

The Complete Works of



St. John Chrysostom

The Complete Works of St. John Chrysostom



The material of this book is available in the public domain.

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew](#)

- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)
- [Homily_12](#)
- [Homily_13](#)
- [Homily_14](#)
- [Homily_15](#)
- [Homily_16](#)
- [Homily_17](#)
- [Homily_18](#)
- [Homily_19](#)
- [Homily_20](#)
- [Homily_21](#)
- [Homily_22](#)

- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)
- [Homily 25](#)
- [Homily 26](#)
- [Homily 27](#)
- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)
- [Homily 31](#)
- [Homily 32](#)
- [Homily 33](#)
- [Homily 34](#)
- [Homily 35](#)
- [Homily 36](#)
- [Homily 37](#)
- [Homily 38](#)
- [Homily 39](#)
- [Homily 40](#)
- [Homily 41](#)
- [Homily 42](#)
- [Homily 43](#)
- [Homily 44](#)
- [Homily 45](#)
- [Homily 46](#)
- [Homily 47](#)
- [Homily 48](#)
- [Homily 49](#)
- [Homily 50](#)

- [Homily 51](#)
- [Homily 52](#)
- [Homily 53](#)
- [Homily 54](#)
- [Homily 55](#)
- [Homily 56](#)
- [Homily 57](#)
- [Homily 58](#)
- [Homily 59](#)
- [Homily 60](#)
- [Homily 61](#)
- [Homily 62](#)
- [Homily 63](#)
- [Homily 64](#)
- [Homily 65](#)
- [Homily 66](#)
- [Homily 67](#)
- [Homily 68](#)
- [Homily 69](#)
- [Homily 70](#)
- [Homily 71](#)
- [Homily 72](#)
- [Homily 73](#)
- [Homily 74](#)
- [Homily 75](#)
- [Homily 76](#)
- [Homily 77](#)
- [Homily 78](#)

- [Homily 79](#)
- [Homily 80](#)
- [Homily 81](#)
- [Homily 82](#)
- [Homily 83](#)
- [Homily 84](#)
- [Homily 85](#)
- [Homily 86](#)
- [Homily 87](#)
- [Homily 88](#)
- [Homily 89](#)
- [Homily 90](#)

[Homilies on Acts](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)

- [Homily 16](#)
- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)
- [Homily 21](#)
- [Homily 22](#)
- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)
- [Homily 25](#)
- [Homily 26](#)
- [Homily 27](#)
- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)
- [Homily 31](#)
- [Homily 32](#)
- [Homily 33](#)
- [Homily 34](#)
- [Homily 35](#)
- [Homily 36](#)
- [Homily 37](#)
- [Homily 38](#)
- [Homily 39](#)
- [Homily 40](#)
- [Homily 41](#)
- [Homily 42](#)
- [Homily 43](#)

- [Homily 44](#)
- [Homily 45](#)
- [Homily 46](#)
- [Homily 47](#)
- [Homily 48](#)
- [Homily 49](#)
- [Homily 50](#)
- [Homily 51](#)
- [Homily 52](#)
- [Homily 53](#)
- [Homily 54](#)
- [Homily 55](#)

[Homilies on Romans](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)

- [Homily 16](#)
- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)
- [Homily 21](#)
- [Homily 22](#)
- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)
- [Homily 25](#)
- [Homily 26](#)
- [Homily 27](#)
- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)
- [Homily 31](#)
- [Homily 32](#)

[Homilies on First Corinthians](#)

- [Argument](#)
- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)

- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)
- [Homily 16](#)
- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)
- [Homily 21](#)
- [Homily 22](#)
- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)
- [Homily 25](#)
- [Homily 26](#)
- [Homily 27](#)
- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)
- [Homily 31](#)
- [Homily 32](#)
- [Homily 33](#)
- [Homily 34](#)
- [Homily 35](#)
- [Homily 36](#)
- [Homily 37](#)

- [Homily 38](#)
- [Homily 39](#)
- [Homily 40](#)
- [Homily 41](#)
- [Homily 42](#)
- [Homily 43](#)
- [Homily 44](#)

[Homilies on Second Corinthians](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)
- [Homily 16](#)
- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)

- [Homily 21](#)
- [Homily 22](#)
- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)
- [Homily 25](#)
- [Homily 26](#)
- [Homily 27](#)
- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)

[Homilies on Ephesians](#)

- [Argument](#)
- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)
- [Homily 16](#)

- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)
- [Homily 21](#)
- [Homily 22](#)
- [Homily 23](#)
- [Homily 24](#)

[Homilies on Philippians](#)

- [Introductory Discourse](#)
- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)

[Homilies on Colossians](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)

- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)
- [Homily_12](#)

[Homilies on First Thessalonians](#)

- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)

[Homilies on Second Thessalonians](#)

- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)

Homilies on First Timothy.

- [Argument](#)
- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)
- [Homily_12](#)
- [Homily_13](#)
- [Homily_14](#)
- [Homily_15](#)
- [Homily_16](#)
- [Homily_17](#)
- [Homily_18](#)

Homilies on Second Timothy.

- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)

- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)

[Homilies on Titus](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)

[Homilies on Philemon](#)

- [Argument](#)
- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)

[Commentary on Galatians](#)

- [Chapter 1](#)
- [Chapter 2](#)
- [Chapter 3](#)
- [Chapter 4](#)
- [Chapter 5](#)
- [Chapter 6](#)

[Homilies on the Gospel of John](#)

- [Homily 1](#)
- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)

- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)
- [Homily_12](#)
- [Homily_13](#)
- [Homily_14](#)
- [Homily_15](#)
- [Homily_16](#)
- [Homily_17](#)
- [Homily_18](#)
- [Homily_19](#)
- [Homily_20](#)
- [Homily_21](#)
- [Homily_22](#)
- [Homily_23](#)
- [Homily_24](#)
- [Homily_25](#)
- [Homily_26](#)
- [Homily_27](#)
- [Homily_28](#)
- [Homily_29](#)
- [Homily_30](#)
- [Homily_31](#)
- [Homily_32](#)
- [Homily_33](#)

- [Homily 34](#)
- [Homily 35](#)
- [Homily 36](#)
- [Homily 37](#)
- [Homily 38](#)
- [Homily 39](#)
- [Homily 40](#)
- [Homily 41](#)
- [Homily 42](#)
- [Homily 43](#)
- [Homily 44](#)
- [Homily 45](#)
- [Homily 46](#)
- [Homily 47](#)
- [Homily 48](#)
- [Homily 49](#)
- [Homily 50](#)
- [Homily 51](#)
- [Homily 52](#)
- [Homily 53](#)
- [Homily 54](#)
- [Homily 55](#)
- [Homily 56](#)
- [Homily 57](#)
- [Homily 58](#)
- [Homily 59](#)
- [Homily 60](#)
- [Homily 61](#)

- [Homily 62](#)
- [Homily 63](#)
- [Homily 64](#)
- [Homily 65](#)
- [Homily 66](#)
- [Homily 67](#)
- [Homily 68](#)
- [Homily 69](#)
- [Homily 70](#)
- [Homily 71](#)
- [Homily 72](#)
- [Homily 73](#)
- [Homily 74](#)
- [Homily 75](#)
- [Homily 76](#)
- [Homily 77](#)
- [Homily 78](#)
- [Homily 79](#)
- [Homily 80](#)
- [Homily 81](#)
- [Homily 82](#)
- [Homily 83](#)
- [Homily 84](#)
- [Homily 85](#)
- [Homily 86](#)
- [Homily 87](#)
- [Homily 88](#)

[Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews](#)

- [Preface](#)
- [Homily_1](#)
- [Homily_2](#)
- [Homily_3](#)
- [Homily_4](#)
- [Homily_5](#)
- [Homily_6](#)
- [Homily_7](#)
- [Homily_8](#)
- [Homily_9](#)
- [Homily_10](#)
- [Homily_11](#)
- [Homily_12](#)
- [Homily_13](#)
- [Homily_14](#)
- [Homily_15](#)
- [Homily_16](#)
- [Homily_17](#)
- [Homily_18](#)
- [Homily_19](#)
- [Homily_20](#)
- [Homily_21](#)
- [Homily_22](#)
- [Homily_23](#)
- [Homily_24](#)
- [Homily_25](#)
- [Homily_26](#)
- [Homily_27](#)

- [Homily 28](#)
- [Homily 29](#)
- [Homily 30](#)
- [Homily 31](#)
- [Homily 32](#)
- [Homily 33](#)
- [Homily 34](#)

[Homilies on the Statues](#)

- [Homily 2](#)
- [Homily 3](#)
- [Homily 4](#)
- [Homily 5](#)
- [Homily 6](#)
- [Homily 7](#)
- [Homily 8](#)
- [Homily 9](#)
- [Homily 10](#)
- [Homily 11](#)
- [Homily 12](#)
- [Homily 13](#)
- [Homily 14](#)
- [Homily 15](#)
- [Homily 16](#)
- [Homily 17](#)
- [Homily 18](#)
- [Homily 19](#)
- [Homily 20](#)
- [Homily 21](#)

[No One Can Harm the Man Who Does Not Injure Himself](#)

[Two Letters to Theodore After His Fall](#)

[Letter to a Young Widow](#)

[Homily on St. Ignatius](#)

[Homily on St. Babylas](#)

[Homily Concerning "Lowliness of Mind"](#)

[Instructions to Catechumens](#)

[Three Homilies on the Power of Satan](#)

[Homily on the Passage "Father, if it be possible . . ."](#)

[Homily on the Paralytic Lowered Through the Roof](#)

[Homily on the Passage "If your enemy hunger, feed him."](#)

[Homily Against Publishing the Errors of the Brethren](#)

[First Homily on Eutropius](#)

[Second Homily on Eutropius \(After His Captivity\)](#)

[Four Letters to Olympias](#)

[Letter to Some Priests of Antioch](#)

[Correspondence with Pope Innocent I](#)

[On the Priesthood](#)

- [Book I](#)
- [Book II](#)
- [Book III](#)
- [Book IV](#)
- [Book V](#)
- [Book VI](#)

Introduction

St. John Chrysostom was born in Antioch in the year 349 AD. His father died soon after his birth and he was raised by his deeply pious mother. Under her influence St. John became devout as well and took to studying scripture under the guidance of the bishop of Antioch who would later be the one to baptize him.

St. John was drawn to become a monk, and when his mother died he withdrew to the wilderness, where he wrote a number of works on the ascetic life.

After a number of years he withdrew into a cave to live in complete silence for two years until his health declined and he was forced to come back into the world. He was ordained a priest in 386, and eventually earned the name, 'Chrysostom' (Golden-Mouthed) for his brilliant sermons. He was known for his love of scripture, and many of his sermons were compiled into commentaries.

St. John was not only known for his sermons, but also for his care of the poor. It is said that his church regularly provided for as many as 2,000 people in need.

In 397 he was chosen to be the bishop of Constantinople, which was perhaps the most important Christian office of its day. Although an extremely busy position, he nevertheless continued his literary output in the form of sermons, which he delivered in the great church, Hagia Sofia. Unfortunately his often fiery sermons did not sit well with the empress. He was banished from the city once by the empress. Then a second time the empress had him removed and forcibly walked to a remote location. St. John did not survive the journey and died on Sept. 17, 407.

St. John Chrysostom left a tremendous mark on the Christian church. His liturgy is celebrated by Eastern Orthodox Christians almost every Sunday, and his homilies are considered by many to be the best every produced. This collection brings together the full range of his extant works in the English language.

Homily 1 on Matthew

It were indeed meet for us not at all to require the aid of the written Word, but to exhibit a life so pure, that the grace of the Spirit should be instead of books to our souls, and that as these are inscribed with ink, even so should our hearts be with the Spirit. But, since we have utterly put away from us this grace, come, let us at any rate embrace the second best course.

For that the former was better, God has made manifest, both by His words, and by His doings. Since unto Noah, and unto Abraham, and unto his offspring, and unto Job, and unto Moses too, He discoursed not by writings, but Himself by Himself, finding their mind pure. But after the whole people of the Hebrews had fallen into the very pit of wickedness, then and thereafter was a written word, and tables, and the admonition which is given by these.

And this one may perceive was the case, not of the saints in the Old Testament only, but also of those in the New. For neither to the apostles did God give anything in writing, but instead of written words He promised that He would give them the grace of the Spirit: for *"He,"* says our Lord, *"shall bring all things to your remembrance."* [John 14:26] And that you may learn that this was far better, hear what He says by the Prophet: *"I will make a new covenant with you, putting my laws into their mind, and in their heart I will write them,"* and, *"they shall be all taught of God."* And Paul too, pointing out the same superiority, said, that they had received a law *"not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."*

But since in process of time they made shipwreck, some with regard to doctrines, others as to life and manners, there was again need that they should be put in remembrance by the written word.

2. Reflect then how great an evil it is for us, who ought to live so purely as not even to need written words, but to yield up our hearts, as books, to the Spirit; now that we have lost that honor, and have come to have need of these, to fail again in duly employing even this second remedy. For if it be a blame to stand in need of written words, and not to have brought down on ourselves the grace of the Spirit; consider how heavy the charge of not choosing to profit even after this assistance, but rather treating what is written with neglect, as if it were cast forth without purpose, and at random, and so bringing down upon ourselves our punishment with increase.

But that no such effect may ensue, let us give strict heed unto the things that are written; and let us learn how the Old Law was given on the one hand, how on the other the New Covenant.

3. How then was that law given in time past, and when, and where? After the destruction of the Egyptians, in the wilderness, on Mount Sinai, when smoke and fire were rising up out of the mountain, a trumpet sounding, thunders and lightnings, and Moses entering into the very depth of the cloud. But in the new covenant not so—neither in a wilderness, nor in a mountain, nor with smoke and darkness and cloud and tempest; but at the beginning of the day, in a house, while all were sitting together, with great quietness, all took place. For to those, being more unreasonable, and hard to guide, there was need of outward pomp, as of a wilderness, a mountain, a smoke, a sound of trumpet, and the other like things: but they who were of a higher character, and submissive, and who had risen above mere corporeal imaginations, Yea, for it was removal of punishment, and remission of sins, and *"righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,"* and adoption, and an inheritance of Heaven, and a relationship unto the Son of God, which he came declaring unto all; to enemies, to the perverse, to

them that were sitting in darkness. What then could ever be equal to these good tidings? God on earth, man in Heaven; and all became mingled together, angels joined the choirs of men, men had fellowship with the angels, and with the other powers above: and one might see the long war brought to an end, and reconciliation made between God and our nature, the devil brought to shame, demons in flight, death destroyed, Paradise opened, the curse blotted out, sin put out of the way, error driven off, truth returning, the word of godliness everywhere sown, and flourishing in its growth, the polity of those above planted on the earth, those powers in secure intercourse with us, and on earth angels continually haunting, and hope abundant touching things to come.

Therefore he has called the history good tidings, forasmuch as all other things surely are words only without substance; as, for instance, plenty of wealth, greatness of power, kingdoms, and glories, and honors, and whatever other things among men are accounted to be good: but those which are published by the fishermen would be legitimately and properly called good tidings: not only as being sure and immoveable blessings, and beyond our deserts, but also as being given to us with all facility.

For not by laboring and sweating, not by fatigue and suffering, but merely as being beloved of God, we received what we have received.

5. And why can it have been, that when there were so many disciples, two write only from among the apostles, and two from among their followers? (For one that was a disciple of Paul, and another of Peter, together with Matthew and John, wrote the Gospels.) It was because they did nothing for vainglory, but all things for use.

"What then? Was not one evangelist sufficient to tell all?" One indeed was sufficient; but if there be four that write, not at the same times, nor in the same places, neither after having met together, and conversed one with

another, and then they speak all things as it were out of one mouth, this becomes a very great demonstration of the truth.

6. *"But the contrary,"* it may be said, *"has come to pass, for in many places they are convicted of discordance."* Nay, this very thing is a very great evidence of their truth. For if they had agreed in all things exactly even to time, and place, and to the very words, none of our enemies would have believed but that they had met together, and had written what they wrote by some human compact; because such entire agreement as this comes not of simplicity. But now even that discordance which seems to exist in little matters delivers them from all suspicion, and speaks clearly in behalf of the character of the writers.

But if there be anything touching times or places, which they have related differently, this nothing injures the truth of what they have said. And these things too, so far as God shall enable us, we will endeavor, as we proceed, to point out; requiring you, together with what we have mentioned, to observe, that in the chief heads, those which constitute our life and furnish out our doctrine, nowhere is any of them found to have disagreed, no not ever so little.

But what are these points? Such as follow: That God became man, that He wrought miracles, that He was crucified, that He was buried, that He rose again, that He ascended, that He will judge, that He has given commandments tending to salvation, that He has brought in a law not contrary to the Old Testament, that He is a Son, that He is only-begotten, that He is a true Son, that He is of the same substance with the Father, and as many things as are like these; for touching these we shall find that there is in them a full agreement.

And if among the miracles they have not all of them mentioned all, but one these, the other those, let not this trouble you. For if on the one hand

one had spoken of all, the number of the rest would have been superfluous; and if again all had written fresh things, and different one from another, the proof of their agreement would not have been manifest. For this cause they have both treated of many in common, and each of them has also received and declared something of his own; that, on the one hand, he might not seem superfluous, and cast on the heap to no purpose; on the other, he might make our test of the truth of their affirmations perfect.

7. Now Luke tells us also the cause wherefore he proceeds to write: *"that you may hold,"* says he, *"the certainty of the words wherein you have been instructed;"* [Luke 1:4] that is, that being continually reminded you may hold to the certainty, and abide in certainty.

But as to John, he has himself kept silence touching the cause; yet, (as a tradition says, which has come down to us from the first, even from the Fathers,) neither did he come to write without purpose; but forasmuch as it had been the care of the three to dwell upon the account of the dispensation, and the doctrines of the Godhead were near being left in silence, he, moved by Christ, then and not till then set himself to compose his Gospel. And this is manifest both from the history itself, and from the opening of his Gospel. For he does not begin like the rest from beneath, but from above, from the same point, at which he was aiming, and it was with a view to this that he composed the whole book. And not in the beginning only, but throughout all the Gospel, he is more lofty than the rest.

Of Matthew again it is said, that when those who from among the Jews had believed came to him, and besought him to leave to them in writing those same things, which he had spoken to them by word, he also composed his Gospel in the language of the Hebrews. And Mark too, in Egypt, is said to have done this self-same thing at the entreaty of the disciples.

For this cause then Matthew, as writing to Hebrews, sought to show nothing more, than that He was from Abraham, and David; but Luke, as discoursing to all in general, traces up the account higher, going on even to Adam. And the one begins with His generation, because nothing was so soothing to the Jew as to be told that Christ was the offspring of Abraham and David: the other does not so, but mentions many other things, and then proceeds to the genealogy.

8. But the harmony between them we will establish, both by the whole world, which has received their statements, and by the very enemies of the truth. For many sects have had birth, since their time, holding opinions opposed to their words; whereof some have received all that they have said, while some have cut off from the rest certain portions of their statements, and so retain them for themselves. But if there were any hostility in their statements, neither would the sects, who maintain the contrary part, have received all, but only so much as seemed to harmonize with themselves; nor would those, which have parted off a portion, be utterly refuted by that portion; so that the very fragments cannot be hid, but declare aloud their connection with the whole body. And like as if you should take any part from the side of an animal, even in that part you would find all the things out of which the whole is composed—nerves and veins, bones, arteries, and blood, and a sample, as one might say, of the whole lump—so likewise with regard to the Scriptures; in each portion of what is there stated, one may see the connection with the whole clearly appearing. Whereas, if they were in discord, neither could this have been pointed out, and the doctrine itself had long since been brought to nought: *"for every kingdom,"* says He, *"divided against itself shall not stand."* But now even in this shines forth the might of the Spirit, namely, in that it prevailed on these men, engaged as they

were in those things which are more necessary and very urgent, to take no hurt at all from these little matters.

Now, where each one was abiding, when he wrote, it is not right for us to affirm very positively.

But that they are not opposed to each other, this we will endeavor to prove, throughout the whole work. And thou, in accusing them of disagreement, art doing just the same as if you were to insist upon their using the same words and forms of speech.

9. And I do not yet say, that those likewise who glory greatly in rhetoric and philosophy, having many of them written many books touching the same matters, have not merely expressed themselves differently, but have even spoken in opposition to one another (for it is one thing to speak differently and another to speak at variance); none of these things do I say. Far be it from me to frame our defense from the frenzy of those men, neither am I willing out of falsehood to make recommendations for the truth.

But this I would be glad to inquire: how were the differing accounts believed? How did they prevail? How was it that, while saying opposite things, they were admired, were believed, were celebrated everywhere in the world?

And yet the witnesses of what they said were many, and many too were the adversaries and enemies thereof. For they did not write these things in one corner and bury them, but everywhere, by sea and by land, they unfolded them in the ears of all, and these things were read in the presence of enemies, even as they are now, and none of the things which they said offended any one. And very naturally, for it was a divine power that pervaded all, and made it to prosper with all men.

10. For if it had not been so, how could the publican, and the fisherman, and the unlearned, have attained to such philosophy? For things, which they that are without have never been able to imagine, no not in a dream, are by these men with great certainty both published and made convincing, and not in their lives only, but even after death: neither to two men, nor twenty men, nor an hundred, nor a thousand, nor ten thousand, but to cities, nations, and people, both to land and sea, in the land both of Greeks and barbarians, both inhabited and desert; and all concerning things far beyond our nature. For leaving the earth, all their discourse is concerning the things in heaven, while they bring in unto us another principle of life, another manner of living: both wealth and poverty, freedom and slavery, life and death, our world and our polity, all changed.

Not like Plato, who composed that ridiculous Republic, or Zeno, or if there be any one else that has written a polity, or has framed laws. For indeed, touching all these, it has been made manifest by themselves, that an evil spirit, and some cruel demon at war with our race, a foe to modesty, and an enemy to good order, oversetting all things, has made his voice be heard in their soul. When, for example, they make their women common to all, and stripping virgins naked in the Palæstra, bring them into the gaze of men; and when they establish secret marriages, mingling all things together and confounding them, and overturning the limits of nature, what else is there to say? For that these their sayings are all inventions of devils, and contrary to nature, even nature herself would testify, not tolerating what we have mentioned; and this, though they write not amidst persecutions, nor dangers, nor fightings, but in all security and freedom, and deck it out with many ornaments from many sources. But these doctrines of the fishermen, chased as they were, scourged and in jeopardy, both learned and unlearned,

both bond and free, both kings and private soldiers, both barbarians and Greeks, have received with all good will.

11. And you can not say, that it was because these things were trifling and low, that they were easily to be received by all men: nay, for these doctrines are far higher than those. For as to virginity, they never imagined even the name thereof so much as in a dream, nor yet of voluntary poverty, nor of fasting, nor of any other of those things that are high.

But they that are of our part not only exterminate lust, they chastise not only the act, but even an unchaste look, and insulting language, and disorderly laughter, and dress, and gait, and clamor, and they carry on their exactness even to the smallest things, and have filled the whole earth with the plant of virginity. And touching God too, and the things in heaven, they persuade men to be wise with such knowledge as no one of those has at any time been able so much as to conceive in his mind. For how could they, who made for gods images of beasts, and of monsters that crawl on the earth, and of other things still more vile?

Yet these high doctrines were both accepted and believed, and they flourish every day and increase; but the others have passed away, and perished, having disappeared more easily than spiders' webs.

And very naturally, for they were demons that published these things; wherefore besides their uncleanness, their obscurity is great, and the labor they require greater. For what could be more ridiculous than that "*republic*," in which, besides what I have mentioned, the philosopher, when he has spent lines without number, that he may be able to show what justice is, has over and above this prolixity filled his discourse with much indistinctness? This, even if it did contain anything profitable, must needs be very useless for the life of man. For if the husbandman and the smith, the builder and the pilot, and every one who subsists by the labor of his hands, is to leave his

trade, and his honest toils, and is to spend such and such a number of years in order to learn what justice is; before he has learned he will often times be absolutely destroyed by hunger, and perish because of this justice, not having learned anything else useful to be known, and having ended his life by a cruel death.

12. But our lessons are not such; rather Christ has taught us what is just, and what is seemly, and what is expedient, and all virtue in general, comprising it in few and plain words: at one time saying that, *"on two commandments hang the Law and the Prophets;"* [Matthew 22:40] that is to say, on the love of God and on the love of our neighbor: at another time, *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets."* [Matthew 7:12]

And these things even to a laborer, and to a servant, and to a widow woman, and to a very child, and to him that appears to be exceedingly slow of understanding, are all plain to comprehend and easy to learn. For the lessons of the truth are like this; and the actual result bears witness thereto. All at least have learned what things they are to do, and not learned only, but been emulous also of them; and not in the cities alone nor in the midst of the market places, but also in the summits of the mountains.

Yea, for there will you see true wisdom abounding, and choirs of angels shining forth in a human body, and the commonwealth of Heaven manifested here on earth. For a commonwealth did these fishermen too write for us, not with commands that it should be embraced from childhood, like those others, nor making it a law that the virtuous man must be so many years old, but addressing their discourse generally to every age. For those lessons are children's toys, but these are the truth of things.

And as a place for this their commonwealth they have assigned Heaven, and God they have brought in as the framer thereof, and as

lawgiver of the statutes there set; as indeed was their duty. And the rewards in their commonwealth are not leaves of bay nor olive, nor an allowance of meat in the public hall, nor statues of brass, these cold and ordinary things, but a life which has no end, and to become children of God, to join the angels' choir, and to stand by the royal throne, and to be always with Christ. And the popular guides of this commonwealth are publicans, and fishermen, and tent-makers, not such as have lived for a short time, but such as are now living for ever. Therefore even after their death they may possibly do the greatest good to the governed.

This republic is at war not with men, but with devils, and those incorporeal powers. Wherefore also their captain is no one of men, nor of angels, but God Himself. And the armor too of these warriors suits the nature of the warfare, for it is not formed of hides and steel, but of truth and of righteousness, and faith, and all true love of wisdom.

13. Since then the aforesaid republic is both the subject on which this book was written, and it is now proposed for us to speak thereof, let us give careful heed to Matthew, discoursing plainly concerning this: for what he says is not his own, but all Christ's, who has made the laws of this city. Let us give heed, I say, that we may be capable of enrolment therein, and of shining forth among those that have already become citizens thereof, and are awaiting those incorruptible crowns. To many, however, this discourse seems to be easy, while the prophetic writings are difficult. But this again is the view of men who know not the depth of the thoughts laid up therein. Wherefore I entreat you to follow us with much diligence, so as to enter into the very ocean of the things written, with Christ for our guide at this our entering in.

But in order that the word may be the more easy to learn, we pray and entreat you, as we have done also with respect to the other Scriptures, to

take up beforehand that portion of the Scripture which we may be going to explain, that your reading may prepare the way for your understanding (as also was the case with the eunuch [Acts 8:28]), and so may greatly facilitate our task.

14. And this because the questions are many and frequent. See, for instance, at once in the beginning of his Gospel, how many difficulties might be raised one after the other. As first, wherefore the genealogy of Joseph is traced, who was not father of Christ. Secondly, whence may it be made manifest that He derives His origin from David, while the forefathers of Mary, who bare Him, are not known, for the Virgin's genealogy is not traced? Thirdly, on what account Joseph's genealogy is traced, when he had nothing to do with the birth; while with regard to the Virgin, who was the very mother, it is not shown of what fathers, or grandfathers, or ancestors, she is sprung.

And along with these things, this is also worth inquiry, wherefore it can be, that, when tracing the genealogy through the men, he has mentioned women also; and why since he determined upon doing this, he yet did not mention them all, but passing over the more eminent, such as Sarah, Rebecca, and as many as are like them, he has brought forward only them that are famed for some bad thing; as, for instance, if any was a harlot, or an adulteress, or a mother by an unlawful marriage, if any was a stranger or barbarian. For he has made mention of the wife of Uriah, and of Thamar, and of Rahab, and of Ruth, of whom one was of a strange race, another an harlot, another was defiled by her near kinsman, and with him not in the form of marriage, but by a stolen intercourse, when she had put on herself the mask of an harlot; and touching the wife of Uriah no one is ignorant, by reason of the notoriety of the crime. And yet the evangelist has passed by all the rest, and inserted in the genealogy these alone. Whereas, if women

were to be mentioned, all ought to be so; if not all but some, then those famed in the way of virtue, not for evil deeds.

See you how much care is required of us straightway in the first beginning? And yet the beginning seems to be plainer than the rest; to many perhaps even superfluous, as being a mere numbering of names.

After this, another point again is worth inquiry; wherefore he has omitted three kings. For if, because they were exceeding ungodly, he therefore passed by their names in silence, neither should he have mentioned the others, that were like them.

And this again is another question; why, after having spoken of fourteen generations, he has not in the third division maintained the number.

And wherefore Luke has made mention of other names, and not only not all of them the same, but also many more of them, while Matthew has both fewer and different, though he too has ended with Joseph, with whom Luke likewise concluded.

You see how much wakeful attention is needed on our part, not only for explanation, but even that we may learn what things we have to explain. For neither is this a little matter, to be able to find out the difficulties; there being also this other hard point, how Elizabeth, who was of the Levitical tribe, was kinswoman to Mary.

15. But that we may not overload your memory, by stringing many things together, here let us stay our discourse for a time. For it is enough for you in order that you be thoroughly roused, that you learn the questions only. But if you long for their solution also, this again depends on yourselves, before we speak. For if I see you thoroughly awakened, and longing to learn, I will endeavor to add the solution also; but if gaping and not attending, I will conceal both the difficulties, and their solution, in obedience to a divine law. For, says He, *"Give not the holy things to the*

dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet."

But who is he that tramples them under foot? He that does not account these things precious, and venerable. And who, it may be asked, is so wretched as not to esteem these things venerable, and more precious than all? He who does not bestow on them so much leisure as on the harlot women in the theatres of Satan. For there the multitude pass the whole day, and give up not a few of their domestic concerns for the sake of this unseasonable employment, and they retain with exactness whatever they have heard, and this though it be to the injury of their souls, that they keep it. But here, where God is speaking, they will not bear to tarry even a little time.

Therefore, let me warn you, we have nothing in common with Heaven, but our citizenship goes no further than words. And yet because of this, God has threatened even hell, not in order to cast us therein, but that He might persuade us to flee this grievous tyranny. But we do the opposite, and run each day the way that leads there, and while God is commanding us not only to hear, but also to do what He says, we do not submit so much as to hearken.

When then, I pray you, are we to do what is commanded, and to put our hand to the works, if we do not endure so much as to hear the words that relate to them, but are impatient and restless about the time we stay here, although it be exceedingly short?

16. And besides, when we are talking of indifferent matters, if we see those that are in company do not attend, we call what they do an insult; but do we consider that we are provoking God, if, while He is discoursing of such things as these, we despise what is said, and look another way?

Why, he that is grown old, and has travelled over much country, reports to us with all exactness the number of stadia, and the situations of cities, their plans, and their harbors and markets; but we ourselves know not even how far we are from the city that is in Heaven. For surely we should have endeavored to shorten the space, had we known the distance. That city being not only as far from us as Heaven is from the earth, but even much farther, if we be negligent; like as, on the other hand, if we do our best, even in one instant we shall come to the gates thereof. For not by local space, but by moral disposition, are these distances defined.

But you know exactly the affairs of the world, as well new as old, and such too as are quite ancient; you can number the princes under whom you have served in time past, and the ruler of the games, and them that gained the prize, and the leaders of armies, matters that are of no concern to you; but who has become ruler in this city, the first or the second or the third, and for how long, each of them; and what each has accomplished, and brought to pass, you have not imagined even as in a dream. And the laws that are set in this city you will not endure to hear, nor attend to them, even when others tell you of them. How then, I pray you, do you expect to obtain the blessings that are promised, when thou dost not even attend to what is said?

17. But though never before, now, at any rate, let us do this. Yea, for we are on the point of entering into a city (if God permit) of gold, and more precious than any gold.

Let us then mark her foundations, her gates consisting of sapphires and pearls; for indeed we have in Matthew an excellent guide. For through his gate we shall now enter in, and much diligence is required on our part. For should He see any one not attentive, He casts him out of the city.

Yes, for the city is most kingly and glorious; not as the cities with us, divided into a market-place, and the royal courts; for there all is the court of the King. Let us open therefore the gates of our mind, let us open our ears, and with great trembling, when on the point of setting foot on the threshold, let us worship the King that is therein. For indeed the first approach has power straightway to confound the beholder.

For the present we find the gates closed; but when we see them thrown open (for this is the solution of the difficulties), then we shall perceive the greatness of the splendor within. For there also, leading you with the eyes of the Spirit, is one who offers to show you all, even this Publican; where the King sits, and who of His host stand by Him; where are the angels, where the archangels; and what place is set apart for the new citizens in this city, and what kind of way it is that leads there, and what manner of portion they have received, who first were citizens therein, and those next after them, and such as followed these. And how many are the orders of these tribes, how many those of the senate, how many the distinctions of dignity.

Let us not therefore with noise or tumult enter in, but with a mystical silence.

For if in a theatre, when a great silence has been made, then the letters of the king are read, much more in this city must all be composed, and stand with soul and ear erect. For it is not the letters of any earthly master, but of the Lord of angels, which are on the point of being read.

If we would order ourselves on this wise, the grace itself of the Spirit will lead us in great perfection, and we shall arrive at the very royal throne, and attain to all the good things, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and always, even for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 2 on Matthew

Matt. I. 1.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham."

Do you indeed remember the charge, which we lately made you, entreating you to hearken unto all the things that are said with all silence, and mystical quietness? For we are today to set foot within the holy vestibule, wherefore I have also put you in mind of the charge.

Since, if the Jews, when they were to approach *"a mountain that burned, and fire, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest;"* — or rather when they were not so much as to approach, but both to see and to hear these things from afar—were commanded for three days before to abstain from their wives, and to wash their garments, and were in trembling and fear, both themselves and Moses with them; much more we, when we are to hearken to such words, and are not to stand far from a smoking mountain, but to enter into Heaven itself, ought to show forth a greater self-denial; not washing our garments, but wiping clean the robe of our soul, and ridding ourselves of all mixture with worldly things. For it is not blackness that you shall see, nor smoke, nor tempest, but the King Himself sitting on the throne of that unspeakable glory, and angels, and archangels standing by Him, and the tribes of the saints, with those interminable myriads.

For such is the city of God, having *"the Church of the first-born, the spirits of the just, the general assembly of the angels, the blood of sprinkling,"* whereby all are knit into one, and Heaven has received the things of earth, and earth the things of Heaven, and that peace has come which was of old longed for both by angels and by saints.

Herein stands the trophy of the cross, glorious, and conspicuous, the spoils won by Christ, the first-fruits of our nature, the booty of our King; all these, I say, we shall out of the Gospels know perfectly. If you follow in becoming quietness, we shall be able to lead you about everywhere, and to show where death is set forth crucified, and where sin is hanged up, and where are the many and wondrous offerings from this war, from this battle.

You shall see likewise the tyrant here bound, and the multitude of the captives following, and the citadel from which that unholy demon overran all things in time past. You will see the hiding places, and the dens of the robber, broken up now, and laid open, for even there also was our King present.

But be not thou weary, beloved, for if any one were describing a visible war, and trophies, and victories, would you feel no satiety at all; nay, you would not prefer either drink or meat to this history. But if that kind of narrative be welcome, much more this. For consider what a thing it is to hear, how on the one side God from Heaven, arising *"out of the royal thrones, leaped down [Wisdom 18:15]"* unto the earth, and even unto hell itself, and stood in the battle array; and how the devil on the other hand set himself in array against Him; or rather not against God unveiled, but God hidden in man's nature.

And what is marvellous, you will see death destroyed by death, and curse extinguished by curse, and the dominion of the devil put down by those very things whereby he did prevail. Let us therefore rouse ourselves thoroughly, and let us not sleep, for lo, I see the gates opening to us; but let us enter in with all seemly order, and with trembling, setting foot straightway within the vestibule itself.

2. But what is this vestibule? *"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham."*

"What do you say? Did you not promise to discourse of the Only-begotten Son of God, and do you make mention of David, a man born after a thousand generations, and say that he is both father and ancestor?" Stay, seek not to learn all at once, but gently and little by little. Why, it is in the vestibule that you are standing, by the very porch; why then do you hasten towards the inner shrine? As yet you have not well marked all without. For neither for a while do I declare unto you that other generation: or rather not even this which comes after, for it is unutterable, and unspeakable. And before me the Prophet Esaias has told you this; where when proclaiming His passion, and His great care for the world, and admiring who He was, and what He became, and whither He descended, he cried out loud and clear, saying thus, *"Who shall declare His generation?"*

It is not then of that we are now to speak, but of this beneath, this which took place on earth, which was among ten thousand witnesses. And concerning this again we will relate in such wise as it may be possible for us, having received the grace of the Spirit. For not even this may any one set forth altogether plainly, forasmuch as this too is most awful. Think not, therefore, it is of small things you are hearing, when you hear of this birth, but rouse up your mind, and straightway tremble, being told that God has come upon earth. For so marvellous was this, and beyond expectation, that because of these things the very angels formed a choir, and in behalf of the world offered up their praise for them, and the prophets from the first were amazed at this, that *"He was seen upon earth, and conversed with men [Baruch 3:37] ."* Yea, for it is far beyond all thought to hear that God the Unspeakable, the Unutterable, the Incomprehensible, and He that is equal to the Father, has passed through a virgin's womb, and has vouchsafed to be born of a woman, and to have Abraham and David for forefathers. But why

do I say Abraham and David? For what is even more amazing, there are those women, whom we have lately mentioned.

3. Hearing these things, arise, and surmise nothing low: but even because of this very thing most of all should you marvel, that being Son of the Unoriginate God, and His true Son, He suffered Himself to be called also Son of David, that He might make you Son of God. He suffered a slave to be father to Him, that He might make the Lord Father to you a slave.

Do you see at once from the beginning of what nature are the Gospels? If you doubt concerning the things that pertain to you, from what belongs to Him believe these also. For it is far more difficult, judging by human reason, for God to become man, than for a man to be declared a Son of God. When therefore you are told that the Son of God is Son of David and of Abraham, doubt not any more that thou too, the son of Adam, shall be son of God. For not at random, nor in vain did He abase Himself so greatly, only He was minded to exalt us. Thus He was born after the flesh, that you might be born after the Spirit; He was born of a woman, that you might cease to be the son of a woman.

Wherefore the birth was twofold, both made like us, and also surpassing ours. For to be born of a woman indeed was our lot, but *"to be born not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of man,"* but of the Holy Ghost, [John 1:13] was to proclaim beforehand the birth surpassing us, the birth to come, which He was about freely to give us of the Spirit. And everything else too was like this. Thus His baptism also was of the same kind, for it partook of the old, and it partook also of the new. To be baptized by the prophet marked the old, but the coming down of the Spirit shadowed out the new. And like as though any one were to place himself in the space between any two persons that were standing apart, and stretching forth both his hands were to lay hold on either side, and tie them together; even so has

He done, joining the old covenant with the new, God's nature with man's, the things that are His with ours.

Do you see the flashing brightness of the city, with how great a splendor it has dazzled you from the very beginning? How it has straightway shown the King in your own form; as though in a camp? For neither there does the king always appear bearing his proper dignity, but laying aside the purple and the diadem, he often disguises himself in the garb of a common soldier. But there it is, lest by being known he should draw the enemy upon himself; but here on the contrary, lest, if He were known, He should cause the enemy to fly from the conflict with Him, and lest He should confound all His own people: for His purpose was to save, not to dismay.

4. For this reason he has also straightway called Him by this title, naming Him Jesus. For this name, Jesus, is not Greek, but in the Hebrew language it is thus called Jesus; which is, when interpreted into the Greek tongue, "*A Saviour*." And He is called a Saviour, from His saving His people.

Do you see how he has given wings to the hearer, at once speaking things familiar, and at the same time by these indicating to us things beyond all hope? I mean that both these names were well known to the Jews. For, because the things that were to happen were beyond expectation, the types even of the names went before, in order that from the very first all the unsettling power of novelty might be taken away. Thus he is called Jesus, who after Moses brought the people into the land of promise. Have you seen the type? Behold the truth. That led into the land of promise, this into heaven, and to the good things in the heavens; that, after Moses was dead, this after the law had ceased; that as a leader, this as a King.

However, lest having heard the word Jesus, you should by reason of the identity of the name be perplexed, he has added, "*Jesus Christ, Son of David.*" But that other was not of David, but of another tribe.

5. But wherefore does he call it a "*book of the generation of Jesus Christ,*" while yet this book has not the birth only, but the whole dispensation? Because this is the sum of the whole dispensation, and is made an origin and root of all our blessings. As then Moses calls it the book of heaven and earth, [Genesis 2:4] although he has not discoursed of heaven and earth only, but also of all things that are in the midst thereof; so also this man has named his book from that which is the sum of all the great things done. For that which teems with astonishment, and is beyond hope and all expectation, is that God should become man. But this having come to pass, all afterwards follows in reasonable consequence.

6. But wherefore did he not say, "*the Son of Abraham,*" and then "*the Son of David?*" It is not, as some suppose, that he means to proceed upward from the lower point, since then he would have done the same as Luke, but now he does the contrary. Why then has he made mention of David? The man was in the mouths of all, both from his distinction, and from the time, for he had not been so very long since dead, like Abraham. And though God made promises to both, yet the one, as old, was passed over in silence, while the other, as fresh and recent, was repeated of all. Themselves, for instance, say, "*Does not Christ come of the seed of David, and out of Bethlehem, the town where David was?*" [John 7:42] And no man called Him Son of Abraham, but all Son of David; and that because this last was more in the recollection of all, both on account of the time, as I have already said, and because of his royalty. On this principle again all the kings whom they had in honor after his time were named from him, both by the people themselves and by God. For both Ezekiel and other prophets besides

speaking of David as coming and rising again; not meaning him that was dead, but them who were emulating his virtue. And to Hezekiah He says, *"I will defend this city, for my own sake and for my servant David's sake."*

[2 Kings 19:34] And to Solomon too He said, that for David's sake He rent not the kingdom during his lifetime. For great was the glory of the man, both with God and with men.

On account of this he makes the beginning at once from him who was more known, and then runs up to his father; accounting it superfluous, as far as regards the Jews, to carry the genealogy higher up. For these were principally the persons held in admiration; the one as a prophet and a king, the other as a patriarch and a prophet.

7. *"But whence is it manifest that He is of David?"* one may say. For if He was not sprung of a man, but from a woman only, and the Virgin has not her genealogy traced, how shall we know that He was of David's race? Thus, there are two things inquired; both why His mother's genealogy is not recited, and wherefore it can be that Joseph is mentioned by them, who has no part in the birth: since the latter seems to be superfluous, and the former a defect.

Of which then is it necessary to speak first? How the Virgin is of David. How then shall we know that she is of David? Harken unto God, telling Gabriel to go unto *"a virgin betrothed to a man (whose name was Joseph), of the house and lineage of David."* What now would you have plainer than this, when you have heard that the Virgin was of the house and lineage of David?

Hence it is evident that Joseph also was of the same. Yes, for there was a law, which bade that it should not be lawful to take a wife from any other stock, but from the same tribe. And the patriarch Jacob also foretold that He should arise out of the tribe of Judah, saying on this wise: *"there shall not*

fail a ruler out of Judah, nor a governor out of his loins, until He come for whom it is appointed, and He is the expectation of the Gentiles."

"Well; this prophecy does indeed make it clear that He was of the tribe of Judah, but not also that He was of the family of David. Was there then in the tribe of Judah one family only, even that of David, or were there not also many others? And might it not happen for one to be of the tribe of Judah, but not also of the family of David?"

Nay, lest you should say this, the evangelist has removed this suspicion of yours, by saying, that He was *"of the house and lineage of David."*

And if you wish to learn this from another reason besides, neither shall we be at a loss for another proof. For not only was it not allowed to take a wife out of another tribe, but not even from another lineage, that is, from another kindred. So that if either we connect with the Virgin the words, *"of the house and lineage of David,"* what has been said stands good; or if with Joseph, by that fact this also is proved. For if Joseph was of the house and lineage of David, he would not have taken his wife from another than that whence he himself was sprung.

"What then," one may say, *"if he transgressed the law?"* Why, for this cause he has by anticipation testified that Joseph was righteous, on purpose that you might not say this, but having been told his virtue, might be sure also that he would not have transgressed the law. For he who was so benevolent, and free from passion, as not to wish, even when urged by suspicion, to attempt inflicting punishment on the Virgin, how should he have transgressed the law for lust? He that showed wisdom and self-restraint beyond the law (for to put her away, and that privily, was to act with self-restraint beyond the law), how should he have done anything contrary to the law; and this when there was no cause to urge him?

8. Now that the Virgin was of the race of David is indeed from these things evident; but wherefore he gave not her genealogy, but Joseph's, requires explanation. For what cause was it then? It was not the law among the Jews that the genealogy of women should be traced. In order then that he might keep the custom, and not seem to be making alterations from the beginning, and yet might make the Virgin known to us, for this cause he has passed over her ancestors in silence, and traced the genealogy of Joseph. For if he had done this with respect to the Virgin, he would have seemed to be introducing novelties; and if he had passed over Joseph in silence, we should not have known the Virgin's forefathers. In order therefore that we might learn, touching Mary, who she was, and of what origin, and that the laws might remain undisturbed, he has traced the genealogy of her espoused husband, and shown him to be of the house of David. For when this has been clearly proved, that other fact is demonstrated with it, namely, that the Virgin likewise is sprung from thence, by reason that this righteous man, even as I have already said, would not have endured to take a wife from another race.

There is also another reason, which one might mention, of a more mystical nature, because of which the Virgin's forefathers were passed over in silence; but this it were not seasonable now to declare, because so much has been already said.

9. Wherefore let us stay at this point our discourse concerning the questions, and in the meanwhile let us retain with accuracy what has been revealed to us; as, for instance, why he mentioned David first; wherefore he called the book, *"a book of the generation;"* on what account he said, *"of Jesus Christ;"* how the birth is common and not common; whence it was that Mary was shown to be from David; and wherefore Joseph's genealogy is traced, while her ancestors are passed over in silence.

For if you retain these things, you will the more encourage us with respect to what is to come; but if you reject and cast them from your mind, we shall be the more backward as to the rest. Just as no husbandman would care to pay attention to a soil which had destroyed the former seed.

Wherefore I entreat you to revolve these things. For from taking thought concerning such matters, there springs in the soul some great good, tending unto salvation. For by these meditations we shall be able to please God Himself; and our mouths will be pure from insults, and filthy talking, and reviling, while they are exercising themselves in spiritual sayings; and we shall be formidable to the devils, while arming our tongue with such words; and we shall draw unto ourselves God's grace the more, and it will render our eye more piercing. For indeed both eyes and mouth and hearing He set in us to this intent, that all our members may serve Him, that we may speak His words, and do His deeds, that we may sing unto Him continual hymns, that we may offer up sacrifices of thanksgiving, and by these may thoroughly purify our consciences.

For as a body will be more in health when enjoying the benefits of a pure air, even so will a soul be more endued with practical wisdom when nourished in such exercises as these. Do you see not even the eyes of the body, that when they abide in smoke they are always weeping; but when they are in clear air, and in a meadow, and in fountains and gardens, they become more quicksighted and more healthy? Like this is the soul's eye also, for should it feed in the meadow of spiritual oracles, it will be clear and piercing, and quick of sight; but should it depart into the smoke of the things of this life, it will weep without end, and wail both now and hereafter. For indeed the things of this life are like smoke. On this account also one has said, *"My days have failed like smoke."* He indeed was referring to their shortness of duration, and to their unsubstantial nature, but

I would say that we should take what is said, not in this sense alone, but also as to their turbid character.

For nothing does so hurt and dim the eye of the soul as the crowd of worldly anxieties and the swarm of desires. For these are the wood that feeds this smoke. And as fire, when it lays hold of any damp and saturated fuel, kindles much smoke; so likewise this desire, so vehement and burning, when it lays hold of a soul that is (so to speak) damp and dissolute, produces also in its way abundance of smoke. For this cause there is need of the dew of the Spirit, and of that air, that it may extinguish the fire, and scatter the smoke, and give wings to our thoughts. For it cannot, it cannot be that one weighed down with so great evils should soar up to heaven; it is well if being without impediment we can cleave our way there; or rather it is not possible even so, unless we obtain the wing of the Spirit.

Now if there be need both of an unencumbered mind, and of spiritual grace, that we may mount up to that height; what if there be none of these things, but we draw to ourselves whatever is opposite to them, even a satanical weight? How shall we be able to soar upwards, when dragged down by so great a load? For indeed, should any one attempt to weigh our words as it were in just balances; in ten thousand talents of worldly talk he will scarcely find an hundred pence of spiritual words, or rather, I should say, not even ten farthings. Is it not then a disgrace, and an extreme mockery, that if we have a servant, we make use of him for the most part in things necessary, but being possessed of a tongue, we do not deal with our member so well even as with a slave, but on the contrary make use of it for things unprofitable, and mere makeweights? And would it were only for makeweights: but now it is for what are contrary and hurtful and in no respect advantageous to us. For if the things that we spoke were profitable to us, they would assuredly be also pleasing to God. But as it is, whatever

the devil may suggest, we speak it all, now laughing, and now speaking wittily; now cursing and insulting, and now swearing, lying, and taking false oaths; now murmuring, and now making vain babblings, and talking trifles more than old wives; uttering all things that are of no concern to us.

For, tell me, who of you that stand here, if he were required, could repeat one Psalm, or any other portion of the divine Scriptures? There is not one.

And it is not this only that is the grievous thing, but that while you have become so backward with respect to things spiritual, yet in regard of what belongs to Satan you are more vehement than fire. Thus should any one be minded to ask of you songs of devils and impure effeminate melodies, he will find many that know these perfectly, and repeat them with much pleasure.

10. But what is the answer to these charges? *"I am not,"* you will say, *"one of the monks, but I have both a wife and children, and the care of a household."* Why, this is what has ruined all, your supposing that the reading of the divine Scriptures appertains to those only, when you need it much more than they. For they that dwell in the world, and each day receive wounds, these have most need of medicines. So that it is far worse than not reading, to account the thing even *"superfluous:"* for these are the words of diabolical invention. Hear ye not Paul saying, *"that all these things are written for our admonition"*? [1 Corinthians 10:11]

And you, if you had to take up a Gospel, would not choose to do so with hands unwashed; but the things that are laid up within it, do you not think to be highly necessary? It is because of this, that all things are turned upside down.

For if you would learn how great is the profit of the Scriptures, examine yourself, what you become by hearing Psalms, and what by

listening to a song of Satan; and how you are disposed when staying in a Church, and how when sitting in a theatre; and you will see that great is the difference between this soul and that, although both be one. Therefore Paul said, "*Evil communications corrupt good manners.*" [1 Corinthians 15:33] For this cause we have need continually of those songs, which serve as charms from the Spirit. Yes, for this it is whereby we excel the irrational creatures, since with respect to all other things, we are even exceedingly inferior to them.

This is a soul's food, this its ornament, this its security; even as not to hear is famine and wasting; for "*I will give them,*" says He, "*not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.*" [Amos 8:11]

What then can be more wretched? When the very evil, which God threatens in the way of punishment, this you are drawing upon your head of your own accord, bringing into your soul a sort of grievous famine, and making it the feeblest thing in the world? For it is its nature both to be wasted and to be saved by words. Yea, this leads it on to anger; and the same kind of thing again makes it meek: a filthy expression is wont to kindle it to lust, and it is trained to temperance by speech full of gravity.

But if a word merely have such great power, tell me, how is it thou dost despise the Scriptures? And if an admonition can do such great things, far more when the admonitions are with the Spirit. Yes, for a word from the divine Scriptures, made to sound in the ear, does more than fire soften the hardened soul, and renders it fit for all good things.

11. In this way too did Paul, when he had found the Corinthians puffed up and inflamed, compose them, and make them more considerate. For they were priding themselves on those very things, touching which they ought to have been ashamed, and to have hid their face. But after they had received

the letter, hear the change in them, of which the Teacher himself has borne witness for them, saying on this wise: for *"this very thing, that you sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge."* In this way do we bring to order servants and children, wives, and friends, and make our enemies friends.

In this way the great men too, they that were dear to God, became better. David, for instance, after his sin, when he had had the benefit of certain words, then it was that he came unto that most excellent repentance; and the apostles also by this mean became what they did become, and drew after them the whole world.

"And what is the profit," one may say, *"when any one hears, but does not what is said?"* No little will the profit be even from hearing. For he will go on to condemn himself, and to groan inwardly, and will come in time also to do the things that are spoken of. But he that does not even know that he has sinned, when will he cease from his negligence? When will he condemn himself?

Let us not therefore despise the hearing of the divine Scriptures. For this is of Satan's devising; not suffering us to see the treasure, lest we should gain the riches. Therefore he says that the hearing the divine laws is nothing, lest he should see us from the hearing acquiring the practice also.

Knowing then this his evil art, let us fortify ourselves against him on all sides, that being fenced with this armor, we may both abide unconquered ourselves, and smite him on the head: and thus, having crowned ourselves with the glorious wreaths of victory, we may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 3 on Matthew

Matt. I. 1.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham."

Behold a third discourse, and we have not yet made an end of the prefatory matter. It was not then for nought that I said, It is the nature of these thoughts to have a great depth.

Come, then, let us speak today what remains. What is it then that is now required? Why Joseph's genealogy is traced, who had no part in the birth. And one cause we have mentioned already; but it is necessary to mention likewise the other, that which is more mystical and secret than the first. What then is this? He would not that it should be manifest to the Jews, at the time of the birth, that Christ was born of a virgin.

Nay, be not troubled at the strangeness of the saying. For it is no statement of mine, but of our fathers, wonderful and illustrious men. For if He disguised many things from the first, calling Himself Son of Man, and has not everywhere clearly unfolded to us even His equality with the Father; why do you wonder at His having for a time disguised this also, taking order as He was for a certain great and marvellous purpose? and would have condemned her for adultery. For if in regard to the other matters, for which they had frequent precedents likewise in the old dispensation, they were quite shameless in their obstinacy (for so, because He had cast out devils, they called Him possessed; and because He healed on the Sabbath day, they supposed Him to be an adversary of God; and yet oftentimes even before this had the Sabbath been broken), what would they not have said, if this had been told them? Especially as they had all time

before this on their side, in that it never had produced any such thing. For if after so many miracles they still called Him son of Joseph, how before the miracles would they have believed that He was born of a virgin?

It is then for this reason that both Joseph has his genealogy traced, and the Virgin betrothed to him. For if even he, who was both a just and wondrous man, required many things, in order that he should receive that which had come to pass; an angel, and the vision in dreams, and the testimony from the prophets; how could the Jews, being both dull and depraved, and of so unfriendly spirit towards Him, have admitted this idea into their minds? For the strangeness and novelty thereof would be sure greatly to disturb them, and the fact that they had never so much as heard of such a thing having happened in the times of their forefathers. For as the man who was once persuaded that He is Son of God, would after that have no cause to doubt concerning this too; so he who was accounting Him to be a deceiver and an adversary of God, how could he but have been yet more offended by this, and have been led on unto the opposite notion? For this cause neither do the apostles at the first directly say this, but while of His resurrection they discourse much and often (forasmuch as of this there were examples in the times before, although not such as this); that He was born of a virgin they do not say always: nay, not even His mother herself ventured to utter this. See, for instance, what says the Virgin even to Himself: "*Behold, Your father and I have sought You.*" [Luke 2:48] For if this suspicion had been entertained, neither would He any longer have been accounted to be a Son of David, and this opinion not being held, many other evils besides would have arisen. For this cause neither do the angels say these things to all, but to Mary only, and Joseph; but when showing to the shepherds the glad tidings of that which had come to pass, they no longer added this.

2. But why is it, that having mentioned Abraham, and having said that *"he begot Isaac, and Isaac, Jacob;"* and not having made any mention of his brother; when he has come to Jacob, he remembers both *"Judah, and his brethren"*? Now there are some that say, it was because of the perverseness of Esau, and of the rest that came before. But I should not say this; for if it were so, how is it that he a little after mentions such women? It being out of contraries, in this place, that His glory is manifested; not by having great forefathers, but low and of little account. For to the lofty One it is a great glory to be able to abase Himself exceedingly. Wherefore then did He not mention them? Because Saracens, and Ishmaelites, and Arabians, and as many as are sprung from those ancestors, have nothing in common with the race of the Israelites. For this cause then he passes over those in silence, and hastens on to His forefathers, and those of the Jewish people. Wherefore he says, *"And Jacob begot Judas and his brethren."* For at this point the race of the Jews begins to have its peculiar mark.

3. *"And Judas begot Phares and Zara of Thamar."* [Matthew 1:3] *"What doest thou, O man, putting us in remembrance of a history that contains an unlawful intercourse?"* But why is this said? Since, if we were recounting the race of a mere man, one might naturally have been silent touching these things; but if of God Incarnate, so far from being silent, one ought to make a glory of them, showing forth His tender care, and His power. Yea, it was for this cause He came, not to escape our disgraces, but to bear them away. Therefore as He is the more admired, in that He not only died, but was even crucified (though the thing be opprobrious, yet the more opprobrious the more does it show Him full of love to man), so likewise may we speak touching His birth; it is not only because He took flesh upon Him, and became man, that we justly stand amazed at Him, but because He vouchsafed to have also such kinsfolk, being in no respect ashamed of our

evils. And this He was proclaiming from the very beginnings of His birth, that He is ashamed of none of those things that belong to us; while He teaches us also hereby, never to hide our face at our forefathers' wickedness, but to seek after one thing alone, even virtue. For such a man, though he have an alien for his ancestor, though he have a mother who is a prostitute, or what you will, can take no hurt thereby. For if the whoremonger himself, being changed, is nothing disgraced by his former life, much more will the wickedness of his ancestry have no power to bring to shame him that is sprung of an harlot or an adulteress, if he be virtuous.

But he did these things not only to instruct us, but also to bring down the haughtiness of the Jews. For since they, negligent about virtue in their own souls, were parading the name of Abraham, thinking they had for a plea their forefathers' virtue; he shows from the very beginning that it is not in these things men ought to glory, but in their own good deeds.

Besides this, he is establishing another point also, to show that all are under sin, even their forefathers themselves. At least their patriarch and namesake is shown to have committed no small sin, for Tamar stands against him, to accuse his whoredom. And David too had Solomon by the wife whom he corrupted. But if by the great ones the law was not fulfilled, much more by the less. And if it was not fulfilled, all have sinned, and Christ's coming has become necessary.

For this cause he made mention also of the twelve patriarchs, by this again bringing down their pride at the noble birth of their fathers. Because many of these also were born of women that were slaves; but nevertheless the difference of the parents did not make a difference in the children. For all were equally both patriarchs and heads of tribes. For this is the precedence of the Church, this the prerogative of the nobility that is among us, taking its type from the beginning. So that whether thou be bond or free,

you have from thence nothing more nor less; but the question is all about one thing only, namely, the mind, and the disposition of the soul.

4. But besides what we have said, there is another cause also, wherefore he has mentioned even this history; for to be sure, Zara's name was not cast at random on that of Phares. (For indeed it was irrelevant, and superfluous, when he had mentioned Phares, from whom he was to trace Christ's genealogy, to mention Zara also.) Wherefore then did he mention him? When Thamar was on the point of giving birth to them, the pangs having come upon her, Zara put forth his hand first. [Genesis 38:27] Then the midwife, when she saw this, in order that the first should be known, bound his hand with scarlet; but the child, when he was bound, drew in his hand, and when he had drawn it in, Phares came forth first, and then Zara. The midwife when she saw this said, "*Why was the hedge broken up for you?*"

Do you see the dark expression of mysteries? For it was not without purpose that these things were recorded for us: since neither was it worth our study to learn, what it might be that the midwife said; nor worth a narrative to know, that he who came out second, put forth his hand first. What then is the mysterious lesson? First, from the name of the child we learn what is inquired, for Phares is "*a division*," and "*a breach*." And moreover from the thing itself, which took place; for it was not in the order of nature that, having thrust out his hand, he should draw it in again when bound; these thing neither belonged to a movement directed by reason, nor did they take place in the way of natural consequence. For after the hand had found its way out, that another child should come forth before was perhaps not unnatural; but that he should draw it back, and give a passage for another, was no longer after the manner of children at the birth, but the

grace of God was present with the children, ordering these things, and sketching out for us by them a sort of image of the things that were to come.

What then? Some of those who have examined these things accurately say, that these children are a type of the two nations. And so in order that you might learn that the polity of the latter people shone forth previously to the origin of the former, the child that has the hand stretched forth does not show itself entire, but draws even it in again; and after his brother had glided forth whole, then he too appears entire. And this took place also with regard to the two nations. I mean, that after the polity of the Church had been manifested in the times of Abraham, and then had been withdrawn in the midst of its course, the Jewish people came, and the legal polity, and then the new people appeared entire with their own laws. Wherefore also the midwife says, *"Why was the hedge broken up for you?"* because the law coming in had broken in upon the freedom of the polity. For indeed the Scripture is ever wont to call the law a hedge; as the prophet says: *"You have broken down her hedge, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck off her grapes:"* and, *"I have set a hedge about it:"* and Paul, *"Having broken down the middle wall of the hedge."* But others say, that the saying, *"Why was the hedge broken up for you?"* was spoken touching the new people: for this at its coming put down the law.

5. Do you see that it was not for few nor small causes that he brought to our remembrance the whole history concerning Judah? For this end he has mentioned Ruth also and Rahab, the one an alien, the other an harlot, that you may learn that He came to do away with all our ills. For He has come as a Physician, not as a Judge. Therefore in like manner as those of old took harlots for wives, even so God too espoused unto Himself the nature which had played the harlot: and this also prophets from the beginning declare to have taken place with respect to the Synagogue. But

that spouse was ungrateful towards Him who had been an husband to her, whereas, the Church, when once delivered from the evils received from our fathers, continued to embrace the Bridegroom.

See, for instance, what befell Ruth, how like it is to the things which belong to us. For she was both of a strange race, and reduced to the utmost poverty, yet Boaz when he saw her neither despised her poverty nor abhorred her mean birth, as Christ having received the Church, being both an alien and in much poverty, took her to be partaker of the great blessings. But even as Ruth, if she had not before left her father, and renounced household and race, country and kindred, would not have attained unto this alliance; so the Church too, having forsaken the customs which men had received from their fathers, then, and not before, became lovely to the Bridegroom. Of this therefore the prophet discourses unto her, and says, *"Forget your people, and your father's house, so shall the king have pleasure in your beauty."* This Ruth did too, and because of this she became a mother of kings, even as the Church did likewise. For of her David himself sprung. So then to shame them by all these things, and to prevail on them not to be high-minded, he has both composed the genealogy, and brought forward these women. Yes, for this last, through those who intervened, was parent to the great king, and of these David is not ashamed. For it cannot, nay, it cannot be that a man should be good or bad, obscure or glorious, either by the virtue or by the vice of his forefathers; but if one must say somewhat even paradoxical, he shines forth the more, who not being of worthy ancestors, has yet become excellent.

6. Let no one therefore be high-minded on account of these matters, but let him consider the forefathers of the Lord, and put away all his haughtiness, and let good actions be his pride; or rather, not even these. For thus it was that the Pharisee came to be inferior to the Publican. Thus, if

you would show the good work to be great, have no high thought, and you have proved it so much the greater. Make account that you have done nothing, and then you have done all. For if, being sinners, when we account ourselves to be what we are, we become righteous, as indeed the Publican did; how much more, when being righteous we account ourselves to be sinners. Since if out of sinners men are made righteous by a lowly mind (although this were not to be lowly-minded but to be right-minded); if then to be right-minded avails so much in the case of sinners, consider what will not lowliness of mind do with respect to righteous men.

Do not then mar your labors, nor cast away from you the fruits of your toils, neither run thou in vain, making frustrate all your labor after the many courses you have run. Nay, for your Lord knows your good works better than you do. Though thou give but a cup of cold water, not even this does He overlook; though thou contribute but a farthing, though you should utter a sigh only, He receives it all with great favor and is mindful thereof, and assigns for it great rewards.

But wherefore do you search out your own doings, and bring them out before us continually? Do you not know, that if you praise yourself, God will no more praise you? Even as if you bewail *yourself*, He will not cease proclaiming you before all. For it is not at all His will that your labors should be disparaged. Why do I say, disparaged? Nay, He is doing and contriving all things, so that even for little He may crown you; and He goes about seeking excuses, whereby you may be delivered from hell. For this cause, though you should work but the eleventh hour of the day, He gives your wages entire; and though thou afford no ground of salvation, He says, *"I do it for my own sake, that my name be not profaned:"* [Ezekiel 36:22] though you should sigh only, though you should only weep, all these things He quickly catches hold of, for an occasion of saving you.

Let us not therefore lift up ourselves, but let us declare ourselves unprofitable, that we may become profitable. For if you call yourself approved, you have become unprofitable, though thou were approved; but if useless, you have become profitable, even though thou were reprobate.

7. Wherefore it is necessary to forget our good actions. *"Yet how is it possible,"* one may say, *"not to know these things with which we are well acquainted?"* How do you say? Offending your Lord perpetually, you live delicately, and laughest, and dost not so much as know that you have sinned, but hast consigned all to oblivion; and of your good actions can you not put away the memory? And yet fear is a stronger kind of thing. But we do the very contrary; on the one hand, while each day we are offending, we do not so much as put it before our mind; on the other, if we give a little money to a poor person, this we are ever revolving. This kind of conduct comes of utter madness, and it is a very great loss to him who so makes his reckoning. For the secure storehouse of good works is to forget our good works. And as with regard to raiment and gold, when we expose them in a market-place, we attract many ill-meaning persons; but if we put them by at home and hide them, we shall deposit them all in security: even so with respect to our good deeds; if we are continually keeping them in memory, we provoke the Lord, we arm the enemy, we invite him to steal them away; but if no one know of them, besides Him who alone ought to know, they will lie in safety.

Be not therefore for ever parading them, lest some one should take them away. As was the case with the Pharisee, for bearing them about upon his lips; whence also the devil caught them away. And yet it was with thanksgiving he made mention of them, and referred the whole to God. But not even did this suffice Him. For it is not thanksgiving to revile others, to be vainglorious before many, to exalt one's self against them that have

offended. Rather, if you are giving thanks to God, be content with Him only, and publish it not unto men, neither condemn your neighbor; for this is not thanksgiving. Would you learn words of thanksgiving? Harken unto the Three Children, saying, *"We have sinned, we have transgressed. You are righteous, O Lord, in all that you have done unto us, because you have brought all things upon us by a true judgment."* For to confess one's own sins, this is to give thanks with confession unto God: a kind of thing which implies one to be guilty of numberless offenses, yet not to have the due penalty exacted. This man most of all is the giver of thanks.

8. Let us beware therefore of saying anything about ourselves, for this renders us both odious with men and abominable to God. For this reason, the greater the good works we do, the less let us say of ourselves; this being the way to reap the greatest glory both with men and with God. Or rather, not only glory from God, but a reward, yea, a great recompense. Demand not therefore a reward that you may receive a reward. Confess yourself to be saved by grace, that He may profess Himself a debtor to you; and not for your good works only, but also for such rightness of mind. For when we do good works, we have Him debtor for our good works only; but when we do not so much as think we have done any good work, then also for this disposition itself; and more for this, than for the other things: so that this is equivalent to our good works. For should this be absent, neither will they appear great. For in the same way, we too, when we have servants, [Luke 17:10] do then most approve them when, after having performed all their service with good will, they do not think they have done anything great. Wherefore, if you would make your good deeds great, do not think them to be great, and then they will be great.

It was in this way that the centurion also said, *"I am not fit that you should enter under my roof;"* because of this, he became worthy, and was

" marvelled at " [Matthew 8:8] above all Jews. On this wise again Paul says, *"I am not meet to be called an apostle;"* [1 Corinthians 15:9] because of this he became even first of all. So likewise John: *"I am not meet to loose the latchet of His shoe;"* because of this he was the *"friend of the Bridegroom,"* and the hand which he affirmed to be unworthy to touch His shoes, this did Christ draw unto His own head. So Peter too said, *"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man;"* [Luke 5:8] because of this he became a foundation of the Church.

For nothing is so acceptable to God as to number one's self with the last. This is a first principle of all practical wisdom. For he that is humbled, and bruised in heart, will not be vainglorious, will not be wrathful, will not envy his neighbor, will not harbor any other passion. For neither when a hand is bruised, though we strive ten thousand times, shall we be able to lift it up on high. If therefore we were thus to bruise our heart likewise, though it were stirred by ten thousand swelling passions, it could not be lifted up, no, not ever so little. For if a man, by mourning for things pertaining to this life, drives out all the diseases of his soul, much more will he, who mourns for sins, enjoy the blessing of self-restraint.

9. *"But who,"* one may say, *"will be able thus to bruise his own heart?"* Listen to David, who became illustrious chiefly because of this, and see the contrition of his soul. How after ten thousand good works, and when he was on the point of being deprived of country, and home, and life itself, at the very season of his calamity, seeing a vile and outcast common soldier trample on the turn of his fortunes and revile him; so far from reviling him again, he utterly forbid one of his captains, who was desirous to have slain him, saying, *"Let him alone, for the Lord has bidden him."* [2 Samuel 16:10] And again, when the priests desired to carry about the ark of God with him, he did not permit it; but what does he say? *"Let me set it*

down in the temple, and if God deliver me from the dangers that are before me, I shall see the beauty thereof; but if He say to me, I have no delight in you, behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seems good unto Him." And that which was done with regard to Saul, again and again, even oftentimes, what excellence of self-restraint does it not show? Yea, for he even surpassed the old law, and came near to the apostolic injunctions. For this cause he bore with contentedness all that came from the Lord's hands; not contending against what befell him, but aiming at one object alone, namely, in everything to obey, and follow the laws set by Him. And when after so many noble deeds on his part, he saw the tyrant, the parricide, the murderer of his own brother, that injurious, that frenzied one, possessing in his stead his own kingdom, not even so was he offended. But *"if this please God,"* says he, *"that I should be chased, and wander, and flee, and that he should be in honor, I acquiesce, and accept it, and do thank God for His many afflictions."* Not like many of the shameless and impudent ones, who when they have not done, no not the least part of his good works, yet if they see any in prosperity, and themselves enduring a little discouragement, ruin their own souls by ten thousand blasphemies. But David was not such an one; rather he showed forth all modesty. Wherefore also God said, *"I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart."*

Such a spirit as this let us too acquire, and whatever we may suffer we shall bear it easily, and before the Kingdom, we shall reap here the gain accruing from lowliness of mind. Thus *"learn,"* says He, *"of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."*

[Matthew 11:29] Therefore in order that we may enjoy rest both here and hereafter, let us with great diligence implant in our souls the mother of all things that are good, I mean humility. For thus we shall be enabled both to pass over the sea of this life without waves, and to end our voyage in that

calm harbor; by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 4 on Matthew

Matt. I. 17.

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations."

He has divided all the generations into three portions, to indicate that not even when their form of government was changed did they become better, but alike under an aristocracy, and under a king, and under an oligarchy, they were in the same evil ways, and whether popular leaders, or priests, or kings controlled them, it was no advantage to them in the way of virtue.

But wherefore has he in the middle portion passed over three kings, and in the last, having set down twelve generations, affirmed them to be fourteen? The former question I leave for you to examine; for neither is it needful for me to explain all things to you, lest ye should grow indolent: but the second we will explain. To me then he seems in this place to be putting in the place of a generation, both the time of the captivity, and Christ Himself, by every means connecting Him with us. And full well does he put us in mind of that captivity, making it manifest that not even when they went down there, did they become more sober-minded; in order that from everything His coming may be shown to be necessary.

"Why then," one may say, *"does not Mark do this, nor trace Christ's genealogy, but utter everything briefly?"* It seems to me that Matthew was before the rest in entering on the subject (wherefore he both sets down the genealogy with exactness, and stops at those things which require it): but

that Mark came after him, which is why he took a short course, as putting his hand to what had been already spoken and made manifest.

How is it then that Luke not only traces the genealogy, but does it through a greater number? As was natural, Matthew having led the way, he seeks to teach us somewhat in addition to former statements. And each too in like manner imitated his master; the one Paul, who flows fuller than any river; the other Peter, who studies brevity.

2. And what may be the reason that Matthew said not at the beginning, in the same way as the prophet, "*the vision which I saw,*" and "*the word which came unto me*"? Because he was writing unto men well disposed, and exceedingly attentive to him. For both the miracles that were done cried aloud, and they who received the word were exceeding faithful. But in the case of the prophets, there were neither so many miracles to proclaim them; and besides, the tribe of the false prophets, no small one, was riotously breaking in upon them: to whom the people of the Jews gave even more heed. This kind of opening therefore was necessary in their case.

And if ever miracles were done, they were done for the aliens' sake, to increase the number of the proselytes; and for manifestation of God's power, if haply their enemies having taken them captives, fancied they prevailed, because their own gods were mighty: like as in Egypt, out of which no small "*mixed multitude*" went up; and, after that, in Babylon, what befell touching the furnace and the dreams. And miracles were wrought also, when they were by themselves in the wilderness; as also in our case: for among us too, when we had just come out of error, many wonderful works were shown forth; but afterwards they stayed, when in all countries true religion had taken root.

And what took place at a later period were few and at intervals; for example, when the sun stood still in its course, and started back in the

opposite direction. And this one may see to have occurred in our case also. For so even in our generation, in the instance of him who surpassed all in ungodliness, I mean Julian, many strange things happened. Thus when the Jews were attempting to raise up again the temple at Jerusalem, fire burst out from the foundations, and utterly hindered them all; and when both his treasurer, and his uncle and namesake, made the sacred vessels the subject of their open insolence, the one was *"eaten with worms, and gave up the ghost,"* the other *"burst asunder in the midst."* Moreover, the fountains failing, when sacrifices were made there, and the entrance of the famine into the cities together with the emperor himself, was a very great sign. For it is usual with God to do such things; when evils are multiplied, and He sees His own people afflicted, and their adversaries greatly intoxicated with their dominion over them, then to display His own power; which he did also in Persia with respect to the Jews.

3. Wherefore, that he was not acting without an object, or by chance, when he distributed Christ's forefathers into three portions, is plain from what has been said. And mark, too, whence he begins, and where he ends. From Abraham to David; from David to the captivity of Babylon; from this unto Christ Himself. For both at the beginning he put the two in close succession, David and Abraham, and also in summing up he mentions both in the same way. And this, because, as I have already said, it was to them that the promises were made.

But why can it be, that as he mentioned the captivity of Babylon, he did not mention also the descent into Egypt? Because they had ceased to be any longer afraid of the Egyptians, but the Babylonians they dreaded still. And the one thing was ancient, but the other fresh, and had taken place of late. And to the one they were carried down for no sins, but to the other, transgressions were the cause of their being removed.

And also with regard to the very names, if any one were to attempt to translate their etymologies, even thence would he derive great matter of divine speculation, and such as is of great importance with regard to the New Testament: as, for instance, from Abraham's name, from Jacob's, from Solomon's, from Zorobabel's. For it was not without purpose that these names were given them. But lest we should seem to be wearisome by running out a great length, let us pass these things by, and proceed to what is urgent.

4. Having then mentioned all His forefathers, and ending with Joseph, he did not stop at this, but added, "*Joseph the husband of Mary;*" intimating that it was for her sake he traced his genealogy also. Then, lest when you have heard of the "*husband of Mary,*" you should suppose that Christ was born after the common law of nature, mark, how he sets it right by that which follows. "*You have heard,*" says he, "*of an husband, you have heard of a mother, you have heard a name assigned to the child, therefore hear the manner too of the birth.*" "*The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise.*" [Matthew 1:18] "*Of what kind of birth are you telling me, I pray you, since you have already mentioned His ancestors?*" "*I still wish to tell you the manner also of His birth.*" Do you see, how he wakens up the hearer? For as though he were about to speak of something unusual, he promises to tell also the manner thereof.

And observe a most admirable order in the things he has mentioned. For he did not proceed directly to the birth, but puts us in mind first, how many generations he was from Abraham, how many from David, and from the captivity of Babylon; and thus he sets the careful hearer upon considering the times, to show that this is the Christ who was preached by the prophets. For when you have numbered the generations, and hast learned by the time that this is He, you will readily receive likewise the

miracle which took place in His birth. Thus, being about to tell of a certain great thing, His birth of a virgin, he first shadows over the statement, until he has numbered the generations, by speaking of *"an husband of Mary;"* or rather he does even put in short space the narration of the birth itself, and then proceeds to number also the years, reminding the hearer, that this is He, of whom the patriarch Jacob had said, He should then at length come, when the Jewish rulers had come to an end; of whom the prophet Daniel had proclaimed beforehand, that He should come after those many weeks. And if any one, counting the years spoken of to Daniel by the angel in a number of weeks, would trace down the time from the building of the city to His birth, by reckoning he will perceive the one to agree with the other.

5. How then was He born, I pray you? *"When as His mother Mary was espoused:"* [Matthew 1:18] He says not *"virgin,"* but merely *"mother;"* so that his account is easy to be received. And so having beforehand prepared the hearer to look for some ordinary piece of information, and by this laying hold of him, after all he amazes him by adding the marvellous fact, saying, *"Before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."* He says not, *"before she was brought to the bridegroom's house;"* for indeed she was therein. It being the way of the ancients for the most part to keep their espoused wives in their house: [Genesis 19:8, 14] in those parts, at least, where one may see the same practised even now. Thus also Lot's sons-in-law were in his house with him. Mary then herself likewise was in the house with Joseph.

And wherefore did she not conceive before her espousal? It was, as I said at first, that what had been done might be concealed awhile, and that the Virgin might escape every evil suspicion. For when he, who had most right of all to feel jealousy, so far from making her a show, or degrading her, is found even receiving and cherishing her after her conception; it was

quite clear that, unless he had fully persuaded himself that what was done was of the operation of the Holy Spirit, he would not have kept her with him, and ministered to her in all other things. And most properly has he said, that "*she was 'found' with child,*" the sort of expression that is wont to be used with respect to things strange, and such as happen beyond all expectation, and are unlooked for.

Proceed therefore no further, neither require anything more than what has been said; neither say thou, "*But how was it that the Spirit wrought this of a virgin?*" For if, when nature is at work, it is impossible to explain the manner of the formation; how, when the Spirit is working miracles, shall we be able to express these? And lest you should weary the evangelist, or disturb him by continually asking these things, he has said who it was that wrought the miracle, and so withdrawn himself. "*For I know,*" says he, "*nothing more, but that what was done was the work of the Holy Ghost.*"

6. Shame on them who busy themselves touching the generation on high. For if this birth, which has witnesses without number, and had been proclaimed so long a time before, and was manifested and handled with hands, can by no man be explained; of what excess of madness do they come short who make themselves busy and curious touching that unutterable generation? For neither Gabriel nor Matthew was able to say anything more, but only that it was of the Spirit; but how, of the Spirit, or in what manner, neither of them has explained; for neither was it possible.

Nor think that you have learned all, by hearing "*of the Spirit;*" nay, for we are ignorant of many things, even when we have learned this; as, for instance, how the Infinite is in a womb, how He that contains all things is carried, as unborn, by a woman; how the Virgin bears, and continues a virgin. How, I pray you, did the Spirit frame that Temple? How did He take not all the flesh from the womb, but a part thereof, and increased it, and

fashioned it? For that He did come forth of the Virgin's flesh, He has declared by speaking of *"that which was conceived in her;"* [Galatians 4:4] and Paul, by saying, *"made of a woman;"* whereby he stops the mouths of them that say, Christ came among us as through some conduit. For, if this were so, what need of the womb? If this were so, He has nothing in common with us, but that flesh is of some other kind, and not of the mass which belongs to us. How then was He of the root of Jesse? How was He a rod? How Son of man? How was Mary His mother? How was He of David's seed? How did he *"take the form of a servant?"* [Philippians 2:7] how *"was the Word made flesh?"* [John 1:14] and how says Paul to the Romans, *"Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is God over all?"* [Romans 9:5] Therefore that He was of us, and of our substance, and of the Virgin's womb, is manifest from these things, and from others beside; but how, is not also manifest. Do not either thou then inquire; but receive what is revealed, and be not curious about what is kept secret.

7. *"And Joseph her husband, being,"* says he *"a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily."* [Matthew 1:19]

Having said that it was of the Holy Ghost, and without cohabitation, he establishes his statement in another way again. Lest any one should say, *"Whence does this appear? Who has heard, who has seen any such thing ever come to pass?"*— or lest you should suspect the disciple as inventing these things to favor his Master;— he introduces Joseph as contributing, by what he underwent, to the proof of the things mentioned; and by his narrative all but says, *"If you doubt me, and if you suspect my testimony, believe her husband."* For *"Joseph,"* says he, *"her husband, being a just man."* By *"a just man"* in this place he means him that is virtuous in all things. For both freedom from covetousness is justice, and universal virtue

is also justice; and it is mostly in this latter sense that the Scripture uses the name of justice; as when it says, "*a man that was just and true;*" [Job 1:1] and again, "*they were both just.*" [Luke 1:6] Being then "*just,*" that is good and considerate, "*he was minded to put her away privily.*" For this intent he tells what took place before Joseph's being fully informed, that you might not mistrust what was done after he knew. However, such a one was not liable to be made a public example only, but that she should also be punished was the command of the law. Whereas Joseph remitted not only that greater punishment, but the less likewise, namely, the disgrace. For so far from punishing, he was not minded even to make an example of her. Do you see a man under self-restraint, and freed from the most tyrannical of passions. For you know how great a thing jealousy is: and therefore He said, to whom these things are clearly known, "*For full of jealousy is the rage of a husband;*" [Proverbs 6:34] "*he will not spare in the day of vengeance:*" and "*jealousy is cruel as the grave.*" [Song of Songs 8:6] And we too know of many that have chosen to give up their lives rather than fall under the suspicion of jealousy. But in this case it was not so little as suspicion, the burden of the womb entirely convicting her. But nevertheless he was so free from passion as to be unwilling to grieve the Virgin even in the least matters. Thus, whereas to keep her in his house seemed like a transgression of the law, but to expose and bring her to trial would constrain him to deliver her to die; he does none of these things, but conducts himself now by a higher rule than the law. For grace having come, there must needs henceforth be many tokens of that exalted citizenship. For as the sun, though as yet he show not his beams, does from afar by his light illumine more than half the world; so likewise Christ, when about to rise from that womb, even before He came forth, shone over all the world. Wherefore, even before her travail, prophets danced for joy, and women foretold what

was to come, and John, when he had not yet come forth from the belly, leaped from the very womb. Hence also this man exhibited great self-command, in that he neither accused nor upbraided, but only set about putting her away.

8. The matter then being in this state, and all at their wits' end, the angel comes to solve all their difficulties. But it is worth inquiring, why the angel did not speak sooner, before the husband had such thoughts: but, *"when he thought on it,"* not until then, he came; for it is said, *"While he thought on these things, the angel"* comes. And yet to her he declares the good tidings even before she conceived. And this again contains another difficulty; for even though the angel had not spoken, wherefore was the Virgin silent, who had been informed by the angel; and why, when she saw her betrothed husband in trouble, did she not put an end to his perplexity?

Wherefore then did not the angel speak before Joseph became troubled. For we must needs explain the former difficulty first. For what reason then did he not speak? Lest Joseph should be unbelieving, and the same happen to him as to Zacharias. For when the thing was visible, belief was thenceforth easy; but when it had not yet a beginning, it was not equally easy to receive his saying. For this reason the angel spoke not at the first, and through the same cause the Virgin too held her peace. For she did not think to obtain credit with her betrothed husband, in declaring to him a thing unheard of, but rather that she should provoke him the more, as though she were cloaking a sin that had been committed. Since if she herself, who was to receive so great a favor, is affected somewhat after the manner of man, and says, *"How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"*

[Luke 1:34] much more would he have doubted; and especially when hearing it from the woman who was under suspicion. Wherefore the Virgin

says nothing to him, but the angel, the time demanding it, presents himself to him.

9. Why then, it may be asked, did he not so in the Virgin's case also, and declare the good tidings to her after the conception? Lest she should be in agitation and great trouble. For it were likely that she, not knowing the certainty, might have even devised something amiss touching herself, and have gone on to strangle or to stab herself, not enduring the disgrace. For wondrous indeed was that Virgin, and Luke points out her excellency, saying, that when she heard the salutation, she did not straightway pour herself out, neither did she accept the saying, but "*was troubled,*" seeking "*what manner of salutation this might be.*" [Luke 1:29] Now she who was of such perfect delicacy would even have been distracted with dismay at the thought of her shame, not expecting, by whatever she might say, to convince any one who should hear of it, but that what had happened was adultery. Therefore to prevent these things, the angel came before the conception. Besides that, it was meet that womb should be free from trouble which the Maker of all things entered; and the soul rid of all perturbation, which was thought worthy to become the minister of such mysteries. For these reasons He speaks to the Virgin before the conception, but to Joseph at the time of travail.

And this many of the simpler sort, not understanding, have said there is a discordance; because Luke says it was Mary to whom he declared the good tidings, but Matthew, that it was Joseph; not knowing that both took place. And this sort of thing it is necessary to bear in mind throughout the whole history; for in this way we shall solve many seeming discordances.

10. The angel then comes, when Joseph is troubled. For in addition to the causes mentioned, with a view also to the manifestation of his self-command, he defers his coming. But when the thing was on the point of

taking place, then at last he presents himself. *"While he thought on these things, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream."* [Matthew 1:20]

Do you see the mildness of the husband? So far from punishing, he did not even declare it to any one, no not even to her whom he suspected, but was thinking it over with himself, as aiming to conceal the cause even from the Virgin herself. For neither is it said that he was minded to *"cast her out,"* but to *"put her away,"* so very mild and gentle was the man. *"But while he is thinking on these things, the angel appears in a dream."*

And why not openly, as to the shepherds, and to Zacharias, and to the Virgin? The man was exceedingly full of faith, and needed not this vision. Whereas the Virgin, as having declared to her very exceeding good tidings, greater than to Zacharias, and this before the event, needed also a marvellous vision; and the shepherds, as being by disposition rather dull and clownish. But this man, after the conception, and wide the interval between the two men; wherefore neither was there need of rebuke.

But by saying, *"fear not,"* he signifies him to have been afraid, lest he should give offense to God, as retaining an adulteress; since, if it had not been for this, he would not have even thought of casting her out. In all ways then he points out that the angel came from God, bringing forward and setting before him all, both what he thought to do, and what he felt in his mind.

Now having mentioned her name, he stayed not at this, but added also, *"your wife;"* whereas he would not have called her so, if she had been corrupted. And here he calls her that is espoused *"a wife;"* as indeed the Scripture is wont to call betrothed husbands sons-in-law even before marriage.

But what means, *"to take unto you?"* To retain her in his house, for in intention she had been now put away by him. *"Her, being put away, do thou*

retain," says he, "as committed unto you by God, not by her parents. And He commits her not for marriage; but to dwell with you; and by my voice does He commit her." Much as Christ Himself afterwards committed her to His disciple, so even now unto Joseph.

12. Then having obscurely signified the matter in hand, he mentioned not the evil suspicion; but, in a manner more reverent and seemly, by telling the cause of travail he removed this also; implying that the very thing which had made him afraid, and for which he would have cast her out—this very thing, I say, was a just cause why he should take her and retain her in his house. Thus more than entirely doing away with his distress. *"For she is not only free," says he, "from unlawful intercourse, but even above all nature is her conception. Not only therefore put away your fear, but even rejoice more exceedingly, 'for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.'"*

A strange thing it was which he spoke of, surpassing man's reason, and above all the laws of nature. How then is he to believe, to whom such tidings are altogether new? *"By the things that are past," says he, "by the revelations."* For with this intent he laid open all things that were in his mind, what he felt, what he feared, what he was resolved to do—that by these he might assure himself of this point.

Or rather, not by things past only, but like wise by things to come, he wins him over. *"And she shall bring forth," says he, "a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus."* [Matthew 1:21] For do not thou, because He is of the Holy Ghost, imagine that you are an alien to the ministry of this dispensation. Since although in the birth you have no part, but the Virgin abode untouched, nevertheless, what pertains to a father, not injuring the honor of virginity, that do I give you, to set a Name on that which is born: for *"you shall call Him."* For though the offspring be not yours, yet shall

you exhibit a father's care towards Him. Wherefore I do straightway, even from the giving of the name, connect you with Him that is born.

Then lest on the other hand any one should from this suspect him to be the father, hear what follows, with what exact care he states it. *"She shall bring forth,"* he says, *"a Son:"* he does not say, *"bring forth to you,"* but merely *"she shall bring forth,"* putting it indefinitely: since not to him did she bring forth, but to the whole world.

13. For this cause too the angel came bringing His name from Heaven, hereby again intimating that this is a wondrous birth: it being God Himself who sends the name from above by the angel to Joseph. For neither was this without an object, but a treasure of ten thousand blessings. Wherefore the angel also interprets it, and suggests good hopes, in this way again leading him to belief. For to these things we are wont to be more inclined, and therefore are also fonder of believing them.

So having established his faith by all, by the past things, by the future, by the present, by the honor given to himself, he brings in the prophet also in good time, to give his suffrage in support of all these. But before introducing him, he proclaims beforehand the good things which were to befall the world through Him. And what are these? Sins removed and done away. *"For He shall save His people from their sins."*

Here again the thing is signified to be beyond all expectation. For not from visible wars, neither from barbarians, but what was far greater than these, from sins, he declares the glad tidings of deliverance; a work which had never been possible to any one before.

But wherefore, one may ask, did he say, *"His people,"* and not add the Gentiles also? That he might not startle the hearer yet a while. For to him that listens with understanding he darkly signified the Gentiles too. For *"His*

people" are not the Jews only, but also all that draw near and receive the knowledge that is from Him.

And mark how he has by the way discovered to us also His dignity, by calling the Jewish nation "*His people*." For this is the word of one implying nought else, but that He who is born is God's child, and that the King of those on high is the subject of his discourse. As neither does forgiving sins belong to any other power, but only to that single essence.

14. Forasmuch then as we have partaken of so great a gift, let us do everything not to dishonor such a benefit. For if even before this honor, what was done was worthy of punishment, much more now, after this unspeakable benefit. And this I say not now for no cause, but because I see many after their baptism living more carelessly than the uninitiated, and having nothing peculiar to distinguish them in their way of life. It is, you see, for this cause, that neither in the market nor in the Church is it possible to know quickly who is a believer and who an unbeliever; unless one be present at the time of the mysteries, and see the one sort put out, the others remaining within. Whereas they ought to be distinguished not by their place, but by their way of life. For as men's outward dignities are naturally to be discovered by the outward signs with which they are invested, so ours ought to be discernible by the soul. That is, the believer ought to be manifest not by the gift only, but also by the new life. The believer ought to be the light and salt of the world. But when thou dost not give light even to yourself, neither bind up your own gangrene, what remains, whereby we are to know you? Because you have entered the holy waters? Nay, this to you becomes a store of punishment. For greatness of honor is, to them who do not choose to live worthy of the honor, an increase of vengeance. Yea, the believer ought to shine forth not only by what he has received from God, but also by what he himself has contributed; and should be discernible by

everything, by his gait, by his look, by his garb, by his voice. And this I have said, not that display, but that the profit of beholders, may be the rule by which we frame ourselves.

15. But now, what things soever I might seek to recognize you by, I find you in all points distinguished by the contraries of the same. For whether by your place I would fain discern you, I see you spending your day in horse races, and theatres, and scenes of lawlessness, in the wicked assemblies in the market places, and in companies of depraved men; or by the fashion of your countenance, I see you continually laughing to excess, and dissolute as a grinning and abandoned harlot; or by your clothes, I see you in no better trim than the people on the stage; or by your followers, you are leading about parasites and flatterers; or by your words, I hear you say nothing wholesome, nothing necessary, nothing of moment to our life; or by your table, yet heavier from thence will the charge against you appear.

By what then, tell me, am I to recognize the believer in you, while all the things I have mentioned give the contrary sentence? And why do I say, the believer? Since I can not clearly make out whether you are a man. For when you are like an ass, kicking, and like a bull, wantoning, and like a horse neighing after women; when thou dost play the glutton like the bear, and pamper your flesh as the mule, and bear malice like the camel; when you prowl as a wolf, art wrathful as a serpent, stingest like a scorpion, and art crafty as a fox, treasurest the poison of wickedness like an asp or a viper, and warrest against your brethren like that evil demon;--how shall I be able to number you with men, not seeing in you the marks of man's nature. Why, whilst I am seeking the difference of catechumen and believer, I come near not to find even the difference between a man and a wild beast. For what shall I call you? A wild beast? Nay, the wild beasts are possessed by some one of these defects, but you heap all together, and far surpassest their

brutishness. Shall I then call you a devil?(1) Nay, a devil is not a slave to the dominion of the belly, neither does he set his love on riches. When therefore you have more faults than either wild beasts or devils, how, I pray you, shall we call you a man? And if you art not to be styled a man, how shall we address you as a believer?

16. And what is yet more grievous is this, that being in such evil case, we have no idea whatever of the deformity of our own soul, nor discern the hideousness thereof. And yet when you are sitting at a hairdresser's, and having your hair cut, you take the mirror, and examine with care the arrangement of your locks, and ask them that stand by, and the haircutter himself, if he has well disposed what is on the forehead; and being old, for so it often happens, art not ashamed of going wild with the fancies of youth: while of our own soul, not only deformed, but transformed into a wild beast, and made a sort of Scylla or Chimaera, according to the heathen fable, we have not even a slight perception. And yet in this case too there is a mirror, spiritual, and far more excellent, and more serviceable than that other one; for it not only shows our own deformity, but transforms it too, if we be willing, into surpassing beauty. This mirror is the memory of good men, and the history of their blessed lives; the reading of the Scriptures; the laws given by God. If thou be willing once only to look upon the portraitures of those holy men, thou wilt both see the foulness of your own mind, and having seen this, wilt need nothing else to be set free from that deformity. Because the mirror is useful for this purpose also, and makes the change easy.

Let no man therefore continue in the form of the irrational creatures. For if the slave does not enter into the father's house, how will you, having become even a wild beast, be able to set your foot within those vestibules? And why say I, a wild beast? Nay, such a one is more unmanageable than

any wild beast. For they, although by nature savage, yet when they have had the advantage of man's art, oftentimes grow tame; but thou who hast changed their natural wildness into this unnatural gentleness, what sort of plea will you have, when you have trained your own natural meekness into the savageness that is contrary to nature? When that which is wild by nature you exhibit in gentle mood, but presentest yourself, by nature so gentle, unnaturally savage? And the lion(2) you tame and make tractable, but your own wrath you render wilder than any lion. And yet in that case there are two hindrances, first that the beast is deprived of reason, and then that it is the most wrathful of all things; nevertheless by the excellency of the wisdom given to you of God, you overcome even nature. Thou therefore, who in who beasts art victorious over nature herself, how is it that in your own case together with nature you give up your admirable quality of free will also?

Further, if I were bidding you make another man gentle, not even so ought I to seem as one enjoining impossible things; however, you might then object that you have not the control of another's disposition, and that it does not altogether rest with you. But now it is your own wild beast, and a thing which absolutely depends on you. What plea then have you? Or what fair excuse will you be able to put forth, turning as you are a lion into a man, and regardless that you yourself art of a man becoming a lion; upon the beast bestowing what is above nature, but for yourself not even preserving what is natural? Yea, while the wild beasts are by your earnest endeavors advanced into our noble estate, you are by yourself cast down from the throne of the kingdom, and thrust out into their madness. Thus, imagine, if you will, your wrath to be a kind of wild beast, and as much zeal as others have displayed about lions, so much do thou in regard of yourself, and cause that way of taking things to become gentle and meek. Because

this too has grievous teeth and talons, and if you tame it not, it will lay waste all things. For not even lion nor serpent has such power to rend the vitals as wrath, with its iron talons continually doing so. Since it mars, we see, not the body only, but the very health likewise of the soul is corrupted by it, devouring, rending, tearing to pieces all its strength, and making it useless for everything. For if a man nourishing worms in his entrails, shall not be able so much as to breathe, his inward parts all wasting away; how shall we, having so large a serpent eating up all within us (it is wrath I mean), how, I say, shall we be able to produce anything noble?

17. How then are we to be freed from this pest? If we can drink a potion that is able to kill the worms within us and the serpents. *"And of what nature,"* it will be asked, *"may this potion be, that has such power?"* The precious Blood of Christ, if it be received with full assurance, (for this will have power to extinguish every disease); and together with this the divine Scriptures carefully heard, and almsgiving added to our hearing; for by means of all these things we shall be enabled to mortify the affections that mar our soul. And then only shall we live; for now surely we are in no better state than the dead: forasmuch as it cannot be, that while those passions live, we should live too, but we must necessarily perish. And unless we first kill them here, they will be sure to kill us in the other life; or rather before that death they will exact of us, even here, the utmost penalty. Yes, for every such passion is both cruel and tyrannical and insatiable, and never ceases to devour us every day. For *"their teeth are the teeth of a lion,"* [Joel 1:6] or rather even far more fierce. For the lion, as soon as ever he is satisfied, is wont to leave the carcass that has fallen in his way; but these passions neither are satisfied, nor do they leave the man whom they have seized, until they have set him near the devil. For so great is their power, that the very service which Paul showed forth to Christ, [Romans 8:38]

despising both hell and the kingdom for His sake, even this same do they require of them whom they have seized. For whether it be with the love of women, or of riches, or of glory, that any one is entangled, he laughs at hell thenceforth, and despises the kingdom, that he may work the will of these. Let us not then doubt Paul when he says that he so loved Christ. For when some are found so doing service to their passions, how should that other afterwards seem incredible? Yea, and this is the reason why our longing for Christ is feeblener, because all our strength is consumed on this love, and we rob, and defraud, and are slaves to vainglory; than which what can be more worthless?

For though you should become infinitely conspicuous, you will be nothing better than the base: rather for this selfsame cause you will even be baser. For when they who are willing to give you glory, and make you illustrious, do for this very cause ridicule you, that you desire the glory which comes of them, how can such instances fail to turn the contrary way in regard of you. For indeed this thing is among those which attract censure. So that even as in the case of one desiring to commit adultery or fornication, should any one praise or flatter him, by this very act he becomes an accuser rather than a commender of the person indulging such desires: so with regard to him who is desirous of glory; when we all praise, it is accusation rather than praise which we bestow on those who wish to be made glorious.

18. Why then bring upon yourself that, from which the very opposite is wont to befall you. Yea, if you will be glorified, despise glory; so shall you be more illustrious than any. Why feel as Nebuchadnezzar felt? For he too set up an image, thinking from wood and from a senseless figure to procure to himself an increase of fame, and the living would fain appear more glorious by the help of that which has no life. Do you see the excess of his

madness; how, thinking to do honor, he rather offered insult, to himself? For when it appears that he is relying rather on the lifeless thing, than on himself and the soul that lives in him, and when for this cause he advances the stock unto such high precedence, how can he be other than ridiculous, endeavoring as he does to adorn himself, not by his way of living, but by planks of wood? Just as if a man should think proper to give himself airs, because of the pavement of his house, and his beautiful staircase rather than because he is a man. Him do many too among us imitate now. For as he for his image, so some men claim to be admired for their clothes, others for their house; or for their mules and chariots, and for the columns in their house. For inasmuch as they have lost their being as men, they go about gathering to themselves from other quarters such glory as is full of exceeding ridicule.

But as to the noble and great servants of God, not by these means, but by such as best became them, even by such did they shine forth. For captives as they were, and slaves, and youths, and strangers, and stripped of all resources of their own, they proved at that time far more awful than he who was invested with all these things. And while Nebuchadnezzar found neither so great an image, nor satraps, nor captains of the host, nor endless legions, nor abundance of gold, nor other pomp, enough to meet his desire, and to show him great; to these, on the other hand, stripped of all this, their high self-restraint alone was sufficient, and showed him that wore the diadem and the purple, as much inferior in glory to those who had no such thing, as the sun is more glorious than a pearl. For they were led forth in the midst of the whole world, being at once youths, and captives, and slaves, and straightway on their appearance the king darted fire from his eyes, and captains, and deputies, and governors, and the whole amphitheatre of the devil, stood around; and a voice of pipes from all sides, and of trumpets,

and of all music, borne up to Heaven, was sounding in their ears, and the furnace burned up to a boundless height, and the flame reached the very clouds, and all was full of terror and dismay. But none of these things dismayed them, but they laughed it all to scorn, as they would children mocking them, and exhibited their courage and meekness, and uttering a voice clearer than those trumpets, they said, *"Be it known unto you, O king."*

[Daniel 3:18] For they did not wish to affront the king, no not so much as by a word, but to declare their religion only. For which cause, neither did they extend their speech to any great length, but set forth all briefly; *"For there is,"* say they, *"a God in Heaven, who is able to deliver us,"*

[Daniel 3:17] *"why do you show me the multitude? Why the furnace? Why the sharpened swords? Why the terrible guards? Our Lord is higher and more mighty than all these."*

Then when they considered that it was possible that God might be willing even to permit them to be burnt; lest, if this should come to pass, they might seem to be speaking falsehoods; they add this also and say, *"If this happen not, be it known unto you, O king, that we serve not your gods."*

[Daniel 3:18] For had they said, *"Sins are the cause of His not delivering us, should He fail to deliver,"* they would not have been believed.

Wherefore in this place they are silent on that subject, though they speak of it in the furnace, again and again alleging their sins. But before the king they say no such thing; only, that though they were to be burnt, they would not give up their religion.

For it was not for rewards and recompenses that they did what they did, but out of love alone; and yet they were in captivity too, and in slavery, and had enjoyed no good thing. Yea, they had lost their country, and their freedom, and all their possessions. For tell me not of their honors in the king's courts, for holy and righteous as they were, they would have chosen

ten thousand times rather to have been beggars at home, and to have been partakers of the blessings in the temple. *"For I had rather,"* it is said, *"be an outcast in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of sinners."* And *"one day in your courts is better than thousands."* They would have chosen then ten thousand times rather to be outcasts at home, than kings in Babylon. And this is manifest, from what they declare even in the furnace, grieving at their continuance in that country. For although themselves enjoyed great honors, yet seeing the calamities of the rest they were exceedingly vexed; and this kind of thing is most especially characteristic of saints, that no glory, nor honor, nor anything else should be more precious to them than their neighbor's welfare. See, for example, how even when they were in a furnace, they made their supplication for all the people. But we not even when at large bear our brethren in mind. And again, when they were inquiring about the dreams, [Daniel 2:17-18] they were looking *"not to their own but the common good,"* for that they despised death they showed by many things afterwards. But everywhere they put themselves forward, as wishing to prevail with God by importunity. Next, as not accounting themselves either to be sufficient, they flee to the Fathers; but of themselves they said that they offer nothing more than *"a contrite spirit."*

19. These men then let us also imitate. Because now too there is set up a golden image, even the tyranny of Mammon. But let us not give heed to the timbrels, nor to the flutes, nor to the harps, nor to the rest of the pomp of riches; yea, though we must needs fall into a furnace of poverty, let us choose it, rather than worship that idol, and there will be *"in the midst a moist whistling wind."* Let us not then shudder at hearing of *"a furnace of poverty."* For so too at that time they that fell into the furnace were shown the more glorious, but they that worshipped were destroyed. Only then all took place at once, but in this case some part will be accomplished here,

some there, some both here and in the day that is to come. For they that have chosen poverty, in order that they might not worship mammon, will be more glorious both here and then, but they that have been rich unjustly here, shall then pay the utmost penalty.

From this furnace Lazarus too went forth, not less glorious than those children; but the rich man who was in the place of them that worshipped the image, was condemned to hell. For indeed what we have now mentioned was a type of this. Wherefore as in this instance they who fell into the furnace suffered no hurt, but they who sat without were laid hold of with great fierceness, so likewise shall it be then. The saints walking through the river of fire shall suffer no pain, nay they will even appear joyous; but they that have worshipped the image, shall see the fire rest upon them fiercer than any wild beast, and draw them in. So that if any one disbelieves hell, when he sees this furnace, let him from the things present believe things to come, and fear not the furnace of poverty, but the furnace of sin. For this is flame and torment, but that, dew and refreshment; and by this stands the devil, by that, angels wafting aside the flame.

20. These things let them hear that are rich, that are kindling the furnace of poverty. For though they shall not hurt those others, *"the dew"* coming to their aid; yet themselves they will render an easy prey to the flame, which they have kindled with their own hands.

Then, an angel went down with those children; now, let us go down with them that are in the furnace of poverty, and by almsdeeds let us make a *"dewy air,"* and waft the flame quite aside, that we may be partakers of their crowns also; that the flames of hell may likewise be scattered by the voice of Christ saying, *"You saw me an hungered, and fed me."* [Matthew 25:35] For that voice shall then be with us instead of a *"moist wind whistling"* through the midst of the flame. Let us then go down with almsgiving, unto

the furnace of poverty; let us behold them that in self-restraint walk therein, and trample on the burning coals; let us behold the marvel, strange and beyond thought, a man singing praise in a furnace, a man giving thanks in fire, chained unto extreme poverty, yet offering much praise to Christ. Since they, who bear poverty with thankfulness, really become equal to those children. For no flame is so terrible as poverty, nor so apt to set us on fire. But those children were not set on fire; rather, on their giving thanks to the Lord, their bonds too were at once loosed. So likewise now, if when you have fallen into poverty, you are thankful, both the bonds are loosened, and the flame extinguished; or though it be not extinguished (what is much more marvellous), it becomes a fountain instead of a flame: which then likewise came to pass, and in the midst of a furnace they enjoyed a pure dew. For the fire indeed it quenched not, but the burning of those cast in it altogether hindered. This one may see in their case also who live by the rules of wisdom, for they, even in poverty, feel more secure than the rich.

Let us not therefore sit down without the furnace, feeling no pity towards the poor; lest the same befall us as then befell those executioners. For if you should go down to them, and take your stand with the children, the fire will no longer work you any harm; but if you should sit above and neglect them in the flame of their poverty, the flame will burn you up. Go down therefore into the fire, that you may not be burnt up by the fire; sit not down without the fire, lest the flame catch hold of you. For if it should find you among the poor, it will depart from you; but if alienated from them, it will run upon you quickly, and catch you. Do not therefore stand off from them that are cast in, but when the devil gives command to cast them that have not worshipped gold into the furnace of poverty, be not thou of them that cast others in, but of them that are cast in; that you may be of the number of the saved, and not of the burned. For indeed it is a most effectual

dew, to be held in no subjection by desire of wealth, to be associate with poor persons. These are wealthier than all, who have trampled under foot the desire of riches. Forasmuch as those children too, by despising the king at that time, became more glorious than the king. And thou therefore, if you despise the things of the world, shall become more honorable than all the world; like those holy men, *"of whom the world was not worthy."*

[Hebrews 11:38]

In order then to become worthy of the things in Heaven, I bid you laugh to scorn things present. For in this way you shall both be more glorious here, and enjoy the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 5 on Matthew

Matthew 1:22-23.

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel."

I hear many say, *"While we are here, and enjoying the privilege of hearing, we are awed, but when we are gone out, we become altered men again, and the flame of zeal is quenched."* What then may be done, that this may not come to pass? Let us observe whence it arises. Whence then does so great a change in us arise? From the unbecoming employment of our time, and from the company of evil men. For we ought not as soon as we retire from the Communion, to plunge into business unsuited to the Communion, but as soon as ever we get home, to take our Bible into our hands, and call our wife and children to join us in putting together what we have heard, and then, not before, engage in the business of life.

For if after the bath you would not choose to hurry into the market place, lest by the business in the market you should destroy the refreshment thence derived; much more ought we to act on this principle after the Communion. But as it is, we do the contrary, and in this very way throw away all. For while the profitable effect of what has been said to us is not yet well fixed, the great force of the things that press upon us from without sweeps all entirely away.

That this then may not be the case, when you retire from the Communion, you must account nothing more necessary than that you should put together the things that have been said to you. Yes, for it were the utmost folly for us, while we give up five and even six days to the

business of this life, not to bestow on things spiritual so much as one day, or rather not so much as a small part of one day. See ye not our own children, that whatever lessons are given them, those they study throughout the whole day? This then let us do likewise, since otherwise we shall derive no profit from coming here, drawing water daily into a vessel with holes, and not bestowing on the retaining of what we have heard even so much earnestness as we plainly show with respect to gold and silver. For any one who has received a few pence both puts them into a bag and sets a seal thereon; but we, having given us oracles more precious than either gold or costly stones, and receiving the treasures of the Spirit, do not put them away in the storehouses of our soul, but thoughtlessly and at random suffer them to escape from our minds. Who then will pity us after all this, plotting against our own interests, and casting ourselves into so deep poverty? Therefore, that this may not be so, let us write it down an unalterable law for ourselves, for our wives, and for our children, to give up this one day of the week entire to hearing, and to the recollection of the things we have heard. For thus with greater aptness for learning shall we approach what is next to be said; and to us the labor will be less, and to you the profit greater, when, bearing in memory what has been lately spoken, you hearken accordingly to what comes afterwards. For no little does this also contribute towards the understanding of what is said, when you know accurately the connection of the thoughts, which we are busy in weaving together for you. For since it is not possible to set down all in one day, you must by continued remembrance make the things laid before you on many days into a kind of chain, and so wrap it about your soul: that the body of the Scriptures may appear entire.

Therefore let us not either today go on to the subjects set before us, without first recalling what was lately said to our memory.

2. But what are the things set before us today? *"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying."* In a tone worthy of the wonder, with all his might he has uttered his voice, saying, *"Now all this was done."* For when he saw the sea and the abyss of the love of God towards man, and that actually come to pass which never had been looked for, and nature's laws broken, and reconciliations made, Him who is above all come down to him that is lower than all, and *"the middle walls of partition broken,"* [Ephesians 2:14] and the impediments removed, and many more things than these done besides; in one word he has put before us the miracle, saying, *"Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord."* For, *"think not,"* says he, *"that these things are now determined upon; they were prefigured of old."* Which same thing, Paul also everywhere labors to prove.

And the angel proceeds to refer Joseph to Isaiah; in order that even if he should, when awakened, forget his own words, as newly spoken, he might by being reminded of those of the prophet, with which he had been nourished up continually, retain likewise the substance of what he had said. And to the woman he mentioned none of these things, as being a damsel and unskilled in them, but to the husband, as being a righteous man and one who studied the prophets, from them he reasons. And before this he says, *"Mary, your wife;"* but now, when he has brought the prophet before him, he then trusts him with the name of virginity; for Joseph would not have continued thus unshaken, when he heard from him of a virgin, unless he had first heard it also from Isaiah. For indeed it was nothing novel that he was to hear out of the prophets, but what was familiar to him, and had been for a long time the subject of his meditations. For this cause the angel, to make what he said easy to be received, brings in Isaiah. And neither here does he stop, but connects the discourse with God. For he does not call the saying

Isaiah's, but that of the God of all things. For this cause he said not, *"that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of Isaiah,"* but *"which was spoken of the Lord."* For the mouth indeed was Isaiah's, but the oracle was wafted from above.

3. What then says this oracle? *"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel."*

How was it then, one may say, that His name was not called Emmanuel, but Jesus Christ? Because he said not, *"you shall call,"* but *"they shall call,"* that is, the multitude, and the issue of events. For here he puts the event as a name: and this is customary in Scripture, to substitute the events that take place for names.

Therefore, to say, *"they shall call"* Him *"Emmanuel,"* means nothing else than that they shall see God among men. For He has indeed always been among men, but never so manifestly.

But if Jews are obstinate, we will ask the, when was the child called, *"Make speed to the spoil, hasten the prey?"* Why, they could not say. How is it then that the prophet said, *"Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz?"* Because, when he was born, there was a taking and dividing of spoils, therefore the event that took place in his time is put as his name. And the city, too, it is said, shall be called *"the city of righteousness, the faithful city Sion."* [Isaiah 1:26-27] And yet we nowhere find that the city was called *"righteousness,"* but it continued to be called Jerusalem. However, inasmuch as this came to pass in fact, when the city underwent a change for the better, on that account he says it is so called. For when any event happens which marks out him who brings it to pass, or who is benefited by it, more clearly than his name, the Scripture speaks of the truth of the event as being a name to him.

4. But if, when their mouths are stopped on this point, they should seek another, namely, what is said touching Mary's virginity, and should object to us other translators, saying, that they used not the term "*virgin*," but "*young woman*;" in the first place we will say this, that the Seventy were justly entitled to confidence above all the others. For these made their translation after Christ's coming, continuing to be Jews, and may justly be suspected as having spoken rather in enmity, and as darkening the prophecies on purpose; but the Seventy, as having entered upon this work an hundred years or more before the coming of Christ, stand clear from all such suspicion, and on account of the date, and of their number, and of their agreement, would have a better right to be trusted.

But even if they bring in the testimony of those others, yet so the tokens of victory would be with us. Because the Scripture is wont to put the word "*youth*," for "*virginity*;" and this with respect not to women only, but also to men. For it is said, "*young men and maidens, old men with younger ones*." And again, speaking of the damsel who is attacked, it says, "*if the young woman cry out*," meaning the virgin.

And what goes before also establishes this interpretation. For he does not merely say, "*Behold, the Virgin shall be with child*," but having first said, "*Behold, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign*," then he subjoins, "*Behold, the Virgin shall be with child*." [Isaiah 7:14] Whereas, if she that was to give birth was not a virgin, but this happened in the way of marriage, what sort of sign would the event be? For that which is a sign must of course be beyond the course of common events, it must be strange and extraordinary; else how could it be a sign?

5. "*Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him*." Do you see obedience, and a submissive mind? Do you see a soul truly wakened, and in all things incorruptible? For neither when

he suspected something painful or amiss could he endure to keep the Virgin with him; nor yet, after he was freed from this suspicion, could he bear to cast her out, but he rather keeps her with him, and ministers to the whole Dispensation.

"And took unto him Mary his wife." Do you see how continually the evangelist uses this word, not willing that that mystery should be disclosed as yet, and annihilating that evil suspicion?

And when he had taken her, *"he knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born Son."* He has here used the word *"till,"* not that you should suspect that afterwards he did know her, but to inform you that before the birth the Virgin was wholly untouched by man. But why then, it may be said, has he used the word, *"till"*? Because it is usual in Scripture often to do this, and to use this expression without reference to limited times. For so with respect to the ark likewise, it is said, *"The raven returned not till the earth was dried up."* [Genesis 8:7] And yet it did not return even after that time. And when discoursing also of God, the Scripture says, *"From age until age You are,"* not as fixing limits in this case. And again when it is preaching the Gospel beforehand, and saying, *"In his days shall righteousness flourish, and abundance of peace, till the moon be taken away,"* it does not set a limit to this fair part of creation. So then here likewise, it uses the word *"till,"* to make certain what was before the birth, but as to what follows, it leaves you to make the inference. Thus, what it was necessary for you to learn of Him, this He Himself has said; that the Virgin was untouched by man until the birth; but that which both was seen to be a consequence of the former statement, and was acknowledged, this in its turn he leaves for you to perceive; namely, that not even after this, she having so become a mother, and having been counted worthy of a new sort of travail, and a child-bearing so strange, could that righteous man ever

have endured to know her. For if he had known her, and had kept her in the place of a wife, how is it that our Lord [John 19:27] commits her, as unprotected, and having no one, to His disciple, and commands him to take her to his own home?

How then, one may say, are James and the others called His brethren? In the same kind of way as Joseph himself was supposed to be husband of Mary. For many were the veils provided, that the birth, being such as it was, might be for a time screened. Wherefore even John so called them, saying, *"For neither did His brethren believe in Him."*

6. Nevertheless they, who did not believe at first, became afterwards admirable, and illustrious. At least when Paul and they that were of his company had come up to Jerusalem about decrees, they went in straightway unto James. For he was so admired as even to be the first to be entrusted with the bishop's office. And they say he gave himself up to such great austerity, that even his members became all of them as dead, and that from his continual praying, and his perpetual intercourse with the ground, his forehead became so callous as to be in no better state than a camel's knees, simply by reason of his striking it so against the earth. This man gives directions to Paul himself, when he was after this come up again to Jerusalem, saying, *"You see, brother, how many thousands there are of them that have come together."* So great was his understanding and his zeal, or rather so great the power of Christ. For they that mock Him when living, after His death are so filled with awe, as even to die for Him with exceeding readiness. Such things most of all show the power of His resurrection. For this, you see, was the reason of the more glorious things being kept till afterwards, viz. that this proof might become indisputable. For seeing that even those who are admired among us in their life, when they are gone, are apt to be forgotten by us; how was it that they, who made light of this Man

living, afterwards thought Him to be God, if He was but one of the many? How was it that they consented even to be slain for His sake, unless they received His resurrection on clear proof?

7. And these things we tell you, that you may not hear only, but imitate also his manly severity, his plainness of speech, his righteousness in all things; that no one may despair of himself, though hitherto he have been careless, that he may set his hopes on nothing else, after God's mercy, but on his own virtue. For if these were nothing the better for such a kindred, though they were of the same house and lineage with Christ, until they gave proof of virtue; what favor can we possibly receive, when we plead righteous kinsmen and brethren, unless we be exceeding dutiful, and have lived in virtue? As the prophet too said, intimating the selfsame thing, "*A brother redeems not, shall a man redeem?*" No, not although it were Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah. Hear, for example, what God says unto this last, "*Pray not thou for this people, for I will not hear you.*" [Jeremiah 11:14] And why do you marvel if I hear not you? "*Though Moses himself and Samuel stood before me,*" [Jeremiah 15:1] I would not receive their supplication for these men. Yea, if it be Ezekiel who entreats, he will be told, "*Though Noah stand forth, and Job, and Daniel, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters.*" Though the patriarch Abraham be supplicating for them that are most incurably diseased, and change not, God will leave him and go His way, [Genesis 18:33] that he may not receive his cry in their behalf. Though again it be Samuel who is doing this, He says unto him, "*Mourn not thou for Saul.*" [1 Samuel 16:1] Though for his own sister one entreat, when it is not fitting, he again shall have the same sort of answer as Moses, "*If her father had but spit in her face.*" [Numbers 12:14]

Let us not then be looking open-mouthed towards others. For it is true, the prayers of the saints have the greatest power; on condition however of

our repentance and amendment. Since even Moses, who had rescued his own brother and six hundred thousand men from the wrath that was then coming upon them from God, had no power to deliver his sister; and yet the sin was not equal; for whereas she had done despite but to Moses, in that other case it was plain impiety, what they ventured on. But this difficulty I leave for you; while that which is yet harder, I will try to explain.

For why should we speak of his sister? Since he who stood forth the advocate of so great a people had not power to prevail for himself, but after his countless toils, and sufferings, and his assiduity for forty years, was prohibited from setting foot on that land, touching which there had been so many declarations and promises. What then was the cause? To grant this favor would not be profitable, but would, on the contrary, bring with it much harm, and would be sure to prove a stumbling-block to many of the Jews. For if when they were merely delivered from Egypt, they forsook God, and sought after Moses, and imputed all to him; had they seen him also lead them into the land of promise, to what extent of impiety might they not have been cast away? And for this reason also, let me add, neither was his tomb made known.

And Samuel again was not able to save Saul from the wrath from above, yet he oftentimes preserved the Israelites. And Jeremiah prevailed not for the Jews, but some one else he did haply cover from evil by his prophecy. And Daniel saved the barbarians from slaughter, [Daniel 2:24] but he did not deliver the Jews from their captivity.

And in the Gospels too we shall see both these events come to pass, not in the case of different persons, but of the same; and the same man now prevailing for himself and now given up. For he who owed the ten thousand talents, though he had delivered himself from the danger by entreaty, yet again he prevailed not, [Matthew 18:26-34] and another on the contrary,

who had before thrown himself away, afterwards had power to help himself in the greatest degree. [Luke 15:13-20] But who is this? He that devoured his Father's substance.

So that on the one hand, if we be careless, we shall not be able to obtain salvation, no not even by the help of others; if, on the other hand, we be watchful, we shall be able to do this by ourselves, and by ourselves rather than by others. Yes; for God is more willing to give His grace to us, than to others for us; that we by endeavoring ourselves to do away His wrath, may both enjoy confidence towards Him, and become better men. Thus He had pity on the Canaanitish woman, thus He saved the harlot, thus the thief, when there was none to be mediator nor advocate.

8. And this I say, not that we may omit supplicating the saints, but to hinder our being careless, and entrusting our concerns to others only, while we fall back and slumber ourselves. For so when He said, *"make to yourselves friends,"* he did not stop at this only, but He added, *"of the unrighteous mammon;"* that so again the good work may be your own; for it is nothing else but almsgiving which He has here signified. And, what is marvellous, neither does He make a strict account with us, if we withdraw ourselves from injustice. For what He says is like this: *"Have you gained ill? Spend well. Have you gathered by unrighteousness? Scatter abroad in righteousness."* And yet, what manner of virtue is this, to give out of such gains? God, however, being full of love to man, condescends even to this and if we thus do, promises us many good things. But we are so past all feeling, as not to give even of our unjust gain, but while plundering without end, if we contribute the smallest part, we think we have fulfilled all. Have you not heard Paul saying, *"He which sows sparingly, shall reap also sparingly"*? act an outlay? Is it an expense? Nay, it is gain and good merchandise. Where there is merchandise, there is also increase; where

there is sowing, there is also reaping. But you, if you had to till a rich and deep soil, and capable of receiving much seed, would both spend what you had, and would borrow of other men, accounting parsimony in such cases to be loss; but, when it is Heaven which you are to cultivate, which is exposed to no variation of weather, and will surely repay your outlay with abundant increase, you are slow and backward, and considerest not that it is possible by sparing to lose, and by not sparing to gain.

9. Disperse therefore, that you may not lose; keep not, that you may keep; lay out, that you may save; spend, that you may gain. If your treasures are to be hoarded, do not thou hoard them, for you will surely cast them away; but entrust them to God, for thence no man makes spoil of them. Do not thou traffic, for you know not at all how to gain; but lend unto Him who gives an interest greater than the principal. Lend, where is no envy, no accusation, nor evil design, nor fear. Lend unto Him who wants nothing, yet has need for your sake; who feeds all men, yet is an hungered, that you may not suffer famine; who is poor, that you may be rich. Lend there, where your return cannot be death, but life instead of death. For this usury is the harbinger of a kingdom, that, of hell; the one coming of covetousness, the other of self-denial; the one of cruelty, the other of humanity. What excuse then will be ours, when having the power to receive more, and that with security, and in due season, and in great freedom, without either reproaches, or fears, or dangers, we let go these gains, and follow after that other sort, base and vile as they are, insecure and perishable, and greatly aggravating the furnace for us? For nothing, nothing is baser than the usury of this world, nothing more cruel. Why, other persons' calamities are such a man's traffic; he makes himself gain of the distress of another, and demands wages for kindness, as though he were afraid to seem merciful, and under the cloak of kindness he digs the pitfall deeper, by the act of help galling a

man's poverty, and in the act of stretching out the hand thrusting him down, and when receiving him as in harbor, involving him in shipwreck, as on a rock, or shoal, or reef.

"But what do you require?" says one; *"that I should give another for his use that money which I have got together, and which is to me useful, and demand no recompense?"* Far from it: I say not this: yea, I earnestly desire that you should have a recompense; not however a mean nor small one, but far greater; for in return for gold, I would that you should receive Heaven for usury. Why then shut yourself up in poverty, crawling about the earth, and demanding little for great? Nay, this is the part of one who knows not how to be rich. For when God in return for a little money is promising you the good things that are in Heaven, and you say, *"Give me not Heaven, but instead of Heaven the gold that perishes,"* this is for one who wishes to continue in poverty. Even as he surely who desires wealth and abundance will choose things abiding rather than things perishing; the inexhaustible, rather than such as waste away; much rather than little, the incorruptible rather than the corruptible. For so the other sort too will follow. For as he who seeks earth before Heaven, will surely lose earth also, so he that prefers Heaven to earth, shall enjoy both in great excellency. And that this may be the case with us, let us despise all things here, and choose the good things to come. For thus shall we obtain both the one and the other, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on Matthew

Matthew 2:1-2.

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him."

We have need of much wakefulness, and many prayers, that we may arrive at the interpretation of the passage now before us, and that we may learn who these wise men were, and whence they came, and how; and at whose persuasion, and what was the star. Or rather, if you will, let us first bring forward what the enemies of the truth say. Because the devil has blown upon them with so violent a blast, as even from this passage try to arm them against the words of truth.

What then do they allege? *"Behold,"* say they, *"even when Christ was born a star appeared; which is a sign that astrology may be depended on."* How then, if He had His birth according to that law, did He put down astrology, and take away fate, and stop the mouths of demons, and cast out error, and overthrow all such sorcery?

And what moreover do the wise men learn from the star of itself? That He was King of the Jews? And yet He was not king of this kingdom; even as He said also to Pilate, *"My kingdom is not of this world."* At any rate He made no display of this kind, for He had neither guards armed with spear or shield, nor horses, nor chariots of mules, nor any other such thing around Him; but He followed this life of meanness and poverty, carrying about with Him twelve men of mean estate.

And even if they knew Him to be a king, for what intent are they come? For surely this is not the business of astrology, to know from the stars who are born, but from the hour when men are born to predict what shall befall them: so it is said. But these were neither present with the mother in her pangs, nor did they know the time when He was born, neither did they, beginning at that moment, from the motion of the stars compute what was to happen: but conversely, having a long time before seen a star appear in their own country, they come to see Him that was born.

Which circumstance in itself would afford a still greater difficulty even than the former. For what reason induced them, or the hope of what benefits, to worship one who was king so far off? Why, had He been to reign over themselves, most assuredly not even so would the circumstance be capable of a reasonable account. To be sure, if He had been born in royal courts, and with His father, himself a king, present by Him, any one would naturally say, that they, from a wish to pay court to the father, had worshipped the child that was born, and in this way were laying up for themselves beforehand much ground of patronage. But now when they did not so much as expect Him to be their own king, but of a strange nation, far distant from their country, neither seeing Him as yet grown to manhood; wherefore do they set forth on so long a journey, and offer gifts, and this when dangers were sure to beset their whole proceeding? For both Herod, when he heard it, was exceedingly troubled, and the whole people was confounded on being told of these things by them.

"But these men did not foresee this." Nay, this is not reasonable. For let them have been ever so foolish, of this they could not be ignorant, that when they came to a city under a king, and proclaimed such things as these, and set forth another king besides him who then reigned, they must needs be bringing down on themselves a thousand deaths.

2. And why did they at all worship one who was in swaddling clothes? For if He had been a grown man, one might say, that in expectation of the succor they should receive from Him, they cast themselves into a danger which they foresaw; a thing however to the utmost degree unreasonable, that the Persian, the barbarian, and one that had nothing in common with the nation of the Jews, should be willing to depart from his home, to give up country, and kindred, and friends, and that they should subject themselves to another kingdom.

But if this be foolish, what follows is much more foolish. Of what nature then is this? That after they had entered on so long a journey, and worshipped, and thrown all into confusion, they went away immediately. And what sign at all of royalty did they behold, when they saw a shed, and a manger, and a child in swaddling clothes, and a poor mother? And to whom moreover did they offer their gifts, and for what intent? Was it then usual and customary, thus to pay court to the kings that were born in every place? And did they always keep going about the whole world, worshipping them who they knew should become kings out of a low and mean estate, before they ascended the royal throne? Nay, this no one can say.

And for what purpose did they worship Him at all? If for the sake of things present, then what did they expect to receive from an infant, and a mother of mean condition? If for things future, then whence did they know that the child whom they had worshipped in swaddling clothes would remember what was then done? But if His mother was to remind Him, not even so were they worthy of honor, but of punishment, as bringing Him into danger which they must have foreseen. Thence at any rate it was that Herod was troubled, and sought, and pried, and took in hand to slay Him. And indeed everywhere, he who makes known the future king, supposing him in

his earliest age in a private condition, does nothing else than betray him to slaughter, and kindle against him endless warfare.

Do you see how manifold the absurdities appear, if we examine these transactions according to the course of human things and ordinary custom? For not these topics only, but more than these might be mentioned, containing more matter for questions than what we have spoken of. But lest, stringing questions upon questions, we should bewilder you, come let us now enter upon the solution of the matters inquired of, making a beginning of our solution with the star itself.

3. For if you can learn what the star was, and of what kind, and whether it were one of the common stars, or new and unlike the rest, and whether it was a star by nature or a star in appearance only, we shall easily know the other things also. Whence then will these points be manifest? From the very things that are written. Thus, that this star was not of the common sort, or rather not a star at all, as it seems at least to me, but some invisible power transformed into this appearance, is in the first place evident from its very course. For there is not, there is not any star that moves by this way, but whether it be the sun you mention, or the moon, or all the other stars, we see them going from east to west; but this was wafted from north to south; for so is Palestine situated with respect to Persia.

In the second place, one may see this from the time also. For it appears not in the night, but in mid-day, while the sun is shining; and this is not within the power of a star, nay not of the moon; for the moon that so much surpasses all, when the beams of the sun appear, straightway hides herself, and vanishes away. But this by the excess of its own splendor overcame even the beams of the sun, appearing brighter than they, and in so much light shining out more illustriously.

In the third place, from its appearing, and hiding itself again. For on their way as far as Palestine it appeared leading them, but after they set foot within Jerusalem, it hid itself: then again, when they had left Herod, having told him on what account they came, and were on the point of departing, it shows itself; all which is not like the motion of a star, but of some power highly endued with reason. For it had not even any course at all of its own, but when they were to move, it moved; when to stand, it stood, dispensing all as need required: in the same kind of way as the pillar of the cloud, now halting and now rousing up the camp of the Jews, when it was needful.

In the fourth place, one may perceive this clearly, from its mode of pointing Him out. For it did not, remaining on high, point out the place; it not being possible for them so to ascertain it, but it came down and performed this office. For you know that a spot of so small dimensions, being only as much as a shed would occupy, or rather as much as the body of a little infant would take up, could not possibly be marked out by a star. For by reason of its immense height, it could not sufficiently distinguish so confined a spot, and discover it to them that were desiring to see it. And this any one may see by the moon, which being so far superior to the stars, seems to all that dwell in the world, and are scattered over so great an extent of earth—seems, I say, near to them every one. How then, tell me, did the star point out a spot so confined, just the space of a manger and shed, unless it left that height and came down, and stood over the very head of the young child? And at this the evangelist was hinting when he said, *"Lo, the star went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was."*

4. Do you see, by what store of proofs this star is shown not to be one of the many, nor to have shown itself according to the order of the outward creation? And for what intent did it appear? To reprove the Jews for their

insensibility, and to cut off from them all occasion of excuse for their willful ignorance. For, since He who came was to put an end to the ancient polity, and to call the world to the worship of Himself, and to be worshipped in all land and sea, straightway, from the beginning, He opens the door to the Gentiles, willing through strangers to admonish His own people. Thus, because the prophets were continually heard speaking of His advent, and they gave no great heed, He made even barbarians come from a far country, to seek after the king that was among them. And they learn from a Persian tongue first of all, what they would not submit to learn from the prophets; that, if on the one hand they were disposed to be candid, they might have the strongest motive for obedience; if, on the other hand, they were contentious, they might henceforth be deprived of all excuse. For what could they have to say, who did not receive Christ after so many prophets, when they saw that wise men, at the sight of a single star, had received this same, and had worshipped Him who was made manifest. Much in the same way then as He acted in the case of the Ninevites, when He sent Jonas, and as in the case of the Samaritan and the Canaanitish women; so He did likewise in the instance of the magi. For this cause He also said, "*The men of Nineveh shall rise up, and shall condemn:*" and, "*the Queen of the South shall rise up, and shall condemn this generation:*" [Matthew 12:41-42] because these believed the lesser things, but the Jews not even the greater.

"*And wherefore,*" one may say, "*did He attract them by such a vision?*" Why, how should He have done? Sent prophets? But the magi would not have submitted to prophets. Uttered a voice from above? Nay, they would not have attended. Sent an angel? But even him they would have hurried by. And so for this cause dismissing all those means, God calls them by the things that are familiar, in exceeding condescension; and He shows a large

and extraordinary star, so as to astonish them, both at the greatness and beauty of its appearance, and the manner of its course.

In imitation of this, Paul also reasons with the Greeks from an heathen altar, and brings forward testimonies from the poets. And not without circumcision does he harangue the Jews. Sacrifices he makes the beginning of his instruction to them that are living under the law. For, since to every one what is familiar is dear, both God, and the men that are sent by Him, manage things on this principle with a view to the salvation of the world. Think it not therefore unworthy of Him to have called them by a star; since by the same rule you will find fault with all the Jewish rites also, the sacrifices, and the purifications, and the new moons, and the ark, and the temple too itself. For even these derived their origin from Gentile grossness. Yet for all that, God, for the salvation of them that were in error, endured to be served by these things, whereby those without were used to serve devils; only He slightly altered them; that He might draw them off by degrees from their customs, and lead them towards the highest wisdom. Just so He did in the case of the wise men also, not disdaining to call them by sight of a star, that He might lift them higher ever after. Therefore after He has brought them, leading them by the hand, and has set them by the manger; it is no longer by a star, but by an angel that He now discourses unto them. Thus did they little by little become better men.

This did He also with respect to them of Ascalon, and of Gaza. For those five cities too (when at the coming of the ark they had been smitten with a deadly plague, and found no deliverance from the ills under which they lay)—the men of them called their prophets, and gathered an assembly, and sought to discover an escape from this divine scourge. Then, when their prophets said that they should yoke to the ark heifers untamed, and having their first calves, and let them go their way, with no man to

guide them, for so it would be evident whether the plague was from God or whether it was any accident which brought the disease—(*"for if,"* it is said, *"they break the yoke in pieces for want of practice, or turn where their calves are lowing, 'it is a chance that has happened;' [1 Samuel 6:9] but if they go on right, and err not from the way, and neither the lowing of their young, nor their ignorance of the way, have any effect on them, it is quite plain that it is the hand of God that has visited those cities:"*)— when, I say, on these words of their prophets the inhabitants of those cities obeyed and did as they were commanded, God also followed up the counsel of the prophets, showing condescension in that instance also, and counted it not unworthy of Himself to bring to effect the prediction of the prophets, and to make them seem trustworthy in what they had then said. For so the good achieved was greater, in that His very enemies themselves bore witness to the power of God; yea, their own teachers gave their voice concerning Him. And one may see many other such things brought about by God. For what took place with respect to the witch, [1 Samuel xxviii] is again like this sort of dispensation; which circumstance also you will now be able to explain from what has been said.

With respect to the star, we have said these things, and yet more perhaps may be said by you; for, it is said, *"Give occasion to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser:"* [Proverbs 9:9] but we must now come to the beginning of what has been read.

5. And what is the beginning? *"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem."* While wise men followed under the auspices of a star, these believed not, with prophets even sounding in their ears. But wherefore does he mention to us both the time and the place, saying, *"in Bethlehem,"* and *"in the days of Herod the king?"* And for what reason does he add his

rank also? His rank, because there was also another Herod, he who slew John: but that was a tetrarch, this a king. And the place likewise, and the time, he puts down, to bring to our remembrance ancient prophecies; whereof one was uttered by Micah, saying, *"And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art by no means the least among the princes of Judah;"* [Micah 5:2] and the other by the patriarch Jacob, distinctly marking out to us the time, and setting forth the great sign of His coming. For, *"A ruler,"* says he, *"shall not fail out of Judah, nor a leader out of his loins, until He come for whom it is appointed, and He is the expectation of the Gentiles."* [Genesis 49:10]

And this again is worth inquiry, whence it was that they came to entertain such a thought, and who it was that stirred them up to this. For it does not seem to me to be the work of the star only, but also of God, who moved their soul; which same kind of thing He did also in the case of Cyrus, disposing him to let the Jews go. He did not however so do this as to destroy their free will, since even when He called Paul from above by a voice, He manifested both His own grace and Paul's obedience.

And wherefore, one may ask, did He not reveal this to all the wise men of the East? Because all would not have believed, but these were better prepared than the rest; since also there were countless nations that perished, but it was to the Ninevites only that the prophet was sent; and there were two thieves on the cross, but one only was saved. See at least the virtue of these men, not only by their coming, but also by their boldness of speech. For so that they may not seem to be a sort of impostors, they tell who showed them the way, and the length of their journey; and having come, they had boldness of speech: *"for we have come,"* that is their statement, *"to worship Him:"* and they were afraid neither of the people's anger, nor of the tyranny of the king. Whence to me at least they seem to have been at home

also teachers of their countrymen. For they who here did not shrink from saying this, much more would they speak boldly in their own country, as having received both the oracle from the angel, and the testimony from the prophet.

6. But "*when Herod,*" says the Scripture, "*had heard, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*" Herod naturally, as being king, and afraid both for himself and for his children; but why Jerusalem? Surely the prophets had foretold Him a Saviour, and Benefactor, and a Deliverer from above. Wherefore then was Jerusalem troubled? From the same feeling which caused them before also to turn away from God when pouring His benefits on them, and to be mindful of the flesh-pots of Egypt, while in the enjoyment of great freedom.

But mark, I pray you, the accuracy of the prophets. For this selfsame thing also had the prophet foretold from the first, saying, "*They would be glad, if they had been burnt with fire; for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.*"

But nevertheless, although troubled, they seek not to see what has happened, neither do they follow the wise men, nor make any particular inquiry; to such a degree were they at once both contentious and careless above all men. For when they had reason rather to pride themselves that the king was born among them, and had attracted to Him the land of the Persians, and they were on the point of having all subject to them, as though their affairs had advanced towards improvement, and from the very outset His empire had become so glorious; nevertheless, they do not even for this become better. And yet they were but just delivered from their captivity there; and it was natural for them to think (even if they knew none of those things that are high and mysterious, but formed their judgment from what is present only), "*If they thus tremble before our king at His birth, much more*

when grown up will they fear and obey Him, and our estate will be more glorious than that of the barbarians."

7. But none of these things thoroughly awakens them, so great was their dullness, and with this their envy also: both which we must with exact care root out of our mind; and he must be more fervent than fire who is to stand in such an array. Wherefore also Christ said, *"I have come to send fire on earth, and I would it were already kindled."* in the same lot with it, even so godly tears are a germ of perpetual and unfading joy. In this way the very harlot became more honorable than virgins when seized by this fire. That is, being thoroughly warmed by repentance, she was thenceforth carried out of herself by her longing desire toward Christ; loosing her hair, and drenching with her tears His holy feet, and wiping them with her own tresses, and exhausting the ointment. And all these were outward results, but those wrought in her mind were far more fervent than these; which things God Himself alone beheld. And therefore, every one, when he hears, rejoices with her and takes delight in her good works, and acquits her of every blame. But if we that are evil pass this judgment, consider what sentence she obtained from that God who is a lover of mankind; and how much, even before God's gifts, her repentance caused her to reap in the way of blessing.

For much as after a violent burst of rain, there is a clear open sky; so likewise when tears are pouring down, a calm arises, and serenity, and the darkness that ensues on our sins quite disappears. And like as by water and the spirit, so by tears and confession are we cleansed the second time; unless we be acting thus for display and vanity: for as to a woman whose tears were of that sort, I should call her justly condemnable, more than if she decked herself out with lines and coloring. For I seek those tears which are shed not for display, but in compunction; those which trickle down secretly and in closets, and in sight of no man, softly and noiselessly; those

which arise from a certain depth of mind, those shed in anguish and in sorrow, those which are for God alone; such as were Hannah's, for "*her lips moved,*" it is said, "*but her voice was not heard;*" however, her tears alone uttered a cry more clear than any trumpet. And because of this, God also opened her womb, and made the hard rock a fruitful field.

If you also weep thus, you have become a follower of your Lord. Yea, for He also wept, both over Lazarus, and over the city; and touching Judas He was greatly troubled. And this indeed one may often see Him do, but nowhere laugh, nay, nor smile but a little; no one at least of the evangelists has mentioned this. Therefore also with regard to Paul, that he wept, that he did so three years night and day, both he has said of himself, and others say this of him; but that he laughed, neither has he said himself anywhere, neither has so much as one other of the saints, either concerning him, or any other like him; but this is said of Sarah only, [Genesis 18:12-15] when she is blamed, and of the son of Noe, when for a freeman he became a slave. [Genesis 9:25]

9. And these things I say, not to suppress all laughter, but to take away dissipation of mind. For wherefore, I pray you, are you luxurious and dissolute, while you are still liable to such heavy charges, and are to stand at a fearful judgment-seat, and to give a strict account of all that has been done here? Yes: for we are to give an account both of what we have sinned willingly, and what against our will:— for "*whosoever shall deny me,*" says He, "*before men, him will I also deny before my Father:*" [Matthew 10:33] — and surely such a denial is against our will; but nevertheless it does not escape punishment, but of it too we have to give account:— both of what we know, and of what we do not know; "*For I know nothing by myself,*" says one, "*yet am I not hereby justified:*" [1 Corinthians 4:4] — both for what we have done in ignorance, and what in knowledge; "*For I bear them*

record," it is said, "that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge;" [Romans 10:2] but yet this does not suffice for an excuse for them. And when writing to the Corinthians also he says, "For I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

The things then being so great, for which you are to give account, do you sit laughing and talking wittily, and giving yourself up to luxury? *"Why,"* one may say, *"if I did not so, but mourned, what would be the profit?"* Very great indeed; even so great, as it is not possible so much as to set it forth by word. For while, before the temporal tribunals, be your weeping ever so abundant, you can not escape punishment after the sentence; here, on the contrary, should you only sigh, you have annulled the sentence, and hast obtained pardon. Therefore it is that Christ discourses to us much of mourning, and blesses them that mourn, and pronounces them that laugh wretched. For this is not the theatre for laughter, neither did we come together for this intent, that we may give way to immoderate mirth, but that we may groan, and by this groaning inherit a kingdom. But you, when standing by a king, dost not endure so much as merely to smile; having then the Lord of the angels dwelling in you, do you not stand with trembling, and all due self-restraint, but rather laughest, oftentimes when He is displeased? And do you not consider that you provoke Him in this way more than by your sins? For God is not wont to turn Himself away so much from them that sin, as from those that are not awestruck after their sin.

But for all this, some are of so senseless a disposition, as even after these words to say, *"Nay, far be it from me to weep at any time, but may God grant me to laugh and to play all my days."* And what can be more childish than this mind? For it is not God that grants to play, but the devil.

At least hear, what was the portion of them that played. "*The people,*" it is said, "*sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*" Such were they at Sodom, such were they at the time of the deluge. For touching them of Sodom likewise it is said, that "*in pride, and in plenty, and in fullness of bread, they waxed wanton.*" [Ezekiel 16:49] And they who were in Noah's time, seeing the ark a preparing for so many years, lived on in senseless mirth, foreseeing nought of what was coming. For this cause also the flood came and swept them all away, and wrought in that instant the common shipwreck of the world.

Ask not then of God these things, which you receive of the devil. For it is God's part to give a contrite and humbled heart, sober, self-possessed, and awestruck, full of repentance and compunction. These are His gifts, forasmuch as it is also of these things that we are most in need. Yes, for a grievous conflict is at hand, and against the powers unseen is our wrestling; against "*the spiritual wickednesses*" [Ephesians 6:12] our fight, "*against principalities, against powers*" our warfare: and it is well for us, if when we are earnest and sober and thoroughly awakened, we can be able to sustain that savage phalanx. But if we are laughing and sporting, and always taking things easily, even before the conflict, we shall be overthrown by our own remissness.

10. It becomes not us then to be continually laughing, and to be dissolute, and luxurious, but it belongs to those upon the stage, the harlot women, the men that are trimmed for this intent, parasites, and flatterers; not them that are called unto heaven, not them that are enrolled into the city above, not them that bear spiritual arms, but them that are enlisted on the devil's side. For it is he, yea, it is he, that even made the thing an art, that he might weaken Christ's soldiers, and soften the nerves of their zeal. For this cause he also built theatres in the cities, and having trained those buffoons,

by their pernicious influence he causes that kind of pestilence to light upon the whole city, persuading men to follow those things which Paul bade us flee, "*foolish talking and jesting.*" [Ephesians 5:4] And what is yet more grievous than these things is the subject of the laughter. For when they that act those absurd things utter any word of blasphemy or filthiness, then many among the more thoughtless laugh and are pleased, applauding in them what they ought to stone them for; and drawing down on their own heads by this amusement the furnace of fire. For they who praise the utterers of such words, it is these above all who induce men so to speak: wherefore they must be more justly accountable for the penalty allotted to these things. For were there no one to be a spectator in such cases, neither would there be one to act; but when they see you forsaking your workshops, and your crafts, and your income from these, and in short everything, for the sake of continuing there, they derive hence a greater forwardness, and exert a greater diligence about these things.

And this I say, not freeing them from reproof, but that you may learn that it is you chiefly who supply the principle and root of such lawlessness; ye who consume your whole day on these matters, and profanely exhibit the sacred things of marriage, and make an open mock of the great mystery. For not even he who acts these things is so much the offender, as you are before him; thou who biddest him make a play on these things, or rather who not only biddest him, but art even zealous about it, taking delight, and laughing, and praising what is done, and in every way gaining strength for such workshops of the devil.

Tell me then, with what eyes will you after this look upon your wife at home, having seen her insulted there? Or how do you not blush being put in mind of the partner of your home, when you see nature herself put to an open shame? Nay, tell me not, that what is done is acting; for this acting has

made many adulterers, and subverted many families. And it is for this most especially that I grieve, that what is done does not so much as seem evil, but there is even applause and clamor, and much laughter, at commission of so foul adultery. What do you say? That what is done is acting? Why, for this selfsame reason they must be worthy of ten thousand deaths, that what things all laws command men to flee, they have taken pains to imitate. For if the thing itself be bad, the imitation thereof also is bad. And I do not yet say how many adulterers they make who act these scenes of adultery, how they render the spectators of such things bold and shameless; for nothing is more full of whoredom and boldness than an eye that endures to look at such things.

And thou in a market-place wouldest not choose to see a woman stripped naked, or rather not even in a house, but callest such a thing an outrage. And go up into the theatre, to insult the common nature of men and women, and disgrace your own eyes? For say not this, that she that is stripped is an harlot; but that the nature is the same, and they are bodies alike, both that of the harlot, and that of the free-woman. For if this be nothing amiss, what is the cause that if you were to see this done in a market place, you would both hasten away yourself, and drive thence her who was behaving herself unseemly? Or is it that when we are apart, then such a thing is outrageous, but when we are assembled and all sitting together, it is no longer equally shameful? Nay, this is absurdity and a disgrace, and words of the utmost madness; and it were better to besmear the eyes all over with mud and mire than to be a spectator of such a transgression. For surely mire is not so much an hurt to an eye, as an unchaste sight, and the spectacle of a woman stripped naked. Hear, for example, what it was that caused nakedness at the beginning, and read the occasion of such disgrace. What then did cause nakedness? Our

disobedience, and the devil's counsel. Thus, from the first, even from the very beginning, this was his contrivance. Yet they were at least ashamed when they were naked, but you take a pride in it; *"having,"* according to that saying of the apostle, *"your glory in your shame."* [Philippians 3:19]

How then will your wife thenceforward look upon you, when you are returned from such wickedness? How receive you? How speak to you, after you have so publicly put to shame the common nature of woman, and art made by such a sight the harlots' captive and slave?

Now if you grieve at hearing these things, I thank you much, for *"who is he that makes me glad, but he which is made sorry by me?"* [2 Corinthians 2:2] Do not then ever cease to grieve and be vexed for them, for the sorrow that comes of such things will be to you a beginning of a change for the better. For this cause I also have made my language the stronger, that by cutting deeper I might free you from the venom of them that intoxicate you; that I might bring you back to a pure health of soul; which God grant we may all enjoy by all means, and attain unto the rewards laid up for these good deeds; by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 7 on Matthew

Matthew 2:4-5.

"And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judæa."

Do you see how all things are done to convict the Jews? How, as long as He was out of their sight, the envy had not yet laid hold of them, and they rehearsed the testimonies *of Him* with truth; but when they saw the glory that arose from the miracles, a grudging spirit possessed them, and thenceforth they betrayed the truth.

However, the truth was exalted by all things, and strength was the more gathered for it even by its enemies. See for example in this very case, how wonderful and beyond expectation are the results secretly provided for. For both the barbarians and the Jews do the same time alike learn something more of one another, and teach one another. Thus the Jews, for their part, heard from the wise men, that a star also had proclaimed Him in the land of the Persians; the wise men, in their turn, were informed by the Jews that this Man, whom the star proclaimed, prophets also had made known from a long time of old. And the ground of their inquiry was made to both an occasion of setting forth clearer and more perfect instruction; and the enemies of the truth are compelled even against their will to read the writings in favor of the truth, and to interpret the prophecy; although not all of it. For having spoken of Bethlehem, and how that out of it He shall come that should rule Israel, they proceed not afterwards to add what follows, out of flattery to the king. And what was this? That *"His goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."*

2. *"But why,"* one may say, *"if He was to come from thence, did He live in Nazareth after the birth, and obscure the prophecy?"* Nay, He did not obscure it, but unfolded it the more. For the fact, that while His mother had her constant residence in the one place, He was born in the other, shows the thing to have been done by a Divine dispensation.

And for this cause, let me add, neither did He remove from thence straightway after His birth, but abode forty days, giving opportunity to them that were disposed to be inquisitive to examine all things accurately. Because there were in truth many things to move them to such an inquiry, at least if they had been disposed to give heed to them. Thus at the coming of the wise men the whole city was in a flutter, and together with the city the king, and the prophet was brought forward, and a court of high authority was summoned; and many other things too were done there, all which Luke relates minutely. Such were what concerns Anna, and Simeon, and Zacharias, and the angels, and the shepherds; all which things were to the attentive sufficient to give hints for ascertaining what had taken place. For if the wise men, who came from Persia, were not ignorant of the place, much more might they, whose abode it was, acquaint themselves with these things.

He manifested Himself then from the beginning by many miracles, but when they would not see, He hid Himself for a while, to be again revealed from another more glorious beginning. For it was no longer the wise men, nor the star, but the Father from above that proclaimed Him at the streams of Jordan; and the Spirit likewise came upon Him, guiding that voice to the head of Him just baptized; and John, with all plainness of speech, cried out everywhere in Judæa, till inhabited and waste country alike were filled with that kind of doctrine; and the witness too of the miracles, and earth, and sea, and the whole creation, uttered in His behalf a distinct voice. But at the time

of the birth, just so many things happened as were fitted quietly to mark out Him that had come. Thus, in order that the Jews might not say, "*We know not when He was born, nor whereabouts,*" both all these events in which the wise men were concerned were brought about by God's providence, and the rest of the things which we have mentioned; so that they would have no excuse to plead, for not having inquired into that which had come to pass.

But mark also the exactness of the prophecy. For it does not say, "*He will abide*" in Bethlehem, but "*He will come out*" thence. So that this too was a subject of prophecy, His being simply born there.

Some of them, however, being past shame, say that these things were spoken of Zerubbabel. But how can they be right? For surely "*his goings forth*" were not "*from of old, from everlasting.*" [Micah 5:2] And how can that suit him which is said at the beginning, "*Out of you shall He come forth:*" Zorobabel not having been born in Judæa, but in Babylon, whence also he was called Zorobabel, because he had his origin there? And as many as know the Syrians' language know what I say.

And together with what has been said, all the time also since these things is sufficient to establish the testimony. For what says he? "*You are not the least among the princes of Judah,*" and he adds the cause of the pre-eminence, saying, "*out of you shall He come.*" But no one else has made that place illustrious or eminent, excepting Him alone. For example: since that birth, men come from the ends of the earth to see the manger, and the site of the shed. And this the prophet foretold aloud from the first, saying, "*You are not the least among the princes of Judah;*" that is, among the heads of tribes. By which expression he comprehended even Jerusalem. But not even so have they given heed, although the advantage passes on to themselves. Yea, and because of this the prophets at the beginning discourse nowhere so much of His dignity, as touching the benefit which accrued to

them by Him. For so, when the Virgin was bearing the child, he says, "*You shall call His name Jesus;*" [Matthew 1:21] and he gives the reason saying, "*for He shall save His people from their sins.*" And the wise men too said not, "*Where is the Son of God?*" but "*He that is born King of the Jews.*" And here again it is not affirmed, "*Out of you shall come forth*" the Son of God, but "*a Governor, that shall feed my people Israel.*" For it was needful to converse with them at first, setting out in a tone of very exceeding condescension, lest they should be offended; and to preach what related to their salvation in particular, that hereby they might be the rather won over. At any rate, all the testimonies that are first cited, and for which it was the season immediately at the time of the birth, say nothing great, nor lofty concerning Him, nor such as those subsequent to the manifestation of the miracles; for these discourse more distinctly concerning His dignity. For instance, when after many miracles children were singing hymns unto Him, hear what says the prophet, "*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings You have perfected praise.*" And again, "*I will consider the Heavens, the works of Your fingers;*" which signifies Him to be Maker of the universe. And the testimony too, which was produced after the ascension, manifests His equality with the Father; thus saying, "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand.*" And Isaiah too says, "*He that rises up to rule over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust.*"

But how says he that Bethlehem is "*not the least among the princes of Judah?*" for not in Palestine alone, but in the whole world, the village has become conspicuous. Why, so far he was speaking to Jews; wherefore also he added, "*He shall feed my people Israel.*" And yet He fed the whole world; but as I have said, He is fain not to offend as yet, by revealing what He has to say touching the Gentiles.

But how was it, one may say, that He did not feed the Jewish people? I answer, first, this too is accomplished: for by the term Israel in this place, he figuratively meant such as believed on Him from among the Jews. And Paul interpreting this, says, *"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel,"* [Romans 9:6] but as many as have been born by faith and promise. And if He did not feed them all, this is their own fault and blame. For when they ought to have worshipped with the wise men, and have glorified God that such a time had come, doing away all their sins (for not a word was spoken to them of judgments set, or of accounts to be given, but of a mild and meek Shepherd); they for their part do just the contrary, and are troubled, and make disturbance, and go on continually framing plots without end.

3. *"Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared:"* [Matthew 2:7]

Attempting to slay that which was born—an act of extreme idiocy not of madness only; since what had been said and done was enough to have withholden him from any such attempt. For those occurrences were not after the manner of man. A star, I mean, calling the wise men from on high; and barbarians making so long a pilgrimage, to worship Him that lay in swaddling clothes and a manger; and prophets too from of old, proclaiming beforehand all this—these and all the rest were more than human events: but nevertheless, none of these things restrained him. For such a thing is wickedness. It falls foul of itself, and is ever attempting impossibilities. And mark his utter folly. If on the one hand he believed the prophecy, and accounted it to be unchangeable, it was quite clear that he was attempting impossibilities; if again he disbelieved, and did not expect that those sayings would come to pass, he need not have been in fear and alarm, nor have formed any plot on that behalf. So that in either way his craft was superfluous.

And this too came of the utmost folly, to think that the wise men would make more account of him than of the Child that was born, for the sake of which they had come so long a journey. For if, before they saw, they were so inflamed with longing for Him; after they had seen with their eyes, and been confirmed by the prophecy, how hoped he to persuade them to betray the young Child to him?

Nevertheless, many as were the reasons to withhold him, he made the attempt; and having *"privily called the wise men, he inquired of them."* Because he thought that Jews would be concerned in favor of the Child, and he never could expect that they would fall away unto such madness as to be willing to give up to His enemies their Protector and Saviour, and Him who had come for the deliverance of their nation. On account of this he both calls them privily, and seeks the time not of the Child, but of the star: thereby marking out the object of his chase so as to include far more than it. For the star, I think, must have appeared a long time before. It was a long time which the wise men had to spend on their journey. In order, therefore, that they might present themselves just after His birth (it being meet for Him to be worshipped in His very swaddling clothes, that the marvellous and strange nature of the thing might appear), the star, a long time before, makes itself visible. Whereas if at the moment of His birth in Palestine, and not before, it had been seen by them in the East, they, consuming a long time in their journey, would not have seen Him in swaddling clothes on their arrival. As to his slaying the children *"from two years old and under,"* let us not marvel; for his wrath and dread, for the sake of a fuller security, added very much to the time, so that not one might escape.

Having therefore called them, he says, *"Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when you have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also."* [Matthew 2:8]

Do you see his extreme folly? Why, if you say these things in sincerity, wherefore do you inquire privily? But if intending to plot against Him, how is it you do not perceive, that from the fact of their being asked secretly the wise men will be able to perceive your craft? But as I have already said, a soul taken captive by any wickedness becomes more utterly senseless than any thing.

And he said not, "*go and learn concerning the King,*" but "*concerning the young Child;*" for he could not even endure to call Him by the name of His dominion.

4. But the wise men perceive nothing of this, by reason of their exceeding reverence (for they never could have expected that he could have gone on to so great wickedness, and would have attempted to form plots against a dispensation so marvellous): and they depart suspecting none of these things, but from what was in themselves auguring all that would be in the rest of mankind.

"And, lo! The star, which they saw in the east, went before them."

[Matthew 2:9]

For therefore only was it hidden, that having lost their guide, they might come to be obliged to make inquiry of the Jews, and so the matter might be made evident to all. Since after they have made inquiries, and have had His enemies for informants, it appears to them again. And mark how excellent was the order; how in the first place after the star the people of the Jews receives them, and the king, and these bring in the prophecy to explain what had appeared: how next, after the prophet, an angel again took them up and taught them all things; but for a time they journey from Jerusalem to Bethlehem by the guidance of the star, the star again journeying with them from that place also; that hence too you might learn, that this was not one of the ordinary stars, for there is not so much as one

star that has this nature. And it not merely moved, but "*went before them*," drawing and guiding them on in mid-day.

"But what need of this star any more," one may ask, *"when the place was ascertained?"* In order that the Child also might be seen. For there was not anything to make Him manifest, since the house was not conspicuous, neither was His mother glorious, or distinguished. There was need then of the star, to set them by the place. Wherefore it re-appears on their coming out of Jerusalem, and stays not, before it has reached the manger.

And marvel was linked on to marvel; for both were strange things, as well the magi worshipping, as the star going before them; and enough to attract even such as were made all of stone. For if the wise men had said, they had heard prophets say these things, or that angels had discoursed with them in private, they might have been disbelieved; but now, when the vision of the star appeared on high, even they that were exceeding shameless had their mouths stopped.

Moreover, the star, when it stood over the young Child, stayed its course again: which thing itself also was of a greater power than belongs to a star, now to hide itself, now to appear, and having appeared to stand still. Hence they too received an increase of faith. For this cause they rejoiced also, that they had found what they were seeking, that they had proved messengers of truth, that not without fruit had they come so great a journey; so great a longing (so to speak) had they for Christ. For first it came and stood over His very head, showing that what is born is Divine; next standing there, it leads them to worship Him; being not simply barbarians, but the wiser sort among them.

Do you see, with how great fitness the star appeared? Why; because even after the prophecy, and after the interpretation of the chief priests and scribes, they still had their minds turned towards it.

5. Shame upon Marcion, shame upon Paul of Samosata, for refusing to see what those wise men saw—the forefathers of the Church; for I am not ashamed so to call them. Let Marcion be ashamed, beholding God worshipped in the flesh. Let Paul be ashamed, beholding Him worshipped as not being merely a man. As to His being in the flesh, that first is signified by the swaddling clothes and the manger; as to their not worshipping Him as a mere man, they declare it, by offering Him, at that unripe age, such gifts as were meet to be offered to God. And together with them let the Jews also be ashamed, seeing themselves anticipated by barbarians and magi, while they submit not so much as to come after them. For indeed what happened then was a type of the things to come, and from the very beginning it was shown that the Gentiles would anticipate their nation.

"But how was it," one may ask, "that not at the beginning, but afterwards, He said, 'Go, and make disciples of all nations'?" Because the occurrence was a type, as I said, of the future, and a sort of declaration of it beforehand. For the natural order was that Jews should come unto Him first; but forasmuch as they of their own choice gave up their proper benefit, the order of things was inverted. Since not even in this instance should the wise men have come before the Jews, nor should persons from so great a distance have anticipated those who were settled about the very city, nor should those who had heard nothing have prevented them that were nurtured in so many prophecies. But because they were exceedingly ignorant of their own blessings, those from Persia anticipate those at Jerusalem. And this indeed is what Paul also says: *"It was necessary that the word of the Lord should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you have judged yourselves unworthy, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] For even though before they did not obey, at any rate when they heard it

from the wise men, they ought to have made all haste; but they would not. Therefore, while those are slumbering, these run before.

6. Let us then also follow the magi, let us separate ourselves from our barbarian customs, and make our distance therefrom great, that we may see Christ, since they too, had they not been far from their own country, would have missed seeing Him. Let us depart from the things of earth. For so the wise men, while they were in Persia, saw but the star, but after they had departed from Persia, they beheld the Sun of Righteousness. Or rather, they would not have seen so much as the star, unless they had readily risen up from thence. Let us then also rise up; though all men be troubled, let us run to the house of the young Child; though kings, though nations, though tyrants interrupt this our path, let not our desire pass away. For so shall we thoroughly repel all the dangers that beset us. Since these too, except they had seen the young Child, would not have escaped their danger from the king. Before seeing the young Child, fears and dangers and troubles pressed upon them from every side; but after the adoration, it is calm and security; and no longer a star but an angel receives them, having become priests from the act of adoration; for we see that they offered gifts also.

Therefore likewise leave the Jewish people, the troubled city, the blood-thirsty tyrant, the pomp of the world, and hasten to Bethlehem, where is the [Acts 13:46] house of the spiritual Bread. For though you be a shepherd, and come hither, you will behold the young Child in an inn: though you be a king, and approach not here, your purple robe will profit you nothing; though you be one of the wise men, this will be no hindrance to you; only let your coming be to honor and adore, not to spurn the Son of God; only do this with trembling and joy: for it is possible for both of these to concur in one.

But take heed that you be not like Herod, and say, "*that I may come and worship Him,*" and when you have come, be minded to slay Him. For him do they resemble, who partake of the mysteries unworthily: it being said, that such a one "*shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.*" [1 Corinthians 11:27] Yes; for they have in themselves the tyrant who is grieved at Christ's kingdom, him that is more wicked than Herod of old, even Mammon. For he would fain have the dominion, and sends them that are his own to worship in appearance, but slaying while they worship. Let us fear then, lest at any time, while we have the appearance of suppliants and worshippers, we should in deed show forth the contrary.

And let us cast everything out of our hands when we are to worship; though it be gold that we have, let us offer it unto him and not bury it. For if those barbarians then offered it for honor, what will become of you, not giving even to Him that has need? If those men journeyed so far to see Him newly born, what sort of excuse will you have, not going out of your way one alley's length, that you may visit Him sick or in bonds? And yet when they are sick or in bonds, even our enemies have our pity; yours is denied even to your Benefactor and Lord. And they offered gold, you hardly give bread. They saw the star and were glad, you, seeing Christ Himself a stranger and naked, are not moved.

For which of you, for Christ's sake, has made so long a pilgrimage, you that have received countless benefits, as these barbarians, or rather, these wiser than the wisest philosophers? And why say I, so long a journey? Nay, many of our women are so delicate, that they go not over so much as one crossing of the streets to behold Him on the spiritual manger, unless they can have mules to draw them. And others being able to walk, yet prefer to their attendance here, some a crowd of worldly business, some the theatres. Whereas the barbarians accomplished so great a journey for His

sake, before seeing Him; you do not emulate them even after you have seen Him, but forsake Him after seeing Him, and run to see the stage player. (For I touch again on the same subjects, as I did also of late.) And seeing Christ lying in the manger, you leave Him, that you may see women on the stage.

7. What thunderbolts do not these things deserve? For tell me, if any one were to lead you into a palace, and show you the king on his throne, would you indeed choose to see the theatre instead of those things? And yet even in the palace there is nothing to gain; but here a spiritual well of fire gushes up out of this table. And you leave this, and runnest down to the theatre, to see women swimming, and nature put to open dishonor, leaving Christ sitting by the well? Yes: for now, as of old, He sits down by the well, not discoursing to a Samaritan woman, but to a whole city. Or perchance now too with a Samaritan woman only. For neither now is any one with Him; but some with their bodies only, and some not even with these. But nevertheless, He retires not, but remains, and asks of us to drink, not water, but holiness, for *"His holy things He gives unto the holy."* For it is not water that He gives us from this fountain, but living blood; and it is indeed a symbol of death, but it has become the cause of life.

But you, leaving the fountain of blood, the awful cup, go your way unto the fountain of the devil, to see a harlot swim, and to suffer shipwreck of the soul. For that water is a sea of lasciviousness, not drowning bodies, but working shipwreck of souls. And whereas she swims with naked body, you beholding, are sunk into the deep of lasciviousness. For such is the devil's net; it sinks, not them that go down into the water itself, but them that sit above more than such as wallow therein; and it chokes them more grievously than Pharaoh, who was of old sunk in the sea with his horses and his chariots. And if souls could but be seen, I could show you many floating on these waters, like the bodies of the Egyptians at that time. But what is

still more grievous is this, that they even call such utter destruction a delight, and they term the sea of perdition a channel for a pleasure voyage. Yet surely one might easier pass over in safety the Ægean or the Tuscan sea, than this spectacle. For in the first place, through a whole night the devil preoccupies their souls with the expectation of it; then having shown them the expected object, he binds them at once, and makes them captives. For think not, because you have not been joined unto the harlot, you are clean from the sin; for in the purpose of your heart you have done it all. Since if you be taken by lust, you have kindled the flame up higher; if you feel nothing at what you see, you deserve a heavier charge, for being a scandal to others, by encouraging them in these spectacles, and for polluting your own eye-sight, and together with your eye-sight, your soul.

However, not merely to find fault, come let us devise a mode of correction too. What then will the mode be? I would commit you to your own wives, that they may instruct you. It is true, according to Paul's law, [1 Corinthians 14:34-35] you ought to be the teachers. But since that order is reversed by sin, and the body has come to be above, and the head beneath, let us even take this way.

But if you are ashamed to have a woman for your teacher, fly from sin, and you will quickly be able to mount up on the throne which God has given you. Since so long as you sin the Scripture sends you not to a woman only, but even to things irrational, and those of the viler sort; yea, it is not ashamed to send you who art honored with reason, as a disciple to the ant. [Proverbs 6:6] Plainly this is no charge against the Scripture, but against them that so betray their own nobility of race. This then we will do likewise; and for the present we will commit you to your wife; but if you despise her, we will send you away to the school of the very brutes, and will

point out to you how many birds, fishes, four-footed beasts, and creeping things are found more honorable, and chaster than you.

If now you are ashamed, and dost blush at the comparison, mount up to your own nobility, and fly the sea of hell, and the flood of fire, I mean the pool in the theatre. For this pool introduces to that sea, and kindles that abyss of flame. Since if *"he that looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery,"* [Matthew 5:28] he who is forced even to see her naked, how does he not become ten thousandfold a captive? The flood in the days of Noah did not so utterly destroy the race of men as these swimming women drown all that are there with great disgrace. For as to that rain, though it wrought indeed a death of the body, yet did it repress the wickedness of the soul; but this has the contrary effect; while the bodies remain, it destroys the soul. And ye, when there is a question of precedence, claim to take place of the whole word, forasmuch as our city first crowned itself with the name of Christian; but in the competition of chastity, you are not ashamed to be behind the rudest cities.

8. *"Well,"* says one, *"and what do you require us to do? To occupy the mountains, and become monks?"* Why it is this which makes me sigh, that you think them alone to be properly concerned with decency and chastity; and yet assuredly Christ made His laws common to all. Thus, when He says, *"if any one look on a woman to lust after her,"* He speaks not to the solitary, but to him also that has a wife; since in fact that mount was at that time filled with all kinds of persons of that description. Form then in your mind an image of that amphitheatre, and hate this, which is the devil's. Neither condemn the severity of my speech. For I neither *"forbid to marry,"* [1 Timothy 4:2] nor hinder your taking pleasure; but I would have this be done in chastity, not with shame, and reproach, and imputations without end. I do not make it a law that you are to occupy the mountains and the

deserts, but to be good and considerate and chaste, dwelling in the midst of the city. For in fact all our laws are common to the monks also, except marriage; yea rather, even with respect to this, Paul commands us to put ourselves altogether on a level with them; saying, *"For the fashion of this world passes away:"* that *"they that have wives be as though they had none."*

"Wherefore" (so he speaks) *"I do not bid you take possession of the summits of the mountains; it is true I could wish it, since the cities imitate the things that were done in Sodom; nevertheless, I do not enforce this. Abide, having house and children and wife; only do not insult your wife, nor put your children to shame, neither bring into your house the infection from the theatre."* Do you not hear Paul saying, *"The husband has not power of his own body, but the wife,"* [1 Corinthians 7:4] and setting down laws common to both? But you, if your wife be continually thrusting herself into a public assembly, art severe in blaming her; but yourself, spending whole days on public shows, you do not account worthy of blame. Yea, touching your wife's modesty you are so strict as even to go beyond necessity or measure, and not to allow her so much as indispensable absences; but to yourself you deem all things lawful. Yet Paul allows you not, who gives the wife likewise the same authority, for thus he speaks: *"Let the husband render unto the wife due honor."* What sort of honor then is this, when you insult her in the chiefest things, and givest up her body to harlots (for your body is hers); when you bring tumults and wars into your house, when you do in the market place such things, as being related by yourself to your wife at home, overwhelm her with shame, and put to shame also your daughter if present, and more than them, surely, yourself? For you must necessarily either be silent, or behave yourself so unseemly, that it would be just for your very servants to be scourged for it. What plea then

will you have, I pray you, beholding, as you do, with great eagerness, things which even to name is disgraceful; preferring to all sights these, which even to recount is intolerable?

Now then for a season, in order not to be too burdensome, I will here bring my discourse to an end. But if you continue in the same courses, I will make the knife sharper, and the cut deeper; and I will not cease, till I have scattered the theatre of the devil, and so purified the assembly of the Church. For in this way we shall both be delivered from the present disgrace, and shall reap the fruit of the life to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 8 on Matthew

Matt. II. 2.

"And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother."

How then says Luke, that He was lying in the manger? Because at the birth indeed she presently laid Him there (for, as was not unlikely, in that large assemblage for the taxing, they could find no house; which Luke also signifies, by saying, *"Because there was no room, she laid Him"* there); but afterwards she took Him up, and held Him on her knees. For no sooner was she arrived at Bethlehem than she brought her pangs to an end, that you may thence also learn the whole dispensation, and that these things were not done at random, or by chance, but that they all were in course of accomplishment, according to some Divine foreknowledge, and prophetic order.

But what was it that induced them to worship? For neither was the Virgin conspicuous, nor the house distinguished, nor was any other of the things which they saw apt to amaze or attract them. Yet they not only worship, but also *"open their treasures,"* and *"offer gifts;"* and gifts, not as to a man, but as to God. For the frankincense and the myrrh were a symbol of this. What then was their inducement? That which wrought upon them to set out from home and to come so long a journey; and this was both the star, and the illumination wrought of God in their mind, guiding them little by little to the more perfect knowledge. For, surely, had it not been so, all that was in sight being ordinary, they would not have shown so great honor. Therefore none of the outward circumstances was great in that instance, but it was a manger, and a shed, and a mother in poor estate; to set before your

eyes, naked *and bare*, those wise men's love of wisdom, and to prove to you, that not as mere man they approached Him, but as a God, and Benefactor. Wherefore neither were they offended by ought of what they saw outwardly, but even worshipped, and brought gifts; gifts not only free from Judaical grossness, in that they sacrificed not sheep and calves, but also coming near to the self-devotion of the Church, for it was knowledge and obedience and love that they offered unto Him.

"And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return unto Herod, they departed into their own country another way." [Matthew 2:12]

See from this also their faith, how they were not offended, but are docile, and considerate; neither are they troubled, nor reason with themselves, saying, *"And yet, if this Child be great, and has any might, what need of flight, and of a clandestine retreat? And wherefore can it be, that when we have come openly and with boldness, and have stood against so great a people, and against a king's madness, the angel sends us out of the city as runaways and fugitives?"* But none of these things did they either say or think. For this most especially belongs to faith, not to seek an account of what is enjoined, but merely to obey the commandments laid upon us.

2. *"And when they were departed, behold, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt."* [Matthew 2:13]

There is something here worth inquiring into, both touching the magi, and touching the Child; for if even they were not troubled, but received all with faith, it is worthy of examination on our part, why they and the young Child are not preserved, continuing there, but they as fugitives go into Persia, He with His mother into Egypt. But what? Should He have fallen into the hands of Herod, and having fallen, not have been cut off? Nay, He

would not have been thought to have taken flesh upon Him; the greatness of the Economy would not have been believed.

For if, while these things are taking place, and many circumstances are being ordered mysteriously after the manner of men, some have dared to say that His assumption of our flesh is a fable; in what degree of impiety would they not have been wrecked had He done all in a manner becoming His Godhead, and according to His own power?

As to the wise men, He sends them off quickly, at once both commissioning them as teachers to the land of the Persians, and at the same time intercepting the madness of the king, that he might learn that he was attempting things impossible, and might quench his wrath, and desist from this his vain labor. For not alone openly to subdue His enemies, but also to deceive them with ease, is worthy of His power. Thus, for example, He deceived the Egyptians also in the case of the Jews, and having power to transfer their wealth openly into the hands of the Hebrews, He bids them do this secretly and with craft; and this surely, not less than the other miracles, made Him an object of terror to His enemies. At least, they of Ascalon, and all the rest, when they had taken the ark, and being smitten, did after that devise their countrymen not to fight, nor to set themselves against Him, with the other miracles brought this also forward, saying, *"Wherefore harden ye your hearts, as Egypt and Pharaoh hardened? When He had mocked them, did He not after that send forth His people, and they departed?"* Now this they said, as accounting this *fresh* one not inferior to those other signs that had been done openly, towards the demonstration of His power, and of His greatness. And the like ensued on this occasion too; a thing sufficient to astonish the tyrant. For consider what it was natural for Herod to feel, and how his very breath would be stopped, deceived as he was by the wise men, and thus laughed to scorn. For what, if he did not

become better? It is not His fault, who marvellously ordered all this, but it is the excess of Herod's madness, not yielding even to those things which had virtue to have persuaded him, and deterred him from his wickedness, but going on still further, to receive a yet sharper punishment for folly so great.

3. But wherefore, it may be said, is the young Child sent into Egypt? In the first place, the evangelist himself has mentioned the cause, saying, *"That it might be fulfilled, Out of Egypt have I called my Son."* And at the same time beginnings of fair hopes were thenceforth proclaimed before to the world. That is, since Babylon and Egypt, most in the whole earth, were burnt up with the flame of ungodliness, He, signifying from the first that He means to correct and amend both, and inducing men hereby to expect His bounties in regard of the whole world likewise, sent to the one the wise men, the other He Himself visited with His mother.

And besides what I have said, there is another lesson also, which we are hereby taught, tending not slightly to true self-command in us. Of what kind then is it? To look from the beginning for temptations and plots. See, for instance, how this was the case even at once from His swaddling clothes. Thus you see at His birth, first a tyrant raging, then flight ensuing, and departure beyond the border; and for no crime His mother is exiled into the land of the barbarians: that you, hearing these things (supposing you thought worthy to minister to any spiritual matter, and then to see yourself suffering incurable ills, and enduring countless dangers), should not be greatly troubled, nor say, *"What can this be? Yet surely I ought to be crowned and celebrated, and be glorious and illustrious for fulfilling the Lord's commandment:"* but that having this example, you might bear all things nobly, knowing that this especially is the order of all things spiritual, to have everywhere temptations in the same lot with them. See at least how

this is the case not only with regard to the mother of the young Child, but also of those barbarians; since they for their part retire secretly in the condition of fugitives; and she again, who had never passed over the threshold of her house, is commanded to undergo so long a journey of affliction, on account of this wonderful birth, and her spiritual travail.

And behold a wonder again. Palestine plots, and Egypt receives and preserves Him that is the object of the plots. For, as it appears, not only in the instance of the sons of the patriarch did types take place, but also in our Lord's own case. In many instances, we are sure, His doings at that time were prophetic declarations of what was to happen afterwards; as, for example, in the matter of the ass and the colt.

4. Now the angel having thus appeared, talks not with Mary, but with Joseph; and what says he? *"Arise, and take the young Child and His mother."* Here, he says not any more, *"your wife,"* but *"His mother."* For after that the birth had taken place, and the suspicion was done away, and the husband appeased, thenceforth the angel talks openly, calling neither child nor wife his, but *"take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt;"* and he mentions the cause of the flight: *"For Herod,"* says he, *"will seek the young Child's life."*

Joseph, when he had heard these things, was not offended, nether did he say, *"The thing is hard to understand: Did you not say just now, that He should save His people?"* and now *He saves not even Himself: but we must fly, and go far from home, and be a long time away: the facts are contrary to the promise."* Nay, none of these things does he say (for the man was faithful): neither is he curious about the time of his return; and this though the angel had put it indefinitely thus: *"Be there until I tell you."* But nevertheless, not even at this did he shudder, but submits and obeys, undergoing all the trials with joy.

And this because God, who is full of love to man, did with these hardships mingle things pleasant also; which indeed is His way with regard to all the saints, making neither their dangers nor their refreshment continual, but weaving the life of all righteous men, out of both the one and the other. This very thing He did here also: for consider, Joseph saw the Virgin with child; this cast him into agitation and the utmost trouble, for he was suspecting the damsel of adultery. But straightway the angel was at hand to do away his suspicion, and remove his fears; and seeing the young child born, he reaped the greatest joy. Again, this joy no trifling danger succeeds, the city being troubled, and the king in his madness seeking after Him that was born. But this trouble was again succeeded by another joy; the star, and the adoration of the wise men. Again, after this pleasure, fear and danger; "*For Herod,*" says he, "*is seeking the young Child's life,*" and He must needs fly and withdraw Himself as any mortal might: the working of miracles not being seasonable as yet. For if from His earliest infancy He had shown forth wonders, He would not have been accounted a Man.

Because of this, let me add, neither is a temple framed at once; but a regular conception takes place, and a time of nine months, and pangs, and a delivery, and giving suck, and silence for so long a space, and He awaits the age proper to manhood; that by all means acceptance might be won for the mystery of His Economy.

"*But wherefore then,*" one may say, "*were even these signs wrought at the beginning?*" For His mother's sake; for the sake of Joseph and of Simeon, who was presently to depart; for the sake of the shepherds and of the wise men; for the sake of the Jews. Since they, had they been willing to mind diligently what was taking place, would from this event also have reaped no small advantage in regard of what was to come.

But if the prophets do not mention what relates to the wise men, be not troubled; for they neither foretold all things, nor were they silent touching all. For as without any warning to see those things coming to pass, would naturally occasion much astonishment and trouble; so also to have been informed of all would dispose the hearer to sleep, and would have left nothing for the evangelists to add.

5. And if the Jews should raise a question touching the prophecy, and say, that the words, *"Out of Egypt have I called my Son,"* were uttered concerning themselves; we would tell them, This is a law of prophecy, that in many cases much that is spoken of one set of persons is fulfilled in another; of which kind is that which is said touching Simeon and Levi, *"I will divide them,"* says He, *"in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."* [Genesis 49:7] And yet not in themselves did this come to pass, but in their descendants; and Noah's saying again about Canaan, came to pass in the Gibeonites, Canaan's descendants. And that concerning Jacob one may see to have so come to pass; for those blessings which say, *"Be lord over your brother, and let your father's sons worship you,"* [Genesis 27:19] had no accomplishment in himself (how could they, he being in fear and trembling, and worshipping his brother over and over again? [Genesis 33:3]), but in his offspring they had. The very same may be said in this case also. For which may be called the truer son of God, he that worships a calf, and is joined to Baalpeor and sacrifices his sons to devils? Or He that is a Son by nature, and honors Him that begot Him? So that, except this man had come, the prophecy would not have received, its due fulfillment. It is worth observing, too, that the evangelist intimates the same by the phrase, *"that it might be fulfilled;"* implying that it would not have been fulfilled, unless He had come.

And this makes the Virgin also in no common degree glorious and distinguished; that the very thing which was the whole people's special endowment in the way of praise, she also might thenceforth have for her own. I mean, that whereas they were proud of their coming up from Egypt, and used to boast of it (which indeed the prophet also was hinting at, when he said, "*Have I not brought up the strangers from Cappadocia, and the Assyrians from the pit*"), He makes this pre-eminence belong to the Virgin likewise.

Rather, however, both the people and the patriarch, going down there, and coming up thence, were together completing the type of this *His* return. Thus, as they went down to avoid death by famine, so He death by conspiracy. But whereas they on their arrival were for the time delivered from the famine, this man, when He had gone down, sanctified the whole land, by setting His foot thereon.

At least it is observable how, in the midst of His humiliations, the tokens of His Godhead are disclosed. Thus, first of all, the angel saying, "*Flee into Egypt,*" did not promise to journey with them, either in their descent or return; intimating that they have a great fellow-traveller, the Child that had been born; such an one as actually changed all things immediately on His appearing, and wrought so that His enemies should minister in many ways to this Economy. Thus magi and barbarians, leaving the superstition of their fathers, have come to worship: thus Augustus ministers to the birth at Bethlehem by the decree for the taxing; Egypt receives and preserves Him, driven from His home, and plotted against, and obtains a sort of first impulse towards her union unto Him; so that when in after-time she should hear Him preached by the apostles, she might have this at least to glory of, as having received Him first. And yet this privilege

did belong unto Palestine alone; but the second proved more fervent than the first.

6. And now, should you come unto the desert of Egypt, you will see this desert become better than any paradise, and ten thousand choirs of angels in human forms, and nations of martyrs, and companies of virgins, and all the devil's tyranny put down, while Christ's kingdom shines forth in its brightness. And the mother of poets, and wise men, and magicians, were but inventions of sottish old women, but the real philosophy, and worthy of heaven, is this, which was declared unto them by the fishermen. And for this very cause, together with their so great exactness in doctrine, they exhibit also by their life that extreme seriousness. For when they have stripped themselves of all that they have, and are crucified to the whole world, they urge their course on again yet farther, using the labor of their body for the nourishment of them that be in need. For neither, because they fast and watch, do they think it meet to be idle by day; but their nights they spend in the holy hymns and in vigils, and their days in prayers, and at the same time in laboring with their own hands imitating the zeal of the apostle. For if he when the whole world was looking unto him for the sake of nourishing them that were in need, both occupied a workshop, and practised a craft, and being thus employed did not so much as sleep by night; how much more, say they, is it meet that we, who have taken up our abode in the wilderness, and have nothing to do with the turmoils in the cities, should use the leisure of our quiet for spiritual labors!

Let us then be ashamed all of us, both they that are rich, and they that are poor, when those having nothing at all but a body only and hands, force their way on and strive eagerly to find thence a supply for the poor; while we, having endless stores within, touch not even our superfluities for these

objects. What kind of plea shall we have then, I pray you? And what sort of excuse?

Yet further consider, how of old these Egyptians were both avaricious, and gluttonous, together with their other vices. For there were the flesh-pots [Exodus 16:3] which the Jews remember; there, the great tyranny of the belly. Nevertheless, having a willing mind, they changed: and having caught fire from Christ, they set off at once on their voyage towards heaven; and though more ardent than the rest of mankind, and more headstrong, both in anger, and in bodily pleasures, they imitate the incorporeal powers in meekness, and in the rest of that freedom from passions which pertains unto self-denial.

7. Now if any man has been in the country, he knows what I say. But if he have never entered those tabernacles, let him call to mind him who even until now is in the mouths of all men—him whom, after the apostles, Egypt brought forth—the blessed and great Antony; and let him put it to himself, *"This man, too, was born in the same country with Pharaoh; nevertheless he was not thereby damaged, but both had a divine vision vouchsafed him, and showed forth such a life as the laws of Christ require."* And this any man shall know perfectly, when he has read the book that contains the history of that man's life; in which also he will perceive much prophecy. I allude to his prediction about those infected with the errors of Arius, and his statement of the mischief that would arise from them; God even then having shown them to him, and sketched out before his eyes all that was coming. A thing which most especially (among the rest) serves to demonstrate the truth, that no person, belonging to the heresies without, has such a man to mention. But, not to depend on us for this information, look earnestly into what is written in that book, and you will learn all exactly, and thence be instructed in much self-denial.

And this advice I give, that we not merely peruse what is written there, but that we also emulate it, and make neither place, nor education, nor forefathers' wickedness an excuse. For if we will take heed to ourselves, none of these things shall be an hindrance to us, since even Abraham had an ungodly father, [Joshua 24:2] but he inherited not his wickedness; and Hezekiah, Ahaz: yet nevertheless he became dear to God. And Joseph too when in the midst of Egypt, adorned himself with the crowns of temperance; and the Three Children no less in the midst of Babylon, and of the palace, when a table like those at Sybaris was set before them, showed the highest self-denial; and Moses also in Egypt, and Paul in the whole world; but nothing was to any one of these an hindrance in the race of virtue.

Let us then, bearing in mind all these things, put out of the way these our superfluous pleas and excuses, and apply ourselves to those toils which the cause of virtue requires. For thus shall we both attract to ourselves more favor from God, and persuade Him to assist us in our struggles, and we shall obtain the eternal blessings; unto which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and victory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 9 on Matthew

Matt. II. 16.

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding angry."

Yet surely it was a case not for anger, but for fear and awe: he ought to have perceived that he was attempting impossible things. But he is not refrained. For when a soul is insensible and incurable, it yields to none of the medicines given by God. See for example this man following up his former efforts, and adding many murders to one, and hurried down the steep any whither. For driven wild by this anger, and envy, as by some demon, he takes account of nothing, but rages even against nature herself, and his anger against the wise men who had mocked him he vents upon the children that had done no wrong: venturing then in Palestine upon a deed akin to the things that had been done in Egypt. For he *"sent forth,"* it is said, *"and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men."*

Here attend to me carefully. Because many things are uttered by many very idly touching these children, and the course of events is charged with injustice, and some of these express their perplexity about it in a more moderate way, others with more of audaciousness and frenzy. In order then that we may free these of their madness and those of their perplexity, suffer us to discourse a little upon this topic. Plainly, then, if this be their charge, that the children were left to be slain, they should find fault likewise with the slaughter of the soldiers that kept Peter. [Acts 12:19] For as here, when the young child had fled, other children are massacred in the place of Him

who was sought; even so then, too, Peter having been delivered from his prison and chains by the angel, one of like name with this tyrant, and like temper too, when he had sought him, and found him not, slew instead of him the soldiers that kept him.

"But what is this?" it may be said; *"why this is not a solution, but an enhancement of our difficulty."* I know it too, and for this intent I bring forward all such cases, that to all I may adduce one and the same solution. What then is the solution of these things? Or what fair account of them can we give? That Christ was not the cause of their slaughter, but the king's cruelty; as indeed neither was Peter to those others, but the madness of Herod. For if he had seen the wall broken through, or the doors overthrown, he might, perhaps, have had ground to accuse the soldiers that kept the apostle, of neglect; but now when all things continued in due form, and the doors were thrown wide open, and the chains fastened to the hands of them that kept him (for in fact they were bound unto him), he might have inferred from these things (that is, if he had been strictly doing a judge's office on the matters before him), that the event was not of human power or craft, but of some divine and wonder-working power; he might have adored the doer of these things, instead of waging war with the sentinels. For God had so done all that He did, that so far from exposing the keepers, He was by their means leading the king unto the truth. But if he proved senseless, what signifies to the skillful Physician of Souls, managing all things to do good, the insubordination of him that is diseased?

And just this one may say in the present case likewise. For, wherefore are you angry, O Herod, at being mocked of the wise men? Did you not know that the birth was divine? Did you not summon the chief priests? Did you not gather together the scribes? Did not they, being called, bring the prophet also with them into your court of judgment, proclaiming these

things beforehand from of old? Did you not see how the old things agreed with the new? Did you not hear that a star also ministered to these men? Did you not reverence the zeal of the barbarians? Did you not marvel at their boldness? Were you not horror-struck at the truth of the prophet? Did you not from the former things perceive the very last also? Wherefore did you not reason with yourself from all these things, that this event was not of the craft of the wise men, but of a Divine Power, duly dispensing all things? And even if you were deceived by the wise men, what is that to the young children, who have done no wrong?

2. *"Yea," says one, "Herod you have full well deprived of excuse, and proved him blood-thirsty; but you have not yet solved the question about the injustice of what took place. For if he did unjustly, wherefore did God permit it?"* Now, what should we say to this? That which I do not cease to say continually, in church, in the market-place and everywhere; that which I also wish you carefully to keep in mind, for it is a sort of rule for us, suited to every such perplexity. What then is our rule, and what our saying? That although there be many that injure, yet is there not so much as one that is injured. And in order that the riddle may not disturb you too much, I add the solution too with all speed. I mean, that what we may suffer unjustly from any one, it tells either to the doing away of our sins, God so putting that wrong to our account; or unto the recompense of rewards.

And that what I may say may be clearer, let us conduct our argument in the way of illustration. As thus: suppose a certain servant who owes much money to his master, and then that this servant has been despitefully used by unjust men, and robbed of some of his goods. If then the master, in whose power it was to stay the plunderer and wrong doer, should not indeed restore that same property, but should reckon what was taken away towards what was owed him by his servant, is the servant then injured? By no

means. But what if he should repay him even more? Has he not then even gained more than he has lost? Every one, I suppose, perceives it.

Now this same reckoning we are to make in regard of our own sufferings. For as to the fact, that in consideration of what we may suffer wrongfully, we either have sins done away, or receive more glorious crowns, if the amount of our sins be not so great: hear what Paul says concerning him that had committed fornication, *"Deliver ye such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved."*

[1 Corinthians 5:5] *"But what is this?"* you may say, *"for the discourse was about them that were injured by others, not about them that are corrected by their teachers."* I might answer, that there is no difference; for the question was, whether to suffer evil be not an indignity to the sufferer. But, to bring my argument nearer the very point inquired of; remember David, how, when he saw Shimei at a certain time assailing him, and trampling on his affliction, and pouring on him revilings without end, his captains desiring to slay him, he utterly forbade them, saying, *"Let him curse, that the Lord may look upon mine abasement, and that he may requite me good for this cursing this day."* And in the Psalms too in his chanting, he said, *"Consider mine enemies, that they are multiplied, and they hate me with unjust hatred,"* and *"forgive all my sins."* And Lazarus again for the same cause enjoyed remission, having in this life suffered innumerable evils. They therefore who are wronged, are not wronged if they bear nobly all that they suffer, yea, rather they gain even more abundantly, whether they be smitten of God, or scourged by the devil.

3. *"But what kind of sin had these children,"* it may be said, *"that they should do it away? For touching those who are of full age, and have been guilty of many negligences, one might with show of reason speak thus: but they who so underwent premature death, what sort of sins did they by their*

sufferings put away?" Did you not hear me say, that though there were no sins, there is a recompense of rewards hereafter for them that suffer ill here? Wherein then were the young children hurt in being slain for such a cause, and borne away speedily into that waveless harbor? *"Because,"* do you say, *"they would in many instances have achieved, had they lived, many and great deeds of goodness."* Why, for this cause He lays up for them beforehand no small reward, the ending their lives for such a cause. Besides, if the children were to have been any great persons, He would not have suffered them to be snatched away beforehand. For if they that eventually will live in continual wickedness are endured by Him with so great long-sufferings, much more would He not have suffered these to be so taken off had He foreknown they would accomplish any great things.

And these are the reasons we have to give; yet these are not all; but there are also others more mysterious than these, which He knows perfectly, who Himself orders these things. Let us then give up unto Him the more perfect understanding of this matter, and apply ourselves to what follows, and in the calamities of others let us learn to bear all things nobly. Yea, for it was no little scene of woe, which then befell Bethlehem, the children were snatched from their mother's breast, and dragged unto this unjust slaughter.

And if you are yet faint-hearted, and not equal to controlling yourself in these things, learn the end of him who dared all this, and recover yourself a little. For very quickly was he overtaken by punishment for these things; and he paid the due penalty of such an abominable act, ending his life by a grievous death, and more pitiable than that which he now dared inflict; suffering also countless additional ills, which you may know of by perusing Josephus' account of these events. But, lest we should make our discourse

long, and interrupt its continuity, we have not thought it necessary to insert that account in what we are saying.

4. *"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, [Jeremiah 31:15] saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."*
[Matthew 2:17-18]

Thus having filled the hearer with horror by relating these things: the slaughter so violent and unjust, so extremely cruel and lawless; he comforts him again, by saying, Not from God's wanting power to prevent it did all this take place, nor from any ignorance of His, but when He both knew it, and foretold it, and that loudly by His prophet. Be not troubled then, neither despond, looking unto His unspeakable providence, which one may most clearly see, alike by what He works, and by what He permits. And this He intimated in another place also, when discoursing to His disciples. I mean where, having forewarned them of the judgment seats, and executions, and of the wars of the world, and of the battle that knows no truce, to uphold their spirit and to comfort them He says, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father which is in Heaven."* [Matthew 10:29] These things He said, signifying that nothing is done without His knowledge, but while He knows all, yet not in all does He act. *"Be not then troubled,"* He says, *"neither be disturbed."* For if He know what ye suffer, and has power to hinder it, it is quite clear that it is in His providence and care for you that He does not hinder it. And this we ought to bear in mind in our own temptations also, and great will be the consolation we shall thence receive.

But what, it may be said, has Rachel to do with Bethlehem? For it says, *"Rachel weeping for her children."* And what has Rama to do with Rachel? Rachel was the mother of Benjamin, and on his death, they buried

her in the horse-course that was near this place. The tomb then being near, and the portion pertaining unto Benjamin her infant (for Rama was of the tribe of Benjamin), from the head of the tribe first, and next from the place of her sepulture, He naturally denominates her young children who were massacred. Then to show that the wound that befell her was incurable and cruel, He says, *"she would not be comforted because they are not."*

Hence again we are taught this, which I mentioned before, never to be confounded when what is happening is contrary to the promise of God. Behold, for instance, when He had come for the salvation of the people, or rather for the salvation of the world, of what kind were His beginnings. His mother, first, in flight; His birth-place is involved in irremediable calamities, and a murder is perpetrated of all murders the bitterest, and there is lamentation and great mourning, and wailings everywhere. But be not troubled; for He is wont ever to accomplish His own dispensations by their contraries, affording us from thence a very great demonstration of His power.

Thus did He lead on His own disciples also, and prepared them to do all their duty, bringing about things by their contraries, that the marvel might be greater. They, at any rate, being scourged and persecuted, and suffering terrors without end, did in this way get the better of them that were beating and persecuting them.

5. *"But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appears in a dream to Joseph saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel."* [Matthew 2:19-20]

He no more says *"fly,"* but *"go."* Do you see again after the temptation refreshment? Then after the refreshment danger again? In that he was freed indeed from his banishment, and came back again to his own country; and beheld the murderer of the children brought to the slaughter; but when he

has set foot on his own country, he finds again a remnant of the former perils, the son of the tyrant living, and being king.

But how did Archelaus reign over Judæa, when Pontius Pilate was governor? Herod's death had recently taken place, and the kingdom had not yet been divided into many parts; but as he had only just ended his life, the son for a while kept possession of the kingdom *"in the room of his father Herod;"* his brother also bearing this name, which is the reason why the evangelist added, *"in the room of his father Herod."*

It may be said, however, *"if he was afraid to settle in Judæa on account of Archelaus, he had cause to fear Galilee also on account of Herod."* I answer, By his changing the place, the whole matter was thenceforward thrown into shade; for the whole assault was upon *"Bethlehem and the coasts thereof."* Therefore now that the slaughter had taken place, the youth Archelaus had no other thought, but that the whole had come to an end, and that among the many, He that was sought had been destroyed. And besides, his father having come to such an end of his life before his eyes, he became for the future more cautious about farther proceedings, and about urging on that course of iniquity.

Joseph therefore comes to Nazareth, partly to avoid the danger, partly also delighting to abide in his native place. To give him the more courage, he receives also an oracle from the angel touching this matter. Luke, however, does not say that he came there by Divine warning, but that when they had fulfilled all the purification, they returned to Nazareth. [Luke 2:39] What then may one say? That Luke is giving an account of the time before the going down to Egypt, when he says these things. For He would not have brought them down there before the purification, in order that nothing should be done contrary to the law, but he waited for her to be purified, and to go to Nazareth, and that then they should go down to Egypt. Then, after

their return, He bids them go to Nazareth. But before this they were not warned of God to go there, but yearning after their native place, they did so of their own accord. For since they had gone up for no other cause but on account of the taxing, and had not so much as a place where to stay, when they had fulfilled that for which they had come up, they went down to Nazareth.

6. We see here the cause why the angel also, putting them at ease for the future, restores them to their home. And not even this simply, but he adds to it a prophecy, *"That it might be fulfilled,"* says he, *"which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."* [Matthew 2:23]

And what manner of prophet said this? Be not curious, nor overbusy. For many of the prophetic writings have been lost; and this one may see from the history of the Chronicles. For being negligent, and continually falling into ungodliness, some they suffered to perish, others they themselves burnt up and cut to pieces. The latter fact Jeremiah relates; [Jeremiah 36:23] the former, he who composed the fourth book of Kings, saying, that after a long time the book of Deuteronomy was hardly found, buried somewhere and lost. But if, when there was no barbarian there, they so betrayed their books, much more when the barbarians had overrun them. For as to the fact, that the prophet had foretold it, the apostles themselves in many places call Him a Nazarene.

"Was not this then," one may say, *"casting a shade over the prophecy touching Bethlehem?"* By no means: rather this very fact was sure greatly to stir up men, and to awaken them to the search of what was said of Him. Thus, for example, Nathanael too enters on the inquiry concerning Him, saying, *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* [John 1:46] For the place was of little esteem; or rather not that place only, but also the whole district of Galilee. Therefore the Pharisees said, *"Search and look,*

for out of Galilee arises no prophet." Nevertheless, He is not ashamed to be named even from thence, signifying that He needs not ought of the things of men; and His disciples also He chooses out of Galilee; everywhere cutting off the pretexts of them who are disposed to be remiss, and giving tokens that we have no need of outward things, if we practise virtue. For this cause He does not choose for Himself so much as a house; for "*the Son of Man,*" says He, "*has not where to lay His head;*" [Matthew 8:20] and when Herod is plotting against Him, He flees, and at His birth is laid in a manger, and abides in an inn, and takes a mother of low estate; teaching us to think no such thing a disgrace, and from the first outset trampling under foot the haughtiness of man, and bidding us give ourselves up to virtue only.

7. For why do you pride yourself on your country, when I am commanding you to be a stranger to the whole world? (so He speaks); when you have leave to become such as that all the universe shall not be worthy of you? For these things are so utterly contemptible, that they are not thought worthy of any consideration even among the philosophers of the Greeks, but are called *Externals*, and occupy the lowest place.

"*But yet Paul,*" one may say, "*allows them, saying on this wise, 'As touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake.'*" But tell me, when, and of what things was he discoursing, and to whom? Why, to those of Gentile origin, who were puffing themselves up on their faith, and exalting themselves against the Jews, and so breaking them off the more: to quell the swelling pride of the one, and to win over the others, and thoroughly excite them to the same emulation. For when he is speaking of those noble and great men, hear how he says, "*They that say these things, show plainly that they seek a country; and truly if they had been mindful of that from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire another, a better country.*" [Hebrews 11:14-

15] And again, *"These all died in faith, not having obtained the promises, but having seen them afar off, and embraced them."* And John too said unto those that were coming to him, *"Think not to say, We have Abraham to our father."* [Matthew 3:9] And Paul again, *"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither they, which are the children of the flesh, are they the children of God."* [Romans 9:6-8] For what were the sons of Samuel advantaged, tell me, by their father's nobleness, when they were not heirs of their father's virtue? And what profit had Moses' sons, not having emulated his perfection? Therefore neither did they inherit the dominion; but while they enrolled him as their father, the rule of the people passed away to another, to him who had become his son in the way of virtue. And what harm was it to Timothy, that he was of a Greek father? Or what on the other hand again was Noah's son profited by the virtue of his father, when he became a slave instead of free? Do you see, how little the nobleness of a father avails his children in the way of advocacy? For the wickedness of Ham's disposition overcame the laws of nature, and cast him not only out of the nobility which he had in respect of his father, but also out of his free estate. And what of Esau? Was he not son of Isaac, and had he not his father to stand his friend? Yea, his father too endeavored and desired that he should partake of the blessings, and he himself for the sake of this did all that was commanded him. Nevertheless, because he was untoward, none of these things profited him; but although he was by birth first, and had his father on his side doing everything for this object, yet not having God with him, he lost all.

But why do I speak of men? The Jews were sons of God, and gained nothing by this their high birth. Now if a man, having become a son of God, but failing to show forth an excellency meet for this noble birth, is even punished the more abundantly; why do you bring me forward the nobleness

of ancestors remote or near? For not under the old covenant only, but even under the new, one may find this rule to have held. For *"as many as received Him,"* it is said *"to them gave He power to become the sons of God."* [John 1:12] And yet many of these children Paul has affirmed to be nothing profited by their father; *"For if you be circumcised,"* says he, *"Christ shall profit you nothing."* [Galatians 5:2] And if Christ be no help to those who will not take heed to themselves, how shall a man stand up in their behalf?

8. Let us not therefore pride ourselves either on high birth, or on wealth, but rather despise them who are so minded: neither let us be dejected at poverty. But let us seek that wealth, which consists in good works; let us flee that poverty, which causes men to be in wickedness, by reason of which also that rich man was poor; [Luke 16:24] wherefore he had not at his command so much as a drop of water, and that, although he made much entreaty. Whereas, who can be so poor among us, *as to want water enough even for comfort?* There is none such. For even they that are pining with extreme hunger, may have the comfort of a drop of water; and not of a drop only, but of refreshment too far more abundant. Not so that rich man, but he was poor even to this degree: and what was yet more grievous, he could not so much as soothe his poverty from any source. Why then do we gape after riches, since they bring us not into Heaven?

For tell me, if any king among those upon earth had said, It is impossible for him that is rich to be distinguished at court, or to enjoy any honor; would ye not have thrown away every one his riches with contempt? So then, if they cast us out from such honor as is in the palaces below, they shall be worthy of all contempt: but, when the King of Heaven is day by day crying aloud and saying, *"It is hard with them, to set foot on that sacred threshold;"* shall we not give up all, and withdraw from our possessions,

that with boldness we may enter into the kingdom? And of what consideration are we worthy, who are at great pains to encompass ourselves with the things that obstruct our way there; and to hide them not only in chests, but even in the earth, when we might entrust them to the guard of the very Heavens? Since now surely you are doing the same, as if any husbandman, having gotten wheat wherewith to sow a rich land, was to leave the land alone, and bury all the wheat in a pit, so as neither to enjoy it himself, nor for the wheat to come to ought, but decay and waste. But what is their common plea, when we accuse them of these things? It gives no little comfort, say they, to know that all is laid up for us in safety at home. Nay, rather not to know of its being laid up is a comfort. For even if you are not afraid of famine, yet other more grievous things, on account of this store, must needs be a terror to you: deaths, wars, plots laid against you. And if a famine should ever befall us, the people again, constrained by the belly, takes weapon in hand against your house. Or rather, in so doing, you are first of all bringing famine into our cities, and next you are forming for your own house this gulf, more grievous than famine. For by stress of famine I know not any who have come to a speedy end; there being in fact many means in many quarters which may be devised to assuage that evil: but for possessions and riches, and the pursuits connected with them, I can show many to have come by their ruin, some in secret, some openly. And with many such instances the highways abound, with many the courts of law, and the market-places. But why speak I of the highways, the courts of law and the market-places? Why, the very sea you may behold filled with their blood. For not over the land only, as it seems, has this tyranny prevailed, but over the ocean also has walked in festal procession with great excess. And one makes a voyage for gold, another, again, is stabbed for the

same; and the same tyrannical power has made one a merchant, the other a murderer.

What then can be less trustworthy than Mammon, seeing that for his sake one travels, and ventures, and is slain? *"But who,"* it is said, *"will pity a charmer that is bitten with a serpent?"* [Sirach 12:13] For we ought, knowing its cruel tyranny, to flee that slavery, and destroy that grievous longing. *"But how,"* says one, *"is this possible?"* By introducing another longing, the longing for Heaven. Since he that desires the kingdom will laugh covetousness to scorn; he that has become Christ's slave is no slave of mammon, but rather his lord; for him that flies from him, he is wont to follow, and to fly from him that pursues. He honors not so much his pursuer as his despiser; no one does he so laugh to scorn, as them that desire him; nor does he only laugh them to scorn, but wraps round them also innumerable bonds.

Be it ours then, however late, to loose these grievous chains. Why bring your reasonable soul into bondage to brute matter, to the mother of those untold evils? But, oh the absurdity! That while we are warring against it in words, it makes war with us by deeds, and leads and carries us everywhere about, insulting us as purchased with money, and meet for the lash; and what can be more disgraceful and dishonorable than this?

Again: if we do not get the better of senseless forms of matter, how shall we have the advantage of the incorporeal powers? If we despise not vile earth and abject stones, how shall we bring into subjection the principalities and authorities? How shall we practise temperance? I mean, if silver dazzle and overpower us, when shall we be able to hurry by a fair face? For, in fact, some are so sold under this tyranny, as be moved somehow even at the mere show of the gold, and in playfulness to say, that the very eyes are the better for a gold coin coming in sight. But make not

such jests, whoever you are; for nothing so injures the eyes, both those of the body and those of the soul, as the lust of these things. For instance; it was this grievous longing that put out the lamps of those virgins, and cast them out of the bride chamber. This sight, which (as you said) "*does good to the eyes,*" suffered not the wretched Judas to hearken unto the Lord's voice, but led him even to the halter, made him burst asunder in the midst; and, after all that, conducted him on to hell.

What then can be more lawless than this? What more horrible? I do not mean the substance of riches, but the unseasonable and frantic desire of them? Why, it even drops human gore, and looks murder, and is fiercer than any wild beast, tearing in pieces them that fall in its way, and what is much worse, it suffers them not even to have any sense of being so mangled. For reason would that those who are so treated should stretch forth their hand to them that pass by, and call them to their assistance, but these are even thankful for such rendings of their flesh, than which what can be more wretched?

Let us then, bearing in mind all these things, flee the incurable disease; let us heal the wounds it has made, and withdraw ourselves from such a pest: in order that both here we may live a secure and untroubled life, and attain to the future treasure; *unto which God grant that we may all attain,* by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom unto the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 10 on Matthew

Matthew 3:1-2.

"In those days comes John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

How *"in those days"*? For not then, surely, when He was a child, and came to Nazareth, but thirty years after, John comes; as Luke also testifies. How then is it said, *"in those days"*? The Scripture is always wont to use this manner of speech, not only when it is mentioning what occurs in the time immediately after, but also of things which are to come to pass many years later. Thus also, for example, when His disciples came unto Him as He sat on the Mount of Olives, and sought to learn about His coming, and the taking of Jerusalem: [Matthew 24:3] and yet ye know how great is the interval between those several periods. I mean, that having spoken of the subversion of the mother city, and completed His discourse on that subject, and being about to pass to that on the consummation, he inserted, *"Then shall these things also come to pass;"* [Matthew 24:23] not bringing together the times by the word *then*, but indicating that time only in which these things were to happen. And this sort of thing he does now also, saying, *"In those days."* For this is not put to signify the days that come immediately after, but those in which these things were to take place, which he was preparing to relate.

"But why was it after thirty years," it may be said, *"that Jesus came unto His baptism"*? After this baptism He was thenceforth to do away with the law: wherefore even until this age, which admits of all sins, He continues fulfilling it all; that no one might say, that because He Himself could not fulfill it, He did it away. For neither do all passions assail us at all

times; but while in the first age of life there is much thoughtlessness and timidity, in that which comes after it, pleasure is more vehement, and after this again the desire of wealth. For this cause he awaits the fullness of His adult age, and throughout it all fulfills the law, and so comes to His baptism, adding it as something which follows upon the complete keeping of all the other commandments.

To prove that this was to Him the last good work of those enjoined by the law, hear His own words: *"For thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness."* [Matthew 3:15] Now what He says is like this: We have performed all the duties of the law, we have not transgressed so much as one commandment. Since therefore this only remains, this too must be added, and so shall we *"fulfill all righteousness."* For He here calls by the name of *"righteousness"* the full performance of all the commandments.

2. Now that on this account Christ came to His baptism, is from this evident. But wherefore was this baptism devised for Him? For that not of himself did the son of Zacharias proceed to this, but of God who moved him—this Luke also declares, when he says, *"The word of the Lord came unto him,"* [Luke 3:2] that is, His commandment. And he himself too says, *"He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending like a dove, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost."* [John 1:33] Wherefore then was he sent to baptize? The Baptist again makes this also plain to us, saying, *"I knew Him not, but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."* [John 1:31]

And if this was the only cause, how says Luke, that *"he came into the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins?"* [Luke 3:3] And yet it had not remission, but this gift pertained unto the baptism that was given afterwards; for in this *"we are*

buried with Him," and our old man was then crucified with Him, and before the cross there does not appear remission anywhere; for everywhere this is imputed to His blood. And Paul too says, *"But you are washed, but you are sanctified,"* not by the baptism of John, but *"in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God."* [1 Corinthians 6:11] And elsewhere too he says, *"John verily preached a baptism of repentance,"* (he says not *"of remission,"*) *"that they should believe in Him that should come after him."* [Acts 19:4] For when the sacrifice was not yet offered, neither had the spirit yet come down, nor sin was put away, nor the enmity removed, nor the curse destroyed; how was remission to take place?

What means then, *"for the remission of sins?"*

The Jews were senseless, and had never any feeling of their own sins, but while they were justly accountable for the worst evils, they were justifying themselves in every respect; and this more than anything caused their destruction, and led them away from the faith. This, for example, Paul himself was laying to their charge, when he said, that *"they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, had not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."* [Romans 10:3] And again: *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained unto the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works."*

Since therefore this was the cause of their evils, John comes, doing nothing else but bringing them to a sense of their own sins. This, among other things, his very garb declared, being that of repentance and confession. This was indicated also by what he preached, for nothing else did he say, but *"bring forth fruits meet for repentance."* [Matthew 3:8]

Forasmuch then as their not condemning their own sins, as Paul also has explained, made them start off from Christ, while their coming to a sense thereof would set them upon longing to seek after their Redeemer, and to desire remission; this John came to bring about, and to persuade them to repent, not in order that they might be punished, but that having become by repentance more humble, and condemning themselves, they might hasten to receive remission.

But let us see how exactly he has expressed it; how, having said, that he *"came preaching the baptism of repentance in the wilderness of Judæa,"* he adds, *"for remission,"* as though he said, For this end he exhorted them to confess and repent of their sins; not that they should be punished, but that they might more easily receive the subsequent remission. For had they not condemned themselves, they could not have sought after His grace; and not seeking, they could not have obtained remission.

Thus that baptism led the way for this; wherefore also he said, that *"they should believe in Him which should come after him;"* [Acts 19:4] together with that which has been mentioned setting forth this other cause of His baptism. For neither would it have been as much for him to have gone about to their houses, and to have led Christ around, taking Him by the hand, and to have said, *"Believe in This Man;"* as for that blessed voice to be uttered, and all those other things performed in the presence and sight of all.

On account of this He comes to the baptism. Since in fact both the credit of him that was baptizing, and the purport of the thing itself, was attracting the whole city, and calling it unto Jordan; and it became a great spectacle.

Therefore he humbles them also when they have come, and persuades them to have no high fancies about themselves; showing them liable to the

utmost evils, unless they would repent, and leaving their forefathers, and all vaunting in them, would receive Him that was coming.

Because in fact the things concerning Christ had been up to that time veiled, and many thought He was dead, owing to the massacre which took place at Bethlehem. For though at twelve years old He discovered Himself, yet did He also quickly veil Himself again. And for this cause there was need of that splendid exordium and of a loftier beginning. Wherefore also then for the first time he with clear voice proclaims things which the Jews had never heard, neither from prophets, nor from any besides; making mention of Heaven, and of the kingdom there, and no longer saying anything touching the earth.

But by the kingdom in this place he means His former and His last advent.

3. *"But what is this to the Jews?"* one may say, *"for they know not even what you say."* *"Why, for this cause,"* says he, *"do I so speak, in order that being roused by the obscurity of my words, they may proceed to seek Him, whom I preach."* In point of fact, he so excited them with good hopes when they came near, that even many publicans and soldiers inquired what they should do, and how they should direct their own life; which was a sign of being thenceforth set free from all worldly things, and of looking to other greater objects, and of foreboding things to come. Yea, for all, both the sights and the words of that time, led them unto lofty thoughts.

Conceive, for example, how great a thing it was to see a man after thirty years coming down from the wilderness, being the son of a chief priest, who had never known the common wants of men, and was on every account venerable, and had Isaiah with him. For he too was present proclaiming him, and saying, *"This is he who I said should come crying, and preaching throughout the whole wilderness with a clear voice."* For so

great was the earnestness of the prophets touching these things, that not their own Lord only, but him also who was to minister unto Him, they proclaimed a long time beforehand, and they not only mentioned him, but the place too in which he was to abide, and the manner of the doctrine which he had to teach when he came, and the good effect that was produced by him.

See, at least, how both the prophet and the Baptist go upon the same ideas, although not upon the same words.

Thus the prophet says that he shall come saying, "*Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*" [Isaiah 40:3] And he himself when he had come said, "*Bring forth fruits meet for repentance,*" [Matthew 3:8] which corresponds with, "*Prepare ye the way of the Lord.*" Do you see that both by the words of the prophet, and by his own preaching, this one thing is manifested alone; that he had come, making a way and preparing beforehand, not bestowing the gift, which was the remission, but ordering in good time the souls of such as should receive the God of all?

But Luke expresses somewhat further: not repeating the exordium, and so passing on, but setting down likewise all the prophecy. "*For every valley,*" says he, "*shall be filled; and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*" [Luke 3:5-6] Do you perceive how the prophet has anticipated all by his words; the concourse of the people, the change of things for the better, the easiness of that which was preached, the first cause of all that was occurring, even if he has expressed it rather as in figure, it being in truth a prophecy which he was uttering? Thus, when he says, "*Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;*" he is signifying the exaltation of the lowly, the humiliation of the

self-willed, the hardness of the law changed into easiness of faith. For it is no longer toils and labors, says he, but grace, and forgiveness of sins, affording great facility of salvation. Next he states the cause of these things, saying, "*All flesh shall see the salvation of God;*" no longer Jews and proselytes only, but also all earth and sea, and the whole race of men. Because by "*the crooked things*" he signified our whole corrupt life, publicans, harlots, robbers, magicians, as many as having been perverted before afterwards walked in the right way: much as He Himself likewise said, "*publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you,*" [Matthew 21:31] because they believed. And in other words also again the prophet declared the self-same thing, thus saying, "*Then wolves and lambs shall feed together.*" [Isaiah 11:6] For like as here by the hills and valleys, he meant that incongruities of character are blended into one and the same evenness of self-restraint, so also there, by the characters of the brute animals indicating the different dispositions of men, he again spoke of their being linked in one and the same harmony of godliness. Here also, as before, stating the cause. That cause is, "*There shall be He that rises to reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust:*" much the same as here too he said, "*All flesh shall see the salvation of God,*" everywhere declaring that the power and knowledge of these our Gospels would be poured out to the ends of the world, converting the human race, from a brutish disposition and a fierce temper to something very gentle and mild.

4. "*And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins.*" [Matthew 3:4]

Observe, how the prophets foretold some things, others they left to the evangelists. Wherefore also Matthew both sets down the prophecies, and adds his own part, not accounting even this superfluous, to speak of the dress of the righteous man.

For indeed it was a marvellous and strange thing to behold so great austerity in a human frame: which thing also particularly attracted the Jews, seeing in him the great Elijah, and guided by what they then beheld, to the memory of that blessed man; or rather, even to a greater astonishment. For the one indeed was brought up in cities and in houses, the other dwelt entirely in the wilderness from his very swaddling clothes. For it became the forerunner of Him who was to put away all the ancient ills, the labor, for example, the curse, the sorrow, the sweat; himself also to have certain tokens of such a gift, and to come at once to be above that condemnation. Thus he neither ploughed land, nor opened furrow, he ate not his bread by the sweat of his face, but his table was hastily supplied, and his clothing more easily furnished than his table, and his lodging yet less troublesome than his clothing. For he needed neither roof, nor bed, nor table, nor any other of these things, but a kind of angel's life in this our flesh did he exhibit. For this cause his very garment was of hair, that by his dress he might instruct men to separate themselves from all things human, and to have nothing in common with the earth, but to hasten back to their earlier nobleness, wherein Adam was before he wanted garments or robe. Thus that garb bore tokens of *nothing less than* a kingdom, and of repentance.

And do not say to me, "*Whence had he a garment of hair and a girdle, dwelling as he did in the wilderness?*" For if you are to make a difficulty of this, you will also inquire into more things besides; how in the winters, and how in the heats of summer, he continued in the wilderness, and this with a delicate body, and at an immature age? How the nature of his infant flesh endured such great inconstancy of weather, and a diet so uncommon, and all the other hardships arising from the wilderness?

Where now are the philosophers of the Greeks, who at random and for nought emulated the shamelessness of the Cynics (for what is the profit of

being shut up in a tub, and afterwards running into such wantonness)? They who encompassed themselves with rings and cups, and men servants and maid servants, and with much pomp besides, falling into either extreme. But this man was not so; but he dwelt in the wilderness as in Heaven, showing forth all strictness of self-restraint. And from thence, like some angel from Heaven, he went down unto the cities, being a champion of godliness, and a crowned victor over the world, and a philosopher of that philosophy which is worthy of the heavens. And these things were, when sin was not yet put away, when the law had not yet ceased, when death was not yet bound, when the brazen gates were not yet broken up, but while the ancient polity still was in force.

Such is the nature of a noble and thoroughly vigilant soul, for it is everywhere springing forward, and passing beyond the limits set to it; as Paul also did with respect to the new polity.

But why, it may be asked, did he use a girdle with his raiment? This was customary with them of old time, before men passed into this soft and loose kind of dress. Thus, for instance, both Peter [John 21:7] appears to have been "*girded,*" and Paul; for it says, "*the man that owns this girdle.*" [Acts 21:11] And Elijah [2 Kings 1:8] too was thus arrayed, and every one of the saints, because they were at work continually, laboring, and busying themselves either in journeyings, or about some other necessary matter; and not for this cause only, but also with a view of trampling under foot all ornaments, and practising all austerity. This very kind of thing accordingly Christ declares to be the greatest praise of virtue, thus saying, "*What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses.*" [Matthew 11:8]

But if he, who was so pure, and more glorious than the heaven, and above all prophets, than whom none greater was born, and who had such

great boldness of speech, thus exercised himself in austerity, scorning so exceedingly all dissolute delicacy, and training himself to this hard life; what excuse shall we have, who after so great a benefit, and the unnumbered burdens of our sins, do not show forth so much as the least part of his penance, but are drinking and surfeiting, and smelling of perfumes, and in no better trim than the harlot women on the stage, and are by all means softening ourselves, and making ourselves an easy prey to the devil?

5. *"Then went out to him all Judea, and Jerusalem, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins."*

[Matthew 3:5-6]

Do you see how great power was in the coming of the prophet? How he stirred up all the people; how he led them to a consideration of their own sins? For it was indeed worthy of wonder to behold him in human form showing forth such things and using so great freedom of speech, and rising up in condemnation of all as children, and having his great grace beaming out from his countenance. And, moreover, the appearance of a prophet after the great interval of time contributed to their amazement, because the gift had failed them, and returned to them after a long time. And the nature of his preaching too was strange and unusual. For they heard of none of those things to which they were accustomed; such as wars and battles and victories below, and famine and pestilence, and Babylonians and Persians, and the taking of the city, and the other things with which they were familiar, but of Heaven and of the kingdom there, and of the punishment in hell. And it was for this cause, let me add, that although they that committed revolt in the wilderness, those in the company of Judas, and of Theudas, [Acts 5:36-37] had been all of them slain no great while before, yet they were not the more backward to go out there. For neither was it for the same objects that he summoned them, as for dominion, or revolt, or

revolution; but in order to lead them by the hand to the kingdom on high. Wherefore neither did he keep them in the wilderness to take them about with him, but baptizing them, and teaching them the rules concerning self-denial, he dismissed them; by all means instructing them to scorn whatever things are on earth, and to raise themselves up to the things to come, and press on every day.

6. This man then let us also emulate, and forsaking luxury and drunkenness let us go over unto the life of restraint. For this surely is the time of confession both for the uninitiated and for the baptized; for the one, that upon their repentance they may partake of the sacred mysteries; for the others, that having washed away their stain after baptism, they may approach the table with a clean conscience. Let us then forsake this soft and effeminate way of living. For it is not, it is not possible at once both to do penance and to live in luxury. And this let John teach you by his raiment, by his food, by his abode. What then? Do you require us, you may say, to practise such self-restraint as this? I do not require it, but I advise and recommend it. But if this be not possible to you, let us at least, though in cities, show forth repentance, for the judgment is surely at our doors. But even if it were further off, we ought not even so to be emboldened, for the term of each man's life is the end of the world virtually to him that is summoned. But that it is even at the doors, hear Paul saying, "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand;*" [Romans 13:12] and again, "*He that comes will come, and will not tarry.*" [Hebrews 10:37]

For the signs too are now complete, which announce that day. For "*this Gospel of the Kingdoms,*" says He, "*shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*" Attend with care to what is said. He said not, "*when it has been believed by all men,*" but "*when it has been preached to all.*" For this cause he also said, "*for a witness to the*

nations," to show, that He does not wait for all men to believe, and then for Him to come. Since the phrase, "for a witness," has this meaning, "for accusation," "for reproof," "for condemnation of them that have not believed."

But we, while hearing these things and seeing them, slumber, and see dreams, sunk in a lethargy, as in some very deepest night. For the things present are nothing better than dreams, whether they be prosperous, or whether they be painful. Wherefore I entreat you now at length to be awakened, and to look another way, unto the Sun of Righteousness. For no man while sleeping can see the sun, nor delight his eyes with the beauty of its beams; but whatever he may see, he beholds all as in a dream. For this cause we need much penance, and many tears; both as being in a state of insensibility while we err, and because our sins are great, and beyond excuse. And that I lie not, the more part of them that hear me are witnesses. Nevertheless, although they be beyond excuse, let us repent, and we shall receive crowns.

7. But by repentance I mean, not only to forsake our former evil deeds, but also to show forth good deeds greater than those. For, *"bring forth,"* says he, *"fruits meet for repentance."* But how shall we bring them forth? If we do the opposite things: as for instance, have you seized by violence the goods of others? Henceforth give away even your own. Have you been guilty of fornication for a long time? abstain even from your wife for certain appointed days; exercise continence. Have you insulted and stricken such as were passing by? Henceforth bless them that insult you, and do good to them that smite you. For it suffices not for our health to have plucked out the dart only, but we must also apply remedies to the wound. Have you lived in self-indulgence, and been drunken in time past? Fast, and take care to drink water, in order to destroy the mischief that has so grown

up within you. Have you beheld with unchaste eyes beauty that belonged to another? Henceforth do not so much as look upon a woman at all, that you may stand in more safety. For it is said, *"Depart from evil, and do good;"* and again, *"Make your tongue to cease from evil, and your lips that they speak no guile."* *"But tell me the good too."* *"Seek peace, and pursue it:"* I mean not peace with man only, but also peace with God. And he has well said, *"pursue"* her: for she is driven away, and cast out; she has left the earth, and is gone to sojourn in Heaven. Yet shall we be able to bring her back again, if we will put away pride and boasting, and whatsoever things stand in her way, and will follow this temperate and frugal life. For nothing is more grievous than wrath and fierce anger. This renders men both puffed up and servile, by the former making them ridiculous, by the other hateful; and bringing in opposite vices, pride and flattery, at the same time. But if we will cut off the greediness of this passion, we shall be both lowly with exactness, and exalted with safety. For in our bodies too all distempers arise from excess; and when the elements thereof leave their proper limits, and go on beyond moderation, then all these countless diseases are generated, and grievous kinds of death. Somewhat of the same kind one may see take place with respect to the soul likewise.

8. Let us therefore cut away excess, and drinking the salutary medicine of moderation, let us abide in our proper temperament, and give careful heed to our prayers. Though we receive not, let us persevere that we may receive; and if we do receive, then because we have received. For it is not at all His wish to defer giving, but by such delay He is contriving for us to persevere. With this intent He does also lengthen out what is good for us better than we do, and loves us more ardently than those who gave us birth. And let both these considerations be a charm for us to chant to ourselves in

every terror that occurs, that so we may quell our despondency, and in all things glorify Him, who on our behalf does and orders all, even God.

For so we shall both easily repulse all hostile devices, and attain unto the incorruptible crowns: by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father glory, might, and honor, together with the Holy Ghost, now, and always, even for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 11 on Matthew

Matt. III. 7.

"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

How then does Christ say, that they did not believe John? [Luke 20:5] Because this was not believing, to decline receiving Him whom he preached. For so they thought they regarded their prophets and their lawgiver, nevertheless He said they had not regarded them, forasmuch as they received not Him, that was foretold by them. *"For if you had believed Moses,"* says He, *"ye would have believed Me."* [John 5:46] And after this again, being asked by Christ, *"The baptism of John, whence is it?"* [Matthew 21:25-26] they said, *"If we shall say, Of earth, we fear the people; if we shall say, From heaven, He will say unto us, How then did ye not believe him?"*

So that from all these things it is manifest that they came indeed and were baptized, yet they did not abide in the belief of that which was preached. For John also points out their wickedness, by their sending unto the Baptist, and saying, *"Are you Elias? Are you Christ?"* wherefore he also added, *"they which were sent were of the Pharisees."* [John 1:24]

"What then? Were not the multitudes also of this same mind?" One may say. Nay, the multitudes in simplicity of mind had this suspicion, but the Pharisees, wishing to lay hold of Him. For since it was acknowledged that Christ comes out of the village of David, and this man was of the tribe of Levi, they laid a snare by the question, in order that if he should say any such thing they might quickly come upon him. This at any rate he has

declared by what follows; for on his not acknowledging any of the things which they expected, even so they take hold of him, saying, *"Why do you baptize then, if you be not the Christ?"* [John 1:25]

And to convince you that the Pharisees came with one mind, and the people with another, hear how the evangelist has declared this too; saying of the people, *"that they came and were baptized of him, confessing their sins;"* [Matthew 3:6] but concerning the Pharisees, no longer like that, but that *"when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming, he said, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* O greatness of mind! How does he discourse unto men ever thirsting after the blood of the prophets, and in disposition no better than serpents! How does he disparage both themselves and their progenitors with all plainness!

2. *"Yea,"* says one; *"he speaks plainly enough, but the question is if there be any reason in this plainness. For he did not see them sinning, but in the act of change; wherefore they did not deserve blame, but rather praise and approbation, for having left city and houses, and making haste to hear his preaching."*

What then shall we say? That he had not things present, and even now doing, in his view, but he knew the secrets of their mind, God having revealed this. Since then they were priding themselves on their forefathers, and this was like to prove the cause of their destruction, and was casting them into a state of carelessness, he cuts away the roots of their pride. For this cause Isaiah also calls them, *"rulers of Sodom,"* and *"people of Gomorrha;"* [Isaiah 1:10] and another prophet says, *"Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians;"* [Amos 9:7] and all withdraw them from this way of thinking, bringing down their pride, which had caused them unnumbered evils.

"But the prophets," you will say, *"naturally did so; for they saw them sinning: but in this case, with what view and for what cause does he the same, seeing them obey him."* To make them yet more tender-hearted.

But if one accurately mark his words, he has also tempered his rebuke with commendation. For he spoke these things, as marveling at them, that they had become able, however late, to do what seemed almost an impossibility for them. His rebuke, you see, is rather that of one bringing them over, and working upon them to arouse themselves. For in that he appears amazed, he implies both their former wickedness to be great, and their conversion marvellous and beyond expectation. Thus, *"what has come to pass,"* says he, *"that being children of those men, and brought up so badly, they have repented? Whence has come so great a change? Who has softened down the harshness of their spirit? Who corrected that which was incurable?"*

And see how straightway from the beginning he alarmed them, by laying first, for a foundation, his words concerning hell. For he spoke not of the usual topics: *"Who has warned you to flee from wars, from the inroads of the barbarians, from captivities, from famines, from pestilences?"* but concerning another sort of punishment, never before made manifest to them, he was striking the first preparatory note, saying thus, *"Who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"*

And full well did he likewise call them, *"generation of vipers."* For that animal too is said to destroy the mother that is in travail with her, and eating through her belly, thus to come forth unto light; which kind of thing these men also did being *"murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers,"* [1 Timothy 1:9] and destroying their instructors with their own hands.

3. However, he stops not at the rebuke, but introduces advice also. For, *"Bring forth,"* says he, *"fruits meet for repentance."*

For to flee from wickedness is not enough, but you must show forth also great virtue. For let me not have that contradictory yet ordinary case, that refraining yourselves for a little while, you return unto the same wickedness. For we are not come for the same objects as the prophets before. Nay, the things that are now are changed, and are more exalted, forasmuch as the Judge henceforth is coming, His very self, the very Lord of the kingdom, leading unto greater self-restraint, calling us to heaven, and drawing us upward to those abodes. For this cause do I unfold the doctrine also touching hell, because both the good things and the painful are for ever. Do not therefore abide as you are, neither bring forward the accustomed pleas, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the noble race of your ancestors.

And these things he said, not as forbidding them to say that they were sprung from those holy men, but as forbidding them to put confidence in this, while they were neglecting the virtue of the soul; at once bringing forward publicly what was in their minds, and foretelling things to come. Because after this they are found to say, "*We have Abraham to our father, and were never in bondage to any man.*" [John 8:33] Since then it was this, which most of all lifted them up with pride and ruined them, he first puts it down.

And see how with his honor paid to the patriarch he combines his correction touching these things. Namely, having said, "*Think not to say, We have Abraham to our father,*" he said not, "*for the patriarch shall not be able to profit you anything,*" but somehow in a more gentle and acceptable manner he intimated the self-same thing, by saying,

"For God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham."
[Matthew 3:9]

Now some say, that concerning the Gentiles he says these things, calling them *stones*, metaphorically; but I say, that the expression has also

another meaning. But of what kind is this? Think not, says he, that if you should perish, you would make the patriarch childless. This is not, this is not so. For with God it is possible, both out of stones to give him men, and to bring them to that relationship; since at the beginning also it was so done. For it was like the birth of men out of stones, when a child came forth from that hardened womb.

This accordingly the prophet also was intimating, when he said, *"Look unto the hard rock, whence you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit, whence you are dug: look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you."* [Isaiah 51:1-2] Now of this prophecy, you see, he reminds them, showing that if at the beginning he made him a father, as marvellously as if he had made him so out of stones, it was possible for this now also to come to pass. And see how he both alarms them, and cuts them off: in that he said not, *"He had already raised up,"* lest they should despair of themselves, but that He *"is able to raise up:"* and he said not, *"He is able out of stones to make men,"* but what was a much greater thing, *"kinsmen and children of Abraham."*

Do you see how for the time he drew them off from their vain imagination about things of the body, and from their refuge in their forefathers; in order that they might rest the hope of their salvation in their own repentance and continence? Do you see how by casting out their carnal relationship, he is bringing in that which is of faith?

4. Mark then how by what follows also he increases their alarm, and adds intensity to their agonizing fear.

For having said that *"God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham,"* he added, *"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees,"* by all means making his speech alarming. For as he from his way of life had much freedom of speech, so they needed his severe rebuke, having

been left barren now for a long time. For *"why do I say"* (such are his words) that you are on the point of falling away from your relationship to the patriarch and of seeing others, even those that are of stones, brought in to your pre-eminence? Nay, not to this point only will your penalty reach, but your punishment will proceed further. *"For now,"* says he, *"the axe is laid unto the root of the trees."* There is nothing more terrible than this turn of his discourse. For it is no longer *"a flying sickle,"* nor *"the taking down of a hedge,"* nor *"the treading under foot of the vineyard;"* [Isaiah 5:5] but an axe exceeding sharp, and what is worse, it is even at the doors. For inasmuch as they continually disbelieved the prophets, and used to say, *"Where is the day of the Lord:"* and *"let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel come, that we may know it,"* [Isaiah 5:19] by reason that it was many years before what they said came to pass; to lead them off from this encouragement also, he sets the terrors close to them. And this he declared by saying *"now,"* and by his putting it to *"the root."* *"For the space between is nothing now,"* says he, *"but it is laid to the very root."* And he said not, *"to the branches,"* nor *"to the fruits,"* but *"to the root."* Signifying, that if they were negligent, they would have incurable horrors to endure, and not have so much as a hope of remedy. It being no servant who is now come, as those before Him were, but the very Lord of all, bringing on them His fierce and most effectual vengeance.

Yet, although he has terrified them again, he suffers them not to fall into despair; but as before he said not *"He has raised up,"* but *"He is able to raise up children to Abraham"* (at once both alarming and comforting them); even so here also he did not say that *"it has touched the root,"* but *"it is laid to the root, and is now hard by it, and shows signs of no delay."* However, even though He has brought it so near, He makes its cutting depend upon you. For if you change and become better men, this axe will

depart without doing anything; but if you continue in the same ways, He will tear up the tree by the roots. And therefore, observe, it is neither removed from the root, nor applied as it is does it cut at all: the one, that you may not grow supine, the other to let you know that it is possible even in a short time to be changed and saved. Wherefore he does also from all topics heighten their fear, thoroughly awakening and pressing them on to repentance. Thus first their falling away from their forefathers; next, others being introduced instead; lastly, those terrors being at their doors, the certainty of suffering incurable evils (both which he declared by the root and the axe), was sufficient to rouse thoroughly those even that were very supine, and to make them full of anxiety. I may add, that Paul too was setting forth the same, when he said, "*A short word will the Lord make upon the whole world.*" [Romans 9:28]

But be not afraid; or rather, be afraid, but despair not. For you have yet a hope of change; the sentence is not quite absolute, neither did the axe come to cut (else what hindered it from cutting, close as it was to the root?); but on purpose by this fear to make you a better man, and to prepare you to bring forth fruit. For this cause he added, "*Therefore every tree, which brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*" [Matthew 3:10] Now by the word "*every*," he rejects again the privilege which they had from their noble descent; "*Why, if you be Abraham's own descendant,*" says he, "*if you have thousands of patriarchs to enumerate, you will but undergo a double punishment, abiding unfruitful.*"

By these words he alarmed even publicans, the soldiers' mind was startled by him, not casting them into despair, yet ridding them of all security. For along with the terror, there is also much encouragement in what he says; since by the expression, "*which brings not forth good fruit,*" he signified that what bears fruit is delivered from all vengeance.

5. *"And how," says one, "shall we be able to bring forth fruit, when the edge is being applied, and the time so strait, and the appointed season cut short." "You will be able," says he, "for this fruit is not of the same kind as that of common trees, waiting a long time, and in bondage to the necessities of seasons, and requiring much other management; but it is enough to be willing, and the tree at once has put forth its fruit. For not the nature of the root only, but also the skill of the husbandman contributes the most to that kind of fruit-bearing."*

For (let me add) on account of this—lest they should say, *"You are alarming and pressing, and constraining us, applying an axe, and threatening us with being cut down, yet requiring produce in time of punishment,"*—he has added, to signify the ease of bearing that fruit, *"I indeed baptize you with water, but He that comes after me is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"* implying hereby that consideration only is needed and faith, not labors and toils; and as it is easy to be baptized, so is it easy to be converted, and to become better men. So having stirred their mind by the fear of *God's* judgment, and the expectation of *His* punishment, and by the mention of the axe, and by the loss of their ancestors, and by the bringing in of those other children, and by the double vengeance of cutting off and burning, and having by all means softened their hardness, and brought them to desire deliverance from so great evils; then he brings in what he has to say touching Christ; and not simply, but with a declaration of His great superiority. Then in setting forth the difference between himself and Him, lest he should seem to say this out of favor, he establishes the fact by comparison of the gifts bestowed by each of them. For he did not at once say, *"I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe;"* but when he had first set forth the little value of his own

baptism, and had shown that it has nothing more than to lead them to repentance (for he did not say with water of remission, but of repentance), he sets forth Christ's also, which is full of the unspeakable gift. Thus he seems to say, Lest, on being told that He comes after me, you should despise Him as having come later; learn the virtue of His gift, and you will clearly know that I uttered nothing worthy nor great, when I said, *"I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe."* So too when you are told, *"He is mightier than I,"* do not think I said this in the way of making a comparison. For I am not worthy to be ranked so much as among His servants, no, not even the lowest of His servants, nor to receive the least honored portion of His ministry. Therefore He did not merely say, *"His shoes,"* but not even *"the latchet,"* which kind of office was counted the last of all. Then to hinder your attributing what he had said to humility, he adds also the proof from the facts: *"For He shall baptize you,"* says he, *"with the Holy Ghost and with fire."*

6. Do you see how great is the wisdom of the Baptist? How, when He Himself is preaching, He says everything to alarm, and fill them with anxiety; but when He is sending men to Him, whatever was mild and apt to recover them: not bringing forward the axe, nor the tree that is cut down and burnt, and cast into the fire, nor the wrath to come, but remission of sins, and removing of punishment, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and adoption, and brotherhood, and a partaking of the inheritance, and an abundant supply of the Holy Ghost. For all these things he obscurely denoted, when he said, *"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost;"* at once, by the very figure of speech, declaring the abundance of the grace (for he said not, *"He will give you the Holy Ghost,"* but *"He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost"*); and by the specification of fire on the other hand indicating the vehement and uncontrollable quality of His grace.

Imagine only what sort of men it was meet for the hearers to become, when they considered that they were at once to be like the prophets, and like those great ones. For it was on this account, you see, that he made mention at all of fire; that he might lead them to reflect on the memory of those men. Because, of all the visions that appeared unto them, I had almost said, the more part appeared in fire; thus God discoursed with Moses in the bush, thus with all the people in the mount Sinai, thus with Ezekiel on the cherubim. [Ezekiel 1:27]

And mark again how he rouses the hearer, by putting that first which was to take place after all. For the Lamb was to be slain, and sin to be blotted out, and the enmity to be destroyed, and the burial to take place, and the resurrection, and then the Spirit to come. But none of these things does he mention as yet, but that first which was last, and for the sake of which all the former were done, and which was fittest to proclaim His dignity; so that when the hearer should be told that he was to receive so great a Spirit he might search with himself, how and in what manner this shall be, while sin so prevails; that finding him full of thought and prepared for that lesson, he might thereupon introduce what he had to say touching the Passion, no man being any more offended, under the expectation of such a gift.

Wherefore he again cried out, saying, *"Behold the Lamb of God, which bears the sin of the world."* He did not say, *"which remits,"* but, that which implies a more guardian care, *"which hears it."* For it is not all one, simply to remit, and to take it upon Himself. For the one was to be done without peril, the other with death.

And again, he said, *"He is Son of God."* [John 1:34] But not even this declared His rank openly to the hearers (for they did not so much as know yet how to conceive of Him as a true Son): but by so great a gift of the Spirit that also was established. Therefore the Father also in sending John

gave him, *as you know*, this as a first token of the dignity of Him that had come, saying, "*Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost.*" Wherefore himself too says, "*I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God;*" as though the one were to all time the clear evidence of the other.

7. Then, as having uttered the gentler part of his message, and soothed and relaxed the hearer, he again binds him up, that he may not become remiss. For such was the nature of the Jewish nation; by all encouraging things they were easily puffed up, and corrupted. Wherefore he again adduces his terrors, saying, "*Whose fan is in His hand.*" [Matthew 3:12]

Thus, as before he had spoken of the punishment, so here he points out the Judge likewise, and introduces the eternal vengeance. For "*He will burn the chaff,*" says he, "*with unquenchable fire.*" You see that He is Lord of all things, and that He is Himself the Husbandman; albeit in another place He calls His Father the same. For "*My Father,*" says He, "*is the Husbandman.*" [John 15:1] Thus, inasmuch as He had spoken of an axe, lest you should suppose that the thing needed labor, and the separation was hard to make; by another comparison he suggests the easiness of it, implying that all the world is His; since He could not punish those who were not His own. For the present, it is true, all are mingled together (for though the wheat appears gleaming through, yet it lies with the chaff, as on a threshing floor, not as in a garner), but then, great will be the separation.

Where now are they by whom hell-fire is disbelieved? Since surely here are two points laid down, one, that He will baptize with the Holy Ghost, the other, that He will burn up the disobedient. If then that is credible, so is this too, assuredly. Yea, this is why the two predictions are put by him in immediate connection, that by that which has taken place already, he might accredit the other, as yet unaccomplished. For Christ too

Himself in many places does so, often of the same things, and often of opposites, setting down two prophecies; the one of which He performs here, the other He promises in the future; that such as are too contentious may, from the one which has already come to pass, believe the other also, which is not yet accomplished. For instance, to them that strip themselves of all that they have for His sake He promised to give an hundred fold in the present world, and life eternal in that which is to come; by the things already given making the future also credible. Which, as we see, John likewise has done in this place; laying down two things, that He shall both baptize with the Holy Ghost, and burn up with unquenchable fire. Now then, if He had not baptized with the Spirit the apostles, and all every day who are willing, you might have doubts concerning those other things too; but if that which seems to be greater and more difficult, and which transcends all reason, has been done, and is done every day; how do you deny that to be true, which is easy, and comes to pass according to reason? Thus having said, "*He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire,*" and having thence promised great blessings; lest you, released wholly from the former things, grow supine, he has added the fan, and the judgment thereby declared. Thus, "*think not at all,*" says he, "*that your baptism suffices, if you become ordinary persons hereafter:*" for we need both virtue, and plenty of that known self-restraint. Therefore as by the axe he urges them unto grace, and unto the font, so after grace he terrifies them by the fan, and the unquenchable fire. And of the one sort, those yet unbaptized, he makes no distinction, but says in general, "*Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down,*" [Matthew 3:10] punishing all the unbelievers. Whereas after baptism He works out a kind of division, because many of them that believed would exhibit a life unworthy of their faith.

Let no man then become chaff, let no one be tossed to and fro, nor lie exposed to wicked desires, blown about by them easily every way. For if you continue wheat, though temptation be brought on you, you will suffer nothing dreadful; nay, for in the threshing floor, the wheels of the car, that are like saws, do not cut in pieces the wheat; but if you fall away into the weakness of chaff, you will both here suffer incurable ills, being smitten of all men, and there you will undergo the eternal punishment. For all such persons both before that furnace become food for the irrational passions here, as chaff is for the brute animal: and there again they are material and food for the flame.

Now to have said directly that He will judge men's doings, would not so effectually procure acceptance for His doctrine: but to blend with it the parable, and so establish it all, was apter to persuade the hearer, and attract him by a more ample encouragement. Wherefore also Christ Himself for the most part so discourses with them; threshing floor, and harvest, and vineyard, and wine-press, and field, and net, and fishing, and all things familiar, and among which they were busied He makes ingredients in His discourses. This kind of thing then the Baptist likewise did here, and offered an exceeding great demonstration of his words, the giving of the Spirit. For *"He who has so great power, as both to forgive sins, and to give the Spirit, much more will these things also be within His power:"* so he speaks.

Do you see how now in due order the mystery came to be laid as a foundation, before the resurrection and judgment? [Hebrews 6:1-2]

"And wherefore," it may be said, *"did he not mention the signs and wonders which were straightway to be done by Him?"* Because this was greater than all, and for its sake all those were done. Thus, in his mention of the chief thing, he comprehended all; death dissolved, sins abolished, the curse blotted out, those long wars done away; our entrance into paradise,

our ascent into heaven, our citizenship with the angels, our partaking of the good things to come: for in truth this is the earnest of them all. So that in mentioning this, he has mentioned also the resurrection of our bodies, and the manifestation of His miracles here, and our partaking of His kingdom, and the good things, which *"eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."* [1 Corinthians 2:9] For all these things He bestowed on us by that gift. It was therefore superfluous to speak of the signs that were immediately to ensue, and which sight can judge of; but those were meet to be discoursed on, whereof they doubted; as for instance, that He is the Son of God; that He exceeds John beyond comparison; that He *"bears the sin of the world;"* that He will require an account of all that we do; that our interests are not limited to the present, but elsewhere every one will undergo the due penalty. For these things were not as yet proveable by sight.

8. Therefore, knowing these things, let us use great diligence, while we are in the threshing floor; for it is possible while we are here, to change even out of chaff into wheat, even as on the other hand many from wheat have become chaff. Let us not then be supine, nor be carried about with every wind; neither let us separate ourselves from our brethren, though they seem to be small and mean; forasmuch as the wheat also compared with the chaff is less in measure, but better in nature. Look not therefore to the forms of outward pomp, for they are prepared for the fire, but to this godly humility, so firm and indissoluble, and which cannot be cut, neither is burnt by the fire. It being for their sake that He bears long with the very chaff, that by their intercourse with them they may become better. Therefore judgment is not yet, that we may be all crowned together, that from wickedness many may be converted unto virtue.

Let us tremble then at hearing this parable. For indeed that fire is unquenchable. *"And how,"* it may be said, *"is it unquenchable?"* Do you see not this sun ever burning, and never quenched? Did you not behold the bush burning, and not consumed? If then you also desire to escape the flame, lay up alms beforehand, and so you will not even taste of that fire. For if, while here, you will believe what is told you, you shall not so much as see this furnace, after your departure into that region; but if you disbelieve it now, you shall know it there full well by experience, when no sort of escape is possible. Since in truth no entreaty shall avert the punishment from them who have not shown forth an upright life. For believing surely is not enough, since even the devils tremble at God, but for all that they will be punished.

9. Wherefore our care of our conduct has need to be great. Why, this is the very reason of our continually assembling you here; not simply that you should enter in, but that you should also reap some fruit from your continuance here. But if you come indeed constantly, but go away again reaping no fruit from thence, you will have no advantage from your entering in and attendance in this place.

For if we, when sending children to teachers, should we see them reaping no benefit thereby, begin to be severe in blaming the teachers, and remove them often to others; what excuse shall we have for not bestowing upon virtue even so much diligence as upon these earthly things, but forever bringing our tablets home empty? And yet our teachers here are more in number and greater. For no less than prophets and apostles and patriarchs, and all righteous men, are by us set over you as teachers in every Church. And not even so is there any profit, but if you have joined in chanting two or three Psalms, and making the accustomed prayers at random and anyhow, are so dismissed, you think this enough for your salvation. Have ye

not heard the prophet, saying (or rather God by the prophet), *"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me?"*

Therefore, lest this be our case too, wipe out the letters, or rather the impressions, which the devil has engraven in your soul; and bring me a heart set free from worldly tumults, that without fear I may write on it what I will. Since now at least there is nothing else to discern, except his letters—rapines, covetings, envy, jealousy. Wherefore of course, when I receive your tablets, I am not able so much as to read them. For I find not the letters, which we every Lord's day inscribe on you, and so let you go; but others, instead of these, unintelligible and misshapen. Then, when we have blotted them out, and have written those which are of the Spirit, you departing, and giving up your hearts to the works of the devil, give him again power to substitute his own characters in you. What then will be the end of all this, even without any words of mine, each man's own conscience knows. For I indeed will not cease to do my part, and to write in you the right letters. But if you mar our diligence, for our part our reward is unaltered, but your danger is not small.

Now, though I would fain say nothing to disgust you, yet I beseech again and entreat you, imitate at least the little children's diligence in these matters. For so they first learn the form of the letters, after that they practise themselves in distinguishing them put out of shape, and then at last in their reading they proceed orderly by means of them. Just so let us also do; let us divide virtue, and learn first not to swear, nor to forswear ourselves, nor to speak evil; then proceeding to another row, not to envy, not to lust, not to be gluttonous, not to be drunken, not fierce, not slothful, so that from these we may pass on again to the things of the Spirit, and practise continence, and neglect of the belly, temperance, righteousness, to be above glory, and

gentle and contrite in mind; and let us join these one with another, and write them upon our soul.

10. And all these let us practise at home, with our own friends, with our wife, with our children. And, for the present, let us begin with the things that come first, and are easier; as for instance, with not swearing; and let us practise this one letter continually at home. For, in truth, there are many at home to hinder this our practice; sometimes a man's servant provoking him, sometimes his wife annoying and angering him, sometimes an indocile and disorderly child urges him on to threatening and swearing. If now at home, when thus continually galled, you should attain not to be tempted into swearing, you will in the market-place also have power with ease to abide unconquered.

Yea, and in like sort, you will attain to keep yourself from insulting any, by not insulting your wife, nor your servants, nor any one else among those in your house. For a man's wife too not seldom, praising this or that person, or bemoaning herself, stirs him up to speak evil of that other. But do not let yourself be constrained to speak evil of him that is praised, but bear it all nobly. And if you should perceive your servants praising other masters, be not perturbed, but stand nobly. Let your home be a sort of lists, a place of exercise for virtue, that having trained yourself well there, you may with entire skill encounter all abroad.

Do this with respect to vainglory also. For if you train yourself not to be vainglorious in company of your wife and your servants, you will not ever afterwards be easily caught by this passion with regard to any one else. For though this malady be in every case grievous and tyrannical, yet is it so especially when a woman is present. If we therefore in that instance put down its power, we shall easily master it in the other cases also.

And with respect to the other passions too, let us do this self-same thing, exercising ourselves against them at home, and anointing ourselves every day.

And that our exercise may be easier, let us further enact a penalty for ourselves, upon our transgressing any of our purposes. And let the very penalty again be such as brings with it not loss, but reward—such as procures some very great gain. And this is so, if we sentence ourselves to intenser fastings, and to sleeping often on the bare ground, and to other like austerity. For in this way will much profit come unto us from every quarter; we shall both live the sweet life of virtue here, and we shall attain unto the good things to come and be perpetually friends of God.

But in order that the same may not happen again—that you may not, having here admired what is said, go your way, and cast aside at random, wherever it may chance, the tablet of your mind, and so allow the devil to blot out these things—let each one, on returning home, call his own wife, and tell her these things, and take her to help him; and from this day let him enter into that noble school of exercise, using for oil the supply of the Spirit. And though you fall once, twice, many times in your training, despair not, but stand again, and wrestle; and do not give up until you have bound on you the glorious crown of triumph over the devil, and hast for the time to come stored up the riches of virtue in an inviolable treasure-house.

For if you should establish yourself in the habits of this noble self-restraint, then, not even when remiss, will you be able to transgress any of the commandments, habit imitating the solidity of nature. Yea, as to sleep is easy, and to eat, and to drink, and to breathe, so also will the deeds of virtue be easy to us, and we shall reap to ourselves that pure pleasure, resting in a harbor without a wave, and enjoying continual calm, and with a great freight bringing our vessel into haven, in that City, on that day; and we shall

attain unto the undecaying crowns, unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory and might, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 12 on Matthew

Matt. III. 13.

"Then comes Jesus from Galilee to Jordan," etc.

With the servants the Lord, with the criminals the Judge, comes to be baptized. But be not troubled; for in these humiliations His exaltation does most shine forth. For He who vouchsafed to be borne so long in a Virgin's womb, and to come forth thence with our nature, and to be smitten with rods, and crucified, and to suffer all the rest which He suffered—why do you marvel if He vouchsafed also to be baptized, and to come with the rest to His servant. For the amazement lay in that one thing, that being God, He would be made Man; but the rest after this all follows in course of reason.

For this cause, let me add, John also by way of anticipation said all that he had said before, that he *"was not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe;"* and all the rest, as for instance, that He is Judge, and rewards every man according to his desert, and that He will bestow His Spirit abundantly on all; in order that when you should see Him coming to the baptism, you might not suspect anything mean. Therefore he forbids Him, even when He had come, saying,

"I have need to be baptized by You, and You come to me."

[Matthew 3:14] For, because the baptism was *"of repentance,"* and led men to accuse themselves for their offenses, lest any one should suppose that He too *"comes to Jordan"* in this sort of mind, John sets it right beforehand, by calling Him both Lamb, and Redeemer from all the sin that is in the world. Since He that was able to take away the sins of the whole race of men, much more was He Himself without sin. For this cause then he said not, *"Behold, He that is without sin,"* but what was much more, He *"that bears*

the sin of the world," in order that together with this truth you might receive that other with all assurance, and having received it might perceive, that in the conduct of some further economy He comes to the baptism. Wherefore also he said to Him when He came, *"I have need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?"*

And he said not, *"And are You baptized of me?"* nay, for this he feared to say: but what? *"And You come to me?"* What then does Christ? What He did afterwards with respect to Peter, this did He then also. For so he too would have forbidden Him to wash his feet, but when he had heard, *"What I do you know not now, but you shall know hereafter,"* and *"you have no part with me,"* [John 13:7-8] he speedily withdrew from his determination, and went over to the contrary. And this man again in like manner, when he had heard, *"Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness,"* straightway obeyed. For they were not unduly contentious, but they manifested both love and obedience, and made it their study to be ruled by their Lord in all things.

And mark how He urges him on that very ground which chiefly caused him to look doubtfully on what was taking place; in that He did not say, *"thus it is just,"* but *"thus it becomes."* For, inasmuch as the point unworthy of Him was in his mind chiefly this, His being baptized by His servant, He stated this rather than anything else, which is directly opposed to that impression: as though He had said, *"Is it not as unbecoming that you avoid and forbiddest this? Nay, for this self-same cause I bid you suffer it, that it is becoming, and that in the highest degree."*

And He did not merely say, *"suffer,"* but He added, *"now."* *"For it will not be so forever,"* says He, *"but you shall see me such as you desire, for the present, however, endure this."* Next He shows also how this *"becomes"* Him. How then does it so? *"In that we fulfill the whole law;"* and to express

this He said, *"all righteousness."* For righteousness is the fulfilling of the commandments. *"Since then we have performed all the rest of the commandments,"* says He, *"and this alone remains, it also must be added: because I have come to do away the curse that is appointed for the transgression of the law. I must therefore first fulfill it all, and having delivered you from its condemnation, in this way bring it to an end. It becomes me therefore to fulfill the whole law, by the same rule that it becomes me to do away the curse that is written against you in the law: this being the very purpose of my assuming flesh, and coming hither."*

2. *"Then he suffers Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him."*

For inasmuch as many supposed that John was greater than He, because John had been brought up all his time in the wilderness, and was son of a chief priest, and was clothed with such raiment, and was calling all men unto his baptism, and had been born of a barren mother; while Jesus, first of all, was of a damsel of ordinary rank (for the virgin birth was not yet manifest to all); and besides, He had been brought up in an house, and held converse with all men, and wore this common raiment; they suspected Him to be less than John, knowing as yet nothing of those secret things—and it fell out moreover that He was baptized of John, which thing added support to this surmise, even if none of those mentioned before had existed; for it would come into their mind that this man was one of the many (for were He not one of the many, He would not have come with the many to the baptism), but that John was greater than He and far more admirable:— in order therefore that this opinion might not prevail with the multitude, the very heavens are opened, when He is baptized, and the Spirit comes down,

and a voice with the Spirit, proclaiming the dignity of the Only Begotten. For since the voice that said, "*This is my beloved Son,*" would seem to the multitude rather to belong to John, for It added not, "*This that is baptized,*" but simply *This*, and every hearer would conceive it to be said concerning the baptizer, rather than the baptized, partly on account of the Baptist's own dignity, partly for all that has been mentioned; the Spirit came in form of a dove, drawing the voice towards Jesus, and making it evident to all, that *This* was not spoken of John that baptized, but of Jesus who was baptized.

And how was it, one may say, that they did not believe, when these things came to pass? Because in the days of Moses also many wonderful works were done, albeit not such as these; and after all those, the voices, and the trumpets, and the lightnings, they both forged a calf, and "*were joined unto Baal-peor.*" And those very persons too, who were present at the time, and saw Lazarus arise, so far from believing in Him, who had wrought these things, repeatedly attempted even to slay Him. Now if seeing before their eyes one rise from the dead, they were so wicked, why marvel at their not receiving a voice wafted from above? Since when a soul is uncandid and perverse, and possessed by the disease of envy, it yields to none of these things; even as when it is candid it receives all with faith, and has no great need of these.

Speak not therefore thus, "*They believed not,*" but rather inquire, "*Did not all things take place which ought to have made them believe?*" For by the prophet also God frames this kind of defense of His own ways in general. That is, the Jews being on the point of ruin, and of being given over to extreme punishment; lest any from their wickedness should calumniate His providence, He says, "*What ought I to have done to this vineyard, that I have not done?*" Just so here likewise reflect; "*what ought to have been done, and was not done?*" And indeed whenever arguments

arise on God's Providence, make use of this kind of defense, against those who from the wickedness of the many try to raise a prejudice against it. See, for instance, what astonishing things are done, preludes of those which were to come; for it is no more paradise, but Heaven that is opened.

But let our argument with the Jews stand over unto some other time; for the present, God working with us, we would direct our discourse to what is immediately before us.

3. *"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo! The heavens were opened unto Him."* [Matthew 3:16]

Wherefore were the heavens opened? To inform you that at your baptism also this is done, God calling you to your country on high, and persuading you to have nothing to do with earth. And if you see not, yet never doubt it. For so evermore at the beginnings of all wonderful and spiritual transactions, sensible visions appear, and such-like signs, for the sake of them that are somewhat dull in disposition, and who have need of outward sight, and who cannot at all conceive an incorporeal nature, but are excited only by the things that are seen: that so, though afterward no such thing occur, what has been declared by them once for all at the first may be received by your faith.

For in the case of the apostles too, there was a *"sound of a mighty wind,"* [Acts 2:2] and visions of fiery tongues appeared, but not for the apostles' sake, but because of the Jews who were then present.

Nevertheless, even though no sensible signs take place, we receive the things that have been once manifested by them. Since the dove itself at that time therefore appeared, that as in place of a finger (so to say) it might point out to them that were present, and to John, the Son of God. Not however merely on this account, but to teach you also, that upon you no less at your baptism the Spirit comes. But since then we have no need of sensible

vision, faith sufficing instead of all. For signs are *"not for them that believe, but for them that believe not."* [1 Corinthians 14:22]

But why in the fashion of a dove? Gentle is that creature, and pure. Forasmuch then as the Spirit too is *"a Spirit of meekness,"* He therefore appears in this sort. And besides, He is reminding us of an ancient history. For so, when once a common shipwreck had overtaken the whole world, and our race was in danger of perishing, this creature appeared, and indicated the deliverance from the tempest, and bearing an olive branch, [Genesis viii] published the good tidings of the common calm of the whole world; all which was a type of the things to come. For in fact the condition of men was then much worse, and they deserved a much sorer punishment. To prevent your despairing, therefore, He reminds you of that history. Because then also, when things were desperate, there was a sort of deliverance and reformation; but then by punishment, now, on the contrary, by grace and an unspeakable gift. [2 Corinthians 9:15] Therefore the dove also appears, not bearing an olive branch, but pointing out to us our Deliverer from all evils, and suggesting the gracious hopes. For not from out of an ark does she lead one man only, but the whole world she leads up into heaven at her appearing, and instead of a branch of peace from an olive, she conveys the adoption to all the world's offspring in common.

Reflect now on the greatness of the gift, and do not account His dignity the less for His appearing in such a likeness. For I actually hear some saying, that *"such as is the difference between a man and a dove, so great is that between Christ and the Spirit: since the one appeared in our nature, the other in the likeness of a dove."* What must we say then to these things? That the Son of God did indeed take upon Him the nature of man, but the Spirit took not on Him the nature of a dove. Therefore the evangelist also said not, *"in the nature of a dove,"* but *"in the form of a dove."*

Accordingly, never after did He so much as appear in this fashion, but at that moment only. And if on this account you affirm His dignity to be less, the cherubim too will be made out by this reasoning much His superior, even as much so as an eagle is to a dove: because they too were figured into that visible shape. And the angels too superior again, for they no less have many times appeared in the fashion of men. But these things are not so, indeed they are not. For the truth of an economy is one thing, and the condescension of a temporary vision another.

Do not now, I pray you, become unthankful towards your Benefactor nor with the very contraries requite Him that has bestowed on you the fountain of blessedness. For where adoption is vouchsafed, there is also the removing of evils, and the giving of all good things.

4. On this very account the Jewish baptism ceases, and ours takes its beginning. And what was done with regard to the Passover, the same ensues in the baptism also. For as in that case too, He acting with a view to both, brought the one to an end, but to the other He gave a beginning: so here, having fulfilled the Jewish baptism, He at the same time opens also the doors of that of the Church; as on one table then, so in one river now, He had both sketched out the shadow, and now adds the truth. For this baptism alone has the grace of the Spirit, but that of John was destitute of this gift. For this very cause in the case of the others that were baptized no such thing came to pass, but only in the instance of Him who was to hand on this; in order that, besides what we have said, you might learn this also, that not the purity of the baptizer, but the power of the baptized, had this effect. Not until then, assuredly, were either the heavens opened, nor did the Spirit make His approach. Because henceforth He leads us away from the old to the new polity, both opening to us the gates on high, and sending down His Spirit from thence to call us to our country there; and not merely to call us,

but also with the greatest mark of dignity. For He has not made us angels and archangels, but He has caused us to become "*sons of God*," and "*beloved*," and so He draws us on towards that portion of ours.

Having then all this in your mind, show forth a life worthy of the love of Him who calls you, and of your citizenship in that world, and of the honor that is given you. Crucified as you are to the world, and having crucified it to yourself, show yourself with all strictness a citizen of the city of the heavens. And do not, because your body is not translated unto heaven, suppose that you have anything to do with the earth; for you have your Head abiding above. Yea with this very purpose the Lord, having first come here and having brought His angels, did then, taking you with Him, depart there; that even before your going up to that place, you might understand that it is possible for you to inhabit earth as it were heaven.

Let us then keep watch over that noble birth, which we received from the beginning; and let us every day seek more and more the palaces there, and account all that is here to be a shadow and a dream. For so, had any king among those on earth, finding you poor and a beggar, made you suddenly his son, never would you have thought upon your cottage, and your cottage's mean appointments. Yet surely in that case the difference is not much. Do not then either in this case take account of any of the former things, for you are called unto much greater. For both He who calls is the Lord of the angels, and the good things that are given surpass all both word and thought. Since not from earth to earth does He remove you, as the king does, but from earth to heaven, and from a mortal nature to an immortal, and to glory unspeakable, then only possible to be properly manifested, when we shall actually enjoy it.

Now then, having to partake of such blessings, do I see you minding money, and clinging to the pomp which is here? And do you not esteem all

that is seen to be more vile than beggars rags? And how will you appear worthy of this honor? And what excuse will you have to plead? Or rather, what punishment will you not have to suffer, who after so great a gift art running to your former vomit? For no longer are you punished merely as a man, but as a son of God that has sinned; and the greatness of your honor becomes a mean of bringing a sorer punishment on you. Since we too punish not equally slaves that do wrong, and sons committing the same offense; and most of all when they have received some great kindness from us.

For if he who had paradise for his portion, for one disobedience underwent such dreadful things after his honor; we, who have received Heaven, and have become joint heirs with the Only Begotten, what excuse shall we have, for running to the serpent after the dove? For it will be no longer, "*Dust you are, and unto dust shall you return,*" [Genesis 3:19] and you "*till the ground,*" and those former words, that will be said to us; but what is far more grievous than these, the "*outer darkness,*" [Matthew 25:30] the bonds that may not be burst, the venomous worm, the "*gnashing of teeth;*" and this with great reason. For he that is not made better even by so great a benefit, would justly suffer the most extreme, and a yet more grievous punishment. Elias once opened and shut Heaven, but that was to bring down rain, and restrain it; whereas to you the heaven is not so opened, but in order for you to ascend there; and what is yet more, not to ascend only, but to lead up others also, if you will; such great confidence and power has He bestowed on you in all that is His.

5. Forasmuch then as our house is there, there let us store up all, and leave nothing here, lest we lose it. For here, though you put a lock on it, and doors, and bars, and set thousands of servants to watch it; though you get the better of all the crafty ones, though you escape the eyes of the envious,

the worms, the wasting that comes of time; which is impossible—death at any rate you will never escape, but will be deprived of all those things in one moment of time; and not deprived of them only, but wilt have to transfer them into the hands often of your very enemies. Whereas if you would transfer them into that house, you will be far above all. For there is no need to apply either key, or doors, or bars; such is the virtue of that city, so inviolable is this place, and by nature inaccessible to corruption and all wickedness.

How then is it not of the utmost folly, where destruction and waste is the lot of all that is stored, there to heap up all, but where things abide untouched and increase, there not to lay up even the least portion; and this, when we are to live there forever? For this cause the very heathens disbelieve the things that we say, since our doings, not our sayings, are the demonstration which they are willing to receive from us; and when they see us building ourselves fine houses, and laying out gardens and baths, and buying fields, they are not willing to believe that we are preparing for another sort of residence away from our city.

"For if this were so," say they, "they would turn to money all they have here, and lay them up beforehand there;" and this they divine from the things that are done in this world. For so we see those who are very rich getting themselves houses and fields and all the rest, chiefly in those cities in which they are to stay. But we do the contrary; and with all earnest zeal we get possession of the earth, which we are soon after to leave; giving up not money only, but even our very blood for a few acres and tenements: while for the purchase of Heaven we do not endure to give even what is beyond our wants, and this though we are to purchase it at a small price, and to possess it forever, provided we had once purchased it.

Therefore I say we shall suffer the utmost punishment, departing there naked and poor; or rather it will not be for our own poverty that we shall undergo these irremediable calamities, but also for our making others to be such as ourselves. For when heathens see them that have partaken of so great mysteries earnest about these matters, much more will they cling themselves to the things heaping much fire upon our head. For when we, who ought to teach them to despise all things that appear, do ourselves most of all urge them to the lust of these things; when shall it be possible for us to be saved, having to give account for the perdition of others? Do you not hear Christ say, that He left us to be for salt and for lights in this world, in order that we may both brace up those that are melting in luxury, and enlighten them that are darkened by the care of wealth? When therefore we even cast them into more thorough darkness, and make them more dissolute, what hope shall we have of salvation? There is none at all; but wailing and gnashing our teeth, and bound hand and foot, we shall depart into the fire of hell, after being full well worn down by the cares of riches.

Considering then all these things, let us loose the bands of such deceit, that we may not at all fall into those things which deliver us over to the unquenchable fire. For he that is a slave to money, the chains both here and there will have him continually liable to them; but he that is rid of this desire will attain to freedom from both. Unto which that we also may attain, let us break in pieces the grievous yoke of avarice, and make ourselves wings toward Heaven; by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 13 on Matthew

Matt. IV. 1.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil."

Then. When? After the descent of the Spirit, after the voice that was borne from above, and said, *"This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* And what was marvellous, it was of the Holy Spirit; for this, he here says, led Him up. For since with a view to our instruction He both did and underwent all things; He endures also to be led up there, and to wrestle against the devil: in order that each of those who are baptized, if after his baptism he have to endure greater temptations may not be troubled as if the result were unexpected, but may continue to endure all nobly, as though it were happening in the natural course of things.

Yea, for therefore you took up arms, not to be idle, but to fight. For this cause neither does God hinder the temptations as they come on, first to teach you that you have become much stronger; next, that you may continue modest neither be exalted even by the greatness of your gifts, the temptations having power to repress you; moreover, in order that that wicked demon, who is for a while doubtful about your desertion of him, by the touchstone of temptations may be well assured that you have utterly forsaken and fallen from him; fourthly, that you may in this way be made stronger, and better tempered than any steel; fifthly, that you may obtain a clear demonstration of the treasures entrusted to you.

For the devil would not have assailed you, unless he had seen you brought to greater honor. Hence, for example, from the beginning, he attacked Adam, because he saw him in the enjoyment of great dignity. For

this reason he arrayed himself against Job, because he saw him crowned and proclaimed by the God of all.

How then says He, "*Pray that you enter not into temptation.*" [Matthew 26:41] For this cause he does not show you Jesus simply going up, but "*led up*" according to the principle of the Economy; signifying obscurely by this, that we ought not of ourselves to leap upon it, but being dragged thereto, to stand manfully.

And see whither the Spirit led Him up, when He had taken Him; not into a city and forum, but into a wilderness. That is, He being minded to attract the devil, gives him a handle not only by His hunger, but also by the place. For then most especially does the devil assail, when he sees men left alone, and by themselves. Thus did he also set upon the woman in the beginning, having caught her alone, and found her apart from her husband. Just as when he sees us with others and banded together, he is not equally confident, and makes no attack. Wherefore we have the greatest need on this very account to be flocking together continually, that we may not be open to the devil's attacks.

2. Having then found Him in the wilderness, and in a pathless wilderness (for that the wilderness was such, Mark has declared, saying, that He "*was with the wild beasts*" [Mark 1:13]), behold with how much craft he draws near, and wickedness; and for what sort of opportunity he watches. For not in his fast, but in his hunger he approaches Him; to instruct you how great a good fasting is, and how it is a most powerful shield against the devil, and that after the font, men should give themselves up, not to luxury and drunkenness, and a full table, but to fasting. For, for this cause even He fasted, not as needing it Himself, but to instruct us. Thus, since our sins before the font were brought in by serving the belly: much as if any one who had made a sick man whole were to forbid his

doing those things, from which the distemper arose; so we see here likewise that He Himself after the fast brought in fasting. For indeed both Adam by the incontinence of the belly was cast out of paradise; and the flood in Noah's time, this produced; and this brought down the thunders on Sodom. For although there was also a charge of whoredom, nevertheless from this grew the root of each of those punishments; which Ezekiel also signified when he said, *"But this was the iniquity of Sodom, that she waxed wanton in pride and in fullness of bread, and in abundance of luxury."* [Ezekiel 16:49] Thus the Jews also perpetrated the greatest wickedness, being driven upon transgression by their drunkenness and delicacy. [Isaiah 5:11-12]

On this account then even He too fasts forty days, pointing out to us the medicines of our salvation; yet proceeds no further, lest on the other hand, through the exceeding greatness of the miracle the truth of His Economy should be discredited. For as it is, this cannot be, seeing that both Moses and Elias, anticipating Him, could advance to so great a length of time, strengthened by the power of God. And if He had proceeded farther, from this among other things His assumption of our flesh would have seemed incredible to many.

Having then fasted forty days and as many nights,

"He was afterwards an hungered; [Matthew 4:2]" affording him a point to lay hold of and approach, that by actual conflict He might show how to prevail and be victorious. Just so do wrestlers also: when teaching their pupils how to prevail and overcome, they voluntarily in the lists engage with others, to afford these in the persons of their antagonists the means of seeing and learning the mode of conquest. Which same thing then also took place. For it being His will to draw him on so far, He both made His hunger known to him, and awaited his approach, and as He waited for

him, so He dashed him to earth, once, twice, and three times, with such ease as became Him.

3. But that we may not, by hurrying over these victories, mar your profit, let us begin from the first assault, and examine each with exact care.

Thus, after He was an hungered, it is said, *"The tempter came, and said unto Him, If Thou be Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."* [Matthew 4:3]

For, because he had heard a voice borne from above, and saying, *"This is My beloved Son;"* and had heard also John bearing so large witness concerning Him, and after that saw Him an hungered; he was thenceforth in perplexity, and neither could believe that He was a mere man, because of the things spoken concerning Him; nor on the other hand receive it that He was Son of God, seeing Him as he did in hunger. Whence being in perplexity he utters ambiguous sounds. And much as when coming to Adam at the beginning, he feigns things that are not, that he may learn the things that are; even so here also, not knowing clearly the unutterable mystery of the Economy, and who He may be that has come, he attempts to weave other nets, whereby he thought to know that which was hidden and obscure. And what says he? *"If Thou be Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."* He said not, because you are an hungered, but, *"if Thou be Son of God;"* thinking to cheat Him with his compliments.

Wherefore also he was silent touching the hunger, that he might not seem to be alleging it, and upbraiding Him. For not knowing the greatness of the Economy which was going on, he supposed this to be a reproach to Him. Wherefore flattering Him craftily, he makes mention of His dignity only.

What then says Christ? To put down his pride, and to signify that there was nothing shameful in what had happened, nor unbecoming His wisdom; that which the other had passed over in silence to flatter Him, He brings

forward and sets it forth, saying, "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*"
[Matthew 4:4]

So that He begins with the necessity of the belly. But mark, I pray you, the craft of that wicked demon, and whence he begins his wrestlings, and how he does not forget his proper art. For by what means he cast out also the first man, and encompassed him with thousands of other evils, with the same means here likewise he weaves his deceit; I mean, with incontinence of the belly. So too even now one may hear many foolish ones say their bad words by thousands because of the belly. But Christ, to show that the virtuous man is not compelled even by this tyranny to do anything that is unseemly, first hungers, then submits not to what is enjoined Him; teaching us to obey the devil in nothing. Thus, because the first man did hereby both offend God, and transgress the law, as much and more does He teach you: — though it be no transgression which he commands, not even so to obey.

And why say I, "*transgression*"? "*Why, even though something expedient be suggested by the devils, do not thou,*" says He, "*even so give heed unto them.*" Thus, for instance, He stopped the mouths of those devils also, proclaiming Him Son of God. And Paul too again [Acts 16:18] rebuked them, crying this self-same thing; and yet what they said was profitable; but he more abundantly dishonoring them, and obstructing their plot against us, drove them away even when doctrines of salvation were preached by them, closing up their mouths, and bidding them be silent.

And therefore neither in this instance did He consent to what was said. But what says He? "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*" Now His meaning is like this: "*God is able even by a word to nourish the hungry man;*" bringing him a testimony out of the ancient Scripture, and teaching us, though we hunger, yea, whatever we suffer, never to fall away from our Lord.

But if a man say, *"still He should have displayed Himself;"* I would ask him, with what intent, and for what reason? For not at all that he might believe did the other so speak, but that he might, as he thought, over-argue Him into unbelief. Since the first of mankind were in this way beguiled and over-argued by him, not putting earnest faith in God. For the contrary of what God had said he promised them, and puffed them up with vain hopes, and brought them to unbelief, and so cast them out of the blessings they actually possessed. But Christ signifies Himself not to have consented, either to him then or afterwards to the Jews his partisans, in their demand of signs: invariably instructing us, whatever we may have power to do, yet to do nothing vainly and at random; nor even when want urges to obey the devil.

4. What then does this accursed one? Overcome, and unable to persuade Him to do his bidding, and that when pressed by such violent hunger, he proceeds to another thing, saying,

"If Thou be Son of God, cast Yourself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and in their hands they shall bear You up." [Matthew 4:6]

What can the reason be, that at each temptation He adds this, *"If Thou be Son of God?"* Much the same as he did in that former case, he does also at this time. That is, as he then slandered God, saying, *"In the day you eat, your eyes shall be opened;"* [Genesis 3:5] thereby intending to signify, that they were beguiled and overreached, and had received no benefit; even so in this case also he insinuates this same thing, saying, *"in vain God has called You Son, and has beguiled You by His gift; for, if this be not so, afford us some clear proof that You are of that power."* Then, because Christ had reasoned with him from Scripture, he also brings in a testimony of the prophet.

How then does Christ? He is not indignant, nor provoked, but with that extreme gentleness He reasons with him again from the Scriptures, saying, *"You shall not tempt the Lord your God:"* [Matthew 4:7] teaching us that we must overcome the devil, not by miracles, but by forbearance and long-suffering, and that we should do nothing at all for display and vainglory.

But mark his folly, even by the very testimony which he produced. For while the testimonies cited by the Lord were both of them spoken with exceeding fitness: his, on the other hand, were chance and random sayings, neither did he bring forward on his part that which applied to the matter in hand. For that it is written, *"He shall give His angels charge concerning You,"* this surely is not advice to dash and toss one's self down headlong; and moreover, this was not so much as spoken concerning the Lord. However, this for the time He did not expose, although there was both insult in his manner of speech, and great inconsistency. For of God's Son no man requires these things: but to cast one's self down is the part of the devil, and of demons. Whereas God's part is to raise up even them that are down. And if He ought to have displayed His own power, it would not have been by casting and tossing Himself down at random, but by saving others. But to cast ourselves down precipices, and into pits, pertains properly to his troop. Thus, for example, the juggler among them does everywhere.

But Christ, even when these things are said, does not yet reveal Himself, but as man for a while discourses with him. For the sayings, *"Man shall not live by bread alone;"* and, *"You shall not tempt the Lord your God,"* suited one not greatly revealing Himself, but representing Himself as one of the many.

But marvel not, if he in reasoning with Christ oftentimes turn himself about. For as pugilists, when they have received deadly blows, reel about, drenched in much blood, and blinded; even so he too, darkened by the first

and the second blow, speaks at random what comes uppermost: and proceeds to his third assault.

5. *"And he leads Him up into a high mountain, and shows Him all the kingdoms, and says, All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me. Then says He, Get behind me, Satan, for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve."*

[Matthew 4:8-10]

For since he was now come to sinning against the Father, saying, that all that is the Father's was his, and was endeavoring to make himself out to be God, as artificer of the universe; He then rebuked him: but not even then with vehemence, but simply, *"Get you hence, Satan;"* which itself had in it something of command rather than of rebuke. For as soon as He had said to him, *"Get you hence,"* He caused him to take to flight; since he brought not against Him any other temptations.

And how says Luke, that *"he ended all temptation."* To me it seems that in mentioning the chief of the temptations, he had spoken of all, as though the rest too were included in these. For the things that form the substance of innumerable evils are these: to be a slave to the belly, to do anything for vainglory, to be in subjection to the madness of riches. Which accordingly that accursed one considering, set last the most powerful of all, I mean the desire of more: and though originally, and from the beginning, he was travailing to come to this, yet he kept it for the last, as being of more force than the rest. For in fact this is the manner of his wrestling, to apply those things last, which seem more likely to overthrow. And this sort of thing he did with respect to Job likewise. Wherefore in this instance too, having begun with the motives which seem to be viler and weaker, he goes on to the more prevailing.

How then are we to get the better of him? In the way which Christ that taught us, by fleeing to God for refuge; and neither to be depressed in famine, as believing in God who is able to feed even with a word; nor amidst whatever good things we may receive to tempt Him who gave them, but to be content with the glory which is from above, making no account of that which is of men, and on every occasion to despise what is beyond our need. For nothing does so make us fall under the power of the devil, as longing for more, and loving covetousness. And this we may see even by what is done now. For now also there are those who say, "*All these things will we give you, if you will fall down and worship;*" who are indeed men by nature, but have become his instruments. Since at that time too he approached Him, not by himself only, but also by others. Which Luke also was declaring, when he said, that "*he departed from Him for a season;*" showing that hereafter he approached Him by his proper instruments.

"And, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." [Matthew 4:11] For when the assault was going on, He suffered them not to appear, that He might not thereby drive away the prey; but after He had convicted him in all points, and caused him to take to flight, then they appear: that you also may learn, that after your victories which are copied from His, angels will receive you also, applauding you, and waiting as guards on you in all things. Thus, for example, angels take Lazarus [Luke 16:22] away with them, after the furnace of poverty and of famine and of all distress. For as I have already said, Christ on this occasion exhibits many things, which we ourselves are to enjoy.

6. Forasmuch then as all these things have been done for you, emulate and imitate His victory. And should any one approach you of those who are that evil spirit's servants, and savor the things that be of him, upbraiding you and saying, "*If you are marvellous and great, remove the mountain;*" be

not troubled, nor confounded, but answer with meekness, and say some such thing as you have heard your Lord say: *"You shall not tempt the Lord your God."*

Or should he, offering glory and dominion, and an endless amount of wealth, enjoin you to worship him, stand again manfully. For neither did the devil deal so with the common Lord of us all only, but every day also he brings these his machinations to bear on each of His servants, not in mountains only and in wildernesses, nor by himself: but in cities likewise, in market-places, and in courts of justice, and by means of our own kindred, even men. What then must we do? Disbelieve him altogether, and stop our ears against him, and hate him when he flatters, and when he proffers more, then so much the more shun him. Because in Eve's case also, when he was most lifting her up with hopes, then he cast her down, and did her the greatest evils. Yea, for he is an implacable enemy, and has taken up against us such war as excludes all treaty. And we are not so earnest for our own salvation, as he is for our ruin. Let us then shun him, not with words only, but also with works; not in mind only, but also in deed; and let us do none of the things which he approves, for so shall we do all those which God approves. Yea, for he makes also many promises, not that he may give, but that he may take. He promises by rapine, that he may deprive us of the kingdom, and of righteousness; and sets treasures in the earth as a kind of gins or traps, that he may deprive us both of these and of the treasures in Heaven, and he would have us be rich here, that we may not be rich there.

And if he should not be able by wealth to cast us out of our portion there, he comes another way, the way of poverty; as he did with respect to Job. That is, when he saw that wealth did him no harm, he weaves his toils by poverty, expecting on that side to get the better of him. But what could be more foolish than this? Since he that has been able to bear wealth with

moderation, much more will he bear poverty with manliness; and he who desires not riches when present, neither will he seek them when absent; even as that blessed man did not, but by his poverty, on the other hand, he became still more glorious. For of his possessions that wicked demon had power indeed to deprive him, but his love toward God he not only could not take away, but made it even stronger, and when he had stripped him of all, he caused him to abound with more blessings; wherefore also he was in perplexity. For the more plagues he brought upon him, the more mighty he then saw him become. And therefore, as you know, when he had gone through all, and had thoroughly tried his metal, because he made no way, he ran to his old weapon, the woman, and assumes a mask of concern, and makes a tragical picture of his calamities in most pitiable tone, and feigns that for removal of his evil he is introducing that deadly counsel. But neither so did he prevail; nay, for his bait was perceived by that wondrous man, who with much wisdom stopped the mouth of the woman speaking at his instigation.

Just so we likewise must act: though it be a brother, a tried friend, a wife, whom you will of those nearest to us, whom he has entered into, and so utters something not convenient, we must not receive the counsel for the person of him who so speaks, but for the deadly counsel turn away from the speaker. Since in fact now also he does many such things, and puts before him a mask of sympathy, and while he seems to be friendly, he is instilling his pernicious words, more grievous than poisons. Thus, as to flatter for evil is his part, so to chastise for our good, is God's.

7. Let us not then be deceived, neither let us by every mean seek after the life of ease. For "*whom the Lord loves,*" it is said, "*He chastens.*" [Hebrews 12:6] Wherefore when we enjoy prosperity, living in wickedness, then most of all should we grieve. For we ought ever to be afraid while we

sin, but especially when we suffer no ill. For when God exacts our penalties little by little, he makes our payment for these things easy to us; but when he is long-suffering for each of our negligences, He is storing us up, if we continue in such things, unto a great punishment. Since, if for the well-doers affliction be a necessary thing, much more for them that sin.

See for instance how much long-suffering Pharaoh met with, and afterwards underwent for all most extreme punishment: in how many things Nebuchadnezzar offended, yet at the end expiated all; and the rich man, because he had suffered no great ill here, for this very cause chiefly became miserable, for that having lived in luxury in the present life, he departed to pay the penalty of all these things there, where he could not obtain anything at all to soothe his calamity.

Yet for all this some are so cold and senseless, as to be always seeking only the things that are here, and uttering those absurd sayings, *"Let me enjoy all things present for a time, and then I will consider about things out of sight: I will gratify my belly, I will be a slave to pleasures, I will make full use of the present life; give me today, and take tomorrow."* Oh excess of folly! Why, wherein do they who talk so differ from goats and swine? For if the prophet [Jeremiah 5:8] permits not them to be accounted men, that *"neigh after their neighbors wife,"* who shall blame us for esteeming these to be goats and swine, and more insensible than asses, by whom those things are held uncertain, which are more evident than what we see? Why, if you believe nothing else, attend to the devils in their scourging, to them who had our hurt for their object in all their practice, both in word and deed. For you will not, I am sure, contradict this, that they do all to increase our security, and to do away with the fear of hell, and to breed disbelief of the tribunals in that world. Nevertheless, they that are so minded, by cryings and wailings do oftentimes proclaim the torments that are there. Whence is

it then that they so speak, and utter things contrary to their own will? From no other cause, but because they are under the pressure of stronger compulsion. For they would have not been minded of their own accord to confess either that they are tormented by dead men, or that they at all suffer anything dreadful.

Wherefore now have I said this? Because evil demons confess hell, who would fain have hell disbelieved; but you who enjoyest honor so great, and hast been a partaker in unutterable mysteries, dost not so much as imitate them, but art become more hardened even than they.

8. *"But who,"* one will say, *"has come from those in hell, and has declared these things?"* Why, who has arrived here from heaven, and told us that there is a God who created all things? And whence is it clear that we have a soul? For plainly, if you are to believe the things only that are in sight, both God and angels, and mind and soul, will be matter of doubting to you, and in this way you will find all the doctrines of the truth gone.

Yet surely, if you are willing to believe what is evident, the things invisible ought to be believed by you, rather than those which are seen. Even though what I say be a paradox, nevertheless it is true, and among men of understanding is fully acknowledged. For whereas the eyes are often deceived, not in the things unseen only (for of those they do not so much as take cognizance), but even in those which men think they actually see, distance and atmosphere, and absence of mind, and anger, and care, and ten thousand other things impeding their accuracy; the reasoning power of the soul on the other hand, if it receive the light of the divine Scriptures, will prove a more accurate, an unerring standard of realities.

Let us not then vainly deceive ourselves, neither in addition to the carelessness of our life, which is the offspring of such doctrines as these, heap up to ourselves, for the very doctrines themselves, a more grievous

fire. For if there be no judgment, and we are not to give account of our deeds, neither shall we receive rewards for our labors. Observe which way your blasphemies tend, when you say, that God, who is righteous, and loving, and mild, overlooks so great labors and toils. And how can this be reasonable? Why, if by nothing else, at any rate by the circumstances of your own house, I bid you weigh these things, and then you will see the absurdity. For though you were yourself savage and inhuman beyond measure, and wilder than the very wild beasts, you would not choose at your death to leave unhonored the servant that had been affectionate to you, but requitest him both with freedom, and with a gift of money; and forasmuch as in your own person hereafter, having departed, you will be able to do him no good, you give charge concerning him to the future inheritors of your substance, beseeching, exhorting, doing everything, so that he may not remain unrewarded.

So then you, who are evil, are so kind and loving towards your servant; and will the Infinite Goodness, that is, God, the Unspeakable Love to man, the kindness so vast: will He overlook and leave uncrowned His own servants, Peter and Paul, and James, and John, those who every day for His sake suffered hunger, were bound, were scourged, were drowned in the sea, were given up to wild beasts, were dying, were suffering so great things as we cannot so much as reckon up? And whereas the Olympic judge proclaims and crowns the victor, and the master rewards the servant, and the king the soldier, and each in general him that has done him service, with what good things he can; shall God alone, after those so great toils and labors, repay them with no good thing great or small? Shall those just and pious men, who have walked in every virtue, lie in the same state with adulterers, and parricides, and manslayers, and violators of tombs? And in what way can this be reasonable? Since, if there be nothing after our

departure hence, and our interests reach no further than things present, those are in the same case with these, or rather not so much as in the same. For what though hereafter, as you say, they fare alike? Yet here, the whole of their time, the wicked have been at ease, the righteous in chastisement. And this what sort of tyrant, what savage and relentless man did ever so devise, touching his own servants and subjects?

Did you mark the exceeding greatness of the absurdity, and in what this argument issues? Therefore if you will not any other way, yet by these reasonings be instructed to rid yourself of this wicked thought, and to flee from vice, and cleave to the toils which end in virtue: and then shall you know certainly that our concerns are not bounded by the present life. And if any one ask you, *"Who has come from thence and brought word what is there?"* say unto him, of men not one; for surely he would have been often disbelieved, as vaunting, and exaggerating the thing; but the Lord of the angels has brought word with exactness of all those things. What need then have we of any man, seeing He, that will demand account of us, cries aloud every day, that He has both made ready a hell, and prepared a kingdom; and affords us clear demonstrations of these things? For if He were not hereafter to judge, neither would he have exacted any penalty here.

9. *"Well, but as to this very point how can it be reasonable? That of the wicked some should be punished, others not? I mean, if God be no respecter of persons, as surely He is not, why can it be that of one He exacts a penalty, but another He suffers to go away unpunished? Why, this is again more inexplicable than the former."*

Yet if you are willing to hear what we say with candor, we will solve this difficulty also.

What then is the solution? He neither exacts penalty of all here, lest you should despair of the resurrection, and lose all expectation of the

judgment, as though all were to give account here; nor does He suffer all to go away unpunished, lest on the other hand you should account all to be without His providence; but He both punishes and abstains from punishing: by those whom He punishes, signifying that in that world also He will exact a penalty of such as are unpunished here; and by those whom He does not punish, working upon you to believe that there is some fearful trial after our departure hence.

But if He were altogether indifferent about our former deeds, He neither would have punished any here, nor have conferred benefits. But now you see Him for your sake stretching out the heaven, kindling the sun, founding the earth, pouring forth the sea, expanding the air, and appointing for the moon her courses, setting unchangeable laws for the seasons of the years, and all other things too performing their own courses exactly at a sign from Him. For both our nature, and that of creatures irrational, of them that creep, that walk, that fly, that swim, in marshes, in springs, in rivers, in mountains, in forests, in houses, in the air, in plains; plants also, and seeds, and trees, both wild and cultivated, both fruitful and unfruitful; and all things in general, moved by that unwearied Hand, make provision for our life, affording to us of themselves their ministry, not for our need only, but also for our feeling of high station.

Seeing therefore order so great and fair (and yet we have not mentioned so much as the least portion thereof), do you dare say, that He who for your sake has wrought things so many and great will overlook you in the most critical points, and suffer you when dead to lie with the asses and swine: and that having honored you with so great a gift, that of godliness, whereby He has even equaled you with the angels, He will overlook you after your countless labors and toils?

And how can this be reasonable? Why, these things, if we be silent *"the stones will immediately cry out;"* [Luke 19:40] so plain are they, and manifest, and more lucid than the sunbeam itself.

Having then considered all these things, and having convinced our own soul, that after our departure hence, we shall both stand at the fearful judgment-seat, and give account of all that we have done, and shall bear our penalty, and submit to our sentence, if we continue in our negligences; and shall receive crowns and unutterable blessings, if we are willing to give a little heed to ourselves; let us both stop the mouths of them who gainsay these things, and ourselves choose the way of virtue; that with due confidence departing to that tribunal, we may attain unto the good things that are promised us, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on Matthew

Matt. IV. 12.

"Now when Jesus had heard that John was delivered up, He departed into Galilee."

1. Wherefore does He depart? Again instructing us not to go to meet temptations, but to give place and withdraw ourselves. For it is no reproach, the not casting one's self into danger, but the failing to stand manfully when fallen into it. To teach us this accordingly, and to soothe the envy of the Jews, He retires to Capernaum; at once fulfilling the prophecy, and making haste to catch the teachers of the world: for they, as you know, were abiding there, following their craft.

But mark, I pray you, how in every case when He is about to depart unto the Gentiles, He has the occasion given Him by Jews. For so in this instance, by plotting against His forerunner, and casting him into prison, they thrust out Christ into the Galilee of the Gentiles. For to show that He neither speaks of the Jewish nation by a part of it, nor signifies obscurely all the tribes; mark how the Prophet distinguishes that place, saying *"The land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people which sat in darkness, saw great light:"* by darkness here not meaning that which is sensible, but men's errors and ungodliness. Wherefore he also added, *"They which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them light is sprung up."* For that you might learn that neither the light nor the darkness which he speaks of are sensible, in discoursing of the light, he called it not merely light, but *"a great light"* which elsewhere he expresses by the word, True: [John 1:9] and in describing the darkness, he termed it, *"a shadow of death."*

Then implying that they did not of themselves seek and find, but that God showed Himself to them from above, he says to them, "*Light is sprung up*;" that is, the light of itself sprang up and shone forth: it was not that they first ran to the light. For in truth the condition of men was at the worst before Christ's coming. Since they more than "*walked in darkness*;" they "*sat in darkness*;" a kind of sign that they did not even hope to be delivered. For as persons not even knowing where to put a step forward, so they sat, overtaken by the darkness, not being able so much as to stand any more.

2. "*From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

"*From that time*:" what time? After John was cast into prison. And wherefore did He not preach to them from the beginning? Indeed what occasion for John at all, when the witness of His works was proclaiming Him?

That hence also you might learn His dignity; namely, that as the Fathers, so He too has prophets; to which purpose Zacharias also spoke; "*And you, child, shall be called a prophet of the Highest.*" [Luke 1:76] And that he might leave no occasion to the shameless Jews; which motive He himself alleged, saying, "*John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he has a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*"

And moreover it was necessary that what concerned Him should be spoken by another first and not by Himself. For if even after both testimonies and demonstrations so many and so great, they said, "*You bear record of Yourself, Your record is not true.*" [John 8:13] had He, without John's saying anything, come into the midst, and first borne record Himself; what would they not have said? For this cause, neither did He preach before

John, nor did He work miracles, until John was cast into prison; lest in this way the multitude should be divided. Therefore also John did no miracle at all; that by this means also might give over the multitude to Jesus, His miracles drawing them unto Him.

Again, if even after so many divine precautions, John's disciples, both before and after his imprisonment, were jealously disposed towards Him, and the people too suspected not Him but John to be the Christ; what would not the result have been, had none of these things taken place? For this cause both Matthew distinctly notes, that *"from that time He began to preach;"* and when He began His preaching, He Himself also taught this same doctrine, which the other used to preach; and no word as yet concerning Himself does the doctrine which he preached say. Because it was for the time a great thing even for this to be received, forasmuch as they had not as yet the proper opinion about Him. Therefore also at the beginning He puts nothing severe or grievous, as the other did, mentioning an axe, and a tree cut down; a fan, and a threshing-floor, and unquenchable fire; but *His* preludes are gracious: the Heavens and the kingdom there are the good tidings which he declares to His hearers.

3. *"And walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren, Simon that was surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And He says unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they left their nets, and followed Him."*

[Matthew 4:18-19]

And yet John says that they were called in another manner. Whence it is evident that this was a second call; and from many things one may perceive this. For there it is said, that they came to Him when *"John was not yet cast into prison;"* but here, after he was in confinement. And there Andrew calls Peter, but here Jesus calls both. And John says, Jesus seeing

Simon coming, says, "*You are Simon, the Son of Jona, you shall be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone.*" [John 1:42] But Matthew says that he was already called by that name; for his words are, "*Seeing Simon that was called Peter.*" And from the place whence they were called, and from many other things, one may perceive this; and from their ready obedience, and abandonment of all. For now they were well instructed beforehand. Thus, in the other case, Andrew is seen coming into His house, and hearing many things; but here, having heard one bare word, they followed immediately. Since neither was it unnatural for them to follow Him at the beginning, and then leave Him again and return anew to their own craft, when they saw both John thrown into prison, and Himself departing. Accordingly you see that He finds them actually fishing. But He neither forbade them at the first when minded to withdraw, nor having withdrawn themselves, did He let them go altogether; but He gave way when they started aside from Him, and comes again to win them back; which kind of thing is the great point in fishing.

But mark both their faith, and their obedience. For though they were in the midst of their work (and you know how greedy a thing fishing is), when they heard His command, they delayed not, they procrastinated not, they said not, "*let us return home, and converse with our kinsfolk,*" but "*they forsook all and followed,*" even as Elisha did to Elijah. [1 Kings 19:20-21] Because such is the obedience which Christ seeks of us, as that we delay not even a moment of time, though something absolutely most needful should vehemently press on us. Wherefore also when some other had come unto Him, and was asking leave to bury his own father, [Matthew 8:21-22] not even this did He permit him to do; to signify that before all we ought to esteem the following of Himself.

But if you should say, "*the promise is very great;*" even for this do I most admire them, for that when they had not as yet seen any sign, they believed in so great a reach of promise, and accounted all but second to that attendance. And this, because they believed that by what words they were caught, by the same they would be able to catch others also.

To these, then, such was His promise: but to James and John He says no such thing. For the obedience of those that had gone before had by this time paved the way for these. And besides they had also heard many things before concerning Him.

And see how he does with exact care intimate unto us their poverty also: in that He found them sewing up their nets. So exceeding great was their poverty, that they were mending what was worn out, not being able to buy others. And this too was for the time no small proof of virtue, their beating poverty with ease, their supporting themselves by honest labor, their being bound one to another by the power of love, their having their father with them, and attending upon them.

4. When therefore He had caught them, then He begins in their presence to work miracles, by His deeds confirming the words of John concerning Him. And He was continually frequenting their synagogues, even by this instructing them that He was not a sort of adversary of God and deceiver, but that He had come in accordance with the Father.

And while frequenting them, He did not preach only, but also showed forth miracles. And this, because on every occasion, whenever anything is done strange and surprising, and any polity is introduced, God is wont to work miracles as pledges of his power, which He affords to them that are to receive His laws. Thus, for instance, when He was about to make man, He created a whole world, and then gave him that law which he had in Paradise. And when He was to give laws to Noah, He showed forth anew

great miracles, in that He reduced again the whole creation to its elements, and made that fearful sea to prevail for a full year; and in that, amid so great a tempest, He preserved that righteous man. And in the time of Abraham too He vouchsafed many signs; as his victory in the war, the plague upon Pharaoh, his deliverance from dangers. And when about to legislate for the Jews, He showed forth those marvellous and great prodigies, and then gave the law. Just so in this case also, being to introduce a certain high polity, and to tell them what they had never heard, by the display of the miracles He confirms what He says.

Thus because the kingdom He was preaching appeared not, by the things that appear, He makes it, though invisible, manifest.

And mark the evangelist's care to avoid superfluity of words; how he tells us not of every one of them that are healed, but in a few words speeds over showers of miracles.

For *"they brought unto Him,"* says he, *"all that were sick with various diseases, and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and He healed them."*

But our inquiry is this; why it can have been that He demanded faith of none of them? For He said not, what we find Him saying after this, *"Believe ye that I am able to do this?"* [Matthew 9:28] because He had not as yet given proof of His power. And besides, the very act of approaching Him, and of bringing others to Him, exhibited no common faith. For they brought them even from far; whereas they would never have brought them, unless they had persuaded themselves of great things concerning Him.

Now then, let us too follow Him; for we also have many diseases of our soul, and these especially He would fain heal. Since with this intent He corrects that other sort, that He may banish these out of our soul.

5. Let us therefore come unto Him, and let us ask nothing pertaining to this life, but rather remission of sins. For indeed He gives it even now, if we be in earnest. Since as then "*His fame went out into Syria,*" so now into the whole world. And they indeed ran together on hearing that He healed persons possessed: and you, after having much more and greater experience of His power, do you not rouse yourself and run?

But whereas they left both country, and friends, and kinsfolk; do you not endure so much as to leave your house for the sake of drawing near, and obtaining far greater things? Or rather we do not require of you so much as this, but leave your evil habits only, and you can easily be made whole, remaining at home with your friends.

But as it is, if we have any bodily ailment, we do and contrive everything to be rid of what pains us; but when our soul is indisposed, we delay, and draw back. For which cause neither from the other sort are we delivered: since the things that are indispensable are becoming to us secondary, and the secondary indispensable; and letting alone the fountain of our ills, we would fain cleanse out the streams.

For that our bodily ills are caused by the wickedness of the soul, is shown both by him that had the palsy thirty and eight years, and by him that was let down through the roof, and by Cain also before these; and from many other things likewise one may perceive this. Let us do away then with the well-spring of our evils, and all the channels of our diseases will be stayed. For the disease is not palsy only, but also our sin; and this more than that, by how much a soul is better than a body.

Let us therefore now also draw near unto Him; let us entreat Him that He would brace our paralyzed soul, and leaving all things that pertain to this life, let us take account of the things spiritual only. Or if you cleave unto these also, yet think of them after the other.

Neither must you think lightly of it, because you have no pain in sinning; rather on this very account most of all do thou lament, that you feel not the anguish of your offenses. For not because sin bites not, does this come to pass, but because the offending soul is insensible. Regard with this view them that have a feeling of their own sins, how they wail more bitterly than such as are being cut, or burned; how many things they do, how many suffer, how greatly they mourn and lament, in order to be delivered from their evil conscience. They would not do any such thing, unless they were exceedingly pained in soul.

The best thing then is, to avoid sin in the first instance: the next to it, is to feel that we sin, and thoroughly amend ourselves. But if we have not this, how shall we pray to God, and ask forgiveness of our sins, we who take no account of these matters? For when you yourself who hast offended art unwilling to know so much as this very fact, that you have sinned; for what manner of offenses will you entreat God for pardon? For what you know not? And how will you know the greatness of the benefit? Tell therefore your offenses in particular, that you may learn for what you receive forgiveness, that so you may become grateful towards your Benefactor.

But you, when it is a man whom you have provoked, entreatest friends, neighbors, and door-keepers, and spendest money, and consumest many days in visiting and petitioning, and though he that is provoked utterly reject you once, twice, ten thousand times over, you despond not, but becoming more earnest you make the more entreaty; but when the God of all is provoked, we gape, and throw ourselves back, and live in luxury and in drunkenness, and do all things as usual. And when shall we be able to propitiate Him? And how shall we by this very thing fail to provoke Him so much the more? For not so much sinning, as signing without even pain, causes in Him indignation and wrath. Wherefore it were meet after all this

to sink into the very earth, and not so much as to behold this sun, nor to breathe at all, for that having so placable a Master, we provoke Him first, and then have no remorse for provoking Him. And yet He assuredly, even when He is angry, does not so as hating and turning away from us, but in order that in this way at least He may win us over to Himself. For if He continued after insult befriending you, you would the more despise Him. Therefore in order that this may not be, He turns away for a little while, to have you ever with Himself.

6. Let us now, I pray you, take courage at His love to man, and let us show forth an anxious repentance, before the day come on, which permits us not to profit thereby. For as yet all depends on us, but then He that judges has alone control over the sentence. *"Let us therefore come before His face with confession;"* let us bewail, let us mourn. For if we should be able to prevail upon the Judge before the appointed day to forgive us our sins, then we need not so much as enter into the court; as on the other hand, if this be not done, He will hear us publicly in the presence of the world, and we shall no longer have any hope of pardon. For no one of those who have not done away with their sins here, when he has departed there shall be able to escape his account for them; but as they who are taken out of these earthly prisons are brought in their chains to the place of judgment, even so all souls, when they have gone away hence bound with the manifold chains of their sins, are led to the awful judgment-seat. For in truth our present life is nothing better than a prison. But as when we have entered into that apartment, we see all bound with chains; so now if we withdraw ourselves from outward show, and enter into each man's life, into each man's soul, we shall see it bound with chains more grievous than iron: and this most especially if you enter into the souls of them that are rich. For the more men have about them, so much the more are they bound. As therefore with

regard to the prisoner, when you see him with irons on his back, on his hands, and often on his feet too, you therefore most of all account him miserable; so also as to the rich man, when you see him encompassed with innumerable affairs, let him not be therefore rich, but rather for these very things wretched, in your account. For together with these bonds, he has a cruel jailor too, the wicked love of riches; which suffers him not to pass out of this prison, but provides for him thousands of fetters, and guards, and doors, and bolts; and when he has cast him into the inner prison, persuades him even to feel pleasure in these bonds; that he may not find so much as any hope of deliverance from the evils which press on him.

And if in thought you were to lay open that man's soul, you would see it not bound only, but squalid, and filthy, and teeming with vermin. For no better than vermin are the pleasures of luxury, but even more abominable, and destroy the body more, together with the soul also; and upon the one and upon the other they bring ten thousand scourges of sickness.

On account then of all these things let us entreat the Redeemer of our souls, that He would both burst asunder our bands, and remove this our cruel jailor, and having set us free from the burden of those iron chains, He would make our spirits lighter than any wing. And as we entreat Him, so let us contribute our own part, earnestness, and consideration, and an excellent zeal. For thus we shall be able both in a short time to be freed from the evils which now oppress us, and to learn in what condition we were before, and to lay hold on the liberty which belongs to us; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 15 on Matthew

Matthew 5:1-2.

"And Jesus seeing the multitudes went up into the mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him. And He opened His mouth, and taught them saying, Blessed," etc.

See how unambitious He was, and void of boasting: in that He did not lead people about with Him, but whereas, when healing was required, He had Himself gone about everywhere, visiting both towns and country places; now when the multitude has become very great, He sits in one spot: and that not in the midst of any city or forum, but on a mountain and in a wilderness; instructing us to do nothing for display, and to separate ourselves from the tumults of ordinary life, and this most especially, when we are to study wisdom, and to discourse of things needful to be done.

But when He had gone up into the mount, and *"was set down, His disciples came unto Him."* Do you see their growth in virtue? And how in a moment they became better men? Since the multitude were but gazers on the miracles, but these from that hour desired also to hear some great and high thing. And indeed this it was set Him on His teaching, and made Him begin this discourse.

For it was not men's bodies only that He was healing, but He was also amending their souls; and again from the care of these He would pass to attendance on the other. Thus He at once varied the succor that He gave, and likewise mingled with the instruction afforded by His words, the manifestation of His glory from His works; and besides, He stopped the shameless mouths of the heretics, signifying by this His care of both parts of our being, that He Himself is the Maker of the whole creation. Therefore

also on each nature He bestowed abundant providence, now amending the one, now the other.

And in this way He was then employed. For it is said, that "*He opened His mouth, and taught them.*" And wherefore is the clause added, "*He opened His mouth*"? To inform you that in His very silence He gave instruction, and not when He spoke only: but at one time by "*opening His mouth,*" at another uttering His voice by the works which He did.

But when you hear that He taught them, do not think of Him as discoursing with His disciples only, but rather with all through them.

For since the multitude was such as a multitude ever is, and consisted moreover of such as creep on the ground, He withdraws the choir of His disciples, and makes His discourse unto them: in His conversation with them providing that the rest also, who were yet very far from the level of His sayings, might find His lesson of self-denial no longer grievous unto them. Of which indeed both Luke gave intimation, when he said, that He directed His words unto them: and Matthew too, clearly declaring the same, wrote, "*His disciples came unto Him, and He taught them.*" For thus the others also were sure to be more eagerly attentive to Him, than they would have been, had He addressed Himself unto all.

2. Whence then does He begin? And what kind of foundations of His new polity does He lay for us?

Let us hearken with strict attention unto what is said. For though it was spoken unto them, it was written for the sake also of all men afterwards. And accordingly on this account, though He had His disciples in His mind in His public preaching, yet unto them He limits not His sayings, but applies all His words of blessing without restriction. Thus He said not, "*Blessed are you, if you become poor,*" but "*Blessed are the poor.*" And I may add that even if He had spoken of them, the advice would still be

common to all. For so, when He says, "*Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,*" [Matthew 28:20] He is discoursing not with them only, but also, through them, with all the world. And in pronouncing them blessed, who are persecuted, and chased, and suffer all intolerable things; not for them only, but also for all who arrive at the same excellency, He weaves His crown.

However, that this may be yet plainer, and to inform you that you have great interest in His sayings, and so indeed has all mankind, if any choose to give heed; hear how He begins these wondrous words.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."
[Matthew 5:3]

What is meant by "*the poor in spirit*?" The humble and contrite in mind. For by "*spirit*" He has here designated the soul, and the faculty of choice. That is, since many are humble not willingly, but compelled by stress of circumstances; letting these pass (for this were no matter of praise), He blesses them first, who by choice humble and contract themselves.

But why said he not, "*the humble,*" but rather "*the poor*?" Because this is more than that. For He means here them who are awestruck, and tremble at the commandments of God. Whom also by His prophet Isaiah God earnestly accepting said, "*To whom will I look, but to him who is meek and quiet, and trembles at My words?*" For indeed there are many kinds of humility: one is humble in his own measure, another with all excess of lowliness. It is this last lowliness of mind which that blessed prophet commends, picturing to us the temper that is not merely subdued, but utterly broken, when he says, "*The sacrifice for God is a contrite spirit, a contrite and an humble heart God will not despise.*" And the Three Children also offer this unto God as a great sacrifice, saying, "*Nevertheless,*

in a contrite soul, and in a spirit of lowliness, may we be accepted." This Christ also now blesses.

3. For whereas the greatest of evils, and those which make havoc of the whole world, had their entering in from pride:— for both the devil, not being such before, did thus become a devil; as indeed Paul plainly declared, saying, *"Lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil:"* [1 Timothy 3:6] — and the first man, too, puffed up by the devil with these hopes, was made an example of, and became mortal (for expecting to become a god, he lost even what he had; and God also upbraiding him with this, and mocking his folly, said, *"Behold, Adam has become as one of us"* [Genesis 3:22]; and each one of those that came after did hereby wreck himself in impiety, fancying some equality with God:— since, I say, this was the stronghold of our evils, and the root and fountain of all wickedness, He, preparing a remedy suitable to the disease, laid this law first as a strong and safe foundation. For this being fixed as a base, the builder in security lays on it all the rest. But if this be taken away, though a man reach to the Heavens in his course of life, it is all easily undermined, and issues in a grievous end. Though fasting, prayer, almsgiving, temperance, any other good thing whatever, be gathered together in you; without humility all fall away and perish.

It was this very thing that took place in the instance of the Pharisee. For even after he had arrived at the very summit, he *"went down"* [Luke 18:14] with the loss of all, because he had not the mother of virtues: for as pride is the fountain of all wickedness, so is humility the principle of all self-command. Wherefore also He begins with this, pulling up boasting by the very root out of the soul of His hearers.

"And what," one may ask, *"is this to His disciples, who were on every account humble? For in truth they had nothing to be proud of, being*

fishermen, poor, ignoble, and illiterate." Even though these things concerned not His disciples, yet surely they concerned such as were then present, and such as were hereafter to receive the disciples, lest they should on this account despise them. But it were truer to say that they did also concern His disciples. For even if not then, yet by and by they were sure to require this help, after their signs and wonders, and their honor from the world, and their confidence towards God. For neither wealth, nor power, nor royalty itself, had so much power to exalt men, as the things which they possessed in all fullness. And besides, it was natural that even before the signs they might be lifted up, at that very time when they saw the multitude, and all that audience surrounding their Master; they might feel some human weakness. Wherefore He at once represses their pride.

And He does not introduce what He says by way of advice or of commandments, but by way of blessing, so making His word less burthensome, and opening to all the course of His discipline. For He said not, *"This or that person,"* but *"they who do so, are all of them blessed."* So that though you be a slave, a beggar, in poverty, a stranger, unlearned, there is nothing to hinder you from being blessed, if you emulate this virtue.

4. Now having begun, as you see, where most need was, He proceeds to another commandment, one which seems to be opposed to the judgment of the whole world. For whereas all think that they who rejoice are enviable, those in dejection, poverty, and mourning, wretched, He calls these blessed rather than those; saying thus,

"Blessed are they that mourn." [Matthew 5:4]

Yet surely all men call them miserable. For therefore He wrought the miracles beforehand, that in such enactments as these He might be entitled to credit.

And here too again he designated not simply all that mourn, but all that do so for sins: since surely that other kind of mourning is forbidden, and that earnestly, which relates to anything of this life. This Paul also clearly declared, when he said, *"The sorrow of the world works death, but godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of."*

These then He too Himself calls blessed, whose sorrow is of that kind; yet not simply them that sorrow did He designate, but them that sorrow intensely. Therefore He did not say, *"they that sorrow,"* but *"they that mourn."* For this commandment again is fitted to teach us entire self-control. For if those who grieve for children, or wife, or any other relation gone from them, have no fondness for gain or pleasure during that period of their sorrow; if they aim not at glory, are not provoked by insults, nor led captive by envy, nor beset by any other passion, their grief alone wholly possessing them; much more will they who mourn for their own sins, as they ought to mourn, show forth a self-denial greater than this.

Next, what is the reward for these? *"For they shall be comforted,"* says He.

Where shall they be comforted! Tell me. Both here and there. For since the thing enjoined was exceeding burthensome and galling, He promised to give that, which most of all made it light. Wherefore, if you will be comforted, mourn: and think not this a dark saying. For when God does comfort, though sorrows come upon you by thousands like snow-flakes, you will be above them all. Since in truth, as the returns which God gives are always far greater than our labors; so He has wrought in this case, declaring them that mourn to be blessed, not after the value of what they do, but after His own love towards man. For they that mourn, mourn for misdoings, and to such it is enough to enjoy forgiveness, and obtain wherewith to answer for themselves. But forasmuch as He is full of love

towards man, He does not limit His recompense either to the removal of our punishments, or to the deliverance from our sins, but He makes them even blessed, and imparts to them abundant consolation.

But He bids us mourn, not only for our own, but also for other men's misdoings. And of this temper were the souls of the saints: such was that of Moses, of Paul, of David; yea, all these many times mourned for evils not their own.

5. *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."* Tell me, what kind of earth? Some say a figurative earth, but it is not this, for nowhere in Scripture do we find any mention of an earth that is merely figurative. But what can the saying mean? He holds out a sensible prize; even as Paul also does, in that when he had said, *"Honor your father and your mother,"* [Ephesians 6:2] he added, *"For so shall you live long upon the earth."* And He Himself unto the thief again, *"Today shall you be with me in Paradise."* [Luke 23:43]

Thus He does not incite us by means of the future blessings only, but of the present also, for the sake of the grosser sort of His hearers, and such as before the future seek those others.

Thus, for example, further on also He said, *"Agree with your adversary."* [Matthew 5:25] Then He appoints the reward of such self-command, and says, *"Lest at any time the adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer."* [Matthew 5:25] Do you see whereby He alarmed us? By the things of sense, by what happens before our eyes. And again, *"Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council."* [Matthew 5:22]

And Paul too sets forth sensible rewards at great length, and uses things present in his exhortations; as when he is discoursing about virginity. For having said nothing about the heavens there, for the time he urges it by

things present, saying, *"Because of the present distress,"* and, *"But I spare you,"* and, *"I would have you without carefulness."*

Thus accordingly Christ also with the things spiritual has mingled the sensible. For whereas the meek man is thought to lose all his own, He promises the contrary, saying, *"Nay, but this is he who possesses his goods in safety, namely, he who is not rash, nor boastful: while that sort of man shall often lose his patrimony, and his very life."*

And besides, since in the Old Testament the prophet used to say continually, *"The meek shall inherit the earth;"* He thus weaves into His discourse the words to which they were accustomed, so as not everywhere to speak a strange language.

And this He says, not as limiting the rewards to things present, but as joining with these the other sort of gifts also. For neither in speaking of any spiritual thing does He exclude such as are in the present life; nor again in promising such as are in our life, does He limit his promise to that kind. For He says, *"Seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."* [Matthew 6:33] And again: *"Whosoever has left houses or brethren, shall receive an hundred fold in this world, and in the future shall inherit everlasting life."*

6. *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."*
[Matthew 5:6]

What sort of righteousness? He means either the whole of virtue, or that particular virtue which is opposed to covetousness. For since He is about to give commandment concerning mercy, to show how we must show mercy, as, for instance, not of rapine or covetousness, He blesses them that lay hold of righteousness.

And see with what exceeding force He puts it. For He said not, *"Blessed are they which keep fast by righteousness,"* but, *"Blessed are they*

which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:" that not merely anyhow, but with all desire we may pursue it. For since this is the most peculiar property of covetousness, and we are not so enamored of meat and drink, as of gaining, and compassing ourselves with more and more, He bade us to transfer this desire to a new object, freedom from covetousness.

Then He appoints the prize, again from things sensible; saying, *"for they shall be filled."* Thus, because it is thought that the rich are commonly made such by covetousness, *"Nay,"* says He, *"it is just contrary: for it is righteousness that does this. Wherefore, so long as you do righteously, fear not poverty, nor tremble at hunger. For the extortioners, they are the very persons who lose all, even as he certainly who is in love with righteousness, possesses himself the goods of all men in safety."*

But if they who covet not other men's goods enjoy so great abundance, much more they who give up their own.

"Blessed are the merciful." [Matthew 5:7]

Here He seems to me to speak not of those only who show mercy in giving of money, but those likewise who are merciful in their actions. For the way of showing mercy is manifold, and this commandment is broad. What then is the reward thereof? *"For they shall obtain mercy."*

And it seems indeed to be a sort of equal recompence, but it is a far greater thing than the act of goodness. For whereas they themselves show mercy as men, they obtain mercy from the God of all; and it is not the same thing, man's mercy, and God's; but as wide as is the interval between wickedness and goodness, so far is the one of these removed from the other.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." [Matthew 5:8]

Behold again the reward is spiritual. Now He here calls *"pure,"* either those who have attained unto all virtue, and are not conscious to themselves of any evil; or those who live in temperance. For there is nothing which we

need so much in order to see God, as this last virtue. Wherefore Paul also said, *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."* [Hebrews 12:14] He is here speaking of such sight as it is possible for man to have.

For because there are many who show mercy, and who commit no rapine, nor are covetous, who yet are guilty of fornication and uncleanness; to signify that the former alone suffices not, He has added this, much in the same sense as Paul, writing to the Corinthians, bore witness of the Macedonians, that they were rich not only in almsgiving, but also in all other virtue. For having spoken of the noble spirit they had shown in regard of their goods, he says, *"They gave also their own selves to the Lord, and to us."* [2 Corinthians 8:5]

7. *"Blessed are the peace-makers."* [Matthew 5:9]

Here He not only takes away altogether our own strife and hatred among ourselves, but He requires besides this something more, namely, that we should set at one again others, who are at strife.

And again, the reward which He annexes is spiritual. Of what kind then is it.

"For they shall be called the children of God."

Yea, for this became the work of the Only Begotten, to unite the divided, and to reconcile the alienated.

Then, lest you should imagine peace in all cases a blessing, He has added,

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

[Matthew 5:10]

That is, for virtue's sake, for succor given to others, and for godliness: it being ever His wont to call by the name of *"righteousness"* the whole practical wisdom of the soul.

"Blessed are you, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad." [Matthew 5:11-12]

As if He said, *"Though they should call you sorcerers, deceivers, pestilent persons, or whatever else, blessed are you:"* so He speaks. What could be newer than these injunctions? Wherein the very things which all others avoid, these He declares to be desirable; I mean, being poor, mourning, persecution, evil report. But yet He both affirmed this, and convinced not two, nor ten, nor twenty, nor an hundred, nor a thousand men, but the whole world. And hearing things so grievous and galling, so contrary to the accustomed ways of men, the multitudes *"were astonished."* So great was the power of Him who spoke.

However, lest you should think that the mere fact of being evil spoken of makes men blessed, He has set two limitations; when it is for His sake, and when the things that are said are false: for without these, he who is evil spoken of, so far from being blessed, is miserable.

Then see the prize again: *"Because your reward is great in heaven."* But you, though you hear not of a kingdom given in each one of the blessings, be not discouraged. For although He give different names to the rewards, yet He brings all into His kingdom. Thus, both when He says, *"they that mourn shall be comforted;"* and, *"they that show mercy shall obtain mercy;"* and, *"the pure in heart shall see God;"* and, the peacemakers *"shall be called the children of God;"* nothing else but the Kingdom does He shadow out by all these sayings. For such as enjoy these, shall surely attain unto that. Think not therefore that this reward is for the poor in spirit only, but for those also who hunger after righteousness, for the meek, and for all the rest without exception.

Since on this account He has set His blessing on them all, that you might not look for anything sensible: for that man cannot be blessed, who is crowned with such things as come to an end with this present life, and hurry by quicker than a shadow.

8. But when He had said, *"your reward is great,"* he added also another consolation, saying, *"For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."*

Thus, since that first, the promise of the Kingdom, was yet to come, and all in expectation, He affords them comfort from this world; from their fellowship with those who before them had been ill-treated.

For *"think not,"* says He, *"that for something inconsistent in your sayings and enactments ye suffer these things: or, as being teachers of evil doctrines, you are to be persecuted by them; the plots and dangers proceed not of any wickedness in your sayings, but of the malice of those who hear you. Wherefore neither are they any blame to you who suffer wrong, but to them who do the wrong. And to the truth of these things all preceding time bears witness. For against the prophets they did not even bring any charge of transgressing the law, and of sentiments of impiety, that they stoned some, chased away others, encompassed others with innumerable afflictions. Wherefore let not this trouble you, for of the very same mind they do all that is done now."* Do you see how He raised up their spirits, by placing them near to the company of Moses and Elias?

Thus also Paul writing to the Thessalonians, says, *"For you became followers of the Churches of God, which are in Judea; for you also have suffered the same things of your own fellow-countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have driven us out; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men."*

[1 Thessalonians 2:14-15] Which same point here also Christ has established.

And whereas in the other beatitudes, He said, "*Blessed are the poor,*" and "*the merciful;*" here He has not put it generally, but addresses His speech unto themselves, saying, "*Blessed are you, when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and say every evil word:*" signifying that this is a special privilege of theirs; and that beyond all others, teachers have this for their own.

At the same time He here also covertly signifies His own dignity, and His equality in honor with Him who begot Him. For "*as they on the Father's account,*" says He, "*so shall you also for me suffer these things.*" But when He says, "*the prophets which were before you,*" He implies that they were also by this time become prophets.

Next, declaring that this above all profits them, and makes them glorious, He did not say, "*they will calumniate and persecute you, but I will prevent it.*" For not in their escaping evil report, but in their noble endurance thereof, and in refuting them by their actions, He will have their safety stand: this being a much greater thing than the other; even as to be struck and not hurt, is much greater than escaping the blow.

9. Now in this place He says, "*Your reward is great in heaven.*" But Luke reports Him to have spoken this, both earnestly, and with more entire consolation; for He not only, as you know, pronounces them blessed, who are evil spoken of for God's sake, but declares them likewise wretched, who are well spoken of by all men. For, "*Woe unto you,*" says He, "*when all men shall speak well of you.*" And yet the apostles were well spoken of, but not by all men. Wherefore He said not, "*Woe unto you, when men shall speak well of you,*" but, "*when all men*" shall do so: for it is not even possible that those who live in the practice of virtue should be well spoken of by all men.

And again He says, *"When they shall cast out your name as evil, rejoice ye, and leap for joy."* [Luke 6:22-23] For not only of the dangers they underwent, but of the calumny also, He appoints the recompence to be great. Wherefore He said not, *"When they shall persecute, and kill you,"* but, *"When they shall revile you, and say all manner of evil."* For most assuredly, men's evil reports have a sharper bite than their very deeds. For whereas, in our dangers, there are many things that lighten the toil, as to be cheered by all, to have many to applaud, to crown, to proclaim our praise; here in our reproach even this consolation is destroyed. Because we seem not to have achieved anything great; and this galls the combatant more than all his dangers: at least many have gone on even to hang themselves, not bearing evil report. And why do you marvel at the others? Since that traitor, that shameless and accursed one, he who had ceased to blush for anything whatever, was wrought upon by this chiefly to hurry to the halter. And Job again, all adamant as he was, and firmer than a rock; when he had been robbed of all his possessions, and was suffering those incurable ills, and had become on a sudden childless, and when he saw his body pouring out worms like a fountain, and his wife attacking him, he repelled it all with ease; but when he saw his friends reproaching and trampling upon him, and entertaining an evil opinion of him, and saying that he suffered those things for some sins, and was paying the penalty of wickedness: then was there trouble, then commotion, even in that great and noble-hearted man.

And David also, letting pass all that he had suffered, sought of God a retribution for the calumny alone. For, *"Let him curse,"* says he, *"for the Lord has bidden him: that the Lord may see my humiliation, and requite me for this cursing of his on this day."* [2 Samuel 16:11-12]

And Paul too proclaims the triumph not of those only who incur danger, or are deprived of their goods, but of these also, thus saying, *"Call*

to remembrance the former days, in which after you were illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly while you were made a gazing stock by reproaches, and afflictions." On this account then Christ has appointed the reward also to be great.

After this, lest any one should say, *"Here you give no redress, nor stoppest men's mouths; and do you assign a reward there?"* He has put before us the prophets, to show that neither in their case did God give redress. And if, where the rewards were at hand, He cheered them with things to come; much more now, when this hope has become clearer, and self-denial is increased.

And observe too, after how many commandments He has put this, for surely He did it not without reason, but to show that it is not possible for one unprovided, and unarmed with all those other virtues, to go forth unto these conflicts. Therefore, you see, in each instance, by the former precept making way for the following one, He has woven a sort of golden chain for us. Thus, first, he that is *"humble,"* will surely also *"mourn"* for his own sins: he that so *"mourns,"* will be both *"meek,"* and *"righteous,"* and *"merciful;"* he that is *"merciful,"* and *"righteous,"* and *"contrite"* will of course be also *"pure in heart:"* and such a one will be *"a peacemaker"* too: and he that has attained unto all these, will be moreover arrayed against dangers, and will not be troubled when evil is spoken of him, and he is enduring grievous trials innumerable.

10. Now then, after giving them due exhortation, He refreshes them again with praises. As thus: the injunctions being high, and far surpassing those in the Old Testament; lest they should be disturbed and confounded, and say, *"How shall we be able to achieve these things?"* hear what He says: *"You are the salt of the earth."* [Matthew 5:13] Implying, that of absolute necessity He enjoins all this. For *"not for your own life apart,"*

says He, *"but for the whole world, shall your account be. For not to two cities, nor to ten or twenty, nor to a single nation am I sending you, as I sent the prophets; but to earth, and sea, and the whole world; and that in evil case."* For by saying, *"You are the salt of the earth,"* He signified all human nature to have *"lost its savor,"* and to be decayed by our sins. For which cause, you see, He requires of them such virtues, as are most necessary and useful for the superintendence of the common sort. For first, the meek, and yielding, and merciful, and righteous, shuts not up his good deeds unto himself only, but also provides that these good fountains should run over for the benefit of others. And he again who is pure in heart, and a peacemaker, and is persecuted for the truth's sake; he again orders his way of life for the common good. *"Think not then,"* He says, *"that you are drawn on to ordinary conflicts, or that for some small matters you are to give account."* *"You are the salt of the earth."*

What then? Did they restore the decayed? By no means; for neither is it possible to do any good to that which is already spoilt, by sprinkling it with salt. This therefore they did not. But rather, what things had been before restored, and committed to their charge, and freed from that ill savor, these they then salted, maintaining and preserving them in that freshness, which they had received of the Lord. For that men should be set free from the rottenness of their sins was the good work of Christ; but their not returning to it again any more was the object of these men's diligence and travail.

Do you see how by degrees He indicates their superiority to the very prophets? In that He says they are teachers, not of Palestine, but of the whole world; and not simply teachers, but awful ones too. For this is the marvellous thing, that not by flattering, nor soothing, but by sharply bracing them, as salt, even so they became dear to all men.

"Now marvel not," says He, if leaving all others, I discourse to you, and draw you on to so great dangers. For consider over how many cities, tribes, and nations, I am to send you to preside. Wherefore I would have you not only be prudent yourselves, but that you should also make others the same. And such persons have great need to be intelligent, in whom the salvation of the rest is at stake: they ought so much to abound in virtue, as to impart of the profit to others also. For if you do not become such as this, you will not suffice even for your own selves.

"Be not then impatient, as though my sayings were too burdensome. For while it is possible for others who have lost their savor to return by your means, you, if you should come to this, will with yourselves destroy others also. So that in proportion as the matters are great, which you have put into your hands, you need so much the greater diligence." Therefore He says,

"But if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." [Matthew 5:13]

For other men, though they fall never so often, may possibly obtain indulgence: but the teacher, should this happen to him, is deprived of all excuse, and will suffer the most extreme vengeance. Thus, lest at the words, *"When they shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you,"* they should be too timid to go forth: He tells them, *"unless you are prepared to combat with all this, you have been chosen in vain."* For it is not evil report that you should fear, but lest ye should prove partners in dissimulation. For then, *"You will lose your savor, and be trodden under foot:"* but if you continue sharply to brace them up, and then are evil spoken of, rejoice; for this is the very use of salt, to sting the corrupt, and make them smart. And so their censure follows of course, in no

way harming you, but rather testifying your firmness. But if through fear of it you give up the earnestness that becomes you, you will have to suffer much more grievously, being both evil spoken of, and despised by all. For this is the meaning of *"trodden under foot."*

11. After this He leads on to another, a higher image.

"You are the light of the world." [Matthew 5:14]

"Of the world" again; not of one nation, nor of twenty states, but of the whole inhabited earth. And *"a light"* to the mind, far better than this sunbeam: like as they were also a spiritual *salt*. And before they are *salt*, and now *light*; to teach you how great is the gain of these strict precepts, and the profit of that grave discipline: how it binds, and permits not to become dissolute; and causes clear sight, leading men on to virtue.

"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle, and put it under the bushel."

Again, by these words He trains them to strictness of life, teaching them to be earnest in their endeavors, as set before the eyes of all men, and contending in the midst of the amphitheatre of the world. For, *"look not to this,"* He says, *"that we are now sitting here, that we are in a small portion of one corner. For you shall be as conspicuous to all as a city set on the ridge of a hill, as a candle in a house on the candlestick, giving light."*

Where now are they who persevere in disbelieving the power of Christ? Let them hear these things, and let them adore His might, amazed at the power of the prophecy. For consider how great things he promised to them, who were not known even in their own country: that earth and sea should know them, and that they should by their fame reach to the limits of the inhabited world; or rather, not by their fame, but by the working of the good they wrought. For it was not fame that bearing them everywhere made them conspicuous, but also the actual demonstration by their works. Since,

as though they had wings, more vehemently than the sunbeam did they overrun the whole earth, sowing the light of godliness.

But here He seems to me to be also training them to boldness of speech. For to say, *"A city set on a hill cannot be hid,"* is to speak as declaring His own powers. For as that city can by no means be hidden, so it was impossible that what they preached should sink into silence and obscurity. Thus, since He had spoken of persecutions and calumnies, of plots and wars, for fear they might think that these would have power to stop their mouths; to encourage them, He says, that so far from being hid, it should over-shine the whole world; and that on this very account they should be illustrious and renowned.

By this then He declares His own power. In what follows, He requires that boldness of speech which was due on their part; thus saying,

"Neither do men light a candle and put it under the bushel, but on the candlestick, and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

"For I," says He, it is true, have kindled the light, but its continuing to burn, let that come of your diligence: not for your own sakes alone, but also for their sake, who are to profit by these rays, and to be guided unto the truth. Since the calumnies surely shall not be able to obscure your brightness, if you be still living a strict life, and as becomes those who are to convert the whole world. Show forth therefore a life worthy of His grace; that even as it is everywhere preached, so this light may everywhere accompany the same.

Next He sets before them another sort of gain, besides the salvation of mankind, enough to make them strive earnestly, and to lead them unto all diligence. As thus, *"You shall not only,"* says He, *"amend the world, if you*

live aright, but you will also give occasion that God shall be glorified; even as if you do the contrary, you will both destroy men, and make God's name to be blasphemed."

And how, it may be asked, shall God be glorified through us, if at least men are to speak evil of us? Nay, not all men, and even they themselves who in envy do this, will in their conscience admire and approve you; even as the outward flatterers of such as live in wickedness do in mind accuse them.

What then? Do you command us to live for display and vain glory? Far from it; I say not this; for I did not say, *"Give ye diligence to bring forward your own good deeds,"* neither did I say, *"Show them;"* but *"Let your light shine."* That is, *"Let your virtue be great, and the fire abundant, and the light unspeakable."* For when virtue is so great, it cannot lie hidden, though its pursuer shade it over ten thousand fold. Present unto them an irreprehensible life, and let them have no true occasion of evil speaking; and then, though there be thousands of evil-speakers, no man shall be able to cast any shade upon you. And well did He say, *"your light,"* for nothing makes a man so illustrious, how manifold soever his will to be concealed, as the manifestation of virtue. For as if he were clad with the very sunbeam, so he shines, yet brighter than it; not spending his rays on earth, but surmounting also Heaven itself.

Hence also He comforts them more abundantly. For, *"What though the slander pain you,"* says He; yet shall you have many to honor God on your account. And in both ways your recompence is gathering, as well because God is glorified through you, as because you are defamed for God's sake. Thus, lest we should on purpose seek to be reproached, on hearing that there is a reward for it: first, He has not expressed that sentiment simply, but with two limitations, namely, when what is said is false, and when it is

for God's sake:— and next He signifies how not that only, but also good report, has its great profit, the glory of it passing on to God. And He holds out to them those gracious hopes. "*For,*" says He, the calumny of the wicked avails not so much as to put all others in the dark, in respect of seeing your light. For then only when you have "*lost your savor*" shall they tread you under foot; but not when you are falsely accused, doing right. Yea, rather then shall there be many admiring, not you only, but for your sake your Father also. And He said not "*God,*" but "*your Father;*" already sowing beforehand the seeds of that noble birth, which was about to be bestowed upon them. Moreover, indicating His parity in honor, as He said above, "*Grieve not when you are evil spoken of, for it is enough for you that for my sake you are thus spoken of;*" so here He mentions the Father: every where manifesting His equality.

12. Since then we know the gain that arises from this earnestness, and the danger of indolence (for if our Lord be blasphemed because of us, that were far worse than our perdition), let us "*give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.*" [1 Corinthians 10:32] And while the life which we present before them is brighter than the sun, yet if any one will speak evil of us, let us not grieve at being defamed, but only if we be defamed with justice.

For, on the one hand, if we live in wickedness, though there be none to speak ill of us, we shall be the most wretched of all men: on the other hand, if we apply ourselves to virtue, though the whole world speak evil of us, at that very time we shall be more enviable than any. And we shall draw on to follow us all who choose to be saved, for not the calumny of the wicked, but our good life, will draw their attention. For indeed no trumpet is so clear as the proof that is given by our actions: neither is the light itself so transparent as a pure life, though our calumniators be beyond number.

I say, if all the above-mentioned qualities be ours; if we be meek and lowly and merciful; if we be pure, and peacemakers; if hearing reproach, we revile not again, but rather rejoice; then shall we attract all that observe us no less than the miracles do. And all will be kindly disposed towards us, though one be a wild beast, a demon, or what you will.

Or if there should even be some who speak evil of you, be not at all troubled thereat, nor because they revile you in public, regard it; but search into their conscience, and you shall see them applauding and admiring you, and numbering up ten thousand praises.

See, for instance, how Nebuchadnezzar praises the children in the furnace; yet surely he was an adversary and an enemy. But upon seeing them stand nobly, he proclaims their triumph, and crowns them: and that for nought else, but because they disobeyed him, and hearkened unto the law of God. For the devil, when he sees himself effecting nothing, from that time departs, fearing lest he should be the cause of our winning more crowns. And when he is gone, even one who is abominable and depraved will recognize virtue, that mist being withdrawn. Or if men still argue perversely, you shall have from God the greater praise and admiration.

Grieve not now, I pray you, neither despond; since the very apostles were to some a "*savor of death*;" [1 Corinthians 2:16] to others, a "*savor of life*." And if there be nothing to lay hold of in yourself, you are rid of all their charges; or rather, you have become the more blessed. Shine out therefore in your life, and take no account of them who speak evil of you. For it cannot, it cannot be, that one careful of virtue, should not have many enemies. However, this is nothing to the virtuous man. For by such means his brightness will increase the more abundantly.

Let us then, bearing these things in mind, look to one object only; how to order our own life with strictness. For thus we shall also guide to the life

that is there, such as are now sitting in darkness. For such is the virtue of that light, as not only to shine here, but also to conduct its followers there. For when men see us despising all things present, and preparing ourselves for that which is to come, our actions will persuade them sooner than any discourse. For who is there so senseless, that at sight of one, who within a day or two was living in luxury and wealth, now stripping himself of all, and putting on wings, and arrayed to meet both hunger and poverty, and all hardship, and dangers, and blood, and slaughter, and everything that is counted dreadful; will not from this sight derive a clear demonstration of the things which are to come?

But if we entangle ourselves in things present, and plunge ourselves in them more and more, how will it be possible for them to be persuaded that we are hastening to another sojourn?

And what excuse after this shall we have, if the fear of God avail not so much with us, as human glory availed with the Greek philosophers? For some of them did really both lay aside wealth, and despised death, that they might make a show before men; wherefore also their hopes became vain. What plea then shall deliver us, when with so great things set before us, and with so high a rule of self-denial laid open to us, we are not able even to do as they did, but ruin both ourselves and others besides? For neither is the harm so great when a heathen commits transgression, as when a Christian does the same. Of course not; for their character is already lost, but ours, by reason of the grace of God, is even among the ungodly venerable and glorious. Therefore when they would most revile us, and aggravate their evil speech, they add some such taunt as, "*Thou Christian:*" a taunt which they would not utter, did they not secretly entertain a great opinion of our doctrine.

Have you not heard how many, and how great precepts Christ enjoined? Now when will you be able to fulfill one of those commandments, while you leave all, and go about gathering interest, tacking together usuries, setting on foot transactions of business, buying herds of slaves, procuring silver vessels, purchasing houses, fields, goods without end? And I would this were all. But when to these unseasonable pursuits, you add even injustice, removing landmarks, taking away houses by violence, aggravating poverty, increasing hunger, when will you be able to set your foot on these thresholds?

13. But sometimes you show mercy to the poor. I know it as well as you. But even in this again great is the mischief. For you do this either in pride or in vainglory, so as not to profit even by your good deeds. What can be more wretched than this, to be making your shipwreck in the very harbor? To prevent this, when you have done any good action, seek not thanks from me, that you may have God your debtor. For, *"Lend,"* says He, *"unto them from whom you do not expect to receive."*

You have your Debtor; why leave Him, and require it of me, a poor and wretched mortal? What? Is that Debtor displeased, when the debt is required of Him? What? Is He poor? Is He unwilling to pay? Do you see not His unspeakable treasures? Do you see not His indescribable munificence? Lay hold then on Him, and make your demand; for He is pleased when one thus demands the debt of Him. Because, if He see another required to pay for what He Himself owes, He will feel as though He were insulted, and repay you no more; nay, He justly finds fault, saying, *"Why, of what ingratitude have you convicted me? What poverty do you know to be in me, that you hasten by me, and resortest unto others? Have you lent to One, and do you demand the debt of another?"*

For although man received it, it was God that commanded you to bestow; and His will is to be Himself, and in the original sense, debtor, and surety, affording you ten thousand occasion to demand the debt of Him from every quarter. Do not then let go so great facility and abundance, and seek to receive of me who have nothing. Why, to what end do you display to me your mercy shown to the poor. What! Was it I that said to you, Give? Was it from me that you heard this; that you should demand it back of me? He Himself has said, *"He that has pity upon the poor lends to God."* [Proverbs 19:17] You have lent to God: put it to His account.

"But He does not repay the whole now." Well, this too He does for your good. For such a debtor is He: not as many, who are anxious simply to repay that which is lent; whereas He manages and does all things, with a view of investing likewise in security that which has been given unto Him. Therefore some, you see, He repays here: some He assigns in the other place.

14. Knowing therefore as we do these things, let us make our mercifulness abundant, let us give proof of much love to man, both by the use of our money, and by our actions. And if we see any one ill-treated and beaten in the market-place, whether we can pay down money, let us do it: or whether by words we may separate them, let us not be backward. For even a word has its reward, and still more have sighs. And this the blessed Job said; *"But I wept for every helpless one, and I sighed when I saw a man in distress."* [Job 30:25] But if there be a reward for tears and sighs; when words also, and an anxious endeavor, and many things besides are added, consider how great the recompence becomes. Yea, for we too were enemies to God, and the Only-begotten reconciled us, casting himself between, and for us receiving stripes, and for us enduring death.

Let us then likewise do our diligence to deliver from countless evils such as are incurring them; and not as we now do, when we see any beating and tearing one another: we are apt to stand by, finding pleasure in the disgrace of others, and forming a devilish amphitheatre around: than which what can be more cruel? You see men reviled, tearing each other to pieces, rending their clothes, smiting each other's faces, and do you endure to stand by quietly?

What! Is it a bear that is fighting? A wild beast? A serpent? It is a man, one who has in every respect fellowship with you: a brother, a member. [Ephesians 4:25] Look not on, but separate them. Take no pleasure, but amend the evil. Stir not up others to the shameful sight, but rather drive off and separate those who are assembled. It is for shameless persons, and born slaves, to take pleasure in such calamities; for those that are mere refuse, for asses without reason.

You see a man behaving himself unseemly, and do you not account the unseemliness your own? Do you not interpose, and scatter the devil's troop, and put an end to men's miseries?

"That I may receive blows myself," says one; *"is this also your bidding?"* You will not have to suffer even this; but if you should, the thing would be to you a sort of martyrdom; for you suffered on God's behalf. And if you are slow to receive blows, consider that your Lord was not slow to endure the cross for you.

Since they for their part are drunken in darkness; wrath being their tyrant and commander; and they need some one who is sound to help them, both the wrong-doer, and he who is injured; the one that he may be delivered from suffering evil, the other that he may cease to do it. Draw near, therefore, and stretch forth the hand, you that are sober to him that is

drunken. For there is a drunkenness of wrath too, and that more grievous than the drunkenness of wine.

Do you see not the seamen, how, when they see any meeting with shipwreck, they spread their sails, and set out with all haste, to rescue those of the same craft out of the waves? Now, if partakers in an art show so much care one for another, how much more ought they who are partakers of the same nature to do all these things! Because in truth here too is a shipwreck, a more grievous one than that; for either a man under provocation blasphemes, and so throws all away: or he forswears himself under the sway of his wrath, and that way falls into hell: or he strikes a blow and commits murder, and thus again suffers the very same shipwreck. Go then, and put a stop to the evil; pull out them that are drowning, though you descend into the very depth of the surge; and having broken up the theatre of the devil, take each one of them apart, and admonish him to quell the flame, and to lull the waves.

But if the burning pile wax greater, and the furnace more grievous, be not terrified; for you have many to help you, and stretch forth the hand, if you furnish but a beginning; and above all you surely have with you the God of peace. And if you will first turn aside the flames, many others also will follow, and of what they do well, you will yourself receive the reward.

Hear what precept Christ gave to the Jews, creeping as they did upon the earth: *"If you see,"* says He, *"your enemy's beast of burden falling down, do not hasten by, but raise it."* And you must see that to separate and reconcile men that are fighting is a much lighter thing than to lift up the fallen beast. And if we ought to help in raising our enemies' ass, much more our friends' souls: and most when the fall is more grievous; for not into mire do these fall, but into the fire of hell, not bearing the burden of their wrath. And you, when you see your brother lying under the load, and the devil

standing by, and kindling the pile, you run by, cruelly and unmercifully; a kind of thing not safe to do, even where brutes are concerned.

And whereas the Samaritan, seeing a wounded man, unknown, and not at all appertaining to him, both staid, and set him on a beast, and brought him home to the inn, and hired a physician, and gave some money, and promised more: you, seeing one fallen not among thieves, but among a band of demons, and beset by anger; and this not in a wilderness, but in the midst of the forum; not having to lay out money, nor to hire a beast, nor to bring him on a long way, but only to say some words:— are you slow to do it? And holdest back, and hurriest by cruelly and unmercifully? And how do you think, calling upon God, ever to find Him propitious?

15. But let me speak also to you, who publicly disgrace yourselves: to him who is acting despitefully, and doing wrong. Are you inflicting blows? Tell me; and kicking, and biting? Are you become a wild boar, and a wild ass? And are you not ashamed? Do you not blush at thus being changed into a wild beast, and betraying your own nobleness? For though you be poor, you are free; though you be a working man, you are a Christian.

Nay, for this very reason, that you are poor, you should be quiet. For fightings belong to the rich, not to the poor; to the rich, who have many causes to force them to war. But you, not having the pleasure of wealth, go about gathering to yourself the evils of wealth, enmities, and strifes, and fightings; and takest your brother by the throat, and go about to strangle him, and throwest him down publicly in the sight of all men: and do you not think that you are yourself rather disgraced, imitating the violent passions of the brutes; nay rather, becoming even worse than they? For they have all things in common; they herd one with another, and go about together: but we have nothing in common, but all in confusion: fightings, strifes, revilings, and enmities, and insults. And we neither reverence the heaven,

unto which we are called all of us in common; nor the earth, which He has left free to us all in common; nor our very nature; but wrath and the love of money sweeps all away.

Have you not seen him who owed the ten thousand talents, and then, after he was forgiven that debt, took his fellow-servant by the throat for an hundred pence, what great evils he underwent, and how he was delivered over to an endless punishment? Have you not trembled at the example? Have you no fear, lest you too incur the same? For we likewise owe to our Lord many and great debts: nevertheless, He forbears, and suffers long, and neither urges us, as we do our fellow-servants, nor chokes and takes us by the throat; yet surely had he been minded to exact of us but the least part thereof, we had long ago perished.

16. Let us then, beloved, bearing these things in mind, be humbled, and feel thankful to those who are in debt to us. For they become to us, if we command ourselves, an occasion of obtaining most abundant pardon; and giving a little, we shall receive much. Why then exact with violence, it being meet, though the other were minded to pay, for you of your accord to excuse him, that you may receive the whole of God? But now you do all things, and art violent, and contentious, to have none of your debts forgiven you; and while you are thinking to do despite unto your neighbor, you are thrusting the sword into yourself, so increasing your punishment in hell: whereas if you will show a little self-command here, you make your own accounts easy. For indeed God therefore wills us to take the lead in that kind of bounty, that He may take occasion to repay us with increase.

As many therefore as stand indebted to you, either for money, or for trespasses, let them all go free, and require of God the recompense of such *your* magnanimity. For so long as they continue indebted to you, you can not have God your debtor. But if you let them go free, you will be able to

detain your God, and to require of Him the recompense of so great self-restraint in bountiful measure. For suppose a man had come up and seeing you arresting your debtor, had called upon you to let him go free, and transfer to himself your account with the other: he would not choose to be unfair after such remission, seeing he had passed the whole demand to himself: how then shall God fail to repay us manifold, yea, ten thousand fold, when for His commandment's sake, if any be indebted to us, we urge no complaint against them, great or small, but let them go exempt from all liability? Let us not then think of the temporary pleasure that springs up in us by exacting of our debtors, but of the loss, rather, how great! Which we shall thereby sustain hereafter, grievously injuring ourselves in the things which are eternal. Rising accordingly above all, let us forgive those who must give account to us, both their debts and their offenses; that we may make our own accounts prove indulgent, and that what we could not reach by all virtue besides, this we may obtain by not bearing malice against our neighbors; and thus enjoy the eternal blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might now and always, even forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 16 on Matthew

Matt. V. 17.

"Think not that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets."

Why, who suspected this? Or who accused Him, that He should make a defense against this charge? Since surely from what had gone before no such suspicion was generated. For to command men to be meek, and gentle, and merciful, and pure in heart, and to strive for righteousness, indicated no such design, but rather altogether the contrary.

Wherefore then can He have said this? Not at random, nor vainly: but inasmuch as He was proceeding to ordain commandments greater than those of old, saying, *"It was said to them of old time, You shall not kill; but I say unto you, Be not even angry;"* and to mark out a way for a kind of divine and heavenly conversation; in order that the strangeness thereof might not disturb the souls of the hearers, nor dispose them quite to mutiny against what He said He used this means of setting them right beforehand.

For although they fulfilled not the law, yet nevertheless they were possessed with much conscientious regard to it; and while they were annulling it every day by their deeds, the letters thereof they would have remain unmoved, and that no one should add anything more to them. Or rather, they bore with their rulers adding thereto, not however for the better, but for the worse. For so they used to set aside the honor due to our parents by additions of their own, and very many others also of the matters enjoined them, they would free themselves of by these unseasonable additions.

Therefore, since Christ in the first place was not of the sacerdotal tribe, and next, the things which He was about to introduce were a sort of addition, not however lessening, but enhancing virtue; He knowing

beforehand that both these circumstances would trouble them, before He wrote in their mind those wondrous laws, casts out that which was sure to be harboring there. And what was it that was harboring there, and making an obstacle?

2. They thought that He, thus speaking, did so with a view to the abrogation of the ancient institutions. This suspicion therefore He heals; nor here only does He so, but elsewhere also again. Thus, since they accounted Him no less than an adversary of God, from this sort of reason, namely, His not keeping the sabbath; He, to heal such their suspicion, there also again sets forth His pleas, of which some indeed were proper to Himself; as when He says, "*My Father works, and I work;*" [John 5:17] but some had in them much condescension, as when He brings forward the sheep lost on the sabbath day, [Matthew 12:11] and points out that the law is disturbed for its preservation, and makes mention again of circumcision, as having this same effect. [John 7:23]

Wherefore we see also that He often speaks words somewhat beneath Him, to remove the semblance of His being an adversary of God.

For this cause He who had raised thousands of the dead with a word only, when He was calling Lazarus, added also a prayer; and then, lest this should make Him appear less than Him that begot Him, He, to correct this suspicion, added, "*I said these things, because of the people which stands by, that they may believe that you have sent me.*" And neither does He work all things as one who acted by His own power, that He might thoroughly correct their weakness; nor does He all things with prayer, lest He should leave matter of evil suspicion to them that should follow, as though He were without strength or power: but He mingles the latter with the former, and those again with these. Neither does He this indiscriminately, but with His own proper wisdom. For while He does the greater works authoritatively, in

the less He looks up unto Heaven. Thus, when absolving sins, and revealing His secrets, and opening Paradise, and driving away devils, and cleansing lepers, and bridling death, and raising the dead by thousands, He did all by way of command: but when, what was much less than these, He was causing many loaves to spring forth out of few, then He looked up to Heaven: signifying that not through weakness He does this. For He who could do the greater with authority, how in the lesser could He need prayer? But as I was saying, He does this to silence their shamelessness. The same reckoning, then, I bid you make of His words also, when you hear Him speak lowly things. For many in truth are the causes both for words and for actions of that cast: as, for instance, that He might not be supposed alien from God; His instructing and waiting on all men; His teaching humility; His being encompassed with flesh; the Jews' inability to hear all at once; His teaching us to utter no high word of ourselves. For this cause many times, having in His own person said much that is lowly of Himself, the great things He leaves to be said by others. Thus He Himself indeed, reasoning with the Jews, said, "*Before Abraham was, I Am:*" [John 8:58] but His disciple not thus, but, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" [John 1:1]

Again, that He Himself made Heaven, and earth, and sea, and all things visible and invisible, in His own person He nowhere expressly said: but His disciple, speaking plainly out, and suppressing nothing, affirms this once, twice, yea often: writing that "*all things were made by Him;*" and, "*without Him was not one thing made;*" and, He was in the world, and the world was made by Him.

And why marvel, if others have said greater things of Him than He of Himself; since (what is more) in many cases, what He showed forth by His deeds, by His words He uttered not openly? Thus that it was Himself who

made mankind He showed clearly even by that blind man; but when He was speaking of our formation at the beginning, He said not, "*I made,*" but "*He who made them, made them male and female.*" [Matthew 19:4] Again, that He created the world and all things therein, He demonstrated by the fishes, by the wine, by the loaves, by the calm in the sea, by the sunbeam which He averted on the Cross; and by very many things besides: but in words He has nowhere said this plainly, though His disciples are continually declaring it, both John, and Paul, and Peter.

For if they who night and day hear Him discourse, and see Him work marvels; to whom He explained many things in private, and gave so great power as even to raise the dead; whom He made so perfect, as to forsake all things for Him: if even they, after so great virtue and self-denial, had not strength to bear it all, before the supply of the Spirit; how could the people of the Jews, being both void of understanding, and far behind such excellency, and only by hazard present when He did or said anything, how could they have been persuaded but that He was alien from the God of all, unless he had practised such great condescension throughout?

For on this account we see that even when He was abrogating the sabbath, He did not as of set purpose bring in such *His* legislation, but He puts together many and various pleas of defense. Now if, when He was about to cause one commandment to cease, He used so much reserve in His language, that He might not startle the hearers; much more, when adding to the law, entire as it was, another entire code of laws, did He require much management and attention, not to alarm those who were then hearing Him.

For this same cause, neither do we find Him teaching everywhere clearly concerning His own Godhead. For if His adding to the law was sure to perplex them so greatly, much more His declaring Himself God.

3. Wherefore many things are uttered by Him, far below His proper dignity, and here when He is about to proceed upon His addition to the law, He has used abundance for correction beforehand. For neither was it once only that He said, *"I do not abrogate the law,"* but He both repeated it again, and added another and a greater thing; in that, to the words, *"Think not that I have come to destroy,"* He subjoined, *"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."*

Now this not only obstructs the obstinacy of the Jews, but stops also the mouths of those heretics, who say that the old covenant is of the devil. For if Christ came to destroy his tyranny, how is this covenant not only not destroyed, but even fulfilled by Him? For He said not only, *"I do not destroy it;"* though this had been enough; but *"I even fulfill it:"* which are the words of one so far from opposing himself, as to be even establishing it.

And how, one may ask, did He not destroy it? In what way did He rather fulfill either the law or the prophets? The prophets He fulfilled, inasmuch as He confirmed by His actions all that had been said concerning Him; wherefore also the evangelist used to say in each case, *"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet."* Both when He was born, [Matthew 1:22-23] and when the children sung that wondrous hymn to Him, and when He sat on the ass, [Matthew 21:5-16] and in very many more instances He worked this same fulfillment: all which things must have been unfulfilled, if He had not come.

But the law He fulfilled, not in one way only, but in a second and third also. In one way, by transgressing none of the precepts of the law. For that He did fulfill it all, hear what He says to John, *"For thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness."* [Matthew 3:15] And to the Jews also He said, *"Which of you convinces me of sin."* [John 8:46] And to His disciples again, *"The prince of this world comes, and finds nothing in me."* [John 14:30]

And the prophet too from the first had said that *"He did no sin."*

[Isaiah 53:9]

This then was one sense in which He fulfilled it. Another, that He did the same through us also; for this is the marvel, that He not only Himself fulfilled it, but He granted this to us likewise. Which thing Paul also declaring said, *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes."* [Romans 10:4] And he said also, that *"He judged sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh."* [Romans 8:3-4] And again, *"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law."* [Romans 3:31] For since the law was laboring at this, to make man righteous, but had not power, He came and brought in the way of righteousness by faith, and so established that which the law desired: and what the law could not by letters, this He accomplished by faith. On this account He says, *"I am not come to destroy the law."*

4. But if any one will inquire accurately, he will find also another, a third sense, in which this has been done. Of what sort is it then? In the sense of that future code of laws, which He was about to deliver to them.

For His sayings were no repeal of the former, but a drawing out, and filling up of them. Thus, *"not to kill,"* is not annulled by the saying, Be not angry, but rather is filled up and put in greater security: and so of all the others.

Wherefore, you see, as He had before unsuspectedly cast the seeds of this teaching; so at the time when from His comparison of the old and new commandments, He would be more distinctly suspected of placing them in opposition, He used His corrective beforehand. For in a covert way He had indeed already scattered those seeds, by what He had said. Thus, *"Blessed are the poor,"* is the same as that we are not to be angry; and, *"Blessed are*

the pure in heart," as not to "look upon a woman for lust;" and the "not laying up treasures on earth," harmonizes with, "Blessed are the merciful;" and "to mourn" also, "to be persecuted" and "reviled," coincide with "entering in at the strait gate;" and, "to hunger and thirst after righteousness," is nothing else than that which He says afterwards, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." And having declared "the peace-maker blessed," He again almost said the same, when He gave command "to leave the gift," and hasten to reconciliation with him that was grieved, and about "agreeing with our adversary."

But there He set down the rewards of them that do right, here rather the punishments of them who neglect practice. Wherefore as in that place He said, *"The meek shall inherit earth;"* so here, *"He who calls his brother fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire;"* and there, *"The pure in heart shall see God;"* here, he is a complete adulterer who looks unchastely. And having there called *"the peace-makers, sons of God;"* here He alarms us from another quarter, saying, *"Lest at any time the adversary deliver you to the judge."* Thus also, whereas in the former part He blesses them that mourn, and them that are persecuted; in the following, establishing the very same point, He threatens destruction to them that go not that way; for, *"They that walk 'in the broad way,' says He, 'make their end there.'"* And, *"You cannot serve God and mammon,"* seems to me the same with, *"Blessed are the merciful,"* and, *"those that hunger after righteousness."*

But as I said, since He is going to say these things more clearly, and not only more clearly, but also to add again more than had been already said (for He no longer merely seeks a merciful man, but bids us give up even our coat; not simply a meek person, but to turn also the other cheek to him that would smite us): therefore He first takes away the apparent contradiction.

On this account, then, as I have already stated, He said this not once only, but once and again; in that to the words, *"Think not that I have come to destroy,"* He added, *"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."*

"For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all come to pass."

Now what He says is like this: it cannot be that it should remain unaccomplished, but the very least thing therein must needs be fulfilled. Which thing He Himself performed, in that He completed it with all exactness.

And here He signifies to us obscurely that the fashion of the whole world is also being changed. Nor did He set it down without purpose, but in order to arouse the hearer, and indicate, that He was with just cause introducing another discipline; if at least the very works of the creation are all to be transformed, and mankind is to be called to another country, and to a higher way of practising how to live.

5. *"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven."*
[Matthew 5:19]

Thus, having rid Himself of the evil suspicion, and having stopped the mouths of them who would fain gainsay, then at length He proceeds to alarm, and sets down a heavy, denunciation in support of the enactments He was entering on.

For as to His having said this in behalf not of the ancient laws, but of those which He was proceeding to enact, listen to what follows, *"For I say unto you,"* says He, *"Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."*

For if He were threatening with regard to the ancient laws, how said He, "*except it shall exceed?*" since they who did just the same as those ancients, could not exceed them on the score of righteousness.

But of what kind was the required excess? Not to be angry, not even to look upon a woman unchastely.

For what cause then does He call these commandments "*least*," though they were so great and high? Because He Himself was about to introduce the enactment of them; for as He humbled Himself, and speaks of Himself frequently with measure, so likewise of His own enactments, hereby again teaching us to be modest in everything. And besides, since there seemed to be some suspicion of novelty, He ordered His discourse for a while with reserve.

But when you hear, "*least in the kingdom of Heaven*," surmise nothing but hell and torments. For He was used to mean by "*the kingdom*," not merely the enjoyment thereof, but also the time of the resurrection, and that awful coming. And how could it be reasonable, that while he who called his brother fool, and transgressed but one commandment, falls into hell; the breaker of them all, and instigator of others to the same, should be within the kingdom. This therefore is not what He means, but that such a one will be at that time least, that is, cast out, last. And he that is last will surely then fall into hell. For, being God, He foreknew the laxity of the many, He foreknew that some would think these sayings were merely hyperbolical, and would argue about the laws, and say, What, if any one call another a fool, is he punished? If one merely look on a woman, does he become an adulterer? For this very cause He, destroying such insolence beforehand, has set down the strongest denunciation against either sort, as well them who transgress, as them who lead on others so to do.

Knowing then His threat as we do, let us neither ourselves transgress, nor discourage such as are disposed to keep these things.

"But whosoever shall do and teach," says He, "shall be called great."

For not to ourselves alone, should we be profitable, but to others also; since neither is the reward as great for him who guides himself aright, as for one who with himself adds also another. For as teaching without doing condemns the teacher (for *"you who teach another,"* it is said, *"do you not teach yourself"* [Romans 2:21]?) so doing but not guiding others, lessens our reward. One ought therefore to be chief in either work, and having first set one's self right, thus to proceed also to the care of the rest. For on this account He Himself has set the doing before the teaching; to intimate that so most of all may one be able to teach, but in no other way. For one will be told, *"Physician, heal yourself."* [Luke 4:23] Since he who cannot teach himself, yet attempts to set others right, will have many to ridicule him. Or rather such a one will have no power to teach at all, his actions uttering their voice against him. But if he be complete in both respects, *"he shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven."*

6. *"For I say unto you, Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 5:20]

Here by righteousness He means the whole of virtue; even as also discoursing of Job, He said, *"He was a blameless man, righteous."* According to the same signification of the word, Paul also called that man *"righteous"* for whom, as he said, no law is even set. *"For,"* says he, *"a law is not made for a righteous man."* [1 Timothy 1:9] And in many other places too one might find this name standing for virtue in general.

But observe, I pray you, the increase of grace; in that He will have His newly-come disciples better than the teachers in the old covenant. For by

"Scribes and Pharisees" here, He meant not merely the lawless, but the well-doers. For, were they not doing well, He would not have said they have a righteousness; neither would He have compared the unreal to the real.

And observe also here, how He commends the old law, by making a comparison between it and the other; which kind of thing implies it to be of the same tribe and kindred. For *more* and *less*, is in the same kind. He does not, you see, find fault with the old law, but will have it made stricter. Whereas, had it been evil, He would not have required more of it; He would not have made it more perfect, but would have cast it out.

And how one may say, if it be such, does it not bring us into the Kingdom? It does not now bring in them who live after the coming of Christ, favored as they are with more strength, and bound to strive for greater things: since as to its own foster-children, them it does bring in one and all. Yea, for *"many shall come,"* says He, *"from east and west, and shall lie down in the bosoms of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."* [Matthew 8:11] And Lazarus also receiving the great prize, is shown dwelling in Abraham's bosom. And all, as many as have shone forth with excellency in the old dispensation, shone by it, every one of them. And Christ Himself, had it been in anything evil or alien from Him, would not have fulfilled it all when He came. For if only to attract the Jews He was doing this, and not in order to prove it akin to the new law, and concurrent therewith; wherefore did He not also fulfill the laws and customs of the Gentiles, that He might attract the Gentiles also?

So that from all considerations it is clear, that not from any badness in itself does it fail to bring us in, but because it is now the season of higher precepts.

And if it be more imperfect than the new, neither does this imply it to be evil: since upon this principle the new law itself will be in the very same case. Because in truth our knowledge of this, when compared with that which is to come, is a sort of partial and imperfect thing, and is done away on the coming of that other. *"For when,"* says He, *"that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away:"* [1 Corinthians 13:10] even as it befell the old law through the new. Yet we are not to blame the new law for this, though that also gives place on our attaining unto the Kingdom: for *"then,"* says He, *"that which is in part shall be done away:"* but for all this we call it great.

Since then both the rewards thereof are greater, and the power given by the Spirit more abundant, in reason it requires our graces to be greater also. For it is no longer *"a land that flows with milk and honey,"* nor a comfortable old age, nor many children, nor grain and wine, and flocks and herds: but Heaven, and the good things in the Heavens, and adoption and brotherhood with the Only-Begotten, and to partake of the inheritance and to be glorified and to reign with Him, and those unnumbered rewards. And as to our having received more abundant help, hear Paul, when he says, *"There is therefore no condemnation now to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: for the law of the Spirit of life has made me free from the law of sin and death."* [Romans 8:1-2]

7. And now after threatening the transgressors, and setting great rewards for them that do right, and signifying that He justly requires of us something beyond the former measures; He from this point begins to legislate, not simply, but by way of comparison with the ancient ordinances, desiring to intimate these two things: first, that not as contending with the former, but rather in great harmony with them, He is making these

enactments; next, that it was meet and very seasonable for Him to add thereto these second precepts.

And that this may be made yet clearer, let us hearken to the words of the Legislator. What then does He Himself say?

"You have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not kill." [Matthew 5:21]

And yet it was Himself who gave those laws also, but so far He states them impersonally. For if on the one hand He had said, *"You have heard that I said to them of old,"* the saying would have been hard to receive, and would have stood in the way of all the hearers. If again, on the other hand, after having said, *"You have heard that it was said to them of old by my Father,"* He had added, *"But I say,"* He would have seemed to be taking yet more on Himself.

Wherefore He has simply stated it, making out thereby one point only; the proof that in fitting season He had come saying these things. For by the words, *"It was said to them of old,"* He pointed out the length of the time, since they received this commandment. And this He did to shame the hearer, shrinking from the advance to the higher class of His commandments; as though a teacher should say to a child that was indolent, *"Do you not know how long a time you have consumed in learning syllables?"* This then He also covertly intimates by the expression, *"them of old time,"* and thus for the future summons them on to the higher order of His instructions: as if He had said, *"You are learning these lessons long enough, and you must henceforth press on to such as are higher than these."*

And it is well that He does not disturb the order of the commandments, but begins first with that which comes earlier, with which the law also began. Yea, for this too suits with one showing the harmony between them.

"But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment."

Do you see authority in perfection? Do you see a bearing suited to a legislator? Why, which among prophets ever spoke on this wise? Which among righteous men? Which among patriarchs? None; but, *"Thus says the Lord."* But the Son not so. Because they were publishing their Master's commands, He His Father's. And when I say, *"His Father's,"* I mean His own. *"For mine,"* says He, *"are yours, and yours are mine."* [John 17:10] And they had their fellow-servants to legislate for, He His own servants.

Let us now ask those who reject the law, *"is, 'Be not angry' contrary to 'Do no murder'?" Or is not the one commandment the completion and the development of the other?"* Clearly the one is the fulfilling of the other, and that is greater on this very account. Since he who is not stirred up to anger, will much more refrain from murder; and he who bridles wrath will much more keep his hands to himself. For wrath is the root of murder. And you see that He who cuts up the root will much more remove the branches; or rather, will not permit them so much as to shoot out at all. Not therefore to abolish the law did He make these enactments, but for the more complete observation of it. For with what design did the law enjoin these things? Was it not, that no one might slay his neighbor? It follows, that he who was opposing the law would have to enjoin murder. For to murder, were the contrary to doing no murder. But if He does not suffer one even to be angry, the mind of the law is established by Him more completely. For he that studies to avoid murder will not refrain from it equally with him that has put away even anger; this latter being further removed from the crime.

8. But that we may convict them in another way also, let us bring forward all their allegations. What then do they affirm? They assert that the God who made the world, who *"makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the*

good, who sends the rain on the just and on the unjust," is in some sense an evil being. But the more moderate (forsooth) among them, though declining this, yet while they affirm Him to be just, they deprive Him of being good. And some other one, who is not, nor made any of the things that are, they assign for a Father to Christ. And they say that he, who is not good, abides in his own, and preserves what are his own; but that He, that is good, seeks what are another's, and desires of a sudden to become a Saviour to them whose Creator He was not. Do you see the children of the devil, how they speak out of the fountain of their father, alienating the work of creation from God: while John cries out, *"He came unto His own,"* and, *"The world was made by Him?"*

In the next place, they criticise the law in the old covenant, which bids put out *"an eye for an eye,"* and *"a tooth for a tooth;"* and straightway they insult and say, *"Why, how can He be good who speaks so?"*

What then do we say in answer to this? That it is the highest kind of philanthropy. For He made this law, not that we might strike out one another's eyes, but that fear of suffering by others might restrain us from doing any such thing to them. As therefore He threatened the Ninevites with overthrow, not that He might destroy them, (for had that been His will, He ought to have been silent), but that He might by fear make them better, and so quiet His wrath: so also has He appointed a punishment for those who wantonly assail the eyes of others, that if good principle dispose them not to refrain from such cruelty, fear may restrain them from injuring their neighbors' sight.

And if this be cruelty, it is cruelty also for the murderer to be restrained, and the adulterer checked. But these are the sayings of senseless men, and of those that are mad to the extreme of madness. For I, so far from saying that this comes of cruelty, should say, that the contrary to this would

be unlawful, according to men's reckoning. And whereas, you say, Because He commanded to pluck out "*an eye for an eye*," therefore He is cruel; I say, that if He had not given this commandment, then He would have seemed, in the judgment of most men, to be that which you say He is.

For let us suppose that this law had been altogether done away, and that no one feared the punishment ensuing thereupon, but that license had been given to all the wicked to follow their own disposition in all security, to adulterers, and to murderers, to perjured persons, and to parricides; would not all things have been turned upside down? Would not cities, market-places, and houses, sea and land, and the whole world, have been filled with unnumbered pollutions and murders? Every one sees it. For if, when there are laws, and fear, and threatening, our evil dispositions are hardly checked; were even this security taken away, what is there to prevent men's choosing vice? And what degree of mischief would not then come revelling upon the whole of human life?

The rather, since cruelty lies not only in allowing the bad to do what they will, but in another thing too quite as much; to overlook, and leave uncared for, him who has done no wrong, but who is without cause or reason suffering ill. For tell me; were any one to gather together wicked men from all quarters, and arm them with swords, and bid them go about the whole city, and massacre all that came in their way, could there be anything more like a wild beast than he? And what if some other should bind, and confine with the utmost strictness those whom that man had armed, and should snatch from those lawless hands them, who were on the point of being butchered; could anything be greater humanity than this?

Now then, I bid you transfer these examples to the law likewise; for He that commands to pluck out "*an eye for an eye*," has laid the fear as a kind of strong chain upon the souls of the bad, and so resembles him, who

detains those assassins in prison; whereas he who appoints no punishment for them, does all but arm them by such security, and acts the part of that other, who was putting the swords in their hands, and letting them loose over the whole city.

Do you see not, how the commandments, so far from coming of cruelty, come rather of abounding mercy? And if on account of these you call the Lawgiver grievous, and hard to bear with; tell me which sort of command is the more toilsome and grievous, "*Do no murder*," or, "*Be not even angry*"? Which is more in extreme, he who exacts a penalty for murder, or for mere anger? He who subjects the adulterer to vengeance after the fact, or he who enjoins a penalty even for the very desire, and that penalty everlasting? See ye not how their reasoning comes round to the very contrary? How the God of the old covenant, whom they call cruel, will be found mild and meek: and He of the new, whom they acknowledged to be good, will be hard and grievous, according to their madness? Whereas we say, that there is but one and the same Legislator of either covenant, who dispensed all meetly, and adapted to the difference of the times the difference between the two systems of law. Therefore neither are the first commandments cruel, nor the second hard and grievous, but all of one and the same providential care.

For that He Himself gave the old covenant also, hear the affirmation of the prophet, or rather (so we must speak), of Him who is both the one and the other: "*I will make a covenant with you, not according to the covenant which I made with your fathers.*" [Jeremiah 31:31-32]

But if he receive not this, who is diseased with the Manichæan doctrines, let him hear Paul saying the very same in another place, "*For Abraham had two sons, one by the bondmaid, and another by the freewoman; and these are two covenants.*" [Galatians 4:22] As therefore in

that case the wives are different, the husband the same; so here too the covenants are two, the Lawgiver one.

And to prove to you that it was of one and the same mildness; in the one He says, "*An eye for an eye*," but in this other,

"If one smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also."

[Matthew 5:39]

For as in that case He checks him that does the wrong with the fear of this suffering, even so also in this. "*How so*," it may be said, "*when He bids turn to him the other cheek also?*" Nay, what of that? Since not to take away his fear did He enjoin this, but as charging yourself to allow him to take his fill entirely. Neither did He say, that the other continues unpunished, but, "*do not thou punish*;" at once both enhancing the fear of him that smites, if he persist, and comforting him who is smitten.

9. But these things we have said, as one might say them incidentally, concerning all the commandments. Now we must go on to that which is before us, and keep to the thread of what had been affirmed. "*He that is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment*:" so He speaks. Thus He has not altogether taken the thing away: first, because it is not possible, being a man, to be freed from passions: we may indeed get the dominion over them, but to be altogether without them is out of the question.

Next, because this passion is even useful, if we know how to use it at the suitable time. See, for instance, what great good was wrought by that anger of Paul, which he felt against the Corinthians, on that well-known occasion; and how, as it delivered them from a grievous pest, so by the same means again he recovered the people of the Galatians likewise, which had fallen aside; and others too beside these. What then is the proper time

for anger? When we are not avenging ourselves, but checking others in their lawless freaks, or forcing them to attend in their negligence.

And what is the unsuitable time? When we do so as avenging ourselves: which Paul also forbidding, said "*Avenge not yourselves, dearly beloved, but rather give place unto wrath.*" [Romans 12:19] When we are contending for riches: yea, for this has he also taken away, where he says, "*Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*" [1 Corinthians 6:7] For as this last sort is superfluous, so is the first necessary and profitable. But most men do the contrary; becoming like wild beasts when they are injured themselves, but remiss and cowardly when they see despite done to another: both which are just opposite to the laws of the Gospel.

Being angry then is not a transgression, but being so unseasonably. For this cause the prophet also said, "*Be angry, and sin not.*"

10. "*And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council.*"

By the council in this place He means the tribunal of the Hebrews: and He has mentioned this now, on purpose that He might not seem everywhere to play the stranger and innovator.

But this word, "*Raca,*" is not an expression of a great insolence, but rather of some contempt and slight on the part of the speaker. For as we, giving orders either to our servants, or to any very inferior person, say, "*Away with you; you here, tell such an one:*" so they who make use of the Syrians' language say, "*Raca,*" putting that word instead of "*you.*" But God, the lover of man, roots up even the least faults, commanding us to behave to one another in seemly manner, and with due respect; and this with a view of destroying hereby also the greater.

"But whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

To many this commandment has appeared grievous and galling, if for a mere word we are really to pay so great a penalty. And some even say that it was spoken rather hyperbolically. But I fear lest, when we have deceived ourselves with words here, we may in deeds there suffer that extreme punishment.

For wherefore, tell me, does the commandment seem overburdensome? Do you not know that most punishments and most sins have their beginning from words? Yea, for by words are blasphemies, and denials are by words, and revilings, and reproaches, and perjuries, and bearing false witness. Regard not then its being a mere word, but whether it have not much danger, this do thou inquire. Are you ignorant that in the season of enmity, when wrath is inflamed, and the soul kindled, even the least thing appears great, and what is not very reproachful is counted intolerable? And often these little things have given birth even to murder, and overthrown whole cities. For just as where friendship is, even grievous things are light, so where enmity lies beneath, very trifles appear intolerable. And however simply a word be spoken, it is surmised to have been spoken with an evil meaning. And as in fire: if there be but a small spark, though thousands of planks lie by, it does not easily lay hold of them; but if the flame have waxed strong and high, it readily seizes not planks only, but stones, and all materials that fall in its way; and by what things it is usually quenched, by the same it is kindled the more (for some say that at such a time not only wood and tow, and the other combustibles, but even water darted forth upon it does but fan its power the more); so is it also with anger; whatever any one may say, becomes food in a moment for this evil conflagration. All which kind of evils Christ checking beforehand, had condemned first him that is angry without a cause to the judgment, (this being the very reason why He said, *"He that is angry shall be in danger of*

the judgment"); then him that says "*Raca*," to the council. But as yet these are no great things; for the punishments are here. Therefore for him who calls "*fool*" He has added the fire of hell, now for the first time mentioning the name of hell. For having before discoursed much of the kingdom, not until then did He mention this; implying, that the former comes of His own love and indulgence towards man, this latter of our negligence.

11. And see how He proceeds little by little in His punishments, all but excusing Himself unto you, and signifying that His desire indeed is to threaten nothing of the kind, but that we drag Him on to such denunciations. For observe: "*I bade you*," says He, "*not be angry for nought, because you are in danger of the judgment. You have despised the former commandment: see what anger has produced; it has led you on straightway to insult, for you have called your brother 'Raca.'* Again, *I set another punishment, 'the council.'* If you overlook even this, and proceed to that which is more grievous, *I visit you no longer with these finite punishments, but with the undying penalty of hell, lest after this you should break forth even to murder.*" For there is nothing, nothing in the world more intolerable than insolence; it is what has very great power to sting a man's soul. But when the word too which is spoken is in itself more wounding than the insolence, the blaze becomes twice as great. Think it not then a light thing to call another "*fool*." For when of that which separates us from the brutes, and by which especially we are human beings, namely, the mind and the understanding—when of this you have robbed your brother, you have deprived him of all his nobleness.

Let us not then regard the words merely, but realizing the things themselves, and his feeling, let us consider how great a wound is made by this word, and unto how much evil it proceeds. For this cause Paul likewise cast out of the kingdom not only "*the adulterous*" and "*the effeminate*," but

"the revilers" [1 Corinthians 6:9-10] also. And with great reason: for the insolent man mars all the beauty of charity, and casts upon his neighbor unnumbered ills, and works up lasting enmities, and tears asunder the members of Christ, and is daily driving away that peace which God so desires: giving much vantage ground unto the devil by his injurious ways, and making him the stronger. Therefore Christ Himself, cutting out the sinews of the devil's power, brought in this law.

For indeed He makes much account of love: this being above all things the mother of every good, and the badge of His disciples, and the bond which holds together our whole condition. With reason therefore does He remove with great earnestness the roots and the sources of that hatred which utterly spoils it.

Think not therefore that these sayings are in any wise hyperbolical, but consider the good done by them, and admire the mildness of these laws. For there is nothing for which God takes so much pains, as this; that we should be united and knit together one with another. Therefore both in His own person, and by His disciples, as well those in the Old, as in the New Testament, He makes so much account of this commandment; and is a severe avenger and punisher of those who despise the duty. For in truth nothing so effectually gives entrance and root to all wickedness, as the taking away of love. Wherefore He also said, *"When iniquity abounds, the love of the many shall wax cold."* Thus Cain became his brother's murderer; thus Esau; thus Joseph's brethren; thus our unnumbered crimes have come revelling in, this bond being dissevered. You see why He Himself also roots out whatever things injure this, on every side, with great exactness.

12. Neither does He stop at those precepts only which have been mentioned, but adds also others more than those: whereby He signifies how much account He makes thereof. Namely, having threatened by *"the*

council," by *"the judgment,"* and by *"hell,"* He added other sayings again in harmony with the former, saying thus:

"If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against you; leave there your gift before the altar, and go away; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." [Matthew 5:23-24]

O goodness! O exceeding love to man! He makes no account of the honor due unto Himself, for the sake of our love towards our neighbor; implying that not at all from any enmity, nor out of any desire to punish, had He uttered those former threatenings, but out of very tender affection. For what can be milder than these sayings? *"Let my service,"* says he, *"be interrupted, that your love may continue; since this also is a sacrifice, your being reconciled to your brother."* Yea, for this cause He said not, *"after the offering,"* or *"before the offering;"* but, while the very gift lies there, and when the sacrifice is already beginning, He sends you to be reconciled to your brother; and neither after removing that which lies before us, nor before presenting the gift, but while it lies in the midst, He bids you hasten there.

With what motive then does He command so to do, and wherefore? These two ends, as it appears to me, He is hereby shadowing out and providing for. First, as I have said, His will is to point out that He highly values charity, and considers it to be the greatest sacrifice: and that without it He does not receive even that other; next, He is imposing such a necessity of reconciliation, as admits of no excuse. For whoso has been charged not to offer before he be reconciled, will hasten, if not for love of his neighbor, yet, that this may not lie unconsecrated, to run unto him who has been grieved, and do away the enmity. For this cause He has also expressed it all most significantly, to alarm and thoroughly to awaken him. Thus, when He

had said, *"Leave your gift,"* He stayed not at this, but added, *"before the altar"* (by the very place again causing him to shudder); *"and go away."* And He said not merely, *"Go away,"* but He added, *"first, and then come and offer your gift."* By all these things making it manifest, that this table receives not them that are at enmity with each other.

Let the initiated hear this, as many as draw near in enmity: and let the uninitiated hear too: yea, for the saying has some relation to them also. For they too offer a gift and a sacrifice: prayer, I mean, and almsgiving. For as to this also being a sacrifice, hear what the prophet says: *"A sacrifice of praise will glorify me;"* and again, *"Sacrifice to God a sacrifice of praise;"* and, *"The lifting up of mine hands is an evening sacrifice."* So that if it be but a prayer, which you are offering in such a frame of mind, it were better to leave your prayer, and become reconciled to your brother, and then to offer your prayer.

For to this end were all things done: to this end even God became man, and took order for all those works, that He might set us at one.

And whereas in this place He is sending the wrong doer to the sufferer, in His prayer He leads the sufferer to the wrong doer, and reconciles them. For as there He says, *"Forgive men their debts;"* so here, *"If he has ought against you, go your way unto him."*

Or rather, even here too He seems to me to be sending the injured person: and for some such reason He said not, *"Reconcile yourself to your brother,"* but, *"Be thou reconciled."* And while the saying seems to pertain to the aggressor, the whole of it really pertains to him that is aggrieved. Thus, *"If you are reconciled to him,"* says Christ, *"through your love to him you will have me also propitious, and will be able to offer your sacrifice with great confidence. But if you are still irritated, consider that even I*

readily command that which is mine to be lightly esteemed, that you may become friends; and let these thoughts be soothing to your anger."

And He said not, When you have suffered any of the greater wrongs, then be reconciled; but, *"Though it be some trifle that he has against you."* And He added not, *"Whether justly or unjustly;"* but merely, *"If he has ought against you."* For though it be justly, not even in that case ought thou to protract the enmity; since Christ also was justly angered with us, yet nevertheless He gave Himself for us to be slain, *"not imputing those trespasses."* [2 Corinthians 5:19]

For this cause Paul also, when urging us in another way to reconciliation, said, *"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."* [Ephesians 4:26] For much as Christ by this argument of the sacrifice, so there Paul by that of the day, is urging us on to the self-same point. Because in truth he fears the night, lest it overtake him that is smitten alone, and make the wound greater. For whereas in the day there are many to distract, and draw him off; in the night, when he is alone, and is thinking it over by himself, the waves swell, and the storm becomes greater. Therefore Paul, you see, to prevent this, would fain commit him to the night already reconciled, that the devil may after that have no opportunity, from his solitude, to rekindle the furnace of his wrath, and make it fiercer. Thus also Christ permits not, though it be ever so little delay, lest, the sacrifice being accomplished, such an one become more remiss, procrastinating from day to day: for He knows that the case requires very speedy treatment. And as a skillful physician exhibits not only the preventives of our diseases, but their correctives also, even so does He likewise. Thus, to forbid our calling *"fool,"* is a preventive of enmity; but to command reconciliation is a means of removing the diseases that ensue on the enmity.

And mark how both commands are set forth with earnestness. For as in the former case He threatened hell, so here He receives not the gift before the reconciliation, indicating great displeasure, and by all these methods destroying both the root and the produce.

And first of all He says, *"Be not angry;"* and after that, *"revile not."* For indeed both these are augmented, the one by the other: from enmity is reviling, from reviling enmity. On this account then He heals now the root, and now the fruit; hindering indeed the evil from ever springing up in the first instance: but if perchance it may have sprouted up and borne its most evil fruit, then by all means He burns it down the more.

13. Therefore, you see, having mentioned, first the judgment, then the council, then hell, and having spoken of His own sacrifice, He adds other topics again, thus speaking:

"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him." [Matthew 5:25]

That is, that you may not say, *"What then, if I am injured;" "what if I am plundered, and dragged too before the tribunal?"* even this occasion and excuse He has taken away: for He commands us not even so to be at enmity. Then, since this injunction was great, He draws His advice from the things present, which are wont to restrain the grosser sort more than the future. *"Why, what do you say?"* says He. *"That your adversary is stronger, and does you wrong? Of course then he will wrong you more, if you do not make it up, but art forced to go into court. For in the former case, by giving up some money, you will keep your person free; but when you have come under the sentence of the judge, you will both be bound, and pay the utmost penalty. But if you avoid the contest there, you will reap two good results: first, not having to suffer anything painful: and secondly, that the good done will be thereafter your own doing, and no longer the effect of compulsion on*

his part. But if you will not be ruled by these sayings, you wrong not him, so much as yourself."

And see here also how He hastens him; for having said, *"Agree with your adversary,"* He added, *"quickly;"* and He was not satisfied with this, but even of this quickness He has required a further increase, saying, *"Whilst you are in the way with him;"* pressing and hastening him hereby with great earnestness. For nothing does so much turn our life upside down, as delay and procrastination in the performance of our good works. Nay, this has often caused us to lose all. Therefore, as Paul for his part says, *"Before the sun set, do away the enmity;"* and as He Himself had said above, *"Before the offering is completed, be reconciled;"* so He says in this place also, *"Quickly, while you are in the way with him,"* before you have come to the doors of the court; before you stand at the bar and art come to be thenceforth under the sway of him that judges. Since, before entering in, you have all in your own control; but if you set your foot on that threshold, you will not by ever so earnest efforts be able to arrange your matters at your will, having come under the constraint of another.

But what is it *"to agree?"* He means either, *"consent rather to suffer wrong?"* or, *"so plead the cause, as if you were in the place of the other;"* that you may not corrupt justice by self-love, but rather, deliberating on another's cause as your own, may so proceed to deliver your vote in this matter. And if this be a great thing, marvel not; since with this view did He set forth all those His blessings, that having beforehand smoothed and prepared the hearer's soul, he might render it apter to receive all His enactments.

Now some say that He obscurely signifies the devil himself, under the name of the adversary; and bids us have nothing of his, (for this, they say, is to *"agree"* with him): no compromise being possible after our departure

hence, nor anything awaiting us, but that punishment, from which no prayers can deliver. But to me He seems to be speaking of the judges in this world, and of the way to the court of justice, and of this prison.

For after he had abashed men by higher things, and things future, he alarms them also by such as are in this life. Which thing Paul also does, using both the future and the present to sway his hearer: as when, deterring from wickedness, he points out to him that is inclined to evil, the ruler armed: thus saying, *"But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God."* [Romans 13:4] And again, enjoining us to be subject unto him, he sets forth not the fear of God only, but the threatening also of the other party, and his watchful care. *"For you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."* [Romans 5:5] Because the more irrational, as I have already said, are wont to be sooner corrected by these things, things which appear and are at hand. Wherefore Christ also made mention, not of hell only, but also of a court of justice, and of being dragged there, and of the prison, and of all the suffering there; by all these means destroying the roots of murder. For he who neither reviles, nor goes to law, nor prolongs enmity, how will he ever commit murder? So that from hence also it is evident, that in the advantage of our neighbor stands our own advantage. For he that agrees with his adversary, will benefit himself much more; becoming free, by his own act, from courts of law, and prisons, and the wretchedness that is there.

14. Let us then be obedient to His sayings; let us not oppose ourselves, nor be contentious; for first of all, even antecedently to their rewards, these injunctions have their pleasure and profit in themselves. And if to the more part they seem to be burdensome, and the trouble which they cause, great; have it in your mind that you are doing it for Christ's sake, and the pain will be pleasant. For if we maintain this way of reckoning at all times, we shall

experience nothing burdensome, but great will be the pleasure we reap from every quarter; for our toil will no longer seem toil, but by how much it is enhanced, so much the sweeter and pleasanter does it grow.

When therefore the custom of evil things, and the desire of wealth, keep on bewitching you; do thou war against them with that mode of thinking which tells us, *"Great is the reward we shall receive, for despising the pleasure which is but for a season;"* and say to your soul; *"Are you quite dejected because I defraud you of pleasure? Nay, be of good cheer, for I am introducing you into Heaven. You do it not for man's sake, but for God's. Be patient therefore a little while, and you shall see how great is the gain. Endure for the present life, and you shall receive an unspeakable confidence."* For if we would thus discourse with our own soul, and not only consider that which is burdensome in virtue, but take account also of the crown that comes thereof, we shall quickly withdraw it from all wickedness.

For if the devil, holding out pleasure for a season, but pain for ever, is yet strong, and prevails; seeing our case is just the reverse in these matters, the labor temporary, the pleasure and profit immortal, what plea shall we have, if we follow not virtue after so great encouragement? Why, the object of our labors is enough to set against all, and our clear persuasion that for God's sake we are enduring all this. For if one having the king his debtor, thinks he has sufficient security for all his life; consider how great will he be, who has made the Gracious and Everlasting God a debtor to himself, for good deeds both small and great. Do not then allege to me labors and sweats; for not by the hope only of the things to come, but in another way also, God has made virtue easy, assisting us everywhere, and putting His hand to our work. And if you will only contribute a little zeal, everything else follows. For to this end He will have you too to labor a little, even that

the victory may be yours also. And just as a king would have his own son present indeed in the array; he would have him shoot with the bow, and show himself, that the trophy may be reckoned his, while he achieves it all Himself: even so does God in our war against the devil: He requires of you one thing alone, that you show forth a sincere hatred against that foe. And if you contribute this to Him, He by Himself brings all the war to an end. Though thou burn with anger, with desire of riches, with any tyrannical passion whatever; if He see you only stripping yourself and prepared against it, He comes quickly to you, and makes all things easy, and sets you above the flame, as He did those children of old in the Babylonian furnace: for they too carried in with them nought but their good will.

In order then that we also may extinguish all the furnace of disordered pleasure here, and so escape the hell that is there, let these each day be our counsels, our cares, and our practice, drawing towards us the favor of God, both by our full purpose concerning good works, and by our frequent prayers. For thus even those things which appear insupportable now, will be most easy, and light, and lovely. Because, so long as we are in our passions, we think virtue rugged and morose and arduous, vice desirable and most pleasing; but if we would stand off from these but a little, then both vice will appear abominable and unsightly, and virtue easy, mild, and much to be desired. And this you may learn plainly from those who have done well. Hear, for instance, how of those passions Paul is ashamed, even after his deliverance from them, saying, *"For what fruit had ye then in those things, whereof you are now ashamed?"* [Romans 6:21] But virtue, even after his labor, he affirms to be light, calling the laboriousness of our affliction momentary and *"light,"* and rejoicing in his sufferings, and glorying in his tribulations, and taking a pride in the marks wherewith he had been branded for Christ's sake.

In order then that we too may establish ourselves in this habit, let us order ourselves each day by what has been said, and *"forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, let us press on towards the prize of the high calling:"* [Philippians 3:13-14] unto which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 17 on Matthew

Matthew 5:27-28.

" You have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that every one who looks upon a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Having now finished the former commandment, and having extended it unto the height of self-denial, He, advancing in course and order, proceeds accordingly unto the second, herein too obeying the law.

"And yet," it may be said, this is not the second, but the third; for neither is the first, *"You shall not kill,"* but *"The Lord your God is one Lord."*

Wherefore it is worth inquiring too, why He did not begin with that. Why was it then? Because, had He begun from thence, He must have enlarged it also, and have brought in Himself together with His Father. But it was not as yet time to teach any such thing about Himself.

And besides, He was for a while practising His moral doctrine only, being minded from this first, and from His miracles, to convince the hearers that He was the Son of God. Now, if He had said at once, before He had spoken or done anything, *You have heard that it was said to them of old time, "I am the Lord your God, and there is none other but me,"* but I say unto you, Worship me even as Him; this would have made all regard Him as a madman. For if, even after His teaching, and His so great miracles, while not even yet was He saying this openly, they called Him possessed with a devil; [John 8:48] had He before all these attempted to say any such thing, what would they not have said? What would they not have thought?

But by keeping back at the proper season His teaching on these subjects, He was causing that the doctrine should be acceptable to the many. Wherefore now He passed it by quickly, but when He had everywhere established it by His miracles, and by His most excellent teaching, He afterwards unveiled it in words also.

For the present, however, by the manifestation of His miracles, and by the very manner of His teaching, He unfolds it on occasion, gradually and quietly. For His enacting such laws, and such corrections of laws, with authority, would lead on the attentive and understanding hearer, little by little, unto the word of His doctrine. For it is said, *"they were astonished at Him, because He taught not as their Scribes."* [Matthew 7:28-29]

2. For beginning from those passions, which most belong to our whole race, anger, I mean, and desire (for it is these chiefly that bear absolute sway within us, and are more natural than the rest); He with great authority, even such as became a legislator, both corrected them, and reduced them to order with all strictness. For He said not that the adulterer merely is punished; but what He had done with respect to the murderer, this He does here also, punishing even the unchaste look: to teach you wherein lies what He had more than the scribes. Accordingly, He says, *"He that looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her:"* that is, he who makes it his business to be curious about bright forms, and to hunt for elegant features, and to feast his soul with the sight, and to fasten his eyes on fair countenances. For He came to set free from all evil deeds not the body only, but the soul too before the body. Thus, because in the heart we receive the grace of the Spirit, He cleanses it out first.

"And how," one may say, *"is it possible to be freed from desire?"* I answer, first, if we were willing, even this might be deadened, and remain inactive.

In the next place, He does not here take away desire absolutely, but that desire which springs up in men from sight. For he that is curious to behold fair countenances, is himself chiefly the enkindler of the furnace of that passion, and makes his own soul a captive, and soon proceeds also to the act.

Thus we see why He said not, "*whosoever shall lust to commit adultery,*" but, "*whosoever shall look to lust.*" And in the case of anger He laid down a certain distinction, saying, "*without a cause,*" and "*for nought;*" but here not so; rather once for all He took away the desire. Yet surely both are naturally implanted, and both are set in us for our profit; both anger, and desire: the one that we may chastise the evil, and correct those who walk disorderly; the other that we may have children, and that our race may be recruited by such successions.

Why then did He not make a distinction here also? Nay, very great is the distinction which, if you attend, you will see here also included. For He said not simply, "*whosoever shall desire,*" since it is possible for one to desire even when sitting in the mountains; but, "*Whosoever shall look to lust;*" that is to say, he who gathers in lust unto himself; he who, when nothing compels him, brings in the wild beast upon his thoughts when they are calm. For this comes no longer of nature, but of self-indulgence. This even the ancient Scripture corrects from the first, saying, "*Contemplate not beauty which is another's.*" [Sirach 9:8] And then, lest any one should say, "*what then, if I contemplate, and be not taken captive,*" He punishes the look, lest confiding in this security you should some time fall into sin. "*What then,*" one may say, "*if I should look, and desire indeed, but do no evil?*" Even so you are set among the adulterers. For the Lawgiver has pronounced it, and you must not ask any more questions. For thus looking once, twice, or thrice, you will perhaps have power to refrain; but if you are

continually doing this, and kindling the furnace, you will assuredly be taken; for your station is not beyond that nature which is common to men. As we then, if we see a child holding a knife, though we do not see him hurt, beat him, and forbid his ever holding it; so God likewise takes away the unchaste look even before the act, lest at any time you should fall in act also. For he who has once kindled the flame, even when the woman whom he has beheld is absent, is forming by himself continually images of shameful things, and from them often goes on even to the deed. For this cause Christ takes away even that embrace which is in the heart only.

What now can they say, who have those virgin inmates? Why, by the tenor of this law they must be guilty of ten thousand adulteries, daily beholding them with desire. For this cause the blessed Job [Job 31:1] also laid down this law from the beginning, blocking out from himself on all sides this kind of gazing.

For in truth greater is the struggle on beholding, and not possessing the object of fondness: nor is the pleasure so great which we reap from the sight, as the mischief we undergo from increasing this desire; thus making our opponent strong, and giving more scope to the devil, and no longer able to repulse him, now that we have brought him into our inmost parts, and have thrown our mind open unto him. Therefore He says, *"commit no adultery with your eyes, and you will commit none with your mind."*

For one may indeed behold in another way, such as are the looks of the chaste; wherefore he did not altogether prohibit our seeing, but that seeing which is accompanied with desire. And if He had not meant this, He would have said simply, *"He who looks on a woman."* But now He said not thus, but, *"He who looks to lust," "he who looks to please his sight."*

For not at all to this end did God make you eyes, that you should thereby introduce adultery, but that, beholding His creatures, you should

admire the Artificer.

Just then as one may feel wrath at random, so may one cast looks at random; that is, when you do it for lust. Rather, if you desire to look and find pleasure, look at your own wife, and love her continually; no law forbids that. But if you are to be curious about the beauties that belong to another, you are injuring both your wife by letting your eyes wander elsewhere, and her on whom you have looked, by touching her unlawfully. Since, although you have not touched her with the hand, yet have you caressed her with your eyes; for which cause this also is accounted adultery, and before that great penalty draws after it no slight one of its own. For then all within him is filled with disquiet and turmoil, and great is the tempest, and most grievous the pain, and no captive nor person in chains can be worse off than a man in this state of mind. And oftentimes she who has shot the dart is flown away, while the wound even so remains. Or rather, it is not she who has shot the dart, but you gave yourself the fatal wound, by your unchaste look. And this I say to free modest women from the charge: since assuredly, should one deck herself out, and invite towards herself the eyes of such as fall in her way; even though she smite not him that meets with her, she incurs the utmost penalty: for she mixed the poison, she prepared the hemlock, even though she did not offer the cup. Or rather, she did also offer the cup, though no one were found to drink it.

3. *"Why then does He not discourse with them also?"* it may be said. Because the laws which He appoints are in every case common, although He seem to address Himself unto men only. For in discoursing with the head, He makes His admonition common to the whole body also. For woman and man He knows as one living creature, and nowhere distinguishes their kind.

But if you desire to hear also His rebuke for them in particular, listen to Isaiah, [Isaiah 3:16] in many words inveighing against them, and deriding their habit, their aspect, their gait, their trailing garments, their tripping feet, their drooping necks. Hear with him the blessed Paul also, setting many laws for them; and both *about garments, and ornaments of gold*, and plaiting of hair, and luxurious living, and all other such things, vehemently rebuking this sex. And Christ too, by what follows next, obscurely intimated this very same; for when He says, "*pluck out and cut off the eye that offends you*," He speaks as indicating His anger against them.

3. Wherefore also He subjoins,

"If your right eye offend you, pluck it out, and cast it from you."

Thus, lest you should say, "*But what if she be akin to me? What if in any other way she belong to me?*" therefore He has given these injunctions; not discoursing about our limbs—far from it—for nowhere does He say that our flesh is to be blamed for things, but everywhere it is the evil mind that is accused. For it is not the eye that sees, but the mind and the thought. Often, for instance, we being wholly turned elsewhere, our eye sees not those who are present. So that the matter does not entirely depend upon its working. Again, had He been speaking of members of the body, He would not have said it of one eye, nor of the right eye only, but of both. For he who is offended by his right eye, most evidently will incur the same evil by his left also. Why then did He mention the right eye, and add the hand? To show you that not of limbs is He speaking, but of them who are near unto us. Thus, "*If*," says He, "*you so lovest any one, as though he were in stead of a right eye; if you think him so profitable to you as to esteem him in the place of a hand, and he hurts your soul; cut off even these.*" And see the

emphasis; for He says not, *"Withdraw from him,"* but to show the fullness of the separation, *"pluck it out,"* says He, *"and cast it from you."*

Then, forasmuch as His injunction was sharp, He shows also the gain on either hand, both from the benefits and from the evils, continuing in the metaphor.

"For it is profitable for you," says He, *"that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body should be cast into hell."*

For while he neither saves himself, nor fails to destroy you too, what kindness is it for both to sink, whereas if they were separated, one at least might have been preserved?

But why did Paul then, it may be said, choose to become accursed? [Romans 9:3] Not on condition of gaining nothing, but with a view to the salvation of others. But in this case the mischief pertains to both. And therefore He said not, *"pluck out"* only, but also *"cast from you:"* to receive him again no more, if he continue as he is. For so shall you both deliver him from a heavier charge, and free yourself from ruin.

But that you may see yet more clearly the profit of this law; let us, if you please, try what has been said, in the case of the body itself, by way of supposition. I mean, if choice were given, and you must either, keeping your eye, be cast into a pit and perish, or plucking it out, preserve the rest of your body; would you not of course accept the latter? It is plain to everyone. For this were not to act as one hating the eye, but as one loving the rest of the body. This same reckoning do thou make with regard to men also and women: that if he who harms you by his friendship should continue incurable, his being thus cut off will both free you from all mischief, and he also will himself be delivered from the heavier charges, not having to answer for your destruction along with his own evil deeds.

Do you see how full the law is of gentleness and tender care, and that which seems to men in general to be severity, how much love towards man it discloses?

Let them hearken to these things, who hasten to the theatres, and make themselves adulterers every day. For if the law commands to cut off him, whose connection with us tends to our hurt; what plea can they have, who, by their haunting those places, attract towards them daily those even that have not yet become known to them, and procure to themselves occasions of ruin without number?

For henceforth, He not only forbids us to look unchastely, but having signified the mischief thence ensuing, He even straitens the law as He goes on, commanding to cut off, and dissever, and cast somewhere far away. And all this He ordains, who has uttered words beyond number about love, that in either way you might learn His providence, and how from every source He seeks your profit.

4. *"Now it has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery; and whosoever marries her that is put away, commits adultery."*
[Matthew 6:31-32]

He goes not on to what lies before Him, until He have well cleared out the former topics. For, lo, He shows us yet another kind of adultery. And what is this? There was an ancient law made, [Deuteronomy 24:1-4] that he who hated his wife, for whatever kind of cause, should not be forbidden to cast her out, and to bring home another instead of her. The law however did not command him simply to do this, but after giving the woman a writing of divorcement, that it might not be in her power to return to him again; that so at least the figure of the marriage might remain.

For if He had not enjoined this, but it were lawful first to cast her out, and take another, then afterwards to take back the former, the confusion was sure to be great, all men continually taking each others' wives; and the matter thenceforth would have been direct adultery. With a view to this, He devised, as no small mitigation, the writing of divorcement.

But these things were done by reason of another, a far greater wickedness; I mean, had He made it necessary to keep in the house her even that was hated, the husband, hating, would have killed her. For such was the race of the Jews. For they who did not spare children, who slew prophets, and "*shed blood as water,*" much more would they have showed no mercy to women. For this cause He allowed the less, to remove the greater evil. For that this was not a primary law, hear Him saying, "*Moses wrote these things according to the hardness of your hearts,*" that you might not slay them in the house, but rather put them out. But forasmuch as He had taken away all wrath, having forbidden not murder only, but even the mere feeling of anger, He with ease introduces this law likewise. With this view also He is ever bringing to mind the former words, to signify that His sayings are not contrary to them, but in agreement: that He is enforcing, not overthrowing them; perfecting, not doing them away.

And observe Him everywhere addressing His discourse to the man. Thus, "*He that puts away his wife,*" says He, "*causes her to commit adultery, and he that marries a woman put away, commits adultery.*" That is, the former, though he take not another wife, by that act alone has made himself liable to blame, having made the first an adulteress; the latter again has become an adulterer by taking her who is another's. For tell me not this, "*the other has cast her out;*" nay, for when cast out she continues to be the wife of him that expelled her. Then lest He should render the wife more self-willed, by throwing it all upon him who cast her out, He has shut

against her also the doors of him who was afterwards receiving her; in that He says, "*He who marries her that is put away commits adultery;*" and so makes the woman chaste even though unwilling, and blocks up altogether her access to all, and suffers her not to give an occasion for jealousy. For she who has been made aware that she positively must either keep the husband, who was originally allotted to her, or being cast out of that house, not have any other refuge—she even against her will was compelled to make the best of her consort.

And if He discourse not at all unto her concerning these things, marvel not; for the woman is rather a weak creature. For this cause letting her go, in his threatening against the men He fully corrects her remissness. Just as if any one who had a prodigal child, leaving him, should rebuke those who make him such, and forbid them to have intercourse, or to approach him. And if that be galling, call to mind, I pray you, His former sayings, on what terms He had blessed His hearers; and you will see that it is very possible and easy. For he that is meek, and a peacemaker, and poor in spirit, and merciful, how shall he cast out his wife? He that is used to reconcile others, how shall he be at variance with her that is his own?

And not thus only, but in another way also He has lightened the enactment: forasmuch as even for him He leaves one manner of dismissal, when He says, "*Except for the cause of fornication;*" since the matter had else come round again to the same issue. For if He had commanded to keep her in the house, though defiling herself with many, He would have made the matter end again in adultery.

Do you see how these sayings agree with what had gone before? For he who looks not with unchaste eyes upon another woman, will not commit whoredom; and not committing whoredom, he will give no occasion to the husband to cast out his wife.

Therefore, you see, after this He presses the point without reserve, and builds up this fear as a bulwark, urging on the husband the great danger, if he do cast her out, in that he makes himself accountable for her adultery. Thus, lest you being told, "*pluck out the eye,*" should suppose this to be said even of a wife: He added in good time this corrective, in one way only giving leave to cast her out, but no otherwise.

5. "*Again, you have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not forswear yourself, but shall perform unto the Lord your oaths. But I say unto you, swear not at all.*" [Matthew 5:33-34]

Why did He go straightway not to theft, but to false witness, passing over that commandment? Because he that steals, does upon occasion swear also; but he that knows not either swearing or speaking falsehood, much less will he choose to steal. So that by this He has overthrown the other sin likewise: since falsehood comes of stealing.

But what means, "*You shall perform unto the Lord your oaths?*" It is this, "*you shall be true in swearing.*" "*But I say unto you, swear not at all.*"

Next, to lead them farther away from swearing by God, He says, "*Neither by Heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King:*" still speaking out of the prophetic writings, and signifying Himself not to be opposed to the ancients. This was because they had a custom of swearing by these objects, and he intimates this custom near the end of his Gospel.

But mark, I pray you, on what ground He magnifies the elements; not from their own nature, but from God's relation to them, such as it had been in condescension declared. For because the tyranny of idolatry was great, that the elements might not be thought worthy of honor for their own sake, He has assigned this cause, which we have mentioned, which again would pass on to the glory of God. For He neither said, "*because Heaven is*

beautiful and great," nor, "because earth is profitable;" but "because the one is God's throne, the other His footstool;" on every side urging them on towards their Lord.

"Neither by your head," says He, "because you can not make one hair white or black." [Matthew 5:36]

Here again, not as wondering at man, has He withdrawn him from swearing by his head (for so man himself would be worshipped), but as referring the glory to God, and signifying that you are not master even of yourself, and of course therefore not of the oaths made by your head. For if no one would give up his own child to another, much more will not God give up His own work to you. For though it be your head, yet is it the property of another; and so far from being master thereof, you shall not be able to do with it, no not the least thing of all. For He said not, *"You can not make one hair grow;"* but, *"Not so much as change its quality."*

"But what," it may be said, *"if any one should require an oath, and apply constraint?"* Let the fear of God be more powerful than the constraint: since, if you are to bring forward such excuses, you will keep none of the things which are enjoined.

Yea, for first with respect to your wife you will say, *"what if she be contentious and extravagant;"* and then as to the right eye, *"what if I love it, and am quite on fire?"* and of the unchaste look, *"what then, if I cannot help seeing?"* and of our anger against a brother, *"what if I be hasty, and not able to govern my tongue?"* and in general, all His sayings you may on this wise trample under foot. Yet surely with regard to human laws you dare not in any case use this allegation, nor say, *"what then if this or that be the case,"* but, willing or unwilling, you receive what is written.

And besides, you will never have compulsion to undergo at all. For he that has hearkened unto those former blessings, and has framed himself to

be such as Christ enjoined, will have no such constraint to endure from any, being held in reverence and veneration by all.

"But let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay: for that which exceeds these comes of the evil one."

What is it then that *"exceeds yea"* and *"nay"*? It is the oath, not the perjury. For this latter is quite acknowledged, and no man needs to learn that it is of the evil one; and it is not an excess, but an opposite: whereas an excess means something more, and added over and above: which kind of thing swearing is.

"What then," says one, *"was it of the evil one? And if it was of the evil one, how was it a law?"* Well, this same thing you will say concerning the wife also; how is that now accounted adultery, which was before permitted?

What now may one reply to this? That the precepts then uttered had reference to the weakness of them who were receiving the laws; since also to be worshipped with the vapor of sacrifice is very unworthy of God, just as to lisp is unworthy of a philosopher. That kind of thing accordingly was now laid down to be adultery, and swearing to be of the evil one, now that the principles of virtue have advanced. But if these things had been, from the first, laws of the devil, they would not have attained to so great goodness. Yea, for had those not been forerunners in the first place, these which we now have would not have been so easily received. Do not thou then require their excellency now, when their use is past: but then, when the time was calling for them. Or rather, if you will, even now: yea, for now also is their virtue shown: and most of all for the very cause, by reason of which we find fault with them. For their appearing such now, is the greatest commendation of them. For had they not brought us up well, and made us meet for the reception of the greater precepts, they would not have appeared such.

Therefore as the breast, when it has fulfilled all its part, and is dismissing the child to the more manly diet, after that appears useless; and the parents who before thought it necessary for the babe, now abuse it with ten thousand mockeries (and many even not content with words of abuse, anoint it also with bitter drugs; that when their words have not power to remove the child's unseasonable propensity towards it, the real things may quench their longing): so also Christ says, that they are of the evil one, not to indicate that the old law is of the devil, but in order that with most exceeding earnestness He might lead them away from their ancient poverty. And to them He says these things; but with regard to the Jews, who were insensible and persevered in the same ways, He has anointed their city all round with the terror of captivity, as with some bitter drug, and made it inaccessible. But since not even this had power to restrain them, but they desired to see it again, running to it, just as a child to the breast, He hid it from them altogether; both pulling it down, and leading away the more part of them far from it: as it is with our cattle; many, by shutting out the calves, in time induce them to forego their old familiar use of the milk.

But if the old law had belonged to the devil, it would not have led people away from idolatry, but rather would have drawn them on and cast them into it; for this did the devil desire. But now we see the opposite effect produced by the old law. And indeed this very thing, the oath, was ordained of old for this cause, that they might not swear by the idols. For *"you shall swear,"* says He, *"by the true God."* They were then no small advantages which the law effected, but rather very great. For that they came unto the *"strong meat,"* was the work of its care.

"What then," it may be said, *"is not swearing of the evil one?"* Yes, indeed it is altogether of the evil one; that is, now, after so high a rule of self-restraint; but then not so.

"But how," one may say, "should the same thing become at one time good, at another time not good?" Nay, I say the very contrary: how could it help becoming good and not good, while all things are crying aloud, that they are so: the arts, the fruits of the earth, and all things else?

See it, for example, taking place first in our own kind. Thus, to be carried, in the earliest age of life, is good, but afterwards pernicious; to eat food that has been softened in the mouth, in the first scene of our life, is good, but afterwards it is full of disgust; to be fed upon milk and to fly to the breast, is at first profitable and healthful, but tends afterwards to decay and harm. Do you see how the same actions, by reason of the times, appear good, and again not so? Yea, and to wear the robe of a child is well as long as you are a boy, but contrariwise, when you have become a man, it is disgraceful. Would you learn of the contrary case too, how to the child again the things of the man are unsuited? Give the boy a man's robe, and great will be the laughter; and greater the danger, he being often upset in walking after that fashion. Allow him to handle public affairs, and to traffic, and sow, and reap, and great again will be the laughter.

And why do I mention these things? When killing, which among all is acknowledged to be an invention of the evil one, killing, I say, having found its proper occasion, caused Phinehas, who committed it, to be honored with the priesthood. [Numbers 25:8] For that killing is a work of him whom I just now mentioned, hear what Christ says; *"You will do the works of your Father; he was a manslayer from the beginning."* [John 8:44] But Phinehas became a manslayer, and *"it was counted unto him"* (so He speaks) *"for righteousness:"* and Abraham again on becoming not a man-slayer only, but (which was far worse) the slayer of his child, won more and more approbation. And Peter too wrought a twofold slaughter, nevertheless what he did was of the Spirit. [Acts v]

Let us not then examine simply the acts, but the season too, and the causes, and the mind, and the difference of persons, and whatsoever else may accompany them, these let us search out with all exactness: for there is no arriving at the truth otherwise.

And let us be diligent, if we would attain unto the kingdom, to show forth something more than the old commandments; since we cannot otherwise lay hold of the things of Heaven. For if we arrive but at the same measure, that of the ancients, we shall stand without that threshold; for *"unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven."*

[Matthew 5:20]

6. Yet, although so heavy a threat is set down, there are some who so far from over-passing this righteousness, even come short of it; so far from shunning oaths, they even swear falsely; so far from avoiding an unchaste gaze, they even fall into the very act of wickedness. And all the rest of the things which are forbidden, they dare to do, as though past feeling: waiting for one thing only, the day of punishment, and the time when they are to pay the most extreme penalty for their misdoings. And this is the portion of those only who have ended their lives in wickedness. For these have reason to despair, and thenceforth to expect nothing else but punishment; whereas they who are yet here, may have power both to renew the fight and to conquer and be crowned with ease.

Despond not therefore, O man, neither put away your noble earnestness; for in truth the things are not grievous, which are enjoined. What trouble is it, I pray you, to shun an oath? What, does it cost any money? Is it sweat and hardship? It is enough to have willed only, and the whole is done.

But if you allege to me your habit; for this very reason most of all do I say, that your doing right is easy. For if you bring yourself to another habit, you had effected all.

Consider, for example, how among the Greeks, in many instances, persons lisping have entirely cured by much practice their halting tongue; while others, who were used to shrug up their shoulders in an unseemly way, and to be continually moving them, by putting a sword over them, have broken themselves of it.

For since you are not persuaded out of the Scriptures, I am compelled to shame you by them that are without. This God also did unto the Jews, when He said, *"Go ye forth unto the Isles of Chittim, and send unto Kedar, and know if nations will change their gods; which yet are no gods."* And to the brutes likewise He sends us oftentimes, saying on this wise, *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard, and emulate her ways:"* and *"go forth to the bee."*

This therefore I also now say unto you; consider the philosophers of the Greeks; and then you will know of how great punishment we are worthy, who disobey the laws of God: in that they for seemliness before men have taken exceeding pains, and you bestow not the same diligence, no, not for the things of Heaven.

But if you should reply, *"Habit has a wonderful power to beguile even those who are very much in earnest:"* this I likewise acknowledge; however, there is another thing which I say with it; that as it is powerful to beguile, so also is it easy to be corrected. For if you will set over yourself at home many to watch you, such as your servant, your wife, your friend, you will easily break off from the bad habits, being hard pressed and closely restrained by all. If you succeed in doing this for ten days only, you will after that no longer need any further time, but all will be secured to you, rooted anew in the firmness of the most excellent habit.

When therefore you are beginning to correct this, though you should transgress your law a first, a second, a third, a twentieth time, do not despair, but rise up again, and resume the same diligence, and you will surely prevail.

For perjury surely is no trifling mischief. If to swear is of the evil one, how great the penalty which false swearing will bring! Did ye give praise to what has been said? Nay, I want not applause, nor tumults, nor noise. One thing only do I wish, that quietly and intelligently listening, you should do what is said. This is the applause, this the panegyric for me. But if you praise what I say, but doest not what you applaud, greater is the punishment, more aggravated the accusation: and to us it is shame and ridicule. For the things here present are no dramatic spectacle; neither do ye now sit gazing on actors, that you may merely applaud. This place is a spiritual school. Wherefore also there is but one thing aimed at, duly to perform the things that have been spoken, and to show forth our obedience by our works. For then only shall we have obtained all. Since as things are, to say the truth, we have fairly given up in despair. For I have not ceased giving these admonitions either to those whom I meet in private, or in discourse with you all in common. Yet I see no advantage at all gained, but you are still clinging to the former rude beginnings, which thing is enough to fill the teacher with weariness.

See, for example, Paul himself, hardly bearing it, because his scholars were delaying a long time in their earlier lessons: *"For when for the time,"* says he, *"ye ought to be teachers, you have need to be taught again which be the first principles of the oracles of God. "*

Wherefore we too mourn and lament. And if I see you persisting, I will forbid you for the future to set foot on this sacred threshold, and partake of the immortal mysteries; as we do fornicators and adulterers, and persons

charged with murder. Yea, for it is better to offer our accustomed prayers, with two or three, who keep the laws of God, than to sweep together a multitude of transgressors and corrupters of others.

Let me have no rich man, no potentate, puffing at me here, and drawing up his eyebrows; all these things are to me a fable, a shade, a dream. For no one of those who are now rich, will stand up for me there, when I am called to account and accused, as not having thoroughly vindicated the laws of God, with all due earnestness. For this, this ruined even that admirable old man, [1 Samuel 3:13] though in his own life giving no handle for blame; yet for all that, because he overlooked the treading under foot of God's laws, he was chastised with his children, and paid that grievous penalty. And if, where the absolute authority of nature was so great, he who failed to treat his own children with due firmness endured so grievous a punishment; what indulgence shall we have, freed as we are from that dominion, and yet ruining all by flattery?

In order therefore that you may not destroy both us and your own selves with us, be persuaded, I entreat you; set very many to watch over you, and call you to account, and so free yourselves from the habit of oaths; that going on orderly from thence, you may both with all facility succeed in attaining unto all other virtue, and may enjoy the good things to come; which God grant that we may all win, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might now and always, even for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 18 on Matthew

Matthew 5:38-40.

" You have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that you resist not the evil: but whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also."

Do you see that it was not of an eye that He was speaking before, when He made the law to pluck out the offending eye, but of him who by his friendship is harming us, and casting us into the gulf of destruction? For He who in this place uses so great strength of expression, and who, not even when another is plucking out your eye, permits you to strike out his; how should He have made it a law to strike out one's own?

But if any one accuses the ancient law, because it commands such retaliation, he seems to me very unskillful in the wisdom that becomes a legislator, and ignorant of the virtue of opportunities, and the gain of condescension. For if he considered who were the hearers of these sayings, and how they were disposed, and when they received this code of laws, he will thoroughly admit the wisdom of the Lawgiver, and will see that it is one and the same, who made both those laws and these, and who wrote each of them exceeding profitably, and in its due season. Yes, for if at the beginning He had introduced these high and most weighty commandments, men would not have received either these, or the others; but now ordaining them severally in their due time, He has by the two corrected the whole world.

And besides, He commanded this, not that we might strike out one another's eyes, but that we might keep our hands to ourselves. For the threat of suffering has effectually restrained our inclination to be doing.

And thus in fact He is silently dropping seed of much self-restraint, at least in that He commands to retaliate with just the same acts. Yet surely he that began such transgression were worthy of a greater punishment, and this the abstract nature of justice demands. But forasmuch as He was minded to mingle mercy also with justice, He condemns him whose offenses were very great to a punishment less than his desert: teaching us even while we suffer to show forth great consideration.

Having therefore mentioned the ancient law, and recognized it all, He signifies again, that it is not our brother who has done these deeds, but the evil one. For this cause he has also subjoined, *"But I say unto you, that you resist not the evil one."* He did not say, *"resist not your brother,"* but *"the evil one,"* signifying that on his motion men dare so to act; and in this way relaxing and secretly removing most of our anger against the aggressor, by transferring the blame to another.

"What then?" it is said, *"ought we not to resist the evil one?"* Indeed we ought, but not in this way, but as He has commanded, by giving one's self up to suffer wrongfully; for thus shall you prevail over him. For one fire is not quenched by another, but fire by water. And to show you that even under the old law he that suffered rather prevails, that he it is who wins the crown; examine just what is done, and you will see that his advantage is great. For as he that has begun with unjust acts, will have himself destroyed the eyes of both, his neighbor's and his own (wherefore also he is justly hated of all, and ten thousand accusations are aimed at him): so he that has been injured, even after his equal retaliation, will have done nothing horrible. Wherefore also he has many to sympathize with him,

as being clear from that offense even after he has retaliated. And though the calamity be equal to both parties, yet the sentence passed on it is not equal, either with God, or with men. It should seem then, that neither is the calamity equal in the end.

Now whereas at the beginning He said, *"he that is angry with his brother without a cause,"* and *"he that calls him fool shall be in danger of hell fire,"* here He requires yet more entire self-restraint, commanding him that suffers ill not merely to be quiet, but even to be more exceedingly earnest in his turn, by offering the other cheek.

And this He says, not as legislating about such a blow as this only, but as teaching also what forbearance we should practise in all our other trials. For just as when He says, *"whoso calls his brother fool, is in danger of hell,"* He speaks not of this word only, but also of all reviling; even so here also He is making a law, not so much for our bearing it manfully, when smitten, as that we should be undisturbed, whatever we suffer. Because of this He both there singled out the extremest insult, and here has set down that which seems to be of all blows most opprobrious, the blow on the cheek, so full of all insolence. And He commands this as having regard both of him that strikes and of him that is stricken. Since both he that is insulted will not think that he suffers any harm, being thus framed to self-restraint (nay, he will not even have any sense of the insult, as striving rather for a prize than as receiving a blow); and he that is offering the affront will be made ashamed, and not add a second blow, though he be fiercer than any wild beast, yea, rather will condemn himself heartily for the former. For nothing so restrains the wrong doers, as when the injured bear what is done with gentleness. And it not only restrains them from rushing onward, but works upon them also to repent for what has gone before, and in wonder at such forbearance to draw back. And it makes them more our own, and

causes them to be slaves, not merely friends, instead of haters and enemies; even as avenging one's self does just the contrary: for it both disgraces each of the two, and makes them worse, and their anger it heightens into a greater flame; yea, often no less than death itself is the end of it, going on from bad to worse. Wherefore He not only forbade you to be angry when smitten, but even enjoined you to satiate the other's desire, that so neither may the former blow appear to have befallen you against your will. For thus, lost as he may be to shame, you will be able to smite him with a mortal blow, rather than if you had smitten him with your hand; or if his shamelessness be still greater, you will make him gentle in proportion.

2. *"And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also."* [Matthew 5:40]

For not in the matter of blows only, but of our goods also, He would have such forbearance exhibited. Wherefore He again employs the same strong figure. That is, as in the other case He commands to overcome in suffering, so here again, by allowing ourselves to be deprived of more than the wrong doer expected. However, He did not put it so merely, but with something to enhance it: not saying, *"give your cloak to him that asks,"* but *"to him that would sue you at the law,"* that is, *"if he drag you into court, and give you trouble."*

And just as, after He had bidden not to call another fool, nor to be angry without cause, He went on and required more, in that He commanded to offer the right cheek also; even so here, having said, *"Agree with your adversary,"* He again amplifies the precept. For now He orders us not only to give what the other would have, but even to show forth a greater liberality.

"What then!" one may say, *"am I to go about naked?"* We should not be naked, if we obeyed these sayings with exactness; rather more

abundantly than any should we be clothed. For first, no one would attack men of this disposition; and next, if there chanced to be any one so savage and ungentle, as to proceed even so far, yet many more would be found to clothe him, who acted with such self-denial, not with garments only, but even with their own flesh, if it were possible.

Further: even though one were of necessity to go about naked on account of this sort of self-denial, neither so were it any disgrace. Since Adam too was "*naked*" [Genesis 2:25] in paradise, "*and was not ashamed;*" and Isaiah was "*naked, and barefoot,*" and more glorious than all the Jews; [Isaiah 20:2-3] and Joseph [Genesis 39:12] also, when he stripped himself, did then more than ever shine forth. For to be thus naked is no evil, but to be so clad, as we now are, with costly garments, this is both disgraceful and ridiculous. For this cause, you see, those had praise of God, but these He blames, both by prophets and by apostles.

Let us not therefore suppose His injunctions impossible. Nay, for besides their expediency, they are very easy, if we are sober-minded; and the profit of them is so great as to be an exceeding help, not to ourselves only, but to those also who are using us despitefully. And in this chiefly stands their excellence, that while they induce us to suffer wrong, they by the same means teach them also that do the wrong to control themselves. For while he on his part thinks it a great thing to take what belongs to others, but you signify to him, that to you it is easy to give even what he does not ask: while you bring in liberality for a counterpoise to his meanness, and a wise moderation to his covetousness: consider what a lesson he will get, being taught not by sayings, but by actual deeds, to scorn vice and to seek after virtue.

For God will have us profitable not to ourselves alone, but to all our neighbors as well. Now if you give, and abstainest from suing, you have

sought your own advantage only; but if you give him some other thing, you have made him too better, and so sent him away. Of this nature is salt, which is what He would have them to be; seeing it both recruits itself, and keeps all other bodies with which it may associate: of this nature is light; for it shows objects both to a man's self and to all others. Forasmuch then as He has set you in the rank of these things, help thou likewise him who is sitting in darkness, and teach him that neither before did he take any thing by force: persuade him that he has done no despite. Yea, for thus you yourself also will be had in more respect and reverence, if you signify that you gave freely and were not robbed. Make therefore his sin, through your moderation, an instance of your own bounty.

3. And if you think this a great thing, wait, and you will see clearly, that neither yet have you attained to perfection. For not even here does He stop with you, who is laying down the laws of patient endurance, but He proceeds even further, thus saying,

"If any one shall compel you to go one mile, go with him two."

[Matthew 5:41]

Do you see the height of self-denial? In this at least, that after giving your coat, and your cloak, not even if your enemy should wish to use your naked body for hardships and labors, not even so (says He), must thou forbid him. For He would have us possess all things in common, both our bodies and our goods, as with them that are in need, so with them that insult us: for the latter comes of manliness, the former of mercifulness.

Because of this, He said, *"If any one shall compel you to go one mile, go with him two:"* again leading you higher up, and commanding you to show forth the same kind of ambition.

For if the things of which He spoke at the beginning, being far less than these, have so great blessings pronounced on them; consider what sort

of portion awaits them, who duly perform these, and what they become even before their rewards, in a human and passible body winning entire freedom from passion. Since when neither insult, nor blows, nor the spoiling of their property, galls them; while they give way to no such thing, but rather add in large measure to their endurance; reflect what kind of training their soul is undergoing.

On this account then, as in regard of blows, as in regard of our goods, so in this case also, He has bidden us act. *"For why,"* says He, *"do I mention insult, and property? Though he should want to make use of your very own limbs for toil and weary work, and this unjustly, do thou again conquer and overpass His unjust desire."*

For *"to compel"* is this, to drag unjustly and without any reason, and by way of despite. Nevertheless, for this also be thou ready in your station, so as to suffer more than the other would fain do to you.

"Give to him that asks you, and from him that would borrow of you, turn not thou away." [Matthew 5:42]

These last are less than what went before; but marvel not, for this He is ever wont to do, mingling the small with the great. And if these be little in comparison with those, let them hearken, who take the goods of others, who distribute their own among harlots, and kindle to themselves a double fire, both by the unrighteous income, and by the pernicious outlay.

But by *"borrowing,"* here, He means not the compact with usury, but the use merely. And elsewhere He even amplifies it, saying that we should give to them, from whom we do not expect to receive.

4. *"You have heard that it has been said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them which despitefully use you: bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. That ye may become like your Father which is in Heaven; for*

He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

See how He has set the highest pinnacle on our good deeds. For this is why He teaches not only to endure a blow, but to offer the right cheek also; not only to add the cloak to the coat, but to travel also two miles with him who compels you to go one; in order that you might receive with all facility that which is much more than these. *"But what,"* one may say, *"is more than these?"* Not even to count as an enemy him who is doing these things: or rather even somewhat else more than this. For He said not, *"do not hate,"* but *"love;"* He said not, *"do not injure,"* but *"do good."*

And if any one should examine accurately, he will see that even to these things somewhat is added, much greater than they are. For neither did He simply command to love, but to pray.

Do you see how many steps He has ascended, and how He has set us on the very summit of virtue? Nay, mark it, numbering from the beginning. A first step is, not to begin with injustice: a second, after he has begun, to vindicate one's self by equal retaliation; a third, not to do unto him that is vexing us the same that one has suffered, but to be quiet; a fourth, even to give one's self up to suffer wrongfully; a fifth, to give up yet more than the other, who did the wrong, wishes; a sixth, not to hate him who has done so; a seventh, even to love him; an eighth, to do him good also; a ninth, to entreat God Himself on his behalf. Do you see, what height of self-command? Wherefore glorious too, as we see, is the reward which it has. That is, because the thing enjoined was great, and needed a fervent soul, and much earnestness, He appoints for it also such a reward, as for none of the former. For He makes not mention here of earth, as with respect to the meek; nor of comfort and mercy, as with regard to the mourners and the merciful; nor of the kingdom of Heaven; but of that which was more

thrilling than all; our becoming like God, in such wise as men might become so. For He says, *"That ye may become like your Father which is in Heaven."*

And observe, I pray you, how neither in this place, nor in the preceding parts, does He call Him His own Father, but in that instance, *"God,"* and *"a great King,"* when He was discoursing about oaths, and here, *"their Father."* And this He does, as reserving for the proper season what He had to say touching these points.

5. Then, bringing the likeness yet closer, He says,

"Because He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain upon just and unjust." [Matthew 5:45]

"For He too, so far from hating," so He speaks, *"even pours benefits on those that insult Him."* Yet surely in no respect is the case parallel, not only because of the surpassing nature of His benefits, but also by reason of the excellence of His dignity. For thou indeed art despised by your fellow-slave, but He by His slave, who has also received ten thousand benefits from Him: and thou indeed givest words, in praying for him, but He, deeds, very great and marvellous, kindling the sun, and giving the annual showers. *"Nevertheless, even so I grant you to be mine equal, in such wise as it is possible for a man so to be."*

Hate not then the man that does you wrong, who is procuring you such good things, and bringing you to so great honor. Curse not him that uses you despitefully; for so have you undergone the labor, but art deprived of the fruit; you will bear the loss, but lose the reward; which is of the utmost folly, having borne the more grievous, not to bear what is less than it. *"But how,"* says one, *"is it possible for this to take place?"* Having seen God become man, and descend so far, and suffer so much for your sake, do you still inquire and doubt, how it is possible to forgive your fellow-servants

their injuriousness? Do you not hear Him on the cross, saying, *"Forgive them, for they know not what they do?"* [Luke 23:34] Do you not hear Paul, when he says, *"He who is gone up on high, and is sitting on the right hand intercedes for us?"* [Romans 8:34] Do you see not that even after the cross, and after He had been received up, He sent the apostles unto the Jews that had slain Him, to bring them His ten thousand blessings, and this, though they were to suffer ten thousand terrors at their hands?

6. But have you been greatly wronged? Nay, what have you endured like your Lord, bound, beaten with whips, with rods, spit upon by servants, enduring death, and that death, which is of all deaths the most shameful, after ten thousand favors shown? And even if you have been greatly wronged, for this very cause most of all do thou do him good, that you may both make your own crown more glorious, and set your brother free from the worst infirmity. For so too the physicians, when they are kicked, and shamefully handled by the insane, then most of all pity them, and take measures for their perfect cure, knowing that the insult comes of the extremity of their disease. Now I bid you too have the same mind touching them that are plotting against you, and do thou so treat them that are injuring you. For it is they above all that are diseased, it is they who are undergoing all the violence. Deliver him then from this grievous contumely, and grant him to let go his anger, and set him free from that grievous demon, wrath. Yea, for if we see persons possessed by devils, we weep for them; we do not seek to be ourselves also possessed.

Now let us do this too likewise with respect to them that are angry; for in truth the enraged are like the possessed; yea rather, are more wretched than they, being mad with consciousness of it. Wherefore also their frenzy is without excuse. Trample not then on the fallen, but rather pity him. For so, should we see any one troubled with bile, blinded and giddy, and

straining to cast up this evil humor, we stretch forth a hand, and continue to support him through his struggles, and though we stain our garments, we regard it not, but seek one thing only, how we may set him free from this grievous distress. This then let us do with respect to the angry also, and continue to bear them up when vomiting and struggling; nor let him go, until he put from him all the bitterness. And then shall he feel toward you the greatest thankfulness; when he is at rest, then he will know clearly from how great trouble you have released him.

But why do I speak of the thanks from him? For God will straightway crown you, and will requite you with ten thousand honors, because you have freed your brother from a grievous disease; and that brother too will honor you as a master, ever reverencing your forbearance.

Do you see not the women that are in travail, how they bite those that stand by, and they are not pained? Or rather they are pained, but bear it bravely, and sympathize with them who are in sorrow and are torn by those pangs. These do thou too emulate, and prove not softer than women. For after these women have brought forth (for these men are more feeble minded than women), then they will know you to be a man in comparison. of Heaven?

9. What then can we deserve, who are commanded to emulate God, and are perhaps in a way not so much as to equal the publicans? For if "*to love them that love us*" be the part of publicans, sinners, and heathens: when we do not even this (and we do it not, so long as we envy our brethren who are in honor), what penalty shall we not incur, commanded as we are to surpass the scribes, and taking our place below the heathens? How then shall we behold the kingdom, I pray you? How shall we set foot on that holy threshold, who are not surpassing even the publicans? For this He covertly signified, when He said, "*Do not even the publicans the same?*"

And this thing most especially we may admire in His teaching, that while in each instance He sets down with very great fullness the prizes of the conflicts; such as *"to see God,"* and *"to inherit the kingdom of Heaven,"* and *"to become sons of God,"* and *"like God,"* and *"to obtain mercy,"* and *"to be comforted,"* and *"the great reward:"* if anywhere He must needs mention things grievous, He does this in a subdued tone. Thus in the first place, the name of hell He has set down once only in so many sentences; and in some other instances too, it is with reserve that He corrects the hearer, and as though he were managing His discourse rather in the way of shaming than threatening him; where He says, *"do not even the publicans the same?"* and, *"if the salt have lost its savor;"* and, *"he shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven."*

And there are places where He puts down the sin itself by way of punishment, leaving to the hearer to infer the grievousness of the punishment: as when He says, *"he has committed adultery with her in his heart;"* and, *"he that puts away causes her to commit adultery;"* and, *"That which is more than these is of the evil one."* For to them that have understanding, instead of the mention of the punishment, the very greatness of the sin is sufficient for correction.

Wherefore also He here brings forward the heathens and the publicans, by the quality of the person putting the disciple to shame. Which Paul too did, saying, *"Sorrow not, even as the rest which have no hope;"* [1 Thessalonians 4:13] and, *"Even as the Gentiles which know not God."* [1 Thessalonians 4:5]

And to signify that He requires nothing very overpowering, but a little more than was accustomed, He says,

"Do not even the Gentiles the same?" [Matthew 5:47] Yet nevertheless He stops not the discourse at this, but makes it end with His rewards, and

those good hopes, saying,

"Be therefore perfect, as your Heavenly Father."

And He intersperses everywhere abundantly the name of the heavens, by the very place thoroughly elevating their minds. For as yet, I know not how, they were somewhat weak and dull.

10. Let us then, bearing in mind all the things which have been said, show forth great love even towards our enemies; and let us cast away that ridiculous custom, to which many of the more thoughtless give way, waiting for those that meet them to address them first. Towards that which has a great blessing, they have no zeal; but what is ridiculous, that they follow after.

Wherefore now do you not address him first? *"Because he is waiting for this,"* is the reply. Nay, for this very reason most of all you should have sprung forward to him, that you might win the crown. *"No,"* says he, *"since this was his object."* And what can be worse than this folly? That is, *"Because this,"* says he, *"was his object—to become procurer of a reward for me—I will not put my hand to what he has thus suggested."* Now if he first address you, you gain nothing, even though you accost him. But if you be first to spring forward and speak to him, you have made yourself profit of his pride, and hast gathered in a manner abundant fruit from his obstinacy. What is it then but the utmost folly, when we are to reap so large fruit from bare words, to give up the gain; and condemning him, to stumble at the very same thing? For if you blame him for this, that he first waits to be addressed by another, wherefore do you emulate that same thing which you accuse. That which you said was evil, why are you to imitate the same as good? Do you see how that nothing is more senseless than a man who associates with wickedness? Wherefore, I entreat, let us flee this evil and

ridiculous practice. Yea, for ten thousand friendships has this pestilence overthrown, many enmities has it wrought.

For this cause then let us anticipate them. Since we who are commanded to take blows, and be compelled to journey, and to be stripped by enemies, and to bear it; what kind of indulgence should we deserve, exhibiting so great contentiousness in a mere formal address?

11. *"Why,"* says one, *"we are despised and spit upon, the moment we have given him up this."* And in order that man may not despise you, do you offend God? And in order that your frenzied fellow servant may not despise you, do you despise the Lord, who has bestowed on you benefits so great? Nay, if it be amiss that your equal should despise you, how much more that you should despise the God that made you?

And together with this, consider that other point also; that when he despises you, he is at that very moment employed in procuring to you a greater reward. Since for God's sake you submit to it, because you have hearkened to His laws. And this, to what kind of honor is it not equal? To how many diadems? Be it my portion both to be insulted and despised for God's sake, rather than to be honored by all kings; for nothing, nothing is equal to this glory.

This then let us pursue, in such wise as Himself commanded, and making no account of the things of men, but showing forth perfect self restraint in all things, let us so direct our own lives. For so even now, from this very time, we shall enjoy the good things of the heavens, and of the crowns that are there, walking as angels among men, going about in the earth like the angelic powers, and abiding apart from all lust, from all turmoil.

And together with all these things we shall receive also the unutterable blessings: unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man

of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory, and power, and worship, with the unoriginate Father, and the Holy and Good Spirit, now and always, even forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 19 on Matthew

Matt. VI. 1.

"Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them."

He roots out in what remains the most tyrannical passion of all, the rage and madness with respect to vainglory, which springs up in them that do right. For at first He had not at all discoursed about it; it being indeed superfluous, before He had persuaded them to do any of the things which they ought, to teach in which way they should practise and pursue them.

But after He had led them on to self-command, then He proceeds to purge away also the alloy which secretly subsists with it. For this disease is by no means of random birth; but when we have duly performed many of the commandments.

It behooved therefore first to implant virtue, and then to remove the passion which mars its fruit.

And see with what He begins, with fasting, and prayer, and almsgiving: for in these good deeds most especially it is wont to make its haunt. The Pharisee, for instance, was hereby puffed up, who says, *"I fast twice a week, I give tithes of my substance."* [Luke 18:12] And he was vainglorious too in his very prayer, making it for display. For since there was no one else present, he pointed himself out to the publican, saying, *"I am not as the rest of men, nor even as this publican."* [Luke 18:11]

And mark how Christ began, as though He were speaking of some wild beast, hard to catch, and crafty to deceive him who was not very watchful. Thus, *"take heed,"* says He, *"as to your alms."* So Paul also speaks to the Philippians; *"Beware of dogs."* And with reason, for the evil

beast comes in upon us secretly, and without noise puffs all away, and unobservedly carries out all that is within.

Forasmuch then as He had made much discourse about almsgiving, and brought forward God, "*Who makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good,*" [Matthew 5:45] and *by motives* from all quarters had urged them on to this, and had persuaded them to exult in the abundance of their giving; He finishes by taking away also all things that encumber this fair olive tree. For which same cause He says, "*Take heed that you do not your alms before men,*" for that which was before mentioned, is "*God's*" almsgiving.

2. And when He had said, "*not to do it before men,*" He added, "*to be seen of them.*" And though it seems as if the same thing were said a second time, yet if any one give particular attention, it is not the same thing, but one is different from the other; and it has great security, and unspeakable care and tenderness. For it may be, both that one doing alms before men may not do it to be seen of them, and again that one not doing it before men may do it to be seen of them. Wherefore it is not simply the thing, but the intent, which He both punishes and rewards. And unless such exactness were employed, this would make many more backward about the giving of alms, because it is not on every occasion altogether possible to do it secretly. For this cause, setting you free from this restraint, He defines both the penalty and the reward not by the result of the action, but by the intention of the doer.

That is, that you may not say, "*What? Am I then the worse, should another see?*"— "*it is not this,*" says He, "*that I am seeking, but the mind that is in you, and the tone of what you do.*" For His will is to bring our soul altogether into frame, and to deliver it from every disease. Now having, as you see, forbidden men's acting for display, and having taught them the penalty thence ensuing, namely, to do it vainly, and for nought, He again

rouses their spirits by putting them in mind of the Father, and of Heaven, that not by the loss alone He might sting them, but also shame them by the recollection of Him who gave them being.

"For you have no reward," says He, "with your Father which is in Heaven." [Matthew 6:1]

Nor even at this did He stop, but proceeds yet further, by other motives also increasing their disgust. For as above He set forth publicans and heathens, by the quality of the person shaming their imitators, so also in this place the hypocrites.

"Therefore when you do your alms," says He, "do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do." [Matthew 6:2]

Not that they had trumpets, but He means to display the greatness of their frenzy, by the use of this figure of speech, deriding and making a show of them hereby.

And well has He called them *"hypocrites"* for the mask was of mercy, but the spirit of cruelty and inhumanity. For they do it, not because they pity their neighbors, but that they themselves may enjoy credit; and this came of the utmost cruelty; while another was perishing with hunger, to be seeking vainglory, and not putting an end to his suffering.

It is not then the giving alms which is required, but the giving as one ought, the giving for such and such an end.

Having then amply derided those men, and having handled them so, that the hearer should be even ashamed of them, He again corrects thoroughly the mind which is so distempered: and having said how we ought not to act, He signifies on the other hand how we ought to act. How then ought we to do our alms?

"Let not your left hand know," says He, "what your right hand does." [Matthew 6:3]

Here again His enigmatical meaning is not of the hands, but He has put the thing hyperbolically. As thus: *"If it can be,"* says He, *"for yourself not to know it, let this be the object of your endeavor; that, if it were possible, it may be concealed from the very hands that minister."* It is not, as some say, that we should hide it from wrong-headed men, for He has here commanded that it should be concealed from all.

And then the reward too; consider how great it is. For after He had spoken of the punishment from the one, He points out also the honor derived from the other; from either side urging them, and leading them on to high lessons. Yea, for He is persuading them to know that God is everywhere present, and that not by our present life are our interests limited, but a yet more awful tribunal will receive us when we go hence, and the account of all our doings, and honors, and punishments: and that no one will be hid in doing anything either great or small, though he seem to be hid from men. For all this did He darkly signify, when He said,

"Your Father which sees in secret shall reward you openly."

Setting for him a great and august assemblage of spectators, and what He desires, that very thing bestowing on him in great abundance. *"For what,"* says He, *"do you wish? Is it not to have some to be spectators of what is going on? Behold then, you have some; not angels, nor archangels, but the God of all."* And if you desire to have men also as spectators, neither of this desire does He deprive you at the fitting season, but rather in greater abundance affords it unto you. For, if you should now make a display, you will be able to make it to ten only, or twenty, or (we will say) a hundred persons: but if you take pains to lie hidden now, God Himself will then proclaim you in the presence of the whole universe. Wherefore above all, if you will have men see your good deeds, hide them now, that then all may look on them with the more honor, God making them manifest, and

extolling them, and proclaiming them before all. Again, whereas now they that behold will rather condemn you as vainglorious; when they see you crowned, so far from condemning, they will even admire you, all of them. When therefore by waiting a little, you may both receive a reward, and reap greater admiration; consider what folly it is to cast yourself out of both these; and while you are seeking your reward from God, and while God is beholding, to summon men for the display of what is going on. Why, if display must be made of our love, to our Father above all should we make it; and this most especially, when our Father has the power both to crown and to punish.

And let me add, even were there no penalty, it were not meet for him who desires glory, to let go this our theatre, and take in exchange that of men. For who is there so wretched, as that when the king was hastening to come and see his achievements, he would let him go, and make up his assembly of spectators of poor men and beggars? For this cause then, He not only commands to make no display, but even to take pains to be concealed: it not being at all the same, not to strive for publicity, and to strive for concealment.

3. *"And when you pray,"* says He, *"you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward."*

"But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father which is in secret."

These too again He calls *"hypocrites,"* and very fitly; for while they are feigning to pray to God, they are looking round after men; wearing the garb not of suppliants, but of ridiculous persons. For he, who is to do a suppliant's office, letting go all other, looks to him alone, who has power to grant his request. But if you leave this one, and go about wandering and

casting around your eyes everywhere, you will depart with empty hands. For this was your own will. Wherefore He said not, "*such shall not receive a reward*," but, "*they have it out*:" that is, they shall indeed receive one, but from those of whom they themselves desire to have it. For God wills not this: He rather for His part was willing to bestow on men the recompence that comes from Himself; but they seeking that which is from men, can be no longer justly entitled to receive from Him, for whom they have done nothing.

But mark, I pray you, the lovingkindness of God, in that He promises to bestow on us a reward, even for those good things which we ask of Him.

Having then discredited them, who order not this duty as they ought, both from the place and from their disposition of mind, and having shown that they are very ridiculous: He introduces the best manner of prayer, and again gives the reward, saying, "*Enter into your closet*."

"*What then*," it may be said, "*ought we not to pray in church*?" Indeed we ought by all means, but in such a spirit as this. Because everywhere God seeks the intention of all that is done. Since even if you should enter into your closet, and having shut the door, should do it for display, the doors will do you no good.

It is worth observing in this case also, how exact the definition, which He made when He said, "*That they may appear unto men*." So that even if you shut the doors, this He desires you duly to perform, rather than the shutting of the doors, even to shut the doors of the mind. For as in everything it is good to be freed from vainglory, so most especially in prayer. For if even without this, we wander and are distracted, when shall we attend unto the things which we are saying, should we enter in having this disease also? And if we who pray and beseech attend not, how do we expect God to attend?

4. But yet some there are, who after such and so earnest charges, behave themselves so unseemly in prayer, that even when their person is concealed, they make themselves manifest to all by their voice, crying out disorderly, and rendering themselves objects of ridicule both by gesture and voice. Do you see not that even in a market place, should any one come up doing like this, and begging clamorously, he wilt drive away him whom he is petitioning; but if quietly, and with the proper gesture, then he rather wins over him that can grant the favor?

Let us not then make our prayer by the gesture of our body, nor by the loudness of our voice, but by the earnestness of our mind: neither with noise and clamor and for display, so as even to disturb those that are near us, but with all modesty, and with contrition in the mind, and with inward tears.

But are you pained in mind, and canst not help crying aloud? Yet surely it is the part of one exceedingly pained to pray and entreat even as I have said. Since Moses too was pained, and prayed in this way and was heard; for this cause also God said unto him, "*Wherefore do you cry unto me.*" [Exodus 14:15] And Hannah too again, her voice not being heard, accomplished all she wished, forasmuch as her heart cried out.

[1 Samuel 1:13] But Abel prayed not only when silent, but even when dying, and his blood sent forth a cry more clear than a trumpet.

[Genesis 4:10]

Do thou also then groan, even as that holy one, I forbid it not. "*Rend,*" as the prophet commanded, [Joel 2:13] "*your heart, and not your garments.*" Out of deeps call upon God, for it is said, "*Out of the depths have I cried to You, O Lord.*" From beneath, out of the heart, draw forth a voice, make your prayer a mystery. Do you see not that even in the houses of kings all tumult is put away, and great on all sides is the silence? Do thou

also therefore, entering as into a palace—not that on the earth, but what is far more awful than it, that which is in heaven,— show forth great seemliness. Yea, for you are joined to the choirs of angels, and art in communion with archangels, and art singing with the seraphim. And all these tribes show forth much goodly order, singing with great awe that mystical strain, and their sacred hymns to God, the King of all. With these then mingle yourself, when you are praying, and emulate their mystical order.

For not unto men are you praying, but to God, who is everywhere present, who hears even before the voice, who knows the secrets of the mind. If you so pray, great is the reward you shall receive.

"For your Father," says He, "who sees in secret, shall reward you openly."

He said not, *"shall freely give you,"* but, *"shall reward you;"* yea, for He has made Himself a debtor to you, and even from this has honored you with great honor. For because He Himself is invisible, He would have your prayer be so likewise.

5. Then He speaks even the very words of the prayer.

"When ye pray," says He, "use no vain repetitions, even as the heathen do."

You see that when He was discoursing of almsgiving, He removed only that mischief which comes of vainglory, and added nothing more; neither did He say whence one should give alms; as from honest labor, and not from rapine nor covetousness: this being abundantly acknowledged among all. And also before that, He had thoroughly cleared up this point, when He blessed them *"that hunger after righteousness."*

But touching prayer, He adds somewhat over and above; *"not to use vain repetitions."* And as there He derides the hypocrites, so here the

heathen; shaming the hearer everywhere most of all by the vileness of the persons. For since this, in most cases, is especially biting and stinging, I mean our appearing to be likened to outcast persons; by this topic He dissuades them; calling frivolousness, here, by the name of "*vain repetition*:" as when we ask of God things unsuitable, kingdoms, and glory, and to get the better of enemies, and abundance of wealth, and in general what does not at all concern us.

"For He knows," says He, "what things you have need of."

[Matthew 6:8]

And herewith He seems to me to command in this place, that neither should we make our prayers long; long, I mean, not in time, but in the number and length of the things mentioned. For perseverance indeed in the same requests is our duty: His word being, "*continuing instant in prayer*."

[Romans 12:12]

And He Himself too, by that example of the widow, who prevailed with the pitiless and cruel ruler, by the continuance of her intercession; [Luke 18:1] and by that of the friend, who came late at night time, and roused the sleeper from his bed, [Luke 11:5] not for his friendship's, but for his importunity's sake; what did He, but lay down a law, that all should continually make supplication unto Him? He does not however bid us compose a prayer of ten thousand clauses, and so come to Him and merely repeat it. For this He obscurely signified when He said, "*They think that they shall be heard for their much speaking*."

"For He knows," says He, "what things you have need of." And if He know, one may say, what we have need of, wherefore must we pray? Not to instruct Him, but to prevail with Him; to be made intimate with Him, by continuance in supplication; to be humbled; to be reminded of your sins.

6. *"After this manner, therefore, pray ye,"* says He: *"Our Father, which art in heaven."*

See how He straightway stirred up the hearer, and reminded him of all God's bounty in the beginning. For he who calls God Father, by him both remission of sins, and taking away of punishment, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and adoption, and inheritance, and brotherhood with the Only-Begotten, and the supply of the Spirit, are acknowledged in this single title. For one cannot call God Father, without having attained to all those blessings. Doubly, therefore, does He awaken their spirit, both by the dignity of Him who is called on, and by the greatness of the benefits which they have enjoyed. But when He says, *"in Heaven,"* He speaks not this as shutting up God there, but as withdrawing him who is praying from earth, and fixing him in the high places, and in the dwellings above.

He teaches, moreover, to make our prayer common, in behalf of our brethren also. For He says not, *"my Father, which art in Heaven,"* but, *"our Father,"* offering up his supplications for the body in common, and nowhere looking to his own, but everywhere to his neighbor's good. And by this He at once takes away hatred, and quells pride, and casts out envy, and brings in the mother of all good things, even charity, and exterminates the inequality of human things, and shows how far the equality reaches between the king and the poor man, if at least in those things which are greatest and most indispensable, we are all of us fellows. For what harm comes of our kindred below, when in that which is on high we are all of us knit together, and no one has anything more than another; neither the rich more than the poor, nor the master than the servant, neither the ruler than the subject, nor the king than the common soldier, nor the philosopher than

the barbarian, nor the skillful than the unlearned? For to all has He given one nobility, having vouchsafed to be called the Father of all alike.

7. When therefore He has reminded us of this nobility, and of the gift from above, and of our equality with our brethren, and of charity; and when He has removed us from earth, and fixed us in Heaven; let us see what He commands us to ask after this. Not but, in the first place, even that saying alone is sufficient to implant instruction in all virtue. For he who has called God Father, and a common Father, would be justly bound to show forth such a conversation, as not to appear unworthy of this nobility, and to exhibit a diligence proportionate to the gift. Yet is He not satisfied with this, but adds, also another clause, thus saying,

"Hallowed be Your name."

Worthy of him who calls God Father, is the prayer to ask nothing before the glory of His Father, but to account all things secondary to the work of praising Him. For *"hallowed"* is *glorified*. For His own glory He has complete, and ever continuing the same, but He commands him who prays to seek that He may be glorified also by our life. Which very thing He had said before likewise, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

[Matthew 5:16] Yea, and the seraphim too, giving glory, said on this wise, *"Holy, holy, holy."* So that *"hallowed"* means this, viz. *"glorified."* That is, *"vouchsafe,"* says he, *"that we may live so purely, that through us all may glorify You."* Which thing again appertains unto perfect self-control, to present to all a life so irreprehensible, that every one of the beholders may offer to the Lord the praise due to Him for this.

"Your kingdom come." [Matthew 6:10]

And this again is the language of a right-minded child, not to be rivetted to things that are seen, neither to account things present some great

matter; but to hasten unto our Father, and to long for the things to come. And this springs out of a good conscience, and a soul set free from things that are on earth. This, for instance, Paul himself was longing after every day: wherefore he also said, that *"even we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan, waiting for an adoption, the redemption of our body."* For he who has this fondness, can neither be puffed up by the good things of this life, nor abashed by its sorrows; but as though dwelling in the very heavens, is freed from each sort of irregularity.

"Your will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven."

Behold a most excellent train of thought! In that He bade us indeed long for the things to come, and hasten towards that sojourn; and, till that may be, even while we abide here, so long to be earnest in showing forth the same conversation as those above. For you must long, says He, for heaven, and the things in heaven; however, even before heaven, He has bidden us make the earth a heaven and do and say all things, even while we are continuing in it, as having our conversation there; insomuch that these too should be objects of our prayer to the Lord. For there is nothing to hinder our reaching the perfection of the powers above, because we inhabit the earth; but it is possible even while abiding here, to do all, as though already placed on high. What He says therefore is this: *"As there all things are done without hindrance, and the angels are not partly obedient and partly disobedient, but in all things yield and obey (for He says, 'Mighty in strength, performing His word'); so vouchsafe that we men may not do Your will by halves, but perform all things as You will."*

Do you see how He has taught us also to be modest, by making it clear that virtue is not of our endeavors only, but also of the grace from above? And again, He has enjoined each one of us, who pray, to take upon himself the care of the whole world. For He did not at all say, *"Your will be done" in*

me, or in us, but everywhere on the earth; so that error may be destroyed, and truth implanted, and all wickedness cast out, and virtue return, and no difference in this respect be henceforth between heaven and earth. "For if this come to pass," says He, "there will be no difference between things below and above, separated as they are in nature; the earth exhibiting to us another set of angels."

8. *"Give us this day our daily bread."* [Matthew 6:11]

What is "*daily bread*"? That for one day.

For because He had said thus, *"Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven,"* but was discoursing to men encompassed with flesh, and subject to the necessities of nature, and incapable of the same impassibility with the angels:— while He enjoins the commands to be practised by us also, even as they perform them; He condescends likewise, in what follows, to the infirmity of our nature. Thus, *"perfection of conduct,"* says He, *"I require as great, not however freedom from passions; no, for the tyranny of nature permits it not: for it requires necessary food."* But mark, I pray you, how even in things that are bodily, that which is spiritual abounds. For it is neither for riches, nor for delicate living, nor for costly raiment, nor for any other such thing, but for bread only, that He has commanded us to make our prayer. And for *"daily bread,"* so as not to *"take thought for the morrow."* [Matthew 6:34] Because of this He added, *"daily bread,"* that is, bread for one day.

And not even with this expression is He satisfied, but adds another too afterwards, saying, *"Give us this day;"* so that we may not, beyond this, wear ourselves out with the care of the following day. For that day, the interval before which you know not whether you shall see, wherefore do you submit to its cares?

This, as He proceeded, he enjoined also more fully, saying, *"Take no thought for the morrow."* He would have us be on every hand unencumbered and winged for flight, yielding just so much to nature as the compulsion of necessity requires of us.

9. Then forasmuch as it comes to pass that we sin even after the washing of regeneration, He, showing His love to man to be great even in this case, commands us for the remission of our sins to come unto God who loves man, and thus to say,

"Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors."

Do you see surpassing mercy? After taking away so great evils, and after the unspeakable greatness of His gift, if men sin again, He counts them such as may be forgiven. For that this prayer belongs to believers, is taught us both by the laws of the church, and by the beginning of the prayer. For the uninitiated could not call God Father. If then the prayer belongs to believers, and they pray, entreating that sins may be forgiven them, it is clear that not even after the laver is the profit of repentance taken away. Since, had He not meant to signify this, He would not have made a law that we should so pray. Now He who both brings sins to remembrance, and bids us ask forgiveness, and teaches how we may obtain remission and so makes the way easy; it is perfectly clear that He introduced this rule of supplication, as knowing, and signifying, that it is possible even after the font to wash ourselves from our offenses; by reminding us of our sins, persuading us to be modest; by the command to forgive others, setting us free from all revengeful passion; while by promising in return for this to pardon us also, He holds out good hopes, and instructs us to have high views concerning the unspeakable mercy of God toward man.

But what we should most observe is this, that whereas in each of the clauses He had made mention of the whole of virtue, and in this way had

included also the forgetfulness of injuries (for so, that *"His name be hallowed,"* is the exactness of a perfect conversation; and that *"His will be done,"* declares the same thing again: and to be able to call God *"Father,"* is the profession of a blameless life; in all which things had been comprehended also the duty of remitting our anger against them that have transgressed): still He was not satisfied with these, but meaning to signify how earnest He is in the matter, He sets it down also in particular, and after the prayer, He makes mention of no other commandment than this, saying thus:

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you." [Matthew 6:14]

So that the beginning is of us, and we ourselves have control over the judgment that is to be passed upon us. For in order that no one, even of the senseless, might have any complaint to make, either great or small, when brought to judgment; on you, who art to give account, He causes the sentence to depend; and *"in what way soever you have judged for yourself, in the same,"* says He, *"do I also judge you."* And if you forgive your fellow servant, you shall obtain the same favor from me; though indeed the one be not equal to the other. For you forgive in your need, but God, having need of none: thou, your fellow slave; God, His slave: thou liable to unnumbered charges; God, being without sin. But yet even thus does He show forth His lovingkindness towards man.

Since He might indeed, even without this, forgive you all your offenses; but He wills you hereby also to receive a benefit; affording you on all sides innumerable occasions of gentleness and love to man, casting out what is brutish in you, and quenching wrath, and in all ways cementing you to him who is your own member.

For what can you have to say? That you have wrongfully endured some ill of your neighbor? (For these only are trespasses, since if it be done with justice, the act is not a trespass.) But you too are drawing near to receive forgiveness for such things, and for much greater. And even before the forgiveness, you have received no small gift, in being taught to have a human soul, and in being trained to all gentleness. And herewith a great reward shall also be laid up for you elsewhere, even to be called to account for none of your offenses.

What sort of punishment then do we not deserve, when after having received the privilege, we betray our salvation? And how shall we claim to be heard in the rest of our matters, if we will not, in those which depend on us, spare our own selves?

10. *"And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from the evil one: for Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."*

Here He teaches us plainly our own vileness, and quells our pride, instructing us to deprecate all conflicts, instead of rushing upon them. For so both our victory will be more glorious, and the devil's overthrow more to be derided. I mean, that as when we are dragged forth, we must stand nobly; so when we are not summoned, we should be quiet, and wait for the time of conflict; that we may show both freedom from vainglory, and nobleness of spirit.

And He here calls the devil *"the wicked one,"* commanding us to wage against him a war that knows no truce, and implying that he is not such by nature. For wickedness is not of those things that are from nature, but of them that are added by our own choice. And he is so called pre-eminently, by reason of the excess of his wickedness, and because he, in no respect injured by us, wages against us implacable war. Wherefore neither said He, *"deliver us from the wicked ones,"* but, *"from the wicked one;"* instructing

us in no case to entertain displeasure against our neighbors, for what wrongs soever we may suffer at their hands, but to transfer our enmity from these to him, as being himself the cause of all our wrongs.

Having then made us anxious as before conflict, by putting us in mind of the enemy, and having cut away from us all our remissness; He again encourages and raises our spirits, by bringing to our remembrance the King under whom we are arrayed, and signifying Him to be more powerful than all. "*For Yours,*" says He, "*is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.*"

Does it not then follow, that if His be the kingdom, we should fear no one, since there can be none to withstand, and divide the empire with him. For when He says, "*Yours is the kingdom,*" He sets before us even him, who is warring against us, brought into subjection, though he seem to oppose, God for a while permitting it. For in truth he too is among God's servants, though of the degraded class, and those guilty of offense; and he would not dare set upon any of his fellow servants, had he not first received license from above. And why say I, "*his fellow servants?*" Not even against swine did he venture any outrage, until He Himself allowed him; [Luke 8:32] nor against flocks, nor herds, until he had received permission from above. [Job 1:12]

"*And the power,*" says He. Therefore, manifold as your weakness may be, you may of right be confident, having such a one to reign over you, who is able fully to accomplish all, and that with ease, even by you.

"*And the glory, for ever. Amen.*" Thus He not only frees you from the dangers that are approaching you, but can make you also glorious and illustrious. For as His power is great, so also is His glory unspeakable, and they are all boundless, and no end of them. Do you see how He has by every means anointed His Champion, and has framed Him to be full of confidence?

11. Then, as I said before, meaning to signify, that of all things He most loathes and hates bearing malice, and most of all accepts the virtue which is opposite to that vice; He has after the prayer also again put us in mind of this same point of goodness; both by the punishment set, and by the reward appointed, urging the hearer to obey this command.

"For if you forgive men," says He, "your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not, neither will He forgive you."

With this view He has again mentioned heaven also, and their Father; to abash the hearer by this topic likewise; that he of all people, being of such a Father, should be made a wild beast of; and summoned as he is to heaven, should cherish an earthly and ordinary sort of mind. Since not by grace only, you see, ought we to become His children, but also by our works. And nothing makes us so like God, as being ready to forgive the wicked and wrong-doers; even as indeed He had taught before, when He spoke of His *"making the sun to shine on the evil and on the good."*

[Matthew 5:45]

For this same cause again in every one of the clauses He commands us to make our prayers common, saying, *"Our Father,"* and *"Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven,"* and *"Give us the bread, and forgive us our debts,"* and *"lead us not into temptation,"* and *"deliver us;"* everywhere commanding us to use this plural word, that we may not retain so much as a vestige of anger against our neighbor.

How great punishment then must they deserve, who after all this, so far from themselves forgiving, do even entreat God for vengeance on their enemies, and diametrically as it were transgress this law; and this while He is doing and contriving all, to hinder our being at variance one with another? For since love is the root of all that is good, He removing from all sides whatever mars it, brings us together, and cements us to each other. For

there is not, there is not one, be he father, or mother, or friend, or what you will, who so loved us as the God who created us. And this, above all things, both His daily benefits and His precepts make manifest. But if you tell me of the pains, and of the sorrows, and of the evils of life; consider in how many things you offend Him every day, and you will no longer marvel, though more than these evils should come upon you, but if you should enjoy any good, then you will marvel, and be amazed. But as it is, we look upon the calamities that come upon us, but the offenses, whereby we offend daily, we consider not: therefore we are perplexed. Since if we did but reckon up with strictness our sins of one day only, in that case we should know well how great evils we must be liable to.

And to let pass the other misdoings of which we have been guilty, each one for himself, and to speak of what have been committed this day; although of course I know not in what each of us may have sinned, yet such is the abundance of our misdoings, that not even he who knew all exactly would be able to choose from among these only. Which of us, for instance, has not been careless in his prayers? Which has not been insolent, or vainglorious? Who has not spoken evil of his brother, has not admitted a wicked desire, has not looked with unchaste eyes, has not remembered things with hostile feeling, even till he made his heart swell?

And if while we are in church, and in a short time we have become guilty of so great evils; what shall be when we are gone out from hence? If in the harbor the waves are so high, when we are gone forth into the channel of wickednesses, the forum I mean, and to public business, and our cares at home, shall we indeed be able so much as to know ourselves again?

But yet from our so great and so many sins, God has given us a short and easy way of deliverance, and one that is free from all toil. For what sort of toil is it to forgive him that has grieved us? Nay, it is a toil not to forgive,

but to keep up our enmity: even as to be delivered from the anger, both works in us a great refreshment, and is very easy to him that is willing. For there is no sea to be crossed, nor long journey to be travelled, nor summits of mountains to be passed over, nor money to be spent, no need to torment your body; but it suffices to be willing only, and all our sins are done away.

But if so far from forgiving him yourself, you make intercession to God against him, what hope of salvation will you then have, if at the very time when you ought rather to appease God, even then you provoke Him; putting on the garb of a suppliant, but uttering the cries of a wild beast, and darting out against yourself those shafts of the wicked one? Wherefore Paul also, making mention of prayer, required nothing so much as the observance of this commandment; for He says, *"lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."* And if when you have need of mercy, not even then will you let go your anger, but art rather exceedingly mindful of it, and that, although you know you are thrusting the sword into yourself; when will it be possible for you to become merciful, and to spew out the evil venom of this wickedness?

But if you have not yet seen this outrageousness in its full extent, suppose it happening among men, and then you will perceive the excess of the insolence. As thus: should one approach you who are a man, seeking to obtain mercy, and then, in the midst of his lying on the ground, should see an enemy, and leaving off to supplicate you, begin to beat him; would you not make yourself more angry with him? This do thou consider as taking place with regard to God also. For so thou likewise, making supplication unto God, leavest your supplication in the midst, and smitest your enemy with your words, and insultest the laws of God. Him who made a law to dismiss all anger, you are summoning against those that have vexed you, and requiring Him to do things contrary to His own commandments. Is it

not enough for you in the way of revenge, that you yourself transgressest the law of God, but do you entreat Him likewise to do so? What? Has He forgotten what He commanded? What? Is He a man who spoke these things? It is God, who knows all things, and whose will is, that His own laws be kept with the utmost exactness, and who, so far from doing these things which you are requiring of Him, does even regard you who sayest these things, merely because you say them, with aversion and hatred, and exacts of you the most extreme penalty. How then do you seek to obtain of Him things, from which He very seriously bids you refrain?

Yet some there are, who have come to such a point of brutishness, as not only to make intercession against their enemies, but even to curse their children, and to taste, if only it might be, of their very flesh; or rather they are even tasting thereof. For tell me not this, that you have not fixed your teeth in the body of him that vexed you; since you have done, at least as far as concerned you, what is much more grievous; in claiming that wrath from above should fall upon him, and that he should be delivered over to undying punishment, and be overthrown with his whole house.

Why, what sort of bites are as ferocious as this? What kind of weapons are as bitter? Not so did Christ instruct you; not so did He command you to stain your mouth with blood. Nay, mouths made bloody with human flesh are not so shocking as tongues like these.

How then will you salute your brother? How will you touch the sacrifice? How taste the Lord's blood, when you have so much venom upon your mind? Since when you say, "*Rend him in pieces, and overthrow his house, and destroy all,*" when you are imprecating on him ten thousand deaths, you are in nothing different from a murderer, or rather from a wild beast that devours men.

Let us cease then from this disease and madness, and that kindliness which He commanded let us show forth towards them that have vexed us: that we may become like *"our Father which is in heaven."* And we shall cease therefrom, if we call to mind our own sins; if we strictly search out all our misdeeds at home, abroad, and in the market, and in church.

12. For if for nothing else, surely for our disrespectfulness here we are worthy to undergo the utmost punishment. For when prophets are chanting, and apostles singing hymns, and God is discoursing, we wander without, and bring in upon us a turmoil of worldly business. And we do not afford to the laws of God so great stillness, even as the spectators in the theatres to the emperor's letters, keeping silence for them. For there, when these letters are being read, deputies at once, and governors, and senate, and people, stand all upright, with quietness hearkening to the words. And if amid that most profound silence any one should suddenly leap up and cry out, he suffers the utmost punishment, as having been insolent to the emperor. But here, when the letters from heaven are being read, great is the confusion on all sides. And yet both He who sent the letters is much greater than this our king, and the assembly more venerable: for not men only, but angels too are in it; and these triumphs, of which the letters bear us the good tidings, are much more awful than those on earth. Wherefore not men only, but angels also and archangels; both the nations of heaven, and all we on the earth, are commanded to give praise. For, *"Bless the Lord,"* it is said, *"all His works."* Yea, for His are no small achievements, rather they surpass all speech, and thought, and understanding of man.

And these things the prophets proclaim every day, each of them in a different way publishing this glorious triumph. For one says, *"You have gone up on high, You have led captivity captive, and hast received gifts among men."* And, *"The Lord strong and mighty in battle."* And another

says, *"He shall divide the spoils of the strong."* [Isaiah 53:12] For indeed to this purpose He came, that He might *"preach deliverance to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind."*

And raising aloud the cry of victory over death, he said, *"Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Grave, is your sting?"* And another again, declaring glad tidings of the most profound peace, said, *"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks."* And while one calls on Jerusalem, saying, *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, for lo! Your King comes to you meek, riding upon an ass, and a young colt;"* [Zechariah 9:9] another proclaims His second coming also, saying on this wise, *"The Lord, whom you seek, will come, and who will abide the day of His coming? [Malachi 3:1-2] Leap ye as calves set free from bonds."* And another again, amazed at such things, said, *"This is our God; there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of Him."* [Baruch 3:35]

Yet, nevertheless, while both these and many more sayings than these are being uttered, while we ought to tremble, and not so much as account ourselves to be on the earth; still, as though in the midst of a forum, we make an uproar and disturbance, and spend the whole time of our solemn assembly in discoursing of things which are nothing to us.

When therefore both in little things, and in great, both in hearing, and in doing, both abroad, and at home, in the church, we are so negligent; and together with all this, pray also against our enemies: whence are we to have any hope of salvation, adding to so great sins yet another grievous enhancement, and equivalent to them all, even this unlawful prayer?

Have we then hereafter any right to marvel, if anything befall us of the things which are unexpected and painful? Whereas we ought to marvel when no such thing befalls us. For the former is in the natural order of things, but the latter were beyond all reason and expectation. For surely it is

beyond reason, that they who have become enemies of God, and are provoking Him to anger, should enjoy sunshine and showers, and all the rest; who being men surpass the barbarity of wild beasts, setting themselves one against another, and by the biting of their neighbors staining their own tongues with blood: after the spiritual table, and His so great benefits, and His innumerable injunctions.

Therefore, considering these things, let us cast up that venom; let us put an end to our enmities, and let us make the prayers that become such as we are. Instead of the brutality of devils, let us take upon us the mildness of angels; and in whatsoever things we may have been injured, let us, considering our own case, and the reward appointed us for this commandment, soften our anger; let us assuage the billows, that we may both pass through the present life calmly, and when we have departed there, may find our Lord such as we have been towards our fellow-servants. And if this be a heavy and fearful thing, let us make it light and desirable; and let us open the glorious gates of confidence towards Him; and what we had not strength to effect by abstaining from sin, that let us accomplish by becoming gentle to them who have sinned against us (for this surely is not grievous, nor burdensome); and let us by doing kindnesses to our enemies, lay up beforehand much mercy for ourselves.

For so both during this present life all will love us, and above all others, God will both befriend and crown us, and will count us worthy of all the good things to come; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 20 on Matthew

Matt. VI. 16.

"And when you fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast."

Here it were well to sigh aloud, and to wail bitterly: for not only do we imitate the hypocrites, but we have even surpassed them. For I know, yea I know many, not merely fasting and making a display of it, but neglecting to fast, and yet wearing the masks of them that fast, and cloaking themselves with an excuse worse than their sin.

For *"I do this,"* say they, *"that I may not offend the many."* What do you say? There is a law of God which commands these things, and do you talk of offense? And do you think that in keeping it you are offending, in transgressing it, delivering men from offense? And what can be worse than this folly?

Will you not leave off becoming worse than the very hypocrites, and making your hypocrisy double? And when you consider the great excess of this evil, will you not be abashed at the force of the expression now before us? In that He did not say, *"they act a part,"* merely, but willing also to touch them more deeply, He says, *"For they disfigure their faces;"* that is, they corrupt, they mar them.

But if this be a disfiguring of the face, to appear pale for vainglory, what should we say concerning the women who corrupt their faces with colorings and paintings to the ruin of the unchaste sort of young men? For while those harm themselves only, these women harm both themselves and them who behold them. Wherefore we should fly both from the one pest and from the other, keeping at distance enough and to spare. For so He not

only commanded to make no display, but even to seek to be concealed. Which thing He had done before likewise.

And whereas in the matter of almsgiving, He did not put it simply, but having said, "*Take heed not to do it before men,*" He added, "*to be seen of them;*" yet concerning fasting and prayer, He made no such limitation. Why could this have been? Because for almsgiving to be altogether concealed is impossible, but for prayer and fasting, it is possible.

As therefore, when He said, "*Let not your left hand know what your right hand does,*" it was not of hands that He was speaking, but of the duty of being strictly concealed from all; and as when He commanded us to enter into our closet, not there alone absolutely, nor there primarily, did He command us to pray, but He covertly intimated the same thing again; so likewise here, in commanding us "*to be anointed,*" He did not enact that we positively must anoint ourselves; for then we should all of us be found transgressors of this law; and above all, surely, they who have taken the most pains to keep it, the societies of the monks, who have taken up their dwelling on the mountains. It was not this then that He enjoined, but, forasmuch as the ancients had a custom to anoint themselves continually, when they were taking their pleasure and rejoicing (and this one may see clearly from David [2 Samuel 12:20] and from Daniel); [Daniel 10:3] He said that we were to anoint ourselves, not that we should positively do this, but that by all means we might endeavor, with great strictness, to hide this our acquisition. And to convince you that so it is, He Himself, when by action exhibiting what He enjoined in words, having fasted forty days, and fasted in secret, did neither anoint nor wash Himself: nevertheless, though He did not these things, He most assuredly fulfilled the whole without vainglory. It is this then that He enjoins on us likewise, both bringing before us the hypocrites, and by a twice repeated charge dissuading the hearers.

And somewhat else He signified by this name, this of hypocrites, I mean. That is, not only by the ridiculousness of the thing, nor by its bringing an extreme penalty, but also by showing that such deceit is but for a season, does He withdraw us from that evil desire. For the actor seems glorious just so long as the audience is sitting; or rather not even then in the sight of all. For the more part of the spectators know who it is, and what part he is acting. However, when the audience is broken up, he is more clearly discovered to all. Now this, you see, the vainglorious must in all necessity undergo. For even here they are manifest to the majority, as not being that which they appear to be, but as wearing a mask only; but much more will they be detected hereafter, when all things appear "*naked and open.*"

And by another motive again He withdraws them from the hypocrites, by showing that His injunction is light. For He does not make the fast more strict, nor command us to practise more of it, but not to lose the crown thereof. So that what seems hard to bear, is common to us and to the hypocrites, for they also fast; but that which is lightest, namely, not to lose the reward after our labors, "*this is what I command,*" says He; adding nothing to our toils, but gathering our wages for us with all security, and not suffering us to go away unrewarded, as they do. Nay, they will not so much as imitate them that wrestle in the Olympic games, who although so great a multitude is sitting there, and so many princes, desire to please but one, even him who adjudges the victory among them; and this, though he be much their inferior. But you, though you have a twofold motive for displaying the victory to Him, first, that He is the person to adjudge it, and also, that He is beyond comparison superior to all that are sitting in the theatre—you are displaying it to others, who so far from profiting, do privily work you the greatest harm.

However, I do not forbid even this, says He. Only, if you are desirous to make a show to men, also, wait, and I will bestow on you this too in fuller abundance, and with great profit. For as it is, this quite breaks you off from the glory which is with me, even as to despise these things unites you closely; but then shall you enjoy all in entire security; having, even before that last, no little fruit to reap in this world also, namely, that you have trodden under foot all human glory, and art freed from the grievous bondage of men, and art become a true worker of virtue. Whereas now, as long at least as you are so disposed, if you should be in a desert, you will be deserted by all your virtue, having none to behold you. This is to act as one insulting virtue itself, if you are to pursue it not for its own sake, but with an eye to the ropemaker, and the brazier, and the common people of the baser sort, that the bad and they that are far removed from virtue may admire you. And you are calling the enemies of virtue to the display and the sight thereof, as if one were to choose to live continently, not for the excellency of continence, but that he might make a show before prostitutes. Thou also, it would seem, wouldest not choose virtue, but for the sake of virtue's enemies; whereas you ought indeed to admire her on this very ground, that she has even her enemies to praise her—yet to admire her (as is meet), not for others, but for her own sake. Since we too, when we are loved not for our own, but for others' sake, account the thing an insult. Just so I bid you reckon in the case of virtue as well, and neither to follow after her for the sake of others, nor for men's sake to obey God; but men for God's sake. Since if you do the contrary, though thou seem to follow virtue, you have provoked equally with him who follows her not. For just as he disobeyed by not doing, so thou by doing unlawfully.

2. *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth."*

Thus, after He has cast out the disease of vainglory, and not before, He seasonably introduces His discourse of voluntary poverty. For nothing so trains men to be fond of riches, as the fondness for glory. This, for instance, is why men devise those herds of slaves, and that swarm of eunuchs, and their horses with trappings of gold, and their silver tables, and all the rest of it, yet more ridiculous; not to satisfy any wants, nor to enjoy any pleasure, but that they may make a show before the multitude.

Now above He had only said, that we must show mercy; but here He points out also how great mercy we must show, when He says, "*Lay not up treasure.*" For it not being possible at the beginning to introduce all at once His discourse on contempt of riches, by reason of the tyranny of the passion, He breaks it up into small portions, and having set free the hearer's mind, instills it therein, so as that it shall become acceptable. Wherefore, you see, He said first, "*Blessed are the merciful;*" and after this, "*Agree with your adversary;*" and after that again, "*If any one will sue you at the law and take your coat, give him your cloak also;*" but here, that which is much greater than all these. For there His meaning was, "*if you see a law-suit impending, do this; since to want and be freed from strife, is better than to possess and strive;*" but here, supposing neither adversary nor any one at law with you, and without all mention of any other such party, He teaches the contempt of riches itself by itself, implying that not so much for their sake who receive mercy, as for the giver's sake, He makes these laws: so that though there be no one injuring us, or dragging us into a court of justice, even so we may despise our possessions, bestowing them on those that are in need.

And neither here has He put the whole, but even in this place it is gently spoken; although He had in the wilderness shown forth to a surpassing extent His conflicts in that behalf. [Matthew 4:9-10] However

He does not express this, nor bring it forward; for it was not yet time to reveal it; but for a while He searches out for reasons, maintaining the place of an adviser rather than a lawgiver, in His sayings on this subject.

For after He had said, *"Lay not up treasures upon the earth,"* He added, *"where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal."*

For the present He signifies the hurtfulness of the treasure here, and the profit of what is there, both from the place, and from the things which mar it. And neither at this point does He stop, but adds also another argument.

And first, what things they most fear, from these He urges them. For *"of what are you afraid?"* says He: *"lest your goods should be spent, if you give alms? Nay, then give alms, and so they will not be spent; and, what is more, so far from being spent, they will actually receive a greater increase; yea, for the things in heaven are added unto them."*

However, for a time He says it not, but puts it afterwards. But for the present, what had most power to persuade them, that He brings forward, namely, that the treasure would thus remain for them unspent.

And on either hand He attracts them. For He said not only, *"If you give alms, it is preserved:"* but He threatened also the opposite thing, that if you give not, it perishes.

And see His unspeakable prudence. For neither did He say, *"Thou dost but leave them to others;"* since this too is pleasant to men: He alarms them however on a new ground, by signifying that not even this do they obtain: since though men defraud not, there are those which are sure to defraud, *"the moth"* and *"the rust."* For although this mischief seem very easy to restrain, it is nevertheless irresistible and uncontrollable, and devise what you will, you will be unable to check this harm.

"What then, does moth make away with the gold?" Though not moth, yet thieves do. *"What then, have all been despoiled?"* Though not all, yet the more part.

3. On this account then He adds another argument, which I have already mentioned, saying,

"Where the man's treasure is, there is his heart also."

For though none of these things should come to pass, says He, you will undergo no small harm, in being nailed to the things below, and in becoming a slave instead of a freeman, and casting yourself out of the heavenly things, and having no power to think on anything that is high, but all about money, usuries and loans, and gains, and ignoble traffickings. Than this what could be more wretched? For in truth such an one will be worse off than any slave, bringing upon himself a most grievous tyranny, and giving up the chiefest thing of all, even the nobleness and the liberty of man. For how much soever any one may discourse unto you, you will not be able to hear any of those things which concern you, while your mind is nailed down to money; but bound like a dog to a tomb, by the tyranny of riches, more grievously than by any chain, barking at all that come near you, you have this one employment continually, to keep for others what you have laid up. Than this what can be more wretched?

However, forasmuch as this was too high for the mind of His hearers, and neither was the mischief within easy view of the generality, nor the gain evident, but there was need of a spirit of more self-command to perceive either of these; first, He has put it after those other topics, which are obvious, saying, *"Where the man's treasure is, there is his heart also;"* and next He makes it clear again, by withdrawing His discourse from the intellectual to the sensible, and saying,

"The light of the body is the eye."

What He says is like this: Bury not gold in the earth, nor do any other such thing, for thou dost but gather it for the moth, and the rust, and the thieves. And even if you should entirely escape these evils, yet the enslaving of your heart, the nailing it to all that is below, you will not escape: *"For wheresoever your treasure may be, there is your heart also."* As then, laying up stores in heaven, you will reap not this fruit only, the attainment of the rewards for these things, but from this world you already receive your recompence, in getting into harbor there, in setting your affections on the things that are there, and caring for what is there (for where you have laid up your treasures, it is most clear you transfer your mind also); so if you do this upon earth, you will experience the contrary.

But if the saying be obscure to you, hear what comes next in order. *"The light of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light. But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. But if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is the darkness!"*

He leads His discourse to the things which are more within the reach of our senses. I mean, forasmuch as He had spoken of the mind as enslaved and brought into captivity, and there were not many who could easily discern this, He transfers the lesson to things outward, and lying before men's eyes, that by these the others also might reach their understanding. Thus, *"If you know not,"* says He, *"what a thing it is to be injured in mind, learn it from the things of the body; for just what the eye is to the body, the same is the mind to the soul."* As therefore you would not choose to wear gold, and to be clad in silken garments, your eyes withal being put out, but accountest their sound health more desirable than all such superfluity (for, should you lose this health or waste it, all your life besides will do you no good): for just as when the eyes are blinded, most of the energy of the other

members is gone, their light being quenched; so also when the mind is depraved, your life will be filled with countless evils: — as therefore in the body this is our aim, namely, to keep the eye sound, so also the mind in the soul. But if we mutilate this, which ought to give light to the rest, by what means are we to see clearly any more? For as he that destroys the fountain, dries up also the river, so he who has quenched the understanding has confounded all his doings in this life. Wherefore He says, *"If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is the darkness?"*

For when the pilot is drowned, and the candle is put out, and the general is taken prisoner; what sort of hope will there be, after that, for those that are under command?

Thus then, omitting now to speak of the plots to which wealth gives occasion, the strifes, the suits (these indeed He had signified above, when He said, *"The adversary shall deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer"*); and setting down what is more grievous than all these, as sure to occur, He so withdraws us from the wicked desire. For to inhabit the prison is not nearly so grievous, as for the mind to be enslaved by this disease; and the former is not sure to happen, but the other is connected as an immediate consequent with the desire of riches. And this is why He puts it after the first, as being a more grievous thing, and sure to happen.

For God, He says, gave us understanding, that we might chase away all ignorance, and have the right judgment of things, and that using this as a kind of weapon and light against all that is grievous or hurtful, we might remain in safety. But we betray the gift for the sake of things superfluous and useless.

For what is the use of soldiers arrayed in gold, when the general is dragged along a captive? What the profit of a ship beautifully equipped, when the pilot is sunk beneath the waves? What the advantage of a well-

proportioned body, when the sight of the eyes is stricken out? As therefore, should any one cast into sickness the physician (who should be in good health, that he may end our diseases), and then bid him lie on a silver couch, and in a chamber of gold, this will nothing avail the sick persons; even so, if you corrupt the mind (which has power to put down our passions), although thou set it by a treasure, so far from doing it any good, you have inflicted the very greatest loss, and hast harmed your whole soul.

4. Do you see how by those very things, through which most especially men everywhere affect wickedness, even by these most of all He deters them from it, and brings them back to virtue? *"For with what intent do you desire riches?"* says He; *"is it not that you may enjoy pleasure and luxury? Why now, this above all things you will fail to obtain thereby, it will rather be just contrary."* For if, when our eyes are stricken out, we perceive not any pleasant thing, because of such our calamity; much more will this be our case in the perversion and maiming of the mind.

Again, with what intent do you bury it in the earth? That it may be kept in safety? But here too again it is the contrary, says He.

And thus, as in dealing with him that for vainglory fasts and gives alms and prays, by those very things which he most desires He had allured him not to be vainglorious:— *"for with what intent,"* says He, *"do you so pray and give alms? For love of the glory that may be had from men? Then do not pray thus,"* says He, *"and so you shall obtain it in the day that is to come:"*— so He has taken captive the covetous man also, by those things for which he was most earnest. Thus: *"what would you?"* says He, *"to have your wealth preserved, and to enjoy pleasure? Both these things I will afford you in great abundance, if you lay up your gold in that place, where I bid you."*

It is true that hereafter He displayed more clearly the evil effect of this on the mind, I mean, when He made mention of the thorns; [Matthew 13:22] but for the present, even here He has strikingly intimated the same, by representing him as darkened who is beside himself in this way.

And as they that are in darkness see nothing distinct, but if they look at a rope, they suppose it to be a serpent, if at mountains and ravines, they are dead with fear; so these also: what is not alarming to them that have sight, that they regard with suspicion. Thus among other things they tremble at poverty: or rather not at poverty only, but even at any trifling loss. Yea, and if they should lose some little matter, those who are in want of necessary food do not so grieve and bewail themselves as they. At least many of the rich have come even to the halter, not enduring such ill fortune: and to be insulted also, and to be despitefully used, seems to them so intolerable, that even because of this again many have actually torn themselves from this present life. For to everything wealth had made them soft, except to the waiting on it. Thus, when it commands them to do service unto itself, they venture on murders, and stripes, and revilings, and all shame. A thing which comes of the utmost wretchedness; to be of all men most effeminate, where one ought to practise self-command, but where more caution was required, in these cases again to become more shameless and obstinate. Since in fact the same kind of thing befalls them, as one would have to endure who had spent all his goods on unfit objects. For such an one, when the time of necessary expenditure comes on, having nothing to supply it, suffers incurable evils, forasmuch as all that he had has been ill spent beforehand.

And as they that are on the stage, skilled in those wicked arts, do in them go through many things strange and dangerous, but in other necessary and useful things none so ridiculous as they; even so is it with these men

likewise. For so such as walk upon a stretched rope, making a display of so much courage, should some great emergency demand daring or courage, they are not able, neither do they endure even to think of such a thing. Just so they likewise that are rich, daring all for money, for self-restraint's sake endure not to submit to anything, be it small or great. And as the former practise both a hazardous and fruitless business; even so do these undergo many dangers and downfalls, but arrive at no profitable end. Yea, they undergo a twofold darkness, both having their eyes put out by the perversion of their mind, and being by the deceitfulness of their cares involved in a great mist. Wherefore neither can they easily so much as see through it. For he that is in darkness, is freed from the darkness by the mere appearance of the sun; but he that has his eyes mutilated not even when the sun shines; which is the very case of these men: not even now that the Sun of Righteousness has shone out, and is admonishing, do they hear, their wealth having closed their eyes. And so they have a twofold darkness to undergo, part from themselves, part from disregard to their teacher.

5. Let us then give heed unto Him exactly, that though late we may at length recover our sight. And how may one recover sight? If you learn how you were blinded. How then were you blinded? By your wicked desire. For the love of money, like an evil humor which has collected upon a clear eyeball, has caused the cloud to become thick.

But even this cloud may be easily scattered and broken, if we will receive the beam of the doctrine of Christ; if we will hear Him admonishing us, and saying, "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.*"

"But," says one, "*what avails the hearing to me, as long as I am possessed by the desire?*" Now in the first place, there will be power in the continual hearing to destroy even the desire. Next, if it continue to possess you, consider that this thing is not really so much as a desire. For what sort

of desire is this, to be in grievous bondage, and to be subject to a tyranny, and to be bound on all sides, and to dwell in darkness, and to be full of turmoil, and to endure toils without profit, and to keep your wealth for others, and often for your very enemies? With what sort of desire do these things agree? Or rather of what flight and aversion are they not worthy? What sort of desire, to lay up treasure in the midst of thieves? Nay, if you dost at all desire wealth, remove it where it may remain safe and unmolested. Since what you are now doing is the part of one desiring, not riches, surely, but bondage, and affront, and loss, and continual vexation. Yet thou, were any one among men on earth to show you a place beyond molestation, though he lead you out into the very desert, promising security in the keeping of your wealth—you are not slow nor backward; you have confidence in him, and puttest out your goods there; but when it is God instead of men who makes you this promise, and when He sets before you not the desert, but Heaven, you accept the contrary. Yet surely, how manifold soever be their security below, you can never become free from the care of them. I mean, though thou lose them not, you will never be delivered from anxiety lest you lose. But there you will undergo none of these things: and mark, what is yet more, thou dost not only bury your gold, but plantest it. For the same is both treasure and seed; or rather it is more than either of these. For the seed remains not for ever, but this abides perpetually. Again, the treasure germinates not, but this bears you fruits which never die.

6. But if you tell me of the time, and the delay of the recompence, I too can point out and tell how much you receive back even here: and besides all this, from the very things of this life, I will try to convict you of making this excuse to no purpose. I mean, that even in the present life you provide many things which you are not yourself to enjoy; and should any one find

fault, you plead your children and their children, and so thinkest you have found palliation enough for your superfluous labors. For when in extreme old age you are building splendid houses, before the completion of which (in many instances) you will have departed; when you plant trees, which will bear their fruit after many years; when you are buying properties and inheritances, the ownership of which you will acquire after a long time, and art eagerly busy in many other such things, the enjoyment whereof you will not reap; is it indeed for your own sake, or for those to come after, that you are so employed? How then is it not the utmost folly, here not at all to hesitate at the delay of time; and this though you are by this delay to lose all the reward of your labors: but there, because of such waiting to be altogether torpid; and this, although it bring you the greater gain, and although it convey not your good things on to others, but procure the gifts for yourself.

But besides this, the delay itself is not long; nay, for those things are at the doors, and we know not but that even in our own generation all things which concern us may have their accomplishment, and that fearful day may arrive, setting before us the awful and incorruptible tribunal. Yea, for the more part of the signs are fulfilled, and the gospel moreover has been preached in all parts of the world, and the predictions of wars, and of earthquakes, and of famines, have come to pass, and the interval is not great.

But is it that thou dost not see any signs? Why, this self-same thing is a very great sign. For neither did they in Noah's time see any presages of that universal destruction, but in the midst of their playing, eating, marrying, doing all things to which they were used, even so they were overtaken by that fearful judgment. And they too in Sodom in like manner, living in

delight, and suspecting none of what befell them, were consumed by those lightnings, which then came down upon them.

Considering then all these things, let us betake ourselves unto the preparation for our departure hence.

For even if the common day of the consummation never overtake us, the end of each one is at the doors, whether he be old or young; and it is not possible for men after they have gone hence, either to buy oil any more, or to obtain pardon by prayers, though he that entreats be Abraham, [Luke 16:24] or Noah, or Job, or Daniel. [Ezekiel 14:14]

While then we have opportunity, let us store up for ourselves beforehand much confidence, let us gather oil in abundance, let us remove all into Heaven, that in the fitting time, and when we most need them, we may enjoy all: by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory, and the might, now and always, and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 21 on Matthew

Matt. VI. 24.

"No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other."

Do you see how by degrees He withdraws us from the things that now are, and at greater length introduces what He has to say, touching voluntary poverty, and casts down the dominion of covetousness?

For He was not contented with His former sayings, many and great as they were, but He adds others also, more and more alarming.

For what can be more alarming than what He now says, if indeed we are for our riches to fall from the service of Christ? Or what more to be desired, if indeed, by despising wealth, we shall have our affection towards Him and our charity perfect? For what I am continually repeating, the same do I now say likewise, namely, that by both kinds He presses the hearer to obey His sayings; both by the profitable, and by the hurtful; much like an excellent physician, pointing out both the disease which is the consequence of neglect, and the good health which results from obedience.

See, for instance, what kind of gain He signifies this to be, and how He establishes the advantage of it by their deliverance from the contrary things. Thus, *"wealth,"* says He, *"hurts you not in this only, that it arms robbers against you, nor in that it darkens your mind in the most intense degree, but also in that it casts you out of God's service, making you captive of lifeless riches, and in both ways doing you harm, on the one hand, by causing you to be slaves of what you ought to command; on the other, by casting you out of God's service, whom, above all things, it is indispensable for you to serve."* For just as in the other place, He signified the mischief to be

twofold, in both laying up here, "*where moth corrupts,*" and in not laying up there, where the watch kept is impregnable; so in this place, too, He shows the loss to be twofold, in that it both draws off from God, and makes us subject to mammon.

But He sets it not down directly, rather He establishes it first upon general considerations, saying thus; "*No man can serve two masters:*" meaning here two that are enjoining opposite things; since, unless this were the case, they would not even be two. For so, "*the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul,*" [Acts 4:32] and yet were they divided into many bodies; their unanimity however made the many one.

Then, as adding to the force of it, He says, "*so far from serving, he will even hate and abhor:*" "*For either he will hate the one,*" says He, "*and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.*" And it seems indeed as if the same thing were said twice over; He did not however choose this form without purpose, but in order to show that the change for the better is easy. I mean, lest you should say, "*I am once for all made a slave; I am brought under the tyranny of wealth,*" He signifies that it is possible to transfer one's self, and that as from the first to the second, so also from the second one may pass over to the first.

2. Having thus, you see, spoken generally, that He might persuade the hearer to be an uncorrupt judge of His words, and to sentence according to the very nature of the things; when he has made sure of his assent, then, and not till then, He discovers Himself. Thus He presently adds, "*You cannot serve God and mammon.*" Let us shudder to think what we have brought Christ to say; with the name of God, to put that of gold. But if this be shocking, its taking place in our deeds, our preferring the tyranny of gold to the fear of God, is much more shocking.

"What then? Was not this possible among the ancients?" By no means. *"How then,"* says one, *"did Abraham, how did Job obtain a good report?"* Tell me not of them that are rich, but of them that serve riches. Since Job also was rich, but he served not mammon, but possessed it and ruled over it, and was a master, not a slave. Therefore he so possessed all those things, as if he had been the steward of another man's goods; not only not extorting from others, but even giving up his own to them that were in need. And what is more, when he had them they were no joy to him: so he also declared, saying, *"If I did so much as rejoice when my wealth waxed great:"* [Job 31:25] wherefore neither did he grieve when it had gone. But they that are rich are not now such as he was, but are rather in a worse condition than any slave, paying as it were tribute to some grievous tyrant. Because their mind is as a kind of citadel occupied by the love of money, which from thence daily sends out unto them its commands full of all iniquity, and there is none to disobey. Be not therefore thus over subtle. Nay, for God has once for all declared and pronounced it a thing impossible for the one service and the other to agree. Say not thou, then, *"it is possible."* Why, when the one master is commanding you to spoil by violence, the other to strip yourself of your possessions; the one to be chaste, the other to commit fornication; the one to be drunken and luxurious, the other to keep the belly in subjection; the one again to despise the things that are, the other to be rivetted to the present; the one to admire marbles, and walls, and roofs, the other to condemn these, but to honor self-restraint: how is it possible that these should agree?

Now He calls mammon here *"a master,"* not because of its own nature, but on account of the wretchedness of them that bow themselves beneath it. So also He calls *"the belly a god,"* [Philippians 3:19] not from the dignity of such a mistress, but from the wretchedness of them that are enslaved: it

being a thing worse than any punishment, and enough, before the punishment, in the way of vengeance on him who is involved in it. For what condemned criminals can be so wretched, as they who having God for their Lord, do from that mild rule desert to this grievous tyranny, and this when their act brings after it so much harm even here? For indeed their loss is unspeakable by so doing: there are suits, and molestations, and strifes, and toils, and a blinding of the soul; and what is more grievous than all, one falls away from the highest blessings; for such a blessing it is to be God's servant.

3. Having now, as you see, in all ways taught the advantage of contemning riches, as well for the very preservation of the riches, as for the pleasure of the soul, and for acquiring self-command, and for the securing of godliness; He proceeds to establish the practicability of this command. For this especially pertains to the best legislation, not only to enjoin what is expedient, but also to make it possible. Therefore He also goes on to say,

"Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat."

That is, lest they should say, *"What then? If we cast all away, how shall we be able to live?"* At this objection, in what follows, He makes a stand, very seasonably. For as surely as if at the beginning He had said, *"Take no thought,"* the word would have seemed burdensome; so surely, now that He has shown the mischief arising out of covetousness, His admonition coming after is made easy to receive. Wherefore neither did He now simply say, *"Take no thought,"* but He added the reason, and so enjoined this. After having said, *"You cannot serve God and mammon,"* He added, *"therefore I say unto you, take no thought. Therefore;"* for what? Because of the unspeakable loss. For the hurt you receive is not in riches only, rather the wound is in the most vital parts, and in that which is the

overthrow of your salvation; casting you as it does out from God, who made you, and cares for you, and loves you.

"Therefore I say unto you, take no thought." Thus, after He has shown the hurt to be unspeakable, then and not before He makes the commandment stricter; in that He not only bids us cast away what we have, but forbids to take thought even for our necessary food, saying, *"Take no thought for your soul, what you shall eat."* Not because the soul needs food, for it is incorporeal; but He spoke according to the common custom. For though it needs not food, yet can it not endure to remain in the body, except that be fed. And in saying this, He puts it not simply so, but here also He brings up arguments, some from those things which we have already, and some from other examples.

From what we have already, thus saying:

"Is not the soul more than meat, and the body more than the raiment?"

He therefore that has given the greater, how shall He not give the less? He that has fashioned the flesh that is fed, how shall He not bestow the food? Wherefore neither did He simply say, *"Take no thought what you shall eat,"* or *"wherewithal you shall be clothed;"* but, *"for the body,"* and, *"for the soul:"* forasmuch as from them He was to make His demonstrations, carrying on His discourse in the way of comparison. Now the soul He has given once for all, and it abides such as it is; but the body increases every day. Therefore pointing out both these things, the immortality of the one, and the frailty of the other, He subjoins and says,

"Which of you can add one cubit unto his stature?" [Matthew 6:27]

Thus, saying no more of the soul, since it receives not increase, He discoursed of the body only; hereby making manifest this point also, that not the food increases it, but the providence of God. Which Paul showing

also in other ways, said, *"So then, neither is he that plants any thing, neither he that waters; but God that gives the increase."* [1 Corinthians 3:7]

From what we have already, then, He urges us in this way: and from examples of other things, by saying, *"Behold the fowls of the air."*

[Matthew 6:26] Thus, lest any should say, *"we do good by taking thought,"*

He dissuades them both by that which is greater, and by that which is less; by the greater, *i.e.* the soul and the body; by the less, *i.e.* the birds. For if of the things that are very inferior He has so much regard, how shall He not give unto you? Says He. And to them on this wise, for as yet it was an ordinary multitude: but to the devil not thus; but how? *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."*

[Matthew 4:4] But here He makes mention of the birds, and this in a way greatly to abash them; which sort of thing is of very great value for the purpose of admonition.

4. However, some of the ungodly have come to so great a pitch of madness, as even to attack His illustration. Because, say they, it was not meet for one strengthening moral principle, to use natural advantages as incitements to that end. For to those animals, they add, this belongs by nature. What then shall we say to this? That even though it is theirs by nature, yet possibly we too may attain it by choice. For neither did He say, *"behold how the birds fly,"* which were a thing impossible to man; but that they are fed without taking thought, a kind of thing easy to be achieved by us also, if we will. And this they have proved, who have accomplished it in their actions.

Wherefore it were meet exceedingly to admire the consideration of our Lawgiver, in that, when He might bring forward His illustration from among men, and when He might have spoken of Moses and Elias and John, and others like them, who took no thought; that He might touch them more

to the quick, He made mention of the irrational beings. For had He spoken of those righteous men, these would have been able to say, "*We are not yet become like them.*" But now by passing them over in silence, and bringing forward the fowls of the air, He has cut off from them every excuse, imitating in this place also the old law. Yea, for the old covenant likewise sends to the bee, and to the ant, and to the turtle, and to the swallow.

[Jeremiah 8:7] And neither is this a small sign of honor, when the same sort of things, which those animals possess by nature, those we are able to accomplish by an act of our choice. If then He take so great care of them which exist for our sakes, much more of us; if of the servants, much more of the master. Therefore He said, "*Behold the fowls,*" and He said not, "*for they do not traffic, nor make merchandise,*" for these were among the things that were earnestly forbidden. But what? "*they sow not, neither do they reap.*" "*What then?*" says one, "*must we not sow?*" He said not, "*we must not sow,*" but "*we must not take thought;*" neither that one ought not to work, but not to be low-minded, nor to rack one's self with cares. Since He bade us also be nourished, but not in "*taking thought.*"

Of this lesson David also lays the foundation from old time, saying enigmatically on this wise, "*You open Your hand, and fillest every living thing with bounty;*" and again, "*To Him that gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that call upon Him.*"

"*Who then,*" it may be said, "*have not taken thought*"? Did you not hear how many of the righteous I adduced? Do you see not with them Jacob, departing from his father's house destitute of all things? Do you not hear him praying and saying, "*If the Lord give me bread to eat and raiment to put on?*" [Genesis 28:20] which was not the part of one taking thought, but of one seeking all of God. This the apostles also attained, who cast

away all, and took no thought: also, the *"five thousand,"* and the *"three thousand."*

5. But if you can not bear, upon hearing so high words, to release yourself from these grievous bonds, consider the unprofitableness of the thing, and so put an end to your care. For

"Which of you by taking thought" (says He) *"can add one cubit unto his stature."* [Matthew 6:27]

Do you see how by that which is evident, He has manifested that also which is obscure? Thus, *"As unto your body,"* says He, *"you will not by taking thought be able to add, though it be ever so little; so neither to gather food; think as you may otherwise."* Hence it is clear that not our diligence, but the providence of God, even where we seem to be active, effects all. So that, were He to forsake us, no care, nor anxiety, nor toil, nor any other such thing, will ever appear to come to anything, but all will utterly pass away.

Let us not therefore suppose His injunctions are impossible: for there are many who duly perform them, even as it is. And if you know not of them, it is nothing marvellous, since Elias too supposed he was alone, but was told, *"I have left unto myself seven thousand men."* Whence it is manifest that even now there are many who show forth the life; like as the *"three thousand"* then, and the *"five thousand."* And if we believe not, it is not because there are none who do well, but because we are far from so doing. So that just as the drunkard would not easily believe, that there exists any man who does not taste even water (and yet this has been achieved by many solitaires in our time); nor he who connects himself with numberless women, that it is easy to live in virginity; nor he that extorts other men's goods, that one shall readily give up even his own: so neither will those,

who daily melt themselves down with innumerable anxieties, easily receive this thing.

Now as to the fact, that there are many who have attained unto this, we might show it even from those, who have practised this self-denial even in our generation.

But for you, just now, it is enough to learn not to covet, and that almsgiving is a good thing; and to know that you must impart of what you have. For these things if you will duly perform, beloved, you will speedily proceed to those others also.

6. For the present therefore let us lay aside our excessive sumptuousness, and let us endure moderation, and learn to acquire by honest labor all that we are to have: since even the blessed John, when he was discoursing with those that were employed upon the tribute, and with the soldiery, enjoined them *"to be content with their wages."* [Luke 3:14] Anxious though he were to lead them on to another, and a higher self-command, yet since they were still unfit for this, he speaks of the lesser things. Because, if he had mentioned what are higher than these, they would have failed to apply themselves to them, and would have fallen from the others.

For this very reason we too are practising you in the inferior duties. Yes, because as yet, we know, the burden of voluntary poverty is too great for you, and the heaven is not more distant from the earth, than such self-denial from you. Let us then lay hold, if it be only of the lowest commandments, for even this is no small encouragement. And yet some among the heathens have achieved even this, though not in a proper spirit, and have stripped themselves of all their possessions. However, we are contented in your case, if alms are bestowed abundantly by you; for we shall soon arrive at those other duties too, if we advance in this way. But if

we do not so much as this, of what favor shall we be worthy, who are bidden to surpass those under the old law, and yet show ourselves inferior to the philosophers among the heathens? What shall we say, who when we ought to be angels and sons of God, do not even quite maintain our being as men? For to spoil and to covet comes not of the gentleness of men, but of the fierceness of wild beasts; nay, worse than wild beasts are the assailers of their neighbor's goods. For to them this comes by nature, but we who are honored with reason, and yet are falling away unto that unnatural vileness, what indulgence shall we receive?

Let us then, considering the measures of that discipline which is set before us, press on at least to the middle station, that we may both be delivered from the punishment which is to come, and proceeding regularly, may arrive at the very summit of all good things; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 22 on Matthew

Matthew 5:28-29.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Having spoken of our necessary food, and having signified that not even for this should we take thought, He passes on in what follows to that which is more easy. For raiment is not so necessary as food.

Why then did He not make use here also of the same example, that of the birds, neither mention to us the peacock, and the swan, and the sheep? For surely there were many such examples to take from thence. Because He would point out how very far the argument may be carried both ways: both from the vileness of the things that partake of such elegance, and from the munificence vouchsafed to the lilies, in respect of their adorning. For this cause, when He has decked them out, He does not so much as call them lilies any more, but *"grass of the field."* [Matthew 6:30] And He is not satisfied even with this name, but again adds another circumstance of vileness, saying, *"which today is."* And He said not, *"and tomorrow is not,"* but what is much baser yet, *"is cast into the oven."* And He said not, *"clothe,"* but *"so clothe."*

Do you see everywhere how He abounds in amplifications and intensities? And this He does, that He may touch them home: and therefore He has also added, *"shall He not much more clothe you?"* For this too has much emphasis: the force of the word, *"you,"* being no other than to indicate covertly the great value set upon our race, and the concern shown for it; as though He had said, *"you, to whom He gave a soul, for whom He*

fashioned a body, for whose sake He made all the things that are seen, for whose sake He sent prophets, and gave the law, and wrought those innumerable good works; for whose sake He gave up His only begotten Son."

And not till He has made His proof clear, does He proceed also to rebuke them, saying, "*O you of little faith.*" For this is the quality of an adviser: He does not admonish only, but reproves also, that He may awaken men the more to the persuasive power of His words.

Hereby He teaches us not only to take no thought, but not even to be dazzled at the costliness of men's apparel. Why, such comeliness is of grass, such beauty of the green herb: or rather, the grass is even more precious than such apparelling. Why then pride yourself on things, whereof the prize rests with the mere plant, with a great balance in its favor?

And see how from the beginning He signifies the injunction to be easy; by the contraries again, and by the things of which they were afraid, leading them away from these cares. Thus, when He had said, "*Consider the lilies of the field,*" He added, "*they toil not:*" so that in desire to set us free from toils, did He give these commands. In fact, the labor lies, not in taking no thought, but in taking thought for these things. And as in saying, "*they sow not,*" it was not the sowing that He did away with, but the anxious thought; so in saying, "*they toil not, neither do they spin,*" He put an end not to the work, but to the care.

But if Solomon was surpassed by their beauty, and that not once nor twice, but throughout all his reign:— for neither can one say, that at one time He was clothed with such apparel, but after that He was so no more; rather not so much as on one day did He array Himself so beautifully: for this Christ declared by saying, "*in all his reign:*" and if it was not that He was surpassed by this flower, but vied with that, but He gave place to all

alike (wherefore He also said, "*as one of these*:" for such as between the truth and the counterfeit, so great is the interval between those robes and these flowers):— if then he acknowledged his inferiority, who was more glorious than all kings that ever were: when will you be able to surpass, or rather to approach even faintly to such perfection of form?

After this He instructs us, not to aim at all at such ornament. See at least the end thereof; after its triumph "*it is cast into the oven*:" and if of things mean, and worthless, and of no great use, God has displayed so great care, how shall He give up you, of all living creatures the most important?

Wherefore then did He make them so beautiful? That He might display His own wisdom and the excellency of His power; that from everything we might learn His glory. For not "*the Heavens only declare the glory of God*," but the earth too; and this David declared when he said, "*Praise the Lord, you fruitful trees, and all cedars*." For some by their fruits, some by their greatness, some by their beauty, send up praise to Him who made them: this too being a sign of great excellency of wisdom, when even upon things that are very vile (and what can be viler than that which today is, and tomorrow is not?) He pours out such great beauty. If then to the grass He has given that which it needs not (for what does the beauty thereof help to the feeding of the fire?) how shall He not give unto you that which you need? If that which is the vilest of all things, He has lavishly adorned, and that as doing it not for need, but for munificence, how much more will He honor you, the most honorable of all things, in matters which are of necessity.

2. Now when, as you see, He had demonstrated the greatness of God's providential care, and they were in what follows to be rebuked also, even in this He was sparing, laying to their charge not want, but poverty, of faith. Thus, "*if God*," says He, "*so clothe the grass of the field, much more you, O you of little faith*." [Matthew 6:30]

And yet surely all these things He Himself works. For *"all things were made by Him, and without Him was not so much as one thing made."*

[John 1:3] But yet He nowhere as yet makes mention of Himself: it being sufficient for the time, to indicate His full power, that He said at each of the commandments, *"You have heard that it has been said to them of old time, but I say unto you."*

Marvel not then, when in subsequent instances also He conceals Himself, or speaks something lowly of Himself: since for the present He had but one object, that His word might prove such as they would readily receive, and might in every way demonstrate that He was not a sort of adversary of God, but of one mind, and in agreement with the Father.

Which accordingly He does here also; for through so many words as He has spent He ceases not to set Him before us, admiring His wisdom, His providence, His tender care extending through all things, both great and small. Thus, both when He was speaking of Jerusalem, He called it *"the city of the Great King;"* [Matthew 5:35] and when He mentioned Heaven, He spoke of it again as *"God's throne;"* [Matthew 5:34] and when He was discoursing of His economy in the world, to Him again He attributes it all, saying, *"He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] And in the prayer too He taught us to say, His *"is the kingdom and the power and the glory."* And here in discoursing of His providence, and signifying how even in little things He is the most excellent of artists, He says, that *"He clothes the grass of the field."* And nowhere does He call Him His own Father, but theirs; in order that by the very honor He might reprove them, and that when He should call Him His Father, they might no more be displeased.

Now if for bare necessities one is not to take thought, what pardon can we deserve, who take thought for things expensive? Or rather, what pardon

can they deserve, who do even without sleep, that they may take the things of others?

3. *"Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the nations of the world seek."*

Do you see how again He has both shamed them the more, and has also shown by the way, that He had commanded nothing grievous nor burdensome? As therefore when He said, *"If you love them which love you,"* it is nothing great which you practise, for the very Gentiles do the same; by the mention of the Gentiles He was stirring them up to something greater: so now also He brings them forward to reprove us, and to signify that it is a necessary debt which He is requiring of us. For if we must show forth something more than the Scribes or Pharisees, what can we deserve, who so far from going beyond these, do even abide in the mean estate of the Gentiles, and emulate their littleness of soul?

He does not however stop at the rebuke, but having by this reproved and roused them, and shamed them with all strength of expression, by another argument He also comforts them, saying, *"For your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things."* He said not, *"God knows,"* but, *"your Father knows;"* to lead them to a greater hope. For if He be a Father, and such a Father, He will not surely be able to overlook His children in extremity of evils; seeing that not even men, being fathers, bear to do so.

And He adds along with this yet another argument. Of what kind then is it? That *"you have need"* of them. What He says is like this. What! Are these things superfluous, that He should disregard them? Yet not even in superfluities did He show Himself wanting in regard, in the instance of the grass: but now are these things even necessary. So that what you consider a

cause for your being anxious, this I say is sufficient to draw you from such anxiety. I mean, if you say, "*Therefore I must needs take thought, because they are necessary;*" on the contrary, I say, "*Nay, for this self-same reason take no thought, because they are necessary.*" Since were they superfluities, not even then ought we to despair, but to feel confident about the supply of them; but now that they are necessary, we must no longer be in doubt. For what kind of father is he, who can endure to fail in supplying to his children even necessities? So that for this cause again God will most surely bestow them.

For indeed He is the artificer of our nature, and He knows perfectly the wants thereof. So that neither can you say, "*He is indeed our Father, and the things we seek are necessary, but He knows not that we stand in need of them.*" For He that knows our nature itself, and was the framer of it, and formed it such as it is; evidently He knows its need also better than thou, who art placed in want of them: it having been by His decree, that our nature is in such need. He will not therefore oppose Himself to what He has willed, first subjecting it of necessity to so great want, and on the other hand again depriving it of what it wants, and of absolute necessities.

Let us not therefore be anxious, for we shall gain nothing by it, but tormenting ourselves. For whereas He gives both when we take thought, and when we do not, and more of the two, when we do not; what do you gain by your anxiety, but to exact of yourself a superfluous penalty? Since one on the point of going to a plentiful feast, will not surely permit himself to take thought for food; nor is he that is walking to a fountain anxious about drink. Therefore seeing we have a supply more copious than either any fountain, or innumerable banquets made ready, the providence of God; let us not be beggars, nor little minded.

4. For together with what has been said, He puts also yet another reason for feeling confidence about such things, saying,

"Seek the kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Thus when He had set the soul free from anxiety, then He made mention also of Heaven. For indeed He came to do away with the old things, and to call us to a greater country. Therefore He does all, to deliver us from things unnecessary, and from our affection for the earth. For this cause He mentioned the heathens also, saying that *"the Gentiles seek after these things;"* they whose whole labor is for the present life, who have no regard for the things to come, nor any thought of Heaven. But to you not these present are the chief things, but other than these. For we were not born for this end, that we should eat and drink and be clothed, but that we might please God, and attain unto the good things to come. Therefore as things here are secondary in our labor, so also in our prayers let them be secondary. Therefore He also said, *"Seek the kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."*

And He said not, *"shall be given,"* but *"shall be added,"* that you might learn, that the things present are no great part of His gifts, compared with the greatness of the things to come. Accordingly, He does not bid us so much as ask for them, but while we ask for other things, to have confidence, as though these also were added to those. Seek then the things to come, and you will receive the things present also; seek not the things that are seen, and you shall surely attain unto them. Yea, for it is unworthy of you to approach your Lord for such things. And thou, who ought to spend all your zeal and your care for those unspeakable blessings, dost greatly disgrace yourself by consuming it on the desire of transitory things.

"How then?" says one, *"did He not bid us ask for bread?"* Nay, He added, *"daily,"* and to this again, *"this day,"* which same thing in fact He does here also. For He said not, *"Take no thought,"* but, *"Take no thought for the morrow,"* at the same time both affording us liberty, and fastening our soul on those things that are more necessary to us.

For to this end also He bade us ask even those, not as though God needed reminding by us, but that we might learn that by His help we accomplish whatever we do accomplish, and that we might be made more His own by our continual prayer for these things.

Do you see how by this again He would persuade them, that they shall surely receive the things present? For He that bestows the greater, much more will He give the less. *"For not for this end,"* says He, *"did I tell you not to take thought nor to ask, that you should suffer distress, and go about naked, but in order that you might be in abundance of these things also:"* and this, you see, was suited above all things to attract them to Him. So that like as in almsgiving, when deterring them from making a display to men, He won upon them chiefly by promising to furnish them with it more liberally;— *"for your Father,"* says He, *"who sees in secret, shall reward you openly;"* [Matthew 6:4] — even so here also, in drawing them off from seeking these things, this is His persuasive topic, that He promises to bestow it on them, not seeking it, in greater abundance. Thus, to this end, says He, do I bid you not seek, not that you may not receive, but that you may receive plentifully; that you may receive in the fashion that becomes you, with the profit which you ought to have; that you may not, by taking thought, and distracting yourself in anxiety about these, render yourself unworthy both of these, and of the things spiritual; that you may not undergo unnecessary distress, and again fall away from that which is set before you.

5. *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof:"* that is to say, the affliction, and the bruising thereof. [Matthew 5:34] Is it not enough for you, to eat your bread in the sweat of your face? Why add the further affliction that comes of anxiety, when you are on the point to be delivered henceforth even from the former toils?

By *"evil"* here He means, not wickedness, far from it, but affliction, and trouble, and calamities; much as in another place also He says, *"Is there evil in a city, which the Lord has not done?"* nor any thing like these, but the scourges which are borne from above. And again, *"I,"* says He, *"make peace, and create evils:"* [Isaiah 45:7] For neither in this place does He speak of wickedness, but of famines, and pestilences, things accounted evil by most men: the generality being wont to call these things evil. Thus, for example, the priests and prophets of those five lordships, when having yoked the cattle to the ark, they let them go without their calves, [1 Samuel 6:9] gave the name of *"evil"* to those heaven-sent plagues, and the dismay and anguish which thereby sprang up within them.

This then is His meaning here also, when He says, *"sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."* For nothing so pains the soul, as carefulness and anxiety. Thus did Paul also, when urging to celibacy, give counsel, saying, *"I would have you without carefulness."*

But when He says, *"the morrow shall take thought for itself,"* He says it not, as though the day took thought for these things, but forasmuch as He had to speak to a people somewhat imperfect, willing to make what He says more expressive, He personifies the time, speaking unto them according to the custom of the generality.

And here indeed He advises, but as He proceeds, He even makes it a law, saying, *"provide neither gold nor silver, nor scrip for your journey."* [Matthew 10:9-10] Thus, having shown it all forth in His actions, then after

that He introduces the verbal enactment of it more determinately, the precept too having then become more easy of acceptance, confirmed as it had been previously by His own actions. Where then did He confirm it by His actions? Hear Him saying, *"The Son of Man has not where to lay His head."* [Matthew 8:20] Neither is He satisfied with this only, but in His disciples also He exhibits His full proof of these things, by fashioning them too in like manner, yet not suffering them to be in want of anything.

But mark His tender care also, how He surpasses the affection of any father. Thus, *"This I command,"* says He, *"for nothing else, but that I may deliver you from superfluous anxieties. For even if today you have taken thought for tomorrow, you will also have to take thought again tomorrow. Why then what is over and above? Why force the day to receive more than the distress which is allotted to it, and together with its own troubles add to it also the burden of the following day; and this, when there is no chance of your lightening the other by the addition so taking place, but you are merely to exhibit yourself as coveting superfluous troubles?"* Thus, that He may reprove them the more, He does all but give life to the very time, and brings it in as one injured, and exclaiming against them for their causeless despite. Why, you have received the day, to care for the things thereof. Wherefore then add unto it the things of the other day also? Hath it not then burden enough in its own anxiety? Why now, I pray, do you make it yet heavier? Now when the Lawgiver says these things, and He that is to pass judgment on us, consider the hopes that He suggests to us, how good they are; He Himself testifying, that this life is wretched and wearisome, so that the anxiety even of the one day is enough to hurt and afflict us.

6. Nevertheless, after so many and so grave words, we take thought for these things, but for the things in Heaven no longer: rather we have reversed His order, on either side fighting against His sayings. For mark;

"Seek ye not the things present," says He, *"at all;"* but we are seeking these things for ever: *"seek the things in Heaven,"* says He; but those things we seek not so much as for a short hour, but according to the greatness of the anxiety we display about the things of the world, is the carelessness we entertain in things spiritual; or rather even much greater. But this does not prosper for ever; neither can this be for ever. What if for ten days we think scorn? If for twenty? If for an hundred? Must we not of absolute necessity depart, and fall into the hands of the Judge?

"But the delay has comfort." And what sort of comfort, to be every day looking for punishment and vengeance? Nay, if you would have some comfort from this delay, take it by gathering for yourself the fruit of amendment after repentance. Since if the mere delay of vengeance seem to you a sort of refreshment, far more is it gain not to fall into the vengeance. Let us then make full use of this delay, in order to have a full deliverance from the dangers that press upon us. For none of the things enjoined is either burdensome or grievous, but all are so light and easy, that if we only bring a genuine purpose of heart, we may accomplish all, though we be chargeable with countless offenses. For so Manasses had perpetrated innumerable pollutions, having both stretched out his hands against the saints, and brought abominations into the temple, and filled the city with murders, and wrought many other things beyond excuse; yet nevertheless after so long and so great wickedness, he washed away from himself all these things. How and in what manner? By repentance, and consideration.

For there is not, yea, there is not any sin, that does not yield and give way to the power of repentance, or rather to the grace of Christ. Since if we would but only change, we have Him to assist us. And if you are desirous to become good, there is none to hinder us; or rather there is one to hinder us, the devil, yet has he no power, so long as you choose what is best, and so

attract God to your aid. But if you are not yourself willing, but startest aside, how shall He protect you? Since not of necessity or compulsion, but of your own will, He wills you to be saved. For if you yourself, having a servant full of hatred and aversion for you, and continually going off, and fleeing away from you, wouldest not choose to keep him, and this though needing his services; much less will God, who does all things not for His own profit, but for your salvation, choose to retain you by compulsion; as on the other hand, if you show forth a right intention only, He would not choose ever to give you up, no, not whatever the devil may do. So that we are ourselves to blame for our own destruction. Because we do not approach, nor beseech, nor entreat Him, as we ought: but even if we do draw near, it is not as persons who have need to receive, neither is it with the proper faith, nor as making demand, but we do all in a gaping and listless way.

7. And yet God would have us demand things of Him, and for this accounts Himself greatly bound to you. For He alone of all debtors, when the demand is made, counts it a favor, and gives what we have not lent Him. And if He should see him pressing earnestly that makes the demand, He pays down even what He has not received of us; but if sluggishly, He too keeps on making delays; not through unwillingness to give, but because He is pleased to have the demand made upon Him by us. For this cause He told you also the example of that friend, who came by night, and asked a loaf; [Luke 11:5-8] and of the judge that feared not God, nor regarded men. [Luke 18:1-8] And He stayed not at similitudes, but signified it also in His very actions, when He dismissed that Phœnician woman, having filled her with His great gift. For through her He signified, that He gives to them that ask earnestly, even the things that pertain not to them. *"For it is not meet,"* says He, *"to take the children's bread, and to give it unto the dogs."* But for

all that He gave, because she demanded of him earnestly. But by the Jews He showed, that to them that are careless, He gives not even their own. They accordingly received nothing, but lost what was their own. And while these, because they asked not, did not receive so much as their very own; she, because she assailed Him with earnestness, had power to obtain even what pertained to others, and the dog received what was the children's. So great a good is importunity. For though thou be a dog, yet being importunate, you shall be preferred to the child being negligent: for what things affection accomplishes not, these, all of them, importunity did accomplish. Say not therefore, *"God is an enemy to me, and will not hearken."* He does straightway answer you, continually troubling him, if not because you are His friend, yet because of your importunity. And neither the enmity, or the unseasonable time, nor anything else becomes an hindrance. Say not, *"I am unworthy, and do not pray;"* for such was the Syrophœnician woman too. Say not, *"I have sinned much, and am not able to entreat Him whom I have angered;"* for God looks not at the desert, but at the disposition. For if the ruler that feared not God, neither was ashamed of men, was overcome by the widow, much more will He that is good be won over by continual entreaty.

So that though thou be no friend, though thou be not demanding your due, though you have devoured your Father's substance, and have been a long time out of sight, though without honor, though last of all, though thou approach Him angry, though much displeased; be willing only to pray, and to return, and you shall receive all, and shall quickly extinguish the wrath and the condemnation.

But, *"behold, I pray,"* says one, *"and there is no result."* Why, you pray not like those; such I mean as the Syrophœnician woman, the friend that came late at night, and the widow that is continually troubling the judge,

and the son that consumed his father's goods. For did you so pray, you would quickly obtain. For though despite have been done unto Him, yet is He a Father; and though He have been provoked to anger, yet is He fond of His children; and one thing only does He seek, not to take vengeance for our affronts, but to see you repenting and entreating Him. Would that we were warmed in like measure, as those bowels are moved to the love of us. But this fire seeks a beginning only, and if you afford it a little spark, you kindle a full flame of beneficence. For not because He has been insulted, is He sore vexed, but because it is thou who art insulting Him, and so becoming frenzied. For if we being evil, when our children molest us, grieve on their account; much more is God, who can not so much as suffer insult, sore vexed on account of you, who hast committed it. If we, who love by nature, much more He, who is kindly affectioned beyond nature. *"For though,"* says He, *"a woman should forget the fruits of her womb, yet will I not forget you."* [Isaiah 49:15]

8. Let us therefore draw near unto Him, and say, *"Truth, Lord; for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."* [Matthew 15:27] Let us draw near *"in season, out of season:"* or rather, one can never draw near out of season, for it is unseasonable not to be continually approaching. For of Him who desires to give it is always seasonable to ask: yea, as breathing is never out of season, so neither is praying unseasonable, but rather not praying. Since as we need this breath, so do we also the help that comes from Him; and if we be willing, we shall easily draw Him to us. And the prophet, to manifest this, and to point out the constant readiness of His beneficence, said, *"We shall find Him prepared as the morning."* For as often as we may draw near, we shall see Him awaiting our movements. And if we fail to draw from out of His ever-springing goodness, the blame is all ours. This, for example, was His

complaint against certain Jews, when He said, *"My mercy is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goes away."* And His meaning is like this; *"I indeed have supplied all my part, but you, as a hot sun coming over scatters both the cloud and the dew, and makes them vanish, so have ye by your great wickedness restrained the unspeakable Beneficence."*

Which also itself again is an instance of providential care: that even when He sees us unworthy to receive good, He withholds His benefits, lest He render us careless. But if we change a little, even but so much as to know that we have sinned, He gushes out beyond the fountains, He is poured forth beyond the ocean; and the more you receive, so much the more does He rejoice; and in this way is stirred up again to give us more. For indeed He accounts it as His own wealth, that we should be saved, and that He should give largely to them that ask. And this, it may seem, Paul was declaring when He said, that He is *"rich unto all and over all that call upon Him."* Because when we pray not, then He is angry; when we pray not, then does He turn away from us. For this cause *"He became poor, that He might make us rich;"* for this cause He underwent all those sufferings, that He might incite us to ask.

Let us not therefore despair, but having so many motives and good hopes, though we sin every day, let us approach Him, entreating, beseeching, asking the forgiveness of our sins. For thus we shall be more backward to sin for the time to come; thus shall we drive away the devil, and shall call forth the lovingkindness of God, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 23 on Matthew

Matt. VII. 1.

"Judge not, that you be not judged."

What then? Ought we not to blame them that sin? Because Paul also says this selfsame thing: or rather, there too it is Christ, speaking by Paul, and saying, [Romans 14:10] *"Why do you judge your brother? And thou, why do you set at nought your brother?"* and, *"Who are you that judgest another man's servant?"* [Romans 14:4] And again, *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come."* [1 Corinthians 4:5]

How then does He say elsewhere, *"Reprove, rebuke, exhort,"* [2 Timothy 4:2] and, *"Them that sin rebuke before all?"* And Christ too to Peter, *"Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone,"* and if he neglect to hear, add to yourself another also; and if not even so does he yield, declare it to the church likewise? And how has He set over us so many to reprove; and not only to reprove, but also to punish? For him that hearkens to none of these, He has commanded to be *"as a heathen man and a publican."* [Matthew 18:17] And how gave He them the keys also? Since if they are not to judge, they will be without authority in any matter, and in vain have they received the power to bind and to loose.

And besides, if this were to obtain, all would be lost alike, whether in churches, or in states, or in houses. For except the master judge the servant, and the mistress the maid, and the father the son, and friends one another, there will be an increase of all wickedness. And why say I, friends? Unless we judge our enemies, we shall never be able to put an end to our enmity, but all things will be turned upside down.

What then can the saying be? Let us carefully attend, lest the medicines of salvation, and the laws of peace, be accounted by any man laws of overthrow and confusion. First of all, then, even by what follows, He has pointed out to them that have understanding the excellency of this law, saying, "*Why do you behold the mote that is in your brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in your own eye?*" [Matthew 7:3]

But if to many of the less attentive, it seem yet rather obscure, I will endeavor to explain it from the beginning. In this place, then, as it seems at least to me, He does not simply command us not to judge any of men's sins, neither does He simply forbid the doing of such a thing, but to them that are full of innumerable ills, and are trampling upon other men for trifles. And I think that certain Jews too are here hinted at, for that while they were bitter accusing their neighbors for small faults, and such as came to nothing, they were themselves insensibly committing deadly sins. Herewith towards the end also He was upbraiding them, when He said, "*You bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, but you will not move them with your finger,*" [Matthew 23:4] and, "*ye pay tithe of mint and anise, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.*" [Matthew 23:23]

Well then, I think that these are comprehended in His invective; that He is checking them beforehand as to those things, wherein they were hereafter to accuse His disciples. For although His disciples had been guilty of no such sin, yet in them were supposed to be offenses; as, for instance, not keeping the sabbath, eating with unwashen hands, sitting at meat with publicans; of which He says also in another place, "*You which strain at the gnat, and swallow the camel.*" But yet it is also a general law that He is laying down on these matters.

And the Corinthians [1 Corinthians 4:5] too Paul did not absolutely command not to judge, but not to judge their own superiors, and upon

grounds that are not acknowledged; not absolutely to refrain from correcting them that sin. Neither indeed was He then rebuking all without distinction, but disciples doing so to their teachers were the object of His reproof; and they who, being guilty of innumerable sins, bring an evil report upon the guiltless.

This then is the sort of thing which Christ also in this place intimated; not intimated merely, but guarded it too with a great terror, and the punishment from which no prayers can deliver.

2. *"For with what judgment ye judge,"* says He, *"you shall be judged."*
[Matthew 7:2]

That is, *"it is not the other,"* says Christ, *"that you condemn, but yourself, and you are making the judgment-seat dreadful to yourself, and the account strict."* As then in the forgiveness of our sins the beginnings are from us, so also in this judgment, it is by ourselves that the measures of our condemnation are laid down. You see, we ought not to upbraid nor trample upon them, but to admonish; not to revile, but to advise; not to assail with pride, but to correct with tenderness. For not him, but yourself, do you give over to extreme vengeance, by not sparing him, when it may be needful to give sentence on his offenses.

Do you see, how these two commandments are both easy, and fraught with great blessings to the obedient, even as of evils on the other hand, to the regardless? For both he that forgives his neighbor, has freed himself first of the two from the grounds of complaint, and that without any labor; and he that with tenderness and indulgence inquires into other men's offenses, great is the allowance of pardon, which he has by his judgment laid up beforehand for himself.

"What then!" say you: *"if one commit fornication, may I not say that fornication is a bad thing, nor at all correct him that is playing the*

wanton?" Nay, correct him, but not as a foe, nor as an adversary exacting a penalty, but as a physician providing medicines. For neither did Christ say, *"stay not him that is sinning,"* but *"judge not;"* that is, be not bitter in pronouncing sentence.

And besides, it is not of great things (as I have already observed), nor of things prohibited, that this is said, but of those which are not even counted offenses. Wherefore He said also.

"Why do you behold the mote that is in your brother's eye?"

[Matthew 7:3]

Yea, for many now do this; if they see but a monk wearing an unnecessary garment, they produce against him the law of our Lord, [Matthew 10:10] while they themselves are extorting without end, and defrauding men every day. If they see him but partaking rather largely of food, they become bitter accusers, while they themselves are daily drinking to excess and surfeiting: not knowing, that besides their own sins, they do hereby gather up for themselves a greater flame, and deprive themselves of every plea. For on this point, that your own doings must be strictly inquired into, you yourself hast first made the law, by thus sentencing those of your neighbor. Account it not then to be a grievous thing, if you are also yourself to undergo the same kind of trial.

"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of your own eye."

[Matthew 7:5]

Here His will is to signify the great wrath, which He has against them that do such things. For so, wheresoever He would indicate that the sin is great, and the punishment and wrath in store for it grievous, He begins with a reproach. As then unto him that was exacting the hundred pence, He said in His deep displeasure, *"Thou wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt;"* [Matthew 18:32] even so here also, *"Thou hypocrite."* For not of protecting

care comes such a judgment, but of ill will to man; and while a man puts forward a mask of benevolence, he is doing a work of the utmost wickedness, causing reproaches without ground, and accusations, to cleave unto his neighbors, and usurping a teacher's rank, when he is not worthy to be so much as a disciple. On account of this He called him "*hypocrite*." For thou, who in other men's doings art so bitter, as to see even the little things; how have you become so remiss in your own, as that even the great things are hurried over by you?

"First cast out the beam out of your own eye."

Do you see, that He forbids not judging, but commands to cast out first the beam from your eye, and then to set right the doings of the rest of the world? For indeed each one knows his own things better than those of others; and sees the greater rather than the less; and loves himself more than his neighbor. Wherefore, if you do it out of guardian care, I bid you care for yourself first, in whose case the sin is both more certain and greater. But if you neglect yourself, it is quite evident that neither do you judge your brother in care for him, but in hatred, and wishing to expose him. For what if he ought to be judged? It should be by one who commits no such sin, not by you.

Thus, because He had introduced great and high doctrines of self denial, lest any man should say, it is easy so to practise it in words; He willing to signify His entire confidence, and that He was not chargeable with any of the things that had been mentioned, but had duly fulfilled all, spoke this parable. And that, because He too was afterwards to judge, saying, "*Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.*" [Matthew 23:1] Yet was not he chargeable with what has been mentioned; for neither did He pull out a mote, nor had He a beam on His eyes, but being clean from all these, He so corrected the faults of all. "*For it is not at all meet,*" says He,

"to judge others, when one is chargeable with the same things." And why marvel at His establishing this law, when even the very thief knew it upon the cross, saying to the other thief, *"Do you not fear God, seeing we are in the same condemnation;"* expressing the same sentiments with Christ?

But you, so far from casting out your own beam, dost not even see it, but another's mote thou not only see, but also judgest, and essayest to cast it out; as if any one seized with a grievous dropsy, or indeed with any other incurable disease, were to neglect this, and find fault with another who was neglecting a slight swelling. And if it be an evil not to see one's own sins, it is a twofold and threefold evil to be even sitting in judgment on others, while men themselves, as if past feeling, are bearing about beams in their own eyes: since no beam is so heavy as sin.

His injunction therefore in these words is as follows, that he who is chargeable with countless evil deeds, should not be a bitter censor of other men's offenses, and especially when these are trifling. He is not overthrowing reproof nor correction, but forbidding men to neglect their own faults, and exult over those of other men.

For indeed this was a cause of men's going unto great vice, bringing in a twofold wickedness. For he, whose practice it had been to slight his own faults, great as they were, and to search bitterly into those of others, being slight and of no account, was spoiling himself two ways: first, by thinking lightly of his own faults; next, by incurring enmities and feuds with all men, and training himself every day to extreme fierceness, and want of feeling for others.

3. Having then put away all these things, by this His excellent legislation, He added yet another charge, saying,

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."

"Yet surely further on," it will be said, He commanded, "What you have heard in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." [Matthew 10:27] But this is in no wise contrary to the former. For neither in that place did He simply command to tell all men, but to whom it should be spoken, to them He bade speak with freedom. And by "dogs" here He figuratively described them that are living in incurable ungodliness, and affording no hope of change for the better; and by "swine," them that abide continually in an unchaste life, all of whom He has pronounced unworthy of hearing such things. Paul also, it may be observed, declared this when He said, "But a natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him." And in many other places too He says that corruption of life is the cause of men's not receiving the more perfect doctrines. Wherefore He commands not to open the doors to them; for indeed they become more insolent after learning. For as to the well-disposed and intelligent, things appear venerable when revealed, so to the insensible, when they are unknown rather. Since then from their nature, they are not able to learn them, "let the thing be hidden," says He, "that at least for ignorance they may reverence them. For neither does the swine know at all what a pearl is. Therefore since he knows not, neither let him see it, lest he trample under foot what he knows not."

For nothing results, beyond greater mischief to them that are so disposed when they hear; for both the holy things are profaned by them, not knowing what they are; and they are the more lifted up and armed against us. For this is meant by, *"lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."*

Nay, *"surely,"* says one, *"they ought to be so strong as to remain equally impregnable after men's learning them, and not to yield to other people occasions against us."* But it is not the things that yield it, but that

these men are swine; even as when the pearl is trampled under foot, it is not so trampled, because it is really contemptible, but because it fell among swine.

And full well did He say, *"turn again and rend you:"* for they feign gentleness, so as to be taught: then after they have learned, quite changing from one sort to another, they jeer, mock and deride us, as deceived persons. Therefore Paul also said to Timothy, [2 Timothy 4:15] *"Of whom also beware; for he has greatly withstood our words;"* and again in another place, *"From such turn away,"* and, *"A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."*

It is not, you see, that those truths furnish them with armor, but they become fools in this way of their own accord, being filled with more willfulness. On this account it is no small gain for them to abide in ignorance, for so they are not such entire scorers. But if they learn, the mischief is twofold. For neither will they themselves be at all profited thereby, but rather the more damaged, and to you they will cause endless difficulties.

Let them hearken, who shamelessly associate with all, and make the awful things contemptible. For the mysteries we too therefore celebrate with closed doors, and keep out the uninitiated, not for any weakness of which we have convicted our rites, but because the many are as yet imperfectly prepared for them. For this very reason He Himself also discoursed much unto the Jews in parables, *"because they seeing saw not."* For this, Paul likewise commanded *"to know how we ought to answer every man."* [Colossians 4:6]

4. *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."* [Matthew 7:6]

For inasmuch as He had enjoined things great and marvellous, and had commanded men to be superior to all their passions, and had led them up to Heaven itself, and had enjoined them to strive after the resemblance, not of angels and archangels, but (as far as was possible) of the very Lord of all; and had bidden His disciples not only themselves duly to perform all this, but also to correct others, and to distinguish between the evil and them that are not such, the dogs and them that are not dogs (although there be much that is hidden in men):— that they might not say, "*these things are grievous and intolerable*," (for indeed in the sequel Peter did utter some such things, saying, "*Who can be saved?*" and again, If the case of the man be so, it is not good to marry): in order therefore that they might not now likewise say so; as in the first place even by what had gone before He had proved it all to be easy, setting down many reasons one upon another, of power to persuade men: so after all He adds also the pinnacle of all facility, devising as no ordinary relief to our toils, the assistance derived from persevering prayers. Thus, we are not ourselves, says He, to strive alone, but also to invoke the help from above: and it will surely come and be present with us, and will aid us in our struggles, and make all easy. Therefore He both commanded us to ask, and pledged Himself to the giving.

However, not simply to ask did He command us, but with much assiduity and earnestness. For this is the meaning of "*seek*." For so he that seeks, putting all things out of his mind, is taken up with that alone which is sought, and forms no idea of any of the persons present. And this which I am saying they know, as many as have lost either gold, or servants, and are seeking diligently after them.

By "*seeking*," then, He declared this; by "*knocking*," that we approach with earnestness and a glowing mind.

Despond not therefore, O man, nor show less of zeal about virtue, than they do of desire for wealth. For things of that kind you have often sought and not found, but nevertheless, though thou know this, that you are not sure to find them, you put in motion every mode of search; but here, although having a promise that you will surely receive, thou dost not show even the smallest part of that earnestness. And if you dost not receive straightway, do not even thus despair. For to this end He said, "*knock*," to signify that even if He should not straightway open the door, we are to continue there.

5. And if you doubt my affirmation, at any rate believe His example.

"For what man is there of you," says He, *"whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?"*

Because, as among men, if you keep on doing so, you are even accounted troublesome, and disgusting: so with God, when you do not so, then thou dost more entirely provoke Him. And if you continue asking, though thou receive not at once, thou surely wilt receive. For to this end was the door shut, that He may induce you to knock: to this end He does not straightway assent, that you may ask. Continue then to do these things, and you will surely receive. For that you might not say, *"What then if I should ask and not receive?"* He has blocked up your approach with that similitude, again framing arguments, and by those human things urging us to be confident on these matters; implying by them that we must not only ask, but ask what we ought.

"For which of you is there, a father, of whom if his son shall ask bread, will he give him a stone?" So that if you receive not, your asking a stone is the cause of your not receiving. For though thou be a son, this suffices not for your receiving: rather this very thing even hinders your receiving, that being a son, you ask what is not profitable.

Do thou also therefore ask nothing worldly, but all things spiritual, and you will surely receive. For so Solomon, because he asked what he ought, behold how quickly he received. Two things now, you see, should be in him that prays, asking earnestly, and asking what he ought: *"since you too,"* says He, *"though ye be fathers, wait for your sons to ask: and if they should ask of you anything inexpedient, you refuse the gifts; just as, if it be expedient, you consent and bestow it."* Do thou too, considering these things, not withdraw until thou receive; until thou have found, retire not; relax not your diligence, until the door be opened. For if you approach with this mind, and say, *"Except I receive, I depart not;"* you will surely receive, provided thou ask such things, as are both suitable for Him of whom you ask to give, and expedient for you the petitioner. But what are these? To seek the things spiritual, all of them; to forgive them that have trespassed, and so to draw near asking forgiveness; *"to lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting."* If we thus ask, we shall receive. As it is, surely our asking is a mockery, and the act of drunken rather than of sober men.

"What then," says one, *"if I ask even spiritual things, and do not receive?"* You did not surely knock with earnestness; or you made yourself unworthy to receive; or quickly left off.

"And wherefore," it may be inquired, *"did He not say, what things we ought to ask?"* Nay verily, He has mentioned them all in what precedes, and has signified for what things we ought to draw near. Say not then, *"I drew near, and did not receive."* For in no case is it owing to God that we receive not, God who loves us so much as to surpass even fathers, to surpass them as far as goodness does this evil nature.

"For if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more your heavenly Father."

Now this He said, not to bring an evil name on man's nature, nor to condemn our race as bad; but in contrast to His own goodness He calls paternal tenderness evil, so great is the excess of His love to man.

Do you see an argument unspeakable, of power to arouse to good hopes even him that has become utterly desperate?

Now here indeed He signifies His goodness by means of our fathers, but in what precedes by the chief among His gifts, by the "*soul*," by the body. And nowhere does He set down the chief of all good things, nor bring forward His own coming:— for He who thus made speed to give up His Son to the slaughter, "*how shall He not freely give us all things?*"— because it had not yet come to pass. But Paul indeed sets it forth, thus saying, "*He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things.*" [Romans 8:32] But His discourse with them is still from the things of men.

6. After this, to indicate that we ought neither to feel confidence in prayer, while neglecting our own doings; nor, when taking pains, trust only to our own endeavors; but both to seek after the help from above, and contribute withal our own part; He sets forth the one in connection with the other. For so after much exhortation, He taught also how to pray, and when He had taught how to pray, He proceeded again to His exhortation concerning what we are to do; then from that again to the necessity of praying continually, saying, "*Ask,*" and "*seek,*" and "*knock.*" And thence again, to the necessity of being also diligent ourselves.

"For all things," says He, *"whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them."*

Summing up all in brief, and signifying, that virtue is compendious, and easy, and readily known of all men.

And He did not merely say, *"All things whatsoever ye would,"* but, *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would."* For this word, *"therefore,"* He did not add without purpose, but with a concealed meaning: *"if you desire,"* says He, *"to be heard, together with what I have said, do these things also."* What then are these? *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you."* Do you see how He has hereby also signified that together with prayer we need exact conversation? And He did not say, *"whatsoever things you would to be done unto you of God, those do unto your neighbor;"* lest you should say, *"But how is it possible? He is God and I am man:"* but, *"whatsoever you would to be done unto you of your fellow servant, these things do thou also yourself show forth towards your neighbor."* What is less burdensome than this? What fairer?

Then the praise also, before the rewards, is exceeding great.

"For this is the law and the prophets." Whence it is evident, that virtue is according to our nature; that we all, of ourselves, know our duties; and that it is not possible for us ever to find refuge in ignorance.

7. *"Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: and strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it."*

And yet after this He said, *"My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* [Matthew 11:30] And in what He has lately said also, He intimated the same: how then does He here say it is strait and confined? In the first place, if you attend, even here He points to it as very light, and easy, and accessible. *"And how,"* it may be said, *"is the narrow and confined way easy?"* Because it is a way and a gate; even as also the other, though it be wide, though spacious, is also a way and a gate. And of these there is

nothing permanent, but all things are passing away, both the pains and the good things of life.

And not only herein is the part of virtue easy, but also by the end again it becomes yet easier. For not the passing away of our labors and toils, but also their issuing in a good end (for they end in life) is enough to console those in conflict. So that both the temporary nature of our labors, and the perpetuity of our crowns, and the fact that the labors come first, and the crowns after, must prove a very great relief in our toils. Wherefore Paul also called their affliction "*light*"; not from the nature of the events, but because of the mind of the combatants, and the hope of the future. "*For our light affliction,*" says he, "*works an eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*"

[2 Corinthians 4:17-18] For if to sailors the waves and the seas, to soldiers their slaughters and wounds, to husbandmen the winters and the frosts, to boxers the sharp blows, be light and tolerable things, all of them, for the hope of those rewards which are temporary and perishing; much more when heaven is set forth, and the unspeakable blessings, and the eternal rewards, will no one feel any of the present hardships. Or if any account it, even thus, to be toilsome, the suspicion comes of nothing but their own remissness.

See, at any rate, how He on another side also makes it easy, commanding not to hold intercourse with the dogs, nor to give one's self over to the swine, and to "*beware of the false prophets;*" thus on all accounts causing men to feel as if in real conflict. And the very fact too of calling it narrow contributed very greatly towards making it easy; for it wrought on them to be vigilant. As Paul then, when he says, "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood,*" does so not to cast down, but to rouse up the spirits of the soldiers: even so He also, to shake the travellers out of their

sleep, called the way rough. And not in this way only did He work upon men, to be vigilant, but also by adding, that it contains likewise many to supplant them; and, what is yet more grievous, they do not even attack openly, but hiding themselves; for such is the race of the false prophets. *"But look not to this,"* says He, *"that it is rough and narrow, but where it ends; nor that the opposite is wide and spacious, but where it issues."*

And all these things He says, thoroughly to awaken our alacrity; even as elsewhere also He said, *"Violent men take it by force."* For whoever is in conflict, when he actually sees the judge of the lists marvelling at the painfulness of his efforts, is the more inspirited.

Let it not then bewilder us, when many things spring up hence, that turn to our vexation. For the way is strait, and the gate narrow, but not the city. Therefore must one neither look for rest here, nor there expect any more anything that is painful.

Now in saying, *"Few there be that find it,"* here again He both declared the carelessness of the generality, and instructed His hearers not to regard the felicities of the many, but the labors of the few. For the more part, says He, so far from walking this way, do not so much as make it their choice: a thing of most extreme criminality. But we should not regard the many, nor be troubled thereat, but emulate the few; and, by all means equipping ourselves, should so walk therein.

For besides that it is strait, there are also many to overthrow us in the way that leads there. Wherefore He also added,

8. *"Beware of false prophets, for they will come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."* Behold together with the dogs and swine another kind of ambush and conspiracy, far more grievous than that. For those are acknowledged and open, but these shaded over. For which cause also, while from those He commanded to hold off, these He

charged men to watch with exact care, as though it were not possible to see them at the first approach. Wherefore He also said, "*beware*"; making us more exact to discern them.

Then, lest when they had heard that it was narrow and strait, and that they must walk on a way opposite to the many, and must keep themselves from swine and dogs, and together with these from another more wicked kind, even this of wolves; lest, I say, they should sink down at this multitude of vexations, having both to go a way contrary to most men, and therewith again to have such anxiety about these things: He reminded them of what took place in the days of their fathers, by using the term, "*false prophets*," for then also no less did such things happen. Be not now, I pray you, troubled (so He speaks), for nothing new nor strange is to befall you. Since for all truth the devil is always secretly substituting its appropriate deceit.

And by the figure of "*false prophets*," here, I think He shadows out not the heretics, but them that are of a corrupt life, yet wear a mask of virtue; whom the generality are wont to call by the name of impostors. Wherefore He also said further,

"By their fruits you shall know them." [Matthew 7:16]

For among heretics one may often find actual goodness, but among those whom I was mentioning, by no means.

"What then," it may be said, *"if in these things too they counterfeit?"*
"Nay, they will be easily detected; for such is the nature of this way, in which I commanded men to walk, painful and irksome; but the hypocrite would not choose to take pains, but to make a show only; wherefore also he is easily convicted." Thus, inasmuch as He had said, *"there be few that find it,"* He clears them out again from among those, who find it not, yet feign so

to do, by commanding us not to look to them that wear the masks only, but to them who in reality pursue it.

"But wherefore," one may say, "did He not make them manifest, but set us on the search for them?" That we might watch, and be ever prepared for conflict, guarding against our disguised as well as against our open enemies: which kind indeed Paul also was intimating, when he said, that *"by their good words they deceive the hearts of the simple."* Let us not be troubled therefore, when we see many such even now. Nay, for this too Christ foretold from the beginning.

And see His gentleness: how He said not, *"Punish them,"* but, *"Be not hurt by them," "Do not fall among them unguarded."* Then that you might not say, *"it is impossible to distinguish that sort of men,"* again He states an argument from a human example, thus saying,

"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit, but the corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." [Matthew 7:16-18]

Now what He says is like this: they have nothing gentle nor sweet; it is the sheep only so far as the skin; wherefore also it is easy to discern them. And lest you should have any the least doubt, He compares it to certain natural necessities, in matters which admit of no result but one. In which sense Paul also said, *"The carnal mind is death; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."*

And if He states the same thing twice, it is not tautology. But, lest any one should say, *"Though the evil tree bear evil fruit, it bears also good, and makes the distinction difficult, the crop being twofold:"* *"This is not so,"* says He, *"for it bears evil fruit only, and never can bear good: as indeed in the contrary case also."*

"What then? Is there no such thing as a good man becoming wicked? And the contrary again takes place, and life abounds with many such examples."

But Christ says not this, that for the wicked there is no way to change, or that the good cannot fall away, but that so long as he is living in wickedness, he will not be able to bear good fruit. For he may indeed change to virtue, being evil; but while continuing in wickedness, he will not bear good fruit.

What then? Did not David, being good, bear evil fruit? Not continuing good, but being changed; since, undoubtedly, had he remained always what he was, he would not have brought forth such fruit. For not surely while abiding in the habit of virtue, did he commit what he committed.

Now by these words He was also stopping the mouths of those who speak evil at random, and putting a bridle on the lips of all calumniators. I mean, whereas many suspect the good by reason of the bad, He by this saying has deprived them of all excuse. *"For you can not say, 'I am deceived and beguiled;' since I have given you exactly this way of distinguishing them by their works, having added the injunction to go to their actions, and not to confound all at random."*

9. Then forasmuch as He had not commanded to punish, but only to beware of them, He, at once both to comfort those whom they vex, and to alarm and change them, set up as a bulwark against them the punishment they should receive at His hands, saying,

"Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." [Matthew 7:19]

Then, to make the saying less grievous, He added,

"Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them."

That He might not seem to introduce the threatening as His leading topic, but to be stirring up their mind in the way of admonition and counsel.

Here He seems to me to be hinting at the Jews also, who were exhibiting such fruits. Wherefore also He reminded them of the sayings of John, in the very same terms delineating their punishment. For he too said the very same, making mention to them of an *"axe,"* and of a *"tree cut down,"* and of *"unquenchable fire."*

And though it appear indeed to be some single judgment, the being burnt up, yet if one examine carefully, these are two punishments. For he that is burnt is also cast of course out of God's kingdom; and this latter punishment is more grievous than the other. Now I know indeed that many tremble only at hell, but I affirm the loss of that glory to be a far greater punishment than hell. And if it be not possible to exhibit it such in words, this is nothing marvellous. For neither do we know the blessedness of those good things, that we should on the other hand clearly perceive the wretchedness ensuing on being deprived of them; since Paul, as knowing these things clearly, is aware, that to fall from Christ's glory is more grievous than all. And this we shall know at that time, when we shall fall into the actual trial of it.

But may this never be our case, O thou only-begotten Son of God, neither may we ever have any experience of this irremediable punishment. For how great an evil it is to fall from those good things, cannot indeed be accurately told: nevertheless, as I may be able, I will labor and strive by an example to make it clear to you, though it be but in some small degree.

Let us then imagine a wondrous child, having besides His virtue the dominion of the whole world, and in all respects so virtuous, as to be capable of bringing all men to the yearning of a father's affection. What theft do you think the father of this child would not gladly suffer, not to be

cast out of His society? And what evil, small or great, would he not welcome, on condition of seeing and enjoying Him? Now let us reason just so with respect to that glory also. For no child, be he never so virtuous, is so desirable and lovely to a father, as the having our portion in those good things, and *"to depart and be with Christ."* [Philippians 1:23]

No doubt hell, and that punishment, is a thing not to be borne. Yet though one suppose ten thousand hells, he will utter nothing like what it will be to fail of that blessed glory, to be hated of Christ, to hear *"I know you not,"* [Matthew 25:12] to be accused for not feeding Him when we saw Him an hungered. [Matthew 25:42] Yea, better surely to endure a thousand thunderbolts, than to see that face of mildness turning away from us, and that eye of peace not enduring to look upon us. For if He, while I was an enemy, and hating Him, and turning from Him, did in such wise follow after me, as not to spare even Himself, but to give Himself up unto death: when after all this I do not vouchsafe to Him so much as a loaf in His hunger, with what kind of eyes shall I ever again behold Him?

But mark even here His gentleness; in that He does not at all speak of His benefits, nor say, *"You have despised Him that has done you so much good:"* neither does He say, *"Me, who brought you from that which is not into being, who breathed into you a soul, and set you over all things on earth, who for your sake made earth, and heaven, and sea, and air, and all things that are, who had been dishonored by you, yea accounted of less honor than the devil, and did not even so withdraw Himself, but had innumerable thoughts for you after it all; who chose to become a slave, who was beaten with rods and spit upon, who was slain, who died the most shameful death, who also on high makes intercession for you, who freely gives you His Spirit, who vouchsafes to you a kingdom, who makes you such promises, whose will it is to be unto you Head, and Bridegroom, and*

Garment, and House, and Root, and Meat, and Drink, and Shepherd, and King, and who has taken you to be brother, and heir, and joint-heir with Himself; who has brought you out of darkness into the dominion of light."

These things, I say, and more than these He might speak of, but He mentions none of these; but what? Only the sin itself.

Even here He shows His love, and indicates the yearning which He has toward you: not saying, *"Depart into the fire prepared for you,"* but *"prepared for the devil."* And before He tells them what wrongs they had done, and neither so does He endure to mention all, but a few. And before these He calls the other sort, those who have done well, to signify from this too that He is blaming them justly.

What amount of punishment, then, is so grievous as these words? For if any one seeing but a man who was his benefactor and hungered, would not neglect him; or if he should neglect him, being upbraided with it, would choose rather to sink into the earth than to hear of it in the presence of two or three friends; what will be our feelings, on hearing these words in the presence of the whole world; such as He would not say even then, were He not earnestly accounting for His own doings? For that not to upbraid did He bring these things forward, but in self-defense, and for the sake of showing, that not without ground nor at random was He saying, *"depart from me;"* this is evident from His unspeakable benefits. For if He had been minded to upbraid, He would have brought forwards all these, but now He mentions only what treatment He had received.

10. Let us therefore, beloved, fear the hearing these words. Life is not a plaything: or rather our present life is a plaything, but the things to come are not such; or perchance our life is not a plaything only, but even worse than this. For it ends not in laughter, but rather brings exceeding damage on them who are not minded to order their own ways strictly. For what, I pray

you, is the difference between children who are playing at building houses, and us when we are building our fine houses? What again between them making out their dinners, and us in our delicate fare? None, but just that we do it at the risk of being punished. And if we do not yet quite perceive the poverty of what is going on, no wonder, for we are not yet become men; but when we have become so, we shall know that all these things are childish.

For so those other things too, as we grow to manhood, we laugh to scorn; but when we are children we account them to be worth anxiety; and while we are gathering together potsherds and mire we think no less of ourselves than they who are erecting their great circuits of walls. Nevertheless they straightway perish and fall down, and not even when standing can they be of any use to us, as indeed neither can those fine houses. For the citizen of Heaven they cannot receive, neither can he bear to abide in them, who has his country above; but as we throw down these with our feet, so he too those by his high spirit. And as we laugh at the children, weeping at that overthrow, even so these also, when we are bewailing it all, do not laugh only, but weep also: because both their bowels are compassionate, and great is the mischief thence arising.

Let us therefore become men. How long are we to crawl on the earth, priding ourselves on stones and stocks? How long are we to play? And would we played only! But now we even betray our own salvation; and as children when they neglect their learning, and practise themselves in these things at their leisure, suffer very severe blows; even so we too, spending all our diligence herein, and having then our spiritual lessons required of us in our works, and not being able to produce them, shall have to pay the utmost penalty. And there is none to deliver us; though he be father, brother, what you will. But while these things shall all pass away, the torment ensuing upon them remains immortal and unceasing; which sort of thing

indeed takes place with respect to the children as well, their father destroying their childish toys altogether for their idleness, and causing them to weep incessantly.

11. And to convince you that these things are such, let us bring before us wealth, that which more than anything seems to be worthy of our pains, and let us set against it a virtue of the soul (which soever you will), and then shall you see most clearly the vileness thereof. Let us, I say, suppose there are two men (and I do not now speak of injuriousness, but as yet of honest wealth); and of these two, let the one get together money, and sail on the sea, and till the land, and find many other ways of merchandise (although I know not quite, whether, so doing, he can make honest gains); nevertheless let it be so, and let it be granted that his gains are gotten with honesty; that he buys fields, and slaves, and all such things, and suppose no injustice connected therewith. But let the other one, possessing as much, sell fields, sell houses, and vessels of gold and silver, and give to the poor; let him supply the necessitous, heal the sick, free such as are in straits, some let him deliver from bonds, others let him release that are in mines, these let him bring back from the noose, those, who are captives, let him rescue from their punishment. Of whose side then would you be? And we have not as yet spoken of the future, but as yet of what is here. Of whose part then would ye be? His that is gathering gold, or his that is doing away with calamities? With him that is purchasing fields, or him who is making himself a harbor of refuge for the human race? Him that is clothed with much gold, or him that is crowned with innumerable blessings? Is not the one like some angel come down from Heaven for the amendment of the rest of mankind; but the other not so much as like a man, but like some little child that is gathering all together vainly and at random?

But if to get money honestly be thus absurd, and of extreme madness; when not even the honesty is there, how can such a man choose but be more wretched than any? I say, if the absurdity be so great; when hell is added thereto, and the loss of the kingdom, how great wailings are due to him, both living and dead?

12. Or will you that we take in hand some other part also of virtue? Let us then introduce again another man, who is in power, commanding all, invested with great dignity, having a gorgeous herald, and girdle, and lictors, and a large company of attendants. Does not this seem great, and meet to be called happy? Well then, against this man again let us set another, him that is patient of injuries, and meek, and lowly, and long suffering; and let this last be despitefully used, be beaten, and let him bear it quietly, and bless them that are doing such things.

Now which is the one to be admired, I pray you? He that is puffed up, and inflamed, or he that is self-subdued? Is not the one again like the powers above, that are so free from passion, but the other like a blown bladder, or a man who has the dropsy, and great inflammation? The one like a spiritual physician, the other, a ridiculous child that is puffing out his cheeks?

For why do you pride yourself, O man? Because you are borne on high in a chariot? Because a yoke of mules is drawing you? And what is this? Why, this one may see befalling mere logs of wood and stones. Is it that you are clothed with beautiful garments? But look at him that is clad with virtue for garments, and you will see yourself to be like withering hay, but him like a tree that bears marvellous fruit, and affords much delight to the beholders. For you are bearing about food for worms and moths, who, if they should set upon you, will quickly strip you bare of this adorning (for truly garments and gold and silver, are the one, the spinning of worms; the

other earth and dust, and again become earth and nothing more): but he that is clothed with virtue has such raiment, as not only worms cannot hurt, but not even death itself. And very naturally; for these virtues of the soul have not their origin from the earth, but are a fruit of the Spirit; wherefore neither are they subject to the mouths of worms. Nay, for these garments are woven in Heaven, where is neither moth, nor worm, nor any other such thing.

Which then is better, tell me? To be rich, or to be poor? To be in power, or in dishonor? In luxury, or in hunger? It is quite clear; to be in honor, and enjoyment, and wealth. Therefore, if you would have the things and not the names, leave the earth and what is here, and find you a place to anchor in Heaven: for what is here is a shadow, but all things there are immovable, steadfast, and beyond any assault.

Let us therefore choose them with all diligent care, that we may be delivered from the turmoil of the things here, and having sailed into that calm harbor, may be found with our lading abundant, and with that unspeakable wealth of almsgiving; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 24 on Matthew

Matt. VII. 21.

"Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that does the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

Wherefore said He not, *"but he that does my will?"* Because for the time it was a great gain for them to receive even this first; yea it was very great, considering their weakness. And moreover He intimated the one also by the other. And withal this may be mentioned, that in fact there is no other will of the Son besides that of the Father.

And here He seems to me to be censuring the Jews chiefly, laying as they did the whole stress upon the doctrines, and taking no care of practice. For which Paul also blames them, saying, *"Behold you are called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest your boast of God, and know His will:"* *"Who then are these men?"* you ask. Many of them that believed received gifts such as he that was casting out devils, and was not with Him; such as Judas; for even he too, wicked as he was, had a gift. And in the Old Testament also this may be found, in that grace has oftentimes wrought upon unworthy persons, that it might do good to others. That is, since all men were not meet for all things, but some were of a pure life, not having so great faith, and others just the contrary; by these sayings, while He urges the one to show forth much faith, the others too He was summoning by this His unspeakable gift to become better men. Wherefore also with great abundance did He bestow that grace. For *"we wrought,"* it is said, *"many mighty works."* But *"then will I profess unto them, I knew you not."* For

"now indeed they suppose they are my friends; but then shall they know, that not as to friends did I give to them."

And why marvel if He has bestowed gifts on men that have believed on Him, though without life suitable to their faith, when even on those who have fallen from both these, He is unquestionably found working? For so Balaam was an alien both from faith and from a truly good life; nevertheless grace wrought on him for the service of other men. And Pharaoh too was of the same sort: yet for all that even to him He signified the things to come. And Nebuchadnezzar was very full of iniquity; yet to him again He revealed what was to follow after many generations. [Daniel iii] And again to the son of this last, though surpassing his father in iniquity, He signified the things to come, ordering a marvellous and great dispensation. [Daniel v] Accordingly because then also the beginnings of the gospel were taking place, and it was requisite that the manifestation of its power should be abundant, many even of the unworthy used to receive gifts. Howbeit, from those miracles no gain accrued to them; rather they are the more punished. Wherefore unto them did He utter even that fearful saying, *"I never knew you:"* there being many for whom His hatred begins already even here; whom He turns away from, even before the judgment.

Let us fear therefore, beloved; and let us take great heed to our life, neither let us account ourselves worse off, in that we do not work miracles now. For that will never be any advantage to us, as neither any disadvantage in our not working them, if we take heed to all virtue. Because for the miracles we ourselves are debtors, but for our life and our doings we have God our debtor.

3. Having now, you see, finished all, having discoursed accurately of all virtue, and pointed out the pretenders to it, of various kinds, both such as for display fast and make prayers, and such as come in the sheep's hide; and

them too that spoil it, whom He also called swine and dogs: He proceeds to signify how great is the profit of virtue even here, and how great the mischief of wickedness, by saying,

"Whosoever therefore hears these sayings of mine, and does them, shall be likened unto a wise man."

As thus: What they shall suffer who do not (although they work miracles), you have heard; but you should know also what such as obey all these sayings shall enjoy; not in the world to come only, but even here. *"For whosoever,"* says He, *"hears these sayings of mine, and does them, shall be likened to a wise man."*

Do you see how He varies His discourse; at one time saying, *"Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord,"* and revealing Himself; at another time, *"He that does the will of my Father;"* and again, bringing in Himself as judge, *"For many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, and I will say, I know you not."* And here again He indicates Himself to have the power over all, this being why He said, *"Whosoever hears these sayings of mine."*

Thus whereas all His discourse had been touching the future; of a kingdom, and an unspeakable reward and consolation, and the like; His will is, out of things here also to give them their fruits, and to signify how great is the strength of virtue even in the present life. What then is this her strength? To live in safety, to be easily subdued by no terror, to stand superior to all that despitefully use us. To this what can be equal? For this, not even he that wears the diadem can provide for himself, but that man who follows after virtue. For he alone is possessed of it in full abundance: in the ebb and flow of the things present he enjoys a great calm. The truly marvellous thing being this, that not in fair weather, but when the storm is

vehement, and the turmoil great, and the temptations continual, he cannot be shaken ever so little.

"For the rain descended," says He, "the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock."
[Matthew 7:25]

By *"rain"* here, and *"floods,"* and *"winds,"* He is expressing metaphorically the calamities and afflictions that befall men; such as false accusations, plots, bereavements, deaths, loss of friends, vexations from strangers, all the ills in our life that any one could mention. *"But to none of these,"* says He, *"does such a soul give way; and the cause is, it is founded on the rock."* He calls the steadfastness of His doctrine a rock; because in truth His commands are stronger than any rock, setting one above all the waves of human affairs. For he who keeps these things strictly, will not have the advantage of men only when they are vexing him, but even of the very devils plotting against him. And that it is not vain boasting so to speak, Job is our witness, who received all the assaults of the devil, and stood unmoveable; and the apostles too are our witnesses, for that when the waves of the whole world were beating against them, when both nations and princes, both their own people and strangers, both the evil spirits, and the devil, and every engine was set in motion, they stood firmer than a rock, and dispersed it all.

And now, what can be happier than this kind of life? For this, not wealth, not strength of body, not glory, not power, nor ought else will be able to secure, but only the possession of virtue. For there is not, nay there is not another life we may find free from all evils, but this alone. And you are witnesses, who know the plots in king's courts, the turmoils and the troubles in the houses of the rich. But there was not among the apostles any such thing.

What then? Did no such thing befall them? Did they suffer no evil at any man's hand? Nay, the marvel is this above all things, that they were indeed the object of many plots, and many storms burst upon them, but their soul was not overset by them, nor thrown into despair, but with naked bodies they wrestled, prevailed, and triumphed.

Thou then likewise, if you be willing to perform these things exactly, shall laugh all ills to scorn. Yea, for if you be but strengthened with such philosophy as is in these admonitions, nothing shall be able to hurt you. Since in what is he to harm you, who is minded to lay plots? Will he take away your money? Well, but before their threatening you were commanded to despise it, and to abstain from it so exceedingly, as not so much as even to ask any such thing of your Lord. But does he cast you into prison? Why, before your prison, you were enjoined so to live, as to be crucified even to all the world. But does he speak evil? Nay, from this pain also Christ has delivered you, by promising you without toil a great reward for the endurance of evil, and making you so clear from the anger and vexation hence arising, as even to command you to pray for them. But does he banish you and involve you in innumerable ills? Well, he is making the crown more glorious for you. But does he destroy and murder you? Even hereby he profits you very greatly, procuring for you the rewards of the martyrs, and conducting you more quickly into the untroubled haven, and affording you matter for a more abundant recompence, and contriving for you to make a gain of the universal penalty. Which thing indeed is most marvellous of all, that the plotters, so far from injuring at all, do rather make the objects of their despite more approved. To this what can be comparable? I mean, to the choice of such a mode of life as this, and no other, is.

Thus whereas He had called the way strait and narrow; to soothe our labors on this side also, He signifies the security thereof to be great, and great the pleasure; even as of the opposite course great is the unsoundness, and the detriment. For as virtue even from things here was signified by Him to have her rewards, so vice also her penalties. For what I am ever saying, that I will say now also: that in both ways He is everywhere bringing about the salvation of His hearers on the one hand by zeal for virtue, on the other by hatred of vice. Thus, because there would be some to admire what He said, while they yield no proof of it by their works, He by anticipation awakens their fears, saying, Though the things spoken be good, hearing is not sufficient for security, but there is need also of obedience in actions, and the whole lies chiefly in this. And here He ends His discourse, leaving the fear at its height in them.

For as with regard to virtue, not only from the things to come did He urge them (speaking of a kingdom, and of Heaven, and an unspeakable reward, and comfort, and the unnumbered good things): but also from the things present, indicating the firm and immoveable quality of the Rock; so also with respect to wickedness, not from the expected things only does He excite their fears (as from the tree that is cut down, and the unquenchable fire, and the not entering into the kingdom, and from His saying, "*I know you not*"): but also from the things present, the downfall, I mean, in what is said of the house.

4. Wherefore also He made His argument more expressive, by trying its force in a parable; for it was not the same thing to say, "*The virtuous man shall be impregnable, but the wicked easily subdued*," as to suppose a rock, and a house, and rivers, and rain, and wind, and the like.

"*And every one*," says He, "*that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened to a foolish man, which built his house upon the*

sand."

And well did He call this man "*foolish*": for what can be more senseless than one building a house on the sand, and while he submits to the labor, depriving himself of the fruit and refreshment, and instead thereof undergoing punishment? For that they too, who follow after wickedness, do labor, is surely manifest to every one: since both the extortioner, and the adulterer, and the false accuser, toil and weary themselves much to bring their wickedness to effect; but so far from reaping any profit from these their labors, they rather undergo great loss. For Paul too intimated this when he said, "*He that sows to his flesh, shall of his flesh reap corruption.*" [Galatians 6:8] To this man are they like also, who build on the sand; as those that are given up to fornication, to wantonness, to drunkenness, to anger, to all the other things.

Such an one was Ahab, but not such Elijah (since when we have put virtue and vice along side of one another, we shall know more accurately the difference): for the one had built upon the rock, the other on the sand; wherefore though he were a king, he feared and trembled at the prophet, at him that had only his sheepskin. Such were the Jews but not the apostles; and so though they were few and in bonds, they exhibited the steadfastness of the rock; but those, many as they were, and in armor, the weakness of the sand. For so they said, "*What shall we do to these men?*" [Acts 4:16] Do you see those in perplexity, not who are in the hands of others, and bound, but who are active in holding down and binding? And what can be more strange than this? Have you hold of the other, and art yet in utter perplexity? Yes, and very naturally. For inasmuch as they had built all on the sand, therefore also were they weaker than all. For this cause also they said again, "*What do ye, seeking to bring this man's blood upon us?*" [Acts 5:28] What

says he? Do you scourge, and are you in fear? Do you entreat despitefully, and art in dismay? Do you judge, and yet tremble? So feeble is wickedness.

But the Apostles not so, but how? "*We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*" [Acts 4:20] Do you see a noble spirit? Do you see a rock laughing waves to scorn? Do you see a house unshaken? And what is yet more marvellous; so far from turning cowards themselves at the plots formed against them, they even took more courage, and cast the others into greater anxiety. For so he that smites adamant, is himself the one smitten; and he that kicks against the pricks, is himself the one pricked, the one on whom the severe wounds fall: and he who is forming plots against the virtuous, is himself the one in jeopardy. For wickedness becomes so much the weaker, the more it sets itself in array against virtue. And as he who wraps up fire in a garment, extinguishes not the flame, but consumes the garment; so he that is doing despite to virtuous men, and oppressing them, and binding them, makes them more glorious, but destroys himself. For the more ills you suffer, living righteously, the stronger are you become; since the more we honor self-restraint, the less we need anything; and the less we need anything, the stronger we grow, and the more above all. Such a one was John; wherefore him no man pained, but he caused pain to Herod; so he that had nothing prevailed against him that ruled; and he that wore a diadem, and purple, and endless pomp, trembles, and is in fear of him that is stripped of all, and not even when beheaded could he without fear see his head. For that even after his death he had the terror of him in full strength, hear what He says, "*This is John, whom I slew.*" Now the expression, "*I slew,*" is that of one not exulting, but soothing his own terror, and persuading his troubled soul to call to mind, that he himself slew him. So great is the force of virtue, that even after death it is more powerful than the living. For this same cause again, when he was living, they that

possessed much wealth came unto him, and said, "*What shall we do?*" Is so much yours, and are you minded to learn the way of your prosperity from him that has nothing? The rich from the poor? The soldiers from him that has not even a house?

Such an one was Elias too: wherefore also with the same freedom did he discourse to the people. For as the former said, "*You generation of vipers;*" [Matthew 3:7] so this latter, "*How long will you halt upon both your hips?*" And the one said, "*Have you killed, and inherited?*" the other, "*It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife.*" [Mark 6:18]

Do you see the rock? Do you see the sand; how easily it sinks down, how it yields to calamities? How it is overthrown, though it have the support of royalty, of number, of nobility? For them that pursue it, it makes more senseless than all.

And it does not merely fall, but with great calamity: for "*great indeed,*" He says, "*was the fall of it.*" The risk not being of trifles, but of the soul, of the loss of Heaven, and those immortal blessings. Or rather even before that loss, no life so wretched as he must live that follows after this; dwelling with continual despondencies, alarms, cares, anxieties; which a certain wise man also was intimating when he said, "*The wicked flees, when no man is pursuing.*" [Proverbs 28:1] For such men tremble at their shadows, suspect their friends, their enemies, their servants, such as know them, such as know them not; and before their punishment, suffer extreme punishment here. And to declare all this, Christ said, "*And great was the fall of it;*" shutting up these good commandments with that suitable ending, and persuading even by the things present the most unbelieving to flee from vice.

For although the argument from what is to come be vaster, yet is this of more power to restrain the grosser sort, and to withdraw them from

wickedness. Wherefore also he ended with it, that the profit thereof might make its abode in them.

Conscious therefore of all these things, both the present, and the future, let us flee from vice, let us emulate virtue, that we may not labor fruitlessly and at random, but may both enjoy the security here, and partake of the glory there: unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 25 on Matthew

Matt. VII. 28.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine."

Yet was it rather natural for them to grieve at the unpleasantness of His sayings, and to shudder at the loftiness of His injunctions; but now so great was the power of the Teacher, that many of them were even caught thereby, and thrown into very great admiration, and persuaded by reason of the sweetness of His sayings, not even when He ceased to speak, to depart from Him at all afterwards. For neither did the hearers depart, He having come down from the mountain, but even then the whole auditory followed Him; so great a love for His sayings had He instilled into them.

But they were astonished most of all at His authority. For not with reference to another, like the prophet and Moses, did He say what He said; but everywhere indicating Himself to be the person that had the power of deciding. For so, when setting forth His laws, He still kept adding, *"But I say unto you."* And in reminding them of that day, He declared Himself to be the judge, both by the punishments, and by the honors.

And yet it was likely that this too would disturb them. For if, when they saw Him by His works showing forth His authority, the scribes were for stoning and persecuting Him; while there were words only to prove this, how was it other than likely for them to be offended? And especially when at first setting out these things were said, and before He had given proof of His own power? But however, they felt nothing of this; for when the heart and mind is candid, it is easily persuaded by the words of the truth. And this is just why one sort, even when the miracles were proclaiming His power,

were offended; while the other on hearing mere words were persuaded and followed Him. This, I would add, the evangelist too is intimating, when he says, "*great multitudes followed Him,*" [Matthew 8:1] not any of the rulers, nor of the scribes, but as many as were free from vice, and had their judgment uncorrupted. And throughout the whole gospel you see that such clave unto Him. For both while He spoke, they used to listen in silence, not making any intrusion, nor breaking in upon the connection of His sayings, nor tempting Him, and desiring to find a handle like the Pharisees; and after His exhortation they followed Him again, marvelling.

But do thou mark, I pray you, the Lord's consideration, how He varies the mode of profiting His hearers, after miracles entering on words, and again from the instruction by His words passing to miracles. Thus, both before they went up into the mountain, He healed many, preparing the way for His sayings; and after finishing that long discourse to the people, He comes again to miracles, confirming what had been said by what was done. And so, because He was teaching as "*one having authority,*" lest His so teaching should be thought boasting and arrogant, He does the very same in His works also, as having authority to heal; that they might no more be perplexed at seeing Him teach in this way, when He was working His miracles also in the same.

2. "*For when He had come down from the mountain, there came a leper, saying, Lord, if You will, You can make me clean.*" Great was the understanding and the faith of him who so drew near. For he did not interrupt the teaching, nor break through the auditory, but awaited the proper time, and approaches Him "*when He has come down.*" And not at random, but with much earnestness, and at His knees, he beseeches Him, as another evangelist says, and with the genuine faith and right opinion about him. For neither did he say, "*If Thou request it of God,*" nor, "*If Thou pray,*"

but, *"If You will, You can make me clean."* Nor did he say, *"Lord, cleanse me,"* but leaves all to Him, and makes His recovery depend on Him, and testifies that all the authority is His.

"What then," says one, *"if the leper's opinion was mistaken?"* It were meet to do away with it, and to reprove, and set it right. Did He then so do? By no means; but quite on the contrary, He establishes and confirms what had been said. For this cause, you see, neither did He say, *"Be thou cleansed,"* but, *"I will, be thou clean;"* that the doctrine might no longer be a thing of the other's surmising, but of His own approval.

But the apostles not so: rather in what way? The whole people being in amazement, they said, *"Why give heed to us, as though by our own power or authority we had made him to walk?"* But the Lord, though He spoke oftentimes many things modestly, and beneath His own glory, what says He here, to establish the doctrine of them that were amazed at Him for His authority? *"I will, be thou clean."* Although in the many and great signs which He wrought, He nowhere appears to have uttered this word. Here however, to confirm the surmise both of all the people and of the leper touching His authority, He purposely added, *"I will."*

And it was not that He said this, but did it not; but the work also followed immediately. Whereas, if he had not spoken well, but the saying had been a blasphemy, the work ought to have been interrupted. But now nature herself gave way at His command, and that speedily, as was meet, even more speedily than the evangelist has said. For the word, *"immediately,"* falls far short of the quickness that there was in the work.

But He did not merely say, *"I will, be thou clean,"* but He also *"put forth His hand, and touched him;"* a thing especially worthy of inquiry. For wherefore, when cleansing him by will and word, did He add also the touch of His hand? It seems to me, for no other end, but that He might signify by

this also, that He is not subject to the law, but is set over it; and that to the clean, henceforth, nothing is unclean. [Titus 1:15] For this cause, we see, Elisha did not so much as see Naaman, but though he perceived that he was offended at his not coming out and touching him, observing the strictness of the law, he abides at home, and sends him to Jordan to wash. Whereas the Lord, to signify that He heals not as a servant, but as absolute master, does also touch. For His hand became not unclean from the leprosy, but the leprous body was rendered clean by His holy hand.

Because, as we know, He came not to heal bodies only, but also to lead the soul unto self-command. As therefore He from that time forward no more forbad to eat with unwashen hands, introducing that excellent law, which relates to the indifference of meats; just so in this case also, to instruct us for the future, that the soul must be our care—that leaving the outward purifications, we must wipe that clean, and dread the leprosy thereof alone, which is sin (for to be a leper is no hindrance to virtue):— He Himself first touches the leper, and no man finds fault. For the tribunal was not corrupt, neither were the spectators under the power of envy. Therefore, so far from blaming, they were on the contrary astonished at the miracle, and yielded thereto: and both for what He said, and for what He did, they adored his uncontrollable power.

3. Having therefore healed his body, He bids him,

"Tell no man, but show himself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." [Matthew 8:4]

Now some say, that for this intent He bade him tell no man, that they might practise no craft about the discerning of his cure; a very foolish suspicion on their part. For He did not so cleanse as to leave the cleansing questionable, but He bids him *"tell no man,"* teaching us to avoid boasting

and vainglory. And yet He well knew that the other would not obey, but would proclaim his benefactor: nevertheless He does His own part.

"How then elsewhere does He bid them tell of it?" one may ask. Not as jostling with or opposing Himself, but as teaching men to be grateful. For neither in that place did He give command to proclaim Himself, but to *"give glory to God;"* by this leper training us to be clear of pride and vainglory, by the other to be thankful and grateful; and instructing on every occasion to offer to the Lord the praise of all things that befall us. That is, because men for the most part remember God in sickness, but grow slacker after recovery; He bids them continually both in sickness and in health to give heed to the Lord, in these words, *"give glory to God."*

But wherefore did He command him also to show himself to the priest, and to offer a gift? To fulfill the law here again. [Leviticus 14:1-32] For neither did He in every instance set it aside, nor in every instance keep it, but sometimes He did the one, sometimes the other; by the one making way for the high rule of life that was to come, by the other checking for a while the insolent speech of the Jews, and condescending to their infirmity. And why marvel, if just at the beginning He Himself did this, when even the very apostles, after they were commanded to depart unto the Gentiles, after the doors were opened for their teaching throughout the world, and the law shut up, and the commandments made new, and all the ancient things had ceased, are found sometimes observing the law, sometimes neglecting it?

But what, it may be said, does this saying, *"Show yourself to the priest,"* contribute to the keeping of the law? No little. Because it was an ancient law, that the leper when cleansed should not entrust to himself the judgment of his cleansing, but should show himself to the priest, and present the demonstration thereof to his eyes, and by that sentence be numbered among the clean. For if the priest said not *"The leper is*

cleansed," he remained still with the unclean without the camp. Wherefore he says, "Show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded." He said not, "which I command," but for a time remits him to the law, by every means stopping their mouths. Thus, lest they should say, He had seized upon the priests' honor; though He performed the work Himself, yet the approving it He entrusted to them, and made them sit as judges of His own miracles. "Why, I am so far," He says, "from striving either with Moses or with the priests, that I guide the objects of my favor to submit themselves unto them."

But what is, *"for a testimony unto them"*? For reproof, for demonstration, for accusation, if they be unthankful. For since they said, as a deceiver and impostor we persecute Him, as an adversary of God, and a transgressor of the law; *"You shall bear me witness,"* says He, *"at that time, that I am not a transgressor of the law. Nay, for having healed you, I remit you to the law, and to the approval of the priests;"* which was the act of one honoring the law, and admiring Moses, and not setting himself in opposition to the ancient doctrines.

And if they were not in fact to be the better, hereby most of all one may perceive His respect for the law, that although He foreknew they would reap no benefit, He fulfilled all His part. For this very thing He did indeed foreknow, and foretold it: not saying, *"for their correction,"* neither, *"for their instruction,"* but, *"for a testimony unto them,"* that is, for accusation, and for reproof, and for a witness that all has been done on my part; and though I foreknew they would continue incorrigible, not even so did I omit what ought to be done; only they continued keeping up to the end their own wickedness.

This, we may observe, He says elsewhere also; *"This gospel shall be preached in all the world for a testimony to all the nations, and then shall*

the end come;" [Matthew 24:14] to the nations, to them that obey not, to them that believe not. Thus, lest any one should say, "*And wherefore preach to all, if all are not to believe?*"— it is that I may be found to have done all my own part, and that no man may hereafter be able to find fault, as though he had not heard. For the very preaching shall bear witness against them, and they will not be able hereafter to say, "*We heard not;*" for the word of godliness "*has gone out unto the ends of the world.*"

4. Therefore bearing these things in mind, let us also fulfill all our duties to our neighbor, and to God let us give thanks continually. For it is too monstrous, enjoying as we do His bounty in deed every day, not so much as in word to acknowledge the favor; and this, though the acknowledgment again yield all its profit to us. Since He needs not, be sure, anything of ours: but we stand in need of all things from Him. Thus thanksgiving itself adds nothing to Him, but causes us to be nearer to Him. For if men's bounties, when we call them to memory, do the more warm us with their proper love-charm; much more when we are continually bringing to mind the noble acts of our Lord towards us, shall we be more diligent in regard of His commandments.

For this cause Paul also said, "*Be thankful.*" [Colossians 3:15] For the best preservative of any benefit is the remembrance of the benefit, and a continual thanksgiving.

For this cause even the awful mysteries, so full of that great salvation, which are celebrated at every communion, are called a sacrifice of thanksgiving, because they are the commemoration of many benefits, and they signify the very sum of God's care for us, and by all means they work upon us to be thankful. For if His being born of a virgin was a great miracle, and the evangelist said in amaze, "*now all this was done;*" His being also slain, what place shall we find for that? Tell me. I mean, if to be born is

called "*all this*;" to be crucified, and to pour forth His blood, and to give Himself to us for a spiritual feast and banquet—what can that be called? Let us therefore give Him thanks continually, and let this precede both our words and our works.

But let us be thankful not for our own blessings alone, but also for those of others; for in this way we shall be able both to destroy our envy, and to rivet our charity, and make it more genuine. Since it will not even be possible for you to go on envying them, in behalf of whom you give thanks to the Lord.

Wherefore, as you know, the priest also enjoins to give thanks for the world, for the former things, for the things that are now, for what has been done to us before, for what shall befall us hereafter, when that sacrifice is set forth.

For this is the thing both to free us from earth, and to remove us into heaven, and to make us angels instead of men. Because they too form a choir, and give thanks to God for His good things bestowed on us, saying, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.*" "*And what is this to us, that are not upon earth, nor are men?*" "*Nay, it is very much to us, for we have been taught so to love our fellow servants, as even to account their blessings ours.*"

Wherefore Paul also, everywhere in his epistles, gives thanks for God's gracious acts to the world.

Let us too therefore continually give thanks, for our own blessings, and for those of others, alike for the small and for the great. For though the gift be small, it is made great by being God's gift, or rather, there is nothing small that comes from Him, not only because it is bestowed by Him, but also in its very nature.

And to pass over all the rest, which exceed the sand in multitude; what is equal to the dispensation that has taken place for our sake? In that what was more precious to Him than all, even His only-begotten Son, Him He gave for us His enemies; and not only gave, but after giving, did even set Him before us as food; Himself doing all things that were for our good, both in giving Him, and in making us thankful for all this. For because man is for the most part unthankful, He does Himself everywhere take in hand and bring about what is for our good. And what He did with respect to the Jews, by places, and times, and feasts, reminding them of His benefits, that He did in this case also, by the manner of the sacrifice bringing us to a perpetual remembrance of His bounty in these things.

No one has so labored that we should be approved, and great, and in all things right-minded, as the God who made us. Wherefore both against our will He befriends us often, and without our knowledge oftener than not. And if you marvel at what I have said, I point to this as having occurred not to any ordinary person, but to the blessed Paul. For even that blessed man, when in much danger and affliction, often besought God that the temptations might depart from him: nevertheless God regarded not his request, but his profit, and to signify this He said, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] So that before He has told him the reason, He benefits him against his will, and without his knowing it.

5. Now what great thing does He ask, in requiring us to be thankful in return for such tender care? Let us then obey, and everywhere keep up this. Since neither were the Jews by anything ruined so much, as by being unthankful; those many stripes, one after another, were brought upon them by nothing else than this; or rather even before those stripes this had ruined and corrupted their soul. *"For the hope of the unthankful,"* says one, *"is like*

the winter's hoar frost;" [Wisdom 16:29] it benumbs and deadens the soul, as that does our bodies.

And this springs from pride, and from thinking one's self worthy of something. But the contrite will acknowledge grounds of thanksgiving to God, not for good things only, but also for what seem to be adverse; and how much soever he may suffer, will count none of his sufferings undeserved. Let us then also, the more we advance in virtue, so much the more make ourselves contrite; for indeed this, more than anything else is virtue. Because, as the sharper our sight is, the more thoroughly do we learn how distant we are from the sky; so the more we advance in virtue, so much the more are we instructed in the difference between God and us. And this is no small part of true wisdom, to be able to perceive our own desert. For he best knows himself, who accounts himself to be nothing. Thus we see that both David and Abraham, when they had come up to the highest pitch of virtue, then best fulfilled this; and would call themselves, the one, *"earth and ashes,"* [Genesis 18:27] the other, *"a worm;"* and all the saints too, like these, acknowledge their own wretchedness. So that he surely who is lifted up in boasting, is the very person to be most ignorant of himself. Wherefore also in our common practice we are wont to say of the proud, *"he knows not himself," "he is ignorant of himself."* And he that knows not himself, whom will he know? For as he that knows himself will know all things, so he who knows not this, neither will he know the rest.

Such an one was he that says, *"I will exalt my throne above the Heavens."* and did not account himself to be worthy so much as of the title of the apostles, after so many and so great deeds of goodness.

Him therefore let us emulate and follow. And we shall follow him, if we rid ourselves of earth, and of things on earth. For nothing makes a man to be so ignorant of himself, as the being rivetted to worldly concerns: nor

does anything again so much cause men to be rivetted to worldly concerns, as ignorance of one's self: for these things depend upon each other. I mean, that as he that is fond of outward glory, and highly esteems the things present, if he strive for ever, is not permitted to understand himself; so he that overlooks these things will easily know himself; and having come to the knowledge of himself, he will proceed in order to all the other parts of virtue.

In order therefore that we may learn this good knowledge, let us, disengaged from all the perishable things that kindle in us so great flame, and made aware of their vileness, show forth all lowliness of mind, and self-restraint: that we may attain unto blessings, both present and future: by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory, might, and honor, to the Father, together with the Holy and Good Spirit, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on Matthew

Matt. VIII. 5.

"And when He was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lies at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented."

The leper came unto Him *"when He had come down from the mountain,"* but this centurion, *"when He was entered into Capernaum."* Wherefore then did neither the one nor the other go up into the mountain? Not out of remissness, for indeed the faith of them both was fervent, but in order not to interrupt His teaching.

But having come unto Him, he says, *"My servant lies at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented."* Now some say, that by way of excuse he mentioned also the cause, why he had not brought him. *"For neither was it possible,"* says he, *"paralyzed as he was, and tormented, and at his last gasp, to lift and convey him."* For that he was at the point of expiring, Luke says; *"He was even ready to die."* But I say, this is a sign of his having great faith, even much greater than theirs, who let one down through the roof. [Luke 5:19] For because he knew for certain, that even a mere command was enough for the raising up of the patient, he thought it superfluous to bring him.

What then does Jesus? What He had in no case done before, here He does. For whereas on every occasion He was used to follow the wish of His supplicants, here He rather springs toward it, and offers not only to heal him, but also to come to the house. And this He does, that we might learn the virtue of the centurion. For if He had not made this offer, but had said,

"Go your way, let your servant be healed;" we should have known none of these things.

This at least He did, in an opposite way, in the case also of the Phœnician woman. For here, when not summoned to the house, of His own accord He says, He will come, that you might learn the centurion's faith and great humility; but in the case of the Phœnician woman, He both refuses the grant, and drives her, persevering therein, to great perplexity.

For being a wise physician and full of resources, He knows how to bring about contraries the one by the other. And as here by His freely-offered coming, so there by His peremptory putting off and denial, He unfolds the woman's faith. So likewise He does in Abraham's case, saying, *"I will by no means hide from Abraham my servant;"* to make you know that man's kindly affection, and his care for Sodom. And in the instance of Lot, [Genesis 19:2] they that were sent refuse to enter into his house, to make you know the greatness of that righteous man's hospitality.

What then says the centurion? *"I am not worthy that you should come under my roof."* [Matthew 8:8] Let us hearken, as many as are to receive Christ: for it is possible to receive Him even now. Let us hearken, and emulate, and receive Him with as great zeal; for indeed, when you receive a poor man who is hungry and naked, you have received and cherished Him.

2. *"But say in a word only, and my servant shall be healed."*

See this man also, how, like the leper, he has the right opinion touching Him. For neither did this one say, *"entreat,"* nor did he say, *"pray, and beseech,"* but *"command only."* And then from fear lest out of modesty He refuse, he says,

"For I also am a man under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say to this man, go, and he goes; and to another, come, and he comes; and to my servant, do this, and he does it." [Matthew 8:4]

"And what of that," says one, "if the centurion did suspect it to be so? For the question is, whether Christ affirmed and ratified as much." You speak well, and very sensibly. Let us then look to this very thing; and we shall find what happened in the case of the leper, the same happening here likewise. For even as the leper said, "If you will" (and not from the leper only are we positive about His authority, but also from the voice of Christ; in that, so far from putting an end to the suspicion, He did even confirm it more, by adding what were else superfluous to say, in the phrase, "I will, be thou cleansed," in order to establish that man's doctrine): so here too, it is right to see whether any such thing occurred. In fact, we shall find this same thing again taking place. For when the centurion had spoken such words, and had testified His so great prerogative; so far from blaming, He did even approve it, and did somewhat more than approve it. For neither has the evangelist said, that He praised the saying only, but declaring a certain earnestness in His praise, that He even "marvelled;" and neither did He simply marvel, but in the presence also of the whole people, and set Him as an example to the rest, that they should emulate Him.

Do you see how each of them that bore witness of His authority is *"marvelled at? And the multitudes were astonished at His doctrine, because He taught as one having authority;"* [Matthew 7:29] and so far from blaming them, He both took them with Him when He came down, and by His words of cleansing to the leper, confirmed their judgment. Again, that leper said, *"If you will, you can make me clean;"* [Matthew 8:2] and so far from rebuking, He on the contrary cleansed him by such treatment as He had said. Again, this centurion says, *"Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed:"* [Matthew 8:8] and *"marvelling"* at him, He said, *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."*

Now, to convince you of this by the opposite also; Martha having said nothing of this sort, but on the contrary, *"Whatsoever you will ask of God, He will give You;"* [John 11:22] so far from being praised, although an acquaintance, and dear to Him, and one of them that had shown great zeal toward Him, she was rather rebuked and corrected by Him, as not having spoken well; in that He said to her, *"Said I not unto you, that if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?"* [John 11:40] blaming her, as though she did not even yet believe. And again, because she had said, *"Whatsoever You will ask of God, He will give You;"* to lead her away from such a surmise, and to teach her that He needs not to receive from another, but is Himself the fountain of all good things, He says, *"I am the resurrection and the life;"* [John 11:25] that is to say, *"I wait not to receive active power, but work all of myself."*

Wherefore at the centurion He both marvels, and prefers him to all the people, and honors him with the gift of the kingdom, and provokes the rest to the same zeal. And to show you that for this end He so spoke, viz. for the instructing of the rest to believe in like manner, listen to the exactness of the evangelist, how he has intimated it. For,

"Jesus," says he, *"turned Him about, and said to them that followed Him, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."*

It follows, that to have high imaginations concerning Him, this especially is of faith, and tends to procure the kingdom and His other blessings. For neither did His praise reach to words only, but He both restored the sick man whole, in recompence of his faith, and weaves for him a glorious crown, and promises great gifts, saying on this wise,

"Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down in the bosoms of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."

Thus, since He had shown many miracles, He proceeds to talk with them more unreservedly.

Then, that no one might suppose His words to come of flattery, but that all might be aware that such was the mind of the centurion, He says,

"Go your way; as you have believed, so be it done unto you."

[Matthew 8:13]

And straightway the work followed, bearing witness to his character. nothing; for the question is, whether each of them has set before us the zealousness of the man, and his having had the right opinion concerning Christ. But it is likely, that after sending his friends, he himself also came and said these things. And if Luke did not speak of the one, no more did Matthew of the other; and this is not the part of men disagreeing among themselves, but rather of those that are filling up the things omitted by one another. But see by another thing also how Luke has proclaimed his faith, saying that his servant *"was ready to die."* [Luke 7:2] Nevertheless, not even this cast him into despondency, neither did it cause him to give up: but even so he trusted that he should prevail. And if Matthew affirm Christ to have said, *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,"* and hereby to show clearly that he was not an Israelite; while Luke says, *"He built our synagogue;"* neither is this a contradiction. For it was possible for one, even though not a Jew, both to build the synagogue, and to love the nation.

4. But do not thou, I pray you, merely inquire what was said by him, but add thereto his rank also, and then you will see the man's excellency. Because in truth great is the pride of them that are in places of command, and not even in afflictions do they take lower ground. He, for example, who is set down in John, is for dragging Him unto his house, and says, *"Come down, for my child is ready to die."* [John 4:49] But not so this man; rather he is far superior both to him, and to those who let down the bed through

the roof. For he seeks not for His bodily presence, neither did He bring the sick man near the physician; a thing which implied no mean imaginations concerning Him, but rather a suspicion of His divine dignity. And he says, "*speak the word only.*" And at the beginning he says not even, "*speak the word,*" but only describe his affliction: for neither did he, of great humility, expect that Christ would straightway consent, and inquire for his house. Therefore, when he heard Him say, "*I will come and heal him,*" then, not before he says, "*speak the word.*" Nor yet did the suffering confound him, but still under calamity he reasons coolly, not looking so much to the health of the servant, as to the avoiding all appearance of doing anything irreverent.

And yet it was not he that pressed it, but Christ that offered it: nevertheless even so he feared, lest perchance he should be thought to be going beyond his own deservings, and to be drawing upon himself a thing above his strength. Do you see his wisdom? Mark the folly of the Jews, in saying, "*He was worthy for whom He should do the favor.*" [Luke 7:4] For when they should have taken refuge in the love of Jesus towards man, they rather allege this man's worthiness; and know not so much as on what ground to allege it. But not so he, but he affirmed himself even in the utmost degree unworthy, not only of the benefit, but even of receiving the Lord in his house. Wherefore even when he said, "*My servant lies sick,*" he did not add, "*speak,*" for fear lest he should be unworthy to obtain the gift; but he merely made known his affliction. And when he saw Christ zealous in His turn, not even so did he spring forward, but still continues to keep to the end his own proper measure.

And if any one should say, "*wherefore did not Christ honor him in return?*" we would say this, that He did make return to him in honor, and that exceedingly: first by bringing out his mind, which thing chiefly

appeared by His not coming to his house; and in the second place, by introducing him into His kingdom, and preferring him to the whole Jewish nation. For because he made himself out unworthy even to receive Christ into his house, he became worthy both of a kingdom, and of attaining unto those good things which Abraham enjoyed.

"But wherefore," one may say, *"was not the leper commended, who showed forth things greater than these?"* For he did not so much as say, *"speak the word,"* but what was far more, *"be willing only,"* which is what the prophet says concerning the Father, *"He has done whatsoever He pleased."* But he also was commended. For when He said, *"Offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them,"* [Matthew 8:4] He means nothing else but, *"you shall be an accuser of them, in that you believed."* And besides, it was not the same for one that was a Jew to believe, and for one from without that nation. For that the centurion was not a Jew is evident, both from his being a centurion and from its being said, *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."* And it was a very great thing for a man who was out of the list of the Jewish people to admit so great a thought. For he did no less than imagine to himself, as it seems to me, the armies in Heaven; or that the diseases and death, and everything else, were so subject to Him, as his soldiers to himself.

Wherefore he said likewise, *"For I also am a man set under authority;"* that is, You are God, and I man; I under authority, but Thou not under authority. If I therefore, being a man, and under authority, can do so much; far more He, both as God, and as not under authority. Thus with the strongest expression he desires to convince Him, that he says this, as one giving not a similar example, but one far exceeding. For if I (said he), being equal in honor to them whom I command, and under authority, yet by reason of the trifling superiority of my rank am able to do such great things;

and no man contradicts me, but what I command, that is done, though the injunctions be various (*"for I say to this man, go, and he goes; and to another, come, and he comes"*: [Matthew 8:9]) much more will You Yourself be able.

And some actually read the place in this way, *"For if I, being a man,"* and having inserted a stop, they add, *"having soldiers under authority under me."*

But mark thou, I pray you, how he signified that Christ is able both to overcome even death as a slave, and to command it as its master. For in saying, *"come, and he comes,"* and *"go, and he goes;"* he expresses this: *"If You should command his end not to come upon him, it will not come."*

Do you see how believing he was? For that which was afterwards to be manifest to all, here is one who already has made it evident; that He has power both of death and of life, and *"leads down to the gates of hell, and brings up again."* [1 Samuel xxvi] Nor was he speaking of soldiers only, but also of slaves; which related to a more entire obedience.

5. But nevertheless, though having such great faith, he still accounted himself to be unworthy. Christ however, signifying that he was worthy to have Him enter into his house, did much greater things, marvelling at him, and proclaiming him, and giving more than he had asked. For he came indeed seeking for his servant health of body, but went away, having received a kingdom. Do you see how the saying had been already fulfilled, *"Seek the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."* For, because he evinced great faith, and lowliness of mind, He both gave him heaven, and added unto him health.

And not by this alone did He honor him, but also by signifying upon whose casting out he is brought in. For now from this time forth He proceeds to make known to all, that salvation is by faith, not by works of

the law. And this is why not to Jews only, but to Gentiles also the gift so given shall be proffered, and to the latter rather than to the former. For *"think not,"* says He, by any means, that so it has come to pass in regard of this man alone; nay, so it shall be in regard of the whole world. And this He said, prophesying of the Gentiles, and suggesting to them good hopes. For in fact there were some following Him from Galilee of the Gentiles. And this He said, on the one hand, not letting the Gentiles despair, on the other, putting down the proud spirits of the Jews.

But that His saying might not affront the hearers, nor afford them any handle; He neither brings forward prominently what He has to say of the Gentiles, but upon occasion taken from the centurion; nor does He use nakedly the term, Gentiles: not saying, *"many of the Gentiles,"* but, *"many from east and west:"* [Matthew 8:11] which was the language of one pointing out the Gentiles, but did not so much affront the hearers, because His meaning was under a shadow.

Neither in this way only does He soften the apparent novelty of His doctrine, but also by speaking of *"Abraham's bosom"* instead of *"the kingdom."* For neither was that term familiar to them: moreover, the introduction of Abraham would be a sharper sting to them. Wherefore John also spoke nothing at first concerning hell, but, what was most apt to grieve them, He says, *"Think not to say, we are children of Abraham."* [Matthew 3:9]

He is providing for another point also; not to seem in any sense opposed to the ancient polity. For he that admires the patriarchs, and speaks of their bosom as an inheritance of blessings, does much more than sufficiently remove also this suspicion.

Let no man therefore suppose that the threat is one only, for both the punishment of the one and the joy of the other is double: of the one, not

only that they fell away, but that they fell away from their own; of the other, not only that they attained, but that they attained what they had no expectation of: and there is a third together with these, that the one received what pertained to the other. And he calls them "*children of the kingdom,*" for whom the kingdom had been prepared: which also more than all was apt to gall them; in that having pointed to them as being in their bosom by His offer and promise, after all He puts them out.

6. Then, because what He had said was mere affirmation, He confirms it by the miracle; as indeed He shows the miracles in their turn, by the subsequent accomplishment of the prediction. He accordingly, who disbelieves the health which the servant then received, let him from the prophecy, which has this day come to pass, believe that other also. For so that prophecy again, even before the event, was made manifest to all by the sign which then took place. To this end, you see, having first uttered that prediction, then and not before He raised up the sick of the palsy; that He might make the future credible by the present, and the less by the greater. Since for virtuous men to enjoy His good things, and for the contrary sort to undergo His penalties, were nothing improbable, but a reasonable event, and according to the tenor of laws: but to brace up the feeble, and to raise the dead, was something beyond nature.

But nevertheless, unto this great and marvellous work the centurion too contributed no little; which thing, we see, Christ also declared, saying, "*Go your way, and as you have believed, so be it done unto you.*" Do you see how the health of the servant proclaimed aloud both Christ's power, and the faith of the centurion, and also became a pledge of the future? Or rather it was all a proclamation of Christ's power. For not only did He quite heal the servant's body, but the soul also of the centurion He did Himself bring over unto the faith by His miracles.

And do thou look not to this only, that the one believed, and the other was healed, but marvel how quickly also. For this too the evangelist declared, saying, "*And his servant was healed in the self-same hour:*" even as of the leper also he said, "*he was straightway cleansed.*" For not by healing, but by doing so both in a wonderful manner and in a moment of time, did He display His power. Neither in this way only does He profit us, but also by his constant practice, in the manifestation of His miracles, of opening incidentally His discourses about His kingdom, and of drawing all men towards it. For, those even whom He was threatening to cast out, He threatened not in order to cast them out, but in order that through such fear, He might draw them into it by His words. And if not even hereby were they profited, theirs is the whole blame, as also of all who are in the like distemper.

For not at all among Jews only may one see this taking place, but also among them that have believed. For Judas too was a child of the kingdom, and it was said to him with the disciples, "*You shall sit on twelve thrones;*" [Matthew 19:28] yet he became a child of hell; whereas the Ethiopian, barbarian as he was, and of them "*from the east and west,*" shall enjoy the crowns with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. This takes place among us also now. "*For many,*" says He, "*that are first shall be last, and the last first.*" [Matthew 19:30] And this He says, that neither the one may grow languid, as unable to return; nor the others be confident, as standing fast. This John also declared before from the beginning, when he said, "*God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*" [Matthew 3:9] Thus, since it was so to come to pass, it is proclaimed long before; that no one may be confounded at the strangeness of the event. But he indeed speaks of it as a possible thing (for he was first); Christ on the other hand as what will surely be, affording the proof of it from His works.

7. Let us not then be confident, who stand, but let us say to ourselves, *"Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall;"* [1 Corinthians 10:12] neither let us who are fallen despair, but let us say to ourselves, *"He that falls, does he not arise?"* [Jeremiah 8:4] For many even who have mounted to the very summit of Heaven, and have shown forth all austerity, and had made their abode in the deserts, nor saw any woman so much as in a dream; having become a little remiss, have been tripped up, and have come unto the very gulf of wickedness. While others again from thence have gone up to Heaven, and from the stage and orchestra have passed over unto the discipline of angels, and have displayed so great virtue, as to drive away devils, and to work many other such miracles. And of these examples both the Scriptures are full, and our life is also full. Even whoremongers and effeminate persons stop the mouths of the Manichæans, who say that wickedness is immoveable, enrolling themselves on the devil's side, and weakening the hands of them that would wish to be in earnest, and overturning all our life.

For they who inculcate these things, not only injure men as to the future, but here also turn all things upside down, for their own part at least. Because when will any regard virtue, from among those that are living in wickedness, so long as he accounts his return that way, and his change for the better, a thing impossible? For if now, when both laws exist, and penalties are threatened, and there is common opinion to recall the ordinary sort, and hell is looked for, and a kingdom promised, and wrong things reproached, and the good praised; hardly do any choose the labors that are to be undergone for virtue's sake: should you take away all these things, what is there to hinder ruin and corruption universal?

Knowing therefore the devil's craft, and that as well the lawgivers of the Gentiles as the oracles of God, and the reasonings of nature, and the

common opinion of all men, yea barbarians, and Scythians, and Thracians, and generally all, are directly opposed both to these, and to such as strive to enact the doctrines of fate: let us be sober, beloved, and bidding farewell to all those, let us travel along the narrow way, being both confident and in fear: in fear because of the precipices on either side, confident because of Jesus our guide. Let us travel on, sober and wakeful. For though but for a little while one slumber, he is swept away quickly.

8. For we are not more perfect than David, who by a little carelessness was hurled into the very gulf of sin. Yet he arose again quickly. Look not then to his having sinned only, but also to his having washed away his sin. For to this end He wrote that history, not that you should behold him fallen, but admire him risen; to teach you, when you are fallen, how you should arise. Thus, as physicians choose out the most grievous diseases, and write them in their books, and teach their method of cure in similar cases; if so be men having practised on the greater, may easily master the less; even so God likewise has brought forward the greatest of sins, that they also who offend in small things may find the cure of these easy, by means of the other: since if those admitted of healing, much more the less.

Let us look then to the manner both of the sickness, and of the speedy recovery of that blessed man. What then was the manner of his sickness? He committed adultery and murder. For I shrink not from proclaiming these things with a loud voice. Since if the Holy Ghost thought it no shame to record all this history, much less ought we to draw any shade over it. Wherefore I not only proclaim it, but I add another circumstance also. For in fact, whosoever hide these things, they most of all men throw his virtue into the shade. And as they that say nothing of the battle with Goliath deprive him of no small crowns, so also they that hurry by this history. Does not my saying seem a paradox? Nay, wait a little, and then you shall

know that with reason have we said this. For to this end do I magnify the sin, and make my statement stranger, that I may the more abundantly provide the medicines.

What is it then which I add? The man's virtue; which makes the fault also greater. For all things are not judged alike in all men. *"For mighty" men (it is said) "shall be mightily tormented:"* and *"He that knew his Lord's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."* [Luke 12:47] So that more knowledge is a ground of more punishment. For this same reason the priest, if he commit the same sin as those under government, shall not have the same to endure, but things far more grievous.

Perhaps, seeing the charge against him amplified, you tremble and fear, and marvel at me, as though I were going down a precipice. But I am so confident on that righteous man's behalf, that I will proceed even farther; for the more I aggravate the charge, so much the more shall I be able to show forth the praise of David.

"And what more than this," you will say, *"can be uttered?"* Abundantly more. For as in the case of Cain, what was done was not a murder only, but worse than even many murders; for it was not a stranger, but a brother, whom he slew; and a brother who had not done but suffered wrong; not after many murderers, but having first originated the horrid crime: so here too that which was perpetrated was not murder only. For it was no ordinary man that did it, but a prophet: and he slays not him that had done wrong, but him that had suffered wrong; for indeed he had been mortally wronged, by the forcing away his wife: nevertheless after that he added this also.

9. Perceive ye, how I have not spared that righteous one? How without any the least reserve I have mentioned his offenses? But yet, so confident am I concerning his defense, that after so great load as this of his sin, I would there were present both the Manichæans who most deride all this,

and they that are diseased in Marcion's way, that I might fully stop their mouths. For they indeed say "*he committed murder and adultery;*" but I say not this only, but have also proved the murder to be twofold, first from him who suffered the wrong, then from the quality of the person who offended. For it is not the same thing, for one to whom the Spirit was vouchsafed, and on whom so great benefits had been conferred, and who had been admitted to such freedom of speech, and at such a time of life, to venture on crimes of that sort; as without all these, to commit this self-same thing. Nevertheless even in this respect is that illustrious man most of all worthy of admiration, that when he had fallen into the very pit of wickedness, he did not sink nor despair, nor cast himself down in supineness, on receiving of the devil so fatal a wound; but quickly, or rather straightway, and with great force, he gave a more fatal blow than he had received.

And the same thing occurred, as if in war and in battle some barbarian had struck his spear into the heart of a chieftain, or shot an arrow into his liver, and had added to the former wound a second more fatal than it, and he that had received these grievous blows, when fallen, and wallowing in much blood all about him, were first to rise up quickly, then to hurl a spear at him that wounded him, and exhibit him dead on the ground in a moment. Even so in this case also, the greater you declare the wound, so much the more admirable do you imply the soul of him that was wounded to be, that he had power after this grievous wound both to rise up again, and to stand in the very forefront of the battle array, and bear down him that had wounded him.

And how great a thing this is, they best know, whosoever are fallen into grievous sins. For it is not so much a proof of a generous and vigorous soul to walk upright, and to run all the way (for such a soul has the good hope going along with it, to cheer and to rouse it, to nerve and render it

more zealous); as after those innumerable crowns, and so many trophies, and victories, having undergone the utmost loss, to be able to resume the same course. And that what I say may be made plain, I will endeavor to bring before you another example, not at all inferior to the former.

For imagine, I pray you, some pilot, when he had compassed seas without number, and sailed over the whole ocean; after those many storms, and rocks and waves, to sink, having with him a great freight, in the very mouth of the harbor, and hardly with his naked body to escape this grievous shipwreck; how would he naturally feel towards the sea, and navigation, and such labors? Will such a one then ever choose, unless he be of a very noble soul, to see a beach, or a vessel, or a harbor? I trow not; but he will lie hiding his face, seeing night all through the day, and shrinking from all things; and he will choose rather to live by begging, than to put his hand to the same labors.

But not such was this blessed man; but though he had undergone such a shipwreck, after those innumerable troubles and toils, he stayed not with his face covered, but launched his vessel, and having spread his sails, and taken the rudder in hand, he applies himself to the same labors, and has made his wealth more abundant again. Now if to stand be so admirable, and not to lie down for ever after one has fallen; to rise up again, and to do such deeds, what crowns would not this deserve?

And yet surely there were many things to drive him to despair; as first, the greatness of his sins; secondly, that not at the beginning of life, when our hopes also are more abundant, but near the end, these things befell him. For neither does the merchant, who has just gone out of the harbor and been wrecked, grieve equally with him, who after very many traffickings strikes on a rock. Thirdly, that when he had already obtained great wealth, he incurred this. Yea, for by that time he had stored up no small merchandise:

for instance, the deeds of his early youth, when he was a shepherd; those about Goliath, when he set up the glorious trophy; those pertaining to his self-command respecting Saul. Since he showed forth even the evangelical long-suffering, in that he got his enemy ten thousand times into his hands, and continually spared him; and chose rather to be an outcast from his country and from liberty, and from life itself, than to slay him that was unjustly plotting against him. Likewise after his coming to the kingdom, there were noble deeds of his to no small amount.

And besides what I have said, his credit also among the many, and his fall from glory so bright, would cause no ordinary perplexity. For the purple did by no means so much adorn him, as the stain of his sin disgraced him. And ye know of course what a great thing it is for evil deeds to be exposed, and how great a soul is required in such an one, not to despond after the censure of the multitude, and when he has so many witnesses of his own offenses.

Nevertheless all these darts that noble person drew out of his soul, and so shone forth after this, so wiped out the stain, became so pure, that his offspring even after his death had their sins mitigated by him: and that which was said of Abraham, we find God saying the same of this man also; or rather, much more of the latter. For with respect to the patriarch it is said, *"I remembered my covenant with Abraham;"* [Exodus 2:24] but here He says not *"the covenant,"* but how? *"I will defend this city for my servant David's sake."* [Isaiah 37:35] And besides, on account of His favor towards him, He suffered not Solomon to fall from the kingdom, great as the sin was which he had committed. And so great was the glory of the man, that Peter, so many years after, in exhorting the Jews, spoke on this wise: *"Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried."* [Acts 2:29] And Christ too, discoursing with the Jews, signifies

him after his sin to have had the Spirit vouchsafed to such a degree, that he was counted worthy to prophesy again even concerning His Godhead; and thereby stopping their mouths, He said, *"How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand?"* And much as with Moses, so it fell out also with David. For as Miriam, even against Moses' will, was punished by God for insolence to her brother, [Numbers 12:13-14] because He greatly loved the holy man; even so this man, injuriously treated by his son, God did swiftly avenge, and that against his will.

These things then are sufficient, yea rather before all others these are sufficient to indicate the man's excellency. For when God pronounces His judgment, we ought to inquire no further. But if you would become particularly acquainted with His self command, you may by perusing his history after his sin, perceive his confidence towards God, his benevolence, his growth in virtue, his strictness unto his last breath.

10. Having then these examples, let us be sober, and let us strive not to despond, and if at any time we fall, not to lie prostrate. For not to cast you into slothfulness, did I speak of the sins of David, but to work in you more fear. For if that righteous man through a little remissness received such wounds, what shall we have to suffer, who are every day negligent? Do not therefore look at his fall, and be remiss, but consider what great things he did even after this, what great mournings, how much repentance he showed forth, adding his nights to his days, pouring forth fountains of tears, washing his couch with his tears, withal clothing himself in sackcloth.

Now if he needed so great a conversion, when will it be possible for us to be saved, feeling insensible after so many sins? For he that has many good deeds, would easily even by this throw a shade over his sins; but he that is unarmed, wherever he may receive a dart, receives a mortal wound.

In order therefore that this may not be so, let us arm ourselves with good works; and if any offense have befallen us, let us wash it away: that we may be counted worthy, after having lived the present life to the glory of God, to enjoy the life to come; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 27 on Matthew

Matt. VIII. 14.

"And when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother laid and sick of a fever: and He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose and ministered unto Him."

But Mark adds also, *"immediately,"* meaning to declare the time as well; but this evangelist has set down only the miracle, without signifying besides the time. And whereas the others say, that she that lay ill did also entreat Him, this too he has passed over in silence. But this comes not of any dissonance, but the one of brevity, the other of exact narrative. But for what intent did He go into Peter's house? As it seems to me, to take food. This at least is declared when it is said,

"She arose and ministered unto Him." [Matthew 8:15]

For He used to visit His disciples (as Matthew likewise, when He had called him), so honoring them and making them more zealous.

But do thou mark, I pray you, herein also Peter's reverence towards Him. For though he had his wife's mother at home lying ill, and very sick of a fever, he drew Him not into his house, but waited first for the teaching to be finished, then for all the others to be healed; and then when He had come in, besought Him. Thus from the beginning was he instructed to prefer the things of all others to his own.

Therefore neither does he himself bring Him in, but He entered of His own accord (after the centurion had said, *"I am not worthy that You should come under my roof"* [Matthew 8:8]): to show how much favor He bestowed on His disciple. And yet consider of what sort were the houses of

these fishermen; but for all that, He disdained not to enter into their mean huts, teaching you by all means to trample under foot human pride.

And sometimes He heals by words only, sometimes He even stretches forth His hand, sometimes He does both these things, to bring into sight His way of healing. For it was not His will always to work miracles in the more surpassing manner: it being needful for Him to be concealed awhile, and especially as concerned His disciples; since they out of their great delight would have proclaimed everything. And this was evident from the fact, that even after coming to the mount, it was needful to charge them that they should tell no man.

Having therefore touched her body, He not only quenched the fever, but also gave her back perfect health. Thus, the disease being an ordinary one, He displayed His power by the manner of healing; a thing which no physician's art could have wrought. For you know that even after the departing of fevers, the patients yet need much time to return to their former health. But then all took place at once.

And not in this case only, but also in that of the sea. For neither there did He quiet the winds only and the storm, but He also stayed at once the swelling of the waves; and this also was a strange thing. For even if the tempest should cease, the waves continue to swell for a long time.

But with Christ it was not so, but all at once was ended: and so it befell this woman also. Wherefore also the evangelist, to declare this, said, "*She arose and ministered unto Him;*" [Matthew 8:15] which was a sign both of Christ's power, and of the disposition of the woman, which she showed towards Christ.

And another thing together with these we may hence observe, that Christ grants the healing of some to the faith even of others. Since in this case too, others besought Him, as also in the instance of the centurion's

servant. And this grant He makes, when there is no unbelief in him that is to be healed, but either through disease he cannot come unto Him, or through ignorance imagines nothing great of Him, or because of His immature age.

2. *"When the evening had come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits from them with a word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet Esaias, that He took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."*

Do you see the multitude, by this time growing in faith? For not even when the time pressed could they endure to depart, nor did they account it unseasonable to bring their sick to Him at eventide.

But mark, I pray you, how great a multitude of persons healed the evangelists pass quickly over, not mentioning one by one, and giving us an account of them, but in one word traversing an unspeakable sea of miracles. Then lest the greatness of the wonder should drive us again to unbelief, that even so great a people and their various diseases should be delivered and healed by Him in one moment of time, He brings in the prophet also to bear witness to what is going on: indicating the abundance of the proof we have, in every case, out of the Scriptures; such, that from the miracles themselves we have no more; and He says, that Esaias also spoke of these things; *"He took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."* He said not, *"He did them away,"* but *"He took and bare them;"* which seems to me to be spoken rather of sins, by the prophet, in harmony with John, where he says, *"Behold the Lamb of God, that bears the sin of the world."* [John 1:29]

How then does the evangelist here apply it to diseases? Either as rehearsing the passage in the historical sense, or to show that most of our diseases arise from sins of the soul. For if the sum of all, death itself, has its

root and foundation from sin, much more the majority of our diseases also: since our very capability of suffering did itself originate there.

3. *"Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side."* [Matthew 8:18]

Do you see again His freedom from ostentation? In that as the others say, *"He charged the devils not to say it was He,"* so this writer says, He repels the multitudes from Him. Now in so doing, He was at once both training us to be moderate, and at the same time allaying the envy of the Jews, and teaching us to do nothing for display. For He was not, we know, a healer to bodies only, but a curer also of the soul, and a teacher of self-restraint; by both disclosing Himself, both by putting away their diseases, and by doing nought for display. Because they indeed were cleaving unto Him, loving Him, and marvelling at Him, and desiring to look upon Him. For who would depart from one who was doing such miracles? Who would not long, were it only to see the face, and the mouth that was uttering such words?

For not by any means in working wonders only was He wonderful, but even when merely showing Himself, He was full of great grace; and to declare this the prophet said, *"Fair in beauty beyond the children of men."* And if Esaias says, *"He has no form nor comeliness,"* he affirms it either in comparison of the glory of His Godhead, which surpasses all utterance and description; or as declaring what took place at His passion, and the dishonor which He underwent at the season of the cross, and the mean estate which throughout His life He exemplified in all respects.

Further: He did not first give *"commandment to depart unto the other side,"* nor until He had healed them. For surely they could not have borne it. As therefore on the mountain they not only continued with Him while exhorting them, but also when it was silence followed Him; so here too, not

in His miracles only did they wait on Him, but also when He had ceased again, from His very countenance receiving no small benefit. For if Moses had his face made glorious, and Stephen like that of an angel; consider thou our common Lord, what manner of person it was likely He would appear at such a time.

Many now perchance have fallen into a passionate desire of seeing that form; but if we are willing we shall behold one far better than that. For if we can pass through our present life with Christian boldness, we shall receive Him in the clouds, meeting Him in an immortal and incorruptible body.

But observe how He does not simply drive them away, lest He should hurt them. For He did not say, "*withdraw*," but "*gave commandment to depart to the other side*," giving them to expect that He would surely come there.

4. And the multitudes for their part evinced this great love, and were following with much affection; but some one person, a slave of wealth, and possessed with much arrogance, approaches Him, and says,

"Master, I will follow You wherever You go." [Matthew 8:19]

Do you see how great his arrogance? For as not deigning to be numbered with the multitude, and indicating that he is above the common sort, so he comes near. Because such is the Jewish character; full of unseasonable confidence. So too another afterwards, when all men were keeping silence, of his own accord springs up, and says, "*Which is the first commandment?*"

Yet nevertheless the Lord rebuked not his unseasonable confidence, teaching us to bear even with such as these. Therefore He does not openly convict them who are devising mischief, but replies to their secret thought, leaving it to themselves only to know that they are convicted, and doubly

doing them good, first by showing that He knows what is in their conscience, next by granting unto them concealment after this manifestation, and allowing them to recover themselves again, if they will: which thing He does in the case of this man also.

For he, seeing the many signs, and many drawn after Him, thought to make a gain out of such miracles; wherefore also he was forward to follow Him. And whence is this manifest? From the answer which Christ makes, meeting not the question, as it stands verbally, but the temper shown in its meaning. For, "*What?*" says He, "*do you look to gather wealth by following me? Do you see not then that I have not even a lodging, not even so much as the birds have?*"

For "*the foxes,*" says He, "*have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head.*" [Matthew 8:20]

Now these were not the words of one turning Himself away, but of one who while putting to the proof his evil disposition, yet permitted him (if he were willing with such a prospect) to follow Him. And to convince you of his wickedness, when he had heard these things, and had been proved, he did not say, "*I am ready to follow You.*"

5. And in many other places also Christ is clearly doing this; He does not openly convict, but by His answer He manifests the purpose of them that are coming unto Him. Thus to him again that said, "*Good Master,*" and had thought by such flattery to gain His favor, according to his purpose He made answer, saying, "*Why do you call me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.*"

And when they said unto Him, "*Behold, Your mother and Your brethren seek You;*" [Matthew 12:47-48] forasmuch as these were under the influence of some human infirmity, not desiring to hear something profitable, but to make a display of their relationship to Him, and therein to

be vainglorious; hear what He says: *"Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?"*

And again to His brethren themselves, saying unto Him, *"Show yourself to the world,"* [John 7:4, 6] and wishing thence to feed their vainglory, He said, *"Your time"* (so He speaks) *"is always ready, but my time is not yet come."*

And in the opposite cases too He does so; as in that of Nathanael, saying, *"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."* [John 1:47] And again, *"Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see."* [Matthew 11:4] For neither in this did He reply to the words, but to the intention of him that sent them. And with the people again in like manner, He addresses His discourse unto their conscience, saying, *"What went ye out into the wilderness to see?"* [Matthew 11:7] That is because they were probably feeling about John, as though he had been a sort of easy and wavering person; to correct this their suspicion, He says, *"What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?"* or, *"a man clothed with soft raiment?"* by both these figures declaring, that he was neither of himself a waverer, nor would be softened by any luxury. Thus then in the present case also He makes His answer to their meaning.

And see how in this also He shows forth great moderation: in that He said not, *"I have it indeed, but despise it,"* but *"I have it not."* Do you see what exact care goes along with His condescension? Even as when He eats and drinks, when He seems to be acting in an opposite way to John, this too He does for the sake of the Jews' salvation, or rather for that of the whole world, at once both stopping the mouths of the heretics, and desiring to win also more abundantly those of that day to Himself.

6. But a certain other one, we read, said unto Him,

"Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." [Matthew 8:21]

Did you mark the difference? How one impudently says, *"I will follow You wherever You go;"* but this other, although asking a thing of sacred duty, says, *"Allow me."* Yet He suffered him not, but says, *"Let the dead bury their dead, but do thou follow me."* For in every case He had regard to the intention. And wherefore did He not suffer him? One may ask. Because, on the one hand, there were those that would fulfill that duty, and the dead was not going to remain unburied; on the other, it was not fit for this man to be taken away from the weightier matters. But by saying, *"their own dead,"* He implies that this is not one of His dead. And that because he that was dead, was, at least as I suppose, of the unbelievers.

Now if you admire the young man, that for a matter so necessary he besought Jesus, and did not go away of his own accord; much rather do thou admire him for staying also when forbidden.

Was it not then, one may say, extreme ingratitude, not to be present at the burial of his father? If indeed he did so out of negligence, it was ingratitude, but if in order not to interrupt a more needful work, his departing would most surely have been of extreme inconsideration. For Jesus forbid him, not as commanding to think lightly of the honor due to our parents, but signifying that nothing ought to be to us more urgent than the things of Heaven, and that we ought with all diligence to cleave to these, and not to put them off for ever so little, though our engagements be exceeding indispensable and pressing. For what can be more needful than to bury a father? What more easy? Since it would not even consume any long time.

But if one ought not to spend even as much time as is required for a father's burial, nor is it safe to be parted even so long from our spiritual concerns; consider what we deserve, who all our time stand off from the

things that pertain to Christ, and prefer things very ordinary to such as are needful, and are remiss, when there is nothing to press on us?

And herein too we should admire the instructiveness of His teaching, that He nailed him fast to His word, and with this freed him from those endless evils, such as lamentations, and mournings, and the things that follow thereafter. For after the burial he must of necessity proceed to inquire about the will, then about the distribution of the inheritance, and all the other things that follow thereupon; and thus waves after waves coming in succession upon him, would bear him away very far from the harbor of truth. For this cause He draws him, and fastens him to Himself.

But if you still marvellest, and art perplexed, that he was not permitted to be present at his father's burial; consider that many suffer not the sick, if it be a father that is dead, or a mother, or a child, or any other of their kinsmen, to know it, nor to follow him to the tomb; and we do not for this charge them with cruelty nor inhumanity: and very reasonably. For, on the contrary, it were cruelty to bring out to the funeral solemnity men in such a state.

But if to mourn and be afflicted in mind for them that are of our kindred is evil, much more our being withdrawn from spiritual discourses. For this same cause He said elsewhere also, *"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Heaven."* And surely it is far better to proclaim the kingdom, and draw back others from death, than to bury the dead body, that is nothing advantaged thereby; and especially, when there are some to fulfill all these duties.

7. Nothing else then do we learn hereby, but that we must not wantonly lose any, no not the smallest time, though there be ten thousand things to press on us; but to set what is spiritual before all, even the most indispensable matters, and to know both what is life, and what is death.

Since many even of them that seem to live are nothing better than dead men, living as they do in wickedness; or rather these are worse than the dead; *"For he that is dead,"* it is said, *"is freed from sin,"* [Romans 6:7] but this man is a slave to sin. For tell me not of this, that he is not eaten of worms, nor lies in a coffin, nor has closed his eyes, nor is bound in graveclothes. Nay, for these things he undergoes more grievously than the dead, no worms devouring him, but the passions of his soul tearing him to pieces more fiercely than wild beasts.

And if his eyes be open, this too again is far worse than having closed them. For those of the dead see no evil thing, but this man is gathering unto himself diseases without number, while his eyes are open. And whereas the other lies in a coffin, unmoved by anything, this one is buried in the tomb of his innumerable distempers.

But you see not his body in a state of decay. And what of that? Since before his body, his soul is corrupted and destroyed, and undergoes greater rottenness. For the other stinks a few days, but this for the whole of his life exhales evil odors, having a mouth more foul than sewers.

And so the one differs from the other, by just so much as this, that the dead indeed undergoes that decay only which comes of nature, but this man together with that, brings in also that rottenness which is from intemperance, devising each day unnumbered causes of corruption.

But is he borne on horseback? And what of that? Why, so is the other on a couch. And what is very hard, while the other is seen by no one in his dissolution and decay, but has his coffin for a veil, this man is going about everywhere with his evil savor, bearing about a dead soul in his body as in a tomb.

And if one could but once see a man's soul who is living in luxury and vice, you would perceive that it is far better to lie bound in a grave than to

be rivetted by the chains of our sins; and to have a stone laid over you, than that heavy cover of insensibility. Wherefore above all things it behooves the friends of these dead men, seeing that they are past feeling, to come near to Jesus in their behalf, as Mary then did in the case of Lazarus. Though he "*stinks*," though he be "*dead four days*," do not despair, but approach, and remove the stone first. Yea, for then you shall see him lying as in a tomb, and bound in his grave clothes.

And if you will, let it be some one of them that are great and distinguished, whom we bring before you. Nay, fear not, for I will state the example without a name: or rather, though I should mention the name, not even so need there be any fear: for who ever fears a dead man? Seeing that whatever one may do, he continues dead, and the dead cannot injure the living either little or much.

Let us then behold their head bound up. For indeed, when they are for ever drunken, even as the dead by their many wrappers and grave-clothes, so are all their organs of sense closed and bound up. And if you will look at their hands too, you shall see these again bound to their belly, like those of the dead, and fastened about not with grave-clothes, but what is far more grievous, with the bands of covetousness: obtaining as they do no leave from her to be stretched out for almsgiving, or for any other of such like good deeds; rather she renders them more useless than those of the dead. Would you also see their feet bound together? See them again fastened about with cares, and for this cause never able to run unto the house of God.

Have you seen the dead? Behold also the embalmer. Who then is the embalmer of these? The devil, who carefully fastens them about, and suffers not the man any longer to appear a man, but a dry stock. For where there is no eye, nor hands, nor feet, nor any other such thing, how can such

an one appear a man? Even so may we see their soul also swaddled up, and rather an image than a soul.

Forasmuch then as they are in a sort of senseless state, being turned to dead men, let us in their behalf draw near unto Jesus, let us entreat Him to raise them up, let us take away the stone, let us loosen the grave clothes. For if you take away the stone, that is, their insensibility to their own miseries, you will quickly be able to bring them also out of the tomb; and having brought them out, you will more easily rid them of their bonds. Then shall Christ know you, when you are risen, when unbound; then will He call you even unto His own supper. As many therefore of you as are friends of Christ, as many as are disciples, as many as love him that is gone, draw near unto Jesus, and pray. For even though his ill savor abound and be ever so intense, nevertheless not even so should we, his friends, forsake him, but so much the rather draw near; even as the sisters of Lazarus then did; neither should we leave interceding, beseeching, entreating, until we have received him alive.

For if we thus order our own affairs, and those of our neighbors, we shall also attain speedily unto the life to come; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love to man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 28 on Matthew

Matthew 8:23-24.

"And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves, but He was asleep."

Now Luke, [Luke 8:22] to free himself from having the order of time required of him, says thus, *"And it came to pass on a certain day that He went into a ship with His disciples;"* and Mark in like manner. But this evangelist not so, but he maintains the order in this place also. For they did not all of them write all things in this way. And these things I have mentioned before, lest any one from the omission should suppose there was a discordance.

The multitudes then He sent on, but the disciples He took with Himself: for the others mention this too. And He took them with Him, not for nought, nor at hazard, but in order to make them spectators of the miracle that was to take place. For like a most excellent trainer, He was anointing them with a view to both objects; as well to be undismayed in dangers, as to be modest in honors. Thus, that they might not be high minded, because having sent away the rest, He retained them, He suffers them to be tossed with the tempest; at once correcting this, and disciplining them to bear trials nobly.

For great indeed were the former miracles too, but this contained also in it a kind of discipline, and that no inconsiderable one, and was a sign akin to that of old. For this cause He takes the disciples only with Himself. For as, when there was a display of miracles, He suffers the people also to be present; so when trial and terrors were rising up against Him, then He

takes with Him none but the champions of the whole world, whom He was to discipline.

And while Matthew merely mentioned that *"He was asleep,"* Luke says that it was *"on a pillow;"* signifying both His freedom from pride, and to teach us hereby a high degree of austerity.

The tempest therefore being thoroughly excited, and the sea raging, *"They awake Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish."* [Matthew 8:25] But He rebuked them before He rebuked the sea. Because as I said, for discipline these things were permitted, and they were a type of the temptations that were to overtake them. Yea, for after these things again, He often suffered them to fall into more grievous tempests of fortune, and bare long with them. Wherefore Paul also said, *"I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that we were pressed out of measure beyond strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life;"* [2 Corinthians 1:8, 10] and after this again, *"Who delivered us from so great deaths."* Signifying therefore hereby, that they ought to be confident, though the waves rise high, and that He orders all things for good, He first of all reproves them. For indeed their very alarm was a profitable occurrence, that the miracle might appear greater, and their remembrance of the event be rendered lasting. Since when anything strange is about to happen, there are prepared beforehand many things to cause remembrance, lest after the miracle has passed by, men should sink into forgetfulness.

Thus Moses also first is in fear of the serpent, and not merely in fear, but even with much distress: and then he sees that strange thing come to pass. [Exodus 4:3-4] So these too, having first looked to perish, were then saved, that having confessed the danger, they might learn the greatness of the miracle.

Therefore also He sleeps: for had He been awake when it happened, either they would not have feared, or they would not have besought Him, or they would not so much as have thought of His being able to do any such thing. Therefore He sleeps, to give occasion for their timidity, and to make their perception of what was happening more distinct. For a man looks not with the same eyes on what happens in the persons of others, as in his own. Therefore since they had seen all benefitted, while themselves had enjoyed no benefit, and were supine (for neither were they lame, nor had they any other such infirmity); and it was meet they should enjoy His benefits by their own perception: He permits the storm, that by their deliverance they might attain to a clearer perception of the benefit.

Therefore neither does He this in the presence of the multitudes, that they might not be condemned for little faith, but He has them apart, and corrects them, and before the tempest of the waters He puts an end to the tempests of their soul, rebuking them, and saying,

"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith:" instructing them also, that men's fear is wrought not by the approach of the temptations, but by the weakness of their mind.

But should any one say, that it was not fearfulness, or little faith, to come near and awaken Him; I would say this, that that very thing was a special sign of their wanting the right opinion concerning Him. That is, His power to rebuke when awakened they knew, but that He could do so even sleeping, they knew not as yet.

And why at all marvel that it was so now, when even after many other miracles their impressions were still rather imperfect? Wherefore also they are often rebuked; as when He says, *"Are ye also yet without understanding?"* Marvel not then, if when the disciples were in such

imperfect dispositions, the multitudes had no exalted imagination of Him. For

"They marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the sea and the winds obey Him?" [Matthew 8:27]

But Christ chode not with them for calling Him a man, but waited to teach them by His signs, that their supposition was mistaken. But from what did they think Him a man? First from His appearance, then from His sleeping, and His making use of a ship. So on this account they were cast into perplexity, saying, *"What manner of man is this?"* since while the sleep and the outward appearance showed man, the sea and the calm declared Him God.

For because Moses had once done some such thing, in this regard also does He signify His own superiority, and that the one works miracles as a slave, the other as Lord. Thus, He put forth no rod, as Moses did, neither did He stretch forth His hands to Heaven, nor did He need any prayer, but, as was meet for a master commanding His handmaid, or a creator His creature, so did He quiet and curb it by word and command only; and all the surge was straightway at an end, and not one trace of the disturbance remained. For this the evangelist declared saying, *"And there was a great calm."* [Matthew 8:26] And that which had been spoken of the Father as a great thing, this He showed forth again by His works. And what had been said concerning Him? *"He spoke,"* it says, *"and the stormy wind ceased."* So here likewise, He spoke, and *"there was a great calm."* And for this most of all did the multitudes marvel at him; who would not have marvelled, had He done it in such manner as did Moses.

2. Now when He is departed from the sea, there follows another miracle yet more awful. For men possessed with devils, like wicked runaways at sight of their master, said,

"What have we to do with You, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Have You come hither to torment us before the time?" [Matthew 8:29]

For, because the multitudes called Him man, the devils came proclaiming His Godhead, and they that heard not the sea swelling and subsiding, heard from the devils the same cry, as it by its calm was loudly uttering.

Then, lest the thing might seem to come of flattery, according to their actual experience they cry out and say, *"Have You come hither to torment us before the time?"* With this view, then, their enmity is avowed beforehand, that their entreaty may not incur suspicion. For indeed they were invisibly receiving stripes, and the sea was not in such a storm as they; galled, and inflamed, and suffering things intolerable from His mere presence. Accordingly, no man daring to bring them to Him, Christ of Himself goes unto them.

And Matthew indeed relates that they said, *"Have You come hither before the time to torment us?"* but the other evangelists have added, that they also entreated and adjured Him not to cast them into the deep. For they supposed that their punishment was now close upon them, and feared, as even now about to fall into vengeance.

And though Luke and those who follow him say that it was one person, but this evangelist two, this does not exhibit any discrepancy at all. I grant if they had said, there was only one, and no other, they would appear to disagree with Matthew; but if that spoke of the one, this of the two, the statement comes not of disagreement, but of a different manner of narration. That is, I for my part think, Luke singled out the fiercest one of them for his narrative, wherefore also in more tragical wise does he report their miserable case; as, for instance, that bursting his bonds and chains he used

to wander about the wilderness. And Mark says, that he also cut himself with the stones.

And their words too are such as well betray their implacable and shameless nature. For, says he, "*Are you come hither to torment us before the time?*" You see, that they had sinned, they could not deny, but they demand not to suffer their punishment before the time. For, since He had caught them in the act of perpetrating those horrors so incurable and lawless, and deforming and punishing His creature in every way; and they supposed that He, for the excess of their crimes, would not await the time of their punishment: therefore they besought and entreated Him: and they that endured not even bands of iron come bound, and they that run about the mountains, are gone forth into the plain; and those who hinder all others from passing, at sight of Him blocking up the way, stand still.

3. But what can be the reason that they love also to dwell in the tombs? They would fain suggest to the multitude a pernicious opinion, as though the souls of the dead become demons, which God forbid we should ever admit into our conception. "*But what then will you say,*" one may ask, "*when many of the sorcerers take children and slay them, in order to have the soul afterwards to assist them?*" Why, whence is this evident? For of their slaying them, indeed, many tell us, but as to the souls of the slain being with them, whence do you know it, I pray you? "*The possessed themselves,*" it is replied, "*cry out, I am the soul of such a one.*" But this too is a kind of stage-play, and devilish deceit. For it is not the spirit of the dead that cries out, but the evil spirit that feigns these things in order to deceive the hearers. For if it were possible for a soul to enter into the substance of an evil spirit, much more into its own body.

And besides, it stands not to reason that the injured soul should co-operate with the wrong-doer, or that a man should be able to change an

incorporeal power into another substance. For if in bodies this were impossible, and one could not make a man's body become that of an ass; much more were this impossible in the invisible soul; neither could one transform it into the substance of an evil spirit. So that these are the sayings of besotted old wives, and spectres to frighten children.

Nor indeed is it possible for a soul, torn away from the body, to wander here any more. For *"the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God;"* [Wisdom 3:1] and if of the righteous, then those children's souls also; for neither are they wicked: and the souls too of sinners are straightway led away hence. And it is evident from Lazarus and the rich man; and elsewhere too Christ says, *"This day they require your soul of you."* [Luke 12:20] And it may not be that a soul, when it is gone forth from the body, should wander here; nor is the reason hard to see. For if we, going about on the earth which is familiar and well known to us, being encompassed with a body, when we are journeying in a strange road, know not which way to go unless we have some one to lead us; how should the soul, being rent away from the body, and having gone out from all her accustomed region, know where to walk without one to show her the way?

And from many other things too one might perceive, that it is not possible for a disembodied soul to remain here. For both Stephen says, *"Receive my spirit;"* [Acts 7:59] and Paul, *"To depart and to be with Christ is far better;"* [Philippians 1:23] and of the patriarch too the Scripture says, that *"he was gathered unto his fathers, being cherished in a good old age."* And as to the proof, that neither can the souls of sinners continue here; hear the rich man making much entreaty for this, and not obtaining it; since had it been at all possible, he would have come, and have told what had come to pass there. [Luke 16:27-28] Whence it is evident that after their departure

hence our souls are led away into some place, having no more power of themselves to come back again, but awaiting that dreadful day.

4. Now, should any one say, "*And wherefore did Christ fulfill the devils' request, suffering them to depart into the herd of swine?*" this would be our reply, that He did so, not as yielding to them, but as providing for many objects thereby. One, to teach them that are delivered from those wicked tyrants, how great the malice of their insidious enemies: another, that all might learn, how not even against swine are they bold, except He allow them; a third, that they would have treated those men more grievously than the swine, unless even in their calamity they had enjoyed much of God's providential care. For that they hate us more than the brutes is surely evident to every man. So then they that spared not the swine, but in one moment of time cast them all down the precipice, much more would they have done so to the men whom they possessed, leading them towards the desert, and carrying them away, unless even in their very tyranny the guardian care of God had abounded, to curb and check the excess of their violence. Whence it is manifest that there is no one, who does not enjoy the benefit of God's providence. And if not all alike, nor after one manner, this is itself a very great instance of providence; in that according to each man's profit, the work also of providence is displayed.

And besides what has been mentioned, there is another thing also, which we learn from this; that His providence is not only over all in common, but also over each in particular; which He also declared with respect to His disciples, saying, "*But the very hairs of your head are numbered.*" [Matthew 10:30] And from these demoniacs too, one may clearly perceive this; who would have "*been choked*" long before, if they had not enjoyed the benefit of much tender care from above.

For these reasons then He suffered them to depart into the herd of swine, and that they also who dwelt in those places should learn His power. For where His name was great, He did not greatly display Himself: but where no one knew Him, but they were still in an insensible condition, He made His miracles to shine out, so as to bring them over to the knowledge of His Godhead. For it is evident from the event that the inhabitants of that city were a sort of senseless people; for when they ought to have adored and marvelled at His power, they sent Him away, and *"besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts."*

But for what intent did the devils destroy the swine? Everywhere they have labored to drive men to dismay, and everywhere they rejoice in destruction. This, for instance, the devil did with respect to Job, although in that case too God suffered it, but neither in that case as complying with the devil, but willing to show His own servant the more glorious, cutting off from the evil spirit all pretext for his shamelessness, and turning on his own head what was done against the righteous man. Because now also the contrary of what they wished came to pass. For the power of Christ was gloriously proclaimed, and the wickedness of the demons, from which He delivered those possessed by them, was more plainly indicated; and how they want power to touch even swine, without permission from the God of all.

And if any would take these things in a hidden sense, there is nothing to hinder. For the history indeed is this, but we are to know assuredly, that the swinish sort of men are especially liable to the operations of the demons. And as long as they are men that suffer such things, they are often able yet to prevail; but if they have become altogether swine, they are not only possessed, but are also cast down the precipice. And besides, lest any should suppose what was done to be mere acting, instead of distinctly

believing that the devils had gone out; by the death of the swine this is rendered manifest.

And mark also His meekness together with His power. For when the inhabitants of that country, after having received such benefits, were driving Him away, He resisted not, but retired, and left those who had shown themselves unworthy of His teaching, having given them for teachers them that had been freed from the demons, and the swine-herds, that they might of them learn all that had happened; while Himself retiring leaves the fear vigorous in them. For the greatness withal of the loss was spreading the fame of what had been done, and the event penetrated their mind. And from many quarters were wafted sounds, proclaiming the strangeness of the miracle; from the cured, and from the drowned, from the owners of the swine, from the men that were feeding them.

5. These things any one may see happening now also, even many in the tombs possessed of evil spirits, whom nothing restrains from their madness; not iron, nor chain, nor multitude of men, nor advice, nor admonition, nor terror, nor threat, nor any other such thing.

For so when any man is dissolute, eager after all embraces, he differs not at all from the demoniac, but goes about naked like him, clad indeed in garments, but deprived of the true covering, and stripped of his proper glory; cutting himself not with stones, but with sins more hurtful than many stones. Who then shall be able to bind such a one? Who, to stay his unseemliness and frenzy, his way of never coming to himself, but forever haunting the tombs? For such are the resorts of the harlots, full of much evil savor, of much rottenness.

And what of the covetous man? Is he not like this? For who will be able ever to bind him? Are there not fears and daily threats, and admonitions, and counsels? Nay, all these bonds he bursts asunder; and if

any one come to set him free, he adjures him that he may not be freed, accounting it the greatest torture not to be in torture: than which what can be more wretched? For as to that evil spirit, even though he despised men, yet he yielded to the command of Christ, and quickly sprang out of the man's body; but this man yields not even to His commandment. See at least how he daily hears Him saying, "*You cannot serve God and mammon,*" [Matthew 6:24] and threatening hell, and the incurable torments, and obeys not: not that He is stronger than Christ, but because against our will Christ corrects us not. Therefore such men live as in desert places, though they be in the midst of cities. For who, that has reason, would choose to be with such men? I for my part would sooner consent to dwell with ten thousand demoniacs, than with one diseased in this way.

And that I am not mistaken in saying this, is manifest from their respective feelings. For these last account him an enemy that has done them no wrong, and desire even to take him for a slave when he is free, and encompass him with ten thousand evils; but the demoniacs do no such thing, but toss their disease to and for within themselves. And while these overturn many houses, and cause the name of God to be blasphemed, and are a pest to the city and to the whole earth; they that are troubled by evil spirits, deserve rather our pity and our tears. And the one for the more part act in insensibility, but the others are frantic while they reason, keeping their orgies in the midst of cities, and maddened with some new kind of madness. For what do all the demoniacs so bad, as what Judas dared to do, when he showed forth that extremity of wickedness? And all too that imitate him, like fierce wild beasts escaped from their cage, trouble their cities, no man restraining them. For these also have bonds upon them on every side; such as the fears of the judges, the threatening of the laws, the condemnation of the multitude, and other things more than these; yet

bursting asunder even these, they turn all things upside down. And should any one remove these altogether from them, then would he know assuredly the demon that is in them to be far fiercer, and more frantic than he who is just now gone forth.

But since this may not be, let us for the time suppose it for argument's sake: and let us take off from him all his chains, and then shall we clearly know his manifest madness. But be not afraid of the monster, when we uncover it; for it is the representation in word, not the thing in truth. Let there be then some man, darting fire from his eyes, black, having from either shoulder serpents hanging down instead of hands; and let him have also a mouth, with sharp swords set in it instead of teeth, and for a tongue a gushing fountain of poison and some baneful drug; and a belly more consuming than any furnace, devouring all that is cast unto it, and a sort of winged feet more vehement than any flame; and let his face be made up of a dog and of a wolf; and let him utter nothing human, but something discordant, and unpleasing, and terrible; and let him have also in his hands a firebrand. Perhaps what we have said seems to you to be terrible, but we have not even yet fashioned him worthily; for together with these things we must add others besides. I mean, that he is also to slay them that meet with him, to devour them, to fasten upon their flesh.

Yet is the covetous man much more fierce even than this, assailing all like hell, swallowing all up, going about a common enemy to the race of men. Why, he would have no man exist, that he may possess all things. And he stops not even at this, but when in his longing he shall have destroyed all men, he longs also to mar the substance of the earth, and to see it all become gold; nay, not the earth only, but hills also, and woods, and fountains, and in a word all things that appear.

And to convince you that not even yet have we set forth his madness, let there be no man to accuse and frighten him, but take away the terror of the laws in supposition awhile, and you will see him snatching up a sword, laying violent hands on all, and sparing none; neither friend, nor kinsman, nor brother, nor even his very parent. Nay rather, in this case there is not even need of supposing, but let us ask him, if he is not for ever framing to himself such imaginations, and if he does not in thought range among all men to destroy them; both friends and kinsmen, and even his very parents. Nay rather there is no need even to ask, because in truth all men know that they who are under the power of this disease are wearied even of their father's old age; and that which is sweet, and universally desirable, the having children, they esteem grievous and unwelcome: many at least with this view have even paid money to be childless, and have maimed their nature, not only by slaying their children after birth, but by not suffering them even to be born at all.

6. Marvel not, therefore, if we have thus sketched the covetous man (for in truth he is far worse than what we have said); but let us consider how we shall deliver him from the demon. How then shall we deliver him? If he may be clearly made aware, that his love of money stands very much in his way in respect of this very object, the gaining of money; for they that wish to gain in little things undergo great losses; whence accordingly a proverb has been put forth to this same effect. Many, for instance, on many occasions, wishing to lend at large usury, and through the expectation of gain not having inquired about them who receive their money, have together with the interest lost also all their capital. Others again falling into dangers, and not willing to give up a little have together with the substance lost their life too.

Again, when it has been in men's power to purchase either gainful offices, or some other such thing, by some trifling meanness they have lost all. For because they know not how to sow, but have ever practised reaping, they of course continually fail of their harvest. For no man can be always reaping, as neither can he be always gaining. Therefore since they are not willing to spend, neither do they know how to gain. And should they have to take a wife, the same thing again befalls them; for either they are deceived into taking a poor wife for a rich one, or when they have brought home one that is rich, but full of faults without number, here too they have incurred more loss than gain. For it is not superfluity but virtue, that causes wealth. For what profit is there of her wealth, when she is expensive and dissolute, and scatters all abroad more vehemently than any wind? What if she be unchaste, and bring in numberless lovers? What if she be drunken? Will she not quickly make her husband the poorest of men? But they do not only marry, but also buy at great risk, from their great covetousness, laboring to find not good slaves, but cheap ones.

Consider then all these things (for the words concerning hell and the kingdom you are not yet able to hear), and bearing in mind the losses which you have often undergone from your love of money, in loans, and in purchases, and in marriages, and in offices of power, and in all the rest; withdraw yourselves from doating on money.

For so shall you be able to live the present life in security, and after a little advance to hear also the words that treat on self-government, and see through and look upon the very Sun of Righteousness, and to attain unto the good things promised by Him; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 29 on Matthew

Matthew 9:1-2.

"And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you."

By His own city here he means Capernaum. For that which gave Him birth was Bethlehem; that which brought Him up, Nazareth; that which had Him continually inhabiting it, Capernaum.

This paralytic, however, was different from that one who is set forth in John. [John 5:1] For he lay at the pool, but this at Capernaum; and that man had his infirmity thirty and eight years, but concerning this, no such thing is mentioned; and the other was in a state destitute of protectors, but this had some to take care of him, who also took him up, and carried him. And to this He says, *"Son, your sins be forgiven you,"* but to that He says, *"Will you be made whole?"* [John 5:6] And the other He healed on a sabbath day, but this not on a sabbath, for else the Jews would have laid this also to His charge; and in the case of this man they were silent, but in that of the other they were instant in persecuting him.

And this I have said, not without purpose, lest any one should think there is a discrepancy from suspecting it to be one and the same paralytic.

But do thou, I pray you, mark the humility and meekness of our Lord. For He had also before this put away the multitudes from Him, and moreover when sent away by them at Gadara, He withstood not, but retired, not however to any great distance.

And again He entered into the ship and passed over, when He might have gone over afoot. For it was His will not to be always doing miracles, that He might not injure the doctrine of His humanity.

Now Matthew indeed says, that "*they brought him,*" but the others, that they also broke up the roof, and let him down. And they put the sick man before Christ, saying nothing, but committing the whole to Him. For though in the beginning He Himself went about, and did not require so much faith of them that came unto Him; yet in this case they both approached Him, and had faith required on their part. For, "*Seeing,*" it is said, "*their faith;*" that is, the faith of them that had let the man down. For He does not on all occasions require faith on the part of the sick only: as for instance, when they are insane, or in any other way, through their disease, are out of their own control. Or rather, in this case the sick man too had part in the faith; for he would not have suffered himself to be let down, unless he had believed.

Forasmuch then as they had evinced so great faith, He also evinces His own power, with all authority absolving his sins, and signifying in all ways that He is equal in honor with Him that begot Him. And mark; He implied it from the beginning, by His teaching, when He taught them as one having authority; by the leper, when He said, "*I will, be thou clean,*" [Matthew 8:3] by the centurion, when upon his saying, "*Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed, He marvelled at him,*" [Matthew 8:8] and celebrated him above all men; by the sea, when He curbed it with a mere word; by the devils, when they acknowledged Him as their judge, and He cast them out with great authority.

Here again in another and a greater way He constrains His very enemies to confess His equality in honor, and by their own mouth He makes it manifest. For He, to signify His indifference to honor (for there stood a great company of spectators shutting up the entrance, wherefore also they

let him down from above), did not straightway hasten to heal the visible body, but He takes His occasion from them; and He healed first that which is invisible, the soul, by forgiving his sins; which indeed saved the other, but brought no great glory to Himself. They themselves rather, troubled by their malice, and wishing to assail Him, caused even against their will what was done to be conspicuous. He, in fact, in His abundance of counsel, made use of their envy for the manifestation of the miracle.

Upon their murmuring, then, and saying, *"This man blasphemes; who can forgive sins but God only?"* let us see what He says. Did He indeed take away the suspicion? And yet if He were not equal, He should have said, *"Why fix upon me a notion which is not convenient? I am far from this power."* But now has He said none of these things, but quite the contrary He has both affirmed and ratified, as well by His own voice, as by the performance of the miracle. Thus, it appearing that His saying certain things of Himself gave disgust to his hearers, He affirms what He had to say concerning Himself by the others; and what is truly marvellous, not by His friends only, but also by His enemies; for this is the excellency of His wisdom. By His friends on the one hand, when He said, *"I will, be thou clean,"* [Matthew 8:3] and when He said, *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel;"* [Matthew 8:10] but by His enemies, now. For because they had said, *"No man can forgive sins but God only,"* He subjoined,

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins upon the earth (then says He to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up your bed, and go unto your house."

And not here only, but also in another case again, when they were saying, *"For a good work we stone you not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest yourself God,"* [John 10:33] neither in that instance did He put down this opinion, but again confirmed it, saying, *"If I*

do not the works of my Father; believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works." [John 10:37-38]

2. In this case indeed He discloses also another sign, and that no small one, of His own Godhead, and of His equality in honor with the Father. For whereas they said, *"To unbind sins pertains to God only,"* He not only unbinds sins, but also before this He makes another kind of display in a thing which pertained to God only; the publishing the secrets in the heart. For neither had they uttered what they were thinking.

For *"behold, certain of the scribes,"* it says, *"said within themselves, This man blasphemes. And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?"* [Matthew 9:3-4]

But that it belongs to God only to know men's secrets, hear what says the prophet, *"Thou most entirely alone know the hearts;"* [2 Chronicles 6:30] and again, *"God tries the hearts and reins;"* and Jeremiah too says, *"The heart is deep above all things, and it is man, and who shall know him?"* and, *"Man shall look on the face, but God on the heart."* [1 Samuel 16:7] And by many things one may see, that to know what is in the mind belongs to God alone.

Implying therefore that He is God, equal to Him that begot Him; what things they were reasoning in themselves (for through fear of the multitude, they dared not utter their mind), this their opinion He unveils and makes manifest, evincing herein also His great gentleness.

"For wherefore," says He, *"think ye evil in your hearts?"*
[Matthew 9:4]

And yet if there were cause for displeasure, it was the sick man who should have been displeased, as being altogether deceived, and should have said *"One thing I came to have healed, and amendest Thou another? Why, whence is it manifest that my sins are forgiven?"*

But now he for his part utters no such word, but gives himself up to the power of the healer; but these being curious and envious, plot against the good deeds of others. Wherefore He rebukes them indeed, but with all gentleness. *"Why, if you disbelieve,"* says He, *"what went before, and account my saying a boast; behold I add to it also another, the uncovering of your secrets; and after that again another."* What then is this? The giving tone to the body of the paralyzed.

And whereas, when He spoke unto the sick of the palsy, He spoke without clearly manifesting His own authority: for He said not, *"I forgive you your sins,"* but, *"your sins be forgiven you:"* upon their constraining, He discloses His authority more clearly, saying, *"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins."*

Do you see, how far He was from unwillingness to be thought equal to the Father? For He said not at all, *"The Son of Man has need of another;"* or, *"He has given Him authority,"* but, *"He has authority."* Neither does He say it for love of honor, but *"to convince you,"* so He speaks, *"that I do not blaspheme in making myself equal with God."*

Thus everywhere His will is to offer proofs clear and indisputable; as when He says, *"Go your way, show yourself to the priest;"* [Matthew 8:4] and when He points to Peter's wife's mother ministering, and permits the swine to cast themselves down headlong. And in the same manner here also; first, for a certain token of the forgiveness of his sins, He provides the giving tone to his body: and of that again, his carrying his bed; to hinder the fact from being thought a mere fancy. And He does not this, before He had asked them a question. *"For whether is easier,"* says He, *"to say, Your sins be forgiven you? Or to say, Take up your bed, and go unto your house?"* [Matthew 9:5-6] Now what He says is like this, *"Which seems to you easier, to bind up a disorganized body, or to undo the sins of a soul? It is quite*

manifest; to bind up a body. For by how much a soul is better than a body, by so much is the doing away sins a greater work than this; but because the one is unseen, the other in sight, I throw in that, which although an inferior thing, is yet more open to sense; that the greater also and the unseen may thereby receive its proof;" thus by His works anticipating even now the revelation of what had been said by John, that *"He takes away the sins of the world."*

Well then, having raised him up, He sends him to his house; here again signifying His unboastfulness, and that the event was not a mere imagination; for He makes the same persons witnesses of his infirmity, and also of his health. For I indeed had desired, says He, through your calamity to heal those also, that seem to be in health, but are diseased in mind; but since they will not, depart thou home, to heal them that are there.

Do you see how He indicates Him to be Creator both of souls and bodies? He heals therefore the palsy in each of the two substances, and makes the invisible evident by that which is in sight. But nevertheless they still creep upon the earth.

"For when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which" (it is said) *"had given such power unto men:"* for the flesh was an offense unto them. But He did not rebuke them, but proceeds by His works to arouse them, and exalt their thoughts. Since for the time it was no small thing for Him to be thought greater than all men, as having come from God. For had they well established these things in their own minds, going on orderly they would have known, that He was even the Son of God. But they did not retain these things clearly, wherefore neither were they able to approach Him. For they said again, *"This man is not of God;"* [John 9:16] *"how is this man of God?"* And they were continually harping on these things, putting them forward as cloaks for their own passions.

3. Which thing many now also do; and thinking to avenge God, fulfill their own passions, when they ought to go about all with moderation. For even the God of all, having power to launch His thunderbolt against them that blaspheme Him, makes the sun to rise, and sends forth the showers, and affords them all other things in abundance; whom we ought to imitate, and so to entreat, advise, admonish, with meekness, not angry, not making ourselves wild beasts.

For no harm at all ensues unto God by their blasphemy, that you should be angered, but he who blasphemed has himself also received the wound. Wherefore groan, bewail, for the calamity indeed deserves tears. And the wounded man, again—noth ing can so heal him as gentleness: gentleness, I say, which is mightier than any force.

See, for example, how He Himself, the insulted one, discourses with us, both in the Old Testament, and in the New; in the one saying, "*O my people, what have I done unto you?*" [Micah 6:3] in the other, "*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me.*" [Acts 9:4] And Paul too bids, "*In meekness instruct those that oppose themselves.*" [2 Timothy 2:25] And Christ again, when His disciples had come to Him, requiring fire to come down from heaven, strongly rebuked them, saying, "*You know not what manner of spirit you are of.*"

And here again He said not, "*O accursed, and sorcerers as you are; O you envious, and enemies of men's salvation;*" but, "*Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?*"

We must, you see, use gentleness to eradicate the disease. Since he who has become better through the fear of man, will quickly return to wickedness again. For this cause He commanded also the tares to be left, giving an appointed day of repentance. Yea, and many of them in fact repented, and became good, who before were bad; as for instance, Paul, the

Publican, the Thief; for these being really tares turned into kindly wheat. Because, although in the seeds this cannot be, yet in the human will it is both manageable and easy; for our will is bound by no limits of nature, but has freedom of choice for its privilege.

Accordingly, when you see an enemy of the truth, wait on him, take care of him, lead him back into virtue, by showing forth an excellent life, by applying "*speech that cannot be condemned*," [Titus 2:8] by bestowing attention and tender care, by trying every means of amendment, in imitation of the best physicians. For neither do they cure in one manner only, but when they see the wound not yield to the first remedy, they add another, and after that again another; and now they use the knife, and now bind up. And do thou accordingly, having become a physician of souls, put in practice every mode of cure according to Christ's laws; that you may receive the reward both of saving yourself and of profiting others, doing all to the glory of God, and so being glorified also yourself. "*For them that glorify me,*" says He, "*I will glorify; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*"

Let us, I say, do all things unto His glory; that we may attain unto that blessed portion, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 30 on Matthew

Matt. IX. 9.

" And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man sitting at the receipt of custom, named Matthew; and He says unto him, Follow me."

For when He had performed the miracle, He did not remain, lest, being in sight, He should kindle their jealousy the more; but He indulges them by retiring, and soothing their passion. This then let us also do, not encountering them that are plotting against us; let us rather soothe their wound, giving way and relaxing their vehemence.

But wherefore did He not call him together with Peter and John and the rest? As in their case He had come at that time, when He knew the men would obey Him; so Matthew also He then called when He was assured he would yield himself. And therefore Paul again He took, as a fisher his prey, after the resurrection. Because He who is acquainted with the hearts, and knows the secrets of each man's mind, knew also when each of these would obey. Therefore not at the beginning did He call him, when he was yet in rather a hardened state, but after His countless miracles, and the great fame concerning Him, when He knew him to have actually become more prepared for obedience.

And we have cause also to admire the self-denial of the evangelist, how he disguises not his own former life, but adds even his name, when the others had concealed him under another appellation.

But why did he say he was *"sitting at the receipt of custom?"* To indicate the power of Him that called him, that it was not when he had left off or forsaken this wicked trade, but from the midst of the evils He drew him up; much as He converted the blessed Paul also when frantic and

raging, and darting fire; which thing he himself makes a proof of the power of Him that called him, saying to the Galatians, *"You have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God."* [Galatians 1:13] And the fishermen too He called when they were in the midst of their business. But that was a craft not indeed in bad report, but of men rather rudely bred, not mingling with others, and endowed with great simplicity; whereas the pursuit now in question was one full of all insolence and boldness, and a mode of gain whereof no fair account could be given, a shameless traffic, a robbery under cloak of law: yet nevertheless He who uttered the call was ashamed of none of these things.

And why talk I of His not being ashamed of a publican? Since even with regard to a harlot woman, so far from being ashamed to call her, He actually permitted her to kiss His feet, and to moisten them with her tears. [Luke 7:38] Yea, for to this end He came, not to cure bodies only, but to heal likewise the wickedness of the soul. Which He did also in the case of the paralytic; and having shown clearly that He is able to forgive sins, then, not before, He comes to him whom we are now speaking of; that they might no more be troubled at seeing a publican chosen into the choir of the disciples. For He that has power to undo all our offenses, why marvel if He even make this man an apostle?

But as you have seen the power of Him that called, so consider also the obedience of him that was called: how he neither resisted, nor disputing said, *"What is this? Is it not indeed a deceitful calling, wherewith He calls me, being such as I am?"* nay; for this humility again had been out of season: but he obeyed straightway, and did not even request to go home, and to communicate with his relations concerning this matter; as neither indeed did the fishermen; but as they left their net and their ship and their

father, so did he his receipt of custom and his gain, and followed, exhibiting a mind prepared for all things; and breaking himself at once away from all worldly things, by his complete obedience he bore witness that He who called him had chosen a good time.

And wherefore can it be, one may say, that he has not told us of the others also, how and in what manner they were called; but only of Peter and James, and John and Philip, and nowhere of the others?

Because these more than others were in so strange and mean ways of life. For there is nothing either worse than the publican's business, or more ordinary than fishing. And that Philip also was among the very ignoble, is manifest from his country. Therefore these especially they proclaim to us, with their ways of life, to show that we ought to believe them in the glorious parts of their histories also. For they who choose not to pass by any of the things which are accounted reproachful, but are exact in publishing these more than the rest, whether they relate to the Teacher or to the disciples; how can they be suspected in the parts which claim reverence? More especially since many signs and miracles are passed over by them, while the events of the cross, accounted to be reproaches, they utter with exact care and loudly; and the disciples' pursuits too, and their faults, and those of their Master's ancestry who were notorious for sins, [Matthew 3:6] they discover with a clear voice. Whence it is manifest that they made much account of truth, and wrote nothing for favor, nor for display.

2. Having therefore called him, He also honored him with a very great honor by partaking straightway of his table; for in this way He would both give him good hope for the future, and lead him on to a greater confidence. For not in a long time, but at once, He healed his vice. And not with him only does He sit down to meat, but with many others also; although this very thing was accounted a charge against Him, that He chased not away

the sinners. But neither do they conceal this point, what sort of blame is endeavored to be fixed on His proceedings.

Now the publicans come together as to one of the same trade; for he, exulting in the entrance of Christ, had called them all together. The fact is, Christ used to try every kind of treatment; and not when discoursing only, nor when healing, nor when reproving His enemies, but even at His morning meal, He would often correct such as were in a bad way; hereby teaching us, that every season and every work may by possibility afford us profit. And yet surely what was then set before them came of injustice and covetousness; but Christ refused not to partake of it, because the ensuing gain was to be great: yea rather He becomes partaker of the same roof and table with them that have committed such offenses. For such is the quality of a physician; unless he endure the corruption of the sick, he frees them not from their infirmity.

And yet undoubtedly He incurred hence an evil report: first by eating with him, then in Matthew's house, and thirdly, in company with many publicans. See at least how they reproach Him with this. "*Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.*"

[Matthew 11:19]

Let them hear, as many as are striving to deck themselves with great honor for fasting, and let them consider that our Lord was called "*a man gluttonous and a winebibber,*" and He was not ashamed, but overlooked all these things, that he might accomplish what He had set before him; which indeed was accordingly done. For the publican was actually converted, and thus became a better man.

And to teach you that this great thing was wrought by his partaking of the table with Him, hear what Zacchæus says, another publican. I mean, when he heard Christ saying, "*Today, I must abide in your house,*" the

delight gave him wings, and he says, *"The half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."* And to him Jesus says, *"This day is salvation come to this house."* So possible is it by all ways to give instruction.

But how is it, one may say, that Paul commands, *"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous, with such an one no, not to eat?"* [1 Corinthians 5:11] In the first place, it is not as yet manifest, whether to teachers also he gives this charge, and not rather to brethren only. Next, these were not yet of the number of the perfect, nor of those who had become brethren. And besides, Paul commands, even with respect to them that had become brethren, then to shrink from them, when they continue as they were, but these had now ceased, and were converted.

3. But none of these things shamed the Pharisees, but they accuse Him to His disciples, saying,

"Why eats your Master with publicans and sinners?" [Matthew 9:11]

And when the disciples seem to be doing wrong, they intercede with Him, saying, *"Behold your disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-day;"* [Matthew 12:2] but here to them they discredit Him. All which was the part of men dealing craftily, and wishing to separate from the Master the choir of the disciples. What then says Infinite Wisdom?

"They that be whole need not a physician," says He, *"but they that are sick."*

See how He turned their reasoning to the opposite conclusion. That is, while they made it a charge against Him that He was in company with these men: He on the contrary says, that His not being with them would be unworthy of Him, and of His love of man; and that to amend such persons is not only blameless, but excellent, and necessary, and deserving of all sorts of praise.

After this, that He might not seem to put them that were bidden to shame, by saying, "*they that are sick;*" see how He makes up for it again, by reproving the others, and saying,

"Go ye and learn what that means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." [Matthew 9:13]

Now this He said, to upbraid them with their ignorance of the Scriptures. Wherefore also He orders His discourse more sharply, not Himself in anger, far from it; but so as that the publicans might not be in utter perplexity.

And yet of course He might say, "*Did ye not mark, how I remitted the sins of the sick of the palsy, how I braced up his body?*" But He says no such thing, but argues with them first from men's common reasonings, and then from the Scriptures. For having said, "*They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;*" and having covertly indicated that He Himself was the Physician; after that He said, "*Go ye and learn what that means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."* Thus does Paul also: when he had first established his reasoning by illustrations from common things, and had said, "*Who feeds a flock, and eats not of the milk thereof?*" [1 Corinthians 9:7] then he brings in the Scriptures also, saying, "*It is written in the law of Moses, You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain;*" and again, "*Even so has the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."*

But to His disciples not so, but He puts them in mind of His signs, saying on this wise, "*Do ye not yet remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*" [Matthew 16:9] Not so however with these, but He reminds them of our common infirmity, and signifies them at any rate to be of the number of the infirm; who did not so much as know the Scriptures, but making light of the rest of virtue, laid all

the stress on their sacrifices; which thing He is also earnestly intimating unto them, when He sets down in brief what had been affirmed by all the prophets, saying, *"Learn ye what that means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."*

The fact is, He is signifying hereby that not He was transgressing the law, but they; as if He had said, *"Wherefore accuse me? Because I bring sinners to amendment? Why then ye must accuse the Father also for this."* Much as He said also elsewhere, establishing this point: *"My Father works hitherto, and I work:"* [John 5:17] so here again, *"Go ye and learn what that means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."* *"For as this is His will, says Christ, so also mine."* Do you see how the one is superfluous, the other necessary? For neither did He say, *"I will have mercy, and sacrifice,"* but, *"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."* That is, the one thing He allowed, the other He cast out; and proved that what they blamed, so far from being forbidden, was even ordained by the law, and more so than sacrifice; and He brings in the Old Testament, speaking words and ordaining laws in harmony with Himself.

Having then reproved them, both by common illustrations and by the Scriptures, He adds again,

"I am not come to call righteous men, but sinners to repentance."

And this He says unto them in irony; as when He said, *"Behold, Adam has become as one of us;"* and again, *"If I were hungry, I would not tell you."* For that no man on earth was righteous, Paul declared, saying, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* [Romans 3:23] And by this too the others were comforted, I mean, the guests. *"Why, I am so far,"* says He, *"from loathing sinners, that even for their sakes only am I come."* Then, lest He should make them more careless, He staid not at the

word *"sinners,"* but added, *"unto repentance."* *"For I am not come that they should continue sinners, but that they should alter, and amend."*

4. He then having stopped their mouths every way, as well from the Scriptures as from the natural consequence of things; and they having nothing to say, proved as they were obnoxious to the charges which they had brought against Him, and adversaries of the law and the Old Testament; they leave Him, and again transfer their accusation to the disciples.

And Luke indeed affirms that the Pharisees said it, but this evangelist, that it was the disciples of John; but it is likely that both said it. That is, they being, as might be expected, in utter perplexity, take the other sort with them; as they did afterwards with the Herodians likewise. Since in truth John's disciples were always disposed to be jealous of Him, and reasoned against Him: being then only humbled, when first John abode in the prison. They came at least then, *"and told Jesus;"* but afterwards they returned to their former envy.

Now what say they? *"Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but your disciples fast not?"* [Matthew 9:14]

This is the disease, which Christ long before was eradicating, in the words, *"When you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face;"* [Matthew 6:17] foreknowing the evils that spring therefrom. But yet He does not rebuke even these, nor say, *"O you vainglorious and over-busy;"* but He discourses to them with all gentleness, saying, *"The children of the bride-chamber cannot fast, as long as the bridegroom is with them."* Thus, when others were to be spoken for, the publicans I mean, to soothe their wounded soul, He was more severe in His reproof of their revilers; but when they were deriding Himself and His disciples, He makes His reply with all gentleness.

Now their meaning is like this; *"Granted,"* say they, *"You do this as a physician; why do Your disciples also leave fasting, and cleave to such tables?"* Then, to make the accusation heavier, they put themselves first, and then the Pharisees; wishing by the comparison to aggravate the charge. For indeed *"both we,"* it is said, *"and the Pharisees, fast oft."* And in truth they did fast, the one having learned it from John, the other from the law; even as also the Pharisee said, *"I fast twice in the week."* [Luke 18:12]

What then says Jesus? *"Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them."* Before, He called Himself a physician, but here a bridegroom; by these names revealing His unspeakable mysteries. Yet of course He might have told them, more sharply, *"These things depend not on you, that you should make such laws. For of what use is fasting, when the mind is full of wickedness; when you blame others, when you condemn them, bearing about beams in your eyes, and do all for display? Nay, before all this ye ought to have cast out vainglory, to be proficient in all the other duties, in charity, meekness, brotherly love."* However, nothing of this kind does He say, but with all gentleness, *"The children of the bridechamber cannot fast, so long as the bridegroom is with them;"* recalling to their mind John's words, when he said, *"He that has the bride, is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, which stands and hears Him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice."* [John 3:29]

Now His meaning is like this: The present time is of joy and gladness, therefore do not bring in the things which are melancholy. For fasting is a melancholy thing, not in its own nature, but to them that are yet in rather a feeble state; for to those at least that are willing to practise self-command, the observance is exceedingly pleasant and desirable. For as when the body is in health, the spirits are high, so when the soul is well conditioned, the pleasure is greater. But according to their previous impression He says this.

So also Isaiah, discoursing of it, calls it *"an affliction of the soul;"* and Moses too in like manner.

Not however by this only does He stop their mouths, but by another topic also, saying,

"Days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." [Matthew 9:15]

For hereby He signifies, that what they did was not of gluttony, but pertained to some marvellous dispensation. And at the same time He lays beforehand the foundation of what He was to say touching His passion, in His controversies with others instructing His disciples, and training them now to be versed in the things which are deemed sorrowful. Because for themselves already to have this said to them, would have been grievous and galling, since we know that afterwards, being uttered, it troubled them; but spoken to others, it would become rather less intolerable to them.

It being also natural for them to pride themselves on John's calamity, He from this topic represses likewise such their elation: the doctrine however of His resurrection He adds not yet, it not being yet time. For so much indeed was natural, that one supposed to be a man should die, but that other was beyond nature.

5. Then what He had done before, this He does here again. I mean, that as He, when they were attempting to prove Him blameable for eating with sinners, proved to them on the contrary, that His proceeding was not only no blame, but an absolute praise to Him: so here too, when they wanted to show of Him, that He knows not how to manage His disciples, He signifies that such language was the part of men not knowing how to manage their inferences, but finding fault at random.

"For no man," says He, *"puts a piece of new cloth unto an old garment."*

He is again establishing His argument by illustrations from common life. And what He says is like this, *"The disciples have not yet become strong, but still need much condescension. They have not yet been renewed by the Spirit, and on persons in that state one ought not to lay any burden of injunctions."*

And these things He said, setting laws and rules for His own disciples, that when they should have to receive as disciples those of all sorts that should come from the whole world, they might deal with them very gently.

"Neither do men put new wine into old bottles."

Do you see His illustrations, how like the Old Testament? The garment? The wine skins? For Jeremiah too calls the people *"a girdle,"* and makes mention again of *"bottles"* and of *"wine."* [Jeremiah 13:10-12] Thus, the discourse being about gluttony and a table, He takes His illustrations from the same.

But Luke the same words, a second and a third time and often; not however in a wearisome kind of way, but sport ively, and do thou now turn from her, now flatter and court her.

Do you see not the painters, how much they rub out, how much they insert, when they are making a beautiful portrait? Well then, do not thou prove inferior to these. For if these, in drawing the likeness of a body, used such great diligence, how much more were it meet for us, in fashioning a soul, to use every contrivance. For if you should fashion well the form of this soul, you will not see the countenance of the body looking unseemly, nor lips stained, nor a mouth like a bear's mouth dyed with blood, nor eyebrows blackened as with the smut of some kitchen vessel, nor cheeks whitened with dust like the walls of the tombs. For all these things are smut, and cinders, and dust, and signals of extreme deformity.

But stay: I have been led on unobserving, I know not how, into these expressions; and while admonishing another to teach with gentleness, I have been myself hurried away into wrath. Let us return therefore again unto the more gentle way of admonition, and let us bear with all the faults of our wives, that we may succeed in doing what we would. Do you see not how we bear with the cries of children, when we would wean them from the breast, how we endure all for this object only, that we may persuade them to despise their former food? Thus let us do in this case also, let us bear with all the rest, that we may accomplish this. For when this has been amended, you will see the other too proceeding in due order, and you will come again unto the ornaments of gold, and in the same way wilt reason concerning them likewise, and thus little by little bringing your wife unto the right rule, you will be a beautiful painter, a faithful servant, an excellent husbandman.

Together with these things remind her also of the women of old, of Sarah, of Rebecca, both of the fair and of them that were not so, and point out how all equally practised modesty. For even Leah, the wife of the patriarch, not being fair, was not constrained to devise any such thing, but although she were uncomely, and not very much beloved by her husband, she neither devised any such thing, nor marred her countenance, but continued to preserve the lineaments thereof undisfigured, and this though brought up by Gentiles.

But thou that art a believing woman, you that hast Christ for your head, are you bringing in upon us a satanic art? And do you not call to mind the water that dashed over your countenance, the sacrifice that adorns your lips, the blood that has reddened your tongue? For if you would consider all these things, though thou were fond of dress to the ten thousandth degree, you will not venture nor endure to put upon you that dust and those cinders. Learn that you have been joined unto Christ, and refrain from this

unseemliness. For neither is He delighted with these colorings, but He seeks after another beauty, of which He is in an exceeding degree a lover, I mean, that in the soul. This the prophet likewise has charged you to cherish, and has said, *"So shall the King have pleasure in your beauty."*

Let us not therefore be curious in making ourselves unseemly. For neither is any one of God's works imperfect, nor does it need to be set right by you. For not even if to an image of the emperor, after it was set up, any one were to seek to add his own work, would the attempt be safe, but he will incur extreme danger. Well then, man works and you add not; but does God work, and do you amend it? And do you not consider the fire of hell? Do you not consider the destitution of your soul? For on this account it is neglected, because all your care is wasted on the flesh.

But why do I speak of the soul? For to the very flesh everything falls out contrary to what you have sought. Consider it. Do you wish to appear beautiful? This shows you uncomely. Do you wish to please your husband? This rather grieves him; and causes not him only, but strangers also, to become your accusers. Would you appear young? This will quickly bring you to old age. Would you wish to array yourself honorably? This makes you to be ashamed. For such an one is ashamed not only before those of her own rank, but even those of her maids who are in her secret, and those of her servants who know; and, above all, before herself.

But why need I say these things? For that which is more grievous than all I have now omitted, namely, that you dost offend God; you undermine modesty, kindlest the flame of jealousy, emulatest the harlot women at their brothel.

All these things then consider, you women, and laugh to scorn the pomp of Satan and the craft of the devil; and letting go this adorning, or rather disfiguring, cultivate that beauty in your own souls which is lovely

even to angels and desired of God, and delightful to your husbands; that you may attain both unto present glory, and unto that which is to come. To which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 31 on Matthew

Matt. IX. 18.

"While He spoke these things unto them, behold, there came in a ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay Your hand upon her, and she shall live."

The deed overtook the words; so that the mouths of the Pharisees were the more stopped. For both he that came was a ruler of the synagogue, and his affliction terrible. For the young damsel was both his only child, and twelve years old, the very flower of her age; on which account especially He raised her up again, and that immediately.

And if Luke say that men came, saying, *"Trouble not the Master, for she is dead;"* [Luke 8:49] we will say this, that the expression, *"she is even now dead,"* was that of one conjecturing from the time of his journeying, or exaggerating his affliction. For it is an usual thing with persons in need to heighten their own evils by their report, and to say something more than is really true, the more to attract those whom they are beseeching.

But see his dullness: how he requires of Christ two things, both His actual presence, and the laying on of His hand: and this by the way is a sign that he had left her still breathing. This Naaman also, that Syrian, required of the prophet. *"For I thought,"* says he, *"he will surely come out, and will lay on his hand."* For in truth they who are more or less dull of temper, require sight and sensible things.

And whereas Mark [Mark 5:37] says, He took the three disciples, and so does Luke; [Luke 8:51] our evangelist merely says, *"the disciples."* Wherefore then did He not take with Him Matthew, though he had but just come unto Him? To bring him to a more earnest longing, and because he

was yet rather in an imperfect state. For to this intent does He honor those, that these may grow such as those are. But for him it sufficed for the present, to see what befell the woman with the issue of blood, and to be honored by His table, and by His partaking of his salt.

And when He had risen up many followed Him, as for a great miracle, both on account of the person who had come, and because the more part being of a grosser disposition were seeking not so much the care of the soul, as the healing of the body; and they flowed together, some urged by their own afflictions, some hastening to behold how other men's were cured: however, there were as yet but few in the habit of coming principally for the sake of His words and doctrine. Nevertheless, He did not suffer them to enter into the house, but His disciples only; and not even all of these, everywhere instructing us to repel the applause of the multitude.

2. *"And, behold," it is said, "a woman that had an issue of blood twelve years, came behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment. For she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole."*

Wherefore did she not approach Him boldly? She was ashamed on account of her affliction, accounting herself to be unclean. For if the menstruous woman was judged not to be clean, much more would she have the same thought, who was afflicted with such a disease; since in fact that complaint was under the law accounted a great uncleanness.

[Leviticus 15:25] Therefore she lies hidden, and conceals herself. For neither had she as yet the proper and correct opinion concerning Him: else she would not have thought to be concealed. And this is the first woman that came unto Him in public, having heard of course that He heals women also, and that He is on His way to the little daughter that was dead.

And she dared not invite Him to her house, although she was wealthy; nay, neither did she approach publicly, but secretly with faith she touched

His garments. For she did not doubt, nor say in herself, *"Shall I indeed be delivered from the disease? Shall I indeed fail of deliverance?"* But confident of her health, she so approached Him. *"For she said,"* we read, *"in herself, If I may only touch His garment, I shall be whole."* Yea, for she saw out of what manner of house He had come, that of the publicans, and who they were that followed Him, sinners and publicans; and all these things made her to be of good hope.

What then does Christ? He suffers her not to be hid, but brings her into the midst, and makes her manifest for many purposes.

It is true indeed that some of the senseless ones say, *"He does this for love of glory. For why,"* say they, *"did He not suffer her to be hid?"* What do you say, unholy, yea, all unholy one? He that enjoins silence, He that passes by miracles innumerable, is He in love with glory?

For what intent then does He bring her forward? In the first place He puts an end to the woman's fear, lest being pricked by her conscience, as having stolen the gift, she should abide in agony. In the second place, He sets her right, in respect of her thinking to be hid. Thirdly, He exhibits her faith to all, so as to provoke the rest also to emulation; and His staying of the fountains of her blood was no greater sign than He affords in signifying His knowledge of all things. Moreover the ruler of the synagogue, who was on the point of thorough unbelief, and so of utter ruin, He corrects by the woman. Since both they that came said, *"Trouble not the Master, for the damsel is dead;"* and those in the house laughed Him to scorn, when He said, *"She sleeps;"* and it was likely that the father too should have experienced some such feeling. Therefore to correct this weakness beforehand, He brings forward the simple woman. For as to that ruler being quite of the grosser sort, hear what He says unto him: *"Fear not, do thou believe only, and she shall be made whole."* [Luke 8:50]

Thus He waited also on purpose for death to come on, and that then He should arrive; in order that the proof of the resurrection might be distinct. With this view He both walks more leisurely, and discourses more with the woman; that He might give time for the damsel to die, and for those to come, who told of it, and said, *"Trouble not the Master."* This again surely the evangelist obscurely signifies, when he says, *"While He yet spoke, there came from the house certain which said, Your daughter is dead, trouble not the Master."* For His will was that her death should be believed, that her resurrection might not be suspected. And this He does in every instance. So also in the case of Lazarus, He waited a first and a second and a third day. [John 11:6, 39]

On account then of all these things He brings her forward, and says, *"Daughter, be of good cheer,"* even as He had said also to the paralyzed person, *"Son, be of good cheer."* Because in truth the woman was exceedingly alarmed; therefore He says, *"be of good cheer,"* and He calls her *"daughter;"* for her faith had made her a daughter. After that comes also her praise: *"Your faith has made you whole."*

But Luke tells us also other things more than these concerning the woman. Thus, when she had approached Him, says he, and had received her health, Christ did not immediately call her, but first He says, *"Which is he that touched me?"* Then when Peter and they that were with Him said, Master, the multitude throng You, and press You, and sayest Thou, who touched me? [Luke 8:45] (which was a very sure sign both that He was encompassed with real flesh, and that He trampled on all vainglory, for they did not follow Him at all afar off, but thronged Him on every side); He for His part continued to say, *"Somebody has touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me;"* answering after a grosser manner according to the impression of His hearers. But these things He said, that He might also

induce her of herself to make confession. For on this account neither did He immediately convict her, in order that having signified that He knows all things clearly, He might induce her of her own accord to publish all, and work upon her to proclaim herself what had been done, and that He might not incur suspicion by saying it.

Do you see the woman superior to the ruler of the synagogue? She detained Him not, she took no hold of Him, but touched Him only with the end of her fingers, and though she came later, she first went away healed. And he indeed was bringing the Physician altogether to his house, but for her a mere touch suffered. For though she was bound by her affliction, yet her faith had given her wings. And mark how He comforts her, saying, *"Your faith has saved you."* Now surely, had He drawn her forward for display, He would not have added this; but He says this, partly teaching the ruler of the synagogue to believe, partly proclaiming the woman's praise, and affording her by these words delight and advantage equal to her bodily health.

For that He did this as minded to glorify her, and to amend others, and not to show Himself glorious, is manifest from hence; that He indeed would have been equally an object of admiration even without this (for the miracles were pouring around Him faster than the snow-flakes, and He both had done and was to do far greater things than these): but the woman, had this not happened, would have gone away hid, deprived of those great praises. For this cause He brought her forward, and proclaimed her praise, and cast out her fear, (for *"she came,"* it is said, *"trembling"*); and He caused her to be of good courage, and together with health of body, He gave her also other provisions for her journey, in that He said, *"Go in peace."*
[Luke 8:48]

3. *"And when He came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He says unto them, Give place, for the maid is not dead, but sleeps. And they laughed Him to scorn."*

Noble tokens, surely, these, of the rulers of synagogues; in the moment of her death pipes and cymbals raising a dirge! What then does Christ? All the rest He cast out, but the parents He brought in; to leave no room for saying that He healed her in any other way. And before her resurrection too, He raises her in His word; saying, *"The maid is not dead, but sleeps."* And in many instances besides He does this. As then on the sea He expels tumult from the mind of the by-standers, at the same time both signifying that it is easy for Him to raise the dead (which same thing He did with respect to Lazarus also, saying, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps [John 11:11];"* and also teaching us not to fear death; for that it is not death, but is henceforth become a sleep. Thus, since He Himself was to die, He does in the persons of others prepare His disciples beforehand to be of good courage, and to bear the end meekly. Since in truth, when He had come, death was from that time forward a sleep.

But yet they laughed Him to scorn: He however was not indignant at being disbelieved by those for whom He was a little afterwards to work miracles; neither did He rebuke their laughter, in order that both it and the pipes, and the cymbals, and all the other things, might be a sure proof of her death. For since for the most part, after the miracles are done, men disbelieve, He takes them beforehand by their own answers; which was done in the case both of Lazarus and of Moses. For to Moses first He says, *"What is that in your hand?"* [Exodus 4:2] in order that when he saw it become a serpent, He should not forget that it was a rod before, but being reminded of his own saying, might be amazed at what was done. And with regard to Lazarus He says, *"Where have ye laid him?"* [John 11:34, 39] that

they who had said, "*Come and see,*" and "*he stinks, for he has been dead four days,*" might no longer be able to disbelieve His having raised a dead man.

Seeing then the cymbals and the multitude, He put them all out, and in the presence of the parents works the miracle; not introducing another soul, but recalling the same that had gone out, and awakening her as it were out of a sleep.

And He holds her by the hand, assuring the beholders; so as by that sight to make a way for the belief of her resurrection. For whereas the father said, "*Lay your hand upon her;*" [Matthew 9:18] He on His part does somewhat more, for He lays no hand on her, but rather takes hold of her, and raises her, implying that to Him all things are ready. And He not only raises her up, but also commands to give her meat, that the event might not seem to be an illusion. And He does not give it Himself, but commands them; as also with regard to Lazarus He said, "*Loose him, and let him go,*" [John 11:44] and afterwards makes him partaker of His table. [John 12:2] For so is He wont always to establish both points, making out with all completeness the demonstration alike of the death and of the resurrection.

But do thou mark, I pray you, not her resurrection only, but also His commanding "*to tell no man;*" and by all learn thou this especially, His freedom from haughtiness and vainglory. And withal learn this other thing also, that He cast them that were beating themselves out of the house, and declared them unworthy of such a sight; and do not thou go out with the minstrels, but remain with Peter, and John, and James.

For if He cast them out then, much more now. For then it was not yet manifest that death was become a sleep, but now this is clearer than the very sun itself. But is it that He has not raised your daughter now? But surely He will raise her, and with more abundant glory. For that damsel,

when she had risen, died again; but your child, if she rise again, abides thenceforth in immortal being.

4. Let no man therefore beat himself any more, nor wail, neither disparage Christ's achievement. For indeed He overcame death. Why then do you wail for nought? The thing has become a sleep. Why lament and weep? Why, even if Greeks did this, they should be laughed to scorn; but when the believer behaves himself unseemly in these things, what plea has he? What excuse will there be for them that are guilty of such folly, and this, after so long a time, and so clear proof of the resurrection?

But you, as though laboring to add to the charge against you, dost also bring us in heathen women singing dirges, to kindle your feelings, and to stir up the furnace thoroughly: and you hearken not to Paul, saying, *"What concord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel?"*

And while the children of heathens, who know nothing of resurrection, do yet find words of consolation, saying, *"Bear it manfully, for it is not possible to undo what has taken place, nor to amend it by lamentations;"* art not thou, who hear sayings wiser and better than these, ashamed to behave yourself more unseemly than they? For we say not at all, *"Bear it manfully, because it is not possible to undo what has taken place,"* but, *"bear it manfully, because he will surely rise again;"* the child sleeps and is not dead; he is at rest and has not perished. For resurrection will be his final lot, and eternal life, and immortality, and an angel's portion. Do you not hear the Psalm that says, *"Return unto your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you?"* God calls it *"bountiful dealing,"* and do you make lamentation?

And what more couldest thou have done, if you were a foe and an enemy of the dead? Why, if there must be mourning, it is the devil that

ought to mourn. He may beat himself, he may wail, at our journeying to greater blessings. This lamentation becomes his wickedness, not you, who art going to be crowned and to rest. Yea, for death is a fair haven. Consider, at any rate, with how many evils our present life is filled; reflect how often you yourself hast cursed our present life. For indeed things go on to worse, and from the very beginning thou were involved in no small condemnation. For, says He, *"In sorrow you shall bring forth children;"* and, *"In the sweat of your face shall you eat your bread;"* and, *"In the world you shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33]

But of our state there, no such word at all is spoken, but all the contrary; that *"grief and sorrow and sighing have fled away."* [Isaiah 35:10] And that *"men shall come from the east and from the west, and shall recline in the bosoms of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob."* [Matthew 8:11] And that the region there is a spiritual bride-chamber, and bright lamps, and a translation to Heaven.

5. Why then disgrace the departed? Why dispose the rest to fear and tremble at death? Why cause many to accuse God, as though He had done very dreadful things? Or rather, why after this invite poor persons, and entreat priests to pray? *"In order,"* says he, *"that the dead may depart into rest; that he may find the Judge propitious."* For these things then are you mourning and wailing? You are therefore fighting and warring with yourself: exciting a storm against yourself on account of his having entered into harbor.

"But what can I do?" says he: *"such a thing is nature."* The blame is not nature's, neither does it belong to the necessary consequence of the thing; but it is we that are turning all things upside down, are overcome with softness, are giving up our proper nobility, and are making the unbelievers worse. For how shall we reason with another concerning

immortality? How shall we persuade the heathen, when we fear death, and shudder at it more than he? Many, for instance, among the Greeks although they knew nothing of course about immortality, have crowned themselves at the decrease of their children, and appeared in white garments, that they might reap the present glory; but thou not even for the future glory's sake ceaseest your woman's behavior and wailing.

But have you no heirs, nor any to succeed to your goods? And which would you rather, that he should be heir of your possessions, or of Heaven? And which did you desire, that he should succeed to the things that perish, which he must have let go soon after, or to things that remain, and are immoveable? You had him not for heir, but God had him instead of you; he became not joint-heir with his own brethren, but he became *"joint-heir with Christ."*

"But to whom," says he, *"are we to leave our garments, to whom our houses, to whom our slaves and our lands?"* To him again, and more securely than if he lived; for there is nothing to hinder. For if barbarians burn the goods of the departed together with them, much more were it a righteous thing for you to send away with the dead what things he has: not to be turned to ashes, like those, but to invest him with more glory; and that if he departed a sinner, it may do away his sins; but if righteous, that it may become an increase of reward and recompense.

But do you long to see him? Then live the same life with him, and you will soon obtain that sacred vision.

And herewith consider this also, that though you should not hearken to us, you will certainly yield to time. But no reward then for you; for the consolation comes of the number of the days. Whereas if you are willing now to command yourself, you will gain two very great points: first, you will deliver yourself from the intervening ills, next, you will be crowned

with the brighter crown from God. For indeed neither almsgiving nor anything else is nearly so great as bearing affliction meekly.

Bear in mind, that even the Son of God died: and He indeed for you, but thou for yourself. And when He said, *"If it be possible, let the cup pass from me,"* [Matthew 26:39] and suffered pain, and was in agony, nevertheless He shunned not the end, but underwent it, and that with its whole course of exceeding woe. That is, He did by no means simply endure death, but the most shameful death; and before His death, stripes; and before His stripes, upbraidings, and jeers, and revilings; instructing you to bear all manfully. And though He died, and put off His body, He resumed it again in greater glory, herein also holding out to you good hopes. If these things be not a fable, lament not. If you account these things to be sure, weep not; but if you dost weep, how will you be able to persuade the Greek that you believe?

6. But even so does the event still appear intolerable to you? Well then, for this very cause it is not meet to lament for him, for he is delivered from many such calamities. Grudge not therefore against him, neither envy him: for to ask death for yourself because of his premature end, and to lament for him that he did not live to endure many such things, is rather the part of one grudging and envying.

And think not of this, that he will no more return home: but that yourself also art a little while after to go to him. Regard not this, that he returns here no more, but that neither do these things that are seen remain such as they are, but these too are being transformed. Yea, for heaven, and earth, and sea, and all, are being put together afresh, and then shall you recover your child in greater glory.

And if indeed he departed a sinner, his wickedness is stayed; for certainly, had God known that he was being converted, He would not have

snatched him away before his repentance: but if he ended his life righteous, he now possesses all good in safety. Whence it is manifest that your tears are not of kindly affection, but of unreasoning passion. For if you loved the departed, you should rejoice and be glad that he is delivered from the present waves.

For what is there more, I pray you? What is there fresh and new? Do we not see the same things daily revolving? Day and night, night and day, winter and summer, summer and winter, and nothing more. And these indeed are ever the same; but our evils are fresh, and newer. Would you then have him every day drawing up more of these things, and abiding here, and sickening, and mourning, and in fear and trembling, and enduring some of the ills of life, dreading others lest he some time endure them? Since assuredly you can not say this, that one sailing over this great sea might possibly be free from despondency and cares, and from all other such things.

And withal take this also into account, that you did not bring him forth immortal; and that if he had not died now, he must have endured it soon after. But is it that you had not your fill of him? But you will of a certainty enjoy him there. But do you long to see him here also? And what is there to hinder you? For you are permitted even here, if you be watchful; for the hope of the things to come is clearer than sight.

But you, if he were in some king's court wouldest not ever seek to see him, so long as you heard of his good report: and seeing him departed to the things that are far better, are you faint-hearted about a little time; and that, when you have in his place one to dwell with you?

But have you no husband? Yet have you a consolation, even the Father of the orphans, and Judge of the widows. Hear even Paul pronouncing this widowhood blessed, and saying, *"Now she that is a widow indeed and*

desolate, trusts in the Lord." Because such an one will appear more approved, evincing as she does greater patience. Mourn not therefore for that which is your crown, that for which you demand a reward.

Since you have also restored His deposit, if you have exhibited the very thing entrusted to you. Be not in care any more, having laid up the possession in an inviolable treasure-house.

But if you would really learn, both what is our present being, and what our life to come; and that the one is a spider's web and a shadow, but the things there, all of them, immoveable and immortal; you would not after that want other arguments. For whereas now your child is delivered from all change; if he were here, perhaps he might continue good, perhaps not so. Do you see not how many openly cast off their own children? How many are constrained to keep them at home, although worse than the open outcasts?

Let us make account of all these things and practise self-command; for so shall we at once show regard to the deceased, and enjoy much praise from men, and receive from God the great rewards of patience, and attain unto the good things eternal; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 32 on Matthew

Matt. IX. 27-30.

" And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him: and Jesus says unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord. Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened."

Wherefore can it be that He puts them off, and they crying out? Here again teaching us utterly to repel the glory that comes from the multitude. For because the house was near, He leads them there to heal them in private. And this is evident from the fact, that He charged them moreover to tell no man.

But this is no light charge against the Jews; when these men, though their eyes were struck out, receive the faith by hearing alone, but they beholding the miracles, and having their sight to witness what was happening, do all just contrary. And see their earnestness also, both by their cry, and by their prayer itself. For they did not merely approach Him, but with loud cries, and alleging nought else but *"mercy."*

And they called Him *"Son of David,"* because the name was thought to be honorable. In many passages, for instance, did the prophets likewise so call the kings, whom they wished to honor, and to declare great.

And having brought them into the house, He puts to them a further question. For in many cases He made a point of healing on entreaty, lest any should suppose Him to be rushing upon these miracles through vainglory: and not on this account alone, but to indicate also that they deserve healing,

and that no one should say, *"If it was of mere mercy that He saved, all men ought to be saved."* For even His love to man has a kind of proportion; depending on the faith of them that are healed. But not for these causes only does He require faith of them, but forasmuch as they called Him *"Son of David,"* He to lead them up to what is higher, and to teach them to entertain the imaginations they ought of Himself, says, *"Believe ye that I am able to do this?"* He did not say, *"Believe ye that I am able to entreat my Father, that I am able to pray"* but, *"that I am able to do this?"*

What then is their word? *"Yea, Lord."* They call Him no more Son of David, but soar higher, and acknowledge His dominion.

And then at last He for His part lays His hand upon them, saying, *"According to your faith be it unto you."* And this He does to confirm their faith, and to show that they are participators in the good work, and to witness that their words were not words of flattery. For neither did He say, *"Let your eyes be opened,"* but, *"According to your faith be it unto you;"* which He says to many of them that came unto Him; before the healing of their bodies, hastening to proclaim the faith in their soul; so as both to make them more approved, and to render others more serious.

Thus with respect to the sick of the palsy also; for there too before giving nerve to the body, He raises up the fallen soul, saying, *"Son, be of good cheer, your sins be forgiven you."* And the young damsel too, when He had raised her up, He detained, and by the food taught her her Benefactor; and in the case of the centurion also He did in like manner, leaving the whole to his faith; and as to His disciples again, when delivering them from the storm on the sea, He delivered them first from their want of faith. Just so likewise in this case: He knew indeed, even before their cry, the secrets of their mind; but that He might lead on others also to the same earnestness,

He makes them known to the rest as well, by the result of their cure proclaiming their hidden faith.

Then after their cure He commands them to tell no man; neither does He merely command them, but with much strictness.

"For Jesus," it is said, "strictly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad His fame in all that country." [Matthew 9:30-31]

They however did not endure this, but became preachers, and evangelists; and when bidden to hide what had been done, they endured it not.

And if in another place we find Him saying, *"Go your way, and declare the glory of God,"* that is not contrary to this, but even highly in agreement herewith. For He instructs us to say nothing ourselves, concerning ourselves, but even to forbid them that would eulogise us: but if the glory be referred to God, then not only not to forbid, but to command men to do this.

2. *"And as they went out,"* it is said, *"behold, they brought unto Him a dumb man possessed with a devil."*

For the affliction was not natural, but the device of the evil spirit; wherefore also he needs others to bring him. For he could neither make entreaty himself, being speechless, nor supplicate others, when the evil spirit had bound his tongue, and together with his tongue had fettered his soul.

For this cause neither does He require faith of him, but straightway heals the disease.

"For when the devil was cast out," it says, *"the dumb spoke: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel."*

[Matthew 9:33]

Now this especially vexed the Pharisees, that they preferred Him to all, not only that then were, but that had ever been. And they preferred Him, not for His healing, but for His doing it easily and quickly, and to diseases innumerable and incurable.

And thus the multitude; but the Pharisees quite contrariwise; not only disparaging the works, but saying things contradictory to themselves, and not ashamed. Such a thing is wickedness. For what say they?

"He casts out devils through the prince of the devils."

What can be more foolish than this? For in the first place, as He also says further on, it is impossible that a devil should cast out a devil, for that being is wont to repair what belongs to himself, not to pull it down. But He did not cast out devils only, but also cleansed lepers, and raised the dead, and curbed the sea, and remitted sins, and preached the kingdom, and brought men unto the Father; things which a demon would never either choose, or at any time be able to effect. For the devils bring men to idols, and withdraw them from God, and persuade them to disbelieve the life to come. The devil does not bestow kindness when he is insulted; forasmuch as even when not insulted, he harms those that court and honor him.

But He does the contrary. For after these their insults and revilings,

3. *"He went about,"* it is said, *"all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease."*

And so far from punishing them for their insensibility, He did not even simply rebuke them; at once both evincing His meekness, and so refuting the calumny; and at the same time minded also by the signs which followed to exhibit His proof more completely: and then to adduce also the refutation by words. He went about therefore both in cities, and in countries, and in their synagogues; instructing us to requite our calumniators, not with fresh

calumnies, but with greater benefits. Since, if not for man's sake, but God's, you do good to your fellow-servants; whatsoever they may do, leave not thou off doing them good, that your reward may be greater; since he surely, who upon their calumny leaves off his doing good, signifies that for their praise' sake, not for God's sake, he applies himself to that kind of virtue.

For this cause Christ, to teach us that of mere goodness He had entered on this, so far from waiting for the sick to come to Him, of Himself hastened unto them, bearing them two of the greatest blessings; one, the gospel of the kingdom; another, the perfect cure of all their diseases. And not a city did He overlook, not a village did He hasten by, but visited every place.

4. And not even at this does He stop, but He exhibits also another instance of His forethought. That is,

"When He saw," it is said, "the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they were troubled, and scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then says He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

See again His freedom from vainglory. That He may not draw all men unto Himself, He sends out His disciples.

And not with this view only, but that He might also teach them, after practising in Palestine, as in a sort of training-school, to strip themselves for their conflicts with the world. For this purpose then He makes the exercises even more serious than the actual conflicts, so far as pertained to their own virtue; that they might more easily engage in the struggles that were to ensue; as it were a sort of tender nestlings whom He was at length leading out to fly. And for the present He makes them physicians of bodies,

dispensing to them afterwards the cure of the soul, which is the principal thing.

And mark how He points out the facility and necessity of the thing. For what says He? *"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."* That is, *"not to the sowing,"* says He, *"but to the reaping do I send you."* Which in John He expressed by, *"Other men labored, and you are entered into their labors."* [John 4:38]

And these things he said, at once repressing their pride, and preparing them to be of good courage, and signifying that the greater part of the labor came first.

And contemplate Him here too beginning from love to man, not with any requital. *"For He had compassion, because they were troubled and scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd."* This is His charge against the rulers of the Jews, that being shepherds they acted the part of wolves. For so far from amending the multitude, they even marred their progress. For instance, when they were marvelling and saying, *"It was never so seen in Israel:"* these were affirming the contrary, *"He casts out devils through the prince of the devils."*

But of what laborers does He speak here? Of the twelve disciples. What then? Whereas He had said, *"But the laborers are few,"* did He add to their number? By no means, but He sent them out alone. Wherefore then did He say, *"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest;"* and made no addition to their number? Because though they were but twelve, He made them many from that time forward, not by adding to their number, but by giving them power.

Then to signify how great the gift is, He says, *"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest;"* and indirectly declares it to be His own prerogative. For after having said, *"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest;"* when they had not made any

entreaty nor prayer, He Himself at once ordains them, reminding them also of the sayings of John, [Matthew 3:12] of the threshing floor, and of the Person winnowing, and of the chaff, and of the wheat. Whence it is evident that Himself is the husbandman, Himself the Lord of the harvest, Himself the master and owner of the prophets. For if He sent them to reap, clearly it was not to reap what belongs to another, but what Himself had sown by the prophets.

But not in this way only was He indirectly encouraging them, in calling their ministry a harvest; but also by making them able for the ministry.

"And when He had called unto Him," it says, "His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease."

Still the Spirit was not yet given. For *"there was not yet,"* it says, *"a Spirit, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."* How then did they cast out the spirits? By His command, by His authority.

And mark, I pray you, also, how well timed was the mission. For not at the beginning did He send them; but when they had enjoyed sufficiently the advantage of following Him, and had seen a dead person raised, and the sea rebuked, and devils expelled, and a paralytic new-strung, and sins remitted, and a leper cleansed, and had received a sufficient proof of His power, both by deeds and words, then He sends them forth: and not to dangerous acts, for as yet there was no danger in Palestine, but they had only to stand against evil speakings. However, even of this He forewarns them, I mean of their perils; preparing them even before the time, and making them feel as in conflict by His continual predictions of that sort.

5. Then, since He had mentioned to us two pairs of apostles, that of Peter, and that of John, and after those had pointed out the calling of

Matthew, but had said nothing to us either of the calling or of the name of the other apostles; here of necessity He sets down the list of them, and their number, and makes known their names, saying thus:

"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; first, Simon, who is called Peter." [Matthew 10:2]

Because there was also another Simon, the Canaanite; and there was Judas Iscariot, and Judas the brother of James; and James the son of Alphæus, and James the son of Zebedee.

Now Mark does also put them according to their dignity; for after the two leaders, He then numbers Andrew; but our evangelist not so, but without distinction; or rather He sets before himself even Thomas who came far short of him.

But let us look at the list of them from the beginning.

"First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother."

Even this is no small praise. For the one he named from his virtue, the other from his high kindred, which was in conformity to his disposition.

Then, *"James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother."*

Do you see how He arranges them not according to their dignity. For to me John seems to be greater, not only than the others, but even than his brother.

After this, when he had said, *"Philip, and Bartholomew,"* he added, *"Thomas, and Matthew the Publican."* [Matthew 10:3]

But Luke not so, but in the opposite order, and he puts him before Thomas.

Next, *"James the son of Alphæus."* For there was, as I have already said, the son of Zebedee also. Then after having mentioned *"Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus,"* and *"Simon"* Zelotes, whom he calls also *"the Canaanite,"* he comes to the traitor. And not as a sort of enemy or foe,

but as one writing a history, so has he described him. He says not, "*the unholy, the all unholy one*," but has named him from his city, "*Judas Iscariot*." Because there was also another Judas, "*Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus*," who, Luke says, was the brother of James, saying, "*Judas the brother of James*." [Luke 6:16] Therefore to distinguish him from this man, it says, "*Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him*." [Matthew 10:4] And he is not ashamed to say, "*who also betrayed Him*." So far were they from ever disguising anything even of those things that seem to be matters of reproach.

And first of all, and leader of the choir, is the "*unlearned, the ignorant man*." [Acts 4:13]

But let us see whither, and to whom, He sends them.

"*These twelve*," it is said, "*Jesus sent forth*." [Matthew 10:5]

What manner of men were these? The fishermen, the publicans: for indeed four were fishermen and two publicans, Matthew and James, and one was even a traitor. And what says He to them? He presently charges them, saying,

"*Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*." [Matthew 10:5-6]

"*For think not at all*," says He, "*because they insult me, and call me demoniac, that I hate them and turn away from them. Nay, as I sought earnestly to amend them in the first place, so keeping you away from all the rest, to them do I send you as teachers and physicians. And I not only forbid you to preach to others before these, but I do not suffer you so much as to touch upon the road that leads there, nor to enter into such a city*." Because the Samaritans too are in a state of enmity with the Jews. And yet it was an easier thing to deal with them, for they were much more favorably disposed

to the faith; but the case of these was more difficult. But for all this, He sends them on the harder task, indicating his guardian care of them, and stopping the mouths of the Jews, and preparing the way for the teaching of the apostles, that people might not hereafter blame them for "*entering in to men uncircumcised*," [Acts 11:3] and think they had a just cause for shunning and abhorring them. And he calls them "*lost*," not "*stray*," "*sheep*," in every way contriving how to excuse them, and winning their mind to himself.

6. "*And as you go*," says He, "*preach, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand*." [Matthew 10:7]

Do you see the greatness of their ministry? Do you see the dignity of apostles? Of nothing that is the object of sense are they commanded to speak, nor such as Moses spoke of, and the prophets before them, but of some new and strange things. For while the former preached no such things, but earth, and the good things in the earth, these preached the kingdom of Heaven, and whatever is there.

And not from this circumstance only were these the greater, but also from their obedience: in that they shrink not, nor are they backward, like those of old; but, warned as they are of perils, and wars, and of those insupportable evils, they receive with great obedience His injunctions, as being heralds of a kingdom.

"*And what marvel*," says one, "*if having nothing to preach that is dismal or grievous, they readily obeyed*?" What do you say? Nothing grievous enjoined them? Do you not hear of the prisons, the executions, the civil wars, the hatred of all men? All which, He said a little while after, they must undergo. True, as to other men, He sent them to be procurers and heralds of innumerable blessings: but for themselves, He said and proclaimed beforehand, that they were to suffer terrible and incurable ills.

After this, to make them trustworthy, He says,

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give."

See how He provides for their conduct, and that no less than for their miracles, implying that the miracles without this are nothing. Thus He both quells their pride by saying, *"Freely you have received, freely give;"* and takes order for their being clear of covetousness. Moreover, lest it should be thought their own work, and they be lifted up by the signs that were wrought, He says, *"freely you have received."* *"You bestow no favor on them that receive you, for not for a price did ye receive these things, nor after toil: for the grace is mine. In like manner therefore give ye to them also, for there is no finding a price worthy of them."*

7. After this plucking up immediately the root of the evils,
[1 Timothy 6:10] He says,

"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff."

He said not, *"take them not with you,"* but, *"even if you can obtain them from another, flee the evil disease."* And you see that hereby He was answering many good purposes; first setting His disciples above suspicion; secondly, freeing them from all care, so that they might give all their leisure to the word; thirdly, teaching them His own power. Of this accordingly He quite speaks out to them afterwards, *"Lacked ye anything, when I sent you naked and unshod?"*

He did not at once say, *"Provide not,"* but when He had said, *"Cleanse the lepers, cast out devils,"* then He said, *"Provide nothing; freely you have received, freely give;"* by His way of ordering things consulting at once for their interest, their credit, and their ability.

But perhaps some one may say, that the rest may not be unaccountable, but "*not to have a scrip for the journey, neither two coats, nor a staff, nor shoes,*" why did He enjoin this? Being minded to train them up unto all perfection; since even further back, He had suffered them not to take thought so much as for the next day. For even to the whole world He was to send them out as teachers. Therefore of men He makes them even angels (so to speak); releasing them from all worldly care, so that they should be possessed with one care alone, that of their teaching; or rather even from that He releases them, saying, "*Take no thought how or what you shall speak.*"

And thus, what seems to be very grievous and galling, this He shows to be especially light and easy for them. For nothing makes men so cheerful as being freed from anxiety and care; and especially when it is granted them, being so freed, to lack nothing, God being present, and becoming to them instead of all things.

Next, lest they should say, "*whence then are we to obtain our necessary food?*" He says not unto them, "*You have heard that I have told you before, 'Behold the fowls of the air;'*" [Matthew 6:26] (for they were not yet able to realise this commandment in their actions); but He added what came far short of this, saying, "*For the workman is worthy of his meat;*" declaring that they must be nourished by their disciples, that neither they might be high minded towards those whom they were teaching, as though giving all and receiving nothing at their hands; nor these again break away, as being despised by their teachers.

After this, that they may not say, "*Do you then command us to live by begging?*" and be ashamed of this, He signifies the thing to be a debt, both by calling them "*workmen,*" and by terming what was given, "*hire.*" For "*think not,*" says He, because the labor is in words, that the benefit

conferred by you is small; nay, for the thing has much toil; and whatsoever they that are taught may give, it is not a free gift which they bestow, but a recompence which they render: *"for the workman is worthy of his meat."* But this He said, not as declaring so much to be the worth of the apostles' labors, far from it; God forbid: but as both making it a law for them to seek nothing more, and as convincing the givers, that what they do is not an act of liberality, but a debt.

8. *"And into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy: and there abide till ye go thence."*

That is, *"it follows not,"* says He, *"from my saying, 'The workman is worthy of his meat,' that I have opened to you all men's doors: but herein also do I require you to use much circumspection. For this will profit you both in respect of your credit, and for your very maintenance. For if he is worthy, he will surely give you food; more especially when you ask nothing beyond mere necessities."*

And He not only requires them to seek out worthy persons, but also not to change house for house, whereby they would neither vex him that is receiving them, nor themselves get the character of gluttony and self-indulgence. For this He declared by saying, *"There abide till ye go thence."* And this one may perceive from the other evangelists also. [Luke 10:7]

Do you see how He made them honorable by this also, and those that received them careful; by signifying that they rather are the gainers, both in honor, and in respect of advantage?

Then pursuing again the same subject, He says,

"And when you come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." [Matthew 10:12-13]

Do you see how far He declines not to carry His injunctions? And very fitly. For as champions of godliness, and preachers to the whole world, was He training them. And in that regard disposing them to practise moderation, and making them objects of love, He says,

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city." [Matthew 10:14-15]

That is, *"do not,"* says He, *"because you are teachers, therefore wait to be saluted by others, but be first in showing that respect."* Then, implying that this is not a mere salutation, but a blessing, He says, *"If the house be worthy, it shall come upon it,"* but if it deal insolently, its first punishment will be, not to have the benefit of your peace; and the second, that it shall suffer the doom of Sodom. *"And what,"* it will be said, *"is their punishment to us?"* You will have the houses of such as are worthy.

But what means, *"Shake off the dust of your feet?"* It is either to signify their having received nothing of them, or to be a witness to them of the long journey, which they had travelled for their sake.

But mark, I pray you, how He does not even yet give the whole to them. For neither does He as yet bestow upon them foreknowledge, so as to learn who is worthy, and who is not so; but He bids them inquire, and await the trial. How then did He Himself abide with a publican? Because he was become worthy by his conversion.

And mark, I pray you, how when He had stripped them of all, He gave them all, by suffering them to abide in the houses of those who became disciples, and to enter therein, having nothing. For thus both themselves were freed from anxiety, and they would convince the others, that for their salvation only are they come; first by bringing in nothing with them, then

by requiring no more of them than necessities, lastly, by not entering all their houses without distinction.

Since not by the signs only did He desire them to appear illustrious, but even before the signs, by their own virtue. For nothing so much characterizes strictness of life, as to be free from superfluities, and so far as may be, from wants. This even the false apostles knew. Wherefore Paul also said, *"That wherein they glory, they may be found even as we."*

[2 Corinthians 11:12]

But if when we are in a strange country, and are going unto persons unknown to us, we must seek nothing more than our food for the day, much more when abiding at home.

9. These things let us not hear only, but also imitate. For not of the apostles alone are they said, but also of the saints afterwards. Let us therefore become worthy to entertain them. For according to the disposition of the entertainers this peace both comes and flies away again. For not only on the courageous speaking of them that teach, but also on the worthiness of them that receive, does this effect follow.

Neither let us account it a small loss, not to enjoy such peace. For this peace the prophet also from of old proclaims, saying, *"How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings of peace."* Then to explain the value thereof he added, *"That bring good tidings of good things."*

This peace Christ also declared to be great, when He said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."* [John 14:27] And we should do all things, so as to enjoy it, both at home and in church. For in the very church too the presiding minister gives peace. And this which we speak of is a type of that. And you should receive it with all alacrity, in heart before the actual communion. For if not to impart it after the communion be

disgusting, how much more disgusting to repel from you him that pronounces it!

For you the presbyter sits, for you the teacher stands, laboring and toiling. What plea then will you have, for not affording him so much welcome as to listen to Him? For indeed the church is the common home of all, and when you have first occupied it, we enter in, strictly observing the type which they exhibited. For this cause we also pronounce "*peace*" in common to all, directly as we enter, according to that law.

Let no one therefore be careless, no one inattentive, when the priests have entered in and are teaching; for there is really no small punishment appointed for this. Yea, and I for one would rather enter into any of your houses ten thousand times, and find myself baffled, than not be heard when I speak here. This latter is to me harder to bear than the other, by how much this house is of greater dignity; our great possessions being verily laid up here, here all the hopes we have. For what is here, that is not great and awful? Thus both this table is far more precious and delightful than the other, and this candlestick than the candlestick there. And this they know, as many as have put away diseases by anointing themselves with oil in faith and in due season. And this coffer too is far better and more indispensable than that other chest; for it has not clothes but alms shut up in it; even though they be few that own them. Here too is a couch better than that other; for the repose of the divine Scriptures is more delightful than any couch.

And had we attained to excellence in respect of concord, then had we no other home beside this. And that there is nothing over-burdensome in this saying, the "*three thousand*," [Acts 2:41] bear witness, and the "*five thousand*," [Acts 4:4] who had but one home, one table, one soul; for "*the multitude of them that believed*," we read, "*were of one heart and of one*

soul." [Acts 4:32] But since we fall far short of their virtue, and dwell scattered in our several homes, let us at least, when we meet here, be earnest in so doing. Because though in all other things we be destitute and poor, yet in these we are rich. Wherefore here at least receive us with love when we come in unto you. And when I say, "*Peace be unto you,*" and you say, "*And with your spirit,*" say it not with the voice only, but also with the mind; not in mouth, but in understanding also. But if, while here you say, "*Peace also to your spirit,*" out of doors you are mine enemy, spitting at and calumniating me, and secretly aspersing me with innumerable reproaches; what manner of peace is this?

For I indeed, though thou speak evil of me ten thousand times, give you that peace with a pure heart, with sincerity of purpose, and I can say nothing evil at any time of you; for I have a father's bowels. And if I rebuke you at any time, I do it out of concern for you. But as for you, by your secret carping at me, and not receiving me in the Lord's house, I fear lest you should in return add to my despondency; not for your insulting me, not for your casting me out, but for your rejecting our peace, and drawing down upon yourself that grievous punishment.

For though I shake not off the dust, though I turn not away, what is threatened remains unchanged. For I indeed oftentimes pronounce peace to you, and will not cease from continually speaking it; and if, besides your insults, you receive me not, even then I shake not off the dust; not that I am disobedient to our Lord, but that I vehemently burn for you. And besides, I have suffered nothing at all for you; I have neither come a long journey, nor with that garb and that voluntary poverty am I come (therefore we first blame ourselves), nor without shoes and a second coat; and perhaps this is why ye also fail of your part. However, this is not a sufficient plea for you; but while our condemnation is greater, to you it imparts no excuse.

10. Then the houses were churches, but now the church has become a house. Then one might say nothing worldly in a house, now one may say nothing spiritual in a church, but even here ye bring in the business from the market place, and while God is discoursing, you leave off listening in silence to His sayings, and bring in the contrary things, and make discord. And I would it were your own affairs, but now the things which are nothing to you, those ye both speak and hear.

For this I lament, and will not cease lamenting. For I have no power to quit this house, but here we must needs remain until we depart from this present life. *"Receive us"* [2 Corinthians 7:2] therefore, as Paul commanded. For his language in that place related not to a meal, but to the temper and mind. This we also seek of you, even love, that fervent and genuine affection. But if you endure not even this, at least love yourselves, and lay aside your present remissness. This is sufficient for our consolation, if we see you approving yourselves, and becoming better men. So will I also myself show forth increased love, even *"though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."*

For indeed there are many things to bind us together. One table is set before all, one Father begot us, we are all the issue of the same throes, the same drink has been given to all; or rather not only the same drink, but also to drink out of one cup. For our Father desiring to lead us to a kindly affection, has devised this also, that we should drink out of one cup; a thing which belongs to intense love.

But *"there is no comparison between the apostles and us."* I confess it too, and would never deny it. For I say not, to themselves, but not even to their shadows are we comparable.

But nevertheless, let your part be done. This will have no tendency to disgrace you but rather to profit you the more. For when even to unworthy

persons ye show so much love and obedience, then shall you receive the greater reward.

For neither are they our own words which we speak, since you have no teacher at all on earth; but what we have received, that we also give, and in giving we seek for nothing else from you, but to be loved only. And if we be unworthy even of this, yet by our loving you we shall quickly be worthy. Although we are commanded to love not them only that love us, but even our enemies. Who then is so hardhearted, who so savage, that after having received such a law, he should abhor and hate even them that love him, full as he may be of innumerable evils?

We have partaken of a spiritual table, let us be partakers also of spiritual love. For if robbers, on partaking of salt, forget their character; what excuse shall we have, who are continually partaking of the Lord's body, and do not imitate even their gentleness? And yet to many, not one table only, but even to be of one city, has sufficed for friendship; but we, when we have the same city, and the same house, and table, and way, and door, and root, and life, and head, and the same shepherd, and king, and teacher, and judge, and maker, and father, and to whom all things are common; what indulgence can we deserve, if we be divided one from another?

11. But the miracles, perhaps, are what ye seek after, such as they wrought when they entered in; the lepers cleansed, the devils driven out, and the dead raised? Nay, but this is the great indication of your high birth, and of your love, that you should believe God without pledges. And in fact this, and one other thing, were the reasons why God made miracles to cease. I mean, that if when miracles are not performed, they that plume themselves on other advantages—for instance, either on the word of wisdom, or on show of piety—grow vainglorious, are puffed up, are

separated one from another; did miracles also take place, how could there but be violent rendings? And that what I say is not mere conjecture, the Corinthians bear witness, who from this cause were divided into many parties.

Do not thou therefore seek signs, but the soul's health. Seek not to see one dead man raised; nay, for you have learned that the whole world is arising. Seek not to see a blind man healed, but behold all now restored unto that better and more profitable sight; and do thou too learn to look chastely, and amend your eye.

For in truth, if we all lived as we ought, workers of miracles would not be admired so much as we by the children of the heathen. For as to the signs, they often carry with them either a notion of mere fancy, or another evil suspicion, although ours be not such. But a pure life cannot admit of any such reproach; yea, all men's mouths are stopped by the acquisition of virtue.

Let virtue then be our study: for abundant are her riches, and great the wonder wrought in her. She bestows the true freedom, and causes the same to be discerned even in slavery, not releasing from slavery, but while men continue slaves, exhibiting them more honorable than freemen; which is much more than giving them freedom: not making the poor man rich, but while he continues poor, exhibiting him wealthier than the rich.

But if you would work miracles also, be rid of transgressions, and you have quite accomplished it. Yea, for sin is a great demon, beloved; and if you exterminate this, you have wrought a greater thing than they who drive out ten thousand demons. Do thou listen to Paul, how he speaks, and prefers virtue to miracles. *"But covet earnestly,"* says he, *"the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."* [1 Corinthians 12:31] And when he was to declare this *"way,"* he spoke not of raising the dead, not of cleansing

of lepers, not of any other such thing; but in place of all these he set charity. Harken also unto Christ, saying, *"Rejoice not that the demons obey you, but that your names are written in Heaven."* [Luke 10:20] And again before this, *"Many will say to me in that day, Have we not prophesied in Your name, and cast out devils, and done many mighty works, and then I will profess unto them, I know you not."* [Matthew 7:22-23] And when He was about to be crucified, He called His disciples, and said unto them, *"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples,"* not *"if you cast out devils,"* but *"if you have love one to another."* [John 13:35] And again, *"Hereby shall all men know that You have sent me;"* not *"if these men raise the dead,"* but, *"if they be one."*

For, as to miracles, they oftentimes, while they profited another, have injured him who had the power, by lifting him up to pride and vainglory, or haply in some other way: but in our works there is no place for any such suspicion, but they profit both such as follow them, and many others.

These then let us perform with much diligence. For if you change from inhumanity to almsgiving, you have stretched forth the hand that was withered. If you withdraw from theatres and go to the church, you have cured the lame foot. If you draw back your eyes from an harlot, and from beauty not your own, you have opened them when they were blind. If instead of satanical songs, you have learned spiritual psalms, being dumb, you have spoken.

These are the greatest miracles, these the wonderful signs. If we go on working these signs, we shall both ourselves be a great and admirable sort of persons through these, and shall win over all the wicked unto virtue, and shall enjoy the life to come; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 33 on Matthew

Matt. X. 16.

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Having made them feel confident about their necessary food, and opened unto them all men's houses, and having invested their entrance with an appearance to attract veneration, charging them not to come in as wanderers, and beggars, but as much more venerable than those who received them (for this He signifies by His saying, *"the workman is worthy of his hire;"* and by His commanding them to inquire, who was worthy, and there to remain, and enjoining them to salute such as receive them; and by His threatening such as receive them not with those incurable evils): having I say, in this way cast out their anxiety, and armed them with the display of miracles, and made them as it were all iron and adamant, by delivering them from all worldly things, and enfranchising them from all temporal care: He speaks in what follows of the evils also that were to befall them; not only those that were to happen soon after, but those too that were to be in long course of time; from the first, even long beforehand, preparing them for the war against the devil. Yea, and many advantages were hence secured; and first, that they learned the power of His foreknowledge; secondly, that no one should suspect, that through weakness of their Master came these evils upon them; thirdly, that such as undergo these things should not be dismayed by their falling out unexpectedly, and against hope; fourthly, that they might not at the very time of the cross be troubled on hearing these things. For indeed, they were just so affected at that time; when also He upbraided them, saying, *"Because I have said these things*

unto you, sorrow has filled your hearts; and none of you asks me, where are You going?" [John 16:6, 5] And yet He had said nothing as yet touching Himself, as that He should be bound, and scourged, and put to death, that He might not hereby also confound their minds; but for the present He announces before what should happen to themselves.

Then, that they might learn that this system of war is new, and the manner of the array unwonted; as He sends them bare, and with one coat, and unshod, and without staff, and without girdle or scrip, and bids them be maintained by such as receive them; so neither here did He stay His speech, but to signify His unspeakable power, He says, Even thus setting out, exhibit the gentleness of "*sheep,*" and this, though you are to go unto "*wolves;*" and not simply unto wolves, but "*into the midst of wolves.*"

And He bids them have not only gentleness as sheep, but also the harmlessness of the dove. "*For thus shall I best show forth my might, when sheep get the better of wolves, and being in the midst of wolves, and receiving a thousand bites, so far from being consumed, do even work a change on them a thing far greater and more marvellous than killing them, to alter their spirit, and to reform their mind; and this, being only twelve, while the whole world is filled with the wolves.*"

Let us then be ashamed, who do the contrary, who set like wolves upon our enemies. For so long as we are sheep, we conquer: though ten thousand wolves prowl around, we overcome and prevail. But if we become wolves, we are worsted, for the help of our Shepherd departs from us: for He feeds not wolves, but sheep: and He forsakes you, and retires, for neither do you allow His might to be shown. Because, as He accounts the whole triumph His own, if you being ill used, show forth gentleness; so if you follow it up and give blows, you obscure His victory.

2. But do thou consider, I pray you, who they are that hear these injunctions, so hard and laborious: the timid and ignorant; the unlettered and uninstructed; such as are in every respect obscure, who have never been trained up in the Gentile laws, who do not readily present themselves in the public places; the fishermen, the publicans, men full of innumerable deficiencies. For if these things were enough to confound even the lofty and great, how were they not enough to cast down and dismay them that were in all respects untried, and had never entertained any noble imagination? But they did not cast them down.

"And very naturally," some one may perhaps say; *"because He gave them power to cleanse lepers, to drive out devils."* I would answer as follows: Nay, this very thing was enough especially to perplex them, that for all their raising the dead, they were to undergo these intolerable evils, both judgments, and executions, and the wars which all would wage on them, and the common hatred of the world; and that such terrors await them, while themselves are working miracles.

3. What then is their consolation for all these things? The power of Him that sends them. Wherefore also He puts this before all, saying, *"Behold, I send you."* This suffices for your encouragement, this for confidence, and fearing none of your assailants.

Do you see authority? Do you see prerogative? Do you see invincible might? Now His meaning is like this: *"Be not troubled"* (so He speaks), *"that sending you among wolves, I command you to be like sheep and like doves. For I might indeed have done the contrary, and have suffered you to undergo nothing terrible, nor as sheep to be exposed to wolves; I might have rendered you more formidable than lions; but it is expedient that so it should be. This makes you also more glorious; this proclaims also my power."*

This He said also unto Paul: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] *"It is I, now mark it, who have caused you so to be."* For in saying, *"I send you forth as sheep,"* He intimates this. *"Do not therefore despond, for I know, I know certainly, that in this way more than any other ye will be invincible to all."*

After this, that they may contribute something on their own part also, and that all might not seem to be of His grace, nor they supposed to be crowned at random, and vainly, He says, *"Be therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."* *"But what,"* it might be said, *"will our wisdom avail in so great dangers? Nay, how shall we be able to have wisdom at all, when so many waves are drenching us all over? For let a sheep be ever so wise, when it is in the midst of wolves, and so many wolves, what will it be able to do? Let the dove be ever so harmless, what will it profit, when so many hawks are assailing it?"* In the brutes indeed, not at all: but in you as much as possible.

But let us see what manner of wisdom He here requires. That of the serpent, He says. For even as that animal gives up everything, and if its very body must be cut off, does not very earnestly defend it, so that it may save its head; in like manner do thou also, says He, give up every thing but the faith; though goods, body, life itself, must be yielded. For that is the head and the root; and if that be preserved, though thou lose all, you will recover all with so much the more splendor.

On this account then He neither commanded to be merely a simple and single-hearted sort of person, nor merely wise; but has mixed up both these, so that they may become virtue; taking in the wisdom of the serpent that we may not be wounded in our vitals; and the harmlessness of the dove, that we may not retaliate on our wrongdoers, nor avenge ourselves on them that lay snares; since wisdom again is useless, except this be added. Now what, I

ask, could be more strict than these injunctions? Why, was it not enough to suffer wrong? Nay, says He, but I do not permit you so much as to be indignant. For this is *"the dove."* As though one should cast a reed into fire, and command it not to be burnt by the fire, but to quench it.

However, let us not be troubled; nay, for these things have come to pass, and have had an accomplishment, and have been shown in very deed, and men became wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; not being of another nature, but of the same with us.

Let not then any one account His injunctions impracticable. For He beyond all others knows the nature of things; He knows that fierceness is not quenched by fierceness, but by gentleness. And if in men's actual deeds too you would see this result, read the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and you will see how often, when the people of the Jews had risen up against them and were sharpening their teeth, these men, imitating the dove, and answering with suitable meekness, did away with their wrath, quenched their madness, broke their impetuosity. As when they said, *"Did not we strictly command you, that you should not speak in this name?"* [Acts 5:28] although able to work any number of miracles, they neither said nor did anything harsh, but answered for themselves with all meekness, saying, *"Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."* [Acts 4:19]

Have you seen the harmlessness of the dove? Behold the wisdom of the serpent. *"For we cannot but speak the things, which we know and have heard."* [Acts 4:20] Do you see how we must be perfect on all points, so as neither to be abased by dangers, nor provoked by anger?

4. Therefore He said also, [Matthew 10:17-18]

"Beware of men, for they shall deliver you up to councils, and they shall scourge you in their synagogues: and you shall be brought before

governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles."

Thus again is He preparing them to be vigilant, in every case assigning to them the sufferance of wrong, and permitting the infliction of it to others; to teach you that the victory is in suffering evil, and that His glorious trophies are thereby set up. For He said not at all, *"Fight ye also, and resist them that would vex you,"* but only, *"You shall suffer the utmost ills."*

O how great is the power of Him that speaks! How great the self-command of them that hear! For indeed we have great cause to marvel, how they did not straightway dart away from Him on hearing these things, apt as they were to be startled at every sound, and such as had never gone further than that lake, around which they used to fish; and how they did not reflect, and say to themselves, *"And whither after all this are we to flee? The courts of justice against us, the kings against us, the governors, the synagogues of the Jews, the nations of the Gentiles, the rulers, and the ruled."* (For hereby He not only forewarned them of Palestine, and the ills therein, but discovered also the wars throughout the world, saying, *"You shall be brought before kings and governors;"* signifying that to the Gentiles also He was afterwards to send them as heralds.) *"You have made the world our enemy, You have armed against us all them that dwell on the earth, peoples, tyrants, kings."*

And what follows again is much more fearful, since men are to become on our account murderers of brothers, of children, of fathers.

"For the brother," says He, *"shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death."* [Matthew 10:21]

"How, then," one might say, *"will the rest of men believe, when they see on our account, children slain by their fathers, and brethren by brethren, and all things filled with abominations?"* What? Will not men, as

though we were destructive demons, will they not, as though we were devoted, and pests of the world, drive us out from every quarter, seeing the earth filled with blood of kinsmen, and with so many murderers? Surely fair is the peace (is it not?) which we are to bring into men's houses and give them, while we are filling those houses with so many slaughters. Why, had we been some great number of us, instead of twelve; had we been, instead of *"unlearned and ignorant,"* wise, and skilled in rhetoric, and mighty in speech; nay more, had we been even kings, and in possession of armies and abundance of wealth; how could we have persuaded any, while kindling up civil wars, yea, and other wars far worse than they? Why, though we were to despise our own safety, which of all other men will give heed to us?

But none of these things did they either think or say, neither did they require any account of His injunctions, but simply yielded and obeyed. And this came not from their own virtue only, but also of the wisdom of their Teacher. For see how to each of the fearful things He annexed an encouragement; as in the case of such as received them not, He said, *"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city;"* so here again, when He had said, *"You shall be brought before governors and kings,"* He added, *"for my sake, for a testimony to them, and the Gentiles."* And this is no small consolation, that they are suffering these things both for Christ, and for the Gentiles' conviction. Thus God, though no one regard, is found to be everywhere doing His own works. Now these things were a comfort to them, not that they desired the punishment of other men, but that they might have ground of confidence, as sure to have Him everywhere present with them, who had both foretold and foreknown these things; and because not as wicked men, and as pests, were they to suffer all this.

And together with these, He adds another, and that no small consolation for them, saying,

"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what you shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you."

[Matthew 10:19-20]

For lest they should say, *"How shall we be able to persuade men, when such things are taking place?"* He bids them be confident as to their defense also. And elsewhere indeed He says, *"I will give you a mouth and wisdom;"* [Luke 21:15] but here, *"It is the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you,"* advancing them unto the dignity of the prophets. Therefore, when He had spoken of the power that was given, then He added also the terrors, the murders, and the slaughters.

"For the brother shall deliver up the brother," says He, *"to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death."* [Matthew 10:21]

And not even at this did He stop, but added also what was greatly more fearful, and enough to shiver a rock to pieces: *"And you shall be hated of all men."* And here again the consolation is at the doors, for, *"For my name's sake,"* says He, *"you shall suffer these things."* And with this again another, *"But he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved."*

[Matthew 10:22...]

And these things in another point of view likewise were sufficient to rouse up their spirits; since at any rate the power of their gospel was to blaze up so high, as that nature should be despised, and kindred rejected, and the Word preferred to all, chasing all mightily away. For if no tyranny of nature is strong enough to withstand your sayings, but it is dissolved and trodden under foot, what else shall be able to get the better of you? Not,

however, that your life will be in security, because these things shall be; but rather ye will have for your common enemies and foes them that dwell in the whole world.

5. Where now is Plato? Where Pythagoras? Where the long chain of the Stoics? For the first, after having enjoyed great honor, was so practically refuted, as even to be sold out of the country, and to succeed in none of his objects, no, not go much as in respect of one tyrant: yea, he betrayed his disciples, and ended his life miserably. And the Cynics, mere pollutions as they were, have all passed by like a dream and a shadow. And yet assuredly no such thing ever befell them, but rather they were accounted glorious for their heathen philosophy, and the Athenians made a public monument of the epistles of Plato, sent them by Dion; and they passed all their time at ease, and abounded in wealth not a little. Thus, for instance, Aristippus was used to purchase costly harlots; and another made a will, leaving no common inheritance; and another, when his disciples had laid themselves down like a bridge, walked on them; and he of Sinope, they say, even behaved himself unseemly in the market place.

Yea, these are their honorable things. But there is no such thing here, but a strict temperance, and a perfect decency, and a war against the whole world in behalf of truth and godliness, and to be slain every day, and not until hereafter their glorious trophies.

But there are some also, one may say, skilled in war among them; as Themistocles, Pericles. But these things too are children's toys, compared with the acts of the fishermen. For what can you say? That he persuaded the Athenians to embark in their ships, when Xerxes was marching upon Greece? Why in this case, when it is not Xerxes marching, but the devil with the whole world, and his evil spirits innumerable assailing these twelve men, not at one crisis only, but throughout their whole life, they

prevailed and vanquished; and what was truly marvellous, not by slaying their adversaries, but by converting and reforming them.

For this especially you should observe throughout, that they slew not, nor destroyed such as were plotting against them, but having found them as bad as devils, they made them rivals of angels, enfranchising human nature from this evil tyranny, while as to those execrable demons that were confounding all things, they drove them out of the midst of markets, and houses, or rather even from the very wilderness. And to this the choirs of the monks bear witness, whom they have planted everywhere, clearing out not the habitable only, but even the uninhabitable land. And what is yet more marvellous, they did not this in fair conflict, but in the enduring of evil they accomplished it all. Since men actually had them in the midst, twelve unlearned persons, binding, scourging, dragging them about, and were not able to stop their mouths; but as it is impossible to bind the sunbeam, so also their tongue. And the reason was, *"it was not they"* themselves *"that spoke,"* but the power of the Spirit. Thus for instance did Paul overcome Agrippa, and Nero, who surpassed all men in wickedness. *"For the Lord,"* says he, *"stood with me, and strengthened me, and delivered me out of the mouth of the lion."* [2 Timothy 4:17]

But do thou also admire them, how when it was said to them, *"Take no thought,"* they yet believed, and accepted it, and none of the terrors amazed them. And if you say, He gave them encouragement enough, by saying, *"It shall be the Spirit of your Father that shall speak;"* even for this am I most amazed at them, that they doubted not, nor sought deliverance from their perils; and this, when not for two or three years were they to suffer these things, but all their life long. For the saying, *"He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved,"* is an intimation of this.

For His will is, that not His part only should be contributed, but that the good deeds should be also done of them. Mark, for instance, how from the first, part is His, part His disciples'. Thus, to do miracles is His, but to provide nothing is theirs. Again, to open all men's houses, was of the grace from above; but to require no more than was needful, of their own self-denial. *"For the workman is worthy of his hire."* Their bestowing peace was of the gift of God, their inquiring for the worthy, and not entering in without distinction unto all, of their own self command. Again, to punish such as received them not was His, but to retire with gentleness from them, without reviling or insulting them, was of the apostles' meekness. To give the Spirit, and cause them not to take thought, was of Him that sent them, but to become like sheep and doves, and to bear all things nobly, was of their calmness and prudence. To be hated and not to despond, and to endure, was their own; to save them that endured, was of Him who sent them.

Wherefore also He said, *"He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved."* That is, because the more part are wont at the beginning indeed to be vehement, but afterwards to faint, therefore says He, *"I require the end."* For what is the use of seeds, flourishing indeed at first, but a little after fading away? Therefore it is continued patience that He requires of them. I mean, lest any say, He wrought the whole Himself, and it was no wonder that they should prove such, suffering as they did nothing intolerable; therefore He says unto them, *"There is need also of patience on your part. For though I should rescue you from the first dangers, I am reserving you for others more grievous, and after these again others will succeed; and you shall not cease to have snares laid for you, so long as you have breath."* For this He intimated in saying, *"But he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved."*

For this cause then, though He said, *"Take no thought what you shall speak;"* yet elsewhere He says, *"Be ready to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you."* [1 Peter 3:15] That is, as long as the contest is among friends, He commands us also to take thought; but when there is a terrible tribunal, and frantic assemblies, and terrors on all sides, He bestows the influence from Himself, that they may take courage and speak out, and not be discouraged, nor betray the righteous cause.

For in truth it was a very great thing, for a man occupied about lakes, and skins, and receipt of custom, when tyrants were on their thrones, and satraps, and guards standing by them, and the swords drawn, and all standing on their side; to enter in alone, bound, hanging down his head, and yet be able to open his mouth. For indeed they allowed them neither speech nor defense with respect to their doctrines, but set about torturing them to death, as common pests of the world. For *"They,"* it is said, *"that have turned the world upside down, have come hither also;"* and again, *"They preach things contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that Jesus Christ is king."* [Acts 17:6-7] And everywhere the courts of justice were preoccupied by such suspicions, and much influence from above was needed, for their showing both the truth of the doctrine they preached, and that they are not violating the common laws; so that they should neither, while earnest to speak of the doctrine, fall under suspicion of overturning the laws; nor again, while earnest to show that they were not overturning the common government, corrupt the perfection of their doctrines: all which you will see accomplished with all due consideration, both in Peter and in Paul, and in all the rest. Yea, and as rebels and innovators, and revolutionists, they were accused all over the world; yet nevertheless they both repelled this impression, and invested themselves with the contrary, all men celebrating

them as saviors, and guardians, and benefactors. And all this they achieved by their much patience. Wherefore also Paul said, "*I die daily*;" and he continued to "*stand in jeopardy*" unto the end.

6. What then must we deserve, having such high patterns, and in peace giving way to effeminacy, and remissness? With none to make war (it is too evident) we are slain; we faint when no man pursues, in peace we are required to be saved, and even for this we are not sufficient. And they indeed, when the world was on fire, and the pile was being kindled over the whole earth, entering, snatched from within, out of the midst of the flame, such as were burning; but you are not able so much as to preserve yourself.

What confidence then will there be for us? What favor? There are no stripes, no prisons, no rulers, no synagogues, nor anything else of that kind to set upon us; yea, quite on the contrary we rule and prevail. For both kings are godly, and there are many honors for Christians, and precedences, and distinctions, and immunities, and not even so do we prevail. And whereas they being daily led to execution, both teachers and disciples, and bearing innumerable stripes, and continual brandings, were in greater luxury than such as abide in Paradise; we who have endured no such thing, not even in a dream, are softer than any wax. "*But they*," it will be said, "*wrought miracles*." Did this then keep them from the scourge? Did it free them from persecution? Nay, for this is the strange thing, that they suffered such things often even at the hands of them whom they benefited, and not even so were they confounded, receiving only evil for good. But thou if you bestow on any one any little benefit, and then be requited with anything unpleasant, art confounded, art troubled, and repentest of that which you have done.

If now it should happen, as I pray it may not happen nor at any time fall out, that there be a war against churches, and a persecution, imagine how great will be the ridicule, how sore the reproaches. And very naturally;

for when no one exercises himself in the wrestling school, how shall he be distinguished in the contests? What champion, not being used to the trainer, will be able, when summoned by the Olympic contests, to show forth anything great and noble against his antagonist? Ought we not every day to wrestle and fight and run? See ye not them that are called Pentathli, when they have no antagonists, how they fill a sack with much sand, and hanging it up try their full strength thereupon? And they that are still younger, practise the fight against their enemies upon the persons of their companions.

These do thou also emulate, and practise the wrestlings of self denial. For indeed there are many that provoke to anger, and incite to lust, and kindle a great flame. Stand therefore against your passions, bear nobly the mental pangs, that you may endure also those of the body.

7. For so the blessed Job, if he had not exercised himself well before his conflicts, would not have shone so brightly in the same. Unless he had practised freedom from all despondency, he would have uttered some rash word, when his children died. But as it was he stood against all the assaults, against ruin of fortune, and destruction of so great affluence: against loss of children, against his wife's commiseration, against plagues in body, against reproaches of friends, against revilings of servants.

And if you would see his ways of exercise also, hear him saying, how he used to despise wealth: *"If I did but rejoice,"* says he, *"because my wealth was great: if I set gold up for a heap, if I put my trust in a precious stone."* Therefore neither was he confounded at their being taken away, since he desired them not when present.

Hear how he also managed what related to his children, not giving way to undue softness, as we do, but requiring of them all circumspection. For

he who offered sacrifice even for their secret sins, imagine how strict a judge he was of such as were manifest. [Job 1:5]

And if you would also hear of his strivings after continence, hearken to him when he says, *"I made a covenant with my eyes, that I should not think upon a maid."* [Job 31:1] For this cause his wife did not break his spirit, for he loved her even before this, not however immoderately, but as is due to a wife.

Wherefore I am led even to marvel, whence it came into the devil's thought to stir up the contest, knowing as he did of his previous training. Whence then did it occur to him? The monster is wicked, and never despairs: and this turns out to us a very great condemnation that he indeed never gives up the hope of our destruction, but we despair of our own salvation.

But for bodily mutilation and indignity, mark how he practised himself. Why, inasmuch as he himself had never undergone any such thing, but had continued to live in wealth and luxury, and in all other splendor, he used to divine other men's calamities, one by one. And this he declared, when he said, *"For the thing which I greatly feared has come upon me; and that which I was afraid of has come unto me."* [Job 3:25] And again, *"But I wept for every helpless man, and groaned when I saw a man in distress."* [Job 30:25]

So because of this, nothing of what happened confounded him, none of those great and intolerable ills. For I bid you not look at the ruin of his substance, nor at the loss of his children, nor at that incurable plague, nor at his wife's device against him; but at those things which are far more grievous than these.

"And what," says one, *"did Job suffer more grievous than these? For from his history there is nothing more than these for us to learn."* Because

we are asleep, we do not learn, since he surely that is anxious, and searches well for the pearl, will know of many more particulars than these. For the more grievous, and apt to infuse greater perplexity, were different.

And first, his knowing nothing certain about the kingdom of heaven, and the resurrection; which indeed he also spoke of, lamenting. *"For I shall not live always, that I should suffer long."* Next, his being conscious to himself of many good works. Thirdly, his being conscious of no evil thing. Fourthly, his supposing that at God's hands he was undergoing it; or if at the devil's, this again was enough to offend him. Fifthly, his hearing his friends accusing him of wickedness, *"For you have not been scourged,"* say they, *"according to what your sins deserve."* [Job 11:6] Sixthly, his seeing such as lived in wickedness prospering, and exulting over him. Seventhly, not having any other to whom he might look as even having ever suffered such things.

8. And if you would learn how great these things are, consider our present state. For if now, when we are looking for a kingdom, and hoping for a resurrection, and for the unutterable blessings, and are conscious to ourselves of countless evil deeds, and when we have so many examples, and are partakers of so high a philosophy; should any persons lose a little gold, and this often, after having taken it by violence, they deem life not to be lived in, having no wife to lay sore on them, nor bereaved of children, nor reproached by friends, nor insulted by servants, but rather having many to comfort them, some by words, some by deeds; of how noble crowns must not he be worthy, who seeing what he had gotten together by honest labor, snatched away from him for nought and at random, and after all that, undergoing temptations without number, like sleet, yet throughout all abides unmoved, and offers to the Lord his due thanksgiving for it all?

Why, though no one had spoken any of the other taunts, yet his wife's words alone were sufficient utterly to shake a very rock. Look, for example, at her craft. No mention of money, none of camels, and flocks, and herds, (for she was conscious of her husband's self command with regard to these), but of what was harder to bear than all these, I mean, their children; and she deepens the tragedy, and adds to it her own influence.

Now if when men were in wealth, and suffering no distress, in many things and oft have women prevailed on them: imagine how courageous was that soul, which repulsed her, assaulting him with such powerful weapons, and which trod under foot the two most tyrannical passions, desire and pity. And yet many having conquered desire, have yielded to pity. That noble Joseph, for instance, held in subjection the most tyrannical of pleasures, and repulsed that strange woman, plying him as she did with innumerable devices; but his tears he contained not, but when he saw his brethren that had wronged him, he was all on fire with that passion, and quickly cast off the mask, and discovered the part he had been playing. But when first of all she is his wife, and when her words are piteous, and the moment favorable for her, as well as his wounds and his stripes, and those countless waves of calamities; how can one otherwise than rightly pronounce the soul impassive to so great a storm to be firmer than any adamant?

Allow me freely to say, that the very apostles, if not inferior to this blessed man, are at least not greater than he was. For they indeed were comforted by the suffering for Christ; and this medicine was so sufficient daily to relieve them, that the Lord puts it everywhere, saying, *"for me, for my sake,"* and, *"If they call me, the master of the house, Beelzebub."* [Matthew 10:25] But he was destitute of this encouragement, and of that

from miracles, and of that from grace; for neither had he so great power of the Spirit.

And what is yet greater, nourished in much delicacy, not from among fishermen, and publicans, and such as lived frugally, but after enjoyment of so much honor, he suffered all that he did suffer. And what seemed hardest to bear in the case of the apostles, this same he also underwent, being hated of friends, of servants, of enemies, of them who had received kindness of him: and the sacred anchor, the harbor without waves, namely, that which was said to the apostles, "*for my sake,*" of this he had no sight.

I admire again the three children, for that they dared the furnace, that they stood up against a tyrant. But hear what they say, "*We serve not your Gods, nor worship the image which you have set up.*" [Daniel 3:18] A thing which was the greatest encouragement to them, to know of a certainty that for God they are suffering all whatsoever they suffer. But this man knew not that it was all conflicts, and a wrestling; for had he known it, he would not have felt what was happening. At any rate, when he heard, "*Do you think that I have uttered to you mine oracles for nought, or that you might be proved righteous?*" consider how straightway, at a bare word, he breathed again, how he made himself of no account, how he accounted himself not so much as to have suffered what he had suffered, thus saying, "*Why do I plead any more, being admonished and reprov'd of the Lord, hearing such things, I being nothing?*" And again, "*I have heard of You before, as far as hearing of the ear; but now my eye has seen You; wherefore I have made myself vile, and have melted away; and I accounted myself earth and ashes.*"

This fortitude then, this moderation, of him that was before law and grace, let us also emulate, who are after law and grace; that we may also be able to share with him the eternal tabernacles; unto which may we all attain,

by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the victory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 34 on Matthew

Matt. X. 23.

"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the other; for verily I say unto you, you shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come."

Having spoken of those fearful and horrible things, enough to melt very adamant, which after His cross, and resurrection, and assumption, were to befall them, He directs again His discourse to what was of more tranquil character, allowing those whom He is training to recover breath, and affording them full security. For He did not at all command them, when persecuted, to close with the enemy, but to fly. That is, it being so far but a beginning, and a prelude, He gave His discourse a very condescending turn. For not now of the ensuing persecutions is He speaking, but of those before the cross and the passion. And this He showed by saying, *"You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come."* That is, lest they should say, *"What then, if when persecuted we flee, and there again they overtake us, and drive us out?"*— to destroy this fear, He says, *"You shall not have gone round Palestine first, but I will straightway come upon you."*

And see how here again He does not away with the terrors, but stands by them in their perils. For He said not, *"I will snatch you out, and will put an end to the persecutions;"* but what? *"You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come."* Yea, for it sufficed for their consolation, simply to see Him.

But do thou observe, I pray you, how He does not on every occasion leave all to grace, but requires something also to be contributed on their

part. *"For if you fear,"* says He, *"flee,"* for this He signified by saying, *"flee ye,"* and *"fear not."* [Matthew 10:26] And He did not command them to flee at first, but when persecuted to withdraw; neither is it a great distance that He allows them, but so much as to go about the cities of Israel.

Then again, He trains them for another branch of self-command; first, casting out all care for their food: secondly, all fear of their perils; and now, that of calumny. Since from that first anxiety He freed them, by saying, *"The workman is worthy of his hire,"* [Matthew 10:10] and by signifying that many would receive them; and from their distress about their dangers, by saying, *"Take no thought how or what you shall speak,"* and, *"He that endures unto the end, the same shall be saved."*

But since withal it was likely that they should also bring upon themselves an evil report, which to many seems harder to bear than all; see whence He comforts them even in this case, deriving the encouragement from Himself, and from all that had been said touching Himself; to which nothing else was equal. For as He said in that other place, *"You shall be hated of all men,"* and added, *"for my name's sake,"* so also here.

And in another way He mitigates it, joining a fresh topic to that former. What kind of one then is it?

"The disciple," says He, *"is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household? Fear them not therefore."* [Matthew 10:24-26]

See how He discovers Himself to be the Lord and God and Creator of all things. What then? Is there not any disciple above his Master, or servant above his Lord? So long as he is a disciple, and a servant, he is not, by the nature of that honor. For tell me not here of the rare instances, but take the

principle from the majority. And He says not, *"How much more His servants,"* but *"them of His household,"* to show how very near He felt them to be to Him. And elsewhere too He said, *"Henceforth I call you not servants; you are my friends."* And He said not, If they have insulted the Master of the house, and calumniated Him; but states also the very form of the insult, that they *"called Him Beelzebub."*

Then He gives also another consolation, not inferior to this: for this indeed is the greatest; but because for them who were not yet living strictly, there was need also of another, such as might have special power to refresh them, He states it likewise. And the saying seems indeed in form to be an universal proposition, nevertheless not of all matters, but of those in hand only, is it spoken. For what says He?

"There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known." [Matthew 10:16] Now what He says is like this. It is indeed sufficient for your encouragement, that I also shared with you in the same reproach; I who am your Master and Lord. But if it still grieve you to hear these words, consider this other thing too, that even from this suspicion you will soon be released. For why do ye grieve? At their calling you sorcerers and deceivers? But wait a little, and all men will address you as saviors, and benefactors of the world. Yea, for time discovers all things that are concealed, it will both refute their false accusation, and make manifest your virtue. For when the event shows you saviors, and benefactors, and examples of all virtue, men will not give heed to their words, but to the real state of the case; and they will appear false accusers, and liars, and slanderers, but you brighter than the sun, length of time revealing and proclaiming you, and uttering a voice clearer than a trumpet, and making all men witnesses of your virtue. Let not therefore what is now said humble

you, but let the hope of the good things to come raise you up. For it cannot be, that what relates to you should be hid.

2. Then, having rid them of all distress, and fears, and anxiety, and set them above men's reproaches, then, and not till then, He seasonably discourses to them also of boldness in their preaching.

For, *"What I tell you,"* says He, *"in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what you have heard in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops."*
[Matthew 10:27]

Yet it was not at all darkness, when He was saying these things; neither was He discursing unto them in the ear; but He used a strong figure, thus speaking. That is, because He was conversing with them alone, and in a small corner of Palestine, therefore He said, *"in darkness,"* and *"in the ear;"* contrasting the boldness of speech, which He was hereafter to confer on them, with the tone of the conversation which was then going on. *"For not to one, or two, or three cities, but to the whole world you shall preach,"* says He, *"traversing land and sea, the inhabited country, and the desert; to princes alike and tribes, to philosophers and orators, saying all with open face, and with all boldness of speech."* Therefore, He said, *"On the house tops,"* and, *"In the light,"* without any shrinking, and with all freedom.

And wherefore said He not only, *"Preach on the housetops,"* and *"Speak in the light,"* but added also, *"What I tell you in darkness,"* and *"What ye hear in the ear"*? It was to raise up their spirits. As therefore when He said, *"He that believes in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do;"* [John 14:12] even so here too, to signify that He will do it all by them, and more than by Himself, He inserted this. For *"the beginning indeed,"* says He, *"I have given, and the prelude; but the greater part it is my will to effect through you."* Now this is the language of one not commanding only, but also declaring beforehand

what was to be, and encouraging them with His sayings, and implying that they should prevail over all, and quietly also removing again their distress at the evil report. For as this doctrine, after lying hid for a while, shall overspread all things, so also the evil suspicion of the Jews shall quickly perish.

Then, because He had lifted them up on high, He again gives warning of the perils also, adding wings to their mind, and exalting them high above all. For what says He? *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."* [Matthew 10:28] Do you see how He set them far above all things, persuading them to despise not anxiety only and calumny, dangers and plots, but even that which is esteemed of all things most terrible, death? And not death alone, but by violence too? And He said not, *"you shall be slain,"* but with the dignity that became Him, He set this before them, saying, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;"* bringing round the argument, as He ever does, to its opposite. For what? Is your fear, says He, of death? And are you therefore slow to preach? Nay for this very cause I bid you preach, that you fear death: for this shall deliver you from that which is really death. What though they shall slay you? Yet over the better part they shall not prevail, though they strive ten thousand ways. Therefore He said not, *"Who do not kill the soul,"* but, who *"are not able to kill."* For wish it as they may, they shall not prevail. Wherefore, if you fear punishment, fear that, the more grievous by far.

Do you see how again He does not promise them deliverance from death, but permits them to die, granting them more than if He had not allowed them to suffer it? Because deliverance from death is not near so great as persuading men to despise death. You see now, He does not push them into dangers, but sets them above dangers, and in a short sentence

fixes in their mind the doctrines that relate to the immortality of the soul, and having in two or three words implanted a saving doctrine, He comforts them also by other considerations.

Thus, lest they should think, when killed and butchered, that as men forsaken they suffered this, He introduces again the argument of God's providence, saying on this wise: *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall into a snare without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."* [Matthew 10:29-30] *"For what is viler than they?"* says He; *"nevertheless, not even these shall be taken without God's knowledge."* For He means not this, *"by His operation they fall,"* for this were unworthy of God; but, *"nothing that is done is hid from Him."* If then He is not ignorant of anything that befalls us, and loves us more truly than a father, and so loves us, as to have numbered our very hairs; we ought not to be afraid. And this He said, not that God numbers our hairs, but that He might indicate His perfect knowledge, and His great providence over them. If therefore He both knows all the things that are done, and is able to save you, and willing; whatever ye may have to suffer, think not that as persons forsaken ye suffer. For neither is it His will to deliver you from the terrors, but to persuade you to despise them, since this is, more than anything, deliverance from the terrors.

3. *"Fear ye not therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."* [Matthew 10:31] Do you see that the fear had already prevailed over them? Yea, for He knew the secrets of the heart; therefore He added, *"Fear them not therefore;"* for even should they prevail, it will be over the inferior part, I mean, the body; which though they should not kill, nature will surely take with her and depart. So that not even this depends on them, but men have it from nature. And if you fear this, much more should you fear what is greater, and dread *"Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*

And He says not openly now, that it is Himself, *"Who is able to destroy both soul and body,"* but where He before declared Himself to be judge, He made it manifest.

But now the contrary takes place: Him, namely, who is able to destroy the soul, that is, to punish it, we fear not, but those who slay the body, we shudder at. Yet surely while He together with the soul punishes the body also, they cannot even chasten the body, much less the soul: and though they chasten it ever so severely, yet in that way they rather make it more glorious.

Do you see how He signifies the conflicts to be easy? Because in truth, death did exceedingly agitate their souls, inspiring terror for a time, for that it had not as yet been made easy to overcome, neither had they that were to despise it partaken of the grace of the Spirit.

Having, you see, cast out the fear and distress that was agitating their soul; by what follows He also encourages them again, casting out fear by fear; and not by fear only, but also by the hope of great prizes; and He threatens with much authority, in both ways urging them to speak boldly for the truth; and says further,

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven."

[Matthew 10:32-33]

Thus not from the good things only, but also from the opposites, does He urge them; and He concludes with the dismal part.

And mark His exact care; He said not *"me,"* but *"in me,"* implying that not by a power of his own, but by the help of grace from above, the confessor makes his confession. But of him that denies, He said not, *"in me,"* but *"me;"* for he having become destitute of the gift, his denial ensues.

"Why then is he blamed," one may say, *"if being forsaken, he denies?"* Because the being forsaken is the fault of the forsaken person himself.

But why is He not satisfied with the faith in the mind, but requires also the confession with the mouth? To train us up to boldness in speech, and a more abundant love and determination, and to raise us on high. Wherefore also He addresses Himself to all. Nor does He at all apply this to the disciples only in person, for not them, but their disciples too, He is now rendering noble hearted. Because he that has learned this lesson will not only teach with boldness, but will likewise suffer all things easily, and with ready mind. This at any rate brought over many to the apostles, even their belief in this word. Because both in the punishment the infliction is heavier, and in the good things the recompense greater. I mean, whereas he that does right has the advantage in time, and the delay of the penalty is counted for gain by the sinner: He has introduced an equivalent, or rather a much greater advantage, the increase of the recompenses. *"Have you the advantage,"* says He, *"by having first confessed me here? I also will have the advantage of you, by giving you greater things, and unspeakably greater; for I will confess you there."* Do you see that both the good things and the evil things are there to be dispensed? Why then hasten and hurry yourself? And why seek your rewards here, thou who art *"saved by hope?"* Wherefore, whether you have done anything good, and not received its recompense here, be not troubled (for with increase, in the time to come, the reward thereof awaits you): or whether you have done any evil, and not paid the penalty, be not easy; for there will vengeance receive you, if you turn not and amend.

But if you believe it not, from the things here form your conjecture about things to come also. Why, if in the season of the conflicts they that confess are so glorious, imagine what they will be in the season of the

crowns. If the enemies here applaud, how shall that tenderest of all fathers fail to admire and proclaim you? Yea, then shall we have both our gifts for the good, and our punishments for the evil. So that such as deny shall suffer harm, both here and there; here living with an evil conscience, though they were never to die, they shall be surely dead; and there, undergoing the last penalty: but the other sort will profit both here and there, both here making a gain of their death, and in this way becoming more glorious than the living, and there enjoying those unspeakable blessings.

God then is in no wise prompt to punish only, but also to confer benefits; and for this last more than for the first. But why has He put the reward once only, the punishment twice? He knows that this would be more apt to correct us. For this cause when He had said, "*Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell,*" He says again, "*Him will I also deny.*" So does Paul also, continually making mention of hell.

Thus we see that He, having by all ways trained on His scholar (both by opening Heaven to him, and by setting before him that fearful judgment-seat, and by pointing to the amphitheatre of angels, and how in the midst of them the crowns shall be proclaimed, which thing would thenceforth prepare the way for the word of godliness to be very easily received); in what follows, lest they grow timid and the word be hindered, He bids them be prepared even for slaughter itself; to make them aware that such as continue in their error, will have to suffer (among other things) for plotting against them.

4. Let us therefore despise death, although the time be not come that requires it of us; for indeed it will translate us to a far better life. "*But the body decays.*" Why, on this account most especially we ought to rejoice, because death decays, and mortality perishes, not the substance of the body. For neither, should you see a statue being cast, would you call the process

destruction, but an improved formation. Just so do thou reason also concerning the body, and do not bewail. Then it were right to bewail, had it remained in its chastisement.

"But," says one, *"this ought to take place without the decay of our bodies; they should continue entire."* And what would this have advantaged either the living or the departed? How long are you lovers of the body? How long are you rivetted to the earth and gaping after shadows? Why, what good would this have done? Or rather, what harm would it not have done? For did our bodies not decay, in the first place the greatest of all evils, pride, would have continued with many. For if even while this is going on, and worms gushing out, many have earnestly sought to be gods; what would not have been the result did the body continue?

In the second place, it would not be believed to be of earth; for if, its end witnessing this, some yet doubt; what would they not have suspected if they did not see this? Thirdly, the bodies would have been excessively loved; and most men would have become more carnal and gross; and if even now some cleave to men's tombs and coffins, after that themselves have perished, what would they not have done, if they had even their image preserved? Fourthly, they would not have earnestly desired the things to come. Fifthly, they that say the world is eternal, would have been more confirmed, and would have denied God as Creator. Sixthly, they would not have known the excellence of the soul, and how great a thing is the presence of a soul in a body. Seventhly, many of them that lose their relations would have left their cities, and have dwelt in the tombs, and have become frantic, conversing continually with their own dead. For if even now men form to themselves images, since they cannot keep the body (for neither is it possible, but whether they will or no it glides and hurries from them), and are rivetted to the planks of wood; what monstrous thing would

they not then have devised? To my thinking, the generality would have even built temples for such bodies, and they that are skilled in such sorceries would have persuaded evil spirits to speak through them; since at least even now, they that venture on the arts of necromancy attempt many things more out of the way than these. And how many idolatries would not have arisen from hence? When men even after the dust and ashes, are yet eager in those practices.

God therefore, to take away all our extravagances, and to teach us to stand off from all earthly things, destroys the bodies before our eyes. For even he that is enamored of bodies, and is greatly affected at the sight of a beautiful damsel, if he will not learn by discourse the deformity of that substance, shall know it by the very sight. Yea, many of the like age with her whom he loves, and oftentimes also fairer, being dead, after the first or second day, have emitted an ill savor, and foul matter, and decay with worms. Imagine then what sort of beauty you love, and what sort of elegance has power so to disturb you. But if bodies did not decay, this would not be well known: but as evil spirits run unto men's graves, so also many of our lovers, continually sitting by the tombs, would have received evil spirits in their soul, and would quickly have perished in this grievous madness.

But as it is, together with all other things this also comforts the soul, that the form is not seen: it brings men to forgetfulness of their affliction. Indeed, if this were not so, there would be no tombs at all, but you would see our cities having corpses instead of statues, each man desiring to look upon his own dead. And much confusion would arise hence, and none of the ordinary sort would attend to his soul, nor would give room to the doctrine of immortality to enter in: and many other things too, more shocking than these, would have resulted, which even to speak of were

unseemly. Wherefore it decays presently, that you might see unveiled the beauty of the soul. For if she be the procurer of all that beauty and life, much more excellent must she herself be. And if she preserve that which is so deformed and unsightly, much more herself.

5. For it is not the body wherein the beauty lies, but the expression, and the bloom which is shed over its substance by the soul. Now then, I bid you love that which makes the body also to appear such as it is. And why speak I of death? Nay even in life itself, I would have you mark how all is hers that is beautiful. For whether she be pleased, she showers roses over the cheeks; or whether she be pained, she takes that beauty, and involves it all in a dark robe. And if she be continually in mirth, the body improves in condition; if in grief, she renders the same thinner and weaker than a spider's web; if in wrath, she has made it again abominable and foul; if she show the eye calm, great is the beauty that she bestows; if she express envy, very pale and livid is the hue she sheds over us; if love, abundant the gracefulness she at once confers. Thus in fact many women, not being beautiful in feature, have derived much grace from the soul; others again of brilliant bloom, by having an ungracious soul, have marred their beauty. Consider how a face that is pale grows red, and by the variation of color produces great delight, when there is need of shame and blushing. As, on the other hand, if it be shameless, it makes the countenance more unpleasing than any monster.

For nothing is fairer, nothing sweeter than a beauteous soul. For while as to bodies, the longing is with pain, in the case of souls the pleasure is pure and calm. Why then let go the king, and be wild about the herald? Why leave the philosopher, and gape after his interpreter? Have you seen a beautiful eye? Acquaint yourself with that which is within; and if that be not beautiful, despise this likewise. For surely, did you see an ill-favored

woman wearing a beautiful mask, she would make no impression on you: just as on the other hand, neither would you suffer one fair and beautiful to be disguised by the mask, but wouldest take it away, as choosing to see her beauty unveiled.

This then I bid you do in regard of the soul also, and acquaint yourself with it first; for this is clad with the body instead of a mask; wherefore also that abides such as it is; but the other, though it be mishapen, may quickly become beautiful. Though it have an eye that is unsightly, and harsh, and fierce, it may become beautiful, mild, calm, sweet-tempered, gentle.

This beauty therefore let us seek, this countenance let us adorn; that God also may "*have pleasure in our beauty,*" and impart to us of His everlasting blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 35 on Matthew

Matt. X. 34.

"Think not that I have come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace, but a sword."

Again, He sets forth the things that are more painful, and that with great aggravation: and the objection they were sure to meet Him with, He prevents them by stating. I mean, lest hearing this, they should say, *"For, this then are You come, to destroy both us, and them that obey us, and to fill the earth with war?"* He first says Himself, *"I am not come to send peace on earth."*

How then did He enjoin them to pronounce peace on entering into each house? And again, how did the angels say, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace"*? [Luke 2:14] And how came all the prophets too to publish it for good tidings? Because this more than anything is peace, when the diseased is cut off, when the mutinous is removed. For thus it is possible for Heaven to be united to earth. Since the physician too in this way preserves the rest of the body, when he amputates the incurable part; and the general, when he has brought to a separation them that were agreed in mischief. Thus it came to pass also in the case of that famous tower; for their evil peace [Genesis 11:7-8] was ended by their good discord, and peace made thereby. Thus Paul also divided them that were conspiring against him. [Acts 23:6-7] And in Naboth's case that agreement was at the same time more grievous than any war. [1 Kings xxi] For concord is not in every case a good thing, since even robbers agree together.

The war is not then the effect of His purpose, but of their temper. For His will indeed was that all should agree in the word of godliness; but

because they fell to dissension, war arises. Yet He spoke not so; but what says He? *"I am not come to send peace;"* comforting them. As if He said, For think not that you are to blame for these things; it is I who order them so, because men are so disposed. Be not ye therefore confounded, as though the events happened against expectation. To this end am I come, to send war among men; for this is my will. Be not ye therefore troubled, when the earth is at war, as though it were subject to some hostile device. For when the worse part is rent away, then after that Heaven is knit unto the better.

And these things He says, as strengthening them against the evil suspicion of the multitude.

And He said not *"war,"* but what was more grievous than it, *"a sword."* And if there be somewhat painful in these expressions, and of an alarming emphasis, marvel not. For, it being His will to train their ears by the severity of His words, lest in their difficult circumstances they should start aside, He fashioned His discourse accordingly; lest any one should say it was by flattery He persuaded them, and by concealing the hardships; therefore even to those things which merited to be otherwise expressed, He gave by His words the more galling and painful turn. For it is better to see persons' gentleness in things, than in words.

2. Wherefore neither with this was He satisfied, but unfolds also the very nature of the war, signifying it to be far more grievous even than a civil war; and He says, *"I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*

For not friends only, says He, nor fellow citizens, but even kinsmen shall stand against one another, and nature shall be divided against herself. *"For I have come,"* says He, *"to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her*

mother-in-law." That is, not merely among those of the same household is the war, but among those that are dearest, and extremely near to each other. And this more than anything signifies His power, that hearing these things, they both accepted Him, and set about persuading all others.

Yet was it not He that did this: of course not: but the wickedness of the other sort: nevertheless He says it is His own doing. For such is the custom of the Scripture. Yea, and elsewhere also He says, "*God has given them eyes that they should not see:*" [Romans 11:8] and here He speaks in this way, in order that having, as I said before, exercised themselves in these words, they might not be confounded on suffering reproaches and insults.

But if any think these things intolerable, let them be reminded of an ancient history. For in times of old also this came to pass, which thing especially shows the old covenant to be akin to the new, and Him who is here speaking, the same with the giver of those commands. I mean that in the case of the Jews also, when each had slain his neighbor, then He laid aside His anger against them; both when they made the calf, and when they were joined to Baal Peor. Where then are they that say, "*That God is evil, and this good?*" For behold He has filled the world with blood, shed by kinsmen. Nevertheless even this we affirm to be a work of great love towards man.

Therefore, you see, implying that it was He who approved those other acts also, He makes mention also of a prophecy, which if not spoken for this end, yet involves the same meaning. And what is this?

"A man's foes shall be they of his own household." [Matthew 10:36]

For indeed among the Jews also something of the kind took place. That is, there were prophets, and false prophets, and the people was divided, and families were in dissension; and some believed the one, and some the other. Wherefore the prophet admonishes, saying, "*Trust ye not in friends, have*

not hope in guides; yea, even of her that lies in your bosom beware, in respect of communicating anything to her:" and, "A man's enemies are the men that are in his own house." [Micah 7:5-6]

And this He said, preparing him that should receive the word to be above all. For to die is not evil, but to die an evil death. On this account He said moreover, *"I have come to cast fire upon the earth."* [Luke 12:49] And this He said, to declare the vehemence and warmth of the love which He required. For, because He loved us very much, so He will likewise be loved of us. And these sayings would strengthen the persons present also, and lift them higher. *"For if those others,"* says He, *"are to despise kinsmen, and children, and parents, imagine what manner of men ye their teachers ought to be. Since neither will the hardships stop with you, but will also pass on to the rest. For since I have come bringing great blessings, I demand also great obedience, and purpose of heart."*

3. *"He that loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loves son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that takes not his cross and follows after me, is not worthy of me."* [Matthew 10:37-38]

Do you see a teacher's dignity? Do you see, how He signifies himself a true Son of Him that begot Him, commanding us to let go all things beneath, and to take in preference the love of Him?

"And why speak I," says He, *"of friends and kinsmen? Even if it be your own life which you prefer to my love, your place is far from my disciples."* What then? Are not these things contrary to the Old Testament? Far from it, rather they are very much in harmony therewith. For there too He commands not only to hate the worshippers of idols, but even to stone them; and in Deuteronomy again, admiring these, He says, *"Who said unto his father, and to his mother, I have not seen you; neither did he*

acknowledge his brethren, and his own sons he disowned: he kept Your oracles." [Deuteronomy 33:9] And if Paul gives many directions touching parents, commanding us to obey them in all things, marvel not; for in those things only does he mean us to obey, as many as do not hinder godliness. For indeed it is a sacred duty to render them all other honors: but when they demand more than is due, one ought not to obey. For this reason Luke says, *"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple;"* [Luke 14:26] not commanding simply to hate them, since this were even quite contrary to the law; but *"when one desires to be loved more than I am, hate him in this respect. For this ruins both the beloved himself, and the lover."* And these things He said, both to render the children more determined, and to make the fathers more gentle, that would hinder them. For when they saw He had such strength and power as to sever their children from them, they, as attempting things impossible, would even desist. Wherefore also He leaves the fathers, and addresses His discourse to the children, instructing the former not to make the attempt, as attempting things impracticable.

Then lest they should be indignant, or count it hard, see which way He makes His argument tend: in that having said, *"Who hates not father and mother,"* He adds, *"and his own life."* For why do you speak to me of parents, says He, and brothers, and sisters, and wife? Nothing is nearer than the life to any man: yet if you hate not this also, you must bear in all things the opposite of his lot who loves me.

And not even simply to hate it was His command, but so as to expose it to war, and to battles, and to slaughters, and blood. *"For he that bears not his cross, and comes after me, cannot be my disciple."* Thus He said not

merely that we must stand against death, but also against a violent death; and not violent only, but ignominious too.

And He discourses nothing as yet of His own passion, that when they had been for a time instructed in these things, they might more easily receive His word concerning it. Is there not, therefore, cause for amazement, how on their hearing these things, their soul did not wing its way from the body, the hardships being everywhere at hand, and the good things in expectation? How then did it not flee away? Great was both the power of the speaker, and the love of the hearers. Wherefore though hearing things far more intolerable and galling than those great men, Moses and Jeremiah, they continued to obey, and to say nothing against it.

"He that finds his life," says He, *"shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake, shall find it."* [Matthew 10:39] Do you see how great the damage to such as love it unduly? How great the gain to them that hate it? I mean, because the injunctions were disagreeable, when He was bidding them set themselves against parents, and children, and nature, and kindred, and the world, and their very soul, He sets forth the profit also, being very great. Thus, *"These things,"* says He, *"so far from harming, will very greatly profit; and their opposites will injure;"* urging them, as He ever does, by the very things which they desire. For why are you willing to despise your life? Because you love it? Then for that very reason despise it, and so you will advantage it in the highest degree, and do the part of one that loves it.

And mark an instance of unspeakable consideration. For not in respect of our parents only does He practise this reasoning, nor of our children, but with regard to our life, which is nearer than all; that the other point may thenceforth become unquestionable, and they may learn that they will in this way profit those of their kindred likewise, as much as may be; since so it is in the case even of our life, which is more essential to us than all.

4. Now these things were enough to recommend men to receive them, their appointed healers. Yea, who would choose but receive with all readiness them that were so noble, such true heroes, and as lions running about the earth, and despising all that pertained to themselves, so that others might be saved? Yet nevertheless He proffers also another reward, indicating that He is caring here for the entertainers more than for the guests.

And the first honor He confers is by saying,

"He that receives you, receives me, and he that receives me, receives Him that sent me." [Matthew 10:40]

With this, what may compare? That one should receive the Father and the Son! But He holds out herewith another reward also.

"He," says He, *"that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward."* [Matthew 10:41]

And as before He threatens punishment to such as do not receive them, here He defines also a certain refreshment for the good. And to teach you His greater care for them, He said not simply, *"He that receives a prophet,"* or *"He that receives a righteous man,"* but subjoined, *"in the name of a prophet,"* and, *"in the name of a righteous man;"* that is, if not for any worldly preferment, nor for any other temporal thing, he receive him, but because he is either a prophet or a righteous man, he shall receive a prophet's reward, and a righteous man's reward; such as it were meet for him to have, that has received a prophet, or a righteous man; or, such as that other is himself to receive. Which kind of thing Paul also said: *"That your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want."* [2 Corinthians 8:14]

Then, lest any one should allege poverty, He says,

"Or whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." [Matthew 10:43]

"Though a cup of cold water be your gift, on which there is nothing laid out, even of this shall a reward be stored up for you. For I do all things for the sake of you the receivers."

Do you see what mighty persuasions He used, and how He opened to them the houses of the whole world? Yea, He signified that men are their debtors: first, by saying, *"The workman is worthy of his hire;"* secondly, by sending them forth having nothing; thirdly, by giving them up to wars and fightings in behalf of them that receive them; fourthly, by committing to them miracles also; fifthly, in that He did by their lips introduce peace, the cause of all blessings, into the houses of such as receive them; sixthly, by threatening things more grievous than Sodom to such as receive them not: seventhly, by signifying that as many as welcome them are receiving both Himself and the Father; eighthly, by promising both a prophet's and a righteous man's reward: ninthly, by undertaking that the recompenses shall be great, even for a cup of cold water. Now each one of these things, even by itself, were enough to attract them. For who, tell me, when a leader of armies wounded in innumerable places, and dyed in blood, came in sight, returning after many trophies from war and conflict, would not receive him, throwing open every door in his house?

5. But who now is like this? One may say. Therefore He added, *"In the name of a disciple, and of a prophet, and of a righteous man;"* to instruct you that not for the worthiness of the visitor, but for the purpose of him that gives welcome, is His reward appointed. For though here He speak of prophets, and righteous men, and disciples, yet elsewhere He bids men

receive the veriest outcasts, and punishes such as fail to do so. For, *"Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me;"* [Matthew 25:45] and the converse again He affirms with respect to the same persons.

Since though he may be doing no such great work, he is a man, inhabiting the same world with you, beholding the same sun having the same soul, the same Lord, a partaker with you of the same mysteries, called to the same heaven with you; having a strong claim, his poverty, and his want of necessary food. But now they that waken you with flutes and pipes in the winter season, and disturb you without purpose or fruit, depart from you receiving many gifts. And they that carry about swallows, and smut themselves over, and abuse every one, receive a reward for this their conjuration. But if there come to you a poor man wanting bread, there is no end of revilings, and reproaches, and charges of idleness, and upbraidings, and insults, and jeers; and you consider not with yourself, that you too art idle, and yet God gives you His gifts. For tell me not this, that you too art doing somewhat, but point me out this rather, if it be anything really needful that you do, and art busy about. But if you tell one of money-getting, and of traffic, and of the care and increase of your goods, I also would say unto you, Not these, but alms, and prayers, and the protection of the injured, and all such things, are truly works, with respect to which we live in thorough idleness. Yet God never told us, *"Because you are idle, I light not up the sun for you; because you do nothing of real consequence, I quench the moon, I paralyze the womb of the earth, I restrain the lakes, the fountains, the rivers, I blot out the atmosphere: I withhold the annual rains:"* but He gives us all abundantly. And to some that are not merely idle, but even doing evil, He freely gives the benefit of these things.

When therefore you see a poor man, and say, *"It stops my breath that this fellow, young as he is and healthy, having nothing, would rather be fed in idleness; he is surely some slave and runaway, and has deserted his proper master:"* I bid you speak these same words to yourself; or rather, permit him freely to speak them to you, and he will say with more justice, *"It stops my breath that you, being healthy, are idle, and practice none of the things which God has commanded, but having run away from the commandments of your Lord, goes about dwelling in wickedness, as in a strange land, in drunkenness, in gluttony, in theft, in extortion, in subverting other men's houses."* And you indeed impute idleness, but I evil works; in your plotting, in your swearing, in your lying, in your spoiling, in your doing innumerable such things.

And this I say, not as making a law in favor of idleness, far from it; but rather very earnestly wishing all to be employed; for sloth is the teacher of all wickedness: but I beseech you not to be unmerciful, nor cruel. Since Paul also, having made infinite complaints, and said, *"If any will not work, neither let him eat,"* stopped not at this, but added, *"But you, be not weary in well doing."* *"Nay, but these things are contradictory. For if you have commanded them not to eat, how do you exhort us to give?"* I do so, says He, for I have also commanded to avoid them, and *"to have no company with them;"* and again I said, *"Count them not as enemies, but admonish them;"* [2 Thessalonians 3:14-15] not making contradictory laws, but such as are quite in unison with each other. Because, if you are prompt to mercy, both he, the poor man, will soon be rid of his idleness, and you of your cruelty.

"But he has many lies and inventions," you reply. Well, hence again is he pitiable, for that he has fallen into such distress, as to be hardened even in such doings. But we, so far from pitying, add even those cruel words,

"Have you not received once and again?" so we talk. What then? Because he was once fed, has he no need to be fed again? Why do you not make these laws for your own belly also, and say to it likewise, You were filled yesterday, and the day before, seek it not now? But while you fill that beyond measure, even to bursting, from him you turn away, when he asks but what is moderate; whereas you ought therefore to pity him, because he is constrained to come to you every day. Yea, if nought else incline you to him, you should pity him because of this; for by the constraint of his poverty he is forced on these things, and does them. And you do not pity him, because, being so spoken to, he feels no shame: the reason being, that his want is too strong for him.

Nay, instead of pitying, you even make a show of him; and whereas God has commanded to give secretly, you stand exposing publicly him that has accosted you, and upbraiding him, for what ought to move your pity. Why, if you are not minded to give, to what end add reproach, and bruise that weary and wretched soul? He came as into a harbor, seeking help at your hands; why stir up waves, and make the storm more grievous? Why do you condemn him of meanness? What? Had he thought to hear such things, would he have come to you? Or if he actually came foreseeing this, good cause therefore both to pity him, and to shudder at your own cruelty, that not even so, when you see an inexorable necessity laid upon him, do you become more gentle, nor judge him to have a sufficient excuse for his importunity in the dread of hunger, but accuse him of impudence: and yet have you often yourself practised greater impudence, yea in respect of grievous matters. For while here the very impudence brings with it ground of pardon, we, often doing things punishable, brazen it out: and when we ought to bear all that in mind, and be humble, we even trample on those miserable men, and when they ask medicines, we add to their wounds. I say,

if you will not give, why do you strike? If you will not be bounteous, why be insolent?

"But he submits not to be put off in any other way." Well then, as that wise man commanded, [Sirach 4:8] so do. *"Answer him peaceable words with meekness."* For not of his own accord, surely, is he so very importunate. For there is not, there cannot be, any man desiring to be put to shame for its own sake. How much soever any may contend, I cannot yield ever to be convinced that a man who was living in plenty would choose to beg.

6. Let no man then beguile us with arguments. But although Paul says, *"If any will not work, neither let him eat,"* [2 Thessalonians 3:10] to them he says it; but to us he says not this, but, on the contrary, *"Be not weary in well doing."* [2 Thessalonians 3:13] Even thus do we at home; when any two are striving with each other, we take each apart, and give them the opposite advice. This did God also, and Moses. For while to God he said, *"If you will forgive them their sin, forgive it; else blot me out also;"* them on the contrary he commanded to slay one another, and all that pertained to them. Yet these things are contrary; nevertheless, both looked to one end.

Again, God said to Moses in the hearing of the Jews, *"Let me alone, that I may consume the people,"* [Exodus 32:10] (for though they were not present when God was saying this, yet they were to hear it afterwards): but privately He gives him directions of the opposite tenor. And this, Moses upon constraint revealed afterwards, thus saying, *"What? Did I conceive them, that you say to me, Carry them, as a nurse would carry the sucking child in her bosom?"*

These things are done also in houses, and often a father while he blames the tutor in private for having used his child reproachfully, saying, *"Be not rough, nor hard,"* to the youth speaks in the contrary way, *"Though*

thou be reproached unjustly, bear it;" out of those opposites making up some one wholesome result. Thus also Paul said to such as are in health and beg, *"If any man will not work, neither let him eat,"* that he may urge them into employment: but to such as can show mercy, *"You, for your part, be not weary in well doing:"* that he may lead them to give alms.

So also, when he was admonishing those of the Gentiles, in his Epistle to the Romans, not to be highminded against the Jews, he brought forward also the wild olive, and he seems to be saying one thing to these, another to those. [Romans 11:17]

Let us not therefore fall away into cruelty, but let us listen to Paul, saying, *"Be not weary in well doing,"* let us listen to the Lord, who says, *"Give to every man that asks of you,"* [Luke 6:30] and, *"Be merciful as your Father."* [Luke 6:36] And though He has spoken of many things, He has nowhere used this expression, but with regard to our deeds of mercy only. For nothing so equals us with God, as doing good.

"But nothing is more shameless," says one, *"than a poor man."* Why, I pray you? Because he runs up, and cries out after you? Will you then let me point out, how we are more importunate than they, and very shameless? Remember, I say, now at the season of the fast, how often, when your table was spread at eventide, and you had called your ministering servant; on his moving rather leisurely, you have overset everything, kicking, insulting, reviling, merely about a little delay; although fully assured, that if not immediately, yet a little after you shall enjoy your victuals. Upon which thou dost not call yourself impudent, changed as you are into a wild beast for nothing; but the poor man, alarmed and trembling about his greater interests (for not about delay, but about famine, is all his fear), him do you call audacious, and shameless, and impudent, and all the most opprobrious names? Nay, how is this anything but extreme impudence.

But these things we do not consider: therefore we account such men troublesome: since if we at all searched into our own doings, and compared them with theirs, we should not have thought them intolerable.

Be not then a severe judge. Why, if you were clear of all sins, not even then would the law of God permit you to be strict in searching out other men's sins. And if the Pharisee perished on this account, what defense are we to find? If He suffer not such as have done well to be bitter in searching out other men's doings, much less them that have offended.

7. Let us not then be savage, nor cruel, not without natural feeling, not implacable, not worse than wild beasts. For I know many to have gone even so far in brutishness, as for a little trouble to slight famishing persons, and to say these words: *"I have no servant now with me; we are far from home; there is no money-changer that I know."* Oh cruelty! Did you promise the greater, and do you not fulfill the less? To save your walking a little way, does he perish with hunger? Oh insolence! Oh pride! Why, if it were ten furlongs to be walked, ought thou to be backward? Does it not even come into your mind that so your reward is made greater? For whereas, when you give, you receive reward for the gift only: when you yourself also go, for this again is appointed you a recompense.

Yea, the patriarch himself we admire for this, that in his own person he ran to the herd, and snatched up the calf, [Genesis 18:7] and that, when he had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house. But now some are filled with so much pride, as to do these things by servants, and not to be ashamed. *"But do you require me to do these things myself?"* one may say. *"How then shall I not seem to be vainglorious?"* Nay, but as it is, you are led by another kind of vainglory to do this, being ashamed to be seen talking with a poor man.

But I am in no respect strict about this; only give, whether by yourself or by another you are minded to do so; and do not accuse, do not smite, do not revile. For medicines, not wounds, does he need who comes unto you; mercy, not a sword. For tell me, if any one who had been smitten with a stone, and had received a wound in his head, were to let go all others, and run unto your knees, drenched in his blood; would you indeed smite him with another stone, and add unto him another wound? I, for my part, think not; but even as it was, you would endeavor to cure it. Why then doest thou the contrary with respect to the poor? Do you not know how much power a word has, both to raise up, and to cast down? *"For a word,"* it is said, *"is better than a gift."* [Sirach 18:16]

Do you not consider that you are thrusting the sword into yourself, and art receiving a more grievous wound, when he, being reviled, silently withdraws, with groans and many tears? Since indeed of God he is sent unto you. Consider then, in insulting him, upon whom you are causing the insult to pass; when God indeed sends him unto you, and commands you to give, but thou, so far from giving, dost even insult him on his coming.

And if you are not aware how exceedingly amiss this is, look at it as among men, and then you will fully know the greatness of the sin. As thus: if a servant of yours had been commanded by you to go to another servant, who had money of yours, to receive it, and were to come back not only with empty hands, but also with spiteful usage; what would you not do to him that had wrought the insult? What penalty would you not exact, as though, after this, it were yourself that had been ill used?

This reckoning do thou make in regard of God also; for truly it is He that sends the poor to us, and of His we give, if indeed we do give. But if, besides not giving, we also send them away insulted, consider how many bolts, how many thunders, that which we are doing deserves.

Duly considering then all these things, let us both bridle our tongue, and put away inhumanity, and let us stretch forth the hand to give alms, and not with money only, but with words also, let us relieve such as are in need; that we may both escape the punishment for reviling, and may inherit the kingdom which is for blessing and almsgiving, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 36 on Matthew

Matt. XI. 1.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities."

That is, after He had sent them, He proceeded to withdraw Himself, to give them room and opportunity to do what He had enjoined. For while He was present and healing, no one would be willing to approach them.

"Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Jesus, he sent two of his disciples, and asked Him, saying, Are you He that should come, or do we look for another?" [Matthew 11:2-3]

But Luke says, they also told John of the miracles, and then he sent them. [Luke 7:18] However, this contains no matter of difficulty, but of consideration only; for this, among other things, indicates their jealousy towards Him.

But what follows is completely among the controverted points. Of what nature then is this? Their saying, *"Are You He that should come, or do we look for another?"* That is, he that knew Him before His miracles, he that had learned it of the Spirit, he that heard it of the Father, he who had proclaimed Him before all men; does he now send to learn of Him, whether it be Himself or no? And if yet thou did not know that it is surely He, how thinkest you yourself credible, affirming as thou dost concerning things, whereof you are ignorant? For he that is to bear witness to others, must be first worthy of credit himself. Did you not say, *"I am not meet to loose the latchet of His shoe?"* [John 1:27] Did you not say, *"I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and resting upon Him, the same is He which*

baptizes with the Holy Ghost?" [John 1:33] Did you not see the Spirit in form of a dove? Did you not hear the voice? Did you not utterly forbid Him, saying, *"I have need to be baptized by You?"* [Matthew 3:14] Did you not say even to your disciples, *"He must increase, I must decrease?"* [John 3:30] Did you not teach all the people, that *"He should baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire?"* [Matthew 3:11] and that He *"is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world?"* Did you not before His signs and miracles proclaim all these things? How then now, when He has been made manifest to all, and the fame of Him has gone out everywhere, and dead men have been raised, and devils driven away, and a display made of so great miracles, do you after this send to learn of Him?

What then is the fact? Were all these sayings a kind of fraud: a stage play and fables? Nay, who that has any understanding would say so? I say not, John, who leaped in the womb, who before his own birth proclaimed Him, the citizen of the wilderness, the exhibitor of the conversation of angels; but even though he were one of the common sort, and of them that are utterly outcast, he would not have hesitated, after so many testimonies, both on his own part and on the part of others.

Whence it is evident, that neither did he send as being himself in doubt, nor did he ask in ignorance. Since no one surely could say this, that though he knew it fully, yet on account of his prison he was become rather timid: for neither was he looking to be delivered therefrom, nor if he did look for it, would he have betrayed his duty to God, armed as he was against various kinds of death. For unless he had been prepared for this, he would not have evinced so great courage towards a whole people, practised in shedding blood of prophets; nor would he have rebuked that savage tyrant with so much boldness in the midst of the city and the forum, severely chiding him, as though he were a little child, in hearing of all men.

And even if he were grown more timid, how was he not ashamed before his own disciples, in whose presence he had so often borne witness unto Him, but asked his question by them, which he should have done by others? And yet surely he knew full well, that they too were jealous of Christ, and desired to find some handle against Him. And how could he but be abashed before the Jewish people, in whose presence he had proclaimed such high things? Or what advantage accrued to him thereby, towards deliverance from his bonds? For not for Christ's sake had he been cast into prison, nor for having proclaimed His power, but for his own rebuke touching the unlawful marriage. And what child so silly, what person so frantic, but that so he would have put on himself their character?

2. What then is it which he is bringing about? For that it belongs not to John to have doubt hereupon, no nor to any ordinary person, nor even to one extremely foolish and frenzied; so much is evident from what we have said. And now we have only to add the solution.

For what intent then did he send to ask? John's disciples were starting aside from Jesus, and this surely any one may see, and they had always a jealous feeling towards Him. And it is plain, from what they said to their master: *"He that was with you,"* it is said, *"beyond Jordan, to whom you bore witness, behold, the same baptizes, and all men come unto Him."*

[John 3:26] And again, *"There arose a question between John's disciples and the Jews about purifying."* And again they came unto Him, and said, *"Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Your disciples fast not?"*

[Matthew 9:14] For as yet they knew not who Christ was, but imagining Jesus to be a mere man, but John greater than after the manner of man, were vexed at seeing the former held in estimation, but the latter, as he had said, now ceasing. And this hindered them from coming unto Him, their jealousy quite blocking up the access. Now so long as John was with them, he was

exhorting them continually and instructing them, and not even so did he persuade them; but when he was now on the point of dying, he uses the more diligence: fearing as he did lest he might leave a foundation for bad doctrine, and they continue broken off from Christ. For as he was diligent even at first to bring to Christ all that pertained to himself; so on his failing to persuade them, now towards his end he does but exert the more zeal.

Now if he had said, "*Go ye away unto Him, He is better than I,*" he would not have persuaded them, minded as they were not easily to be separated from him, but rather he would have been thought to say it out of modesty, and they would have been the more rivetted to him; or if he had held his peace, then again nothing was gained. What then does he? He waits to hear from them that Christ is working miracles, and not even so does he admonish them, nor does he send all, but some two (whom he perhaps knew to be more teachable than the rest); that the inquiry might be made without suspicion, in order that from His acts they might learn the difference between Jesus and himself. And he says, Go, and say, "*Are you He that should come, or do we look for another?*" [Matthew 11:3]

But Christ knowing the purpose of John, did not say, I am He; for this would again have offended the hearers, although this was what it naturally followed for Him to say, but He leaves them to learn it from His acts. For it says, when these had come to Him, then "*He cured many.*" [Luke 7:21] And yet what congruity was there, that being asked, "*Are you He,*" He should say nothing to that, but should presently cure them that were sick; unless it had been His mind to establish this which I have mentioned? Because they of course would account the testimony of His deeds surer, and more above suspicion than that of His words.

Knowing therefore, as being God, the mind with which John had sent them, He straightway cured blind, lame, and many others; not to teach him

(for how should He him that was convinced), but these that were doubting: and having healed them, He says,

"Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them." [Matthew 4:5] And he added, *"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me;"* implying that He knows even their unuttered thoughts. For if He had said, *"I am He,"* both this would have offended them, as I have already said; and they would have thought, even if they had not spoken, much as the Jews said to Him, *"You bear record of Yourself."* Wherefore He says not this Himself, but leaves them to learn all from the miracles, freeing what He taught from suspicion, and making it plainer. Wherefore also He covertly added His reproof of them. That is, because they were *"offended in Him,"* He by setting forth their case and leaving it to their own conscience alone, and by calling no witness of this His accusation, but only themselves that knew it all, did thus also draw them the more unto Himself, in saying, Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. For indeed His secret meaning was of them when He said this.

3. But in order to our making the truth more evident to you by the comparison of the several statements, producing not only our own sayings, but also what is stated by others; we must needs add some account of them.

What then do some affirm? That this which we have stated was not the cause, but that John was in ignorance, yet not in ignorance of all; but that He was the Christ, he knew, but whether He was also to die for mankind, he knew not, therefore he said, *"Are You He that should come?"* that is, He that is to descend into hell. But this is not tenable; for neither of this was John ignorant. This at least he proclaimed even before all the others, and bare

record of this first, "*Behold,*" says he, "*the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.*" [John 1:29] Now he called Him a lamb, as proclaiming the cross, and again in saying, "*That takes away the sin of the world,*" he declared this same thing. For not otherwise than by the cross did He effect this; as Paul likewise said: "*And the handwriting which was contrary to us, even it He took out of the way, nailing it to His cross.*" And his saying too, "*He shall baptize you with the Spirit,*" [Matthew 3:11] is that of one who was foretelling the events after the resurrection.

Well: that He was to rise again, he knew, say they, and that He was to give the Holy Ghost; but that He should likewise be crucified, he knew not. How then was He to rise again, who had not suffered, nor been crucified? And how was this man greater than a prophet, who knew not even what the prophets knew? For that he was greater than a prophet, even Christ Himself bare record, [Matthew 11:9] but that the prophets knew of the passion is surely plain to every one. For so Isaiah says, "*He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb.*" [Isaiah 53:7] And before this testimony also he says, "*There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise again to rule the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust.*" [Isaiah 11:10] Then speaking of His passion, and of the ensuing glory, he added, "*And His rest shall be honor.*" And this prophet foretold not only that He should be crucified, but also with whom. "*For,*" says he, "*He was numbered with the transgressors.*" [Isaiah 53:12] And not this only, but that He should not even plead for Himself; "*For this man,*" he says, "*opens not His mouth:*" and that He should be unjustly condemned; "*For in His humiliation,*" says he, "*His judgment was taken away.*" And before this again, David both says this, and describes the judgment hall. "*Why,*" says he, "*do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers are gathered together against the Lord,*

and against His anointed." And elsewhere he mentions also the image of the cross, saying on this wise, "*They pierced my hand and my feet,*" and those things which the soldiers were emboldened to do, he adds with all exactness, "*For they parted my garments,*" says he, "*among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.*" And elsewhere again he says, that they also offered Him vinegar; "*For they gave me,*" says He, "*gall for my meat, and for my thirst they made me drink vinegar.*"

So then the prophets, so many years before, speak of the hall of judgment, and of the condemnation, and of them that were crucified with Him, and of the division of the garments, and of the lot cast upon them, and of many more things besides (for indeed it is unnecessary to allege all now, lest we make our discourse long): and was this man, greater than them all, ignorant of all these things? Nay, how should this be reasonable?

And why did he not say, "*Are you He that should come to hell,*" but simply, "*He that should come?*" Although this were far more absurd than the others, I mean their saying, "*he therefore said these things, that he might preach there also after his departure.*" To whom it were seasonable to say, "*Brethren, be not children in understanding, howbeit in malice be ye children.*" [1 Corinthians 14:20] For the present life indeed is the season for right conversation, but after death is judgment and punishment. "*For in hell,*" it is said, "*who will confess unto you?*"

How then were "*the gates of brass burst, and the bars of iron broken in sunder*"? By His body; for then first was a body shown, immortal, and destroying the tyranny of death. And besides, this indicates the destruction of the might of death, not the loosing of the sins of those who had died before His coming. And if this were not so, but He have delivered all that were before Him from hell, how says He, "*It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah?*" [Matthew 10:15] For this saying supposes

that those are also to be punished; more mildly indeed, yet still that they are to be punished. And yet they did also suffer here the most extreme punishment, nevertheless not even this will deliver them. And if it is so with them, much more with such as have suffered nothing.

"What then?" one may say, *"were they wronged, who lived before His coming?"* By no means, for men might then be saved, even though they had not confessed Christ. For this was not required of them, but not to worship idols, and to know the true God. *"For the Lord your God,"* it is said, *"is one Lord."* [Deuteronomy 6:4] Therefore the Maccabees were admired, because for the observance of the law they suffered what they did suffer; and the three children, and many others too among the Jews, having shown forth a very virtuous life, and having maintained the standard of this their knowledge, had nothing more required of them. For then it was sufficient for salvation, as I have said already, to know God only; but now it is so no more, but there is need also of the knowledge of Christ. Therefore He said, *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."*

So likewise with regard to the rule of practice. Then murder was the destruction of him that committed it, but now even to be angry. And then to commit adultery, and to lie with another man's wife, brought punishment, but now even to look with unchaste eyes. For as the knowledge, so also the rule of life is now made stricter. So that there was no need of a forerunner there.

And besides, if unbelievers are after death to be saved on their believing, no man shall ever perish. For all will then repent and adore. And in proof that this is true, hear Paul saying, *"Every tongue shall confess, and every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."* [Philippians 2:10-11] And, *"The last enemy that shall be*

destroyed is death." [1 Corinthians 15:26] But there is no advantage in that submission, for it comes not of a rightly disposed choice, but of the necessity of things, as one may say, thenceforth taking place.

Let us not then any more bring in such old wives' doctrines, and Jewish fables. Hear at least what Paul says touching these things. *"For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law;"* [Romans 2:12] where his discourse is of those who lived in the time before the law; and, *"As many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law,"* [Romans 2:12] speaking of all after Moses. And, *"That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men,"* [Romans 1:18] and, *"indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that works evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."* [Romans 2:8-9] And yet countless were the evils which the Gentiles have suffered in this world, and this is declared alike by the histories of the heathens, and by the Scriptures that are in our hands. For who could recount the tragic calamities of the Babylonians, or those of the Egyptians? But in proof that they who, not having known Christ before His coming in the flesh, yet refrained from idolatry and worshipped God only, and showed forth an excellent life, shall enjoy all the blessings; hear what is said: *"But glory, and honor, and peace to every one that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."* Do you see that for their good deeds there are many rewards, and chastisements again, and penalties for such as have done the contrary?

4. Where now, tell me, are the utter unbelievers in hell? Why, if those before Christ's coming, who had not so much as heard the name of hell, nor of a resurrection, and were punished here, shall suffer punishment there also; how much more we that have been nurtured in so many lessons of strict virtue?

And how is it reasonable, asks one, that they that have never heard of hell, should fall into hell? For they will say, *"If you had threatened hell, we should have feared more, and have been sobered."* To be sure; (is it not so?) at our rate of living now, who hear daily the sayings about hell, and give no heed at all.

And besides, there is this also to be said; that he who is not restrained by the judgments in sight, much less will he be restrained by those others. For the less reasonable sort, and those of a grosser disposition, are wont to be sobered rather by things which are at hand, and straightway to happen, than by such as will come to pass a long time after. *"But over us,"* one may say, *"a greater fear is suspended, and herein were they wronged."* By no means. For first, there are not the same measures set to us as to them, but much greater for us. Now they that have undertaken greater labors, ought to enjoy greater help. And it is no little help, that our fear has been increased. And if we have an advantage over them in knowing things to come, they have an advantage over us in that the severe punishments are presently laid upon them.

But there is something else, which the multitude say with respect to this also. For *"where,"* say they, *"is God's justice, when any one for sinning here, is punished both here and there?"* Would ye then I should put you in mind of your own sayings, that you may no longer give us trouble, but furnish the solution from within yourselves. I have heard many of our people, if haply they were told of a murderer cut off in a court of justice, how they had indignation, and talked in this way: *"This unholy and accursed wretch, having perpetrated thirty murders, or even many more, has himself undergone one death only; and where is the justice of it?"* So that you yourselves confess, that one death is not sufficient for punishment; how give ye then an opposite sentence now. Because not others but

yourselves are the objects of your judgment: so great a hindrance is self-love to our perceiving what is just. Because of this, when we are judging others, we search out all things with strictness, but when we are sitting in judgment on ourselves, we are blinded. Since if we were to search into these things in our own case too, as we do with regard to other men, we should give an uncorrupt sentence. For we also have sins, deserving not two or three, but ten thousand deaths. And to pass over all the rest, let us recollect ourselves, as many of us as partake unworthily of the mysteries; such men being guilty of the body and blood of Christ. Wherefore, when you are talking of the murderer, take account of yourself also. For he indeed has murdered a man, but you are under the guilt of slaying the Lord; and he, not having partaken of mysteries, but we, while enjoying the benefit of the sacred table.

And what are they that bite and devour their brethren, and pour out such abundance of venom? What is he that robs the poor of their food? For if he who imparts not of his own, is such as I have said, *much more he that takes the things of others*. How many robbers do the covetous surpass in wickedness! How many murderers and robbers of tombs, the rapacious! And how many after spoiling men are desirous even of their blood!

"Nay," says he, "*God forbid*." Now you say, God forbid. When you have an enemy, then say, God forbid, and call to mind what has been said, and show forth a life full of great strictness; lest the portion of Sodom await us also, lest we suffer the lot of Gomorrha, lest we undergo the ills of the Tyrians and Sidonians; or rather, lest we offend Christ, which were a thing more grievous *and more to be feared* than all.

For though to many hell seem to be a fearful thing, yet I for my part will not cease continually to say, that this is more grievous and fearful than any hell; and you I entreat to be of the same mind. For so shall we both be

delivered from hell, and enjoy the glory that is bestowed of Christ; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 37 on Matthew

Matthew 10:7-9.

"And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment; behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet."

For the matter indeed of John's disciples had been ordered well, and they had gone away assured by the miracles which had just been performed; but there was need after that of remedy as regarded the people. For although they could not suspect anything of the kind of their own master, the common people might from the inquiry of John's disciples form many strange suspicions, not knowing the mind with which he sent his disciples. And it was natural for them to reason with themselves, and say, *"He that bore such abundant witness, has he now changed his persuasion, and does he doubt whether this or another be He that should come? Can it be, that in dissension with Jesus he says this? That the prison has made him more timid? That his former words were spoken vainly, and at random?"* It being then natural for them to suspect many such things, see how He corrects their weakness, and removes these their suspicions. For *"as they departed, He began to say to the multitudes."* Why, *"as they departed?"* That He might not seem to be flattering the man.

And in correcting the people, He does not publish their suspicion, but adds only the solution of the thoughts that were mentally disturbing them: signifying that He knew the secrets of all men. For He says not, as unto the

Jews, *"Wherefore think ye evil?"* [Matthew 9:4] Because if they had it in their minds, not of wickedness did they so reason, but of ignorance on the points that had been spoken of. Wherefore neither does He discourse unto them in the way of rebuke, but merely sets right their understanding, and defends John, and signifies that he is not fallen away from his former opinion, neither is he changed, not being at all a man easily swayed and fickle, but steadfast and sure, and far from being such as to betray the things committed unto him.

And in establishing this, He employs not at first his own sentence, but their former testimony, pointing out how they bare record of his firmness, not by their words only, but also by their deeds.

Wherefore He says, *"What went ye out into the wilderness to see?"* as though He had said, Wherefore did ye leave your cities, and your houses, and come together all of you into the wilderness? To see a pitiful and flexible kind of person? Nay, this were out of all reason, this is not what is indicated by that earnestness, and the concourse of all men unto the wilderness. So much people and so many cities would not have poured themselves out with so great zeal towards the wilderness and the river Jordan at that time, had ye not expected to see some great and marvellous one, one firmer than any rock. Yea, it was not *"a reed"* surely, that *"ye went out to see shaken by the wind:"* for the flexible and such as are lightly brought round, and now say one thing, now another, and stand firm in nothing, are most like that.

And see how He omits all wickedness, and mentions this, which then especially haunted them; and removes the suspicion of lightness.

"But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." [Matthew 11:8]

Now His meaning is like this: He was not of himself a waverer; and this ye yourselves showed by your earnestness. Much less could any one say this, that he was indeed firm, but having made himself a slave to luxury, he afterwards became languid. For among men, some are such as they are of themselves, others become so; for instance, one man is passionate by nature, and another from having fallen into a long illness gets this infirmity. Again, some men are flexible and fickle by nature, while others become so by being slaves to luxury, and by living effeminately. *"But John,"* says He, *"neither was such a character by nature, for neither was it a reed that you went out to see; nor by giving himself to luxury did he lose the advantage he possessed."* For that he did not make himself a slave to luxury, his garb shows, and the wilderness, and the prison. Since, had he been minded to wear soft raiment, he would not have lived in the wilderness, nor in the prison, but in the king's courts: it being in his power, merely by keeping silence, to have enjoyed honor without limit. For since Herod so revered him, even when he had rebuked him, and was in chains, much more would he have courted him, had he held his peace. You see, he had indeed given proof of his firmness and fortitude; and how could he justly incur suspicions of that kind?

2. When therefore as well by the place, as by his garments, and by their concourse unto Him, He had delineated his character, He proceeds to bring in the prophet. For having said, *"Why went ye out? To see a prophet? Yea I say unto you, and more than a prophet;"* He goes on, *"For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before Your face, which shall prepare Your way before You."* [Matthew 11:10] Having before set down the testimony of the Jews, He then applies that of the prophets; or rather, He puts in the first place the sentence of the Jews, which must have been a very strong demonstration, the witness being borne by his enemies;

secondly, the man's life; thirdly, His own judgment; fourthly, the prophet; by all means stopping their mouths.

Then lest they should say, "*But what if at that time indeed he were such an one, but now is changed?*" He added also what follows; his garments, his prison, and together with these the prophecy.

Then having said, that he is greater than a prophet, He signifies also in what he is greater. And in what is he greater? In being near Him that had come. For, "*I send,*" says He, "*my messenger before Your face;*" that is, near You. For as with kings, they who ride near the chariot, these are more illustrious than the rest, just so John also appears in his course near the advent itself. See how He signified John's excellency by this also; and not even here does He stop, but adds afterwards His own suffrage as well, saying, "*Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.*" [Matthew 11:11]

Now what He said is like this: "*woman has not borne a greater than this man.*" And His very sentence is indeed sufficient; but if you are minded to learn from facts also, consider his table, his manner of life, the height of his soul. For he so lived as though he were in heaven: and having got above the necessities of nature, he travelled as it were a new way, spending all his time in hymns and prayers, and holding intercourse with none among men, but with God alone continually. For he did not so much as see any of his fellow-servants, neither was he seen by any one of them; he fed not on milk, he enjoyed not the comfort of bed, or roof, or market, or any other of the things of men; and yet he was at once mild and earnest. Hear, for example, how considerately he reasons with his own disciples, courageously with the people of the Jews, how openly with the king. For this cause He said also, "*There has not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist.*"

3. But lest the exceeding greatness of His praises should produce a sort of extravagant feeling, the Jews honoring John above Christ; mark how He corrects this also. For as the things which edified His own disciples did harm to the multitudes, they supposing Him an easy kind of person; so again the remedies employed for the multitudes might have proved more mischievous, they deriving from Christ's words a more reverential opinion of John than of Himself.

Wherefore this also, in an unsuspected way, He corrects by saying, *"He that is less, in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he."* Less in age, and according to the opinion of the multitude, since they even called Him *"a gluttonous man and a winebibber;"* [Matthew 11:19] and, *"Is not this the carpenter's son?"* [Matthew 13:55] and on every occasion they used to make light of Him.

"What then?" it may be said, *"is it by comparison that He is greater than John?"* Far from it. For neither when John says, *"He is mightier than I,"* [Matthew 3:11] does he say it as comparing them; nor Paul, when remembering Moses he writes, *"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses,"* [Hebrews 3:3] does he so write by way of comparison; and He Himself too, in saying, *"Behold, a greater than Solomon is here,"* [Matthew 12:42] speaks not as making a comparison.

Or if we should even grant that this was said by Him in the way of comparison, this was done in condescension, because of the weakness of the hearers. For the men really had their gaze very much fixed upon John; and then he was rendered the more illustrious both by his imprisonment, and by his plainness of speech to the king; and it was a great point for the present, that even so much should be received among the multitude. And so too, the Old Testament uses in the same way to correct the souls of the erring, by putting together in a way of comparison things that cannot be

compared; as when it says, *"Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord:"* and again, *"There is no god like our God."*

Now some affirm, that Christ said this of the apostles, others again, of angels. Thus, when any have turned aside from the truth, they are wont to wander many ways. For what sort of connection has it, to speak either of angels or of apostles? And besides, if He were speaking of the apostles, what hindered his bringing them forward by name? Whereas, when He is speaking of Himself, He naturally conceals His person, because of the still prevailing suspicion, and that He may not seem to say anything great of Himself; yea, and we often find Him doing so.

But what is, *"In the kingdom of heaven?"* Among spiritual beings, and all them that are in heaven.

And moreover His saying, *"There has not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John,"* suited one contrasting John with Himself, and thus tacitly excepting Himself. For though He too were born of a woman, yet not as John, for He was not a mere man, neither was He born in like manner as a man, but by a strange and wondrous kind of birth.

4. *"And from the days of John the Baptist,"* says He, *"until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."*

And what sort of connection may this have with what was said before? Much, assuredly, and in full accordance therewith. Yea, by this topic also He proceeds to urge and press them into the faith of Himself; and at the same time likewise, He is speaking in agreement with what had been before said by John. For if all things are fulfilled even down to John, I am *"He that should come."*

"For all the prophets," says He, *"and the law prophesied until John."*
[Matthew 11:13]

For the prophets would not have ceased, unless I had come. Expect therefore nothing further, neither wait for any one else. For that I am He is manifest both from the prophets ceasing, and from those that every day *"take by force"* the faith that is in me. For so manifest is it and certain, that many even take it by force. Why, who has so taken it? Tell me. All who approach it with earnestness of mind.

Then He states also another infallible sign, saying, *"If you will receive it, he is Elias, which was for to come."* For *"I will send you,"* it is said, *"Elias the Tishbite, who shall turn the heart of the father to the children."* This man then is Elias, if you attend exactly, says He. For *"I will send,"* says He, *"my messenger before Your face."*

And well has He said, *"If you will receive it,"* to show the absence of force. For I do not constrain, says He. And this He said, as requiring a candid mind, and showing that John is Elias, and Elias John. For both of them received one ministry, and both of them became forerunners. Wherefore neither did He simply say, *"This is Elias,"* but, *"If you are willing to receive it, this is he,"* that is, if with a candid mind ye give heed to what is going on. And He did not stop even at this, but to the words, *"This is Elias, which was for to come,"* He added, to show that understanding is needed, He that has ears to hear, let him hear. [Matthew 11:15]

Now He used so many dark sayings, to stir them up to inquiry. And if not even so were they awakened, much more, had all been plain and clear. For this surely no man could say, that they dared not ask Him, and that He was difficult of approach. For they that were asking him questions, and tempting Him about common matters, and whose mouths were stopped a thousand times, yet they did not withdraw from Him; how should they but have inquired of Him, and besought Him touching the indispensable things, had they indeed been desirous to learn? For if concerning the matters of the

law they asked, *"Which is the first commandment,"* and all such questions, although there was of course no need of His telling them that; how should they but ask the meaning of what He Himself said, for which also He was bound to give account in His answers? And especially when it was He Himself that was encouraging and drawing them on to do this. For by saying, *"The violent take it by force,"* He stirs them up to earnestness of mind; and by saying, *"He that has ears to hear, let him hear,"* He does just the same thing.

5. *"But whereunto shall I liken this generation?"* says He, *"It is like children sitting in the market place, and saying, We have piped unto you, and you have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and you have not lamented."* This again seems to be unconnected with what came before, but it is the most natural consequence thereof. Yea, He still keeps to the same point, the showing that John is acting in harmony with Himself, although the results were opposite; as indeed with respect to his inquiry also. And He implies that there was nothing that ought to have been done for their salvation, and was omitted; which thing the prophet says of the vineyard; *"What ought I to have done to this vineyard, and have not done it? For whereunto,"* says He, *"shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the market, and saying, We have piped unto you, and you have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and you have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He has a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."*

Now what He says is like this: We have come each of us an opposite way, I and John; and we have done just as if it were some hunters with a wild beast that was hard to catch, and which might by two ways fall into the toils; as if each of the two were to cut it off his several way, and drive it,

taking his stand opposite to the other; so that it must needs fall into one of the two snares. Mark, for instance, the whole race of man, how it is astonished at the wonder of men's fasting, and at this hard and self-denying life. For this reason it had been so ordered, that John should be thus brought up from his earliest youth, so that hereby (among other things) his sayings might obtain credit.

But wherefore, it may be asked, did not He Himself choose that way? In the first place He did also Himself proceed by it, when He fasted the forty days, and went about teaching, and not having where to lay His head. Nevertheless He did also in another mode accomplish this same object, and provide for the advantage thence accruing. For to be testified of by him that came this way was the same thing, or even a much greater thing than to have come this way Himself.

And besides, John indeed exhibited no more than his life and conversation; for "*John*," it is said, "*did no sign*," [John 10:41] but He Himself had the testimony also from signs and from miracles. Leaving therefore John to be illustrious by his fasting, He Himself came the opposite way, both coming unto publicans' tables, and eating and drinking.

Let us ask the Jews then, "*Is fasting a good thing, and to be admired? You should then have obeyed John, and received him, and believed his sayings. For so would those sayings have led you towards Jesus. Is fasting, on the other hand, a thing grievous, and burdensome? Then should you have obeyed Jesus, and have believed in Him that came the opposite way. Thus, either way, you would have found yourselves in the kingdom.*" But, like an intractable wild beast, they were speaking evil of both. The fault is not then theirs who were not believed, but they are to be blamed who did not believe. For no man would ever choose to speak evil of opposite things, any more than he would on the other hand commend them. I mean thus: he

that approves the cheerful and free character, will not approve him that is sad and grave; he that commends the man of a sad countenance will not commend the cheerful man. For it is a thing impossible to give your vote both ways at once. Therefore also He says, "*We have piped unto you, and you have not danced;*" that is, "*I have exhibited the freer kind of life, and you obeyed not:*" and, "*We have mourned, and you have not lamented;*" that is, "*John followed the rugged and grave life, and you took no heed.*" And He says not, "*he this, I that,*" but the purpose of both being one, although their modes of life were opposite, for this cause He speaks of their doings as common. Yea, for even their coming by opposite ways arose out of a most exact accordance, such as continued looking to one and the same end. What sort of excuse then can you have after all this?

Wherefore He subjoined, "*And wisdom is justified of her children;*" that is, though ye be not persuaded, yet with me after this ye cannot find fault. As the prophet says touching the Father, "*That You might be justified in Your sayings.*" For God, though He should effect nothing more by His care over us, fulfills all His part, so as to leave to them that will be shameless not so much as a shadow of excuse for uncandid doubt.

And if the similitudes be mean, and of an ill sound, marvel not, for He was discoursing with a view to the weakness of His hearers. Since Ezekiel too mentions many similitudes like them, and unworthy of God's majesty. But this too especially becomes His tender care.

And mark them, how in another respect also they are carried about into contradictory opinions. For whereas they had said of John, "*he has a devil,*" [Matthew 11:18] they stopped not at this, but said the very same again concerning Him, taking as He did the opposite course; thus were they forever carried about into conflicting opinions.

But Luke herewith sets down also another and a heavier charge against them, saying, *"For the publicans justified God, having received the baptism of John."*

6. Then He proceeds to upbraid the cities now that wisdom has been justified; now that He has shown all to be fully performed. That is, having failed to persuade them, He now does but lament over them; which is more than terrifying. For He had exhibited both His teaching by His words, and His wonder-working power by His signs. But forasmuch as they abode in their own unbelief, He now does but upbraid.

For *"then,"* it is said, *"began Jesus to upbraid the cities, wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not; saying, Woe unto you, Chorazin! Woe unto you, Bethsaida!"* [Matthew 11:20-21]

Then, to show you that they are not such by nature, He states also the name of the city out of which proceeded five apostles. For both Philip, and those two pairs of the chief apostles, were from thence. [John 1:44]

"For if," says He, *"the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell, for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."*

And He adds not Sodom with the others for nought, but to aggravate the charge against them. Yea, for it is a very great proof of wickedness, when not only of them that now are, but even of all those that ever were wicked, none are found so bad as they.

Thus elsewhere also He makes a comparison, condemning them by the Ninevites, and by the Queen of the south; there, however, it was by them that did right, here, even by them that sinned; a thing far more grievous. With this law of condemnation, Ezekiel too was acquainted: wherefore also he said to Jerusalem, *"You have justified your sisters in all your sins."* Thus everywhere is He wont to linger in the Old Testament, as in a favored place. And not even at this does He stay His speech, but makes their fears yet more intense, by saying, that they should suffer things more grievous than Sodomites and Tyrians, so as by every means to gather them in, both by bewailing, and by alarming them.

7. To these same things let us also listen: since not for the unbelievers only, but for us also, has He appointed a punishment more grievous than that of the Sodomites, if we will not receive the strangers that come in unto us; I mean, when He commanded to shake off the very dust: and very fitly. For as to the Sodomites, although they committed a great transgression, yet it was before the law and grace; but we, after so much care shown towards us, of what indulgence should we be worthy, showing so much inhospitality, and shutting our doors against them that are in need, and before our doors our ears? Or rather not against the poor only, but against the apostles themselves? For therefore we do it to the poor, because we do it to the very apostles. For whereas Paul is read, and you attend not; whereas John preaches, and you hear not: when will you receive a poor man, who will not receive an apostle?

In order then that both our houses may be continually open to the one, and our ears to the others, let us purge away the filth from the ears of our soul. For as filth and mud close up the ears of our flesh, so do the harlot's songs, and worldly news, and debts, and the business of usury and loans, close up the ear of the mind, worse than any filth; nay rather, they do not

close it up only, but also make it unclean. And they are putting dung in your ears, who tell you of these things. And that which the barbarian threatened, saying, "*You shall eat your own dung,*" and what follows; [Isaiah 36:12] this do these men also make you undergo, not in word, but in deeds; or rather, somewhat even much worse. For truly those songs are more loathsome even than all this; and what is yet worse, so far from feeling annoyance when you hear them, you rather laugh, when you ought to abominate them and fly.

But if they be not abominable, go down unto the stage, imitate that which you praise, or rather, do thou merely take a walk with him that is exciting that laugh. Nay, you could not bear it. Why then bestow on him so great honor? Yea, while the laws that are enacted by the Gentiles would have them to be dishonored, you receive them with your whole city, like ambassadors and generals, and dost convoke all men, to receive dung in their ears. And your servant, if he say anything filthy in your hearing, will receive stripes in abundance; and be it a son, a wife, whoever it may, that does as I have said, you call the act an affront; but if worthless fellows, that deserve the scourge, should invite you to hear the filthy words, not only are you not indignant, thou dost even rejoice and applaud. And what could be equal to this folly?

But dost you yourself never utter these base words? Why what is the profit? Or rather, this very fact, whence is it manifest? For if you did not utter these things, neither would you at all laugh at hearing them, nor would you run with such zeal to the voice that makes you ashamed.

For tell me, are you pleased at hearing men blaspheme? Do you not rather shudder, and stop your ears? Surely I think you do. Why so? Because you blaspheme not yourself. Just so do thou act with respect to filthy talking also; and if you would show us clearly, that you have no pleasure in filthy speaking, endure not so much as to hear them. For when will you be

able to become good, bred up as you are with such sounds in your ears? When will you venture to undergo such labors as chastity requires, now that you are falling gradually away through this laughter, these songs, and filthy words? Yea, it is a great thing for a soul that keeps itself pure from all this, to be able to become grave and chaste; how much more for one that is nourished up in such hearings? Do you not know, that we are of the two more inclined to evil? While then we make it even an art, and a business, when shall we escape that furnace?

8. Heardest thou not what Paul says, "*Rejoice in the Lord?*" [Philippians 4:4] He said not, "*in the devil.*" When then will you be able to hear Paul? When, to gain a sense of your wrong actions? drunken as you are, ever and incessantly, with the spectacle I was speaking of. For your having come here is nothing wonderful nor great; or rather it is wonderful. For here you come any how, and so as just to satisfy a scruple, but there with diligence and speed, and great readiness. And it is evident from what you bring home, on returning thence.

For even all the mire that is there poured out for you, by the speeches, by the songs, by the laughter, you collect and take every man to his home, or rather not to his home only, but every man even into his own mind.

And from things not worthy of abhorrence you turn away; while others which are to be abhorred, so far from hating, thou dost even court. Many, for instance, on coming back from tombs, are used to wash themselves, but on returning from theatres they have never groaned, nor poured forth any fountains of tears; yet surely the dead man is no unclean thing, whereas sin induces such a blot, that not even with ten thousand fountains could one purge it away, but with tears only, and with confessions. But no one has any sense of this blot. Thus because we fear not what we ought, therefore we shrink from what we ought not.

And what again is the applause? What the tumult, and the satanical cries, and the devilish gestures? For first one, being a young man, wears his hair long behind, and changing his nature into that of a woman, is striving both in aspect, and in gesture, and in garments, and generally in all ways, to pass into the likeness of a tender damsel. Then another who is grown old, in the opposite way to this, having his hair shaven, and with his loins girt about, his shame cut off before his hair, stands ready to be smitten with the rod, prepared both to say and do anything. The women again, their heads uncovered, stand without a blush, discoursing with a whole people, so complete is their practice in shamelessness; and thus pour forth all effrontery and impurity into the souls of their hearers. And their one study is, to pluck up all chastity from the foundations, to disgrace our nature, to satiate the desire of the wicked demon. Yea, and there are both foul sayings, and gestures yet fouler; and the dressing of the hair tends that way, and the gait, and apparel, and voice, and flexure of the limbs; and there are turnings of the eyes, and flutes, and pipes, and dramas, and plots; and all things, in short, full of the most extreme impurity. When then will you be sober again, I pray you, now that the devil is pouring out for you so much of the strong wine of whoredom, mingling so many cups of unchastity? For indeed both adulteries and stolen marriages are there, and there are women playing the harlot, men prostituting, youths corrupting themselves: all there is iniquity to the full, all sorcery, all shame. Wherefore they that sit by should not laugh at these things, but weep and groan bitterly.

"What then? Are we to shut up the stage?" it will be said, *"and are all things to be turned upside down at your word?"* Nay, but as it is, all things are turned upside down. For whence are they, tell me, that plot against our marriages? Is it not from this theatre? Whence are they that dig through into chambers? Is it not from that stage? Comes it not of this, when husbands are

insupportable to their wives? Of this, when the wives are contemptible to their husbands? Of this, that the more part are adulterers? So that the subverter of all things is he that goes to the theatre; it is he that brings in a grievous tyranny. *"Nay,"* you will say, *"this is appointed by the good order of the laws."* Why, to tear away men's wives, and to insult young boys, and to overthrow houses, is proper to those who have seized on citadels. *"And what adulterer,"* will you say, *"has been made such by these spectacles?"* Nay, who has not been made an adulterer? And if one might but mention them now by name, I could point out how many husbands those harlots have severed from their wives, how many they have taken captive, drawing some even from the marriage bed itself, not suffering others so much as to live at all in marriage.

"What then? I pray you, are we to overthrow all the laws?" Nay, but it is overthrowing lawlessness, if we do away with these spectacles. For hence are they that make havoc in our cities; hence, for example, are seditions and tumults. For they that are maintained by the dancers, and who sell their own voice to the belly, whose work it is to shout, and to practise everything that is monstrous, these especially are the men that stir up the populace, that make the tumults in our cities. For youth, when it has joined hands with idleness, and is brought up in so great evils, becomes fiercer than any wild beast. The necromancers too, I pray you, whence are they? Is it not from hence, that in order to excite the people who are idling without object, and make the dancing men have the benefit of much and loud applause, and fortify the harlot women against the chaste, they proceed so far in sorcery, as not even to shrink from disturbing the bones of the dead? Comes it not hence, when men are forced to spend without limit on that wicked choir of the devil? And lasciviousness, whence is that, and its innumerable

mischiefs? You see, it is thou who art subverting our life, by drawing men to these things, while I am recruiting it by putting them down.

"Let us then pull down the stage," say they. Would that it were possible to pull it down; or rather, if you be willing, as far as regards us, it is pulled down, and dug up. Nevertheless, I enjoin no such thing. Standing as these places are, I bid you make them of no effect; which thing were a greater praise than pulling them down.

9. Imitate at least the barbarians, if no one else; for they verily are altogether clean from seeking such sights. What excuse then can we have after all this, we, the citizens of Heaven, and partners in the choirs of the cherubim, and in fellowship with the angels, making ourselves in this respect worse even than the barbarians, and this, when innumerable other pleasures, better than these, are within our reach?

Why, if you desire that your soul may find delight, go to pleasure grounds, to a river flowing by, and to lakes, take notice of gardens, listen to grasshoppers as they sing, be continually by the coffins of martyrs, where is health of body and benefit of soul, and no hurt, no remorse after the pleasure, as there is here.

You have a wife, you have children; what is equal to this pleasure? You have a house, you have friends, these are the true delights: besides their purity, great is the advantage they bestow. For what, I pray you, is sweeter than children? What sweeter than a wife, to him that will be chaste in mind?

To this purpose, we are told, that the barbarians uttered on some occasion a saying full of wise severity. I mean, that having heard of these wicked spectacles, and the unseasonable delight of them; *"why the Romans,"* say they, *"have devised these pleasures, as though they had not wives and children;"* implying that nothing is sweeter than children and wife, if you are willing to live honestly.

"What then," one may say, "if I point to some, who are nothing hurt by their pastime in that place?" In the first place, even this is a hurt, to spend one's time without object or fruit, and to become an offense to others. For even if you should not be hurt, you make some other more eager herein. And how can you but be yourself hurt, giving occasion to what goes on? Yea, both the fortune-teller, and the prostitute boy, and the harlot woman, and all those choirs of the devil, cast upon your head the blame of their proceedings. For as surely as, if there were no spectators, there would be none to follow these employments; so, since there are, they too have their share of the fire due to such deeds. So that even if in chastity thou were quite unhurt (a thing impossible), yet for others' ruin you will render a grievous account; both the spectators', and that of those who assemble them.

And in chastity too you would profit more, did you refrain from going there. For if even now you are chaste, you would have become chaster by avoiding such sights. Let us not then delight in useless argument, nor devise unprofitable apologies: there being but one apology, to flee from the Babylonian furnace, to keep far from the Egyptian harlot, though one must escape her hands naked. [Genesis 39:12]

For so shall we both enjoy much delight, our conscience not accusing us, and we shall live this present life with chastity, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 38 on Matthew

Matthew 11:25-26.

" At that time Jesus answered and said, I make acknowledgment unto You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth; because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight."

Do you see, how many ways He leads them on to the faith? First, [Matthew 11:7-11] by His praises of John. For by pointing to him as a great and marvellous one, He proved likewise all his sayings credible, whereby he used to draw them on to the knowledge of Him. Secondly, [Matthew 11:12] by saying, *"The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force;"* for this is the language of one who is pressing and urging them. Thirdly, [Matthew 6:13] by signifying that the number of the prophets was finished; for this too manifested Himself to be the person that was announced beforehand by them. Fourthly, [Matthew 6:14-19] by pointing out that whatsoever things should be done by him, were all accomplished; at which time also He made mention of the parable of the children. Fifthly, by His upbraiding them that had not believed, and by His alarming and threatening them greatly. [Matthew 11:20-24] Sixthly, by His giving thanks for them that believed. For the expression, *"I make acknowledgment to You,"* here is, *"I thank You."* *"I thank You,"* He says, *"because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent."*

What then? Does He rejoice in destruction, and in the others not having received this knowledge? By no means; but this is a most excellent way of His to save men, His not forcing them that utterly reject, and are not willing to receive His sayings; that, since they were not bettered by His call,

but fell back, and despised it, His casting them out might cause them to fall into a longing for these things. And so likewise the attentive would grow more earnest.

And while His being revealed to these was fit matter of joy, His concealment from those was no more of joy but of tears. Thus at any rate He acts, where He weeps for the city. Not therefore because of this does He rejoice, but because what wise men knew not, was known to these. As when Paul says, *"I thank God, that you were servants of sin, but you obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered unto you."* You see, neither does Paul therefore rejoice, because they were *"servants of sin,"* but because being such, they had been so highly favored.

Now by the *"wise,"* here, He means the Scribes, and the Pharisees. And these things He says, to make the disciples more earnest, and to show what had been vouchsafed to the fishermen, when all those others had missed of it. And in calling them *"wise,"* He means not the true and commendable wisdom, but this which they seemed to have through natural shrewdness. Wherefore neither did He say, *"you have revealed it to fools,"* but *"to babes;"* to unsophisticated, that is, to simple-minded men; and He implies that so far from their missing these privileges contrary to their desert, it was just what might be expected. And He instructs us throughout, to be free from pride, and to follow after simplicity. For this cause Paul also expressed it with more exceeding earnestness, writing on this wise: *"If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."* [1 Corinthians 3:18] For thus is God's grace manifested.

But wherefore does He give thanks to the Father, although of course it was Himself who wrought this? As He prays and intercedes with God, showing His great love towards us, in the same way does He this too: for this also is of much love. And He signifies, that not from Him only had they

fallen away, but also from the Father. Thus, what He said, speaking to His disciples, *"Cast not the holy things unto dogs,"* [Matthew 7:6] this He Himself anticipated them in performing.

Moreover He signifies hereby both His own principal will, and that of the Father; His own, I say, by His giving thanks and rejoicing at what had taken place; His Father's, by intimating that neither had He done this upon entreaty, but of Himself upon His own will; *"For so,"* says He, *"it seemed good in Your sight:"* that is, *"so it pleased You."*

And wherefore was it hidden from them? Hear Paul, saying, that *"Seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."* [Romans 10:3]

Consider now how it was likely the disciples should be affected, hearing this; that what wise men knew not, these knew, and knew it continuing babes, and knew it by God's revelation. But Luke says, that *"at the very hour,"* when the seventy came telling Him about the devils, then He *"rejoiced"* and spoke these things, [Luke 10:21] which, besides increasing their diligence, would also dispose them to be modest. That is, since it was natural for them to pride themselves on their driving away devils, on this among other grounds He refrains them; that it was a revelation, whatever had been done, no diligence on their part. Wherefore also the scribes, and the wise men, thinking to be intelligent for themselves, fell away through their own vanity. Well then, if for this cause it was hidden from them, *"do you also,"* says He, *"fear, and continue babes."* For this caused you to have the benefit of the revelation, as indeed on the other hand the contrary made them be deprived of it. For by no means, when He says, *"You have hid,"* does He mean that it is all God's doing: but as when Paul says, *"He gave them over to a reprobate mind,"* [Romans 1:28] and, *"He has blinded their*

minds," it is not meant to bring Him in as the doer of it, but those who gave the occasion: so here also He uses the expression, *"You have hid."*

For since He had said, *"I thank You, because You have hid them, and hast revealed them unto babes;"* to hinder your supposing that as being Himself deprived of this power, and unable to effect it, so He offers thanks, He says,

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father." [Matthew 11:27] And to them that are rejoicing, because the devils obey them, *"Nay, why marvel,"* says He, [Luke 10:22] that devils yield to you? All things are mine; *"All things are delivered unto me."*

But when you hear, *"they are delivered,"* do not surmise anything human. For He uses this expression, to prevent your imagining two unoriginate Gods. Since, that He was at the same time both begotten, and Lord of all, He declares in many ways, and in other places also.

2. Then He says what is even greater than this, lifting up your mind; *"And no man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knows any man the Father, but the Son."* Which seems indeed to the ignorant unconnected with what went before, but has full accordance therewith. As thus: having said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father,"* He adds, *"And what marvel,"* so He speaks, *"if I be Lord of all? I who have also another greater privilege, the knowing the Father, and being of the same substance."* Yea, for this too He covertly signifies by His being the only one who so knew Him. For this is His meaning, when He says, *"No man knows the Father but the Son."*

And see at what time He says this. When they by His works had received the certain proof of His might, not only seeing Him work miracles, but endowed also in His name with so great powers. Then, since He had said, *"You have revealed them unto babes,"* He signifies this also to pertain

to Himself; for *"neither knows any man the Father,"* says He, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son is willing to reveal Him; [Matthew 11:27] not *"to whomsoever He may be enjoined,"* *"to whomsoever He may be commanded."* But if He reveals Him, then Himself too. This however He let pass as acknowledged, but the other He has set down. And everywhere He affirms this; as when He says, *"No man comes unto the Father, but by me."* [John 14:6]

And thereby he establishes another point also, His being in harmony and of one mind with Him. *"Why,"* says He, *"I am so far from fighting and warring with Him, that no one can even come to Him but by me."* For because this most offended them, His seeming to be a rival God, He by all means does away with this; and interested Himself about this not less earnestly, but even more so, than about His miracles.

But when He says, *"Neither knows any man the Father, save the Son,"* He means not this, that all men were ignorant of Him, but that with the knowledge wherewith He knows Him, no man is acquainted with Him; which may be said of the Son too. For it was not of some God unknown, and revealed to no man, that He was so speaking, as Marcion says; but it is the perfection of knowledge that He is here intimating, since neither do we know the Son as He should be known; and this very thing, to add no more, Paul was declaring, when he said, *"We know in part, and we prophesy in part."* [1 Corinthians 13:9]

3. Next, having brought them by His words to an earnest desire, and having signified His unspeakable power, He after that invites them, saying, *"Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* [Matthew 11:28] Not this or that person, but all that are in anxiety, in sorrows, in sins. Come, not that I may call you to account, but that I may do away your sins; come, not that I want your honor, but that I want your

salvation. *"For I,"* says He, *"will give you rest."* He said not, *"I will save you,"* only; but what was much more, *"I will place you in all security."*

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." [Matthew 11:29-30] Thus, *"be not afraid,"* says He, hearing of a yoke, for it is easy: fear not, because I said, *"a burden,"* for it is light.

And how said He before, *"The gate is narrow and the way strait?"* [Matthew 7:13] Whilst you are careless, while you are supine; whereas, if you duly perform His words, the burden will be light; wherefore also He has now called it so.

But how are they duly performed? If you have become lowly, and meek, and gentle. For this virtue is the mother of all strictness of life. Wherefore also, when beginning those divine laws, with this He began. [Matthew 5:3] And here again He does the very same, and exceeding great is the reward He appoints. *"For not to another only do you become serviceable; but yourself also above all you refresh,"* says He. *"For you shall find rest unto your souls."*

Even before the things to come, He gives you here your recompense, and bestows the prize already, making the saying acceptable, both hereby, and by setting Himself forward as an example. For, *"Of what are you afraid?"* says He, *"lest you should be a loser by your low estate? Look to me, and to all that is mine; learn of me, and then shall you know distinctly how great your blessing."* Do you see how in all ways He is leading them to humility? By His own doings: *"Learn of me, for I am meek."* By what themselves are to gain; for, *"You shall find,"* says He, rest unto your souls. By what He bestows on them; for, *"I too will refresh you,"* says He. By rendering it light; *"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* So

likewise does Paul, saying, *"For the present light affliction, which is but for a moment, works a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."*

[2 Corinthians 4:17]

And how, some one may say, is the burden light, when He says, *"Except one hate father and mother;"* and, *"Whosoever takes not up his cross, and follows after me, is not worthy of me:"* and, *"Whosoever forsakes not all that he has, cannot be my disciple:"* when He commands even to give up our very life? [Matthew 16:25] Let Paul teach you, saying, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? [Romans 8:35]"* And that, *"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."* [Romans 8:18] Let those teach you, who return from the council of the Jews after plenty of stripes, and *"rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ."* [Acts 5:41] And if you are still afraid and tremblest at hearing of the yoke and the burden, the fear comes not of the nature of the thing, but of your remissness; since if you are prepared, and in earnest, all will be easy to you and light. Since for this cause Christ also, to signify that we too must needs labor ourselves, did not mention the gracious things only, and then hold His peace, nor the painful things only, but set down both. Thus He both spoke of *"a yoke,"* and called it *"easy;"* both named a burden, and added that it was *"light;"* that you should neither flee from them as toilsome, nor despise them as over easy.

But if even after all this, virtue seem to you an irksome thing, consider that vice is more irksome. And this very thing He was intimating, in that He said not first, *"Take my yoke upon you,"* but before that, *"Come, you that labor and are heavy laden;"* implying that sin too has labor, and a burden that is heavy and hard to bear. For He said not only, *"You that labor,"* but

also, *"that are heavy laden."* This the prophet too was speaking of, when in that description of her nature, *"As an heavy burden they weighed heavy upon me."* And Zacharias too, describing her, says she is *"A talent of lead."* [Zechariah 5:7-8]

And this moreover experience itself proves. For nothing so weighs upon the soul, and presses it down, as consciousness of sin; nothing so much gives it wings, and raises it on high, as the attainment of righteousness and virtue.

And mark it: what is more grievous, I pray you, than to have no possessions? To turn the cheek, and when smitten not to smite again? To die by a violent death? Yet nevertheless, if we practise self-command, all these things are light and easy, and pleasurable.

But be not disturbed; rather let us take up each of these, and inquire about it accurately; and if you will, that first which many count most painful. Which then of the two, tell me, is grievous and burdensome, to be in care for one belly, or to be anxious about ten thousand? To be clothed with one outer garment, and seek for nothing more; or having many in one's house, to bemoan one's self every day and night in fear, in trembling, about the preservation of them, grieved, and ready to choke about the loss of them; lest one should be moth-eaten, lest a servant purloin and go off with them?

4. But whatever I may say, my speech will present no such proof as the actual trial. Wherefore I would there were present here with us some one of those who have attained unto that summit of self-restraint, and then you would know assuredly the delight thereof; and that none of those that are enamored of voluntary poverty would accept wealth, though ten thousand were to offer it.

But would these, say you, ever consent to become poor, and to cast away the anxieties which they have? And what of that? This is but a proof of their madness and grievous disease, not of anything very pleasurable in the thing. And this even themselves would testify to us, who are daily lamenting over these their anxieties, and accounting their life to be not worth living. But not so those others; rather they laugh, leap for joy, and the wearers of the diadem do not so glory, as they do in their poverty.

Again, to turn the cheek is, to him that gives heed, a less grievous thing than to smite another; for from this the contest has beginning, in that termination: and whereas by the former you have kindled the other's pile too, by the latter you have quenched even your own flames. But that not to be burnt is a pleasanter thing than to be burnt, is surely plain to every man. And if this hold in regard of bodies, much more in a soul.

And whether is lighter, to contend, or to be crowned? To fight, or to have the prize? And to endure waves, or to run into harbor? Therefore also, to die is better than to live. For the one withdraws us from waves and dangers, while the other adds unto them, and makes a man subject to numberless plots and distresses, which have made life not worth living in your account.

And if you disbelieve our sayings, hearken to them that have seen the countenances of the martyrs in the time of their conflicts, how when scourged and flayed, they were exceeding joyful and glad, and when exposed upon hot irons, rejoiced, and were glad of heart, more than such as lie upon a bed of roses. Wherefore Paul also said, when he was at the point of departing hence, and closing his life by a violent death, *"I joy, and rejoice with you all; for the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me."* Do you see with what exceeding strength of language he invites the whole world to partake in his gladness? So great a good did he know his departure

hence to be, so desirable, and lovely, and worthy of prayer, that formidable thing, death.

5. But that virtue's yoke is sweet and light, is manifest many other ways also; but to conclude, if you please, let us look also at the burdens of sin. Let us then bring forward the covetous, the retailers and second-hand dealers in shameless bargains. What now could be a heavier burden than such transactions? How many sorrows, how many anxieties, how many disappointments, how many dangers, how many plots and wars, daily spring up from these gains? How many troubles and disturbances? For as one can never see the sea without waves, so neither such a soul without anxiety, and despondency, and fear, and disturbance; yea, the second overtakes the first, and again others come up, and when these are not yet ceased, others come to a head.

Or would you see the souls of the revilers, and of the passionate? Why, what is worse than this torture? What, than the wounds they have within? What, than the furnace that is continually burning, and the flame that is never quenched?

Or of the sensual, and of such as cleave unto this present life? Why, what more grievous than this bondage? They live the life of Cain, dwelling in continual trembling and fear at every death that happens; the kinsmen of the dead mourn not so much, as these do for their own end.

What again fuller of turmoil, and more frantic, than such as are puffed up with pride? *"For learn,"* says He, *"of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."* Because long-suffering is the mother of all good things.

Fear thou not therefore, neither start away from the yoke that lightens you of all these things, but put yourself under it with all forwardness, and then you shall know well the pleasure thereof. For it does not at all bruise

your neck, but is put on you for good order's sake only, and to persuade you to walk seemly, and to lead you unto the royal road, and to deliver you from the precipices on either side, and to make you walk with ease in the narrow way.

Since then so great are its benefits, so great its security, so great its gladness, let us with all our soul, with all our diligence, draw this yoke; that we may both here *"find rest unto our souls,"* and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 39 on Matthew

Matt. XII. 1.

"At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the grain; and His disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of grain, and to eat."

But Luke says, *"On a double Sabbath."* Now what is a double Sabbath? When the cessation from toil is twofold, both that of the regular Sabbath, and that of another feast coming upon it. For they call every cessation from toil, a sabbath.

But why could He have led them away from it, who foreknew all, unless it had been His will that the Sabbath should be broken? It was His will indeed, but not simply so; wherefore He never breaks it without a cause, but giving reasonable excuses: that He might at once bring the law to an end, and not startle them. But there are occasions on which He even repeals it directly, and not with circumstance: as when He anoints with the clay the eyes of the blind man; [John 9:6, 14] as when He says, *"My Father works hitherto, and I work."* And He does so, by this to glorify His own Father, by the other to soothe the infirmity of the Jews. At which last He is laboring here, putting forward as a plea the necessity of nature; although in the case of acknowledged sins, that could not of course ever be an excuse. For neither may the murderer make his anger a plea, nor the adulterer allege his lust, no, nor any other excuse; but here, by mentioning their hunger, He freed them from all blame.

But do thou, I pray you, admire the disciples, how entirely they control themselves, and make no account of the things of the body, but esteem the table of the flesh a secondary thing, and though they have to struggle with

continual hunger, do not even so withdraw themselves. For except hunger had sorely constrained them, they would not have done so much as this.

What then do the Pharisees? *"When they saw it,"* it is said, *"they said unto Him, Behold, Your disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day."* [Matthew 12:2]

Now here indeed with no great vehemence (yet surely that would have been consistent in them)—nevertheless they are not vehemently provoked, but simply find fault. But when He stretched out the withered hand and healed it, then they were so infuriated, as even to consult together about slaying and destroying Him. For where nothing great and noble is done, they are calm; but where they see any made whole, they are savage, and fret themselves, and none so intolerable as they are: such enemies are they of the salvation of men.

How then does Jesus defend His disciples? *"Have ye not read,"* says He, *"what David did in the temple, when he was an hungered, himself and all they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the show-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?"* [Matthew 12:3-4]

Thus, whereas in pleading for His disciples, He brings forward David; for Himself, it is the Father. [John 5:17]

And observe His reproving manner: *"Have ye not read what David did?"* For great indeed was that prophet's glory, so that Peter also afterwards pleading with the Jews, spoke on this wise, *"Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried."* [Acts 2:29]

But wherefore does He not call him by the name of his rank, either on this occasion or afterwards? Perhaps because He derived His race from him.

Now had they been a candid sort of persons, He would have turned His discourse to the disciples' suffering from hunger; but abominable as they

were and inhuman, He rather rehearses unto them a history.

But Mark says, "*In the days of Abiathar the High Priest:*" not stating what was contrary to the history, but implying that he had two names; and adds that "*he gave unto him,*" indicating that herein also David had much to say for himself, since even the very priest suffered him; and not only suffered, but even ministered unto him. For tell me not that David was a prophet, for not even so was it lawful, but the privilege was the priests': wherefore also He added, "*but for the priests only.*" For though he were ten thousand times a prophet, yet was he not a priest; and though he were himself a prophet, yet not so they that were with him; since to them too we know that he gave.

"*What then,*" it might be said, "*were they all one with David?*" Why talk to me of dignity, where there seems to be a transgression of the law, even though it be the constraint of nature? Yea, and in this way too He has the more entirely acquitted them of the charges, in that he who is greater is found to have done the same.

"*And what is this to the question,*" one may say; "*for it was not surely the Sabbath, that he transgressed?*" Thou tellest me of that which is greater, and which especially shows the wisdom of Christ, that letting go the Sabbath, He brings another example greater than the Sabbath. For it is by no means the same, to break in upon a day, and to touch that holy table, which it was not lawful for any man to touch. Since the Sabbath indeed has been violated, and that often; nay rather it is continually being violated, both by circumcision, and by many other works; and at Jericho [Joshua 6:15] too one may see the same to have happened; but this happened then only. So that He more than obtains the victory. How then did no man blame David, although there was yet another ground of charge

heavier than this, that of the priests' murder, which had its origin from this? But He states it not, as applying himself to the present subject only.

2. Afterwards again He refutes it in another way also. For as at first He brought in David, by the dignity of the person quelling their pride; so when He had stopped their mouths, and had put down their boasting, then He adds also the more appropriate refutation. And of what sort is this? *"Do you not know, that in the temple the priests profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"* [Matthew 12:5] For in that other instance indeed, says He, the emergency made the relaxation, but here is the relaxation even without emergency. He did not however at once thus refute them but first by way of permission, afterwards as insisting upon his argument. Because it was meet to draw the stronger inference last, although the former argument also had of course its proper weight.

For tell me not, that it is not freeing one's self from blame, to bring forward another who is committing the same sin. For when the doer incurs no blame, the act on which he has ventured becomes a rule for others to plead.

Nevertheless He was not satisfied with this, but subjoins also what is more decisive, saying that the deed is no sin at all; and this more than anything was the sign of a glorious victory, to point to the law repealing itself, and in two ways doing so, first by the place, then by the Sabbath; or rather even in three ways, in that both the work is twofold that is done, and with it goes also another thing, its being done by the priests; and what is yet more, that it is not even brought as a charge. *"For they,"* says He, *"are blameless."*

Do you see how many points He has stated? The place; for He says, *"In the temple;"* the persons, for they are *"the priests;"* the time, for He says, *"the Sabbath;"* the act itself, for *"they profane;"* (He not having said,

"they break," but what is more grievous, *"they profane;"*) that they not only escape punishment, but are even free from blame, *"for they,"* says He, *"are blameless."*

Do not ye therefore account this, He says, like the former instance. For that indeed was done both but once, and not by a priest, and was of necessity; wherefore also they were deserving of excuse; but this last is both done every Sabbath, and by priests, and in the temple, and according to the law. And therefore again not by favor, but in a legal way, they are acquitted of the charges. For not at all as blaming them did I so speak, says He, nor yet as freeing them from blame in the way of indulgence, but according to the principle of justice.

And He seems indeed to be defending them, but it is His disciples whom He is clearing of the alleged faults. For when He says, *"those are blameless,"* He means, *"much more are these."*

"But they are not priests." Nay, they are greater than priests. For the Lord of the temple Himself is here: the truth, not the type. Wherefore He said also,

"But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple."

Nevertheless, great as the sayings were which they heard, they made no reply, for the salvation of men was not their object.

Then, because to the hearers it would seem harsh, He quickly draws a veil over it, giving His discourse, as before, a lenient turn, yet even so expressing Himself with a rebuke. *"But if you had known what this means, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless."* [Matthew 12:7]

Do you see how again He inclines His speech to lenity, yet again shows them to be out of the reach of lenity? *"For you would not have condemned,"* says He, *"the guiltless."* Before indeed He inferred the same

from what is said of the priests, in the words, "*they are guiltless*;" but here He states it on His own authority; or rather, this too is out of the law, for He was quoting a prophetic saying. [Hosea 6:6]

3. After this He mentions another reason likewise; "*For the Son of man*," says He, "*is Lord of the Sabbath day*;" [Matthew 12:8] speaking it of Himself. But Mark relates Him to have said this of our common nature also; for He said, "*The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*." [Mark 2:27]

Wherefore then was he punished that was gathering the sticks? [Numbers 15:32-36] Because if the laws were to be despised even at the beginning, of course they would scarcely be observed afterwards.

For indeed the Sabbath did at the first confer many and great benefits; for instance, it made them gentle towards those of their household, and humane; it taught them God's providence and the creation, as Ezekiel says; [Ezekiel 20:12] it trained them by degrees to abstain from wickedness, and disposed them to regard the things of the Spirit.

For because they could not have borne it, if when He was giving the law for the Sabbath, He had said, "*Do your good works on the Sabbath, but do not the works which are evil*," therefore He restrained them from all alike for, "*You must do nothing at all*," says He: and not even so were they kept in order. But He Himself, in the very act of giving the law of the Sabbath, did even therein darkly signify that He will have them refrain from the evil works only, by the saying, "*You must do no work, except what shall be done for your life*." And in the temple too all went on, and with more diligence and double toil. [Numbers 28:9-10] Thus even by the very shadow He was secretly opening unto them the truth.

Did Christ then, it will be said, repeal a thing so highly profitable? Far from it; nay, He greatly enhanced it. For it was time for them to be trained

in all things by the higher rules, and it was unnecessary that his hands should be bound, who was freed from wickedness, winged for all good works; or that men should hereby learn that God made all things; or that they should so be made gentle, who are called to imitate God's own love to mankind (for He says, *"Be merciful, as your Heavenly Father"*); [Luke 6:36] or that they should make one day a festival, who are commanded to keep a feast all their life long; (*"For let us keep the feast,"* it is said, *"not with old leaven, neither with leaven of malice and wickedness; but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"*); [1 Corinthians 5:8] as neither need they stand by an ark and a golden altar, who have the very Lord of all for their inmate, and in all things hold communion with Him; by prayer, and by oblation, and by scriptures, and by almsgiving, and by having Him within them. Lo now, why is any Sabbath required, by him who is always keeping the feast, whose conversation is in Heaven?

4. Let us keep the feast then continually, and do no evil thing; for this is a feast: and let our spiritual things be made intense, while our earthly things give place: and let us rest a spiritual rest, refraining our hands from covetousness; withdrawing our body from our superfluous and unprofitable toils, from such as the people of the Hebrews did of old endure in Egypt. For there is no difference between us who are gathering gold, and those that were bound in the mire, working at those bricks, and gathering stubble, and being beaten. Yea, for now too the devil bids us make bricks, as Pharaoh did then. For what else is gold, than mire? And what else is silver, than stubble? Like stubble, at least, it kindles the flame of desire; like mire, so does gold defile him that possesses it.

Wherefore He sent us, not Moses from the wilderness, but His Son from Heaven. If then, after He has come, thou abide in Egypt, you will

suffer with the Egyptians: but if leaving that land thou go up with the spiritual Israel, you shall see all the miracles.

Yet not even this suffices for salvation. For we must not only be delivered out of Egypt, but we must also enter into the promise. Since the Jews too, as Paul says, both went through the Red Sea, and ate manna, and drank spiritual drink, but nevertheless they all perished.

Lest then the same befall us also, let us not be slow, neither draw back; but when you hear wicked spies even now bringing up an evil report against the strait and narrow way, and uttering the same kind of talk as those spies of old, let not the multitude, but Joshua, be our pattern, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh; and do not thou give up, until thou have attained the promise, and entered into the Heavens.

Neither account the journey to be difficult. *"For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved."* [Romans 5:10] *"But this way,"* it will be said, *"is strait and narrow."* Well, but the former, through which you have come, is not strait and narrow only, but even impassable, and full of savage wild beasts. And as there was no passing through the Red Sea, unless that miracle had been wrought, so neither could we, abiding in our former life, have gone up into Heaven, but only by baptism intervening. Now if the impossible has become possible, much more will the difficult be easy.

"But that," it will be said, *"was of grace only."* Why, for this reason especially you have just cause to take courage. For if, where it was grace alone, He wrought with you; will He not much more be your aid, where ye also show forth laborious works? If He saved you, doing nothing, will He not much more help you, working?

Above indeed I was saying, that from the impossibilities you ought to take courage about the difficulties also; but now I add this, that if we are

vigilant, these will not be so much as difficult. For mark it: death is trodden under foot, the devil has fallen, the law of sin is extinguished, the grace of the Spirit is given, life is contracted into a small space, the heavy burdens are abridged.

And to convince you hereof by the actual results, see how many have overshot the injunctions of Christ; and are you afraid of that which is just their measure? What plea then will you have, when others are leaping beyond the bounds, and you yourself too slothful for what is enacted?

Thus, you we admonish to give alms of such things as you have, but another has even stripped himself of all his possessions: you we require to live chastely with your wife, but another has not so much as entered into marriage: and you we entreat not to be envious, but another we find giving up even his own life for charity: you again we entreat to be lenient in judgments, and not severe to them that sin, but another, even when smitten, has turned the other cheek also.

What then shall we say, I pray you? What excuse shall we make, not doing even these things, when others go so far beyond us? And they would not have gone beyond us, had not the thing been very easy. For which pines away, he who envies other men's blessings, or he who takes pleasure with them, and rejoices? Which eyes all things with suspicion and continual trembling, the chaste man, or the adulterer? Which is cheered by good hopes, he that spoils by violence, or he that shows mercy, and imparts of his own to the needy?

Let us then bear in mind these things, and not be torpid in our career for virtue's sake; but having stripped ourselves with all readiness for these glorious wrestlings, let us labor for a little while, that we may win the perpetual and imperishable crowns; unto which may we all attain, by the

grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 40 on Matthew

Matthew 12:9-10.

"And when He was departed thence, He went into their synagogue: and, behold, a man which had his hand withered."

Again He heals on a Sabbath day, vindicating what had been done by His disciples. And the other evangelists indeed say, that He *"set"* the man *"in the midst,"* and asked them, *"If it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath days."*

See the tender bowels of the Lord. *"He set him in the midst,"* that by the sight He might subdue them; that overcome by the spectacle they might cast away their wickedness, and out of a kind of shame towards the man, cease from their savage ways. But they, ungentle and inhuman, choose rather to hurt the fame of Christ, than to see this person made whole: in both ways betraying their wickedness; by their warring against Christ, and by their doing so with such contentiousness, as even to treat with despite His mercies to other men.

And while the other evangelists say, He asked the question, this one says, it was asked of Him. *"And they asked Him,"* so it stands, *"saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? That they might accuse Him."*

[Matthew 12:10] And it is likely that both took place. For being unholy wretches, and well assured that He would doubtless proceed to the healing, they hastened to take Him beforehand with their question, thinking in this way to hinder Him. And this is why they asked, *"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?"* not for information, but that *"they might accuse Him."* Yet surely the work was enough, if it were really their wish to accuse Him; but

they desired to find a handle in His words too, preparing for themselves beforehand an abundance of arguments.

But He in His love towards man does this also: He answers them, teaching His own meekness, and turning it all back upon them; and points out their inhumanity. And He *"sets"* the man *"in the midst;"* not in fear of them, but endeavoring to profit them, and move them to pity.

But when not even so did He prevail with them, then was He grieved, it is said, and angry with them for the hardness of their heart, and He says,

"What man is there among you that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the Sabbath days, will he not lay hold of it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." [Matthew 12:3]

Thus, lest they have ground of obstinacy, and of accusing him again of transgression, He convicts them by this example. And do thou mark, I pray you, how variously and suitably in each case, He introduces His pleas for the breaking of the sabbath. Thus, first, in the case of the blind man, [John 9:6] He does not so much as defend Himself to them, when He made the clay: and yet then also were they blaming Him; but the manner of the creation was enough to indicate the Lord and Owner of the law. Next, in the case of the paralytic, when he carried his bed, and they were finding fault, [John 5:9-10] He defends Himself, now as God, and now as man; as man, when He says, *"If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law should not be broken;"* (and He said not *"that a man should be profited"*); *"are you angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?"* [John 7:23] As God again, when He says, *"My Father works hitherto, and I work."* [John 5:17]

But when blamed for His disciples, He said, *"Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, himself and they that were with him,*

how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the show-bread?"

[Matthew 12:3-4] He brings forward the priests also.

And here again; *"Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? Which of you shall have one sheep?"* For He knew their love of wealth, that they were all taken up with it, rather than with love of mankind. And indeed the other evangelist says, that He also looked about upon them when asking these questions, that by His very eye He might win them over; but not even so did they become better.

And yet here He speaks only; whereas elsewhere in many cases He heals by laying on of hands also. But nevertheless none of these things made them meek; rather, while the man was healed, they by his health became worse.

For His desire indeed was to cure them before him, and He tried innumerable ways of healing, both by what He did in their presence, and by what He said: but since their malady after all was incurable, He proceeded to the work. *"Then says He to the man, Stretch forth your hand. And he stretched it forth, and it was restored whole, like as the other."*

[Matthew 12:13]

2. What then did they? They go forth, it is said, and take counsel together to slay Him. For *"the Pharisees,"* says the Scripture, *"went out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him."* They had received no injury, yet they went about to slay Him. So great an evil is envy. For not against strangers only, but even against our own, is it ever warring. And Mark says, they took this counsel with the Herodians. [Mark 3:6]

What then does the gentle and meek One? He withdrew, on being aware of it. *"But when Jesus knew their devices, He withdrew Himself,"* it is said, *"from them."* [Matthew 12:15] Where now are they who say, miracles ought to be done? Nay, by these things He signified, that the uncandid soul

is not even thereby persuaded; and He made it plain that His disciples too were blamed by them without cause. This however we should observe, that they grow fierce especially at the benefits done to their neighbors; and when they see any one delivered either from disease or from wickedness, then is the time for them to find fault, and become wild beasts. Thus did they calumniate Him, both when He was about to save the harlot, and when He was eating with publicans, and now again, when they saw the hand restored.

But do thou observe, I pray you, how He neither desists from His tender care over the infirm, and yet allays their envy. *"And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all; and He charged them that were healed, that they should make Him known to no man."* Because, while the multitudes everywhere both admire and follow Him, they desist not from their wickedness.

Then, lest you should be confounded at what is going on, and at their strange frenzy, He introduces the prophet also, foretelling all this. For so great was the accuracy of the prophets, that they omit not even these things, but foretell His very journeyings, and changes of place, and the intent with which He acted therein; that you might learn, how they spoke all by the Spirit. For if the secrets of men cannot by any art be known, much more were it impossible to learn Christ's purpose, except the Spirit revealed it. [1 Corinthians 2:11]

What then says the prophet? Nay, it is subjoined: *"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not*

quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust."

The prophet celebrates His meekness, and His unspeakable power, and opens to the Gentiles *"a great door and effectual;"* he foretells also the ills that are to overtake the Jews, and signifies His unanimity with the Father. For *"behold,"* says He, *"my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased."* Now if He chose Him, not as an adversary does Christ set aside the law, nor as being an enemy of the lawgiver, but as having the same mind with Him, and the same objects.

Then proclaiming His meekness, he says, *"He shall not strive nor cry."* For His desire indeed was to heal in their presence; but since they thrust Him away, not even against this did He contend.

And intimating both His might, and their weakness, he says, *"A bruised reed shall He not break."* For indeed it was easy to break them all to pieces like a reed, and not a reed merely, but one already bruised.

"And smoking flax shall He not quench." Here he sets forth both their anger that is kindled, and His might that is able to put down their anger, and to quench it with all ease; whereby His great mildness is signified.

What then? Shall these things always be? And will He endure them perpetually, forming such frantic plots against Him? Far from it; but when He has performed His part, then shall He execute the other purposes also. For this He declared by saying *"Till He send forth judgment unto victory: and in His name shall the Gentiles trust."* As Paul likewise says, *"Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."*

But what is, *"when He sends forth judgment unto victory?"* When He has fulfilled all His own part, then, we are told, He will bring down upon them His vengeance also, and that a perfect vengeance. Then shall they suffer His terrors, when His trophy is gloriously set up, and the ordinances

that proceed from Him have prevailed, and He has left them no plea of contradiction, however shameless. For He is wont to call righteousness, *"judgment."*

But not to this will His dispensation be confined, to the punishment of unbelievers only, but He will also win to Himself the whole world. Wherefore He added, *"And in His name shall the Gentiles trust."*

Then, to inform you that this too is according to the purpose of the Father, in the beginning the prophet had assured us of this likewise, together with what had gone before; saying, *"My well-beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased."* For of the well-beloved it is quite evident that He did these things also according to the mind of the beloved.

3. *"Then they brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spoke and saw."*

O wickedness of the evil spirit! He had barred up both entrances, whereby that person should have believed, as well sight as hearing; nevertheless, both did Christ open.

"And all the people were amazed, saying, Is not this the Son of David? But the Pharisees said, This fellow does not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils."

And yet what great thing had been said? Nevertheless, not even this did they endure: to such a degree, as I have already remarked, are they ever stung by the good works done to their neighbors, and nothing grieves them so much as the salvation of men. And yet He had actually retired, and had given room for their passion to subside; but the evil was again rekindled, because a benefit was again conferred; and the evil spirit was not so indignant as they. For he indeed departed from the body, and gave place and fled away, uttering no sound; but these were endeavoring now to slay, now

to defame Him. That is, their first aim not succeeding, they would fain hurt His good name.

Such a thing is envy, than which no worse evil can exist. For the adulterer indeed enjoys some pleasure, such as it is, and in a short time accomplishes his proper sin; but the envious man punishes himself, and takes vengeance upon himself more than on the person whom he envies, and never ceases from his sin, but is continually engaged in the commission thereof. For as a sow in mire, and evil spirits in our hurt, so also does he delight in his neighbor's ills; and if anything painful take place, then is he refreshed, and takes breath; accounting the calamities of others his own joys, and the blessings of others his own ills; and he considers not what pleasure may accrue to himself, but what pain to his neighbor. These men therefore were it not meet to stone and beat to death, like mad dogs, like destroying demons, like the very furies?

For as beetles feed on dung, so do these men on the calamities of others, being a sort of common foes and enemies of our nature. And whereas the rest of mankind pity even a brute when it is killed, do you, on seeing a man receive benefits, become like a wild beast, tremble, and turn pale? Why, what can be worse than this madness? Therefore, you see, whoremongers and publicans were able to enter into the kingdom, but the envious, being within it, went out: For "*the children of the kingdom,*" it is said, "*shall be cast out.*" And the former, once freed from their present wickedness, attained to things which they never looked for, while these latter lost even the good things which they had; and very reasonably. For this turns a man into a devil, this renders one a savage demon. Thus did the first murder arise; thus was nature forgotten; thus the earth defiled; thus afterwards did it open its mouth, to receive yet living, and utterly destroy, Dathan, and Korah, and Abiram, and all that multitude.

4. But to declaim against envy, one may say, is easy; but we ought to consider also how men are to be freed from the disease. How then are we to be rid of this wickedness? If we bear in mind, that as he who has committed fornication cannot lawfully enter the church, so neither he that envies; nay, and much less the latter than the former. For as things are, it is accounted even an indifferent thing; wherefore also it is little thought of; but if its real badness be made evident, we should easily refrain from it.

Weep then, and groan; lament, and entreat God. Learn to feel and to repent for it, as for a grievous sin. And if you be of this mind, you will quickly be rid of the disease.

And who knows not, one may say, that envy is an evil thing? No one indeed is ignorant of it: yet they have not the same estimation of this passion as of adultery and fornication. When, at least, did any one condemn himself bitterly for having envied? When did he entreat God concerning this pest, that He would be merciful to him? No man at any time: but if he shall fast and give a little money to a poor man, though he be envious to the thousandth degree, he counts himself to have done nothing horrid, held as he is in subjection by the most accursed passion of all. Whence, for example, did Cain become such as he was? Whence Esau? Whence the children of Laban? Whence the sons of Jacob? Whence Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their company? Whence Miriam? Whence Aaron? Whence the devil himself?

Herewith consider this also; that you injure not him whom you envy, but into yourself you are thrusting the sword. For wherein did Cain injure Abel? Did he not even against his own will send him the more quickly into the kingdom? But himself he pierced through with innumerable evils. Wherein did Esau harm Jacob? Did not Jacob grow wealthy, and enjoy unnumbered blessings; while he himself both became an outcast from his

father's house, and wandered in a strange land, after that plot of his? And wherein did Jacob's sons again make Joseph the worse, and this, though they proceeded even unto blood? Had not they to endure famine, and encounter peril to the utmost, whereas he became king of all Egypt? For the more you envy, the more do you become a procurer of greater blessing to the object of your envy. For there is a God who beholds these things; and when He sees him injured, that does no injury, him He exalts the more, and so makes him glorious, but you He punishes.

For if them that exult over their enemies, He suffer not to go unpunished (*"For rejoice not,"* it is said, *"when your enemies fall, lest at any time the Lord see it, and it displease Him"*); much more such as envy those who have done no wrong.

Let us then extirpate the many-headed wild beast. For in truth many are the kinds of envy. Thus, if he that loves one that is a friend to him has no more than the publican, where shall he stand who hates him that does him no wrong? And how shall he escape hell, becoming worse than the heathens? Wherefore also I do exceedingly grieve, that we who are commanded to copy the angels, or rather the Lord of the angels, emulate the devil. For indeed there is much envy, even in the church; and more among us, than among those under authority. Wherefore we must even discourse unto ourselves.

5. Tell me then, why do you envy your neighbor? Because you see him reaping honor, and words of good report? Then do you not bear in mind how much evil honors bring on the unguarded? Lifting them up to pride, to vainglory, to arrogance, to contemptuousness; making them more careless? And besides these evils, they wither also lightly away. For the most grievous thing is this, that the evils arising therefrom abide immortal, but

the pleasure at the moment of its appearing, is flown away. For these things then do you envy? Tell me.

"But he has great influence with the Ruler, and leads and drives all things which way he will, and inflicts pain on them that offend him, and benefits his flatterers, and has much power." These are the sayings of secular persons, and of men that are riveted to the earth. For the spiritual man nothing shall be able to hurt.

For what serious harm shall he do to him? Vote him out of his office? And what of that? For if it be justly done, he is even profited; for nothing so provokes God, as for one to hold the priest's office unworthily. But if unjustly, the blame again falls on the other, not on him; for he who has suffered anything unjustly, and borne it nobly, obtains in this way the greater confidence towards God.

Let us not then aim at this, how we may be in places of power, and honor, and authority, but that we may live in virtue and self denial. For indeed places of authority persuade men to do many things which are not approved of God; and great vigor of soul is needed, in order to use authority aright. For as he that is deprived thereof, practises self restraint, whether with or against his will, so he that enjoys it is in some such condition, as if any one living with a graceful and beautiful damsel were to receive rules never to look upon her unchastely. For authority is that kind of thing. Wherefore many, even against their will, has it induced to show insolence; it awakens wrath, and removes the bridle from the tongue, and tears off the door of the lips; fanning the soul as with a wind, and sinking the bark in the lowest depth of evils. Him then who is in so great danger do you admire, and do you say he is to be envied? Nay, how great madness is here! Consider, at any rate (besides what we have mentioned), how many enemies and accusers, and how many flatterers this person has besieging him. Are

these then, I pray you, reasons for calling a man happy? Nay, who can say so?

"But the people," you say, *"hold high account of him."* And what is this? For the people surely is not God, to whom he is to render account: so that in naming the people, you are speaking of nothing else than of other breakers, and rocks, and shoals, and sunken ridges. For to be in favor with the people, the more it makes a man illustrious, the greater the dangers, the cares, the despondencies it brings with it. For such an one has no power at all to take breath or stand still, having so severe a master. And why say I, *"stand still and take breath"*? Though such an one have never so many good works, hardly does he enter into the kingdom. For nothing is so wont to overthrow men, as the honor which comes of the multitude, making them cowardly, ignoble, flatterers, hypocrites.

Why, for instance, did the Pharisees say that Christ was possessed? Was it not because they were greedy of the honor of the multitude?

And whence did the multitude pass the right judgment on Him? Was it not because this disease had no hold on them? For nothing, nothing so much tends to make men lawless and foolish, as gaping after the honor of the multitude. Nothing makes them glorious and immoveable, like despising the same.

Wherefore also great vigor of soul is needed for him who is to hold out against such an impulse, and so violent a blast. For as when things are prosperous, he prefers himself to all, so when he undergoes the contrary, he would fain bury himself alive: and this is to him both hell, and the kingdom, when he has come to be overwhelmed by this passion.

Is all this then, I pray you, matter of envyings, and not rather of lamentations and tears? Every one surely can see. But you do the same, in envying one in that kind of credit, as if a person, seeing another bound and

scourged and torn by innumerable wild beasts, were to envy him his wounds and stripes. For in fact, as many men as the multitude comprises, so many bonds also, so many tyrants has he: and, what is yet more grievous, each of these has a different mind: and they all judge whatever comes into their heads concerning him that is a slave to them, without examining into anything; but whatever is the decision of this or that person, this they also confirm.

What manner of waves then, what tempest so grievous as this? Yea, such a one is both puffed up in a moment by the pleasure, and is under water again easily, being ever in fluctuation, in tranquillity never. Thus, before the time of the assembly, and of the contests in speaking, he is possessed with anxiety and fear; but after the assembly he is either dead with despondency, or rejoices on the contrary without measure; a worse thing than sorrow. For that pleasure is not a less evil than sorrow is plain from the effect it has on the soul; how light it makes it, and unsteady, and fluttering.

And this one may see even from those of former times. When, for instance, was David to be admired; when he rejoiced, or when he was in anguish? When, the people of the Jews? Groaning and calling upon God, or exulting in the wilderness, and worshipping the calf? Wherefore Solomon too, who best of all men knew what pleasure is, says, *"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of laughter."* [Ecclesiastes 7:2] Wherefore Christ also blesses the one, saying, *"Blessed are they that mourn,"* [Matthew 5:4] but the other sort He bewails, saying, *"Woe unto you that laugh, for you shall weep."* [Luke 6:25] And very fitly. For in delight the soul is more relaxed and effeminate, but in mourning it is braced up, and grows sober, and is delivered from the whole swarm of passions, and becomes higher and stronger.

Knowing then all these things, let us shun the glory that comes from the multitude, and the pleasure that springs therefrom, that we may win the real and everlasting glory; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 41 on Matthew

Matthew 12:25-26.

"And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"

Even before now they had accused Him of this, that *"by Beelzebub He casts out the devils."* But whereas then He did not rebuke them, allowing them both to know His power by His more numerous miracles, and by His teaching to learn His majesty: now, since they continued saying the same, He proceeds also to rebuke them, showing His Godhead by this first, that He made their secrets public; and secondly, by the very act of casting out the devils with ease.

And indeed the accusation too was very shameless. Because, as I have said, envy seeks not what to say, but only that it may say somewhat. Yet for all that, not even so did Christ despise them, but defends Himself with the forbearance proper to Him, teaching us to be meek to our enemies; and though they say such things, as we are neither conscious of, nor have they any the least probability, not to be disturbed, nor troubled, but with all long suffering to render them an account. This then He did most especially on that very occasion, affording the strongest proof, that the things were false that were said by them. For neither was it a demoniac's part to exhibit so much meekness; it was not a demoniac's part to know men's secrets.

For, in truth, both because of the exceeding impudence of such a suspicion, and because of the fear of the multitude, they dared not publicly make these charges, but were turning them in their mind. But He, to show

them that He knew all that likewise, does not set down the accusation, nor does He expose their wickedness; but the refutation He adds, leaving it to the conscience of them that had said it to convict them. For on one thing only was He bent, to do good to them that were sinning, not to expose them.

Yet surely, if He had been minded to extend his speech in length, and to make them ridiculous, and withal to have exacted of them also the most extreme penalty, there was nothing to hinder Him. Nevertheless He put aside all these things, and looked to one object only, not to render them more contentious, but more candid, and so to dispose them better toward amendment.

How then does He plead with them? Not by allegation out of the Scriptures (for they would not so much as attend, but were sure rather to distort their meaning), but by the events of ordinary life. For *"every kingdom,"* says He, *"divided against itself shall not stand; and a city and a house, if it be divided, is soon dissolved."*

For the wars from without are not so ruinous as the civil ones. Yea, and this is the case in bodies too; it is the case even in all things; but for this time He takes His illustration from those that are more publicly known.

And yet, what is there more powerful on earth than a kingdom? Nothing, but nevertheless it perishes if in dissension. And if in that case one throw the blame on the great burden of the affairs thereof, as breaking down by its own weight; what would you say of a city? And what of a house? Thus, whether it be a small thing, or a great, if at dissension with itself, it perishes. If then I, having a devil, do by him cast out the devils, there is dissension and fighting among devils, and they take their stand one against another. But if they stand one against another, their strength is wasted and destroyed. *"For if Satan cast out Satan"* (and He said not *"the devils,"* implying their great unanimity one with another), *"he is then divided*

against himself;" so He speaks. But if he be divided, he has become weaker, and is ruined; and if he be ruined, how can he cast out another?

Do you see how great the absurdity of the accusation, how great the folly, the inconsistency? Since it is not for the same persons to say first, that He stands, and casts out devils, and then to say, that He stands by that, which it was likely would be the cause of His undoing.

2. This then being the first refutation, the next after it is that which relates to the disciples. For not always in one way only, but also in a second and third, He solves their objections, being minded most abundantly to silence their shamelessness. Which sort of thing He did also with respect to the Sabbath, bringing forward David, the priests, the testimony that says, *"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,"* the cause of the Sabbath, for which it was ordained; *"for the Sabbath,"* says He, was for man. This then He does in the present case also: where after the first He proceeds to a second refutation, plainer than the former.

"For if I," says He, *"by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?"* [Matthew 12:27]

See here too His gentleness. For He said not, *"my disciples,"* nor, *"the apostles,"* but *"your sons;"* to the end that if indeed they were minded to return to the same nobleness with them, they might derive hence a powerful spring that way; but if they were uncandid, and continued in the same course, they might not thenceforth be able to allege any plea, though ever so shameless.

But what He says is like this, *"By whom do the apostles cast them out?"* For in fact they were doing so already, because they had received authority from Him, and these men brought no charge against them; their quarrel not being with the acts, but with the person only. As then it was His will to show that their sayings arose only from their envy against Him, He

brings forward the apostles; thus: If I so cast them out, much more those, who have received their authority from me. Nevertheless, no such thing have ye said to them. How then bring ye these charges against me, the author of their doings, while acquitting them of the accusations? This, however, will not free you from your punishment, rather it will condemn you the more. Therefore also He added, *"They shall be your judges."* For when persons from among you, and having been practised in these things, both believe me and obey, it is most clear that they will also condemn those who are against me both in deed and word.

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come unto you."

What means *"the Kingdom"*? *"My coming."* See how again He conciliates and soothes them, and draws them to the knowledge of Himself, and signifies that they are warring with their own good, and contentious against their own salvation. *"For whereas ye ought to rejoice,"* says He, *"and leap for joy, that One has come bestowing those great and unutterable blessings, hymned of old by the prophets, and that the time of your prosperity is at hand; ye do the contrary; so far from receiving the blessings, you do even speak ill of them, and frame accusations that have no real being."*

Now Matthew indeed says, *"If I by the Spirit of God cast out"*; but Luke, *"If I by the finger of God cast out the devils:"* [Luke 11:20] implying that to cast out devils is a work of the greatest power, and not of any ordinary grace. And He means indeed that from these things they should infer and say, If this be so, then the Son of God has come. This, however, He says not, but in a reserved way, and so as not to be galling to them, He darkly intimates it by saying, *"Then the kingdom of God has come unto you."*

Do you see exceeding wisdom? By the very things which they were blaming, He showed His presence shining forth.

Then, to conciliate them, He said not simply, *"The Kingdom has come,"* but, *"unto you,"* as though He had said, To you the good things have come; wherefore then feel displeased at your proper blessings? Why war against your own salvation? This is that time, which the prophets long ago foretold: this, the sign of that advent which was celebrated by them, even these things being wrought by divine power. For the fact indeed, that they are wrought, yourselves know; but that they are wrought by divine power, the deeds themselves cry out. Yea, and it is impossible that Satan should be stronger now; rather he must of absolute necessity be weak. But it cannot be, that he who is weak should, as though he were strong, cast out the strong devil.

Now thus speaking He signified the power of charity, and the weakness of separation and contentiousness. Wherefore He was Himself also continually charging His disciples, on every occasion, concerning charity, and teaching them that the devil, to subvert it, leaves nothing undone.

3. Having then uttered His second refutation, He adds also a third, thus saying:

"How can one enter into the strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then spoil his goods?"

For that Satan cannot possibly cast out Satan is evident from what has been said; but that neither in any other way is it possible to cast him out, except one first get the better of him, this too is acknowledged by all.

What then is established hereby? The former statement, with more abundant evidence. *"Why, I am so far,"* says He, *"from using the devil as an ally, that I make war upon him, and bind him; and an infallible proof*

thereof is the plundering of his goods." See how the contrary is proved, of what they were attempting to establish. For whereas they wished to show, that not by His own power does He cast out devils, He shows that not only the devils, but even their very chief leader is held by Him bound with all authority; and that over him, before them, did He prevail by His own power. And this is evident from the things that are done. For if he be the prince, and they subjects, how, except he were worsted, and made to bow down, could they have been spoiled?

And here His saying seems to me to be a prophecy likewise. For not only, I suppose, are the evil spirits the goods of the devil, but also the men that are doing his works. Therefore to declare that He does not only cast out devils, but also will drive away all error from the world, and will put down his sorceries, and make all his arts useless, He said these things.

And He said not, He will take away, but "*He will spoil,*" to express what is done with authority. But He calls him "*strong,*" not because he is so by nature, God forbid, but declaring his former tyranny, which arose from our remissness.

4. "*He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not with me scatters abroad.*" [Matthew 12:30]

Behold also a fourth refutation. For what is my desire? Says He. To bring men to God, to teach virtue, to proclaim the kingdom. What, that of the devil, and the evil spirits? The contrary to these. How then should he that gathers not with me, nor is at all with me, be likely to co-operate with me? And why do I say co-operate? Nay, on the contrary, his desire is rather to scatter abroad my goods. He then who is so far from cooperating that he even scatters abroad, how should he have exhibited such unanimity with me, as with me to cast out the devils?

Now it is a natural surmise that He said this not of the devil only, but Himself also of Himself, as being for His part against the devil, and scattering abroad his goods. And how, one may say, is he that is not with me against me? By this very fact, of his not gathering. But if this be true, much more he that is against him. For if he that does not co-operate is an enemy, much more he that wages war.

But all these things He says, to indicate His enmity against the devil, how great and unspeakable it is. For tell me, if you must go to war with any one, he that is not willing to fight on your side, by this very fact is he not against you? And if elsewhere He says, *"He that is not against you is for you,"* it is not contrary to this. For here He signified one actually against them, but there He points to one who in part is on their side: *"For they cast out devils,"* it is said *"in Your name."*

But to me He seems here to be hinting also at the Jews, setting them on the devil's side. For they too were against Him, and were scattering what He gathered. As to the fact that He was hinting at them also, He declared it by speaking thus,

"Therefore I say unto you, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men."

5. Thus having defended Himself, and refuted their objection, and proved the vanity of their shameless dealings, He proceeds to alarm them. For this too is no small part of advice and correction, not only to plead and persuade, but to threaten also; which He does in many passages, when making laws and giving counsel.

And though the saying seem to have much obscurity, yet if we attend, its solution will prove easy.

First then it were well to listen to the very words: *"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy of the Holy*

Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

What now is it that He affirms? Many things have ye spoken against me; that I am a deceiver, an adversary of God. These things I forgive you on your repentance, and exact no penalty of you; but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven, no, not to those who repent. And how can this be right? For even this was forgiven upon repentance. Many at least of those who said these words believed afterward, and all was forgiven them. What is it then that He says? That this sin is above all things unpardonable. Why so? Because Himself indeed they knew not, who He might be, but of the Spirit they received ample experience. For the prophets also by the Spirit said whatever they said; and indeed all in the Old Testament had a very high notion of Him.

What He says, then, is this: Be it so: you are offended at me, because of the flesh with which I am encompassed: can you say of the Spirit also, We know it not? And therefore is your blasphemy unpardonable, and both here and hereafter shall you suffer punishment. For many indeed have been punished here only (as he who had committed fornication, as they who partook unworthily of the mysteries, among the Corinthians); but you, both here and hereafter.

Now as to your blasphemies against me, before the cross, I forgive them: and the daring crime too of the cross itself; neither shall you be condemned for your unbelief alone. (For neither had they, that believed before the cross, perfect faith. And on many occasions He even charges them to make Him known to no man before the Passion; and on the cross He said that this sin was forgiven them.) But as to your words touching the

Spirit, they will have no excuse. For in proof that He is speaking of what was said of Him before the crucifixion, He added, "*Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Ghost,*" there is no more forgiveness.

Wherefore? Because this is known to you; and the truths are notorious which you harden yourselves against. For though ye say that you know not me; yet of this surely you are not ignorant, that to cast out devils, and to do cures, is a work of the Holy Ghost. It is not then I only whom you are insulting, but the Holy Ghost also. Wherefore your punishment can be averted by no prayers, neither here nor there.

For so of men, some are punished both here, and there, some here only, some there only, others neither here nor there. Here and there, as these very men (for both here did they pay a penalty, when they suffered those incurable ills at the taking of their city, and there shall they undergo a very grievous one), as the inhabitants of Sodom; as many others. There only, as the rich man who endured the flames, and had not at his command so much as a drop of water. Here, as he that had committed fornication among the Corinthians. Neither here nor there, as the apostles, as the prophets, as the blessed Job; for their sufferings were not surely in the way of punishment, but as contests and wrestlings.

Let us labor, therefore, to be of the same part with these: or if not with these, at least with them that wash away their sins here. For fearful indeed is that other judgment, and inexorable the vengeance, and incurable the punishment.

6. But if you desire not to be punished even here, pass judgment on yourself, exact your own penalty. Listen to Paul, when he says, "*If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*" If you do this, proceeding in order you shall even arrive at a crown.

But how are we to exact our own penalty? One may ask. Lament, groan bitterly, humble, afflict yourself, call to remembrance your sins in their particulars. This thing is no small torture to a man's soul. If any man has been in a state of contrition, he knows that the soul is punished by this more than anything. If any has been living in remembrance of sins, he knows the anguish thence arising. Therefore does God appoint righteousness as a reward for such repentance, saying, *"Be first to tell your sins, that you may be justified."* For it is not, it is not indeed, a small step towards amendment, to lay together all our sins, and to be continually revolving and reckoning them up with their particulars. For he that is doing this will be so heart-broken, as not to think himself worthy so much as to live; and he that thinks thus, will be tenderer than any wax. For tell me not of acts of fornication only, nor of adulteries, nor of these things that are manifest, and acknowledged among all men: but lay together also your secret crafts, and your false accusations, and your evil speakings, and your vain gloryings, and your envy, and all such things. For neither will these bring a trifling punishment. For the reviler too shall fall into hell; and the drunkard has no part in the kingdom; and he that loveth not his neighbor so offends God, as to find no help even in his own martyrdom; and he that neglects his own has denied the faith, and he who overlooks the poor is sent into the fire.

Account not then these things to be little, but put all together, and write them as in a book. For if you write them down, God blots them out; even as on the other hand, if you omit writing them, God both inscribes them, and exacts their penalty. It were then far better for them to be written by us, and blotted out above, than on the contrary, when we have forgotten them, for God to bring them before our eyes in that day.

Therefore that this may not be so, let us reckon up all with strictness, and we shall find ourselves answerable for much. For who is clear from covetousness? Nay, tell me not of the quantity, but since even in a small amount we shall pay the same penalty, consider this and repent. Who is rid of all insolence? Yet this casts into hell. Who has not secretly spoken evil of his neighbor? Yet this deprives one of the Kingdom. Who has not been self-willed? Yet this man is more unclean than all. Who has not looked with unchaste eyes? Yet this is a complete adulterer. Who has not been "*angry with his brother without a cause*"? Yet such an one is "*in danger of the council*." Who has not sworn? Yet this thing is of the evil one. Who has not forsworn himself? But this man is something more than of the evil one. Who has not served mammon? But this man is fallen away from the genuine service of Christ.

I have also other things greater than these to mention: but even these are enough, and able, if a man be not made of stone, nor utterly past feeling, to bring him to compunction. For if each one of them casts into hell, what will they not bring to pass when all are met together?

How then can one be saved? It may be asked. By application of the countervailing remedies: alms, prayers, compunction, repentance, humility, a contrite heart, contempt of possessions. For God has marked out for us innumerable ways of salvation, if we be willing to attend. Let us then attend, and let us every way cleanse out our wounds, showing mercy, remitting our anger against them that have displeased us, giving thanks for all things to God, fasting according to our power, praying sincerely, "*making unto ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*." For so shall we be able to obtain pardon for our offenses, and to win the promised good things; whereof may we all be counted worthy, by the grace and love

toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 42 on Matthew

Matt. XII. 33.

"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit."

Again in another way He shames them, and is not content with His former refutations. But this He does, not freeing Himself from accusations, (for what went before was quite enough), but as wishing to amend them.

Now His meaning is like this: none of you has either found fault about the persons healed, as not being healed; nor has said, that it is an evil thing to deliver one from a devil. For though they had been ever so shameless, they could not have said this.

Since therefore they brought no charge against the works, but were defaming the Doer of them, He signifies that this accusation is against both the common modes of reasoning, and the congruity of the circumstances. A thing of aggravated shamelessness, not only to interpret maliciously, but also to make up such charges as are contrary to men's common notions.

And see how free He is from contentiousness. For He said not, *"Make the tree good, forasmuch as the fruit also is good;"* but, most entirely stopping their mouths, and exhibiting His own considerateness, and their insolence, He says, Even if you are minded to find fault with my works, I forbid it not at all, only bring not inconsistent and contradictory charges. For thus were they sure to be most clearly detected, persisting against what was too palpable. Wherefore to no purpose is your maliciousness, says He, and your self-contradictory statements. Because in truth the distinction of the tree is shown by the fruit, not the fruit by the tree; but you do the contrary. For what if the tree be the origin of the fruit; yet it is the fruit that

makes the tree to be known. And it were consistent, either in blaming us to find fault with our works too, or praising these, to set us who do them free from these charges. But now ye do the contrary; for having no fault to find with the works, which is the fruit, you pass the opposite judgment upon the tree, calling me a demoniac; which is utter insanity.

Yea, and what He had said before, [Matthew 7:16-18] this He establishes now also; that a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor again can the converse be. So that their charges were against all consistency and nature.

Then since He is arguing not for Himself, but for the Spirit, He has dealt out His reproof even as a torrent, saying, "*O generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things?*" [Matthew 12:34]

Now this is at once to accuse, and to give demonstration of His own sayings from their case. For behold, says He, you being evil trees, cannot bring forth good fruit. I do not then marvel at your talking thus: for you were both ill nurtured, being of wicked ancestors, and you have acquired a bad mind.

And see how carefully, and without any hold for exception, He has expressed His accusations: in that He said not, How can you speak good things, being a generation of vipers? (for this latter is nothing to the former): but, "*How can you, being evil, speak good things?*"

But He called them "*broods of vipers*," because they prided themselves on their forefathers. To signify therefore that they had no advantage thereby, He both casts them out from their relationship to Abraham, and assigns them forefathers of kindred disposition, having stripped them of that ground of illustriousness.

"*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*" Here again He indicates His Godhead, which knew their secrets: and that not for words

only, but also for wicked thoughts, they shall suffer punishment; and that He knows it all, as God. And He says, that it is possible even for men to know these things; for this is a natural consequence, that when wickedness is overflowing within, its words should be poured forth through the lips. So that when you hear a man speak wicked words, do not suppose only so much wickedness to be in him as the words display, but conjecture the fountain to be much more abundant; for that which is spoken outwardly, is the superabundance of that which is within.

See how vehemently He reprehends them. For if what they had said is so evil, and is of the very mind of the devil, consider the root and well-spring of their words, how far that must reach. And this is naturally the case; for while the tongue through shame often pours not forth all its wickedness at once, the heart having no human witness, fearlessly gives birth to whatever evils it will; for of God it has not much regard. Since then men's sayings come to examination and are set before all, but the heart is concealed; therefore the evils of the former grow less, while those of the latter increase. But when that within is multiplied, all that has been awhile hidden comes forth with a violent gushing. And as persons vomiting strive at first to keep down the humors that force their way out, but, when they are overcome, cast forth much abomination; so do they that devise evil things, and speak ill of their neighbors.

"A good man out of his good treasure," says He, "brings forth good things, and an evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil things."

For think not by any means, says He, that it is so in respect of wickedness only, for in goodness also the same occurs: for there too the virtue within is more than the words without. By which He signified, that both they were to be accounted more wicked than their words indicated, and

Himself more perfectly good than His sayings declared. And He calls it "*a treasure*," indicating its abundance.

Then again He fences them in with great terror. For think not at all, says He, that the thing stops at this, that is, at the condemnation of the multitude; nay, for all that do wickedly in such things shall suffer the utmost punishment. And He said not, "*ye*," partly in order to instruct our whole race, partly to make His saying the less burdensome.

"But I say unto you," this is His word, *"that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."*

[Matthew 12:36]

And that is idle, which is not according to the fact, which is false, which has in it unjust accusation; and some say, that which is vain also, for instance, provoking inordinate laughter, or what is filthy, and immodest, and coarse.

"For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned." [Matthew 12:37]

Do you see how far the tribunal is from invidiousness? How favorable the account required? For not upon what another has said of you, but from what you have yourself spoken, will the Judge give His sentence; which is of all things the very fairest: since surely with you it rests, either to speak, or not to speak.

2. Wherefore not those that are slandered, but the slanderers, have need to be anxious and to tremble. For the former are not constrained to answer for themselves touching the evil things which are said of them, but the latter will, for the evil they have spoken; and over these impends the whole danger. So that the persons censured should be without anxiety, not being to give account of the evil that others have said; but the censurers have cause to be in anxiety, and to tremble, as being themselves to be

dragged before the judgment-seat in that behalf. For this is indeed a diabolical snare, and a sin having in it no pleasure, but harm only. Yea, and such an one is laying up an evil treasure in his soul. And if he that has an evil humor in him does himself first reap the fruits of the malady, much more he that is treasuring up in himself what is more bitter than any bile, I mean, wickedness, will suffer the utmost evils, gathering unto himself a grievous disease. And it is evident from the things that He vomits out. For if they pain others so much, far more the soul that gives them birth.

Thus the plotter destroys himself first; just as he that treads on fire burns up himself, and he that smites adamant spites himself, and he that kicks against the pricks draws blood from himself. For somewhat of this kind is he that knows how to suffer wrong, and to bear it manfully; he is adamant, and the pricks, and fire; but he that has used himself to do wrong is feebler than any clay.

Not therefore to suffer wrong is evil, but to do it, and not to know how to bear being wronged. For instance, how great wrongs did David endure! How great wrongs did Saul commit! Which then was the stronger and happier? Which the more wretched and miserable? Was it not he that did wrong? And mark it. Saul had promised, if David should slay the Philistine, to take him for his son-in law, and to give him his daughter with great favor. He slew the Philistine; the other broke his engagements, and so far from bestowing her, did even go about to slay him. Which then became the more glorious? Was not the one choking with despair and the evil demon, while the other shone brighter than the sun with his trophies, and his loyalty to God? Again, before the choir of the women, was not the one suffocated with envy, while the other enduring all in silence, won all men, and bound them unto himself? And when he had even gotten him into his hands, and spared him, which again was happy? And which wretched? Which was the

weaker? Which the more powerful? Was it not this man, who did not avenge himself even justly? And very naturally. For the one had armed soldiers, but the other, righteousness, that is more mighty than ten thousand armies, for his ally and helper. And for this reason, though unjustly conspired against, he endured not to slay him even justly. For he knew by what had taken place before, that not to do evil, but to suffer evil, this is what makes men more powerful. So it is with bodies also, so also with trees.

And what did Jacob? Was he not injured by Laban, and suffered evil? Which then was the stronger? He that had gotten the other into his hands, and dared not touch him, but was afraid and trembling; [Genesis 31:29] or he whom we see without arms and soldiers proving more terrible to him than innumerable kings?

But that I may give you another demonstration of what I have said, greater than this, let us again in the instance of David himself try the reasoning on the opposite side. For this man who being injured was so strong, afterwards upon committing an injury became on the contrary the weaker party. At least, when he had wronged Uriah, his position was changed again, and the weakness passed to the wrong doer, and the might to the injured; for he being dead laid waste the other's house. And the one being a king, and alive, could do nothing, but the other, being but a soldier, and slain, turned upside down all that pertained to his adversary.

Would ye that in another way also I should make what I say plainer? Let us look into their case, who avenge themselves even justly. For as to the wrong doers, that they are the most worthless of all men, warring against their own soul; this is surely plain to every one.

But who avenged himself justly, yet kindled innumerable ills, and pierced himself through with many calamities and sorrows? The captain of

David's host. For he both stirred up a grievous war, and suffered unnumbered evils; not one whereof would have happened, had he but known how to command himself.

Let us flee therefore from this sin, and neither in words nor deeds do our neighbors wrong. For He said not, If you slander, and summon a court of justice, but simply, If you speak evil, though within yourself, even so shall you suffer the utmost punishment. Though it be true which you have said, though thou have spoken upon conviction, even so shall vengeance come upon you. For not according to what the other has done, but according to what you have spoken, will God pass sentence; *"for by your words you shall be condemned,"* says He. Are you not told that the Pharisee also spoke the truth, and affirmed what was manifest to all men, without discovering what was hidden? Nevertheless, he paid the utmost penalty.

But if we ought not to accuse men of things which are acknowledged, much less of those which are disputed; nay, for the offender has a judge. Do not now, I warn you, seize upon the privilege of the Only Begotten. For Him is the throne of judgment reserved.

3. Would you however be a judge? You have a court of judgment which has great profit, and bears no blame. Make consideration, as judge, to sit down upon your conscience, and bring before it all your transgressions, search out the sins of your soul, and exact with strictness the account thereof, and say, *"wherefore did you dare to do this and that?"* And if she shun these, and be searching into other men's matters, say to her, *"Not about these am I judging you, not for these are you come here to plead. For what, if such a one be a wicked man? Thou, why did you commit this and that offense? Answer for yourself, not to accuse; look to your own matters, do not those of others."* And be thou continually urging her to this anxious trial. Then, if she have nothing to say, but shrink back, wear her out with the

scourge, like some restless and unchaste handmaid. And this tribunal do thou cause to sit every day, and picture the river of fire, the venomous worm, the rest of the torments.

And permit her not to be with the devil any more, nor bear with her shameless sayings, *"he comes to me, he plots against me, he tempts me;"* but tell her, *"If you were not willing, all that would be to no purpose."* And if she say again, *"I am entangled with a body, I am clothed with flesh, I dwell in the world, I abide on earth;"* tell her, *"All these are excuses and pretexts. For such an one too was encompassed with flesh, and such another dwelling in the world, and abiding on earth, is approved; and you yourself too, when you do well, doest it encompassed with flesh."* And if she be pained at hearing this, take not off your hand; for she will not die, if you smite her, but you will save her from death. And if she say again, *"Such an one provoked me,"* tell her, *"But it is in your power not to be provoked; often at least you have restrained your anger."* And if she say, *"The beauty of such a woman moved me;"* tell her, *"Yet were you able to have mastered yourself."* Bring forward those that have got the better, bring forward the first woman, who said, *"The serpent beguiled me,"* [Genesis 3:13] and yet was not acquitted of the blame.

And when you are searching out these things, let no man be present, let no man disturb you; but as the judges sit under curtains to judge, so do thou too, instead of curtains, seek a time and place of quiet. And when after your supper you are risen up, and art about to lie down, then hold this your judgment; this is the time convenient for you, and the place, your bed, and your chamber. This the prophet likewise commanded, saying, *"For the things which you say in your hearts, be ye moved to compunction upon your beds."* And for small offenses require great satisfaction, that unto the great

you may never even approach. If you do this every day, you will with confidence stand at that fearful judgment-seat.

In this way Paul became clean; therefore also he said, "*For if we judged ourselves, we should not be judged.*" [1 Corinthians 11:31] Thus did Job cleanse his sons. [Job 1:5] For he that offered sacrifices for secret sins, much more did he require an account of such as were manifest.

4. But we do not so, but altogether the contrary. For as soon as we are laid down to rest, we rather think over all our worldly matters; and some introduce unclean thoughts, some usuries, and contracts, and temporal cares.

And if we have a daughter, a virgin, we watch her strictly; but that which is more precious to us than a daughter, our soul, her we suffer to play the harlot and defile herself, introducing to her innumerable wicked thoughts. And whether it be the love of covetousness, or that of luxury, or that of fair persons, or that of wrath, or be it what you will else that is minded to come in, we throw open the doors, and attract and invite it, and help it to defile our soul at its leisure. And what can be more barbarous than this, to overlook our soul that is more precious than all, abused by so many adulterers, and so long companying with them, even until they are sated? Which will never be. So it is, therefore, that when sleep overtakes us, then only do they depart from her; or rather not even then, for our dreams and imaginations furnish her with the same images. Whence also, when day has come, the soul stored with such images often falls away to the actual performance of those fancies.

And thou, while into the apple of your eye you suffer not so much as a grain of dust to enter, do you pass unnoticed your soul, gathering to itself a heap of so great evils? When shall we then be able to clear out this filth, which we are daily laying up within us? When to cut up the thorns? When

to sow the seed? Do you not know that henceforth the time of harvest is at hand? But we have not yet so much as ploughed our fields. If then the husbandman should come and find fault, what shall we say? And what answer shall we make? That no man gave us the seed? Nay, this is sown daily. That no man, then, has cut up the thorns? Nay, every day we are sharpening the sickle. But do the necessary engagements of life distract you? And why have you not crucified yourself to the world? For if he that repays that only, which is given him, is wicked, because he did not double it; he that has wasted even this, what will be said to him? If that person was bound, and cast out where is gnashing of teeth, what shall we have to suffer, who, when numberless motives are drawing us toward virtue, shrink back and are unwilling?

For what is there, that has not enough in it to persuade you? Do you see not the vileness of the world, the uncertainty of life, the toil, the sweat, for things present? What? Is it the case that virtue must be toiled for, but may vice be had without toil? If then both in the one and in the other there is toil, why did you not choose this, which has so great profit?

Or rather, there are some parts of virtue, which are free even from toil. For what kind of toil is it, not to calumniate, not to lie, not to swear, to lay aside our anger against our neighbor? Nay, on the contrary, to do these things is toilsome, and brings much anxiety.

What plea then shall we have, what excuse, not doing right even in these matters? For hereby it is plain, that out of remissness and sloth the more toilsome duties also altogether escape us.

All these things let us consider; let us flee vice, let us choose virtue, that we may attain both unto the good things that are present, and unto those that are to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 43 on Matthew

Matthew 12:38-39.

"Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, Master, we would see a sign from You. But He answered and said, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas."

Could then anything be more foolish than these men (not more impious only), who after so many miracles, as though none had been wrought, say, *"We would see a sign from You?"* With what intent then did they so speak? That they might lay hold of Him again. For since by His words He had stopped their mouths, once and twice and often, and had checked their shameless tongue, they come to His works again. At which also the evangelist marvelling again, said,

"Then certain of the scribes answered Him, asking a sign."

"Then," when? When they ought to be stooping before Him, to admire, to be amazed and give way, *"then"* they desist not from their wickedness.

And see their words too, teeming with flattery and dissimulation. For they thought to draw Him towards them in that way. And now they insult, now they flatter Him; now calling Him a demoniac, now again *"Master,"* both out of an evil mind, how contrary soever the words they speak.

Wherefore also He rebukes them severely. And when they were questioning Him roughly and insulting Him, He reasoned with them gently; when they were flattering; reproachfully, and with great severity; implying that He is superior to either passion, and is neither at the one time moved to anger, nor at the other softened by flattery. And see His reproach, that it is

not merely hard words, but contains a demonstration of their wickedness. For what says He?

"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign." Now what He says is to this effect: What marvel if you behave so to me who have been hitherto unknown to you when even to the Father, of whom you have had so much experience, you have done the very same? Forsaking Him, you have run unto the devils, drawing to yourselves wicked lovers. With this Ezekiel too was continually upbraiding them.

Now by these sayings He signified Himself to be of one accord with His Father, and them to be doing nothing new; He was also unfolding their secrets, how with hypocrisy and as enemies they were making their demand. Therefore He called them *"an evil generation,"* because they have been always ungrateful towards their benefactors; because upon favors they become worse, which belongs to extreme wickedness.

And He called it *"adulterous,"* declaring both their former and their present unbelief; whereby He implies Himself again to be equal to the Father, if at least the not believing Him makes it *"adulterous."*

2. Then, after His reproach, what says He? *"There shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet."* Now is He striking the first note of the doctrine of His resurrection, and confirming it by the type.

What then? One may say; was no sign given it? None was given to it on asking. For not to bring in them did He work His signs (for He knew them to be hardened), but in order to amend others. Either then this may be said, or that they were not to receive such a sign as that was. For a sign did befall them, when by their own punishment they learned His power. Here then He speaks as threatening, and with this very meaning obscurely conveyed: as if He said, innumerable benefits have I showed forth, none of these has drawn you to me, neither were ye willing to adore my power. You

shall know therefore my might by the contrary tokens, when you shall see your city cast down to the ground, the walls also dismantled, the temple become a ruin; when you shall be cast out both from your former citizenship and freedom, and shall again go about everywhere, houseless and in exile. (For all these things came to pass after the cross.) These things therefore shall be to you for great signs. And indeed it is an exceeding great sign, that their ills remain unchanged; that although ten thousand have attempted it, no one has been able to reverse the judgment once gone forth against them.

All this however He says not, but leaves it to after time to make it clear to them, but for the present He is making trial of the doctrine of His resurrection, which they were to come to know by the things which they should afterwards suffer.

"For as Jonas," says He, *"was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* [Matthew 22:40] Thus, He said not indeed openly that He should rise again, since they would have even laughed Him to scorn, but He intimated it in such manner, that they might believe Him to have foreknown it. For as to their being aware of it, they say to Pilate, *"That deceiver said,"* these are their words, *"while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again;"* and yet we know His disciples were ignorant of this; even as they had been beforehand more void of understanding than these: wherefore also these became self-condemned.

But see how exactly He expresses it, even though in a dark saying. For He said not, *"In the earth,"* but, *"In the heart of the earth;"* that He might designate His very sepulchre, and that no one might suspect a mere semblance. And for this intent too did He allow three days, that the fact of His death might be believed. For not by the cross only does He make it

certain, and by the sight of all men, but also by the time of those days. For to the resurrection indeed all succeeding time was to bear witness; but the cross, unless it had at the time many signs bearing witness to it, would have been disbelieved; and with this disbelief would have gone utter disbelief of the resurrection also. Therefore He calls it also a sign. But had He not been crucified, the sign would not have been given. For this cause too He brings forward the type, that the truth may be believed. For tell me, was Jonah in the whale's belly a mere appearance? Nay, you can not say so. Therefore neither was Christ in the heart of the earth such. For surely the type is not in truth, and the truth in mere appearance. For this cause we every where show forth His death, both in the mysteries, and in baptism, and in all the rest. Therefore Paul also cries with a clear voice, *"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Whence it is clear, that they who are diseased in Marcion's way are children of the devil, blotting out these truths, to avoid the annulling whereof Christ did so many things, while to have them annulled the devil took such manifold pains: I mean, His cross and His passion.

3. Therefore He said elsewhere also, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:"* [John 2:19] and, The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them: [Matthew 9:15] and here, *"There shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet:"* declaring both that He should die and *"the ox that knows his owner, and the ass that remembers his crib."* [Isaiah 1:3] Even so here too, when He had by a comparison set forth their perverseness, He speaks afterwards of their punishment also.

What then can the saying mean? As the possessed, says He, when delivered from that infirmity, should they be at all remiss, draw upon themselves their delusion more grievous than ever: even so is it with you.

For before also you were possessed by a devil, when you were worshipping idols, and were slaying your sons to the devils, exhibiting great madness; nevertheless I forsook you not, but cast out that devil by the prophets; and again in my own person I have come, willing to cleanse you more entirely. Since then you will not attend, but have wrecked yourselves in greater wickedness (for to kill prophets was a crime not nearly so great and grievous as to slay Him); therefore your sufferings will be more grievous than the former, those at Babylon, I mean, and in Egypt, and under the first Antiochus. Because what things befell them in the time of Vespasian and Titus, were very far more grievous than those. Wherefore also He said, *"There shall be great tribulation, such as never was, neither shall be."* [Matthew 24:21] But not this only does the illustration declare, but that they should be also utterly destitute of all virtue, and more assailable by the power of the devils, than at that time. For then even although they sinned, yet were there also among them such as acted uprightly, and God's providence was present with them, and the grace of the Spirit, tending, correcting, fulfilling all its part; but now of this guardianship too they shall be utterly deprived; so He tells them; so that there is now both a greater scarcity of virtue, and a more intense affliction, and a more tyrannical operation of the devils.

You know accordingly even in our generation, when he who surpassed all in impiety, I mean Julian, was transported with his fury, how they ranged themselves with the heathens, how they courted their party. So that, even if they seem to be in some small degree chastened now, the fear of the emperors makes them quiet; since, if it were not for that, far worse than the former had been their daring. For in all their other evil works they surpass their predecessors; sorceries, magic arts, impurities, they exhibit in great excess. And among the rest, moreover, strong as is the curb which holds

them down, they have often made seditions, and risen up against kings, which has resulted in their being pierced through with the worst of evils.

Where now are they that seek after signs? Let them hear that a considerate mind is needed, and if this be wanting, signs are of no profit. See, for instance, how the Ninevites without signs believed, while these, after so many miracles, grew worse, and made themselves an habitation of innumerable devils, and brought on themselves ten thousand calamities; and very naturally. For when a man, being once delivered from his ills, fails to be corrected, he will suffer far worse than before. Yea, therefore He said, *"he finds no rest,"* to indicate, that positively and of necessity such an one will be overtaken by the ambush of the devils. Since surely by these two things he ought to have been sobered, by his former sufferings, and by his deliverance; or rather a third thing also is added, the threat of having still worse to endure. But yet by none of these were they made better.

5. All this might be seasonably said, not of them only, but of us also, when after having been enlightened, [Hebrews 6:4] and delivered from our former ills, we again cleave unto the same wickedness, for more grievous also thenceforth will be the punishment of our subsequent sins. Therefore to the sick of the palsy also Christ said, *"Behold, you are made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you;"* [John 5:14] and this to a man who was thirty-eight years in his infirmity. And what, one might ask, was he to suffer worse than this? Something far worse, and more intolerable. For far be it from us, that we should endure as much as we are capable of enduring. For God is at no loss for inflictions. For according to the greatness of His mercy, so also is His wrath.

With this He charges Jerusalem also by Ezekiel. *"I saw you,"* says He, *"polluted in blood; and I washed you, and anointed you; and you had renown for your beauty; and you poured out your fornications,"* says He,

"on those who dwell near you," wherefore also the more grievous are His threatenings to you when you sin.

But from hence infer not your punishment only, but also the boundless longsuffering of God. How often at least have we put our hands to the same evil deeds, and yet He suffers long! But let us not be sanguine, but fear; since Pharaoh too, had he been taught by the first plague, would not have experienced the later ones; he would not afterwards have been drowned, his host and all together.

And this I say, because I know many, who like Pharaoh are even now saying, *"I know not God,"* [Exodus 5:2] and making those that are in their power cleave to the clay and to the bricks. How many, though God bids them assuage their *"threatening,"* [Ephesians 6:9] cannot bear so much as to relax the toil!

"But we have no Red Sea now, to pass through afterwards." But we have a sea of fire, a sea not like that, either in kind or in size, but far greater and fiercer, having its waves of fire, of some strange and horrible fire. A great abyss is there, of most intolerable flame. Since everywhere fire may be seen roving quickly round, like some savage wild beast. And if here this sensible and material fire leaped like a wild beast out of the furnace, and sprang upon those who were sitting without, [Daniel 3:22] what will not that other fire do to such as have fallen into it?

Concerning that day, hear the prophets, saying, *"The day of the Lord is incurable, full of anger and wrath."* [Isaiah 13:9] For there will be none to stand by, none to rescue, nowhere the face of Christ, so mild and calm. But as those who work in the mines are delivered over to certain cruel men, and see none of their friends, but those only that are set over them; so will it be then also: or rather not so, but even far more grievous. For here it is possible to go unto the king, and entreat, and free the condemned person:

but there, no longer; for He permits it not, but they continue in the scorching torment, and in so great anguish, as it is not possible for words to tell. For if, when any are in flames here, no speech can describe their sharp pangs, much less theirs, who suffer it in that place: since here indeed all is over in a brief point of time, but in that place there is burning indeed, but what is burnt is not consumed.

What then shall we do there? For to my self also do I say these things.

6. *"But if you,"* says one, *"who art our teacher, speak so of yourself, I care no more; for what wonder, should I be punished?"* Nay, I entreat, let no man seek this consolation; for this is no refreshment at all. For tell me; was not the devil an incorporeal power? Was he not superior to men? Yet he fell away. Is there any one who will derive consolation from being punished along with him? By no means. What of all who were in Egypt? Did they not see those also punished who were in high places, and every house in mourning? Were they then hereby refreshed, and comforted? No surely; and it is manifest by what they did afterwards, as men tortured by some kind of fire, rising up together against the king, and compelling him to cast out the people of the Hebrews.

Yea, and very unmeaning is this saying, to suppose that it gives comfort to be punished with all men, to say, *"As all, so I too."* For why should I speak of hell? Think, I pray you, of those that are seized with gout, how, when they are racked by sharp pain, though you show them ten thousand suffering worse, they do not so much as take it into their mind. For the intensity of their anguish allows not their reason any leisure for thinking of others, and so finding consolation. Let us not then feed ourselves with these cold hopes. For to receive consolation from the ills of our neighbors, takes place in ordinary sufferings; but when the torment is excessive, and all our inward parts full of tempest, and the soul is now

come to be unable so much as to know itself, whence shall it derive consolation? So that all these sayings are an absurdity, and fables of foolish children. For this, of which you speak, takes place in dejection, and in moderate dejection, when we are told, "*the same thing has befallen such an one*;" but sometimes not even in dejection: now if in that case it has no strength, much less in the anguish and burden unspeakable, which "*the gnashing of teeth*" indicates.

And I know that I am galling you, and giving you pain by these words; but what can I do? For I would fain not speak thus, but be conscious of virtue both in myself, and in all of you; but since we are in sins, the more part of us, who will grant me ability to pain you indeed, and to penetrate the understanding of them that hear me? Then might I so be at rest. But now I fear lest any despise my sayings, and their punishments become the greater for their indifferent way of hearing. Since, when a master utters a threat, should one of the fellow-servants hear and make light of his menace, not without punishment would he hasten by him, provoked as he is, but rather it would be a ground for increasing his chastisement. Wherefore I entreat you, let us pierce our own hearts, when we hear His sayings regarding hell. For nothing is more delightful than this discourse, by how much nothing is more bitter than the reality. But how delightful to be told of hell? One may ask. Because it were so far from delight to fall into hell, which result, our words that appear so galling, keep off. And before this they furnish another pleasure: in that they brace up our souls, and make us more reverent, and elevate the mind, and give wings to the thoughts, and cast out the desires that so mischievously beset us; and the thing becomes a cure.

7. Wherefore, to proceed, together with the punishment let me speak also of the shame. For as the Jews shall then be condemned by the Ninevites, so we too by many that seem beneath us now.

Let us imagine then how great the mockery, how great the condemnation; let us imagine, and cast some foundation at length, some door of repentance.

To myself I say these things, to myself first I give this advice, and let no one be angry, as though he were condemned. Let us enter upon the narrow way. How long shall it be luxury? How long sloth? Have we not had enough of indolence, mirth, procrastination? Will it not be the same over again, feasting, and surfeiting, and expense, and wealth, and acquisitions, and buildings? And what is the end? Death. What is the end? Ashes, and dust, and coffins, and worms.

Let us show forth then a new kind of life. Let us make earth, heaven; let us hereby show the Greeks, of how great blessings they are deprived. For when they behold in us good conversation, they will look upon the very face of the kingdom of Heaven. Yea, when they see us gentle, pure from wrath, from evil desire, from envy, from covetousness, rightly fulfilling all our other duties, they will say, *"If the Christians have become angels here, what will they be after their departure hence? If where they are strangers they shine so bright, how great will they become when they shall have won their native land!"* Thus they too will be reformed, and the word of godliness *"will have free course,"* [2 Thessalonians 3:1] not less than in the apostles' times. For if they, being twelve, converted entire cities and countries; were we all to become teachers by our careful conduct, imagine how high our cause will be exalted. For not even a dead man raised so powerfully attracts the Greek, as a person practising self-denial. At that indeed he will be amazed, but by this he will be profited. That is done, and is past away; but this abides, and is constant culture to his soul.

Let us take heed therefore to ourselves, that we may gain them also. I say nothing burdensome. I say not, do not marry. I say not, forsake cities,

and withdraw yourself from public affairs; but being engaged in them, show virtue. Yea, and such as are busy in the midst of cities, I would fain have more approved than such as have occupied the mountains. Wherefore? Because great is the profit thence arising. *"For no man lights a candle, and sets it under the bushel."* Therefore I would that all the candles were set upon the candlestick, that the light might wax great.

Let us kindle then His fire; let us cause them that are sitting in darkness to be delivered from their error. And tell me not, *"I have a wife, and children belonging to me, and am master of a household, and cannot duly practise all this."* For though you had none of these, yet if you be careless, all is lost; though you are encompassed with all these, yet if you be earnest, you shall attain unto virtue. For there is but one thing that is wanted, the preparation of a generous mind; and neither age, nor poverty, nor wealth, nor reverse of fortune, nor anything else, will be able to impede you. Since in fact both old and young, and men having wives, and bringing up children, and working at crafts, and serving as soldiers, have duly performed all that is enjoined. For so Daniel was young, and Joseph a slave, and Aquila wrought at a craft, and the woman who sold purple was over a workshop, and another was the keeper of a prison, and another a centurion, as Cornelius; and another in ill health, as Timothy; and another a runaway, as Onesimus; but nothing proved an hindrance to any of these, but all were approved, both men and women, both young and old, both slaves and free, both soldiers and people.

Let us not then make vain pretexts, but let us provide a thoroughly good mind, and whatsoever we may be, we shall surely attain to virtue, and arrive at the good things to come; by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 44 on Matthew

Matt. XII. 46-49.

" While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then one said unto Him, Behold, Your mother and Your brethren stand without, desiring to speak with You. But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is my mother, and my brethren? And He stretched forth His hand towards His disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren."

That which I was lately saying, that when virtue is wanting all things are vain, this is now also pointed out very abundantly. For I indeed was saying, that age and nature, and to dwell in the wilderness, and all such things, are alike unprofitable, where there is not a good mind; but today we learn in addition another thing, that even to have borne Christ in the womb, and to have brought forth that marvellous birth, has no profit, if there be not virtue.

And this is hence especially manifest. *"For while He yet talked to the people,"* it is said, *"one told Him, Your mother and Your brethren seek You. But He says, who is my mother, and who are my brethren?"*

And this He said, not as being ashamed of His mother, nor denying her that bare Him; for if He had been ashamed of her, He would not have passed through that womb; but as declaring that she has no advantage from this, unless she do all that is required to be done. For in fact that which she had essayed to do, was of superfluous vanity; in that she wanted to show the people that she has power and authority over her Son, imagining not as yet anything great concerning Him; whence also her unseasonable approach. See at all events both her self-confidence and theirs. Since when they ought

to have gone in, and listened with the multitude; or if they were not so minded, to have waited for His bringing His discourse to an end, and then to have come near; they call Him out, and do this before all, evincing a superfluous vanity, and wishing to make it appear, that with much authority they enjoin Him. And this too the evangelist shows that he is blaming, for with this very allusion did he thus express himself, *"While He yet talked to the people;"* as if he should say, What? Was there no other opportunity? Why, was it not possible to speak with Him in private?

And what was it they wished to say? For if it were touching the doctrines of the truth, they ought to have propounded these things publicly, and stated them before all, that the rest also might have the benefit: but if about other matters that concerned themselves, they ought not to have been so urgent. For if He suffered not the burial of a father, lest the attendance on Him should be interrupted, much less ought they to have stopped His discourse to the people, for things that were of no importance. Whence it is clear, that nothing but vainglory led them to do this; which John too declares, by saying, *"Neither did His brethren believe in Him;"* [John 7:5] and some sayings too of theirs he reports, full of great folly; telling us that they were for dragging Him to Jerusalem, for no other purpose, but that they themselves might reap glory from His miracles. *"For if you do these things,"* it is said, *"show Yourself to the world. For there is no man that does anything in secret, and seeks himself to be manifest;"* when also He Himself rebuked them, attributing it to their carnal mind. That is, because the Jews were reproaching Him, and saying, *"Is not this the carpenter's son, whose father and mother we know? And His brethren, are not they with us?"* they, willing to throw off the disparagement caused by His birth, were calling Him to the display of His miracles.

For this cause He quite repels them, being minded to heal their infirmity; since surely, had it been His will to deny His mother, He would have denied her then, when the Jews were reproaching Him. But as it is, we see that He takes so great care of her, as even at the very cross to commit her to the disciple whom He loved most of all, and to give him a great charge concerning her.

But now He does not so, out of care for her, and for His brethren. I mean, because their regard for Him was as towards a mere man, and they were vainglorious, He casts out the disease, not insulting, but correcting them.

But do thou, I pray, examine not the words only, which contain a moderate reproof, but also the unbecoming conduct of His brethren, and the boldness wherewith they had been bold and who was the person reproving it, no mere man, but the only-begotten Son of God; and with what purpose He reproofed; that it was not with intent to drive them to perplexity, but to deliver them from the most tyrannical passion and to lead them on little by little to the right idea concerning Himself, and to convince her that He was not her Son only, but also her Lord: so will you perceive that the reproof is in the highest degree both becoming Him and profitable to her, and withal having in it much gentleness. For He said not, *"Go your way, tell my mother; you are not my mother,"* but He addresses Himself to the person that told Him; saying, *"Who is my mother?"* together with the things that have been mentioned providing for another object also. What then is that? That neither they nor others confiding in their kindred, should neglect virtue. For if she is nothing profited by being His mother, were it not for that quality in her, hardly will any one else be saved by his kindred. For there is one only nobleness, to do the will of God. This kind of noble birth is better than the other, and more real.

2. Knowing therefore these things, let us neither pride ourselves on children that are of good report, unless we have their virtue; nor upon noble fathers, unless we be like them in disposition. For it is possible, both that he who begot a man should not be his father, and that he who did not beget him should be. Therefore in another place also, when some woman had said, *"Blessed is the womb that bare You, and the paps which You have sucked;"* He said not, *"The womb bare me not, neither did I suck the paps,"* but this, *"Yea rather, blessed are they that do the will of my Father."* Do you see how on every occasion He denies not the affinity by nature, but adds that by virtue? And His forerunner too, in saying, *"O generation of vipers, think not to say, We have Abraham to our father,"* [Matthew 3:7, 9] means not this, that they were not naturally of Abraham, but that it profits them nothing to be of Abraham, unless they had the affinity by character; which Christ also declared, when He said, *"If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham;"* [John 8:39] not depriving them of their kindred according to the flesh, but teaching them to seek after that affinity which is greater than it, and more real.

This then He establishes here also, but in a manner less invidious, and more measured, as became Him speaking to His mother. For He said not at all, *"She is not my mother, nor are those my brethren, because they do not my will;"* neither did He declare and pronounce judgment against them; but He yet left in it their own power to choose, speaking with the gentleness that becomes Him.

"For he that does," says He, *"the will of my Father, this is my brother, and sister, and mother."*

Wherefore if they desire to be such, let them come this way. And when the woman again cried out, saying, *"Blessed is the womb that bare You,"* He said not, *"She is not my mother,"* but, *"If she wishes to be blessed, let her do*

the will of my Father. For such a one is both brother, and sister, and mother."

Oh honor! Oh virtue! Unto what a height does she lead up him that follows after her! How many women have blessed that holy Virgin, and her womb, and prayed that they might become such mothers, and give up all! What then is there to hinder? For behold, He has marked out a spacious road for us; and it is granted not to women only, but to men also, to be of this rank, or rather of one yet far higher. For this makes one His mother much more, than those pangs did. So that if that were a subject for blessing, much more this, inasmuch as it is also more real. Do not therefore merely desire, but also in the way that leads you to your desire walk thou with much diligence.

3. Having then said these words, *"He came out of the house."* Do you see, how He both rebuked them, and did what they desired? Which He did also at the marriage. [John 2:1-11] For there too He at once reprov'd her asking unseasonably, and nevertheless did not gainsay her; by the former correcting her weakness, by the latter showing His kindly feeling toward His mother. So likewise on this occasion too, He both healed the disease of vainglory, and rendered the due honor to His mother, even though her request was unseasonable. For, *"in the same day,"* it is said, *"went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side."*

Why, if you desire, says He, to see and hear, behold I come forth and discourse. Thus having wrought many miracles, He affords again the benefit of His doctrine. And He *"sits by the sea,"* fishing and getting into His net them that are on the land.

But He *"sat by the sea,"* not without a purpose; and this very thing the evangelist has darkly expressed. For to indicate that the cause of His doing

this was a desire to order His auditory with exactness, and to leave no one behind His back, but to have all face to face,

"And great multitudes," says He, "were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore."

And having sat down there, He speaks by parables.

"And He spoke," it says, "many things unto them in parables."

[Matthew 13:3]

And yet on the mount, we know, He did no such thing, neither did He weave His discourse with so many parables, for then there were multitudes only, and a simple people; but here are also Scribes and Pharisees.

But do thou mark, I pray you, what kind of parable He speaks first, and how Matthew puts them in their order. Which then does He speak first?

That which it was most necessary to speak first, that which makes the hearer more attentive. For because He was to discourse unto them in dark sayings, He thoroughly rouses His hearers' mind first by His parable.

Therefore also another evangelist says that He reproved them, because they do not understand; saying, *"How knew ye not the parable?"* But not for this cause only does He speak in parables, but that He may also make His discourse more vivid, and fix the memory of it in them more perfectly, and bring the things before their sight. In like manner do the prophets also.

4. What then is the parable? *"Behold,"* says He, *"a sower went forth to sow."* Whence went He forth, who is present everywhere, who fills all things? Or how went He forth? Not in place, but in condition and dispensation to usward, coming nearer to us by His clothing Himself with flesh. For because we could not enter, our sins fencing us out from the entrance, He comes forth unto us. And wherefore came He forth? To destroy the ground teeming with thorns? To take vengeance upon the

husbandmen? By no means; but to till and tend it, and to sow the word of godliness. For by seed here He means His doctrine, and by land, the souls of men, and by the sower, Himself.

What then comes of this seed? Three parts perish, and one is saved.

"And when He sowed, some seeds fell," He says, "by the way side; and the fowls came and devoured them up."

He said not, that He cast them, but that *"they fell."*

"And some upon the rock, where they had not much earth; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among the thorns, and the thorns sprang up, and choked them. But others fell on the good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who has ears to hear let him hear."

A fourth part is saved; and not this all alike, but even here great is the difference.

Now these things He said, manifesting that He discoursed to all without grudging. For as the sower makes no distinction in the land submitted to him, but simply and indifferently casts his seed; so He Himself too makes no distinction of rich and poor, of wise and unwise, of slothful or diligent, of brave or cowardly; but He discourses unto all, fulfilling His part, although foreknowing the results; that it may be in His power to say, *"What ought I to have done, that I have not done?"* [Isaiah 5:4] And the prophets speak of the people as of a vine; *"For my beloved,"* it is said, *"had a vineyard;"* [Isaiah 5:1] and, *"He brought a vine out of Egypt;"* but He, as of seed. What could this be to show? That obedience now will be quick and easier, and will presently yield its fruit.

But when you hear, "*The sower went forth to sow*," think it not a needless repetition. For the sower frequently goes forth for some other act also, either to plough, or to cut out the evil herbs, or to pluck up thorns, or to attend to some such matter; but He went forth to sow.

Whence then, tell me, was the greater part of the seed lost? Not through the sower, but through the ground that received it; that is, the soul that did not hearken.

And wherefore does He not say, Some the careless received, and lost it; some the rich, and choked it, and some the superficial, and betrayed it? It is not His will to rebuke them severely, lest He should cast them into despair, but He leaves the reproof to the conscience of His hearers.

And this was not the case with the seed only, but also with the net; for that too produced many that were unprofitable.

5. But this parable He speaks, as anointing His disciples, and to teach them, that even though the lost be more than such as receive the word yet they are not to despond. For this was the ease even with their Lord, and He who fully foreknew that these things should be, did not desist from sowing.

And how can it be reasonable, says one, to sow among the thorns, on the rock, on the wayside? With regard to the seeds and the earth it cannot be reasonable; but in the case of men's souls and their instructions, it has its praise, and that abundantly. For the husbandman indeed would reasonably be blamed for doing this; it being impossible for the rock to become earth, or the wayside not to be a wayside, or the thorns, thorns; but in the things that have reason it is not so. There is such a thing as the rock changing, and becoming rich land; and the wayside being no longer trampled on, nor lying open to all that pass by, but that it may be a fertile field; and the thorns may be destroyed, and the seed enjoy full security. For had it been impossible, this Sower would not have sown. And if the change did not take place in all,

this is no fault of the Sower, but of them who are unwilling to be changed: He having done His part: and if they betrayed what they received of Him, He is blameless, the exhibitor of such love to man.

But do thou mark this, I pray you; that the way of destruction is not one only, but there are differing ones, and wide apart from one another. For they that are like the wayside are the coarse-minded, and indifferent, and careless; but those on the rock such as fail from weakness only.

For *"that which is sown upon the stony places,"* says He, *"the same is he that hears the word, and anon with joy receives it. Yet has he not root in himself, but endures for a while; but when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, by and by he is offended! When any one,"* so He says, *"hears the word of truth and understands it not, then comes the wicked one, and catches that which was sown out of his heart. This is he that is sown by the wayside."*

Now it is not the same thing for the doctrine to wither away, when no man is evil entreating, or disturbing its foundations, as when temptations press upon one. But they that are likened to the thorns, are much more inexcusable than these.

6. In order then that none of these things may befall us, let us by zeal and continual remembrance cover up the things that are told us. For though the devil do catch them away, yet it rests with us, whether they be caught away; though the plants wither, yet it is not from the heat this takes place (for He did not say, because of the heat it withered, but, *"because it had no root"*); although His sayings are choked, it is not because of the thorns, but of them who suffer them to spring up. For there is a way, if you will, to check this evil growth, and to make the right use of our wealth. Therefore He said not, *"the world,"* but *"the care of the world;"* nor *"riches,"* but *"the deceitfulness of riches."*

Let us not then blame the things, but the corrupt mind. For it is possible to be rich and not to be deceived; and to be in this world, and not to be choked with its cares. For indeed riches have two contrary disadvantages; one, care, wearing us out, and bringing a darkness over us; the other, luxury, making us effeminate.

And well has He said, "*The deceitfulness of riches.*" For all that pertains to riches is deceit; they are names only, not attached to things. For so pleasure and glory, and splendid array, and all these things, are a sort of vain show, not a reality.

Having therefore spoken of the ways of destruction, afterwards He mentions the good ground, not suffering them to despair, but giving a hope of repentance, and indicating that it is possible to change from the things before mentioned into this.

And yet if both the land be good, and the Sower one, and the seed the same, wherefore did one bear a hundred, one sixty, one thirty? Here again the difference is from the nature of the ground, for even where the ground is good, great even therein is the difference. Do you see, that not the husbandman is to be blamed, nor the seed, but the land that receives it? Not for its nature, but for its disposition. And herein too, great is His mercy to man, that He does not require one measure of virtue, but while He receives the first, and casts not out the second, He gives also a place to the third.

And these things He says, least they that followed Him should suppose that hearing is sufficient for salvation. And wherefore, one may say, did He not put the other vices also, such as lust, vainglory? In speaking of "*the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,*" He set down all. Yea, both vainglory and all the rest belong to this world, and to the deceitfulness of riches; such as pleasure, and gluttony, and envy, and vainglory, and all the like.

But He added also the "*way*" and the "*rock*," signifying that it is not enough to be freed from riches only, but we must cultivate also the other parts of virtue. For what if you are free indeed from riches, yet are soft and unmanly? And what if you are not indeed unmanly, but art remiss and careless about the hearing of the word? Nay, no one part is sufficient for our salvation, but there is required first a careful hearing, and a continual recollection; then fortitude, then contempt of riches, and deliverance from all worldly things.

In fact, His reason for putting this before the other, is because the one is first required (for "*How shall they believe except they hear?*" [Romans 10:14] just as we too, except we mind what is said, shall not be able so much as to learn what we ought to do): after that, fortitude, and the contempt of things present.

7. Hearing therefore these things, let us fortify ourselves on all sides, regarding His instructions, and striking our roots deep, and cleansing ourselves from all worldly things. But if we do the one, neglecting the other, we shall be nothing bettered; for though we perish not in one way, yet shall we in some other. For what signifies our not being ruined by riches, if we are by indolence: or not by indolence, if we are by softness. For so the husbandman, whether this way or that way he lose his crop, equally bewails himself. Let us not then soothe ourselves upon our not perishing in all these ways, but let it be our grief, in whichever way we are perishing.

And let us burn up the thorns, for they choke the word. And this is known to those rich men, who not for these matters alone, but for others also prove unprofitable. For having become slaves and captives of their pleasures, they are useless even for civil affairs, and if for them, much more for those of Heaven. Yea, and in two ways hereby our thoughts are corrupted; both by the luxury, and by the anxiety too. For either of these by

itself were enough to overwhelm the bark; but when even both concur, imagine how high the billow swells.

And marvel not at His calling our luxury, "*thorns*." For thou indeed art not aware of it, being intoxicated with your passion, but they that are in sound health know that it pricks sharper than any thorn, and that luxury wastes the soul worse than care, and causes more grievous pains both to body and soul. For one is not so sorely smitten by anxiety, as by surfeiting. Since when watchings, and throbbings of the temples, and heaviness in the head, and pangs of the bowels, lay hold of such a man, you may imagine how many thorns these surpass in grievousness. And as the thorns, on whichever side they are laid hold of, draw blood from the hands that seize them, just so does luxury plague both feet, and hands, and head, and eyes, and in general all our members; and it is withered also, and unfruitful, like the thorn, and hurts much more than it, and in our vital parts. Yea, it brings on premature old age, and dulls the senses, and darkens our reasoning, and blinds the keen-sighted mind, and makes the body tumid, rendering excessive the deposition of that which is cast away, and gathering together a great accumulation of evils; and it makes the burden too great, and the load overwhelming; whence our falls are many and continual, and our shipwrecks frequent.

For tell me, why pamper your body? What? Are we to slay you in sacrifice, to set you on the table? The birds it is well for you to pamper: or rather, not so well even for them; for when they are fattened, they are unprofitable for wholesome food. So great an evil is luxury, that its mischief is shown even in irrational beings. For even them by luxury we make unprofitable, both to themselves and to us. For their superfluous flesh is indigestible, and the moister kind of corruption is engendered by that kind of fatness. Whereas the creatures that are not so fed, but live, as one

may say, in abstinence, and moderate diet, and in labor and hardship, these are most serviceable both to themselves and to others, as well for food, as for everything else. Those, at any rate, who live on them, are in better health; but such as are fed on the others are like them, growing dull and sickly, and rendering their chain more grievous. For nothing is so hostile and hurtful to the body, as luxury; nothing so tears it in pieces, and overloads and corrupts it, as intemperance.

Wherefore above all may this circumstance make one amazed at them for their folly, that not even so much care as others show towards their wine skins, are these willing to evince towards themselves. For those the wine merchants do not allow to receive more than is fit, lest they should burst; but to their own wretched belly these men do not vouchsafe even so much forethought, but when they have stuffed it and distended it, they fill all, up to the ears, up to the nostrils, to the very throat itself, thereby pressing into half its room the spirit, and the power that directs the living being. What? Was your throat given you for this end, that you should fill it up to the very mouth, with wine turned sour, and all other corruption? Not for this, O man, but that you should above all things sing to God, and offer up the holy prayers, and read out the divine laws, and give to your neighbors profitable counsel. But you, as if you had received it for this end, dost not suffer it to have leisure for that ministry, so much as for a short season, but for all your life subjectest it to this evil slavery. And as if any man having had a lyre given him with golden strings, and beautifully constructed, instead of awakening with it the most harmonious music, were to cover it over with much dung and clay; even so do these men. Now the word, dung, I use not of living, but of luxurious living, and of that great wantonness. Because what is more than necessary is not nourishment, but merely injurious. For in truth the belly alone was made merely for the reception of food; but the

month, and the throat, and tongue, for other things also, far more necessary than these: or rather, not even the belly for the reception of food simply, but for the reception of moderate food. And this it makes manifest by crying out loudly against us, when we tease it by this greediness; nor does it clamor against us only, but also avenging that wrong exacts of us the severest penalty. And first it punishes the feet, that bear and conduct us to those wicked revels, then the hands that minister to it, binding them together for having brought unto it such quantities and kinds of provisions; and many have distorted even their very mouth, and eyes, and head. And as a servant receiving an order beyond his power, not seldom out of desperation becomes insolent to the giver of the order: so the belly too, together with these members, often ruins and destroys, from being overstrained, the very brain itself. And this God has well ordered, that from excess so much mischief should arise; that when of your own will thou dost not practise self-restraint, at least against your will, for fear of so great ruin, you may learn to be moderate.

Knowing then these things, let us flee luxury, let us study moderation, that we may both enjoy health of body, and having delivered our soul from all infirmity, may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 45 on Matthew

Matthew 13:10-11.

"And the disciples came and said unto Him, Why do You speak unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given."

We have good cause to admire the disciples, how, longing as they do to learn, they know when they ought to ask. For they do it not before all: and this Matthew shows by saying, *"And they came."* And, as to this assertion not being conjecture, Mark has expressed it more distinctly, by saying, that *"they came to Him privately."* [Mark 4:10] This then His brethren and His mother should also have done, and not have called Him out, and made a display.

But mark their kindly affection also, how they have much regard for the others, and seek their good first, and then their own. *"For why,"* it is said, *"do You speak unto them in parables?"* They did not say, why do you speak unto us in parables? Yea, and on other occasions also their kindness towards men appears in many ways; as when they say, *"Send the multitude away;"* [Luke 9:12] and, *"Do you know that they were offended?"* [Matthew 15:12]

What then says Christ? *"Because it is given unto you,"* so He speaks, *"to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given."* But this He said, not bringing in necessity, or any allotment made causelessly and at random, but implying them to be the authors of all their own evils, and wishing to represent that the thing is a gift, and a grace bestowed from above.

It by no means follows, however, because it is a gift, that therefore free will is taken away; and this is evident from what comes after. To this purpose, in order that neither the one sort may despair, nor the other grow careless, upon being told that *"it is given,"* He signifies the beginning to be with ourselves.

"For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever has not, from him shall be taken away, even that which he seems to have."

And although the saying be full of much obscurity, yet it indicates unspeakable justice. For what He says is like this: When any one has forwardness and zeal, there shall be given unto him all things on God's part also: but if he be void of these, and contribute not his own share, neither are God's gifts bestowed. For even *"what he seems to have,"* so He says, *"shall be taken away from him;"* God not so much taking it away, as counting him unworthy of His gifts. This we also do; when we see any one listening carelessly, and when with much entreaty we cannot persuade him to attend, it remains for us to be silent. For if we are still to go on, his carelessness is aggravated. But him that is striving to learn, we lead on, and pour in much.

And well said He, *"Even that which he seems to have."* For he has not really even this.

Then He also made what He had said more distinct, pointing out the meaning of, *"To him that has, shall be given, but from him that has not, even that which he seems to have, shall be taken away."*

"Therefore," says He, *"speak I to them in parables; because they seeing see not."* [Matthew 13:13]

"It were meet then," one may say, *"to have opened their eyes, if they see not."* Nay, if the blindness were natural, it were meet to open them; but because it was a voluntary and self-chosen blindness, therefore He said not

simply, "*They see not,*" but, "*seeing, they see not;*" so that the blindness is of their own wickedness. For they saw even devils cast out, and said, "*By Beelzebub, prince of the devils, He casts out the devils.*" [Matthew 12:14] They heard Him guiding them unto God, and evincing His great unanimity with Him, and they say, "*This man is not of God.*" [John 9:16] Since then the judgment they pronounced was contrary both to their sight and hearing, therefore, says He, the very hearing do I take away from them. For they derive thence no advantage, but rather greater condemnation. For they not only disbelieved, but found fault also, and accused, and laid snares. However, He says not this, for it is not His will to give disgust in accusing them. Therefore neither at the beginning did He so discourse to them, but with much plainness; but because they perverted themselves, thenceforth He speaks in parables.

2. After this, lest any one should suppose His words to be a mere accusation, and lest men should say, Being our enemy He is bringing these charges and calumnies against us; He introduces the prophet also, pronouncing the same judgment as Himself.

"For in them is fulfilled," says He, *"the prophecy of Esaias, which says, By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive."*

Do you see the prophet likewise, accusing them with this same accuracy? For neither did He say, You see not, but *"You shall see and not perceive;"* nor again, You shall not hear, but *"You shall hear and not understand."* So that they first inflicted the loss on themselves, by stopping their ears, by closing their eyes, by making their heart fat. For they not only failed to hear, but also *"heard heavily,"* and they did this, He says,

"Lest at any time they should be converted, and I should heal them;" describing their aggravated wickedness, and their determined defection

from Him. And this He says to draw them unto Him, and to provoke them, and to signify that if they would convert He would heal them: much as if one should say, *"He would not look at me, and I thank him; for if he had vouchsafed me this, I should straightway have given in:"* and this he says, to signify how he would have been reconciled. Even so then here too it is said, *"Lest at any time they should convert, and I should heal them;"* implying that both their conversion was possible, and that upon their repentance they might be saved, and that not for His own glory, but for their salvation, He was doing all things.

For if it had not been His will that they should hear and be saved, He ought to have been silent, not to have spoken in parables; but now by this very thing He stirs them up, even by speaking under a veil. *"For God wills not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn unto Him and live."*

For in proof that our sin belongs not to nature, nor to necessity and compulsion, hear what He says to the apostles, *"But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;"* [Matthew 13:16] not meaning this kind of sight nor hearing, but that of the mind. For indeed these too were Jews, and brought up in the same circumstances; but nevertheless they took no hurt from the prophecy, because they had the root of His blessings well settled in them, their principle of choice, I mean, and their judgment.

Do you see that, *"unto you it is given,"* was not of necessity? For neither would they have been blessed, unless the well-doing had been their own. For tell me not this, that it was spoken obscurely; for they might have come and asked Him, as the disciples did: but they would not, being careless and supine. Why say I, they would not? Nay, they were doing the very opposite, not only disbelieving, not only not hearkening, but even waging war, and disposed to be very bitter against all He said: which He

brings in the prophet laying to their charge, in the words, *"They heard heavily."*

But not such were these; wherefore He also blessed them. And in another way too He assures them again, saying,

"For verily I say unto you, many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them;"

[Matthew 13:17] my coming, He means; my very miracles, my voice, my teaching. For here He prefers them not to these depraved only, but even to such as have done virtuously; yea, and He affirms them to be more blessed even than they. Why can this be? Because not only do these see what the Jews saw not, but even what those of old desired to see. For they indeed beheld by faith only: but these by sight too, and much more distinctly.

Do you see how again He connects the old dispensation with the new, signifying that those of old not only knew the things to come but also greatly desired them? But had they pertained to some strange and opposing God, they would never have desired them.

"Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower," [Matthew 13:18] says He; and He speaks what we before mentioned, of carelessness and attention, of cowardice and fortitude, of wealth and voluntary poverty; pointing out the hurt from the one, and the benefit from the other.

Then of virtue also He brings forward different forms. For being full of love to man, He marked out not one only way, nor did He say, *"unless one bring forth an hundred, he is an outcast;"* but he that brings forth sixty is saved also, and not he only, but also the producer of thirty. And this He said, making out salvation to be easy.

3. And thou then, are you unable to practise virginity? Be chaste in marriage. Are you unable to strip yourself of your possessions? Give of

your substance. Can you not bear that burden? Share your goods with Christ. Are you unwilling to yield Him up all? Give Him but the half, but the third part. He is your brother, and joint-heir, make Him joint-heir with you here too. Whatsoever you give Him, you will give to yourself. Do you not hear what says the prophet? *"Them that pertain to your seed you shall not overlook."* But if we must not overlook our kinsmen, much less our Lord, having towards you, together with His authority as Lord, the claim also of kindred, and many more besides. Yea, for He too has made you a sharer in His goods, having received nothing of you, but having begun with this unspeakable benefit. What then can it be but extreme senselessness, not even by this gift to be made kind towards men, not even to give a return for a free gift, and less things for greater? Thus whereas He has made you heir of Heaven, do you not impart to Him even of the things on earth? He, when you had done no good work, but were even an enemy, reconciled you: and do you not requite Him, being even a friend and benefactor?

Yet surely, even antecedently to the kingdom, and to all the rest, even for the very fact of His giving, we ought to feel bound to Him. For so servants too, when bidding their masters to a meal, account themselves not to be giving but receiving; but here the contrary has taken place: not the servant the Lord, but the Lord has first bidden the servant unto His own table; and do you not bid Him, no not even after this? He first has introduced you under His own roof; do you not take Him in, so much as in the second place? He clad you, being naked; and do you not even after this receive Him being a stranger? He first gave you to drink out of His own cup, and do you not impart to Him so much as cold water? He has made you drink of the Holy Spirit, and do you not even soothe His bodily thirst? He has made you drink of the Spirit, when you were deserving of punishment; and do you neglect Him even when thirsty, and this when it is

out of His own, that you are to do all these things? Do you not then esteem it a great thing, to hold the cup out of which Christ is to drink, and to put it to His lips? Do you see not that for the priest alone is it lawful to give the cup of His blood? But I am by no means strict about this, says He; but though yourself should give, I receive; though thou be a layman, I refuse it not. And I do not require such as I have given: for not blood do I seek, but cold water. Consider to whom you are giving drink, and tremble. Consider, you have become a priest of Christ, giving with your own hand, not flesh but bread, not blood, but a cup of cold water. He clothed you with a garment of salvation, and clothed you by Himself; do thou at least by your servant clothe Him. He made you glorious in Heaven, do thou deliver Him from shivering, and nakedness, and shame. He made you a fellow-citizen of angels, do thou impart to Him at least of the covering of your roof, give house-room to Him at least as to your own servant. *"I refuse not this lodging and that, having opened to you the whole Heaven. I have delivered you from a most grievous prison; this I do not require again, nor do I say, deliver me; but if you would look upon me only, when I am bound, this suffices me for refreshment. When thou were dead, I raised you; I require not this again of you, but I say, visit me only when sick."*

Now when His gifts are so great, and His demands exceeding easy, and we do not supply even these; what deep of hell must we not deserve? Justly shall we depart into the fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels, being more insensible than any rock. For how great insensibility is it, tell me, for us, who have received, and are to receive so much, to be slaves of money, from which we shall a little while hence be separated even against our will? And others indeed have given up even their life, and shed their blood; and do you not even give up your superfluities for Heaven's sake, for the sake of so great crowns?

And of what favor can you be worthy? Of what justification? Who in your sowing of the earth, gladly pourest forth all, and in lending to men at usury sparest nothing; but in feeding your Lord through His poor art cruel and inhuman?

Having then considered all these things, and calculated what we have received, what we are to receive, what is required of us, let us show forth all our diligence on the things spiritual. Let us become at length mild and humane, that we may not draw down on ourselves the intolerable punishment. For what is there that has not power to condemn us? Our having enjoyed so many and such great benefits; our having no great thing required of us; our having such things required, as we shall leave here even against our will; our exhibiting so much liberality in our worldly matters. Why each one of these, even by itself, were enough to condemn us; but when they all meet together, what hope will there be of salvation?

In order then that we may escape all this condemnation, let us show forth some bounty towards those who are in need. For thus shall we enjoy all the good things, both here, and there; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 46 on Matthew

Matt. XIII. 24-30.

"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Whence then has it tares? He said unto them, An enemy has done this. The servants said unto him, Will you then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let both therefore grow together until the harvest."

What is the difference between this, and the parable before it? There He speaks of them that have not at all holden with Him, but have started aside, and have thrown away the seed; but here He means the societies of the heretics. For in order that not even this might disturb His disciples, He foretells it also, after having taught them why He speaks in parables. The former parable then means their not receiving Him; this, their receiving corrupters. For indeed this also is a part of the devil's craft, by the side of the truth always to bring in error, painting thereon many resemblances, so as easily to cheat the deceivable. Therefore He calls it not any other seed, but tares; which in appearance are somewhat like wheat.

Then He mentions also the manner of his device. For *"while men slept,"* says He. It is no small danger, which He hereby suspends over our rulers, to whom especially is entrusted the keeping of the field; and not the rulers only, but the subjects too.

And He signifies also that the error comes after the truth, which the actual event testifies. For so after the prophets, were the false prophets; and after the apostles, the false apostles; and after Christ, Antichrist. For unless the devil see what to imitate, or against whom to plot, he neither attempts, nor knows how. Now then also, having seen that *"one brought forth a hundred, another sixty, another thirty,"* he proceeds after that another way. That is, not having been able to carry away what had taken root, nor to choke, nor to scorch it up, he conspires against it by another craft, privily casting in his own inventions.

And what difference is there, one may say, between them that sleep, and them that resemble the wayside? That in the latter case he immediately caught it away; yea, he suffered it not even to take root; but here more of his craft was needed.

And these things Christ says, instructing us to be always wakeful. For, says He, though thou quite escape those harms, there is yet another harm. For as in those instances *"the wayside,"* and *"the rock,"* and *"the thorns,"* so here again sleep occasions our ruin; so that there is need of continual watchfulness. Wherefore He also said, *"He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved."* [Matthew 10:22]

Something like this took place even at the beginning. Many of the prelates, I mean, bringing into the churches wicked men, disguised heresiarchs, gave great facility to the laying that kind of snare. For the devil needs not even to take any trouble, when he has once planted them among us.

And how is it possible not to sleep? One may say. Indeed, as to natural sleep, it is not possible; but as to that of our moral faculty, it is possible. Wherefore Paul also said, *"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith."* [1 Corinthians 16:13]

After this He points out the thing to be superfluous too, not hurtful only; in that, after the land has been tilled, and there is no need of anything, then this enemy sows again; as the heretics also do, who for no other cause than vainglory inject their proper venom.

And not by this only, but by what follows likewise, He depicts exactly all their acting. For, "*When the blade was sprung up,*" says He, "*and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also;*" which kind of thing these men also do. For at the beginning they disguise themselves; but when they have gained much confidence, and some one imparts to them the teaching of the word, then they pour out their poison.

But wherefore does He bring in the servants, telling what has been done? That He may pronounce it wrong to slay them.

And He calls him "*an enemy,*" because of his harm done to men. For although the despite is against us, in its origin it sprang from his enmity, not to us, but to God. Whence it is manifest, that God loves us more than we love ourselves.

And see from another thing also, the malicious craft of the devil. For he did not sow before this, because he had nothing to destroy, but when all had been fulfilled, that he might defeat the diligence of the Husbandman; in such enmity against Him did he constantly act.

And mark also the affection of the servants. I mean, what haste they are in at once to root up the tares, even though they do it indiscreetly; which shows their anxiety for the crop, and that they are looking to one thing only, not to the punishment of that enemy, but to the preservation of the seed sown. For of course this other is not the urgent consideration.

Wherefore how they may for the present extirpate the mischief, this is their object. And not even this do they seek absolutely, for they trust not themselves with it, but await the Master's decision, saying, "*Will You?*"

What then does the Master? He forbids them, saying, "*Lest haply ye root up the wheat with them.*" And this He said, to hinder wars from arising, and blood and slaughter. For it is not right to put a heretic to death, since an implacable war would be brought into the world. By these two reasons then He restrains them; one, that the wheat be not hurt; another, that punishment will surely overtake them, if incurably diseased. Wherefore, if you would have them punished, yet without harm to the wheat, I bid you wait for the proper season.

But what means, "*Lest ye root up the wheat with them?*" Either He means this, If you are to take up arms, and to kill the heretics, many of the saints also must needs be overthrown with them; or that of the very tares it is likely that many may change and become wheat. If therefore ye root them up beforehand, you injure that which is to become wheat, slaying some, in whom there is yet room for change and improvement. He does not therefore forbid our checking heretics, and stopping their mouths, and taking away their freedom of speech, and breaking up their assemblies and confederacies, but our killing and slaying them.

But mark thou His gentleness, how He not only gives sentence and forbids, but sets down reasons.

What then, if the tares should remain until the end? "*Then I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.*" [Matthew 13:30] He again reminds them of John's words, [Matthew 3:12] introducing Him as judge; and He says, So long as they stand by the wheat, we must spare them, for it is possible for them even to become wheat but when they have departed, having profited nothing, then of necessity the inexorable punishment will overtake them. "*For I will say to the reapers,*" says He, "*Gather ye together first the tares.*" Why, "*first?*" That these may not be alarmed, as though the wheat were carried off with

them. *"And bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."*

2. *"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed."*

That is, since He had said, that of the crop three parts are lost, and but one saved, and in the very part again which is saved so great damage ensues; lest they should say, *"And who, and how many will be the faithful?"* this fear again He removes, by the parable of the mustard seed leading them on to belief, and signifying that in any case the gospel shall be spread abroad.

Therefore He brought forward the similitude of this herb, which has a very strong resemblance to the subject in hand; *"Which indeed is the least,"* He says, *"of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."*

Thus He meant to set forth the most decisive sign of its greatness. *"Even so then shall it be with respect to the gospel too,"* says He. Yea, for His disciples were weakest of all, and least of all; but nevertheless, because of the great power that was in them, It has been unfolded in every part of the world.

After this He adds the leaven to this similitude, saying, *"The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."*

For as this converts the large quantity of meal into its own quality, even so shall you convert the whole world.

And see His wisdom, in that He brings in things natural, implying that as the one cannot fail to take place, so neither the other. For say not this to me: *"What shall we be able to do, twelve men, throwing ourselves upon so*

vast a multitude?" Nay, for this very thing most of all makes your might conspicuous, that you mix with the multitude and are not put to flight. As therefore the leaven then leavens the lump when it comes close to the meal, and not simply close, but so as to be actually mixed with it (for He said not, "*put*," simply, but "*hid*"); so also ye, when you cleave to your enemies, and are made one with them, then shall you get the better of them. And as the leaven, though it be buried, yet is not destroyed, but little by little transmutes all into its own condition; of like sort will the event be here also, with respect to the gospel. Fear ye not then, because I said there would be much injurious dealing: for even so shall you shine forth, and get the better of all.

But by "*three measures*," here, He meant many, for He is wont to take this number for a multitude.

And marvel not, if discoursing about the kingdom, He made mention of a little seed and of leaven; for He was discoursing with men inexperienced and ignorant, and such as needed to be led on by those means. For so simple were they, that even after all this, they required a good deal of explanation.

Where now are the children of the Greeks? Let them learn Christ's power, seeing the verity of His deeds, and on either ground let them adore Him, that He both foretold so great a thing, and fulfilled it. Yea, for it is He that put the power into the leaven. With this intent He mingled also with the multitude those who believe in Him, that we might impart unto the rest of our wisdom. Let no one therefore reprove us for being few. For great is the power of the gospel, and that which has been once leavened, becomes leaven again for what remains. And as a spark, when it has caught in timber, makes what has been burnt up already increase the flame, and so proceeds to the rest; even so the gospel likewise. But He said not fire, but "*leaven*."

Why might this be? Because in that case the whole effect is not of the fire, but partly of the timber too that is kindled, but in this the leaven does the whole work by itself.

3. Now if twelve men leavened the whole world, imagine how great our baseness, in that when we being so many are not able to amend them that remain; we, who ought to be enough for ten thousand worlds, and to become leaven to them. *"But they,"* one may say, *"were apostles."* And what then? Were they not partakers with you? Were they not brought up in cities? Did they not enjoy the same benefits? Did they not practise trades? What, were they angels? What, came they down from Heaven?

"But they had signs," it will be said. It was not the signs that made them admirable. How long shall we use those miracles as cloaks for our own remissness? *Behold the choir of the Saints, that they shone not by those miracles.* Why, many who had actually cast out devils, because they wrought iniquity, instead of being admired, did even incur punishment.

And what can it be then, he will say, that showed them great? Their contempt of wealth, their despising glory, their freedom from worldly things. Since surely, had they wanted these qualities, and been slaves of their passions, though they had raised ten thousand dead, so far from doing any good, they would even have been accounted deceivers. Thus it is their life, so bright on all sides, which also draws down the grace of the Spirit.

What manner of miracle did John work, that he fixed on himself the attention of so many cities? For as to the fact that he did no wondrous works, hear the evangelist, saying, *"John did no miracle."* And whence did Elias become admirable? Was it not from his boldness towards the king? From his zeal towards God? From his voluntary poverty? From his garment of sheep's skin, and his cave, and his mountains? For his miracles he did after all these. And as to Job, what manner of miracle did he work in sight

of the devil, that he was amazed at him? No miracle indeed, but a life that shone and displayed an endurance firmer than any adamant. What manner of miracle did David, yet being young, that God should say, "*I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart?*" [Acts 13:22] And Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, what dead body did they raise? What leper did they cleanse? Do you not know that the miracles, except we be sober, do even harm in many cases? Thus many of the Corinthians were severed one from another; thus many of the Romans were carried away with pride; thus was Simon cast out. Thus he, who at a certain time had a desire to follow Christ, was rejected, when he had been told, "*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests.*" [Matthew 8:20] For each of these, one aiming at the wealth, another at the glory, which the miracles bring, fell away and perished. But care of practice, and love of virtue, so far from generating such a desire, does even take it away when it exists.

And Himself too, when He was making laws for His own disciples, what said He? "*Do miracles, that men may see you*"? By no means. But what? "*Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.*" [Matthew 5:16] And to Peter again He said not, "*If you love me,*" "*do miracles,*" but "*feed my sheep.*" [John 21:16] And whereas He everywhere distinguishes him with James and John above all the rest, for what, I pray you, did He distinguish them? For their miracles? Nay, all alike cleansed the lepers, and raised the dead; and to all alike He gave that authority.

Whence then had these the advantage? From the virtue in their soul. Do you see how everywhere practice is required, and the proof by works? "*For by their fruits,*" says He, "*you shall know them.*" [Matthew 7:16] And what commends our own life? Is it indeed a display of miracles, or the perfection of an excellent conversation? Very evidently it is the second; but

as to the miracles, they both have their origin from hence, and terminate herein. For both he that shows forth an excellent life, draws to himself this gift, and he that receives the gift, receives it for this end, that he may amend other men's lives. Since even Christ for this end wrought those miracles, that having made Himself thereby credible, and drawn men unto Him, He might bring virtue into our life. Wherefore also He lays more stress of the two on this. For He is not at all satisfied with the signs only, but He also threatens hell, and promises a kingdom, and lays down those startling laws, and all things He orders to this end, that He may make us equal to the angels.

And why say I, that Christ does all for this object? Why, even thou, should one give you your choice, to raise dead men by His name, or to die for His name; which I pray you, of the two would you rather accept? Is it not quite plain, the latter? And yet the one is a miracle, the other but a work. And what, if one offered you to make grass gold, or to be able to despise all wealth as grass, would you not rather accept this latter? And very reasonably. For mankind would be attracted by this more than any way. For if they saw the grass changed into gold, they would covet themselves also to acquire that power, as Simon did, and the love of money would be increased in them; but if they saw us all contemning and neglecting gold, as though it were grass, they would long ago have been delivered from this disease.

4. Do you see that our practice has more power to do good? By practice I mean, not your fasting, nor yet your strewing sackcloth and ashes under you, but if you despise wealth, as it ought to be despised; if you be kindly affectioned, if you give your bread to the hungry, if you control anger, if you cast out vainglory, if you put away envy. So He Himself used to teach: for, "*Learn of me,*" says He, "*for I am meek and lowly in heart.*"

[Matthew 11:29] He did not say, "*for I fasted,*" although surely He might have spoken of the forty days, yet He says not this; but, "*I am meek and lowly in heart.*" And again, when sending them out, He said not, "*Fast,*" but, "*Eat of all that is set before you.*" With regard to wealth, however, He required of them great strictness, saying, "*Provide not gold, or silver, or brass, in your purses.*" [Matthew 10:9]

And all this I say, not to depreciate fasting, God forbid, but rather highly to commend it. But I grieve when other duties being neglected, you think it enough for salvation, having but the last place in the choir of virtue. For the greatest thing is charity, and moderation, and almsgiving; which hits a higher mark even than virginity.

Wherefore, if you desire to become equal to the apostles, there is nothing to hinder you. For to have arrived at this virtue only suffices for your not at all falling short of them. Let no one therefore wait for miracles. For though the evil spirit is grieved, when he is driven out of a body, yet much more so, when he sees a soul delivered from sin. For indeed this is his great power. [Acts 8:10] This power caused Christ to die, that He might put an end to it. Yea, for this brought in death; by reason of this all things have been turned upside down. If then thou remove this, you have cut out the nerves of the devil, you have "*bruised his head,*" you have put an end to all his might, you have scattered his host, you have exhibited a sign greater than all signs.

The saying is not mine, but the blessed Paul's. For when he had said, "*Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way;*" [1 Corinthians 12:31] he did not speak next of a sign, but of charity, the root of all our good things. If then we practise this, and all the self-denial that flows from it, we shall have no need of signs; even as on the other hand, if we do not practise it, we shall gain nothing by the signs.

Bearing in mind then all this, let us imitate those things whereby the apostles became great. And whereby did they become great? Hear Peter, saying, *"Behold we have forsaken all, and followed You; what shall we have therefore?"* [Matthew 19:27] Hear also Christ saying to them, *"You shall sit upon twelve thrones,"* and, *"every one that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or father, or mother, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit everlasting life."* From all worldly things, therefore, let us withdraw ourselves, and dedicate ourselves to Christ, that we may both be made equal to the apostles according to His declaration, and may enjoy eternal life; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 47 on Matthew

Matthew 13:34-35.

"All these things spoke Jesus unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spoke He not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

But Mark says, *"As they were able to hear it, He spoke the word unto them in parables."* [Matthew 4:33]

Then pointing out that He is not making a new thing, He brings in the Prophet also, proclaiming beforehand this His manner of teaching. And to teach us the purpose of Christ, how He discoursed in this manner, not that they might be ignorant, but that He might lead them to inquiry, he added, *"And without a parable spoke He nothing unto them."* Yet surely He did say many things without a parable; but then nothing. And for all this no man asked Him questions, whereas the Prophets, we know, they were often questioning: as Ezekiel, for instance; as many others: but these did no such thing. Yet surely His sayings were enough to cast them into perplexity, and to stir them up to the inquiry; for indeed a very sore punishment was threatened by those parables: however, not even so were they moved.

Wherefore also He left them and went away. For,

"Then," says he, *"Jesus sent the multitudes away, and went into His house."*

And not one of the Scribes follows Him; whence it is clear that for no other purpose did they follow, than to take hold of Him. But when they marked not His sayings, thenceforth He let them be.

"And His disciples come unto Him, asking Him concerning the parable of the tares;" although at times wishing to learn, and afraid [Mark 9:32] to ask. Whence then arose their confidence in this instance? They had been told, *"To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven;"* and they were emboldened. Wherefore also they ask in private; not as grudging the multitude, but observing their Master's law. For, *"To these,"* says He, *"it is not given."*

And why may it be that they let pass the parable of the leaven, and of the mustard seed, and inquire concerning this? They let those pass, as being plainer; but about this, as having an affinity to that before spoken, and as setting forth something more than it, they are desirous to learn (since He would not have spoken the same to them a second time); for indeed they saw how severe was the threatening therein uttered. Wherefore neither does He blame them, but rather completes His previous statements.

And, as I am always saying, the parables must not be explained throughout word for word, since many absurdities will follow; this even He Himself is teaching us here in thus interpreting this parable. Thus He says not at all who the servants are that came to Him, but, implying that He brought them in, for the sake of some order, and to make up the picture, He omits that part, and interprets those that are most urgent and essential, and for the sake of which the parable was spoken; signifying Himself to be Judge and Lord of all.

"And He answered," so it is said, *"and said unto them, He that sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sows them is the devil; and the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man*

shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

For whereas He Himself is the sower, and that of His own field, and out of His own kingdom He gathers, it is quite clear that the present world also is His.

But mark His unspeakable love to man, and His leaning to bounty, and His disinclination to punishment; in that, when He sows, He sows in His own person, but when He punishes, it is by others, that is, by the angels.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Not because it will be just so much only, but because this star is surpassed in brightness by none that we know. He uses the comparisons that are known to us.

And yet surely elsewhere He says, the harvest is already come; as when He says of the Samaritans, *"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."* [John 4:35] And again, *"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."* How then says He there, that the harvest is already come, while here He said, it is yet to be? According to another signification.

And how having elsewhere said, *"One sows, and another reaps,"* [John 4:37] does He here say, it is Himself that sows? Because there again, He was speaking, to distinguish the apostles, not from Himself, but from the prophets, and that in the case of the Jews and Samaritans. Since certainly it was He who sowed through the prophets also.

And at times He calls this self-same thing both harvest and sowing, naming it with relation, now to one thing, now to another. Thus when He is speaking of the conviction and obedience of His converts, He calls the thing

"a harvest," as though He had accomplished all; but when He is seeking after the fruit of their hearing, He calls it seed, and the end, harvest.

And how says He elsewhere, that "*the righteous are caught up first?*" [1 Thessalonians 4:17] Because they are indeed caught up first, but Christ having come, those others are given over to punishment, and then the former depart into the kingdom of heaven. For because they must be in heaven, but He Himself is to come and judge all men here; having passed sentence upon these, like some king He rises with His friends, leading them to that blessed portion. Do you see that the punishment is twofold, first to be burnt up, and then to fall from that glory?

2. But wherefore does He still go on, when the others have withdrawn, to speak to these also in parables? They had become wiser by His sayings, so as even to understand. At any rate, to them He says afterwards,

"Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord." So completely, together with its other objects, did the parable effect this too, that it made them more clear sighted. What then says He again?

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hid in a field, the which when a man has found, he hides, and for joy thereof sells all that he has, and buys that field. Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Much as in the other place, the mustard seed and the leaven have but some little difference from each other, so here also these two parables, that of the treasure and that of the pearl. This being of course signified by both, that we ought to value the gospel above all things. And the former indeed, of the leaven and of the mustard seed, was spoken with a view to the power of the gospel, and to its surely prevailing over the world; but these declare its value, and great price. For as it extends itself like mustard seed, and

prevails like leaven, so it is precious like a pearl, and affords full abundance like a treasure. We are then to learn not this only, that we ought to strip ourselves of everything else, and cling to the gospel, but also that we are to do so with joy; and when a man is dispossessing himself of his goods, he is to know that the transaction is gain, and not loss.

Do you see how both the gospel is hid in the world, and the good things in the gospel?

Except thou sell all, you buy not; except thou have such a soul, anxious and inquiring, you find not. Two things therefore are requisite, abstinence from worldly matters, and watchfulness. For He says *"One seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one of great price, sold all and bought it."* For the truth is one, and not in many divisions.

And much as he that has the pearl knows indeed himself that he is rich, but others know not, many times, that he is holding it in his hand (for there is no corporeal bulk); just so also with the gospel, they that have hold of it know that they are rich, but the unbelievers, not knowing of this treasure, are in ignorance also of our wealth.

3. After this, that we may not be confident in the gospel merely preached, nor think that faith only suffices us for salvation, He utters also another, an awful parable. Which then is this? That of the net.

"For the kingdom of Heaven is like a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."

And wherein does this differ from the parable of the tares? For there too the one are saved, the other perish; but there, for choosing of wicked doctrines; and those before this again, for not giving heed to His sayings, but these for wickedness of life; who are the most wretched of all, having

attained to His knowledge, and being caught, but not even so capable of being saved.

Yet surely He says elsewhere, that the shepherd Himself separates them, but here He says the angels do this; [Matthew 25:32] and so with respect to the tares. How then is it? At one time He discourses to them in a way more suited to their dullness, at another time in a higher strain.

And this parable He interprets without so much as being asked, but of His own motion He explained it by one part of it, and increased their awe. For lest, on being told, *"They cast the bad away,"* you should suppose that ruin to be without danger; by His interpretation He signified the punishment, saying, *"They will cast them into the furnace."* [Matthew 13:50] And He declared the gnashing of teeth, and the anguish, that it is unspeakable.

Do you see how many are the ways of destruction? By the rock, by the thorns, by the wayside, by the tares, by the net. Not without reason therefore did He say, *"Broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be which go away by it."* [Matthew 7:13]

4. Having then uttered all this, and concluded His discourse in a tone to cause fear, and signified that these are the majority of cases (for He dwelt more on them). He says,

"Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord."

Then because they understood, He again praises them, saying,

"Therefore every Scribe, which is instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven, is like a man that is an householder, which brings forth out of his treasure things new and old." [Matthew 13:52]

Wherefore elsewhere also He says, *"I will send you wise men and scribes."* [Matthew 23:34] Do you see how so far from excluding the Old

Testament, He even commends it, and speaks publicly in favor of it, calling it "*a treasure*"?

So that as many as are ignorant of the divine Scriptures cannot be "*householders*;" such as neither have of themselves, nor receive of others, but neglect their own case, perishing with famine. And not these only, but the heretics too, are excluded from this blessing. For they bring not forth things new and old. For they have not the old things, wherefore neither have they the new; even as they who have not the new, neither have they the old, but are deprived of both. For these are bound up and interwoven one with another.

Let us then hear, as many of us as neglect the reading of the Scriptures, to what harm we are subjecting ourselves, to what poverty. For when are we to apply ourselves to the real practice of virtue, who do not so much as know the very laws according to which our practice should be guided? But while the rich, those who are mad about wealth, are constantly shaking out their garments, that they may not become moth-eaten; do you, seeing forgetfulness worse than any moth wasting your soul, neglect conversing with books? Do you not thrust away from you the pest, adorn your soul, look continually upon the image of virtue, and acquaint yourself with her members and her head? For she too has a head and members more seemly than any graceful and beautiful body.

What then, says one, is the head of virtue? Humility. Wherefore Christ also begins with it, saying, "*Blessed are the poor.*" This head has not locks and ringlets, but beauty, such as to gain God's favor. For, "*Unto whom shall I look,*" says He, "*but unto him that is meek and humble, and trembles at my words?*" [Isaiah 66:2] And, "*My eyes are upon the meek of the earth.*" And, "*The Lord is near unto them that are of a contrite heart.*" This head, instead of locks, and flowing hair, bears sacrifices acceptable to God. It is a golden

altar, and a spiritual place of sacrifice; *"For a contrite spirit is a sacrifice to God."* This is the mother of wisdom. If a man have this, he will have the rest also.

Have you seen a head such as you had never seen? Will you see the face too, or rather mark it? Mark then for the present its color, how ruddy, and blooming, and very engaging; and observe what are its ingredients. *"Well, and what are they?"* Shame-facedness and blushing. Wherefore also some one says, *"Before a shamefaced man shall go favor."* [Sirach 32:10] This sheds much beauty over the other members also. Though thou mix ten thousand colors, you will not produce such a bloom.

And if you will see the eyes also, behold them exactly delineated with decency and temperance. Wherefore they become also so beautiful and sharp-sighted, as to behold even the Lord Himself. For, *"Blessed,"* says He, *"are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* [Matthew 5:8]

And her mouth is wisdom and understanding, and the knowledge of spiritual hymns. And her heart, acquaintance with Scripture, and maintenance of sound doctrines, and benevolence, and kindness. And as without this last there is no living, so without that other is never any salvation. Yea, for from that all her excellencies have birth. She has also for feet and hands the manifestations of her good works. She has a soul too, godliness. She has likewise a bosom of gold, and firmer than adamant, even fortitude; and all may be taken captive more easily than that bosom may be riven asunder. And the spirit that is in the brain and heart, is charity.

5. Will you that in her actual deeds also I show you her image? Consider, I pray you, this very evangelist: although we have not his whole life in writing, nevertheless even from a few facts one may see his image shine forth.

First, as to his having been lowly and contrite, hear him, after his gospel, calling himself a publican; for his being also merciful, see him stripping himself of all and following Jesus; and as to his piety, it is evident from his doctrines. And his wisdom again it is easy to see from the gospel which he composed, and his charity (for he cared for the whole world); and the manifestation of his good works, from the throne on which he is to sit; [Luke 22:30] and his courage too, "*by his departing with joy from the presence of the council.*" [Acts 5:41]

Let us imitate then this virtue, and most of all his humility and almsgiving, without which one cannot be saved. And this is shown by the five virgins, and together with them by the Pharisee. For without virginity indeed it is possible to see the kingdom, but without almsgiving it cannot be. For this is among the things that are essential, and hold all together. Not unnaturally then have we called it the heart of virtue. But this heart, unless it supply breath to all, is soon extinguished. In the same way then as the fountain also, if it confine its streams to itself, grows putrid; so it is with the rich also, when they keep their possessions to themselves. Wherefore even in our common conversation we say, "*great is the consumption of wealth with such a man;*" instead of saying, "*great is the abundance, great the treasure.*" For in truth there is a consumption, not of the possessors only, but of the riches themselves. Since both garments laid by spoil, and gold is cankered, and grain is eaten up, and the soul too of their owner is more than they all cankered and corrupted by the cares of them.

And if you be willing to produce in the midst a miser's soul; like a garment eaten by innumerable worms, and not having any sound part, even so will you find it, perforated on all sides by cares; rotted, cankered by sins.

But not such the poor man's soul, the soul of him, I mean, that is voluntarily poor; but it is resplendent as gold, it shines like a pearl, and it

blooms like a rose. For no moth is there, no thief is there, no worldly care, but as angels converse, so do they.

Would you see the beauty of this soul? Would you acquaint yourself with the riches of poverty? He commands not men, but he commands evil spirits. He stands not at a king's side, but he has taken his stand near to God. He is the comrade, not of men, but of angels. He has not chests, two, or three, or twenty, but such an abundance as to account the whole world as nothing. He has not a treasure, but heaven. He needs not slaves, or rather has his passions for slaves, has for slaves the motives that rule over kings. For that which commands him who wears the purple, that motive shrinks before him. And royalty, and gold, and all such things, he laughs at, as at children's toys; and like hoops, and dice, and heads, and balls, so does he count all these to be contemptible. For he has an adorning, which they who play with these things cannot even see.

What then can be superior to this poor man? He has at least heaven for his pavement; but if the pavement be like this, imagine the roof! But has he not horses and chariots? Why, what need has he of these, who is to be borne upon the clouds, and to be with Christ?

Having these things then impressed on our minds, let us, both men and women, seek after that wealth, and the plenty that cannot be rifled; that we may attain also unto the kingdom of heaven, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 48 on Matthew

Matt. XIII. 53.

"And it came to pass, that, when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence."

Wherefore said He, *"these"*? Because He was to speak others besides. And wherefore, again, does He depart? Desiring to sow the word everywhere.

"And when He had come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue." [Matthew 13:54]

And what does he now call His country? As it seems to me, Nazareth. *"For He did not many mighty works there,"* [Matthew 13:58] it is said, but in Capernaum He did miracles: wherefore He said also, *"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shall be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in you, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."* [Matthew 11:23]

But having come there, while He slackens somewhat in His miracles; so as not to inflame them unto more envy, nor to condemn them more grievously, by the aggravation of their unbelief: He yet puts forth a doctrine, having no less of wonder in it than the miracles. For these utterly senseless men, when they ought to have marvelled, and to have been amazed at the power of His words, they on the contrary hold Him cheap, because of him who seemed to be His father; yet we know they had many examples of these things in the former times, and from fathers of no note had seen illustrious children. For so David was the son of a certain mean husbandman, Jesse; and Amos, the child of a goatherd, and himself a goatherd; [Amos 7:14-15] and Moses too, the lawgiver, had a father very

inferior to himself. When they therefore, for this especially, ought to adore and be amazed, that being of such parents He spoke such things, it being quite manifest, that so it was not of man's care, but of God's grace: yet they, what things they should admire Him for, for those they despise Him.

He is moreover continually frequenting the synagogues, lest if He were always abiding in the wilderness, they should the more accuse Him as making a schism, and fighting against their polity. Being amazed therefore, and in perplexity, they said, "*Whence has this man this wisdom, and these powers?*" either calling the miracles powers, or even the wisdom itself. "*Is not this the carpenter's son?*" [Matthew 13:55] The greater then the marvel, and the more abundant the ground of amaze. "*Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence has this man these things? And they were offended in Him.*" [Matthew 13:55-56]

Do you see that Nazareth was where He was discoursing? "*Are not his brethren,*" it is said, "*such a one, and such a one?*" And what of this? Why, by this especially you ought to have been led on to faith. But envy you see is a poor base thing, and often falls foul of itself. For what things were strange and marvellous, and enough to have gained them over, these offended them.

What then says Christ unto them? "*A prophet,*" says He, "*is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house: and He did not,*" it is said, "*many mighty works, because of their unbelief.*" But Luke says, "*And He did not there many miracles.*" And yet it was to be expected He should have done them. For if the feeling of wonder towards Him was gaining ground (for indeed even there He was marvelled at), wherefore did He not do them? Because He looked not to the display of Himself, but to

their profit. Therefore when this succeeded not, He overlooked what concerned Himself, in order not to aggravate their punishment.

And yet see after how long a time He came to them, and after how great a display of miracles: but not even so did they endure it, but were inflamed again with envy.

Wherefore then did He yet do a few miracles? That they might not say, *"Physician, heal yourself."* [Luke 4:23] That they might not say, *"He is a foe and an enemy to us, and overlooks His own;"* that they might not say, *"If miracles had been wrought, we also should have believed."* Therefore He both wrought them, and stayed: the one, that He might fulfill His own part; the other, that He might not condemn them the more.

And consider thou the power of His words, herein at least, that possessed as they were by envy, they did yet admire. And as with regard to His works, they do not find fault with what is done, but feign causes which have no existence, slaying, *"In Beelzebub He casts out the devils;"* even so here too, they find no fault with the teaching, but take refuge in the meanness of His race.

But mark thou, I pray you, the Master's gentleness, how He reviles them not, but with great mildness says, *"A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country."* And neither here did He stop, but added, *"And in his own house."* To me it appears, that with covert reference to His very own brethren, He made this addition.

But in Luke He puts examples also of this, saying, that neither did Elias come unto His own, but to the stranger widow; neither by Eliseus was any other leper healed, but the stranger Naaman; [Luke 4:25-27] and Israelites neither received benefit, nor conferred benefit, but the foreigners. And these things He says, signifying in every instance their evil disposition, and that in His case nothing new is taking place.

2. *"At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus."* For Herod the king, this man's father, he that slew the children, was dead.

But not without a purpose does the evangelist signify the time, but to make you observe also the haughtiness of the tyrant, and his thoughtlessness, in that not at the beginning did he inform himself about Christ, but after a very long time. For such are they that are in places of power, and are encompassed with much pomp, they learn these things late, because they do not make much account of them.

But mark thou, I pray you, how great a thing virtue is, that he was afraid of him even when dead, and out of his fear he speaks wisely even concerning a resurrection.

"For he said," it is mentioned, *"unto his servants, This is John, whom I slew, he is risen from the dead, and therefore the mighty powers do work in him."* [Matthew 13:2] Do you see the intensity of his fear? For neither then did he dare to publish it abroad, but he still speaks but to his own servants.

But yet even this opinion savored of the soldier, and was absurd. For many besides had risen from the dead, and no one had wrought anything of the kind. And his words seem to me to be the language both of vanity, and of fear. For such is the nature of unreasonable souls, they admit often a mixture of opposite passions.

But Luke affirms that the multitudes said, *"This is Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the old prophets,"* but he, as uttering forsooth something wiser than the rest, made this assertion.

But it is probable that before this, in answer to them that said He was John (for many had said this too), he had denied it, and said, *"I slew him,"* priding himself and glorying in it. For this both Mark and Luke report that he said, *"John I beheaded."* But when the rumor prevailed, then he too says the same as the people.

Then the evangelist relates to us also the history. And what might his reason be for not introducing it as a subject by itself? Because all their labor entirely was to tell what related to Christ, and they made themselves no secondary work besides this, except it were again to contribute to the same end. Therefore neither now would they have mentioned the history were it not on Christ's account, and because Herod said, *"John is risen again."*

But Mark says, that Herod exceedingly honored the man, and this, when reproved. [Mark 6:20] So great a thing is virtue.

Then his narrative proceeds thus: *"For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for you to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the people, because they counted him as a prophet."* [Matthew 13:3-5]

And wherefore does he not address his discourse at all to her, but to the man? Because it depended more on him.

But see how inoffensive he makes his accusation, as relating a history rather than bringing a charge.

4. *"But when Herod's birth-day was kept,"* says he, *"the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod."* [Matthew 13:6] O diabolical revel! O satanic spectacle! O lawless dancing! And more lawless reward for the dancing. For a murder more impious than all murders was perpetrated, and he that was worthy to be crowned and publicly honored, was slain in the midst, and the trophy of the devils was set on the table.

And the means too of the victory were worthy of the deeds done. For, *"The daughter of Herodias,"* it is said, *"danced in the midst, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he swore with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger."* [Matthew 13:6-8]

Her reproach is twofold; first, that she danced, then that she pleased him, and so pleased him, as to obtain even murder for her reward.

Do you see how savage he was? How senseless? How foolish? In putting himself under the obligation of an oath, while to her he gives full power over her request. But when he saw the evil actually ensuing, "*he was sorry*," it is said; and yet in the first instance he had put him in bonds. Wherefore then is he sorry? Such is the nature of virtue, even among the wicked admiration and praises are its due. But alas for her madness! When she too ought to admire, yea, to bow down to him, for trying to redress her wrong, she on the contrary even helps to arrange the plot, and lays a snare, and asks a diabolical favor.

But he was afraid "*for the oath's sake*," it is said, "*and them that sat at meat with him*." And how did you not fear that which is more grievous? Surely if you were afraid to have witnesses of your perjury, much more ought thou to fear having so many witnesses of a murder so lawless.

But as I think many are ignorant of the grievance itself, whence the murder had its origin, I must declare this too, that you may learn the wisdom of the lawgiver. What then was the ancient law, which Herod indeed trampled on, but John vindicated? The wife of him that died childless was to be given to his brother. [Deuteronomy 25:5] For since death was an incurable ill, and all was contrived for life's sake; He makes a law that the living brother should marry her, and should call the child that is born by the name of the dead, so that his house should not utterly perish. For if the dead were not so much as to leave children, which is the greatest mitigation of death, the sorrow would be without remedy. Therefore you see, the lawgiver devised this refreshment for those who were by nature deprived of children, and commanded the issue to be reckoned as belonging to the other.

But when there was a child, this marriage was no longer permitted. *"And wherefore?"* one may say, *"for if it was lawful for another, much more for the brother."* By no means. For He will have men's consanguinity extended, and the sources multiplied of our interest in each other.

Why then, in the case also of death without offspring, did not another marry her? Because it would not so be accounted the child of the departed; but now his brother begetting it, the fiction became probable. And besides, any other man had no constraining call to build up the house of the dead, but this had incurred the claim by relationship.

Forasmuch then as Herod had married his brother's wife, when she had a child, therefore John blames him, and blames him with moderation, showing together with his boldness, his consideration also.

But mark thou, I pray you, how the whole theatre was devilish. For first, it was made up of drunkenness and luxury, whence nothing healthful could come. Secondly, the spectators in it were depraved, and he that gave the banquet the worst transgressor of all. Thirdly, there was the irrational pleasure. Fourthly, the damsel, because of whom the marriage was illegal, who ought even to have hid herself, as though her mother were dishonored by her, comes making a show, and throwing into the shade all harlots, virgin as she was.

And the time again contributes no little to the reproof of this enormity. For when he ought to be thanking God, that on that day He had brought him to light, then he ventures upon those lawless acts. When one in chains ought to have been freed by him, then he adds slaughter to bonds.

Hearken, you virgins, or rather ye wives also, as many as consent to such unseemliness at other person's weddings, leaping, and bounding, and disgracing our common nature. Hearken, you men too, as many as follow after those banquets, full of expense and drunkenness, and fear ye the gulf

of the evil one. For indeed so mightily did he seize upon that wretched person just then, that he swore even to give the half of his kingdom: this being Mark's statement, "*He swore unto her, Whatsoever you shall ask of me, I will give it you, unto the half of my kingdom.*" [Mark 6:23]

Such was the value he set upon his royal power; so was he once for all made captive by his passion, as to give up *his kingdom* for a dance. vilifying, reviling, insulting. But not so the saints; they on the contrary mourn for such as sin, rather than curse them.

8. This then let us also do, and let us weep for Herodias, and for them that imitate her. For many such revels now also take place, and though John be not slain, yet the members of Christ are, and in a far more grievous way. For it is not a head in a charger that the dancers of our time ask, but the souls of them that sit at the feast. For in making them slaves, and leading them to unlawful loves, and besetting them with harlots, they do not take off the head, but slay the soul, making them adulterers, and effeminate, and whoremongers.

For you will not surely tell me, that when full of wine, and drunken, and looking at a woman who is dancing and uttering base words, thou dost not feel anything towards her, neither art hurried on to profligacy, overcome by your lust. Nay, that awful thing befalls you, that you "*makest the members of Christ members of an harlot.*" [1 Corinthians 6:15]

For though the daughter of Herodias be not present, yet the devil, who then danced in her person, in theirs also holds his choirs now, and departs with the souls of those guests taken captive.

But if you are able to keep clear of drunkenness, yet are you partakers of another most grievous sin; such revels being also full of much rapine. For look not, I pray you, on the meats that are set before them, nor on the

cakes; but consider whence they are gathered, and you will see that it is of vexation, and covetousness, and violence, and rapine.

"Nay, ours are not from such sources," one may say. God forbid they should be: for neither do I desire it. Nevertheless, although they be clear of these, not even so are our costly feasts freed from blame. Hear, at all events, how even apart from these things the prophet finds fault with them, thus speaking, *"Woe to them that drink wine racked off, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments."* Do you see how He censures luxury too? For it is not covetousness which He here lays to their charge, but prodigality only.

And you eat to excess, Christ not even for need; thou various cakes, He not so much as dry bread; you drink Thasian wine, but on Him you have not bestowed so much as a cup of cold water in His thirst. You are on a soft and embroidered bed, but He is perishing with the cold.

Wherefore, though the banquets be clear from covetousness, yet even so are they accursed, because, while for your part you do all in excess, to Him you give not even His need; and that, living in luxury upon things that belong to Him. Why, if you were guardian to a child, and having taken possession of his goods, were to neglect him in extremities, you would have ten thousand accusers, and wouldest suffer the punishment appointed by the laws; and now having taken possession of the goods of Christ, and thus consuming them for no purpose, do you not think you will have to give account?

9. And these things I say not of those who introduce harlots to their tables (for to them I have nothing to say, even as neither have I to the dogs), nor of those who cheat some, and pamper others (for neither with them have I anything to do, even as I have not with the swine and with the wolves); but of those who enjoy indeed their own property, but do not impart thereof to others; of those who spend their patrimony at random. For

neither are these clear from reprehension. For how, tell me, will you escape reprov ing and blame, while your parasite is pampered, and the dog that stands by you, but Christ's worth appears to you even not equal to theirs? When the one receives so much for laughter's sake, but the other for the Kingdom of Heaven not so much as the smallest fraction thereof. And while the parasite, on saying something witty, goes away filled; this Man, who has taught us, what if we had not learned we should have been no better than the dogs—is He counted unworthy of even the same treatment with such an one?

Do you shudder at being told it? Shudder then at the realities. Cast out the parasites, and make Christ to sit down to meat with you. If He partake of your salt, and of your table, He will be mild in judging you: He knows how to respect a man's table. Yea, if robbers know this, much more the Lord. Think, for instance, of that harlot, how at a table He justified her, and upbraids Simon, saying, "*You gave me no kiss.*" [Luke 7:54] I say, if He feed you, not doing these things, much more will He reward you, doing them. Look not at the poor man, that he comes to you filthy and squalid, but consider that Christ by him is setting foot in your house, and cease from your fierceness, and your relentless words, with which you are even aspersing such as come to you, calling them impostors, idle, and other names more grievous than these.

And think, when you are talking so, of the parasites; what kind of works do they accomplish? In what respect do they profit your house? Do they really make your dinner pleasant to you? Pleasant, by their being beaten and saying foul words? Nay, what can be more displeasing than this, when you smite him that is made after God's likeness, and from your insolence to him gatherest enjoyment for yourself, making your house a theatre, and filling your banquet with stage-players, thou who art well born

and free imitating the actors with their heads shaven? For among them too is laughter, and rude blows.

These things then do you call pleasure, I pray you, which are deserving of many tears, of much mourning and lamentation? And when it were fit to urge them to a good life, to give timely advice, do you lead them on to perjuries, and disorderly language, and call the thing a delight? And that which procures hell, do you account a subject of pleasure? Yea, and when they are at a loss for witty sayings, they pay the whole reckoning with oaths and false swearing. Are these things then worthy of laughter, and not of lamentations and tears? Nay, who would say so, that has understanding?

And this I say, not forbidding them to be fed, but not for such a purpose. Nay, let their maintenance have the motive of kindness, not of cruelty; let it be compassion, not insolence. Because he is a poor man, feed him; because Christ is fed, feed him; not for introducing satanical sayings, and disgracing his own life. Look not at him outwardly laughing, but examine his conscience, and then you will see him uttering ten thousand imprecations against himself, and groaning, and wailing. And if he do not show it, this also is due to you.

10. Let the companions of your meals then be men that are poor and free, not perjured persons, nor stage-players. And if you must needs ask of them a requital for their food, enjoin them, should they see anything done that is amiss, to rebuke, to admonish, to help you in your care over your household, in the government of your servants. Have you children? Let these be joint fathers to them, let them divide your charge with you, let them yield you such profits as God loves. Engage them in a spiritual traffic. And if you see one needing protection, bid them succor, command them to minister. By these do thou track the strangers out, by these clothe the naked, by these send to the prison, put an end to the distresses of others.

Let them give you, for their food, this requital, which profits both you and them, and carries with it no condemnation.

Hereby friendship also is more closely riveted. For now, though they seem to be loved, yet for all that they are ashamed, as living without object in your house; but if they accomplish these purposes, both they will be more pleasantly situated, and you will have more satisfaction in maintaining them, as not spending your money without fruit; and they again will dwell with you in boldness and due freedom, and your house, instead of a theatre, will become to you a church, and the devil will be put to flight, and Christ will enter, and the choir of the angels. For where Christ is, there are the angels too, and where Christ and the angels are, there is Heaven, there is a light more cheerful than this of the sun.

And if you would reap yet another consolation through their means, command them, when you are at leisure, to take their books and read the divine law. They will have more pleasure in so ministering to you, than in the other way. For these things add respect both to you and to them, but those bring disgrace upon all together; upon you as an insolent person and a drunkard, upon them as wretched and gluttonous. For if you feed in order to insult them, it is worse than if you had put them to death; but if for their good and profit, it is more useful again than if you had brought them back from their way to execution. And now indeed thou dost disgrace them more than your servants, and your servants enjoy more liberty of speech, and freedom of conscience, than they do; but then you will make them equal to the angels.

Set free therefore both them and your own self, and take away the name of parasite, and call them companions of your meals; cast away the appellation of flatterers, and bestow on them that of friends. With this intent

indeed did God make our friendships, not for evil to the beloved and loving, but for their good and profit.

But these friendships are more grievous than any enmity. For by our enemies, if we will, we are even profited; but by these we must needs be harmed, no question of it. Keep not then friends to teach you harm; keep not friends who are enamored rather of your table than of your friendship. For all such persons, if you retrench your good living, retrench their friendship too; but they that associate with you for virtue's sake, remain continually, enduring every change.

And besides, the race of the parasites does often take revenge upon you, and bring upon you an ill fame. Hence at least I know many respectable persons to have got bad characters, and some have been evil reported of for sorceries, some for adulteries and corrupting of youths. For whereas they have no work to do, but spend their own life unprofitably; their ministry is suspected by the multitude as being the same with that of corrupt youths.

Therefore, delivering ourselves both from evil report, and above all from the hell that is to come, and doing the things that are well-pleasing to God, let us put an end to this devilish custom, that *"both eating and drinking we may do all things to the glory of God,"* [1 Corinthians 10:31] and enjoy the glory that comes from Him; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 49 on Matthew

Matt. XIV. 13.

"But when Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart; and when the multitudes had heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of all the cities."

See Him on every occasion *"departing,"* For not by His appearance only, but by His actions He would have this confirmed, because He knew the devil's craft, and that he would leave nothing undone to destroy this doctrine.

He then for this end retires; but the multitudes not even so withdraw themselves from Him, but they follow, riveted to Him, and not even John's tragical end alarmed them. So great a thing is earnest desire, so great a thing is love; in such wise does it overcome and dispel all dangers.

Therefore they straightway also received their reward. For *"Jesus,"* it is said, *"went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick."* [Matthew 14:14]

For great as their assiduity was, yet nevertheless His doings exceeded what any diligence could earn. Wherefore He sets forth also His motive for so healing them, His mercy, intense mercy: and He heals all.

And He requires not faith here. For both by coming to Him, and by leaving their cities, and by diligently seeking Him, and by abiding with Him even when hunger was pressing, they display their own faith.

But He is about to feed them also. And He does not this of Himself, but waits to be entreated; on every occasion, as I have said, maintaining this rule, not to spring onward to His miracles, preventing them, but upon some call.

And why did none of the multitude come near and speak for them? They revered Him exceedingly, and felt not even their hunger, through their longing to stay with Him. Neither indeed do His disciples, when they had come to Him, say, "*Feed them;*" for as yet they were rather in an imperfect state; but what?

"And when it was evening," it is said, *"His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now passed; send the multitude away, that they may go and buy themselves victuals."*
[Matthew 14:15]

For if even after the miracle they forgot what had been done, and after the baskets, supposed Him to be speaking of loaves, when He gave the name of "*leaven*" to the doctrine of the Pharisees; [Matthew 16:6] much less, when they had never yet had experience of such a miracle, would they have expected any such thing. And yet He had made a beginning by actually healing many sick; but nevertheless, not even from this did they expect the miracle of the loaves; so imperfect were they as yet.

But mark thou, I pray, the Teacher's skill, how distinctly He summons them on towards believing. For He said not at once, "*I feed them;*" which indeed would not have been easily received; but what?

"But Jesus," so it is written, said unto them, *"They need not depart; give ye them to eat."* [Matthew 14:16]

He said not, "*I give them,*" but, "*Give ye them;*" for as yet their regard to Him was as to a man. But they not even so are awakened, but still reason as with a man, saying,

"We have but five loaves, and two fishes." [Matthew 14:17]

Wherefore Mark also says, *"They understood not the saying, for their heart was hardened."*

They continuing therefore to crawl on the ground, then at length He brings in His own part, and says, "*Bring them hither to me.*" For although the place be desert, yet He that feeds the world is here; and although the time be now past, yet He that is not subject to time is discoursing with you.

But John says also, that they were "*barley loaves,*" [John 6:9] not mentioning it without object, but teaching us to trample under foot the pride of costly living. Such was the diet of the prophets also.

2. "*He took therefore the five loaves, and the two fishes, and commanded the multitude,*" it is said, "*to sit down upon the grass, and looking up to Heaven, He blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat and were filled, and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.*"

Wherefore did He look up to Heaven, and bless? It was to be believed of Him, both that He is of the Father, and that He is equal to Him. But the proofs of these things seemed to oppose one another. For while His equality was indicated by His doing all with authority, of His origin from the Father they could no otherwise be persuaded, than by His doing all with great lowliness, and with reference to Him, and invoking Him on His works. Wherefore we see that He neither did these actions only, nor those, that both might be confirmed; and now He works miracles with authority, now with prayer.

Then again, that what He did might not seem an inconsistency, in the lesser things He looks up to Heaven, but in the greater does all with authority; to teach you in the lesser also, that not as receiving power from elsewhere, but as honoring Him that begot Him, so He acts. For example: when He forgave sins, and opened paradise, and brought in the thief, and most utterly set aside the old law, and raised innumerable dead, and bridled

the sea, and reproved the un-uttered thoughts of men, and created an eye—which are achievements of God only and of none else—we see Him in no instance praying: but when He provided for the loaves to multiply themselves, a far less thing than all these, then He looks up to Heaven; at once establishing these truths which I have spoken of, and instructing us not to touch a meal, until we have given thanks to Him who gives us this food.

And why does He not make it of things that are not? Stopping the mouth of Marcion, and of Manichæans, who alienate His creation from Him, and teaching by His very works, that even all the things that are seen are His works and creatures, and signifying that it is Himself who gives the fruits, who said at the beginning, "*Let the earth put forth the herb of grass,*" and "*Let the waters bring forth things moving with living souls.*"

For this is not at all a less work than the other. For though those were made of things that are not, yet nevertheless were they of water; and it was no greater thing to produce fruits out of the earth, and moving things with life out of the water, than out of five loaves to make so many; and of fishes again, which was a sign that He was ruler both of the earth and of the sea.

Thus, since the sick were constantly the subject of His miracles, He works also a general benefit, that the many might not be spectators only of what befell others, but themselves also partakers of the gift.

And that which in the wilderness seemed to the Jews marvellous, (they said at least, "*Can He give bread also? Or prepare a table in the wilderness?*") this He shows forth in His works. With this view also He leads them into the wilderness, that the miracle might be very far beyond suspicion, and that no one might think that any village lying near contributed ought to the meal. For this reason He mentions the hour also, not the place only.

And another thing too we learn, the self-restraint of the disciples which they practised in necessary things, and how little they accounted of food. For being twelve, they had five loaves only and two fishes; so secondary to them were the things of the body: so did they cling to the things spiritual only.

And not even that little did they hold fast, but gave up even it when asked. Whereby we should be taught, that though we have but little, this too we ought to give up to them that are in need. Thus, when commanded to bring the five loaves, they say not, "*and whence are we to have food? Whence to appease our own hunger?*" but they obey at once.

And besides what I have mentioned, to this end, as I at least think, He makes it out of the materials which they had, namely, that He might lead them to faith; for as yet they were rather in a weak state.

Wherefore also "*He looks up to Heaven.*" For of the other miracles they had many examples, but of this none.

3. "*He took the loaves,*" therefore, "*and broke them, and gave them by His disciples,*" hereby to honor them; and not in honor to them only, but also that, when the miracle had been done they might not disbelieve it, nor forget it when it had past, their own hands bearing them witness.

Wherefore also He suffers the multitudes first to have a sense of hunger, and waits for these to come to Him first and ask Him, and by them makes the people sit down, and by them distributes; being minded by their own confessions and actions to prepossess them every one.

Therefore also, from them He receives the loaves, that the testimonies of what was doing might be many, and that they might have memorials of the miracle. For if even after these occurrences they forgot, [Matthew 16:9] what would not have been their case, had He omitted those provisions?

And He commands them to sit down on the trampled grass, instructing the multitudes in self-denial. For His will was not to feed their bodies only, but also to instruct their souls. As well by the place therefore, as by His giving them nothing more than loaves and fishes, and by setting the same before all, and making it common, and by affording no one more than another, He was teaching them humility, and temperance, and charity, and to be of like mind one towards another, and to account all things common.

"And He broke and gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." The five loaves He broke and gave, and the five multiplied themselves in the hands of the disciples. And not even here does He stay the miracle, but He made them even to exceed; to exceed, not as whole loaves, but as fragments; to signify that of those loaves these were remains, and in order that the absent might learn what had been done.

For this purpose indeed He suffered the multitudes to hunger, that no one might suppose what took place to be illusion.

For this also He caused just twelve baskets to remain over, that Judas also might bear one. For He was able indeed to have appeased their hunger, but the disciples would not have known His power, since in Elijah's case also this took place. [1 Kings 17:16]

At all events, so greatly were the Jews amazed at Him for this, that they wished even to make Him a king, [John 6:15] although with regard to the other miracles they did not so in any instance.

What reasoning now may set forth, how the loaves multiplied themselves; how they flowed together in the wilderness; how they were enough for so many (for there were *"five thousand men beside women and children;"* which was a very great commendation of the people, that both women and men attended Him); how the remnants had their being (for this

again is not less than the former), and became so abundant, that the baskets were equal in number to the disciples, and neither more nor less?

Having then taken the fragments, He gave them not to the multitudes, but to the disciples, and that, because the multitudes were in a more imperfect state than the disciples.

And, having wrought the miracle, *"straightway He constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He sent the multitudes away."*

For even if He had seemed, when in sight, to be presenting an illusion, and not to have wrought a truth; yet surely not in His absence also. For this cause then, submitting His proceedings to an exact test, He commanded those that had got the memorials, and the proof of the miracles, to depart from Him.

And besides this, when He is doing great works, He disposes elsewhere of the multitudes and the disciples, instructing us in nothing to follow after the glory that comes from the people, nor to collect a crowd about us.

Now by saying, *"He constrained them,"* He indicates the very close attendance of the disciples.

And His pretext indeed for dismissing them was the multitude, but He was Himself minded to go up into the mountain; and He did this, instructing us neither to be always in intercourse with multitudes, nor always to fly from the crowd, but each of the two as may be expedient, and giving each duly his turn.

4. Let us learn therefore ourselves also to wait upon Jesus; but not for His bounty in things sensible, lest we be upbraided like the Jews. For *"ye seek me,"* says He, *"not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled."* [John 6:26] Therefore neither does He work

this miracle continually, but a second time only; that they might be taught not to be slaves to their belly, but to cling incessantly to the things of the Spirit.

To these then let us also cling, and let us seek the heavenly bread, and having received it, let us cast away all worldly care. For if those men left houses, and cities, and kinsmen, and all, and abode in the wilderness, and when hunger was pressing, withdrew not; much more ought we, when approaching such a table, to show forth a more abundant self-command, and to set our love on the things of the Spirit, and to seek the things of sense as secondary to these.

Since even they were blamed, not because they sought Him for the bread, but because it was for this only they sought Him, and for this primarily. For should any one despise the great gifts, but cling to the small, and to those which the giver would have him despise, he loses these latter too: as on the other hand, if we love those, He adds these also. For these are but an appendage to the others; so vile are they and trifling, compared with those, although they be great. Let us not therefore spend our diligence on them, but account both the acquisition and loss of them alike indifferent, even as Job also neither clung to them when present, nor sought them absent. For on this account, they are called [χρυσία], not that we should bury them in the earth, but that we should use them aright.

And as of artisans every one has his peculiar skill, even so the rich man, as he knows not how to work in brass, nor to frame ships, nor to weave, nor to build houses, nor any such thing—let him learn then to use his wealth aright, and to pity the poor; so shall he know a better art than all those.

For indeed this is above all those arts. Its workshop is built in Heaven. It has its tools not of iron and brass, but of goodness and of a right will. Of

this art Christ is the Teacher, and His Father. *"For be ye merciful,"* says He, *"as your Father which is in Heaven."* [Luke 6:36]

And what is indeed marvellous, being so much superior to the rest, it needs no labor, no time for its perfection; it is enough to have willed, and the whole is accomplished.

But let us see also the end thereof, what it is. What then is the end of it? Heaven, the good things in the heavens, that unspeakable glory, the spiritual bride-chambers, the bright lamps, the abiding with the Bridegroom; the other things, which no speech, nor even understanding, is able to set forth.

So that herein likewise great is its difference from all others. For most of the arts profit us for the present life, but this for the life to come also.

5. But if it so far excels the arts that are necessary to us for the present, as medicine, for instance, and house-building, and all others like them: much more the rest, which if any one were nicely to examine, he would not even allow them to be arts. Wherefore I at least would not call those others, as they are unnecessary, so much as arts at all. For wherein is delicate cookery and making sauces profitable to us? Nowhere: yea, they are greatly unprofitable and hurtful, doing harm both to body and soul, by bringing upon us the parent of all diseases and sufferings, luxury, together with great extravagance.

But not these only, but not even painting, or embroidery, would I for one allow to be an art, for they do but throw men into useless expense. But the arts ought to be concerned with things necessary and important to our life, to supply and work them up. For to this end God gave us skill at all, that we might invent methods, whereby to furnish out our life. But that there should be figures either on walls, or on garments, wherein is it useful, I pray you? For this same cause the sandal-makers too, and the weavers,

should have great retrenchments made in their art. For most things in it they have carried into vulgar ostentation, having corrupted its necessary use, and mixed with an honest art an evil craft; which has been the case with the art of building also. But even as to this, so long as it builds houses and not theatres, and labors upon things necessary, and not superfluous, I give the name of an art; so the business of weaving too, as long as it makes clothes, and coverlids, but does not imitate the spiders, and overwhelm men with much absurdity, and unspeakable effeminacy, so long I call it an art.

And the sandal-makers' trade, so long as it makes sandals, I will not rob of the appellation of art; but when it perverts men to the gestures of women, and causes them by their sandals to grow wanton and delicate, we will set it amidst the things hurtful and superfluous, and not so much as name it an art.

And I know well, that to many I seem over-minute in busying myself about these things; I shall not however refrain for this. For the cause of all our evils is this, such faults being at all counted trifling, and therefore disregarded.

And what sin, say you, can be of less account than this, of having an ornamented and glittering sandal, which fits the foot; if indeed it seem right at all to denominate it a sin?

Will ye then that I let loose my tongue upon it, and show its unseemliness, how great it is? And will you not be angry? Or rather, though ye be angry, I care not much. Nay, for yourselves are to blame for this folly, who do not so much as think it is a sin, and hereby constrain us to enter upon the reproof of this extravagance. Come then, let us examine it, and let us see what sort of an evil it is. For when the silken threads, which it is not seemly should be even inwoven in your garments, these are sewn by you into your shoes, what reproach, what derision do these things deserve?

And if you despise our judgments, hear the voice of Paul, with great earnestness forbidding these things, and then you will perceive the absurdity of them. What then says he? "*Not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.*" [1 Timothy 2:9] Of what favor then can you be worthy; when, in spite of Paul's prohibiting the married woman to have costly clothing, you extend this effeminacy even to your shoes, and hast no end of contrivances for the sake of this ridicule and reproach? Yes: for first a ship is built, then rowers are mustered, and a man for the prow, and a helmsman, and a sail is spread, and an ocean traversed, and, leaving wife and children and country, the merchant commits his very life to the waves, and comes to the land of the barbarians, and undergoes innumerable dangers for these threads, that after it all you may take them, and sew them into your shoes, and ornament the leather. And what can be done worse than this folly?

But the old ways are not like these, but such as become men. Wherefore I for my part expect that in process of time the young men among us will wear even women's shoes, and not be ashamed. And what is more grievous, men's fathers seeing these things are not much displeased, but do even account it an indifferent matter.

Would ye that I should add what is still more grievous; that these things are done even when there are many poor? Would ye that I bring before you Christ, an hungered, naked, wandering everywhere, in chains? And how many thunderbolts must ye not deserve, overlooking Him in want of necessary food, and adorning these pieces of leather with so much diligence? And He indeed, when He was giving law to His disciples, would not so much as suffer them to have shoes at all, but we cannot bear to walk, I say not barefooted, but even with feet shod as they ought to be.

7. What then can be worse than this unseemliness, this absurdity? For the thing marks a soul, in the first place effeminate, then unfeeling and cruel, then curious and idly busy. For when will he be able to attend to any necessary matter, who is taken up with these superfluous things? When will such a youth endure to take heed to his soul, or to consider so much as that he has a soul? Yes, he surely will be a trifler who cannot help admiring such things; he cruel, who for their sake neglects the poor; he void of virtue, who spends all his diligence on them.

For he that is curious about the beauty of threads, and the bloom of colors, and the tendrils made of such woven work, when will he be able to look upon the heaven? When will he admire the beauty there, who is excited about a kind of beauty that belongs to pieces of leather, and who is bending to the earth? And whereas God has stretched out the Heaven, and lighted up the sun, drawing your looks upwards; you constrain yourself to look downwards, and to the earth, like the swine, and obeyest the devil. For indeed this wicked demon has devised this unseemliness, to draw you off from that beauty. For this intent has he drawn you this way; and God, showing Heaven, is outvied by a devil showing certain skins, or rather not even skins (for indeed these too are God's works), but effeminacy and a bad kind of skill.

And the young man goes about bending down towards the earth, he that is required to seek wisdom concerning the things in Heaven; priding himself more on these trifles than if he had accomplished some great and good work, and walking on tiptoe in the forum, and hereby begetting to himself superfluous sorrows and distresses, lest he should stain them with the mud when it is winter; lest he should cover them with the dust, when summer has come.

What do you say, O man? Have you cast your whole soul into the mire through this extravagance, and do you overlook it trailing on the ground, and are you so anxious about a pair of shoes? Mark their use, and respect the verdict you pass on them. For to tread on mud and mire, and all the spots on the pavement, for this were your shoes made. Or if you can not bear this, take and hang them from your neck, or put them on your head.

And ye indeed laugh at hearing this. But I am inclined to weep for these men's madness, and their earnest care about these matters. For in truth they would rather stain their body with mud, than those pieces of leather.

Triflers then they become in this way, and fond of money again in another way. For he that has been used to be frantic and eager upon such matters, requires also for his clothes and for all other things much expense, and a large income.

And if he have a munificent father, his thralldom becomes worse, his absurd fancy more intense; but if a parsimonious one, he is driven to other unseemliness, by way of getting together a little money for such expenses.

Hence many young men have even sold their manhood, and have become parasites to the rich, and have undertaken other servile offices, purchasing thereby the fulfillment of such desires.

So then, that this man is sure to be at once fond of money, and a trifler, and about important things the most indolent of all men, and that he will be forced to commit many sins, is hereby evident. And that he is cruel and vainglorious, neither this will any one gainsay: cruel, in that when he sees a poor man, through the love of finery he makes as though he did not even see him, but while he is decking out these things with gold, overlooks him perishing of hunger; vainglorious, since even in such little matters he trains himself to hunt after the admiration of the beholders. For I suppose no general prides himself so much on his legions and trophies, as our profligate

youths on the decking out of their shoes, on their trailing garments, on the dressing of their hair; yet surely all these are works of other persons, in their trades. But if men do not cease from vain boasting in the works of others, when will they cease from it in their own?

8. Shall I mention yet other things more grievous than these? Or are even these enough for you? Well then; I must end my speech here; since even this have I said, because of the disputatious, who maintain the thing not to be so very wrong.

And although I know that many of the young will not so much as attend to what I have said, being once for all intoxicated with this fancy, I yet ought not therefore to keep silence. For such fathers as have understanding, and are as yet sound, will be able to force them, even against their will, to a becoming decency.

Say not then, *"this is of no consequence, that is of no consequence;"* for this, this has ruined all. For even hereby ought you to train them, and by the things which seem trifling to make them grave, great of soul, superior to outward habiliments; so shall we find them approved in the great things also. For what is more ordinary than the learning of letters? Nevertheless thereby do men become rhetoricians, and sophists, and philosophers, and if they know not their letters, neither will they ever have that knowledge.

And this we have spoken not to young men only, but to women also, and to young damsels. For these too are liable to the like charges, and much more, inasmuch as seemliness is a thing appropriate to a virgin.

What has been said therefore to the others; do ye account to have been said to you also, that we may not repeat again the same things.

For it is full time now to close our discourse with prayer. All of you then pray with us, that the young men of the church above all things may be enabled to live orderly, and to attain an old age becoming them. Since for

those surely who do not so live, it were well not to come to old age at all. But for them that have grown old even in youth, I pray that they may attain also to the very deep of gray hairs, and become fathers of approved children, and may be a joy to them that gave them birth, and above all surely to the God that made them, and may exterminate every distempered fancy, not that about their shoes, nor about their clothes only, but every other kind also.

For as untilled land, such is also youth neglected, bringing forth many thorns from many quarters. Let us then send forth on them the fire of the Spirit, and burn up these wicked desires, and let us break up our fields, and make them ready for the reception of the seed, and the young men among us let us exhibit with soberer minds than the old elsewhere. For this in fact is the marvellous thing, when temperance shines forth in youth; since he surely that is temperate in old age cannot have a great reward, having in perfection the security from his age. But what is wonderful, is to enjoy a calm amidst waves, and in a furnace not to be burnt, and in youth not to run wanton.

With these things then in our minds, let us emulate that blessed Joseph, who shone through all these trials, that we may attain unto the same crowns with him; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 50 on Matthew

Matthew 14:23-24.

" And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when the evening had come, He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary."

For what purpose does He go up into the mountain? To teach us, that loneliness and retirement is good, when we are to pray to God. With this view, you see, He is continually withdrawing into the wilderness, and there often spends the whole night in prayer, teaching us earnestly to seek such quietness in our prayers, as the time and place may confer. For the wilderness is the mother of quiet; it is a calm and a harbor, delivering us from all turmoils.

He Himself then went up there with this object, but the disciples are tossed with the waves again, and undergo a storm, equal even to the former. But whereas before they had Him in the ship when this befell them, now they were alone by themselves. Thus gently and by degrees He excites and urges them on for the better, even to the bearing all nobly. Accordingly we see, that when they were first near that danger, He was present, though asleep, so as readily to give them relief; but now leading them to a greater degree of endurance, He does not even this, but departs, and in mid sea permits the storm to arise, so that they might not so much as look for a hope of preservation from any quarter; and He lets them be tempest-tost all the night, thoroughly to awaken, as I suppose, their hardened heart.

For such is the nature of the fear, which the time concurs with the rough weather in producing. And together with the compunction, He cast

them also into a greater longing for Himself, and a continual remembrance of Him.

Accordingly, neither did He present Himself to them at once. For, *"in the fourth watch,"* so it is said, *"of the night, He went unto them, walking upon the sea;"* [Matthew 14:25] instructing them not hastily to seek for deliverance; from their pressing dangers, but to bear all occurrences manfully. At all events, when they looked to be delivered, then was their fear again heightened. For,

"When the disciples," it is said, *"saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit: and they cried out for fear."*

Yea, and He constantly does so; when He is on the point of removing our terrors, He brings upon us other worse things, and more alarming: which we see took place then also. For together with the storm, the sight too troubled them, no less than the storm. Therefore neither did He remove the darkness, nor straightway make Himself manifest, training them, as I said, by the continuance of these fears, and instructing them to be ready to endure. This He did in the case of Job also; for when He was on the point of removing the terror and the temptation, then He suffered the end to grow more grievous; I mean not for his children's death, or the words of his wife, but because of the reproaches, both of his servants and of his friends. And when He was about to rescue Jacob from his affliction in the strange land, He allowed his trouble to be awakened and aggravated: in that his father-in-law first overtook him and threatened death, and then his brother coming immediately after, suspended over him the extremest danger.

For since one cannot be tempted both for a long time and severely; when the righteous are on the point of coming to an end of their conflicts, He, willing them to gain the more, enhances their struggles. Which He did in the case of Abraham too, appointing for his last conflict that about his

child. For thus even things intolerable will be tolerable, when they are so brought upon us, as to have their removal near, at the very doors.

So did Christ at that time also, and did not discover Himself before they cried out. For the more intense their alarm, the more did they welcome His coming. Afterward when they had exclaimed, it is said,

"Straightway Jesus spoke unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." [Matthew 14:27]

This word removed their fear, and caused them to take confidence. For as they knew Him not by sight, because of His marvellous kind of motion, and because of the time, He makes Himself manifest by His voice.

2. What then says Peter, everywhere ardent, and ever starting forward before the rest?

"Lord, if it be Thou," says he, *"bid me come unto You on the water."* [Matthew 14:28]

He said not, *"Pray and entreat,"* but, *"bid."* Do you see how great his ardor, how great his faith? Yet surely he is hereby often in danger, by seeking things beyond his measure. For so here too he required an exceedingly great thing, for love only, not for display. For neither did he say, *"Bid me walk on the water,"* but what? *"Bid me come unto You."* For none so loved Jesus.

This he did also after the resurrection; he endured not to come with the others, but leapt forward. [John 21:7] And not love only, but faith also does he display. For he not only believed that He was able Himself to walk on the sea, but that He could lead upon it others also; and he longs to be quickly near Him.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter had come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord,

save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and says unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore did you doubt?"

[Matthew 14:29-31]

This is more wonderful than the former. Therefore this is done after that. For when He had shown that He rules the sea, then He carries on the sign to what is yet more marvellous. Then He rebuked the winds only; but now He both walks Himself, and permits another to do so; which thing if He had required to be done at the beginning, Peter would not have so well received it, because he had not yet acquired so great faith.

Wherefore then did Christ permit him? Why, if He had said, "*you can not*," Peter being ardent would have contradicted Him again. Wherefore by the facts He convinces him, that for the future he may be sobered.

But not even so does he endure. Therefore having come down, he becomes dizzy; for he was afraid. And this the surf caused, but his fear was wrought by the wind.

But John says, that "*they willingly received Him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went*," relating this same circumstance. So that when they were on the point of arriving at the land, He entered the ship.

Peter then having come down from the ship went unto Him, not rejoicing so much in walking on the water, as in coming unto Him. And when he had prevailed over the greater, he was on the point of suffering evil from the less, from the violence of the wind, I mean, not of the sea. For such a thing is human nature; not seldom effecting great things, it exposes itself in the less; as Elias felt toward Jezebel, as Moses toward the Egyptian, as David toward Bathsheba. Even so then this man also; while their fear was yet at the height, he took courage to walk upon the water, but against the assault of the wind he was no longer able to stand; and this, being near

Christ. So absolutely nothing does it avail to be near Christ, not being near Him by faith.

And this also showed the difference between the Master and the disciple, and allayed the feelings of the others. For if in the case of the two brethren they had indignation, much more here; for they had not yet the Spirit vouchsafed unto them.

But afterwards they were not like this. On every occasion, for example, they give up the first honors to Peter, and put him forward in their addresses to the people, although of a rougher vein than any of them.

And wherefore did He not command the winds to cease, but Himself stretched forth His hand and took hold of him? Because in him faith was required. For when our part is wanting, then God's part also is at a stand.

Signifying therefore that not the assault of the wind, but his want of faith had wrought his overthrow, He says, *"Wherefore did you doubt, O thou of little faith?"* So that if his faith had not been weak, he would have stood easily against the wind also. And for this reason, you see, even when He had caught hold of Him, He suffers the wind to blow, showing that no hurt comes thereby, when faith is steadfast.

And as when a nestling has come out of the nest before the time, and is on the point of falling, its mother bears it on her wings, and brings it back to the nest; even so did Christ.

"And when they had come into the ship, then the wind ceased."

[Matthew 14:32]

Whereas before this they had said, *"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!"* [Matthew 8:27] now it is not so. For *"they that were in the ship,"* it is said, *"came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth You are Son of God."* [Matthew 14:33] Do you see, how by degrees he was leading them all higher and higher? For both by His walking

on the sea, and by His commanding another to do so, and preserving him in jeopardy; their faith was henceforth great. For then indeed He rebuked the sea, but now He rebukes it not, in another way signifying His power more abundantly. Wherefore also they said, *"Of a truth You are Son of God."*

What then? Did He rebuke them on their so speaking? Nay, quite the contrary, He rather confirmed what they said, with greater authority healing such as approached Him, and not as before.

"And when they had gone over," so it is said, *"they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; and besought Him that they might touch the hem of His garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole."*

For neither did they approach Him as before, dragging Him into their houses, and seeking a touch of His hand, and directions from Him in words; but in a far higher strain, and with more of self-denial, and with a more abundant faith did they try to win themselves a cure; for she that had the issue of blood taught them all to be severe in seeking wisdom.

And the evangelist, implying also that at long intervals He visited the several neighborhoods, says, *"The men of that place took knowledge of Him, and sent out into the country round about, and brought unto Him them that were diseased."* But yet the interval, so far from abolishing their faith, made it even greater, and preserved it in vigor.

3. Let us also then touch the hem of His garment, or rather, if we be willing, we have Him entire. For indeed His body is set before us now, not His garment only, but even His body; not for us to touch it only, but also to eat, and be filled. Let us now then draw near with faith, every one that has an infirmity. For if they that touched the hem of His garment drew from Him so much virtue, how much more they that possess Him entire? Now to

draw near with faith is not only to receive the offering, but also with a pure heart to touch it; to be so minded, as approaching Christ Himself. For what, if you hear no voice? Yet you see Him laid out; or rather thou dost also hear His voice, while He is speaking by the evangelists.

Believe, therefore, that even now it is that supper, at which He Himself sat down. For this is in no respect different from that. For neither does man make this and Himself the other; but both this and that is His own work. When therefore you see the priest delivering it unto you, account not that it is the priest that does so, but that it is Christ's hand that is stretched out.

Even as when he baptizes, not he does baptize you, but it is God that possesses your head with invisible power, and neither angel nor archangel nor any other dare draw near and touch you; even so now also. For when God begets, the gift is His only. Do you see not those who adopt to themselves sons here, how they commit not the act to slaves, but are themselves present at the judgment-seat? Even so neither has God committed His gift to angels, but Himself is present, commanding and saying, "*Call no man Father on earth;*" [Matthew 23:9] not that you should dishonor them that gave you birth, but that you should prefer to all those Him that made you, and enrolled you among His own children. For He that has given the greater, that is, has set Himself before you, much more will He not think scorn to distribute unto you of His body. Let us hear therefore, both priests and subjects, what we have had vouchsafed to us; let us hear and tremble. Of His own holy flesh He has granted us our fill; He has set before us Himself sacrificed.

What excuse shall we have then, when feeding on such food, we commit such sins? When eating a lamb, we become wolves? When feeding on a sheep, we spoil by violence like the lions?

For this mystery He directs to be always clear, not from violence only, but even from bare enmity. Yea, for this mystery is a mystery of peace; it allows us not to cling to wealth. For if He spared not Himself for us, what must we deserve, sparing our wealth, and being lavish of a soul, in behalf of which He spared not Himself?

Now upon the Jews God every year bound in their feasts a memorial of His peculiar favors to them: but for you, every day, as I may say, through these mysteries.

Be not therefore ashamed of the cross: for these are our venerable things, these our mysteries; with this gift do we adorn ourselves, with this we are beautified.

And if I say, He stretched out the heaven, He spread out the earth and the sea, He sent prophets and angels, I say nothing in comparison. For the sum of His benefits is this, that "*He spared not His own Son,*" [Romans 8:32] in order to save His alienated servants.

4. Let no Judas then approach this table, no Simon; nay, for both these perished through covetousness. Let us flee then from this gulf; neither let us account it enough for our salvation, if after we have stripped widows and orphans, we offer for this table a gold and jewelled cup. Nay, if you desire to honor the sacrifice, offer your soul, for which also it was slain; cause that to become golden; but if that remain worse than lead or potter's clay, while the vessel is of gold, what is the profit?

Let not this therefore be our aim, to offer golden vessels only, but to do so from honest earnings likewise. For these are of the sort that is more precious even than gold, these that are without injuriousness. For the church is not a gold foundry nor a workshop for silver, but an assembly of angels. Wherefore it is souls which we require, since in fact God accepts these for the souls' sake.

That table at that time was not of silver nor that cup of gold, out of which Christ gave His disciples His own blood; but precious was everything there, and awful, for that they were full of the Spirit.

[Ephesians 5:18]

Would you do honor to Christ's body? Neglect Him not when naked; do not while here you honor Him with silken garments, neglect Him perishing without of cold and nakedness. For He that said, "*This is my body,*" and by His word confirmed the fact, This same said, "*You saw me an hungered, and fed me not;*" and, "*Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.*" [Matthew 25:42, 45] For This indeed needs not coverings, but a pure soul; but that requires much attention.

Let us learn therefore to be strict in life, and to honor Christ as He Himself desires. For to Him who is honored that honor is most pleasing, which it is His own will to have, not that which we account best. Since Peter too thought to honor Him by forbidding Him to wash his feet, but his doing so was not an honor, but the contrary.

Even so do thou honor Him with this honor, which He ordained, spending your wealth on poor people. Since God has no need at all of golden vessels, but of golden souls.

And these things I say, not forbidding such offerings to be provided; but requiring you, together with them, and before them, to give alms. For He accepts indeed the former, but much more the latter. For in the one the offerer alone is profited, but in the other the receiver also. Here the act seems to be a ground even of ostentation; but there all is mercifulness, and love to man.

For what is the profit, when His table indeed is full of golden cups, but He perishes with hunger? First fill Him, being an hungered, and then abundantly deck out His table also. Do you make Him a cup of gold, while

you give Him not a cup of cold water? And what is the profit? Do you furnish His table with cloths bespangled with gold, while to Himself you afford not even the necessary covering? And what good comes of it? For tell me, should you see one at a loss for necessary food, and omit appeasing his hunger, while you first overlaid his table with silver; would he indeed thank you, and not rather be indignant? What, again, if seeing one wrapped in rags, and stiff with cold, you should neglect giving him a garment, and build golden columns, saying, "*thou were doing it to his honor*," would he not say that thou were mocking, and account it an insult, and that the most extreme?

Let this then be your thought with regard to Christ also, when He is going about a wanderer, and a stranger, needing a roof to cover Him; and thou, neglecting to receive Him, deckest out a pavement, and walls, and capitals of columns, and hapest up silver chains by means of lamps, but Himself bound in prison you will not even look upon.

5. And these things I say, not forbidding munificence in these matters, but admonishing you to do those other works together with these, or rather even before these. Because for not having done these no one was ever blamed, but for those, hell is threatened, and unquenchable fire, and the punishment with evil spirits. Do not therefore while adorning His house overlook your brother in distress, for he is more properly a temple than the other.

And whereas these your stores will be subject to alienations both by unbelieving kings, and tyrants, and robbers; whatever you may do for your brother, being hungry, and a stranger, and naked, not even the devil will be able to despoil, but it will be laid up in an inviolable treasure.

Why then does He Himself say, "*The poor always you have with you, but me you have not always*?" Why, for this reason most of all should we

give alms, that we have Him not always an hungered, but in the present life only. But if you are desirous to learn also the whole meaning of the saying, understand that this was said not with a view to His disciples, although it seem so, but to the woman's weakness. That is, her disposition being still rather imperfect, and they doubting about her; to revive her He said these things. For in proof that for her comfort He said it, He added, "*Why trouble ye the woman?*" [Matthew 26:10] And with regard to our having Him really always with us, He says, "*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*" [Matthew 28:20] From all which it is evident, that for no other object was this said, but that the rebuke of the disciples might not wither the faith of the woman, just then budding.

Let us not then bring forward these things now, which were uttered because of some economy, but let us read all the laws, those in the New and those in the Old Testament, that are set down about almsgiving, and let us be very earnest about this matter. For this cleanses from sin. For "*give alms, and all things will be clean unto you.*" [Luke 11:41] This is a greater thing than sacrifice. "*For I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.*" This opens the heavens. For "*your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.*" [Acts 10:4] This is more indispensable than virginity: for thus were those virgins cast out of the bridechamber; thus were the others brought in.

All which things let us consider, and sow liberally, that we may reap in more ample abundance, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Homily 51 on Matthew

Matt. XV. 1.

"Then came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do Your disciples," etc.

Then; when? When He had wrought His countless miracles; when He had healed the infirm by the touch of the hem of His garment. For even with this intent does the evangelist mark the time, that He might signify their unspeakable wickedness, by nothing repressed.

But what means, *"The Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem?"* In every one of the tribes were they scattered abroad, and divided into twelve parts; but they who occupied the chief city were worse than the others, as both enjoying more honor, and having contracted much haughtiness.

But mark, I pray you, how even by the question itself they are convicted; in not saying, *"Why do they transgress the law of Moses,"* but, *"the tradition of the elders."* Whence it is evident that the priests were inventing many novelties, although Moses, with much terror and with much threatening, had enjoined neither to add nor take away. *"For you shall not add,"* says he, *"unto the word which I command you this day, and you shall not take away from it."* [Deuteronomy 4:2]

But not the less were they innovating; as in this instance, that one ought not to eat with unwashed hands, that we must wash cups and brazen vessels, that we must wash also ourselves. Thus, when men were henceforth, as time advanced, to be freed from their observances, at that very time they bound them with the same in more and more instances, fearing lest any one should take away their power, and wishing to strike

more dread, as though they were themselves also lawgivers. The thing in fact proceeded so far in enormity, that while their own commandments were kept, those of God were transgressed; and they so far prevailed, that the matter had actually become a ground of accusation. Which was a twofold charge against them, in that they both invented novelties, and were so strict exactors on their own account, while of God they made no reckoning.

And omitting to speak of the other things, the pots and the brazen vessels (for it was too ridiculous), what seemed more reasonable than the rest, that they bring forward, wishing, as seems at least to me, in that way to provoke Him to anger. Wherefore also they made mention of the elders, in order that He, as setting them at nought, might give occasion against Himself.

But it were meet first to inquire, why the disciples ate with unwashen hands. Wherefore then did they so eat? Not as making a point of it, but as overlooking henceforth the things that are superfluous, and attending to such as are necessary; having no law to wash or not to wash, but doing either as it happened. For they that despised even their own necessary food, how were they to hold these things worth much consideration? This then having often happened unintentionally—for instance, when they ate in the wilderness, when they plucked the ears of grain—is now put forward as a charge by these persons, who are always transgressing in the great things, and making much account of the superfluous.

2. What then says Christ? He did not set Himself against it, neither made He any defense, but straightway blames them again, plucking down their confidence, and signifying that he who commits great sins ought not to be strict with others concerning small matters. *"What? When you ought to be blamed,"* says He, *"do ye even blame?"*

But do thou observe, how when it is His will to set aside any of the things enjoined by the law, He does it in the form of an apology; and so He did in that case. For by no means does He proceed at once to transgress it, nor does He say, "*It is nothing;*" for surely He would have made them more audacious; but first He clean cuts away their boldness, bringing forward the far heavier charge, and directing it upon their head. And He neither says, "*they do well in transgressing it,*" lest He should give them a hold on Him; nor does He speak ill of their proceeding, lest He should confirm the law: nor again, on the other hand, does He blame the elders, as lawless and unholy men; for doubtless they would have shunned Him as a reviler and injurious: but all these things He gives up, and proceeds another way. And He seems indeed to be rebuking the persons themselves who had come to Him, but He is reprehending them that enacted these laws; nowhere indeed making mention of the elders, but by His charge against the Scribes casting down them also, and signifying that their sin is twofold, first in disobeying God, next in doing so on men's account; as though He had said, "*Why this, this has ruined you, your obeying the elders in all things.*"

Yet He says not so, but this is just what He intimates, by answering them as follows:

Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor your father and your mother: and, He that curses father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever you might be profited by me, and honor not his father or his mother — And you have made void the commandment of God by your tradition.

And He said not, "*the elders' tradition,*" but "*your own.*" And, "*ye say;*" again He said not, "*the elders say:*" in order to make His speech less

galling. That is, because they wanted to prove the disciples transgressors of the law, He signifies that they themselves are doing so, but that these are free from blame. For of course that is not a law, which is enjoined by men (wherefore also He calls it "*a tradition*"), and especially by men that are transgressors of the law.

And since this had no shade of contrariety to the law, to command men to wash their hands, He brings forward another tradition, which is opposed to the law. And what He says is like this. "*They taught the young, under the garb of piety, to despise their fathers.*" How, and in what way? "*If one of their parents said to his child, Give me this sheep that you have, or this calf, or any such thing, they used to say, 'This is a gift to God, whereby you would be profited by me, and you can not have it.'*" And two evils hence arose: *on the one hand they did not bring them to God, on the other they defrauded their parents under the name of the offering, alike insulting their parents for God's sake, and God for their parents' sake.*" But He does not say this at once, but first rehearses the law, by which He signifies His earnest desire that parents should be honored. For, "*honor,*" says He, "*your father and your mother, that you may live long upon the earth.*" And again, "*He that curses father or mother, let him die the death.*" [Exodus 21:17]

But He, omitting the first, the reward appointed for them that honor their parents, states that which is more awful, the punishment, I mean, threatened to such as dishonor them; desiring both to dismay them, and to conciliate such as have understanding; and He implies them to be for this worthy of death. For if he who dishonors them in word is punished, much more ye, who do so in deed, and who not only dishonor, but also teach it to others. "*You then who ought not so much as to live, how find ye fault with the disciples?*"

"And what wonder is it, if you offer such insults to me, who am as yet unknown, when even to the Father you are found doing the like?" For everywhere He both asserts and implies, that from Him they began with this their arrogance.

But some do also otherwise interpret, *"It is a gift, by whatsoever you might be profited by me;"* that is, I owe you no honor, but it is a free gift from me to you, if indeed I do honor you. But Christ would not have mentioned an insult of that sort.

And Mark again makes this plainer, by saying, *"It is Corban, by whatsoever you might be profited by me;"* [Mark 7:11] which means, not a gift and present, but properly an offering.

Having then signified that they who were trampling on the law could not be justly entitled to blame men for transgressing a command of certain elders, He points out this same thing again from the prophet likewise. Thus, having once laid hold of them severely, He proceeds further: as on every occasion He does, bringing forward the Scriptures, and so evincing Himself to be in accordance with God.

And what says the prophet? *"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*

Do you see a prophecy in exact accordance with His sayings, and from the very first proclaiming beforehand their wickedness? For what Christ laid to their charge now, of this Isaiah also spoke from the very first; that the words of God they despise, *"for in vain do they worship me,"* says He; but of their own they make much account, *"teaching,"* says He, *"for doctrines the commandments of men."* Therefore with reason the disciples keep them not.

3. Having, you see, given them their mortal blow; and from the facts first, then from their own suffrage, then from the prophet having aggravated the charge, with them indeed He discourses not at all, incorrigibly disposed as they are now come to be, but directs His speech to the multitudes, so as to introduce His doctrine, great and high, and full of much strictness; and taking occasion from the former topic, He proceeds to insert that which is greater, casting out also the observance of meats.

But see when. When He had cleansed the leper, when He had repealed the Sabbath, when He had shown Himself King of earth and sea, when He had made laws, when He had remitted sins, when He had raised dead men, when He had afforded them many proofs of His Godhead, then He discourses of meats.

For indeed all the religion of the Jews is comprised in this; if you take this away, you have even taken away all. For hereby He signifies, that circumcision too must be abrogated. But of Himself He does not prominently introduce this (forasmuch as that was older than the other commandments, and had higher estimation), but He enacts it by His disciples. For so great a thing was it, that even the disciples after so long a time being minded to do it away, first practise it, and so put it down.
[Acts 16:3]

But see how He introduces His law: how *"He called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand."* [Matthew 15:11]

Thus He does by no means simply reveal it to them, but by respect and courtesy, first, He makes His saying acceptable (for this the evangelist declares by saying, *"He called them unto Him"*): and secondly, by the time also; in that after their refutation, and His victory over them, and the accusation by the prophet, then He begins His legislation, when they too would more easily receive His sayings.

And He does not merely call them unto Him, but also makes them more attentive. For *"understand,"* says He, that is, *"consider, rouse yourselves; for of that sort is the law now about to be enacted. For if they set aside the law, even unseasonably, for their own tradition, and you hearkened; much more ought ye to hearken unto me, who at the proper season am leading you unto a higher rule of self restraint."*

And He did not say, *"The observance of meats is nothing, neither that Moses had given wrong injunctions, nor that of condescension He did so;"* but in the way of admonition and counsel, and taking His testimony from the nature of the things, He says: *"Not the things that go into the mouth, defile the man, but the things that go out of the mouth;"* [Matthew 15:11] resorting to nature herself both in His enactment and in His demonstration. Yet they hearing all this, made no reply, neither did they say, *"What sayest Thou? When God has given charges without number concerning the observance of meats, do you make such laws?"* But since He had utterly stopped their mouths, not by refuting them only, but also by publishing their craft, and exposing what was done by them in secret, and revealing the secrets of their mind; their mouths were stopped, and so they went away.

But mark, I pray you, how He does not yet venture distinctly to set Himself with boldness against the meats. Therefore neither did He say *"the meats,"* but, *"the things that enter in defile not the man;"* which it was natural for them to suspect concerning the unwashen hands also. For He indeed was speaking of meats, but it would be understood of these matters too.

Why, so strong was the feeling of scruple about the meats, that even after the resurrection Peter said, *"Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean."* [Acts 10:14] For although it was for the sake of others that He said this, and in order to leave Himself a justification

against his censurers, by pointing out that he actually remonstrated, and not even so was excused, nevertheless it implies the depth of their impression on that point.

Wherefore you see He Himself also at the beginning spoke not openly concerning meats, but, *"The things that go into the mouth;"* and again, when He had seemed afterwards to speak more plainly, He veiled it by His conclusion, saying, *"But to eat with unwashen hands defiles not the man:"* [Matthew 15:20] that He might seem to have had His occasion from thence, and to be still discoursing of the same. Therefore He said not, *"To eat meats defiles not a man,"* but is as though He were speaking on that other topic; that they may have nothing to say against it.

4. When therefore they had heard these things, *"the Pharisees,"* it is said, *"were offended,"* [Matthew 15:12] not the multitudes. For *"His disciples,"* so it is said, *"came and said unto Him, Do you know that the Pharisees were offended, when they heard the saying?"* Yet surely nothing had been said unto them.

What then says Christ? He did not remove the offense in respect of them, but reproved them, saying, *"Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up."* [Matthew 15:13] For He is wont both to despise offenses, and not to despise them. Elsewhere, for example, He says, *"But lest we should offend them, cast an hook into the sea:"* [Matthew 17:27] but here He says, *"Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."*

But these things His disciples said, not as grieving for those men only, but as being themselves also slightly perplexed. But because they dared not say so in their own person, they would fain learn it by their telling Him of others. And as to its being so, hear how after this the ardent and ever-forward Peter came to Him, and says, *"Declare unto us this parable,"*

[Matthew 15:15] discovering the trouble in his soul, and not indeed venturing to say openly, *"I am offended,"* but requiring that by His interpretation he should be freed from his perplexity; wherefore also he was reproved.

What then says Christ? *"Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up."*

This, they that are diseased with the Manichæan pest affirm to be spoken of the law; but their mouths are stopped by what had been said before. For if He was speaking of the law, how does He further back defend it, and fight for it, saying, *"Why do ye transgress the commandments of God for your tradition?"* And how does He bring forward the prophet? But of themselves and of their traditions He so speaks. For if God said, *"Honor your father and your mother,"* how is not that of God's planting, which was spoken by God?

And what follows also indicates, that of themselves it was said, and of their traditions. Thus He added, *"They are blind leaders of the blind."* Whereas, had He spoken it of the law, He would have said, *"It is a blind leader of the blind."* But not so did He speak, but, *"They are blind leaders of the blind:"* freeing it from the blame, and bringing it all round upon them.

Then to sever the people also from them, as being on the point of falling into a pit by their means, He says, *"If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."*

It is a great evil merely to be blind, but to be in such a case and have none to lead him, nay, to occupy the place of a guide, is a double and triple ground of censure. For if it be a dangerous thing for the blind man not to have a guide, much more so that he should even desire to be guide to another.

What then says Peter? He says not, *"What can this be which You have said?"* but as though it were full of obscurity, he puts his question. And he says not, *"Why have you spoken contrary to the law?"* for he was afraid, lest he should be thought to have taken offense, but asserts it to be obscure. However, that it was not obscure, but that he was offended, is manifest, for it had nothing of obscurity.

Wherefore also He rebukes him, saying, *"Are ye also yet without understanding?"* [Matthew 15:16] For as to the multitude, they did not perhaps so much as understand the saying; but themselves were the persons offended. Wherefore, whereas at first, as though asking in behalf of the Pharisees, they were desirous to be told; when they heard Him denouncing a great threat, and saying, *"Every plant, which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up,"* and, *"They are blind leaders of the blind,"* they were silenced. But he, always ardent, not even so endures to hold his peace, but says, *"Declare unto us this parable."* [Matthew 15:15]

What then says Christ? With a sharp rebuke He answers, *"Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand?"*

But these things He said, and reproved them, in order to cast out their prejudice; He stopped not however at this, but adds other things also, saying, *"That whatsoever enters in at the mouth goes into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, blasphemies, false-witnessings: and these are the things that defile the man: but to eat with unwashen hands defiles not the man."* [Matthew 15:17-20]

Do you see how sharply He deals with them, and in the way of rebuke?

Then He establishes His saying by our common nature, and with a view to their cure. For when He says, *"It goes into the belly, and is cast out*

into the draught," he is still answering according to the low views of the Jews. For He says, *"it abides not, but goes out:"* and what if it abode? It would not make one unclean. But not yet were they able to hear this.

And one may remark, that because of this the lawgiver allows just so much time, as it may be remaining within one, but when it is gone forth, no longer. For instance, at evening He bids you wash yourself, and so be clean; measuring the time of the digestion, and of the excretion. [Leviticus 11:24-25] But the things of the heart, He says, abide within, and when they are gone forth they defile, and not when abiding only. And first He puts our evil thoughts, a kind of thing which belonged to the Jews; and not as yet does He make His refutation from the nature of the things, but from the manner of production from the belly and the heart respectively, and from the fact that the one sort remains, the other not; the one entering in from without, and departing again outwards, while the others are bred within, and having gone forth they defile, and then more so, when they are gone forth. Because they were not yet able, as I said, to be taught these things with all due strictness.

But Mark says, that *"cleansing the meats,"* He spoke this. He did not however express it, nor at all say, *"but to eat such and such meats defiles not the man,"* for neither could they endure to be told it by Him thus distinctly. And accordingly His conclusion was, *"But to eat with unwashen hands defiles not the man."* [Matthew 15:20]

5. Let us learn then what are the things that defile the man; let us learn, and let us flee them. For even in the church we see such a custom prevailing among the generality, and men giving diligence to come in clean garments, and to have their hands washed; but how to present a clean soul to God, they make no account.

And this I say, not forbidding them to wash hands or mouth; but willing men so to wash as is meet, not with water only, but instead of water, with all virtues. For the filth of the mouth is evil speaking, blasphemy, reviling, angry words, filthy talking, laughter, jesting: if then you are conscious to yourself of uttering none of them, neither of being defiled with this filth, draw near with confidence; but if you have times out of number received these stains, why do you labor in vain, washing your tongue indeed with water, but bearing about on it such deadly and hurtful filth? For tell me, had you dung on your hands, and mire, would you indeed venture to pray? By no means. And yet this were no hurt; but that is ruin. How then are you reverential in the different things, but in the forbidden remiss?

What then? Should not we pray? Says one. We should indeed, but not while defiled, and having upon us mire of that sort.

"What then, if I have been overtaken?" says one. Cleanse yourself. *"How, and in what way?"* Weep, groan, give alms, apologize to him that is affronted, reconcile him to yourself hereby, wipe clean your tongue, lest you provoke God more grievously. For so if one had filled his hands with dung, and then should lay hold of your feet, entreating you, far from hearing him, you would rather spurn him with your foot; how then dared thou in such sort draw near to God? Since in truth the tongue is the hand of them that pray, and by it we lay hold on the knees of God. Defile it not therefore, lest to you also He say, *"Though you make many prayers, I will not hearken."* [Isaiah 1:15] Yea, and *"in the power of the tongue are death and life;"* [Proverbs 18:21] and, *"By your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned."* [Matthew 12:37]

I bid you then watch your tongue more than the apple of your eye. The tongue is a royal steed. If then thou put a bridle on it, and teach it to pace orderly, the King will rest and take His seat thereon; but if you suffer it to

rush about unbridled and leap wantonly, it becomes a beast for the devil and bad spirits to ride on. And while thou, fresh from the company of your own wife, darest not pray, although this is no blame at all; do you lift up your hands, fresh from reviling and insult, which brings after it no less than hell, before you have well cleansed yourself? And how do you not shudder? Tell me. Have you not heard Paul, saying, *"Marriage is honorable, and the bed undefiled?"* [Hebrews 13:4] But if on rising from the undefiled bed, you dare not draw near in prayer, how do you coming from the bed of the devil call on that awful and terrible name? For it is truly the devil's bed, to wallow in insults and reviling. And like some wicked adulterer, wrath dallies with us in great delight, casting into us deadly seed, and making us give birth to diabolical enmity, and doing all things in a way opposite to marriage. For whereas marriage causes the two to become one flesh, wrath severs into many parts them that were united, and cleaves and cuts in pieces the very soul.

That you may therefore with confidence draw near to God, receive not wrath, when it comes in upon you, and desires to be with you, but drive it away like a mad dog.

For so Paul too commanded: his phrase being, *"lifting up holy hands without wrath and disputing."* [1 Timothy 2:8] Dishonor not then your tongue, for how will it entreat for you, when it has lost its proper confidence? But adorn it with gentleness, with humility, make it worthy of the God who is entreated, fill it with blessing, with much almsdoing. For it is possible even with words to do alms. *"For a word is a better thing than a gift,"* [Sirach 18:16] and *"answer the poor man peaceably with meekness."* [Sirach 4:8] And all the rest of your time too adorn it with the rehearsing of the laws of God; *"Yea, let all your communication be in the law of the Most High."* [Sirach 9:15]

Having thus adorned ourselves, let us come to our King, and fall at His knees, not with the body only, but also with the mind. Let us consider whom we are approaching, and on whose behalf, and what we would accomplish. We are drawing near unto God, whom the seraphim behold and turn away their faces, not bearing His brightness; at sight of whom the earth trembles. We draw near unto God, *"who dwells in the light, which no man can approach unto."* [1 Timothy 6:16] And we draw near unto Him for deliverance from hell, for remission of sins, for escape from those in tolerable punishments, for attaining to the Heavens, and to the good things that are there. Let us, I say, fall down before Him both in body and in mind, that He may raise us up when we are down; let us converse with all gentleness and meekness.

And who is so wretched and miserable, one may say, as not to become gentle in prayer? He that prays with an imprecation, and fills himself with wrath, and cries out against his enemies.

6. Nay, if you will accuse, accuse yourself. If you will whet and sharpen your tongue, let it be against your own sins. And tell not what evil another has done to you, but what you have done to yourself; for this is most truly an evil; since no other will really be able to injure you, unless thou injure yourself. Wherefore, if you desire to be against them that wrong you, approach as against yourself first; there is no one to hinder; since by coming into court against another, you have but the greater injury to go away with.

And what injury at all have you really to mention? That such an one insulted and spoiled you by violence, and encompassed you with dangers? Nay, this is receiving not injury, but if we be sober, the very greatest benefit; the injured being he that did such things, not he that suffered them. And this is more than any one thing the cause of all our evils, that we do not

so much as know at all who is the injured, and who the injurious person. Since if we knew this well, we should not ever injure ourselves, we should not pray against another, having learned that it is impossible to suffer ill of another. For not to be spoiled, but to spoil, is an evil. Wherefore, if you have spoiled, accuse yourself; but if you have been spoiled, rather pray for him that spoiled you, because he has done you the greatest good. For although the intent of the doer was not such, yet you have received the greatest benefit, if you have endured it nobly. For him, both men, and the laws of God declare to be wretched, but you, the injured party, they crown, and proclaim your praise.

For so if any one sick of a fever had violently taken from any other a vessel containing water, and had had his fill of his pernicious desire, we should not say that the despoiled had been injured, but the spoiler; for he has aggravated his fever, and made his disease more grievous. Now in this way I bid you reason concerning him also that loves wealth and money. For he too, having a far worse fever than the other, has by this rapine fanned the flame in himself.

Again, were some madman to snatch a sword from any one, and destroy himself, which again is the injured? He that has been robbed, or the robber? It is quite clear, he that did the robbery.

Well then, in the case of seizing property also, let us give the same suffrage. For what a sword is to a madman, much the same is wealth to a covetous man; nay, it is even a worse thing. For the madman, when he has taken the sword, and thrust it through himself, is both delivered from his madness, and has no second blow to receive; but the lover of money receives daily ten thousand wounds more grievous than his, without delivering himself from his madness, but aggravating it more exceedingly:

and the more wounds he receives, the more does he give occasion for other more grievous blows.

Reflecting then on these things, let us flee this sword; let us flee the madness; though late, let us become temperate. For this virtue too ought to be called temperance, not less than that which is used to be so called among all men. For whereas there the dominion of one lust is to be struggled against, here we have to master many lusts, and those of all kinds.

Yea, nothing, nothing is more foolish than the slave of wealth. He thinks he overcomes when he is overcome. He thinks he is master, when he is a slave, and putting bonds on himself, he rejoices; making the wild beast fiercer, he is pleased; and becoming a captive, he prides himself, and leaps for joy; and seeing a dog rabid and flying at his soul, when he ought to bind him and weaken him by hunger, he actually supplies him with abundance of food, that he may leap upon him more fiercely, and be more formidable.

Reflecting then on all these things, let us loose the bonds, let us slay the monster, let us drive away the disease, let us cast out this madness; that we may enjoy a calm and pure health, and having with much pleasure sailed into the serene haven, may attain unto the eternal blessings; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 52 on Matthew

Matthew 15:21-22.

"And Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

But Mark says, that *"He could not be hid,"* [Mark 7:24] though He had entered into the house. And why did He go at all into these parts? When He had set them free from the observance of meats, then to the Gentiles also He goes on to open a door, proceeding in due course; even as Peter, having been first directed to annul this law, is sent to Cornelius.

But if any one should say, How then, while saying to His disciples, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles,"* does He Himself admit her? first, this would be our reply, that what He enjoined upon His disciples, He was not Himself also tied to; secondly, that not in order to preach did He depart; which indeed Mark likewise intimating said, He even hid Himself, yet was not concealed.

For as His not hastening to them first was a part of the regular course of His proceedings, so to drive them away when coming to Him was unworthy of His love to man. For if the flying ought to be pursued, much more ought the pursuing not to be avoided.

See at any rate how worthy this woman is of every benefit. For she dared not even come to Jerusalem, fearing, and accounting herself unworthy. For were it not for this, she would have come there, as is evident both from her present earnestness, and from her coming out of her own coasts.

And some also taking it as an allegory say, that when Christ came out of Judea, then the church ventured to approach Him, coming out herself also from her own coasts. For it is said, *"Forget your own people and your father's house."* For both Christ went out of His borders, and the woman out of her borders, and so it became possible for them to fall in with each other: thus He says, *"Behold a woman of Canaan coming out of her own coasts."*

The evangelist speaks against the woman, that he may show forth her marvellous act, and celebrate her praise the more. For when you hear of a Canaanitish woman, you should call to mind those wicked nations, who overset from their foundations the very laws of nature. And being reminded of these, consider also the power of Christ's advent. For they who were cast out, that they might not pervert any Jews, these appeared so much better disposed than the Jews, as even to come out of their coasts, and approach Christ; while those were driving Him away, even on His coming unto them.

2. Having then come unto Him, she says nothing else, but *"Have mercy on me,"* and by her cry brings about them many spectators. For indeed it was a pitiful spectacle to see a woman crying aloud in so great affliction, and that woman a mother, and entreating for a daughter, and for a daughter in such evil case: she not even venturing to bring into the Master's sight her that was possessed, but leaving her to lie at home, and herself making the entreaty.

And she tells her affliction only, and adds nothing more; neither does she drag the physician to her house, like that nobleman, saying, *"Come and lay your hand upon her,"* and, *"Come down ere my child die."*

But having described both her calamity, and the intensity of the disease, she pleads the Lord's mercy, and cries aloud; and she says not, *"Have mercy on my daughter,"* but, *"Have mercy on me."* For she indeed is

insensible of her disease, but it is I that suffer her innumerable woes; my disease is with consciousness, my madness with perception of itself.

2. *"But He answered her not a word."* [Matthew 15:23]

What is this new and strange thing? The Jews in their perverseness He leads on, and blaspheming He entreats them, and tempting Him He dismisses them not; but to her, running unto Him, and entreating, and beseeching Him, to her who had been educated neither in the law, nor in the prophets, and was exhibiting so great reverence; to her He does not vouchsafe so much as an answer.

Whom would not this have offended, seeing the facts so opposite to the report? For whereas they had heard, that He went about the villages healing, her, when she had come to Him, He utterly repels. And who would not have been moved by her affliction, and by the supplication she made for her daughter in such evil case? For not as one worthy, nor as demanding a due, not so did she approach Him, but she entreated that she might find mercy, and merely gave a lamentable account of her own affliction; yet is she not counted worthy of so much as an answer.

Perhaps many of the hearers were offended, but she was not offended. And why say I, of the hearers? For I suppose that even the very disciples must have been in some degree affected at the woman's affliction, and have been greatly troubled, and out of heart.

Nevertheless not even in this trouble did they venture to say, *"Grant her this favor,"* but, *"His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she cries after us."* For we too, when we wish to persuade any one, oftentimes say the contrary.

But Christ says, *"I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* [Matthew 15:24]

What then did the woman, after she heard this? Was she silent, and did she desist? Or did she relax her earnestness? By no means, but she was the more instant. But it is not so with us; rather, when we fail to obtain, we desist; whereas it ought to make us the more urgent.

And yet, who would not have been driven to perplexity by the word which was then spoken? Why His silence were enough to drive her to despair, but His answer did so very much more. For together with herself, to see them also in utter perplexity that were pleading with her, and to hear that the thing is even impossible to be done, was enough to cast her into unspeakable perplexity.

Yet nevertheless the woman was not perplexed, but on seeing her advocates prevail nothing, she made herself shameless with a goodly shamelessness.

For whereas before this she had not ventured so much as to come in sight (for "*she cries*," it is said, "*after us*"), when one might expect that she should rather depart further off in utter despair, at that very time she comes nearer, and worships, saying, "*Lord, help me.*" [Matthew 15:25]

What is this, O woman? Have you then greater confidence than the apostles? More abundant strength? "*Confidence and strength*," says she, "*by no means; nay, I am even full of shame. Yet nevertheless my very shamelessness do I put forward for entreaty; He will respect my confidence.*" And what is this? Heardest thou not Him saying, "*I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel?*" "*I heard*," says she, "*but He Himself is Lord.*" Wherefore neither did she say, "*Entreat and beseech*," but, "*Help me.*"

3. What then says Christ? Not even with all this was He satisfied, but He makes her perplexity yet more intense again, saying,

"It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs."
[Matthew 15:26]

And when He vouchsafed her a word, then He smote her more sharply than by His silence. And no longer does He refer the cause to another, nor say, *"I am not sent,"* but the more urgent she makes her entreaty, so much the more does He also urge His denial. And He calls them no longer *"sheep,"* but *"children,"* and her *"a dog."*

What then says the woman? Out of His own very words she frames her plea. *"Why, though I be a dog,"* said she, *"I am not an alien."*

Justly did Christ say, *"For judgment am I come."* [John 9:32] The woman practises high self-command, and shows forth all endurance and faith, and this, receiving insult; but they, courted and honored, requite it with the contrary.

For, *"that food is necessary for the children,"* says she, *"I also know; yet neither am I forbidden, being a dog. For were it unlawful to receive, neither would it be lawful to partake of the crumbs; but if, though in scanty measure, they ought to be partakers, neither am I forbidden, though I be a dog; nay, rather on this ground am I most surely a partaker, if I am a dog."*

With this intent did Christ put her off, for He knew she would say this; for this did He deny the grant, that He might exhibit her high self-command.

For if He had not meant to give, neither would He have given afterwards, nor would He have stopped her mouth again. But as He does in the case of the centurion, saying, *"I will come and heal him,"* [Matthew 8:7] that we might learn the godly fear of that man, and might hear him say, *"I am not worthy that You should come under my roof;"* [Matthew 8:8] and as He does in the case of her that had the issue of blood, saying, *"I perceive that virtue has gone out of me,"* [Luke 8:46] that He might make her faith

manifest; and as in the case of the Samaritan woman, that He might show how not even upon reproof she desists: [John 4:18] so also here, He would not that so great virtue in the woman should be hid. Not in insult then were His words spoken, but calling her forth, and revealing the treasure laid up in her.

But do thou, I pray you, together with her faith see also her humility. For He had called the Jews "*children*," but she was not satisfied with this, but even called them "*masters*;" so far was she from grieving at the praises of others.

"Why, the dogs also," says she, *"eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table."* [Matthew 15:27]

Do you see the woman's wisdom, how she did not venture so much as to say a word against it, nor was stung by other men's praises, nor was indignant at the reproach? Do you see her constancy? He said, *"It is not meet,"* and she said, *"Truth, Lord;"* He called them "*children*," but she "*masters*;" He used the name of a dog, but she added also the dog's act. Do you see this woman's humility?

Hear the proud language of the Jews. *"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man;"* [John 8:33] and, *"We be born of God."* [John 8:41] But not so this woman, rather she calls herself a dog, and them masters; so for this she became a child. What then says Christ? *"O woman, great is your faith."* [Matthew 15:28]

Yea, therefore did He put her off, that He might proclaim aloud this saying, that He might crown the woman.

"Be it unto you even as you will." Now what He says is like this: *"Your faith indeed is able to effect even greater things than these; nevertheless, Be it unto you even as you will."*

This was akin to that voice that said, *"Let the Heaven be, and it was."*
[Genesis 1:3]

"And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

Do you see how this woman too contributed not a little to the healing of her daughter? For to this purpose neither did Christ say, *"Let your little daughter be made whole,"* but, *"Great is your faith, be it unto you even as you will;"* to teach you that the words were not used at random, nor were they flattering words, but great was the power of her faith.

The certain test, however, and demonstration thereof, He left to the issue of events. Her daughter accordingly was straightway healed.

But mark thou, I pray you, how when the apostles had failed, and had not succeeded, this woman had success. So great a thing is assiduity in prayer. Yea, He had even rather be solicited by us, guilty as we are, for those who belong to us, than by others in our behalf. And yet they had more liberty to speak; but she exhibited much endurance.

And by the issue He also excused Himself to His disciples for the delay, and showed that with reason He had not assented to their request.

4. *"And Jesus departed from thence, and came near unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into the mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, maimed, dumb; and cast them at His feet; and He healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel."*

Now He goes about Himself, now sits awaiting the diseased, and has the lame brought up unto the mountain. And no longer do they touch so much as His garment, but advance a higher step, being cast at His feet: and

they showed their faith doubly, first, by going up into the mountain though lame, then by wanting nothing else but to be cast at His feet only.

And great was the marvel and strange, to see them that were carried walking, the blind needing not any to lead them by the hand. Yea, both the multitude of the healed, and the facility of their cure amazed them.

Do you see, how the woman indeed He healed with so much delay, but these immediately? Not because these are better than she is, but because she is more faithful than they. Therefore, while in her case He defers and delays, to manifest her constancy; on these He bestows the gift immediately, stopping the mouths of the unbelieving Jews, and cutting away from them every plea. For the greater favors one has received, so much the more is he liable to punishment, if he be insensible, and the very honor make him no better. Therefore you see the rich also proving wicked, are more punished than the poor, for not being softened even by their prosperity. For tell me not that they gave alms. Since if they gave not in proportion to their substance, not even so shall they escape; our alms being judged not by the measure of our gifts, but by the largeness of our mind. But if these suffer punishment, much more they that are eager about unnecessary things; who build houses of two and three stories, but despise the hungry; who give heed to covetousness, but neglect almsgiving.

5. But since the discourse has fallen on almsgiving, come then, let us resume again today that argument, which I was making three days ago concerning benevolence, and left unfinished. You remember, when lately I was speaking of vanity about your shoes, and of that empty trouble, and the luxury of the young, that it was from almsgiving that our discourse passed on to those charges *against you*. What were the matters then at that time brought forward? That almsgiving is a kind of art, having its workshop in Heaven, and for its teacher, not man, but God. Then inquiring what is an art,

and what not an art, we came upon fruitless labors, and evil devices, among which we made mention also of this art concerning men's shoes.

Have ye then recalled it to mind? Come now, let us today also resume what we then said, and let us show how almsgiving is an art, and better than all arts. For if the peculiarity of art is to issue in something useful, and nothing is more useful than almsgiving, very evidently this is both an art, and better than all arts. For it makes for us not shoes, nor does it weave garments, nor build houses that are of clay; but it procures life everlasting, and snatches us from the hands of death, and in either life shows us glorious, and builds the mansions that are in Heaven, and those eternal tabernacles.

This suffers not our lamps to go out, nor that we should appear at the marriage having filthy garments, but washes them, and renders them purer than snow. *"For though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow." not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.*

Homily 53 on Matthew

MATT. XV. 32. 'But Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.'

Both above, when going to do this miracle, He first healed them that were maimed in body, and here He does the self-same thing; from the healing of the blind and the lame, He goes on to this again.

But why might it be, that then His disciples said, "*Send away the multitude,*" but now they said not so; and this, though three days had past? Either being themselves improved by this time, or seeing that the people had no great sense of hunger; for they were glorifying God for the things that were done.

But see how in this instance too He does not proceed at once to the miracle, but calls them forth thereunto. For the multitudes indeed who had come out for healing dared not ask for the loaves; but He, the benevolent and provident one, gives even to them that ask not, and says unto His disciples, "*I have compassion, and will not send them away fasting.*"

For lest they should say that they came having provisions for the way, He says, "*They continue with me now three days;*" so that even if they came having any, it is all spent. For therefore He Himself did not this on the first and second day, but when all had been consumed by them, in order that having first been in want, they might more eagerly accept His work.

Therefore He says, "*Lest they faint in the way;*" implying both their distance to be great, and that they had nothing left.

"Then, if you are not willing to send them away fasting, wherefore do you not work the miracle?" That by this question and by their answer He might make the disciples more heedful, and that they might show forth their faith, coming unto Him, and saying, *"Make loaves."*

But not even so did they understand the motive of His question; wherefore afterwards He says to them, as Mark relates, *"Are your hearts so hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? And having ears, hear ye not?"* [Mark 8:17-18]

Since, if this were not so, wherefore does He speak to the disciples, and signify the multitude's worthiness to receive a benefit, and add also the pity He Himself feels?

But Matthew says, that after this He also rebuked them, saying, *"O you of little faith, do ye not yet understand, nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?"* [Matthew 16:8-10] So completely do the evangelists harmonize one with another.

What then say the disciples? Still they creep on the ground, although He had done so very many things in order that that miracle might be kept in memory; as by His question, and by the answer, and by making them minister herein, and by distributing the baskets; but their state of mind was yet rather imperfect.

Wherefore also they say to Him, *"Whence should we have so many loaves in the wilderness?"*

Both before this, and now, they make mention of the wilderness; themselves in a weak way of argument so speaking, yet even hereby putting the miracle above suspicion. That is, lest any should affirm (as I have indeed already said), that they obtained it from some neighboring village, the place is acknowledged, that the miracle may be believed. With this

view, both the former miracle and this He works in a wilderness, at a great distance from the villages.

The disciples, considering none of all this, said, "*Whence should we have so many loaves in a wilderness?*" For they thought verily He had said it as purposing next to enjoin them to feed the people; most foolishly; since with this intent He had said, and that lately, "*Give ye them to eat,*" [Matthew 14:16] that He might bring them to an urgent need of entreating Him.

But now He says not this, "*Give ye them to eat,*" but what? "*I have compassion on them, and will not send them away fasting;*" bringing the disciples nearer, and provoking them more, and granting them clearer sight, to ask these things of Him. For in truth they were the words of one signifying that He has power not to send them away fasting; of one manifesting His authority. For the expression, "*I will not,*" implies such a purpose in Him.

2. Since however they still spoke of the multitude merely, and the place, and the wilderness (for "*whence,*" it is said, "*should we have in a wilderness so many loaves, as to fill so great a multitude?*"); and not even so understood what He said, He proceeds to contribute His own part, and says unto them,

"How many loaves do you have? And they say, Seven, and a few little fishes." [Matthew 15:34]

And they no more say, "*But what are these among so many?*" [John 6:9] as they had said before. So that although they reached not His whole meaning, yet nevertheless they became higher by degrees. For so He too, arousing their mind hereby, puts the question much as He had done before, that by the very form of the inquiry He might remind them of the works already done.

But as you have seen their imperfection hereby, so observe the severity of their spirit, and admire their love of truth, how, writing themselves, they conceal not their own defects, great as they were. For it was no small blame to have presently forgotten this miracle, which had so recently taken place; wherefore they are also rebuked.

And herewith consider also their strictness in another matter, how they were conquerors of their appetite; how disciplined to make little account of their diet. For being in the wilderness and abiding there three days, they had seven loaves.

Now all the rest He does as on the former occasion; thus He both makes them sit down on the ground, and He makes the loaves multiply themselves in the hands of the disciples.

For, *"He commanded,"* it is said, *"the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves, and the fishes, and gave thanks, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."*

But when we come to the end, there is a difference.

For, *"they did all eat,"* so it is said, *"and were filled, and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children."* [Matthew 15:37-38]

But why at the former time, when there were five thousand, did twelve baskets full remain over and above, whereas here, when there were four thousand, it was seven baskets full? For what purpose, I say, and by what cause, were the remnants less, the guests not being so many?

Either then one may say this, that the baskets on this last occasion were greater than those used before, or if this were not so, lest the equality of the miracle should again cast them into forgetfulness, He rouses their recollection by the difference, that by the variation they might be reminded of both one and the other. Accordingly, in that case, He makes the baskets

full of fragments equal in number to His disciples, in this, the other baskets equal to the loaves; indicating even hereby His unspeakable power, and the ease wherewith He exercised His authority, in that it was possible for Him to work such miracles, both in this way and in the other. For neither was it of small power, to maintain the exact number, both then and now; then when there were five thousand, now when there were four thousand; and not suffer the remnants to be more than the baskets used on the one occasion or on the other, although the number of the guests was different.

And the end again was like the former. For as then He left the multitude and withdrew in a ship, so also now; and John also says this. [John 6:17] For since no sign did so work upon them to follow Him, as the miracle of the loaves; and they were minded not only to follow Him, but also to make Him a king; [John 6:15] avoiding all suspicion of usurping royalty, He hastens away after this work of wonder: and He does not even go away afoot, lest they should follow Him, but by entering into a ship.

"And He sent away the multitudes," so it says, "and went on board the ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala."

3. *"And the Pharisees and Sadducees came and desired Him to show them a sign from Heaven. But He says, When it is evening, you say, Fair weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, Foul weather today, for the sky is red and lowering. You can discern the face of the sky, but can you not the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And He left them, and departed."*

But Mark says, that when they had come unto Him, and were questioning with Him, *"He sighed deeply in His spirit, and says, Why does this generation seek after a sign?"* [Mark 8:12]

And yet surely their inquiry was deserving of anger and great displeasure; yet nevertheless the benevolent and provident One is not angry, but pities and bewails them as incurably diseased, and after so full a demonstration of His power, tempting Him.

For not in order to believe did they seek, but to lay hold of Him. Since had they come unto Him as ready to believe, He would have given it. For He who said to the woman, *"It is not meet,"* [Matthew 15:26] and afterwards gave, much more would He have shown His bounty to these.

But since they did not seek to believe, therefore He also calls them hypocrites, because in another place they said one thing, and meant another. Yea, had they believed, they would not even have asked. And from another thing too it is evident that they believed not; that when reproved and exposed, they abode not with Him, nor said, *"We are ignorant and seek to learn."*

But for what sign from Heaven were they asking? Either that He should say the sun, or curb the moon, or bring down thunderbolts, or work a change in the air, or some other such thing.

What then says He to all this? *"You can discern the face of the sky, but can you not discern the signs of the times?"* See His meekness and moderation. For not even as before did He refuse merely, and say, *"There shall none be given them,"* but He states also the cause why He gives it not, even though they were not asking for information.

What then was the cause? *"Much as in the sky,"* says He, *"one thing is a sign of a storm, another of fair weather, and no one when he saw the sign of foul weather would seek for a calm, neither in calm and fair weather for a storm; so should you reckon with regard to me also. For this present time of my coming, is different from that which is to come. Now there is need of these signs which are on the earth, but those in Heaven are stored up*

against that time. Now as a physician am I come, then I shall be here as a judge; now to seek that which is gone astray, then to demand an account. Therefore in a hidden manner am I come, but then with much publicity, folding up the heaven, hiding the sun, not suffering the moon to give her light. Then 'the very powers of the heavens shall be shaken,' [Matthew 24:29] and the manifestation of my coming shall imitate lightning that appears at once to all. [Matthew 24:27] But not now is the time for these signs; for I have come to die, and to suffer all extremities."

Heard ye not the prophet, saying, *"He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall His voice be heard without?"* [Isaiah 42:2] and another again, *"He shall come down as rain upon a fleece of wool?"*

And if men speak of the signs in Pharaoh's time, there was an enemy then from whom deliverance was needed, and it all took place in due course. But to Him that came among friends there was no need of those signs.

"And besides, how shall I give the great signs, when the little are not believed?" Little, I mean, as regards display, since in power these latter were much greater than the former. For what could be equal to remitting sins, and raising the dead, and driving away devils, and creating a body, and ordering all other things aright?

But see their hardened heart, how on being told, that *"no sign should be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas,"* they do not ask. And yet, knowing both the prophet, and all that befell him, and having been told this a second time, they ought to have inquired and learned what the saying could mean; but, as I said, there is no desire of information in these their doings. For this cause *"He also left them, and departed."*

4. *"And when His disciples,"* so it is said, *"had come to the other side, they forgot to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware*

of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." [Matthew 16:5-6]

And why said He not plainly, Beware of their teaching? His will is to remind them of what had been done, for He knew they had forgotten. But for accusing them at once there seemed to be no reasonable ground, but to take the occasion from themselves, and so to reprove them, would make the charge admissible. *"And why did He not then reprove them, when they said, 'Whence should we have so many loaves in the wilderness?' for it seemed a good time then to say what He says here."* That He might not seem to rush hastily on the miracle. And besides, He would not blame them before the multitude, nor seek honor in their presence. And now too the accusation had greater reason, for that after repetition of the miracle they were so minded.

Wherefore also He works another miracle, and then and not till then He reproves; I mean, He brings forward what they were reasoning in their hearts. But what were their reasonings? *"Because,"* so it is said, *"we have taken no bread."* For as yet they were full of trepidation about the purifications of the Jews, and the observances of meats.

Wherefore on all accounts He attacks them even with severity, saying, *"Why reason ye in yourselves, O you of little faith, because you have brought no bread? Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your heart hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? Having ears, hear ye not? [Mark 8:17-18] Do ye not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?"* [Matthew 16:9-10]

Do you see intense displeasure? For nowhere else does He appear to have so rebuked them. Wherefore then does He so? In order again to cast out their prejudice about the meats. I mean that with this view, whereas then He had only said, *"Perceive ye not, neither understand?"* in this place, and with a strong rebuke, He says, *"O you of little faith."*

For not everywhere is lenity a good thing. And as He used to allow them freedom of speech, so does He also reprove, by this variety providing for their salvation. And mark at once His reproof, how strong, and His mildness. For all but excusing Himself to them for His severe reproofs to them, He says, *"Do ye not yet consider the five loaves, and how many baskets ye took up; and the seven loaves, and how many baskets ye took up?"* And to this end He sets down also the numbers, as well of the persons fed as of the fragments, at once both bringing them to recollection of the past, and making them more attentive to the future.

And to teach you how great the power of His reproof, and how it roused up their slumbering mind, hear what says the evangelist. For Jesus having said no more, but having reproved them, and added this only, *"How is it that you do not understand, that I spoke it not to you concerning bread that you should beware, but of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees;"* He subjoined, saying, *"Then understood they that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees,"* [Matthew 14:12] although He had not uttered that interpretation.

See how much good His reproof wrought. For it both led them away from the Jewish observances, and when they were remiss, made them more heedful, and delivered them from want of faith;

Homily 54 on Matthew

MATT. XIV. 13. 'Now when Jesus had gone forth into the coastsof Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?'

Wherefore has he mentioned the founder of the city? Because there was another besides, Cæsarea Stratonis. But not in that, but in this does He ask them, leading them far away from the Jews, so that being freed from all alarm, they might speak with boldness all that was in their mind.

And wherefore did He not ask them at once their own opinion, but that of the people? In order that when they had told the people's opinion, and then were asked, "*But whom say ye that I am?*" by the manner of His inquiry they might be led up to a sublimer notion, and not fall into the same low view as the multitude. Accordingly He asks them not at all in the beginning of His preaching, but when He had done many miracles, and had discoursed with them of many and high doctrines, and had afforded so many clear proofs of His Godhead, and of His unanimity with the Father, then He puts this question to them.

And He said not, "*Whom say the Scribes and Pharisees that I am?*" often as these had come unto Him, and discoursed with Him; but, "*Whom do men say that I am?*" inquiring after the judgment of the people, as unbiassed. For though it was far meaner than it should be, yet was it free from malice, but the other was teeming with much wickedness.

And signifying how earnestly He desires His Economy to be confessed, He says, "*The Son of Man;*" thereby denoting His Godhead, which He does also in many other places. For He says, "*No man has ascended up to Heaven, but the Son of Man, which is in Heaven.*"

[John 3:13] And again, *"But when you shall see the Son of Man ascend up, where He was before."* [John 6:62]

Then, since they said, *"Some John the Baptist, some Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the prophets,"* [Matthew 16:14] and set forth their mistaken opinion, He next added, *"But whom say ye that I am?"* [Matthew 16:15] calling them on by His second inquiry to entertain some higher imagination concerning Him, and indicating that their former judgment falls exceedingly short of His dignity. Wherefore He seeks for another judgment from themselves, and puts a second question, that they might not fall in with the multitude, who, because they saw His miracles greater than human, accounted Him a man indeed, but one that had appeared after a resurrection, as Herod also said. [Matthew 14:2] But He, to lead them away from this notion, says, *"But whom say ye that I am?"* that is, *"ye that are with me always, and see me working miracles, and have yourselves done many mighty works by me."*

2. What then says the mouth of the apostles, Peter, the ever fervent, the leader of the apostolic choir? When all are asked, he answers. And whereas when He asked the opinion of the people, all replied to the question; when He asked their own, Peter springs forward, and anticipates them, and says, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* [Matthew 16:16]

What then says Christ? *"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you."* [Matthew 16:17]

Yet surely unless he had rightly confessed Him, as begotten of the very Father Himself, this were no work of revelation; had he accounted our Lord to be one of the many, his saying was not worthy of a blessing. Since before this also they said, *"Truly He is Son of God,"* [Matthew 14:33] those, I mean, who were in the vessel after the tempest, which they saw, and were not blessed, although of course they spoke truly. For they confessed not

such a Sonship as Peter, but accounted Him to be truly Son as one of the many, and though peculiarly so beyond the many, yet not of the same substance.

And Nathanael too said, "*Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel;*" [John 1:49] and so far from being blessed, he is even reproved by Him, as having said what was far short of the truth. He replied at least, "*Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig-tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.*" [John 1:50]

Why then is this man blessed? Because he acknowledged Him very Son. Wherefore you see, that while in those former instances He had said no such thing, in this case He also signifies who had revealed it. That is, lest his words might seem to the many (because he was an earnest lover of Christ) to be words of friendship and flattery, and of a disposition to show favor to Him, he brings forward the person who had made them ring in his soul; to inform you that Peter indeed spoke, but the Father suggested, and that you might believe the saying to be no longer a human opinion, but a divine doctrine.

And wherefore does He not Himself declare it, nor say, "*I am the Christ,*" but by His question establish this, bringing them in to confess it? Because so to do was both more suitable to Him, yea necessary at that time, and it drew them on the more to the belief of the things that were said.

Do you see how the Father reveals the Son, how the Son the Father? For "*neither knows any man the Father,*" says He, "*save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.*" It cannot therefore be that one should learn the Son of any other than of the Father; neither that one should learn the Father of any other than of the Son. So that even hereby, their sameness of honor and of substance is manifest.

3. What then says Christ? *"You are Simon, the son of Jonas; you shall be called Cephas."* *"Thus since you have proclaimed my Father, I too name him that begot you;"* all but saying, *"As you are son of Jonas, even so am I of my Father."* Else it were superfluous to say, *"You are Son of Jonas;"* but since he had said, *"Son of God,"* to point out that He is so Son of God, as the other son of Jonas, of the same substance with Him that begot Him, therefore He added this, *"And I say unto you, You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church;"* [Matthew 16:18] that is, on the faith of his confession. Hereby He signifies that many were now on the point of believing, and raises his spirit, and makes him a shepherd. *"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* *"And if not against it, much more not against me. So be not troubled because you are shortly to hear that I shall be betrayed and crucified."*

Then He mentions also another honor. *"And I also will give you the keys of the heavens."* But what is this, *"And I also will give you?"* *"As the Father has given you to know me, so will I also give you."*

And He said not, *"I will entreat the Father"* (although the manifestation of His authority was great, and the largeness of the gift unspeakable), but, *"I will give you."* What dost Thou give? Tell me. *"The keys of the heavens, that whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven."* How then is it not *"His to give to sit on His right hand, and on His left,"* [Matthew 20:23] when He says, *"I will give you"?*

Do you see how He, His own self, leads Peter on to high thoughts of Him, and reveals Himself, and implies that He is Son of God by these two promises? For those things which are peculiar to God alone, (both to absolve sins, and to make the church in capable of overthrow in such assailing waves, and to exhibit a man that is a fisher more solid than any

rock, while all the world is at war with him), these He promises Himself to give; as the Father, speaking to Jeremiah, said, He would make him as "*a brazen pillar, and as a wall;*" [Jeremiah 1:18] but him to one nation only, this man in every part of the world.

I would fain inquire then of those who desire to lessen the dignity of the Son, which manner of gifts were greater, those which the Father gave to Peter, or those which the Son gave him? For the Father gave to Peter the revelation of the Son; but the Son gave him to sow that of the Father and that of Himself in every part of the world; and to a mortal man He entrusted the authority over all things in Heaven, giving him the keys; who extended the church to every part of the world, and declared it to be stronger than heaven. "*For heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.*" [Matthew 24:35] How then is He less, who has given such gifts, has effected such things?

And these things I say, not dividing the works of Father and Son ("*for all things are made by Him, and without Him was nothing made which was made*"): but bridling the shameless tongue of them that dare so to speak.

But see, throughout all, His authority: "*I say unto you, You are Peter; I will build the Church; I will give you the keys of Heaven.*"

4. And then, when He had so said, "*He charged them that they should tell no man that He was the Christ.*" [Matthew 16:20]

And why did He charge them? That when the things which offend are taken out of the way, and the cross is accomplished, and the rest of His sufferings fulfilled, and when there is nothing any more to interrupt and disturb the faith of the people in Him, the right opinion concerning Him may be engraven pure and immovable in the mind of the hearers. For, in truth, His power had not yet clearly shone forth. Accordingly it was His will then to be preached by them, when both the plain truth of the facts, and the

power of His deeds were pleading in support of the assertions of the apostles. For it was by no means the same thing to see Him in Palestine, now working miracles, and now insulted and persecuted (and especially when the very cross was presently to follow the miracles that were happening); and to behold him everywhere in the world, adored and believed, and no more suffering anything, such as He had suffered.

Therefore He bids them *"tell no man."* For that which has been once rooted and then plucked up, would hardly, if planted, again be retained among the many; but that which, once fixed, has remained immovable, and has suffered injury from no quarter, easily mounts up, and advances to a greater growth.

And if they who had enjoyed the benefit of many miracles, and had had part in so many unutterable mysteries, were offended by the mere hearing of it; or rather not these only, but even the leader of them all, Peter; consider what it was likely the common sort should feel, being first told that He is the Son of God, then seeing Him even crucified and spit upon, and that without knowledge of the secret of those mysteries, or participation in the gift of the Holy Ghost. For if to His disciples He said, *"I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now;"* [John 16:12] much more would the rest of the people have utterly failed, had the chiefest of these mysteries been revealed to them before the proper time. Accordingly He forbids them to tell.

And to instruct you how great a thing it was, their afterwards learning His doctrine complete, when the things that offend had passed by; learn it from this same leader of theirs. For this very Peter, he who after so many miracles proved so weak as even to deny Him, and to be in fear of a mean damsel; after the cross had come forth, and he had received the certain proofs of the resurrection, and there was nothing more to offend and trouble

him, retained the teaching of the Spirit so immovable, that more vehemently than a lion he sprang upon the people of the Jews, for all the dangers and innumerable deaths which were threatened.

With reason then did He bid them not tell the many before the crucifixion, since not even to them that were to teach did He venture to commit all before the crucifixion. *"For I have many things to say unto you,"* says He, *"but you cannot bear them now."*

And of the things too that He did say, they do not understand many, which He did not make plain before the crucifixion. At least when He was risen from the dead, then and not before they knew some of His sayings.

5. *"From that time forth began He to show unto them that He must suffer. [Matthew 16:21] From that time."* What time? When He had fixed the doctrine in them; when He had brought in the beginning of the Gentiles.

But not even so did they understand what He said. *"For the saying,"* it is said, *"was hid from them;"* [Luke 18:34] and they were as in a kind of perplexity, not knowing that He must rise again. Therefore He rather dwells on the difficulties, and enlarges His discourse, that He may open their mind, and they may understand what it can be that He speaks of.

"But they understood not, but the saying was hid from them, and they feared to ask this;" [Luke 9:45] not whether He should die, but how, and in what manner, and what this mystery could be. For they did not even know what was this same rising again, and supposed it much better not to die. Therefore, the rest being troubled and in perplexity, Peter again, in his ardor, alone ventures to discourse of these things; and not even he openly, but when he had taken Him apart; that is, having separated himself from the rest of the disciples; and he says, *"Be it far from You, Lord, this shall not be unto You."* What ever is this? He that obtained a revelation, he that was blessed, has he so soon fallen away, and suffered overthrow, so as to fear

His passion? And what marvel, that one who had not on these points received any revelation, should have that feeling? Yea, to inform you that not of himself did he speak those other things either, see in these matters that were not revealed to him how he is confounded and overthrown, and being told ten thousand times, knows not what the saying can mean.

For that He is Son of God he had learned, but what the mystery of the cross and of the resurrection might be, was not yet manifest to him: for *"the saying,"* it is said, *"was hid from them."*

Do you see that with just cause He bade them not declare it to the rest? For if it so confounded them, who must needs be made aware of it, what would not all others have felt?

6. He however, to signify that He is far from coming to the passion against His will, both rebuked Peter, and called him Satan.

Let them hear, as many as are ashamed of the suffering of the cross of Christ. For if the chief apostle, even before he had learned all distinctly, was called Satan for feeling this, what excuse can they have, who after so abundant proof deny His economy? I say, when he who had been so blessed, who made such a confession, has such words addressed to him; consider what they will suffer, who after all this deny the mystery of the cross.

And He said not, *"Satan spoke by you,"* but, *"Get behind me, Satan."* [Matthew 16:23] For indeed it was a desire of the adversary that Christ should not suffer. Therefore with such great severity did He rebuke him, as knowing that both he and the rest are especially afraid of this, and will not easily receive it.

Therefore He also reveals the thoughts of his mind, saying, *"Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."*

But what means, *"Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men"*? Peter examining the matter by human and earthly reasoning, accounted it disgraceful to Him and an unmeet thing. Touching him therefore sharply, He says, *"My passion is not an unmeet thing, but you give this sentence with a carnal mind; whereas if you had hearkened to my sayings in a godly manner, disengaging yourself from your carnal understanding, you would know that this of all things most becomes me. For thou indeed supposest that to suffer is unworthy of me; but I say unto you, that for me not to suffer is of the devil's mind;"* by the contrary statements repressing his alarm.

Thus as John, accounting it unworthy of Christ to be baptized by him, was persuaded of Christ to baptize Him, He saying, *"Thus it becomes us,"* [Matthew 3:15] and this same Peter too, forbidding Him to wash his feet, by the words, *"You have no part with me, unless I wash your feet;"* [John 13:8] even so here too He restrained him by the mention of the opposite, and by the severity of the reproof repressed his fear of suffering.

7. Let no man therefore be ashamed of the honored symbols of our salvation, and of the chiefest of all good things, whereby we even live, and whereby we are; but as a crown, so let us bear about the cross of Christ. Yea, for by it all things are wrought, that are wrought among us. Whether one is to be new-born, the cross is there; or to be nourished with that mystical food, or to be ordained, or to do anything else, everywhere our symbol of victory is present. Therefore both on house, and walls, and windows, and upon our forehead, and upon our mind, we inscribe it with much care.

For of the salvation wrought for us, and of our common freedom, and of the goodness of our Lord, this is the sign. *"For as a sheep was He led to the slaughter."* [Isaiah 53:7] When therefore you sign yourself, think of the

purpose of the cross, and quench anger, and all the other passions. When you sign yourself, fill your forehead with all courage, make your soul free. And ye know assuredly what are the things that give freedom. Wherefore also Paul leading us there, I mean unto the freedom that beseems us, did on this wise lead us unto it, having reminded us of the cross and blood of our Lord. *"For you are bought,"* says he, *"with a price; be not ye the servants of men."* Consider, says he, the price that has been paid for you, and you will be a slave to no man; by the price meaning the cross.

Since not merely by the fingers ought one to engrave it, but before this by the purpose of the heart with much faith. And if in this way you have marked it on your face, none of the unclean spirits will be able to stand near you, seeing the blade whereby he received his wound, seeing the sword which gave him his mortal stroke. For if we, on seeing the places in which the criminals are beheaded, shudder; think what the devil must endure, seeing the weapon, whereby Christ put an end to all his power, and cut off the head of the dragon.

Be not ashamed then of so great a blessing, lest Christ be ashamed of you, when He comes with His glory, and the sign appears before Him, shining beyond the very sunbeam. For indeed the cross comes then, uttering a voice by its appearance, and pleading with the whole world for our Lord, and signifying that no part has failed of what pertained to Him.

This sign, both in the days of our forefathers and now, has opened doors that were shut up; this has quenched poisonous drugs; this has taken away the power of hemlock; this has healed bites of venomous beasts. For if it opened the gates of hell, and threw wide the archways of Heaven, and made a new entrance into Paradise, and cut away the nerves of the devil; what marvel, if it prevailed over poisonous drugs, and venomous beasts, and all other such things.

This therefore do thou engrave upon your mind, and embrace the salvation of our souls. For this cross saved and converted the world, drove away error, brought back truth, made earth Heaven, fashioned men into angels. Because of this, the devils are no longer terrible, but contemptible; neither is death, death, but a sleep; because of this, all that wars against us is cast to the ground, and trodden under foot.

If any one therefore say to you, Do you worship the crucified? Say, with your voice all joy, and your countenance gladdened, *"I do both worship Him, and will never cease to worship."* And if he laugh, weep for him, because he is mad. Thank the Lord, that He has bestowed on us such benefits, as one cannot so much as learn without His revelation from above. Why, this is the very reason of his laughing, that *"the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit."* [1 Corinthians 2:14] Since our children too feel this, when they see any of the great and marvellous things; and if you bring a child into the mysteries, he will laugh. Now the heathen are like these children; or rather they are more imperfect even than these; wherefore also they are more wretched, in that not in an immature age, but when full grown, they have the feelings of babes; wherefore neither are they worthy of indulgence.

But let us with a clear voice, shouting both loud and high, cry out and say (and should all the heathen be present, so much the more confidently), that the cross is our glory, and the sum of all our blessings, and our confidence, and all our crown. I would that also with Paul I were able to say, *"By which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;"* [Galatians 6:14] but I cannot, restrained as I am by various passions.

8. Wherefore I admonish both you, and surely before you myself, to be crucified to the world, and to have nothing in common with the earth, but to set your love on your country above, and the glory and the good things that

come from it. For indeed we are soldiers of a heavenly King, and are clad with spiritual arms. Why then take we upon ourselves the life of traders, and mountebanks, nay rather of worms? For where the King is, there should also the soldier be. Yea, we have become soldiers, not of them that are far off, but of them that are near. For the earthly king indeed would not endure that all should be in the royal courts, and at his own side, but the King of the Heavens wills all to be near His royal throne.

And how, one may say, is it possible for us, being here, to stand by that throne? Because Paul too being on earth was where the seraphim, where the cherubim are; and nearer to Christ, than these the body guards to the king. For these turn about their faces in many directions, but him nothing beguiled nor distracted, but he kept his whole mind intent upon the king. So that if we would, this is possible to us also.

For were He distant from us in place, you might well doubt, but if He is present everywhere, to him that strives and is in earnest He is near. Wherefore also the prophet said, *"I will fear no evil, for You are with me; "* and God Himself again, *"I am a God near at hand, and not a God afar off."* [Jeremiah 23:23] Then as our sins separate us from Him, so do our righteousnesses draw us near unto Him. *"For while you are yet speaking,"* it is said, *"I will say, Here I am."* What father would ever be thus obedient to his offspring? What mother is there, so ready, and continually standing, if haply her children call her? There is not one, no father, no mother: but God stands continually waiting, if any of his servants should perchance call Him; and never, when we have called as we ought, has He refused to hear. Therefore He says, *"While you are yet speaking,"* I do not wait for you to finish, and I straightway hearken.

9. Let us call Him therefore, as it is His will to be called. But what is this His will? *"Loose,"* says He, *"every band of iniquity, unloose the twisted*

knots of oppressive covenants, tear in pieces every unjust contract. Break your bread to the hungry, and bring in the poor that are cast out to your house. If you see one naked, cover him, and them that belong to your seed you shall not overlook. Then shall your light break forth in the morning, and your healings shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall cover you. Then you shall call upon me, and I will give ear unto you; while you are yet speaking, I will say, Lo! Here I am."

And who is able to do all this? It may be asked. Nay, who is unable, I pray you? For which is difficult of the things I have mentioned? Which is laborious? Which not easy?

Why, so entirely are they not possible only, but even easy, that many have actually overshot the measure of those sayings, not only tearing in pieces unjust contracts, but even stripping themselves of all their goods; making the poor welcome not to roof and table, but even to the sweat of their body, and laboring in order to maintain them; doing good not to kinsmen only, but even to enemies.

But what is there at all even hard in these sayings? For neither did He say, *"Pass over the mountain, go across the sea, dig through so many acres of land, abide without food, wrap yourself in sackcloth;"* but, *"Impart to the poor, impart of your bread, cancel the contracts unjustly made."*

What is more easy than this? Tell me. But even if you account it difficult, look, I pray you, at the rewards also, and it shall be easy to you.

For much as our emperors at the horse races heap together before the combatants crowns, and prizes, and garments, even so Christ also sets His rewards in the midst of His course, holding them out by the prophet's words, as it were by many hands. And the emperors, although they be ten thousand times emperors, yet as being men, and the wealth which they have

in a course of spending, and their munificence of exhaustion, are ambitious of making the little appear much; wherefore also they commit each thing severally into the hand of the several attendants, and so bring it forward. But our King contrariwise, having heaped all together (because He is very rich, and does nothing for display), He so brings it forward, and what He so reaches out is indefinitely great, and will need many hands to hold it. And to make you aware of this, examine each particular of it carefully.

"Then," says He, "*shall your light break forth in the morning.*" Does not this gift appear to you as some one thing? But it is not one; nay, for it has many things in it, both prizes, and crowns, and other rewards. And, if you are minded, let us take it to pieces and show all its wealth, as it shall be possible for us to show it; only do not ye grow weary.

And first, let us learn the meaning of "*It shall break forth.*" For He said not at all, "*shall appear,*" but "*shall break forth;*" declaring to us its quickness and plentifulness, and how exceedingly He desires our salvation, and how the good things themselves travail to come forth, and press on; and that which would check their unspeakable force shall be nought; by all which He indicates their plentifulness, and the infinity of His abundance. But what is "*the morning.*" It means, "*not after being in life's temptations, neither after our evils have come upon us;*" nay, it is quite beforehand with them. For as in our fruits, we call that early, which has shown itself before its season; so also here again, declaring its rapidity, he has spoken in this way, much as above He said, "*Whilst you are yet speaking, I will say, Lo! Here I am.*"

But of what manner of light is He speaking, and what can this light be? Not this, that is sensible; but another far better, which shows us Heaven, the angels, the archangels, the cherubim, the seraphim, the thrones, the dominions, the principalities, the powers, the whole host, the royal palaces,

the tabernacles. For should you be counted worthy of this light, you shall both see these, and be delivered from hell, and from the venomous worm, and from the gnashing of teeth, and from the bonds that cannot be broken, and from the anguish and the affliction, from the darkness that has no light, and from being cut asunder, and from the river of fire, and from the curse, and from the abodes of sorrow; and you shall depart, *"where sorrow and woe are fled away,"* [Isaiah 35:10] where great is the joy, and the peace, and the love, and the pleasure, and the mirth; where is life eternal, and unspeakable glory, and inexpressible beauty; where are eternal tabernacles, and the untold glory of the King, and those good things, *"which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man;"* [1 Corinthians 2:9] where is the spiritual bridechamber, and the apartments of the heavens, and the virgins that bear the bright lamps, and they who have the marriage garment; where many are the possessions of our Lord, and the storehouses of the King.

Do you see how great the rewards, and how many He has set forth by one expression, and how He brought all together?

So also by unfolding each of the expressions that follow, we shall find our abundance great, and the ocean immense. Shall we then still delay, I beg you; and be backward to show mercy on them that are in need? Nay, I entreat, but though we must throw away all, be cast into the fire, venture against the sword, leap upon daggers, suffer what you will; let us bear all easily, that we may obtain the garment of the kingdom of Heaven, and that untold glory; which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 55 on Matthew

Matt. XVI. 24.

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

Then; when? When Peter said, *"Be it far from You, this shall not be unto You;"* and was told, *"Get behind me, Satan."* [Matthew 16:22-23] For He was by no means satisfied with the mere rebuke, but, willing also more abundantly to show both the extravagance of what Peter had said, and the benefit of His passion, He says, Your word to me is, *"Be it far from You, this shall not be unto You:"* but my word to you is, *"Not only is it hurtful to you, and destructive, to hinder me and to be displeased at my Passion, but it will be impossible for you even to be saved, unless you yourself too be continually prepared for death."*

Thus, lest they should think His suffering unworthy of Him, not by the former things only, but also by the events that were coming on, He teaches them the gain thereof. Thus in John first, He says, *"Except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit;"* [John 12:24] but here more abundantly working it out, not concerning Himself only does He bring forward the statement that it is meet to die, but concerning them also. *"For so great is the profit thereof, that in your case also unwillingness to die is grievous, but to be ready for it, good."*

This however He makes clear by what follows, but for the present He works it out on one side only. And see how He also makes His discourse unexceptionable: not saying at all, *"whether you will, or no, you must suffer this,"* but how? *"If any man will come after me." "I force not, I compel not,*

but each one I make lord of his own choice; wherefore also I say, 'If any man will.' For to good things do I call you, not to things evil, or burdensome; not to punishment and vengeance, that I should have to compel. Nay, the nature of the thing is alone sufficient to attract you."

Now, thus saying, He drew them unto Him the more. For he indeed that uses compulsion oftens turns men away, but he that leaves the hearer to choose attracts him more. For soothing is a mightier thing than force. Wherefore even He Himself said, *"If any man will."* "For great," says He, *"are the good things which I give you, and such as for men even to run to them of their own accord. For neither if one were giving gold, and offering a treasure, would he invite with force. And if that invitation be without compulsion, much more this, to the good things in the Heavens. Since if the nature of the thing persuade you not to run, you are not worthy to receive it at all, nor if you should receive it, will you well know what you have received."*

Wherefore Christ compels not, but urges, sparing us. For since they seemed to be murmuring much, being secretly disturbed at the saying, He says, *"No need of disturbance or of trouble. If you do not account what I have mentioned to be a cause of innumerable blessings, even when befalling yourselves, I use no force, nor do I compel, but if any be willing to follow, him I call."*

"For do not by any means imagine that this is your following of me; I mean, what ye now do attending upon me. You have need of many toils, many dangers, if you are to come after me. For you ought not, O Peter, because you have confessed me Son of God, therefore only to expect crowns, and to suppose this enough for your salvation, and for the future to enjoy security, as having done all. For although it be in my power, as Son of God, to hinder you from having any trial at all of those hardships; yet such

is not my will, for your sake, that you may yourself too contribute something, and be more approved."

For so, if one were a judge at the games, and had a friend in the lists, he would not wish to crown him by favor only, but also for his own toils; and for this reason especially, because he loves him. Even so Christ also; whom He most loves, those He most of all will have to approve themselves by their own means also, and not from His help alone.

But see how at the same time He makes His saying not a grievous one. For He does by no means compass them only with His terror, but He also puts forth the doctrine generally to the world, saying, "*If any one will,*" be it woman or man, ruler or subject, let him come this way.

2. And though he seem to have spoken but one single thing, yet His sayings are three, "*Let him renounce himself,*" and "*Let him bear his cross,*" and "*Let him follow me;*" and two of them are joined together, but the one is put by itself.

But let us see first what it can be to deny one's self. Let us learn first what it is to deny another, and then we shall know what it may be to deny one's self. What then is it to deny another? He that is denying another—for example, either brother, or servant, or whom you will,—should he see him either beaten, or bound, or led to execution, or whatever he may suffer, stands not by him, does not help him, is not moved, feels nothing for him, as being once for all alienated from him. Thus then He will have us disregard our own body, so that whether men scourge, or banish, or burn, or whatever they do, we may not spare it. For this is to spare it. Since fathers too then spare their offspring, when committing them to teachers, they command not to spare them.

So also Christ; He said not, "*Let him not spare himself,*" but very strictly, "*Let him renounce himself;*" that is, let him have nothing to do with

himself, but give himself up to all dangers and conflicts; and let him so feel, as though another were suffering it all.

And He said not, "*Let him deny*," but "*Let him renounce*;" even by this small addition intimating again, how very far it goes. For this latter is more than the former.

"*And let him take up his cross.*" This arises out of the other. For to hinder your supposing that words, and insults, and reproaches are to be the limits of our self-renunciation, He says also how far one ought to renounce one's self; that is, unto death, and that a reproachful death. Therefore He said not, "*Let him renounce himself unto death*," but, "*Let him take up his cross*;" setting forth the reproachful death; and that not once, nor twice, but throughout all life one ought so to do. "Yea," says He, "*bear about this death continually, and day by day be ready for slaughter. For since many have indeed contemned riches, and pleasure, and glory, but death they despised not, but feared dangers; I*," says He, "*will that my champion should wrestle even unto blood, and that the limits of his course should reach unto slaughter; so that although one must undergo death, death with reproach, the accursed death, and that upon evil surmise, we are to bear all things nobly, and rather to rejoice in being suspected.*"

"*And let him follow me.*" That is, it being possible for one to suffer, yet not to follow Him, when one does not suffer for Him (for so robbers often suffer grievously, and violaters of tombs, and sorcerers); to hinder your supposing that the mere nature of your calamities is sufficient, He adds the occasion of these calamities.

And what is it? In order that, so doing and suffering, you may follow Him; that for Him you may undergo all things; that you may possess the other virtues also. For this too is expressed by "*Let him follow me*;" so as to show forth not fortitude only, such as is exercised in our calamities, but

temperance also, and moderation, and all self-restraint. This being properly *"to follow,"* the giving heed also to the other virtues, and for His sake suffering all.

For there are who follow the devil even to the endurance of all this, and for his sake give up their own lives; but we for Christ, or rather for our own sakes: they indeed to harm themselves both here and there; but we, that we may gain both lives.

How then is it not extreme dullness, not to show forth even the same fortitude with them that perish; and this, when we are to reap from it so many crowns? Yet with us surely Christ Himself is present to be our help, but with them no one.

Now He had indeed already spoken this very injunction, when He sent them, saying, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles"* (for, says He, *"I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves,"* and, *"you shall be brought before kings and governors"*) but now with more intensity and severity. For then He spoke of death only, but here He has mentioned a cross also, and a continual cross. For *"let him take up,"* says He, *"his cross;"* that is, *"let him carry it continually and bear it."* And this He is wont to do in everything; not in the first instance, nor from the beginning, but quietly and gradually, bringing in the greater commandments, that the hearers may not count it strange.

3. Then, because the saying seemed to be vehement, see how He softens it by what follows, and sets down rewards surpassing our toils; and not rewards only, but also the penalties of vice: nay, on these last He dwells more than on those, since not so much His bestowing blessings, as His threat of severities, is wont to bring ordinary men to their senses. See at least how He both begins here from this, and ends in this.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it," says He, "but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Now what He says is like this: *"not as unsparing towards you, but rather as exceedingly sparing you, I enjoin these things. For he who spares his child, ruins it; but he who spares it not, preserves."* To which effect also a certain wise man said, *"If you beat your son with a rod, he shall not die, but you shall deliver his soul from death."* [Proverbs 23:13-14] And again, *"He that refreshes his son, shall bind up his wounds."* [Sirach 30:7]

This takes place in the camp also. For if the general, sparing the soldiers, commands them to remain within the place always, he will destroy with them the inhabitants too.

"In order then that this may not happen in your case also," says He, *"ye must be arrayed against continual death. For now too a grievous war is about to be kindled. Sit not therefore within, but go forth and fight; and should you fall in your post, then have you obtained life."* For if in the visible wars he that in his post meets slaughter, is both more distinguished than the rest, and more invincible, and more formidable to the enemy; although we know that after death the king, in behalf of whom he takes his station, is not able to raise him up again: much more in these wars, when there are such hopes of resurrection besides, will he who exposes his own life unto death, find it; in one sense, because he will not be quickly taken; in a second, because even though he fall, God will lead his life on to a higher life.

4. Then, because he had said, *"He who will save shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose shall save it,"* and on that side had set salvation and destruction, and on this salvation and destruction; to prevent any one's

imagining the one destruction and salvation to be all the same with the other, and to teach you plainly that the difference between this salvation and that is as great as between destruction and salvation; from the contraries also He makes an inference once for all to establish these points. *"For what is a man profited,"* says He, *"if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"*

Do you see how the wrongful preservation of it is destruction, and worse than all destruction, as being even past remedy, from the want of anything more to redeem it? For *"tell me not this,"* says He, *"that he that has escaped such dangers has saved his life; but together with his life put also the whole world, yet what profit has he thereby, if the soul perish?"*

For tell me, should you see your servants in luxury, and yourself in extreme calamity, will you indeed profit anything by being master? By no means. Make this reckoning then with regard to your soul also, when the flesh is in luxury and wealth, and she awaiting the destruction to come.

"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Again, He dwells upon the same point. What? Have you another soul to give for this soul? Says He. Why, should you lose money, you will be able to give money; or be it house, or slaves, or any other kind of possession, but for your soul, if you lose it, you will have no other soul to give: yea, though you had the world, though you were king of the whole earth, you would not be able, by paying down all earthly goods, with the earth itself, to redeem but one soul.

And what marvel, if it be so with the soul? Since even in the body one may see that so it turns out. Though thou wear ten thousand diadems, but have a body sickly by nature, and incurable, you will not be able, not by giving all your kingdom, to recover this body, not though thou add innumerable persons, and cities, and goods.

Now thus I bid you reason with regard to your soul also; or rather even much more with regard to the soul; and do thou, forsaking all besides, spend all your care upon it. Do not then while taking thought about the things of others, neglect yourself and your own things; which now all men do, resembling them that work in the mines. For neither do these receive any profit from this labor, nor from the wealth; but rather great harm, both because they incur fruitless peril, and incur it for other men, reaping no benefit from such their toils and deaths. These even now are objects of imitation to many, who are digging up wealth for others; or rather we are more wretched even than this, inasmuch as hell itself awaits us after these our labors. For they indeed are staid from those toils by death, but to us death proves a beginning of innumerable evils.

But if you say, you have in your wealth the fruit of your toils: show me your soul gladdened, and then I am persuaded. For of all things in us the soul is chief. And if the body be fattened, while she is pining away, this prosperity is nothing to you (even as when the handmaiden is glad, the happiness of the maidservant is nothing to her mistress perishing, nor is the fair robe anything compared with the weak flesh); but Christ will say unto you again, *"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* on every hand commanding you to be busied about that, and to take account of it only.

5. Having alarmed them therefore hereby, He comforts them also by His good things.

"For the Son of Man shall come," says He, *"in the glory of His Father with His holy angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works."*

Do you see how the glory of the Father and of the Son is all one? But if the glory be one, it is quite evident that the substance also is one. For if in one substance there be a difference of glory (*"for there is one glory of the*

sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory;" [1 Corinthians 15:41] although the substance be one), how may the substance of those differ, whereof the glory is one? For He said not at all, "In glory such as the Father's," whereby you might suppose again some variation; but implying entire perfection, "In that same glory," says He, "will He come;" for it to be deemed one and the same.

"Now, why fear, O Peter" (so He speaks), "on being told of death? Why, then shall you see me in the glory of the Father. And if I am in glory, so are you; your interests are no wise limited to the present life, but another sort of portion will take you up, a better one." Nevertheless, when He had spoken of the good things, He stayed not at this, but mingled the fearful things also, bringing forward that judgment-seat, and the inexorable account, and the inflexible sentence, and the judgment that cannot be deceived.

He suffered not however His discourse to appear only dismal, but tempered it also with good hopes. For neither did He say, *"then shall He punish them that sinned,"* but, *"He shall reward every man according to his doings."* And this He said, reminding not only the sinners of punishment, but also them that have done well of prizes and crowns.

6. And He indeed spoke it, in part to refresh the good, but I ever shudder at hearing it, for I am not of them that are crowned, and I suppose that others also share with us in our fear and anxiety. For whom is this saying not enough to startle, when he has entered into his own conscience; and to make him shudder, and convince him that we have need of sackcloth, and of prolonged fasting, more than the people of the Ninevites? For not for an overthrow of a city, and the common end, are we concerned, but for eternal punishment, and the fire that is never quenched.

Wherefore also I praise and admire the monks that have occupied the desert places, as for the rest, so for this saying. For they after having made their dinners, or rather after supper (for dinner they know not at any time, because they know that the present time is one of mourning and fasting); after supper then, in saying certain hymns of thanksgiving unto God, they make mention of this expression also. And if you would hear the very hymns themselves, that you too may say them continually, I will rehearse to you the whole of that sacred song. The words of it then stand as follows:

"Blessed God, who feedest me from my youth up, who givest food to all flesh; fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that always having all sufficiency we may abound unto every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord; with whom be unto You glory, honor and might, with the Holy Spirit, forever. Amen. Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You, O Holy One, glory to You, O King, that You have given us meat to make us glad. Fill us with the Holy Ghost, that we may be found well-pleasing before You, not being ashamed, when You render to every man according to his works."

Now this hymn is in all parts worthy of admiration, but especially the above ending of it. That is, because meals and food are wont to dissipate and weigh down, they put this saying as a kind of bridle upon the soul, at the time of indulgence reminding it of the time of judgment. For they have learned what befell Israel through a costly table. *"For my beloved,"* says He, *"ate, and waxed fat, and kicked."* Wherefore also Moses said, *"When you shall have eaten and drunk and art full, remember the Lord your God."* [Deuteronomy 6:11-12]

For after that feast, then they ventured on those acts of lawless daring.

Do thou therefore also look to it, lest something like it befall you. For though thou sacrifice not to stone nor to gold, either sheep or bullocks, see lest to wrath thou sacrifice your own soul, lest to whoredom or other like

passions, thou sacrifice your own salvation. Yea— on this account, you see, they being afraid of these downfalls, when they have enjoyed their meal, or rather fasting (for their meal is in fact fasting), remind themselves of the terrible judgment-seat, and of that day. And if they who correct themselves both with fasting, and with nights spent on the ground, with watchings, and with sackcloth, and with ten thousand means, do yet require also this reminding, when will it be possible for us to live virtuously; who set forth tables loaded with innumerable wrecks, and do not so much as pray at all, neither in the beginning nor the end?

7. Wherefore to put an end to these shipwrecks, let us bring before us that hymn and unfold it all, that seeing the profit thereof, we too may chant it constantly over our table, and quell the rude motions of the belly, introducing both the manners and laws of those angels into our houses. For you ought indeed to go there and reap these fruits; but since you are not willing, at least through our words, hear this spiritual melody, and let every one after his meal say these words, beginning thus.

"Blessed God." For the apostolic law they straightway fulfill, that commands, *"Whatsoever we do in word or in deed, that we do it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."* [Colossians 3:17]

Next, the thanksgiving takes place not for that one day only, but for all their life. For, *"Who feedest me,"* it is said, *"from my youth up."* And a lesson of self-command is drawn thence, that when God feeds, we must not take thought. For if upon a king's promising you to furnish your daily food out of his own stores, you would be of good hope for the future; much more, when God gives, and all things pour upon you as out of fountains, should you be freed from all anxiety. Yea, and to this very intent they so

speaking, that they may persuade both themselves, and those that are made disciples by them, to put off all worldly care.

Then, not to have you suppose that for themselves only they offer up this thanksgiving, they further say, "*Who givest food to all flesh,*" giving thanks in behalf of all the world; and as fathers of the whole earth, so do they offer up their praises for all, and train themselves to a sincere brotherly love. For it is not even possible they should hate them, in behalf of whom they thank God, that they are fed.

Do you see both charity introduced by their thanksgiving, and worldly care cast out, both by the preceding words, and by these? For if He feed all flesh, much more them that are devoted to him; if them that are entangled in worldly cares, much more them that are freed from the same.

To establish this, Christ Himself said, "*How many sparrows do ye exceed in value?*" And He said it, teaching them not to put their confidence in wealth and land and seeds; for it is not these that feed us, but the word of God.

Hereby they stop the mouths, both of the Manichæans, and of them of Valentinus, and of all that are diseased in their way. For sure this Being is not evil, who sets his own stores before all, even before them that blaspheme Him.

Then comes the petition: "*Fill our hearts with joy and gladness.*" With what manner of joy then, does it mean? The joy of this world? God forbid: for had they meant this, they would not have occupied summits of mountains, and deserts, nor wrapt themselves in sackcloth; but that joy they mean, which has nothing in common with this present life, the joy of angels, the joy above.

And they do not simply ask for it, but in great excess; for they say not, "*give,*" but, "*fill,*" and they say not "*us,*" but "*our hearts.*" For this is

especially a heart's joy; *"For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."*
[Galatians 5:22]

Thus, because sin brought in sorrow, they request that through joy righteousness may be implanted in them, for no otherwise might joy be engendered.

"That, always having all sufficiency, we may abound unto every good work." [2 Corinthians 9:8] See how they fulfill that word of the gospel which says, *"Give us this day our daily bread,"* and how they seek even this for spiritual ends. For their phrase is, *"That we may abound unto every good work."* They said not, *"That we may do our duty only,"* but *"even more than what is enjoined,"* for, *"that we may abound,"* means this. And while of God they seek sufficiency in things needful, themselves are willing to obey not in sufficiency only, but with much abundance, and in all things. This is the part of well-disposed servants, this of men strict in goodness, to abound always, and in all things.

Then again reminding themselves of their own weakness, and that without the influence from above nothing noble can be done; having said, *"that we may abound unto every good work,"* they add, *"in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom unto You be glory, honor, and might forever. Amen;"* framing this end like their commencement by a thread of thanksgiving.

8. After this again, they seem to begin afresh, but they are keeping to the same argument. As Paul also in the beginning of an epistle, having closed with a doxology, where he says, *"According to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever. Amen;"* [Galatians 1:4-5] begins the subject again on which he was writing. And again in another place when he had said, *"They worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen;"* [Romans 1:25] he completed not his discourse, but begins again.

Therefore neither let us blame these our angels, as acting disorderly, for that having closed with a doxology they begin again the sacred hymns. For they follow laws, beginning from a doxology, and ending therein, and after that end making a commencement again.

Wherefore they say, *"Glory be to You, O Lord; glory be to You, O Holy One; glory be to You, O King; that You have given us food to make us glad."*

Since not for the greater things only, but also for the lesser, we ought to give thanks. And they do give thanks for these also, putting to shame the heresy of the Manichæans, and of as many as affirm our present life to be evil. For lest for their high self-command, and contempt of the belly, you should suspect them as abhorring the meat, like the heretics aforesaid, who choke themselves to death; they by their prayer teach you, that not from abhorrence of God's creatures they abstain from most of them, but as exercising self-restraint.

And see how after thanksgiving for His past gifts, they are importunate also for the greater things, and dwell not upon the matters of this life, but mount above the heavens, and say, *"Fill us with the Holy Ghost."* For it is not even possible to approve one's self as one ought, not being filled with that grace; as there is no doing anything noble or great, without the benefit of Christ's influences.

As therefore when they had said, *"That we may abound unto every good work,"* they added, *"In Christ Jesus;"* so here also they say, *"Fill us with the Holy Ghost, that we may be found to have been well-pleasing before You."*

Do you see how for the things of this life they pray not, but give thanks only; but for the things of the Spirit, they both give thanks and pray. For, *"seek ye,"* says He, *"the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."*

And mark too another kind of severe goodness in them; their saying, namely, *"That we may be found to have been well-pleasing in Your sight, not being ashamed."* For *"we care not,"* say they, *"for the shame that proceeds from the many, but whatever men may say of us, laughing, upbraiding, we do not so much as regard it; but our whole endeavor is not to be put to shame then."* But in these expressions, they bring in also the river of fire, and the prizes, and the rewards.

They said not, *"that we be not punished,"* but, *"that we be not ashamed."* For this is to us far more fearful than hell, to seem to have offended our Lord.

But since the more part and the grosser sort are not in fear of this, they add, *"When You render to every man according to his works."* Do you see how greatly these strangers and pilgrims have benefitted us, these citizens of the wilderness, or rather citizens of the Heavens? For whereas we are strangers to the Heavens, but citizens of the earth, these are just the contrary.

And after this hymn, being filled with much compunction, and with many and fervent tears, so they proceed to sleep, snatching just so much of it as a little to refresh themselves. And again, the nights they make days, spending them in thanksgivings and in the singing of psalms.

But not men only, but women also practise this self-denial, overcoming the weakness of their nature by the abundance of their zeal.

Let us be abashed then at their earnestness, we who are men, let us cease to be fastened to the things present, to shadow, to dreams, to smoke. For the more part of our life is passed in insensibility.

For both the first period of our life is full of much folly, and that again which travels on to old age, makes all the feeling that is in us wither away, and small is the space between, that is able feelingly to enjoy pleasure; or

rather, not even that has a pure participation thereof, by reason of innumerable cares and toils, that harrass it.

Wherefore, I pray, let us seek the unmovable and eternal goods, and the life that never has old age.

For even one dwelling in a city may imitate the self-denial of the monks; yea, one who has a wife, and is busied in a household, may pray, and fast, and learn compunction. Since they also, who at the first were instructed by the apostles, though they dwelt in cities, yet showed forth the piety of the occupiers of the deserts: and others again who had to rule over workshops, as Priscilla and Aquila.

And the prophets too, all had both wives and households, as Isaiah, as Ezekiel, as the great Moses, and received no hurt therefrom in regard of virtue.

These then let us also imitate, and continually offer thanksgiving to God, continually sing hymns to Him; let us give heed to temperance, and to all other virtues, and the self-denial that is practised in the deserts, let us bring into our cities; that we may appear both well-pleasing before God, and approved before men, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be unto the Father, glory, honor, and might, together with the holy and life-giving Spirit, now and always and world without end. Amen.

Homily 56 on Matthew

Matt. XVI. 28.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Thus, inasmuch as He had discoursed much of dangers and death, and of His own passion, and of the slaughter of the disciples, and had laid on them those severe injunctions; and these were in the present life and at hand, but the good things in hope and expectation:— for example, *"They save their life who lose it;" "He is coming in the glory of His Father;" "He renders His rewards:"*— He willing to assure their very sight, and to show what kind of glory that is wherewith He is to come, so far as it was possible for them to learn it; even in their present life He shows and reveals this; that they should not grieve any more, either over their own death, or over that of their Lord, and especially Peter in His sorrow.

And see what He does. Having discoursed of hell, and of the kingdom (for as well by saying, *"He that finds his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose it for my sake, shall find it;"* [Matthew 16:25] as by saying, *"He shall reward every man according to his works,"* He had manifested both of these): having, I say, spoken of both, the kingdom indeed He shows in the vision, but hell not yet.

Why so? Because had they been another kind of people, of a grosser sort, this too would have been necessary; but since they are approved and considerate, He leads them on the gentler way. But not therefore only does He make this disclosure, but because to Himself also it was far more suitable.

Not however that He passes over this subject either, but in some places He almost brings even before our eyes the very realities of hell; as when He introduces the picture of Lazarus, and mentions him that exacted the hundred pence, and him that was clad in the filthy garments, and others not a few.

2. *"And after six days He takes with Him Peter and James and John."*
[Matthew 17:1]

Now another says, *"after eight,"* [Luke 9:28] not contradicting this writer, but most fully agreeing with him. For the one expressed both the very day on which He spoke, and that on which He led them up; but the other, the days between them only.

But mark thou, I pray you, the severe goodness of Matthew, not concealing those who were preferred to himself. This John also often does, recording the peculiar praises of Peter with great sincerity. For the choir of these holy men was everywhere pure from envy and vainglory.

Having taken therefore the leaders, *"He brings them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him."* [Matthew 17:2-3]

Wherefore does He take with Him these only? Because these were superior to the rest. And Peter indeed showed his superiority by exceedingly loving Him; but John by being exceedingly loved of Him; and James again by his answer which he answered with his brother, saying, *"We are able to drink the cup;"* nor yet by his answer only, but also by his works; both by the rest of them, and by fulfilling, what he said. For so earnest was he, and grievous to the Jews, that Herod himself supposed that he had bestowed herein a very great favor on the Jews, I mean in slaying him.

But wherefore does He not lead them up straightway? To spare the other disciples any feeling of human weakness: for which cause He omits also the names of them that are to go up. And this, because the rest would have desired exceedingly to have followed, being to see a pattern of that glory; and would have been pained, as overlooked. For though it was somewhat in a corporeal way that He made the disclosure, yet nevertheless the thing had much in it to be desired.

Wherefore then does He at all foretell it? That they might be readier to seize the high meaning, by His foretelling it; and being filled with the more vehement desire in that round of days, might so be present with their mind quite awake and full of care.

3. But wherefore does He also bring forward Moses and Elias? One might mention many reasons. And first of all this: because the multitudes said He was, some Elias, some Jeremias, some one of the old prophets, He brings the leaders of His choir, that they might see the difference even hereby between the servants and the Lord; and that Peter was rightly commended for confessing Him Son of God.

But besides that, one may mention another reason also: that because men were continually accusing Him of transgressing the law, and accounting Him to be a blasphemer, as appropriating to Himself a glory which belonged not to Him, even the Father's, and were saying, *"This Man is not of God, because He keeps not the Sabbath day;"* [John 9:16] and again, *"For a good work we stone You not, but for blasphemy, and because that Thou, being a man, makest Yourself God:"* [John 10:33] that both the charges might be shown to spring from envy, and He be proved not liable to either; and that neither is His conduct a transgression of the law, nor His calling Himself equal to the Father an appropriation of glory not His own; He brings forward them who had shone out in each of these respects:

Moses, because he gave the law, and the Jews might infer that he would not have overlooked its being trampled on, as they supposed, nor have shown respect to the transgressor of it, and the enemy of its founder: Elias too for his part was jealous for the glory of God, and were any man an adversary of God, and calling himself God, making himself equal to the Father, while he was not what he said, and had no right to do so; he was not the person to stand by, and hearken unto him.

And one may mention another reason also, with those which have been spoken of. Of what kind then is it? To inform them that He has power both of death and life, is ruler both above and beneath. For this cause He brings forward both him that had died, and him that never yet suffered this.

But the fifth motive, (for it is a fifth, besides those that have been mentioned), even the evangelist himself has revealed. Now what was this? To show the glory of the cross, and to console Peter and the others in their dread of the passion, and to raise up their minds. Since having come, they by no means held their peace, but "*spoke,*" it is said, "*of the glory which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem; [Luke 9:31]* " that is, of the passion, and the cross; for so they call it always.

And not thus only did He cheer them, but also by the excellency itself of the men, being such as He was especially requiring from themselves. I mean, that having said, "*If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross, and follow me;*" them that had died ten thousand times for God's decrees, and the people entrusted to them, these persons He sets before them. Because each of these, having lost his life, found it. For each of them both spoke boldly unto tyrants, the one to the Egyptian, the other to Ahab; and in behalf of heartless and disobedient men; and by the very persons who were saved by them, they were brought into extreme danger; and each of them wishing to withdraw men from idolatry; and each being unlearned;

for the one was of a *"slow tongue,"* [Exodus 4:10] and dull of speech, and the other for his part also somewhat of the rudest in his bearing: and of voluntary poverty both were very strict observers; for neither had Moses made any gain, nor had Elias anything more than his sheepskin; and this under the old law, and when they had not received so great a gift of miracles. For what if Moses clave a sea? Yet Peter walked on the water, and was able to remove mountains, and used to work cures of all manner of bodily diseases, and to drive away savage demons, and by the shadow of his body to work those wonderful and great prodigies; and changed the whole world. And if Elias too raised a dead man, yet these raised ten thousand; and this before the spirit was as yet vouchsafed to them. He brings them forward accordingly for this cause also. For He would have them emulate their winning ways toward the people, and their presence of mind and inflexibility; and that they should be meek like Moses, and jealous for God like Elias, and full of tender care, as they were. For the one endured a famine of three years for the Jewish people; and the other said, *"If you will forgive them their sin, forgive; else blot me too out of the book, which you have written."* [Exodus 32:32] Now of all this He was reminding them by the vision.

For He brought those in glory too, not that these should stay where they were, but that they might even surpass their liminary lines. For example, when they said, *"Should we command fire to come down from heaven,"* and made mention of Elias as having done so, He says, *"You know not what manner of spirit you are of;"* training them to forbearance by the superiority in their gift.

And let none suppose us to condemn Elias as imperfect; we say not this; for indeed he was exceedingly perfect, but in his own times, when the mind of men was in some degree childish, and they needed this kind of

schooling. Since Moses too was in this respect perfect; nevertheless these have more required of them than he. For *"unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 5:20] For not into Egypt did they enter, but into the whole world, worse disposed than the Egyptians; neither were they to speak with Pharaoh, but to fight hand to hand with the devil, the very prince of wickedness. Yea, and their appointed struggle was, both to bind him, and to spoil all his goods; and this they did cleaving not the sea, but an abyss of ungodliness, through the rod of Jesse—an abyss having waves far more grievous. See at any rate how many things there were to put the men in fear; death, poverty, dishonor, their innumerable sufferings; and at these things they trembled more than the Jews of old at that sea. But nevertheless against all these things He persuaded them boldly to venture, and to pass as along dry ground with all security.

To train them therefore for all this, He brought forward those who shone forth under the old law.

4. What then says the ardent Peter? *"It is good for us to be here."* [Matthew 16:4] For because he had heard that Christ was to go to Jerusalem and to suffer, being in fear still and trembling for Him, even after His reproof, he dared not indeed approach and say the same thing again, Be it far from you; [Matthew 16:22] but from that fear obscurely intimates the same again in other words. That is, when he saw a mountain, and so great retirement and solitude, his thought was, *"He has great security here, even from the place; and not only from the place, but also from His going away no more unto Jerusalem."* For he would have Him be there continually: wherefore also he speaks of *"tabernacles."* For *"if this may be,"* says he, *"we shall not go up to Jerusalem; and if we go not up, He will not die, for there He said the scribes would set upon Him."*

But thus indeed he dared not speak; but desiring however to order things so, he said undoubtingly, *"It is good for us to be here,"* where Moses also is present, and Elias; Elias who brought down fire on the mountain, and Moses who entered into the thick darkness, and talked with God; and no one will even know where we are.

Do you see the ardent lover of Christ? For look not now at this, that the manner of his exhortation was not well weighed, but see how ardent he was, how burning his affection to Christ. For in proof that not so much out of fear for himself he said these things, hear what he says, when Christ was declaring beforehand His future death, and the assault upon Him: I will lay down my life for Your sake. [John 13:37] Though I should die with You, yet will I not deny You. [Matthew 26:35]

And see how even in the very midst of the actual dangers he counselled amiss for himself. We know that when so great a multitude encompassed them, so far from flying, he even drew the sword, and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. To such a degree did he disregard his own interest, and fear for his Master. Then because he had spoken as affirming a fact, he checks himself, and thinking, what if he should be again reproved, he says, *"If You will, let us make here three tabernacles, one for You and one for Moses, and one for Elias."*

What do you say, O Peter? Did you not a little while since distinguish Him from the servants? Are you again numbering Him with the servants? Do you see how exceedingly imperfect they were before the crucifixion? For although the Father had revealed it to him, yet he did not always retain the revelation, but was troubled by his alarm; not this only, which I have mentioned, but another also, arising from that sight. In fact, the other evangelists, to declare this, and to indicate that the confusion of his mind, with which he spoke these things, arose from that alarm, said as follows;

mark, *"He knew not what to say, for they were sore afraid;"* [Mark 9:6] but Luke after his saying, *"Let us make three tabernacles,"* added, *"not knowing what he said."* [Luke 9:33] Then to show that he was holden with great fear, both he and the rest, he says, *"They were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake they saw His glory;"* meaning by deep sleep here, the deep stupor engendered in them by that vision. For as eyes are darkened by an excessive splendor, so at that time also did they feel. For it was not, I suppose, night, but day; and the exceeding greatness of the light weighed down the infirmity of their eyes.

5. What then? He Himself speaks nothing, nor Moses, nor Elias, but He that is greater than all, and more worthy of belief, the Father, utters a voice out of the cloud.

Wherefore out of the cloud? Thus does God ever appear. *"For a cloud and darkness are round about Him;"* and, *"He sits on a light cloud;"* [Isaiah 19:1] and again, *"Who makes clouds His chariot;"* and, *"A cloud received Him out of their sight;"* [Acts 1:9] and, *"As the Son of Man coming in the clouds."* [Daniel 7:13]

In order then that they might believe that the voice proceeds from God, it comes from thence.

And the cloud was bright. For *"while he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."* [Matthew 17:5]

For as, when He threatens, He shows a dark cloud—as on Mount Sinai; for *"Moses,"* it is said, *"entered into the cloud, and into the thick darkness; and as a vapor, so went up the smoke;"* and the prophet said, when speaking of His threatening, *"Dark water in clouds of the air;"* — so

here, because it was His desire not to alarm, but to teach, it is a bright cloud.

And whereas Peter had said "*Let us make three tabernacles,*" He showed a tabernacle not made with hands. Wherefore in that case it was smoke, and vapor of a furnace; but in this, light unspeakable and a voice.

Then, to signify that not merely concerning some one of the three was it spoken, but concerning Christ only; when the voice was uttered, they were taken away. For by no means, had it been spoken merely concerning any one of them, would this man have remained alone, the two being severed from Him.

Why then did not the cloud likewise receive Christ alone, but all of them together? If it had received Christ alone, He would have been thought to have Himself uttered the voice. Wherefore also the evangelist, making sure this same point, says, that the voice was from the cloud, that is, from God.

And what says the voice? "*This is my beloved Son.*" Now if He is beloved, fear not thou, O Peter. For you ought indeed to know His power already, and to be fully assured touching His resurrection; but since you know not, at least from the voice of the Father take courage. For if God be mighty, as surely He is mighty, very evidently the Son is so likewise. Be not afraid then of those fearful things.

But if as yet thou receive it not, consider at least that other fact, that He is both a Son, and is beloved. For "*This,*" it is said, "*is My beloved Son.*" Now if He is beloved, fear not. For no one gives up one whom he loves. Be not thou therefore confounded; though you love Him beyond measure, you love Him not as much as He that begot Him.

"*In whom I am well pleased.*" For not because He begot Him only, does He love Him, but because He is also equal to Him in all respects, and

of one mind with Him. So that the charm of love is twofold, or rather even threefold, because He is the Son, because He is beloved, because in Him He is well pleased.

But what means, *"In whom I am well pleased?"* As though He had said, *"In whom I am refreshed, in whom I take delight;"* because He is in all respects perfectly equal with Himself, and there is but one will in Him and in the Father, and though He continue a Son, He is in all respects one with the Father.

"Hear ye Him." So that although He choose to be crucified, you are not to oppose Him.

6. *"And when they heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."* [Matthew 17:6-8]

How was it that, when they heard these words, they were dismayed? And yet before this also a like voice was uttered at Jordan, and a multitude was present, and no one felt anything of the kind; and afterwards again, when also they said, *"It thundered,"* [John 12:28-29] yet neither at that time did they experience anything like this. How then did they fall down in the mount? Because there was solitude, and height, and great quietness, and a transfiguration full of awe, and a pure light, and a cloud stretched out; all which things put them in great alarm. And the amazement came thick on every side, and they fell down both in fear at once and in adoration.

But that the fear abiding so long might not drive out their recollection, presently He puts an end to their alarm, and is seen Himself alone, and commands them to tell no man this, until He is risen from the dead.

For *"as they came down from the mount, He charged them to tell the vision to no man, until He were risen from the dead."* what they were about.

7. Nothing then is more blessed than the apostles, and especially the three, who even in the cloud were counted worthy to be under the same roof with the Lord.

But if we will, we also shall behold Christ, not as they then on the mount, but in far greater brightness. For not thus shall He come hereafter. For whereas then, to spare His disciples, He discovered so much only of His brightness as they were able to bear; hereafter He shall come in the very glory of the Father, not with Moses and Elias only, but with the infinite host of the angels, with the archangels, with the cherubim, with those infinite tribes, not having a cloud over His head, but even heaven itself being folded up.

For as it is with the judges; when they judge publicly, the attendants drawing back the curtains show them to all; even so then likewise all men shall see Him sitting, and all the human race shall stand by, and He will make answers to them by Himself; and to some He will say, *"Come, you blessed of my Father; for I was an hungered, and you gave me meat;"* [Matthew 25:34-35] to others, *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things."* [Matthew 25:23]

And again passing an opposite sentence, to some He will answer, *"Depart into the everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels,"* [Matthew 25:41] and to others, *"O thou wicked and slothful servants."* [Matthew 25:26] And some He will *"cut asunder,"* and *"deliver to the tormentors;"* but others He will command to *"be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness."* [Matthew 22:13] And after the axe the furnace will follow; and all out of the net, that is cast away, will fall therein.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun;" [Matthew 13:43] or rather more than the sun. But so much is said, not because their light is to

be so much and no more, but since we know no other star brighter than this, He chose by the known example to set forth the future brightness of the saints.

Since on the mount too, when He says, *"He did shine as the sun,"* for the same cause did He so speak. For that the comparison did not come up to His light, the apostles showed by falling down. For had the brightness not been unalloyed, but comparable to the sun; they would not have fallen, but would easily have borne it.

The righteous therefore will shine as the sun, and more than the sun in that time; but the sinners shall suffer all extremities. Then will there be no need of records, proofs, witnesses. For He who judges is Himself all, both witness, and proof, and judge. For He knows all things exactly; *"For all things are naked and opened unto His eyes."* [Hebrews 4:13]

No man will there appear rich or poor, mighty or weak, wise or unwise, bond or free; but these masks will be dashed in pieces, and the inquiry will be into their works only. For if in our courts, when any one is tried for usurpation, or murder, whatever he may be, whether governor, or consul, or what you will, all these dignities fleet away, and he that is convicted suffers the utmost penalty; much more will it be so there.

8. Therefore that this may not be so, let us lay aside our filthy garments, let us put on the armor of light, and the glory of God will wrap us around. For what is even grievous in the injunctions? Or what is there not easy? Hear, for instance, the prophet speaking, and then you shall know the easiness thereof. *"Neither though thou bow as a collar your neck, and strew beneath you sackcloth and ashes, not even so shall you call a fast acceptable; but loose every bond of iniquity, unloose the twisted knots of oppressive bargains."* [Isaiah 58:6]

See a prophet's wisdom, how stating first whatever was irksome, and removing it, he exhorts them to obtain salvation by the duties that are easy; signifying, that God needs not toils, but obedience.

Then implying that virtue is easy, but vice grievous and galling, he makes it out by the bare names; *"For,"* says he, *"vice is a bond,"* and *"a twisted knot,"* but virtue is a disengagement and release from all these.

"Tear in sunder every unjust compact;" thus calling men's bills about the interest due to them, and the sums they have lent.

"Set at liberty them that are bruised;" them that are afflicted. For such a being is the debtor; when he sees his creditor, his mind is broken, and he fears him more than a wild beast.

"Bring in the poor that are cast out to your house; if you see one naked, clothe him, and them that belong to your seed you shall not overlook." [Isaiah 58:7]

Now in our late discourse which we made unto you when declaring the rewards, we showed the wealth arising from these acts; but now let us see if any of the injunctions be grievous, and transcending our nature. Nay, nothing of the kind shall we discover, but quite the contrary; that while these courses are very easy, those of vice are full of labor. For what is more vexatious than to be lending, and taking thought about usuries and bargains, and demanding sureties, and fearing and trembling about securities, about the principal, about the writings, about the interest, about the bondsmen?

For such is the nature of worldly things; yea, nothing is so unsound and suspicious as that which is accounted security, and contrived for that purpose; but to show mercy is easy, and delivers from all anxiety.

Let us not then traffic in other men's calamities, nor make a trade of our benevolence. And I know indeed that many hear these words with displeasure; but what is the profit of silence? For though I should hold my

peace, and give no trouble by my words, I could not by this silence deliver you from your punishment; rather it has altogether the opposite result; the penalty is enhanced, and not to you only, but to me also, does such a silence procure punishment. What then signify our gracious words, when in our works they help us not, but rather do harm? What is the good of delighting men in word, while we vex them in deed, bringing pleasure to the ears, and punishment to the soul? Wherefore I must needs make you sorry here, that we may not suffer punishment there.

9. For indeed a dreadful disease, beloved, dreadful and needing much attendance, has fallen on the church. Those, namely, who are enjoined not even by honest labors to lay up treasures, but to open their houses to the needy, make a profit of other men's poverty, devising a specious robbery, a plausible covetousness.

For tell me not of the laws that are without; since even the publican fulfills the law that is without, but nevertheless is punished: which will be the case with us also, unless we refrain from oppressing the poor, and from using their need and necessity as an occasion for shameless trafficking.

For to this intent you have wealth, to relieve poverty, not to make a gain of poverty; but thou with show of relief makest the calamity greater, and sellest benevolence for money. Sell it, I forbid you not, but for a heavenly kingdom. Receive not a small price for so good a deed, your monthly one in the hundred, but that immortal life. Why are you beggarly, and poor, and mean, selling your great things for a little, even for goods that perish, when it should be for an everlasting kingdom? Why do you leave God, and get human gains? Why do you pass by the wealthy one, and trouble him that has not? And leaving the sure paymaster make your bargain with the unthankful? The other longs to repay, but this even grudges in the act of repaying. This hardly repays a hundredth part, but the other "*an*

hundredfold and eternal life." This with insults and revilings, but the other with praises and auspicious words. This stirs up envy against you, but the other even weaves for you crowns. This hardly here, but the other both there and here.

Surely then is it not the utmost senselessness, not so much as to know how to gain? How many have lost their very principal for the interest's sake? How many have fallen into perils for usurious gains. How many have involved both themselves and others in extreme poverty through their unspeakable covetousness!

For tell me not this, that he is pleased to receive, and is thankful for the loan. Why, this is a result of your cruelty. Since Abraham too, contriving how his plan might take with the barbarians, did himself give up his wife to them; not however willingly, but through fear of Pharaoh. So also the poor man, because you count him not even worth so much money, is actually compelled to be thankful for cruelty.

And it seems to me as though, should you deliver him from dangers, you would exact of him a payment for this deliverance. "*Away,*" says he; "*let it not be.*" What do you say? Delivering him from the greater evil, you are unwilling to exact money, and for the lesser do you display so much inhumanity?

Do you see not how great a punishment is appointed for the deed? Do you not hear that even in the old law this is forbidden? But what is the plea of the many? "*When I have received the interest, I give to the poor;*" one tells me. Speak reverently, O man; God desires not such sacrifices. Deal not subtly with the law. Better not give to a poor man, than give from that source; for the money that has been collected by honest labors, thou often makest to become unlawful because of that wicked increase; as if one should compel a fair womb to give birth to scorpions.

And why do I speak of God's law? Do not even ye call it "*filth*"? But if you, the gainers, give your voice so, consider what suffrage God will pass upon you.

And if you will ask the Gentile lawgivers too, you will be told that even by them this thing is deemed a proof of the most utter shamelessness. Those, for example, who are in offices of honor, and belong to the great council, which they call the senate, may not legally disgrace themselves with such gains; there being a law among them which prohibits the same.

How then is it not a horrible thing, if you ascribe not even so much honor to the polity of Heaven, as the legislators to the council of the Romans; but Heaven is to obtain less than earth, and you are not ashamed even of the very folly of the thing? For what could be more foolish than this, unless one without land, rain, or plough, were to insist upon sowing? Tares therefore, to be committed to the fire, do they reap, who have devised this evil husbandry.

Why, are there not many honest trades? In the fields, the flocks, the herds, the breeding of cattle, in handicrafts, in care of property? Why rave and be frantic, cultivating thorns for no good? What if the fruits of the earth are subject to mischance; hail, and blight, and excessive rain? Yet not to such an extent as are money dealings. For in whatsoever cases of that sort occur, the damage of course concerns the produce, but the principal remains, I mean, the land. But herein many often have suffered shipwreck in their principal; and before the loss too they are in continual dejection. For never does the money-lender enjoy his possessions, nor find pleasure in them; but when the interest is brought, he rejoices not that he has received gain, but is grieved that the interest has not yet come up to the principal. And before this evil offspring is brought forth complete, he compels it also to bring forth, making the interest principal, and forcing it to bring forth its

untimely and abortive brood of vipers. For of this nature are the gains of usury; more than those wild creatures do they devour and tear the souls of the wretched. This *"is the bond of iniquity:"* this *"the twisted knot of oppressive bargains."*

Yea, *"I give,"* he seems to say, *"not for you to receive, but that you may repay more."* And whereas God commands not even to receive what is given (for *"give,"* says He, *"to them from whom you look not to receive"*), you require even more than is given, and what you gave not, this as a debt, you constrain the receiver to pay.

And thou indeed supposest your substance to be increased hereby, but instead of substance you are kindling the unquenchable fire.

That this therefore may not be, let us cut out the evil womb of usurious gains, let us deaden these lawless travailings, let us dry up this place of pernicious teeming, and let us pursue the true and great gains only. *"But what are these?"* Hear Paul saying *"Godliness with contentment is great gain."* [1 Timothy 6:6]

Therefore in this wealth alone let us be rich, that we may both here enjoy security, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 57 on Matthew

Matt. XVII. 10.

"And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?"

Not then from the Scriptures did they know this, but the Scribes used to explain themselves, and this saying was reported abroad among the ignorant people; as about Christ also.

Wherefore the Samaritan woman also said, *"Messiah comes; when He has come, He will tell us all things:"* [John 4:25] and they themselves asked John, *"Are you Elias, or the Prophet?"* [John 1:21] For the saying, as I said, prevailed, both that concerning the Christ and that concerning Elias, not however rightly interpreted by them.

For the Scriptures speak of two advents of Christ, both this that is past, and that which is to come; and declaring these Paul said, *"The grace of God, that brings salvation, has appeared, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly."* Behold the one, hear how he declares the other also; for having said these things, he added, *"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."* [Titus 2:13] And the prophets too mention both; of the one, however, that is, of the second, they say Elias will be the forerunner. For of the first, John was forerunner; whom Christ called also Elias, not because he was Elias, but because he was fulfilling the ministry of that prophet. For as the one shall be forerunner of the second advent, so was the other too of the first. But the Scribes, confusing these things and perverting the people, made mention of that other only to the people, the second advent, and said, *"If this man is the Christ, Elias ought*

to have come beforehand." Therefore the disciples too speak as follows, *"How then say the Scribes, Elias must first come?"*

Therefore also the Pharisees sent unto John, and asked him, *"Are you Elias?"* [John 1:21] making no mention anywhere of the former advent.

What then is the solution, which Christ alleged? *"Elias indeed comes then, before my second advent; and now too is Elias come;"* so calling John.

In this sense Elias has come: but if you would seek the Tishbite, he is coming. Wherefore also He said, *"Elias truly comes, and shall restore all things."* All what things? Such as the Prophet Malachi spoke of; for *"I will send you,"* says He, *"Elias the Tishbite, who shall restore the heart of father to son, lest I come and utterly smite the earth."*

Do you see the accuracy of prophetical language? How, because Christ called John, Elias, by reasoning of their community of office, lest you should suppose this to be the meaning of the prophet too in this place, He added His country also, saying, *"the Tishbite;"* whereas John was not a Tishbite. And herewith He sets down another sign also, saying, *"Lest I come and utterly smite the earth,"* signifying His second and dreadful advent. For in the first He came not to smite the earth. For, *"I came not,"* says He, *"to judge the world, but to save the world."* [John 12:47]

To show therefore that the Tishbite comes before that other advent, which has the judgment, He said this. And the reason too of his coming He teaches withal. And what is this reason? That when He has come, he may persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, and that they may not all utterly perish at His coming. Wherefore He too, guiding them on to that remembrance, says, *"And he shall restore all things;"* that is, shall correct the unbelief of the Jews that are then in being.

Hence the extreme accuracy of his expression; in that he said not, *"He will restore the heart of the son to the father,"* but *"of the father to the son."*

For the Jews being fathers of the apostles, his meaning is, that he will restore to the doctrines of their sons, that is, of the apostles, the hearts of the fathers, that is, the Jewish people's mind.

"But I say unto you, that Elias has come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then they understood that He spoke to them of John." [Matthew 17:12-13]

And yet neither the Scribes said this, nor the Scriptures; but because now they were sharper and more attentive to His sayings, they quickly caught His meaning.

And whence did the disciples know this? He had already told them, *"He is Elias, which was for to come;"* [Matthew 11:14] but here, that he has come; and again, that *"Elias comes and will restore all things."* But be not thou troubled, nor imagine that His statement wavers, though at one time He said, *"he will come,"* at another, *"he has come."* For all these things are true. Since when He says, *"Elias indeed comes, and will restore all things,"* He means Elias himself, and the conversion of the Jews which is then to take place; but when He says, *"Which was for to come,"* He calls John, Elias, with regard to the manner of his administration. Yea, and so the prophets used to call every one of their approved kings, David; and the Jews, *"rulers of Sodom,"* [Isaiah 1:10] and *"sons of Ethiopians;"* [Amos 9:7] because of their ways. For as the other shall be forerunner of the second advent, so was this of the first.

2. And not for this only does He call him Elias everywhere, but to signify His perfect agreement with the Old Testament, and that this advent too is according to prophecy.

Wherefore also He adds again, *"He came, and they knew him not, but have done unto him all things whatsoever they listed."* [Matthew 17:12]

What means, *"call things whatsoever they listed?"* They cast him into prison, they used him despitefully, they slew him, they brought his head in a charger.

"Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them." Do you see how again He in due season reminds them of His passion, laying up for them great store of comfort from the passion of John. And not in this way only, but also by presently working great miracles. Yea, and whenever He speaks of His passion, presently He works miracles, both after those sayings and before them; and in many places one may find Him to have kept this rule.

"Then," for instance, it says, *"He began to signify how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and be killed, and suffer many things."* [Matthew 16:21] *"Then:"* when? When He was confessed to be Christ, and the Son of God.

Again on the mountain, when He had shown them the marvellous vision, and the prophets had been discoursing of His glory, He reminded them of His passion. For having spoken of the history concerning John, He added, *"Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them."*

And after a little while again, when He had cast out the devil, which His disciples were not able to cast out; for then too, *"As they abode in Galilee,"* so it says, *"Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again."* [Matthew 17:23]

Now in doing this, He by the greatness of the miracles was abating the excess of their sorrow, and in every way consoling them; even as here also, by the mention of John's death, He afforded them much consolation.

But should any one say, *"Wherefore did He not even now raise up Elias and send him, witnessing as He does so great good of his coming?"* we should reply, that even as it was, while thinking Christ to be Elias, they did not believe Him. For *"some say,"* such are the words, *"that You are*

Elias, and others, Jeremias." [Matthew 16:14] And indeed between John and Elias, there was no difference but the time only. *"Then how will they believe at that time?"* it may be said. Why, *"he will restore all things,"* not simply by being recognized, but also because the glory of Christ will have been growing more intense up to that day, and will be among all clearer than the sun. When therefore, preceded by such an opinion and expectation, he comes making the same proclamation as John, and himself also announcing Jesus, they will more easily receive his sayings. But in saying, *"They knew him not,"* He is excusing also what was done in His own case. [Luke 23:24]

And not in this way only does He console them, but also by pointing out that John's sufferings at their hands, whatever they are, are undeserved; and by His throwing into the shade what would annoy them, by means of two signs, the one on the mountain, the other just about to take place.

But when they heard these things, they do not ask Him when Elias comes; being straitened either by grief at His passion, or by fear. For on many occasions, upon seeing Him unwilling to speak a thing clearly, they are silent, and so an end. For instance, when during their abode in Galilee He said, *"The Son of Man shall be betrayed, and they shall kill Him;"* [Matthew 17:22-23] it is added by Mark, *"That they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask Him;"* [Mark 9:32] by Luke, *"That it was hid from them, that they might not perceive it, and they feared to ask Him of that saying."* [Luke 9:45]

3. *"And when they had come to the multitude, there came to Him a man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic, and sore vexed; for oftentimes he falls into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him unto Your disciples, and they could not cure him."* [Matthew 17:14-16]

This man the Scripture signifies to be exceedingly weak in faith; and this is many ways evident; from Christ's saying, "*All things are possible to him that believes;*" [Mark 9:23] from the saying of the man himself that approached, "*Help my unbelief;*" [Mark 9:24] from Christ's commanding the devil to "*enter no more into him;*" [Mark 9:25] and from the man's saying again to Christ, "*If You can.*" [Mark 9:22] "*Yet if his unbelief was the cause,*" it may be said, "*that the devil went not out, why does He blame the disciples?*" Signifying, that even without persons to bring the sick in faith, they might in many instances work a cure. For as the faith of the person presenting oftentimes availed for receiving the cure, even from inferior ministers; so the power of the doers oftentimes sufficed, even without belief in those who came to work the miracle.

And both these things are signified in the Scripture. For both they of the company of Cornelius by their faith drew unto themselves the grace of the Spirit; and in the case of Eliseus [2 Kings 13:21] again, when none had believed, a dead man rose again. For as to those that cast him down, not for faith but for cowardice did they cast him, unintentionally and by chance, for fear of the band of robbers, and so they fled: while the person himself that was cast in was dead, yet by the mere virtue of the holy body the dead man arose.

Whence it is clear in this case, that even the disciples were weak; but not all; for the pillars [Galatians 2:9] were not present there. And see this man's want of consideration, from another circumstance again, how before the multitude he pleads to Jesus against His disciples, saying, "*I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him.*"

But He, acquitting them of the charges before the people, imputes the greater part to him. For, "*O faithless and perverse generation,*" these are His words, "*how long shall I be with you?*" [Matthew 17:17] not aiming at

his person only, lest He should confound the man, but also at all the Jews. For indeed many of those present might probably be offended, and have undue thoughts of them.

But when He said, *"How long shall I be with you,"* He indicates again death to be welcome to Him, and the thing an object of desire, and His departure longed for, and that not crucifixion, but being with them, is grievous.

He stopped not however at the accusations; but what says He? *"Bring him hither to me."* [Mark 9:21] And Himself moreover asks him, *"how long time he is thus;"* both making a plea for His disciples, and leading the other to a good hope, and that he might believe in his attaining deliverance from the evil.

And He suffers him to be torn, not for display (accordingly, when a crowd began to gather, He proceeded to rebuke him), but for the father's own sake, that when he should see the evil spirit disturbed at Christ's mere call, so at least, if in no other way, he might be led to believe the coming miracle.

And because he had said, *"Of a child,"* and, *"If you can help me,"* Christ says, *"To him that believes, all things are possible,"* [Mark 9:23] again giving the complaint a turn against him. And whereas when the leper said, *"If You will, You can make me clean,"* [Matthew 8:2] bearing witness to His authority Christ commending him, and confirming His words, said, *"I will, be thou clean;"* in this man's case, upon his uttering a speech in no way worthy of His power—*"If You can, help me,"*—see how He corrects it, as not rightly spoken. For what says He? *"If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes."* What He says is like this: *"Such abundance of power is with me, that I can even make others work these miracles. So that if you believe as one ought, even you yourself art able,"* says He, *"to*

heal both this one, and many others." And having thus said, He set free the possessed of the devil.

But do thou not only from this observe His providence and His beneficence, but also from that other time, during which He allowed the devil to be in him. Since surely, unless the man had been favored with much providential care even then, he would have perished long ago; for *"it cast him both into the fire,"* so it is said, *"and into the water."* And he that dared this would assuredly have destroyed the man too, unless even in so great madness God had put on him His strong curb: as indeed was the case with those naked men that were running in the deserts and cutting themselves with stones.

And if he call him *"a lunatic,"* trouble not yourself at all, for it is the father of the possessed who speaks the word. How then says the evangelist also, *"He healed many that were lunatic?"* Denominating them according to the impression of the multitude. For the evil spirit, to bring a reproach upon nature, by wine? For the weaker the vessel, the more entire the shipwreck, whether she be free or a slave. For the free woman behaves herself unseemly in the midst of her slaves as spectators, and the slave again in like manner in the midst of the slaves, and they cause the gifts of God to be blasphemously spoken of by foolish men.

For instance, I hear many say, when these excesses happen, *"Would there were no wine."* O folly! O madness! When other men sin, do you find fault with God's gifts? And what great madness is this? What? Did the wine, O man, produce this evil? Not the wine, but the intemperance of such as take an evil delight in it. Say then, *"Would there were no drunkenness, no luxury;"* but if you say, *"Would there were no wine,"* you will say, going on by degrees, *"Would there were no steel, because of the murderers; no night,*

because of the thieves; no light, because of the informers; no women, because of adulteries;" and, in a word, you will destroy all.

But do not so; for this is of a satanical mind; do not find fault with the wine, but with the drunkenness; and when you have found this self-same man sober, sketch out all his unseemliness, and say unto him, Wine was given, that we might be cheerful, not that we might behave ourselves unseemly; that we might laugh, not that we might be a laughingstock; that we might be healthful, not that we might be diseased; that we might correct the weakness of our body, not cast down the might of our soul.

God honored you with the gift, why disgrace yourself with the excess thereof? Hear what Paul says, *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities."* [1 Timothy 5:23] But if that saint, even when oppressed with disease, and enduring successive sicknesses, partook not of wine, until his Teacher suffered him; what excuse shall we have, who are drunken in health? To him indeed He said, *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake;"* but to each of you who are drunken, He will say, *"Use little wine, for your fornications, your frequent filthy talking, for the other wicked desires to which drunkenness is wont to give birth."* But if you are not willing, for these reasons, to abstain; at least on account of the despondencies which come of it, and the vexations, do ye abstain. For wine was given for gladness, *"Yea, wine,"* so it is said, *"makes glad the heart of man:"* but you mar even this excellence in it. For what kind of gladness is it to be beside one's self, and to have innumerable vexations, and to see all things whirling round, and to be oppressed with giddiness, and like those that have a fever, to require some who may drench their heads with oil?

6. These things are not said by me to all: or rather they are said to all, not because all are drunken, God forbid; but because they who do not drink take no thought of the drunken. Therefore even against you do I rather

inveigh, that are in health; since the physician too leaves the sick, and addresses his discourse to them that are sitting by them. To you therefore do I direct my speech, entreating you neither to be at any time over-taken by this passion, and to draw up as by cords those who have been so overtaken, that they be not found worse than the brutes. For they indeed seek nothing more than what is needful, but these have become even more brutish than they, overpassing the boundaries of moderation. For how much better is the ass than these men? How much better the dog! For indeed each of these animals, and of all others, whether it need to eat, or to drink, acknowledges sufficiency for a limit, and goes not on beyond what it needs; and though there are innumerable persons to constrain, it will not endure to go on to excess.

In this respect then we are worse even than the brutes, by the judgment not of them that are in health only, but even by our own. For that you have judged yourselves to be baser than both dogs and asses, revealed to Peter, He does hereby again confirm. And neither at this did He stop, but by His very condescension declares this self-same truth; an instance of exceeding wisdom.

Homily 58 on Matthew

MATT. XVII. 22, 23. 'And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.'

THAT is, to hinder their saying, 'wherefore do we abide here continually,' He speaks to them again of the passion; on hearing which they had no wish so much as to see Jerusalem. And it is remarkable how, when both Peter had been rebuked, and Moses and Elias had discoursed concerning it, and had called the thing glory, and the Father had uttered a voice from above, and so many miracles had been done, and the resurrection was at the doors (for He said, He should by no means abide any long time in death, but should be raised the third day); not even so did they endure it, but were sorry; and not merely sorry, but exceeding sorry.

Now this arose from their being ignorant as yet of the force of His sayings. This Mark and Luke indirectly expressing said, the one, 'They understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask Him:' the other, 'It was hid from them, that they perceived it not, and they feared to ask Him of that saying.'

And yet if they were ignorant, how were they sorry? Because they were not altogether ignorant; that He was to die they knew, continually hearing it, but what this death might be, and that there would be a speedy release from it, and that it would work innumerable blessings, as yet they knew not clearly; nor what this resurrection might be: but they understood it not, wherefore they grieved; for indeed they clung very earnestly to their Master.

'And when they had come to Capernaum, they that received the didrachma came to Peter, and said, Does not your Master pay the didrachma?'

And what is this 'didrachma?' When God had slain the firstborn of the Egyptians, then He took the tribe of Levi in their stead. Afterwards, because the number of the tribe was less than of the firstborn among the Jews, for them that are wanting to make up the number, He commanded a shekel to be contributed: and moreover a custom came thereby in force, that the firstborn should pay this tribute.

Because then Christ was a firstborn child, and Peter seemed to be first of the disciples, to him they come: their way being, as I suppose, to exact it in every city; wherefore also in His native place they approached Him; for Capernaum was accounted His native place.

And Him indeed they dared not approach, but Peter; nor him either with much violence, but rather gently. For not as blaming, but as inquiring, they said, 'Does not your Master pay the didrachma?' For the right opinion of Him they had not as yet, but as concerning a man, so did they feel; yet they rendered Him some reverence and honor, because of the signs that went before.

2. What then says Peter? 'He says, Yea:' and to these indeed he said, that He pays, but to Him he said it not, blushing perhaps to speak to Him of these things. Wherefore that gentle one, well knowing as He did all things, prevented him, saying, What do you think, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own sons, or of strangers;' and when he said 'of strangers,' He replied, 'Then are the sons free.'

For lest Peter should suppose Him to say so, being told it by the others, He prevents him, partly indicating what has been said, partly giving him leave to speak freely, backward as he was to speak first of these things.

And what He says is like this, 'I am indeed free from paying tribute. For if the kings of the earth take it not of their sons, but of their subjects; much more ought I to be freed from this demand, I who am Son, not of an earthly king, but of the King of Heaven, and myself a King.' Do you see how He has distinguished the sons from them that are not sons? And if He were not a Son, to no purpose has He brought in the example also of the kings. 'Yea,' one may say, 'He is a Son, but not truly begotten.' Then is He not a Son; and if not a Son, nor truly begotten, neither does He belong to God, but to some other. But if He belong to another, then neither has the comparison its proper force. For He is discoursing not of the sons generally, but of the genuine sons, men's very own; of them that share the kingdom with their parents.

Wherefore also in contradistinction He has mentioned the 'strangers;' meaning by 'strangers,' such as are not born of them, but by 'their own,' those whom they have begotten of themselves.

And I would have you mark this also; how the high doctrine, revealed to Peter, He does hereby again confirm. And neither at this did He stop, but by His very condescension declares this self-same truth; an instance of exceeding wisdom.

For after thus speaking, He says, *"But lest we should offend them, go thou and cast an hook into the sea, and take up the fish that first comes up, and you shall find therein a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and you."*

See how He neither declines the tribute, nor simply commands to pay it, but having first proved Himself not liable to it, then He gives it: the one to save the people, the other, those around Him, from offense. For He gives it not at all as a debt, but as doing the best for their weakness. Elsewhere, however, He despises the offense, when He was discoursing of meats,

[Matthew 15:11] teaching us to know at what seasons we ought to consider them that are offended, and at what to disregard them.

And indeed by the very mode of giving He discloses Himself again. For wherefore does He not command him to give of what they have laid up? That, as I have said, herein also He might signify Himself to be God of all, and the sea also to be under His rule. For He had indeed signified this even already, by His rebuke, and by His commanding this same Peter to walk on the waves; but He now again signifies the self-same thing, though in another way, yet so as to cause herein great amazement. For neither was it a small thing, to foretell that the first, who out of those depths should come in his way, would be the fish that would pay the tribute; and having cast forth His commandment like a net into that abyss, to bring up the one that bore the piece of money; but it was of a divine and unutterable power, thus to make even the sea bear gifts, and that its subjection to Him should be shown on all hands, as well when in its madness it was silent, [Matthew 8:26] and when, though fierce, it received its fellow servant; [Matthew 14:29] as now again, when it makes payment in His behalf to them that are demanding it.

"And give unto them," He says, *"for me and you."* Do you see the exceeding greatness of the honor? See also the self-command of Peter's mind. For this point Mark, the follower of this apostle, does not appear to have set down, because it indicated the great honor paid to him; but while of the denial he wrote as well as the rest, the things that make him illustrious he has passed over in silence, his master perhaps entreating him not to mention the great things about himself. And He used the phrase, *"for me and you,"* because Peter too was a firstborn child.

Now as you are amazed at Christ's power, so I bid you admire also the disciple's faith, that to a thing beyond possibility he so gave ear. For indeed

it was very far beyond possibility by nature. Wherefore also in requital for his faith, He joined him to Himself in the payment of the tribute.

3. *"In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"*

The disciples experienced some feeling of human weakness; wherefore the evangelist also adds this note, saying, *"In that hour;"* when He had preferred him to all. For of James too, and John, one was a firstborn son, but no such thing as this had He done for them.

Then, being ashamed to avow their feeling, they say not indeed openly, *"Wherefore have you preferred Peter to us?"* or, *"Is he greater than we are?"* for they were ashamed; but indefinitely they ask, *"Who then is greater?"* For when they saw the three preferred, they felt nothing of the kind; but now that the honor had come round to one, they were vexed. And not for this only, but there were many other things which they put together to kindle that feeling. For to him He had said, *"I will give you the keys;"* [Matthew 16:19] to him, *"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona;"* to him here, *"Give unto them for me and you;"* and seeing too in general how freely he was allowed to speak, it somewhat fretted them.

And if Mark says, [Mark 9:34] that they did not ask, but reasoned in themselves, that is nothing contrary to this. For it is likely that they did both the one and the other, and whereas before, on another occasion, they had had this feeling, both once and twice, that now they did both declare it, and reason among themselves.

But to you I say, *"Look not to the charge against them only, but consider this too; first, that they seek none of the things of this world; next, that even this passion they afterwards laid aside, and give up the first place one to another."* But we are not able to attain so much as unto their faults,

neither do we seek, *"who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven;"* but, who is greatest in the earthly kingdom, who is wealthiest, who most powerful.

What then says Christ? He unveils their conscience, and replies to their feeling, not merely to their words. *"For He called a little child unto Him,"* says the Scripture, *"and said, Unless you are converted, and become as this little child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."* [Matthew 18:2-3] *"Why, you,"* He says, *"inquire who is greatest, and are contentious for first honors; but I pronounce him, that is not become lowest of all, unworthy so much as to enter in there."*

And full well does He both allege that pattern, and not allege it only, but also set the child in the midst, by the very sight abashing them, and persuading them to be in like manner lowly and artless. Since both from envy the little child is pure, and from vainglory, and from longing for the first place; and he is possessed of the greatest of virtues, simplicity, and whatever is artless and lowly.

Not courage then only is wanted, nor wisdom, but this virtue also, humility I mean, and simplicity. Yea, and the things that belong to our salvation halt even in the chiefest point, if these be not with us.

The little child, whether it be insulted and beaten, or honored and glorified, neither by the one is it moved to impatience or envy, nor by the other lifted up.

Do you see how again He calls us on to all natural excellencies, indicating that of free choice it is possible to attain them, and so silences the wicked frenzy of the Manichæans? For if nature be an evil thing, wherefore does He draw from hence His patterns of severe goodness?

And the child which He set in the midst I suppose to have been a very young child indeed, free from all these passions. For such a little child is free from pride and the mad desire of glory, and envy, and contentiousness,

and all such passions, and having many virtues, simplicity, humility, unworldliness, prides itself upon none of them; which is a twofold severity of goodness; to have these things, and not to be puffed up about them.

Wherefore He brought it in, and set it in the midst; and not at this merely did He conclude His discourse, but carries further this admonition, saying, *"And whoso shall receive such a little child in my name, receives me."*

"For know," says He, *"that not only, if you yourselves become like this, shall you receive a great reward; but also if for my sake ye honor others who are such, even for your honor to them do I appoint unto you a kingdom as your recompence."* Or rather, He sets down what is far greater, saying, *"he receives me. So exceedingly dear to me is all that is lowly and artless."* For by *"a little child,"* here, He means the men that are thus simple and lowly, and abject and contemptible in the judgment of the common sort.

4. After this, to obtain yet more acceptance for His saying, He establishes it not by the honor only, but also by the punishment, going on to say, *"And whoso shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."*

"For as they," says He, who honor these for my sake, have heaven, or rather an honor greater than the very kingdom; even so they likewise who dishonor them (for this is to offend them), shall suffer the extremity of punishment. And marvel thou not at His calling the affront *"an offense;"* for many feeble-minded persons have suffered no ordinary offense from being treated with slight and insult. To heighten therefore and aggravate the blame, He states the mischief arising therefrom.

And He does not go on to express the punishment in the same way, but from the things familiar to us, He indicates how intolerable it is. For when

He would touch the grosser sort most sharply, He brings sensible images. Wherefore here also, meaning to indicate the greatness of the punishment they shall undergo, and to strike into the arrogance of those that despise them, He brought forward a kind of sensible punishment, that of the millstone, and of the drowning. Yet surely it were suitable to what had gone before to have said, "*He that receives not one of these little ones, receives not me;*" a thing bitterer than any punishment; but since the very unfeeling, and exceeding gross, were not so much penetrated by this, terrible as it is, He puts "*a millstone,*" and "*a drowning.*" And He said not, "*A millstone shall be hanged about his neck,*" but, "*It were better for him*" to undergo this; implying that another evil, more grievous than this, awaits him; and if this be unbearable, much more that.

Do you see how in both respects He made His threat terrible, first by the comparison with the known image rendering it more distinct, then by the excess on its side presenting it to the fancy as far greater than that visible one. Do you see how He plucks up by the root the spirit of arrogance; how He heals the ulcer of vainglory; how He instructs us in nothing to set our heart on the first honors; how He persuades such as covet them in everything to follow after the lowest place?

5. For nothing is worse than arrogance. This even takes men out of their natural senses, and brings upon them the character of fools; or rather, it really makes them to be utterly like idiots.

For like as, if any one, being three cubits in stature, were to strive to be higher than the mountains, or actually to think it, and draw himself up, as overpassing their summits, we should seek no other proof of his being out of his senses; so also when you see a man arrogant, and thinking himself superior to all, and accounting it a degradation to live with other people, seek not thou after that to see any other proof of that man's madness. Why,

he is much more ridiculous than any natural fool, inasmuch as he absolutely creates this his disease on purpose. And not in this only is he wretched, but because he does without feeling it fall into the very gulf of wickedness.

For when will such an one come to due knowledge of any sin? When will he perceive that he is offending? Nay, rather he is as a vile and captive slave, whom the devil having caught goes off with, and makes him altogether a prey, buffetting him on every side, and encompassing him with ten thousand insults.

For unto such great folly does he lead them in the end, as to get them to be haughty towards their children, and wives, and towards their own forefathers. And others, on the contrary, He causes to be puffed up by the distinction of their ancestors. Now, what can be more foolish than this? When from opposite causes people are alike puffed up, the one sort because they had mean persons for fathers, grandfathers, and ancestors; and the other because theirs were glorious and distinguished? How then may one abate in each case the swelling sore? By saying to these last, *"Go farther back than your grandfather, and immediate ancestors, and you will find perchance many cooks, and drivers of asses, and shopkeepers:"* but to the former, that are puffed up by the meanness of their forefathers, the contrary again; *"And thou again, if you proceed farther up among your forefathers, wilt find many far more illustrious than you are."*

For that nature has this course, come let me prove it to you even from the Scriptures. Solomon was son of a king, and of an illustrious king, but that king's father was one of the vile and ignoble. And his grandfather on his mother's side in like manner; for else he would not have given his daughter to a mere soldier. And if you were to go up again higher from these mean persons, you will see the race more illustrious and royal. So in Saul's case too, so in many others also, one shall come to this result. Let us

not then pride ourselves herein. For what is birth? Tell me. Nothing, but a name only without a substance; and this you will know in that day. But because that day is not yet come, let us now even from the things present persuade you, that hence arises no superiority. For should war overtake us, should famine, should anything else, all these inflated conceits of noble birth are put to the proof: should disease, should pestilence come upon us, it knows not how to distinguish between the rich and the poor, the glorious and inglorious, the high born and him that is not such; neither does death, nor the other reverses of fortune, but they all rise up alike against all; and if I may say something that is even marvellous, against the rich more of the two. For by how much they are less exercised in these things, so much the more do they perish, when overtaken by them. And the fear too is greater with the rich. For none so tremble at princes as they; and at multitudes, not less than at princes, yea rather much more; many such houses in fact have been subverted alike by the wrath of multitudes and the threatening of princes. But the poor man is exempt from both these kinds of troubled waters.

6. Wherefore let alone this nobility, and if you would show me that you are noble, show the freedom of your soul, such as that blessed man had (and he a poor man), who said to Herod, *"It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife;"* [Mark 6:18] such as he was possessed of, who before him was like him, and after him shall be so again; who said to Ahab, *"I do not trouble Israel, but thou, and your father's house;"* [1 Kings 18:18] such as the prophets had, such as all the apostles.

But not like this are the souls of them that are slaves to wealth, but as they that are under ten thousand tutors, and taskmasters, so these dare not so much as lift up their eye, and speak boldly in behalf of virtue. For the love of riches, and that of glory, and that of other things, looking terribly on

them, make them slavish flatterers; there being nothing which so takes away liberty, as entanglement in worldly affairs, and the wearing what are accounted marks of distinction. For such an one has not one master, nor two, nor three, but ten thousand.

And if you would fain even number them, let us bring in some one of those that are in honor in kings' courts, and let him have both very much wealth, and great power, and a birthplace excelling others, and distinction of ancestry, and let him be looked up to by all men. Now then let us see, if this be not the very person to be more in slavery than all; and let us set in comparison with him, not a slave merely, but a slave's slave, for many though servants have slaves. This slave's slave then for his part has but one master. And what though that one be not a freeman? Yet he is but one, and the other looks only to his pleasure. For albeit his master's master seem to have power over him, yet for the present he obeys one only; and if matters between them two are well, he will abide in security all his life. But our man has not one or two only, but many, and more grievous masters. And first he is in care about the sovereign himself. And it is not the same to have a mean person for a master, as to have a king, whose ears are buzzed into by many, and who becomes a property now to this set and now to that.

Our man, though conscious of nothing, suspects all; both his comrades and his subordinates; both his friends and his enemies.

But the other man too, you may say, fears his master. But how is it the same thing, to have one or many, to make one timorous? Or rather, if a man inquire carefully, he will not find so much as one. How, and in what sense? Whereas that slave has no one that desires to put him out of that service of his, and to introduce himself (whence neither has he any one to plot against him therein); these have not even any other pursuit, but to unsettle him that is more approved and more beloved by their ruler. Wherefore also he must

needs flatter all, his superiors, his equals, his friends. For where envy is, and love of glory, there even sincere friendship has no strength. For as those of the same craft cannot love one another with a perfect and genuine love, so is it with rivals in honor also, and with them that long for the same among worldly objects. Whence also great is the war within.

Do you see what a swarm of masters, and of hard masters? Will you that I show you yet another, more grievous than this? They that are behind him, all of them strive to get before him: all that are before him, to hinder him from coming nearer them, and passing them by.

7. But O marvel! I undertook indeed to show you masters, but our discourse, we find, coming on and waxing eager, has performed more than my undertaking, pointing out foes instead of masters; or rather the same persons both as foes and as masters. For while they are courted like masters, they are terrible as foes, and they plot against us as enemies. When then any one has the same persons both as masters, and as enemies, what can be worse than this calamity? The slave indeed, though he be subject to command, yet nevertheless has the advantage of care and good-will on the part of them who give him orders; but these, while they receive commands, are made enemies, and are set one against another; and that so much more grievously than those in battles, in that they both wound secretly, and in the mask of friends they treat men as their enemies would do, and oftentimes make themselves credit of the calamity of others.

But not such are our circumstances; rather should another fare ill, there are many to grieve with him: should he obtain distinction, many to find pleasure with him. Not so again the apostle: *"For whether,"* says he, *"one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."* [1 Corinthians 12:26] And the words of him who gives these admonitions, are at one time, *"What is my hope or joy?*

Are not even ye?" [1 Thessalonians 2:19] at another, "Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord;" [1 Thessalonians 3:8] at another, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you;" [2 Corinthians 2:4] and, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" [2 Corinthians 11:29]

Wherefore then do we still endure the tempest and the billows of the world without, and not run to this calm haven, and leaving the names of good things, go on to the very things themselves? For glory, and dignity, and wealth, and credit, and all such things, are names with them, but with us realities; just as the grievous things, death and dishonor and poverty, and whatever else is like them, are names indeed with us, but realities with them.

And, if you will, let us first bring forward glory, so lovely and desirable with all of them. And I speak not of its being short-lived, and soon put out, but when it is in its bloom, then show it me. Take not away the daubings and colored lines of the harlot, but bring her forward decked out, and exhibit her to us, for me thereupon to expose her deformity. Well then, of course you will tell of her array, and her many lictors, and the heralds' voice, and the listening of all classes, and the silence kept by the populace, and the blows given to all that come in one's way, and the universal gazing. Are not these her splendors? Come then, let us examine whether these things be not vain, and a mere unprofitable imagination. For wherein is the person we speak of the better for these things, either in body, or in soul? For this constitutes the man. Will he then be taller hereby, or stronger, or healthier, or swifter, or will he have his senses keener, and more piercing? Nay, no one could say this. Let us go then to the soul, if haply we may find there any advantage occurring herefrom. What then? Will such a one be more temperate, more gentle, more prudent, through that kind of

attendance? By no means, but rather quite the contrary. For not as in the body, so also is the result here. For there the body indeed gains nothing in respect of its proper excellence; but here the mischief is not only the soul's reaping no good fruit, but also its actually receiving much evil therefrom: hurried as it is by such means into haughtiness, and vainglory, and folly, and wrath, and ten thousand faults like them.

"But he rejoices," you will say, *"and exults in these things, and they brighten him up."* The crowning point of his evils lies in that word of yours, and the incurable part of the disease. For he that rejoices in these things, would be unwilling however easily to be released from that which is the ground of his evils; yea, he has blocked up against himself the way of healing by this delight. So that here most of all is the mischief, that he is not even pained, but rather rejoices, when the diseases are growing upon him.

For neither is rejoicing always a good thing; since even thieves rejoice in stealing, and an adulterer in defiling his neighbor's marriage bed, and the covetous in spoiling by violence, and the manslayer in murdering. Let us not then look whether he rejoice, but whether it be for something profitable, lest perchance we find his joy to be such as that of the adulterer and the thief.

For wherefore, tell me, does he rejoice? For his credit with the multitude, because he can puff himself up, and be gazed upon? Nay, what can be worse than this desire, and this ill-placed fondness? Or if it be no bad thing, you must leave off deriding the vainglorious and aspersing them with continual mockeries: ye must leave off uttering imprecations on the haughty and contemptuous. But ye would not endure it. Well then, they too deserve plenty of censure, though they have plenty of lictors. And all this I have said of the more tolerable sort of rulers; since the greater part of them we shall find transgressing more grievously than either robbers, or

murderers, or adulterers, or spoilers of tombs, from not making a good use of their power. For indeed both their thefts are more shameless, and their butcheries more hardened, and their impurities far more enormous than the others; and they dig through, not one wall, but estates and houses without end, their prerogative making it very easy to them.

And they serve a most grievous servitude, both stooping basely under their passions, and trembling at all their accomplices. For he only is free, and he only a ruler, and more kingly than all kings, who is delivered from his passions.

Knowing then these things, let us follow after the true freedom, and deliver ourselves from the evil slavery, and let us account neither pomp of power nor dominion of wealth, nor any other such thing, to be blessed; but virtue only. For thus shall we both enjoy security here, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Homily 59 on Matthew

Matt. XVIII. 7.

Woe unto the world because of offenses: for it must needs be that offenses come: but woe to that man by whom the offense comes.

"And if 'it must needs be that offenses come,'" (some one of our adversaries may perchance say), "why does He lament over the world, when He ought rather to afford succor, and to stretch forth His hand in its behalf? For this were the part of a physician, and a protector, whereas the other might be looked for even from any ordinary person."

What then could we possibly say, in answer to so shameless a tongue? Nay what do you seek for equal to this healing care of His? For indeed being God He became man for you, and took the form of a slave, and underwent all extremities, and left undone none of those things which it concerned Him to do. But inasmuch as unthankful men were nothing the better for this, He laments over them, for that after so much fostering care they continued in their unsoundness.

It was like as if over the sick man, that had had the advantage of much attendance, and who had not been willing to obey the rules of the physician, any one were to lament and say, *"Woe to such a man from his infirmity, which he has increased by his own remissness."* But in that case indeed there is no advantage from the bewailing, but here this too is a kind of healing treatment to foretell what would be, and to lament it. For many oftentimes, though, when advised, they were nothing profited, yet, when mourned for, they amended.

For which reason most of all He used the word *"Woe,"* thoroughly to rouse them, and to make them in earnest, and to work upon them to be

wakeful. And at the same time He shows forth the good will He had towards those very men and His own mildness, that He mourns for them even when gainsaying, not taking mere disgust at it, but correcting them, both with the mourning, and with the prediction, so as to win them over.

But how is this possible? He may say. For if *"it must needs be that offenses come,"* how is it possible to escape these? Because that the offenses come indeed must needs be, but that men should perish is not altogether of necessity. Like as though a physician should say (for nothing hinders our using the same illustration again), it must needs be that this disease should come on, but it is not a necessary consequence that he who gives heed should be of course destroyed by the disease. And this He said, as I mentioned, to awaken together with the others His disciples. For that they may not slumber, as sent unto peace and unto untroubled life, He shows many wars close upon them, from without, from within. Declaring this, Paul said, *"Without were fightings, within were fears;"* [2 Corinthians 7:5] and, *"In perils among false brethren;"* [2 Corinthians 11:26] and in his discourse to the Milesians too He said, *"Also of you shall some arise speaking perverse things;"* [Acts 20:30] and He Himself too said, *"The man's foes shall be they of his own household."* [Matthew 10:36] But when He said, *"It must needs be,"* it is not as taking away the power of choosing for themselves, nor the freedom of the moral principle, nor as placing man's life under any absolute constraint of circumstances, that He says these things, but He foretells what would surely be; and this Luke has set forth in another form of expression, *"It is impossible but that offenses should come."* [Luke 17:1]

But what are the offenses? The hindrances on the right way. Thus also do those on the stage call them that are skilled in those matters, them that distort their bodies.

It is not then His prediction that brings the offenses; far from it; neither because He foretold it, therefore does it take place; but because it surely was to be, therefore He foretold it; since if those who bring in the offenses had not been minded to do wickedly, neither would the offenses have come; and if they had not been to come, neither would they have been foretold. But because those men did evil, and were incurably diseased, the offenses came, and He foretells that which is to be.

But if these men had been kept right, it may be said, and there had been no one to bring in an offense, would not this saying have been convicted of falsehood? By no means, for neither would it have been spoken. For if all were to have been kept right, He would not have said, *"it must needs be that they come,"* but because He foreknew they would be of themselves incorrigible, therefore He said, the offenses will surely come.

And wherefore did He not take them out of the way? It may be said. Why, wherefore should they have been taken out of the way? For the sake of them that are hurt? But not thence is the ruin of them that are hurt, but from their own remissness. And the virtuous prove it, who, so far from being injured thereby, are even in the greatest degree profited, such as was Job, such as was Joseph, such as were all the righteous, and the apostles. But if many perish, it is from their own slumbering. But if it were not so, but the ruin was the effect of the offenses, all must have perished. And if there are those who escape, let him who does not escape impute it to himself. For the offenses, as I have said, awaken, and render more quick-sighted, and sharper, not only him that is preserved; but even him that has fallen into them, if he rise up again quickly, for they render him more safe, and make him more difficult to overcome; so that if we be watchful, no small profit do we reap from hence, even to be continually awake. For if when we have enemies, and when so many dangers are pressing upon us,

we sleep, what should we be if living in security. Nay, if you will, look at the first man. For if having lived in paradise a short time, perchance not so much as a whole day, and having enjoyed delights, he drove on to such a pitch of wickedness, as even to imagine an equality with God, and to account the deceiver a benefactor, and not to keep to one commandment; if he had lived the rest of his life also without affliction, what would he not have done?

2. But when we say these things, they make other objections again, asking, And why did God make him such? God did not make him such, far from it, since then neither would He have punished him. For if we in those matters in which we are the cause, do not find fault with our servant, much more will not the God of all. *"But whence did this come to pass?"* one may say. Of himself and his own remissness. *"What means, of himself?"* Ask yourself. For if it be not of themselves the bad are bad, do not punish your servant nor reprove your wife for what errors she may commit, neither beat your son, nor blame your friend, nor hate your enemy that does despite to you: for all these deserve to be pitied, not to be punished, unless they offend of themselves. *"But I am not able to practise self-restraint,"* one may say. And yet, when you perceive the cause not to be with them, but of another necessity, you can practise self-restraint. When at least a servant being taken with sickness does not the things enjoined him, so far from blaming thou dost rather excuse him. Thus you are a witness, that the one thing is of one's self, the other not of one's self. So that here too, if you knew that he was wicked from being born such, so far from blaming, you would rather have shown him indulgence. For surely, when you make him allowance for his illness, it could not be that you would have refused to make allowance for God's act of creation, if indeed he had been made such from the very first.

And in another way too it is easy to stop the mouths of such men, for great is the abounding power of the truth. For wherefore do you never find fault with your servant, because he is not of a beautiful countenance, that he is not of fine stature in his body, that he is not able to fly? Because these things are natural. So then from blame against his nature he is acquitted, and no man gainsays it. When therefore you blame, you show that the fault is not of nature but of his choice. For if in those things, which we do not blame, we bear witness that the whole is of nature, it is evident that where we reprove, we declare that the offense is of the choice.

Do not then bring forward, I beseech you, perverse reasonings, neither sophistries and webs slighter than the spider's, but answer me this again: Did God make all men? It is surely plain to every man. How then are not all equal in respect of virtue and vice? Whence are the good, and gentle, and meek? Whence are the worthless and evil? For if these things do not require any purpose, but are of nature, how are the one this, the others that? For if by nature all were bad, it were not possible for any one to be good, but if good by nature, then no one bad. For if there were one nature of all men, they must needs in this respect be all one, whether they were to be this, or whether they were to be that.

But if we should say that by nature the one are good, the other bad, which would not be reasonable (as we have shown), these things must be unchangeable, for the things of nature are unchangeable. Nay, mark. All mortals are also liable to suffering; and no one is free from suffering, though he strive without end. But now we see of good many becoming worthless, and of worthless good, the one through remissness, the other by earnestness; which thing most of all indicates that these things do not come of nature.

For the things of nature are neither changed, nor do they need diligence for their acquisition. For like as for seeing and hearing we do not need labor, so neither should we need toils in virtue, if it had been apportioned by nature.

"But wherefore did He at all make worthless men, when He might have made all men good? Whence then are the evil things?" says he. Ask yourself; for it is my part to show they are not of nature, nor from God.

"Come they then of themselves?" he says. By no means. *"But are they unoriginate?"* Speak reverently, O man, and start back from this madness, honoring with one honor God and the evil things, and that honor the highest. For if they be unoriginate they are mighty, and cannot so much as be plucked up, nor pass into annihilation. For that what is unoriginate is imperishable, is surely manifest to all.

3. And whence also are there so many good, when evil has such great power? How are they that have an origin stronger than that which is unoriginate?

"But God destroys these things," he says. When? And how will He destroy what are of equal honor, and of equal strength, and of the same age, as one might say, with Himself?

Oh malice of the devil! How great an evil has he invented! With what blasphemy has he persuaded men to surround God! With what cloak of godliness has he devised another profane account? For desiring to show, that not of Him was the evil, they brought in another evil doctrine, saying, that these things are unoriginate.

"Whence then are evils?" one may say. From willing and not willing. *"But the very thing of our willing and not willing, whence is it?"* From ourselves. But thou dost the same in asking, as if when you had asked, whence is seeing and not seeing? Then when I said, from closing the eyes

or not closing the eyes, thou were to ask again; the very closing the eyes or not, whence is it? Then having heard that it was of ourselves, and our will, thou were to seek again another cause.

For evil is nothing else than disobedience to God. *"Whence then,"* one may say, *"did man find this?" "Why, was it a task to find this? I pray you."* *"Nay, neither do I say this, that this thing is difficult; but whence became he desirous to disobey." "From remissness. For having power for either, he inclined rather to this."*

But if you are perplexed yet and dizzy at hearing this, I will ask you nothing difficult nor involved, but a simple and plain question. Have you become some time bad? And have you become some time also good? What I mean, is like this. Did you prevail some time over passion, and were you taken again by passion? Have you been overtaken by drunkenness, and have you prevailed over drunkenness? Were you once moved to wrath, and again not moved to wrath? Did you overlook a poor man, and not overlook him? Did you commit whoredom once? And did you become chaste again? Whence then are all these things? Tell me, whence? Nay if you yourself do not tell, I will say. Because at one time you restrained yourself and strove, but after that you became remiss and careless. For to those that are desperate, and are continually in wickedness, and are in a state of senselessness, and are mad, and who are not willing so much as to hear what will amend them, I will not even discourse of self restraint; but to them that have been sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other, I will gladly speak. Did you once take by violence the things that belonged not to you; and after this, subdued by pity, imparted even of your own unto him that was in need? Whence then this change? Is it not quite plain it is from the mind, and the choice of will?

It is quite plain, and there is no one who would not say this. Wherefore I entreat you to be in earnest, and to cleave to virtue, and you will have no need of these questions. For our evils are mere names, if we be willing. Inquire not then whence are evils, neither perplex yourself; but having found that they are from remissness only, flee the evil deeds.

And if any one should say, that these things come not from us; whenever you see him angry with his servants, and provoked with his wife, and blaming a child, and condemning them who injure him, say to him, how then did you say, that evils come not from us? For if they be not from us, wherefore do you find fault? Say again; is it of yourself you revile, and insultest? For if it be not of yourself, let no man be angry with you; but if it be of yourself, of yourself and of your remissness are your evil deeds.

But what? Do you think there are some good men? For if indeed no man is good, whence have you this word? Whence are praises? But if there are good men, it is quite plain that they will also reprove the bad. Yet if no one is voluntarily wicked, nor of himself, the good will be found to be unjustly reproving the bad, and they themselves too will be in this way bad again. For what can be worse than to subject the guiltless to accusations? But if they continue in our estimation good men, though reproving, and this especially is a proof of their goodness, even to the very fools it is hereby plain, that no one is ever by necessity bad.

But if after all this you would still inquire, whence are evils? I would say, from remissness, from idleness, from keeping company with the bad, from contempt of virtue; hence are both the evils themselves, and the fact that some inquire, whence are the evils. Since of them surely who do right no one inquires about these things, of them that are purposed to live equitably and temperately; but they, who dare to commit wicked acts, and

wish to devise some foolish comfort to themselves by these discussions, do weave spiders' webs.

But let us tear these in pieces not by our words only, but by our deeds too. For neither are these things of necessity. For if they were of necessity, He would not have said, *"Woe to the man, by whom the offense comes."* [Matthew 18:7] For those only does he bewail, who are wicked by their choice.

And if He says *"by whom,"* marvel not. For not as though another were bringing in it by him, does He say this, but viewing him as himself causing the whole. For the Scripture is wont to say, *"by whom,"* for *"of whom;"* as when it says, *"I have gotten a man by God,"* putting not the second cause, but the first; and again, *"Is not the interpretation of them by God,"* [Genesis 40:8] and, *"God is faithful, by whom you are called unto the fellowship of His Son."* [1 Corinthians 1:9]

4. And that you may learn that it is not of necessity, hear also what follows. For after bewailing them, He says, *"If your hand, or your foot offend you, cut them off, and cast them from you: for it is better for you to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or feet to be cast into the fire. And if your right eye offend you, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the furnace of fire;"* not saying these things of limbs; far from it; but of friends, of relations, whom we regard in the rank of necessary members. This He had both said further back, and now He says it. For nothing is so hurtful as bad company. For what things compulsion cannot, friendship can often effect, both for hurt, and for profit. Wherefore with much earnestness He commands us to cut off them that hurt us, intimating these that bring the offenses.

Do you see how He has put away the mischief that would result from the offenses? By foretelling that there surely will be offenses, so that they might find no one in a state of carelessness, but that looking for them men might be watchful. By showing the evils to be great (for He would not have said without purpose, *"Woe to the world because of the offenses,"* but to show that great is the mischief therefrom), by lamenting again in stronger terms over him that brings them in. For the saying, *"But woe to that man,"* was that of one showing that great was the punishment, but not this only, but also by the comparison which He added He increased the fear.

Then He is not satisfied with these things, but He shows also the way, by which one may avoid the offenses.

But what is this? The wicked, says He, though they be exceeding dear friends to you, cut off from your friendship.

And He gives a reason that cannot be gainsaid. For if they continue friends, you will not gain them, but you will lose yourself besides; but if you should cut them off, your own salvation at least you will gain. So that if any one's friendship harms you, cut it off from you. For if of our own members we often cut off many, when they are both in an incurable state, and are ruining the rest, much more ought one to do this in the case of friends.

But if evils were by nature, superfluous were all this admonition and advice, superfluous the precaution by the means that have been mentioned. But if it be not superfluous, as surely it is not superfluous, it is quite clear that wickedness is of the will.

"Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven."

He calls little ones not them that are really little, but them that are so esteemed by the multitude, the poor, the objects of contempt, the unknown (for how should he be little who is equal in value to the whole world; how should he be little, who is dear to God?); but them who in the imagination of the multitude are so esteemed.

And He speaks not of many only, but even of one, even by this again warding off the hurt of the many offenses. For even as to flee the wicked, so also to honor the good, has very great gain, and would be a twofold security to him who gives heed, the one by rooting out the friendships with them that offend, the other from regarding these saints with respect and honor.

Then in another way also He makes them objects of reverence, saying, *"That their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven."*

Hence it is evident, that the saints have angels, or even all men. For the apostle too says of the woman, *"That she ought to have power on her head because of the angels."* [1 Corinthians 10:10] And Moses, *"He set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God."* [Deuteronomy 32:8]

But here He is discoursing not of angels only, but rather of angels that are greater than others. But when He says, *"The face of my Father,"* He means nothing else than their fuller confidence, and their great honor.

"For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost."

Again, He is putting another reason stronger than the former, and connects with it a parable, by which He brings in the Father also as desiring these things. *"For how think ye?"* says He; *"If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine, and goes into the mountains, and seeks that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety and*

nine, which went not astray. Even so it is not will before your Father, that one of these little ones should perish." [Matthew 18:12-14]

Do you see by how many things He is urging to the care of our mean brethren. Say not then, *"Such a one is a blacksmith, a shoemaker, he is a ploughman, he is a fool,"* and so despise him. For in order that you should not feel this, see by how many motives He persuades you to practise moderation, and presses you into a care for these. He set a little child, and says, *"Be as little children."* And, *"Whosoever receives such a little child receives me;"* and, *"Whosoever shall offend,"* shall suffer the utmost penalties. And He was not even satisfied with the comparison of the *"millstone,"* but added also His *"woe,"* and commanded us to cut off such, though they be in the place of hands and eyes to us. And by the angels again that are entrusted with these same mean brethren, He makes them objects of veneration, and from His own will and passion (for when He said, *"The Son of Man has come to save that which was lost,"* He signifies even the cross, like as Paul says, speaking of a brother, *"For whom Christ died"*); and from the Father, for that neither to Him does it seem good that one should perish; and from common custom, because the shepherd leaves them that are safe, and seeks what is lost; and when he has found what had gone astray, he is greatly delighted at the finding and the saving of this.

5. If then God thus rejoices over the little one that is found, how do you despise them that are the objects of God's earnest care, when one ought to give up even one's very life for one of these little ones? But is he weak and mean? Therefore for this very cause most of all, one ought to do everything in order to preserve him. For even He Himself left the ninety and nine sheep, and went after this, and the safety of so many availed not to throw into the shade the loss of one. But Luke says, that He even brought it on his shoulders, and that *"There was greater joy over one sinner that*

repents, than over ninety and nine just persons." [Luke 15:7] And from His forsaking those that were saved for it, and from His taking more pleasure in this one, He showed His earnestness about it to be great.

Let us not then be careless about such souls as these. For all these things are said for this object. For by threatening, that he who has not become a little child should not so much as at all set foot in the Heavens, and speaking of *"the millstone,"* He has brought down the haughtiness of the boastful; for nothing is so hostile to love as pride; and by saying, *"It must needs be that offenses come,"* He made them to be wakeful; and by adding, *"Woe unto him by whom the offense comes,"* He has caused each to endeavor that it be not by him. And while by commanding to cut off them that offend He made salvation easy; by enjoining not to despise them, and not merely enjoining, but with earnestness (for *"take heed,"* says He, *"that you despise not one of these little ones"*), and by saying, *"Their angels behold the face of my Father,"* and, *"For this end am I come,"* and *"my Father wills this,"* He has made those who should take care of them more diligent.

Do you see what a wall He has set around them, and what earnest care He takes of them that are contemptible and perishing, at once threatening incurable ills to them that make them fall, and promising great blessings to them that wait upon them, and take care of them, and bringing an example from Himself again and from the Father?

Him let us also imitate, refusing none of the tasks that seem lowly and troublesome for our brethren's sake; but though we have to do service, though he be small, though he be mean for whom this is done, though the work be laborious, though we must pass over mountains and precipices, let all things be held endurable for the salvation of our brother. For a soul is an

object of such earnest care to God, that "*He spared not His own Son.*"
[Romans 8:32]

Wherefore I entreat, when morning has appeared, straightway as we come out of our house, let us have this one object in view, this earnest care above all, to rescue him that is in danger; I do not mean this danger only that is known by sense, for this is not danger at all, but the danger of the soul, that which is brought upon men by the devil.

For the merchant too, to increase his wealth, crosses the sea; and the artisan, to add to his substance, does all things. Let us also then not be satisfied with our own salvation only, since else we destroy even this. For in a war too, and in an engagement, the soldier who is looking to this only how he may save himself by flight, destroys the rest also with himself; much as on the other hand the noble-minded one, and he who stands in arms in defense of the others, with the others preserves himself also. Since then our state too is a war, and of all wars the bitterest, and an engagement and a battle, even as our King commanded us, so let us set ourselves in array in the engagement, prepared for slaughter, and blood, and murders, looking to salvation in behalf of all, and cheering them that stand, and raising up them that are down. For indeed many of our brethren lie fallen in this conflict, having wounds, wallowing in blood, and there is none to heal, not any one of the people, not a priest, no one else, no one to stand by, no friend, no brother, but we look every man to his own things.

By reason of this we maim our own interests also. For the greatest confidence and means of approval is the not looking to our own things.

Therefore I say, are we weak and easy to be overcome both by men, and by the devil, because we seek the opposite to this, and lock not our shields one with another, neither are fortified with godly love, but seek for ourselves other motives of friendship, some from relationship, some from

long acquaintance, some from community of interest, some from neighborhood; and from every cause rather are we friends, than from godliness, when one's friendships ought to be formed upon this only. But now the contrary is done; with Jews and with Greeks we sometimes become friends, rather than with the children of the church.

6. Yes, says he, because the one is worthless, but the other kind and gentle. What do you say? Do you call your brother worthless, who art commanded not to call him so much as Raca? And are you not ashamed, neither do you blush, at exposing your brother, your fellow member, him that has shared in the same birth with you, that has partaken of the same table?

But if you have any brother after the flesh, if he should perpetrate ten thousand evil deeds, you labor to conceal him, and accountest yourself also to partake of the shame, when he is disgraced; but as to your spiritual brother, when you ought to free him from calumny, thou dost rather encompass him with ten thousand charges against him?

"Why he is worthless and insufferable," you may say. Nay then for this reason become his friend, that you may put an end to his being such a one, that you may convert him, that you may lead him back to virtue.— *"But he obeys not,"* you will say, *"neither does he bear advice."*— Whence do you know it? What, have you admonished him, and attempted to amend him?— *"I have admonished him often,"* you will say. How many times?— Oftentimes, both once, and a second time.— Oh! Is this often? Why, if you had done this throughout all the time, ought thou to grow weary, and to give it up? Do you see not how God is always admonishing us, by the prophets, by the apostles, by the evangelists? What then? Have we performed all? And have we been obedient in all things? By no means. Did He then cease admonishing? Did He hold His peace? Does He not say each day, *"You*

cannot serve God, and mammon" [Matthew 6:24] and with many, the superfluity and the tyranny of wealth yet increases? Does He not cry aloud each day, *"Forgive, and you shall have forgiveness,"* [Luke 6:37] and we become wild beasts more and more? Does He not continually admonish to restrain desire, and to keep the mastery over wicked lust, and many wallow worse than swine in this sin? But nevertheless, He ceases not speaking.

Wherefore then do we not consider these things with ourselves, and say that even with us God reasons, and abstains not from doing this, although we disobey Him in many things?

Therefore He said that, *"Few are the saved."* For if virtue in ourselves suffices not for our salvation, but we must take with us others too when we depart; when we have saved neither ourselves, nor others, what shall we suffer? Whence shall we have any more a hope of salvation?

But why do I blame for these things, when not even of them that dwell with us do we take any account, of wife, and children, and servants, but we have care of one thing instead of another, like drunken men, that our servants may be more in number, and may serve us with much diligence, and that our children may receive from us a large inheritance, and that our wife may have ornaments of gold, and costly garments, and wealth; and we care not at all for themselves, but for the things that belong to them. For neither do we care for our own wife, nor provide for her, but for the things that belong to the wife; neither for the child, but for the things of the child.

And we do the same as if any one seeing a house in a bad state, and the walls giving way, were to neglect to raise up these, and to make up great fences round it without; or when a body was diseased, were not to take care of this, but were to weave for it gilded garments; or when the mistress was ill, were to give heed to the maidservants, and the looms, and the vessels in the house, and mind other things, leaving her to lie and moan.

For this is done even now, and when our soul is in evil and wretched case, and angry, and reviling, and lusting wrongly, and full of vainglory, and at strife, and dragged down to the earth, and torn by so many wild beasts, we neglect to drive away the passions from her, and are careful about house and servants. And while if a bear has escaped by stealth, we shut up our houses, and run along by the narrow passages, so as not to fall in with the wild beast; now while not one wild beast, but many such thoughts are tearing in pieces the soul, we have not so much as a feeling of it. And in the city we take so much care, as to shut up the wild beasts in solitary places and in cages, and neither at the senate house of the city, nor at the courts of justice, nor at the king's palace, but far off somewhere at a distance do we keep them chained; but in the case of the soul, where the senate house is, where the King's palace, where the court of justice is, the wild beasts are let loose, crying and making a tumult about the mind itself and the royal throne. Therefore all things are turned upside down, and all is full of disturbance, the things within, the things without, and we are in nothing different from a city thrown into confusion from being overrun by barbarians; and what takes place in us is as though a serpent were setting on a brood of sparrows, and the sparrows, with their feeble cries, were flying about every way affrighted, and full of trouble, without having any place whither to go and end their consternation.

7. Wherefore I entreat, let us kill the serpent, let us shut up the wild beasts, let us stifle them, let us slay them, and these wicked thoughts let us give over to the sword of the Spirit, lest the prophet threaten us also with such things as he threatened Judea, that *"The wild asses shall dance there, and porcupines, and serpents."*

For there are, there are even men worse than wild asses, living as it were in the wilderness, and kicking; yea the more part of the youth among

us is like this. For indeed having wild lusts they thus leap, they kick, going about unbridled, and spend their diligence on no becoming object.

And the fathers are to blame, who while they constrain the horsebreakers to discipline their horses with much attention, and suffer not the youth of the colt to go on long untamed, but put upon it both a rein, and all the rest, from the beginning; but their own young ones they overlook, going about for a long season unbridled, and without temperance; disgracing themselves, by fornications, and gamings, and continuings in the wicked theatres, when they ought before fornication to give him to a wife, to a wife chaste, and highly endued with wisdom; for she will both bring off her husband from his most disorderly course of life, and will be instead of a rein to the colt.

For indeed fornications and adulteries come not from any other cause, than from young men's being unrestrained. For if he have a prudent wife, he will take care of house and honor and character. *"But he is young,"* you say. I know it too. For if Isaac was forty years old when he took his bride, passing all that time of his life in virginity, much more ought young men under grace to practise this self-restraint. But oh what grief! You do not endure to take care of their chastity, but you overlook their disgracing, defiling themselves, becoming accursed; as though ye knew not that the profit of marriage is to preserve the body pure, and if this be not so, there is no advantage of marriage. But ye do the contrary; when they are filled with countless stains, then ye bring them to marriage without purpose and without fruit.

"Why I must wait," you will say, *"that he may become approved, that he may distinguish himself in the affairs of the state;"* but of the soul you have no consideration, but you overlook it as a cast-away. For this reason all things are full of confusion, and disorder, and trouble, because this is

made a secondary matter, because necessary things are neglected, but the unimportant obtain much forethought.

Do you not know, that you can do no such kindness to the youth, as to keep him pure from whorish uncleanness? For nothing is equal to the soul. Because, "*What is a man profited,*" says He, "*if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his own soul.*" [Matthew 16:26] But because the love of money has overturned and cast down all, and has thrust aside the strict fear of God, having seized upon the souls of men, like some rebel chief upon a citadel; therefore we are careless both of our children's salvation, and of our own, looking to one object only, that having become wealthier, we may leave riches to others, and these again to others after them, and they that follow these to their posterity, becoming rather a kind of passers on of our possessions and of our money, but not masters.

Hence great is our folly; hence the free are less esteemed than the slaves. For slaves we reprove, if not for their sake, yet for our own; but the free enjoy not the benefit even of this care, but are more vile in our estimation than these slaves. And why do I say, than our slaves? For our children are less esteemed than cattle; and we take care of horses and asses rather than of children. And should one have a mule, great is his anxiety to find the best groom, and not one either harsh, or dishonest, or drunken, or ignorant of his art; but if we have set a tutor over a child's soul, we take at once, and at random, whoever comes in our way. And yet than this art there is not another greater. For what is equal to training the soul, and forming the mind of one that is young? For he that has this art, ought to be more exactly observant than any painter and any sculptor.

But we take no account of this, but look to one thing only, that he may be trained as to his tongue. And to this again we have directed our endeavors for money's sake. For not that he may be able to speak, but that

he may get money, does he learn speaking; since if it were possible to grow rich even without this, we should have no care even for this.

Do you see how great is the tyranny of riches? How it has seized upon all things, and having bound them like some slaves or cattle, drags them where it will?

But what are we advantaged by such accusations against it? For we indeed shoot at it in words, but it prevails over us in deeds. Nevertheless, not even so shall we cease to shoot at it with words from our tongue. For if any advance is made, both we are gainers and you; but if you continue in the same things, all our part at least has been performed.

But may God both deliver you from this disease, and cause us to glory in you, for to Him be glory, and dominion, world without end. Amen.

Homily 60 on Matthew

Matt. XVIII. 15.

"If your brother shall trespass against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he shall hear you, you have gained your brother."

For, since He had used vehement language against them that cause offense, and on every hand had moved them to fear; in order that the offended might not in this way on the other hand become supine, neither supposing all to be cast upon others, should be led on to another vice, soften in themselves, and desiring to be humored in everything, and run upon the shoal of pride; do you see how He again checks them also, and commands the telling of the faults to be between the two alone, lest by the testimony of the many he should render his accusation heavier, and the other, become excited to opposition, should continue incorrigible.

Wherefore He says, *"Between you and him alone,"* and, *"If he shall hear you, you have gained your brother."* What is, *"If he shall hear you?"* If he shall condemn himself, if he shall be persuaded that he has done wrong.

"You have gained your brother." He did not say, You have a sufficient revenge, but, *"You have gained your brother,"* to show that there is a common loss from the enmity. For He said not, *"He has gained himself only,"* but, *"thou too hast gained him,"* whereby He showed that both the one and the other were losers before this, the one of his brother, the other of his own salvation.

This, when He sat on the mount also, He advised; at one time bringing him who has given the pain to him that had been pained, and saying, *"Be reconciled to your brother,"* and at another commanding him that had been

wronged to forgive his neighbor. For He taught men to say, *"Forgive us our debts, like as we forgive our debtors."* [Matthew 6:12]

But here He is devising another mode. For not him that gave the pain, *does He now call upon*, but him that was pained He brings to this one. For because this who has done the wrong would not easily come to make excuse, out of shame, and confusion of face, He draws that other to him, and not merely so, but in such way as also to correct what has been done. And He says not, *"Accuse,"* nor *"Charge him,"* nor *"Demand satisfaction, and an account,"* but, *"Tell him of his fault,"* says He. For he is held in a kind of stupor through anger and shame with which he is intoxicated; and thou, who art in health, must go your way to him that is ill, and make the tribunal private, and the remedy such as may be readily received. For to say, *"Tell him of his fault,"* is nothing else than *"Remind him of his error,"* tell him what you have suffered at his hand, which very thing, if it be done as it ought, is the part of one making excuse for him, and drawing him over earnestly to a reconciliation.

What then, if he should disobey, and be disposed to abide in hardness? *"Take with yourself yet one or two, that in the mouth of two witnesses every word may be established."* For the more he is shameless, and bold, the more ought we to be active for his cure, not in anger and indignation. For the physician in like manner, when he sees the malady obstinate, does not give up nor grow impatient, but then makes the more preparation; which He commands us to do in this case too.

For since you appeared to be too weak alone, make yourself more powerful by this addition. For surely the two are sufficient to convict him that has sinned. Do you see how He seeks not the good of him that has been pained only, but of him also that has given the pain. For the person injured is this one who is taken captive by his passion, he it is that is diseased, and

weak, and infirm. Wherefore He often sends the other to this one, now alone, and now with others; but if he continue in it, even with the church. For, *"Tell it,"* says He, *"to the Church."* [Matthew 18:17] For if He were seeking this one's advantage only, He would not have commanded to pardon, seventy times seven, one repenting. He would not so often have set so many over him to correct his passion; but if he had remained incorrigible after the first conference would have let him be; but now once, and twice, and thrice, He commands to attempt his cure, and now alone and now with two, now with more.

Wherefore, with respect to them that are without He says no such thing, but, *"If any one smite you,"* He says, *"on your right cheek, turn to him the other also,"* [Matthew 5:39] but here not in such wise. For what Paul means, saying, *"What have I to do to judge them also that are without?"* [1 Corinthians 5:12] but the brethren he commands both to tell of their faults, and to avoid them, and to cut them off, not being obedient, that they may be ashamed; this Himself also does here, making these laws about the brethren; and He sets three over him for teachers and judges, to teach him the things that are done at the time of his drunkenness. For though it be himself that has said and done all those unreasonable things, yet he will need others to teach him this, like as the drunken man. For anger and sin is a more frantic thing than any drunkenness, and puts the soul in greater distraction.

Who, for instance, was wiser than David? Yet for all that, when he had sinned he perceived it not, his lust keeping in subjection all his reasoning powers, and like some smoke filling his soul. Therefore he stood in need of a lantern from the prophet, and of words calling to his mind what he had done. Wherefore here also He brings these to him that has sinned, to reason with him about the things he had done.

2. But for what reason does He command this one to tell him of his fault, and not another? Because this man he would endure more quietly, this, who has been wronged, who has been pained, who has been despitefully used. For one does not bear in the same way being told by another of one's fault concerning him that has been insulted, as by the insulted person himself, especially when this person is alone convicting him. For when he who should demand justice against him, even this one appears to be caring for his salvation, this will have more power than anything in the world to shame him.

Do you see how this is done not for the sake of just punishment, but of amendment? Therefore He does not at once command to take with him the two, but when himself has failed; and not even then does He send forth a multitude against him; but makes the addition no further than two, or even one; but when he has contemned these too, then and not till then He brings him out to the church.

So much earnestness does He show, that our neighbor's sins be not exposed by us. And indeed He might have commanded this from the first, but that this might not be, He did not command it, but after a first and second admonition He appoints this.

But what is, *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established?"* You have a sufficient testimony. His meaning is, that you have done all your part, that you have left undone none of the things which it pertained to you to do.

"But if he shall neglect to hear them also, tell it to the church," that is, to the rulers of it; *"but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to you as an heathen man and a publican."* For after this such a one is incurably diseased.

But mark thou, I pray you, how everywhere He puts the publican for an example of the greatest wickedness. For above too He says, "*Do not even the publicans the same?*" [Matthew 5:46] And further on again, "*Even the publicans and the harlots shall go before you into the Kingdom of Heaven,*" [Matthew 21:31] that is, they who are utterly reprobated and condemned. Let them hearken, who are rushing upon unjust gains, who are counting up usuries upon usuries.

But why did He set him with these? To soothe the person wronged, and to alarm him. Is this only then the punishment? Nay, but hear also what follows. "*Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven.*" And He did not say to the ruler of the church, "*Bind such a man,*" but, "*If you bind,*" committing the whole matter to the person himself, who is aggrieved, and the bonds abide indissoluble. Therefore he will suffer the utmost ills; but not he who has brought him to account is to blame, but he who has not been willing to be persuaded.

Do you see how He has bound him down with twofold constraint, both by the vengeance here, and by the punishment hereafter? But these things has He threatened, that these circumstances may not arise, but that fearing, at once the being cast out of the church, and the danger from the bond, and the being bound in Heaven, he may become more gentle. And knowing these things, if not at the beginning, at any rate in the multitude of the tribunals he will put off his anger. Wherefore, I tell you, He has set over him a first, and a second, and a third court, so that though he should neglect to hear the first, he may yield to the second; and even if he should reject that, he may fear the third; and though he should make no account of this, he may be dismayed at the vengeance to come, and at the sentence and judgment to proceed from God.

"And again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." [Matthew 18:19-20]

Do you see how by another motive also He puts down our enmities, and takes away our petty dissensions, and draws us one to another, and this not from the punishment only which has been mentioned, but also from the good things which spring from charity? For having denounced those threats against contentiousness, He puts here the great rewards of concord, if at least they who are of one accord do even prevail with the Father, as touching the things they ask, and have Christ in the midst of them.

"Are there then indeed nowhere two of one accord?" Nay, in many places, perchance even everywhere. *"How then do they not obtain all things?"* Because many are causes of their failing. For either they often ask things inexpedient. And why do you marvel, if this is the case with some others, whereas it was so even with Paul, when he heard, *"My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is perfected in weakness."* Or they are unworthy to be reckoned with them that heard these words, and contribute not their own part, but He seeks for such as are like them; therefore He says *"of you,"* of the virtuous, of them that show forth an angelic rule of life. Or they pray against them that have aggrieved them, seeking for redress and vengeance; and this kind of thing is forbidden, for, *"Pray,"* says He, *"for your enemies."* [Matthew 5:44] Or having sins unrepented they ask mercy, which thing it is impossible to receive, not only if themselves ask it, but although others having much confidence towards God entreat for them, like as even Jeremiah praying for the Jews did hear, *"Pray not thou for this people, because I will not hear you."* [Jeremiah 11:14]

But if all things are there, and thou ask things expedient, and contribute all your own part, and exhibit an life, and have concord and love towards your neighbor, you will obtain on your entreaty; for the Lord is loving towards man.

3. Then because He had said, *"Of my Father,"* in order that He might show that it is Himself that gives, and not He who begot Him only, He added, *"For wheresoever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*

What then? Are there not two or three gathered together in His name? There are indeed, but rarely. For not merely of the assembling does He speak, neither this does He require only; but most surely, as I said before also, the rest of virtue too together with this, and besides, even this itself He requires with great strictness. For what He says is like this, *"If any holds me the principal ground of his love to his neighbors, I will be with Him, if he be a virtuous man in other respects."*

But now we see the more part having other motives of friendship. For one loves, because he is loved, another because he has been honored, a third because such a one has been useful to him in some other worldly matter, a fourth for some other like cause; but for Christ's sake it is a difficult thing to find any one loving his neighbor sincerely, and as he ought to love him. For the more part are bound one to another by their worldly affairs. But Paul did not love thus, but for Christ's sake; wherefore even when not loved in such wise as he loved, he did not cease his love, because he had planted a strong root of his affection; but not so our present state, but on inquiry we shall find with most men anything likely to produce friendship rather than this. And if any one bestowed on me power in so great a multitude to make this inquiry, I would show the more part bound one to another by worldly motives.

And this is evident from the causes that work enmity. For because they are bound one to another by these temporal motives, therefore they are neither fervent towards one another, nor constant, but insult, and loss of money, and envy, and love of vainglory, and every such thing coming upon them, severs the love-tie. For it finds not the root spiritual. Since if indeed it were such, no worldly thing would dissolve things spiritual. For love for Christ's sake is firm, and not to be broken, and impregnable, and nothing can tear it asunder; not calumnies, not dangers, not death, no other thing of this kind. For though he suffer ten thousand things, who thus loves; looking to the ground of his love, he will not desist. For he who loves because of being loved, should he meet with anything painful, puts an end to his love; but he who is bound by this, will never desist.

Wherefore Paul also said, "*Charity never fails.*" For what have you to say? That when honored he insults? That receiving benefits he was minded to slay you? But even this works upon you to love more, if you love for Christ's sake. For what things are in the rest subversive of love, these here become apt to produce it. How? First, because such a one is to you a cause of rewards; secondly, because he that is so disposed stands in need of more succor, and much attention. Therefore I say, he who thus loves inquires not about race, nor country, nor wealth, nor his love to himself, nor any other such matter, but though he be hated, though he be insulted, though he be slain, continues to love, having as a sufficient ground for love, Christ; wherefore also he stands steadfast, firm, not to be overthrown, looking unto Him.

For Christ too so loved his enemies, having loved the obstinate, the injurious, the blasphemers, them that hated Him, them that would not so much as see Him; them that were preferring wood and stones to Him, and with the highest love beyond which one cannot find another. "*For greater*

love has no man than this," He says, "that one lay down his life for his friends." [John 15:13]

And those even that crucified Him, and acted in so many instances with contumely against Him, see how He continues to treat with kindness. For even to His Father He speaks for them, saying, *"Forgive them, for they know not what they do."* And He sent His disciples moreover, after these things, unto them.

This love then let us also imitate, unto this let us look, that being followers of Christ, we may attain both unto the good things here, and unto those to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 61 on Matthew

Matt. XVIII. 21.

"Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus says unto him, I say not unto you, Until seven times, but, Until seventy times seven."

Peter supposed he was saying something great, wherefore also as aiming at greatness he added, *"Until seven times?"* For this thing, says he, which You have commanded to do, how often shall I do? For if he forever sins, but forever when reprov'd repents, how often do you command us to bear with this man? For with regard to that other who repents not, neither acknowledges his own faults, You have set a limit, by saying, *"Let him be to you as the heathen and the publican;"* but to this no longer so, but You have commanded to accept him.

How often then ought I to bear with him, being told his faults, and repenting? Is it enough for seven times?

What then says Christ, the good God, who is loving towards man? *"I say not unto you, until seven times, but, until seventy times seven,"* not setting a number here, but what is infinite and perpetual and forever. For even as ten thousand times signifies often, so here too. For by saying, *"The barren has borne seven,"* [1 Samuel 2:5] the Scripture means many. So that He has not limited the forgiveness by a number, but has declared that it is to be perpetual and forever.

This at least He indicated by the parable that is put after. For that He might not seem to any to enjoin great things and hard to bear, by saying, *"Seventy times seven,"* He added this parable, at once both leading them on to what He had said, and putting down him who was priding himself upon

this, and showing the act was not grievous, but rather very easy. Therefore let me add, He brought forward His own love to man, that by the comparison, as He says, you might learn, that though thou forgive seventy times seven, though thou continually pardon your neighbor for absolutely all his sins, as a drop of water to an endless sea, so much, or rather much more, does your love to man come short in comparison of the boundless goodness of God, of which you stand in need, for that you are to be judged, and to give an account.

Wherefore also He went on to say, *"The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, he commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had."*

Then after this man had enjoyed the benefit of mercy, he went out, and *"took by the throat his fellow-servant, which owed him an hundred pence;"* [Matthew 18:28] and having by these doings moved his lord, he caused him to cast him again into prison, until he should pay off the whole.

Do you see how great the difference between sins against man and against God? As great as between ten thousand talents, and a hundred pence, or rather even much more. And this arises both from the difference of the persons, and the constant succession of our sins. For when a man looks at us, we stand off and shrink from sinning: but when God sees us every day, we do not forbear, but do and speak all things without fear.

But not hereby alone, but also from the benefit and from the honor of which we have partaken, our sins become more grievous.

And if you are desirous to learn how our sins against Him are ten thousand talents, or rather even much more, I will try to show it briefly. But I fear lest to them that are inclined to wickedness, and love continually to

sin, I should furnish still greater security, or should drive the meeker sort to despair, and they should repeat that saying of the disciples, "*who can be saved?*"

Nevertheless for all that I will speak, that I may make those that attend more safe, and more meek. For they that are incurably diseased, and past feeling, even without these words of mine, do not depart from their own carelessness, and wickedness; and if even from hence they derive greater occasion for contempt, the fault is not in what is said, but in their insensibility; since what is said surely is enough both to restrain those that attend to it, and to prick their hearts; and the meeker sort, when they see on the one hand the greatness of their sins, and learn also on the other hand the power of repentance, will cleave to it the more, wherefore it is needful to speak.

I will speak then, and will set forth our sins, both wherein we offend against God, and wherein against men, and I will set forth not each person's own, but what are common; but his own let each one join to them after that from his conscience.

And I will do this, having first set forth the good deeds of God to us. What then are His good deeds? He created us when we were not, and made all things for our sakes that are seen, Heaven, sea, air, all that in them is, living creatures, plants, seeds; for we must needs speak briefly for the boundless ocean of the works. Into us alone of all that are on earth He breathed a living soul such as we have, He planted a garden, He gave a help-meet, He set us over all the brutes, He crowned us with glory and honor.

After that, when man had been unthankful towards his benefactor, He vouchsafed unto him a greater gift.

2. For look not to this only, that He cast him out of paradise, but mark also the gain that arose from thence. For after having cast him out of paradise, and having wrought those countless good works, and having accomplished His various dispensations, He sent even His own Son for the sake of them that had been benefited by Him and were hating Him, and opened Heaven to us, and unfolded paradise itself, and made us sons, the enemies, the unthankful.

Wherefore it were even seasonable now to say, "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*" [Romans 11:33]

And He gave us also a baptism of the remission of sins, and a deliverance from vengeance, and an inheritance of a kingdom, and He promised numberless good things on our doing what is right, and stretched forth His hand, and shed abroad His Spirit into our hearts.

What then? After so many and such great blessings, what ought to be our disposition; should we indeed, even if each day we died for Him who so loves us, make due recompense, or rather should we repay the smallest portion of the debt? By no means, for moreover even this again is turned to our advantage.

How then are we disposed, whose disposition ought to be like this? Each day we insult His law. But be ye not angry, if I let loose my tongue against them that sin, for not you only will I accuse, but myself also.

Where then would ye that I should begin? With the slaves, or with the free? With them that serve in the army, or with private persons? With the rulers, or with the subjects? With the women, or with the men? With the aged men, or with the young? With what age? With what race? With what rank? With what pursuit?

Would ye then that I should make the beginning with them that serve as soldiers? What sin then do not these commit every day, insulting,

reviling, frantic, making a gain of other men's calamities, being like wolves, never clear from offenses, unless one might say the sea too was without waves. What passion does not trouble them? What disease does not lay siege to their soul?

For to their equals they show a jealous disposition, and they envy, and seek after vainglory; and to those that are subject to them, their disposition is covetous; but to them that have suits, and run unto them as to a harbor, their conduct is that of enemies and perjured persons. How many robberies are there with them! How many frauds! How many false accusations, and meannesses! How many servile flatteries!

Come then, let us apply in each case the law of Christ. *"He that says to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. [Matthew 5:22] He that has looked on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her. [Matthew 5:28] Unless one humble himself as the little child, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."*

But these even study haughtiness, becoming towards them that are subject to them, and are delivered into their hands, and who tremble at them, and are afraid of them, more fierce than a wild beast; for Christ's sake doing nothing, but all things for the belly, for money, for vainglory.

Can one indeed reckon up in words the trespass of their actions? What should one say of their decisions, their laughter, their unseasonable discourses, their filthy language? But about covetousness one cannot so much as speak. For like as the monks on the mountains know not even what covetousness is, so neither do these; but in an opposite way to them. For they indeed, because of being far removed from the disease, know not the passion, but these, by reason of being exceedingly intoxicated with it, have not so much as a perception how great the evil is. For this vice has so thrust

aside virtue and tyrannises, that it is not accounted so much as a heavy charge with those madmen.

But will you, that we leave these, and go to others of a gentler kind? Come then, let us examine the race of workmen and artisans. For these above all seem to live by honest labors, and the sweat of their own brow. But these too, when they do not take heed to themselves, gather to themselves many evils from hence. For the dishonesty that arises from buying and selling they bring into the work of honest labor, and add oaths, and perjuries, and falsehoods to their covetousness often, and are taken up with worldly things only, and continue riveted to the earth; and while they do all things that they may get money, they do not take much heed that they may impart to the needy, being always desirous to increase their goods. What should one say of the revilings that are uttered touching such matters, the insults, the loans, the usurious gains, the bargains full of much mean trafficking, the shameless buyings and sellings.

3. But will you that we leave these too, and go to others who seem to be more just? Who then are they? They that are possessed of lands, and reap the wealth that springs from the earth. And what can be more unjust than these? For if any one were to examine how they treat their wretched and toil-worn laborers, he will see them to be more cruel than savages. For upon them that are pining with hunger, and toiling throughout all their life, they both impose constant and intolerable payments, and lay on them laborious burdens, and like asses or mules, or rather like stones, do they treat their bodies, allowing them not so much as to draw breath a little, and when the earth yields, and when it does not yield, they alike wear them out, and grant them no indulgence. And what can be more pitiable than this, when after having labored throughout the whole winter, and being consumed with frost and rain, and watchings, they go away with their hands empty, yea

moreover in debt, and fearing and dreading more that this famine and shipwreck, the torments of the overlookers, and their dragging them about, and their demands, and their imprisonments, and the services from which no entreaty can deliver them!

Why should one speak of the merchandise which they make of them, the sordid gains which they gain by them, by their labors and their sweat filling winepresses, and wine vats, but not suffering them to take home so much as a small measure, but draining off the entire fruits into the casks of their wickedness, and flinging to them for this a little money?

And new kinds of usuries also do they devise, and not lawful even according to the laws of the heathens, and they frame contracts for loans full of many a curse. For not the hundredth part of the sum, but the half of the sum they press for and exact; and this when he of whom it is exacted has a wife, is bringing up children, is a human being, and is filling their threshing floor, and their wine-press by his own toils.

But none of these things do they consider. Wherefore now it were seasonable to bring forward the prophet and say, "*Be astonished, O Heaven, and be horribly afraid, O earth,*" [Jeremiah 2:12] to what great brutality has the race of man been madly carried away!

But these things I say, not blaming crafts, nor husbandry, nor military service, but ourselves. Since Cornelius also was a centurion, and Paul a worker in leather, and after his preaching practised his craft, and David was a king, and Job enjoyed the possession of land and of large revenues, and there was no hindrance hereby to any of these in the way of virtue.

Bearing in mind all these things, and considering the ten thousand talents, let us at least hence hasten to remit to our neighbors their few and trifling debts. For we too have an account to give of the commandments wherewith we have been trusted, and we are not able to pay all, no not

whatever we may do. Therefore God has given us a way to repayment both ready and easy, and which is able to cancel all these things, I mean, not to be revengeful.

In order then that we may learn this well, let us hear the whole parable, going on regularly through it. *"For there was brought unto Him,"* it says, *"one which owed ten thousand talents, and when he had not to pay, He commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children."* Wherefore, I pray you? Not of cruelty, nor of inhumanity (for the loss came back again upon himself, for she too was a slave), but of unspeakable tenderness.

For it is His purpose to alarm him by this threat, that He might bring him to supplication, not that he should be sold. For if He had done it for this intent, He would not have consented to his request, neither would He have granted the favor.

Wherefore then did He not do this, nor forgive the debt before the account? Desiring to teach him, from how many obligations He is delivering him, that in this way at least he might become more mild towards his fellow servant. For even if when he had learned the weight of his debt, and the greatness of the forgiveness, he continued taking his fellow-servant by the throat; if He had not disciplined him beforehand with such medicines, to what length of cruelty might he not have gone?

What then says the other? *"Have patience with me, and I will pay you all. And his Lord was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."* [Matthew 18:26-27]

Do you see again surpassing benevolence? The servant asked only for delay and putting off the time, but He gave more than he asked, remission and forgiveness of the entire debt. For it had been his will to give it even from the first, but he did not desire the gift to be his only, but also to come of this man's entreaty, that he might not go away uncrowned. For that the

whole was of him, although this other fell down to him and prayed, the motive of the forgiveness showed, for "*moved with compassion*" he forgave him. But still even so he willed that other also to seem to contribute something, that he might not be exceedingly covered with shame, and that he being schooled in his own calamities, might be indulgent to his fellow-servant.

4. Up to this point then this man was good and acceptable; for he confessed, and promised to pay the debt, and fell down before him, and entreated, and condemned his own sins, and knew the greatness of the debt. But the sequel is unworthy of his former deeds. For going out straightway, not after a long time but straightway, having the bene fit fresh upon him, he abused to wickedness the gift, even the freedom bestowed on him by his master.

For, "*he found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what you owe.*"

[Matthew 18:28]

Do you see the master's benevolence? Do you see the servant's cruelty? Hear, you who do these things for money. For if for sins we must not do so, much more not for money.

What then says the other? "*Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.*" But he did not regard even the words by which he had been saved (for he himself on saying this was delivered from the ten thousand talents), and did not recognize so much as the harbor by which he escaped shipwreck; the gesture of supplication did not remind him of his master's kindness, but he put away from him all these things, from covetousness and cruelty and revenge, and was more fierce than any wild beast, seizing his fellow-servant by the throat.

What doest thou, O man? Do you not perceive, you are making the demand upon yourself, thou art thrusting the sword into yourself, and revoking the sentence and the gift? But none of these things did he consider, neither did he remember his own state, neither did he yield; although the entreaty was not for equal objects.

For the one besought for ten thousand talents, the other for a hundred pence; the one his fellow-servant, the other his lord; the one received entire forgiveness, the other asked for delay, and not so much as this did he give him, for *"he cast him into prison."*

"But when his fellow-servants saw it, they accused him to their lord." Not even to men is this well-pleasing, much less to God. They therefore who did not owe, partook of the grief.

What then says their lord? *"O thou wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you desired me; should not thou also have had compassion, even as I had pity on you?"*

See again the lord's gentleness. He pleads with him, and excuses himself, being on the point of revoking his gift; or rather, it was not he that revoked it, but the one who had received it. Wherefore He says, *"I forgave you all that debt, because you desired me; should not thou also have had compassion on your fellow-servant?"* For even if the thing does seem to you hard; yet should you have looked to the gain, which has been, which is to be. Even if the injunction be galling, you ought to consider the reward; neither that he has grieved you, but that you have provoked God, whom by mere prayer you have reconciled. But if even so it be a galling thing to you to become friends with him who has grieved you, to fall into hell is far more grievous; and if you had set this against that, then you would have known that to forgive is a much lighter thing.

And whereas, when he owed ten thousand talents, he called him not wicked, neither reproached him, but showed mercy on him; when he had become harsh to his fellow-servant, then he says, "*O thou wicked servant.*"

Let us hearken, the covetous, for even to us is the word spoken. Let us hearken also, the merciless, and the cruel, for not to others are we cruel, but to ourselves. When then you are minded to be revengeful, consider that against yourself are you revengeful, not against another; that you are binding up your own sins, not your neighbors. For as to you, whatsoever you may do to this man, you do as a man and in the present life, but God not so, but more mightily will He take vengeance on you, and with the vengeance hereafter.

"*For He delivered him over till he should pay that which was due,*" that is, for ever; for he will never repay. For since you are not become better by the kindness shown you, it remains that by vengeance thou be corrected.

And yet, "*The graces and the gifts are without repentance,*" but wickedness has had such power as to set aside even this law. What then can be a more grievous thing than to be revengeful, when it appears to overthrow such and so great a gift of God.

And he did not merely "*deliver*" him, but "*was angry.*" For when he commanded him to be sold, his were not the words of wrath (therefore neither did he do it), but a very great occasion for benevolence; but now the sentence is of much indignation, and vengeance, and punishment.

What then means the parable? "*So likewise shall my Father do also unto you,*" He says, "*if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*"

He says not "*your Father,*" but "*my Father.*" For it is not meet for God to be called the Father of such a one, who is so wicked and malicious.

5. Two things therefore does He here require, both to condemn ourselves for our sins, and to forgive others; and the former for the sake of the latter, that this may become more easy (for he who considers his own sins is more indulgent to his fellow-servant); and not merely to forgive with the lips, but from the heart.

Let us not then thrust the sword into ourselves by being revengeful. For what grief has he who has grieved you inflicted upon you, like you will work unto yourself by keeping your anger in mind, and drawing upon yourself the sentence from God to condemn you? For if indeed you are watchful, and keepest yourself under control, the evil will come round upon his head, and it will be he that will suffer harm; but if you should continue indignant, and displeased, then yourself wilt undergo the harm not from him, but from yourself.

Say not then that he insulted you, and slandered you, and did unto you ills beyond number; for the more you tell, so much the more do you declare him a benefactor. For he has given you an opportunity to wash away your sins; so that the greater the injuries he has done you, so much more is he become to you a cause of a greater remission of sins.

For if we be willing, no one shall be able to injure us, but even our enemies shall advantage us in the greatest degree. And why do I speak of men? For what can be more wicked than the devil; yet nevertheless, even hence have we a great opportunity of approving ourselves; and Job shows it. But if the devil has become a cause of crowns, why are you afraid of a man as an enemy?

See then how much you gain, bearing meekly the spiteful acts of your enemies. First and greatest, deliverance from sins; secondly, fortitude and patience; thirdly, mildness and benevolence; for he that knows not how to be angry with them that grieve him, much more will he be ready to serve

them that love him. Fourthly, to be free from anger continually, to which nothing can be equal. For of him that is free from anger, it is quite clear that he is delivered also from the despondency hence arising, and will not spend his life on vain labors and sorrows. For he that knows not how to hate, neither does he know how to grieve, but will enjoy pleasure, and ten thousand blessings. So that we punish ourselves by hating others, even as on the other hand we benefit ourselves by loving them.

Besides all these things, you will be an object of veneration even to your very enemies, though they be devils; or rather, you will not so much as have an enemy while you are of such a disposition.

But what is greater than all, and first, you gain the favor of God. Should thou have sinned, you will obtain pardon; should you have done what is right, you will obtain a greater confidence. Let us accomplish therefore the hating no one, that God also may love us, that, though we be in debt for ten thousand talents, He may have compassion and pity us.

But have you been injured by him? Pity him then, do not hate him; weep and mourn, do not turn away from him. For you are not the one that has offended against God, but he; but you have even approved yourself, if you endure it. Consider that Christ, when about to be crucified, rejoiced for Himself, but wept for them that were crucifying Him. This ought to be our disposition also; and the more we are injured, so much the more should we lament for them that are injuring us. For to us many are the benefits hence arising, but to them the opposites.

But did he insult you, and strike you before all? Then has he disgraced and dishonored himself before all, and has opened the mouths of a thousand accusers, and for you has he woven more crowns, and gathered for you many to publish your forbearance.

But did he slander you to others? And what is this? God is the one that is to demand the account, not they that have heard this. For to himself has he added occasion of punishment, so that not only for his own sins he should give account, but also of what he said of you. And upon you has he brought evil report with men, but he himself has incurred evil report with God.

And if these things are not sufficient for you, consider that even your Lord was evil reported of both by Satan and by men, and that to those most loved by Him; and His Only-Begotten the same again. Wherefore He said, *"If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, much more shall they call them of His household."* [Matthew 10:25]

And that wicked demon did not only slander Him, but was also believed, and slandered Him not in ordinary matters, but with the greatest reproaches and accusations. For he affirmed Him to be possessed, and to be a deceiver, and an adversary of God.

But have you also done good, and received evil? Nay, in respect of this most of all lament and grieve for him that has done the wrong, but for yourself rather rejoice, because you have become like God, *"Who makes the sun to rise upon evil and good."* [Matthew 5:45]

But if to follow God is beyond you, although to him that watches not even this is hard; yet nevertheless if this seem to you to be too great for you, come let us bring you to your fellow-servants, to Joseph, who suffered countless things, and did good unto his brethren; to Moses, who after their countless plots against him, prayed for them; to the blessed Paul, who cannot so much as number what he suffered from them, and is willing to be accursed for them; to Stephen, who is stoned, and entreating this sin may be forgiven them. And having considered all these things, cast away all anger, that God may forgive us also all our trespasses by the grace and love

towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 62 on Matthew

Matt. XIX. 1.

"And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan."

Having constantly left Judæa on account of the envy of those men, now He frequents it from this time forth, because the passion was to be near at hand; He goes not up, however, unto Jerusalem for a while, but *"into the coasts of Judæa."*

"And," when He had come, *"great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them."* [Matthew 19:2]

For neither in the teaching by words does He continue always, nor in the wonderful working of signs, but He does now one now the other, variously working the salvation of them that were waiting upon Him and following Him, so as by the miracles to appear, in what He said, a Teacher worthy of belief, and by the teaching of His word to increase the profit from the miracles; and this was to lead them by the hand to the knowledge of God.

But do thou mark, I pray you, this too, how the disciples pass over whole multitudes with one word, not declaring by name each of them that are healed. For they said not, that such a one, and such another, but that many, teaching us to be unostentatious. But Christ healed, benefiting both them, and by them many others. For the healing of these men's infirmity was to others a foundation for the knowledge of God.

But not so to the Pharisees, but even for this self-same thing they become more fierce, and come unto Him tempting Him. For because they could not lay hold of the works that were doing, they propose to Him

questions. For they *"came unto Him, and tempting Him said, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"* [Matthew 19:3]

O folly! They thought to silence Him by their questions, although they had already received certain proof of this power in Him. When at least they argued much about the Sabbath, when they said, *"He blasphemes,"* when they said, *"He has a devil,"* when they found fault with His disciples as they were walking in the grain fields, when they argued about unwashed hands, on every occasion having sewed fast their mouths, and shut up their shameless tongue, He thus sent them away. Nevertheless, not even so do they keep off from Him. For such is wickedness, such is envy, shameless and bold; though it be put to silence ten thousand times, ten thousand times does it assault again.

But mark thou, I pray you, their craft also from the form of their question. For neither did they say unto Him, You commanded not to put away a wife, for indeed He had already discoursed about this law; but nevertheless they made no mention of those words; but took occasion from hence, and thinking to make their snare the greater, and being minded to drive Him to a necessity of contradicting the law, they say not, why did You enact this or that? But as though nothing had been said, they ask, *"Is it lawful?"* expecting that He had forgotten having said it; and being ready if on the one hand He said, *"It is lawful to put away,"* to bring against Him the things He Himself had spoken, and to say, How then did You affirm the contrary? But if the same things now again as before, to bring against Him the words of Moses.

What then said He? He said not, do you tempt me, you hypocrites? although afterwards He says this, but here He speaks not thus. Why can this be? In order that together with His power He might show forth His gentleness also. For He does neither always keep silence, lest they should

suppose they are hidden; nor does He always reprove, in order that He may instruct us to bear all things with gentleness.

How then does He answer them? *"Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh? So that they are no more two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."*

[Matthew 19:4-6]

See a teacher's wisdom. I mean, that being asked, Is it lawful? He did not at once say, It is not lawful, lest they should be disturbed and put in disorder, but before the decision by His argument He rendered this manifest, showing that it is itself too the commandment of His Father, and that not in opposition to Moses did He enjoin these things, but in full agreement with him.

But mark Him arguing strongly not from the creation only, but also from His command. For He said not, that He made one man and one woman only, but that He also gave this command that the one man should be joined to the one woman. But if it had been His will that he should put this one away, and bring in another, when He had made one man, He would have formed many women.

But now both by the manner of the creation, and by the manner of lawgiving, He showed that one man must dwell with one woman continually, and never break off from her.

And see how He says, *"He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female,"* that is, from one root they sprung, and into one body came they together, *"for the two shall be one flesh."*

After this, to make it a fearful thing to find fault with this lawgiving, and to confirm the law, He said not, *"Sever not therefore, nor put asunder,"*

but, *"What God has joined together, let not man put asunder."*

But if you put forward Moses, I tell you of Moses' Lord, and together with this, I rely upon the time also. For God at the beginning made them male and female; and this law is older (though it seem to have been now introduced by me), and with much earnestness established. For not merely did He bring the woman to the man, but also commanded to leave father and mother. And neither did He make it a law for him merely to come to the woman, but also *"to cleave to her,"* by the form of the language intimating that they might not be severed. And not even with this was He satisfied, but sought also for another greater union, *"for the two,"* He says, *"shall be one flesh."*

Then after He had recited the ancient law, which was brought in both by deeds and by words, and shown it to be worthy of respect because of the giver, with authority after that He Himself too interprets and gives the law, saying, *"So that they are no more two, but one flesh."* Like then as to sever flesh is a horrible thing, so also to divorce a wife is unlawful. And He stayed not at this, but brought in God also by saying, *"What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder,"* showing that the act was both against nature, and against law; against nature, because one flesh is dissevered; against law, because that when God has joined and commanded it not to be divided, you conspire to do this.

2. What then ought they to have done after this? Ought they not to have held their peace, and to have commended the saying? Ought they not to have marvelled at His wisdom? Ought they not to have stood amazed at His accordance with the Father? But none of these things do they, but as though they were contending for *the law*, they say, *"How then did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?"* And yet they ought not now to have brought this forward, but rather He to them; but

nevertheless He does not take advantage of them, nor does He say to them, "*I am not now bound by this,*" but He solves this too.

And indeed if He had been an alien from the old covenant, He would not have striven for Moses, neither would He have argued positively from the things done once for all at the beginning; He would not have studied to show that His own precepts agreed with those of old.

And indeed Moses had given many other commandments besides, both those about meats, and those about the Sabbath; wherefore then do they nowhere bring him forward, as here? From a wish to enlist the multitude of the husbands against him. For this was considered a thing indifferent with the Jews, and all used to do so much as this. Accordingly it was for this reason that when so many things had been said on the mount, they remembered this commandment only now.

Nevertheless, unspeakable wisdom makes a defense even for these things, and says, "*Moses for the hardness of your hearts*" thus made the law. And not even him does He suffer to remain under accusation, forasmuch as He had Himself given him the law; but delivers him from the charge, and turns the whole upon their head, as everywhere He does.

For again when they were blaming His disciples for plucking the ears of grain, He shows themselves to be guilty; and when they were laying a transgression to their charge as to their not washing their hands, He shows themselves to be the transgressors, and touching the Sabbath also: both everywhere, and here in like manner.

Then because the saying was hard to bear, and brought on them much blame, He quickly directs back His discourse to that ancient law, saying as He had said before also, "*But in the beginning it was not so,*" that is, God by His acts at the beginning ordained the contrary. For in order that they may not say, Whence is it manifest, that "*for our hardness Moses said this?*"

hereby again He stops their mouths. For if this were the primary law, and for our good, that other would not have been given at the beginning; God in creating would not have so created, He would not have said such things.

"But I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication, and marry another, commits adultery." For since he had stopped their mouths, He then gives the law with His own authority, like as touching the meats, like as touching the Sabbath.

For with regard to the meats likewise, when He had overcome them, then, and not till then, He declared unto the multitude, that, *"Not that which goes in defiles the man;"* [Matthew 15:11] and with regard to the Sabbath, when He had stopped their mouths, He says, *"Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day;"* [Matthew 12:12] and here this self-same thing.

But what took place there, this happened here also. For as there, when the Jews had been put to silence the disciples were troubled, and came unto Him with Peter and said, *"Declare unto us this parable;"* [Matthew 15:15] even so now also they were troubled and said, *"If the case of the man be so, it is good not to marry."*

For now they understood the saying more than before. Therefore then indeed they held their peace, but now when there has been gainsaying, and answering, and question, and learning by reply, and the law appeared more clear, they ask Him. And openly to contradict they do not dare, but they bring forward what seemed to be a grievous and galling result of it, saying, *"If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry."* For indeed it seemed to be a very hard thing to have a wife full of every bad quality, and to endure a wild beast perpetually shut up with one in the house. And that you may learn that this greatly troubled them, Mark said, [Mark 10:10] to show it, that they spoke to Him privately.

3. But what is, *"If such be the case of a man with his wife?"* That is, if to this end he is joined with her, that they should be one, or, on the other hand, if the man shall get to himself blame for these things, and always transgresses by putting away, it were easier to fight against natural desire and against one's self, than against a wicked woman.

What then says Christ? He said not, *"yea, it is easier, and so do,"* lest they should suppose that the thing is a law; but He subjoined, *"Not all men receive it, but they to whom it is given,"* [Matthew 19:11] raising the thing, and showing that it is great, and in this way drawing them on, and urging them.

But see herein a contradiction. For He indeed says this is a great thing; but they, that it is easier. For it was meet that both these things should be done, and that it should be at once acknowledged a great thing by Him, that it might render them more forward, and by the things said by themselves it should be shown to be easier, that on this ground too they might the rather choose virginity and continence. For since to speak of virginity seemed to be grievous, by the constraint of this law He drove them to this desire. Then to show the possibility of it, He says, *"There are some eunuchs, who were so born from their mother's womb, there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men, and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake,"* [Matthew 19:12] by these words secretly leading them to choose the thing, and establishing the possibility of this virtue, and all but saying, Consider if you were in such case by nature, or had endured this selfsame thing at the hands of those who inflict such wanton injuries, what would you have done, being deprived indeed of the enjoyment, yet not having a reward? Thank God therefore now, for that with rewards and crowns you undergo this, which those men endure without crowns; or rather not even this, but what is much lighter,

being supported both by hope, and by the consciousness of the good work, and not having the desire so raging like waves within you.

For the excision of a member is not able to quell such waves, and to make a calm, like the curb of reason; or rather, reason only can do this.

For this intent therefore He brought in those others, even that He might encourage these, since if this was not what He was establishing, what means His saying concerning the other eunuchs? But when He says, that they made themselves eunuchs, He means not the excision of the members, far from it, but the putting away of wicked thoughts. Since the man who has mutilated himself, in fact, is subject even to a curse, as Paul says, *"I would they were even cut off which trouble you."* And very reasonably. For such a one is venturing on the deeds of murderers, and giving occasion to them that slander God's creation, and opens the mouths of the Manichæans, and is guilty of the same unlawful acts as they that mutilate themselves among the Greeks. For to cut off our members has been from the beginning a work of demoniacal agency, and satanic device, that they may bring up a bad report upon the work of God, that they may mar this living creature, that imputing all not to the choice, but to the nature of our members, the more part of them may sin in security, as being irresponsible; and doubly harm this living creature, both by mutilating the members, and by impeding the forwardness of the free choice in behalf of good deeds.

These are the ordinances of the devil, bringing in, besides the things which we have mentioned, another wicked doctrine also, and making way beforehand for the arguments concerning destiny and necessity even from hence, and everywhere marring the freedom given to us of God, and persuading us that evil deeds are of nature, and hence secretly implanting many other wicked doctrines, although not openly. For such are the devil's poisons.

Therefore I beseech you to flee from such lawlessness. For together with the things I have mentioned, neither does the force of lust become milder hereby, but even more fierce. For from another origin has the seed that is in us its sources, and from another cause do its waves swell. And some say from the brain, some from the loins, this violent impulse has its birth; but I should say from nothing else than from an ungoverned will and a neglected mind: if this be temperate, there is no evil result from the motions of nature.

Having spoken then of the eunuchs that are eunuchs for nought and fruitlessly, unless with the mind they too practise temperance, and of those that are virgins for Heaven's sake, He proceeds again to say, "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it,*" at once making them more earnest by showing that the good work is exceeding in greatness, and not suffering the thing to be shut up in the compulsion of a law, because of His unspeakable gentleness. And this He said, when He showed it to be most possible, in order that the emulation of the free choice might be greater.

And if it is of free choice, one may say, how does He say, at the beginning, "*All men do not receive it, but they to whom it is given?*" That you might learn that the conflict is great, not that you should suspect any compulsory allotments. For it is given to those, even to the willing.

But He spoke thus to show that much influence from above is needed by him who enters these lists, whereof He that is willing shall surely partake. For it is customary for Him to use this form of speech when the good work done is great, as when He says, "*To you it is given to know the mysteries.*"

And that this is true, is manifest even from the present instance. For if it be of the gift from above only, and they that live as virgins contribute

nothing themselves, for nought did He promise them the kingdom of Heaven, and distinguish them from the other eunuchs.

But mark thou, I pray, how from some men's wicked doings, other men gain. I mean, that the Jews went away having learned nothing, for neither did they ask with the intent of learning, but the disciples gained even from hence.

4. *"Then were there brought unto Him little children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But He said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. And He laid His hands on them, and departed thence."*
[Matthew 19:13-15]

And wherefore did the disciples repel the little children? For dignity. What then does He? Teaching them to be lowly, and to trample under foot worldly pride, He does receive them, and takes them in His arms, and to such as them promises the kingdom; which kind of thing He said before also. [Matthew 18:3-4]

Let us also then, if we would be inheritors of the Heavens, possess ourselves of this virtue with much diligence. For this is the limit of true wisdom; to be simple with understanding; this is angelic life; yes, for the soul of a little child is pure from all the passions. Towards them who have vexed him he bears no resentment, but goes to them as to friends, as if nothing had been done; and how much soever he be beaten by his mother; after her he seeks, and her does he prefer to all. Though thou show him the queen with a diadem, he prefers her not to his mother clad in rags, but would choose rather to see her in these, than the queen in splendor. For he uses to distinguish what pertains to him and what is strange to him, not by its poverty and wealth, but by friendship. And nothing more than necessary things does he seek, but just to be satisfied from the breast, and then he

leaves sucking. The young child is not grieved at what we are grieved, as at loss of money and such things as that, and he does not rejoice again at what we rejoice, namely, at these temporal things, he is not eager about the beauty of persons.

Therefore He said, "*of such is the kingdom of Heaven,*" that by choice we should practise these things, which young children have by nature. For since the Pharisees from nothing else so much as out of craft and pride did what they did, therefore on every hand He charges the disciples to be single hearted, both darkly hinting at those men, and instructing these. For nothing so much lifts up unto haughtiness, as power and precedence. Forasmuch then as the disciples were to enjoy great honors throughout the whole world, He preoccupies their mind, not suffering them to feel anything after the manner of men, neither to demand honors from the multitude, nor to have men clear the way before them.

For though these seem to be little things, yet are they a cause of great evils. The Pharisees at least being thus trained were carried on into the very summit of evil, seeking after the salutations, the first seats, the middle places, for from these they were cast upon the shoal of their mad desire of glory, then from thence upon impiety. So therefore those men went away having drawn upon themselves a curse by their tempting, but the little children a blessing, as being freed from all these.

Let us then also be like the little children, and "*in malice be we babes.*" [1 Corinthians 14:20] For it cannot be, it cannot be for one otherwise to see Heaven, but the crafty and wicked must needs surely be cast into hell.

5. And before hell too, we shall here suffer the utmost ills. "*For if you be evil,*" it is said, "*thou alone shall endure the evil; but if good, it is for yourself and for your neighbor.*" Mark, at any rate, how this took place in the former instances also. For neither was anything more wicked than Saul,

nor more simple and single-hearted than David. Which therefore was the stronger? Did not David get him twice into his hands, and having the power to slay him, forebore? Had he not him shut up as in a net and prison, and spared him? And this when both others were urging him, and when he himself was able to accuse him of countless charges; but nevertheless he suffered him to go away safe. And yet the other was pursuing him with all his army, but he was, with a few desperate fugitives, wandering and changing from place to place; nevertheless the fugitive had the advantage of the king, forasmuch as the one came to the conflict with simplicity, the other with wickedness.

For what could be more wicked than that man, who when he was leading his armies, and bringing all his wars to a successful issue, and undergoing the labors of the victory and the trophies, but bringing the crowns to him, assayed to slay him?

6. Such is the nature of envy, it is ever plotting against its own honors, and wasting him that has it, and encompassing him with countless calamities. And that miserable man, for instance, until David departed, burst not forth into that piteous cry, bewailing himself and saying, *"I am sore distressed, and the Philistines make war against me, and the Lord is departed from me."* [1 Samuel 28:15] Until he was separated from David, he fell not in war, but was both in safety and in glory; for indeed unto the king passed the glory of the captain. For neither was the man disposed to usurpation, nor did he assay to depose the other from his throne, but for him did he achieve all things, and was earnestly attached to him, and this is evident even from what followed afterwards. For when indeed he was set under him, any one of them who do not search carefully might perhaps suppose these things to be by the usual custom of a subject; but after he had withdrawn himself out of Saul's kingdom, what then was there to restrain

him, and to him even to slay? Had not the other been evil towards him once, twice, and often? Was it not after having received benefits from him? Was it not having nothing whereof to accuse him? Was not Saul's kingdom and safety danger and insecurity to himself? Must he not needs wander and be a fugitive, and be in trembling for fear of the utmost ills, while the other is alive, and reigning? Nevertheless none of these things constrained him to stain his sword with blood, but when he saw him asleep, and bound, and alone, and in the midst of his own men, and had touched his head, and when there were many rousing him to it, and saying the opportunity thus favorable was a judgment of God, he at once rebuked those who were urging him on, and refrained from the murder, and sent him away both safe and well; and as though he had been rather a body guard of his, and a shield-bearer, not an enemy, so did he chide the host for their treachery towards the king. [1 Samuel 26:16]

What could be equal to this soul? What to that mildness? For this it is possible to see even by the things that have been mentioned but much more by what are done now. For when we have considered our vileness, then we shall know more perfectly the virtue of those saints. Wherefore I entreat you to hasten towards the emulation of them.

For indeed if you love glory, and for this cause art plotting against your neighbor, then shall you enjoy it more largely, when having spurned it, you will abstain from the plotting. For like as to become rich is contrary to covetousness, so is the loving of glory to the obtaining of glory. And if you be minded, let us inquire into each. For since we have no fear of hell, nor much regard for the kingdom, come and even from the things present let us lead you on.

For who are they that are ridiculous? Tell me. Is it not they that are doing anything for the sake of glory from the multitude? And who are the

objects of praise? Is it not they who spurn the praise of the multitude? Therefore if the love of vainglory be matter of reproach, and it cannot be concealed that the vainglorious man loves it, he will assuredly be an object of reproach, and the love of glory has become to him a cause of dishonor. And not in this respect only does he disgrace himself, but also in that he is compelled to do many things shameful, and teeming with the utmost disgrace. And like as with respect to their gains men are wont to suffer harm more than anything from the disease of covetousness (they become at least the subjects of many tricks, and of small gains make great losses, wherefore this saying has prevailed even to be a proverb); and as to the voluptuous man likewise, his passion becomes a hindrance to the enjoyment of his pleasure. These at least that are exceedingly given up thereto, and are the slaves of women these above all do women carry about as servants, and will never vouchsafe to treat them as men, buffeting, spurning them, leading, and taking them about everywhere, and giving themselves airs, and in everything merely giving them orders.

Even so also than him that is arrogant and mad about glory, and accounts himself to be high, nothing is more base and dishonored. For the race of man is fond of contention, and against nothing else does it set itself so much, as against a boaster, and a contemptuous man, and a slave of glory.

And he himself too, in order to maintain the fashion of his pride, exhibits the conduct of a slave to the common sort, flattering, courting them, serving a servitude more grievous than that of one bought for money.

Knowing then all these things, let us lay down these passions, that we may not both pay a penalty here, and there be punished without end. Let us become lovers of virtue. For so both before reaching the kingdom we shall reap the greatest benefits here, and when we are departed there we shall

partake of the eternal blessings; unto which God grant we may all attain by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 63 on Matthew

Matt. XIX. 16.

"And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, by doing what, shall I inherit eternal life?"

Some indeed accuse this young man, as one dissembling and ill-minded, and coming with a temptation to Jesus, but I, though I would not say he was not fond of money, and under subjection to his wealth, since Christ in fact convicted him of being such a character, yet a dissembler I would by no means call him, both because it is not safe to venture on things uncertain, and especially in blame, and because Mark has taken away this suspicion; for he says, that *"having come running unto Him, and kneeling to Him, he besought Him,"* and that *"Jesus beheld him, and loved him."*

[Mark 10:17-21]

But great is the tyranny of wealth, and it is manifest hence; I mean, that though we be virtuous as to the rest, this ruins all besides. With reason has Paul also affirmed it to be the root of all evils in general. *"For the love of money is the root of all evils,"* he says.

Wherefore then does Christ thus reply to him, saying, *"There is none good?"* Because He came unto Him as a mere man, and one of the common sort, and a Jewish teacher; for this cause then as a man He discourses with him. And indeed in many instances He replies to the secret thoughts of them that come unto Him; as when He says, *"We worship we know what;"* [John 4:22] and, *"If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true."* [John 5:31] When therefore He says, *"There is none good;"* not as putting Himself out from being good does He say this, far from it; for he said not,

"Why do you call me good? I am not good;" but, *"there is none good,"* that is, none among men.

And when He says this self-same thing, He says it not as depriving even men of goodness, but in contradistinction to the goodness of God. Wherefore also He added, *"But one, that is, God;"* and He said not, *"but my Father,"* that you might learn that He had not revealed Himself to the young man. So also further back He called men evil, saying, *"If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children."* [Matthew 7:11] For indeed there too He called them evil, not as condemning the whole race as evil (for by *"ye,"* He means not *"ye men"*), but comparing the goodness that is in men with the goodness of God, He thus named it; therefore also He added, *"How much more shall your Father give good things to them that ask Him?"* And what was there to urge Him, or what the profit that He should answer in this way? He leads him on little by little, and teaches him to be far from all flattery, drawing him off from the things upon each, and fastening him upon God, and persuading him to seek after the things to come, and to know that which is really good, and the root and fountain of all things, and to refer the honors to Him.

Since also when He says, *"Call no one master upon earth,"* it is in contradistinction to Himself He says this, and that they might learn what is the chief sovereignty over all things that are. For neither was it a small forwardness the young man had shown up to this time in having fallen into such a desire; and when of the rest some were tempting, some were coming to Him for the cure of diseases, either their own or others, he for eternal life was both coming to Him, and discoursing with Him. For fertile was the land and rich, but the multitude of the thorns choked the seed. Mark at any rate how he is prepared thus far for obedience to the commandments. For *"By doing what,"* he says, *"shall I inherit eternal life?"* So ready was he for the

performance of the things that should be told him. But if he had come unto Him, tempting Him, the evangelist would have declared this also to us, as He does also with regard to the others, as in the case of the lawyer. And though himself had been silent, Christ could not have suffered him to lie concealed, but would have convicted him plainly, or at least would have intimated it, so that he should not seem to have deceived Him, and to be hidden, and thereby have suffered hurt.

If he had come unto Him tempting, he would not have departed sorrowing for what he heard. This was not at any rate ever the feeling of any of the Pharisees, but they grew fierce when their mouths were stopped. But not so this man; but he goes away cast down, which is no little sign that not with an evil will he had come unto Him, but with one too feeble, and that he did indeed desire life, but was held in subjection by another and most grievous feeling.

Therefore when Christ said, *"If you will enter into life, keep the commandments,"* he says, *"Which?"* Not tempting, far from it, but supposing there were some others besides those of the law that should procure him life, which was like one who was very desirous. Then since Jesus mentioned those out of the law, he says, *"All these things have I kept from my youth up."* And neither at this did he stop, but again asks, *"What lack I yet?"* which itself again was a sign of his very earnest desire.

What then says Christ? Since He was going to enjoin something great, He sets forth the recompenses, and says, *"If you will be perfect, go and sell that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in Heaven: and come, and follow me."*

2. Do you see how many prizes, how many crowns, He appoints for this race? If he had been tempting, He would not have told him these things. But now He both says it, and in order to draw him on, He also shows him

the reward to be great, and leaves it all to his own will, by all means throwing into the shade that which seemed to be grievous in His advice. Wherefore even before mentioning the conflicts and the toil, He shows him the prize, saying *"If you will be perfect,"* and then says, *"Sell that you have, and give to the poor;"* and straightway again the rewards, *"You shall have treasure in Heaven; and come, and follow me."* For indeed to follow Him is a great recompense. *"And you shall have treasure in Heaven."*

For since his discourse was of money, even of all did He advise him to strip himself, showing that he loses not what he has, but adds to his possessions, He gave him more than He required him to give up; and not only more, but also as much greater as Heaven is greater than earth, and yet more so.

But He called it a treasure, showing the plenteousness of the recompense, its permanency, its security, so far as it was possible by human similitudes to intimate it to the hearer. It is not then enough to despise wealth, but we must also maintain poor men, and above all things follow Christ; that is, do all the things that are ordered by Him, be ready for slaughter and daily death. *"For if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."* [Matthew 16:24] So that to cast away one's money is a much less thing than this last commandment, to shed even one's very blood; yet not a little does our being freed from wealth contribute towards this.

"But when the young man heard it, he went away sorrowful." [Matthew 19:22] After this the evangelist, as it were to show that he has not felt anything it was unlikely he should feel, says, *"For he had great possessions."* For they that have little are not equally held in subjection, as they that are overflowed with great affluence, for then the love of it becomes more tyrannical. Which thing I cease not always saying, that the

increase of acquisitions kindles the flame more, and renders the getters poorer, inasmuch as it puts them in greater desire, and makes them have more feeling of their want.

See, for example, even here what strength did this passion exhibit. Him that had come to Him with joy and forwardness, when Christ commanded him to cast away his riches, it so overwhelmed and weighed down, as not to suffer him so much as to answer touching these things, but silenced and become dejected and sullen to go away.

What then says Christ? *"How hardly shall the rich enter into the kingdom of Heaven!"* blaming not riches but them that are held in subjection by them. But if the rich man *"hardly,"* much more the covetous man. For if not to give one's own be an hindrance to entering the kingdom, even to take of other men's goods, think how much fire it heaps up.

Why can it have been, however, that He said to His disciples, that *"hardly shall a rich man enter in,"* they being poor men, and having no possessions? Instructing them not to be ashamed of their poverty, and, as it were, excusing Himself to them for suffering them to have nothing.

But having said it was hard; as He proceeds, He shows that it is even impossible, and not merely impossible, but even in the highest degree impossible; and this He showed by the comparison concerning the camel and the needle.

"It is easier" says He, *"for a camel to enter in by the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 19:24] Whence it is shown, that there is no ordinary reward for them that are rich, and are able to practise self command. Wherefore also He affirmed it to be a work of God, that He might show that great grace is needed for him who is to achieve this. At least, when the disciples were troubled, He said, *"With*

men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

[Matthew 19:26]

And wherefore are the disciples troubled, being poor, yea, exceedingly poor? Wherefore then are they confounded? Being in pain about the salvation of the rest, and having a great affection for all, and having already taken upon themselves the tender bowels of teachers. They were at least in such trembling and fear for the whole world from this declaration, as to need much comfort.

Therefore, having first *"beheld them, He said unto them, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God."* For with a mild and meek look, having soothed their shuddering mind, and having put an end to their distress (for this the evangelist signified by saying, *"He beheld them"*), then by His words also He relieves them, bringing before them God's power, and so making them feel confidence.

But if you will learn the manner of it likewise, and how what is impossible may become possible, hear. Born either for this end did He say, *"The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God,"* that you should give it up, and abstain, as from things impossible; but that having considered the greatness of the good work, you should hasten to it readily, and having besought God to assist you in these noble contests, should attain unto life.

3. How then should this become possible? If you cast away what you have, if you empty yourself of your wealth, if you refrain from the wicked desire. For in proof that He does not refer it to God alone, but that to this end He said it, that you should know the vastness of the good work, hear what follows. For when Peter had said, *"Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed You,"* and had asked, *"What shall we have therefore?"* having appointed the reward for them; He added, *"And every one who has forsaken*

houses, or lands, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life." Thus that which is impossible becomes possible. But how may this very thing be done, one may say, to forsake these? How is it possible for him that is once sunk in such lust of wealth, to recover himself? If he begin to empty himself of his possessions, and cut off what are superfluous. For so shall he both advance further, and shall run on his course more easily afterwards.

Do not then seek all at once, but gently, and little by little, ascend this ladder, that leads you up to Heaven. For like as those in fevers having acrid bile abounding within them, when they cast in thereon meats and drinks, so far from quenching their thirst, do even kindle the flame; so also the covetous, when they cast in their wealth upon this wicked lust more acrid than that bile, do rather inflame it. For nothing so stays it as to refrain for a time from the lust of gain, like as acrid bile is stayed by abstinence and evacuations.

But this itself, by what means will it be done? One may say. If you consider, that while rich, you will never cease thirsting, and pining with the lust of more; but being freed from your possessions, you will be able also to stay this disease. Do not then encompass yourself with more, lest you follow after things unattainable, and be incurable, and be more miserable than all, being thus frantic.

For answer me, whom shall we affirm to be tormented and pained? Him that longs after costly meats and drinks, and is not able to enjoy them as he will, or him that has not such a desire? It is quite clear one must say, him that desires, but cannot obtain what he desires. For this is so painful, to desire and not to enjoy, to thirst and not to drink, that Christ desiring to describe hell to us, described it in this way, and introduced the rich man thus tormented. For longing for a drop of water, and not enjoying it, this

was his punishment. So then he that despises wealth quiets the desire, but he that desires to be rich has inflamed it more, and not yet does he stay; but though he have got ten thousand talents, he desires as much more; though he obtain these, again he aims at twice as much more, and going on he desires even the mountains, and the earth, and the sea, and all to become gold for him, being mad with a kind of new and fearful madness, and one that can never thus be extinguished.

And that you might learn, that not by addition but by taking away this evil is stayed; if you had ever had an absurd desire to fly and to be borne through the air, how would you extinguish this unreasonable desire? By fashioning wings, and preparing other instruments, or by convincing the mind that it is desiring things impossible, and that one should attempt none of these things? It is quite plain, that by convincing the mind. But that, you may say, is impossible. But this again is more impossible, to find a limit for this desire. For indeed it is more easy for men to fly, than to make this lust cease by an addition of more. For when the objects of desire are possible, one may be soothed by the enjoyment of them, but when they are impossible, one must labor for one thing, to draw ourselves off from the desire, as otherwise at least it is not possible to recover the soul.

Therefore that we may not have superfluous sorrows, let us forsake the love of money that is ever paining, and never endures to hold its peace, and let us remove ourselves to another love, which both makes us happy, and has great facility, and let us long after the treasures above. For neither is the labor here so great, and the gain is unspeakable, and it is not possible for him to fail of them who is but in any wise watchful and sober, and despises the things present; even as on the other hand, as to him that is a slave to these last, and is utterly given up to them, it is altogether of necessity that he fail of those better riches.

4. Considering then all these things, put away the wicked desire of wealth. For neither couldst thou say this, that it gives the things present, though it deprive us of the things to come, albeit even if this were so, this were extreme punishment, and vengeance. But now not even this may be. For besides hell, and before that hell, even here it casts you into a more grievous punishment. For many houses has this lust overthrown, and fierce wars has it stirred up, and compelled men to end their lives by a violent death; and before these dangers it ruins the nobleness of the soul, and is wont often to make him that has it cowardly, and unmanly, and rash, and false, and calumnious, and ravenous, and over-reaching, and all the worst things.

But seeing perhaps the brightness of the silver, and the multitude of the servants, and the beauty of the buildings, the court paid in the market-place, are you bewitched thereby? What remedy then may there be for this evil wound? If you consider how these things affect your soul, how dark, and desolate, and foul they render it, and how ugly; if you reckon with how many evils these things were acquired, with how many labors they are kept, with how many dangers: or rather they are not kept unto the end, but when you have escaped the attempts of all, death coming on you is often wont to remove these things into the hand of your enemies, and goes and takes you with him destitute, drawing after you none of these things, save the wounds and the sores only, which the soul received from these, before its departing. When then you see any one resplendent outwardly with raiment and large attendance, lay open his conscience, and you shall see many a cobweb within, and much dust. Consider Paul, Peter. Consider John, Elias, or rather the Son of God Himself, who has not where to lay His head. Be an imitator of Him, and of His servants, and imagine to yourself the unspeakable riches of these.

But if having obtained a little sight by these, you should be darkened again, as in any shipwreck when a storm has come on, hear the declaration of Christ, which affirms, that it is impossible "*for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.*" And against this declaration set the mountains, and the earth, and the sea; and all things, if you will, suppose to be gold; for you shall see nothing equal to the loss arising to you from thence. And thou indeed makest mention of acres of land, so many and so many, and of houses ten or twenty or even more, and of baths as many, and of slaves a thousand, or twice as many, and of chariots fastened with silver and overlaid with gold; but I say this, that if each one of you that are rich were to leave this poverty (for these things are poverty compared with what I am about to say), and were possessed of a whole world, and each of them had as many men as are now everywhere on land and sea, and each a world both sea and land, and everywhere buildings, and cities, and nations, and from every side instead of water, instead of fountains, gold flowed up for him, I would not say those who are thus rich are worth three farthings, when they are cast out of the kingdom.

For if now aiming at riches that perish, when they miss them, they are tormented, if they should obtain a perception of those unspeakable blessings, what then will suffice for consolation for them? There is nothing. Tell me not then of the abundance of their possessions, but consider how great loss the lovers of this abundance undergo in consequence thereof, for these things losing Heaven, and being in the same state, as if any one after being cast out of the highest honor in kings' courts, having a dung heap, were to pride himself on that. For the storing up of money differs nothing from that, or rather that is even the better. For that is serviceable both for husbandry, and for heating a bath, and for other such uses, but the buried gold for none of these things. And would it were merely useless; but as it is,

it kindles moreover many furnaces for him that has it, unless he use it rightly; countess evils at least spring therefrom.

Therefore they that are without used to call the love of money the citadel of evils; but the blessed Paul spoke much better and more vividly, pronouncing it "*the root of all evils.*"

Considering then all these things, let us emulate the things worthy of emulation, not gorgeous buildings not costly estates, but the men that have much confidence towards God, those that have riches in Heaven, the owners of those treasures, them that are really rich, them that are poor for Christ's sake, that we may attain unto the good things of eternity by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and always and world without end. Amen.

Homily 64 on Matthew

Matt. XIX. 27.

"Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed You; what shall we have therefore?"

All which? O blessed Peter; the rod? The net? The boat? The craft? These things do you tell me of, as all? Yea, says he, but not for display do I say these things, but in order that by this question I may bring in the multitude of the poor. For since the Lord had said, *"If you will be perfect, sell that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in Heaven;"* [Matthew 19:21] lest any one of the poor should say, What then? If I have no possessions, can I not be perfect? Peter asks, that you, the poor man, may learn, that you are made in no respect inferior by this: Peter asks, that you may not learn from Peter and doubt (for indeed he was imperfect as yet, and void of the Spirit), but that, having received the declaration from Peter's Master, you may be confident.

For like as we do (we make things our own often when speaking of the concerns of others), so did the apostle, when he put to Him this question in behalf of all the world. Since that at least he knew with certainty his own portion, is manifest from what had been said before; for he that had already received the keys of the Heavens, much more might feel confidence about the things hereafter.

But mark also how exactly his reply is according to Christ's demand. For He had required of the rich man these two things, to give that he had to the poor, and to follow Him. Wherefore he also expresses these two things, to forsake, and to follow. *"For behold we have forsaken all,"* says he, *"and have followed You."* For the forsaking was done for the sake of following,

and the following was rendered easier by the forsaking, and made them feel confidence and joy touching the forsaking.

What then says He? *"Verily, I say unto you, that you which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* [Matthew 19:28] What then, one may say, shall Judas sit there? By no means. How, then, does He say, *"You shall sit on twelve thrones?"* how shall the terms of the promise be fulfilled?

Hear how, and on what principle. There is a law ordained of God, recited by Jeremiah, the prophet to the Jews, and in these words: *"At what instant I shall speak a sentence concerning a nation and kingdom, to pluck up and destroy; if that nation turn from their evil deeds, I also will repent of the evils, which I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and kingdom to build and to plant it; and if they do evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, I also will repent of the good, which I said I would do unto them."* [Jeremiah 18:7-10]

For the same custom do I observe with respect to the good things as well, says He. For though I spoke of building up, should they show themselves unworthy of the promise, I will no longer do it. Which sort of thing was done with respect to man upon his creation, *"For the dread of you,"* it is said, *"and the fear of you shall be on the wild beasts,"* [Genesis 9:2] and it came not to pass, for he proved himself unworthy of the sovereignty, even as did Judas also.

For in order that neither at the denunciations of punishment any men should despair and become more hardened, nor by the promises of good things be rendered causelessly more remiss, He remedies both these evils, by that which I have before mentioned, saying in this way: Though I should threaten, do not despair; for you are able to repent, and to reverse the

denunciation, like the Ninevites. Though I should promise any good thing, grow not remiss because of the promise. For should you appear unworthy, the fact of my having promised will not advantage you, but will rather bring punishment. For I promise you being worthy.

Therefore even then in His discourse with His disciples He did not promise to them simply, for neither did He say, "*you*," only, but added, "*which have followed me*," that He might both cast out Judas, and draw towards Him those that should come afterwards. For neither to them only was it said, nor to Judas any more, when he had become unworthy.

Now to the disciples He promised things to come, saying, "*You shall sit on twelve thrones*," for they were now of a higher stamp, and sought after none of the things of the present world, but to the rest He promises also what are here.

For "*every one*," He says, "*that has forsaken brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, or house, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit eternal life*."

For lest any after having heard the word "*ye*," should suppose this a thing peculiar to the disciples (I mean now the enjoying the greatest and first honors in the things to come), He extended the word, and spread the promise over the whole earth, and from the things present establishes the things to come also. And to the disciples also at the beginning, when they were in a more imperfect state, He reasoned from the things present. For when He drew them from the sea, and took them from their trade, and commanded them to forsake the ships, He made mention not of Heaven, not of thrones, but of the things here, saying, "*I will make you fishers of men*;" but when He had wrought them to be of higher views, then after that He discourses of the things to come also.

2. But what is, "*Judging the twelve tribes of Israel?*" This is, "*condemning them.*" For they are not surely to sit as judges, but like as He said the Queen of the South should condemn that generation, and the Ninevites shall condemn them; so now these also. Therefore He said not, the nations, and the world, but the tribes of Israel. For since both the Jews alike and the apostles had been brought up under the same laws, and customs, and polity; when the Jews said, that for this cause they could not believe in Christ, because the law forbade to receive His commandments, by bringing forward these men, who had received the same law, and yet had believed, He condemns all those; like as even already He had said, "*therefore they shall be your judges.*" [Matthew 12:27]

And what great thing does He promise them, it may be said, if what the Ninevites have and the Queen of the South, this these are to have also? In the first place He had promised them many other things before this, and after this does promise them, and this alone is not their reward.

And besides even in this He intimated by the way something more than these things. For of those He simply said, The men of Nineveh shall rise up and condemn this generation, [Matthew 12:41] and, "*The Queen of the South shall condemn it;*" but concerning these, not merely thus, but how? "*When the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, then shall you also sit upon twelve thrones,*" says He, declaring, that they also shall reign with Him, and partake of that glory. "*For if we suffer,*" it is said, "*we shall also reign with Him.*" [2 Timothy 2:12] For neither do the thrones signify a sitting (in judgment), for He alone is the one that shall sit and judge, but honor and glory unspeakable did He intimate by the thrones.

To these then He spoke of these things, but to all the rest of eternal life and an hundredfold here. But if to the rest, much more to these too, both these things, and the things in this life.

And this surely came to pass; for when they had left a fishing rod and a net, they possessed with authority the substances of all, the prices of the houses and the lands, and the very bodies of the believers. For often did they choose even to be slain for their sake, as Paul also bears witness to many, when he says, *"If it had been possible ye would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me."* [Galatians 4:51] But when He says, *"Every one who has forsaken wife,"* He says not this, for marriages to be broken asunder for nought, but as He says concerning one's life, *"He that loses his life for my sake shall find it,"* [Matthew 10:39] not that we should destroy ourselves, neither that while yet here we should part it from the body, but that we should prefer godliness to all things; this too He says also with respect to wife and brethren.

But He seems to me here to intimate also the persecutions. For since there were many instances both of fathers urging their sons to ungodliness, and wives their husbands; when they command these things, says He, let them be neither wives nor parents, even as Paul likewise said, *"But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart."* [1 Corinthians 7:15]

When He had then raised the spirit of all, and had persuaded them to feel confidence both with respect to themselves and to all the world, He added, that *"Many that were first shall be last, and last first."* But this although it be spoken also without distinction concerning many others likewise, it is spoken also concerning these men and concerning the Pharisees, who did not believe, even as before also He had said, *"Many shall come from east and west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."* [Matthew 8:11-12]

Then He adds also a parable, as training those who had fallen short to a great forwardness.

"For the kingdom of Heaven," He said, "is like to a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with them for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard."

"And at the third hour he saw others standing idle, and to them too he said, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And about the sixth and ninth hours he did likewise. And about the eleventh hour, he saw others standing idle, and says unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? But they say unto him, No man has hired us. He says unto them, Go ye also into my vineyard, and whatsoever is right, you shall receive."

"So when even had come, the lord of the vineyard says unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. And the first supposed that they should receive more, and they received likewise every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and you have made them equal unto us that have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a penny? Take what is yours, and go your way; I will give unto this last also, even as unto you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good? Thus the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen."

3. What is to us the intent of this parable? For the beginning does not harmonize with what is said at the end, but intimates altogether the contrary. For in the first part He shows all enjoying the same, and not some cast out, and some brought in; yet He Himself both before the parable and

after the parable said the opposite thing. *"That the first shall be last, and the last first,"* that is, before the very first, those not continuing first, but having become last. For in proof that this is His meaning, He added, *"Many are called, but few chosen,"* so as doubly both to sting the one, and to soothe and urge on the other.

But the parable says not this, but that they shall be equal to them that are approved, and have labored much. *"For you have made them equal unto us,"* it is said, *"that have borne the burden and heat of the day."*

What then is the meaning of the parable? For it is necessary to make this first clear, and then we shall clear up that other point. By a vineyard He means the injunctions of God and His commandments: by the time of laboring, the present life: by laborers, them that in different ways are called to the fulfillment of the injunctions: by early in the morning, and about the third and ninth and eleventh hours, them who at different ages have drawn near to God, and approved themselves.

But the question is this, whether the first having gloriously approved themselves, and having pleased God, and having throughout the whole day shone by their labors, are possessed by the basest feeling of vice, jealousy and envy. For when they had seen them enjoying the same rewards, they say, *"These last have wrought but one hour, and you have made them equal unto us, that have borne the burden and heat of the day."* And in these words, when they are to receive no hurt, neither to suffer diminution as to their own hire, they were indignant, and much displeased at the good of others, which was proof of envy and jealousy. And what is yet more, the good man of the house in justifying himself with respect to them, and in making his defense to him that had said these things, convicts him of wickedness and the basest jealousy, saying, *"Did you not agree with me for*

a penny? Take what is yours, and go your way; I will give unto the last even as unto you. Is your eye evil, because I am good?"

What then is it which is to be established by these things? For in other parables also this self-same thing may be seen. For the son who was approved is brought in, as having felt this self-same thing, when he saw his prodigal brother enjoying much honor, even more than himself. For like as these enjoyed more by receiving first, so he in a greater degree was honored by the abundance of the things given him; and to these things he that was approved bears witness.

What then may we say? There is no one who is thus justifying himself, or blaming others in the kingdom of Heaven; away with the thought! For that place is pure from envy and jealousy. For if when they are here the saints give their very lives for sinners, much more when they see them there in the enjoyment of these things, do they rejoice and account these to be blessings of their own. Wherefore then did He so frame His discourse? The saying is a parable, wherefore neither is it right to inquire curiously into all things in parables word by word, but when we have learned the object for which it was composed, to reap this, and not to busy one's self about anything further.

Wherefore then was this parable thus composed? What is its object to effect? To render more earnest them that are converted and become better men in extreme old age, and not to allow them to suppose they have a less portion. So it is for this cause He introduces also others displeased at their blessings, not to represent those men as pining or vexed, away with the thought! But to teach us that these have enjoyed such honor, as could even have begotten envy in others. Which we also often do, saying, *"Such a one blamed me, because I counted you worthy of much honor,"* neither having

been blamed, nor wishing to slander that other, but hereby to show the greatness of the gift which this one enjoyed.

But wherefore can it have been that He did not hire all at once? As far as concerned Him, He did hire all; but if all did not hearken at once, the difference was made by the disposition of them that were called. For this cause, some are called early in the morning, some at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, some at the eleventh, when they would obey.

This Paul also declared when he said, *"When it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother's womb."* [Galatians 1:15] When did it please Him? When he was ready to obey. For He willed it even from the beginning, but because he would not have yielded, then it pleased Him, when Paul also was ready to obey. Thus also did He call the thief, although He was able to have called him even before, but he would not have obeyed. For if Paul at the beginning would not have obeyed, much more the thief.

And if they say, *"No man has hired us,"* in the first place as I said we must not be curious about all the points in the parables; but here neither is the good man of the house represented to say this, but they; but he does not convict them, that he might drive them to perplexity, but might win them over. For that He called all, as far as lay in Him, from the first even the parable shows, saying, that *"He went out early in the morning to hire."*

4. From everything then it is manifest to us, that the parable is spoken with reference to them who from earliest youth, and those who in old age and more tardily, lay hold on virtue; to the former, that they may not be proud, neither reproach those called at the eleventh hour; to the latter, that they may learn that it is possible even in a short time to recover all.

For since He had been speaking about earnestness, and the casting away of riches, and contempt of all one's possessions, but this needed much vigor of mind and youthful ardor; in order to kindle in them a fire of love,

and to give vigor to their will, He shows that it is possible even for men coming later to receive the hire of the whole day.

But He does not say it thus, lest again He should make them proud, but he shows that the whole is of His love to man, and because of this they shall not fail, but shall themselves enjoy the unspeakable blessings.

And this chiefly is what it is His will to establish by this parable. And if He adds, that, "*So the last shall be first and the first last; for many are called, but few chosen,*" marvel not. For not as inferring it from the parable does He say this, but His meaning is this, that like as this came to pass, so shall that come to pass. For here indeed the first did not become last, but all received the same contrary to hope and expectation. But as this result took place contrary to hope and contrary to expectation, and they that came before were equalled by them that followed, so shall that also come to pass which is more than this, and more strange, I mean, that the last should come to be even before the first, and that the first should be after these. So that that is one thing, and this another.

But He seems to me to say these things, darkly hinting at the Jews, and among the believers at those who at first shone forth, but afterwards neglected virtue, and fell back; and those others again that have risen from vice, and have shot beyond many. For we see such changes taking place both with respect to faith and practice.

Wherefore I entreat you let us use much diligence both to stand in the right faith, and to show forth an excellent life. For unless we add also a life suitable to our faith, we shall suffer the extremest punishment.

And this the blessed Paul showed even from times of old, when he said, that "*They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink:*" and added, that they were not saved; "*for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*" And Christ declared it even in the

evangelists, when He brought in some that had cast out devils and prophesied, and are led away to punishment. And all His parables also, as that of the virgins, that of the net, that of the thorns, that of the tree not bringing forth fruit, demand virtue in our works. For concerning doctrines He discourses seldom, for neither does the subject need labor, but of life often or rather everywhere, for the war about this is continual, wherefore also so is the labor.

And why do I speak of the whole code. For even a part of it overlooked brings upon one great evils; as, for instance, almsgiving overlooked casts into hell them that have come short in it; and yet this is not the whole of virtue, but a part thereof. But nevertheless both the virgins were punished for not having this, and the rich man was for this cause tormented, and they that have not fed the hungry, are for this condemned with the devil. Again, not to revile is a very small part of it, nevertheless this too casts out them that have not attained to it. *"For he that says to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."* [Matthew 5:22] Again, even continence itself is a part, but nevertheless, without this no one shall see the Lord. For, *"Follow peace,"* it is said, *"and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."* [Hebrews 12:14] And humility too in like manner is a part of virtue; but nevertheless though any one should fulfill other good works, but have not attained to this, he is unclean with God. And this is manifest from the Pharisee, who though abounding with numberless good works, by this lost all.

But I have also something more than these things to say again. I mean, that not only one of them overlooked shuts Heaven against us, but though it be done, yet not in due perfection and abundance, it produces the selfsame effect again. *"For unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of*

Heaven." [Matthew 8:20] So that though thou give alms, but not more than they, you shall not enter in.

And how much did they bestow in alms? One may ask. For this very thing, I am minded to say now, that they who do not give may be roused to give, and they that give may not pride themselves, but may make increase of their gifts. What then did they give? A tenth of all their possessions, and again another tenth, and after this a third, so that they almost gave away the third part, for three-tenths put together make up this. And together with these, first fruits, and first born, and other things besides, as, for instance, the offerings for sins, those for purification, those at feasts, those in the jubilee, those by the cancelling of debts, and the dismissals of servants, and the lendings that were clear of usury. But if he who gave the third part of his goods, or rather the half (for those being put together with these are the half), if then he who is giving the half, achieves no great thing, he who does not bestow so much as the tenth, of what shall he be worthy? With reason He said, *"There are few that be saved."*

5. Let us not, then, despise the care of our life. For if one portion of it despised brings so great a destruction, when on every hand we are subject to the sentence of condemnation, how shall we escape the punishment? And what manner of penalty shall we not suffer? And what manner of hope of salvation have we, one may ask, if each of the things we have numbered threatens us with hell? I too say this; nevertheless, if we give heed we may be saved, preparing the medicines of almsgiving, and attending to our wounds.

For oil does not so strengthen a body, as benevolence at once strengthens a soul, and makes it invincible to all and impregnable to the devil. For wheresoever he may seize us, his hold then slips, this oil not suffering his grasp to fix on our back.

With this oil therefore let us anoint ourselves continually. For it is the cause of health, and a supply of light, and a source of cheerfulness. "*But such a one,*" you will say, "*has talents of gold so many and so many, and gives away nothing.*" And what is that to you? For thus shall you appear more worthy of admiration, when in poverty you are more munificent than he. It was on this ground Paul marvelled at the Macedonians, not because they gave, but because even though they were in poverty they gave.

Look not then at these, but at the common Teacher of all, who "*had not where to lay His head.*" [Matthew 8:20] And why, you say, does not this and that person do so? Do not judge another, but deliver yourself from the charge against you. Since the punishment is greater when thou at the same time blamest others, and yourself doest not, when judging other men, you are again yourself also subject to the same judgment. For if even them who do right He permits not to judge others, much more will He not permit offenders. Let us not therefore judge others, neither let us look to others who are taking their ease, but unto Jesus, and from thence let us draw our examples.

Why! Have I been your benefactor? Why! Did I redeem you, that you look to me? It is another who has bestowed these things on you. Why do you let go your Master, and look unto your fellow-servant? Heardest thou not Him saying, "*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart?*" [Matthew 11:29] And again, "*He that would be first among you, let him be servant of all:*" and again, "*Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*" [Matthew 20:27-28] And after these things again, lest taking offense at them who are remiss among your fellow-servants, thou continue in contemptuousness; to draw you off from that, He says, "*I have made myself an example to you, that as I have done, you should do also.*" [John 13:15] But have you no teacher of virtue among

those persons that are with you, neither such a one as to lead you on to these things? More abundant then will be the praise, the commendation greater, when not even being supplied with teachers you have become one to be marvelled at.

For this is possible, nay very easy, if we be willing: and this they show, who first duly performed these things, as for instance, Noah, Abraham, Melchizedeck, Job, and all the men like them. To them it is needful to look every day, and not unto these, whom you never cease emulating, and passing about their names in your assemblies. For nothing else do I hear you saying everywhere, but such words as these; *"Such a one has bought so many acres of land; such a one is rich, he is building."* Why do you stare, O man, at what is without? Why do you look to others? If you are minded to look to others, look to them that do their duty, to them that approve themselves, to them that carefully fulfill the law, not to those that have become offenders, and are in dishonor. For if you look to these, you will gather hence many evil things, falling into remissness, into pride, into condemnation of others; but if you reckon over them that do right, you will lead yourself on unto humility, unto diligence, unto compunction, unto the blessings that are beyond number.

Hear what the Pharisee suffered, because he let pass them that do right, and looked to him that had offended; hear and fear.

See how David became one to be marvelled at, because he looked to his ancestors that were noted for virtue. *"For I am a stranger,"* says he, *"and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."* For this man, and all that are like him, let pass them that had sinned, and thought of those who had approved themselves.

This do thou also. For you are not set to judge of the negligences of which others have been guilty, nor to inquire into the sins which others are

committing; you are required to do judgment on yourself, not on others.

"For if we judged ourselves," it is said, *"we should not be judged, but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord."* [1 Corinthians 11:31-32] But you have reversed the order, of yourself requiring no account of offenses great or small, but being strict and curious about the offenses of others.

Let us no more do this, but leaving off this disorderly way, let us set up a tribunal in ourselves for the sins committed by ourselves, becoming ourselves accusers, and judges, and executioners for our offenses.

But if it be your will to be busy about the things of other men also, busy yourself about their good works, not their sins, that both by the memory of our negligences and by our emulation for the good works they have done, *and by setting before ourselves the judgment-seat from which no prayers can deliver, wounded each day by our conscience as by a kind of goad*, we may lead ourselves on to humility, and a greater diligence, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom be to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 65 on Matthew

Matt. XX. 17-19.

"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall be raised."

He goes not up at once to Jerusalem when He has come out of Galilee, but having first wrought miracles, and having stopped the mouths of Pharisees, and having discoursed with His disciples of renouncing possessions: for, *"if you will be perfect,"* says He, *"sell that you have:"* [Matthew 19:21] and of virginity, *"He that is able to receive, let him receive it:"* [Matthew 19:12] and of humility, *"For except ye be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven:"* [Matthew 18:3] and of a recompense of the things here, *"For whoso has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, shall receive an hundredfold in this world:"* [Matthew 19:29] and of rewards there, *"For he shall also inherit,"* it is said, *"eternal life:"* then He assails the city next, and being on the point of going up, discourses again of His passion. For since it was likely that they, because they were not willing this should come to pass, would forget it, He is continually putting them in remembrance, exercising their mind by the frequency with which He reminded them, and diminishing their pain.

But He speaks with them *"apart,"* necessarily; for it was not meet that His discourse about these things should be published to the many; neither that it should be spoken plainly, for no advantage arose from this. For if the

disciples were confounded at hearing these things, much more the multitude of the people.

What then? Was it not told to the people? You may say. It was indeed told to the people also, but not so plainly. For, *"Destroy,"* says He, *"this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up;"* [John 2:19] and, *"This generation seeks after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas;"* [Matthew 12:39] and again, *"Yet a little while am I with you, and you shall seek me, and shall not find me."* [John 7:33-34]

But to the disciples not so, but as the other things He spoke unto them more plainly, so also spoke He this too. And for what purpose, if the multitude understood not the force of His sayings, were they spoken at all? That they might learn after these things, that fore-knowing it, He came to His passion, and willing it; not in ignorance, nor by constraint. But to the disciples not for this cause only did He foretell it; but, as I have said, in order that having been exercised by the expectation, they might more easily endure the passion, and that it might not confound them by coming upon them without preparation. So for this cause, while at the beginning He spoke of His death only, when they were practised and trained to hear of it, He adds the other circumstances also; as, for instance, that they should deliver Him to the Gentiles, that they should mock and scourge Him; as well on this account, as in order that when they saw the mournful events come to pass, they might expect from this the resurrection also. For He who had not cloaked from them what would give pain, and what seemed to be matter of reproach, would reasonably be believed about good things too.

But mark, I pray you, how with regard to the time also He orders the thing wisely. For neither at the beginning did He tell them, lest He should disquiet them, neither at the time itself, lest by this again He should confound them; but when they had received sufficient proof of His power,

when He had given them promises that were very great concerning life everlasting, then He introduces also what He had to say concerning these things, once and twice and often interweaving it with His miracles and His instructions.

But another evangelist says, that He brought in the prophets also as witnesses; [Luke 18:31] and another again says, that even they themselves understood not His words, but the saying was hid from them, and that they were amazed as they followed Him.

Surely then, one may say, the benefit of the prediction is taken away. For if they knew not what they were hearing, neither could they look for the event, and not looking for it, neither could they be exercised by their expectations.

But I say another thing also more perplexing than this: If they did not know, how were they sorry. For another says, they were sorry. If therefore they knew it not, how were they sorry? How did Peter say, *"Be it far from You. This shall not be unto You?"* [Matthew 16:22]

What then may we say? That He should die indeed they knew, albeit they knew not clearly the mystery of the Incarnation. Neither did they know clearly about the resurrection, neither what He was to achieve; and this was hid from them.

For this cause also they felt pain. For some they had known to have been raised again by other persons, but for any one to have raised up himself again, and in such wise to have raised himself as not to die any more, they had never known.

This then they understood not, though often said; nay nor of this self-same death did they clearly know what it was, and how it should come on Him. Wherefore also they were amazed as they followed Him, but not for

this cause only; but to me at least He seems even to amaze them by discoursing of His passion.

2. Yet none of these things made them take courage, and this when they were continually hearing about His resurrection. For together with His death this also especially troubled them, to hear that men should *"mock and scourge Him,"* and the like. For when they considered His miracles, the possessed persons whom He had delivered, the dead whom He had raised, all the other marvellous works which He was doing, and then heard these things, they were amazed, if He who does these works is thus to suffer. Therefore they fell even into perplexity, and now believed, now disbelieved, and could not understand His sayings. So far at least were they from understanding clearly what He said, that the sons of Zebedee at the same time came to Him, and spoke to Him of precedence. *"We desire,"* it is said, *"that one should sit on Your right hand, and one on Your left."* How then does this evangelist say, that their mother came to Him? It is probable both things were done. I mean, that they took their mother with them, with the purpose of making their entreaty stronger, and in this way to prevail with Christ.

For in proof that this is true, as I say, and the request was rather theirs, and that being ashamed they put forward their mother, mark how Christ directs His words to them.

But rather let us learn, first, what do they ask, and with what disposition, and whence they were moved to this? Whence then were they moved to this? They saw themselves honored above the rest, and expected from that they should obtain this request also. But what can it be they ask? Hear another evangelist plainly declaring this. For, *"Because He was near,"* it is said, *"to Jerusalem, and because they thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear,"* [Luke 19:11] they asked these things. For they

supposed that this was at the doors, and visible, and that having obtained what they asked, they would undergo none of the painful things. For neither for its own sake only did they seek it, but as though they would also escape the hardships.

Wherefore also Christ in the first place leads them off from these thoughts, commanding them to await slaughter and dangers, and the utmost terrors. For, "*Are ye able,*" says He, "*to drink of the cup that I drink of?*" [Matthew 20:22]

But let no man be troubled at the apostles being in such an imperfect state. For not yet was the cross accomplished, not yet the grace of the Spirit given. But if you would learn their virtue, notice them after these things, and you will see them superior to every passion. For with this object He reveals their deficiencies, that after these things you might know what manner of men they became by grace.

That then they were asking, in fact, for nothing spiritual, neither had a thought of the kingdom above, is manifest from hence. But let us see also, how they come unto Him, and what they say. "*We would,*" it is said, "*that whatsoever we shall desire of You, You should do it for us.*" [Mark 10:35]

And Christ says to them, "*What would ye?*" [Mark 10:36] not being ignorant, but that He may compel them to answer, and lay open the wound, and so apply the medicine. But they out of shame and confusion of face, because under the influence of a human passion they had come to do this, took Him privately apart from the disciples, and asked Him. For they went before, it is said, so that it might not be observable to them, and so said what they wished. For it was their desire, as I suppose, because they heard, "*You shall sit on twelve thrones,*" to have the first place of these seats. And that they had an advantage over the others, they knew, but they were afraid

of Peter, and say, "*Command, that one sit on Your right hand, one on Your left;*" and they urge Him, saying, "*Command.*"

What then says He? Showing, that they asked nothing spiritual, neither, if they had known again what they were asking, would they have ventured to ask for so much, He says, "*You know not what ye ask,*" how great, how marvellous, how surpassing even the powers above. After that He adds, "*Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?*" Do you see, how He straightway drew them off from their suspicion, by framing His discourse from the contrary topics? For you, He says, talk to me of honor and crowns, but I to you of conflicts and labors. For this is not the season for rewards, neither shall that glory of mine appear now, but the present time is one of slaughter, and wars, and dangers.

And see how by the form of His question, He both urges and attracts them. For He said not, "*Are ye able to be slain?*" "*Are ye able to pour forth your blood?*" but how? "*Are ye able to drink of the cup?*" Then to attract them to it, He says, "*Which I shall drink of,*" that by their fellowship with Him in it they might be made more ready.

And a baptism again calls He it; showing that great was the cleansing the world was to have from the things that were being done.

"*They say unto Him, We are able.*" [Matthew 20:22] Out of their forwardness they straightway undertook it, not knowing even this which they were saying, but looking to hear what they had asked.

What then says He? "*You shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.*" Great blessings did He foretell to them. His meaning is, you shall be counted worthy of martyrdom, and shall suffer these things which I suffer; you shall close your life by a violent death, and in these things you shall be partakers with me; "*But to sit*

on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."

3. Having first elevated their souls, and made them of a higher character, and having rendered them such as sorrow could not subdue, then He reproves their request.

But what can be this present saying? For indeed there are two points that are subjects of inquiry to many: one, if it be prepared for any to sit on His right hand; and then, if the Lord of all has not power to bestow it on them for whom it is prepared.

What then is the saying? If we solve the former point, then the second also will be clear to the inquirers. What then is this? No one shall sit on His right hand nor on His left. For that throne is inaccessible to all, I do not say to men only, and saints, and apostles, but even to angels, and archangels, and to all the powers that are on high.

At least Paul puts it as a peculiar privilege of the Only-Begotten, saying, *"To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand? [Hebrews 1:13] And of the angels He says, who makes His angels spirits; but unto the Son, 'Your throne, O God.'" [Hebrews 1:7-8]*

How then says He, *"To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give,"* as though there are some that should sit there? Not as though there are; far from it; but He makes answer to the thoughts of them who ask the favor, condescending to their understanding. For neither did they know that lofty throne, and His sitting at the right hand of the Father; how should they, when even the things that were much lower than these, and were daily instilled into them, they understood not? But they sought one thing only, to enjoy the first honors, and to stand before the rest, and that no one should stand before them with Him; even as I have already said before, that, since

they heard of twelve thrones, in ignorance what the saying could mean, they asked for the first place.

What therefore Christ says is this: *"You shall die indeed for me, and shall be slain for the sake of the gospel, and shall be partakers with me, as far as regards the passion: but this is not sufficient to secure you the enjoyment of the first seat, and to cause that you should occupy the first place. For if any one else should come, together with the martyrdom, possessed of all the other parts of virtue far more fully than you, not because I love you now, and prefer you to the rest, therefore shall I set aside him that is distinguished by his good works, and give the first honors to you."*

But thus indeed He did not say it, so as not to pain them, but darkly He intimates the self-same thing, saying, *"You shall drink indeed of my cup, and you shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left, this is not mine to give, but it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared."*

But for whom is it prepared? For them who could become distinguished by their works. Therefore He said not, It is not mine to give, but my Father's, lest any should say that He was too weak, or wanting in vigor for their recompense; but how? It is not mine, but of those for whom it is prepared.

And in order that what I say may be more plain, let us work it on an illustration, and let us suppose there was some master of the games, then that many excellent combatants went down to the contest, and that some two of the combatants that were most nearly connected with the master of the games were to come to him and say, *"Cause us to be crowned and proclaimed,"* confiding in their good-will and friendship with him; and that he were to say to them, *"This is not mine to give, but it shall be given to*

them for whom it is prepared, by their labors, and their toils;" should we indeed condemn him as powerless? By no means, but we should approve him for his justice, and for having no respect of persons. Like then as we should not say that he did not give the crown from want of vigor, but as not wishing to corrupt the law of the games, nor to disturb the order of justice; in like manner now should I say Christ said this, from every motive to compel them, after the grace of God, to set their hopes of salvation and approval on the proof of their own good works.

Therefore He says, *"For whom it is prepared."* For what, says He, if others should appear better than you? What, if they should do greater things? For shall you, because you have become my disciples, therefore enjoy the first honors, if you yourselves should not appear worthy of the choice?

For that He Himself has power over the whole, is manifest from His having the entire judgment. For to Peter too He speaks thus, *"I will give you the keys of the Heavens."* And Paul also makes this clear where he says, *"Henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also which have loved His appearing."* [2 Timothy 4:8] But the appearing was of Christ. But that no one will stand before Paul, is surely clear to every one.

And if He has expressed these things somewhat obscurely, marvel not. For to lead them on by hidden instruction, not to be rudely pressing Him without object or cause for the first honors (for from a human passion they felt this), and not wishing to give them pain, by the obscurity He effects both these objects.

"Then were the ten moved with indignation with respect to the two."
Then. When.? When He had reproved them. So long as the judgment was

Christ's, they were not moved with indignation; but seeing them preferred, they were contented, and held their peace, out of reverence and honor to their Master.

And if they were vexed in mind, yet they dared not utter this. And when they had some feeling of human weakness towards Peter, at the time that He gave the didrachmas, they did not give way to anger, but asked only, *"Who then is greatest?"* But since here the request was the disciples', they are moved with indignation. And not even here are they straightway moved with indignation, when they asked, but when Christ had reproved them, and had said they should not enjoy the first honors, unless they showed themselves worthy of these.

4. Do you see how they were all in an imperfect state, when both these were lifting themselves up above the ten, and those envying the two? But, as I said, show me them after these things, and you will see them delivered from all these passions. Hear at least how this same John, he who now came to Him for these things, everywhere gives up the first place to Peter, both in addressing the people, and in working miracles, in the Acts of the Apostles.

And he conceals not Peter's good deeds, but relates both the confession, which he openly made when all were silent, [John 6:68-69] and his entering into the tomb, [John 20:6] and puts the apostle before himself. For, because both continued with Him at His crucifixion, taking away the ground of his own commendation, he says, *"That disciple was known unto the high priest."* [John 18:15]

But James survived not a long time, but from the beginning he was so greatly filled with warmth, and so forsook all the things of men, and mounted up to an height unutterable, as straightway to be slain. Thus, in all respects, they after these things became excellent.

But then, *"they were moved with indignation."* What then says Christ? *"He called them unto Him, and said, The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them."* For, as they were disturbed and troubled, He soothes them by His call before His word, and by drawing them near Him. For the two having separated themselves from the company of the ten, had stood nearer Him, pleading their own interests. Therefore He brings near Him these also, by this very act, and by exposing and revealing it before the rest, soothing the passion both of the one and of the other.

And not as before, so now also does He check them. For whereas before He brings little children into the midst, and commands to imitate their simplicity and lowliness; here He reproves them in a sharper way from the contrary side, saying, *"The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you; but he that will be great among you, let this man be minister to all; and he that will be first, let him be last of all;"* showing that such a feeling as this is that of heathens, I mean, to love the first place. For the passion is tyrannical, and is continually hindering even great men; therefore also it needs a severer stripe. Whence He too strikes deeper into them, by comparison with the Gentiles shaming their inflamed soul, and removes the envy of the one and the arrogance of the other, all but saying, *"Be not moved with indignation, as insulted. For they harm and disgrace themselves most, who on this wise seek the first places, for they are among the last. For matters with us are not like matters without. 'For the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them,' but with me the last, even he is first."*

"And in proof that I say not these things without cause, by the things which I do and suffer, receive the proof of my sayings. For I have myself done something even more. For being King of the powers above, I was

willing to become man, and I submitted to be despised, and despitefully entreated. And not even with these things was I satisfied, but even unto death did I come. Therefore," He says,

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." [Matthew 20:28] "For not even at this did I stop," says He, *"but even my life did I give a ransom; and for whom? For enemies. But thou if you are abused, it is for yourself, but I for you."*

Be not then afraid, as though your honor were plucked down. For however much you humble yourself, you cannot descend so much as your Lord. And yet His descent has become the ascent of all, and has made His own glory shine forth. For before He was made man, He was known among angels only; but after He was made man and was crucified, so far from lessening that glory, He acquired other besides, even that from the knowledge of the world.

Fear not then, as though your honor were put down, if you should abase yourself, for in this way is your glory more exalted, in this way it becomes greater. This is the door of the kingdom. Let us not then go the opposite way, neither let us war against ourselves. For if we desire to appear great, we shall not be great, but even the most dishonored of all.

Do you see how everywhere He urges them by the opposite things, giving them what they desire? For in the preceding parts also we have shown this in many instances, and in the cases of the covetous, and of the vain-glorious, He did thus. For wherefore, He says, do you give alms before men? That you may enjoy glory? You must then not do so, and you shall surely enjoy it. Wherefore do you lay up treasures? That you may be rich? You must then not lay up treasures, and you shall be rich. Even so here too, wherefore do you set your heart on the first places? That you may be before

others? Choose then the last place, and then you will enjoy the first. So that if it be your will to become great, seek not to become great, and then you will be great. For the other is to be little.

5. Do you see how He drew them off from the disease, by showing them both from thence failing of their object, and from hence gaining, that they might flee the one, and follow after the other.

And of the Gentiles, too, He for this cause reminded them, that in this way again He might show the thing to be disgraceful and to be abhorred.

For the arrogant is of necessity base, and, on the contrary, the lowly-minded is high. For this is the height that is true and genuine, and exists not in name only, nor in manner of address. And that which is from without is of necessity and fear, but this is like to God's. Such a one, though he be admired by no one, continues high; even as again the other, though he be courted by all, is of all men the basest. And the one is an honor rendered of necessity, whence also it easily passes away; but the other is of principle, whence also it continues steadfast. Since for this we admire the saints also, that being greater than all, they humbled themselves more than all. Wherefore even to this day they continue to be high, and not even death has brought down that height.

And if you be minded, let us by reasonings also inquire into this very thing. Any one is said to be high, either when he is so by greatness of stature, or when he has chanced to be set on a high place, and low in like manner, from the opposite things.

Let us see then who is like this, the boaster, or he that keeps within measure, that you may perceive that nothing is higher than lowliness of mind, and nothing lower than boastfulness.

The boaster then desires to be greater than all, and affirms no one to be equal in worth with him; and how much soever honor he may obtain, he

sets his heart on more and claims it, and accounts himself to have obtained none, and treats men with utter contempt, and yet seeks after the honor that comes from them; than which what can be more unreasonable? For this surely is like an enigma. By those, whom he holds in no esteem, he desires to be glorified.

Do you see how he who desires to be exalted falls down and is set on the ground? For that he accounts all men to be nothing compared with himself, he himself declares, for this is boasting. Why then dost cast yourself upon him who is nothing? Why do you seek honor of him? Why do you lead about with you such great multitudes?

Do you see one low, and set on a low place. Come then, let us inquire about the high man. This one knows what man is, and that man is a great thing, and that he himself is last of all, and therefore whatever honor he may enjoy, he reckons this great, so that this one is consistent with himself and is high, and shifts not his judgment; for whom he accounts great, the honors that come from them he esteems great also, though they should chance to be small, because he accounts those who bestow them to be great. But the boastful man accounts them that give the honors to be nothing, yet the honors bestowed by them he reckons to be great.

Again, the lowly man is seized by no passion, no anger can much trouble this man, no love of glory, no envy, no jealousy: and what can be higher than the soul that is delivered from these things? But the boastful man is held in subjection by all these things, like any worm crawling in the mire, for jealousy and envy and anger are forever troubling his soul.

Which then is high? He that is superior to his passions, or he that is their slave? He that trembles at them and is afraid of them, or he that is unsubdued, and never taken by them? Which kind of bird should we say flies higher? That which is higher than the hands and the arrows of the

hunter, or that which does not even suffer the hunters to need an arrow, from his flying along the ground, and from not being able ever to elevate himself? Is not then the arrogant man like this? For indeed every net readily catches him as crawling on the ground.

6. But if you will, even from that wicked demon prove thou this. For what can be baser than the devil, because he had exalted himself; what higher than the man who is willing to abase himself? For the former crawls on the ground under our heel (For, *"ye tread,"* He says, *"upon serpents and scorpions"*), but the latter is set with the angels on high.

But if you desire to learn this from the example of haughty men also, consider that barbarian king, that led so great an army, who knew not so much as the things that are manifest to all; as, for instance, that stone was stone, and the images, images; wherefore he was inferior even to these. But the godly and faithful are raised even above the sun; than whom what can be higher, who rise above even the vaults of heaven, and passing beyond angels, stand by the very throne of the king.

And that you may learn in another way their vileness; who will be abased? He who has God for his ally, or he with whom God is at war? It is quite plain that it is he with whom He is at war. Hear then touching either of these what says the Scripture. *"God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble."* [James 4:6]

Again, I will ask you another thing also. Which is higher? He who acts as a priest to God and offers sacrifice? Or he who is somewhere far removed from confidence towards Him? And what manner of sacrifice does the lowly man offer? One may say. Hear David saying, *"The sacrifice of God is a contrite spirit; a contrite and humbled heart God will not despise."*

Do you see the purity of this man? Behold also the uncleanness of the other; for *"every one that is proud in heart is unclean before God."* Besides,

the one has God resting upon him, (*"For unto whom will I look,"* says He, *"but to him that is meek and quiet, and trembles at my words"*), [Isaiah 66:2] but the other crawls with the devil, for he that is lifted up with pride shall suffer the devil's punishment. Wherefore Paul also said, *"Lest, being lifted up with pride, he should fall into the condemnation of the devil."* [1 Timothy 3:6]

And the thing opposite to what he wishes, befalls him. For his wish is to be arrogant, that he may be honored; but the most contemned of all is this character. For these most of all are laughing stocks, foes and enemies to all men, the most easy to be subdued by their enemies, the men that easily fall into anger, the unclean before God.

What then can be worse than this, for this is the extremity of evils? And what is sweeter than the lowly, what more blessed, since they are longed after, and beloved of God? And the glory too that comes of men, these do most of all enjoy, and all honor them as fathers, embrace them as brothers, receive them as their own members.

Let us then become lowly, that we may be high. For most utterly does arrogance abase. This abased Pharaoh. For, *"I know not,"* he says, *"the Lord,"* [Exodus 5:2] and he became inferior to flies and frogs, and the locusts, and after that with his very arms and horses was he drowned in the sea. In direct opposition to him, Abraham says, *"I am dust and ashes,"* [Genesis 18:27] and prevailed over countless barbarians, and having fallen into the midst of Egyptians, returned, bearing a trophy more glorious than the former, and, cleaving to this virtue, grew ever more high. Therefore he is celebrated everywhere, therefore he is crowned and proclaimed; but Pharaoh is both earth and ashes, and if there is anything else more vile than these. For nothing does God so abhor as arrogance. For this object has He done all things from the beginning, in order that He might root out this

passion. Because of this are we become mortal, and are in sorrows, and wailings. Because of this are we in toil, and sweat, and in labor continual, and mingled with affliction. For indeed out of arrogance did the first man sin, looking for an equality with God. Therefore, not even what things he had, did he continue to possess, but lost even these.

For arrogance is like this, so far from adding to us any improvement of our life, it subtracts even what we have; as, on the contrary, humility, so far from subtracting from what we have, adds to us also what we have not.

This virtue then let us emulate, this let us pursue, that we may both enjoy present honor, and attain unto the glory to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father glory and might, together with the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 66 on Matthew

Matthew 20:29-30.

"And as they departed from Jericho, great multitudes followed Him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David."

See whence He passed unto Jerusalem, and where He abode before this, with regard to which it seems to me especially worthy of inquiry, wherefore He went not away even long before this from thence unto Galilee, but through Samaria. But this we will leave to them that are fond of learning. For if any one were disposed to search the matter out carefully, he will find that John intimates it well, and has expressed the cause.

But let us keep to the things set before us, and let us listen to these blind men, who were better than many that see. For neither having a guide, nor being able to see Him when come near to them, nevertheless they strove to come unto Him, and began to cry with a loud voice, and when rebuked for speaking, they cried the more. For such is the nature of an enduring soul, by the very things that hinder, it is borne up.

But Christ suffered them to be rebuked, that their earnestness might the more appear, and that you might learn that worthily they enjoy the benefits of their cure. Therefore He does not so much as ask, *"Do ye believe?"* as He does with many; for their cry, and their coming unto Him, sufficed to make their faith manifest.

Hence learn, O beloved, that though we be very vile and outcast, but yet approach God with earnestness, even by ourselves we shall be able to effect whatsoever we ask. See, for instance, these men, how, having none of

the apostles to plead with them, but rather many to stop their mouths, they were able to pass over the hindrances, and to come unto Jesus Himself. And yet the evangelist bears witness to no confidence of life in them, but earnestness sufficed them instead of all.

These then let us also emulate. Though God defer the gift, though there be many withdrawing us, let us not desist from asking. For in this way most of all shall we win God to us. See at least even here, how not poverty, not blindness, not their being unheard, not their being rebuked by the multitude, not anything else, impeded their exceeding earnestness. Such is the nature of a fervent and toiling soul.

What then says Christ? *"He called them, and said, What will you that I should do unto you? They say unto Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened."* [Matthew 20:32-33] Wherefore does He ask them? Lest any one should think that when they wish to receive one thing, He gives them another thing. For indeed it is usual with Him on every occasion, first to make manifest and discover to all the virtue of those He is healing, and then to apply the cure, for one reason, that He might lead on the others likewise to emulation; and for another, that He might show that they were enjoying the gift worthily. This, for instance, He did with respect to the Canaanitish woman also, this too in the case of the centurion, this again as to her that had the issue of blood, or rather that marvellous woman even anticipated the Lord's inquiry; but not so did He pass her by, but even after the cure makes her manifest. Such earnest care had He on every occasion to proclaim the good deeds of them that come to Him, and to show them to be much greater than they are, which He does here also.

Then, when they said what they wished, He had compassion on them, and touched them. For this alone is the cause of their cure, for which also

He came into the world. But nevertheless, although it be mercy and grace, it seeks for the worthy.

But that they were worthy is manifest, both from what they cried out, and from the fact that, when they had received, they did not hasten away, as many do, being ungrateful after the benefits. Nay, they were not like this, but were both persevering before the gift, and after the gift grateful, for *"they followed Him."*

"And when He drew near unto Jerusalem, and had come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, saying, Go into the village over against you, and you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say anything unto you, you shall say, The Lord has need of them; and straightway he sends them. And this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Zechariah the prophet, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, your King comes to you, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

And yet He had often entered Jerusalem before, but never with so much circumstance. What then is the cause? It was the beginning then of the dispensation; and neither was He very well known, nor the time of His passion near; wherefore He mixed with them with less distinction, and more disguising Himself. For He would not have been held in admiration, had He so appeared, and He would have excited them to greater anger. But when He had both given them sufficient proof of His power, and the cross was at the doors, He makes Himself then more conspicuous, and does with greater circumstance all the things that were likely to inflame them. For it was indeed possible for this to have been done at the beginning also; but it was not profitable nor expedient it should be so.

But do thou observe, I pray you, how many miracles are done, and how many prophecies are fulfilled. He said, *"You shall find an ass;"* He

foretold that no man should hinder them, but that all, when they heard, should hold their peace.

But this is no small condemnation of the Jews, if them that were never known to Him, neither had appeared before Him, He persuades to give up their own property, and to say nothing against it, and that by His disciples, while these, being present with Him at the working of His miracles, were not persuaded.

2. And do not account what was done to be a small thing. For who persuaded them, when their own property was taken from them, and that, when they were perhaps poor men and husbandmen, not to forbid it? Why say I not to forbid it? Not to ask, or even if they asked, to hold their peace, and give it up. For indeed both things were alike marvellous, as well, if they said nothing, when their beasts were dragged away, or if having spoken, and heard, "*The Lord has need of them,*" they yielded and withstood not, and this when they see not Him, but His disciples.

By these things He teaches them, that it was in His power to have entirely hindered the Jews also, even against their will, when they were proceeding to attack Him, and to have made them speechless, but He would not.

And another thing again together with these does He teach the disciples, to give whatever He should ask; and, though he should require them to yield up their very life, to give even this, and not to gainsay. For if even strangers gave up to Him, much more ought they to strip themselves of all things.

And besides what we have said, He was fulfilling also another prophecy, one which was twofold, one part in words, and another in deeds. And that in deeds was, by the sitting on the ass; and that by words, the prediction of Zacharias; because he had said, that the King should sit on an

ass. And He, having sat and having fulfilled it, gave to the prophecy another beginning again, by what He was doing typifying beforehand the things to come.

How and in what manner? He proclaimed beforehand the calling of the unclean Gentiles, and that He should rest upon them, and that they should yield to Him and follow Him, and prophecy succeeded to prophecy.

But to me He seems not for this object only to sit on the ass, but also as affording us a standard of self-denial. For not only did He fulfill prophecies, nor did He only plant the doctrines of the truth, but by these very things He was correcting our practice for us, everywhere setting us rules of necessary use, and by all means amending our life.

For this cause, I say, even when He was to be born He sought not a splendid house, nor a mother rich and distinguished, but a poor woman, and one that had a carpenter as her betrothed husband; and is born in a shed, and laid in a manger: and choosing His disciples, He chose not orators and wise men, not rich men and nobly born, but poor men, and of poor families, and in every way undistinguished; and providing His table, at one time He sets before Himself barley loaves, and at another at the very moment commands the disciples to buy at the market. And making His couch, He makes it of grass, and putting on raiment, He clothes Himself in what is cheap, and in no respect different from the common sort; and a house He did not so much as possess. And if He had to go from place to place, He did this travelling on foot, and so travelling, as even to grow weary. And sitting, He requires no throne nor pillow, but sits on the ground, sometimes in the mountain, and sometimes by the well, and not merely by the well, but also alone, and talks with a Samaritan woman.

Again, setting measures of sorrow, when He had need to mourn, He weeps moderately, everywhere setting us rules, as I have said, and limits

how far one ought to proceed, and not any further. So for this intent now also, since it happens that some are weak and have need of beasts to carry them, in this too He fixes a measure, showing that one ought not to yoke horses or mules to be borne by them, but to use an ass, and not to proceed further, and everywhere to be limited by the want.

But let us look also at the prophecy, that by words, that by acts. What then is the prophecy? *"Behold, your King comes to you, meek, and riding on an ass, and a young colt;"* [Zechariah 9:9] not driving chariots, like the rest of the kings, not demanding tributes, not thrusting men off, and leading about guards, but displaying His great meekness even hereby.

Ask then the Jew, what King came to Jerusalem borne on an ass? Nay, he could not mention, but this alone.

But He did these things, as I said, signifying beforehand the things to come. For here the church is signified by the colt, and the new people, which was once unclean, but which, after Jesus sat on them, became clean. And see the image preserved throughout. I mean that the disciples loose the asses. For by the apostles, both they and we were called; by the apostles were we brought near. But because our acceptance provoked them also to emulation, therefore the ass appears following the colt. For after Christ has sat on the Gentiles, then shall they also come moving us to emulation. And Paul declaring this, said, *"That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."* [Romans 11:25-26] For that it was a prophecy is evident from what is said. For neither would the prophet have cared to express with such great exactness the age of the ass, unless this had been so.

But not these things only are signified by what is said, but also that the apostles should bring them with ease. For as here, no man gainsaid them so

as to keep the asses, so neither with regard to the Gentiles was any one able to prevent them, of those who were before masters of them.

But He does not sit on the bare colt, but on the apostles' garments. For after they had taken the colt, they then gave up all, even as Paul also said, *"I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls."* [2 Corinthians 12:15]

But mark how tractable the colt, how being unbroken, and having never known the rein, he was not restive, but went on orderly; which thing itself was a prophecy of the future, signifying the submissiveness of the Gentiles, and their sudden conversion to good order. For all things did that word work, which said, *"Loose him, and bring him to me:"* so that the unmanageable became orderly, and the unclean thenceforth clean.

3. But see the baseness of the Jews. He had wrought so many miracles, and never were they thus amazed at Him; but when they saw a multitude running together, then they marvel. *"For all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? But the multitudes said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."* And when they thought they were saying something great, even then were their thoughts earthly, and low, and dragging on the ground.

But these things He did, not as displaying any pomp, but at once, as I have said, both fulfilling a prophecy, and teaching self-denial, and at the same time also comforting His disciples, who were grieving for His death, and showing them that He suffers all these things willingly. And mark thou, I pray you, the accuracy of the prophet, how he foretold all things. And some things David, some things Zechariah, had proclaimed beforehand. Let us also do likewise, and let us sing hymns, and give up our garments to them that bear Him. For what should we deserve, when some clothe the ass on which He was set, and others strew the garments even under her feet; but we, seeing him naked, and not being even commanded to strip ourselves, but to spend of what is laid by, not even so are liberal? And when they

indeed attend upon Him before and behind, but we, when He comes unto us, send Him away, and thrust Him off and insult Him.

How sore a punishment do these things deserve, how great vengeance! Your Lord comes unto you in need, and you are not willing so much as to listen to His entreaty, but you blame and rebuke Him, and this, when you have heard such words as these. But if in giving one loaf, and a little money, you are so mean, and haughty, and backward; if you had to empty out all, what would you become?

Do you see not those that show their magnificence in the theatre, how much they give away to the harlots? But you give not so much as the half, nay often not the smallest part. But the devil is exhorting to give to whom it may chance, procuring us hell, and you give; but Christ to the needy, promising a kingdom, and thou, far from giving, dost rather insult them, and you choose rather to obey the devil, that you might be punished, than to submit to Christ, and be saved.

And what could be worse than this frenzy? One procures hell, the other a kingdom, and you leave the latter, and run unto the former. And this ye send away, when He comes unto you, that when he is far off, you call unto you. And what you do is the same as if a king bearing a royal robe, and offering a diadem, did not win your choice, but a robber brandishing a sword at you, and threatening death, were to win it.

Considering these things then, beloved, let us discern the truth at length though late, and let us grow sober. For I am now ashamed of speaking of almsgiving, because that having often spoken on this subject, I have effected nothing worth the exhortation. For some increase indeed has there been, but not so much as I wished. For I see you sowing, but not with a liberal hand. Wherefore I fear too lest ye also "*reap sparingly*."

[2 Corinthians 9:6]

For in proof that we do sow sparingly, let us inquire, if it seem good, which are more numerous in the city, poor or rich; and which they, who are neither poor nor rich, but have a middle place. As, for instance, a tenth part is of rich, and a tenth of the poor that have nothing at all, and the rest of the middle sort.

Let us distribute then among the poor the whole multitude of the city, and you will see the disgrace how great it is. For the very rich indeed are but few, but those that come next to them are many; again, the poor are much fewer than these. Nevertheless, although there are so many that are able to feed the hungry, many go to sleep in their hunger, not because those that have are not able with ease to succor them, but because of their great barbarity and inhumanity. For if both the wealthy, and those next to them, were to distribute among themselves those who are in need of bread and raiment, scarcely would one poor person fall to the share of fifty men or even a hundred. Yet nevertheless, though in such great abundance of persons to assist them, they are wailing every day. And that you may learn the inhumanity of the others, when the church is possessed of a revenue of one of the lowest among the wealthy, and not of the very rich, consider how many widows it succors every day, how many virgins; for indeed the list of them has already reached unto the number of three thousand. Together with these, she succors them that dwell in the prison, the sick in the caravansera, the healthy, those that are absent from their home, those that are maimed in their bodies, those that wait upon the altar; and with respect to food and raiment, them that casually come every day; and her substance is in no respect diminished. So that if ten men only were thus willing to spend, there would be no poor.

4. And what, it will be said, are our children to inherit? The principal remains, and the income again has become more abundant, the goods being

stored up for them in Heaven.

But are you not willing to do this? At least do it by the half, at least by the third part, at least by the fourth part, at least by the tenth. For owing to God's favor, it were possible for our city to nourish the poor of ten cities.

And if you will, let us make some calculation in proof of this; or rather there is no need so much as of reckoning; for of itself the easiness of the thing is discernible. See at least, upon public occasions, how much one house has often not been backward to spend, and has not had so much as a little feeling of the expense, which service if each of the rich were willing to perform for the poor, in a brief moment of time he would have seized on Heaven.

What plea then will there be? What shadow of defense, when not even of the things from which we must assuredly be separated, when taken away from hence, not even of these do we impart to the needy with as much liberality as others to those on the stage, and this when we are to reap so many benefits therefrom? For we ought indeed, even though we were always to be here, not even so to be sparing of this good expenditure; but when after a little time, we are to be removed from hence, and dragged away naked from all, what kind of defense shall we have for not even out of our income giving to the hungry and distressed?

For neither do I constrain you to lessen your possessions, not because I do not wish it, but because I see you very backward. It is not then this I say, but spend of your fruits, and treasure up nothing from these. It is enough for you to have the money of your income pouring in on you as from a fountain; make the poor sharers with you, and become a good steward of the things given you of God.

But I pay tribute, one may say. For this cause then do you despise, because in this case no one demands it of you? And the other, who, should

the earth bear, or should it not bear, takes by force, and extorts, you dare not gainsay; but Him that is so mild, and then only demands, when the earth bears, you answer not even to a word? And who will deliver you from those intolerable punishments? There is no one. For if, because in the other case a very sore punishment will ensue to you for not giving, therefore you become diligent about the payment, consider here too is one more sore; not to be bound, neither to be cast into prison, but to depart into the eternal fire.

For all reasons then let us pay these tributes first: for great is the facility, and greater the reward; and more abundant the gain, and worse the punishments to us if we are obstinate. For a punishment comes upon us, which has no end.

But if you tell me of the soldier's fighting for you with the barbarians, there is here too a camp, that of the poor, and a war, which the poor are waging for you. For when they receive, by praying they make God propitious; and making Him propitious, they repulse, instead of barbarians, the assaults of the devils; they suffer not the evil one to be violent, neither to attack us continually, but they relax his might.

5. Seeing therefore these soldiers every day fighting in your behalf with the devil by their supplications and prayers, demand of yourself this good contribution, their nourishment. For this King being mild has not assigned you any to demand it of you, but desires you should give it willingly; though thou pay little by little, He receives it; though being in difficulty, you should pay after a long time, He does not press him that has not.

Let us not then despise His long-suffering; let us treasure up for ourselves, not wrath, but salvation; not death, but life; not punishment and vengeance, but honors and crowns. There is no need in this case to pay a hire for the conveyance of the things contributed; there is no need in this

case to labor in turning them into money. If you give them up, the Lord Himself removes them into Heaven; He Himself makes the traffic the more gainful for you.

There is no need here to find one to carry in what you have contributed; contribute only, and straightway it goes up, not that others may be maintained as soldiers, but that it may remain for you with great profit. For here whatsoever you may have given, it is not possible to recover; but there you will receive them again with much honor, and shall gain greater, and more spiritual gains. Here the gifts are a demand; there a loan, and money at interest, and a debt.

Yea farther, God has given you bonds. For *"he that shows mercy to a poor man,"* it is said, *"lends to the Lord."* [Proverbs 19:17] He gave you also an earnest, and bail, and this being God! What sort of earnest? The things in the present life, the visible, the spiritual things, the foretaste of the things to come.

Why then do you delay, and why are you backward, having received so many things already, looking for so many things?

For what you have received are these: He Himself made you a body, He Himself put in you a soul, He honored with speech you alone of the things on the earth, He gave you the use of all the things that are seen, He bestowed on you the knowledge of Himself, He gave up His Son for you, He gave you a baptism full of so many good things, He gave you a holy table, He promised a kingdom, and the good things that cannot be told.

Having then received so many good things, having to receive so many, again I say the same thing, are you making petty reckoning about perishing riches, and what excuse will you have?

But are you looking altogether at your children? And dost draw back for the sake of these? Nay, rather teach them also to gain such gains. For if

you had money lent out and bearing interest, and you had a grateful debtor, you would ten thousand times rather choose instead of the gold to leave the bond to your child, so that he should have the large income from it, and not be constrained to go about, and seek for others to borrow it.

And now give this bond to your children, and leave God a debtor to them. Thou dost not sell your lands, and give to your children, but leavest them, that the income may remain, and that they may have a greater increase of riches from thence; but this bond, which is more productive than any land or revenue, and bears so many fruits, this are you afraid to leave to them? What great folly must this be, and frenzy. And this when you know, that though you should leave it to them, you yourself also shall again take it away with you.

Of this nature are the things spiritual; they have great munificence. Let us not then be beggarly; neither be inhuman and savage towards ourselves, but let us traffic in that good merchandise; that we may both ourselves take it away with us when we depart, and leave it to our own children, and attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 67 on Matthew

Matthew 21:12-13.

"And Jesus went into the temple, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and says unto them, It is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves."

This John likewise says, but he in the beginning of his Gospel, this at the end. Whence it is probable this was done twice, and at different seasons.

And it is evident both from the times, and from their reply. For there He came at the very passover, but here much before. And there the Jews say, *"What sign do you show us?"* [John 2:18] but here they hold their peace, although reprov'd, because He was now marvelled at among all men.

And this is a heavier charge against the Jews, that when He had done this not once only, but a second time, they continued in their trafficking, and said that He was an adversary of God, when they ought even from hence to have learned His honor for His Father and His own might. For indeed He also wrought miracles, and they saw His words agreeing with His works.

But not even so were they persuaded, but *"were sore displeased,"* and this while they heard the prophet crying aloud, and the children in a manner beyond their age proclaiming Him. Wherefore also He Himself sets up Isaiah against them as an accuser, saying, *"My house shall be called a house of prayer."* [Isaiah 56:7]

But not in this way only does He show His authority, but also by His healing various infirmities. *"For the blind and the lame came unto Him, and*

He healed them," [Matthew 21:14] and His power and authority He indicates.

But they not even so would be persuaded, but together with the rest of the miracles hearing even the children proclaiming, were ready to choke, and say, "*Do you not hear what these say?*" And yet it was Christ's part to have said this to them, "*Hear ye not what these say?*" for the children were singing to Him as to God.

What then says He? Since they were speaking against things manifest, He applies His correction more in the way of reproof, saying, "*Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have perfected praise?*" And well did He say, "*Out of the mouth.*" For what was said was not of their understanding, but of His power giving articulation to their tongue yet immature.

And this was also a type of the Gentiles lisping, and sounding forth at once great things with understanding and faith.

And for the apostles also there was from hence no small consolation. For that they might not be perplexed, how being unlearned they should be able to publish the gospel, the children anticipate them, and remove all their anxiety, teaching them, that He would grant them utterance, who made even these to sing praises.

And not so only, but the miracle showed that He is Creator even of nature. The children then, although of age immature, uttered things that had a clear meaning, and were in accordance with those above, but the men things teeming with frenzy and madness. For such is the nature of wickedness.

Forasmuch then as there were many things to provoke them, from the multitude, from the casting out of the sellers, from the miracles, from the children, He again leaves them, giving room to the swelling passion, and

not willing to begin His teaching, lest boiling with envy they should be the more displeased at His sayings.

"Now in the morning as He returned into the city, He was an hungered." [Matthew 21:18] How is He an hungered in the morning? When He permits the flesh, then it shows its feeling. *"And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only."*

[Matthew 21:19] Another evangelist says, *"The time of figs was not yet;"* but if it was not time, how does the other evangelist say, *"He came, if haply He might find fruit thereon."* Whence it is manifest that this belongs to the suspicion of His disciples, who were yet in a somewhat imperfect state. For indeed the evangelists in many places record the suspicions of the disciples.

Like as this then was their suspicion, so also was it too to suppose it was cursed for this cause, because of having no fruit. Wherefore then was it cursed? For the disciples' sakes, that they might have confidence. For because everywhere He conferred benefits, but punished no man; and it was needful that He should afford them a demonstrative proof of His power to take vengeance also, that both the disciples might learn, and the Jews, that being able to blast them that crucify Him, of His own will He submits, and does not blast them; and it was not His will to show forth this upon men; upon the plant did He furnish the proof of His might in taking vengeance. But when unto places, or unto plants, or unto brutes, any such thing as this is done, be not curious, neither say, how was the fig-tree justly dried up, if it was not the time *of figs*; for this it is the utmost trifling to say; but behold the miracle, and admire and glorify the worker thereof.

Since in the case also of the swine that were drowned, many have said this, working out the argument of justice; but neither there should one give heed, for these again are brutes, even as that was a plant without life.

Wherefore then was the act invested with such an appearance, and with this plea for a curse? As I said, this was the disciple's suspicion.

But if it was not yet time, vainly do some say the law is here meant. For the fruit of this was faith, and then was the time of this fruit, and it had indeed borne it; *"For already [John 4:35] are the fields white to harvest,"* says He; and, *"I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor."* [John 4:38]

2. Not any therefore of these things does He here intimate, but it is what I said, He displays His power to punish, and this is shown by saying, *"The time was not yet,"* making it clear that of this special purpose He went, and not for hunger, but for His disciples' sake, who indeed marvelled exceedingly, although many miracles had been done greater; but, as I said, this was strange, for now first He showed forth His power to take vengeance. Wherefore not in any other, but in the moistest of all planted things did He work the miracle, so that hence also the miracle appeared greater.

And that you might learn, that for their sakes this was done, that He might train them to feel confidence, hear what He says afterwards. But what says He? *"You also shall do greater things, if you are willing to believe and to be confident in prayer."* Do you see that all is done for their sake, so that they might not be afraid and tremble at plots against them? Wherefore He says this a second time also, to make them cleave to prayer and faith. *"For not this only shall you do, but also shall remove mountains; and many more things shall you do, being confident in faith and prayer."*

But the boastful and arrogant Jews, wishing to interrupt His teaching, came unto Him, and asked, *"By what authority doest thou these things?"* [Matthew 21:23] For since they could not object against the miracles, they bring forward against Him the correction of the traffickers in the temple.

And this in John also they appear to ask, although not in these words, but with the same intent. For there too they say, "*What sign do you show unto us? Seeing that you do these things.*" But there He answers them, saying, "*Destroy this temple, and I in three days will raise it up,*" whereas here He drives them into a difficulty. Whence it is manifest, that then indeed was the beginning and prelude of the miracles, but here the end.

But what they say is this: Have you received the teacher's chair? Have you been ordained a priest, that you displayed such authority? It is said. And yet He had done nothing implying arrogance, but had been careful for the good order of the temple, yet nevertheless having nothing to say, they object against this. And indeed when He cast them out, they did not dare to say anything, because of the miracles, but when He showed Himself, then they find fault with Him.

What then says He? He does not answer them directly, to show that, if they had been willing to see His authority, they could; but He asks them again, saying, "*The baptism of John, whence is it? From heaven, or of men?*"

And what sort of inference is this? The greatest surely. For if they had said, from heaven, He would have said unto them, why then did ye not believe him? For if they had believed, they would not have asked these things. For of Him John had said, "*I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe;*" and, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world;*" and, "*This is the Son of God;*" and, "*He that comes from above is above all;*" [John 4:31] and, "*His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor.*" [Matthew 3:12] So that if they had believed him, there was nothing to hinder them from knowing by what authority Christ does these things.

After this, because they, dealing craftily, said, "*We know not*," He said not, neither know I, but what? "*Neither tell I you*." [Matthew 21:27] For if indeed they had been ignorant it would have been requisite for them to be instructed; but since they were dealing craftily with good reason He answers them nothing.

And how was it they did not say that the baptism was of men? "*They feared the people*" [Matthew 21:26] it is said. Do you see a perverse heart? In every case they despise God and do all things for the sake of men. For this man too they feared for their sakes not reverencing the saint but on account of men, and they were not willing to believe in Christ, because of men, and all their evils were engendered to them from hence.

After this, He says, "*What do you think? A man had two sons; and he says to the first, go, work today in the vineyard. But he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go sir: and went not. Whether then of them two did the will of his father? They say, the first.*"

Again He convicts them by a parable, intimating both their unreasonable obstinacy, and the submissiveness of those who were utterly condemned by them. For these two children declare what came to pass with respect to both the Gentiles and the Jews. For the former not having undertaken to obey, neither having become hearers of the law, showed forth their obedience in their works; and the latter having said, "*All that the Lord shall speak, we will do, and will hearken*," [Exodus 19:8] in their works were disobedient. And for this reason, let me add, that they might not think the law would benefit them, He shows that this self-same thing condemns them, like as Paul also says, "*Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*" For this intent, that He might

make them even self-condemned, He causes the judgment to be delivered by themselves, like as He does also in the ensuing parable of the vineyard.

3. And that this might be done, He makes trial of the accusation in the person of an other. For since they were not willing to confess directly, He by a parable drives them on to what He desired.

But when, not understanding His sayings, they had delivered the judgment, He unfolds His concealed meaning after this, and says, *"Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of Heaven before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and you believed him not; but the publicans believed him; and you, when you had seen it, repented not afterwards, that you might believe him."* [Matthew 21:31-32]

For if He had said simply, harlots go before you, the word would have seemed to them to be offensive; but now, being uttered after their own judgment it appears to be not too hard.

Therefore He adds also the accusation. What then is this? *"John came,"* He says, *"unto you,"* not unto them, and not this only, but; also *"in the way of righteousness."* *"For neither with this can you find fault, that he was some careless one, and of no profit; but both his life was irreprehensible, and his care for you great, and you gave no heed to him."*

And with this there is another charge also, that publicans gave heed; and with this, again another, that *"not even after them did ye. For you should have done so even before them, but not to do it even after them was to be deprived of all excuse;"* and unspeakable was both the praise of the one, and the charge against the other. *"To you he came, and you accepted him not; he came not to them, and they receive him, and not even them did ye take for instructors."*

See by how many things is shown the commendation of those, and the charge against these. To you he came, not to them. You believed not, this

offended not them. They believed, this profited not you.

But the word, "*go before you*," is not as though these were following, but as having a hope, if they were willing. For nothing, so much as jealousy, rouses the grosser sort. Therefore He is ever saying, "*The first shall be last, and the last first*." Therefore He brought in both harlots and publicans, that they might provoke them to jealousy.

For these two indeed are chief sins, engendered of violent lust, the one of sexual desire, the other of the desire of money. And He indicates that this especially was hearing the law of God, to believe John. For it was not of grace only, that harlots entered in, but also of righteousness. For not, as continuing harlots, did they enter in, but having obeyed and believed, and having been purified and converted, so did they enter in.

Do you see how He rendered His discourse less offensive, and more penetrating, by the parable, by His bringing in the harlots? For neither did He say at once, wherefore believed ye not John? But what was much more pricking, when, He had put forward the publicans and the harlots, then He added this, by the order of their actions convicting their unpardonable conduct, and showing that for fear of men they do all things, and for vainglory. For they did not confess Christ for fear, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; and again, of John they dared not speak evil, and not even this from reverence, but for fear. All which things He convicted by His sayings, and with more severity afterwards did He go on to inflict the blow, saying, "*But you, when you knew it, repented not afterwards, that you might believe him*."

For an evil thing it is not at the first to choose the good, but it is a heavier charge not even to be brought round. For this above all makes many wicked, which I see to be the case with some now from extreme insensibility.

But let no one be like this; but though he be sunk down to the extremity of wickedness, let him not despair of the change for the better. For it is an easy thing to rise up out of the very abysses of wickedness.

Heard ye not how that harlot, that went beyond all in lasciviousness, outshone all in godly reverence. Not the harlot in the gospels do I mean, but the one in our generation, who came from Phœnice, that most lawless city. For she was once a harlot among us, having the first honors on the stage, and great was her name everywhere, not in our city only, but even as far as the Cilicians and Cappadocians. And many estates did she ruin, and many orphans did she overthrow; and many accused her of sorcery also, as weaving such toils not by her beauty of person only, but also by her drugs. This harlot once won even the brother of the empress, for mighty indeed was her tyranny.

But all at once, I know not how, or rather I do know well, for it was being so minded, and converting, and bringing down upon herself God's grace, she despised all those things, and having cast away the arts of the devils, mounted up to heaven.

And indeed nothing was more vile than she was, when she was on the stage; nevertheless, afterwards she outwent many in exceeding continence, and having clad herself with sackcloth, all her time she thus disciplined herself. On the account of this woman both the governor was stirred up, and soldiers armed, yet they had not strength to carry her off to the stage, nor to lead her away from the virgins that had received her.

This woman having been counted worthy of the unutterable mysteries, and having exhibited a diligence proportionate to the grace (given her) so ended her life, having washed off all through grace, and after her baptism having shown forth much self-restraint. For not even a mere sight of herself did she allow to those who were once her lovers, when they had come for

this, having shut herself up, and having passed many years, as it were, in a prison. Thus *"shall the last be first, and the first last;"* thus do we in every case need a fervent soul, and there is nothing to hinder one from becoming great and admirable:

4. Let no man then of them that live in vice despair; let no man who lives in virtue slumber. Let neither this last be confident, for often the harlot will pass him by; nor let the other despair, for it is possible for him to pass by even the first.

Hear what God says unto Jerusalem, *"I said, after she had committed all these whoredoms, Turn thou unto me, and she returned not."*

[Jeremiah 3:7] When we have come back unto the earnest love of God, He remembers not the former things. God is not as man, for He reproaches us not with the past, neither does He say, Why were you absent so long a time? When we repent; only let us approach Him as we ought. Let us cleave to Him earnestly, and rivet our hearts to His fear.

Such things have been done not under the new covenant only, but even under the old. For what was worse than Manasseh? But he was able to appease God. What more blessed than Solomon? But when he slumbered, he fell. Or rather I can show even both things to have taken place in one, in the father of this man, for he the same person became at different times both good and bad. What more blessed than Judas? But he became a traitor. What more wretched than Matthew? But he became an evangelist. What worse than Paul? But he became an apostle. What more to be envied than Simon? But he became even himself the most wretched of all.

How many other such changes would you see, both to have taken place of old, and now taking place every day? For this reason then I say, Neither let him on the stave despair, nor let him in the church be confident. For to this last it is said, *"Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall;"*

[1 Corinthians 10:12] and to the other, *"Shall not he that falls arise?"* [Jeremiah 8:4] and, *"Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees."* Again, to these He says, *"Watch;"* but to those, *"Awake, you that sleepest and arise from the dead."* [Ephesians 5:14] For these need to preserve what they have, and those to become what they are not; these to preserve their health, those to be delivered from their infirmity, for they are sick; but many even of the sick become healthy, and of the healthy many by remissness grow infirm.

To the one then He says, *"Behold, you are made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you;"* [John 5:14] but to these, *"Will you be made whole? Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house."* For a dreadful, dreadful palsy is sin, or rather it is not palsy only, but also somewhat else more grievous. For such a one is not only in inactivity as to good works, but also in the active doing of evil works. But nevertheless, though thou be so disposed, and be willing to rouse yourself a little, all the terrors are at an end.

Though you have been so *"thirty and eight years,"* and art earnest to become whole, there is no one to hinder you. Christ is present now also, and says, *"Take up your bed,"* only be willing to rouse yourself, despair not. Have you no man? But you have God. Have you no one to put you into the pool? But you have Him who suffers you not to need the pool. Have you had no one to cast you in there? But you have Him that commands you to take up your bed.

You may not say, *"While I am coming, another steps down before me."* [John 5:7] For if it be your will to go down into the fountain, there is none to hinder you. Grace is not consumed, is not spent, it is a kind of fountain springing up constantly; by His fullness are we all healed both soul and body. Let us come unto it then even now. For Rahab also was a harlot, yet

was she saved; and the thief was a murderer, yet he became a citizen of paradise; and while Judas being with his Master perished, the thief being on a cross became a disciple. Such are the wonderful works of God. Thus the magi approved themselves, thus the publican became an evangelist, thus the blasphemer an apostle.

5. Look at these things, and never despair, but be ever confident, and rouse yourself. Lay hold only on the way that leads there, and you will advance quickly. Shut not up the doors, close not up the entrance. Short is the present life, small the labor. But though it were great, not even so ought one to decline it. For if you toil not at this most glorious toil that is spent upon repentance and virtue, in the world you will assuredly toil and weary yourself in other ways. But if both in the one and the other there be labor, why do we not choose that which has its fruit abundant, and its recompense greater.

Yet neither is this labor and that the same. For in worldly pursuits are continual perils, and losses one upon another, and the hope uncertain; great is the servility, and the expenditure alike of wealth, and of bodies, and of souls; and then the return of the fruits is far below our expectation, if perchance it should grow up.

For neither does toil upon worldly matters everywhere bear fruit; nay but even, when it has not failed, but has brought forth its produce even abundantly, short is the time wherein it continues.

For when you are grown old, and hast no longer after that the feeling of enjoyment in perfection, then and not till then does the labor bear you its recompense. And whereas the labor was with the body in its vigor, the fruit and the enjoyment is with one grown old and languid, when time has dulled even the feeling, although if it had not dulled it, the expectation of the end suffers us not to find pleasure.

But in the other case not so, but the labor is in corruption and a dying body, but the crown is incorruptible, and immortal, and having no end. And the labor is both first and short-lived; but the reward both subsequent and endless, that with security you may take your rest after that, looking for nothing unpleasant.

For neither may thou fear change any more or loss as here. What sort of good things, then, are these, which are both insecure, and short-lived, and earthly, and vanishing before they have appeared, and acquired with many toils? And what good things are equal to those, that are immovable, that grow not old, that have no toil, that even at the time of the conflicts bring you crowns?

For he that despises money even here already receives his reward, being freed from anxiety, from rivalry, from false accusation, from plotting from envy. He that is temperate, and lives orderly, even before his departure, is crowned and lives in pleasure, being delivered from unseemliness, ridicule, dangers of accusation, and the other things that are to be feared. All the remaining parts of virtue likewise make us a return here already.

In order therefore that we may attain unto both the present and the future blessings, let us flee from vice and choose virtue. For thus shall we both enjoy delight, and obtain the crowns to come, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 68 on Matthew

Matt. XXI. 33-44.

"Hear another parable. There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and dug a winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to receive the fruits. And the husbandmen took the servants, and beat some, and killed some, and stoned some. Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last he sent unto them his son, saying, It may be they will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the Lord therefore of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those husbandmen? They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus says unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner?"

Many things does He intimate by this parable, God's providence, which had been exercised towards them from the first; their murderous disposition from the beginning; that nothing had been omitted of whatever pertained to a heedful care of them; that even when prophets had been slain, He had not turned away from them, but had sent His very Son; that the God both of the New and of the Old Testament was one and the same; that His death should effect great blessings; that they were to endure extreme

punishment for the crucifixion, and their crime; the calling of the Gentiles, the casting out of the Jews.

Therefore He puts it after the former parable, that He may show even hereby the charge to be greater, and highly unpardonable. How, and in what way? That although they met with so much care, they were worse than harlots and publicans, and by so much.

And observe also both His great care, and the excessive idleness of these men. For what pertained to the husbandmen, He Himself did, the hedging it round about, the planting the vineyard, and all the rest, and He left little for them to do; to take care of what was there, and to preserve what was given to them. For nothing was left undone, but all accomplished; and not even so did they gain, and this, when they had enjoyed such great blessings from Him. For when they had come forth out of Egypt, He gave a law, and set up a city, and built a temple, and prepared an altar.

"And went into a far country;" that is, He bore long with them, not always bringing the punishments close upon their sins; for by His going into a far country, He means His great long-suffering.

And *"He sent His servants,"* that is, the prophets, *"to receive the fruit;"* that is, their obedience, the proof of it by their works. But they even here showed their wickedness, not only by failing to give the fruit, after having enjoyed so much care, which was the sign of idleness, but also by showing anger towards them that came. For they that had not to give when they owed, should not have been indignant, nor angry, but should have entreated. But they not only were indignant, but even filled their hands with blood, and while deserving punishment, themselves inflicted punishment.

Therefore He sent both a second, and a third company, both that the wickedness of these might be shown, and the love towards man of Him who sent them.

And wherefore sent He not His Son immediately? In order that they might condemn themselves for the things done to the others, and leave off their wrath, and reverence Him when He came. There are also other reasons, but for the present let us go on to what is next. But what means, *"It may be they will reverence?"* It is not the language of one ignorant, away with the thought! But of one desiring to show the sin to be great; and without any excuse. Since Himself knowing that they would slay Him, He sent Him. But He says, *"They will reverence,"* declaring what ought to have been done, that it was their duty to have revered Him. Since elsewhere also He says, *"if perchance they will hear;"* [Ezekiel 2:5] not in this case either being ignorant, but lest any of the obstinate should say, that His prediction was the thing that necessitated their disobedience, therefore He frames His expressions in this way, saying, *"Whether they will,"* and, *"It may be."* For though they had been obstinate towards His servants, yet ought they to have revered the dignity of the Son.

What then do these? When they ought to have run unto Him, when they ought to have asked pardon for their offenses, they even persist more strongly in their former sins, they proceed to add unto their pollutions, forever throwing into the shade their former offenses by their later; as also He Himself declared when He said, *"Fill ye up the measure of your fathers."* [Matthew 23:32] For from the first the prophets used to charge them with these things, saying, *"Your hands are full of blood;"* [Isaiah 1:15] and, *"They mingle blood with blood;"* [Hosea 4:2] and, *"They build up Sion with blood."* [Micah 3:10]

But they did not learn self-restraint, albeit they received this commandment first, *"You shall not kill;"* and had been commanded to abstain from countless other things because of this, and by many and various means urged to the keeping of this commandment.

Yet, for all that, they put not away that evil custom; but what say they, when they saw Him? Come, let us kill Him. With what motive, and for what reason? What of any kind had they to lay to His charge, either small or great? Is it that He honored you, and being God became man for your sakes, and wrought His countless miracles? Or that He pardoned your sins? Or that He called you unto a kingdom?

But see together with their impiety great was their folly, and the reason of His murder was full of much madness. *"For let us kill Him,"* it is said, *"and the inheritance shall be ours."*

And where do they take counsel to kill Him? *"Out of the vineyard."*

2. Do you see how He prophesies even the place where He was to be slain. *"And they cast Him out, and slew Him."*

And Luke indeed says, that He declared what these men should suffer; and they said, *"God forbid;"* and He added the testimony [of Scripture]. For *"He beheld them, and said, What is it then that is written? The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner; and every one that falls upon it shall be broken."* [Luke 20:17-18] But Matthew, that they themselves delivered the sentence. But this is not a contradiction. For indeed both things were done, both themselves passed the sentence against themselves; and again, when they perceived what they had said, they added, *"God forbid;"* and He set up the prophet against them, persuading them that certainly this would be.

Nevertheless, not even so did He plainly reveal the Gentiles, that He might afford them no handle, but signified it darkly by saying, *"He will give the vineyard to others."* For this purpose then did He speak by a parable, that themselves might pass the sentence, which was done in the case of David also, when He passed judgment on the parable of Nathan. But do

thou mark, I pray you, even hereby how just is the sentence, when the very persons that are to be punished condemn themselves.

Then that they might learn that not only the nature of justice requires these things, but even from the beginning the grace of the Spirit had foretold them, and God had so decreed, He both added a prophecy, and reproves them in a way to put them to shame, saying, *"Did ye never read, The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes;"* by all things showing, that they should be cast out for unbelief, and the Gentiles brought in. This He darkly intimated by the Canaanitish woman also; this again by the ass, and by the centurion, and by many other parables; this also now.

Wherefore He added too, *"This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes,"* declaring beforehand that the believing Gentiles, and as many of the Jews as should also themselves believe, shall be one, although the difference between them had been so great before.

Then, that they might learn that nothing was opposed to God's will of the things doing, but that the event was even highly acceptable, and beyond expectation, and amazing every one of the beholders (for indeed the miracle was far beyond words), He added and said, *"It is the Lord's doing."* And by the stone He means Himself, and by builders the teachers of the Jews; as Ezekiel also says, *"They that build the wall, and daub it with untempered mortar."* [Ezekiel 13:10] But how did they reject Him? By saying, *"This man is not of God; [John 9:16] This man deceives the people;"* [John 7:12] and again, *"You are a Samaritan, and hast a devil."* [John 8:48]

Then, that they might know that the penalty is not limited to their being cast out, He added the punishments also, saying, *"Every one that falls on this stone, shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall*

grind him to powder." He speaks here of two ways of destruction, one from stumbling and being offended; for this is, "*Whosoever falls on this stone:*" but another from their capture, and calamity, and utter destruction, which also He clearly foretold, saying, "*It will grind him to powder.*" By these words He darkly intimated His own resurrection also.

Now the Prophet Isaiah says, that He blames the vineyard, but here He accuses in particular the rulers of the people. And there indeed He says, "*What ought I to have done to my vineyard, that I did not;*" [Isaiah 5:4] and elsewhere again, "*What transgression have your fathers found in me?*" [Jeremiah 2:5] And again, "*O my people, what have I done unto you? And wherein have I grieved you?*" [Micah 6:3] showing their thankless disposition, and that when in the enjoyment of all things, they requited it by the contraries; but here He expresses it with yet greater force. For He does not plead, Himself, saying, "*What ought I to have done that I have not done?*" but brings in themselves to judge, that nothing has been wanting, and to condemn themselves. For when they say, "*He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen,*" they say nothing else than this, publishing their sentence with much greater force.

With this Stephen also upbraids them, which thing most of all stung them, that having enjoyed always much providential care, they requited their benefactor with the contraries, which very thing itself was a very great sign, that not the punisher, but the punished, were the cause of the vengeance brought upon them.

This here likewise is shown, by the parable, by the prophecy. For neither was He satisfied with a parable only, but added also a twofold prophecy, one David's, the others from Himself.

What then ought they to have done on hearing these things? Ought they not to have adored, to have marvelled at the tender care, that shown before, that afterwards? But if by none of these things they were made better, by the fear of punishment at any rate ought they not to have been rendered more temperate?

But they did not become so, but what do they after these things? *"When they had heard it,"* it is said, *"they perceived that He spoke of them. And when they sought to lay hands on Him, they were afraid because of the multitudes, for they took Him for a prophet."* For they felt afterwards that they themselves were intimated. Sometimes indeed, when being seized, He withdraws through the midst of them, and is not seen; and sometimes while appearing to them He lays a check upon their laboring eagerness; at which indeed men marveled, and said, *"Is not this Jesus? Lo, He speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto Him."* But in this instance, forasmuch as they were held in restraint by the fear of the multitude, He is satisfied with this, and does not work miracles, as before, withdrawing through the midst, and not appearing. For it was not His desire to do all things in a superhuman way, in order that the Dispensation might be believed.

But they, neither by the multitude, nor by what had been said, were brought to a sound mind; they regarded not the prophet's testimony, nor their own sentence, nor the disposition of the people; so entirely had the love of power and the lust of vainglory blinded them, together with the pursuit of things temporal.

3. For nothing so urges men headlong and drives them down precipices, nothing so makes them fail of the things to come, as their being riveted to these decaying things. Nothing so surely makes them enjoy both the one and the other, as their esteeming the things to come above all. For, *"Seek ye,"* says Christ, *"the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be*

added unto you." And indeed, even if this were not joined, not even in that case ought we to aim at them. But now in obtaining the others, we may obtain these two; and not even so are some persuaded, but are like senseless stones, and pursue shadows of pleasure. For what is pleasant of the things in this present life? What is delightful? For with greater freedom do I desire to discourse with you today; but suffer it, that you may learn that this life which seems to you to be a galling and wearisome life, I mean that of the monks and of them that are crucified, is far sweeter, and more to be desired than that which seems to be easy, and more delicate.

And of this you are witnesses, who often have asked for death, in the reverses and despondencies that have overtaken you, and have accounted happy them that are in mountains, them that are in caves, them that have not married, them that live the unworldly life; ye that are engaged in crafts, you that are in military services, you that live without object or rules, and pass your days at the theatres and orchestras. For of these, although numberless fountains of pleasures and mirth seem to spring up, yet are countless darts still more bitter brought forth.

For if any one be seized with a passion for one of the damsels that dance there, beyond ten thousand marches, beyond ten thousand journeys from home, will he undergo a torture more grievous, being in a more miserable state than any besieged city.

However, not to inquire into those things for the present, having left them to the conscience of those that have been taken captive, come let us discourse of the life of the common sort of men, and we shall find the difference between either of these kinds of life as great as between a harbor, and a sea continually beaten about with winds.

And observe from their retreats at once the first signs of their tranquillity. For they have fled from market places, and cities, and the

tumults amidst men, and have chosen the life in mountains, that which has nothing in common with the things present, that which undergoes none of the ills of man, no worldly sorrows, no grief, no care so great, no dangers, no plots, no envy, no jealousy, no lawless lusts, nor any other thing of this kind.

Here already they meditate upon the things of the kingdom, holding converse with groves, and mountains, and springs, and with great quietness, and solitude, and before all these, with God. And from all turmoil is their cell pure, and from every passion and disease is their soul free, refined and light, and far purer than the finest air.

And their work is what was Adam's also at the beginning and before his sin, when he was clothed with the glory, and conversed freely with God, and dwelt in that place that was full of great blessedness. For in what respect are they in a worse state than he, when before his disobedience he was set to till the garden? Had he no worldly care? But neither have these. Did he talk to God with a pure conscience? This also do these; or rather they have a greater confidence than he, inasmuch as they enjoy even greater grace by the supply of the Spirit.

Now ye ought indeed by the sight to take in these things; but forasmuch as you are not willing, but pass your time in turmoils and in markets, by word at least let us teach you, taking one part of their way of living (for it is not possible to go over their whole life). These that are the lights of the world, as soon as the sun is up, or rather even long before its rise, rise up from their bed, healthy, and wakeful, and sober (for neither does any sorrow and care, nor headache, and toil, and multitude of business, nor any other such thing trouble them, but as angels live they in Heaven); having risen then straightway from their bed cheerful and glad, and having made one choir, with their conscience bright, with one voice all, like as out

of one mouth, they sing hymns unto the God of all, honoring Him and thanking Him for all His benefits, both particular, and common.

So that if it seem good, let us leave Adam, and inquire what is the difference between the angels and this company of them who on earth sing and say, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."*

And their dress is suitable to their manliness. For not indeed, like those with trailing garments, the enervated and mincing, are they dressed, but like those blessed angels, Elijah, Elisha, John, like the apostles; their garments being made for them, for some of goat's hair, for some of camel's hair, and there are some for whom skins suffice alone, and these long worn.

Then, after they have said those songs, they bow their knees, and entreat the God who was the object of their hymns for things, to the very thought of which some do not easily arrive. For they ask nothing of things present, for they have no regard for these, but that they may stand with boldness before the fearful judgment-seat, when the Only-Begotten Son of God has come to judge quick and dead, and that no one may hear the fearful voice that says, *"I know you not,"* and that with a pure conscience and many good deeds they may pass through this toilsome life, and sail over the angry sea with a favorable wind. And he leads them in their prayers, who is their Father, and their ruler.

After this, when they have risen up and finished those holy and continual prayers, the sun being risen, they depart each one to their work, gathering thence a large supply for the needy.

4. Where now are they who give themselves to devilish choirs, and harlot's songs, and sit in theatres? For I am indeed ashamed to make mention of them; nevertheless, because of your infirmity it is needful to do even this. For Paul too says, *"Like as you have yielded your members*

servants to uncleanness, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

Come let us also therefore compare the company that is made up of harlot women, and prostituted youths on the stage, and this same that consists of these blessed ones in regard of pleasure, for which most of all, many of the careless youths are taken in their snares. For we shall find the difference as great as if any one heard angels singing above that all-harmonious melody of theirs, and dogs and swine howling and grunting on the dunghill. For by the mouths of these Christ speaks, by their tongues the devil.

But is the sound of pipes joined to them with unmeaning noise, and unpleasing show, when cheeks are puffed out, and their strings stretched to breaking? But here the grace of the Spirit pours forth a sound, using, instead of flute or lyre or pipes, the lips of the saints.

Or rather, whatever we may say, it is not possible to set forth the pleasure thereof, because of them that are riveted to their clay, and their brick-making? Therefore I would even wish to take one of those who are mad about these matters, and to lead him off there, and to show him the choir of those saints, and I should have no more need for these words. Nevertheless, though we speak unto miry ones, we will try, though by word, still little by little, to draw them out of the slime and the fens. For there the hearer receives straightway the fire of illicit love; for as though the sight of the harlot were not enough to set the mind on fire, they add the mischief also from the voice; but here even should the soul have any such thing, it lays it aside straightway. But not their voice only, nor their countenance, but even their clothes do more than these confound the beholders. And should it be some poor man of the grosser and heedless sort, from the sight he will cry out ten thousand times in bitter despair, and will say to himself, "*The*

harlot, and the prostituted boy, children of cooks and cobblers, and often even of slaves live in such delicacy, and I a freeman, and born of freemen, choosing honest labor, am not able so much as to imagine these things in a dream;" and thus he will go his way inflamed with discontent.

But in the case of the monks there is no such result, but rather the contrary altogether. For when he shall see children of rich men and descendants of illustrious ancestors clothed in such garments as not even the lowest of the poor, and rejoicing in this, consider how great a consolation against poverty he will receive as he goes away. And should he be rich, he returns sobered, become a better man. Again in the theatre, when they see the harlot clothed with golden ornaments, while the poor man will lament, and bemoan, seeing his own wife having nothing of the kind, the rich will in consequence of this spectacle condemn and despise the partners of their home. For when the harlot presents to the beholders garb and look, and voice and step, all luxurious, they depart set on fire, and enter into their own houses, thenceforth captives.

Hence the insults, and the affronts, hence the enmities, the wars, the daily deaths; hence to them that are taken captive, life is insupportable, and the partner of their home thenceforth displeasing, and their children not as much objects of affection, and all things in their houses turned upside down, and after that they seem to be thrown into disorder by the very sunbeam.

But not from these choirs does any such dissatisfaction arise, but the wife will receive her husband quiet and meek, freed from all unlawful lust, and will find him more gentle to her than before this. Such evil things does that choir bring forth, but this good things, the one making wolves of sheep, this lambs of wolves. But as yet we have perhaps said nothing hitherto touching the pleasure.

And what could be more pleasant than not to be troubled or grieved in mind, neither to despond and groan? Nevertheless, let us carry on our discourse still further, and examine the enjoyment of either kind of song and spectacle; and we shall see the one indeed continuing until evening, so long as the spectator sits in the theatre, but after this paining him more grievously than any sting; but in the other case forever vigorous in the souls of them that have beheld it. For as well the fashion of the men, and the delightfulness of the place, and the sweetness of their manner of life, and the purity, of their rule, and the grace of that most beautiful and spiritual song they have for ever instilled in them. They at least who are in continual enjoyment of those havens, thenceforth flee as from a tempest, from the tumults of the multitude.

But not when singing only, and praying, but also when riveted to their books, they are a pleasing spectacle to the beholders. For after they have ended the choir, one takes Isaiah and discourses with him, another converses with the apostles, and another goes over the labors of other men, and seeks wisdom concerning God, concerning this universe, concerning the things that are seen, concerning the things that are not seen, concerning the objects of sense, and the objects of intellect, concerning the vileness of this present life, and the greatness of that to come.

5. And they are fed on a food most excellent, not setting before themselves cooked flesh of beasts; but oracles of God, beyond honey and the honey comb, a honey marvellous, and far superior to that whereon John fed of old in the wilderness. For this honey no wild bees collect, settling on the flowers, neither do lay it up in hives digesting the dew, but the grace of the Spirit forming it, lays it up in the souls of the saints, in the place of honeycombs, and hives, and pipes, so that he that will may eat thereof

continually in security. These bees then they also imitate, and hover around the honeycombs of those holy books, reaping therefrom great pleasure.

And if you desire to learn about their table, be near it, and you shall see them bursting forth with such things, all gentle and sweet, and full of a spiritual fragrance. No foul word can those spiritual mouths bring forth, nothing of foolish jesting, nothing harsh, but all worthy of Heaven. One would not be wrong in comparing the mouths of them that crawl about in the market places, and are mad after worldly things, to ditches of some mire; but the lips of these to fountains flowing with honey, and pouring forth pure streams.

But if any felt displeased that I have called the mouths of the multitude ditches of some mire, let him know that I have said it, sparing them very much. For Scripture has not used this measure, but a comparison far stronger. *"For adder's poison,"* it is said, *"is under their lips, and their throat is an open sepulchre."* But theirs are not so, but full of much fragrance.

And their state here is like this, but that hereafter what speech can set before us? What thought shall conceive? The portion of angels, the blessedness unspeakable, the good things untold?

Perchance some are warmed now, and have been moved to a longing after this good rule of life. But what is the profit, when while you are here only, you have this fire; but when you have gone forth, you extinguish the flame, and this desire fades. How then, in order that this may not be? While this desire is warm in you, go your way unto those angels, kindle it more. For the account that we give will not be able to set you on fire, like as the sight of the things. Say not, I will speak with my wife, and I will settle my affairs first. This delay is the beginning of remissness. Hear, how one desired to bid farewell to them at his house, [1 Kings 19:20] and the prophet

suffered him not. And why do I say, to bid farewell? The disciple desired to bury his father, [Matthew 8:21-22] and Christ allowed not so much as this. And yet what thing seems to you to be so necessary as the funeral of a father? But not even this did He permit.

Why could this have been? Because the devil is at hand fierce, desiring to find some secret approach; and though it be but a little hindrance or delay he takes hold of, he works a great remissness. Therefore one advises, "*Put not off from day to day.*" [Sirach 5:7] For thus shall you be able to succeed in most things, thus also shall the things in your house be well ordered for you. "*For seek ye,*" it is said, "*the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.*" [Matthew 6:33] For if we establish in great security them that overlook their own interests, and prefer the care of ours, much more does God, who even without these things has a care for us, and provides for us.

Be not thoughtful then about your interests, but leave them to God. For if you are thoughtful about them, you are thoughtful as a man; but if God provide, He provides as God. Be not so thoughtful about them as to let go the greater things, since then He will not much provide for them. In order therefore that He may fully provide for them, leave them to Him alone. For if you also yourself takest them in hand, having let go the things spiritual, He will not make much provision for them.

In order then that both these things may be well disposed for you, and that you may be freed from all anxiety, cleave to the things spiritual, overlook the things of the world; for in this way you shall have earth also with heaven, and shall attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 69 on Matthew

Matt. XXII. 1-14.

" And Jesus answered and spoke again in parables. The kingdom of Heaven is like a certain king, which made a marriage for his son; and sent forth his servants to call them which were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."

Do you see both in the former parable and in this the difference between the Son and the servants? Do you see at once the great affinity between both parables, and the great difference also? For this also indicates God's long-suffering, and His great providential care, and the Jews' ingratitude.

But this parable has something also more than the other. For it proclaims beforehand both the casting out of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; and it indicates together with this also the strictness of the life required, and how great the punishment appointed for the careless.

And well is this placed after the other. For since He had said, *"It shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof,"* He declares next to what kind of nation; and not this only, but He also again sets forth His providential care towards the Jews as past utterance. For there He appears before His crucifixion bidding them; but here even after He is slain, He still urges them, striving to win them over. And when they deserved to have

suffered the most grievous punishment, then He both presses them to the marriage, and honors them with the highest honor. And see how both there He calls not the Gentiles first, but the Jews, and here again. But as there, when they would not receive Him, but even slew Him when He had come, then He gave away the vineyard; thus here too, when they were not willing to be present at the marriage, then He called others.

What then could be more ungrateful than they, when being bidden to a marriage they rush away? For who would not choose to come to a marriage, and that a King's marriage, and of a King making a marriage for a Son?

And wherefore is it called a marriage? One may say. That you might learn God's tender care, His yearning towards us, the cheerfulness of the state of things, that there is nothing sorrowful there, nor sad, but all things are full of spiritual joy. Therefore also John calls Him a bridegroom, therefore Paul again says, *"For I have espoused you to one husband;"* [2 Corinthians 11:2] and, *"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."* [Ephesians 5:32]

Why then is not the bride said to be espoused to Him, but to the Son? Because she that is espoused to the Son, is espoused to the Father. For it is indifferent in Scripture that the one or the other should be said, because of the identity of the substance.

Hereby He proclaimed the resurrection also. For since in what went before He had spoken of the death, He shows that even after the death, then is the marriage, then the bridegroom.

But not even so do these become better men nor more gentle, than which what can be worse? For this again is a third accusation. The first that they killed the prophets; then the son; afterwards that even when they had slain Him, and were bidden unto the marriage of Him that was slain, by the very one that was slain, they come not, but feign excuses, yokes of oxen,

and pieces of ground, and wives. And yet the excuses seem to be reasonable; but hence we learn, though the things which hinder us be necessary, to set the things spiritual at a higher price than all.

And He not suddenly, but a long time before. For, *"Tell,"* He says, *"them that are bidden;"* and again, *"Call them that were bidden;"* which circumstance makes the charge against them heavier. And when were they bidden? By all the prophets; by John again; for unto Christ he would pass all on, saying, *"He must increase, I must decrease;"* [John 3:30] by the Son Himself again, *"Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you;"* and again, *"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."* [John 7:37]

But not by words only, but also by actions did He bid them, after His ascension by Peter, and those with him. *"For He that wrought effectually in Peter,"* it is said, *"to the apostleship of the circumcision, was mighty also in me towards the Gentiles."*

For since on seeing the Son, they were angry and slew Him, He bids them again by His servants. And unto what does He bid them? Unto labors, and toils, and sweat? Nay but unto pleasure. For, *"My oxen,"* He says, *"and my fatlings are killed."* See how complete His banquet, how great His munificence.

And not even this shamed them, but the more long-suffering He showed, so much the more were they hardened. For not for press of business, but from *"making light of it,"* they did not come.

"How then do some bring forward marriages, others yokes of oxen? These things surely are of want of leisure."

By no means, for when spiritual things call us, there is no press of business that has the power of necessity.

And to me they seem moreover to make use of these excuses, putting forward these things as cloke for their negligence. And not this only is the grievous thing, that they came not, but also that which is a far more violent and furious act, to have even beaten them that came, and to have used them despitefully, and to have slain them; this is worse than the former. For those others came, demanding produce and fruits, and were slain; but these, bidding them to the marriage of Him that had been slain by them, and these again are murdered.

What is equal to this madness? This Paul also was laying to their charge, when he said, *"Who both killed the Lord, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us."*

Moreover, that they may not say, *"He is an adversary of God, and therefore we do not come,"* hear what they say who are bidding them; that it is the father who is making the marriage, and that it is He who is bidding them.

What then did He after these things? Since they were not willing to come, yea and also slew those that came unto them; He burns up their cities, and sent His armies and slew them.

And these things He says, declaring beforehand the things that took place under Vespasian and Titus, and that they provoked the father also, by not believing in Him; it is the father at any rate who was avenging.

And for this reason let me add, not straightway after Christ was slain did the capture take place, but after forty years, that He might show His long suffering, when they had slain Stephen, when they had put James to death, when they had spitefully entreated the apostles.

Do you see the truth of the event, and its quickness? For while John was yet living, and many other of them that were with Christ, these things

came to pass, and they that had heard these words were witnesses of the events.

See then care utterable. He had planted a vineyard; He had done all things, and finished; when His servants had been put to death, He sent other servants; when those had been slain, He sent the son; and when He was put to death, He bids them to the marriage. They would not come. After this He sends other servants, and they slew these also.

Then upon this He slays them, as being incurably diseased. For that they were incurably diseased, was proved not by their acts only, but by the fact, that even when harlots and publicans had believed, they did these things. So that, not by their own crimes alone, but also from what others were able to do aright, these men are condemned,

But if any one should say, that not then were they out of the Gentiles called, I mean, when the apostles had been beaten and had suffered ten thousand things, but straightway after the resurrection (for then He said to them, "*Go ye and make disciples of all nations.*" [Matthew 28:19]) We would say, that both before the crucifixion, and after the crucifixion, they addressed themselves to them first. For both before the crucifixion, He says to them, "*Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;*" [Matthew 10:6] and after the crucifixion, so far from forbidding, He even commanded them to address themselves to the Jews. For though He said, "*Make disciples of all nations,*" yet when on the point of ascending into Heaven, He declared that unto those first they were to address themselves; For, "*you shall receive power;*" says He, "*after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and unto the uttermost part of the earth;*" [Acts 1:8] and Paul again, "*He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, was mighty in me also toward the Gentiles.*" Therefore the apostles also went

first unto the Jews, and when they had tarried a long time in Jerusalem, and then had been driven away by them, in this way they were scattered abroad unto the Gentiles.

2. And see thou even herein His bounty; *"As many as you shall find,"* says He, *"bid to the marriage."* For before this, as I said, they addressed themselves both to Jews and Greeks, tarrying for the most part in Judæa; but since they continued to lay plots against them, hear Paul interpreting this parable, and saying thus, *"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but since you judge yourselves unworthy, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."*

Therefore Christ also says, *"The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy."*

He knew this indeed even before, but that He might leave them no pretext of a shameless sort of contradiction, although He knew it, to them first He both came and sent, both stopping their mouths, and teaching us to fulfill all our parts, though no one should derive any profit.

Since then they were not worthy, go ye, says He, into the highways, and as many as you shall find, bid; both the common sort, and the outcasts. For because He had said in every way, *"The harlots and publicans shall inherit heaven;"* and, *"The first shall be last, and the last first;"* He shows that justly do these things come to pass; which more than anything stung the Jews, and goaded them far more grievously than their overthrow, to see those from the Gentiles brought into their privileges, and into far greater than theirs.

Then in order that not even these should put confidence in their faith alone, He discourses unto them also concerning the judgment to be passed upon wicked actions; to them that have not yet believed, of coming unto

Him by faith, and to them that have believed, of care with respect to their life. For the garment is life and practice.

And yet the calling was of grace; wherefore then does He take a strict account? Because although to be called and to be cleansed was of grace, yet, when called and clothed in clean garments, to continue keeping them so, this is of the diligence of them that are called.

The being called was not of merit, but of grace. It was fit therefore to make a return for the grace, and not to show forth such great wickedness after the honor. *"But I have not enjoyed,"* one may say, *"so much advantage as the Jews."* Nay, but you have enjoyed far greater benefits. For what things were being prepared for them throughout all their time, these you have received at once, not being worthy. Wherefore Paul also says, *"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy."* [Romans 15:9] For what things were due to them, these you have received.

Wherefore also great is the punishment appointed for them that have been remiss. For as they did despise by not coming, so also thou by thus sitting down with a corrupt life. For to come in with filthy garments is this namely, to depart hence having one's life impure; wherefore also he was speechless.

Do you see how, although the fact was so manifest, He does not punish at once, until he himself, who has sinned, has passed the sentence? For by having nothing to reply he condemned himself, and so is taken away to the unutterable torments.

For do not now, on hearing of darkness, suppose he is punished by this, by sending into a place where there is no light only, but where *"there is"* also *"weeping and gnashing of teeth."* [Matthew 22:13] And this He says, indicating the intolerable pains.

Hear ye, as many as having partaken of the mysteries, and having been present at the marriage, clothe your souls with filthy deeds. Hear whence you were called.

From the highway. Being what? Lame and halt in soul, which is a much more grievous thing than the mutilation of the body. Reverence the love of Him, who called you, and let no one continue to have filthy garments, but let each of you busy himself about the clothing of your soul.

Hear, you women; hear, you men; we need not these garments that are bespangled with gold, *that adorn our outward parts*, but those others, that adorn the inward. Whilst we have these former, it is difficult to put on those latter. It is not possible at the same time to deck both soul and body. It is not possible at the same time both to serve mammon, and to obey Christ as we ought.

Let us put off us therefore this grievous tyranny. For neither if any one were to adorn your house by hanging it with golden curtains, and were to make you sit there in rags, naked, would you endure it with meekness. But lo, now you do this to yourself, decking the house of your soul, I mean the body, with curtains beyond number, but leaving the soul itself to sit in rags. Do you not know that the king ought to be adorned more than the city? So therefore while for the city hangings are prepared of linen, for the king there is a purple robe and a diadem. Even so do thou wrap the body with a much meaner dress, but the mind do thou clothe in purple, and put a crown on it, and set it on a high and conspicuous chariot. For now you are doing the opposite, decking the city in various ways, but suffering the king, the mind, to be dragged bound after the brute passions.

Rememberest thou not, that you are bidden to a marriage, and to God's marriage? Considerest thou not how the soul that is bidden ought to enter into those chambers, clad, and decked with fringes of gold.

3. Will you that I show you them that are clad thus, them that have on a marriage garment?

Call to mind those holy persons, of whom I discoursed to you of late, them that wear garments of hair, them that dwell in the deserts. These above all are the wearers of the garments of that wedding; this is evident from hence, that how many soever purple robes thou were to give them, they would not choose to receive them; but much as a king, if any one were to take the beggar's rags, and exhort him to put them on, would abhor the clothing, so would those persons also his purple robe. And from no other cause have they this feeling, but because of knowing the beauty of their own raiment. Therefore even that purple robe they spurn like the spider's web. For these things has their sackcloth taught them; for indeed they are far more exalted and more glorious than the very king who reigns.

And if you were able to open the doors of the mind, and to look upon their soul, and all their ornaments within, surely you would fall down upon the earth, not bearing the glory of their beauty, and the splendor of those garments, and the lightning brightness of their conscience.

For we could tell also of men of old, great and to be admired; but since visible examples lead on more those of grosser souls, therefore do I send you even to the tabernacles of those holy persons. For they have nothing sorrowful, but as if in heaven they had pitched their tents, even so are they encamped far off the wearisome things of this present life, in campaign against the devils; and as in choirs, so do they war against him. Therefore I say, they have fixed their tents, and have fled from cities, and markets, and houses. For he that wars cannot sit in a house, but he must make his habitation of a temporary kind, as on the point of removing straightway, and so dwell. Such are all those persons, contrary to us. For we indeed live not as in a camp, but as in a city at peace.

For who in a camp ever lays foundation, and builds himself a house, which he is soon after to leave? There is not one; but should any one attempt it, he is put to death as a traitor. Who in a camp buys acres of land, and makes for himself trades? There is not one, and very reasonably. *"For you have come here,"* they would say, *"to fight, not to traffic; why then do you trouble yourself about the place, which in a little time you will leave? When we are gone away to our country, do these things."*

The same do I now say to you also. When we have removed to the city that is above, do these things: or rather you will have no need of labors there; after that the king will do all things for you. But here it is enough to dig a ditch round only, and to fix a palisade, but of building houses there is no need.

Hear what was the life of the Scythians, that lived in their wagons, such, as they say, are the habits of the shepherd tribes. So ought Christians to live; to go about the world, warring against the devil, rescuing the captives held in subjection by him, and to be in freedom from all worldly things.

Why do you prepare a house, O man, that you may bind yourself more? Why do you bury a treasure, and invite the enemy against yourself? Why do you compass yourself with walls, and prepare a prison for yourself?

But if these things seem to you to be hard, let us go away unto the tents of those men, that by their deeds we may learn the easiness thereof. For they having set up huts, if they must depart from these, depart like as soldiers, having left their camp in peace. For so likewise are they encamped, or rather even much more beautifully.

For indeed it is more pleasant to behold a desert containing huts of monks in close succession, than soldiers stretching the canvas in a camp,

and fixing spears, and suspending from the point of the spears saffron garments, and a multitude of men having heads of brass, and the bosses of the shields glistening much, and men armed all throughout with steel, and royal courts hastily made, and ground levelled far, and men dining and piping. For neither is this spectacle so delightful as that of which I now speak.

For if we were to go away into the wilderness, and look at the tents of Christ's soldiers, we shall see not canvas stretched, neither points of spears, nor golden garments making a royal pavilion; but like as if any one upon an earth much larger than this earth, yea infinite, had stretched out many heavens, strange and awful would be the sight he showed; even so may one see here.

For in nothing are their lodging-places in a condition inferior to the heavens; for the angels lodge with them, and the Lord of the angels. For if they came to Abraham, a man having a wife, and bringing up children, because they saw him hospitable; when they find much more abundant virtue, and a man delivered from the body, and in the flesh disregarding the flesh, much more do they tarry there, and celebrate the choral feast that becomes them. For there is moreover a table among them pure from all covetousness, and full of self-denial.

No streams of blood are among them, nor cutting up of flesh, nor heaviness of head, nor dainty cooking, neither are there unpleasing smells of meat among them, nor disagreeable smoke, neither runnings and tumults, and disturbances, and wearisome clamors; but bread and water, the latter from a pure fountain, the former from honest labor. But if any time they should be minded to feast more sumptuously, their sumptuousness consists of fruits, and greater is the pleasure there than at royal tables. There is no fear there, or trembling; no ruler accuses, no wife provokes, no child casts

into sadness, no disorderly mirth dissipates, no multitude of flatterers puffs up; but the table is an angel's table free from all such turmoil.

And for a couch they have grass only beneath them, like as Christ did when making a dinner in the wilderness. And many of them do this, not being even under shelter, but for a roof they have heaven, and the moon instead of the light of a candle, not wanting oil, nor one to attend to it; on them alone does it shine worthily from on high.

4. This table even angels from heaven beholding are delighted and pleased. For if over one sinner that repents they rejoice, over so many just men imitating them, what will they not do? There are not master and slave; all are slaves, all free men. And do not think the saying to be a dark proverb, for they are indeed slaves one of another, and masters one of another.

They have no occasion to be in sadness when evening has overtaken them, as many men feel, revolving the anxious thoughts that spring from the evils of the day. They have no occasion after their supper to be careful about robbers, and to shut the doors, and to put bars against them, neither to dread the other ills, of which many are afraid, extinguishing their candles with strict care, lest a spark anywhere should set the house on fire.

And their conversation again is full of the same calm. For they talk not of these things, whereof we discourse, that are nothing to us; such a one is made governor, such a one has ceased to be governor; such a one is dead, and another has succeeded to the inheritance, and all such like, but always about the things to come do they speak and seek wisdom; and as though dwelling in another world, as though they had migrated unto heaven itself, as living there, even so all their conversation is about the things there, about Abraham's bosom, about the crowns of the saints, about the choiring with Christ; and of things present they have neither any memory nor thought, but

like as we should not deign to speak at all of what the ants do in their holes and clefts; so neither do they of what we do; but about the King that is above, about the war in which they are engaged, about the devil's crafts, about the good deeds which the saints have achieved.

Wherein therefore are we different from ants, when compared with them? For like as they care for the things of the body, so also do we; and would it were for these alone: but now it is even for things far worse. For not for necessary things only do we care like them, but also for things superfluous. For those insects pursue a business free from all blame, but we follow after all covetousness, and not even the ways of ants do we imitate, but the ways of wolves, but the ways of leopards, or rather we are even worse than these. For to them nature has assigned that they should be thus fed, but us God has honored with speech, and a sense of equity, and we have become worse than the wild beasts.

And whereas we are worse than the brutes, those men are equal to the angels, being strangers and pilgrims as to the things here; and all things in them are made different from us, clothing, and food, and house, and shoes, and speech. And if any one were to hear them conversing and us, then he would know full well, how they indeed are citizens of heaven, but we are not worthy so much as of the earth.

So that therefore, when any one invested with rank has come unto them, then is all inflated pride found utterly vain. For the laborer there, and he that has no experience of worldly affairs, sits near him that is a commander of troops, and prides himself on his authority, upon the grass, upon a mean cushion. For there are none to extol him, none to puff him up; but the same result takes place, as if any one were to go to a goldsmith, and a garden of roses, for he receives some brightness from the gold and from the roses; so they too, gaining a little from the splendor of these, are

delivered from their former arrogance. And like as if any were to go upon a high place, though he be exceedingly short, he appears high; so these too, coming unto their exalted minds, appear like them, so long as they abide there, but when they are gone down are abased again, on descending from that height.

A king is nothing among them, a governor is nothing; but like as we, when children are playing at these things, laugh; so do they also utterly spurn the inflamed pride of them who strut without. And this is evident from hence, that if any one would give them a kingdom to possess in security, they would never take it; yet they would take it, unless their thoughts were upon what is greater than it, unless they accounted the thing to be but for a season.

What then? Shall we not go over unto blessedness so great? Shall we not come unto these angels; shall we not receive clean garments, and join in the ceremonies of this wedding feast; but shall we continue begging, in no respect in a better condition than the poor in the streets, or rather in a state far worse and more wretched? For much worse than these are they that are rich in evil ways, and it is better to beg than to spoil, for the one has excuse, but the other brings punishment; and the beggar in no degree offends God, but this other both men and God; and undergoes the labors of rapine, but all the enjoyment thereof other men often reap.

Knowing then these things, let us lay aside all covetousness, and covet the things above, with great earnestness *"taking the kingdom by force."* [Matthew 11:12] For it cannot be, it cannot be that any one who is remiss should enter therein.

But God grant that we all having become earnest, and watchful may attain thereto, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 70 on Matthew

Matt. XXII. 15.

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk."

Then. When? When most of all they ought to have been moved to compunction, when they should have been amazed at His love to man, when they should have feared the things to come, when from the past they ought to have believed touching the future also. For indeed the things that had been said cried aloud in actual fulfillment. I mean, that publicans and harlots believed, and prophets and righteous men were slain, and from these things they ought not to have gainsaid touching their own destruction, but even to believe and to be sobered.

But nevertheless not even so do their wicked acts cease, but travail and proceed further. And forasmuch as they could not lay hands on Him (for they feared the multitude), they took another way with the intention of bringing Him into danger, and making Him guilty of crimes against the state.

For *"they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians saying, Master, we know that you are true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither do you care for any man; for you regard not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What do you think? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?"* [Matthew 22:16-17]

For they were now tributaries, their state having passed under the rule of the Romans. Forasmuch then as they saw that Theudas and Judas [Acts 5:36-37] with their companies for this cause were put to death, as having prepared for a revolt, they were minded to bring Him too by these

words into such a suspicion. Therefore they sent both their own disciples, and Herod's soldiers, digging, as they thought, a precipice on either side, and in every direction setting the snare, so that, whatever He should say, they might lay hold of it; and if He should answer in favor of the Herodians, themselves might find fault with Him, but if in their favor, the others should accuse Him. And yet He had given the didrachmas, but they knew not that.

And in either way indeed they expected to lay hold of Him; but they desired rather that He should say something against the Herodians. Wherefore they send their disciples also to urge Him thereto by their presence, that they might deliver Him to the governor as an usurper. For this Luke also intimates and shows, by saying, that they asked also in the presence of the multitude, so that the testimony should be the stronger.

But the result was altogether opposite; for in a larger body of spectators they afforded the demonstration of their folly.

And see their flattery, and their hidden craft. "*We know,*" their words are, "*that You are true.*" How said ye then, "*He is a deceiver,*" and "*deceives the people,*" and "*has a devil,*" and "*is not of God?*" how a little while before did ye devise to slay Him?

But they are at everything, whatsoever their craft against Him may suggest. For since, when a little before they had said in self will, "*By what authority doest Thou these things?*" [Matthew 21:23] they did not meet with an answer to the question, they look to puff Him up by their flattery, and to persuade Him to say something against the established laws, and opposed to the prevailing government.

Wherefore also they testify the truth unto Him, confessing what was really so, nevertheless, not with an upright mind, nor willingly; and add thereto, saying, "*You care not for any man.*" See how plainly they are desiring to urge Him to these sayings, that would make Him both offend

Herod, and incur the suspicion of being an usurper, as standing up against the laws, so that they might punish Him, as a mover of sedition, and an usurper. For in saying, "*You care not for any man,*" and, "*Thou regardest not the person of man,*" they were hinting at Herod and Cæsar.

"*Tell us therefore, what thinkest Thou?*" Now ye honor Him, and esteem Him a Teacher, having despised and insulted Him oftentimes, when He was discoursing of the things that concern your salvation. Whence also they have become confederates.

And see their craftiness. They say not, Tell us what is good, what is expedient, what is lawful? But, "*What thinkest Thou?*" So much did they look to this one object, to betray Him, and to set Him at enmity with the rulers. And Mark declaring this, and more plainly discovering their self-will, and their murderous disposition, affirms them to have said, "*Shall we give Cæsar tribute, or shall we not give?*" [Mark 12:15] So that they were breathing anger, and travailing with a plot against Him, yet they feigned respect.

What then says He? "*Why do you tempt me, you hypocrites?*" Do you see how He talks with them with more than usual severity? For since their wickedness was now complete and manifest, He cuts the deeper, first confounding and silencing them, by publishing their secret thoughts, and making it manifest to all with what kind of intent they are coming unto Him.

And these things He did, repulsing their wickedness, so that they might not suffer hurt in attempting the same things again. And yet their words were full of much respect, for they both called Him Master, and bore witness to His truth, and that He was no respecter of persons; but being God, He was deceived by none of these things. Wherefore they also ought

to have conjectured, that the rebuke was not the result of conjecture, but a sign of His knowing their secret thoughts.

2. He stopped not, however, at the rebuke, although it was enough merely to have convicted them of their purpose, and to have put them to shame for their wickedness; but He stops not at this, but in another way closes their mouths; for, "*Show me,*" says He, "*the tribute money.*" And when they had shown it, as He ever does, by their tongue He brings out the decision, and causes them to decide, that it is lawful; which was a clear and plain victory. So that, when He asks, not from ignorance does He ask, but because it is His will to cause them to be bound by their own answers. For when, on being asked, "*Whose is the image?*" they said, "*Cæsar's;*" He says, "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.*" For this is not to give but to render, and this He shows both by the image, and by the superscription.

Then that they might not say, You are subjecting us to men, He added, "*And unto God the things that are God's.*" For it is possible both to fulfill to men their claims and to give unto God the things that are due to God from us. Wherefore Paul also says, "*Render unto all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear.*" [Romans 13:7]

But you, when you hear, "*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's,*" know that He is speaking only of those things, which are no detriment to godliness; since if it be any such thing as this, such a thing is no longer Cæsar's tribute, but the devil's.

When they heard these things, their mouths were stopped, and they "*marvelled*" at His wisdom. Ought they not then to have believed, ought they not to have been amazed. For indeed, He gave them proof of His Godhead, by revealing the secrets of their hearts, and with gentleness did He silence them.

What then? Did they believe? By no means, but they *"left Him, and went their way;"* and after them, *"came to Him the Sadducees."*

O folly! When the others had been put to silence, these made the attack, when they ought to have been the more backward. But such is the nature of rashness, shameless, and importunate, and attempting things impossible. Therefore the evangelist also, amazed at their folly, signified this very thing, by saying, *"On that day came to Him."* On that day. On what day? In which He had convicted their craftiness, and put them to shame. But who are these? A sect of the Jews different from the Pharisees, and much worse than they, who said, *"that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit."* [Acts 23:8] For these were some of a grosser sort, and eager after the things of the body. For there were many sects even among the Jews. Wherefore Paul also says, *"I am a Pharisee, of the strictest sect among us."*

And they say nothing indeed directly about a resurrection; but they feign a story, and make up a case, which, as I suppose, never so much as had an existence; thinking to drive Him to perplexity, and desiring to overthrow both things, both the existence of a resurrection, and of such a resurrection.

And again, these too attack Him with a show of moderation, saying, *"Master; Moses said, If a man die, not having children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven?"*

See Him answering these like a teacher. For though out of craft they came unto Him, yet was their question rather one of ignorance. Therefore

neither does He say unto them, "*You hypocrites.*"

Moreover, in order that He might not blame, saying, "*Wherefore had seven one wife?*" they add the authority of Moses; although, as I have said before, it was a fiction, in my judgment at least. For the third would not have taken her, when he saw the two bridegrooms dead; or if the third, yet not the fourth or the fifth; and if even these, much more the sixth or the seventh would not have come unto the woman, but have shrunk from her. For such is the nature of the Jews. For if now many have this feeling, much more then had they; when at least, even without this, they often avoided marrying in this way, and that when the law was constraining them. Thus, at any rate, Ruth, that Moabitish woman, was thrust off to him that was further off from her kindred; and Tamar too was thus compelled to obtain, by stealth, seed from her husband's kinsman.

And wherefore did they not feign two or three, but seven? In order the more abundantly to bring derision, as they thought, upon the resurrection. Wherefore they further say, "*they all had her,*" as driving Him into some difficulty.

What then says Christ? He replies unto both, as taking His stand not against the words, but the purpose, and on every occasion revealing the secrets of their hearts; and at one time exposing them, at another time leaving the refutation of them that question Him to their conscience. See, at any rate here, how He proves both points, as well that there will be a resurrection, as that it will not be such a resurrection as they suspect.

For what says He? "*You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*" [Matthew 22:29] For since, as if they knew them, they put forward Moses and the law, He shows that this question is that of men very ignorant of the Scriptures. For hence also arose their tempting Him, from

their being ignorant of the Scriptures, and from their not knowing the power of God as they ought.

"For what marvel then is it," He says, *"if you tempt me, who am as yet unknown to you, when at least ye know not so much as the power of God, of which you have had so much experience, and neither from common sense nor from the Scriptures have become acquainted with it;"* if indeed even common sense causes us to know this, that to God all things are possible. And in the first place He answers to the question asked. For since this was the cause for their not believing a resurrection, that they think the order of things is like this, He cures the cause, then the symptom also (for thence arose the disease too), and shows the manner of the resurrection. *"For in the resurrection,"* says He, *"they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels of God in Heaven."* But Luke says, *"As Sons of God."*
[Luke 20:36]

If then they marry not, the question is vain. But not because they do not marry, therefore are they angels, but because they are as angels, therefore they do not marry. By this He removed many other difficulties also, all which things Paul intimated by one word, saying, *"For the fashion of this world passes away."* [1 Corinthians 7:31]

And by these words He declared how great a thing the resurrection is; and that moreover there is a resurrection, He proves. And indeed this too was demonstrated at the same time by what He had said, nevertheless over and above He adds again to His word by what He says now. For neither at their question only did He stop, but at their thought. Thus when they are not dealing with great craft, but are asking in ignorance, He teaches even over and above, but when it is of wickedness only, not even to their question does He answer.

And again by Moses does He stop their mouths, since they too had brought forward Moses; and He says, *"But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* Not of them that are not His meaning is, and that are utterly blotted out, and are to rise no more. For He said not, I was, but, I am; of them that are, and them that live. For like as Adam, although he lived on the day that he ate of the tree, died in the sentence: even so also these, although they had died, lived in the promise of the resurrection.

How then does He say elsewhere, *"That He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living?"* [Romans 14:9] But this is not contrary to that. For here He speaks of the dead, who are also themselves to live. And moreover too, *"I am the God of Abraham,"* is another thing from, *"That He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living."* He knew of another death too, concerning which He says, *"Let the dead bury their dead."* [Matthew 8:22]

"And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine." [Matthew 22:33] Yet not even here the Sadducees; but these go away defeated, while the impartial multitude reap the benefit.

Since then the resurrection is like this, come let us do all things, that we may obtain the first honors there. But, if you will, let us show you some even before the resurrection here pursuing and reaping these blessings, again having made our resort to the deserts. For again will I enter upon the same discourse, since I see you listening with more pleasure.

Let us behold then today also the spiritual camps, let us behold their pleasure unalloyed with fear. For not with spears are they encamped like the soldiers, for at this point I lately ended my discourse, neither with shields and breastplates; but bare of all these will you see them, yet achieving such things, as not even with arms do they.

And if you are able to observe, come and stretch forth your hand to me, and let us go unto this war, both of us, and let us see their battle array. For these too fight every day, and slay their adversaries, and conquer all the lusts that are plotting against us; and you will see these cast out on the ground, and not able so much as to struggle, but proving by very deed that saying of the apostle, *"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."* [Galatians 5:24]

Do you see a multitude of dead lying there, slain by the sword of the Spirit? Therefore in that place is no drunkenness nor gluttony. And their table proves it, and the trophy that is set thereon. For drunkenness and gluttony lie dead, put to the rout by the drinking of water, though this be multiform, and a many-headed monster. For like as in the fabled Scylla and Hydra, so in drunkenness may one see many heads, on one side fornication growing up, on another wrath; on one hand sloth, on another lawless lusts; but all these things are taken away. And yet all those other armies, though they get the better in ten thousand wars, are taken captive by these; and neither arms, nor spears, nor whatever else there may be, is able to stand against these phalanxes; but the very giants, the heroes, those that do countless brave deeds, you will find without bonds bound by sleep and drunkenness, without slaughter or wounds lying like the wounded, or rather in more grievous case. For those at least struggle; but these do not even this, but straightway give up.

Do you see that this host is greater and more to be admired? For the enemies that got the better of the others it destroys by its mere will. For they do so weaken the mother of all their evils, that she cannot even trouble them any more; and the leader being overthrown, and the head removed, the rest of the body also lies still.

And this victory one may see each of them, that abide there, achieving. For it is not as in these wars of ours, where, if any enemy has received a blow from one, he is no more grievous to another, having been once overthrown; but it is necessary for all to smite this monster; and he that has not smitten and overthrown her, is surely troubled by her.

Do you see a glorious victory? For such a trophy as the hosts in all parts of the world having met together have not power to erect, this each one of those men erects; and all things that from the army of drunkenness lie mingled together wounded, delirious words of frenzy, insane thoughts, unpleasing haughtiness. And they imitate their own Lord, at whom the Scripture marvelling says, *"He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head."*

Would ye see also another multitude of dead? Let us see the lusts that arise from luxurious living, those that are cherished by the makers of sauces, by the cooks, the furnishers of feasts, the confectioners. For I am ashamed indeed to speak of all; however, I will tell of the birds from Phasis, the soups that are mixed from various things: the moist, the dry dishes, the laws made about these things. For like as if ordering some city and marshalling hosts, even so these too make laws, and ordain such a thing first, and such a thing second, and some bring in first birds roasted on the embers, filled within with fish; and others make of other material the beginnings of these unlawful feasts; and there is much rivalry about these things, about quality, and about order, and about quantity; and they take a pride in the things, for which they ought to bury themselves for shame; some saying that they have spent the half of the day, some all of it, some that they have added the night too. Behold, O wretched man, the measure of your belly, and be ashamed of your unmeasured earnestness!

But there is nothing like this among those angels; but all these desires also are dead. For their meals are not unto fullness, and unto luxurious living, but unto necessity. No bird hunters are there, no fishermen, but bread and water. But this confusion, and the disturbance, and the turmoils, are all removed from thence, alike from the house and from the body, and great is the haven, but among these great the tempest.

Burst open now in thought the belly of them who feed on such things, and you will see the vast refuse, and the unclean channel, and the whited sepulchre.

But what come after these I am even ashamed to tell, the disagreeable eructations, the vomitings, the discharges downwards and upwards.

But go and see even these desires dead there, and those more violent lusts that spring from these; I mean, those of impurity. For these too you will see all overthrown, with their horses, with their beasts of burden. For the beast of burden, and the weapon, and the horse of a filthy deed, is a filthy word. But you will see such like horse and rider together, and their weapons thrown down; but here quite the contrary, and souls cast down dead. But not at their meal only is the victory of these holy men glorious, but in the other things also, in money, in glory, in envy, in all diseases of the soul.

Surely does not this host seem to you mightier than that, and the meal better? Nay, who will gainsay it? None, not even of those persons themselves, though he be very mad. For this guides us on to Heaven, that drags to hell; this the devil lays out, that Christ; for this luxury gives laws, and intemperance, for that self-denial and sobriety, here Christ is present, there the devil. For where there is drunkenness, the devil is there; where there are filthy words, where there is surfeiting, there the devils hold their

choirs. Such a table had that rich man, therefore not even of a drop of water was he master.

But these have not such a table, but they already practise the ways of the angels. They marry not, they are not given in marriage, neither do they sleep excessively, nor live luxuriously, but except a few things they are even bodiless.

Now who is there that so easily overcomes his enemies as he that sets up a trophy while at his dinner? Therefore also the prophet says, "*You have prepared a table before me, in the presence of them that trouble me.*" One could not be wrong in repeating this oracle about this table. For nothing so troubles a soul as disorderly concupiscence, and luxury, and drunkenness, and the evils that spring from these; and this they know full well who have had experience thereof.

And if you were to learn also, whence this table is procured, and whence that; then you would see well the difference between each. Whence then is this procured. From countless tears, from widows defrauded, from orphans despoiled; but the other from honest labor. And this table is like to a fair and well-favored woman, needing nothing external, but having her beauty from nature; but that to some ugly and ill-favored harlot, wearing much paint, but not able to disguise her deformity, but the nearer she is, the more convicted. For this too, when it is nearer to him that is at it, then shows its ugliness more. For look not I tell you, at the banqueters, as they come only, but also as they go away, and then you will see its ugliness. For that, as being free, suffers them that come unto it to say nothing shameful; but this nothing seemly, as being a harlot, and dishonored. This seeks the profit of him that is at it, that the hurt. And one permits not to offend God, the other permits not but that we must offend Him.

Let us go away therefore unto those men. Thence we shall learn with how many bonds we are encompassed. Thence shall we learn to set before ourselves a table full of countless blessings, most sweet, without cost, delivered from care, free from envy and jealousy and every disease, and full of good hope, and having its many trophies. No turmoil of soul there, no sorrow, no wrath; all is calm, all is peace.

For tell me not of the silence of them that serve in the houses of the rich, but of the clamor of them that dine; I mean, not that which they make one to another (for this too is worthy of derision), but that within, that in the soul, that brings on them a great captivity, the tumults of the thoughts, the sleet, the darkness, the tempest, by which all things are mingled and confused, and are like to some night battle. But not in the monks' tents are such things as these; but great is the calm, great the quietness. And that table is succeeded by a sleep that is like death, but this by sobriety and wakefulness; that by punishment, this by the kingdom of heaven, and the immortal rewards.

This then let us follow, that we may enjoy also the fruits thereof; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 71 on Matthew

Matt. XXII. 34-36.

"But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together; and one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Again does the evangelist express the cause, for which they ought to have held their peace, and marks their boldness by this also. How and in what way? Because when those others were put to silence, these again assail Him. For when they ought even for this to hold their peace, they strive to urge further their former endeavors, and put forward the lawyer, not desiring to learn, but making a trial of Him, and ask, *"What is the first commandment?"*

For since the first commandment was this, *"You shall love the Lord your God,"* thinking that He would afford them some handle, as though He would amend it, for the sake of showing that Himself too was God, they propose the question. What then says Christ? Indicating from what they were led to this; from having no charity, from pining with envy, from being seized by jealousy, He says, *"You shall love the Lord your God. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* [Matthew 22:37-39]

But wherefore *"like this?"* Because this makes the way for that, and by it is again established; *"For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light;"* [John 3:20] and again, *"The fool has said in his heart, There is no God."* And what in consequence of this? *"They are corrupt, and become abominable in their ways."* And again, *"The love of money is the*

root of all evils; which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith;" [1 Timothy 6:10] and, *"He that loves me, will keep my commandment."*

But His commandments, and the sum of them, are, *"You shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself."* If therefore to love God is to love one's neighbor, *"For if you love me,"* He says, *"O Peter, feed my sheep,"* [John 21:16-17] but to love one's neighbor works a keeping of the commandments, with reason does He say, *"On these hang all the law and the prophets."* [Matthew 22:40]

So therefore what He did before, this He does here also. I mean, that both there, when asked about the manner of the resurrection, He also taught a resurrection, instructing them beyond what they inquired; and here, being asked the first commandment, He rehearses the second also, which is not much inferior to that (for though second, it is like that), intimating to them, whence the question had arisen, that it was from hatred. *"For charity envies not."* [1 Corinthians 13:4] By this He shows Himself to be submissive both to the law and to the prophets.

But wherefore does Matthew say that he asked, tempting Him, but Mark the contrary? *"For when Jesus,"* he says, *"saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, You are not far from the kingdom of God."* [Mark 12:34]

They are not contradicting each other, but indeed fully agreeing. For he asked indeed, tempting, at the beginning, but being benefitted by the answer, was commended. For not at the beginning did He commend him, but when he had said, *"That to love his neighbor is more than whole burnt sacrifices,"* then He says, *"You are not far from the kingdom;"* because he overlooked low things, and embraced the first principle of virtue. For indeed all those are for the sake of this, as well the Sabbath as the rest.

And not even so did He make His commendation perfect, but yet deficient. For His saying, "*You are not far off*," indicates that he is yet falling short, that he might seek after what was deficient.

But if, when He said, "*There is one God, and there is none other but He*," He commended him, wonder not, but by this too observe, how He answers according to the opinion of them that come unto Him. For although men say ten thousand things about Christ unworthy of His glory, yet this at any rate they will not dare to say, that He is not God at all. Wherefore then does He praise him that said, that beside the Father, there is no other God?

Not excepting Himself from being God; away with the thought; but since it was not yet time to disclose His Godhead, He suffers him to remain in the former doctrine, and praises him for knowing well the ancient principles, so as to make him fit for the doctrine of the New Testament, which He is bringing in its season.

And besides, the saying, "*There is one God, and there is none other but He*," both in the Old Testament and everywhere, is spoken not to the rejection of the Son, but to make the distinction from idols. So that when praising this man also, who had thus spoken, He praises him in this mind.

Then since He had answered, He asks also in turn, "*What think ye of Christ, whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David.*"

See after how many miracles, after how many signs, after how many questions, after how great a display of His unanimity with the Father, as well in words, as in deeds; after having praised this man that said, that there is one God, He asks the question, that they may not be able to say, that He did miracles indeed, yet was an adversary to the law, and a foe to God.

Therefore, after so many things, He asks these questions, secretly leading them on to confess Him also to be God. And the disciples He asked first what the others say, and then themselves; but these not so; for surely

they would have said a deceiver, and a wicked one, as speaking all things without fear. So for this cause He inquires for the opinion of these men themselves.

For since He was now about to go on to His passion, He sees forth the prophecy that plainly proclaims Him to be Lord; and not as having come to do this without occasion, nor as having made this His aim, but from a reasonable cause.

For having asked them first, since they answered not the truth concerning Him (for they said He was a mere man), to overthrow their mistaken opinion, He thus introduces David proclaiming His Godhead. For they indeed supposed that He was a mere man, wherefore also they said, *"the Son of David;"* but He to correct this brings in the prophet witnessing to His being Lord, and the genuineness of His Sonship, and His equality in honor with His Father.

And not even at this does He stop, but in order to move them to fear, He adds what follows also, saying, *"Till I make Your enemies Your footstool;"* that at least in this way He might gain them over.

And that they may not say, that it was in flattery he so called Him, and that this was a human judgment, see what He says, *"How then does David in spirit call Him Lord?"* See how submissively He introduces the sentence and judgment concerning Himself. First, He had said, *"What do you think? Whose Son is He?"* so by a question to bring them to an answer. Then since they said, *"the Son of David,"* He said not, *"And yet David says these things,"* but again in this order of a question, *"How then does David in spirit call Him Lord?"* in order that the sayings might not give offense to them. Wherefore neither did He say, What think ye of me, but of Christ. For this reason the apostles also reasoned submissively, saying, *"Let us speak freely of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried."* [Acts 2:29]

And He Himself too in like manner for this cause introduces the doctrine in the way of question and inference, saying, "*How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand, until I make Your foes Your footstool;*" [Matthew 22:44] and again, "*If David then call Him Lord, how is He then his Son,*" [Matthew 22:45] not taking away the fact that He is his Son, away with the thought; for He would not then have reproved Peter for this, but to correct their secret thoughts. So that when He says, "*How is He his Son?*" He means this, not so as you say. For they said, that He is Son only, and not also Lord. And this after the testimony, and then submissively, "*If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?*"

But, nevertheless, even when they had heard these things, they answered nothing, for neither did they wish to learn any of the things that were needful. Wherefore He Himself adds and says, that "*He is his Lord.*" Or rather not even this very thing does He say without support, but having taken the prophet with Him, because of His being exceedingly distrusted by them, and evil reported of among them. To which fact we ought to have special regard, and if anything be said by Him that is lowly and submissive, not to be offended, for the cause is this, with many other things also, that He talks with them in condescension.

Wherefore now also He delivers His doctrine in the manner of question and answer; but He darkly intimates even in this way His dignity. For it was not as much to be called Lord of the Jews, as of David.

But mark thou also, I pray you, how seasonable it is. For when He had said, "*There is one Lord,*" then He spoke of Himself that He is Lord, and showed it by prophecy, no more by His works only. And He shows the Father Himself taking vengeance upon them in His behalf, for He says, "*Until I make Your enemies Your footstool,*" and great unanimity even

hereby on the part of Him that begot Him towards Himself, and honor. And upon His reasonings with them He does set this end high and great, and sufficient to close fast their mouths.

For they were silent from thenceforth, not willingly, but from their having nothing to say; and they received so deadly a blow, as no longer to dare to attempt the same things any more. For, *"no one,"* it is said, *"dared from that day forth ask Him any more questions."* [Matthew 22:46]

And this was no little advantage to the multitude. Therefore also unto them does He henceforth direct His word, having removed the wolves, and having repulsed their plots.

For those men gained nothing, taken captive by vainglory, and having fallen upon this terrible passion. For terrible is this passion and many-headed, for some set their heart upon power for the sake of this, some on wealth, some on strength. But proceeding in order it goes on unto almsgiving also, and fasting, and prayers, and teaching, and many are the heads of this monster.

But to be vainglorious indeed about those other things is nothing wonderful; but to be so about fasting and prayer, this is strange and lamentable.

But that we may not again blame only, come and let us tell the means, by which we shall avoid this. Against whom shall we prepare to contend first, against those that are vainglorious of money, or those of dress, or those of places of power, or those of sciences, or those of art, or those of their person, or those of beauty, or those of ornaments, or those of cruelty, or those of humanity and almsgiving, or those of wickedness, or those of death, or those after death? For indeed, as I have said, this passion has many links, and goes on beyond our life. For such a one, it is said, is dead, and

that he may be held in admiration, has charged that such and such things be done; and therefore such a one is poor, such a one rich.

For the grievous thing is this, that even of opposite things is it made up.

Against whom then shall we stand, and let ourselves in array first? For one and the same discourse suffices not against all. Will ye then that it be against them that are vainglorious about almsgiving?

To me at least it seems well; for exceedingly do I love this thing, and am pained at seeing it marred, and vainglory plotting against it, like a pandering nurse against some royal damsel. For she feeds her in deed, but for disgrace and mischief, prostituting her and commanding her to despise her father; but to deck herself to please unholy and often despicable men; and invests her with such a dress, as strangers wish, disgraceful, and dishonorable, not such as the father.

Come now, then, let us take our aim against these; and let there be an almsgiving made in abundance for display to the multitude. Surely then, first vainglory leads her out of her Father's chamber. And whereas her Father requires not to appear so much as to the left hand, [Matthew 6:3] she displays her to the slaves, and to the vulgar, that have not even known her.

Do you see a harlot, and pander, casting her into the love of foolish men, that according as they require, so she may order herself? Do you desire to see how it renders such a soul not a harlot only, but insane also?

Mark then her mind. For when she lets go heaven and runs after fugitives and menial slaves, pursuing through streets and lanes them that hate her, the ugly and deformed, them that are not willing so much as to look at her, them that, when she burns with love towards them, hate her, what can be more insane than this? For no one do the multitude hate so much, as those that want the glory they have to bestow. Countless

accusations at least do they frame against them, and the result is the same, as if any one were to bring down a virgin daughter of the king from the royal throne, and to require her to prostitute herself to gladiators, who abhorred her. These then, as much as you pursue them, so much do they turn away from you; but God, if you seek the glory that comes from Him, so much the more both draws you unto Himself, and commends you, and great is the reward He renders unto you.

But if you are minded in another way also to discern the mischief thereof, when you give for display and ostentation, consider how great the sorrow that then comes upon you, and how continual the desponding, while Christ's voice is heard in your ears, saying, [Matthew 6:1] "*You have lost all your reward.*" For in every matter indeed vainglory is a bad thing, yet most of all in beneficence, for it is the utmost cruelty, making a show of the calamities of others, and all but upbraiding those in poverty. For if to mention one's own good actions is to upbraid, what do you think it is to publish them even to many others.

How then shall we escape the danger? If we learn how to give alms, if we see after whose good report we are to seek. For tell me, who has the skill of almsgiving? Plainly, it is God, who has made known the thing, who best of all knows it, and practises it without limit. What then? If you are learning to be a wrestler, to whom do you look? Or to whom do you display your doings in the wrestling school, to the seller of herbs, and of fish, or to the trainer? And yet they are many, and he is one. What then, if while he admires you, others deride you, will you not with him deride them?

What, if you are learning to box, will you not look in like manner to him who knows how to teach this? And if you are practising oratory, will you not accept the praise of the teacher of rhetoric, and despise the rest.

How then is it other than absurd, in other arts to look to the teacher only, but here to do the contrary? Although the loss be not equal. For there, if you wrestle according to the opinion of the multitude, and not that of the teacher, the loss is in the wrestling; but here it is in eternal life. You have become like to God in giving alms; be thou then like Him in not making a display. For even He said, when healing, that they should tell no man.

But do you desire to be called merciful among men? And what is the gain? The gain is nothing; but the loss infinite. For these very persons, whom you call to be witnesses, become robbers of your treasures that are in the heavens; or rather not these, but ourselves, who spoil our own possessions, and scatter what we have laid up above.

O new calamity! This strange passion. Where moth corrupts not, nor thief breaks through, vainglory scatters. This is the moth of those treasures there; this the thief of our wealth in heaven; this steals away the riches that cannot be spoiled; this mars and corrupts all. For because the devil saw that that place is impregnable to thieves and to the worm, and the other plots against them, he by vainglory steals away the wealth.

But do you desire glory? Does not then that suffice you which is given by the receiver himself, that from our gracious God, but do you set your heart on that from men also? Take heed, lest you undergo the contrary, lest some condemn you as not showing mercy, but making a display, and seeking honor, as making a show of the calamities of others.

For indeed the showing of mercy is a mystery. Shut therefore the doors, that none may see what it is not pious to display. For our mysteries too are above all things, a showing of God's mercy and loving-kindness. According to His great mercy, He had mercy on us being disobedient.

And the first prayer too is full of mercy, when we entreat for the energumens; and the second again, for others under penance seeking for

much mercy; and the third also for ourselves, and this puts forward the innocent children of the people entreating God for mercy. For since we condemn ourselves for sins, for them that have sinned much and deserve to be blamed we ourselves cry; but for ourselves the children; for the imitators of whose simplicity the kingdom of heaven is reserved. For this image shows this, that they who are like those children, lowly and simple, these above all men are able to deliver the guilty by their prayers.

But the mystery itself, of how much mercy, of how much love to man it is full, the initiated know.

Do thou then, when according to your power you are showing mercy to a man, shut the doors, let the object of your mercy see it only; but if it be possible, not even he. But if you set them open, you are profanely exposing your mystery.

Consider that the very person, whose praise you seek, even himself will condemn you; and if he be a friend, will accuse you to himself; but if an enemy, he will deride you unto others also. And you will undergo the opposite of what you desire. For thou indeed desirest that he should call you the merciful man; but he will not call you this, but the vainglorious, the man-pleaser, and other names far more grievous than these.

But if you should hide it, he will call you all that is opposite to this; the merciful, the kind. For God suffers it not to be hidden; but if you conceal it, the other will make it known, and greater will be the admiration, and more abundant the gain. So that even for this very object of being glorified, to make a display is against us; for with respect to the thing unto which we most hasten and press, as to this most especially is this thing against us. For so far from obtaining the credit of being merciful, we obtain even the contrary, and besides this, great is the loss we undergo.

For every motive then let us abstain from this, and set our love on God's praise alone. For thus shall we both attain to honor here, and enjoy the eternal blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 72 on Matthew

Matt. XXIII. 1-3.

" Then spoke Jesus to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you do, that do; but do not after their works. "

Then. When? When He had said these things, when He had stopped their mouths; when He had brought them that they should no more dare to tempt Him; when He had shown their state incurable.

And since He had made mention of *"the Lord"* and *"my Lord,"* He recurs again to the law. And yet the law said nothing of this kind, but, *"The Lord your God is one Lord."* [Deuteronomy 6:4] But Scripture calls the whole Old Testament the law.

But these things He says, showing by all things His full agreement with Him that begot Him. For if He were opposed, He would have said the opposite about the law; but now He commands so great reverence to be shown towards it, that, even when they that teach it are depraved, He charges them to hold to it.

But here He is discoursing about their life and morals, since this was chiefly the cause of their unbelief, their depraved life, and the love of glory. To amend therefore His hearers; that which in the first place most contributes to salvation, not to despise our teachers, neither to rise up against our priests, this does He command with superabundant earnestness. But He does not only command it, but also Himself does it. For though they were depraved, He does not depose them from their dignity; to them rendering their condemnation heavier, and to His disciples leaving no cloke for disobedience.

I mean, that lest any one should say, that because my teacher is bad, therefore am I become more remiss, He takes away even this pretext. So much at any rate did He establish their authority, although they were wicked men, as even after so heavy an accusation to say, "*All whatsoever they command you to do, do.*" For they speak not their own words, but God's, what He appointed for laws by Moses. And mark how much honor He showed towards Moses, again showing His agreement with the Old Testament; since indeed even by this does He make them objects of reverence. "*For they sit,*" He says, "*on Moses' seat.*" For because He was not able to make them out worthy of credit by their life, He does it from the grounds that were open to Him, from their seat, and their succession from him. But when you hear all, do not understand all the law, as, for instance, the ordinances about meats, those about sacrifices, and the like; for how was He to say so of these things, which He had taken away beforehand? But He meant all things that correct the moral principle, and amend the disposition, and agree with the laws of the New Testament, and suffer them not any more to be under the yoke of the law.

Wherefore then does He give these things divine authority, not from the law of grace, but from Moses? Because it was not yet time, before the crucifixion, for these things to be plainly declared.

But to me He seems, in addition to what has been said, to be providing for another object, in saying these things. For since He was on the point of accusing them, that He might not seem in the sight of the foolish to set His heart on this authority of theirs, or for enmity to be doing these things, first He removed this thought, and having set himself clear from suspicion, then begins His accusation. And for what intent does He convict them, and run out into a long discourse against them? To set the multitude on their guard, so that they might not fall into the same sins. For neither is dissuading like

pointing out those that have offended; much as recommending what is right, is not like bringing forward those that have done well. For this cause also He is beforehand in saying, "*Do not after their works.*" For, lest they should suppose, because of their listening to them, they ought also to imitate them, He uses this means of correction, and makes what seems to be their dignity a charge against them. For what can be more wretched than a teacher, when the preservation of his disciples is, not to give heed to his life? So that what seems to be their dignity is a most heavy charge against them, when they are shown to live such a life, as they that imitate are ruined.

For this cause He also falls upon His accusations against them, but not for this only, but that He might show, that both their former unbelief wherewith they had not believed, and the crucifixion after this, which they dared to perpetrate, were not a charge against Him who was crucified and disbelieved, but against their perverseness.

But see whence He begins, and whence He aggravates His blame of them. "*For they say,*" He says, "*and do not.*" For every one is worthy of blame in transgressing the law, but especially he that bears the authority of teaching, for doubly and triply does he deserve to be condemned. For one cause, because he transgresses; for another, that as he ought to amend others, and then halts, he is worthy of a double punishment, because of his dignity; and in the third place, that he even corrupts the more, as committing such transgression in a teacher's place.

And together with these He mentions also another charge against them, that they are harsh to those accountable to them.

"*For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they will not move them with their finger.*" He mentions here a twofold wickedness, their requiring great and extreme strictness of life, without any indulgence, from those over whom they rule,

and their allowing to themselves great security; the opposite to which the truly good ruler ought to hold; in what concerns himself, to be an unpardoning and severe judge, but in the matters of those whom he rules, to be gentle and ready to make allowances; the contrary to which was the conduct of these men.

2. For such are all they who practise self restraint in mere words, unpardoning and grievous to bear as having no experience of the difficulty in actions. And this itself too is no small fault, and in no ordinary way increases the former charge.

But do thou mark, I pray you, how He aggravates this accusation also. For He did not say, "*they cannot*," but, "*they will not*." And He did not say, "*to bear*," but, "*to move with a finger*," that is, not even to come near them, nor to touch them.

But wherein are they earnest, and vigorous? In the things forbidden. For, "*all their works they do*," He says, "*to be seen of men*." [Matthew 23:5] These things He says, accusing them in respect of vainglory, which kind of thing was their ruin. For the things before were signs of harshness and remissness, but these of the mad desire of glory. This drew them off from God, this caused them to strive before other spectators, and ruined them. For whatever kind of spectators any one may have, since it has become his study to please these, such also are the contests he exhibits. And he that wrestles among the noble, such also are the conflicts he takes in hand, but he among the cold and supine, himself also becomes more remiss. For instance, has any one a beholder that delights in ridicule? He himself too becomes a mover of ridicule, that he may delight the spectator: has another one who is earnest minded, and practises self-government? He endeavors himself to be such as he is, since such is the disposition of him who praises him.

But see again that here too the charge is with aggravation. For neither is it that they do some things in this way, some in another way, but all things absolutely this way.

Then, having blamed them for vainglory, He shows that it is not even about great and necessary things they are vainglorious (for neither had they these, but were destitute of good works), but for things without warmth or worth, and such as were certain proofs of their baseness, the phylacteries, the borders; of their garments. *"For they make broad their phylacteries,"* He says, *"and enlarge the borders of their garments."* [Matthew 23:5]

And what are these phylacteries, and these borders? Since they were continually forgetting God's benefits, He commanded His marvellous works to be inscribed on little tablets, and that these should be suspended from their hands (wherefore also He said, *"They shall be immoveable in your eyes"*), which they called phylacteries; as many of our women now wear Gospels hung from their necks. And in order that by another thing again they may be reminded, like as many often do, binding round their finger with a piece of linen or a thread, as being likely to forget, this God enjoined them as children to do, *"to sew a ribbon of blue on their garments, upon the fringe that hung round their feet, that they might look at it, and remember the commandments;"* and they were called *"borders."*

In these things then they were diligent, making wide the strips of the tablets, and enlarging the borders of their garments; which was a sign of the most extreme vanity. For wherefore are you vainglorious, and dost make these wide? What, is this your good work? What does it profit you at all, if you gain not the good results from them. For God seeks not the enlarging of these and making them wide, but our remembering His benefits. But if for almsgiving and prayer, although they be attended with labor, and be good

deeds on our parts, we must not seek vainglory, how do you, O Jew, pride yourself in these things, which most of all convict your remissness.

But they not in these only, but in other little things, suffered from this disease.

For, *"they love,"* He says, *"the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi."* For these things, although one may think them small, yet are they a cause of great evils. These things have overthrown both cities and churches.

And it comes upon me now even to weep, when I hear of the first seats, and the greetings, and consider how many ills were hence engendered to the churches of God, which it is not necessary to publish to you now; nay rather as many as are aged men do not even need to learn these things from us.

But mark thou, I pray you, how vainglory prevailed; when they were commanded not to be vainglorious, even in the synagogues, where they had entered to discipline others.

For to have this feeling at feasts, to howsoever great a degree, does not seem to be so dreadful a thing; although even there the teachers ought to be held in reverence, and not in the church only, but everywhere. And like as a man, wherever he may appear, is manifestly distinguished from the brutes; so also ought the teacher, both speaking and holding his peace, and dining, and doing whatever it may be, to be distinguished as well by his gait, as by his look, and by his garb, and by all things generally. But they were on every account objects of ridicule, and in every respect disgraced themselves, making it their study to follow what they ought to flee. For they love them, it is said; but if the loving them be a matter of blame, what a

thing must the doing them be; and to hunt and strive after them, how great an evil.

3. The other things then He carried no further than to accuse them, as being small and trifling, and as though His disciples needed not at all to be corrected about these matters; but what was a cause of all the evils, even ambition, and the violent seizing of the teacher's chair, this He brings forward, and corrects with diligence, touching this vehemently and earnestly charging them.

For what says He? "*But be not ye called Rabbi.*" Then follows the cause also; "*For one is your master, and all you are brethren;*" [Matthew 23:8] and one has nothing more than another, in respect of his knowing nothing from himself. Wherefore Paul also says, "*For who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers?*" [1 Corinthians 3:5] He said not masters. And again, "*Call not, father,*" [Matthew 23:9] not that they should not call, but they may know whom they ought to call Father, in the highest sense. For like as the master is not a master principally; so neither is the father. For He is cause of all, both of the masters, and of the fathers.

And again He adds, "*Neither be ye called guides, for one is your guide, even Christ;*" and He said not, I. For like as above He said, "*What think ye of Christ?*" and He said not, "*of me,*" so here too.

But I should be glad to ask here, what they would say, who are repeatedly applying the term one, one, to the Father alone, to the rejection of the Only-begotten. Is the Father guide? All would declare it, and none would gainsay it. And yet "*one,*" He says, "*is your guide, even Christ.*" For like as Christ, being called the one guide, casts not out the Father from being guide; even so the Father, being called Master, does not cast out the Son from being Master. For the expression, one, one, is spoken in contradistinction to men, and the rest of the creation.

Having warned them therefore against this grievous pest, and amended them, He instructs also how they may escape it; by humility. Wherefore He adds also, *"He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. For whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and whosoever shall abase himself shall be exalted."*

For nothing is equal to the practice of modesty, wherefore He is continually reminding them of this virtue, both when He brought the children into the midst, and now. And, when on the mount, beginning the beatitudes, He began from hence. And in this place, He plucks it up by the roots hereby, saying, *"He that abases himself shall be exalted."*

Do you see how He draws off the hearer right over to the contrary thing. For not only does He forbid him to set his heart upon the first place, but requires him to follow after the last. For so shall you obtain your desire, He says. Wherefore he that pursues his desire for the first, must follow after the last place. *"For he that abases himself shall be exalted."*

And where shall we find this humility? Will ye that we go again to the city of virtue, the tents of the holy men, the mountains, I mean, and the groves? For there too shall we see this height of humility.

For men, some illustrious from their rank in the world, some from their wealth, in every way put themselves down, by their vesture, by their dwelling, by those to whom they minister; and, as in written characters, they throughout all things inscribe humility.

And the things that are incentives of arrogance, as to dress well, and to build houses splendidly, and to have many servants, things which often drive men even against their will to arrogance; these are all taken away. For they themselves light their fire, they themselves cleave the logs, themselves cook, themselves minister to those that come there.

No one can be heard insulting there, nor seen insulted, nor commanded, nor giving commands; but all are devoted to those that are waited on, and every one washes the strangers' feet, and there is much contention about this. And he does it, not inquiring who it is, neither if he be a slave, nor if he be free; but in the case of every one fulfills this service. No man there is great nor mean. What then? Is there confusion? Far from it, but the highest order. For if any one be mean, he that is great sees not this, but has accounted himself again to be inferior even to him, and so becomes great.

There is one table for all, both for them that are served, and for them that serve; the same food, the same clothes, the same dwellings, the same manner of life. He is great there, who eagerly seizes the mean task. There is not mine and yours, but this expression is exterminated, that is a cause of countless wars.

4. And why do you marvel, if there be one manner of life and table and dress for all, since indeed there is even one soul to all, not in substance only (for this is with all men also), but in love? How then should it ever be lifted up itself against itself? There is no wealth and poverty there, honor and dishonor; how then should haughtiness and arrogance find an entrance? For they are indeed little and great in respect of their virtue; but, as I have said, no one sees this. He that is little, feels not pain, as despised; for neither is there any one to despise him; and should any one spurn him, this above all are they taught, to be despised, to be spurned, to be set at nought, in word and in deed. And with the poor and maimed do they associate, and their tables are full of these guests; so that for this are they worthy of the heavens. And one tends the wounds of the mutilated, another leads the blind by the hand, a third bears him that is lamed of his leg.

There is no multitude of flatterers or parasites there; or rather they know not even what flattery is; whence then could they be lifted up at any time? For there is great equality among them, wherefore also there is much facility for virtue.

For by these are they of an inferior sort better instructed, than if they were compelled to give up the first place to them.

For like as the impetuous man derives instruction from him that is smitten, and submits to it; so the ambitious from him that claims not glory, but despises it. This they do there abundantly, and as the strife is great with us to obtain the first place, so great is it with them not to obtain it, but utterly to refuse it; and great is their earnest desire who shall have the advantage in honoring, not in being honored.

And besides, even their very employments persuade them to practise moderation, and not to be high-swollen. For who, I pray you, digging in the earth, and watering, and planting, or making baskets, or weaving sackcloth, or practising any other handy works, will ever be proud? Who dwelling in poverty and wrestling with hunger, will ever be sick of this disease? There is not one. Therefore humility is easy to them. And like as here, it is a hard thing to be lowly minded, for the multitude of them who applaud and admire us, so there it is exceedingly easy.

And that man gives heed only to the wilderness, and sees birds flying, and trees waving, and a breeze blowing, and streams rushing through glens. Whence then should he be lifted up who dwells in solitude so great?

Not however that therefore we have from this an excuse, in that we are proud when living in the midst of men. For surely Abraham, when amidst Canaanites, said, "*I am but dust and ashes;*" [Genesis 18:27] and David, when in the midst of camps, "*I am a worm, and no man;*" and the apostle, in the midst of the world, "*I am not meet to be called an apostle.*"

[1 Corinthians 15:9] What comfort shall we have then; what plea, when even, having such great examples, we do not practise moderation? For even as they are worthy of countless crowns, having been the first that went the way of virtue, even so are we deserving of countless punishments, who not even after those that are departed, and are set before us in books, no nor even after these that are living, and held in admiration through their deeds, are drawn on to the like emulation.

For what couldest thou say, for not being amended? Are you ignorant of letters, and hast not looked into the Scriptures that you might learn the virtues of them of old? To say the truth, this is itself blameworthy, when the church is constantly standing open, not to enter in, and partake of those sacred streams.

However, although thou know not the departed by the Scriptures, these living men you ought to see. But is there no one to lead you? Come to me, and I will show you the places of refuge of these holy men; come and learn thou of them something useful. Shining lamps are these in every part of the earth; as walls are they set about the cities. For this cause have they occupied the deserts, that they may instruct you to despise the tumults in the midst of the world.

For they, as being strong, are able even in the midst of the raging of the waters to enjoy a calm; but thou, who art leaky on every side, hast need of tranquility, and to take breath a little, after the successive waves. Go then there continually, that, having purged away the abiding stain by their prayers and admonitions, you may both pass in the best manner the present life, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 73 on Matthew

Matt. XXIII. 14.

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: therefore you shall receive greater damnation."

After this, next He derides them for gluttony: and the grievous thing was, that not from rich men's goods, but from the poor they indulged their own belly, and aggravated their poverty, which they should have relieved. For neither did they merely eat, but devoured.

Moreover also the manner of their overreaching was yet more grievous, *"for a pretense making long prayers."*

For every one is worthy of vengeance who does any evil thing; but he that is deriving even the reason for so doing from godliness, and is using this cloke for his wickedness, is justly liable to a far more grievous punishment. And wherefore did He not depose them? Because the time suffered it not as yet. So therefore He lets them alone for a time, but by His sayings, He secures that the people be not deceived, lest, through the dignity of those men, they be drawn on to the same emulation.

For as He had said, *"Whatsoever they bid you do, that do;"* He shows how many things they do amiss, lest from thence He should be supposed among the unwise to commit all to them.

"Woe unto you, for you shut up the kingdom against men; for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." But if to profit no one be a charge against a man, even to hurt and hinder, what plea has that? But what means, *"them that are entering in?"* Them that are fit for it. For when they were to lay injunctions on others, they used to

make the burdens intolerable, but when they themselves were to do any of the things required, on the contrary, so far from doing anything, they went much beyond this in wickedness, they even used to corrupt others. These are they that are called pests, who make their employment the ruin of others, standing right contrary to teachers. For if it be the part of a teacher to save that which is perishing, to destroy that which is on the point of being saved is that of a destroyer.

After this, again another charge: "*You compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves;*" that is, not even the fact that hardly you have taken him, and with endless toils, induces you to be sparing towards him, although of the things we have hardly acquired, we are more sparing, but you not even this renders more gentle.

Here He lays to their charge two things; one, that they are unprofitable for the salvation of the many, and need much toil in order to win over even one; another, that they were remiss in the preservation of him whom they had gained, or rather that they were not only careless, but even traitors, by their wickedness in their life corrupting him, and making him worse. For when the disciple sees his teachers to be such as these, he becomes worse than they. For he stops not at his teacher's wickedness; but as when his teacher is virtuous, he imitates him, so when he is bad, he even goes beyond him, by reason of our proneness to what is evil.

And He calls him "*a child of hell,*" that is, a very hell. And He said "*twofold more than you,*" that He might both alarm those, and make these feel the more severely, because they are teachers of wickedness. And not this only, but because they labor to instill into their disciples a greater wickedness, hardening them to a much greater depravity than they have, and this is above all a mark of a depraved soul.

Then He derides them for folly also, because they bade them disregard the greater commandments. And yet before He had said the opposite, that *"they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne."* But these things too they did again and were doing everything for the corruption of those who were subject to them, in little things requiring strictness, and despising the great.

"For you pay tithe," He says, *"of mint and anise, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith. These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone."*

Here then He naturally says it, where it is tithe and almsgiving, for what does it hurt to give alms? But not to keep the law; for neither does it say thus. Therefore here indeed He says, *"These ought ye to have done;"* but where He is speaking about clean and unclean, He no longer adds this, but makes a distinction, and shows that the inward purity is necessarily followed by the outward, but the converse is no longer so.

For where there is a plea of love to man, He passes it over lightly, for this very reason, and because it was not yet time expressly and plainly to revoke the things of the law. But where it is an observance of bodily purification, He overthrows it more plainly.

So, therefore, while with respect to alms He says, *"These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone,"* touching purifications He speaks not on this wise, but what? *"You make clean,"* He says, *"the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion, and injustice. Cleanse that which is within the cup, that the outside may be clean also."* And He took it from a thing confessed and manifest, from a cup and platter.

2. Then, to show that there is no harm arising from despising bodily cleansings, but very great vengeance from not regarding the purifications of the soul, which is virtue, He called these *"a gnat,"* for they are small and

nothing, but those other a camel, for they were beyond what men could bear. Wherefore also He says, "*Straining at the gnat, and swallowing the camel.*" For indeed the one were enacted for the sake of the other, I mean of mercy and judgment; so that not even then did they profit being done alone. For whereas the little things were mentioned for the sake of the great, and after that these last were neglected, and labor was spent on those alone, nothing was gained even then by this. For the greater followed not the lesser, but the lesser were sure to follow these greater.

But these things He says to show, that even before grace had come, these were not among the principal things, or among those upon which men should spend their labor, but the matters required were different. But if before the grace they were so, much more when high commandments had come, were these things unprofitable, and it was not meet to practise them at all.

In every case then is vice a grievous thing, but especially when it does not so much as think it needs amendment; and it is yet more grievous, when it thinks itself sufficient even to amend others; to express which Christ calls them "*blind guides.*" For if for a blind man not to think he needs a guide be extreme misery and wretchedness; when he wishes himself to guide others, see to what a gulf it leads.

But these things He said, by all intimating their mad desire of glory, and their exceeding frenzy concerning this pest. For this became a cause to them of all their evils, namely, that they did all things for display. This both led them away from the faith, and caused them to neglect what really is virtue, and induced them to busy themselves about bodily purifyings only, neglecting the purifications of the soul. So therefore to lead them into what really is virtue, and to the purifyings of the soul, He makes mention of mercy, and judgment, and faith. For these are the things that comprise our

life, these are what purify the soul, justice, love to man, truth; the one inclining us to pardon and not suffering us to be excessively severe and unforgiving to them that sin (for then shall we gain doubly, both becoming kind to man, and hence meeting also ourselves with much kindness from the God of all), and causing us both to sympathize with them that are despitefully entreated, and to assist them; the other not suffering them to be deceitful, and crafty.

But neither when He says, *"These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone,"* does He say it as introducing a legal observance; away with the thought; neither with regard to the platter and the cup, when He said, *"Cleanse that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also,"* does He bring us unto the old regard for little things, but on the contrary indeed, He does all things to show it to be superfluous. For He said not, Cleanse the outside of them also, but that which is within, and the outside is sure to follow.

And besides, neither is it concerning a cup and platter he is speaking, but of soul and body, by the outside meaning the body, by the inside the soul. But if with regard to the platter there be need of that which is within much more with regard to you.

But ye do the contrary, says He, observing things trifling and external, you neglect what are great and inward: whence very great mischief arises, for that thinking you have duly performed all, you despise the other things; and despising them, you do not so much as strive or attempt to perform them.

After this, He again derides them for vainglory, calling them *"whited sepulchers,"* [Matthew 23:27] and unto all adding, *"ye hypocrites;"* which thing is the cause of all their evils, and the origin of their ruin. And He did not merely call them whited sepulchers, but said, that they were full of

uncleanness and hypocrisy. And these things He spoke, indicating the cause wherefore they did not believe, because they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

But these things not Christ only, but the prophets also constantly lay to their charge, that they spoil, that their rulers judge not according to the rule of justice, and every where you may find the sacrifices indeed refused, but these things required. So that there is nothing strange, nothing new, neither in the lawgiving, nor in the accusation, nay not even in the comparison of the sepulchre. For the prophet makes mention thereof, neither did he call them merely a sepulchre, *"but their throat an open sepulchre."*

Such are many men now also, decking themselves indeed outwardly, but full of iniquity within. For now too there is many a mode, and many a care for outward purifications, but of those in the soul not so much as one. But if indeed any one should tear open each man's conscience, many worms and much corruption would he find, and an ill savor beyond utterance; unreasonable and wicked lusts I mean, which are more unclean than worms.

3. But that *"they"* should be such persons is not *"so"* dreadful a thing (although it be dreadful), but that *"you,"* that have been counted worthy to become temples of God, should of a sudden have become sepulchers, having as much ill savor, this is extreme wretchedness. He in whom Christ dwells, and the Holy Spirit has worked, and such great mysteries, that this man should be a sepulchre, what wretchedness is this? What mournings and lamentations does this call for, when the members of Christ have become a tomb of uncleanness? Consider how you were born, of what things you have been counted worthy, what manner of garment you have received, how you were built a temple without a breach! How fair! not adorned with gold, neither with pearls, but with the spirit that is more precious than these.

Consider that no sepulchre is made in a city, so then neither shall you be able to appear in the city above. For if here this is forbidden, much more there. Or rather even here you are an object of scorn to all, bearing about a dead soul, and not to be scorned only, but also to be shunned. For tell me, if any one were to go round, bearing about a dead body, would not all have rushed away? Would not all have fled? Think this now likewise. For you go about, bearing a spectacle far more grievous than this, a soul deadened by sins, a soul paralyzed.

Who now will pity such a one? For when thou dost not pity your own soul, how shall another pity him that is so cruel, such an enemy to himself? If any one, where you slept and eat, had buried a dead body, what would you not have done? But you are burying a dead soul, not where you dine, nor where you sleep, but in the members of Christ: and are you not afraid lest a thousand lightnings and thunderbolts be hurled from above upon your head?

And how do you even dare to set foot in the churches of God, and in holy temples, having within you the savor of so much abomination? For if one bearing a dead body into the king's courts and burying it would have suffered the utmost punishment, thou setting your foot in the sacred courts, and filling the house with so much ill savor, consider what a punishment you will undergo.

Imitate that harlot who anointed with ointment the feet of Christ, and filled the whole house with the odor, the opposite to which you do to His house! For what though thou be not sensible of the ill savor? For this most of all is the grievous part of the disease; wherefore also you are incurably diseased, and more grievously than they that are maimed in their bodies, and become fetid. For that disease indeed is both felt by the sick and is

without any blame, nay even is deserving of pity; but this of hatred and punishment.

Since then both in this respect it is more grievous, and from the sick not being sensible of it as he ought to be; come, give yourself to my words, that I may teach you plainly the mischief of it.

But first listen to what you say in the Psalm, "*Let my prayer be set forth in Your sight as incense.*" When then not incense, but a stinking smoke arises from you, and from your deeds, what punishment do you not deserve to undergo?

What then is the stinking smoke? Many come in gazing about at the beauty of women; others curious about the blooming youth of boys. After this, do you not marvel, how bolts are not launched, and all things are not plucked up from their foundations? For worthy both of thunderbolts and hell are the things that are done; but God, who is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forbears awhile His wrath, calling you to repentance and amendment.

What doest thou, O man? Are you curiously looking after women's beauty, and do you not shudder at thus doing despite unto the temple of God? Does the church seem to you a brothel, and less honorable than the market-place. For in a market-place indeed you are afraid and ashamed to appear to be looking after any woman, but in God's temple, when God Himself is discoursing unto you, and threatening about these things, you are committing whoredom and adultery at the very time in which you are being told not to do this. And do you not shudder, nor stand amazed?

These things do the spectacles of wantonness teach you, the pest that is so hard to put down, the deleterious sorceries, the grievous snares of the thoughtless, the pleasurable destruction of the unchaste.

Therefore the prophet also blaming you, said, *"Your eyes are not good, neither is your heart."*

It were better for such men to be blind; it were better to be diseased, than to abuse your eyes for these purposes.

It were meet indeed that you had within you the wall to part you from the women; but since you are not so minded, our fathers thought it necessary by these boards to wall you off; since I hear from the elder ones, that of old there were not so much as these partitions; *"For in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female."* And in the apostle's time also both men and women were together. Because the men were men, and the women women, but now altogether the contrary; the women have urged themselves into the manners of courtezans, but the men are in no better state than frantic horses.

Heard ye not, that the men and women were gathered together in the upper room, and that congregation was worthy of the heavens? And very reasonably. For even women then practised much self-denial, and the men gravity and chastity. Hear, for instance, the seller of purple saying, *"If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come in, and abide with me."* Hear the women, who went about with the apostles, having taken unto themselves manly courage, Priscilla, Persis, and the rest; from whom our present women are as far removed as our men from their men.

4. For then indeed even travelling into far countries women brought not on themselves evil report; but now even though brought up in a chamber, they hardly escape this suspicion. But these things arise from their decking of themselves, and their luxury. Then the business of those women was to spread the word; but now to appear beauteous, and fair, and comely in countenance. This is glory to them, this salvation; but of lofty and great works they do not even dream.

What woman exerts herself to make her husband better? What man has taken to himself this care to amend his wife? There is not one: but the woman's whole study is upon the care of ornaments of gold, and raiment, and the other adornments of the person, and how to increase their substance; but the man's both this, and others more than this, all however worldly.

Who, when about to marry, inquires about the disposition and nurture of the damsel? No one; but straightway about money, and possessions, and measures of property of various and different kinds; like as if he were about to buy something, or to settle some common contract.

Therefore they do even so call marriage. For I have heard many say, such a man has contracted with such a woman, that is, has married. And they offer insult to the gifts of God, and as though buying and selling, so do they marry, and are given in marriage.

And writings there are, requiring greater security than those about buying and selling. Learn how those of old married, and imitate them. How then did they marry? They inquired about ways of life, and morals, and virtue of the soul. Therefore they had no need of writings, nor of security by parchment and ink; for the bride's disposition sufficed them in the place of all.

I therefore entreat you likewise not to seek after wealth and affluence, but a good disposition, and gentleness. Seek for a pious and self-denying damsel, and these will be to you better than countless treasures. If you seek the things of God, these others will come also; but if you pass by those, and hasten unto these, neither will these follow.

But such a man, one will say, became rich by his wife! Are you not ashamed of bringing forward such examples? I had ten thousand times sooner become a poor man, as I have heard many say, than gain wealth

from a wife. For what can be more displeasing than that wealth? What more painful than the abundance? What more shameful than to be notorious from thence, and for it to be said by all, such a man became rich by a wife? For the domestic discomforts I pass by, all that must needs result from hence, the wife's pride, the servility, the strifes, the reproaches of the servants. *"The beggar," "the ragged one," "the base one, and sprung of base."* *"Why, what had he when he came in?" "Do not all things belong to our mistress?"* But thou dost not care at all about these sayings, for neither are you a freeman. Since the parasites likewise hear worse things than these, and are not pained wherefore neither are these, but rather pride themselves in their disgrace; and when we tell them of these things, *"Let me have,"* says one of them, *"something pleasant and sweet, and let it choke me."* Alas! The devil, what proverbs has he brought into the world, of power to overturn the whole life of such persons. See at least this self-same devilish and pernicious saying; of how much ruin it is full. For it means nothing else than these words, Have thou no regard to what is honorable; have thou no regard to what is just; let all those things be cast aside, seek one thing alone, pleasure. Though the thing stifle you, let it be your choice; though all that meet you spurn you, though they smear your face with mire, though they drive you away as a dog, bear all. And what else would swine say, if they had a voice? What else would filthy dogs? But perhaps not even they would have said such things, as the devil has persuaded men to rave.

Wherefore I entreat you, being conscious of the senselessness of such words as these, to flee such proverbs, and to choose out those in the Scriptures that are contrary to them.

But what are these? *"Go not,"* it is said, *"after your lusts, and refrain yourself from your appetites."* [Sirach 18:30] And, touching an harlot again, it is said in opposition to this proverb, *"Give not heed to a bad woman: for*

honey drops from the lips of a woman that is an harlot, which, for a season, is luscious unto your throat; but afterwards you shall find it more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword." Unto these last then let us listen, not unto those. For hence indeed spring our mean, hence our slavish thoughts, hence men become brutes, because in everything they will follow after pleasure according to this proverb, which, even without arguments of ours, is of itself ridiculous. For after one is choked, what is the gain of sweetness?

Cease, therefore, to set up such great absurdity, and to kindle hell and unquenchable fire; and let us look steadfastly (at length though late) as we ought, unto the things to come, having put away the film on our eyes, that we may both pass the present life honestly, and with much reverence and godly fear, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 74 on Matthew

" Woe unto you, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish their sepulchers, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets."

Not because they build, nor because they blame the others, does He say, woe, but because, while both thus, and by what they say, they are pretending to condemn their fathers, they do worse. For in proof that the condemnation was a pretense, Luke says, you do allow because ye build; for, *"Woe unto you,"* says He, *"for you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness, and you allow the deeds of your fathers, for they indeed killed them, and you build their sepulchers."* [Luke 11:47-48] For here He reproves their purpose, wherewith they built, that it was not for the honoring of them that were slain, but as making a show of the murders, and afraid, lest, when the tombs had perished by time, the proof and memory of such daring should fade away, setting up these glorious buildings, as a kind of trophy, and priding themselves in the daring deeds of those men, and displaying them.

For the things that you now dare to do, show that you do these things also in this spirit. For, though ye speak the contrary, says He, as condemning them, as, for instance, *"We should not, if we had been in their days, have been partakers with them;"* yet the disposition is evident wherewith ye say these things. Wherefore also unfolding it, though darkly, still He has expressed it. For when He had said, you say, *"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets;"* He added, *"Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that you are the children of them that slew the prophets."* And

what blame is it to be a murderer's son, if one partake not in the mind of one's father? None. Whence it is evident, that for this same thing He brings it forward against them, hinting at their affinity in wickedness.

And this is manifest too by what comes after; He adds at least, "*You serpents, you generation of vipers.*" [Matthew 23:33] For as those beasts are like their parents, in the destructiveness of their venom, so also are you like your fathers in murderousness.

Then, because He was searching their temper of mind, which is to the more part obscure, He does, from those things also which they were about to perpetrate, which would be manifest to all, establish His words. For, because He had said, "*Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that you are the children of them which killed the prophets,*" making it evident, that of their affinity in wickedness He is speaking, and that it was a pretense to say, "*We should not have been partakers with them,*" He added, "*Fill ye up therefore the measure of your fathers,*" [Matthew 23:32] not commanding, but declaring beforehand, what was to be, that is, His own murder.

Therefore, having brought in their refutation, and having shown that they were pretenses which they said in their own defense, as, for instance, "*We would not have been partakers with them,*" (for they who refrain not from the Lord, how should they have refrained from the servants), He makes after this His language more condemnatory, calling them "*serpents, and generation of vipers,*" and saying, "*How shall you escape the damnation of hell,*" at once perpetrating such things, and denying them, and dissembling your purpose?

Then rebuking them more exceedingly from another cause also, He says, "*I will send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them shall you kill and crucify, and some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues.*" For that they should not say, "*Though we crucified the*

Lord, yet from the servants we should have refrained, if we had been then;" "Behold," He says, *"I send servants also to you, prophets likewise themselves, and neither will you spare them."* But these things He says, showing that it was nothing strange, that He should be murdered by those sons, being both murderous and deceitful, and having much guile, and surpassing their fathers in their outrages.

And besides what has been said, He shows them to be also exceedingly vainglorious. For when they say, *"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them,"* they spoke out of vainglory, and were practising virtue in words only, but in their works doing the contrary.

You serpents, you generation of vipers, that is, wicked sons of wicked men, and more wicked than those who begot them. For He shows that they are committing greater crimes, both by their committing them after those others, and by their doing much more grievous things than they, and this, while positively affirming that they never would have fallen into the same. For they add that which is both the end and the crown of their evil deeds. For the others slew them that came to the vineyard, but these, both the son, and them that were bidding them to the wedding.

But these things He says, to separate them off from the affinity to Abraham, and to show that they had no advantage from thence, unless they followed his works; wherefore also He adds, *"How can you flee from the damnation of hell,"* when following them that have committed such acts?

And here He recalls to their remembrance John's accusation, for he too called them by this name, and reminded them of the judgment to come. Then, because they are nothing alarmed by judgment and hell, by reason of their not believing them, and because the thing is future, He awes them by the things present, and says, *"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets*

and scribes: and some of them shall you kill and crucify, and scourge; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, that all these things shall come upon this generation." [Matthew 23:34-36]

2. See by how many things He has warned them. He said, You condemn your fathers, in that you say, *"We would not have been partakers with them;"* and this is no little thing to shame them. He said, While ye condemn them, you do worse things, even ye yourselves; and this is sufficient to cover them with disgrace. He said, These things shall not be without punishment; and hence he implants in them fear beyond words. He has reminded them at least of hell. Then because that was to come, He brought home to them the terrors as even present. *"For all these things shall come,"* He says, *"upon this generation."*

He added also unspeakable severity to the vengeance, saying, that they shall suffer more grievous things than all; yet by none of these things did they become better. But if any one say, And why do they suffer more grievously than all? We would say, Because they have first committed more grievous things than all, and by none of the things that have been done to them have they been brought to a sound mind.

Heardest thou not Lamech saying, *"Of Lamech vengeance shall be taken seventy times sevenfold;"* [Genesis 4:24] that is, *"I am deserving of more punishment than Cain."* Why could this be? Yet he did not slay his brother; but because not even by his example was he brought to a better mind. And this is what God says elsewhere, *"Requiting the sins of fathers upon children for the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."* Not as though one were to suffer punishment for the crimes committed by others, but inasmuch as they who, after many sin and have been punished,

yet have not grown better, but have committed the same offenses, are justly worthy to suffer their punishments also.

But see how seasonably he also mentioned Abel, indicating that this murder likewise is of envy. What then have ye to say? Do you not know what Cain suffered? Did God hold His peace at his deeds? Did He not exact the severest penalty? Heard ye not what things your fathers suffered, when they slew the prophets; were they not delivered over to punishments, and inflictions of vengeance without number? How then did ye not become better? And why do I speak of the punishments of your fathers, and what they suffered? Thou who yourself condemnest your fathers, how is it you do worse? For moreover even ye yourselves have declared that *"He will miserably destroy those wicked men."* [Matthew 21:41] What favor then will you have after this, committing such things after such a sentence?

But who is this Zacharias? Some say, the father of John; some, the prophet; some, a priest with two different names, whom the Scripture also calls, the son of Jehoiada.

But do thou mark this, that the outrage was twofold. For not only did they slay holy men, but also in a holy place. And saying these things, He did not only alarm them, but also comfort His disciples, showing that the righteous men also who were before them suffered these things. But these He alarmed, foretelling that like as they paid their penalty, even so should these too suffer the utmost extremities. Therefore He calls them *"prophets, and wise men, and scribes,"* even hereby again taking away every plea of theirs. *"For you cannot say,"* He says, *"You sent from among the Gentiles, and therefore we were offended;"* but they were led on unto this by being murderous, and thirsting for blood. Wherefore He also said beforehand, *"For this cause do I send prophets and scribes."* This did the prophets also lay to their charge, saying, *"They mingle blood with blood,"* and that they

are men of blood. Therefore also did He command the blood to be offered to Him, showing that if in a brute it be thus precious, much more in a man. Which He says to Noah likewise, *"I will require all blood that is shed."* [Genesis 9:5] And ten thousand other such things might one find Him enjoining with regard to their not committing murder; wherefore He commanded them not even to eat that which was strangled.

Oh the love of God towards man! That though He foreknew they would profit nothing, He still does His part. For I will send, He says, and this knowing they would be slain. So that even hereby they were convicted of saying vainly, *"We should not have been partakers with our fathers."* For these too slew prophets even in their synagogues, and revered neither the place, nor the dignity of the persons. For not merely ordinary persons did they slay, but prophets and wise men, such that they had nothing to lay to their charge. And by these He means the apostles, and those after them, for, indeed, many prophesied. Then, willing to aggravate their fears, He says, *"Verily, verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation;"* that is, I will bring all upon your heads, and will make the vengeance sore. For he that knew many to have sinned, and was not sobered, but himself has committed the same sins again, and not the same only, but also far more grievous, would justly deserve to suffer a far more grievous punishment than they. For like as, if he had been minded, he would have gained greatly, had he grown better by their examples, even so, since he continued without amendment, he is liable to a heavier vengeance, as having had the benefit of more warning by them who had sinned before and been punished, and having reaped no advantage.

3. Then He directs His speech unto the city, in this way too being minded to correct His hearers, and says, *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!"* [Matthew 23:37] What means the repetition? This is the manner of one

pitied her, and bemoaning her, and greatly loving her. For, like as unto a woman beloved, herself indeed ever loved, but who had despised Him that loved her, and therefore on the point of being punished, He pleads, being now about to inflict the punishment. Which He does in the prophets also, using these words, *"I said, Turn thou unto me, and she returned not."* [Jeremiah 3:7]

Then having called her, He tells also her blood-stained deeds, *"Thou that killest the prophets, and stone them that are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, and you would not,"* in this way also pleading for His own dealings; not even with these things have you turned me aside, nor withdrawn me from my great affection toward you, but it was my desire even so, not once or twice, but often to draw you unto me. *"For how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens, and you would not."* And this He says, to show that they were ever scattering themselves by their sins. And His affection He indicates by the similitude; for indeed the creature is warm in its love towards its brood. And everywhere in the prophets is this same image of the wings, and in the song of Moses and in the Psalms, indicating His great protection and care.

"But ye would not," He says. *"Behold your house is left desolate,"* [Matthew 23:38] stripped of the succor which comes from me. Surely it was the same, who also was before protecting them, and holding them together, and preserving them; surely it was He who was ever chastening them. And He appoints a punishment, which they had ever dreaded exceedingly; for it declared the entire overthrow of their polity. *"For I say unto you, You shall not see me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."* [Matthew 23:39] And this is the language of one that loves earnestly, earnestly drawing them unto Him by the things to come, not

merely warning them by the past; for of the future day of His second coming does He here speak.

What then? Did they not see Him from that time? But it is not that hour which He means in saying, Henceforth, but the time up to His crucifixion.

For since they were forever accusing Him of this, that He was a kind of rival God, and a foe to God, He moves them to love Him by this, namely, by showing Himself to be of one accord with His Father; and He indicates Himself to be the same that was in the prophets. Wherefore also He uses the same words as did the prophets.

And by these He intimated both His resurrection, and His second coming, and made it plain even to the utterly unbelieving, that then most surely they should worship Him. And how did He make this plain? By speaking of many things that were first to be, that He should send prophets, that they should kill them; that it should be in the synagogues; that they should suffer the utmost extremities; that their house should be left desolate; that they should undergo things more grievous than any, and such as never were undergone before. For all these things are enough to furnish even to the most senseless and contentious a clear proof of that which should come to pass at His coming.

For I will ask them, Did He send the prophets and wise men? Did they slay them in their synagogue? Was their house left desolate? Did all the vengeance come upon that generation? It is quite plain that it was so, and no man gainsays it. As then all these things came to pass, so shall those also come to pass, and most surely they shall submit then.

But they shall derive thence no advantage in the way of defense, as neither will they who repent of their course of life then.

Wherefore let us, while it is time, practise what is good. For like as they henceforth derived no advantage from their knowledge, even so neither shall we ourselves from our repentance for our wickedness. For neither to the pilot, when the bark is sunk in the sea from his remissness, will there remain anything more; nor to the physician, when the sick man is gone; but each of these must before the end devise, and execute all things, so as to be involved in no danger, nor shame; but after this, all is unprofitable.

Let us also then, while in sickness, send for physicians, and lay out money, and exert unceasing diligence, that having risen up from our affliction, we may depart hence in health.

And as much care as we exert about our servants, when their bodies are sick, so much let us show forth upon ourselves, when our soul is diseased. And indeed we are nearer to ourselves than our servants, and our souls are more necessary than those bodies, but nevertheless it were well if we exert at least an equal diligence. For if we do not this now, when gone, thenceforth we may obtain nothing more in the way of plea.

4. Who is so wretched, one may say, as not to show even as much thought as this? Why this is the marvellous thing, that we are held in so little esteem with our ownselves, that we despise ourselves more than our servants. For when our servants are sick of a fever, we send for physicians, and make a separation in the house, and compel them to obey the laws of that art; and if these are neglected, we are displeased with them, and set persons to watch them, who will not, even should they wish them, suffer them to satiate their desire; and if they who have the care of these persons should say, that medicines must be procured at great cost, we yield; and whatsoever they may enjoin, we obey, and we pay them hire for these injunctions.

But when we are sick (or rather there is no time when we are not sick), we do not so much as call in the physician, we do not lay out money, but as though some ruffian, and enemy, and foes were concerned, so do we disregard our soul. And these things I say, not finding fault with our attention towards our servants, but thinking it meet to take at least as much care of our souls. And how should we do? One may say. Show it to Paul when ill; call in Matthew; let John sit by it. Hear from them, what we ought to do that is thus ill, they will surely tell, and will not conceal. For they are not dead, but live and speak. But does the soul take no heed to them, being weighed down by the fever? Do thou compel it, and awaken its reasoning power. Call in the prophets. There is no need to pay money to these physicians, for neither do they themselves demand hire for themselves, nor for the medicines which they prepare do they drive you to the necessity of expense, except for almsgiving; but in everything else they even add to your possessions; as, for instance, when they require you to be temperate, they deliver you from unseasonable and wrong expenses; when they tell you to abstain from drunkenness, they make you wealthier. Do you see the skill of physicians, who besides health, are supplying you also with riches? Sit down therefore by them, and learn of them the nature of your disease. For instance, do you love wealth, and greedy gain, like as the fevered love water? Listen at any rate to their admonitions. For like as the physician says to you, If you will gratify your desire, you will perish, and undergo this or that; even so also Paul: *"They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare of the devil, and into foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."* [1 Timothy 6:9]

But are you impatient? Hear him saying, *"Yet a little while, and He that comes will come, and will not tarry."* [Hebrews 10:37] *The Lord is at*

hand, be careful for nothing;" [Philippians 4:5-6] and again, *"The fashion of this world passes away."* [1 Corinthians 7:31]

For neither does he command only, but also soothes, as a physician should. And like as they devise some other things in the place of cold things, so does this man draw off the desire another way. Do you wish to be rich, says he; let it be *"in good works."* Do you desire to lay up treasure? I forbid it not at all; only let it be in Heaven.

And like as the physician says, that what is cold is hurtful to teeth, to nerves, to bones; so he too, more briefly indeed, as heedful of brevity, yet far more, clearly and more powerfully, says, *"For the love of money is the root of all evils."* [1 Timothy 6:10]

Of what then should one make use? He tells this also: of contentedness instead of covetousness. *"For contentment,"* he says, *"with godliness is great gain."* [1 Timothy 5:6] But if you are dissatisfied, and desirest more, and art not yet equal to cast away all superfluous things, he tells also him that is thus diseased, how he ought to handle these things too. *"That they that rejoice in wealth, be as though they rejoiced not; and they that have, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it."* [1 Corinthians 7:30-31]

Do you see what manner of things he enjoins? Will you call in also another physician besides? To me at least it seems well. For neither are these physicians like those of the body, who often, while vying one with another, overwhelm the sick man. But not so these, for they have regard to the health of the sick, not to their own vainglory. Be not then afraid of the number of them; one Master speaks in all, that is, Christ.

5. See, for instance, another again entering in, and saying severe things concerning this disease, or rather it is the Master by him; *"For you cannot serve God and mammon."* [Matthew 6:24] Yea, says he, and how will these

things be? How shall we cease from the desire? Hence may we learn this also. And how shall we know? Hear him saying this too: "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.*" [Matthew 6:19]

Do you see how by the place, by the things that waste there, He draws men off from this desire that is here, and rivets them to Heaven, where all things are impregnable? For if you transfer your wealth there where neither rust nor moth corrupts, nor thieves break through and steal, you will both expel this disease, and establish your soul in the greatest abundance.

And together with what we have said, He brings forward an example also to teach you moderation. And like as the physician, to alarm the sick man says, that such a one died from the use of cold water; so does He also bring in the rich man, [Matthew 19:16] laboring indeed, and longing for life and health, but not able to attain thereto, because of having set his heart on covetousness, but going away empty. And besides this man, another is shown to you again by another evangelist, he that was in torment, [Luke 16:24-26] and was not master so much as of a drop of water. Then showing that His injunctions are easy, He says, "*Behold the fowls of the air.*" [Matthew 6:26] But being compassionate, He suffers not even the rich to despair. "*For the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God,*" [Luke 18:27] says He. For though thou be rich, the physician is able to cure you. For neither was it wealth that He took away, but to be slave of riches, and a lover of greedy gain.

How then is it possible for the rich man to be saved. By possessing his goods in common with them that are in need, being such as Job was, and exterminating out of his soul the desire of more, and in no points going beyond real need.

He shows you together with these this selfsame publican also, that was grievously oppressed by the fever of covetousness, quickly set free from it. For what more sordid than a publican? Nevertheless, the man became indifferent to wealth from obeying the laws of the physician. For indeed He has for His disciples such persons as these, that were sick of the same diseases as we are, and have recovered their health quickly. And He shows us each, in order we may not despair. See at least this publican. Mark again another, a chief of the publicans, who promised four fold indeed for all that he had extorted, and the half of all that he possessed, that he might receive Jesus.

But are you on fire with exceeding desire for riches. Have the possessions of all men instead of your own. For indeed I give you, He says, more than you seek, in opening to you the houses of the wealthy throughout the world. *"For whosoever has forsaken father or mother, or lands, or house, shall receive an hundredfold."* [Matthew 19:29] Thus will you not enjoy more abundant possessions only, but you will even remove this grievous thirst altogether, and wilt endure all things easily, so far from desiring more, not seeking often even necessary things. Thus does Paul suffer hunger, and is held in honor more than when he ate. Forasmuch as a wrestler also, when striving, and winning crowns, would not choose to give up and to be in repose; and a merchant who has entered on sea voyages would not desire to be afterwards in idleness.

And we therefore, if we should taste as we ought of spiritual fruits, shall thenceforth not even account the things present to be anything, being seized by the desire of the things to come as with some most noble intoxication.

Let us taste of them, therefore, that we may both be delivered from the turmoil of the things present, and may attain the good things to come, by

the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 75 on Matthew

Matthew 24:1-2.

"And Jesus went out from the temple, and departed. And His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. And He answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

For inasmuch as He said, *"Your house is left desolate,"* and had previously forewarned them of many grievous things; therefore the disciples having heard these things, as though marvelling at it, came unto Him, showing the beauty of the temple, and wondering, if so much beauty was to be destroyed, and materials so costly, and variety of workmanship past utterance; He no longer thenceforth talks to them of desolation merely, but foretells an entire destruction. *"See ye not all these things,"* says He, and do ye marvel, and are you amazed? *"There shall not remain one stone upon another."* How then did it remain? One may say. But what is this? For neither so has the prediction fallen to the ground. For He said these things either indicating its entire desolation, or at that spot where He was. For there are parts of it destroyed unto the foundations.

And together with its we would say another thing also, that from what has been done, even the most contentious ought to believe concerning the remains, that they are utterly to be destroyed.

"And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?" [Matthew 24:3]

Therefore did they come unto Him privately, as it was of such matters they meant to inquire. For they were in travail to know the day of His coming, because of their eager desire to behold that glory, which is the cause of countless blessings. And these two things do they ask him, when shall these things be? That is, the overthrow of the temple; and, what is the sign of your coming? But Luke says, [Luke 21:6-7] the question was one concerning Jerusalem, as though they were supposing that then is His coming. And Mark says, that neither did all of them ask concerning the end of Jerusalem, but Peter and John, as having greater freedom of speech.

What then says He? *"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."* [Matthew 24:4-6]

For since they felt as being told of vengeance falling on others when hearing of that which was to be brought upon Jerusalem and as though they were to be out of the turmoils, and were dreaming of good things only, and looked for these to befall them quite immediately; for this cause He again foretells to them grievous things, making them earnest, and commanding them on two grounds to watch, so as neither to be seduced by the deceit of them that would beguile them, nor to be overpowered by the violence of ills that should overtake them.

For the war, says He, shall be twofold that of the deceivers, and that of the enemies, but the former far more grievous, as coming upon them in the confusion and turmoils, and when men were terrified and troubled. For indeed great was the storm then, when the Roman power was beginning to flourish, and cities were taken, and camps and weapons were set in motion, and many were readily believed.

But of wars in Jerusalem is He speaking; for it is not surely of those without, and everywhere in the world; for what did they care for these? And besides, He would thus say nothing new, if He were speaking of the calamities of the world at large, which are happening always. For before this, were wars, and tumults, and fightings; but He speaks of the Jewish wars coming upon them at no great distance, for henceforth the Roman arms were a matter of anxiety. Since then these things also were sufficient to confound them, He foretells them all.

Then to show that He Himself also will assail the Jews with them, and war on them, He speaks not of battles only, but also of plagues sent from God, famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, showing that the wars also He Himself permitted to come upon them, and that these things do not happen for no purpose according to what has been before the accustomed course of things among men, but proceed from the wrath on high.

Therefore He says, they shall come not by themselves or at once, but with signs. For that the Jews may not say, that they who then believed were the authors of these evils, therefore has He told them also of the cause of their coming upon them. *"For verily I say unto you,"* He said before, *"all these things shall come upon this generation,"* having made mention of the stain of blood on them.

Then lest on hearing of the showers of evils, they should suppose the gospel to be broken through, He added, *"See, be not troubled, for all things must come to pass,"* i.e. which I foretold, and the approach of the temptations will set aside none of the things which I have said; but there shall indeed be tumults and confusion, but nothing shall shake my predictions.

Then since He had said to the Jews, *"You shall not see me, till you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord;"* and the

disciples supposed that together with the destruction would be the end also; to set right this secret thought of theirs, He said, "*But the end is not yet.*" For that they did suspect even as I said, you may learn from their question. For, what did they ask? When shall these things be? *i.e.* when shall Jerusalem be destroyed? And what is the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?

But He answered nothing directly to this question, but first speaks of those other things that are urgent, and which it was needful for them to learn first. For neither concerning Jerusalem straightway, nor of His own second coming, did He speak, but touching the ills that were to meet them at the doors. Wherefore also He makes them earnest in their exertions, by saying, "*Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.*"

Afterwards, when He has roused them to listen about these things (for, "*take heed,*" says He, "*that no man deceive you*"); and having made them energetic, and prepared them to be watchful, and has spoken first of the false Christs, then He speaks of the ills of Jerusalem, assuring them ever by the things already past, foolish and contentious though they were, of those which were yet to come.

2. But by "*wars and rumors of wars,*" He means, what I before said, the troubles coming upon them. After this, because, as I have already said, they supposed after that war the end would come, see how He warns them, saying, "*But the end is not yet. For nation,*" He says, "*shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*" [Matthew 24:7] Of the preludes to the ills of the Jews does He speak. "*All these are the beginning of sorrows,*" that is, of those that befall them. "*Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you.*"

In good season did He introduce their ills, having a consolation from the common miseries; and not in this way only, but also by His adding, that it is *"for my name's sake. For you shall be hated,"* He says, *"of all men for my name's sake. Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and many false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."*

This is the greater evil, when the war is intestine too, for there were many false brethren. Do you see the war to be threefold? From the deceivers, from the enemies, from the false brethren. See Paul too lamenting over the same things, and saying, *"Without were fightings, within were fears;"* [2 Corinthians 7:5] and, *"perils among false brethren,"* [2 Corinthians 11:26] and again, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."* [2 Corinthians 11:13]

After this again, what is more grievous than all, they shall not have so much as the consolation from love. Then indicating, that these things will in no degree harm the noble and the firm, He says, Fear not, neither be troubled. For if you show forth the patience that becomes you, the dangers will not prevail over you. And it is a plain proof of this, that the word shall surely be preached everywhere in the world, so much shall you be above the things that alarm you. For, that they may not say, how then shall we live? He said more, You shall both live and preach everywhere. Therefore He added moreover, *"And this gospel shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come,"* of the downfall of Jerusalem.

For in proof that He meant this, and that before the taking of Jerusalem the gospel was preached, hear what Paul says, *"Their sound went into all*

the earth;" [Romans 10:18] and again, *"The gospel which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven."* [Colossians 1:23] And do you see him running from Jerusalem unto Spain? And if one took so large a portion, consider what the rest also wrought. For writing to others also, Paul again says concerning the gospel, that *"it is bringing forth fruit, and growing up in every creature which is under Heaven."*

But what means, *"For a witness to all nations?"* Forasmuch as though it was everywhere preached, yet it was not everywhere believed. It was for a witness, He says, to them that were disbelieving, that is, for conviction, for accusation, for a testimony; for they that believed will bear witness against them that believed not, and will condemn them. And for this cause, after the gospel is preached in every part of the world, Jerusalem is destroyed, that they may not have so much as a shadow of an excuse for their perverseness. For they that saw His power shine throughout every place, and in an instant take the world captive, what excuse could they then have for continuing in the same perverseness? For in proof that it was everywhere preached at that time, hear what Paul says, *"of the gospel which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven."* [Colossians 1:23]

Which also is a very great sign of Christ's power, that in twenty or at most thirty years the word had reached the ends of the world. *"After this therefore,"* says He, *"shall come the end of Jerusalem."* For that He intimates this was manifested by what follows.

For He brought in also a prophecy, to confirm their desolation, saying, *"But when you shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that reads understand."* He referred them to Daniel. And by *"abomination"* He means the statue of him who then took the city, which he who desolated the city and the temple placed within the temple, wherefore Christ calls it, *"of desolation."*

Moreover, in order that they might learn that these things will be while some of them are alive, therefore He said, "*When ye see the abomination of desolation.*"

3. Whence one may most marvel at Christ's power, and their courage, for that they preached in such times, in which most especially the Jewish state was warred against, in which most especially men regarded them as movers of sedition, when Cæsar commanded all of them to be driven away. [Acts 18:2] And the result was the same as if any one (when the sea was stirred up on every side, and darkness was filling all the air, and successive shipwrecks taking place, and when all their fellow-sailors were at strife above, and monsters were rising up from beneath, and with the waves devouring the mariners, and thunderbolts falling, and their being pirates, and those in the vessel plotting one against another), were to command men inexperienced in sailing, and who had not so much as seen the sea to sit at the rudder, and to guide and fight the vessel, and when an immense fleet was coming against them with a great array, making use of a single bark, with her crew in this disturbed state, to sink and subdue the fleet. For indeed by the heathens they were hated as Jews, and by the Jews were stoned, as waging war against their laws; and nowhere could they stand.

Thus were all things, precipices, and reefs, and rocks, the things in the cities, the things in the fields, the things in the houses, and every single person was at war with them; generals and rulers, and private persons, and all nations, and all people, and a turmoil which cannot be set forth by words. For the Jewish race was exceedingly detestable to the government of the Romans, as having occasioned them endless trouble; and not even from this did the preaching of the word take hurt; but the city was stormed and set on fire, and involved its inhabitants in countless evils; but the apostles

that came from thence, introducing new laws, prevailed even over the Romans.

O strange and wonderful facts! Countless myriads of Jews did the Romans then subdue, and they did not prevail over twelve men fighting against them naked and unarmed. What language can set forth this miracle? For they that teach need to have these two things, to be worthy of credit, and to be beloved by them whom they are instructing; and together with these, and besides them, that their sayings should be easy of reception, and the time should be free from trouble and tumults.

But then were all the contraries to these. For while they did not seem worthy of credit, they were withdrawing from such as did seem worthy of it, those who had been deceived by them. So far from being loved, they were even hated, and were taking men away from what they loved, both habits, and hereditary customs, and laws.

Again, their injunctions had great difficulty; but the things, from which they were withdrawing men, much pleasure. And many were the perils, many the deaths, both themselves and they that obeyed them underwent, and together with all this, the time also occasioned them much difficulty, teeming with wars, tumults, disturbance, so that, even if there had been none of the things we have mentioned, it would have quite thrown all things into confusion.

We have good occasion to say, *"Who shall tell the mighty works of the Lord, and make all His praises to be heard."* For if his own people amid signs hearkened not to Moses, because of the clay only, and the bricks; who persuaded these that every day were beaten and slain, and were suffering incurable evils, to leave a quiet life, and to prefer thereto this which was teeming with blood and death, and that when they who preached it were strangers to them, and very hostile in every way? For I say not unto nations

and cities and people, but into a small house let one bring in him that is hated of all that are in the house, and by him endeavor to bring them away from those whom they love, from father, and wife, and child, will he not surely be seen torn in pieces, before he has opened his mouth? And if there be added moreover a tumult and strife of husband and wife in the house, will they not stone him to death before he steps on the threshold? And if he also be one whom they may readily despise, and who enjoins galling things, and commands them who are living in luxury to practise self restraint, and together with this the conflict be against those who are far more in numbers and who excel him, is it not quite manifest that he will be utterly destroyed? Yet nevertheless, this, which is impossible to be done in one house, this has Christ accomplished in all the world, through precipices and furnaces, and ravines, and rocks, and land and sea at war with Him, bringing in the healers of the world.

And if you are minded to learn these things more distinctly, I mean, the famines, the pestilences, the earthquakes, the other calamities, peruse the history about these things composed by Josephus, and you will know all accurately. Therefore Himself too said, *"Be not troubled, for all must be;"* and, *"He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved;"* and, *"The gospel shall surely be preached in all the world."* For when weakened and faint at the fear of what had been said, He braces them up by saying, Though ten thousand things be done, the gospel must be preached in every part of the world, and then shall the end come.

4. Do you see in what a state things were then, and how manifold was the war? And this is the beginning, when each of the things to be effected most required quiet. In what state then were they? For nothing hinders us from resuming the same things again. The first war was that of the deceivers; *"For there shall come,"* He says, *"false Christs and false*

prophets:" the second, that of the Romans, *"For you shall hear,"* He says, *"of wars:"* the third, that which brings on the *"famines:"* the fourth, *"the pestilences"* and *"the earthquakes:"* the fifth, *"they shall deliver you into afflictions:"* the sixth, *"you shall be hated of all men:"* the seventh, *"They shall betray one another, and hate one another"* (an intestine war does He here make known); then, *"false Christs,"* and false brethren; then, *"the love of the most shall wax cold,"* which is the cause of all the ills.

Do you see numberless kinds of war, new and strange? Yet nevertheless in the midst of these things, and much more (for with the intestine wars was mingled also that of kinsmen), the gospel prevailed over the whole earth. *"For the gospel,"* He says, *"shall be preached in the whole world."*

Where then are they who set up the power of a nativity and the cycle of times against the doctrines of the church? For who has ever recorded that another Christ appeared; that such a thing took place? Although they falsely affirm other things, that ten myriads of years passed, yet this they cannot even feign. Of what kind of cycle then would ye speak? For there was never another Sodom, nor another Gomorrha, nor another flood. How long do ye trifle, talking of a cycle and nativity?

How then, it is said, do many of the things they say come to pass? Because you have bereaved yourself of the help God bestows, and betrayed yourself, and placed yourself without His providence; therefore does the evil spirit turn and twist about your matters as he will.

But not so among the saints, or rather not even among us sinners, who utterly despise it. For although our practice is beyond endurance, yet because by God's grace we cling with much exactness to the doctrines of the truth, we are above the malice of the evil spirits.

And altogether, what is a nativity? Nothing else than injustice, and confusion, and that all things are borne along at random; or rather not at random only; but more than this, with folly.

"And if there is not any nativity, whence is such a one rich? Whence is such a one poor?"

I know not: for in this way I will for a time reason with you, instructing you not to be curious about all things; neither in consequence of this to go on at random and rashly. For neither because you are ignorant of this, ought thou to feign the things that are not. It is better to be ignorant well, than to learn ill. For he that knows not the cause, will come soon to the right one; but he who because he does not know the real cause, feigns one that is untrue, will not be able easily to receive the real; but he needs more both of labors and toil, in order to take away the former. For indeed on a tablet, if it have been wiped smooth, any one may easily write what he will, but when it is written upon, no longer in the same way, for we must first wipe out what has been ill written. And among physicians again, he that applies nothing, is far better than he that applies hurtful things; and he who builds unsoundly, is worse than he who does not so much as build at all; like as the land is far better that bears nothing, than that which bears thorns.

Let us not then be impatient to learn all things, but let us endure to be even ignorant of some things, that when we have found a teacher, we may not afford him double toil. Or rather many oftentimes have remained even incurably diseased, by carelessly entangling themselves in evil opinions. For neither is the toil the same to pluck up first what has taken root amiss, and then to sow, as to plant a clear ground. For in that case, he must overthrow first, and then put in other things; but in this, the hearing is ready.

Whence then is such a one rich? I will say, now; many acquire wealth, by God's gift; and many by His permission. For this is the short and simple account.

What then? It is said, does He make the whoremongers to be rich, and the adulterers, and him that has abused himself with mankind, and him that has made a bad use of his possessions? He does not make them, but permits them to be rich; and great is the difference, and quite infinite between making and permitting. But wherefore does He suffer it at all? Because it is not yet the time for judgment, that every one may receive according to his merits.

For what more worthless than that rich man, who gives not to Lazarus so much as of his crumbs? Nevertheless, he was more wretched than all, for he came to be possessed not even of a drop of water, and for this very cause most especially, that being rich he was cruel. For if there are two wicked men, who have not had the same portion here, but one in wealth, the other in poverty, they will not be similarly punished there, but the wealthier more grievously.

5. Do you not see at least even this man, suffering more fearfully because he had *"received his good things?"* Do thou also therefore, when you see in prosperity one who has become rich by injustice, groan, weep; for indeed this wealth is to him an addition of punishment. For like as they who sin much, and are not minded to repent, treasure up to themselves a treasure of wrath; even so they, who, besides not being punished, are even enjoying prosperity, will undergo the greater punishment.

And the proof of this, if you will, I will show you, not from the things to come only, but also from the present life. For the blessed David, when he sinned that sin of Bathsheba, and was convicted by the prophet, for this cause most of all was he more severely reproved, that even when he had

enjoyed such security, he was like this. Hear at least God upbraiding him with this especially. *"Did not I anoint you for a king, and delivered you from the hand of Saul, and give you all that pertained to your master, and all the house of Israel and Judah, and if it had been little for you, I would have added thus and thus; and wherefore have you done that which was evil in my sight?"* [2 Samuel 12:7-9] For not for all sins are there the same punishments, but many and diverse, according to the times, according to the persons, according to their rank, according to their understanding, according to other things besides. And that what I say may be more clear, let one sin be set forth, fornication; and mark how many different punishments I find not from myself, but from the divine Scriptures. Did any one commit fornication before the law, he is differently punished; and this Paul shows, *"For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law."* [Romans 2:12] Did any one commit fornication after the law? He shall suffer more grievous things. *"For as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."* Did any one commit fornication being a priest, he receives from his dignity a very great addition to his punishment. So for this cause, whereas the other women were slain for fornication, the daughters of the priests were burnt; the lawgiver showing the more amply, how great punishment await the priest if he commits this sin. For if on the daughter he inflicts a greater punishment, because of her being a priest's daughter, much more on the man himself who bears the priest's office. Was fornication committed with any violence? She is even freed from punishment. Did one play the harlot being rich, and another being poor? Here again also is a difference. And this is evident from what we have said before concerning David. Was any one guilty of fornication after Christ's coming? Should he depart uninitiated, he will suffer a punishment more sore than all those. Was any guilty of fornication after the laver? In this case

not even a consolation is left for the sin any more. And this selfsame thing Paul declared when he said, He that despised Moses' law dies without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose you shall he be counted worthy, who has trodden underfoot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and has done despite to the grace of the Spirit? Hath any been guilty of fornication, bearing the priest's office now? This above all is the crown of the evil deeds.

Do you see of one sin how many different forms? One that before the law, another that after the law, another that of him who bears the priest's office; that of the rich woman, and that of the poor woman, of her that is a catechumen, and of the believing woman, of the daughter of the priest.

And from the knowledge again great is the difference; *"For he which knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."* [Luke 12:47] And to sin after examples brings greater vengeance. Therefore He says, *"But you, when you had seen it, repented not afterwards,"* [Matthew 21:32] though ye had had the advantage of much care. Therefore He upbraids Jerusalem likewise with this saying, *"How often would I have gathered your children together, and you would not!"* [Luke 13:34]

And to sin being in luxury, this is shown by the history of Lazarus. And from the place also the sin becomes more grievous, which He Himself indicated when He said, *"Between the temple and the altar."* [Matthew 23:35]

And from the equality of the offenses themselves, *"It is not marvellous if one be taken stealing;"* and again, *"You slew your sons and your daughters; this is beyond all your whoredoms, and your abominations."*

And from the persons again: *"If one man sin against another, they shall pray for him; but if he sin against God, who shall entreat for him?"*

And when any one surpasses in negligence those who are far inferior; wherewith in Ezekiel He does charge them, saying, *"Not even according to the judgments of the nations have you done."* [Ezekiel 5:7]

And when one is not sobered even by the examples of others, *"She saw her sister,"* it is said, *"and justified her."*

And when one has had the advantage of more abundant care; *"For if,"* He says, *"these mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago; but it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for that city."* [Matthew 11:21-22]

Do you see perfect exactness, and that all for the same sins are not paying the same penalty? For moreover when we have had the benefit of long-suffering, and profit nothing, we shall endure worse things. And this Paul shows, where he says, *"But after your hardness and impenitent heart, you store up for yourself wrath."* [Romans 2:5]

Knowing then these things, let us not be offended, neither let us be confounded at any of the things that happen, nor bring in upon us the storm of thought, but giving place to God's providence, let us give heed to virtue, and flee vice, that we may also attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom be glory unto the Father together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 76 on Matthew

Matt. XXIV. 16-18.

"Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains. And let him that is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. Neither let him which is in his field return back to take his clothes."

Having spoken of the ills that were to overtake the city, and of the trials of the apostles, and that they should remain unsubdued, and should overrun the whole world, He mentions again the Jews' calamities, showing that when the one should be glorious, having taught the whole world, the others should be in calamity.

And see how He relates the war, by the things that seem to be small setting forth how intolerable it was to be. For, *"Then,"* says He, *"let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains."* Then, When? When these things should be, *"when the abomination of desolation should stand in the holy place."* Whence he seems to me to be speaking of the armies. Flee therefore then, says He, for thenceforth there is no hope of safety for you.

For since it had fallen out, that they often had recovered themselves in grievous wars, as under Sennacherib, under Antiochus again (for when at that time also, armies had come in upon them, and the temple had been seized beforehand, the Maccabees rallying gave their affairs an opposite turn); in order then that they might not now also suspect this, that there would be any such change, He forbids them all thought of the kind. For it were well, says He, to escape henceforth with one's naked body. Therefore them also that are on the housetop, He suffers not to enter into the house to take their clothes, indicating the evils to be inevitable, and the calamity without end, and that it must needs be that he that was involved therein

should surely perish. Therefore He adds also, him that is in the field, saying, neither let this man turn back to take his clothes. For if they that are in doors flee, much more they that are out of doors ought not to take refuge within.

"Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck," [Matthew 24:19] to the one because of their greater inertness, and because they cannot flee easily, being weighed down by the burden of their pregnancy; to the other, because they are held by the tie of feeling for their children, and cannot save their sucklings. For money it is a light thing to despise, and an easy thing to provide, and clothes; but the bonds of nature how could any one escape? How could the pregnant woman become active? How could she that gives suck be able to overlook that which she had borne?

Then, to show again the greatness of the calamity, He says, *"Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be."* [Matthew 24:20-21]

Do you see that His discourse is addressed to the Jews, and that He is speaking of the ills that should overtake them? For the apostles surely were not to keep the Sabbath day, neither to be there, when Vespasian did those things. For indeed the most part of them were already departed this life. And if any was left, he was dwelling then in other parts of the world.

But wherefore neither *"in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day?"* Not in the winter, because of the difficulty arising from the season; not on the Sabbath day, because of the absolute authority exercised by the law. For since they had need of flight, and of the swiftest flight, but neither would the Jews dare to flee on the Sabbath day, because of the law, neither in

winter was such a thing easy; therefore, *"Pray ye,"* says He; *"for then shall be tribulation, such as never was, neither shall be."*

And let not any man suppose this to have been spoken hyperbolically; but let him study the writings of Josephus, and learn the truth of the sayings. For neither can any one say, that the man being a believer, in order to establish Christ's words, has exaggerated the tragical history. For indeed He was both a Jew, and a determined Jew, and very zealous, and among them that lived after Christ's coming.

What then says this man? That those terrors surpassed all tragedy, and that no such had ever overtaken the nation. For so great was the famine, that the very mothers fought about the devouring of their children, and that there were wars about this; and he says that many when they were dead had their bellies ripped up.

I should therefore be glad to inquire of the Jews. Whence came there thus upon them wrath from God intolerable, and more sore than all that had befallen aforetime, not in Judæa only, but in any part of the world? Is it not quite clear, that it was for the deed of the cross, and for this rejection? All would say it, and with all and before all the truth of the facts itself.

But mark, I pray you, the exceeding greatness of the ills, when not only compared with the time before, they appear more grievous, but also with all the time to come. For not in all the world, neither in all time that is past, and that is to come, shall any one be able to say such ills have been. And very naturally; for neither had any man perpetrated, not of those that ever have been, nor of those to come hereafter, a deed so wicked and horrible. Therefore He says, *"there shall be tribulation such as never was, nor shall be."*

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." By these

things He shows them to be deserving of a more grievous punishment than had been mentioned, speaking now of the days of the war and of that siege. But what He says is like this. If, says He, the war of the Romans against the city had prevailed further, all the Jews had perished (for by "*no flesh*" here, He means no Jewish flesh), both those abroad, and those at home. For not only against those in Judæa did they war, but also those that were dispersed everywhere they outlawed and banished, because of their hatred against the former.

2. But whom does He here mean by the elect? The believers that were shut up in the midst of them. For that Jews may not say that because of the gospel, and the worship of Christ, these ills took place, He shows, that so far from the believers being the cause, if it had not been for them, all had perished utterly. For if God had permitted the war to be protracted, not so much as a remnant of the Jews had remained, but lest those of them who had become believers should perish together with the unbelieving Jews, He quickly put down the fighting, and gave an end to the war. Therefore He says, "*But for the elect's sake they shall be shortened.*" But these things He said to leave an encouragement to those of them who were shut up in the midst of them, and to allow them to take breath, that they might not be in fear, as though they were to perish with them. And if here so great is His care for them, that for their sakes others also are saved, and that for the sake of Christians remnants were left of the Jews, how great will be their honor in the time for their crowns?

By this He also encouraged them not to be distressed at their own dangers, since these others are suffering such things, and for no profit, but for evil upon their own head.

But He not only encouraged them, but also led them off secretly and unsuspectedly from the customs of the Jews. For if there is not to be a

change afterwards, and the temple is not to stand, it is quite evident that the law also shall be made to cease.

However, He spoke not this openly, but by their entire destruction He darkly intimated it. But He spoke it not openly, lest He should startle them before the time. Wherefore neither at the beginning did He of Himself fall into discourse touching these things; but having first lamented over the city, He constrained them to show Him the stones, and question Him, in order that as it were in answering them their question, He might declare to them beforehand all the things to come.

But mark thou, I pray you, the dispensation of the Spirit, that John wrote none of these things, lest he should seem to write from the very history of the things done (for indeed he lived a long time after the taking of the city), but they, who died before the taking, and had seen none of these things, they write it, in order that every way the power of the prediction should clearly shine forth.

"Then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together."

Having finished what concerned Jerusalem, He passes on to His own coming, and tells the signs of it, not for their use only, but for us also, and for all that shall come after us.

"Then." When? Here, as I have often said, the word, *"then,"* relates not to the connection in order of time with the things before mentioned. At

least, when He was minded to express the connection of time, He added, *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days,"* [Matthew 24:29] but here not so, but, *"then,"* not meaning what should follow straightway after these things, but what should be in the time, when these things were to be done, of which He was about to speak. So also when it is said, *"In those days comes John the Baptist,"* he is not speaking of the time that should straightway follow, but that many years after, and that in which these things were done, of which He was about to speak. For, in fact, having spoken of the birth of Jesus, and of the coming of the magi, and of the death of Herod, He at once says, *"In those days comes John the Baptist;"* although thirty years had intervened. But this is customary in the Scripture, I mean, to use this manner of narration. So then here also, having passed over all the intermediate time from the taking of Jerusalem unto the preludes of the consummation, He speaks of the time just before the consummation. *"Then,"* He says therefore, *"if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not."*

Awhile He secures them by the place, mentioning the distinguishing marks of His second coming, and the indications of the deceivers. For not, as when at His former coming He appeared in Bethlehem, and in a small corner of the world, and no one knew Him at the beginning, so does He say it shall be then too; but openly and with all circumstance, and so as not to need one to tell these things. And this is no small sign that He will not come secretly.

But mark how here He says nothing of war (for He is interpreting the doctrine concerning His advent), but of them that attempt to deceive. For some in the days of the apostles deceived the multitude, *"for they shall come,"* says He, *"and shall deceive many;"* [Matthew 24:11] and others shall do so before His second coming, who shall also be more grievous than

the former. *"For they shall show,"* He says, *"signs and wonders, so as to deceive if possible the very elect:"* [Matthew 24:24] here He is speaking of Antichrist, and indicates that some also shall minister to him. Of him Paul too speaks on this wise. Having called him *"man of sin,"* and *"son of perdition,"* He added, *"Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."* [2 Thessalonians 2:9-10]

And see how He secures them; *"Go not forth into the deserts, enter not into the secret chambers."* He did not say, *"Go, and do not believe;"* but, *"Go not forth, neither depart there."* For great then will be the deceiving, because that even deceiving miracles are wrought.

3. Having told them how Antichrist comes, as, for instance, that it will be in a place; He says how Himself also comes. How then does He Himself come? *"As the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there also will the eagles be gathered together."* [Matthew 24:27-28]

How then shines the lightning? It needs not one to talk of it, it needs not a herald, but even to them that sit in houses, and to them in chambers it shows itself in an instant of time throughout the whole world. So shall that coming be, showing itself at once everywhere by reason of the shining forth of His glory. But He mentions also another sign, *"where the carcass is, there also shall the eagles be;"* meaning the multitude of the angels, of the martyrs, of all the saints.

Then He tells of fearful prodigies. What are these prodigies? *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days,"* says He, *"the sun shall be darkened."* [Matthew 24:29] Of the tribulation of what days does He speak? Of those of Antichrist and of the false prophets? For there shall be great

tribulation, there being so many deceivers. But it is not protracted to a length of time. For if the Jewish war was shortened for the elect's sake, much more shall this temptation be limited for these same's sake. Therefore, He said not, *"after the tribulation,"* but *immediately "after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,"* for almost at the same time all things come to pass. For the false prophets and false Christs shall come and cause confusion, and immediately He Himself will be here. Because no small turmoil is then to prevail over the world.

But how does He come? The very creation being then transfigured, for *"the sun shall be darkened,"* not destroyed, but overcome by the light of His presence; and the stars shall fall, for what shall be the need of them thenceforth, there being no night? And *"the powers of Heaven shall be shaken,"* and in all likelihood, seeing so great a change come to pass. For if when the stars were made, they trembled and marvelled (*"for when the stars were made, all angels,"* it is said, *"praised Me with a loud voice"*); much more seeing all things in course of change, and their fellow servants giving account, and the whole world standing by that awful judgment-seat, and those who have lived from Adam unto His coming, having an account demanded of them of all that they did, how shall they but tremble, and be shaken?

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven;"
[Matthew 24:30] that is, the cross being brighter than the sun, since this last will be darkened, and hide himself, and that will appear when it would not appear, unless it were far brighter than the beams of the sun. But wherefore does the sign appear? In order that the shamelessness of the Jews may be more abundantly silenced. For having the cross as the greatest plea, Christ thus comes to that judgment-seat, showing not His wounds only, but also the death of reproach. *"Then shall the tribes mourn,"* for there shall be no

need of an accusation, when they see the cross; and they shall mourn, that by His death they are nothing benefited; because they crucified Him whom they ought to have adored.

Do you see how fearfully He has pictured His coming? How He has stirred up the spirits of His disciples? For this reason, let me add, He puts the mournful things first, and then the good things, that in this way also He may comfort and refresh them. And of His passion He suggests to them the remembrance, and of His resurrection, and with a display of glory, He mentions His cross, so that they may not be ashamed nor grieve, whereas indeed He comes then setting it forth for His sign. And another says, "*They shall look on Him whom they pierced.*" Therefore it is that they shall mourn, when they see that this is He.

And forasmuch as He had made mention of the cross, He added, "*They shall see the Son of Man coming,*" no longer on the cross, but "*in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory.*" [Matthew 24:30]

For think not, He means, because you hear of the cross, that it is again anything mournful, for He shall come with power and great glory. But He brings it, that their sin may be self-condemned, as if any one who had been struck by a stone, were to show the stone itself, or his garments stained with blood. And He comes in a cloud as He was taken up, and the tribes seeing these things mourn. Not however that the terrors shall with them proceed no further than mournings; but the mourning shall be, that they may bring forth their sentence from within, and condemn themselves.

And then again, "*He will send His angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather the elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other.*" [Matthew 24:31]

But when you have heard of this, consider the punishment of them that remain. For neither shall they suffer that former penalty only, but this too.

And as above He said, that they should say, "*Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord,*" [Matthew 22:39] so here, that they shall mourn. For since He had spoken unto them of grievous wars, that they might learn, that together with the fearful things here, the torments there also await them, He brings them in mourning and separated from the elect, and consigned to hell; by this again rousing the disciples, and indicating from how many evils they should be delivered, and how many good things they shall enjoy.

4. And why now does He call them by angels, if He comes thus openly? To honor them in this way also. But Paul says, that they "*shall be caught up in clouds.*" And He said this also, when He was speaking concerning a resurrection. "*For [1 Thessalonians 4:16] the Lord Himself,*" it is said, "*shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel.*" So that when risen again, the angels shall gather them together, when gathered together the clouds shall catch them up; and all these things are done in a moment, in an instant. For it is not that He abiding above calls them, but He Himself comes with the sound of a trumpet. And what mean the trumpets and the sound? They are for arousing, for gladness, to set forth the amazing nature of the things then doing, for grief to them that are left.

Woe is me for that fearful day! For though we ought to rejoice when we hear these things, we feel pain, and are dejected, and our countenance is sad. Or is it I only that feel thus, and do ye rejoice at hearing of these things? For upon me at least there comes a kind of shudder when these things are said, and I lament bitterly, and groan from the very depth of my heart. For I have no part in these things, but in those that are spoken afterwards, that are said unto the virgins, unto him that buried the talents he had received, unto the wicked servant. For this cause I weep, to think from what glory we are to be cast out, from what hope of blessings, and this perpetually, and forever, to spare ourselves a little labor. For if indeed this

were a great toil, and a grievous law, we ought even so to do all things; nevertheless many of the remiss would seem to have at least some pretext, a poor pretext indeed, yet would they seem to have some, that the toil was great, and the time endless, and the burden intolerable; but now we can put forward no such objection; which circumstance most of all will gnaw us no less than hell at that time, when for want of a slight endeavor, and a little toil, we shall have lost Heaven, and the unspeakable blessings. For both the time is short, and the labor small, and yet we faint and are supine. Thou strivest on earth, and the crown is in Heaven; you are punished of men, and art honored of God; the race is for two days, and the reward for endless ages; the struggle is a corruptible body, and the rewards in an incorruptible.

And apart from these things, we should consider another point also, that even if we do not choose to suffer any of the things that are painful for Christ's sake, we must in other ways most assuredly endure them. For neither, though you should not have died for Christ, will you be immortal; neither though you should not have cast away your riches for Christ, will you go away hence with them. These things He requires of you, which although He should not require them, you will have to give up, because you are mortal; He wills you to do these by your choice, which you must do by necessity. So much only He requires to be added, that it be done for His sake; since that these things befall men and pass away, comes to pass of natural necessity. Do you see how easy the conflict? What it is altogether necessary for you to suffer, that choose to suffer for my sake; let this only be added, and I have sufficient obedience. The gold which you intend to lend to another, this lend to me, both at more profit, and in greater security. Your body, wherewith you are going to warfare for another, make it to war for me, for indeed I surpass your toils with recompenses in the most abundant excess. Yet thou in all other matters preferrest him that gives you

more as well in loans, as in marketing and in warfare; but Christ alone, when giving more, and infinitely more than all, thou dost not receive. And what is this so great hostility? What is this so great enmity? Where will there be any excuse or defense left for you, when the reasons for which you prefer man to man avail not to induce you to prefer God to man?

Why do you commit your treasure to the earth? *"Give it into my hand,"* He says. Does not the earth's Lord seem to you more worthy of trust than the earth? This indeed restores that which you laid in it, though oftentimes not even this, but He gives you also recompense for His keeping of it? For indeed He does exceedingly love us. Therefore if you should wish to lend, He stands ready; or to sow, He receives it; or if you should wish to build, He draws you unto Himself, saying, Build in my regions. Why do you run unto poor, unto beggarly men, who also for little gains occasion you great trouble? Nevertheless, not even on hearing these things, do we make up our minds to it, but where are fightings and wars, and wild struggles, and trials and suits of law, and false accusations, there do we hasten.

5. Does He not justly turn away from us, and punish us, when He is giving up Himself unto us for all things, and we are resisting Him? It is surely plain to all. For whether you are desirous to adorn yourself, *"Let it, He says, be with my ornaments;"* or to arm yourself, *"with my arms,"* or to clothe yourself, *"with my raiment;"* or to feed yourself, *"at my table;"* or to journey, *"on my way;"* or to inherit, *"my inheritance;"* or to enter into a country, *"the city of which I am builder and maker;"* or to build a house, *"among my tabernacles."* *"For I, so far from asking you for a recompense of the things that I give you, to even make myself owe you a recompense for this very thing, if you be willing to use all I have."* What can be equal to this munificence, *"I am Father, I am brother, I am bridegroom, I am dwelling place, I am food, I am raiment, I am root, I am foundation, all whatsoever*

you will, I am." *"Be thou in need of nothing, I will be even a servant, for I came to minister, not to be ministered unto; I am friend, and member, and head, and brother, and sister, and mother; I am all; only cling thou closely to me. I was poor for you, and a wanderer for you, on the cross for you, in the tomb for you, above I intercede for you to the Father; on earth I have come for your sake am ambassador from my Father. You are all things to me, brother, and joint heir, and friend, and member."* What would you more? Why do you turn away from Him, who loves you? Why do you labor for the world? Why do you draw water into a broken cistern? For it is this to labor for the present life. Why do you comb wool into the fire? Why do you *"beat the air?"* [1 Corinthians 9:26] Why do you *"run in vain?"* [Galatians 2:2]

Hath not every art an end? It is surely plain to every one. Do thou also show the end of your worldly eagerness. But you can not; for, *"vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* [Ecclesiastes 1:2] Let us go to the tombs; show me your father; show me your wife. Where is he that was clad in raiment of gold? He that rode in the chariot? He that had armies, that had the girdle, that had the heralds? He that was slaying these, and casting those into prison? He that put to death whom he would, and set free whom he was minded? I see nothing but bones, and a worm, and a spider's web; all those things are earth, all those a fable, all a dream, and a shadow, and a bare relation, and a picture, or rather not so much as a picture. For the picture we see at least in a likeness, but here not so much as a likeness.

And would that the evils stop with this. For now the honor, and the luxury, and the distinction, end with a shadow, with words; but the consequences of them, are no longer limited to a shadow and to words, but continue, and will pass over with us elsewhere, and will be manifest to all, the rapine, the covetousness, the fornications, the adulteries, the dreadful

things beyond number; these not in similitude, neither in ashes, but written above, both words and deeds.

With what eyes then shall we behold Christ? For if any one could not bear to see his father, when conscious to himself that he had sinned against him, upon Him who infinitely exceeds a father in forbearance how shall we then look? How shall we bear it? For indeed we shall stand at Christ's judgment-seat, and there will be a strict inquiry into all things.

But if any man disbelieve the judgments to come, let him look at the things here, at those in the prisons, those in the mines, those on the dunghills, the possessed, the frantic, them that are struggling with incurable diseases, those that are fighting against continual poverty, them that live in famine, them that are pierced with irremediable woes, those in captivity. For these persons would not suffer these things here, unless vengeance and punishments were to await all the others also that have committed such sins. And if the rest have undergone nothing here, you ought to regard this very fact as a sign that there is surely something to follow after our departure here. For the self-same God of all would not take vengeance on some, and leave others unpunished, who have committed the same or more grievous offenses, unless He designed to bring some punishments upon them there.

By these arguments then and these examples let us also humble ourselves; and let them who are obstinate unbelievers of the judgment believe it henceforth, and become better men; that having lived here in a manner worthy of the kingdom, we may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 77 on Matthew

Matthew 24:33-34.

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near: so likewise ye, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

Forasmuch as He had said, *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days;"* but they sought of this, after how long a time it should be, and desired to know in particular the very day, therefore He puts also the similitude of the fig tree, indicating that the interval was not great, but that in quick succession would occur His advent also. And this He declared not by the parable alone, but by the words that follow, saying, *"know that it is near, even at the doors."*

Whereby He foretells another thing also, a spiritual summer, and a calm that should be on that day (after the present tempest) for the righteous; but to the sinners the contrary, winter after summer, which He declares in what follows, saying, that the day shall come upon them, when they are living in luxury.

But not for this intent only did He put forward this about the fig tree, in order to declare the interval; for it was possible to have set this before them in other ways as well; but that he might hereby also confirm His saying, as assuredly thus to come to pass. For as this *of the fig tree* is of necessity, so that too. For thus, wherever He is minded to speak of that which will assuredly come to pass, He brings forward the necessary courses of nature, both Himself, and the blessed Paul imitating Him. Therefore also when speaking of His resurrection, He says, *"When the grain of wheat has fallen into the earth, except it die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings*

forth much fruit." [John 12:24] Whereby also the blessed Paul being instructed uses the same similitude, *"You fool,"* he says, *"that which you sow is not quickened, except it die."* [1 Corinthians 15:36]

After this, that they might not straightway return to it again, and say, *"When?"* he brings to their remembrance the things that had been said, saying, *"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled!"* All these things. What things? I pray you. Those about Jerusalem, those about the wars, about the famines, about the pestilences, about the earthquakes, about the false Christs, about the false prophets, about the sowing of the gospel everywhere, the seditions, the tumults, all the other things, which we said were to occur until His coming. How then, one may ask, did He say, *"This generation?"* Speaking not of the generation then living, but of that of the believers. For He is wont to distinguish a generation not by times only, but also by the mode of religious service, and practice; as when He says, *"This is the generation of them that seek the Lord."*

For what He said above, *"All these must come to pass,"* [Matthew 24:6] and again, *"the gospel shall be preached,"* [Matthew 24:14] this He declares here also, saying, All these things shall surely come to pass, and the generation of the faithful shall remain, cut off by none of the things that have been mentioned. For both Jerusalem shall perish, and the more part of the Jews shall be destroyed, but over this generation shall nothing prevail, not famine, not pestilence, not earthquake, nor the tumults of wars, not false Christs, not false prophets, not deceivers, not traitors, not those that cause to offend, not the false brethren, nor any other such like temptation whatever.

Then to lead them on more in faith, He says, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away;"* [Matthew 24:35] that is, it

were more easy for these firm, fixed, and immoveable bodies to be blotted out, than for ought of my words to fall to the ground. And he who gainsays these things, let him test His sayings, and when he has found them true (for so he surely will find them) from what is past, let him believe also the things to come, and let him search out all things with diligence, and he will see the actual events bearing witness to the truth of the prophecy. And the elements He has brought forward, at once to declare, that the church is of more honor than Heaven and earth, and at the same time to indicate Himself by this also to be maker of all. For since He was speaking of the end, a thing disbelieved by many, He brought forward Heaven and earth, indicating His unspeakable power, and showing with great authority, that He is Lord of all, and by these things rendering His sayings deserving of credit, even with those who are much given to doubt.

"But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." By saying, not the angels, He stopped their mouths, that they should not seek to learn what these angels know not; and by saying, *"neither the Son,"* forbids them not only to learn, but even to inquire. For in proof that therefore He said this, see after His resurrection, when He saw they had become over curious, how He stopped their mouths more decidedly. For now indeed He has mentioned infallible signs, many and endless; but then He says merely, *"It is not for you to know times or seasons."* And then that they might not say, we are driven to perplexity, we are utterly scorned, we are not held worthy so much as of this, He says, *"which the Father has put in His own power."* And this, because He was exceedingly careful to honor them, and to conceal nothing from them. Therefore He refers it to His Father, both to make the thing awful, and to exclude that of which He had spoken from their inquiry. Since if it be not this, but He is ignorant of it, when will He know it? Will it be together with

us? But who would say this? And the Father He knows clearly, even as clearly as He knows the Son; and of the day is He ignorant? Moreover, *"the Spirit indeed searches even the deep things of God,"* [1 Corinthians 2:10] and does not He know so much as the time of the judgment? But how He ought to judge He knows, and of the secrets of each He has a full perception; and what is far more common than that, of this could He be ignorant? And how, if *"all things were made by Him, and without Him was not even one thing made,"* was He ignorant of the day? For He who made the worlds, it is quite plain that He made the times also; and if the times, even that day. How then is He ignorant of that which He made?

2. And ye indeed say that you know even His substance, but that the Son not even the day, the Son, who is always in the bosom of the Father; and yet His substance is much greater than the days, even infinitely greater. How then, while assigning to yourselves the greater things, do you not allow even the less to the Son, *"in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* [Colossians 2:3] But neither do you know what God is in His substance, though ten thousand times ye talk thus madly, neither is the Son ignorant of the day, but is even in full certainty thereof.

For this cause, I say, when He had told all things, both the times and the seasons, and had brought it to the very doors (*"for it is near,"* He says, *"even at the doors"*), He was silent as to the day. For if you seek after the day and hour, you shall not hear them of me, says He; but if of times and preludes, without hiding anything, I will tell you all exactly.

For that indeed I am not ignorant of it, I have shown by many things; having mentioned intervals, and all the things that are to occur, and how short from this present time until the day itself (for this did the parable of the fig tree indicate), and I lead you to the very vestibule; and if I do not open unto you the doors, this also I do for your good.

And that you may learn by another thing also, that the silence is not a mark of ignorance on His part, see, together with what we have mentioned, how He sets forth another sign also. *"But as in the days of Noe they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that the flood came, and took all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."* And these things He spoke, showing that He should come on a sudden, and unexpectedly, and when the more part were living luxuriously. For Paul too says this, writing on this wise, *"When they shall speak of peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them;"* and to show how unexpected, He said, *"as travail upon a woman with child."*

[1 Thessalonians 5:3] How then does He say, *"after the tribulation of those days?"* For if there be luxury then, and peace, and safety, as Paul says, how does He say, *"after the tribulation of those days?"* If there be luxury, how is there tribulation? Luxury for them that are in a state of insensibility and peace. Therefore He said not, when there is peace, but *"when they speak of peace and safety,"* indicating their insensibility to be such as of those in Noah's time, for that amid such evils they lived in luxury.

But not so the righteous, but they were passing their time in tribulation and dejection. Whereby He shows, that when Antichrist has come, the pursuit of unlawful pleasures shall be more eager among the transgressors, and those that have learned to despair of their own salvation. Then shall be gluttony, then revellings, and drunkenness. Wherefore also most of all He puts forth an example corresponding to the thing. For like as when the ark was making, they believed not, says He; but while it was set in the midst of them, proclaiming beforehand the evils that are to come, they, when they saw it, lived in pleasure, just as though nothing dreadful were about to take place; so also now, Antichrist indeed shall appear, after whom is the end, and the punishments at the end, and vengeance intolerable; but they that are

held by the intoxication of wickedness shall not so much as perceive the dreadful nature of the things that are on the point of being done. Wherefore also Paul says, *"as travail upon a woman with child,"* even so shall those fearful and incurable evils come upon them.

And wherefore did He not speak of the ills in Sodom? It was His will to introduce an example embracing all men, and disbelieved after it was foretold. So therefore, as by the more part the things to come are disbelieved, He confirms those things by the past, terrifying their minds. And together with the points I have mentioned, He shows this also, that of the former things also He was the doer. Then again He sets another sign, by all which things He makes it evident, that He is not ignorant of the day. And what is the sign? *"Then shall two be in the field; one shall be taken, and one left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken, and one left. Watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord does come."* And all these things are both proofs that He knew, and calculated to turn them from their inquiry. So for this cause He spoke also of the days of Noe, for this cause He said too, *"Two shall be on the bed,"* signifying this, that He should come upon them thus unexpectedly, when they were thus without thought, and *"two women grinding at the mill,"* which also of itself is not the employment of them that are taking thought.

And together with this, He declares that as well servants as masters should be both taken and left, both those who are at ease, and those in toil, as well from the one rank as from the other; even as in the Old Testament He says, *"From him that sits upon the throne to the captive woman that is at the mill."* For since He had said, that hardly are the rich saved, He shows that not even these are altogether lost, neither are the poor saved all of them, but both out of these and out of those are men saved, and lost.

And to me He seems to declare, that at night will be the advent. For this Luke too says. [Luke 17:34] Do you see how accurately He knows all things?

After this again, that they may not ask about it, He added, *"Watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord does come."*

[Matthew 24:42] He said not, *"I know not,"* but, *"ye know not."* For when He had brought them well near to the very hour, and had placed them there, again He deters them from the inquiry, from a desire that they should be striving always. Therefore He says, *"Watch,"* showing that for the sake of this, He did not tell it.

"But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as you think not the Son of Man comes."

For this intent He tells them not, in order that they may watch, that they may be always ready; therefore He says, When ye look not for it, then He will come, desiring that they should be anxiously waiting, and continually in virtuous action.

But His meaning is like this: if the common sort of men knew when they were to die, they would surely strive earnestly at that hour.

3. In order therefore that they may strive, not at that hour only, therefore He tells them not either the common hour, or the hour of each, desiring them to be ever looking for this, that they may be always striving. Wherefore He made the end of each man's life also uncertain.

After this, He openly calls Himself Lord, having nowhere spoken so distinctly. But here He seems to me also to put to shame the careless, that not even as much care as they that expect a thief have taken for their money, not even this much do these take for their own soul. For they indeed, when

they expect it, watch, and suffer none of the things in their house to be carried off; but you, although knowing that He will come, and come assuredly, continue not watching, says He, and ready so as not to be carried away hence unprepared. So that the day comes unto destruction for them that sleep. For as that man, if he had known, would have escaped, so also ye, if you be ready, escape free.

Then, as He had fallen upon the mention of the judgment, He directs His discourse to the teachers next, speaking of punishment and honors; and having put first them that do right, He ends with them that continue in sin, making His discourse to close with that which is alarming.

Wherefore He first says this, *"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord shall set over His household to give them their meat in their due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He comes shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all His goods."*

Tell me, is this too the language of one who is in ignorance? For if because He said, *"neither does the Son know,"* you say He is ignorant of it; as He says, *"who then?"* what will you say? Will you say He is ignorant of this too? Away with the thought. For not even one of them that are frantic would say this. And yet in the former case one might assign a cause; but here not even this. And what when He said, *"Peter, do you love me?"* [John 21:16] asking it, knew He not so much as this? Nor when He said, *"Where have ye laid him?"* [John 11:34]

And the Father too will be found to be saying such things. For He Himself likewise says, *"Adam, where are you?"* [Genesis 3:9] and, *"The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is waxed great before me. I will go down therefore, and see whether their doings be according to their cry which comes unto me, and if not, I will know."* [Genesis 18:20-21] And elsewhere He says,

"Whether they will hear, whether they will understand." [Ezekiel 2:5] And in the gospel too, *"It may be they will reverence my Son:"* all which are expressions of ignorance. But not in ignorance did He say these things, but as compassing objects such as became Him: in the case of Adam, that He might drive him to make an excuse for his sin: in that of the Sodomites, that He might teach us never to be positive, till we are present at the very deeds; in that of the prophet, that the prediction might not appear in the judgment of the foolish a kind of compulsion to disobedience; and in the parable in the gospel, that He might show that they ought to have done this, and to have revered the Son: but here, as well that they may not be curious, nor over busy again, as that He might indicate that this was a rare and precious thing. And see of what great ignorance this saying is indicative, if at least He know not even him that is set over. For He blesses him indeed, *"For blessed,"* says He, *"is that servant;"* but He says not who this is. *"For who is he,"* He says, *"whom His Lord shall set over?"* and, *"Blessed is he whom He shall find so doing."*

But these things are spoken not of money only, but also of speech, and of power, and of gifts, and of every stewardship, wherewith each is entrusted. This parable would suit rulers in the state also, for every one is bound to make full use of what he has for the common advantage. If it be wisdom you have, if power, if wealth, if what it may, let it not be for the hurt of your fellow-servants, neither for your own ruin. For this cause, therefore, He requires both things of him, wisdom, and fidelity: for sin arises from folly also. He calls him faithful then, because he has purloined nothing, neither misspent his Lord's goods without aim or fruit; and wise, because he knew how to dispense the things given him, according as was fit. For indeed we have need of both things, as well not to purloin the goods of our Master, as also to dispense them as is fit. But if the one be wanting,

the other halts. For if he be faithful and steal not, yet were to waste and to spend upon that which concerned him not, great were the blame; and if he should know how to dispense it well, yet were to purloin, again there is no common charge against him.

And let us also that have money listen to these things. For not unto teachers only does He discourse, but also unto the rich. For either sort were entrusted with riches; those that teach with the more necessary wealth, you with what is inferior. When then at the time that the teachers are scattering abroad the greater, you are not willing to show forth your liberality even in the less, or rather not liberality but honesty (for you give the things of another), what excuse will you have? But now, before the punishment of them that do the contrary things, let us hear the honor of him that approves himself. *"For verily I say unto you, He will set him over all His goods."*

What can be equal to this honor? What manner of speech will be able to set forth the dignity, the blessedness, when the King of Heaven, He that possesses all things, is about to set a man over *"all His goods?"* Wherefore also He calls him wise, because he knew, not to give up great things for small, but having been temperate here, has attained to Heaven.

4. After this, as He ever does, not by the honor only laid up for the good, but also by the punishment threatened against the wicked, does He correct the hearers. Wherefore also He added, *"But and if the evil servant say in his heart, my Lord delays His coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken: the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looks not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

But if any one should say, Do you see what a thought has entered into his mind, because of the day's not being known, *"my Lord,"* he says, *"delays*

His coming?" we should affirm, that it was not because the day is not known, but because the servant is evil. Else wherefore came not this thought into the heart of the faithful and wise servant. For what, even though the Lord tarry, O wretched man, surely you look that He will come. Why then do you not take care?

Hence then we learn, that He does not so much as tarry. For this judgment is not the Lord's, but that of the evil servant's mind, wherefore also he is blamed for this. For in proof that He does not tarry, hear Paul saying, *"The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing;"* [Philippians 4:5-6] and, *"He that comes will come, and will not tarry."* [Hebrews 10:37]

But do thou hear also what follows, and learn how continually He reminds them of their ignorance of the day, showing that this is profitable to the servants, and fitted to waken and thoroughly to rouse them. For what though some gained nothing hereby? For neither by other things profitable for them were some profited, but nevertheless He ceases not to do His part.

What then is the purport of that which follows? *"For He shall come in a day when he looks not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of;"* [Matthew 24:50] and shall inflict upon him extreme punishment. Do you see how even everywhere He puts this, the fact of their ignorance, indicating that it was profitable, and by this making them always earnest minded? For this is the point at which He labors, that we should be always on the watch; and since it is always in luxury that we are supine, but in afflictions we are braced up, therefore everywhere He says this, that when there is relaxation, then come the terrors. And as further back He showed this by the example of Noah, even so here He says it is, when that servant is drunken, when he is beating, and that his punishment shall be intolerable.

But let us not regard only the punishment appointed for him, but let us look to this other point too, lest we ourselves also be un awares to ourselves

doing the same things. For to this servant are they like, who have money, and give not to the needy. For you too are steward of your own possessions, not less than he who dispenses the alms of the church. As then he has not a right to squander at random and at hazard the things given by you for the poor, since they were given for the maintenance of the poor; even so neither may thou squander your own. For even though you have received an inheritance from your father, and hast in this way all you possess, even thus all are God's. And then thou for your part desirest that what you have given should be thus carefully dispensed, and do you not think that God will require His own of us with greater strictness, or that He suffers them to be wasted at random? These things are not, they are not so. Because for this end, He left these things in your hand, in order *"to give them their meat in due season."* But what means, *"in due season?"* To the needy, to the hungry. For like as you gave to your fellow-servant to dispense, even so does the Lord will you too to spend these things on what is needful. Therefore though He was able to take them away from you, He left them, that you might have opportunity to show forth virtue; that bringing us into need one of another, He might make our love for one another more fervent.

But you, when you have received, so far from giving, dost even beat. And yet if not to give be blame, what excuse is there for beating? But this, it seems to me, He speaks, hinting at the insolent, and the covetous, and indicating the charge to be heavy, when they beat them, whom they were commanded to feed.

5. But He seems to be here hinting also at those that live in luxury, since for luxury too there is laid up a great punishment. *"For He eats and drinks,"* it is said, *"with the drunken,"* pointing at gluttony. For not for this purpose did you receive, that you should spend it on luxury, but that you should lay it out on alms. What! Are they your own things which you have?

With the goods of the poor have you been entrusted, though thou be possessed of them by honest labor, or though it be by inheritance from your father. What, could not God have taken away these things from you? But He does not this, to give you power to be liberal to the poor.

But mark thou, I pray you, how throughout all the parables He punishes them that lay not out their money upon the needy. For neither had the virgins robbed other men's goods, but they had not given their own; neither had he that buried the one talent embezzled, but he had not doubled; neither are they that overlooked the hungry punished, because they seized the possessions of others, but because they did not lay out their own, like as also this servant.

Let us hearken, as many as please the belly, as many as lay out on costly banquets the riches that pertain not at all to us, but belong to the needy. For do not, because out of great love to man you are commanded to give as of yours, therefore suppose these things to be indeed your own. He lent them to you, that you might be able to approve yourself. Do not then suppose them to be yours, when giving Him His own. For neither, if you had lent to any one, that he might go and be able to find means of gain, would you say the money was his. To you then also has God given, that you might traffic for Heaven. Make not then the exceeding greatness of His love to man a cause of ingratitude.

Consider of what prayer it were a worthy object, to be able to find after baptism a way to do away one's sins. If He had not said this, Give alms, how many would have said, Would it were possible to give money, and so be freed from the ills to come! But since this has become possible, again are they become supine.

"But I give," you say. And what is this? You have not yet given as much as she, who cast in the two mites; or rather not so much as the half,

nor a very small part of what she gave, but you lay out the greater part on useless expenses, on banquets, and drunkenness, and extreme extravagance; now bidding, now bidden; now spending, now constraining others to spend; so that the punishment is even rendered twofold for you, both from what yourself doest, and what you move others to do. See at any rate how He Himself blames His servant for this. *"For he eats,"* He says, *"and drinks with the drunken."* For not the drunken only, but those that are with them, does He punish, and very fitly, because (together with corrupting their own selves) they make light also of the salvation of others. But nothing does so much provoke God, as for us to be inclined to overlook the things that concern our neighbor. Wherefore showing His anger, He commands him to be cut asunder. Therefore He also affirmed love to be a distinguishing mark of His disciples, since it is altogether necessary that he who loves should take thought for the things of his beloved.

To this way then let us hold, for this is especially the way that leads up to Heaven, which renders men followers of Christ, which makes them, as far as possible, like God. See at any rate how these virtues are more needful, which have their dwelling by this way. And, if you will, let us make an inquiry into them, and let us bring forth the sentences from the judgment of God.

Let there be then two ways of most holy life, and let the one secure the goodness of him that practises it, but the other of his neighbor also. Let us see whether is the more approved and leads us to the summit of virtue. Surely he, who seeks his own things only, will receive even from Paul endless blame, and when I say from Paul, I mean from Christ, but the other commendations and crowns. Whence is this evident? Hear what His language is to one, what to the other. *"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."* [1 Corinthians 10:24] Do you see he rejects the one,

and brings in the other? Again, *"Let every one of you please his neighbor for good to edification."* Then comes also the praise beyond words with an admonition, *"For even Christ pleased not Himself."* [Romans 15:2-3]

Even these judgments then are sufficient to show the victory; but that this may be done even superabundantly, let us see among good works, which are confined to ourselves, and which pass over from us to others also. Fasting then, and lying on the bare ground, and keeping virginity, and a self-denying life, these things bring their advantage to the persons themselves who do them; but those that pass from ourselves to our neighbors are almsgiving, teaching, charity. Hear then Paul in this matter also saying, *"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing profited."* [1 Corinthians 13:3]

6. Do you see it in itself gloriously celebrated, and crowned?

But if you be willing, from a third point also let us compare them; and let the one fast, and deny himself, and be a martyr, and be burnt to death, but let another delay his martyrdom for his neighbor's edification; and let him not only delay it, but let him even depart without martyrdom; who will be the more approved after his removal hence? We need not have many words, nor a long circumlocution. For the blessed Paul is at hand, giving his judgment, and saying, *"To depart and to be with Christ is better, nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you;"* [Philippians 1:23-24] even to his removal unto Christ did he prefer his neighbor's edification. For this is in the highest sense to be with Christ, even to be doing His will, but nothing is so much His will, as that which is for one's neighbor's good.

Will you that I tell you a fourth proof also of these things? *"Peter, do you love me,"* says He; *"Feed my sheep:"* [John 21:15-17] and having asked

him a third time, declared this to be an infallible proof of love. But not to priests only is this said, but to every one of us also, who are also entrusted with a little flock. For do not despise it, because it is a little flock: For "*my Father*," He says, "*has pleasure in them.*" [Luke 12:32] Each of us has a sheep, let him lead that to the proper pastures. And let the man, as soon as he has risen from his bed, seek after nothing else, but how he may do and say something whereby he may render his whole house more reverent. The woman again, let her be indeed a good housekeeper; but before attending to this, let her have another more needful care, that the whole household may work the works of Heaven. For if in worldly matters, before attending to the affairs of our household, we labor diligently to pay public dues, that we may not for our undutifulness in these matters be beaten and dragged to the market places, and suffer ten thousand unseemly things; much more ought we to do this in things spiritual, and to render what is due to God, the King of all, first, that we may not come to that place, "*where is gnashing of teeth.*"

And after these virtues let us seek, which together with our own salvation will be able in the greatest degree to profit our neighbor. Such is almsgiving, such is prayer, or rather even this latter is by the former made efficacious, and furnished with wings. "*For your prayers,*" it is said, "*and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.*" [Acts 10:4] But not prayers only, but fasting also has its strength from hence. Should you fast without almsgiving; the act is not so much as counted for fasting; but such a one is worse than a gluttonous man and a drunkard; and so much worse, as cruelty is a more grievous thing than luxury. And why do I speak of fasting? Though thou practise self-denial, though thou practise virginity, you are set without the bridechamber, if you have not almsgiving. And yet what is equal to virginity, which not even in the new dispensation has come under

the compulsion of law, on account of its high excellence? But nevertheless it is cast out, when it has not almsgiving. But if virgins are cast out, because they have not this in due abundance, who will be able without this to obtain pardon? There is no man, but he must quite of necessity perish, who has not this.

For, if in worldly matters no man lives for himself, but artisan, and soldier, and husbandman, and merchant, all of them contribute to the common good, and to their neighbor's advantage; much more ought we to do this in things spiritual. For this is most properly to live: since he at least who is living for himself only, and overlooking all others, is useless, and is not so much as a human being, nor of our race.

What then, you would say, if I neglect my own interests, while seeking after the good of the rest? It is not possible, for one who seeks after the good of the rest to overlook his own; for he who seeks after the good of the rest pains no man, but pities all, helps them to the utmost of his powers; will rob no man, will covet the goods of no man, will not steal, will not bear false witness; will abstain from all wickedness, will apply himself to all virtue, and will pray for his enemies, and do good to them that plot against him, and will neither revile any, nor speak ill of them, though he hear from them ten thousand evil things; but will speak the words of the apostle: *"Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?"*

[2 Corinthians 11:29] But when looking to our own good, it is not quite sure that the good of the rest will follow.

By all which things being persuaded that it is not possible for one to be saved, who has not looked to the common good, and seeing this man that was cut asunder, and him that buried his talent, let us choose this way, that we may also attain unto eternal life, unto which God grant we may all

attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory, world without end. Amen.

Homily 78 on Matthew

Matt. XXV. 1-30.

"Then shall the kingdom of Heaven," He says, "be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. But five of them were wise, and the other five foolish, which took not," He says, "oil."

"Then, while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him. And the five arose, and being in perplexity, said to the wise, Give us of your oil. But they consented not, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; go to them that sell, and buy."

"And while they had gone for this, the bridegroom came, and those went in; but these came afterwards, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for you know not the day, nor the hour."

"Then He spoke again another parable. A man travelling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods; to one five talents, to another two, to another one, to every man according to his several ability, and took his journey. Then, when the two had brought him the double, he that had been entrusted with the one talent brought it alone, and being blamed says, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered; and I was afraid, and hid your talent; lo! There you have that is yours. His Lord answered and said, Thou wicked servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered: you ought therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I might have

received my own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him that has ten talents. For to him that has shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but from him that has not, shall be taken away even that which he has. And cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

These parables are like the former parable of the faithful servant, and of him that was ungrateful and devoured his Lord's goods. For there are four in all, in different ways admonishing us about the same things, I mean about diligence in almsgiving, and about helping our neighbor by all means which we are able to use, since it is not possible to be saved in another way. But there He speaks more generally of all assistance which should be rendered to one's neighbor; but as to the virgins, he speaks particularly of mercifulness in alms, and more strongly than in the former parable. For there He punishes him that beats, and is drunken, and scatters and wastes his lord's goods, but here even him that does not help, nor spends abundantly his goods upon the needy. For they had oil indeed, but not in abundance, wherefore also they are punished.

But wherefore does He set forth this parable in the person of the virgins, and does not merely suppose any person whatever? Great things had He spoken of virginity, saying, *"There are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake;"* and, *"He that is able to receive, let him receive it."* [Matthew 19:12] He knew also that the generality of men would have a great opinion of it. For indeed the work is by nature great, and is shown so by this, that neither under the old dispensation was it fulfilled by these ancient and holy men, nor under the new was it brought under the compulsion of the law. For He did not command this, but left it to the choice of his hearers. Wherefore Paul also said *"Now, concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord."*

[1 Corinthians 7:25] *"For though I praise him that attains thereto, yet I constrain not him that is not willing, neither do I make the thing an injunction."* Since then the thing is both great in itself and has great honor with the multitude, lest any one attaining to this should feel as though he had attained to all, and should be careless about the rest, He puts forth this parable sufficient to persuade them, that virginity, though it should have everything else, if destitute of the good things arising out of almsgiving, is cast out with the harlots, and He sets the inhuman and merciless with them. And most reasonably, for the one was overcome by the love of carnal pleasure, but these of money. But the love of carnal pleasure and of money are not equal, but that of carnal pleasure is far keener and more tyrannical. And the weaker the antagonist, the less excusable are these that are overcome thereby. Therefore also He calls them foolish, for that having undergone the greater labor, they have betrayed all for want of the less. But by lamps here, He means the gift itself of virginity, the purity of holiness; and by oil, humanity, almsgiving, succor to them that are in need.

"Then, while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." He shows that the time intervening will not be short, leading His disciples away from the expectation that His kingdom was quite immediately to appear. For this indeed they hoped, therefore He is continually holding them back from this hope. And at the same time He intimates this too, that death is a sleep. For they slept, He says.

"And about midnight there was a cry made." Either He was continuing the parable, or again He shows that the resurrection will be at night. But the cry Paul also indicates, saying, *"With a shout, with a voice of an archangel, with the last trump, He shall come down from Heaven."* And what mean the trumpets, and what says the cry? *"The bridegroom comes."* When therefore they had trimmed their lamps, the foolish say unto the wise, *"Give us of*

your oil." Again He calls them foolish, showing that nothing can be more foolish than they who are wealthy here, and depart naked there, where most of all we have need of humanity, where we want much oil. But not in this respect only were they foolish, but also because they looked to receive it there, and sought it out of season; and yet nothing could be more humane than those virgins, who for this especially were approved. Neither do they seek for it all, for, *"Give us,"* they say, *"of your oil;"* and the urgency of their need is indicated; *"for our lamps,"* they say, *"are going out."* But even so they failed, and neither the humanity of those whom they asked, nor the easiness of their request, nor their necessity and want, made them obtain.

But what now do we learn from hence? That no man can protect us there, if we are betrayed by our works, not because he will not, but because he cannot. For these too take refuge in the impossibility. This the blessed Abraham also indicated, saying, *"Between us and you there is a great gulf,"* [Luke 16:26] so that not even when willing is it permitted them to pass it.

"But go to them that sell, and buy." And who are they that sell? The poor. And where are these? Here, and then should they have sought them, not at that time.

2. Do you see what great profit arises to us from the poor? Should you take them away, you would take away the great hope of our salvation. Wherefore here must we get together the oil, that it may be useful to us there, when the time calls us. For that is not the time of collecting it, but this. Spend not then your goods for nought in luxury and vainglory. For you will have need of much oil there.

Having heard these things, those virgins went their way; but they profited nothing. And this He says, either pursuing the parable, and working it up; or also by these things showing, that though we should become humane after our departure, we shall gain nothing from thence towards our

escape. Therefore neither did their forwardness avail these virgins, because they went to them that sell not here, but there; nor the rich man, when he became so charitable, as even to be anxious about his relations. For he that was passing by him that was laid at the gate, is eager to rescue from perils and from hell them whom he did not so much as see, and entreats that some be sent to tell them these things. But nevertheless, he derived no benefit from thence, as neither did these virgins. For when they having heard these things went their way, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him, but the others were shut out. After their many labors, after their innumerable toils, and that intolerable fight, and those trophies which they had set up over the madness of natural appetite, disgraced, and with their lamps gone out, they withdrew, bending down their faces to the earth. For nothing is more sullied than virginity not having mercy; so that even the multitude are wont to call the unmerciful dark. Where then was the profit of virginity, when they saw not the bridegroom? And not even when they had knocked did they obtain, but they heard that fearful saying, *"Depart, I know you not."* [Matthew 25:12] And when He has said this, nothing else but hell is left, and that intolerable punishment; or rather, this word is more grievous even than hell. This word He speaks to them also that work iniquity.

"Watch therefore, for you know not the day nor the hour."

[Matthew 25:13] Do you see how continually He adds this, showing how awful our ignorance concerning our departure hence? Where now are they, who throughout all their life are remiss, but when they are blamed by us, are saying, At the time of my death, I shall leave money to the poor. Let them listen to these words, and be amended. For indeed at that time many have failed of this, having been snatched away at once, and not permitted so much as to give charge to their relations touching what they wished to be done.

This parable was spoken with respect to mercy in alms; but the one that comes after this, to them that neither in money, nor in word, nor in protection, nor in any other things whatever, are willing to assist their neighbors, but withhold all.

And wherefore can it be that this parable brings forward a king, but that a bridegroom? That you might learn how close Christ is joined unto the virgins that strip themselves of their possessions; for this indeed is virginity. Wherefore Paul also makes this as a definition of the thing. *"The unmarried woman cares for the things of the Lord;"* [1 Corinthians 7:34-35] such are his words: and, *"For that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction. These things we advise,"* he says.

And if in Luke the parable of the talents is otherwise put, this is to be said, that the one is really different from the other. For in that, from the one capital different degrees of increase were made, for from one pound one brought five, another ten; wherefore neither did they obtain the same recompense; but here, it is the contrary, and the crown is accordingly equal. For he that received two gave two, and he that had received the five again in like manner; but there since from the same beginning one made the greater, one the less, increase; as might be expected, in the rewards also, they do not enjoy the same.

But see Him everywhere, not requiring it again immediately. For in the case of the vineyard, He let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country; and here He committed to them the talents, and took His journey, that you might learn His long-suffering. And to me He seems to say these things, to intimate the resurrection. But here it is no more a vineyard and husbandmen, but all servants. For not to rulers only, nor to Jews, but to all, does He address His discourse. And they who bring a return unto Him confess frankly, both what is their own, and what their Master's. And the

one says, Lord, *"You gave me five talents;"* and the other says, *"two,"* indicating that from Him they received the source of their gain, and they are very thankful, and reckon all to Him.

What then says the Master? *"Well done, thou good"* (for this is goodness to look to one's neighbor) *"and faithful servant; you were faithful over few things, I will set you over many things: enter thou into the joy of your Lord,"* [Matthew 25:23] meaning by this expression all blessedness.

But not so that other one, but how? *"I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you sowed not, and gathering where you did not scatter: and I was afraid, and hid your talent: lo, there you have that is yours."* [Matthew 25:24-25] What then the Master? *"You ought to have put my money to the exchangers,"* that is, *"that ought to have spoken, to have admonished, to have advised."* But are they disobedient? Yet this is nought to you.

What could be more gentle than this? For men indeed do not so, but him that has put out the money at usury, even him do they make also responsible to require it again. But He not so; but, You ought, He says, to have put it out, and to have committed the requiring of it again to me. And I should have required it with increase; by increase upon the hearing, meaning the showing forth of the works. You ought to have done that which is easier, and to have left to me what is more difficult. Forasmuch then as he did not this, *"Take,"* says He, *"the talent from him, and give it to him that has ten talents. For unto every one that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that has not shall be taken away even that which he has."* [Matthew 25:28-29] What then is this? He that has a gift of word and teaching to profit thereby, and uses it not, will lose the gift also; but he that gives diligence, will gain to himself the gift in more abundance; even as the other loses what he had received. But not to this is the penalty

limited for him that is slothful, but even intolerable is the punishment, and with the punishment the sentence, which is full of a heavy accusation. For "*cast,*" says He, "*the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" Do you see how not only the spoiler, and the covetous, nor only the doer of evil things, but also he that does not good things, is punished with extreme punishment.

Let us hearken then to these words. As we have opportunity, let us help on our salvation, let us get oil for our lamps, let us labor to add to our talent. For if we be backward, and spend our time in sloth here, no one will pity us any more hereafter, though we should wail ten thousand times. He also that had on the filthy garments condemned himself, and profited nothing. He also that had the one talent restored that which was committed to his charge, and yet was condemned. The virgins again entreated, and came unto Him and knocked, and all in vain, and without effect.

Knowing then these things, let us contribute alike wealth, and diligence, and protection, and all things for our neighbor's advantage. For the talents here are each person's ability, whether in the way of protection, or in money, or in teaching, or in what thing soever of the kind. Let no man say, I have but one talent, and can do nothing; for you can even by one approve yourself. For you are not poorer than that widow; you are not more uninstructed than Peter and John, who were both "*unlearned and ignorant men;*" [Acts 4:13] but nevertheless, since they showed forth a zeal, and did all things for the common good, they attained to Heaven. For nothing is so pleasing to God, as to live for the common advantage.

For this end God gave us speech, and hands, and feet, and strength of body, and mind, and understanding, that we might use all these things, both for our own salvation, and for our neighbor's advantage. For not for hymns only and thanksgivings is our speech serviceable to us, but it is profitable

also for instruction and admonition. And if indeed we used it to this end, we should be imitating our Master; but if for the opposite ends, the devil. Since Peter also, when he confessed the Christ, was blessed, as having spoken the words of the Father; but when he refused the cross, and dissuaded it, he was severely reproved, as savoring the things of the devil. But if where the saying was of ignorance, so heavy is the blame, when we of our own will commit many sins, what favor shall we have?

Such things then let us speak, that of themselves they may be evidently the words of Christ. For not only if I should say, *"Arise, and walk;"* [Matthew 9:5] neither if I should say, *"Tabitha, arise,"* [Acts 9:40] then only do I speak Christ's words, but much more if being reviled I bless, if being despitefully used I pray for him that does despite to me. Lately indeed I said, that our tongue is a hand laying hold on the feet of God; but now much more do I say, that our tongue is a tongue imitating the tongue of Christ, if it show forth the strictness that becomes us, if we speak those things which He wills. But what are the things which He wills us to speak? Words full of gentleness and meekness, even as also He Himself used to speak, saying to them that were insulting Him, *"I have not a devil;"* and again, *"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil."* [John 18:23] If you also speak in this way; if you speak for your neighbor's amendment, you will obtain a tongue like that tongue. And these things God Himself says; *"For he that brings out the precious from the vile, shall be as my mouth;"* [Jeremiah 15:19] such are His words.

When therefore your tongue is as Christ's tongue, and your mouth has become the mouth of the Father, and you are a temple of the Holy Ghost, then what kind of honor could be equal to this? For not even if your mouth were made of gold, no nor even of precious stones, would it shine like as now, when lit up with the ornament of meekness. For what is more lovely

than a mouth that knows not how to insult, but is used to bless *and give good words*? But if you can not bear to bless him that curses you, hold your peace, and accomplish but this for the time; and proceeding in order, and striving as you ought, you will attain to that other point also, and wilt acquire such a mouth, as we have spoken of.

4. And do not account the saying to be rash. For the Lord is loving to man, and the gift comes of His goodness. It is rash to have a mouth like the devil, to have a tongue resembling that of an evil demon, especially for him that partakes of such mysteries, and communicates of the very flesh of the Lord. Reflecting then on these things, become like Him, to the utmost of your power. No longer then will the devil be able so much as to look you in the face, when you have become such a one as this. For indeed he recognizes the image of the King, he knows the weapons of Christ, whereby he was worsted. And what are these? Gentleness and meekness. For when on the mountain Christ overthrew and laid low the devil who was assaulting him, it was not by making it known that He was Christ, but He entrapped him by these sayings, He took him by gentleness, he turned him to flight by meekness. Thou also must do this; should you see a man become a devil, and coming against you, even so do thou likewise overcome. Christ gave you also power to become like Him, so far as your ability extends. Be not afraid at hearing this. The fear is not to be like Him. Speak then after His manner, and you have become in this respect such as He, so far as it is possible for one who is a man to become so.

Wherefore greater is he that thus speaks, than he that prophecies. For this is entirely a gift, but in the other is also your labor and toil. Teach your soul to frame you a mouth like to Christ's mouth. For it can create such things, if it will; it knows the art, if it be not remiss. And how is such a mouth made? One may ask. By what kind of colorings? By what kind of

material? By no colorings, indeed, or material; but by virtue only, and meekness, and humility.

Let us see also how a devil's mouth is made; that we may never frame that. How then is it made? By curses, by insults, by envy, by perjury. For when any one speaks his words, he takes his tongue. What kind of excuse then shall we have; or rather, what manner of punishment shall we not undergo; when this our tongue, wherewith we are allowed to taste of the Lord's flesh, when this, I say, we overlook, speaking the devil's words?

Let us not overlook it, but let us use all diligence, in order to train it to imitate its Lord. For if we train it to this, it will place us with great confidence at Christ's judgment seat. Unless any one know how to speak thus, the judge will not so much as hear him. For like as when the judge chances to be a Roman, he will not hear the defense of one who knows not how to speak thus; so likewise Christ, unless thou speak after His fashion, will not hear you, nor give heed.

Let us learn therefore to speak in such wise as our Judge is wont to hear; let it be our endeavor to imitate that tongue. And should you fall into grief, take heed lest the tyranny of despondency pervert your tongue, but that thou speak like Christ. For He too mourned for Lazarus and Judas. Should thou fall into fear, seek again to speak even as He. For He Himself fell into fear for your sake, with regard to His manhood. the other sheep, that He might indicate the unfruitfulness of the one, for no fruit will come from kids; and the great profit from the other, for indeed from sheep great is the profit, as well from the milk, as from the wool, and from the young, of all which things the kid is destitute.

Homily 79 on Matthew

MATT. XXV. 31--41. 'When the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit,' says He, 'upon the throne of His glory, and He shall divide the sheep from the kids; '[and the one He will accept, because they fed Him, when an hungered, and gave Him drink when thirsty, and took Him in when a stranger, and clothed Him when naked, and visited Him when sick, and came to see Him when in prison: and He will give the kingdom to them. But the others, accusing them for the opposite things, He will send into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.]

Unto this most delightful portion of Scripture, which we do not cease continually revolving, let us now listen with all earnestness and compunction, this wherewith His discourse ended, even as the last thing, reasonably; for great indeed was His regard for philanthropy and mercy. Wherefore in what precedes He had discoursed concerning this in a different way; and here now in some respects more clearly, and more earnestly, not setting forth two nor three nor five persons, but the whole world; although most assuredly the former places, which speak of two persons, meant not two persons, but two portions of mankind, one of them that disobey, the other of the obedient. But here He handles the word more fearfully, and with fuller light. Wherefore neither does He say, 'The kingdom is likened,' any more, but openly shows Himself, saying, 'When the Son of Man shall come in His glory.' For now is He come in dishonor, now in affronts and reproaches; but then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.

And continually does He make mention of glory. For since the cross was near, a thing that seemed to be matter of reproach, for this cause He raises up the hearer; and brings before his sight the judgment seat, and sets round him all the world.

And not in this way only does He make His discourse awful, but also by showing the Heavens opened. For all the angels will be present with Him, He says, themselves also to bear witness, in how many things they had ministered, when sent by the Lord for the salvation of men.

And everything will help to render that day fearful. Then, 'shall be gathered together,' He says, 'all nations,' that is, the whole race of men. 'And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd his sheep.' For now they are not separated, but all mingled together, but the division then shall be made with all exactness. And for a while it is by their place that He divides them, and makes them manifest; afterwards by the names He indicates the dispositions of each, calling the one kids, the other sheep, that He might indicate the unfruitfulness of the one, for no fruit will come from kids; and the great profit from the other, for indeed from sheep great is the profit, as well from the milk, as from the wool, and from the young, of all which things the kid is destitute.

But while the brutes have from nature their unfruitfulness, and fruitfulness, these have it from choice, wherefore some are punished, and the others crowned. And He does not punish them, until He has pleaded with them; wherefore also, when He has put them in their place, He mentions the charges against them. And they speak with meekness, but they have no advantage from it now; and very reasonably, because they passed by a work so much to be desired. For indeed the prophets are everywhere saying this, "*I will have mercy and not sacrifice,*" [Hosea 6:6] and the

lawgiver by all means urged them to this, both by words, and by works; and nature herself taught it.

But mark them, how they are destitute not of one or two things only, but of all. For not only did they fail to feed the hungry, or clothe the naked; but not even did they visit the sick, which was an easier thing.

And mark how easy are His injunctions. He said not, *"I was in prison, and you set me free; I was sick, and you raised me up again;"* but, *"you visited me,"* and, *"you came to me."* And neither in hunger is the thing commanded grievous. For no costly table did He seek, but what is needful only, and His necessary food, and He sought in a suppliant's garb, so that all things were enough to bring punishment on them; the easiness of the request, for it was bread; the pitiable character of Him that requests, for He was poor; the sympathy of nature, for He was a man; the desirableness of the promise, for He promised a kingdom; the fearfulness of the punishment, for He threatened hell. The dignity of the one receiving, for it was God, who was receiving by the poor; the surpassing nature of the honor, that He vouchsafed to condescend so far; His just claim for what they bestowed, for of His own was He receiving. But against all these things covetousness once for all blinded them that were seized by it; and this though so great a threat was set against it.

For further back also He says, that they who receive not such as these shall suffer more grievous things than Sodom; and here He says, *"Inasmuch as you did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, you did it not unto me."* What sayest Thou? They are Your brethren; and how dost Thou call them least. Why, for this reason they are brethren, because they are lowly, because they are poor, because they are outcast. For such does He most invite to brotherhood, the unknown, the contemptible, not meaning by these the monks only, and them that have occupied the mountains, but every

believer; though he be a secular person, yet if he be hungry, and famishing, and naked, and a stranger, His will is he should have the benefit of all this care. For baptism renders a man a brother, and the partaking of the divine mysteries.

2. Then, in order that you may see in another way also the justice of the sentence, He first praises them that have done right, and says, *"Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and you gave me meat,"* and all that follows. [Matthew 25:34-40] For that they may not say, we had it not, He condemns them by their fellow-servants; like as the virgins by the virgins, and the servant that was drunken and gluttonous by the faithful servant, and him that buried his talent, by them that brought the two, and each one of them that continue in sin, by them that have done right.

And this comparison is sometimes made in the case of an equal, as here, and in the instance of the virgins, sometimes of him that has advantage, as when he said, *"The men of Nineveh shall rise up and shall condemn this generation, because they believed at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here;"* and, *"The queen of the south shall condemn this generation, because she came to hear the wisdom of Solomon;"* [Matthew 12:41-42] and of an equal again, *"They shall be your judges;"* [Matthew 12:27] and again of one at advantage, *"Do you not know, that we shall judge angels, how much more things that pertain to this life?"* [1 Corinthians 6:3]

And here, however, it is of an equal; for he compares rich with rich, and poor with poor. And not in this way only does He show the sentence justly passed, by their fellow-servants having done what was right when in the same circumstances, but also by their not being obedient so much as in these things in which poverty was no hindrance; as, for instance, in giving

drink to the thirsty, in looking upon him that is in bonds, in visiting the sick. And when He had commended them that had done right, He shows how great was originally His bond of love towards them. For, "*Come,*" says He, "*you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" To how many good things is this same equivalent, to be blessed, and blessed of the Father? And wherefore were they counted worthy of such great honors? What is the cause? "*I was an hungered, and you gave me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink;*" and what follows.

Of what honor, of what blessedness are these words? And He said not, Take, but, "*Inherit,*" as one's own, as your Father's, as yours, as due to you from the first. For, before you were, says He, these things had been prepared, and made ready for you, forasmuch as I knew you would be such as you are.

And in return for what do they receive such things? For the covering of a roof, for a garment, for bread, for cold water, for visiting, for going into the prison. For indeed in every case it is for what is needed; and sometimes not even for that. For surely, as I have said, the sick and he that is in bonds seeks not for this only, but the one to be loosed, the other to be delivered from his infirmity. But He, being gracious, requires only what is within our power, or rather even less than what is within our power, leaving to us to exert our generosity in doing more.

But to the others He says, "*Depart from me, you cursed,*" (no longer of the Father; for not He laid the curse upon them, but their own works), "*into the everlasting fire, prepared,*" not for you, but "*for the devil and his angels.*" For concerning the kingdom indeed, when He had said, "*Come, inherit the kingdom,*" He added, "*prepared for you before the foundation of the world;*" but concerning the fire, no longer so, but, "*prepared for the devil.*" I, says He, prepared the kingdom for you, but the fire no more for

you, but *"for the devil and his angels;"* but since you cast yourselves therein, impute it to yourselves. And not in this way only, but by what follows also, like as though He were excusing Himself to them, He sets forth the causes.

"For I was an hungered, and you gave me no meat." For though He that came to you had been your enemy, were not His sufferings enough to have overcome and subdued even the merciless? Hunger, and cold, and bonds, and nakedness, and sickness, and to wander everywhere houseless? These things are sufficient even to destroy enmity. But you did not do these things even to a friend, being at once friend, and benefactor, and Lord. Though it be a dog we see hungry, often we are overcome; and though we behold a wild beast, we are subdued; but seeing the Lord, are you not subdued? And wherein are these things worthy of defense?

For if it were this only, were it not sufficient for a recompense? (I speak not of hearing such a voice, in the presence of the world, from Him that sits on the Father's throne, and of obtaining the kingdom), but were not the very doing it sufficient for a reward? But now even in the presence of the world, and at the appearing of that unspeakable glory, He proclaims and crowns you, and acknowledges you as His sustainer and host, and is not ashamed of saying such things, that He may make the crown brighter for you.

So for this cause, while the one are punished justly, the others are crowned by grace. For though they had done ten thousand things, the munificence were of grace, that in return for services so small and cheap, such a heaven, and a kingdom, and so great honor, should be given them.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, He said unto His disciples, You know that after two days is the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified." [Matthew 26:1-2] In good season again

does He speak of the passion, when He had reminded them of the kingdom, and of the recompense there, and of the deathless punishment; as though He had said, Why are you afraid at the dangers that are for a season, when such good things await you?

3. But mark thou, I pray you, how He has in all His first sayings after a new manner worked up and thrown into the shade what was most painful to them. For He said not, You know that after two days I am betrayed, but, *"You know that after two days is the passover,"* to show that what is done is a mystery and that a feast and celebration is being kept for the salvation of the world, and that with foreknowledge He suffered all. So then, as though this were sufficient consolation for them, He did not even say anything to them now about a resurrection; for it was superfluous, after having discoursed so much about it, to speak of it again. And moreover, as I said, He shows that even His very passion is a deliverance from countless evils, having by the passover reminded them of the ancient benefits in Egypt.

"Then were assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill Him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people."

Do you see the unspeakable corruption of the Jewish state? Attempting unlawful acts, they come to the high priest, desiring to obtain their authority from that quarter, whence they ought to have found hindrance.

And how many high priests were there? For the law wills there should be one, but then there were many. Whence it is manifest, that the Jewish constitution had begun to dissolve. For Moses, as I said, commanded there should be one, and that when he was dead there should be another, and by the life of this person He measured the banishment of them that had

involuntarily committed manslaughter. How then were there at that time many high priests? They were afterwards made for a year. And this the evangelist declared, when he was speaking of Zacharias, saying, that he was of the course of Abia. Those therefore does he here call high priests, who had been high priests.

What did they consult together? That they might seize Him secretly, or that they might put Him to death? Both; for they feared the people.

Wherefore also they waited for the feast to be past; for *"they said, Not on the feast day."* For the devil, lest he should make the passion conspicuous, was not willing it should take place at the passover; but they, lest there should be an uproar. Mark them then ever fearing, not the ills from God, neither lest any greater pollution should arise to them from the season, but in every case the ills from men.

Yet for all this, boiling with anger, they changed their purpose again. For though they had said, *"Not at the feast time;"* when they found the traitor, they waited not for the time, but slew Him at the feast. But why did they take Him then? They were boiling with rage, as I said; and they expected then to find Him, and all things they did as blinded. For though He Himself made the greatest use of their wickedness for His own dispensation, they were not surely for this guiltless, but deserving of inflictions without number for their temper of mind. At least when all should be set free, even the guilty, then these men slew the guiltless, Him that had conferred on them countless benefits, and who for a time had neglected the Gentiles for their sake. But O loving-kindness! Them that were thus depraved, them that were *thus froward, and* full of countless evils, He again saves, and sends the apostles to be slain in their behalf, and by the apostles makes entreaty. *"For we are ambassadors for Christ."*

Having then such patterns as these, I say not, let us die for our enemies, for we ought to do even this; but since we are too feeble for this, I say for the present, at least let us not look with an evil eye upon our friends, let us not envy our benefactors. I say not for the present, let us do good to them that evil entreat us, for I desire even this; but since you are too gross for this, at least avenge not yourselves. What is our condition, a scene, and acting? Wherefore can it be that you set yourselves directly against the acts enjoined? It is not for nought that all else has been written and how many things He did at the very cross sufficient to recall them to Him; but that you might imitate His goodness, that you might emulate His lovingkindness. For indeed He cast them to the ground, and restored the servant's ear, and discoursed with forbearance; and great miracles did He show forth, when lifted up, turning aside the sunbeams, bursting the rocks, raising the dead, frightening by dreams the wife of him that was judging Him, at the very judgment showing forth all meekness (which was of power not less than miracles to gain them over), forewarning them of countless things in the judgment hall; on the very cross crying aloud, "*Father, forgive them their sin.*" And when buried, how many things did He show forth for their salvation? And having risen again, did he not straightway call the Jews? Did He not give them remission of sins? Did He not set before them countless blessings? What can be more strange than this? They that crucified Him, and were breathing murder, after they crucified Him, became sons of God.

What can be equal to this tenderness? On hearing these things let us hide our faces, to think that we are so far removed from Him whom we are commanded to imitate. Let us at least see how great the distance, that we may at any rate condemn ourselves, for warring with these, in behalf of whom Christ gave His life, and not being willing to be reconciled to them,

whom that He might reconcile He refused not even to be slain; unless this too be some expense, and outlay of money, which you object in almsgiving.

4. Consider of how many things you are guilty; and so far from being backward to forgive them that have injured you, you will even run unto them that have grieved you, in order that you may have a ground for pardon, that you may find a remedy for your own evil deeds.

The sons of the Greeks, who look for nothing great, have often shown self-command toward these: and thou who art to depart hence with such hopes, shrinkest, and art slow to act; and that which time effects, this you endure not to do before the time for God's law, but willest this passion to be quenched without reward, rather than for a reward? For neither, if this should have arisen from the time, will you have any advantage, but rather great will be the punishment, because, what time has effected, this the law of God persuaded you not to do.

But if you say that you burn with the memory of the insult; call to mind if any good has been done you by him that has offended you, and how many ills you have occasioned to others.

Hath he spoken ill of you, and disgraced you? Consider also that you have spoken thus of others. How then will you obtain pardon, which you bestow not on others? But have you spoken ill of no one? But you have heard men so speaking, and allowed it. Neither is this guiltless.

Will you learn how good a thing it is not to remember injuries, and how this more than anything pleases God? Them that exult over persons, justly chastised by Himself, He punishes. And yet they are justly chastised; but you should not rejoice over them. So the prophet having brought many accusations, added this also, saying, "*They felt nothing for the affliction of Joseph;*" [Amos 6:6] and again, "*She that inhabites Enan, came not forth to lament for the place near her.*" And yet both Joseph (that is, the tribes that

were sprung from him), and the neighbors of these others, were punished according to the purpose of God; nevertheless, it is His will that we sympathize even with these. For if we, being evil, when we are punishing a servant, if we should see one of his fellow slaves laughing, we at the same time are provoked the more, and turn our anger against him; much more will God punish them that exult over those whom He chastises. But if upon them that are chastised by God it is not right to trample, but to grieve with them, much more with them that have sinned against us. For this is love's sign; love God prefers to all things. For as in the royal purple, those are precious among the flowers and dyes, which make up this robing; so here too, these virtues are the precious ones, which preserve love. But nothing maintains love so much as the not remembering them that have sinned against us.

"Why? Did not God guard the other side also? Why? Did He not drive him that has done the wrong to him that is wronged? Does He not send him from the altar to the other, and so after the reconciliation invite him to the table?" But do not therefore wait for the other to come, since thus you have lost all. For to this intent most especially does He appoint unto you an unspeakable reward, that you may prevent the other, since, if you are reconciled by his entreaties, the amity is no longer the result of the divine command, but of the other party's diligence. Wherefore also you go away uncrowned, while he receives the rewards.

What do you say? Have you an enemy, and are you not ashamed? Why is not the devil enough for us, that we bring upon ourselves those of our own race also? Would that not even he had been minded to war against us; would that not even he were a devil!

Do you not know how great the pleasure after reconciliation? For what, though in our enmity it appear not great? For that it is sweeter to love

him that does us wrong than to hate him, after the enmity is done away you shall be able to learn full well.

5. Why then do we imitate the mad, devouring one another, warring against our own flesh?

Hear even under the Old Testament, how great regard there was for this, *"The ways of revengeful men are unto death. One man keeps anger against another, and does he seek healing of God?"* [Sirach 28:3] *"And yet He allowed, 'eye for eye,' and 'tooth for tooth,' how then does He find fault?"* Because He allowed even those things, not that we should do them one to another, but that through the fear of suffering, we might abstain from the commission of crime. And besides, those acts are the fruits of a short-lived anger, but to remember injuries is the part of a soul that practises itself in evil.

But have you suffered evil? Yet nothing so great, as you will do to yourself by remembering injuries. And besides, it is not so much as possible for a good man to suffer any evil. For suppose there to be any man, having both children and a wife, and let him practise virtue, and let him have moreover many occasions of being injured, as well abundance of possessions, as sovereign power, and many friends, and let him enjoy honor; only let him practise virtue, for this must be added, and let us in supposition lay plagues upon him. And let some wicked man come unto him, and involve him in losses. What then is that to him who accounts money nothing? Let him kill his children. What this to him, who learns to be wise touching the resurrection? Let him slay his wife; what is this to him who is instructed not to sorrow for them that are fallen asleep? Let him cast him into dishonor. What this to him who accounts the things present, the flower of the grass? If you will, let him also torture his body, and cast him into prison, what this to him that has learned, *"Though our outward man*

perish, yet the inward man is renewed;" and that "tribulation works approval?"

Now I had undertaken that he should receive no harm; but the account as it proceeded has shown that he is even advantaged, being renewed, and becoming approved.

Let us not then vex ourselves with others, injuring ourselves, and rendering our soul weak. For the vexation is not so much from our neighbors' wickedness, as from our weakness. Because of this, should any one insult us, we weep, and frown; should any one rob us, we suffer the same like those little children, which the more clever of their companions provoke for nothing, grieving them for small causes; but nevertheless these too, if they should see them vexed, continue to tease them, but if laughing, they on the contrary leave off. But we are more foolish even than these, lamenting for these things, about which we ought to laugh.

Wherefore I entreat, let us let go this childish mind, and lay hold of Heaven. For indeed, Christ wills us to be men, perfect men. On this wise did Paul also command, "*Brethren, be not children in understanding,*" he says, "*howbeit in malice be ye children.*"

Let us therefore be children in malice, and flee wickedness, and lay hold on virtue, that we may attain also to the good things eternal, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 80 on Matthew

Matthew 26:6-7.

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head, as He sat at meat."

This woman seems indeed to be one and the same with all the evangelists, yet she is not so; but though with the three she does seem to me to be one and the same, yet not so with John, but another person, one much to be admired, the sister of Lazarus.

But not without purpose did the evangelist mention the leprosy of Simon, but in order that He might show whence the woman took confidence, and came unto Him. For inasmuch as the leprosy seemed a most unclean disease, and to be abhorred, and yet she saw Jesus had both healed the man (for else He would not have chosen to have tarried with a leper), and had gone into his house; she grew confident, that He would also easily wipe off the uncleanness of her soul. And not for nought does He name the city also, Bethany, but that you might learn, that of His own will He comes to His passion. For He who before this was fleeing through the midst of them; then, at the time when their envy was most kindled, comes near within about fifteen furlongs; so completely was His former withdrawing Himself a part of a dispensation.

The woman therefore having seen Him, and having taken confidence from thence came unto Him. For if she that had the issue of blood, although conscious to herself of nothing like this, yet because of that natural seeming uncleanness, approached Him trembling and in fear; much more was it likely this woman should be slow, and shrink back because of her evil

conscience. Wherefore also it is after many women, the Samaritan, the Canaanite, her that had the issue of blood, and other besides, that she comes unto Him, being conscious to herself of much impurity; and then not publicly but in a house. And whereas all the others were coming unto Him for the healing of the body alone, she came unto Him by way of honor only, and for the amendment of the soul. For neither was she at all afflicted in body, so that for this most especially one might marvel at her.

And not as to a mere man did she come unto Him; for then she would not have wiped His feet with her hair, but as to one greater than man can be. Therefore that which is the most honorable member of the whole body, this she laid at Christ's feet, even her own head.

"But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation," such are the words, "saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. But when Jesus understood it, He said, Why trouble ye the woman? For she has wrought a good work upon me? For you have the poor always with you, but me you have not always. For in that she has poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman has done, be told for a memorial of her."

And whence had they this thought? They used to hear their Master saying, *"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,"* and blaming the Jews, because they omitted the weightier matters, judgment, and mercy, and faith, and discoursing much on the mount concerning almsgiving, and from these things they inferred with themselves, and reasoned, that if He accepts not whole burnt offerings, neither the ancient worship, much more will He not accept the anointing of oil.

But though they thus thought, He knowing her intention suffers her. For indeed great was her reverence, and unspeakable her zeal; wherefore of this exceeding condescension, He permitted the oil to be poured even on His head.

For if He refused not to become man, and to be borne in the womb, and to be fed at the breast, why do you marvel, if He does not utterly reject this? For like as the Father suffered a savor of meat, and smoke, even so did He the harlot, accepting, as I have already said, her intention. For Jacob too anointed a pillar to God, and oil was offered in the sacrifices, and the priests were anointed with ointment.

But the disciples not knowing her purpose found fault unseasonably, and by the things they laid to her charge, they show the woman's munificence. For saying, that it might have been sold for three hundred pence, they showed how much this woman had spent on the ointment, and how great generosity she had manifested. Wherefore He also rebuked them, saying, *"Why trouble ye the woman?"* And He adds a reason, as it was His will again to put them in mind of His passion, *"For she did it,"* He said, *"for my burial."* And another reason. *"For you have the poor always with you, but me you have not always;"* and, *"Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached, that shall be told also which this woman has done."*

Do you see how again He declares beforehand the going forth unto the Gentiles, in this way also consoling them for His death, if after the cross His power was so to shine forth, that the gospel should be spread abroad in every part of the earth.

Who then is so wretched as to set his face against so much truth? For lo! What He said has come to pass, and to whatever part of the earth you may go, you will see her celebrated.

And yet neither was the person that did it distinguished, nor had what was done many witnesses, neither was it in a theatre, but in a house, that it took place, and this a house of some leper, the disciples only being present.

2. Who then proclaimed it, and caused it to be spread abroad? It was the power of Him who is speaking these words. And while of countless kings and generals the noble exploits even of those whose memorials remain have sunk into silence; and having overthrown cities, and encompassed them with walls, and set up trophies, and enslaved many nations, they are not known so much as by hearsay, nor by name, though they have both set up statues, and established laws; yet that a woman who was a harlot poured out oil in the house of some leper, in the presence of ten men, this all men celebrate throughout the world; and so great a time has passed, and yet the memory of that which was done has not faded away, but alike Persians and Indians, Scythians and Thracians, and Sarmatians, and the race of the Moors, and they that dwell in the British Islands, spread abroad that which was done secretly in a house by a woman that had been a harlot.

Great is the loving-kindness of the Lord. He endures an harlot, an harlot kissing his feet, and moistening them with oil, and wiping them with her hair, and He receives her, and reproves them that blame her. For neither was it right that for so much zeal the woman should be driven to despair.

But mark thou this too, how far they were now raised up above the world, and forward in almsgiving. And why was it He did not merely say, *"She has wrought a good work,"* but before this, *"Why trouble ye the woman?"* That they might learn not at the beginning to require too high principles of the weaker sort. Therefore neither does He examine the act merely itself by itself, but taking into account the person of the woman. And indeed if He had been making a law, He would not have brought in the

woman, but that you might learn that for her sake these things were said, that they might not mar her budding faith, but rather cherish it, therefore He says it, teaching us whatever good thing may be done by any man, though it be not quite perfect, to receive it, and encourage it, and advance it, and not to seek all perfection at the beginning. For, that at least He Himself would rather have desired this, is manifest from the fact, that He required a bag to be borne, who had not where to lay His head. But then the time demanded not this, that He should correct the deed, but that He should accept it only. For even as, if any one asked Him, without the woman's having done it, He would not have approved this; so, after she had done it, He looks to one thing only, that she be not driven to perplexity by the reproof of the disciples, but that she should go from His care, having been made more cheerful and better. For indeed after the oil had been poured out, their rebuke had no seasonableness.

Do thou then likewise, if you should see any one provide sacred vessels and offer them, and loving to labor upon any other ornament of the church, about its walls or floor; do not command what has been made to be sold, or overthrown, lest you spoil his zeal. But if, before he had provided them, he were to tell you of it, command it to be given to the poor; forasmuch as He also did this not to spoil the spirit of the woman, and as many things as He says, He speaks for her comfort.

Then because He had said, "*She has done it for my burial;*" that He might not seem to perplex the woman, by making mention of such a thing as this, His burial and death, I mean; see how by that which follows He recovers her, saying, "*What she has done shall be spoken of in the whole world.*"

And this was at once consolation to His disciples, and comfort and praise to her. For all men, He says, shall celebrate her hereafter; and now

too has she announced beforehand my passion, by bringing unto me what was needed for a funeral, let not therefore any man reprove her. For I am so far from condemning her as having done amiss, or from blaming her as having not acted rightly, that I will not suffer what has been done to lie hidden, but the world shall know that which has been done in a house, and in secret. For in truth the deed came of a reverential mind, and fervent faith, and a contrite soul.

And wherefore did He promise the woman nothing spiritual; but the perpetual memory? From this He is causing her to feel a confidence about the other things also. For if she has wrought a good work, it is quite evident she shall receive a due reward.

"Then went one of the twelve, he that was called Judas Iscariot, unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?" Then. When? When these things were spoken, when He had said, it is for my burial, and not even thereby was he moved to compunction, neither when he heard that the Gospel should be preached everywhere did he fear (and yet it was the language of unspeakable power), but when women showed so much honor, and women that had been harlots, then he wrought the devil's works.

But what can be the reason they mention his surname? Because there was also another Judas. And they do not shrink from saying, He was of the twelve; so entirely do they hide none of those things which seem to be matters of reproach. And yet they might have said merely this, that he was one of the disciples, for there were others besides. But now they add, of the twelve, as though they had said, of the first company of those selected as the best, of them with Peter and John. Because for one thing did they care, for truth alone, not for concealing what things were done.

For this cause many of the signs they pass by, but of the things that appear to be matters of reproach they conceal nothing; but though it be word, though it be deed, though it be what you will of this kind, they proclaim it with confidence.

3. And not these only, but even John himself, who utters the higher doctrines. For he most of all tells us of the affronts and the reproachful things that were done unto Him.

And see how great is the wickedness of Judas, in that he comes unto them of his own accord, in that he does this for money, and for such a sum of money.

But Luke says, that he conferred with the chief captains. For after that the Jews became seditious, the Romans set over them those that should provide for their good order. For their government had now undergone a change according to the prophecy.

To these then he went and said, *"What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you. And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him."* For indeed he was afraid of the multitude, and desired to seize him alone.

Oh madness! How did covetousness altogether blind him! For he that had often seen Him when He went through the midst, and was not seized, and when He afforded many demonstrations of His Godhead and power, looked to lay hold on Him; and this while He was using like a charm for him so many, both awful and soothing words, to put an end to this evil thought. For not even at the supper did He forbear from this care of him, but unto the last day discoursed to him of these things. But he profited nothing. Yet not for that did the Lord cease to do His part.

Knowing this, then, let us also not intermit to do all things unto them that sin and are remiss, warning, teaching, exhorting, admonishing,

advising, though we profit nothing. For Christ indeed foreknew that the traitor was incorrigible, yet nevertheless He ceased not to supply what could be done by Himself, as well admonishing as threatening and bewailing over him, and nowhere plainly, nor openly, but in a concealed way. And at the very time of the betrayal, He allowed him even to kiss Him, but this benefited him nothing. So great an evil is covetousness, this made him both a traitor, and a sacrilegious robber.

Hearken, all you covetous, you that have the disease of Judas; hearken, and beware of the calamity. For if he that was with Christ, and wrought signs, and had the benefit of so much instruction, because he was not freed from the disease, was sunk into such a gulf; how much more shall you, who do not so much as listen to the Scripture, who are constantly riveted to the things present, become an easy prey to this calamity, unless you have the advantage of constant care. Every day was that man with Him, who had not where to lay His head, and every day was he instructed by deeds, and by words, not to have gold, nor silver, nor two coats; and yet he was not taught self restraint; and how do you expect to escape the disease, if you have not the benefit of earnest attention, and dost not use much diligence? For terrible, terrible is the monster, yet nevertheless, if you be willing, you will easily get the better of him. For the desire is not natural; and this is manifest from them that are free from it. For natural things are common to all; but this desire has its origin from remissness alone; hence it takes its birth, hence it derives its increase, and when it has seized upon those who look greedily after it, it makes them live contrary to nature. For when they regard not their fellow countrymen, their friends, their brethren, in a word all men, and with these even themselves, this is to live against nature. Whence it is evident that the vice and disease of covetousness, wherein Judas, being entangled, became a traitor, is contrary to nature. And how did he become

such a one, you may say, having been called by Christ? Because God's call is not compulsory, neither does it force the will of them who are not minded to choose virtue, but admonishes indeed, and advises, and does and manages all things, so as to persuade men to become good; but if some endure not, it does not compel. But if you would learn from what cause he became such as he was, you will find him to have been ruined by covetousness.

And how was he taken by this calamity? One may say. Because he grew remiss. For hence arise such changes, as on the other hand, those for the better from diligence. How many for instance that were violent, are now more gentle than lambs? How many lascivious persons have become afterwards continent? How many, heretofore covetous, yet now have cast away even their own possessions? And the contrary again has been the result of remissness. For Gehazi also lived with a holy man, and he too became depraved from the same disease. For this calamity is the most grievous of all. Hence come robbers of tombs, hence menslayers, hence wars and fightings, and whatsoever evil you may mention, it comes hence. And in every respect is such a one useless, whether it be requisite to lead an army or to guide a people: or rather not in public matters only, but also in private. If he is to marry a wife, he will not take the virtuous woman, but the vilest of all; if he have to buy a house, not that which becomes a free man, but what can bring much rent; if he is to buy slaves, or what else it may be, he will take the worst.

And why do I speak of leading an army, and guiding a people, and managing households; for should he be a king, he is the most wretched of all men, and a pest to the world, and the poorest of all men. For he will feel like one of the common sort, not accounting all men's possessions to be his, but himself to be one of all; and when spoiling all men's goods, thinks

himself to have less than any. For measuring the things present by his desire for those whereof he is not yet possessed, he will account the former nothing compared to the latter. Wherefore also one says, "*There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man.*" [Sirach 10:9]

4. For such a one both sets himself to sale, and goes about, a common enemy of the world, grieving that the earth does not bear gold instead of the grain, and the fountains instead of streams, and the mountains instead of stone; vexed at the fruitfulness of the seasons, troubled at common benefits; shunning every means whence one cannot obtain money; undergoing all things whence one can scrape together so much as two farthings; hating all men, the poor and the rich; the poor, lest they should come and beg of him; the rich, because he has not their possessions. All men he accounts to be possessed of what is his, and as though he had been injured by all, so is he displeased with all. He knows not plenty, he has no experience of satiety, he is more wretched than any, even as, on the other hand, he that is freed from these things, and practises self-restraint, is the most enviable. For the virtuous man, though he be a servant, though a prisoner, is the most happy of all men. For no one shall do him ill, no not though all men should come together out of the world, setting in motion arms and camps, and warring with him. But he that is depraved and vile, and such as we have described, though he be a king, though he have on a thousand diadems, will suffer the utmost extremities, even from a common hand. So feeble is vice, so strong is virtue.

Why then do you mourn, being in a state of poverty. Why do you wail keeping a feast, for indeed it is an occasion of feasting. Why do you weep, for poverty is a festival, if you be wise. Why do you lament, thou little child; for such a one we should call a little child. Did such a person strike you? What is this, he made you more able to endure? But did he take away

your money? He has removed the greater part of your burden. But has he cut off your honor? Again you tell me of another kind of freedom. Hear even those without teaching wisdom touching these things, and saying, *"You have suffered no ill, if you show no regard to it."* But has he taken away that great house of yours, which has enclosures about it? But behold the whole earth is before you, the public buildings, whether you would have them for delight, or for use. And what is more pleasing or more beautiful than the firmament of Heaven.

How long are you poor and needy? It is not possible for him to be rich, who is not wealthy in his soul; like as it is not possible for him to be poor, who has not the poverty in his mind. For if the soul is a nobler thing than the body, the less noble parts have not power to affect it after themselves; but the noble part draws over unto herself, and changes those that are not so noble. For so the heart, when it has received any hurt, affects the whole body accordingly; if its temperament be disordered, it mars all, if it be rightly tempered, it profits all. And if any of the remaining parts should have become corrupt, while this remains sound, it easily shakes off what is evil in them also.

And that I may further make what I say more plain, what is the use, I pray you, of verdant branches, when the root is withering? And what is the harm of the leaves being withered above, while this is sound? So also here there is no use of money, while the soul is poor; neither harm from poverty, when the soul is rich. And how can a soul, one may say, be rich, being in want of money? Then above all times might this be; for then also is it wont to be rich.

For if, as we have often shown, this is a sure proof of being rich, to despise wealth, and to want nothing; and of poverty again, to want, and any one would more easily despise money in poverty than in wealth, it is quite

evident that to be in poverty rather makes one to be rich. For indeed that the rich man sets his heart on money more than the poor man, is surely plain to every one; like as the drunken man is thirsty, rather than he that has partaken of drink sufficiently. For neither is his desire such as to be quenched by too much; but, on the contrary, it is its nature to be inflamed by this. For fire likewise, when it has received more food, then most of all waxes fierce; and the tyranny of wealth, when you have cast into it more gold, then most especially is increased.

If then the desiring more be a mark of poverty; and he that is in the possession of riches is like this; he is especially in poverty. Do you see that the soul then most of all is poor, when it is rich; and then is rich, when it is in poverty?

And if you will, let us exercise our reasoning in persons also, and let there be two, the one having ten thousand talents, the other ten, and from both let us take away these things. Who then will grieve the most? He that has lost the ten thousand. But he would not have grieved more, unless he had loved it more; but if he loves more, he desires more; but if he desires more, he is more in poverty. For this do we most desire, of which we are most in want, for desire is from want. For where there is satiety, there cannot be desire. For then are we most thirsty, when we have most need of drink.

And all these things have I said, to show that if we be vigilant, no one shall harm us; and that the harm arises not from poverty but from ourselves. Wherefore I beseech you with all diligence to put away the pest of covetousness, that we may both be wealthy here, and enjoy the good things eternal, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 81 on Matthew

Matthew 26:17-18.

"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where will You that we prepare for You to eat the Passover? And He said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master says, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."

By the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, he means the day before that feast; for they are accustomed always to reckon the day from the evening, and he makes mention of this in which in the evening the passover must be killed; [John 13:1] for on the fifth day of the week they came unto Him. And this one calls the day before the feast of unleavened bread, [Luke 22:7] speaking of the time when they came to Him, and another says on this wise, *"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed;"* by the word *"came,"* meaning this, it was near, it was at the doors, making mention plainly of that evening. For they began with the evening, wherefore also each adds, when the passover was killed.

And they say, *"Where will You that we prepare for You to eat the passover?"* So even from this it is manifest, that He had no house, no place of sojourning; and I suppose neither had they. For surely they would have entreated him to come there. But neither had they any, having now parted with all things.

But wherefore did He keep the passover? To indicate by all things unto the last day, that He is not opposed to the law.

And for what possible reason does He send them to an unknown person? To show by this also that He might have avoided suffering. For He

who prevailed over this man's mind, so that he received them, and that by words; what would He not have done with them that crucified Him, if it had been His will not to suffer? And what He did about the ass, this He did here also. For there too He says, *"If any man say anything unto you, you shall say, that the Lord has need of them;"* [Matthew 21:3] and so likewise here, *"The Master says, I will keep the passover at your house."* But I marvel not at this only, that he received Him, being unknown, but that expecting to bring upon himself such enmity and implacable hostility, he despised the enmity of the multitude.

After this, because they knew him not, He gave them a sign, like as the prophet touching Saul, saying, *"You shall find one going up and carrying a bottle;"* [1 Samuel 10:3] and here, *"carrying a pitcher."* And see again the display of his power. For He did not only say, *"I will keep the passover,"* but He adds another thing also, *"My time is at hand."* And this He did, at once continually reminding His disciples of the passion, so that exercised by the frequency of the prediction, they should be prepared for what was to take place; and at the same time to show to themselves, and to him that was receiving Him, and to all the Jews, which I have often mentioned, that not involuntarily does He come to His passion. And He adds, *"with my disciples,"* in order that both the preparation should be sufficient, and that the man should not suppose that He was concealing Himself.

"Now when the evening had come, He sat down with the twelve disciples." Oh the shamelessness of Judas! For he too was present there, and came to partake both of the mysteries, and of the meal, and is convicted at the very table, when although he had been a wild beast, he would have become tame.

For this cause the evangelist also signifies, that while they are eating, Christ speaks of His betrayal, that both by the time and by the table he

might show the wickedness of the traitor.

For when the disciples had done, as Jesus had appointed them, *"when the evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, He said,"* we are told, *"Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me."* And before the supper, He had even washed his feet. And see how He spares the traitor. For He said not, such a one shall betray me; but, *"one of you,"* so as again to give him power of repentance by concealment. And He chooses to alarm all, for the sake of saving this man. Of you, the twelve, says He, that are everywhere present with me, whose feet I washed, to whom I promised so many things.

Intolerable sorrow thereupon seized that holy company. And John indeed says, they *"were in doubt, and looked one upon another,"* and each of them asked in fear concerning himself, although conscious to themselves of no such thing. But this evangelist says, that *"being exceeding sorrowful, they began every one of them to say unto Him, Is it I, Lord?"* [Matthew 26:22] *And He answered and said, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it."*

Mark at what time He discovered him. It was when it was His will to deliver the rest from this trouble, for they were even dead with the fear, wherefore also they were instant with their questions. But not only as desiring to deliver them from their distress He did this, but also as willing to amend the traitor. For since after having often heard it generally, he continued incorrigible, being past feeling, He being minded to make him feel more, takes off his mask.

For when being sorrowful they began to say, *"Is it I, Lord? He answered and said, He that dips with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of Man goes, as it is written of Him, but woe to the man by*

whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had not been born."

Now some say that he was so bold as not to honor his Master, but to dip with Him: but to me Christ seems to have done this too, to shame him the more, and bring him over to a better disposition. For this act again has something more in it.

2. But these things we ought not to pass by at random, but they should be instilled in our minds, and wrath would find no place at any time.

For who, bearing in mind that supper, and the traitor sitting at meat with the Saviour of all, and Him who was to be betrayed thus meekly reasoning, would not put away all venom of wrath and anger? See at any rate how meekly He conducts Himself towards him, *"The Son of Man goes, as it is written of Him."*

And these things again He said, both to restore the disciples, that they might not think the thing was a sign of weakness, and to amend the traitor.

"But woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born." See again in His rebukes His unspeakable meekness. For not even here with invective, but more in the way of compassion, does He apply what He says, but in a disguised way again; and yet not his former senselessness only, but his subsequent shamelessness was deserving of the utmost indignation. For after this conviction he says, *"Is it I, Lord?"* Oh insensibility! He inquires, when conscious to himself of such things. For the evangelist too, marvelling at his boldness, says this. What then says the most mild and gentle Jesus? *"You say."* And yet He might have said, O thou unholy, thou all unholy one; accursed, and profane; so long a time in travail with mischief, who hast gone your way, and made satanical compacts, and hast agreed to receive money, and hast been convicted by me too, do you yet dare to ask? But

none of these things did He say; but how? *"You say?"* fixing for us bounds and rules of long suffering.

But some one will say, Yet if it was written that He was to suffer these things, wherefore is Judas blamed, for he did the things that were written? But not with this intent, but from wickedness. For if you inquire not concerning the motive, you will deliver even the devil from the charges against him. But these things are not, they are not so. For both the one and the other are deserving of countless punishments, although the world was saved. For neither did the treason of Judas work out salvation for us, but the wisdom of Christ, and the good contrivance of His fair skill, using the wickednesses of others for our advantage.

"What then," one may say, *"though Judas had not betrayed Him, would not another have betrayed Him?"* And what has this to do with the question? *"Because if Christ must needs be crucified, it must be by the means of some one, and if by some one, surely by such a person as this. But if all had been good, the dispensation in our behalf had been impeded."* Not so. For the Allwise knows how He shall bring about our benefits, even had this happened. For His wisdom is rich in contrivance, and incomprehensible. So for this reason, that no one might suppose that Judas had become a minister of the dispensation, He declares the wretchedness of the man. But some one will say again, *"And if it had been good if he had never been born, wherefore did He suffer both this man, and all the wicked, to come into the world?"* When you ought to blame the wicked, for that having the power not to become such as they are, they have become wicked, you leave this, and busiest yourself, and art curious about the things of God; although knowing that it is not by necessity that any one is wicked.

"But the good only should be born," he would say, *"and there were no need of hell, nor punishment, nor vengeance, nor trace of vice, but the*

wicked should either not be born at all, or being born should straightway depart."

First then, it were well to repeat to you the saying of the apostle, *"Nay but, O man, who are you that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why have You made me thus?"*

But if you still demandest reasons, we would say this, that the good are more admired for being among the bad; because their long-suffering and great self-command is then most shown. But you take away the occasion of their wrestlings, and conflicts, by saying these things. *"What then, in order that these may appear good, are others punished?"* says he. God forbid, but for their own wickedness. For neither because they were brought into the world did they become wicked, but on account of their own wickedness; wherefore also they are punished. For how should they fail to be deserving of punishment, seeing they have so many teachers of virtue, and gain nothing therefrom. For like as the noble and good are worthy of double honor, because they both became good, and took no hurt from the wicked; so also the worthless deserve twofold punishment, both because they became wicked, when they might have become good (they show it who have become such), and because they gained nothing from the good.

But let us see what says this wretched man, when convicted by his Master. What then says he? *"Is it I, Rabbi?"* [Matthew 26:25] And why did he not ask this from the beginning? He thought to escape knowledge by its being said, *"one of you;"* but when He had made him manifest, he ventured again to ask, confiding in the clemency of his Master, that He would not convict him.

3. O blindness! Whereunto has it led him? Such is covetousness, it renders men fools and senseless, yea reckless, and dogs instead of men, or rather even more fierce than dogs, and devils after being dogs. This man at

least received unto him the devil even when plotting against him, but Jesus, even when doing him good, he betrayed, having already become a devil in will. For such does the insatiable desire of gain make men, out of their mind, frenzy-smitten, altogether given up to gain, as was the case even with Judas.

But how do Matthew and the other evangelists say, that, when he made the agreement touching the treason, then the devil seized him; but John, that *"after the sop Satan entered into him."* [John 13:27] And John himself knew this, for further back he says, *"The devil having now put into the heart of Judas, that he should betray Him."* How then does he say, *"After the sop Satan entered into him?"* Because he enters not in suddenly, nor at once, but makes much trial first, which accordingly was done here also. For after having tried him in the beginning, and assailed him quietly, after that he saw him prepared to receive him, he thenceforth wholly breathed himself into him, and completely got the better of him.

But how, if they were eating the passover, did they eat it contrary to the law? For they should not have eaten it, sitting down to their meat. [Exodus 12:11] What then can be said? That after eating it, they then sat down to the banquet.

But another evangelist says, that on that evening He not only ate the passover, but also said, *"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you,"* [Luke 22:15] that is, on that year. For what reason? Because then the salvation of the world was to be brought about, and the mysteries to be delivered, and the subjects of sorrow to be done away with by His death; so welcome was the cross to Him. But nothing softened the savage monster, nor moved, nor shamed him. He pronounced him wretched, saying, *"Woe to that man."* He alarmed him again, saying, *"It were good for him if he had not been born."* He put him to shame, saying, *"To whom I shall give a sop,*

when I have dipped it." And none of these things checked him, but he was seized by covetousness, as by some madness, or rather by a more grievous disease. For indeed this is the more grievous madness.

For what would the madman do like this? He poured not forth foam out of his mouth but he poured forth the murder of his Lord. He distorted not his hands, but stretched them out for the price of precious blood. Wherefore his madness was greater, because he was mad being in health.

But he does not utter *do you say*, sounds without meaning. And what is more without meaning than this language. "*What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?*" [Matthew 26:15] "*I will deliver,*" the devil spoke by that mouth. But he did not smite the ground with his feet struggling? Nay, how much better so to struggle, than thus to stand upright. But do you say, he did not cut himself with stones? Yet how much better, than to do such things as these!

Will ye, that we bring forward the possessed and the covetous, and make a comparison between the two. But let no one account what is done a reproach to himself. For we do not reproach the nature, but we lament the act. The possessed was never clad with garments, cutting himself with stones, and running, he rushes over rough paths, driven headlong of the devil. Do not these things seem to be dreadful? What then, if I shall show the covetous doing more grievous things than these to their own soul, and to such a degree more grievous, that these are considered child's play compared with those. Will you indeed shun the pest? Come then, let us see if they are in any respect in a more tolerable state than they. In none, but even in a more grievous condition; for indeed they are more objects of shame than ten thousand naked persons. For it were far better to be naked as to clothing, than being clad with the fruits of covetousness, to go about like them that celebrate the orgies for Bacchus. For like as they have on

madmen's masks and clothes, so have these also. And much as the nakedness of the possessed is caused by madness, so does madness produce this clothing, and the clothing is more miserable than the nakedness.

And this I will hereby endeavor to prove. For whom should we say was more mad, among madmen themselves; one who should cut himself, or one who together with himself should hurt those who met him? It is quite clear that it is this last. The madmen then strip themselves of their clothing, but these all that meet them. *"But these tear their clothes to pieces."* And how readily would every one of those that are injured consent that his garment should be torn, rather than be stripped of all his substance?

"But those do not aim blows at the face." In the first place, the covetous do even this, and if not all, yet do all inflict by famine and penury more grievous pains on the belly.

"But those bite not with the teeth." Would that it were with teeth, and not with the darts of covetousness fiercer than teeth. *"For their teeth are weapons and darts."* For who will feel most pained, he that was bitten once, and straightway healed, or he that is for ever eaten up by the teeth of penury? For penury when involuntary is more grievous than furnace or wild beast.

"But those rush not into the deserts like the possessed of devils." Would it were the deserts, and not the cities, that they overran, and so all in the cities enjoyed security. For now in this respect again, they are more intolerable than all the insane, because they do in the cities these things which the others do in the deserts, making the cities deserts, and like as in a desert, where there is none to hinder, so plundering the goods of all men.

"But they do not pelt with stones them that meet them." And what is this? Of stones it were easy to beware; but of the wounds which by paper and ink they work to the wretched poor (framing writings full of blows

without number), who, out of those that fall in with them, can ever easily beware?

4. And let us see also what they do to themselves. They walk naked up and down the city, for they have no garment of virtue. But if this does not seem to them to be a disgrace, this again is of their exceeding madness, for that they have no feeling of the unseemliness, but while they are ashamed of having their body naked, they bear about the soul naked, and glory in it. And if you wish, I will tell you also the cause of their insensibility. What then is the cause? They are naked among many that are thus naked, wherefore neither are they ashamed, like as neither are we in the baths. So that if indeed there were many clothed with virtue, then would their shame appear more. But now this above all is a worthy subject for many tears, that because the bad are many, bad things are not even esteemed as a disgrace. For besides the rest, the devil has brought about this too, not to allow them to obtain even a sense of their evil deeds, but by the multitude of them that practise wickedness, to throw a shade over their disgrace; since if it came to pass that he was in the midst of a multitude of persons practising self-restraint, such a one would see his nakedness more.

That they are more naked than the possessed is evident from these things; and that they go into the deserts, neither this again could any one gainsay. For the wide and broad way is more desert than any desert. For though it have many that journey on it, yet none from among men, but serpents, scorpions, wolves, adders, and asps. Such are they that practise wickedness. And this way is not only desert, but much more rugged than that *of the mad*. And this is hereby evident. For stones and ravines and crags do not so wound those that mount them, as robbery and covetousness the souls that practise them.

And that they live by the tombs, like the possessed, or rather that they themselves are tombs, is plain by this. What is a tomb? A stone having a dead body lying in it. Wherein then do these men's bodies differ from those stones? Or rather, they are more miserable even than they. For it is not a stone containing a dead body, but a body more insensible than stones, bearing about a dead soul. Wherefore one would not be wrong in calling them tombs. For so did our Lord too call the Jews, for this reason most especially; He went on at least to say, "*Their inward parts are full of ravening and covetousness.*"

Would ye that I show next, how they also cut their heads with stones? Whence then first, I pray you, will you learn this? From the things here, or from the things to come? But of the things to come they have not much regard; we must speak then of the things here. For are not anxieties more grievous than many stones, not wounding heads, but consuming a soul. For they are afraid, lest those things should justly go forth out of their house, which have come unto them unjustly; they tremble in fear of the utmost ills, are angry, are provoked, against those of their own house, against strangers; and now despondency, now fear, now wrath, comes upon them in succession, and they are as if they were crossing precipice after precipice, and they are earnestly looking day by day for what they have not yet acquired. Wherefore neither do they feel pleasure in the things they have, both by reason of not feeling confidence about the security of them, and because with their whole mind they are intent upon what they have not yet seized. And like as one continually thirsting, though he should drink up ten thousand fountains, feels not the pleasure, because he is not satisfied; so also these, so far from feeling pleasure, are even tormented, the more they heap around themselves; from their not feeling any limit to such desire.

And things here are like this; but let us speak also of the day to come. For though they give not heed, yet it is necessary for us to speak. In the day to come then, one will see everywhere such men as these undergoing punishment. For when He says, *"I was an hungered, and you gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink;"* [Matthew 25:42] He is punishing these; and when He says, *"Depart into the eternal fire prepared for the devil,"* He is sending there them that make a bad use of riches. And the wicked servant, who gives not to his fellow-servants the goods of his Lord, is of the number of these men, and he that buried his talent, and the five virgins.

And wherever you shall go, you will see the covetous punished. And now they will hear, *"There is a void between us and you;"* now, *"Depart from me into the fire that is prepared."* [Matthew 25:41] And now being cut asunder, they will go away, where there is gnashing of teeth, and from every place one may see them driven, and finding a place nowhere, but gathered in hell alone.

5. What then is the use of the right faith to us for salvation, when we hear these things? There, gnashing of teeth, and outer darkness, and the fire prepared for the devil, and to be cut asunder, and to be driven away; here, enmities, evil speakings, slanders, perils, cares, plots, to be hated of all, to be abhorred of all, even of the very persons that seem to flatter us. For as good men are admired not by the good only but even by the wicked; so bad men, not the good only, but also the worthless, hate. And in proof that this is true, I would gladly ask of the covetous, whether they do not feel painfully one toward another; and account such more their enemies than those that have done them the greatest wrong; whether they do not also accuse themselves, whether they do not account the thing an affront, if any one brings this reproach upon them. For indeed this is an extreme reproach,

and a sure proof of much wickedness; for if you dost not endure to despise wealth, of what will you ever get the better? Of lust, or of the mad desire of glory, or anger, or of wrath? And how would any be persuaded of it? For as to lust, and anger, and wrath, many impute it even to the temperament of the flesh, and to this do students of medicine refer the excesses thereof; and him that is of a more hot and languid temperament, they affirm to be more lustful; but him that runs out into a drier kind of ill temperament, eager, and irritable, and wrathful. But with respect to covetousness, no one ever heard of their having said any such thing. So entirely is the pest the effect of mere remissness, and of a soul past feeling.

Therefore, I beseech you, let us give diligence to amend all such things, and to give an opposite direction to the passions that come upon us in every age. But if in every part of our life we sail past the labors of virtue, everywhere undergoing shipwrecks; when we have arrived at the harbor destitute of spiritual freight, we shall undergo extreme punishment. For our present life is an outstretched ocean. And as in the sea here, there are different bays exposed to different tempests, and the Ægean is difficult because of the winds, the Tyrrhenian strait because of the confined space, the Charybdis that is by Africa because of the shallows, the Propontis, which is without the Euxine sea, on account of its violence and currents, the parts without Cadiz because of the desolation, and tracklessness, and unexplored places therein, and other portions for other causes; so also is it in our life.

And the first sea to view is that of our childish days, having much tempestuousness, because of its folly, its facility, because it is not steadfast. Therefore also we set over it guides and teachers, by our diligence adding what is wanting to nature, even as there by the pilot's skill.

After this age succeeds the sea of the youth, where the winds are violent as in the Ægean, lust increasing upon us. And this age especially is destitute of correction; not only because he is beset more fiercely, but also because his faults are not reproved, for both teacher and guide after that withdraw. When therefore the winds blow more fiercely, and the pilot is more feeble, and there is no helper, consider the greatness of the tempest.

After this there is again another period of life, that of men, in which the cares of the household press upon us, when there is a wife, and marriage, and begetting of children, and ruling of a house, and thick falling showers of cares. Then especially both covetousness flourishes and envy.

When then we pass each part of our life with shipwrecks, how shall we suffice for the present life? How shall we escape future punishment. For when first in the earliest age we learn nothing healthful, and then in youth we do not practise sobriety, and when grown to manhood do not get the better of covetousness, coming to old age as to a hold full of bilgewater, and as having made the barque of the soul weak by all these shocks, the planks being separated, we shall arrive at that harbor, bearing much filth instead of spiritual merchandise, and to the devil we shall furnish laughter, but lamentation to ourselves, and bring upon ourselves the intolerable punishments.

That these things may not be, let us brace ourselves up on every side, and, withstanding all our passions, let us cast out the lust of wealth, that we may also attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 82 on Matthew

Matt. XXVI. 26-28.

" And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; This is my body."

" And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; This is my blood of the New Testament, Which is shed for many, for the remission of sins."

Ah! How great is the blindness of the traitor! Even partaking of the mysteries, he remained the same; and admitted to the most holy table, he changed not. And this Luke shows by saying, that after this Satan entered into him, not as despising the Lord's body, but thenceforth laughing to scorn the traitor's shamelessness. For indeed his sin became greater from both causes, as well in that he came to the mysteries with such a disposition, as that having approached them, he did not become better, either from fear, or from the benefit, or from the honor. But Christ forbad him not, although He knew all things, that you might learn that He omits none of the things that pertain to correction. Wherefore both before this, and after this, He continually admonished him, and checked him, both by deeds, and by words; both by fear, and by kindness; both by threatening, and by honor. But none of these things withdrew him from that grievous pest.

Wherefore thenceforth He leaves him, and by the mysteries again reminds the disciples of His being slain, and in the midst of the meal His discourse is of the cross, by the continual repeating of the prediction, making His passion easy to receive. For if, when so many things had been done and foretold, they were troubled; if they had heard none of these things, what would they not have felt?

"And as they were eating, He took bread, and broke it." Why can it have been that He ordained this sacrament then, at the time of the passover? That you might learn from everything, both that He is the lawgiver of the Old Testament, and that the things therein are foreshadowed because of these things. Therefore, I say, where the type is, there He puts the truth.

But the evening is a sure sign of the fullness of times, and that the things were now come to the very end.

And He gives thanks, to teach us how we ought to celebrate this sacrament, and to show that not unwillingly does He come to the passion, and to teach us whatever we may suffer to bear it thankfully, thence also suggesting good hopes. For if the type was a deliverance from such bondage, how much more will the truth set free the world, and will He be delivered up for the benefit of our race. Wherefore, I would add, neither did He appoint the sacrament before this, but when henceforth the rites of the law were to cease. And thus the very chief of the feasts He brings to an end, removing them to another most awful table, and He says, *"Take, eat, This is my body, Which is broken for many."*

And how were they not confounded at hearing this? Because He had before told unto them many and great things touching this. Wherefore that He establishes no more, for they had heard it sufficiently, but he speaks of the cause of His passion, namely, the taking away of sins. And He calls it blood of a New Testament, that of the undertaking, the promise, the new law. For this He undertook also of old, and this comprises the Testament that is in the new law. And like as the Old Testament had sheep and bullocks, so this has the Lord's blood. Hence also He shows that He is soon to die, wherefore also He made mention of a Testament, and He reminds them also of the former Testament, for that also was dedicated with blood. And again He tells the cause of His death, *"which is shed for many for the*

remission of sins;" and He says, *"Do this in remembrance of me."* Do you see how He removes and draws them off from Jewish customs. For like as you did that, He says, in remembrance of the miracles in Egypt, so do this likewise in remembrance of me. That was shed for the preservation of the firstborn, this for the remission of the sins of the whole world. For, *"This,"* says He, *"is my blood, which is shed for the remission of sins."*

But this He said, indicating thereby, that His passion and His cross are a mystery, by this too again comforting His disciples. And like as Moses says, *"This shall be to you for an everlasting memorial,"* [Exodus 12:14] so He too, *"in remembrance of me,"* until I come. Therefore also He says, *"With desire I have desired to eat this passover,"* [Luke 22:15] that is, to deliver you the new rites, and to give a passover, by which I am to make you spiritual.

And He Himself drank of it. For lest on hearing this, they should say, What then? Do we drink blood, and eat flesh? And then be perplexed (for when He began to discourse concerning these things, even at the very sayings many were offended), therefore lest they should be troubled then likewise, He first did this Himself, leading them to the calm participation of the mysteries. Therefore He Himself drank His own blood. What then must we observe that other ancient rite also? Some one may say. By no means. For on this account He said, *"Do this,"* that He might withdraw them from the other. For if this works remission of sins, as it surely does work it, the other is now superfluous.

As then in the case of the Jews, so here also He has bound up the memorial of the benefit with the mystery, by this again stopping the mouths of heretics. For when they say, Whence is it manifest that Christ was sacrificed? Together with the other arguments we stop their mouths from

the mysteries also. For if Jesus did not die, of what are the rites the symbols?

2. Do you see how much diligence has been used, that it should be ever borne in mind that He died for us? For since the Marcionists, and Valentinians, and Manichæans were to arise, denying this dispensation, He continually reminds us of the passion even by the mysteries, (so that no man should be deceived); at once saving, and at the same time teaching by means of that sacred table. For this is the chief of the blessings; wherefore Paul also is in every way pressing this.

Then, when He had delivered it, He says, *"I will not drink of the fruit of this wine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."* For because He had discoursed with them concerning passion and cross, He again introduces what He has to say of His resurrection, having made mention of a kingdom before them, table, and rise up in drunkenness, whereas it were meet to give thanks, and end with an hymn.

Hear this, as many as wait not again for the last prayer of the mysteries, for this is a symbol of that. He gave thanks before He gave it to His disciples, that we also may give thanks. He gave thanks, and sang an hymn after the giving, that we also may do this selfsame thing.

But for what reason does He go forth unto the mountain? Making Himself manifest, that He may be taken, in order not to seem to hide himself. For He hastened to go to the place which was also known to Judas.

Then *"He says unto them, All you shall be offended in me."*
[Matthew 26:31] After this He mentions also a prophecy, *"For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad:"* at once persuading them ever to give heed to the things that are written, and at same time making it plain that He was crucified, according to God's purpose; and by everything showing He was no alien from the old covenant, nor from the

God preached therein, but that what is done is a dispensation, and that the prophets all proclaimed all things beforehand from the beginning that are comprised in the matter, so that they be quite confident about the better things also.

And He teaches us to know what the disciples were before the crucifixion, what after the crucifixion. For indeed they who, when He was crucified, were not able so much as to stand their ground, these after His death were mighty, and stronger than adamant.

And this self-same thing is a demonstration of His death, the fright and cowardice, I mean, of His disciples. For if when so many things have been both done and said, still some are shameless, and say that He was not crucified; if none of these things had come to pass, to what pitch of wickedness would they not have proceeded? So for this reason, not by His own sufferings only, but by what took place with respect to the disciples, He confirms the word concerning His death, and by the mysteries also, in every way confounding those that are diseased with the pest of Marcion. For this reason He suffers even the chief apostle to deny Him. But if He was not bound nor crucified, whence sprung the fear to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles.

He suffers them not however, on the other hand, to wait until the sorrows, but what says He? *"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."* For not from Heaven does He appear at once, neither will He depart into any distant country, but in the same nation, in which He had also been crucified, nearly in the same place, so as hereby again to assure them that He that was crucified was the very same that rose again, and in this way to comfort them more abundantly when in sorrow. Therefore also He said *"in Galilee,"* that being freed from the fears of the Jews they might believe His saying. For which cause indeed He appeared there.

"But Peter answered and said, Though all men should be offended because of You, yet will I never be offended."

3. What do you say, O Peter? The prophet said, *"The sheep shall be scattered;"* Christ has confirmed the saying, and do you say, No? Is not what passed before enough, when Thou said, *"Far be it from You,"* [Matthew 16:22] and your mouth was stopped? For this then He suffers him to fall, teaching him thereby to believe Christ in all things, and to account His declaration more trustworthy than one's own conscience. And the rest too reaped no small benefit from his denial, having come to know man's weakness, and God's truth. For when He foretells anything, we must no longer be subtle, nor lift up ourselves above the common sort. For, *"your rejoicing,"* it is said, *"you shall have in yourself, and not in another."* For where he should have prayed, and have said, Help us, that we be not cut off, he is confident in himself, and says, *"Though all men should be offended in You, yet will I never;"* though all should undergo this, I shall not undergo it, which led him on little by little to self-confidence. Christ then, out of a desire to put down this, permitted his denial. For since he neither submitted to Him nor the prophet (and yet for this intent He brought in the prophet besides, that they may not gainsay), but nevertheless since he submitted not to His words, he is instructed by deeds.

For in proof that for this intent He permitted it, that He might amend this in him, hear what He says, *"I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not."* For this He said sharply reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than the rest, and needed more help. For the matters of blame were two; both that he gainsaid; and, that he set himself before the other; or rather a third too, namely, that he attributed all to himself.

To cure these things then, He suffered the fall to take place, and for this cause also leaves the others, and addresses Himself earnestly to him.

For, "*Simon*," says He, "*Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat;*" that is, that he may trouble, confound, tempt you; but "*I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not.*"

And why, if Satan desired all, did He not say concerning all, I have prayed for you? Is it not quite plain that it is this, which I have mentioned before, that it is as reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than the rest, that He directs His words to him?

And wherefore said He not, But I did not suffer it, rather than, "*I have prayed?*" He speaks from this time lowly things, on His way to His passion, that He may show His humanity. For He that has built His church upon Peter's confession, and has so fortified it, that ten thousand dangers and deaths are not to prevail over it; He that has given him the keys of Heaven, and has put him in possession of so much authority, and in no manner needed a prayer for these ends (for neither did He say, I have prayed, but with His own authority, "*I will build my church, and I will give you the keys of Heaven*"), how should He need to pray, that He might brace up the shaken soul of a single man? Wherefore then did He speak in this way? For the cause which I mentioned, and because of their weakness, for they had not as yet the becoming view of Him.

How then was it that He denied? He said not, that you may not deny, but that your faith fail not, that you perish not utterly. For this came from His care.

For indeed fear had driven out all else, for it was beyond measure, and it became beyond measure, since God had to an exceeding degree deprived him of His help, and He did exceedingly deprive him thereof, because there was to an exceeding degree in him the passion of self-will and contradiction. In order then that He might pluck it up by the roots, therefore He suffered the terror to overtake him.

For in proof that this passion was grievous in him, he was not content with his former words, gainsaying both prophet and Christ, but also after these things when Christ had said unto him, *"Verily I say unto you, that this night, before the cock crow, you shall deny me thrice,"* he replies, *"Though I should die with You, I will not deny You in any wise."* And Luke signifies moreover, that the more Christ warned him, so much the more did Peter exceedingly oppose Him.

What mean these things, O Peter? When He was saying, *"One of you shall betray me,"* you feared lest you should be the traitor, and constrained the disciple to ask, although conscious to yourself of no such thing; but now, when He is plainly crying out, and saying, *"All shall be offended,"* are you gainsaying it, and not once only, but twice and often? For this is what Luke says.

Whence then did this come to him? From much love, from much pleasure. I mean, that after that he was delivered from that distressing fear about the betrayal, and knew the traitor, he then spoke confidently, and lifted himself up over the rest, saying, *"Though all men shall be offended, yet will I not be offended."* And in some degree too his conduct sprung from jealousy, for at supper they reasoned *"which of them is the greater,"* [Luke 22:24] to such a degree did this passion trouble them. Therefore He checked him, not compelling him to the denial, God forbid! But leaving him destitute of His help, and convicting human nature.

See at any rate after these things how he was subdued. For after the resurrection, when he had said, *"And what shall this man do?"* [John 21:21] and was silenced, he ventured no more to gainsay as here, but held his peace. Again, towards the assumption, when he heard, *"It is not for you to know times or seasons,"* [Acts 1:7] again he holds his peace, and contradicts not. After these things, on the house, and by the sheet, when he heard a

voice saying to him, *"What God has cleansed, call not thou common,"* [Acts 10:15] even though he knew not for the time what the saying could be, he is quiet, and strives not.

4. All these things did that fall effect, and whereas before that he attributes all to himself, saying, *"Though all men shall be offended, yet will I not be offended;"* and, *"If I should die, I will not deny You"* (when he should have said, If I receive the assistance from You)—yet after these things altogether the contrary, *"Why do ye give heed to us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk?"*

Hence we learn a great doctrine, that a man's willingness is not sufficient, unless any one receive the succor from above; and that again we shall gain nothing by the succor from above, if there be not a willingness. And both these things do Judas and Peter show; for the one, though he had received much help, was profited nothing, because he was not willing, neither contributed his part; but this one, though he was ready in mind, because he received no assistance, fell. For indeed of these two things is virtue's web woven.

Wherefore I entreat you neither (when you have cast all upon God) to sleep yourselves, nor, when laboring earnestly, to think to accomplish all by your own toils. For neither is it God's will that we should be supine ourselves, therefore He works it not all Himself; nor yet boasters, therefore He did not give all to us; but having removed what was hurtful in either way, left that which is useful for us. Therefore He suffered even the chief apostle to fall, both rendering him more humbled in mind, and training him thenceforth to greater love. *"For to whom more is forgiven,"* it is said, *"he loves more."* [Luke 7:47]

Let us then in everything believe God, and gainsay Him in nothing, though what is said seem to be contrary to our thoughts and senses, but let

His word be of higher authority than both reasonings and sight. Thus let us do in the mysteries also, not looking at the things set before us, but keeping in mind His sayings.

For His word cannot deceive, but our senses are easily beguiled. That has never failed, but this in most things goes wrong. Since then the word says, "*This is my body*," let us both be persuaded and believe, and look at it with the eyes of the mind.

For Christ has given nothing sensible, but though in things sensible yet all to be perceived by the mind. So also in baptism, the gift is bestowed by a sensible thing, that is, by water; but that which is done is perceived by the mind, the birth, I mean, and the renewal. For if you had been incorporeal, He would have delivered you the incorporeal gifts bare; but because the soul has been locked up in a body, He delivers you the things that the mind perceives, in things sensible.

How many now say, I would wish to see His form, the mark, His clothes, His shoes. Lo! You see Him, Thou touchest Him, you eat Him. And thou indeed desirest to see His clothes, but He gives Himself to you not to see only, but also to touch and eat and receive within you.

Let then no one approach it with indifference, no one faint-hearted, but all with burning hearts, all fervent, all aroused. For if Jews standing, and having on their shoes and their staves in their hands, ate with haste, much more ought thou to be watchful. For they indeed were to go forth to Palestine, wherefore also they had the garb of pilgrims, but you are about to remove unto Heaven.

5. Wherefore it is needful in all respects to be vigilant, for indeed no small punishment is appointed to them that partake unworthily.

Consider how indignant you are against the traitor, against them that crucified Him. Look therefore, lest you also yourself become guilty of the

body and blood of Christ. They slaughtered the all-holy body, but you receive it in a filthy soul after such great benefits. For neither was it enough for Him to be made man, to be smitten and slaughtered, but He also commingles Himself with us, and not by faith only, but also in very deed makes us His body. What then ought not he to exceed in purity that has the benefit of this sacrifice, than what sunbeam should not that hand be more pure which is to sever this flesh, the mouth that is filled with spiritual fire, the tongue that is reddened by that most awful blood? Consider with what sort of honor you were honored, of what sort of table you are partaking. That which when angels behold, they tremble, and dare not so much as look up at it without awe on account of the brightness that comes thence, with this we are fed, with this we are commingled, and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ. *"Who shall declare the mighty works of the Lord, and cause all His praises to be heard?"* What shepherd feeds his sheep with his own limbs? And why do I say, shepherd? There are often mothers that after the travail of birth send out their children to other women as nurses; but He endures not to do this, but Himself feeds us with His own blood, and by all means entwines us with Himself.

Mark it, He was born of our substance. But, you say, this is nothing to all men; though it does concern all. For if He came unto our nature, it is quite plain that it was to all; but if to all, then to each one. And how was it, you say, that all did not reap the profit therefrom. This was not of His doing, whose choice it was to do this in behalf of all, but the fault of them that were not willing. With each one of the faithful does He mingle Himself in the mysteries, and whom He begot, He nourishes by Himself, and puts not out to another; by this also persuading you again, that He had taken your flesh. Let us not then be remiss, having been counted worthy of so much both of love and honor. See ye not the infants with how much

eagerness they lay hold of the breast? With what earnest desire they fix their lips upon the nipple? With the like let us also approach this table, and the nipple of the spiritual cup. Or rather, with much more eagerness let us, as infants at the breast, draw out the grace of the spirit, let it be our one sorrow, not to partake of this food. The works set before us are not of man's power. He that then did these things at that supper, this same now also works them. We occupy the place of servants. He who sanctifies and changes them is the same. Let then no Judas be present, no covetous man. If any one be not a disciple, let him withdraw, the table receives not such. For *"I keep the passover,"* He says, *"with my disciples."* [Matthew 26:18]

This table is the same as that, and has nothing less. For it is not so that Christ wrought that, and man this, but He does this too. This is that upper chamber, where they were then; and hence they went forth unto the mount of Olives.

Let us also go out unto the hands of the poor, for this spot is the mount of Olives. For the multitude of the poor are olive-trees planted in the house of God, dropping the oil, which is profitable for us there, which the five virgins had, and the others that had not received perished thereby. Having received this, let us enter in that with bright lamps we may meet the bridegroom; having received this, let us go forth hence.

Let no inhuman person be present, no one that is cruel and merciless, no one at all that is unclean.

6. These things I say to you that receive, and to you that minister. For it is necessary to address myself to you also, that you may with much care distribute the gifts there. There is no small punishment for you, if being conscious of any wickedness in any man, you allow him to partake of this table. *"His blood shall be required at your hands."* [Ezekiel 33:8] Though any one be a general, though a deputy, though it be he himself who is

invested with the diadem, and come unworthily, forbid him, the authority you have is greater than his. You, if you were entrusted to keep a spring of water clean for a flock, and then were to see a sheep having much mire on its mouth, you would not suffer it to stoop down unto it and foul the stream: but now being entrusted with a spring not of water, but of blood and of spirit, if you see any having on them sin, which is more grievous than earth and mire, coming unto it, are you not displeased? Do you not drive them off? And what excuse can you have?

For this end God has honored you with this honor, that you should discern these things. This is your office, this your safety, this your whole crown, not that you should go about clothed in a white and shining vestment.

And whence know I, you may say, this person, and that person? I speak not of the unknown, but of the notorious.

Shall I say something more fearful. It is not so grievous a thing for the energumens to be within, as for such as these, whom Paul affirms to trample Christ under foot, and to *"account the blood of the covenant unclean, and to do despite to the grace of the Spirit."* For he that has fallen into sin and draws near, is worse than one possessed with a devil. For they, because they are possessed are not punished, but those, when they draw near unworthily, are delivered over to undying punishment. Let us not therefore drive away these only, but all without exception, whomsoever we may see coming unworthily.

Let no one communicate who is not of the disciples. Let no Judas receive, lest he suffer the fate of Judas. This multitude also is Christ's body. Take heed, therefore, you that ministerest at the mysteries, lest you provoke the Lord, not purging this body. Give not a sword instead of meat.

Nay, though it be from ignorance that he come to communicate, forbid him, be not afraid. Fear God, not man. If you should fear man, you will be laughed to scorn even by him, but if God, you will be an object of respect even to men.

But if you dare not to do it yourself, bring him to me; I will not allow any to dare do these things. I would give up my life rather than impart of the Lord's blood to the unworthy; and will shed my own blood rather than impart of such awful blood contrary to what is meet.

But if any has not known the bad man, after much inquiry, it is no blame. For these things have been said about the open sinners. For if we amend these, God will speedily discover to us the unknown also; but if we let these alone, wherefore should He then make manifest those that are hidden.

But these things I say, not that we repel them only, nor cut them off, but in order that we may amend them, and bring them back, that we may take care of them. For thus shall we both have God propitious, and shall find many to receive worthily; and for our own diligence, and for our care for others, receive great reward; unto which God grant we may all attain by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 83 on Matthew

Matt. XXVI. 36-38.

"Then comes Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and says unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy: and He says unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me."

Because they clung to Him inseparably, therefore He says, *"Tarry ye here, while I go away and pray."* For it was usual with Him to pray apart from them. And this He did teaching us in our prayers, to prepare silence for ourselves and great retirement.

And He takes with Him the three, and says unto them, *"my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."* Wherefore does He not take all with Him? That they might not be cast down; but these He takes that had been spectators of His glory. However, even these He dismisses: *"And He went on a little farther, and prays, saying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. And He comes unto them, and finds them sleeping, and says unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Not without reason does He inveigh against Peter most, although the others also had slept; but to make him feel by this also, for the cause which I mentioned before. Then because the others also said the same thing (for when Peter had said (these are the words), *"Though I must die with You, I will not deny You; likewise also,"* it is added, *"said all the disciples"*); [Matthew 26:36] He addresses Himself to all, convicting their weakness.

For they who are desiring to die with Him, were not then able so much as to sorrow with Him wakefully, but sleep overcame them.

And He prays with earnestness, in order that the thing might not seem to be acting. And sweats flow over him for the same cause again, even that the heretics might not say this, that He acts the agony. Therefore there is a sweat like drops of blood, and an angel appeared strengthening Him, and a thousand sure signs of fear, lest any one should affirm the words to be feigned. For this cause also was this prayer. By saying then, *"If it be possible, let it pass from me,"* He showed His humanity; but by saying, *"Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will,"* He showed His virtue and self-command, teaching us even when nature pulls us back, to follow God. For since it was not enough for the foolish to show His face only, He uses words also. Again, words sufficed not alone, but deeds likewise were needed; these also He joins with the words, that even they who are in a high degree contentious may believe, that He both became man and died. For if, even when these things are so, this be still disbelieved by some, much more, if these had not been. See by how many things He shows the reality of the incarnation: by what He speaks, by what He suffers. After that He comes and says to Peter, as it is said, *"What, couldst thou not watch one hour with me?"* [Mark 14:37] All were sleeping, and He rebukes Peter, hinting at him, in what He spoke. And the words, *"with me,"* are not employed without reason; it is as though He had said, You could not watch with me one hour, and will you lay down your life for me? And what follows also, intimates this self-same thing. For *"Watch,"* says He, *"and pray not to enter into temptation."* See how He is again instructing them not to be self-confident, but contrite in mind, and to be humble, and to refer all to God.

And at one time He addresses Himself to Peter, at another to all in common. And to him He says, *"Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to have*

you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you;" and to all in common, *"Pray that you enter not into temptation;"* every way plucking up their self-will, and making them earnest-minded. Then, that He might not seem to make His language altogether condemnatory, He says, *"The spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weak."* For even although thou dost desire to despise death, yet you will not be able, until God stretch forth His hand, for the carnal mind draws down.

And again He prayed in the same way, saying, *"Father, if this cannot pass from me except I drink it, Your will be done,"* showing here, that He fully harmonizes with God's will, and that we must always follow this, and seek after it.

"And He came and found them asleep." For besides that it was late at night, their eyes also were weighed down by their despondency. And the third time He went and spoke the same thing, establishing the fact, that He was become man. For the second and third time is in the Scriptures especially indicative of truth; like as Joseph also said to Pharaoh, *"Did the dream appear to you the second time? For truth was this done, and that you might be assured that this shall surely be."* [Genesis 41:32] Therefore He too once, and twice, and three times spoke the same thing, for the sake of proving the incarnation.

And wherefore came He the second time? In order to reprove them, for that they were so drowned in despondency, as not to have any sense even of His presence. He did not however reprove them, but stood apart from them a little, showing their unspeakable weakness, that not even when they had been rebuked, were they able to endure. But He does not awake and rebuke them again, lest He should smite them that were already smitten, but He went away and prayed, and when He has come back again, He says, *"Sleep on now, and take your rest."* And yet then there was need to be wakeful, but

to show that they will not bear so much as the sight of the dangers, but will be put to flight and desert Him from their terror, and that He has no need of their succor, and that He must by all means be delivered up, "*Sleep on now,*" He says, "*and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.*" [Matthew 26:45]

He shows again that what is done belongs to a divine dispensation.

2. But He does not this only, but also, by saying, "*into the hands of sinners,*" He cheers up their minds, showing it was the effect of their wickedness, not of His being liable to any charge.

"*Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that does betray me.*" [Matthew 26:46] For by all means He taught them, that the matter was not of necessity, nor of weakness, but of some secret dispensation. For, as we see, He foreknew that Judas would come, and so far from flying, He even went to meet him. At any rate, "*While He yet spoke, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.*" [Matthew 26:47] Seemly surely are the instruments of the priests! "*with swords and staves*" do they come against Him! And Judas, it is said, with them, one of the twelve. Again he calls him "*of the twelve,*" and is not ashamed. Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, "*Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He, hold Him fast.*" Oh! What depravity had the traitor's soul received. For with what kind of eyes did he then look at his Master? With what mouth did he kiss Him? Oh! accursed purpose; what did he devise? What did he dare? What sort of sign of betrayal did he give? Whomsoever I shall kiss, he says. He was emboldened by his Master's gentleness, which more than all was sufficient to shame him, and to deprive him of all excuse for that he was betraying one so meek.

But wherefore does He say this? Because often when seized by them He had gone out through the midst, without their knowing it. Nevertheless, then also this would have been done, if it had not been His own will that He should be taken. It was at least with a view to teach them this, that He then blinded their eyes, and Himself asked, "*Whom do you seek?*" [John 18:4] And they knew Him not, though being with lanterns and torches, and having Judas with them. Afterwards, as they had said, "*Jesus;*" He says, "*I am He*" whom you seek: and here again, "*Friend, wherefore are you come?*"

For after having shown His own strength, then at once He yielded Himself. But John says, that even to the very moment He continued to reprove him, saying, "*Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?*" [Luke 22:48] Are you not ashamed even of the form of the betrayal? Says He. Nevertheless, forasmuch as not even this checked him, He submitted to be kissed, and gave Himself up willingly; and they laid their hands on Him, and seized Him that night on which they ate the passover, to such a degree did they boil with rage, and were mad. However, they would have had no strength, unless He had Himself suffered it. Yet this delivers not Judas from intolerable punishment, but even more exceedingly condemns him, for that though he had received such proof of His power, and lenity, and meekness, and gentleness, he became fiercer than any wild beast.

Knowing then these things, let us flee from covetousness. For that, that it was, which then drove him to madness; that exercises them who are taken thereby in the most extreme cruelty and inhumanity. For, when it makes them to despair of their own salvation, much more does it cause them to overlook that of the rest of mankind. And so tyrannical is the passing, as sometimes to prevail over the keenest lust. Wherefore indeed I am exceedingly ashamed, that to spare their money, may indeed have bridled

their unchastity, but for the fear of Christ they were not willing to live chastely and with gravity.

Wherefore I say, let us flee from it; for I will not cease for ever saying this. For why, O man, do you gather gold? Why do you make your bondage more bitter? Why your watching more grievous? Why your anxiety more painful? Account for your own the metals buried in the mines, those in the kings' courts. For indeed if you had all that heap, you would keep it only, and wouldest not use it. For if now you have not used the things you possess, but abstainest from them as though they belonged to others, much more would this be the case with you, if you had more. For it is the way of the covetous, the more they heap up around them, the more to be sparing of it. *"But I know,"* do you say, *"that these things are mine."* The possession then is in supposition only, not in enjoyment. But I should be an object of fear to men, do you say. Nay, but you would by this become a more easy prey both to rich and poor, to robbers, and false accusers, and servants, and in general to all that are minded to plot against you. For if you are desirous to be an object of fear, cut off the occasions by which they are able to lay hold of you and pain you, whoever have set their hearts thereon. Do you not hear the parable that says, that the poor and naked man, not even a hundred men gathered together are ever able to strip? For he has his poverty as his greatest protection, which not even the king shall ever be able to subdue and take.

3. The covetous man indeed all join in vexing. And why do I say men, when moths and worms war against such a man? And why do I speak of moths? Length of time is enough alone, even when no one troubles him, to do the greatest injury to such a man.

What then is the pleasure of wealth? For I see its discomforts, but do thou tell me the pleasure of it. And what are its discomforts? Do you say:

anxieties, plots, enmities, hatred, fear; to be ever thirsting and in pain.

For if any one were to embrace a damsel he loves, but were not able to satisfy his desire, he undergoes the utmost torment. Even so also does the rich man. For he has plenty, and is with her, but cannot satisfy all his desire; but the same result takes place as some wise man mentions; "*The lust of eunuch to deflower a virgin;*" and, "*Like an eunuch embracing a virgin and groaning;*" so are all the rich.

Why should one speak of the other things? How such a one is displeasing to all, to his servants, his laborers, his neighbors, to them that handle public affairs, to them that are injured, to them that are not injured, to his wife most of all, and to his children more than to any. For not as men does he bring them up, but more miserably than menials and purchased slaves.

And countless occasions for anger, and vexation, and insult, and ridicule against himself, does he bring about, being set forth as a common laughing stock to all. So the discomforts are these, and perhaps more than these; before one could never go through them all in discourse, but experience will be able to set them before us.

But tell me the pleasure from hence. "*I appear to be rich,*" he says, "*and am reputed to be rich.*" And what kind of pleasure to be so reputed? It is a very great name for envy. I say a name, for wealth is a name only void of reality.

"*Yet he that is rich,*" says he, "*indulges and delights himself with this notion.*" He delights himself in those things about which he ought to grieve. "*To grieve? Wherefore?*" asks he. Because this renders him useless for all purposes, and cowardly and unmanly both with regard to banishment and to death, for he holds this double, longing more for money than for light. Such

a one not even Heaven delights, because it bears not gold; nor the sun, forasmuch as it puts not forth golden beams.

But there are some, says he, who do enjoy what they possess, living in luxury, in gluttony, in drunkenness, spending sumptuously. You are telling me of persons worse than the first. For the last above all are the men, who have no enjoyment. For the first at least abstains from other evils, being bound to one love; but the others are worse than these, besides what we have said, bringing in upon themselves a crowd of cruel masters, and doing service every day to the belly, to lust, to drunkenness, to other kinds of intemperance, as to so many cruel tyrants, keeping harlots, preparing expensive feasts, purchasing parasites, flatterers, turning aside after unnatural lusts, involving their body and their soul in a thousand diseases springing therefrom.

For neither is it on what they want they spend their goods, but on ruining the body, and on ruining also the soul therewith; and they do the same, as if any one, when adorning his person, were to think he was spending his money on his own wants.

So that he alone enjoys pleasure and is master of his goods, who uses his wealth for a proper object; but these are slaves and captives, for they aggravate both the passions of the body and the diseases of the soul. What manner of enjoyment is this, where is siege and war, and a storm worse than all the raging of the sea? For if wealth find men fools, it renders them more foolish; if wanton, more wanton.

And what is the use of understanding, you will say, to the poor man? As might be expected you are ignorant; for neither does the blind man know what is the advantage of light. Listen to Solomon, saying, "*As far as light excels darkness, so does wisdom excel folly.*" [Ecclesiastes 2:13]

But how shall we instruct him that is in darkness? For the love of money is darkness, permitting nothing that is to appear as it is, but otherwise. For much as one in darkness, though he should see a golden vessel, though a precious stone, though purple garments, supposes them to be nothing, for he sees not their beauty; so also he that is in covetousness, knows not as he ought the beauty of those things that are worthy of our care. Disperse then I pray you the mist that arises from this passion, and then will you see the nature of things.

But nowhere do these things so plainly appear as in poverty, nowhere are those things so disproved which seem to be, and are not, as in self-denial.

4. But oh! Foolish men; who do even curse the poor, and say that both houses and living are disgraced by poverty, confounding all things. For what is a disgrace to a house? I pray you. It has no couch of ivory, nor silver vessels, but all of earthenware and wood. Nay, this is the greatest glory and distinction to a house. For to be indifferent about worldly things, often occasions all a man's leisure to be spent in the care of his soul.

When therefore you see great care about outward things, then be ashamed at the great unseemliness. For the houses of them that are rich most of all want seemliness. For when you see tables covered with hangings, and couches inlaid with silver, much as in the theatre, much as in the display of the stage, what can be equal to this unseemliness? For what kind of house is most like the stage, and the things on the stage? The rich man's or the poor man's? Is it not quite plain that it is the rich man's? This therefore is full of unseemliness. What kind of house is most like Paul's, or Abraham's? It is quite evident that it is the poor man's. This therefore is most adorned, and to be approved. And that you may learn that this is, above all, a house's adorning, enter into the house of Zacchæus, and learn,

when Christ was on the point of entering therein, how Zacchæus adorned it. For he did not run to his neighbors begging curtains, and seats, and chairs made of ivory, neither did he bring forth from his closets Laconian hangings; but he adorned it with an adorning suitable to Christ. What was this? *"The half of my goods I will give,"* he says, *"to the poor; and whomsoever I have robbed, I will restore fourfold."* On this wise let us too adorn our houses, that Christ may enter in unto us also. These are the fair curtains, these are wrought in Heaven, they are woven there. Where these are, there is also the King of Heaven. But if you adorn it in another way, you are inviting the devil and his company.

He came also into the house of the publican Matthew. What then did this man also do? He first adorned himself by his readiness, and by his leaving all, and following Christ.

So also Cornelius adorned his house with prayers and alms; wherefore even unto this day it shines above the very palace. For the vile state of a house is not in vessels lying in disorder, nor in an untidy bed, nor in walls covered with smoke, but in the wickedness of them that dwell therein. And Christ shows it, for into such a house, if the inhabitant be virtuous, He is not ashamed to enter; but into that other, though it have a golden roof, He will never enter. So that while this one is more gorgeous than the palace, receiving the Lord of all, that with its golden roof and columns is like filthy drains and sewers, for it contains the vessels of the devil.

But these things we have spoken not of those who are rich for a useful purpose, but of the grasping, and the covetous. For neither is there among these, diligence nor care about the things needful, but about pampering the belly, and drunkenness, and other like unseemliness; but with the others about self-restraint. Therefore nowhere did Christ enter into a gorgeous

house, but into that of the publican and chief publican, and fisherman, leaving the kings' palaces, and them that are clothed with soft raiment.

If then thou also desirest to invite Him, deck your house with alms, with prayers, with supplications, with vigils. These are the decorations of Christ the King, but those of mammon, the enemy of Christ. Let no one be ashamed then of a humble house, if it has this furniture; let no rich man pride himself on having a costly house, but let him rather hide his face, and seek after this other, forsaking that, that both here he may receive Christ, and there enjoy the eternal tabernacles, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 84 on Matthew

Matt. XXVI. 51-54.

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched forth his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear."

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again your sword unto his place, for all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to the Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?

Who was this *"one,"* who cut off the ear? John says that it was Peter. [John 18:10] For the act was of his fervor.

But this other point is worth inquiry, wherefore they were bearing swords? For that they bore them is evident not hence only, but from their saying when asked, *"here are two."* But wherefore did Christ even permit them to have swords? For Luke affirms this too, that He said unto them, *"When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything?"* And when they said, *"Nothing,"* He said unto them, *"But now, he that has a purse, let him take it, and a scrip, and he that has no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."* And when they said, *"Here are two swords,"* He said unto them, *"It is enough."*

Wherefore then did He suffer them to have them? To assure them that He was to be betrayed. Therefore He says unto them, *"Let him buy a sword,"* not that they should arm themselves, far from it; but by this, indicating His being betrayed.

And wherefore does He mention a scrip also? He was teaching them henceforth to be sober, and wakeful, and to use much diligence on their own part. For at the beginning He cherished them (as being inexperienced) with much putting forth of His power but afterwards bringing them forth as young birds out of the nest, He commands them to use their own wings. Then, that they might not suppose that it was for weakness He is letting them alone, in commanding them also to work their part, He reminds them of the former things, saying, *"When I sent you without purse, lacked ye anything?"* that by both they might learn His power, both wherein He protected them, and wherein He now leaves them to themselves by degrees.

But whence were the swords there? They had come forth from the supper, and from the table. It was likely also there should be swords because of the lamb, and that the disciples, hearing that certain were coming forth against Him, took them for defense, as meaning to fight in behalf of their Master, which was of their thought only. Wherefore also Peter is rebuked for using it, and with a severe threat. For he was resisting the servant who came, warmly indeed, yet not defending himself, but doing this in behalf of his Master.

Christ however suffered not any harm to ensue. For He healed him, and showed forth a great miracle, enough to indicate at once both His forbearance and His power, and the affection and meekness of His disciple. For then he acted from affection, now with dutifulness. For when he heard, *"Put up your sword into its sheath,"* [John 18:11] he obeyed straightway, and afterwards nowhere does this.

But another says, that they moreover asked, *"Shall we smite?"* [Luke 22:49] but that He forbade it, and healed the man, and rebuked His disciple, and threatened, that He might move him to obedience. *"For all they that take the sword,"* He said, *"shall die with the sword."*

And he adds a reason, saying, *"Think ye that I cannot pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But that the Scriptures might be fulfilled."* [Matthew 26:53-54] By these words He quenched their anger, indicating that to the Scriptures also, this seemed good. Wherefore there too He prayed, that they might take meekly what befell Him, when they had learned that this again is done according to God's will.

And by these two things, He comforted them, both by the punishment of them that are plotting against Him, *"For all they,"* He says, *"that take the sword shall perish with the sword;"* and by His not undergoing these things against His will, *"For I can pray,"* He says, *"to my Father."*

And wherefore did He not say, *"Think ye that I cannot destroy them all?"* Because He was more likely to be believed in saying what He did say; for not yet had they the right belief concerning Him. And a little while before He had said, *"My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death,"* and, *"Father, let the cup pass from me;"* [Matthew 26:38-39] and He had appeared in an agony and sweating, and strengthened by an angel.

Since then He had shown forth many tokens of human nature, He did not seem likely to speak so as to be believed, if He had said, *"Think ye that I cannot destroy them."* Therefore He says, *"What, think ye that I cannot pray to my Father?"* And again He speaks it humbly, in saying, *"He will presently give me twelve legions of angels."* For if one angel slew one hundred and eighty-five armed thousands, [2 Kings 19:35] what need of twelve legions against a thousand men? But He frames His language with a view to their terror and weakness, for indeed they were dead with fear. Wherefore also He brings against them the Scriptures, saying, *"How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled?"* alarming them by this also. For if this be approved by the Scriptures, do ye oppose and fight against them?

2. And to His disciples He says these things; but to the others, *"Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily teaching in the temple, and you laid no hold on me."*

See how many things He does that might awaken them. He cast them to the ground, He healed the servant's ear, He threatened them with being slain; *"For they shall perish with the sword,"* He says, *"who take the sword."* By the healing of the ear, He gave assurance of these things also; from every quarter, both from the things present, and from the things to come, manifesting His power, and showing that it was not a work of their strength to seize Him. Wherefore He also adds, *"I was daily with you, and sat teaching, and you laid no hold on me;"* by this also making it manifest, that the seizure was of His permission. He passed over the miracles, and mentions the teaching, that He might not seem to boast.

When I taught, you laid no hold on me; when I held my peace, did ye come against me? I was in the temple, and no one seized me, and now do ye come upon me late and at midnight with swords and staves? What need was there of these weapons against Him, who was with you always? By these things teaching them, that unless He had voluntarily yielded, not even then would they have succeeded. For neither could they (who were not able to hold Him when in their hands, and who, when they had got Him in the midst of them, had not prevailed) even then have succeeded, unless He had been willing.

After this, He solves also the difficulty why He willed it then. For, *"this was done,"* He says, *"that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."* [Matthew 26:56] See how even up to the last hour, and in the very act of being betrayed, He did all things for their amendment, healing, prophesying, threatening. *"For,"* He says, *"they shall perish by the sword."* To show that He is suffering voluntarily, He says, *"I was daily with you*

teaching;" to manifest His accordance with the Father, He adds, "That the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

But wherefore did they not lay hold on Him in the temple? Because they would not have dared in the temple, on account of the people. Wherefore also He went forth without, both by the place and by the time giving them security, and even to the last hour taking away their excuse. For He who, in order that He might obey the prophets, gave up even Himself, how did He teach things contrary to them?

"Then all His disciples," it is said, "forsook Him, and fled." For when He was seized, they remained; but when He had said these things to the multitudes, they fled. For thenceforth they saw that escape was no longer possible, when He was giving Himself up to them voluntarily, and saying, that this was done according to the Scriptures.

And when these were fled, "they lead Him away to Caiaphas; but Peter followed, and entered in to see what the end should be."

Great was the fervor of the disciple; neither did he fly when he saw them flying, but stood his ground, and went in with Him. And if John did so too, yet he was *"known to the high priest."* [John 18:15]

And why did they lead Him away there where they were all assembled? That they might do all things with consent of the chief priests. For he was then high priest, and all were waiting for Christ there, to such a degree did they spend the whole night, and give up their sleep for this object. For neither did they then eat the passover, but watched for this other purpose. For John, when he had said that *"it was early,"* added, *"they entered into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover."*

What must we say then? That they ate it on another day, and broke the law, on account of their eager desire about this murder. For Christ would

not have transgressed as to the time of the passover, but they who were daring all things, and trampling under foot a thousand laws. For since they were exceedingly boiling with rage, and having often attempted to seize Him, had not been able; having then taken Him unexpectedly, they chose even to pass by the passover, for the sake of satiating their murderous lust.

Wherefore also they were all assembled together, and it was a council of pestilent men, and they ask some questions, wishing to invest this plot with the appearance of a court of justice. For *"neither did their testimonies agree together;"* so feigned was the court of justice, and all things full of confusion and disorder.

"But false witnesses came, and said, This fellow said, I will destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it." And indeed He had said, *"In three days,"* but He said not, *"I will destroy,"* but, *"Destroy,"* and not about that temple but about His own body.

What then does the high priest? Willing to press Him to a defense, that by that he might take Him, he says, *"Hearest Thou not what these witness against You? But He held His peace."*

For the attempts at defense were unprofitable, no man hearing. For this was a show only of a court of justice, but in truth an onset of robbers, assailing Him without cause, as in a cave, or on a road.

Wherefore *"He held His peace,"* but the other continued, saying, *"I adjure You by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of the living God. But He said, You have said. Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He has spoken blasphemy."* And this he did to add force to the accusation, and to aggravate what He said, by the act. For since what had

been said moved the hearers to fear, what they did about Stephen, [Acts 7:59] stopping their ears, this high priest does here also.

3. And yet what kind of blasphemy was this? For indeed before He had said, when they were gathered together, "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand,*" [Matthew 22:43-46] and interpreted the saying, and they dared say nothing, but held their peace, and from that time forth gainsaid Him no more. Why then did they now call the saying a blasphemy? And wherefore also did Christ thus answer them? To take away all their excuse, because unto the last day He taught that He was Christ, and that He sits at the right hand of the Father, and that He will come again to judge the world, which was the language of one manifesting His full accordance with the Father.

Having rent therefore his clothes, he says, "*What do you think?*" [Matthew 26:66] He gives not the sentence from himself, but invites it from them, as in a case of confessed sins, and manifest blasphemy. For, inasmuch as they knew that if the thing came to be inquired into, and carefully decided, it would free Him from all blame, they condemn Him among themselves, and anticipate the hearers by saying, "*You have heard the blasphemy;*" all but necessitating and forcing them to deliver the sentence. What then say they? "*He is guilty of death;*" that having taken Him as condemned, they should thus work upon Pilate thereupon to pass sentence. In which matter those others also being accomplices say, "*He is guilty of death;*" themselves accusing, themselves judging, themselves passing sentence, themselves being everything then.

But wherefore did they not bring forward the Sabbaths? Because He had often stopped their mouths; and moreover they wanted to take Him, and condemn Him by the things then said. And *the high priest* anticipated them, and gave the sentence as from them, and drew them all on by rending his

vestments, and having led Him away as now condemned unto Pilate, thus did all.

Before Pilate at any rate they said nothing of this kind, but what? *"If this Man were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto you;"* attempting to put Him to death by political accusations. And wherefore did they not slay Him secretly? They were desirous also to bring up an evil report against His fame. For since many had now heard Him, and were admiring Him, and amazed at Him, therefore they endeavored that He should be put to death publicly, and in the presence of all.

But Christ hindered it not, but made full use of their wickedness for the establishment of the truth, so that His death should be manifest. And the result was the contrary to what they wished. For they wished to make a show of it, as in this way disgracing Him, but He even by these very things shone forth the more. And much as they said, *"Let us put Him to death, lest the Romans come and take away our place and nation;"* and after they had put Him to death, this came to pass; so also here; their object was to crucify Him publicly, that they might injure His fame, and the contrary result took place.

For in proof that indeed they had power to have put Him to death, even among themselves, hear what Pilate says: *"Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law."* [John 18:31] But they would not, that He might seem to have been put to death as a transgressor, as an usurper, as a mover of sedition. Therefore also they crucified thieves with Him; therefore also they said, *"Write not that this man is King of the Jews; but that He said it."*

But all these things are done for the truth, so that they might not have so much as any shadow of a defense that is surely shameless. And at the sepulchre too, in the like manner, the seals and the watches made the truth

to be the more conspicuous; and the mockings, and the jeerings, and the revilings, wrought again this self-same effect.

For such is the nature of error: it is destroyed by those things whereby it plots; thus at least it fell out even here, for they that seemed to have conquered, these most of all were put to shame, and defeated, and ruined; but He that seemed to be defeated, this man above all has both shone forth, and conquered mightily.

Let us not then everywhere seek victory, nor everywhere shun defeat. There is an occasion when victory brings hurt, but defeat profit. For, for instance, in the case of them that are angry; he that has been very outrageous seems to have prevailed; but this man above all is the one subdued and hurt by the most grievous passion; but he that has endured nobly, this man has got the better and conquered. And while the one has not had strength to overcome so much as his own disease; the other has removed another man's; this has been subdued by his own, that has got the better even of another's passion; and so far from being burnt up, he quenched the flame of another when raised to a height. But if he had minded to gain what seems to be victory, both he himself would have been overcome; and having inflamed the other, he would have occasioned him to have suffered this more grievously; and, like women, both the one and the other would have been disgracefully and miserably overthrown by their anger. But now he that has exercised self-control is both freed from this disgrace, and has erected a glorious trophy over anger both in himself and in his neighbor, through his honorable defeat.

4. Let us not then everywhere seek victory. For he that has overreached has conquered the person wronged, but with an evil victory, and one that brings destruction to him that has won it; but he that is wronged, and seems to have been conquered, if he have borne it with self-command, this above

all is the one that has the crown. For often to be defeated is better, and this is the best mode of victory. For whether one overreaches, or smites, or envies, he that is defeated, and enters not into the conflict, this is he who has the victory.

And why do I speak of overreaching and envy? For he also that is dragged to martyrdom, thus conquers by being bound, and beaten, and maimed, and slain. And what is in wars defeat, namely, for the combatant to fall; this with us is victory. For nowhere do we overcome by doing wrongfully, but everywhere by suffering wrongfully. Thus also does the victory become more glorious, when we sufferers get the better of the doers. Hereby it is shown that the victory is of God. For indeed it has an opposite nature to outward conquest, which fact is again above all an infallible sign of strength. Thus also the rocks in the sea, by being struck, break the waves; thus also all the saints were proclaimed, and crowned, and set up their glorious trophies, winning this tranquil victory. *"For stir not yourself,"* He says, *"neither weary yourself. God has given you this might, to conquer not by conflict, but by endurance alone. Do not oppose yourself also as he does, and you have conquered; conflict not, and you have gained the crown. Why do you disgrace yourself? Allow him not to say that by conflicting you have got the better, but suffer him to be amazed and to marvel at your invincible power; and to say to all, that even without entering into conflict you have conquered."*

Thus also the blessed Joseph obtained a good report, everywhere by suffering wrong getting the better of them who were doing it. For his brethren and the Egyptian woman were among those that were plotting against him, but over all did this man prevail. For tell me not of the prison, wherein this man dwelt, nor of the kings' courts where she abode, but show me who it is that is conquered, who it is that is defeated, who that is in

despondency, who that is in pleasure. For she, so far from being able to prevail over the righteous man, could not master so much as her own passion; but this man prevailed both over her and over that grievous disease. But if you will, hear her very words, and you shall see the trophy.

"You brought in unto us here an Hebrew servant to mock us."

[Genesis 39:17] It was not this man that mocked you, O wretched and unhappy woman, but the devil that told you that you could break down the adamant. This *your husband* brought not in unto you an Hebrew servant to plot against you, but the wicked spirit brought in that unclean lasciviousness; he it was that mocked you.

What then did Joseph? He held his peace, and thus is condemned, even as Christ is also.

For all those things are types of these. And he indeed was in bonds, and she in royal courts. Yet what is this? For he was more glorious than any crowned victor, even while continuing in his bonds, but she was in a more wretched condition than any prisoner, while abiding in royal chambers.

But not hence alone may one see the victory, and the defeat, but by the end itself. For which accomplished his desired object? The prisoner, not the high born lady? For he strove to keep his chastity, but she to destroy it. Which then accomplished what he desired? He who suffered wrong, or she who did the wrong. It is quite plain, that it is he who suffered. Surely then this is the one who has conquered.

Knowing then these things, let us follow after this victory, which is obtained by suffering wrong, let us flee from that which is got by doing wrong. For so shall we both live this present life in all tranquility, and great quietness, and shall attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 85 on Matthew

Matthew 26:67-68.

" Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him, and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, you Christ, who is he that smote you?"

Wherefore did they these things, when they were to put Him to death? What need of this mockery? That you might learn their intemperate spirit by all things, and that having taken Him like a prey, they thus showed forth their intoxication, and gave full swing to their madness; making this a festival, and assaulting Him with pleasure, and showing forth their murderous disposition.

But admire, I pray you, the self command of the disciples, with what exactness they relate these things. Hereby is clearly shown their disposition to love the truth, because they relate with all truthfulness the things that seem to be opprobrious, disguising nothing, nor being ashamed thereof, but rather accounting it very great glory, as indeed it was, that the Lord of the universe should endure to suffer such things for us. This shows both His unutterable tenderness, and the inexcusable wickedness of those men, who had the heart to do such things to Him that was so mild and meek, and was charming them with such words, as were enough to change a lion into a lamb. For neither did He fail in any things of gentleness, nor they of insolence and cruelty, in what they did, in what they said. All which things the prophet Isaiah foretold, thus proclaiming beforehand, and by one word intimating all this insolence. For *"like as many were astonished at you,"* he says, *"so shall your form be held inglorious of men, and your glory of the sons of men."*

For what could be equal to this insolence? On that face which the sea, when it saw it, had revered, from which the sun, when it beheld it on the cross, turned away his rays, they did spit, and struck it with the palms of their hands, and some upon the head; giving full swing in every way to their own madness. For indeed they inflicted the blows that are most insulting of all, buffeting, smiting with the palms of their hands, and to these blows adding the insult of spitting at Him. And words again teeming with much derision did they speak, saying, *"prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote you?"* because the multitude called Him a prophet.

But another [Luke 22:64] says, that they covered His face with His own garment, and did these things, as though they had got in the midst of them some vile and worthless fellow. And not freemen only, but slaves also were intemperate with this intemperance towards Him at that time.

These things let us read continually, these things let us hear aright, these things let us write in our minds, for these are our honors. In these things do I take a pride, not only in the thousands of dead which He raised, but also in the sufferings which He endured. These things Paul puts forward in every way, the cross, the death, the sufferings, the revilings, the insults, the scoffs. And now he says, *"let us go forth unto Him bearing His reproach;"* [Hebrews 13:13] and now, *"who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame."* [Hebrews 12:2]

"Now Peter sat in the court without; and a damsel came unto him, saying, thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what you say. And when he had gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and says, this man also was there with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said unto Peter, surely thou also art one of them, for your speech betrays you. Then began he to curse and to swear, I know

not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said, before the cock crow, you shall deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly."

Oh strange and wonderful acts! When indeed he saw his master seized only, he was so fervent as both to draw his sword, and to cut off the man's ear; but when it was natural for him to be more indignant, and to be inflamed and to burn, hearing such revilings, then he becomes a denier. For who would not have been inflamed to madness by the things that were then done? Yet the disciple, overcome by fears, so far from showing indignation, even denies, and endures not the threat of a miserable and mean girl, and not once only, but a second and third time does he deny Him; and in a short period, and not so much as before judges, for it was without for "*when he had gone out into the porch,*" they asked him, and he did not even readily come to a sense of his fall. And this Luke says, [Luke 22:61] namely, that Christ looked on him showing that he not only denied Him, but was not even brought to remembrance from within, and this though the cock had crowed; but he needed a further remembrance from his master, and His look was to him instead of a voice; so exceedingly was he full of fear.

But Mark says, that when he had once denied, then first the cock crew, but when thrice, then for the second time; for he declares more particularly the weakness of the disciple, and that he was utterly dead with fear; having learned these things of his master [1 Peter 5:13] himself, for he was a follower of Peter. In which respect one would most marvel at him, that so far from hiding his teacher's faults, he declared it more distinctly than the rest, on this very account, that he was his disciple.

2. How then is what is said true, when Matthew affirms that Christ said, "*Verily I say unto you, that before the cock crow you shall deny me thrice;*" [Matthew 26:34] and Mark declares after the third denial, that "*The*

*cock crew the second time?" [Mark 14:72] Nay, most certainly is it both true and in harmony. For because at each crowing the cock is wont to crow both a third and a fourth time, Mark, to show that not even the sound checked him, and brought him to recollection says this. So that both things are true. For before the cock had finished the one crowing, he had denied a third time. And not even when reminded of his sin by Christ did he dare to weep openly, lest he should be betrayed by his tears, but *"he went out, and wept bitterly."**

"And when it was day, they led away Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate." For because they were desirous to put Him to death, but were not able themselves because of the feast, they lead Him to the governor.

But mark, I pray you, how the act was forced on, so as to take place at the feast. For so was it typified from the first.

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver."

This was a charge both against him, and against these men; against him, not because he repented, but because he did so, late, and slowly, and became self-condemned (for that he delivered Him up, he himself confessed); and against them, for that having the power to reverse it, they repented not.

But mark, when it is that he feels remorse. When his sin was completed, and had received an accomplishment. For the devil is like this; he suffers not those that are not watchful to see the evil before this, lest he whom he has taken, should repent. At least, when Jesus was saying so many things, he was not influenced, but when his offense was completed, then repentance came upon him; and not then profitably. For to condemn it, and to throw down the pieces of silver, and not to regard the Jewish people, were all acceptable things; but to hang himself, this again was

unpardonable, and a work of an evil spirit. For the devil led him out of his repentance too soon, so that he should reap no fruit from thence; and carries him off, by a most disgraceful death, and one manifest to all, having persuaded him to destroy himself.

But mark, I pray you, the truth shining forth on every side, even by what the adversaries both do and suffer. For indeed even the very end of the traitor stops the mouths of them that had condemned Him, and suffers them not to have so much as any shadow of an excuse, that is surely shameless. For what could they have to say, when the traitor is shown to pass such a sentence on himself.

But let us see also the words, what is said; *"He brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests, and says, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, what is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."*

For neither could he bear his conscience scourging him. But mark, I pray you, the Jews too suffering the same things. For these men also, when they ought to have been amended by what they suffered, do not stop, until they have completed their sin. For his sin had been completed, for it was a betrayal; but theirs not yet. But when they too had accomplished theirs, and had nailed Him to the cross then they also are troubled; at one time saying, *"Write not, this is the king of the Jews"* [John 19:21] (and yet why are you afraid? Why are you troubled at a dead body that is nailed upon the cross?); at another time they guard over Him, saying, *"Lest His disciples steal Him away, and say that He is risen again; so the last error shall be worse than the first."* And yet if they do it, the thing is refuted, if it be not true. But how should they say so, which did not dare so much as to stand their ground, when He was seized; and the chief of them even thrice denied Him, not

bearing a damsel's threat. But, as I said, the chief priests were now troubled; for that they knew the act was a transgression of the law is manifest, from their saying, "*See thou to that.*"

Hear, you covetous, consider what befell him; how he at the same time lost the money, and committed the sin, and destroyed his own soul. Such is the tyranny of covetousness. He enjoyed not the money, neither the present life, nor that to come, but lost all at once, and having got a bad character even with those very men, so hanged himself.

But, as I said, after the act, then some see clearly. See at any rate these men too for a time not willing to have a clear perception of the fact, but saying, "*See thou to that:*" which thing of itself is a most heavy charge against them. For this is the language of men bearing witness to their daring and their transgression, but intoxicated by their passion, and not willing to forbear their satanical attempts, but senselessly wrapping themselves up in a veil of feigned ignorance.

For if indeed these things had been said after the crucifixion, and His being slain, of a truth even then the saying would have had no reasonable meaning, nevertheless it would not have condemned them so much; but now having Him yet in your own hands, and having power to release Him, how could ye be able to say these things? For this defense would be a most heavy accusation against you. How? And in what way? Because while throwing the whole blame upon the traitor (for they say, "*See thou to that*"), being able to have set themselves free from this murder of Christ, they left the traitor, and even pressed the crime further, adding the cross to the betrayal. For what hindered them, when they said to him, "*See thou to that,*" themselves to forbear the criminal act? But now they even do the contrary, adding to it the murder and in every thing, both by what they do, and by what they say, entangling themselves in inevitable ills. For indeed after

these things, when Pilate left it to them, they choose the robber to be released rather than Jesus; but Him that had done no wrong, but had even conferred on them so many benefits, they slew.

3. What then did that man? When he saw that he was laboring to no profit, and that they would not consent to receive the pieces of silver, *"he cast them down in the temple, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, it is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, the field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."*

Do you see them again self-condemned by their conscience? For because they knew that they had been buying the murder, they put them not into the treasury, but bought a field to bury strangers in. And this also became a witness against them, and a proof of their treason. For the name of the place more clearly than a trumpet proclaimed their blood- guiltiness. Neither did they it at random, but having taking counsel, and in every case in like manner, so that no one should be clear of the deed, but all guilty. But these things the prophecy foretold from of old. Do you see not the apostles only, but the prophets also declaring exactly those things which were matters of reproach, and every way proclaiming the passion, and indicating it beforehand?

This was the case with the Jews without their being conscious of it. For if they had cast it into the treasury, the thing would not have been so clearly discovered; but now having bought a piece of ground, they made it all manifest even to subsequent generations.

Hear ye as many as think to do good works out of murders, and take a reward for the lives of men. These almsgiving are Judaical, or rather they are Satanical. For there are, there are now also they, that take by violence countless things belonging to others, and think that an excuse is made for all if they cast in some ten or a hundred gold pieces.

Touching whom also the prophet says, "*You covered my altar with tears.*" [Malachi 2:13] Christ is not willing to be fed by covetousness, He accepts not this food. Why do you insult your Lord, offering Him unclean things? It is better to leave men to pine with hunger, than to feed them from these sources. That was the conduct of a cruel man, this of one both cruel and insolent. It is better to give nothing, than to give the things of one set of persons to others. For tell me, if you saw any two persons, one naked, one having a garment, and then having stripped the one that had the garment, thou were to clothe the naked, would you not have committed an injustice? It is surely plain to every one. But if when you have given all that you have taken to another, you have committed an injustice, and not shown mercy; when you give not even a small portion of what you rob, and callest the deed alms, what manner of punishment will you not undergo? For if men offering lame brutes were blamed, what favor will you obtain doing things more grievous? For if the chief, making restitution to the owner himself, still does an injustice, and so does an injustice, as by adding fourfold scarcely to do away the charge against himself, and this under the old covenant; [Exodus 22:1] he that is not stealing, but taking by violence, and not even giving to him that is robbed, but instead of him to another; nor yet giving fourfold, but not so much as the half; and moreover not living under the old dispensation, but under the new; consider how much fire he is heaping together upon his own head. And if he do not as yet suffer his punishment, for this self-same thing I say bewail him, for he is treasuring

up against himself a greater wrath, unless he repent. For what? *"Think ye,"* says He, *"that they alone were sinners upon whom the tower fell down? Nay, I say unto you, but except ye repent, you also shall suffer the same things."*

Let us repent then, and give alms pure from covetousness, and in great abundance. Consider that the Jews used to feed eight thousand Levites, and together with the Levites, widows also and orphans, and they bore many other public charges, and together with these things also served as soldiers; but now there are fields, and houses, and hirings of lodgings, and carriages, and muleteers, and mules, and a great array of this kind in the church on account of you, and your hardness of heart. For this store of the church ought to be with you, and your readiness of mind ought to be a revenue to her; but now two wrong things come to pass, both you continue unfruitful, and God's priests do not practise their proper duties.

Was it not possible for the houses and the lands to have remained in the time of the apostles? Wherefore then did they sell them and give away? Because this was a better thing.

4. But now a fear seized our fathers (when you were so mad after worldly things, and because of your gatherings, and not dispersing abroad), lest the companies of the widows and orphans, and of the virgins, should perish of famine; therefore were they constrained to provide these things. For it was not their wish to thrust themselves unto what was so unbecoming; but their desire was that your good will should have been a supply for them, and that they should gather their fruits from thence, and that they themselves should give heed to prayers only.

But now you have constrained them to imitate the houses of them that manage public affairs; whereby all things are turned upside down. For when both you and we are entangled in the same things, who is there to propitiate

God? Therefore it is not possible for us to open our mouths, when the state of the church is no better than that of worldly men. Have ye not heard that the apostles would not consent so much as to distribute the money that was collected without any trouble? But now our bishops have gone beyond agents, and stewards, and hucksters in their care about these things; and when they ought to be careful and thoughtful about your souls, they are vexing themselves every day about these things, for which the innkeepers, and tax-gatherers, and accountants, and stewards are careful.

These things I do not mention for nought in the way of complaint, but in order that there may be some amendment and change, in order that we may be pitied for serving a grievous servitude, in order that you may become a revenue and store for the church.

But if you are not willing, behold the poor before your eyes; as many as it is possible for us to suffice, we will not cease to feed; but those, whom it is not possible, we will leave to you, that you may not hear those words on the awful day, which shall be spoken to the unmerciful and cruel. *"You saw me an hungered, and fed me not."* [Matthew 25:42]

For together with you this inhumanity makes us laughing-stocks, because leaving our prayers, and our teaching, and the other parts of holiness, we are fighting all our time, some with wine merchants, some with grain-factors, others with them that retail other provisions.

Hence come battles, and strifes, and daily revilings, and reproaches, and jeers, and on each of the priests names are imposed more suitable for houses of secular men; when it would have been fit to take other names in the place of these, and to be named from those things, from which also the apostles ordained, from the feeding of the hungry, from the protection of the injured, from the care of strangers, from succoring them that are despitefully used, from providing for the orphans, from taking part with the

widows, from presiding over the virgins; and these offices should be distributed among us instead of the care of the lands and houses.

These are the stores of the church, these the treasures that become her, and that afford in great degree both ease to us and profit to you; or rather to you ease with the profit. For I suppose that by the grace of God they that assemble themselves here amount to the number of one hundred thousand; and if each bestowed one loaf to some one of the poor, all would be in plenty; but if one farthing only, no one would be poor; and we should not undergo so many revilings and jeers, in consequence of our care about the money. For indeed the saying, "*Sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come and follow me,*" might be seasonably addressed to the prelates of the church with respect to the property of the church. For in any other way it is not possible to follow Him as we ought, not being freed from all grosser and more worldly care.

But now the priests of God attend at the vintage and harvest, and at the sale and purchase of the produce; and whereas they that served the shadow had an entire immunity from such matters, although entrusted with a more carnal service; we, who are invited to the very inmost shrines of the heavens, and who enter into the true holy of holies, take upon ourselves the cares of tradesmen and retail dealers.

Hence great neglect of the Scriptures, and remissness in prayers, and indifference about all the other duties; for it is not possible to be split into the two things with due zeal. Where I pray and beseech you that many fountains may spring up to us from all quarters, and that your forwardness may be to us the threshing floor and the wine press.

For in this way both the poor will more easily be supported, and God will be glorified, and you will advance unto a greater degree of love to mankind, and will enjoy the good things eternal; unto which God grant we

may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ,
to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 86 on Matthew

Matthew 27:11-12.

"And Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked Him, saying, Are you the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, You say. And when He was accused of the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing."

Do you see what He is first asked? Which thing most of all they were continually bringing forward in every way? For since they saw Pilate making no account of the matters of the law, they direct their accusation to the state charges. So likewise did they in the case of the apostles, ever bringing forward these things, and saying that they were going about proclaiming king one Jesus, [Acts 17:7] speaking as of a mere man, and investing them with a suspicion of usurpation.

Whence it is manifest, that both the rending the garment and the amazement were a pretense. But all things they got up, and plied, in order to bring Him to death.

This at any rate Pilate then asked. What then said Christ? *"You say."* He confessed that He was a king, but a heavenly king, which elsewhere also He spoke more clearly, replying to Pilate, *"My kingdom is not of this world;"* [John 18:36] that neither they nor this man should have an excuse for accusing Him of such things. And He gives a reason that cannot be gainsaid, saying, *"If I were of this world, my servants would fight, that I should not be delivered."* For this purpose I say, in order to refute this suspicion, He both paid tribute, [Matthew 22:17] and commanded others to pay it, and when they would make Him a king, He fled. [John 6:15]

Wherefore then did he not bring forward these things, it may be said, at that time, when accused of usurpation? Because having the proofs from His acts, of His power, His meekness, His gentleness, beyond number, they were willfully blind, and dealt unfairly, and the tribunal was corrupt. For these reasons then He replies to nothing, but holds His peace, yet answering briefly (so as not to get the reputation of arrogance from continual silence) when the high priest adjured Him, when the governor asked, but in reply to their accusations He no longer says anything; for He was not now likely to persuade them. Even as the prophet declaring this self-same thing from of old, said, *"In His humiliation His judgment was taken away."*

At these things the governor marvelled, and indeed it was worthy of admiration to see Him showing such great forbearance, and holding His peace, Him that had countless things to say. For neither did they accuse Him from knowing of any evil thing in Him, but from jealousy and envy only. At least when they had set false witness, wherefore, having nothing to say, did they still urge their point? And when they saw Judas was dead, and that Pilate had washed his hands of it, why were they not pricked with remorse. For indeed He did many things even at the very time, that they might recover themselves, but by none were they amended.

What then says Pilate? *"Do you not hear how many things these witness against you?"* He wished that He should defend Himself and be acquitted, wherefore also he said these things; but since He answered nothing, he devises another thing again.

Of what nature was this? It was a custom for them to release one of the condemned, and by this means he attempted to deliver Him. For if you are not willing to release Him as innocent, yet as guilty pardon Him for the feast's sake.

Do you see order reversed? For the petition in behalf of the condemned it was customary to be with the people, and the granting it with the rulers; but now the contrary has come to pass, and the ruler petitions the people; and not even so do they become gentle, but grow more savage and bloodthirsty, driven to frenzy by the passion of envy. For neither had they whereof they should accuse Him, and this though He was silent, but they were refuted even then by reason of the abundance of His righteous deeds, and being silent He overcame them that say ten thousand things, and are maddened.

"And when he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, have thou nothing to do with this just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." See what a thing takes place again, sufficient to recall them all. For together with the proof from the things done, the dream too was no small thing. And wherefore does he not see it himself? Either because she was more worthy, or because he, if he had seen it, would not have been equally believed; or would not so much as have told it. Therefore it was ordered that the wife should see it, so that it might be manifest to all. And she does not merely see it, but also suffers many things, that from his feeling towards his wife, the man may be made more reluctant to the murder. And the time too contributed not a little, for on the very night she saw it.

But it was not safe, it may be said, for him to let Him go, because they said He made Himself a king. He ought then to have sought for proofs, and a conviction, and for all the things that are infallible signs of an usurpation, as, for instance, whether He levied forces, whether He collected money, whether He forged arms, whether He attempted any other such thing. But he is led away at random, therefore neither does Christ acquit him of the blame, in saying, *"He that betrays me unto you has greater sin."* So that it

was from weakness that he yielded and scourged Him, and delivered Him up.

He then was unmanly and weak; but the chief priests wicked and criminal. For since he had found out a device, namely, the law of the feast requiring him to release a condemned person, what do they contrive in opposition to that? *"They persuaded the multitude,"* it is said, *"that they should ask Barabbas."*

2. See how much care he takes for them to relieve them from blame, and how much diligence they employed, so as not to leave to themselves so much as a shadow of an excuse. For which was right? To let go the acknowledged criminal, or Him about whose guilt there was a question? For, if in the case of acknowledged offenders it was fit there should be a liberation, much more in those of whom there was a doubt. For surely this man did not seem to them worse than acknowledged murderers. For on this account, it is not merely said they had a robber; but one noted, that is, who was infamous in wickedness, who had perpetrated countless murders. But nevertheless even him did they prefer to the Saviour of the world, and neither did they reverence the season because it was holy, nor the laws of humanity, nor any other thing of the kind, but envy had once for all blinded them. And besides their own wickedness, they corrupt the people also, that for deceiving them too they might suffer the most extreme punishment.

Since therefore they ask for the other, he says, *"What shall I do then with the Christ,"* in this way desiring to put them to the blush, by giving them the power to choose, that at least out of shame they might ask for Him, and the whole should be of their bountifulness. For though to say, He had not done wrong, made them more contentious, yet to require that He should be saved out of humanity, carries with it persuasion and entreaty that cannot be gainsaid.

But even then they said, "*Crucify Him. But he said, why, what evil has He done? But they cried out exceedingly, let Him be crucified. But he, when he saw that he profited nothing, washed his hands, saying, I am innocent.*" Why then did you deliver Him up? Why did you not rescue Him, as the centurion did Paul. [Acts xxi] For that man too was aware that he would please the Jews; and a sedition had taken place on his account, and a tumult, nevertheless he stood firm against all. But not so this man, but he was extremely unmanly and weak, and all were corrupt together. For neither did this man stand firm against the multitude, nor the multitude against the Jews, and in every way their excuse was taken away. For they "*cried out exceedingly,*" that is, cried out the more, "*Let Him be crucified.*" For they desired not only to put Him to death, but also that it should be on a charge of wickedness, and though the judge was contradicting them, they continued to cry out the same thing.

Do you see how many things Christ did in order to recover them? For like as He often times checked Judas, so likewise did He restrain these men too, both throughout all His Gospel, and at the very time of His condemnation. For surely when they saw the ruler and the judge washing his hands of it, and saying, "*I am innocent of this blood,*" they should have been moved to compunction both by what was said, and by what was done, as well when they saw Judas had hanged himself, as when they saw Pilate himself entreating them to take another in the place of Him. For when the accuser and traitor condemns himself, and he who gives sentence puts off from himself the guilt, and such a vision appears the very night, and even as condemned he begs Him off, what kind of plea will they have? For if they were not willing that He should be innocent, yet they should not have preferred to him even a robber, one that was acknowledged to be such, and very notorious.

What then did they? When they saw the judge washing his hands, and saying, "*I am innocent,*" they cried out "*His blood be on us, and on our children.*" [Matthew 27:25] Then at length when they had given sentence against themselves, he yielded that all should be done.

See here too their great madness. For passion and wicked desire are like this. They suffer not men to see anything of what is right. For be it that you curse yourselves; why do you draw down the curse upon your children also?

Nevertheless, the lover of man, though they acted with so much madness, both against themselves, and against their children, so far from confirming their sentence upon their children, confirmed it not even on them, but from the one and from the other received those that repented, and counts them worthy of good things beyond number. For indeed even Paul was of them, and the thousands that believed in Jerusalem; for, "*you see it is said, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe.*" And if some continued *in their sin*, to themselves let them impute their punishment.

"Then released he Barabbas unto them, but Jesus, when he had scourged Him, he delivered to be crucified."

And wherefore did he scourge Him. Either as one condemned, or willing to invest the judgment with due form, or to please them. And yet he ought to have resisted them. For indeed even before this he had said, "*Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law.*" [John 18:31] And there were many things that might have held back him and those men, the signs and the miracles, and the great patience of Him, who was suffering these things, and above all His untold silence. For since both by His defense of Himself, and by His prayers, He had shown His humanity, again He shows His exaltedness and the greatness of His nature, both by His silence, and by

His contemning what is said; by all leading them on to marvel at Himself. But to none of these things did they give way.

3. For when once the reasoning powers are overwhelmed as it were by intoxication or some wild insanity, it would be hard for the sinking soul to rise again, if it be not very noble.

For it is fearful, it is fearful to give place to these wicked passions, wherefore it were fit in every way to ward off and repel their entering in. For when they have laid hold of the soul, and got the dominion over it, like as fire lighting upon a wood, so do they kindle the flame to a blaze.

Wherefore I entreat you to do all things so as to fence off their entrance; and not by comforting yourselves with this heartless reasoning to bring in upon yourselves all wickedness, saying, what of this? What of that? For countless ills have their birth from hence. For the devil, being depraved, makes use of much craft, and exertion, and self-abasement for the ruin of men, and begins his attack on them with things of a more trifling nature.

And mark it, he desired to bring Saul into superstition of witchcraft. But if he had counselled this at the beginning, the other would not have given heed; for how should he, who was even driving them out? Therefore gently and little by little he leads him on to it. For when he had disobeyed Samuel, and had caused the burnt-offering to be offered, when he was not present, being blamed for it, he says, "*The compulsion from the enemy was too great,*" and when he ought to have bewailed, he felt as though he had done nothing.

Again God gave him the commands about the Amalekites, but he transgressed these too. Thence he proceeded to his crimes about David, and thus slipping easily and little by little he stayed not, until he came unto the very pit of destruction, and cast himself in. So likewise in the case of Cain, he did not at once urge him to slay his brother, since he would not have

persuaded him, but first wrought upon him to offer things more or less vile, saying, "*This is no sin:*" in the second place he kindled envy and jealousy, saying, neither is there anything in this; thirdly, he persuaded him to slay and to deny his murder; and did not leave him before he had put on him the crowning act of evil.

Wherefore it is necessary for us to resist the beginning. For at any rate, even if the first sins stopped at themselves, not even so were it right to despise the first sins; but now they go on also to what is greater, when the mind is careless. Wherefore we ought to do all things to remove the beginnings of them.

For look not now at the nature of the sin, that it is little, but that it becomes a root of great sin when neglected. For if one may say something marvellous, great sins need not so much earnestness, as such as are little, and of small account. For the former the very nature of the sin causes us to abhor, but the little sins by this very thing cast us into remissness; and allow us not to rouse ourselves heartily for their removal. Wherefore also they quickly become great, while we sleep. This one may see happening in bodies also.

So likewise in the instance of Judas, that great wickedness had its birth. For if it had not seemed to him a little thing to steal the money of the poor, he would not have been led on to this treachery. Unless it had seemed to the Jews a little thing to be taken captive by vainglory, they would not have run on the rock of becoming Christ's murderers. And indeed all evils we may see arise from this.

For no one quickly and at once rushes out into vices. For the soul has, yea it has a shame implanted in us, and a reverence for right things; and it would not at once become so shameless as in one act to cast away everything, but slowly, and little by little does it perish, when it is careless.

Thus also did idolatry enter in, men being honored beyond measure, both the living and the departed; thus also were idols worshipped; thus too did whoredom prevail, and the other evils.

And see. One man laughed unseasonably; another blamed him; a third took away the fear, by saying, nothing comes of this. *"For what is laughing? What can come of it?"* Of this is bred foolish jesting; from that filthy talking; then filthy doings.

Again, another being blamed for slandering his neighbors, and reviling, and calumniating, despised it, saying, evil-speaking is nothing. By this he begets hatred unspeakable, revilings without end; by the revilings blows, and by the blows oftentimes murder.

4. From these little things then that wicked spirit thus brings in the great sins; and from the great despair; having invented this other while not less mischievous than the former. For to sin destroys not so much as to despair. For he that has offended, if he be vigilant, speedily by repentance amends what has been done; but he that has learned to despond, and does not repent, by reason thereof fails of this amendment by not applying the remedies from repentance.

And he has a third grievous snare; as when he invests the sin with a show of devotion. And where has the devil so far prevailed as to deceive to this degree? Hear, and beware of his devices. Christ by Paul commanded *"that a woman depart not from her husband, [1 Corinthians 7:10] and not to defraud one another, except by consent;"* [1 Corinthians 7:5] but some from a love of continence forsooth, having withdrawn from their own husbands, as though they were doing something devout, have driven them to adultery. Consider now what an evil it is that they, undergoing so much toil, should be blamed as having committed the greatest injustice, and

should suffer extreme punishment, and drive their husbands into the pit of destruction.

Others again, abstaining from meats by a rule of fasting, have by degrees gone so far as to abhor them; which even of itself brings a very great punishment.

But this comes to pass, when any hold fast their own prejudices contrary to what is approved by the Scriptures. Those also among the Corinthians thought it was a part of perfection to eat of all things without distinction, even of things forbidden, but nevertheless this was not of perfection, but of the utmost lawlessness. Wherefore also Paul earnestly reproves them, and pronounces them to be worthy of extreme punishment. Others again think it a sign of piety to wear long hair. And yet this is among the things forbidden, and carries with it much disgrace.

Again, others follow after excessive sorrow for their sins as a profitable thing; yet it also comes of the devil's wiles, and Judas showed it; at least in consequence thereof he even hanged himself. Therefore Paul again was in fear about him that had committed fornication, lest any such thing should befall him, and persuaded the Corinthians speedily to deliver him, *"lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."* [2 Corinthians 2:7] Then, indicating that such a result comes of the snares of that wicked one, he says, *"Lest Satan should get an advantage over us, for we are not ignorant of his devices,"* [2 Corinthians 2:10-11] meaning that he assails us with much craft. Since if he fought against us plainly and openly, the victory would be ready and easy; or rather even now, if we be vigilant, victory will be ready. For indeed against each one of those ways God has armed us.

For to persuade us not to despise even these little things, hear what warning He gives us, saying, *"He that says to his brother, thou fool, shall be*

in danger of hell;" [Matthew 5:22] and he that has looked with unchaste eyes is a complete adulterer. [Matthew 5:28] And on them that laugh he pronounces a woe, and everywhere He removes the beginning and the seeds of evil, and says we have to give an account of an idle word.

[Matthew 12:36] Therefore also Job applied a remedy even for the thoughts of his children. [Job 1:5]

But about not despairing, it is said, *"Does he fall, and not arise? Does he turn away, and not return?"* [Jeremiah 8:4] and, *"I do not will the death of the sinner, so much as that he should turn and live:"* and, *"Today if you will hear His voice:"* and many other such things, both sayings and examples are set in the Scripture. And in order not to be ruined under the guise of godly fear, hear Paul saying, *"Lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up by overmuch sorrow."*

Knowing therefore these things, let us set for a barrier in all the ways that pervert the unwary the wisdom which is drawn from the Scriptures. Neither say, why, what is it, if I gaze curiously at a beautiful woman? For if you should commit the adultery in the heart, soon you will venture on that in flesh. Say not, why, what is it if I should pass by this poor man? For if you pass this man by, you will also the next; if him, then the third.

Neither again say, why, what is it, if I should desire my neighbor's goods. For this, this caused Ahab's ruin; although he would have paid a price, yet he took it from one unwilling. For a man ought not to buy by force, but on persuasion. But if he, who would have paid the fair price, was so punished, because he took from one unwilling, he who does not so much as this, and takes by violence from the unwilling, and that when living under grace, of what punishment will he not be worthy?

In order therefore that we be not punished, keeping ourselves quite pure from all violence and rapine, and guarding against the sources of sins

together with the sins themselves, let us with much diligence give heed to virtue; for thus shall we also enjoy the good things eternal by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 87 on Matthew

Matt. XXVII. 27-29.

" Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers; and they stripped Him, and put on Him a purple robe; and when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews."

As though on some signal the devil then was entering in triumph into all. For, be it that Jews pining with envy and jealousy were mad against Him, as to the soldiers, whence was it, and from what sort of cause? Is it not clear that it was the devil who was then entering in fury into the hearts of all? For indeed they made a pleasure of their insults against Him, being a savage and ruthless set. I mean that, when they ought to have been awestruck, when they ought to have wept, which even the people did, this they did not, but, on the contrary, were despiteful, and insolent; perhaps themselves also seeking to please the Jews, or it may be doing all in conformity to their own evil nature.

And the insults were different, and varied. For that Divine Head at one time they buffeted, at another they insulted with the crown of thorns, at another they smote with the reed, men unholy and accursed!

What plea shall we have after this for being moved by injuries, after Christ suffered these things? For what was done was the utmost limit of insolence. For not one member, but the whole entire body throughout was made an object of insolence; the head through the crown, and the reed, and the buffeting; the face, being spit upon; the cheeks, being smitten with the

palms of the hands; the whole body by the stripes, by being wrapped in the robe, and by the pretended worship; the hand by the reed, which they gave him to hold instead of a sceptre; the mouth again by the offering of the vinegar. What could be more grievous than these things? What more insulting?

For the things that were done go beyond all language. For as though they were afraid lest they should seem to fall short at all in the crime, having killed the prophets with their own hands, but this man with the sentence of a judge, so they do in every deed; and make it the work of their own hands, and condemn and sentence both among themselves and before Pilate, saying, *"His blood be on us and on our children,"* [Matthew 27:25] and insult Him, and do despite unto Him themselves, binding Him, leading Him away, and render themselves authors of the spiteful acts done by the soldiers, and nail Him to the cross, and revile Him, and spit at Him, and deride Him. For Pilate contributed nothing in this matter, but they themselves did every thing, becoming accusers, and judges, and executioners, and all.

And these things are read among us, when all meet together. For that the heathens may not say, that you display to people and nations the things that are glorious and illustrious, such as the signs and the miracles, but that you hide these which are matters of reproach; the grace of the Spirit has brought it to pass, that in the full festival, when men in multitude and women are present, and all, as one may say, at the great eve of the passover, then all these things should be read; when the whole world is present, then are all these acts proclaimed with a clear voice. And these being read, and made known to all, Christ is believed to be God and, besides all the rest, is worshipped, even because of this, that He vouchsafed to stoop so much for us as actually to suffer these things, and to teach us all virtue.

These things then let us read continually; for indeed great is the gain, great the advantage to be thence obtained. For when you see Him, both by gestures and by deeds, mocked and worshipped with so much derision, and beaten and suffering the utmost insults, though thou be very stone, you will become softer than any wax, and wilt cast out of your soul all haughtiness.

Hear therefore also what follows. For after *"they had mocked Him, they led Him to crucify Him,"* it is said, and when they had stripped Him, they took His garments, and sat down and watched Him, when He should die. And they divide His garments among them, which sort of thing is done in the case of very vile and abject criminals, and such as have no one belonging to them, and are in utter desolation.

They parted the garments, by which such great miracles were done. But they wrought none now, Christ restraining His unspeakable power. And this was no small addition of insult. For as to one base and abject, as I said, and the vilest of all men; so do they dare to do all things. To the thieves at any rate they did nothing of the kind, but to Christ they dare it all. And they crucified Him in the midst of them, that He might share in their reputation.

And they gave Him gall to drink, and this to insult Him, but He would not. But another says, that having tasted it, He said, *"It is finished."* [John 19:30] And what means, *"It is finished?"* The prophecy was fulfilled concerning Him. *"For they gave me,"* it is said, *"gall for my meat, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."* But neither does that evangelist indicate that He drank, for merely to taste differs not from not drinking, but has one and the same signification.

But nevertheless not even here does their contumely stop, but after having stripped and crucified Him, and offered Him vinegar, they proceeded still further, and beholding Him impaled upon the cross, they revile Him, both they themselves and the passers by; and this was more

grievous than all, that on the charge of being an impostor and deceiver He suffered these things, and as a boaster, and vainly pretending what He said. Therefore they both crucified Him publicly, that they might make a show of it in the sight of all; and therefore also they did it by the hands of the soldiers, that these things being perpetrated even by a public tribunal, the insult might be the greater.

2. And yet who would not have been moved by the multitude that was following Him, and lamenting Him? Nay, not these wild beasts. Wherefore also He to the multitude vouchsafes an answer, but to these men not so. For after having done what they would, they endeavor also to injure His honor, fearing His resurrection. Therefore they say these things publicly, and crucified thieves with Him, and wishing to prove Him a deceiver, they say, *"Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days come down from the cross."* [Matthew 27:40] For since on telling Pilate to remove the accusation (this was the writing, *"The king of the Jews"*), they prevailed not, but he persevered in saying, *"What I have written, I have written,"* [John 19:22] they then endeavor by their derision of Him to show that He is not a king.

Wherefore they said those things, and also these. If *"He is the king of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save,"* [Matthew 27:42] aiming hereby to bring discredit even on His former miracles. And again, *"If He be Son of God, and He will have Him, let Him save Him."*

O execrable; most execrable! What, were not the prophets prophets, nor the righteous men righteous, because God rescued them not out of their dangers. Nay surely they were, though suffering these things. What then could be equal to your folly? For if the coming of the dangers upon them did not injure their honor with you, how much more in the case of this man,

was it wrong for you to be offended, when both by what He did, by what He said, He was ever correcting beforehand this suspicion of yours.

Yet nevertheless, even when these things were said and done, they prevailed nothing, not even at the very time. At any rate, he, who was depraved in such great wickedness, and who had spent his whole life in murders and house-breakings, when these things were being said, then confessed Him, and made mention of a kingdom, and the people bewailed Him. And yet the things that were done seemed to testify the contrary in the eyes of those who knew not the mysterious dispensations, that He was weak and of no power, nevertheless truth prevailed even by the contrary things.

Hearing then these things, let us arm ourselves against all rage, against all anger. Should thou perceive your heart swelling, seal your breast setting upon it the cross. Call to mind some one of the things that then took place, and you will cast out as dust all rage by the recollection of the things that were done. Consider the words, the actions; consider that He is Lord, and thou servant. He is suffering for you, thou for yourself; He in behalf of them who had been benefited by Him and had crucified Him, thou in behalf of yourself; He in behalf of them who had used Him despitefully, thou oftentimes at the hands of them who have been injured. He in the sight of the whole city, or rather of the whole people of the Jews, both strangers, and those of the country, before whom He spoke those merciful words, but thou in the presence of few; and what was more insulting to Him, that even His disciples forsook Him. For those, who before paid Him attention, had deserted Him, but His enemies and foes, having got Him in the midst of themselves on the cross, insulted, reviled, mocked, derided, scoffed at Him, Jews and soldiers from below, from above thieves on either side: for indeed the thieves insulted, and upbraided Him both of them. How then says Luke that one "*rebuked?*" [Luke 23:40] Both things were done, for at first both

upbraided Him, but afterwards one did so no more. For that you might not think the thing had been done by any agreement, or that the thief was not a thief, by his insolence he shows you, that up on the cross he was a thief and an enemy, and at once was changed.

Considering then all these things, control yourself. For what do you suffer like what your Lord suffered? Were you publicly insulted? But not like these things. Are you mocked? Yet not your whole body, not being thus scourged, and stripped. And even if you were buffeted, yet not like this.

3. And add to this, I pray you, by whom, and wherefore, and when, and who it was; and (the most grievous matter) that these things being done, no one found fault, no one blamed what was done, but on the contrary all rather approved, and joined in mocking Him and in jeering at Him; and as a boaster, impostor, and deceiver, and not able to prove in His works the things that He said, so did they revile Him. But He held His peace to all, preparing for us the most powerful incentives to long suffering.

But we, though hearing such things, are not patient so much as to servants, but we rush and kick worse than wild asses, with respect to injuries against ourselves, being savage and inhuman; but of those against God not making much account. And with respect to friends too we have the same disposition; should any one vex us, we bear it not; should he insult us, we are savage more than wild beasts, we who are reading these things every day. A disciple betrayed Him, the rest forsook Him and fled, they that had been benefited by Him spat at Him, the servants of the high priest smote Him with the palm of the hand, the soldiers buffeted Him; they that passed by jeered Him and reviled Him, the thieves accused Him; and to no man did He utter a word, but by silence overcame all; instructing you by His actions, that the more meekly you shall endure, the more will you prevail over them that do you evil, and will be an object of admiration before all. For who will

not admire him that endures with forbearance the insults he receives from them that are using him despitefully? For even as, though any man suffer justly, yet enduring the evil meekly, he is considered by the more part to suffer unjustly; so though one suffer unjustly, yet if he be violent, he will get the suspicion of suffering justly, and will be an object of ridicule, as being dragged captive by his anger, and losing his own nobility. For such a one, we must not call so much as a freeman, though he be lord over ten thousand servants.

But did some person exceedingly provoke you? And what of that? For then should self-control be shown, since when there is no one to vex, we see even the wild beasts gentle; for neither are they always savage, but when any one rouses them. And we therefore, if we are only then quiet, when there is no one provoking us, what advantage have we over them. For they are both oftentimes justly indignant, and have much excuse, for by being stirred and goaded are they roused, and besides these things they are devoid of reason, and have savageness in their nature.

But whence, I pray you, can you find a plea for being savage and fierce? What hardship have you suffered? Have you been robbed? For this self-same reason should you endure it, so as to gain more amply. But were you deprived of character? And what is this? Your condition is in no way worsened by this, if you practise self-command. But if you suffer no grievance, whence are you angry with him that has done you no harm, but has even benefited you? For they who honor, make them that are not watchful the more vain; but they who insult and despise render those that take heed to themselves more steadfast. For the careless are more injured by being honored than by being insulted. And the one set of persons, if we be sober, become to us authors of self-control, but the others excite our pride,

they fill us with boastfulness, vainglory, folly, they make our soul the feebler.

And to this fathers bear witness, who do not flatter their own children so much as they chide them, fearing lest from the praise they should receive any harm, and their teachers use the same remedy to them. So that if we are to avoid any one, it should be those that flatter us rather than those that insult us; for this bait brings greater mischief than insult to them, who do not take heed, and it is more difficult to control this feeling than that. And the reward too is far more abundant from thence, and the admiration greater. For indeed it is more worthy of admiration to see a man insulted, and not moved, than beaten and smitten, and not falling.

And how is it possible not to be moved? One may say. Hath any one insulted you? Place the sign upon your breast, call to mind all the things that were then done; and all is quenched. Consider not the insults only, but if also any good has been ever done unto you, by him that has insulted you, and straightway you will become meek, or rather consider before all things the fear of God, and soon you will be mild and gentle.

4. Together with these things even from your own servants take a lesson concerning these matters; and when you see yourself insulting, but your servant holding his peace, consider that it is possible to practise self-control, and condemn yourself for being violent; and in the very time of offering insults learn not to insult; and thus not even when insulted, will you be vexed. Consider that he who is insolent is beside himself and mad, and you will not feel indignant, when insulted, since the possessed strike us, and we, so far from being provoked, do rather pity them. This do thou also; pity him that is insolent to you, for he is held in subjection by a dreadful monster, rage, by a grievous demon, anger. Set him free as he is wrought upon by a grievous demon, and going quickly to ruin. For so great is this

disease as not to need even time for the destruction of him that is seized with it. Wherefore also one said, "*The sway of his fury shall be his fall;*" [Sirach 1:22] by this most of all showing its tyranny, that in a short time it works great ills, and needs not to continue long with us, so that if in addition to its strength it were apt to last, it would indeed be hard to strive against.

I should like to show what the man is who insults, what he that practises self-control, and to bring nakedly before you the soul of the one and the other. For you should see the one like a sea tost with a tempest, but the other like a harbor free from disturbance. For it is not disturbed by these evil blasts, but puts them to rest easily. For indeed they who are insulting, do everything in order to make it sting. When then they fail of that hope, even they are thenceforth at peace, and go away amended. For it is impossible that a man, who is angry, should not utterly condemn himself, even as on the other hand it is impossible for one who is not angry to be self-condemned. For though it be necessary to retaliate, it is possible to do this without anger (and it were more easy and more wise than with anger) and to have no painful feeling. For if we be willing, the good things will be from ourselves, and we shall be with the grace of God sufficient for our own safety and honor.

For why do you seek the glory that comes from another? Do thou honor yourself, and no one will be able to insult you; but if you dishonor yourself, though all should honor you, you will not be honored. For like as, unless we put ourselves in an evil state, no one else puts us in such a state; even so unless we insult ourselves, no one else can put us to shame.

For let any man be great and worthy of admiration, and let all men call him an adulterer, a thief, a violater of tombs, a murderer, a robber, and let him be neither provoked or indignant, nor be conscious to himself of any of

these crimes, what disgrace will he thence undergo? None. What then, you may say, if many have such an opinion of him? Not even so is he disgraced, but they bring shame upon themselves, by accounting one, who is not such, to be such. For tell me, if any one think the sun to be dark, does he bring an ill name on that heavenly body, or on himself? Surely on himself, getting himself the character of being blind or mad. So also they that account wicked men good, and they that make the opposite error, disgrace themselves.

Wherefore we ought to give the greater diligence, to keep our conscience clear, and to give no handle against ourselves, nor matter for evil suspicion; but if others will be mad, even when this is our disposition, not to care very much, nor to grieve. For he that has got the character of a wicked man, being a good man, is in no degree thereby hurt as regards his being such as he is; but he that has been suspecting another vainly and causelessly, receives the utmost harm; as, on the other hand, the wicked man, if he be supposed to be the contrary, will gain nothing thence, but will both have a heavier judgment, and be led into greater carelessness. For he that is such and is suspected thereof, may perhaps be humbled, and acknowledge his sins; but when he escapes detection, he falls into a state past feeling. For if, while all are accusing them, offenders are hardly stirred up to compunction, when so far from accusing them, some even praise them, at what time will they who are living in vice be able to open their eyes? Do you hear that Paul also blames for this, that the Corinthians (so far from permitting him that had been guilty of fornication, to acknowledge his own sin), applauding and honoring him, did on the contrary urge him on in vice thereby? Wherefore, I pray, let us leave the suspicions of the multitude, their insults and their honors, and let us be diligent about one thing only, that we be conscious to ourselves of no evil thing, nor insult our own

selves. For so both here, and in the world to come, we shall enjoy much glory, unto which God grant we all may attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 88 on Matthew

Matt. XXVII. 45-48.

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, and said, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, my God my God, why have you forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that said, this man calls for Elias. And straight way one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink."

This is the sign which before He had promised to give them when they asked it, saying, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;"* [Matthew 12:39] meaning His cross, and His death, His burial, and His resurrection. And again, declaring in another way the virtue of the cross, He said, *"When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He."* [John 8:28] And what He says is to this purport: *"When you have crucified me, and think you have overcome me, then, above all, shall you know my might."*

For after the crucifixion, the city was destroyed, and the Jewish state came to an end, they fell away from their polity and their freedom, the gospel flourished, the word was spread abroad to the ends of the world; both sea and land, both the inhabited earth and the desert perpetually proclaim its power. These things then He means, and those which took place at the very time of the crucifixion. For indeed it was much more marvellous that these things should be done, when He was nailed to the cross, than when He was walking on earth. And not in this respect only was

the wonder, but because from heaven also was that done which they had sought, and it was over all the world, which had never before happened, but in Egypt only, when the passover was to be fulfilled. For indeed those events were a type of these.

And observe when it took place. At midday, that all that dwell on the earth may know it, when it was day all over the world; which was enough to convert them, not by the greatness of the miracle only, but also by its taking place in due season. For after all their insulting, and their lawless derision, this is done, when they had let go their anger, when they had ceased mocking, when they were satiated with their jeerings, and had spoken all that they were minded; then He shows the darkness, in order that at least so (having vented their anger) they may profit by the miracle. For this was more marvellous than to come down from the cross, that being on the cross He should work these things. For whether they thought He Himself had done it, they ought to have believed and to have feared; or whether not He, but the Father, yet thereby ought they to have been moved to compunction, for that darkness was a token of His anger at their crime. For that it was not an eclipse, but both wrath and indignation, is not hence alone manifest, but also by the time, for it continued three hours, but an eclipse takes place in one moment of time, and they know it, who have seen this; and indeed it has taken place even in our generation.

And how, you may say, did not all marvel, and account Him to be God? Because the race of man was then held in a state of great carelessness and vice. And this miracle was but one, and when it had taken place, immediately passed away; and no one was concerned to inquire into the cause of it, and great was the prejudice and the habit of ungodliness. And they knew not what was the cause of that which took place, and they thought perhaps this happened so, in the way of an eclipse or some natural

effect. And why do you marvel about them that are without, that knew nothing, neither inquired by reason of great indifference, when even those that were in Judæa itself, after so many miracles, yet continued using Him despitefully, although He plainly showed them that He Himself wrought this thing.

And for this reason, even after this He speaks, that they might learn that He was still alive, and that He Himself did this, and that they might become by this also more gentle, and He says, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" [Matthew 27:46] that unto His last breath they might see that He honors His Father, and is no adversary of God. Wherefore also He uttered a certain cry from the prophet, even to His last hour bearing witness to the Old Testament, and not simply a cry from the prophet, but also in Hebrew, so as to be plain and intelligible to them, and by all things He shows how He is of one mind with Him that begot Him.

But mark herein also their wantonness, and intemperance, and folly. They thought (it is said) that it was Elias whom He called, and straightway they gave Him vinegar to drink. [Matthew 27:48] But another came unto Him, and "*pierced His side with a spear.*" What could be more lawless, what more brutal, than these men; who carried their madness to so great a length, offering insult at last even to a dead body?

But mark thou, I pray you, how He made use of their wickednesses for our salvation. For after the blow the fountains of our salvation gushed forth from thence.

"*And Jesus, when He had cried with a loud voice, yielded up the Ghost.*" This is what He said, "*I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again,*" and, "*I lay it down of myself.*" [John 10:18] So for this cause He cried with the voice, that it might be shown that the act is done by power. Mark at any rate says, that "*Pilate marvelled if He were*

already dead:" [Mark 15:44] and that the centurion for this cause above all believed, because He died with power. [Mark 15:39]

This cry rent the veil, and opened the tombs, and made the house desolate. And He did this, not as offering insult to the temple (for how should He, who says, "*Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise*"), [John 2:16] but declaring them to be unworthy even of His abiding there; like as also when He delivered it over to the Babylonians. But not for this only were these things done, but what took place was a prophecy of the coming desolation, and of the change into the greater and higher state; and *a sign* of His might.

And together with these things He showed Himself also by what followed after these things, by the raising of the dead. For in the instance of Elisha; one on touching a dead body rose again, but now by a voice He raised them, His body continuing up there, on the cross. And besides, those things were a type of this. For that this might be believed, therefore is that all done. And they are not merely raised, but also rocks are rent, and the earth shaken, that they might learn, that He was able to strike themselves blind, and to rend them in pieces. For He that cleft rocks asunder, and darkened the world, much more could have done these things to them, had it been His will. But He would not, but having discharged His wrath upon the elements, them it was His will to save by clemency. But they abated not their madness. Such is envy, such is jealousy, it is not easily stayed. At that time then they were impudent in setting themselves against the actual appearances; and afterwards *even against the things themselves*, when a seal being put upon Him, and soldiers watching Him, He rose again, and they heard these things from the very guards; they even gave money, in order both to corrupt others, and to steal away the history of the resurrection.

Marvel not therefore if at this time also they were perverse, being thus altogether prepared to set themselves impudently against all things; but observe this other point, how great signs He had wrought, some from Heaven, some on earth, some in the very temple, at once marking His indignation, and at the same time showing that what were unapproachable are now to be entered, and that Heaven shall be opened; and the work removed to the true Holy of Holies. And they indeed said, *"If He be the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross,"* [Matthew 27:42] but He shows that He is King of all the world. And whereas those men said, *"Thou that destroyest this temple, and buildest it in three days,"* [Matthew 27:40] He shows that it shall be made forever desolate. Again they said, *"He saved others, Himself He cannot save,"* [Matthew 27:42] but He while abiding on the cross proved this most abundantly on the bodies of His servants. For if for Lazarus to rise on the fourth day was a great thing, how much more for all those who had long ago fallen asleep, at once to appear alive, which was a sign of the future resurrection. For, *"many bodies of the saints which slept, arose,"* it is said, *"and went into the holy city, and appeared to many."* For in order that what was done might not be accounted to be an imagination, they appear, even to many, in the city. And the Centurion too then glorified God, saying, *"Truly this was a righteous man. And the multitudes that came together to that sight, returned beating their breasts."* [Luke 23:47-48] So great was the power of the crucified, that after so many mockings, and scoffs, and jeers, both the centurion was moved to compunction, and the people. And some say that there is also a martyrdom of this centurion, who after these things grew to manhood in the faith.

"And many women were there beholding afar off, which had followed Him, ministering unto Him, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons."

These things the women see done, these who were most inclined to feel for Him, who were most of all bewailing Him. And mark how great their assiduity. They had followed Him ministering to Him, and were present even unto the time of the dangers. Wherefore also they saw all; how He cried, how He gave up the ghost, how the rocks were rent, and all the rest.

And these first see Jesus; and the sex that was most condemned, this first enjoys the sight of the blessings, this most shows its courage. And when the disciples had fled, these were present. But who were these? His mother, for she is called mother of James, and the rest. But another evangelist [Luke 22:48] says, that many also lamented over the things that were done, and smote their breasts, which above all shows the cruelty of the Jews, for that they gloried in things for which others were lamenting, and were neither moved by pity, nor checked by fear. For indeed the things that were done were of great wrath, and were not merely signs, but signs of anger all of them, the darkness, the cloven rocks, the veil rent in the midst, the shaking of the earth, and great was the excess of the indignation.

"But Joseph went, and begged the body." This was Joseph, who was concealing his discipleship of late; now however he had become very bold after the death of Christ. For neither was he an obscure person, nor of the unnoticed; but one of the council, and highly distinguished; from which circumstance especially one may see his courage. For he exposed himself to death, taking upon him enmity with all, by his affection to Jesus, both having dared to beg the body, and not having desisted until he obtained it. But not by taking it only, nor by burying it in a costly manner, but also by laying it in his own new tomb, he shows his love, and his courage. And this was not so ordered without purpose, but so there should not be any bare suspicion, that one had risen instead of another.

"And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." For what purpose do these wait by it? As yet they knew nothing great, as was meet, and high about Him, wherefore also they had brought ointments, and were waiting at the tomb, so that if the madness of the Jews should relax, they might go and embrace the body. Do you see women's courage? Do you see their affection? Do you see their noble spirit in money? Their noble spirit even unto death?

Let us men imitate the women; let us not forsake Jesus in temptations. For they for Him even dead spent so much and exposed their lives, but we (for again I say the same things) neither feed Him when hungry, nor clothe Him when naked, but seeing Him begging, we pass Him by. And yet if you saw Himself, every one would strip himself of all his goods. But even now it is the same. For He Himself has said, I am he. Wherefore then do you not strip yourself of all? For indeed even now you hear Him say, You do it unto me; and there is no difference whether you give to this man or to Him; you have nothing less than these women that then fed Him, but even much more. But be not perplexed! For it is not so much to have fed Him appearing in His own person, which would be enough to prevail with a heart of stone, as (because of His mere word) to wait upon the poor, the maimed, him that is bent down. For in the former case, the look and the dignity of Him who appears divides with you that which is done; but here the reward is entire for your benevolence; and there is the proof of the greater reverence towards Him, when at His mere word waiting upon your fellow-servant you refresh him in all things. Refresh him, and believe Him, who receives it, and says, You give to me. For unless you had given to Him, He would not have counted you worthy of a kingdom. If you had not turned away from Him, He would not have sent you to hell, if you had overlooked

a chance person; but because it is He Himself that is despised, therefore great is the blame.

Thus also Paul persecuted Him, in persecuting them that are His; wherefore too He said, "*Why do you persecute me?*" [Acts 9:4] Thus therefore let us feel, as bestowing on Christ Himself when we bestow. For indeed His words are more sure than our sight. When therefore you see a poor man, remember His words, by which He declared, that it is He Himself who is fed. For though that which appears be not Christ, yet in this man's form Christ Himself receives and begs.

But are you ashamed to hear that Christ begs? Rather be ashamed when thou dost not give to Him begging of you. For this is shame, this is vengeance and punishment. Since for Him to beg is of His goodness, wherefore we ought even to glory therein; but for you not to give, is of your inhumanity. But if you believe not now, that in passing by a poor man that is a believer, you pass by Him, you will believe it then, when He will bring you into the midst and say, "*Inasmuch as you did it not to these, you did it not to me.*" But God forbid that we should so learn it, and grant rather that we may believe now, and bring forth fruit, and hear that most blessed voice that brings us into the kingdom.

But perhaps some one will say, "*You are every day discoursing to us of almsgiving and humanity.*" Neither will I cease to speak of this. For if you had attained to it, in the first place, not even so ought I to desist, for fear of making you the more remiss; yet had ye attained, I might have relaxed a little; but if you have not arrived even at the half; say not these things to me, but to yourselves. For indeed you do the same in blaming me, as if a little child, hearing often of the letter alpha, and not learning it, were to blame its teacher, because he is continually and for ever reminding him about it.

For who from these discourses has become more forward in the giving of alms? Who has cast down his money? Who has given the half of his substance? Who the third part? No one. How then should it be other than absurd, when you do not learn, to require us to desist from teaching? You ought to do the contrary. Though we were minded to desist, you ought to stop us and to say, we have not yet learned these things, and how is it you have desisted from reminding us of them? If it befell any one to suffer from his eye, and I happened to be a physician, and then having covered it up and anointed it, and having applied other treatment, I had not benefited it much, and so had desisted; would he not have come to the doors of my surgery and cried out against me, accusing me of great remissness, for that I had of myself withdrawn, while the disease remained; and if, on being blamed, I had said in reply to these things, that I had covered it up, and anointed it; would he have endured it? By no means, but would immediately have said; *"And what is the advantage, if I still suffer pain."* Reason thus also with respect to your soul. But what if after having often fomented a hand that was lifeless and shrunk, I had not succeeded in mollifying it? Should I not have heard the same thing? And even now a hand that is shrunk and withered we bathe, and for this reason, until we can stretch it out perfectly, we will not desist. Would that you too were to discourse of nothing else, at home and at market, at table and at night, and as a dream. For if we were always careful about these things by day, even in our dreams we should be engaged in them.

What do you say? Am I forever speaking of almsgiving? I would wish myself that there were not great need for me to address this advice to you, but that I were to speak of the battle against the Jews, and heathens, and heretics; but when you are not yet sound, how can any one arm you for the fight? How should he lead you to the array, yet having wounds and gashes.

Since if indeed I saw you thoroughly sound in health, I should lead you forth to that battle array, and you would see by the grace of Christ ten thousands lying dead, and their heads cast one upon another. In other books at any rate, many discourses have been spoken by us touching these things, but not even so are we able thoroughly to triumph in the victory, because of the remissness of the multitude. For when we conquer them ten thousand times over in doctrines, they reproach us with the lives of the multitude of those who join our congregations, their wounds, their diseases in their soul.

How then shall we with confidence show you in the battle array, when you rather do us mischief, being straightway wounded by our enemies, and made a mock of? For one man's hand is diseased, and shrunk so as not to be able to give away. How then should such a one hold a shield, and thrust it before him, and avoid being wounded by the jeers of cruelty. With others the feet halt, as many as go up to the theatres, and to the resorts of the harlot women. How shall these then be able to stand in the battle, and not to be wounded with the accusation of wantonness? Another suffers and is maimed in his eyes, not looking straight, but being full of lasciviousness, and assailing women's chastity, and overthrowing marriages. How then should this man be able to look in the face of the enemy, and brandish a spear, and throw his dart, being goaded on all sides with jeers. We may see also many suffering with the belly not less than the dropsical, when they are held in subjection by gluttony and drunkenness. How then shall I be able to lead forth these drunken men to war? With others the mouth is rotten; such are the passionate, and revilers, and blasphemers. How then shall this man ever shout in battle, and achieve anything great and noble, he too being drunk with another drunkenness, and affording much laughter to the enemy?

Therefore each day I go about this camp, dressing your wounds, healing your sores. But if you ever rouse yourselves up, and become fit even to wound others, I will both teach you this art of war, and instruct you how to handle these weapons, or rather your works themselves will be weapons to you, and all men will immediately submit, if you would become merciful, if forbearing, if mild and patient, if you would show forth all other virtue. But if any gainsay, then we will also add the proof of what we can show on our part, bringing you forward, since now we rather are hindered (at least as to your part) in this race.

And mark. We say that Christ has done great things, having made angels of men; then, when we are called upon to give account, and required to furnish a proof out of this flock, our mouths are stopped. For I am afraid, lest in the place of angels, I bring forth swine as from a stable, and horses mad with lust.

I know you are pained, but not against you all are these things spoken, but against the guilty, or rather not even against them if they awake, but for them. Since now indeed all is lost and ruined, and the church has become nothing better than a stable of oxen, and a fold for asses and camels, and I go round seeking for a sheep, and am not able to see it. So much are all kicking, like horses, and any wild asses, and they fill the place here with much dung, for like this is their discourse. And if indeed one could see the things spoken at each assemblage, by men, by women, you would see their words more unclean than that dung.

Wherefore I entreat you to change this evil custom, that the church may smell of ointment. But now, while we lay up in it perfumes for the senses, the uncleanness of the mind we use no great diligence to purge out, and drive away. What then is the advantage? For we do not so much disgrace the church by bringing dung into it, as we disgrace it by speaking

such things one to another, about gains, about merchandise, about petty tradings, about things that are nothing to us, when there ought to be choirs of angels here, and we ought to make the church a heaven, and to know nothing else but earnest prayers, and silence with listening.

This then let us do at any rate, from the present time, that we may both purify our lives, and attain unto the promised blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 89 on Matthew

Matt. XXVII. 62-64.

" Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error should be worse than the first. "

Everywhere deceit recoils upon itself, and against its will supports the truth. And observe. It was necessary for it to be believed that He died, and that He rose again, and that He was buried, and all these things are brought to pass by His enemies. See, at any rate, these words bearing witness to every one of these facts. *"We remember,"* these are the words, *"that that deceiver said, when He was yet alive,"* (He was therefore now dead), *"After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be sealed,"* (He was therefore buried), *"lest His disciples come and steal Him away."* So that if the sepulchre be sealed, there will be no unfair dealing. For there could not be. So then the proof of His resurrection has become incontrovertible by what you have put forward. For because it was sealed, there was no unfair dealing. But if there was no unfair dealing, and the sepulchre was found empty, it is manifest that He is risen, plainly and incontrovertibly. Do you see, how even against their will they contend for the proof of the truth?

But mark thou, I pray you, the disciples' love of truth, how they conceal from us none of the things that are said by His enemies, though

they use opprobrious language. Behold, at any rate, they even call Him a deceiver, and these men are not silent about that.

But these things show also their savageness (that not even at His death did they let go their anger), and these men's simple and truthful disposition.

But it were worth while to inquire concerning that point also, where He said, *"After three days I rise again?"* For one would not find this thus distinctly stated, but rather the example of Jonah. So that they understood His saying, and of their own will dealt unfairly.

What then says Pilate? *"You have a watch; make it as sure as you can. And they made it sure, sealing the sepulchre, and setting the watch."* He suffers not the soldiers alone to seal, for as having learned the things concerning Christ, he was no longer willing to co-operate with them. But in order to be rid of them, he endures this also, and says, *"Do ye seal it as you will, that you may not have it in your power to blame others."* For if the soldiers only had sealed, they might have said (although the saying would have been improbable and false, yet nevertheless as in the rest they cast aside shame, so in this too they might have been able to say), that the soldiers, having given up the body to be stolen, gave His disciples opportunity to feign the history concerning His resurrection, but now having themselves made it sure, they are not able to say so much as this.

Do you see how they labor for the truth against their will? For they themselves came to Pilate, themselves asked, themselves sealed, setting the watch, so as to be accusers, and refuters one of another. And indeed when should they have stolen Him? On the Sabbath? And how? For it was not lawful so much as to go out. [Exodus 16:29] And even if they transgressed the law, how should they have dared, who were so timid, to come forth? And how could they also have been able to persuade the multitude? By saying what? By doing what? And from what sort of zeal could they have

stood in behalf of the dead? Expecting what recompense? What requital? Seeing Him yet alive and merely seized, they had fled; and after His death were they likely to speak boldly in His behalf, unless He had risen again? And how should these things be reasonable? For that they were neither willing nor able to feign a resurrection, that did not take place, is plain from hence. He discoursed to them much of a resurrection, and continually said, as indeed these very men have stated, "*After three days I rise again.*" If therefore He rose not again, it is quite clear that these men (having been deceived and made enemies to an entire nation for His sake, and come to be without home and without city) would have abhorred Him, and would not have been willing to invest Him with such glory; as having been deceived, and having fallen into the utmost dangers on His account. For that they would not even have been able, unless the resurrection had been true, to feign it, this does not so much as need reasoning.

For in what were they confident? In the shrewdness of their reasonings? Nay of all men they were the most unlearned. But in the abundance of their possessions? Nay, they had neither staff nor shoes. But in the distinction of their race? Nay, they were mean, and of mean ancestors. But in the greatness of their country? Nay, they were of obscure places. But in their own numbers? Nay, they were not more than eleven, and they were scattered abroad. But in their Master's promises? What kind of promises? For if He were not risen again, neither would those be likely to be trusted by them. And how should they endure a frantic people. For if the chief of them endured not the speech of a woman, keeping the door, and if all the rest too, on seeing Him bound, were scattered abroad, how should they have thought to run to the ends of the earth, and plant a feigned tale of a resurrection? For if he stood not a woman's threat, and they not so much as the sight of bonds, how were they able to stand against kings, and rulers,

and nations, where were swords, and gridirons, and furnaces, and ten thousand deaths day by day, unless they had the benefit of the power and grace of Him who rose again? Such miracles and so many were done, and none of these things did the Jews regard, but crucified Him, who had done them, and were they likely to believe these men at their mere word about a resurrection? These things are not, they are not so, but the might of Him, who rose again, brought them to pass.

2. But mark, I pray you, their craft, how ridiculous it is. *"We remember,"* these are their words, *"that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise again."* Yet if He were a deceiver, and boastfully uttered falsehood, why are you afraid and run to and fro, and use so much diligence? We are afraid, it is replied, lest perchance the disciples steal Him away, and deceive the multitude. And yet this has been proved to have no probability at all. Malice, however, is a thing contentious and shameless, and attempts what is unreasonable.

And they command it to be made sure for three days, as contending for doctrines, and being minded to prove that before that time also He was a deceiver, and they extend their malice even to His tomb. For this reason then He rose sooner, that they might not say that He spoke falsely, and was stolen. For this, His rising sooner, was open to no charge, but to be later would have been full of suspicion. For indeed if He had not risen then, when they were sitting there, and watching, but when they had withdrawn after the three days, they would have had something to say, and to speak against it, although foolishly. For this reason then He anticipated the time. For it was meet the resurrection should take place, while they were sitting by and watching. Therefore also it was fit it should take place within the three days, since if it had been when they were passed, and the men had withdrawn, the matter would have been regarded with suspicion. Wherefore

also He allowed them to seal it, as they were minded, and soldiers sat around it.

And they cared not about doing these things, and working on a Sabbath day, but they looked to one object only, their own wicked purpose, as though by that they were to succeed; which was a mark of extreme folly, and of fear now greatly dismaying them. For they who seized Him, when living, are afraid of Him when dead. And yet if He had been a mere man, they had reason to have taken courage. But that they might learn, that when living also He endured of His own will, what He did endure; behold, both a seal, a stone, and a watch, and they were not able to hold Him. But there was one result only, that the burial was published, and the resurrection thereby proved. For indeed soldiers sat by it, and Jews are on the watch.

"But in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."

After the resurrection came the angel. Wherefore then came he, and took away the stone? Because of the women, for they themselves had seen Him then in the sepulchre. Therefore that they might believe that He was risen again, they see the sepulchre void of the body. For this cause he removed the stone, for this cause also an earthquake took place, that they might be thoroughly aroused and awakened. For they had come to pour oil on Him, and these things were done at night, and it is likely that some also had become drowsy. And for what intent and cause does he say, *"Fear not ye?"* First he delivers them from the dread, and then tells them of the resurrection. And the ye is of one showing them great honor, and indicating,

that extreme punishment awaits them that had dared to do, what the others had dared, except they repented. For to be afraid is not for you, he means, but for them that crucified Him.

Having delivered them then from the fear both by his words, and by his appearance (for his form he showed bright, as bearing such good tidings), he went on to say, *"I know that you seek Jesus the Crucified."* And he is not ashamed to call Him *"crucified;"* for this is the chief of the blessings.

"He is risen." [Matthew 28:6] Whence is it evident? *"As He said."* So that if you refuse to believe me, he would say, remember His words, and neither will you disbelieve me. Then also another proof, *"Come and see the place where He lay."* For this he had lifted up the stone, in order that from this too they might receive the proof. *"And tell His disciples, that you shall see Him in Galilee."* And he prepares them to bear good tidings to others, which thing most of all made them believe. And He said well *"in Galilee,"* freeing them from troubles and dangers, so that fear should not hinder their faith.

"And they departed from the sepulchre with fear and joy." Why could this be? They had seen a thing amazing, and beyond expectation, a tomb empty, where they had before seen Him laid. Wherefore also He had led them to the sight, that they might become witnesses of both things, both of His tomb, and of His resurrection. For they considered that no man could have taken Him, when so many soldiers were sitting by Him, unless He raised up Himself. For this cause also they rejoice and wonder, and receive the reward of so much continuance with Him, that they should first see and gladly declare, not what had been said only, but also what they beheld.

3. Therefore after then they had departed with fear and joy, *"Behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail."* But *"they held Him by the feet,"* and with

exceeding joy and gladness ran unto Him, and received by the touch also, an infallible proof, and full assurance of the resurrection. *"And they worshipped Him."* What then says He? *"Be not afraid."* Again, He Himself casts out their fear, making way for faith, *"But go, tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."* Mark how He Himself sends good tidings to His disciples by these women, bringing to honor, as I have often said, that sex, which was most dishonored, and to good hopes; and healing that which was diseased.

Perchance some one of you would wish to be like them, to hold the feet of Jesus; ye can even now, and not His feet and His hands only, but even lay hold on that sacred head, receiving the awful mysteries with a pure conscience. But not here only, but also in that day you shall see Him, coming with that unspeakable glory, and the multitude of the angels, if you are disposed to be humane; and you shall hear not these words only, *"All hail!"* but also those others, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."*

[Matthew 25:34]

Be therefore humane, that you may hear these things; and you women, that wear gold, who have looked on the running of these women, at last, though late, lay aside the disease of the desire for golden ornaments. So that if you are emulous of these women, change the ornaments which you wear, and clothe yourselves instead with almsgiving. What is the use, I pray you, of these precious stones, and of the garments spangled with gold? *"My soul,"* you say, *"is glad, and is pleased with these things."* I asked you the profit, but you tell me the hurt. For nothing is worse than being taken up with these things, and delighting in them, and being riveted to them. For more bitter is this grievous slavery, when any one finds delight even in being a slave. For in what spiritual matter will she ever be diligent as she

ought; when will she laugh to scorn, as she should, the things of this world, who thinks it a worthy matter for joy, that she has been chained in gold? For he that continues in prison, and is pleased, will never desire to be set free; as indeed neither will this woman; but as having become a kind of captive to this wicked desire, she will not endure so much as to hear spiritual language with becoming desire and diligence, much less to engage in such work.

What then is the profit of these ornaments and this luxury? I pray you. *"I am pleased with them,"* you say. Again you have told of the hurt and the ruin. *"But I enjoy also,"* you say, *"much honor from the beholders."* And what is this? This is the occasion of another destruction, when you are lifted up to haughtiness, to arrogance. Come now, since you have not told me of the profit, bear with me while I tell you of the mischiefs. What then are the mischiefs resulting therefrom? Anxiety, which is greater than the pleasure. Wherefore many of the beholders, these I mean of the grosser sort, derive more pleasure from it than she who wears the gold. For thou indeed deckest yourself with anxiety, but they, without this, feast their eyes.

Moreover, there are other things again, the debasing of the soul, the being looked upon with envy on all sides. For the neighboring women stung by it, arm themselves against their own husbands, and stir up against you grievous wars. Together with these things, the fact that all one's leisure and anxiety are spent on this object, that one does not apply one's self earnestly to spiritual achievements; that one is filled with haughtiness, arrogance, and vainglory; that one is riveted to the earth, and loses one's wings, and instead of an eagle, becomes a dog or a swine. For having given up looking up into Heaven, and flying there, you bend down to the earth like the swine, being curious about mines and caverns, and having an unmanly and base soul. But do you, when you appear, turn towards you the eyes of them at the market-

place? Well then; for this very reason, you should not wear gold, that you may not become a common gazing stock, and open the mouths of many accusers. For none of those whose eyes are toward you admires you, but they jeer at you, as fond of dress, as boastful, as a carnal woman. And should you enter into a church, you go forth, without getting anything but countless leers, and revilings, and curses, not from the beholders only, but also from the prophet. For straightway Isaiah, that has the fullest voice of all, as soon as he has seen you, will cry out, *"These things says the Lord against the princely daughters of Sion; because they walked with a lofty neck, and with winkings of the eyes, and in their walking, trailing their garments, and mincing at the same time with their feet; the Lord shall take off their bravery, and instead of a sweet smell there shall be dust, and instead of a stomacher, you shall gird yourself with a cord."* [1 Timothy 2:9]

These things for your gorgeous array. For not to them only are these words addressed, but to every woman that does like them. And Paul again with him stands as an accuser, telling Timothy to charge the women, *"not to adorn themselves with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."* So that everywhere the wearing of gold is hurtful, but especially when you are entering into a church, when you pass through the poor. For if you were exceedingly anxious to bring an accusation against yourself, you could not put on any other array than this visage of cruelty and inhumanity.

4. Consider at any rate how many hungry bellies you pass by with this array, how many naked bodies with this satanical display. How much better to feed hungry souls, than to bore through the lobes of your ears, and to hang from them the food of countless poor for no purpose or profit. What? Is to be rich a commendation? What? Is to wear gold a praise? Though it be from honest earnings that these things are put on you, even so what you

have done is a very heavy charge against you; but when it is moreover from dishonesty, consider the exceeding greatness of it.

But do you love praises and honor? Strip yourself therefore of this ridiculous clothing, and then all will admire you; then shall you enjoy both honor and pure pleasure; since now at any rate you are overwhelmed with jeers, working for yourself many causes of vexation arising out of these things. For should any of these things be missing, consider how many are the evils that have their birth therefrom, how many maidservants are beaten, how many men put to trouble, how many led to execution, how many cast into prison. And trials arise hence, and actions, and countless curses and accusations against the wife from the husband, against the husband from her friends, against the soul from itself. *"But it will not be lost."* In the first place, this is not easy to secure, but even if it be kept safe constantly, yet by being kept, it occasions much anxiety and care and discomfort, and no advantage.

For what kind of profit arises from hence to the house? What advantage to the woman herself who wears it? No advantage indeed, but much unseemliness, and accusation from every quarter? How will you be able to kiss Christ's feet, and cling to them, when thus dressed? From this adorning He turns away. For this cause He vouchsafed to be born in the house of the carpenter, or rather not even in that house, but in a shed, and a manger. How then will you be able to behold Him, not having beauty that is desirable in His eyes, not wearing the array that is lovely before Him, but what is hateful. For he that comes unto Him must not deck himself out with such garments, but be clothed with virtue.

Consider what after all these jewels are. Nothing else than earth and ashes. Mix water with them, and they are clay. Consider and be ashamed to make clay your master, forsaking all, and abiding by it, and carrying and

bearing it about, even when you enter into a church, when most of all you ought to flee from it. For neither for this cause was the church built, that you should display therein these riches, but spiritual riches. But you, as though thou were entering into a pompous procession, thus deckest yourself out on every side, imitating the women on the stage, even so do you carry about in profusion that ridiculous mass.

Therefore, I tell you, you come for mischief to many, and when the congregation is dismissed, in their houses, at their tables, one may hear the more part describing these things. For they have left off saying, thus and thus said the prophet and the apostle, and they describe the costliness of your garments, the size of your precious stones, and all the other unseemliness of them that wear these things.

This makes you backward in almsgiving, and your husbands. For one of you would not readily consent to break up one of these ornaments to feed a poor man. For when you would choose even yourself to be in distress rather than to behold these things broken to pieces, how should you feed another at the cost of them?

For most women feel towards these things, as to some living beings, and not less than towards their children. "*God forbid*," you say. Prove me this then, prove it by your works, as now at least I see the contrary. For who ever of those that are completely taken captive, by melting down these things, would rescue a child's soul from death? And why do I say a child's? Who has redeemed his own soul thereby, when perishing? Nay, on the contrary, the more part even set it to sale for these things every day. And should any bodily infirmity take place, they do everything, but if they see their soul depraved, they take no such pains, but are careless both about their children's soul, and their own soul, in order that these things may remain to rust with time.

And while you are wearing jewels worth ten thousand talents, the member of Christ has not the enjoyment so much as of necessary food. And whereas the common Lord of all has imparted to all alike of heaven, and of the things in Heaven, and of the spiritual table, thou dost not impart to Him even of perishing things, on purpose that you may continue perpetually bound with these grievous chains.

Hence the countless evils, hence the fornications of the men, when you prepare them to cast off self-restraint, when you teach them to take delight in these things with which the harlot women deck themselves. For this cause they are so quickly taken captive. For if you had instructed him to look down upon these things, and to take delight in chastity, godly fear and humility, he would not have been so easily taken by the shafts of fornication. For the harlot is able to adorn herself in this way even to a greater degree than this, but with those other ornaments not so. Accustom him then to take delight in these ornaments, which he cannot see placed on the harlot. And how will you bring him into this habit? If you take off these, and put on those others, so shall both your husband be in safety, and thou in honor, and God will be propitious to you, and all men will admire you, and you will attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 90 on Matthew

Matt. XXVIII. 11-14.

"Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and declared unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they had assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you."

For the sake of these soldiers that earthquake took place, in order to dismay them, and that the testimony might come from them, which accordingly was the result. For the report was thus free from suspicion, as proceeding from the guards themselves. For of the signs some were displayed publicly to the world, others privately to those present on the spot; publicly for the world was the darkness, privately the appearance of the angel, the earthquake. When then they came and showed it (for truth shines forth, being proclaimed by its adversaries), they again gave money, that they might say, as it is expressed, *"that His disciples came and stole Him."*

How did they steal Him? O most foolish of all men! For because of the clearness and conspicuousness of the truth, they are not even able to make up a falsehood. For indeed what they said was highly incredible, and the falsehood had not even speciousness. For how, I ask, did the disciples steal Him, men poor and unlearned, and not venturing so much as to show themselves? What? Was not a seal put upon it? What? Were there not so many watchmen, and soldiers, and Jews stationed round it? What? Did not those men suspect this very thing, and take thought, and break their rest,

and continue anxious about it? And wherefore moreover did they steal it? That they might feign the doctrine of the resurrection? And how should it enter their minds to feign such a thing, men who were well content to be hidden and to live? And how could they remove the stone that was made sure? How could they have escaped the observation of so many? Nay, though they had despised death, they would not have attempted without purpose, and fruitlessly to venture in defiance of so many who were on the watch. And that moreover they were timorous, what they had done before showed clearly, at least, when they saw Him seized, all rushed away from Him. If then at that time they did not dare so much as to stand their ground when they saw Him alive, how when He was dead could they but have feared such a number of soldiers? What? Was it to burst open a door? Was it that one should escape notice? A great stone lay upon it, needing many hands to move it.

They were right in saying, *"So the last error shall be worse than the first,"* [Matthew 27:64] making this declaration against themselves, for that, when after so much mad conduct they ought to have repented, they rather strive to outdo their former acts, feigning absurd fictions, and as, when He was alive, they purchased His blood, so when He was dead and risen again, they again by money were striving to undermine the evidence of His resurrection. But do thou mark, I pray you, how by their own doings they are caught everywhere. For if they had not come to Pilate, nor asked for the guard, they would have been more able to act thus impudently, but as it was, not so. For indeed, as though they were laboring to stop their own mouths, even so did they all things. For if the disciples had not strength to watch with Him, and that, though upbraided by Him, how could they have ventured upon these things? And wherefore did they not steal Him before this, but when you had come? For if they had been minded to do this, they

would have done it, when the tomb was not yet guarded on the first night, when it was to be done without danger, and in security. For it was on the Sabbath that they came and begged of Pilate to have the watch, and kept guard, but during the first night none of these was present by the sepulchre.

2. And what mean also the napkins that were stuck on with the myrrh; for Peter saw these lying. For if they had been disposed to steal, they would not have stolen the body naked, not because of dishonoring it only, but in order not to delay and lose time in stripping it, and not to give them that were so disposed opportunity to awake and seize them. Especially when it was myrrh, a drug that adheres so to the body, and cleaves to the clothes, whence it was not easy to take the clothes off the body, but they that did this needed much time, so that from this again, the tale of the theft is improbable.

What? Did they not know the rage of the Jews? And that they would vent their anger on them? And what profit was it at all to them, if He had not risen again?

So these men, being conscious that they had made up all this tale, gave money, and said, *"Say ye these things, and we will persuade the governor."* For they desire that the report should be published, fighting in vain against the truth; and by their endeavors to obscure it, by these even against their will they occasioned it to appear clearly. For indeed even this establishes the resurrection, the fact I mean of their saying, that the disciples stole Him. For this is the language of men confessing, that the body was not there. When therefore they confess the body was not there, but the stealing it is shown to be false and incredible, by their watching by it, and by the seals, and by the timidity of the disciples, the proof of the resurrection even hence appears incontrovertible.

Nevertheless, these shameless and audacious men, although there were so many things to stop their mouths, *"Say ye,"* these are their words, *"and we will persuade, and will secure you."* Do you see all depraved? Pilate, for he was persuaded? The soldiers? The Jewish people? But marvel not, if money prevailed over soldiers. For if with His disciple it showed its might to be so great, much more with these.

"And this saying is commonly reported," it is said, *"until this day."* Do you see again the disciples' love of truth, how they are not ashamed of saying even this, that such a report prevailed against them.

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, and some worshipped, and some when they saw Him doubted."

This seems to me to be the last appearance in Galilee, when He sent them forth to baptize. And if *"some doubted,"* herein again admire their truthfulness, how they conceal not even their shortcomings up to the last day. Nevertheless, even these are assured by their sight.

What then says He unto them, when He sees them? *"All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth."* Again He speaks to them more after the manner of man, for they had not yet received the spirit, which was able to raise them on high. *"Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;"* giving the one charge with a view to doctrine, the other concerning commandments. And of the Jews He makes no mention, neither brings forward what had been done, nor upbraids Peter with his denial, nor any one of the others with their flight, but having put into their hands a summary of the doctrine, that expressed by the form of baptism, commands them to pour forth over the whole world.

After that, because he had enjoined on them great things, to raise their courage, He says, "*Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*" [Matthew 28:20] Do you see His own proper power again? Do you see how those other things also were spoken for condescension? And not with those men only did He promise to be, but also with all that believe after them. For plainly the apostles were not to remain here unto "*the end of the world;*" but he speaks to the believers as to one body. For tell me not, says He, of the difficulty of the things: for "*I am with you,*" who make all things easy. This He said to the prophets also in the Old Testament continually, as well to Jeremiah objecting his youth, [Jeremiah 1:6, 8] as to Moses and Ezekiel shrinking from the office, "*I am with you,*" this here also to these men. And mark, I pray you, the excellence of these, for the others, when sent to one nation, often excused themselves, but these said nothing of the sort, though sent to the world. And He reminds them also of the consummation, that He may draw them on more, and that they may look not at the present dangers only, but also at the good things to come that are without end.

"For the irksome things, says He, that you will undergo are finished together with the present life, since at least even this world itself shall come to an end, but the good things which you shall enjoy remain immortal, as I have often told you before." Thus having invigorated and roused their minds, by the remembrance of that day, He sent them forth. For that day to them that live in good works is to be desired, even as on the other hand to those in sin, it is terrible as to the condemned.

But let us not fear only, and shudder, but let us change too, while there is opportunity, and let us rise out of our wickedness, for we can, if we be willing. For if before grace many did this, much more after grace.

3. For what grievous things are we enjoined? To cleave mountains asunder? To fly into the air? Or to cross the Tuscan sea? By no means, but a way of life so easy, as not so much as to want any instruments, but a soul and purpose only. For what instruments had these apostles, who effected such things? Did they not go about with one vestment and unshod? And they got the better of all.

For what is difficult of the injunctions? Have no enemy. Hate no man. Speak ill of no man. Nay, the opposites of these things are the greater hardships. But He said, you reply, Throw away your money. Is this then the grievous thing? In the first place, He did not command, but advised it. Yet even if it were a command, what is it grievous not to carry about burdens and unseasonable cares?

But oh covetousness! All things have become money; for this cause all things are turned upside down. If anyone declares another happy, he mentions this; should he pronounce him wretched, hence is derived the description of wretchedness. And all reckonings are made on this account, how such an one gets rich, how such an one gets poor. Should it be military service, should it be marriage, should it be a trade, should it be what you will that any man takes in hand, he does not apply to what is proposed, until he see these riches are coming in rapidly upon him. After this shall we not meet together and consult how we shall drive away this pest? Shall we not regard with shame the good deeds of our fathers? Of the three thousand, of the five thousand, who had all things common?

What is the profit of this present life, when we do not use it for our future gain? How long do ye not enslave the mammon that has enslaved you? How long are you slaves of money? How long have ye no love for liberty, and do not rend in pieces the bargains of covetousness? But while, if you should have become slaves of men, you do all things, if any one should

promise you liberty; yet being captives of covetousness, you do not so much as consider how ye may be delivered from this bitter bondage. And yet the one were nothing terrible, the other is the most bitter tyranny.

Consider how great a price Christ paid for us. He shed His own blood; He gave up Himself. But you, even after all this, are grown supine; and the most grievous thing of all is, that you even take delight in the slavery, you luxuriate in the dishonor, and that, from which you ought to flee, has become an object of desire to you.

But since it is right not only to lament and to blame, but also to correct, let us see from what cause this passion and this evil have become an object of desire to you. Whence then, whence has this come to be an object of desire? Because, you say, it makes me to be in honor and in security. In what kind of security, I pray you? In the confidence, not to suffer hunger, nor cold, not to be harmed, not to be despised. Will you then, if we promise you this security, refrain from being rich? For if it is for this that riches are an object of desire, if it be in your power to have security without these, what need have you of these any more? *"And how is it possible,"* you say, *"for one who is not rich to attain to this?"* Nay, how is it possible (for I say the opposite thing) if one is rich? For it is necessary to flatter many, both rulers and subjects, and to entreat countless numbers, and to be a base slave, and to be in fear and trembling, and to regard with suspicion the eyes of the envious, and to fear the tongues of false accusers, and the desires of other covetous men. But poverty is not like this, but altogether the contrary. It is a place of refuge and security, a calm harbor, a wrestling ground, and school of exercise to learn self-command, an imitation of the life of angels.

Hear these things, as many as are poor; or rather also, as many as desire to be rich. It is not poverty that is the thing to be feared, but the not being willing to be poor. Account poverty to be nothing to fear, and it will

not be to you a matter for fear. For neither is this fear in the nature of the thing, but in the judgment of feeble-minded men. Or rather, I am even ashamed that I have occasion to say so much concerning poverty, to show that it is nothing to be feared. For if you practise self-command, it is even a fountain to you of countless blessings. And if any one were to offer you sovereignty, and political power, and wealth, and luxury, and then having set against them poverty, were to give you your choice to take which thou wouldest, you would straightway seize upon poverty, if indeed you knew the beauty thereof.

4. And I know that many laugh, when these things are said; but we are not troubled but we require you to stay, and soon ye will give judgment with us. For to me poverty seems like some comely, fair, and well-favored damsel, but covetousness like some monster shaped woman, some Scylla or Hydra, or some other like prodigies feigned by fabulous writers.

For bring not forward, I pray you, them that accuse poverty, but them that have shone thereby. Nurtured in this, Elias was caught up in that blessed assumption. With this Eliseus shone; with this John; with this all the apostles; but with the other, Ahab, Jezebel, Gehazi, Judas, Nero, Caiaphas, were condemned.

But if it please you, let us not look to those only that have been glorious in poverty, but let us observe the beauty itself of this damsel. For indeed her eye is clear and piercing, having nothing turbid in it, like the eye of covetousness, which is at one time full of anger, at another sated with pleasure, at another troubled by incontinence. But the eye of poverty is not like this, but mild, calm, looking kindly on all, meek, gentle, hating no man, shunning no man. For where there are riches, there is matter for enmity, and for countless wars. The mouth again of the other is full of insults, of a certain haughtiness, of much boasting, cursing, deceit; but the mouth and

the tongue of this are sound, filled with continual thanksgiving, blessing, words of gentleness, of affection, of courtesy, of praise, of commendation. And if you would see also the proportion of her members, she is of a goodly height, and far loftier than wealth. And if many flee from her, marvel not at it, for indeed so do fools from the rest of virtue.

But the poor man, you will say, is insulted by him that is rich. Again you are declaring to me the praise of poverty. For who, I pray you, is blessed, the insulter, or the insulted? It is manifest that it is the insulted person. But then, the one, covetousness, urges to insult the other; poverty persuades to endure. *"But the poor man suffers hunger,"* you will say. Paul also suffered hunger, and was in famine. *"But he has no rest."* Neither *"had the Son of Man where to lay His head."* [Matthew 8:20]

Do you see how far the praises of poverty have proceeded, and where it places you, to what men it leads you on, and how it makes you a follower of the Lord? If it were good to have gold, Christ, who have the unutterable blessings, would have given this to His disciples. But now so far from giving it them, He forbade them to have it. Wherefore Peter also, so far from being ashamed of poverty, even glories in it, saying, *"Silver and gold have I none; but what I have give I you."* [Acts 3:6] And who of you would not have desired to utter this saying? Nay, we all would extremely, perhaps some one may say. Then throw away your silver, throw away your gold. *"And if I throw it away, you will say, shall I receive the power of Peter?"* Why, what made Peter blessed, tell me? Was it indeed to have lifted up the lame man? By no means, but the not having these riches, this procured him Heaven. For of those that wrought these miracles, many fell into hell, but they, who did those good things, attained a kingdom. And this you may learn even of Peter himself. For there were two things that he said, *"Silver and gold have I none;"* and, *"In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk."*

Which sort of thing then made Him glorious and blessed, the raising up the lame man, or the casting away his money? And this you may learn from the Master of the conflicts Himself. What then does He Himself say to the rich man seeking eternal life? He said not, *"raise up the lame,"* but, *"Sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come and follow me, and you shall have treasure in Heaven."* [Matthew 19:21] And Peter again said not, *"Behold, in Your name we cast out devils;"* although he was casting them out, but, *"Behold, we have forsaken all and followed You what shall we have?"* [Matthew 19:27] And Christ again, in answering this apostle, said not, *"If any man raise up the lame,"* but, *"Whosoever has forsaken houses or lands, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit everlasting life."*

Let us also then emulate this man, that we may not be confounded, but may with confidence stand at the judgment seat of Christ; that we may win Him to be with us, even as He was with His disciples. For He will be with us, like as He was with them, if we are willing to follow them, and to be imitators of their life and conversation. For in consequence of these things God crowns, and commends men, not requiring of you to raise the dead, or to cure the lame. For not these things make one to be like Peter, but the casting away one's goods, for this was the apostles' achievement.

But do you not find it possible to cast them away? In the first place, I say, it is possible; but I compel you not, if you are not willing, nor constrain you to it; but this I entreat, to spend at least a part on the needy, and to seek for yourself nothing more than is necessary. For thus shall we both live our life here without trouble, and in security, and enjoy eternal life; unto which God grant we all may attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 1:1-2

"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, concerning all things which Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day on which, having given charge to the Apostles, whom He had chosen, by the Holy Spirit, He was taken up."

To many persons this Book is so little known, both it and its author, that they are not even aware that there is such a book in existence. For this reason especially I have taken this narrative for my subject, that I may draw to it such as do not know it, and not let such a treasure as this remain hidden out of sight. For indeed it may profit us no less than even the Gospels; so replete is it with Christian wisdom and sound doctrine, especially in what is said concerning the Holy Ghost. Then let us not hastily pass by it, but examine it closely. Thus, the predictions which in the Gospels Christ utters, here we may see these actually come to pass; and note in the very facts the bright evidence of Truth which shines in them, and the mighty change which is taking place in the disciples now that the Spirit has come upon them. For example, they heard Christ say, *"Whoso believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do"* [John 14:12]; and again, when He foretold to the disciples, that they should be brought before rulers and kings, and in their synagogues they should scourge them, and that they should suffer grievous things, and overcome all [Matthew 10:18]; and that the Gospel should be preached in all the world [Matthew 24:14]; now all this, how it came to pass exactly as it was said,

may be seen in this Book, and more besides, which He told them while yet with them. Here again you will see the Apostles themselves, speeding their way as on wings over land and sea; and those same men, once so timorous and void of understanding, on the sudden become quite other than they were; men despising wealth, and raised above glory and passion and concupiscence, and in short all such affections: moreover, what unanimity there is among them now; nowhere any envying as there was before, nor any of the old hankering after the preeminence, but all virtue brought in them to its last finish, and shining through all, with surpassing lustre, that charity, concerning which the Lord had given so many charges saying, *"In this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* [John 13:35] And then, besides, there are doctrines to be found here, which we could not have known so surely as we now do, if this Book had not existed, but the very crowning point of our salvation would be hidden, alike for practice of life and for doctrine.

The greater part, however, of this work is occupied with the acts of Paul, who *"laboured more abundantly than they all."* [1 Corinthians 15:10] And the reason is, that the author of this Book, that is, the blessed Luke, was his companion: a man, whose high qualities, sufficiently visible in many other instances, are especially shown in his firm adherence to his Teacher, whom he constantly followed. Thus at a time when all had forsaken him, one gone into Galatia, another into Dalmatia, hear what he says of this disciple: *"Only Luke is with me."* [2 Timothy 4:10] And giving the Corinthians a charge concerning him, he says, *"Whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches."* [2 Corinthians 8:18] Again, when he says, *"He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve,"* and, *"according to the Gospel which you received"* (1 Corinthians 15:5, 1), he means the Gospel of this Luke. So that there can be no mistake in attributing this work to him:

and when I say, to him, I mean, to Christ. And why then did he not relate every thing, seeing he was with Paul to the end? We may answer, that what is here written, was sufficient for those who would attend, and that the sacred writers ever addressed themselves to the matter of immediate importance, whatever it might be at the time: it was no object with them to be writers of books: in fact, there are many things which they have delivered by unwritten tradition. Now while all that is contained in this Book is worthy of admiration, so is especially the way the Apostles have of coming down to the wants of their hearers: a condescension suggested by the Spirit who has so ordered it, that the subject on which they chiefly dwell is that which pertains to Christ as man. For so it is, that while they discourse so much about Christ, they have spoken but little concerning His Godhead; it was mostly of the Manhood that they discoursed, and of the Passion, and the Resurrection, and the Ascension. For the thing required in the first instance was this, that it should be believed that He was risen, and ascended into heaven. As then the point on which Christ himself most insisted was, to have it known that He had come from the Father, so is it this writer's principal object to declare, that Christ was risen from the dead, and was received up into Heaven, and that He went to God, and came from God. For, if the fact of His coming from God were not first believed, much more, with the Resurrection and Ascension added thereto, would the Jews have found the entire doctrine incredible. Wherefore gently and by degrees he leads them on to higher truths. Nay, at Athens Paul even calls Him man simply, without saying more [Acts 17:31]. For if, when Christ Himself spoke of His equality with the Father, they often attempted to stone Him, and called Him a blasphemer for this reason, it was little to be expected that they would receive this doctrine from the fishermen, and that too, with the Cross coming before it.

But why speak of the Jews, seeing that even the disciples often upon hearing the more sublime doctrines were troubled and offended? Therefore also He told them, *"I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now."* [John 16:12] If those could not, who had been so long time with Him, and had been admitted to so many secrets, and had seen so many wonders, how was it to be expected that men, but newly dragged away from altars, and idols, and sacrifices, and cats, and crocodiles (for such did the Gentiles worship), and from the rest of their evil ways, should all at once receive the more sublime matters of doctrine? And how in particular should Jews, hearing as they did every day of their lives, and having it ever sounded in their ears, *"The Lord your God is one Lord, and beside Him is none other"* [Deuteronomy 6:4]: who also had seen Him hanging nailed on the Cross, nay, had themselves crucified and buried Him, and not seen Him even risen: when they were told that this same person was God and equal with the Father, how should they, of all men, be otherwise than shocked and revolted? Therefore it is that gently and little by little they carry them on, with much consideration and forbearance letting themselves down to their low attainments, themselves the while enjoying in more plentiful measure the grace of the Spirit, and doing greater works in Christ's name than Christ Himself did, that they may at once raise them up from their grovelling apprehensions, and confirm the saying, that Christ was raised from the dead. For this, in fact, is just what this Book is: a Demonstration of the Resurrection: this being once believed, the rest would come in due course. The subject then and entire scope of this Book, in the main, is just what I have said. And now let us hear the Preface itself.

"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach." [Acts 1:1] Why does he put him in mind of the Gospel? To intimate how strictly he may be depended upon. For at the

outset of the former work he says, *"It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto you in order."* [Luke 1:3] Neither is he content with his own testimony, but refers the whole matter to the Apostles, saying, *"Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word."* [Luke 1:2] Having then accredited his account in the former instance, he has no need to put forth his credentials afresh for this treatise, seeing his disciple has been once for all satisfied, and by the mention of that former work he has reminded him of the strict reliance to be placed in him for the truth. For if a person has shown himself competent and trustworthy to write of things which he has heard, and moreover has obtained our confidence, much more will he have a right to our confidence when he has composed an account, not of things which he has received from others, but of things which he has seen and heard. For you received what relates to Christ; much more will you receive what concerns the Apostles.

What then, (it may be asked), is it a question only of history, with which the Holy Spirit has nothing to do? Not so. For, if *"those delivered it unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word;"* then, what he says, is *theirs*. And why did he not say, 'As they who were counted worthy of the Holy Spirit delivered them unto us;' but *"Those who were eyewitnesses?"* Because, in matter of belief, the very thing that gives one a right to be believed, is the having learned from eyewitnesses: whereas the other appears to foolish persons mere parade and pretension. And therefore John also speaks thus: *"I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."* [John 1:34] And Christ expresses Himself in the same way to Nicodemus, while he was dull of apprehension, *"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and no one receives our witness."* [John 3:11] Accordingly, He gave them leave to rest their testimony in many particulars

on the fact of their having seen them, when He said, "*And do ye bear witness concerning Me, because you have been with Me from the beginning.*" [John 15:27] The Apostles themselves also often speak in a similar manner; "*We are witnesses, and the Holy Spirit which God has given to those that obey Him.*" [Acts 2:32]; and on a subsequent occasion, Peter, still giving assurance of the Resurrection, said, "*Seeing we ate and drank with Him.*" [Acts 10:41] For they more readily received the testimony of persons who had been His companions, because the notion of the Spirit was as yet very much beyond them. Therefore John also at that time, in his Gospel, speaking of the blood and water, said, he himself *saw it*, making the fact of his having seen it equivalent, for them, to the highest testimony, although the witness of the Spirit is more certain than the evidence of sight, but not so with unbelievers. Now that Luke was a partaker of the Spirit, is abundantly clear, both from the miracles which even now take place; and from the fact that in those times even ordinary persons were gifted with the Holy Ghost; and again from the testimony of Paul, in these words, "*Whose praise is in the Gospel*" [2 Corinthians 8:18]; and from the appointment to which he was chosen: for having said this, the Apostle adds, "*But also appointed of the Churches to travel with us with this grace which is administered by us.*"

Now mark how unassuming he is. He does not say, The former Gospel which I preached, but, "*The former treatise have I made;*" accounting the title of Gospel to be too great for him; although it is on the score of this that the Apostle dignifies him: "*Whose praise,*" he says, "*is in the Gospel.*" But he himself modestly says, "*The former treatise have I made— O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach:*" not simply "*of all,*" but from the beginning to the end; "*until the day,*" he says, "*in which He was taken up.*" And yet John says, that it was not possible to write all:

for "*were they written, I suppose,*" says he, "*that even the world itself could not contain the books written.*" [John 21:25] How then does the Evangelist here say, "*Of all?*" He does not say "*all,*" but "*of all,*" as much as to say, "*in a summary way, and in the gross;*" and "*of all that is mainly and pressingly important.*" Then he tells us in what sense he says *all*, when he adds, "*Which Jesus began both to do and to teach;*" meaning His miracles and teaching; and not only so, but implying that His doing was also a teaching.

But now consider the benevolent and Apostolic feelings of the writer: that for the sake of a single individual he took such pains as to write for him an entire Gospel. "*That you might have,*" he says, "*the certainty of those things, wherein you have been instructed.*" [Luke 1:4] In truth, he had heard Christ say, "*It is not the will of My Father that one of these little ones should perish.*" [Matthew 18:14] And why did he not make one book of it, to send to one man Theophilus, but has divided it into two subjects? For clearness, and to give the brother a pause for rest. Besides, the two treatises are distinct in their subject-matter.

But consider how Christ accredited his words by His deeds. Thus He says, "*Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*" [Matthew 11:29] He taught men to be poor, and exhibited this by His actions: "*For the Son of Man,*" He says, "*has not where to lay His head.*" [Matthew 8:20] Again, He charged men to love their enemies; and He taught the same lesson on the Cross, when He prayed for those who were crucifying Him. He said, "*If any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also*" [Matthew 5:40]: now *He* not only gave His garments, but even His blood. In this way He bade others teach. Wherefore Paul also said, "*So as you have us for an example.*" [Philippians 3:17] For nothing is more frigid than a teacher who shows his philosophy only in words: this is to act the part not of a teacher, but of a hypocrite. Therefore the Apostles first

taught by their conduct, and then by their words; nay rather they had no need of words, when their deeds spoke so loud. Nor is it wrong to speak of Christ's Passion as action, for in suffering all He performed that great and wonderful act, by which He destroyed death, and effected all else that He did for us.

"Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen. After He had given commandments through the Spirit" [Acts 1:2]; i.e. they were spiritual words that He spoke unto them, nothing human; either this is the meaning, or, that it was by the Spirit that He gave them commandments. Do you observe in what low terms he still speaks of Christ, as in fact Christ had spoken of Himself? *"But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils"* [Matthew 12:28]; for indeed the Holy Ghost wrought in that Temple. Well, what did He command? *"Go ye therefore,"* He says, *"make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."* (Ib. 28:19-20.) A high encomium this for the Apostles; to have such a charge entrusted to them, I mean, the salvation of the world! Words full of the Spirit! And this the writer hints at in the expression, *"through the Holy Ghost"* (and, *"the words which I spoke unto you,"* says the Lord, *"are Spirit"*) [John 6:63]; thus leading the hearer on to a desire of learning what the commands were, and establishing the authority of the Apostles, seeing it is the words of the Spirit they are about to speak, and the commandments of Christ. *"After He had given commandments,"* he says, *"He was taken up."* He does not say, 'ascended;' he still speaks as concerning a man. It appears then that He also taught the Disciples after His resurrection, but of this space of time no one has related to us the whole in detail. St. John indeed, as also does the present writer,

dwells at greater length on this subject than the others; but none has clearly related every thing (for they hastened to something else); however, we have learned these things through the Apostles, for what they heard, that did they tell. *"To whom also He showed Himself alive."* Having first spoken of the Ascension, he adverts to the Resurrection; for since you have been told that *"He was taken up,"* therefore, lest you should suppose Him to have been taken up by others, he adds, *"To whom He showed Himself alive."* For if He showed Himself in the greater, surely He did in the minor circumstance. Do you see, how casually and unperceived he drops by the way the seeds of these great doctrines?

"Being seen of them during forty days." He was not always with them now, as He was before the Resurrection. For the writer does not say *"forty days,"* but, *"during forty days."* He came, and again disappeared; by this leading them on to higher conceptions, and no longer permitting them to stand affected towards Him in the same way as before, but taking effectual measures to secure both these objects, that the fact of His Resurrection should be believed, and that He Himself should be ever after apprehended to be greater than man. At the same time, these were two opposite things; for in order to the belief in His Resurrection, much was to be done of a human character, and for the other object, just the reverse. Nevertheless, both results have been effected, each when the fitting time arrived.

But why did He appear not to all, but to the Apostles only? Because to the many it would have seemed a mere apparition, inasmuch as they understood not the secret of the mystery. For if the disciples themselves were at first incredulous and were troubled, and needed the evidence of actual touch with the hand, and of His eating with them, how would it have fared in all likelihood with the multitude? For this reason therefore by the miracles [wrought by the Apostles] He renders the evidence of His

Resurrection unequivocal, so that not only the men of those times— this is what would come of the ocular proof— but also all men thereafter, should be certain of the fact, that He was risen. Upon this ground also we argue with unbelievers. For if He did not rise again, but remains dead, how did the Apostles perform miracles in His name? But they did not, say you, perform miracles? How then was our religion ([ἡ] [θῆσις]) instituted? For this certainly they will not controvert nor impugn what we see with our eyes: so that when they say that no miracles took place, they inflict a worse stab upon themselves. For this would be the greatest of miracles, that without any miracles, the whole world should have eagerly come to be taken in the nets of twelve poor and illiterate men. For not by wealth of money, not by wisdom of words, not by any thing else of this kind, did the fishermen prevail; so that objectors must even against their will acknowledge that there was in these men a Divine power, for no human strength could ever possibly effect such great results. For this He then remained forty days on earth, furnishing in this length of time the sure evidence of their seeing Him in His own proper Person, that they might not suppose that what they saw was a phantom. And not content with this, He added also the evidence of eating with them at their board: as to signify this, the writer adds, "*And being at table with them, He commanded.*" [Acts 1:4] And this circumstance the Apostles themselves always put forth as an fallible token of the Resurrection; as where they say, "*Who ate and drank with Him.*" [Acts 10:41]

And what did He, when appearing unto them those forty days? Why, He conversed with them, says the writer, "*concerning the kingdom of God.*" [Acts 1:3] For, since the disciples both had been distressed and troubled at the things which already had taken place, and were about to go forth to encounter great difficulties, He recovered them by His discourses

concerning the future. *"He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father."* [Acts 1:4] First, He led them out to Galilee, afraid and trembling, in order that they might listen to His words in security. Afterwards, when they had heard, and had passed forty days with Him, *"He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem."* Wherefore? Just as when soldiers are to charge a multitude, no one thinks of letting them issue forth until they have armed themselves, or as horses are not suffered to start from the barriers until they have got their charioteer; so Christ did not suffer these to appear in the field before the descent of the Spirit, that they might not be in a condition to be easily defeated and taken captive by the many. Nor was this the only reason, but also there were many in Jerusalem who should believe. And then again that it might not be said, that leaving their own acquaintance, they had gone to make a parade among strangers, therefore among those very men who had put Christ to death do they exhibit the proofs of His Resurrection, among those who had crucified and buried Him, in the very town in which the iniquitous deed had been perpetrated; thereby stopping the mouths of all foreign objectors. For when those even who had crucified Him appear as believers, clearly this proved both the fact of the crucifixion and the iniquity of the deed, and afforded a mighty evidence of the Resurrection.

Furthermore, lest the Apostles should say, How shall it be possible for us to live among wicked and bloody men, they so many in number, we so few and contemptible, observe how He does away their fear and distress, by these words, *"But wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard of Me."* [Acts 1:4] You will say, When had they heard this? When He said, *"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."* [John 16:7] And again, *"I will pray the Father, and*

He shall send you another Comforter, that He may abide with you." [John 14:16]

But why did the Holy Ghost come to them, not while Christ was present, nor even immediately after his departure, but, whereas Christ ascended on the fortieth day, the Spirit descended *"when the day of Pentecost,"* that is, the fiftieth, *"was fully come?"* [Acts 2:1] And how was it, if the Spirit had not yet come, that He said, *"Receive the Holy Ghost?"* [John 20:22] In order to render them capable and meet for the reception of Him. For if Daniel fainted at the sight of an Angel [Daniel 8:17], much more would these when about to receive so great a grace. Either this then is to be said, or else that Christ spoke of what was to come, as if come already; as when He said, *"Tread ye upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the devil."* [Luke 10:19] But why had the Holy Ghost not yet come? It was fit that they should first be brought to have a longing desire for that event, and so receive the grace. For this reason Christ Himself departed, and then the Spirit descended. For had He Himself been there, they would not have expected the Spirit so earnestly as they did. On this account neither did He come immediately after Christ's Ascension, but after eight or nine days. It is the same with us also; for our desires towards God are then most raised, when we stand in need. Accordingly, John chose that time to send his disciples to Christ when they were likely to feel their need of Jesus, during his own imprisonment. Besides, it was fit that our nature should be seen in heaven, and that the reconciliation should be perfected, and then the Spirit should come, and the joy should be unalloyed. For, if the Spirit being already come, Christ had then departed, and the Spirit remained; the consolation would not have been so great as it was. For in fact they clung to Him, and could not bear to part with Him; wherefore also to comfort them He said, *"It is expedient for you that I go away."* [John

16:7] On this account He also waits during those intermediate days, that they might first despond for awhile, and be made, as I said, to feel their need of Him. and then reap a full and unalloyed delight. But if the Spirit were inferior to the Son, the consolation would not have been adequate; and how could He have said, *"It is expedient for you?"* For this reason the greater matters of teaching were reserved for the Spirit, that the disciples might not imagine Him inferior.

Consider also how necessary He made it for them to abide in Jerusalem, by promising that the Spirit should be granted them. For lest they should again flee away after His Ascension, by this expectation, as by a bond, He keeps them to that spot. But having said, *"Wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard of Me,"* He then adds, *"For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."* (v. 4-5.) For now indeed He gives them to see the difference there was between Him and John, plainly, and not as heretofore in obscure hints; for in fact He had spoken very obscurely, when He said, *"Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he:"* but now He says plainly, *"John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."* [Matthew 11:11] And he no longer uses the testimony, but merely adverts to the person of John, reminding the disciples of what he had said, and shows them that they are now become greater than John; seeing they too are to baptize with the Spirit. Again, He did not say, I baptize you with the Holy Ghost, but, *"You shall be baptized:"* teaching us humility. For this was plain enough from the testimony of John, that it was Christ Himself Who should baptize: *"He it is that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"* [Luke 3:16]; wherefore also He made mention of John.

The Gospels, then, are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that "*other Comforter*" said and did. Not but that the Spirit did many things in the Gospels also; even as Christ here in the Acts still works in men as He did in the Gospels: only then the Spirit wrought through the Temple, now through the Apostles: then, He came into the Virgin's womb, and fashioned the Temple; now, into Apostolic souls: then in the likeness of a dove; now, in the likeness of fire. And wherefore? Showing there the gentleness of the Lord, but here His taking vengeance also, He now puts them in mind of the judgment likewise. For, when need was to forgive, need was there of much gentleness; but now we have obtained the gift, it is henceforth a time for judgment and examination.

But why does Christ say, "*You shall be baptized,*" when in fact there was no water in the upper room? Because the more essential part of Baptism is the Spirit, through Whom indeed the water has its operation; in the same manner our Lord also is said to be anointed, not that He had ever been anointed with oil, but because He had received the Spirit. Besides, we do in fact find them receiving a baptism with water [and a baptism with the Spirit], and these at different moments. In our case both take place under one act, but then they were divided. For in the beginning they were baptized by John; since, if harlots and publicans went to that baptism, much rather would they who thereafter were to be baptized by the Holy Ghost. Then, that the Apostles might not say, that they were always having it held out to them in promises [John 14:15-16], (for indeed Christ had already discoursed much to them concerning the Spirit, that they should not imagine It to be an impersonal Energy or Operation, ([ἐ] [νέργειαν ἀνυπόστατον]) that they might not say this, then, He adds, "*not many days hence.*" And He did not explain when, that they might always watch: but, that it would soon take place, He told them, that they might not faint; yet

the exact time He refrained from adding, that they might always be vigilant. Nor does He assure them by this alone; I mean, by the shortness of the time, but withal by saying, *"The promise which you have heard of Me."* For this is not, says He, the only time I have told you, but already I have promised what I shall certainly perform. What wonder then that He does not signify the day of the final consummation, when this day which was so near He did not choose to reveal? And with good reason; to the end they may be ever wakeful, and in a state of expectation and earnest heed.

For it cannot, it cannot be, that a man should enjoy the benefit of grace except he watch. Do you see not what Elias says to his disciple? *"If you see me when I am taken up"* [2 Kings 2:10], this that you ask shall be done for you. Christ also was ever wont to say unto those that came unto Him, *"Believest thou?"* For if we be not appropriated and made over to the thing given, neither do we greatly feel the benefit. So it was also in the case of Paul; grace did not come to him immediately, but three days intervened, during which he was blind; purified the while, and prepared by fear. For as those who dye the purple first season with other ingredients the cloth that is to receive the dye, that the bloom may not be fleeting; so in this instance God first takes order that the soul shall be thoroughly in earnest, and then pours forth His grace. On this account also, neither did He immediately send the Spirit, but on the fiftieth day. Now if any one ask, why we also do not baptize at that season of Pentecost? We may answer, that grace is the same now as then; but the mind becomes more elevated now, by being prepared through fasting. And the season too of Pentecost furnishes a not unlikely reason. What may that be? Our fathers held Baptism to be just the proper curb upon evil concupiscence, and a powerful lesson for teaching to be sober-minded even in a time of delights.

As if then we were banquetting with Christ Himself, and partaking of His table, let us do nothing at random, but let us pass our time in fastings, and prayers, and much sobriety of mind. For if a man who is destined to enter upon some temporal government, prepares himself all his life long, and that he may obtain some dignity, lays out his money, spends his time, and submits to endless troubles; what shall we deserve, who draw near to the kingdom of heaven with such negligence, and both show no earnestness before we have received, and after having received are again negligent? Nay, this is the very reason why we are negligent after having received, that we did not watch before we had received. Therefore many, after they have received, immediately have returned to their former vomit, and have become more wicked, and drawn upon themselves a more severe punishment; when having been delivered from their former sins, herein they have more grievously provoked the Judge, that having been delivered from so great a disease, still they did not learn sobriety, but that has happened unto them, which Christ threatened to the paralytic man, saying, "*Behold you are made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you*" [John 5:14]: and which He also predicted of the Jews, that "*the last state shall be worse than the first.*" [Matthew 12:45] For *if*, says He, showing that by their ingratitude they should bring upon them the worst of evils, "*if I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin*" [John 15:22]; so that the guilt of sins committed after these benefits is doubled and quadrupled, in that, after the honour put upon us, we show ourselves ungrateful and wicked. And the Laver of Baptism helps not a whit to procure for us a milder punishment. And consider: a man has gotten grievous sins by committing murder or adultery, or some other crime: *these* were remitted through Baptism. For there is no sin, no impiety, which does not yield and give place to this gift; for the Grace is Divine. A man has again committed

adultery and murder; the former adultery is indeed done away, the murder forgiven, and not brought up again to his charge, *"for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"* [Romans 11:29]; but for those committed after Baptism he suffers a punishment as great as he would if both the former sins were brought up again, and many worse than these. For the guilt is no longer simply equal, but doubled and tripled. Look: in proof that the penalty of these sins is greater, hear what St. Paul says: *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* [Hebrews 10:28-29]

Perhaps we have now deterred many from receiving baptism. Not however with this intention have we so spoken, but on purpose that having received it, they may continue in temperance and much moderation. 'But I am afraid,' says one. If you were afraid, you would have received and guarded it. 'Nay,' says he, 'but this is the very reason why I do not receive it—that I am frightened.' And are you not afraid to depart thus? 'God is merciful,' says he. Receive baptism then, because He is merciful and ready to help. But you, where to be in earnest is the thing required, dost not allege this mercifulness; you think of this only where you have a mind to do so. And yet that was the time to resort to God's mercy, and we shall then be surest of obtaining it, when we do our part. For he that has cast the whole matter upon God, and, after his baptism, sins, as being man it is likely, he may, and repents, shall obtain mercy; whereas he that prevaricates with God's mercy, and departs this life with no portion in that grace, shall have his punishment without a word to be said for him. 'But how if he depart,' say you, 'after having had the grace vouchsafed to him?' He will depart

empty again of all good works. For it is impossible, yes, it is in my opinion impossible, that the man who upon such hopes dallied with baptism should have effected ought generous and good. And why do you harbor such fear, and presume upon the uncertain chance of the future? Why not convert this fear into labor and earnestness, and you shall be great and admirable?

Which is best, to fear or to labor? Suppose some one to have placed you, having nothing to do, in a tottering house, saying, Look for the decaying roof to fall upon your head: for perhaps it will fall, perhaps not; but if you had rather it should not, then work and inhabit the more secure apartment: which would you have rather chosen, that idle condition accompanied with fear, or this labor with confidence? Why then, act now in the same way. For the uncertain future is like a decayed house, ever threatening to fall; but this work, laborious though it be, ensures safety.

Now God forbid that it should happen to us to fall into so great straits as to sin after baptism. However, even if anything such should happen, God is merciful, and has given us many ways of obtaining remission even after this. But just as those who sin after baptism are punished for this reason more severely than the Catechumens, so again, those who know that there are medicines in repentance, and yet will not make use of them, will undergo a more grievous chastisement. For by how much the mercy of God is enlarged, by so much does the punishment increase, if we do not duly profit by that mercy. What do you say, O man? When you were full of such grievous evils, and given over, suddenly you became a friend, and wast exalted to the highest honor, not by labors of your own, but by the gift of God: you again returned to your former misconduct; and though you deserved to be sorely punished, nevertheless, God did not turn away, but gave unnumbered opportunities of salvation, whereby you may yet become a friend: yet for all this, you have not the will to labor. What forgiveness

can you deserve henceforth? Will not the Gentiles with good reason deride you as a worthless drone? For if there be power in that doctrine of yours, say they, what means this multitude of uninitiated persons? If the mysteries be excellent and desirable, let none receive baptism at his last gasp. For that is not the time for giving of mysteries but for making of wills; the time for mysteries is in health of mind and soundness of soul. For, if a man would not prefer to make his will in such a condition; and if he does so make it, he gives a handle for subsequent litigation (and this is the reason why testators premise these words: *"Alive, in my senses, and in health, I make this disposal of my property:"*), how should it be possible for a person who is no longer master of his senses to go through the right course of preparation for the sacred mysteries? For if in the affairs of this life, the laws of the world would not permit a man who was not perfectly sound in mind to make a will, although it be in his own affairs that he would lay down the law; how, when you are receiving instruction concerning the kingdom of heaven, and the unspeakable riches of that world, shall it be possible for you to learn all clearly, when very likely too you are beside yourself through the violence of your malady? And when will you say those words to Christ, in the act of being buried with Him when at the point to depart hence? For indeed both by works and by words must we show our good will towards Him. [Romans 6:4] Now what you are doing is all one, as if a man should want to be enlisted as a soldier, when the war is just about to break up; or to strip for the contest in the arena, just when the spectators have risen from their seats. For you have your arms given you, not that you should straightway depart hence, but that being equipped therewith, you may raise a trophy over the enemy. Let no one think that it is out of season to discourse on this subject, because it is not Lent now. Nay, this it is that vexes me, that you look to a set time in such matters. Whereas that Eunuch, barbarian as he was and on a

journey, yea on the very highway, he did not seek for a set time [Acts 8:27]; no, nor the jailer, though he was in the midst of a set of prisoners, and the teacher he saw before him was a man scourged and in chains, and whom he was still to have in his custody. [Acts 16:29] But here, not being inmates of a jail, nor out on a journey, many are putting off their baptism even to their last breath.

Now if you still questionest that Christ is God, stand away from the Church: be not here, even as a hearer of the Divine Word, and as one of the catechumens: but if you are sure of this, and know clearly this truth, why delay? Why shrink back and hesitate? For fear, say you, lest I should sin. But do you not fear what is worse, to depart for the next world with such a heavy burden? For it is not equally excusable, not to have gotten a grace set before you, and to have failed in attempting to live uprightly. If you be called to account, Why did you not come for it? What will you answer? In the other case you may allege the burden of your passions, and the difficulty of a virtuous life: but nothing of the kind here. For here is grace, freely conveying liberty. But you fear lest you should sin? Let this be your language after Baptism: and then entertain this fear, in order to hold fast the liberty you have received; not now, to prevent your receiving such a gift. Whereas now you are wary before baptism, and negligent after it. But you are waiting for Lent: and why? Has that season any advantage? Nay, it was not at the Passover that the Apostles received the grace, but at another season; and then three thousand (Luke says,) and five thousand were baptized: (ch. 2:41; 4:4, and ch. x.) and again Cornelius. Let us then not wait for a set time, lest by hesitating and putting off we depart empty, and destitute of so great gifts. What do you suppose is my anguish when I hear that any person has been taken away unbaptized, while I reflect upon the intolerable punishments of that life, the inexorable doom! Again, how I am

grieved to behold others drawing near to their last gasp, and not brought to their right mind even then. Hence too it is that scenes take place quite unworthy of this gift. For whereas there ought to be joy, and dancing, and exultation, and wearing of garlands, when another is christened; the wife of the sick man has no sooner heard that the physician has ordered this, than she is overcome with grief, as if it were some dire calamity; she sets up the greatest lamentation, and nothing is heard all over the house but crying and wailing, just as it is when condemned criminals are led away to their doom. The sick man again is then more sorely grieved; and if he recovers from his illness, is as vexed as if some great harm had been done to him. For since he had not been prepared for a virtuous life, he has no heart for the conflicts which are to follow, and shrinks at the thought of them. Do you see what devices the devil contrives, what shame, what ridicule? Let us rid ourselves of this disgrace; let us live as Christ has enjoined. He gave us Baptism, not that we should receive and depart, but that we should show the fruits of it in our after life. How can one say to him who is departing and broken down, Bear fruit? Have you not heard that *"the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace?"* [Galatians 5:22] How comes it then that the very contrary takes place here? For the wife stands there mourning, when she ought to rejoice; the children weeping, when they ought to be glad together; the sick man himself lies there in darkness, and surrounded by noise and tumult, when he ought to be keeping high festival; full of exceeding despondency at the thought of leaving his children orphans, his wife a widow, his house desolate. Is this a state in which to draw near unto mysteries? Answer me; is this a state in which to approach the sacred table? Are such scenes to be tolerated? Should the Emperor send letters and release the prisoners in the jails, there is joy and gladness: God sends down the Holy Ghost from Heaven to remit not arrears of money, but a whole mass of sins, and do ye

all bewail and lament? Why, how grossly unsuitable is this! Not to mention that sometimes it is upon the dead that the water has been poured, and holy mysteries flung upon the ground. However, not we are to blame for this, but men who are so perverse. I exhort you then to leave all, and turn and draw near to Baptism with all alacrity, that having given proof of great earnestness at this present time, we may obtain confidence for that which is to come; whereunto that we may attain, may it be granted unto us all by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 2 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts I. 6

"When they therefore had come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, will You at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

When the disciples intend to ask anything, they approach Him together, that by dint of numbers they may abash Him into compliance. They well knew that in what He had said previously, *"Of that day knows no man"* [Matthew 24:36], He had merely declined telling them: therefore they again drew near, and put the question. They would not have put it had they been truly satisfied with that answer. For having heard that they were about to receive the Holy Ghost, they, as being now worthy of instruction, desired to learn. Also they were quite ready for freedom: for they had no mind to address themselves to danger; what they wished was to breathe freely again; for they were no light matters that had happened to them, but the utmost peril had impended over them. And without saying any thing to Him of the Holy Ghost, they put this question: *"Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* They did not ask, when? But whether *"at this time."* So eager were they for that day. Indeed, to me it appears that they had not any clear notion of the nature of that kingdom; for the Spirit had not yet instructed them. And they do not say, When shall these things be? But they approach Him with greater honour, saying, *"Will You at this time restore again the kingdom,"* as being now already fallen. For there they were still affected towards sensible objects, seeing they were not yet become better than those who were before them; here they have henceforth high

conceptions concerning Christ. Since then their minds are elevated, He also speaks to them in a higher strain. For He no longer tells them, "*Of that day not even the Son of Man knows*" [Mark 13:32]; but He says, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own power [Acts 1:7] You ask things greater than your capacity, He would say. And yet even now they learned things that were much greater than this. And that you may see that this is strictly the case, look how many things I shall enumerate. What, I pray you, was greater than their having learned what they did learn? Thus, they learned that there is a Son of God, and that God has a Son equal with Himself in dignity [John 5:17-20]; they learned that there will be a resurrection [Matthew 17:9]; that when He ascended He sat on the right hand of God [Luke 22:69]; and what is still more stupendous, that Flesh is seated in heaven, and adored by Angels, and that He will come again [Mark 16:19]; they learned what is to take place in the judgment [Matthew 16:27]; learned that they shall then sit and judge the twelve tribes of Israel [Luke 21:27]; learned that the Jews would be cast out, and in their stead the Gentiles should come in [Matthew 19:28]. For, tell me, which is greater? To learn that a person will reign, or to learn the time when? [Luke 21:24]. Paul learned "*things which it is not lawful for a man to utter*" [2 Corinthians 12:4]; things that were before the world was made, he learned them all. Which is the more difficult, the beginning or the end? Clearly to learn the beginning. This, Moses learned, and the time when, and how long ago: and he enumerates the years. And the wise Solomon says, "*I will make mention of things from the beginning of the world.*" And that the time is at hand, they do know: as Paul says, "*The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing.*" [Philippians 4:5]. These things they knew not [then], and yet He mentions many signs [Matthew 24]. But, as He has just said, "*Not many days hence,*" wishing them to be vigilant, and did not openly declare the

precise moment, so is it here also. However, it is not about the general Consummation that they now ask Him, but, *"Will You at this time,"* say they, *"restore the kingdom to Israel?"* And not even this did He reveal to them. They also asked this [about the end of the world] before: and as on that occasion He answered by leading them away from thinking that their deliverance was near and, on the contrary, cast them into the midst of perils, so likewise on this occasion but more mildly. For, that they may not imagine themselves to be wronged, and these things to be mere pretences, hear what He says: He immediately gives them that at which they rejoiced: for He adds: *"But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* [Acts 1:8] Then, that they may make no more enquiries, straightway He was received up. Thus, just as on the former occasion He had darkened their minds by awe, and by saying, *"I know not;"* here also He does so by being taken up. For great was their eagerness on the subject, and they would not have desisted; and yet it was very necessary that they should not learn this. For tell me, which do the Gentiles most disbelieve? That there will be a consummation of the world, or that God has become man, and issued from the Virgin? But I am ashamed of dwelling on this point, as if it were about some difficult matter. Then again, that the disciples might not say, Why do you leave the matter in suspense? He adds, *"Which the Father has put in His own power."* And yet He declared the Father's power and His to be one: as in the saying, *"For as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."* [John 5:21] If where need is to work, Thou actest with the same power as the Father; where it behooves to know, dost Thou not know with the same power? Yet certainly to raise up

the dead is much greater than to learn the day. If the greater be with power, much more the other.

But just as when we see a child crying, and pertinaciously wishing to get something from us that is not expedient for him, we hide the thing, and show him our empty hands, and say, "*See, we have it not:*" the like has Christ here done with the Apostles. But as the child, even when we show him [our empty hands], persists with his crying, conscious he has been deceived, and then we leave him, and depart, saying, "*Such an one calls me:*" and we give him something else instead, in order to divert him from his desire, telling him it is a much finer thing than the other, and then hasten away; in like manner Christ acted. The disciples asked to have something, and He said He had it not. And on the first occasion he frightened them. Then again they asked to have it now: He said He had it not; and He did not frighten them now, but after having shown [the empty hands], He has done this, and gives them a plausible reason: "*Which the Father,*" He says, "*has put in his own power.*" What? Thou not know the things of the Father! You know Him, and not what belongs to Him! And yet You have said, "*None knows the Father but the Son*" [Luke 10:25]; and, "*The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God*" [1 Corinthians 2:10]; and Thou not know this! But they feared to ask Him again, lest they should hear Him say, "*Are ye also without understanding?*" [Matthew 15:26] For they feared Him now much more than before. "*But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you.*" As in the former instance He had not answered their question (for it is the part of a teacher to teach not what the disciple chooses, but what is expedient for him to learn), so in this, He tells them beforehand, for this reason, what they ought to know, that they may not be troubled. In truth, they were yet weak. But to inspire them with confidence, He raised up their souls, and concealed what was grievous.

Since he was about to leave them very shortly, therefore in this discourse He says nothing painful. But how? He extols as great the things which would be painful: all but saying, *"Fear not: for you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria."* For since he had said, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not"* [Matthew 10:5], what there He left unsaid, He here adds, *"And to the uttermost part of the earth;"* and having spoken this, which was more fearful than all the rest, then that they may not again question Him, He held His peace. *"And having this said, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight"* [Acts 1:9]. Do you see that they did preach and fulfil the Gospel? For great was the gift He had bestowed on them. In the very place, He says, where you are afraid, that is, in Jerusalem, there preach ye first, and afterwards unto the uttermost part of the earth. Then for assurance of what He had said, *"While they beheld, He was taken up."* Not *"while they beheld"* did He rise from the dead, but *"while they beheld, He was taken up."* Inasmuch, however, as the sight of their eyes even here was not all-sufficient; for in the Resurrection they saw the end, but not the beginning, and in the Ascension they saw the beginning, but not the end: because in the former it had been superfluous to have seen the beginning, the Lord Himself Who spoke these things being present, and the sepulchre showing clearly that He is not there; but in the latter, they needed to be informed of the sequel by word of others: inasmuch then as their eyes do not suffice to show them the height above, nor to inform them whether He is actually gone up into heaven, or only seemingly into heaven, see then what follows. That it was Jesus Himself they knew from the fact that He had been conversing with them (for had they seen only from a distance, they could not have recognized Him by sight), but that

He is taken up into Heaven the Angels themselves inform them. Observe how it is ordered, that not all is done by the Spirit, but the eyes also do their part. But why did *"a cloud receive Him?"* This too was a sure sign that He went up to Heaven. Not fire, as in the case of Elijah, nor fiery chariot, but *"a cloud received Him;"* which was a symbol of Heaven, as the Prophet says; *"Who makes the clouds His chariot"* [Psalm 104:3]; it is of the Father Himself that this is said. Therefore he says, *"on a cloud;"* in the symbol, he would say, of the Divine power, for no other Power is seen to appear on a cloud. For hear again what another Prophet says: *"The Lord sits upon a light cloud"* [Isaiah 19:1]. For it was while they were listening with great attention to what He was saying, and this in answer to a very interesting question, and with their minds fully aroused and quite awake, that this thing took place. Also on the mount [Sinai] the cloud was because of Him: since Moses also entered into the darkness, but the cloud there was not because of Moses. And He did not merely say, *"I go,"* lest they should again grieve, but He said, *"I send the Spirit"* [John 16:5-7]; and that He was going away into heaven they saw with their eyes. O what a sight they were granted! *"And while they looked steadfastly,"* it is said, *"toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, You men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven"*— they used the expression *"This"* demonstratively, saying, *"this Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall thus"*— demonstratively, *"in this way"*— *"come in like manner as you have seen Him going into heaven."* (v. 10-11.) Again, the outward appearance is cheering [*"in white apparel"*]. They were Angels, in the form of men. And they say, *"You men of Galilee:"* they showed themselves to be trusted by the disciples, by saying, *"You men of Galilee."* For this was the meaning: else, what needed they to be told of their country,

who knew it well enough? By their appearance also they attracted their regard, and showed that they were from heaven. But wherefore does not Christ Himself tell them these things, instead of the Angels? He had beforehand told them all things; [*"What if you shall see the Son of Man] going up where He was before?"*] [John 6:62].

Moreover the Angels did not say, 'whom you have seen taken up,' but, *"going into heaven:"* ascension is the word, not assumption; the expression *"taken up,"* belongs to the flesh. For the same reason they say, *"He which is taken up from you shall thus come,"* not, *"shall be sent,"* but, *"shall come. He that ascended, the same is he also that descended"* [Ephesians 4:10]. So again the expression, *"a cloud received Him:"* for He Himself mounted upon the cloud. Of the expressions, some are adapted to the conceptions of the disciples, some agreeable with the Divine Majesty. Now, as they behold, their conceptions are elevated: He has given them no slight hint of the nature of His second coming. For this, *"Shall thus come,"* means, with the body; which thing they desired to hear; and, that he shall come again to judgment *"thus"* upon a cloud. *"And, behold, two men stood by them."* Why is it said, *"men?"* Because they had fashioned themselves completely as such, that the beholders might not be overpowered. *"Which also said:"* their words moreover were calculated for soothing: *"Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"* They would not let them any longer wait there for Him. Here again, these tell what is greater, and leave the less unsaid. That *"He will thus come,"* they say, and that *"ye must look for Him from heaven."* For the rest, they called them off from that spectacle to their saying, that they might not, because they could not see Him, imagine that He was not ascended, but even while they are conversing, would be present ere they were aware. For if they said on a former occasion, *"Where are You going?"* [John 13:36] much more would they have said it now.

"Will You at this time," say they, *"restore the kingdom to Israel?"* (Recapitulation). They so well knew his mildness, that after His Passion also they ask Him, *"Will you restore?"* And yet He had before said to them, *"You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, but the end is not yet,"* nor shall Jerusalem be taken. But now they ask Him about the kingdom, not about the end. And besides, He does not speak at great length with them after the Resurrection. They address then this question, as thinking that they themselves would be in high honor, if this should come to pass. But He (for as touching this restoration, that it was not to be, He did not openly declare; for what needed they to learn this? Hence they do not again ask, *"What is the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?"* for they are afraid to say that: but, *"Will You restore the kingdom to Israel?"* for they thought there was such a kingdom), but He, I say, both in parables had shown that the time was not near, and here where they asked, and He answered thereto, *"You shall receive power,"* says He, *"when the Holy Ghost has come upon you. Is come upon you,"* not, *"is sent,"* [to show the Spirit's coequal Majesty. How then do you dare, O opponent of the Spirit, to call Him a creature ?]. *"And you shall be witnesses to Me."* He hinted at the Ascension. [And when he had spoken these things.] Which they had heard before, and He now reminds them of. [*"He was taken up."*] Already it has been shown, that He went up into heaven. [*"And a cloud, etc."*] *"Clouds and darkness are under His feet,"* [Psalm 18:9; 97:2] says the Scripture: for this is declared by the expression, *"And a cloud received Him:"* the Lord of heaven, it means. For as a king is shown by the royal chariot, so was the royal chariot sent for Him. [Behold, two men, etc.] That they may vent no sorrowful exclamations, and that it might not be with them as it was with Elisha, [2 Kings 2:12] who, when his master was taken up, rent his mantle. And what say they? *"This Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven,*

shall thus come." And, *"Behold, two men stood by them."* [Matthew 18:16] With good reason: for *"in the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established"* [Deuteronomy 17:6]: and these utter the same things. And it is said, that they were *"in white apparel."* In the same manner as they had already seen an Angel at the sepulchre, who had even told them their own thoughts; so here also an Angel is the preacher of His Ascension; although indeed the Prophets had frequently foretold it, as well as the Resurrection.

Everywhere it is Angels as at the Nativity, *"for that which is conceived in her,"* says one, *"is by the Holy Ghost"* [Matthew 1:20]: and again to Mary, *"Fear not, Mary."* [Luke 1:30] And at the Resurrection: *"He is not here; He is risen, and goes before you."* [Luke 24:6] *"Come, and see!"* [Matthew 28:6] And at the Second Coming. For that they may not be utterly in amaze, therefore it is added, *"Shall thus come."* [Matthew 25:31] They recover their breath a little; if indeed He shall come again, if also thus come, and not be unapproachable! And that expression also, that it is *"from them"* He is taken up, is not idly added. And of the Resurrection indeed Christ Himself bears witness (because of all things this is, next to the Nativity, nay even above the Nativity, the most wonderful: His raising Himself to life again): for, *"Destroy,"* He says, *"this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* [John 2:19] *"Shall thus come,"* say they. If any therefore desires to see Christ; if any grieves that he has not seen Him: having this heard, let him show forth an admirable life, and certainly he shall see Him, and shall not be disappointed. For Christ will come with greater glory, though *"thus,"* in this manner, with a body ; and much more wondrous will it be to see Him descending from heaven. But for what He will come, they do not add.

[*"Shall thus come,"* etc.] This is a confirmation of the Resurrection; for if he was taken up with a body, much rather must He have risen again with

a body. Where are those who disbelieve the Resurrection? Who are they, I pray? Are they Gentiles, or Christians? For I am ignorant. But no, I know well: they are Gentiles, who also disbelieve the work of Creation. For the two denials go together: the denial that God creates any thing from nothing, and the denial that He raises up what has been buried. But then, being ashamed to be thought such as *"know not the power of God"* [Matthew 22:29], that we may not impute this to them, they allege: We do not say it with this meaning, but because there is no need of the body. Truly it may be seasonably said, *"The fool will speak foolishness."* [Isaiah 32:6] Are you not ashamed not to grant, that God can create from nothing? If he creates from matter already existing, wherein does He differ from men? But whence, you demand, are evils? Though you should not know whence, ought you for that to introduce another evil in the knowledge of evils? Hereupon two absurdities follow. For if you do not grant, that from things which are not, God made the things which are, much more shall you be ignorant whence are evils: and then, again, you introduce another evil, the affirming that Evil ([τὴν κακίαν]) is uncreated. Consider now what a thing it is, when you wish to find the source of evils, to be both ignorant of it, and to add another to it. Search after the origin of evils, and do not blaspheme God. And how do I blaspheme? Says he. When you make out that evils have a power equal to God's; a power uncreated. For, observe what Paul says; *"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."* [Romans 1:20] But the devil would have both to be of matter, that there may be nothing left from which we may come to the knowledge of God. For tell me, whether is harder: to take that which is by nature evil (if indeed there be ought such; for I speak upon your principles, since there is no such thing as evil by nature), and make it either good, or even coefficient of good? Or, to make of nothing?

Whether is easier (I speak of quality); to induce the non-existent quality; or to take the existing quality, and change it into its contrary? Where there is no house, to make the house; or where it is utterly destroyed, to make it identically exist again? Why, as this is impossible, so is that: to make a thing into its opposite. Tell me, whether is harder; to make a perfume, or to make filth have the effect of perfume? Say, whether of these is easier (since we subject God to our reasonings: nay, not we, but you); to form eyes, or to make a blind man to see continuing blind, and yet more sharp-sighted, than one who does see? To make blindness into sight, and deafness into hearing? To me the other seems easier. Say then do you grant God that which is harder, and not grant the easier? But souls also they affirm to be of His substance. Do you see what a number of impieties and absurdities are here! In the first place, wishing to show that evils are from God, they bring in another thing more impious than this, that they are equal with Him in majesty, and God prior in existence to none of them, assigning this great prerogative even to them! In the next place, they affirm evil to be indestructible: for if that which is uncreated can be destroyed, you see the blasphemy! So that it comes to this, either that nothing is of God if not these; or that these are God! Thirdly, what I have before spoken of, in this point they defeat themselves, and prepare against themselves fresh indignation. Fourthly, they affirm unordered matter to possess such inherent ([ἐ] [πιτηδειότητα]) power. Fifthly, that evil is the cause of the goodness of God, and that without this the Good had not been good. Sixthly, they bar against us the ways of attaining unto the knowledge of God. Seventhly, they bring God down into men, yea plants and logs. For if our soul be of the substance of God, but the process of its transmigration into new bodies brings it at last into cucumbers, and melons, and onions, why then the substance of God will pass into cucumbers! And if we say, that the Holy

Ghost fashioned the Temple [of our Lord's body] in the Virgin, they laugh us to scorn: and if, that He dwelt in that spiritual Temple, again they laugh; while they themselves are not ashamed to bring down God's substance into cucumbers, and melons, and flies, and caterpillars, and asses, thus excogitating a new fashion of idolatry: for let it not be as the Egyptians have it, "*The onion is God*;" but let it be, "*God in the onion*"! Why do you shrink from the notion of God's entering into a body? 'It is shocking,' says he. Why then this is much more shocking. But, forsooth, it is not shocking — how should it be?— this same thing which is so, if it be into us! 'But your notion is indeed shocking.' Do ye see the filthiness of their impiety?— But why do they not wish the body to be raised? And why do they say the body is evil? By what then, tell me, do you know God? By what have you the knowledge of existing things? The philosopher too: by means of what is he a philosopher, if the body does nothing towards it? Deaden the senses, and then learn something of the things one needs to know! What would be more foolish than a soul, if from the first it had the senses deadened? If the deadening of but a single part, I mean of the brain, becomes a marring of it altogether; if all the rest should be deadened, what would it be good for? Show me a soul without a body. Do you not hear physicians say, The presence of disease sadly enfeebles the soul? How long will you put off hanging yourselves? Is the body material? Tell me. "*To be sure, it is.*" Then you ought to hate it. Why do you feed, why cherish it? You ought to get quit of this prison. But besides: "*God cannot overcome matter, unless he ([συμπλακῆ]) implicate himself with it: for he cannot issue orders to it (O feebleness!) until he close with it, and ([σταθῆ]) take his stand (say you) through the whole of it!*" And a king indeed does all by commanding; but God, not by commanding the evil! In short, if it were unparticipant of all good, it could not subsist at all. For Evil cannot subsist, unless it lay hold

upon somewhat of the accidents of Virtue: so that if it had been heretofore all unmixed with virtue, it would have perished long ago: for such is the condition of evils. Let there be a profligate man, let him put upon himself no restraint whatever, will he live ten days? Let there be a robber, and devoid of all conscience in his dealings with every one, let him be such even to his fellow robbers, will he be able to live? Let there be a thief, void of all shame, who knows not what blushing is, but steals openly in public. It is not in the nature of evils to subsist, unless they get some small share at least in good. So that hereupon, according to these men, God gave them their subsistence. Let there be a city of wicked men; will it stand? But let them be wicked, not only with regard to the good, but towards each other. Why, it is impossible such a city should stand. Truly, *"professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* [Romans 1:22] If bodily substance be evil, then all things visible exist idly, and in vain, both water and earth, and sun, and air; for air is also body, though not solid. It is in point then to say, *"The wicked have told me foolish things."* [Psalm 119:85] But let not us endure them, let us block up our ears against them. For there is, yea, there is, a resurrection of bodies. This the sepulchre which is at Jerusalem declares, this the pillar to which He was bound, when He was scourged. For, *"We ate and drank with Him,"* it is said. Let us then believe in the Resurrection, and do things worthy of it, that we may attain to the good things which are to come, through Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father, and the Holy Ghost together, be power, honor, now and for ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 3 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts I. 12

"Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey."

"Then returned they," it is said: namely, when they had heard. For they could not have borne it, if the angel had not ([ὁ] [περέθετο]) referred them to another Coming. It seems to me, that it was also on a sabbath-day that these things took place; for he would not thus have specified the distance, saying, *"from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey,"* unless they were then going on the sabbath-day a certain definite distance. *"And when they had come in,"* it says, *"they went up into an upper room, where they were making their abode:"* so they then remained in Jerusalem after the Resurrection: *"both Peter, and James, and John:"* no longer is only the latter together with his brother mentioned, but together with Peter the two: *"and Andrew, and Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, and James (the son) of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas, (the brother) of James."* [Acts 1:13] He has done well to mention the disciples: for since one had betrayed Christ, and another had been unbelieving, he thereby shows that, except the first, all of them were preserved.

"These were all continuing with one accord in prayer together with the women." [Acts 1:14] For this is a powerful weapon in temptations; and to this they had been trained. [*"Continuing with one accord."*] Good. ([καλῶς]). Besides, the present temptation directed them to this: for they

exceedingly feared the Jews. "*With the women,*" it is said: for he had said that they had followed Him: "*and with Mary the mother of Jesus.*" [Luke 23:55] How then [is it said, that "*that disciple*"] took her to his own home [John 19:26], at that time? But then the Lord had brought them together again, and so returned. "*And with His brethren.*" [John 17:5] These also were before unbelieving. "*And in those days,*" it says, "*Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said.*" [Acts 1:15] Both as being ardent, and as having been put in trust by Christ with the flock, and as having precedence in honor, he always begins the discourse. ("*The number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty.*") *Men and brethren,*" he says, "*this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spoke before,*" [etc.] [Acts 1:16] Why did he not ask Christ to give him some one in the room of Judas? It is better as it is. For in the first place, they were engaged in other things; secondly, of Christ's presence with them, the greatest proof that could be given was this: as He had chosen when He was among them, so did He now being absent. Now this was no small matter for their consolation. But observe how Peter does everything with the common consent; nothing imperiously. And he does not speak thus without a meaning. But observe how he consoles them concerning what had passed. In fact, what had happened had caused them no small consternation. For if there are many now who canvass this circumstance, what may we suppose they had to say then?

"Men and brethren," says Peter. For if the Lord called them brethren, much more may he. [*"Men,"* he says]: they all being present. See the dignity of the Church, the angelic condition! No distinction there, "*neither male nor female.*" I would that the Churches were such now! None there had his mind full of some worldly matter, none was anxiously thinking about

household concerns. Such a benefit are temptations, such the advantage of afflictions!

"This Scripture," says he, *"must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spoke before."* Always he comforts them by the prophecies. So does Christ on all occasions. In the very same way, he shows here that no strange thing had happened, but what had already been foretold. *"This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled,"* he says, *"which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spoke before."* He does not say, David, but the Spirit through him. See what kind of doctrine the writer has at the very outset of the book. Do you see, that it was not for nothing that I said in the beginning of this work, that this book is the Polity of the Holy Spirit? *"Which the Holy Ghost spoke before by the mouth of David."* Observe how he appropriates ([οἰκειοῦται]) him; and that it is an advantage to them, that this was spoken by David, and not by some other Prophet. *"Concerning Judas,"* he says, *"which was guide."* Here again mark the philosophical temper of the man: how he does not mention him with scorn, nor say, *"that wretch," "that miscreant:"* but simply states the fact; and does not even say, *"who betrayed Him,"* but does what he can to transfer the guilt to others: nor does he animadvert severely even on these: *"Which was guide,"* he says, *"to them that took Jesus."* Furthermore, before he declares where David had spoken, he relates what had been the case with Judas, that from the things present he may fetch assurance of the things future, and show that this man had already received his due. *"For he was numbered,"* says he, *"with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man acquired a field out of the reward of iniquity."* (v. 17-18.) He gives his discourse a moral turn, and covertly mentions the cause of the wickedness, because it carried reproof with it. And he does not say, The Jews, but, *"this man, acquired"* it. For since the minds of weak persons do not attend to things future, as they do to

things present, he discourses of the immediate punishment inflicted. "*And falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst.*" He does well to dilate not upon the sin, but upon the punishment. "*And,*" he says, "*all his bowels gushed out.*" This brought them consolation. "*And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue [Aceldama], that is to say, the field of blood.*" [Acts 1:19]. Now the Jews gave it this name, not on this account, but because of Judas; here, however, Peter makes it to have this reference, and when he brings forward the adversaries as witnesses, both by the fact that they named it, and by saying, "*in their proper tongue,*" this is what he means.

Then after the event, he appositely brings in the Prophet, saying, "*For it is written in the Book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein*" [Acts 1:20] [Psalm 69:25]: this is said of the field and the dwelling: And his bishopric let another take; that is, his office, his priesthood. So that this, he says, is not my counsel, but His who has foretold these things. For, that he may not seem to be undertaking a great thing, and just such as Christ had done, he adduces the Prophet as a witness. "*Wherefore it behooves of these men which have companied with us all the time.*" [Acts 1:21] Why does he make it their business too? That the matter might not become an object of strife, and they might not fall into contention about it. For if the Apostles themselves once did this, much more might those. This he ever avoids. Wherefore at the beginning he said, "*Men and brethren. It behooves*" to choose from among you. He defers the decision to the whole body, thereby both making the elected objects of reverence and himself keeping clear of all invidiousness with regard to the rest. For such occasions always give rise to great evils. Now that some one must needs be appointed, he adduces the prophet as witness: but from among what persons: "*Of these,*" he says, "*which have companied with us all the time.*"

To have said, the worthy must present themselves, would have been to insult the others; but now he refers the matter to length of time; for he says not simply, *"These who have companied with us,"* but, *"all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection"* [Acts 1:22]: that their college ([ὁ] [χορὸς]) might not be left mutilated. Then why did it not rest with Peter to make the election himself: what was the motive? This; that he might not seem to bestow it of favor. And besides, he was not yet endowed with the spirit. *"And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabus, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias."* [Acts 1:23] Not he appointed them: but it was he that introduced the proposition to that effect, at the same time pointing out that even this was not his own, but from old time by prophecy; so that he acted as expositor, not as preceptor. *"Joseph called Barsabus, who was surnamed Justus."* Perhaps both names are given, because there were others of the same name, for among the Apostles also there were several names alike; as James, and James (the son) of Alphæus; Simon Peter, and Simon Zelotes; Judas (the brother) of James, and Judas Iscariot. The appellation, however, may have arisen from a change of life, and very likely also of the moral character. *"They appointed two,"* it is said, *"Joseph called Barsabus, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said; Thou, Lord, which know the hearts of all men, show whether of these two you have chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."* (v. 24-25.) They do well to mention the sin of Judas, thereby showing that it is a witness they ask to have; not increasing the number, but not suffering it to be diminished. *"And they gave forth their lots"* (for the

spirit was not yet sent), *"and the lot fell upon Matthias: and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles."* [Acts 1:26]

"Then," it says, returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet (Recapitulation), [*"which is near to Jerusalem, at the distance of a sabbath-day's journey:"*] so that there was no long way to go, to be a cause of alarm to them while yet trembling and fearful. *"And when they had come in, they went up into an upper room."* They dared not appear in the town. They also did well to go up into an upper room, as it became less easy to arrest them at once. *"And they continued,"* it is said, *"with one accord in prayer."* Do you see how watchful they were? *"Continuing in prayer,"* and *"with one accord,"* as it were with one soul, continuing therein: two things reported in their praise. [*"Where they were abiding,"* etc., to, *"And Mary the Mother of Jesus and His brethren."*] Now Joseph perhaps was dead: for it is not to be supposed that when the brethren had become believers, Joseph believed not; he who in fact had believed before any. Certain it is that we nowhere find him looking upon Christ as man merely. As where His mother said, [*"Your father and I did seek you sorrowing."* [Luke 2:48] And upon another occasion, it was said,] *"Your mother and your brethren seek you."* [Matthew 13:47] So that Joseph knew this before all others. And to them [the brethren] Christ said, The world cannot hate you, but Me it hates. [John 7:7]

Again, consider the moderation of James. He it was who received the Bishopric of Jerusalem, and here he says nothing. Mark also the great moderation of the other Apostles, how they concede the throne to him, and no longer dispute with each other. For that Church was as it were in heaven: having nothing to do with this world's affairs: and resplendent not with wails, no, nor with numbers, but with the zeal of them that formed the assembly. They were *"about an hundred and twenty,"* it says. The seventy

perhaps whom Christ Himself had chosen, and other of the more earnest-minded disciples, as Joseph and Matthias. [Acts 1:14] There were women, he says, many, who followed Him. [Mark 15:41] [*"The number of the names together."*] *Together* " they were on all occasions.

[*"Men and brethren,"* etc.] Here is forethought for providing a teacher; here was the first who ordained a teacher. He did not say, 'We are sufficient.' So far was he beyond all vain-glory, and he looked to one thing alone. And yet he had the same power to ordain as they all collectively. But well might these things be done in this fashion, through the noble spirit of the man, and because prelacy then was not an affair of dignity, but of provident care for the governed. This neither made the elected to become elated, for it was to dangers that they were called, nor those not elected to make a grievance of it, as if they were disgraced. But things are not done in this fashion now; nay, quite the contrary.— For observe, they were an hundred and twenty, and he asks for one out of the whole body: with good right, as having been put in charge of them: for to him had Christ said, *"And when you are converted, strengthen your brethren."* [Luke 22:32]

"For he was numbered with us," ([πρῶτος τοῦ πράγματος ἀβθεντει] absent from A.B.C) says Peter. On this account it behooves to propose another; to be a witness in his place. And see how he imitates his Master, ever discoursing from the Scriptures, and saying nothing as yet concerning Christ; namely, that He had frequently predicted this Himself. Nor does he mention where the Scripture speaks of the treachery of Judas; for instance, *"The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me"* [Psalm 109:1]; but where it speaks only of his punishment; for this was most to their advantage. It shows again the benevolence of the Lord: *"For he was numbered with us"* ([τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτοὺς μάλιστα ὠφέλει] God's grace and election, and reminding them of the old times, inasmuch as God chose

him into His own lot or portion, as of old He took the Levites. He also dwells upon the circumstances respecting Judas, showing that the reward of the treachery was made itself the herald of the punishment. For he *"acquired,"* he says, *"a field out of the reward of the iniquity."* Observe the divine economy in the event. *"Of the iniquity,"* he says. For there are many iniquities, but never was anything more iniquitous than this: so that the affair was one of iniquity. Now not only to those who were present did the event become known, but to all thereafter, so that without meaning or knowing what they were about, they gave it a name; just as Caiaphas had prophesied unconsciously. God compelled them to call the field in Hebrew *"Aceldama."* Matthew 26:24] By this also the evils which were to come upon the Jews were declared: and Peter shows the prophecy to have been so far in part fulfilled, which says, *"It had been good for that man if he had not been born."* We may with propriety apply this same to the Jews likewise; for if he who was guide suffered thus, much more they. Thus far however Peter says nothing of this. Then, showing that the term, *"Aceldama,"* might well be applied to his fate, he introduces the prophet, saying, *"Let his habitation be desolate."* For what can be worse desolation than to become a place of burial? And the field may well be called *his*. For he who cast down the price, although others were the buyers, has a right to be himself reckoned owner of a great desolation. This desolation was the prelude to that of the Jews, as will appear on looking closely into the facts. For indeed they destroyed themselves by famine, and killed many, and the city became a burial-place of strangers, of soldiers, for as to those, they would not even have let them be buried, for in fact they were not deemed worthy of sepulture.

"Wherefore of these men which have companied with us," continues Peter. Observe how desirous he is they should be eye-witnesses. It is true

indeed that the Spirit would shortly come; and yet great care is shown with regard to this circumstance. *"Of these men,"* he says, *"which have accompanied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us."* He shows that they had dwelt with Christ, not simply been present as disciples. In fact, from the very beginning there were many that then followed Him. Observe, for instance, how this appears in these words: *"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed Jesus.— All the time,"* he says, *"that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John."* [John 1:40] True! For no one knew what preceded that event, though they did learn it by the Spirit. *"Unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection."* He said not, a witness of the rest of his actions, but a witness of the resurrection alone. For indeed that witness had a better right to be believed, who was able to declare, that He Who ate and drank, and was crucified, the same rose again. Wherefore it was needed that he should be a witness, not only of the time preceding this event, nor only of what followed it, and of the miracles; the thing required was, the resurrection. For the other matters were manifest and acknowledged, but the resurrection took place in secret, and was manifest to these only. And they do not say, Angels have told us; but, We have seen. For this it was that was most needful at that time: that they should be men having a right to be believed, because they had seen.

"And they appointed two," it is said. Why not many? That the feeling of disappointment might not reach further, extending to many. Again, it is not without reason that he puts Matthias last; he would show, that frequently he that is honourable among men, is inferior before God. And they all pray in common saying, *"You, Lord, which know the hearts of all men, show. You,"* not *"We."* And very seasonably they use the epithet,

"heart-knowing:" for by Him Who is this must the choice be made. So confident were they, that assuredly one of them must be appointed. They said not, Choose, but, *"Show the chosen one;"* knowing that all things were foreordained of God; *"Whom You chose: one of these two,"* say they, *"to have his lot in this ministry and apostleship."* For there was besides another ministry ([διακονία]). *"And they gave them their lots."* For they did not yet consider themselves to be worthy to be informed by some sign. And besides, if in a case where neither prayer was made, nor men of worth were the agents, the casting of lots so much availed, because it was done of a right intention, I mean in the case of Jonah [Jonah 1:7]; much more did it here. Thus, did he, the designated, fill up the company, complete the order: but the other candidate was not annoyed; for the apostolic writers would not have concealed [that or any other] failings of their own, seeing they have told of the very chief Apostles, that on other occasions they *had indignation* [Matthew 20:24; Matthew 26:8], and this not once only, but again and again.

Let us then also imitate them. And now I address no longer every one, but those who aim at preferment. If you believe that the election is with God, be not displeased. [Mark 10:14-21 and 14:4] For it is with Him you are displeased, and with Him you are exasperated: it is He who has made the choice; you do the very thing that Cain did; because, forsooth, his brother's sacrifice was preferred, he was indignant, when he ought to have felt compunction. However, that is not what I mean here; but this, that God knows how to dispense things for the best. In many cases, you are in point of disposition more estimable than the other but not the fit person. Besides, on the other hand, your life is irreproachable, and your habits those of a well-nurtured man, but in the Church this is not all that is wanted. Moreover, one man is adapted for one thing, another for another. Do you

not observe, how much discourse the holy Scripture has made on this matter? But let me say why it is that the thing has become a subject of competition: it is because we come to the Episcopate not as unto a work of governing and superintending the brethren, but as to a post of dignity and repose. Did you but know that a Bishop is bound to belong to all, to bear the burden of all; that others, if they are angry, are pardoned, but he never; that others, if they sin, have excuses made for them, he has none; you would not be eager for the dignity, would not run after it. So it is, the Bishop is exposed to the tongues of all, to the criticism of all, whether they be wise or fools. He is harassed with cares every day, nay, every night. He has many to hate him, many to envy him. Talk not to me of those who curry favor with all, of those who desire to sleep, of those who advance to this office as for repose. We have nothing to do with these; we speak of those who watch for your souls, who consider the safety and welfare of those under them before their own. Tell me now: suppose a man has ten children, always living with him, and constantly under his control; yet is he solicitous about them; and a bishop, who has such numbers, not living under the same roof with him, but owing obedience to his authority— what does he not need to be! But he is honored, you will say. With what sort of honor, indeed! Why, the paupers and beggars abuse him openly in the market-place. And why does he not stop their mouths then? Yes, very proper work, this, for a bishop, is it not? Then again, if he do not give to all, the idle and the industrious alike, lo! A thousand complaints on all sides. None is afraid to accuse him, and speak evil of him. In the case of civil governors, fear steps in; with bishops, nothing of the kind. As for the fear of God, it does not influence people, as regards them, in the least degree. Why speak of the anxiety connected with the word and doctrine? The painful work in Ordinations? Either, perhaps, I am a poor wretched incompetent creature, or else, the case is as I say. The

soul of a Bishop is for all the world like a vessel in a storm: lashed from every side, by friends, by foes, by one's own people, by strangers. Does not the Emperor rule the whole world, the Bishop a single city? Yet a Bishop's anxieties are as much beyond those of the emperor, as the waters of a river simply moved, by the wind are surpassed in agitation by the swelling and raging sea. And why? Because in the one case there are many to lend a hand, for all goes on by law and by rule; but in the other there is none of this, nor is there authority to command; but if one be greatly moved, then he is harsh; if the contrary, then he is cold! And in him these opposites must meet, that he may neither be despised, nor be hated. Besides, the very demands of business preoccupy him: how many is he obliged to offend, whether he will or not! How many to be severe with! I speak not otherwise than it is, but as I find it in my own actual experience. I do not think there are many among Bishops that will be saved, but many more that perish: and the reason is, that it is an affair that requires a great mind. Many are the exigencies which throw a man out of his natural temper; and he had need have a thousand eyes on all sides. Do you not see what a number of qualifications the Bishop must have? To be apt to teach, patient, holding fast the faithful word in doctrine [see 1 Timothy 3:2-9; Titus 1:7-9]. What trouble and pains does this require! And then, others do wrong, and he bears all the blame. To pass over every thing else: if one soul depart unbaptized, does not this subvert all his own prospect of salvation? The loss of one soul carries with it a penalty which no language can represent. For if the salvation of that soul was of such value, that the Son of God became man, and suffered so much, think how sore a punishment must the losing of it bring! And if in this present life he who is cause of another's destruction is worthy of death, much more in the next world. Do not tell me, that the presbyter is in fault, or the deacon. The guilt of all these comes perforce

upon the head of those who ordained them. Let me mention another instance. It chances, that a bishop has inherited from his predecessor a set of persons of indifferent character. What measures is it proper to take in respect of bygone transgressions (for here are two precipices) so as not to let the offender go unpunished, and not to cause scandal to the rest? Must one's first step be to cut him off? There is no actual present ground for that. But is it right to let him go unmarked? Yes, say you; for the fault rests with the bishop who ordained him. Well then? Must one refuse to ordain him again, and to raise him to a higher degree of the ministry? That would be to publish it to all men, that he is a person of indifferent character, and so again one would cause scandal in a different way. But is one to promote him to a higher degree? That is much worse.

If then there were only the responsibility of the office itself for people to run after in the episcopate, none would be so quick to accept it. But as things go, we run after this, just as we do after the dignities of the world. That we may have glory with men, we lose ourselves with God. What profit in such honor? How self-evident its nothingness is! When you covet the episcopal rank, put in the other scale, the account to be rendered after this life. Weigh against it, the happiness of a life free from toil, take into account the different measure of the punishment. I mean, that even if you have sinned, but in your own person merely, you will have no such great punishment, nothing like it: but if you have sinned as bishop, you are lost. Remember what Moses endured, what wisdom he displayed, what good deeds he exhibited: but, for committing one sin only, he was bitterly punished; and with good reason; for this fault was attended with injury to the rest. Not in regard that the sin was public, but because it was the sin of a spiritual Ruler ([ἵ] [ἐπέως]) cf. S.); for in truth we do not pay the same penalty for public and for hidden faults. [Augustine in Psalm 99:6] The sin

may be the same, but not the ([ζημία]) harm of it; nay, not the sin itself; for it is not the same thing to sin in secret and unseen, and to sin openly. But the bishop cannot sin unobserved. Well for him if he escape reproach, though he sin not; much less can he think to escape notice, if he do sin. Let him be angry, let him laugh, or let him but dream of a moment's relaxation, many are they that scoff, many that are offended, many that lay down the law, many that bring to mind the former bishops, and abuse the present one; not that they wish to sound the praise of those; no, it is only to carp at him that they bring up the mention of fellow bishops, of presbyters. Sweet, says the proverb, is war to the inexperienced; but it may rather be said now, that even after one has come out of it, people in general have seen nothing of it: for in their eyes it is not war, but like those shepherds in Ezekiel, we slay and devour. [Ezekiel 34:2] Which of us has it in his power to show that he has taken as much care for the flocks of Christ, as Jacob did for Laban's? [Genesis 31:40] Which of us can tell of the frost of the night? For talk not to me of vigils, and all that parade. The contrary plainly is the fact. Prefects, and governors ([ὄ] [παρχοι καὶ τοπάρχαι]) of provinces, do not enjoy such honour as he that governs the Church. If he enter the palace, who but he is first? If he go to see ladies, or visit the houses of the great, none is preferred to him. The whole state of things is ruined and corrupt. I do not speak thus as wishing to put us bishops to shame, but to repress your hankering after the office. For with what conscience, (even should you succeed in becoming a bishop, having made interest for it either in person or by another), with what eyes will you look the man in the face who worked with you to that end? What will you have to plead for your excuse? For he that unwillingly, by compulsion and not with his own consent, was raised to the office, may have something to say for himself, though for the most part even such an one has no pardon to expect, and yet truly he so far has

something to plead in excuse. Think how it fared with Simon Magus. What signifies it that you give not money, if, in place of money, you pay court, you lay many plans, you set engines to work? *"Your money perish with you!"* [Acts 8:20] Thus was it said to him, and thus will it be said to these: your canvassing perish with you, because you have thought to purchase the gift of God by human intrigue! But there is none such here? And God forbid there should be! For it is not that I wish any thing of what I have been saying to be applicable to you: but just now the connection has led us on to these topics. In like manner when we talk against covetousness, we are not preaching at you, no, nor against any one man personally. God grant it may be the case, that these remedies were prepared by us without necessity. The wish of the physician is, that after all his pains, his drugs may be thrown away because not wanted: and this is just what we desire, that our words may not have been needed, and so have been spoken to the wind, so as to be but words. I am ready to submit to anything, rather than be reduced to the necessity of using this language. But if you like, we are ready to leave off; only let our silence be without bad effects. No one, I imagine, though he were ever so vainglorious, would wish to make a display of severity, when there is nothing to call for it. I will leave the teaching to you: for that is the best teaching, which teaches by actions. For indeed the best physicians, although the sickness of their patients brings them in fees, would rather their friends were well. And so we too wish all to be well. [2 Corinthians 13:7] It is not that we desire to be approved, and you reprov'd. I would gladly manifest, if it were possible, with my very eyes, the love which I bear to you: for then no one would be able to reproach me, though my language were ever so rough. *"For speech of friends, yea, were it insult, can be borne;"* more faithful are the wounds of a friend, rather than the ready kisses of an enemy. [Proverbs 27:6] There nothing I love more

than you, no, not even light itself. I would gladly have my eyes put out ten thousand times over, if it were possible by this means to convert your souls; so much is your salvation dearer to me than light itself. For what profit to me in the rays of the sun, when despondency on your account makes it all thick darkness before my eyes? Light is good when it shines in cheerfulness, to a sorrowful heart it seems even to be a trouble. How true this is, may you never learn by experience! However, if it happen to any of you to fall into sin, just stand by my bedside, when I am laid down to rest and should be asleep; see whether I am not like a palsied man, like one beside himself, and, in the language of the prophet, the light of my eyes, it also is gone from me. [Psalm 38:10] For where is our hope, if you do not make progress? Where our despondency, if you do excellently? I seem to have wings, when I hear any thing good of you. *"Fulfil ye my joy."* [Philippians 2:2] This one thing is the burden of my prayers, that I long for your advancement. But that in which I strive with all is this, that I love you, that I am wrapped up in you, that you are my all, father, mother, brethren, children. Think not then that any thing that has been said was said in a hostile spirit, nay, it is for your amendment. It is written *"A brother assisted by his brother is as a strong city."* [Proverbs 18:19] Then do not take it in disdain: for neither do I undervalue what you have to say. I should wish even to be set right by you. For all (Edd. 'all we') you are brethren, and One is our Master: yet even among brothers it is for one to direct, while the others obey. Then disdain it not, but let us do all to the glory of God, for to Him belongs glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 4 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 2:1-2

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven."

Do you perceive the type? What is this Pentecost? The time when the sickle was to be put to the harvest, and the ingathering was made. See now the reality, when the time had come to put in the sickle of the word: for here, as the sickle, keen-edged, came the Spirit down. For hear the words of Christ: *"Lift up your eyes,"* He said, *"and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest."* [John 4:35] And again, *"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."* [Matthew 9:38] But as the first-fruits of this harvest, He himself took [our nature], and bore it up on high. Himself first put in the sickle. Therefore also He calls the Word the Seed. *"When,"* it says, *"the day of Pentecost was fully come"* [Luke 8:5, 11]: that is, when at the Pentecost, while about it, in short. For it was essential that the present events likewise should take place during the feast, that those who had witnessed the crucifixion of Christ, might also behold these. *"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven."* [Acts 2:2] Why did this not come to pass without sensible tokens? For this reason. If even when the fact was such, men said, *"They are full of new wine,"* what would they not have said, had it been otherwise? And it is not merely, *"there came a sound,"* but, *"from heaven."* And the suddenness also startled them, and brought all together to the spot. *"As of a rushing mighty wind:"* this betokens the exceeding vehemence of the Spirit. *"And it filled all the house:"* insomuch that those

present both believed, and (Εδδ. [τούτους]) in this manner were shown to be worthy. Nor is this all; but what is more awful still, *"And there appeared unto them,"* it says, *"cloven tongues like as of fire."* [Acts 2:3] Observe how it is always, *"like as;"* and rightly: that you may have no gross sensible notions of the Spirit. Also, *"as it were of a blast:"* therefore it was not a wind. *"Like as of fire."* For when the Spirit was to be made known to John, then it came upon the head of Christ as in the form of a dove: but now, when a whole multitude was to be converted, it is *"like as of fire. And it sat upon each of them."* This means, that it remained and rested upon them. For the sitting is significant of settledness and continuance.

Was it upon the twelve that it came? Not so; but upon the hundred and twenty. For Peter would not have quoted to no purpose the testimony of the prophet, saying, *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord God, I will pour out of My spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."* [Joel 2:28] *"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 2:4] For, that the effect may not be to frighten only, therefore is it both *"with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* [Matthew 3:11] They receive no other sign, but this first; for it was new to them, and there was no need of any other sign. *"And it sat upon each of them,"* says the writer. Observe now, how there is no longer any occasion for that person to grieve, who was not elected as was Matthias, *"And they were all filled,"* he says; not merely received the grace of the Spirit, but *"were filled. And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* It would not have been said, *All*, the Apostles also being there present, unless the rest also were partakers. For were it not so, having above made mention of the Apostles distinctively and by name, he would not now have put them

all in one with the rest. For if, where it was only to be mentioned that they were present, he makes mention of the Apostles apart, much more would he have done so in the case here supposed. Observe, how when one is *continuing in prayer*, when one is in charity, then it is that the Spirit draws near. It put them in mind also of another vision: for as fire did He appear also in the bush. As the Spirit gave them utterance, [ἁ] [ποφθέγγεσθαι] [Exodus 3:2] For the things spoken by them were [ἁ] [ποφθέγματα], profound utterances. "And," it says, "*there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men.*" [Acts 2:5] The fact of their dwelling there was a sign of piety: that being of so many nations they should have left country, and home, and relations, and be abiding there. For, it says, There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded. [Acts 2:6] Since the event had taken place in a house, of course they came together from without. The multitude *was confounded*: was all in commotion. They marvelled; "*Because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were amazed,*" it says, "*and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?*" [Acts 2:7-13] They immediately turned their eyes towards the Apostles. "And how" (it follows) "*hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene:*" mark how they run from east to west: "*and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And, they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What means this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.*" O the excessive folly! O the excessive

malignity! Why it was not even the season for that; for it was Pentecost. For this was what made it worse: that when those were confessing— men that were Jews, that were Romans, that were proselytes, yea perhaps that had crucified Him— yet these, after so great signs, say, "*They are full of new wine!*"

But let us look over what has been said from the beginning. (Recapitulation.) "*And when the day of Pentecost,*" etc. "*It filled,*" he says, "*the house.*" That wind [πνοή] was a very pool of water. This betokened the copiousness, as the fire did the vehemence. This nowhere happened in the case of the Prophets: for to uninebriated souls such accesses are not attended with much disturbance; but "*when they have well drunken,*" then indeed it is as here, but with the Prophets it is otherwise. [Ezekiel 3:3] The roll of a book is given him, and Ezekiel ate what he was about to utter. "*And it became in his mouth,*" it is said, "*as honey for sweetness.*" (And again the hand of God touches the tongue of another Prophet; but here it is the Holy Ghost Himself: [Jeremiah 1:9] so equal is He in honor with the Father and the Son.) And again, on the other hand, Ezekiel calls it "*Lamentations, and mourning, and woe.*" [Ezekiel 2:10] To them it might well be in the form of a book; for they still needed similitudes. Those had to deal with only one nation, and with their own people; but these with the whole world, and with men whom they never knew. Also Elisha receives the grace through the medium of a mantle [2 Kings 13]; another by oil, as David [1 Samuel 16:13]; and Moses by fire, as we read of him at the bush. [Exodus 3:2] But in the present case it is not so; for the fire itself sat upon them. (But wherefore did the fire not appear so as to fill the house? Because they would have been terrified.) But the story shows, that it is the same here as there. For you are not to stop at this, that "*there appeared unto them cloven tongues,*" but note that they were "*of fire.*" Such a fire as this is able to

kindle infinite fuel. Also, it is well said, *Cloven*, for they were from one root; that you may learn, that it was an operation sent from the Comforter.

But observe how those men also were first shown to be worthy, and then received the Spirit as worthy. Thus, for instance, David: what he did among the sheepfolds, the same he did after his victory and trophy; that it might be shown how simple and absolute was his faith. Again, see Moses despising royalty, and forsaking all, and after forty years taking the lead of the people [Exodus 2:11]; and Samuel occupied there in the temple [1 Samuel 3:3]; Elisha leaving all [1 Kings 19:21]; Ezekiel again, made manifest by what happened thereafter. In this manner, you see, did these also leave all that they had. They learned also what human infirmity is, by what they suffered; they learned that it was not in vain they had done these good works. [1 Samuel 9 and 11:6] Even Saul, having first obtained witness that he was good, thereafter received the Spirit. But in the same manner as here did none of them receive. Thus Moses was the greatest of the Prophets, yet he, when others were to receive the Spirit, himself suffered diminution. But here it is not so; but just as fire kindles as many flames as it will, so here the largeness of the Spirit was shown, in that each one received a fountain of the Spirit; as indeed He Himself had foretold, that those who believe in Him, should have *"a well of water springing up into everlasting life."* [John 4:14] And good reason that it should be so. For they did not go forth to argue with Pharaoh, but to wrestle with the devil. But the wonder is this, that when sent they made no objections; they said not, they were *"weak in voice, and of a slow tongue."* [Exodus 4:10] For Moses had taught them better. They said not, they were too young. [Jeremiah 1:6] Jeremiah had made them wise. And yet they had heard of many fearful things, and much greater than were theirs of old time; but they feared to object.— And because they were angels of light, and ministers of things above [*"Suddenly*

there came from heaven," etc.] To them of old, no one *"from heaven"* appears, while they as yet follow after a vocation on earth; but now that Man has gone up on high, the Spirit also descends mightily from on high. *"As it were a rushing mighty wind;"* making it manifest by this, that nothing shall be able to withstand them, but they shall blow away all adversaries like a heap of dust. *"And it filled all the house."* The house also was a symbol of the world. *"And it sat upon each of them,"* [etc.] and *"the multitude came together, and were confounded."* Observe their piety; they pronounce no hasty judgment, but are perplexed: whereas those reckless ones pronounce at once, saying, *"These men are full of new wine."* Now it was in order that they might have it in their power, in compliance with the Law, to appear thrice in the year in the Temple, that they dwelt there, these *"devout men from all nations."* Observe here, the writer has no intention of flattering them. For he does not say that they pronounced any opinion: but what? *"Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded."* And well they might be; for they supposed the matter was now coming to an issue against them, on account of the outrage committed against Christ. Conscience also agitated their souls, the very blood being yet upon their hands, and every thing alarmed them. *"Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?"* For indeed this was confessed. [*"And how hear we"*] so much did the sound alarm them. [*"Every man in our own tongue,"* etc.] for it found the greater part of the world assembled there. [*"Parthians and Medes,"* etc.] This nerved the Apostles: for, what it was to speak in the Parthian tongue, they knew not but now learned from what those said. Here is mention made of nations that were hostile to them, Cretans, Arabians, Egyptians, Persians: and that they would conquer them all was here made manifest. But as to their being in those countries, they were there in captivity, many of them: or else, the doctrines of the Law had

become disseminated [among] the Gentiles in those countries. So then the testimony comes from all quarters: from citizens, from foreigners, from proselytes. *"We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."* For it was not only that they spoke (in their tongues), but the things they spoke were wonderful. Well then might they be in doubt: for never had the like occurred. Observe the ingenuousness of these men. They were amazed and were in doubt, saying, *"What means this?"* But *"others mocking said, 'These men are full of new wine'"* [John 8:48], and therefore mocked. O the effrontery! And what wonder is it? Since even of the Lord Himself, when casting out devils, they said that He had a devil! For so it is; wherever impudent assurance exists, it has but one object in view, to speak at all hazards, it cares not what; not that the man should say something real and relevant to the matter of discourse, but that he should speak no matter what. [*"They are full of new wine."*] Quite a thing of course (is not it?), that men in the midst of such dangers, and dreading the worst, and in such despondency, have the courage to utter such things! And observe: since this was unlikely; because they would not have been drinking much [at that early hour], they ascribe the whole matter to the quality (of the wine), and say, *"They are full"* of it. *"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them."* In a former place you saw his provident forethought, here you see his manly courage. For if they were astonished and amazed, was it not as wonderful that he should be able in the midst of such a multitude to find language, he, an unlettered and ignorant man? If a man is troubled when he speaks among friends, much more might he be troubled among enemies and bloodthirsty men. That they are not drunken, he shows immediately by his very voice, that they are not beside themselves, as the soothsayers: and this too, that they were not constrained by some compulsory force. What is meant by, *"with the eleven?"* They

expressed themselves through one common voice, and he was the mouth of all. The eleven stood by as witnesses to what he said. *"He lifted up his voice,"* it is said. That is, he spoke with great confidence, that they might perceive the grace of the Spirit. He who had not endured the questioning of a poor girl, now in the midst of the people, all breathing murder, discourses with such confidence, that this very thing becomes an unquestionable proof of the Resurrection: in the midst of men who could deride and make a joke of such things as these! What effrontery, think you, must go to that! What impiety, what shamelessness! For wherever the Holy Spirit is present, He makes men of gold out of men of clay. Look, I pray you, at Peter now: examine well that timid one, and devoid of understanding; as Christ said, *"Are ye also yet without understanding?"* [Matthew 15:16] the man, who after that marvellous confession was called *"Satan."* [Matthew 16:23] Consider also the unanimity of the Apostles. They themselves ceded to him the office of speaking; for it was not necessary that all should speak. *"And he lifted up his voice,"* and spoke out to them with great boldness. Such a thing it is to be a spiritual man! Only let us also bring ourselves into a state meet for the grace from above, and all becomes easy. For as a man of fire falling into the midst of straw would take no harm, but do it to others: not he could take any harm, but they, in assailing him, destroy themselves. For the case here was just as if one carrying hay should attack one bearing fire: even so did the Apostles encounter these their adversaries with great boldness.

For what did it harm them, though they were so great a multitude? Did they not spend all their rage? Did they not turn the distress upon themselves? Of all mankind were ever any so possessed with both rage and terror, as those became possessed? Were they not in an agony, and were dismayed, and trembled? For hear what they say, *"Do ye wish to bring this*

man's blood upon us?" [Acts 5:28] Did they (the Apostles) not fight against poverty and hunger: against ignominy and infamy (for they were accounted deceivers): did they not fight against ridicule and wrath and mockery?— for in their case the contraries met: some laughed at them, others punished them—were they not made a mark for the wrathful passions, and for the merriment, of whole cities? Exposed to factions and conspiracies: to fire, and sword, and wild beasts? Did not war beset them from every quarter, in ten thousand forms? And were they any more affected in their minds by all these things, than they would have been at seeing them in a dream or in a picture? With bare body they took the field against all the armed, though against them all men had arbitrary power [against them, were]: terrors of rulers, force of arms, in cities and strong walls: without experience, without skill of the tongue, and in the condition of quite ordinary men, matched against juggling conjurors, against impostors, against the whole throng of sophists, of rhetoricians, of philosophers grown mouldy in the Academy and the walks of the Peripatetics, against all these they fought the battle out. And the man whose occupation had been about lakes, so mastered them, as if it cost him not so much ado as even a contest with dumb fishes: for just as if the opponents he had to outwit were indeed more mute than fishes, so easily did he get the better of them! And Plato, that talked a deal of nonsense in his day, is silent now, while this man utters his voice everywhere; not among his own countrymen alone, but also among Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and in India, and in every part of the earth, and to the extremities of the world. Where now is Greece, with her big pretensions? Where the name of Athens? Where the ravings of the philosophers? He of Galilee, he of Bethsaida, he, the uncouth rustic, has overcome them all. Are you not ashamed— confess it— at the very name of the country of him who has defeated you? But if you hear his own name

too, and learn that he was called Cephas, much more will you hide your faces. This, this has undone you quite; because you esteem this a reproach, and account glibness of tongue a praise, and want of glibness a disgrace. You have not followed the road you ought to have chosen, but leaving the royal road, so easy, so smooth, you have trodden one rough, and steep, and laborious. And therefore you have not attained unto the kingdom of heaven.

Why then, it is asked, did not Christ exercise His influence upon Plato, and upon Pythagoras? Because the mind of Peter was much more philosophical than their minds. They were in truth children shifted about on all sides by vain glory; but this man was a philosopher, one apt to receive grace. If you laugh at these words, it is no wonder; for those aforetime laughed, and said, the men were full of new wine. But afterwards, when they suffered those bitter calamities, exceeding all others in misery; when they saw their city falling in ruins, and the fire blazing, and the walls hurled to the ground, and those manifold frantic horrors, which no one can find words to express, they did not laugh then. And you will laugh then, if you have the mind to laugh, when the time of hell is close at hand, when the fire is kindled for your souls. But why do I speak of the future? Shall I show you what Peter is, and what Plato, the philosopher? Let us for the present examine their respective habits, let us see what were the pursuits of each. The one wasted his time about a set of idle and useless dogmas, and philosophical, as he says, that we may learn that the soul of our philosopher becomes a fly. Most truly said, a fly! not indeed changed into one, but a fly must have entered upon possession of the soul which dwelt in Plato; for what but a fly is worthy of such ideas! The man was full of irony, and of jealous feelings against every one else, as if he made it his ambition to introduce nothing useful, either out of his own head or other people's. Thus he adopted the metempsychosis from another, and from himself produced

the Republic, in which he enacted those laws full of gross turpitude. Let the women, he says, be in common, and let the virgins go naked, and let them wrestle before the eyes of their lovers, and let there also be common fathers, and let the children begotten be common. But with us, not nature makes common fathers, but the philosophy of Peter does this; as for that other, it made away with all paternity. For Plato's system only tended to make the real father next to unknown, while the false one was introduced. It plunged the soul into a kind of intoxication and filthy wallowing. Let all, he says, have intercourse with the women without fear. The reason why I do not examine the maxims of poets, is, that I may not be charged with ripping up fables. And yet I am speaking of fables much more ridiculous than even those. Where have the poets devised anything so portentous as this? But (not to enter into the discussion of his other maxims), what say you to these — when he equips the females with arms, and helmets, and greaves, and says that the human race has no occasion to differ from the canine! Since dogs, he says, the female and the male, do just the same things in common, so let the women do the same works as the men, and let all be turned upside down. For the devil has always endeavored by their means to show that our race is not more honorable than that of brutes; and, in fact, some have gone to such a pitch of ([κενοδοξίας]) absurdity, as to affirm that the irrational creatures are endued with reason. And see in how many various ways he has run riot in the minds of those men! For whereas their leading men affirmed that our soul passes into flies, and dogs, and brute creatures; those who came after them, being ashamed of this, fell into another kind of turpitude, and invested the brute creatures with all rational science, and made out that the creatures— which were called into existence on our account— are in all respects more honorable than we! They even attribute to them foreknowledge and piety. The crow, they say, knows God, and the

raven likewise, and they possess gifts of prophecy, and foretell the future; there is justice among them, and polity, and laws. Perhaps you do not credit the things I am telling you. And well may you not, nurtured as you have been with sound doctrine; since also, if a man were fed with this fare, he would never believe that there exists a human being who finds pleasure in eating dung. The dog also among them is jealous, according to Plato. But when we tell them that these things are fables, and are full of absurdity, 'You do not enter ([ἐ] [νοήσατε]) into the higher meaning,' say they. No, we do not enter into this your surpassing nonsense, and may we never do so: for it requires (of course!) an excessively profound mind, to inform me, what all this impiety and confusion would be at. Are you talking, senseless men, in the language of crows, as the children are wont (in play)? For you are in very deed children, even as they. But Peter never thought of saying any of these things: he uttered a voice, like a great light shining out in the dark, a voice which scattered the mist and darkness of the whole world. Again, his deportment, how gentle it was, how considerate ([ἐ] [πεικῆς]); how far above all vainglory; how he looked towards heaven without all self-elation, and this, even when raising up the dead! But if it had come to be in the power of any one of those senseless people (in mere fantasy of course) to do anything like it, would he not straightway have looked for an altar and a temple to be reared to him, and have wanted to be equal with the gods? Since in fact when no such sign is forthcoming, they are forever indulging such fantastic conceits. And what, pray you, is that Minerva of theirs, and Apollo, and Juno? They are different kinds of demons among them. And there is a king of theirs, who thinks fit to die for the mere purpose of being accounted equal with the gods. But not so the men here: no, just the contrary. Hear how they speak on the occasion of the lame man's cure. You men of Israel, why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by

our own power or holiness we had made him to walk? [Acts 3:12] We also are men of like passions with you. [Acts 14:14] But with those, great is the self-elation, great the bragging; all for the sake of men's honors, nothing for the pure love of truth and virtue. ([φιλοσοφίας ἕνεκεν].) For where an action is done for glory, all is worthless. For though a man possess all, yet if he have not the mastery over this (lust), he forfeits all claim to true philosophy, he is in bondage to the more tyrannical and shameful passion. Contempt of glory; this it is that is sufficient to teach all that is good, and to banish from the soul every pernicious passion. I exhort you therefore to use the most strenuous endeavors to pluck out this passion by the very roots; by no other means can you have good esteem with God, and draw down upon you the benevolent regard of that Eye which never sleeps. Wherefore, let us use all earnestness to obtain the enjoyment of that heavenly influence, and thus both escape the trial of present evils, and attain unto the future blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and to all ages. Amen.

Homily 5 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts II. 14

"You men of Judea, and all you that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words."

[*"He men of Judea, and all you that dwell at Jerusalem,"*] whom the writer above described as strangers. Here he directs his discourse to those others, the mockers, and while he seems to reason with those, he sets these right. For indeed it was divinely ordered that *"some mocked,"* that he might have a starting-point for his defence, and by means of that defence, might teach. [*"And all you that dwell in Jerusalem."*] It seems they accounted it a high encomium to dwell in Jerusalem too. *"Be this,"* says he, *"known unto you, and hearken unto my words."* In the first instance he made them more disposed to attend to him. *"For not as you suppose,"* says he, *"are these drunken."* Do you observe the mildness of his defence? [Acts 2:15]

Although having the greater part of the people on his side, he reasons with those others gently; first he removes the evil surmise, and then he establishes his apology. On this account, therefore, he does not say, *"as you mock,"* or, *"as you deride,"* but, *"as you suppose;"* wishing to make it appear that they had not said this in earnest, and for the present taxing them with ignorance rather than with malice. *"For these are not drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."* And why this? Is it not possible at the third hour to be drunken? But he did not insist upon this to the letter; for there was nothing of the kind about them; the others said it only in mockery. Hence we learn that on unessential points one must not

spend many words. And besides, the sequel is enough to bear him out on this point: so now the discourse is for all in common. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord God. (v. 16, 17. Joel 2:28.) Nowhere as yet the name of Christ, nor His promises but the promise is that of the Father. Observe the wisdom: observe the considerate forbearance: ([συγκατάβασιν].) He did not pass on to speak at once of the things relating to Christ; that He had promised this after His Crucifixion; truly that would have been to upset all. And yet, you will say, here was sufficient to prove His divinity. True, it was, if believed (and the very point was that it should be believed); but if not believed, it would have caused them to be stoned. *"And I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh."* He offers even to them excellent hopes, if they would have them. And so far, he does not leave it to be regarded as the exclusive advantage of himself and his company; which would have made them be looked upon with an evil eye; thus cutting off all envious feeling. *"And your sons shall prophesy."* And yet, he says, not yours this achievement, this distinction; the gift has passed over to your children. Himself and his company he calls their sons, and those [whom he is addressing] he calls his and their fathers. *"And your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy."* So far he shows that he and his have found favor, in that they had received ([καταξιοθέντας]) [the Spirit]; not so they whom he is addressing; for that they had crucified [the Lord]. So Christ also, willing to mitigate their wrath, said, *"By whom do your sons cast out devils?"* [Matthew 12:27] He did not say, My disciples; for indeed it seemed a flattering mode of expression. And so Peter also did not say, 'They are not drunk, but speak by the Spirit.' but he takes refuge with the prophet, and

under shelter of him, so speaks. As for the accusation [of drunkenness], he cleared himself of that by his own assertion; but for the grace, he fetches the prophet as witness. *"I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh."* [*"And your sons,"* etc.] To some the grace was imparted through dreams, to others it was openly poured forth. For indeed by dreams the prophets saw, and received revelations.

Then he goes on with the prophecy, which has in it also something terrible. *"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs"* [*"in the earth beneath"*]. [Acts 2:19] In these words he speaks both of the judgment to come, and of the taking of Jerusalem. *"Blood and fire, and vapor of smoke."* Observe how he describes the capture. *"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood."* [Acts 2:20] This results from the ([διαθέσεως]) internal affection of the sufferers. It is said, indeed, that many such phenomena actually did occur in the sky, as Josephus attests. At the same time the Apostle strikes fear into them, by reminding them of the darkness which had lately occurred, and leading them to expect things to come. *"Before that great and notable day of the Lord come."* For be not confident, he means to say, because at present you sin with impunity. For these things are the prelude of a certain great and dreadful day. Do you see how he made their souls to quake and melt within them, and turned their laughter into pleading for acquittal? For if these things are the prelude of that day, it follows that the extreme of danger is impending. But what next? He again lets them take breath, adding, *"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved."* [Romans 10:13] This is said concerning Christ, as Paul affirms, but Peter does not venture as yet to reveal this.

Well, let us look over again what has been said. It is well managed, that as against men laughing and mocking, he starts up and begins with, *"Be*

this known unto you all and hearken unto my words." But he begins by saying, *"You men of Judea."* By the expression ['] [Ιουδαῖοι], I take him to mean those that lived in Judea.— And, if you please, let us compare those expressions in the Gospel, that you may learn what a sudden change has taken place in Peter. *"A damsel,"* it is written, *"came out unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth."* And, says he, *"I know not the Man."* And being again questioned, *"he began to curse and to swear."* [Matthew 26:69-72] But see here his boldness, and his great freedom of speech.— He did not praise those who had said, *"We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God;"* but by his severity towards those others, he made these more earnest, and at the same time his address is clear from all appearance of adulation. And it is well to remark, on all occasions, however the Apostles may condescend to the level of their hearers ([συγκατάβασις]), their language is clear from all appearance both of adulation and of insolence: which is a difficult point to manage.

Now that these things should have occurred at *"the third hour,"* was not without cause. For the brightness of this fire is shown at the very time when people are not engaged in their works, nor at dinner; when it is bright day, when all are in the market-place. Do you observe also the freedom which fills his speech? *"And hearken to my words."* And he added nothing, but, *"This,"* says he, *"is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days."* He shows, in fact, that the consummation is near at hand, and the words, *"In the last days,"* have a kind of emphasis. [*"I will pour out,"* etc.] And then, that he may not seem to limit the privilege to the sons only, he subjoins, *"And your old men shall dream dreams."* Mark the sequence. First sons; just as David said, *"Instead of your fathers, were begotten your sons."* [Psalm 45:17] And again Malachi; *"They shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. And on*

my handmaidens, and on my servants." [Malachi 4:6] This also is a token of excellence, for we have become His servants, by being freed from sin. And great is the gift, since the grace passes over to the other sex also, not as of old, it was limited to just one or two individuals, as Deborah and Huldah. He did not say that it was the Holy Ghost, neither did he expound the words of the prophet; but he merely brings in the prophecy to fight its own battle. As yet also he has said nothing about Judas; and yet it was known to all what a doom and punishment he had undergone; for nothing was more forcible than to argue with them from prophecy: this was more forcible even than facts. For when Christ performed miracles, they often contradicted Him. But when Christ brought forward the prophet, saying, *"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand,"* they were silent, and *"no man,"* we read, *"was able to answer Him a word."* [Psalm 90:1] And on all occasions He Himself also appealed to the Scriptures; for instance, *"If he called them gods to whom the word of God came."* [John 10:35] And in many places one may find this. On this account here also Peter says, *"I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh;"* that is, upon the Gentiles also. But he does not yet reveal this, nor give interpretations; indeed, it was better not to do so (as also this obscure saying, *"I will show wonders in heaven above,"* put them the more in fear because it was obscure.) And it would have been more an offense, had it been interpreted from the very first. Then besides, even as plain, he passes over it, wishing to make them regard it as such. But after all, he does interpret to them anon, when he discourses to them upon the resurrection, and after he has paved the way by his discourse. (*infra* v. 39.) For since the good things were not sufficient to allure them, [it is added, *"And I will show wonders, etc."*]. Yet this has never been fulfilled. For none escaped then [in that former judgment], but now the faithful did escape, in Vespasian's time. And this it is that the Lord speaks of, *"Except*

those days had been shortened, not all flesh should be saved."— [*"Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke."*] [Matthew 24:22] The worst to come first; namely, the inhabitants to be taken, and then the city to be razed and burnt. Then he dwelt upon the metaphor, bringing before the eyes of the hearers the overthrow and the taking. *"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood."* What means, the moon turned into blood? It denotes the excess of the slaughter. The language is fraught with helpless dismay. (*supra* p. 32.) *"And it shall come to pass, every one who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Every one,"* he says: though he be priest (but he does not yet reveal the meaning), though bond, though free. For there is no male nor female in Christ Jesus, no bond, no free. [Galatians 3:28] Well may it be so, for all these are but shadow. For if in king's palaces there is no high-born nor low-born, but each appears according to his deeds; and in art, each is shown by his works; much more in that school of wisdom ([φιλοσοφία]). *"Every one who shall invoke."* Invoke: not any how, for it is written, *"Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord:"* but with ([διαθέσεως]) inward earnest affection, with a life more than commonly good, with the confidence which is meet. Thus far, however, he makes the discourse light, by introducing that which relates to faith, and that terrible which relates to the punishment. For in the invocation is the salvation.

What, I pray you, is this you say? Do you talk of salvation for them after the Cross? Bear with me a little. Great is the mercy of God. And this very fact does, no less than the resurrection, prove him to be God, yea, no less than His miracles— the fact that He calls these to Him. For surpassing goodness is, above all things, peculiarly God's own. Therefore also He says, *"None is good save one, that is, God."* [Luke 18:19] Only let us not take this goodness for an occasion of negligence. For He also punishes as God. In fact, the very punishments here spoken of, He brought them to pass, even

He who said, *"Every one who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved."* I speak of the fate of Jerusalem; that intolerable punishment: of which I will tell you some few of the particulars, useful to us in our contest, both with the Marcionites and many other heretics. For, since they distinguish between Christ a good God, and that evil God [of the Old Testament], let us see who it was that effected these things. The evil God, taking vengeance for Christ? Or not so? How then alien to Him? But was it the good God? Nay, but it is demonstrated that both the Father and the Son did these things. The Father in many places; for instance, when He says in the parable of the vineyard, [*"He will miserably destroy those wicked husbandmen"*] [Matthew 21:41]; again in the parable of the marriage feast, the King is said] to send His armies [Matthew 22:7]: and the Son, when He says, *"But those Mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me."* [Luke 19:27] * * *. And they sent, saying, We will not have You to reign over us. Would you like then to hear the things which actually came to pass? Moreover, Christ Himself also speaks of the future tribulations, than which never any thing more dreadful came to pass; never any thing more ruthless, my beloved, than the deeds then done! And He Himself declared it. For what could you wish to see more grievous than these? * * *— probed them with their daggers! — * * * But shall I relate to you the shocking case of the woman, that tragic tale? * * * (Joseph. B. J. vi. 3. 4.) Did not the actual events cast all misery into the shade? But shall I tell you of famines and pestilences? One might speak of horrors without number: nature was unknown; law unknown; they outdid wild beasts in ferocity. True, these miseries came by the fate of wars; but because God, because Christ so willed it to be. These facts will apply both against the Marcionites and against those who do not believe that there is a hell: for they are sufficient to silence their impudence. Are not these

calamities more severe than the Babylonian? Are not these sufferings more grievous than the famines of that time? Yes, for [*"never was the like from the beginning of the world"*] *"no, nor ever shall be such."* [Matthew 24:21] And this was Christ's own declaration. In what sense then, think ye, is it said that Christ remitted them their sin? Perhaps it seems a commonplace question: but do ye solve it.— It is not possible to show anywhere, even in fiction, any thing like what the reality was here. And had it been a Christian that wrote this history, the matter might be regarded with suspicion: but if he was a Jew, and a Jewish zealot, and after the Gospel, how can the meaning of the facts be otherwise than palpable to all men? For you will see the man, how, everywhere, he always extols the concerns of the Jews.— There is therefore a hell, O man! And God is good.— Aye, did you shudder at hearing these horrors? But these, which take place here, are nothing in comparison with what shall be in that world. Once more I am compelled to seem harsh, disagreeable, stern. But what can I do? I am set to this: just as a severe schoolmaster is set to be hated by his scholars: so are we. For would it not be strange indeed, that, while those who have a certain post assigned them by kings do that which is appointed them, however disagreeable the task may be, we, for fear of your censure, should leave our appointed task undone? Another has a different work. Of you, many have it for their work, to show mercy, to act humanely, to be pleasant and agreeable to the persons to whom you are benefactors. But to those to whom we do good, we seem stern and severe, troublesome and disagreeable. For we do good, not by the pleasure we give, but by the pain we inflict. So it is also with the physician: though he indeed is not excessively disagreeable, for the benefit afforded by his art is had immediately; ours hereafter. So again the magistrate is odious to the disorderly and seditious; so the legislator is vexatious to them for whom he makes laws. But not so he that invites to enjoyment, not so he that

prepares public festivities and entertainments, and puts all the people in garlands: no, these are men that win acceptance, feasting, as they do, whole cities with all sorts of spectacles; contributing largely, bearing all the cost. And therefore those whom they have treated, requite them for these enjoyments with words of welcome and benediction, with hanging ([παραπετάσματα]) of tapestries, and a blaze of lamps, and with wreaths, and boughs, and brilliant garments. Whereas, at the sight of the physician, the sick become sad and downcast: at sight of the magistrate, the rioters become subdued: no running riot then, no gambolling, except when he also goes over into their ranks. Let us see, then, which render the best service to their cities; those who provide these festivities, and banquetings, and expensive entertainments, and manifold rejoicings; or those who restrain all those doings, bearing before them stocks, scourges, executioners, dreaded soldiers, and a voice fraught with much terror: and issuing orders, and making men hang down their heads, and with the rod dispersing the idlers in the market-place. Let us see, I say; these are the disagreeable, those the beloved: let us see where the gain rests. ([λήλει].) What comes then of your pleasure-givers? A kind of frigid enjoyment, lasting till the evening, and tomorrow vanished; mirth ungoverned, words unseemly and dissolute. And what of these? Awe, sobriety, subdued thoughts; reasonableness of mind, an end of idleness; a curb on the passions within; a wall of defence, next to God, against assailants from without. It is by means of these we have each our property but by those ruinous festivities we dissipate it. Robbers indeed have not invaded it, but vainglory together with pleasure acts the part of robber. Each sees the robber carrying off everything before his eyes, and is delighted at it! A new fashion of robbery, this, to induce people to be glad when one is plundering them! On the other part, there is nothing of the kind: but God, as the common Father, has secured us as by a wall against all

[depredators], both seen and unseen. For, *"Take heed,"* says He, *"that you do not your alms before men."* [Matthew 6:1] The soul learns from the one, [excess; from the other] to flee injustice. For injustice consists not merely in grasping at more wealth than belongs to us, but in giving to the belly more than its needful sustenance, in carrying mirth beyond its proper bounds, and causing it to run into frantic excesses. From the one, it learns sobriety; from the other, unchastity. For it is unchastity, not merely to have carnal intercourse with women, but even to look upon a woman with unchaste eyes. From the one, it learns modesty; from the other, conceited self-importance. For, *"All things,"* says the Apostle, *"are lawful for me, but not all things expedient."* [1 Corinthians 6:12] From the one, decent behavior; from the other unseemliness. For, as to the doings in the theatres, I pass these. But to let you see that it is not even a pleasure either, but a grief, show me, but a single day after the festival, both those who spent their money in giving it, and those who were feasted with spectacles: and you shall see them all looking dejected enough, but most of all him, your ([ἔ] [κεῖνον]) famous man that has spent his money for it. And this is but fair: for, the day before, he delighted the common man, and the common man indeed was in high good humor and enjoyment, and rejoiced indeed in the splendid garment, but then not having the use of it, and seeing himself stripped of it, he was grieved and annoyed; and wanted to be the great man, seeing even his own enjoyment to be small compared with his. Therefore, the day after, they change places, and now he, the great man, gets the larger share in the dejection.

Now if in worldly matters, amusements are attended with such dissatisfaction, while disagreeable things are so beneficial, much more does this hold in things spiritual. Why is it that no one quarrels with the laws, but on the contrary all account that matter a common benefit? For indeed not

strangers from some other quarter, nor enemies of those for whom the laws are made, came and made these orders, but the citizens themselves, their patrons, their benefactors: and this very thing, the making of laws, is a token of beneficence and good-will. And yet the laws are full of punishment and restraint, and there is no such thing as law without penalty and coercion. Then is it not unreasonable, that while the expositors of those laws are called deliverers, benefactors, and patrons, we are considered troublesome and vexatious if we speak of the laws of God? When we discourse about hell, then we bring forward those laws: just as in the affairs of the world, people urge the laws of murder, highway robbery, and the like, so do we the penal laws: laws, which not man enacted, but the Only-Begotten Son of God Himself. Let him that has no mercy, He says, be punished [Matthew 18:23]; for such is the import of the parable. Let him that remembers injuries, pay the last penalty. Let him that is angry without cause, be cast into the fire. Let him that reviles, receive his due in hell. If you think these laws which you hear strange, be not amazed. For if Christ was not intended to make new laws, why did He come? Those other laws are manifest to us; we know that the murderer and adulterer ought to be punished. If then we were meant only to be told the same things over again, where was the need of a heavenly Teacher? Therefore He does not say, Let the adulterer be punished, but, whoso looks on with unchaste eyes. And where, and when, the man will receive punishment, He there tells us. And not in fine public monuments, nor yet somewhere out of sight, did He deposit His laws; not pillars of brass did He raise up, and engrave letters thereon, but twelve souls raised He up for us, the souls of the Apostles, and in their minds has He by the Spirit inscribed this writing. This cite we to you. If this was authorized to Jews, that none might take refuge in the plea of ignorance, much more is it to us. But should any say, *"I do not hear,*

therefore have no guilt," on this very score he is most liable to punishment. For, were there no teacher, it would be possible to take refuge in this plea; but if there be, it is no longer possible. Thus see how, speaking of Jews, the Lord deprives them of all excuse; *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin:"* [John 15:22]: and Paul again, *"But I say, have they not heard? Nay, but into all the earth went forth their sound."* [Romans 10:18] For then there is excuse, when there is none to tell the man; but when the watchman sits there, having this as the business of his life, there is excuse no longer. Nay, rather, it was the will of Christ, not that we should look only upon these written pillars, but that we should ourselves be such. But since we have made ourselves unworthy of the writing, at least let us look to those. For just as the pillars threaten others, but are not themselves obnoxious to punishment, nor yet the laws, even so the blessed Apostles. And observe; not in one place only stands this pillar, but its writing is carried round about in all the world. Whether you go among the Indians, you shall hear this: whether into Spain, or to the very ends of the earth, there is none without the hearing, except it be of his own neglect. Then be not offended, but give heed to the things spoken, that you may be able to lay hold upon the works of virtue, and attain unto the eternal blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father and Holy Ghost together be glory, power, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 6 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts II. 22

"You men of Israel, hear these my words."

[*"He men of Israel"*]: it is not for flattery that he uses this term; but, as he has borne hard upon them, he relaxes a little, and puts them in mind of their great ancestor [Israel]. Here again he begins with an introduction, that they may not become excited, now that he is going to make express mention to them of Jesus: for in what preceded, there was no reason why they should be excited, while the Prophet was the subject of discourse: but the name of Jesus would have given offense at the very outset.— And he does not say, *"Do as I bid you,"* but, *Hear*; as being not at all exacting. And observe how he forbears to speak of the high matters, and begins with the very low: *"Jesus,"* he says: and then straightway mentions the place He belonged to, being one which was held in mean estimation: *"Jesus of Nazareth"*: and does not say anything great about Him, nor even such as one would say about a Prophet, so far: *"Jesus,"* he says, *"of Nazareth, a man proved (to be) from God among you."* Observe; what great matter was this, to say that He was sent from God? For this was the point which on all occasions both He and John and the Apostles were studious to show. Thus hear John saying: *"The same said unto me On whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and abiding on him, this is He."* [John 1:33] But Christ Himself does this to an extreme; Of Myself I am not come, He sent Me. [John 7:28] And everywhere in the Scriptures this seems the point most studiously insisted upon. Therefore also this holy leader of the blessed company, the

lover of Christ, the good shepherd, the man put in trust with the keys of heaven, the man who received the Spiritual Wisdom, when he has first subdued the Jews by fear; and has shown what great things have been vouchsafed to the disciples, and what a right they have to be believed, then first proceeds to speak concerning Him. Only think what boldness it was to say it, in the midst of the murderers— that He is risen! And yet he does not all at once say, He is risen; but what?— *"He came,"* says he, *"from God: this is manifest by the signs which"*— he does not yet say, Jesus Himself wrought: but what?— *"which God wrought by Him in the midst of you."* He calls themselves as witnesses. *"A man proved (to be sent) from God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God wrought by him in the midst of you, as also ye yourselves know."* Then, having fallen upon the mention of that their sacrilegious outrage, observe how he endeavors to quit them of the crime: *"Him,"* he says, *"being by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God delivered up":* [Acts 2:23] [adding however,] *"you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"* for though it was predetermined, still they were murderers. [*"By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God:"*] all but using the same words as Joseph did; just as he said to his brethren; *"Be not angry one with another by the way: God sent me hither."* [Genesis 45:5, 24] It is God's doing. *"What of us, then?"* (it might be said,) *"it was even well done on our part."* That they may not say this, therefore it is that he adds, *"By wicked hands you have crucified and slain."* Here then he hints at Judas; while at the same time he shows them that it was not from any strength of theirs, and would not have been, if He had not Himself permitted it: it was God that delivered Him up. He has transferred the evil entire upon the head of Judas, now already parted from them; for he it was that delivered Him over to them by the kiss. Or, *"By wicked hands,"* refers to the soldiers: for neither is it simply, *"You*

have slain," but, By wicked men you have done this. And observe how everywhere they make it of great importance that the Passion should first be confessed. *Whom God Raised Up* [Acts 2:24], says he. This was the great thing; and observe how he sets it in the middle of his discourse: for the former matters had been confessed; both the miracles and the signs and the slaying— "*Whom God,"* says he, "*raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be kept in its power.*" It is something great and sublime that he has hinted at here. For the expression, "*It was not possible,*" even itself is that of one assigning something. It shows that death itself in holding Him had pangs as in travail, and was sore bestead: whereas, by *pains*, or, travail-pangs, *of death*, the Old Testament means danger and disaster: and that He so rose as never more to die. For the assertion, "*Seeing that it was not possible that He should be holden of it,*" means this, that *His* rising was not common to the rest. Then, however, before their thoughts can enter at all into his meaning, he brings David upon them, an authority which sets aside all human reasoning. "*For David says (with reference) to Him.*" [Acts 2:25] And observe how, once more, the testimony is lowly. For therefore he begins the citation further up, with the matters of lowlier import: therefore was death not in the number of grievous things [because], says he, "*I foresaw the Lord always before my face, that He is on my right hand that I should not be moved:*" [Acts 2:25-27] and, "*that You will not leave my soul in hell.*" Then, having finished the citation from the Prophet, he adds; "*Men and brethren.*" [Acts 2:29] When he is about to say anything great, he uses this opening address, to rouse and to conciliate them. "*Let me be allowed,*" he says, "*to speak freely to you of the patriarch David.*" Remarkable lowliness, in a case where he was giving no hurt, nor was there any reason why the hearers should be angry. For he did not say, This is not said concerning David, but concerning the Christ. But in

another point of view: by his reverential expression towards the blessed David, he awed them; speaking of an acknowledged fact as if it were a bold thing to say, and therefore begging them to pardon him for saying it. And thereupon his expression is not simply *"concerning David,"* but *"concerning the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried:"* he does not also say, *"and is not risen again,"* but in another way (though this too would have been no great thing to say), *"And his sepulchre is with us unto this day,"* he has said what comes to the same thing. Then— and even so he does not come to the mention of Christ, but what next?— he goes on with his encomium upon David, *"Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that with an oath God had sworn unto him."* [Acts 2:30] But this he says, that were it but on account of the honor shown to David, and the descent from him, they may accept what is said concerning Christ's resurrection, as seeing that it would be an injury to the prophecy, and a derogating from ([τῆς εἰς αὐτοὺς τιμῆς]) their honor, if this were not the fact. *"And knowing,"* he says, *"that with an oath God had sworn unto him"*— he does not say simply *"promised"*— *"of the fruit of his loins after the flesh to raise up Christ, to seat Him upon his throne."* Observe how he has again only hinted at what is sublime. For now that he has soothed them with his expression, he confidently adds this: The prophet [says it] *"of His resurrection, that neither was His soul left in hell, nor did His flesh see corruption."* [Acts 2:31] This again is wonderful: it shows that His resurrection was not like that of other men. For though death laid hold on Him, yet it did not its own work then.— And, as regards the sin, he has spoken of that, covertly and darkly; of the punishment, he forbore to add anything; but that they had slain Him, this he has spoken out; for the rest he now comes to the sign given by God. And when it is once proved, that He, the slain, was just, was dear to God, then, though thou be silent of the

punishment, be sure that he which did the sin will condemn himself more than ever you can condemn him. So then, that he refers all to the Father, is in order that they may receive what is said: and that assertion, *"Not possible,"* he fetches in from the prophecy. Well then, let us again look over what has been said.

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man proved (to be sent) from God unto you."
[Recapitulation of Acts 2:22-31]: one, of whom, by reason of His works, there can be no doubt; but who, on the contrary, is demonstrated. Thus also Nicodemus said, *"No man can do these miracles which Thou doest— By miracles, and wonders, and signs which God wrought by Him in the midst of you"* [John 3:2]: not secretly. Setting out from facts notorious to those whom he was addressing, he then comes to things hidden. Thereupon [in saying, *"By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,"*] [Acts 2:23] he shows that it was not because they had the power to do it, and that there was a wisdom and a Divine arrangement in the event, seeing it was from God. He rapidly passes over the unpleasant part, [adding, *"Whom God raised up,"* etc.] [Acts 2:24]. For it is always a point of great importance with them to show that He was once dead. Though you should deny it, says he, ([ἐ] [κεῖνοι]) those (present) will bear witness to the fact. [*"Having loosed the pangs of death."*] He that gives Death trouble, may much more give trouble to them that crucified Him: however, nothing of the kind is here said, as that He had power to slay you. Meanwhile, let us also learn thus to hold. For one that is in pain like a woman in travail, does not hold the thing held, and is not active but passive; and makes haste to cast it off. And it is well said: *"For David says in reference to him"* (v. 25); that you may not refer that saying to the Prophet.— [*"Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing,"* etc.] (v. 30, 31.) Do you observe how he now interprets the prophecy, and does not give it bare of comment? How did He *"seat Him*

upon" David's *"throne?"* For the kingdom after the Spirit is in heaven. Observe how, along with the resurrection, he has also declared the kingdom in the fact of His rising again. He shows that the Prophet was under constraint: for the prophecy was concerning Him. Why does he say, not, Concerning His kingdom (it was a great matter), but *"Concerning His resurrection?"* And how did He seat Him upon his (David's) throne? Why, He reigns as King over Jews also, yea, what is much more, over them that crucified Him. *"For His flesh saw no corruption."* This seems to be less than resurrection, but it is the same thing.

"This Jesus"— observe how he does not call Him otherwise— *"has God raised up; whereof all we are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted"* (v. 33, 34): again he takes refuge with the Father, and yet it had been enough to say what precedes: but he knows what a great point this is. Here he has hinted at the Ascension also, and that Christ is in heaven: but neither does he say this openly. *"And having received,"* says he, *"the promise of the Holy Ghost."* Observe how, in the beginning of his discourse, he does not say that Jesus Himself had sent It, but the Father: now, however, that he has mentioned His signs and the things done to Him by the Jews, and has spoken of His resurrection, he boldly introduces what he has to say about these matters, again adducing themselves as witnesses by both senses: [*"He has shed forth this, which you do see and hear."*] And of the resurrection he has made continual mention, but of their outrageous deed he has spoken once for all. *"And having received the promise of the Holy Ghost."* This again is great. *"The promise,"* he says; because [promised] before His Passion. Observe how he now makes it all His [*"He has poured forth this"*], covertly making a great point. For if it was He that poured it forth, it is of Him that the Prophet has spoken above, In the last days I will pour forth of My Spirit on My Servants, and on Mine

handmaids, and I will do wonders in the heaven above. [Acts 2:17] Observe what he secretly puts into it! But then, because it was a great thing, he again veils it with the expression of *"His having received of the Father."* He has spoken of the good things fulfilled, of the signs; has said, that He is king, the point that touched them; has said, that it is He that gives the Spirit.

(*Arist. Rhet.* 1. 3.) (For, however much a person may say, if it does not issue in something advantageous, he speaks to no purpose.) Just as John: *"The same,"* says he, *"shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."* [Matthew 3:11]

And it shows that the Cross not only did not make Him less, but rendered Him even more illustrious, seeing that of old God promised it to Him, but now has given it. Or [it may be], *"the promise"* which He promised to us.

He so foreknew it about to be, and has given it to us greater after the resurrection. And, *"has poured it out,"* he says; not requiring worthiness: and not simply gave, but with abundance. Whence does this appear?

Henceforth after the mention of His giving the Spirit, he confidently speaks also of His ascension into heaven; and not only so, but again adducing the witness, and reminding them of that Person concerning Whom Christ once spoke. [Matthew 22:43] *"For not David,"* says he ascended into the

heavens. [Acts 2:34] Here he no longer speaks in lowly phrase, having the confidence which results from the things said; nor does he say, *"Be it*

permitted me to speak," or the like: *"But he says himself; The Lord said*

unto my Lord, Sit on My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your

footstool." Now if He be David's Lord, much more shall they not disdain Him. *"Sit on My right hand;"* he has set the whole matter here; *"until I make Your enemies Your footstool:"* here also he has brought upon them a great terror, just as in the beginning he showed what He does to His friends, what to his enemies. And again, as to the act of subjugation, not to provoke unbelief, he ascribes it to the Father. Since then these are great things that

he has uttered, he again brings his discourse down to lowly matters. *"Let therefore,"* he says, the whole house of Israel know assuredly: i.e. question ye not, nor doubt ye: then also in the tone of command it follows; *"that God has made Him both Lord"*— this he says from David— *"and Christ,"* [Acts 2:36], this from the Psalm: For when it would have been rightly concluded, *"Let therefore the whole house of Israel know assuredly that"* He sits on the right hand of God, this, which would have been great, he forbears, and brings in a different matter which is much more humble, and the expression *"Hath made;"* i.e. has ordained: so that there is nothing about ([οὐσίωσις]) communication of substance here, but the expression relates to this which has been mentioned. *"Even this Jesus, Whom you crucified."* He does well to end with this, thereby agitating their minds. For when he has shown how great it is, he has then exposed their daring deed, so as to show it to be greater, and to possess them with terror. For men are not so much attracted by benefits as they are chastened by fear.

But the admirable and great ones, and beloved of God, need none of these motives: men, such as was Paul: not of the kingdom, not of hell, made he account. For this is indeed to love Christ, this to be no hireling, nor to reckon it a matter of trafficking and trading, but to be indeed virtuous, and to do all for the love of God. [Romans 9:3] Then what tears does it not deserve, when, owing so large a measure, we do not even like traders seek the kingdom of heaven! He promises us so great things, and not even so is He worthy to be heard? What can come up to this enmity! And yet, they are mad after money-making, though it be with enemies, though it be with slaves, though it be with persons most hostile to them, that they come in contact, though it be with persons utterly evil, if only they expect that they shall be enabled by their means to make money, they will do everything, will flatter, and be obsequious, and make themselves slaves, and will

esteem them more to be revered than all men, to get some advantage out of them: for the hope of money does not allow them to give a thought to any such considerations as these. But the Kingdom is not so powerful as money is; nay, rather, not in the smallest proportion as powerful. For it is no ordinary Being that promises: but this is greater than even the Kingdom itself that we receive it from such a Giver! But now the case is the same as if a king, wishing, after ten thousand other benefits, to make us his heirs and coheirs with his son [should be despised]: while some captain of a band of robbers, who has done ten thousand wrongs to us and to our parents, and is himself fraught with ten thousand wickednesses, and has utterly marred our honor and our welfare, should, on presenting a single penny, receive our worship. God promises a Kingdom, and is despised: the Devil helps us to hell, and he is honored! Here God, there Devil. But let us see the difference of the tasks enjoined. For if there were none of these considerations in the case: if it were not, here God, there Devil; not, here one helping to a kingdom, there to a hell: the nature itself of the tasks enjoined were sufficient to induce us to comply with the former. For what does each enjoin? The one, the things which make glorious; the other the things which put to shame: one, the things which involve in ten thousand calamities and disgraces; the other, the things which have with them abundant refreshment. For look: the one says, *"Learn ye of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."* [Matthew 11:29]: the other says, Be thou savage, and ungentle, and passionate, and wrathful, and more a wild beast than a man. Let us see which is more useful, which, I pray you, more profitable. *"Speak not of this,"* say you. * * * But consider that he is the devil: above all indeed, if that be shown: there is need also to undergo toils, and, on the other hand, the prize of victory will be greater. For not he that enjoins easy tasks is the kind ([κῆδεμὼν]) benefactor, but he that

enjoins what is for our good. Since fathers also enjoin disagreeable tasks; but for this they are fathers: and so again do masters to slaves: but kidnappers and destroyers ([λυμεῶνες]) on the other hand, do just the reverse. And yet that the commands of Christ are attended with a pleasure, is manifest from that saying. For to what sort do you take the passionate man to belong, and to what the forbearing and meek? Does not the soul of the ([ἐ] [κείνου]) one seem to be in a kind of solitary retreat, enjoying exceeding quiet; while that of ([τούτου]) the other is like a market-place and tumult and the midst of cities, where great is the clamor of those going out, the noise of camels, mules, asses: of men shouting loud to those that meet them, that they may not be trodden under foot: and again, of silver-beaters, of braziers, of men thrusting and pushing this way and that and some overborne, some overbearing? But the soul of ([τούτου]) the former is like some mountain-top, with its delicate air, its pure sunshine, its limpid gushing fountains, its multitude of charming flowers, while the vernal meads and gardens put on their plumage of shrubs and flowers, and glance with rifling waters: and if any sound is heard there, it is sweet, and calculated to affect the ear with a sense of much delight. For either the warbling birds perch on the outermost spray of the branching trees, and cicadas, nightingales and swallows, blended in one harmony, perform a kind of concerted music; or the zephyr gently stirring the leaves, draws whistling tones from pines and firs, resembling oft the notes of the swan: and roses, violets, and other flowers, gently swayed, and ([κυανίζοντα]) dark-dimpling, show like a sea just rippled over with gentle undulations. Nay, many are the images one might find. Thus, when one looks at the roses, one shall fancy that he beholds in them the rainbow; in the violets a waving sea; in the lilies, the sky. But not by the spectacle alone, and the beholding, does such an one then cause delight: but also in the very body of

him that looks to the meadow, rather it refreshes him, and causes him to breathe freely, so that he thinks himself more in heaven than on earth. There is withal a sound of a different kind, when water from the mountain-steep, borne by its own force through ravines gently plashes over its pebbly bed with lulling noise, and so relaxes our frame with the pleasurable sensations, as quickly to draw over our eyes the soft languor of slumber. You have heard the description with pleasure: perhaps also it has made you enamored of solitude. But sweeter far than this solitude is the soul * * of the long-suffering. For it was not for the sake of describing a meadow, nor for the sake of making a display of language, that we have broached this similitude: but the object was, that, seeing how great is the delight of the long suffering, and how, by converse with a long suffering man, one would be far more both delighted and benefited, than by frequenting such spots, you may follow after such men. For when not even a breath of violence proceeds from such a soul, but mild and engaging words, then indeed does that gentle softness of the zephyr find its counterpart: entreaties also, devoid of all arrogance, but forming the resemblance to those winged warblers,—how is not this far better? For not the body is fanned by the soft breeze of speech; no, it refreshes our souls heated and glowing. A physician, by ever so great attention, could not so speedily rid a man of the fever, as a patient man would cool, by the breath of his own words, a person who was passionate and burning with wrath. And why do I speak of a physician? Not even iron, made red-hot and dipped into water, so quickly parts with its heat, as does the passionate man when he comes in contact with the soul of the long-suffering. But as, if it chance that singing birds find their way into the market, they go for nothing there, just so is it with our precepts when they light upon souls addicted to wrathful passions. Assuredly, sweeter is gentleness than bitterness and frowardness.— Well, but the one was God's

bidding, the other the devil's. Do you see that it was not for nothing that I said, even if there were no devil or God in the case, the things enjoined would be enough in themselves to ([ᾶ] [ποστῆσαι]) revolt us? For the one is both agreeable to himself, and serviceable to others, the other displeasing to himself, and hurtful to others. Nothing is more unpleasant than a man in a passion, nothing more noisome, more odious, more shocking, as also nothing more pleasing than one who knows not what it is to be in a passion. Better dwell with a wild beast than with a passionate man. For the beast, when once tamed, abides by its law; but the man, no matter how often you have tamed him, again turns wild, unless however he should of himself settle down into some such habit (of gentleness).

For as a bright sunny day and winter with all its gloom, so are the soul of the angry and that of the gentle. However, let us at present look not to the mischievous consequences resulting to others, but to those which affect the persons themselves: though indeed it is also no slight mischief (to one's self) to cause ill to another, for the present, however, let that be the consideration. What executioner with his lash can so lacerate the ribs, what red-hot lancets ([ὀ] [βελίσκοι]) ever so pierced the body, what madness can so dispossess a man of his natural reason, as anger and rage do? I know many instances of persons engendering diseases by giving loose to anger: and the worst of fevers are precisely these. But if they so injure the body, think of the soul. For do not argue that you do not see the mischief, but rather consider, if that which is the recipient of the malignant passion is so hurt, what must be the hurt sustained by that which engenders it! Many have lost their eyes, many have fallen into most grievous disease. Yet he that bears bravely, shall endure all things easily. But, however, both such are the troublesome tasks the devil enjoins, and the wages he assigns us for these is hell. He is both devil and foe to our salvation, and we rather do his

bidding than Christ's, Saviour as He is, and Benefactor and Defender, and speaking as He does such words, which are both sweeter, and more reverend, and more profitable and beneficial, and are both to ourselves and to those who live in our company the greatest of blessings. Nothing worse than anger, my beloved, nothing worse than unseasonable wrath. It will not have any long delay; it is a quick, sharp passion. Many a time has a mere word been blurted out in anger, which needs for its curing a whole lifetime, and a deed been done which was the ruin of the man for life. For the worst of it is this, that in a little moment, and by one act, and by a single word, full oft has it cast us out from the possession of eternal good, and brought to nought a world of pains. Wherefore I beseech you to do all you can to curb this savage beast. Thus far, however, I have spoken concerning meekness and wrath; if one should take in hand to treat of other opposites, as covetousness and the mad passion for glory, contrasted with contempt of wealth and of glory; intemperance with sobriety; envy with benevolence; and to marshal them each against its opposite, then one would know how great the difference. Behold how from the very things enjoined it is plainly shown, that the one master is God, the other the devil! Why then, let us do God's bidding, and not cast ourselves into bottomless pits; but while there is time, let us wash off all that defiles the soul, that we may attain unto the eternal blessings, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and Holy Ghost together be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 7 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts II. 37

"Now when they heard these words (E.V. 'this,') they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Do you see what a great thing gentleness is? More than any vehemence, it pricks our hearts, inflicts a keener wound. For as in the case of bodies which have become callous, the man that strikes upon them does not affect the sense so powerfully, but if he first mollify them and make them tender, then he pierces them effectually; so in this instance also, it is necessary first to mollify. But that which softens, is not wrath, not vehement accusation, not personal abuse; it is gentleness. The former indeed rather aggravate the callousness, this last alone removes it. If then you are desirous to reprove any delinquent, approach him with all possible mildness. For see here; he gently reminds them of the outrages they have committed, adding no comment; he declares the gift of God, he goes on to speak of the grace which bore testimony to the event, and so draws out his discourse to a still greater length. So they stood in awe of the gentleness of Peter, in that he, speaking to men who had crucified his Master, and breathed murder against himself and his companions, discoursed to them in the character of an affectionate father and teacher. Not merely were they persuaded; they even condemned themselves, they came to a sense of their past behavior. For he gave no room for their anger to be roused, and darken their judgment, but by means of humility he dispersed, as it were, the mist

and darkness of their indignation, and then pointed out to them the daring outrage they had committed. For so it is; when we say of ourselves that we are injured, the opposite party endeavor to prove that they have not done the injury; but when we say, we have not been injured, but have rather done the wrong, the others take the contrary line. If, therefore, you wish to place your enemy ([εἰς ἀγώνα]) in the wrong, beware of accusing him; nay ([ἀ] [γώνισαι]), plead for him, he will be sure to find himself guilty. There is a natural spirit of opposition in man. Such was the conduct of Peter. He did not accuse them harshly; on the contrary, he almost endeavored to plead for them, as far as was possible. And this was the very reason that he penetrated into their souls. You will ask, where is the proof that they were pricked? In their own words; for what say they? *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* Whom they had called deceivers, they call *"brethren:"* not that hereby they put themselves on an equality with them, but rather by way of attracting their brotherly affection and kindness: and besides, because the Apostles had deigned to call them by this title. And, say they, *"What shall we do?"* They did not straightway say, Well then, we repent; but they surrendered themselves to the disciples. Just as a person on the point of shipwreck, upon seeing the pilot, or in sickness the physician, would put all into his hands, and do his bidding in everything; so have these also confessed that they are in extreme peril, and destitute of all hope of salvation. They did not say, How shall we be saved? But, *"What shall we do?"* Here again Peter, though the question is put to all, is the man to answer. *"Repent,"* says he, *"and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ."* [Acts 2:38] He does not yet say, Believe, but, *"Be baptized every one of you."* For this they received in baptism. Then he speaks of the gain; *"For the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."* If you are to receive a gift, if baptism conveys remission, why

delay? He next gives a persuasive turn to his address, adding, "*For the promise is unto you*" [Acts 2:39]: for he had spoken of a promise above. "*And to your children,*" he says: the gift is greater, when these are to be heirs of the blessings. "*And to all,*" he continues, "*that are afar off:*" if to those that are afar off, much more to you that are near: "*even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" Observe the time he takes for saying, "*To those that are afar off.*" It is when he finds them conciliated and self-accusing. For when the soul pronounces sentence against itself, no longer can it feel envy. "*And with many other words did he testify, and exhort, saying.*" [Acts 2:40] Observe how, throughout, the writer studies brevity, and how free he is from ambition and display. "*He testified and exhorted, saying.*" This is the perfection of teaching, comprising something of fear and something of love. "*Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*" He says nothing of the future, all is about the present, by which indeed men are chiefly swayed; he shows that the Gospel releases from present evils as well. "*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*" [Acts 2:41] Think you not this cheered the Apostles more than the miracle? "*And they continued steadfastly and with one accord in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship.*" [Acts 2:42] Here are two virtues, perseverance and concord. "*In the Apostles' doctrine,*" he says: for they again taught them; "*and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.*" All in common, all with perseverance. "*And fear came upon every soul*" [Acts 2:43]: of those that believed. For they did not despise the Apostles, like common men, nor did they fix their regard on that which was visible merely. Verily, their thoughts were kindled into a glow. And as Peter had before spoken much, and declared the promises, and the things to come, well might they be beside themselves with fear. The wonders also bore witness to the words: "*Many*

wonders and signs were done by the Apostles." As was the case with Christ; first there were signs, then teaching, then wonders; so was it now. *"And all that believed were together, and had all things common."* [Acts 2:44]

Consider what an advance was here immediately! For the fellowship was not only in prayers, nor in doctrine alone, but also in ([πολιτεία]) social relations. *"And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."* See what fear was wrought in them! *"And they parted them,"* he says, showing the ([τὸ οἰκονομικὸν]) wise management: *"As every man had need."* Not recklessly, like some philosophers among the Greeks, of whom some gave up their land, others cast into the sea great quantities of money; but this was no contempt of riches, but only folly and madness. For universally the devil has made it his endeavor to disparage the creatures of God, as if it were impossible to make good use of riches. *"And continuing daily with one accord in the temple"* [Acts 2:46], they enjoyed the benefit of teaching. Consider how these Jews did nothing else great or small, than assiduously attend at the temple. For, as having become more earnest, they had increased devotion also to the place. For the Apostles did not for the present pluck them away from this object, for fear of injuring them. *"And breaking bread from house to house, did take their portion of food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."* [Acts 2:47] It seems to me that in mentioning *"bread,"* he here signifies fasting and hard life; for they *"took their portion of food,"* not of dainty fare. *"With gladness,"* he says. Do you see that not the dainty fare, but the ([τροφῆς οὐ τροφῆς]) food made the enjoyment. For they that fare daintily are under punishment and pain; but not so these. Do you see that the words of Peter contain this also, namely, the regulation of life? [*"And singleness of heart."*] For no gladness can exist where there is no simplicity. How had they *"favor with all the*

people?" On account of their alms deeds. For do not look to the fact, that the chief priests for envy and spite rose up against them, but rather consider that *"they had favor with the people."*— *"And the Lord added to the Church daily ([ἐ] [πὶ τὸ αὐτό]) [together] such as should be saved.— And all that believed were together."* Once more, the unanimity, the charity, which is the cause of all good things!

[*"Now when they heard this,"* etc. *"Then Peter said unto them,"* etc.] [Recapitulation, Acts 2:37] What had been said was not enough. For those sayings indeed were sufficient to bring them to faith; but these are to show what things the believer behooves to do. And he said not, In the Cross, but, *"In the name of Jesus Christ let every one of you be baptized."* [Acts 2:38] And he does not put them continually in mind of the Cross, that he may not seem to reproach them, but he says simply, *"Repent:"* and why? That we may be punished? No: *"And let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins."* And yet quite other is the law; of this world's tribunals: but in the case of the Gospel proclamation ([κηρύγματος]); when the delinquent has confessed, then is he saved! Observe how Peter does not instantly hurry over this, but he specifies also the conditions, and adds, *"You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;"* an assertion accredited by the fact, that the Apostles themselves had received that gift. [*"For the promise,"* etc.] [Acts 2:39] *"The promise,"* i.e. the gift of the Holy Ghost. So far, he speaks of the easy part, and that which has with it a great gift; and then he leads them to practice: for it will be to them a ground of earnestness, to have tasted already of those so great blessings [*"and with many other words did he testify,"* etc.] [Acts 2:40]. Since, however, the hearer would desire to learn what was the sum and, substance of these further words, he tells us this: [*"Saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation."*] [*"They then, that gladly received his words,"* etc.]

[Acts 2:41] they approved of what had been said, although fraught with terror, and after their assent given, proceed at once to baptism. *"And they continued"* it is written, *"steadfastly in the doctrine"* (or, *"teaching"*) *"of the Apostles"* [Acts 2:42]: for it was not for one day, no nor for two or three days that they were under teaching as being persons who had gone over to a different course of life. [*"And they continued with one accord in the Apostles' doctrine,"* etc.] The expression is not, [ὁ] [μοῦ] *"together,"* but [ὁ] [μοθυμαδόν], *"with one accord;"* (*"and daily,"* he says [afterwards], *"they were continuing with one accord in the temple,"*) i.e. with one soul. And here again in his conciseness, he does not relate the teaching given; for as young children, the Apostles nourished them with spiritual food. *"And fear came upon every soul"* [Acts 2:43]: clearly, of those, as well, who did not believe; namely, upon seeing so great a change all at once effected, and besides in consequence of the miracles. [*"And all that believed were together, and had all things in common,"* etc.] [Acts 2:44] They are all become angels on a sudden; all of them continuing in prayer and hearing, they saw that spiritual things are *common*, and no one there has more than other, and they speedily came together ([ἐ] [πὶ τὸ αὐτὸ]), to the same thing in common, even to the imparting to all. *"And all the believing"* [Acts 2:44], it says, were [ἐ] [πὶ τὸ αὐτὸ]: and to see that this does not mean that they were together in place, observe what follows [*"And had all things common"*]. *"All,"* it says: not one with the exception of another. This was an angelic commonwealth, not to call anything of theirs their own. Forthwith the root of evils was cut out. By what they did, they showed what they had heard: this was that which he said, *"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."*— *"And daily continuing with one accord in the temple."* [Acts 2:46] Since they have become three thousand, they take them abroad now: and withal, the boldness imparted by the Spirit being great: and daily they

went up as to a sacred place, as frequently we find Peter and John doing this: for at present they disturbed none of the Jewish observances. And this honor too passed over to the place; the eating in the house. In what house? In the Temple. Observe the increase of piety. They cast away their riches, and rejoiced, and had great gladness, for greater were the riches they received without labor ([ἄ] [πovα] Cat. al. [ἄ] [γαθά]). None reproached, none envied, none grudged; no pride, no contempt was there. As children they did indeed account themselves to be under teaching: as new born babes, such was their disposition. Yet why use this faint image? If you remember how it was when God shook our city with an earthquake, how subdued all men were. (*Infra*, Hom. xli. §2.) Such was the case then with those converts. No knavery, no villany then: such is the effect of fear, of affliction! No talk of "*mine*" and "*yours*" then. Hence gladness waited at their table; no one seemed to eat of his own, or of another's—I grant this may seem a riddle. Neither did they consider their brethren's property foreign to themselves; it was the property of a Master; nor again deemed they anything their own, all was the brethren's. The poor man knew no shame, the rich no haughtiness. This is gladness. The latter deemed himself the obliged and fortunate party; the others felt themselves as honored herein, and closely were they bound together. For indeed, because when people make doles of money, there are apt to be insults, pride, grudging; therefore says the Apostle, "*Not grudgingly, or of necessity.*"— [2 Corinthians 9:7] [*"With gladness and simplicity of heart,"* etc.] See of how many things he bears witness to them! Genuine faith, upright conduct, perseverance in hearing, in prayers, in singleness, in cheerfulness. [*"Praising God."*] [Acts 2:47] Two things there were which might deject them; their abstemious living, and the loss of their property. Yet on both these accounts did they rejoice. [*"And having favor with all the people."*]

For who but must love men of this character, as common fathers? They conceived no malice toward each other; they committed all to the grace of God. [*"With all the people."*] Fear there was none; yea, though they had taken their position in the midst of dangers. By *singleness*, however, he denotes their entire virtue, far surpassing their contempt of riches, their abstinence, and their perseverance in prayer. For thus also they offered pure praise to God: this is to praise God. But observe also here how they immediately obtain their reward. *"Having favor with all the people."* They were engaging, and highly beloved. For who would not prize and admire their simplicity of character; who would not be linked to one in whom was nothing underhand? To whom too does salvation belong, but to these? To whom those great marvels? Was it not to shepherds that the Gospel was first preached? And to Joseph, being a man of simple mind, insomuch that he did not let a suspicion of adultery frighten him into doing wrong? Did not God elect rustics, those artless men? For it is written, *"Blessed is every simple soul."* [Proverbs 11:25] And again, *"He that walks simply, walks surely."* [Proverbs 10:9] *"True,"* you will say, *"but prudence also is needed."* Why, what is simplicity, I pray you, but prudence? For when you suspect no evil, neither can you fabricate any: when you have no annoyances, neither can you remember injuries. Has any one insulted you? You were not pained. Has any one reviled you? You were nothing hurt. Has he envied you? Still you had no hurt. Simplicity is a high road to true philosophy. None so beautiful in soul as the simple. For as in regard of personal appearance, he that is sullen, and downcast, and reserved ([σύννους]), even if he be good-looking, loses much of his beauty; while he that relaxes his countenance, and gently smiles, enhances his good looks; so in respect of the soul, he that is reserved, if he have ten thousand good points, disfigures them; but the frank and simple, just the reverse. A man of this last description may be

safely made a friend, and when at variance easily reconciled. No need of guards and outposts, no need of chains and fetters with such an one; but great is his own freedom, and that of those who associate with him. But what, you will say, will such a man do if he fall among wicked people? God, Who has commanded us to be simple-minded, will stretch out His hand. What was more guileless than David? What more wicked than Saul? Yet who triumphed? Again, in Joseph's case; did not he in simplicity approach his master's wife, she him with wicked art? Yet what, I pray, was he the worse? Furthermore, what more simple than was Abel? What more malicious than Cain? And Joseph again, had he not dealt artlessly with his brethren? Was not this the cause of his eminence, that he spoke out unsuspiciously, while they received his words in malice? He declared once and again his dreams unreservedly; and then again he set off to them carrying provisions; he used no caution; he committed all to God: nay, the more they held him in the light of an enemy, the more did he treat them as brothers. God had power not to have suffered him to fall into their hands; but that the wonder might be made manifest, how, though they do their worst, he shall be higher than they: though the blow do come upon him, it comes from another, not from himself. On the contrary, the wicked man strikes himself first, and none other than himself. *"For alone,"* it is said, *"shall he bear his troubles."* [Proverbs 9:12] Ever in him the soul is full of dejection, his thoughts being ever entangled: whether he must hear anything or say anything, he does all with complaints, with accusation. Far, very far from such do friendship and harmony make their abode: but fightings are there, and enmities, and all unpleasantness. They that are such suspect even themselves. To these not even sleep is sweet, nor anything else. And have they a wife also, lo, they are enemies and at war with all: what endless jealousies, what unceasing fear! Aye, the wicked, [πονηρὸς] has his name

from [πονεῖν], "*to have trouble.*" And, indeed, thus the Scripture is ever calling "*wickedness*" by the name of labor; as, for instance, "*Under his tongue is toil and labor;*" and again, "*In the midst of them is toil and labor.*" [Psalm 10:7; 90:10; and 55:11]

Now if any one should wonder, whence those who had at first been of this last class, now are so different, let him learn that affliction was the cause, affliction, that school-mistress of heavenly wisdom, that mother of piety. When riches were done away with, wickedness also disappeared. True, say you, for this is the very thing I am asking about; but whence comes all the wickedness there is now? How is it that it came into the minds of those three thousand and five thousand straightway, to choose virtue, and that they simultaneously became Christian philosophers, whereas now hardly one is to be found? How was it that they then were in such harmony? What was it, that made them resolute and active? What was it that so suddenly inflamed them? The reason is, that they drew near with much piety; that honors were not so sought after as they are now; that they transferred their thoughts to things future, and looked for nothing of things present. This is the sign of an ardent mind, to encounter perils; this was their idea of Christianity. We take a different view, we seek our comfort here. The result is, that we shall not even obtain this, when the time has come. "*What are we to do?*" asked those men. We, just the contrary—"*What shall we do?*" What behooved to be done, they did. We, quite the reverse. Those men condemned themselves, despaired of saving themselves. This is what made them such as they were. They knew what a gift they had received. But how can you become like them, when you do everything in an opposite spirit? They heard, and were immediately baptized. They did not speak those cold words which we do now, nor did they contrive delays (p. 47, note 3); and yet they had heard all the

requirements: but that word, *"Save yourselves from this generation,"* made them to be not sluggish; rather they welcomed the exhortation; and that they did welcome it, they proved by their deeds, they showed what manner of men they were. They entered at once the lists, and took off the coat; whereas we do enter, but we intend to fight with our coat on. This is the cause that our antagonist has so little trouble, for we get entangled in our own movements, and are continually thrown down. We do precisely the same thing as he who, having to cope with a man frantic, breathing fire; and seeing him, a professed wrestler, covered with dust, tawny, stripped, clotted with dirt from the sand and sun, and running down with sweat and oil and dirt; himself, smelling of perfumes, should put on his silken garments, and his gold shoes, and his robe hanging down to his heels, and his golden trinkets on the head, and so descend into the arena, and grapple with him. Such a one will not only be impeded, but being taken up with the sole idea of not staining or rending his fine clothes, will tumble at the very first onset, and withal will suffer that which he chiefly dreaded, the damage of those his fond delights. The time for the contest has come, and say, are you putting on your silks? It is the time of exercise, the hour of the race, and are you adorning yourself as for a procession? Look not to outward things, but to the inward. For by the thoughts about these things the soul is hampered on all sides, as if by strong cords, so that she cannot let you raise a hand, or contend against the adversary; and makes you soft and effeminate. One may think himself, even when released from all these ties, well off, to be enabled to conquer that impure power. And on this account Christ too did not allow the parting with riches alone to suffice, but what says He? *"Sell whatsoever you have, and give to the poor, and come and follow Me."* [Mark 10:21] Now if, even when we cast away our riches, we are not yet in a safe position, but stand still in need of some further art and close practice; much

more, if we retain them, shall we fail to achieve great things, and, instead thereof, become a laughing-stock to the spectators, and to the evil one himself. For even though there were no devil, though there were none to wrestle with us, yet ten thousand roads on all sides lead the lover of money to hell. Where now are they who ask why the devil was made ([διατί ὁ δ. γέγονεν];)? Behold here the devil has no hand in the work, we do it all ourselves. Of a truth they of the hills might have a right to speak thus, who after they had given proof of their temperance, their contempt of wealth and disregard of all such things, have infinitely preferred to abandon father, and houses, and lands, and wife, and children. Yet, they are the last to speak so: but the men who at no time ought to say it, these do say it. Those are indeed wrestlings with the devil; these he does not think worth entering into. You will say, But it is the devil who instils this same covetousness. Well, flee from it, do not harbor it, O man. Suppose now, you see one flinging out filth from some upper story, and at the same time a person seeing it thrown out, yet standing there and receiving it all on his head: you not only do not pity him, but you are angry, and tell him it serves him right; and, "*Do not be a fool,*" everyone cries out to him, and lays the blame not so much on the other for shooting out the filth, as on him for letting it come on him. But now, you know that covetousness is of the devil; you know that it is the cause of ten thousand evils; you see him flinging out, like filth, his noisome imaginations; and do you not see that you are receiving on your bare head his nastiness, when it needed but to turn aside a little to escape it altogether? Just as our man by shifting his position would have escaped; so, do you refuse to admit such imaginations, ward off the lust. And how am I to do this? You will ask. Were you a Gentile, and had eyes for things present alone, the matter perhaps might be one of considerable difficulty, and yet even the Gentiles have achieved as much; but you— a man in expectation

of heaven and heavenly bliss— and you to ask, "*How am I to repel bad thoughts?*" Were I saying the contrary, then you might doubt: did I say, covet riches, "*How shall I covet riches,*" you might answer, "*seeing such things as I do?*" Tell me, if gold and precious stones were set before you, and I were to say, Desire lead, would there not be reason for hesitation? For you would say, How can I? But if I said, Do not desire it; this had been plainer to understand. I do not marvel at those who despise, but at those who despise not riches. This is the character of a soul exceeding full of stupidity, no better than flies and gnats, a soul crawling upon the earth, wallowing in filth, destitute of all high ideas. What is it you say? Are you destined to inherit eternal life; and do you say, how shall I despise the present life for the future? What, can the things be put in competition? You are to receive a royal vest; and say you, How shall I despise these rags? You are going to be led into the king's palace; and do you say, How shall I despise this present hovel? Of a truth, we ourselves are to blame in every point, we who do not choose to let ourselves be stirred up ever so little. For the willing have succeeded, and that with great zeal and facility. Would that you might be persuaded by our exhortation, and succeed too, and become imitators of those who have been successful, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, and power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 8 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts III. 1

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple, at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

Everywhere we find these two Apostles in great harmony together. *"To him Simon Peter beckoned."* [John 13:24] These two also came together to the sepulchre. [John 20:3 *et seq.*] And concerning John, Peter said unto Christ, *"And what shall this man do?"* [John 21:21] Now as for the other miracles, the writer of this book omits them; but he mentions the miracle by which they were all put in commotion. Observe again that they do not come to them purposely; so clear were they of ambition, so closely did they imitate their Master. Why now did they go up to the temple? Did they still live as Jews? No, but for expediency ([*χρησίμως*]). A miraculous sign again takes place, which both confirms the converts, and draws over the rest; and such, as they were a sign for having wrought. The disease was in the nature of the man, and baffled the art of medicine. He had been forty years lame [Acts 4:20], as the writer says afterwards, and no one during all that time had cured him. And the most obstinate diseases are those which are born with men. It was a great calamity, insomuch that even to provide for himself his necessary sustenance was impossible for him. The man was conspicuous both from the place, and from his malady. Hear how the matter is related. *"And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple."* [Acts 3:2] He sought to receive alms,

and he did not know who the men were. *"Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us."* (v. 3, 4.) Yet, not even so were the man's thoughts elevated, but he persisted in his importunity. For such is poverty; upon a refusal, it compels people still to persist. Let this put us to shame who fall back in our prayers. But observe, I pray you, Peter's gentleness: for he said, *"Look on us."* So truly did their very bearing, of itself, betoken their character. *"And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give you."* (v. 5-6.) He did not say, I give you something much better than silver or gold: but what? *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up."* [Acts 3:7] Such was also the way of Christ. Often He healed by word, often by an act, often also He stretched forth the hand, where men were somewhat weak in faith, that the cure might not appear to be spontaneous. *"And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up."* This act made manifest the Resurrection, for it was an image of the Resurrection. *"And immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked."* [Acts 3:8] Perhaps it was by way of trying himself that he put it thus to further proof, whether perchance the thing done might not be to no purpose. His feet were weak; it was not that he had lost them. Some say that he did not even know how to walk. *"And entered with them into the temple."* Of a truth it was marvellous. The Apostles do not urge him; but of his own accord he follows, by the act of following pointing out his benefactors. *"And leaping and praising God;"* not admiring them, but God that wrought by them. The man was grateful.

[*"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple,"* etc.] You observe how they continued in prayer. *"The ninth hour:"* there they prayed

together. [*"And a certain man,"* etc.] The man was in the act of being carried at that instant. [*"Whom they laid daily:"*] (his bearers carried him away:) [*"at the gate,"* etc.] just when people went into the temple. And that you may not suppose that they carried him for some other purpose, but that it was in order that he might receive alms, hear what the writer says: *"so that he might receive alms of those entering into the temple."*

[Recapitulation of Acts 3:1-8] And this is the reason why he also makes mention of the places, to give evidence of what he relates. *"And how was it,"* you may ask, *"that they did not present him to Christ?"* Perhaps they were certain unbelieving men, that haunted the temple, as in fact neither did they present him to the Apostles, when they saw them entering, after having done such great miracles. *"He asked,"* it is written, *"to receive an alms."*

[Acts 3:3] Their bearing marked them as certain devout and righteous men. [*"And Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said,"* etc.] (v. 4-5.)

And observe how John is everywhere silent, while Peter makes excuse for him also; *"Silver and gold,"* he says, *"have I none."* [Acts 3:6] He does not say, I have none here, as we are wont to speak, but absolutely, I have none. *"What then?"* he might say, *"do you take no notice of me, your suppliant?"*

Not so, but of what I have, receive thou. Do you remark how unassuming Peter is, how he makes no display even to the object of his beneficence?

[*"In the name,"* etc. *"And he took him by the hand,"* etc.] [Acts 3:7] And the mouth and the hand did all. Such sort of persons were the Jews; lame, and the right thing being to ask for health, these same ask for money, grovelling on the ground: for this it was that they beset the temple— to get money.

What then does Peter? He did not despise him; he did not look about for some rich subject; he did not say, If the miracle is not done to some great one ([εἰς ἐκεῖνον]), nothing great is done: he did not look for some honor from him, no, nor heal him in the presence of people; for the man was at the

entrance, not where the multitude were, that is, within. But Peter sought no such object; nor upon entering did he proclaim the matter: no, it was by his bearing that he attracted the lame man to ask. And the wonder is, that he believed so readily. For those who are set free from diseases of long standing, hardly believe their very eyesight. Once healed, he remains with the Apostles, giving thanks to God. *"And he entered,"* it is said, *"with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."* [Acts 3:8] Observe how restless he is, in the eagerness of his delight, at the same time shutting the mouths of the Jews. Also, that he leaped, was to prevent the suspicion of hypocrisy; for after all, this was beyond the possibility of deception. For if previously he was totally unable to walk, even when hunger pressed hard (and indeed he would not have chosen to share with his bearers the proceeds of his begging, if he had been able to manage for himself), this holds still more in the present case. And how should he have feigned in behalf of those who had given him no alms? But the man was grateful, even after his recovery. And thus on either side his faith is shown, both by his thankfulness, and by the recent event.

He was so well known to all, that *"they recognized him. And all the people,"* it says, *"saw him walking and praising God; and they recognized ([ἐ] [περίνωσκον]) that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple."* [Acts 3:9] It is well said, *"they recognized,"* inasmuch as he was one unknown now by reason of what had happened: for we use this term with regard to objects, which we find a difficulty in recognizing. [*"And they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him."*] Needs must it be believed that the name of Christ remits sins, seeing it produces even such effects as this. (*"And as he held Peter and John, all the people came together at the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."* [Acts 3:11] From his good feelings and love towards

the Apostles, the lame man would not leave them; perhaps he was thanking them openly, and praising them. *"And all the people,"* it is said, *"ran together unto them. And when Peter saw them, he answered."* [Acts 3:12] Again it is he who acts, and addresses the people.

And in the former instance, it was the circumstance of the tongues that aroused them to hearing, now it was this miracle; then, he took occasion to speak from their accusations now, from their supposition. Let us then consider, in what this address differs from the former, and in what it agrees with that. The former was held in a house, before any one has come over, and before they themselves have wrought anything; this, when all are wondering, and the healed man is standing by; when none doubt, as in the other case where some said *"These men are full of new wine."* [Acts 12:13] At the one, he was surrounded by all the Apostles as he spoke; but at this, he has John alone; for by this time he is bold, and become more energetic. Such is the nature of virtue; once started, it advances, and never stops. Observe also how it was divinely ordered, that the miracle should take place in the temple, that others also might wax bold, while the Apostles work not in holes ([εἰς καταδύσεις]) and corners, and in secret: though not in the interior of the temple either, where the greater number were. How then, I pray you, was it believed? The man himself who was healed proclaimed the benefit. For there was no reason why he should lie, nor why he should have joined a different set of people. Either then it was because of the spaciousness of the place, that he there wrought the miracle, or because the spot was retired. And observe the event. They went up for one object, and they accomplished another. Thus also did Cornelius: he prayed and fasted * *. But hitherto they always call Him, *"of Nazareth."* *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,"* said Peter, walk. For in the first instance, the thing required was, that He should be believed in.

Let us not, I pray you, give over at the beginning of the story: and if one has named some particular achievement of virtue, and then has dropped it for awhile, let us begin over again. If we get into the right mood ([ἐ] [v ἔξει]), we shall soon arrive at the end, soon reach the summit. For earnestness, it is said, begets earnestness, and dulness begets dulness. He who has effected some little reformation, thereby receives encouragement to approach greater things, and thence again to go on something more than that; and just as it is with fire, the more wood it lays hold on, the more vehement it becomes, so likewise zeal, the more pious reflections it kindles, the more effectually is it armed against their opposites. As, for example: There are set in us, like so many thorns, perjury, falsehood hypocrisy, deceit, dishonesty, abusiveness, scoffing, buffoonery, indecency, scurrility; again under another head, covetousness, rapacity, injustice, calumny, insidiousness; again, wicked lust, uncleanness, lewdness, fornication, adultery; again, envy, emulation, anger, wrath, rancor, revenge, blasphemy, and numberless others. If we effect a reformation in the first instances, not only in them will the success have been achieved, but through them in the following cases also. For reason has then gained more strength to overthrow those other vices. For instance, if he, who has frequently sworn, once extirpates that satanic habit, he has not only gained this point, but a habit of piety in other respects will have been brought in. For no one, I suppose, averse to swearing would easily consent to do any other wicked act; he will feel a reverence for the virtue already acquired. Just as the man who wears a beautiful robe, will blush to roll himself in the mire; so is it also here. From this beginning he will come to learn not to be angry, not to strike, not to insult. For if once he has come right in little matters, the whole affair is done. Often, however, something of this sort takes place, that a person has once reformed, and then again through carelessness falls back into the old

sins but too readily, so that the case becomes irremediable. For instance, we have made it a law to ourselves not to swear; we have got on well, for some three, or even four days; after that being hard put to it, we scattered away the whole of our collected gain; we then fall into indolence and recklessness. Still it is not right to give over; one must set to work zealously again. For it is said, he that has built up a house, and then sees his building pulled down, will have less spirit for building again. Yes, but for all this, one must not be dispirited, but must once more set to work zealously.

Let us then lay down daily laws for ourselves. For a time let us begin with the easier. Let us retrench all that superfluity of paths, and put a bridle on our tongues; let no one swear by God. Here is no outlay, here is no fatigue, here is no cost of time. It is sufficient to will, and all is done. It is a matter of habit. I beseech and entreat you, let us contribute thus much of zeal. Tell me, if I had bid you contribute your money, would not each one of you readily cast in according to his ability? If you saw me in extreme danger, would you not, if it had been possible, have cut off your own flesh to give me? Well, I am in danger now, and in great danger, such indeed that, were I withal confined to a dungeon, or had I received ten thousand stripes, or were a convict in the mines, I could not suffer more. Reach me then the hand. Consider how great is the danger, that I should not have been able to reform this which is least: I say "*least*" in regard to the labor required. What shall I have to say hereafter, when thus called to account? "*Why did you not remonstrate? Why did you not enjoin? Why did you not lay the law before them? Why did you not check the disobedient?*" It will not be enough for me to say, that I did admonish. It will be answered, "*You ought to have used more vehement rebuke; since Eli also admonished.*" [1 Samuel 2:24] But God forbid I should compare you with Eli's sons. Indeed, he did admonish them and say, "*Nay, my sons, do not so; evil is the report that I hear of*

you." [1 Samuel 3:13] But subsequently the Scripture says, that he did not admonish his sons: since he did not admonish them severely, or with threats. For is it not strange indeed, that in the synagogues of the Jews the laws are in such force, and whatever the teacher enjoins is performed; while here we are thus despised and rejected? It is not my own glory that I care for (my glory is your good report), but it is for your salvation. Every day we lift up our voice, and shout in your ears. But there is none to hear. Still we take no strong measures. I fear we shall have to give an account at the coming Day of this excessive and unseasonable leniency.

Wherefore, with a loud and clear voice, I proclaim to all and testify, that those who are notorious for this transgression, who utter words which come "*of the evil one,*" [Matthew 5:37] (for such is swearing,) shall not step over the threshold of the Church. Let this present month be the time allowed you for reforming in this matter. Talk not to me, "*Necessity of business compels me to use oaths, else people do not believe me.*" To begin with this, retrench those oaths which come merely of habit. I know many will laugh, but it is better to be laughed at now, than wept for hereafter. They will laugh, who are mad. For who, I ask, in his right mind would laugh at the keeping of the commandment? But suppose they do; why, it will not be at us, but at Christ, that such men will laugh. You shudder at the word! I knew you would. Now if this law were of my making, at me would be the laughing; but if Another be the Lawgiver, the jeering passes over to Him. Yes, and Christ was once spit upon, and smitten with the palm, smitten upon the face. Now also He bears with this, and it is no wonder ([οὐδὲν ἀπεικὸς])! For this, hell is prepared; for this, the worm that dies not. Behold, again I say and testify; let him laugh that will, let him scoff that lists. Hereunto are we set, to be laughed at and mocked, to suffer all things. We are "*the offscouring*" [1 Corinthians 4:13] or the world, as blessed Paul

says. If any man refuse to conform to this order, that man I, by my word, as with a trumpet's blast, do prohibit to set foot over the Church's threshold, be he prince, be he even the crowned head. Either depose me from this station, or if I am to remain, expose me not to danger. I cannot bear to ascend this throne, without effecting some great reformation. For if this be impossible, it is better to stand below. Nothing more wretched than a ruler who does his people no good. Do exert yourselves, and attend to this, I entreat you; and let us strive, and of a surety more will come of it. Fast, entreat God (and we will do the same with you) that this pernicious habit may be eradicated. It is no great matter, to become teachers to the world; no small honor to have it said everywhere, that really in this city there is not a man that swears. If this come to pass, you will receive the reward not only of your own good works; indeed what I am to you, this you will become to the world. Assuredly others also will emulate you; assuredly you will be a candle set upon a candlestick.

And is this, you will say, the whole matter? No, this is not all, but this is a beginning of other virtues. He who swears not, will certainly attain unto piety in other respects, whether he will or not, by dint of self-respect and awe. But you will urge that most men do not keep to it, but fall away. Well, better one man that does the will of the Lord, than ten thousand transgressors. In fact, hereby is everything subverted, everything turned upside down, I mean, because after the fashion of the Theatre we desire numbers not a select number. For what indeed will a multitude be able to profit? Would you learn that it is the saints, not the numbers, which make the multitude? Lead out to war ten hundred thousand men, and one saint, and let us see who achieves the most? Joshua the son of Nun went out to war, and alone achieved all; the rest were of no use. Would you see, beloved, that the great multitude, when it does not the will of God, is no

better than a thing of naught? I wish indeed, and desire, and with pleasure would be torn in pieces, to adorn the Church with a multitude, yea, but a select multitude; yet if this be impossible, that the few should be select, is my desire. Do you not see, that it is better to possess one precious stone, than ten thousand farthing pieces? Do you not see that it is better to have the eye sound, than to be loaded with flesh, and yet deprived of sight? Do you not see that it is better to have one healthy sheep, than ten thousand with the murrain; that fine children, though few, are better than many children diseased withal; that in the Kingdom there will be few, but in hell many? What have I to do with a multitude? What profit therein? None. Rather they are a plague to the rest. It is as if one who had the option of ten healthy persons or ten thousand sick folks, should take to himself the latter in addition to the ten. The many who do nothing well, will avail us only for punishment hereafter, and disgrace for the time being. For no one will urge it as a point in our favor that we are many; we shall be blamed for being unprofitable. In fact, this is what men always tell us, when we say, We are many; *"aye, but bad,"* they answer.

Behold again: I give warning, and proclaim with a loud voice, let no one think it a laughing matter: I will exclude and prohibit the disobedient; and as long as I sit on this throne, I will give up not one of its rights. If any one depose me from it, then I am no longer responsible; as long as I am responsible, I cannot disregard them; on account not of my own punishment, but of your salvation. For I do exceedingly long for your salvation. To advance it, I endure pain and vexation. But yield your obedience, that both here and hereafter you may receive a plentiful reward, and that we may in common reap eternal blessings; through the grace and mercy of the only-begotten Son of God; to Whom with the Father and the

Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, world without end.
Amen.

Homily 9 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts III. 12

"And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, You men of Israel, why marvel ye at this, or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we have made this man to walk?"

There is greater freedom of speech in this harangue, than in the former. Not that he was afraid on the former occasion, but the persons whom he addressed there, being jesters and scoffers, would not have borne it. Hence in the beginning of that address he also bespeaks their attention by his preamble; *"Be this known unto you, and hearken to my words."* [Acts 2:14] But here there is no need of this management. ([κατασκευῆς].) For his hearers were not in a state of indifference. The miracle had aroused them all; they were even full of fear and amazement. Wherefore also there was no need of beginning at that point, but rather with a different topic; by which, in fact, he powerfully conciliated them, namely, by rejecting the glory which was to be had from them. For nothing is so advantageous, and so likely to pacify the hearers, as to say nothing about one's self of an honorable nature, but, on the contrary, to obviate all surmise of wishing to do so. And, in truth, much more did they increase their glory by despising glory, and showing that what had just taken place was no human act, but a Divine work; and that it was their part to join with the beholders in admiration, rather than to receive it from them. Do you see how clear of all ambition he is, and how he repels the honor paid to him? In the same manner also did the ancient fathers; for instance, Daniel said, *"Not for any*

wisdom that is in me." [Daniel 2:30] And again Joseph, *"Do not interpretations belong to God?"* [Genesis 11:8] And David, *"When the lion and the bear came, in the name of the Lord I rent them with my hands."* [1 Samuel 17:34] And so likewise here the Apostles, *"Why do you look so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"* [Acts 3:13] Nay, not even this; for not by our own merit did we draw down the Divine influence. *"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers."* See how assiduously he thrusts himself ([εἰσωθεῖ]) upon the fathers of old, lest he should appear to be introducing a new doctrine. In the former address he appealed to the patriarch David, here he appeals to Abraham and the rest. *"Hath glorified His Servant Jesus."* Again a lowly expression, like as in the opening address.

But at this point he proceeds to enlarge upon the outrage, and exalts the heinousness of the deed, no longer, as before, throwing a veil over it. This he does, wishing to work upon them more powerfully. For the more he proved them accountable, the better his purpose were effected. *"Hath glorified,"* he says, *"His Servant Jesus, Whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go."* The charge is twofold: Pilate was desirous to let Him go; you would not, when he was willing. *"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince (or Author) of Life: Whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."* (v. 14-15.) You desired a robber instead of Him. He shows the great aggravation of the act. As he has them under his hand, he now strikes hard. *"The Prince of Life,"* he says. In these words he establishes the doctrine of the Resurrection. *"Whom God has raised from the dead."* [Acts 2:26] *"Whence does this appear?"* He no longer refers to the Prophets, but to himself,

inasmuch as now he has a right to be believed. Before, when he affirmed that He was risen, he adduced the testimony of David; now, having said it, he alleges the College of Apostles. *"Whereof we are witnesses,"* he says.

"And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Seeking to declare the matter ([ζητῶν τὸ πρᾶγμα εἰπεῖν]), he straightway brings forward the sign: *"In the presence,"* he says, *"of you all."* As he had borne hard upon them, and had shown that He Whom they crucified had risen, again he relaxes, by giving them the power of repentance; *"And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers."* [Acts 3:17] This is one ground of excuse. The second is of a different kind. As Joseph speaks to his brethren, God did send me before you [Genesis 45:5]; what in the former speech he had briefly said, in the words, *"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken,"*— this he here enlarges upon: *"But what God before had showed by the mouth of all His Prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has so fulfilled."* [Acts 3:18] At the same time showing, that it was not of their doing, if this be proved, that it took place after God's counsel. He alludes to those words with which they had reviled Him on the Cross, namely *"Let Him deliver Him, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God. If He trust in God, let Him now come down from the cross."* [Matthew 27:42-43] O foolish men, were these idle words? It must needs so come to pass, and the prophets bear witness thereunto. Therefore if He descended not, it was for no weakness of His own that He did not come down, but for very power. And Peter puts this by way of apology for the Jews, hoping that they may also close with what he says. *"He has so fulfilled,"* he says. Do you see now how he refers everything to that source? *"Repent ye therefore,"* he says, *"and be*

converted." He does not add, "*from your sins;*" but, "*that your sins, may be blotted out,*" means the same thing. And then he adds the gain: "*So shall the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord.*" [Acts 3:19] This betokens them in a sad state, brought low by many wars. For it is to the case of one on fire, and craving comfort, that the expression applies. And see now how he advances. In his first sermon, he but slightly hinted at the resurrection, and Christ's sitting in heaven; but here he also speaks of His visible advent. And He shall send Jesus the Christ ordained (for you), "*Whom the heaven must (i.e. must of necessity) receive, until the times of the restitution of all things.*" The reason why He does not now come is clear. "*Which God has spoken,*" he continues, "*by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*" Before, he had spoken of David, here he speaks of Moses. "*Of all things,*" he says, "*which He has spoken.*" But he does not say, "*which Christ,*" but, "*which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*" (v. 20-21.) Then he betakes him to the ground of credibility, saying, "*A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear in all things.*" And then the greatness of the punishment: "*And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow, after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these days.*" (v. 23-24.) He has done well to set the distinction here. For whenever he says anything great, he appeals to them of old. And he found a text which contained both truths; just as in the other discourse he said, "*Until He put His foes under His feet.*" [Acts 2:35] The remarkable circumstance is, that the two things stand together; that is,

subjection and disobedience, and the punishment. *"Like unto me,"* he says. Then why are you alarmed? *"You are the children of the prophets"* [Acts 3:25]: so that to you they spoke, and for your sakes have all these things come to pass. For as they deemed that through their outrage they had become alienated (and indeed there is no parity of reason, that He Who now is crucified, should now cherish them as His own), he proves to them that both the one and the other are in accordance with prophecy. *"You are the children,"* he says, *"of the Prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, 'And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.' Unto you first,"* he continues, *"God having raised up His Son ([τόν Παῖδα]) sent Him."* *"To others indeed also, but to you first who crucified Him."* *"To bless you,"* he adds, *"in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."* [Acts 3:26]

Now let us consider again more minutely what has been read out. (Recapitulation.) In the first place, he establishes the point that the miracle was performed by them ; saying, *"Why marvel ye?"* And he will not let the assertion be disbelieved: and to give it more weight, he anticipates their judgment. *"Why look ye,"* he says, *"so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"* [Acts 3:12] If this troubles and confounds you, learn Who was the Doer, and be not amazed. And observe how on all occasions when he refers to God, and says that all things are from Him, then he fearlessly chides them: as above where he said, *"A man approved of God among you."* [Acts 2:22] And on all occasions he reminds them of the outrage they had committed, in order that the fact of the Resurrection may be established. But here he also subjoins something else; for he no more says, *"of Nazareth,"* but what? *"The God of our fathers has glorified His Servant Jesus."* [Acts 3:13] Observe also the modesty. He reproached them not, neither did he say at once, *"Believe then*

now: behold, a man that has been forty years lame, has been raised up through the name of Jesus Christ." This he did not say, for it would have excited opposition. On the contrary, he begins by commending them for admiring the deed, and again calls them after their ancestor: *"You men of Israel."* Moreover, he does not say, It was Jesus that healed him: but, *"The God of our fathers has glorified,"* etc. But then, lest they should say, How can this stand to reason— that God should glorify the transgressor? Therefore he reminds them of the judgment before Pilate, showing that, would they but consider, He was no transgressor; else Pilate had not wished to release Him. And he does not say, *"when Pilate was desirous,"* but, *"was determined to let Him go."* *"But ye denied the Holy One,"* etc. (v. 13-14.) Him who had killed others, you asked to be released; Him Who quickens them that are killed, you did not wish to have! And that they might not ask again, How should it be that God now glorifies Him, when before He gave no assistance? He brings forward the prophets, testifying that so it behooved to be. *"But those things which God before had showed,"* etc., [*infra* Acts 3:18] Then, lest they should suppose that God's dispensation was their own apology, first he reproves them. Moreover, that the denying Him *"to Pilate's face,"* was no ordinary thing; seeing that he wished to release Him. And that you cannot deny this, the man who was asked in preference to Him is witness against you. This also is part of a deep dispensation. Here it shows their shamelessness and effrontery; that a Gentile, one who saw Him for the first time, should have discharged Him, though he had heard nothing striking; while they who had been brought up among His miracles, have done the very opposite! For, as he has said, *"When he (Pilate) had determined to let Him go,"* that it may not be imagined that he did this of favor, we read, And he said, It is a custom with you to release one prisoner: will you therefore that I release unto you this man? [Matthew 27:15] *"But*

ye denied the Holy One and the Just." [Mark 15:6] He does not say, "*You delivered up;*" but everywhere, "*You denied.*" For, said they, "*We have no king but Cæsar.*" [John 19:15] And he does not say only, You did not beg off the innocent, and, "*You denied*" Him but, "*You slew*" Him. While they were hardened, he refrained from such language; but when their minds are most moved, then he strikes home, now that they are in a condition to feel it. For just as when men are drunk we say nothing to them, but when they are sober, and are recovered from their intoxication then we chide them; thus did Peter: when they were able to understand his words, then he also sharpened his tongue, alleging against them many charges; that, Whom God had glorified, they had delivered up; Whom Pilate would have acquitted they denied to his face; that they preferred the robber before Him.

Observe again how he speaks covertly concerning Christ's power, showing that He raised Himself: just as in his first discourse he had said, "*Because it was not possible that He should be holden of it*" [Acts 2:24], so here he says, "*And killed the Prince of Life.*" [Acts 3:15] It follows that the Life He had was not from another. The prince (or author) of evil would be he that first brought forth evil; the prince or author of murder, he who first originated murder; so also the Prince (or Author) of Life must be He Who has Life from Himself. "*Whom God raised up,*" he continues: and now that he has uttered this, he adds, And his name, upon faith in his name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know; yea, the faith which is by Him has given Him this perfect soundness. [The faith which is by Him [ἡ] [δι' αὐτοῦ πίστις] .] And yet it was [ἡ] [εἰς αὐτὸν πίστις], "*the faith which is in Him*" (as its object) that did all. For the Apostles did not say, "*By the name,*" but, "*In the name,*" and it was in Him ([εἰς αὐτὸν]) that the man believed. But they did not yet make bold to use the expression, "*The faith which is in Him.*" For, that the phrase "*By Him*" should not be too low, observe that

after saying, *"Upon the faith of His name,"* he adds, *"His name has made him strong,"* and then it is that he says, *"Yea, the faith which is by Him has given him this perfect soundness."* Observe how he implies, that in the [καὶ ἐκείνο] former expression also *"Whom God raised up,"* he did but condescend to their low attainments. For that Person needed not Another's help for His rising again, Whose Name raised up a lame man, being all one as dead. Mark how on all occasions he adduces their own testimony. Thus above, he said, *"As ye yourselves also know;"* and, *"In the midst of you:"* and here again, *"Whom ye see and know: in the presence of you all."* [Acts 2:22] And yet that it was, *"In His name,"* they knew not: but they did know that the man was lame, that he stands there whole. They that had wrought the deed themselves confessed, that it was not by their own power, but by that of Christ. And had this assertion been unfounded, had they not been truly persuaded themselves that Christ had risen again, they would not have sought to establish the honor of a dead man instead of their own, especially while the eyes of the multitude were upon them. Then, when their minds were alarmed, immediately he encourages them, by the appellation of Brethren, *"And now, brethren, I know, etc."* For in the former discourse he foretold nothing, but only says concerning Christ, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly:"* here he adds an admonition. There he waited till the people spoke: here, he knew how much they had already effected, and that the present assembly was better disposed toward them. *"That through ignorance you did it."* And yet the circumstances mentioned above were not to be put to the score of ignorance. To choose the robber, to reject Him Who had been adjudged to be acquitted, to desire even to destroy Him—how should this be referred to ignorance? Nevertheless, he gives them liberty to deny it, and to change their mind about what had happened. Now this indeed, that you put to death the innocent, you knew:

but that you were killing *"the Prince of Life,"* this, belike, you did not know. And he exculpated not them alone, but also the chief contrivers of the evil, *"ye and your rulers:"* for doubtless it would have roused their opposition, had he gone off into accusation. For the evil-doer, when you accuse him of some wickedness that he has done, in his endeavor to exonerate himself, grows more vehement. And he no longer says, *"You crucified," "You killed,"* but, *"You did it;"* leading them to seek for pardon. If those rulers did it through ignorance, much more did these present. *"But these things which God before had showed,"* etc. [Acts 3:18] But it is remarkable, that both in the first and in the second discourse, speaking to the same effect, that is, in the former, *"By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;"* and in this, *"God before had showed that Christ should suffer;"* in neither does he adduce any particular text in proof. The fact is, that each one of such passages is accompanied with many accusations, and with mention of the punishment in store for them [as]; *"I will deliver up,"* says one, *"the wicked in requital for His grave, and the rich in return for His death."* [Isaiah 53:9] And again, * * * *"Those things,"* he says, *"which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He has so fulfilled."* It shows the greatness of that *"counsel,"* in that *all* spoke of it, and not one only. It does not follow, because the event was through ignorance, that it took place irrespectively of God's ordinance. See how great is the Wisdom of God, when it uses the wickedness of others to bring about that which must be. *"He has fulfilled,"* he says: that they may not imagine that anything at all is wanting; for whatsoever Christ must needs suffer, has been fulfilled. But do not think, that, because the Prophets said this, and because you did it through ignorance, this suffices to your exculpation. However, he does not express himself thus, but in milder terms says, *"Repent ye therefore."* [Acts 3:19] *"Why? For either it was through ignorance, or by the dispensation of*

God." *"That your sins may be blotted out."* I do not mean the crimes committed at the Crucifixion; perhaps they were through ignorance; but so that your other sins may be blotted out: this only. *"So shall the times of refreshing come unto you."* Here he speaks of the Resurrection, obscurely. For those are indeed times of refreshing, which Paul also looked for, when he said, *"We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burthened."* [2 Corinthians 5:4] Then to prove that Christ is the cause of the days of refreshing, he says, *"And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was for you ordained."* [Acts 3:20] He said not, *"That your sin may be blotted out,"* but, *"your sins;"* for he hints at that sin also. *"He shall send."* And whence? *"Whom the heaven must receive."* [Acts 3:21] Still [*"must"*] *"receive?"* And why not simply, Whom the heaven has received? This, as if discoursing of old times: so, he says, it is divinely ordered, so it is settled: not a word yet of His eternal subsistence.— *"For Moses indeed said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord raise up for you:"* *"Him shall you hear in all things that He shall speak unto you:"* and having said, *"All things which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets,"* [Acts 3:22] now indeed he brings in Christ Himself. For, if He predicted many things and it is necessary to hear Him, one would not be wrong in saying that the Prophets have spoken these things. But, besides, he wishes to show that the Prophets did predict the same things. And, if any one will look closely into the matter, he will find these things spoken in the Old Testament, obscurely indeed, but nevertheless spoken. *"Who was purposely designed,"* says he: in Whom there is nothing novel. Here he also alarms them, by the thought that much remains to be fulfilled. But if so, how says he, *"Hath fulfilled?"* [Acts 3:18] The things which it was necessary *"that Christ should suffer,"* are fulfilled: the things which must come to pass, not yet. *"A prophet shall the Lord God raise up for you from among your brethren, like me."* This would

most conciliate them. Do you observe the sprinkling of low matters and high, side by side—that He Who was to go up into the heavens should be like Moses? And yet it was a great thing too. For in fact He was not simply like Moses, if so be that *"every soul which will not hear shall be destroyed."* And one might mention numberless other things which show that He was not like Moses; so that it is a mighty text that he has handled. *"God shall raise Him up unto you,"* says Moses, *"from among your brethren,"* etc.: consequently Moses himself threatens those that should not hear. *"Yea, and all the prophets,"* etc.: all this is calculated to attract *"Yea, and all the prophets,"* says the Apostle, *"from Samuel."* He refrains from enumerating them singly, not to make his discourse too long; but having alleged that decisive testimony of Moses, he passes by the rest. *"You,"* he says, *"are the children of the Prophets, and of the covenant which God made."* [Acts 3:25] *"Children of the covenant;"* that is, heirs. For lest they should think that they received this offer from the favor of Peter, he shows, that of old it was due to them, in order that they may the rather believe that such also is the will of God. *"Unto you first,"* he continues, *"God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him."* [Acts 3:26] He does not say simply, *"Unto you He sent His Son,"* but also, after the resurrection, and when He had been crucified. For that they may not suppose that he himself granted them this favor, and not the Father, he says, *"To bless you."* For if He is your Brother, and blesses you, the affair is a promise. *"Unto you first."* That is, so far are you from having no share in these blessings, that He would have you become moreover promoters and authors of them to others. For you are not to feel like castaways. *"Having raised up":* again, the Resurrection. *"In turning away,"* he says, *"every one of you from his iniquities."* In this way He blesses you: not in a general way. And what kind of blessing is this? A great one. For of course not the turning a man away from his iniquities is itself

sufficient to remit them also. And if it is not sufficient to remit, how should it be to confer a blessing? For it is not to be supposed that the transgressor becomes immediately also blessed; he is simply released from his sins. But this, *"Like unto me,"* would no wise apply. *"Hear ye Him,"* he says; and not this alone, but he adds, *"And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."*

When he has shown them that they had sinned, and has imparted forgiveness to them, and promised good things, then indeed, then he says, *"Moses also says the same thing."* What sort of connection is this: *"Until the times of the restitution;"* and then to introduce Moses, saying, that all that Christ said shall come to pass? Then also, on the other hand, he says, as matter of encomium (so that for this reason also ye ought to obey): *"You are the children of the prophets and of the covenant:"* i.e. heirs. Then why do you stand affected towards that which is your own, as if it were another's? True, you have done deeds worthy of condemnation; still you may yet obtain pardon. Having said this, with reason he is now able to say, *"Unto you God sent his Son Jesus to bless you."* He says not, To save you, but what is greater; that the crucified Jesus blessed His crucifiers.

Let us then also imitate Him. Let us cast out that spirit of murder and enmity. It is not enough not to retaliate (for even in the Old Dispensation this was exemplified); but let us do all as we would for bosom-friends, as we would for ourselves so for those who have injured us. We are followers of Him, we are His disciples, who after being crucified, sets everything in action in behalf of his murderers, and sends out His Apostles to this end. And yet we have often suffered justly; but those acted not only unjustly, but impiously; for He was their Benefactor, He had done no evil, and they crucified Him. And for what reason? For the sake of their reputation. But He Himself made them objects of reverence. *"The scribes and the pharisees*

sit in Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that do ye, but after their works do ye not." [Matthew 23:2] And again in another place, *"Go your way, show yourself to the priest."* [Matthew 8:4] Besides, when He might have destroyed them, He saves them. Let us then imitate Him, and let no one be an enemy, no one a foe, except to the devil.

Not a little does the habit of not swearing contribute to this end: I mean to the not giving way to wrath: and by not giving way to wrath, we shall not have an enemy either. Lop off the oaths of a man, and you have clipped the wings of his anger, you have smothered all his passion. Swearing, it is said, is as the wind to wrath. Lower the sails; no need of sails, when there is no wind. If then we do not clamor, and do not swear, we have cut the sinews of passion. And if you doubt this, just put it to experiment. Impose it as a law upon the passionate man that he shall never swear, and you will have no necessity of preaching moderation to him. So the whole business is finished. For even though you do not forswear yourselves [yet], by swearing at all, do you not know in what absurd consequences you involve yourselves— binding yourselves to an absolute necessity and as with a cord, and putting yourselves to all manner of shifts, as men studying how to rescue their soul from an evil which there is no escaping, or, failing of that, obliged [by that self-imposed necessity] to spend your life thenceforth in vexation, in quarrels, and to curse your wrath? But all is in vain, and to no purpose. Threaten, be peremptory ([διόρισαι]), do all, whatever it be, without swearing; [so]: it is in your power to reverse ([ἀ] [ναλῦσαι]) both what you have said and what you have done if you have the mind. Thus on the present day I must needs speak more gently to you. For since you have heard me, and the greater part of the reformation is achieved by you, now then let us see for what purpose the taking of oaths was introduced, and why allowed to be. In relating to you their first origin, and

when they were conceived, and how, and by whom we shall give you this account in requital for your obedience. For it is fit that he who has made his practice right, should be taught the philosophy of the matter, but he who is not yet doing the right, is not worthy to be told the history.

They made many covenants in Abraham's time, and slew victims, and offered sacrifices, and as yet oaths were not. Whence then did they come in? When evil increased, when all was confusion, upside down, when men had turned aside to idolatry: then it was, then, when men appeared no longer worthy to be believed, that they called God as witness, as if thereby giving an adequate surety for what they said. Such in fact is the Oath: it is a security where men's principles cannot be trusted. So that in the indictment of the swearer the first charge is this—that he is not to be trusted without a surety, and a great surety too: for such is the exceeding faithlessness, that they ask not man as surety, but will needs have God! Secondly, the same charge lies against him who receives the oath: that, in a question of compact, he must drag in God for warranty, and refuse to be satisfied unless he get Him. O the excessive stupidity, the insolence of such conduct! Thou, a worm, earth and dust, and ashes, and vapor, to drag in your Lord as the surety, and to compel the other to drag Him in likewise! Tell me, if your servants were disputing with each other, and exchanging assurances with each other, and the fellow-servant should declare that for his part he would not be satisfied till he had their common master given him for surety, would he not have stripes given him without number, and be made to know that the master is for other purposes, and not to be put to any such use as this? Why do I speak of a fellow-servant? For should he choose any respectable person, would not that person consider it an affront? But I do not wish to do this, say you. Well: then do not compel the other to do so either: since where men only are in question, this is done— if your party says, *"I give*

such an one as my surety," you do not allow him. *"What then,"* say you, *"am I to lose what I have given?"* I am not speaking of this; but that you allow him to insult God. For which reason greater shall be the inevitable punishment to him who forces the oath upon another, than to him who takes it: the same holds with regard to him who gives an oath when no one asks him. And what makes it worse, is, that every one is ready to swear, for one farthing, for some petty item, for his own injustice. All this may be said, when there is no perjury; but if perjury follow in the train, both he that imposes and he that takes the oath have turned everything upside down. *"But there are some things,"* you will say, *"which are unknown."* Well take these into account, and do nothing negligently; but, if you do act negligently, take the loss to yourself as your punishment. It is better to be the loser thus, than in a very different way. For tell me— you force a man to take an oath, with what expectation? That he will forswear himself? But this is utter insanity; and the judgment will fall upon your own head; better you should lose your money, than he be lost. Why act thus to your own detriment, and to the insulting of God? This is the spirit of a wild beast, and of an impious man. But you do this in the expectation that he will not forswear himself? Then trust him without the oath. *"Nay, there are many,"* you reply, *"who in the absence of an oath would presume to defraud; but, once the oath taken, would refrain."* You deceive yourself, man. A man having once learned to steal, and to wrong his neighbor, will presume full oft to trample upon his oath; if on the contrary he shrinks from swearing, he will much more shrink from injustice. *"But he is influenced against his will."* Well then, he deserves pardon.

But why am I speaking of this kind of oaths, while I pass over those in the market-place? For as regards these last, you can urge none of these pleas. For ten farthings you there have swearing and forswearing. In fact,

because the thunderbolt does not actually fall from heaven, because all things are not overthrown, you stand holding God in your bonds: to get a few vegetables, a pair of shoes, for a little matter of money, calling Him to witness. What is the meaning of this? Do not let us imagine, that because we are not punished, therefore we do not sin; this comes of God's mercy; not of our merit. Let your oath be an imprecation upon your own child, upon your own self: say, "*Else let the hangman lash my ribs.*" But you dare not. Is God less valuable than your ribs? Is He less precious than your pate? Say "*Else let me be struck blind.*" But no. Christ so spares us, that He will not let us swear even by our own head; and yet we so little spare the honor of God, that on all occasions we must drag Him in! You know not what God is, and with what sort of lips he behooves to be invoked. Why, when we speak of any man of eminent worth, we say, "*First wash your mouth, and then make mention of him.*" and yet, that precious Name which is above every name, the Name which is marvellous in all the earth, the Name which devils hear and tremble, we haul about as we list! Oh! The force of habit! Thereby has that Name become cheap. No doubt, if you impose on any one the necessity of coming into the sacred edifice to take his oath there, you feel that you have made the oath an awful one. And yet how is it that it seems awful in this way, but because we have been in the habit of using that at random, but not this? For ought not a shudder of awe to be felt when God is but named? But now, whereas among the Jews His Name was held to be so reverend, that it was written upon plates, and none was allowed to wear the characters except the high-priest alone: we bandy about His Name like any ordinary word. If simply to name God was not allowed to all; to call Him to witness, what audacity is it! nay, what madness! For if need were (rather than this) to fling away all that you have, ought you not readily to part with all? Behold, I solemnly declare and testify; reform these oaths of

the forum, these superfluous oaths, and bring to me all those who wish to take them. Behold, in the presence of this assembly, I charge those who are set apart for the tending of the Houses of Prayer, I exhort and issue this order to them, that no person be allowed to take such oaths at his own discretion: or rather, that none be allowed to swear in any other way, but that the person be brought to me, whosoever he be, since even for these matters less will not serve but they must needs come before us, just as if one had to do with little children. May there be no occasion! It is a shame in some things still to need to be taught. Do you dare to touch the Holy Table, being a person unbaptized? No, but what is still worse, you the baptized dare to lay your hand upon the Holy Table, which not even all ordained persons are allowed to touch, and so to take your oath. Now you would not go and lay your hand upon the head of your child, and yet do you touch the Table, and not shudder, not feel afraid? Bring these men to me; I will judge, and send them away rejoicing, both the one and the other. Do what you choose; I lay it down as a law that there be no swearing at all. What hope of salvation, while we thus make all to have been done in vain? Is this the end of your bills, and your bonds, that you should sacrifice your own soul? What gain do you get so great as the loss? Has he forsworn himself? You have undone both him and yourself. But has he not? Even so still you have undone (both), by forcing him to transgress the commandment. Let us cast out this disease from the soul: at any rate let us drive it out of the forum, out of our shops, out of our other work-places; our profits will but be the greater. Do not imagine that the success of your worldly plans is to be ensured by transgressions of the Divine laws. *"But he refuses to trust me,"* say you; and in fact I have sometimes heard this said by some: *"Unless I swear oaths without number, the man will not trust me."* Yes, and for this you may thank yourself, because you are so off-hand with your oaths. For

were it not so, but on the contrary were it clear to all men that you do not swear, take my word for it, you would be more readily believed upon your mere nod, than those are who swallow oaths by thousands. For look now: which do you more readily believe? Me who do not swear, or those that do swear? "*Yes,*" say you, "*but then you are ruler and bishop.*" Then suppose I prove to you that it is not only for that reason? Answer me with truth, I beseech you; were I in the habit of perpetually swearing, would my office stand me in that stead? Not a whit. Do you see that it is not for this reason? And what do you gain at all? Answer me that. Paul endured hunger; do you then also choose to hunger rather than to transgress one of the commandments of God. Why are you so unbelieving? Here are you, ready to do and suffer all things for the sake of not swearing: and shall not He reward you? Shall He, Who sustains day by day both takers and breakers of oaths, give you over to hunger, when you have obeyed Him? Let all men see, that of those who assemble in this Church not one is a swearer. By this also let us become manifest, and not by our creed alone; let us have this mark also to distinguish us both from the Gentiles and from all men. Let us receive it as a seal from heaven, that we may everywhere be seen to be the King's own flock. By our mouth and tongue let us be known, in the first place, just as the barbarians are by theirs: even as those who speak Greek are distinguished from barbarians, so let us be known. Answer me: the birds which are said to be parrots, how are they known to be parrots? Is it not by speaking like men? Let us then be known by speaking like the Apostles; by speaking like the Angels. If any one bid you swear tell him, "*Christ has spoken, and I do not swear.*" This is enough to make a way for all virtue to come in. It is a gate to religion, a high road leading to the philosophy of piety; a kind of training-school. These things let us observe, that we may obtain also the future blessings, through the grace and mercy of our Lord

Jesus Christ, to Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, power and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 10 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts IV. 1

"And as they spoke unto the people, there came unto them the priests, and the captain of the temple."

Ere yet they had time to take breath after their first trials, straightway they enter into others. And observe how the events are disposed. First, they were all mocked together; this was no small trial: secondly, they enter into dangers. And these two things do not take place in immediate succession; but when first the Apostles have won admiration by their two discourses, and after that have performed a notable miracle, thereupon it is that, after they are waxen bold, through God's disposal, they enter the lists. But I wish you to consider, how those same persons, who in the case of Christ must need look out for one to deliver Him up to them, now with their own hands arrest the Apostles, having become more audacious and more impudent since the Crucifixion. In truth, sin, while it is yet struggling to the birth, is attended with some sense of shame; but when once fully born, it makes those more shameless who practise it. *"And the captain of the temple,"* it is said. The object again was to attach a public criminality to what was doing, and not to prosecute it as the act of private individuals: such in fact was constantly their plan of proceeding.

"Being grieved that they taught the people." [Acts 4:2] Not merely because they taught, but because they declared, not alone that Christ Himself was risen from the dead, but moreover, that we through Him do rise again. *"Because they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the*

resurrection of the dead." So mighty was His Resurrection, that to others also He is the cause of a resurrection. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day; for it was now eventide. [Acts 4:3] What impudence! They feared not the multitude; for this also the captain of the temple was with them: they had their hands still reeking with the blood of the former victim. *"For it was now eventide,"* it is said. It was with the wish to abate their spirit that those men did this, and guarded them; but the delay only served to make the Apostles more intrepid. And consider who these are who are arrested. They are the chiefs of the Apostles, who are now become a pattern to the rest, that they should no longer crave each other's support, nor want to be together. *"Howbeit, many having heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."* [Acts 4:4] How was this? Did they see them in honor? Did they not behold them put in bonds? How then did they believe? Do you see the evident efficacy? And yet even those that believed already might well have become weaker. But no, it is no longer so: for Peter's sermon had laid the seed deep into them, and had taken a hold upon their understandings. Therefore were [their enemies] incensed, that they did not fear them, that they made no account of their present troubles. For, say they, if He that was crucified effects such great things, and makes the lame to walk, we fear not these men either. This again is of God's ordering. For those who now believe were more numerous than the former. Therefore it was that in their presence they bound the Apostles, to make them also more fearful. But the reverse took place. And they examine them not before the people, but privately, that the hearers may not profit by their boldness.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the High Priest, were

gathered together at Jerusalem." (v. 5-6.) For now along with the other evils (of the times), the Law was no longer observed. And again they set off the business with the form of a tribunal, to constitute them guilty by their iniquitous sentence. *"And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?"* [Acts 4:7] And yet they knew it well; for it was because they were *"grieved that they preached through Jesus the resurrection"* that they arrested them. Then for what purpose do they question them? They expected the numbers present would make them recant, and thought by this means to have put all right again. Observe then what they say: *"And by what name have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them."* [Acts 4:8] And now, I pray you, call to mind Christ's saying; When they deliver you up unto the synagogues, take ye no thought how or what thing you shall speak; for it is the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you. [Luke 12:11-14] So that it was a mighty Power they enjoyed. What then says Peter? *"You rulers of the people, and elders of Israel."* Mark the Christian wisdom of the man; how full of confidence it is: he utters not a word of insult, but says with respect, *"You rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we be this day called to account of the good deed done to the impotent man."* He takes them in hand right valiantly; by the opening of his speech he exposes them, and reminds them of the former things: that it is for a work of beneficence they are calling them to account. As if he had said, In all fairness we ought to have been crowned for this deed, and proclaimed benefactors; but since *"we are even put upon our trial for a good deed done to an impotent man,"* not a rich man, not powerful, not noble— and yet who would feel envy in a case like this? It is a most forcible ([ἃ] [παγγελία], al. [ἐ] [παγγελία]) way of putting the case; and he shows that they are piercing their own selves:— *"By what means this man is made whole: be it known unto you all, and to*

all the people Israel; that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth:"— this is what would vex them most. For this was that which Christ had told the disciples, *"What ye hear in the ear that preach ye upon the housetops.— That in the name of Jesus Christ,"* he says, *"of Nazareth, Whom you crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, even by Him does this man stand here before you whole."* [Acts 4:10]. [Matthew 10:27] Think not, he says that we conceal the country, or the nature of the death. *"Whom you crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, even by Him does this man stand before you whole."* Again the death, again the resurrection. *"This is the stone,"* he says, *"which was set at nought of you builders, which has become the head of the corner."* [Acts 4:11] He reminds them also of a saying which was enough to frighten them. For it had been said, Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. [Matthew 21:44]— Neither is there salvation in any other, [Acts 4:12] Peter says. What wounds, think you, must these words inflict on them! *"For there is none other name,"* he continues, *"under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* Here he utters also lofty words. For when the object is, not to carry some point successfully, but only to show boldness he does not spare; for he was not afraid of striking too deep. Nor does he say simply, *"By another;"* but, *"Neither is there salvation in any other:"* that is, He is able to save us. In this way he subdued their threatening.

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." [Acts 4:13] The two unlearned men beat down with their rhetoric them and the chief priests. For it was not they that spoke, but the grace of the Spirit. *"And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against*

it." [Acts 4:14] Great was the boldness of the man; that even in the judgment-hall he has not left them. For had they said that the fact was not so, there was he to refute them. *"But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What are we to do to these men?"* [Acts 4:15] See the difficulty they are in, and how the fear of men again does everything. As in the case of Christ, they were not able (as the saying is) to undo what is done, nor to cast it into the shade, but for all their hindering, the Faith did but gain ground the more; so was it now. *"What shall we do?"* O the folly! To suppose that those who had tasted of the conflict, would now take fright at it: to expect, impotent as their efforts had proved in the beginning, to effect something new, after such a specimen of oratory as had been exhibited! The more they wished to hinder, the more the business grew upon their hands. But what say they? *"For that indeed a notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straightly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach, in the name of Jesus."* [Acts 4:16-18] See what effrontery is shown by these, and what greatness of mind by the Apostles. *"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people."* [Acts 4:19-21] The miracles shut their mouths: they would not so much as let them finish their speech, but cut them short in the middle, most insolently. *"For all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on*

whom this miracle of healing was showed." [Acts 4:22] But let us look over what has been said from the beginning.

"And as they spoke unto the people, etc. Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead."

(Recapitulation, v. 1, 2.) So then at first they did all for the sake of man's opinion (or glory): but now another motive was added: that they should not be thought guilty of murder, as they said subsequently, *"Do ye wish to bring this man's blood on us?"* [Acts 5:28] O the folly! Persuaded that He was risen, and having received this proof of it, they expected that He Whom death could not hold, could be cast into the shade by their machinations!

What can match the folly of this! Such is the nature of wickedness: it has no eyes for anything, but on all occasions it is thrown into perturbation.

Finding themselves overborne, they felt like persons who have been outwitted: as is the case with people who have been forestalled and made a sport of in some matter. And yet they everywhere affirmed that it was God that raised Him: but it was *"in the Name of Jesus"* that they spoke; showing that Jesus was risen. *"Through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead"*: for they themselves also held a resurrection: a cold and puerile doctrine, indeed, but still they held it. Why this alone, was it not sufficient to induce them to do nothing to them—I mean, that the disciples with such boldness bore themselves in the way they did? Say, wherefore, O Jew, do you disbelieve? You ought to have attended to the sign done, and to the words, not to the evil disposition of the many. *"By their teaching the people."* For already they were in ill repute with them by reason of what they had done to Christ; so that they were rather increasing their own obloquy. *"And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold until the morrow; for it was now eventide."*

[Acts 4:3] In the case of Christ, however, they did not so; but having taken Him at midnight, they immediately led him away, and made no delay, being

exceedingly in fear of the multitude: whereas in the case of the Apostles here, they were bold. And they no more take them to Pilate, being ashamed and blushing at the thought of the former affair, lest they should also be taken to task for that.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes were gathered together at Jerusalem." [Acts 4:5] Again in Jerusalem: and there it is that men's blood is poured out; no reverence for their city either; *"And Annas, and Caiaphas,"* etc. [Acts 4:6] *"And Annas,"* it says, *"and Caiaphas."* His maid-servant it was that questioned Peter, and he could not bear it: in his house it was that Peter denied, when Another was in bonds there: but now, when he has come into the midst of them all, see how he speaks! *"By what name have ye done this?"* Why do you not speak it, what it is, but keepest that out of sight? *"By what name have ye done this?"* [Acts 4:7] And yet he affirmed, It was not we that did it. *"You rulers of the people,"* etc. [Acts 4:8] Observe his wisdom: he does not say outright, *"In the Name of Jesus we did it,"* but how? *"In His Name this man"*— He does not say, *"was made whole by us;"* but— *"does stand here before you whole."* And again, *"If we be examined concerning the good deed done to the impotent man."* [Acts 4:9] He hits them hard, that they are always making a crime of such acts, finding fault with works of beneficence done to men: and he reminds them of their former doings, that *they* run to do murder, and not only so, but make a crime of doing good deeds. Do you observe too (in point of rhetoric) with what dignity they express themselves? Even in the use of words they were becoming expert by practice, and henceforth they were not to be beaten down. *"Be it known unto you all,"* etc. [Acts 4:10] Whereby he shows them that they rather do, in spite of themselves, preach Christ; themselves extol the doctrine, by their examining and questioning. O exceeding boldness— *"Whom you crucified!"*

Whom God raised up"— this is bolder still! Think not that we hide what there is to be ashamed of. He says this all but tauntingly: and not merely says it, but dwells upon the matter. *"This,"* says he, *"is the Stone which was set at naught by you builders;"* and then he goes on to teach them, saying in addition, *"Which is made the head of the corner"* [Acts 4:11]; that is to say, that the Stone is indeed approved! Great was the boldness they now had, in consequence of the miracle. And when there was need to teach, observe how they speak and allege many prophecies; but when the point was to use boldness of speech, then they only speak peremptorily. Thus *"Neither,"* says he, *"is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."* [Acts 4:12] It is manifest to all, he says, because not to us alone was that Name given; he cites even themselves as witnesses. For, since they asked, *"In what name did ye it?"* *"In Christ's,"* says he: there is none other name. How is it that you ask? On all hands this is palpable. *"For there exists not another name under heaven, whereby we must be saved."* This is the language of a soul which has renounced ([κατεγνωκυΐας]) this present life. His exceeding out-spokenness proves here, that when he speaks in lowly terms of Christ, he does it not of fear, but of wise forbearance ([συγκαταβαίνων]): but now that it was the fitting time, he speaks not in lowly terms: by this very thing intending to strike dismay into them. Behold another miracle not less than the former. *"And beholding the boldness of Peter and John,"* etc. *"And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."* [Acts 4:13] Not without a meaning has the Evangelist set down this passage; but in saying, *"they recognized them that they had been with Jesus,"* he means, in His Passion: for only these were [with Him] at that time, and then indeed they had seen them humble, dejected: and this it was that most surprised them: the greatness of the change. For in fact Annas and Caiaphas with their company were there, and these then also had stood by

Him, and their boldness now amazed them. *"And beholding the boldness."* For not only their words; their very bearing showed it; that they should stand there so intrepidly to be tried in a cause like this, and with uttermost peril impending over them! Not only by their words, but by their gesture also, and their look and voice, and, in short, by everything about them, they manifested the boldness with which they confronted the people. From the things they uttered, they marvelled, perhaps: *"that they were unlearned and common men:"* for one may be unlearned, yet not a common or private man, and a common man, yet not unlearned. *"Having perceived,"* it says. Whence? From what they said? Peter does not draw out long speeches, but then by his very manner and method ([τῆς ἀπαγγελίας καὶ τῆς συνθήκης]) he declares his confidence. *"And they recognized them that they had been with Jesus."* Which circumstance made them believe that it was from Him they had learned these things, and that they did all in the character of His disciples. But not less than the voice of these, the miracle uttered a voice of its own: and that sign itself stopped their mouths. [*"And beholding the man,"* etc.] So that they would have been peremptory ([ἐ] [πέσκηψαν]) with them, if the man had not been with them. *"We cannot deny it."* So that they would have denied it, if the thing had not been so: if the testimony had not been that of the people in general. *"But that it spread no further among the people."* [Acts 4:17] And yet it was palpable to all men! But such is the nature of wickedness: everywhere it is shamed. *"Let us strictly threaten them."* What do you say? Threaten? And expect ye to stop the preaching? And yet all beginnings are hard and trying. You slew the Master, and did not stop it: and now, if you threaten, do ye expect to turn us back? The imprisonment did not prevail with us to speak submissively, and shall you prevail? *"And they called them, and commanded them,"* etc. (v. 18, 19.) It had been much better for them to let them go. *"And Peter and John*

answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." When the terror was abated (for that command was tantamount to their being dismissed), then also the Apostles speak more mildly: so far were they from mere bravery: *"Whether it be right,"* says he: and *"We cannot [but speak]. Whether it be right in the sight of God to obey you rather than God."* [Acts 4:20] Here [by "God"] they mean Christ, for he it was that commanded them. And once more they confirm the fact of His Resurrection. *"For we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard:"* so that we are witnesses who have a right to be believed. *"So when they had further threatened them."* [Acts 4:21] Again they threatened in vain. *"They let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done."* So then the people glorified God, but these endeavored to destroy them: such fighters against God were they! Whereby they made them more conspicuous and illustrious. *"For My strength,"* it is said, *"is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9]

Already these as martyrs have borne testimony: set in the battle against all, they said, *"We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."* If the things we speak be false, reprehend them; if true, why do you hinder? Such is philosophy! Those, in perplexity, these in gladness: those covered with exceeding shame, these doing all with boldness: those in fear, these in confidence. For who, I would ask, were the frightened? Those who said, *"That it spread no further among people,"* or these who said, *"we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard?"* And these had a delight, a freedom of speech, a joy surpassing all; those a despondency, a shame, a fear; for they feared the people. But these were not afraid of those; on the contrary, while these spoke what they would, those did not what they would. Which were in chains and dangers? Was it not these last?

Let us then hold fast to virtue; let not these words end only in delight, and in a certain elevation of the spirits. This is not the theatre, for singers ([κιθαρώδων]), and tragedians, and musicians ([κιθαριστῶν]), where the fruit consists only in the enjoyment and where the enjoyment itself passes with the passing day. Nay, would that it were enjoyment alone, and not mischief also with the enjoyment! But so it is: each man carries home with him much of what he has witnessed there, sticking to him like the infection of a plague: and one indeed, of the younger sort, having culled such snatches of song here and there of those satanic plays, as he could fix in his memory, goes singing them about the house: while another, a senior, and forsooth too staid for such levity, does not this indeed, but what is there spoken, both the preachments and the very words, he remembers it all; and another again, some filthy and absurd ditty. From this place you depart, taking nothing with you.— We have laid down a law— nay, not we: God forbid! For it is said, *"Call no man your master upon the earth"* [Matthew 23:8]; Christ has laid down a law that none should swear. Now, say, what has been done with regard to this law? For I will not cease speaking of it; *"lest,"* as the Apostle says, *"if I come again, I must not spare."* [2 Corinthians 13:2] I ask then, have you laid the matter to heart? Have you thought of it seriously? Have you been in earnest about it, or must we again take up the same subject? Nay, rather, whether you have or not, we will resume it, that you may think seriously about it, or, if you have laid it to heart, may again do this the more surely, and exhort others also. With what then, I pray you, with what shall we begin? Shall it be with the Old Testament? For indeed this also is to our shame, that the precepts of the Law, which we ought to surpass, we do not even thus observe! For we ought not to be hearing such matters as these: these are precepts adapted to the poor Jewish level ([τῆς Ἰουδαϊκῆς εὐτελείας]): *we* ought to be hearing

those counsels of perfection; *"Cast away your property, stand courageously, and give up your life in behalf of the Gospel, scorn all the goods of earth, have nothing in common with this present life; if any wrong you, do him good; if any defraud you, bless him; if any revile you, show him honor; be above everything."* (S. Ambros. *de Off.* i. 2.) These and such as these are what we ought to be hearing. But here are we discoursing about swearing; and our case is just the same as if, when a person ought to be a philosopher, one should take him away from the great masters, and set him to spell syllables letter by letter! Just think now what a disgrace it would be for a man having a flowing beard, and with staff in hand, and cope on shoulders, to go to school with children, and be set the same tasks with them: would it not be above measure ridiculous? And yet the ridicule which belongs to us is even greater. For not as the difference between philosophy and the spelling-lesson, so is that between the Jewish polity and ours: no indeed, but as the difference between angels and men. Say now, if one could fetch down an angel from heaven, and should bid him stand here and listen to our preaching, as one whose duty it is to conform himself thereto, would it not be shameful and preposterous? But if to be yet, like children, under teaching about these things be ridiculous; what must it be, not even to attend to these things: how great the condemnation, how great the shame! To be Christians still, and to have to learn that it is not right to swear! However, let us put up with that, lest we incur even worse ridicule.

Well, then, let us speak to you today from the Old Testament. What does it tell us? *"Accustom not your mouth to swearing; neither use yourself to the naming of the Holy One."* And why? *"For as a servant that is continually beaten shall not be without a blue mark, so he that swears."* [Sirach 23:10] See the discernment of this wise man. He did not say, *"Accustom not to swearing"* your mind, but *"your mouth"*; because being

altogether an affair of the mouth, thus it is easily remedied. For at last it becomes a habit without intention; as for instance, there are many who entering the public baths, as soon as they have passed the threshold, cross [Hom. in 1 Corinthians 11:7] themselves ([σφραγίζονται]). This the hand has got to do, without any one's bidding, by force of habit. Again, at the lighting of a candle, often when the mind is intent on something else, the hand makes the sign. In the same way also the mouth, without concurrence of the mind, articulates the word, from mere habit, and the whole affair is in the tongue. *"Neither use yourself,"* he says, *"to the naming of the Holy One. For as a servant that is continually beaten shall not be without a blue mark, so he that swears."* He speaks not here of false oaths, but he cuts down all oaths, and to them also assigns their punishment. Why then, swearing is a sin. For such in truth is the soul; full of all these ulcers, all these scars. But you do not see them? Yes, this is the mischief of it; and yet you might see if you wished; for God has given you eyes. With eyes of this kind did the Prophet see, when he said, *"My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness."* [Psalm 38:5] We have despised God, we have hated that good Name, we have trodden Christ under foot, we have lost all reverence, none names the Name of God with honor. Yet if you love any one, even at his name you start to your feet; but God you thus continually invoke, and make nothing of it. Call upon Him for the benefit of your enemy; call upon Him for the salvation of your own soul; then he will be present, then you will delight Him; whereas now you provoke Him to anger. Call upon Him as Stephen did; *"Lord,"* he said, *"lay not this sin to their charge."* [Acts 7:59] Call upon Him as did the wife of Elkanah, with tears and sobs, and prayers. [1 Samuel 1:10] I prevent you not, rather I earnestly exhort you to it. Call upon him as Moses called upon Him, yea, cried, interceding for those who had driven him into banishment. For you to make mention at

random of any person of consideration, is taken as an insult: and do you bandy God about in your talk, in season, out of season? I do not want to hinder you from keeping God always in your mind: nay, this I even desire and pray for, only that you should do this, so as to honor Him. Great good would this have done us, if we had called upon God only when we ought, and for what we ought. And why, I would ask, were such miracles wrought in the Apostles' times, and not in ours? And yet it is the same God, the same Name. But no, the case is not the same. For then they called upon Him only for those objects which I have mentioned; whereas we call upon Him not for these, but quite other purposes.— If a man refuse to believe you, and that is why you swear, say to him, "*Believe me:*" however, if you will needs make oath, swear by yourself. I say this, not to set up a law against Christ's law; God forbid; for it is said. Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay [Matthew 5:37]: but by way of coming down to your present level, that I may more easily lead you to the practice of this commandment, and divert you from this tyrannical habit. How many who have done well in other respects, have been undone by these practices! Shall I tell you why it was permitted the ancients to take oaths? (for to take false oaths, was not permitted to them either.) Because they swore by idols. But are you not ashamed to rest in laws, by which they in their infirmity were led on to something better? It is true, when I take a Gentile in hand, I do not immediately lay this injunction upon him, but in the first place I exhort him to know Christ; but if the believer, who has both learned Him and heard Him, must needs crave the same forbearance with the Gentile, what is the use, what the gain (of his Christianity?)— But the habit is strong, and you cannot detach yourself from it? Well then, since the tyranny of habit is so great, transfer it into another channel. And how is this to be done? You will ask. What I have said often, I say also now; let there be many monitors

([λογισταῖ]), let there be many examiners and censors ([ἐ] [ξετασταῖ], [δοκιμασταί]). Say, if you chance to put on your mantle inside out, you allow your servant to correct your mistake, and are ashamed to learn of him, although there is much to be ashamed of in this; and here when you are getting hurt to your soul, are you ashamed to be taught better by another? You suffer your menial to put your dress in order, and to fasten your shoes, and will you not endure him that would put your soul in order? Let even your menial, your child, your wife, your friend, your kinsman, your neighbor, be your teachers on this point. For as when a wild beast is hunted down from all sides, it is impossible for it to escape; so he that has so many to watch him, so many to reprove him, who is liable to be struck at from all sides, cannot help being on his guard. The first day he will find it hard to put up with, and the second, and the third; but after that it will come easier, and, the fourth passed, there will not even be anything to do. Make the experiment, if you doubt me; take it into consideration, I beseech you. It is not a trifling matter to be wrong in, nor yet to come right in; on both sides it is great for evil and for good. May the good be effected, through the grace and loving-mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 11 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts IV. 23

"And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them."

Not for their own glory did they tell the tale— how should such be their motive?— but what they displayed was the proofs therein exhibited of the grace of Christ. All that their adversaries had said, this they told; their own part, it is likely, they omitted: this made the hearers all the more courageous. What then? These again flee to the true Succor, to the Alliance invincible, and again, *"with one accord. And when they heard that,"* it is said, *"with one accord they lifted up their voice to God, and said:"* [Acts 4:24] and with great earnestness, for it is no prayer made at random.

Observe with what exquisite propriety their prayers are framed: thus, when they besought to be shown who was meet for the Apostleship, they said, *"You, Lord, which know the heart of all men, show:"* [Acts 1:24] for it was a subject for Prescience there: but here, where the thing needed was that the mouths of their adversaries should be stopped, they speak of lordship; wherefore they begin thus: Lord, *"([Δέσποτα]) the God that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who, by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of Your servant, David our father, said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ."* [Acts 4:24-26] It is to sue God, as one may say upon His own covenants, that they thus produce this prophecy: and at the same

time to comfort themselves with the thought, that in vain are all the imaginations of their foes. This then is what they say: Bring those words into accomplishment, and show that they *"imagine vain things.— For of a truth,"* they proceed, *"there were gathered together in this city, against Your holy Child Jesus, ([Παῖδα]) Whom You have anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, for to do whatsoever Your hand and Your counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings."* [Acts 4:27-29] Observe their largeness of mind ([φιλοσοφίαν]). These are not words of imprecation. In saying, their threatenings, they do not mean this or that thing specifically threatened, but only in general, the fact of their threatening, perhaps, as being formidable. In fact, the writer is concise in his narrative. And observe, they do not say, *"Crush them, cast them down;"* but what? *"And grant unto Your servants, that with all boldness they may speak Your word."* Let us also learn thus to pray. And yet how full of wrath one would be, when fallen among men intent upon killing him, and making threats to that effect? How full of animosity? But not so these saints. *"By stretching forth Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the Name of Your holy Child Jesus."* [Acts 4:30] If in that Name the mighty deeds are wrought, great will be the boldness.

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together." [Acts 4:31] This was the proof that they were heard, and of His visitation. *"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."* What means, *"They were filled?"* It means, They were inflamed; and the Gift burned up within them. *"And they spoke the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."* [Acts 4:32] Do you see that together with the grace of God they also contributed their part? For everywhere it ought to be well observed, that

together with the grace of God they do their part likewise. Just as Peter said above, *"Silver and gold have I none"*; and again, that *"they were all together."* [Acts 3:6] But in this place, having mentioned that they were heard, the sacred writer proceeds to speak also of them, what virtue they showed. Moreover, he is just about to enter upon the narrative of Sapphira and Ananias, and with a view to show the detestable conduct of that pair, he first discourses of the noble behavior of the rest. Now say, did their love beget their poverty, or the poverty the love? In my opinion, the love begot the poverty, and then the poverty drew tight the cords of love. For observe what he says: *"They were all of one heart and of one soul."* Behold, heart and soul are what make the *"together."* *"Neither said any of them that anything of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power the Apostles rendered their testimony ([ἀ] [πεδίδουν]) of the resurrection."* [Acts 4:33] The phrase betokens them to be as persons put in trust with a deposit: he speaks of it as a debt or obligation: that is, their testimony they with boldness did render, or pay off, to all. *"And great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked."* [Acts 4:34] Their feeling was just as if they were under the paternal roof, all for awhile sharing alike. It is not to be said, that though indeed they maintained the rest, yet they did it with the feeling that the means whereof they maintained them were still their own. No, the admirable circumstance is this, that they first alienated their property, and so maintained the rest, on purpose that the maintenance might not come as of their own private means, but as of the common property. *"For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."* [Acts 4:35] A great mark of honor this, that *"they laid them at the Apostles' feet."*

And Joses, who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas, ('which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation.')" [Acts 4:36] I do not think that this is the same with the companion of Matthias; for that person was also called Justus and [Barsabas, but this, Joses and] "*Barnabas*" ["*son of consolation*"]. I suppose he also received the name from his virtue, as being qualified and suited for this duty. "*A Levite, and of the country of Cyprus by birth.*" Observe on all occasions how the writer indicates the breaking up of the Law. But how was he also a "*Cyprian by birth?*" Because they then even removed to other countries, and still were called Levites. "*Having land, sold it, and brought the price, and laid it at the Apostles' feet.*"

Let us now look over again what has been said. ["*And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.*"] [Recapitulation, Acts 4:23] See the unostentatious conduct of the Apostles, and their largeness of mind. They did not go about boasting, and say, "*How we served ([ἀ] [πεχρησάμεθα]) the priests!*" nor were they ambitious of honor: but, we read, they came unto their own company. Observe how they do not cast themselves upon temptations, but when the temptations present themselves, with courage endure them. Had it been some other of the disciples, perhaps, emboldened by the countenance of the multitude, he might have insulted, might have vented ever so many harsh expressions. But not so these true philosophers; they do all with mildness and with gentleness. "*And when they heard that, we read, with one accord they lifted up their voice to God.*" [Acts 4:24] That shout proceeded from delight and great emotion. Such indeed are the prayers which do their work, prayers replete with true philosophy, prayers offered up for such objects, by such persons, on such occasions, in such a manner; whereas all others are abominable and profane. "*Lord, Thou the God that made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.*" Observe

how they say nothing idle, no old wives' talk and fables, but speak of His power. Just as Christ Himself said to the Jews, *"If I by the Spirit of God do cast out devils:"* behold the Father also speaks by the Spirit. For what says it? *"Lord, the God Who, by the Holy Ghost, through the mouth of our father Your servant David said, Why did the nations rage?"* [Acts 4:25] Scripture is wont thus to speak of one as of many. *"For of a truth, Lord, against Your Holy Child Jesus, Whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate,"* etc. [Acts 4:27] Observe how, even in prayer, they circumstantially describe the Passion, and refer all to God.— That is, Not they had power to do this: but Thou did it all, Thou that permitted, that dost call to account, and yet brought to accomplishment, Thou the All-skilful and Wise, that served You of Your enemies for Your own pleasure. [Acts 4:28] *"For to do whatever Your hand,"* etc. Here they discourse of His exceeding Skill and Wisdom and Power. So then, as enemies they came together, and with murderous purpose, and as opposing themselves, but they did what things You would: *"For to do,"* as it is said, *"whatsoever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."* What means, *"Your hand?"* Here he seems to me to denote one and the same thing by power and purpose, meaning that for You it is enough but to will: for it is not by power that one determines. *"Whatsoever Your hand,"* etc. i.e. Whatsoever You ordained: either this is the meaning, or, that by His hand He did effect. *"And now, Lord, regard their threatenings."* [Acts 4:29] As at that time, it is said, they *"imagined vain things,"* so *"now,"* grant that their imaginations may be in vain: i.e. let not their threatenings come into accomplishment. And this they said not because they would themselves deprecate any hardship, but for the preaching's sake. For they do not say, *"and deliver us out of dangers;"* but what? *"And grant unto Your servants, that with all boldness they may speak Your word."* You Who brought to pass the former designs, bring these also

to accomplishment. Observe, how they affirm God to be the Author of their confidence; and how they ask all for God's sake, nothing for their own glory or ambition. They promise for their own part, that they will not be dismayed; but they pray that signs may be wrought *"by stretching forth Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done:"* [Acts 4:30] for without these, however great the zeal they showed, they would be striving to no purpose. God assented to their prayer, and manifested this, by shaking the place. For *"when they had prayed,"* it is said, *"the place was shaken."* [Acts 4:31] And wherefore this was done, hear from the prophet, when he says, He looks on the earth, and makes it to tremble. [Psalm 104:32] For by this He made it manifest that He is present to their prayers. And again, another prophet says, *"The earth was shaken, and did tremble at the presence of the Lord."* [Psalm 18:7; lxviii, 8] And God did this, both to make it more awful, and to lead them on to a courageous trust. *"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."* They gained increased boldness. As it was the beginning (of their work), and they had besought a sensible sign for their persuasion ([πρὸς τὸ πεισθῆναι αὐτοὺς])— but after this we nowhere find the like happening— therefore great was the encouragement they received. In fact, they had no means of proving that He was risen, save by miraculous signs. So that it was not only their own assurance ([ὁ] [σφαλείαν]) that they sought: but that they might not be put to shame, but that they might speak with boldness. *"The place was shaken,"* and that made them all the more unshaken. For this is sometimes a token of wrath, sometimes of favor and providence, but on the present occasion, of wrath. For in those times it took place in an unusual manner. Thus, at the Crucifixion, the earth was shaken: and the Lord Himself says, *"Then there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in various places."* [Matthew 24:7] But then the wrath of

which it was a sign was against the adversaries: as for the disciples, it filled them with the Spirit. Observe, even the Apostles, after the prayer, are *"filled with the Holy Ghost."* *"And the multitudes of them that believed,"* etc. [Acts 4:32] Great, you perceive, is the virtue of this thing, seeing their was need of this (grace) even in that Company. For this is the foundation of all that is good, this of which he now for the second time makes mention, exhorting all men to the contempt of riches: *"Neither said any of them that anything of the things he possessed was his own," "but they had all things common."* For that this was in consequence not merely of the miraculous signs, but of their own purpose, is manifest by the case of Sapphira and Ananias. *"And with great power gave the Apostles witness,"* etc. [Acts 4:33] Not in word, but with power the Apostles exhibited their testimony of the Resurrection: just as Paul says, *"And my preaching was not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but with manifestation of the Spirit and of power."* And it is not merely, With power, but, *"With great power."* [1 Corinthians 2:4] *"And great grace,"* it says, *"was upon them all; for neither was there any among them that lacked."* [Acts 4:34] This is why the grace (was upon them all,) for that *"there was none that lacked:"* that is, from the exceeding ardor of the givers, none was in want. For they did not give in part, and in part reserve: nor yet in giving all, give it as their own. And they lived moreover in great abundance: they removed all inequality from among them, and made a goodly order. *"For as many as were possessors,"* etc. And with great respect they did this: for they did not presume to give into their hands, nor did they ostentatiously present, but brought to the Apostles' feet. To them they left it to be the dispensers, made them the owners, that thenceforth all should be defrayed as from common, not from private, property. This was also a help to them against vain-glory. If this were done now, we should live more pleasant lives, both rich and poor, nor would it be

more pleasant to the poor than to the rich themselves. And if you please, let us now for awhile depict it in words, and derive at least this pleasure from it, since you have no mind for it in your actions. For at any rate this is evident, even from the facts which took place then, that by selling their possessions they did not come to be in need, but made them rich that were in need. However, let us now depict this state of things in words, and let all sell their possessions, and bring them into the common stock— in words, I mean: let none be excited, rich or poor. How much gold think you would be collected? For my part, I conjecture— for of course it is not possible to speak exactly— that supposing all here, men and women, to empty out their whole property, lands, possessions, houses—for I will not speak of slaves, since at that time there was no such thing, but doubtless such as were slaves they sat at liberty—perhaps ten hundred thousand pounds weight of gold would be the amount collected: nay, twice or thrice as much. For consider; at what number of "*juga*" (yokes) is our city rated? How many (of the population) shall we say are Christians? Shall we say an hundred thousand, and the rest Greeks and Jews? Then what thousands (of pounds) of gold would be collected! And what is the number of poor? I do not think more than fifty thousand. Then to feed that number daily, what abundance there would be! And yet if the food were received in common, all taking their meals together, it would require no such great outlay after all. But, you will ask, what should we do after the money was spent? And do you think it ever could be spent? Would not the grace of God be ten thousand fold greater? Would not the grace of God be indeed richly poured out? Nay, should we not make it a heaven upon earth? If, where the numbers were three thousand and five thousand, the doing of this thing had such splendid success, and none of them complained of poverty, how much more glorious would this be in so vast a multitude? And even of those that are without,

who would not contribute?— But, to show that it is the living separately that is expensive and causes poverty, let there be a house in which are ten children: and the wife and the man, let the one work at her wool, the other bring his earnings from his outdoor occupation: now tell me, in which way would these spend most? By taking their meals together and occupying one house, or by living separately? Of course, by living separately. For if the ten children must live apart, they would need ten several rooms, ten tables, ten attendants, and the income otherwise in proportion. Is it not for this very reason, that where there is a great number of servants, they have all one table, that the expense may not be so great? For so it is, division always makes diminution, concord and agreement make increase. The dwellers in the monasteries live just as the faithful did then: now did ever any of these die of hunger? Was ever any of them not provided for with plenty of everything? Now, it seems, people are more afraid of this than of falling into a boundless and bottomless deep. But if we had made actual trial of this, then indeed we should boldly venture upon this plan ([τοῦ πράγματος]). What grace too, think you, would there not be! For if at that time, when there was no believer but only the three thousand and the five thousand: when all, throughout the world, were enemies, when they could nowhere look for comfort, they yet boldly entered upon this plan with such success; how much more would this be the case now, when by the grace of God there are believers everywhere throughout the world? What Gentile would be left? For my part, I think there would not be one: we should so attract all, and draw them to us? But yet if we do but make fair progress, I trust in God that even this shall be realized. Only do as I say, and let us successfully achieve things in their regular order; if God grant life, I trust that we shall soon bring you over to this way of life.

In the first place, as regards that law about swearing: accomplish that; establish it firmly: and let him that has kept it make known him that has not, and call him to account withal and rebuke him sternly. For the (*supra*, Hom. viii.) appointed time ([ἡ] [προθεσμία]), is at hand and I am holding inquisition in the matter, and him that is found guilty I will banish and exclude. But God forbid that any such should be found among us; rather may it appear, that all have strictly kept this spiritual watchword. And as in war it is by the watchword that friends and strangers are shown, so let it be now; for indeed now also we are engaged in a war; that we may know our brethren that are properly such. For what a good thing it is that we should have this to be our cognizance both here and in a foreign land! What a weapon this, against the very head of the devil! A mouth that cannot swear will soon both engage God in prayers, and smite the devil a deadly blow. A mouth that cannot swear will also be incapable of using insulting language. Cast out this fire from your tongue, as you would from a house: this fire, drag it out. Give your tongue a little rest: make the sore less virulent. Yea, I beseech you, do this, that I may go on to set you another lesson: for as long as this is not rightly done, I dare not pass on to any other. Let this lesson be got perfectly, and you shall have a consciousness of the achievement, and then I will introduce you to other laws, or rather not I, but Christ. Implant in your soul this good thing, and little by little you shall be a paradise of God, far better than that paradise of old. No serpent among you, no deadly tree, nor any such thing. Fix this habit deep. If this be done, not ye only that are present shall be benefitted, but all that are in all the world; and not they alone, but those that are to succeed hereafter. For a good habit having once entered, and being kept by all, will be handed on to long ages, and no circumstances shall be able to erase it. If he that gathered sticks on the sabbath was stoned—the man that is doing a far more heinous work than

that gathering, the man that is amassing a load of sins, for such is the multitude of oaths, what shall he undergo? What shall he not have to endure? You will receive great assistance from God, if this be well achieved by you. If I were to say, Be not abusive, immediately you will plead to me your indignation; should I say, Be not envious, you will urge some other excuse. But in this case you have nothing of the kind to say. On which account I began with the easy precepts, which indeed is also the uniform practice in all arts. And thus one comes to the higher duties, by learning first those which are easier far. How easy it is you will see, when by the grace of God having succeeded in this, you shall receive another precept.

Put it in my power to speak out boldly, in the presence both of Gentiles and of Jews, and, above all, of God. Yea, I entreat you by the love, by the pangs wherewith I have travailed for your birth, *"my little children."* I will not add what follows, *"of whom I travail in birth again;"* nor will I say, *"until Christ be formed in you."* [Galatians 4:19]. For I am persuaded, that Christ has been formed in you. Other language I will use towards you; *"My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown."*

[Philippians 4:1] Believe me that I shall use no other language. If at this moment there were placed upon my head ten thousand richly-jewelled royal crowns, they could not give me the joy which I feel at your growth in holiness; or rather, I do not think the monarch himself has such a joy, as that wherewith I joy over you. Let him have come home, victorious over all the nations at war with him, let him have won many other crowns besides the crown of his right; and receive other diadems as tokens of his victory: I do not think he would joy over his trophies, as I joy over your soul's progress. For I exult, as if I had a thousand crowns on my head; and well may I rejoice. For if by the grace of God you achieve this good habit, you will have gained a thousand battles far more difficult than his; by wrestling and

fighting with malicious demons, and fiendish spirits, with the tongue, not with sword, but by the will. For consider how much is gained, if so be that you do succeed! You have eradicated, first, a heinous habit; secondly, an evil conceit, the source of all evil, namely, the opinion that the thing is indifferent and can do no hurt; thirdly, wrath; fourthly, covetousness; for all these are the offspring of swearing. Nay, hence you will acquire a sure footing in the way to all other virtues. For as when children learn their letters, they learn not them alone, but by means of them are gradually taught to read; so shall it be with you. That evil conceit will no longer deceive you, you will not say, This is indifferent; you will no longer speak by mere habit, but will manfully stand against all, so that having perfected in all parts that virtue which is after God, you may reap eternal blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness of His Only-Begotten Son, to Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 12 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 4:36-37

And Joses, who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet.

The writer is now about to relate the affair of Ananias and Sapphira, and in order to show that the man's sin was of the worst description, he first mentions him who performed the virtuous deed; that, there being so great a multitude all doing the same, so great grace, so great miracles, he, taught by none of these, but blinded by covetousness, brought destruction upon his own head. *"Having land—meaning that this was all he possessed—sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet. But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the Apostles' feet."* [ch. 5:1-2] The aggravating circumstance was, that the sin was concerted, and none other saw what was done. How came it into the mind of this hapless wretch to commit this crime? *"But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?"* [Acts 5:3] Observe even in this, a great miracle performed, greater far than the former. *"Whiles it remained,"* says he, *"was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own power?"* [Acts 5:4] That is, *"Was there any obligation and force? Do we constrain you against your will?" "Why have you conceived*

this thing in your heart? You have not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost." [Acts 5:5] This miracle is greater than that of the lame man, in respect of the death inflicted, and the knowing what was in the thought of the heart, even what was done in secret. *"And great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, and wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?"* [Acts 5:6-8] The woman he would fain save, for the man had been the author of the sin: therefore he gives her time to clear herself, and opportunity for repentance, saying, *"Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Holy Ghost? Behold, the feet of them which have buried your husband are at the door, and shall carry you out. Then she fell down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things."* [Acts 5:9-11]

After this fear had come upon them, he wrought more miracles; both Peter and the rest; *"And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest dared no man join himself to them,"* i.e. to the Apostles; *"but the people magnified them,"* i.e. the Jewish people. If *"no man dared join himself unto them,"* the Apostles, *"there were,"* however, *"the more added unto the Lord, believers, multitudes both of men and of women, insomuch that they brought out into the streets their impotent folk, and laid them upon couches and beds, that at the least the shadow of Peter*

passing by might overshadow some of them." [Acts 5:12-15] For Peter was the wonderful one, and he to whom they more gave heed both because of his public harangue, the first and the second and the third, and because of the miracle; for he it was that wrought the miracle, the first, the second, the third: for the present miracle was twofold: first, the convicting the thoughts of the heart, and next the inflicting of death at his word of command. *"That at the least the shadow of Peter passing by,"* etc. This had not occurred in the history of Christ; but see here what He had told them actually coming to pass, that *"they which believe in Me, the works that I do shall they do also; and greater works than these shall they do."* [John 14:12] *"There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one."* [Acts 5:16]

And now I would have you observe the way in which their whole life is interwoven. First there was despondency on account of Christ taken from them, and then came joy because of the Spirit descending upon them; again, dejection because of the scoffers, and then joy in the result of their own apology. And here again we find both dejection and gladness. In that they had become conspicuous, and that God made revelations to them, there was gladness: in that they had cut off some of their own company, there was sadness. Once more: again there is gladness upon their success, and again sadness by reason of the High Priest. And so it will be seen to be the case throughout. And the same will be found to hold in the case of the ancient saints likewise.— But let us look over again what has been said.

"They sold them," it is written, *"and brought the prices, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet."* [Recapitulation. Acts 4:34-37] See, my beloved brethren, how instead of leaving the Apostles to sell, they themselves sold, and presented the prices to them. *"But a certain man named Ananias,"* etc.

[Acts 5:1] This history touches Bishops too, and very forcibly. And the wife of Ananias was privy to the thing done: therefore he examines her. But perhaps some one will say that he dealt very harshly with her. What do you mean? What harshness? If for gathering sticks a man is to be stoned, much rather ought he for sacrilege; for this money was become sacred. He that has chosen to sell his goods and distribute them, and then withdraws them, is guilty of sacrilege. But if he is sacrilegious, who resumes from his own, much more he who takes from what is not his own. And do not think that because the consequence is not now the same, the crime will go unpunished. Do you see that this is the charge brought against Ananias, that having made the money sacred, he afterwards secreted it? Couldst thou not, said Peter, after selling your land, use the proceeds as your own? Were you forbidden? Wherefore after you had promised it? See how at the very beginning, the devil made his attack; in the very midst of such signs and wonders, how this man was hardened! Something of the same kind had happened upon a time in the Old Testament. The son of Charmi coveted the devoted thing: for observe there also what vengeance ensues upon the sin. Sacrilege, beloved, is a most grievous crime, insulting, and full of contempt. We neither obliged you to sell, the Apostle says, nor to give your money when you had sold; of your own free choice you did it; why have you then stolen from the sacred treasury? *"Why,"* he says, *"has Satan filled your heart?"* [Acts 5:3] Well, if Satan did the thing, why is the man made guilty of it? For admitting the influence of the devil, and being filled with it. You will say, they ought to have corrected him. But he would not have received correction; for he that has seen such things as he had seen, and is none the better, would certainly be none the better for anything else that could be done; the matter was not one to be simply passed over: like a gangrene, it must be cut out, that it might not infect the rest of the body. As

it is, both the man himself is benefitted in regard that he is not left to advance further in wickedness, and the rest, in that they are made more earnest; otherwise the contrary would have ensued. In the next place, Peter proves him guilty, and shows that the deed was not hidden from him, and then pronounces the sentence. But wherefore, upon what purpose have you done this? Did you wish to keep it? You ought to have kept it all along, and never to have professed to give it. The sacrilege, beloved, is a grievous one. For another, it may be, coveted what was not his own: but it was at your discretion to keep what was your own. Why then did you first make it sacred, and then take it? Out of excessive contempt have you done this. The deed does not admit of pardon, it is past pleading for.— Therefore let it be no stumbling-block to any, if at present also there are sacrilegious persons. If there were such persons then, much more now, when evils are many. But let us *"rebuke them before all, that others also may fear."* [1 Timothy 5:20] Judas was sacrilegious, but it was no stumbling-block to the disciples. Do you see how many evils spring from love of money? *"And great fear, it is said, came on all them that heard these things."* [Acts 5:5] That man was punished, and others profited thereby. Not without cause. And yet, signs had been wrought before: true, but there was not such a sense of fear. So true is that saying, *"The Lord is known by executing judgments."* [Psalm 9:16] The same thing had occurred in the case of the Ark: Uzzah was punished and fear came upon the rest. [2 Samuel 6:7] But in that instance the king through fear removed from him the Ark; but here the disciples became more earnestly heedful. [*"And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in,"* etc.] [Acts 5:7] But observe how Peter, instead of sending for her, waited till she entered; and how none of the others dared carry out the intelligence. Such the teacher's awfulness, such the disciples' reverence, such the obedience! *"An*

interval of three hours,"— and yet the woman did not hear of it, and none of those present reported it, although there was time enough for it to be noised abroad; but they were afraid. This circumstance the Evangelist relates with wonder even, when he says, *"Not knowing what was done, came in."* *"And Peter answered unto her,"* etc. [Acts 5:8] And yet she might have perceived even from this that Peter knew the secret. For why, having questioned none other, does he question you? Was it not clear that he asked because he knew? But so great was her hardness, it would not let her attempt to evade the guilt; and with great confidence she replied; for she thought she was speaking only to a man. The aggravation of the sin was, that they committed it as with one soul, just as upon a settled compact between them. *"How is it that you have agreed together,"* he said, *"to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried your husband are at the door."* [Acts 5:9] First he makes her learn the sin, and then shows that she will justly suffer the same punishment with her husband, since she has committed the same wickedness: *"And they shall carry you out. And she fell down straightway at his feet,"* for she was standing near him, *"and yielded up the ghost."* [Acts 5:10] So entirely by their own act had they invited upon themselves the vengeance! Who after that would not be struck with awe? Who would not fear the Apostle? Who would not marvel? Who not be afraid? *"And they were with one accord, all of them in Solomon's porch,"* [Acts 5:12] no longer in a house, but having occupied the very Temple, they there passed their time! No longer they guarded themselves against touching the unclean; nay, without scruple they handled the dead. And observe how, while to their own people they are severe, against the aliens they do not exercise their power. *"But the people,"* he says, *"magnified them."* [Acts 5:13] And as he had mentioned their being *"in Solomon's porch,"* that you may not wonder how the multitude allowed

this, he tells us that they did not dare even to approach them: for "*no man,*" he says, "*dared join himself unto them.*" "*But believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.*" (v. 14, 15.) Great faith, surpassing what had been shown in the case of Christ. How comes this? Because Christ declared: "*And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father.*" [John 14:12] And these things the people do, while the Apostles remain there, and are not moving about from place to place: also from other places they were all bringing [their sick] on beds and couches: and from all quarters accrued to them fresh tribute of wonder; from them that believed, from them that were healed, from him that was punished; from their boldness of speech towards those (their adversaries), from the virtuous behavior of the believers: for certainly the effect produced was not owing to the miracles only. For though the Apostles themselves modestly ascribe it all to this cause, declaring that they did these things in the name of Christ, yet at the same time the life and noble conduct of the men helped to produce this effect. "*And believers were more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.*" Observe, how he now no longer tells the number of them that believe; at such a rate was the faith making way even to an immense multitude, and so widely was the Resurrection proclaimed. So then "*the people magnified them:*" but they were now no longer lightly to be despised as once they were: for in a little moment, at a single turn of the scale, such have been the effects produced by the fisherman and by the publican! Earth was become a heaven, for manner of life, for boldness of speech, for wonders, for all besides; like Angels were they looked upon with wonder: all unconcerned for ridicule, for threats, for perils: compassionate were

they, and beneficent; some of them they succoured with money, and some with words, and some with healing of their bodies and of their souls; no kind of healing ([πᾶν εἶδος ἰατρείας]) but they accomplished.

Peter all but pleads for himself, when at the point to inflict the punishment, and at the same time gives a lesson to the rest. For because the act would seem exceeding stern, therefore it is that he does so much in the case. In respect of the woman also the process of judgment was terrible. But see how many evils grow out of the sacrilege: covetousness, contempt of God, impiety; and upon these too he pleaded for himself before the assembly, in that he did not immediately proceed to punishment, but first exposed the sin. None groaned, none lamented, all were terrified. For as their faith increased, the signs also were multiplied, and great was the fear among their own company: for the things which are from without do not so militate ([πολεμεῖ]) against our peace, as do the acts of our own people. If we be firmly joined together, no warfare will be hard: but the mischief would be the being divided and broken up. Now they went about in the public place: with boldness they attacked even the market, and in the midst of enemies they prevailed, and that saying was fulfilled, "*Be Thou Ruler in the midst among Your enemies.*" [Psalm 110:2] This was a greater miracle, that they, arrested, cast into prison, should do such acts as these!

If those for lying suffered such things, what shall not the perjured suffer? Because she simply affirmed, "*Yea, for so much,*" ye see what she suffered. Bethink you then; they that swear and forswear themselves, of what should they be worthy? It comes in opportunely today even from the Old Testament to show you the heinousness of perjury. "*There was,*" it says, "*a flying sickle, ten cubits in breadth.*" [Zechariah 5:2] The "*flying*" betokens the swift advent of the vengeance which pursues oaths; that it is many cubits in length and breadth, signifies the force and magnitude of the

woes; that it comes flying "*from heaven*," is to show that the vengeance comes from the judgment-seat on high: that it is in the form of a sickle, denotes the inevitableness of the doom: for just as the sickle, where it comes and has hooked the neck, is not drawn back with nothing but itself, but with the head reaped off, even so the vengeance which comes upon the swearers is severe, and will not desist until it have completed its work. But if we swear and escape, let us not be confident; this is but to our woe. For what think ye? How many, since Ananias and Sapphira, have dared the same with them? How is it then, say you, that they have not met with the same fate? Not because it was allowed in them, but because they are reserved for a greater punishment. For those who often sin and are not punished, have greater reason to fear and dread than if they were punished. For the vengeance is increased for them by their present impunity and the long-suffering of God. Then let us not look to this, that we are not punished; but let us consider whether we have not sinned: if sinning we are not punished, we have the more reason to tremble. Say, if you have a slave, and you only threaten him, and do not beat him; when is he most in fear, when most inclined to run away? Is it not when you only threaten him? And hence we advise each other not to be continually using threats, thereby choosing rather to agitate the mind by the terror, and lacerating it worse than with blows. For in the one instance the punishment is momentary, but in the other it is perpetual. If then no one feels the stroke of the sickle, do not look to this, but rather let each consider whether he commits such sins. Many like things are done now as were done before the Flood, yet no flood has been sent: because there is a hell threatened, and vengeance. Many sin as the people did in Sodom, yet no rain of fire has been poured down; because a river of fire is prepared. Many go the lengths of Pharaoh; yet they have not fared like Pharaoh, they have not been drowned in a Red Sea: for

the sea that awaits them, is the sea of the bottomless pit, where the punishment is not accompanied with insensibility, where there is no suffocation to end all, but in ever lengthened torture, in burning, in strangling, they are consumed there. Many have offended like the Israelites, but no serpents have devoured them: there awaits them the worm that never dies. Many have been like Gehazi, yet they have not been struck with leprosy: for instead of leprosy, it remains for them to be cut asunder, and numbered among the hypocrites. Many have both sworn and forsworn; but if they have indeed escaped, let us not be confident: the gnashing of teeth awaits them. Yea, here too they will suffer many grievous woes, though, it may be, not immediately, but after further transgressions, that the vengeance may be the greater; for even we often set out at first with small sins, and then through great offenses lose all. Therefore when you see anything happening to you, call to mind that particular sin of yours. The sons of Jacob are an example of this. Remember Joseph's brothers; they had sold their brother, they had even attempted to slay him; nay, they had slain him, as far as inclination went; they had deceived and grieved the old man; they suffered nothing. After many years they are brought into extreme peril, and now they are put in remembrance of this their sin. Exceeding wisely is this circumstance brought in. Hear what they say: *"We are verily guilty concerning our brother."* [Genesis 42:21] In this manner then do thou also, when anything happens, say, We are verily guilty, because we have not obeyed Christ; because we have sworn; my much swearing, and my false swearing, has fallen upon my own head. Confess thou; since they also confessed, and were saved. For what though the punishment follow not immediately? Since Ahab also did not immediately after his sin in the matter of Naboth suffer that vengeance which he yet at last suffered. [1 Kings 21:19] And what is the reason of this? God sets you a time, in which

to wash yourself clean; but if you persist, at last He will send down the vengeance. You have seen the fate of liars. Consider what is the fate of false swearers, consider, and desist. It is impossible a swearer should not forswear himself, whether he will or not; and no perjurer can be saved. One false oath suffices to finish all, to draw down upon us the whole measure of vengeance. Let us then take heed to ourselves, that we may escape the punishment due to this offense, and be deemed worthy of the loving kindness of God, through the grace and mercies of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 13 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 5:17-18

"Then having risen up, the high-priest and they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees) were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the Apostles, and put them in the common prison."

"Having risen up," that is, being roused, being excited at the things taking place, the high-priest and they which were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees) were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the Apostles: they now assault them more vigorously: *"and put them in the common prison;"* but did not immediately bring them to trial, because they expected them again to be softened down. *"But the Angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."* *"And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught."* [Acts 5:19-21] This was done both for the encouragement of the disciples, and for the benefit and instruction of the others. And observe how the proceeding in the present instance is just the same as in what Christ Himself did. Namely, in His miracles though He does not let men see them in the act of being wrought, He furnishes the means whereby they may be apprised of the things wrought: thus, in His Resurrection, He did not let them see how He rose: in the water made wine, the guests do not see it done, for they have been drinking much, and the discernment He leaves to others. Just so in the present case, they do not see them in the act of being brought forth, but the proofs from which they might gather what had been done, they do see. And

it was by night that the Angel put them forth. Why was this? Because in this way they were more believed than they would have been in the other: so, people would not even have had occasion to put the question: they would not in some other way have believed. So it was in the old times, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar: he saw them praising God in the furnace, and then indeed he was put in amazement. [Daniel 3:24] Whereas then these priests ought as their first question to have asked, How did you come out? Instead of this, as if nothing had happened, they ask, *"Did we not strictly charge you not to speak?"* [Acts 5:28] And observe, by report of others they are apprised of all the circumstances: they see the prison remaining closed with safety, and the guards standing before the doors. A twofold security this; as was the case at the sepulchre, where was both the seal, and the men to watch. See how they fought against God! Say, was this of man's doing, that happened to them? Who led them forth, when the doors were shut? How came they out, with the keepers standing before the door? Verily they must be mad or drunken to talk so. Here are men, whom neither prison, nor bonds, nor closed doors, had been able to keep in; and yet they expect to overpower them: such is their childish folly! Their officers come and confess what has taken place, as if on purpose to debar them from all show of reason. Do you mark how there is miracle upon miracle, differing in kind, some wrought by them, others on them, and these more illustrious than the others? *"And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high-priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no*

man within. Now when the high-priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow." [Acts 5:21-25] It is well ordered that the information was not brought to them at once, but they are first utterly at a loss what to think, that when they have considered it well and seen that there is a Divine Power in the case, then they may learn the whole state of the case. *"Then came one, and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the other officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the multitude, lest they should have been stoned."* (v. 25, 26.) O the folly of the men! *"They feared,"* says he, *"the multitude."* Why, how had the multitude helped the Apostles? When they ought to have feared that God Who was continually delivering them like winged creatures out of their power, instead of that, *"they feared the multitude!"* *"And the high-priest,"* shameless, reckless, senseless, *"asked them, saying, Did not we strictly command you that you should not teach in this name? And, behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."* (v. 27, 28.) What then (say the Apostles)? Again with mildness they address them; and yet they might have said, *"Who are you, that you countermand God?"* But what do they say? Again in the way of exhortation and advice, and with much mildness, they make answer. *"Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."* [Acts 5:29] High magnanimity! He shows them too that they are fighting against God. For, he says, Whom you killed, Him has God raised up. *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom you slew and hanged on a tree. Him has God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."* (v. 30, 31.) And again they refer the whole to the Father, that He should not seem

to be alien to the Father. *"And has exalted,"* says He, *"with his right hand."* He affirms not merely the Resurrection, but the Exaltation also. *"For to give repentance to Israel."* Observe here as before the gain (to them): observe the perfection of doctrine conveyed in the form of apology. *"And we are witnesses of these things."* [Acts 5:32] Great boldness of speech! And the ground of their credibility: *"And so is also the Holy Ghost, Whom God has given to them that obey Him."* Do you observe that they allege not only the Spirit's testimony? And they said not, *"Whom He has given"* to us, but, *"to them that obey Him:"* therein alike showing their own unassuming temper, and intimating the greatness of the gift, and showing the hearers that it was possible for them also to receive the Spirit. See, how these people were instructed both by deeds and by words, and yet they paid no heed, that their condemnation might be just. For to this end did God suffer the Apostles to be brought to trial, that both their adversaries might be instructed, and all might learn, and that the Apostles might be invigorated to boldness of speech. *"And they hearing that, were cut to the heart."* [Acts 5:33] The others (on a former occasion) *"when they heard these things were pricked;"* here they were cut (as with a saw) ([διεπρίοντο]) *"and desired to slay them."* [Acts 2:37]

But it is necessary now to look over again what we have read. *"But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. Brought them forth."* (Recapitulation, v. 19, 20.) He did not bring them away to benefit themselves thereby, but, *"Stand,"* he says, *"and speak in the temple to the people."* But if the guards had put them out, as those thought, they would have fled, that is, supposing they had been induced to come out: and if those had put them forth, they would not have stood in the temple, but would have absconded. No one is so void of sense, as not at

once to see this. *"Did we not strictly charge you?"* [Acts 5:28] Well, if they undertook to obey you, you do well to call them to account: but if even at the very time they told you they would not obey, what account have you to call them to, what defence is there for them to make? *"And behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."* Mark the inconsistency of the accusations and the exceeding folly. They want to make it appear now, that the dispositions of the Jews are sanguinary, as if they were doing these things not for the truth's sake, but in the wish to be revenged. And for this reason too the Apostles do not answer them with defiance ([θρασέως]): for they were teachers. And yet where is the man, who, with a whole city to back him, and endowed with so great grace, would not have spoken and uttered something big? But not so did these: for they were not angered; no, they pitied these men, and wept over them, and marked in what way they might free them from their error and wrath. And they no longer say to them, *"Judge ye:"* [Acts 4:19] but they simply affirm, saying, *"Whom God raised up, Him do we preach: it is by the will of God that these things are done."* They said not, Did not we tell you even then, that *"we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard?"* [Acts 4:20] for they are not contentious for glory; but they repeat again the same story—the Cross, the Resurrection. And they tell not, wherefore He was crucified—that it was for our sakes: but they hint at this indeed, but not openly as yet, wishing to terrify them awhile. And yet what sort of rhetoric is here? None at all, but everywhere it is still the Passion, and the Resurrection and the Ascension, and the end wherefore: *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus,"* etc. (v. 30, 31.) And yet what improbable assertions are these! Very improbable, no doubt; but for all that, not rulers, not people, had a word to say against them: but those had their mouths stopped, and these received the teaching. *"And we,"* says he, *"are witnesses*

of these things." [Acts 5:32] Of what things? Of His having promised forgiveness and repentance: for the Resurrection indeed was acknowledged, now. But that He gives forgiveness, both we are witnesses, and "*so is the Holy Ghost,*" Who would not have come down, unless sins had been first remitted: so that this is an indisputable proof. "*When they heard that, they were cut*" (to the heart), "*and took counsel to slay them.*" [Acts 5:33] Do you hear of the forgiveness of sins, O wretched man, and that God does not demand punishment, and do you wish to slay them? What wickedness was this! And yet, either they ought to have convicted them of lying, or if they could not do that, to have believed: but if they did not choose to believe, yet they ought not to slay them. For what was there deserving of death? Such was their intoxication, they did not even see what had taken place. Observe, how everywhere the Apostles, when they have made mention of the crime, add the mention of forgiveness; showing, that while what had been done was worthy of death, that which was given was proffered to them as to benefactors! In what other way could any one have persuaded them?

"Then stood up the high-priest," etc. As men in high repute, these (the Apostles) were about to take their place near to the Prophets. The Sadducees were they that were most sore on the subject of the Resurrection. But perchance some one will say: Why, what man, endowed with such gifts as the Apostles were, would not have been great? But consider, I pray you, how, before that they were endowed with the grace, "*they were continuing steadfastly with one accord in prayer*" [Acts 1:14], and depending on the aid from above. And do you, my beloved, hope for the kingdom of heaven, yet endurest naught? And have you received the Spirit, yet sufferest not such things, nor encounterest perils? But they, before they had breathing-time from their former dangers, were again led into others. And even this too, that there is no arrogance, no conceit, how great a good it is! To

converse with mildness, what a gain it is! For not all that they did was the immediate work of grace, but there are many marks of their own zeal as well. That the gifts of grace shine forth in them, this was from their own diligence. See, for instance, from the very beginning, how careful Peter is; how sober and vigilant: how they that believed cast away their riches, had no private property, continued in prayer, showed that they were of one mind, passed their time in fastings. What grace, I ask (alone), did all this? Therefore it is that He brings the evidence home to them through their own officers. Just as in the case of Christ, it was their officers who said, "*Never man spoke as this Man speaks.*" [John 7:46] These (proofs) are more apt to be believed than the Resurrection.— Observe also the moderation shown by (the rulers) themselves, and how they give way. "*The high-priest asked them, saying,*" etc. [Acts 5:27]: here he reasons with them, forsooth, in a moderate tone; for he was frightened: indeed to hinder was what he desired rather than to kill, since that he cannot do: and with the view to rouse them all, and show them the extreme danger they are in, "*And intend,*" says he (to the Apostles), "*to bring this man's blood upon us.*" Do you still take Him to be but *man*? He wants to make it appear that the injunction was necessary for their own safety. But mark what (Peter) says: "*Him has God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*" [Acts 5:31] Here he forbears to mention the Gentiles, not to give them a handle against him. "*And they desired,*" it says, "*to slay them.*" [Acts 5:33] See again these in perplexity, these in pain: but those in quiet and cheerfulness and delight. It is not merely, They were grieved, but "*They were cut*" (to the heart). Truly this makes good that proverb, "*Evil do, evil fare:*" as we may see in this case. Here were these men in bonds, set at the bar of judgment, and the men that sit in judgment upon them were in distress and helpless perplexity. For as he who strikes a

blow upon the adamant, gets the shock of the blow himself, so it was with these men. But they saw that not only was their boldness of speech not stopped, but rather their preaching increased the more, and that they discoursed without a thought of fear, and afforded them no handles against them.

Let us imitate these, my beloved: let us be undaunted in all our dangers. There is nothing dreadful to him that fears God; but all that is dreadful is for others. For when a man is delivered from his passions, and regards all present things as a shadow, say, from whom shall he suffer anything dreadful? Whom shall he have to fear? Whom shall he need plead to? Let us flee to this Rock which cannot be shaken. If any one were to build for us a city, and throw up a wall around it, and remove us to a land uninhabited, where there were none to disturb us, and there supply us with abundance of everything, and not suffer us to have anything to trouble us with anybody, he would not set us in such perfect safety, as Christ has done now. Be it a city made of brass, if you will, surrounded on all sides with a wall, lofty and impregnable, let there be no enemy near it; let it have land plentiful and rich, let there be added abundance of other things, let the citizens too be mild and gentle, and no evil-doer there, neither robber, nor thief, no informer, no court of justice, but merely agreements ([συναλλάγματα]); and let us dwell in this city: not even thus would it be possible to live in security. Wherefore? Because there could not but be differences with servants, with wives, with children, to be a groundwork of much discomfort. But here was nothing of the kind; for here was nothing at all to pain them or cause any discomfort. Nay, what is more wonderful to say, the very things which are thought to cause discomfort, became matter of all joy and gladness. For tell me, what was there for them to be annoyed at? What to take amiss? Shall we cite a particular case for comparison with

them? Well, let there be one of consular dignity, let him be possessed of much wealth, let him dwell in the imperial city, let him have no troublesome business with anybody, but only live in delight, and have nothing else but this to do, seated at the very summit of wealth and honor and power: and let us set against him a Peter, in bonds if you will, in evils without number: and we shall find that he is the man that lives the most delightfully. For when there is such excess of joy, as to be delighted when in bonds, think what must be the greatness of that joy! For like as those who are high in office, whatsoever evils may happen, are not sensible of them, but continue in enjoyment: so did these the more rejoice on account of these very evils. For it is impossible, impossible in words to express how great pleasure falls to their lot, who suffer for Christ's sake: for they rejoice in their sufferings, rather than in their good things. Whoso loves Christ, knows what I say.— But what as regards safety? And who, I ask, if he were ever so rich, could have escaped so many perils, going about among so many different nations, for the sole purpose of bringing about a reformation in their manner of life? For it was just as if by royal mandate that they carried all before them, nay, far more easily, for never mandate could have been so effectual, as their words were. For the royal edict compels by necessity, but these drew men willingly and spontaneously, yea, and with hearts above measure thankful. What royal edict, I ask, would ever have persuaded men to part with all their property and their lives; to despise home, country, kindred, yea, even self-preservation? Yet the voices of fishermen and tent-makers availed for this. So that they were both happy, and more powerful and strong than all others. "Yes," say you, "*those of course were, for they wrought miracles.*" (*supra*, p. 83, note 4.) But I ask what miracles did those who believed work, the three thousand, and the five thousand; and yet these, we read, passed their time in gladness? And well they might: for that

which is the groundwork of all discomforts, the possession of riches, was done away with. For that, that, I say, was ever the cause both of wars and fighting, and grief, and discomfort, and all evils: the thing which makes life full of labor and troubles, it is that. And indeed it would be found that many more rich than poor have reason to be sad. If any think this is not true, their notion is derived not from the nature of the things, but from their own fancy. And if the rich do enjoy some sort of pleasure, this is not to be wondered at: for even those who are covered all over with the itch, have a good deal of pleasure. For that the rich are for all the world like these, and their mind affected in the same sort, is plain from this circumstance. Their cares annoy them, and they choose to be engrossed with them for the sake of the momentary pleasure: while those who are free from these affections, are in health and without discomfort. Whether is more pleasant, I ask, whether of the two more safe? To have to take thought only for a single loaf of bread and suit of clothes, or for an immense family, both slaves and freemen, not having care about himself (only)? For as this man has his fears for himself, so have you for those who depend on your own person. Why, I pray you, does poverty seem a thing to be shunned? Just in the same way as other good things are, in the judgment of many, things to be deprecated.

"Yes," say you, "but it is not that those good things are subjects for deprecation, but that they are hard of attainment." Well, so is poverty, not a thing to be deprecated, but hard of attainment: so that if one could bear it, there would be no reason to deprecate it. For how is it that the Apostles did not deprecate it? How is it that many even choose it, and so far from deprecating, even run to it? For that which is really a thing to be deprecated, cannot be an object of choice save to madmen. But if it be the men of philosophic and elevated minds that betake themselves to this, as to a safe and salubrious retreat, no wonder if to the rest it wears a different

appearance. For, in truth, the rich man seems to me to be just like a city, unwall'd, situated in a plain, inviting assailants from all sides: but poverty, a secure fortress, strong as brass can make it, and the way up to it difficult. *"And yet,"* say you, *"the fact is just the reverse: for these are they, who are often dragged into courts of law, these are they who are overborne and ill-treated."* No: not the poor, as poor, but those who being poor want to be rich. But I am not speaking of them, but of such as make it their study to live in poverty. For say, how comes it that nobody ever drags the brethren of the hills into courts of law? And yet if to be poor is to be a mark for oppression, those ought most of all to be dragged there, since they are poorer than all others. How comes it that nobody drags the common mendicants into the law-courts? Because they have come to the extreme of poverty. How is it that none does violence to them, none lays vexatious informations against them? Because they abide in a stronghold too safe for that. How many think it a condition hard to struggle against, poverty, I mean, and begging! What then, I ask, is it a good thing to beg? *"It is good, if there be comfort,"* say you; *"if there be one to give: it is a life so free from trouble and reverses, as every one knows."* But I do not mean to commend this; God forbid! What I advise is the not aiming at riches.

For say, whom would you rather call blessed? Those who find themselves at home with virtue, ([ἐ] [πιτηδείους πρὸς ἀρετήν]) or those who stand aloof? Of course, those who are near. Say then, which of the two is the man to learn anything that is profitable, and to shine in the true wisdom? The former, or the latter? The first, all must see. If you doubt it, satisfy yourself in this way. Fetch hither from the market-place any of the poor wretches there; let him be a cripple, lame, maimed: and then produce some other person, comely of aspect, strong in body, full of life and vigor in every part, overflowing with riches: let him be of illustrious birth, and

possessed of great power. Then let us bring both these into the school of philosophy: which of them, I ask, is more likely to receive the things taught? The first precept, at the outset, *"Be lowly and moderate"* (for this is Christ's command): which will be most able to fulfil it, this one or the other? *"Blessed are they that mourn"* [Matthew 5:4]: which will most receive this saying? *"Blessed are the lowly:"* which will most listen to this? *"Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake"* (ib. 8, 6, 10). Which will with ease receive these sayings? And, if you will, let us apply to all of them these rules, and see how they will fit. Is not the one inflamed and swollen all over, while the other is ever lowly minded and subdued in his whole bearing? It is quite plain. Yes, and there is a saying to that effect among those that are without: *"(I was) a slave, Epictetus by name, a cripple in body, for poverty a very Irus, and a friend of the Immortals."* For how, I would ask, can it be otherwise, but that the soul of the rich must teem with evils; folly, vainglory, numberless lusts, anger and passion, covetousness, iniquity, and what not? So that even for philosophy, the former is more congenially ([ἐ] [πιτηδεία]) disposed than the latter. By all means seek to ascertain which is the more pleasant: for this I see is the point everywhere discussed, whether such an one has the more enjoyable way of life. And yet even as regards this, we need not be in doubt; for to be near to health, is also to have much enjoyment. But whether of the two, I would ask, is best disposed ([ἐ] [πιτήδειος]) to the matter now in hand, that which we will needs carry into accomplishment— our law, I mean— the poor man or the rich? Whether of them will be apt to swear? The man who has children to be provoked with, the man who has his covenants with innumerable parties, or the man who is concerned to apply for just a loaf of bread or a garment? This man has not

even need of oaths, should he wish, but always lives free from cares of business; nay, more, it is often seen that he who is disciplined to swear not at all, will also despise riches; and one shall see in his whole behavior his ways all branching off from this one good habit, and leading to meekness, to contempt of riches, to piety, to subduedness of soul, to compunction of heart. Then let us not be indolent, my beloved, but let us again show great earnestness: they who have succeeded, that they may keep the success achieved, that they be not easily caught by the receding wave, nor the reflux tide carry them back again [they too who are yet behindhand, that they may be raised up again, and strive to make up that which is wanting. And meanwhile let those who have succeeded, help those who have not been able to do the same]: and by reaching out their hands, as they would to men struggling in the deep water, receive them into the haven of no-swearing ([ᾧ] [νῶμοσίᾳς]). For it is indeed a haven of safety, to swear not at all: whatever storms burst upon us, to be in no danger of sinking there: be it anger, be it insult, be it passion, be it what it may, the soul is stayed securely; yea, though one have vented some chance word or other that ought not, and had been better not, to be spoken, yet he has laid himself under no necessity, no law. (*Supra*, Hom. ix. §5. ad. Pop. Ant. viii. §3.) See what Herod did for his oath's sake: he cut off the head of the Fore-runner. "*But because of his oaths,*" it says, "*and because of them which sat at meat with him*" [Mark 6:26], he cut off the head of the Prophet. Think what the tribes had to suffer for their oath in the matter of the tribe of Benjamin [Judges 21:5-10]: what Saul had to suffer for his oath [1 Samuel 14:24, etc.]. For Saul indeed perjured himself, but Herod did what was even worse than perjury, he committed murder. Joshua again—you know how it fared with him, for his oath in the matter of the Gibeonites. [Joshua 9] For it is indeed a snare of Satan, this swearing. Let us burst the cords; let us bring

ourselves into a condition in which it will be easy (not to swear); let us break loose from every entanglement, and from this snare of Satan. Let us fear the command of the Lord: let us settle ourselves in the best of habits: that, making progress, and having achieved this and the rest of the commandments, we may obtain those good things which are promised to them that love Him, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts V. 34

"Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded the men to be put forth a little space."

This Gamaliel was Paul's teacher. And one may well wonder, how, being so right-minded in his judgment, and withal learned in the law, he did not yet believe. But it cannot be that he should have continued in unbelief to the end. Indeed it appears plainly from the words he here speaks. He *"commanded,"* it says, *"to put the men forth a little space [and said unto them.]"* Observe how judiciously he frames his speech, and how he immediately at the very outset puts them in fear. And that he may not be suspected of taking their part, he addresses them as if he and they were of the same opinion, and does not use much vehemence, but as speaking to men intoxicated through passion, he thus expresses himself: *"You men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men."* [Acts 5:35] Do not, he would say, go to work rashly and in a hurry. *"For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody: to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught."* [Acts 5:36] By examples he teaches them prudence; and, by way of encouragement, mentions last the man who seduced the greatest number. Now before he gives the examples, he says, *"Take heed to yourselves;"* but when he has cited them, then he declares his opinion, and says, *"Refrain*

from these men." For, says he, *"there rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this council or this work be of men, it will come to naught. But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow them."* (al. *it*) [Acts 5:37-39] Then what is there, he would say, to hinder you to be overthrown? For, says he (take heed), *"lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."* He would dissuade them both by the consideration that the thing is impossible, and because it is not for their good. And he does not say by whom these people were destroyed, but that there they *"were scattered,"* and their confederacy fell away to nothing. For if, says he, it be of man, what needs any ado on your part? But if it be of God, for all your ado you will not be able to overcome it. The argument is unanswerable. *"And they were persuaded by him."* [Acts 5:40] How were they persuaded? So as not to slay them, but merely to scourge. For, it says, *"And when they had called the Apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go."* See after what great works they are scourged! And again their teaching became more extended: for they taught at home and in the temple, *"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. (v. 41, 42.) And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."* [Acts 6:1] Not absolutely in those immediate days; for it is the custom of Scripture to speak of things next about to happen, as taking place in immediate succession. But by *"Hellenists"* I suppose he means those who spoke Greek [*"against the Hebrews"*]: for they

did not use the Greek language. Behold another trial! Observe how from within and from without there are warrings, from the very first! *"Then,"* it says, *"the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables."* [Acts 6:2] Well said: for the needful must give precedence to the more needful. But see, how straightway they both take thought for these (inferior matters), and yet do not neglect the preaching. *"Because their widows were overlooked:"* for those (the Hebrews) were treated as the persons of greater consequence ([αἰδεσιμώτεροι]). *"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost"* [Acts 6:3-5] so were the others also full of faith; not to have the same things happening as in the case of Judas, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira— *"and Philip, and Prochoras, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."* [Acts 6:5-7]

But let us look over again what has been spoken. *"You men of Israel take heed to yourselves."* [Recapitulation, Acts 5:35] See here, I pray you, how mildly Gamaliel reasons, and how he says but a few words to them, and does not recount ancient histories, although he might have done so, but more recent instances, which are most powerful to produce belief. With this view he throws out a hint himself, saying, *"For before these days"* [Acts 5:36]: meaning, not many days before. Now had he at once said, *"Let these*

men go," both himself would have fallen into suspicion, and his speech would not have been so effective: but after the examples, it acquired its own proper force. And he mentions not one instance, but a second also: "for," says the Scripture, "in the mouth of two witnesses" [Matthew 18:16]: and yet he had it in his power to mention even three. "Refrain from these men." [Acts 5:38] See how mild his manner is, and his speech not long, but concise, and his mention even of those (impostors) how free from passion: "And all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered." And for all this he does not blaspheme Christ. They heard him, all these unbelievers, heard him, these Jews. ["For if this council or this work be of men, it will come to naught."] Well then, since it did not come to nought, it is not of men. ["But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it."] [Acts 5:39] Once more he checks them by the impossibility and the inexpediency of the thing, saying, "Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." And he does not say, If Christ be God; but the work (itself) declares (this). He does not pronounce upon it, either that, it is "of men," or that it is "of God;" but he leaves the proof to the future. "They were persuaded [by him]." [Acts 5:40] Then why, it may be asked, do ye scourge them? Such was the incontrovertible justness of his speech, they could not look it in the face; nevertheless, they sated their own animosity; and again they expected to terrify them in this way. By the fact also of his saying these things not in the presence of the Apostles, he gained a hearing more than he would otherwise have done; and then the suavity of his discourse and the justness of what was said, helped to persuade them. In fact, this man all but preached the Gospel. "You were persuaded," one may say, "that you had not strength to overthrow it. Wherefore did ye not believe?" Such is the witness borne even by enemies. There it is four hundred, there, four thousand: and here the first movers were twelve. Let not the number which added itself affright you. [ch. 2:41; 4:4] He might

also have mentioned another instance, that of the Egyptian, but what he has spoken is fully sufficient. And he closes his speech with an alarming topic: "*Lest haply,*" etc. And he does not pronounce upon it, lest he should seem to be pleading their cause; but he reasons by way of syllogism from the issue of the matter. And he does not venture to pronounce that it is not of men, nor yet that it is of God; for had he said that it was of God, they would have gainsaid him: but had he said that it was of men, they would again have taken prompt measures. Therefore he bids them wait for the end, saying, "*Refrain.*" But they once more threaten knowing indeed that they avail nothing, but doing after their manner. Such is the nature of wickedness: it attempts even impossibilities.— "*And after this man rose up Judas,*" etc. These things Josephus relates in detail. (*Ant.* xx. 8; *ib.* v. 2; xviii. 1. *B. J.* ii. 8. 1.) But what a great thing it was that he ventured to affirm: that it was of God, when in the sequel it received its proof from the events! Great boldness of speech, great freedom from all respect of persons! And he does not say, "*But if you do not overthrow it, it is of God;*" but, "*If it be of God, it will not be overthrown.*" "*And to him they agreed.*" [Acts 5:40] They revered the high character of the man. "*And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ.*" [Acts 5:41] What miracles so wonderful as this? Nowhere is the like of this recorded of the old saints: for Jeremiah indeed was scourged for the word of God, and they threatened Elijah, and the rest: but in this case, even by this very thing, and not only by their miracles, these showed forth the power of God. He does not say, that they were not pained, but that though pained they rejoiced. How does this appear? From their boldness afterwards: they were so instant still, even after their beatings, in preaching the word. "*But in the temple,*" it says, "*and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*" [Acts

5:42] *"And in those days"*— when these things were done, when there were scourgings, when there were threatenings, when the disciples were multiplying— also, it says, *"there arose a murmuring."* [Acts 6:1] And this comes of the multitude: for it is impossible to have strict order in a multitude. *"There arose a murmuring,"* etc. to—*"And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.— There arose murmuring against the Hebrews"*— for that description of people seemed to be more honorable— *"because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."* [Acts 6:1-7] So then there was a daily ministration for the widows. And observe how he calls it a *"ministration"* ([διακονία]), and not directly alms: extolling by this at once the doers, and those to whom it was done. *"Were neglected."* This did not arise from malice, but perhaps from the carelessness of the multitude. And therefore he brought it forward openly, for this was no small evil. Observe, how even in the beginning the evils came not only from without, but also from within. For you must not look to this only, that it was set to rights, but observe that it was a great evil that it existed. *"Then the twelve,"* etc. [Acts 6:2] Do you observe how outward concerns succeed to inward? They do not act at their own discretion, but plead for themselves to the congregation. So ought it to be done now. *"It is not reason,"* says he, *"that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables."* First he puts to them the unreasonableness of the thing; that it is not possible for both things to be done with the same attention: just as when they were about to ordain Matthias, they first show the necessity of the thing, that one was deficient, and there must needs be twelve. And so here they showed the necessity; and they did it not sooner, but waited till the murmuring arose; nor, on the other hand, did they suffer this to spread far. And, lo! They leave the decision to them: those who pleased all, those who of all were honestly reputed, them they present: not now twelve, but *"seven, full of the Spirit and of wisdom:*

well reported of" for their conversation. [Acts 6:3] Now when Matthias was to be presented, it was said, *"Therefore must one of these men which have accompanied with us all the time"* [Acts 1:21]: but not so here: for the case was not alike. And they do not now put it to the lot; they might indeed themselves have made the election, as moved by the Spirit: but nevertheless, they desire the testimony of the people. The fixing the number, and the ordaining them, and for this kind of business, rested with them: but the choice of the men they make over to the people, that they might not seem to act from favor: just as God also leaves it to Moses to choose as elders those whom he knew. [Numbers 11:16] *"And of wisdom."* For indeed there needs much wisdom in such ministrations. For think not, because he has not the word committed unto him, that such an one has no need of wisdom: he does need it, and much too. *"But we,"* says he, *"will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."* [Acts 6:4] Again they plead for themselves, beginning and ending with this. *"Will give ourselves continually,"* he says. For so it behooved, not just to do the mere acts, or in any chance way, but to be continually doing them. *"And the saying,"* we are told, *"pleased the whole multitude."* (v. 5, 6.) This too was worthy of their wisdom. All approved of what was said so sensible was it. *"And they chose,"* it says (again it is the people ([αὐτοί]) that choose,) *"Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."* They separated them from the multitude, and it is the people ([αὐτοί]) that draw them, not the Apostles that lead them. Observe how he avoids all that is superfluous: he does not tell in what way it was done, but that they were ordained ([ἐ] [χειροτονήθησαν]) with prayer: for this is the meaning of [χειροτονία], (i.e.

"putting forth the hand,") or ordination: the hand of the man is laid upon (the person,) but the whole work is of God, and it is His hand which touches the head of the one ordained, if he be duly ordained. *"And the word of God,"* it says, *"increased: and the number of the disciples multiplied."* [Acts 6:7] It is not for nothing that he says this: it shows how great is the virtue of alms and good order. And as he is about in the sequel to enlarge ([αὐξεν]) upon the affair of Stephen, he puts first the causes which led to it. *"And many,"* he says, *"of the priests were obedient to the faith."* For since they perceived such to be the mind of their ruler and teacher, they put the matter to the test of facts.— It is also a subject for wonder, how it was that the multitude was not divided in its choice of the men, and how it was that the Apostles were not rejected by them. But what sort of rank these bore, and what sort of office they received, this is what we need to learn. Was it that of Deacons? And yet this is not the case in the Churches. But is it to the Presbyters that the management belongs? And yet at present there was no Bishop, but the Apostles only. Whence I think it clearly and manifestly follows, that neither Deacons nor Presbyters is their designation: but it was for this particular purpose that they were ordained. And this business was not simply handed over to them without further ceremony, but the Apostles prayed over them, that power might be given to them. But observe, I pray you, if there were need of seven men for this, great in proportion must have been the sums of money that flowed in, great in proportion also the number of widows. So then the prayers were not made in an off-hand way, but with much deliberate attention: and this office, as well as preaching, was thus brought to good effect; for what they did, they effected mostly by the means of these (their prayers.) Thus they were enabled to give their attention to things spiritual; thus were these also free to undertake long journeys; thus were these put in trust with the word. But the writer does not say this, nor

extol them, but that it was *"not reason"* that they should leave the work given to them. Thus they had been taught by Moses's example not to undertake the management of everything by themselves. [Numbers 11:14] *"Only,"* it is said, *"that we should remember the poor."* [Galatians 2:10] And how did they bring these forward? They fasted. *"Look you out seven men,"* etc. [Acts 6:3] It is not simply, spiritual men, but, *"full of the Spirit and of wisdom,"* for it needed very great superiority of mind ([φιλοσοφίας]) to bear the complainings of widows. For what profits it, that the dispenser of alms steal not, if nevertheless he waste all, or be harsh and easily provoked? *"And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 6:5] And in this regard Philip also was admirable: for it is of him that the writer says: *"And we entered into the house of Philip the Evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him."*— [Acts 21:8] Do you mark how matters are ordered quite otherwise than after the matter of men? *"And the number of disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem."* [Acts 6:7] In Jerusalem the multitude increased. Wonderful, where Christ was slain, there the preaching increased! And not only was it not the case that some were offended then in the manner of Ananias, but the awe became even greater: while these are scourged, those threatening, those tempting the Spirit, those murmuring. But I would have you remark under what circumstances the multitude increased: after these trials, then it was that the multitude increased, and not before. Mark also how great the mercy of God. Of those chief-priests, of the very men who had indignation and sore displeasure and so cried out and said, *"He saved others, Himself He cannot save;"* of these same, *"Many,"* it says, *"were obedient unto the faith."* [Matthew 27:42]

Him therefore let us also imitate. He received them, and did not cast them out. So let us requite those our enemies, who have wrought us even numberless ills. Whatever good thing we may have, let us impart to them:

let us not pass them by, in our acts of beneficence. For if we ought, by suffering ill, to sate their rage, much more, by doing them good: for this is a less thing than the other. For it is not all alike, to do good to an enemy, and to be willing to suffer greater wrongs than he wishes (to inflict): from the one we shall come on to the other. This is the dignity of Christ's disciples. Those crucified Him, when He had come for the very purpose of doing them good; His disciples they scourged; and after all this, He admits them to the same honor with His disciples, making them equally partakers of His gifts. I beseech you, let us be imitators of Christ: in this regard it is possible to imitate Him: this makes a man like God: this is more than human. Let us hold fast to Mercy: she is the schoolmistress and teacher of that higher Wisdom. He that has learned to show mercy to the distressed, will learn also not to resent injuries; he that has learned this, will be able to do good even to his enemies. Let us learn to feel for the ills our neighbors suffer, and we shall learn to endure the ills they inflict. Let us ask the person himself who ill-treats us, whether he does not condemn himself? Would he not be glad to show a nobler spirit ([φιλοσοφεῖν])? Must he not own that his behavior is nothing but passion, that it is little-minded, pitiful? Would he not like to be of those who are wronged and are silent, and not of those who do wrong, and are beside themselves with passion? Can he go away not admiring the patient sufferer? Do not imagine that this makes men despicable. Nothing makes men so despicable, as insolent and injurious behavior: nothing makes men so respectable, as endurance under insolence and injury. For the one is a ruffian, the other a philosopher; the one is less than man, the other is equal to angels. For though he be inferior to the wrong-doer, yet, for all that, he has the power, if he had the mind, to be revenged. And besides, the one is pitied by all, the other hated. What then? The former will be much the better of the two: for everybody will treat the one as a madman, the other as

a man of sense. He cannot speak of him in evil sort: yea, you fear, says one, lest perchance he be not such (as you would represent). Best that thou speak not evil in your thought even; next, that you speak it not to another. Pray not then to God against this man: if you hear him evil-spoken of, take his part: say, It was passion that spoke such words, not the man; say, It was anger, not my friend: his madness, not his heart. Thus let us account of each offense. Wait not for the fire to be kindled, but check it before it comes to that: do not exasperate the savage beast, rather do not suffer it to become exasperated: for you will no longer be able to check it, if once the flame be kindled. For what has the man called you? "*Thou fool and simpleton.*" And which then is liable to the name? The called, or the caller? For the one, be he ever so wise, gets the character of being a fool: but the other, even if he be a simpleton, gets credit for being wise, and of philosophic temper. Say, which is the simpleton? He who alleges against another what is untrue, or he who even under such treatment is unmoved? For if it be the mark of true philosophy to be unmoved however moved; to fall into a passion when none moves to anger— what folly is it! I say not yet, how sore a manner of punishment is in store for those who utter such reproaches and revilings against their neighbor. But how? Has he called you "*a low fellow and low-born, a sorry creature and of sorry extraction?*" Again he has turned the taunt against himself. For the other will appear worthy and respectable, but he a sorry creature indeed: for to cast up such things, that is to say, meanness of birth, as a disgrace, is little-minded indeed: while the other will be thought a great and admirable character, because he thinks nothing of such a taunt, and is no more affected by it than if he were told that he had about him any other ordinary and quite indifferent circumstance. But does he call you "*adulterer,*" and such like? At this you may even laugh: for, when the conscience is not smitten, there can be no occasion for wrath. * *

For when one has considered what bad and disgraceful disclosures he makes, still for all that, there is no need to grieve. He has but laid bare now, what everybody must be apprised of by and bye: meanwhile, as regards himself he has shown all men that he is not to be trusted, for that he knows not how to screen his neighbor's faults: he has disgraced himself more than he has the other; has stopped up against himself every harbor: has made terrible to himself the bar at which he must hereafter be tried. For not the person (whose secrets are betrayed) will be the object of everybody's aversion, but he, who where he ought not to have raised the veil, has stripped off the clothes. But speak thou nothing of the secrets you know, hold thou your peace if you would bear off the good fame. For not only will you overthrow what has been spoken, and hide it: but you will also bring about another capital result: you will stop sentence being given against yourself. Does somebody speak evil of you? Say thou: *"Had he known all, he would not have spoken only thus much."*— So you admire what has been said, and are delighted with it? Aye, but you must follow it. For when we tell you all these maxims of the heathen moralists, it is not because Scripture does not contain hundreds of such sayings, but because these are of more force to put you to the blush. As in fact Scripture itself is wont to use this appeal to our sense of shame; for, instance, when it says, *"Do ye even as the heathen."* [Jeremiah 35:3] And the prophet Jeremiah brought forward into public view the children of Rechab, how they would not consent to violate the command of their father.— Miriam and her company spoke evil of Moses, and he immediately begged them off from their punishment; nay, would not so much as let it be known that his cause was avenged. [Numbers 12] But not so we: on the contrary, this is what we most desire; to have all men know that they have not passed unpunished. How long shall we breathe of the earth?— One party cannot make a fight. Pluck

the madmen from both sides, you will exasperate them the more: but pluck from right or from left, and you have quenched the passion. The striker, if he has to do with one who will not put up with blows, is the more set on: but if with one who yields, he is the sooner unnerved, and his blow is spent upon himself. For no practised pugilist so unnerves the strength of his antagonist, as does a man who being injuriously treated makes no return. For the other only goes off ashamed, and condemned, first by his own conscience, and secondly by all the lookers on. And there is a proverb too, which says, that *"to honor another, is to honor one's self"*: therefore also to abuse another is to abuse one's self. None, I repeat, will be able to harm us, unless we harm ourselves; nor will any make me poor, unless I make myself such. For come, let us look at it in this way. Suppose that I have a beggarly soul, and let all lavish all their substance upon me, what of that? So long as the soul is not changed, it is all in vain. Suppose I have a noble soul, and let all men take from me my substance: what of that? So long as you do not make the soul beggarly, no harm is done. Suppose my life be impure, and let all men say just the contrary of me: what of that? For though they say it, yet they do not judge thus of me in their heart. Again, suppose my life be pure, and let all say of me just the reverse: and what of that? For in their own conscience they will condemn themselves: since they are not persuaded of what they say. Just as we ought not to admit the praise, so neither the criminations. And why say I these things? None will ever be able to plot against us, nor lay us under any evil charge, if we choose (that they shall not). For how now, I ask you? Let him drag me into a court of justice, let him lay vexatious informations, let him, if you will, have the very soul out of me: and what of that? For a little while, undeservedly to suffer these things, what does it signify? *"Well, but this,"* say you, *"is of itself an evil."* Well, but of itself this is a good, to suffer undeservedly.

What? Would you have the suffering to be deserved? Let me mention again a piece of philosophy, from one of the sages. A certain person, says the story, had been put to death. And one of the sage's disciples said to him, *"Woe is me, that he should have suffered unjustly!"* The other turned upon him, *"Why, how now?"* said he, *"would you have had him justly suffer?"* (Socrates ap. Diog. Laert. and Xen. *Mem. Socr.*) John also, was not he unjustly put to death? Which then do you rather pity: them that justly suffer death, or [him? Do you not count them miserable, while] him you even admire? Then what is a man injured, when from death itself he has got great gain, not merely no hurt? If indeed the man had been immortal, and this made him mortal, no doubt it would be a hurt: but if he be mortal, and in the course of nature must expect death a little later, and his enemy has but expedited his death, and glory with it, what is the harm? Let us but have our soul in good order, and there will be no harm from without. But you are not in a condition of glory? And what of that? That which is true of wealth, the same holds for glory: if I be magnanimous ([μεγαλοπρεπής]), I shall need none; if vainglorious, the more I get, the more I shall want. In this way shall I most become illustrious, and obtain greater glory; namely, if I despise glory. Knowing these things, let us be thankful to Him Who has freely given us such a life, and let us ensue it unto His glory; for to Him belongs the glory, forever. Amen.

Homily 15 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts VI. 8

"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

See how even among the seven one was preëminent, and won the first prize. For though the ordination was common to him and them, yet he drew upon himself greater grace. And observe, how he wrought no (signs and wonders) before this time, but only when he became publicly known; to show that grace alone is not sufficient, but there must be ordination also; so that there was a further access of the Spirit. For if they were full of the Spirit, it was of that which is from the Laver of Baptism. *"Then there arose certain of them of the synagogue."* [Acts 6:9] Again he uses the phrase of *"rising up"* ([ἀ] [νάστασιν], Hom. xiii. p. 81), to denote their exasperation and wrath. Here we have a great multitude. And observe the difference in the form of accusation: for since Gamaliel had stopped them from finding fault on the former plea, they bring in another charge. *"And there rose up, it says, certain of them of the synagogue of those who are called ([τῶν λεγομένων] . Edd. [τῆς λεγομένης]) Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God."* [Acts 6:9-12] That they may establish the charge, the phrase is, *"he speaks against God, and against Moses."* And with this object too they disputed, that they might

force him to say somewhat. But he now discoursed more openly, and perhaps spoke of the cessation of the Divine Law: or, spoke it not, but hinted as much: since had he spoken plainly, there had been no need of suborned men, nor yet of false witnesses. The synagogues were diverse: [to wit, *"Of the Libertines"*]: of the Cyrenians, i.e. those in the parts beyond Alexandria [*"of the Alexandrians,"* etc.]. There also they seem to have had synagogues according to their different nations; for many stayed behind there, that they might not be obliged to be continually travelling. The Libertines perhaps were freedmen of the Romans. As there were many foreigners dwelling there, so they had their synagogues, where the Law was to be read. *"Disputing with Stephen."* Observe him, not taking upon him to teach, but forced to do so. The miracles once more brought him into ill-will; but when he overcame in argument, it was false-witness! For they did not wish to kill intolerable to them. *"They could not resist, etc.: then they suborned men."* Everywhere out of hand, but by means of a sentence, that they might hurt their reputation also: and leaving those (the Apostles), they attack these (the disciples), thinking in this way to terrify those also. They say not, *"he speaks,"* but, *"he ceases not to speak. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceases not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law."* (v. 12, 13.) *"Ceases not,"* say they, as if he made this his business. *"For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."* [Acts 6:14] *"Jesus,"* they say, *"the Nazarene,"* as a term of reproach, *"shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs."* This is also what they said about Christ. *"Thou that destroyest this Temple."* [Matthew 27:40] For great was their veneration for the Temple (as indeed they had chosen to

leave their own country ([μετοικεῖν]) in order to be near it) and for the name of Moses. The charge is twofold. If He *"shall change the customs,"* He will also introduce others instead: observe how the charge is a bitter one, and fraught with perils. *"And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."* [Acts 6:15] So possible is it even for one in a lower degree to shine. For what, I ask, had this man less than the Apostles? He lacked not miracles, and great was the boldness he exhibited. — *"They saw His face,"* it is said, *"as it had been the face of an angel."* [Exodus 34:30] For this was his grace, this was the glory of Moses. God made him thus gracious ([ἐ] [πίχαριν]) of visage, now that he was about to say somewhat, thus at once by his very look to awe them. For there are, yes, there are faces full-fraught with spiritual grace, lovely to them that love, awful to haters and enemies. It mentions also the reason, why they suffered his oration.— *"Then,"* it proceeds, *"said the high-priest, Are these things so?"* [Acts 7:1] Observe, the question is put with mildness, that he may effect some great mischief. For this reason Stephen too begins his speech in a tone of gentleness, and says, *"Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran."* [Acts 7:2] Immediately at the outset he overthrows their conceit, and makes it appear by what he says, that the temple is nothing, that the customs are nothing either, without their suspecting his drift: also that they shall not overcome the preaching; and that from powerless ([ἀ] [μηχανών]) things God evermore contrives Him powerful ([εὐμήχανα]) instruments. Mark then how these threads make the texture of the whole speech: and moreover that having evermore enjoyed exceeding goodness, they still requited their Benefactor with the opposite conduct, and that they are now attempting impossibilities. *"The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in*

Mesopotamia, before he came into Charran." Both the temple was not, and sacrifice was not, and yet a vision of God was vouchsafed to Abraham, and yet had he Persians for his ancestors, and was in a strange land. And he does well at the beginning of his speech to call Him, *"the God of glory:"* seeing that He has made them that are without honor to be glorious.

"Because" (says he) *"it was He that made them glorious, He will make us also."* Observe how he leads them away from things of the body, from the place, in the first instance, as the place was in question. *"The God of glory,"* says he: implying again, that He needs not the glory which comes from us, which comes by the Temple: for Himself is the Fountain thereof. Think not, he would say, in this way to glorify Him. *"And from your kindred."* How then says the Scripture, that Abraham's father was willing to go out? Hence we learn, that it was in consequence of Abraham's vision, that his father was moved to join in the migration. [Genesis 11:31] *"And said unto him, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and come into a land which I shall show you."* [Acts 7:3] It shows how far these men are from being children of Abraham, how obedient he was. *"And from your kindred."*

Uncomfortable ([φορτικὰ]) reflections, both, that he endured the labors, while you reap the fruits, and that all your ancestors were in evil case.

"Then came he out of the land of the Chaldæans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, He removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on." (v. 4, 5.) See how he raises their thoughts away from (their possession of) the land. For if He said (that, He will give: clearly [all came from him], and nothing from themselves. For he came, having left both kindred and country. Wherefore then did He not give it to him? Truly it was a figure of another land. *"And He promised to give it to him."* Do you perceive, that he does not merely resume the thread of his

discourse? *"He gave him not,"* says he; *"and He promised; and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."* Again, what God can do: that out of impossibilities, He does all. For here is a man in Persia, so far away, and this man God says He will make lord of Palestine. But let us look back to what was said before.

Whence, I pray you, did that grace bloom upon the countenance of Stephen? (Recapitulation.) The writer gives him this report above, that he was *"full of faith."* [Acts 6:8]. For it is possible to have a grace that does not consist in works of healing: For to one is given the grace of the Spirit [1 Corinthians 12:8-9] in such and such wise ([τοιῷσδε]). But here, it seems to me, it says that he was also gracious to look at: *"They saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."* *"Full of faith and of power":* [Acts 6:15] which is also the character given of Barnabas *"he was a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 11:24] Whence we learn that the sincere and innocent are, above all others, the men to be saved, and that these same are also more gracious. *"Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words."* [Acts 6:11] In the case of the Apostles they were annoyed that they preached the Resurrection, and that much people flowed unto them: but in this case, that they were getting their diseases healed. [Acts 4:2] The things for which they ought to give thanks, they made matter of blame: O the madness! The men who overcame them by works, they expected to overcome by words! It is just what they did in the case of Christ, and always they forced them to words. For they were ashamed to seize them without more ado, having nothing to charge them with. And observe, not the persons themselves who bring them to judgment bear witness against them; for they would have been refuted: but they simply hire others, that it may not seem to be an act of mere violence. It is all of a piece with their proceeding in the case of Christ. And observe the

power of the preaching, that, though they are not only scourged but stoned, it still prevails: not only, private individuals as they are, dragged to the bar, but assailed from all quarters: and, their enemies themselves being witnesses, not only were these worsted, but *"they were not able"* even *"to resist"* [Acts 6:10], though they were exceeding shameless: so mightily did it overthrow them, for all that they could do with their preposterous figments (as the saying that He had a devil— He that cast out devils!). For the battle was not man's, but God's against men. And there were many combined together; not only they in Jerusalem, but others as well. [Acts 6:9] For *"we have heard him,"* say they, *"speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God."* [Acts 6:11] O you shameless ones! You work blasphemous deeds, and think nothing of it. This is why Moses is added— because the things of God were no great concern to them: and it is ever and always Moses that they make mention of: *"This Moses, which brought us out."* [Acts 7:40] *"And they stirred up the people."* [Acts 6:12] Fickleness of the multitude! And yet how could a man who was a blasphemer have so succeeded? How could a blasphemer work such miracles among the people? But the undisciplined multitude made them strong who had the worst of it (in argument).— This was what most annoyed them. *"We have heard him,"* they say, *"speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God"* [Acts 6:13]: and again, *"This man ceases not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law,"* and with an addition, *"the customs" "which Moses delivered to us"* [Acts 6:14]; Moses, not God. Upon the supposition of a design to overturn their manner of life ([πολιτείας]), they accused him of impiety also. But to show that it was not in the nature of such a man to speak such things, and harshly [*"Then all,"* it says, *"which were in the council, looking steadfastly upon him, saw his face, as it had been the face of an angel"*] [Acts 6:15]: so

mild was he even in countenance. For, in cases where persons were not falsely accused, Scripture mentions nothing of this kind: but as in this case it was all false accusation, with reason does God rectify it by the very look of the man. For the Apostles indeed were not falsely accused, but were forbidden: but this man is falsely accused: and therefore before all else his countenance pleads for him. This abashed even the priest. *"And he said,"* etc. [Acts 7:1] He shows here, that the promise was made before the Place, before Circumcision, before Sacrifice, before the Temple, and that it was not of their merit that these received either Circumcision or Law, but that the land was the reward of obedience alone. Moreover, that neither on the giving of circumcision does the promise receive its fulfillment. Also, that these were figures, and (so was) both the leaving his country at God's command— not against the law (for home and country is where God shall lead): *"Then came he out,"* it says, *"of the land of the Chaldeans"* [Acts 7:4]:— and that if one look closely into the matter, the Jews are of Persian origin: and that, without miracles, one must do as God bids, whatever hardships be the consequence; since the Patriarch left both the grave of his father and all that he had, in obedience to God's command. But if Abraham's father was not allowed to take part with him in the privilege of migrating to Palestine, because he was unworthy: much more shall the children (be excluded at last), for all that they may have gone a good distance on the way. *"And He promised,"* it says, *"to give it to him, and to his seed after him."* [Acts 7:5] Herein is shown the greatness both of God's goodness and of Abraham's faith. For the expression, *"when as yet he had no child,"* does show his obedience and faith. *"Promised to give it to him and to his seed."* And yet the events showed the contrary: namely, after he came, he had not *"so much as to set his foot on,"* had not a child; which very things were contrary to his faith.

These things having seen, let us likewise, whatever God shall promise, receive the same, however contrary may be the events. And yet in our case, they are not contrary, but very suitable. For where the promises are, there, when the contraries turn out, they are really contrary; but in our case it is just the reverse: for He has told us that we should have tribulation here, but our rest there. Why do we confound the times? Why do we turn things upside down? Say, are you afflicted, and livest in poverty, and in dejection? Be not troubled: for it were worth being troubled at, were thou destined to be afflicted in that world: as for this present affliction, it is the cause of rest. *"This sickness,"* says He, *"is not unto death."* [John 11:4] That affliction is punishment: this, schooling and correction. It is a contest, this life present: if so, to fight is our business now: it is war and battle. In war one does not seek to have rest, in war one does not seek to have dainty living, one is not anxious about riches, one's care is not about a wife then: one thing only he looks at, how he may overcome his foes. Be this our care likewise: if we overcome, and return with the victory, God will give us all things. Be this alone our study, how we may overcome the devil: though after all it is not our own study that does it, but God's grace does the whole business. Be it our one study, how we may attract His grace, how we may draw to ourselves that assistance. *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* [Romans 8:31] Let us make one thing our study; that He be not our enemy, that He turn not away from us.

Not the being afflicted is an evil; the evil is, to sin. This is the sore affliction, however we may pass our days in luxury:— not to speak of the life to come, it is so even in this life present. Think how our conscience is stung with remorse, and whether this is not worse than any kind of torture! I should like to put the question searchingly to those who live in evil ways ([ἐ] [ν κακοίς]), whether they never come to reflect upon their own sins,

whether they do not tremble, and are in fear and anguish, whether they do not think those blessed who live in abstinence, them of the mountains, them of the strict rule? ([τοὺς ἐν πολλῇ φιλοσοφίᾳ 139] Apostles rejoiced when scourged. Paul gives this exhortation, saying, "*Rejoice in the Lord.*" Philippians 4:4] And how can there be rejoicing, where there are bonds, where there are tortures; where there are courts of justice? There, most of all, is rejoicing. But say, how can there be rejoicing, where these are not? For he who is conscious of no evil, will have a sort of exceeding delight, insomuch that in what degree you speak of tribulation, in the same you tell of his delight. The soldier who has received numberless wounds and has come home again, will he not return with exceeding delight, with his wounds as his title for speaking up boldly, and as evidence of his glory and renown? And thou, if you be able to exclaim as Paul does, "*I bear the marks of Jesus*" [Galatians 6:17], will be able to become great and glorious and renowned. "*But there is no persecution.*" Make your stand against glory: and should any one speak anything against you, fear not to be evil-spoken of for Christ's sake: make your stand against the tyranny of pride, against the fighting of anger, against the torment of concupiscence. These also are "*marks*," these also are torments. For, I ask, what is the worst in tortures? Is it not, that the soul is pained, and is on fire? For in the other case, the body too has its share: but in this, the whole belongs to the soul. On the soul alone comes all the smart, when one is angry, when one is envious, whatever else of this kind one does, or rather suffers. For, in fact, it is not action, but passion, not a doing, but a suffering—to be angered, to feel envy: therefore indeed they are called passions (or sufferings) ([πάθη], *perturbationes*) of the soul, yea wounds, and bruises. For it is indeed a suffering, and worse than suffering. Bethink you, you that are angry, that you do such things in "*passion*," in a state of suffering. Therefore he who is

not angry suffers not. Do you mark that not he who is abused is the sufferer, but he that abuses, as I said above? For that he is a sufferer, is plain in the first place from the very fact, that such a thing is called by this name of passion: and it is also plain from the (effects on the) body: for these are the affections ([πάθη]) for "*sufferings*," as we call them] engendered by anger, viz. dimness of vision, insanity, and numberless others. "*But he insulted my boy*," say you; "*but [he called him] clown*." Deem it not weakness your not doing the same thing yourself. For, I ask you, was it well done? You will not say that: then leave that undone which being done were not well done. I know what passions are engendered in such cases. "*But*," say you, "*how if he despise me, how if he say it again?*" Show him that he is in the wrong: rebuke him, entreat him: by meekness anger is put down: go and expostulate with him. For though in cases of wrong done to ourselves it is right not to do even this, yet it is quite necessary to do it in behalf of others. Do not look on it as an insult to yourself that your boy has been insulted: annoyed you may be for his sake, yet not as if you were insulted: for it does not follow because your boy has been ill-treated, that you are disgraced, but he is disgraced that did the ill. Quench (your anger) that sharp sword: let it lie in its scabbard. If we have it unsheathed, we shall be apt to use it even when the time is not proper, being drawn on by it: but if it be hidden, though a necessity should arise, yet, while we seek it in order to draw it, the anger will be quenched. Christ would not have us be angry on his account: (hear what He says to Peter: "*Put up again your sword into the sheath:*") [Matthew 26:52] and are you angry on account of a boy? Teach your boy also to be philosophical: tell him your own sufferings: imitate (herein) your Teacher. [Matthew 26:52] When they too (His disciples) were about to be treated with dishonor, He said not, "*I will avenge you:*" but, "*to Me also*," says He, "*they have done the same: bear it nobly, for you are not better than*

I." These words too do thou speak to your son and your boy: *"You are not better than your master."* But these words of philosophy are counted as the talk of a widow woman. Alas! That it is not in the power of words to bring it home to people in the way that it is possible to be taught it by actual experience! And that you may learn this; stand between two combatants, take part with the wronged, not with the wrong-doers [that you may learn] whether you shall not see the victory on your side, whether you shall not get splendid crowns.— See, how God is insulted, and how He answers; how gently, *"Where,"* says He, *"is Abel your brother?"* and what says the other: *"Am I my brother's keeper?"* [Genesis 6:9] What could be more contumacious than this? Would any one have heard it (patiently) even from a son? And if from a brother, would he not have thought such conduct an insult? What then? See how again God gently answers, *"The voice of your brother's blood,"* says He *"cries unto Me."* *"But God,"* it will be said, *"is superior to wrath."* Yes, but for this reason the Son of God came down, that He might make you a God as far as human power can go. *"But I cannot,"* says one, *"seeing I am man."* Well then, let us give you men for instances. And do not suppose I speak of Paul or of Peter: no, but of some of inferior sort, yea, very much lower down. Eli's menial insulted Hannah, saying, *"Put away your wine from you."* [1 Samuel 1:14] What could be more insulting than this? What then said she? *"I am a woman of a hard lot."* Indeed, there is nothing equal to affliction: she is the mother of true philosophy. But this same woman, though she has her rival, insulted her not: but what does she? She takes refuge with God, and in her prayer does not even make mention of her, nor say, *"Avenge me, for such an one reproaches me:"* so magnanimous was that woman (let us men be ashamed):— and yet ye know, that there is nothing like jealousy. The publican, when insulted by the Pharisee, insulted not in return, though, had

he wished it, he might have done so: but he bore it like a philosopher, saying, *"Be merciful to me a sinner."* [Luke 18:13] Mephibosheth, having been accused and calumniated by his servant, neither said, nor did, any evil to him, not even in the presence of the king himself. [2 Samuel 19:26] Shall I tell you even of a harlot, what philosophic magnanimity she showed? Hear Christ saying, as she was wiping His feet with her hair, *"The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before you."* [Matthew 21:31] Do you see her standing, and taking courage, and washing away her own sins? Observe, how she was not angry even with the Pharisee, when reproached by him: *"for had He known,"* says he, that this woman is a sinner, He would not have suffered her [Luke 7:39]: and how she said not to him, *"What then? Say, are you pure from sins?"* but felt more, wept more, and let fall hotter tears. But if women and publicans and harlots play the philosopher, and that before grace (i.e. of Baptism), what pardon can they deserve, who, after so great grace, fight, and worry, and kick one another, worse than beasts? Nothing is more base than passion, nothing more disgraceful, nothing more frightful, nothing more odious, nothing more hurtful. These things I say, not only in order that towards men we may be gentle, but also if a wife be a talker, that you may bear it: let your wife be to you a school for training and exercise ([παλαίστρα καὶ γυμνάσιον]). For how can it but be absurd, to submit to exercises which yield no profit, where we afflict the body, but not to practise exercises at home, which, even before the contest, present to us a crown? Does your wife abuse you? Do not thou become a woman: to be abusive is womanly: it is a disease of the soul, an inferiority. Think not that it is unworthy of you, when your wife abuses you. Unworthy it is, when you are abusive, but she bears patiently ([φιλοσοφῆ]): then do you act unseemly, then are you disgraced: but if, having been abused, thou bear it, great is the proof of your strength. I do not say this, to induce wives to be abusive: God

forbid: but only in case it should so happen at the instance of Satan. It is the part of men that are strong, to bear the weak. And if your servant contradict you, bear it philosophically: not what he deserves to have said to him, do thou say or do, but that which it behooves you both to do and to say. Never insult a girl by uttering some foul word against her: never call your servant, scoundrel ([μιαρὸν]): not he is disgraced, but thou. It is not possible to be master of one's self, being in a passion. Like a sea rolling mountains high, it is all hurly-burly: or even as a pure fountain, when mire is cast into it, becomes muddied, and all is in turmoil. You may beat him, you may rend his coat to rags, but it is you that sustain the greater damage: for to him the blow is on the body and the garment, but to you on the soul. It is your own soul that you have cut open; it is there that you have inflicted a wound: you have flung your own charioteer from his horses, you have got him dragging along the ground upon his back. And it is all one, as if one driver being in a passion with another, should choose to be thus dragged along. You may rebuke, you may chide, you may do whatever if be, only let it be without wrath and passion. For if he who rebukes is physician to him who offends, how can he heal another, when he has first hurt himself, when he does not heal himself? Say, if a physician should go to heal another person, does he first wound his own hand, first blind his own eyes, and so set about healing that other? God forbid. So also, however thou rebuke, however thou chide, let your eyes see clearly. Do not make your mind muddy, else how shall the cure be wrought? It is not possible to be in the same tranquillity, being in a passion, and being free from passion. Why do you first overturn your master from his seat, and then discourse with him as he lies sprawling on the ground? Do you see not the judges, how, when about to hold the assize, they seat themselves upon the bench, in their becoming attire? Thus do thou likewise dress your soul with the judicial robe (which is gentleness). *"But*

he will not be afraid of me," say you. He will be the more afraid. In the other case, though you speak justly, your servant will impute it to passion: but if you do it with gentleness, he will condemn himself: and, what is of the first importance, God will accept you, and thus you will be able to attain unto the eternal blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 16 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 7:6-7

"And God spoke on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve Me in this place."

See, what a number of years the Promise has been given, and the manner of the Promise, and nowhere sacrifice, nowhere circumcision! He here shows, how God Himself suffered them to be afflicted, not that He had anything to lay to their charge. *"And they shall bring them into bondage,"* etc. But nevertheless, they did not these things with impunity. *"And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage I will judge, said God."* For, to show that they are not to go by this, in estimating who are pious (by reason of their saying, *"He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him,"*) [Matthew 27:43].— He, the Same that promised, He that gave the land, first permits the evils. So also now, though He has promised a Kingdom, yet He suffers us to be exercised in temptations. If here the freedom was not to be till after four hundred years, what wonder, with regard to the Kingdom? Yet he performed it, and lapse of time availed not to falsify His word. Moreover, it was no ordinary bondage they underwent. And the matter does not terminate solely in the punishment of those (their oppressors); but they themselves also, He says, shall enjoy a mighty salvation. Here he reminds them too of the benefit which they enjoyed. *"And he gave him the covenant*

of circumcision: and so he begot Isaac." Here he lets himself down to lower matters. *"And circumcised him on the eighth day: and Isaac (begot) Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs."* [Acts 7:8].— Here he seems to hint now at the type. *"And the patriarchs moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt."* [Acts 7:9] Here again, the type of Christ. Though they had no fault to find with him, and though he came on purpose to bring them their food, they thus ill-treated him. Still here again the promise, though it is a long while first, receives its fulfillment. *"And God was with him"*— this also is for them— *"and delivered him out of all his afflictions."* [Acts 7:10]. He shows that unknowingly they helped to fulfil the prophecy, and that they were themselves the cause, and that the evils recoiled on their own selves. *"And gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt, Gave him favor,"* in the eyes of a barbarian, to him, the slave, the captive: his brethren sold him, this (barbarian) honored him. *"Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren."* [Acts 7:11-13]. They came down to buy, and had to depend upon him for everything. What then did he? [*"He made himself known to his brethren:"*] not to this point only did he carry his friendliness; he also made them known to Pharaoh, and brought them down into the land. *"And Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh. Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem. But when the time of the promise drew near, which God had sworn to Abraham the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose, which*

knew not Joseph." [Acts 7:13-18]. Then again, fresh disappointment ([ὁ] [νελπιστία]): first, famine, but they came through that: secondly, the falling into the hands of their enemy: thirdly, the being destroyed by the king. Then (to show) God's fullness of ways and means ([εὐμήχανον]), *"In which time,"* it says, *"Moses was born, and was exceeding fair."* [Acts 7:20] If the former circumstance was wonderful, that Joseph was sold by his brethren, here again is another circumstance more wonderful still, that the king *"nourished"* the very person who was to overthrow his dominion, being himself the person that was to perish. Do you observe all along a figurative enacting, so to say, of the resurrection of the dead? But it is not the same thing for God himself to do a thing, and for a thing to come to pass in connection with man's purpose ([προαίρεσις]). For these things indeed were in connection with man's purpose [but the Resurrection by itself, independently.]— *"And he was mighty,"* it says, *"in word and in deed"* [Acts 7:22]: he that was to have died. Then again he shows how ungrateful they were to their benefactor. For, just as in the former instance, they were saved by the injured Joseph, so here again they were saved by another injured person, I mean, Moses. *"And when he was full forty years old,"* etc. For what though they killed him not actually? In intention they did kill, as did the others in the former case. There, they sold out of their own into a strange land: here, they drive from one strange land into another strange land: in the former case, one in the act of bringing them food; in this, one in the act of giving them good counsel; one to whom, under God, the man was indebted for his life! Mark how it shows (the truth of) that saying of Gamaliel's, *"If it be of God, you cannot overthrow it."* [Acts 5:39] See the plotted-against eventually becoming the authors of salvation to those plotting against them: the people, plotting against itself, and itself plotted against by others; and for all this, saved! A famine, and it did not consume

them: nor was this all: but they were saved by means of the very person, whom they had expected to be destroyed (by their means). A royal edict, and it did not consume them: nay then most did their number increase, when he was dead *"who knew"* them. Their own Saviour they wished to kill, but for all that, they had not power to do it. Do you observe, that by the means whereby the devil tried to bring to naught the promise of God, by those very means it was advanced?

"And God spoke on this wise," etc. (Recapitulation, v. 6, 7.) This is suitable to be said here also: that God is rich in ways and means to bring us up from hence. For this above all showed the riches of God's resources, that in its very reverses ([ἄ] [ποστροφῇ]) the nation increased, while enslaved, while evil-entreated, and sought to be exterminated. And this is the greatness of the Promise. For had it increased in its own land, it had not been so wonderful. And besides, it was not for a short time, either, that they were in the strange land: but for four hundred years. Hence we learn a (great lesson) of philosophic endurance ([φιλοσοφίαν]):— they did not treat them as masters use slaves, but as enemies and tyrants— and he foretold that they should be set in great liberty: for this is the meaning of that expression, *"They shall serve (Me): and they shall come up hither again"* ([ἐ] [νταῦθα ἐπανελεύσονται]); and with impunity. — And observe, how, while he seems to concede something to circumcision, he in fact allows it nothing [Acts 7:8]; since the Promise was before it, and it followed after.— *"And the patriarchs,"* he says, *"moved with envy."* [Acts 7:9] Where it does no harm, he humors ([χαρίζεται]) them: for they prided themselves much on these also.— And he shows, that the saints were not exempt from tribulation, but that in their very tribulations they obtained help. And that these persons did themselves help to bring about the results, who wished to cut short these same (afflictions): just as these made Joseph the more

glorious: just as the king did Moses, by ordering the children to be killed: since had he not ordered, this would not have been: just as also that (Hebrew) drives Moses into exile, that there he may have the Vision, having become worthy. Thus also him who was sold for a slave, makes He to reign as king there, where he was thought to be a slave. Thus also does Christ in His death give proof of His power: thus also does He there reign as king where they sold Him. *"And gave him favor and wisdom,"* etc. [Acts 7:10] This was not only by way of honor, but that he should have confidence in his own power. *"And he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."* *"Now there came a dearth,"* etc. On account of famine— such preparations is he making— *"with threescore and fifteen souls,"* he says, *"Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem."* [Acts 7:11-16]. It shows, that they were not masters even to the extent of a burying-place. *"But when the time of the promise drew near, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose, which knew not Joseph"* (v. 17, 18). Observe, that it is not during the four hundred years that He multiplies them, but (only) when the end was about to draw near. And yet already four hundred years were passed, nay more, in Egypt. But this is the wonder of it. *"The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil-entreated our fathers, that they should cast out their young children, to the end they might not live."* [Acts 7:19] *"Dealt subtly:"* he hints at their not liking to exterminate them openly: *"that they should cast out their young children,"* it says. *"In which time Moses was born and was exceeding fair."* [Acts 7:20] This is the wonder, that he who is to be their champion, is born, neither after nor before, these things, but in the very midst of the storm ([θυμῶ]). *"And was nourished up in his father's house three months."* But

when man's help was despaired of, and they cast him forth, then did God's benefit shine forth conspicuous. *"And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son."* [Acts 7:21] Not a word of Temple, not a word of Sacrifice, while all these Providences are taking place. And he was nourished in a barbarian house. *"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."* [Acts 7:22] *"Was trained,"* both in discipline and in letters. *"And when he was full forty years old."* [Acts 7:23] Forty years he was there, and was not found out from his being circumcised. Observe, how, being in safety, they overlook their own interests, both he and Joseph, in order that they may save others: *"And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not."* [Acts 7:23-25]— See how up to this point he is not yet offensive to them; how they listened to him while he said all this. And *"his face,"* we read, *"was as the face of an angel"* [Acts 6:15].— *"For he supposed,"* etc. And yet it was by deeds that his championship was shown; what intelligence was there need of here? But still for all this *"they understood not. And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, you are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?"* [Acts 7:26-28] Do you mark with what mildness he addresses them? He who had shown his wrath in the case of the other, shows his gentleness in his own case. *"But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Will you kill me, as you did the Egyptian yesterday?"* Mark; the very words which they said to Christ: *"Who made You ruler and judge over us?"* So habitual a thing was

it for Jews to wrong (their benefactors) when in the act of receiving benefits! And again, mark the atrocious baseness: ([μιαρίαν] al. [μοχθηρίαν], Sav. marg.) *"As you did the Egyptian yesterday! Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begot two sons."* [Acts 7:29] But neither did flight extinguish the plan of Providence, as neither did death (i.e. the death of Christ).

"And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush." [Acts 7:30] Do you mark that it is not hindered by lapse of time? For when he was an exile, when a stranger, when he had now passed much time in a foreign land, so as to have two sons, when he no longer expected to return, then does the Angel appear to him. The Son of God he calls an Angel, as also he calls Him man. (Appears) in the desert, not in a temple. See how many miracles are taking place, and no word of Temple, no word of Sacrifice. And here also not simply in the desert, but in the bush. *"When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him."* [Acts 7:31] Lo! He was deemed worthy of the Voice also. *"I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."* (v. 32, 33.) Lo! how He shows that He is none other than *"the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"*— He, *"the Angel of the Great Counsel."* (Isaiah 9:6. LXX. *"Wonderful, Counsellor,"* E.V.) Here he shows what great loving-kindness God herein exhibits. *"Then Moses trembled, and dared not behold. Then said the Lord to him, Put off your shoes from your feet; for the place where you stand is holy ground."* Not a word of Temple, and the place is holy through the appearance and operation of Christ. Far more wonderful this than the place which is in the Holy of Holies: for there God is nowhere said to have appeared in this manner, nor Moses to have

thus trembled. And then the greatness of His tender care. *"I have seen, I have seen the affliction of My people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you into Egypt."* [Acts 7:34] See, how he shows, that both by kindnesses, and by chastisements, and by miracles, God was drawing them to Him: but they were still the same. That God is everywhere present, they learned.

Hearing these things, let us in our afflictions flee to Him. *"And their groaning,"* says He, *"I have heard:"* not simply, *"because of their calamities."* But if any should ask, Why then did He suffer them to be evil entreated there? Why, in the first place, to every just man his sufferings are the causes of his rewards. And in the next place, as to why He afflicted them: it was to show His power, that He can (do all), and not only so, but that He may also train them. Observe in fact; when they were in the desert, then they *"waxed fat, they grew thick, they spread out in breadth, they kicked"* [Deuteronomy 32:15]: and ever and always ease was an evil. Therefore also from the beginning He said to Adam: *"In the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread."* [Genesis 3:19] Also (it was) in order that having come out of much suffering into rest, they might give thanks to God. For affliction is a great good. For hear the Prophet saying, *"It is good for me, that You have humbled me."* [Psalm 119:71] But if to great and wonderful men affliction be a great (good), much more to us. And, if you will, let us examine into the nature of affliction as it is in itself. Let there be some person rejoicing exceedingly, and gay, and giving a loose to jollity: what more unseemly, what more senseless than this? Let there be one sorrowing and dejected: what more truly philosophic than this? For, *"It is better,"* we read, *"to go into the house of mourning, than into the house of laughter."* [Ecclesiastes 7:2] But, likely enough, you do not like the saying,

and want to evade it. Let us however see, what sort of man Adam was in Paradise, and what he was afterwards: what sort of man Cain was before, and what he was afterwards. The soul does not stand fast in its proper place, but, like as by a running tide, ([ῥ] [εὔματος], Edd. [πνεύματος], "*wind*") is raised and buoyed up by pleasure, having no steadfastness; facile in making professions, prompt at promising; the thoughts all in restless commotion: laughter ill-timed, causeless hilarity, idle clatter of unmeaning talk. And why speak of others? Let us take in hand some one of the saints, and let us see what he was while in pleasure, what again, when in distress. Shall we look at David himself? When he was in pleasure and rejoicing, from his many trophies, from his victory, from his crowns, from his luxurious living, from his confidence, see what sort of things he said and did: "*But I said in my prosperity,*" says he, "*I shall never be moved.*" [Psalm 30:6] But when he has come to be in affliction, hear what he says: "*And if He say to me, I have no mind for you; lo! Here am I, let Him do that which is pleasing in His sight.*" [2 Samuel 15:26] What can be more truly philosophic than these words? "*Whatsoever may be pleasing to God,*" says he, "*so let it be.*" And again he said to Saul: "*If the Lord stirs you up against me, may your sacrifice be acceptable.*" [1 Samuel 26:19] And then too, being in affliction, he spared even his enemies: but afterwards, not friends even, nor those who had done him no injury. Again, Jacob when he was in affliction, said: "*If the Lord will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on.*" [Genesis 28:20] As also the son of Noah did nothing of the kind erewhile; but when he was no longer afraid for his safety, you hear how wanton he became. [Genesis 9:22] Hezekiah too, when he was in affliction, see what things he did in order to his deliverance; he put on sackcloth, and such like; but when he was in pleasure, he fell through the haughtiness of his heart. [2 Kings 19:20] For, says the Scripture, "*When you have eaten, and drunk, and art filled, take*

heed to yourself." [Deuteronomy 6:11-12] For perilous, as on a precipice's brink, is the post of affluence. "*Take heed,*" says he, "*to yourself.*" When the Israelites were afflicted, they became all the more increased in number: but when He left them to themselves, then they all went to ruin. And why speak of examples from the ancients? In our own times, let us see, if you please, is it not the case, that when the most are in good case, they become puffed up, hostile to everybody, passionate, while the power is with them: but if it be taken away, they are gentle, lowly (and as) human beings, are brought to a consciousness of their own natural condition. Therefore the Scripture says, "*Pride has holden them unto the end: their iniquity shall go forth as from fatness.*" [Psalm 73:6, Septuagint]

Now these things I have spoken, that we should not make enjoyment every way our object. How then does Paul say, "*Rejoice always?*" He does not say simply, "*Rejoice,*" but he adds, "*in the Lord.*" [Philippians 4:4] This is the greatest joy, such as the Apostles rejoiced withal; the joy of which prisons, and scourges, and persecutions, and evil report, and all painful things, are the source, and the root, and the occasion; whence also it comes to a happy issue. But that of the world, on the contrary, begins with sweets and ends in bitters. Neither do I forbid to rejoice in the Lord, nay, I earnestly exhort to this. The Apostles were scourged, and they rejoiced: were bound, and they gave thanks: were stoned, and they preached. This is the joy I also would have: from nothing bodily has it its origin, but from spiritual things. It is not possible for him who joys after the fashion of the world, to rejoice also after a godly sort: for every one who joys after the world's fashion, has his joy in riches, in luxury, in honor, in power, in arrogance: but he who rejoices after the mind of God, has his joy in dishonor for God's sake, in poverty, in want, in fasting, in humbleness of mind. Do you see, how opposite are the grounds (of joy)? To go without joy

here, is to be without grief also: and to be without grief here, is to go without pleasure too. And in truth these are the things which produce real joy, since the others have the name only of joy, but they altogether consist of pain. What misery the arrogant man endures! How is he cut short ([διακόπτεται]) in the midst of his arrogance, bespeaking for himself numberless insults, much hatred, great enmity, exceeding spite, and many an evil eye! Whether it be that he is insulted by greater men, he grieves: or that he cannot make his stand against everybody, he is mortified. Whereas the humble man lives in much enjoyment: expecting honor from none, if he receive honor, he is pleased, but if not, he is not grieved. He takes it contentedly that he is honored; but above all, none dishonors him. Now not to seek honor, and yet to be honored— great must be the enjoyment of this. But in the other, it is just the reverse: he seeks honor, and is not honored. And the pleasure that the honor gives is not the same to him who seeks it, as it is to him who seeks it not. The one, however much he receives, thinks he has received nothing: the other, though you give him ever so little, takes it as though he had received all. Then again, he who lives in affluence and luxury has numberless affairs of business, and let his revenues flow in to him ever so easily, and, as it were, from full fountains, yet he fears the evils arising from luxurious living, and the uncertainty of the future: but the other is always in a state of security and enjoyment, having accustomed himself to scantiness of diet. For he does not so bemoan himself at not partaking of a sumptuous board, as he luxuriates in not fearing the uncertainty of the future. But the evils arising from luxurious living, how many and great they are, none can be ignorant: it is necessary, however, to mention them now. Twofold the war, in the body, and in the soul: twofold the storm: twofold the diseases; not only in this respect, but because they are both incurable, and bring with them great calamities. Not so, frugality: but here is twofold

health, twofold the benefits. *"Sleep of health,"* we read, *"is in moderate eating."* [Sirach 31:20] For everywhere, that which keeps measure is pleasant, that which is beyond measure, ceases to please. For say now: on a little spark put a great pile of fagots, and you will no longer see the fire shining, but much disagreeable smoke. On a very strong and large man lay a burden which exceeds his strength, and you will see him with his burden lying prostrate on the ground. Embark too large a freight in your vessel, and you have ensured a grievous shipwreck. Just so it is here. For just as in overladen ships, great is the tumult of the sailors, the pilot, the man at the prow, and the passengers, while they cast into the sea the things above deck, and things below; so here too, with their vomitings upwards, and their purgings downwards, they mar their constitutions, and destroy themselves. And what is the most shameful of all, the mouth is made to do the office of the nether parts, and that becomes the more shameful member. But if to the mouth the disgrace be such, think what must it be in the soul! For indeed there it is all mist, all storm, all darkness, great the uproar of the thoughts, at being so thronged and crushed, the soul itself crying out at the abuse done to it: all (the parts and faculties) complaining of one another, beseeching, entreating, that the filth may be discharged somewhere. And after it is flung out, still the turmoil is not at an end; but then comes fever and diseases. *"And how comes it,"* say you, *"that one may see these luxurious livers, in goodly plight, riding on horseback? What idle talk is this,"* say you, *"to tell us of diseases? It is I that am diseased, I that am racked, I that am disgusting, while I have nothing to eat."* Ah me! For one may well lament at such words. But the sufferers with the gout, the men that are carried on litters, the men that are swathed with bandages, from what class of people, I ask you, shall we see these? And indeed, were it not that they would deem it an insult, and think my words opprobrious, I would before now have

addressed them even by name. *"But there are some of them, who are in good health as well."* Because they give themselves not merely to luxurious living, but also to labors. Else show me a man, who does nothing whatever but fatten himself, free from pain as he lies there, without an anxious thought. For though a host of physicians without number came together, they would not be able to rescue him from his diseases. It is not in the nature of things. For I will hold you a medical discourse. Of the matters sent down into the belly, not all becomes nourishment; since even in the food itself, not all is nutritive, but part of it in the process of digestion passes into stool, part is turned into nourishment. If then in the process of digestion the operation is perfect, this is the result, and each finds its proper place; the wholesome and useful part betakes itself to its appropriate place, while that which is superfluous and useless, withdraws itself, and passes off. But if it be in too great quantity, then even the nutritive part of it becomes hurtful. And, to speak by way of example, in order that my meaning may be clearer to you: in wheat part is fine flour, part meal, part bran: now if the mill be able to grind (what is put in), it separates all these: but if you put in too much, all becomes mixed up together. Wine again, if it go through its proper process of formation, and under due influence of the seasons, then, whereas at first all is mixed together, anon part settles into lees, part rises into scum, part remains for enjoyment to those that use it, and this is the good part, and will not readily undergo any change. But what they call *"nourishment,"* is neither wine, nor lees, while all are mixed up together.— The same may be seen in the river, when its waters make a whirling flood. As at such time we see the fishes floating at top, dead, their eyes first blinded by the muddy slime: so is it with us. For when gormandizing, like a flood of rain, has drenched the inward parts, it puts all in a whirl, and makes that the faculties ([λογισμοὶ]), healthy till then and

living in a pure element, drift lifeless on the surface. Since then by all these examples we have shown how great the mischief is, let us cease to count these men happy for that, for which we ought to think them wretched, and to bemoan ourselves for that, for which we ought to count ourselves happy, and let us welcome sufficiency with a contented mind. Or do you not hear even what physicians tell you, that *"want is the mother of health?"* But what I say is, that want is mother, not of bodily health, but also of that of the soul. These things Paul also, that physician indeed, cries aloud; when he says, *"Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content."* [1 Timothy 6:8] Let us therefore do as he bids us, that so, being in sound health, we may perform the work that we ought to do, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 17 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts VII. 35

"This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? The same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel which appeared to him in the bush."

This is very suitable to the matter in hand. *"This Moses,"* he says. *"This,"* the man who had been in danger of losing his life; the man who had been set at naught by them; *"this"* the man whom they had declined: *"this"* same, God having raised up, sent unto them. *"Whom they refused, saying, Who made you a ruler?"* just as they themselves (the hearers) said, *"We have no king, but Cæsar."* [John 19:15] He here shows also, that what was then done, was done by Christ. *"The same did God send by the hand of the Angel,"* who said unto him, *"I am the God of Abraham."* *"This"* same Moses, he says—and observe how he points to his renown—*"this"* same Moses, he says, *"brought them out, after that he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like me"* (v. 36, 37): set at naught like me. Him, likewise, Herod wished to kill, and in Egypt He found preservation just as it was with the former, even when He was a babe, He was aimed at for destruction. *"This is he, that was in the Church in the wilderness with the Angel which spoke to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us."* [Acts 7:38] Again no mention of temple, none of sacrifice. *"With the*

Angel," it says, "he received the lively oracles to give unto the fathers." It shows, that he not only wrought miracles, but also gave a law, as Christ did. Just as Christ first works miracles, and then legislates: so did Moses. But they did not hear him, keeping their disobedience, even after the miracles: "To whom," he says, "our fathers would not obey:" [Acts 7:39] after the wonders done in those forty years. And not only so, but just the contrary: "but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt. Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us; for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him. And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the Prophets, O you house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which you made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon." (v. 40, 43.) The expression, "gave them up," means, He suffered. "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion he had seen." [Acts 7:44] Even when there was a Tabernacle, yet there were no sacrifices. "Did ye offer unto Me slain beasts and sacrifices?" [Amos 5:25] There was "the tabernacle of witness," and yet it profited them nothing, but they were consumed. But neither before, nor afterwards, did the miracles profit them anything. "Which also, our fathers that came after brought in." Do you see, how the holy place is there wherever God may be? For to this end also he says, "in the wilderness," to compare place with place. Then the benefit (conferred upon them): And our fathers that came after brought it in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the

face of our fathers, unto the days of David; who found favor before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. (v. 45, 46.) David *"desired to find favor:"* and he built not, he, the wonderful, the great; but the castaway, Solomon. *"But Solomon,"* it says, *"built Him an house. Howbeit the Most High dwells not in (places) made with hands."* [Acts 7:47-50] This was shown indeed already by what had been before said: but it is shown also by the voice of a prophet; *"What house will you build for Me? Says the Lord God. As says the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will you build for me? Says the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?"* [Isaiah 66:1-2]

Marvel not, he says, if they on whom Christ confers His benefits refuse His kingdom, seeing in the case of Moses it was just the same. (Recapitulation). *"He brought them out;"* and rescued them not in a general way, but also while they were in the wilderness. *"Wonders and signs,"* etc. [Acts 7:35-50] Do you mark that they themselves (Stephen's hearers) are concerned in those old miracles also? *"This is that Moses:"* [Acts 7:37] he, that conversed with God; he, that had been saved out of situations so strange and wonderful; he, that wrought so great works, and had so great power. [*"Which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet,"* etc.] He shows, that the prophecy must by all means be fulfilled, and that Moses is not opposed to Him. *"This is he that was in the Church in the wilderness, and, that said unto the children of Israel."* [Acts 7:38] Do you mark that thence comes the root, and that *"salvation is from the Jews?"* [John 4:22] *"With the Angel,"* it says, *"which spoke unto him."* [Romans 11:16] Lo, again he affirms that it was He (Christ) that gave the Law, seeing Moses was with *"Him"* in the Church in the wilderness. And here he puts them in mind of a great marvel, of the things done in the Mount: *"Who received living oracles*

to give unto us." On all occasions Moses is wonderful, and (so) when need was to legislate. What means the expression, "*Living oracles*" ([λόγια])? Those, whereof the end was shown by words ([διὰ λόγων]): in other words, he means the prophecies. Then follows the charge, in the first instance, against the patriarchs [after], the "*signs and wonders*," after the receiving of the "*lively oracles: To whom*," he says, "*our fathers would not obey*." [Acts 7:39] But concerning those, Ezekiel says that they are not "*living*;" as when he says, "*And I gave you statutes that are not good*." [Ezekiel 20:25] It is with reference to those that he says, "*Living. But thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back to Egypt*"— the place where they groaned, where they cried, whence they called upon God. "*And said unto Aaron, Make us gods which shall go before us*." [Acts 7:40] O the folly! "*Make*," say they; "*that they may go before us*." Whither? "*Into Egypt*." See how hard they were to tear away from the customs of Egypt! What do you say? What, not wait for him that brought you out, but flee the benefit, and deny the Benefactor? And mark how insulting they are: "*For as for this Moses*," they say:— "*which brought us out of the land of Egypt*" nowhere the name of God: instead of that, they ascribed all to Moses. Where they ought to give thanks (to God), they bring Moses forward: where it was, to do as the Law bade them, they no longer make account of Moses. "*We know not what has become of him*." And yet he told them that he was going up to receive the Law: and they had not patience to wait forty days. "*Make us gods*"— they did not say, "*a God*."— And yet one may well wonder at this, that they do not even know.— "*And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifices unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands*" [Acts 7:41]: for which they ought to have hid their faces. What wonder that you know not Christ, seeing ye knew not Moses, and God Who was manifested by such wonders? But they not only knew Him not: they also insulted in

another way, by their idol making. *"Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven"* [Acts 7:42] Hence these same *"customs"* date their origin, hence the sacrifices: they were themselves the first that made sacrifices to their idols! For that is why it is marked, *"They made a calf in Horeb, and offered sacrifices to the idol:"* seeing that, before this the name of sacrifice is nowhere mentioned, but only lively ordinances, and *"lively oracles. And rejoiced"*— that is the reason for the feasts. [Exodus 32:5-6] *"As it is written in the Book of the Prophets"*— and observe, he does not cite the text without a purpose, but shows by it that there is no need of sacrifices; saying: *"Did ye offer slain beasts and sacrifice to Me?"*— He lays an emphasis on this word (to Me?). You cannot say that it was from sacrificing to Me, that you proceeded to sacrifice to them:— *"by the space of forty years:"* and this too, *"in the wilderness,"* where He had most signally shown Himself their Protector. *"Yea, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan: images which you made to worship them."* The cause of sacrifices! *"And I will carry you away beyond Babylon."* [Acts 7:43] Even the captivity, an impeachment of their wickedness! *"But a Tabernacle,"* say you, *"there was (the Tabernacle) 'of Witness.'"* [Acts 7:44] (Yes,) this is why it was: that they should have God for Witness: this was all. *"According to the fashion,"* it says, *"that was shown you on the mount:"* so that on the mount was the Original. And this Tabernacle, moreover, *"in the wilderness,"* was carried about, and not locally fixed. And he calls it, *"Tabernacle of witness:"* i.e. (for witness) of the miracles, of the statutes. This is the reason why both it and those (the fathers) had no Temple. *"As He had appointed, that spoke unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen."* Again, it was none other than He (Christ) that gave the fashion itself. *"Until the days of David"* [Acts 7:45]: and there was no temple! And yet the Gentiles also had

been driven out: for that is why he mentions this: *"Whom God drove out,"* he says, *"before the face of our fathers. Whom He drove out,"* he says: and even then, no Temple! And so many wonders, and no mention of a Temple! So that, although first there is a Tabernacle, yet nowhere a Temple. *"Until the days of David,"* he says: even David, and no Temple! *"And he sought to find favor before God"* [Acts 7:46]: and built not:— so far was the Temple from being a great matter! *"But Solomon built Him an house."* [Acts 7:47] They thought Solomon was great: but that he was not better than his father, nay not even equal to him, is manifest. *"Howbeit the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands; as says the prophet, Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool."* (v. 48, 49.) Nay, not even these are worthy of God, forasmuch as they are made, seeing they are creatures, the works of His hand. See how he leads them on little by little (showing) that not even these are to be mentioned. And again the prophecy says openly, *"What house will you build Me?"* etc. [Acts 7:50]

What is the reason that at this point he speaks in the tone of invective ([καταφορικῶς])? Great was his boldness of speech, when at the point to die: for in fact I think he knew that this was the case. *"You stiffnecked,"* he says, *"and uncircumcised in heart and ears."* This also is from the prophets: nothing is of himself. *"You do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."* [Acts 7:51] When it was not His will that sacrifices should be, you sacrifice: when it is His will, then again ye do not sacrifice: when He would not give you commandments, you drew them to you: when you got them, you neglected them. Again, when the Temple stood, you worshipped idols: when it is His will to be worshipped without a Temple, you do the opposite. Observe, he says not, *"You resist God,"* but, *"the Spirit:"* so far was he from knowing any difference between Them. And, what is greater: *"As your fathers did,"* he says, *"so do ye."* Thus also did

Christ (reproach them), forasmuch as they were always boasting much of their fathers. *"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One:"* he still says, *"the Just One,"* wishing to check them: *"of Whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers"*— two charges he lays against them — *"who have received the Law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it."* [Acts 7:52] How, *"By the disposition of Angels?"* Some say (The Law), disposed by Angels; or, put into his hand by the Angel Who appeared to him in the bush; for was He man? No wonder that He who wrought those works, should also have wrought these. *"You slew them who preached of Him,"* much more Himself. He shows them disobedient both to God, and to Angels, and the Prophets, and the Spirit, and to all: as also Scripture says elsewhere: *"Lord, they have slain Your Prophets, and thrown down Your altars."* [1 Kings 19:10] They, then, stand up for the Law, and say, *"He blasphemes against Moses:"* he shows, therefore, that it is they who blaspheme, and that (their blasphemy is not only against Moses, but) against God; shows that *"they"* from the very beginning have been doing this: that *"they"* have themselves destroyed their *"customs,"* that there is no need of these: that while accusing him, and saying that he opposed Moses, they themselves were opposing the Spirit: and not merely opposing, but with murder added to it: and that they had their enmity all along from the very beginning. Do you see, that he shows them to be acting in opposition both to Moses and to all others, and not keeping the Law? And yet Moses had said, A Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you: and the rest also told of this (Christ) that He would come: and the prophet again said, *"What house will you build Me?"* and again, *"Did ye offer to Me slain beasts and sacrifices"* those *"forty years?"* [Deuteronomy 18:18]

Such is the boldness of speech of a man bearing the Cross. Let us then also imitate this: though it be not a time of war, yet it is always the time for boldness of speech. For, *"I spoke,"* says one, *"in Your testimonies before kings, and was not ashamed."* [Psalm 119:46] If we chance to be among heathens, let us thus stop their mouths. without wrath, without harshness. (Comp. Hom. in 1 Cor. iv. §6; xxxiii. §4, 5; Col. xi. §2.) For if we do it with wrath, it no longer seems to be the boldness (of one who is confident of his cause,) but passion: but if with gentleness, this is boldness indeed. For in one and the same thing success and failure cannot possibly go together. The boldness is a success: the anger is a failure. Therefore, if we are to have boldness, we must be clean from wrath that none may impute our words to that. No matter how just your words may be, when you speak with anger, you ruin all: no matter how boldly you speak, how fairly reprove, or what not. See this man, how free from passion as he discourses to them! For he did not abuse them: he did but remind them of the words of the Prophets. For, to show you that it was not anger, at the very moment he was suffering evil at their hands, he prayed, saying, *"Lay not to their charge this sin."* So far was he from speaking these words in anger; no, he spoke in grief and sorrow for their sakes. As indeed this is why it speaks of his appearance, that *"they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel,"* on purpose that they might believe. Let us then be clean from wrath. The Holy Spirit dwells not where wrath is: cursed is the wrathful. It cannot be that anything wholesome should approach, where wrath goes forth. For as in a storm at sea, great is the tumult, loud the clamor, and then would be no time for lessons of wisdom ([φιλοσοφεῖν]): so neither in wrath. If the soul is to be in a condition either to say, or to be disciplined to, anything of philosophy, it must first be in the haven. Do you see not how, when we wish to converse on matters of serious import, we look out for places free from noise, where

all is stillness, all calm, that we may not be put out and discomposed? But if noise from without discomposes, much more disturbance from within.

Whether one pray, to no purpose does he pray "*with wrath and disputings*:" [1 Timothy 2:8] whether he speak, he will only make himself ridiculous: whether he hold his peace, so again it will be even then: whether he eat, he is hurt even then: whether he drink, or whether he drink not; whether he sit, or stand, or walk; whether he sleep: for even in their dreams such fancies haunt them. For what is there in such men that is not disagreeable? Eyes unsightly, mouth distorted, limbs agitated and swollen, tongue foul and sparing no man, mind distraught, gestures uncomely: much to disgust. Mark the eyes of demoniacs, and those of drunkards and madmen; in what do they differ from each other? Is not the whole madness? For what though it be but for the moment? The madman too is possessed for the moment: but what is worse than this? And they are not ashamed at that excuse; "*I knew not (says one) what I said.*" And how came it that thou did not know this, thou the rational man, you that hast the gift of reason, on purpose that you may not act the part of the creatures without reason, just like a wild horse, hurried away by rage and passion? In truth, the very excuse is criminal. For you ought to have known what you said. "*It was the passion,*" say you, "*that spoke the words, not I.*" How should it be that? For passion has no power, except it get it from you. You might as well say, "*It was my hand that inflicted the wounds, not I.*" What occasion, think you, most needs wrath? Would you not say, war and battle? But even then, if anything is done with wrath, the whole is spoiled and undone. For of all men, those who fight had best not be enraged: of all men, those had best not be enraged, who want to hurt ([τοὺς ὑβρίζοντας]). And how is it possible to fight then? You will ask. With reason, with self-command ([ἐ] [πικεῖ& 139law, and order, and times? For wrath is nothing but an irrational

impulse: and an irrational creature cannot possibly perform anything rational. For instance, the man here spoke such words, and did it without passion. And Elias said, How long will you halt on both your knees? [1 Kings 18:21] and spoke it not in passion. And Phinees slew, and did it without passion. For passion suffers not a man to see, but, just as in a night-battle, it leads him, with eyes blindfolded and ears stopped up, where it will. Then let us rid ourselves of this demon, at its first beginning let us quell it, let us put the sign of the Cross on our breast, as it were a curb. Wrath is a shameless dog: but let it learn to hear the law. If there be in a sheep-fold a dog so savage as not to obey the command of the shepherd, nor to know his voice, all is lost and ruined. He is kept along with the sheep: but if he makes a meal on the sheep, he is useless, and is put to death. If he has learned to obey you, feed your dog: he is useful when it is against the wolves, against robbers, and against the captain of the robbers that he barks, not against the sheep, not against friends. If he does not obey he ruins all: if he learns not to mind you, he destroys all. The mildness in you let not wrath consume, but let it guard it, and feed it up. And it will guard it, that it may feed in much security, if it destroy wicked and evil thoughts, if it chase away the devil from every side. So is gentleness preserved, when evil works are nowhere admitted: so we become worthy of respect, when we learn not to be shameless. For nothing renders a man so shameless, as an evil conscience. Why are harlots without shame? Why are virgins shamefaced? Is it not from their sin that the former, from their chastity that the latter, are such? For nothing makes a person so shameless, as sin. *"And yet on the contrary,"* say you, *"it puts to shame."* Yes; him who condemns himself: but him that is past blushing, it renders even more reckless: for desperation makes daring. For *"the wicked,"* says the Scripture, *"when he has come into*

the depths of evils, despises." [Proverbs 18:3] But he that is shameless, will also be reckless, and he that is reckless, will be daring.

See in what way gentleness is destroyed, when evil thoughts gnaw at it. This is why there is such a dog, barking mightily: we have also sling and stone (ye know what I mean): we have also spear and enclosure and cattle-fold: let us guard our thoughts unhurt. If the dog be gentle ([σαίνῃ]) with the sheep, but savage against those without, and keep vigilant watch, this is the excellence of a dog: and, be he ever so famished, not to devour the sheep; be he ever so full, not to spare the wolves. Such too is anger meant to be: however provoked, not to forsake gentleness; however at quiet, to be on the alert against evil thoughts: to acknowledge the friend, and not for any beating forsake him, and for all his caressing, to fly at the intruder. The devil uses caressing full oft: let the dog know at sight that he is an intruder. So also let us caress ([σαίνωμεν]) Virtue, though she put us to pain, and show our aversion to Vice, though she give us pleasure. Let us not be worse than the dogs, which, even when whipped and throttled, do not desert their master: but if the stranger also feed them, even so they do hurt. There are times when anger is useful; but this is when it barks against strangers. What means it, "*Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause?*" [Matthew 5:22] It means, Stand not up in your own quarrel, neither avenge yourself: if you see another suffering deadly wrong, stretch out your hand to help him. This is no longer passion, when you are clear of all feeling for yourself alone. David had gotten Saul into his power, and was not moved by passion, did not thrust the spear into him, the enemy he had in his power; but took his revenge upon the Devil. [1 Samuel 26:7] Moses, when he saw a stranger doing an injury, even slew him [Exodus 2:22]: but when one of his own people, he did not so: them that were brethren he would have reconciled; the others not so. That "*most meek*" [Numbers 12:3] Moses, as Scripture

witnesses of him, see how he was roused! But not so, we: on the contrary, where we ought to show meekness, no wild beast so fierce as we: but where we ought to be roused, none so dull and sluggish. (Hom. vi. *de laud. Pauli, ad fin.*) On no occasion do we use our faculties to the purpose they were meant for: and therefore it is that our life is spent to no purpose. For even in the case of implements; if one use them, one instead of other, all is spoilt: if one take his sword, and then, where he should use it and cut with it, uses only his hand, he does no good: again, where he should use his hand, by taking the sword in hand he spoils all. In like manner also the physician, if where he ought to cut, he cuts not, and where he ought not, he does cut, mars all. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us use the thing ([τὸ πρᾶγματι]) at its proper time. The proper time for anger is never, where we move in our own quarrel: but if it is our duty to correct others, then is the time to use it, that we may by force deliver others. (Hom. in Matt. xvi. §7.) So shall we both be like God, always keeping a spirit free from wrath, and shall attain unto the good things that are to come, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, dominion, and honor, now and evermore, world without end. Amen.

Homily 18 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts VII. 54

When they heard these things, they were cut to *"the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth."*

See, once more, the wrong-doers in trouble. Just as the Jews are perplexed, saying, *"What are we to do with these men?"* so these also are *"cut to the heart."* [Acts 4:16] And yet it was he that had good right to be incensed, who, having done no wrong, was treated like a criminal, and was spitefully calumniated. But the calumniators had the worst of it in the end. So true is that saying, which I am ever repeating, *"Ill to do, is ill to fare."* And yet he (in his charges against them) resorted to no calumny, but proved (what he said). So sure are we, when we are shamefully borne down in a matter wherein we have a clear conscience, to be none the worse for it.—*"If they desired,"* say you, *"to kill him, how was it that they did not take occasion, out of what he said, that they might kill him?"* They would fain have a fair-seeming plea to put upon their outrage. *"Well then, was not the insulting them a fair plea?"* It was not his doing, if they were insulted: it was the Prophet's accusation of them. And besides, they did not wish it to look as if they killed him because of what he had said against them—just as they acted in the case of Christ; no, but for impiety: now this word of his was the expression of piety. Wherefore, as they attempted, besides killing him, to hurt his reputation also, *"they were cut to the heart."* For they were afraid lest he should on the contrary become an object of even greater reverence. Therefore, just what they did in Christ's case, the same they do

here also. For as He said, *"You shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of God"* [Matthew 26:64], and they, calling it blasphemy, *"ran upon Him;"* just so was it here. There, they *"rent their garments;"* here, they *"stopped their ears. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him."* [Acts 7:55-58] And yet, if he lied, they ought to have thought him beside himself, and to have let him go.— But he wished to bring them over, *"and said, Behold,"* etc., for, since he had spoken of Christ's death, and had said nothing of His resurrection, he would fain add this doctrine also. *"Standing at the right hand of God."* And in this manner He appeared to him: that, were it but so, the Jews might receive Him: for since the (idea of His) sitting (at the right hand of God) was offensive to them, for the present he brings forward only what relates to His Resurrection. This is the reason also why his face was glorified. For God, being merciful, desired to make their machinations the means of recalling them unto Himself. And see, how many signs are wrought! *"And cast him out of the city, and stoned him."* Here again, *"without the city,"* and even in death, Confession and Preaching. [Hebrews 13:21] *"And the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."* [Acts 7:59] This is meant to show them that he is not perishing, and to teach them. *"And he knelt down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."* [Acts 7:60] To clear himself, and show that neither were his former words prompted by passion, he says, *"Lord" "lay not this sin to their charge"*: wishing also even in this way to win them

over. For to show that he forgave their wrath and rage in murdering him, and that his own soul was free from all passion, was the way to make his saying to be favorably received.

"And Saul was consenting unto his death." Hereupon arises a persecution, and it becomes a great one. *"And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem. And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles."* [Acts 8:1] Mark how once more God permits temptations to arise; mark, and well observe, how the events are ordered by Divine Providence. They were admired because of the signs: being scourged, they were none the worse for it: (some) were ordained in the matter of the widows : the word increased: once more, God permits a great hindrance to arise. And a persecution of no ordinary kind [*"and they were all scattered,"* etc.]; for they feared their enemies, now become more daring: and at the same time it is shown that they were but men, these that were afraid, that fled. For, that you may not say after these things that by grace alone they effected (what they did), they were also persecuted, and themselves became more timorous, while their adversaries were more daring. *"And were all scattered abroad,"* it says, *"except the Apostles."* But this was divinely ordered, so that they should no longer all sit there in Jerusalem. *"And devout men,"* it says, *"carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."* [Acts 8:2] If they were *"devout,"* why did they *"make great lamentation over him?"* They were not yet perfect. The man was gracious and amiable: this also shows that they were men— not their fear alone, but their grief and lamentation. Who would not have wept to see that mild, that lamb-like person stoned, and lying dead? Fit eulogy to be spoken over his grave has the Evangelist recorded, in this one speech, *"Lay*

not this sin to their charge."— *"And made,"* he says, *"great lamentation over him."*— But let us look over again what has been said.

He mentions the cause of his (angelic) appearance [Recapitulation, 7:54; 8:2]; *"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."* And when he said, *"I see the heavens opened, they stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord."* (v. 56, 57.) And yet in what respect are these things deserving of accusation? *"Upon him,"* the man who has wrought such miracles, the man who has prevailed over all in speech, the man who can hold such discourse! As if they had got the very thing they wanted, they straightway give full scope to their rage. *"And the witnesses,"* he says, *"laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul."* [Acts 7:58] Observe how particularly he relates what concerns Paul, to show you that the Power which wrought in him was of God. But after all these things, not only did he not believe, but also aimed at Him with a thousand hands: for this is why it says, *"And Saul was consenting unto his death."*— And this blessed man does not simply pray, but does it with earnestness: *"having kneeled down."* Mark his divine death! So long only the Lord permitted the soul to remain in him. *"And having said this, he fell asleep."* [Acts 7:60]— And they were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria. [Acts 8:1] And now without scruple they had intercourse with Samaria, whereas it had been said to them, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles" "and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."* [Matthew 10:5] *"Except the Apostles,"* it says: they, in this way also, wishing to win the Jews—but not to leave the city—and to be the means of inspiring others with boldness.

"As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison." [Acts 8:3] Great

was his frenzy: that he was alone, that he even entered into houses: for indeed he was ready to give his life for the Law. *"Haling,"* it says, *"men and women:"* mark both the confidence, and the violence, and the frenzy. All that fell into his hands, he put to all manner of ill-treatment: for in consequence of the recent murder, he was become more daring. *"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria."* [Acts 8:4-9] Observe another trial, this affair of Simon. *"Giving out,"* it says, *"that he was himself some great one. To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they had come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 8:10-15] And (yet) great signs had been done: how then had they not received the Spirit? They had received the Spirit, namely, of remission of sins: but the Spirit of miracles they had not received. *"For as yet He was fallen upon*

none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (v. 16, 17.) For, to show that this was the case, and that it was the Spirit of miracles they had not received, observe how, having seen the result, Simon came and asked for this. *"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost."* (v. 18, 19.)

"The persecution," say you, *"gained strength."* True, but at that very time to men possessed before (by a hostile power) it brought deliverance. For it planted the miracles like a stronghold, in the heart of the enemy's country.— Not even the death of Stephen quenched their rage, nay, increased it rather: it scattered wide the teachers, so that the greater became the discipleship.— *"And there was joy."* And yet there had been *"great lamentation:"* true; but mark again the good— *"Of a long time"* was the malady, but this man brought them deliverance.— And how came he to baptize Simon also? Just as Christ chose Judas.— And *"beholding the signs"* which he did, forasmuch as the others did not receive the (power of working) signs, he dared not ask for it.— How was it then that they did not strike him dead, as they did Ananias and Sapphira? Because even in the old times, he that gathered sticks (on the sabbath-day) was put to death as a warning to others [Numbers 15:32] and in no other instance did any suffer the same fate. So too on the present occasion, *"Peter said to him, Your money perish, because you have imagined that the gift of God is to be purchased with money."*— [Acts 8:20] Why had not these received the Holy Ghost, when baptized? Either because Philip kept this honor for the Apostles; or, because he had not this gift (to impart); or, he was one of the Seven: which is rather to be said. Whence, I take it, this Philip was one of

the Apostles. But observe; those went not forth: it was Providentially ordered that these should go forth and those be lacking, because of the Holy Ghost: for they had received power to work miracles, but not also to impart the Spirit to others: this was the prerogative of the Apostles. And observe (how they sent) the chief ones: not any others, but Peter [and John]. *"And when Simon,"* it says, *"saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given."* He would not have said, *"And having seen,"* unless there had been some sensible manifestation. *"Then laid they their hands on them,"* etc. Just as Paul also did, when they spoke with tongues. [Acts 19:6] Observe the execrable conduct of Simon. *"He offered money,"* with what object? And yet he did not see Peter doing this for money. And it was not of ignorance that he acted thus; it was because he would tempt them, because he wished to get matter of accusation against them. And therefore also Peter says, You have no part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God *"because you have thought,"* etc. [Acts 8:21] Once more he brings to light what was in the thoughts, because Simon thought to escape detection. *"Repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I perceive the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me."* [Acts 8:22-24] Even this he did only formally, as words of course, when he ought to have wept and mourned as a penitent. *"If perchance it may be forgiven you."* Not as though it would not have been pardoned, had he wept, but this is the manner of the Prophet also, to denounce absolutely, ([ἀ] [παγορεύειν]) and not to say, *"Howbeit, if you do this, your sin shall be forgiven,"* but that in any wise the punishment shall take effect.

(a) *"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere, preaching the word."* But I would have you admire how even in a season of

calamity they neglected not the preaching. *"Hearing and seeing the miracles which he did."* [Recapitulation, Acts 8:4-6] Just as in the case of Moses by contrast (with the magicians) the miracles were evident miracles, so here also. There was magic, and so these signs were manifest. (b) *"For unclean spirits came out of many that were possessed with them"* [Acts 8:7]; for this was a manifest miracle:— not as the magicians did: for the other (Simon), it is likely, bound (men with spells)—*"and many,"* it says, *"that were palsied and lame were healed."* There was no deceit here: for it needed but that they should walk and work. *"And to him they all gave heed, saying, This (man) is the Power of God."* [Acts 8:10] And that was fulfilled which was spoken by Christ, *"There shall come false Christs and false Prophets in My name."*— [Matthew 24:24] *"And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries."* [Acts 8:11] (a) And yet there ought to have been not one demoniac there, seeing that of a long time he had been bewitching them with sorceries: but if there were many demoniacs, many palsied, these pretences were not truth. But Philip here by his word also won them over, discoursing concerning the kingdom of Christ. [Acts 8:12] *"And Simon,"* it says, being baptized, continued with Philip [Acts 8:13]: not for faith's sake, but in order that he might become such (as he). (b) But why did they not correct him instantly? They were content with his condemning himself. For this too belonged to their work of teaching ([τῆς διδασκαλίας]). But when he had not power to resist, he plays the hypocrite, just as did the magicians, who said, *"This is the finger of God."* And indeed that he might not be driven away again, therefore he *"continued with Philip,"* and did not part from him. *"And when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem,"* etc. (v. 13, 14.) See how many things are brought about by God's Providence through the death of Stephen! (a) *"But they,"* it says, *"having come down, prayed for them that they might*

receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet He was fallen upon none of them. Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." [Acts 8:15-17] Do you see that it was not to be done in any ordinary manner, but it needed great power to give the Holy Ghost? For it is not all one, to obtain remission of sins, and to receive such a power. (b) By degrees it is, that those receive the gift. It was a twofold sign: both the giving to those, and the not giving to this man. Whereas then this man ought, on the contrary, to have asked to receive the Holy Ghost, he, because he cared not for this, asks power to give It to others. And yet those received not this power to give: but this man wished to be more illustrious than Philip, he being among the disciples! (a) *"He offered them money."* (v. 18, 19.) What? Had he seen the others doing this? Had he seen Philip? Did he imagine they did not know with what mind he came to them? (b) *"Your money with you to perdition"* [Acts 8:20]: since you have not used it as it ought to be used. These are not words of imprecation, but of chastisement. *"To you,"* he says, be it (to you): being such. As if one should say, Let it perish along with your purpose. Have you so mean conceptions of the gift of God, that you have imagined it to be altogether a thing of man? It is not this. (a) Wherefore also Peter well calls the affair a gift: *"You have thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."* Do you observe how on all occasions they are clean from money? *"For your heart is not right in the sight of God."* [Acts 8:21] Do you see how he does all of malice? To be simple, however, was the thing needed. (b) For had it been done with simplicity, he would have even welcomed his willing mind. Do you see that to have mean conceptions of great things is to sin doubly? Accordingly, two things he bids him: *"Repent and pray, if haply the thought of your heart may be forgiven you."* [Acts 8:22] Do you see it was a wicked thought he had entertained? Therefore he says, *"If haply it may be forgiven you:"* because he knew him

to be incorrigible. (a) *"For I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."* [Acts 8:23] Words of exceeding wrath! But otherwise he did not punish him: that faith may not thereafter be of compulsion; that the matter may not seem to be carried ruthlessly; that he may introduce the subject of repentance: or also, because it suffices for correction to have convicted him, to have told him what was in his heart, to have brought him to confess himself overcome ([ὅ] [τι ἐ& 128confession that he has done wrong. Observe him, what a miscreant he is; when he was convicted, then he believed: when again he was convicted, then he became humble. *"Seeing his miracles,"* [*"he was amazed,"* and came over.] He thought to be able to escape detection: he thought the thing was an art: but when he had not power to defeat (ἐ) [λεῖν]) the Apostles, * * *. (b) Again, he fears the multitude, and is afraid to deny it; and yet he might have said, I did not know: I did it in simplicity: but he was struck with dismay first by the former circumstance, that he was overcome ([ὅ] [τι ἐ& 128wayoff, to Rome, thinking the Apostle would not soon come there.

And they, when they had testified, and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem. [Acts 8:25] *"Testified,"* probably because of him (Simon), that they may not be deceived; that thenceforth they may be safe. *"Having preached,"* it says, *"the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem."* Why do they go there again where was the tyranny of the bad, where were those most bent upon killing them? Just as generals do in wars, they occupy that part of the scene of war which is most distressed. *"And preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans."* Observe them again, how they do not ([προηγούμενως]) of set purpose come to Samaria, but driven by stress of persecution, just as it was in the case of Christ; and how when the Apostles go there, it is to men now believers, no longer Samaritans. *"But when the Apostles,"* it says, *"which were at Jerusalem*

heard this, they sent unto them Peter and John. Sent" them, again, to rid them of magic. And besides, (the Lord) had given them a pattern at the time when the Samaritans believed. "And in many villages," it says, "of the Samaritans, they preached the Gospel." [John 4:39] Observe how actively employed even their journeys were, how they do nothing without a purpose.

Such travels should we also make. And why do I speak of travels? Many possess villages and lands, and give themselves no concern, nor make any account of this. That baths may be provided, their revenues increased, courts and buildings erected, for this they take plenty of pains: but for the husbandry of souls, not so. When you see thorns— answer me— you cut them up, you burn, you utterly destroy them, to rid your land of the hurt thence arising. And do you see the laborers themselves overrun with thorns, and dost not cut them up, and are you not afraid of the Owner Who shall call you to account? For ought not each individual believer to build a Church, to get a Teacher, to cooperate ([συνάconvert (πεῖσαι)] him. By the means which are in your power, convert him; by kindness, by good offices, by gentleness, by courting (κολακεί& 139Churches: nay, sooner everything than this! Wherefore I beseech and implore, as a favor I entreat, yea as a law I lay it down, that there be no estate to be seen destitute of a Church. Tell not me, There is one hard by; there is one in the neighboring properties; the expense is great, the income not great. If you have anything to expend upon the poor, expend it there: better there than here. Maintain a Teacher, maintain a Deacon, and a sacerdotal body complete. As by a bride, whether a wife whom you take, or a daughter whom you give in marriage, so act by the Church: give her a dowry. So shall your estate be filled with blessing. For what shall not be there of all that is good? Is it a small thing, tell me, that your wine-press should be blessed; a small thing, tell me, that of your fruits God is the first to taste, and that the first fruits are there (with Him)?

And then even for the peace of the laboring people this is profitable. Then as one whom they must respect, there will be the presbyter among them and this will contribute to the security of the estate. There will be constant prayers there through you (*infra*, note 1, p. 119) hymns and Communions through you; the Oblation on each Lord's Day. For only consider what a praise it will be, that, whereas others have built splendid tombs, to have it said hereafter: "*Such a one built this,*" you have reared Churches! Bethink you that even until the coming of Christ you shall have your reward, who hast reared up the altars of God.

Suppose an Emperor had ordered you to build an house that he might lodge there, would you not have done everything to please him? And here now it is palace of Christ, the Church, the Church which you build. Look not at the cost, but calculate the profit. Your people yonder cultivate your field: cultivate thou their souls: they bring to you your fruits, raise thou them to heaven. He that makes the beginning is the cause of all the rest: and you will be the cause that the people are brought under Christian teaching ([κατηχουμένων]) both there, and in the neighboring estates. Your baths do but make the peasants less hardy, your taverns give them a taste for luxury, and yet you provide these for credit's sake. Your markets and fairs, ([πανηγύρεις]) on the other hand, promote covetousness. But think now what a thing it would be to see a presbyter, the moving picture of Abraham, gray-headed, girded up, digging and working with his own hands? What more pleasant than such a field! Their virtue thrives. No intemperance there, nay, it is driven away: no drunkenness and wantonness, nay, it is cast out: no vanity, nay, it is extinguished. All benevolent tempers shine out the brighter through the simplicity of manners. How pleasant to go forth and enter into the House of God, and to know that one built it himself: to fling himself on his back in his litter, and after the bodily benefit of his pleasant

airing, be present both at the evening and the morning hymns, have the priest as a guest at his table, in associating with him enjoy his benediction, see others also coming there! This is a wall for his field, this its security. This is the field of which it is said, *"The smell of a full field which the Lord has blessed."* [Genesis 27:27] If, even without this, the country is pleasant, because it is so quiet, so free from distraction of business, what will it not be when this is added to it? The country with a Church is like the Paradise of God. No clamor there, no turmoil, no enemies at variance, no heresies: there you shall see all friends, holding the same doctrines in common. The very quiet shall lead you to higher views, and receiving you thus prepared by philosophy, the presbyter shall give you an excellent cure. For here, whatever we may speak, the noise of the market drives it all out: but there, what you shall hear, you will keep fixed in your mind. You will be quite another man in the country through him: and moreover to the people there he will be director, he will watch over them both by his presence and by his influence in forming their manners. And what, I ask, would be the cost? Make for a beginning a small house ([ἐ] [ν τάξει ναοῦ]) to serve as temple. Your successor will build a porch, his successor will make other additions, and the whole shall be put to your account. You give little, and receive the reward for the whole. At any rate, make a beginning: lay a foundation. Exhort one another, vie one with another in this matter. But now, where there is straw and grain and such like to be stored, you make no difficulty of building: but for a place where the fruits of souls may be gathered in, we bestow not a thought; and the people are forced to go miles and miles, and to make long journeys, that they may get to Church! Think, how good it is, when with all quietness the priest presents himself in the Church, that he may draw near unto God, and say prayers for the village, day by day, and for its owner! Say, is it a small matter, that even in the Holy Oblations

evermore your name is included in the prayers, and that for the village day by day prayers are made unto God?— How greatly this profits you for all else! It chanceth that certain (great) persons dwell in the neighborhood, and have overseers: now to you, being poor, one of them will not deign even to pay a visit: but the presbyter, it is likely, he will invite, and make him sit at his table. How much good results from this! The village will in the first place be free from all evil suspicion. None will charge it with murder, with theft: none will suspect anything of the kind.— They have also another comfort, if sickness befall, if death.— Then again the friendships formed there by people as they go side by side (to and from the Church) are not struck up at random and promiscuously: and the meetings there are far more pleasant than those which take place in marts and fairs. The people themselves also will be more respectable, because of their presbyter. How is it you hear that Jerusalem was had in honor in the old times above all other cities? Why was this? Because of the then prevailing religion. Therefore it is that where God is honored, there is nothing evil: as, on the contrary, where He is not honored, there is nothing good. It will be great security both with God and with men. Only, I beseech you, that you be not remiss: only may you put your hand to this work. For if he who brings out "*the precious from the vile*," shall be "*as the mouth of God*" [Jeremiah 15:19]; he who benefits and recovers so many souls, both that now are and that shall be even until the coming of Christ, what favor shall not that person reap from God! Raise thou a garrison against the devil: for that is what the Church is. Thence as from headquarters let the hands go forth to work: first let the people hold them up for prayers, and then go their way to work. So shall there be vigor of body; so shall the tillage be abundant; so shall all evil be kept aloof. It is not possible to represent in words the pleasure thence arising, until it be realized. Look not to this, that it brings in no revenue: if

thou do it at all in this spirit, then do it not at all; if you account not the revenue you get thence greater than from the whole estate beside; if you be not thus affected, then let it alone; if you do not account this work to stand you more in stead than any work beside. What can be greater than this revenue, the gathering in of souls into the threshing-floor which is in heaven! Alas, that you know not how much it is, to gain souls! Hear what Christ says to Peter, "*Feed My sheep.*" [John 21:15-17] If, seeing the emperor's sheep, or herd of horses, by reason of having no fold or stable, exposed to depredation, thou were to take them in hand, and build a fold or stables, or also provide a shepherd or herdsman to take charge of them, what would not the emperor do for you in return? Now, you gather the flock of Christ, and puttest a shepherd over them, and do you think it is no great gain you are earning? But, if for offending even one, a man shall incur so great a punishment, how can he that saves so many, ever be punished? What sin will he have thenceforth? For, though he have it, does not this blot it out? From the punishment threatened to him that offends, learn the reward of him that saves. Were not the salvation of even one soul a matter of great importance, to offend would not move God to so great anger. Knowing these things, let us apply ourselves immediately to this spiritual work. And let each invite me, and we will together help to the best of our ability. If there be three joint-owners, let them do it by each bearing his part: if but one, he will induce the others also that are near. Only be earnest to effect this, I beseech you, that in every way being well-pleasing unto God, we may attain unto the eternal blessings, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever world without end. Amen.

Homily 19 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts VIII. 26, 27

"And the Angel of the Lord spoke unto Philip, saying, arise and go toward the south unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went."

It seems to me, this (Philip) was one of the seven; for from Jerusalem he would not have gone southwards, but to the north; but from Samaria it was *"towards the south. The same is desert:"* so that there is no fear of an attack from the Jews. And he did not ask, Wherefore? But *"arose and went. And, behold,"* it says, *"a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet."* (v. 27, 28.) High encomiums for the man, that he, residing in Ethiopia and beset with so much business, and when there was no festival going on, and living in that superstitious city, came *"to Jerusalem for to worship."* Great also is his studiousness, that even *"sitting in his chariot he read. And,"* it says, *"the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot. And Philip ran there to him, and heard him reading the prophet Esaias, and said, Do you understand what you read? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?"* [Acts 8:29-31] Observe again his piety; that though he did not understand, he read, and then after reading, examines. *"And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;*

and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray you, of whom speaks the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." [Acts 8:32-35] Observe how it is Providentially ordered. First he reads and does not understand; then he reads the very text in which was the Passion and the Resurrection and the Gift. *"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized?"* [Acts 8:36] Mark the eager desire, mark the exact knowledge. *"And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they had come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."* (v. 38, 39.) But why did the Spirit of the Lord bear him away? (Hereby) the occurrence was shown to be more wonderful. Even then, the eunuch did not know him. Consequently this was done, that Philip might afterwards be a subject of wonder to him. *"For,"* it says, *"he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea."* [Acts 8:40] This (Philip, therefore) was one of the seven; for there in fact he is afterwards found at Cæsarea. It was well and expedient therefore that the Spirit caught Philip away; else the eunuch would have desired to go with him, and Philip would have grieved him by declining to comply with his request, the time being not yet come. (a) But at the same time here was an encouraging assurance for them that they shall also prevail over the heathen: for indeed the high character ([τὸ ἀξιόπιστον]) of the (first) believers was enough to move them. If however

the eunuch had stayed there, what fault could have been found? [But he knew him not]: for this is why it says, "*he went on his way rejoicing:*" so that had he known him, he would not have been (so) delighted.

"*And the Angel of the Lord,*" etc. [Recapitulation, Acts 8:26] (b) See Angels assisting the preaching, and not themselves preaching, but calling these (to the work). But the wonderful nature of the occurrence is shown also by this: that what of old was rare, and hardly done, here takes place with ease, and see with what frequency! (c) "*An eunuch,*" it says, "*a man of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians.*" [Acts 8:27] For there women bore rule of old, and this was the law among them. Philip did not yet know for whose sake he had come into the desert: (d) but what was there to hinder his learning all (these particulars) accurately, while in the chariot? "*Was reading the prophet Esaias.*" [Acts 8:28] For the road was desert, and there was no display in the matter. Observe also at what time: in the most violent heat (of the day). (e) "*And the Spirit said unto him.*" [Acts 8:29] Not now the Angel but the Spirit urges him. Why is this? "*Then,*" the vision took place, in grosser form, through the Angel, for this is for them that are more of the body, but the Spirit is for the more spiritual. And how did He speak to him? Of course, suggested it to him. Why does not the Angel appear to the other, and bring him to Philip? Because it is likely he would not have been persuaded, but rather terrified. Observe the wisdom of Philip: he did not accuse him, not say, "*I know these things exactly:*" did not pay court to him, and say, "*Blessed are you that readest.*" But mark his speech, how far it is from harshness alike and from adulation; the speech rather of a kind and friendly man. "*Do you understand what you read?*" [Acts 8:30] For it was needful that he should himself ask, himself have a longing desire. He plainly intimates, that he knows that the other knew nothing: and says, "*Do you understand what you read?*" at the same time he

shows him that great was the treasure that lay therein. It tells well also, that the eunuch looked not to the outward appearance ([σχήμα]) (of the man), said not, *"Who are you?"* did not chide, not give himself airs, not say that he did know. On the contrary, he confesses his ignorance: wherefore also he learns. He shows his hurt to the physician: sees at a glance, that he both knows the matter, and is willing to teach. Look how free he is from haughtiness; the outward appearance announced nothing splendid. So desirous was he of learning, and gave heed to his words; and that saying, *"He that seeks, finds,"* [Matthew 7:8] was fulfilled in him. *"And,"* it says, *"he besought Philip, that he would come up and sit with him."* [Acts 8:31] Do you mark the eagerness, the longing desire? But should any say he ought to have waited for Philip (to speak), (the answer is), he does not know what is the matter: he could not in the least tell what the other was going to say to him, but supposed merely that he was about to receive some (lesson of) prophecy. And moreover, this was more respectful, that he did not draw him into his chariot, but besought him. *"And Philip,"* we have read, *"ran to him, and heard him reading;"* even the fact of his running, showed that he wished to say (something). *"And the place,"* it says, *"of the Scripture which he read was this: As a sheep He was led to the slaughter."* [Acts 8:32] And this circumstance, also, is a token of his elevated mind, ([φιλοσοφίας]) that he had in hand this prophet, who is more sublime than all others. Philip does not relate matters to him just as it might happen, but quietly: nay, does not say anything until he is questioned. Both in the former instance he prayed him, and so he does now, saying, *"I pray you of whom speaks the prophet this?"* That he should at all know either that the Prophets speak in different ways about different persons, or that they speak of themselves in another person—the question betokens a very thoughtful mind. Let us be put to shame, both poor and rich, by this eunuch. Then, it

says, *"they came to a certain water; and he said, Lo, here is water."* [Acts 8:36] Again, of his own accord he requests, saying, *"What does hinder me to be baptized?"* And see again his modesty: he does not say, Baptize me, neither does he hold his peace; but he utters somewhat midway between strong desire and reverent fear, saying, *"What does hinder me?"* Do you observe that he has the doctrines (of faith) perfect? For indeed the Prophet had the whole, Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Judgment to come. And if he shows exceeding earnestness of desire, do not marvel. Be ashamed, all you as many as are unbaptized. *"And,"* it says, *"he commanded the chariot to stand still."* [Acts 8:38] He spoke, and gave the order at the same moment, before hearing (Philip's answer). *"And when they had come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip;"* [Acts 8:39] in order that the occurrence might be shown to be of God; that he might not consider it to be merely man. *"And he went,"* it says, *"on his way rejoicing."* (P. 121, note 2.) This hints, that he would have been grieved had he known: for the greatness of his joy, having had the Spirit also vouchsafed to him, he did not even see things present— *"But Philip was found at Azotus."* [Acts 8:40] Great was the gain to Philip also:— that which he heard concerning the Prophets, concerning Habakkuk, concerning Ezekiel, and the rest, he saw done in his own person. [Daniel 14:36; Ezekiel 3:12] Thence it appears that he went a long distance, seeing he *"was found at Azotus."* (The Spirit) set him there, where he was thenceforth to preach: *"And passing through, he preached in all the cities, until he came to Cæsarea."*

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." [ch. 9:1-2] He fitly mentions Paul's zeal, and shows that in the very midst of his zeal

he is drawn. *"Yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter,"* and not yet sated with the murder of Stephen, he was not yet glutted with the persecution of the Church, and the dispersion. Lo, this was fulfilled which was spoken by Christ, that *"they which kill you shall think they offer worship to God."* [John 16:2] He then in this wise did it, not as the Jews: God forbid! For that he did it through zeal, is manifest from his going abroad even to strange cities: whereas they would not have cared even for those in Jerusalem; they were for one thing only, to enjoy honor. But why went he to Damascus? It was a great city, a royal city: he was afraid lest that should be preoccupied. And observe his strong desire and ardor (and), how strictly according to the Law he went to work: he goes not to the governor, but *"to the priest. That if he found any of this way:"* for so the believers were called, probably because of their taking the direct way that leads to heaven. And why did he not receive authority to have them punished there, but brings them to Jerusalem! He did these things here with more authority. And mark on what a peril he casts himself. He was not afraid lest he should take any harm, but (yet) he took others also with him, *"that if,"* it says, *"he found any of this way, whether they were men or women"*— Oh, the ruthlessness!— *"he might bring them bound."* By this journey of his, he wished to show them all (how he would act): so far were they from being earnest in this matter. Observe him also casting (people) into prison before this. The others therefore did not prevail: but this man did prevail, by reason of his ardent mind. *"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"* (v. 3, 4.) Why not in Jerusalem? Why not in Damascus? That there might be no opening for different persons to relate the occurrence in different ways, but that he alone should be the authentic

narrator ([ὁ] [ξιόπιστος]), he that went for this purpose. In fact, he says this [both in his oration on the stairs], and when pleading before Agrippa. *"Fell to the earth"*: [ch. 22:6: 26:12] for excess of light is wont to shock, because the eyes have their measure: it is said also that excess of sound makes people deaf and stunned (as in a fit) ([ὁ] [ποπλήγας]). But him it only blinded, and extinguished his passion by fear, so that he should hear what was spoken. *"Saul, Saul,"* says He, *"why do you persecute me?"* And He tells him nothing: does not say, Believe, nor anything whatever of the kind: but expostulates with him, all but saying, What wrong, great or small, have you suffered from Me, that you do these things? *"And he said, Who are You Lord?"* [Acts 9:5] thus in the first place confessing himself His servant. *"And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute."* think not your warring is with men. And they which were with him heard the voice of Paul, but saw no person to whom he answered— for (the Lord) suffered them to be hearers of what was less important. Had they heard the other Voice, they would not have believed; but perceiving Paul answering (some person), they marvelled. *"But arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told you what you must do."* [Acts 9:6] Observe, how He does not immediately add all, but first softens his mind. In the same way He called the disciples also a second time. *"It shall be told you,"* etc.: He gives him good hopes, and (intimates) that he shall recover his sight also. *"And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus"* (v. 7, 8):— the spoils of the devil ([τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ]), *"his goods"* [Matthew 13:29], as from some city, yea, some metropolis which has been taken. And the wonder of it is, the enemies and foes themselves brought him in, in the sight of all! *"And for three days he neither did eat nor drink, being*

blinded." [Acts 9:9] What could equal this? To compensate the discouragement in the matter of Stephen, here is encouragement, in the bringing in of Paul: though that sadness had its consolation in the fact of Stephen's making such an end, yet it also received this further consolation: moreover, the bringing in of the villages of the Samaritans afforded very great comfort.— But why did this take place not at the very first, but after these things? That it might be shown that Christ was indeed risen. This furious assailant of Christ, the man who would not believe in His death and resurrection, the persecutor of His disciples, how should this man have become a believer, had not the power of His resurrection been great indeed? Be it so, that the other Apostles favored (His pretensions): what say you to this man? Why then not immediately after His resurrection? That his hostility might be more clearly shown as open war. The man who is so frantic as even to shed blood and cast men into prisons, all at once believes! It was not enough that he had never been in Christ's company: the believers must be warred upon by him with vehement hostility: he left to none the possibility of going beyond him in fury: none of them all could be so violent. But when he was blinded, then he saw the proofs of His sovereignty and loving kindness: then he answers, "*Lord, what will You have me to do?*" that none may say that he played the hypocrite, he that was even eager for blood, and went to the priests, and flung himself upon such dangers, in persecuting and bringing to punishment even them that were in foreign parts— under these circumstances he now acknowledges His sovereignty. And why was he shone upon by that light not within the city, but before it? The many would not have believed, since even there (at Jerusalem when the people heard the voice which came from above, they said that "*it thundered*" [John 12:29, *supra*, note 2, p. 123]; but this man was authority enough in reporting what was his own affair. And bound he was brought in,

though not with bonds upon him: and they drew him, who had expected to draw the others. "*And he eat not, neither drank:*" he condemned himself for the past, he confessed, prayed, besought God. But should any say, This was the effect of compulsion: (we answer) The same thing happened to Elymas: then how came it that he was not changed? (ch. xiii. *de Laud. Pauli Hom.* iv. §1, t. ii. p. 491.) What (evidence) could be more compulsory than the earthquake at the Resurrection, the report of the soldiers, the other miracles, the seeing Himself risen? But these things do not compel (belief) they are calculated to teach (it) ([οὐκ ἀναγκαστικὰ ἀλλὰ διδακτικά]). Why did not the Jews believe when they were told of these things? That he spoke truth was manifest: for he would not have been changed, had this not happened; so that all were bound to believe. He was not inferior to them that preached the Resurrection, and was more credible, by being all at once converted. He had no intercourse with any of the believers; it was at Damascus that he was converted, or rather before he came to Damascus that this happened to him. I ask the Jew: Say, by what was Paul converted? He saw so many signs, and was not converted: his teacher (Gamaliel, *supra*, p. 87, note 1) was converted, and he remained unconverted. Who convinced him— and not only convinced, but all at once inspired him with such ardent zeal? Wherefore was it, that he wished even to go into hell itself for Christ's sake? The truth of the facts is manifest.

But, as I said, for the present let us take shame to ourselves (when we think of) the eunuch, both in his baptism and his reading. Do ye mark how he was in a station of great authority, how he was in possession of wealth, and even on his journey allowed himself no rest? What must he have been at home, in his leisure hours, this man who rested not even on his travels? What must he have been at night? You that are in stations of dignity, hear: imitate his freedom from pride, (*de Lazaro, Conc.* iii. §3, t. i. p. 748. c) his

piety. Though about to return home, he did not say to himself: *"I am going back to my country, there let me receive baptism;"* those cold words which most men use! No need had he of signs, no need of miracles: from the Prophet merely, he believed. (b) But why is it (so ordered) that he sees (Philip) not before he goes to Jerusalem, but after he has been there? It was not meet that he should see the Apostles under persecution. Because he was yet weak, the Prophet was not easy; (but yet the Prophet) catechized him. For even now, if any of you would apply himself to the study of the Prophets, he would need no miracles. And, if you please, let us take in hand the prophecy itself. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. (v. 22, 23.) It is likely he had heard that He was crucified, [and now he learns], that *"His life is taken away from the earth,"* and the rest that *"He did no sin, nor deceit in His mouth:"* that He prevailed to save others also: [and] who He is, Whose generation is unutterable. It is likely he had seen the riven rocks there (on the spot), and (had heard) how the veil was rent, and how there was darkness, and so forth: and all these things Philip mentioned, merely taking his text from the Prophet. It is a great thing, this reading of the Scriptures! That was fulfilled which was spoken by Moses, *"Sitting, lying down, rising up, and walking, remember the Lord your God."* [Deuteronomy 6:7] For the roads, especially when they are lonely, give us opportunity for reflection, there being none to disturb us. Both this man is on the road and Paul on the road: howbeit the latter no man draws, but Christ alone. This was too great a work for the Apostles: and, greater still, in that, the Apostles being at Jerusalem, and no person of authority at Damascus, he nevertheless returned thence converted: yet those at Damascus knew that he did not come from Jerusalem

converted, for he brought letters, that he might put the believers in bonds. Like a consummate Physician, when the fever was at its height, Christ brought help to him: for it was needful that he should be quelled in the midst of his frenzy. For then most of all would he be brought down, and condemn himself as one guilty of dreadful audacity. (a) For these things Paul deplores himself, saying, *"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all His long suffering."* [1 Timothy 1:13-16] Verily one has reason to admire this eunuch. He did not see Christ, he saw no miracle: he beheld Jerusalem standing yet entire ([συνεστῶτα]): he believed Philip. How came he to behave thus? His soul was earnest ([μεμεριμνημένη]). Yet the thief (on the cross) had seen miracles: the wise men had seen a star; but this man, nothing of the kind. So great a thing is the careful reading of the Scriptures! What of Paul then! Did he not study the law? But he, it seems to me, was specially reserved, for the purpose which I have already mentioned by anticipation, because Christ would fain draw to Himself the Jews by inducements from every quarter. For had they been in their right mind, nothing was so likely to do them good as this; for this, more than miracles and all else, was calculated to attract them: as, on the other hand, nothing is so apt to prove a stumbling block to men of duller minds. See then how, after the Apostle, we have God also doing miracles. They accused the Apostles after these [miracles of theirs]; they cast them into prison: see thereupon God doing the miracles. For instance, the bringing them out of prison, was His miracle: the bringing Philip, His miracle: the bringing Paul over, was His.— Observe in what way Paul is honored, in what way the eunuch. There, Christ appears, probably because of his hardness, and because Ananias would not (else) have been persuaded. Conversant with these wonders, let us show ourselves worthy. But many in these times, even when they come to church, do not know what is read;

whereas the eunuch, even in public ([ἐ] [π' ἀγορᾶς]) and riding in his chariot, applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures. Not so you: none takes the Bible in hand: nay, everything rather than the Bible.

Say, what are the Scriptures for? For as much as in you lies, it is all undone. What is the Church for? Tie up the Bibles: perhaps the judgment would not be such, not such the punishment: if one were to bury them in dung, that he might not hear them, he would not so insult them as you do now. For say, what is the insult there? That the man has buried them. And what here? That we do not hear them. Say, when is a person most insulted — when he is silent, and one makes no answer, or, when he does speak (and is unheeded)? So that the insult is greater in the present case, when He does speak and you will not hear: greater the contempt. "*Speak not to us*" [Isaiah 30:10], we read, they said of old to the Prophets: but you do worse, saying, Speak: we will not do. For there they turned them away that they should not even speak, as feeling that from the voice itself they got some sort of awe and obligation; whereas you, in the excess of your contempt, do not even this. Believe me, if you stopped our mouths by putting your hands over them, the insult would not be so great as it is now. For say, whether shows greater contempt, he that hears, even when hindering by this action, or, he that will not even hear? Say— if we shall look at it as a case of an insult offered— suppose one person to check the party insulting him, and to stop his mouth, as being hurt by the insults, and another person to show no concern, but pretend not even to hear them: whether will show most contempt? Would you not say the latter? For the former shows that he feels himself hit: the latter all but stops the mouth of God. Did ye shudder at what was said? Why, the mouth by which God speaks, is the mouth of God. Just as our mouth is the mouth of our soul, though the soul has no mouth, so the mouth of the Prophets is the mouth of God. Hear, and shudder. There,

common (to the whole congregation) stands the deacon crying aloud, and saying, "*Let us attend to the reading.*" It is the common voice of the whole Church, the voice which he utters, and yet none does attend. After him begins the Reader, "*The Prophecy of Esaias,*" and still none attends, although Prophecy has nothing of man in it. Then after this, he says, "*Thus says the Lord,*" and still none attends. Then after this punishments and vengeance, and still even then none attends. But what is the common excuse? "*It is always the same things over again.*" This it is most of all, that ruins you. Suppose you knew the things, even so you certainly ought not to turn away: since in the theatres also, is it not always the same things acted over again, and still you take no disgust? How dare you talk about "*the same things,*" you who know not so much as the names of the Prophets? Are you not ashamed to say, that this is why you do not listen, because it is "*the same things over again,*" while you do not know the names of those who are read, and this, though always hearing the same things? You have yourself confessed that the same things are said. Were I to say this as a reason for finding fault with you, you would need to have recourse to quite a different excuse, instead of this which is the very thing you find fault with.— Do not you exhort your son? Now if he should say, "*Always the same things!*" would not you count it an insult? It would be time enough to talk of "*the same things,*" when we both knew the things, and exhibited them in our practice. Or rather, even then, the reading of them would not be superfluous. What equal to Timothy? Tell me that: and yet to him says Paul, Give attention to reading, to exhortation. [1 Timothy 4:13] For it is not possible, I say not possible, ever to exhaust the mind of the Scriptures. It is a well which has no bottom. "*I said,*" says the Preacher, "*I have become wise: and then it departed from me.*"— [Ecclesiastes 7:24] Shall I show you that the things are not "*the same?*" How many persons, do you suppose,

have spoken upon the Gospels? And yet all have spoken in a way which was new and fresh. For the more one dwells on them, the more insight does he get, the more does he behold the pure light. Look, what a number of things I am going to speak of:— say, what is narrative? What is prophecy? What is parable? What is type? What is allegory? What is symbol? What are Gospels? Answer me only to this one point, which is plain: why are they called Gospels, "*good tidings*?" And yet you have often heard that good news ought to have nothing sad in it: yet this "*good news*" has abundance of sadness in it. "*Their fire,*" it says, "*shall never be quenched: their worm shall not die:*" [Mark 9:44] "*Shall appoint his portion,*" it says, "*with the hypocrites,*" with them that are "*cut asunder: then shall He say, I know you not: Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.*" [Matthew 24:51; 7:23] Surely, we do not deceive ourselves, when we imagine that we tell you in your own mother-tongue ([good tidings? You look downcast; you are stunned; you are struck all of a heap, unable to hold up your heads. "*Good news*" should have nothing in it of a duty to be done, but rather should counsel what is good: whereas these "*Gospels*" have endless duties to be done. And again, to mention other things, as for instance, Except a man hate father and mother, he is not worthy of Me Luke 14:26]: and "*I am not come to bring peace upon earth, but a sword*" [Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51]: and In the world you shall have tribulation— [John 16:33] excellent good tidings these, are they not! For good news is such as this— "*You shall have this and that good thing:*" as in common life men say one to another, "*What shall I have for my good news? Your father is coming, or, your mother:*" he does not say, "*You must do this or that.*"— Again, tell me, how do the Gospels differ from the Prophets? Why are not the Prophecies also called Gospels, good tidings? For they tell the same things: for instance, "*The lame shall leap as an hart.*" [Isaiah 35:6] "*The Lord shall give the word to*

them that preach the Gospel" [Psalm 68:11]: and, *"A new heaven and a new earth."* [Isaiah 65:17] Why are not those also called Gospels? But if, while you do not so much as know what *"Gospels"* mean, you so despise the reading of the Scriptures, what shall I say to you?— Let me speak of something else. Why four Gospels? Why not, ten? Why not twenty? If *"many have taken in hand to set forth a narrative"* [Luke 1:1], why not one person? Why they that were disciples (i.e. Apostles)? Why they that were not disciples? But why any Scriptures at all? And yet, on the contrary, the Old Testament says, *"I will give you a New Testament."* [Jeremiah 31:31] Where are they that say, *"Always the same things?"* If you knew these, that, though a man should live thousands of years, they are not *"the same things,"* ye would not say this. Believe me, I will not tell you the answers to any of these questions; not in private, not in public: only, if any find them out, I will nod assent. For this is the way we have made you good-for-nothing, by always telling you the things ready to your hands, and not refusing when we ought. Look, you have questions enough: consider them, tell me the reasons. Why Gospels? Why not Prophecies? Why duties, to be done, in the Gospels? If one is at a loss, let another seek the answer, and contribute each to the others from what he has: but now we will hold our peace. For if what has been spoken has done you no good, much less would it, should we add more. We only pour water into a vessel full of holes. And the punishment too is all the greater for you. Therefore, we will hold our peace. Which that we may not have to do, it rests with yourselves. For if we shall see your diligence, perhaps we will again speak, that both ye may be more approved, and we may rejoice over you, in all things giving glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Him be glory and dominion now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 20 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts IX. 10, 12

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prays, and has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."

What may be the reason that He neither drew any one of high authority and importance, nor caused such to be forthcoming for the purpose of instructing Paul? It was, because it was not meet that he should be induced by men, but only by Christ Himself: as in fact this man taught him nothing, but merely baptized him; for, as soon as baptized ([φωτισθείς]), he was to draw upon himself the grace of the Spirit, by his zeal and exceeding earnestness. And that Ananias was no very distinguished person, is plain. For, *"the Lord,"* it says, *"spoke unto him in a vision, and Ananias answered and said, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to Your saints at Jerusalem."* [Acts 9:13] For if he spoke in objection to Him, much more would he have done so, had He sent an Angel. And this is why, in the former instance, neither is Philip told what the matter is; but he sees the Angel, and then the Spirit bids him go near to the chariot. But observe here how the Lord relieves him of his fear: *"He is blind,"* says He, *"and prays, and are you afraid?"* In the same way Moses also is afraid: so

that the words betokened that he was afraid, and shrunk from the task, not that he did not believe. He said, have heard from many concerning this man. What do you say? God speaks, and you hesitate. They did not yet well know the power of Christ. *"And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Your name."* [Acts 9:14] How was that known? It is likely that they, being in fear, made minute enquiries. He does not say this, as thinking that Christ does not know the fact, but, *"such being the case, how,"* says he, *"can these things be?"* As in fact those (in the Gospel) say, *"Who can be saved?"*— [Mark 10:26] This is done, in order that Paul may believe him that shall come to him: *"he has seen in a vision:"* it has showed him beforehand: *"he prays,"* says (the Lord): fear not. And observe, He speaks not to him of the success achieved: teaching us not to speak of our achievements. And, though He saw him afraid, for all this He said it not. *"You shall not be disbelieved:"* *"he has seen,"* says He, *"in a vision a man (named) Ananias:"* for this is why it was *"in a vision,"* namely, because he was blind. And not even the exceeding wonderfulness of the thing took possession of the disciple's mind, so greatly was he afraid. But observe: Paul being blind, in this way He restored to sight. *"But the Lord said unto him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake."* (v. 15, 16.) *"Not only,"* says He, shall he be a believer, but even a teacher, and great boldness shall he show: 'before Gentiles and kings'— such shall be the spread of the doctrine!— that just as He astonished (him) by the former, so He may (startle him even more) by the latter. *"And Ananias went, and entered into the house, and laid his hands upon him, and said, Brother Saul"*— he straightway addresses him as a friend by that name— *"Jesus, Who appeared unto you in the way in which you came"*— and yet Christ had not

told him this, but he learned it from the Spirit— *"has sent me unto you, that you may receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 9:17] As he said this, he laid his hands upon him. *"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales."* [Acts 9:18] Some say this was a sign of his blindness. Why did he not blind his eyes (entirely)? This was more wonderful, that, with his eyes open, he did not see: [Acts 9:8] which was just his case in respect of the Law, until the Name of Jesus was put on him. *"And he received sight immediately, and arose, and was baptized. And having taken food, he recovered strength."* [Acts 9:19] He was faint, therefore, both from his journey and from his fear; both from hunger, and from dejection of mind. Wishing therefore to deepen his dejection, He made the man blind until the coming of Ananias: and, that he might not imagine the blindness to be (only) fancy, this is the reason of the scales. He needed no other teaching: that which had befallen was made teaching (to him). *"And he was with the disciples which were at Damascus certain days. And straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus, that He is the Son of God."* [Acts 9:20] See, straightway he was a teacher in the synagogues. He was not ashamed of the change, was not afraid while the very things in which he was glorious afore-time, the same he destroyed. Even from his first appearance on the stage here was a man, death-dealing, ready for deeds of blood: do you see what a manifest sign (was here)? And with this very thing, he put all in fear: for, said they, Hither also is he come for this very thing. *"But all that heard him were amazed, and said: Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."* (v. 21, 22.) As one learned in the Law, he stopped their mouths, and suffered them not to speak. They

thought they were rid of disputation in such matters, in getting rid of Stephen, and they found another, more vehement than Stephen.

(Recapitulation.) But let us look at what relates to Ananias. The Lord said not to him, Converse with him, and catechize him. For if, when He said, *"He prays, and has seen a man laying his hands upon him,"* (v. 11, 12.) He did not persuade him, much less had He said this. So that he shall not disbelieve you, *"he has seen in a vision."* Observe how in the former instance neither is Philip told all immediately. Fear not, He says: for this man is a chosen vessel for Me. [Acts 9:15] He more than sufficiently released him of his fear, if the case be so that this man shall be so zealous in our cause, as even to suffer many things. And justly he is called *"a vessel"* (or, instrument)—for reason shows that evil is not a physical quality: *"a vessel of election"* (or, chosen instrument), He says; for we choose that which is approved. And let not any imagine, that (Ananias) speaks in unbelief of what was told him, as imagining that Christ was deceived: far from it! But affrighted and trembling, he did not even attend to what was said, at hearing the name of Paul. Moreover, the Lord does not tell that He has blinded him: at the mention of his name fear had prepossessed his soul: *"see,"* he says, *"to whom You are betraying me: 'and hither for this very purpose is he come, to bind all that call upon Your Name.' I fear, lest he take me to Jerusalem: why dost Thou cast me into the mouth of the lion?"* He is terrified, even while he speaks these words; that from every quarter we may learn the energetic character ([ἄ] [ρετήν]) of the man. For that these things should be spoken by Jews, were nothing wonderful: but that these (the believers) are so terrified, it is a most mighty proof of the power of God. Both the fear is shown, and the obedience greater after the fear. For there was indeed need of strength. Since He says, *"a vessel of election,"* that you may not imagine that God is to do all, He adds, to bear My Name

before Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel. Ananias has heard what he most desired— that against the Jews also he will take his stand: this above all gave him courage. *"For I,"* says He, *"will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake."* At the same time also this is said by way of putting Ananias to the blush: If he, that was so frantic, shall suffer all things, and thou not willing even to baptize him! *"It is well,"* says he: *"let him continue blind"* (this is why he says these words): *"he is blind: why dost Thou at all bid me open his eyes, that he may bind (men) again?"* Fear not the future: for that opening of his eyes he will use not against you, but for you (with reference to that saying, *"That he may receive his sight"* [Acts 9:12], these words are spoken): for not only will he do you no harm, but he *"will suffer many things."* And what is wonderful indeed is, that he shall first know *"how great things he shall suffer,"* and then shall take the field against the perils.— *"Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus"*— he says not, *"Who made you blind,"* but, *"Who appeared with you in the way, has sent me unto you that you may receive your sight"* [Acts 9:17]: observe this man also, how he utters nothing boastful, but just as Peter said in the case of the lame man, *"Why look ye on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk,"* [Acts 3:12] so here also he says, *"Jesus, Who appeared unto you."* (b) Or, (he says it) that the other may believe: and he says not, He that was crucified, the Son of God, He that does wonders: but what? *"He that appeared unto you:"* (speaking) from what the other knew: as Christ also added no more, neither said, I am Jesus, the Crucified, the Risen: but what? *"Whom you persecute."* Ananias said not, *"The persecuted,"* that he may not seem as it were to rave over him ([ἐ] [πενθουσί& 139visibly) appear, but was seen by the things done. And immediately he added, wishing to draw a veil over the accusation: *"That you may receive your sight."* I came not to reprove the past, but to bestow

the gift: *"that you may receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."* (a) With hands laid on, he spoke these words. *"And immediately there fell from his eyes,"* etc. Acts 9:18]: a double blindness is removed.— And why says it, *"Having taken food, he was strengthened?"* [Acts 9:19] Because they that are in such case become relaxed: he had no heart to partake of food before, until he obtained the mighty gifts. (c) It seems to me, that both Paul and Cornelius, at the very instant when the words were spoken, received the Spirit. And yet (in this case) the giver was no great one. So true is it, that there was naught of man's in the things done, nor anything was done by man, but God was present, the Doer of these things. And at the same time (the Lord) both teaches him to think modestly of himself, in that He does not bring him to the Apostles who were so admired, and shows that there is nothing of man here. He was not filled, however, with the Spirit which works signs: that in this way also his faith might be shown; for he wrought no miracles. *"And straightway,"* it says, *"in the synagogues he preached Jesus"*— [Acts 9:20] not that He is risen— not this: no, nor that He lives: but what? Immediately he strictly expounded the doctrine— *"that this is the Son of God. And all that heard him were amazed,"* etc. [Acts 9:21] They were reduced to utter incredulity. And yet they ought not to have wondered only, but to worship and reverence. *"Is not this he,"* etc. He had not merely been a persecutor, but *"destroyed them which called on this Name"*— they did not say, *"on Jesus;"* for hatred, they could not bear even to hear His name— and what is more marvellous still, *"and came hither for this purpose,"* etc. *"We cannot say, that he associated with the Apostles before."* See by how many (witnesses) he is confessed to have been of the number of the enemies! But Paul not only was not confounded by these things, nor hid his face for shame, but *"increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews"* [Acts 9:22], i.e. put them to

silence, left them nothing to say for themselves, *"proving, that this is very Christ."* *"Teaching,"* it says: for this man was a teacher.

"And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him." [Acts 9:23] The Jews again resort to that valid argument ([i] [σχυρὸν συλλογισμόν]) of theirs, not now seeking false-accusers and false-witnesses; they cannot wait for these now: but what do they? They set about it by themselves. For as they see the affair on the increase, they do not even use the form of a trial. *"But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him."* [Acts 9:24] For this was more intolerable to them than the miracles which had taken place— than the five thousand, the three thousand, than everything, in short. And observe him, how he is delivered, not by (miraculous) grace, but by man's wisdom— not as the apostles were— [ἐ] [κεῖνοι], Acts 5:19 that you may learn the energetic ([ᾱ] [ρετήν]) character of the man, how he shines even without miracles. *"Then the disciples took him by night,"* that the affair might not be suspected, *"and let him down by the wall in a basket."* [Acts 9:25] What then? Having escaped such a danger, does he flee? By no means, but goes where he kindled them to greater rage.

(Recapitulation, v. 20, 21.) *"And straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus"*— for he was accurate in the faith— *"that this is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed,"* etc., for indeed it was incredible. *"But Saul increased,"* etc. Therefore *"after many days"* this happens: viz. the Jews *"took counsel to kill him. And their laying await was known of Saul."* [Acts 22:22-24] What does this mean? It is likely that for awhile he did not choose to depart thence, though many, perhaps, besought him; but when he learned it, then he permitted his disciples: for he had disciples immediately.

"Then the disciples," etc. [Acts 9:25] Of this occurrence he says: *"The ethnarch of Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to apprehend me."* [2 Corinthians 11:32] But observe the Writer here, that he does not tell the story ambitiously, and so as to show what an important person Paul was, saying, *"For they stirred up the king,"* and so forth: but only, *"Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall—in a basket:"* for they sent him out alone, and none with him. And it was well they did this: the consequence being, that he showed himself to the Apostles in Jerusalem. Now they sent him out, as bound to provide for his safety by flight: but he did just the contrary—he leaped into the midst of those who were mad against him. This it is to be on fire, this to be fervent indeed! From that day forth he knew all the commands which the Apostles had heard: *"Except a man take up his cross, and follow Me."* [Matthew 10:38] The very fact that he had been slower to come than the rest made him more zealous: for *"to whom much is forgiven"* [Luke 7:47] the same will love more, so that the later he came, the more he loved: * * * and having done ten thousand wrongs, he thought he could never do enough to cast the former deeds into the shade. *"Proving"* [Acts 9:22], it says: i.e. with mildness teaching. And observe, they did not say to him, You are he that destroyed: why are you changed? For they were ashamed: but they said it to themselves. For he would have said to them, This very thing ought to teach you, as in fact he does thus plead in his speech before Agrippa. Let us imitate this, man: let us bear our souls in our hands ready to confront all dangers.— (That he fled from Damascus) this was no cowardice: he preserved himself for the preaching. Had he been a coward, he would not have gone to Jerusalem, would not immediately have commenced teaching: he would have abated somewhat of his vehemence: for he had been taught by the fate of Stephen. He was no coward, but he was also prudent

([οἰκονομικός]) (in husbanding himself). Wherefore he thought it no great thing to die for the Gospel's sake, unless he should do this to great advantage: willing not even to see Christ, Whom most of all he longed to see, while the work of his stewardship among men was not yet complete. [Philippians 1:23-24]. Such ought to be the soul of a Christian. From his first appearance from the very outset, the character of Paul declared itself: nay even before this, even in the things which he did *"not according to knowledge"* [Romans 10:2], it was not by man's reasoning that he was moved to act as he did. For if, so long afterwards, he was content not to depart, much more at the beginning of his trading voyage, when he had but just left the harbor! Many things Christ leaves to be done by (ordinary) human wisdom, that we may learn that (his disciples) were men, that it was not all everywhere to be done by grace: for otherwise they would have been mere motionless logs: but in many things they managed matters themselves. — This is not less than martyrdom—to shrink from no suffering for the sake of the salvation of the many. Nothing so delights God. Again will I repeat what I have often said: and I repeat it, because I do exceedingly desire it: as Christ also did the same, when discoursing concerning forgiveness: *"When ye pray, forgive if you have anything against any man:"* [Mark 11:25] and again to Peter He said, *"I say not unto you, Forgive until seven times, but until seventy-times seven."* [Matthew 18:22] And Himself in fact forgives the transgressions against Him. So do we also, because we know that this is the very goal of Christianity, continually discourse thereof. Nothing is more frigid than a Christian, who cares not for the salvation of others. You can not here plead poverty: for she that cast down the two mites, shall be your accuser. [Luke 21:1] And Peter said, *"Silver and gold have I none."* [Acts 3:6] And Paul was so poor, that he was often hungered, and wanted necessary food. You can not plead lowness of birth: for they too

were ignoble men, and of ignoble parents. You can not allege want of education: for they too were "*unlearned men.*" [Acts 4:13] Even if you be a slave therefore and a runaway slave, you can perform your part: for such was Onesimus: yet see to what Paul calls him, and to how great honor he advances him: "*that he may communicate with me,*" he says, "*in my bonds.*" [Philemon 13] You can not plead infirmity: for such was Timothy, having often infirmities; for, says the apostle, "*Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities.*" [1 Timothy 5:23] Every one can profit his neighbor, if he will fulfil his part. See ye not the unfruitful trees, how strong they are, how fair, how large also, and smooth, and of great height? But if we had a garden; we should much rather have pomegranates, or fruitful olive trees: for the others are for delight to the eye, not for profit, which in them is but small. Such are those men who only consider their own interest: nay, not such even since these persons are fit only for burning: whereas those trees are useful both for building and for the safety of those within. Such too were those Virgins, chaste indeed, and decent, and modest, but profitable to none [Matthew 25:1] wherefore they are burned. Such are they who have not nourished Christ. For observe that none of those are charged with particular sins of their own, with fornication, for instance, or with perjury; in short, with no sin but the having been of no use to another. Such was he who buried his talent, showing indeed a blameless life, but not being useful to another. [Matthew 25:25] How can such an one be a Christian? Say, if the leaven being mixed up with the flour did not change the whole into its own nature, would such a thing be leaven? Again, if a perfume shed no sweet odor on those who approach it, could we call it a perfume? Say not, "*It is impossible for me to induce others (to become Christians)*"— for if you are a Christian, it is impossible but that it should be so. For as the natural properties of things cannot be gainsaid, so it is

here: the thing is part of the very nature of the Christian. Do not insult God. To say, that the sun cannot shine, would be to insult Him: to say that a Christian cannot do good, is to insult God, and call Him a liar. For it is easier for the sun not to give heat, nor to shine, than for the Christian not to send forth light: it is easier for the light to be darkness, than for this to be so. Tell me not that it is impossible: the contrary is the impossible. Do not insult God. If we once get our own affairs in a right state, the other will certainly follow as a natural and necessary consequence. It is not possible for the light of a Christian to be hid; not possible for a lamp so conspicuous as that to be concealed. Let us not be careless. For, as the profit from virtue reaches both to ourselves, and to those who are benefited by it: so from vice there is a two-fold loss, reaching both to ourselves, and to those who are injured by it. Let there be (if you will) some private man, who has suffered numberless ills from some one, and let no one take his part, yet let that man still return good offices; what teaching so mighty as this? What words, or what exhortations could equal it? What wrath were it not enough to extinguish and soften? Knowing therefore these things, let us hold fast to virtue, as knowing that it is not possible to be saved otherwise, than by passing through this present life in doing these good works, that we may also obtain the good things which are to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 21 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts IX. 26, 27

"And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way."

One may well be much at a loss here to understand how it is that, whereas in the Epistle to the Galatians Paul says, *"I went not to Jerusalem,"* but *"into Arabia"* and *"to Damascus,"* and, *"After three years I went up to Jerusalem,"* and *"to see Peter"* [(i) [στορησαι] Cat.) here the writer says the contrary. (There, Paul says,) *"And none of the Apostles saw I; but here, it is said (Barnabas), brought him to the Apostles."*— Well, then, either (Paul) means, I went not up with intent to refer or attach myself to them ([ἃ] [ναθέσθαι])— for what says he? *"I referred not myself, neither went I to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me:"* or else, that the laying await for him in Damascus was after his return from Arabia; or else, again, that the visit to Jerusalem was after he came from Arabia. Certainly of his own accord he went not to the Apostles, but *"assayed to join himself unto the disciples"*— as being a teacher, not a disciple— *"I went not,"* he says, *"for this purpose, that I should go to those who were Apostles before me: certainly, I learned nothing from them."* Or, he does not speak of this visit, but passes it by, so that the order is, *"I went into Arabia, then I came to Damascus, then to Jerusalem, then to Syria:"* or else, again, that he went up to Jerusalem, then was sent to Damascus, then to Arabia, then again to

Damascus, then to Cæsarea. Also, the visit "*after fourteen years,*" probably, was when he brought up the [alms to the] brethren together with Barnabas: [or else he means a different occasion. Acts 11:30] For the Historian for conciseness, often omits incidents, and condenses the times. Observe how unambitious the writer is, and how he does not even relate [related in Acts 22:17-21] that vision, but passes it by. "*He assayed,*" it says, "*to join himself to the disciples. And they were afraid of him.*" By this again is shown the ardor of Paul's character: not (only) from the mouth of Ananias, and of those who wondered at him there, but also of those in Jerusalem: "*they believed not that he was a disciple:*" for truly that was beyond all human expectation. He was no longer a wild beast, but a man mild and gentle! And observe how he does not go to the Apostles, such is his forbearance, but to the disciples, as being a disciple. He was not thought worthy of credit. "*But Barnabas*"— "*Son of Consolation*" is his appellation, whence also he makes himself easy of access to the man: for "*he was a kind man*" [Acts 11:24], exceedingly, and this is proved both by the present instance, and in the affair of John (Mark)— "*having taken him, brought him to the Apostles, and related to them how he had seen the Lord in the way.*" [Acts 15:39] It is likely that at Damascus also he had heard all about him: whence *he* was not afraid but the others were, for he was a man whose glance inspired fear. "*How,*" it says, "*he had seen the Lord in the way, and that He had spoken unto him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of the Lord. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, and speaking boldly in the name of Jesus*" [Acts 9:28]: these things were demonstrative of the former, and by his acts he made good what was spoken of him. "*And he spoke, and disputed with the Hellenists.*" [Acts 9:29] So then the disciples were afraid of him, and the Apostles did not trust him; by this therefore he relieves them of their fear. "*With the Hellenists:*"

he means those who used the Greek tongue: and this he did, very wisely; for those others, those profound Hebrews had no mind even to see him. *"But they,"* it says, *"went about to slay him:"* a token, this, of his energy, and triumphant victory, and of their exceeding annoyance at what had happened. Thereupon, fearing lest the issue should be the same as in the case of Stephen, they sent him to Cæsarea. For it says, *"When the brethren were aware of this, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus"* [Acts 9:30], at the same time to preach, and likely to be more in safety, as being in his own country. But observe, I pray you, how far it is from being the case that everything is done by (miraculous) grace; how, on the contrary, God does in many things leave them to manage for themselves by their own wisdom and in a human way; so to cut off the excuse of idle people: for if it was so in the case of Paul, much more in theirs. Then, it says, *"the Church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace (they), being edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and abounded in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 9:31] He is about to relate that Peter goes down (from Jerusalem), therefore that you may not impute this to fear, he first says this. For while there was persecution, he was in Jerusalem, but when the affairs of the Church are everywhere in security, then it is that he leaves Jerusalem. See how fervent and energetic he is! For he did not think, because there was peace, therefore there was no need of his presence. Paul departed, and there was peace: there is no war nor disturbance. Them, they respected most, as having often stood by them, and as being held in admiration by the multitude: but him, they despised, and were more savage against him. See, how great a war, and immediately, peace! See what that war effected. It dispersed the peace-makers. In Samaria, Simon was put to shame: in Judea, the affair of Sapphira took place. Not that, because there was peace, therefore matters became relaxed, but such was the peace as also

to need exhortation. *"And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda."* [Acts 9:32] Like the commander of an army, he went about, inspecting the ranks, what part was compact, what in good order, what needed his presence. See how on all occasions he goes about, foremost. When an Apostle was to be chosen, he was the foremost: when the Jews were to be told, that these were *"not drunken,"* when the lame man was to be healed, when harangues to be made, he is before the rest: when the rulers were to be spoken to, he was the man; when Ananias, he [ch. 1:15; 2:15; 3:4-12; 4:8; 5:3-15]: when healings were wrought by the shadow, still it was he. And look: where there was danger, he was the man, and where good management (was needed); but where all is calm, there they act all in common, and he demands no greater honor (than the others). When need was to work miracles, he starts forward, and here again he is the man to labor and toil. *"And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ makes you whole: arise, and make your bed. And he arose immediately."* (v. 33, 34.) And why did he not wait for the man's faith, and ask if he wished to be healed? In the first place, the miracle served for exhortation to many: hear then how great the gain. *"And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord."* [Acts 9:35] For the man was notable. *"Arise, and make your bed:"* he does well to give a proof of the miracle: for they not only released men of their diseases, but in giving the health they gave the strength also. Moreover, at that time they had given no proofs of their power, so that the man could not reasonably have been required to show his faith, as neither in the case of the lame man did they demand it. [Acts 3:6] As therefore Christ in the beginning of His miracles did not demand faith, so neither did these. For in Jerusalem indeed, as was but reasonable, the faith of the parties was

first shown; *"they brought out their sick into the streets, but as Peter passed by, his shadow at least might fall upon some of them"* [Acts 5:15]; for many miracles had been wrought there; but here this is the first that occurs. For of the miracles, some were wrought for the purpose of drawing others (to faith); some for the comfort of them that believed. *"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was near to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them."* [Acts 9:36-38]. Why did they wait till she was dead? Why was not Peter solicited ([ἐ] [σκούλη]) before this? So right-minded ([φιλοσοφοῦντες]) were they, they did not think it proper to trouble ([σκούλλειν]) the Disciples about such matters, and to take them away from the preaching: as indeed this is why it mentions that the place was near, seeing they asked this as a thing beside his mark, and not now in the regular course. *"Not to delay to come unto them:"* for she was a disciple. And Peter arose, and went with them. And when he had come, they led him into the upper chamber. [Acts 9:39] They do not beseech, but leave it to him to give her life ([σωτηρίαν].) See what a cheering inducement to alms is here! *"And all the widows,"* it says, *"stood round him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them."* Peter went into the apartment, as one who took it calmly, but see what an accession came of it! It is not without a meaning that the Writer has informed us of the woman's name, but to show that the name she bore ([φερόνυμος ἦν]) matched her character; as active and wakeful was she as an antelope. For in many instances there is a Providence in the giving of

names, as we have often told you. *"She was full,"* it says, *"of good works:"* not only of alms, but *"of good works,"* first, and then of this good work in particular. *"Which,"* it says, *"Dorcas made while she was with them."* Great humility! Not as we do; but they were all together in common, and in company with them she made these things and worked. *"But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up."* [Acts 9:40] Why does he put them all out? That he may not be confused nor disturbed by their weeping. *"And having knelt down, he prayed."* Observe the intentness of his prayer *"And he gave her his hand."* [Acts 9:41] So did Christ to the daughter of Jairus: *"And (says the Evangelist) having taken her by the hand."* Mark severally, first the life, then the strength brought into her, the one by the word, the other by his hand— *"And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive:"* to some for comfort, because they received back their sister, and because they saw the miracle, and for kindly support ([προστασίαν]) to others. *"And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner."* [Acts 9:42-43] Mark the unassuming conduct, mark the moderation of Peter, how he does not make his abode with this lady, or some other person of distinction, but with a tanner: by all his acts leading men to humility, neither suffering the mean to be ashamed, nor the great to be elated! *"Many days;"* for they needed his instruction, who had believed through the miracles.— Let us look then again at what has been said.

"Assayed," it says, *"to join himself to the disciples."* [Recapitulation, Acts 9:26] He did not come up to them unabashed, but with a subdued manner. *"Disciples"* they were all called at that time by reason of their great

virtue, for there was the likeness of the disciples plainly to be seen. *"But they were all afraid of him."* See how they feared the dangers, how the alarm was yet at its height in them. *"But Barnabas,"* etc. [Acts 9:27]— it seems to me that Barnabas was of old a friend of his— *"and related,"* etc.: observe how Paul says nothing of all this himself: nor would he have brought it forward to the others, had he not been compelled to do so. *"And he was with them, coming in and going out at Jerusalem, and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus."* (v. 28, 29.) This gave them all confidence. *"But they went about to slay him: which when the brethren knew"* etc. [Acts 9:30] Do you observe how both there (at Damascus), and here, the rest take care for him, and provide for him the means of departure, and that we nowhere find him thus far receiving (direct supernatural) aid from God? So the energy of his character is betokened. *"To Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus:"* so that, I suppose, he did not continue his journey by land, but sailed the rest of it. And this (departure) is Providentially ordered, that he might preach there also: and so likewise were the plots against him ordered by God's Providence, and his coming to Jerusalem, that the story about him might no longer be disbelieved. For there he was *"speaking boldly,"* it says, *"in the name of the Lord Jesus; and he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists;"* and again, *"he was with them coming in and going out.— So the Church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace"*— i.e. it increased: and peace with itself, that peace which is peace indeed: for the war from without would have done them no harm — *"they being edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and abounded in the consolation of the Holy Ghost."* And the spirit consoled them both by the miracles and by the works, and independently of these in the person of each individual. *"And it came to pass, etc. And Peter said unto him, Eneas,"* etc. [Acts 9:32-34] But before discourse, before exhortations,

he says to the lame man himself, *"Jesus Christ makes you whole."* This word he believed in any wise, and was made whole. Observe how unassuming he is: for he said not, *"In the Name,"* but rather as a sign he narrates the miracle itself, and speaks as its Evangelist. *"And having seen him,"* it says, *"all that dwelt in Lydda, and Saron, turned unto the Lord.—Now there was at Joppa,"* etc. (v. 35, 36.) Observe everywhere the signs taking place. But let us so believe them, as if we were now beholding them. It is not simply said, that Tabitha died, but that she died, having been in a state of weakness. And (yet) they did not call Peter until she died; then *"they sent and told him not to delay to come unto them."* Observe, they send and call him by others. And he comes: he did not think it a piece of disrespect, to be summoned by two men: for, it says, *"they sent two men unto him."*—Affliction, my beloved, is a great thing, and rivets our souls together. Not a word of wailing there, nor of mourning. See how thoroughly matters are cleansed! *"Having washed her,"* it says, *"they laid her in an upper chamber:"* that is, they did all (that was right) for the dead body. Then Peter having come, *"knelt down, and prayed; and turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise."* [Acts 9:40] They did not perform all their miracles with the same ease. But this was profitable for them: for truly God took thought not only for the salvation of others, but for their own. He that healed so many by his very shadow, how is it that he now has to do so much first? There are cases also in which the faith of the applicants coöperated. This is the first dead person that he raises. Observe how he, as it were, awakes her out of sleep: first she opened her eyes: then upon seeing (Peter) she sat up: then from his hand she received strength. *"And it was known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord."* [Acts 9:42] Mark the gain, mark the fruit, that it was not for display. Indeed, this is why he puts them all out, imitating his Master in this also.

For where tears are— or rather, where miracles are, there tears ought not to be; not where such a mystery is celebrating. Hear, I beseech you: although somewhat of the like kind does not take place now, yet in the case of our dead likewise, a great mystery is celebrating. Say, if as we sit together, the Emperor were to send and invite some one of us to the palace, would it be right, I ask, to weep and mourn? Angels are present, commissioned from heaven and come from thence, sent from the King Himself to call their fellow servant, and say, do you weep? Do you not know what a mystery it is that is taking place, how awful, how dread, and worthy indeed of hymns and lauds? Would you learn, that you may know, that this is no time for tears? For it is a very great mystery of the Wisdom of God. As if leaving her dwelling, the soul goes forth, speeding on her way to her own Lord, and do you mourn? Why then, you should do this on the birth of a child: for this in fact is also a birth, and a better than that. For here she goes forth to a very different light, is loosed as from a prison-house, comes off as from a contest. *"Yes,"* say you, *"it is all very well to say this, in the case of those of whose salvation we are assured."* Then, what ails you, O man, that even in the case of such, thou dost not take it in this way? Say, what can you have to condemn in the little child? Why do you mourn for it? What in the newly baptized? For he too is brought into the same condition: why do you mourn for him? For as the sun arises clear and bright, so the soul, leaving the body with a pure conscience, shines joyously. Not such the spectacle of Emperor as he comes in state to take possession of the city ([ἐ] [πιβαίνοντα πόλεως]), not such the hush of awe, as when the soul having quitted the body is departing in company with Angels. Think what the soul must then be! In what amazement, what wonder, what delight! Why do you mourn? Answer me.— But it is only in the case of sinners you do this? Would that it were so, and I would not forbid your mournings, would that

this were the object! This lamentation were Apostolic, this were after the pattern of the Lord; for even Jesus wept over Jerusalem. I would that your mournings were discriminated by this rule. But when you speak the words of one that would call back (the dead), and speakest of your long intimacy and his beneficence, it is but for this you mourn (not because he was a sinner), thou dost but pretend to say it. Mourn, bewail the sinner, and I too will give a loose to tears; I, more than thou, the greater the punishment to which he is liable as such: I too will lament, with such an object. But not thou alone must lament him that is such; the whole city must do the same, and all that meet you on the way, as men bewail them that are led to be put to death. For this is a death indeed, an evil death, the death of sinners. But (with you) all is clean reversed. Such lamentation marks a lofty mind, and conveys much instruction; the other marks a littleness of soul. If we all lamented with this sort of lamentation, we should amend the persons themselves while yet living. For as, if it rested with you to apply medicines which would prevent that bodily death, you would use them, just so now, if *this* death were the death you lament, you would prevent its taking place, both in yourself and in him. Whereas now our behavior is a perfect riddle; that having it in our power to hinder its coming, we let it take place, and mourn over it when it has come. Worthy indeed of lamentations are they (when we consider), what time as they shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, what words they shall then hear, what they shall suffer! To no purpose have these men lived: nay, not to no purpose, but to evil purpose! Of them too it may be fitly said, *"It were good for them had they never been born."* [Mark 14:21] For what profit is it, I ask, to have spent so much time to the hurt of his own person? Had it been spent only to no purpose, were not that, I ask you, punishment enough! If one who has been an hired servant twenty years were to find that he has had all his labor in vain, would

he not weep and lament, and think himself the most miserable of men? Why, here is a man who has lost all the labor of a whole life: not one day has he lived for himself, but to luxury, to debauchery, to covetousness, to sin, to the devil. Then, say, shall we not bewail this man? Shall we not try to snatch him from his perils? For it is, yes, it is possible, if we will, to mitigate his punishment, if we make continual prayers for him, if for him we give alms. However unworthy he may be, God will yield to our importunity. For if Paul showed mercy on one (who had no claims on his mercy), and for the sake of others spared one (whom he would not have spared), much more is it right for us to do this. By means of his substance, by means of your own, by what means you will, aid him: pour in oil, nay rather, water. Has he no almsdeeds of his own to exhibit? Let him have at least those of his kindred. Has he none done by himself? At least let him have those which are done for him, that his wife may with confidence beg him off in that day, having paid down the ransom for him. The more sins he has to answer for, the greater need has he of alms, not only for this reason, but because the alms has not the same virtue now, but far less: for it is not all one to have done it himself, and to have another do it for him; therefore, the virtue being less, let us by quantity make it the greatest. Let us not busy ourselves about monuments, not about memorials. This is the greatest memorial: set widows to stand around him. Tell them his name: bid them all make for him their prayers, their supplications: this will overcome God: though it have not been done by the man himself, yet because of him another is the author of the almsgiving. Even this pertains to the mercy of God: "*widows standing around and weeping*" know how to rescue, not indeed from the present death, but from that which is to come. Many have profited even by the alms done by others on their behalf: for even if they have not got perfect (deliverance), at least they have found some comfort

thence. If it be not so, how are children saved? And yet there, the children themselves contribute nothing, but their parents do all: and often have women had their children given them, though the children themselves contributed nothing. Many are the ways God gives us to be saved, only let us not be negligent.

How then if one be poor? Say you. Again I say, the greatness of the alms is not estimated by the quantity given, but by the purpose. Only give not less than your ability, and you have paid all. How then, say you, if he be desolate and a stranger, and have none to care for him? And why is it that he has none, I ask you? In this very thing you suffer your desert, that you have none to be thus your friend, thus virtuous. This is so ordered on purpose that, though we be not ourselves virtuous, we may study to have virtuous companions and friends— both wife, and son, and friend— as reaping some good even through them, a slight gain indeed, but yet a gain. If you make it your chief object not to marry a rich wife, but to have a devout wife, and a religious daughter, you shall gain this consolation; if you study to have your son not rich but devout, you shall also gain this consolation. If you make these your objects then wilt yourself be such as they. This also is part of virtue, to choose such friends, and such a wife and children. Not in vain are the oblations made for the departed, not in vain the prayers, not in vain the almsdeeds: all those things has the Spirit ordered, wishing us to be benefited one by the other. See: he is benefited, you are benefited: because of him, you have despised wealth, being set on to do some generous act: both you are the means of salvation to him, and he to you the occasion of your almsgiving. Doubt not that he shall get some good thereby. It is not for nothing that the Deacon cries, *"For them that are fallen asleep in Christ, and for them that make the memorials for them."* It is not the Deacon that utters this voice, but the Holy Ghost: I speak of the Gift.

What do you say? There is the Sacrifice in hand, and all things laid out duly ordered: Angels are there present, Archangels, the Son of God is there: all stand with such awe, and in the general silence those stand by, crying aloud: and do you think that what is done, is done in vain? Then is not the rest also all in vain, both the oblations made for the Church, and those for the priests, and for the whole body? God forbid! But all is done with faith. What do you think of the oblation made for the martyrs, of the calling made in that hour, martyrs though they be, yet even "*for martyrs?*" It is a great honor to be named in the presence of the Lord, when that memorial is celebrating, the dread Sacrifice, the unutterable mysteries. For just as, so long as the Emperor is seated, is the time for the petitioner to effect what he wishes to effect, but when he is risen, say what he will, it is all in vain, so at that time, while the celebration of the mysteries is going on, it is for all men the greatest honor to be held worthy of mention. For look: then is declared the dread mystery, that God gave Himself for the world: along with that mystery he seasonably puts Him in mind of them that have sinned. For as when the celebration of Emperor's victories is in progress, then, as many as had their part in the victory receive their meed of praise, while at the same time as many as are in bonds are set at liberty in honor of the occasion; but when the occasion is past, he that did not obtain this favor then, no longer gets any: so is it here likewise: this is the time of celebration of a victory. For, says it, "*so often as you eat this bread, you do show forth the Lord's death.*" Then let us not approach indifferently, nor imagine that these things are done in any ordinary sort. But it is in another sense that we make mention of martyrs, and this, for assurance that the Lord is not dead: and this, for a sign that death has received its death's blow, that death itself is dead. Knowing these things, let us devise what consolations we can for the departed, instead of tears, instead of laments, instead of tombs, our alms,

our prayers, our oblations, that both they and we may attain unto the promised blessings, by the grace and loving-kindness of His only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end.
Amen.

Homily 22 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts X. 1-4

"There was a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God."

This man is not a Jew, nor of those under the Law, but he had already forestalled our manner of life. Observe, thus far, two persons, both of high rank, receiving the faith, the eunuch at Gaza and this man; and the pains taken on behalf of these men. But do not imagine that this was because of their high rank: God forbid! It was because of their piety. For that the Scripture mentions their dignified stations, is to show the greatness of their piety; since it is more wonderful when a person being in a position of wealth and power is such as these were. What makes the praise of the former is, his undertaking so long a journey, and this when there was no (festival) season to require it, and his reading on his road, and while riding in his chariot, and his beseeching Philip, and numberless other points: and the great praise of the latter is, that he makes alms and prayers, and is a just man, holding such a command. The reason why the writer describes the man so fully, is, that none may say that the Scripture history relates

falsehoods: "*Cornelius*," he says, "*a centurion of the band called the Italian band*." [Acts 10:1] A "*band*," [σπεῖρα], is what we now call a "*numerous*." "*A devout man*," he says, "*and one that feared God with all his house*" [Acts 10:2]: that you may not imagine that it is because of his high station that these things are done.— When Paul was to be brought over, there is no angel, but the Lord Himself: and He does not send him to some great one, but to a very ordinary person: but here, on the contrary, He brings the chief Apostle (to these Gentiles), not sends them to him: herein condescending to their weakness, and knowing how such persons need to be treated. As indeed on many occasions we find Christ Himself hasting (to such), as being more infirm. Or (it may be) because (Cornelius) was not able himself to leave his home. But here again is a high commendation of alms, just as was there given by means of Tabitha. "*A devout man*," it says, "*and one that feared God with all his house*." Let us hear this, whoever of us neglect them of our own house, whereas this man was careful of his soldiers also. "*And that gave alms*," it says, "*to all the people*." Both his doctrines and his life were right. "*He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius*." [Acts 10:3] Why does he see the angel? This also was in order to the full assurance of Peter, or rather, not of him, but of the others, the weaker ones. "*At the ninth hour*," when he was released from his cares and was at quiet, when he was engaged in prayers and compunction. "*And when he looked on him, he was afraid*." [Acts 10:4] Observe how what the angel speaks he does not speak immediately, but first rouses and elevates his mind. At the sight, there was fear, but a fear in moderation, just so far as served to fix his attention. Then also the words relieved him of his fear. The fear roused him: the praise mitigated what was unpleasant in the fear. "*Your prayers*," says he, "*and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. And now send*

men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter." [Acts 10:5] Lest they should come to a different person, he designates the man not only by his surname, but by the place. *"And the same,"* says he, *"is lodging with one Simon a tanner, who has his house by the seaside."* [Acts 10:6] Do you mark how the Apostles, for love of solitude and quiet, affected the retired quarters of the cities? *"With one Simon a tanner:"* how then if it chanced that there was another? Behold, there is another token, his dwelling by the seaside. All three tokens could not possibly coincide (elsewhere). He does not tell him for what purpose, that he may not take off the intense desire, but he leaves him to an eager and longing expectation of what he shall hear. *"And when the Angel which spoke unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa."* (v. 7, 8.) Do you see, that it is not without purpose that the writer says this? (it shows) that those also *"who waited on him continually"* were such as he. *"And when he had declared the whole matter unto them:"* observe the unassuming character of the man: for he does not say, Call Peter to me: but, in order also to induce him to come, he declared the whole matter:— this was so ordered by Providence;— for he did not choose to use the authority of his rank to fetch Peter to him; therefore *"he declared the matter;"* such was the moderation of the man: and yet no great notion was to be formed of one lodging with a tanner. *"And on the morrow, as they journeyed, and drew near to the city"* [Acts 10:9]— observe how the Spirit connects the times: no sooner than this, and no later, He Causes this to take place— *"Peter about the sixth hour went up upon the housetop to pray:"* that is, privately and quietly, as in an upper chamber. *"And he became very hungry, and would have eaten; but while they made ready, there fell upon him a trance."* [Acts 10:10] What means this expression, [ε]

[κστασις], "trance?" Rather, there was presented to him a kind of spiritual view ([θεωρία]): the soul, so to say, was caused to be out of the body ([ἐξέστη]). *"And saw heaven opened, and, knit at the four corners, a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spoke unto him again the second time, What God has cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."* [Acts 10:11-16] What is this? It is a symbol of the whole world. The man was uncircumcised: and — for he had nothing in common with the Jews— they would all accuse him as a transgressor: *"you went in to men uncircumcised, and ate with them: [Acts 11:3]"* this was a thing altogether offensive to them: observe then what is providentially managed. He himself also says, *"I have never eaten:"* not being himself afraid— far be the thought from us— but it is so contrived by the Spirit, in order that he may have it to say in answer to those accusing him, that he did object: for it was altogether necessary for them to observe the Law. He was in the act of being sent to the Gentiles: therefore that these also may not accuse him, see how many things are contrived (by the Providence of God). For, that it may not seem to be a mere fancy, *"this was done thrice. I said,"* says he, *"Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean.— And the voice came unto him, What God has cleansed, that call not thou common."* [ch. 11:8, with 10:14] It seems indeed to be spoken to him, but the whole is meant for the Jews. For if the teacher is rebuked, much more these. The earth then, this is what the linen sheet denotes, and the wild beasts in it, are they of the Gentiles, and the command, *"Kill and eat,"* denotes that he must

go to them also; and that this thing is thrice done, denotes baptism. *"What God has cleansed,"* says it, *"call not thou common."* Great daring!

Wherefore did he object? That none may say that God was proving him, as in the case of Abraham, this is why he says, *"Not so, Lord,"* etc. not gainsaying—just as to Philip also He said, *"How many loaves do you have?"* Not to learn, but tempting, or *"proving him."* And yet it was the same (Lord) that had discoursed above (in the Law) concerning things clean and unclean. But in that sheet were also *"all the four-footed beasts of the earth:"* the clean with the unclean. And for all this, he knew not what it meant. *"Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, and called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. But while Peter,"* it says, *"doubted in himself"* (v. 17, 18), the men come at the right moment to solve his doubt: just as (the Lord) suffered Joseph first to be perturbed in mind, and then sends the Angel: for the soul with ease accepts the solution, when it has first been in perplexity. His perplexity neither lasts long (when it did occur), nor (did it occur) before this, but just at the moment when they *"asked whether he were lodging there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek you. Arise therefore, and get you down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."* (*supra*, p. 142, and 145, note 7; v. 19, 20.)

And this again is a plea for Peter in answer to the disciples, that he did doubt, and was instructed to doubt nothing. *"For I,"* says He, *"have sent them."* Great is the authority of the Spirit! What God does, this the Spirit is said to do. Not so the Angel, but having first said, *"Your prayers and your alms have ascended, for a memorial before God,"* to show that he is sent from thence, then he adds, *"And now send men,"* etc.: the Spirit not so, but,

"For I have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom you seek: what is the cause wherefore you have come? And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that fears God and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for you into his house, and to hear words of you." (v. 21, 22.) They speak his praises, so as to persuade him that an Angel has in fact appeared unto him. *"Then called he them in,"* (b) that they may suffer no harm, *"and lodged them:"* thenceforth he without scruple takes his meals with them. *"And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Cæsarea accompanied him. And the morrow after, they entered into Cæsarea."* (v. 23, 24.) The man was a person of note, and it was in a city of note that he then was.

(a) But let us look over again what has been said. *"There was a certain man in Cæsarea,"* etc. (Recapitulation, v. 1, 2.) Observe with whom the beginning of the Gentiles is made— with *"a devout man,"* and one proved to be worthy by his works. For if, though the case be so, they are still offended, if this had not been the case, what would not have been the consequence! But mark the greatness of the assurance. (c) To this end all is done (in the way it is done), and the affair takes its beginning from Judea. (d) *"He saw in a vision, evidently,"* etc. [Acts 10:3]. It was not in his sleep that the Angel appeared to him, but while he was awake, in the daytime, *"about the ninth hour. He saw an Angel of God coming in unto him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid."* So occupied was he with himself. Implying, that it was in consequence of the Angel's calling him by a voice that he saw him; as, had he not called him, he would not have seen him: so taken up was he with the act in which he was engaged. But the Angel says to him, *"Your prayers and your alms have*

come up for a memorial before God, and now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, who is called Peter." [Acts 10:5] So far, he signified that the sending for him would be for good consequences, but in what way good, he did not intimate. So, neither does Peter relate the whole matter, but everywhere, the narratives are in part only, for the purpose of making the hearers apply their minds to what is said. "*Send and call for Simon:*" in like manner the Angel only calls Philip. "*And as they went on their journey, and drew near to the city*" [Acts 10:9]: in order that Peter should not be in perplexity too long. "*Peter went up upon the housetop,*" etc. Observe, that not even his hunger forced him to have recourse to the sheet. "*Rise, Peter,*" says the Voice, "*kill and eat.*" [Acts 10:13] Probably he was on his knees when he saw the vision.— To me it seems that this also denotes the Gospel (or, "*the Preaching*"). That the thing taking place was of God (the circumstances made evident, namely), both that he sees it (descending) from above, and that he is in a trance; and, that the voice comes from thence, and the thrice confessing that the creatures there were unclean, and its coming from thence, and being drawn back there (all this), is a mighty token of the cleanness (imparted to them).— But why is this done? For the sake of those thereafter, to whom he is about to relate it. For to himself it had been said, "*Go not into the way of the Gentiles.*" [Matthew 10:5] * * For if Paul needed both (to give) circumcision, and (to offer) sacrifice, much more (was some assurance needed) then, in the beginning of the Preaching, while they were as yet weaker. [Acts 16:3; 21:16]— Observe too how he did not at once receive them. For, it says, they "*called, and asked, whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodging there.*" [Acts 10:18] As it was a mean looking house, they asked below, they inquired of the neighbors. "*And while Peter thought, the Spirit said unto him, Arise, get you down, and go, nothing doubting, for I have sent them.*" (v. 19, 20.) And

he does not say, For to this end did the vision appear unto you; but, *"I have sent them. Then Peter went down"* [Acts 10:21]— this is the way the Spirit must be obeyed, without demanding reasons. For it is sufficient for all assurance to be told by Him, This do, this believe: nothing more (is needed) — *"Then Peter went down, and said, Behold, I am he whom you seek: what is the cause wherefore you have come?"* He saw a soldier, saw a man: it was not that he was afraid, on the contrary, having first confessed that he was the person whom they sought, then he asks for the cause (of their coming); that it may not be supposed that the reason of his asking the cause, was, that he wished to hide himself: (he asks it) in order, that if it be immediately urgent, he may also go forth with them, but if not, may receive them as guests. *"And they said, etc. into his house."* [Acts 10:22] This he had ordered them. Do not think he has done this out of contempt: not as of contempt has he sent, but so he was ordered. *"And Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends."* [Acts 10:24] It was right that his kinsmen and friends should be gathered to him. But being there present, they would have heard from him (what had happened).

See how great the virtue of alms, both in the former discourse, and here! There, it delivered from death temporal; here, from death eternal; and opened the gates of heaven. Such are the pains taken for the bringing of Cornelius to the faith, that both an angel is sent, and the Spirit works, and the chief of the Apostles is fetched to him, and such a vision is shown, and, in short, nothing is left undone. How many centurions were there not besides, and tribunes, and kings, and none of them obtained what this man did! Hear, all you that are in military commands, all you that stand beside kings. *"A just man,"* it says, *"fearing God; devout"* (v. 2, and 22); and what is more than all, with all his house. Not as we (who): that our servants may

be afraid of us, do everything. but not that they may be devout. And over the domestics too, so * *. Not so this man; but he was "*one that feared God with all his house*" [Acts 10:2], for he was as the common father of those with him, and of all the others (under his command.) But observe what (the soldier) says himself. For, fearing * *, he adds this also: "*well reported of by all the nation.*" For what if he was uncircumcised? Nay, but those give him a good report. Nothing like alms: great is the virtue of this practice, when the alms is poured forth from pure stores; for it is like a fountain discharging mud, when it issues from unjust stores, but when from just gains, it is as a limpid and pure stream in a paradise, sweet to the sight, sweet to the touch, both light and cool, when given in the noon-day heat. Such is alms. Beside this fountain, not poplars and pines, nor cypresses, but other plants than these, and far better, of goodly stature: friendship with God, praise with men, glory to Godward, good-will from all; blotting out of sins, great boldness, contempt of wealth. This is the fountain by which the plant of love is nourished: for nothing is so wont to nourish love, as the being merciful: it makes its branches to lift themselves on high. This fountain is better than that in Paradise [Genesis 2:10]; a fountain, not dividing into four heads, but reaching unto Heaven itself: this gives birth to that river "*which springs up into eternal life*" [John 4:14]: on this let Death light, and like a spark it is extinguished by the fountain: such, wherever it drops, are the mighty blessings it causes. This quenches, even as a spark, the river of fire: this so strangles that worm, as naught else can do. [Mark 9:44] He that has this, shall not gnash his teeth. Of the water of this, let there be dropped upon the chains, and it dissolves them: let it but touch the firebrands, it quenches all.— A fountain does not give out streams for a while and anon run dry—else must it be no more a fountain—but ever gushes: so let our fountain give out more copiously of the streams of mercy

(in alms). This cheers him that receives: this is alms, to give out not only a copious, but a perennial, stream. If you would that God rain down His mercy upon you as from fountains, have thou also a fountain. And yet there is no comparison (between God's fountain and yours): for if you open the mouths of this fountain, such are the mouths of God's Fountain as to surpass every abyss. God does but seek to get an opportunity on our part, and pours forth from His storehouses His blessings. When He expends, when He lavishes, then is He rich, then is He affluent. Large is the mouth of that fountain: pure and limpid its water. If you stop not up the fountain here, neither will you stop up that fountain.— Let no unfruitful tree stand beside it, that it may not waste its spray. Have you wealth? Plant not poplars there: for such is luxury: it consumes much, and shows nothing for it in itself, but spoils the fruit. Plant not a pine-tree— such is wantonness in apparel, beautiful only to the sight, and useful for nothing— nor yet a fir-tree, nor any other of such trees as consume indeed, but are in no sort useful. Set it thick with young shoots: plant all that is fruitful, in the hands of the poor, all that you will. Nothing richer than this ground. Though small the reach of the hand, yet the tree it plants starts up to heaven and stands firm. This it is to plant. For that which is planted on the earth will perish, though not now, at any rate a hundred years hence. Thou plantest many trees, of which you shall not enjoy the fruit, but ere you can enjoy it, death comes upon you. This tree will give you its fruit then, when you are dead.— If you plant, plant not in the maw of gluttony, that the fruit end not in the draught-house: but plant thou in the pinched belly, that the fruit may start up to heaven. Refresh the straightened soul of the poor, lest you pinch your own roomy soul.— See you not, that the plants which are over-much watered at the root decay, but grow when watered in moderation? Thus also drench not thou your own belly, that the root of the tree decay not: water that which is

thirsty, that it may bear fruit. If you water in moderation, the sun will not wither them, but if in excess, then it withers them: such is the nature of the sun. In all things, excess is bad; wherefore let us cut it off, that we also may obtain the things we ask for.— Fountains, it is said, rise on the most elevated spots. Let us be elevated in soul, and our alms will flow with a rapid stream: the elevated soul cannot but be merciful, and the merciful cannot but be elevated. For he that despises wealth, is higher than the root of evils.— Fountains are oftenest found in solitary places: let us withdraw our soul from the crowd, and alms will gush out with us. Fountains, the more they are cleaned, the more copiously they flow: so with us, the more we spend, the more all good grows.— He that has a fountain, has nothing to fear: then neither let us be afraid. For indeed this fountain is serviceable to us for drink, for irrigation, for building, for everything. Nothing better than this draught: it is not possible for this to inebriate. Better to possess such a fountain, than to have fountains running with gold. Better than all gold-bearing soil is the soul which bears this gold. For it advances us, not into these earthly palaces, but into those above. The gold becomes an ornament to the Church of God. Of this gold is wrought "*the sword of the Spirit*" [Ephesians 6:17], the sword by which the dragon is beheaded. From this fountain come the precious stones which are on the King's head. Then let us not neglect so great wealth, but contribute our alms with largeness, that we may be found worthy of the mercy of God, by the grace and tender compassion of His only begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 23 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts X. 23, 24

"Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends."

"He" called them in, and lodged them. Good, that first he gives the men friendly treatment, after the fatigue of their journey, and makes them at home with him; *"and on the morrow,"* sets out with them. And certain accompany him: this too as Providence ordered it, that they should be witnesses afterwards when Peter would need to justify himself. *"And Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends."* This is the part of a friend, this the part of a devout man, that where such blessings are concerned, he takes care that his near friends shall be made partakers of all. Of course (his *"near"* friends), those in whom he had ever full confidence; fearing, with such an interest at stake, to entrust the matter to others. In my opinion, it was by Cornelius himself that both friends and kinsmen had been brought to a better mind. *"And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him."* [Acts 10:25] This, both to teach the others, and by way of giving thanks to God, and showing his own humility: thereby making it plain, that though he had been commanded, yet in himself he had great piety. What then did Peter? *"But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."* [Acts 10:26] Do you mark how, before all else (the Apostles) teach

them this lesson, not to think great things of them? *"And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that had come together. And he said unto them, You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."* (v. 27, 28.) Observe, he straightway speaks of the mercy of God, and points out to them that it is a great grace that God has shown them. Observe also how while he utters great things, at the same time he speaks modestly. For he does not say, We, being men who do not deign to keep company with any (such), have come to you: but what says he? *"You know"*— God commanded this — *"that it is against law to keep company with, or come unto, one of another nation."* Then he goes on to say, *"And to me God has shown"*— this he says, that none may account the thanks due to him— *"that I should call no man"*— that it may not look like obsequiousness to him, *"no human being,"* says he — *"common or unclean."* [Acts 10:29] *"Wherefore also"*— that they may not think the affair a breach of the law on his part, nor (Cornelius) suppose that because he was in a station of command therefore he had complied, but that they may ascribe all to God—*"wherefore also I came without gainsaying as soon as I was sent for:"* (though) not only to keep company, but even to come unto (him) was not permitted. *"I ask therefore, for what intent you have sent for me."* Already Peter had heard the whole matter from the soldiers also, but he wishes them first to confess, and to make them amenable to the Faith. What then does Cornelius? He does not say, Why, did not the soldiers tell you? But observe again, how humbly he speaks. For he says, *"From the fourth day I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. And at the ninth hour,"* he says, *"I*

was praying." (v. 30, 31.) It seems to me, that this man had also fixed for himself set times of a life under stricter rule, and on certain days. For this is why he he says, *"From the fourth day."* See how great a thing prayer is! When he advanced in piety, then the Angel appears to him. *"From the fourth day:"* i.e. of the week; not *"four days ago."* For, *"on the morrow Peter went away with them, and on the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea:"* this is one day: and the day on which the persons sent came (to Joppa) one day: and on the third (the Angel) appeared: so that there are two days after that on which (Cornelius) had been praying. *"And, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing:"* he does not say, an Angel, so unassuming is he: *"and said, Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter: he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside: who, when he comes, shall speak unto you. Immediately therefore I sent to you; and you have well done that you have come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded you of God."* [Acts 10:31-33] (b) See what faith, what piety! He knew that it was no word of man that Peter spoke, when he said, *"God has shown me."* Then says the man, We are present to hear all things that are commanded you of the Lord. (a) Therefore it was that Peter asked, *"For what intent have ye sent for me?"* on purpose that he might so speak these very words. (d) *"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is acceptable to him."* (v. 34, 35.) That is, be he uncircumcised or circumcised. (c) This also Paul declaring, says, *"For there is no respect of persons with God."* [Romans 2:11] (e) What then? (it may be asked) is the man yonder in Persia acceptable to Him? If he be worthy, in this regard he is acceptable, that it should be

granted him to be brought unto faith ([τῷ καταξιωθῆναι τῆς πίστεως]). The Eunuch from Ethiopia He overlooked not. *"What shall one say then of the religious men who have been overlooked?"* It is not the case, that any (such) ever was overlooked. But what he says is to this effect, that God rejects no man. *"In every nation, he that fears God and works righteousness:"* (by righteousness) he means, all virtue. Mark, how he subdues all elation of mind in him. That (the Jews) may not seem to be in the condition of persons cast off (he adds), The word which He sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all [Acts 10:36]: this he says also for the sake of those present (of the Jews), that He may persuade them also: this is why he forces Cornelius to speak. *"He,"* says he, *"is Lord of all."* But observe at the very outset, *"The word,"* says he, *"which He sent unto the children of Israel;"* he gives them the preëminence. Then he adduces (these Gentiles) themselves as witnesses: *"ye know,"* says he, *"the matter which came to pass throughout all Judea, beginning at Galilee"*— then he confirms it from this also— *"after the baptism which John preached"* [Acts 10:37]— *"even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power."* [Acts 10:38] He does not mean, You know Jesus, for they did not know Him, but he speaks of the things done by Him: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: by this he shows that many cases of lost senses or paralyzed limbs are the devil's work, and a wrench given to the body by him: as also Christ said. *"For God was with Him."* Again, lowly terms. *"And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem"* [Acts 10:39]: both *"we,"* says he, and you. Then the Passion, and the reason why they do not believe: *"Whom also they slew, and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who ate*

and drank with Him after He rose from the dead." (v. 40, 41.) This is a proof of the Resurrection. *"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."* [Acts 10:42] This is great. Then he adduces the testimony from the Prophets: *"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believes in Him shall receive remission of sins."* [Acts 10:43] This is a proof of that which was about to be: this is the reason why he here cites the Prophets.

But let us look over again what relates to Cornelius. (Recapitulation.) He sent, it says, to Joppa to fetch Peter. *"He was waiting for him,"* etc; see how fully he believed that Peter would certainly come: (b) *"and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him."* (v. 24, 25.) (a) Mark how on every side it is shown how worthy he is! (So) the Eunuch there desired Philip to come up and sit in the chariot [Acts 8:31], although not knowing who he was, upon no other introduction ([ἐ] [παγγελίας]) than that given by the Prophet. But here Cornelius fell at his feet. (c) *"Stand up, I myself also am a man."* [Acts 10:26] Observe how free from adulation his speech is on all occasions, and how full of humility. *"And conversing with him, he came in."* (a) [Acts 10:27] Conversing about what? I suppose saying these words: *"I myself also am a man."* (e) Do you mark (Peter's) unassuming temper? He himself also shows that his coming is God's doing: *"You know that it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew,"* etc. [Acts 10:28] And why did he not speak of the linen sheet? Observe Peter's freedom from all vainglory: but, that he is sent of God, this indeed he mentions; of the manner in which he was sent, he speaks not at present; when the need has arisen, seeing he had said, *"You know that it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew to keep company with, or to come unto, one of another nation,"* he simply adds, *"but to me God has shown,"* etc. There is nothing of vainglory here. *"All you,"* he says, *"know."*

He makes their knowledge stand surety for him. But Cornelius says, *"We are present before God to hear all things that are commanded you of the Lord"* [Acts 10:33]: not, Before man, but, *"Before God."* This is the way one ought to attend to God's servants. Do you see his awakened mind? Do you see how worthy he was of all these things? *"And Peter,"* it says, *"opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."* [Acts 10:34] This he said also by way of justifying himself with the Jews then present. For, being at the point to commit the Word to these (Gentiles), he first puts this by way of apology. What then? Was He *"a respecter of persons"* beforetime? God forbid! For beforetime likewise it was just the same: *"Every one,"* as he says, *"that fears Him, and works righteousness, would be acceptable to Him."* As when Paul says, *"For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things of the Law."* [Romans 2:14] *"That fears God and works righteousness:"* he assumes both doctrine and manner of life: is *"accepted with Him;"* for, if He did not overlook the Magi, nor the Ethiopian, nor the thief, nor the harlot, much more them that work righteousness, and are willing, shall He in anywise not overlook. *"What say you then to this, that there are likely persons ([ἐ] [πιεικέις]), men of mild disposition, and yet they will not believe?"* (Above, p. 149, note 2.) Lo, you have yourself named the cause: they will not. But besides the likely person he here speaks of is not this sort of man, but the man *"that works righteousness:"* that is, the man who in all points is virtuous and irreproachable, when he has the fear of God as he ought to have it. But whether a person be such, God only knows. See how this man was acceptable: see how, as soon as he heard, he was persuaded. *"Yes, and now too,"* say you, *"every one would be persuaded, be who he may."* But the signs that are now, are much greater than those, and more wonderful.— Then Peter commences his teaching, and reserves for the Jews the privilege

of their birth. *"The word,"* he says, which He sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace [Acts 10:36], not bringing judgment. He is sent to the Jews also: yet for all this He did not spare them. *"Preaching peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all."* First he discourses of His being Lord and in exceeding elevated terms, seeing he had to deal with a soul more than commonly elevated, and that took all in with ardor. Then he proves how He was Lord of all, from the things which He achieved *"throughout all Judea. For you know,"* says he, *"the matter which came to pass throughout all Judea:"* and, what is the wonderful part of it, *"beginning at Galilee: after the baptism which John preached."* [Acts 10:37] First he speaks of His success, and then again he says concerning Him, *"Jesus of Nazareth."* Why, what a stumbling-block, this birthplace! *"How God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power."* [Acts 10:38] Then again the proof—how does that appear?—from the good that He did. *"Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil:"* and the greatness of the power shown when He overcomes the devil; and the cause, *"Because God was with Him."* Therefore also the Jews spoke thus: *"We know that You are a teacher come from God: for none can do these miracles except God be with him."* [John 3:2] Then, when he has shown that He was sent from God, he next speaks of this, that He was slain: that you may not imagine anything absurd. Do you see how far they are from hiding the Cross out of view, nay, that together with the other circumstances they put also the manner? *"Whom also,"* it says, *"they slew by hanging on a tree. And gave Him,"* it is added, *"to be made manifest not to all the people, but to witnesses before ordained of God, even unto us:"* and yet it was (Christ) Himself that elected them; but this also he refers to God. *"To the before-ordained,"* he says, *"even to us, who ate and drank with Him after that He was risen from the dead."* (v. 39, 41.) See whence he

fetches his assurance of the resurrection. What is the reason that being risen he did no sign, but only ate and drank? Because the Resurrection itself was a great sign, and of this nothing was so much a sign as the eating and drinking. *"To testify,"* says he— in a manner calculated to alarm— that they may not have it in their power to fall back upon the excuse of ignorance: and he does not say, *"that He is the Son of God,"* but, what would most alarm them, *"that it is He which is ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead."* [Acts 10:42] *"To him give all the Prophets witness,"* etc. [Acts 10:43] When by the terror he has agitated them, then he brings in the pardon, not spoken from himself but from the Prophets. And what is terrifying is from him, what is mild from the Prophets.

All you that have received this forgiveness, all you to whom it has been vouchsafed to attain unto faith, learn, I beseech you, the greatness of the Gift, and study not to be insolent to your Benefactor. For we obtained forgiveness, not that we should become worse, but to make us far better and more excellent. Let none say that God is the cause of our evil doings, in that He did not punish, nor take vengeance. If (as it is said) a ruler having taken a murderer, lets him go, say, is he (not) judged to be the cause of the murders afterwards committed? See then, how we expose God to the tongues of the wicked. For what do they not say, what leave unuttered? *"(God) Himself,"* say they, *"allowed them; for he ought to have punished them as they deserved, not to honor them, nor crown them, nor admit them to the foremost privileges, but to punish and take vengeance upon them: but he that, instead of this, honors them, has made them to be such as they are."* Do not, I beseech and implore you, do not let any man utter such speech as far as we are concerned. Better to be buried ten thousand times over, than that God through us should be so spoken of! The Jews, we read, said to (Christ) Himself, *"Thou that destroyest the Temple, and in three days*

buildest it up, come down from the Cross" [Matthew 27:40]: and again, "*If Thou be the Son of God:*" but the reproaches here are more grievous than those, that through us He should be called a teacher of wickedness! Let us cause the very opposite to be said, by having our conversation worthy of Him that calls us, and (worthily) approaching to the baptism of adoption. For great indeed is the might of baptism ([φωτίσματος]): it makes them quite other men than they were, that partake of the gift; it does not let the men be men (and nothing more). Make thou the Gentile ([τὸν slave, like a malefactor, as though it were not your duty to live unto God? Why do you stand affected to Him, as if you had in Him a ruthless, cruel Master? What can be more heartless (ψυχρότερον)], what more miserable, than those who make that the time to receive baptism? God made you a friend, and vouchsafed you all His good things, that you may act the part of a friend. Suppose you had done some man the greatest of wrongs, had insulted him, and brought upon him disgraces without end, suppose you had fallen into the hands of the person wronged, and he, in return for all this, had honored you, made you partaker of all that he had, and in the assembly of his friends, of those in whose presence he was insulted, had crowned you, and declared that he would hold you as his own begotten son, and then straightway had died: say, would you not have bewailed him? Would you not have deemed his death a calamity? Would you not have said, Would that he were alive, that I might have it in my power to make the fit return, that I might requite him, that I might show myself not base to my benefactor? So then, where it is but man, this is how you would act; and where it is God, are you eager to be gone, that you may not requite your benefactor for so great gifts? Nay rather, choose the time for coming to Him so that you shall have it in your power to requite Him like for like. True, say you, but I cannot keep (the gift). Has God commanded impossibilities? Hence it is

that all is clean reversed, hence that, all the world over, every thing is marred— because nobody makes it his mark to live after God. Thus those who are yet Catechumens, because they make this their object, (how they may defer baptism to the last,) give themselves no concern about leading an upright life: and those who have been baptized ([φωτισθεντες]), whether it be because they received it as children, or whether it be that having received it in sickness, and afterwards recovered ([ἀ] [νενεγκόντες]), they had no hearty desire to live on (to the glory of God), so it is, that neither do these make an earnest business of it: nay, even such as received it in health, have little enough to show of any good impression, and warmly affected for the time, these also presently let the fire go out. Why do you flee? Why do you tremble? What is it you are afraid of? You do not mean to say that you are not permitted to follow your business? I do not part you from your wife! No, it is from fornication that I bar you. I do not debar you from the enjoyment of your wealth? No, but from covetousness and rapacity. I do not oblige you to empty out all your coffers? No, but to give some small matter according to your means to them that lack, your superfluities to their need, and not even this unrewarded. We do not urge you to fast? We do but forbid you to besot yourselves with drunkenness and gormandizing. The things we would retrench are but the very things which bring you disgrace; things which even here, on this side of hell-fire, you yourselves confess to be things to be shunned and hated. We do not forbid you to be glad and to rejoice? Nay, only rejoice not with a disgraceful and unbecoming merriment. What is it you dread, why are you afraid, why do you tremble? Where marriage is, where enjoyment of wealth, where food in moderation, what matter of sin is there in these things? And yet, they that are without enjoin the opposites to these, and are obeyed. For they demand not according to your means, but they say, You must give thus much: and if you

allege poverty, they will make no account of that. Not so Christ: Give, says He, of what you have, and I inscribe you in the first rank. Again those say, If you will distinguish yourself, forsake father, mother, kindred, friends, and keep close attendance on the Palace, laboring, toiling, slaving, distracted, suffering miseries without number. Not so Christ; but keep thou, says He, at home with your wife, with your children, and as for your daily occupations reform and regulate them on the plan of leading a peaceable life, free from cares and from perils. True, say you, but the other promises wealth. Aye, but Christ a kingdom, and more, He promises wealth also with it. For, "*Seek ye*," says He, "*the kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you*" [Matthew 6:33]: throwing in, by way of additional boon, what the other holds out as the main thing: and the Psalmist says, he has "*never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.*" [Psalm 37:25] Let us set about practising virtue, let us make a beginning; let us only lay hold on it, and you shall see what the good will be. For surely in these (worldly) objects you do not succeed so without labor, that you should be so faint-hearted for these (higher) objects— that you should say, Those are to be had without labor, these only with toil. Nay,— what need to tell you what is the true state of the case?— those are had only with greater labor. Let us not recoil from the Divine Mysteries, I beseech you. Look not at this, that one who was baptized before you, has turned out ill, and has fallen from his hope: since among soldiers also we see some not doing their duty by the service, while we see others distinguishing themselves, and we do not look only at the idle ones, but we emulate these, the men who are successful. But besides, consider how many, after their baptism, have of men become angels!

Fear the uncertainty of the future. "*As a thief in the night*," so death comes: and not merely as a thief, but while we sleep it sets upon us, and

carries us off while we are idling. To this end has God made the future uncertain, that we may spend our time in the practice of virtue, because of the uncertainty of expectation. But He is merciful, say you. How long shall we hear this senseless, ridiculous talk? *I* affirm not only that God is merciful, but that nothing can be more merciful than He, and that He orders all things concerning us for our good. How many all their life do you see afflicted with the worst form of leprosy! ([ἐ] [ν ἐλέφαντι διάγοντας], "*Elephantiasis*,") how many blind from their earliest youth even to old age! Others who have lost their eyesight, others in poverty, others in bonds, others again in the mines, others entombed ([καταχωσθέντας]) together, others (slaughtered) in wars! These things say you, do not look like mercy. Say, could He not have prevented these things had He wished, yet He permits them? True, say you. Say, those who are blind from their infancy, why are they so? I will not tell you, until you promise me to receive baptism, and, being baptized, to live aright. It is not right to give you the solution of these questions. The preaching is not meant just for amusement. For even if I solve this, on the back of this follows another question: of such questions there is a bottomless deep. Therefore do not get into a habit of looking to have them solved for you: else we shall never stop questioning. For look, if I solve this, I do but lead the way to question upon question, numberless as the snowflakes. So that this is what we learn, rather to raise questions, not to solve the questions that are raised. For even if we do solve them, we have not solved them altogether, but (only) as far as man's reasoning goes. The proper solution of such questions is faith: the knowing that God does all things justly and mercifully and for the best: that to comprehend the reason of them is impossible. This is the one solution, and another better than this exists not. For say, what is the use of having a question solved? This, that one needs no longer to make a question of the

thing which is solved. And if you get yourself to believe this, that all things are ordered by the Providence of God, Who, for reasons known to Himself, permits some things and actively works others, you are rid of the need of questioning, and hast gotten the gain of the solution. But let us come back to our subject. Do you not see such numbers of men suffering chastisements? God (say you) permits these things to be. Make the right use of the health of the body, in order to the health of the soul. But you will say, What is the use to me of labors and toil, when it is in my power to get quit of all (my sins) without labor? In the first place, this is not certain. It may happen, that a person not only does not get quit of his sins without labor, but that he departs hence with all his sins upon him. However, even if this were certain, still your argument is not to be tolerated. He has drawn you to the contests: the golden arms lie there. When you ought to take them, and to handle them, you wish to be ingloriously saved, and to do no good work! Say, if war broke out, and the Emperor were here, and you saw some charging into the midst of the phalanxes of the enemy, hewing them down, dealing wounds by thousands, others thrusting (with the sword's point), others hounding (now here, now there), others dashing on horseback, and these praised by the Emperor, admired, applauded, crowned: others on the contrary thinking themselves well off if they take no harm, and keeping in the hindmost ranks, and sitting idly there; then after the close of the war, the former sort summoned, honored with the greatest gifts, their names proclaimed by the heralds: while of the latter, not even the name becomes known, and their reward of the good obtained is only that they are safe: which sort would you wish to belong to? Why, if you were made of stone, if you were more stupid even than senseless and lifeless things, would you not ten thousand times rather belong to the former? Yea, I beseech and implore you. For if need were to fall fighting, ought you not eagerly to choose this?

See you not how it is with them that have fallen in the wars, how illustrious they are, how glorious? And yet they die a death, after which there is no getting honor from the emperor. But in that other war, there is nothing of the kind, but you shall in any wise be presented with your scars. Which scars, even without persecutions, may it be granted all us to have to exhibit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 24 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts X. 44, 46

"While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God."

Observe God's providential management. He does not suffer the speech to be finished, nor the baptism to take place upon a command of Peter, but, when He has made it evident how admirable their state of mind is, and a beginning is made of the work of teaching, and they have believed that assuredly baptism is the remission of sins, then immediately comes the Spirit upon them. Now this is done by God's so disposing it as to provide for Peter a mighty ground of justification. And it is not simply that the Spirit came upon them, but, *"they spoke with tongues:"* which was the thing that astonished those who had come together. They altogether disliked the matter, wherefore it is that the whole is of God; and as for Peter, it may almost be said, that he is present only to be taught (with them) the lesson, that they must take the Gentiles in hand, and that they themselves are the persons by whom this must be done. For whereas after all these great events, still both in Cæsarea and in Jerusalem a questioning is made about it, how would it have been if these (tokens) had not gone step by step with the progress of the affair? Therefore it is that this is carried to a sort of excess. Peter seizes his advantage, and see the plea he makes of it. *"Can*

any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" [Acts 10:47] Mark the issue to which he brings it; how he has been travailing to bring this forth. So (entirely) was he of this mind! Can any one, he asks, "*forbid water?*" It is the language, we may almost say, of one triumphantly pressing his advantage ([ἐ] [πεμβάινοντος]) against such as would forbid, such as should say that this ought not to be. The whole thing, he says, is complete, the most essential part of the business, the baptism with which we were baptized. "*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*" [Acts 10:48] After he has cleared himself, then, and not before, he commands them to be baptized: teaching them by the facts themselves. Such was the dislike the Jews had to it! Therefore it is that he first clears himself, although the very facts cry aloud, and then gives the command. "*Then prayed they him*"— well might they do so— "*to tarry certain days:*" and with a good courage thenceforth he does tarry.

"And the Apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, You went in to men uncircumcised, and ate with them." [Acts 11:1-3] After such great things, "*they of the circumcision contended:*" not the Apostles; God forbid! It means, they took no small offense. And see what they allege. They do not say, Why did you preach? But, Why did you eat with them? But Peter, not stopping to notice this frigid objection— for frigid indeed it is— takes his stand ([ἵ] [σταται]) on that great argument, If they had the Spirit Itself given them, how could one refuse to give them the baptism? But how came it that in the case of the Samaritans this did not happen, but, on the contrary, neither before their baptism nor after it was there any controversy, and there they did not take it amiss, nay, as soon as

they heard of it, sent the Apostles for this very purpose? [Acts 8:14] True, but neither in the present case is this the thing they complain of; for they knew that it was of Divine Grace: what they say is, Why did you eat with them? Besides, the difference is not so great for Samaritans as it is for Gentiles. Moreover, it is so managed (as part of the Divine plan) that he is accused in this way: on purpose that they may learn: for Peter, without some cause given, would not have related the vision. But observe his freedom from all elation and vainglory. For it says, *"But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, I was in the city of Joppa, praying:"* he does not say why, nor on what occasion: *"and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me (v. 4, 5): upon the which when I had fastened my eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat."* (v. 6, 7.) As much as to say, This of itself was enough to have persuaded me— my having seen the linen sheet: but moreover a Voice was added. *"But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean has at any time entered into my mouth."* [Acts 11:8] Do you mark? *"I did my part,"* says he: *"I said, that I have never eaten anything common or unclean:"* with reference to this that they said, *"You went in, and ate with them."* But this he does not say to Cornelius: for there was no need to mention it to him. *"But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God has cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven."* (v. 9, 10.) The essential points were those (that ensued at Cæsarea); but by these he prepares the way for them. Observe how he justifies himself (by reasons), and forbears to use his authority as teacher. For the more mildly he expresses himself,

the more tractable he makes them. *"At no time,"* says he, *"has anything common or unclean entered into my mouth.— And, behold— this too was part of his defence— three men stood at the house in which I was, sent to me from Cæsarea. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting."* (v. 11, 12.) Do you mark that it is to the Spirit the enacting of laws belongs! *"And these also accompanied me"*— nothing can be more lowly, when he alleges the brethren for witnesses!— *"these six men, and we entered into the man's house: and he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell you words, whereby thou and all your house shall be saved."* (v. 13, 14.) And he does not mention the words spoken by the Angel to Cornelius, Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God, that he may not disgust them; but what says he? *"He shall tell you words, whereby thou and all your house shall be saved:"* with good reason this is added. Also he says nothing of the man's fitness ([ἐ] [πικέ]). *"The Spirit,"* he might say, *"having sent (me), God having commanded, on the one part having summoned (me) through the Angel, on the other urging (me) on, and solving my doubt about the things, what was I to do?"* He says none of these things, however: but makes his strong point of what happened last, which even in itself was an incontrovertible argument. *"And as I began to speak,"* etc. [Acts 11:15] Then why did not this happen alone? Of superabundance ([ἐ] [κ περισίας]) this is wrought by God, that it might be shown that the beginning too was not from the Apostle. But had he set out of his own motion, without any of these things having taken place, they would have been very much hurt: so that from the beginning he disposes their minds in his favor*: saying to them, *"Who have received the Holy Ghost even as we."* And not content with this, he reminds them also of the words of the Lord:

"Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." [Acts 11:16] He means, that no new thing has happened, but just what the Lord foretold. *"But there was no need to baptize?"* (Comp. p. 158.) But the baptism was completed already. And he does not say, I ordered them to be baptized: but what says he? *"Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?"* [Acts 11:17] He shows that he had himself done nothing: for the very thing which we have obtained, he says, that same did those men receive. That he may more effectually stop their mouths, therefore he says, *"The like gift."* Do you perceive how he does not allow them to have less: when they believed, says he, the same gift did God give unto them, as He did to us who believed on the Lord, and Himself cleanses them. And he does not say, To you, but *to us*. Why do you feel aggrieved, when *we* call them partakers (with *us*?) *"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."* [Acts 11:18] Do you mark that it all came of Peter's discourse, by his admirably skilful way of relating the facts? They glorified God that He had given repentance to themselves ([καὶ αὐτοῖς]) also: they were humbled by these words. Hence was the door of faith opened thenceforth to the Gentiles. But, if you please, let us look over again what has been said.

"While Peter yet spoke," etc. (Recapitulation.) He does not say that Peter was astonished, but, *"They of the circumcision:"* since he knew what was in preparation. And yet they ought to have marvelled at this, how they themselves had believed. When they heard that they had believed, they were not astonished, but when God gave them the Spirit. Then *"answered Peter and said,"* etc. [Acts 10:47] And therefore it is that he says, *"God has*

shown that I should not call common or unclean any human being." [Acts 10:28] He knew this from the first, and plans his discourse beforehand (with a view to it). Gentiles? What Gentiles henceforth? They were no longer Gentiles, the Truth having come. It is nothing wonderful, he says, if before the act of baptism they received the Spirit: in our own case this same happened. Peter shows that not as the rest either were they baptized, but in a much better way. This is the reason why the thing takes place in this manner, that they may have nothing to say, but even in this way may account them equal with themselves. *"And they besought him,"* it says, *"to tarry certain days."* [Acts 10:48] *"And the Apostles and brethren, etc. And they of the circumcision contended with him."* [ch. 11:1, 2] Do you remark how they were not kindly disposed towards him? Saying *"You went in to men uncircumcised, and ate with them."* [Acts 11:3] Do you note what zeal they had for the Law? Not Peter's authority abashed them, not the signs which had taken place, not the success achieved, what a thing it was, the Gentiles having *"received the word:"* but they contended about those petty things. For if none of those (signs) had taken place, was not the success (itself) enough? But not so does Peter frame his defence: for he was wise, or rather it was not his wisdom, but the Spirit that spoke the words. And by the matter of his defence, he shows that in no one point was he the author, but in every point God, and upon Him he casts the whole. *"The trance,"* he says — it was He that caused me to fall into it, for *"I was in Joppa,"* etc.: the vessel — it was He that showed it; I objected: again, He spoke, and even then I did not hear: the Spirit commanded me to go, and even then though I went, I did not run: I told that God had sent me, and after these things, even then I did not baptize, but again God did the whole. God baptized them, not I. And he does not say, Was it not right then to add the water? But, implying that nothing was lacking, *"What was I, that I should withstand God?"* What

a defence is here! For he does not say, Then knowing these things, hold your peace; but what? He stands their attack, and to their impeachment he pleads— *"What was I, to be able to hinder God?"* It was not possible for me to hinder— a forcible plea indeed, and such as might well put them to shame. Whence being at last afraid, *"they held their peace and glorified God."*

In like manner ought we also to glorify God for the good things which befall our neighbors, only not in the way that the rest of the newly-baptized are insulted, when they see others receiving baptism, and immediately departing this life. It, is right to glorify God, even though all be saved: and as for you, if you be willing, you have received a greater gift (than they): I do not mean in respect of the baptism, for the gift there is the same for him as for you, but in regard that you have received a set time for winning distinction. The other put on the robe, and was not suffered to exhibit himself therewith in the procession, whereas to you, God has given full opportunity to use your arms for the right purpose, thereby to make proof of them. The other goes his way, having only the reward of his faith: you stand in the course, both able to obtain an abundant recompense for your works, and to show yourself as much more glorious than he, as the sun is than the smallest star, as the general, nay rather as the Emperor himself, than the lowest soldier. Then blame yourself, or rather not blame, but correct: for it is not enough to blame yourself; it is in your power to contend afresh. Have you been thrown? Have you taken grievous hurt? Stand up, recover yourself: you are still in the course, the meeting ([θέατρον]) is not yet broken up. Do you not see how many that have been thrown in the wrestling have afterwards resumed the combat? Only do not willingly come by your fall. Do you count him a happy man for departing this life? Much rather count yourself happy. Was he released of his sins? But you, if you

will, shall not only wash away your sins, but shall also have achievements (of good works), which in his case is not possible. It is in our power to recover ourselves. Great are the medicinal virtues ([φάρμακα]) of repentance: let none despair of himself. That man truly deserves to be despaired of, who despairs of himself; that man has no more salvation, nor any hopes. It is not the having fallen into a depth of evils, it is the lying there when fallen, that is dreadful, it is not the having come into such a condition, it is the making light of it that is impious. The very thing that ought to make you earnest, say, is it this that makes you reckless? Having received so many wounds, have you fallen back? Of the soul, there can be no incurable wound; for the body, there are many such, but none for the soul: and yet for those we cease not in our endeavors to cure them, while for these we are supine. Do you see not the thief (on the cross), in how short a time he achieved (his salvation)? Do you see not the Martyrs, in how short a time they accomplished the whole work? *"But martyrdom is not to be had nowadays."* True, but there are contests to be had, as I have often told you, if we had the mind. *"For they that wish,"* says the Apostle, *"to live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution."* [2 Timothy 3:12] They that live godly are always undergoing persecution, if not from men, at any rate from evil spirits, which is a more grievous persecution. Yes, and it is in consequence, first and foremost, of ease and comfort, that those who are not vigilant undergo this. Or do you think it is a trifling persecution to be living at ease? This is more grievous than all, this is worse than persecution. For, like a running flux, ease makes the soul languid ([χαυνοῖ]): and as summer and winter, so persecution and ease. But to show you that this is the worse persecution, listen: it induces sleep in the soul, an excessive yawning and drowsiness, it stirs up the passions on every side, it arms pride, it arms pleasure, it arms anger, envy, vainglory, jealousy. But in time of persecution

none of these is able to make a disturbance; but fear, entering in, and plying the lash vigorously, as one does to a barking dog, will not let any of these passions so much as attempt to give tongue. Who shall be able in time of persecution to indulge in vainglory? Who to live in pleasure? Not one: but there is much trembling and fear, making a great calm, composing the harbor into stillness, filling the soul with awe. I have heard from our fathers (for in our own time God grant it may not happen, since we are bidden not to ask for temptation), that in the persecution of old time one might see men that were indeed Christian. None of them cared for money, none for wife, none for children, nor home, nor country: the one great concern with all was to save their lives (or, souls). There were they hiding, some in tombs and sepulchres, some in deserts: yes tender and dainty women too, fighting all the while with constant hunger.

Then think whether any longing for sumptuous and dainty living at all came into the mind of a woman, while in hiding beside a coffin ([παρὰ λάρνακι]), and waiting for her maid-servant to bring her meal, and trembling lest she should be taken, and lying in her terror as in a furnace: was she even aware that there ever was such a thing as dainty living, that such things as dress and ornaments exist at all ([ὅ] [τι κόσμος ὅλως ἐστίν])? Do you see that now is the persecution, with our passions, like wild beasts, setting upon us on every side? Now is the trying persecution, both in this regard, and especially if it is not even thought to be persecution at all. For this (persecution) has also this evil in it, that being war, it is thought to be peace, so that we do not even arm ourselves against it, so that we do not even rise: no one fears, no one trembles. But if you do not believe me, ask the heathen, the persecutors, at what time was the conduct of the Christians more strict, at what time were they all more proved? Few indeed had they then become in number, but rich in virtue. For say, what profit is it, that

there should be hay in plenty, when there might be precious stones? The amount consists not in the sum of numbers, but in the proved worth. Elias was one: yet the whole world was not worth so much as he. And yet the world consists of myriads: but they are no myriads, when they do not even come up to that one. *"Better is one that does the will of God, than ten thousand who are transgressors:"* for the ten thousands have not yet reached to the one. *"Desire not a multitude of unprofitable children."* [Sirach 16:1] Such bring more blasphemy against God, than if they were not Christians. What need have I of a multitude? It is (only) more food for the fire. This one might see even in the body, that better is moderate food with health, than a (fatted) calf with damage. This is more food than the other: this is food, but that is disease. This too one may see in war: that better are ten expert and brave men, than ten thousand of no experience. These latter, besides that they do no work, hinder also those that do work. The same too one may see to be the case in a ship, viz. that better are two experienced mariners, than ever so great a number of unskilful ones: for these will sink the ship. These things I say, not as looking with an evil eye upon your numbers, but wishing that all of you should be approved men, and not trust in your numbers. Many more in number are they who go down into hell: but greater than it is the Kingdom, however few it contain. As the sand of the sea was the multitude of the people (Israel) yet one man saved them. Moses was but one, and yet he availed more than they all: Joshua was one and he was enabled to do more than the six hundred thousand. Let us not make this our study merely, that (the people) may be many, but rather, that they may be excellent; when this shall have been effected, then will that other follow also. No one wishes at the outset to make a spacious house, but he first makes it strong and sure, then spacious: no one lays the foundations so that he may be laughed at. Let us first aim at this, and then at the other.

Where this is, that also will be easy: but where this is not, the other, though it be, is to no profit. For if there be those who are able to shine in the Church, there will soon be also numbers: but where these are not, the numbers will never be good for anything. How many, suppose you, may there be in our city who are likely to be saved ([τοὺς σωζομένους])? It is disagreeable, what I am going to say, but I will say it nevertheless. Among all these myriads, there are not to be found one hundred likely to be saved: nay, even as to these, I question it. For think, what wickedness there is in the young, what supineness in the aged! None makes it his duty to look after his own boy, none is moved by anything to be seen in his elder, to be emulous of imitating such an one. The patterns are defaced, and therefore it is that neither do the young become admirable in conduct. Tell not me, "*We are a goodly multitude*:" this is the speech of men who talk without thought or feeling ([ψυχρῶν].) In the concerns of men indeed, this might be said with some show of reason: but where God is concerned, (to say this with regard to Him) as having need of us, can never be allowed. Nay, let me tell you, even in the former case, this is a senseless speech ([ψυχρόν]). Listen. A person that has a great number of domestics, if they be a corrupt set what a wretched time will he have of it! For him who has none, the hardship, it seems, amounts to this, that he is not waited on: but where a person has bad servants, the evil is, that he is ruining himself withal, and the damage is greater (the more there are of them.) For it is far worse than having to be one's own servant, to have to fight with others, and take up a (continual) warfare. These things I say, that none may admire the Church because of its numbers, but that we may study to make the multitude proof-worthy; that each may be earnest for his own share of the duty— not for his friends only, nor his kindred as I am always saying, nor for his neighbors, but that he may attract the strangers also. For example, Prayer is going on; there they

lie (on bended knees), all the young, stupidly unconcerned ([ψυχροὶ]), (yes,) and old too: filthy nuisances rather than young men; giggling, laughing outright, talking— for I have heard even this going on— and jeering one another as they lie along on their knees: and there stand you, young man or elder: rebuke them, if you see them (behaving thus): if any will not refrain, chide him more severely: call the deacon, threaten, do what is in your power to do: and if he dare do anything to you, assuredly you shall have all to help you. For who is so irrational, as, when he sees you chiding for such conduct, and them chidden not to take your part? Depart, having received your reward from the Prayer.— In a master's house, we count those his best-disposed servants, who cannot bear to see any part of his furniture in disorder. Answer me; if at home you should see the silver plate lie tossed out of doors, though it is not your business, you will pick it up and bring it into the house: if you see a garment flung out of its place, though you have not the care of it, though you be at enmity with him whose business it is, yet, out of good-will to the master, will you not put it right? So in the present case. These are part of the furniture: if you see them lying about in disorder, put them to rights: apply to me, I do not refuse the trouble: inform me, make the offender known to me: it is not possible for me to see all: excuse me (in this). See, what wickedness overspreads the whole world! Said I without reason that we are (no better than) so much hay (disorderly as) a troubled sea? I am not talking of those (young people), that they behave thus; (what I complain of, is) that such a sleepy indifference possesses those who come in here, that they do not even correct this misbehavior.

Again I see others stand talking while Prayer is going on; while the more consistent of them (do this) not only during the Prayer, but even when the Priest is giving the Benediction. O, horror! When shall there be

salvation? When shall it be possible for us to propitiate God?— Soldiers go to their diversion, and you shall see them, all keeping time in the dance, and nothing done negligently, but, just as in embroidery and painting, from the well-ordered arrangement in each individual part of the composition, there results at once an exceeding harmony and good keeping, so it is here: we have one shield, one head, all of us (in common): and if but some casual point be deranged by negligence, the whole is deranged and is spoilt, and the good order of the many is defeated by the disorder of the one part. And, fearful indeed to think of, here you come, not to a diversion, not to act in a dance, and yet you stand disorderly. Know you not that you are standing in company with angels? With them you chant, with them sing hymns, and do you stand laughing? Is it not wonderful that a thunderbolt is not launched not only at those (who behave thus), but at us? For such behavior might well be visited with the thunderbolt. The Emperor is present, is reviewing the army: and do you, even with His eyes upon you, stand laughing, and endure to see another laughing? How long are we to go on chiding, how long complaining? Ought not such to be treated as very pests and nuisances; as abandoned, worthless reprobates, fraught with innumerable mischiefs, to be driven away from the Church? When will these forebear laughing, who laugh in the hour of the dread Mystery ([ἐ] [ν ὧρᾳ φρίκης])? When refrain from their trifling, who talk at the instant of the Benediction? Have they no sense of shame before those who are present? Have they no fear of God? Are our own idle thoughts not enough for us, is it not enough that in our prayers we rove hither and there, but laughter also must needs intrude, and bursts of merriment? Is it a theatrical amusement, what is done here? Aye, but, methinks, it is the theatres that do this: to the theatres we owe it that the most of you so refuse to be curbed by us, and to be reformed. What we build up here, is thrown down there: and not only so, but the hearers

themselves cannot help being filled with other filthinesses besides: so that the case is just the same as if one should want to clean out a place with a fountain above it discharging mire; for however much you may clean out, more runs in. So it is here. For when we clean people out, as they come here from the theatres with their filthiness, there they go again, and take in a larger stock of filthiness, as if they lived for the purpose of only giving us trouble, and then come back to us, laden with ordure, in their manners, in their movements, in their words, in their laughter, in their idleness. Then once more we begin shovelling it out afresh, as if we had to do this only on purpose that, having sent them away clean, we may again see them clogging themselves with filth. Therefore I solemnly protest to you, the sound members, that this will be to you judgment and condemnation, and I give you over to God from this time forth, if any having seen a person behaving disorderly, if any having seen any person talking, especially in that part (of the Service), shall not inform against him, not bring him round (to a better behavior). To do this is better than prayer. Leave your prayer and rebuke him, that you may both do him good, and yourself get profit, and so we may be enabled all to be saved and to attain unto the Kingdom of Heaven, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 25 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XI. 19

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that rose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only."

The persecution turned out to be no slight benefit as *"to them that love God all things work together for good."* [Romans 8:28] If they had made it their express study how best to establish the Church, they would have done no other thing than this— they dispersed the teachers. Mark in what quarters the preaching was extended. *"They travelled,"* it says, *"as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch; to none however did they preach the word but to Jews only."* Do you mark with what wise purposes of Providence so much was done in the case of Cornelius? This serves both to justify Christ, and to impeach the Jews. When Stephen was slain, when Paul was twice in danger, when the Apostles were scourged, then the Gentiles received the word, then the Samaritans. Which Paul also declares: *"To you it was necessary that the Word of God should first be spoken; but since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy, lo, we turn unto the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] Accordingly they went about, preaching to Gentiles also. *"But some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke unto the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus:"* [Acts 11:20] for it is likely both that they could now speak Greek, and that there were such men in Antioch. *"And the hand of the Lord,"* it says, *"was with them,"* that is, they wrought miracles; *"and a great number believed,*

and turned unto the Lord." [Acts 11:21] Do you mark why now also there was heed of miracles (namely) that they might believe? *"Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch."* [Acts 11:22]

What may be the reason that, when such a city received the word, they did not come themselves? Because of the Jews. But they send Barnabas.

However, it is no small part of the providential management even so that Paul comes to be there. It is both natural, and it is wisely ordered, that they are averse to him, and (so) that Voice of the Gospel, that Trumpet of heaven, is not shut up in Jerusalem. Do you mark how on all occasions, Christ turns their ill dispositions to needful account and for the benefit of the Church? Of their hatred to the man, He availed Himself for the building up of the Church. But observe this holy man— Barnabas, I mean— how he looked not to his own interests, but hasted to Tarsus. *"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord."* (v. 23, 24.) He was a very kind man, and single-hearted, and considerate ([συγγνωμονικός]). *"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul."* [Acts 11:25] He came to the athletic wrestler, the general (fit to lead armies), the champion of single combat, the lion— I am at a loss for words, say what I will— the hunting-dog, killer of lions, bull of strength, lamp of brightness, mouth sufficing for a world. *"And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch."* [Acts 11:26] Verily this is the reason why it was there they were appointed to be called Christians, because Paul there spent so long time! *"And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch."* No small matter of praise to that

city! This is enough to make it a match for all, that for so long a time it had the benefit of that mouth, it first, and before all others: wherefore also it was there in the first place that men were accounted worthy of that name. Do you observe the benefit resulting (to that city) from Paul, to what a height that name, like a standard ([σημεῖον]), exalted it? Where three thousand, where five thousand, believed, where so great a multitude, nothing of the sort took place, but they were called *"they of the way:"* here they were called Christians. *"And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch."* [Acts 11:27] It was need that the fruit of alms should also be planted there. And see how of necessity ([ἀ] [ναγκαίως]) (it comes about that) none of the men of note becomes their teacher. They got for their teachers, men of Cyprus, and Cyrene, and Paul— though he indeed surpassed (the Apostles) themselves— since Paul also had for teachers Ananias and Barnabas. But here of necessity (this was the case). *"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there would be great dearth throughout the world, which also came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar."* [Acts 11:28] *"By the Spirit,"* it says: for, that they may not imagine that this was the reason why the famine came, (namely) because Christianity had come in, because the demons were departed, the Holy Ghost foretells it: this, however, was nothing wonderful, for in fact Christ predicted it. Not this was the reason, else this must have been the case from the beginning: but it was because of the evils done to the Apostles— and God had borne long with them; but, when they pressed upon them, a great famine ensues, betokening to the Jews the coming woes. *"If it was because of them, in any wise it ought to have stopped (there), when it did exist. What harm had the Gentiles done, that they should have their share in the evils? They ought rather to have been marked as approved ([εὐδοκιμῆσαι]), because they were doing their part, were slaying,*

punishing, taking vengeance, persecuting on every side. And mark also at what time the famine comes: precisely when the Gentiles were thenceforth added to the Church. But if, as you say, it was because of the evils (done by the Jews), these ought to have been exempted." How so? Christ, forestalling this objection, said, *"You shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33] (It is) just as if you should say, They ought not to have been scourged either. *"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea."* [Acts 11:29] Mark how the famine becomes to them the means of salvation, an occasion of almsgiving, a harbinger of many blessing. And (so it might have been) to you, one may say, if you were so minded, but you would not. But it is predicted, that they might be prepared beforehand for almsgiving. *"Unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa;"* for they were enduring great hardships, but before this, they were not suffering from famine. *"Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."* [Acts 11:30] Do you mark them, that no sooner do they believe than they bring forth fruit, not only for their own but for those afar off? And Barnabas is sent and Saul, to minister (the same.) Of this occasion (ἡ [Εὐταῦθα]) he says (to the Galatians), *"And James, Cephas, and John gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, only"* (they would) *"that we should remember the poor."* [Galatians 2:9] James was yet living.

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution," etc. (Recapitulation.) Do you mark how even in the tribulation instead of falling to lamentations and tears, as we do, they give themselves up to a great and good work? *"Travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch,"* and there with more security preached the word. *"And some of them, which were men of Cyprus and Cyrene,"* etc. [Acts 11:20] And they did not say, *"(What), we, Cyrenians and Cyprians, to attack this splendid and great city!"*

but trusting in the grace of God, they applied themselves to the work of teaching, nor did these (Gentiles) themselves think scorn to learn anything of them. Mark how by small means all is brought about: mark the preaching how it spreads: mark those in Jerusalem, having like care for all, holding the whole world as one house. *"They heard that Samaria had received the word, and"* [Acts 8:14] to Samaria they send the Apostles: they heard what had befallen at Antioch, and to Antioch they send Barnabas: they also send again, and (these) prophets. For the distance was great, and it was not meet the Apostles at present should separate from thence, that they might not be thought to be fugitives, and to have fled from their own people. But then, almost precisely, is the time of their parting from Jerusalem, when the state (of the Jews) was shown to be past remedy, when the war was close at hand, and they must needs perish: when the sentence was made absolute. For, until Paul went to Rome, the Apostles were there (at Jerusalem). But they depart, not because afraid of the war— how should it be so?— seeing those they went to, were those that should bring the war: and moreover the war breaks out only after the Apostles were dead. For of them (the Apostles) says, *"The wrath has come upon them unto the end."* [1 Thessalonians 2:16] The more insignificant the persons, the more illustrious the grace, working great results by small means.— *"And he exhorted them to cleave unto the Lord, for he was a good man."* (v. 23, 24.) By *"good man,"* I take it, he means one that is kind, ([χρηστὸν]) sincere, exceedingly desirous of the salvation of his neighbors— *"for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. To cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart"* (this is said): with encomium and praise. *"And much people was added unto the Lord:"* for like rich land this city received the word, and brought forth much fruit. *"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus,"* etc. [Acts 11:25] But why did he take him off from Tarsus and bring him here? Not without good reason; for

here were both good hopes, and a greater city, and a great body of people. See how grace works all, not Paul: by small means the affair was taking its commencement. When it has become difficult the Apostles take it up. Why did they not before this seen Barnabas? Because they had enough to do ([ἡ] [σχόληντο]) with Jerusalem. Again they justified themselves to the Jews, that the Gentiles were receiving ([προσελάμβανε]) the word, even without enjoying so great attention. There is about to be a questioning: therefore the affair of Cornelius forestalled it. Then indeed they say, *"That we to the Gentiles, and they to the Circumcision."* [Galatians 2:9] Observe, henceforth the very stress of the famine introduces the fellowship on the part of the Gentiles, namely, from the alms. For they receive the offerings sent from them.

"Now they which were scattered abroad," etc. [Acts 11:19] and not as we who pass our time in lamentations and tears, in our calamities; but with more fearlessness they passed their time, as having got to a distance from those hindering them, and as being among men not afraid of the Jews: which also helped. And they came to Cyprus, where they had the sea between them, and greater freedom from anxiety: so they made no account of the fear of men, but (still) they gave the precedence to the regard of the Law: *"they spoke to Jews only. But there were in Antioch certain men of Cyprus and Cyrene:"* these, of all others, least cared for the Jews: *"who spoke unto the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus."* [Acts 11:20] Probably it was because of their not knowing Hebrew, that they called them Greeks. And *"when"* Barnabas, it says, *"came and had seen the grace of God,"*—not the diligence of men— *"he exhorted them to cleave unto the Lord"* [Acts 11:23]: and by this he converted more. *"And much people was added unto the Lord."* Why do they not write to Paul, but send Barnabas? They did not yet know the virtue of the man: but it is providentially ordered that

Barnabas should come. As there was a multitude, and none to hinder, well might the faith grow, and above all because they had no trials to undergo. Paul also preaches, and is no longer compelled to flee. And it is well ordered, that not they speak of the famine, but the prophets. The men of Antioch also did not take it amiss that they sent not the Apostles, but were content with their teachers: so fervent were they all for the word. They did not wait for the famine to come, but before this they sent: *"according as each had the ability."* And observe, among the Apostles, others are put in charge with this trust, but here Paul and Barnabas. For this was no small order ([οἰκονομία]) of Providence. Besides, it was the beginning, and it was not fit they should be offended.

"As each had the ability, they sent." But now, none does this, although there is a famine more grievous than that. For the cases are not alike, for (all) to bear the calamity in common, and, while all (the rest) abound, for the poorer to be famishing. And the expression shows that the givers also were poor, for, it says, *"as each of them had the means."* A twofold famine, even as the abundance is twofold: a severe famine, a famine not of hearing the word of the Lord, but of being nourished by alms. Then, both the poor in Judea enjoyed the benefit, and so did those in Antioch who gave their money; yea, these more than those: but now, both we and the poor are famishing: they being in lack of necessary sustenance, and we in luxurious living, lacking the mercy of God. But this is a food, than which nothing can be more necessary. This is not a food, from which one has to undergo the evils of repletion: not a food, of which the most part ends in the draught. ([ἀ] [φεδρῶνα].) Nothing more beautiful, nothing more healthful, than a soul nurtured by this food: it is set high above all disease, all pestilence, all indigestion and distemper: none shall be able to overcome it, ([ἐ] [λεῖν]) but just as, if one's body were made of adamant, no iron, nor anything else,

would have power to hurt it, even so when the soul is firmly compact by almsgiving, nothing at all shall be able to overcome it. For say, what shall spoil this? Shall poverty? It cannot be, for it is laid up in the royal treasuries. But shall robber and housebreaker? Nay, those are walls which none shall be able to break through. But shall the worm? Nay, this treasure is set far above the reach of this mischief also. But shall envy and the evil eye? Nay, neither by these can it be overcome. But shall false accusations and plottings of evil? No, neither shall this be, for safe as in an asylum is this treasure. But it were a shame should I make it appear as if the advantages which belong to almsgiving were only these (the absence of these evils), and not (the presence of) their opposites. For in truth it is not merely that it is secure from ill-will; it also gets abundant blessing from those whom it benefits. For as the cruel and unmerciful not only have for enemies those whom they have injured, but those also who are not themselves hurt, partake the grief and join in the accusation: so those that have done great good have not only those who are benefited, but those also who are not themselves affected, to speak their praises. Again (that), it is secure from the attacks of the evil-disposed, and robbers, and housebreakers — what, is this all the good, or is it this — that besides the not suffering diminution, it grows also and increases into multitude? What more shameful than Nebuchadnezzar, what more foul, what more iniquitous? The man was impious; after tokens and signs without number he refused to come to his senses ([ἀνενεγκεῖν]), but cast the servants of God into a furnace: and (yet) after these doings, he worshipped. What then said the Prophet? *"Wherefore,"* says he, *"O king let my counsel be acceptable unto you, ransom ([λύτρωσαι]) your sins by alms, and your iniquities by mercies to the poor: perhaps there shall be pardon for your transgressions."* [Daniel 3:27] In so speaking, he said it not doubting, nay, with entire confidence,

but wishing to put him in greater fear, and to make a stronger necessity of doing these things. For if he had spoken it as a thing unquestionable, the king would have been more supine: just as it is with us, we then most urge some person (whom we wish to persuade), when they say to us, "*Exhort such an one,*" and do not add, "*he will be sure to hear,*" but only, "*perhaps he will hear:*" for by leaving it doubtful, the fear is made greater, and urges him the more. This is the reason why the Prophet did not make the thing certain to him. What do you say? For so great impieties shall there be pardon? Yes. There is no sin, which alms cannot cleanse, none, which alms cannot quench: all sin is beneath this: it is a medicine adapted for every wound. What worse than a publican? The very matter ([ὁ] [πόθεις]) (of his occupation) is altogether one of injustice: and yet Zaccheus washed away all these (sins). Mark how even Christ shows this, by the care taken to have a purse, and to bear the contributions put into it. And Paul also says, "*Only that we remember the poor*" [Galatians 2:10]: and everywhere the Scripture has much discourse concerning this matter. "*The ransom,*" it says, "*of a man's soul is his own wealth*" [Proverbs 13:8]: and with reason: for, says (Christ), "*if you would be perfect, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me.*" [Matthew 19:21] This may well be part of perfection. But alms may be done not only by money, but by acts. For example: one may kindly stand ([προστήναι]) by a person (to succor and defend him), one may reach to him a helping hand: the service rendered ([προστασία]) by acts has often done more good even than money. Let us set to work all the different kinds of almsgiving. Can you do alms by money? Be not slack. Can you by good offices? Say not, Because I have no money, this is nothing. This is a very great point: look upon it as if you had given gold. Can you do it by kind attentions ([θεραπείας])? Do this also. For instance, if you be a physician, (give) your skill: for this also is a great

matter. Can you by counsel? This (service) is much greater than all: this (alms) is better than all, or it is also more, by how much the gain it has is greater. For in so doing you put away not starvation, but a grievous death. [ch. 3:6; 6:4] With such alms the Apostles above measure abounded: therefore it was that the distribution of money they put into the hands of those after them, themselves exhibiting the (mercy) shown by words. Or is it, think you, a small alms, to a lost, castaway soul, a soul in uttermost jeopardy, possessed by a burning fever ([πυρώσεως]), to be able to rid it of its disease? For example, do you see one possessed by love of money? Pity the man. Is he in danger of suffocation? Quench his fire. *"What if he will not be persuaded?"* Do your part, and be not remiss. Have you seen him in bonds?— for wealth is indeed bonds. [Matthew 25:35 ff.] Go to him, visit him, console him, try to release him of his bonds. If he refuse, he shall bear the blame himself. Have you seen him naked, and a stranger?— for he is indeed naked, and a stranger to heaven. Bring him to your own inn, clothe him with the garment of virtue, give him the city which is in heaven. *"What if I myself be naked?"* say you. Clothe also yourself first: if you know that you are naked, assuredly you know that you need to be clothed; if you know what sort of nakedness this is. What numbers of women now wear silken apparel but are indeed naked of the garments of virtue! Let their husbands clothe these women. *"But they will not admit those garments; they choose to have these."* Then do this also first: induce them to have a longing for those garments: show them that they are naked: speak to them of judgment to come: answer me, what is the clothing we shall need there? But if you will bear with me, I also will show you this nakedness. He that is naked, when it is cold, shrinks and shudders, and stands there cowering, and with his arms folded: but in summer heat, not so. If then I shall prove to you that your rich men, and rich women, the more they put on, the more naked they

are, do not take it amiss. How then, I ask you, when we raise the subject of hell-fire, and of the torments there? Do not these shrink and shudder more than those naked ones? Do they not bitterly groan and condemn themselves? What? When they come to this or that man, and say to him, Pray for me, do they not speak the same words as those (naked wretches)?

Now indeed, after all that we can say, the nakedness is not yet apparent: but it will be plain enough there. How, and in what way? When these silken garments and precious stones shall have perished, and it shall be only by the garments of virtue and of vice that all men are shown, when the poor shall be clad with exceeding glory, but the rich, naked and in disgraceful sort, shall be haled away to their punishments. What more naked (Edd. "*more dainty*") than that rich man who arrayed himself in purple? What poorer than Lazarus? Then which of them uttered the words of beggars? Which of them was in abundance? Say, if one should deck his house with abundance of tapestry hangings, and himself sit naked within, what were the benefit? So it is in the case of these women. Truly, the house of the soul, the body I mean, they hang round with plenty of garments: but the mistress of the house sits naked within. Lend me the eyes of the soul, and I will show you the soul's nakedness. For what is the garment of the soul? Virtue, of course. And what its nakedness? Vice. For just as, if one were to strip any decent person, that person would be ashamed, and would shrink and cower out of sight; just so the soul, if we wish to see it, the soul which has not these garments, blushes for shame. How many women, think you, at this moment feel ashamed, and would fain sink to the very depth, as if seeking some sort of curtain, or screen, that they may not hear these words? But those who have no evil conscience, are exhilarated, rejoice, find delight, and gayly deck themselves ([ἐ] [γκαλλωπίζονται]) with the things said. Hear concerning that blessed Thekla, how, that she might see Paul, she

gave even her gold: and you will not give even a farthing that you may see Christ: you admire what she did, but dost not emulate her. Do you not hear that "*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy?*" [Matthew 5:7] What is the gain of your costly garments? How long shall we continue agape for this attire? Let us put on the glory of Christ: let us array ourselves with that beauty, that both here we may be praised, and there attain unto the eternal good things, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XII. 1, 2

"Now at that time Herod the King stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were the days of unleavened bread."

"At that time," of course meaning the time immediately following: for this is the custom of Scripture. And he well says that Herod *"the king"* (did this): this was not he of Christ's time. Lo, a different sort of trial— and mark what I said in the beginning, how things are blended, how rest and trouble alternate in the whole texture of the history— not now the Jews, nor the Sanhedrin, but the king. Greater the power, the warfare more severe, the more it was done to obtain favor with the Jews. *"And,"* it says, *"he slew James the brother of John with the sword:"* (taking him) at random and without selection. But, should any raise a question, why God permitted this, we shall say, that it was for the sake of these (Jews) themselves: thereby, first, convincing them, that even when slain (the Apostles) prevail, just as it was in the case of Stephen: secondly, giving them opportunity, after satiating their rage, to recover from their madness; thirdly, showing them that it was by His permission this was done. *"And when he saw,"* it says, that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. O excessive wickedness! On whose behalf was it, that he gratified them by doing murders thus without plan or reason? *"And it was the day of unleavened bread."* Again, the idle preciseness of the Jews: to kill indeed

they forbade not, but at such a time they did such things! *"Whom having arrested, he put in ward, having delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers."* [Acts 12:4] This was done both of rage, and of fear. *"He slew,"* it says, *"James the brother of John with the sword."* Do you mark their courage? For, that none may say that without danger or fear of danger they brave death, as being sure of God's delivering them, therefore he permits some to be put to death, and chief men too, Stephen and James, thereby convincing their slayers themselves, that not even these things make them fall away, and hinder them. *"Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him."* [Acts 12:5] For the contest was now for life and death: both the slaying of the one made them fearful, and the casting of the other into prison. *"And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands."* (v. 6, 7.) In that night He delivered him. *"And a light shined in the prison,"* that he might not deem it fancy: and none saw the light, but he only. For if, notwithstanding this was done, he thought it a fancy, because of its unexpectedness; if this had not been, much more would he have thought this: so prepared was he for death. For his having waited there many days and not being saved caused this. Why then, say you, did He not suffer him to fall into the hands of Herod, and then deliver him? Because that would have brought people into astonishment, whereas this was credible: and they would not even have been thought human beings. But in the case of Stephen, what did He not do? Did He not show them his face as it had been the face of an angel? But what in short did He leave undone here also? *"And*

the angel said to him, Gird yourself, and bind on your sandals." [Acts 12:8] Here again it shows, that it was not done of craft: for one that is in haste and wishes to break out (of prison), is not so particular as to take his sandals, and gird himself. *"And he did so. And he said unto him, Put on your cloak, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and knew not that it was true which was done by the Angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leads unto the city; which opened to them of its own accord."* (v. 9, 10.) Behold, a second miracle. *"And they went out, and passed on through one street; and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord has sent His Angel, and has delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."* (v. 10, 11.) When the angel departed, then Peter understood: *"Now I perceive,"* says he, not then. But why is this so, and why is Peter not sensible of the things taking place, although he had already experienced a like deliverance when all were released? [Acts 5:18] (The Lord) would have the pleasure come to him all at once, and that he should first be at liberty, and then be sensible of what had happened. The circumstance also of the chains having fallen off from his hands, is a strong argument of his not having fled. *"And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying."* [Acts 12:12] Observe how Peter does not immediately withdraw, but first brings the good tidings to his friends. *"And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness,"*—Mark even the servant-girls, how full of piety they are—*"but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate."* [Acts 12:13-15] But they, though it was so, shook their heads (incredulously): And they

said unto her, You are mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel. *"But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place."* (v. 16, 17.) But let us review the order of the narrative.

(Recapitulation.) *"At that time,"* it says, *"Herod the king stretched forth his hands to afflict certain of the Church."* [Acts 12:1] Like a wild beast, he attacked all indiscriminately and without consideration. This is what Christ said: *"My cup indeed you shall drink, and with the baptism wherewith I am baptized, shall you be baptized."* [Mark 10:39] (b) *"And he killed James the brother of John."* [Acts 12:2] For there was also another James, the brother of the Lord: therefore to distinguish him, he says, *"The brother of John."* Do you mark that the sum of affairs rested in these three, especially Peter and James? (a) And how was it he did not kill Peter immediately? It mentions the reason: *"it was the day of unleavened bread:"* and he wished rather to make a display ([ἐ] [κτομπεῦσαι]) with the killing of him. *"And when he saw it pleased the Jews."* [Acts 12:3] For their own part, they now in consequence of Gamaliel's advice, abstained from bloodshedding: and besides, did not even invent accusations; but by means of others they compassed the same results. (c) This (counsel of Gamaliel's) above all was their condemnation: for the preaching was shown to be no longer a thing of men. *"He proceeded further to kill Peter also."* [ch. 5:8] In very deed was that fulfilled, *"We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."* [Psalm 44:13] *"Seeing,"* it says, *"it was a pleasing thing to the Jews."* [Romans 8:36] A pleasing thing, bloodshed, and unrighteous bloodshed, wickedness, impiety! He ministered to their senseless ([ἀ] [τόποις]) lusts: for, whereas he ought to

have done the contrary, to check their rage, he made them more eager, as if he were an executioner, and not a physician to their diseased minds. (And this) though he had numberless warnings in the case of both his grandfather and his father Herod, how the former in consequence of his putting the children to death suffered the greatest calamities, and the latter by slaying John raised up against himself a grievous war. But as they thought * * He feared lest Peter, in consequence of the slaying of James, should withdraw; and wishing to have him in safe keeping, he put him in prison: *"and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers"* [Acts 12:4]: the stricter the custody, the more wondrous the display. *"Peter therefore was kept in prison."* [Acts 12:5] But this was all the better for Peter, who was thereby made more approved, and evinced his own manly courage. And it says, *"there was earnest prayer making."* It was the prayer of (filial) affection: it was for a father they asked, a father mild. *"There was,"* it says, *"earnest prayer."* Hear how they were affected to their teachers. No factions, no perturbation: but they betook them to prayer, to that alliance which is indeed invincible, to this they betook them for refuge. They did not say, *"What? I, poor insignificant creature that I am, to pray for him!"* for, as they acted of love, they did not give these things a thought. And observe, it was during the feast, that (their enemies) brought these trials upon them, that their worth might be the more approved. *"And when Herod,"* etc. [Acts 12:6] See Peter sleeping, and not in distress or fear! That same night, after which he was to be brought forth, he slept, having cast all upon God. *"Between two soldiers, bound with two chains."* [cf. 1 Peter 5:7] Mark, how strict the ward! *"And says, Arise."* [Acts 12:7] The guards were asleep with him, and therefore perceived nothing of what was happening. *"And a light shined."* What was the light for? In order that Peter might see as well as hear, and not imagine it to be all fancy. And the command, *"Arise quickly, "*

that he may not be remiss. He also smote him; so deeply did he sleep. (a) *"Rise,"* says he, *"quickly:"* this is not to hurry him ([θορυβοῦντος]) but to persuade him not to delay. (c) *"And"* immediately *"his chains fell off from his hands."* (b) How? Answer me: where are the heretics?— let them answer. *"And the Angel said unto him,"* etc. [Acts 12:8] by this also convincing him that it is no fancy: to this end he bids him gird himself and put on his shoes, that he may shake off his sleep, and know that it is real. (a) (e) *"And he knew not that it was true that was done by the Angel, but thought he saw a vision"* [Acts 12:9]: (e) well he might, by reason of the excessive greatness ([ὅ] [περβολήν]) of the things taking place. Do you mark what a thing it is for a miracle to be excessive ([ὅ] [περβολή σημείου])? How it amazes ([ἐ] [κπλήττει]) the beholder? How it will not let the thing be believed? For if Peter *"thought he saw a vision,"* though he had girded himself and put on his shoes, what would have been the case with another? *"And,"* it says, *"when they had passed the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate, which opened unto them of its own accord"* [Acts 12:10]: and yet the things that had happened within (the prison) were more marvellous: but this was now more after the manner of man. *"And having gone out, they went along one street and immediately (all 'until') the Angel departed from him."* [Acts 12:11] When there was no hindrance, then the Angel departed. For Peter would not have gone along ([προῆλθεν]), there being so many hindrances. *"And when he came to himself:"* for in very truth, it was indeed an amazement ([ἐ] [κπληξίς]). *"Now,"* says he, *"I know"*— now, not then, when I was in the prison—*"that the Lord has sent His Angel, and has delivered me out of the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered"* [Acts 12:12], it says: viz. where he was, or, that he must not without more ado depart but requite his Benefactor: *"he came to the house*

of Mary the mother of John." Who is this John? Probably he that was always with them: for this is why he adds his distinctive name ([τὸ παράσημον]), "*whose surname was Mark.*" But observe, "*praying*" in the night, how much they got by it: what a good thing affliction is; how wakeful it made them! Do you see how great the gain resulting from the death of Stephen? Do you see how great the benefit accruing from this imprisonment? For it is not by taking vengeance upon those who wronged them that God shows the greatness of the Gospel: but in the wrong-doers themselves, without any harm happening to those, he shows what a mighty thing the afflictions in themselves are, that we may not seek in any wise deliverance from them, nor the avenging of our wrongs. And mark how the very servant-girls were henceforth upon an equality with them. "*For joy,*" it says, "*she opened not.*" (v. 13, 14.) This too is well done, that they likewise may not be amazed by seeing him at once, and that they may be incredulous, and their minds may be exercised. "*But ran in,*" etc. just as we are wont to do, she was eager to be herself the bringer of the good tidings, for good news it was indeed. "*And they said unto her, You are mad: but she constantly affirmed that it was even so: then said they, It is his Angel.*" [Acts 12:15] This is a truth, that each man has an Angel. And what would the Angel? It was from the time (of night) that they surmised this. But when he "*continued knocking, and when they had opened, and saw him, they were astonished. But he beckoning to them with his hand*" (v. 16, 17), made them keep quiet, to hear all that had happened to him. He was now an object of more affectionate desire to the disciples, not only in consequence of his being saved, but by his sudden coming in upon them and straightway departing. Now, both his friends learn all clearly; and the aliens also learn, if they had a mind, but they had not. The same thing happened in the case of Christ. "*Tell these things,*" he says, "*to James, and to the brethren.*" How

free from all vainglory! Nor did he say, Make known these things to people everywhere, but, *"to the brethren. And he withdrew to another place:"* for he did not tempt God, nor fling himself into temptation: since, when they were commanded to do this, then they did it. *"Go,"* it was said, *"speak in the temple to the people."* [Acts 5:20] But this the Angel said not (here); on the contrary, by silently removing him and bringing him out by night, he gave him free permission to withdraw— and this too is done, that we may learn that many things are providentially brought about after the manner of men— so that he should not again fall into peril.— For that they may not say, *"It was his Angel,"* after he had gone, they say this first, and then they see himself overthrowing their notion of the matter. Had it been the Angel, he would have knocked at the door, would not have retired to another place. And what followed in the day, make them sure.

"So Peter was kept in the prison," etc. [Acts 12:5] They, being at large, were at prayer: he, bound, was in sleep. *"And he knew not that it was true."* [Acts 12:9] If he thought it was true that was happening, he would have been astonished, he would not have remembered (all the circumstances): but now, seeming to be in a dream, he was free from perturbation. *"When,"* it says, *"they were past the first and the second ward"*— see also how strong the guard was— *"they came unto the iron gate."* [Acts 12:10] *"Now know I that the Lord has sent His Angel."* [Acts 12:11] Why is not this effected by themselves? (I answer,) By this also the Lord honors them, that by the ministry of His Angels he rescues them. Then why was it not so in the case of Paul? There with good reason, because the jailer was to be converted, whereas here, it was only that the Apostle should be released. [Acts 16:25] And God disposes all things in various ways. And there too, it is beautiful, that Paul sings hymns, while here Peter was asleep. *"And when he had considered, he came to the house of Mary,"* etc. [Acts 12:12] Then

let us not hide God's marvels, but for our own good let us study to display these abroad for the edifying of the others. For as he deserves to be admired for choosing to be put into bonds, so is he worthy of more admiration, that he withdrew not until he had reported all to his friends. *"And he said, Tell James and the brethren."* [Acts 12:17] That they may rejoice: that they may not be anxious. Through these those learn, not those through him: such thought had he for the humbler part!—

Truly, nothing better than affliction not above measure ([συμμέτρου]). What think you must have been their state of mind— how full of delight! Where now are those women, who sleep the whole night through? Where are those men, who do not even turn themselves in their bed? Do you see the watchful soul? With women, and children, and maid-servants, they sang hymns to God, made purer than the sky by affliction. But now, if we see a little danger, we fall back. Nothing ever was more splendid than that Church. Let us imitate these, let us emulate them. Not for this was the night made, that we should sleep all through it and be idle. To this bear witness the artisans, the carriers, and the merchants (to this), the Church of God rising up in the midst of the night. Rise thou up also, and behold the quire of the stars, the deep silence, the profound repose: contemplate with awe the order ([οἰκονομίαν]) of your Master's household. Then is your soul purer: it is lighter, and subtler, and soaring disengaged: the darkness itself, the profound silence, are sufficient to lead you to compunction. And if also thou look to the heavens studded with its stars, as with ten thousand eyes, if you bethink you that all those multitudes who in the daytime are shouting, laughing, frisking, leaping, wronging, grasping, threatening, inflicting wrongs without number, lie all one as dead, you will condemn all the self-willedness of man. Sleep has invaded and defeated ([ἡ] [λεγξεν]) nature: it is the image of death, the image of the end of all things. If thou (look out of

window and) lean over into the street, you will not hear even a sound: if you look into the house, you will see all lying as it were in a tomb. All this is enough to arouse the soul, and lead it to reflect on the end of all things.

Here indeed my discourse is for both men and women. Bend your knees, send forth groans, beseech your Master to be merciful: He is more moved by prayers in the night, when you make the time for rest a time for mourning. Remember what words that king uttered: *"I have been weary with my groaning: every night will I wash my bed, I will water my couch with my tears."* [Psalm 6:6] However delicate a liver you may be, you are not more delicate than he: however rich you may be, you are not richer than David. And again the same Psalmist says, *"At midnight I rose to give thanks unto You for the judgments of Your righteousness."* [Psalm 119:62] No vainglory then intrudes upon you: how can it, when all are sleeping, and not looking at you? Then neither sloth nor drowsiness invades you: how can they, when your soul is aroused by such great things? After such vigils come sweet slumbers and wondrous revelations. Do this, thou also the man, not the woman only. Let the house be a Church, consisting of men and women. For think not because you are the only man, or because she is the only woman there, that this is any hindrance. *"For where two,"* He says, *"are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."* [Matthew 18:20] Where Christ is in the midst, there is a great multitude. Where Christ is, there needs must Angels be, needs must Archangels also and the other Powers be there. Then you are not alone, seeing you have Him Who is Lord of all. Hear again the prophet also saying, *"Better is one that does the will of the Lord, than ten thousand transgressors."* [comp. Sirach 16:3] Nothing more weak than a multitude of unrighteous men, nothing more strong than one man who lives according to the law of God. If you have children wake up them also, and let your house altogether become

a Church through the night: but if they be tender, and cannot endure the watching, let them stay for the first or second prayer, and then send them to rest: only stir up yourself, establish yourself in the habit. Nothing is better than that storehouse which receives such prayers as these. Hear the Prophet speaking: *"If I remembered You upon my bed, I thought upon You in the dawn of the morning."* [Psalm 63:7] But you will say: I have labored much during the day, and I cannot. Mere pretext this and subterfuge. For however much you have labored, you will not toil like the smith, who lets fall such a heavy hammer from a great height upon the (metal flying off in) sparks, and takes in the smoke with his whole body: and yet at this work he spends the greater part of the night. You know also how the women, if there is need for us to go into the country, or to go forth unto a vigil, watch through the whole night. Then have thou also a spiritual forge, to fashion there not pots or cauldrons, but your own soul, which is far better than either coppersmith or goldsmith can fashion. Your soul, waxen old in sins, cast thou into the smelting-furnace of confession: let fall the hammer from on high: that is, the condemnation of your words ([τῶν ῥημάτων τὴν κατάγνωσιν]): light up the fire of the Spirit. You have a far mightier craft (than theirs). You are beating into shape not vessels of gold, but the soul, which is more precious than all gold, even as the smith hammers out his vessel. For it is no material vessel that you are working at, but you are freeing your soul from all imaginations belonging to this life. Let a lamp be by your side, not that one which we burn, but that which the prophet had, when he said, *"Your law is a lamp unto my feet."* [Psalm 119:105] Bring your soul to a red heat, by prayer: when you see it hot enough, draw it out, and mould it into what shape you will. Believe me, not fire so effectual to burn off rust, as night prayer to remove the rust of our sins. Let the night-watchers, if no one else, shame us. They, by man's law, go their rounds in the cold, shouting loudly,

and walking through lanes ([στενωπών]) and alleys, oftentimes drenched with rain and (all) congealed with cold, for you and for your safety, and the protection of your property. There is he taking such care for your property, while you take none even for your soul. And yet I do not make you go your rounds in the open air like him, nor shout loudly and rend your sides: but in your closet itself, or in your bedchamber, bend your knees, and entreat your Lord. Why did Christ Himself pass a whole night on the mountain? Was it not, that He might be an ensample to us? Then is it that the plants respire, in the night, I mean: and then also does the soul take in the dew even more than they. What the sun has parched by day becomes cool again at night. More refreshing than all dew, the tears of the night descend upon our lusts and upon all heat and fever of the soul, and do not let it be affected in any such way. But if it do not enjoy the benefit of that dew, it will be burnt up in the daytime. But God forbid (it should be so)! Rather, may we all, being refreshed, and enjoying the mercy of God, be freed from the burden of our sins, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 27 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XII. 18, 19

"Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Cæsarea, and there abode."

Some persons, it is likely, are at a loss how to explain it, that God should quietly look on while (His) champions are put to death, and now again the soldiers on account of Peter: and yet it was possible for Him after (delivering) Peter to rescue them also. But it was not yet the time of judgment, so as to render to each according to his deserts. And besides, it was not Peter that put them into his hands. For the thing that most annoyed him was the being mocked; just as in the case of his grandfather when he was deceived by the wise men, that was what made him (feel) cut to the heart—the being (eluded and) made ridiculous. *"And having put them to the question,"* it says, *"he ordered them to be led away to execution."*

[Matthew 2:16] And yet he had heard from them—for he had put them to the question—both that the chains had been left, and that he had taken his sandals, and that until that night he was with them. *"Having put them to the question:"* but what did they conceal? Why then did they not themselves also flee? *"He ordered them to be led away to execution:"* and yet he ought to have marvelled, ought to have been astonished at this. The consequence is, by the death of these men (the thing), is made manifest to all: both his

wickedness is exposed to view, and (it is made clear that) the wonder (is) of God. *"And he went down from Judea to Cæsarea, and there abode: and Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, 'It is the voice of a god, and not of a man,' And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."* [Acts 12:20:23] * * But see how (the writer) here does not hide these things. Why does he mention this history? Say, what has it to do with the Gospel, that Herod is incensed with the Tyrians and Sidonians? It is not a small matter, even this, how immediately justice seized him; although not because of Peter, but because of his arrogant speaking. And yet, it may be said, if those shouted, what is that to him? Because he accepted the acclamation, because he accounted himself to be worthy of the adoration. Through him those most receive a lesson, who so thoughtlessly flattered him (al. [οἱ κολακεύοντες]). Observe again, while both parties deserve punishment, this man is punished. For this is not the time of judgment, but He punishes him that had most to answer for, leaving the others to profit by this man's fate. *"And the word of God,"* it says, *"grew,"* i.e. in consequence of this, *"and multiplied."* [Acts 12:24] Do you mark God's providential management? *"But Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark."* [Acts 12:25] *"Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaën, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."*

[Acts 13:1] He still mentions Barnabas first: for Paul was not yet famous, he had not yet wrought any sign. *"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."* (v. 2, 3.) What means, *"Ministering?"* Preaching. *"Separate for Me,"* it says, *"Barnabas and Saul."* What means, *"Separate for Me?"* For the work, for the Apostleship. See again by what persons he is ordained ([γυμνοτέρᾳ] . Cat. [σεμνοτέρᾳ], *"more awful."*) By Lucius the Cyrenean and Manaën, or rather, by the Spirit. The less the persons, the more palpable the grace. He is ordained henceforth to Apostleship, so as to preach with authority. How then does he himself say, *"Not from men, nor by man?"* [Galatians 1:1] Because it was not man that called or brought him over: this is why he says, *"Not from men. Neither by man,"* that is, that he was not sent by this (man), but by the Spirit. Wherefore also (the writer) thus proceeds: *"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus."* [Acts 13:4] But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And when it was day,"* etc. [Acts 12:18] For if the Angel had brought out the soldiers also, along with Peter, it would have been thought a case of flight. Then why, you may ask, was it not otherwise managed? Why, where is the harm? Now, if we see that they who have suffered unjustly, take no harm, we shall not raise these questions. For why do you not say the same of James? Why did not (God) rescue him? *"There was no small stir among the soldiers."* So (clearly) had they perceived nothing (of what had happened). Lo, I take up the plea in their defence. The chains were there, and the keepers within, and the prison shut, nowhere a wall broken through, all told the same tale: the man had been carried off: why do you condemn them? Had they wished to let him off, they would

have done it before, or would have gone out with him. *"But he gave them money?"* [Acts 3:6] And how should he, who had not to give even to a poor man, have the means to give to these? And then neither had the chains been broken, nor were they loosed. He ought to have seen, that the thing was of God, and no work of man. *"And he went down from Judea to Cæsarea, and there abode. And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon,"* etc. [Acts 12:19] He is now going to mention (a matter of) history: this is the reason why he adds the names, that it may be shown how he keeps to the truth in all things. *"And,"* it says, *"having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, they desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country."* (v. 20, 21.) For probably there was a famine. *"And on a set day,"* etc. (Joseph. *Ant.* xix.) Josephus also says this, that he fell into a lingering disease. Now the generality were not aware of this, but the Apostle sets it down: yet at the same time their ignorance was an advantage, in regard that they imputed what befell (Agrippa) to his putting James and the soldiers to death. Observe, when he slew the Apostle, he did nothing of this sort but when (he slew) these; in fact he knew not what to say about it: as being at a loss, then, and feeling ashamed, *"he went down from Judea to Cæsarea."* I suppose it was also to bring those (men of Tyre and Sidon) to apologize, that he withdrew (from Jerusalem): for with those he was incensed, while paying such court to these. See how vainglorious the man is: meaning to confer the boon upon them, he makes an harangue. But Josephus says, that he was also arrayed in a splendid robe made of silver. Observe both what flatterers those were, and what a high spirit was shown by the Apostles: the man whom the whole nation so courted, the same they held in contempt. [Acts 12:24] But observe again a great refreshing granted to them, and the numberless benefits accruing from the vengeance inflicted upon him. But if this man, because it was said to

him, It is the voice of God and not of a man [Acts 12:22] although he said nothing himself, suffered such things: much more should Christ, had He not Himself been God (have suffered) for saying always as He did, *"These words of mine are not Mine"* [John 14:10; 18:36] and, *"Angels minister to Me,"* and such like. But that man ended His life by a shameful and miserable death, and thenceforth no more is seen of him. And observe him also, easily talked over even by Blastus, like a poor creature, soon incensed and again pacified, and on all occasions a slave of the populace, with nothing free and independent about him. But mark also the authority of the Holy Ghost: *"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul."* [Acts 13:2] What being would have dared, if not of the same authority, to say this? *"Separate,"* etc. But this is done, that they may not keep together among themselves. The Spirit saw that they had greater power, and were able to be sufficient for many. And how did He speak to them? Probably by prophets: therefore the writer premises, that there were prophets also. And they were fasting and ministering: that you may learn that there was need of great sobriety. In Antioch he is ordained, where he preaches. Why did He not say, Separate for the Lord, but, *"For me?"* It shows that He is of one authority and power. *"And when they had fasted,"* etc. Do you see what a great thing fasting is? *"So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost:"* it shows that the Spirit did all.

A great, yes a great good is fasting: it is circumscribed by no limits. When need was to ordain, then they fast: and to them while fasting, the Spirit spoke. Thus much only do I enjoin: (I say) not fast, but abstain from luxury. Let us seek meats to nourish, not things to ruin us; seek meats for food, not occasions of diseases, of diseases both of soul and body: seek food which has comfort, not luxury which is full of discomfort: the one is luxury, the other mischief; the one is pleasure, the other pain; the one is

agreeable to nature, the other contrary to nature. For say, if one should give you hemlock juice to drink, would it not be against nature? If one should give you logs and stones, would you not reject them? Of course, for they are against nature. Well, and so is luxury. For just as in a city, under an invasion of enemies when there has been siege and tumult, great is the uproar, so is it in the soul, under invasion of wine and luxury. *"Who has woe? Who has tumults? Who has discomforts and babblings? Are they not they that tarry long at the wine? Whose are bloodshot eyes?"* [Proverbs 23:29-30] But yet, say what we will, we shall not bring off those who give themselves up to luxury, unless we bring into conflict therewith a different affection. And first, let us address ourselves to the women. Nothing uglier than a woman given to luxury, nothing uglier than a woman given to drink. The bloom of her complexion is faded: the calm and mild expression of the eyes is rendered turbid, as when a cloud intercepts the rays of the sunshine. It is a vulgar, ([ᾶ] [νελεύθερον]) slave-like, thoroughly low-lived habit. How disgusting is a woman when from her breath you catch sour whiffs of fetid wine: a woman belching, giving out a fume ([χυμὸν]) of decomposing meats; herself weighed down, unable to keep upright; her face flushed with an unnatural red; yawning incessantly, and everything swimming in a mist before her eyes! But not such, she that abstains from luxurious living: no (this abstinence makes her look) a more beautiful, well-bred ([σωφρονεστέρα]) woman. For even to the body, the composure of the soul imparts a beauty of its own. Do not imagine that the impression of beauty results only from the bodily features. Give me a handsome girl, but turbulent ([τεταραγμένην]), loquacious, railing, given to drink, extravagant, (and tell me) if she is not worse-looking than any ugly woman? But if she were bashful, if she would hold her peace, if she learned to blush, if to speak modestly ([συμμέτρως]), if to find time for fastings; her beauty would

be twice as great, her freshness would be heightened, her look more engaging, fraught with modesty and good breeding ([σωφροσύνης καὶ κοσμιότητος]). Now then, shall we speak of men? What can be uglier than a man in drink? He is an object of ridicule to his servants, of ridicule to his enemies, of pity to his friends; deserving condemnation without end: a wild beast rather than a human being; for to devour much food is proper to panther, and lion, and bear. No wonder (that they do so), for those creatures have not a reasonable soul. And yet even they, if they be gorged with food more than they need, and beyond the measure appointed them by nature, get their whole body ruined by it: how much more we? Therefore has God contracted our stomach into a small compass; therefore has He marked out a small measure of sustenance, that He may instruct us to attend to the soul.

Let us consider our very make, and we shall see there is in us but one little part that has this operation— for our mouth and tongue are meant for singing hymns, our throat for voice— therefore the very necessity of nature has tied us down, that we may not, even involuntarily, get into much trouble ([πραγματείαν]) (in this way). Since, if indeed luxurious living had not its pains, nor sickness and infirmities, it might be tolerated: but as the case is, He has stinted you by restrictions of nature, that even if you wish to exceed, you may not be able to do so. Is not pleasure your object, beloved? This you shall find from moderation. Is not health? This too you shall so gain. Is not easiness of mind? This too. Is not freedom? Is not vigor and good habit of body, is not sobriety and alertness of mind? (All these you shall find); so entirely are all good things there, while in the other are the contraries to these, discomfort, distemper, disease, embarrassment— waste of substance ([ἄ] [νελευθερία]). Then how comes it, you will ask, that we all run eagerly after this? It comes of disease. For say, what is it that makes the sick man hanker after the thing that does him harm? Is not this very hankering a part

of his disease? Why is it that the lame man does not walk upright? This very thing, does it come of his being lazy, and not choosing to go to the physician? For there are some things, in which the pleasure they bring with them is temporary, but lasting the punishment: others just the contrary, in which the endurance is for a time, the pleasure perpetual. He, therefore, that has so little solidity and strength of purpose as not to slight present sweets for future, is soon overcome. Say, how came Esau to be overcome? How came he to prefer the present pleasure to the future honor? Through want of solidity and firmness of character. [Genesis 25:33] And this fault itself, say you, whence comes it? Of our own selves: and it is plain from this consideration. When we have the mind, we do rouse ourselves, and become capable of endurance. Certain it is, if at any time necessity comes upon us, nay, often only from a spirit of emulation, we get to see clearly what is useful for us. When therefore you are about to indulge in luxury, consider how brief the pleasure, consider the loss— for loss it is indeed to spend so much money to one's own hurt— the diseases, the infirmities: and despise luxury. How many shall I enumerate who have suffered evils from indulgence? Noah was drunken, and was exposed in his nakedness, and see what evils came of this. [Genesis 9:20] Esau through greediness abandoned his birthright, and was set upon fratricide. The people of Israel *"sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."* [Exodus 32:6] Therefore says the Scripture, *"When you have eaten and drunken, remember the Lord your God."* [Deuteronomy 6:12] For they fell over a precipice, in falling into luxury. *"The widow,"* he says, *"that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives"* [1 Timothy 5:6]: and again, *"The beloved waxed sleek, grew thick, and kicked"* [Deuteronomy 32:15]: and again the Apostle, *"Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."* [Romans 13:14] I am not enacting as a law that there shall be fasting, for indeed there is no one who

would listen; but I am doing away with daintiness, I am cutting off luxury for the sake of your own profit: for like a winter torrent, luxury overthrows all: there is nothing to stop its course: it casts out from a kingdom: what is the gain of it ([τί τὸ πλεόν])? Would you enjoy a (real) luxury? Give to the poor; invite Christ, so that even after the table is removed, you may still have this luxury to enjoy. For now, indeed, you have it not, and no wonder: but then you will have it. Would you taste a (real) luxury? Nourish your soul, give to her of that food to which she is used: do not kill her by starvation.— It is the time for war, the time for contest: and do you sit enjoying yourself? Do you not see even those who wield sceptres, how they live frugally while abroad on their campaigns? *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood"* [Ephesians 6:12]; and are you fattening yourself when about to wrestle? The adversary stands grinding his teeth, and are you giving a loose to jollity, and devoting yourself to the table? I know that I speak these things in vain, yet not (in vain) for all. *"He that has ears to hear, let him hear."* [Luke 8:8] Christ is pining through hunger, and are you frittering yourself away ([διασπᾶς]) with gluttony? Two inconsistencies ([Δύο ἀμετρίας]). For what evil does not luxury cause? It is contrary to itself: so that I know not how it gets its name: but just as that is called glory, which is (really) infamy, and that riches, which in truth is poverty, so the name of luxury is given to that which in reality is nauseousness. Do we intend ourselves for the shambles, that we so fatten ourselves? Why cater for the worm that it may have a sumptuous larder? Why make more of their humors ([χῶρας])? Why store up in yourself sources of sweat and rank smelling? Why make yourself useless for everything? Do you wish your eye to be strong? Get your body well strung? For in musical strings, that which is coarse and not refined, is not fit to produce musical tones, but that which has been well scraped, stretches well, and vibrates with full harmony.

Why do you bury the soul alive? Why make the wall about it thicker? Why increase the reek and the cloud, with fumes like a mist steaming up from all sides? If none other, let the wrestlers teach you, that the more spare the body, the stronger it is: and (then) also the soul is more vigorous. In fact, it is like charioteer and horse. But there you see, just as in the case of men giving themselves to luxury, and making themselves plump, so the plump horses are unwieldy, and give the driver much ado. One may think one's self ([ἀ] [γαπητὸν]) well off, even with a horse obedient to the rein and well-limbed, to be able to carry off the prize: but when the driver is forced to drag the horse along, and when the horse falls, though he goad him ever so much, he cannot make him get up, be he ever so skilful himself, he will be deprived of the victory. Then let us not endure to see our soul wronged because of the body, but let us make the soul herself more clear-sighted, let us make her wing light, her bonds looser: let us feed her with discourse, with frugality, (feeding) the body only so much that it may be healthy, that it may be vigorous, that it may rejoice and not be in pain: that having in this sort well ordered our concerns, we may be enabled to lay hold upon the highest virtue, and to attain unto the eternal good things by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and Holy Ghost together, be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 28 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIII. 4, 5

"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister."

As soon as they were ordained they went forth, and hasted to Cyprus, that being a place where was no ill-design hatching against them, and where moreover the Word had been sown already. In Antioch there were (teachers) enough, and Phœnice too was near to Palestine; but Cyprus not so.

However, you are not to make a question of the why and wherefore, when it is the Spirit that directs their movements: for they were not only ordained by the Spirit, but sent forth by Him likewise. *"And when they had come to Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews."* Do you mark how they make a point of preaching the word to them first, not to make them more contentious? The persons mentioned before *"spoke to none but to Jews only"* [Acts 11:19], and so here they betook them to the synagogues. *"And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."* [Acts 13:6-8] Again a Jew sorcerer, as was Simon. And observe this man, how, while they

preached to the others, he did not take it much amiss, but only when they approached the proconsul. And then in respect of the proconsul the wonder is, that although prepossessed by the man's sorcery, he was nevertheless willing to hear the Apostles. So it was with the Samaritans: and from the competition ([συγκρίσεως]) the victory appears, the sorcery being worsted. Everywhere, vainglory and love of power are a (fruitful) source of evils! "*But Saul, who is also Paul,*" — [Acts 13:9] here his name is changed at the same time that he is ordained, as it was in Peter's case, — "*filled with the Holy Ghost, looked upon him, and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou child of the devil:*" [Acts 13:10] and observe, this is not abuse, but accusation: for so ought forward, impudent people to be rebuked "*thou enemy of all righteousness;*" here he lays bare what was in the thoughts of the man, while under pretext of saving he was ruining the proconsul: "*will you not cease,*" he says, "*to pervert the ways of the Lord?*" (He says it) both confidently ([αξιόπιστως]), It is not with us you are warring, nor are you fighting (with us), but "*the ways of the Lord*" you are perverting, and with praise (of these, he adds) "*the right*" ways. "*And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind.*" [Acts 13:11] It was the sign by which he was himself converted, and by this he would fain convert this man. As also that expression, "*for a season,*" puts it not as an act of punishing, but as meant for his conversion: had it been for punishment, he would have made him lastingly blind, but now it is not so, but "*for a season*" (and this), that he may gain the proconsul. For, as he was prepossessed by the sorcery, it was well to teach him a lesson by this infliction (and the sorcerer also), in the same way as the magicians (in Egypt) were taught by the boils. [Exodus 9:11] "*And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness: and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being*

astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." [Acts 13:12] But observe, how they do not linger there, as (they might have been tempted to do) now that the proconsul was a believer, nor are enervated by being courted and honored, but immediately keep on with their work, and set out for the country on the opposite coast. *"Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down."* (v. 13, 14.) And here again they entered the synagogues, in the character of Jews, that they might not be treated as enemies, and be driven away: and in this way they carried the whole matter successfully. *"And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, You men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."* [Acts 13:15] From this point, we learn the history of Paul's doings, as in what was said above we have learned not a little about Peter. But let us review what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And when they had come to Salamis,"* the metropolis of Cyprus, *"they preached the word of God."* [Acts 13:5] They had spent a year in Antioch: it behooved that they should go hither also (to Cyprus) and not sit permanently where they were (the converts in Cyprus): needed greater teachers. See too how they remain no time in Seleucia, knowing that (the people there) might have reaped much benefit from the neighboring city (of Antioch): but they hasten on to the more pressing duties. When they came to the metropolis of the island, they were earnest to disabuse ([διωρθωσαι]) the proconsul. But that it is no flattery that (the writer) says, *"he was with the proconsul, a prudent man"* [Acts 13:7], you may learn from the facts; for he needed not many discourses, and himself wished to hear them. And he mentions also the names. * * * Observe, how he said

nothing to the sorcerer, until he gave him an occasion: but they only *"preached the word of the Lord."* Since (though Elymas) saw the rest attending to them, he looked only to this one object, that the proconsul might not be won over. Why did not (Paul) perform some other miracle? Because there was none equal to this, the taking the enemy captive. And observe, he first impeaches, and then punishes, him. He shows how justly the man deserved to suffer, by his saying, *"O full of all deceit"* [Acts 13:10]: (*"full of all,"*) he says: nothing wanting to the full measure: and he well says, of all *"deceit,"* for the man was playing the part of a hypocrite.—*"Child of the devil,"* because he was doing his work: *"enemy of all righteousness,"* since this (which they preached) was the whole of righteousness (though at the same time): I suppose in these words he reproves his manner of life. His words were not prompted by anger, and to show this, the writer premises, *"filled with the Holy Ghost,"* that is, with His operation. *"And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon you."* [Acts 13:11] It was not vengeance then, but healing: for it is as though he said: *"It is not I that do it, but the hand of God."* Mark how unassuming! No *"light,"* as in the case of Paul, *"shone round about him."* [Acts 9:3] *"You shall be blind,"* he says, *"not seeing the sun for a season,"* that he may give him opportunity for repentance: for we nowhere find them wishing to be made conspicuous by the more stern (exercise of their authority), even though it was against enemies that this was put forth: in respect of those of their own body (they used severity), and with good reason, but in dealing with those without, not so; that (the obedience of faith) might not seem to be matter of compulsion and fear. It is a proof of his blindness, his *"seeking some to lead him by the hand."* [Acts 5:1 ff.] And the proconsul sees the blindness inflicted, *"and when he saw what was done, he believed:"* and both alone believed not merely this, but, *"being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord"* [Acts

13:12]: he saw that these things were not mere words, nor trickery. Mark how he loved to receive instruction from his teachers, though he was in a station of so high authority. And (Paul) said not to the sorcerer, "*Will you not cease to pervert*" the proconsul? What may be the reason of John's going back from them? For "*John*," it says, "*departing from them returned to Jerusalem*" [Acts 13:13]: (he does it) because they are undertaking a still longer journey: and yet he was their attendant, and as for the danger, they incurred it (not he).— Again, when they had come to Perga, they hastily passed by the other cities, for they were in haste to the metropolis, Antioch. And observe how concise the historian is. "*They sat down in the synagogue*," he says, and, "*on the sabbath day*" (v. 14, 15): that they might prepare the way beforehand for the Word. And they do not speak first, but when invited: since as strangers, they called upon them to do so. Had they not waited, there would have been no discourse. Here for the first time we have Paul preaching. And observe his prudence: where the word was already sown, he passes on: but where there was none (to preach), he makes a stay: as he himself writes: "*Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named.*" [Romans 15:20] Great courage this also. Truly, from the very outset, a wonderful man! crucified, ready for all encounters ([παρατεταγμένος]), he knew how great grace he had obtained, and he brought to it zeal equivalent. He was not angry with John: for this was not for him: but he kept to the work, he quailed not, he was unappalled, when shut up in the midst of a host. Observe how wisely it is ordered that Paul should not preach at Jerusalem: the very hearing that he has become a believer, this of itself is enough for them; for him to preach, they never would have endured, such was their hatred of him: so he departs far away, where he was not known. But it is well done, that "*they entered the synagogue on the sabbath day*" when all were collected together. "*And after*

the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, You men and brethren, if you have any word or exhortation for the people, say on." [Acts 13:15] Behold how they do this without grudging, but no longer after this. If you did wish this (really), there was more need to exhort.

He first convicted the sorcerer (and showed), what he was; and that he was such, the sign showed: "*you shall be blind, not seeing the sun*" this was a sign of the blindness of his soul: "*for a season*" [Acts 13:11]: he says, to bring him to repentance. But, oh that love of rule! Oh, that lust of vainglory! How it does overturn and ruin everything; makes people stand up against their own, against each other's salvation; renders them blind indeed, and dark, insomuch that they have even to seek for some to lead them by the hand! Oh that they did even this, oh that they did seek were it but some to lead them by the hand! But no, they no longer endure this, they take the whole matter into their own hands. (This vice) will let no man see: like a mist and thick darkness it spreads itself over them, not letting any see through it. What pleas shall we have to offer, we who for one evil affection, overcome another evil affection (*supra* p. 176), but not for the fear of God! For example, many who are both lewd and covetous, have for their niggardliness put a bridle upon their lust, while other such, on the contrary, have for pleasure's sake, despised riches. Again, those who are both the one and the other, have by the lust of vainglory overcome both, lavishing their money unsparingly, and practising temperance to no (good) purpose; others again, who are exceedingly vainglorious, have despised that evil affection, submitting to many vile disgraces for the sake of their amours, or for the sake of their money: others again, that they may satiate their anger, have chosen to suffer losses without end, and care for none of them, provided only they may work their own will. And yet, what passion can do with us,

the fear of God is impotent to effect! Why speak I of passion? What shame before men can do with us, the fear of God has not the strength to effect! Many are the things we do right and wrong, from a feeling of shame before men; but God we fear not. How many have been shamed by regard to the opinions of men into flinging away money! How many have mistakenly made it a point of honor to give themselves up to the service of their friends (only), to their hurt! How many from respect for their friendships have been shamed into numberless wrong acts! Since then both passion and regard for the opinion of men are able to put us upon doing wrong things and right, it is idle to say, "*we cannot:*" we can, if we have the mind: and we ought to have the mind. Why can you not overcome the love of glory, when others do overcome it, having the same soul as thou, and the same body; bearing the same form, and living the same life? Think of God, think of the glory that is from above: weigh against that the things present, and you will quickly recoil from this worldly glory. If at all events thou covet glory, covet that which is glory, indeed. What kind of glory is it, when it begets infamy? What kind of glory, when it compels one to desire the honor of those who are inferior, and stands in need of that? Real honor is the gaining the esteem of those who are greater than one's self. If at all events you are enamoured of glory, be thou rather enamoured of that which comes from God. If enamoured of that glory you despise this world's glory, you shall see how ignoble this is: but so long as you see not that glory, neither will you be able to see this, how foul it is, how ridiculous. For as those who are under the spell of some wicked, hideously ugly woman, so long as they are in love with her, cannot see her ill-favoredness, because their passion spreads a darkness over their judgment: so is it here also: so long as we are possessed with the passion, we cannot perceive what a thing it is. How then might we be rid of it? Think of those who (for the sake of glory) have spent countless

sums, and now are none the better for it: think of the dead, what glory they got, and (now) this glory is nowhere abiding, but all perished and come to naught: bethink you how it is only a name, and has nothing real in it. For say, what is glory? Give me some definition. "*The being admired by all,*" you will say. With justice, or also not with justice? For if it be not with justice, this is not admiration, but crimination ([κατηγορία]), and flattery, and misrepresentation ([διαβολή]). But if you say, With justice, why that is impossible: for in the populace there are no right judgments; those that minister to their lusts, those are the persons they admire. And if you would (see the proof of this), mark those who give away their substance to the harlots, to the charioteers, to the dancers. But you will say, we do not mean these, but those who are just and upright, and able to do great and noble good acts. Would that they wished it, and they soon would do good: but as things are, they do nothing of the kind. Who, I ask you, now praises the just and upright man? Nay, it is just the contrary. Could anything be more preposterous than for a just man, when doing any such good act, to seek glory of the many— as if an artist of consummate skill, employed upon an Emperor's portrait, should wish to have the praises of the ignorant!

Moreover, a man who looks for honor from men, will soon enough desist from the acts which virtue enjoins. If he will needs be gaping for their praises, he will do just what they wish, not what himself wishes. What then would I advise you? You must look only to God, to the praise that is from Him, perform all things which are pleasing to Him, and go after the good things (that are with Him), not be gaping for anything that is of man: for this mars both fasting and prayer and almsgiving, and makes all our good deeds void. Which that it be not our case, let us flee this passion. To one thing alone let us look, to the praise which is from God, to the being accepted of Him, to the commendation from our common Master; that,

having passed through our present life virtuously, we may obtain the promised blessings together with them that love Him, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end.
Amen.

Homily 29 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIII. 16, 17

"Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and you that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought He them out of it."

Behold Barnabas giving place to Paul— how should it be otherwise? — to him whom he brought from Tarsus; just as we find John on all occasions giving way to Peter: and yet Barnabas was more looked up to than Paul: true, but they had an eye only to the common advantage. *"Then Paul stood up,"* it says—this was a custom of the Jews— *"and beckoned with his hand."* And see how he prepares the way beforehand for his discourse: having first praised them, and showed his great regard for them in the words, *"you that fear God,"* he so begins his discourse. And he says not, You proselytes, since it was a term of disadvantage. *"The God of this people chose our fathers: and the people"*— See, he calls God Himself *their* God peculiarly, Who is the common God of men; and shows how great from the first were His benefits, just as Stephen does. This they do to teach them, that now also God has acted after the same custom, in sending His own Son; [Luke 20:13]: as (Christ) Himself (does) in the parable of the vineyard— *"And the people,"* he says, *"He exalted when it sojourned in the land of Egypt"*— and yet the contrary was the case: true, but they increased in numbers; moreover, the miracles were wrought on their account: *"and with an high arm brought He them out of it."* Of these things (the wonders)

which were done in Egypt, the prophets are continually making mention. And observe, how he passes over the times of their calamities, and nowhere brings forward their faults, but only God's kindness, leaving those for themselves to think over. *"And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness."* [Acts 13:18] Then the settlement. *"And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He divided their land to them by lot."* [Acts 13:19] And the time was long; four hundred and fifty years. *"And after that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."* [Acts 13:20] Here he shows that God varied His dispensations towards them (at various times). *"And afterward they desired a king:"* and (still) not a word of their ingratitude, but throughout he speaks of the kindness of God. *"And God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years."* [Acts 13:21] *"And when he had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king: to whom also He gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, which shall fulfil all My will. Of this man's seed has God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."* (v. 22, 23.) This was no small thing that Christ should be from David. Then John bears witness to this: *"When John had first preached before His coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom do you think that I am? I am not He. But, behold, there comes one after me, whose shoes of His feet I am not worthy to loose."* (v. 24, 25.) And John too not merely bears witness (to the fact), but (does it in such sort that) when men were bringing the glory to him, he declines it: for it is one thing (not to affect) an honor which nobody thinks of offering; and another, to reject it when all men are ready to give it, and not only to reject it, but to do so with such humility. *"Men and brethren, children of the*

stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fears God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain." [Acts 13:26-28] On all occasions we find them making a great point of showing this, that the blessing is peculiarly theirs, that they may not flee (from Christ), as thinking they had nothing to do with Him, because they had crucified Him. "*Because they knew Him not,*" he says: so that the sin was one of ignorance. See how he gently makes an apology even on behalf of those (crucifiers). And not only this: but he adds also, that thus it must needs be. And how so? "*By condemning Him, they fulfilled the voices of the prophets.*" Then again from the Scriptures. "*And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him from the dead. And He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people—*" [Acts 13:29-31] that He rose again. "*And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You. And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he says also in another Psalm, You shall not allow Your Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He, Whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is*

preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." [Acts 13:32-39] Observe how Paul here is more vehement in his discourse: we nowhere find Peter saying this. Then too he adds the terrifying words: *"Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."* (v. 40, 41.)

(a) Observe how he twines (the thread of) his discourse (alternately) from things present, from the prophets. Thus, *"from (this man's) seed according to the promise"*— [Acts 13:23]: (c) the name of David was dear to them; well then, is it not (a thing to be desired) that a son of his, he says, should be their king?— (b) then he adduces John: then again the prophets, where he says, *"By condemning they fulfilled,"* and again, *"All that was written:"* then the Apostles as witnesses of the Resurrection: then David bearing witness. For neither the Old Testament proofs seemed so cogent when taken by themselves as they are in this way, nor yet the latter testimonies apart from the former: wherefore he makes them mutually confirm each other. *"Men and brethren,"* etc. [Acts 13:26] For since they were possessed by fear, as having slain Him, and conscience made them aliens (the Apostles), discourse not with them as unto Christicides, neither as putting into their hands a good which was not theirs, but one peculiarly their own. (d) *"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers:"* as much as to say, not you, but they: and again, apologizing even for those, *"Because they knew Him not, and the voices of the Prophets which are read every sabbath day, in condemning Him, they fulfilled them."* A great charge it is against them that they continually hearing heeded not. But no marvel: for what was said above concerning Egypt and the wilderness, was enough to

show their ingratitude. And observe how this Apostle also, as one moved by the Spirit Himself, continually preaches the Passion, the Burial. (g) *"Having taken Him down from the tree."* Observe, what a great point they make of this. He speaks of the manner of His death. Moreover they bring Pilate (conspicuously) forward, that (the fact of) the Passion may be proved by the mention of the tribunal (by which he was condemned), but at the same time, for the greater impeachment of those (His crucifiers), seeing they delivered Him up to an alien. And he does not say, They made a complaint (against Him), ([ἐ] [νέτυχον], al. [ἐ] [ντυγχάνει]) but, *"They desired, though having found no cause of death"* (in Him), *"that He should be slain."* (e) *Who appeared,"* he says, *"for many days to them that came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem."* [Romans 11:2] Instead of ** he says, *"Who are His witnesses unto the people,"* to wit, *"The men which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem."* Then he produces David and Esaias bearing witness. *"The faithful (mercies),"* the abiding (mercies), those which never perish. (h) Paul loved them exceedingly. And observe, he does not enlarge on the ingratitude of the fathers, but puts before *them* what they must fear. For Stephen indeed with good reason does this, seeing he was about to be put to death, not teaching them; and showing them, that the Law is even now on the point of being abolished: [Acts 7] but not so Paul; he does but threaten and put them in fear. (f) And he does not dwell long on these, as taking it for granted that the word is of course believed; nor enlarge upon the greatness of their punishment, and assail that which they affectionately love, by showing the Law about to be cast out: but dwells upon that which is for their good (telling them), that great shall be the blessings for them being obedient, and great the evils being disobedient.

But let us look over again what has been said. *"You men of Israel,"* etc. [Acts 13:16-21] The Promise then, he says, the fathers received; you, the

reality. (j) And observe, he nowhere mentions right deeds of theirs, but (only) benefits on God's part: *"He chose: Exalted: Suffered their manners:"* these are no matters of praise to them: *"They asked, He gave."* But David he does praise (and him) only, because from him the Christ was to come. *"I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, which shall fulfil all My will."* [Acts 13:22] (i) Observe also; it is with praise (that he says of him), *"David after that he had served the will of God:"* just as Peter — seeing it was then the beginning of the Gospel— making mention of him, said, *"Let it be permitted me to speak freely of the patriarch David."* [Acts 2:29] Also, he does not say, Died, but, *"was added to his fathers. (k) Of this man's seed,"* etc. *"When John,"* he says, *"had first preached before His entry"*— by *entry* he means the Incarnation— *"the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel."* [Acts 13:23-25] Thus also John, writing his Gospel, continually has recourse to him: for his name was much thought of in all parts of the world. And observe, he does not say it *"Of this man's seed,"* etc. from himself, but brings John's testimony.

"Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham"— he also calls them after their father— *"unto you was the word of this salvation sent."* [Acts 13:26] Here the expression, *"Unto you,"* does not mean, Unto (you) Jews, but it gives them a right to sever themselves from those who dared that murder. And what he adds, shows this plainly. *"For,"* he says, *"they that dwell at Jerusalem, because they know Him not."* [Acts 13:27] And how, you will say, could they be ignorant, with John to tell them? What marvel, seeing they were so, with the prophets continually crying aloud to them? Then follows another charge: *"And having found no cause of death in Him:"* in which ignorance had nothing to do. For let us put the case, that they did not hold Him to be the Christ: why did they also kill Him? And *"they desired of Pilate, he says, that He should be slain."* [Acts 13:28] *"And*

when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him." [Acts 13:29] Observe what a point he makes of showing that the (whole) thing was a (Divine) Dispensation. See, by saying what did they persuade men? (By telling them) that He was crucified? Why, what could be less persuasive than this? That He was buried— by them to whom it was promised that He should be salvation? That He who was buried forgives sins, yea, more than the Law (has power to do)? And (observe), he does not say, From which you would not but, *"from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses."* [Acts 13:39] *"Every one,"* he says: be who he may. For those (ordinances) are of no use, unless there be some benefit (accruing therefrom.) This is why he brings in forgiveness later: and shows it to be greater, when, the thing being (otherwise) impossible, yet this is effected. *"Who are His witnesses,"* he says, *"unto the people"*— the people that slew Him. Who would never have been so, were they not strengthened by a Divine Power: for they would never have borne such witness to blood-thirsty men, to the very persons that killed Him. But, *"He has raised up Jesus again: This day,"* he says, *"I have begotten you."* [Acts 13:33] Aye, upon this the rest follows of course. Why did he not allege some text by which they would be persuaded that forgiveness of sins is by Him? Because the great point with them was to show, in the first place, that He was risen: this being acknowledged, the other was unquestionable. *"Through this man,"* nay more, by Him, *"is remission of sins."* [Acts 13:38] And besides, he wished to bring them to a longing desire of this great thing. Well then, His death was not dereliction, but fulfilling of Prophecy.— For the rest, he puts them in mind of historical facts, wherein they through ignorance suffered evils without number. And this he hints in the conclusion, saying, *"Look, you despisers, and behold."* And observe how, this being harsh, he cuts it short. Let not that, he says, come upon you, which was spoken for the others, that *"I work a work which*

you shall in no wise believe, though one declare it unto you." [Acts 13:41] Marvel not that it seems incredible: this very thing was foretold from the first— (that it would not be believed). *"Behold, you despisers,"* as regards those who disbelieve in the Resurrection.

This too might with reason be said to us: *"Behold you despisers."* For the Church indeed is in very evil case, although you think her affairs to be in peace. For the mischief of it is, that while we labor under so many evils, we do not even know that we have any. *"What do you say? We are in possession of our Churches, our Church property, and all the rest, the services are held, the congregation comes to Church every day."* True, but one is not to judge of the state of a Church from these things. From what then? Whether there be piety, whether we return home with profit each day, whether reaping some fruit, be it much or little, whether we do it not merely of routine and for the formal acquittance of a duty ([ἅ] [φοσιούμενοι]). Who has become a better man by attending (daily) service for a whole month? That is the point: otherwise the very thing which seems to bespeak a flourishing condition (of the Church,) does in fact bespeak an ill condition, when all this is done, and nothing comes of it. Would to God (that were all), that nothing comes of it: but indeed, as things are, it turns out even for the worse. What fruit do you get from your services? Surely if you were getting any profit by them, you ought to have been long leading the life of true wisdom ([τῆς φιλοσοφίας]), with so many Prophets twice in every week discoursing to you, so many Apostles, and Evangelists, all setting forth the doctrines of salvation, and placing before you with much exactness that which can form the character aright. The soldier by going to his drill, becomes more perfect in his tactics: the wrestler by frequenting the gymnastic ground becomes more skilful in wrestling: the physician by attending on his teacher becomes more accurate, and knows more, and

learns more: and thou— what have you gained? I speak not to those who have been members of the Church only a year, but to those who from their earliest age have been attending the services. Think you that to be religious is to be constant in Church-going ([παράβαλλειν τῇ συνάξει])? This is nothing, unless we reap some fruit for ourselves: if (from the gathering together in Church) we do not gather ([συνάγωμεν]) something for ourselves, it were better to remain at home. For our forefathers built the Churches for us, not just to bring us together from our private houses and show us one to another: since this could have been done also in a market-place, and in baths, and in a public procession:— but to bring together learners and teachers, and make the one better by means of the other. With us it has all become mere customary routine, and formal discharge of a duty: a thing we are used to; that is all. Easter comes, and then great the stir, great the hubbub, and crowding of— I had rather not call them human beings, for their behavior is not commonly human. Easter goes, the tumult abates, but then the quiet which succeeds is again fruitless of good. *"Vigils, and holy hymn-singing."*— And what is got by these? Nay, it is all the worse. Many do so merely out of vanity. Think how sick at heart it must make me, to see it all like (so much water) poured into a cask with holes in it! But you will assuredly say to me, We know the Scriptures. And what of that? If you exemplify the Scriptures by your works, that is the gain, that the profit. The Church is a dyer's vat: if time after time perpetually ye go hence without receiving any dye, what is the use of coming here continually? Why, the mischief is all the greater. Who (of you) has added ought to the customary practices he received from his fathers? For example: such an one has a custom of observing the memorial of his mother, or his wife, or his child: this he does whether he be told or whether he be not told by us, drawn to it by force of habit and conscience. Does this displease you,

you ask? God forbid: on the contrary, I am glad of it with all my heart: only, I would wish that he had gained some fruit also from our discoursing, and that the effect which habit has, were also the effect as regards us (your teachers)— the superinducing of another habit. Else why do I weary myself in vain, and talk uselessly, if you are to remain in the same state, if the Church services work no good in you? Nay, you will say, we pray. And what of that? *"Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 7:21] Many a time have I determined to hold my peace, seeing no benefit accruing to you from my words; or perhaps there does accrue some, but I, through insatiableness and strong desire, am affected in the same way as those that are mad after riches. For just as they, however much they may get, think they have nothing; so I, because I ardently desire your salvation, until I see you to have made good progress, think nothing done, because of my exceeding eager desire that you should arrive at the very summit. I would that this were the case, and that my eagerness were in fault, not your sloth: but I fear I conjecture but too rightly. For you must needs be persuaded, that if any benefit had arisen in all this length of time, we ought ere now to have done speaking. In such case, there were no need to you of words, since both in those already spoken there had been enough said for you, and you would be yourselves able to correct others. But the fact, that there is still a necessity of our discoursing to you, only shows, that matters with you are not in a state of high perfection. Then what would we have to be brought about? For one must not merely find fault. I beseech and entreat you not to think it enough to have invaded the Church, but that you also withdraw hence, having taken somewhat, some medicine, for the curing of your own maladies: and, if not from us, at any rate from the Scriptures, you have the remedies suitable for each. For instance, is any

passionate? Let him attend to the Scripture-readings, and he will of a surety find such either in history or exhortation. In exhortation, when it is said, *"The sway of his fury is his destruction"* [Sirach 1:22]; and, *"A passionate man is not seemly"* [Proverbs 11:25]; and such like: and again, *"A man full of words shall not prosper"* [Psalm 140:11]; and Christ again, *"He that is angry with his brother without a cause"* [Matthew 5:22]; and again the Prophet, *"Be angry, and sin not"* [Psalm 4:4]; and, *"Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce."* [Genesis 49:7] And in histories, as when you hear of Pharaoh filled with much wrath, and the Assyrian. Again, is any one taken captive by love of money? Let him hear, that *"There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man: for this man sets even his own soul for sale"* [Sirach 9:9]; and how Christ says, *"You cannot serve God and mammon"* [Matthew 6:24]; and the Apostle, that *"the love of money is a root of all evils"* [1 Timothy 6:10]; and the Prophet, *"If riches flow in, set not your heart upon them"* [Psalm 62:10]; and many other like sayings. And from the histories you hear of Gehazi, Judas, the chief scribes, and that *"gifts blind the eyes of the wise."* [Deuteronomy 16:19] Is another proud? Let him hear that *"God resists the proud"* [James 4:6]; and, *"Pride is the beginning of sin"* [Sirach 10:14] and, *"Every one that has a high heart, is impure before the Lord."* [Proverbs 16:5] And in the histories, the devil, and all the rest. In a word, since it is impossible to recount all, let each choose out from the Divine Scriptures the remedies for his own hurts.

So wash out, if not the whole at once, a part at any rate, part today, and part tomorrow, and then the whole. And with regard to repentance too, and confession, and almsgiving, and justice also, and temperance, and all other things, you will find many examples. *"For all these things,"* says the Apostle, *"were written for our admonition."* [1 Corinthians 10:11] If then Scripture in all its discoursing is for our admonition, let us attend to it as we

ought. Why do we deceive ourselves in vain? I fear it may be said of us also, that "*our days have fallen short in vanity, and our years with haste.*" [Psalm 77:33] Who from hearing us has given up the theatres? Who has given up his covetousness? Who has become more ready for almsgiving? I would wish to know this, not for the sake of vainglory, but that I may be inspirited to more zeal, seeing the fruit of my labors to be clearly evident. But as things now are, how shall I put my hand to the work, when I see that for all the rain of doctrine pouring down upon you shower after shower, still our crops remain at the same measure, and the plants have waxed none the higher? Anon the time of threshing is at hand (and) He with the fan. I fear me, lest it be all stubble: I fear, lest we be all cast into the furnace. The summer is past, the winter has come: we sit, both young and old, taken captive by our own evil passions. Tell not me, I do not commit fornication: for what are you the better, if though thou be no fornicator you are covetous? It matters not to the sparrow caught in the snare that he is not held tight in every part, but only by the foot: he is a lost bird for all that; in the snare he is, and it profits him not that he has his wings free, so long as his foot is held tight. Just so, you are caught, not by fornication, but by love of money: but caught you are nevertheless; and the point is, not *how* you are caught, but *that* you are caught. Let not the young man say, I am no money-lover: well, but perchance you are a fornicator: and then again what are you the better? For the fact is, it is not possible for all the passions to set upon us at one and the same time of life: they are divided and marked off, and that, through the mercy of God, that they may not by assailing us all at once become insuperable, and so our wrestling with them be made more difficult. What wretched inertness it shows, not to be able to conquer our passions even when taken one by one, but to be defeated at each several period of our life, and to take credit to ourselves for those which (let us alone) not in

consequence of our own hearty endeavors, but merely because, by reason of the time of life, they are dormant? Look at the chariot-drivers, do you not see how exceedingly careful and strict they are with themselves in their training-practice, their labors, their diet, and all the rest, that they may not be thrown down from their chariots, and dragged along (by the reins)?— See what a thing art is. Often even a strong man cannot master a single horse: but a mere boy who has learned the art shall often take the pair in hand, and with ease lead them and drive them where he will. Nay, in India it is said that a huge monster of an elephant shall yield to a stripling of fifteen, who manages him with the utmost ease. To what purpose have I said all this? To show that, if by dint of study and practice we can throttle into submission ([ᾗ] [γχομεν]) even elephants and wild horses, much more the passions within us. Whence is it that throughout life we continually fail (in every encounter)? We have never practised this art: never in a time of leisure when there is no contest, talked over with ourselves what shall be useful for us. We are never to be seen in our place on the chariot, until the time for the contest is actually come. Hence the ridiculous figure we make there. Have I not often said, Let us practise ourselves upon those of our own family before the time of trial? With our servants ([παῖδας]) at home we are often exasperated, let us there quell our anger, that in our intercourse with our friends we may come to have it easily under control. And so, in the case of all the other passions, if we practised ourselves beforehand, we should not make a ridiculous figure in the contests themselves. But now we have our implements and our exercises and our trainings for other things, for arts and feats of the palæstra, but for virtue nothing of the sort. The husbandman would not venture to meddle with a vine, unless he had first been practised in the culture of it: nor the pilot to sit by the helm, unless he had first practised himself well at it: but we, in all respects unpractised, wish for the

first prizes! It were good to be silent, good to have no communication with any man in act or word, until we were able to charm ([κατεπάδειν]) the wild beast that is within us. The wild beast, I say: for indeed is it not worse than the attack of any wild beast, when wrath and lust make war upon us?

Beware of invading the market-place (Μ[ὴ] [ἐμβάλῃς εἰς ἀγοράν]) with these beasts, until thou have got the muzzle well upon their mouths, until thou have tamed and made them tractable. Those who lead about their tame lions in the market-place, do you not see what a gain they make of it, what admiration they get, because in the irrational beast they have succeeded in producing such tameness— but, should the lion suddenly take a savage fit, how he scares all the people out of the market-place, and then both the man that leads him about is himself in danger, and if there be loss of life to others, it is his doing? Well then do thou also first tame your lion, and so lead him about, not for the purpose of receiving money, but that you may acquire a gain, to which there is none equal. For there is nothing equal to gentleness, which both to those that possess it, and to those who are its objects, is exceeding useful. This then let us follow after, that having kept in the way of virtue, and with all diligence finished our course therein, we may be enabled to attain unto the good things eternal, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 30 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIII. 42

"And as they were going out (text rec. 'from the syn. of the Jews,') they besought (the Gentiles) that these words might be spoken unto them on the following sabbath."

Do you mark Paul's wisdom? He not only gained admiration at the time, but put into them a longing desire for a second hearing, while in what he said he dropped some seeds ([εἰπὼν τινα σπέρματα]) as it were, and forbore to solve (the questions raised), or to follow out the subject to its conclusion, his plan being to interest them and engage their good-will to himself, and not make (people) listless and indifferent by casting all at once into the minds of those (who first heard him). He told them the fact, that *"through this Man is remission of sins announced unto you,"* but the how, he did not declare. *"And when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and worshipping proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas"*— after this point he puts Paul first — *"who, speaking unto them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God."* [Acts 13:43] Do you observe the eagerness, how great it is? They *"followed"* them, it says. Why did they not baptize them immediately? It was not the proper time: there was need to persuade them in order to their steadfast abiding therein. *"And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God."* [Acts 13:44] *"But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and contradicted the things spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming."* [Acts 13:45] See malice wounded in wounding others: this made the

Apostles more conspicuous—the contradiction which those offered. In the first instance then they of their own accord besought them to speak (and now they opposed them): *"contradicting,"* it says, *"and blaspheming."* O recklessness! *"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] Do you mark how by their contentious behavior they the more extended the preaching, and (how the Apostles here) gave themselves the more to the Gentiles, having (by this very thing) pleaded their justification, and made themselves clear of all blame with their own people (at Jerusalem)? (c) See how by their *"envy"* they bring about great things, other (than they looked for): they brought it about that the Apostles spoke out boldly, and came to the Gentiles! For this is why he says, *"And speaking out boldly, Paul and Barnabas said."* They were to go out to the Gentiles: but observe the boldness coming with measure: for if Peter pleaded in his justification, much more these needed a plea, none having called them there. [Acts 11:4] But by saying *"To you first,"* he showed that to those also it was their duty (to preach), and in saying *"Necessary,"* he showed that it was necessary to be preached to them also. *"But since you turn away from it"*— he does not say, *"Woe unto you,"* and *"You are punished,"* but *"We turn unto the Gentiles."* With great gentleness is the boldness fraught! (a) Also he does not say, *"You are unworthy,"* but *"Have judged yourselves unworthy. Lo, we turn unto the Gentiles. For so has the Lord commanded us, saying, I have sent you to be a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."* [Acts 13:47] For that the Gentiles might not be hurt at hearing this, as if the case were so that, had the Jews been in earnest, they themselves would not have obtained the blessings, therefore he brings in the prophecy,

saying, *"A light of the Gentiles,"* and, *"for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And hearing"* (this) *"the Gentiles"* [Acts 13:48]— this, while it was more cheering to them, seeing the case was this, that whereas those were of right to hear first, they themselves enjoy the blessing, was at the same time more stinging to those— *"and the Gentiles,"* it says, *"hearing"* (this) *"were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and believed, as many as were ordained unto eternal life":* i.e., set apart for God. Observe how he shows the speediness of the benefit: *"And the word of the Lord was borne through all the region,"* [Acts 13:49] [διεφέρετο], instead of [διεκομίζετο], *"was carried or conveyed through (it)."* (d) *"But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts."* [Acts 13:50] *"The devout women,"* (b) instead of the proselyte-women. They did not stop at *"envy,"* but added deeds also. (e) Do you see what they effected by their opposing the preaching? To what dishonor they brought these (*"honorable women"*)? *"But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium."* [Acts 13:51] Here now they used that terrible sign which Christ enjoined, *"If any receive you not, shake off the dust from your feet"* [Matthew 10:14; Mark 6:11]; but these did it upon no light ground, but because they were driven away by them. This was no hurt to the disciples; on the contrary, they the more continued in the word: *"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost"* [Acts 13:52] for the suffering of the teacher does not check his boldness, but makes the disciple more courageous.

"And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews." [Acts 14:1] Again they entered into the synagogues. See how far they were from becoming more timid! Having said, *"We turn unto the Gentiles,"* nevertheless (by going into the

synagogues) they superabundantly fortify their own justification (with their Jewish brethren). *"So that,"* it says, *"a great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed."* For it is likely they discoursed as to Greeks also. *"But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren."* [Acts 14:2] Together (with themselves) now they took to stirring up the Gentiles too, as not being themselves sufficient. Then why did the Apostles not go forth thence? Why, they were not driven away, only attacked. *"Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands."* [Acts 14:3] This caused their boldness; or rather, of their boldness indeed their own hearty good-will was the cause — therefore it is that for a long while they work no signs— while the conversion of the hearers was (the effect) of the signs, though their boldness also contributed somewhat. *"But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the Apostles."* [Acts 14:4] No small matter this dividing. And this was what the Lord said, *"I am not come to bring peace, but a sword."* [Matthew 10:34] *"And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them, they were aware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lies round about: and there they preached the Gospel."* [Acts 14:5-7] Again, as if they purposely wished to extend the preaching after it was increased, they once more sent them out. See on all occasions the persecutions working great good, and defeating the persecutors, and making the persecuted illustrious. For having come to Lystra, he works a great miracle, by raising the lame man. *"And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: the same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he*

had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice"— why with a loud voice? That the multitude should believe— *"Stand upright on your feet."* (v. 8, 9.) But observe, he gave heed, it says, to the things spoken by Paul. Do you mark the elevation of the man's mind ([φιλοσοφίαν])? He was nothing defeated ([παρεβλάβη]) by his lameness for earnestness of hearing. *"Who fixing his eyes upon him, and perceiving,"* it says, *"that he had faith to be made whole."* He was already predisposed in purpose of mind. And yet in the case of the others, it was the reverse: for first receiving healing in their bodies, they were then taken in hand for cure of their souls, but this man not so. It seems to me, that Paul saw into his soul. *"And he leaped,"* it says, *"and walked."* [Acts 14:10] It was a proof of his perfect cure, the leaping. *"And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people."* [Acts 14:11-13] But this purpose was not yet manifest, for they spoke in their own tongue, saying, *"The gods in the likeness of men have come down to us:"* therefore the Apostle said nothing to them as yet. But when they saw the garlands, then they went out, and rent their garments, *"Which when the Apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you."* (v. 14, 15.) See how on all occasions they are clean from the lust of glory, not only not coveting, but even repudiating it when offered: just as Peter also said, *"Why gaze ye on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk"* [Acts 3:12]? So these also say the same. And Joseph also said of the dreams, *"Is not their interpretation of God?"* [Genesis 60:8]

And Daniel in like manner, *"And to me also, not through the wisdom that is in me was it revealed."* [Daniel 2:30] And Paul everywhere says this, as when he says, *"And for these things who is sufficient? Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think (anything) as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God."* [2 Corinthians 2:16; 3:5] But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And when they had gone out,"* etc. [Acts 13:42]. Not merely were the multitudes drawn to them, but how? They besought to have the same words spoken to them again, and by their actions they showed their earnestness. *"Now when the congregation,"* etc. [Acts 13:43] See the Apostles on all occasions exhorting, not merely accepting men, nor courting them, but, *"speaking unto them,"* it says, *"they persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. But when the Jews,"* etc. [Acts 13:45] Why did they not contradict before this? Do you observe who on all occasions they were moved by passion? And they not only contradicted, but blasphemed also. For indeed malice stops at nothing. But see what boldness of speech! *"It was necessary,"* he says, *"that the word should have been spoken first to you, but since you put it from you,"*— [Acts 13:46] it is not put as affronting (though) it is in fact what they did in the case of the prophets: *"Talk not to us,"* said they, *"with talk"*— [Isaiah 30:10]: *"but since you put it from you"*— it, he says, not us: for the affront on your part is not to us. For that none may take it as an expression of their piety (that he says,) *"You judge not yourselves worthy,"* therefore he first says, *"You put it from you,"* and then, *"We turn unto the Gentiles."* The expression is full of gentleness. He does not say, We abandon you, but so that it is possible— he would say— that we may also turn hither again: and this too is not the consequence of the affront from you, *"for so has (the Lord) commanded us."*— [Acts 13:47] *"Then why have ye not done this?"* It was indeed needful that the Gentiles

should hear, and this not before you: it is your own doing, the "*before you.*" "*For so has the Lord commanded us: I have set you for a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation,*" i.e. for knowledge which is unto salvation, and not merely of the Gentiles, but of all men, "*unto the ends of the earth— As many as were ordained unto eternal life*" [Acts 13:48]: this is also a proof, that their having received these Gentiles was agreeable with the mind of God. But "*ordained,*" not in regard of necessity: "*whom He foreknew,*" says the Apostle, "*He did predestinate.*" [Romans 8:29] "*And the word of the Lord,*" etc. [Acts 13:49] No longer in the city (only) were (their doctrines) disseminated, but also in the (whole) region. For when they of the Gentiles had heard it, they also after a little while came over. "*But the Jews stirred up the devout women, and raised persecution*"— observe even of what is done by the women, they are the authors— "*and cast them,*" it says, "*out of their coasts*" [Acts 13:50], not from the city merely. Then, what is more terrible, "*they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. But the disciples, it says, were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.*" (v. 51, 52.) The teachers were suffering persecution, and the disciples rejoiced.

"*And so spoke, that a great multitude,*" etc. [Acts 14:1] Do you mark the nature of the Gospel, the great virtue it has? "*Made their minds evil-affected,*" it says, "*against the brethren:*" [Acts 14:2] i.e. slandered the Apostles, raised numberless accusations against them: (these people, being simple, they "*made evil-affected,*" disposed them to act a malignant part. And see how on all occasions he refers all to God. "*Long time,*" he says, "*abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of His grace.*" [Acts 14:3] Think not this (expression, "*Gave testimony,*") has anything derogatory (to the Lord's Divine Majesty): "*Who witnessed,*" it is said, "*before Pontius Pilate.*" [1 Timothy 6:13] Then the

boldness— *"and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands."*

Here he speaks it as concerning their own nation. *"And the multitude of the city,"* etc. (v. 4, 5.) Accordingly they did not wait for it, but saw the

intention of attacking them, and fled, on no occasion kindling their wrath, *"to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe, and the adjacent region."*

[Acts 14:6] They went away into the country, not into the cities only.—

Observe both the simplicity of the Gentiles, and the malignity of the Jews.

By their actions they showed that they were worthy to hear: they so honored them from the miracles only. The one sort honored them as gods, the other

persecuted them as pestilent fellows: and (those) not only did not take

offense at the preaching, but what say they? *"The gods, in the likeness of*

men, have come down to us;" but the Jews were offended. *"And they called*

Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius." (v. 11, 12.) I suppose Barnabas

was a man of dignified appearance also. Here was a new sort of trial, from immoderate zeal, and no small one: but hence also is shown the virtue of

the Apostles, (and) how on all occasions they ascribe all to God.

Let us imitate them: let us think nothing our own, seeing even faith itself is not our own, but more God's (than ours). *"For by grace are you*

saved through faith; and this," says he, *"not of ourselves; it is the gift of*

God." [Ephesians 2:8] Then let us not think great things of ourselves, nor be

puffed up, being as we are, men, dust and ashes, smoke and shadow. For

say, Why do you think great things of yourself? Have you given alms, and

lavished your substance? And what of that? Think, what if God had chosen

not to make you rich? Think of them that are impoverished, or rather, think

how many have given (not their substance only, but) their bodies moreover,

and after their numberless sacrifices, have felt still that they were miserable

creatures! You gave for yourself, Christ (not for Himself, but) for you: you

did but pay a debt, Christ owed you not.— See the uncertainty of the future,

and *"be not high-minded, but fear"* [Romans 11:20]; do not lessen your virtue by boastfulness. Would you do something truly great? Never let a surmise of your attainments as great enter your mind. But you are a virgin? So were those in (the Gospel) virgins, but they got no benefit from their virginity, because of their cruelty and inhumanity. [Matthew 25:12] Nothing like humility: this is mother, and root, and nurse, and foundation, and bond of all good things: without this we are abominable, and execrable, and polluted. For say— let there be some man raising the dead, and healing the lame, and cleansing the lepers, but with proud self-complacency: than this there can be nothing more execrable, nothing more impious, nothing more detestable. Account nothing to be of yourself. Have you utterance and grace of teaching? Do not for this account yourself to have anything more than other men. For this cause especially you ought to be humbled, because you have been vouchsafed more abundant gifts. For he to whom more was forgiven, will love more [Luke 7:47]: if so, then ought thou to be humbled also, for that God having passed by others, took notice of you. Fear thou because of this: for often this is a cause of destruction to you, if you be not watchful. Why do you think great things of yourself? Because you teach by words? But this is easy, to philosophize in words: teach me by your life: that is the best teaching. Do you say that it is right to be moderate, and do you make a long speech about this thing, and play the orator, pouring forth your eloquence without a check? But *"better than thou is he"* shall one say to you, *"who teaches me this by his deeds"*— for not so much are those lessons wont to be fixed in the mind which consist in words, as those which teach by things: since if you have not the deed, thou not only hast not profited him by your words, but hast even hurt him the more— *"better thou were silent."* Wherefore? *"Because the thing you propose to me is impossible: for I consider, that if you who hast so much to say about it,*

succeedest not in this, much more am I excusable." For this cause the Prophet says, *"But unto the sinner said God. Why do you declare My statutes?"* [Psalm 60:16] For this is a worse mischief, when one who teaches well in words, impugns the teaching by his deeds. This has been the cause of many evils in the Churches. Wherefore pardon me, I beseech you, that my discourse dwells long on this evil affection ([πάθει]). Many take a deal of pains to be able to stand up in public, and make a long speech: and if they get applause from the multitude, it is to them as if they gained the very kingdom (of heaven): but if silence follows the close of their speech, it is worse than hell itself, the dejection that falls upon their spirits from the silence! This has turned the Churches upside down, because both *you* desire not to hear a discourse calculated to lead you to compunction, but one that may delight you from the sound and composition of the words, as though you were listening to singers and minstrels ([κιθαρωδῶν καὶ κιθαριστῶν], *supra* p. 68): and *we* too act a preposterous and pitiable part in being led by your lusts, when we ought to root them out. And so it is just as if the father of a poor cold-blooded child (already, more delicate than it ought to be), should, although it is so feeble, give it cake and cold (drink) and whatever only pleases the child, and take no account of what might do it good; and then, being reprov'd by the physicians, should excuse himself by saying, *"What can I do? I cannot bear to see the child crying."* Thou poor, wretched creature, thou betrayer! For I cannot call such a one a father: how much better were it for you, by paining him for a short time, to restore him to health forever, than to make this short-lived pleasure the foundation of a lasting sorrow? Just such is our case, when we idly busy ourselves about beautiful expressions, and the composition and harmony of our sentences, in order that we may please, not profit: (when) we make it our aim to be admired, not to instruct; to delight, not prick to the heart; to be applauded

and depart with praise, not to correct men's manners! Believe me, I speak not other than I feel— when as I discourse I hear myself applauded, at the moment indeed I feel it as a man (for why should I not own the truth?): I am delighted, and give way to the pleasurable feeling: but when I get home, and bethink me that those who applauded received no benefit from my discourse, but that whatever benefit they ought to have got, they lost it while applauding and praising, I am in pain, and groan, and weep, and feel as if I had spoken all in vain. I say to myself: *"What profit comes to me from my labors, while the hearers do not choose to benefit by what they hear from us?"* Nay, often have I thought to make a rule which should prevent all applauding, and persuade you to listen with silence and becoming orderliness. But bear with me, I beseech you, and be persuaded by me, and, if it seem good to you, let us even now establish this rule, that no hearer be permitted to applaud in the midst of any person's discourse, but if he will needs admire, let him admire in silence: there is none to prevent him: and let all his study and eager desire be set upon the receiving the things spoken.— What means that noise again? I am laying down a rule against this very thing, and you have not the forbearance even to hear me!— Many will be the good effects of this regulation: it will be a discipline of philosophy. Even the heathen philosophers— we hear of their discoursing, and nowhere do we find that noisy applause accompanied their words: we hear of the Apostles, making public speeches, and yet nowhere do the accounts add, that in the midst of their speeches the hearers interrupted the speakers with loud expressions of approbation. A great gain will this be to us. But let us establish this rule: in quiet let us all hear, and speak the whole (of what we have to say). For if indeed it were the case that we departed retaining what we had heard, what I insist upon is, that even so the praise is not beneficial — but not to go too much into particulars (on this point); let

none tax me with rudeness — but since nothing is gained by it, nay, it is even mischievous, let us loose the hindrance, let us put a stop to the boundings, let us retrench the gambollings of the soul. Christ spoke publicly on the Mount: yet no one said anything, until He had finished His discourse. I do not rob those who wish to be applauded: on the contrary, I make them to be more admired. It is far better that one's hearer, having listened in silence, should by his memory throughout all time applaud, both at home and abroad, than that having lost all he should return home empty, not possessed of that which was the subject of his applauses. For how shall the hearer be otherwise than ridiculous? Nay, he will be deemed a flatterer, and his praises no better than irony, when he declares that the teacher spoke beautifully, but what he said, this he cannot tell. This has all the appearance of adulation. For when indeed one has been hearing minstrels and players, it is no wonder if such be the case with him, seeing he knows not how to utter the strain in the same manner: but where the matter is not an exhibition of song or of voice, but the drift and purport of thoughts and wise reflection ([φιλοσοφίας]), and it is easy for every one to tell and report what was said, how can he but deserve the accusation, who cannot tell what the matter was for which he praised the speaker? Nothing so becomes a Church as silence and good order. Noise belongs to theatres, and baths, and public processions, and market-places: but where doctrines, and such doctrines, are the subject of teaching, there should be stillness, and quiet, and calm reflection, and a haven of much repose ([φιλοσοφία καὶ πολὺς ὁ λυμὴν]). These things I beseech and entreat: for I go about in quest of ways by which I shall be enabled to profit your souls. And no small way I take this to be: it will profit not you only, but us also. So shall we not be carried away with pride ([ἐ] [κτραχηλίζεσθαί]), not be tempted to love praises and honor, not be led to speak those things which delight, but those which profit: so shall

we lay the whole stress of our time and diligence not upon arts of composition and beauties of expression, but upon the matter and meaning of the thoughts. Go into a painter's study, and you will observe how silent all is there. Then so ought it to be here: for here too we are employed in painting portraits, royal portraits (every one of them), none of any private man, by means of the colors of virtue— How now? Applauding again? This is a reform not easy, but (only) by reason of long habit, to be effected.— The pencil moreover is the tongue, and the Artist the Holy Spirit. Say, during the celebration of the Mysteries, is there any noise? Any disturbance? When we are baptizing ([βαπτίζόμεθα]), when we are doing all the other acts? Is not all Nature decked (as it were) with stillness and silence? Over all the face of heaven is scattered this charm (of repose).— On this account are we evil spoken of even among the Gentiles, as though we did all for display and ostentation. But if this be prevented, the love of the chief seats also will be extinguished. It is sufficient, if any one be enamoured of praise, that he should obtain it after having been heard, when all is gathered in. Yea, I beseech you, let us establish this rule, that doing all things according to God's will, we may be found worthy of the mercy which is from Him, through the grace and compassion of His only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 31 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIV. 14, 15

"Which when the Apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."

Mark the vehemence with which all this is done by the Apostles: *"rent their clothes, ran in, cried out,"* all from strong affection of the soul, revolted by the things that were done. For it was a grief, indeed a grief inconsolable, that they should needs be thought gods, and introduce idolatry, the very thing which they came to destroy! This also was a contrivance of the devil— but he did not prevail. But what say they? *"We also are men of like passions with you."* At the very outset they overthrew the evil. They said not simply, *"Men,"* but *"As ye."* Then, that they may not seem to honor the gods, hear what they add: *"Preaching unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, Who made heaven, the sea, and all things that are therein."* Observe how they nowhere mention things invisible. (b) For they had learned that one should study not so much to say somewhat worthy of God, as to say what is profitable for the hearers. (a) What then? If He be Maker of all things, why does He not also attend to these things by His Providence?— *"Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways"* [Acts 14:16]— but wherefore He suffered them, this he does not say, for at present he keeps to the matter of immediate

importance, nowhere bringing in the name of Christ. Observe, he does not wish to swell the accusation against them, but rather that they themselves should refer all to God. *"Nevertheless, He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, giving you rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."* [Acts 14:17] (c) See how covertly he puts the accusation *"in that He did good,"* etc. And yet if God did this, He could not have *"let them alone;"* on the contrary, they ought to be punished, for that, enjoying so great benefits, they had not acknowledged Him, not even as their feeder. *"From heaven,"* he says, *"giving you rain."* Thus also David said, *"From the fruit of their grain and wine and oil were they made to abound"* [Psalm 4:7], and in many places speaking of Creation, he brings forward these benefits: and Jeremiah mentions first Creation, then Providence (shown) by the rains, so that the Apostle here discourses as taught from those Scriptures. *"Filling,"* he says, *"with food and gladness."* [Jeremiah 5:24] With large liberality ([φιλοτιμίας]) the food is given, not merely for a frugal sufficiency, nor stinted by the need. *"And saying these things, they scarcely stopped the multitudes"* [Acts 14:18]—indeed by this very thing they gained most admiration— *"from sacrificing to them."* Do you observe that this was the point with them to put an end to that madness? *"But there came,"* it says, *"certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium"* [Acts 14:19].— Indeed children of the devil, that not in their own cities only, but also beyond them, they did these things, and as much made it their study to make an end of the preaching, as the Apostles were in earnest to establish it!— *"and having persuaded the multitude and stoned Paul, they dragged him out of the city."* (e) So then, the Gentiles regarded them as gods, but these *"dragged"* him, *"out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Having persuaded the multitude"*— for it is not likely that all thus revered them. In the very city in which they received this

reverence, in the same were they thus terribly ill treated. And this also profited the beholders. *"Lest any man,"* he says, *"should think of me above that which he sees me to be, or that he hears anything from me."* (v. 20.)—*"Howbeit as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up and came into the city."* (d) Here is fulfilled that saying, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] Greater this than the raising of the lame man! (f) *"Came into the city."* Do you mark the zeal, do you mark how fervent he is, how set on fire! He came into the city itself again: for proof that if on any occasion he did retire, it was because he had sown the word, and because it was not right to inflame their wrath. (h) Then they went over all the cities in which they had been in danger. *"And on the morrow,"* it says, *"he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."* (v. 21, 22.) This they said, this they showed. But it is purposely so done, not only by the Apostles, but by the disciples also, that they may learn from the very outset both the might of the preaching, and that they must themselves also suffer such things, that they may stand nobly, not idly gaping for the miracles, but much more (ready) for the trials. Therefore also the Apostle himself said, *"Having the same conflict which you saw in me and heard."* [Philippians 1:30] Persecutions succeeded to persecutions: wars, fightings, stonings. (g) These things, not less than the miracles, both made them more illustrious, and prepared for them a greater rejoicing. The Scripture nowhere says that they returned rejoicing because they had done miracles, but (it does say that they rejoiced), that *"they were counted worthy for that Name to suffer shame."* [Acts 5:41] And this they were taught of Christ,

saying, *"Rejoice not that the devils obey you."* [Luke 10:20] For the joy indeed and without alloy is this, to suffer anything for Christ's sake. (i) *"And that through much tribulation:"* what sort of cheering ([προτροπή]) is this? How did they persuade them, by telling them at the outset of tribulations? Then also another consolation. *"And when they had appointed for them elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."* [Acts 14:23] Do you mark Paul's ardor?— Then other consolation: *"Commended them,"* it says, *"to the Lord. And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia (v. 24, 25): (l) and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled."* [Acts 14:26] Why do they come back to Antioch? To report what had taken place yonder. And besides, there is a great purpose of Providence concerned: for it was needful that they should thenceforth preach with boldness to the Gentiles. They come therefore, reporting these things, that they may be able to know them: and it is providentially ordered, that just then came those who forbade to keep company with the Gentiles in order that from Jerusalem they might obtain great encouragement, and so go their ways with boldness. And besides, it shows that in their temper there was nothing of self-will: for they come, at the same time showing their boldness, in that without the authority of those (at Jerusalem) they had preached to the Gentiles, and their obedience, in that they refer the matter to them: for they were not made arrogant, as ([ὁ] [πενοήθησαν]) having achieved so great successes. *"Whence,"* it says, *"they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled."* And yet moreover the Spirit had said, *"Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."* [Acts 13:2] *"And when they had*

come, and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples." (v. 27, 28.) For the city being great had need of teachers.— But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"Which when the Apostles,"* etc. [Acts 14:14]. First by the sight they checked them, by rending their garments. This did Joshua the son of Nun upon the occasion of the defeat of the people. Then think not that this action was unworthy of them: for such was the eagerness, they would not otherwise have restrained it would not otherwise have quenched the conflagration ([πύραν]). Therefore when need is to do something that is fit to be done, let us not decline it. For if even after all this they hardly persuaded them, if they had not acted thus, what might have been the consequence? For if they had not done thus, they would have been thought to make a show of humility ([ταπεινοθρονεῖν]), and to be all the more desirous of the honor. And observe their language, how in rebuking it is moderated, alike full of wonder and of rebuke. This above all it was that hindered them, the saying, *"Preaching unto you to turn from these vanities unto God."* [Acts 14:15] We are men indeed, they say, but greater than these: for these are dead things. Mark how they not only subvert (the false), but teach (the true), saying nothing about things invisible— *"Who made,"* say they, *"heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. Who in times past,"* etc. (v. 16, 17.) He names as witnesses even the years (in their courses). *"And there came there certain Jews,"* etc. [Acts 14:19] O that Jewish madness! Among a people that had so honored the Apostles, they had the hardihood to come, and to stone Paul. *"And they dragged him out of the city,"* being afraid of those (others)—*"Supposing he had been dead."* (k) *"Howbeit,"* etc. *"and came into the city."* [Acts 14:20] For that

the spirits of the disciples might not be downcast because they who were accounted gods suffered such treatment, they came in unto them and discoursed. *"Then on the morrow,"* etc. And observe, first he goes forth to Derbe, and then comes back to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, [Acts 14:21] giving way to them while their passions are roused, but when they have ceased, then attacking them again. Do you mark, that it was not by (supernatural) grace that they managed all that they did, but by their own diligence? *"Confirming,"* it says *"the souls of the disciples:"* [ἐ] [πιστηρίζοντες], *"further establishing;"* so that they were established, but they added more thereto. *"And that we must,"* etc. [Acts 14:22]: they foretold (this), that they might not be offended. *"And when they had appointed for them,"* etc. Again the ordinations accompanied with fastings: and again fasting, that purifying of our souls. (m) *"And having prayed,"* it says, *"with fastings, they commended them unto the Lord"* [Acts 14:23]: they taught them to fast also in their trials. (o) Why did they not make elders in Cyprus nor in Samaria? Because the latter was near to Jerusalem, the former to Antioch, and the word was strong there; whereas in those parts they needed much consolation, especially they of the Gentiles, who behooved to have much instruction. *"And when they had come,"* etc. [Acts 14:27] They came, teaching them that with good reason had they been ordained by the Spirit. (n) They said not what they themselves, but *"what God had done with them."* It seems to me, that they mean their trials. It was not for nothing that they come here, nor to rest, but providentially guided by the Spirit, to the end that the preaching to the Gentiles might be firmly established. (p) And mark Paul's ardor. He does not ask whether it be right to speak to Gentiles, but he straightway speaks: therefore it is that he says, *"I did not refer myself to flesh and blood."* [Galatians 1:16]

For it is indeed a great thing, a great, a generous soul (like this)! How many have since believed, and none of them all has shone like him! What we want is earnestness, exceeding ardor, a soul ready to encounter death. Else is it not possible to attain unto the Kingdom, not being crucified. Let us not deceive ourselves. For if in war it is impossible to come off safe while living daintily, and trafficking, and huckstering and idling, much more in this war. Or think ye not that it is a war worse than all others? (*Infra*, p. 204, note 1.) "*For we wrestle not,*" he says, "*against flesh and blood.*" [Ephesians 6:12] Since even while taking our meals and walking, and bathing, the enemy is present with us, and knows no time of truce, except that of sleep only: nay, often even then he carries on the war, injecting into us unclean thoughts, and making us lewd by means of dreams. We watch not, we do not rouse ourselves up, do not look to the multitude of the forces opposed to us, do not reflect, that this very thing constitutes the greatest misfortune— that though surrounded by so great wars, we live daintily as in time of peace. Believe me, worse than Paul suffered may have to be suffered now. Those enemies wounded him with stones: there is a wounding with words, even worse than stones. What then must we do? The same that he did: he did not hate those who cast stones at him, but after they had dragged him out, he entered again into their city, to be a benefactor to those who had done him such wrongs. If you also endure him who harshly insults you, and has done you wrongs, then have you too been stoned. Say not, "*I have done him no injury.*" For what injury had Paul done, that he should be stoned? He was announcing a Kingdom, he was bringing men away from error, and bringing them to God: benefits these, worthy of crowns, worthy of proclamation by voice of herald, worthy of a thousand good things— not of stones. And yet (far from resenting) he did just the contrary. For this is the splendid victory. "*And they dragged*

him," [Acts 14:19] it says. These too they often drag: but be not thou angry; on the contrary, preach thou the word with gentleness. Hath one insulted you? Hold your peace, and bless if you can, and thou also hast preached the word, hast given a lesson of gentleness, a lesson of meekness. I know that many do not so smart under wounds, as they do under the blow which is inflicted by words: as indeed the one wound the body receives the other the soul. But let us not smart, or rather feeling the smart let us endure. Do you not see the pugilists, how, with their heads sorely battered, they bite their teeth into their lips, and so bear their smarts kindly? No need to grind the teeth, no need to bite (the lips). Remember your Master, and by the remembrance you have at once applied the remedy. Remember Paul: reflect that thou, the beaten hast conquered, and he the beater, is defeated; and by this have you cured the whole. It is the turning of the scale a moment and you have achieved the whole: be not hurried away, do not even move, you have extinguished the whole (fire). Great eloquence of persuasion there is in suffering anything for Christ: you preach not the word of faith, but you preach the word of patience ([φιλοσοφίας]). But, you will say, the more he sees my gentleness, the more he sets upon me. Is it for this then that you are pained, that he increases your rewards the more? *"But this is the way,"* you say, *"to make him unbearable."* This is mere pretext of your own littleness of mind: on the contrary, the other is the way to make him unbearable, namely, that you avenge yourself. If God had known, that through forbearance of revenge, the unjust became unbearable, He would not have done this Himself: on the contrary, He would have said, Avenge yourself: but He knew, that other than this is the more likely way to do good. Make not thou a law contrary to God: do as He bids you. You are not kinder than He that made us. He has said, *"Bear to be wronged:"* you say, *"I requite wrong for wrong, that he may not become unbearable."* Have you then

more care for him than God has? Such talk is mere passion and ill temper, arrogance and setting up laws against God's laws. For even if the man were hurt (by our forbearance), would it not be our duty to obey? When God orders anything, let us not make a contrary law. "*A submissive answer*," we read, turns away wrath [Proverbs 16:1]: not an answer of opposition. If it profits you, it profits him also: but if it hurts you who art to set him right, how much more will it hurt him? "*Physician, heal yourself*." Hath one spoken ill of you? Commend him thou. Hath he reviled you? Praise him thou. Hath he plotted against you? Do him a kindness. Requite him with the contrary things, if at least thou at all carest for his salvation and wish not thou to revenge your own suffering. And yet, you will say, though he has often met with long-suffering from me he has become worse. This is not your affair, but his. Will you learn what wrongs God suffered? They threw down His altars, and slew His prophets [1 Kings 19:10], yet He endured it all. Could He not have launched a thunderbolt from above? Nay, when He had sent His prophets, and they killed them, then He sent His Son [Matthew 21:37], when they wrought greater impieties, then He sent them greater benefits. And thou too, if you see one exasperated, then yield the more: since this madness has greater need of soothing ([*παραμθίας*]). The more grievous his abuse of you, the more meekness does he need from you: and even as a gale when it blows strong, then it requires yielding to, so also he who is in a passion. When the wild beast is most savage, then we all flee: so also should we flee from him that is angry. Think not that this is an honor to him: for is it an honor we show to the wild beast, and to madmen, when we turn aside out of their way? By no means it is a dishonor and a scorn: or rather not dishonor and scorn, but compassion and humanity. Do you see not how the sailors, when the wind blows violently, take down their sails, that the vessel may not sink? How, when the horses have run away with the

driver, he only leads them into the (open) plain, and does not pull against them that he may not voluntarily exhaust his strength? This do thou also. Wrath is afire, it is a quick flame needing fuel: do not supply food to the fire, and you have soon extinguished the evil. Anger has no power of itself; there must be another to feed it. For you there is no excuse. He is possessed with madness, and knows not what he does; but when thou, seeing what he is, fallest into the same evils, and art not brought to your right senses by the sight, what excuse can there be for you? If coming to a feast thou see at the very outset of the feast some one drunken and acting unseemly, would not he, who after seeing him makes himself drunk, be much more inexcusable? Just so it is here. Do we think it any excuse to say, I was not the first to begin? This is against us, that even the sight of the other in that condition did not bring us to our right senses. It is just as if one should say, "*I did not murder him first.*" For this very thing makes you deserving of punishment, that even upon the warning of such a spectacle thou did not restrain yourself. If you should see the drunken man in the act of vomiting, retching, bursting, his eyes strained, filling the table with his filthiness, everybody hurrying out of his way, and then should fall into the same state yourself, would you not be more hateful? Like him is he that is in a passion: more than he who vomits, he has his veins distended, his eyes inflamed, his bowels racked; he vomits forth words far more filthy than that food; all crude what he utters, nothing duly digested, for his passion will not let it be. But as in that case excess of fumes ([χυμῶν]), making an uproar in the stomach, often rejects all its contents; so here, excess of heat, making a tumult in the soul suffers him not to conceal what it were right to leave unsaid, but things fit and unfit to be spoken, he says all alike, not putting the hearers but himself to shame. As then we get out of the way of those that vomit, so let us from those who are angry. Let us cast dust upon their

vomit: By doing what? By holding our peace: let us call the dogs to eat up the vomit. I know that you are disgusted at hearing this: but I wish you to feel this same disgust when you see these things take place, and not to be pleased at the thing. The abusive man is filthier than the dog that returns to its own vomit. For if indeed having vomited once he were done with it, he would not be like that dog: but if he vomits the same things again, it is plain that he does so from having eaten the same again. What then is more abominable than such an one? What filthier than that mouth which chews such food? And yet this is a work of nature, but the other not or rather both the one and the other are contrary to nature. How? Since it is not according to nature to be causelessly abusive, but against nature: he speaks nothing then like a man, but part as beast, part as madman. As then the disease of the body is contrary to nature, so also is this. And to show that it is contrary to nature, if he shall continue in it, he will perish little by little: but if he continue in that which is natural, he will not perish. I had rather sit at table with a man who eats dirt, than with one who speaks such words. See ye not the swine devouring dung? So also do these. For what is more stinking than the words which abusive men utter? It is their study to speak nothing wholesome, nothing pure, but whatever is base, whatever is unseemly, that they study both to do and say: and what is worse, they think to disgrace others, while they in fact are disgracing themselves. For that it is themselves they disgrace is plain. For, leaving out of the question those who speak lies (in their railings), say it be some notorious harlot, or even from the stage some other (abandoned creature), and let that person be having a fight with some other person: then let the latter cast this up to the former (what she or he is), and the former retort upon the latter the same reproach: which of them is most damaged by the words? For the former is but called what in fact he or she is, which is not the case with the other: so that the

first gets nothing more in the way of shame (than there was before), while to the other there accrues a great accession of disgrace. But again, let there be some hidden actions (mod. text [εἰργασμένα] "*which have been done*"), and let only the person abusing know of them: then, holding his peace until now, let him openly parade ([ἐ] [κλομπευέτω]) the reproach: even so, he himself is more disgraced than the other. How? By making himself the herald of the wickedness, so getting for himself either the imputation of not being privy to any such thing, or the character of one not fit to be trusted. And you shall see all men immediately accuse him: "*If indeed he had been privy to a murder being done, he ought to have revealed it all:*" and so they regard him with aversion as not human even, they hate him, they say he is a wild beast, fierce and cruel: while the other they pardon much rather than him. For we do not so much hate those that have wounds, as those that compel one to uncover and show them. Thus that man has not only disgraced the other, but himself as well and his hearers, and the common nature of men: he has wounded the hearer, done no good. For this reason Paul says: "*If there be any word that is good for edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*" [Ephesians 4:29] Let us get a tongue speaking only good things, that we may be lovely and amiable. But indeed, everything has come to that pitch of wickedness, that many boast of the very things, for which they should hide their faces. For the threats of the many are of this kind: "*you can not bear my tongue,*" say they. Words, these, worthy only of a woman, of an abandoned drunken old hag, one of those that are dragged (to punishment) in the forum, a procuress. Nothing more shameful than these words, nothing more unmanly, more womanlike, than to have your strength in the tongue, and to think great things of yourself because you can rail, just like the fellows in processions, like the buffoons, parasites, and flatterers. Swine they are rather than men, who

pride themselves upon this. Whereas you should (sooner) have buried yourself, and if another gave you this character, should recoil from the charge as odious and unmanly, instead of that you have made yourself the herald of (your own) disgrace ([ἡ] [βρεωv]). But you will not be able to hurt him you speak ill of. Wherefore I beseech you, considering how the wickedness has come to such a height, that many boast of it, let us return to our senses, let us recover those who are thus mad, let us take away these councils out of the city, let us make our tongue gracious, let us rid it of all evil speaking, that being clean from sins, we may be able to draw down upon us the good-will from above, and to have mercy vouchsafed unto us from God, through the grace and compassion of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 32 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XV. 1

"And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Unless you are circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Mark how at every step of the right progress in respect of the Gentiles, the beginning is brought in as matter of necessity. Before this (Peter) being found fault with, justified himself, and said all that he said in the tone of apology, which was what made his words acceptable: then, the Jews having turned away, upon this (Paul) came to the Gentiles. Here again, seeing another extravagance coming in, upon this (the apostle) enacts the law. For as it is likely that they, as being taught of God, discoursed to all indifferently, this moved to jealousy them of the Jews (who had believed). And they did not merely speak of circumcision, but they said, You cannot even be saved. Whereas the very opposite to this was the case, that receiving circumcision they could not be saved. Do you mark how closely the trials succeed each other, from within, from without? It is well ordered too, that this happens when Paul is present, that he may answer them.

"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." [Acts 15:2] And Paul does not say, What? Have I not a right to be believed after so many signs? But he complied for their sakes. *"And being brought on their way by the Church, they passed through Phenice and*

Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren." [Acts 15:3] And observe, the consequence is that all the Samaritans also, learn what has come to the Gentiles: and they rejoiced. *"And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them."* [Acts 15:4] See what a providence is here! *"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, you know how that of old days God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe."* [Acts 15:5-7] Observe Peter from the first standing aloof ([κεχωρισμένον]) from the affair, and even to this time judaizing. And yet (says he) *"ye know."* [ch. 10:45; 11:2] Perhaps those were present who of old found fault with him in the matter of Cornelius, and went in with him (on that occasion): for this reason he brings them forward as witnesses. *"From old days,"* he says, *"did choose among you."* What means, *"Among you?"* Either, in Palestine, or, you being present. *"By my mouth."* Observe how he shows that it was God speaking by him, and no human utterance. *"And God, that knows the hearts, gave testimony unto them:"* he refers them to the spiritual testimony: *"by giving them the Holy Ghost even as unto us."* [Acts 15:8] Everywhere he puts the Gentiles upon a thorough equality. *"And put no difference between us and them, having purified their hearts by faith."* [Acts 15:9] From faith alone, he says, they obtained the same gifts. This is also meant as a lesson to those (objectors); this is able to teach even them that faith only is needed, not works nor circumcision. For indeed they do not say all this only by way of apology for the Gentiles, but to teach (the

Jewish believers) also to abandon the Law. However, at present this is not said. *"Now therefore why do you tempt God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples?"* [Acts 15:10] What means, *"Tempt ye God?"* As if He had not power to save by faith. Consequently, it proceeds from a want of faith, this bringing in the Law. Then he shows that they themselves were nothing benefited by it, and he turns the whole (stress of his speech) against the Law, not against them, and (so) cuts short the accusation of them: *"which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved, even as they."* [Acts 15:11] How full of power these words! The same that Paul says at large in the Epistle to the Romans, the same says Peter here. *"For if Abraham,"* says (Paul), *"was justified by works, he has whereof to glory, but not before God."* [Romans 4:2] Do you perceive that all this is more a lesson for them than apology for the Gentiles? However, if he had spoken this without a plea for speaking, he would have been suspected: an occasion having offered, he lays hold of it, and speaks out fearlessly. See on all occasions how the designs of their foes are made to work with them. If those had not stirred the question, these things would not have been spoken, nor what follows.

(Recapitulation.) (b) But let us look more closely at what has been said. *"And certain men,"* etc. In Jerusalem, then, there were not any believers from among the Gentiles: but in Antioch of course there were. Therefore there came down certain yet laboring under this disease of the love of rule, and wishing to have those of the Gentiles attached to them. And yet Paul, though he too was learned in the Law, was not thus affected. *"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small disputation with them,"* etc. [Acts 15:2] But when he returned from thence, the doctrine also became more exact. For if they at Jerusalem enjoin no such thing, much

more these (have no right to do so). *"And being brought on their way,"* etc, *"they caused no small joy to the brethren."* [Acts 15:3] Do you mark, as many as are not enamoured of rule, rejoiced in their believing? It was no ambitious feeling that prompted their recitals, neither was it for display, but in justification of the preaching to the Gentiles. [Acts 15:4] Thus they say nothing of what had happened in the matter of the Jews. *"But there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed,"* etc. [Acts 15:5] (a) But even if they would needs bring over the Gentiles to their side, they learn that neither must the Apostles overlook it. *"And the Apostles and elders,"* etc. [Acts 15:6] *"Among us,"* he says, *"God chose:"* and *"from old days:"* long ago, he says, not now. And this too is no small point— at a time when Jews believed, not turned away (from the Gospel). *"Among us;"* an argument from the place: *"of old days,"* from the time. And that expression, *"Chose:"* just as in their own case he says not, (so) willed it, but, *"Chose that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel and believe."* Whence is this proved? From the Spirit. Then he shows that the testimony given them is not of grace merely, but of their virtue. *"And God which knows the hearts bare them witness"* [Acts 15:8]; having afforded to them nothing less (than to us), for, he says, *"Put no difference between us and them."* [Acts 15:9] Why then, hearts are what one must everywhere look to. And it is very appositely said, *"God that knows the hearts bare them witness:"* as in the former instance, *"You, Lord, that know the hearts of all men."* [Acts 1:24] For to show that this is the meaning, observe what he adds, *"Put no difference between us and them."* When he has mentioned the testimony borne to them, then he utters that great word, the same which Paul speaks, *"Neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision."* [1 Corinthians 7:19] *"That he may make the two one in Himself."* [Ephesians 2:5] Of all these the seeds lie in Peter's discourse. And he does not say

(between) them of the circumcision, but *"Between us,"* that is the Apostles, *"and them."* Then, that the expression, *"no difference"* may not seem an outrage, After faith, he says— *"Having purified their hearts by faith"* [Acts 15:10]— He thoroughly cleansed them first. Then he shows, not that the Law was evil, but themselves weak.— *"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved even as they."* [Acts 15:11] Mark how he ends with a fearful consideration. He does not discourse to them from the Prophets, but from things present, of which themselves were witnesses. Of course (the Prophets) also themselves anon add their testimony (*infra* v. 15), and make the reason stronger by what has now come to pass. And observe, he first permits the question to be moved in the Church, and then speaks. *"And put no difference between"*— he said not, them of the circumcision, but *"us and them,"* i.e. the Gentiles: for this (gradual advance) little by little is stronger. *"Why therefore do you tempt God?"* who has become (the) God of the Gentiles: for this was tempting: * * * whether He is able to save even after the Law. See what he does. He shows that they are in danger. For if, what the Law could not do, faith had power to do, *"we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved even as they"* [comp.]: but faith falling off, behold, themselves (are) in destruction. And he did not say, Why do ye disbelieve? Which was more harsh, but, *"Tempt God,"* and that when the fact is demonstrated.

(c) Great effrontery this, of the Pharisees, that even after faith they set up the Law, and will not obey the Apostles. But see these, how mildly they speak, and not in the tone of authority: such words are amiable, and more apt to fix themselves in the mind. Observe, it is nowhere a display of words, but demonstration by facts, by the Spirit. And yet, though they have such proofs, they still speak gently. And observe they do not come accusing those at Antioch, but *"declaring all things that God had done with them:"*

[Acts 15:4] but thence again these men lay hold upon the occasion (to compass their own objects), "*but there rose up,*" etc. [Acts 15:1] Such were the pains they took in their love of power: and it was not with the knowledge of the Apostles that they Paul and Barnabas were blamed. But still they brought forward none of these charges: but when they have proved the matter, then (the Apostles) write in stronger terms.

For gentleness is everywhere a great good: gentleness, I say, not stupid indifference; gentleness, not adulation: for between these there is a vast difference. Nothing ruffled Paul, nothing discomposed Peter. When you have convincing proofs, why lose your temper, to render these of none effect? It is impossible for one who is out of temper ever to persuade. Yesterday also we discoursed about anger; but there is no reason why we should not today also; perchance a second exhortation coming directly after the first will effect somewhat. For indeed a medicine though of virtue to heal a wound, unless it be constantly renewed, mars all. And think not that our continual discoursing about the same things is a condemning of you: for if we condemned you, we should not discourse; but now, hoping that you will gain much, we speak these things. Would indeed that we did speak constantly of the same things: would that there were no other subject of our discourses, than how we might overcome our passions. For is it not contrary to all reason, that while emperors, living in luxury and so great honor, have no subject of discourse either while sitting at table, or at any other time, save only how to overcome their enemies — and therefore it is that they hold their assemblies each day, and appoint generals and soldiers, and demand taxes and tributes; and that of all state affairs, the moving causes are these two, the overcoming of those who make war upon them, and the establishing of their subjects in peace— we have no mind for such themes as this, nor ever even dream of conversing upon them: but how we may buy

land, or purchase slaves, and make our property greater, these are subjects we can talk about every day, and never be tired of them: while concerning things in ourselves and really our own, we neither wish to speak ourselves, nor so much as dream of tolerating advice, nor of enduring to hear others speaking about them? But answer me, what do you talk about? About dinner? Why that is a subject for cooks. Of money? Nay, that is a theme for hucksters and merchants. Of buildings? That belongs to carpenters and builders. Of land? That talk is for husbandmen. But for us, there is no other proper business, save this, how we may make wealth for the soul. Then let not the discourse be wearisome to you. Why is it that none finds fault with the physician for always discoursing of the healing art, nor with people of other crafts for talking about their peculiar arts? If indeed the mastery over our passions were really achieved, so that there were no need of putting us in mind, we might reasonably be taxed with ambition and display: or rather, not then either. For even if it were gained, for all that, there would be need of discoursing, that one might not relapse and remain uncorrected: as in fact physicians discourse not only to the sick, but also to the whole, and they have books on this subject, on the one part how to free from disease, on the other how to preserve health. So that even if we are well, still we must not give over, but must do all in order to the preserving of our health. And when we are sick there is a twofold necessity for advice: first, that we may be freed from the disease; secondly, that having been freed, we may not fall into it again. Well then, we are discoursing now by the method of treating the sick, not by the rules for the treatment of the healthy.

How then may one root out this evil passion? How subdue ([ὁ] [ποσκελίσειε]) this violent fever? Let us see whence it had its birth, and let us remove the cause. Whence is it wont to arise? From arrogance and much haughtiness. This cause then let us remove, and the disease is removed

together with it. But what is arrogance? Whence does it arise? For perhaps we are likely to have to go back to a still higher origin. But whatever course the reason of the thing may point out, that let us take, that we may go to the bottom of the mischief, and pluck it up by the roots. Whence then comes arrogance? From our not looking into our own concerns, but instead of that, busying ourselves about the nature of land, though we are not husbandmen, and the nature of gold, though we are not merchants, and concerning clothing, and everything else: while to ourselves and our own nature we never look at all. And who, you will say, is ignorant of his own nature? Many: perhaps all, save a few: and if you will, I will show the proof of it. For, tell me, what is man? If one were asked, will he be able to answer outright to the questions, In what he differs from the brutes, in what he is akin to the heavenly inhabitants, what can be made of man? For as in the case of any other material, so also in this case: man is the subject-matter, but of this can be made either an angel or a beast. Does not this seem a strange saying? And yet you have often heard it in the Scriptures. For of certain human beings it was said, *"he is the angel of the Lord"* [Malachi 2:7]: and *"from his lips,"* says it, *"they shall seek judgment"* [Malachi 3:1]: and again, *"I send My angel before Your face:"* but of some, *"Serpents, generation of vipers."* [Matthew 12:34] So then, it all depends upon the use. Why do I say, an angel? The man can become God, and a child of God. For we read, *"I have said, You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High."* [Psalm 82:6] And what is greater, the power to become both God and angel and child of God is put into his own hands. Yea, so it is, man can be the maker of an angel. Perchance this saying has startled you? Hear however Christ saying: *"In the Resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels."* [Matthew 22:30] And again, *"He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."* [Matthew 19:12] In a word,

it is virtue which makes angels: but this is in our power: therefore we are able to make angels, though not in nature, certainly in will. For indeed if virtue be absent, it is no advantage to be an angel by nature; and the Devil is a proof of this, who was an angel once: but if virtue be present, it is no loss to be a man by nature; and John is a proof of this, who was a man, and Elias who went up into heaven, and all those who are about to depart there. For these indeed, though with bodies, were not prevented from dwelling in heaven: while those others, though without bodies, could not remain in heaven. Let no one then grieve or be vexed with his nature as if it were a hindrance to him, but with his will. He (the Devil) from being incorporeal became a lion: for lo! It says, *"Our adversary, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour"* [1 Peter 5:8]: we from being corporeal, become angels. For just as if a person, having found some precious material, should despise it, as not being an artificer, it will be a great loss to him, whether it be pearls, or a pearl shell, or any other such thing that he has seen; so we likewise, if we are ignorant of our own nature, shall despise it much: but if we know what it is, we shall exhibit much zeal, and reap the greatest profits. For from this nature is wrought a king's robe, from this a king's house, from this nature are fashioned a king's members: all are kingly. Let us not then misuse our own nature to our hurt. He has made us *"a little lower than the angels,"* [Psalm 8:5], I mean, by reason of death: but even that little we have now recovered. There is nothing therefore to hinder us from becoming near to the angels, if we will. Let us then will it, let us will it, and having exercised ourselves thoroughly, let us return honor to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, world without end, Amen.

Homily 33 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XV. 13, 15

"And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets."

This (James) was bishop, as they say, and therefore he speaks last, and herein is fulfilled that saying, *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."* [Deuteronomy 17:6; Matthew 18:16] But observe the discretion shown by him also, in making his argument good from the prophets, both new and old. For he had no acts of his own to declare, as Peter had and Paul. And indeed it is wisely ordered that this (the active) part is assigned to those, as not intended to be locally fixed in Jerusalem, whereas (James) here, who performs the part of teacher, is no way responsible for what has been done, while however he is not divided from them in opinion. (b) *"Men and brethren,"* he says, *"hearken unto me."* Great is the moderation of the man. His also is a more complete oration, as indeed it puts the completion to the matter under discussion. (a) *"Symeon,"* he says, *"declared:"* (namely,) in Luke, in that he prophesied, *"Which You have prepared before the face of all nations, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."* (c) *"How God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name."* [Luke 2:25] Then, since that (witness), though from the time indeed he was manifest, yet had not authority by reason of his not being ancient, therefore he produces

ancient prophecy also, saying, *"And to this agree the words of the Prophets, as it is written: After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up."* [Acts 15:16] What? Was Jerusalem raised up? Was it not rather thrown down? What sort of raising up does he call that which took place after the return from Babylon? *"That the residue of men,"* he says, *"may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles upon whom My Name is called."* [Acts 15:17] Then, what makes his word authoritative— *"Says the Lord, which does all these things:"* and, for that this is no new thing, but all was planned from the beginning, *"Known unto God are all His works from everlasting."* [Acts 15:18] And then again his authority ([καὶ τὸ ἀξίωμα πάλιν]) (as Bishop): *"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time has in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day."* [Acts 15:19-21] Since then they had heard of the Law, with good reason he enjoins these things from the Law, that he may not seem to make it of no authority. And (yet) observe how he does not let them be told these things from the Law, but from himself, saying, It is not that I heard these things from the Law, but how? *"We have judged."* Then the decree is made in common. *"Then pleased it the Apostles and elders, together with the whole Church, to choose men of their own company"*— do you observe they do not merely enact these matters, and nothing more?— *"and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: and they wrote letters by them after this manner."* [Acts 15:22] And observe, the more to authenticate the decree, they send men of their own, that there may be no room for

regarding Paul and his company with suspicion. *"The Apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia."* [Acts 15:23] And mark with what forbearance of all harsh vituperation of those (brethren) they indite their epistle. *"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, You must be circumcised, and keep the Law: to whom we gave no such commandment."* [Acts 15:24] Sufficient was this charge against the temerity of those men, and worthy of the Apostles' moderation, that they said nothing beyond this. Then to show that they do not act despotically, that all are agreed in this, that with deliberation they write this— *"It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send men of ours whom we have chosen"* [Acts 15:25]— then, that it may not look like disparagement of Paul and Barnabas, that those men are sent, observe the encomium passed upon them — *"together with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas; who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us"*— it is not man's doing, it says— *"to lay upon you no greater burden"*— again it calls the Law a burden: then apologizing even for these injunctions— *"save these necessary things"* [Acts 15:26-28]: "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication from which if you keep yourselves, you shall do well. [Acts 15:29] For these things the New Testament did not enjoin: we nowhere find that Christ discoursed about these matters; but these things they take from the Law. *"From things strangled,"* it says, *"and from blood."* Here it prohibits murder. [cf. Genesis 9:5] *"So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: which when*

they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation." (v. 30, 31.) Then those (brethren) also exhorted them: and having established them, for towards Paul they were contentiously disposed, so departed from them in peace. *"And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the Apostles."* (v. 32, 33.) No more factions and fightings, but thenceforth Paul taught.

(Recapitulation.) *"Then all the multitude kept silence,"* etc. [Acts 15:12] There was no arrogance in the Church. After Peter Paul speaks, and none silences him: James waits patiently, not starts up (for the next word). Great the orderliness (of the proceedings). No word speaks John here, no word the other Apostles, but held their peace, for James was invested with the chief rule, and think it no hardship. So clean was their soul from love of glory. *"And after that they had held their peace, James answered,"* etc. [Acts 15:13] (b) Peter indeed spoke more strongly, but James here more mildly: for thus it behooves one in high authority, to leave what is unpleasant for others to say, while he himself appears in the milder part. (a) But what means it, *"How God first ([πρῶτον]) did visit?"* [Acts 15:14] (It means) from the beginning ([ἐ] [ξ ἀρχῆς]). (c) Moreover he well says, *"Symeon expounded" ([ἐ] [ξηγήσατο])* (or, interpreted), implying that he too spoke the mind of others. *"And to this agree,"* etc. Observe how he shows that this is a doctrine of old time. *"To take out of the Gentiles,"* he says, *"a people for His Name."* [Acts 15:15] Not simply, Chose, but, *"for His Name,"* that is for His glory. His Name is not shamed by the taking ([προλήψει]) the Gentiles first, but it is even a greater glory.— Here some even great thing is hinted at: that these are chosen before all. *"After this I will return, and rebuild the tabernacle of David which is fallen down."*

[Acts 15:16] But if one would look into the matter closely, the kingdom of David does in fact now stand, his Offspring reigning everywhere. For what is the good of the buildings and the city, with none obeying there? And what is the harm arising from the destruction of the city, when all are willing to give their very souls? There is that come which is more illustrious than David: in all parts of the world is he now sung. This has come to pass: if so, then must this also come to pass, *"And I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:"* to what end? *"that the residue of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name is called."* [Acts 15:17] If then it was to this end that the city rose again (namely) because of Him (that was to come) of them, it shows that of the building of the city the cause is, the calling of the Gentiles. Who are *"the residue?"* those who are then left. *"And all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name is called:"* but observe, how he keeps the due order, and brings them in second. *"Says the Lord, which does these things."* Not *"says"* (only), but *"does."* Why then, it was God's work.— *"But the question is other than this (namely), what Peter spoke more plainly, whether they must be circumcised. Then why do you harangue about these matters?"* For what the objectors asserted, was not that they must not be received upon believing, but that it must be with the Law. And upon this Peter well pleaded: but then, as this very thing above all others troubled the hearers, therefore he sets this to rights again ([θεραπεύει]). And observe, that which was needful to be enacted as a rule, that it is not necessary to keep the Law, this Peter introduced: but the milder part, the truth which was received of old, this James says, and dwells upon that concerning which nothing is written, in order that having soothed their minds by that which is acknowledged, he may opportunely introduce this likewise. *"Wherefore,"* says he, *"my sentence is, not to trouble them which from among the Gentiles do turn unto God"* [Acts 15:19], that is, not to

subvert: for, if God called them, and these observances subvert, we fight against God. And again, *"them which from the Gentiles,"* he says, *"do turn."* And he says well, with authority, the *"my sentence is. But that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication"*— (b) and yet they often insisted upon these points in discoursing to them — but, that he may seem also to honor the Law (he mentions), these also, speaking (however) not as from Moses but from the Apostles, and to make the commandments many, he has divided the one into two (saying), *"and from things strangled, and from blood."* [Acts 15:20] For these, although relating to the body, were necessary to be observed, because (these things) caused great evils, *"For Moses has of old times in every city,"* etc. [Acts 15:21] This above all quieted them. ([ἀ] [νέπαυσεν]) (a) For this cause I affirm that it is good (so *"to write to them."*) Then why do we not write the same injunctions to Jews also? Moses discourses unto them. See what condescension (to their weakness)! Where it did no harm, he set him up as teacher, and indulged them with a gratification which hindered nothing, by permitting Jews to hear him in regard of these matters, even while leading away from him them of the Gentiles. See what wisdom! He seems to honor him, and to set him up as the authority for his own people, and by this very thing he leads away the Gentiles from him! *"Being read in the synagogues every sabbath day."* Then why do they not learn (what is to be learned) out of him, for instance * *? Through the perversity of these men. He shows that even these (the Jews) need observe no more (than these necessary things). And if we do not write to them, it is not that they are bound to observe anything more, but only that they have one to tell them. And he does not say, Not to offend, nor to turn them back, which is what Paul said to the Galatians, but, *"not to trouble them:"* he shows that the point ([κατόρθωμα]) if carried is nothing

but a mere troubling. Thus he made an end of the whole matter; and while he seems to preserve the Law by adopting these rules from it, he unbinds it by taking only these. (c) There was a design of Providence in the disputation also, that after the disputation the doctrine might be more firm. *"Then pleased it the Apostles to send chosen men of their own company,"* etc., no ordinary persons, but the *"leading men; having written"* (letters) *"by them after this manner. To those in Antioch,"* it says, *"and Syria and Cilicia."* (v. 22, 23) where the disease had its birth. Observe how they say nothing harsher ([φορτικώτερον]) against those men, but look to one thing only, namely, to undo (the mischief) which has been done. For this would make even the movers of the faction there to confess (that they were wrong). They do not say, The seducers, the pestilent fellows, or suchlike: though where need is, Paul does this, as when he says, *"O full of all guile"* [Acts 13:10]: but here, the point being carried, there was no need. And observe, they do not put it, That certain from us ordered you to keep the Law, but, *"Troubled you with words, subverting your souls,"*— nothing could be more proper ([κυριώτερον]) than that word: none (of the other speakers) has so spoken of the things done by those men. *"The souls,"* he says, already strongly established, these persons are [ὅ] [νασχευάζοντες] as in speaking of a building, *"taking them down again:"* displacing them ([μετατιθέντες]) from the foundation). *"To whom,"* he says, *"we gave no such commandment. It seemed good therefore to us being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you together with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (v. 25, 26.) If *"beloved,"* they will not despise them, if they *"have hazarded their lives,"* they have themselves a right to be believed. *"We have sent,"* it says, *"Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by word of mouth."* [Acts 15:27] For it was necessary that

there should be not merely the Epistle there by itself, lest they should say that Paul and Barnabas had suppressed (the real purport), that they said one thing instead of another. The encomium passed upon Paul stopped their mouths. For this is the reason why neither Paul comes alone nor Barnabas (with him), but others also from the Church; that he may not be suspected, seeing it was he that advocated that doctrine: nor yet those from Jerusalem alone. It shows that they have a right to be believed. *"For it seemed good,"* say they, *"to the Holy Ghost and to us"* [Acts 15:28]: not making themselves equal (to Him)— they are not so mad. But why does it put this (so)? Why did they add, *"And to us,"* and yet it had sufficed to say, *"To the Holy Ghost?"* The one, *"To the Holy Ghost,"* that they may not deem it to be of man; the other, *"To us,"* that they may be taught that they also themselves admit (the Gentiles), although themselves being in circumcision. They have to speak to men who are still weak and afraid of them: this is the reason why this also is added. And it shows that it is not by way of condescension that they speak, neither because they spared them, nor as considering them weak, but the contrary; for great was the reverence of the teachers also. *"To lay upon you no greater burden"*— they are ever calling it a burden— and again, *"save these necessary things:"* for that was a superfluous burden. See here a brief Epistle, with nothing more in it (than was needed), neither arts of persuasion ([κατασκευὰς]) nor reasonings, but simply a command: for it was the Spirit's legislating. *"So when they were dismissed they came to Antioch, and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered to them the epistle."* [Acts 15:30] After the epistle, then (Judas and Silas) also themselves exhort them by word [Acts 15:31]: for this also was needful, that (Paul and Barnabas) might be quit of all suspicion. *"Being prophets also themselves,"* it says, exhorted the brethren *"with many words."* It shows here the right that Paul and Barnabas have to be believed. For Paul also

might have done this, but it behooved to be done by these. And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace. [Acts 15:33]

No more faction. On this occasion, I suppose, it was that they received the right hand, as he says himself, *"They gave to me and Barnabas right hands of fellowship."* [Galatians 2:9] There he says, *"They added nothing to me."* [Galatians 2:6] For they confirmed his view: they praised and admired it.— It shows that even from human reasonings it is possible to see this, not to say from the Holy Ghost only, that they sinned a sin not easy to be corrected. For such things need not the Spirit.— It shows that the rest are not necessary, but superfluous, seeing these things are necessary. *"From which if you keep yourselves,"* it says, *"you shall do well."* It shows that nothing is lacking to them, but this is sufficient. For it might have been done also without letters, but that there may be a law in writing (they send this Epistle): again, that they may obey the law (the Apostles), also told those men (the same things), and they did this, *"and confirmed them, and having tarried a space were let go in peace."*

Let us not then be offended on account of the heretics. For look, here at the very outset of the preaching, how many offenses there were: I speak not of those which arose from them that were without; for these were nothing: but of the offenses which were within. For instance, first Ananias, then the *"murmuring,"* then Simon the sorcerer; afterwards they that accused Peter on account of Cornelius, next the famine, lastly this very thing, the chief of the evils. For indeed it is impossible when any good thing has taken place, that some evil should not also subsist along with it. Let us not then be disturbed, if certain are offended, but let us thank God even for this, because it makes us more approved. For not tribulations only, but even temptations also render us more illustrious. A man is no such great lover of the truth, only for holding to it when there is none to lead him astray from

it: to hold fast to the truth when many are drawing him away, this makes the proved man. What then? Is this why offenses come? I am not speaking as if God were the author of them: God forbid! But I mean, that even out of their wickedness He works good to us: it was never His wish that they should arise: "*Grant to them,*" He says, "*that they may be one*" [John 17:21]: but since offenses do come, they are no hurt, to these, but even a benefit: just as the persecutors unwillingly benefit the Martyrs by dragging them to martyrdom, and yet they are not driven to this by God; just so is it here. Let us not look (only at this), that men are offended: this very thing is itself a proof of the excellence of the doctrine— that many stimulate and counterfeit it: for it would not be so, if it were not good. And this I will now show, and make on all hands plain to you. Of perfumes, the fragrant spices are they which people adulterate and counterfeit; as, for instance, the amomum leaf. For because these are rare and of necessary use, therefore there come to be spurious imitations likewise. Nobody would care to counterfeit any common article. The pure life gets many a false pretender to it: no man would care to counterfeit the man of vicious life; no, but the man of monastic life.— What then shall we say to the heathen? There comes a heathen and says, "*I wish to become a Christian, but I know not whom to join: there is much fighting and faction among you, much confusion: which doctrine am I to choose?*" How shall we answer him? "*Each of you*" (says he) "*asserts, 'I speak the truth.'*" (b) No doubt: this is in our favor. For if we told you to be persuaded by arguments, you might well be perplexed: but if we bid you believe the Scriptures, and these are simple and true, the decision is easy for you. If any agree with the Scriptures, he is the Christian; if any fight against them, he is far from this rule. (a) "*But which am I to believe, knowing as I do nothing at all of the Scriptures? The others also allege the same thing for themselves. What then (c) if the other come,*

and say that the Scripture has this, and you that it has something different, and you interpret the Scriptures diversely, dragging their sense (each his own way)?" And you then, I ask, have you no understanding, no judgment? "And how should I be able (to decide)," says he, "I who do not even know how to judge of your doctrines? I wish to become a learner, and you are making me immediately a teacher." If he say this, what, say you, are we to answer him? How shall we persuade him? Let us ask whether all this be not mere pretence and subterfuge. Let us ask whether he has decided ([κατέγνωκε]) against the heathen (that they are wrong). The fact he will assuredly affirm, for of course, if he had not so decided, he would not have come to (enquire about) our matters: let us ask the grounds on which he has decided, for to be sure he has not settled the matter out of hand. Clearly he will say, *"Because (their gods) are creatures, and are not the uncreated God."* Good. If then he find this in the other parties ([αἱρέσεις]), but among us the contrary, what argument need we? We all confess that Christ is God. But let us see who fight (against this truth), and who not. Now we, affirming Him to be God speak of Him things worthy of God, that He has power, that He is not a slave, that He is free, that He does of Himself: whereas the other says the reverse. Again I ask: if you would learn (to be) a physician, * * *? And yet among them are many (different) doctrines. For if you accept without more ado just what you are told, this is not acting like a man: but if you have judgment and sense, you shall assuredly know what is good. We affirm the Son to be God, we verify ([ἐ] [παληθεύομεν]) what we affirm: but they affirm indeed, but (in fact) confess not.— But to mention (something) even plainer: those have certain persons from whom they are called, openly showing the name of the heresiarch himself, and each heresy in like manner: with us, no man has given us a name, but the faith itself. However, this (talk of yours) is mere pretence and subterfuge. For answer

me: how is it that if you would buy a cloak, though ignorant of the art of weaving, you do not speak such words as these— *"I do not know how to buy; they cheat me"*— but do all you can to learn, and so whatever else it be that you would buy: but here you speak these words? For at this rate, you will accept nothing at all. For let there be one that has no (religious) doctrine whatever: if he should say what you say about the Christians— *"There is such a multitude of men, and they have different doctrines; this a heathen, that a Jew, the other a Christian: no need to accept any doctrine whatever; for they are at variance one with another; but I am a learner, and do not wish to be a judge"* — but if you have yielded (so far as) to pronounce against ([καταγινώσκειν]) one doctrine, this pretext no longer has place for you. For just as you were able to reject the spurious, so here also, having come, you shall be able to prove what is profitable. For he that has not pronounced against any doctrine at all, may easily say this: but he that has pronounced against any, though he have chosen none, by going on in the same way, will be able to see what he ought to do. Then let us not make pretexts and excuses, and all will be easy. For, to show you that all this is mere excuse, answer me this: Do you know what you ought to do, and what to leave undone? Then why do you not what you ought? Do that, and by right reason seek of God, and He will assuredly reveal it to you. *"God,"* it says, *"is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him."* [ch. 10:34-35] It cannot be that he who hears without prejudice should not be persuaded. For just as, if there were a rule, by which everything behooved to be put straight, it would not need much consideration, but it would be easy to detect the person who measures falsely ([τὸν παραμετροῦντα λαβῆν]), so is it here. *"Then how is it they do not see it at a glance?"* Many things are the cause of this: both preconceived opinion, and human causes ([αἰτίαι]). The

others, say you, say the same thing about us. How? For are we separated from the Church? Have we our heresiarchs? Are we called after men— as one of them has Marcion, another Manichæus, a third Arius, for the author and leader (of his sect)? Whereas if we likewise do receive an appellation from any man, we do not take them that have been the authors of some heresy, but men that presided over us, and governed the Church. We have no *"masters upon the earth"*— God forbid— we have *"One Master that is in heaven."* [Matthew 23:9-10] *"And those also,"* says he, *"say the same."* But there stands the name set over them, accusing them, and stopping their mouths.— How is it, there have been many heathen, and none of them asked these questions: and among the philosophers there were these (differences), and yet none of those holding the right party ([αἵρεσιν]) was hindered (thereby)?— Why did not (those believers) say, when (the others) raised these questions, *"Both these and those are Jews: which must we believe?"* But they believed as they ought. Then let us also obey the laws of God, and do all things according to His good pleasure, that having virtuously passed this life present, we may be enabled to attain unto the good things promised to them that love Him, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 34 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XV. 35

"Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also."

Observe again their humility, how they let others also take part in the preaching. *"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good ([ἡ] [ζίου] see note 3, p. 213) to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention (or exasperation) was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other."* [Acts 15:36-39] And already indeed Luke has described to us the character of the Apostles, that the one was more tender and indulgent, but this one more strict and austere. For the gifts are diverse— (the gifts, I say), for that this is a gift is manifest— but the one befitting one, the other another set of characters, and if they change places, harm results instead of good. (b) In the Prophets too we find this: diverse minds, diverse characters: for instance, Elias austere, Moses meek. So here Paul is more vehement. And observe for all this, how gentle he is. *"Thought not good,"* it says, *"to take him with them that had departed from them from Pamphylia."* (a) And there seems indeed to be exasperation ([παροξυσμός]), but in fact the whole matter is a plan of the Divine Providence, that each should receive his proper place: and it behooved that

they should not be upon a par, but the one should lead, and the other be led. *"And so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the Churches."*

[Acts 15:39-41] And this also is a work of Providence. For the Cyprians had exhibited nothing of the like sort as they at Antioch and the rest: and those needed the softer character, but these needed such a character as Paul's. *"Which then,"* say you, *"did well? He that took, or he that left?"* ***

(c) For just as a general would not choose to have a low person always to his baggage-bearer, so neither did the Apostle. This corrected the other's, and instructed (Mark) himself. *"Then did Barnabas ill?"* say you. *"And how is it not amiss ([ἄ] [τοπον]), that upon so small a matter there should arise so great an evil?"* In the first place then, no evil did come of it, if, sufficing each for whole nations, they were divided the one from the other, but a great good. And besides, they would not readily have chosen to leave each other. But admire, I pray you, the writer, how he does not conceal this either. *"But at any rate,"* say you, *"if they must needs part, let it be without exasperation."* Nay, but if nothing more, observe this, that in this too is shown what was of man (in the preaching of the Gospel). For if the like behooved to be shown (even) in what Christ did, much more here. And besides, the contention cannot be said to be evil, when each disputes for such objects (as here) and with just reason. I grant you, if the exasperation were in seeking his own, and contending for his own honor, this might well be (reproved): but if wishing, both the one and the other, to instruct and teach, the one took this way and the other that, what is there to find fault with? For in many things they acted upon their human judgment; for they were not stocks or stones. And observe how Paul impeaches (Mark), and gives the reason. For of his exceeding humility he revered Barnabas, as

having been partner with him in so great works, and being with him: but still he did not so reverence him, as to overlook (what was necessary). Now which of them advised best, it is not for us to pronounce: but thus far (we may affirm), that it was a great arrangement of Providence, if these were to be vouchsafed a second visitation, but those were not to be visited even once.

(a) *"Teaching and preaching the word of the Lord."* [Acts 15:35] They did not simply tarry in Antioch, but taught. What did they *"teach,"* and what *"preach"* (evangelize)? They both (taught) those that were already believers, and (evangelized) those that were not yet such. *"And some days after,"* etc. [Acts 15:36] For because there were offenses without number, their presence was needed. (d) *"How they do,"* he says. And this he did not know: naturally. See him ever alert, solicitous, not bearing to sit idle, though he underwent dangers without end. Do you mark, it was not of cowardice that he came to Antioch? He acts just as a physician does in the case of the sick. And the need of visiting them he showed by saying, *"In which we preached the word. And Barnabas determined,"* etc. [Acts 15:37-40] (So) Barnabas *"departed, and went not with (him)."* (b) The point to be considered, is not that they differed in their opinions, but that they accommodated themselves the one to the other (seeing), that thus it was a greater good their being parted: and the matter took a pretext from this. What then? Did they withdraw in enmity? God forbid! In fact you see after this Barnabas receiving many encomiums from Paul in the Epistles. There was *"sharp contention,"* it says, not enmity nor quarrelling. The contention availed so far as to part them. *"And Barnabas took Mark,"* etc. And with reason: for what each supposed to be profitable, he did not forego thereafter, because of the fellowship with the other. Nay, it seems to me that the parting took place advisedly ([κατὰ σύνεσιν]), and that they said one to

another, *"As I wish not, and you wish, therefore that we may not fight, let us distribute the places."* So that in fact they did this, altogether yielding each to the other: for Barnabas wished Paul's plan to stand, therefore withdrew; on the other hand, Paul wished the other's plan to stand, therefore he withdrew. Would to God we too made such separations, as to go forth for preaching. A wonderful man this is; and exceedingly great! To Mark this contest was exceedingly beneficial. For the awe inspired by Paul converted him, while the kindness of Barnabas caused that he was not left behind: so that they contend indeed, but the gain comes to one and the same end. For indeed, seeing Paul choosing to leave him, he would be exceedingly awed, and would condemn himself, and seeing Barnabas so taking his part, he would love him exceedingly: and so the disciple was corrected by the contention of the teachers: so far was he from being offended thereby. For if indeed they did this with a view to their own honor, he might well be offended: but if for his salvation, and they contend for one and the same object, to show that he who honored him * * * had well determined, what is there amiss ([ἄ] [τοπον]) in it?

(e) *"But Paul,"* it says, *"departed, having chosen Silas, and being commended to the grace of God."* What is this? They prayed it says: they besought God. See on all occasions how the prayer of the brethren can do great things. And now he journeyed by land, wishing even by his journeying to benefit those who saw ([τοὺς ὁρῶντας]) him. For when indeed they were in haste they sailed, but now not so. (c) *"And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the Churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra."* [Acts 15:41] Mark the wisdom of Paul: he does not go to other cities before he has visited them which had received the Word. For it is folly to run at random. This let us also do: let us teach the first in the first

place, that these may not become an hindrance to them that are to come after.

"And, behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters; for they knew all that his father was a Greek." [Acts 16:1-3] It is indeed amazing, the wisdom of Paul! He that has had so many battles about circumcision, he that moved all things to this end, and did not give over until he had carried his point, now that the decree is made sure, circumcises the disciple. He not only does not forbid others, but himself does this thing. (b) *"Him,"* it says, *"he would have to go forth with him."* And the wonder is this, that he even took him unto him. *"Because of the Jews,"* it says, *"which were in those parts:"* for they would not endure to hear the word from one uncircumcised. (a) Nothing could be wiser. So that in all things he looked to what was profitable: he did nothing upon his own preference ([*προλήψει*]). (c) And what (then)? Mark the success: he circumcised, that he might take away circumcision: for he preached the decrees of the Apostles. *"And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the Churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."* (v. 4, 5.) Do you mark fighting, and by fighting, edification? Not warred upon by others, but themselves doing contrary things, so they edified the Church! They introduced a decree not to circumcise, and he circumcises! *"And so were the Churches,"* it says, *"established in the faith,"* and in multitude: *"increased,"* it says, *"in number daily."* Then he does not continue to tarry with these, as having come to visit them: but how? He

goes further. *"Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,"* [Acts 16:6] having left Phrygia and Galatia, they hastened into the interior. For, it says, *"After they had come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not."* [Acts 16:7] Wherefore they were forbidden, he does not say, but that they were *"forbidden,"* he does say, teaching us to obey and not ask questions, and showing that they did many things as men. *"And the Spirit,"* it says, *"suffered them not: but having passed by Mysia they came down to Troas."* [Acts 16:8] *"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."* [Acts 16:9] Why a vision, and not the Holy Ghost? Because He forbade the other. He would even in this way draw them over: since to the saints also He appeared in a dream, and in the beginning (Paul) himself saw a vision, *"a man coming in and laying his hands upon him."* [Acts 9:12] In this manner also Christ appears to him, saying, *"You must stand before Cæsar."* Then for this reason also He draws him there, that the preaching may be extended. This is why he was forbidden to tarry long in the other cities, Christ urging him on. For these were to enjoy the benefit of John for a long time, and perhaps did not extremely need him (Paul), but there he behooved to go. And now he crosses over and goes forth. *"And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them."* [Acts 16:10] Then the writer mentions also the places, as relating a history, and showing where he made a stay (namely), in the greater cities, but passed by the rest. *"Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony."* (v. 11, 12.) It is a high distinction for

a city, the being a colony. *"And in this city we were tarrying certain days."* But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And after some days, Paul said,"* etc. [Acts 15:36] He put to Barnabas a necessity for their going abroad, saying *"Let us visit the cities in which we preached the word."* *"But Paul begged,"* etc. [Acts 15:38] And yet no need for him to beg, who had to make an accusation presently. This happens even in the case where God and men are the parties: the man requests, God is angry. For instance, when He says, *"If her father had spit in her face"* [Numbers 12:14]: and again, *"Let me alone, and in Mine anger I will blot out this people."* [Exodus 32:32] And Samuel when he mourns for Saul. [1 Samuel 15:35] For by both, great good is done. Thus also here: the one is angry, the other not so. The same happens also in matters where we are concerned. And the sharp contention with good reason, that Mark may receive a lesson, and the affair may not seem mere stage-playing. For it is not to be thought that he who bids, *"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,"* [Ephesians 4:26] would have been angry because of such a matter as this: nor that he who on all occasions gave way would not have given way here, he who so greatly loved Paul that before this he sought him in Tarsus, and brought him to the Apostles, and undertook the alms in common with him, and in common the business relating to the decree. But they take themselves so as to instruct and make perfect by their separation them that need the teaching which was to come from them. And he rebukes others indeed, but bids do good to all men. As in fact he does elsewhere, saying, *"But you, be not weary in well-doing."* [2 Thessalonians 3:13] This we also do in our common practice. Here it seems to me that others also were alike displeased with Paul. And thereupon taking them also apart, he does all, and exhorts and admonishes. Much can concord do, much can charity. Though it be for a great matter you ask,

though thou be unworthy, you shall be heard for your purpose of heart: fear not.

"He went," it says, "through" the cities "And, behold, there was a disciple, by name Timothy, who had a good report of the brethren which were in Lystra and Iconium." (v. 41; 16:1.) Great was the grace of Timothy. When Barnabas departed ([ἁ] [πέστη]), he finds another, equivalent to him. Of him he says, *"Remembering your tears and your unfeigned faith, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice."* [2 Timothy 1:5] His father continued to be a Gentile, and therefore it was that (Timothy) was not circumcised. (a) Observe the Law already broken. Or if not so, I suppose he was born after the preaching of the Gospel but this is perhaps not so. (c) He was about to make him a bishop, and it was not meet that he should be uncircumcised. (e) And this was not a small matter, seeing it offended after so long a time: (b) *"for from a child,"* he says, *"you have known the Holy Scriptures."* [2 Timothy 3:15] (d) *"And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep."* [Acts 16:4] For until then, there was no need for the Gentiles to keep any such. The beginning of the abrogation was the Gentiles' not keeping these things, and being none the worse for it: nor having any inferiority in respect of faith: anon, of their own will they abandoned the Law. (f) Since therefore he was about to preach, that he might not smite the Jews a double blow, he circumcised Timothy. And yet he was but half (a Jew by birth), his father being a Greek: but yet, because that was a great point carried in the cause of the Gentiles, he did not care for this: for the Word must needs be disseminated: therefore also he with his own hands circumcised him. *"And so were the churches established in the faith."* Do you mark here also how from going counter (to his own object) a great good results? *"And increased in number daily."* [Acts 16:5] Do you observe, that the circumcising not

only did no harm, but was even of the greatest service? *"And a vision appeared unto Paul in the night."* [Acts 16:9] Not now by Angels, as to Philip, as to Cornilius, but how? By a vision it is now shown to him: in more human sort, not now as before (i.e., v. 6, 7) in more divine manner. For where the compliance is more easy, it is done in more human sort; but where great force was needed, there in more divine. For since he was but urged to preach, to this end it is shown him in a dream: but to forbear preaching, he could not readily endure: to this end the Holy Ghost reveals it to him. Thus also it was then with Peter, *"Arise, go down."* [Acts 10:20] For of course the Holy Spirit did not work what was otherwise easy: but (here) even a dream sufficed him. And to Joseph also, as being readily moved to compliance, the appearance is in a dream, but to the rest in waking vision. [Matthew 1:20; 2:13-19] Thus to Cornelius, and to Paul himself. *"And lo, a man of Macedonia,"* etc. and not simply enjoining, but *"beseeching,"* and from the very persons in need of (spiritual) cure. [ch. 10:3; 9:3] *"Assuredly gathering,"* it says, *"that the Lord had called us."* [Acts 16:10], that is, inferring, both from the circumstance that Paul saw it and none other, and from the having been *"forbidden by the Spirit,"* and from their being on the borders; from all these they gathered. *"Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course,"* etc. [Acts 16:11] That is, even the voyage made this manifest: for there was no tardiness. It became the very root of Macedonia. It was not always in the way of *"sharp contention"* that the Holy Spirit wrought: but this so rapid progress (of the Word) was a token that the thing was more than human. And yet it is not said that Barnabas was exasperated, but, *"Between them there arose a sharp contention."* [Acts 15:39] If the one was not exasperated neither was the other.

Knowing this, let us not merely pick out ([ἐ] [κλέγωμεν]) these things, but let us learn and be taught by them: for they were not written without a

purpose. It is a great evil to be ignorant of the Scriptures: from the things we ought to get good from, we get evil. Thus also medicines of healing virtue, often, from the ignorance of those who use them, ruin and destroy: and arms which are meant to protect, are themselves the cause of death unless one know how to put them on. But the reason is, that we seek everything rather than what is good for ourselves. And in the case of a house, we seek what is good for it, and we would not endure to see it decaying with age, or tottering, or hurt by storms: but for our soul we make no account: nay, even should we see its foundations rotting, or the fabric and the roof, we make no account of it. Again, if we possess brute creatures, we seek what is good for them: we call in both horse-feeders and horse-doctors, and all besides: we attend to their housing, and charge those who are entrusted with them, that they may not drive them at random or carelessly, nor take them out by night at unseasonable hours nor sell away their provender; and there are many laws laid down by us for the good of the brute creatures: but for that of our soul there is no account taken. But why speak I of brute creatures which are useful to us? There are many who keep small birds (or "*sparrows*") which are useful for nothing except that they simply amuse, and there are many laws even about them, and nothing is neglected or without order, and we take care for everything rather than for our own selves. Thus we make our selves more worthless than all. And if indeed a person abusively call us "*dog*," we are annoyed: but while we are opprobrious to ourselves, not in word, but in deed, and do not even bestow as much care on our soul as on dogs, we think it no great harm. Do you see how all is full of darkness? How many are careful about their dogs, that they may not be filled with more than the proper food, that so they may be keen and fit for hunting, being set on by famine and hunger: but for themselves they have no care to avoid luxury: and the brute creatures

indeed they teach to exercise philosophy, while they let themselves sink down into the savageness of the brutes. The thing is a riddle. *"And where are your philosophic brutes?"* There are such; or, say, do you not take it to be philosophy, when a dog gnawed with hunger, after having hunted and caught his prey, abstains from the food; and though he sees his meal ready before him, and with hunger urging him on, yet waits for his master? Be ashamed of yourselves: teach your bellies to be as philosophic. You have no excuse. When you have been able to implant such philosophic self-command in an irrational nature, which neither speaks nor hears reason, shall you not much more be able to implant it in yourself? For that it is the effect of man's care, not of nature is plain: since otherwise all dogs ought to have this habit. Do you then become as dogs. For it is you that compel me to fetch my examples thence: for indeed they should be drawn from heavenly things; but since if I speak of those, you say, *"Those are (too) great,"* therefore I speak nothing of heavenly things: again, if I speak of Paul, you say, *"He was an Apostle:"* therefore neither do I mention Paul: if again I speak of a man, you say, *"That person could do it:"* therefore I do not mention a man even, but a brute creature; a creature too, that has not this habit by nature, lest you should say that it effected this by nature, and not (which is the fact) from choice: and what is wonderful, choice not self-acquired, but (the result of) your care. The creature does not give a thought to the fatigue, the wear and tear it has undergone in running down the prey, not a thought to this, that by its own proper toil it has made the capture: but casting away all these regards, it observes the command of its master, and shows itself superior to the cravings of appetite. *"True; because it looks to be praised, it looks to get a greater meal."* Say then to yourself, that the dog through hope of future pleasure, despises that which is present: while you do not choose for hope of future good things to despise those which are

present; but he indeed knows, that, if he tastes of that food at the wrong time and against his master's will, he will both be deprived of that, and not get even that which was apportioned to him, but receive blows instead of food: whereas you cannot even perceive this, and that which he has learned by dint of custom, you do not succeed in acquiring even from reason. Let us imitate the dogs. The same thing hawks also and eagles are said to do: what the dogs do with regard to hares and deer, the same do those with regard to birds; and these too act from a philosophy learned from men. These facts are enough to condemn us, these enough to convict us. To mention another thing:— they that are skilled in breaking horses, shall take them, wild, fierce, kicking, biting, and in a short time so discipline them, that though the teacher be not there, it is a luxury to ride them, their paces are so thoroughly well-ordered: but the paces of the soul may be all disordered, and none cares for it: it bounds, and kicks, and its rider is dragged along the ground like a child, and makes a most disgraceful figure, and yet no one puts curbs on her, and leg-ties, and bits, nor mounts upon her the skilful rider— Christ, I mean. And therefore it is that all is turned upside down. For when you both teach dogs to master the craving of the belly, and tame the fury in a lion, and the unruliness of horses, and teach the birds to speak plainly, how inconsistent must it not be— to implant achievements of reason in natures that are without reason, and to import the passions of creatures without reason into natures endowed with reason? There is no excuse for us, none. All who have succeeded (in mastering their passions) will accuse us, both believers and unbelievers: for even unbelievers have so succeeded; yea, and wild beasts, and dogs, not men only: and we shall accuse our own selves, since we succeed, when we will, but when we are slothful, we are dragged away. For indeed many even of those who live a very wicked life, have oftentimes changed themselves when they wished.

But the cause is, as I said, that we go about seeking for what is good for other things, not what is good for ourselves. If you build a splendid house, you know what is good for the house, not what is good for yourself: if you take a beautiful garment, you know what is good for the body, not for yourself: and if you get a good horse, it is so likewise. None makes it his mark how his soul shall be beautiful; and yet, when that is beautiful, there is no need of any of those things: as, if that be not beautiful, there is no good of them. For like as in the case of a bride, though there be chambers hung with tapestry wrought with gold, though there be choirs of the fairest and most beautiful women, though there be roses and garlands, though there be a comely bridegroom, and the maidservants and female friends, and everybody about them be handsome, yet, if the bride herself be full of deformity, there is no good of all those; as on the other hand if she were beautiful, neither would there be any loss arising from (the want of) those, nay just the contrary; for in the case of an ugly bride, those would make her look all the uglier, while in the other case, the beautiful would look all the more beautiful: just so, the soul, when she is beautiful, not only needs none of those adjuncts, but they even cast a shade over her beauty. For we shall see the philosopher shine, not so much when in wealth, as in poverty. For in the former case many will impute it to his riches, that he is not superior to riches: but when he lives with poverty for his mate, and shines through all, and will not let himself be compelled to do anything base, then none claims shares with him in the crown of philosophy. Let us then make our soul beauteous, if at least we would fain be rich. What profit is it, when your mules indeed are white and plump and in good condition, but you who are drawn by them are lean and scurvy and ill-favored? What is the gain, when your carpets indeed are soft and beautiful, full of rich embroidery and art, and your soul goes clad in rags, or even naked and foul? What the gain,

when the horse indeed has his paces beautifully ordered, more like dancing than stepping, while the rider, together with his choral train and adorned with more than bridal ornaments, is more crooked than the lame, and has no more command over hands and feet than drunkards and madmen? Tell me now, if some one were to give you a beautiful horse, and to distort your body, what would be the profit? Now you have your soul distorted, and care you not for it? Let us at length, I beseech you, have a care for our own selves. Do not let us make our own selves more worthless than all beside. If anyone insult us with words, we are annoyed and vexed: but insulting ourselves as we do by our deeds, we do not give a thought to it. Let us, though late, come at last to our senses, that we may be enabled by having much care for our soul, and laying hold upon virtue, to obtain eternal good things, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and evermore, world without end. Amen.

Homily 35 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVI. 13, 14

And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont (Chrys. *"was thought likely"*) to be made; and we sat down, and spoke unto the women which resorted there. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

See again Paul judaizing. *"Where it was thought,"* it says, both from the time and from the place, *"that prayer would be.— Out of the city, by a river side:"* for it is not to be supposed that they prayed only where there was a synagogue; they also prayed out of synagogue, but then for this purpose they set apart, as it were, a certain place, because as Jews they were more corporeal— and, *"on the sabbath-day,"* when it was likely that a multitude would come together. *"And we sat down, and spoke to the women which resorted there."* Mark again the freedom from all pride. *"And a certain woman:"* a woman and she of low condition, from her trade too: but mark (in her) a woman of elevated mind ([φιλόσοφον]). In the first place, the fact of God's calling her bears testimony to her: *"And when she was baptized,"* it says, *"she and her household"*— mark how he persuaded all of them— *"she besought us, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us "* [Acts 16:15]: then look at her wisdom, how she importunes ([δυσωπεῖ]), the Apostles how full of humility her words are, how full of wisdom. *"If you*

have judged me faithful," she says. Nothing could be more persuasive. Who would not have been softened by these words? She did not request (or, *"claim"*) did not entreat simply: but she left them to decide, and (yet) exceedingly forced them: *"And she constrained us,"* it says, by those words. And again in a different way: for see how she straightway bears fruit, and accounts it a great gain. *"If you have judged me,"* that is, That ye did judge me is manifest, by your delivering to me such (holy) mysteries (i.e. sacraments, see p. 225, note 3): and she did not dare to invite them before this. But why was there any unwillingness on the part of Paul and those with them, that they should need to be constrained? It was either by way of calling her to greater earnestness of desire, or because Christ had said, *"Enquire who is worthy, and there abide."* [Luke 10:8] (It was not that they were unwilling), but they did it for a purpose. — *"And it came to pass,"* it says, *"as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation."* (v. 16, 17.) What may be the reason that both the demon spoke these words, and Paul forbade him? Both the one acted maliciously, and the other wisely: the demon wished in fact to make himself credible. For if Paul had admitted his testimony, he would have deceived many of the believers, as being received by him: therefore he endures to speak what made against himself, that he may establish what made for himself: and so the demon himself uses accommodation ([συγκαταβάσει]) in order to destruction. At first then, Paul would not admit it, but scorned it, not wishing to cast himself all at once upon miracles; but when it continued to do this, and pointed to their work ([καὶ τὸ ἔργον ἐδείκνυ]) *"who preach unto us the way of salvation,"* then he commanded it to come out. For it says, *"Paul being grieved, turned and*

said to the spirit, *I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. (a) And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains had gone, they caught Paul and Silas.*" (v. 18, 19.) (d) So then Paul did all, both miracles and teaching, but of the dangers Silas also is partaker. And why says it, *"But Paul being grieved?"* It means, he saw through the malice of the demon, as he says, *"For we are not ignorant of his devices."* [2 Corinthians 2:11] (b) *"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains had gone."* Everywhere money the cause of evils. O that heathen cruelty! They wished the girl to be still a demoniac, that they might make money by her. *"They caught Paul and Silas,"* it says, *"and dragged them into the marketplace unto the rulers, and brought them unto the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city!"* [Acts 16:20]: by doing what? Then why did you not drag them (hither) before this? *"Being Jews:"* the name was in bad odor. *"And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans."* [Acts 16:21] They made a charge of treason of it ([εἰς καθοσίωσιν ἡγάγον]). (e) Why did they not say, Because they cast out the demon, they were guilty of impiety against God? For this was a defeat to them: but instead of that, they have recourse to a charge of treason ([ἐ] [πὶ καθοσίωσιν]): like the Jews when they said, *"We have no king but Cæsar: whoso makes himself a king speaks against Cæsar."* [John 19:14] (c) *"And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them."* [Acts 16:22] O the irrational conduct! They did not examine, did not allow them to speak. And yet, such a miracle having taken place, you ought to have worshipped them, ought to have held them as saviors and benefactors. For if money was what ye wished, why, having found so great wealth, did ye not run to it? This makes you more famous, the having power to cast out demons than the obeying

them. Lo, even miracles, and yet love of money was mightier. (f) *"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison."*— great was their wrath— *"charging the jailer to keep them safely"* [Acts 16:23]: *"who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks."* [Acts 16:24] Observe, he also again thrust them into the *"inner"* prison: and this too was done providentially, because there was to be a great miracle.

(Recapitulation.) *"Out of the city."* [Acts 16:13] The place was convenient for hearing the word, aloof from troubles and dangers. (b) *"On the sabbath."* As there was no work going on, they were more attentive to what was spoken. (a) *"And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple"* [Acts 16:14]: observe how the writer of the history is not ashamed of the occupations (of the converts): (c) moreover neither was this city of the Philippians a great one. Having learned these things, let us also be ashamed of no man. Peter abides with a tanner [Acts 9:43]: (Paul) with a woman who was a seller of purple, and a foreigner. Where is pride? *"Whose heart the Lord opened."* Therefore we need God, to open the heart: but God opens the hearts that are willing: for there are hardened hearts to be seen. *"So that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul."* The opening, then, was God's work, the attending was hers: so that it was both God's doing and man's. And she was baptized [Acts 16:15], and receives the Apostles with such earnestness of entreaty; with more than that used by Abraham. And she speaks of no other token than that whereby she was saved [Genesis 18:3]: she says not, *"If you have judged me"* a great, a devout woman; but what? *"faithful to the Lord:"* if to the Lord, much more to you. *"If you have judged me:"* if you do not doubt it. And she says not, Abide with me, but, *"Come into my house and abide:"* with great earnestness (she says it). Indeed a faithful woman!— *"A certain damsel*

possessed with a spirit of Python." [Acts 16:16] Say, what is this demon? The god, as they call him, Python: from the place he is so called. Do you mark that Apollo also is a demon? And (the demon) wished to bring them into temptation: (therefore) to provoke them, *"the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation."* [Acts 16:17] O thou accursed, thou execrable one! If then you know that it is *"His way of salvation"* that *"they show,"* why do you not come out freely? But just what Simon wished, when he said, *"Give me, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost"* [Acts 8:19], the same did this demon: since he saw them becoming famous, here also he plays the hypocrite: by this means he thought to be allowed to remain in the body, if he should preach the same things. But if Christ *"receive not testimony from man,"* [John 5:34], meaning John, much less from a demon. *"Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner"* [Sirach 15:9], much less from a demon. For that they preach is not of men, but of the Holy Ghost. Because they did not act in a spirit of boasting. *"And Paul being grieved,"* etc. By their clamor and shouting they thought to alarm them (the magistrates): saying, *"These men do exceedingly trouble our city."* [Acts 16:18-20] What do you say? Do you believe the demon? Why not here also? He says, They are *"servants of the most high God;"* you say, *"They exceedingly trouble our city:"* he says, *"They show us the way of salvation;"* you say, *"They teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive."* [Acts 16:21] Observe, how they do not attend even to the demon, but look only to one thing, their covetousness. But observe them (Paul and Silas), how they do not answer, nor plead for themselves; (b) *"For when,"* says he, *"I am weak, then am I strong. My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness"* [2 Corinthians 12:9]: so that by reason of their gentleness also they should be admired. (a) *"And*

the magistrates," etc., *"charging the jailer to keep them safely"* [Acts 16:22]: that they may be the means of a greater miracle. (c) The stricter the custody, the greater the miracle. It was probably from the wish to cut short the disturbance, that the magistrates did these things; because they saw the crowd urgent, and wished to stay their passion at the instant, therefore they inflicted the stripes: at the same time it was their wish to hear the matter, and that was why they cast them into prison and gave charge *"to keep them safely."* And, it says, *"he made them fast in the stocks"* [Acts 16:24], ([το ξύλον]) as we should say, the *nervum* ([νέρβον]).

What tears do not these things call for! (Think) what they suffer, while we (live) in luxury, we in theatres, we perishing and drowning (in dissolute living), seeking always idle amusement, not enduring to suffer pain for Christ, not even as far as words, not even as far as talk. These things I beseech you let us ever call to mind, what things they suffered, what things they endured, how undismayed they were, how unoffended. They were doing God's work, and suffered these things! They did not say, Why do we preach this, and God does not take our part? But even this was a benefit to them, even apart from the truth, in the thing itself; it made them more vigorous, stronger, intrepid. *"Tribulation works endurance."* [Romans 5:4] Then let us not seek loose and dissolute living. For as in the one case the good is twofold, that the sufferers are made strong, and that the rewards are great; so in the other the evil is twofold, that such are rendered more enervated, and that it is to no good, but only evil. For nothing can be more worthless than a man who passes all his time in idleness and luxury. For the man untried, as the saying is, is also unapproved; unapproved not only in the contests, but also in everything else. Idleness is a useless thing, and in luxury itself nothing is so unsuited to the end proposed as the leading a luxurious life: for it palls with satiety, so that neither the enjoyment of the

viands is so great, nor the enjoyment of relaxation, but all becomes vapid, and runs to waste.

Then let us not seek after this. For if we will consider which has the pleasanter life, he that is toiled and hardworked, or he that lives in luxury, we shall find it to be the former. For in the first place, the bodily senses are neither clear nor sound, but dull ([χαῖναι]) and languid; and when those are not right, even of health there is plainly no enjoyment. Which is the useful horse, the pampered or the exercised? Which the serviceable ship, that which sails, or that which lies idle? Which the best water, the running or the stagnant? Which the best iron, that which is much used, or that which does no work? Does not the one shine bright as silver, while the other becomes all over rusty, useless, and even losing some of its own substance? The like happens also to the soul as the consequence of idleness: a kind of rust spreads over it, and corrodes both its brightness and everything else. How then shall one rub off this rust? With the whetstone of tribulations: so shall one make the soul useful and fit for all things. Else, how, I ask, will she be able to cut off the passions, with her edge turned ([ἀ] [νακλώσης]) and bending like lead? How shall she wound the devil?— And then to whom can such an one be other than a disgusting spectacle— a man cultivating obesity, dragging himself along like a seal? I speak not this of those who are naturally of this habit, but of those who by luxurious living have brought their bodies into such a condition, of those who are naturally of a spare habit. The sun has risen, has shot forth his bright beams on all sides, and roused up each person to his work: the husbandman goes forth with his spade, the smith with his hammer, and each artisan with his several instruments, and you will find each handling his proper tools; the woman also takes either her distaff or her webs: while he, like the swine, immediately at the first dawn goes forth to feed his belly, seeking how he

may provide sumptuous fare. And yet it is only for brute beasts to be feeding from morning to night; and for them, because their only use is to be slaughtered. Nay, even of the beasts, those which carry burdens and admit of being worked, go forth to their work while it is yet night. But this man, rising from his bed, when the (noon-tide) sun has filled the market-place, and people are tired of their several works, then this man gets up, stretching himself out just as if he were indeed a hog in fattening, having wasted the fairest part of the day in darkness. Then he sits there for a long time on his bed, often unable even to lift himself up from the last evening's debauch, and having wasted (still) more time in this (listlessness), proceeds to adorn himself, and issues forth, a spectacle of unseemliness, with nothing human about him, but with all the appearance of a beast with a human shape: his eyes rheumy from the effect of wine, * * * while the miserable soul, just like the lame, is unable to rise, bearing about its bulk of flesh, like an elephant. Then he comes and sits in (various) places, and says and does such things, that it were better for him to be still sleeping than to be awake. If it chance that evil tidings be announced, he shows himself weaker than any girl; if good, more silly than any child; on his face there is a perpetual yawn. He is a mark for all that would do harm, if not for all men, at least for all evil passions; and wrath easily excites such a man, and lust, and envy, and all other passions. All flatter him, all pay court to him, rendering his soul weaker than it is already: and each day he goes on and on, adding to his disease. If he chance to fall into any difficulty of business, he becomes dust and ashes, and his silken garments are of no help to him. We have not said all this without a purpose, but to teach you, that none of you should live idly and at random. For idleness and luxury are not conducive to work, to good reputation, to enjoyment. For who will not condemn such a man? Family, friends, kinsfolk (will say), He is indeed a very encumbrance of the

ground. Such a man as this has come into the world to no purpose: or rather, not to no purpose, but to ill purpose against his own person, to his own ruin, and to the hurt of others. But that this is more pleasant— let us look to this; for this is the question. Well then, what can be less pleasant than (the condition of) a man who has nothing to do; what more wretched and miserable? Is it not worse than all the fetters in the world, to be always gaping and yawning, as one sits in the market-place, looking at the passers by? For the soul, as its nature is to be always on the move, cannot endure to be at rest. God has made it a creature of action: to work is of its very nature; to be idle is against its nature. For let us not judge of these things from those who are diseased, but let us put the thing itself to the proof of fact. Nothing is more hurtful than leisure, and having nothing to do: indeed therefore has God laid on us a necessity of working: for idleness hurts everything. Even to the members of the body, inaction is a mischief. Both eye, if it perform not its work, and mouth, and belly, and every member that one could mention, falls into the worst state of disease: but none so much as the soul. But as inaction is an evil, so is activity in things that ought to be let alone. For just as it is with the teeth, if one eats not, one receives hurt to them, and if one eats things unfitting, it jars them, and sets them on edge: so it is here; both if the soul be inactive, and if inactive in wrong things, it loses its proper force. Then let us eschew both alike; both inaction, and the activity which is worse than inaction. And what may that be? Covetousness, anger, envyings, and the other passions. As regards these, let us make it our object to be inactive, in order that we may obtain the good things promised to us, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 36 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVI. 25, 26

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

What could equal these souls? These men had been scourged, had received many stripes, they had been misused, were in peril of their lives, were thrust into the inner prison, and set fast in the stocks: and for all this they did not suffer themselves to sleep, but kept vigil all the night. Do you mark what a blessing tribulation is? But we, in our soft beds, with none to be afraid of, pass the whole night in sleep. But belike this is why they kept vigil, because they were in this condition. Not the tyranny of sleep could overpower them, not the smart of pain could bow them, not the fear of evil east them into helpless dejection: no, these were the very things that made them wakeful: and they were even filled with exceeding delight. *"At midnight,"* it says, *"and the prisoners listened to them:"* it was so strange and surprising! *"And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately, all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled."* [Acts 16:27] There was an earthquake, that the keeper should be roused from sleep, and the doors flew open, that he should wonder at what

had happened: but these things the prisoners saw not: otherwise they would all have fled: but the keeper of the prison was about to slay himself, thinking the prisoners were escaped. *"But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm: for we are all here"* [Acts 16:28] (b) *"Then he called for lights, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* (v. 29, 30.) Do you mark how the wonder overpowered him? (a) He wondered more at Paul's kindness; he was amazed at his manly boldness, that he had not escaped when he had it in his power, that he hindered him from killing himself. (c) *"And they said, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house. And they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."* (v. 31, 35) and (so) immediately gave proof of their kindness towards him. *"And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."* [Acts 16:33] He washed them, and was himself baptized, he and his house. *"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go."* (v. 34, 35.) It is likely the magistrates had learned what had happened, and did not dare of themselves to dismiss them. *"And the keeper of the prison told these words to Paul, saying, the magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into*

the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." [Acts 16:36-40] Even upon the declaration of the magistrates Paul does not go out, but for the sake both of Lydia and the rest he puts them in fear: that they may not be supposed to have come out upon their own request, that they may set the rest in a posture of boldness. The impeachment was twofold: that "*being Romans,*" and "*uncondemned,*" they had openly cast them into prison. You see that in many things they took their measures as men.

(Recapitulation) "*And at midnight,*" etc. [Acts 16:25] Let us compare, beloved, with that night these nights of ours, with their revellings, their drunkenness, and wanton excesses, with their sleep which might as well be death, their watchings which are worse than sleep. For while some sleep without sense or feeling, others lie awake to pitiable and wretched purpose, plotting deceits, anxiously thinking about money, studying how they may be revenged upon those who do them wrong, meditating enmity, reckoning up the abusive words spoken during the day: thus do they rake up the smouldering embers of wrath, doing things intolerable. Mark how Peter slept. [Acts 12:6] Both there, it was wisely ordered (that he should be asleep); for the Angel came to him, and it behooved that none should see what happened; and on the other hand it was well ordered here (that Paul should be awake), in order that the keeper of the prison might be prevented from killing himself. "*And suddenly there was a great earthquake.*" [Acts 16:26] And why did no other miracle take place? Because this was, of all others, the thing sufficient for his conversion, seeing he was personally in danger: for it is not so much miracles that overpower us, as the things which issue in our own deliverance. That the earthquake should not seem to have come of itself, there was this concurrent circumstance, bearing witness to it: "*the doors were opened, and all their bonds were loosed.*" And it appears in

the night-time; for the Apostles did not work for display, but for men's salvation. *"And the keeper of the prison,"* etc. [Acts 16:27] The keeper was not an evil-disposed man that he *"thrust them into the inner prison,"* [Acts 16:24] was because of his *"having received such a command,"* not of himself. The man was all in a tumult of perturbation. *"What shall I do to be saved?"* he asks. Why not before this? Paul shouted, until he saw, and is beforehand with him saying, *"We are all here. And having called for lights,"* it says, *"he sprang in, and fell down at the feet"* of the prisoner; he, the prison keeper, saying, *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* [Acts 16:28-30] Why, what had they said? Observe, he does not, on finding himself safe, think all is well; he is overcome with awe at the miraculous power.

Do you mark what happened in the former case, and what here? There a girl was released from a spirit, and they cast them into prison, because they had liberated her from the spirit. Here, they did but show the doors standing open, and it opened the doors of his heart, it loosed two sorts of chains; that (prisoner) kindled the (true) light; for the light in his heart was shining. *"And he sprang in, and fell before them;"* and he does not ask, How is this? What is this? But straightway he says, *"What must I do to be saved?"* What then answers Paul? *"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your house."* [Acts 16:31] For this above all, wins men: that one's house also should be saved. *"And they spoke the word to him, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes,"* etc. (v. 32, 33), washed them and was washed: those he washed from their stripes, himself was washed from his sins: he fed and was fed. *"And rejoiced,"* it says: although there was nothing but words only and good hopes: having believed in God with all his house [Acts 16:34]: this was the token of his having believed—that he was released of all. What worse than a jailer, what more ruthless, more savage?

He entertained them with great honor. Not, because he was safe, he made merry, but, having believed God. (a) "*Believe in the Lord,*" said the Apostle: therefore it is that the writer here says, "*Having believed.*" — (d) *Now therefore,*" it says, "*depart, and go in peace*" [Acts 16:36]: that is, in safety, fearing no man. (b) "*But Paul said unto them*" [Acts 16:37]: that he may not seem to be receiving his liberty as one condemned, and as one that has done wrong: therefore it is that he says, "*Having openly beaten us uncondemned,*" etc.— that it may not be matter of grace on their part. (e) And besides, they wish the jailer himself to be out of danger, that he may not be called to account for this afterwards. And they do not say, "*Having beaten us,*" who have wrought miracles: for they (the magistrates) did not even heed these: but, that which was most effectual to shake their minds, "*uncondemned, and being Romans.*" (c) Observe how diversely grace manages things: how Peter went out, how Paul, though both were Apostles. "*They feared,*" [Acts 16:38] it says: because the men were Romans, not because they had unjustly cast them into prison, "*And besought them to depart out of the city*" [Acts 16:39]: begged them as a favor. And they went to the house of Lydia, and having confirmed her, so departed. For it was not right to leave their hostess in distress and anxiety. But they went out, not in compliance with the request of those rulers, but hasting to the preaching: the city having been sufficiently benefited by the miracle: for it was fit they should not be there any longer. For in the absence of them that wrought it, the miracle appeared greater, itself crying out more loudly: the faith of the jailer was a voice in itself. What equal to this? He is put in bonds, and looses, being bound: looses a twofold bond: him that bound him, he looses by being bound. These are indeed works of (supernatural) grace.

(f) Let us constantly bear in mind this jailer, not the miracle: how, prisoner as he was (the Apostle), persuaded his jailer. What say the

heathen? *"And of what things,"* say they, *"was such a man as this to be persuaded— a vile, wretched creature, of no understanding, full of all that is bad and nothing else, and easily brought over to anything? For these, say they, are the things, a tanner, a purple-seller, an eunuch, slaves, and women believed."* This is what they say. What then will they be able to say, when we produce the men of rank and station, the centurion, the proconsul, those from that time to the present, the rulers themselves, the emperors? But for my part, I speak of something else, greater than this: let us look to these very persons of no consideration. *"And where is the wonder?"* say you. Why, this, I say, is a wonder. For, if a person be persuaded about any common things, it is no wonder: but if resurrection, a kingdom of heaven, a life of philosophic self-command, be the subjects, and, discoursing of these to persons of mean consideration, one persuades them, it will be more wonderful than if one persuaded wise men. For when there is no danger attending the things of which one persuades people, then (the objector) might with some plausibility allege want of sense on their part: but when (the preacher) says— to the slave, as you will have it— *"If you be persuaded by me, it is at your peril, you will have all men for your enemies, you must die, you must suffer evils without number,"* and yet for all this, convinces that man's soul, there can be no more talk here of want of sense. Since, if indeed the doctrines contained what was pleasant, one might fairly enough say this: but if, what the philosophers would never have chosen to learn, this the slave does learn, then is the wonder greater. And, if you will, let us bring before us the tanner himself, and see what were the subjects on which Peter conversed with him: or if you will, this same jailer. What then said Paul to him? *"That Christ rose again,"* say you; *"that there is a resurrection of the dead, and a kingdom: and he had no difficulty in persuading him, a man easily led to anything."* How? Said he nothing about

the mode of life; that he must be temperate, that he must be superior to money, that he must not be unmerciful, that he must impart of his good things to others? For it cannot be said, that the being persuaded to these things also was from the want of power of mind; no, to be brought to all this required a great soul. For be it so, that as far as the doctrines went, they were rendered more apt to receive these by their want of intelligence: but to accept such a virtuous, self-denying rule of life, how could that be owing to any defect of understanding? So that the less understanding the person may have, if nevertheless he is persuaded to things, to which even philosophers were unable to persuade their fellow philosophers, the greater the wonder—when women and slaves are persuaded of these truths, and prove it by their actions, of which same truths the Platos and all the rest of them were never able to persuade any man. And why say I, "*any man*?" Say rather, not themselves even: on the contrary, that money is not to be despised, Plato persuaded (his disciples) by getting, as he did, such an abundance of property, and golden rings, and goblets; and that the honor to be had from the many is not to be despised, this Socrates himself shows, for all that he may philosophize without end on this point: for in everything he did, he had an eye to fame. And if you were conversant with his discourses, I might go at great length into this subject, and show what a deal of insincerity ([εἰρωνείαν]) there was in them—if at least we may believe what his disciple says of him—and how that all his writings have their ground-work in vainglory. But, leaving them, let us direct the discourse to our own selves. For besides the things that have been said, there is this also to be added, that men were persuaded of these things to their own peril. Be not thou therefore shameless, but let us think over that night, the stocks, and the hymns of praise. This let us also do, and we shall open for ourselves—not a prison, but— heaven. If we pray, we shall be able even to open heaven.

Elias both shut and opened heaven by prayer. [James 5:17] There is a prison in heaven also. *"Whatsoever,"* He says, *"you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven."* [Matthew 16:19] Let us pray by night, and we shall loose these bonds. For that prayers loose sins, let that widow convince us, let that friend convince us, who at that untimely hour of the night persists and knocks [Luke 11:5]: let Cornelius convince us, for, *"your prayers,"* it says, *"and your alms have come up before God."* [Acts 10:4] Let Paul convince us, who says, *"Now she that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusts in God, and continues in supplications night and day."* [1 Timothy 5:5] If he speaks thus of a widow, a weak woman, much more would he of men. I have both before discoursed to you on this, and now repeat it: let us arouse ourselves during the night: though thou make not many prayers, make one with watchfulness, and it is enough, I ask no more: and if not at midnight, at any rate at the first dawn. Show that the night is not only for the body, but also for the soul: do not suffer it to pass idly, but make this return to your Master: nay rather (the benefit) itself returns to you. Say, if we fall into any difficult strait, to whom do we not make request? And if we soon obtain our request, we breathe freely again. What a boon were it for you, to have a friend to go to with your request, who shall be ready to take it as a kindness, and to be obliged to you for your asking? What a boon, not to have to go about and seek one to ask of, but to find one ready? To have no need of others through whom you may solicit? What could be greater than this? Since here is One who then does most, when we make not our requests of others than Himself: just as a sincere friend then most complains of us for not trusting in his friendship, when we ask of others to make request to him. Thus also let us act. *"But what,"* you will ask, *"if I should have offended Him?"* Cease to give offense, and weep, and so draw near to Him, and you will quickly render Him propitious as to your former sins. Say only, I have

offended: say it from your soul and with a sincere mind, and all things are remitted to you. Thou dost not so much desire your sins to be forgiven, as He desires to forgive you your sins. In proof that thou dost not so desire it, consider that you have no mind either to practice vigils, or to give your money freely: but He, that He might forgive our sins, spared not His Only-begotten and True Son, the partner of His throne. Do you see how He more desires to forgive you your sins (than thou to be forgiven)? Then let us not be slothful, nor put off this any longer. He is merciful and good: only let us give Him an opportunity.

And (even) this (He seeks), only that we may not become unprofitable, since even without this He could have freed us from them: but like as we (with the same view) devise and arrange many things for our servants to do, so does He in the matter of our salvation. *"Let us anticipate His face with thanksgiving."* [Psalm 95:2. *"Let us come before His presence."* E.V.], since He is good and kind. But if you call not upon Him, what will *He* do? Thou dost not choose to say, Forgive; you will not say it from your heart, but with your mouth only. What is it, to call in truth? (To call) with purpose of heart, with earnestness, with a sincere mind; just as men say of perfumes, *"This is genuine, and has nothing spurious,"* so here. He who truly calls on Him, he who truly prays to Him, continually attends to it, and desists not, until he obtain (his request): but he who does it in a merely formal manner ([ᾠ] [φοσιούμενος]), and even this only by way of fulfilling a law, does not call in truth. Whosoever you are, say not only, *"I am a sinner,"* but be earnest also to rid yourself of this character; say not this only, but also grieve. If you grieve, you are in earnest: if you are not in earnest, you grieve not: if you grieve not, you trifle. What sort of man is he who shall say, *"I am sick,"* and not to do all to be freed from his sickness? A mighty weapon is Prayer. *"If you,"* says the Lord, *"know how to give good gifts to your children, how*

much more your Father?" [Luke 11:13] Then wherefore are you unwilling to approach Him? He loves you, He is of more power than all besides. Both willing is He and able, what is there to hinder? Nothing. But then, on our part, let us draw near with faith, draw near, offering the gifts that He desires, forgetfulness of wrongs, kindness, meekness. Though thou be a sinner, with boldness shall you ask of Him forgiveness of your sins, if you can show that this has been done by yourself: but though thou be righteous, and possess not this virtue of forgetfulness of injuries, you are none the better for it. It cannot be that a man who has forgiven his neighbor should not obtain perfect forgiveness: for God is beyond comparison more merciful than we. What do you say? If you say, *"I have been wronged, I have subdued my anger, I have endured the onset of wrath because of Your command, and dost Thou not forgive?"* Full surely He will forgive: and this is plain to all. Therefore let us purge our soul from all resentment. This is sufficient for us, in order that we may be heard; and let us pray with watching and much perseverance, that having enjoyed His bountiful mercy, we may be found worthy of the good things promised, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 37 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVII. 1, 2, 3

"Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."

Again they haste past the small cities, and press on to the greater ones, since from those the word was to flow as from a fountain into the neighboring cities. *"And Paul, as his manner was, went into the synagogue of the Jews."* Although he had said, *"We turn to the Gentiles"* [Acts 13:46], he did not leave these alone: such was the longing affection he had towards them. For hear him saying, *"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved"* [Romans 10:1]: and, *"I wished myself accursed from Christ for my brethren."* [Romans 9:3] But he did this because of God's promise and the glory: and this, that it might not be a cause of offense to the Gentiles. *"Opening,"* it says, *"from the Scriptures, he reasoned with them for three sabbaths, putting before them that the Christ must suffer."* Do thou mark how before all other things he preaches the Passion: so little were they ashamed of it, knowing it to be the cause of salvation. *"And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."* [Acts 17:4] The writer mentions only the sum and substance of the

discoursing: he is not given to redundancy, and does not on every occasion report the sermons. But the Jews which believed not (the best texts omit *"which believed not"*), moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also; whom Jason has received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. [Acts 17:5-7] Oh! What an accusation! Again they get up a charge of treason against them, *"saying, there is another king (one) Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go."* (v. 8, 9.) A man worthy to be admired, that he put himself into danger, and sent them away from it. *"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming there went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble,"* it says, *"than they of Thessalonica: more noble,"* i.e. more gentle ([ἐ] [πικέστεροι]) (in their behavior): *"in that they received the word with all readiness,"* and this not inconsiderately, but with a strictness wherein was no passion, *"searching the Scriptures whether these things were so."* (v. 10, 11.) *"Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came there also, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still."* [Acts 17:12-14] See how he at one time gives way, at another presses on, and in many things takes his measures upon human considerations. *"And they that conducted Paul*

brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with speed, they departed." [Acts 17:15] But let us look again at what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"Three sabbath-days,"* it says, being the time when they had leisure from work, *"he reasoned with them, opening out of the Scriptures"* [Acts 17:2]: for so used Christ also to do: as on many occasions we find Him reasoning from the Scriptures, and not on all occasions (urging men) by miracles. Because to this indeed they stood in a posture of hostility, calling them deceivers and jugglers; but he that persuades men by reasons from the Scriptures, is not liable to this imputation. And on many occasions we find (Paul) to have convinced men simply by force of teaching: and in Antioch *"the whole city was gathered together"* [Acts 13:44]: so great a thing is this also, for indeed this itself is no small miracle, nay, it is even a very great one. And that they might not think that they did it all by their own strength, but rather that God permitted it, two things resulted, namely, *"Some of them were persuaded,"* etc. (c) *"And of devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few:"* but those others did the contrary: *"the Jews moved with envy,"* etc. (v. 4, 5) (b) and, from the fact that the being called was itself a matter of God's fore-ordering, (a) they neither thought great things of themselves as if the triumph were their own, nor were terrified as being responsible (for all). But how comes it that he said, *"That we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision"* [Galatians 2:9], and yet discoursed to the Jews? ([α]) He did this as a thing over and above. ([β]) For he did other things also more than he was obliged. For instance, Christ ordained that they should *"live by the Gospel"* [1 Corinthians 9:14; 1:17], but our Apostle did it not: Christ sent him not to baptize, yet he did baptize. Mark how he was equal to all. Peter to the circumcision, he to the Gentiles, to the greater part. ([α]) Since if it was

necessary for him to discourse to Jews, how said he again: *"For He that wrought effectually in him toward the circumcision, the same was mighty also in me toward the Gentiles"* [Galatians 2:8]? In the same way as those Apostles also had intercourse with the Gentiles, though they had been set apart for the circumcision, so likewise did our Apostle. The more part of his work indeed was with the Gentiles: still he did not neglect the Jews either, that they might not seem to be severed from them. And how was it, you will ask, that he entered in the first place into the synagogues, as if this were his leading object? True; but he persuaded the Gentiles through the Jews, and from the things which he discoursed of to the Jews. And he knew, that this was most suitable for the Gentiles, and most conducive to belief. Therefore he says: Inasmuch as I am the *"Apostle of the Gentiles."* [Romans 11:13] And his Epistles too all fight against the Jews.— *"That the Christ,"* he says, *"must needs have suffered."* [Acts 17:3] If there was a necessity for His suffering, there was assuredly a necessity for His rising again: for the former was far more wonderful than the latter. For if He gave Him up to death Who had done no wrong, much rather did He raise Him up again. But the Jews which believed not took unto them certain of the baser sort, and set all the city on an uproar [Acts 17:5]: so that the Gentiles were more in number. The Jews thought not themselves enough to raise the disturbance: for because they had no reasonable pretext, they ever effect such purposes by means of uproar, and by taking to themselves base men. *"And when they found them not,"* it says, *"they haled Jason and certain brethren."* [Acts 17:6] O the tyranny! Dragged them without any cause out of their houses. *"These all,"* say they, *"do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar"* [Acts 17:7]: for since they spoke nothing contrary to what had been decreed, nor made any commotion in the city, they bring them under a different charge: *"saying that there is another king, one Jesus. And they troubled the people,"* etc.

[Acts 17:8] And what are you afraid of, seeing He is dead? ([β]) *"And when they had taken security,"* etc. [Acts 17:9] See how by giving security Jason sent Paul away: so that he gave his life (to the hazard) for him. ([α]) *"And brethren,"* etc. [Acts 17:10] See how the persecutions in every case extend the preaching. *"Now these,"* it says, *"were more noble than those in Thessalonica"* [Acts 17:11]: i.e. they were not (men) practising base things, but some were convinced, and the others (who were not), did nothing (of that sort). ([β]) *"Daily,"* it says, *"searching the Scriptures whether these things were so:"* not merely upon a sudden impetus or (burst of) zeal. *"More noble,"* it says: i. e. in point of virtue ([α]) *"Therefore many of them,"* etc. [Acts 17:12] And here again are Greeks. ([β]) *"But when the Jews of Thessalonica,"* etc. [Acts 17:13], because there were lewd persons there. And yet that city was greater. But it is no wonder in the greater city the people were worse: nay, of course to the greater city there go the worse men, where the occasions of disturbances are many. And as in the body, where the disease is more violent for having more matter and fuel, just so is it here. ([α]) But look, I beg you, how their fleeing was providentially ordered, not from cowardice: otherwise they would have ceased to preach, and would not have exasperated them still more. But from this (flight) two things resulted: both the rage of those (Jews) was quenched, and the preaching spread. But in terms befitting their disorderly conduct, he says, *"Agitating the multitude."* ([β]) Just what was done at Iconium— that they may have the additional condemnation of destroying others besides themselves. [ch. 14:2, 19] This is what Paul says of them: *"Forbidding to preach to the Gentiles, to fill up their sins always, for the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost."* [1 Thessalonians 2:16] Why did he not stay? For if [at Lystra, ch. 14:19, 21] there, where he was stoned, he nevertheless stayed a long time, much more here. Why? (The Lord) did not wish them to

be always doing signs; for this is itself a sign, not less than the working of signs— that being persecuted, they overcame without signs. So that just as now He prevails without signs, so was it on many occasions His will to prevail then. Consequently neither did the Apostles run after signs: as in fact he says himself, *"We preach Christ crucified"* [1 Corinthians 1:23]— to them that crave signs, to them that crave wisdom, we give that which cannot even after signs persuade, and yet we do persuade! So that this was a mighty sign. See then, how when the preaching is extended, they are not in a hurry to run after signs. For it was right that thenceforth the believers should be mighty signs to the rest. Howbeit, by retreating and advancing they did these things. ([α]) *"And immediately,"* it says, *"the brethren sent away Paul."* [Acts 17:14] Here now they send Paul alone: for it was for him they feared, lest he should suffer some harm, the head and front of all being in fact none other than he. ([β]) *"They sent him away,"* it says, *"as it were to the sea:"* that it might not be easy for them to seize him. For at present they could not have done much by themselves; and with him they accomplished and achieved many things. For the present, it says, they wished to rescue him. ([α]) So far is it from being the case, that (supernatural) Grace worked all alike on all occasions: on the contrary, it left them to take their measures upon human judgment, (only) stirring them up and rousing them out of sleep, and making them to take pains. Thus, observe, it brought them safe only as far as Philippi, but no more after that. *"And receiving,"* it says, *"a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed."* [Acts 17:15] For though he was a Paul, nevertheless he needed them. And with good reason are they urged by God to go into Macedonia, for there lay Greece moreover bright (before them). [Acts 16:9]

See what zeal the rest of the disciples showed with respect to their leaders: not as it is now with us, who are separated and divided into great

and small: some of us exalted, while others are envious: for this is the reason why those are envious, because we are puffed up, because we will not endure to be put upon a par with them. The reason why there is harmony in the body, is because there is no puffing up: and there is no puffing up, because the members are of necessity made to stand in need of each other, and the head has need of the feet. And God has made this to be the case with us, and, for all that, we will not endure it: although even without this, there ought to be love among us. Hear ye not how they that are without accuse us when they say, "*Needs make friendships?*" The laity have need of us; and we again exist for them. Since teacher or ruler would not exist, if there were not persons to be taught, nor would he perform his part, for it would not be possible. As the land has need of the husbandman, and the husbandman of the land, so is it here. What reward is there for the teacher to receive, when he has none to produce that he has taught? And what for the taught, who have not had the benefit of the best teaching? So that we need each other alike in turn, both the governed, them that govern, and leaders, them that obey: for rulers are for the sake of many. Since no one is sufficient to do anything by himself alone, whether need be to ordain ([χειροτονῆσαι]), or to examine men's counsels and opinions, but they become more honorable by assembly and numbers. For instance, the poor need givers, the givers again need receivers. "*Considering one another*" he says, "*to provoke unto love and to good works.*" [Hebrews 10:24] On this account the assembly of the whole Church has more power: and what each cannot do by himself singly, he is able to do when joined with the rest. Therefore most necessary are the prayers offered up, here, for the world, for the Church, from the one end of the earth to the other, for peace, for those who are in adversities. And Paul shows this when he says, "*That for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by*

many on our behalf" [2 Corinthians 1:11]; that is, that He might confer the favor on many. And often he asks for their prayers. See also what God says with regard to the Ninevites: *"And shall not I spare that city, wherein dwell more than six score thousand persons?"* [Jonah 4:11] For if, *"where two or three,"* He says, *"are gathered together in My Name"* [Matthew 18:20], they prevail much, how much more, being many? And yet you may prevail, though thou be but one; yet not equally so. For why are you but one? Why do you not make many? Why do you not become the maker of love? Why do you not create ([κατασκευάζεις]) friendship? Thou lackest the chief excellence of virtue. For as men's being bad by agreement together more provokes God; so for men to be good by unanimity delights Him more. *"You shall not follow a multitude,"* He says, *"to do evil."* [Exodus 23:2] *"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable"* [Romans 3:12], and have become as it were men singing in concert in their wickedness. Make for yourself friends in preference to domestics, and all besides. If the peacemaker is a son of God, how much more he who makes friends also? [Matthew 5:9] If he who reconciles only is called a son of God, of what shall not he be worthy, who makes friends of those who are reconciled? Let us engage ourselves in this trade, let us make those who are enemies to each other friends, and those who are not indeed enemies, but are not friends, them let us bring together, and before all, our own selves. For as he who is at enmity in his house, and has differences with his wife, carries no authority when reconciling others, but will be told, *"Physician, heal yourself"* [Luke 4:23], so will a man be told in this case. What then is the enmity that is in us? That of the soul against the body, that of vice against virtue. This enmity let us put an end to, this war let us take away, and then being in peace we shall also address others with much boldness of speech, our conscience not accusing us. Anger fights against gentleness,

love of money against contempt of it, envy against goodness of heart. Let us make an end of this war, let us overthrow these enemies, let us set up these trophies, let us establish peace in our own city. We have within us a city and a civil polity, and citizens and aliens many: but let us banish the aliens, that our own people may not be ruined. Let no foreign nor spurious doctrine enter in, no carnal desire. See we not that, if any enemy has been caught in a city, he is judged as a spy? Then let us not only banish aliens, but let us drive out enemies also. If we see one, let us deliver up to the ruler, (that is), to conscience ([τῷ νόῳ]), that imagination which is indeed an alien, a barbarian, albeit tricked out with the garb of a citizen. For there are within us many imaginations of this kind, which are by nature indeed enemies, but are clad in sheep's skins. Just as the Persians, when they have put off the tiara, and the drawers, and the barbarian shoes, and put on the other dress which is usual with us, and have shorn themselves close, and converse in our own tongue, conceal war under their outward garb: but once apply the tortures ([βασάνους] or *"tests"*), and you bring to light what is hidden: so here, examine (or *"put to the test,"*) by torture again and again such an imagination as this, and you will quickly see that its spirit is that of a stranger. But to show you also by way of example the sort of spies which the devil sends into us to spy out what is in us, come let us strip one of them, and examine it strictly at the tribunal: and if you please, let us bring forward some of those which were detected by Paul. *"Which things,"* he says, *"have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh."* [Colossians 2:23] The devil wished to bring in Judaism: now if he had introduced it in its own form, he would not have carried his point. Accordingly, mark how he brought it about. *"You must neglect the body,"* he says: *"this is (the true) philosophy, not to admit of meats, but to guard*

against them: this is humility." And now again in our own times, in the case of the heretics, he wished to bring us down to the creature. See then how he dressed up his deceit. Had he said, "*Worship a creature,*" he would have been detected: but what says he? "*God*" (viz. the Son and the Holy Ghost), he says, "*is a created being.*" But let us lay bare for the decision of the judges the meaning of the Apostolic writings: there let us bring him: themselves will acknowledge both the preaching and the language. Many make gains "*that they may have wherewith to give to the poor,*" unjust gains: this too is a wicked imagination. But let us undress it, let us convict it, that we may not be taken by it, but that having escaped all the devices of the devil, and holding to the sound doctrines with strictness, we may be able both to pass in safety through this life present, and to obtain the good things promised, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 38 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVII. 16, 17

"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him."

Observe how he meets with greater trials among the Jews than among the Gentiles. Thus in Athens he undergoes nothing of this kind; the thing goes as far as ridicule, and there an end: and yet he did make some converts: whereas among the Jews he underwent many perils; so much greater was their hostility against him.— *"His spirit,"* it says, *"was roused within him when he saw the city all full of idols."* Nowhere else were so many objects of worship to be seen. But again *"he disputed with the Jews in the synagogue, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain of the philosophers of the Stoics and Epicureans encountered him."* [Acts 17:18] It is a wonder the philosophers did not laugh him to scorn, speaking in the way he did. *"And some said, What does this babbler mean to say?"* insolently, on the instant: — this is far from philosophy. *"Other some said, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods,"* from the preaching, because he had no arrogance. They did not understand, nor comprehend the subjects he was speaking of— how should they? affirming as they did, some of them, that God is a body; others, that pleasure is the (true) happiness. *"Of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the Resurrection:"* for in fact they supposed *"Anastasis"* (the

Resurrection) to be some deity, being accustomed to worship female divinities also. *"And having taken him, they brought him to the Areopagus"* [Acts 17:19]— not to punish, but in order to learn — *"to the Areopagus"* where the trials for murder were held. Thus observe, in hope of learning (they ask him), saying, *"May we know what is this new doctrine spoken of by you? For you bring certain strange matters to our ears"* [Acts 17:20]: everywhere novelty is the charge: *"we would fain know therefore, what these things may mean."* It was a city of talkers, that city of theirs. *"For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars hill, and said, You men of Athens, I look upon you as being in all things"* (v. 21, 22)— he puts it by way of encomium: (the word) does not seem to mean anything offensive— [δεισιδαιμονεστέρους], that is, [εὐλαβεστέρους], *"more religiously disposed. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with his inscription, To an Unknown God. What therefore ye ignorantly worship, this declare I unto you."* [Acts 17:23]— *"On which was inscribed, To an Unknown God."* The Athenians, namely, as on many occasions they had received gods from foreign parts also— for instance, the temple of Minerva, Pan, and others from different countries— being afraid that there might be some other god not yet known to them, but worshipped elsewhere, for more assurance, forsooth, erected an altar to that god also: and as the god was not known, it was inscribed, *"To an Unknown God."* This God then, he tells them, is Christ; or rather, the God of all. *"Him declare I unto you."* Observe how he shows that they had already received Him, and *"it is nothing strange,"* says he, *"nothing new that I introduce to you."* All along, this was what they had been saying: *"What is this new doctrine spoken of by you? For you bring certain strange matters to our ears."* Immediately therefore he removes this surmise of

theirs: and then says, *"God that made the world and all things therein, He being Lord of heaven and earth"*— for, that they may not imagine Him to be one of many, he presently sets them right on this point; adding, *"dwells not in temples made with hands"* [Acts 17:24], *"neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything"*— do you observe how, little by little, he brings in the philosophy? How he ridicules the heathen error? *"seeing it is He that gives to all life, and breath, and all things; and has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."* This is peculiar to God. Look, then, whether these things may not be predicated of the Son also. *"Being Lord,"* he says, *"of heaven and earth"*— which they accounted to be God's. Both the creation he declares to be His work, and mankind also. *"Having determined,"* he says, *"the times assigned to them, and the bounds of their habitation,"* (v. 25, 26), *"that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being: as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring."* (v. 27, 28.) This is said by Aratus the poet. Observe how he draws his arguments from things done by themselves, and from sayings of their own. *"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art."* [Acts 17:29] And yet for this reason we ought. By no means: for surely we are not like (to such), nor are these souls of ours. *"And imagination of man."* How so? * * But some person might say, *"We do not think this."* But it was to the many that he was addressing himself, not now to Philosophy. How then did they think so unworthily of Him? Again, putting it upon their ignorance, he says, *"Now the times of ignorance God overlooked."* Having agitated their minds by the fear, he then adds this: and yet he says, *"but now he commands all men everywhere to repent."* [Acts 17:30] *"Because He has*

appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead." [Acts 17:31] But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) (b) *"And while Paul waited,"* etc. [Acts 17:16] It is providentially ordered that against his will he stays there, while waiting for those others. (a) *"His spirit,"* it says, *"within him"* [παρωξύνετο] . It does not mean there anger or exasperation: just as elsewhere it says, *"There was [παροξυσμὸς] between them."* [Acts 15:30] (c) Then what is [παρωξύνετο]? Was roused: for the gift is far removed from anger and exasperation. He could not bear it, but pined away. *"He reasoned therefore in the synagogue,"* etc. [Acts 17:17] Observe him again reasoning with Jews. By *"devout persons"* he means the proselytes. For the Jews were dispersed everywhere before (mod. text *"since"*) Christ's coming, the Law indeed being henceforth, so to say, in process of dissolution, but at the same time (the dispersed Jews) teaching men religion. But those prevailed nothing, save only that they got witnesses of their own calamities. (e) *"And certain philosophers,"* etc. [Acts 17:18] How came they to be willing to confer with him? (They did it) when they saw others reasoning, and the man having repute (in the encounter). And observe straightway with overbearing insolence, *"some said, What would this babbler say? For the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit."* [1 Corinthians 2:14] Other some, He seems to be a setter-forth of strange deities: [δαίμονίων], for so they called their gods. *"And having taken him, they brought him,"* etc. [Acts 17:19] (a) The Athenians no longer enjoyed their own laws, but had become subject to the Romans. (g) (Then) why did they hale him to the Areopagus? Meaning to overawe him— (the place) where they held the trials for bloodshed. *"May we know, what is this new doctrine spoken of by you? For you bring*

certain strange things to our ears; we would fain know therefore what these things mean. For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." (v. 20, 21.) Here the thing noted is, that though ever occupied only in this telling and hearing, yet they thought those things strange— things which they had never heard. *"Then Paul standing in the midst of the Areopagus said, You men of Athens, I look upon you as being in all things more religiously disposed"* [Acts 17:22]: (f) for the cities were full of gods ([δαίμόνων], al. [εἰδώλων]): (h) this is why he says [δεισιδαιμονεστέρους] . For as I passed by and viewed the objects of your worship — he does not say simply [τοὺς δαίμονας] (the demons, or deities), but paves the way for his discourse: *"I beheld an altar,"* etc. [Acts 17:23] This is why he says, *"I look upon you as being more religiously disposed,"* viz. because of the altar. *"God,"* he says, *"that made the world."* [Acts 17:24] He uttered one word, by which he has subverted all the (doctrines) of the philosophers. For the Epicureans affirm all to be fortuitously formed and (by concourse) of atoms, the Stoics held it to be body and fire ([ἐ] [κτύρωσιν]). *"The world and all that is therein."* Do you mark the conciseness, and in conciseness, clearness? Mark what were the things that were strange to them: that God made the world! Things which now any of the most ordinary persons know, these the Athenians and the wise men of the Athenians knew not. *"Seeing He is Lord of heaven and earth:"* for if He made them, it is clear that He is Lord. Observe what he affirms to be the note of Deity— creation. Which attribute the Son also has.

For the Prophets everywhere affirm this, that to create is God's prerogative. Not as those affirm that another is Maker but not Lord, assuming that matter is uncreated. Here now he covertly affirms and establishes his own, while he overthrows their doctrine. *"Dwells not in*

temples made with hands." For He does indeed dwell in temples, yet not in such, but in man's soul. He overthrows the corporeal worship. What then? Did He not dwell in the temple at Jerusalem? No indeed: but He wrought therein. *"Neither is worshipped by men's hands."* [Acts 17:25] How then was He worshipped by men's hands among the Jews? Not by hands, but by the understanding. *"As though He needed anything:"* since even those (acts of worship) He did not in this sort seek, *"as having need. Shall I eat,"* says He, *"the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?"* [Psalm 50:13] Neither is this enough—the having need of naught—which he has affirmed: for though this is Divine, yet a further attribute must be added. *"Seeing it is He that gives unto all, life and breath and all things."* Two proofs of Godhead: Himself to have need of naught, and to supply all things to all men. Produce here Plato (and) all that he has philosophized about God, all that Epicurus has: and all is but trifling to this! *"Gives,"* he says, *"life and breath."* Lo, he makes Him the Creator of the soul also, not its begetter. See again how he overthrows the doctrine about matter. *"And made,"* he says, *"of one blood every nation of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth."* [Acts 17:26] These things are better than the former: and what an impeachment both of the atoms and of matter, that (creation) is not partial (work), nor the soul of man either. But this, which those say, is not to be Creator. — But by the mind and understanding He is worshipped.— *"It is He that gives,"* etc. He not the partial ([μερικοί δαίμονες]) deities. *"And all things."* It is *"He,"* he says.— How man also came into being. — First he showed that *"He dwells not,"* etc., and then declared that He *"is not worshipped as though He had need of anything."* If God, He made all: but if He made not, He is not God. Gods that made not heaven and earth, let them perish. He introduces much greater doctrines, though as yet he does not mention the great doctrines; but he discoursed to them as unto children. And these were much greater than

those. Creation, Lordship, the having need of naught, authorship of all good — these he has declared. But how is He worshipped? Say. It is not yet the proper time. What equal to this sublimity? Marvellous is this also— of one, to have made so many: but also, having made, Himself sustains them ([συγκρατεῖ]) in being, *"giving life and breath and all things. (b) And has determined the times appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him."* [Acts 17:27] (a) It means either this, that He did not compel them to go about and seek God, but according to the bounds of their habitation: (c) or this, that He determined their seeking God, yet not determined this (to be done) continually, but (determined) certain appointed times (when they should do so): showing now, that not having sought they had found: for since, having sought, they had not found, he shows that God was now as manifest as though He were in the midst of them palpably ([ψηλαφώμενος]). (e) *"Though He be not far,"* he says, *"from every one of us,"* but is near to all. See again the power (or, *"what it is to be God,"*) of God. What says he? Not only He gave *"life and breath and all things,"* but, as the sum and substance of all, He brought us to the knowledge of Himself, by giving us these things by which we are able to find and to apprehend Him. But we did not wish to find Him, albeit close at hand. *"Though He be not far from every one of us."* Why look now, He is near to all, to every one all the world over! What can be greater than this? See how he makes clear riddance of the parcel deities ([τοὺς μερικούς])! What say I, *"afar off?"* He is so near, that without Him we live not: *"for in Him we live and move and have our being."* [Acts 17:28] *"In him;"* to put it by way of corporeal similitude, even as it is impossible to be ignorant of the air which is diffused on every side around us, and is *"not far from every one of us,"* nay rather, which is in us. (d) For it was not so that there was a heaven in one

place, in another none, nor yet (a heaven) at one time, at another none. So that both at every "*time*" and at every "*bound*" it was possible to find Him. He so ordered things, that neither by place nor by time were men hindered. For of course even this, if nothing else, of itself was a help to them— that the heaven is in every place, that it stands in all time. (f) See how (he declares) His Providence, and His upholding power ([συγκράτησιν]); the existence of all things from Him, (from Him) their working ([τὸ ἐνεργεῖν]), (from Him their preservation) that they perish not. And he does not say, "*Through Him*," but, what was nearer than this, "*In him*."— That poet said nothing equal to this, "*For we are His offspring*." He, however, spoke it of Jupiter, but Paul takes it of the Creator, not meaning the same being as he, God forbid! But meaning what is properly predicated of God: just as he spoke of the altar with reference to Him, not to the being whom they worshipped. As much as to say, "*For certain things are said and done with reference to this (true God), but you know not that they are with reference to Him*." For say, of whom would it be properly said, "*To an Unknown God?*" Of the Creator, or of the demon? Manifestly of the Creator: because Him they knew not, but the other they knew. Again, that all things are filled (with the presence)— of God? Or of Jupiter— a wretch of a man, a detestable impostor! But Paul said it not in the same sense as he, God forbid! But with quite a different meaning. For he says we are God's offspring, i.e. God's own, His nearest neighbors as it were.

For lest, when he says, "*Being the offspring of God*" [Acts 17:29], they should again say, You bring certain strange things to our ears, he produces the poet. He does not say, "*You ought not to think the Godhead like to gold or silver*," ye accursed and execrable: but in more lowly sort he says, "*We ought not*." For what (says he)? God is above this? No, he does not say this either: but for the present this— "*We ought not to think the Godhead like*

such," for nothing is so opposite to men. *"But we do not affirm the Godhead to be like this, for who would say that?"* Mark how he has introduced the incorporeal (nature of God) when he said, *"In Him,"* etc., for the mind, when it surmises body, at the same time implies the notion of distance. (Speaking) to the many he says, *"We ought not to think the Godhead like gold, or silver, or stone, the shaping of art,"* for if we are not like to those as regards the soul, much more God (is not like to such). So far, he withdraws them from the notion. But neither is the Godhead, he would say, subjected to any other human conception. For if that which art or thought has found—this is why he says it thus, *"of art or imagination of man"*—if that, then, which human art or thought has found, is God, then even in the stone (is) God's essence.—How comes it then, if *"in Him we live,"* that we do not find Him? The charge is twofold, both that they did not find Him, and that they found such as these. The (human) understanding in itself is not at all to be relied upon.—But when he has agitated their soul by showing them to be without excuse, see what he says: *"The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent."* [Acts 17:30] What then? Are none of these men to be punished? None of them that are willing to repent. He says it of these men, not of the departed, but of them whom He commands to repent. He does not call you to account, he would say. He does not say, Took no notice ([παρεῖδεν]); does not say, Permitted: but, You were ignorant. *"Overlooked,"* i.e. does not demand punishment as of men that deserve punishment. You were ignorant. And he does not say, You wilfully did evil; but this he showed by what he said above. — *"All men everywhere to repent:"* again he hints at the whole world. Observe how he takes them off from the parcel deities! *"Because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance to all men, in that He raised*

Him from the dead." [Acts 17:31] Observe how he again declares the Passion. Observe the terror again: for, that the judgment is true, is clear from the raising Him up: for it is alleged in proof of that. That all he has been saying is true, is clear from the fact that He rose again. For He did give this "*assurance to all men,*" His rising from the dead: this (i.e. judgment), also is henceforth certain.

These words were spoken indeed to the Athenians: but it were seasonable that one should say to us also, "*that all men everywhere must repent, because he has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world.*" See how he brings Him in as Judge also: Him, both provident for the world, and merciful and forgiving and powerful and wise, and, in a word possessing all the attributes of a Creator. "*Having given assurance to all men,*" i.e. He has given proof in the rising (of Jesus) from the dead. Let us repent then: for we must assuredly be judged. If Christ rose not, we shall not be judged: but if he rose, we shall without doubt be judged. "*For to this end,*" it is said, "*did He also die, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*" [Romans 14:9] "*For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to that he has done.*" [2 Corinthians 5:10] Do not imagine that these are but words. Lo! He introduced also the subject of the resurrection of all men; for in no other way can the world be judged. And that, "*In that He has raised Him from the dead,*" relates to the body: for that was dead, that had fallen. Among the Greeks, as their notions of Creation, so likewise of the Judgment, are children's fancies, ravings of drunken men. But let us, who know these things accurately, do something that is to the purpose: let us be made friends unto God. How long shall we be at enmity with Him? How long shall we entertain dislike towards Him? "*God forbid!*" you will say: "*Why do you say such things?*" I would wish not to say the things I say, if you did

not do the things ye do: but as things are, what is the use now in keeping silence from words, when the plain evidence of deeds so cries aloud? How then, how shall we love Him? I have told you thousands of ways, thousands of times: but I will speak it also now. One way I seem to myself to have discovered, a very great and admirable way. Namely, after acknowledging to Him our general obligations—what none shall be able to express (I mean), what has been done for each of us in his own person, of these also let us bethink ourselves, because these are of great force: let each one of us reckon them up with himself, and make diligent search, and as it were in a book let him have the benefits of God written down; for instance, if at any time having fallen into dangers he has escaped the hands of his enemies; if ever having gone out on a journey at an untimely hour, he has escaped danger; if ever, having had an encounter with wicked men, he has got the better of them; or if ever, having fallen into sickness, he has recovered when all had given him over: for this avails much for attaching us to God. For if that Mordecai, when the services done by him were brought to the king's remembrance, found them to be so available, that he in return rose to that height of splendor [Esther 6:2-11]: much more we, if we call to mind, and make diligent enquiry of these two points, what sins we have committed against God, and what good He has done to us, shall thus both be thankful, and give Him freely all that is ours. But no one gives a thought to any of these things: but just as regarding our sins we say that we are sinners, while we do not enquire into them specifically, so with regard to God's benefits (we say), that God has done us good, and do not specifically enquire, where, and in how great number and at what time. But from this time forth let us be very exact in our reckoning. For if any one can recall even those things which happened long ago, let him reckon up all accurately, as one who will find a great treasure. This is also profitable to us in keeping us

from despair. For when we see that he has often protected us, we shall not despair, nor suppose that we are cast off: but we shall take it as a strong pledge of His care for us, when we bethink us how, though we have sinned, we are not punished, but even enjoy protection from Him. Let me now tell you a case, which I heard from a certain person, in which was a child, and it happened on a time that he was in the country with his mother, being not yet fifteen years old. Just then there came a bad air, in consequence of which a fever attacked them both, for in fact it was the autumn season. It happened that the mother succeeded in getting into the town before (they could stop her); but the boy, when the physicians on the spot ordered him, with the fever burning within him, to gargle his throat, resisted, having forsooth his own wise view of the matter, and thinking he should be better able to quench the fire, if he took nothing whatever, therefore, in his unseasonable spirit of opposition, boy-like, he would take nothing. But when he came into the town, his tongue was paralyzed, and he was for a long time speechless, so that he could pronounce nothing articulately; however, he could read indeed, and attended masters for a long time, but that was all, and there was nothing to mark his progress. So all his hopes (in life) were cut off, and his mother was full of grief: and though the physicians suggested many plans, and many others did so too, yet nobody was able to do him any good, until the merciful God loosed the string of his tongue [cf. Mark 7:35], and then he recovered, and was restored to his former readiness and distinctness of speech. His mother also related, that when a very little child, he had an affection in the nose, which they call a polypus: and then too the physicians had given him over and his father cursed him (for the father was then living), and (even) his mother prayed for him to die; and all was full of distress. But he on a sudden having coughed, owing to the collection of mucus, by the force of the breath

expelled the creature ([τὸ θηρίον]) from his nostrils, and all the danger was removed. But this evil having been extinguished, an acrid and viscid running from the eyes formed such a thick gathering of the humors ([τὰς λήμας]), that it was like a skin drawn over the pupil, and what was worse, it threatened blindness, and everybody said this would be the issue. But from this disease also was he quickly freed by the grace of God. So far what I have heard from others: now I will tell you what I myself know. Once on a time a suspicion of tyrants was raised in our city— at that time I was but a youth— and all the soldiers being set to watch without the city as it chanced, they were making strict inquisition after books of sorcery and magic. And the person who had written the book, had flung it unbound ([ὅ] [κατασκέυαστον]) into the river, and was taken, and when asked for it, was not able to give it up, but was carried all around the city in bonds: when, however, the evidence being brought home to him, he had suffered punishment, just then it chanced that I, wishing to go to the Martyrs' Church, was returning through the gardens by the riverside in company with another person. He, seeing the book floating on the water at first thought it was a linen cloth, but when he got near, perceived it was a book, so he went down, and took it up. I however called shares in the booty, and laughed about it. But let us see, says he, what in the world it is. So he turns back a part of the page, and finds the contents to be magic. At that very moment it chanced that a soldier came by: * * * then having taken from within, he went off. There were we congealed with fear. For who would have believed our story that we had picked it up from the river, when all were at that time, even the unsuspected, under strict watch? And we did not dare to cast it away, lest we should be seen, and there was a like danger to us in tearing it to pieces. God gave us means, and we cast it away, and at last we were free for that time from the extreme peril. And I might mention

numberless cases, if I had a mind to recount all. And even these I have mentioned for your sakes, so that, if any have other cases, although not such as these, let him bear them in mind constantly: for example, if at any time a stone having been hurled, and being about to strike you, has not struck you, do thou bear this ever in your mind: these things produce in us great affection towards God. For if on remembering any men who have been the means of saving us, we are much mortified if we be not able to requite them, much more (should we feel thus) with regard to God. This too is useful in other respects. When we wish not to be overmuch grieved, let us say: *"If we have received good things at the hand of the Lord, shall not we endure evil things?"* [Job 2:10] And when Paul told them from whence he had been delivered, [2 Timothy 4:17] the reason was that he might put them also in mind. See too how Jacob kept all these things in his mind: wherefore also he said: *"The Angel which redeemed me from my youth up"* [Genesis 48:16]; and not only that he redeemed him, but how and for what purpose. See accordingly how he also calls to mind the benefits he had received in particular. *"With my staff,"* he says, *"I passed over Jordan."* [Genesis 32:10] The Jews also always remembered the things which happened to their forefathers, turning over in their minds the things done in Egypt. Then much more let us, bearing in mind the special mercies which have happened to us also, how often we have fallen into dangers and calamities, and unless God had held his hand over us, should long ago have perished: I say, let us all, considering these things and recounting them day by day, return our united thanks all of us to God, and never cease to glorify Him, that so we may receive a large recompense for our thankfulness of heart, through the grace and compassion of His only begotten Son, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 39 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVII. 32-34, XVIII. 1

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear you again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth."

What can be the reason that, having persuaded (some so far as to say) that they would hear him again, and there being no dangers, Paul is so in haste to leave Athens? Probably he knew that he should do them no great good; moreover he was led by the Spirit to Corinth. (b) For the Athenians, although fond of hearing strange things, nevertheless did not attend (to him); for this was not their study, but only to be always having something to say; which was the cause that made them hold off from him. But if this was their custom, how is it that they accuse him, *"he seems to be a setter forth of strange gods?"* [Acts 17:18] Yes, but these were matters they did not at all know what to make of. Howbeit, he did convert both Dionysius the Areopagite, and some others. For those who were careful of (right) living, quickly received the word; but the others not so. It seemed to Paul sufficient to have cast the seeds of the doctrines. (a) To Corinth then, as I said, he was led by the Spirit, in which city he was to abide. (c) *"And having found a certain Jew named Aquila, of Pontus by birth, lately come from Italy"*— for the greater part of his life had been passed there— *"and Priscilla his wife,*

because that Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome." [Acts 18:2] For though it was in the reign of Nero that the war against the Jews was consummated, yet from the time of Claudius and thenceforward it was fanning up, at a distance indeed, so that, were it but so, they might come to their senses, and from Rome they were now driven as common pests. This is why it is so ordered by Providence that Paul was led there as a prisoner, that he might not as a Jew be driven away, but as acting under military custody might even be guarded there. (Having found these,) *"he came to them, and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought: for by occupation they were tent-makers."* [Acts 18:3] Lo, what a justification he found for dwelling in the same house with them! For because here, of all places, it was necessary that he should not receive, as he himself says, *"That wherein they glory, they may be found, even as we"* [2 Corinthians 11:12], it is providentially ordered that he there abides. *"And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus had come from Macedonia, Paul was straitened in the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ."* (v. 4, 5.) *"And when the Jews opposed and blasphemed,"* i.e. they tried to bear him down ([ἐ] [πῆρέαζον]), they set upon him— What then does Paul? He separates from them, and in a very awful manner: and though he does not now say, *"It was need that the word should be spoken unto you,"* yet he darkly intimates it to them:— *"and when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."* [Acts 18:6] *"And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue."* See how having again said, *"Henceforth— "* for all that, he does not neglect them; so that it was to rouse them that he said this, and

thereupon came to Justus, whose house was contiguous to the synagogue, so that even from this they might have jealousy, from the very proximity. *"And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house."* This also was, of all things, enough to bring them over. *"And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spoke the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not your peace: for I am with you, and no man shall set on you to hurt you: for I have much people in this city."* [Acts 18:8-10] See by how many reasons He persuades him, and how He puts last the reason which of all others most prevailed with him, *"I have much people in this city."* Then how was it, you may ask, that they set upon him? And yet, the writer tells us, they prevailed nothing, but brought him to the proconsul. *"And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. And when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat."* (v. 11, 12.) Do you mark why those men were ever contriving to give a public turn to the misdemeanors (they accused them of)? Thus see here: (b) *"Saying, This fellow seduces men contrary to the law to worship God. And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said: If indeed it were any wrong-doing or wicked lewdness, O you Jews, reason would that I should bear with you. But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. And he drove them from the judgment-seat."* [Acts 18:13-16] This Gallio seems to me to have been a sensible man. (a) Thus observe, when these had said, *"Against the law he seduces men to worship God,"* he *"cared for none of these things:"* and observe how he answers them: *"If indeed it were"* any matter affecting the city, *"any wrong-doing or wicked lewdness,"* etc. (c) *"Then all the Jews took Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him*

before the judgment-seat: and Gallio cared for none of these things" [Acts 18:17]: but their beating him he did not take as an insult to himself. So petulant were the Jews. But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And when they heard,"* [Acts 17:32] what great and lofty doctrines, they did not even attend, but jeered at the Resurrection! *"For the natural man,"* it says, *"receives not the things of the Spirit."* [1 Corinthians 2:14] *"And so,"* it says, *"Paul went forth."* [Acts 17:33] How? Having persuaded some; derided by others. *"But certain men,"* it says, *"clave unto him, and believed, among whom was also Dionysius the Areopagite and some others."* [Acts 17:34] *"And after these things,"* etc. *"And having found a certain Jew by name Aquila, of Pontus by birth, lately come from Italy, because that Claudius had ordered all Jews to depart from Rome, he came to them, and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers."* [Acts 18:1-3] Being of Pontus, this Aquila * * *. Observe how, not in Jerusalem, nor near it (the crisis), was hasting to come, but at a greater distance. And with him he abides, and is not ashamed to abide, nay, for this very reason he does abide, as having a suitable lodging-place, for to him it was much more suitable than any king's palace. And smile not thou, beloved, to hear (of his occupation). For (it was good for him) even as to the athlete the palæstra is more useful than delicate carpets; so to the warrior the iron sword (is useful), not that of gold. *"And wrought,"* though he preached. Let us be ashamed, who though we have no preaching to occupy us, live in idleness. *"And he disputed in the synagogue every sabbath day, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks"* [Acts 18:4]: but *"when they opposed and blasphemed"* he withdrew, by this expecting to draw them more. For wherefore having left that house did he come to live hard by the synagogue? Was it not for this? For it was not that he saw any danger here.

But therefore it is that Paul having testified to them— not teaches now, but testifies— *"having shaken his garments,"* to terrify them not by word only but by action, *"said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads"* [Acts 18:6]: he speaks the more vehemently as having already persuaded many. *"I,"* says he, *"am clean."* Then we also are accountable for the blood of those entrusted to us, if we neglect them. *"From this time forth I will go to the Gentiles."* So that also when he says, *"Henceforth let no man trouble me"* [Galatians 6:17], he says it to terrify. For not so much did the punishment terrify, as this stung them. *"And having removed thence he came into the house of one named Justus, that worshipped God, whose house was contiguous to the synagogue"* [Acts 18:7], and there abode, by this wishing to persuade them that he was in earnest ([πρὸς τὰ ἔθνη ἠπείγετο]) to go to the Gentiles. Accordingly, mark immediately the ruler of the synagogue converted, and many others, when he had done this. *"Crispus the ruler of the synagogue believed in the Lord, with his whole house: and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."*— [Acts 18:8] *"With his whole house:"* observe the converts in those times doing this with their entire household. This Crispus he means where he writes, *"I baptized none save Crispus and Gaius."* [1 Corinthians 1:14] This (same) I take to be called Sosthenes— (evidently) a believer, insomuch that he is beaten, and is always present with Paul. *"And the Lord said in the night,"* etc. Now even the number (of the *"much people"*) persuaded him, but Christ's claiming them for His own (moved him) more. Yet He says also, *"Fear not:"* for the danger was become greater now, both because more believed, and also the ruler of the synagogue. This was enough to rouse him. Not that he was reprov'd as fearing; but that he should not suffer anything; *"I am with you, and none shall set upon you to hurt you."* (v. 9, 10.) For He did not always permit them to suffer evil, that they might not

become too weak. For nothing so grieved Paul, as men's unbelief and setting themselves (against the Truth): this was worse than the dangers. Therefore it is that (Christ) appears to him now. *"And he continued a year and six months,"* etc. [Acts 18:11] After the year and six months, they set upon him. *"And when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia,"* etc. (v. 12, 13), because they had no longer the use of their own laws. (c) And observe how prudent he is: for he does not say straightway, I care not, but, *"If,"* says he, *"it were a matter of wrong-doing or wicked lewdness, O you Jews, reason would that I should bear with you; but if it be a question of doctrine and words and of your law, see ye to it, for I do not choose to be a judge of such matters."* (v. 14, 15.) (g) He taught them that not such are the matters which crave a judicial sentence, but they do all things out of order. And he does not say, It is not my duty, but, *"I do not choose,"* that they may not trouble him again. Thus Pilate said in the case of Christ, *"Take ye Him, and judge him according to your law."* [John 18:31] But they were just like men drunken and mad. (d) *"And he drove them from the judgment-seat"* [Acts 18:16]— he effectually closed the tribunal against them. *"Then all"* (the Jews) *"having seized Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue, beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things."* [Acts 18:17]. (a) This thing, of all others, set them on (to this violence)— their persuasion that the governor would not even let himself down (to notice it). (e) It was a splendid victory. O the shame they were put to! (b) For it is one thing to have come off victorious from a controversy, and another for those to learn that he cared nothing for the affair. (f) *"And Gallio cared for none of these things:"* and yet the whole was meant as an insult to him! But, forsooth, as if they had received authority (they did this). Why did he (Sosthenes), though he also had authority, not beat (them)? But they were (otherwise) trained: so that the judge should learn which party was more reasonable.

This was no small benefit to those present— both the reasonableness of these, and the audacity of those. (*h*) He was beaten, and said nothing.

This man let us also imitate: to them that beat us, let us return blow for blow, by meekness, by silence, by long-suffering. More grievous these wounds, greater this blow, and more heavy. For to show that it is not the receiving a blow in the body that is grievous, but the receiving it in the mind, we often smite people, but since it is in the way of friendship, they are even pleased: but if you smite any indifferent person in an insolent manner, you have pained him exceedingly, because you have touched his heart. So let us smite their heart. But that meekness inflicts a greater blow than fierceness, come, let us prove, so far as that is possible, by words. For the sure proof indeed is by acts and by experience: but if you will, let us also make the enquiry by word, though indeed we have often made it already. Now in insults, nothing pains us so much, as the opinion passed by the spectators; for it is not the same thing to be insulted in public and in private, but those same insults we endure even with ease, when we suffer them in a solitary place, and with none by to witness them, or know of them. So true is it that it is not the insult, as it is in itself, that mortifies us, but the having to suffer it in the sight of all men: since if one should do us honor in the sight of all men, and insult us in private, we shall notwithstanding even feel obliged to him. The pain then is not in the nature of the insult, but in the opinion of the beholders; that one may not seem to be contemptible. What then, if this opinion should be in our favor? Is not the man attempting to disgrace us himself more disgraced, when men give their opinion in our favor? Say, whom do the bystanders despise? Him who insults, or him who being insulted keeps silence? Passion indeed suggests, that they despise him who is insulted: but let us look into it now while we are free from that excitement, in order that we may not be carried away

when the time comes. Say, whom do we all condemn? Plainly the man who insults: and if he be an inferior, we shall say that he is even mad; if an equal, that he is foolish; if a superior, still we shall not approve of it. For which man, I ask, is worthy of approval, the man who is excited, who is tossed with a tempest of passion, who is infuriated like a wild beast, who demeans himself in this sort against our common nature, or he who lives in a state of calm, in a haven of repose, and in virtuous equanimity? Is not the one like an angel, the other not even like a man? For the one cannot even bear his own evils, while the other bears even those of others also: here, the man cannot even endure himself; there, he endures another too: the one is in danger of shipwreck, the other sails in safety, his ship wafted along the favoring gales: for he has not suffered the squall of passion to catch his sails and overturn the bark of his understanding: but the breath of a soft and sweet air fanning upon it, the breath of forbearance, wafts it with much tranquillity into the haven of wise equanimity. And like as when a ship is in danger of foundering, the sailors know not what they cast away, whether what they lay hands upon be their own or other men's property, but they throw overboard all the contents without discrimination, alike the precious and what is not such: but when the storm has ceased, then reckoning up all that they have thrown out, they shed tears, and are not sensible of the calm for the loss of what they have thrown overboard: so here, when passion blows hard, and the storm is raised, people in flinging out their words know not how to use order or fitness; but when the passion has ceased, then recalling to mind what kind of words they have given utterance to, they consider the loss and feel not the quiet, when they remember the words by which they have disgraced themselves, and sustained most grievous loss, not as to money, but as to character for moderation and gentleness. Anger is a darkness. *"The fool,"* says Scripture, *"has said in his heart, There is no*

God." [Psalm 13:1] Perhaps also of the angry man it is suitable to say the same, that the angry man has said, There is no God. For, says Scripture, *"Through the multitude of his anger he will not seek"* (after God). [Psalm 10:4] For let what pious thought will enter in, (passion) thrusts and drives all out, flings all athwart. (b) When you are told, that he whom you abused uttered not one bitter word, do you not for this feel more pain than you have inflicted? (a) If you in your own mind do not feel more pain than he whom you have abused, abuse still; (but) though there be none to call you to account, the judgment of your conscience, having taken you privately, shall give you a thousand lashes, (when you think) how you poured out a flood of railings on one so meek, and humble, and forbearing. We are forever saying these things, but we do not see them exhibited in works. You, a human being, insult your fellow-man? You, a servant, your fellow-servant? But why do I wonder at this, when many even insult God? Let this be a consolation to you when suffering insult. Are you insulted? God also is insulted. Are you reviled? God also was reviled. Are you treated with scorn? Why, so was our Master also. In these things He shares with us, but not so in the contrary things. For He never insulted another unjustly: God forbid! He never reviled, never did a wrong. So that we are those who share with Him, not ye. For to endure when insulted is God's part: to be merely abusive, is the part of the devil. See the two sides. *"You have a devil"* [John 7:20 and 18:22], Christ was told: He received a blow on the face from the servant of the high-priest. They who wrongfully insult, are in the same class with these. For if Peter was even called *"Satan"* [Matthew 16:23] for one word; much more shall these men, when they do the works of the Jews, be called, as those were called, *"children of the devil"* [John 8:44], because they wrought the works of the devil. You insult; who are you, I ask (that you do so)? Nay, rather the reason why you insult, is this, that you are

nothing: no one that is human insults. So that what is said in quarrels, "*Who are you?*" ought to be put in the contrary way: "*Insult: for you are nothing.*" Instead of that the phrase is, "*Who are you, that you insult?*" "*A better man than you,*" is the answer. And yet it is just the contrary: but because we put the question amiss, therefore they answer amiss: so that the fault is ours. For as if we thought it was for great men to insult, therefore we ask, "*Who are you, that you insult?*" And therefore they make this answer.

But, on the contrary, we ought to say: "*Do you insult? Insult still: for you are nobody:*" whereas to those who do not insult this should be said: "*Who are you that you insult not?— you have surpassed human nature.*" This is nobility, this is generosity, to speak nothing ungenerous, though a man may deserve to have it spoken to him. Tell me now, how many are there who are not worthy to be put to death? Nevertheless, the judge does not this in his own person, but interrogates them; and not this either, in his own person. But if it is not to be suffered, that the judge, sitting in judgment, should (in his own person) speak with a criminal, but he does all by the intervention of a third person, much more is it our duty not to insult our equals in rank; for all the advantage we shall get of them will be, not so much to have disgraced them, as to be made to learn that we have disgraced ourselves. Well then, in the case of the wicked, this is why we must not insult (even them); in the case of the good there is another reason also because they do not deserve it: and for a third, because it is not right to be abusive. But as things are, see what comes of it; the person abused is a man, and the person abusing is a man, and the spectators men. What then? Must the beasts come between them and settle matters? For only this is left. For when both the wrong-doers and those who delight in the wrong-doing are men, the part of reconciler is left for the beasts: for just as when the masters quarrel in a house, there is nothing left but for the servants to reconcile

them—even if this be not the result, for the nature of the thing demands this—just so is it here.— Are you abusive? Well may you be so, for you are not even human. Insolence seemed to be a high-born thing; it seemed to belong to the great; whereas it belongs rather to slaves; but to give good words belongs to free men. For as to do ill is the part of those, so to suffer ill is the part of these.— Just as if some slave should steal the master's property, some old hag,— such a thing as that is the abusive man. And like as some detestable thief and runaway, with studied purpose stealing in, looks all around him, wishing to filch something: so does this man, even as he, look narrowly at all on every side, studying how to throw out some (reproach). Or perhaps we may set him forth by a different sort of example. Just as if one should steal filthy vessels out of a house, and bring them out in the presence of all men, the things purloined do not so disgrace the persons robbed, as they disgrace the thief himself: just so this man, by bringing out his words in the presence of all men, casts disgrace not on others but on himself by the words, in giving vent to this language, and be-fouling both his tongue and his mind. For it is all one, when we quarrel with bad men, as if one for the sake of striking a man who is immersed in putrefying filth should defile himself by plunging his hands into the nastiness. Therefore, reflecting on these things, let us flee the mischief thence accruing, and keep a clean tongue, that being clear from all abusiveness, we may be enabled with strictness to pass through the life present, and to attain unto the good things promised to those that love Him, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 40 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XVIII. 18

"And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow."

See how the Law was breaking up; see how they were bound by conscience. This, namely, was a Jewish custom, to shear their heads agreeably with a vow. But then there ought to be also a sacrifice [Acts 21:26], which was not the case here. — *"Having yet tarried:"* after the beating of Sosthenes. For it was necessary that he should yet tarry, and comfort them concerning these things. *"He sailed for Syria."* Why does he desire again to come to Syria? It was there that *"the disciples were ordered to be called Christians"* [Acts 11:26]: there, that he had been *"commended to the grace of God"* [Acts 14:26]: there, that he had effected such things concerning the doctrine. *"And with him Priscilla"* — lo, a woman also — *"and Aquila."* But these he left at Ephesus. With good reason, namely, that they should teach. For having been with him so long time, they were learning many things: and yet he did not at present withdraw them from their custom as Jews. *"And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that comes in Jerusalem."* Therefore it was that he was hindered from coming into Asia, being impelled to what was of pressing moment. Thus observe him here,

entreated (by them) to stay, but because he could not comply, being in haste to depart, *"he bade them farewell."* However, he did not leave them without more ado, but with promise (to return): *"But I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus."* [Acts 18:19-21] *"And when he had landed at Cæsarea, and gone up, and saluted the Church, he went down to Antioch. And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples."* [Acts 18:22-23] He came again to those places which he had previously visited. *"And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus."* [Acts 18:24] Lo, even learned men are now urgent, and the disciples henceforth go abroad. Do you mark the spread of the preaching? *"This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the Spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."* [Acts 18:25-26] If this man knew only the baptism of John, how is it that he was *"fervent in the Spirit,"* for the Spirit was not given in that way? And if those after him needed the baptism of Christ, much more would he need it. Then what is to be said? For it is not without a meaning that the writer has strung the two incidents together. It seems to me that this was one of the hundred and twenty who were baptized with the Apostles: or, if not so, then the same that took place in the case of Cornelius, took place also in the case of this man. But neither does he receive baptism. That expression, then, *"they expounded more perfectly,"* seems to me to be this, that he behooved also to be baptized. Because the other twelve knew nothing accurate, not even what related to Jesus. And it is likely that he did in fact receive baptism. But if these (disciples) of John,

after that baptism again received baptism, was this needful for the disciples also? And wherefore the need of water? These are very different from him, men who did not even know whether there were a Holy Ghost. *"He was fervent,"* then, *"in the Spirit, knowing only the baptism of John:"* but these *"expounded to him more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; who, when he had come, helped them much which had believed through grace."* [Acts 18:27] He wished then also to depart into Achaia, and these also encouraged (him to do so), having also given him letters. *"Who when he had come, helped them much which had believed through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."* [Acts 18:28] *"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts"*—meaning what we have read as to Cæsarea and the other places—came to Ephesus, and having found certain disciples [Acts 19:1], *"he said to them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe in Him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."* [Acts 19:2-4] For that they did not even believe in Christ is plain from his saying, *"that they should believe in Him that was to come after him."* And he did not say, The baptism of John is nothing, but, It is incomplete. Nor does he add this (in so many words), but he taught them, and many received the Holy Ghost. *"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were*

about twelve" [Acts 19:5-7]: so that it was likely they had the Spirit, but it did not appear. *"And all the men were about twelve."*

(Recapitulation.) *"And they came to Ephesus, and there he left them"* [Acts 18:19]: for he did not wish to take them about with him, but left them at Ephesus. But they subsequently dwelt at Corinth, and he bears high testimony to them, and writing to the Romans, salutes them. [Romans 16:3] Whence it seems to me that they afterwards went back to Rome, in the time of Nero, as having an attachment for those parts whence they had been expelled in the time of Claudius. *"But he himself went into the synagogue."* It seems to me that the faithful still assembled there, for they did not immediately withdraw them. *"And when they besought him to stay, he consented not"* [Acts 18:20, 21], for he was hastening to Cæsarea. *"And having arrived at Cæsarea,"* etc., *"passing through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming all the disciples."* (v. 22, 23.) Through these regions also he merely *passes* again, just enough to establish them by his presence. *"And a certain Jew, Apollos by name,"* etc. [Acts 18:24] For he was an awakened man, travelling in foreign parts for this very purpose. Writing of him the Apostle said, *"Now concerning Apollos our brother."* [1 Corinthians 16:12] ([β] []) *"Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard,"* etc. [Acts 18:26] It was not for nothing that he left them at Ephesus, but for Apollos' sake, the Spirit so ordered it, that he might come with greater force to the attack ([ἐ] [πιβῆναι]) upon Corinth. What may be the reason that to him they did nothing, but Paul they assault? They knew that he was the leader, and great was the name of the man. *"And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia"* [Acts 18:27] i.e. in faith, he did all by faith; *"the brethren wrote,"* etc. nowhere envy, nowhere an evil eye. Aquila teaches, or rather this man lets himself be taught. He was minded to depart, and they send letters. (a) *"For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly,"* etc.

[Acts 18:28] Now by this, that he *"publicly"* convinced them, his boldness was shown: by the clearness of his arguing, his power was declared: by his convicting them out of the Scriptures, his skill (of learning). For neither boldness by itself contributes anything, where there is not power, nor power where there is not boldness. *"He mightily convinced,"* it says. ([β]) *"And it came to pass,"* etc. [Acts 19:1] But whence had those, being in Ephesus, the baptism of John? Probably they had been on a visit at Jerusalem at the time (of John's preaching), and did not even know Jesus. And he does not say to them, Do ye believe in Jesus? But what? *"Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"* [Acts 19:2] He knew that they had not, but wishes themselves to say it, that having learned what they lack, they may ask. *"John verily baptized,"* etc. [Acts 19:4] From the baptism itself he (John) prophesies: and he leads them (to see) that this is the meaning of John's baptism. (a) *"That they should believe in Him that was to come:"* on what kind (of Person)? *"I indeed baptize you with water, but He that comes after me, shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."* [Matthew 3:11] *"And when Paul,"* it says, *"had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied."* [Acts 19:6] ([β]) The gift is twofold: tongues and prophesyings. Hence is shown an important doctrine, that the baptism of John is incomplete. And he does not say, *"Baptism"* of forgiveness, but, *"of repentance."* What (is it) then? These had not the Spirit: they were not so fervent, not even instructed. And why did (Apollus) not receive baptism? (The case) seems to me to be this: Great was the boldness of the man. *"He taught diligently the things concerning Jesus,"* but he needed more diligent teaching. Thus, though not knowing all, by his zeal he attracted the Holy Ghost, in the same manner as Cornelius and his company.

Perhaps it is the wish of many, Oh that we had the baptism of John now! But (if we had), many would still be careless of a life of virtue, and it might be thought that each for this, and not for the kingdom of heaven's sake, aimed at virtue. There would be many false prophets: for then *"they which are approved"* would not be very *"manifest."* [1 Corinthians 11:19] As, *"blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed"* [John 20:29], so they that (believe) without signs. *"Except,"* says (Christ), *"ye see signs, you will not believe."* [John 4:48] For we lose nothing (by lack of miracles), if we will but take heed to ourselves. We have the sum and substance of the good things: through baptism we received remission of sins, sanctification, participation of the Spirit, adoption, eternal life. What would ye more? Signs? But they come to an end ([ἀ] [λλὰ καταργεῖται]). You have *"faith, hope, charity,"* the abiding things: these seek thou, these are greater than signs. Nothing is equal to charity. For *"greater than all,"* says he, *"is charity."* [cf. 1 Corinthians 13:5] But now, love is in jeopardy, for only its name is left behind, while the reality is nowhere (seen), but we are divided each from the other. What then shall one do to reunite (ourselves)? For to find fault is easy, but how may one make friendship, this is the point to be studied; how we may bring together the scattered members. For be it so, that we have one Church, or one doctrine— yet this is not the (main) consideration: no, the evil is, that in these we have not fellowship— *"living peaceably,"* as the Apostle says, *"with all men"* [Romans 12:18], on the contrary, we are at variance one with another. For be it that we are not having fights every day, yet look not thou to this, but (to this), that neither have we charity, genuine and unswerving. There is need of bandages and oil. Let us bear it in mind, that charity is the cognizance of the disciples of Christ: that without this, all else avails nothing: that it is an easy task if we will. Yes, say you, we know all this, but

how (to go to work) that it may be achieved? What (to do), that it may be effected? In what way, that we may love one another? First, let us put away the things which are subversive of charity, and then we shall establish this. Let none be resentful, none be envious, none rejoicing in (others') misfortunes: these are the things that hinder love; well then, the things that make it are of the other sort. For it is not enough to put away the things that hinder; the things that establish must also be forthcoming. Now Sirach tells us the things that are subversive (of friendship), and does not go on to speak of the things which make union. "*Reproaching, he says, and revealing of a secret, and a treacherous wound.*" [cf. Sirach 22:27] But in speaking of the men of those times, these things might well be named, seeing they were carnal: but in our case, God forbid they should be (even) named. Not from these things do we bring our inducements for you, but from the others. For us, there is nothing good without friendship. Let there be good things without number, but what is the benefit— be it wealth, be it luxury— without friendship? No possession equal to this, even in matters of this life, just as there is nothing worse than men hating (us). "*Charity hides a multitude of sins*" [1 Peter 4:8]: but enmity, even where sins are not, suspects them to be. It is not enough not to be an enemy; no, one must also love. Bethink you, that Christ has bidden, and this is enough. Even affliction makes friendships, and draws (men) together. "*What then,*" say you, "*now, when there is no affliction? Say, how (are we to act) to become friends?*" Have ye not other friends, I ask? In what way are you their friends, how do ye continue such? For a beginning, let none have any enemy: this (in itself) is not a small matter: let none envy; it is not possible to accuse the man who envies not. (b) How then shall we be warmly affected? What makes love of persons? Beauty of person. Then let us also make our souls beautiful, and we shall be amiable one to another: for it is

necessary, of course, not only to love, but also to be loved. Let us first achieve this point, that we may be loved, and the other will be easy. How to act that we may be loved? Let us become beautiful, and let us do this, that we may always have lovers. Let none make it his study to get money, to get slaves, to get houses, (so much) as to be loved, as to have a good name. Better is a name than much wealth. For the one remains, the other perishes: and the one it is possible to acquire, the other impossible. For he that has got an evil character, will with difficulty lay it aside: but by means of his (good) name the poor man may quickly be rich. Let there be a man having ten thousand talents, and another a hundred friends; the latter is more rich in resources than the former. Then let us not merely do this, but let us work it as a kind of trade. *"And how can we?"* say you. *"A sweet mouth multiplies its friends, and a gracious tongue."* Let us get a well-spoken mouth, and pure manners. It is not possible for a man to be such, and not to be known.

(a) We have one world that we all inhabit, with the same fruits we all are fed. But these are small matters: by the same Sacraments we partake of the same spiritual food. These surely are justifications of loving! (c) Mark how many (inducements and pleas) for friendship they that are without have excogitated; community of art or trade, neighborhood, relationships: but mightier than all these are the impulses and ties which are among us: this Table is calculated more (than all else) to shame us into friendliness. But many of us who come thereto do not even know one another. The reason, it may be said, is that there are so many of them. By no means; it is only our own sluggish indifference. (Once) there were three thousand [Acts 2:41]—there were five thousand [Acts 4:4]—and yet they had all one soul: but now each knows not his brother, and is not ashamed to lay the blame on the number, because it is so great! Yet he that has many friends is invincible against all men: stronger he than any tyrant. Not such the safety the tyrant

has with his body-guards, as this man has with his friends. Moreover, this man is more glorious than he: for the tyrant is guarded by his own slaves, but this man by his peers: the tyrant, by men unwilling and afraid of him; this man by willing men and without fear. And here too is a wonderful thing to be seen— many in one, and one in many. (*a*) Just as in an harp, the sounds are diverse, not the harmony, and they all together give out one harmony and symphony, (*c*) I could wish to bring you into such a city, were it possible, wherein (all) should be one soul: then should you see surpassing all harmony of harp and flute, the more harmonious symphony. (*b*) But the musician is the Might of Love: it is this that strikes out the sweet melody, (*d*) singing, (withal) a strain in which no note is out of tune. This strain rejoices both Angels, and God the Lord of Angels; this strain rouses (to hear it) the whole audience that is in heaven; this even lulls (evil) passions — it does not even suffer them to be raised, but deep is the stillness. For as in a theatre, when the band of musicians plays, all listen with a hush, and there is no noise there; so among friends, while Love strikes the chords, all the passions are still and laid to sleep, like wild beasts charmed and unnerved: just as, where hate is, there is all the contrary to this. But let us say nothing just now about enmity; let us speak of friendship. Though thou let fall some casual hasty word, there is none to catch you up, but all forgive you; though thou do (some hasty thing), none puts upon it the worse construction, but all allowance is made: every one prompt to stretch out the hand to him that is falling, every one wishing him to stand. A wall it is indeed impregnable, this friendship; a wall, which not the devil himself, much less men, can overpower. It is not possible for that man to fall into danger who has gotten many friends. (Where love is) no room is there to get matter of anger, but only for pleasantness of feeling: no room is there to get matter of envying; none, to get occasion of resentment. Mark him, how in

all things both spiritual and temporal, he accomplishes all with ease. What then, I pray you, can be equal to this man? Like a city walled on every side is this man, the other as a city unwalled.— Great wisdom, to be able to be a creator of friendship! Take away friendship, and you have taken away all, you have confounded all. But if the likeness of friendship have so great power, what must the reality itself be? Then let us, I beseech you, make to ourselves friends, and let each make this his art. But, lo! You will say, I do study this, but the other does not. All the greater the reward to you. True, say you, but the matter is more difficult. How, I ask? Lo! I testify and declare to you, that if but ten of you would knit yourselves together, and make this your work, as the Apostles made the preaching theirs, and the Prophets theirs the teaching, so we the making of friends, great would be the reward. Let us make for ourselves royal portraits. For if this be the common badge of disciples, we do a greater work than if we should put ourselves into the power to raise the dead. The diadem and the purple mark the Emperor, and where these are not, though his apparel be all gold, the Emperor is not yet manifest. So now you are making known your lineage. Make men friends to yourself, and (friends) to others. There is none who being loved will wish to hate you. Let us learn the colors, with what ingredients they are mixed, with what (tints) this portrait is composed. Let us be affable: let us not wait for our neighbors to move. Say not, if I see any person hanging back (for me to make the first advances), I become worse than he: but rather when you see this, forestall him, and extinguish his bad feeling. Do you see one diseased, and add to his malady? This, most of all, let us make sure of— *"in honor to prefer one another, to account others better than one's self"* [Romans 12:10], deem not this to be a lessening of yourself. If you prefer (another) in honor, you have honored yourself more, attracting to yourself a still higher extinction. On all occasions let us yield

the precedence to others. Let us bear nothing in mind of the evil done to us, but if any good has been done (let us remember only that). Nothing so makes a man a friend, as a gracious tongue, a mouth speaking good things, a soul free from self-elation, a contempt of vain-glory, a despising of honor. If we secure these things, we shall be able to become invincible to the snares of the Devil, and having with strictness accomplished the pursuit of virtue, to attain unto the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 41 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIX. 8, 9

"And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when various were hardened, and believed not, but spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus."

(a) See him in every place forcing his way into the synagogue, and in this manner departing thence. For in every place, he wished to have the occasion given him by them. (c) He wished to separate the disciples thence, and to have the beginning for ceasing to assemble with them, given by (the Jews) themselves. And it was not for nothing that he did this (b) which I have said. He was henceforth *"provoking them to jealousy."* For both the Gentiles readily received him, and the Jews, upon the Gentiles receiving him, repented. (a) This is why he continually made a stir among them, *"for three months arguing and persuading concerning the kingdom of God:"* for you must not suppose because you hear of his *"speaking boldly,"* that there was any harshness: it was of good things that he discoursed, of a kingdom: who would not have heard him? *"But when various were hardened, speaking evil of the way."* They might well call it *"the way;"* this was indeed the way, that led into the kingdom of heaven. *"He departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this was done for the space of two years, so that all that were in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."* [Acts 19:10] (a) Do you mark

how much was effected by his persisting? *"Both Jews and Greeks heard: (c) all that dwelt in Asia:"* it was for this also that the Lord suffered him not to go into Asia [Acts 16:6] (on a former occasion); waiting, as it seems to me, for this same conjuncture. (Hom. xl. p. 245.) (b) *"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."* (v. 11, 12.) Not touched the wearer only (and so were healed), but also receiving them, they laid them upon the sick (and so healed them). (g) *"He that believes in Me,"* says Christ, *"does greater works than those which I do."* [John 14:12] This, and the miracle of the shadows is what He meant (in those words). (d) *"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."* [Acts 19:13] So entirely did they do all by way of trade! Observe: vagabond, or, itinerant, Jewish exorcists. And to believe indeed, they had no mind; but by that Name they wished to cast out the demons. *"By Jesus, whom Paul preaches."* Only see what a name Paul had got! *"And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."* [Acts 19:14-16] They did it in secret: then their impotence is publicly exposed. (f) Then not the Name does anything, unless it be spoken with faith. (h) See how they used their weapons against themselves! (j) So far were they from thinking Jesus to be anything great: no, they must needs add Paul, as thinking him to be something great. Here one may marvel how it was that the demon did not cooperate with the imposture of the exorcists, but on the contrary exposed

them, and laid open their stage-play. He seems to me (to have done this) in exceeding wrath: just as it might be, if a person being in uttermost peril, should be exposed by some pitiful creature, and wish to vent all his rage upon him. *"Jesus I know, and Paul I know."* For, that there may not seem to be any slight put upon the Name of Jesus, (the demon) first confesses (Him), and then has permission given him. For, to show that it was not any weakness of the Name, but all owing to the imposture of those men, why did not the same take place in the case of Paul? *"They fled out of that house naked and wounded:"* he sorely battered their heads, perhaps rent their garments. (e) *"And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus, and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many of them that had believed came confessing and making known their practices."* (v. 17, 18.) For since they had got to possess such power as, by means of the demons, to do such things, well might this be the consequence. *"And many of them that practised curious arts, brought their books together, and burnt them in the presence of all men;"*— having seen that there was no more use of them now that the demons themselves do these things— *"and reckoned up the price of them, and found the amount fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."* (v. 19, 20.) (i) *"And"* (so) *"he disputed,"* in the school of one Tyrannus for two years: where were believers, and believers exceedingly (advanced in the faith). Moreover (Paul) writes (to them) as to great men.

(Recapitulation.) (b) *"And having entered in to the synagogue,"* etc. [Acts 19:8] But why [ἐ] [παρησιάζετο]? It means, he was ready to confront dangers, and disputed more openly, not veiling the doctrines. (a) *"But when some were hardened, and spoke evil of the way, having departed from them, he separated the disciples."* [Acts 19:9] He put a stop, it means,

to their evil-speaking: he did not wish to kindle their envy, nor to bring them into more contention. (c) Hence let us also learn not to put ourselves in the way of evil-speaking men, but to depart from them: he did not speak evil, when himself evil spoken of. *"He disputed daily,"* and by this gained the many, that, being evil intreated and (evil) spoken of, he did not (utterly) break away from them, and keep aloof. (e) The evil-speakers are defeated. They calumniated the doctrine itself; (therefore) so as neither to rouse the disciples to wrath, nor * * them, he withdrew, showing that everywhere alike they repel salvation from them. Here now he does not even apologize, seeing that the Gentiles everywhere have believed. *"In the school of one Tyrannus:"* it was not that he sought the place, but without more ado where there was a school (there he discoursed). (d) And look, no sooner is the trial from those without over, than this from the demons begins. Mark the infatuated Jewish hardness. Having seen his garments working miracles, they paid no heed to it. What could be greater than this? But, on the contrary, it resulted in just the opposite effect. If any of the heathens believe not, having seen the (very) dust working these effects, let him believe. (f) Wonderful, how great the power of them that have believed! Both Simon for the sake of merchandise sought the grace of the Spirit, and these for this object did this. What hardness (of heart)! Why does not Paul rebuke them? It would have looked like envy, therefore it is so ordered. This same took place in the case of Christ [Mark 9:36]: but then the person is not hindered, for it was the beginning of the new state of things: since Judas also is not hindered, whereas Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead: and many Jews even for opposing (Christ) suffered nothing, while Elymas was blinded. *"For I am not come,"* says Christ, *"to judge the world, but that the world might be saved."* [John 3:17] *"And seven sons,"* etc. [Acts 19:14] See the villany of the men! They still continued to be Jews, while wishing to make

a gain of that Name. All that they did was for glory and profit. (g) Look, in every case, how men are converted not so much in consequence of good things as of things fearful. In the case of Sapphira, fear fell upon the Church, and men dared not join themselves to them: here they received handkerchiefs and aprons, and were healed: and after this, then they came confessing their sins. (Hereby) the power of the demons is shown to be a great one, when it is against unbelievers. For why did he not say, "*Who is Jesus?*" He was afraid, lest he also should suffer punishment; but, that it might be permitted him to take revenge upon those who mocked him, he did this; "*Jesus,*" says he, "*I know,*" etc. He was in dread of Paul. For why did not those wretched men say to him, We believe? How much more splendid an appearance they would have made had they said this, that is, if they had claimed Him as their Master? But instead of that, they spoke even those senseless words, "*By Jesus, whom Paul preaches.*" Do you mark the forbearance (of the writer), how he writes history and does not call names? This makes the Apostles admirable. "*And the evil spirit,*" etc. [Acts 19:15], for what had happened at Philippi [Acts 16:16] had given a lesson to these also. He mentions the name, and the number, thereby giving to the persons then living a credible proof of what he wrote. And why were they itinerant? For the sake of merchandise: not assuredly to bear tidings of the word; how should that be their object? And how ran they anon, preaching by the things they suffered? "*Insomuch,*" it says, "*that all that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord.*" Ought not this to have converted all? And marvel not, for nothing convinces malice. But come now, let us look at the affair of the exorcists, with what an evil disposition (they acted). Why the same was not done in the case of Christ, is an inquiry for another time, and not for the present, save that this also was well and usefully ordered. It seems to me that they did this also in mockery, and that in consequence of this

(punishment), none dared even at random to name that Name. Why did this put them upon confession? Because this was a most mighty argument of God's omniscience (therefore), before they should be exposed by the demons, they accused themselves, fearing lest they should suffer the same things. For when the demons their helpers are their accusers, what hope is there thenceforth, save the confession by deeds?

But see, I pray you, after such signs had been wrought, what evils within a short space ensue. Such is human nature: it soon forgets. Or, do ye not remember what has been the case among ourselves? Did not God last year shake our whole city? Did not all run to baptism? Did not whoremongers and effeminate and corrupt persons leave their dwellings, and the places where they spent their time, and change and become religious? But three days passed, and they returned again to their own proper wickedness. And whence is this? From the excessive laziness. And what marvel if, when the things have passed away (this be the case), seeing that, the images lasting perpetually, the result is such? The fate of Sodom—say, does it not still last (in its effects)? Well, did the dwellers beside it become any the better? And what say you to the son of Noah? Was he not such (as he is represented), did he not see with his eyes so vast a desolation, and yet was wicked? Then let us not marvel how, when such things had been done, these Jews (at Ephesus) believe not, when we see that belief itself often comes round for them into its opposite, into malignity; as, for instance, when they say that He has a devil, He, the Son of God! Do you not see these things even now, and how men are many of them like serpents, both faithless and thankless, men who, viper-like, when they have enjoyed benefits and have been warmed by some, then they sting their benefactors? This we have said, lest any should marvel, how, such signs having been wrought, they were not all converted. For behold, in our own times

happened those (miracles) relating to the martyr Babylas, those relating to Jerusalem, those relating to the destruction of the temples, and not all were converted. Why need I speak of ancient things? I have told you what happened last year; and none gave heed to it, but again little by little they fell off and sunk back. The heaven stands perpetually crying aloud that it has a Master, and that it is the work of an Artificer, all this that we see—I mean the world—and yet some say that it is not so. What happened to that Theodorus last year—whom did it not startle? And yet nothing came of it, but having for a season become religious, they returned to the point from which they had started in their attempt to be religious. So it was with the Jews. This is what the Prophet said of them: *"When He slew them, then they sought Him, and turned early unto God."* [Psalm 78:34] And what need to speak of those things that are common to all? How many have fallen into diseases, how many have promised, if raised up, to work so great a change, and yet they have again become the same as ever! This, if nothing else, shows that we have natural free-will—our changing all at once. Were evil natural, this would not be: things that are natural and necessary, we cannot change from. *"And yet,"* you will say, *"we do change from them. For do we not see some, who have the natural faculty to see, but are blinded by fear?"* (True—) because this also is natural: * * if a different (necessity of) nature come not also into operation: (thus) it is natural to us, that being terrified we do not see; it is natural to us that when a greater fear supervenes, the other gives way. *"What then,"* you will say, *"if right-mindedness be indeed according to nature, but fear having overpowered it cast it out?"* What then if I shall show that some even then are not brought to a right mind, but even in these fears are reckless? Is this natural? Shall I speak of ancient things? Well then, of recent? How many in the midst of those fears continued laughing, mocking, and experienced nothing of the sort? Did not Pharaoh

change immediately, and (as quickly) run back to his former wickedness? But here, as if (the demons) knew Him not, they (the exorcists) added, *"Whom Paul preaches,"* whereas they ought to have said, *"the Saviour of the world."* *"Him that rose again."* By this they show that they do know, but they did not choose to confess His glory. Wherefore the demon exposes them, leaping upon them, and saying, *"Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"* So that not you are believers, but you abuse that Name when you say this. Therefore the Temple is desolate, the implement easy to be overcome. So that you are not preachers; mine, says he, you are. Great was the wrath of the demon. The Apostles had power to do this to them, but they did it not as yet. For they that had power over the demons that did these things to them, much more had power over the men themselves. Mark how their forbearance is shown, in that they whom they repulsed do these things, while the demons whom they courted do the contrary. *"Jesus,"* says he, *"I know."* Be ashamed, you that are ignorant (of Him). *"And Paul I know."* Well said, *"Think not that it is because I despise them, that I do these things."* Great was the fear of the demon. And why without these words did he not rend their garments? For so he would both have sated his wrath, and established the delusion. He feared as I said, the unapproachable force, and would not have had such power had he not said this. But observe how we find the demons everywhere more right minded (than the Jews), not daring to contradict nor accuse the Apostles, or Christ. There they say, *"We know You who You are"* [Matthew 8:29]; and, *"Why are You come hither before the time to torment us"* [Mark 1:24]; and again, *"I know You who You are, the Son of God."* And here, *"These men are servants of the most high God"* [Acts 16:17]; and again, *"Jesus I know, and Paul I know."* For they exceedingly feared and trembled before those holy persons. Perhaps some one of you, hearing of these things, wishes he were possessed of this power,

so that the demons should not be able to look him in the face, and accounts those saints happy for this, that they had such power. But let him hear Christ saying, "*Rejoice not because the demons are subject unto you*" [Luke 10:20], because He knew that all men rejoice most in this, through vainglory. For if you seek that which pleases God, and that which is for the common good, there is another, a greater way. It is not so great to free from a demon as it is to rescue from sin. A demon hinders not to attain unto the kingdom of Heaven, nay, even cooperates, unwillingly indeed, but nevertheless cooperates by making him that has the demon more sober-minded; but sin casts a man out.

But it is likely some man will say, "*God forbid it should ever befall me to be sobered in this way!*" Nor do I wish it for you, but a very different way, that you should do all from love of Christ: if however, which God forbid, it should so befall you, then even on this behalf I would comfort you. If then the demon does not cast out (from the kingdom of heaven), but sin does cast out, to free a man from sin is greater beneficence.

From this let us study to free our neighbors, and before our neighbors, our own selves. Let us see to it, lest we have a demon: let us examine ourselves strictly. More grievous than a demon is sin, for the demon makes men humble. See ye not those possessed with a demon, when they have recovered from the attack, how downcast they are, of how sad a countenance, how fraught with shame their faces are, how they have not even courage to look one in the face? See the strange inconsistency! While those are ashamed on account of the things they suffer, we are not ashamed on account of the things we do; while they are abashed being wronged, we are not abashed when doing wrong: and yet their condition is not a subject for shame, but for pity and tenderness and indulgence: nay, great is the admiration it calls for, and many the praises, when struggling against such a

spirit, they bear all thankfully: whereas our condition in very deed is a subject for ridicule, for shame, for accusation, for correction, for punishment, for the worst of evils, for hell-fire; calling for no compassion whatever. Do you see, that worse than a demon is sin? And those indeed, from the ills they suffer, reap a double profit: first, their being sobered and brought to more self-control; then, that having suffered here the chastisement of their own sins, they depart hence to their Master, purified. For indeed upon this we have often discoursed to you, that those who are punished here, if they bear it thankfully, may naturally be supposed to put away thereby many of their sins. Whereas from sins the mischief resulting is twofold; first, that we offend; secondly, that we become worse. Attend to what I say. Not this is the only injury we get from sin, that we commit a sin: but another and a worse is this, that our soul receives a habit. Just as it is in the case of the body— for it will be more plain when put in the form of an example— as he who has taken a fever has got harm not only in this respect, that he is sick, but also that after the sickness he has become weaker, even though he may return to health after a long disease: just so in the case of sin, though we may regain health, yet we are far from having the strength we need. For take the case of one who has been insolently abusive: does he not suffer his deserts for his abusive conduct? Aye, but there is another and a worse thing to rue (which is), that his soul has become more insensible to shame. For from each several sin that is committed, even after the sin has been done and has ceased, there remains a kind of venom instilled into our souls. Do you not hear people saying, when they are recovered from sickness, "*I dare not drink water now?*" And yet the man has regained his health: aye, but the disease has done him this harm also. And whereas those (possessed) persons, albeit suffering ill, are thankful, we, when faring well, blaspheme God, and think ourselves very ill used: for

you will find more persons behaving thus in health and wealth than in poverty and sickness. For there stands the demon over (the possessed), like a very hangman, fierce, uttering many (menaces), even as a schoolmaster brandishing the lash, and not suffering them to give way to any laxity. And suppose that some are not at all brought to a sober mind, neither are these liable to punishment; no small thing this: even as fools, even as madmen and children, are not called to account, so neither are these: since for things that are done in a state of unconsciousness, none can be so merciless as to call the doers to account. Why then, in a far worse condition than those who are possessed of evil sprits are we that sin. We do not, indeed, foam at the mouth, nor distort our eyes, or throw about our hands convulsively; but as for this, would that we did it in our body and not in our soul! Will you that I show you a soul, foaming, filthy, and a distortion of the mind's eyes? Think of those who are in a passion and drunken with rage; can any form be filthier than the words they discharge? In very deed it is like a sputtering of noisome slaver. And just as the possessed know none of those who are present, so neither do these. Their understanding darkened, their eyes distorted, they see not who is friend, who foe, who worthy of respect, who contemptible, but they see all alike without a difference. And then, do you not see them, how they tremble, just like those others? But they do not fall to the ground, say you? True, but their soul lies on the ground and falls there in convulsions: since had it stood upright, it would not have come into the condition it is in. Or think you not that it betokens a soul abjectly sprawling and lost to all self-possession, the things men can do and say when drunken with rage? There is also another form of madness worse than this. What may this be? When men cannot so much as suffer themselves to vent their anger, but instead of that nourish within their own bosoms, to their own proper hurt, as it were a very hangman with his lash, the

rancorous remembrance of wrongs. For it is a bane to themselves first, the malice that they bear. To say nothing of the things to come, what torture, think you, must that man undergo in the scourging of his soul, as day by day he looks how he may avenge himself on his enemy? He chastises himself first, and suffers punishment, swelling (with suppressed passion), fighting against himself, setting himself on fire. For needs must the fire be always burning within you: while raising the fever to such a height, and not suffering it to wane, you think you are inflicting some evil on the other, whereas you are wasting yourself, ever bearing about with you a flame which is always at its height, and not letting your soul have rest, but evermore being in a state of fury, and having your thoughts in a turmoil and tempest. What is more grievous than this madness, to be always smarting with pain, and ever swelling and inflamed? For such are the souls of the resentful: when they see him on whom they wish to be revenged, straightway it is as if a blow were struck them: if they hear his voice, they cower and tremble: if they be on their bed, they picture to themselves numberless revenges, hanging, torturing that enemy of theirs: and if, beside all this, they see him also to be in renown, O! The misery they suffer! Forgive him the offense, and free yourself from the torment. Why continue always in a state of punishment, that you may once punish him, and take your revenge? Why establish for yourself a hectic disease? Why, when your wrath would fain depart from you, do you keep it back? Let it not remain until the evening, says Paul. [Ephesians 4:26] For like some eating rot or moth, even so does it gnaw through the very root of our understanding. Why shut up a beast within your bowels? Better a serpent or an adder to lie within your heart, than anger and resentment: for those indeed would soon have done with us, but this remains forever fixing in us its fangs, instilling its poison, letting loose upon us an invading host of bitter thoughts. *"That*

he should laugh me to scorn," say you, *"that he should despise me!"* O wretched, miserable man, would you not be ridiculed by your fellow-servant, and would you be hated by your Master? Would you not be despised by your fellow-servant, and do you despise your Master?

To be despised by him, is it more than you can bear, but do you not think that God is indignant, because you ridicule Him, because you despise Him, when you will not do as He bids you? But that your enemy will not even ridicule you, is manifest from hence (that), whereas if you follow up the revenge, great is the ridicule, great the contempt, for this is a mark of a little mind; on the contrary, if you forgive him, great is the admiration, for this is a mark of greatness of soul. But you will say, he knows not this. Let God know it, that you may have the greater reward. For He says, *"Lend to those of whom you hope not to receive."* [Luke 6:34] So let us also do good to those who do not even perceive that one is doing them good, that they may not, by returning to us praise or any other thing, lessen our reward. For when we receive nothing from men, then we shall receive greater things from God. But what is more worthy of ridicule, what more paltry, than a soul which is always in anger, and wishing to take revenge? It is womanly, this disposition, it is babyish. For as the babes are angry even with lifeless things, and unless the mother beats the ground, they will not let go their anger: so do these persons wish to revenge themselves on those who have aggrieved them. Why then, it is they who are worthy of ridicule: for to be overcome by passion, is the mark of a childish understanding, but to overcome it, is a sign of manliness. Why then, not we are the objects of ridicule, when we keep our temper, but they. It is not this that makes men contemptible— not to be conquered by passion: what makes them contemptible is this— to be so afraid of ridicule from without, as on this account to choose to subject one's self to one's besetting passion, and to

offend God, and take revenge upon one's self. These things are indeed worthy of ridicule. Let us flee them. Let a man say, that having done us numberless ills, he has suffered nothing in return: let him say that he might again frantically assault us, and have nothing to fear. Why, in no other (better) way could he have proclaimed our virtue; no other words would he have sought, if he had wished to praise us, than those which he seems to say in abuse. Would that all men said these things of me: *"he is a poor tame creature; all men heap insults on him, but he bears it: all men trample upon him, but he does not avenge himself."* Would that they added, *"neither, if he should wish to do so, can he:"* that so I might have praise from God, and not from men. Let him say, that it is for want of spirit that we do not avenge ourselves. This does us no hurt, when God knows (all): it does but cause our treasure to be in greater safety. If we are to have regard to them, we shall fall away from everything. Let us not look to what they say, but to what becomes us. But, says he, *"Let no man ridicule me,"* and some make a boast of this. O! What folly! *"No man,"* says he, *"having injured me, has ridiculed me:"* that is, *"I had my revenge."* And yet for this you deserve to be ridiculed, that you took revenge. Whence came these words among us—being, as they are, a disgrace to us and a pest, an overthrow of our own proper life and of our discipline? It is in downright opposition to God that thou (so) speakest. The very thing which makes you equal to God—the not avenging yourself—this you think a subject for ridicule! Are not we for these things worthy to be laughed at, both by ourselves, and by the heathen, when we thus speak against God? I wish to tell you a story of a thing that happened in the old times (which they tell) not on the subject of anger, but of money. A man had an estate in which there was a hidden treasure, unknown to the owner: this piece of ground he sold. The buyer, when digging it for the purpose of planting and cultivation, found the treasure

therein deposited, and came and wanted to oblige the seller to receive the treasure, urging that he had bought a piece of ground, not a treasure. The seller on his part repudiated the gift, saying, "*The piece of ground (is not mine), I have sold it, and I have no concern whatever with this (treasure).*" So they fell to altercation about it, the one wishing to give it, the other standing out against receiving it. So chancing upon some third person, they argued the matter before him, and said to him, "*To whom ought the treasure to be assigned?*" The man could not settle that question; he said, however, that he would put an end to their dispute— he would (if they pleased) be master of it himself. So he received the treasure, which they willingly gave up to him; and in the sequel got into troubles without end, and learned by actual experience that they had done well to have nothing to do with it. So ought it be done likewise with regard to anger; both ourselves ought to be emulous not to take revenge, and those who have aggrieved us, emulous to give satisfaction. But perhaps these things also seem to be matter of ridicule: for when that madness is widely prevalent among men, those who keep their temper are laughed at, and among many madmen he who is not a madman seems to be mad. Wherefore I beseech you that we may recover (from this malady), and come to our senses, that becoming pure from this pernicious passion, we may be enabled to attain unto the kingdom of heaven, through the grace and mercy of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 42 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XIX. 21, 23

"After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. And the same time there arose no small stir about the Way."

He sends Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, but himself remains at Ephesus. Having made a long enough stay in that city, he wishes to remove elsewhere again. But how is it, that having from the first chosen to depart into Syria, he turns back to Macedonia? *"He purposed,"* it says, *"in the Spirit,"* showing that all (that he did) was done not of his own power. Now he prophesies, saying, *"I must also see Rome:"* perhaps to comfort them with the consideration of his not remaining at a distance, but coming nearer to them again, and to arouse the minds of the disciples by the prophecy. At this point, I suppose, it was that he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians from Ephesus, saying, *"I would not have you ignorant of the trouble which came to us in Asia."* [2 Corinthians 1:8] For since he had promised to go to Corinth, he excuses himself on the score of having loitered, and mentions the trial relating the affair of Demetrius. *"There arose no small stir about the Way."* Do you see the renown (acquired)? They contradicted, it says: (then) came miracles, twofold: (then) again, danger: such is the way the threads alternate throughout the whole texture (of the history). *"For a*

certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver temples of Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen." [Acts 19:24]. "Which made," it says, "silver temples of Diana." And how is it possible that temples could be made of silver? Perhaps as small boxes ([κιβώρια].) Great was the honor paid to this (Diana) in Ephesus; since, when (*Hom. in Eph. Prol.*) their temple was burnt it so grieved them, that they forbade even the name of the incendiary ever to be mentioned. See how, wherever there is idolatry, in every case we find money at the bottom of it. Both in the former instance it was for money, and in the case of this man, for money. [Acts 19:13] It was not for their religion, because they thought that in danger; no, it was for their lucrative craft, that it would have nothing to work upon. Observe the maliciousness of the man. He was wealthy himself, and to him indeed it was no such great loss; but to them the loss was great, since they were poor, and subsisted on their daily earnings. Nevertheless, these men say nothing, but only he. And observe: "*Whom having collected, and the workmen of like occupation,*" having themselves common cause with him, "*he said, Sirs, you know that by this craft we have our wealth*" [Acts 19:25]; then he brought the danger home to them, that we are in danger of falling from this our craft into starvation. "*Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught; but also, that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*" [Acts 19:26-28] And yet the very things he spoke were enough to bring them to true religion: but being poor senseless creatures, this is the part they act. For if this (Paul

being) man is strong enough to turn away all, and the worship of the gods is in jeopardy, one ought to reflect, how great must this man's God be, and that he will much more give you those things, for which you are afraid. Already (at the outset) he has secured a hold upon their minds by saying, *"This Paul has turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods, which are made with men's hands."* See what it is that the heathen are so indignant at; because he said that *"they which be made of men are no gods."* Throughout, he drives his speech at their craft. Then that which most grieved them he brings in afterwards. But, with the other gods, he would say, we have no concern, but that *"the temple also of the great goddess Diana is in danger to be destroyed."* Then, lest he should seem to say this for the sake of lucre, see what he adds: *"Whom the whole world worships."* Observe how he showed Paul's power to be the greater, proving all (their gods) to be wretched and miserable creatures, since a mere man, who was driven about, a mere tentmaker, had so much power. Observe the testimonies borne to the Apostles by their enemies, that they overthrew their worship. There (at Lystra) they brought *"garlands and oxen."* [Acts 14:13] Here he says, *"This our craft is in danger to be set at naught.— You have filled (all) everywhere with your doctrine."* [Acts 5:28] So said the Jews also with regard to Christ: *"You see how the world is going after Him"* [John 12:19]; and, *"The Romans shall come and take away our city."* [John 11:48]. And again on another occasion, *"These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also."* [Acts 17:6].— *"And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath."* Upon what was that wrath called forth? On hearing about Diana, and about their source of gain. *"And cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and rushed with one accord into the theatre."* [Acts 19:29]. Such is the way with vulgar minds, any trivial occasion shall hurry them away and inflame their

passions. Therefore it behooves to do (things) with (strict) examination. But see how contemptible they were, to be so exposed to all (excitements)!

"Having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they dragged them:" (here) again recklessly, just as did the Jews in the case of Jason; and everywhere they set upon them. *"And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not,"* [Acts 19:30] so far were they from all display and love of glory. *"And certain of the Asiarchs, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre"* [Acts 19:31] to a disorderly populace and tumult. And Paul complies, for he was not vainglorious, nor ambitious. *"Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused."* Such is the nature of the multitude: it recklessly follows, like fire when it has fallen upon fuel; and the more part knew not wherefore they had come together. [Acts 19:32] *"And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward."* It was the Jews that thrust him forward; but as providence ordered it, this man did not speak. *"And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people."* [Acts 19:33] *"But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians."* [Acts 19:34] A childish understanding indeed! As if they were afraid, lest their worship should be extinguished, they shouted without intermission. For two years had Paul abode there, and see how many heathen there were still! *"And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, You men of Ephesus, what man is there that knows not how that the city of the Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?"* [Acts 19:35] As if the thing were not palpable. With this saying first he extinguished their wrath. *"And of the Diopetes."* There was another

sacred object ([i] [ἐρὸν]) that was so called. Either he means the piece of burnt earth or her image. This (is) a lie. *"Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, you ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For you have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess."* (v. 36, 37.) All this however he says to the people; but in order that those (workmen) also might become more reasonable, he says: *"Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsman which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. But if you enquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause, for which (matter) we shall not be able to give an account for this concourse."* [Acts 19:38-40] *"A lawful assembly,"* he says, for there were three assemblies according to law in each month; but this one was contrary to law. Then he terrified them also by saying, *"We are in danger to be called to account"* for sedition. But let us look again at the things said.

(Recapitulation.) *"After these things were ended,"* it says, *"Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem,"* saying, *"After I have been there, I must also see Rome."* [Acts 19:21] He no longer speaks here after the manner of a man, or, He purposed to pass through those regions, without tarrying longer. Wherefore does he send away Timothy and Erastus? Of this I suppose he says, *"Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone. He sent away,"* it says, *"two of those who ministered to him"* [1 Thessalonians 3:1], both to announce his coming, and to make them more eager. *"But he himself tarried awhile in Asia."* [Acts 19:22] Most of all does he pass his time in Asia; and with reason: there, namely, was the

tyranny, of the philosophers. (Afterwards) also he came and discoursed to them again. *"And the same time"* etc. [Acts 19:23], for indeed the superstition was excessive. (a) *"You both see and hear,"* so palpable was the result that was taking place— *"that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul by persuading has turned away,"* not by violence: this is the way to persuade a city. Then, what touched them closely, *"that they be no gods which are made with hands."* [Acts 19:26] He overturns, says he, our craft: (e) *"From this work we have our wealth. Hath persuaded."* How did he persuade— he, a man of mean consideration? How prevail over so great a force of habit? By doing what— by saying what? It is not for a Paul (to effect this), it is not for a man. Even this is enough, that he said, *"They are no gods."* Now if the impiety (of the heathen religions) was so easy to detect, it ought to have been condemned long ago: if it was strong, it ought not to have been overthrown so quickly. (b) For, lest they should consider within themselves (how strange), that a human being should have such power as this, and if a human being has power to effect such things, why then one ought to be persuaded by that man, he adds: (f) *"not only is this our craft in danger to be set at naught, but also,"* as if forsooth alleging a greater consideration, *"the temple of the great goddess Diana,"* etc. (c) *"whom all Asia and the world worships."* [Acts 19:27] (g) *"And when they heard, they were filled with wrath, and shouted, Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"* [Acts 19:28] For each city had its proper gods. (d) They thought to make their voice a barrier against the Divine Spirit. Children indeed, these Greeks! (h) And their feeling was as if by their voice they could reinstate the worship of her, and undo what had taken place! *"And the whole city,"* etc. [Acts 19:29] See a disorderly multitude! *"And when Paul,"* etc. [Acts 19:30] Paul then wished to enter in that he might harangue them: for he took his persecutions as occasions for teaching: *"but*

the disciples suffered him not." Mark, how great forethought we always find them taking for him. At the very first they brought him out that they might not (in his person) receive a mortal blow; and yet they had heard him say, "*I must also see Rome.*" But it was providential that he so predicts beforehand, that they might not be confounded at the event. But they would not that he should even suffer any evil. "*And certain of the Asiarchs besought him that he would not enter into the theatre.*" Knowing his eagerness, they "*besought him:*" so much did all the believers love him.— "*And they drew Alexander,*" etc. [Acts 19:33] This Alexander, why did he wish to plead? Was he accused? No, but it was to find an opportunity, and overturn the whole matter, and inflame the anger of the people. "*But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*" [Acts 19:34] Do you mark the inordinate rage? Well, and with rebuke does the town clerk say, "*What man is there that knows not how that the city of the Ephesians—*" [Acts 19:35] (coming to the point) which they were frightened about. Is it this, says he, that you do not worship her? And he does not say, "*That knows not*" Diana, but, "*our city,*" that it always worshipped her. "*Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against.*" [Acts 19:36] Why then do ye make a question about them, as if these things were not plain? (b) Then he quietly chides them, showing that they had come together without reason. "*And to do nothing rashly,*" he says. Showing that they had acted rashly. (a) "*For you have brought hither,*" etc. [Acts 19:37] They wanted to make religion the pretext for what concerned their own money-making: (c) and it was not right on account of private charges to hold a public assembly. For he put them to a nonplus, and left them not a word to say for themselves. "*There being no cause,*" he says, "*for this concourse, for which*" (matter) "*we shall not be able to give the account.*" [Acts 19:40] See how prudently, how cleverly, the

unbelievers (act). Thus he extinguished their wrath. For as it is easily kindled, so also is it easily extinguished. *"And when he had thus spoken,"* it says, *"he dismissed the assembly."* [Acts 19:41]

Do you see how God permits trials, and by them stirs up and awakens the disciples, and makes them more energetic? Then let us not sink down under trials: for He Himself will *"also make the way of escape, that we may be able to bear them."* [1 Corinthians 10:13] Nothing so makes friends, and rivets them so firmly, as affliction: nothing so fastens and compacts the souls of believers: nothing is so seasonable for us teachers in order that the things said by us may be heard. For the hearer when he is in ease is listless and indolent, and seems to suffer annoyance from the speaker: but when he is in affliction and distress, he falls into a great longing for the hearing. For when distressed in his soul, he seeks on all sides to find comfort for his affliction: and the preaching brings no small comfort. *"What then,"* you will say, *"of the Jews? How was it that in consequence of their weakheartedness, they did not hear?"* Why, they were Jews, those ever weak and miserable creatures: and besides, the affliction in their case was great, but we speak of affliction in moderation. For observe: they expected to be freed from the evils that encompassed them, and they fell into numberless greater evils: now this is no common distress to the soul. Afflictions cut us off from the sympathy we have for the present world, as appears in this, that we wish for death immediately, and cease to be loving of the body: which very thing is the greatest part of wisdom, to have no hankering, no ties to the present life. The soul which is afflicted does not wish to be concerned about many things: repose and stillness are all it desired, content for its part to have done with the things present, even though there be nothing else to follow. As the body when wearied and distressed does not wish to indulge in amours, or gormandizing, but only to

repose and lie down in quiet; so the soul, harassed by numberless evils, is urgent to be at rest and quiet. The soul which is at ease is (apt to be) fluttered, alarmed, unsettled: whereas in this there is no vacuity, no running to waste: and the one is more manly, the other more childish; the one has more gravity, in the other more levity. And as some light substance, when it falls upon deep water, is tossed to and fro, just so is the soul when it falls into great rejoicing. Moreover, that our greatest faults arise out of overmuch pleasure, any one may see. Come, if you will, let us represent to ourselves two houses, the one where people are marrying, the other where they are mourning: let us enter in imagination into each: let us see which is better than the other. Why, that of the mourner will be found full of seriousness ([φιλοσοφίας]); that of the marrying person, full of indecency. For look, (here are) shameful words, unrestrained laughter, more unrestrained motions, both dress and gait full of indecency, words fraught with mere nonsense and foolery: in short, all is ridicule there, all ridiculous. I do not say the marriage is this; God forbid; but the accompaniments of the marriage. Then nature is beside itself in excess of riot. Instead of human beings, those present become brute creatures, some neighing like horses, others kicking like asses: such utter license, such dissolute unrestraint: nothing serious, nothing noble: (it is) the devil's pomp, cymbals, and pipes, and songs teeming with fornication and adultery. But not so in that house where there is mourning; all is well-ordered there: such silence, such repose, such composure; nothing disorderly, nothing extravagant: and if any one does speak, every word he utters is fraught with true philosophy: and then the wonderful circumstance is, that at such times not men only, but even servants and women speak like philosophers— for such is the nature of sorrow— and while they seem to be consoling the mourner, they in fact utter numberless truths full of sound philosophy. Prayers are there to begin

with, that the affliction may stop there, and go no further: many a one comforting the sufferer, and recitals without number of the many who have the like cause for mourning. "*For what is man?*" (they ask) (and thereupon) a serious examination of our nature— "*aye, then, what is man!*" (and upon this) an impeachment of the life (present) and its worthlessness, a reminding (one another) of things to come, of the Judgment. (So from both these scenes) each returns home: from the wedding, grieved, because he himself is not in the enjoyment of the like good fortune; from the mourning, light-hearted, because he has not himself undergone the like affliction, and having all his inward fever quenched. But what will you? Shall we take for another contrast the prisons and the theatres? For the one is a place of suffering, the other of pleasure. Let us again examine. In the former there is seriousness of mind; for where there is sadness, there must needs be seriousness. He who aforesaid was rich, and inflated with his own importance, now will even suffer any common person to converse with him, fear and sorrow, like some mightier fire, having fallen on his soul, and softening down his harshness: then he becomes humble, then of a sad countenance, then he feels the changes of life, then he bears up manfully against everything. But in a theatre all is the reverse of this— laughter, ribaldry, devil's pomp, dissoluteness, waste of time, useless spending of days, planning for extravagant lust, adultery made a study of, practical training to fornication, schooling in intemperance, encouragement to filthiness, matter for laughter, patterns for the practice of indecency. Not so the prison: there you will find humbleness of mind, exhortation, incentive to seriousness, contempt of worldly things; (these) are all trodden under foot and spurned and, fear stands over (the man there), as a schoolmaster over a child, controlling him to all his duties. But if you will, let us examine in a different way. I should like you to meet a man on his return from a theatre,

and another coming out of prison; and while you would see the soul of the one fluttered, perturbed, actually tied and bound, that of the other you would see enlarged, set free, buoyant as on wings. For the one returns from the theatre, enfettered by the sight of the women there, bearing about chains harder than any iron, the scenes, the words, the gestures, that he saw there. But the other on his return from the prison, released from all (bounds), will no longer think that he suffers any evil as comparing his own case with that of (those) others. (To think) that he is not in bonds will make him thankful ever after; he will despise human affairs, as seeing so many rich men there in calamity, men (once) having power to do many and great things, and now lying bound there: and if he should suffer anything unjustly, he will bear up against this also; for of this too there were many examples there: he will be led to reflect upon the Judgment to come and will shudder, seeing here (in the earthly prison) how it will be there. For as it is with one here shut up in prison, so in that world also before the Judgment, before the Day that is to come. Towards wife, children, and servants, he will be more gentle.

Not so he that comes from the theatre: he will look upon his wife with more dislike, he will be peevish with his servants, bitter towards his children, and savage towards all. Great are the evils theatres cause to cities, great indeed, and we do not even know that they are great. Shall we examine other scenes of laughter also, I mean the feasts, with their parasites, their flatterers, and abundance of luxury, and (compare with them) places where are the halt and blind? As before, in the former is drunkenness, luxury, and dissoluteness, in the latter the reverse.— See also with regard to the body, when it is hot-blooded, when it is in good case, it undergoes the quickest change to sickness: not so, when it has been kept low. Then let me make my meaning clearer to you:— let there be a body having plenty of blood, plenty of flesh, plump with good living: this body

will be apt even from any chance food to engender a fever, if it be simply idle. But let there be another, struggling rather with hunger and hardship: this is not easily overcome, not easily wrestled down by disease. Blood, though it may be healthy in us, does often by its very quantity engender disease: but if it be small in quantity, even though it be not healthy, it can be easily worked off. So too in the case of the soul, that which leads an easy, luxurious life, has its impulses quickly swayed to sin: for such a soul is next neighbor to folly, to pleasure, to vainglory also, and envy, and plottings, and slanderings. Behold this great city of ours, what a size it is! Whence arise the evils? Is it not from those who are rich? Is it not from those who are in enjoyment? Who are they that *"drag"* men *"before the tribunals?"* Who, that dissipate properties? Those who are wretched and outcasts, or those who are inflated with consequence, and in enjoyment? It is not possible that any evil can happen from a soul that is afflicted. [James 2:6] Paul knew the gain of this: therefore he says, *"Tribulation works patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope makes not ashamed."* [Romans 5:3] Then let us not sink in our afflictions, but in all things give thanks, that so we may get great gain, that we may be well-pleasing to God, who permits afflictions. A great good is affliction: and we learn this from our own children: for without affliction (a boy) would learn nothing useful. But we, more than they, need affliction. For if there, when the passions (as yet) are quiet, (chastisement) benefits them, how much more us, especially possessed as we are by so many! Nay, we behoove rather to have schoolmasters than they: since the faults of children cannot be great, but ours are exceeding great. Our schoolmaster is affliction. Let us then not draw it down willingly upon ourselves, but when it has come let us bear it bravely, being, as it is, always the cause of numberless good things; that so we may both obtain grace from God, and the good things which are laid up

for them that love Him, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father,
together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and evermore,
world without end. Amen.

Homily 43 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XX. 1

"And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia."

There was need of much comforting after that uproar. Accordingly, having done this, he goes into Macedonia, and then into Greece. For, it says, *"when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia."* (v. 2, 3.) Again he is persecuted by the Jews, and goes into Macedonia. *"And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas."* (v. 4, 5.) But how does he call Timothy a man *"of Thessalonica?"* This is not his meaning, but, *"Of Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus and Gaius: of Derbe, Timothy,"* etc., these, he says, went before him to Troas, preparing the way for him. *"And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days."* [Acts 20:6] For it seems to me that he made a point of keeping the feasts in the large cities. *"From Philippi,"* where the affair of the prison had taken place. This was his third coming into Macedonia, and it is a high testimony that he bears to the Philippians, which is the reason why he makes some stay there. *"And upon the day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul*

preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." [Acts 20:7] It was then the (season between Easter and) Pentecost. See how everything was subordinate to the preaching. It was also, it says, the Lord's day. Not even during night-time was he silent, nay he discoursed the rather then, because of stillness. Mark how he both made a long discourse, and beyond the time of supper itself. But the Devil disturbed the feast— not that he prevailed, however— by plunging the hearer in sleep, and causing him to fall down. "*And,*" it says, "*there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore had come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.*" [Acts 20:8-12] But observe, I pray you, the theatre, how crowded it was: and the miracle, what it was. "*He was sitting in a window,*" at dead of night. Such was their eagerness to hear him! Let us take shame to ourselves! "*Aye, but a Paul*" say you, "*was discoursing then.*" Yes, and Paul discourses now, or rather not Paul, either then or now, but Christ, and yet none cares to hear. No window in the case now, no importunity of hunger, or sleep, and yet we do not care to hear: no crowding in a narrow space here, nor any other such comfort. And the wonderful circumstance is, that though he was a youth, he was not listless and indifferent; and though (he felt himself) weighed down by sleep, he did not go away, nor yet fear the danger of falling down. It was not from listlessness that he slumbered, but from necessity of nature. But observe, I beseech you, so fervent was their

zeal, that they even assembled in a third loft: for they had not a Church yet. *"Trouble not yourselves,"* he says. He said not, *"He shall come to life again, for I will raise him up:"* but mark the unassuming way in which he comforts them: *"for his life,"* says he, *"is in him. When he had come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten."* This thing cut short the discourse; it did no harm, however. *"When he had eaten,"* it says, *"and discoursed a long while, even till break of day, so he departed."* Do you mark the frugality of the supper? Do you observe how they passed the whole night? Such were their meals, that the hearers came away sober, and fit for hearing. But we, in what do we differ from dogs? Do you mark what a difference (between us and those men)? *"And they brought the young man alive, and,"* it says, *"were not a little comforted,"* both because they received him back alive, and because a miracle had been wrought. *"And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Thasos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot."* [Acts 20:13] We often find Paul parting from the disciples. For behold again, he himself goes afoot: giving them the easier way, and himself choosing the more painful. He went afoot, both that he might arrange many matters, and by way of training them to bear a parting from him. *"And when he had joined us at Thasos, having taken him on board, we came to Mytilene; and having sailed thence on the morrow, we come over against Chios"*— then they pass the island— *"and on the next day we touched at Samos, and having stopped at Trogylium, on the following day we came to Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be in Jerusalem the day of Pentecost."* [Acts 20:14-16] Why this haste? Not for the sake of the feast, but of the multitude. At the same time, by this he conciliated the Jews, as being one that did honor the feasts, wishing to gain even his adversaries: at the same

time also he delivers the word. Accordingly, see what great gain accrued, from all being present. But that the interests of the people of Ephesus might not be neglected on that account, he managed for this in a different way. But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"And having embraced them,"* it says, *"he departed for to go into Macedonia."* [Acts 20:1] By this again he refreshed them ([ἁ] [νεκτήσατο]), giving them much consolation. *"And having exhorted"* the Macedonians, *"with much discourse, he came into Greece."* [Acts 20:2] Observe how we everywhere find him accomplishing all by means of preaching, not by miracles. *"And we, sailed,"* etc. The writer constantly shows him to us as hasting to get to Syria; and the reason of it was the Church, and Jerusalem, but still he restrained his desire, so as to set all right in those parts also. And yet Troas is not a large place: why then do they pass seven days in it? Perhaps it was large as regarded the number of believers. And after he had passed seven days there, on the following day he spent the night in teaching: so hard did he find it to tear himself away from them, and they from him. *"And when we came together"* it says, *"to break bread."* [Acts 20:7-12] At the very time (of breaking bread) the discourse having taken its commencement,* extended: as representing that they were hungry, and it was not unseasonable: for the principal object (which brought them together) was not teaching, but they came together *"to break bread;"* discourse however having come up, he prolonged the teaching. See how all partook also at Paul's table. It seems to me, that he discoursed while even sitting at table, teaching us to consider all other things as subordinate to this. Picture to yourselves, I beseech you, that house with its lights, with its crowd, with Paul in the midst, discoursing, with even the windows occupied by many: what a thing it was to see, and to hear that trumpet, and behold that gracious countenance! But why did he discourse during night time?

Since *"he was about to depart,"* it says, and was to see them no more: though this indeed he does not tell them, they being too weak (to bear it), but he did tell it to the others. At the same time too the miracle which took place would make them evermore to remember that evening; so that the fall turned out to the advantage of the teacher. Great was the delight of the hearers, and even when interrupted it was the more increased. That (young man) was to rebuke all that are careless (of the word), he whose death was caused by nothing else than this, that he wished to hear Paul. *"And we went before to ship,"* etc. [Acts 20:13] Wherefore does the writer say where they came, and where they went to? To show in the first place that he was making the voyage more leisurely— and this upon human grounds— and sailing past (some): also (for the same reason he tells) where he made a stay, and what parts he sailed past; (namely,) *"that he might not have to spend the time in Asia."* [Acts 20:16] Since had he come there, he could not have sailed by; he did not like to pain those who would have begged him to remain. *"For he hasted,"* it says, *"if it were possible for him to keep the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem:"* and (this) was not possible (if he stayed). Observe, how he is also moved like other men. For therefore it is that all this is done, that we may not fancy that he was above human nature: (therefore) you see him desiring (something), and hasting, and in many instances not obtaining (his object): for those great and holy men were partakers of the same nature with us; it was in the will and purpose that they differed, and so it was that also they attracted upon themselves the great grace they did. See, for instance, how many things they order by an economy of their own. *"That we give not offense"* [2 Corinthians 6:3] to those who wish (to take offense), and, *"That our ministry be not blamed."* Behold, both an irreproachable life and on the other hand condescension. This is (indeed to be) called economy, to the (very) summit and height (of

it). For he that went beyond the commandments of Christ, was on the other hand more humble than all. *"I am made all things to all men,"* he says, *"that I might gain all."* [1 Corinthians 9:22] He cast himself also upon dangers, as he says in another place; *"In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments."* [2 Corinthians 6:4-5] And great was his love for Christ. For if there be not this, all else is superfluous, both the economy (of condescending accommodation), and the irreproachable life, and the exposing himself to dangers. *"Who is weak,"* he says, *"and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?"* [2 Corinthians 11:29] These words let us imitate, and let us cast ourselves upon dangers for our brethren's sake. Whether it be fire, or the sword, cast yourself on it, beloved, that you may rescue (him that is) your member: cast yourself, be not afraid. You are a disciple of Christ, Who laid down His life for His brethren: a fellow disciple with Paul, who chose to suffer numberless ills for his enemies, for men that were warring against him; be thou filled with zeal, imitate Moses. He saw one suffering wrong, and avenged him; he despised royal luxury, and for the sake of those who were afflicted he became a fugitive, a wanderer, lonely and deserted; he passed his days in a foreign land; and yet he blamed not himself, nor said, *"What is this? I despised royalty, with all that honor and glory: I chose to avenge those who were wronged, and God has overlooked me: and not only has He not brought me back to my former honor, but even forty years am I passing in a foreign land. Truly, handsomely have I received my wages, have I not!"* But nothing of the kind did he say or think. So also do thou: be it that thou suffer any evil for doing good, be it that (thou have to wait) a long time, be not thou offended, be not discomposed: God will of a surety give you your reward. The more the recompense is delayed, the more is the interest of it increased. Let us have a soul apt to sympathize, let us have a heart that

knows how to feel with others in their sorrows: no unmerciful temper ([ὦ] [μὸν]), no inhumanity.

Though thou be able to confer no relief, yet weep thou, groan, grieve over what has happened: even this is not to no purpose. If it behooves us to feel for those who are justly punished by God, much more for those who suffer unjustly at the hands of men. (They of) "*Ænan*," it says, "*came not forth to mourn for the house which was near her*" [Micah 1:11]: they shall receive pain, "*in return for that they built for derision.*" And again, Ezekiel makes this an accusation against them, that they did not grieve for (the afflicted). [Ezekiel 16:2] What do you say, O Prophet? God punishes, and shall I grieve for those that He is punishing? Yea verily: for God Himself that punishes wishes this: since neither does He Himself wish to punish, nay, even Himself grieves when punishing. Then be not thou glad at it. You will say, "*If they are justly punished, we ought not to grieve.*" Why, the thing we ought to grieve for is this— that they were found worthy of punishment. Say, when you see your son undergoing cautery or the knife, do you not grieve? And do you not say to yourself, "*What is this? It is for health this cutting, to quicken his recovery; it is for his deliverance, this burning?*" but for all that, when you hear him crying out, and not able to bear the pain, you grieve, and the hope of health being restored is not enough to carry off the shock to nature. So also in the case of these, though it be in order to their health that they are punished, nevertheless let us show a brotherly feeling, a fatherly disposition. They are cuttings and cauteries, the punishments sent by God: but it is for this we ought to weep, that they were sick, that they needed such a mode of cure. If it be for crowns that any suffer these things, then grieve not; for instance, as Paul, as Peter suffered: but when it is for punishment that one suffers justice, then weep, then groan. Such was the part the prophets acted; thus one of them said, "*Ah!*"

Lord, do you destroy the residue of Israel?" [Ezekiel 9:8] We see men-slayers, wicked men, suffering punishment, and we are distressed, and grieve for them. Let us not be philosophical beyond measure: let us show ourselves pitiful, that we may be pitied; there is nothing equal to this beautiful trait: nothing so marks to us the stamp of human nature as the showing pity, as the being kind to our fellow-men. In fact, therefore do the laws consign to public executioners the whole business of punishment: having compelled the judge to punish so far as to pronounce the sentence, thereafter they call forth those to perform the act itself. So true is it, that though it be justly done, it is not the part of a generous ([φιλοσόφου]) soul to inflict punishment, but it requires another sort of person for this: since even God punishes not by His own hand, but by means of the angels. Are they then executioners, the angels? God forbid: I say not this, but they are avenging powers. When Sodom was destroyed, the whole was done by them as the instruments: when the judgments in Egypt were inflicted, it was through them. For, *"He sent,"* it says, *"evil angels among them."* [Psalm 78:50] But when there is need of saying, God does this by Himself: thus, He sent the Son:— (b) but, *"He that receives you, receives Me, and he that receives Me, receives Him that sent Me."* [Matthew 10:40] (a) And again He says, *"Then will I say unto the angels, Gather together them that do iniquity, and cast them into the furnace."* [Matthew 13:30-42] But concerning the just, not so. (c) And again, *"Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness."* [Matthew 22:13] Observe how in that case His servants minister: but when the point is to do good, see Himself doing the good, Himself calling: *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you."* [Matthew 25:34] When the matter is, to converse with Abraham, then Himself comes to him: when it is, to depart to Sodom, He sends His servants, like a judge raising up those who are to

punish. *"You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things"* [Matthew 25:21]; *I* (will make you): but that other, not Himself, but His servants bind. Knowing these things, let us not rejoice over those who are suffering punishment, but even grieve: for these let us mourn, for these let us weep, that for this also we may receive a reward. But now, many rejoice even over those who suffer evil unjustly. But not so, we: let us show all sympathy: that we also may have God vouchsafed us, through the grace and mercy of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 44 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XX. 17-21

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Church. And when they had come to him, he said unto them, You know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

See him, hasting to sail by, and yet not overlooking them, but taking order for all. Having sent for the rulers, through those he discourses to them (the Ephesians): but it is worthy of admiration, how finding himself under a necessity of saying certain great things about himself, he tries to make the least he can of it ([πειρᾶτα μετριάζειν]). *"You know."* For just as Samuel, when about to deliver up the government to Saul says in their presence, *"Have I taken anything of your hands? You are witnesses, and God also"* [1 Samuel 12:3-5]; (so Paul here). David also, when disbelieved, says, *"I was with the flock keeping my father's sheep: and when the bear came, I scared her away with my hands"* [1 Samuel 17:34-35]: and Paul himself too says to the Corinthians, *"I have become a fool; you have compelled me."* [2 Corinthians 12:11] Nay, God Himself also does the same, not speaking of himself upon any and every occasion, but only when He is disbelieved, then

He brings up His benefits. Accordingly, see what Paul does here: first he adduces their own testimony: that you may not imagine his words to be mere boasting, he calls the hearers themselves as witnesses of the things he says, since he was not likely to speak lies in their presence. This is the excellence of a teacher, to have for witnesses of his merits those who are his disciples. And what is wonderful, Not for one day nor for two, says he, have I continued doing this. He wishes to cheer them for the future, that they may bravely bear all things, both the parting from him, and the trials about to take place—just as it was in the case of Moses and Joshua. And see how he begins: *"How I have been with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility of mind."* Observe, what most becomes rulers: *"hating pride"* [Exodus 18:21, Septuagint], says (Moses): which (qualification) is especially in point for rulers, because to them there is (almost) a necessity of becoming arrogant. This (humility) is the groundwork of all that is good, as in fact Christ says, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit."* [Matthew 5:3] And (here) not simply, *"with humility of mind,"* but, *"with all humility."* For there are many kinds of humility, in word and in action, towards rulers, and toward the ruled. Will you that I mention to you some kinds of humility? There are some who are lowly towards those who are lowly, and high towards the high: this is not the character of humility. Some then are such. Then, that he may not seem to be arrogant, he lays a foundation beforehand, removing that suspicion: For, *"if, says he, I have acted 'with all humility of mind,' it is not from arrogance that I say the things I say."* Then for his gentleness, ever with much condescension making them his fellows. *"With you,"* he says, *"have I been, serving the Lord;"* he makes the good works common to them with himself: none of it his own peculiar. *"What?"* (you will say) *"why, against God could he possibly bear himself arrogantly?"* And yet there are many who do bear

themselves arrogantly against God: but this man not even against his own disciples. This is the merit of a teacher, by his own achievements of virtue to form the character of his disciples. Then for his fortitude, upon which also he is very concise. *"With many tears,"* he says, *"and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews."* Do you see that he grieves at their doings? But here too he seems to show how sympathizing he was: for he suffered for those who were going to perdition, for the doers themselves: what was done to himself, he even rejoiced at it; for he belonged to that band which *"rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for that Name"* [Acts 5:41]: and again he says, *"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you"* [Colossians 1:24]: and again, *"For our light affliction, which is but for the moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."* [2 Corinthians 4:17]. These things, however, he says, by way of making the least of his merits ([μετρίῳζων]). But there he shows his fortitude, not so much of daring, as of enduring: *"I,"* says he, *"have been evil entreated, but it was with you: and what is indeed the grievous part of the business, at the hands of Jews."* Observe, he puts here both love and fortitude. Mark, here, I pray you, a character of teaching: *"I kept back nothing,"* he says, ungrudging fullness, unshrinking promptness— *"of what was profitable unto you:"* because there were things which they did not need to learn. For as the hiding some things would have been like grudging, so the saying all things would be folly. This is why he adds, *"that was profitable unto you. But have showed you, and have taught you:"* have not only said, but also taught: not doing this either as a mere matter of form. For that this is what he means, observe what he says: *"publicly, and from house to house:"* thereby representing the exceeding toil, the great earnestness and endurance. *"Both Jews, and Greeks."* Not (addressing myself) to you alone. *"Testifying:"* here, the boldness of speech: and that, even though we do no

good, yet we must speak: for this is the meaning of "*testifying*," when we speak to those who do not pay attention: and so the word [διαμαρτύρασθαι] is for the most part used. "*I call heaven and earth to witness*" [Deuteronomy 4:26], [διαμαρτύρομαι], Moses says: and now Paul himself, [Διαμαρτυρόμενος] "*both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God.*" What do you testify? That they should be careful about their manner of life: that they should repent, and draw near to God. "*Both to Jews and Greeks*"— for neither did the Jews know Him— both by reason of their works, he says, "*repentance towards God,*" and, by reason that they knew not the Son, he adds, "*and faith in the Lord Jesus.*" To what end, then, do you say these things? To what end do you put them in mind of them? What has come of it? Have you anything to lay to their charge? Having first alarmed their feeling, then he adds, "*And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.*" [Acts 20:22-24]. Wherefore says he this? By way of preparing them to be always ready to meet dangers, whether seen or unseen, and in all things to obey the Spirit. He shows that it is for great objects that he is led away from them. "*Save that the Holy Ghost,*" he says, "*in every city witnesses to me saying*"— to show that he departs willingly; that (see Hom. xlv. p. 273) you may not imagine it any bond or necessity, when he says, "*bound in the Spirit— that in every city bonds and afflictions await me.*" Then also he adds this, "*I count not my life dear, until I shall have fulfilled my course and the ministry, which I received of the Lord Jesus.*" Until I shall have finished my course, says he, with joy. Do you mark how

(clearly) these were the words not of one lamenting, but of one who forbore to make the most (of his troubles) ([μετριάζοντος]), of one who would instruct those (whom he addressed), and sympathize with them in the things which were befalling. He says not, *"I grieve indeed, but one must needs bear it:"* *"but,"* says he, *"of none of those things do I make account, neither do I have,"* i.e. account *"my life dear to me."* Why this again? Not to extol himself, but to teach them, as by the former words, humility, so by these, fortitude and boldness: *"I have it not precious,"* i.e. *"I love it not before this: I account it more precious to finish my course, to testify."* And he says not, *"to preach," "to teach"*— but what says he? *"to testify ([διαμαρτύρασθαι])—the Gospel of the grace of God."* He is about to say something more uncomfortable ([φορτικώτερον]), namely, *"I am pure from the blood of all men (because on my part) there is nothing lacking:"* he is about to lay upon them the whole weight and burden: so he first mollifies their feelings by saying, *"And now behold I know that you shall see my face no more."* The consolation is twofold: both that *"my face you shall see no more,"* for in heart I am with you: and that it was not they alone (who should see him no more): for, *"you shall see my face no more, you all, among whom I have gone about preaching the Kingdom."* So that he may well (say), *"Wherefore I take you to record (read [διὸ μαρτ] . for [διαμαρτ].)—seeing I shall be with you no more— "that I am pure from the blood of all men."* [Acts 20:26] Do you mark how he terrifies them, and troubled and afflicted as their souls are, how hard he rubs them ([ἐ] [πιτρίβει])? But it was necessary. *"For I have not shunned,"* he says, *"to declare unto you all the counsel of God."* [Acts 20:27] Why then, he who does not speak, has blood to answer for: that is, murder! Nothing could be more terrifying than this. He shows that they also, if they *do* it not, have blood to answer for. So, whereas he seems to be justifying himself, in fact he is terrifying them. *"Take heed*

therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers (or, bishops) to feed the Church of God (see note 3), which He has purchased with His own blood." [Acts 20:28] Do you mark? He enjoins them two things. Neither success in bringing others right of itself is any gain— for, I fear, he says, *"lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away"* [1 Corinthians 9:27]; nor the being diligent for one's self alone. For such an one is selfish, and seeks his own good only, and is like to him who buried his talent. *"Take heed to yourselves:"* this he says, not because our own salvation is more precious than that of the flock, but because, when we take heed to ourselves, then the flock also is a gainer. *"In which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God."* See, it is from the Spirit you have your ordination. This is one constraint: then he says, *"To feed the Church of the Lord."* Lo! Another obligation: the Church is the Lord's. And a third: *"which He has purchased with His own blood."* It shows how precious the concern is; that the peril is about no small matters, seeing that even His own blood He spared not. He indeed, that he might reconcile those who were enemies, poured out even His blood: but thou, even when they have become your friends, are not able to retain them. *"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."* [Acts 20:29] Again he engages ([ἐ] [πιστρέφει]) them from another quarter, from the things which should come after: as when he says, *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood. After my departing,"* he says, *"grievous wolves shall enter in among you"* [Ephesians 6:12]; twofold the evil, both that he himself would not be present, and that others would assail them. *"Then why depart, if you know this beforehand?"* The Spirit draws me, he says. Both *"wolves,"* and *"grievous, not sparing the flock;"* and what is worse, even *"from among your own selves:"* the grievous thing (this),

when the war is moreover an intestine war. The matter is exceeding serious, for it is *"the Church of the Lord:"* great the peril for with blood He redeemed it: mighty the war, and twofold. *"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."* [Acts 20:30] *"How then? What comfort shall there be?"* *"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."* [Acts 20:31] See how many strong expressions are here: *"with tears,"* and *"night and day,"* and *"every one."* For it was not that if he saw many, then he came in (to the work), but even were it for a single soul, he was capable of doing everything (for that one soul). So it was, in fact, that he compacted them together ([συνεκρότησεν]) (so firmly as he did). *"Enough done on my part: three years have I remained:"* they had establishing enough, he says; enough of roofing. *"With tears,"* he says. Do you see that the tears were on this account? The bad man grieves not: grieve thou: perhaps he will grieve also. As, when the sick man sees his physician partaking of food, he also is incited to do the same: so likewise here, when he sees you weeping, he is softened: he will be a good and great man.

(Recapitulation.) *"Not knowing,"* he says, *"the things that shall befall me."* (v. 22, 23.) Then is this why you depart? By no means; on the contrary (I know that), *"bonds and afflictions await me."* That (there are) trials, I know, but of what kind I know not: which was more grievous. *"But none of these things move me"* [Acts 20:24]: for do not suppose that I say these things as lamenting them: for *"I hold not my own life dear."* It is to raise up their minds that he says all this, and to persuade them not only not to flee, but also to bear nobly. Therefore it is that he calls it a *"course"* and a *"ministry,"* on the one hand, showing it to be glorious from its being a race, on the other, showing what was due from it, as being a ministry. I am a

minister: nothing more. Having comforted them, that they might not grieve that he was so evil entreated, and having told them that he endured those things *"with joy,"* and having shown the fruits of them, then (and not before) he brings in that which would give them pain, that he may not overwhelm their minds. *"And now behold,"* etc. *"Wherefore I take you to record, that I am pure from the blood of all men, because I have not shrunk from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God"* [Acts 20:25-27]: * * * that (counsel) which concerns the present matter. *"For I know this,"* etc. [Acts 20:29] *"What then,"* someone might say, *"thinkest you yourself so great? If you should depart, are we to die?"* I say not this, he replies, that my absence causes this: but what? That there should rise up against you certain of another sort: he says not, *"because of my departing,"* but *"after my departing:"* that is, after his going on his journey.— And yet this thing has happened already: much more (then will it happen) hereafter. Then we have the cause, *"to draw away disciples after them."* [Acts 20:30]. That there are heresies, this is the cause, and no other than this. Then comes also consolation. But if He *"purchased"* it *"with His own blood,"* He will assuredly stand forward in its defence. *"Night and day,"* he says, *"I cease not to warn with tears."* [Acts 20:31] This might well be said in our case also: and though the speech seems to refer peculiarly to the teachers, it is common also to the disciples. For what, though I speak and exhort and weep night and day, while the disciple obeys not? Therefore it is that he says, *"I take you to record:"* since also himself says, *"I am pure from the blood of all men: for I have not shunned to declare unto you."* (v. 26, 27.) Why then, this only is to be a teacher, to declare, to preach, to instruct, shrink from nothing, to exhort night and day: but if, while one is doing all this, nothing comes of it, you know what remains. Then you have another justification: *"I am pure from the blood of all men."* Think not that these

words are spoken to us only: for indeed this speech is addressed to you also, that you should attend to the things spoken, that you should not start away from the hearing. What can I do? Lo! each day I rend myself with crying out, "*Depart from the theatres:*" and many laugh at us: "*Desist from swearing, from covetousness:*" numberless are our exhortations, and there is none to hear us. But I do not discourse during night? Fain would I do this also in the night time, and at your tables, if it were possible that one could be divided into ten thousand pieces, so as to be present with you and discourse. But if once in the week we call to you, and you shrink back, and some of you do not even come here, and you that do come, depart having received no profit—what shall we do? Many I know even sneer at us, that we are forever discoursing about the same things: so wearisome are we become to you by very satiety. But for this not we are to blame, but the hearers may thank themselves. For he indeed who is making good progress, rejoices to hear the same things always; it seems to be his praises that he hears spoken: but he who does not wish to get on, seems even to be annoyed, and though he hear the same thing but twice, it seems to him that he is hearing it often.

"*I am pure,*" he says, "*from the blood of all men.*" [Acts 20:26] This was fit and proper for Paul to say, but we dare not say it, conscious as we are of numberless faults. Wherefore for him the ever vigilant, ever at hand, the man enduring all things for the sake of the salvation of his disciples, it was fit and proper to say this: but we must say that of Moses, "*The Lord was angry with me for your sakes*" [Deuteronomy 3:26], because ye lead us also into many sins. For when we are dispirited at seeing you make no progress, is not the greater part of our strength struck down? For what, I ask you has been done? Lo! By the grace of God we also have now passed the space of three years, not indeed night and day exhorting you, but doing this,

often every third day, or every seventh. What more has come of it? We accuse, we rebuke, we weep, we are in anguish, although not openly, yet in heart. But those (inward) tears are far more bitter than these (outward ones): for these indeed bring a kind of relief to the feelings of the sorrowful, whereas those aggravate it, and bind it fast. Since when there is any cause of grief, and one cannot give vent to the sorrow, lest he should seem to be vainglorious, think what he suffers! Were it not that people would tax me with excessive love of display, you would see me each day shedding fountains of tears: but to those my chamber is witness, and my hours of solitude. For believe me I have (at times) despaired of my own salvation, but from my mourning on your account, I have not even leisure to bemoan my own evils: so entirely are you all in all to me. And whether I perceive you to be advancing, then, for very delight, I am not sensible of my own evils: or whether I see you not advancing, such is my grief, I again dismiss my own cares from my thoughts: brightening up on account of your good things, though I myself have evils without number, and saddened on account of your painful things, though my own successes are without number. For what hope is there for the teacher, when his flock is destroyed? What kind of life, what kind of expectation is there for him? With what sort of confidence will he stand up before God? What will he say? For grant that he has nothing laid to his charge, has no punishment to suffer, but is *"pure from the blood of all men:"* yet even so will he suffer a grief incurable: since fathers also though they be not liable to be called to account for their children's sins, nevertheless have grief and vexation. And this profits them nothing, nor shields them ([*προίσταται*]). *"For it is they that watch for our souls, as those that must give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] This seems to be a fearful thing: to me this gives no concern after your destruction. For whether I give account, or not, it is no profit to me. Might it be, that you

were saved, and I to give account because of you: ye saved, and I charged with not having fulfilled my part! For my anxiety is not that you should be saved through me as the means, but only that you should be saved, no matter by what person as the instrument. You know not the pangs of spiritual childbirth, how overpowering they are; how he who is in travail with this birth, would rather be cut into ten thousand pieces, than see one of those to whom he has given birth perishing and undone. Whence shall we persuade you? By no other argument indeed, but by what has been done, in all that regards you we shall clear ourselves. We too shall be able to say, that in nothing have we *"shrunk from declaring"* to you the whole truth: nevertheless we grieve: and that we do grieve, is manifest from the numberless plans we lay and contrivances we devise. And yet we might say to ourselves, What matters it to me? I have done my part, *"I am pure from"* (their) *"blood:"* but this is not enough for comfort. If we could tear open our heart, and show it to you, you would see with what largeness it holds (you) within it, both women and children and men; for such is the power of love, that it makes the soul more spacious than the heaven. *"Receive us,"* says (Paul): *"we have wronged no man, you are not straitened in us."* [2 Corinthians 7:2; 6:12] He had all Corinth in his heart, and says, *"You are not straitened: be ye also enlarged"* [2 Corinthians 6:13]; but I myself could not say this, for I well know, that you both love me and receive me. But what is the profit either from my love or from yours, when the things pertaining to God thrive not in us? It is a ground for greater sorrow, an occasion of worse mischief ([λύμης], al. [λύπης]). I have nothing to lay to your charge: *"for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."* [Galatians 4:15] *"We yearn not only to give you the Gospel, but also our own souls."* [1 Thessalonians 2:8] We are loved and we love (you): but this is not the

question. But let us love Christ, *"for the first commandment is, You shall love the Lord your God: and the second is like it, And your neighbor as yourself."* [Matthew 22:37-39] We have the second, we need the first: need the first, exceedingly, both I and you. We have it, but not as we ought. Let us love Him: ye know how great a reward is laid up for them that love Christ: let us love Him with fervor of soul, that, enjoying his goodwill, we may escape the stormy waves of this present life, and be found worthy to obtain the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and mercy of His only-begotten Son, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 45 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XX. 32

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

What he does when writing in an Epistle, this he does also when speaking in council: from exhorting, he ends with prayer: for since he had much alarmed them by saying, *"Grievous wolves shall enter in among you"* [Acts 20:29], therefore, not to overpower them, and make them lose all self-possession, observe the consolation (he gives). *"And now,"* he says, as always, *"I commend you, brethren, to God, and to the word of His grace:"* that is, to His grace: it is grace that saves. He constantly puts them in mind of grace, to make them more earnest as being debtors, and to persuade them to have confidence. *"Which is able to build you up."* He does not say, to build, but, *"to build up,"* showing that they had (already) been built. Then he puts them in mind of the hope to come; *"to give you an inheritance,"* he says, *"among all them which are sanctified."* Then exhortation again: *"I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel."* [Acts 20:33] He takes away that which is the root of evils, the love of money. *"Silver, or gold,"* he says. He says not, I have not taken, but, not even *"coveted."* No great thing this, but what follows after is great. *"Yea, you yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring, you ought to support the weak."* (v. 34, 35.) Observe him employed in work and not simply that, but

toiling. *"These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me:"* so as to put them to shame. And see how worthily of them. For he says not, You ought to show yourselves superior to money, but what? *"to support the weak"*— not all indiscriminately— *"and to hear the word of the Lord which He spoke, It is more blessed to give than to receive."* For lest any one should think that it was spoken with reference to them, and that he gave himself for an ensample, as he elsewhere says, *"giving an ensample to you"* [Philippians 3:17], he added the declaration of Christ, Who said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* He prayed over them while exhorting them: he shows it both by action,— *"And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all,"* [Acts 20:36]— he did not simply pray, but with much feeling: ([κατανύξεως]): great was the consolation— and by his saying, *"I commend you to the Lord. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more."* (v. 37, 38.) He had said, that *"grievous wolves should enter in;"* had said, *"I am pure from the blood of all men:"* and yet the thing that grieved them most of all was this, *"that they should see him no more:"* since indeed it was this that made the war grievous. *"And they accompanied them,"* it says, *"unto the ship. And it came to pass, that after we had torn ourselves from them"*— so much did they love him, such was their affection towards him— *"and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre"* [Acts 21:1-3]: he came to Lycia, and having left Cyprus, he sailed down to Tyre— *"for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he*

should not go up to Jerusalem." [Acts 21:4] They too prophesy of the afflictions. It is so ordered that they should be spoken by them also, that none might imagine that Paul said those things without cause, and only by way of boasting. And there again they part from each other with prayer. *"And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again. And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cæsarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him."* [Acts 21:5-8] Having come to Cæsarea, it says, we abode with Philip, which was one of the seven. *"And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy."* [Acts 21:9] But it is not these that foretell to Paul, though they were prophetesses; it is Agabus. *"And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he had come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus says the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."* (v. 10, 11.) He who formerly had declared about the famine, the same says, This *"man, who owns this girdle, thus shall they bind."* [Acts 11:28] The same that the prophets used to do, representing events to the sight, when they spoke about the captivity— as did Ezekiel— the same did this (Agabus). *"And,"* what is the grievous part of the business, *"deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem."* [Acts 21:12] Many even besought

him not to depart, and still he would not comply. *"Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?"* [Acts 21:13] Do you mark? Lest, having heard that saying, *"I go bound in the Spirit"* [Acts 20:22], you should imagine it a matter of necessity, or that he fell into it ignorantly, therefore these things are foretold. But they wept, and he comforted them, grieving at their tears. For, *"what mean ye,"* he says, *"to weep and to break my heart?"* Nothing could be more affectionate: because he saw them weeping, he grieved, he that felt no pain at his own trials. *"For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."* (v. 13, 14.) You do me wrong in doing this: for do I grieve? Then they ceased, when he said, *"to break my heart."* I weep, he says, for you, not on account of my own sufferings: as for those (men), I am willing even to die for them. But let us look over again what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"Silver, or gold, or apparel,"* etc. [ch. 20:33, 34; 1 Corinthians 9; 2 Corinthians 11] So then, it was not in Corinth only that they did this — they that corrupted the disciples, but in Asia as well. But he nowhere casts this up as a reproach to the Ephesians, when writing to them. And why? Because he did not fall upon any subject that obliged him to speak of this. But to the Corinthians he says, *"My boasting has not been stopped in the regions of Achaia."* [2 Corinthians 11:10] And he does not say, You did not give to me; but, *"Silver, or gold, or apparel, I coveted not,"* that it might not seem to be their doing, that they had not given. And he does not say, From no man have I coveted the necessities of life, that again it might not look like accusing them: but he covertly hints as much, seeing that he provided subsistence for others as well as himself. See how he worked with earnestness, *"night and day"* discoursing (to others), *"with*

tears warning each one of them." [Acts 20:31] (Here) again he puts them in fear: *"I have showed you all things,"* he says: you cannot take refuge in the plea of ignorance: *"have shown you"* by works *"how that so laboring you ought to work."* And he does not say, that to receive is bad, but that not to receive is better. For, *"remember,"* he says, *"the words of the Lord which he spoke: It is more blessed to give than to receive."* [Acts 20:35] And where said He this? Perhaps the Apostles delivered it by unwritten tradition; or else it is plain from (recorded sayings, from) which one could infer it. For in fact here he has shown both boldness in meeting dangers, sympathy with those over whom he ruled, teaching with (unshrinking) boldness, humility, (voluntary) poverty: but, what we have here is even more than that poverty. For if He says there (in the Gospel), *"If you will be perfect, sell what you have and give to the poor"* [Matthew 19:21], when, besides receiving nothing himself, he provides sustenance for others also, what could equal this? It is one degree to fling away one's possessions; a second, to be sufficient for the supply of one's own necessities: a third, to provide for others also; a fourth, for one (to do all this) who preaches and has a right to receive. So that here is a man far better than those who merely forego possessions. *"Thus it is right to support the weak:"* this is (indeed) sympathy with the weak; for to give from the labors of others, is easy. *"And they fell on his neck,"* it says, *"and wept."* [Acts 20:37] He shows their affection also by saying, *"Upon his neck,"* as taking a last and yet a last embrace, such was the love they conceived from his discourse, such the spell of love that bound them. For if we groan when simply parting from each other, although we know that we shall receive one another back again, what a tearing away of themselves it must have been to them! Methinks Paul also wept. *"Having torn ourselves away,"* he says: he shows the violence of it by saying, *"having torn ourselves away from them."* And with

reason: otherwise they could never have got to sea. What means, "*We came with a straight course unto Coos?*" Instead of saying, "*we did not go round nor make stay in other places.*" Then "*unto Rhodes.*" [Acts 21:1] See how he hastes on. And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia. [Acts 21:2] Possibly that ship (in which they had come) was making a stay there: wherefore they shifted to another, and not having found one going to Cæsarea, but (finding this) for Phenice, they embarked in it (and pursued their voyage), having left Cyprus also and Syria: but the expression, "*having left it on the left hand,*" is not said simply (in that meaning), but that they made speed not to get to Syria either. "*We landed at Tyre.*" [Acts 21:3] Then they tarry with the brethren seven days. Now that they had come near to Jerusalem, they no longer run. (b) "*Who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.*" [Acts 21:4] Observe how, when the Spirit does not forbid, he complies. They said, "*Adventure not yourself into the theatre, and he did not adventure*" [Acts 19:31]: often they bore him off (from dangers), and he complied: again he escaped by a window: and now, though numberless persons, so to say, beseech him, both those at Tyre and those at Cæsarea, weeping also and predicting numberless dangers, he refuses to comply. And yet it is not (merely), they predicted the dangers, but "*said by the Spirit.*" If then the Spirit bade, why did he gainsay? "*By the Spirit,*" that is, they knowing "*by the Spirit*" (what would be the consequences, said to him): for of course it does not mean that the exhortation they made was by the Spirit. For they did not simply foretell to him the dangers (through the Spirit), but (added of themselves) that it behooved him not to go up— sparing him. But "*after we had accomplished the days,*" i.e. had fulfilled the appointed days, "*we separated, and went on our way: they all bringing us on our way with wives and children.*" [Acts 21:5]— See how great was the entreaty. And again they part with prayer.

Also in Ptolemais they stay one day, but in Cæsarea many. [Acts 21:6-8] (a) Now that they are near to Jerusalem, they no longer hurry. For observe, I pray you, all the days. "*After the day of unleavened bread*" they came "*to Troas in five days*" [Acts 20:6]; then they there spent "*seven;*" in all, twelve: then to "*Thasos,*" to "*Mytilene,*" to "*Trogylium*" and "*over against Chios,*" and to "*Samos*" and "*Miletus*" [Acts 20:13-17]; eighteen in all. Then to "*Cos,*" to "*Rhodes,*" to "*Patara,*" twenty-one: then say five to "*Tyre;*" twenty-six: there "*seven;*" thirty-three; "*Ptolemais,*" thirty-four; then to "*Cæsarea, many days*" [Acts 21:1-10]; and then, thereafter, the prophet puts them up thence. (c) When Paul has heard that he has to suffer numberless perils, then he is in haste, not flinging himself upon the dangers but accounting it to be the command of the Spirit. (e) And Agabus does not say, "*They shall bind*" Paul, that he may not seem to speak upon agreement (with Paul), but "*the man that owns this girdle*" [Acts 21:11]— so then he had a girdle also. But when they could not persuade him— this was why they wept— then they "*held their peace.*" Do you mark the resignation? Do you mark the affection? "*They held their peace,*" it says, "*saying, The will of the Lord be done.*" [Acts 21:12-14] (g) The Lord, say they, Himself will do that which is pleasing in his sight. For they perceived that it was the will of God. Else Paul would not be so bent (upon going)— he that on all (other occasions delivers himself out of dangers. (d) "*And after these, days,*" it says, "*having taken up our baggage*"— i.e. having received the (supplies) necessary for the journey— "*we went up to Jerusalem.*" [Acts 21:15] "*And there went with us also certain of the disciples from Cæsarea, bringing us to one with whom we should lodge, one Mnason, an ancient disciple of Cyprus.*" [Acts 21:16] "*And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*" [Acts 21:17] (f) "*Bringing us,*" it says, "*(to him) with whom we should lodge*"— not to the church: for on the former occasion

[Acts 15:4], when they went up concerning the decrees, they lodged with the Church, but now with a certain "*ancient disciple*." (The expression) shows that the preaching had been going on a long time: whence it seems to me that this writer in the Acts epitomizes the events of many years, relating (only) the matters of chief importance. (h) So unwilling were they to burden the Church, when there was another to lodge them; and so little did they stand upon their dignity. "*The brethren*," it says, "*received us gladly*." Affairs among the Jews were now full of peace: there was not much warfare (among them). "*Bringing us*," it says, "*to one with whom we should lodge*." Paul was the guest he entertained. Perchance some one of you says: Aye, if it were given me to entertain Paul as a guest, I readily and with much eagerness would do this. Lo! It is in your power to entertain Paul's Master for your guest, and you will not: for "*he that receives one of these least*," he says, "*receives Me*." [Matthew 18:5; Luke 9:48] By how much the brother may be least, so much the more does Christ come to you through him. For he that receives the great, often does it from vainglory also; but he that receives the small, does it purely for Christ's sake. It is in your power to entertain even the Father of Christ as your guest, and thou wilt not: for, "*I was a stranger*," He says, "*and you took me in*" [Matthew 25:35]: and again, "*Unto one of the least of these the brethren that believe in Me, you have done it unto Me*." [Matthew 25:40] Though it be not Paul, yet if it be a believer and a brother, although the least, Christ comes to you through him. Open your house, take Him in. "*He that receives a prophet*," He says, "*shall receive a prophet's reward*." [Matthew 10:41] Therefore too he that receives Christ, shall receive the reward of him who has Christ for his guest. Do not thou disbelieve His words, but be believing. Himself has said, Through them I come to you: and that you may not disbelieve, He lays down both punishments for those who do not receive, and honors for those who do

receive; since He would not have done this, unless both the person honored and the person insulted were Himself. " *You received Me*," He says, "*into your lodging, I will receive you into the Kingdom of My Father; you took away My hunger, I take away your sins; you saw Me bound, I see you loosed; you saw Me a stranger, I make you a citizen of heaven; you gave Me bread, I give you an entire Kingdom, that you may inherit and possess it.*" He says not, "*Receive*," but, "*Inherit*," the word which is spoken of those who have possession by right of ownership; as when we say, "*This have I inherited.*" Thou did it to Me in secret, I will proclaim it openly: and of your acts indeed I say, that they were of free gift, but Mine are of debt. "*For since thou*," He says, "*began, I follow and come after: I am not ashamed to confess the benefits conferred on Me, nor from what things you freed Me, hunger and nakedness and wandering. Thou saw Me bound, you shall not behold the fire of hell; you saw Me sick, you shall not behold the torments nor the punishments.*" O hands, truly blessed, which minister in such services as these, which are accounted worthy to serve Christ! Feet which go into prisons for Christ's sake, with ease defy the fire: no trial of bonds have they, (the hands) which saw Him bound! You clothed Him with a garment, and you put on a garment of salvation: you were in prison with Him, and with Him you find yourself in the Kingdom, not ashamed, knowing that you visited Him. The Patriarch knew not that he was entertaining Angels, and he did entertain them. [Genesis 18:3] Let us take shame to ourselves, I beseech you: he was sitting in mid-day, being in a foreign land, where he had none inheritance, "*not so much as to set his foot on*" [Acts 7:5]: he was a stranger, and the stranger entertained strangers: for he was a citizen of heaven. Therefore, not even while he was on earth was he a stranger (to Him). We are rather strangers than that stranger, if we receive not strangers. He had no home, and his tent was his place of

reception. And mark his liberality— he killed a calf, and kneaded fine meal: mark his ready mind— by himself and his wife: mark the unassuming manner— he worships and beseeches them. For all these qualities ought to be in that man who entertains strangers— readiness, cheerfulness, liberality. For the soul of the stranger is abashed, and feels ashamed; and unless (his host) show excessive joy, he is as (if) slighted, and goes away, and it becomes worse than not to have received him, his being received in this way. Therefore he worships them, therefore he welcomes them with speech, therefore with a seat. For who would have hesitated, knowing that this work was done unto Him? *"But we are not in a foreign land."* If we will, we shall be able to imitate him. How many of the brethren are strangers? There is a common apartment, the Church, which we call the *"Xenon."* Be inquisitive ([περιεργάζεσθε]), sit before the doors, receive those who come yourselves; though you may not wish to take them into your houses, at any rate in some other way (receive them), by supplying them with necessities. *"Why, has not the Church means"* you will say? She has: but what is that to you? That they should be fed from the common funds of the Church, can that benefit you? If another man prays, does it follow that you are not bound to pray? Wherefore do you not say, *"Do not the priests pray? Then why should I pray?"* *"But I,"* you will say, *"give to him who cannot be received there."* Give, though it be to that one: for what we are anxious for is this, that you should give at any rate. Hear what Paul says: *"That it may relieve them that are widows indeed, and that the Church be not burdened."* [1 Timothy 5:16] Be it how you will, only do it. But *I* put it, not, *"that the Church be not burdened,"* but, *"that thou be not burdened;"* for at this rate you will do nothing, leaving all to the Church. This is why there is a common room set apart by the Church, that you may not say these things. *"The Church,"* say you, *"has lands, has money, and revenues."* And has she not charges? I ask;

and has she not a daily expenditure? *"No doubt,"* you will say. Why then do you not lend aid to her moderate means? I am ashamed indeed to say these things: however, I compel no man, if any one imagines what I am saying to be for gain. Make for yourself a guest-chamber in your own house: set up a bed there, set up a table there and a candlestick. [cf. 2 Kings 4:10] For is it not absurd, that whereas, if soldiers should come, you have rooms set apart for them, and show much care for them, and furnish them with everything, because they keep off from you the visible war of this world, yet strangers have no place where they might abide? Gain a victory over the Church. Would you put us to shame? This do: surpass us in liberality: have a room, to which Christ may come; say, *"This is Christ's cell; this building is set apart for Him."* Be it but an underground chamber, and mean, He disdains it not. *"Naked and a stranger,"* Christ goes about, it is but a shelter He wants: afford it, though but this. Be not uncompassionate, nor inhuman; be not so earnest in worldly matters, so cold in spiritual. Let also the most faithful of your servants be the one entrusted with this office, and let him bring in the maimed, the beggars, and the homeless. These things I say to shame you. For you ought indeed to receive them in the upper part of your house; but if you will not do this, then though it be below, though but where your mules are housed, and your servants, there receive Christ. Perchance you shudder at hearing this. What then, when you do not even this? Behold, I exhort, behold, I bid you; let this be a matter to be taken up in earnest. But ye do not wish it thus, perhaps? Do it some other way. There are many poor men and poor women: set apart some one (of these) constantly to remain there: let the poor man be (your inmate) though but as a guard to your house: let him be to you wall and fence, shield and spear. Where alms are, the devil dares not approach, nor any other evil thing. Let us not overlook so great a gain. But now a place is set apart for a chariot, and for litters

([βαστερνίοις]) another; but for Christ Who is wandering, not even one! Abraham received the strangers in the place where he abode himself; his wife stood in the place of a servant, the guests in the place of masters. He knew not that he was receiving Christ; knew not that he was receiving Angels; so that had he known it, he would have lavished his whole substance. But we, who know that we receive Christ, show not even so much zeal as he did who thought that he was receiving men. *"But they are impostors,"* you will say, *"many of them, and unthankful."* And for this the greater your reward, when you receive for the sake of Christ's name. For if you know indeed that they are impostors, receive them not into your house: but if you dost not know this, why do you accuse them lightly? *"Therefore I tell them to go to the receiving house."* But what kind of excuse is there for us, when we do not even receive those whom we know, but shut our doors against all? Let our house be Christ's general receptacle: let us demand of them as a reward, not money, but that they make our house the receptacle for Christ; let us run about everywhere, let us drag them in, let us seize our booty: greater are the benefits we receive than what we confer. He does not bid you kill a calf: give thou bread to the hungry, raiment to the naked, shelter to the stranger. But that you may not make this your pretext, there is a common apartment, that of the Church; throw your money into that, and then you have received them: since (Abraham) there had the reward of those things also which were done by his servants. *"He gave the calf to a young man, and he hastened to dress it."* [Genesis 18:7] So well trained were his servants also! They ran, and murmured not as ours do: for he had made them pious. He drew them out to war, and they murmured not: so well disciplined were they. [Genesis 14:14] For he had equal care for all as for himself: he all but said as Job did, *"We were alike formed in the same womb."* [Job 33:6] Therefore let us also take thought for their salvation, and

let us make it our duty to care for our servants, that they may be good; and let our servants also be instructed in the things pertaining to God. Then will virtue not be difficult to us, if we train them orderly. Just as in war, when the soldiers are well-disciplined, the general carries on war easily, but the contrary happens, when this is not so; and when the sailors too are of one mind, the pilot easily handles the rudder-strings; so here likewise. For say now, if your servants have been so schooled, you will not be easily exasperated, you will not have to find fault, will not be made angry, will not need to abuse them. It may be, you will even stand in awe of your servants, if they are worthy of admiration, and they will be helpers with you, and will give you good counsel. But from all these shall all things proceed that are pleasing to God, and thus shall the whole house be filled with blessing, and we, performing things pleasing to God, shall enjoy abundant succor from above, unto which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost, together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 46 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXI. 18, 19

"And the day following Paul went in with us unto James: and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."

This was the Bishop of Jerusalem; and to him (Paul) is sent on an earlier occasion. This (James) was brother of the Lord; a great and admirable man. (To him, it says,) *"Paul entered in with us."* Mark the (Bishop's) unassuming behavior: *"and the elders"* (were present). Again Paul relates to them the things relating to the Gentiles, not indulging in vainglory, God forbid, but wishing to show forth the mercy of God, and to fill them with great joy. [Acts 15] See accordingly: *"when they heard it,"* it says, *"they glorified God,"*— not praised nor admired Paul: for in such wise had he narrated, as referring all to Him— *"and said unto him, You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believed."* Observe with what modest deference they too speak: *"they said to him:"* not (James) as Bishop discourses authoritatively, but they take Paul as partner with them in their view; *"You see, brother:"* as though immediately and at the outset apologizing for themselves, and saying, *"We did not wish this. Do you see the necessity of the thing? 'how many thousands,' say they, 'of Jews there are which' have come together."* And they say not, *"how many thousands we have made catechumens,"* but, *"there are. And these,"* say they, *"are all zealous for the law."* [Acts 21:20] Two reasons— the number of them, and

their views. For neither had they been few, would it have been right to despise them: nor, if they were many and did not all cling to the law, would there have been need to make much account of them. Then also a third cause is given: *"And they all,"* it says, *"have been informed of you"*— they say not, *"have heard,"* but [κατηχήθησαν], that is, so they have believed, and have been taught, *"that you teach apostasy from Moses to all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, by telling them not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."* [Acts 21:21] *"What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that you have come. Do therefore this that we say to you"* (v. 22, 23): they say these things as advising, not as commanding. *"We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them."* Make your defence in act, not in word— *"that they may shave themselves,"* it says, *"and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law"* (v. 23, 24): they say not, *"teachest,"* but, of superabundance, *"that you yourself also keepest the law."* For of course not this was the matter of chief interest, whether he did not teach others, but, that he did himself observe the law. *"What then"* (he might say), *"if the Gentiles should learn it? I shall injure them."* How so? Say they, seeing that even we, the teachers of the Jews, have sent unto them. *"As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."* [Acts 21:25] Here with a kind of remonstrance ([ἐ]ντροπεπτικῶς), As *"we,"* say they, commanded them, although we are preachers to the Jews, so do thou, although a preacher to the Gentiles, cooperate with us. Observe Paul: he does not say, *"Well, but I can bring*

forward Timothy, whom I circumcised: well, but I can satisfy them by what I have to say (of myself):" but he complied, and did all: for in fact thus was it expedient (to do). For it was one thing to take (effectual) measures for clearing himself, and another to have done these things without the knowledge of any (of the parties). It was a step open to no suspicion, the fact of his even bearing the expenses. "Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, signifying the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them." [Acts 21:26] "Signifying," [διαγγέλλων], i.e. [καταγγέλλων], publicly notifying: so that it was he who made himself conspicuous. "And when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia"— for (his arrival) most keeps times with theirs — "when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teaches all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and has polluted this holy place." (v. 27, 28.) Mark their habitual conduct, how turbulent we everywhere find it, how men who with or without reason make a clamor in the midst. "For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple and immediately the doors were shut." (v. 29, 30.) "Men of Israel," it says, "help: this is the man that (teaches) against the people, and the law, and this place."— the things which most trouble them, the Temple and the Law. And Paul does not tax the Apostles with being the cause of these things to him. "And they drew him," it says, "out of the Temple: and the doors were shut." For they wished to kill him; and therefore were dragging him out, to do this with greater security. "And as they went about to kill him,

tidings came unto the tribune of the cohort, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. Then the tribune came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude." [Acts 21:31-34] But the tribune having come down delivered him, and "*commanded him to be bound with two chains:*" (hereby) appeasing the anger of the people. "*And when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him!"* [Acts 21:34-36] What means, "*Away with him?*" that is, what they say with us according to the Roman custom, To the standards with him! "*And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the tribune, May I speak unto you?*" [Acts 21:37] In the act of being borne along up the stairs, he requests to say something to the tribune: and observe how quietly he does it. "*May I speak unto you?*" he says. "*Who said, Can you speak Greek? Are you not then that Egyptian, which before these days made an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?*" [Acts 21:38] For (this Egyptian) was a revolutionary and seditious person. With regard to this then Paul clears himself, and * *

(Recapitulation.) "*Do therefore this that we say unto you,*" etc. (v. 23, 24.) He shows that it was not necessary to do this upon principle ([προηγούμενως])— whence also they obtain his compliance— but that it was economy and condescension. "*As touching the Gentiles,*" etc. [Acts 21:25] Why, then, this was no hindrance to the preaching, seeing they themselves legislated for them to this effect. Why, then, in his taking Peter

to task he does not absolutely ([ἀ] [πλῶς]) charge him with doing wrong: for precisely what he does on this occasion himself, the same does Peter on that occasion, (merely) holding his peace, and establishing his doctrine. [Galatians 2:11] And he says not, For why? It is not right to teach those among the Gentiles. *"It is not enough to have not (so) preached there, but there was need also to do something more, that those may be persuaded that you observe the law. The affair is one of condescension, be not alarmed."* They do not advise him (to this course) sooner, until they have first spoken of the economy and the gain. *"And besides, the doing this in Jerusalem, is a thing to be borne. 'Do thou this thing therefore' here, that it may be in your power abroad to do the other."* (b) *"The next day,"* it says, *"he took them"* [Acts 21:26]: he deferred it not; for when there is economy in the case, this is the way of it. (a) *"Jews from Asia having seen him,"* for it was natural that they were spending some days there, *"in the Temple."* [Acts 21:27] (c) Mark the economy (of Providence) that appeared (in this). (p. 279, note 1) After the (believing) Jews had been persuaded (concerning him), then it is that those (Jews of Asia) set upon him in order that those (believing Jews) may not also set upon him. Help, say they, *"ye men of Israel!"* as though it were some (monster) difficult to be caught, and hard to be overcome, that has fallen into their hands. *"All men,"* they say, *"everywhere, he ceases not to teach;"* not here only. And then the accusation (is) more aggravated by the present circumstances. *"And yet more,"* say they, *"he has polluted the temple, having brought into it men who are Greeks."* [Acts 21:28] And yet in Christ's time there *"came up (Greeks) to worship"* [John 12:20]: true, but here it speaks of Greeks who had no mind to worship. *"And they seized Paul,"* etc. [Acts 21:30-35] They no longer wanted laws nor courts of justice: they also beat him. But he forbore to make his defence then; he made it afterward: with reason; for they would not even have heard him

then. Pray, why did they cry, *"Away with him?"* [Acts 21:36] They feared he might escape them. Observe how submissively Paul speaks to the tribune. *"May I speak unto you? Then art not thou that Egyptian?"* (v. 37, 38.) This Egyptian, namely, was a cheat and impostor, and the devil expected to cast a cloud over (the Gospel) through him, and implicate both Christ and His Apostles in the charges pertaining to those (imposters): but he prevailed nothing, nay the truth became even more brilliant, being nothing defeated by the machinations of the devil, nay rather shining forth all the more. Since if there had not been impostors, and then these (Christ and His Apostles) had prevailed, perhaps some one might have laid hold upon this: but when those impostors did actually appear, this is the wonder. *"In order,"* says (the Apostle), *"that they which are approved may be made manifest."* [1 Corinthians 11:19] And Gamaliel says, *"Before these days stood up Theudas."* Then let us not grieve that heresies exist, seeing that false Christs wished to attack even Christ both before this and after; with a view to throw Him into the shade, but on every occasion we find the truth shining out transparent. So it was with the Prophets: there were false prophets, and by contrast with these they shone the more: just as disease enhances health, and darkness light, and tempest calm. There is no room left for the Greeks to say that (our teachers) were impostors and mountebanks: for those (that were such) were exposed. It was the same in the case of Moses: God suffered the magicians, on purpose that Moses might not be suspected to be a magician: He let them teach all men to what length magic can go in making a fantastic show: beyond this point they deceived not, but themselves confessed their defeat. Impostors do *us* no harm, rather do us good, if we will apply our mind to the matter. What then, you will say, if we are partners with them in common estimation? The estimation is not among us, but with those who have no judgment. Let not us greatly care for the

estimation of the many, nor mind it more than needs. To God we live, not to men: in heaven we have our conversation, not on earth: *there* lie the awards and the prizes of our labors, thence we look for our praises, thence for our crowns. Thus far let us trouble ourselves about men—that we do not give and afford them a handle against us. But if, though we afford none, those choose to accuse us thoughtlessly and without discrimination, let us laugh, not weep. *"Provide" thou "things honest before the Lord and before men"* [2 Corinthians 8:21]: if, though thou provide things honest, that man derides, give yourself no more concern (for that). You have your patterns in the Scriptures. For, says he, *"do I now persuade men or God?"* [Galatians 1:10] and again, *"We persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God."* [2 Corinthians 5:11] And Christ (spoke) thus of them that take offense: *"Let them alone, they be blind guides of the blind"* [Matthew 15:14]; and again, *"Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you"* [Luke 6:26]: and again, *"Let your works shine, that men may see, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 5:16] And, *"Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea."* [Matthew 18:6]

These sayings are not contrary, nay, they are exceedingly in accord. For when the offense is with us, then woe unto us, but when not with us, not so. And again, Woe to (that man) through whom *"the name of God is blasphemed."* [Romans 2:24] How then if I do what is right in anything, but another blasphemes? That is nothing to me, but only to him: for through him (God) was blasphemed. *"And how is it possible to do what is right in anything, and yet give a handle to the rest?"* Whence will you that I bring examples—from present, or from old times? Not to be easily scared ([ψοφοδεῖς]), shall we speak to the very point now in hand? Paul judaized in Jerusalem, but in Antioch not so: he judaized, and they were offended (p.

282, note 3), but those had no right to be offended. He is said to have saluted both Nero's cupbearer and his concubine: what, think ye, must they have said against him because of this? But they had no right to do so. Since, if he drew them to him for loose living or any wicked acts, one might well be offended: but if in order to right living, what is there to be offended at? Let me mention something that happened to one of my acquaintance. The wrath of God once fell upon (a city), and he being very young (was) in the order of deacon. The bishop was absent at the time, and of the presbyters none took thought for the matter, but indiscriminately they caused in one night immense numbers of people to be baptized all at once, and they did indiscriminately receive baptism, all of them ignorant of everything: these he took apart by a hundred or two hundred together, and discoursed to them, not upon any other subject, but only on the sacraments, so that the unbaptized also were not allowed to be present. Many thought he did this because he coveted rule. But he cared not for that: neither however did he continue the thing for a (longer) time, but immediately desisted. When then? Was he the cause of the scandal? I think not. For if indeed he had done this without cause, they might with reason have ascribed it to him: and so again, if he had continued to do so. For when anything of what is pleasing to God is hindered by another's taking offense, it is right to take no notice: but then is the time to mind it, when we are not forced because of him to offend God. For, say, if, while we are discoursing and putting drunkards to shame ([σκωπτόντων]), any one take offense— am I to give over speaking? Hear Christ say, "*Will ye also go away?*" [John 6:67] So then, the right thing is, neither to take no notice, nor to take too much, of the weakness of the many. Do we not see the physicians acting thus: how, when it may be done, they humor the whims of their patients, but when the gratification does harm, then they will not spare? Always it is good to know

the right mean. Many reviled, because a certain beautiful virgin stayed, and they railed upon those who catechised (her). What then? Was it their duty to desist for that? By no means. For let us not look to this only, whether some be offended, but whether they are justly offended, and so that it is no hurt to ourselves (to give way). *"If meat,"* says (Paul), *"offend my brother, I will eat no meat as long as the world lasts."* [1 Corinthians 8:13] With reason: for the not eating did (him) no harm. If however it offend him, that I wish to renounce ([ἀ] [ποτάξασθαι]) (the world), it is not right to mind him. And whom, you will ask, does this offend? Many, to my knowledge. When therefore the hindrance is a thing indifferent, let (the thing) be done. Else, if we were to look only to this, many are the things we have to desist from: just as, on the other hand, if we should despise (all objections), we have to destroy many (brethren). As in fact Paul also took thought beforehand concerning offense: *"Lest,"* he says, *"in this liberality which is administered by us:"* for it was attended with no loss (to him) to obviate an ill surmise. But when we fall into such a necessity as that great evils should ensue through the other's taking offense let us pay no heed to that person. He has to thank himself for it, and we are not now accountable, for it was not possible to spare him without hurt (to ourselves). Some were offended, because certain believers sat down to meat in (heathen) temples. It was not right to sit down: for no harm came of this (their not doing it). They were offended, because Peter ate with the Gentiles. But he indeed spared them, but (Paul) not so. On all occasions it behooves us in following the laws of God to take great pains that we give no matter of offense; that both ourselves may not have to answer for it, and may have mercy vouchsafed us from God, by the grace and loving-kindness of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 47 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXI. 39, 40

"But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech you, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spoke unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying."

Observe how, when he discourses to those that are without, he does not decline availing himself of the aids afforded by the laws. Here he awes the tribune by the name of his city. And again, elsewhere he said, *"Openly, uncondemned, Romans as we are, they have cast us into prison."* [Acts 19:37] For since the tribune said, *"Are you that Egyptian?"* he immediately drew him off from that surmise: then, that he may not be thought to deny his nation, he says at once, *"I am a Jew:"* he means his religion. (b) What then? He did not deny (that he was a Christian): God forbid: for he was both a Jew and a Christian, observing what things he ought: since indeed he, most of all men, did obey the law: (a) as in fact he elsewhere calls himself, *"Under the law to Christ."* [1 Corinthians 9:21] What is this, I pray? (c) The man that believes in Christ. And when discoursing with Peter, he says: *"We, Jews by nature.— But I beseech you, suffer me to speak unto the people."* [Galatians 2:15] And this is a proof, that he does not speak lies, seeing he takes all as his witnesses. Observe again how mildly he speaks. This again is a very strong argument that he is chargeable with no crime, his being so ready to make his defence, and his wishing to come to discourse with the

people of the Jews. See a man well-prepared ([τεταγμένον ἄνδρα])!— Mark the providential ordering of the thing: unless the tribune had come, unless he had bound him, he would not have desired to speak for his defence, he would not have obtained the silence he did. *"Standing on the stairs."* Then there was the additional facility afforded by the locality, that he should have a high place to harangue them from— in chains too! What spectacle could be equal to this, to see Paul, bound with two chains, and haranguing the people! (To see him,) how he was not a whit perturbed, not a whit confused; how, seeing as he did so great a multitude all hostility against him, the ruler standing by, he first of all made them desist from their anger: then, how prudently (he does this). Just what he does in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the same he does here: first he attracts them by the sound of their common mother tongue: then by his mildness itself. *"He spoke unto them,"* it says, *"in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you."* [Acts 22:1] Mark his address, at once so free from all flattery, and so expressive of meekness. For he says not, *"Masters,"* nor *"Lords,"* but, *"Brethren,"* just the word they most liked: *"I am no alien from. you,"* he says, nor *"against you."* *"Men,"* he says, *"brethren, and fathers:"* this, a term of honor, that of kindred. *"Hear ye,"* says he, *"my"*— he says not, *"teaching,"* nor *"harangue,"* but, *"my defence which I now make unto you."* He puts himself in the posture of a suppliant. *"And when they heard that he spoke in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence."* [Acts 22:2] Do you observe how the using the same tongue subdued them? In fact, they had a sort of awe for that language. Observe also how he prepares the way for his discourse, beginning thus: *"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as*

you all are this day." [Acts 22:3] *"I am a man,"* he says, *"which am a Jew:"* which thing they liked most of all to hear; *"born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia."* That they may not again think him to be of another nation, he adds his religion: *"but brought up in this city."* (p. 282, note 4.) He shows how great was his zeal for the worship, inasmuch as having left his native city, which was so great and so remote too, he chose to be brought up here for the Law's sake. See how from the beginning he attached himself to the law. But this he says, not only to defend himself to them, but to show that not by human intent was he led to the preaching of the Gospel, but by a Divine power: else, having been so educated, he would not have suddenly changed. For if indeed he had been one of the common order of men, it might have been reasonable to suspect this: but if he was of the number of those who were most of all bound by the law, it was not likely that he should change lightly, and without strong necessity. But perhaps some one may say: *"To have been brought up here proves nothing: for what if you came here for the purpose of trading, or for some other cause?"* Therefore he says, *"at the feet of Gamaliel:"* and not simply, *"by Gamaliel,"* but *"at his feet,"* showing his perseverance, his assiduity, his zeal for the hearing, and his great reverence for the man. *"Taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers."* Not simply, *"the law,"* but *"the law of the fathers;"* showing that he was such from the beginning, and not merely one that knew the Law. All this seems indeed to be spoken on their side, but in fact it told against them, since he, knowing the law, forsook it. *"Yes: but what if you indeed knew the law accurately, but did not vindicate it, no, nor love it?"* *"Being a zealot,"* he adds: not simply (one that knew it). Then, since it was a high encomium he had passed upon himself, he makes it theirs as well as his, adding, *"As ye all are this day."* For he shows that they act not from any human object, but from zeal for God; gratifying them, and preoccupying

their minds, and getting a hold upon them in a way that did no harm. Then he brings forward proofs also, saying, "*and I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest does bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders*" (v. 4, 5): "*How does this appear.*" As witnesses he brings forward the high-priest himself and the elders. He says indeed, "*Being a zealot, as you*" (Hom. xix. p. 123): but he shows by his actions, that he went beyond them. For I did not wait for an opportunity of seizing them: I both stirred up the priests, and undertook journeys: I did not confine my attacks, as you did, to men, I extended them to women also: "*both binding, and casting into prisons both men and women.*"

This testimony is incontrovertible; the (unbelief) of the Jews (is left) without excuse. See how many witnesses he brings forward, the elders, the high-priest, and those in the city. Observe his defence, how it is not of cowardly fear (for himself, that he pleads), no, but for teaching and indoctrination. For had not the hearers been stones, they would have felt the force of what he was saying. For up to this point he had themselves as witnesses: the rest, however, was without witnesses: "*From whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and had come near unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? And I answered, Who are Thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom you persecute.*" (v. 6, 7, 8.) Why then, these very things ought to have been held worthy of credit, from those that went before: otherwise he would not have undergone such a revolution. How if he is only making a fine story of it, say you? Answer me, Why did

he suddenly fling away all this zeal? Because he looked for honor? And yet he got just the contrary. But an easy life, perhaps? No, nor that either. Well but something else? Why it is not in the power of thought to invent any other object. So then, leaving it to themselves to draw the inference, he narrates the facts. *"As I came near,"* he says, *"unto Damascus, about noonday."* See how great was the excess of the light. What if he is only making a fine story, say you? Those who were with him are witnesses, who led him by the hand, who saw the light. *"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me."* [Acts 22:9] But in another place he says, *"Hearing the voice, but seeing no man."* [Acts 9:7] It is not at variance: no, there were two voices, that of Paul and the Lord's voice: in that place, the writer means Paul's voice (Hom. xix. p. 124, note 2); as in fact (Paul) here adds, *"The voice of Him that spoke unto me. Seeing no man:"* he does not say, that they did not see the light: but, *"no man,"* that is, *"none speaking."* And good reason that it should be so, since it behooved him alone to have that voice vouchsafed unto him. For if indeed they also had heard it, (the miracle) would not have been so great. Since persons of grosser minds are persuaded more by sight, those saw the light, and were afraid. In fact, neither did the light take so much effect on them, as it did on him: for it even blinded his eyes: by that which befell him, (God) gave them also an opportunity of recovering their sight, if they had the mind. It seems to me at least, that their not believing was providentially ordered, that they might be unexceptionable witnesses. *"And he said unto me"* it says, *"I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom you persecute."* [comp. Acts 9:5] Well is the name of the city (Nazareth) also added, that they might recognize (the Person): moreover, the Apostles also spoke thus. [ch. 2:22; 4:10; 10:38] And Himself bore witness, that they were persecuting Him. *"And they that were*

with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told you of all things which are appointed for you to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive your sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. Enter into the city," it says, "and there it shall be spoken to you of all that is appointed for you to do." [Acts 22:10-13] Lo! Again another witness. And see how unexceptionable he makes him also. "And one Ananias," he says, "a devout man according to the law,"— so far is it from being anything alien!— "having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt" (there). "And I in the same hour received sight." Then follows the testimony borne by the facts. Observe how it is interwoven, of persons and facts; and the persons, both of their own and of aliens: the priests, the elders, and his fellow-travellers: the facts, what he did and what was done to him: and facts bear witness to facts, not persons only. Then Ananias, an alien; then the fact itself, the recovery of sight; then a great prophecy. "And he said, The God of our fathers has chosen you, that you should know His will, and see That Just One." [Acts 22:14] It is well said, "Of the fathers," to show that they were not Jews, but aliens from the law, and that it was not from zeal (for the law) that they were acting. "That you should know His will." Why then His will is this. See how in the form of narrative it is teaching. "And see That Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. For you shall be His witness unto all men of what you have seen and heard. And see," he says, "that Just One." [Acts 22:15] For the present he says no more than this: if He is Just, they are guilty. "And hear the voice of His mouth."

See how high he raises the fact! For you shall be His witness— for this, because you will not betray the sight and hearing (i.e. *"prove false to"*)— *"both of what you have seen, and of what you have heard:"* by means of both the senses he claims his faith, fullness— *"to all men. And now why do you tarry? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name."* [Acts 22:16] Here it is a great thing he has uttered. For he said not, *"Be baptized in His name:"* but, *"calling on the name of Christ."* It shows that He is God: since it is not lawful to *"call upon"* any other, save God. Then he shows also, that he himself was not compelled: for, *"I said,"* says he, *"What must I do?"* Nothing is (left) without witness: no; he brings forward the witness of a whole city, seeing they had beheld him led by the hand. But see the prophecy fulfilled. *"To all men,"* it is said. For he did become a witness to Him, and a witness as it ought to be; by what he suffered, by what he did, and by what he said. Such witnesses ought we also to be, and not to betray the things we have been entrusted withal: I speak not only of doctrines, but also of the manner of life.

For observe: because he had seen, because he had heard, he bears witness to all men, and nothing hindered him. We too bear witness (Mod. text *"have heard"*) that there is a Resurrection and numberless good things: we are bound to bear witness of this to all men. *"Yes, and we do bear witness,"* you will say, *"and do believe."* How; when you act the contrary? Say now: if any one should call himself a Christian, and then having apostatized should hold with the Jews, would this testimony suffice? By no means: for men would desire the testimony which is borne by the actions. Just so, if we say that there is a Resurrection and numberless good things, and then despise those things and prefer the things here, who will believe us? Not what we say, but what we do, is what all men look to. *"You shall be a witness,"* it says, *"unto all men:"* not only to the friendly, but also to the

unbelievers: for this is what witnesses are for; not to persuade those who know, but those who know not. Let us be trustworthy witnesses. But how shall we be trustworthy? By the life we lead. The Jews assaulted him: our passions assault us, bidding us abjure our testimony. But let us not obey them: we are witnesses from God. (Christ) is judged that He is not God: He has sent us to bear witness to Him. Let us bear witness and persuade those who have to decide the point: if we do not bear witness, we have to answer for their error also. But if in a court of justice, where worldly matters come in question, nobody would receive a witness full of numberless vices, much less here, where such (and so great) are the matters to be considered. *We* say, that we have heard Christ, and that we believe the things which He has promised: Show it, say they, by your works: for your life bears witness of the contrary— that you do not believe. Say, shall we look at the money-getting people, the rapacious, the covetous? The people that mourn and wail, that build and busy themselves in all sorts of things, as though they were never to die? *"You do not believe that you shall die, a thing so plain and evident: and how shall we believe you when you bear witness?"* For there are, there are many men, whose state of mind is just as if they were not to die. For when in a lengthened old age they set about building and planting, when will they take death into their calculations? It will be no small punishment to us that we were called to bear witness, but were not able to bear witness of the things that we have seen. We have seen Angels with our eyes, yea, more clearly than those who have (visibly) beheld them. We shall be (Mod. text *"Then let us be"*) witnesses to Christ: for not those only are *"martyrs,"* (or witnesses, whom we so call), but ourselves also. This is why they are called martyrs, because when bidden to abjure (the faith), they endure all things, that they may speak the truth: and we, when we are bidden by our passions to abjure, let us not be overcome. Gold says:

Say that Christ is not Christ. Then listen not to it as to God, but despise its biddings. The evil lusts *"profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] For this is not to witness, but the contrary. And indeed that others should deny (Him) is nothing wonderful: but that we who have been called to bear witness should deny Him, is a grievous and a heinous thing: this of all things does the greatest hurt to our cause. *"It shall be to (your)selves for a testimony."* [Luke 21:13], He says: but (this is) when we ourselves stand to it firmly. If we would all bear witness to Christ, we should quickly persuade the greater number of the heathen. It is a great thing, my beloved, the life (one leads). Let a man be savage as a beast, let him openly condemn you on account of your doctrine, yet he secretly approves, yet he will praise, yet he will admire. For say, whence can an excellent life proceed? From no source, except from a Divine Power working in us. *"What if there be heathen also of such a character?"* If anywhere any of them be such, it is partly from nature, partly from vainglory. Will you learn what a brilliancy there is in a good life, what a force of persuasion it has? Many of the heretics have thus prevailed, and while their doctrines are corrupt, yet the greater part of men out of reverence for their (virtuous) life did not go on to examine their doctrine: and many even condemning them on account of their doctrine, reverence them on account of their life: not rightly indeed, but still so it is, that they do thus feel (towards them). This has brought slanders on the awful articles of our creed, this has turned everything upside down, that no one takes any account of good living: this is a mischief to the faith. We say that Christ is God; numberless other arguments we bring forward, and this one among the rest, that He has persuaded all men to live rightly: but this is the case with few. The badness of the life is a mischief to the doctrine of the Resurrection, to that of the immortality of the soul, to that of the Judgment:

many other (false doctrines) too it draws on with itself, fate, necessity, denial of a Providence. For the soul being immersed in numberless vices, by way of consolations to itself tries to devise these, that it may not be pained in having to reflect that there is a Judgment, and that virtue and vice lie in our own power. (Such a) life works numberless evils, it makes men beasts, and more irrational than beasts: for what things are in each several nature of the beasts, these it has often collected together in one man, and turned everything upside down. This is why the devil has brought in the doctrine of Fate: this is why he has said that the world is without a Providence (Hom. ii. p. 15): this is why he advances his hypothesis of good natures, and evil natures, and his hypothesis of evil (uncreated and) without beginning, and material (in its essence): and, in short, all the rest of it, that he may ruin our life. For it is not possible for a man who is of such a life either to recover himself from corrupt doctrines, or to remain in a sound faith: but of inevitable necessity he must receive all this. For I do not think, for my part, that of those who do not live aright, there could be easily found any who do not hold numberless satanical devices— as, that there is a nativity (or birth-fate) ([γένεσις]), that things happen at random, that all is hap-hazard and chance-medley. Wherefore I beseech you let us have a care for good living, that we may not receive evil doctrines. Cain received for punishment that he should be (ever) groaning and trembling. [Genesis 4:14] Such are the wicked, and being conscious within themselves of numberless bad things, often they start out of their sleep, their thoughts are full of tumult, their eyes full of perturbation; everything is fraught for them with misgivings, everything alarms them, their soul is replete with grievous expectation and cowardly apprehension, contracted with impotent fear and trembling. Nothing can be more effeminate than such a soul, nothing more inane. Like madmen, it has no self-possession. For it were well for it that in

the enjoyment of calm and quiet it were enabled to take knowledge of its proper nobility. But when all things terrify and throw it into perturbation, dreams, and words, and gestures, and forebodings, indiscriminately, when will it be able to look into itself, being thus troubled and amazed? Let us therefore do away with its fear, let us break asunder its bonds. For were there no other punishment, what punishment could exceed this— to be living always in fear, never to have confidence, never to be at ease?

Therefore knowing these things assuredly, let us keep ourselves in a state of calm and be careful to practise virtue, that maintaining both sound doctrines and an upright life, we may without offense pass through this life present, and be enabled to attain unto the good things which God has promised to them that love Him, through the grace and mercy of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 48 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXII. 17-20

"And it came to pass, that, when I had come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get you quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive your testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on you: and when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."

See how he thrusts himself (into danger), I came, he says, after that vision, *"to Jerusalem. I was in a trance,"* etc. Again, this is without witness: but observe, the witness follows from the result. He said, *"They will not receive your testimony:"* they did not receive it. And yet from calculations of reason the surmise should have been this, that they would assuredly receive him. For I was the man that made war upon the Christians: so that they ought to have received him. Here he establishes two things: both that they are without excuse, since they persecuted him contrary to all likelihood or calculation of reason; and, that Christ was God, as prophesying things contrary to expectation, and as not looking to past things, but fore-knowing the things to come. How then does He say, *"He shall bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and children of Israel?"* [Acts 9:15] Not, certainly persuade. Besides which, on other occasions we find the Jews were persuaded, but here they were not. Where most of all they ought to have been persuaded, as knowing his former zeal (in their cause), here they were

not persuaded. *"And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen,"* etc. See where again his discourse terminates, namely, in the forcible main point ([εἰς τὸ ἰσχυρὸν κεφάλαιον]): that it was he that persecuted, and not only persecuted but killed, nay, had he ten thousand hands ([μυρίαίς χερσὶν ἀναιρῶν]) would have used them all to kill Stephen. He reminded them of the murderous spirit heinously indulged (by him and them). Then of course above all they would not endure him, since this convicted them; and truly the prophecy was having its fulfilment: great the zeal, vehement the accusation, and the Jews themselves witnesses of the truth of Christ! *"And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send you far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live."* (v. 21, 22.) The Jews would not endure to hear out all his harangue, but excessively fired by their wrath, they shouted, it says, *"Away with him; for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, the tribune commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him."* (v. 23, 24.) Whereas both the tribune ought to have examined whether these things were so— yes, and the Jews themselves too— or, if they were not so, to have ordered him to be scourged, he *"bade examine him by scourging, that he might know for what cause they so clamored against him."* And yet he ought to have learned from those clamorers, and to have asked whether they laid hold upon anything of the things spoken: instead of that, without more ado he indulges his arbitrary will and pleasure, and acts with a view to gratify them: for he did not look to this, how he should do a righteous thing, but only how he might stop their rage unrighteous as it was. *"And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it*

lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" [Acts 22:25] Paul lied not, God forbid: for he was a Roman: if there was nothing else, he would have been afraid (to pretend this), lest he should be found out, and suffer a worse punishment. (See Sueton. Vit. Claud. §25.) And observe he does not say it peremptorily ([ἀ] [πλῶς]), but, *"Is it lawful for you?"* The charges brought are two, both its being without examination, and his being a Roman. They held this as a great privilege, at that time: for they say that (it was only) from the time of Hadrian that all were named Romans, but of old it was not so. He would have been contemptible had he been scourged: but as it is, he puts *them* into greater fear (than they him). Had they scourged him, they would also have dismissed the whole matter, or even have killed him; but as it is, the result is not so. See how God permits many (good results) to be brought about quite in a human way, both in the case of the Apostles and of the rest (of mankind). Mark how they suspected the thing to be a pretext, and that in calling himself a Roman, Paul lied: perhaps surmising this from his poverty. *"When the centurion heard that, he went and told the tribune, saying, Take heed what you do, for this man is a Roman. Then the tribune came, and said unto him, Tell me, are you a Roman? He said, Yea. And the tribune answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the tribune also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him."* [Acts 22:26-29]— *"But I,"* he says, *"was free born."* So then his father also was a Roman. What then comes of this? He bound him, and brought him down to the Jews. *"On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty whereof he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them."* [Acts 22:30] He

discourses not now to the multitude, nor to the people. *"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."* [Acts 23:1] What he means is this: I am not conscious to myself of having wronged you at all, or of having done anything worthy of these bonds. What then said the high priest? Right justly, and ruler-like, and mildly: *"And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite you, you whited wall: for do you sit to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Do you revile God's high priest? Then said Paul, I knew not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people."* [Acts 23:3-5] Because *"I knew not that he was high priest."* Some say, Why then does he defend himself as if it was matter of accusation, and adds, *"You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people?"* For if he were not the ruler, was it right for no better reason than that to abuse (him or any) other? He says himself, *"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it"* [1 Corinthians 4:12]; but here he does the contrary, and not only reviles, but curses. They are the words of boldness, rather than of anger; he did not choose to appear in a contemptible light to the tribune. For suppose the tribune himself had spared to scourge him, only as he was about to be delivered up to the Jews, his being beaten by their servants would have more emboldened him: this is why Paul does not attack the servant, but the person who gave the order. But that saying, *"Thou whited wall, and do you sit to judge me after the law?"* (is) instead of, Being (yourself) a culprit: as if he had said, And (yourself) worthy of stripes without number. See accordingly how greatly they were struck with his boldness; for whereas the point was to have overthrown the whole matter, they rather commend him. (*infra*, v. 9.) *"For it is written,"* etc. He

wishes to show that he thus speaks, not from fear, nor because (Ananias) did not deserve to be called this, but from obedience to the law in this point also. And indeed I am fully persuaded that he did not know that it was the high priest, since he had returned now after a long interval, and was not in the habit of constant intercourse with the Jews; seeing him too in the midst among many others: for the high priest was no longer easy to be seen at a glance, there being many of them and diverse. So, it seems to me, in this also he spoke with a view to his plea against them: by way of showing that he does obey the law; therefore he (thus) exculpates himself.

(Recapitulation.) (b) But let us review what has been said. (a) "*And when I was came again to Jerusalem,*" etc. [Acts 22:17] How was it, that being a Jew, and there brought up and taught, he did not stay there? Nor did he abide there, unless he had a mind to furnish numberless occasions against him: everywhere just like an exile, fleeing about from place to place. (c) "*While I prayed in the temple,*" he says, "*it came to pass that I was in a trance.*" (To show) that it was not simply a phantom of the imagination, therefore "*while he prayed*" (the Lord) stood by him. And he shows that it was not from fear of their dangers that he fled, but because they would "*not receive*" his "*testimony.*" [Acts 22:18] But why said he "*They know I imprisoned?*" [Acts 22:19] Not to gainsay Christ, but because he wished to learn this which was so contrary to all reasonable expectation. Christ, however, did not teach him (this), but only bade him depart, and he obeys: so obedient is he. "*And they lifted up their voices,*" it says, "*and said, Away with him: it is not fit that this fellow should live.*" [Acts 22:22] Nay, you are the persons not fit to live; not he, who in everything obeys God. O villains and murderers! "*And shaking out their clothes,*" it says, "*they threw dust into the air*" [Acts 22:23], to make insurrection more fierce, because they wished to frighten the governor. And observe; they do not say what the

charge was, as in fact they had nothing to allege, but only think to strike terror by their shouting. *"The tribune commanded,"* etc. and yet he ought to have learned from the accusers, *"wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him, etc. And the chief captain was afraid, after he learned that he was a Roman."* Why then it was no falsehood. *"On the morrow, because he would know the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, etc., he brought him down before the council."* [Acts 22:24-30] This he should have done at the outset. He brought him in, loosed. This above all the Jews would not know what to make of. *"And Paul,"* it says, *"earnestly beholding them."* It shows his boldness, and how it awed them ([τὸ ἐντροπικόν]). *"Then the high priest Ananias."* etc. [ch. 23:1, 2] Why, what has he said that was affronting? What is he beaten for? Why what hardihood, what shamelessness! Therefore (Paul) set him down (with a rebuke): *"God shall smite you thou whited wall."* [Acts 23:3] Accordingly (Ananias) himself is put to a stand, and dares not say a word: only those about him could not bear Paul's boldness. They saw a man ready to die * * * for if this was the case, (Paul) had but to hold his peace, and the tribune would have taken him, and gone his way; he would have sacrificed him to them. He both shows that he suffers willingly what he suffers, and thus excuses himself before them, not that he wished to excuse himself to them — since as for those, he even strongly condemns them — but for the sake of the people. *"Violating the law, do you command me to be beaten?"* Well may he say so: for to kill a man who had done (them) no injury, and that an innocent person, was a violating of the law. For neither was it abuse that was spoken by him, unless one would call Christ's words abusive, when He says, *"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, for you are like whited walls."* [Matthew 23:27] True, you will say: but if he had said it before he had been beaten, it would have betokened not anger, but boldness. But I have

mentioned the reason of this. And (at this rate) we often find Christ Himself *"speaking abusively"* to the Jews when abused by them; as when He says, *"Do not think that I will accuse you."* [John 5:45] But this is not abuse, God forbid. See, with what gentleness he addresses these men: *"I knew not,"* he says, *"that he was God's high priest"* (v. 4, 5): and, (to show) that he was not dissembling ([εἰρωνεύεται]) he adds, *"You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people."* He even confesses him to be still ruler. Let us also learn the gentleness also, that in both the one and the other we may be perfect. For one must look narrowly into them, to learn what the one is and what the other: narrowly, because these virtues have their corresponding vices hard by them: mere forwardness passing itself off for boldness, mere cowardice for gentleness: and need being to scan them, lest any person possessing the vice should seem to have the virtue: which would be just as if a person should fancy that he was cohabiting with the mistress, and not know that it was the servant-maid. What then is gentleness, and what mere cowardice? When others are wronged, and we do not take their part, but hold our peace, this is cowardice: when we are the persons ill-treated, and we bear it, this is gentleness. What is boldness? Again the same, when others are the persons for whom we contend. What forwardness? When it is in our own cause that we are willing to fight. So that magnanimity and boldness go together, as also (mere) forwardness and (mere) cowardice. For he that (does not) resent on his own behalf, will hardly but resent on behalf of others: and he that does not stand up for his own cause, will hardly fail to stand up for others. For when our habitual disposition is pure from passion, it admits virtue also. Just as a body when free from fever admits strength, so the soul, unless it be corrupted by the passions, admits strength. It betokens great strength, this gentleness; it needs a generous and a gallant soul, and one of exceeding loftiness, this gentleness. Or, think you, is it a small thing

to suffer ill, and not be exasperated? Indeed one would not err if in speaking of the disposition to stand up for our neighbors, one should call it the spirit of manly courage. For he that has had the strength to be able to overcome so strong a passion (as this of selfishness), will have the strength to dare the attack on another. For instance, these are two passions, cowardice and anger: if you have overcome anger, it is very plain that you overcome cowardice also: but you get the mastery over anger, by being gentle: therefore (do so) with cowardice also, and you will be manly. Again, if you have not got the better of anger, you have become forward and pugnacious; but not having got the better of this, neither can you get the better of fear; consequently, you will be a coward too: and the case is the same as with the body; if it be weak, it is quickly overcome both by cold and heat: for such is the ill temperament, but the good temperament is able to stand all (changes). Again, greatness of soul is a virtue, and hard by it stands prodigality: economy is a virtue, the being a good manager; hard by it stands parsimony and meanness. Come, let us again collate and compare the virtues (with their vices). Well, then, the prodigal person is not to be called great-minded. How should he? The man who is overcome by numberless passions, how should he be great of soul? For this is not despising money; it is only the being ordered about by other passions: for just as a man, if he were at the beck and bidding of robbers to obey their orders, could not be free (so it is here). His large spending does not come of his contempt of money, but simply from his not knowing how to dispose of it properly: else, were it possible both to keep it and to lay it out on his pleasure, this is what he would like. But he that spends his money on fit objects, this is the man of high soul: for it is truly a high soul, that which is not in slavery to passion, which accounts money to be nothing. Again, economy is a good thing: for thus that will be the best manager, who spends in a proper

manner, and not at random without management. But parsimony is not the same thing with this. For the former indeed, not even when an urgent necessity demands, touches the principal of his money: but the latter will be brother to the former. Well, then, we will put together the man of great soul, and the prudent economist, as also the prodigal and the mean man: for both of these are thus affected from littleness of soul, as those others are (from the opposite). Let us not then call him high-souled, who simply spends, but him who spends aright: nor let us call the economical manager mean and parsimonious, but him who is unseasonably sparing of his money.

What a quantity of wealth that rich man spent, "*who was clothed in purple and fine linen?*" [Luke 16:19] But he was not high-souled: for his soul was possessed by an unmerciful disposition and by numberless lusts: how then should it be great? Abraham had a great soul, spending as he did for the reception of his guests, killing the calf, and, where need was, not only not sparing his property, but not even his life. If then we see a person having his sumptuous table, having his harlots and his parasites, let us not call him a man of a great mind, but a man of an exceedingly little mind. For see how many passions he is enslaved and subject to—gluttony, inordinate pleasure, flattery: but him who is possessed by so many, and cannot even escape one of them, how can any one call magnanimous? Nay, then most of all let us call him little-minded, when he spends the most: for the more he spends, the more does he show the tyranny of those passions: for had they not excessively got the mastery over him, he would not have spent to excess. Again, if we see a person, giving nothing to such people as these, but feeding the poor, and succoring those in need, himself keeping a mean table—him let us call an exceedingly high-souled man: for it is truly a mark of a great soul, to despise one's own comfort, but to care for that of others. For tell me, if you should see a person despising all tyrants, and

holding their commands of no account, but rescuing from their tyranny those who are oppressed and evil entreated; would you not think this a great man? So let us account of the man in this case also. The passions are the tyrant: if then we despise them, we shall be great: but if we rescue others also from them, we shall be far greater, as being sufficient not only for ourselves, but for others also. But if any one, at a tyrant's bidding, beat some other of his subjects, is this greatness of soul? No, indeed: but the extreme of slavery, in proportion as he is great. And now also there is set before us ([πρόκειται]) a soul that is a noble one and a free: but this the prodigal has ordered to be beaten by his passions: the man then that beats himself, shall we call high-souled? By no means. Well then * *, but let us see what is greatness of soul, and what prodigality; what is economy, and what meanness; what is gentleness, and (what) dulness and cowardice; what boldness, and what forwardness: that having distinguished these things from each other, we may be enabled to pass (this life) well-pleasing to the Lord, and to attain unto the good things promised, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 49 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXIII. 6-8

"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."

Again he discourses simply as man, and he does not on all occasions alike enjoy the benefit of supernatural aid. *"I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee:"* both in this, and in what comes after it, he wished to divide the multitude, which had an evil unanimity against him. And he does not speak a falsehood here either: for he was a Pharisee by descent from his ancestors. *"Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."* For since they would not say for what reason they arraigned him, he is compelled therefore to declare it himself. *"But the Pharisees,"* it says, *"confess both."* And yet there are three things: how then does he say both? *"Spirit and Angel"* is put as one. When he is on their side, then they plead for him. *"And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but"* (what) *"if a spirit has spoken to him, or an angel?"* [Acts 23:9] Why did they not plead for him before this? Do you observe, how, when the passions give way, the truth is discovered? Where is the crime, say they, if an angel

has spoken to him, or a spirit? Paul gives them no handle against him. *"And when there arose a great dissension, the tribune, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle."* [Acts 23:10] The tribune is afraid of his being pulled in pieces, now that he has said that he is a Roman: and the matter was not without danger. Do you observe that Paul had a right to profess himself a Roman? Else, neither would (the tribune) have been afraid now. So it remains that the soldiers must bear him off by force. But when the wretches saw all to be without avail, they take the whole matter into their own hands, as they would fain have done before, but were prevented: and their wickedness stops nowhere, though it received so many checks: and yet how many things were providentially ordered, on purpose that they might settle down from their rage, and learn those things through which they might possibly recover themselves! But none the less do they set upon him. Sufficient for proof of his innocence was even this, that the man was saved when at the point to be pulled in pieces, and that with these so great dangers about him, he escaped them all. *"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as you have testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome. And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy."* [Acts 23:11-13] *"They bound themselves under a curse,"* it says. See how vehement and revengeful they are in their malice! What means, *"bound under a curse?"* Why then those men are accused forever, seeing they did not kill Paul. And forty together. For such is the nature of that nation: when there needs concerting together for a good object, not even two concur with each other: but when it is for an

evil object, the entire people does it. And they admit the rulers also as accomplices. *"And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the tribune that he bring him down unto you tomorrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the tribune: For he has a certain thing to tell him. So he took him, and brought him to the tribune, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto you, who has something to say unto you. Then the tribune took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that you have to tell me? And he said, the Jews have agreed to desire you that you would bring down Paul tomorrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from you. So the tribune then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that you have showed these things to me."* [Acts 23:14-22]. Again he is saved by man's forethought. And observe: Paul lets no man learn this, not even the centurion, that the matter might not become known. And the centurion having come, reported to the tribune. And it is well done of the tribune also, that he bids him keep it secret, that it might not become known: moreover he gives his orders to the centurions only, at the time when the thing was to be done: and so Paul is sent into Cæsarea, that there too he might discourse

in a greater theatre and before a more splendid audience: that so the Jews may not be able to say, *"If we had seen Paul, we would have believed— if we had heard him teaching."* Therefore this excuse too is cut off from them. *"And the Lord,"* it said, *"stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as you have testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."* (Yet) even after He has appeared to him, He again suffers him to be saved by man's means. And one may well be astonished at Paul; he was not taken aback, neither said, *"Why, what is this? Have I then been deceived by Christ?"* but he believed: yet, because he believed, he did not therefore sleep: no; what was in his own power by means of human wisdom, he did not abandon. *"Bound themselves by a curse:"* it was a kind of necessity that those men fastened on themselves by the curse. *"That they would neither eat nor drink."* Behold fasting the mother of murder! Just as Herod imposed on himself that necessity by his oath, so also do these. For such are the devil's (ways): under the pretext forsooth of piety he sets his traps. *"And they came to the chief priests,"* etc. And yet they ought to have come (to the tribune), ought to have laid a charge, and assembled a court of justice: for these are not the doings for priests, but for captains of banditti, these are not the doings for rulers, but for ruffians. They endeavor also to corrupt the ruler: but it was providentially ordered, to the intent that he also should learn of their plot. For not (only) by their having nothing to say, but also by their secret attempt, they convicted themselves that they were naught. It is likely too that after (Paul had gone) the chief priests came to (the tribune) making their request, and were put to shame. For of course he would not have liked either to deny or to grant their request. How came he to believe (the young man's tale)? He did so in consequence of what had already taken place; because it was likely they would do this also. And observe their wickedness: they as good as laid a necessity on the chief priests also: for if

they undertook so great a thing themselves, and engaged themselves in the whole risk, much more ought those to do thus much. Do you observe, how Paul is held innocent by those that are without, as was also Christ by Pilate? See their malice brought to naught: they delivered him up, to kill and condemn him: but the result is just the contrary; he is both saved, and held innocent. For had it not been so, he would have been pulled in pieces: had it not been so, he would have perished, he would have been condemned. And not only does (the tribune) rescue him from the rush (made upon him), but also from much other (violence): see how he becomes a minister to him, insomuch that without risk he is carried off safe with so large a force. *"And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night; and provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor. And he wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sends greeting. This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council: whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to you, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before you what they had against him. Fare well."* [Acts 23:23-30]. See how the letter speaks for him as a defence— for it says, *"I found nothing worthy of death,"* but as accusation against them (rather) than against him. *"About to have been killed of them:"* so set upon his death were they. First, *"I came with the army, and rescued him:"* then also *"I brought him down unto them:"* and not

even so did they find anything to lay to his charge: and when they ought to have been stricken with fear and shame for the former act, they again attempt to kill him, insomuch that again his cause became all the more clear. *"And his accusers,"* he says, *"I have sent unto you:"* that at the tribunal where these things are more strictly examined, he may be proved guiltless.

(Recapitulation.) Let us look then to what has been said above. *"I,"* he says, *"am a Pharisee:"* then, that he may not seem to pay court, he adds, *"Of the hope and resurrection of the dead it is, that I am called in question."* [Acts 23:6] From this charge and calumny he commends himself. *"For the Sadducees indeed,"* etc. The Sadducees have no knowledge of anything incorporeal, perhaps not even God; so gross ([παχεῖς]) are they: whence neither do they choose to believe that there is a Resurrection. *"And the scribes,"* etc. Look; the tribune also hears that the Pharisees have acquitted him of the charges, and have given sentence (manuscripts and Edd. [ἐ] [ψηφίσατο], *"he gave sentence"*) in his favor, and with greater confidence carries him off by force. Moreover all that was spoken (by Paul) was full of right-mindedness ([φιλοσοφίας]). *"And the night following the Lord stood by him,"* etc. See what strong consolation! First he praises him, *"As you have testified to My cause in Jerusalem;"* then He does not leave him to be afraid for the uncertain issue of his journey to Rome: for there also, He says, you shall not depart alone ([μόνος], Cat. and Edd. [μόνον]), but you shall also have all this boldness of speech. Hereby it was made manifest, not (only) that he should be saved, but that (he should be so) in order to great crowns in the great city. But why did He not appear to him before he fell into the danger? Because it is evermore in the afflictions that God comforts us; for He appears more wished-for, while even in the dangers He exercises and trains us. Besides, he was then at ease, when free from bonds;

but now great perils were awaiting him. *"We have bound ourselves,"* they say, *"under a curse, that we will not eat nor drink."* [Acts 23:14] What is all this zeal? *"That he may bring him down,"* it says, *"unto you, as though ye would enquire into his case more perfectly."* [Acts 23:15] Has he not twice made a speech unto you? Has he not said that he is a Pharisee? What (would you have) over and above this? So reckless were they and afraid of nothing, not tribunals, not laws: such their hardihood which shrunk from nothing. They both declare their purpose, and announce the way of carrying it into effect. *"Paul's sister's son heard of it."* [Acts 23:16] This was of God's providence, their not perceiving that it would be heard. What then did Paul? He was not alarmed, but perceived that this was God's doing: and casting all upon Him, so he acquits himself (from further concern about it:) *"having called one of the centurions,"* etc. [Acts 23:17] He told of the plot, he was believed; he is saved. If he was acquitted of the charge, why did (the tribune) send the accusers? That the enquiry might be more strict: that the man might be the more entirely cleared.

Such are God's ways of ordering: the very things by which we are hurt, by these same are we benefited. Thus it was with Joseph: his mistress sought to ruin him: and she seemed indeed to be contriving his ruin, but by her contriving she placed him in a state of safety: for the house where that wild beast (of a woman) was kept was a den in comparison with which the prison was gentle. [Genesis 39:1-20] For while he was there, although he was looked up to and courted, he was in constant fear, lest his mistress should set upon him, and worse than any prison was the fear that lay upon him: but after the accusation he was in security and peace, well rid of that beast, of her lewdness and her machinations for his destruction: for it was better for him to keep company with human creatures in miserable plight, than with a maddened mistress. Here he comforted himself, that for

chastity's sake he had fallen into it: there he had been in dread, lest he should receive a death-blow to his soul: for nothing in the world is more annoying than a woman in love can be to a young man who will not (meet her advances): nothing more detestable (than a woman in such case), nothing more fell: all the bonds in the world are light to this. So that the fact was not that he got into prison, but that he got out of prison. She made his master his foe, but she made God his friend: brought him into closer relation to Him Who is indeed the true Master; she cast him out of his stewardship in the family, but made him a familiar friend to that Master. Again, his brethren sold him [Genesis 37:18]; but they freed him from having enemies dwelling in the same house with him, from envy and much ill will, and from daily machinations for his ruin: they placed him far aloof from them that hated him. For what can be worse than this, to be compelled to dwell in the same house with brethren that envy one; to be an object of suspicion, to be a mark for evil designs? So that while they and she were severally seeking to compass their own ends, far other were the mighty consequences working out by the Providence of God for that just man. When he was in honor, then was he in danger; when he was in dishonor, then was he in safety. The eunuchs did not remember him, and right well it was that they did not, that the occasion of his deliverance might be more glorious: that the whole might be ascribed, not to man's favor, but to God's Providence [Genesis 40:23]: that at the right moment, Pharaoh, reduced to need, might bring him out; that not as conferring but as receiving a benefit, the king might release him from the prison. [Genesis 41:40] It behooved to be no servile gift, but that the king should be reduced to a necessity of doing this: it behooved that it should be made manifest what wisdom was in him. Therefore it is that the eunuch forgets him, that Egypt might not forget him, that the king might not be ignorant of him. Had he been delivered at

that time, it is likely he would have desired to depart to his own country: therefore he is kept back by numberless constraints, first by subjection to a master, secondly by being in prison, thirdly by being over the kingdom, to the end that all this might be brought about by the Providence of God. Like a spirited steed that is eager to bound off to his fellows, did God keep him back there, for causes full of glory. For that he longed to see his father, and free him from his distress, is evident from his calling him there. [Genesis 45:9]

Shall we look at other instances of evil designing, how they turn out to our good, not only by having their reward, but also by their working at the very time precisely what is for our good? This (Joseph's) uncle (Esau) had ill designs against his father (Jacob), and drove him out of his native land: what then? [Genesis 27:41] He too set him (thereby) aloof from the danger; for he too got (thereby) to be in safety. He made him a wiser and a better man ([φιλοσοφώτερον]); he was the means of his having that dream [Genesis 28:12] But, you will say, he was a slave in a foreign land? Yes, but he arrives among his own kindred, and receives a bride, and appears worthy to his father-in-law. [Genesis 29:23] But he too cheated him? Yes, but this also turned out to his good, that he might be the father of many children. But it was in his mind to design evil against him? True, but even this was for his good, that he might thereupon return to his own country; for if he had been in good circumstances, he would not have so longed for home. But he defrauded him of his hire? Aye, but he got more by the means. [Genesis 31:7] Thus, in every point of these men's history, the more people designed their hurt, the more their affairs flourished. If (Jacob) had not received the elder daughter, he would not soon have been the father of so many children; he would have dragged out a long period in childlessness, he would have mourned as his wife did. For she indeed had reason to

mourn, as not having become a mother (ib. 30:1, 2.); but he had his consolation: whence also he gives her a repulse. Again, had not (Laban) defrauded him of his hire, he would not have longed to see his own country; the higher points ([φιλοσοφία]) of the man's character would not have come to light, (his wives) would not have become more closely attached to him. For see what they say: *"With devouring has he devoured us and our money."* [Genesis 31:15] So that this became the means of riveting their love to him. After this he had in them not merely wives, but (devoted) slaves; he was beloved by them: a thing that no possession can equal: for nothing, nothing whatever, is more precious than to be thus loved by a wife and to love her. *"And a wife,"* Scripture says, *"that agrees with her husband."* [Sirach 25:1] *"A man and a wife that agree together."* E.V.) One thing this, as the Wise Man puts it, of the things for which a man is to be counted happy; for where this is, there all wealth, all prosperity abounds: as also, where it is not, there all besides profits nothing, but all goes wrong, all is mere unpleasantness and confusion. Then let us seek this before all things. He that seeks money, seeks not this. Let us seek those things which can remain fixed. Let us not seek a wife from among the rich, lest the excess of wealth on her side produce arrogance, lest that arrogance be the means of marring all. See you not what God did? How He put the woman in subjection? [Genesis 3:16] Why are you ungrateful, why without perception? The very benefit God has given you by nature, do not thou mar the help it was meant to be. So that it is not for her wealth that we ought to seek a wife: it is that we may receive a partner of our life, for the appointed order of the procreation of children. It was not that she should bring money, that God gave the woman; it was that she might be an helpmate. But she that brings money, becomes, instead of a wife, a setter up of her own will ([ἐ] [πίβουλος]), a mistress— it may be a wild beast instead of a wife— while she thinks she has a right to give

herself airs upon her wealth. Nothing more shameful than a man who lays himself out to get riches in this way. If wealth itself is full of temptations, what shall we say to wealth so gotten? For you must not look to this, that one or another as a rare and unusual case, and contrary to the reason of the thing, has succeeded: as neither ought we in other matters to fix our regards upon the good which people may enjoy, or their chance successes, out of the common course: but let us look to the reason of the thing as it is in itself, and see whether this thing be not fraught with endless annoyance. Not only you bring yourself into a disreputable position; you also disgrace your children by leaving them poor, if it chance that you depart this life before the wife: and you give her incomparably more occasions for connecting herself with a second bridegroom. Or do you not see that many women make this the excuse for a second marriage— that they may not be despised; that they want to have some man to take the management of their property? Then let us not bring about so great evils for the sake of money; but let us dismiss all (such aims), and seek a beautiful soul, that we may also succeed in obtaining love. This is the exceeding wealth, this the great treasure, this the endless good things: whereunto may we all attain by the grace and loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 50 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXIII. 31, 32, 33

"Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: who, when they came to Cæsarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him."

Like some king whom his body-guards escort, so did these convey Paul; in such numbers too, and by night, for fear of the wrath of the people. Now then you will say that they have got him out of the city, they desist from their violence? No indeed. But (the tribune) would not have sent him off with such care for his safety, but that while he himself had found nothing amiss in him, he knew the murderous disposition of his adversaries. *"And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; I will hear you, said he, when your accusers are also come."* Already Lysias has spoken for his exculpation; (but the Jews seek to) gain the hearer beforehand. *"And he ordered him to be kept in custody in Herod's prætorium"* (v. 34, 35): again Paul is put in bonds. *"And after five days came down the high priest Ananias with the elders."* See how for all this they do not desist; hindered as they were by obstacles without number, nevertheless they come, only to be put to shame here also. *"And with an orator, one Tertullus."* And what need was there of *"an orator? Which (persons) also informed the governor against Paul."* [Acts 24:1] See how this man also from the very outset (b) with his praises seeks to gain the judge beforehand. *"And when he was*

called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by you we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by your providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness." (v. 2, 3.) Then as having much to say, he passes by the rest: *"Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto you, I pray you that you would hear us of your clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world."* (a) As a revolutionary and seditious person he wishes to deliver him up. And yet, it might be answered, it is ye that have done this. (c) And see how he would put up the judge to a desire of punishing, seeing he had here an opportunity to coerce the man that turned the world upside down! As if they had achieved a meritorious action, they make much of it: *"Having found this fellow,"* etc., *"a mover of sedition,"* say they, *"among all the Jews throughout the world."* (Had he been such), they would have proclaimed him as a benefactor and saviour of the nation! *"And a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes."* (v. 4, 5.) They thought this likely to tell as a reproach— *"of the Nazarenes:"* and by this also they seek to damage him— for Nazareth was a mean place. And, *"we have found him,"* say they: see how maliciously they calumniate him: (found him), as if he had been always giving them the slip, and with difficulty they had succeeded in getting him: though he had been seven days in the Temple! *"Who also has gone about to profane the temple; whom we took, [and would have judged according to our law.]"* [Acts 24:6] See how they insult even the Law; it was so like the Law, forsooth, to beat, to kill, to lie in wait! And then the accusation against Lysias: though he had no right, say they, to interfere, in the excess of his confidence he snatched him from us: [*"But the tribune Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto you*]: by examining of

whom yourself may take knowledge of all these things, where of we accuse him. And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so." [Acts 24:7-9]. What then says Paul? *"Then Paul; after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that you have been of many years a just judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself."* [Acts 24:10] This is not the language of flattery, his testifying to the judge's justice: no, the adulation was rather in that speech of the orator, *"By you we enjoy great quietness."* If so, then why are you seditious? What Paul sought was justice. *"Knowing you to be a just judge, I cheerfully,"* says he, *"answer for myself."* Then also he enforces this by the length of time: that (he had been judge) *"of many years. Because that you may understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship."* [Acts 24:11] And what is this? (It means), *"that I could not immediately have raised a commotion."* Because the accuser had nothing to show (as done) in Jerusalem, observe what he said: *"among all the Jews throughout the world."* Therefore it is that Paul here forcibly attracts him— *"to worship,"* he says, *"I came up,"* so far am I from raising sedition— and lays a stress upon this point of justices being the strong point. *"And they neither found me in the Temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city"* [Acts 24:12]; which in fact was the truth. And the accusers indeed use the term *"ringleader,"* as if it were a case of fighting and insurrection; but see how mildly Paul here answers. *"But this I confess unto you, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."* (v. 14, 15.) The accusers were separating him (as an alien), but he identifies himself with

the Law, as one of themselves. *"And in this,"* says he, *"do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. In which they found me purified in the temple, not with multitude, neither with tumult."* (v. 16, 17, 18.) Why then did you come up? What brought you here? To worship, says he; to do alms. This was not the act of a factious person. Then also he casts out their person: *"but,"* says he, (they that found me, were) *"certain Jews from Asia, who ought to have been here before you, and object, if they had ought against me. Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me while I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried, standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day."* (v. 19, 20, 21.) For this is justification in superabundance, not to flee from his accusers, but to be ready to give account to all. *"Of the resurrection of the dead,"* says he, *"am I this day called in question."* And not a word said he of what he had to say, how they had conspired against him, had violently kept him, had laid wait for him—for these matters are course spoken of by the tribune—but by Paul, though there was danger, not so: no, he is silent, and only defends himself, though he had very much to say. (b) *"In which"* (alms), says he, *"they found me in course of purifying in the Temple."* Then how did he profane it? For it was not the part of the same man both to purify himself and worship and come for this purpose, and then to profane it. This has with it a surmise of the justice of his cause, that he does not fall into a long discourse. And he gratifies the judge, I suppose, by that also (namely, by), making his defence compendious: (d) seeing that Tertullus before him did make a long harangue. (f) And this too is a proof of mildness, that when one has much to say, in order not to be troublesome one says but few words. (c) But let us look again at what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) *"Then the soldiers,"* etc. [Acts 23:31-33] (a) This also made Paul famous in Cæsarea, his coming with so large a force.—*"But,"* says Tertullus, *"that I be not further tedious,"* (e) showing that (Felix) does find him tedious ([ἐ] [γκόπτεται]): *"I beseech you,"* he does not say, Hear the matter, but, *"hear us of your clemency."* [Acts 24:4] Probably it is to pay court, that he thus lays out his speech. (g) *"For having found this man, a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world"* [Acts 24:5]: how then, it might be said, if he did this elsewhere (and not here)? No, says he; among us also he has profaned the Temple; *"attempted,"* says he, *"to profane it:"* but the how, he leaves untold. *"Whom also we took."* etc. *"But the tribune,"* etc. And while he thus exaggerates what relates to the tribune, see how he extenuates the part of the accusers themselves. *"We took him,"* he says, *"and would have judged him according to our Law."* [Acts 24:6] He shows that it is a hardship to them that they have to come to foreign tribunals, and that they would not have troubled him had not the tribune compelled them, and that he, having no concern in the matter, had seized the man by force: for in fact the wrongs done were against us, and with us the tribunal ought to have been. For that this is the meaning, see what follows: *"with great violence"* [Acts 24:7], he says. For this conduct is violence. *"From whom you may know."* He neither dares to accuse him (the tribune)— for the man was indulgent (forsooth)— nor does he wholly pass it by. Then again, lest he should seem to be lying, he adduces Paul himself as his own accuser. *"From whom, by examining him, you may take knowledge of all these things."* [Acts 24:8] Next, as witnesses also of the things spoken, the accusers, the same persons themselves both witnesses and accusers: *"And the Jews also assented,"* etc. [Acts 24:9] But Paul, *"Forasmuch as I know that you have been of many years a just judge."* [Acts 24:10] Why then, he is no stranger or alien or

revolutionary person, seeing he had known the judge for many years. And he does well to add the epithet *"just,"* that he (Felix) might not look to the chief priest, nor to the people, nor the accuser. See, how he did not let himself be carried away into abuse, although there was strong provocation. *"Believing,"* he says, *"that there will be a resurrection:"* now a man who believed a resurrection, would never have done such things— *"which"* (resurrection) *"they themselves also allow."* [Acts 24:15] He does not say it of them, that they believe *"all things written in the Prophets:"* it was he that believed them all, not they: but how *"all,"* it would require a long discourse to show. And he nowhere makes mention of Christ. Here by saying, *"Believing,"* he does (virtually) introduce what relates to Christ; for the present he dwells on the subject of the resurrection, which doctrine was common to them also, and removed the suspicion of any sedition. And for the cause of his going up, *"I came,"* he says, *"to bring alms to my nation and offerings."* [Acts 24:17] How then should I have troubled those, for the bringing offerings to whom I had come so long a journey? *"Neither with multitude, nor with tumult."* [Acts 24:18] Everywhere he does away the charge of sedition. And he also does well to challenge his accusers who were from Asia, *"Who ought to accuse before you,"* etc., but he does well also not to reject this either; *"or else,"* says he, *"let these same here say. Touching the resurrection of the dead,"* etc. (v. 19, 20, 21): for in fact it was on this account they were sore troubled from the first, because he preached the Resurrection. This being proved, the things relating to Christ also were easily introduced, that He was risen. *"What evil doing,"* he says, *"they found in me. In the council"* [Acts 4:2] he says: the examination not having taken place in private. That these things which I say are true, those witness who bring this charge against me. *"Having,"* he says, *"a conscience void of offense both toward God, and toward men."* [Acts 24:16] This is the

perfection of virtue, when even to men we give no handle against us, and are careful to be void of offense with God. *"That I cried,"* he says, *"in the council."* He also shows their violence. They have it not to say, Thou did these things under the pretext of alms: for (it was) *"not with multitude, nor with tumult:"* especially as upon enquiry made concerning this thing, nothing further was found. Do you observe his moderation, though there were dangers? Do you observe how he keeps his tongue from evil-speaking, how he seeks only one thing, to free himself from the charges against himself, not that he may criminate them, except so far as he might be obliged to do so while defending himself? Just as Christ also said: *"I have not a devil, but I honor My Father: but you do dishonor Me."* [John 8:49]

Let us imitate him, since he also was an imitator of Christ. If he, with enemies, who went even to the length of murder and slaughter, said nothing offensive to them, what pardon shall we deserve, who in reviling and abuse become infuriated, calling our enemies villains, detestable wretches? What pardon shall we deserve, for having enemies at all? Hear you not, that to honor (another) is to honor one's self? So it is: but we disgrace ourselves. You accuse (some one) that he has abused you: then why do you bring yourself under the same accusation? Why inflict a blow on yourself? Keep free from passion, keep unwounded: do not, by wishing to smite another, bring the hurt upon yourself. What, is the other tumult of our soul not enough for us, the tumult that is stirred up, though there be none to stir it up — for example, its outrageous lusts, its griefs and sorrows, and such like — but we must needs heap up a pile of others also? And how, you will say, is it possible, when one is insulted and abused, to bear this? And how is it not possible, I ask? Is a wound got from words; or do words inflict bruises on our bodies? Then where is the hurt to us? So that, if we will, we can bear it. Let us lay down for ourselves a law not to grieve, and we shall bear it: let us

say to ourselves, "*It is not from enmity; it is from infirmity*"— for it is indeed owing to an infirmity, since, for proof that it comes not from enmity nor from malignity of disposition, but from infirmity, the other also would fain have restrained (his anger), although he had suffered numberless wrongs. If we only have this thought in our minds, that it is from infirmity, we shall bear it, and while we forgive the offending person, we shall try not to fall into it ourselves. For I ask all you who are present: would you have wished to be able to exercise such a philosophic temper, as to bear with those who insult you? I think so. Well, then, he insulted unwillingly; he would rather not have done so, but he did it, forced by his passion: refrain yourself. Do you not see (how it is with) the demoniacs (in their fits)? Just then as it is with them, so with him: it is not so much from enmity, as from infirmity (that he behaves as he does): endure it. And as for us— it is not so much from the insults as they are in themselves that we are moved, as from our own selves: else how is it that when madmen offer us the same insults, we bear it? Again, if those who insult us be our friends, in that case too we bear it: or also our superiors, in that case also we bear it: how then is it not absurd, that in the case of these three, friends, madmen, and superiors, we bear it, but where they are of the same rank or our inferiors, we do not bear it? I have oftentimes said: It is but an impulse of the moment, something that hurries us away on the sudden: let us endure it for a little, and we shall bear the whole thing. The greater the insults, the more weak the offender. Do you know when it behooves us to grieve? When we have insulted another, and he keeps silence: for then he is strong, and we weak: but if the contrary be the case, you must even rejoice: you are crowned, you are proclaimed conqueror, without having even entered into the contest, without having borne the annoyance of sun, and heat, and dust, without having grappled with an antagonist and let him close with you; nothing but a mere

wish on your part, sitting or standing, and you have got a mighty crown: a crown far greater than those (combatants earn): for to throw an enemy standing to the encounter, is nothing like so great as to overcome the darts of anger. You have conquered, without having even let him close with you, you have thrown down the passion that was in you, have slain the beast that was roused, have quelled the anger that was raging, like some excellent herdsman. The fight was like to have been an intestine one, the war a civil war. For, as those who sit down to besiege from without (endeavor to), embroil (the besieged) in civil discords, and then overcome them; so he that insults, unless he rouse the passion within us, will not be able to overcome us: unless we kindle the flame in ourselves, he has no power. Let the spark of anger be within us, so as to be ready for lighting at the right moment, not against ourselves, nor so as to involve us in numberless evils. See ye not how the fire in houses is kept apart, and not thrown about at random everywhere, neither among straw, nor among the linen, nor just where it may chance, that so there may not be danger, if a wind blow on it, of its kindling a flame: but whether a maid-servant have a lamp, or the cook light a fire, there is many an injunction given, not to do this in the draught of the wind, nor near a wooden panel, nor in the night-time: but when the night has come on, we extinguish the fire, fearing lest perchance while we are asleep and there is none to help, it set fire, and burn us all. Let this also be done with regard to anger; let it not be scattered everywhere up and down in our thoughts, but let it be in some deep recess of the mind, that the wind arising from the words of him who is opposing us may not easily reach to it, but that it receive the wind (which is to rouse it) from ourselves, who know how to rouse it in due measure and with safety. If it receive the wind from without, it knows no moderation; it will set everything on fire: oftentimes when we are asleep this wind will come upon it, and will burn up all. Let it

therefore be with us (in safe keeping) in such sort as only to kindle a light: for anger does kindle a light when it is managed as it ought to be: and let us have torches against those who wrong others, against the devil. Let not the spark lie anywhere as it may chance, nor be thrown about; let us keep it safe under ashes: in lowly thoughts let us keep it slumbering. We do not want it at all times, but when there is need to subdue and to make tender, to mollify obduracy, and convict the soul. What evils have angry and wrathful passions wrought! And what makes it grievous indeed is, that when we have parted asunder, we have no longer the power to come together again, but we wait for others (to do this): each is ashamed, and blushes to come back himself and reconcile the other. See, he is not ashamed to part asunder and to be separated; no, he takes the lead as author of the evil: but to come forward and patch that which is rent, this he is ashamed to do: and the case is just the same, as if a man should not shrink from cutting off a limb, but should be ashamed to join it together again. What do you say, O man? Have you committed great injuries, and yourself been the cause of the quarrel? Why, then, you would justly be the first to go and be reconciled, as having yourself furnished the cause. But he did the wrong, he is the cause of the enmity? Why then, for this reason also you must do it, that men may the more admire you, that in addition to the former, you may get the first prize in the latter also: as you were not the cause of the enmity, so neither of its being extended further. Perhaps also the other, as conscious within himself of numberless evils, is ashamed and blushes. But he is haughty? On this account above all, do not hesitate to run and meet him: for if the ailment in him be twofold, both haughtiness and anger, in this you have mentioned the very reason why you ought to be the first to go to him, you that are the one in sound health, the one who is able to see: as for him, he is in darkness: for such is anger and false pride. But do you, who art free from these and in

sound health, go to him — you the physician, go to the sick. Does any of the physicians say, Because such an one is sick, I do not go to him? No, this is the very reason above all why they do go, when they see that he is not able to come to them. For of those who are able (to come) they think less, as of persons not extremely ill, but not so of those who lie at home sick. Or are not pride and anger, think you, worse than any illness? Is not the one like a sharp fever, the other like a body swollen with inflammation? Think what a thing it is to have a fever and inflammation: go to him, extinguish the fire, for by the grace of God you can, go, assuage the heat as it were with water. *"But,"* you will say, *"how if he is only the more set up by my doing this very thing?"* This is nothing to you: you have done your part, let him take account for himself: let not our conscience condemn us, that this thing happens in consequence of any omission of what ought to have been done on our part. *"In so doing,"* says the Scripture, *"you shall heap coals of fire on his head."* [Romans 12:20, cf. Hom. in l. xxii. §3] And yet, for all that this is the consequence, it bids us go and be reconciled and do good offices— not that we may heap coals of fire, but that (our enemy) knowing that future consequence, may be assuaged by the present kindness, that he may tremble, that he may fear our good offices rather than our hostilities, and our friendships rather than our ill designs. For one does not so hurt his hater by showing his resentment as an enemy, as by doing him good and showing kindness. For by his resentment, he has hurt both himself and perhaps the other also in some little degree: but by doing good offices, he has heaped coals of fire on his head. *"Why then,"* you will say, *"for fear of thus heaping coals one ought not to do this (b) but to carry on the enmity to greater lengths."* By no means: it is not you that cause this, but he with his brutish disposition. For if, when you are doing him good, and honoring him, and offering to be reconciled, he persists in keeping up the enmity, it is he

has kindled the fire for himself, he has set his own head on fire; you are guiltless. Do not want to be more merciful than God (b), or rather, if you wish it, you will not be able, not even in the least degree. How should you? *"As far as the heaven is from the earth,"* Scripture says, *"so far are My counsels from your counsels"* [Isaiah 45:8]: and again, *"If you,"* He says, *"being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more your heavenly Father"* [Matthew 7:11]? But in fact this talk is mere pretext and subterfuge. Let us not prevaricate with God's commandments. *"And how do we prevaricate,"* you will say? He has said, *"In so doing, you will heap coals of fire on his head:"* and you say, I do not like to do this. (a) But are you willing to heap coals after another fashion, that is upon your own head? For in fact this is what resentment does: (c) since you shall suffer evils without number. (e) You say, *"I am afraid for my enemy, because he has done me great injuries:"* in reality is it this you say? But how came you to have an enemy? But how came you to hate your enemy? You fear for him that has injured you, but do you not fear yourself? Would that you had a care for yourself! Do not act (the kindness) with such an aim as this: or rather do it, though it be but with such an aim. But you do it not at all. I say not to you, *"you will heap coals of fire:"* no, I say another and a greater thing: only do it. For Paul says this only by way of summoning you (if only), in hope of the vengeance, to put an end to the enmity. Because we are savage as wild beasts in disposition, and would not otherwise endure to love our enemy, unless we expected some revenge, he offers this as a cake, so to say, to a wild beast. For to the Apostles (the Lord) says not this, but what says He? *"That ye may be like to your Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 5:45] And besides, it is not possible that the benefactor and the benefited should remain in enmity. This is why Paul has put it in this way. Why, affecting a high and generous principle in your words, why in your

deeds do you not even observe (common) moderation? (It sounds) well; you do not feed him, for fear of thereby heaping upon him coals of fire: well then, you spare him? Well then, you love him, you act with this object in view? God knows, whether you have this object in so speaking, and are not palming this talk upon us as a mere pretence and subterfuge. You have a care for your enemy, you fear lest he be punished, then would you not have extinguished your anger? For he that loves to that degree that he overlooks his own interest for the sake of the other's advantage, that man has no enemy. (Then indeed) you might say this. How long shall we trifle in matters that are not to be trifled with, and that admit of no excuse? Wherefore I beseech you, let us cut off these pretexts; let us not despise God's laws: that we may be enabled with well-pleasing to the Lord to pass this life present, and attain unto the good things promised, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 51 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXIV. 22, 23

"And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them and said, When Lysias the tribune shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him."

See how much close investigation is made by the many in a long course of time, that it should not be said that the trial was hurried over. For, as the orator had made mention of Lysias, that he took *"him away with violence, Felix,"* he says, *"deferred them. Having knowledge of that way:"* that is, he put them off on purpose: not because he wanted to learn, but as wishing to get rid of the Jews. On their account, he did not like to let him go: to punish him was not possible; that would have been (too) barefaced. *"And to let him have liberty, and to forbid none of his acquaintance to minister to him."* So entirely did he too acquit him of the charges. Howbeit, to gratify them, he detained him, and besides, expecting to receive money, he called for Paul. *"And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance (i.e. self-control or chastity), and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go your way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for you. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him; wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and*

communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's room: and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

[Acts 24:24-27] See how close to the truth are the things written. But he sent for him frequently, not that he admired him, nor that he praised the things spoken, nor that he wished to believe, but why? *"Expecting,"* it says, *"that money should have been given him."* Observe how he does not hide here the mind of the judge. *"Wherefore he sent for him,"* etc. And yet if he had condemned him, he would not have done this, nor have wished to hear a man, condemned and of evil character. And observe Paul, how, though reasoning with a ruler, he says nothing of the sort that was likely to amuse and entertain, but (*"he reasoned,"* it says,) *"of righteousness, and of the coming judgment,"* and of the resurrection. And such was the force of his words, that they even terrified the governor. This man is succeeded in his office by another, and he leaves Paul a prisoner: and yet he ought not to have done this; he ought to have put an end to the business: but he leaves him, by way of gratifying them. They however were so urgent, that they again besought the judge. Yet against none of the Apostles had they set themselves thus pertinaciously; there, when they had attacked, anon they desisted. So providentially is he removed from Jerusalem, having to do with such wild beasts. And they nevertheless request that he might be brought again there to be tried. *"Now when Festus had come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him, and desired favor against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him."* [Acts 25:1-3] Here now God's providence interposed, not permitting the governor to do this: for it was natural that he having just come to the government would wish to gratify them: but God suffered him not. *"But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at*

Cæsarea, and that he himself would depart shortly there. Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought." [Acts 25:4-6] But after they came down, they immediately made their accusations shamelessly and with more vehemence: and not having been able to convict him on grounds relating to the Law, they again according to their custom stirred the question about Cæsar, being just what they did in Christ's case. For that they had recourse to this is manifest by the fact, that Paul defends himself on the score of offenses against Cæsar. *"And when he had come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all. But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Will you go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me"?* [Acts 25:7-9] Wherefore he too gratifies the Jews, the whole people, and the city. Such being the case, Paul terrifies him also, using a human weapon for his defence. *"Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as you very well know. For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar."* (v. 10, 11.) Some one might say, How is it, that having been told, *"You must also bear witness of Me in Rome,"* [Acts 23:11], he, as if unbelieving, did this? God forbid: nay, he did it, because he so strongly believed. For it would have been a tempting of God to be bold on account of that declaration, and to cast

himself into numberless dangers, and to say: *"Let us see if God is able even thus to deliver me."* But not so does Paul; no, he does his part, all that in him lies, committing the whole to God. Quietly also he reproves the governor: for, *"If, says he, I am an offender, you do well: but if not, why do you give me up?"* *"No man,"* he says, *"may sacrifice me."* He put him in fear, so that even if he wished, he could not sacrifice him to them; while also as an excuse to them he had Paul's appeal to allege. *"Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Have you appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar shall you go. And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus."* (v. 12, 13.) Observe, he communicates the matter to Agrippa, so that there should be other hearers once more, both the king, and the army, and Bernice. Thereupon a speech in his exculpation. *"And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. Therefore, when they had come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar. Then Agrippa*

said unto Festus, *I would also hear the man myself. Tomorrow, said he, you shall hear him.*" [Acts 25:14-22] And observe a crimination of the Jews, not from Paul, but also from the governor. "*Desiring,*" he says, "*to have judgment against him.*" To whom I said, to their shame, that "*it is not the manner of the Romans,*" before giving an opportunity to speak for himself, "*to sacrifice a man.*" But I did give him (such opportunity), and I found no fault in him. "*Because I doubted,*" says he, of "*such manner of questions:*" he casts a veil also over his own wrong. Then the other desires to see him. (b) But let us look again at what has been said.

(Recapitulation.) "*And when Felix,*" etc. [Acts 24:22] Observe on all occasions how the governors try to keep off from themselves the annoyance of the Jews, and are often compelled to act contrary to justice, and seek pretexts for deferring: for of course it was not from ignorance that he deferred the cause, but knowing it. And his wife also hears, together with the governor. [Acts 24:24] This seems to me to show great honor. For he would not have brought his wife to be present with him at the hearing, but that he thought great things of him. It seems to me that she also longed for this. And observe how Paul immediately discourses not only about faith, nor about remission of sins, but also about practical points of duty. "*Go your way,*" he says, "*for this time: when I have a convenient season, I will call for you.*" [Acts 24:25] Observe his hardness of heart: hearing such things, "*he hoped that he should receive money from him!*" [Acts 24:26] And not only so, but even after conversing with him— for it was towards the end of his government— he left him bound, "*willing to show the Jews a pleasure*" [Acts 24:27]: so that he not only coveted money, but also glory. How, O wretch, can you look for money from a man who preaches the contrary? But that he did not get it, is evident from his leaving him bound; he would have loosed him, had he received it. "*Of temperance,*" it says, he

reasoned; but the other was hankering to receive money from him who discoursed these things! And to ask indeed he did not dare: for such is wickedness: but he hoped it. *"And when two years were completed,"* etc., so that it was but natural that he showed them a pleasure, as he had been so long governor there. *"Now when Festus had come into the province,"* etc. [ch. 25:1, 2] At the very beginning, the priests came to him, who would not have hesitated to go even to Cæsarea, unless he had been seen immediately coming up, since immediately on his arrival they come to him. And he spends ten days, in order, I suppose, to be open to those who wished to corrupt him with bribes. But Paul was in the prison. *"They besought him,"* it says, *"that he would send for him:"* why did they desire it as a favor, if he was deserving of death? But thus their plotting became evident even to him, so that discoursing of it (to Agrippa), he says, *"desiring to have judgment against him."* They wanted to induce him to pass sentence now immediately, being afraid of Paul's tongue. What are you afraid of? What are you in such a hurry? In fact, that expression, *"that he should be kept"* [Acts 25:4], shows this. Does he want to escape? *"Let them therefore,"* he says, *"which among you are able, accuse him."* [Acts 25:5] Again accusers, again at Cæsarea, again Paul is brought forth. And having come, immediately *"he sat on the judgment-seat"* [Acts 25:6]; with all his haste: they so drove, so hurried him. While as yet he had not got acquainted with the Jews, nor experienced the honor paid to him by them, he answered rightly: but now that he had been in Jerusalem ten days, he too wants to pleasure them (by sacrificing Paul to them): then, also to receive Paul, *"Will you,"* says he, *"be judged there of these things by me?"* [Acts 25:9] I am not giving you up to them— but this was the fact— and he leaves the point to his own choice, that by this mark of respect he might get him to yield: since his was the sentence, and it would have been too barefaced, when he had

been convicted of nothing here, to take him back there. *"But Paul said, At Cæsar's tribunal am I standing,"* etc. [Acts 25:10]: he did not say, I will not, lest he should make the judge more vehement, but (here) again is his great boldness: They cast me out once for all, themselves, and by this they think to condemn me, by their showing that I have offended against Cæsar: at his bar I choose to be judged, at the bar of the injured person himself. *"To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well know."* Here now he reproved him, that he too wished to sacrifice him to the Jews: then, on the other hand, he relaxes (the sternness of) his speech: *"if then I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die."* I utter sentence against myself. For along with boldness of speech there must be also justness of cause, so as to abash (the hearer). *"But if there be nothing in the things whereof these accuse me, no man"*— however he may wish it— *"no man may sacrifice me to please them."* He said, not, I am not worthy of death, nor, I am worthy to be acquitted, but, I am ready to take my trial before Cæsar. At the same time too, remembering the dream, he was the more confident to appeal. [Acts 23:11] And he said not, Thou (may not), but, neither any other man may sacrifice me, that it might be no affront to him. *"Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council"*— do you observe how he seeks to gratify them? For this is favor— *"having conferred,"* it says, *"with the council, he said, Have you appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar shall you go."* [Acts 25:12] See how his trial is again lengthened out, and how the plot against him becomes an occasion for the preaching: so that with ease and in safe custody he should be taken away to Rome, with none to plot evil against him: for it was not the same thing his simply coming there, and his coming on such a cause. For, in fact this was what made the Jews come together there. [Acts 28:17] Then again, some time passes while he tarries at Jerusalem, that you may learn, that, though

some time passed, the evil design against him prevails nothing, God not permitting it. But this king Agrippa, who was also a Herod, was a different Agrippa, after him of James' time, so that this is the fourth (Herod). See how his enemies coöperate with him against their will. To make the audience large, Agrippa falls into a desire of hearing: and he does not simply hear, but with much parade. And see what a vindication ([απολογία])! So writes Festus, and the ruthlessness of the Jews is openly made a show of: for when it is the governor that says these things, he is a witness above all suspicion: so that the Jews are condemned by him also. For, when all had pronounced sentence against them, then, and not sooner, God brings upon them the punishment. But observe: Lysias gave it against them, Felix against them, Festus against them— although he wished to gratify them — Agrippa against them. What further? The Pharisees— even they gave it against themselves. No evil, says Festus, *"of such things as I supposed: no accusation did they bring against him."* [Acts 25:18] And yet they did bring it: true, but they did not prove it: for their evil design and daring plot against him gave cause to surmise this, but the examination brought out nothing of the kind. *"And of one Jesus,"* he says, *"which was dead."* [Acts 25:19] He says naturally enough, *"of one"* (Jesus), as being a man in office, and not caring for these things. *"And not knowing, for my part, what to make of the enquiry concerning these things"* [Acts 25:20]— of course, it went beyond a judge's hearing, the examining into these matters. If you are at a loss, why do you drag him to Jerusalem? But the other would not deign this: no, *"To Cæsar"* (says he); as in fact it was touching Cæsar that they accused him. Do you hear the appeal? Hear the plotting of the Jews? Hear their factious spirit? All these things provoked him to a desire (of hearing him): and he gives them the gratification and Paul becomes more renowned. For such as I said, are the ill designs (of

enemies). Had not these things been so, none of these rulers would have deigned to hear him, none would have heard with such quietness and silence. And he seems indeed to be teaching, he seems to be making a defence; but he rather makes a public harangue with much orderliness. Then let us not think that ill designs against us are a grievous thing. So long as we do not make ill designs against ourselves, no one will be able to have ill designs against us: or rather, people may do this, but they do us no hurt; nay, even benefit us in the highest degree: for it rests with ourselves, whether we shall suffer evil, or not suffer evil. Lo! I testify, and proclaim with a loud voice, more piercing even than the sound of a trumpet— and were it possible to ascend on high and cry aloud, I would not shrink from doing it— him that is a Christian, none of all the human beings that inhabit the earth will have power to hurt. And why do I say, human beings? Not even the Evil Spirit himself, the tyrant, the Devil, can do this, unless the man injure himself; be what it may that any one works, in vain he works it. For even as no human being could hurt an angel, if he were on earth, so neither can one human being hurt another human being. But neither again will he himself be able to hurt another, so long as he is good. What then can be equal to this, when neither to be hurt is possible, nor to hurt another? For this thing is not less than the former, the not wishing to hurt another. Why, that man is a kind of angel, yea, like God. For such is God; only, He indeed (is such) by nature, but this man, by moral choice: neither to be hurt is possible (for either), nor to hurt another. But this thing, this "*not possible*," think not that it is for any want of power— for the contrary to this is want of power— no, I speak of the morally incompatible ([τὸ ἀνενδεκτόν]). For the (Divine) Nature is neither Itself susceptible of hurt, nor capable of hurting another: since this very thing in itself is a hurt. For in no other way do we hurt ourselves, than by hurting another, and our greatest sins become

such from our doing injury to ourselves. So that for this reason also the Christian cannot be hurt, namely, because neither can he hurt. But how in hurting others we hurt ourselves, come, let us take this saying in hand for examination in detail. Let a man wrong another, insult, overreach; whom then has he hurt? Is it not himself first? This is plain to every one. For to the one, the damage is in money, to himself, it is in the soul; to destruction, and to punishment. Again, let another be envious: is it not himself he has injured? For such is the nature of injustice: to its own author first it does incalculable hurt. *"Yes, but to another also?"* True, but nothing worth considering: or rather, not even a little— nay, it even benefits him. For let there be—as the whole matter lies most in these examples—let there be some poor man, having but little property and (barely) provided with necessary food, and another rich and wealthy, and having much power, and then let him take the poor man's property, and strip him naked, and give him up to starvation, while he shall luxuriate in what he has unjustly taken from the other: not only has he not hurt that man at all— he has even benefited him, while himself he has not only not benefited, but even hurt. For how should it be otherwise? In the first place, harassed by an evil conscience, and day by day condemning himself and being condemned by all men: and then, secondly, in the judgment to come. But the other, how is he benefited? Because to suffer ill and bear it nobly, is great gain: for it is a doing away of sins, this suffering of ill, it is a training to philosophy, it is a discipline of virtue. Let us see which of the two is in evil case, this man or that. For the one, if he be a man of well-ordered mind, will bear it nobly: the other will be every day in a constant tremor and misgiving: which then is hurt, this man or that? *"You talk idly,"* say you: *"for when a man has nothing to eat, and is forced to bewail himself and to feel himself very wretched, or comes and begs, and gets nothing, is not that a ruining of both soul and body?"*

No, it is you that talk idly: for I show facts in proof. For say, does none of the rich feel himself wretched? What then? Is poverty the cause of his wretchedness? *"But he does not starve."* And what of that? The greater is the punishment, when having riches he does this. For neither does wealth make a man strong-minded, nor poverty make him weak: otherwise none of those living in wealth would pass a wretched life, nor would any of those in poverty (not) curse his fate. But that yours is indeed the idle talk, I will make manifest to you from hence. Was Paul in poverty or in wealth? Did he suffer hunger, or did he not? You may hear himself saying, *"In hunger and thirst."* [2 Corinthians 11:27] Did the prophets suffer hunger, or did they not? They too had a hard time of it. *"Again, you fetch up Paul to me, again the prophets, some ten or twenty men."* But whence shall I bring examples? *"Show me from the many some who bear ills nobly."* But the rare is ever such: however, if you will, let us examine the matter as it is in itself. Let us see whose is the greater and sharper care, whose the more easy to be borne. The one is solicitous about his necessary food, the other about numberless matters, freed from that care. The rich man is not afraid on the score of hunger, but he is afraid about other things: oftentimes for his very life. The poor man is not free from anxiety about food, but he is free from other anxieties, he has safety, has quietness, has security.

If to injure another is not an evil, but a good, wherefore are we ashamed? Wherefore do we cover our faces? Wherefore, being reproached, are we vexed and disconcerted? If the being injured is not a good thing, wherefore do we pride ourselves, and glory in the thing, and justify ourselves on its account? Would you learn how this is better than that? Observe those who are in the one condition, and those who are in the other. Wherefore are laws? Wherefore are courts of justice? Wherefore punishments? Is it not, on account of those men, as being diseased and

unsound? But the pleasure lies great, you will say. Let us not speak of the future: let us look into the present. What is worse than a man who is under such a suspicion as this? What more precarious? What more unsound? Is he not always in a state of shipwreck? Even if he do any just thing, he is not credited, condemned as he is by all on account of his power (of injuring): for in all who dwell with him he has accusers: he cannot enjoy friendship: for none would readily choose to become the friend of a man who has such a character, for fear of becoming implicated with him in the opinion held of him. As if he were a wild beast, all men turn away from him; as from a pest, a foe, a man-slayer, and an enemy of nature, so they shrink from the unjust man. If he who has wronged another happen to be brought into a court of justice, he does not even need an accuser, his character condemns him in place of any accuser. Not so he who is injured; he has all men to take his part, to condole with him, to stretch out the hand of help: he stands on safe ground. If to injure another be a good and a safe thing, let any one confess that he is unjust: but if he dares not do this, why then does he pursue it as a good thing? But let us see in our own persons, if his same be done there, what evils come of it: (I mean,) if any of the parts or functions within us having overstepped its proper bounds, grasp at the office of some other. For let the spleen, if it will, have left its proper place, and seize on the part belonging to some other organ along with its own, is not this disease? The moisture within us, let it fill every place, is it not dropsy and gout? is not this to ruin itself, along with the other? Again, let the bile seek for a wide room, and let the blood be diffused throughout every part. But how is it in the soul with anger, lust, and all the rest, if the food exceed its proper measure? Again in the body, if the eye wish to take in more, or to see more than is allotted to it, or admit a greater light than is proper. But if, when the light is good, yet the eye is ruined, if it choose to see more than is right:

consider what it must be in the case of an evil thing. If the ear take in a (too) loud voice, the sense is stunned: the mind, if it reason about things above itself, it is overpowered: and whatever is in excess, mars all. For this is [πλεονεξία], the wanting to have more than what is marked off and allotted. So too in respect of money; when we will needs put upon (us) more burdens (than is meet), although we do not perceive it, to our sore hurt we are nourishing within ourselves a wild beast; much having, yet much wanting, numberless the cares we entangle ourselves withal, many the handles we furnish the devil against ourselves. In the case of the rich, however, the devil has not even need of labor, so surely do their very concerns of business of themselves ruin them. Wherefore I beseech you to abstain from the lust of these things, that we may be enabled to escape the snares of the evil one, and having taken hold of virtue, to attain unto the good things eternal, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory forever. Amen.

Homily 52 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXV. 23

"And on the morrow, when Agrippa had come, and Bernice with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

See what an audience is gathered together for Paul. Having collected all his guards, the governor has come, and the king, and the tribunes, *"with the principal men,"* it says, *"of the city."* Then Paul being brought forth, see how he is proclaimed as conqueror. Festus himself acquits him from the charges, for what says Festus? *"And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, you see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself has appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and especially before you, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."* [Acts 25:24-27] Mark how he accuses them, while he acquits him. O what an abundance of justifications! After all these repeated examinations, the governor finds not how he may condemn him. They said he was worthy of death. On this account he said also: *"When I found,"* says he *"that he had*

committed nothing worthy of death.— Of whom I have no certain thing to write to my lord." This too is a proof of Paul's spotlessness, that the judge found nothing to say concerning him. *"Therefore I have brought him forth,"* he says, *"before you. For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crime laid against him."* Such were the great straits into which the Jews brought themselves and their rulers! What then? *"Agrippa said to Paul, You are permitted to speak for yourself."* [Acts 26:1] From his great desire to hear, the king permits him to speak. But Paul speaks out immediately with boldness, not flattering, but for this reason saying that he is happy, namely, because (Agrippa) knew all. *"Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself. I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before you touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews. Especially because I know you to be expert in all questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech you to hear me patiently."* (v. 2, 3.) And yet, had he been conscious of guilt, he should have feared at being tried in the presence of one who knew all the facts: but this is a mark of a clear conscience, not to shrink from a judge who has an accurate knowledge of the circumstances, but even to rejoice, and to call himself happy. *"I beseech you,"* he says, *"to hear me patiently."* Since he is about to lengthen out his speech, and to say something about himself, on this account, he premises an entreaty, and (then) says: *"My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among my own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews: which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."* (v. 4, 5.) Then how should I have become a seditious person, who when young was (thus) testified of by all? Then too from his sect: *"after the most straitest sect"* says he, *"of our religion I lived."* *"What then, if though the sect indeed be worthy of*

admiration, you are evil?" Touching this also I call all to witness— touching my life and conversation. *"And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"* [Acts 26:6-8] Two arguments he lays down for the Resurrection: one, the argument from the prophets: and he does not bring forward any prophet (in particular,) but the doctrine itself as held by the Jews: the other and stronger one, the argument from the facts— (especially from this,) that Christ Himself held discourse with him. And he lays the ground for this by (other) arguments, relating accurately his former madness. Then too, with high commendation of the Jews, he says, *"Night and day,"* says he, *"serving (God) look to attain unto."* So that even if I had not been of unblemished life, it is not for this (doctrine) that I ought to be brought to trial:— *"for which hope, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews."* And then another argument *"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"* Since, if such an opinion had not existed, if they had not been brought up in these dogmas, but they were now for the first time brought in, perhaps some one might not have received the saying. Then he tells, how he persecuted: this also helps the proof: and he brings forward the chief priests as witnesses, and the *"strange cities,"* and that he heard Him saying to him, *"It is hard for you to kick against the pricks,"* and shows the mercifulness of God, that, though being persecuted He appeared (to men), and did that benefit not to me only, but also sent me as teacher to others: and shows also the prophecy, now come to pass, which he then heard, *"Delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send you."* Showing all this, he says: I verily thought with myself, that I

ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who are You, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you persecute, but rise, and stand upon your feet: for I have appeared unto you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of these things which you have seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto you: delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send you, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins [Acts 26:9-18]:— observe how mildly he discourses— God, he says, said (this) to me, *"that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me."* By these things, says he, I was persuaded, by this vision He drew me to Himself, and so persuaded me, that I made no delay. *"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."* (v. 19, 20.) I therefore, who instructed others also concerning the most excellent

way of living, how should I myself have become the author of sedition and contention? *"For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."* (v. 21, 22.) See how free from flattery his speech is, and how he ascribes the whole to God. Then his boldness— but neither do I now desist: and the sure grounds— for it is from the prophets that I urge the question, *"Whether the Christ was to suffer:"* then the Resurrection and the promise, *"Whether He, as the first to rise from the dead, should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles."* [Acts 26:23] Festus saw the boldness, and what says he? For Paul was all along addressing himself to the king— he was in a manner annoyed, and says to him, *"You are beside yourself, Paul:"* for, *"while he thus discoursed, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, you are beside yourself: much learning does make you mad."* [Acts 26:24] What then says Paul? With gentleness, *"I am not mad,"* says he, *"most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."* [Acts 26:25] Then too he gives him to understand why, turning from him, he addressed his speech to the king: *"For the king knows of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him: for this thing was not done in a corner."* [Acts 26:26] He shows, that (the king) knows all perfectly; at the same time, all but saying to the Jews, And ye indeed ought to have known these things— for this is the meaning of that which he adds, *"For this thing was not done in a corner. And Agrippa, said to Paul, ['] [Ev ὀλίγω] you persuade me to be a Christian."* What is [ἐ] [ν ὀλίγω]? Within a little, [παρὰ μικρόν] . *"And Paul said, I could pray to God,"* [καὶ ἐν ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐν πολλῷ], (that is) *"I could pray to God,"* for my part, not *"in little"* (but *"in much"*): he does not simply pray, he prays (not briefly, but) with largeness

— *"that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were such as I am."* Then he adds, *"except these bonds;"* and yet it was matter of glory; true, but looking to their notion of it, therefore says he, *"except these bonds."* [Acts 26:27-29]

(Recapitulation.) *"And on the morrow,"* etc. [Acts 25:23] The Jews desisted ever since Paul exercised his right of appeal. Then also for him the theatre becomes a splendid one: *"with great pomp"* they were present. *"And Festus said,"* etc. The whole multitude of the Jews— not some of them only, and others not so— *"both at Jerusalem, and also here,"* they said *"that he ought not to live any longer."* [Acts 25:24] *"And I having found,"* etc. It shows that he did right in appealing to Cæsar. For if though they had no great matter to allege against him, yet those (at Jerusalem) were mad against him, with good reason may he go to Cæsar. *"That after examination had by you,"* he says, *"I may get somewhat to write."* Observe how the matter is repeatedly put to the test. The Jews therefore may thank themselves for this vindication (of Paul), which would come to the ears of those also who were at Rome. See how they become the unwilling heralds both of their own wickedness and of Paul's virtue, even to the emperor himself: so that Paul was carried away (to Rome) with more renown than if he had gone there without bonds: for not as an impostor and a deceiver, after so many judges had acquitted him, was he now carried there. Quit therefore of all charges, among those with whom he was bred and born, and not only so, (but) thus free from all suspicion, he makes his appearance at Rome. *"Then Paul,"* etc. [Acts 26:1-3] And he said not, Why is this? Once for all I have appealed to Cæsar: I have been tried many times: when will there be an end of this? But what did he? Again he is ready to render an account, and that, before the man who was the best informed on the subject; and with much boldness, seeing they were not his judges to condemn him:

but still, though they were not his judges, since that declaration was in force, Unto Cæsar shall you go, he renders an account and gives full answers, "*touching all the things,*" and not merely on one and another here and there. They accuse me of sedition, accuse me of heresy, accuse me that I have profaned the temple: "*touching all these things I answer for myself:*" now that these are not things in accordance with my ways, my accusers themselves are witnesses: "*my manner of life from my youth,*" etc. [Acts 26:4] which is what he says on a former occasion "*Being a zealot.*" [Acts 22:3] And when the whole people was present, then he challenges their testimony: not before the tribunal, but before Lysias, and again here, when more were present: whereas in that hearing there needed not much vindication of himself, since Lysias' letter exculpated him. "*Know all the Jews,*" he says, "*which knew me from the beginning.*" And he does not say what kind of life his was, but leaves it to their own conscience, and lays the whole stress on his *sect*, as he would not have chosen that sect, if he had been a man of evil disposition and bad character ([πονηρὸς καὶ μοχθηρός]). "*But, for this hope*" (manuscripts and Edd. [αἰρέσεως]) he says, "*I stand and am judged.*" (v. 6, 7.) This hope is honored among themselves also, because of this they pray, because of this they worship, that unto this they may attain: this same do I show forth. Why then, it is acting like madmen, to be doing all things for the sake of attaining to this, and yet to persecute him who believes in the same. "*I indeed thought with myself,*" that is, I determined, "*to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*" [Acts 26:9] I was not one of Christ's disciples: among those who fought against Him, was I. Whence also he is a witness who has a right to be believed, because he, a man who was doing numberless things, makes war on the believers, persuading them to blaspheme, stirring up all against them, cities, rulers, and by himself doing all this of his own accord, was thus

suddenly changed. Then again the witnesses, those who were with him: next he shows what just cause he had to be persuaded, both from the light, and from the prophets, and from the results, and from the things which have now taken place. See accordingly, how both from the prophets, and from these particulars, he confirms the proof to them. For that he may not seem to be broaching some novelty, although he had great things to say, yet he again takes refuge with the prophets, and puts this as a question for discussion. Now this had a stronger claim upon belief, as having actually come to pass: but since he alone saw (Christ), he again fetches proof of it from the prophets. And see how he does not discourse alike in the court of justice, and in the assembly (of his own people); there indeed he says, "*ye slew Him:*" but here no such thing, that he might not kindle their anger more: but he shows the same thing, by saying, "*Whether the Christ was to suffer.*" He so frees them from accusations: for the prophets, he says, say this. Therefore receive ye also the rest. Since he has mentioned the vision, he then without fear goes on to speak also of the good wrought by it. "*To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. For to this end have I appeared unto you*" [Acts 26:16-18], not to punish, but to make you an Apostle. He shows the evils which possess unbelievers, "*Satan, darkness;*" the good things belonging to believers, light, God, "*the inheritance of the saints. Whereupon, O king Agrippa,*" etc. (v. 19, 20.) He not only exhorts them to repent, but also to show forth a life worthy of admiration. And see how everywhere the Gentiles are admitted into connection with the people (Israel): for those who were present were of the Gentiles. "*Testifying,*" he says, "*both to great and small,*" [Acts 26:22] that is, both to distinguished and undistinguished. This is also for the soldiers. Observe: having left the post of defendant, he took up that of teacher— and therefore also it is that Festus says to him, "*You are beside yourself*"— but

then, that he may not seem to be himself the teacher, he brings in the prophets, and Moses: *"Whether the Christ was to suffer, whether He as the first to rise from the dead should show light both to the people, and to the Gentiles."* [Acts 26:23] *"And Festus said with a loud voice"*— in such anger and displeasure (did he speak)— *"Paul, you are beside yourself."* What then said Paul? *"I am not mad,"* etc. *"For this thing,"* he says, *"was not done in a corner."* (v. 25, 26.) Here he speaks of the Cross, of the Resurrection: that the doctrine had come to every part of the world. *"King Agrippa,"* he says, *"do you believe"*— he does not say, the Resurrection, but— *"the prophets?"* [Acts 26:27] Then he forestalls him, and says: *"I know that you believe?"* ['] [Ev ὀλίγω] (i.e. within a little,) *"almost thou persuades the to be a Christian."* [Acts 26:28] Paul did not understand what the phrase [ἐ] [v ὀλίγω] meant: he thought it meant [ἐ] [ξ ὀλίγου] (i.e. with little cost or trouble), wherefore also he answers (as) to this: so unlearned was he. And he said not, I do not wish (that), but, *"I pray that not only thou, but also all that hear."* Mark how free from flattery his speech is.— *"I pray that this day they may be all such as I am, except these bonds."* [Acts 26:29] He, the man that glories in his bonds, that puts them forth as a golden chain, deprecates them for these men: for they were as yet too weak in their minds, and it was rather in condescension that he so spoke. For what could be better than those bonds which always in his Epistles he prefers (to all things else), saying, *"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ:"* [Ephesians 3:1] and again, *"On this account I am bound with this chain"* [Acts 28:20], *"but the word of God is not bound;"* and, *"Even unto bonds, as an evil-doer."* [2 Timothy 2:9] The punishment was twofold. For if indeed he had been so bound, as with a view to his good, the thing would have carried with it some consolation: but now (he is bound) both *"as an evil-doer,"* and as with a view to very ill consequences; yet for none of these things cared he.

Such is a soul winged with heavenly love. For if those who cherish the foul (earthly passion which men call) love, think nothing either glorious or precious, but those things alone which tend to gratify their lust, they think both glorious and honorable, and their mistress is everything to them; much more do those, who have been taken captive by this heavenly love, think nothing of the cost ([τὰ ἐπιτίμια]). But if we do not understand what I am saying, it is no marvel, while we are unskilled in this Divine Wisdom. For if any one be caught with the fire of Christ's love, he becomes such as a man would become who dwelt alone upon the earth, so utterly careless is he for glory or disgrace: but just as if he dwelt alone, he would care for nothing, no more does he in this case. As for trials, he so despises them, both scourges and imprisonments, as though the body in which he suffers these things were another's and not his own, or as though he had got a body made of adamant: while as for the sweet things of this life, he so laughs them to scorn, is so insensible to them, as we are insensible of dead bodies, being ourselves dead. He is as far from being taken captive by any passion, as the gold refined in the fire and purified is free from alloy. For even as flies would not dart into the midst of a flame, but fly from it, so the passions dare not even to come near this man. Would that I could bring forward examples of all this from among ourselves: but since we are at a loss for such, we must needs betake ourselves to this same Paul. Observe him then, how he felt towards the whole world. *"The world is crucified unto me,"* he says, *"and I unto the world"* [Galatians 6:14]: I am dead to the world, and the world is dead to me. And again: *"It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me."* [ib.] And, to show you that he was as it were in solitude, and so looked upon the things present, hear himself saying, *"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."* [2 Corinthians 4:18] What do you say? Answer me. And yet what you say is

the contrary; you see the things invisible, and the visible you see not. Such eyes as you had gotten, such are the eyes which are given by Christ: for as these bodily eyes see indeed the things that are seen, but things unseen they see not: so those (heavenly eyes) do the contrary: none that beholds the invisible things, beholds the visible: no one beholding the things seen, beholds the invisible. Or is not this the case with us also? For when having turned our mind inwards we think of any of the unseen things, our views become raised above the things on earth. Let us despise glory: let us be willing to be laughed at rather than to be praised. For he indeed who is laughed at is nothing hurt: but he who is praised is much hurt. Let us not think much of those things which terrify men, but as we do in the case of children, this let us do here: namely, if we see any one terrifying children, we do not hold that man in admiration: since in fact whoever does frighten, only frightens children; for were it a man, he could not frighten him. Just as those who frighten (children in sport), do this either by drawing up their eyelids, or by otherwise distorting their face, but with the eye looking naturally and mild they would not be able to do this: so these others do this, by distorting their mental vision ([τὸ διορατικὸν τῆς διανοίας]). So that of a mild man and beautiful in soul nobody would be afraid; on the contrary, we all respect him, honor and venerate him. See ye not, how the man who causes terror is also an object of hatred and abhorrence to us all? For of those things which are only able to terrify what do we not turn away from? Is it not so with wild beasts, with sounds, with sights, with places, with the air, such as darkness? Let us not therefore think it a great thing, if men fear us. For, in the first place, no man indeed is frightened at us: and, secondly, it is no great thing (if they were). Virtue is a great good: and see how great. However wretched we may deem the things by means of which it consists, yet we admire virtue itself, and count them blessed (that have it). For who

would not count the patient sufferer blessed, although poverty and such like things seem to be wretched? When therefore it shines forth through those things which seem to be wretched, see how surpassingly great this is! Do you think much, O man, because you are in power? And what sort of power? Say, was it conferred by appointment? (If so,) of men you have received power: appoint yourself to it from within. For the ruler is not he who is so called, but he who is really so. For as a king could not make a physician or an orator, so neither can he make a ruler: since it is not the (imperial) letters nor the name that makes a ruler. For, if you will, let any man build a medicine-shop, let him also have pupils, let him have instruments too and drugs, and let him visit those who are sick: are these things sufficient to make a physician? By no means: but there is need of art, and without that, not only do these things profit nothing, but they even hurt: since it were better that he who is not a physician should not even possess medicines. He that possesses them not, neither saves nor destroys: but he that possesses them, destroys, if he knows not how to use them: since the healing power is not only in the nature of the medicines, but also in the art of the person applying them: where this is not, all is marred. Such also is the ruler: he has for instruments, his voice, anger, executioners, banishments, honors, gifts, and praises; he has also for medicines, the law; has also for his patients, men; for a place to practise in, the court of justice; for pupils, he has the soldiers: if then he know not the science of healing, all these profit him nothing. The judge is a physician of souls, not of bodies: but if this art of healing the bodies needs so much care, much more that of healing the soul, since the soul is of more importance than the body. Then not the mere having the name of ruler is to be a ruler: since others also are called by great names: as Paul, Peter, James, and John: but the names do not make them that which they are called, as neither does my name make me

(to be that which John was); I bear indeed the same name with that blessed man, but I am not the same thing ([ὁ] [μὲν ὄντις], [οὐ μὲν συνώντις]), I am not John, but am called so. In the same way they are not rulers, but are called so. But those others are rulers even without these adjuncts, just as also a physician, though he may not actually practise his science, yet if he have it in his soul, he is a physician. Those are rulers, who bear rule over themselves. For there are these four things, soul, family; city, world: and the things form a regular progression ([ὁ] [δὲ προβαίνει]). He therefore that is to superintend a family, and order it well, must first bring his own soul into order; for it is his family: but if he cannot order his own family, where there is but one soul, where he himself is master, where he is always along with himself, how shall he order others? He that is able to regulate his own soul, and makes the one part to rule, the other to be subject, this man will be able to regulate a family also: but he that can do this by a family, can do it by a city also: and if by a city, then also by the world. But if he cannot do this for his own soul, how then shall he be able to do it for the world? These things have been spoken by me, that we may not be excited about offices of rule; that we may know what ruling is: for this (which is so called) is not ruling, but a there object of derision, mere slavery, and many other names one might call it by. Tell me, what is proper to a ruler? Is it not to help one's subjects, and to do them good? What then, if this be not the case? How shall he help others, who has not helped himself? He who has numberless tyrannies of the passions in his own soul, how shall he root out those of others? Again, with respect to "*luxury*" or delightful living: the true luxury or delight is not this (which is so called), but quite another thing. For as we have shown that the ruler is not he who is so called, but another (who has something more than the name), so the person who lives indeed in delight is another sort of person (than he whom we so describe). For "*luxury*" or

delightful living seems indeed to be, the enjoying pleasure and the gratifying the belly: yet it is not this thing, but the contrary: it is, to have a soul worthy of admiration, and to be in a state of pleasure. For let there be a man eating, drinking, and wantoning; then let him suffer cares and loss of spirits: can this man be said to be in a state of delight? Therefore, it is not eating and drinking, it is the being in pleasure, that makes true luxury or delightful living. Let there be a man who gets only dry bread, and let him be filled with gladness: is not this pleasure? Well then, it is the true luxury. Let us see then, to whom this befalls— whether to the rich, or to those who are not rich? Neither to the one part altogether, nor to the other, but to those who so order their own souls, that they may not have many grounds for sorrows. And where is such a life as this to be found? For I see you all eager and wishing to hear what this life is which has no sorrows. Well then, let this be acknowledged first by you, that this is pleasure, this the true luxury, to have no sorrow to cause annoyance; and ask not of me meats, and wine, and sauces, and silken robes, and a sumptuous table. But if I shall show that apart from all these such a life as that is present (within our reach), then welcome thou this pleasure, and this life: for the most part of painful things happen to us from our not calculating things as we ought. Who then will have the most sorrows— he that cares for none of these things, or he that cares for them? He that fears changes, or he that does not fear? He that is in dread of jealousy, of envy, of false accusations, of plottings, of destruction, or he that stands aloof from these fears? He that wants many things, or he that wants nothing? He that is a slave to masters without number, or he that is a slave to none? He that has need of many things, or he that is free? He that has one lord to fear, or he that fears despots innumerable? Well then, greater is the pleasure here. This then let us pursue, and not be excited about the things present: but let us laugh to

scorn all the pomp of life, and everywhere practise moderation, that we may be enabled so to pass through this life, that it may be without pain, and to attain unto the good things promised, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 53 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXVI. 30-32

"And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: and when they had gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."

See how again also they pass sentence in his favor, and after having said, *"You are beside yourself,"* [Acts 26:24] they acquit him, as undeserving not only of death, but also of bonds, and indeed would have released him entirely, if he had not appealed to Cæsar. But this was done providentially, that he should also depart with bonds. *"Unto bonds,"* he says, *"as an evil doer."* [1 Timothy 2:9] For if his Lord *"was reckoned among the transgressors"* [Mark 15:28], much more he: but as the Lord did not share with them in their character, so neither did Paul. For in this is seen the marvellous thing, the being mixed up with such, and yet receiving no harm from them. *"And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. And the next day we touched at Sidon."* [Acts 27:1-3] See how far Aristarchus also accompanies Paul. To good and useful purpose is Aristarchus present, as he would take back the report of all to Macedonia. *"And Julius courteously*

entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. Julius gave Paul liberty," it says, acting "*courteously, that he might refresh himself;*" as it was but natural that he should be much the worse from his bonds and the fear, and the being dragged hither and there. See how the writer does not hide this either, that Paul wished "*to refresh himself. And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.*" [Acts 27:4] Again trials, again contrary winds. See how the life of the saints is thus interwoven throughout: escaped from the court of justice, they fall in with shipwreck and storm. "*And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.*" (v. 5, 6.) "*A ship of Alexandria,*" it says. It is likely that both those (in the former ship) would bear to Asia the report of what had befallen Paul, and that these would do the same in Lycia. See how God does not innovate or change the order of nature, but suffers them to sail into the unfavorable winds. But even so the miracle is wrought. That they may sail safely, He did not let them go out in the (open) sea, but they always sailed near the land. "*And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce had come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; and, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called the fair havens; near whereunto was the city of Lasea. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them.*" [Acts 27:7-9] By "*the fast*" here, I suppose he means that of the Jews. For they departed thence a long time after the Pentecost, so that it was much about midwinter that they arrived at the coasts of Crete. And this too was no slight miracle, that they also should be saved on his account. "*Paul admonished them, and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will*

be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lies toward the southwest and northwest. And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close to Crete. But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive" (R.V. "were driven.") [Acts 27:10-15] Paul therefore advised them to remain, and he foretells what would come of it: but they, being in a hurry, and being prevented by the place, wished to winter at Phenice. Mark then the providential ordering of the events: first indeed, *"when the south wind blew softly, supposing they had obtained their purpose,"* they loosed the vessel, and came forth; then when the wind bore down upon them, they gave way to it driving them, and were with difficulty saved. *"And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; and the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, you should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss."* [Acts 27:16-21] Then after so great a storm he does not speak as insultingly over them, but

as wishing that at any rate he might be believed for the future. Wherefore also he alleges what had taken place for a testimony of the truth of what was about to be said by him. *"And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; you must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo God has given you all them that sail with you. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."* [Acts 27:22-26] And he foretells two things; both that they must be cast upon an island, and that though the ship would be lost, those who were in it should be saved— which thing he spoke not of conjecture, but of prophecy— and that he *"must be brought before Cæsar."* But this that he says, *"God has given you all,"* is not spoken boastfully, but in the wish to win those who were sailing in the ship: for (he spoke thus), not that they might feel themselves bound to him, but that they might believe what he was saying. *"God has given you;"* as much (as to say), They are worthy indeed of death, since they would not listen to you: however, this is done out of favor to you. *"But when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; and sounded, and found it twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under color as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off."* [Acts 27:27-32]

The sailors however, were about to escape, having no faith in what was said: but the centurion does believe Paul, For he says, If these flee, *"ye cannot be saved:"* so saying, not on this account, but that he might restrain them, and the prophecy might not fall to the ground. See how as in a church they are instructed by the calmness of Paul's behavior, how he saved them out of the very midst of the dangers. And it is of providential ordering that Paul is disbelieved, that after proof of the facts, he might be believed: which accordingly was the case. And he exhorts them again to take some meat, and they do as he bids them, and he takes some first, to persuade them not by word, but also by act, that the storm did them no harm, but rather was a benefit to their souls. *"And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that you have tarried and continued fasting having taken nothing."* [Acts 27:33] (b) And how, say you, did they go without food, having taken nothing? How did they bear it? Their fear possessed them, and did not let them fall into a desire of food, being, as they were, at the point of extreme jeopardy; (f) but they had no care for food. *"Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat,"* [Acts 27:34-36] seeing that there was no question about their lives being saved. (d) *"And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and*

hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore." [Acts 27:37-41] *"They made towards shore,"* having given the rudder-handles to the wind: for oftentimes they do it not in this way. They were borne along, having loosed the rigging, i.e. the sails. *"And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves;"* for when there is a strong wind, this is the consequence, the stern bearing the brunt (of the storm). (a) *"And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape."* [Acts 27:42] Again the devil tries to hinder the prophecy, and they had a mind to kill some, but the centurion suffered them not, that he might save Paul, so much was the centurion attached to him. *"But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."* (v. 43, 44.) *"And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita."* [Acts 28:1] Do you mark what good came of the storm? Why then it was no mark of their being forsaken, that the storm came upon them. (c) Now this that happened was in consequence of the season of the year; but the wonder is greater, that at such a season they were saved from the midst of the dangers, both he, and for his sake the rest, (e) and this too in the Hadriatic. There were two hundred and seventy-six souls in all: no small matter this also, if indeed they believed. The voyage was at an unseasonable time. (g) It is natural to suppose they would ask the reason why they were sailing, and would learn all. Nor was it for nothing that the voyage was so protracted; it afforded Paul an opportunity for teaching.

(Recapitulation.) And Paul says, "*I perceive that (this voyage will be) with hurt and loss.*" [Acts 27:10] And observe how unassuming the expression is. That he may not seem to prophesy, but to speak as of conjecture, "*I perceive,*" says he. For they would not have received it, had he said this at the outset. In fact he does prophesy on this former occasion, as he does afterward, and says (there), "*The God whom I serve,*" leading them on. Then how comes it that it was not "*with loss*" (of any) "*of their lives?*" It would have been so, but that God brought them safe through it. For as far as depended on the nature of the thing, they had perished, but God prevented it. Then, to show that it was not from conjecture that he so spoke, the master of the ship said the contrary [Acts 27:11], and he a man of experience in the matter: so far was it from being the case that Paul's advice was given from conjecture. Moreover, the place suggested this same (which the master said), "*being not commodious;*" and it was evident that from conjecture "*the more part advised*" [Acts 27:12] as they did, rather than Paul. Then, severe the storm (that ensued), deep the darkness: and that they may not forget, the vessel also goes to pieces, and the grain is flung out and all beside, that they may not have it in their power after this to be shameless. For this is why the vessel goes to pieces, and their souls are tightly braced. Moreover, both the storm and the darkness contributed not a little to his obtaining the hearing he did. Accordingly observe how the centurion does as he bids him, insomuch that he even let the boat go, and destroyed it. And if the sailors did not as yet comply with his bidding, yet afterwards they do so: for in fact this is a reckless sort of people. [Acts 27:13-20] "*Sirs, you should have hearkened to me,*" etc. [Acts 27:21] One is not likely to have a good reception, when he chides in the midst of calamity; but when he tells them what more there is (to come) of the calamity, and then predicts the good, then he is acceptable. Therefore he

attacks them then first, when *"all hope that they should be saved was taken away:"* that none may say, Nothing has come of it. And their fear also bears witness. Moreover, the place is a trying one, for it was in the Adriatic, and then their long abstinence. They were in the midst of death. It was now the fourteenth day that they were going without food, having taken nothing. *"Wherefore,"* said he, *"I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health"* [Acts 27:34], that you should eat, lest ye perish of hunger. Observe, his giving thanks after all that had happened strengthened them. For this showed an assured mind that they would be saved. (b) *"Then were they all of good cheer; and they also took some meat."* [Acts 27:36] And not only so, but henceforth they so cast all their care upon Paul, that they even cast out the grain [Acts 27:37], being so many. (a) Two hundred and seventy-six souls [Acts 27:38]: whence had they victuals? (c) See how they do their part as men, and how Paul does not forbid them. *"And when it was day,"* etc., *"they loosed the rudder-bands."* (v. 39, 40.) And the vessel goes to pieces in the daytime, that they may not be clean dissolved with the terror: that you may see the prophecy brought out as fact. *"And the soldiers' counsel,"* etc. [Acts 27:42] Do you mark that in this respect also they were given to Paul? Since for his sake the centurion suffered them not to be slain. So confessedly wicked do those men seem to me to have been: insomuch that they would have chosen even to slay them: but some swam on shore, others were borne on boards, and they all were thus saved, and the prophecy received accomplishment; (a prophecy,) although not solemn from length of time, since he did not deliver it a number of years before, but keeping close to the nature of the things themselves: (still a prophecy it was,) for all was beyond the reach of hope. And (so) it was through themselves being saved that they learned who Paul was. But some one may say: why did he not save the ship? That they might perceive how great a danger they had

escaped: and that the whole matter depended, not on the help of man, but on God's hand saving them independently of a ship. So that righteous men, though they may be in a tempest, or on the sea, or in the deep, suffer nothing dreadful, but even save others together with themselves. If (here was) a ship in danger and suffering wreck, and prisoners were saved for Paul's sake, consider what a thing it is to have a holy man in a house: for many are the tempests which assail us also, tempests far more grievous than these (natural ones), but He can also give us to be delivered, if only we obey holy men as those (in the ship) did, if we do what they enjoin. For they are not simply saved, but themselves also contributed to other men's believing ([πίστιν εἰσήνεγκαν]). Though the holy man be in bonds, he does greater works than those who are free. And look how this was the case here. The free centurion stood in need of his bound prisoner: the skilful pilot was in want of him who was no pilot— nay rather, of him who was the true pilot. For he steered as pilot not a vessel of this (earthly) kind, but the Church of the whole world, having learned of Him Who is Lord also of the sea; (steered it,) not by the art of man, but by the wisdom of the Spirit. In this vessel are many shipwrecks, many waves, spirits of wickedness, *"from within are fightings, from without are fears"* [2 Corinthians 7:5]: so that he was the true pilot. Look at our whole life: it is just such (as was this voyage). For at one time we meet with kindness, at another with a tempest; sometimes from our own want of counsel, sometimes from our idleness, we fall into numberless evils; from our not hearkening to Paul, when we are eager to go somewhere, where he bids us not. For Paul is sailing even now with us, only not bound as he was then: he admonishes us even now, and says to those who are (sailing) on this sea, *"take heed unto yourselves: for after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you"* [Acts 20:29]: and again, *"In the last times perilous times shall come:*

and men shall be lovers of their own selves, lovers of money, boasters." [2 Timothy 3:2] This is more grievous than all storms. Let us therefore abide where he bids us— in faith, in the safe haven: let us hearken unto him rather than to the pilot that is within us, that is, our own reason. Let us not straightway do just what this may suggest; not what the owner of the ship: no, but what Paul suggests: he has passed through many such tempests. Let us not learn (to our cost) by experience, but before the experience let us *"avoid both harm and loss."* Hear what he says: *"They that will be rich fall into temptation."* [1 Timothy 6:9] Let us therefore obey him; else, see what they suffered, because they did not take his counsel. And again he tells in another place what causes shipwrecks: *"Who,"* he says, *"have made shipwreck concerning the faith. But do thou continue in the things which you have learned and wast assured of."* [1 Timothy 1:19] Let us obey Paul: though we be in the midst of a tempest, we shall surely be freed from the dangers: though we remain without food fourteen days, though hope of safety may have left us, though we be in darkness and mist, by doing his bidding, we shall be freed from the dangers. Let us think that the whole world is a ship, and in this the evildoers and those who have numberless vices, some rulers, others guards, others just men, as Paul was, others prisoners, those bound by their sins: if then we do as Paul bids us, we perish not in our bonds, but are released from them: God will give us also to him. Or think you not that sins and passions are grievous bonds? For it is not the hands only that are bound, but the whole man. For tell me, when any one possessed of much money uses it not, nor spends it, but keeps it close, is he not bound more grievously than any prisoner by his miserliness, a bond that cannot be broken? What again, when a man gives himself up to (the belief in) Fate, is not he too bound with other fetters? What, when he gives himself up to observations (of times)? What, when to omens? Are not these

more grievous than all bonds? What again, when he gives himself up to an unreasonable lust and to love? Who shall break in pieces these bonds for you? There is need of God's help that they may be loosed. But when there are both bonds and tempest, think how great is the amount of dangers. For which of them is not enough to destroy? The hunger, the tempest, the wickedness of those on board, the unfitness of the season? But against all these, Paul's glory stood its ground. So is it now: let us keep the saints near us, and there will be no tempest: or rather, though there be a tempest, there will be great calm and tranquillity, and freedom from dangers: since that widow had the saint for her friend, and the death of her child was loosed, and she received back her son alive again. [1 Kings 17:17] Where the feet of saints step, there will be nothing painful; and if such should happen, it is for proving us and for the greater glory of God. Accustom the floor of your house to be trodden by such feet, and an evil spirit will not tread there. For as where a sweet odor is, there a bad odor will not find place: so where the holy ointment is, there the evil spirit is choked, and it gladdens those who are near it, it delights, it refreshes the soul. Where thorns are, there are wild beasts: where hospitality is, there are no thorns: for almsgiving having entered in, more keenly than any sickle it destroys the thorns, more violently than any fire. Be not thou afraid: (the wicked one) fears the tracks of saints, as foxes do lions. For "*the righteous,*" it says, "*is as bold as a lion.*" [Proverbs 28:1] Let us bring these lions into our house, and all the wild beasts are put to flight, the lions not needing to roar, but simply to utter their voice. For not so much does the roaring of a lion put the wild beasts to flight, as the prayer of a righteous man puts to flight evil spirits: let him but speak, they cower. And where are such men now to be found, you will say? Everywhere, if we believe, if we seek, if we take pains. Where have you sought, tell me? When did you take this work in hand? When did you make

this your business? But if you seek not, marvel not that thou dost not find. For "*he that seeks finds*" [Matthew 7:7], not he that seeks not. Listen to those who live in deserts: away with your gold and silver: (such holy men) are to be found in every part of the world. Though thou receive not such an one in your house, yet go thou to him, live with the man, be at his dwelling-place, that you may be able to obtain and enjoy his blessing. For a great thing it is to receive a blessing from the saints: which let us be careful to obtain, that being helped by their prayers we may enjoy mercy from God, through the grace and loving-kindness of His only-begotten Son, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 54 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXVIII. 1

"And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand."

"Showed," he says, *"no little kindness to us— barbarians"* (as they were)— *"having kindled a fire:"* else it were of no use that their lives be saved, if the wintry weather must destroy them. Then Paul having taken brushwood, laid it on the fire. See how active he is; observe how we nowhere find him doing miracles for the sake of doing them, but only upon emergency. Both during the storm when there was a cause he prophesied, not for the sake of prophesying, and here again in the first instance he lays on brushwood:— nothing for vain display, but (with a simple view) to their being preserved, and enjoying some warmth. Then a viper *"fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffers not to live."* [Acts 28:4] Well also was this permitted, that they should both see the thing and utter the thought, in order that, when the result ensued, there might be no disbelieving the miracle. Observe their good feeling (towards the distressed), in saying this (not aloud, but) among themselves— observe (also) the natural judgment clearly expressed even among barbarians, and

how they do not condemn without assigning a reason. And these also behold, that they may wonder the more. *"And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god."* (v. 5, 6.) They expected him, it says, to fall down dead: and again, having seen that nothing of the kind happened to him, they said, He is a god. Again [viz. as in Acts 14:11], another excess on the part of these men. *"In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him."* (v. 7, 8.) Behold again another hospitable man, Publius, who was both rich and of great possessions: he had seen nothing, but purely out of compassion for their misfortune, he received them, and took care of them. So that he was worthy to receive kindness: wherefore Paul as a requital for his receiving them, *"healed him. So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: who also honored us with many honors; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary"* (v. 9, 10), both us and the rest. See how when they were quit of the storm, they did not become more negligent, but what a liberal entertainment was given to them for Paul's sake: and three months were they there, all of them provided with sustenance. See how all this is done for the sake of Paul, to the end that the prisoners should believe, and the soldiers, and the centurion. For if they were very stone, yet from the counsel they heard him giving, and from the prediction they had heard him making, and from the miracles they knew him to have wrought, and from the sustenance they by his means enjoyed,

they must have got a very high notion of him. See, when the judgment is right, and not preoccupied by some passion, how immediately it gets right judgments, and gives sound verdicts. *"And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the Three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."* [Acts 28:11-15] Already the preaching has reached to Sicily: see how it has run through (even to those lands): at Puteoli also they found some: others also came to meet them. Such was the eagerness of the brethren, it nothing disconcerted them, that Paul was in bonds. But observe also how Paul himself also was affected after the manner of men. For it says, *"he took courage, when he saw the brethren."* Although he had worked so many miracles, nevertheless even from sight he received an accession (of confidence). From this we learn, that he was both comforted after the manner of men, and the contrary. *"And when we came to Rome, Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him."* [Acts 28:16] Leave was given him to dwell by himself. No slight proof this also of his being held in much admiration: it is clear they did not number him among the rest. *"And it came to pass, that after three days he called together them that were the chief of the Jews."* After three days he called the chief of the Jews, that their ears might not be preoccupied. And what had he in common with them? For they would not (else) have been like to accuse him. Nevertheless, it was not for this that he

cared; it was for the teaching that he was concerned, and that what he had to say might not offend them.

(Recapitulation.) *"And the barbarians,"* etc. [Acts 28:2] The Jews then, beholding all the many miracles they did, persecuted and harassed (Paul); but the barbarians, who had seen none, merely on the ground of his misfortune, were kind to him.— *"No doubt,"* say they, *"this man is a murderer:"* [Acts 28:4]. They do not simply pronounce their judgment, but say, *"No doubt,"* (i.e.) as any one may see *"and vengeance,"* say they, *"suffers him not to live."* Why then, they held also the doctrine of a Providence, and these barbarians were far more philosophic than the philosophers, who allow not the benefit of a Providence to extend to things *"below the moon:"* whereas (these barbarians) suppose God to be present everywhere, and that although a (guilty) man may escape many (a danger), he will not escape in the end. And they do not assail him immediately, but for a time respect him on account of his misfortune: nor do they openly proclaim their surmise, but speak it *"among themselves: a murderer;"* for the bonds led them to suspect this. *"They showed no small kindness,"* and yet (some of them) were prisoners. Let those be ashamed that say, Do not do good to those in prison: let these barbarians shame us; for they knew not who these men were, but simply because they were in misfortune (they were kind): thus much they perceived, that they were human beings, and therefore they considered them to have a claim upon their humanity. *"And for a great while,"* it says, *"they expected that he would die."* [Acts 28:6] But when he shook his hand, and flung off the beast, then they saw and were astonished. And the miracle did not take place suddenly, but the men went by the length of time, *"after they had looked a great while,"* so plainly was there no deceit, no haste here ([συναρπαγή]). *"Publius,"* it says, *"lodged them courteously"* [Acts 28:7]: two hundred and seventy-six

persons. Consider how great the gain of his hospitality: not as of necessity, not as unwilling, but as reckoning it a gain he lodged them for three days: thereafter having met with his requital, he naturally honored Paul much more, when the others also received healing. *"Who also,"* it says, *"honored us with many honors"* [Acts 28:10]: not that he received wages, God forbid; but as it is written, *"The workman is worthy of his meat. And when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary."* [Matthew 10:10] It is plain that having thus received them, they also received the word of the preaching: for it is not to be supposed, that during an entire three months they would have had all this kindness shown them, had these persons not believed strongly, and herein exhibited the fruits (of their conversion): so that from this we may see a strong proof of the great number there was of those that believed. Even this was enough to establish (Paul's) credit with those (his fellow-voyagers). Observe how in all this voyage they nowhere touched at a city, but (were cast) on an island, and passed the entire winter (there, or) sailing— those being herein under training for faith, his fellow-voyagers, I mean. (a) *"And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux."* [Acts 28:11] Probably this was painted on it: so addicted were they to their idols. (d) *"And when the south wind blew, we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome."* (v. 13, 14.) (b) Observe them tarrying a while, and again hasting onwards. (e) *"And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the Three Taverns"* [Acts 28:15]: not fearing the danger. (c) Paul therefore was now so much respected, that he was even permitted to be by himself: for if even before this they used him kindly, much more would they now. (g) *"He was suffered,"* it says, *"to dwell by himself, with a soldier*

that kept him." [Acts 28:16] That it might not be possible for any plot to be laid against him there either— for there could be no raising of sedition now. So that in fact they were not keeping Paul in custody, but guarding him, so that nothing unpleasant should happen: for it was not possible now, in so great a city, and with the Emperor there, and with Paul's appeal, for anything to be done contrary to order. So surely is it the case, that always through the things which seem to be against us, all things turn out for us. *"With the soldier"*— for he was Paul's guard. *"And having called together the chief of the Jews"* [Acts 28:17], he discourses to them, who both depart gainsaying, and are taunted by him, yet they dare not say anything: for it was not permitted them to deal with his matter at their own will. For this is a marvellous thing, that not by the things which seem to be for our security, but by their very opposites, all comes to be for us. And that you may learn this— Pharaoh commanded the infants to be cast into the river. [Exodus 1:22] Unless the infants had been cast forth, Moses would not have been saved, he would not have been brought up in the palace. When he was safe, he was not in honor; when he was exposed, then he was in honor. But God did this, to show His riches of resource and contrivance. The Jew threatened him, saying, *"Would you kill me?"* [Exodus 1:14] and this too was of profit to him. It was of God's providence, in order that he should see that vision in the desert, in order that the proper time should be completed, that he should learn philosophy in the desert, and there live in security. And in all the plottings of the Jews against him the same thing happens: then he becomes more illustrious. As also in the case of Aaron; they rose up against him, and thereby made him more illustrious [Numbers 16 and 17]: that so his ordination should be unquestionable, that he might be held in admiration for the future also from the plates of brass ([τῶν πετάλων τοῦ χαλκοῦ]). Of

course you know the history: wherefore I pass over the narration. And if you will, let us go over the same examples from the beginning.

Cain slew his brother, but in this he rather benefited him: for hear what Scripture says, *"The voice of your brother's blood cries unto Me"* [Genesis 4:10]: and again in another place, *"To the blood that speaks better things than that of Abel."* [Hebrews 12:24] He freed him from the uncertainty of the future, he increased his reward: we have all learned hereby what love God had for him. For what was he injured? Not a whit, in that he received his end sooner. For say, what do they gain, who die more slowly? Nothing: for the having good days does not depend on the living many years or few years, but in the using life properly. The Three Children were thrown into the furnace, and through this they became more illustrious: Daniel was cast into the pit, and thence was he made more renowned. (Daniel 3 and 6.) You see that trials in every case bring forth great good even in this life, much more in the life to come: but as to malice, the case is the same, as if a man having a reed should set himself to fight with the fire: it seems indeed to beat the fire, but it makes it brighter, and only consumes itself. For the malice of the wicked becomes food and an occasion of splendor to virtue: for by God's turning the unrighteousness to good account, our character shines forth all the more. Again, when the devil works anything of this kind, he makes those more illustrious that endure. How then, you will say, was this not the case with Adam, but, on the contrary, he became more disgraced? Nay, in this case of all others God turned (the malice of) that (wicked one) to good account: but if (Adam) was the worse for it, it was he that injured himself: for it is the wrongs that are done to us by others that become the means of great good to us, not so the wrongs which are done by ourselves. As indeed, because the fact is that when hurt by others, we grieve, but not so when hurt by ourselves, therefore it is that God shows,

that he who suffers unjustly at the hands of another, gets renown, but he who injures himself, receives hurt: that so we may bear the former courageously, but not the latter. And besides, the whole thing there was Adam's own doing. Wherefore did you the woman's bidding? [Genesis 3:6] Wherefore when she counselled you contrary (to God), did you not repel her? You were assuredly yourself the cause. Else, if the devil was the cause, at this rate all that are tempted ought to perish: but if all do not perish, the cause (of our destruction) rests with ourselves. *"But,"* you will say, *"all that are tempted ought (at that rate) to succeed."* No: for the cause is in ourselves. *"At that rate it ought to follow that (some) perish without the devil's having anything to do with it."* Yes: and in fact many do perish without the devil's being concerned in it: for surely the devil does not bring about all (our evil doings); no, much comes also from our own sluggishness by itself alone: and if he too is anywhere concerned as a cause, it is from our offering the occasion. For say, why did the devil prevail in Judas' case? When *"Satan entered into him"* [John 13:27], you will say. Yes, but hear the cause: it was because *"he was a thief, and bare what was put in the bag."* [John 12:6] It was he that himself gave the devil a wide room for entering into him: so that it is not the devil who puts into us the beginning, it is we that receive and invite him. *"But,"* you will say, *"if there were no devil, the evils would not have become great."* True, but then our punishment would admit of no plea for mitigation: but as it is, beloved, our punishment is more mild, whereas if we had wrought the evils of ourselves, the chastisements would be intolerable. For say, if Adam, without any counsel, had committed the sin he did, who would have snatched him out of the dangers? *"But he would not have sinned,"* you will say? What right have you to say this? For he who had so little solidity, that was so inert and so ready for folly as to receive such advice as this, much more would he

without any counsel have become this (that he did become). What devil incited the brethren of Joseph to envy? If then we be watchful brethren, the devil becomes to us the cause even of renown. Thus, what was Job the worse for his falling into such helplessness of distress? *"Speak not of this instance,"* you will say: *"(Job was not the worse,) but the weak person is the worse."* Yes, and the weak person is the worse, even if there be no devil. *"But in a greater degree,"* you will say, *"when there is the devil's power working along with him."* True, but he is the less punished, when he has sinned through the devil's working with him; for the punishments are not the same for all sins. Let us not deceive ourselves: the devil is not the cause of our taking harm, if we be watchful: rather what he does, is to awake us out of our sleep; what he does, is to keep us on the alert. Let us for a while examine these things: suppose there were no wild beasts, no irregular states of the atmosphere; no sicknesses, no pains, no sorrows, nor anything else of the kind: what would not man have become? A hog rather than a man, revelling in gluttony and drunkenness, and troubled by none of those things. But as it is, cares and anxieties are an exercise and discipline of philosophy, a method for the best of training. For say, let a man be brought up in a palace, having no pain, nor care, nor anxiety, and having neither cause for anger nor failure, but whatever he sets his mind upon, that let him do, in that let him succeed, and have all men obeying him: (see whether) such a man would not become more irrational than any wild beast. But as it is, our reverses and our afflictions are as it were a whetstone to sharpen us. For this reason the poor are for the most part wiser than the rich, as being driven about and tost by many waves. Thus a body also, being idle and without motion, is sickly and unsightly: but that which is exercised, and suffers labor and hardships, is more comely and healthy: and this we should find to hold also in the case of the soul. Iron also, lying unused, is spoilt, but if

worked it shines brightly; and in like manner a soul which is kept in motion. Now these reverses are precisely what keeps the soul in motion. Arts again perish, when the soul is not active: but it is active when it has not everything plain before it: it is made active by adverse things. If there were no adverse things, there would be nothing to stir it: thus, if everything existed ready-made in beautiful sort, art would not have found wherein to exercise itself. So, if all things were level to our understanding, the soul would not find wherein to exert itself: if it had to be carried about everywhere, it would be an unsightly object. See you not, that we exhort nurses not to make a practice of carrying children always, that they may not bring them into a habit (of wanting to be carried) and so make them helpless? This is why those children which are brought up under the eyes of their parents are weak, in consequence of the indulgence, which by sparing them too much injures their health. It is a good thing, even pain in moderation; a good thing, care; a good thing, want; for they make us strong: good also are their opposites: but each of these when in excess destroys us; and the one relaxes, but the other (by overmuch tension) breaks us. Do you see not, that Christ also thus trains His own disciples? If they needed these things, much more do we. But if we need them, let us not grieve, but even rejoice in our afflictions. For these are remedies, answering to our wounds, some of them bitter, others mild; but either of them by itself would be useless. Let us therefore return thanks to God for all these things: for He does not suffer them to happen at random, but for the benefit of our souls. Therefore, showing forth our gratitude, let us return Him thanks, let us glorify Him, let us bear up courageously, considering that it is but for a time, and stretching forward our minds to the things future, that we may both lightly bear the things present, and be counted worthy to attain unto the good things to come, through the grace and mercy of His only begotten

Son, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 55 on the Acts of the Apostles

Acts XXVIII. 17-20

"And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they had come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spoke against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had anything to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."

He wished to exculpate both himself and others; himself, that they might not accuse him, and by so doing hurt themselves; and those (others), that it might not seem that the whole thing was of their doing. For it was likely that a report was prevalent, that he had been delivered up by the Jews; and this was enough to alarm them. He therefore addresses himself to this, and defends himself as to his own conduct. *"How then is it reasonable,"* it might be said, *"that they should deliver you up without a cause?"* The Roman governors, he says, bear me witness, who wished to let me go. *"How was it then that they did not let (you) go?"* *"When the Jews spoke against it,"* he says. Observe how he extenuates (in speaking of) their charges against him. Since if he had wished to aggravate matters, he might have used them so as to bear harder upon them. Wherefore, he says, *"I was*

constrained to appeal unto Cæsar:" so that his whole speech is of a forgiving nature. What then? Did you this, that you might accuse them? No, he says: "Not that I had anything to accuse my nation of:" but that I might escape the danger. For it is for your sakes "that I am bound with this chain." So far am I, he says, from any hostile feeling towards you. Then they also were so subdued by his speech, that they too apologized for those of their own nation: "And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning you, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spoke any harm of you." [Acts 28:21] Neither through letters, nor through men, have they made known any harm of you. Nevertheless, we wish to hear from yourself: "But we desire to hear of you what you think." [Acts 28:22]: and then forestalled him by showing their own sentiments. "For as concerning this sect, it is known to us, that everywhere it is spoken against. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." (v. 23, 24.) They said not, we speak against it, but "it is spoken against." Then he did not immediately answer, but gave them a day, and they came to him, and he discoursed, it says, "both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets. And some believed, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and

understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." [Acts 28:25-27] But when they departed, as they were opposed to each other, then he reproaches them, not because he wished to reproach those (that believed not), but to confirm these (that believed). *"Well said Esaias,"* says he to them. So that to the Gentiles it is given to know this mystery. No wonder then, if they did gainsay: this was foretold from the first. Then again he moves their jealousy (on the score) of them of the Gentiles. *"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. Amen."* [Acts 28:28-31] It shows the freedom he had now: without hindrance in Rome, he who had been hindered in Judea; and he remained teaching there for two years. What of the (years) after these?

(Recapitulation.) (d) *"Who having examined me,"* says he, *"found nothing in me"* [Acts 28:18]. When those ought to have rescued, they *"delivered (him) into the hands of the Romans."* And such the superabundance, * * because those had not power to condemn but delivered him prisoner. *"Not as having anything to accuse my nation of,"* [Acts 28:19] am I come. See what friendliness of expression *"my nation:"* he does not hold them as aliens. He does not say, I do not accuse, but, *"I have not (whereof) to accuse:"* although he had suffered so many evils at their hands. But nothing of all this does he say, nor make his speech offensive: neither does he seem to be sparing them as matter of favor. For this was the main point, to show that they delivered him prisoner to the Romans, when those ought to have condemned him. (a) *"For this cause,"* he says, *"I wished to*

see you" [Acts 28:20]: that it might not be in any man's power to accuse me, and to say what (naturally) might suggest itself ([τὰ παριστάμενα]), that having escaped their hands I have come for this: not to bring evils upon others, but myself fleeing from evils. *"I was compelled to appeal unto Caesar."* Observe them also speaking more mildly to him. *"We beg,"* say they: and wish to speak in exculpation of those (at Jerusalem). (e) Whereas they ought to accuse them, they plead for them: by the very fact of their exonerating them, they do in fact accuse them. (b) For this very thing was a proof that they knew themselves exceedingly in the wrong. Had they been confident, they would at any rate have done this, so that he should not have it in his power to make out his story in his own way, and besides they shrank from coming. And by their many times attempting they showed * * (f) *"As for this sect, it is known to us,"* say they, *"that it is everywhere spoken against."* (v. 21, 21.) True, but (people) are also everywhere persuaded (as, in fact, here), *"some were persuaded, and some believed not. And when they had appointed him a day,"* etc. [Acts 28:23-25] See again how not by miracles but by Law and Prophets he puts them to silence, and how we always find him doing this. And yet he might also have wrought signs; but then it would no longer have been matter of faith. In fact, this (itself) was a great sign, his discoursing from the Law and the Prophets. Then that you may not deem it strange (that they believed not), he introduces the prophecy which says, *"Hearing you shall hear and not understand,"* more now than then: *"and you shall see and not perceive"* [Acts 28:26] more now than then. This is not spoken for the former sort, but for the unbelievers. How then? Was it contrary to the prophecy, that those believed? (*"Go,"*) it says, *"unto this people"* (that is), to the unbelieving people. He did not say this to insult them, but to remove the offense. *"Be it known then,"* he says, *"unto you, that unto the Gentiles is sent the salvation*

of God. They," says he, *"will hear it too."* [Acts 28:28] Then why do you discourse to us? Did you not know this? Yes, but that you might be persuaded, and that I might exculpate myself, and give none a handle (against me). (c) The unbelieving were they that withdrew. But see how they do not now form plots against him. For in Judea they had a sort of tyranny. Then wherefore did the Providence of God order that he should go there, and yet the Lord had said, *"Get you out quickly from Jerusalem?"* [Acts 22:18] That both their wickedness might be shown and Christ's prophecy made good, that they would not endure to hear him: and so that all might learn that he was ready to suffer all things, and that the event might be for the consolation of those in Judea: for there also (the brethren) were suffering many grievous evils. But if while preaching the Jewish doctrines, he suffered thus, had he preached the doctrines of the glory of Christ, how would they have endured him? While *"purifying himself"* [Acts 21:26] he was intolerable, and how should he have been tolerable while preaching? What lay ye to his charge? What have ye heard? He spoke nothing of the kind. He was simply seen, and he exasperated all against him. Well might he then be set apart for the Gentiles: well might he be sent afar off: there also destined to discourse to the Gentiles. First he calls the Jews, then having shown them the facts he comes to the Gentiles. [Acts 24:18] *"Well spoke the Holy Ghost,"* etc. But this saying, *"The Spirit said,"* is nothing wonderful: for an angel also is said to say what the Lord says: but He (the Spirit) not so. When one is speaking of the things said by the angel, one does not say, Well said the angel, but, Well said the Lord. *"Well said the Spirit:"* as much as to say, It is not me that you disbelieve. But God foreknew this from the first. *"He discoursed,"* it says, *"with boldness, unhindered"* [Acts 28:31]: for it is possible to speak with boldness, yet hindered. His boldness nothing checked: but in fact he also spoke

unhindered. (c) "*Discoursed*," it says, "*the things concerning the kingdom of God*:" mark, nothing of the things of sense, nothing of the things present. (f) But of his affairs after the two years, what say we? (b) (The writer) leaves the hearer thirsty for more: the heathen authors do the same (in their writings), for to know everything makes the reader dull and jaded. Or else he does this, (e) not having it in his power to exhibit it from his own personal knowledge. (a) Mark the order of God's Providence, "*I have been much hindered from coming unto you...having a great desire these many years to come unto you.*" [Romans 15:22-23] (d) But he fed them with hopes. (g) I am in haste to go to Spain, and "*I hope*," says he, "*to see you in my journey, and to be brought thitherward on my journey by you, if first I be filled with your company in some measure.*" [Romans 15:24] (i) Of this he says, I will come and rest together with you "*in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel*" [Romans 15:29]: and again "*I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints*" [Romans 15:25]: this is the same that he has said here, "*To do alms to my nation I came.*" [Acts 24:17] (h) Do you mark how he did not foresee everything— that sacred and divine head, the man higher than the heavens, that had a soul able to grasp all at once, the holder of the first place— Paul? The man whose very name, to them that know him, suffices for rousing of the soul, for vigilance, for shaking off all sleep! Rome received him bound, coming up from the sea, saved from a shipwreck— and was saved from the shipwreck of error. Like an emperor that has fought a naval battle and overcome, he entered into that most imperial city. (k) He was nearer now to his crown. Rome received him bound, and saw him crowned and proclaimed conqueror. There he had said, I will rest together with you: but this was the beginning of a course once more, and he added trophies to trophies, a man not to be overcome. Corinth kept him two years, and Asia three, and this city two for this time; a second time he again

entered it, when also he was consummated. Thus he escaped then, and having filled the whole world, he so brought his life to a close. Why did you wish to learn what happened after these two years? Those too are such as these: bonds, tortures, fightings, imprisonments, lyings in wait, false accusations, deaths, day by day. You have seen but a small part of it? How much soever you have seen, such is he for all the rest. As in the case of the sky, if you see one part of it, go where you will you shall see it such as this: as it is with the sun, though thou see its rays but in part, you may conjecture the rest: so is it with Paul. His Acts you have seen in part; such are they all throughout, teeming with dangers. He was a heaven having in it the Sun of Righteousness, not such a sun (as we see): so that that man was better than the very heaven. Think you that this is a small thing— when you say "*The Apostle*," immediately every one thinks of him (as), when you say "*The Baptist*," immediately they think of John? To what shall one compare his words? To the sea, or even to the ocean? But nothing is equal to them.

More copious than this (sea) are (his) streams; purer and deeper; so that one would not err in calling Paul's heart both a sea and a heaven, the one for purity, the other for depth. He is a sea, having for its voyagers not those who sail from city to city, but those from earth to heaven: if any man sail in this sea, he will have a prosperous voyage. On this sea, not winds, but instead of winds the Holy and Divine Spirit wafts the souls which sail thereon: no waves are here, no rock, no monsters: all is calm. It is a sea which is more calm and secure than a haven, having no bitter brine, but a pure fountain both sweeter than * *, and brighter and more transparent than the sun: a sea it is, not having precious stones, nor purple dye as ours, but treasures far better than those. He who wishes to descend into this sea, needs not various, needs not oil, but much loving-kindness ([φιλανθρωπίας]): he will find in it all the good things that are in the

kingdom of Heaven. He will even be able to become a king, and to take the whole world into his possession, and to be in the greatest honor; he who sails on this sea will never undergo shipwreck, but will know all things well. But as those who are inexpert in this (our visible sea) are suffocated (in attempting to dive therein), so is it in that other sea: which is just the case with the heretics, when they attempt things above their strength. It behooves therefore to know the depth, or else not to venture. If we are to sail on this sea, let us come well-girded. *"I could not,"* he says, *"speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal."* [1 Corinthians 3:1] Let no one who is without endurance sail on this sea. Let us provide for ourselves ships, that is, zeal, earnestness, prayers, that we may pass over the sea in quiet. For indeed this is the living water. Like as if one should get a mouth of fire, such a mouth does that man get who knows Paul well: like as if one should have a sharp sword, so again does such an one become invincible. And for the understanding of Paul's words there is needed also a pure life. For therefore also he said: *"You have become such as have need of milk, seeing you are dull of hearing."* [Hebrews 5:11-12] For there is, there is an infirmity of hearing. For as a stomach which is infirm could not take in wholesome food (which it finds) hard of digestion, so a soul which has become tumid and heated, unstrung and relaxed, could not receive the word of the Spirit. Hear the disciples saying, *"This is a hard saying: who can hear it"* [John 6:60]? But if the soul be strong and healthy, all is most easy, all is light: it becomes more lofty and buoyant: it is more able to soar and lift itself on high. Knowing then these things, let us bring our soul into a healthy state: let us emulate Paul, and imitate that noble, that adamant soul: that, advancing in the steps of his life, we may be enabled to sail through the sea of this present life, and to come unto the haven wherein are no waves, and attain unto the good things promised to them that love Him,

through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and Holy Ghost together be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on Romans

Romans 1:1-2

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, (which He promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.)"

Moses having written five books, has nowhere put his own name to them, neither have they who after him put together the history of events after him, no nor yet has Matthew, nor John, nor Mark, nor Luke; but the blessed Paul everywhere in his Epistles sets his own name. Now why was this? Because they were writing to people, who were present, and it had been superfluous to show themselves when they were present. But this man sent his writings from afar and in the form of a letter, for which cause also the addition of the name was necessary. But if in the Epistle to the Hebrews he does not do the same, this too is after his own wise judgment. For since they felt prejudiced against him, lest on hearing the name at the outstart, they should stop up all admission to his discourse, he subtly won their attention by concealing the name. But if some Prophets and Solomon have put their names, this I leave as a subject for you to look further into hereafter, why some of them wished to put it so, and some not. For you are not to learn everything from me, but to take pains yourselves also and enquire further, lest ye become more dull-witted.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." Why did God change his name, and call him Paul who was Saul? It was, that he might not even in this respect come short of the Apostles, but that that preëminence which the chief of the Disciples had, he might also acquire [Mark 3:16]; and have whereon to ground a closer union with them. And he calls himself, the servant of

Christ, yet not merely this; for there be many sorts of servitude. One owing to the Creation, according to which it says, *"for all are Your servants"* [Psalm 119:91]; and according to which it says, *"Nebuchadnezzar, My servant"* [Jeremiah 25:9], for the work is the servant of Him which made it. Another kind is that from the faith, of which it says, *"But God be thanked that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from a pure heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you: being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness."* [Romans 6:17-18] Another is that from civil subjection ([πολιτείας]), after which it says, *"Moses my servant is dead"* [Joshua 1:2]; and indeed all the Jews were servants, but Moses in a special way as shining most brightly in the community. Since then, in all the forms of the marvellous servitude, Paul was a servant, this he puts in the room of the greatest title of dignity, saying, *"a servant of Jesus Christ."* And the Names appertaining to the dispensation he sets forth, going on upwards from the lowest. For with the Name Jesus, did the Angel come from Heaven when He was conceived of the Virgin, and Christ He is called from being anointed, which also itself belonged to the flesh. And with what oil, it may be asked, was He anointed? It was not with oil that He was anointed, but with the Spirit. And Scripture has instances of calling such *"Christs"*: inasmuch as the Spirit is the chief point in the unction, and that for which the oil is used. And where does it call those *"Christs"* who are not anointed with oil? *"Touch not,"* it says, *"Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm"* [Psalm 105:15], but at that time the institution of anointing with oil did not yet even exist.

"Called an Apostle." He styles himself *"called"* in all his Epistles, so showing his own candor ([εὐγνώμοσύνην]), and that it was not of his own seeking that he found, but that when called he came near and obeyed. And the faithful, he styles, *"called to be saints,"* but while they had been called

so far as to be believers, he had besides a different thing committed to his hands, namely, the Apostleship, a thing full of countless blessings, and at once greater than and comprehensive of, all the gifts.

And what more need one say of it, than that whatsoever Christ was doing when present, this he committed to their hands when He departed. Which also Paul cries aloud, speaking thereof and magnifying the dignity of the Apostles' office; "*We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us;*" i.e. in Christ's stead. "*Separated to the Gospel of God.*" [2 Corinthians 5:20] For as in a house, each one is set apart for various works; thus also in the Church, there be various distributions of ministrations. And herein he seems to me to hint, that he was not appointed by lot only, but that of old and from the first he was ordained to this office; which also Jeremy says, that God spoke concerning himself, "*Before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you, I ordained you a prophet unto the nations.*" [Jeremiah 1:5] For in that he was writing to a vainglorious city, and one every way puffed up, he therefore uses every mode of showing that his election was of God. For he Himself called him, and Himself separated him. And he does this, that he may make the Epistle deserve credit, and meet an easy reception. "*To the Gospel of God.*" Not Matthew then alone is an Evangelist, nor Mark, as neither was this man alone an Apostle, but they also; even if he be said præeminently to be this, and they that. And he calls it the Gospel, not for those good things only which have been brought to pass, but also for those which are to come. And how comes he to say, that the Gospel "*of God*" is preached by himself? For he says, "*separated to the Gospel of God*"— for the Father was manifest, even before the Gospels. Yet even if He were manifest, it was to the Jews only, and not even to all of these as were fitting. For neither did they know Him to be a Father, and many things did they conceive unworthily of Him. Wherefore also Christ

says, *"The true worshippers"* shall come, and that *"the Father seeks such to worship Him."* [John 4:23] But it was afterwards that He Himself with the Son was unveiled to the whole world, which Christ also spoke of beforehand, and said, *"that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom You have sent."* [John 17:3] But he calls it the *"Gospel"* of God, to cheer the hearer at the outstart. For he came not with tidings to make the countenance sad, as did the prophets with their accusations, and charges, and reproofs, but with glad tidings, even the *"Gospel of God;"* countless treasures of abiding and unchangeable blessings.

Ver. 2. *"Which He promised afore by His Prophets in the Holy Scriptures."*

For the Lord, says he, *"shall give the word to them that proclaim glad tidings with great power"* [Psalm 68:12, Septuagint]; and again, *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."* [Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15] See here both the name of the Gospel expressly and the temper of it, laid down in the Old Testament. For, we do not proclaim it by words only, he means, but also by acts done; since neither was it human, but both divine and unspeakable, and transcending all nature. Now since they have laid against it the charge of novelty also, He shows it to be older than the Greeks, and described aforetime in the Prophets. And if He gave it not from the beginning because of those that were unwilling to receive it, still, they that were willing did hear it. *"Your father Abraham,"* He says, *"rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad."* [John 8:56] How then comes He to say, *"Many prophets desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them?"* [Matthew 13:17] He means not so, as you see and hear, the Flesh itself, and the very miracles before your eyes. But let me beg you to look and see what a very long time ago these things were foretold. For when God is about to do openly some great things, He

announces them of a long time before, to practise men's hearing for the reception of them when they come.

"In the Holy Scriptures." Because the Prophets not only spoke, but also writ what they spoke; nor did they write only, but also shadowed them forth by actions, as Abraham when he led up Isaac, and Moses when he lifted up the Serpent, and when he spread out his hands against Amalek, and when he offered the Paschal Lamb.

Ver. 3. *"Concerning His Son which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh."*

What dost, you, O Paul, that after lifting up our souls so, and elevating them, and causing great and unutterable things to pass in show before them, and speaking of the Gospel, and that too the Gospel of God, and bringing in the chorus of the Prophets, and showing the whole of them heralding forth many years before those things which were to come: why do you again bring us down to David? Are you conversing, oh tell me, of some man, and giving him Jesse's son for a father? And wherein are these things worthy of what you have just spoken of? Yea, they are fully worthy. For our discourse is not, says he, of any bare man. Such was my reason for adding, *"according to the flesh;"* as hinting that there is also a Generation of the Same after the Spirit. And why did he begin from that and not from this the higher? It is because that was what Matthew, and Luke, and Mark, began from. For he who would lead men by the hand to Heaven, must needs lead them upwards from below. So too was the actual dispensation ordered. First, that is, they saw Him a man upon earth, and then they understood Him to be God. In the same direction then, as He Himself had framed His teaching, did His disciple also shape out the way which leads there. Therefore the generation according to the flesh is in his language placed

first in order, not because it was first, but because he was for leading the hearer from this up to that.

Ver. 4. *"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, even Jesus Christ."*

What is said has been made obscure by the close-folding of the words, and so it is necessary to divide it. What then is it, which he says? We preach, says he, Him Who was made of David. But this is plain. Whence then is it plain, that this incarnate *"Person"* was also the Son of God? First, it is so from the prophets; wherefore he says, *"Which He had promised afore by the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures."* [Romans 1:2] And this way of demonstration is no weak one. And next also from the very way of His Generation: which also he sets forth by saying, *"of the seed of David according to the flesh:"* for He broke the rule of nature. Thirdly, from the miracles which He did, yielding a demonstration of much power, for *"in power"* means this. Fourthly, from the Spirit which He gave to them that believe upon Him, and through which He made them all holy, wherefore he says, *"according to the Spirit of holiness."* For it was of God only to grant such gifts. Fifthly, from the Resurrection; for He first and He alone raised Himself: and this Himself too said to be above all a miracle sufficient to stop the mouths even of them that behaved shamelessly. For, *"Destroy this Temple,"* He says, *"and in three days I will raise it up"* [John 19]; and, *"When you have lifted" Me "up from the earth, then shall you know that I am He"* [John 8:28]; and again, *This "generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonas."* [Matthew 12:39] What then is the being *"declared?"* being shown, being manifested, being judged, being confessed, by the feeling and suffrage of all; by Prophets, by the marvelous Birth after the Flesh, by the power which was in the miracles,

by the Spirit, through which He gave sanctification, by the Resurrection, whereby He put an end to the tyranny of death.

Ver. 5. *"By Whom we have received grace and Apostleship for obedience to the faith."*

See the candor of the servant. He wishes nothing to be his own, but all his Master's. And indeed it was the Spirit that gave this. Wherefore He says, *"I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth"* [John 16:12]; and again, *"Separate Me Paul and Barnabas."* [Acts 13:2] And in the Epistle to the Corinthians, he says, that *"to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge"* [1 Corinthians 12:8-11]; and that It divides all as It wills. And in addressing the Milesians, he says, *"Over which the Holy Ghost has made you shepherds and overseers."* [Acts 20:28] You see, he calls the things of the Spirit, the Son's, and the things of the Son, the Spirit's. *"Grace and Apostleship;"* that is, it is not we that have achieved for ourselves, that we should become Apostles. For it was not by having toiled much and labored that we had this dignity allotted to us, but we received grace, and the successful result is a part of the heavenly gift. *"For obedience to the faith."* So it was not the Apostles that achieved it, but grace that paved the way before them. For it was their part to go about and preach, but to persuade was of God, Who wrought in them. As also Luke says, that *"He opened their heart"* [Acts 16:14]; and again, To whom it was given to hear the word of God. *"To obedience;"* he says not, to questioning and parade ([κατασκευήν]) of argument but *"to obedience."* For we were not sent, he means, to argue, but to give those things which we had trusted to our hands. For when the Master declares anything, they that hear should not be nice and curious handlers of what is told them, but receivers only; for this is why

the Apostles were sent, to speak what they had heard, not to add anything from their own stock, and that we for our part should believe— that we should believe what?— *"concerning His Name."* Not that we should be curious about the essence, but that we should believe in the Name; for this it was which also wrought the miracles. For it says, *"in the Name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk."* [Acts 3:6] And this too requires faith, neither can one grasp anything of these things by reasoning ([λογισμῷ καταλαβεῖν]). *"Among all nations, among whom are you also the called of Jesus Christ."* What? Did Paul preach then to all the nations? Now that he ran through the whole space from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and from thence again went forth to the very ends of the earth, is plain from what he writes to the Romans; but even if he did not come to all, yet still what he says is not false, for he speaks not of himself alone, but of the twelve Apostles, and all who declared the word after them. And in another sense, one should not see any fault to find with the phrase, if about himself, when one considers his ready mind, and how that after death he ceases not to preach in all parts of the world. And consider how he extols the gift, and shows that it is great and much more lofty than the former, since the old things were with one nation, but this gift drew sea and land to itself. And attend to this too, how free the mind of Paul is from all flattery; for when conversing with the Romans, who were seated as it were upon a sort of summit of the whole world, he attaches no more to them than to the other nations, nor does he on the score of their being then in power and ruling, say, that they have in spiritual things also any advantage. But as (he means) we preach to all the nations, so do we to you, numbering them with Scythians and Thracians: for if he did not wish to show this, it were superfluous to say *"Among whom are you also."* And this he does to take down their high spirit ([κενῶν τὸ φύσημα]) and to prostrate the swelling vanity of their minds, and to teach them to

honor others alike to themselves: and so he proceeds to speak upon this very point.

Ver. 6. *"Among whom are you also the called of Jesus Christ."*

That is, along with whom you also are: and he does not say, that he called the others with you, but you with the others. For if in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free, much less is there king and private man. For even you were called and did not come over of yourselves.

Ver. 7. *"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

See how continually he puts the word *"called,"* saying, *"called to be an Apostle; among whom you also are called; to all that be in Rome, called:"* and this he does not out of superfluity of words, but out of a wish to remind them of the benefit. For since among them which believed, it was likely that there would be some of the consuls ([ὁ] [πάτων]; Ben. *consulares*) and rulers as well as poor and common men, casting aside the inequality of ranks, he writes to them all under one appellation. But if in things which are more needful and which are spiritual, all things are set forth as common both to slaves and to free, for instance, the love from God, the calling, the Gospel, the adoption, the grace, the peace, the sanctification, all things else, how could it be other than the uttermost folly, whom God had joined together, and made to be of equal honor in the greater things, those to divide on account of things on earth? On this ground, I presume, from the very outstart, this blessed Apostle, after casting out this mischievous disease, conducts them to the mother of blessings, humble-mindedness. This made servants better, since they learned that they should take no harm from their servitude, while they had the true freedom; this would incline masters to be gentle, as being instructed that they have no advantage in being free, unless the goods of faith have the first place given them. And that you may learn

that he was not doing this to work confusion, by dashing all things, but still knew the best distinction, he wrote not simply to all that were in Rome, but with a definition added, "*beloved of God.*" For this is the best discrimination, and shows whence the sanctification was. Whence then was the sanctification? From Love. For after saying, "*beloved,*" then he proceeds, "*called to be saints,*" showing that it is from this that the fount of all blessings is. But saints he calls all the faithful. "*Grace unto you and peace.*"

Oh address, that brings countless blessings to us! This also Christ bade the Apostles to use as their first word when entering into houses. [Luke 10:5] Wherefore it is from this that Paul also in all places takes his beginning, from grace and peace; for it was no small war which Christ put an end to, but indeed one varying and of every kind and of a long season ([τοικίλον καὶ παντοδαπὸν]); and this not from our labors, but through His grace. Since then love presented us with grace, and grace with peace, having set them down in the due order of an address, he prays over them that they may abide perpetual and unmoved, so that no other war may again be blown into flame, and beseeches Him that gave, to keep these things firmly settled, saying as follows, "*Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*" See in this passage, the "*from*" is common to the Son and the Father, and this is equivalent to "*of whom.*" For he did not say, Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father, "*through*" our Lord Jesus Christ; but, "*from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*" Strange! How mighty is the love of God! We which were enemies and disgraced, have all at once become saints and sons. For when he calls Him Father, he shows them to be sons; and when he says sons, he has unveiled the whole treasure of blessings.

Let us then keep showing a conversation worthy of the gift, and hold on in peace and holiness. For other dignities are but for a time, and are brought to an end along with this life present, and may be bought with money (whence one might say they are not dignities at all but names of dignities only, having their strength in the investiture of fine array and the servility of attendants), but this as having been given of God, the gift of sanctification and adoption, is not broken through even by death, but even here makes men conspicuous, and also departs with us upon our journey to the life to come. For he that holds on in the adoption, and keeps an exact watch upon his holiness, is much brighter and more happy even than he that is arrayed with the diadem itself, and has the purple; and has the delight of abundant peace in the present life and is nurtured up with goodly hopes, and has no ground for worry and disturbance, but enjoys constant pleasure; for as for good spirits and joy, it is not greatness of power, not abundance of wealth, not pomp of authority, not strength of body, not sumptuousness of the table, not the adorning of dresses, nor any other of the things in man's reach that ordinarily produces them, but spiritual success, and a good conscience alone. And he that has this cleansed, even though he be clad in rags and struggling with famine, is of better spirits than they that live so softly. So too he that is conscious of wicked deeds, even though he may gather to himself all men's goods, is the most wretched of all men. For this cause Paul, living in continual hunger and nakedness, and being scourged every day was joyful, and went more softly than they that were then emperors. But Ahab though a king, and indulging in a sumptuous luxury, when he had done that one sin, groaned and was out of spirits, and his countenance was fallen both before the sin and after the sin. If then we wish to enjoy pleasure, above all things else let us shun wickedness, and follow after virtue; since it is not in the nature of things for one to have a share

thereof on any other terms, even if we were mounted upon the king's throne itself. Wherefore also Paul says, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.*" [Galatians 5:22] This fruit then let us keep growing by us, that we may be in the fruition of joy here, and may obtain the kingdom to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom, be glory to the Father, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, even unto all ages. Amen.

Homily 2 on Romans

Rom. I. 8

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."

An exordium worthy of this blessed spirit, and able to teach all men to offer unto God the firstlings of their good deeds and words, and to render thanks not only for their own, but also for others' well-doings: which also makes the soul pure from envy and grudging, and draws God in a greater measure towards the loving spirit of them that so render thanks. Wherefore also elsewhere he says, *"Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with all spiritual blessing."* [Ephesians 1:3] And it is fitting that we render thanks not only when rich, but also when poor, not when in health only, but also when sick, not when we thrive only, but also when we have to bear the reverse. For when our affairs are borne onward with a fair wind, to be thankful is not matter of wonder. But when no small tempests be upon us, and the vessel veers about and is in jeopardy, then is the great time for displaying patience and goodness of heart. For this cause Job also gained a crown from hence, and the shameless mouth of the devil did he stop, and show clearly that not even when he saw good days was it through his wealth that he was thankful, but through his much love toward God. And see too what things he is thankful for: not for things earthly and perishing, as power and authority and glory (for these things are of no account), but for real blessings, faith and boldness of speech. And with how much feeling he gives thanks: for he says not *"to God,"* but *"to my God,"* which also the Prophets do, so making that which is common to all their own. And what is there wonderful in the Prophets doing so? For God

himself plainly does it continually to His servants, calling Himself the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, as peculiarly theirs. *"That your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."* What then, had the whole world heard of the faith of the Romans? Yes, the whole, according to him. (Or, since that time, [πᾶσα ἐξ ἐκείνου]). And it is not a thing unlikely. For the city was not one of no note, but as being upon a sort of eminence it was on every account conspicuous. But consider, I pray, the power of the preaching, how in a short time by means of publicans and fishermen it took hold upon the very head of all cities, and Syrians became the teachers and guides of Romans. He attests then two excellencies in them, both that they believed, and that they believed with boldness, and that so great as that the fame of them reached into all the world. *"For your faith,"* he says *"is spoken of throughout the whole world. Your faith,"* not your verbal disputations, nor your questionings, nor your syllogisms. And yet there were there many hindrances to the teaching. For having recently acquired the empire of the world they were elated, and lived in riches and luxury, and fishermen brought the preaching there, and they Jews and of the Jews, a nation hated and had in abomination among all men; and they were bidden to worship the Crucified, Who was brought up in Judea. And with the doctrine the teachers proclaimed also an austere life to men who were practised in softness, and were agitated about things present. And they that proclaimed it were poor and common men, of no family, and born of men of no family. But none of these things hindered the course of the word. So great was the power of the Crucified as to carry the word round everywhere. *"For it is spoken of,"* he says, *"in all the world."* He says not, it is manifested, but, is spoken of, as if all men had them in their mouths. And indeed when he bears witness of this in the Thessalonians, he adds another thing also. For after saying, *"from you sounded out the word of God,"* he

adds, "*so that we need not to speak anything.*" [1 Thessalonians 1:8] For the disciples had come into the place of teachers, by their boldness of speech instructing all, and drawing them to themselves. For the preaching came not anywhere to a stand, but went over the whole world more rapidly than fire. But here there is only thus much— "*it is spoken of.*" He well says that "*it is spoken of,*" showing that there was no need to add anything to what was said, or to take away. For a messenger's business is this, to convey from one to another only what is told him. For which cause also the priest is called a "*messenger*" [Malachi 2:7], because he speaks not his own words, but those of Him that sent him. And yet Peter had preached there. But he reckons what was his, to be his own as well. In such degree, as I said before, was he beyond measure clear of all grudging!

Ver. 9. "*For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son.*"

Words these of an Apostle's bowels of affection, the showing forth this of fatherly concernment! And what is it which he says, and why does he call God to witness? He had to declare his feeling toward them. Since then he had not as yet ever seen them, he therefore called no man to witness, but Him Who enters in the hearts. For since he was saying, "*I love you,*" and as a token thereof alleged his praying continually for them, and wishing to come to them, and neither was this self-evident, he betakes himself to the trustworthy testimony. Will then any one of you be able to boast that he remembers, when praying at his house ([ἐ] [πὶ τῇς οἰκίας]) the entire body of the Church? I think not. But Paul drew near to God in behalf not of one city only, but of the whole world, and this not once, or twice, or thrice, but continually. But if the continually bearing any one about in one's memory would not happen without much love; to have any in one's prayers, and to have them there continually, think what great affection and friendship that

implies. But when he says, *"Whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son,"* he shows us at once the grace of God, and also his own humble-mindedness; the grace of God because He entrusted to him so great a matter; but his own humility, because he imputes it all not to his own zeal, but to the assistance of the Spirit. But the addition of *"the Gospel,"* shows the kind of ministry. For there are many and diverse modes of service. And as under kings all are ranged under one that bears kingly power, and all have not to minister ([διακονοῦνται]) about the same thing, but to one belongs the ministry of ruling armies and to another that of ordering cities and to another again that of keeping treasures in the storehouses, thus also in spiritual things, one serves God and labors ([λατρεύει καὶ δουλεύει]) in believing and ordering his own life well, and another in undertaking the care of strangers, and another in taking in hand the patronship of them that be in need. As even during the Apostle's own time, they of Stephen's company served God in the guardianship of the widows, others ([ἄ] [λλοι] 2 manuscripts, all [ὁ] [ν]) in the teaching of the word, of whom also Paul was serving in the preaching of the Gospel. And this was the fashion of his service: for it was to this that he was appointed. On this account, he not only calls God to witness, but also says what he was entrusted with, to show that having so great things put into his hands, he would not have called Him Who trusted them to him to witness what was false. And therewith he wished to make another point out also, viz. that he could not but have this love and care for them. For that they might not say *"who are you? And, from whence? That you say that you are anxious over a city so great, and most imperial,"* he shows that he must needs have this care, if at least the sort of service that was committed to him, was to declare the Gospel: for he that has this put into his hands, must needs have continually upon his mind them that are to receive the word. And he shows another thing besides this

by saying, *"in my spirit;"* that this service is much higher than either the Gentile or the Jewish. For the Gentile is both fleshly and in error, and the Jewish is true indeed, yet even this is fleshly. But that of the Church is the opposite of the Gentile, but more lofty than the Jewish by a great deal. For the mode of our service is not with sheep and oxen and smoke and fat, but by a spiritual soul, which Christ also shows in saying that *"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."* [John 4:24]

"In the Gospel of His Son." Having said above that it was the Father's Gospel, here he says it is the Son's. So indifferent is it to say the Father's or the Son's! For he had learned from that blessed voice that the things of the Father are the Son's, and the things of the Son are the Father's. For *"all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine."* [John 17:10]

"That without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." This is the part of genuine love, and he seems indeed to be saying some one thing, yet states four things even here. Both that he remembers, and that he does so continually, and that it is in his prayers, and that it is to ask great things for them.

Ver. 10, 11. *"Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you."*

You see him painfully desiring to see them, and yet not enduring to see them contrary to what seemed good unto God, but having his longing mingled with the fear of God. For he loved them, and was eager to come to them. Yet he did not, because he loved them, desire to see them, contrary to what seemed good unto God. This is true love, not as we love who err on both sides from the laws of love: for either we love no one, or if we ever do love, we love contrary to what seems good unto God, acting in both against the Divine law. And if these things be grievous ([φορτικὰ]) when spoken of,

they are more grievous when done. And how do we love contrary to what seems good to God? (you will say.) When we neglect Christ pining with hunger, and provide our children and friends and relations above their needs. Or rather what need to carry the subject further. For if any one will examine his own conscience, he will find that this takes place in many things. But such was not that blessed person, but he knew both how to love and to love as he ought (3 manuscripts omit "*as he ought*"), and as was fitting, and though exceeding all men in loving, he transgressed not the measures of love. See then two things thrive extremely in him, fear of God, and also longing towards the Romans. For to be praying continually, and not to desist when he obtained not, shows exceeding love. But while loving, thus to continue yielding to the will of God, shows intense reverence. In another place, however, having "*thrice besought the Lord*" [2 Corinthians 12:8], he not only did not receive, but on the contrary, when he did not receive, he was very thankful for not having been heard. So, in all things did he look to God. But here he received, though not when he asked, but after delay, and neither hereat was he discontented. And these things I mention that we may not repine at not being heard, or at being heard slowly. For we are not better than Paul, who confesses his thankfulness for both, and with good ground. For when he had once given himself up to the all-governing Hand, and put himself with as much subjection under it, as clay under the potter, he followed wheresoever God led. Having then said that he desired to see them, he mentioned also the cause of his desire; and what is it?

Ver. 11. "*That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.*"

For it was not merely as many now go travelling in a needless and profitless way that he also went, but for necessary and very urgent ends.

And he does not tell them his meaning openly, but by way of hints, for he does not say that I may teach you, that I may instruct you, that I may fill up that which is wanting; but, "*that I may impart;*" showing, that it is not his own things which he is giving them, but that he was imparting to them what he had received. And here again he is unassuming, in saying "*some,*" he means, a small one, and suited to my powers. And what may this small one be which you are now going to impart? This it is, he says, "*to the end that you may be established.*" This then also comes of grace, namely, the being unwavering and standing fast. But when you hear of grace, think not that the reward of resolve on our part is thereby cast aside; for he speaks of grace, not to disparage the labor of resolve on our part, but to undermine ([ὅ] [ποτεμνόμενος], as piercing a thing inflated) the haughtiness of an insolent spirit ([ὅ] [πονοίας]). Do not thou then, because that Paul has called this a gift of grace, grow supine. For he knows how, in his great candor, to call even well doings, graces; because even in these we need much influence from above. But in saying, "*to the end that you may be established,*" he covertly shows that they needed much correction: for what he would say is this: Of a "*long time I have both desired*" and prayed to see you, for no other reason than that I may "*establish, strengthen, fix*" you thoroughly in the word of God, so that you be not continually wavering. But he does not express himself so (for he would have shocked them), but in another way he hints to them the same thing, though in a subdued tone. For when he says, "*to the end that you may be established,*" he makes this plain. Then since this also was very irksome, see how he softens it by the sequel. For that they may not say, are we wavering, and carried about? And need we speech of yours in order to stand fast? He anticipates and does away any gainsaying of the kind, by saying as follows.

Ver. 12. *"That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."*

As if he said, Do not suspect that I spoke to accuse you. It was not with this feeling that I said what I did. But what may it be that I wished to say? You are undergoing many tribulations, being drenched on every side (by those who persecute you [περιαντλούμενοι] . 3 manuscripts [παρενοχλούμενοι], harassed). I desired then to see you, that I might comfort you, or rather, not that I might comfort you only, but that I might myself receive comfort. See the wisdom of the teacher. He said, to the end that *"ye may be strengthened;"* he knew that what he had said would be heavy and irksome to the disciples. He says, *"to the end that you may be comforted."* But this again is heavy, not indeed to such a degree as the former, still it is heavy. He then pares down what is galling in this also, smoothing his speech on every side, and rendering it easy of acceptance. For he does not say barely, *"to be comforted,"* but, *"to be comforted together with you;"* nor was he content with this but he puts in a further lenitive, when he says, *"by the mutual faith both of you and me."* Oh how great was his humble-mindedness! He showed himself also to be in need of them, and not them only of him. And he puts the disciples in the position of teachers, not letting any superiority remain upon his own side, but pointing out their full equality. For the gain is mutual, he means, and I need the comfort from you, and you that from me. And how comes this to pass? *"Through the mutual faith both of you and me."* For as in the case of fire, if any one gather together many lights, it is a bright flame that he kindles, thus also does it naturally happen with the faithful. For when we be by ourselves, torn away from others, we are somehow in worse spirits. But when we see one another, and are entwined with the members of our own selves, great is the comfort we receive. You must not look to the present

time, during which, by God's grace, both in city and in the desert itself, there be many hosts of believers, and all impiety has been driven out; but consider, in that time, how great a good it was both for disciples to see their master, and for brethren who had come from another city to be seen of brethren. But that I may make what I am saying plainer, let me bring the matter to an example. For if it should even happen and come to pass (may it never do so!) that we had been carried away to the land of the Persians or Scythians or other barbarians, and had been scattered (7 manuscripts *"torn asunder"*) by twos and threes in their cities, and were then suddenly to see any one of those here coming to us, reflect what a harvest of comfort we should reap of it! See ye not those too who are in the prisons, if they see any of their acquaintance, how they revive, and are quite fluttering with the pleasure? But if I compare those days with captivity and imprisonment, count it no wonder. For these suffered far harder things than those, scattered as they were, and driven about, and dwelling in the midst of famine and of wars, and tremblingly expecting daily death, and suspecting friends and kindred and relatives, and dwelling in the world as in a strange land, aye, and in far harder plight than they who live in another's country. This is why he says, *"to the end that you may be established and comforted with us by our mutual faith."* And this he says, not as though himself needed any assistance from them (far from it; for how should the pillar of the Church, who was stronger than iron and the rock, the spiritual adamant, who was equal to the charge of countless cities), but that he should not make his language impetuous and his reproof vehement, he says, that he himself also needs their consolation. But if any one here should say, that the comfort was his gladness at the increase of their faith, and that Paul needed this, he would not be mistaking his meaning in this way either. If then thou desire, one might say, and pray, and wilt gain comfort and give comfort by it, what

is there to hinder your coming? By way of dissipating this suspicion then, he proceeds.

Ver. 13. *"Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I desired to come unto you (but was let hitherto)."*

Here is a compliance great as that of slaves, and a plain exhibition of his excellent temper ([εὐγνώμοσύνης])! For, that he was let, he says, but why, he does not go on to say. For he does not pry into the command of his Master, but only obeys. And yet one might expect a person to start questions, as to why God hindered a city so conspicuous and great, and towards which the whole world was looking, from enjoying such a teacher, and that for so long a time. For he that had overcome the governing city, could easily go on to the subjects of it. But he that let alone the more royal one, and lay in wait about the dependents, had the main point left neglected. But none of these things does he busy himself with, but yields to the incomprehensibleness of Providence, thereby both showing the right tone of his soul, and instructing us all never to call God to account for what happens, even though what is done seem to trouble the minds of many. For the Master's part it is alone to enjoin, the servants' to obey. And this is why he says, that he was let, but not for what cause; for he means, even I do not know; ask not then of me the counsel or mind of God. For neither *"shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why have you made me thus?"* For why, tell me, do you even seek to learn it? Do you not know that all things are under His care, that He is wise, that He does nothing at a mere hazard, that He loves you more than they who begot you, and goes exceeding far beyond a father's yearnings of affection to you, and a mother's anxiousness. Seek then no more, and go not a step further; for this is sufficient consolation for you: since even then it was well ordered for the Romans. And if you know not the manner, take it not to heart: for this is a main

feature of faith, even when in ignorance of the manner of the dispensation, to receive what is told us of His Providence.

Paul then having succeeded in what he was earnest about (and what was this? To show that it was not as slighting them that he did not come to them, but because, though greatly desiring it, he was hindered), and having divested himself of the accusation of remissness, and having persuaded them that he was not less desirous to see them than themselves, further shows his love to them by other things. For even when I was hindered he means, I did not stand aloof from the attempt, but I kept attempting always yet was always hindered, yet never did I stand aloof thus, without falling out with the will of God, still keeping my love. For by his purposing it to himself and not standing aloof from it, he showed his affection; but through his being hindered and yet not struggling against it, all his love to God.

"That I might have some fruit among you also." Yet he had told them the cause of his longing before, and shown that it was becoming him; but still here also, he states it, clearing away all their suspicion. For since the city was conspicuous, and in the whole extent of sea and land had no equal to many even the mere desire of becoming acquainted with it became a reason ([*πρόφασις*]) for a journey to it; that they might not think anything of the sort about Paul, or suspect that, merely with a view to glory in claiming them to himself he desired to be present there, he repeatedly lays down the ground of his desire, and before he says, it was that *"I may impart to you some spiritual gift,"* that I desired to see you; but here more clearly, *"that I might have some fruit among you also even as among other Gentiles."* The rulers he puts with the subjects, and after the countless triumphs and victories and the glory of the consuls, he puts them with the barbarians, and with good reason too. For where the nobility of faith is, there is none barbarian, none Grecian, none stranger, none citizen, but all mount up to

one height of dignity. And see him here also unassuming, for he does not say, that I may teach and instruct, but what? "*that I might have some fruit.*" And not fruit, simply, but "*some fruit.*" Again, depreciating his own share therein just as he had said above, "*that I may impart some gift.*" And then to repress them too, as I said also before, he says, "*even as among other Gentiles.*" For, I do not, because you are rich, and have the advantage of others, show less concern about the others. For it is not the rich that we are seeking, but the faithful. Where now are the wise of the Greeks, they that wear long beards and that are clad in open dress, and puff forth great words ([τὰ μεγάλα φυσῶντες])? All Greece and all barbarian lands has the tentmaker converted. But Plato, who is so cried up and carried about among them, coming a third time to Sicily with the bombast of those words of his, with his brilliant reputation ([ὁ] [πσλήψεως]), did not even get the better of a single king, but came off so wretchedly, as even to have lost his liberty. But this tentmaker ran over not Sicily alone or Italy, but the whole world; and while preaching too he desisted not from his art, but even then sewed skins, and superintended the workshop. And even this did not give offense to those who were born of consuls, and with very good reason, for it is not their trades and occupations, but falsehood and forged doctrines, which usually render teachers easy subjects of contempt. And for this reason, even Athenians still laugh at the former. But this man even barbarians attend to, and even foolish and ignorant men. For his preaching is set forth to all alike, it knows no distinction of rank, no preëminence of nation, no other thing of the sort; for faith alone does it require, and not reasonings. Wherefore it is most worthy of admiration, not only because it is profitable and saving, but that it is readily admissible and easy (Sav. "*lovable*"), and comprehensible to all: which is a main object in the Providence of God, who sets forth His blessings to all in common.

For what He did in respect of the sun and the moon and the earth and the sea and other things, not giving the rich and the wise a greater share of the benefits of these, and a less to the poor, but setting forth the enjoyment of them to all alike, this also did He with regard to the preaching, and even in a much greater degree, by how much this is more indispensable than they. Wherefore Paul repeatedly says, *"among all the Gentiles,"* to show that he in no respect favors them, but is fulfilling his Master's command, and sending them away to thanksgiving to the God of all, he says;

Ver. 14. *"I am a debtor to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise."*

Which also he said when writing to the Corinthians. And he says it, to ascribe the whole to God. [1 Corinthians 9:16]

Ver. 15. *"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also."*

Oh, noble soul! Having taken on him a task laden of so great dangers, a voyage across the sea, temptations, plottings, risings— for it was likely, that one who was going to address so great a city which was under the tyrannic sway of impiety, should undergo temptations thick as snowflakes; and it was in this way that he lost his life in this city, being cut off by the tyrant of it— yet still expecting to undergo so great troubles, for none of these did he become less energetic, but was in haste and was in travail and was ready-minded. Wherefore he says, *"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also."*

Ver. 16. *"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel."*

"What do you say, O, Paul? When it were fitting to say, that I boast, and am proud, and luxuriate in it; you say not this, but what is less than this, that you are *"not ashamed,"* which is not what we usually say of things very glorious. What then is this which he says, and why does he thus speak?

While yet he exults over it more than over heaven. At least, in writing to the Galatians, he said, "*God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" [Galatians 6:14] How then comes he here to say, not that I even glory, but that "*I am not ashamed?*" The Romans were most anxiously eager about the things of the world, owing to their riches, their empire, their victories; and their kings they reckoned to be equal to the gods, and so they even called them. And for this cause too, they worshipped them with temples and with altars and with sacrifices. Since then they were thus puffed up, but Paul was going to preach Jesus, who was thought to be the carpenter's son, who was brought up in Judea, and that in the house of a mean woman, who had no body guards, who was not encircled in wealth, but even died as a culprit with robbers, and endured many other inglorious things; and it was likely that they were concealing themselves as not as yet knowing any of the unspeakable and great things: for this reason he says, "*I am not ashamed,*" having still to teach them not to be ashamed. For he knew that if they succeeded in this, they would speedily go on and come to glorying also: and do you then, if you hear any one saying, Do you worship the Crucified? Be not ashamed, and do not look down, but luxuriate in it, be bright-faced at it, and with the eyes of a free man, and with uplifted look, take up your confession; and if he say again, Do you worship the Crucified? Say in reply to him, Yes! And not the adulterer, not the insulter of his father, not the murderer of his children (for such be all the gods they have), but Him who by the Cross stopped the mouths of devils, and did away with their countless juggleries. For the Cross is for our sakes, being the work of unspeakable Love towards man, the sign of His great concern for us. And in addition to what has been said, since they were puffed up with great pomposity of speech and with their cloak of external wisdom, I, he means to say, bidding an entire farewell to these reasonings, come to preach the

Cross, and am not ashamed because of it: *"for it is the power of God to salvation."* For since there is a power of God to chastisement also (for when He chastised the Egyptians, He said, *"This is My great power, "*) [Joel 2:25] and a power to destruction, (for, *"fear Him,"* He says, *"that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell"*), [Matthew 10:28] for this cause he says, it is not these that I come to bring, the powers of chastisement and punishment, but those of salvation. What then? Did not the Gospel tell of these things also, namely, the account of hell, and that of the outer darkness, and of the venomous worm? And yet we know of these from no other source than the Gospel. In what sense then does he say, *"the power of God unto salvation?"* Attend only to what follows. *"To every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."*

For it is not to all absolutely, but to them that receive it. For though thou be a Grecian (i.e. Heathen), and even one that has run into every kind of vice, though a Scythian, though a barbarian, though a very brute, and full of all irrationality, and burdened with the weights of endless sins, no sooner have you received the word concerning the Cross, and been baptized, than you have blotted out all these; and why says he here, *"to the Jew first, and also to the Greek?"* What means this difference? And yet he has often said, *"Neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision"* [Galatians 5:6 and 6:15]; how then does he here discriminate, setting the Jew before the Greek? Now why is this? Seeing that by being first he does not therefore receive any more of the grace (for the same gift is bestowed both on this person and that,) but the *"first"* is an honor in order of time only. For he has no such advantage as that of receiving greater righteousness, but is only honored in respect of his receiving it first. Since in the case of those that are enlightened (you that are initiated know what is meant,) all run to the baptism, yet not all at the same hour, but one first and another second. Yet

the first does not receive more than the second, nor he than the person after him, but all enjoy the same gifts. The *"first"* then here is an honor in word, not a superiority in grace. Then after saying, *"unto salvation,"* he enhances the gift further, by showing that it stays not at the present point, but proceeds farther. For this is what he sets forth, when he says,

Ver. 17. *"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed."*

But he who has become just shall live, not for the present life only, but for that which is to come. And he hints not only this, but also another thing along with this, namely, the brightness and gloriousness of such a life. For since it is possible to be saved, yet not without shame (as many are saved of those, who by the royal humanity are released from punishment), that no one may suspect this upon hearing of safety, he adds also righteousness; and righteousness, not your own, but that of God; hinting also the abundance of it and the facility. For you do not achieve it by toilings and labors, but you receive it by a gift from above, contributing one thing only from your own store, *"believing."* Then since his statement did not seem credible, if the adulterer and effeminate person, and robber of graves, and magician, is not only to be suddenly freed from punishment but to become just, and just too with the highest righteousness; he confirms his assertion from the Old Testament. And first with a short sentence, he lays open a vast sea of histories to one who has a capacity for seeing them. For after having said, *"from faith to faith,"* he sends the hearer back to the dispensations of God, which took place thus in the Old Testament, which, when writing to the Hebrews, he explains with his usual great wisdom, showing that both the just and the sinners were justified in that way even then, wherefore also he made mention both of the harlot and of Abraham. But then here, after having just hinted at it (for he was running on to another and a pressing subject), he again confirms what he had said from the Prophets, bringing in

Habakkuk before them, crying, and saying, that it is not in the nature of things for him who is to live, to live otherwise save by faith; for "*the just,*" he says, "*shall live by faith*" [Habakkuk 2:4], speaking about the life to come. For since what God gives transcends reasoning entirely, it is but reason that we need faith. But the man that thinks meanly of it, and is contemptuous and vainglorious, will not effect anything at all. Let heretics hearken to the voice of the Spirit, for such is the nature of reasonings. They are like some labyrinth or puzzles which have no end to them anywhere, and do not let the reason stand upon the rock, and have their very origin in vanity. For being ashamed to allow of faith, and to seem ignorant of heavenly things, they involve themselves in the dust-cloud of countless reasonings. Then oh miserable and painful man, fit object for endless tears, should any one ask you, how the heaven was made, and how the earth—and why do I say the heaven and the earth? How thou were yourself born, how nourished, and how you grew, are you then not ashamed of your ignorance? But if anything be said about the Only-begotten, do you thrust yourself through shame into a pit of destruction, thinking that it is unworthy of you not to know everything? And yet disputatiousness is an unworthy thing, and so is ill-timed curiosity. And why do I speak of doctrines? For even from the corruption in our present life we have escaped by no other means than through the faith. Thus shone also all those aforetime, thus Abraham, thus Isaac, thus Jacob, thus too the harlot was saved, the one in the Old Testament, and likewise the one in the New. For, "*by faith,*" he says, "*the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies.*" [Hebrews 11:31] For if she had said to herself, "*and how can they that are captives and exiles, and refugees, and live the life of vagabond tribes, get the better of us who have a city, and walls, and towers?*" she would have destroyed both herself and them. Which also the

forefathers of those who were then saved did suffer. For when, upon the sight of men great and tall, they questioned the manner of victory, they perished, without battle or array, all of them. Do you see what a pit is that of unbelief! What a wall that of faith! For the one carried down endless thousands, the other not only saved a harlot, but made her the patroness of so numerous a people!

Now since we know of these and more than these, never let us call God to account for what is done, but whatsoever He may lay on us, that let us take up with, and let us not run into niceties and curious questions, though to human reasoning the thing commanded appears even amiss. For what, let me ask, looks more amiss than for a father to slay with his own hands his only and legitimate son? [Genesis 22:3] But still when the righteous man was bid do it, he raised no nice scruples about it, but owing to the dignity of the bidder, he merely accepted the injunction. And another too that was bidden of God to strike a prophet, when he raised nice scruples about the seeming unreasonableness of the injunction, and did not simply obey, he was punished to the extreme. [1 Kings 20:35-36] But he that struck, gained a good report. And Saul too, when he saved men contrary to the decree of God, fell from the kingdom, and was irretrievably punished. And one might find other instances beside these: by all which we learn, never to require a reason for God's injunctions, but to yield and obey only. But if it be dangerous to raise nice scruples about anything that He may enjoin, and extreme punishment is appointed for those who are curious questioners, what possible excuse shall they have who curiously question things far more secret and awful than these, as for instance, how He begot the Son, and in what fashion, and what His Essence is? Now as we know this, let us with all kindliness receive the mother of all blessings, faith; that sailing as it were in a still harbor, we may at once keep our doctrines

orthodox, and by steering our life safely in a straight course, may attain those eternal blessings by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom be glory unto the Father, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 3 on Romans

Rom. I. 18

"For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness."

Observe the discretion of Paul, how after encouraging by the gentler things, he turns his discourse to the more fearful. For after saying that the Gospel is the cause of salvation and of life, that it is the power of God, that it genders salvation and righteousness, he mentions what might well make them fear that were heedless of it. For since in general most men are not drawn so much by the promise of what is good as by the fear of what is painful, he draws them on both sides. For this cause too did God not only promise a kingdom, but also threaten hell. And the Prophets spoke thus with the Jews, ever intermingling the evil with the good. For this cause too Paul thus varies his discourse, yet not any how, but he sets first the good things, and after the evil, to show that the former came of the guiding purpose of God, but the latter of the wickedness of the backsliding. And in this way the prophet puts the good first, saying, *"If you be willing and will obey me, you shall eat the good of the land: but if you be not willing and will not obey me, the sword shall devour you."* [Isaiah 1:19-20] So here too does Paul conduct his discourse. But observe him; Christ, he means, came to bring forgiveness, righteousness, life, yet not in any way, but by the Cross, which is greatest too and wonderful, that He not only gave such things, but that He also suffered such things. If then ye insolently scorn the gifts, then will the penalties await you. And see how he raises his language, *"For the wrath of God,"* he says, *"is revealed from heaven."* Whence does this appear? If it be a believer who says this, we will tell him of the

declarations of Christ, but if the unbeliever and the Grecian, him Paul silences, by what he says presently of the judgment of God, bringing an uncontrovertible demonstration from the things which were done by them. And this too is by far the most striking point in him, how he exhibits those who speak against the truth, as themselves bearing witness by the things which they do daily, and say, to the doctrines of the truth. But of this in the sequel: but for the present, let us keep to what is set before us. *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven."* And indeed even here this often takes place in famines and pestilences and wars: for each individually and all in common are punished. What will be the new thing then? That the chastisement will be greater, and common to all, and not by the same rules. For now what takes place is for correction; but then for vengeance. And this also St. Paul showed, when he said, *"We are chastened now, that we should not be condemned with the world."* [1 Corinthians 11:32] And now indeed to many such things usually seem to come not of the wrath from above, but of the malice of man. But then the punishment from God shall be manifest, when the Judge, sitting upon the fearful tribunal, shall command some to be dragged to the furnaces, and some to the outer darkness, and some to other inexorable and intolerable punishments. And why is it that he does not speak as plainly as this, the Son of God is coming with ten thousand angels, and will call each man to account, but says, that *"the wrath of God is revealed?"* His hearers were as yet novices, and therefore he draws them first by things quite allowed by them. And besides what is here mentioned, he also seems to me to be aiming against the Greeks. And this is why he makes his beginning from this, but afterwards he introduces the subject of Christ's judgment.

"Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Here he shows that the ways of ungodliness are

many, and that of truth, one. For error is a thing various and multiform and compound, but the truth is one. And after speaking of doctrines he speaks of life, mentioning the unrighteousness of men. For there be various kinds of unrighteousness also. One is in money affairs, as when any one deals unrighteously by his neighbor in these; and another in regard to women, when a man leaves his own wife, and breaks in upon the marriage of another. For St. Paul calls this also defrauding, saying thus, *"That no man go beyond or defraud his brother in the matter."* [1 Thessalonians 4:6] Others again injure not the wife or property, but the reputation of their neighbor, and this too is unrighteousness. For *"a good name is better than great riches."* [Proverbs 22:1] But some say that this also is said of Paul about doctrines. Still there is nothing to prevent its having been said of both. But what it is *"to hold the truth in unrighteousness,"* learn from the sequel.

Ver. 19. *"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has showed it unto them."*

But this glory they invested stocks and stones with. As then he which is entrusted with the goods of the king, and is ordered to spend them upon the king's glory, if he waste these upon robbers, and harlots, and witches, and make these splendid out of the king's stores, he is punished as having done the kingdom the greatest wrong. Thus they also who after having received the knowledge of God and of His glory, invested idols therewith, *"held the truth in unrighteousness,"* and, at least as far as was in their power, dealt unrighteously by the knowledge, by not using it upon fitting objects. Now, has what was said become clear to you, or must one make it still clearer? Perhaps it were needful to say somewhat more. What then is it which is here said? The knowledge of Himself God placed in men from the beginning. But this knowledge they invested stocks and stones with, and so

dealt unrighteously to the truth, as far at least as they might. For it abides unchanged, having its own glory immutable. *"And whence is it plain that He placed in them this knowledge, O Paul?" "Because,"* says he, *"that which may be known of Him is manifest in them."* This, however, is an assertion, not a proof. But do thou make it good, and show me that the knowledge of God was plain to them, and that they willingly turned aside. Whence was it plain then? Did He send them a voice from above? By no means. But what was able to draw them to Him more than a voice, that He did, by putting before them the Creation, so that both wise, and unlearned, and Scythian, and barbarian, having through sight learned the beauty of the things which were seen, might mount up to God. Wherefore he says,

Ver. 20. *"For the invisible things of Him from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made."*

Which also the prophet said, *"The heavens declare the glory of God."* [Psalm 19:1] For what will the Greeks (i.e. Heathen) say in that day? That *"we were ignorant of You?"* Did ye then not hear the heaven sending forth a voice by the sight, while the well-ordered harmony of all things spoke out more clearly than a trumpet? Did ye not see the hours of night and day abiding unmoved continually, the goodly order of winter, spring, and the other seasons remaining both sure and unmoved, the tractableness ([εὐγνώμοσύνην]) of the sea amid all its turbulence and waves? All things abiding in order and by their beauty and their grandeur, preaching aloud of the Creator? For all these things and more than these does Paul sum up in saying, *"The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even His eternal Power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."* And yet it is not for this God has made these things, even if this came of it. For it was not to bereave them of all excuse, that He set before them so great a system

of teaching, but that they might come to know Him. But by not having recognized Him they deprived themselves of every excuse, and then to show how they are bereaved of excuse, he says,

Ver. 21. *"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God."*

This is the one greatest charge; and the second after it is their also worshipping idols, as Jeremy too in accusing them said, *"This people has committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living water, and have dug for themselves broken cisterns."* [Jeremiah 2:13] And then as a sign of their having known God, and not used their knowledge upon a fit object, he adduces this very thing, that they knew gods. Wherefore he adds, *"because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God."* And he names the cause through which they fell into such senselessness. What then is it? They trusted everything to their reasonings. Still he does not word it so, but in a much sharper language, *"but became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened."* For as in a night without a moon, if any one attempt to go by a strange road, or to sail over a strange sea, so far will he be from soon reaching his destination, that he will speedily be lost. Thus they, attempting to go the way leading to Heaven, and having destroyed the light from their own selves, and, in lieu of it, trusted themselves to the darkness of their own reasoning, and seeking in bodies for Him who is incorporeal, and in shapes for Him who has no shape, underwent a most rueful shipwreck. But beside what has been said, he names also another cause of their error, when he says,

Ver. 22. *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*

For having some great conceit of themselves, and not enduring to go the way which God had commanded them, they were plunged into the reasonings of senselessness (1 manuscript [δυναμίας]). And then to show

and give in outline, what a rueful surge it was, and how destitute of excuse, he goes on to say,

Ver. 23. *"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."*

The first charge is, that they did not find God; the second was, that it was while they had great and clear (Sav. marg. "wise") means to do it; the third, that withal they said they were wise; the fourth, that they not only did not find that Reverend Being, but even lowered Him to devils and to stones and stocks. Now he takes down their haughtiness also in the Epistle to the Corinthians, but not in the same way there as here. For there it is from the Cross he gives them the blow, saying, *"The foolishness of God is wiser than men."* [1 Corinthians 1:25] But here, without any comparison, he holds their wisdom by itself up to ridicule, showing it to be folly and a mere display of vain boasting. Then, that you may learn that when they had the knowledge of God they gave it up thus treacherously, *"they changed,"* he says. Now he that changes, has something to change. For they wished to find out more, and not bear with the limits given them, and so they were banished from these also. For they were lusters after new devices, for such is all that is Grecian. And this is why they stood against one another and Aristotle rose up against Plato, and the Stoics blustered ([ἐ] [φρυάξαντο] 6 manuscripts *"fenced themselves,"* [ἐ] [φράξαντο]: which Field inclines to prefer) against him, and one has become hostile to one, another to another. So that one should not so much marvel at them for their wisdom, as turn away from them indignant and hate them, because through this very thing they have become fools. For had they not trusted what they have to reasonings, and syllogisms, and sophistries, they would not have suffered what they did suffer. Then, to strengthen the accusation against them he holds the whole

of their idolatry up to ridicule. For in the first place the changing even were a very fit subject of scorn. But to change to such things too, is beyond all excuse. For what then did they change it, and what was it which they invested with His Glory? Some conceptions they ought to have had about Him, as, for instance, that He is God, that He is Lord of all, that He made them, which were not, that He exercises a Providence, that He cares for them. For these things are the "*Glory of God.*" To whom then did they ascribe it? Not even to men, but "*to an image made like to corruptible man.*" Neither did they stop here, but even dropped down to the brutes, or rather to the images of these. But consider, I pray, the wisdom of Paul, how he has taken the two extremes, God the Highest, and creeping things the lowest: or rather, not the creeping things, but the images of these; that he might clearly show their evident madness. For what knowledge they ought to have had concerning Him Who is incomparably more excellent than all, with that they invested what was incomparably more worthless than all. But what has this to do with the philosophers? A man may say. To these belongs most of all what I have said to do with them. For they have the Egyptians who were the inventors of these things to their masters. And Plato, who is thought more reverend than the rest of them, glories in these masters. (Plat. Tim. 21. B. etc.) And his master is in a stupid awe of these idols, for he it is that bids them sacrifice the cock to Æsculapius (his last words, Phædo), where (i.e. in his temple. So Field from manuscripts.) are the images of these beasts, and creeping things. And one may see Apollo and Bacchus worshipped along with these creeping things. And some of the philosophers even lifted up to Heaven bulls, and scorpions, and dragons, and all the rest of that vanity. For in all parts did the devil zealously strive to bring men down before the images of creeping things, and to range beneath the most senseless of all things, him whom God has willed to lift up above the

heavens. And it is not from this only, but also from other grounds, that you will see their chief man to come under the remarks now made. For having made a collection of the poets, and having said that we should believe them upon matters relating to God, as having accurate knowledge, he has nothing else to bring forward but the *"linked sweetness"* of these absurdities, and then says, that this utterly ludicrous trifling is to be held for true.

Ver. 24. *"Wherefore also God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves."*

Hence he shows, that even of the perversion of the laws it was ungodliness which was the cause, but He *"gave them up,"* here is, let them alone. For as he that has the command in an army, if upon the battle lying heavy upon him he retreat and go away, gives up his soldiers to the enemies not by thrusting them himself, but by stripping them of his own assistance; thus too did God leave those that were not minded to receive what comes from Him, but were the first to bound off from Him, though Himself having wholly fulfilled His own part. But consider; He set before them, for a form of doctrine, the world; He gave them reason, and an understanding capable of perceiving what was needful. None of these things did the men of that day use unto salvation, but they perverted to the opposite what they had received. What was to be done then? To drag them by compulsion and force? But this were not to make them virtuous. It remained then, after that, for Him to leave them alone, and this He did too, that in this way, if by no other, having by trial come to know the things they lusted after, they might flee from what was so shameful (3 manuscripts add [εἰκότως], and with reason). For if any that was a king's son, dishonoring his father, should choose to be with robbers and murderers, and them that break up tombs, and prefer their doings to his father's house; the father leaves him, say, so

that by actual trial, he may learn the extravagance of his own madness. But how comes he to mention no other sin, as murder, for instance, or covetousness, or other such besides, but only unchasteness? He seems to me to hint at his audience at the time, and those who were to receive the Epistle. *"To uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves."*

Note the emphasis here, as it is most severe. For they stood not in need of any others, it means, to do insolent violence to them, but the very treatment the enemies would have shown them, this they did to themselves. And then, taking up the charge again, he says,

Ver. 25. *"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."*

Things which were matter for utter scorn, he puts down specially, but what seemed of a graver cast than the rest, in general terms; and by all he shows, that serving the creature is Grecian. And see how strong he makes his assertion, for he does not say, barely, *"they served the creature,"* but *"more than the Creator:"* thus everywhere giving fresh force to the charge, and, by the comparison, taking from them all ground of mitigation. *"Who is blessed forever. Amen."* But by this, he means, He was not any whit injured. For Himself abides *"blessed for ever."* Here he shows, that it was not in self-defence that He left them alone, inasmuch as He suffered nothing Himself. For even if these treated Him insolently, yet He was not insolently treated, neither was any scathe done to the bearings of His glory, but He abides continually blessed. For if it often happen, that man through philosophy would not feel the insults men offered him, much less would God, the imperishable and unalterable Nature, the unchangeable and immovable Glory.

For men are in this respect made like God, when they do not feel what is inflicted by them who would do them despite, and are neither insulted of others who insult them, nor beaten of them when beating them, nor made scorn of when they make scorn of them. And how in the nature of things can this be? It may be said. It is so, yea most certainly it is possible, when you are not vexed at what is done. And how, it may be said, is it possible not to be vexed? Nay rather, how is it possible to be vexed? Tell me now, if your little child were to insult you, would you then reckon the insult an insult? What, but would you be vexed? Surely not. But and if you were to be vexed, would you not then be ridiculous? Thus too let us then get to feel disposed towards our neighbors, and then we shall have no sense of displeasure. For they that insult us are more senseless than children. Neither let us even seek to be free from insults, but when we are insulted to bear them. For this is the only secure honor. But why so? Because this you are master of, but that, another person. Do you not see the adamant reverberating the blows it receives? But nature, you will say, gives it this property. Yet you too have it in your power to become by free choice such, as that happens to be by nature. How? Do you not know that the children in the furnace were not burned? And that Daniel in the den suffered no harm? This may even now come to pass. There stand by us too lions, anger and lust, with fearful teeth tearing asunder him that falls among them. (Plato *Rep.* viii.) Become then like that ([ἐ] [κεινον] 3 manuscripts) Daniel, and let not these affections fasten their fangs into your soul. But that, you will say, was wholly of grace. Yes; because the acts of free-will led the way thereto. So that if we be willing to train ourselves to a like character, even now the grace is at hand. And even though the brutes be an hungered, yet will they not touch your sides. For if at the sight of a servant's body they were abashed, when they have seen the members of Christ, (and this is what we

believers are,) how shall they do else than be still? Yet if they be not still, it is owing to the fault of those cast among them. For indeed many spend largely upon these lions, by keeping harlots, breaking through marriages, taking vengeance upon enemies. And so before ever they come to the bottom of the den they get torn in pieces. [Daniel 6:24] But with Daniel this did not so happen, neither yet would it with us, if we were so minded, but even a greater thing would take place than what then happened. For the lions hurt not him; and if we be sober-minded, then will they that hurt us even profit us. Thus then did Paul grow bright out of those that thwarted him and plotted against him, thus Job out of the many scourges, thus Jeremy out of the miry pit, thus Noah out of the flood, thus Abel out of the treachery, thus Moses out of the bloodthirsty Jews, thus, Elisha, thus each of the worthies of old, not out of relaxedness and softness, but out of tribulations and trials, came to be attired with their bright crowns.

Wherefore also Christ, inasmuch as He knew this to be the groundwork of a good report, said to His disciples, *"In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."* [John 16:33] What then, they will say, Have not many been turned to flight by these terrors? Yes, but that was not of the nature of temptation, but of their own remissness. But He that *"with the temptation makes also an escape, so that you may be able to bear it"* [1 Corinthians 10:13], may He stand by all of us, and reach forth His hand, that being gloriously proclaimed victorious we may attain to the everlasting crowns, through the grace and love towards man (5 manuscripts add the rest and so Field *passim*) of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom, to the Father be glory, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 4 on Romans

Romans I. 26, 27

"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another."

All these affections then were vile, but chiefly the mad lust after males; for the soul is more the sufferer in sins, and more dishonored, than the body in diseases. But behold how here too, as in the case of the doctrines, he deprives them of excuse, by saying of the women, that *"they changed the natural use."* For no one, he means, can say that it was by being hindered of legitimate intercourse that they came to this pass, or that it was from having no means to fulfil their desire that they were driven into this monstrous insaneness. For the changing implies possession. Which also when discoursing upon the doctrines he said, *"They changed the truth of God for a lie."* And with regard to the men again, he shows the same thing by saying, *"Leaving the natural use of the woman."* And in a like way with those, these he also puts out of all means of defending themselves by charging them not only that they had the means of gratification, and left that which they had, and went after another, but that having dishonored that which was natural, they ran after that which was contrary to nature. But that which is contrary to nature has in it an irksomeness and displeasingness, so that they could not fairly allege even pleasure. For genuine pleasure is that which is according to nature. But when God has left one, then all things are turned upside down. And thus not only was their doctrine Satanical, but their life too was diabolical. Now when he was discoursing of their

doctrines, he put before them the world and man's understanding, telling them that, by the judgment afforded them by God, they might through the things which are seen, have been led as by the hand to the Creator, and then, by not willing to do so, they remained inexcusable. Here in the place of the world he sets the pleasure according to nature, which they would have enjoyed with more sense of security and greater glad-heartedness, and so have been far removed from shameful deeds. But they would not; whence they are quite out of the pale of pardon, and have done an insult to nature itself. And a yet more disgraceful thing than these is it, when even the women seek after these intercourses, who ought to have more sense of shame than men. And here too the judgment of Paul is worthy of admiration, how having fallen upon two opposite matters he accomplishes them both with all exactness. For he wished both to speak chastely and to sting the hearer. Now both these things were not in his power to do, but one hindered the other. For if you speak chastely you shall not be able to bear hard upon the hearer. But if you are minded to touch him to the quick, you are forced to lay the naked facts before him in plain terms. But his discreet and holy soul was able to do both with exactness, and by naming nature has at once given additional force to his accusation, and also used this as a sort of veil, to keep the chasteness of his description. And next, having reproached the women first, he goes on to the men also, and says, "*And likewise also the men leaving the natural use of the woman.*" Which is an evident proof of the last degree of corruptness, when both sexes are abandoned, and both he that was ordained to be the instructor of the woman, and she who was bid to become an helpmate to the man, work the deeds of enemies against one another. And reflect too how significantly he uses his words. For he does not say that they were enamoured of, and lusted after one another, but, "*they burned in their lust one toward another.*" You

see that the whole of desire comes of an exorbitancy which endures not to abide within its proper limits. For everything which transgresses the laws by God appointed, lusts after monstrous things and not those which be customary. For as many oftentimes having left the desire of food get to feed upon earth and small stones, and others being possessed by excessive thirst often long even for mire, thus these also ran into this ebullition of lawless love. But if you say, and whence came this intensity of lust? It was from the desertion of God: and whence is the desertion of God? From the lawlessness of them that left Him; *"men with men working that which is unseemly."* Do not, he means, because you have heard that they burned, suppose that the evil was only in desire. For the greater part of it came of their luxuriousness, which also kindled into flame their lust. And this is why he did not say being swept along or being overtaken, an expression he uses elsewhere; but what? Working. They made a business of the sin, and not only a business, but even one zealously followed up. And he called it not lust, but that which is unseemly, and that properly. For they both dishonored nature, and trampled on the laws. And see the great confusion which fell out on both sides. For not only was the head turned downwards but the feet too were upwards, and they became enemies to themselves and to one another, bringing in a pernicious kind of strife, and one even more lawless than any civil war, and one rife in divisions, and of varied form. For they divided this into four new, and lawless kinds. Since (3 manuscripts whence) this war was not twofold or threefold, but even fourfold. Consider then. It was meet, that the two should be one, I mean the woman and the man. For *"the two,"* it says, *"shall be one flesh."* [Genesis 2:24] But this the desire of intercourse effected, and united the sexes to one another. This desire the devil having taken away, and having turned the course thereof into another fashion, he thus sundered the sexes from one another, and

made the one to become two parts in opposition to the law of God. For it says, "*the two shall be one flesh*;" but he divided the one flesh into two: here then is one war. Again, these same two parts he provoked to war both against themselves and against one another. For even women again abused women, and not men only. And the men stood against one another, and against the female sex, as happens in a battle by night. You see a second and third war, and a fourth and fifth; there is also another, for beside what have been mentioned they also behaved lawlessly against nature itself. For when the Devil saw that this desire it is, principally, which draws the sexes together, he was bent on cutting through the tie, so as to destroy the race, not only by their not copulating lawfully, but also by their being stirred up to war, and in sedition against one another.

"And receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." See how he goes again to the fountain head of the evil, namely, the impiety that comes of their doctrines, and this he says is a reward of that lawlessness. For since in speaking of hell and punishment, it seemed he would not at present be credible to the ungodly and deliberate choosers of such a life, but even scorned, he shows that the punishment was in this pleasure itself. (So Plato *Theæt.* p. 176, 7.) But if they perceive it not, but are still pleased, be not amazed. For even they that are mad, and are afflicted with phrenzy (cf. Soph. *Aj.* 265-277) while doing themselves much injury and making themselves such objects of compassion, that others weep over them themselves smile and revel over what has happened. Yet we do not only for this not say that they are quit of punishment, but for this very reason are under a more grievous vengeance, in that they are unconscious of the plight they are in. For it is not the disordered but those who are sound whose votes one has to gain. Yet of old the matter seemed even to be a law, and a certain law-giver among them bade the domestic slaves neither to use

ointments when dry (i.e. except in bathing) nor to keep youths, giving the free this place of honor, or rather of shamefulness. Yet they, however, did not think the thing shameful, but as being a grand privilege, and one too great for slaves, the Athenian people, the wisest of people, and Solon who is so great among them, permitted it to the free alone. And sundry other books of the philosophers may one see full of this disease. But we do not therefore say that the thing was made lawful, but that they who received this law were pitiable, and objects for many tears. For these are treated in the same way as women that play the whore. Or rather their plight is more miserable. For in the case of the one the intercourse, even if lawless, is yet according to nature: but this is contrary both to law and nature. For even if there were no hell, and no punishment had been threatened, this were worse than any punishment. Yet if you say "*they found pleasure in it*," you tell me what adds to the vengeance. For suppose I were to see a person running naked, with his body all besmeared with mire, and yet not covering himself, but exulting in it, I should not rejoice with him, but should rather bewail that he did not even perceive that he was doing shamefully. But that I may show the atrocity in a yet clearer light, bear with me in one more example. Now if any one condemned a virgin to live in close dens ([θαλομενομένην]), and to have intercourse with unreasoning brutes, and then she was pleased with such intercourse, would she not for this be especially a worthy object of tears, as being unable to be freed from this misery owing to her not even perceiving the misery? It is plain surely to every one. But if that were a grievous thing, neither is this less so than that. For to be insulted by one's own kinsmen is more piteous than to be so by strangers: these I say (5 manuscripts "*I consider*") are even worse than murderers: since to die even is better than to live under such insolency. For the murderer dissevers the soul from the body, but this man ruins the soul

with the body. And name what sin you will, none will you mention equal to this lawlessness. And if they that suffer such things perceived them, they would accept ten thousand deaths so they might not suffer this evil. For there is not, there surely is not, a more grievous evil than this insolent dealing. For if when discoursing about fornication Paul said, that *"Every sin which a man does is without the body, but he that commits fornication sins against his own body"* [1 Corinthians 6:18]; what shall we say of this madness, which is so much worse than fornication as cannot even be expressed? For I should not only say that you have become a woman, but that you have lost your manhood, and hast neither changed into that nature nor kept that which you had, but you have been a traitor to both of them at once, and deserving both of men and women to be driven out and stoned, as having wronged either sex. And that you may learn what the real force of this is, if any one were to come and assure you that he would make you a dog instead of being a man, would you not flee from him as a plague? But, lo! You have not made yourself a dog out of a man, but an animal more disgraceful than this. For this is useful unto service, but he that has thus given himself up is serviceable for nothing. Or again, if any one threatened to make men travail and be brought to bed, should we not be filled with indignation? But lo! now they that have run into this fury have done more grievously by themselves. For it is not the same thing to change into the nature of women, as to continue a man and yet to have become a woman; or rather neither this nor that. But if you would know the enormity of the evil from other grounds, ask on what account the lawgivers punish them that make men eunuchs, and you will see that it is absolutely for no other reason than because they mutilate nature. And yet the injustice they do is nothing to this. For there have been those that were mutilated and were in many cases useful after their mutilation. But nothing can there be more worthless

than a man who has pandered himself. For not the soul only, but the body also of one who has been so treated, is disgraced, and deserves to be driven out everywhere. How many hells shall be enough for such? But if you scoff at hearing of hell and believest not that fire, remember Sodom. For we have seen, surely we have seen, even in this present life, a semblance of hell. For since many would utterly disbelieve the things to come after the resurrection, hearing now of an unquenchable fire, God brings them to a right mind by things present. For such is the burning of Sodom, and that conflagration! And they know it well that have been at the place, and have seen with their eyes that scourge divinely sent, and the effect of the lightnings from above. [Jude 7] Consider how great is that sin, to have forced hell to appear even before its time! For whereas many thought scorn of His words, by His deeds did God show them the image thereof in a certain novel way. For that rain was unwonted, for that the intercourse was contrary to nature, and it deluged the land, since lust had done so with their souls. Wherefore also the rain was the opposite of the customary rain. Now not only did it fail to stir up the womb of the earth to the production of fruits, but made it even useless for the reception of seed. For such was also the intercourse of the men, making a body of this sort more worthless than the very land of Sodom. And what is there more detestable than a man who has pandered himself, or what more execrable? Oh, what madness! Oh, what distraction! Whence came this lust lewdly revelling and making man's nature all that enemies could? Or even worse than that, by as much as the soul is better than the body. Oh, you that were more senseless than irrational creatures, and more shameless than dogs! For in no case does such intercourse take place with them, but nature acknowledges her own limits. But you have even made our race dishonored below things irrational, by such indignities inflicted upon and by each other. Whence then were these

evils born? Of luxury; of not knowing God. For so soon as any have cast out the fear of Him, all that is good straightway goes to ruin.

Now, that this may not happen, let us keep clear before our eyes the fear of God. For nothing, surely nothing, so ruins a man as to slip from this anchor, as nothing saves so much as continually looking thereto. For if by having a man before our eyes we feel more backward at doing sins, and often even through feeling abashed at servants of a better stamp we keep from doing anything amiss, consider what safety we shall enjoy by having God before our eyes! For in no case will the Devil attack us when so conditioned, in that he would be laboring without profit. But should he see us wandering abroad, and going about without a bridle, by getting a beginning in ourselves he will be able to drive us off afterwards any whither. And as it happens with thoughtless servants at market, who leave the needful services which their masters have entrusted to them, and rivet themselves at a mere haphazard to those who fall in their way, and waste out their leisure there; this also we undergo when we depart from the commandments of God. For we presently get standing on, admiring riches, and beauty of person, and the other things which we have no business with, just as those servants attend to the beggars that do jugglers' feats, and then, arriving too late, have to be grievously beaten at home. And many pass the road set before them through following others, who are behaving in the same unseemly way. But let not us so do. For we have been sent to dispatch many affairs that are urgent. And if we leave those, and stand gaping at these useless things, all our time will be wasted in vain and to no profit, and we shall suffer the extreme of punishment. For if you wish yourself to be busy, you have whereat you ought to wonder, and to gape all your days, things which are no subject for laughter, but for wondering and manifold praises. As he that admires things ridiculous, will himself often be such, and

even worse than he that occasions the laughter. And that you may not fall into this, spring away from it immediately. For why is it, pray, that you stand gaping and fluttering at sight of riches? What do you see so wonderful, and able to fix your eyes upon them? These gold-harnessed horses, these lackeys, partly savages, and partly eunuchs, and costly raiment, and the soul that is getting utterly soft in all this, and the haughty brow, and the bustlings, and the noise? And wherein do these things deserve wonder? What are they better than the beggars that dance and pipe in the market-place? For these too being taken with a sore famine of virtue, dance a dance more ridiculous than theirs, led and carried round at one time to costly tables, at another to the lodging of prostitute women, and at another to a swarm of flatterers and a host of hangers-on. But if they do wear gold, this is why they are the most pitiable, because the things which are nothing to them, are most the subject of their eager desire. Do not now, I pray, look at their raiment, but open their soul, and consider if it is not full of countless wounds, and clad with rags, and destitute, and defenceless! What then is the use of this madness of shows? For it were much better to be poor and living in virtue, than to be a king with wickedness; since the poor man in himself enjoys all the delights of the soul, and does not even perceive his outward poverty for his inward riches. But the king, luxurious in those things which do not at all belong to him, is punished in those things which are his most real concern, even the soul, the thoughts, and the conscience, which are to go away with him to the other world. Since then we know these things, let us lay aside the gilded raiment, let us take up virtue and the pleasure which comes thereof. For so, both here and hereafter, shall we come to enjoy great delights, through the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom, be glory to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 5 on Romans

Rom. I. 28

"Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."

Lest he should seem to be hinting at them by delaying in his discourse so long over the unnatural sin, he next passes on to other kinds of sins also, and for this cause he carries on the whole of his discourse as of other persons. And as he always does when discoursing with believers about sins, and wishing to show that they are to be avoided, he brings the Gentiles in, and says, *"Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the other Gentiles which know not God."* [1 Thessalonians 4:5] And again: *"sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."* [1 Thessalonians 4:13] And so here too he shows that it was to them the sins belonged, and deprives them of all excuse. For he says, that their daring deeds came not of ignorance, but of practice. And this is why he did not say, *"and as they knew not God;"* but *"as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;"* as much as to say, that the sin was one of a perverted determination of obstinacy, more than of a sudden ravishment, and shows that it was not the flesh (as some heretics say) but the mind, to the wicked lust whereof the sins belonged, and that it was thence the fount of the evils flowed. For since the mind has become undistinguishing, all else is then dragged out of course and overturned, when he is corrupted that held the reins! (Plat. *Phaedr.* 246 A. B.)

Ver. 29. *"Being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness."*

See how everything here is intensitive. For he says, *"being filled,"* and *"with all,"* and having named maliciousness in general, he also further pursues the particulars, and these too in excess, saying, *"Full of envy, murder;"* for the latter of these comes from the former, as was shown in Abel's case and Joseph's, and then after saying, *"debate, deceit, malignity;"*

Ver. 30. *"Whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful,"* and classing things which to many seem indifferent among his charges, he further strengthens his accusation, going up to the stronghold of their wickednesses, and styles them *"boasters."* For even worse than sinning is it, even though sinning to be haughty-minded. Wherefore also he charges the Corinthians with it, saying, *"You are puffed up."* [1 Corinthians 5:2] For if in a good action he that puffs himself up loses all, if any one do so among his sins, what vengeance is there of which he is not worthy, since such an one cannot repent any more? Next, he says, *"inventors of evil things;"* showing that they were not content with those already existing, but even invented others. And this again is like men that are full purposed and in earnest, not those that are hurried away and forced out of their course; and after mentioning the several kinds of maliciousness, and showing that here too they stood against nature itself (for he says, *"disobedient to parents"*), he then goes on to the root of the great pestilence, calling them,

Ver. 31. *"Without natural affection, implacable."*

For this Christ Himself also pronounces to be the cause of wickedness, saying, *"When iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."* [Matthew 24:12]. This too St. Paul here says, calling them *"covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful,"* and showing that they were traitors even to the gift of nature. For we have a sort of family feeling even by nature towards one another, which even beasts have got towards each other. *"For every beast,"* it says, *"loves his like, and every*

man his neighbor." [Sirach 13:15] But these became more ferocious even than they. The disorder then which resulted to the world by evil doctrines, he proves to us by these witnesses, and clearly shows that the malady in either case came of the negligence of them that were disordered. He shows besides, what he did in the case of the doctrines, that they were here also deprived of all excuse; and so he says,

Ver. 32. *"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."*

Having assumed here two objections, he in the first place removes them. For what reason have you to say, he means, that you know not the things which ought to be done? At best, even if you did not know, you are to blame in having left God who instructs you. But as it is by many arguments we have shown that you do know, and transgress willingly. But are you drawn by passion? Why then do you both coöperate therewith and praise it? For they *"not only do such things,"* he says, *"but have pleasure in them that do them."* Having then put the more grievous and the unpardonable sin first, that he might have done with it (Or *"convict you of it,"* [ἴ] [να ἐλῇ]); (for he that praises the sin is far worse than even he that trespasses;) having then put this the first, he by this method grapples more powerfully with him in the sequel, speaking on this wise,

Chap. ii. ver. 1. *"Therefore you are inexcusable, O man; whosoever you are that judgest; for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself."*

These things he says, with an aim at the rulers, inasmuch as that city then had the rule of the world put into its hands. He anticipated them therefore by saying, You are depriving yourself of defence, whoever you may be; for when you condemn an adulterer, and yourself committest

adultery, although no man condemns you, in your judgment upon the guilty person you have also passed sentence against yourself.

Ver. 2. *"For we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them who commit such things."*

For lest any should say, until now I have escaped, to make him afraid, he says, that it is not so with God as it is here. For here (Plato in *Theæt. et Phædon.*) one is punished, and another escapes while doing the same thing. But hereafter it is not so. That he that judges then knows the right, he has said: but whence he knows it, he has not added; for it was superfluous. For in the case of ungodliness, he shows both that the ungodly was so even with a knowledge of God, and also whence he got that knowledge, namely, from the Creation. For inasmuch as it was not plain to all, he gave the cause also; but here he passes it over as a thing admitted. But when he says, *"whosoever you are that judgest,"* he is not addressing himself to the rulers only, but to private individuals and subjects also. For all men, even if they have no chair of state, nor executioners, nor stocks at command, yet even they judge those that offend, in conversations and public meetings (Gr. [κοινοῖς συλλόγοις]) and by the vote of their conscience. And no one would venture to say, that the adulterer does not deserve punishment. But it is others, he says, they condemn, and not themselves. And for this cause he stands forth vehemently against them, and says,

Ver. 3. *"And do you think this"* (4 manuscripts om. this), *"O man, that judgest those which do such things, and doest the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God?"*

For since he had shown the sin of the world to be great, from its doctrines, from its doings, and that they did yet sin though wise, and though they had the creation to lead them by the hand, and not by leaving God only, but also by choosing the images of creeping things, and by their

dishonoring virtue, and deserting, in spite of nature's drawings back, to the service of vice even contrary to nature: he goes on next to show, that they who do such things are punished too. He did indeed at once point out a punishment by mentioning their very practice. For *"they received,"* he says, *"in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."* But as they do not perceive that, he mentions another also, which they stood most in fear of. And indeed already he chiefly pointed at this. For when he says, *"That the judgment of God is according to truth,"* he is speaking of no other than this. But he establishes the same again upon other further grounds, saying thus, *"And do you think this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God?"* You have not been acquitted of your own judgment, and will you escape through God's? Who indeed would say this? And yet you have judged yourself (3 manuscripts *"and not been acquitted"*). But since the rigorousness of the judgment-court was such, and thou were not able to spare even yourself, how should not God, that cannot do amiss, and who is in the highest sense just, be much surer to do the same? But have you condemned yourself, and is God to approve of you and praise you? And how can this be reasonable? And all the while you are deserving of a greater punishment, than he who is of you condemned. For sinning merely, is not the same thing with falling again into the same sins you have chastised another for committing. See, how he has strengthened the charge! For if you, he means, punish a person who has committed less sins, though by it you will put yourself to shame, how shall not God cast you in your suit, and condemn you more severely, who have committed greater transgressions, and this too when He will never make Himself ashamed, and you are already condemned by your own reckoning. But if you say, I know that I deserve punishment; yet through His long-suffering thinkest

slightly of it, and art confident because thou dost not suffer punishment immediately; this surely is a reason why you ought to be afraid and tremble. For the fact that you have not yet suffered punishment, will not result in your not suffering any punishment, but in your suffering a more severe one if you abide unamended. And so he goes on to say:

Ver. 4. *"Or despises thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"*

For after praising God's long-suffering, showing the gain thereof to be very great to them that heeded it (and this was the drawing sinners to repentance); he adds to the terror. For as to them, who avail themselves of it aright, it is a ground of safety; so to them that slight it, it is conducive to a greater vengeance. For whenever you utter this common notion, that God does not exact justice, because He is good and long-suffering, he says, You do but mention what will make the vengeance intenser. For God shows His goodness that you may get free from your sins, not that you may add to them. If then thou make not this use thereof, the judgment will be more fearful. Wherefore it is a chief ground for abstaining from sin, that God is long-suffering, and not for making the benefit a plea for obstinacy. For if He be long-suffering, He most certainly punishes. Whence does this appear? From what is next said. For if the wickedness be great and the wicked have not been requited, it is absolutely necessary that they should be requited. For if men do not overlook these things, how should God make an oversight? And so from this point he introduces the subject of the judgment. For the fact of showing many who, if they repent not, are liable, yet still are not punished here, introduces with it necessarily the judgment, and that with increase. Wherefore he says,

Ver. 5. *"But after your hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto yourself wrath."*

For when a man is neither to be softened by goodness nor to be turned back by fear, what can be harder than such an one? For after that he had showed the goodness of God towards men, he then shows His vengeance that it is unbearable for him who does not even so return to repentance. And observe with what propriety he uses the words! *"You treasure up unto yourself wrath,"* he says, so making it plain what is certainly laid up, and showing that it is not He that judges, but he that is condemned, who is the author of this. For he says, *"you store up for yourself,"* not God for you. For He did all, whatsoever things were fitting, and created you with a power to discern between good and what was not so, and showed long-suffering over you, and called you to repentance, and threatened a fearful day, so by every means drawing you to repentance. But if you should continue unyielding, *"you store up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation and (so all manuscripts but two) the righteous judgment of God."* For lest on hearing of wrath you should think of any passion, he adds, *"the righteous judgment of God."* And he said *"revelation"* with good reason, for then is this revealed when each man receives his desert. For here many men often annoy and practise harm to one without justice. But hereafter it is not so.

Ver. 6, 7. *"Who will render to every man according to his deeds, to them who by patient continuance in well doing,"* etc.

Since he had become awestriving and harsh by discoursing of the judgment and of the punishment that shall be, he does not immediately, as one might expect, enter upon the vengeance, but turns his discourse to what was sweeter, to the recompense of good actions, saying as follows,

Ver. 7. *"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life."*

Here also he awakens those who had drawn back during the trials, and shows that it is not right to trust in faith only. For it is deeds also into which that tribunal will enquire. But observe, how when he is discoursing about the things to come, he is unable to tell clearly the blessings, but speaks of glory and honor. For in that they transcend all that man has, he has no image of them taken from this to show, but by those things which have a semblance of brightness among us, even by them he sets them before us as far as may be, by glory, by honor, by life. For these be what men earnestly strive after, yet are those things not these, but much better than these, inasmuch as they are incorruptible and immortal. See how he has opened to us the doors toward the resurrection of the body by speaking of incorruptibility. For incorruptibility belongs to the corruptible body. Then, since this sufficed not, he added glory and honor. For all of us are to rise incorruptible, but not all to glory, but some to punishment, and some to life.

Ver. 8. *"But unto them that are contentious,"* he says. Again, he deprives of excuse those that live in wickedness, and shows that it is from a kind of disputatiousness and carelessness that they fall into unrighteousness.

"And do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness." See, here is another accusation again. For what defence can he set up, who flees from the light and chooses the dark? And he does not say, who are *"compelled by," "larded over by,"* but who *"obey unrighteousness,"* that one may learn that the fall is one of free choice, the crime not of necessity.

Ver. 9. *"Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil."*

That is, if a man be rich, if a consul, if a very sovereign (so Field: several manuscripts and Edd. *"the emperor himself"*), by none of them is the account of the judgment out-faced. Since in this dignities have no place. Having then shown the exceeding greatness of the disease, and having added the cause, that it was from the carelessness of the disordered, and finally, that destruction awaits them and that amendment is easy, in the punishment also he again gives the Jew the heavier lot. For he that had enjoyed a larger share of instruction would also deserve to undergo a larger share of vengeance if doing lawlessly. And so the wiser or mightier men we are, the more are we punished if we sin. For if you are rich, you will have more money demanded of you than of the poor; and if wiser than others, a stricter obedience; and if you have been invested with authority, more shining acts of goodness; and so in the case of all the other things, you will have to bring in measures proportioned to your power.

Ver. 10. *"But glory, honor, and peace to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."*

What Jew does he here mean? Or about what Gentiles is he discoursing? It is of those before Christ's coming. For his discourse had not hitherto come to the times of grace, but he was still dwelling upon the earlier times, so breaking down first from afar off and clearing away the separation between the Greek and the Jew, that when he should do this in the matter of grace, he might no more seem to be devising some new and degrading view. For if in the earlier times when this Grace had not shone forth in such greatness, when the estate of the Jews was solemn and renowned and glorious before all men, there was no difference, what could they say for themselves ([τίνα ἂν ἔχοιεν λόγον εἰπεῖν];) now after so great a display of grace? And this is why he establishes it with so great earnestness. For when the hearer has been informed that this held in the earlier times,

much more will he receive it after the faith. But by Greeks he here means not them that worshipped idols, but them that adored God, that obeyed the law of nature, that strictly kept all things, save the Jewish observances, which contribute to piety, such as were Melchizedek and his ([οἱ περὶ]), such as was Job, such as were the Ninevites, such as was Cornelius. Here then he is first breaking through the partition between the circumcision and the uncircumcision: and at a distance dissipates this distinction beforehand, so as to do it without being suspected, and to strike into it as compelled by another occasion, which is ever a characteristic of his Apostolic wisdom. For if he had showed it in the times of grace, what he said would have had a very suspicious look. But on describing the vice which possessed the world, and where end the ways of wickedness, to pass from that consecutively into the treatment of these points renders his teaching unsuspected. And that he means this, and for this purpose so put this together, is plain from hence: for if he were not intent upon effecting this, it were enough for him to have said, *"According to your hardness and impenitent heart you store up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath;"* and then to have dropped this subject, since it would have been complete. But in that what he had in view was not to speak of the judgment to come only, but to show also that the Jew had no advantage of such a Greek, and so was not to be haughty-spirited, he advances farther, and speaks of them in order. But consider! He had put the hearer in fear, had advanced against him the fearful day, had told him what an evil it is to be living in wickedness, had showed him that no man sins of ignorance, nor with impunity, but that even though he suffer no punishment now, yet he certainly will suffer it: then he wishes to make good next that the teaching of the Law was not a thing of great importance. For it is upon works that both punishment and reward depend, not upon circumcision and uncircumcision. Since then he had said, that the Gentile

shall by no means go unpunished and had taken this for granted, and upon it had made good that he shall also be rewarded, he next showed the Law and circumcision to be superfluous. For it is the Jews that he is here chiefly opposing. For inasmuch as they were somewhat captiously disposed, first, of their haughtiness, not deigning to be reckoned along with the Gentiles, and secondly thinking it ridiculous if the faith is to do away all sins; for this cause he accused the Gentiles first, in whose behalf he is speaking, that without suspicion and with boldness of speech, he may attack the Jews. And then having come to the enquiry concerning the punishment, he shows that the Jew is so far from being at all profited by the Law, that he is even weighed down by it. And this was his drift some way back. For if the Gentile be on this score inexcusable, because, when the creation led him on and his own reasonings, he yet did not amend, much more were the Jew so, who besides these had the teaching of the Law also. Having then persuaded him to a ready admission of these reasonings, in the case of other men's sins, he now compels him even against his will to do so in the case of his own. And in order that what he says may be more readily allowed, he leads him forward with the better things also in view, speaking on this wise: *"But glory and honor and peace to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."* For here whatever good things a man has, he has with fightings, even if he be rich, if a prince, if a king. Even if he be not at variance with others, yet is he often so with himself, and has abundant war in his own thoughts. But there it is no such thing, but all is still and void of trouble, and in possession of true peace. Having then made good from what was said above, that they too which have not the Law are to enjoy the same blessings, he adds his reason in the following words:

Ver. 11. *"For there is no respect of persons with God."*

For when he says that as well the Jew as the Gentile is punished if he sin, he needs no reasonings: but when he wants to prove that the Gentile is honored also, he then needs a foundation for it also; as it seemed wonderful and extravagant if he who had heard neither Law nor Prophets, were to be honored upon his working good. And this is why (as I also said before) he exercises their hearing in the times before grace, that he might afterwards more treatably bring in, along with the faith, the acquiescence in these things also. For here he is not at all suspected, as seeming not to be making his own point good. Having then said, *"Glory and honor and peace to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile,"* he adds, *"For there is no respect of persons with God."* Wonderful! What more than victory has he gained! For he shows, by reducing it to an absurdity, that it was not meet with God that it should be otherwise. For it would then be a case of respecting of persons. But of such character God is not. And he does not say, *"for if this were not so, God would be a respecter of persons,"* but with more of dignity, *"For there is no respect of persons with God."* That it is not quality of persons, but difference of actions. Which He makes inquisition for. By so saying he shows that it was not in actions but in persons only that the Jew differed from the Gentile. The consequence of this would be thus expressed; For it is not because one is a Jew and the other a Gentile, that one is honored and the other disgraced, but it is from the works that either treatment comes. But he does not say so, since it would have roused the anger of the Jew, but he sets down something more, so bringing their haughty spirit yet lower, and quelling it for the admission of the other. But what is this? The next position.

Ver. 12. *"For as many,"* he says, *"as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."*

For here, as I said before, he shows not only the equality of the Jew and the Gentile, but that the Jew was even much burdened by the gift of the Law. For the Gentile is judged without law. But this "*without law*" (Gr. lawlessly) here expresses not the worse plight but the easier, that is, he has not the Law to accuse him. For "*without law*" (that is, without the condemnation arising from it), is he condemned solely from the reasonings of nature, but the Jew, "*in the Law*," that is, with nature and the Law too to accuse him. For the greater the attention he enjoyed, the greater the punishment he will suffer. See how much greater is the necessity which he lays upon the Jews of a speedy recourse to grace! For in that they said, they needed not grace, being justified by the Law, he shows that they need it more than the Gentiles, considering they are liable to be punished more. Then he adds another reason again, and so farther contends for what has been said.

Ver 13. "*For not the hearers of the law are just before God.*"

Well does he add "*before God*;" for haply before men they may be able to appear dignified and to vaunt great things, but before God it is quite otherwise—the doers of the Law alone are justified. You see with what advantage he combats, by turning what they said to an opposite bearing. For if it is by the Law you claim to be saved, in this respect, says he, the Gentile will stand before you, when seen to be a doer of what is written in the Law. And how is it possible (one may say) for one who has not heard to be a doer? Not this only, he says, is possible, but what is much more even than this. For not only is it possible without hearing to be a doer, but even with hearing not to be so. Which last thing he makes plainer, and that with a greater advantage over them, when he says, "*You that teaches another, do you not teach yourself?*" [Romans 2:21] But here he is still making the former point good.

Ver. 14. *"For when the Gentiles,"* he says, *"which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves."*

I am not, he means, rejecting the Law, but even on this score I justify the Gentiles. You see how when undermining the conceit of Judaism, he gives no handle against himself as villifying the Law, but on the contrary by extolling it and showing its greatness he so makes good his whole position. But whenever he says *"by nature,"* he means by the reasonings of nature. And he shows that others are better than they, and, what is more better for this, that they have not received the Law, and have not that wherein the Jews seem to have an advantage over them. For on this ground he means they are to be admired, because they required not a law, and yet exhibited all the doings of the Law, having the works, not the letters, graven upon their minds. For this is what he says,

Ver. 15. *"Which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."*

Ver. 16. *"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel."*

See how he again puts that day before them, and brings it close to them, battering down their conceit, and showing, that those were to be the rather honored who without the Law strove earnestly to fulfil the things of the Law. But what is most to be marvelled at in the discretion of the Apostle, it is worth while to mention now. For having shown, from the grounds given, that the Gentile is greater than the Jew; in the inference, and the conclusion of his reasoning, he does not state it, in order not to exasperate the Jew. But to make what I have said clearer, I will give the very words of the Apostle. For after saying, that it is not the hearers of the

Law, but the doers of the Law, that shall be justified, it followed to say, *"For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law,"* they are much better than those who are instructed by the Law. But this he does not say, but he stays at the encomium of the Gentiles, and does not yet awhile carry on his discourse by way of comparison, that so at least the Jew may receive what is said. And so he does not word it as I was doing, but how? *"For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the Law, written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness."* For the conscience and reason does suffice in the Law's stead. By this he showed, first, that God made man independent, so as to be able to choose virtue and to avoid vice. And be not surprised that he proves this point, not once or twice, but several times. For this topic was very needful for him to prove owing to those who say, Why ever is it, that Christ came but now? And where in times before was the (most manuscripts this mighty) scheme of Providence? Now it is these that he is at present beating off by the way, when he shows that even in former times, and before the Law was given, the human race (Gr. nature) fully enjoyed the care of Providence. For *"that which may be known of God was manifest in them,"* and they knew what was good, and what bad; by means whereof they judged others, which he reproaches them with, when he says, *"wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself."* But in the case of the Jews, besides what has been mentioned, there was the Law, and not reason or conscience only. And why does he put the words *"accusing or else excusing?"*— for, if they have a Law written, and show the work of it in them, how comes reason to be able to accuse them still? But he is not any longer speaking of those only who do well, but also of mankind (Gr. the nature) universally. For then our

reasonings stand up, some accusing and some excusing. And at that tribunal a man needs no other accuser. Then to add to their fear, he does not say the sins of men, but the secrets of men. For since he said, *"Do you think, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God;"* that you may not expect such a sentence as you pass yourself, but may know, that that of God is far more exact than your own, he brings in, *"the secrets of men,"* and adds, *"through Jesus Christ according to my Gospel."* For men sit in judgment upon overt acts alone. And above too he spoke of the Father alone, but as soon as he had crushed them with fear, he brought in the mention of Christ also. But he does not do barely this, but even here, after having made mention of the Father, he so introduces Him. And by the same things he raises the dignity of his preaching. For this preaching, he means, openly speaks out what nature taught by anticipation. Do you see with what wisdom he has bound them both to the Gospel and to Christ, and demonstrated that our affairs come not here to a stand, but travel further. And this he made good before also, when he said, *"you store up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath:"* and here again, *"God shall judge the secrets of men."*

Now let each man enter into his own conscience, and reckoning up his transgressions, let him call himself to a strict account, that we be not then condemned with the world. [1 Corinthians 11:32] For fearful is that court, awful the tribunal, full of trembling the accounts, a river of fire rolls along ([ἔ] [λκεται]). *"A brother does not redeem: shall man redeem?"* [Psalm 49:8, Septuagint] Call then to mind what is said in the Gospel, the Angels running to and fro, of the bridechamber being shut, of the lamps going out, of the powers which drag to the furnaces. And consider this, that if a secret deed of any one of us were brought forth into the midst, today, before the Church only, what could he do but pray to perish, and to have the earth to

gape for him, rather than have so many witnesses of his wickedness? How then shall we feel, when, before the whole world, all things are brought into the midst, in a theatre so bright and open, with both those known and those unknown to us seeing into everything? But alas! Wherewith am I forced to affright you! With men's estimation! When I ought to use the fear of God, and His condemnation. For what, pray, is to become of us then when bound, and gnashing our teeth, we are led away to the outer darkness? Or, rather, what shall we do (and this is the most fearful thought of all) when we offend ([προσκρούσωμεν]) God? For if any one have sense and reason, he has already endured a hell when he is out of sight of God. But since this does not pain, fire is therefore threatened. For we ought to smart not when we are punished, but when we sin. Thus listen to Paul wailing and lamenting over sins, for which he was not to be punished. For *"I am not meet,"* he says, *"to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church."* [1 Corinthians 15:9] Hear also David, when he is set free from the punishment, yet, as thinking that he had offended God, calling vengeance down upon himself, and saying, *"Let your hand be upon me and upon my father's house."* [2 Samuel 24:17] For to have offended God is more distressing than to be punished. But now we are so wretchedly disposed, that, were there no fear of hell, we should not even choose readily to do any good thing. Wherefore were it for nothing else, yet for this at least, we should deserve hell, because we fear hell more than Christ (several manuscripts. God). But not so the blessed Paul, but contrariwise. But since we feel otherwise, for this reason are we condemned to hell: since, did we but love Christ as we should love Him, we should have known that to offend Him we love were more painful than hell. But since we love Him not, we know not the greatness of His punishment. And this is what I bewail and grieve over the most! And yet what has God not done, to be

beloved of us? What has He not devised? What has He omitted? We insulted Him, when He had not wronged us in anything, but had even benefited us with blessings countless and unspeakable. We have turned aside from Him when calling and drawing us to Him by all ways, yet has He not even upon this punished us, but has run Himself unto us, and held us back, when fleeing, and we have shaken Him off and leaped away to the Devil. And not even on this has He stood aloof, but has sent numberless messengers to call us to Him again, Prophets, Angels, Patriarchs: and we have not only not received the embassy, but have even insulted those that came. But not even for this did He spew us out of His mouth, but like those slighted lovers that be very earnest, He went round beseeching all, the heaven, the earth, Jeremiah, Micah, and that not that He might weigh us down, but that He might speak in behalf of His own ways [Micah 6:1]: and along with the prophets He went also Himself to those that turned aside from Him, being ready to submit to examination, and deigning to condescend to a conference, and drawing them that were deaf to every appeal into a disputation with Himself. For He says, *"O my people, what have I done unto you, and wherein have I wearied you? Answer me."* [Micah 6:3] After all this we killed the Prophets, we stoned them, we did them other cruel wrongs without number. What then? In their place He sent no longer Prophets, no longer Angels, no longer Patriarchs, but the Son Himself. He too was killed when He had come, and yet not even then did He quench His love, but kindled it even more, and keeps on beseeching us, after even His own Son was killed, and entreating us, and doing all things to turn us unto Himself. And Paul cries aloud, saying, *"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: be ye reconciled to God."* [2 Corinthians 5:20] None of these things however reconciled us. Yet not even then did He leave us, but keeps on both

threatening hell, and promising a kingdom, that even so He may draw us unto Himself. But we be still in an insensible mood. What can be worse than this brutishness? For had a man done these things, should we not many times over have let ourselves become slaves to him? But God when doing so we turn us away from! O what listlessness! O what unfeelingness! We that live continually in sins and wickednesses, if we happen to do any little good, like unfeeling domestics, with what a niggardly spirit do we exact it, and how particular are we about the recompense made, if what we have done has any recompense to come of it. And yet the recompense is the greater if you do it without any hope of reward. Why saying all this, and making exact reckoning, is language fitter for an hireling than a domestic of willing mind. For we ought to do everything for Christ's sake, not for the reward, but for Him. For this also was why He threatened hell and promised the kingdom, that He might be loved of us. Let us then so love Him as we ought to love Him. For this is the great reward, this is royalty and pleasure, this is enjoyment, and glory, and honor, this is light, this is the great happiness, which language (or reasoning) cannot set before us, nor mind conceive. Yet indeed I do not know how I was led so far in this way of speaking, and came to be exhorting men who do not even think slightly of power and glory here for Christ's sake, to think slightly of the kingdom. Yet still those great and noble men even attained to this measure of love. Hear, for instance, how Peter burns with love towards Him, setting Him before soul, and life, and all things. And when he had denied Him, it was not the punishment he was grieved for, but that he had denied Him Whom he longed for, which was more bitter to him than any punishment. And all this did he show before the grace of the Spirit was given. And he perseveringly pressed the question, "*Where are you going?*" [John 13:36] and before this; "*To whom shall we go?*" [John 6:67]; and again; "*I will follow You wherever*

You go." [Luke 22:33?] Thus He was all things to them, and neither heaven nor the kingdom of heaven did they count of, in comparison of Him they longed for. For You are all these things unto me, he means. And why doest thou marvel that Peter was so minded? Hear now what the Prophet says: "*What have I in heaven, and what is there upon earth, that I should desire in comparison of You?*" [Psalm 73:25] Now what he means is nearly this. Neither of things above nor of things below desire I any, save You only. This is passion; this is love. Can we so love, it will not be things present only, but even things to come, which we shall reckon as nothing compared with that love-charm, and even here shall we enjoy the Kingdom, delighting ourselves in the love of Him. And how is this to be? One may say. Let us reflect how oft we insult Him after numberless goodnesses, yet He stands and calls us to Him, and how often we run by Him, but He still does not overlook us, but runs to us, and draws us to Him, and catches us in unto Himself. For if we consider these things, and such as these, we shall be enabled to kindle this longing. For if it were a common man that so loved, but a king who was thus beloved, would he not feel a respect for the greatness of the love? Most assuredly he would. But when the case is reversed, and His Beauty (S. "*that beauty*") is unspeakable, and the glory and the riches too of Him that loves us, and our vileness so great, surely we deserve the utmost punishment, vile as we are and outcasts, who are treated with so exceeding great love by One so great and wonderful, and yet wax wanton against His love? He needs not anything of ours, and yet He does not even now cease loving us. We need much what is His, and for all that we cleave not unto His love, but money we value above Him, and man's friendship, and ease of body, and power, and fame, before Him who values nothing more than us. For He had One Son, Very (Lit. "*true-born*") and Only-Begotten, and He spared not even Him for us. But we value many

things above Him. Were there not then good reason for a hell and torment, even were it twofold or threefold or manifold what it is? For what can we have to say for ourselves, if even Satan's injunctions we value more than the Laws of Christ, and are reckless of our own salvation that we may choose the works of wickedness, before Him who suffered all things for us? And what pardon do these things deserve? What excuse have they? Not one even. (5 manuscripts [οὐδὲ μῦς].) Let us stop then after this in our headlong course, and let us grow again sober; and reckoning up all these things, let us send up glory unto Him by our works (for words alone suffice not thereto), that we may also enjoy the glory that comes of Him, which may we all attain unto by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom, to the Father be glory, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on Romans

Romans II. 17, 18

"Behold, you are called a Jew, and retest in the Law, and makest your boast of God, and know His will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law."

After saying that the Gentile wants nothing appertaining to salvation if he be a doer of the Law, and after making that wonderful comparison, he goes on to set down the glories of the Jews, owing to which they thought scorn of the Gentiles: and first the very name itself, which was of great majesty, as the name Christian is now. For even then the distinction which the appellation made was great. And so he begins from this, and see how he takes it down. For he does not say, Behold, you are a Jew, but *"art called"* so, *"and makest your boast in God;"* that is, as being loved by Him, and honored above all other men. And here he seems to me to be gently mocking their unreasonableness, and great madness after glory, because they misused this gift not to their own salvation, but to set themselves up against the rest of mankind, and to despise them. *"And know His will, and approvest the things that are more excellent."* Indeed this is a disadvantage, if without working: yet still it seemed to be an advantage, and so he states it with accuracy. For he does not say, you do, but know; and approvest, not followest and doest.

Ver. 19. *"And art confident that you yourself."*

Here again he does not say that you are *"a guide of the blind,"* but *"you are confident,"* so you boast, he says. So great was the unreasonableness of the Jews. Wherefore he also repeats nearly the very words, which they used in their boastings. See for instance what they say in the Gospels. *"You were*

altogether ([ὅ] [λος] 4 manuscripts [ὅ] [λως]) born in sin, and do you teach us?" [John 9:34] And all men they utterly looked down upon, to convince them of which, Paul keeps extolling them and lowering the others, that so he may get more hold on them, and make his accusation the weightier. Wherefore he goes on adding the like things, and making more of them by different ways of relating them. For "You are confident," he says, "that you yourself art a leader of the blind,"

Ver. 20. "An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and truth, which is in the Law."

Here again he says not, in the conscience and in actions and in well-doings, but "*in the Law;*" and after saying so, he does here also what he did with regard to the Gentiles. For as there he says, "*for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself,*" so says he here also.

Ver. 21. "You therefore who teaches another, do you not teach yourself?"

But there he frames his speech with more of sharpness, here with more of gentleness. For he does not say, However on this score you deserve greater punishment, because though entrusted with so great things you have not made a good use of any of them, but he carries his discourse on by way of question, turning them on themselves ([ἐ] [ντρέπων]), and saying, "*Thou that teachest another; do you not teach yourself?*" And here I would have you look at the discretion of Paul in another case. For he sets down such advantages of the Jews, as came not of their own earnestness, but by a gift from above, and he shows not only that they are worthless to them if neglectful, but that they even bring with them increase of punishment. For neither is the being called a Jew any well doing of theirs, nor yet is the receiving of the Law, nor the other things he has just enumerated, but of the grace from above. And towards the beginning he had said, that the hearing

of the Law is valueless unless the doing be thereto added (*"for not the hearers of the Law,"* he says, *"are just before God,"*) but now he shows further still, that not only the hearing, but, what is more than the hearing, the teaching of the Law itself will not be able to screen the teacher, unless he do what he says; and not only will it not screen him, but will even punish him the more. And he has used his expressions well too, since he does not say, You have received the Law, but *"You rest in the Law."* For the Jew was not wearied with going about to seek what was to be done, but had on easy terms the Law pointing the way leading to virtue. For if even the Gentiles have natural reason (and it is on this ground that these are better than they, in that they do the Law without hearing), yet still the others had greater facility. But if you say, I am not only a hearer, but even a teacher, this very thing is an aggravation of your punishment. For because they prided themselves upon this, from this above all he shows them to be ridiculous. But when he says, *"a guide of the blind, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes,"* he is speaking their own pompous language. For they treated proselytes extremely ill, and these were the names they called them by. And this is why he dwells at large upon what were supposed to be their praises, well knowing that what was said gave ground for greater accusation; *"Which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the Law."* As if any one who had a picture of the king, were to draw nothing after it, and they that were not entrusted with it were to imitate it exactly even without the original. And then after mentioning the advantages they had from God, he tells them of their failings, bringing forward what the prophets accused them of. *"You therefore who teaches another, do you not teach yourself? You that preaches that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who says a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You that abhors idols, do you commit sacrilege?"* For it was strictly

forbidden them to touch any of the treasures upon the idols (so Field from the manuscripts: Vulg. *"in the idol temples"*) by reason of the defilement. But the tyranny of avarice, he says, has persuaded you (4 manuscripts and mar. *"us"*) to trample this Law also under foot. Then he brings the far more grievous charge afterwards, saying,

Ver. 23. *"You that makes a boast in the Law through breaking the Law do you dishonor God?"*

There are two accusations which he makes, or rather three. Both that they dishonor, and dishonor that whereby they were honored; and that they dishonor Him that honored them, which was the utmost extreme of unfeelingness. And then, not to seem to be accusing them of his own mind, he brings in the Prophet as their accuser, here briefly and concisely as it were in a summary, but afterwards more in detail, and here Isaiah, and after that David, when he had shown the grounds of reproof to be more than one. For to show, he means, that it is not I who speak these things to your reproach, hear what Isaiah says.

Ver. 24. *"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you."* [Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:20-23]

See again another double accusation. For they not only commit insolence themselves, but even induce others to do so. What then is the use of your teaching when you teach not your own selves? Above, however, he merely said this, but here he has even turned it round to the contrary. For not only yourselves, but even others, do ye not teach what should be done. And what is far worse— ye not only teach not the things of the Law, but you even teach the opposite, viz. to blaspheme God, which is opposite to the Law. But the circumcision, one will say, is a great thing. Yea, I also confess it, but when? When (So all manuscripts S. *"then, when"*) it has the inward circumcision. And observe his judgment, in bringing in what he says

about it so opportunely. For he did not begin straightway with it, since the conceit men had of it was great. But after he had shown them to have offended in that which was greater and to be responsible for the blasphemy against God, then having henceforth possession of the reader's judgment against them, and having stripped them of their pre-eminence, he introduces the discussion about circumcision, feeling sure that no one will any more advocate it, and says,

Ver. 25. *"For circumcision verily profits, if you keep the Law."*

And yet, were this not so, a man might have rejected it and said, What is circumcision? For is it any good deed on his part that has it? Is it any manifestation of a right choice? For it takes place at an unripe age, and those in the wilderness too remained uncircumcised for a long time. And from many other points of view also, one might look at it as not necessary. And yet it is not on this foot that he rejects it, but upon the most proper ground, from the case of Abraham. For this is the most exceeding victory—to take the very reason for showing it to be of small regard, whence it was held by them in reverence. Now he might have said that even the prophets call the Jews uncircumcised. But this is no disparagement of circumcision, but of those that hold ill to it. For what he aims at is to show that even in the very best life, it has not the least force. This is what he next proves. And here he does not bring forward the Patriarch, but having previously overturned it upon other grounds, he keeps him till afterwards, when he brings in what he has to say of faith, on the words— *"How then was it reckoned"* to Abraham? *"when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?"* For so long as it is struggling against the Gentile and the uncircumcised, he is unwilling to say anything of this, lest he should be over irksome to them. But when it comes in opposition to the faith, then he disengages himself more completely for a combat with it. Up to the present

point then it is uncircumcision that the contest is against, and this is why he advances in His discourse in a subdued tone, and says,

"For circumcision verily profits if you keep the Law; but if you be a breaker of the Law, your circumcision is made uncircumcision." For here he speaks of two uncircumcisions, and two circumcisions, as also two laws. For there is a natural law and there is a written law. But there is one also between these, that by works. And see how he points these three out, and brings them before you.

"For when the Gentiles," he says, *"which have not the Law."* What Law, say? The written one. *"Do by nature the things of the Law."* Of what Law? Of that by works. *"These having not the Law."* What Law? The written one. *"Are a law unto themselves."* How so? By using the natural law. *"Who show the work of the Law."* Of what law? Of that by actions. For that which is by writing lies outside; but this is within, the natural one, and the other is in actions. And one the writing proclaims; and another, nature; and another, actions. Of this third there is need, for the sake of which also those two exist, both the natural and the written. And if this be not present they are of no good, but even very great harm. And to show this in the case of the natural he said, *"For wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself."* But of the written Law, thus— *"You who preaches that a man should not steal, do you steal?"* Thus also there are two uncircumcisions, one that of nature, and the second from conduct: and one circumcision in the flesh, and the other from the will. I mean for instance, a man has been circumcised upon the eighth day; this is circumcision of the flesh: a man has done all the Law bids him; this is circumcision of the mind which St. Paul requires above all, yea rather the Law also. See now how having granted it in words, he in deed does away with it. For he does not say the circumcision is superfluous, the circumcision is of no profit, of no use. But

what says he? *"Circumcision verily profits if you keep the Law."*

[Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6] He approves it so far, saying, I confess and deny not that the circumcision is honorable. But when? When it has the Law kept along with it.

"But if you be a breaker of the Law, your circumcision is made uncircumcision." He does not say, it is no more profitable, lest he should seem to insult it. But having stripped the Jew of it, he goes on to smite him. And this is no longer any insult to circumcision, but to him who through listlessness has lost the good of it. As then in the case of those who are in dignified stations and are after convicted of the greatest misdemeanors, the judges deprive them of the honors of their stations and then punish them; so has Paul also done. For after saying, if you are a breaker of the Law, your *"circumcision is made uncircumcision,"* and having shown him to be uncircumcised, he condemns him after that without scruple.

Ver. 26. *"Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be turned into circumcision?"*

See how he acts. He does not say that the uncircumcision overcomes circumcision (for this was highly grating to those who then heard him), but that the uncircumcision has become circumcision. And he next enquires what circumcision is, and what uncircumcision and he says that circumcision is well doing and uncircumcision is evil doing. And having first transferred into the circumcision the uncircumcised, who has good deeds, and having thrust out the circumcised man that lived a corrupt life into the uncircumcision, he so gives the preference to the uncircumcised. And he does not say, To the uncircumcised, but goes on to the thing itself, speaking as follows: *"Shall not his uncircumcision be turned into circumcision?"* And he does not say *"reckoned,"* but *"turned to,"* which was

more expressive. As also above he does not say your circumcision is reckoned uncircumcision, but has been made so.

Ver. 27. *"And shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature judge?"*

You see, he recognizes two uncircumcisions, one from nature, and the other from the will. Here, however, he speaks of that from nature, but does not pause here, but goes on, *"if it fulfil the Law, judge you, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the Law?"* See his exquisite judgment. He does not say, that the uncircumcision which is from nature shall judge the circumcision, but while where the victory had been, he brings in the uncircumcision, yet where the defeat is, he does not expose the circumcision as defeated; but the Jew himself who had it, and so by the wording spares offending his hearer. And he does not say, *"you that hast the Law and the circumcision,"* but yet more mildly, *"you who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the Law."* That is, such uncircumcision even stands up for the circumcision, for it has been wronged and comes to the Law's assistance, for it has been insulted, and obtains a notable triumph. For then is the victory decided, when it is not by Jew that Jew is judged, but by the uncircumcised; as when he says, *"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment against this generation, and shall condemn it."* [Matthew 12:41] It is not then the Law that he dishonors (for he reverences it greatly), but him that does disgrace to the Law. Next, having settled these grounds clearly, he goes on confidently to define what the Jew really is; and he shows that it is not the Jew, nor the circumcision, but he that is no Jew, and uncircumcised, whom he is rejecting. And he seems indeed to stand up in its behalf, but yet does away with the opinion regarding it, securing men's concurrence by the conclusion he comes to. For he shows not only that there is no difference between the Jew and the uncircumcised, but that the

uncircumcised has even the advantage, if he take heed to himself, and that it is he that is really the Jew; and so he says:

Ver. 12. *"For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly."*

Here he attacks them as doing all things for show.

Ver. 29. *"But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter."*

By saying this he sets aside all things bodily. For the circumcision is outwardly, and the sabbaths and the sacrifices and purifications: all of which he hints in a single word, when he says, *"For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly."* But since much was made of the circumcision, inasmuch as even the sabbath gave way to it [John 7:22], he has good reason for aiming more especially against it. But when he has said *"in the spirit"* he thereafter paves the way for the conversation of the Church, and introduces the faith. For it too is in the heart and spirit and has its praise of God. And how comes he not to show that the Gentile which does aright is not inferior to the Jew which does aright, but that the Gentile which does aright is better than the Jew which breaks the Law? It was that he might make the victory an undoubted one. For when this is agreed upon, of necessity the circumcision of the flesh is set aside, and the need of a good life is everywhere demonstrated. For when the Greek is saved without these, but the Jew with these is yet punished, Judaism stands by doing nothing. And by Greek he again means not the idolatrous Greek, but the religious and virtuous, and free from all legal observances.

Chap. iii. ver. 1. *"What advantage then has the Jew?"*

Since he has set all aside, the hearing, the teaching, the name of the Jew, the circumcision, and all the other particulars by his saying that *"he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he which is one inwardly;"* he next sees an objection which starts up, and against this makes his stand. Now

what is this objection? If, he means, these things are no use, what reason was there for that nation being called, and the circumcision too being given? What does he then and how does he solve it? By the same means as he did before: for as there, he told, not of their praises, but the benefits of God; nor their well doings (for to be called a Jew and to know His Will and to approve the things which are more excellent, was no well doing of their own, but came of the grace of God: and this the Prophet also says, upbraiding them; *"He has not done so to any nation, neither has he showed His judgments unto them;"* [Psalm 147:20] and Moses again; *"Ask now whether there has been any such thing as this?"* he says, *"did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, and live?"*) [Deuteronomy 4:32-33], this then he does here also. For as, when speaking of circumcision, he did not say, Circumcision is valueless without a good life, but, Circumcision is of value with a good life, pointing out the same thing but in a more subdued tone. And again he does not say, If you be a breaker of the Law, thou who art circumcised art no whit profited, but *"your circumcision is made uncircumcision:"* and after this again, *"the uncircumcision,"* says he, shall *"judge,"* not the circumcision, but *"you that dost transgress the Law,"* so sparing the things of the Law, and smiting the persons. So he does here also. For after setting before himself this objection, and saying, *"what advantage then has the Jew?"* he says not, None, but he concurs with the statement, and confutes it again by the sequel, and shows that they were even punished owing to this preëminence. And how he does so, I will tell you when I have stated the objection. *"What advantage then,"* he says, *"has the Jew,"* or *"what profit is there of circumcision?"*

Ver. 2. *"Much every way: chiefly, because that they were entrusted with the oracles of God."*

Do you see that, as I said above, it is not their well doings, but the benefits of God, that he everywhere counts up? And what is the word [ἐ] [πιστεύθησαν]? (they were trusted.) It means, that they had the Law put into their hands because He held them to be of so much account that He entrusted to them oracles which came down from above. I know indeed that some take the "*entrusted*" not of the Jews, but of the oracles, as much as to say, the Law was believed in. But the context does not admit of this being held good. For in the first place he is saying this with a view to accuse them, and to show that, though in the enjoyment of many a blessing from above, they yet showed great ingratitude. Then, the context also makes this clear. For he goes on to say, "*For what if some did not believe?*" If they did not believe, how do some say, the oracles were believed in? What does he mean then? Why that God entrusted the same to them, and not that they trusted to the oracles: how else will the context make sense? For he farther goes on to say,

Ver. 3. "*For what if some did not believe?*"

And what comes next makes the same point clear. For he again adds and follows; "*Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*"

Ver. 4. "*God forbid.*" The word [ἐ] [πιστεύθησαν], then, proclaims God's gift.

And I would have you here also note his judgment. For again he does not bring in his accusation of them on his own part, but as it were by way of objection, as if he said, But perhaps you will say, 'What then is the use of this circumcision since they used it not as was fitting, since they were trusted with the Law and were unfaithful to the trust?' And hitherto he is not a severe accuser, but as if to clear God of complaints against Him, he by this means turns the whole of the accusation round upon themselves. For why, he would say, do you complain that they did not believe? And how

does this affect God? For as for His benefit, does the ingratitude of those benefited overturn it? Or does it make the honor to be no honor? For this is what the words, *"Shall their unfaithfulness make the faith of God without effect,"* amount to. *"God forbid."* As if one should say, I have honored such an one. And if he did not receive the honor, this gives no ground for accusing me, nor impairs my kindness, but shows his want of feeling. But Paul does not say this merely, but what is much more. That not only does their unbelief not leave the soil of complaint upon God, but even shows His honor and love of man to be the greater, in that He is seen to have bestowed honor upon one who would dishonor Him. See how he has brought them out guilty of misdemeanors by means of what they gloried in; forasmuch as the honor with which God treated them was so great, that even when He saw what would come thereof, He withheld not His good-will toward them! Yet they made the honors bestowed on them a means of insulting Him that Honor them! Next, since he said, *"For what if some did not believe?"* (while clearly it was all of them that did not believe,) lest by speaking here too as the history allowed him, he should seem to be a severe accuser of them like an enemy, he puts that, which really took place, in the method of reasoning and syllogism, saying as follows: *"Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."* What he says is something of this sort. I do not mean, he says, that some did not believe, but if you will, suppose that all were unbelieving, so waiving what really happened, to fall in with the objector, that he might seem overbearing or to be suspected. Well, he says, in this way God is the more justified. What does the word justified mean? That, if there could be a trial and an examination of the things He had done for the Jews, and of what had been done on their part towards Him, the victory would be with God, and all the right on His side. And after showing this clearly from what was said before, he next introduces the Prophet also as giving his approval

to these things, and saying, *"that You might be justified in Your sayings, and clear when You are judged."* [Psalm 51:4] He then for His part did everything, but they were nothing the better even for this. Then he brings forward after this another objection that arises, and says,

Ver. 5. *"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous Who takes vengeance? I speak as a man."*

Ver. 6. *"God forbid."*

He solves one perplexity by another again. Yet as this is not clear, we must needs declare it more clearly. What is it then he means? God honored the Jews: they did despite to Him. This gives Him the victory, and shows the greatness of His love towards man, in that He honored them even such as they were. Since then, he means, we did despite to Him and wronged Him, God by this very thing became victorious, and His righteousness was shown to be clear. Why then (a man may say) am I to be punished, who have been the cause of His victory by the despite I did Him? Now how does he meet this? It is, as I was saying, by another absurdity again. For if it were you, he says, that were the cause of the victory, and after this are punished, the thing is an act of injustice. But if He is not unjust, and yet you are punished, then you are no more the cause of the victory. And note his apostolic reverence; (or caution: [εὐλάβεια]); for after saying, *"Is God unrighteous Who takes vengeance?"* he adds, *"I speak as a man."* As if, he means, any body were to argue in the way men reason. For what things seem with us to be justice, these the just judgment of God far exceeds, and has certain other unspeakable grounds for it. Next, since it was indistinct, he says the same thing over again:

Ver. 7. *"For if the truth of God has more abounded through my lie unto His glory: why yet am I also judged as a sinner?"*

For if God, he means is shown to be a Lover of man, and righteous, and good, by your acts of disobedience, you ought not only to be exempt from punishment but even to have good done unto you. But if so, that absurdity will be found to result, which is in circulation with so many, that good comes of evil, and that evil is the cause of good; and one of the two is necessary, either that He be clearly unjust in punishing, or that if He punish not, it is from our vices that He has the victory. And both of these are absurd to a degree. And himself meaning to show this too, he introduces the Greeks (i.e. heathens) as the fathers of these opinions, thinking it enough to allege against what he has mentioned the character of the persons who say these things. For then they used to say in ridicule of us, *"let us do evil that good may come."* And this is why he has stated it clearly in the following language.

Ver. 8. *"If not (as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil that good may come? Whose damnation is just."*

For whereas Paul said, *"where sin abounded grace did much more abound"* [Romans 5:20], in ridicule of him and perverting what he said to another meaning, they said, We must cling to vice that we may get what is good. But Paul said not so; however to correct this notion it is that he says, *"What then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!"* (ib. 6:1, 2.) For I said it, he means, of the times which are past, not that we should make this a practice. To lead them away then from this suspicion, he said, that henceforth this was even impossible. For *"how shall we,"* he says, *"that are dead unto sin, live any longer therein?"* Against the Greeks then he inveighs ([κατέδραμεν]) without difficulty. For their life was exceeding abandoned. But of the Jews, even if their life seemed to have been careless, still they had great means of cloaking these things in the Law and circumcision, and the fact of God having conversed with them, and their

being the teachers of all. And this is why he strips them even of these, and shows that for these they were the more punished, and this is the conclusion to which he has here drawn his discussion. For if they be not punished, he would say, for so doing, that blasphemous language— let us do evil that good may come— must necessarily gain currency. But if this be impious, and they who hold this language shall be punished (for this he declared by saying, "*whose damnation is just*"), it is plain that they are punished. For if they who speak it be deserving of vengeance, much more are they who act it, but if deserving thereof, it is as having done sin. For it is not man that punishes them, that any one should suspect the sentence, but God, that does all things righteously. But if they are righteously punished, it is unrighteously that they, who make ridicule of us, said what they did. For God did and does everything, that our conversation might shine forth and be upright on every side.

Let us then not be listless; for so we shall be able to recover the Greeks also from their error. But when we are in words lovers of wisdom, but in deeds behave unseemly, with what looks shall we face them? With what lips shall we discourse concerning doctrines? For he will say to each of us, How can you that have failed in what is less, claim to teach me about what is greater? You who as yet have not learned that covetousness is a vice, how can you be wise upon the things in heaven? But do you know that it is a vice? Then, the charge is the greater, because you transgress knowingly. And why speak I of the Greek, for even our laws allow us not to speak thus boldly when our life has become abandoned. For to "*the sinner,*" it says, "*says God, what have you to do to declare my statutes?*" [Psalm 50:16] There was a time when the Jews were carried away captive, and when the Persians were urgent with them, and called upon them to sing those divine songs unto them, they said, "*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange*

land?" [Psalm 137:4] Now if it were unlawful to sing the oracles of God in a strange land, much less might the estranged soul do it. For estranged the merciless soul is. If the Law made those who were captives and had become slaves to men in a strange land, to sit in silence; much more is it right for those who are slaves to sin and are in an alien community ([πολιτεία
139slaves to what is more tyrannical than any barbarian, sin. For tell me what have you to say to the Greek, if you plunder, and be covetous? will you say, Forsake idolatry, acknowledge God, and draw not near to gold and silver? Will he not then make a jest of you, and say, Talk to yourself first in this way? For it is not the same thing for a Gentile to practise idolatry, and a Christian to commit this same (4 manuscripts. om. "same") sin. For how are we to draw others away from that idolatry if we draw not ourselves away from this? For we are nearer related to ourselves than our neighbor is, and so when we persuade not ourselves, how are we to persuade others? For if he that does not rule well over his own house, will not take care of the Church either 1 Timothy 3:5], how shall he that does not rule even over his own soul be able to set others right? Now do not tell me, that you do not worship an image of gold, but make this clear to me, that you do not do those things which gold bids you. For there be different kinds of idolatry, and one holds mammon lord, and another his belly his god, and a third some other most baneful lust. But, *"you do not sacrifice oxen to them as the Gentiles do."* Nay, but what is far worse, you butcher your own soul. But *"you do not bow the knee and worship."* Nay, but with greater obedience you do all that they command you, whether it be your belly, or money, or the tyranny of lust. For this is just what makes Gentiles disgusting, that they made gods of our passions; calling lust Venus, and anger Mars, and drunkenness Bacchus. If then you do not grave images as did they, yet do you with great eagerness bow under the very same passions, when you

make the members of Christ members of an harlot, and plunge yourself into the other deeds of iniquity. [1 Corinthians 6:15] I therefore exhort you to lay to heart the exceeding unseemliness hereof, and to flee from idolatry:— for so does Paul name covetousness— and to flee not only covetousness in money, but that in evil desire, and that in clothing, and that in food, and that in everything else: since the punishment we shall have to suffer if we obey not God's laws is much severer. For, He says, "*the servant that knew his Lord's will,*" and did it not, "*shall be beaten with many stripes.*" [Luke 12:47] With a view then to escaping from this punishment, and being useful both to others and to ourselves, let us drive out all iniquity from our soul and choose virtue. For so shall we attain to the blessings which are to come, whereto may it be granted us all to attain by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 7 on Romans

Rom. III. 9-18

" What then have we more than they? For we have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues have they used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes."

He had accused the Gentiles, he had accused the Jews; it came next in order to mention the righteousness which is by faith. For if the law of nature availed not, and the written Law was of no advantage, but both weighed down those that used them not aright, and made it plain that they were worthy of greater punishment, then after this the salvation which is by grace was necessary. Speak then of it, O Paul, and display it. But as yet he does not venture, as having an eye to the violence of the Jews, and so turns afresh to his accusation of them; and first he brings in as accuser, David speaking of the same things at length, which Isaiah mentioned all in short compass, so furnishing a strong curb for them, so that they might not bound off, nor any of his hearers, while the matters of faith were laid open to them, might after this start away; being beforehand safely held down by the accusations of the prophets. For there are three excesses which the prophet lays down; he says that all of them together did evil, and that they did not

do good indifferently with evil, but that they followed after wickedness alone, and followed it also with all earnestness. And next that they should not say, "*What then, if these things were said to others?*" he goes on:

Ver. 19. "*Now we know that what things soever the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law.*"

This then is why, next to Isaiah, who confessedly aimed at them, he brought in David; that he might show that these things also belonged to the same subject. For what need was there, he means, that a prophet who was sent for your correction should accuse other people. For neither was the Law given to any else than you. And for what reason did he not say, we know that what things soever the prophet says, but what things soever the Law says? It is because Paul uses to call the whole Old Testament the Law. And in another place he says, "*Do ye not hear the Law, that Abraham had two sons?*" [Galatians 4:21-22] And here he calls the Psalm the Law when he says, "*We know that what things soever the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law.*" Next he shows that neither are these things he said merely for accusation's sake, but that he may again be paving the way for faith. So close is the relationship of the Old Testament with the New, since even the accusations and reproofs were entirely with a view to this, that the door of faith might open brightly upon them that hear it. For since it was the principal bane of the Jews that they were so conceited with themselves (which thing he mentioned as he went on, "*how that being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they submitted not themselves to the righteousness of God*") [Romans 10:3], the Law and the Prophet by being beforehand with them cast down their high thoughts, and laid low their conceit, that being brought to a consideration of their own sins, and having emptied out the whole of their unreasonableness, and seen themselves in danger of the last extremity, they

might with much earnestness run unto Him Who offered them the remission of their sins, and accept grace through faith. And this it is then which St. Paul hints even here, when he says,

"Now we know that what things soever the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Here then he exhibits them as destitute of the boldness of speech which comes of works, and only using a parade of words and behaving in a barefaced way. And this is why he uses so literal an expression, saying, *"that every mouth may be stopped,"* so pointing out the barefaced and almost uncontrollable pomposity of their language, and that their tongue was now curbed in the strictest sense. For as an unsupportable torrent, so had it been borne along. But the prophet stopped it. And when Paul says, *"that every mouth may be stopped,"* what he means is, not that the reason of their sinning was that their mouth might be stopped, but that the reason of their being reprov'd was that they might not commit this very sin in ignorance. *"And all the world may become guilty before God."* He does not say the Jew, but the whole of mankind. For the phrase, *"that every mouth may be stopped,"* is the language of a person hinting at them, although he has not stated it clearly, so as to prevent the language being too harsh. But the words *"that all the world may become guilty before God,"* are spoken at once both of Jews and of Greeks. Now this is no slight thing with a view to take down their unreasonableness. Since even here they have no advantage over the Gentiles, but are alike given up as far as salvation is concerned. For he would be in strict propriety called a guilty person, who cannot help himself to any excuse, but needs the assistance of another: and such was the plight of all of us, in that we had lost the things pertaining to salvation.

Ver. 20. *"For by the Law is the knowledge of sin."*

He springs upon the Law again, with forbearance however (for what he says is not an accusation of it, but of the listlessness of the Jews). Yet nevertheless he has been earnest here with a view (as he was going to introduce his discourse about faith) to show its utter feebleness. For if you boast in the Law, he means, it puts you to the greater shame: it solemnly parades forth your sins before you. Only he does not word it in this harsh way, but again in a subdued tone; *"For by the Law is the knowledge of sin."* And so the punishment is greater, but that because of the Jew. For the Law accomplished the disclosure of sin to you, but it was your duty then to flee it. Since then you have not fled you have pulled the punishment more sorely on yourself, and the good deed of the Law has been made to you a supply of greater vengeance. Now then having added to their fear, he next brings in the things of grace, as having brought them to a strong desire of the remission of their sins, and says,

Ver. 21. *"But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested."*

Here he utters a great thing, and such as needed much proof. For if they that lived in the Law not only did not escape punishment, but were even the more weighed down thereby, how without the Law is it possible not only to escape vengeance, but even to be justified? For he has here set down two high points, the being justified, and the obtaining these blessings, without the Law. And this is why he does not say righteousness simply, but the righteousness of God, so by the worthiness of the Person displaying the greater degree of the grace, and the possibility of the promise. For to Him all things are possible. And he does not say, *"was given,"* but *"is manifested,"* so cutting away the accusation of novelty. For that which is manifested, is so as being old, but concealed. And it is not this only, but the

sequel that shows that this is no recent thing. For after saying, "*is manifested*," he proceeds:

"Being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets."

Do not be troubled, he means, because it has but now been given, nor be affrighted as though at a thing new and strange. For of old both the Law and the Prophets foretold it. And some passages he has pointed out in the course of this argument, and some he will shortly, having in what came before brought in Habakkuk as saying, "*the just shall live by faith*" [Romans 1:17], but in what comes after, Abraham and David, as themselves also conversing with us about these things. Now the regard they had for these persons was great, for one was a patriarch and a prophet, and the other a king and a prophet: and further the promises about these things had come to both of them. And this is why Matthew in the first beginning of his Gospel mentions both of these first, and then brings forward in order the forefathers. For after saying, "*the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ*" [Matthew 1:1], he does not wait after Abraham to name Isaac also and Jacob, but mentions David along with (5 manuscripts "*after*") Abraham. And what is wonderful indeed is, that he has even set David before Abraham speaking on this wise, "*the Son of David, the Son of Abraham*," and then begins the catalogue of Isaac and Jacob, and all the rest in order. And this is why the Apostle here keeps presenting them in turns, and speaks of the righteousness of God being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Then that no one should say, How are we to be saved without contributing anything at all to the object in view? He shows that we also offer no small matter toward this, I mean our faith. Therefore after saying, "*the righteousness of God*," he adds straightway, "*by faith unto all and upon all that believe*."

Here again the Jew is alarmed by his not having anything better than the rest, and being numbered with the whole world. Now that he may not feel this, he again lowers him with fear by adding, *"For there is no difference, for all have sinned."* For tell me not that it is such and such a Greek, such and such a Scythian, such and such a Thracian, for all are in the same plight. For even if you have received the Law, one thing alone is there which you have learned from the Law— to know sin, not to flee from it. Next, that they may say, *"even if we have sinned, still it is not in the same way that they did,"* he added, *"and have come short of the glory of God."* So that even if you have not done the same sins as others, still you are alike bereft of the glory, since you belong to those who have offended, and he that has offended belongs not to such as are glorified, but to such as are put to shame. Yet, be not afraid: for the reason of my saying this was not that I might thrust you into despair, but that I might show the love of the Lord ([Δεσπότου]) toward man: and so he goes on;

Ver. 24, 25. *"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness."*

See by how many proofs he makes good what was said. First, from the worthiness of the person, for it is not a man who does these things, that He should be too weak for it, but God all-powerful. For it is to God, he says, that the righteousness belongs. Again, from the Law and the Prophets. For you need not be afraid at hearing the *"without the Law,"* inasmuch as the Law itself approves this. Thirdly, from the sacrifices under the old dispensation. For it was on this ground that he said, *"In His blood,"* to call to their minds those sheep and calves. For if the sacrifices of things without reason, he means, cleared from sin, much more would this blood. And he does not say barely [λυτρώσεως], but ἀ[πολυτρώσεως], entire redemption,

to show that we should come no more into such slavery. And for this same reason he calls it a propitiation, to show that if the type had such force, much more would the reality display the same. But to show again that it was no novel thing or recent, he says, "*fore-ordained*" (Auth. Version marg.); and by saying God "*fore-ordained*," and showing that the good deed is the Father's, he shows it to be the Son's also. For the Father "*fore-ordained*," but Christ in His own blood wrought the whole aright.

"To declare His righteousness." What is declaring of righteousness? Like the declaring of His riches, not only for Him to be rich Himself, but also to make others rich, or of life, not only that He is Himself living, but also that He makes the dead to live; and of His power, not only that He is Himself powerful, but also that He makes the feeble powerful. So also is the declaring of His righteousness not only that He is Himself righteous, but that He does also make them that are filled with the putrefying sores ([κατασαπέντας]) of sin suddenly righteous. And it is to explain this, viz. what is "*declaring*," that he has added, "*That He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.*" Doubt not then: for it is not of works, but of faith: and shun not the righteousness of God, for it is a blessing in two ways; because it is easy, and also open to all men. And be not abashed and shamefaced. For if He Himself openly declares ([ἐ] [νδείκνυται]) Himself to do so, and He, so to say, finds a delight and a pride therein, how do you come to be dejected and to hide your face at what your Master glories in? Now then after raising his hearers expectations by saying that what had taken place was a declaring of the righteousness of God, he next by fear urges him on that is tardy and remissful about coming; by speaking as follows:

"On account of the relaxing of sins that were before." Do you see how often he keeps reminding them of their transgressions? Before, he did it by

saying, "*through the Law is the knowledge of sin;*" and after by saying, "*that all have sinned,*" but here in yet stronger language. For he does not say for the sins, but, "*for the relaxing,*" that is, the deadness. For there was no longer any hope of recovering health, but as the paralyzed body needed the hand from above, so does the soul which has been deadened. And what is indeed worse, a thing which he sets down as a charge, and points out that it is a greater accusation. Now what is this? That the last state was incurred in the forbearance of God. For you cannot plead, he means, that you have not enjoyed much forbearance and goodness. But the words "*at this time*" are those of one who is pointing out the greatness of the power (Sav. forbearance) and love toward man. For after we had given all over, (he would say,) and it were time to sentence us, and the evils were waxed great and the sins were in their full, then He displayed His own power, that you might learn how great is the abundancy of righteousness with Him. For this, had it taken place at the beginning, would not have had so wonderful and unusual an appearance as now, when every sort of cure was found unavailing.

Ver. 27. "*Where is boasting then? It is excluded,*" he says. "*By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.*"

Paul is at great pains to show that faith is mighty to a degree which was never even fancied of the Law. For after he had said that God justifies man by faith, he grapples with the Law again. And he does not say, where then are the well doings of the Jews? Where their righteous dealing? But, "*where is then the boasting?*" so taking every opportunity of showing, that they do but use great words, as though they had somewhat more than others, and have no work to show. And after saying, "*Where then is the boasting?*" he does not say, it is put out of sight and has come to an end, but "*it is excluded,*" which word rather expresses unseasonableness; since the

reason for it is no more. For as when the judgment has come they that would repent have not any longer the season for it, thus now the sentence being henceforth passed, and all being upon the point of perishing, and He being at hand Who by grace would break these terrors, they had no longer the season for making a plea of amelioration wrought by the Law. For if it were right to strengthen themselves upon these things, it should have been before His coming. But now that He who should save by faith had come, the season for those efforts was taken from them. For since all were convicted, He therefore saves by grace. And this is why He has come but now, that they may not say, as they would had He come at the first, that it was possible to be saved by the Law and by our own labors and well-doings. To curb therefore this their effrontery, He waited a long time: so that after they were by every argument clearly convicted of inability to help themselves, He then saved them by His grace. And for this reason too when he had said above, *"To declare His righteousness,"* he added, *"at this time."* If any then were to gainsay, they do the same as if a person who after committing great sins was unable to defend himself in court, but was condemned and going to be punished, and then being by the royal pardon forgiven, should have the effrontery after his forgiveness to boast and say that he had done no sin. For before the pardon came, was the time to prove it: but after it came he would no longer have the season for boasting. And this happened in the Jews' case. For since they had been traitors to themselves, this was why He came, by His very coming doing away their boasting. For he who says that he is a *"teacher of babes, and makes his boast in the Law,"* and styles himself *"an instructor of the foolish,"* if alike with them he needed a teacher and a Saviour, can no longer have any pretext for boasting. For if even before this, the circumcision was made uncircumcision, much rather was it now, since it is cast out from both

periods. But after saying that *"it was excluded,"* he shows also, how. How then does he say it was excluded? *"By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith."* See he calls the faith also a law delighting to keep to the names, and so allay the seeming novelty. But what is the *"law of faith?"* It is, being saved by grace. Here he shows God's power, in that He has not only saved, but has even justified, and led them to boasting, and this too without needing works, but looking for faith only. And in saying this he attempts to bring the Jew who has believed to act with moderation, and to calm him that has not believed, in such way as to draw him on to his own view. For he that has been saved, if he be high-minded in that he abides by the Law, will be told that he himself has stopped his own mouth, himself has accused himself, himself has renounced claims to his own salvation, and has excluded boasting. But he that has not believed again, being humbled by these same means, will be capable of being brought over to the faith. Do you see how great faith's preëminence is? How it has removed us from the former things, not even allowing us to boast of them?

Ver. 28. *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law."*

When he had shown that by faith they were superior to the Jews, then he goes on with great confidence to discourse upon it also, and what seemed therein to annoy he again heals up. For these two things were what confused the Jews; one, if it were possible for men, who with works were not saved, to be saved without them, and another, if it were just for the uncircumcised to enjoy the same blessings with those, who had during so long a period been nurtured in the Law; which last confused them more by far than the former. And on this ground having proved the former, he goes on to the other next, which perplexed the Jews so far, that they even complained on account of this position against Peter after they believed.

What does he say then? *"Therefore we conclude, that by faith a man is justified."* He does not say, a Jew, or one under the Law, but after leading forth his discourse into a large room, and opening the doors of faith to the world, he says *"a man,"* the name common to our race. And then having taken occasion from this, he meets an objection not set down. For since it was likely that the Jews, upon hearing that faith justifies every man, would take it ill and feel offended, he goes on,

Ver. 29. *"Is He the God of the Jews only?"*

As if he said, On what foot does it then seem to you amiss that every man should be saved? Is God partial? So showing from this, that in wishing to flout the Gentiles, they are rather offering an insult to God's glory, if, that is, they would not allow Him to be the God of all. But if He is of all, then He takes care of all; and if He care for all, then He saves all alike by faith. And this is why he says, *"Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also."* For He is not partial as the fables of the Gentiles (cf. Ov. Tr. I. ii. 5. sqq) are, but common to all, and One. And this is why he goes on,

Ver. 30. *"Seeing it is one God."*

That is, the same is the Master of both these and those. But if you tell me of the ancient state of things, then too the dealings of Providence were shared by both, although in diverse ways. For as to you was given the written law, so to them was the natural; and they came short in nothing, if, that is, only they were willing, but were even able to surpass you. And so he proceeds, with an allusion to this very thing, *"Who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith,"* so reminding them of what he said before about uncircumcision and circumcision, whereby he showed that there was no difference. But if then there was no difference, much less is there any now. And this accordingly he now

establishes upon still clearer grounds, and so demonstrates, that either of them stand alike in need of faith.

Ver. 31. *"Do we then,"* he says, *"make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law."*

Do you see his varied and unspeakable judgment? For the bare use of the word *"establish"* shows that it was not then standing, but was worn out ([καταλελυμένον]). And note also Paul's exceeding power, and how superabundantly he maintains what he wishes. For here he shows that the faith, so far from doing any disparagement to the *"Law,"* even assists it, as it on the other hand paved the way for the faith. For as the Law itself before bore witness to it (for he says, *"being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets"*), so here this establishes that, now that it is unnerved. And how did it establish? He would say. What was the object of the Law and what the scope of all its enactments? Why, to make man righteous. But this it had no power to do. *"For all,"* it says, *"have sinned:"* but faith when it came accomplished it. For when a man is once a believer, he is straightway justified. The intention then of the Law it did establish, and what all its enactments aim after, this has it brought to a consummation. Consequently it has not disannulled, but perfected it. Here then three points he has demonstrated; first, that without the Law it is possible to be justified; next, that this the Law could not effect; and, that faith is not opposed to the Law. For since the chief cause of perplexity to the Jews was this, that the faith seemed to be in opposition to it, he shows more than the Jew wishes, that so far from being contrary, it is even in close alliance and coöperation with it, which was what they especially longed to hear proved.

But since after this grace, whereby we were justified, there is need also of a life suited to it, let us show an earnestness worthy the gift. And show it we shall, if we keep with earnestness charity, the mother of good deeds.

Now charity is not bare words, or mere ways of speaking ([προσρήσεις]) to men, but a taking care ([προστασία]) of them, and a putting forth of itself by works, as, for instance, by relieving poverty, lending one's aid to the sick, rescuing from dangers, to stand by them that be in difficulties, to weep with them that weep, and to rejoice with them that rejoice. [Romans 12:15] For even this last is a part of charity. And yet this seems a little thing, to be rejoicing with them that rejoice: nevertheless it is exceedingly great, and requires for it the spirit of true wisdom. And we may find many that perform the more irksome part ([πικρότερον]), and yet want vigor for this. For many weep with them that weep, but still do not rejoice with them that rejoice, but are in tears when others rejoice; now this comes of grudging and envy. The good deed then of rejoicing when our brother rejoices is no small one, but even greater than the other: and haply not only greater than weeping with them that weep, but even than standing by them that are in danger. There are many, at all events, that have shared danger with men in danger, but were cut to the heart when they came into honor. So great is the tyranny of a grudging spirit! And yet the one is a thing of toils and labors, and this of choice and temper only. Yet at the same time many that have endured the harder task have not accomplished the one easier than it, but pine and consume away when they see others in honor, when a whole Church is benefited, by doctrine, or in any other fashion. And what can be worse than this? For such an one does not any more fight with his brother, but with the will of God. Now consider this, and be rid of the disease: and even if you be unwilling to set your neighbor free, at least set yourself free from these countless evils. Why do you carry war into your own thoughts? Why fill your soul with trouble? Why work up a storm? Why turn things upside down? How will you be able, in this state of mind, to ask forgiveness of sins? For if those that allow not the things done against themselves to

pass, neither does He forgive, what forgiveness shall He grant to those who go about to injure those that have done them no injury? For this is a proof of the utmost wickedness. Men of this kind are fighting with the Devil, against the Church, and haply even worse than he. For him one can be on one's guard against. But these cloaking themselves under the mask of friendliness, secretly kindle the pile, throwing themselves the first into the furnace, and laboring under a disease not only unfit for pity, but even such as to meet with much ridicule. For why is it, tell me, that you are pale and trembling and standing in fear? What evil has happened? Is it that your brother is in honor, and looked up to, and in esteem? Why, you ought to make chaplets, and rejoice, and glorify God, that your own member is in honor and looked up to! But are you pained that God is glorified? Do you see to what issue the war tends? But, some will say, it is not because God is glorified, but because my brother is. Yet through him the glory ascends up to God: and so will the war from you do also. But it is not this, he will say, that grieves me, for I should wish God to be glorified by me. Well then! rejoice at your brother's being in honor, and then glorified is God again through you also; and all will say, Blessed be God that has His household so minded, wholly freed from envy, and rejoicing together at one another's goods! And why do I speak of your brother? For if he were your foe and enemy, and God were glorified through him, a friend should you make of him for this reason. But you make your friend an enemy because God is glorified by his being in honor. And were any one to heal your body when in evil plight, though he were an enemy, you would count him thenceforward among the first of your friends: and do you reckon him that gladdens the countenance of Christ's Body, that is, the Church, and is your friend, to be yet an enemy? How else then couldest thou show war against Christ? For this cause, even if a man do miracles, have celibacy to show,

and fasting, and lying on the bare ground, and does by this virtue advance even to the angels, yet shall he be most accursed of all, while he has this defect, and shall be a greater breaker of the Law than the adulterer, and the fornicator, and the robber, and the violator of supulchres. And, that no one may condemn this language of hyperbole, I should be glad to put this question to you. If any one had come with fire and mattock, and were destroying and burning this House, and digging down this Altar, would not each one of those here stone him with stones as accursed and a law-breaker? What then, if one were to bring a flame yet more consuming than that fire, I mean envy, that does not ruin the buildings of stone nor dig down an Altar of gold, but subverts and scornfully mars what is far more precious than either walls or Altar, the Teachers' building, what sufferance would he deserve? For let no one tell me, that he has often endeavored and been unable: for it is from the spirit that the actions are judged. For Saul did kill David, even though he did not hit him. [1 Samuel 19:10] Tell me, do you not perceive that you are plotting against the sheep of Christ when you war with His Shepherd? Those sheep for whom also Christ shed His Blood, and bade us both to do and to suffer all things? Do you not remind yourself that your Master sought your glory and not His own, but you are seeking not that of your Master but your own? And yet if you saw His then you would have obtained your own also. But by seeking your own before His, you will not ever gain even this.

What then will be the remedy? Let us all join in prayer, and let us lift up our voice with one accord in their behalf as for those possessed, for indeed these are more wretched than they, inasmuch as their madness is of choice. For this affliction needs prayer and much entreaty. For if he that loves not his brother, even though he empty out his money, yea, and have the glory of martyrdom, is no whit advantaged; consider what punishment

the man deserves who even wars with him that has not wronged him in anything; he is even worse than the Gentiles: for if to love them that love us does not let us have any advantage over them, in what grade shall he be placed, tell me, that envies them that love him? For envying is even worse than warring; since he that wars, when the cause of the war is at an end, puts an end to his hatred also: but the grudger would never become a friend. And the one shows an open kind of battle, the other a covert: and the one often has a reasonable cause to assign for the war, the other, nothing else but madness, and a Satanic spirit. To what then is one to compare a soul of this kind? To what viper? To what asp? To what canker-worm? To what scorpion? Since there is nothing so accursed or so pernicious as a soul of this sort. For it is this, it is this, that has subverted the Churches, this that has gendered the heresies, this it was that armed a brother's hand, and made his right hand to be dipped in the blood of the righteous, and plucked away the laws of nature, and set open the gates for death, and brought that curse into action, and suffered not that wretch to call to mind either the birth-pangs, or his parents, or anything else, but made him so furious, and led him to such a pitch of phrenzy, that even when God exhorted him and said, *"Unto you shall be his recourse, and you shall rule over him"* [Genesis 4:7, Septuagint]; he did not even then give in. Yet did He both forgive him the fault, and make his brother subject to him: but his complaint is so incurable, that even if thousands of medicines are applied, it keeps sloughing with its own corruption. For wherefore are you so vexed, you most miserable of men? Is it because God has had honor shown Him? Nay, this would show a Satanical spirit. Is it then because your brother outstrips you in good name? As for that, it is open to you in turn to outstrip him. And so, if you would be a conqueror, kill not, destroy not, but let him abide still, that the material for the struggle may be preserved, and conquer him living. For in this way your

crown had been a glorious one; but by thus destroying you pass a harder sentence of defeat upon yourself. But a grudging spirit has no sense of all this. And what ground have you to covet glory in such solitude? For those were at that time the only inhabitants of the earth. Still even then this restrained him not, but he cast away all from his mind, and stationed himself in the ranks of the devil; for he it was who then led the war upon Cain's side. For inasmuch as it was not enough for him that man had become liable to death, by the manner of the death he tried to make the tragedy still greater, and persuaded him to become a fratricide. For he was urgent and in travail to see the sentence carried into effect, as never satisfied with our ills. As if any one who had got an enemy in prison, and saw him under sentence, were to press, before he was out of the city, to see him butchered within it, and would not wait even the fitting time, so did the devil then, though he had heard that man must return to earth, travail with desire to see something worse, even a son dying before his father, and a brother destroying a brother, and a premature and violent slaughter. See you what great service envy has done him? How it has filled the insatiate spirit of the devil, and has prepared for him a table great as he desired to see?

Let us then escape from the disease; for it is not possible, indeed it is not, to escape from the fire prepared for the devil, unless we get free from this sickness. But free we shall get to be if we lay to mind how Christ loved us, and also how He bade us love one another. Now what love did He show for us? His precious Blood did He shed for us when we were enemies, and had done the greatest wrong to Him. This do thou also do in your brother's case (for this is the end of His saying "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye so love one another as I have loved you*") [John 13:34]; or rather even so the measure does not come to a stand. For it was in behalf of His enemies that He did this. And are you unwilling to shed your blood for your

brother? Why then do you even shed his blood, disobeying the commandment even to reversing it? Yet what He did was not as a due: but you, if you do it, are but fulfilling a debt. Since he too, who, after receiving the ten thousand talents, demanded the hundred pence, was punished not merely for the fact that he demanded them, but because even by the kindness done him he had not become any better, and did not even follow where his Lord had begun, or remit the debt. For on the part of the servant the thing done was but a debt after all, if it had been done. For all things that we do, we do towards the payment of a debt. And this is why Himself said, *"When you have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do."* [Luke 17:10] If then we display charity, if we give our goods to them that need, we are fulfilling a debt; and that not only in that it was He who first began the acts of goodness, but because it is His goods that we are distributing if we ever do give. Why then deprive yourself of what He wills you to have the right of? For the reason why He bade you give them to another was that you might have them yourself. For so long as you have them to yourself even you yourself hast them not. But when you have given to another, then have you received them yourself. What charm then will do as much as this? Himself poured forth His Blood for His enemies: but we not even money for our benefactor. He did so with His Blood that was His own: we will not even with money that is not ours. He did it before us, we not even after His example. He did it for our salvation, we will not do it even for our own advantage. For He is not to have any advantage from our love toward man, but the whole gain accrues unto us. For this is the very reason why we are bidden to give away our goods, that we may not be thrown out of them. For as a person who gives a little child money and bids him hold it fast, or give it the servant to keep, that it may not be for whoever will to snatch it away, so also does

God. For He says, Give to him that needs, lest some one should snatch it away from you, as an informer, for instance, or a calumniator, or a thief, or, after all these are avoided, death. For so long as you hold it yourself, you have no safe hold of it. But if you give it Me through the poor, I keep it all for you exactly, and in fit season will return it with great increase. For it is not to take it away that I receive it, but to make it a larger amount and to keep it more exactly, that I may have it preserved for you against that time, in which there is no one to lend or to pity. What then can be more hard-hearted, than if we, after such promises, cannot make up our minds to lend to him? Yes, it is for this that we go before Him destitute and naked and poor, not having the things committed to our charge, because we do not deposit them with Him who keeps them more exactly than any. And for this we shall be most severely punished. For when we are charged with it, what shall we be able to say about the loss of them? what pretext to put forward? What defence? For what reason is there why you did not give? Do you disbelieve that you will receive it again? And how can this be reasonable? For He that has given to one that has not given, how shall He not much rather give after He has received? Does the sight of them please you? Well then, give much the more for this reason, that you may there be the more delighted, when no one can take them from you. Since now if you keep them, you will even suffer countless evils. For as a dog, so does the devil leap upon them that are rich, wishing to snatch from them, as from a child that holds a sippet or a cake. Let us then give them to our Father, and if the devil see this done, he will certainly withdraw: and when he has withdrawn, then will the Father safely give them all to you, when he cannot trouble, in that world to come. For now surely they that be rich differ not from little children that are troubled by dogs, while all are barking round them, tearing and pulling; not men only, but ignoble affections; as gluttony, drunkenness,

flattery, uncleanness of every kind. And when we have to lend, we are very anxious about those that give much, and look particularly for those that are frank dealers. But here we do the opposite. For God, Who deals frankly, and gives not one in the hundred, but a hundred-fold, we desert, and those who will not return us even the capital, these we seek after. For what return will our belly make us, that consumes the larger share of our goods? Dung and corruption. Or what will vainglory? Envy and grudging. Or what nearness? Care and anxiety. Or what uncleanness? Hell and the venomous worm! For these are the debtors of them that be rich, who pay this interest upon the capital, evils at present, and dreadful things in expectation. Shall we then lead to these, pray, with such punishment for interest, and shall we not trust the same to Christ (4 manuscripts om. [τῷ]) Who holds forth unto us heaven, immortal life, blessings unutterable? And what excuse shall we have? For how do you come not to give to Him, who will assuredly return, and return in greater abundance? Perhaps it is because it is so long before He repays. Yet surely He repays even here. For He is true which says, "*Seek the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added to you.*"

[Matthew 6:33] Do you see this extreme munificence? Those goods, He says, have been stored up for you, and are not diminishing: but these here I give by way of increase and surplus. But, besides all this, the very fact of its being so long before you will receive it, does but make your riches the greater: since the interest is more.

For in the case of those who have money lent them, we see that this is what the lenders do, lending, that is, with greater readiness to those who refund a long time after. For he that straightway repays the whole, cuts off the progression of the interest, but he that keeps possession of it for a longer time, makes also the gain from it greater. Shall we then, while in man's case we are not offended at the delay, but even use artifices to make it greater, in

the case of God be so little-minded, as on this very ground to be backward and to retract? And yet, as I said, He both gives here, and along with the reason mentioned, as planning also some other greater advantage to us, He there keeps the whole in store. For the abundance of what is given, and the excellency of that gift, transcends this present worthless life. Since in this perishable and doomed body there is not even the possibility of receiving those unfading crowns; nor in our present state, perturbed and full of trouble, and liable to many changes as it is, of attaining to that unchangeable unperturbed lot. Now you, if any one were to owe you gold, and while you were staying in a foreign country, and had neither servants, nor any means to convey it across to the place of your abode, were to promise to pay you the loan, would beseech him in countless ways to have it paid down not in the foreign land, but at home rather. But do you think right to receive those spiritual and unutterable things in this world? Now what madness this would show! For if you receive them here, you must have them corruptible to a certainty; but if you wait for that time, He will repay you them incorruptible and unalloyed. If you receive here, you have gotten lead; but if there, tried gold. Still He does not even deprive you of the goods of this life. For along with that promise He has placed another also, to the following effect, That every one that loves the things of the world to come, shall receive *"an hundred-fold in this life present, and shall inherit eternal life."* [Matthew 19:29] If then we do not receive the hundred-fold, it is ourselves that are to blame for not lending to Him Who can give so much, for all who have given have received much, even though they gave but little. For what great thing, tell me, did Peter give? Was it not a net that was broken [Luke 5:6-11], and a rod and a hook only? Yet still God opened to him the houses of the world, and spread before him land and sea, and all men invited him to their possessions. Or rather they sold what was

their own, and brought it to their feet, not so much as putting it into their hands, for they dared not, so great was the honor they paid him, as well as their profuseness. But he was Peter, you will say! And what of this? O man! For it was not Peter only to whom He made this promise, neither said He, You, O Peter, only art to receive an hundred-fold, but *"every one whosoever has left houses or brethren shall receive an hundredfold."* For it is not distinction of persons that He recognizes, but actions that are rightly done. But a circle of little ones is round about me, one will say, and I am desirous of leaving them with a good fortune. Why then do we make them paupers? For if you leave them everything, you are still committing your goods to a trust that may deceive you. But if you leave God their joint-heir and guardian, you have left them countless treasures. For as when we avenge ourselves God assists us not, but when we leave it to Him, more than we expect comes about; so in the case of goods, if we take thought about them ourselves, He will withdraw from any providence over them, but if we cast all upon Him, He will place both them and our children in all safety. And why are you amazed that this should be so with God? For even with men one may see this happening. For if you do not when dying invite any of your relatives to the care of your children, it often happens, that one who is abundantly willing feels reluctancy, and is too modest to spring to the task of his own accord. But if you cast the care upon him, as having had a very great honor shown him, he will in requital make very great returns. If then you would leave your children much wealth, leave them God's care. For He Who, without your having done anything, gave you a soul, and formed you a body, and granted you life, when He sees you displaying such munificence and distributing their goods to Himself along with them, must surely open to them every kind of riches. For if Elijah after having been nourished with a little meal, since he saw that that woman honored him

above her children, made threshing-floors and oil-presses appear in the little hut of the widow, consider what loving caring the Lord of Elijah will display! Let us then not consider how to leave our children rich, but how to leave them virtuous. For if they have the confidence of riches, they will not mind anything besides, in that they have the means screening the wickedness of their ways in their abundant riches. But if they find themselves devoid of the comfort to be got from that source, they will do all so as by virtue to find themselves abundant consolation for their poverty. Leave them then no riches that you may leave them virtue. For it is unreasonable in the extreme, not to make them, while we are alive, lords of all our goods, yet after we are dead to give the easy nature of youth full exemption from fear. And yet while we are alive we shall have power to call them to good account, and to sober and bridle them, if they make an ill use of their goods: but if after we are dead we afford them, at the time of the loss of ourselves, and their own youthfulness, that power which wealth gives, endless are the precipices into which we shall thrust those unfortunate and miserable creatures, so heaping fuel upon flame, and letting oil drop into a fierce furnace. And so, if you would leave them rich and safe withal, leave God a debtor to them, and deliver the bequest to them into His hands. For if they receive the money themselves, they will not know even who to give it to, but will meet with many designing and unfeeling people. But if you beforehand puttest it out to interest with God, the treasure henceforward remains unassailable, and great is the facility wherewith that repayment will be made. For God is well pleased at repaying us what He owes, and both looks with a more favorable eye upon those who have lent to Him, than on those who have not; and loves those the most to whom He owes the most. And so, if you would have Him for your Friend continually, make Him your Debtor to a large amount. For there is no lender so pleased

at having those that owe to him, as Christ (6 manuscripts God) is rejoiced at having those that lend to Him. And such as He owes nothing to, He flees from; but such as He owes to, He even runs unto. Let us then use all means to get Him for our Debtor; for this is the season for loans, and He is now in want. If then you give not unto Him now, He will not ask of you after your departing hence. For it is here that He thirsts, here that He is an hungered. He thirsts, since He thirsts after your salvation; and it is for this that He even begs; for this that He even goes about naked, negotiating immortal life for you. Do not then neglect Him; since it is not to be nourished that He wishes, but to nourish; it is not to be clothed, but to clothe and to accoutre you with the golden garment, the royal robe. Do you not see even the more attached sort of physicians, when they are washing the sick, wash themselves also, though they need it not? In the same way He also does all for the sake of you who art sick. For this reason also He uses no force in demanding, that He may make you great returns: that you may learn that it is not because He is in need that He asks of you, but that He may set right that you need. For this reason too He comes to you in a lowly guise, and with His right hand held forth. And if you give Him a farthing, He turns not away: and even if you reject Him, He departs not but comes again to you. For He desires, yea desires exceedingly, our salvation: let us then think scorn of money, that we may not be thought scorn of by Christ. Let us think scorn of money, even with a view to obtain the money itself. For if we keep it here, we shall lose it altogether both here and hereafter. But if we distribute it with abundant expenditure, we shall enjoy in each life abundant wealthiness. He then that would become rich, let him become poor, that he may be rich. Let him spend that he may collect, let him scatter that he may gather. But if this is novel and paradoxical, look to the sower, and consider, that he cannot in any other way gather more together, save by scattering

what he has and, letting go of what is at hand. Let us now sow and till the Heaven, that we may reap with great abundance, and obtain everlasting goods, through the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 8 on Romans

Romans IV. 1, 2

"What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to glory; but not before God."

He had said (5 manuscripts [εἶπεν]), that the world had become guilty before God, and that all had sinned, and that boasting was excluded and that it was impossible to be saved otherwise than by faith. He is now intent upon showing that this salvation, so far from being matter of shame, was even the cause of a bright glory, and a greater than that through works. For since the being saved, yet with shame, had somewhat of dejection in it, he next takes away this suspicion too. And indeed he has hinted at the same already, by calling it not barely salvation, but *"righteousness. Therein"* (he says) *"is the righteousness of God revealed."* [Romans 1:17] For he that is saved as a righteous man has a confidence accompanying his salvation. And he calls it not *"righteousness"* only, but also the setting forth of the righteousness of God. But God is set forth in things which are glorious and shining, and great. However, he nevertheless draws support for this from what he is at present upon, and carries his discourse forward by the method of question. And this he is always in the habit of doing both for clearness sake, and for the sake of confidence in what is said. Above, for instance, he did it, where he says, *"What advantage then has the Jew?"* [Romans 3:1] and, *"What then have we more than they?"* [Romans 3:9] and again, *"where then is boasting? It is excluded"* [Romans 3:27]: and here, *"what then shall we say that Abraham our father?"* etc. Now since the Jews kept turning over and over the fact, that the Patriarch, and friend of God, was the first to receive

circumcision, he wishes to show, that it was by faith that he too was justified. And this was quite a vantage ground to insist upon ([περιουσία νίκης πολλῆς]). For for a person who had no works, to be justified by faith, was nothing unlikely. But for a person richly adorned with good deeds, not to be made just from hence, but from faith, this is the thing to cause wonder, and to set the power of faith in a strong light. And this is why he passes by all the others, and leads his discourse back to this man. And he calls him *"father, as pertaining to the flesh,"* to throw them out of the genuine relationship ([συγγενείας γνησίας]) to him, and to pave the Gentiles' way to kinsmanship with him. And then he says, *"For if Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to glory: but not before God."* After saying that God *"justified the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith,"* and making the same sufficiently sure in what he said before, he now proves it by Abraham more clearly than he promised, and pitches the battle for faith against works, and makes this righteous man the subject of the whole struggle; and that not without special meaning. Wherefore also he sets him up very high by calling him *"forefather,"* and putting a constraint upon them to comply with him in all points. For, Tell me not, he would say, about the Jews, nor bring this man or that before me. For I will go up to the very head of all, and the source whence circumcision took its rise. For *"if Abraham,"* he says, *"was justified by works, he has whereof to glory: but not before God."* What is here said is not plain, and so one must make it plainer. For there are two *"gloryings,"* one of works, and one of faith. After saying then, *"if he was justified by works, he has whereof to glory; but not before God;"* he points out that he might have whereof to glory from faith also, yea and much greater reason for it. For the great power of Paul is especially displayed in this, that he turns what is objected to the other side, and shows that what seemed rather to be on the side of salvation by works,

viz. glorying or boldness of claim ([παρρησιάζεσθαι]) belonged much more truly to that by faith. For he that glories in his works has his own labors to put forward: but he that finds his honor in having faith in God, has a much greater ground for glorying to show, in that it is God that he glorifies and magnifies. For those things which the nature of the visible world tells him not of, in receiving these by faith in Him, he at once displays sincere love towards Him, and heralds His power clearly forth. Now this is the character of the noblest soul, and the philosophic spirit, and lofty mind. For to abstain from stealing and murdering is trifling sort of acquirement, but to believe that it is possible for God to do things impossible requires a soul of no mean stature, and earnestly affected towards Him; for this is a sign of sincere love. For he indeed honors God, who fulfils the commandments, but he does so in a much greater degree who thus follows wisdom ([φιλοσοφῶν]) by his faith. The former obeys Him, but the latter receives that opinion of Him which is fitting, and glorifies Him, and feels wonder at Him more than that evinced by works. For that glorying pertains to him that does aright, but this glorifies God, and lies wholly in Him. For he glories at conceiving great things concerning Him, which redound to His glory. And this is why he speaks of having whereof to glory before God. And not for this only, but also for another reason: for he who is a believer glories again, not only because he loves God in sincerity, but also because he has enjoyed great honor and love from him. For as he shows his love to Him by having great thoughts about Him, (for this is a proof of love), so does God also love him, though deserving to suffer for countless sins, not in freeing him from punishment only, but even by making him righteous. He then has whereof to glory, as having been counted worthy of mighty love.

Ver. 4. *"For to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."*

Then is not this last the greatest? He means. By no means: for it is to the believer that it is reckoned. But it would not have been reckoned, unless there were something that he contributed himself. And so he too has God for his debtor, and debtor too for no common things, but great and high ones. For to show his high-mindedness and spiritual understanding, he does not say *"to him that believes"* merely, but

Ver. 5. *"To him that believes in Him that justifies the ungodly."*

For reflect how great a thing it is to be persuaded and have full confidence that God is able on a sudden not to free a man who has lived in impiety from punishment only, but even to make him just, and to count him worthy of those immortal honors. Do not then suppose that this one is lowered in that it is not reckoned unto the former of grace. For this is the very thing that makes the believer glorious; the fact of his enjoying so great grace, of his displaying so great faith. And note too that the recompense is greater. For to the former a reward is given, to the latter righteousness. Now righteousness is much greater than a reward. For righteousness is a recompense which most fully comprehends several rewards. Therefore after proving this from Abraham, he introduces David also as giving his suffrage in favor of the statement made. What then does David say? And whom does he pronounce blessed? Is it him that triumphs in works, or him that has enjoyed grace? Him that has obtained pardon and a gift? And when I speak of blessedness, I mean the chiefest of all good things; for as righteousness is greater than a reward, so is blessedness greater than righteousness. Having then shown that the righteousness is better, not owing to Abraham's having received it only but also from reasonings (for he has whereof to boast, he says, before God); he again uses another mode of showing that it is more dignified, by bringing David in to give his suffrage this way. For he also, he says, pronounces him blessed who is so made righteous, saying,

Ver. 7. *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven."*

And he seems to be bringing a testimony beside his purpose. For it does not say, Blessed are they whose faith is reckoned for righteousness. But he does so on purpose, not through inadvertency, to show the greater superiority. For if he be blessed that by grace received forgiveness, much more is he that is made just, and that exhibits faith. For where blessedness is, there all shame is removed, and there is much glory, since blessedness is a greater degree both of reward and of glory. And for this cause what is the advantage of the other he states as unwritten, *"Now to him that works is the reward reckoned not of grace;"* but what the advantage of the faithful is, he brings Scriptural testimony to prove, saying, As David says, *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."* What, he means, is it that you say? Is it that *"it is not of debt but of grace that he receives forgiveness?"* But see it is this person who is pronounced blessed. For he would not have pronounced him so, unless he saw him in the enjoyment of great glory. And he does not say this *"forgiveness"* then comes upon the circumcision; but what says he?

Ver. 9. *"Comes this blessedness then"* (which is the greater thing) *"upon the circumcision or upon the uncircumcision?"*

For now the subject of enquiry is, With whom is this good and great thing to be found; is it with the circumcision or with the uncircumcision? And notice its superiority! For he shows that it is so far from shunning the uncircumcision, that it even dwelt gladly with it before the circumcision. For since he that pronounced it blessed was David, who was himself also in a state of circumcision, and he was speaking to those in that state, see how eagerly Paul contends for applying what he said to the uncircumcised. For after joining the ascription of blessedness to righteousness, and showing that they are one and the same thing, he enquires how Abraham came to be

righteous. For if the ascription of blessedness belong to the righteous, and Abraham was made righteous, let us see how he was made righteous, as uncircumcised or circumcised? Uncircumcised, he says.

"For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness."

After mentioning the Scripture above (for he said, *"What says the Scripture? Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness,"*) here he goes on to secure also the judgment of the speakers, and shows that justification took place in the uncircumcision. Then from these grounds he solves another objection which is starting up. For if when in uncircumcision, one might say he was justified, to what purpose was the circumcision brought in?

Ver. 11. *"He received it,"* he says, *"a sign and seal of the righteousness that was by the faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised."*

See you how he shows the Jews to be as it were of the class of parasites (i.e. guests), rather than those in uncircumcision, and that these were added to the others? For if he was justified and crowned while in uncircumcision, the Jews came in afterwards, Abraham is then the father first of the uncircumcised, which through faith appertain to him, and then of those in the circumcision. For he is a forefather of two lines. See you faith lightening up? For till it came the patriarch was not justified. See you the uncircumcision offering no hindrance? For he was uncircumcised, yet was not hindered from being justified. The circumcision therefore is behind the faith. And why wonder that it is behind the faith, when it is even behind the uncircumcision. Nor is it behind faith only, but very far inferior to it, even so far as the sign is to the reality of which it is the sign; for instance, as the seal is to the soldier. (See Hom. iii. on 2 Cor. at the end.) And why, he says, did he want a seal then? He did not want it himself. For what purpose then did he receive it? With a view to his being the father alike of them that

believe in uncircumcision and in circumcision. But not of those in circumcision absolutely: wherefore he goes on to say, "*To them who are not of the circumcision only.*" For if to the uncircumcised, it is not in that he is uncircumcised that he is their father, although justified in uncircumcision; but in that they imitated his faith; much less is it owing to circumcision that he is the forefather of those in the state of circumcision, unless faith also be added. For he says that the reason of his receiving circumcision was that either of us two parties might have him for a forefather, and that those in the uncircumcision might not thrust aside those in the circumcision. See how the former had him for their forefather first. Now if the circumcision be of dignity owing to its preaching righteousness, the uncircumcision even has no small preeminence in having received it before the circumcision. Then will you be able to have him as a forefather when you walk in the steps of that faith, and art not contentious, nor a causer of division in bringing in the Law. What faith? Tell me.

Ver. 12. "*Which he had being yet uncircumcised.*"

Here again he lays low the lofty spirit of the Jews by reminding them of the time of the justification. And he well says, "*the steps,*" that you as well as Abraham may believe in the resurrection of bodies that are dead. For he also displayed his faith upon this point. And so if you reject the uncircumcision, be informed for certain that the circumcision is of no more use unto you. For if you follow not in the steps of his faith, though you were ten thousand times in a state of circumcision, you will not be Abraham's offspring. For even he received the circumcision for this end, that the man in a state of uncircumcision might not cast you off. Do not then demand this of him too. For it was you whom the thing was to be an assistance to, not he. But he calls it a sign of the righteousness. And this also was for your sake, since now it is not even this: for thou then were in

need of bodily signs, but now there is no need of them. *"And was it not possible,"* one might say, *"from his faith to learn the goodness of his soul?"* Yes, it was possible but you stood in need of this addition also. For since thou did not imitate the goodness of his soul, and were not able to see it, a sensible circumcision was given you, that, after having become accustomed to this of the body, you might little by little be led on to the true love of wisdom in the soul also, and that having with much seriousness received it as a very great privilege, you might be instructed to imitate and revere your ancestor. This object then had God not only in the circumcision, but in all the other rites, the sacrifices, I mean, and the sabbath, and feasts. Now that it was for your sake that he received the circumcision, learn from the sequel. For after saying that he received a sign and a seal, he gives the reason also as follows. That he might be the father of the circumcision—to those who received the spiritual circumcision also, since if you have only this (i.e. the carnal), no farther good will come to you. For this is then a sign, when the reality of which it is the sign is found with you, that is, faith; since if you have not this, the sign to you has no longer the power of a sign, for what is it to be the sign of? Or what the seal of, when there is nothing to be sealed? Much as if you were to show one a purse with a seal to it, when there was nothing laid up within. And so the circumcision is ridiculous if there be no faith within. For if it be a sign of righteousness, but you have not righteousness, then you have no sign either. For the reason of your receiving a sign was that you might seek diligently for that reality whereof you have the sign: so that if you had been sure of diligently seeking thereafter without it, then you had not needed it. But this is not the only thing that circumcision proclaims, namely righteousness, but righteousness in even an uncircumcised man. Circumcision then does but proclaim, that there is no need of circumcision.

Ver. 14. *"For if they which are of the Law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect."*

He had shown that faith is necessary, that it is older than circumcision, that it is more mighty than the Law, that it establishes the Law. For if all sinned, it was necessary: if one being uncircumcised was justified, it is older: if the knowledge of sin is by the Law and yet it was without the Law made evident, it is more mighty: if it has testimony borne to it by the Law, and establishes the Law, it is not opposed to it, but friendly and allied to it. Again, he shows upon other grounds too that it was not even possible by the Law to attain to the inheritance, and after having matched it with the circumcision, and gained it the victory, he brings it besides into contrast with the Law in these words, *"For if they which are of the Law be heirs, faith is made void."* To prevent them anyone from saying that one may have faith and also keep up the Law, he shows this to be impracticable. For he that clings to the Law, as if of saving force, does disparagement to faith's power; and so he says, *"faith is made void,"* that is, there is no need of salvation by grace. For then it cannot show forth its own proper power; *"and the promise is made of none effect."* This is because the Jew might say, What need have I of faith? If then this held, the things that were promised, would be taken away along with faith. See how in all points he combats with them from the early times and from the Patriarch. For having shown from thence that righteousness and faith went together in the inheritance, he now shows that the promise did likewise. For to prevent the Jew from saying, What matters it to me if Abraham was justified by faith? Paul says, neither can what you are interested with, the promise of the inheritance, come into effect apart from it: which was what scared them most. But what promise is he speaking of? That of his being *"the heir of the world,"* and

that in him all should be blessed. And how does he say that this promise is made of none effect?

Ver. 15. *"Because the Law works wrath: for where no Law is, there is no transgression."*

Now if it works wrath, and renders them liable for transgression, it is plain that it makes them so to a curse also. But they that are liable under a curse, and punishments, and transgression, are not worthy of inheriting, but of being punished and rejected. What then happens? faith comes, drawing on it the grace, so that the promise comes into effect. For where grace is, there is a remitting, and where remitting is, there is no punishment. Punishment then being removed, and righteousness succeeding from faith, there is no obstacle to our becoming heirs of the promise.

Ver. 16. *"Therefore it is of faith,"* he says, *"that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."*

You see that it is not the Law only that faith establishes, but the promise of God also that it will not allow to fall to the ground. But the Law, on the other hand, by being kept to unseasonably, makes even the faith of none effect, and hinders the promise. By this he shows that faith, so far from being superfluous, is even necessary to that degree, that without it there is no being saved. For the Law works wrath, as all have transgressed it. But this does not even suffer wrath to arise at all: for *"where no Law is,"* he says, *"there is no transgression."* Do you see how he not only does away with sin after it has existed, but does not even allow it to be produced? And this is why he says *"by grace."* For what end? Not with a view to their being put to shame, but to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Here he lays down two blessings, both that the things given are sure, and also that they are to all the seed, so gathering in those of the Gentiles, and showing that the Jews are without, if they contend against the faith. For this

is a surer thing than that. For faith does you no hurt (be not contentious), but even now you are in danger from the Law, it preserves you. Next having said, *"to all the seed,"* he defines what seed he means. That which is of faith, he says, so blending with it their relationship to the Gentiles, and showing that they must not be proud of Abraham who do not believe as he did. And see a third thing which faith effected besides. It makes the relationship to that righteous man more definite ([ἀ] [κρι βεστέρων]), and holds him up as the ancestor of a more numerous issue. And this is why he does not say merely Abraham, but *"our father,"* ours who believe. Then he also seals what he has said by the testimony—

Ver. 17. *"As it is written,"* he says, *"I have made you a father of many nations."*

Do you observe that this was ordered by Providence from of old? What then, he means, does He say this on account of the Ishmaelites, or of the Amalekites, or of the Hagarenes? This however, as he goes on he proves more distinctly not to be said of these. But as yet he presses forward to another point, by which means he proves this very thing by defining the mode of the relationship, and establishing it with a vast reach of mind. What then does he say?

"Before (or, answering to, [κατέναντι]) Him Whom he believed, even God."

But his meaning is something of this sort, as God is not the God of a part, but the Father of all, so is he also. And again, as God is a father not by way of the relationship of nature, but by way of the affiancing of faith, so is he also inasmuch as it is obedience that makes him father of us all. For since they thought nothing of this relationship, as clinging to that grosser one, he shows that this is the truer relationship by lifting his discourse up to God. And along with this he makes it plain that this was the reward of faith

that he received. Consequently, if it were not so, and he were the father of all the dwellers upon earth, the expression before (or answering to) would be out of place, while the gift of God would be curtailed. For the *"before,"* is equivalent to *"alike with."* Since where is the marvel, pray, in a man's being the father of those sprung from himself? This is what is every man's lot. But the extraordinary thing is, that those whom by nature he had not, them he received by the gift of God. And so if you would believe that the patriarch was honored, believe that he is the father of all. But after saying, *"before Him Whom he believed, even God,"* he does not pause here, but goes on thus; *"Who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were,"* so laying beforehand his foundations for discoursing upon the resurrection. And it was serviceable also to his present purpose. For if He could *"quicken the dead"* and bring in *"those things that were not as though they were,"* then could He also make those who were not born of him to be his children. And this is why he does not say, bringing in the things which are not, but calling them, so showing the greater ease of it. For as it is easy to us to call the things which are by name, so to Him it is easy, yea, and much easier to give a subsistence to things that are not. But after saying, that the gift of God was great and unspeakable, and having discoursed concerning His power, he shows farther that Abraham's faith was deserving of the gift, that you may not suppose him to have been honored without reason. And after raising the attention of his hearers to prevent the Jew from clamoring and making doubts, and saying, *"And how is it possible for those who are not children to become children?"* he passes on to speak of the patriarch, and says,

Ver. 18. *"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall your seed be."*

How was it that he *"believed in hope against hope?"* It was against man's hope, in hope which is of God. (For he is showing the loftiness of the action, and leaving no room for disbelieving what is said.) Things which are contrary to one another, yet faith blends them together. But if he were speaking about such as were from Ishmael, this language would be superfluous: for it was not by faith but by nature that they were begotten. But he brings Isaac also before us. For it was not concerning those nations that he believed, but concerning him who was to be from his barren wife. If then it be a reward to be father of many nations, it would be so of those nations clearly of whom he so believed. For that you may know that he is speaking of them, listen to what follows.

Ver. 19. *"And being not weak in faith, he considered his own body now dead."*

Do you see how he gives the obstacles, as well as the high spirit of the righteous man which surmounts all? *"Against hope,"* he says, was that which was promised: this is the first obstacle. For Abraham had no other person who had received a son in this way to look to. They that were after him looked to him, but he to no one, save to God only. And this is why he said, *"against hope."* Then, *"his body now dead."* This is a second. And, *"the deadness of Sarah's womb."* This is a third, aye and a fourth obstacle.

Ver. 20. *"But he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief."*

For God neither gave any proof nor made any sign, but there were only bare words promising such things as nature did not hold out any hopes of. Yet still he says, *"he staggered not."* He does not say, *"He did not disbelieve,"* but, *"He staggered not,"* that is, he neither doubted nor hesitated though the hindrances were so great. From this we learn, that if God promise even countless impossibilities, and he that hears does not receive them, it is not the nature of things that is to blame, but the

unreasonableness of him who receives them not. *"But was strong in faith."* See the pertinacity of Paul. For since this discourse was about them that work and them that believe, he shows that the believer works more than the other, and requires more power, and great strength, and sustains no common degree of labor. For they counted faith worthless, as having no labor in it. Insisting then upon this, he shows that it is not only he that succeeds in temperance, or any other virtue of this sort, but he that displays faith also who requires even greater power. For as the one needs strength to beat off the reasonings of intemperance, so has the faithful also need of a soul endued with power, that he may thrust aside the suggestions of unbelief. How then did he become *"strong?"* By trusting the matter, he replies, to faith and not to reasonings: else he had fallen. But how came he to thrive in faith itself? By giving glory to God, he says.

Ver. 21. *"And being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform."*

Abstaining then from curious questionings is glorifying God, as indulging in them is transgressing. But if by entering into curious questions, and searching out things below, we fail to glorify Him, much more if we be over curious in the matter of the Lord's generation, shall we suffer to the utmost for our insolence. For if the type of the resurrection is not to be searched into, much less those unutterable and awestriving subjects. And he does not use the word *"believed"* merely, but, *"being fully persuaded."* For such a thing is faith, it is clearer than the demonstration by reasons, and persuades more fully. For it is not possible for another reasoning succeeding to it to shake it afterwards. He indeed that is persuaded with words may have his persuasion altered too by them. But he that stays himself upon faith, has henceforward fortified his hearing against words that may do hurt to it. Having said then, that he was justified by faith, he shows that he

glorified God by that faith; which is a thing specially belonging to a good life. For, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in heaven."* [Matthew 5:16] But lo! This is shown also to belong to faith! Again, as works need power, so does faith. For in their case the body often shares the toil, but in the faith the well-doing belongs to the soul alone. And so the labor is greater, since it has no one to share the struggles with it. Do you observe how he shows that all that belonged to works attached to faith in a far greater degree, as having whereof to glory before God—requiring power and labor—and again, glorifying God? And after saying, that *"what He had promised, He is able also to perform,"* he seems to me to speak beforehand of things to come. For it is not things present merely that He promises, but also things to come. For the present are a type of the other. It is then a sign of a weak, little, and pitiful mind not to believe. And so when any make faith a charge against us, let us make want of faith a charge against them in return, as pitiful, and little-minded, and foolish, and weak, and no better in disposition than asses. For as believing belongs to a lofty and high-born soul, so disbelieving does to a most unreasonable and worthless one, and such as is sunken drowsily ([κατενηνεγμένης]) into the senselessness of brutes. Therefore having left these, let us imitate the Patriarch, and glorify God as he gave Him glory. And what does it mean, gave Him glory? He held in mind His majesty, His boundless power. And having formed a just conception of Him, he was also *"fully persuaded"* about His promises.

Let us then also glorify Him by faith as well as by works, that we may also attain to the reward of being glorified by Him. *"For them that glorify Me, I will glorify"* [1 Samuel 2:30], He says: and indeed, if there were no reward, the very privilege of glorifying God were itself a glory. For if men take a pride in the mere fact of speaking eulogies of kings, even if there be

no other fruit of it; consider how glorious it must be, that our Lord is glorified by us: as again, how great a punishment to cause Him to be by our means blasphemed. And yet this very being glorified, He wishes to be brought about for our sakes, since He does not need it Himself. For what distance do you suppose to be between God and man? As great as that between men and worms? Or as great as between Angels and worms? But when I have mentioned a distance even thus great, I have not at all expressed it: since to express its greatness is impossible. Would you, now, wish to have a great and marked reputation among worms? Surely not. If then thou that lovest glory, wouldest not wish for this, how should He Who is far removed from this passion, and so much farther above us, stand in need of glory from you? Nevertheless, free from the want of it as He is, still He says that He desires it for your sake. For if He endured for your sake to become a slave, why wonder that He upon the same ground lays claim to the other particulars also? For He counts nothing unworthy of Himself which may be conducive to our salvation. Since then we are aware of this, let us shun sin altogether, because by reason of it He is blasphemed. For it says, *"flee from sin, as from the face of a serpent: if you come too near unto it, it will bite you"* [Sirach 21:2]: for it is not it that comes to us, but we that desert to it. God has so ordered things that the Devil should not prevail over us by compulsion (Gr. tyranny): since else none would have stood against his might. And on this account He set him a distant abode, as a kind of robber and tyrant. And unless he find a person unarmed and solitary for his assaults, he does not venture to attack him. Except he see us travelling by the desert, he has not the courage to come near us. But the desert and place of the Devil is nothing else than sin. We then have need of the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, not only that we may not get evil intreated, but that ever should he be minded to leap upon us, we

may cut off his head. Need we have of continual prayer that he may be bruised under our feet, for he is shameless and full of hardihood, and this though he fights from beneath. But yet even so he gets the victory: and the reason is, that we are not earnestly set upon being above his blows. For he has not even the power to lift himself very high, but he trails along upon the ground. And of this the serpent is a type. But if God set him in that rank from the beginning, much more will He now. But if you dost not know what fighting from beneath may be, I also will try to explain to you the manner of this war. What then may this fighting "*from beneath*" [John 8:23] be? It is standing upon the lower things of the world to buffet us, such as pleasure and riches and all the goods of this life. And for this reason, whoever he sees flying toward heaven, first, he will not even be able to leap so far. Secondly, even if he should attempt he will speedily fall. For he has no feet; be not afraid: he has no wings; fear not. He trails upon the earth, and the things of the earth. Do thou then have naught in common with the earth, and you will not need labor even. For he has not any knowledge of open fight: but as a serpent he hides him in the thorns, nestling evermore in the "*deceitfulness of riches.*" [Matthew 13:22] And if you were to cut away the thorns, he will easily be put to flight, being detected: and if you know how to charm him with the inspired charms he will straightway be struck. For we have, we surely have, spiritual charms, even the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the might of the Cross. This charm will not only bring the serpent out of his lurking places, and cast him into the fire [Acts 28:5], but even wounds it heals. But if some that have said this Name have not been healed, it came of their own little faith, and was not owing to any weakness in what they said. For some did throng Jesus and press Him [Luke 8:44-45], and got no good therefrom. But the woman with an issue, without even touching His Body, but merely the hem of His garment, stanchd a flux of

blood of so long standing. (So St. Aug. Serm. LXII. iii. 4, p. 124 O.T.) This Name is fearful alike to devils, and to passions, and to diseases. In this then let us find a pleasure, herewith let us fortify ourselves. It was thus Paul waxed great, and yet he was of the like nature with ourselves, so the whole choir of the Disciples. But faith had made him a perfectly different person, and so much did it abound in them, that even their garments had great force. [Acts 19:12] What excuse then shall we deserve, if even the shadows and the garments of those men drove off death [Acts 5:15], but our very prayers do not so much as bring the passions down? What is the reason of it? Our temper is widely different. For what nature gives, is as much ours as theirs. For he was born and brought up just as we are, and dwelt upon the earth and breathed the air, as we do. But in other points he was far greater and better than we are, in zeal, in faith, and love. Let us then imitate him. Let us allow Christ to speak through us. He desires it more than we do: and by reason of this, He prepared this instrument, and would not have it remain useless and idle, but wishes to keep it ever in hand. Why then do you not make it serviceable for the Maker's hand, but let it become unstrung, and makest it relaxed through luxury, and unfittest the whole harp for His use, when you ought to keep the members of it in full stretch, and well strung, and braced with spiritual salt. For if Christ see our soul thus attuned, He will send forth His sounds even by it. And when this takes place, then shall you see Angels leaping for joy, ([σκιπτῶντας]) and Archangels too, and the Cherubim.

Let us then become worthy of His spotless hands. Let us invite Him to strike even upon our heart. For He rather needs not any inviting. Only make it worthy of that touch, and He will be foremost in running unto you. For if in consideration of their attainments not yet reached, He runs to them (for when Paul was not yet so advanced He yet framed that praise for him) when He sees one fully furnished, what is there that He will not do? But if Christ

shall sound forth and the Spirit shall indeed light upon us, and we shall be better than the heaven, having not the sun and the moon fixed in our body, but the Lord of both sun and moon and angels dwelling in us and walking in us. And this I say, not that we may raise the dead, or cleanse the lepers, but that we may show forth what is a greater miracle than all these— charity. For wheresoever this glorious thing shall be there the Son takes up His abode along with the Father, and the grace of the Spirit frequents. For *"where two or three are gathered together in My Name,"* it says, *"there am I in the midst of them."* [Matthew 18:20] Now this is for great affection, and for those that are very intimate friends, to have those whom they love on either side of them. Who then, he means, is so wretched as not to wish to have Christ in the midst? We that are at variance with one another! And haply some one may ridicule me and ask, What is it that you mean? Do you not see that we are all within the same walls, and under the same enclosure of the Church, standing under the same fold with unanimity; that no one fights, that we be under the same shepherd, crying aloud in common, listening in common to what is being said, sending up our prayers in common—and yet mention fighting and variance? Fighting I do mention, and I am not mad nor out of my sober mind. For I see what I see, and know that we are under the same fold, and the same shepherd. Yet for this cause I make the greater lamentation, because, though there are so many circumstances to draw us together, we are at variance. And what sedition, it will be said, see you here? Here truly I see none. But when we have broken up, such an one accuses such another, another is openly insulting, another grudges, another is fraudulent, and rapacious, and violent, another indulges in unlawful love, another frames countless schemes of deceit. And if it were possible to open your souls, then ye would see all things distinctly, and know that I am not mad. Do you not see in a camp, that when it is peace,

men lay down their arms and cross over unarmed and undefended into the camp of the enemy, but when they are protected with arms, and with guards and outposts, the nights are spent in watching, and the fires are kept continually burning, this state of things is no longer peace but war? Now this is what may be seen among us. For we are on our guard against one another, and fear one another and talk each of us into his neighbor's ear. And if we see any one else present, we hold our peace, and draw in all we were going to say. And this is not like men that feel confidence, but like those that are strictly on their guard. *"But these things we do (some one may say,) not to do wrong, but to escape having it done us."* Yea, for this I grieve, that living as we do among brethren, we need be on our guard against having wrong done us; and we light up so many fires, and set guards and out-posts! The reason is the prevalence of falsehood, the prevalence of craft, the prevailing secession of charity, and war without truce. By this means one may find men that feel more confidence in Gentiles (Greeks) than in Christians. And yet, how ashamed we ought to be of this; how we ought to weep and bewail at it! *"What then, some may say, is to become of me? Such and such an one is of ungainly temper, and vexatious."* Where then is your religion (Gr. philosophy)? Where are the laws of the Apostles, which bid us bear one another's burdens? [Galatians 6:2] For if you have no notion of dealing well by your brother, when are you to be able to do so by a stranger? If you have not learned how to treat a member of your own self, when are you likely to draw to you any from without, and to knit him to yourself? But how am I to feel? I am vexed exceedingly almost to tears, for I could have sent forth large fountains from my eyes [Jeremiah 9:1], as that Prophet says, seeing as I do countless enemies upon the plain more galling than those he saw. For he said, upon seeing the aliens coming against them, *"My bowels! I am pained at my bowels."* [Jeremiah 4:19] But when I see

men arrayed under one leader, yet standing against one another, and biting and tearing their own members, some for money's sake, and some for glory's, and others quite at random ridiculing and mocking and wounding one another in countless ways, and corpses too worse treated than those in war, and that it is but the bare name of the brethren that is now left, myself feel my inability to devise any lament fitting such a catastrophe as this! Reverence now, oh reverence, this Table whereof we all are partakers! [1 Corinthians 10:16-18] Christ, Who was slain for us, the Victim that is placed thereon! [Hebrews 13:10] Robbers when they once partake of salt, cease to be robbers in regard to those with whom they have partaken thereof; that table changes their dispositions, and men fiercer than wild beasts it makes gentler than lambs. But we though partakers of such a Table, and sharers of such food as that, arm ourselves against one another, when we ought to arm against him who is carrying on a war against all of us, the devil. Yet this is why we grow weaker and he stronger every day. For we do not join to form in defence against him, but along with him we stand against each other, and use him as a commander for such hostile arrays, when it is he alone that we ought to be fighting with. But now letting him pass, we bend the bow against our brethren only. What bows, you will say? Those of the tongue and the mouth. For it is not javelins and darts only, but words too, keener far than darts, that inflict wounds. And how shall we be able to bring this war to an issue? One will ask. If you perceive that when you speak ill of your brother, you are casting up mire out of your mouth, if you perceive that it is a member of Christ that you are slandering, that you are eating up your own flesh [Psalm 27:2], that you are making the judgment set for you more bitter (fearful and uncorrupt as it is), that the shaft is killing not him that is smitten, but yourself that shot it forth.

But he did you some wrong, maybe, and injured you? Groan at it, and do not rail. Weep, not for the wrong done you, but for his perdition, as your Master also wept at Judas, not because Himself was to be crucified, but because he was a traitor. Has he insulted you and abused you? Beseech God for him, that He may speedily become appeased toward him. He is your brother, he is a member of you, the fruit of the same pangs as yourself, he has been invited to the same Table. But he only makes fresh assaults upon me, it may be said. Then is your reward all the greater for this. On this ground then there is the best reason for abating one's anger, since it is a mortal wound that he has received, since the devil has wounded him. Do not thou then give a further blow, nor cast yourself down together with him. For so long as you stand you have the means of saving him also. But if you dash yourself down by insulting deeds in return, who is then to lift you both up? Will he that is wounded? Nay, for he cannot, now that he is down. But will you that are fallen along with him? And how shall you, that couldst not support your own self, be able to lend a hand to another? Stand therefore now nobly, and setting your shield before you, and draw him, now he is dead, away from the battle by your long-suffering. Rage has wounded him, do not thou also wound him, but cast out even that first shaft. For if we associate with each other on such terms, we shall soon all of us become healthful. But if we arm ourselves against one another, there will be no farther need even of the devil to our ruin. For all war is an evil, and civil war especially. But this is a sorer evil than even a civil one, as our mutual rights are greater than those of citizenship, yea, than of kindred itself. Of old, Abel's brother slew him and shed the blood of his kinsman. But this murder is more lawless than that, in that the rights of kinship are greater, and the death a sorer evil. For he wounded the body, but you have whetted your sword against the soul. *"But you first suffered ill."* Yes, but it

is not suffering ill, but doing it, that is really suffering ill. Now consider; Cain was the slayer, Abel was the slain. Who then was the dead? He that after death cries, (for He says, "*The voice of your brother's blood cries to Me,*") [Genesis 4:10], or he who while he lived was yet trembling and in fear? He was, assuredly he was, more an object of pity than any dead man. Do you see how to be wronged is better, though a man come even to be murdered? Learn that to wrong is worse, though a man should be strong enough even to kill. He smote and cast down his brother, yet the latter was crowned, the former was punished. Abel was made away with and slain wrongfully, but he even when dead accused [comp. John 5:45], and convicted and overcame: the other, though alive, was speechless, and was ashamed, and was convicted, and effected the opposite of what he intended. For he made away with him because he saw him beloved, expecting to cast him out of the love also. Yet he did but make the love more intense, and God sought him more when dead, saying, "*Where is your brother Abel?*" [Genesis 4:9] For you have not extinguished the desire towards him by your envy, but hast kindled it up the more. You have not lessened his honor by slaying him, but hast made it the more ample. Yet before this God had even made him subject to you, whereas since you have slain him, even when dead, he will take vengeance upon you. So great was my love towards him. Who then was the condemned person, the punisher or the punished? He that enjoyed so great honor from God, or he that was given up to a certain novel and unexpected punishment? You did not fear him (he would say) while alive, you shall fear him therefore when dead. You did not tremble when on the point of thrusting with the sword. You shall be seized, now the blood is shed, with a continual trembling. While alive he was your servant, and you showed no forbearance to him. For this reason, now he is dead, he has become a master you shall be afraid of. Thinking then upon these things,

beloved, let us flee from envy, let us extinguish malice, let us recompense one another with charity, that we may reap the blessings rising from it, both in the present life and the life which is to come, by the grace and love toward man, etc. Amen.

Homily 9 on Romans

Rom. IV. 23

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him for righteousness; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

After saying many great things of Abraham, and his faith, and righteousness, and honor before God, lest the hearer should say, What is this to us, for it is he that was justified? He places us close to the Patriarch again. So great is the power of spiritual words. For of one of the Gentiles, one who was recently come near, one who had done no work, he not only says that he is in nothing inferior to the Jew who believes (i.e. as a Jew), but not even to the Patriarch, but rather, if one must give utterance to the wondrous truth, even much greater. For so noble is our birth, that his faith is but the type of ours. And he does not say, If it was reckoned unto him, it is probable it will be also to us, that he might not make it matter of syllogism. But he speaks in authentic words of the divine law, and makes the whole a declaration of the Scripture. For why was it written, he says, save to make us see that we also were justified in this way? For it is the same God Whom we have believed, and upon the same matters, if it be not in the case of the same persons. And after speaking of our faith, he also mentions God's unspeakable love towards man, which he ever presents on all sides, bringing the Cross before us. And this he now makes plain by saying,

Ver. 25. *"Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."*

See how after mentioning the cause of His death, he makes the same cause likewise a demonstration of the resurrection. For why, he means, was

He crucified? Not for any sin of His own. And this is plain from the Resurrection. For if He were a sinner, how should He have risen? But if He rose, it is quite plain that He was not a sinner. But if He was not a sinner, how came He to be crucified?— For others—and if for others, then surely he rose again. Now to prevent your saying, How, when liable for so great sins, came we to be justified? He points out One that blots out all sins, that both from Abraham's faith, whereby he was justified, and from the Saviour's Passion, whereby we were freed from our sins, he might confirm what he had said. And after mentioning His Death, he speaks also of His Resurrection. For the purpose of His dying was not that He might hold us liable to punishment and in condemnation, but that He might do good unto us. For for this cause He both died and rose again, that He might make us righteous.

Chap. v. ver. 1. *"Therefore being justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

What does *"Let us have peace"* mean? Some say, *"Let us not be at variance, through a peevish obstinacy for bringing in the Law."* But to me he seems to be speaking now of our conversation. For after having said much on the subject of faith, he had set it before righteousness which is by works, to prevent any one from supposing what he said was a ground for listlessness, he says, *"let us have peace,"* that is, let us sin no more, nor go back to our former estate. For this is making war with God. And *"how is it possible,"* says one, *"to sin no more?"* How was the former thing possible? For if when liable for so many sins we were freed from all by Christ, much more shall we be able through Him to abide in the estate wherein we are. For it is not the same thing to receive peace when there had been none, and to keep it when it has been given, since to acquire surely is harder than to keep. Yet nevertheless the more difficult has been made easy, and carried

out into effect. That which is the easier thing then will be what we shall easily succeed in, if we cling to Him who has wrought even the other for us. But here it is not the easiness only which he seems to me to hint at, but the reasonableness. For if He reconciled us when we were in open war with Him, it is reasonable that we should abide in a state of reconciliation, and give unto Him this reward for that He may not seem to have reconciled untoward and unfeeling creatures to the Father.

Ver. 2. "*By Whom also we have access,*" he says, by faith unto this grace. (7 manuscripts add, unto, etc.)

If then He has brought us near to Himself, when we were far off, much more will He keep us now that we are near. And let me beg you to consider how he everywhere sets down these two points; His part, and our part. On His part, however, there be things varied and numerous and diverse. For He died for us, and farther reconciled us, and brought us to Himself, and gave us grace unspeakable. But we brought faith only as our contribution. And so he says, "*by faith, unto this grace.*" What grace is this? Tell me. It is the being counted worthy of the knowledge of God, the being forced from error, the coming to a knowledge of the Truth, the obtaining of all the blessings that come through Baptism. For the end of His bringing us near was that we might receive these gifts. For it was not only that we might have simple remission of sins, that we were reconciled; but that we might receive also countless benefits. Nor did He even pause at these, but promised others, namely, those unutterable blessings that pass understanding alike and language. And this is why he has set them both down also. For by mentioning grace he clearly points at what we have at present received, but by saying, "*And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God,*" he unveils the whole of things to come. And he had well said, "*wherein also we stand.*" For this is the nature of God's grace. It has no end,

it knows no bound, but evermore is on the advance to greater things, which in human things is not the case. Take an instance of what I mean. A person has acquired rule and glory and authority, yet he does not stand therein continuously, but is speedily cast out of it. Or if man take it not from him, death comes, and is sure to take it from him. But God's gifts are not of this kind; for neither man, nor occasion, nor crisis of affairs, nor even the Devil, nor death, can come and cast us out of them. But when we are dead we then more strictly speaking have possession of them, and keep going on enjoying more and more. And so if you feel in doubt about those to come; from those now present, and what you have already received, believe in the other also. For this is why he says, "*And we rejoice ([καυχώμεθα]) in hope of the glory of God,*" that you may learn, what kind of soul the faithful ought to have. For it is not only for what has been given, but for what is to be given, that we ought to be filled with confidingness, as though it were already given. For one "*rejoices*" in what is already given. Since then the hope of things to come is even as sure and clear as that of what is given, he says that in that too we in like manner "*rejoice.*" For this cause also he called them glory. For if it contributes unto God's glory, come to pass it certainly will, though it do not for our sakes, yet for Him it will. And why am I saying (he means) that the blessings to come are worthy of being gloried in ([καυχήσεως])? Why even the very evils of this time present are able to brighten up our countenances, and make us find in them even our repose. Wherefore also he added,

Ver. 3. "*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.*"

Now, consider how great the things to come are, when even at things that seem to be distressful we can be elated; so great is God's gift, and such a nothing any distastefulness in them! For in the case of external goods, the struggle for them brings trouble and pain and irksomeness along with it;

and it is the crowns and rewards that carry the pleasure with them. But in this case it is not so, for the wrestlings have to us no less relish than the rewards. For since there were sundry temptations in those days, and the kingdom existed in hopes, the terrors were at hand, but the good things in expectation, and this unnerved the feebler sort, even before the crowns he gives them the prize now, by saying that we should *"glory even in tribulations."* And what he says is not *"you should glory,"* but we glory, giving them encouragement in his own person. Next since what he had said had an appearance of being strange and paradoxical, if a person who is struggling in famine, and is in chains and torments, and insulted, and abused, ought to glory, he next goes on to confirm it. And (what is more), he says they are worthy of being gloried in, not only for the sake of those things to come, but for the things present in themselves. For tribulations are in their own selves a goodly thing. How so? It is because they anoint us unto patient abiding. Wherefore after saying we glory in tribulations, he has added the reason, in these words, *"Knowing that tribulation works patience."* Notice again the argumentative spirit of Paul, how he gives their argument an opposite turn. For since it was tribulations above all that made them give up the hopes of things to come, and which cast them into despondency, he says that these are the very reasons for confidingness, and for not desponding about the things to come, for *"tribulation,"* he says, *"works patience."*

Ver. 4, 5. *"And patience experience, and experience hope; and hope makes not ashamed."*

Tribulations, that is, are so far from confuting these hopes, that they even prove them. For before the things to come are realized, there is a very great fruit which tribulation has— patience; and the making of the man that is tried, experienced. And it contributes in some degree too to the things to

come, for it gives hope a vigor within us, since there is nothing that so inclines a man to hope for blessings as a good conscience. Now no man that has lived an upright life is unconfiding about things to come, as of those who have been negligent there are many that, feeling the burden of a bad conscience, wish there were neither judgment nor retribution. What then? Do our goods lie in hopes? Yes, in hopes— but not mere human hopes, which often slip away, and put him that hoped to shame; when some one, who was expected to patronize him, dies, or is altered though he lives. No such lot is ours: our hope is sure and unmoveable. For He Who has made the promise ever lives, and we that are to be the enjoyers of it, even should we die, shall rise again, and there is absolutely nothing which can put us to shame, as having been elated at random, and to no purpose, upon unsound hopes. Having then sufficiently cleared them of all doubtfulness by these words of his, he does not let his discourse pause at the time present, but urges again the time to come, knowing that there were men of weaker character, who looked too for present advantages, and were not satisfied with these mentioned. And so he offers a proof for them in blessings already given. For lest any should say, But what if God be unwilling to give them to us? For that He can, and that He abides and lives, we all know: but how do we know, that He is willing, also, to do it? From the things which have been done already. *"What things done?"* The Love which He has shown for us. In doing what? Some may say. In giving the Holy Ghost. Wherefore after saying *"hope makes not ashamed,"* he goes on to the proof of this, as follows:

"Because the love of God is," he does not say *"given,"* but *"shed abroad in our hearts,"* so showing the profusion of it. That gift then, which is the greatest possible, He has given; not heaven and earth and sea, but what is more precious than any of these, and has rendered us Angels from

being men, yea sons of God, and brethren of Christ. But what is this gift? The Holy Spirit. Now had He not been willing to present us after our labors with great crowns, He would never have given us such mighty gifts before our labors. But now the warmth of His Love is hence made apparent, that it is not gradually and little by little that He honors us; but He has shed abroad the full fountain of His blessings, and this too before our struggles. And so, if you are not exceedingly worthy, despond not, since you have that Love of your Judge as a mighty pleader for you. For this is why he himself by saying, "*hope makes not ashamed*," has ascribed everything not to our well-doings, but to God's love. But after mentioning the gift of the Spirit, he again passes to the Cross, speaking as follows:

Ver. 6-8. "*For while we were yet without strength, Christ in due time died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet pervadenture for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends His love towards us.*"

Now what he is saying is somewhat of this kind. For if for a virtuous man, no one would hastily choose to die, consider your Master's love, when it is not for virtuous men, but for sinners and enemies that He is seen to have been crucified—which he says too after this, "*In that, if when we were sinners Christ died for us,*"

Ver. 9, 10. "*Much more then, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*"

And what he has said looks indeed like tautology, but it is not to any one who accurately attends to it. Consider then. He wishes to give them reasons for confidence respecting things to come. And first he gives them a sense of shame from the righteous man's decision, when he says, that he

also *"was fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able also to perform;"* and next from the grace that was given; then from the tribulation, as sufficing to lead us into hopes; and again from the Spirit, whom we have received. Next from death, and from our former viciousness, he makes this good. And it seems indeed, as I said, that what he had mentioned was one thing, but it is discovered to be two, three, and even many more. First, that *"He died:"* second, that it was *"for the ungodly;"* third, that He *"reconciled, saved, justified"* us, made us immortal, made us sons and heirs. It is not from His Death then only, he says, that we draw strong assertions, but from the gift which was given unto us through His Death. And indeed if He had died only for such creatures as we be, a proof of the greatest love would what He had done be! But when He is seen at once dying, and yielding us a gift, and that such a gift, and to such creatures, what was done casts into shade our highest conceptions, and leads the very dullest on to faith. For there is no one else that will save us, except He Who so loved us when we were sinners, as even to give Himself up for us. Do you see what a ground this topic affords for hope? For before this there were two difficulties in the way of our being saved; our being sinners, and our salvation requiring the Lord's Death, a thing which was quite incredible before it took place, and required exceeding love for it to take place. But now since this has come about, the other requisites are easier. For we have become friends, and there is no further need of Death. Shall then He who has so spared his enemies as not to spare His Son, fail to defend them now they have become friends, when He has no longer any need to give up his Son? For it is either because a person does not wish it, or because though he may wish it perhaps, yet he is unable to do it, that he does not save. Now none of these things can be said of God. For that He is willing is plain from His having given up His Son. But that He is able also is the very thing He proved likewise, from the

very fact of His having justified men who were sinners. What is there then to prevent us any more from obtaining the things to come? Nothing! Then again, lest upon hearing of sinners, and enemies, and strengthless ones, and ungodly, you should be inclined to feel abashed and blush; hear what he says.

Ver. 11. *"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the atonement."*

What means the *"not only so?"* Not only were we saved, he means, but we even glory for this very reason, for which some suppose we ought to hide our faces. For, for us who lived in so great wickedness to be saved, was a very great mark of our being exceedingly beloved by Him that saved us. For it was not by angels or archangels, but by His Only-begotten Son Himself, that He saved us. And so the fact of His saving us, and saving us too when we were in such plight, and doing it by means of His Only-begotten, and not merely by His Only-begotten, but by His Blood, weaves for us endless crowns to glory in. For there is not anything that counts so much in the way of glory and confidence, as the being treated as friends ([φιλεῖσθαι]) by God, and finding a Friend ([φιλεῖν]) in Him that loves ([ἀγαπᾶν]) us. This it is that makes the angels glorious, and the principalities and powers. This is greater than the Kingdom, and so Paul placed it above the Kingdom. For this also I count the incorporeal powers blessed, because they love Him, and in all things obey Him. And on this score the Prophet also expressed his admiration at them. *"You that excel in strength, that fulfil His Word."* [Psalm 103:20] And hence too Isaiah extols the Seraphim, setting forth their great excellency from their standing near that glory, which is a sign of the greatest love.

Let us then emulate the powers above, and be desirous not only of standing near the throne, but of having Him dwelling in us who sits upon

the Throne. He loved us when we hated Him, and also continues to love us. *"For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] As then He loves us, do thou love Him. For He is our Friend ([φιλεῖ γὰρ]). And how comes it, some will say, that one who is our Friend threatens hell, and punishment, and vengeance? It is owing to His loving us alone. For all He does and is busied with, is with a view to strike out your wickedness, and to refrain with fear, as with a kind of bridle, your inclinableness to the worse side, and by blessings and by pains recovering you from your downward course, and leading you up to Him, and keeping you from all vice, which is worse than hell. But if you mock what is said, and wouldest rather live continually in misery, than be punished for a single day, it is no marvel. For this is but a sign of your unformed judgment ([ἄ] [τελοῦς γνώμης]), drunkenness, and incurable disorder. Since little children even when they see the physician going to apply burning or the knife, flee and leap away screaming and convulsed, and choose to have a continual sore eating into their body, rather than to endure a temporary pain, and so enjoy health afterwards. But those who have come to discretion, know that to be diseased is worse than submitting to the knife, as also to be wicked is worse than to be punished. For the one is to be cured and to be healthy, the other to ruin one's constitution and to be in continual feebleness. Now that health is better than feebleness, surely is plain to every one. Thieves then ought to weep not when they have their sides pierced through, but when they pierce through walls and murder. For if the soul be better than the body (as it is), when the former is ruined there is more reason to groan and lament; but if a man does not feel it, so much the more reason to bewail it. For those that love with an unchastened love ought to be more pitied than those who have a violent fever, and those that are drunken, than those that are undergoing torture. But

if these are more painful (some may say), how come we to give them the preference? Because there are many of mankind, who, as the proverb says, like the worse, and they choose these, and pass by the better. And this one may see happening as well in victuals as in forms of government, in emulous aims of life too, and in the enjoyment of pleasure, and in wives, and in houses, and in slaves, and in lands, and in the case of all other things. For which is more pleasurable pray, cohabiting with women or with males? With women or with mules? Yet still we shall find many that pass over women, and cohabit with creatures void of reason, and abuse the bodies of males. Yet natural pleasures are greater than unnatural ones. But still many there are that follow after things ridiculous and joyless, and accompanied with a penalty, as if pleasurable. Well but to them, a man may say, these things appear so. Now this alone is ground enough to make them miserable, that they think those things to be pleasurable which are not so. Thus they assume punishment to be worse than sin which it is not, but just the contrary. Yet, if it were an evil to the sinner, God would not have added evils to the evil; for He that does everything to extinguish evil, would not have increased it. Being punished then is no evil to the man who has done wrong, but not being punished, when in that plight, is evil, just as for the infirm not to be cured. (Plat. *Gorg.* p. 478, sqq.) For there is nothing so evil as extravagant desire. And when I say, extravagant, I mean that of luxury, and that of ill-placed glory, and that of power, and in general that of all things which go beyond what is necessary. For such is he who lives a soft and dissolute life, who seems to be the happiest of men, but is the most wretched, as superinducing upon his soul harsh and tyrannical sovereigns. For this cause has God made the present a life of labor to us, that He may rid us of that slavery, and bring us into genuine freedom. For this cause He threatened punishment, and made labors a part of our portion in life, so

muzzling our vaunting spirit. In this way the Jews also, when they were fettered to the clay and brick making, were at once self-governed, and called continually upon God. But when they were in the enjoyment of freedom, then they murmured, and provoked the Lord, and pierced themselves through with countless evils. What then, it may be said, will you say to those frequent instances of men being altered for the worse by tribulations? Why, that this is no effect of tribulation, but of their own imbecility. For neither if a man had a weak stomach and could not take a bitter medicine which would act as a purgative, but was made even worse by it, would it be the drug we should find fault with, but the weakness of the part, as we should therefore here too with the yieldingness of temper. For he who is altered so by tribulation, is much more likely to be affected in this way by laxity. If he fails even when splinted, (or tied) (this is what affliction is), much more will he when the bandage is removed. If when braced up he is altered, much more when in a state of tumor ([χαυνοόμενος]). And how am I, one may ask, to keep from being so altered by tribulation? Why, if you reflect that, wish it or not, you will have to bear the thing inflicted: but if you do it with a thankful spirit, you will gain very greatly thereby; but if you are indignant at it, and ragest and blaspheme, you will not make the calamity lighter, but you will render its wave more troublous. By feeling then in this way, let us turn what is necessary into a matter of our own choice. What I mean is this— suppose one has lost his own son, another all his property: if you reflect that it is not in the nature of things for what has taken place to be undone; while it is to gain fruit from the misfortune, though irremediable, even that of bearing the circumstance nobly; and if instead of using blasphemous words, thou were to offer up words of thanksgiving to the Lord, so would evils brought upon you against your will become to you the good deeds of a free choice. Have

you seen a son taken prematurely away? Say, *"the Lord has given, the Lord has taken away."* Do you see your fortune exhausted? Say, *"naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there."* [Job 1:21] Do you see evil men faring well, and just men faring ill and undergoing ills without number, and do you not know where to find the cause? Say, *"I became even as it were a beast before You. Yet I am ever with You."* [Psalm 73:22] But if you will search out the cause, reflect that He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world, and so you will throw off perplexity, for then every man will meet his deserts, even as Lazarus and the rich man. Call to mind the Apostles, for they too rejoiced at being scourged, at being driven about and undergoing numberless sufferings, because they were *"counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name's sake."* [Acts 5:41] And do thou, then, if you are sick, bear it nobly, and own yourself indebted to God for it, and you shall receive the same reward with them. But how, when in feebleness and pain, are you to be able to feel grateful to the Lord? You will if you love Him sincerely. For if the Three Children who were thrown into the furnace, and others who were in prisons, and in countless other evils, ceased not to give thanks, much more will they who are in a state of disease, be able to do this. For there is not, assuredly there is not, anything which vehement desire does not get the better of. But when the desire is even that of God, it is higher than anything, and neither fire, nor the sword, nor poverty, nor infirmity, nor death, nor anything else of the kind appears dreadful to one who has gotten this love, but scorning them all, he will fly to heaven, and will have affections no way inferior to those of its inhabitants, seeing nothing else, neither heaven, nor earth, nor sea, but gazing only at the one Beauty of that glory. And neither the vexations of this life present will depress him, nor the things which are goodly and attended with pleasure elate him or puff him up. Let us then love with this

love (for there is not anything equal unto it) both for the sake of things present and for the sake of things to come. Or rather, more than for these, for the nature of the love itself. For we shall be set free both from the punishments of this life and of that which is to come, and shall enjoy the kingdom. Yet neither is the escape from hell, nor the fruition of the kingdom, anything great in comparison of what is yet to be said. For greater than all these things is it to have Christ our beloved at once and our lover. For if when this happens with men it is above all pleasure; when both happen from God, what language or what thought is able to set before one the blessedness of this soul? There is none that can, save the experience of it only. That then we may by experience come to know what is this spiritual joy, and life of blessedness, and untold treasure of good things, let us leave everything to cling to that love, with a view as well to our own joy as to the glory of God. For unto Him is the glory and power, with His Only-begotten, and the Holy Ghost, now, and ever, and unto all ages evermore. Amen.

Homily 10 on Romans

Rom. V. 12

" Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon ([διήλθεν] 6 manuscripts [εἰς] ...) all men, for that all have sinned."

As the best physicians always take great pains to discover the source of diseases, and go to the very fountain of the mischief, so does the blessed Paul also. Hence after having said that we were justified, and having shown it from the Patriarch, and from the Spirit, and from the dying of Christ (for He would not have died unless He intended to justify), he next confirms from other sources also what he had at such length demonstrated. And he confirms his proposition from things opposite, that is, from death and sin. How, and in what way? He enquires whence death came in, and how it prevailed. How then did death come in and prevail? *"Through the sin of one."* But what means, *"for that all have sinned?"* This; he having once fallen, even they that had not eaten of the tree did from him, all of them, become mortal.

Ver. 13. *"For until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law."*

The phrase *"till the Law"* some think he used of the time before the giving of the Law— that of Abel, for instance, or of Noah, or of Abraham — till Moses was born. What was the sin in those days, at this rate? Some say he means that in Paradise. For hitherto it was not done away, (he would say,) but the fruit of it was yet in vigor. For it had borne that death whereof all partake, which prevailed and lorded over us. Why then does he proceed, *"But sin is not imputed when there is no law?"* It was by way of objection

from the Jews, say they who have spoken on our side, that he laid this position down and said, if there be no sin without the Law, how came death to consume all those before the Law? But to me it seems that the sense presently to be given has more to be said for it, and suits better with the Apostle's meaning. And what sense is this? In saying, that *"till the Law sin was in the world,"* what he seems to me to mean is this, that after the Law was given the sin resulting from the transgression of it prevailed, and prevailed too so long as the Law existed. For sin, he says, can have no existence if there be no law. If then it was this sin, he means, from the transgression of the Law that brought forth death, how was it that all before the Law died? For if it is in sin that death has its origin, but when there is no law, sin is not imputed, how came death to prevail? From whence it is clear, that it was not this sin, the transgression, that is, of the Law, but that of Adam's disobedience, which marred all things. Now what is the proof of this? The fact that even before the Law all died: for *"death reigned,"* he says, *"from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned."*

How did it reign? *"After the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come."* Now this is why Adam is a type of Christ. How a type? It will be said. Why in that, as the former became to those who were sprung from him, although they had not eaten of the tree, the cause of that death which by his eating was introduced; thus also did Christ become to those sprung from Him, even though they had not wrought righteousness, the Provider of that righteousness which through His Cross He graciously bestowed on us all. For this reason, at every turn he keeps to the *"one,"* and is continually bringing it before us, when he says, *"As by one man sin entered into the world"*— and, *"If through the offense of one many be dead:"* and, *"Not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift;"* and, *"The judgment was by one to condemnation:"* and again, *"If*

by one (or, the one) man's offense death reigned by one;" and "Therefore as by the offense of one." And again, *"As by one man's disobedience many (or, the many) were made sinners."* And so he lets not go of the one, that when the Jew says to you, How came it, that by the well-doing of this one Person, Christ, the world was saved? You might be able to say to him, How by the disobedience of this one person, Adam, came it to be condemned? And yet sin and grace are not equivalents, death and life are not equivalents, the Devil and God are not equivalents, but there is a boundless space between them. When then as well from the nature of the thing as from the power of Him that transacts it, and from the very suitableness thereof (for it suits much better with God to save than to punish), the preëminence and victory is upon this side, what one word have you to say for unbelief, tell me? However, that what had been done was reasonable, he shows in the following words.

Ver. 15. *"But not as the offense, so is also the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto the many."*

For what he says is somewhat of this kind. If sin had so extensive effects, and the sin of one man too; how can grace, and that the grace of God, not the Father only, but also the Son, do otherwise than be the more abundant of the two? For the latter is far the more reasonable supposition. For that one man should be punished on account of another does not seem to be much in accordance with reason. But for one to be saved on account of another is at once more suitable and more reasonable. If then the former took place, much more may the latter. Hence he has shown from these grounds the likelihood and reasonableness of it. For when the former had been made good, this would then be readily admitted. But that it is even

necessarily so, he makes good from what follows. How then does he make it good?

Ver. 16. *"And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift. For the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification."*

And what is this that he is speaking of? It is that sin had power to bring in death and condemnation; but grace did not do away that one sin only, but also those that followed after in its train. Lest then the words "*as*" and "*so*" might seem to make the measure of the blessings and the evils equal, and that you might not think, upon hearing of Adam, that it was only that sin which he had brought in which was done away with, he says that it was from many offenses that an indemnity was brought about. How is this plain? Because after the numberless sins committed after that in paradise, the matter issued in justification. But where righteousness is, there of necessity follows by all means life, and the countless blessings, as does death where sin was. For righteousness is more than life, since it is even the root of life. That there were several goods then brought in, and that it was not that sin only that was taken away, but all the rest along with it, he points out when he says, that *"the gift was of many offenses unto justification."* In which a proof is necessarily included, that death was also torn up by the roots. But since he had said, that the second was greater than the first, he is obliged to give further grounds again for this same thing. For, before, he had said that if one man's sin slew all, much more will the grace of One have the power to save. After that he shows that it was not that sin only that was done away by the grace, but all the rest too, and that it was not that the sins were done away only, but that righteousness was given. And Christ did not merely do the same amount of good that Adam did of harm, but far more and greater good. Since then he had made such declarations as these,

he wants again here also further confirmation of these. And how does he give this confirmation? He says,

Ver. 17. *"For if by one man's offense death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift and (so Field with most manuscripts) of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."*

What he says, amounts to this nearly. What armed death against the world? The one man's eating from the tree only. If then death attained so great power from one offense, when it is found that certain received a grace and righteousness out of all proportion to that sin, how shall they still be liable to death? And for this cause, he does not here say "*grace*," but "*superabundance of grace*." For it was not as much as we must have to do away the sin only, that we received of His grace, but even far more. For we were at once freed from punishment, and put off all iniquity, and were also born again from above [John 3:3] and rose again with the old man buried, and were redeemed, justified, led up to adoption, sanctified, made brothers of the Only-begotten, and joint heirs and of one Body with Him, and counted for His Flesh, and even as a Body with the Head, so were we united unto Him! All these things then Paul calls a "*superabundance*" of grace, showing that what we received was not a medicine only to countervail the wound, but even health, and comeliness, and honor, and glory and dignities far transcending our natural state. And of these each in itself was enough to do away with death, but when all manifestly run together in one, there is not the least vestige of it left, nor can a shadow of it be seen, so entirely is it done away. As then if any one were to cast a person who owed ten mites ([ὁ] [βόλους]) into prison, and not the man himself only, but wife and children and servants for his sake; and another were to come and not to pay down the ten mites only, but to give also ten thousand talents of gold, and to lead the prisoner into the king's courts, and to the throne of the highest

power, and were to make him partaker of the highest honor and every kind of magnificence, the creditor would not be able to remember the ten mites; so has our case been. For Christ has paid down far more than we owe, yea as much more as the illimitable ocean is than a little drop. Do not then, O man, hesitate as you see so great a store of blessings, nor enquire how that mere spark of death and sin was done away, when such a sea of gifts was brought in upon it. For this is what Paul intimated by saying that *"they who have received the abundance of the grace and righteousness shall reign in life."* And as he had now clearly demonstrated this, he again makes use of his former argument, clenching it by taking up the same word afresh, and saying that if for that offense all were punished, then they may be justified too by these means. And so he says,

Ver. 18. *"Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."*

And he insists again upon it, saying,

Ver. 19. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.

What he says seems indeed to involve no small question: but if any one attends to it diligently, this too will admit of an easy solution. What then is the question? It is the saying that through the offense of one many were made sinners. For the fact that when he had sinned and become mortal, those who were of him should be so also, is nothing unlikely. But how would it follow that from his disobedience another would become a sinner? For at this rate a man of this sort will not even deserve punishment, if, that is, it was not from his own self that he became a sinner. What then does the word *"sinners"* mean here? To me it seems to mean liable to punishment and condemned to death. Now that by Adam's death we all

became mortals, he had shown clearly and at large. But the question now is, for what purpose was this done? But this he does not go on to add: for it contributed nothing to his present object. For it is against a Jew that the contest is, who doubted and made scorn of the righteousness by One. And for this reason after showing that the punishment too was brought in by one upon all, the reason why this was so he has not added. For he is not for superfluities, but keeps merely to what is necessary. For this is what the principles of disputation did not oblige him to say any more than the Jew; and therefore he leaves it unsolved. But if any of you were to enquire with a view to learn, we should give this answer: That we are so far from taking any harm from this death and condemnation, if we be sober-minded, that we are the gainers even by having become mortal, first, because it is not an immortal body in which we sin; secondly, because we get numberless grounds for being religious ([φιλοσοφίας]). For to be moderate, and to be temperate, and to be subdued, and to keep ourselves clear of all wickedness, is what death by its presence and by its being expected persuades us to. But following with these, or rather even before these, it has introduced other greater blessings besides. For it is from hence that the crowns of the martyrs come, and the rewards of the Apostles. Thus was Abel justified, thus was Abraham, in having slain his son, thus was John, who for Christ's sake was taken off, thus were the Three Children, thus was Daniel. For if we be so minded, not death only, but even the devil himself will be unable to hurt us. And besides there is this also to be said, that immortality awaits us, and after having been chastened a little while, we shall enjoy the blessings to come without fear, being as if in a sort of school in the present life, under instruction by means of disease, tribulation, temptations, and poverty, and the other apparent evils, with a view to our becoming fit for the reception of the blessings of the world to come.

Ver. 20. *"Moreover the Law entered: that the offense might abound."*

Since then he had shown that the world was condemned from Adam, but from Christ was saved and freed from condemnation, he now seasonably enters upon the discussion of the Law, here again undermining the high notions of it. For it was so far from doing any good, he means, or from being any way helpful, but the disorder was only increased by its having come in. But the particle *"that"* again does not assign the cause, but the result. For the purpose of its being given was not *"in order that"* it might abound, for it was given to diminish and destroy the offense. But it resulted the opposite way, not owing to the nature of the Law, but owing to the listlessness of those who received it. But why did he not say the Law was given, but *"the Law entered by the way?"* It was to show that the need of it was temporary, and not absolute or imperative. And this he says also to the Galatians, showing the very same thing another way. *"For before faith came,"* he says, *"we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."* And so it was not for itself, but for another, that it kept the flock. For since the Jews were somewhat gross-minded, and enervated, and indifferent to the gifts themselves, this was why the Law was given, that it might convict them the more, and clearly teach them their own condition, and by increasing the accusation might the more repress them. But be not thou afraid, for it was not that the punishment might be greater that this was done, but that the grace might be seen to be greater. And this is why he proceeds,

"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

He does not say did abound, but *"did much more abound."* For it was not remission from punishment only that He gave us, but that from sins, and life also. As if any were not merely to free a man with a fever from his disease, but to give him also beauty, and strength, and rank; or again, were

not to give one an hungered nourishment only, but were to put him in possession of great riches, and were to set him in the highest authority. And how did sin abound? Some will say. The Law gave countless commands. Now since they transgressed them all, transgression became more abundant. Do you see what a great difference there is between grace and the Law? For the one became an addition to the condemnation, but the other, a further abundance of gifts. Having then mentioned the unspeakable munificence, he again discusses the beginning and the root both of death and of life. What then is the root of death? It is sin. Wherefore also he says,

Ver. 21. *"That as sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

This he says to show that the latter ranks as a king, the former, death, as a soldier, being marshalled under the latter, and armed by it. If then the latter (i.e. sin) armed death, it is plain enough that the righteousness destructive hereof, which by grace was introduced, not only disarms death, but even destroys it, and undoes entirely the dominion thereof, in that it is the greatest of the two, as being brought in not by man and the devil, but by God and grace, and leading our life unto a goodlier estate, and to blessings unlimited. For of it there will never be any end (to give you a view of its superiority from this also). For the other cast us out of our present life, but grace, when it came, gave us not the present life, but the immortal and eternal one. But for all these things Christ is our voucher. Doubt not then for your life if you have righteousness, for righteousness is greater than life as being mother of it.

Chap. vi. ver. 1. *"What then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid."*

He is again turning off to exhortation, yet introducing it not directly, lest he should seem to many to be irksome and vexing, but as if it rose out

of the doctrines. For if, even so diversifying his address, he was afraid of their being offended at what he said, and therefore said, "*I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort,*" [Romans 15:15] much more would he have seemed to them, had he not done so, to be too harsh. Since then he showed the greatness of the grace by the greatness of the sins it healed, and owing to this it seemed in the eyes of the unthinking to be an encouragement to sin (for if the reason, they would say, why greater grace was shown, was because we had done great sins, let us not give over sinning, that grace may be more displayed still), now that they might not say this or suspect it, see how he turns the objection back again. First he does it by his deprecation. "*God forbid.*" And this he is in the habit of doing at things confessed on all hands to be absurd. And then he lays down an irrefragable argument. And what is it?

Ver. 2. "*How shall we,*" he says, "*that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*"

What does "*we are dead*" mean? Does it mean that as for that, and as far as it goes, we have all received the sentence of death? Or, that we became dead to it by believing any being enlightened. This is what one should rather say, since the sequel makes this clearly right. But what is becoming dead to it? The not obeying it in anything any more. For this baptism effected once for all, it made us dead to it. But this must of our own earnestness thenceforth continually be maintained, so that, although sin issue countless commands to us, we may never again obey it, but abide unmovable as a dead man does. And indeed he elsewhere says that sin itself is dead. But there he sets that down as wishing to show that virtue is easy, [Romans 7:8?] But here, as he earnestly desires to rouse the hearer, he puts the death on his side. Next, since what was said was obscure, he again explains, using what he had said also in the way of reproof.

Ver. 3, 4. *"Do you not know," he says, "my brethren, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death."*

What does being *"baptized into His Death"* mean? That it is with a view to our dying as He did. For Baptism is the Cross. What the Cross then, and Burial, is to Christ, that Baptism has been to us, even if not in the same respects. For He died Himself and was buried in the Flesh, but we have done both to sin. Wherefore he does not say, planted together in His Death, but in the likeness of His Death. For both the one and the other is a death, but not of the same subject; since the one is of the Flesh, that of Christ; the other of sin, which is our own. As then that is real, so is this. But if it be real, then what is of our part again must be contributed. And so he proceeds,

"That as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Here he hints, along with the duty of a careful walk, at the subject of the resurrection. In what way? Do you believe, he means, that Christ died, and that He was raised again? Believe then the same of yourself. For this is like to the other, since both Cross and Burial is yours. For if you have shared in Death and Burial, much more will you in Resurrection and Life. For now the greater is done away with, the sin I mean, it is not right to doubt any longer about the lesser, the doing away of death.

But this he leaves for the present to the conscience of his hearers to reason out, but himself, after the resurrection to come had been set before us, demands of us another, even the new conversation, which is brought about in the present life by a change of habits. When then the fornicator becomes chaste, the covetous man merciful, the harsh subdued, even here a resurrection has taken place, the prelude to the other. And how is it a resurrection? Why, because sin is mortified, and righteousness has risen

again, and the old life has been made to vanish, and this new and angelic one is being lived in. But when you hear of a new life, look for a great alteration, a wide change. But tears come into my eyes, and I groan deeply to think how great religiousness ([φιλοσοφίαν]) Paul requires of us, and what listlessness we have yielded ourselves up to, going back after our baptism to the oldness we before had, and returning to Egypt, and remembering the garlic after the manna. [Numbers 11:5] For ten or twenty days at the very time of our Illumination, we undergo a change, but then take up our former doings again. But it is not for a set number of days, but for our whole life, that Paul requires of us such a conversation. But we go back to our former vomit, thus after the youth of grace building up the old age of sins. For either the love of money, or the slavery to desires not convenient, or any other sin whatsoever, uses to make the worker thereof old. *"Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away."* [Hebrews 8:13] For there is no body, there surely is none, to be seen as palsied by length of time, as a soul is decayed and tottering with many sins. Such an one gets carried on to the last degree of doting, yielding indistinct sounds, like men that are very old and crazed, being surcharged with rheum, and great distortion of mind, and forgetfulness, and with scales upon its eyes, and disgusting to men, and an easy prey to the devil. Such then are the souls of sinners; not so those of the righteous, for they are youthful and well-favored, and are in the very prime of life throughout, ever ready for any fight or struggle. But those of sinners, if they receive even a small shock, straightway fall and are undone. And it was this the Prophet made appear, when he said, that like as the chaff which the wind scatters from the face of the earth [Psalm 1:4], thus are they that live in sin whirled to and fro, and exposed to every sort of harm. For they neither see like a healthy person, nor hear with simplicity, they speak not articulately, but are

oppressed with great shortness of breath. They have their mouth overflowing with spittle. And would it were but spittle, and nothing offensive! But now they send forth words more fetid than any mire, and what is worst, they have not power even to spit this saliva of words away from them, but taking it in their hand with much lewdness, they smear it on again, so as to be coagulating, and hard to perspire through. Perhaps you are sickened with this description. Ought ye not, then to be more so at the reality? For if these things when happening in the body are disgustful, much more when in the soul. Such was that son who wasted out all his share, and was reduced to the greatest wretchedness, and was in a feebler state than any imbecile or disordered person. But when he was willing, he became suddenly young by his decision alone and his change. For as soon as he had said, *"I will return to my Father,"* this one word conveyed to him all blessings; or rather not the bare word, but the deed which he added to the word. For he did not say, *"Let me go back,"* and then stay there; but said, Let me go back, and went back, and returned the whole of that way. Thus let us also do; and even if we have gotten carried beyond the boundary, let us go up to our Father's house, and not stay lingering over the length of the journey. For if we be willing, the way back again is easy and very speedy. Only let us leave the strange and foreign land; for this is what sin is, drawing us far away from our Father's house; let us leave her then, that we may speedily return to the house of our Father. For our Father has a natural yearning towards us, and will honor us if we be changed, no less than those that are unattainted, if we change, but even more, just as the father showed that son the greater honor. For he had greater pleasure himself at receiving back his son. And how am I to go back again? One may say. Do but put a beginning upon the business, and the whole is done. Stay from vice, and go no farther into it, and you have laid hold of the whole already. For as in the

case of the sick, being no worse may be a beginning of getting better, so is the case with vice also. Go no further, and then your deeds of wickedness will have an end. And if you do so for two days, you will keep off on the third day more easily; and after three days you will add ten, then twenty, then an hundred, then your whole life. (Cf. Hom. xvii. on St. Matt. p. 267, O.T.) For the further you go on, the easier will you see the way to be, and you will stand on the summit itself, and wilt at once enjoy many goods. For so it was when the prodigal came back, there were flutes, and harps, and dancings, and feasts, and assemblings: and he who might have called his son to account for his ill-timed extravagance, and flight to such a distance, did nothing of the sort, but looked upon him as unattainted, and could not find it in him even to use the language of reproach, or rather, even to mention barely to him the former things, but threw himself upon him, and kissed him, and killed the calf, and put a robe upon him, and placed on him abundant honors. Let us then, as we have such examples before us, be of good cheer and keep from despair. For He is not so well pleased with being called Master, as Father, nor with having a slave as with having a son. And this is what He likes rather than that. This then is why He did all that He has done; and *"spared not even His Only-begotten Son"* [Romans 8:32], that we might receive the adoption of sons, that we might love Him, not as a Master only, but as a Father. And if He obtained this of us He takes delight therein as one that has glory given him, and proclaims it to all though He needs nothing of ours. This is what, in Abraham's case for instance, He everywhere does, using these words, *"I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."* And yet it was they of His household who should have found an honor in this; but now it is the Lord evidently who does this; for this is why He says to Peter, *"Lovest thou Me more than these?"* [John 21:17] to show that He seeks nothing so much as this from us. For this too He bade

Abraham offer his son to Him, that He might make it known to all that He was greatly beloved by the patriarch. Now this desire to be loved exceedingly comes from loving exceedingly. For this cause too He said to the Apostles, *"He that loves father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me."* [Matthew 10:37] For this cause He bids us esteem that even which is in the most close connection with us, our soul [or, life, John 12:25], as second to the love of him, since He wishes to be beloved by us with exceeding entireness. For we too, if we have no strong feelings about a person, have no strong desire for his friendship either, though he be great and noble; whereas when we love any one warmly and really, though the person loved be of low rank and humble, yet we esteem love from him as a very great honor. And for this reason He Himself also called it glory not to be loved by us only, but even to suffer those shameful things in our behalf. [John 12:23] However, those things were a glory owing to love only. But whatever we suffer for Him, it is not for love alone; but even for the sake of the greatness and dignity of Him we long for, that it would with good reason both be called glory, and be so indeed. Let us then incur dangers for Him as if running for the greatest crowns, and let us esteem neither poverty, nor disease, nor affront, nor calumny, nor death itself, to be heavy and burdensome, when it is for Him that we suffer these things. For if we be right-minded, we are the greatest possible gainers by these things, as neither from the contrary to these shall we if not right-minded gain any advantage. But consider; does any one affront you and war against you? Does he not thereby set you upon your guard, and give you an opportunity of growing like God? For if you love him that plots against you, you will be like Him that *"makes His Sun to rise upon the evil and good."* [Matthew 5:45] Does another take your money away? If you bear it nobly, you shall receive the same reward as they who have spent all they have upon the poor. For it

says, *"You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."* [Hebrews 10:34] Has any one reviled you and abused you, whether truly or falsely, he weaves for you a very great crown if you bear meekly his contumely; since he too, who calumniates, provides for us an abundant reward. For *"rejoice,"* it says, *"and be exceeding glad, when men say all manner of evil against you falsely, because great is your reward in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:12] And he too that speaks truth against us is of the greatest service, if we do but bear meekly what is said. For the Pharisee spoke evil of the Publican, and with truth, still instead of a Publican he made him a righteous man. [Luke 18:11] And what need to go into particular instances. For any one that will go to the conflicts of Job may learn all these points accurately. And this is why Paul said, *"God for us, who against us?"* [Romans 8:31] As then by being earnest, we gain even from things that vex us, so by being listless, we do not even improve from things that favor us. For what did Judas profit, tell me, by being with Christ? Or what profit was the Law to the Jew? Or Paradise to Adam? Or what did Moses profit those in the wilderness? And so we should leave all, and look to one point only, how we may husband aright our own resources. And if we do this, not even the devil himself will ever get the better of us, but will make our profiting the greater, by putting us upon being watchful. Now in this way it is that Paul rouses the Ephesians, by describing his fierceness. Yet we sleep and snore, though we have to do with so crafty an enemy. And if we were aware of a serpent nestling by our bed, we should make much ado to kill him. But when the devil nestles in our souls, we fancy that we take no harm, but lie at our ease; and the reason is, that we see him not with the eyes of our body. And yet this is why we should rouse us the more and be sober. For against an enemy whom one can perceive, one may easily be on guard; but one that cannot be

seen, if we be not continually in arms, we shall not easily escape. And the more so, because he has no notion of open combat (for he would surely be soon defeated), but often under the appearance of friendship he insinuates the venom of his cruel malice. In this way it was that he suborned Job's wife, by putting on the mask of natural affectionateness, to give that wretchless advice. And so when conversing with Adam, he puts on the air of one concerned and watching over his interests, and says, that "*your eyes shall be opened in the day that you eat of the tree.*" [Genesis 3:5] Thus Jephtha too he persuaded, under the pretext of religion, to slay his daughter, and to offer the sacrifice the Law forbade. Do you see what his wiles are, what his varying warfare? Be then on your guard, and arm yourself at all points with the weapons of the Spirit, get exactly acquainted with his plans, that you may both keep from being caught, and easily catch him. For it was thus that Paul got the better of him, by getting exactly acquainted with these. And so he says, "*for we are not ignorant of his devices.*" [2 Corinthians 2:11] Let us then also be earnest in learning and avoiding his stratagems, that after obtaining a victory over him, we may, whether in this present life or in that which is to come, be proclaimed conquerors, and obtain those unalloyed blessings, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 11 on Romans

Rom. VI. 5

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."

What I had before occasion to remark, that I mention here too, that he continually digresses into exhortation, without making any twofold division as he does in the other Epistles, and setting apart the former portion for doctrines, and the latter for the care of moral instruction. Here then he does not do so, but blends the latter with the subject throughout, so as to gain it an easy admission. Here then he says there are two mortifyings, and two deaths, and that one is done by Christ in Baptism, and the other it is our duty to effect by earnestness afterwards. For that our former sins were buried, came of His gift. But the remaining dead to sin after baptism must be the work of our own earnestness, however much we find God here also giving us large help. For this is not the only thing Baptism has the power to do, to obliterate our former transgressions; for it also secures against subsequent ones. As then in the case of the former, your contribution was faith that they might be obliterated, so also in those subsequent to this, show forth the change in your aims, that you may not defile yourself again. For it is this and the like that he is counselling you when he says, *"for if we have been planted together in the likeness of His Death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection."* Do you observe, how he rouses the hearer by leading him straightway up to his Master, and taking great pains to show the strong likeness? This is why he does not say *"in death,"* lest you should gainsay it, but, *"in the likeness of His Death."* For our essence itself has not died, but the man of sins, that is, wickedness. And he does not say, *"for if*

we have been" partakers of *"the likeness of His Death;"* but what? *"If we have been planted together,"* so, by the mention of planting, giving a hint of the fruit resulting to us from it. For as His Body, by being buried in the earth, brought forth as the fruit of it the salvation of the world; thus ours also, being buried in baptism, bore as fruit righteousness, sanctification, adoption, countless blessings. And it will bear also hereafter the gift of the resurrection. Since then we were buried in water, He in earth, and we in regard to sin, He in regard to His Body, this is why he did not say, *"we were planted together in His Death,"* but *"in the likeness of His Death."* For both the one and the other is death, but not that of the same subject. If then he says, *"we have been planted together in His Death, we shall be in that of His Resurrection,"* speaking here of the Resurrection which (Gr. be of His Resurrection) is to come. For since when he was upon the subject of the Death before, and said, *"Do you not know, brethren, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His Death?"* he had not made any clear statement about the Resurrection, but only about the way of life after baptism, bidding men walk in newness of life; therefore he here resumes the same subject, and proceeds to foretell to us clearly that Resurrection. And that you may know that he is not speaking of that resulting from baptism, but about the other, after saying, *"for if we were planted together in the likeness of His Death,"* he does not say that we shall be in the likeness of His Resurrection, but we shall belong to the Resurrection. For to prevent your saying, and how, if we did not die as He died, are we to rise as He rose? When he mentioned the Death, he did not say, *"planted together in the Death,"* but, *"in the likeness of His Death."* But when he mentioned the Resurrection, he did not say, *"in the likeness of the Resurrection,"* but we shall be *"of the Resurrection"* itself. And he does not say, We have been made, but we shall be, by this word again plainly

meaning that Resurrection which has not yet taken place, but will hereafter. Then with a view to give credibility to what he says, he points out another Resurrection which is brought about here before that one, that from that which is present you may believe also that which is to come. For after saying, "*we shall be planted together in the Resurrection,*" he adds,

Ver. 6. "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.*"

So putting together both the cause and the demonstration of the Resurrection which is to come. And he does not say is crucified, but is crucified with Him, so bringing baptism near to the Cross. And on this score also it was that he said above, "*We have been planted together in the likeness of His Death that the body of sin might be destroyed,*" not giving that name to this body of ours, but to all iniquity. For as he calls the whole sum of wickedness the old man, thus again the wickedness which is made up of the different parts of iniquity he calls the body of that man. And that what I am saying is not mere guesswork, hearken to Paul's own interpretation of this very thing in what comes next. For after saying, "*that the body of sin might be destroyed,*" he adds, "*that henceforth we should not serve sin.*" For the way in which I would have it dead is not so that you should be destroyed and die, but so that you sin not. And as he goes on he makes this still clearer.

Ver. 7. "*For he that is dead,*" he says, "*is freed (Gr. justified) from sin.*"

This he says of every man, that as he that is dead is henceforth freed from sinning, lying as a dead body, so must he that has come up from baptism, since he has died there once for all, remain ever dead to sin. If then you have died in baptism, remain dead, for any one that dies can sin no more; but if you sin, you mar God's gift. After requiring of us then heroism

(Gr. philosophy) of this degree, he presently brings in the crown also, in these words.

Ver. 8. *"Now if we be dead with Christ."*

And indeed even before the crown, this is in itself the greater crown, the partaking with our Master. But he says, I give even another reward. Of what kind is it? It is life eternal. For *"we believe,"* he says, *"that we shall also live with Him."* And whence is this clear?

Ver. 9. *"That Christ being raised from the dead, dies no more."*

And notice again his undauntedness, and how he makes the thing good from opposite grounds. Since then it was likely that some would feel perplexed at the Cross and the Death, he shows that this very thing is a ground for feeling confident henceforward.

For suppose not, he says, because He once died, that He is mortal, for this is the very reason of His being immortal. For His death has been the death of death, and because He did die, He therefore does not die. For even that death

Ver. 10. *"He died unto sin."*

What does *"unto sin"* mean? It means that He was not subject even to that one, but for our sin, that He might destroy it, and cut away its sinews and all its power, therefore He died. Do you see how he affrights them? For if He does not die again, then there is no second laver, then do thou keep from all inclinableness to sin. For all this he says to make a stand against the *"let us do evil that good may come. Let us remain in sin that grace may abound."* To take away this conception then, root and branch, it is, that he sets down all this. But in that *"He lives, He lives unto God,"* he says—that is, unchangeably, so that death has no more any dominion over Him. For if it was not through any liability to it that He died the former death, save only for the sin of others, much less will He die again now that He has done that

sin away. And this he says in the Epistle to the Hebrews also, "*But now once,*" he says, "*in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*" [Hebrews 9:26-28] And he both points out the power of the life that is according to God, and also the strength of sin. For with regard to the life according to God, he shows that Christ shall die no more. With regard to sin, that if it brought about the death even of the Sinless, how can it do otherwise than be the ruin of those that are subject to it? And then as he had discoursed about His life; that none might say, What has that which you have been saying to do with us? He adds,

Ver. 11. "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.*"

He well says, "*reckon,*" because there is no setting that, which he is speaking of, before the eyes as yet. And what are we to reckon? One may ask. That we "*are dead unto sin, but alive unto God. In Jesus Christ our Lord.*" For he that so lives will lay hold of every virtue, as having Jesus Himself for his ally. For that is what, "*in Christ,*" means, for if He raised them when dead, much more when alive will He be able to keep them so.

Ver. 12. "*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.*"

He does not say, let not the flesh live or act, but, "*let not sin reign,*" for He came not to destroy our nature, but to set our free choice aright. Then to show that it is not through any force or necessity that we are held down by iniquity, but willingly, he does not say, let it not tyrannize, a word that would imply a necessity, but let it not reign. For it is absurd for those who are being conducted to the kingdom of heaven to have sin empress over

them, and for those who are called to reign with Christ to choose to be the captives of sin, as though one should hurl the diadem from off his head, and choose to be the slave of a frantic woman, who came begging, and was clothed in rags. Next since it was a heavy task to get the upper hand of sin, see how he shows it to be even easy, and how he allays the labor by saying, *"in your mortal body."* For this shows that the struggles were but for a time, and would soon bring themselves to a close. At the same time he reminds us of our former evil plight, and of the root of death, as it was from this that, contrary even to its beginning, it became mortal. Yet it is possible even for one with a mortal body not to sin. Do you see the abundancy of Christ's grace? For Adam, though as yet he had not a mortal body, fell. But you, who have received one even subject to death, canst be crowned. How then, is it that *"sin reigns?"* he says. It is not from any power of its own, but from your listlessness. Wherefore after saying, *"let it not reign,"* he also points out the mode of this reigning, by going on to say *"that you should obey it in the lusts thereof."* For it is not honor to concede to it (i.e. to the body) all things at will, nay, it is slavery in the extreme, and the height of dishonor; for when it does what it lists, then is it bereft of all liberties; but when it is put under restraints, then it best keeps its own proper rank.

Ver. 13. *"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin...but as instruments of righteousness."*

The body then is indifferent between vice and virtue, as also instruments (or arms) are. But either effect is wrought by him that uses it. As if a soldier fighting in his country's behalf, and a robber who was arming against the inhabitants, had the same weapons for defence. For the fault is not laid to the suit of armor, but to those that use it to an ill end. And this one may say of the flesh too which becomes this or that owing to the mind's decision, not owing to its own nature. For if it be curious after the beauty of

another, the eye becomes an instrument of iniquity, not through any agency of its own (for what is of the eye, is but seeing, not seeing amiss), but through the fault of the thought which commands it. But if you bridle it, it becomes an instrument of righteousness. Thus with the tongue, thus with the hands, thus with all the other members. And he well calls sin unrighteousness. For by sinning a man deals unrighteously either by himself or by his neighbor, or rather by himself more than by his neighbor. Having then led us away from wickedness, he leads us to virtue, in these words:

"But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."

See how by his bare words he exhorts them, on that side naming "*sin*" and on this "*God*." For by showing what a difference there is between the rulers, he casts out of all excuse the soldier that leaves God, and desires to serve under the dominion of sin. But it is not only in this way, but also by the sequel, that he establishes this; by saying, "*as alive from the dead*." For by these he shows the wretchedness of the other, and the greatness of God's gift. For consider, he says, what you were, and what you have been made. What then were ye? Dead, and ruined by a destruction which could not from any quarter be repaired. For neither was there any one who had the power to assist you. And what have you been made out of those dead ones? Alive with immortal life. And by whom? By the all-powerful God. You ought therefore to marshal yourselves under Him with as much cheerful readiness, as men would who had been made alive from being dead.

"And your members as instruments of righteousness."

Hence, the body is not evil, since it may be made an arm of righteousness. But by calling it an arm, he makes it clear that there is a hard warfare at hand for us. And for this reason we need strong armor, and also a noble spirit, and one acquainted too with the ways of this warfare; and above all we need a commander. The Commander however is standing by,

ever ready to help us, and abiding unconquerable, and has furnished us with strong arms likewise. Farther, we have need of a purpose of mind to handle them as should be, so that we may both obey our Commander, and take the field for our country. Having then given us this vigorous exhortation, and reminded us of arms, and battle, and wars, see how he encourages the soldier again and cherishes his ready spirit.

Ver. 14. *"For sin shall no more have dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under grace."*

If then sin has no more dominion over us, why does he lay so great a charge upon them as he does in the words, *"Let not sin reign in your mortal body,"* and, *"yield not ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin?"* What does that here said mean then? He is sowing a kind of seed in this statement, which he means to develop afterwards, and to cultivate in a powerful argument. What then is this statement? It is this; that our body, before Christ's coming, was an easy prey to the assaults of sin. For after death a great swarm of passions entered also. And for this cause it was not lightsome for running the race of virtue. For there was no Spirit present to assist, nor any baptism of power to mortify. [John 7:39] But as some horse (Plato *Phædr.* §74) that answers not the rein, it ran indeed, but made frequent slips, the Law meanwhile announcing what was to be done and what not, yet not conveying into those in the race anything over and above exhortation by means of words. But when Christ had come, the effort became afterwards more easy, and therefore we had a more distant goal ([μείζονα τὰ σκάμματα]) set us, in that the assistance we had given us was greater. Wherefore also Christ says, *"Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 5:20] But this he says more clearly in the sequel. But at present he alludes here briefly to it, to show that

unless we stoop down very low to it, sin will not get the better of us. For it is not the Law only that exhorts us, but grace too which also remitted our former sins, and secures us against future ones. For it promised them crowns after toils, but this (i.e. grace) crowned them first, and then led them to the contest. Now it seems to me that he is not signifying here the whole life of a believer, but instituting a comparison between the Baptism and the Law. And this he says in another passage also; *"The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."* [2 Corinthians 3:6] For the Law convinces of transgression, but grace undoes transgression. As then the former by convincing establishes sin so the latter by forgiving suffers us not to be under sin. And so you are in two ways set free from this thralldom; both in your not being under the Law, and in your enjoying grace. After then he had by these words given the hearer a breathing time, he again furnishes him a safeguard, by introducing an exhortation in reply to an objection, and by saying as follows.

Ver. 15. *"What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the Law, but under grace? God forbid."*

So he first adopted a form of adjuration, because it was an absurd thing he had named. And then he makes his discourse pass on to exhortation, and shows the great facility of the struggle, in the following words.

Ver. 16. Do you not know, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

I do not, he would say, mention hell as yet, nor that great (manuscript Bodl. long) punishment, but the shame it is in this world, when you become slaves, and slaves of your own accord too, and sin's slaves, and when the wages are such as a second death. For if before baptism, it wrought death of the body, and the wound required so great attendance, that the Lord of all

came down to die, and so put a stop to the evil; if after so great a gift, and so great liberty, it seize you again, while you bend down under it willingly, what is there that it may not do? Do not then run into such a pit, or willingly give yourself up. For in the case of wars, soldiers are often given up even against their will. But in this case, unless you desert of yourself, there is no one who will get the better of you. Having then tried to shame them by a sense of duty, he alarms them also by the rewards, and lays before them the wages of both; righteousness, and death, and that a death not like the former, but far worse. For if Christ is to die no more, who is to do away with death? No one! We must then be punished, and have vengeance taken upon us forever. For a death preceptible to the senses is not still to come in this case, as in the former, which gives the body rest, and separates it from the soul. *"For the last enemy, death, is destroyed"* [1 Corinthians 15:26], whence the punishment will be deathless. But not to them that obey, for righteousness, and the blessings springing from it, will be their rewards.

Ver. 17. *"But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you."* (Lit. *"into which you were delivered."*)

After shaming them by the slavery, after alarming them by the rewards, and so exhorting them, he again rights them by calling the benefits to mind. For by these he shows that they were great evils from which they were freed, and that not by any labors of their own, and that things henceforth would be more manageable. Just as any one who has rescued a captive from a cruel tyrant, and advises him not to run away back to him, reminds him of his grievous thralldom; so does Paul set the evils passed away most emphatically before us, by giving thanks to God. For it was no human power that could set us free from all those evils, but, *"thanks be to God,"* who was willing and able to do such great things. And he well says,

"You have obeyed from the heart." You were neither forced nor pressed, but you came over of your own accord, with willing mind. Now this is like one that praises and rebukes at once. For after having willingly come, and not having had any necessity to undergo, what allowance can you claim, or what excuse can you make, if you run away back to your former estate? Next that you may learn that it came not of your own willing temper only, but the whole of it of God's grace also, after saying, *"You have obeyed from the heart,"* he adds, *"that form of doctrine which was delivered you."* For the obedience from the heart shows the free will. But the being delivered, hints the assistance from God. But what is the form of doctrine? It is living aright, and in conformity with the best conversation.

Ver. 18. *"Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness."*

There are two gifts of God which he here points out. The *"freeing from sin,"* and also the *"making them servants to righteousness,"* which is better than any freedom. For God has done the same as if a person were to take an orphan, who had been carried away by savages into their own country, and were not only to free him from captivity, but were to set a kind father over him, and bring him to very great dignity. And this has been done in our case. For it was not our old evils alone that He freed us from, since He even led us to the life of angels, and paved the way for us to the best conversation, handing us over to the safe keeping of righteousness, and killing our former evils, and deadening the old man, and leading us to an immortal life.

Let us then continue living this life; for many of those who seem to breathe and to walk about are in a more wretched plight than the dead. For there are different kinds of deadness; and one there is of the body, according to which Abraham was dead, and still was not dead. For *"God,"* He says, *"is*

not a God of the dead, but of the living." [Matthew 22:32] Another is of the soul which Christ alludes to when He says, *"Let the dead bury their dead."* [Matthew 8:22] Another, which is even the subject of praise, which is brought about by religion ([φιλοσοφίας]), of which Paul says, *"Mortify your members which are upon the earth."* [Colossians 3:5] Another, which is the cause even of this, the one which takes place in baptism. *"For our old man,"* he says, *"has been crucified"* [Romans 6:6], that is, has been deadened. Since then we know this, let us flee from the deadness by which, even though alive, we die. And let us not be afraid of that with which common death comes on. But the other two, whereof one is blissful, having been given by God, the other praiseworthy (cf. Ar. Eth. i. 12), which is accomplished by ourselves together with God, let us both choose and be emulous of. And of those two, one does David pronounce blessed, when he says, *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven"* [Psalm 32:1]; and the other, Paul holds in admiration, saying, and writing to the Galatians, *"They that be Christ's have crucified the flesh."* [Galatians 5:24] But of the other couple, one Christ declares to be easy to hold in contempt, when He says, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul:"* and the other fearful, for, *"Fear"* (He says) *"Him that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."* [Matthew 10:28] And therefore let us flee from this, and choose that deadness which is held blessed and admirable; that of the other two, we may escape the one and not fear the other: for it is not the least good to us to see the sun, and to eat and drink, unless the life of good words be with us. For what would be the advantage, pray, of a king dressed in a purple robe and possessed of arms, but without a single subject, and exposed to all that had a mind to attack and insult him? In like manner it will be no advantage to a Christian to have faith, and the gift of baptism, and yet be open to all the passions. In that way the disgrace will be greater,

and the shame more. For as such an one having the diadem and purple is so far from gaining by this dress any honor to himself, that he even does disgrace to that by his own shame: so the believer also, who leads a corrupt life, is so far from becoming, as such, an object of respect, that he is only the more one of scorn. *"For as many,"* it says, *"as sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law."* [Romans 2:12]. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who had trodden under foot the Son of God?"* [Hebrews 10:28-29] And with reason. For I placed (He might say) all the passions in subjection to you by baptism. How then comes it that you have disgraced so great a gift, and hast become one thing instead of another? I have killed and buried your former transgressions, like worms— how is it that you have bred others?— for sins are worse than worms, since these do harm to the body, those to the soul; and those make the more offensive stench. Yet we perceive it not, and so we are at no pains to purge them out. Thus the drunkard knows not how disgusting the stale wine is, but he that is not drunken has a distinct perception of it. So with sins also, he that lives soberly knows thoroughly that other mire, and the stain. But he that gives himself up to wickedness, like a man made drowsy with drunkenness, does not even know the very fact that he is ill. And this is the most grievous part of vice, that it does not allow those who fall into it even to see the greatness of their own bane, but as they lie in the mire, they think they are enjoying perfumes. And so they have not even the power of getting free, but when full of worms, like men that pride themselves in precious stones, so do they exult in these. And for this reason they have not so much as the will to kill them, but they even nourish these up, and multiply them in themselves,

until they send them on to the worms of the world to come. For these are providers for those, and are not only providers, but even the fathers of those that never die; as it says, "*their worm shall not die.*" [Mark 9:44] These kindle the hell which never extinguishes. To prevent this from happening then, let us do away with this fountain of evil, and extinguish the furnace, and let us draw up the root of wickedness from beneath, since you will do no good by cutting the tree off from above, if the root remains below, and sends up fresh shoots of the same kind again. What then is the root of the evils? Learn from the good husbandman [i.e. St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 3:6-9], who has an accurate knowledge of such things, and tends the spiritual vine and cultivates the whole world. Now what does he say is the cause of all the evils? The love of money. For the "*love of money is the root of all evils.*" [1 Timothy 6:10]. Hence come fightings, and enmities and wars; hence emulations, and railings, and suspicions, and insults; hence murders, and thefts, and violations of sepulchres.

Through this, not cities and countries only, but roads and habitable and inhabitable parts, and mountains, and groves, and hills, and, in a word, all places are filled with blood and murder. And not even from the sea has this evil withdrawn, but even there also with great fury has it revelled, since pirates beset it on all sides, thus devising a new mode of robbery. Through this have the laws of nature been subverted, and the claims of relationship set aside, and the laws of piety itself broken through. For the thraldom of money has armed, not against the living only, but even against the departed too, the right hands of such men. And at death even, they make no truce with them, but bursting open the sepulchres, they put forth their impious hands even against dead bodies, and not even him that has let go of life will they suffer to be let go from their plotting. And all the evils that you may find, whether in the house or in the market-place, or in the courts of law, or

in the senate, or in the king's palace, or in any other place whatsoever, it is from this that you will find they all spring. For this evil it is, this assuredly, which fills all places with blood and murder, this lights up the flame of hell, this makes cities as wretchedly off as a wilderness, yea, even much worse. For those that beset the high roads, one can easily be on one's guard against, as not being always upon attack. But they who in the midst of cities imitate them are so much the worse than them, in that these are harder to guard against, and dare to do openly what the others do with secrecy. For those laws, which have been made with a view to stopping their iniquity, they draw even into alliance and fill the cities with this kind of murders and pollutions. Is it not murder, pray, and worse than murder, to hand the poor man over to famine, and to cast him into prison, and to expose him not to famine only, but to tortures too, and to countless acts of insolence? For even if you do not do these things yourself to him, yet you are the occasion of their being done, you do them more than the ministers who execute them. The murderer plunges his sword into a man at once, and after giving him pain for a short time, he does not carry the torture any farther. But do you who by your calumnies, by your harassings, by your plottings, make light darkness to him, and set him upon desiring death ten thousand times over, consider how many deaths you perpetrate instead of one only? And what is worse than all, you plunder and are grasping, not impelled to it by poverty, without any hunger to necessitate you, but that your horse's bridle may be spattered over with gold enough, or the ceiling of your house, or the capitals of your pillars. And what hell is there that this conduct would not deserve, when it is a brother, and one that has shared with yourself in blessings unutterable, and has been so highly honored by the Lord, whom you, in order that you may deck out stones, and floors, and the bodies of animals with neither reason, nor perception of these ornaments, are casting into

countless calamities? And your dog is well attended too, while man, or rather Christ, for the sake of the hound, and all these things I have named, is straitened with extreme hunger. What can be worse than such confusion? What more grievous than such lawlessness as this? What streams of fire will be enough for such a soul? He that was made in the Image of God stands in unseemly plight, through your inhumanity; but the faces of the mules that draw your wife glisten with gold in abundance, as do the skins and woods which compose that canopy. And if it is a seat that is to be made, or a footstool, they are all made of gold and silver. But the member of Christ, for whom also He came hither from Heaven, and shed His precious Blood, does not even enjoy the food that is necessary for him, owing to your rapaciousness. But the couches are mantled with silver on every side, while the bodies of the saints are deprived even of necessary clothing. And to you Christ is less precious than anything else, servants, or mules, or couch, or chair, or footstool; for I pass over furniture of still meaner use than these, leaving it to you to know of it. But if you are shocked at hearing this, stand aloof from doing it, and then the words spoken will not harm you. Stand aloof, and cease from this madness. For plain madness it is, such eagerness about these things. Wherefore letting go of these things, let us look up, late as it is, towards Heaven, and let us call to mind the Day which is coming, let us bethink ourselves of that awful tribunal, and the exact accounts, and the sentence incorruptible. Let us consider that God, who sees all these things, sends no lightnings from Heaven; and yet what is done deserves not thunderbolts merely. Yet He neither does this, nor does He let the sea loose upon us, nor does He burst the earth in two, He quenches not the sun, nor does He hurl the heaven with its stars upon us. He does not move anything from its place, but suffers them to hold their course, and the whole creation to minister to us. Pondering all this then, let us be awestruck

with the greatness of His love toward man, and let us return to that noble origin which belongs to us, since at present certainly we are in no better plight than the creatures without reason, but even in a much worse one. For they do love their kin, and need but the community of nature to cause affection towards each other. But thou who besides nature hast countless causes to draw you together and attach you to the member of yourself; the being honored with the Word, the partaking in one religion, the sharing in countless blessings; art become of wilder nature than they, by displaying so much carefulness about profitless things, and leaving the Temples of God to perish in hunger and nakedness, and often surrounding them also with a thousand evils. For if it is from love of glory that you do these things, it is much more binding on you to show your brother attention, than your horse. For the better the creature that enjoys the act of kindness, the brighter the crown that is woven for such carefulness. Since now while you fall into the contrary of all this, you pull upon yourself accusers without number, yet perceivest it not. For who is there that will not speak ill of you? Who that will not indite you as guilty of the greatest atrocity and misanthropy, when he sees that you disregard the human race, and settest that of senseless creatures above men, and besides senseless creatures, even the furniture of your house? Have you not heard the Apostles say, that they who first received the word sold both "*houses and lands*" [Acts 4:34], that they might support the brethren? But you plunder both houses and lands, that you may adorn a horse or wood-work, or skins, or walls, or a pavement. And what is worse is, that it is not men only, but women too are afflicted with this madness, and urge their husbands to this empty sort of pains, by forcing them to lay out their money upon anything rather than the necessary things. And if any one accuse them for this, they are practised with a defence, itself

loaded with much to be accused. For both the one and the other are done at once, says one.

What say you? Are you not afraid to utter such a thing, and to set the same store by horses and mules and couches and footstools, as by Christ an hungered? Or rather not even comparing them at all, but giving the larger share to these, and to Him meting out with difficulty a scant share? Do you not know that all belongs to Him, both you and yours? Do you not know that He fashioned your body, as well as gave you a soul, and apportioned you the whole world? But you are not for giving a little recompense to Him. But if you let a little hut, you require the rent with the utmost rigor, and though reaping the whole of His creation, and dwelling in so wide a world, you have not courage to lay down even a little rent, but has given up to vainglory yourself and all you have. For this is that whereof all these things come. The horse is none the better above his natural excellence for having this ornament, neither yet is the person mounted upon him, for sometimes he is only in the less esteem for it; since many neglect the rider and turn their eyes to the horse's ornaments, and to the attendants behind and before, and to the fan-bearers. But the man, who is lackeyed by these, they hate and turn their heads from, as a common enemy. But this does not happen when you adorn your soul, for then men, and angels, and the Lord of angels, all weave you a crown. And so, if you are in love with glory, stand aloof from the things which you are now doing, and show your taste not in your house, but in your soul, that you may become brilliant and conspicuous. For now nothing can be more cheap than you are, with your soul unfurnished, and but the handsomeness of your house for a screen. But if you are impatient of hearing me speak in this way, listen to what one of those that are without did, and at all events be shamed by their philosophy. For it is said that a certain one of them, who went into a palace that shone with gold in

abundance, and glistened with the great beauty of the marbles and the columns, when he saw the floor strewn with carpets in all directions, spat in the face of the master of the house, and when found fault with for it said, that since there was no other part of the house where he could do this, he was obliged to do this affront to his face. See how ridiculous a man is, who displays his taste in exteriors, and how little he is in the eyes of all reasonable men. And with good reason. For if a person were to leave your wife to be clad in rags, and to be neglected, and clothed your maid-servants with brilliant dresses, you would not bear it meekly, but wouldest be exasperated, and say that it was insulting in the extreme. Reason then in this way about your soul. When you display your taste in walls then, and pavement, and furniture, and other things of the kind, and do not give liberally in alms, or practise the other parts of a religious life ([φιλοσοφίαν]); you do nothing less than this, or rather what is worse than this by far. For the difference between servant and mistress is nothing, but between soul and flesh, there is a great disparity. But if it be so with the flesh, much more is it with a house or a couch or a footstool. What kind of excuse then do you deserve, who puttest silver on all these, but for it hast no regard, though it be covered with filthy rags, squalid, hungry, and full of wounds, torn by hounds unnumbered [Luke 16:20-21]; and after all this fanciest that you shall get you glory by displaying your taste in externals wound about you? And this is the very height of phrenzy, while ridiculed, reproached, disgraced, dishonored, and falling into the severest punishment, still to be vain of these things! Wherefore, I beseech you, laying all this to heart, let us become sober-minded, late as it is, and become our own masters, and transfer this adorning from outward things to our souls. For so it will abide safe from spoiling, and will make us equal to the angels, and

will entertain us with unaltering good, which may we all attain by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 12 on Romans

Rom. VI. 19

"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as you have yielded your members (so 4 manuscripts Sav. the members of your flesh) servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

Since he had required great strictness of life, charging us to be dead to the world, and to have died unto wickedness, and to abide with no notion towards the workings of sin, and seemed to be saying something great and burdensome, and too much for human nature; through a desire to show that he is not making any exorbitant demand, nor even as much as might be expected of one who enjoyed so great a gift, but one quite moderate and light, he proves it from contraries, and says, *"I speak after the manner of men,"* as much as to say, Going by human reasonings; by such as one usually meets with. For he signifies either this, or the moderateness of it, by the term applied, *"after the manner of men."* For elsewhere he uses the same word. *"There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man"* [1 Corinthians 10:13], that is, moderate and small. *"For as you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."* And truly the masters are very different ones, but still it is an equal amount of servitude that I ask. For men ought to give a much larger one, and so much the larger as this is a greater and better mastership than the other. Nevertheless I make no greater demand *"because of the infirmity,"* and that, he does not say of your free will or readiness of spirit, but *"of your flesh,"* so making what he says the less severe. And yet on one side there is

uncleanness, on the other holiness: on the one iniquity, and on the other righteousness. And who is so wretched, he says, and in such straits as not to spend as much earnestness upon the service of Christ, as upon that of sin and the devil? Hear then what follows, and you will see clearly that we do not even spend this little. For when (stated in this naked way) it does not seem credible or easy to admit, and nobody would endure to hear that he does not serve Christ so much as he did serve the devil, he proves it by what follows, and renders it credible by bringing that slavery before us, and saying how they did serve him.

Ver. 20. *"For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness."*

Now what he says is somewhat of this kind, When ye lived in wickedness, and impiety, and the worst of evils, the state of compliance ye lived in was such that you did absolutely no good thing at all. For this is, *"you were free from righteousness."* That is you were not subject to it, but estranged from it wholly. For you did not even so much as divide the manner of servitude between righteousness and sin, but gave yourselves wholly up to wickedness. Now, therefore, since you have come over to righteousness, give yourselves wholly up to virtue, doing nothing at all of vice, that the measure you give may be at least equal. And yet it is not the mastership only that is so different, but in the servitude itself there is a vast difference. And this too he unfolds with great perspicuity, and shows what conditions they served upon then, and what now. And as yet he says nothing of the harm accruing from the thing, but hitherto speaks of the shame.

Ver. 21. *"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now ashamed?"*

So great was the slavery, that even the recollection of it now makes you ashamed; but if the recollection makes one ashamed, the reality would

much more. And so you gained now in two ways, in having been freed from the shame; and also in having come to know the condition you were in; just as then you were injured in two ways, in doing things deserving shame, and in not even knowing to be ashamed. And this is worse than the former. Yet still ye kept in a state of servitude. Having then proved most abundantly the harm of what took place then from the shame of it, he comes to the thing in question. Now what is this thing? *"For the end of those things is death."* Since then shame seems to be no such serious evil, he comes to what is very fearful, I mean death; though in good truth what he had before mentioned were enough. For consider how exceeding great the mischief must be, inasmuch as, even when freed from the vengeance due to it, they could not get free of the shame. What wages then, he says, do you expect from the reality, when from the bare recollection, and that too when you are freed from the vengeance, you hide your face and blush, though under such grace as you are! But God's side is far otherwise.

Ver. 22. *"For now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."*

Of the former, the fruit was shame, even after the being set free. Of these the fruit is holiness, and where holiness is, there is all confidence. But of those things the end is death, and of these everlasting life. Do you see how he points out some things as already given, and some as existing in hope, and from what are given he draws proof of the others also, that is from the holiness of the life. For to prevent your saying (i.e. as an objection) everything lies in hope, he points out that you have already reaped fruits, first the being freed from wickedness, and such evils as the very recollection of puts one to shame; second, the being made a servant unto righteousness; a third, the enjoying of holiness; a fourth, the obtaining of life, and life too not for a season, but everlasting. Yet with all these, he

says, do but serve as you served it. For though the master is far preferable, and the service also has many advantages, and the rewards too for which you are serving, still I make no further demand. Next, since he had mentioned arms and a king, he keeps on with the metaphor in these words:

Ver. 23. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

After speaking of the wages of sin, in the case of the blessings, he has not kept to the same order ([τάξιν], rank or relation): for he does not say, the wages of good deeds, *"but the gift of God;"* to show, that it was not of themselves that they were freed, nor was it a due they received, neither yet a return, nor a recompense of labors, but by grace all these things came about. And so there was a superiority for this cause also, in that He did not free them only, or change their condition for a better, but that He did it without any labor or trouble upon their part: and that He not only freed them, but also gave them much more than before, and that through His Son. And the whole of this he has interposed as having discussed the subject of grace, and being on the point of overthrowing the Law next. That these things then might not both make them rather listless, he inserted the part about strictness of life, using every opportunity of rousing the hearer to the practice of virtue. For when he calls death the wages of sin, he alarms them again, and secures them against dangers to come. For the words he uses to remind them of their former estate, he also employs so as to make them thankful, and more secure against any inroads of temptations. Here then he brings the hortatory part to a stop, and proceeds with the doctrines again, speaking on this wise.

Chap. vii. ver. 1. *"Do you not know, brethren, for I speak to them that know the Law."*

Since then he had said, we are "*dead to sin*," he here shows that not sin only, but also the Law, has no dominion over them. But if the Law has none, much less has sin: and to render his language palatable, he uses a human example to make this plain by. And he seems to be stating one point, but he sets down at once two arguments for his proposition. One, that when a husband is dead, the woman is no longer subject to her husband, and there is nothing to prevent her becoming the wife of another man: and the other, that in the present case it is not the husband only that is dead but the wife also. So that one may enjoy liberty in two ways. Now if when the husband is dead, she is freed from his power, when the woman is shown to be dead also, she is much more at liberty. For if the one event frees her from his power, much more does the concurrence of both. As he is about to proceed then to a proof of these points, he starts with an encomium of the hearers, in these words, "*Do you not know, brethren, for I speak to them that know the Law*," that is, I am saying a thing that is quite agreed upon, and clear, and to men too that know all these things accurately,

"How that the Law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?"

He does not say, husband or wife, but "*man*," which name is common to either creature; "*For he that is dead*," he says, "*is freed (Gr. justified) from sin*." The Law then is given for the living, but to the dead it ceases to be ordained (or to give commands). Do you observe how he sets forth a twofold freedom? Next, after hinting this at the commencement, he carries on what he has to say by way of proof, in the woman's case, in the following way.

Ver. 2, 3. "*For the woman which has an husband is bound by the Law to her husband, so long as he lives: but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the Law of her husband. So then, if while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she is called an adulteress: but if her husband*

be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

He keeps continually upon this point, and that with great exactness, since he feels quite sure of the proof grounded on it: and in the husband's place he puts the Law, but in the woman's, all believers. Then he adds the conclusion in such way, that it does not tally with the premiss; for what the context would require would be, *"and so, my brethren, the Law does not rule over you, for it is dead."* But he does not say so, but only in the premiss hinted it, and in the inference, afterwards, to prevent what he says being distasteful, he brings the woman in as dead by saying,

"Wherefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the Law."

As then the one or the other event gives rise to the same freedom, what is there to prevent his showing favor to the Law without any harm being done to the cause? *"For the woman which has an husband is bound by the Law to her husband as long as he lives."* What has become now (3 manuscripts then) of those that speak evil of the Law? Let them hear, how even when forced upon it, he does not bereave it of its dignity, but speaks great things of its power; if while it is alive the Jew is bound, and they are to be called adulterers who transgress it, and leave it while it is alive. But if they let go of it after it has died, this is not to be wondered at. For in human affairs no one is found fault with for doing this: *"but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband."* You see how in the example he points out the Law as dead, but in the inference he does not do so. So then if it be while her husband lives, the woman is called an adulteress. See how he dwells upon the accusations of those who transgress the Law, while it is yet living. But since he had put an end to it, he afterwards favors it with perfect security, without doing any harm hereby to the faith. *"For if while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she is called an adulteress."*

Thus it would have been natural to say next, you also, my brethren, now the Law is dead, will not be judged guilty of adultery, if you become married to another husband. Yet he does not use these words, but what? *"You have become dead to the Law;"* if you have been made dead, you are no longer under the Law. For if, when the husband is dead, the woman is no longer liable to it, much more when herself is dead also she is freed from the former. Do you note the wisdom of Paul, how he points out that the Law itself designs that we should be divorced from it, and married to another? For there is nothing, he means, against your living with another husband, now the former is dead; for how should there be, since when the husband was alive it allowed this to her who had a writing of divorcement? But this he does not set down, as it was rather a charge against the woman; for although this had been granted, still it was not cleared of blame. [Matthew 19:7-8] For in cases where he has gained the victory by requisite and accredited proofs, he does not go into questions beyond the purpose; not being captious. The marvel then is this, that it is the Law itself that acquits us who are divorced from it of any charge, and so the mind of it was that we should become Christ's. For it is dead itself, and we are dead; and the grounds of its power over us are removed in a twofold way. But he is not content with this alone, but also adds the reason of it. For he has not set down death without special purpose, but brings the cross in again, which had wrought these things, and in this way too he puts us under an engagement. For you have not been freed merely, he means, but it was through the Lord's death. For he says,

"You have become dead to the Law by the Body of Christ."

Now it is not on this only he grounds his exhortation, but also on the superiority of this second husband. And so he proceeds: *"that you should be married to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead."*

Then to prevent their saying, If we do not choose to live with another husband, what then? For the Law does not indeed make an adulteress of the widow who lives in a second marriage, but for all that it does not force her to live in it. Now that they may not say this, he shows that from benefits already conferred, it is binding on us to choose it: and this he lays down more clearly in other passages, where he says, "*You are not your own;*" and, "*You are bought with a price;*" and, "*Be not ye the servants of men*" [1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 7:23]; and again, "*One died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them.*" [2 Corinthians 5:15] This is then what he here alludes to in the words, "*By the Body.*" And next he exhorts to better hopes, saying, "*That we should bring forth fruit unto God.*" For then, he means, you brought forth fruit unto death, but now unto God.

Ver. 5. "*For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*"

You see then the gain to be got from the former husband! And he does not say when we were in the Law, so in every passage shrinking from giving a handle to heretics; but "*when we were in the flesh,*" that is, in evil deeds, in a carnal life. What he says then is, not that they were in the flesh before, but now they went about without any bodies; but by saying what he does, he neither says that the Law is the cause of sins, nor yet frees it from odium. For it held the rank of a bitter accuser, by making their sins bare: since that, which enjoins more to him who is not minded to obey at all, makes the offense greater. And this is why he does not say, the "*motions of sins*" which were produced by the Law, but which "*were through the Law*" [Romans 2:27], without adding any "*produced,*" but simply "*through the Law,*" that is to say, which through the Law were made apparent, were made known. Next that he might not accuse the flesh either; he does not say

which the members wrought, but "*which did work (or were wrought) in our members,*" to show that the origin of the mischief was elsewhere, from the thoughts which wrought in us, not from the members which had them working in them. For the soul ranks as a performer, and the fabric of the flesh as a lyre, sounding as the performer obliges it. So the discordant tune is to be ascribed not to the latter, but to the former sooner than to the latter.

Ver. 6. "*But now,*" he says, "*we are delivered from the Law.*"

([κατηργήθημεν], "*made of no effect.*")

See how he again in this place spares the flesh and the Law. For he does not say that the Law was made of no effect, or that the flesh was made of no effect, but that we were made of no effect (i.e., were delivered). And how were we delivered? Why by the old man, who was held down by sin, being dead and buried. For this is what he sets forth in the words, "*being dead to that, wherein we were held.*" As if he had said, the chain by which we were held down was deadened and broken through, so that that which held down, namely sin, held down no more. But do not fall back or grow listless. For you have been freed with a view to being servants again, though not in the same way, but "*in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*" Now what does he mean here? For it is necessary to disclose it here, that when we come upon the passage, we may not be perplexed with it. When then Adam sinned (he means), and his body became liable to death and sufferings, it received also many physical losses, and the horse became less active and less obedient. But Christ, when He came, made it more nimble for us through baptism, rousing it with the wing of the Spirit. And for this reason the marks for the race, which they of old time had to run, are not the same as ours. Since then the race was not so easy as it is now. For this reason, He desires them to be clear not from murder only, as He did them of old time, but from anger also; nor is it adultery only that He bids

them keep clear of, but even the unchaste look; and to be exempt not from false swearing only, but even from true. [Matthew 5:21-33] And with their friends He orders them to love their enemies also. And in all other duties, He gives us a longer ground to run over, and if we do but obey, threatens us with hell, so showing that the things in question are not matters of free-will offering for the combatants, as celibacy and poverty are, but are binding upon us absolutely to fulfil. For they belong to necessary and urgent requisites, and the man who does not do them is to be punished to the utmost. This is why He said, *"Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."* [Matthew 5:20] But he that does not see the kingdom, shall certainly fall into hell. For this cause Paul too says, *"Sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the Law, but under grace."* And here again, *"that you should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."* For it is not the letter that condemns, that is the old Law, but the Spirit that helps. And for this reason among the ancients, if any were found practising virginity, it was quite astonishing. But now the thing is scattered over every part of the world. And death in those times some few men did with difficulty despise, but now in villages and cities there are hosts of martyrs without number, consisting not of men only, but even of women. And next having done with this, he again meets an objection which is rising, and as he meets it, gives confirmation to his own object. And so he does not introduce the solution of it as main argument, but by way of opposing this; that by the exigency of meeting it, he may get a plea for saying what he wishes, and make his accusation not so unpalatable. Having then said, *"in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter,"* he proceeds.

Ver. 7. *"What then? Is the Law sin? God forbid."*

Even before this he had been saying, that *"the motions of sins, which were by the Law did work in our members"* [Romans 7:5]: and, *"sin shall have no dominion over you, for you are not under the Law."* [Romans 6:14] And that *"where no law is, there is no transgression."* [Romans 4:15] And, *"but the Law came in, that the offense might abound"* [Romans 5:20]; and, *"the Law works wrath."* [Romans 4:15] Now as all these things seem to bring the Law into disrepute, in order to correct the suspicion arising from them, he supposes also an objection, and says, *"What then, is the Law sin? God forbid."* Before the proof he uses this adjuration to conciliate the hearer, and by way of soothing any who was troubled at it. For so, when he had heard this, and felt assured of the speaker's disposition, he would join with him in investigating the seeming perplexity, and feel no suspicions of him. Wherefore he has put the objection, associating the other with him. Hence, he does not say, What am I to say? But *"What shall we say then?"* As though a deliberation and a judgment were before them, and a general meeting called together, and the objection came forward not of himself, but in the course of discussion, and from real circumstances of the case. For that the letter kills, he means, no one will deny, or that the Spirit gives life [2 Corinthians 3:6]; this is plain too, and nobody will dispute it. If then these are confessedly truths, what are we to say about the Law? That *"it is sin? God forbid."* Explain the difficulty then. Do you see how he supposes the opponent to be present, and having assumed the dignity of the teacher, he comes to the explaining of it. Now what is this? Sin, he says, the Law is not. *"Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law."* Notice the reach of his wisdom! What the Law is not, he has set down by way of objection, so that by removing this, and thereby doing the Jew a pleasure, he may persuade him to accept the less alternative. And what is this? Why that *"I had not*

known sin, but by the Law. For I had not known lust, except the Law had said, You shall not covet."

Do you observe, how by degrees he shows it to be not an accuser of sin only, but in a measure its producer? Yet not from any fault of its own, but from that of the froward Jews, he proves it was, that this happened. For he has taken good heed to stop the mouths of the Manichees, that accuse the Law; and so after saying, "*Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law;*" and, "*I had not known lust, except the Law had said, You shall not covet;*" he adds,

Ver. 8. "*But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence."*

Do you see how he has cleared it of all blame? For "*sin,*" he says, "*taking occasion by the commandment,*" it was, and not the Law, that increased the concupiscence, and the reverse of the Law's intent was brought about. This came of weakness, and not of any badness. For when we desire a thing, and then are hindered of it, the flame of the desire is but increased. Now this came not of the Law; for it hindered us (3 manuscripts endeavored) of itself to keep us off from it; but sin, that is, your own listlessness and bad disposition, used what was good for the reverse. But this is no fault in the physician, but in the patient who applies the medicine wrongly. For the reason of the Law being given was, not to inflame concupiscence, but to extinguish it, though the reverse came of it. Yet the blame attaches not to it, but to us. Since if a person had a fever, and wanted to take cold drink when it was not good for him, and one were not to let him take his fill of it, and so increase his lust after this ruinous pleasure, one could not deservedly be found fault with. For the physician's business is simply prohibiting it, but the restraining himself is the patient's. And what if sin did take occasion from it? Surely there are many bad men who by good

precepts grow in their own wickedness. For this was the way in which the devil ruined Judas, by plunging him into avarice, and making him steal what belonged to the poor. However it was not the being entrusted with the bag that brought this to pass, but the wickedness of his own spirit. And Eve, by bringing Adam to eat from the tree, threw him out of Paradise. But neither in that case was the tree the cause, even if it was through it that the occasion took place. But if he treats the discussion about the Law with somewhat of vehemence, do not feel surprise. For Paul is making a stand against the present exigency, and suffers not his language to give a handle even to those that suspected otherwise, but takes great pains to make the present statement correct. Do not then sift what he is now going on to say (4 manuscripts *"here saying"*) by itself, but put beside it the purpose by which he is led on to speak of these things, and reckon for the madness of the Jews, and their vigorous spirit of contention, which as he desires earnestly to do away with, he seems to bear violently ([πολὺς πνεῖν]) against the Law, not to find fault with it, but to unnerve their vigor. For if it is any reproach to the Law that sin takes occasion by it, this will be found to be the case in the New Testament also. For in the New Testament there are thousands of laws, and about many more (*"far more,"* Field) important matters. And one may see the same come to pass there also, not with regard to covetousness [lust, as Romans 7:7] only, but to all wickedness generally. For He says, *"if I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,"* [John 15:22] Here then sin finds a footing in this fact, and so the greater punishment. And again when Paul discourses about grace, he says, *"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be counted worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God."* [Hebrews 10:29] Has not then the worse punishment its origin from hence, from the greater benefit? And the reason why he says the Greeks were without excuse was, because being honored with the gift of

reason, and having gotten a knowledge of the beauty of the creation, and having been placed in a fair way for being led by it to the Creator, they did not so use the wisdom of God, as it was their duty. Do you see that to the wicked in all cases occasions of greater punishment result from good things? But we shall not in this accuse the benefits of God, but rather upon this even admire them the more: but we shall throw the blame on the spirit of those who abuse the blessings to contrary purpose. Let this then be our line with regard to the Law also. But this is easy and feasible—the other is what is a difficulty. How is it that he says *"I had not known lust except the Law had said, You shall not covet?"* Now if man had not known lust, before he received the Law, what was the reason for the flood, or the burning of Sodom? What does he mean then? He means vehement lust: and this is why he did not say, lust, but *"all manner of concupiscence,"* intimating, in that, its vehemency. And what, it will be said, is the good of the Law, if it adds to the disorder? None; but much mischief even. Yet the charge is not against the Law, but the listlessness of those who received it. For sin wrought it, though by the Law. But this was not the purpose of the Law, nay, the very opposite, Sin then became stronger, he says, and violent. But this again is no charge against the Law but against their obstinacy. *"For without the Law sin is dead."* That is, was not so ascertainable. For even those before the Law knew that they had sinned, but they came to a more exact knowledge of it after the giving of the Law. And for this reason they were liable to a greater accusation: since it was not the same thing to have nature to accuse them, and besides nature the Law, which told them distinctly every charge.

Ver. 9. *"For I was alive without the Law once."*

When, pray, was that? Before Moses. See how he sets himself to show that it, both by the things it did, and the things it did not do, weighed down

human nature. For when *"I was alive without the Law,"* he means, I was not so much condemned.

"But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

This seems indeed to be an accusing of the Law. But if any one will look closely at it, it will be seen to be even an encomium of it. For it did not give existence to sin that before was not, but only pointed out what had escaped notice. And this is even a praise of the Law, if at least before it they had been sinning without perceiving it. But when this came, if they gained nothing besides from it, at all events this they were distinctly made acquainted with, the fact that they had been sinning. And this is no small point, with a view to getting free from wickedness. Now if they did not get free, this has nothing to do with the Law; which framed everything with a view to this end, but the accusation lies wholly against their spirit, which was perverse beyond all supposition. For what took place was not the natural thing—their being injured by things profitable. And this is why he says *"And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."* He does not say, *"it was made,"* or *"it brought forth"* death, but *"was found,"* so explaining the novel and unusual kind of discrepancy, and making the whole fall upon their own pate. For if, he says, you would know the aim of it, it led to life, and was given with this view. But if death was the issue of this, the fault is with them that received the commandment, and not of this, which was leading them to life. And this is a point on which he has thrown fresh light by what follows.

Ver. 11. *"For sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me."*

You observe how he everywhere keeps to sin, and entirely clears the Law of accusation. And so he proceeds as follows.

Ver. 12. *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."*

But, if you be so minded, we will bring before you the language of those who wrest these declarations. For this will make our own statements clearer. For there are some that say, that he is not here saying what he does of the Law of Moses, but some take it of the law of nature; some, of the commandment given in Paradise. Yet surely Paul's object everywhere is to annul this Law, but he has not any question with those. And with much reason; for it was through a fear and a horror of this that the Jews obstinately opposed grace. But it does not appear that he has ever called the commandment in Paradise *"Law"* at all; no, nor yet any other writer. Now to make this plainer from what he has really said, let us follow out his words, retracing the argument a little. Having then spoken to them about strictness of conversation, he goes on to say, *"Do you not know, brethren, how that the Law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? Wherefore you have become dead to the Law."* Therefore if these things are said about the natural law, we are found to be without the natural law. And if this be true, we are more senseless than the creatures which are without reason. Yet this is not so, certainly. For with regard to the law in Paradise, there is no need to be contentious, lest we should be taking up a superfluous trouble, by entering the lists against things men have made up their minds upon. In what sense then does he say, *"I should not have known sin but by the Law?"* He is speaking, not of absolute want of knowledge, but of the more accurate knowledge. For if this were said of the law of nature, how would what follows suit? *"For I was alive,"* he says, *"without the Law once."* Now neither Adam, nor any body else, can be shown ever to have lived without the law of nature. For as soon as God formed him, He put into him that law of nature, making it to dwell by him as a security to the whole kind (Gr.

Nature, see p. 365). And besides this, it does not appear that he has anywhere called the law of nature a commandment. But this he calls as well a commandment, and that *"just and holy,"* as a *"spiritual law."* But the law of nature was not given to us by the Spirit. For barbarians, as well as Greeks and other men, have this law. Hence it is plain, that it is the Mosaic Law that he is speaking of above, as well as afterwards, and in all the passages. For this cause also he calls it holy, saying, *"Wherefore the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."* For even though the Jews have been unclean since the Law, and unjust and covetous, this does not destroy the virtue of the Law, even as their unbelief does not make the faith of God of none effect. So from all these things it is plain, that it is of the Law of Moses that he here speaks.

Ver. 13. *"Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin that it might appear sin."* (4 manuscripts om. [ῥ].)

That is, that it might be shown what great evil sin is, namely, a listless will, an inclinableness to the worse side, the actual doing (3 manuscripts om. this clause), and the perverted judgment. For this is the cause of all the evils; but he amplifies it by pointing out the exceeding grace of Christ, and teaching them what an evil He freed the human race from, which, by the medicines used to cure it, had become worse, and was increased by the preventives. Wherefore he goes on to say: *"That sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful."* Do you see how these things are woven together everywhere? By the very means he uses to accuse sin, he again shows the excellency of the Law. Neither is it a small point which he has gained by showing what an evil sin is, and unfolding the whole of its poison, and bringing it to view. For this is what he shows, by saying, *"that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."* That is, that it may be made clear what an evil sin is, what a ruinous thing. And this is

what was shown by the commandment. Hereby he also shows the preëminence of grace above the Law, the preëminence above, not the conflict with, the Law. For do not look to this fact, that those who received it were the worse for it; but consider the other, that the Law had not only no design of drawing wickedness out to greater lengths, but even seriously aimed at hewing down what already existed. But if it had no strength, give to it indeed a crown for its intention, but adore more highly the power of Christ, which abolished, cut away: and plucked up the very roots an evil so manifold and so hard to be overthrown. But when you hear me speak of sin, do not think of it as a substantial power, but evil doing, as it comes upon men and goes from them continually, and which, before it takes place, has no being, and when it has taken place, vanishes again. This then was why the Law was given. Now no law is ever given to put an end to things natural, but in order to correct a way of acting purposely wicked. And this the lawgivers that are without too are aware of, and all mankind in general. For it is the evils from viciousness alone that they are for setting right, and they do not undertake to extirpate those allotted us along with our nature; since this they cannot do. For things natural remain unalterable (Arist. *Eth.* b. 2, c. 1), as we have told you frequently in other discourses also.

And so let us leave these contests, and again practise ourselves in exhortation. Or rather, this last part belongs to those contests. For if we cast out wickedness, we should bring virtue in also: and by these means we shall clearly teach that wickedness is no natural evil, and shall be able easily to stop the mouths of them that enquire for the origin of evil, not by means of words only, but of actions also, since we share the same nature with them, but are freed from their wickedness. For let us not be looking at the laboriousness of virtue, but at the possibility of succeeding in it. But if we be in earnest, it will be at once light and palatable to us. But if you tell me

of the pleasure of vice, tell out its end too. For it issues in death, even as virtue leads us to life. Or if you think fit let us rather scrutinize them both even before their end; for we shall see that vice has a great deal of pain attached to it, and virtue great pleasure. For what pray is so painful as a bad conscience? Or what more pleasing than a good hope? For there is nothing, assuredly there is nothing, which is used to cut us so deep, and press so hard on us, as the expectation of evil: nothing that so keeps us up, and all but gives us wings, as a good conscience. And this we may get a knowledge of even by what takes place before our eyes. For they that dwell in a prison, and are in expectation of sentence against them, let them have the enjoyment of luxury repeated beyond count, live a more afflicting life than those that go a begging by the by-roads, yet with nothing upon their consciences to trouble them. For the expectation of a dreadful end will not let them perceive those pleasures which they have in their hands. And why do I speak of prisoners? Why, as for those that are living out of prison, and have a good fortune, yet have a bad conscience about them, handicraftsmen that work for their bread, and spend the whole day amid their labor, are in a far better plight than they. And for this reason too we say, How miserable the gladiators are (though seeing them as we do in taverns, drunken, luxurious, gormandizing), and call them the most miserable of men, because the calamity of the end which they must expect is too great to admit of comparison with that pleasure. Now if to them a life of this sort seems to be pleasing, remember what I am continually telling you, that it is no such marvel that a man who lives in vice should not flee from the misery and pain of vice. For see how a thing so detestable as that, yet seems to be delectable to those who practice it. Yet we do not on this account say, how happy they are, for this is just the very reason why we think them pitiable, because they have no notion of the evils they are among. And what would

you say of adulterers, who for a little pleasure undergo at once a disgraceful slavery, and a loss of money, and a perpetual fear (Hor. Sat. II. vii. 58-67), and in fact the very life of a Cain, or rather one that is even much worse than his; filled with fears for the present, and trembling for the future, and suspecting alike friend and foe, and those that know about it, and those that know nothing? Neither when they go to sleep are they quit of this struggle, their bad conscience shaping out for them dreams that abound with sundry terrors, and in this way horrifying them. Far otherwise is the chaste man, seeing he passes the present life unshackled and at full liberty. Weigh then against the little pleasure, the sundry fluctuations of these terrors, and with the short labor of continency, the calm of an entire life; and you will find the latter has more of pleasantness than the former. But as for the man that is set upon plundering and laying hands upon other men's goods, tell me if he has not to undergo countless pains in the way of running about, fawning upon slaves, freemen, doorkeepers; alarming and threatening, acting shamelessly, watching, trembling, in agony, suspecting everything. Far otherwise is the man that holds riches in contempt, for he too enjoys pleasure in abundance, and lives with no fear, and in perfect security. And if any one were to go through the other instances of vice, he would find much trouble, and many rocks. But what is of greater importance is, that in the case of virtue the difficulties come first, and the pleasant part afterwards, so the trouble is even thus alleviated. But in the case of vice, the reverse. After the pleasure, the pains and the punishments, so that by these besides the pleasure is done away. For as he who waits for the crown, perceives nothing of present annoyance, so he that has to expect the punishments after the pleasures has no power of gathering in a gladness that is unalloyed, since the fear puts everything in confusion. Or rather if any one were to scrutinize the thing with care, even before the punishment which follows upon these

things, he would find that even at the very moment when vice is boldly entered upon, a great deal of pain is felt. And, if you think fit, let us just examine this in the case of those who plunder other men's goods. Or those who in any way get together money, and setting aside the fears, and dangers, and trembling, and agony, and care, and all these things, let us suppose the case of a man, who has got rich without any annoyance, and feels sure about maintaining his present fortune (which he has no means of doing, still for all that let it be assumed for argument's sake). What sort of pleasure then is he to gather in from having so much about him? On the contrary, it is just this very thing that will not let him be glad-hearted. For as long as ever he desires other things besides, he is still upon the rack. Because desire gives pleasure at the time it has come to a stand. If thirsty, for instance, we feel refreshed, when we have drunk as much as we wish; but so long as we keep thirsty, even if we were to have exhausted all the fountains in the world, our torment were but growing greater; even if we were to drink up ten thousand rivers, our state of punishment were more distressing. And thou also, if you were to receive the goods of the whole world, and still to covet, wouldest make your punishment the greater, the more things you had tasted of. Fancy not then, that from having gathered a great sum together you shall have anything of pleasure, but rather by declining to be rich. But if you covet to be rich you will be always under the scourge. For this is a kind of love that does not reach its aim; and the longer journey you have gone, the further off you keep from the end.

Is not this a paradox then, a derangement, a madness in the extreme? Let us then forsake this first of evils, or rather let us not even touch this covetousness at all. Yet, if we have touched it, let us spring away from its first motions ([πρροοιμίωv]). For this is the advice the writer of the Proverbs gives us, when he speaks about the harlot: "*Spring away,*" he says, "*tarry*

not, neither go thou near to the door of her house" [Proverbs 5:8]: this same thing I would say to you about the love of money. For if by entering gradually you fall into this ocean of madness, you will not be able to get up out of it with ease, and as if you were in whirlpools, struggle as often as ever you may, it will not be easy for you to get clear; so after falling into this far worse abyss of covetousness, you will destroy your own self, with all that belongs to you. [Acts 8:20] And so my advice is that we be on our watch against the beginning, and avoid little evils, for the great ones are gendered by these. For he who gets into a way of saying at every sin, *This matters nothing!* will little by little ruin himself entirely. At all events it is this which has introduced vice; which has opened the doors to the robber (5 manuscripts devil), which has thrown down the walls of cities, this saying at each sin, *"This matters nothing!"* Thus in the case of the body too, the greatest of diseases grow up, when trifling ones are made light of. If Esau had not first been a traitor to his birthright, he would not have become unworthy of the blessings. If he had not rendered himself unworthy of the blessings, he would not have had the desire of going on to fratricide. If Cain had not fallen in love with the first place, but had left that to God, he would not have had the second place. Again, when he had the second place, if he had listened to the advice, he would not have travailed with the murder. Again, if after doing the murder he had come to repentance, when God called him, and had not answered in an irreverent way, he would not have had to suffer the subsequent evils. But if those before the Law did owing to this listlessness come to the very bottom of misery, only consider what is to become of us, who are called to a greater contest, unless we take strict heed unto ourselves, and make speed to quench the sparks of evil deeds before the whole pile is kindled. Take an instance of my meaning. Are you in the habit of false swearing? Do not stop at this only, but away with all

swearing, and you will have no further need of trouble. For it is far harder for a man that swears to keep from false swearing, than to abstain from swearing altogether. Are you an insulting and abusive person? A striker too? Lay down as a law for yourself not to be angry or brawl in the least, and with the root the fruit also will be gotten rid of. Are you lustful and dissipated? Make it your rule again not even to look at a woman [Job 31:1], or to go up into the theatre, or to trouble yourself with the beauty of other people whom you see about. For it is far easier not even to look at a woman of good figure, than after looking and taking in the lust, to thrust out the perturbation that comes thereof, the struggle being easier in the preliminaries ([προοιμίους]). Or rather we have no need of a struggle at all if we do not throw the gates open to the enemy, or take in the seeds of mischief ([κακίας]). And this is why Christ chastised the man who looks unchastely upon a woman [Matthew 5:28], that He might free us from greater labor, before the adversary became strong, bidding us cast him out of the house while he may be cast out even with ease. For what need to have superfluous trouble, and to get entangled with the enemies, when without entanglement we may erect the trophy, and before the wrestling seize upon the prize? For it is not so great a trouble not to look upon beautiful women, as it is while looking to restrain one's self. Or rather the first would be no trouble at all, but immense toil and labor comes on after looking. Since then this trouble is less (most manuscripts add, "*to the incontinent*"), or rather there is no labor at all, nor trouble, but the greater gain, why do we take pains to plunge into an ocean of countless evils? And farther, he who does not look upon a woman, will overcome such lust not only with greater ease, but with a higher purity, as he on the other hand who does look, gets free with more trouble, and not without a kind of stain, that is, if he does get free at all. For he that does not take a view of the beautiful

figure, is pure also from the lust that might result. But he who lusts to look, after first laying his reason low, and polluting it in countless ways, has then to cast out the stain that came of the lust, that is, if he do cast it out. This then is why Christ, to prevent our suffering in this way, did not prohibit murder only, but wrath; not adultery only, but an unchaste look even: not perjury only, but all swearing whatsoever. Nor does he make the measure of virtue stop here, but after having given these laws, He proceeds to a still greater degree. For after keeping us far away from murder, and bidding us to be clear of wrath, He bids us be ready even to suffer ill, and not to be prepared to suffer no more than what he who attacks us pleases, but even to go further, and to get the better of his utmost madness by the overflowingness of our own Christian spirit ([τῆς οἰκείας φηγοσοφίας]). For what He says is not, *"If a man smite you on your right cheek, bear it nobly and hold your peace;"* but He adds to this the yielding to him the other too. For He says, *"Turn to him the other also."* [Matthew 5:39] This then is the brilliant victory, to yield him even more than what he wishes, and to go beyond the bounds of his evil desire by the profuseness of one's own patient endurance. For in this way you will put a stop to his madness, and also receive from the second act again the reward of the first, besides putting a stop to wrath against him. See you, how in all cases it is we that have it in our power not to suffer ill, and not they that inflict it? Or rather it is not the not suffering ill alone, but even the having benefits (Sav. conj. [παθεῖν εὖ], so 2 manuscripts) done us that we have in our own power. And this is the truest wonder, that we are so far from being injured, if we be right-minded, that we are even benefited, and that too by the very things that we suffer unjustly at the hands of others. Reflect then; has such an one done you an affront? You have the power of making this affront redound to your honor. For if you do an affront in return, you only increase the disgrace. But if you

bless him that did you the affront, you will see that all men give you victory, and proclaim your praise. Do you see how by the things wherein we are wronged, we get good done unto us if we be so minded? This one may see happening in the case of money matters, of blows, and the same in everything else. For if we requite them with the opposite, we are but twining a double crown about us, one for the ills we have suffered, as well as one for the good we are doing. Whenever then a person comes and tells you that *"such an one has done you an affront, and keeps continually speaking ill of you to everybody,"* praise the man to those who tell you of him. For thus even if you wish to avenge yourself, you will have the power of inflicting punishment. For those who hear you, be they ever so foolish, will praise you, and hate him as fiercer than any brute beast, because he, without being at all wronged, caused you pain, but you, even when suffering wrong, requited him with the opposite. And so you will have it in your power to prove that all that he said was to no purpose. For he who feels the tooth of slander, gives by his vexation a proof that he is conscious of the truth of what is said. But he who smiles at it, by this very thing acquits himself of all suspicion with those who are present. Consider then how many good things you cull together from the affair. First, you rid yourself of all vexation and trouble. Secondly (rather this should come first), even if you have sins, you put them off, as the Publican did by bearing the Pharisee's accusation meekly. Besides, you will by this practice make your soul heroic (Gr. philosophic), and will enjoy endless praises from all men, and will divest yourself of any suspicion arising from what is said. But even if you are desirous of taking revenge upon the man, this too will follow in full measure, both by God's punishing him for what he has said, and before that punishment by your heroic conduct standing to him in the place of a mortal blow. For there is nothing that cuts those who affront

us so much to the heart, as for us who are affronted to smile at the affront. As then from behaving with Christian heroism so many honors will accrue to us, so from being little-minded just the opposite will befall us in everything. For we disgrace ourselves, and also seem to those present to be guilty of the things mentioned, and fill our soul with perturbation, and give our enemy pleasure, and provoke God, and add to our former sins. Taking then all this into consideration, let us flee from the abyss of a little mind ([μικροψυχίας]), and take refuge in the port of patient endurance ([μακροθυμίας]), that here we may at once *"find rest unto our souls"* [Matthew 11:29], as Christ also set forth, and may attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 13 on Romans

Rom. VII. 14

"For we know that the Law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."

After having said that great evils had taken place, and that sin, taking occasion by the commandment, had grown stronger, and the opposite of what the Law mainly aimed at had been the result, and after having thrown the hearer into a great deal of perplexity, he goes on next to give the rationale of these events, after first clearing the Law of any ill suspicion. For lest— upon hearing that it was through the commandment that sin took that occasion, and that it was when it came that sin revived, and through it deceived and killed— any one should suppose the Law to be the source of these evils, he first sets forth its defence with considerable advantage, not clearing it from accusation only, but encircling it also with the utmost praise. And this he lays down, not as granting it for his own part, but as declaring a universal judgment. *"For we know,"* he says, *"that the Law is spiritual."* As if he had said, This is an allowed thing, and self-evident, that it *"is spiritual,"* so far is it from being the cause of sin, or to blame for the evils that have happened. And observe, that he not only clears it of accusation, but bestows exceeding great praise upon it. For by calling it spiritual, he shows it to be a teacher of virtue and hostile to vice; for this is what being spiritual means, leading off from sin of every kind. And this the Law did do, by frightening, admonishing, chastening, correcting, recommending every kind of virtue. Whence then, was sin produced, if the teacher was so admirable? It was from the listlessness of its disciples. Wherefore he went on to say, *"but I am carnal;"* giving us a sketch now of

man, as comporting himself in the Law, and before the Law. *"Sold under sin."* Because with death (he means) the throng of passions also came in. For when the body had become mortal, it was henceforth a necessary thing for it to receive concupiscence, and anger, and pain, and all the other passions, which required a great deal of wisdom ([φιλοσοφίας]) to prevent their flooding us, and sinking reason in the depth of sin. For in themselves they were not sin, but, when their extravagancy was unbridled, it wrought this effect. Thus (that I may take one of them and examine it as a specimen) desire is not sin: but when it has run into extravagance, being not minded to keep within the laws of marriage, but springing even upon other men's wives; then the thing henceforward becomes adultery, yet not by reason of the desire, but by reason of its exorbitancy. And observe the wisdom of Paul. For after praising the Law, he hastens immediately to the earlier period, that he may show the state of our race, both then and at the time it received the Law, and make it plain how necessary the presence of grace was, a thing he labored on every occasion to prove. For when he says, *"sold under sin,"* he means it not of those who were under the Law only, but of those who had lived before the Law also, and of men from the very first. Next he mentions the way in which they were sold and made over.

Ver. 15. *"For that which I do, I know not."*

What does the *"I know not"* mean?— I am ignorant. And when could this ever happen? For nobody ever sinned in ignorance. Do you see, that if we do not receive his words with the proper caution, and keep looking to the object of the Apostle, countless incongruities will follow? For if they sinned through ignorance, then they did not deserve to be punished. As then he said above, *"for without the Law sin is dead,"* not meaning that they did not know they were sinning, but that they knew indeed, but not so distinctly; wherefore they were punished, but not so severely: and again; *"I*

should not have known lust;" not meaning an entire ignorance of it, but referring to the most distinct knowledge of it; and said, that it also "*wrought in me all manner of concupiscence,*" not meaning to say that the commandment made the concupiscence, but that sin through the commandment introduces an intense degree of concupiscence; so here it is not absolute ignorance that he means by saying, "*For what I do, I know not;*" since how then would he have pleasure in the law of God in his inner man? What then is this, "*I know not?*" I get dizzy, he means, I feel carried away, I find a violence done to me, I get tripped up without knowing how. Just as we often say, Such an one came and carried me away with him, without my knowing how; when it is not ignorance we mean as an excuse, but to show a sort of deceit, and circumvention, and plot. "*For what I would, that I do not: but what I hate, that I do.*" How then can you be said not to know what you are doing? For if you will the good, and hatest the evil, this requires a perfect knowledge. Whence it appears that he says, "*that I would not,*" not as denying free will, or as adducing any constrained necessity. For if it was not willingly, but by compulsion, that we sinned, then the punishments that took place before would not be justifiable. But as in saying "*I know not,*" it was not ignorance he set before us, but what we have said; so in adding the "*that I would not,*" it is no necessity he signifies, but the disapproval he felt of what was done. Since if this was not his meaning in saying, "*That which I would not, that I do:*" he would else have gone on, "*But I do what I am compelled and enforced to.*" For this is what is opposed to willing and power ([ἐ] [ξουσί& 139·]). But now he does not say this, but in the place of it he has put the word, "*that I hate,*" that you might learn how when he says, "*that I would not,*" he does not deny the power. Now, what does the "*that I would not*" mean? It means, what I praise not,

what I do not approve, what I love not. And in contradistinction to this, he adds what follows; *"But what I hate, that I do."*

Ver. 16. *"If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the Law, that it is good."*

You see here, that the understanding is not yet perverted, but keeps up its own noble character even during the action. For even if it does pursue vice, still it hates it the while, which would be great commendation, whether of the natural or the written Law. For that the Law is good, is (he says) plain, from the fact of my accusing myself, when I disobey the Law, and hate what has been done. And yet if the Law was to blame for the sin, how comes it that he felt a delight in it, yet hated what it orders to be done? For, *"I consent,"* he says, *"unto the Law, that it is good."*

Ver 17, 18. *"Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing."*

On this text, those who find fault with the flesh, and contend it was no part of God's creation, attack us. What are we to say then? Just what we did before, when discussing the Law: that as there he makes sin answerable for everything so here also. For he does not say, that the flesh works it, but just the contrary, *"it is not I that do it, but sin that dwells in me."* But if he does say that *"there dwells no good thing in it,"* still this is no charge against the flesh. For the fact that *"no good thing dwells in it,"* does not show that it is evil itself. Now we admit, that the flesh is not so great as the soul, and is inferior to it, yet not contrary, or opposed to it, or evil; but that it is beneath the soul, as a harp beneath a harper, and as a ship under the pilot. And these are not contrary to those who guide and use them, but go with them entirely, yet are not of the same honor with the artist. As then a person who says, that the art resides not in the harp or the ship, but in the pilot or harper, is not finding fault with the instruments, but pointing out the great difference

between them and the artist; so Paul in saying, that *"in my flesh dwells no good thing,"* is not finding fault with the body, but pointing out the soul's superiority. For this it is that has the whole duty or pilotage put into its hands, and that of playing. And this Paul here points out, giving the governing power to the soul, and after dividing man into these two things, the soul and the body, he says, that the flesh has less of reason, and is destitute of discretion, and ranks among things to be led, not among things that lead. But the soul has more wisdom, and can see what is to be done and what not, yet is not equal to pulling in the horse as it wishes. And this would be a charge not against the flesh only, but against the soul also, which knows indeed what it ought to do, but still does not carry out in practice what seems best to it. *"For to will,"* he says, *"is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not."* Here again in the words, *"I find not,"* he does not speak of any ignorance or perplexity, but a kind of thwarting and crafty assault made by sin, which he therefore points more clearly out in the next words.

Ver. 19, 20. *"For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwells in me."*

Do you see, how he acquits the essence of the soul, as well as the essence of the flesh, from accusation, and removes it entirely to sinful actions? For if the soul wills not the evil, it is cleared: and if he does not work it himself, the body too is set free, and the whole may be charged upon the evil moral choice. Now the essence of the soul and body and of that choice are not the same, for the two first are God's works, and the other is a motion from ourselves towards whatever we please to direct it. For willing is indeed natural ([ἐ] [μφορτον]), and is from God: but willing on this wise is our own, and from our own mind.

Ver. 21. *"I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me."*

What he says is not very clear. What then is it that is said? I praise the law, he says, in my conscience, and I find it pleads on my side so far as I am desirous of doing what is right, and that it invigorates this wish. For as I feel a pleasure in it, so does it yield praise to my decision. Do you see how he shows, that the knowledge of what is good and what is not such is an original and fundamental part of our nature, and that the Law of Moses praises it, and gets praise from it? For above he did not say so much as I get taught by the Law, but *"I consent to the Law;"* nor further on that I get instructed by it, but *"I delight in"* it. Now what is *"I delight?"* It is, I agree with it as right, as it does with me when wishing to do what is good. And so the willing what is good and the not willing what is evil was made a fundamental part of us from the first. But the Law, when it came, was made at once a stronger accuser in what was bad, and a greater praiser in what was good. Do you observe that in every place he bears witness to its having a kind of intensitiveness and additional advantage, yet nothing further? For though it praises and I delight in it, and wish what is good the *"evil is"* still *"present with me,"* and the agency of it has not been abolished. And thus the Law, with a man who determines upon doing anything good, only acts so far as auxiliary to him, as that it has the same wish as himself. Then since he had stated it indistinctly, as he goes on he gives a yet more distinct interpretation, by showing how the evil is present, how too the Law is a law to such a person only who has a mind to do what is good.

Ver. 22. *"For I delight,"* he says, *"in the law of God after the inward man."*

He means, for I knew even before this what was good, but when I find it set down in writing, I praise it.

Ver. 23. *"But I see another law warring against the law of my mind."*

Here again he calls sin a law warring against the other, not in respect of good order, but from the strict obedience yielded to it by those who comply with it. As then it gives the name of master [κύριον] [Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13] to Mammon, and of god [Philippians 3:19] to the belly, not because of their intrinsically deserving it, but because of the extreme obsequiousness of their subjects; so here he calls sin a law, owing to those who are so obsequious to it, and are afraid to leave it, just as those who have received the Law dread leaving the Law. This then, he means, is opposed to the law of nature; for this is what is meant by *"the law of my mind."* And he next represents an array and battle, and refers the whole struggle to the law of nature. For that of Moses was subsequently added over and above: yet still both the one and the other, the one as teaching, the other as praising what was right, wrought no great effects in this battle; so great was the thralldom of sin, overcoming and getting the upper hand as it did. And this Paul setting forth, and showing the decided ([κατὰ κράτος]) victory it had, says, *"I see another law warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity."* He does not use the word conquering only, but *"bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."* He does not say the bent of the flesh, or the nature of the flesh, but *"the law of sin."* That is, the thrall, the power. In what sense then does he say, *"Which is in my members?"* Now what is this? Surely it does not make the members to be sin, but makes them as distinct from sin as possible. For that which is in a thing is diverse from that wherein it is. As then the commandment also is not evil, because by it sin took occasion, so neither is the nature of the flesh, even if sin subdues us by means of it. For in this way the soul will be evil, and much more so too, since it has authority in matters of action. But these things are not so, certainly they are not. Since neither if a tyrant and a

robber were to take possession of a splendid mansion and a king's court, would the circumstance be any discredit to the house, inasmuch as the entire blame would come on those who contrived such an act. But the enemies of the truth, along with their impiety, fall unawares also into great unreasonableness. For they do not accuse the flesh only, but they also disparage the Law. And yet if the flesh were evil, the Law would be good. For it wars against the Law, and opposes it. If, however, the Law be not good, then the flesh is good. For it wars and fights against it even by their own account. How come they then to assert that both belong to the devil, putting things opposed to each other before us? Do you see, along with their impiety, how great is their unreasonableness also? But such doctrines as these are not the Church's, for it is the sin only that she condemns; and both the Laws which God has given, both that of nature and that of Moses, she says are hostile to this, and not to the flesh; for the flesh she denies to be sin, for it is a work of God's, and one very useful too in order to virtue, if we live soberly.

Ver. 24. *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

Do you notice what a great thralldom that of vice is, in that it overcomes even a mind that delighted in the Law? For no one can rejoin, he means, that I hate the Law and abhor it, and so sin overcomes me. For *"I delight in it, and consent to it,"* and flee for refuge to it, yet still it had not the power of saving one who had fled to it. But Christ saved even one that fled from Him. See what a vast advantage grace has! Yet the Apostle has not stated it thus; but with a sigh only, and a great lamentation, as if devoid of any to help him, he points out by his perplexity the might of Christ, and says, *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* The Law has not been able: conscience has proved unequal to

it, though it praised what was good, and did not praise it only, but even fought against the contrary of it. For by the very words "*wars against*" he shows that he was marshalled against it for his part. From what quarter then is one to hope for salvation?

Ver. 25. "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

Observe how he shows the necessity of having grace present with us, and that the well-doings herein belong alike to the Father and the Son. For if it is the Father Whom he thanks, still the Son is the cause of this thanksgiving. But when you hear him say, "*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" do not suppose him to be accusing the flesh. For he does not say "*body of sin,*" but "*body of death:*" that is, the mortal body—that which has been overcome by death, not that which gendered death. And this is no proof of the evil of the flesh, but of the marring ([ἐ] [πηρεΐας], thwarting) it has undergone. As if any one who was taken captive by the savages were to be said to belong to the savages, not as being a savage, but as being detained by them: so the body is said to be of death, as being held down thereby, not as producing it. Wherefore also it is not the body that he himself wishes to be delivered from, but the mortal body, hinting, as I have often said, that from its becoming subject to suffering, it also became an easy prey to sin. Why then, it may be said, the thralldom of sin being so great before the times of grace, were men punished for sinning? Because they had such commands given them as might even under sin's dominion be accomplished. For he did not draw them to the highest kind of conversation, but allowed them to enjoy wealth, and did not forbid having several wives, and to gratify anger in a just cause, and to make use of luxury within bounds. [Matthew 5:38] And so great was this condescension, that the written Law even required less than the law of nature. For the law of nature ordered one man to associate with one woman

throughout. And this Christ shows in the words, *"He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female."* [Matthew 19:4] But the Law of Moses neither forbade the putting away of one and the taking in of another, nor prohibited the having of two at once! [Matthew 5:31] And besides this there are also many other ordinances of the Law, that one might see those who were before its day fully performing, being instructed by the law of nature. They therefore who lived under the old dispensation had no hardship done them by so moderate a system of laws being imposed upon them. But if they were not, on these terms, able to get the upper hand, the charge is against their own listlessness. Wherefore Paul gives thanks, because Christ, without any rigorousness about these things, not only demanded no account of this moderate amount, but even made us able to have a greater race set before us. And therefore he says, *"I thank my God through Jesus Christ."* And letting the salvation which all agreed about pass, he goes from the points he had already made good, to another further point, in which he states that it was not our former sins only that we were freed from, but we were also made invincible for the future. For *"there is,"* he says, *"now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh."* Yet he did not say it before he had first recalled to mind our former condition again in the words, *"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Chap. viii. ver. 1. *"There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."*

Then as the fact that many fall into sin even after baptism presented a difficulty ([ἀ] [ντέπιπτεν]), he consequently hastened to meet it, and says not merely *"to them that are in Christ Jesus,"* but adds, *"who walk not after the flesh;"* so showing that all afterward comes of our listlessness. For now

we have the power of walking not after the flesh, but then it was a difficult task. Then he gives another proof of it by the sequel, in the words,

Ver. 2. *"For the law of the Spirit of life has made me free."*

It is the Spirit he is here calling the law of the Spirit. For as he calls sin the law of sin, so he here calls the Spirit the law of the Spirit. And yet he named that of Moses as such, where he says, *"For we know that the Law is spiritual."* What then is the difference? A great and unbounded one. For that was spiritual, but this is a law of the Spirit. Now what is the distinction between this and that? The other was merely given by the Spirit, but this even furnishes those that receive it with the Spirit in large measure.

Wherefore also he called it the law of life in contradistinction to that of sin, not that of Moses. For when he says, It freed me from the law of sin and death, it is not the law of Moses that he is here speaking of, since in no case does he style it the law of sin: for how could he one that he had called *"just and holy"* so often, and destructive of sin too? But it is that which wars against the law of the mind. For this grievous war did the grace of the Spirit put a stop to, by slaying sin, and making the contest light to us and crowning us at the outstart, and then drawing us to the struggle with abundant help. Next as it is ever his wont to turn from the Spirit to the Son and the Father, and to reckon all our estate to lean upon the Trinity, so does he here also. For after saying, *"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death,"* he pointed at the Father as doing this by the Son, then again at the Holy Spirit along with the Son. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free, he says. Then again, at the Father and the Son;

Ver. 3. *"For what the Law could not do,"* he says, *"in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*

Again, he seems indeed to be disparaging the Law. But if any one attends strictly, he even highly praises it, by showing that it harmonizes with Christ, and gives preference to the same things. For he does not speak of the badness of the Law, but of "*what it could not do;*" and so again, "*in that it was weak,*" not, "*in that it was mischievous, or designing.*" And even weakness he does not ascribe to it, but to the flesh, as he says, "*in that it was weak through the flesh,*" using the word "*flesh*" here again not for the essence and subsistency itself, but giving its name to the more carnal sort of mind. In which way he acquits both the body and the Law of any accusation. Yet not in this way only, but by what comes next also. For supposing the Law to be of the contrary part, how was it Christ came to its assistance, and fulfilled its requisitions, and lent it a helping hand by condemning sin in the flesh? For this was what was lacking, since in the soul the Lord had condemned it long ago. What then? Is it the greater thing that the Law accomplished, but the less that the Only-Begotten did? Surely not. For it was God that was the principal doer of that also, in that He gave us the law of nature, and added the written one to it. Again, there were no use of the greater, if the lesser had not been supplied. For what good is it to know what things ought to be done, if a man does not follow it out? None, for it were but a greater condemnation. And so He that has saved the soul it is, Who has made the flesh also easy to bridle. For to teach is easy, but to show besides a way in which these things were easily done, this is the marvel. Now it was for this that the Only-Begotten came, and did not depart before He had set us free from this difficulty. But what is greater, is the method of the victory; for He took none other flesh, but this very one which was beset with troubles. So it is as if any one were to see in the street a vile woman of the baser sort being beaten, and were to say he was her son, when he was the king's, and so to get her free from those who ill treated her. And

this He really did, in that He confessed that He was the Son of Man, and stood by it (i.e. the flesh), and condemned the sin. However, He did not endure to smite it besides; or rather, He smote it with the blow of His death, but in this very act it was not the smitten flesh which was condemned and perished, but the sin which had been smiting. And this is the greatest possible marvel. For if it were not in the flesh that the victory took place, it would not be so astonishing, since this the Law also wrought. But the wonder is, that it was with the flesh ([μετὰ σαρκὸς]) that His trophy was raised, and that what had been overthrown numberless times by sin, did itself get a glorious victory over it. For behold what strange things there were that took place! One was, that sin did not conquer the flesh; another, that sin was conquered, and conquered by it too. For it is not the same thing not to get conquered, and to conquer that which was continually overthrowing us. A third is, that it not only conquered it, but even chastised it. For by not sinning it kept from being conquered, but by dying also, He overcame and condemned it, having made the flesh, that before was so readily made a mock of by it, a plain object of fear to it. In this way then, He at once unnerved its power, and abolished the death by it introduced. For so long as it took hold of sinners, it with justice kept pressing to its end. But after finding a sinless body, when it had given it up to death, it was condemned as having acted unjustly. Do you observe, how many proofs of victory there are? The flesh not being conquered by sin, Its even conquering and condemning it, Its not condemning it barely, but condemning it as having sinned. For after having convicted it of injustice, he proceeds to condemn it, and that not by power and might barely, but even by the rules of justice. For this is what he means by saying, *"for sin condemned sin in the flesh."* As if he had said that he had convicted it of great sin, and then condemned it. So you see it is sin that gets condemned everywhere, and not

the flesh, for this is even crowned with honor, and has to give sentence against the other. But if he does say that it was *"in the likeness"* of flesh that he sent the Son, do not therefore suppose that His flesh was of a different kind. For as he called it *"sinful,"* this was why he put the word *"likeness."* For sinful flesh it was not that Christ had, but like indeed to our sinful flesh, yet sinless, and in nature the same with us. And so even from this it is plain that by nature the flesh was not evil. For it was not by taking a different one instead of the former, nor by changing this same one in substance, that Christ caused it to regain the victory: but He let it abide in its own nature, and yet made it bind on the crown of victory over sin, and then after the victory raised it up, and made it immortal. What then, it may be said, is this to me, whether it was this flesh that these things happened in? Nay, it concerns you very much. Wherefore also he proceeds:

Ver. 4. *"That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh."*

What means this word, righteousness? Why, the end, the scope, the well-doing. For what was its design, and what did it enjoin? To be without sin. This then is made good to us ([κατώρθωται ἡμῖν]) now through Christ. And the making a stand against it, and the getting the better of it, came from Him. But it is for us to enjoy the victory. Then shall we never sin henceforth? We never shall unless we have become exceedingly relaxed and supine. And this is why he added, *"to them that walk not after the flesh."* For lest, after hearing that Christ has delivered you from the war of sin, and that the requisition ([δικαίωμα]) of the Law is fulfilled in you, by sin having been *"condemned in the flesh,"* you should break up all your defences; therefore, in that place also, after saying, *"there is therefore no condemnation,"* he added, *"to them that walk not after the flesh;"* and here also, *"that the requisition of the Law might be fulfilled in us,"* he proceeds

with the very same thing; or rather, not with it only, but even with a much stronger thing. For after saying, *"that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us that walk not after the flesh,"* he proceeds, *"but after the Spirit."*

So showing, that it is not only binding upon us to keep ourselves from evil deeds, but also to be adorned ([κομᾶν]) with good. For to give you the crown is His; but it is yours to hold it fast when given. For the righteousness of the Law, that one should not become liable to its curse, Christ has accomplished for you. Be not a traitor then to so great a gift, but keep guarding this goodly treasure. For in this passage he shows that the Law will not suffice to save us, unless, after coming from it, we display a life worthy of the Gift. And so he again advocates the Law in saying what he does. For when we have once become obedient to Christ, we must use all ways and plans so that its righteousness, which Christ fulfilled, may abide in us, and not come to naught.

Ver. 5. *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh."*

Yet even this is no disparaging of the flesh. For so long as it keeps its own place, nothing amiss comes to pass. But when we let it have its own will in everything, and it passes over its proper bounds, and rises up against the soul, then it destroys and corrupts everything, yet not owing to its own nature, but to its being out of proportion, and the disorder thereupon ensuing. *"But they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit."*

Ver. 6. *"For to be carnally minded is death."* He does not speak of the nature of the flesh, or the essence of the body, but of being carnally *"minded,"* which may be set right again, and abolished. And in saying thus, he does not ascribe to the flesh any reasoning power of its own. Far from it. But to set forth the grosser motion of the mind, and giving this a name from

the inferior part, and in the same way as he often is in the habit of calling man in his entirety, and viewed as possessed of a soul, flesh. *"But to be spiritually minded."* Here again he speaks of the spiritual mind, in the same way as he says further on, *"But He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the spirit"* [Romans 8:27]; and he points out many blessings resulting from this, both in the present life, and in that which is to come. For as the evils which being carnally minded introduces, are far outnumbered by those blessings which a spiritual mind affords. And this he points out in the words *"life and peace."* The one is in contraposition to the first— for death is what he says to be carnally minded is. And the other in contraposition to the following. For after mentioning peace, he goes on,

Ver. 7. *"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God:"* and this is worse than death. Then to show how it is at once death and enmity; *"for it is not subject to the Law of God,"* he says, *"neither indeed can be."* But be not troubled at hearing the *"neither indeed can be."* For this difficulty admits of an easy solution. For what he here names *"carnal mindedness"* is the reasoning (or *"way of thinking,"* [λογισμὸν]) that is earthly, gross, and eager-hearted after the things of this life and its wicked doings. It is of this he says *"neither yet can"* it *"be subject"* to God. And what hope of salvation is there left, if it be impossible for one who is bad to become good? This is not what he says. Else how would Paul have become such as he was? How would the (penitent) thief, or Manasses, or the Ninevites, or how would David after falling have recovered himself? How would Peter after the denial have raised himself up? [1 Corinthians 5:5] How could he that had lived in fornication have been enlisted among Christ's fold? [2 Corinthians 2:6-11] How could the Galatians who had *"fallen from grace"* [Galatians 5:4], have attained their former dignity again? What he says then is not that it is impossible for a man that is wicked to become good, but that it is

impossible for one who continues wicked to be subject to God. Yet for a man to be changed, and so become good, and subject to Him, is easy. For he does not say that man cannot be subject to God, but, wicked doing cannot be good. As if he had said, fornication cannot be chastity, nor vice virtue. And this it says in the Gospel also, "*A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*" [Matthew 7:18], not to bar the change from virtue to vice, but to say how incapable continuance in vice is of bringing forth good fruits. For He does not say that an evil tree cannot become a good one, but that bring forth good fruit it cannot, while it continues evil. For that it can be changed, He shows from this passage, and from another parable, when He introduces the tares as becoming wheat, on which score also He forbids their being rooted up; "*Lest,*" He says, "*ye root up also the wheat with them*" [Matthew 13:29]; that is, that which will spring ([γίνεσθαι], 4 manuscripts [τίκτεσθαι]) from them. It is vice then he means by carnal mindedness, and by spiritual mindedness the grace given, and the working of it discernible in the right determination of mind, not discussing in any part of this passage, a substance and an entity, but virtue and vice. For that which you had no power to do under the Law, now, he means, you will be able to do, to go on uprightly, and with no intervening fall, if you lay hold of the Spirit's aid. For it is not enough not to walk after the flesh, but we must also go after the Spirit, since turning away from what is evil will not secure our salvation, but we must also do what is good. And this will come about, if we give our souls up to the Spirit, and persuade our flesh to get acquainted with its proper position, for in this way we shall make it also spiritual; as also if we be listless we shall make our soul carnal. For since it was no natural necessity which put the gift into us, but the freedom of choice placed it in our hands, it rests with you henceforward whether this shall be or the other. For He, on His part, has performed everything. For sin no longer wars

against the law of our mind, neither does it lead us away captive as heretofore, for all that state has been ended and broken up, and the affections cower in fear and trembling at the grace of the Spirit. But if you will quench the light, and cast out the holder of the reins, and chase the helmsman away, then charge the tossing thenceforth upon yourself. For since virtue has been now made an easier thing (for which cause also we are under far stricter obligations of religious living), consider how men's condition lay when the Law prevailed, and how at present, since grace has shone forth. The things which aforetime seemed not possible to any one, virginity, and contempt of death, and of other stronger sufferings, are now in full vigor through every part of the world, and it is not with us alone, but with the Scythians, and Thracians, and Indians, and Persians, and several other barbarous nations, that there are companies of virgins, and clans of martyrs, and congregations of monks, and these now grown even more numerous than the married, and strictness of fasting, and the utmost renunciation of property. Now these are things which, with one or two exceptions, persons who lived under the Law never conceived even in a dream. Since you see then the real state of things voiced with a shriller note than any trumpet, let not yourself grow soft and treacherous to so great a grace. Since not even after the faith is it possible for a listless man to be saved! For the wrestlings are made easy that you may strive and conquer, nor that you should sleep, or abuse the greatness of the grace by making it a reason for listlessness, so wallowing again in the former mire. And so he goes on to say,

Ver. 8. *"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."*

What then? Are we, it will be said, to cut our bodies in pieces to please God, and to make our escape from the flesh? And would you have us be homicides, and so lead us to virtue? You see what inconsistencies are

gendered by taking the words literally. For by "*the flesh*" in this passage, he does not mean the body, or the essence of the body, but that life which is fleshly and worldly, and uses self-indulgence and extravagance to the full, so making the entire man flesh. For as they that have the wings of the Spirit, make the body also spiritual, so do they who bound off from this, and are the slaves of the belly, and of pleasure, make the soul also flesh, not that they change the essence of it, but that they mar its noble birth. And this mode of speaking is to be met with in many parts of the Old Testament also, to signify by flesh the gross and earthly life, which is entangled in pleasures that are not convenient. For to Noah He says, "*My Spirit shall not always make its abode in these men, because they are flesh.*" [Genesis 6:3 as the Septuagint gives it] And yet Noah was himself also compassed about with flesh. But this is not the complaint, the being compassed about with the flesh, for this is so by nature, but the having chosen a carnal life. Wherefore also Paul says, "*But they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Then he proceeds:

Ver. 9. "*But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.*"

Here again, he does not mean flesh absolutely, but such sort of flesh, that which was in a whirl and thralldom of passions. Why then, it may be said, does he not say so, nor state any difference? It is to rouse the hearer, and to show that he that lives aright is not even in the body. For inasmuch as it was in a manner clear to every one that the spiritual man was not in sin, he states the greater truth that it was not in sin alone, that the spiritual man was not, but not even in the flesh was he henceforward, having become from that very moment an Angel, and ascended into heaven, and henceforward barely carrying the body about. Now if this be your reason for disparaging the flesh, because it is by its name that he calls the fleshly life, at this rate you are also for disparaging the world, because wickedness

is often called after it, as Christ also said to His disciples, *"You are not of this world;"* and again to His brethren, He says, *"The world cannot hate you, but me it hates."* [John 15:19. Ibid. 7:7] And the soul too Paul must afterwards be calling estranged from God, since to those that live in error, he gives the name of men of the soul [1 Corinthians 2:14, ψυχικὸς] A.V. *natural*. But this is not so, indeed it is not so. For we are not to look to the bare words, but always to the sentiment of the speaker, and so come to a perfectly distinct knowledge of what is said. For some things are good, some bad, and some indifferent. Thus the soul and the flesh belong to things indifferent, since each may become either the one or the other. But the spirit belongs to things good, and at no time becomes any other thing. Again, the mind of the flesh, that is, ill-doing, belongs to things always bad. *"For it is not subject to the law of God."* If then you yield your soul and body to the better, you will have become of its part. If on the other hand thou yield to the worse, then are you made a partaker of the ruin therein, not owing to the nature of the soul and the flesh, but owing to that judgment which has the power of choosing either. And to show that these things are so, and that the words do not disparage the flesh, let us take up the phrase itself again, and sift it more thoroughly. *"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit,"* he says. What then? Were they not in the flesh, and did they go about without any bodies? What sense would this be? You see that it is the carnal life that he intimates. And why did he not say, But you are not in sin? It is that you may come to know that Christ has not extinguished the tyranny of sin only, but has even made the flesh to weigh us down less, and to be more spiritual, not by changing its nature, but rather by giving it wings. For as when fire comes in company with iron, the iron also becomes fire, though abiding in its own nature still; thus with them that believe, and have the Spirit, the flesh henceforth goes over into that manner of working, and becomes

wholly spiritual, crucified in all parts, and flying with the same wings as the soul, such as was the body of him who here speaks. Wherefore all self-indulgence and pleasure he made scorn of, and found his self-indulgence in hunger, and stripes, and prisons, and did not even feel pain in undergoing them. [2 Corinthians 11] And it was to show this that he said, *"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment,"* etc. [2 Corinthians 4:17] So well had he tutored even the flesh to be in harmony with the spirit. *"If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you"* ([εἴπερ].) He often uses this *"if so be,"* not to express any doubt, but even when he is quite persuaded of the thing, and instead of *"since,"* as when he says, *"If it is a righteous thing,"* for *"seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you."* [2 Thessalonians 1:6] Again, *"Have ye suffered so many things in vain, if it be yet in vain?"* [Galatians 3:4]

"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ." He does not say, if you have not, but he brings forward the distressing word, as applied to other persons. *"He is none of His,"* he says.

Ver. 10. *"And if Christ be in you."*

Again, what is good he applies to them, and the distressing part was short and parenthetical. And that which is an object of desire, is on either side of it, and put at length too, so as to throw the other into shade. Now this he says, not as affirming that the Spirit is Christ, far from it, but to show that he who has the Spirit not only is called Christ's, but even has Christ Himself. For it cannot but be that where the Spirit is, there Christ is also. For wheresoever one Person of the Trinity is, there the whole Trinity is present. For It is undivided in Itself, and has a most entire Oneness. What then, it may be said, will happen, if Christ be in us? *"The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* You see the great evils that come of not having the Holy Spirit; death, enmity against

God, inability to satisfy His laws, not being Christ's as we should be, the want of His indwelling. Consider now also what great blessings come of having the Spirit. Being Christ's, having Christ himself, vying with the Angels (for this is what mortifying the flesh is), and living an immortal life, holding henceforward the earnest of the Resurrection, running with ease the race of virtue. For he does not say so little as that the body is henceforward inactive for sin, but that it is even dead, so magnifying the ease of the race. For such an one without troubles and labors gains the crown. Then afterward for this reason he adds also, "*to sin*," that you may see that it is the viciousness, not the essence of the body, that He has abolished at once. For if the latter had been done, many things even of a kind to be beneficial to the soul would have been abolished also. This however is not what he says, but while it is yet alive and abiding, he contends, it is dead. For this is the sign of our having the Son, of the Spirit being in us, that our bodies should be in no respect different from those that lie on the bier with respect to the working of sin (so the manuscripts Sav. "*of the body*." The preceding words are slightly corrupt.) But be not affrighted at hearing of mortifying. For in it you have what is really life, with no death to succeed it: and such is that of the Spirit. It yields not to death any more, but wears out death and consumes it, and that which it receives, it keeps it immortal. And this is why after saying "*the body is dead*," he does not say, "*but the Spirit 'lives*,'" but, "*is life*," to point out that He (the Spirit) had the power of giving this to others also. Then again to brace up his hearer, he tells him the cause of the Life, and the proof of it. Now this is righteousness; for where there is no sin, death is not to be seen either; but where death is not to be seen, life is indissoluble.

Ver. 11. "*But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up our Lord shall also quicken your mortal*

bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you."

Again, he touches the point of the Resurrection, since this was the most encouraging hope to the hearer, and gave him a security from what had happened unto Christ. Now be not thou afraid because you are compassed about with a dead body. Let it have the Spirit, and it shall assuredly rise again. What then, shall the bodies which have not the Spirit not rise? How then must *"all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ?"* [Romans 14:10] or how will the account of hell be trustworthy? For if they that have not the Spirit rise not, there will not be a hell at all. What then is it which is said? All shall rise, yet not all to life, but some to punishment and some to life. [John 5:29] This is why he did not say, shall raise up, but shall quicken. [Daniel 12:2] And this is a greater thing than resurrection, and is given to the just only. And the cause of this honor he adds in the words, *"By His Spirit that dwells in you."* And so if while here thou drive away the grace of the Spirit, and do not depart with it still safe, you will assuredly perish, though thou dost rise again. For as He will not endure then, if He see His Spirit shining in you, to give you up to punishment, so neither will He allow them, if He see It quenched, to bring you into the Bride-chamber, even as He admitted not those virgins. [Matthew 25:12]

Suffer not your body then to live in this world, that it may live then! Make it die, that it die not. For if it keep living, it will not live: but if it die, then shall it live. And this is the case with resurrection in general. For it must die first and be buried, and then become immortal. But this has been done in the Font. It has therefore had first its crucifixion and burial, and then been raised. This has also happened with the Lord's Body. For that also was crucified and buried (7 manuscripts died) and rose again. This then let us too be doing: let us keep continually mortifying it in its works. I do not mean in its substance— far be it from me— but in its inclinations towards

evil doings. For this is a life too, or rather this only is life, undergoing nothing that is common to man, nor being a slave to pleasures. For he who has set himself under the rule of these, has no power even to live through the low spirits, the fears, and the dangers, and the countless throng of ills, that rise from them. For if death must be expected, he has died, before death, of fear. And if it be disease he dreads, or affront, or poverty, or any of the other ills one cannot anticipate, he is ruined and has perished. What then can be more miserable than a life of this sort? But far otherwise is he that lives to the Spirit, for he stands at once above fears and grief and dangers and every kind of change: and that not by undergoing no such thing, but, what is much greater, by thinking scorn of them when they assail him. And how is this to be? It will be if the Spirit dwell in us continually. For he does not speak of any short stay made thereby, but of a continual indwelling. Hence he does not say "*the Spirit which*" dwelt, but "*which dwells in us,*" so pointing to a continual abiding. He then is most truly alive, who is dead to this life. Hence he says, "*The Spirit is life because of righteousness.*" And to make the thing clearer, let me bring before you two men, one who is given up to extravagances and pleasures, and the deceitfulness of this life; and the other made dead to all these; and let us see which is more really the living one. For let one of these two be very rich and much looked up to, keeping parasites and flatterers, and let us suppose him to spend the whole day upon this, in revelling and drunkenness: and let the other live in poverty, and fasting, and hard fare, and strict rules ([φιλοσοφία& 139necessary food only; or if you will let him even pass two or three days without food. Which then of these two think we (3 manuscripts you) is most really alive? Men in general will, I know, reckon the former so, the man that takes his pleasure (Sav. σκιρτώντα], manuscripts [τρυφώντα]) and squanders his goods. But we reckon the man that enjoys the moderate fare. Now then since it is still a

subject of contest and opposition let us go into the houses of them both, and just at the very time too when in your judgment the rich man is living in truest sense, in the very season of self-indulgence, and when we have got in, let us look and see the real condition of each of these men. For it is from the actions that it appears which is alive and which dead. Shall we not find the one among his books, or in prayer and fasting, or some other necessary duty, awake and sober, and conversing with God? But the other we shall see stupid in drunkenness, and in no better condition than a dead man. And if we wait till the evening, we shall see this death coming upon him more and more, and then sleep again succeeding to that: but the other we shall see even in the night keeping from wine and sleep. Which then shall we pronounce to be most alive, the man that lies in a state of insensibility, and is an open laughing-stock to everybody? Or the man that is active, and conversing with God? For if you go up to the one, and tell him something he ought to know, you will not hear him say a word, any more than a dead man. But the latter, whether you choose to be in his company at night or by day, you will see to be an angel rather than a man, and will hear him speak wisdom about things in Heaven. Do you see how one of them is alive above all men living, and the other in a more pitiable plight even than the dead? And even if he have a mind to stir he sees one thing instead of another, and is like people that are mad, or rather is in a worse plight even than they. For if any one were to do them any harm, we should at once feel pity for the sufferer, and rebuke the doer of the wrong. But this man, if we were to see a person trample on him, we should not only be disinclined to pity, but should even give judgment against him, now that he was fallen. And will you tell me this is life, and not a harder lot than deaths unnumbered? So you see the self-indulgent man is not only dead, but worse than dead, and more miserable than a man possessed. For the one is the object of pity, the other

of hatred. And the one has allowance made him, the other suffers punishment for his madness. But if externally he is so ridiculous, as having his saliva tainted, and his breath stinking of wine, just consider what case his wretched soul, inhumed as it were in a grave, in such a body as this, is probably in. For one may look upon this as much the same as if one were to permit a damsel, comely, chaste, free-born, of good family, and handsome, to be trampled on, and every way insulted by a serving woman, that was savage, and disgusting, and impure; drunkenness being something of this sort. And who, being in his senses, would not choose to die a thousand deaths, rather than live a single day in this way? For even if at daylight he were to get up, and seem to be sober from that revelling (or absurd show, [κωμῳδίας], 1 manuscript [κώμου]) of his, still even then it is not the clear brightness of temperance which he enjoys, since the cloud from the storm of drunkenness still is hanging before his eyes. And even if we were to grant him the clearness of sobriety, what were he the better? For this soberness would be of no service to him, except to let him see his accusers. For when he is in the midst of his unseemly deeds, he is so far a gainer in not perceiving those that laugh at him. But when it is day he loses this comfort even, and while his servants are murmuring, and his wife is ashamed, and his friends accuse him, and his enemies make sport of him, he knows it too. What can be more miserable than a life like this, to be laughed at all day by everybody, and when it is evening to do the same unseemly things afresh. But what if you would let me put the covetous before you? For this is another, and even a worse intoxication. But if it be an intoxication, then it must be a worse death by far than the former, since the intoxication is more grievous. And indeed it is not so sad to be drunk with wine as with covetousness. For in the former case, the penalty ends with the sufferings (several manuscript "*sufferer*,") and results in insensibility, and

the drunkard's own ruin. But in this case the mischief passes on to thousands of souls, and kindles wars of sundry kinds upon all sides. Come then and let us put this beside the other, and let us see what are the points they have in common, and in what again this is worse than it, and let us make a comparison of drunkards today. For with that blissful man, who lives to the Spirit, let them not be put at all in comparison, but only tried by one another. And again, let us bring the money-table before you, laden as it is with blood. What then have they in common, and in what are they like each other? It is in the very nature of the disease. For the species of drunkenness is different, as one comes of wine, the other of money, but its way of affecting them is similar, both being alike possessed with an exorbitant desire. For he who is drunken with wine, the more glasses he has drunk off, the more he longs for; and he that is in love with money, the more he compasses, the more he kindles the flame of desire, and the more importunate he renders his thirst. In this point then they resemble each other. But in another the covetous man has the advantage (in a bad sense). Now what is this? Why that the other's affection is a natural one. For the wine is hot, and adds to one's natural drought, and so makes drunkards thirsty. But what is there to make the other man always keep desiring more? How comes it that when he is increased in riches, then he is in the veriest poverty? This complaint then is a perplexing one, and has more of paradox about it. But if you please, we will take a view of them after the drunkenness also. Or rather, there is no such thing as ever seeing the covetous man after his drunkenness, so continual a state of intoxication is he in! Let us then view them both in the state of drunkenness, and let us get a distinct notion which is the most ridiculous, and let us again figure to ourselves a correct sketch of them. We shall see then the man who dotes with his wine at eventide with his eyes open, seeing no one, but moving

about at mere hap-hazard, and stumbling against such as fall in his way, and spewing, and convulsed, and exposing his nakedness in an unseemly manner. [See Habakkuk 2:16] And if his wife be there, or his daughter, or his maid-servant, or anybody else, they will laugh at him heartily. And now let us bring before you the covetous man. Here what happens is not deserving of laughter only, but even of a curse, and exceeding wrath, and thunderbolts without number. At present however let us look at the ridiculous part, for this man as well as the other has an ignorance of all, whether friend or foe. And like him too, though his eyes are open, he is blinded. And as the former takes all he sees for wine, so does this man take all for money. And his spewing is even more disgusting. For it is not food that he vomits, but words of abuse, of insolence, of war, of death, that draws upon his own head lightnings without number from above. And as the body of the drunkard is livid and dissolving, so also is the other's soul. Or rather, even his body is not free from this disorder, but it is taken even worse, care eating it away worse than wine does (as do anger too and want of sleep), and by degrees exhausting it entirely. And he that is seized with illness from wine, after the night is over may get sober. But this person is always drunken day and night, watching or sleeping, so paying a severer penalty for it than any prisoner, or person at work in the mines, or suffering any punishment more grievous than this, if such there be. Is it then life pray, and not death? Or rather, is it not a fate more wretched than any death? For death gives the body rest, and sets it free from ridicule, as well as disgrace and sins: but these drunken fits plunge it into all these, stopping up the ears, dulling the eyesight, keeping down the understanding in great darkness. For it will not bear the mention of anything but interest, and interest upon interest, and shameful gains, and odious traffickings, and ungentlemanly and slavelike transactions, barking like a dog at everybody, and hating

everybody, averse to everybody, at war with everybody, without any reason for it, rising up against the poor, grudging at the rich, and civil to nobody. And if he have a wife, or children, or friends, if he may not use them all towards getting gain, these are to him more his enemies than natural enemies. What then can be worse than madness of this sort, and what more wretched? When a man is preparing rocks for his own self on every side, and shoals, and precipices, and gulfs, and pits without number, while he has but one body, and is the slave of one belly. And if any thrust you into a state office, you will be a runaway, through fear of expense. Yet to yourself you are laying up countless charges far more distressing than those, enlisting yourself for services not only more expensive, but also more dangerous, to be done for mammon, and not paying this tyrant a money contribution only, nor of bodily labor, torture to the soul, and grief, but even of your blood itself, that you may have some addition to your property (miserable and sorrow-stricken man!) out of this barbarous slavery. Do you not see those who are taken day by day to the grave, how they are carried to tombs naked and destitute of all things, unable to take with them anything that is in the house, but bearing what clothes they have about them to the worm? Consider these day by day, and perchance the malady will abate, unless you mean even by such an occasion to be still more mad at the expensiveness of the funeral rites— for the malady is importunate, the disease terrible! This then is why we address you upon this subject at every meeting, and constantly foment your hearing, that at all events by your growing accustomed to such thoughts, some good may come. But be not contentious, for it is not only at the Day to come, but even before it, that this manifold malady brings with it sundry punishments. For if I were to tell you of those who pass their days in chains, or of one nailed to a lingering disease, or of one struggling with famine, or of any other thing whatsoever,

I could point out no one who suffers so much as they do who love money. For what severer evil can befall one, than being hated by all men, than hating all men, than not having kindly feeling towards any, than being never satisfied, than being in a continual thirst, than struggling with a perpetual hunger, and that a more distressing one than what all men esteem such? Than having pains day by day, than being never sober, than being continually in worries and harasses? For all these things, and more than these, are what the covetous set their shoulder to; in the midst of their gaining having no perception of pleasure, though scraping to themselves from all men, because of their desiring more. But in the case of their incurring a loss, if it be but of a farthing, they think they have suffered most grievously, and have been cast out of life itself. What language then can put these evils before you? And if their fate here be such, consider also what comes after this life, the being cast out of the kingdom, the pain that comes from hell, the perpetual chains, the outer darkness, the venomous worm, the gnashing of teeth, the affliction, the sore straitening, the rivers of fire, the furnaces that never get quenched. And gathering all these together, and weighing them against the pleasure of money, tear up now this disease root and branch, that so receiving the true riches, and being set free from this grievous poverty, you may obtain the present blessings, and those to come, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 14 on Romans

Romans VIII. 12, 13

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live."

After showing how great the reward of a spiritual life is, and that it makes Christ to dwell in us, and that it quickens our mortal bodies, and wings them to heaven, and renders the way of virtue easier, he next fitly introduces an exhortation to this purpose. *"Therefore"* we ought *"not to live after the flesh."* But this is not what he says, for he words it in a much more striking and powerful way, thus, *"we are debtors to the Spirit."* For saying, *"we are debtors not to the flesh,"* indicates this. And this is a point he is everywhere giving proof of, that what God has done for us is not matter of debt, but of mere grace. But after this, what we do is no longer matter of free-will offering, but of debt. For when he says, *"You are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men"* [1 Corinthians 7:23]; and when he writes, *"You are not your own"* [1 Corinthians 6:19]; and again in another passage he calls these selfsame things to their mind, in these words, If (most manuscripts om. *"if"*) One died for all, then all died that they should not henceforth live unto themselves. [2 Corinthians 5:15] And it is to establish this that he says here also, *"We are debtors;"* then since he said we are *"not"* debtors *"to the flesh,"* lest you should again take him to be speaking against the nature of the flesh, he does not leave speaking, but proceeds, *"to live after the flesh."* For there are many things which we do owe it, as giving it food, warmth, and rest, medicine when out of health, clothing, and a thousand other attentions. To prevent your supposing then that it is this

ministration he is for abrogating when he says, "*We are not debtors to the flesh,*" he explains it by saying, "*to live after the flesh.*" For the care that I am for abrogating is, he means, that which leads to sin, as I should be for its having what is healing to it. And this he shows further on. For when he says, "*Make not provision for the flesh,*" he does not pause at this, but adds, "*to fulfil the lusts thereof.*" [Romans 13:14] And this instruction he gives us here also, meaning, Let it have attention shown it indeed, for we do owe it this, yet let us not live according to the flesh, that is, let us not make it the mistress of our life. For it must be the follower, not the leader, and it is not it that must regulate our life, but the laws of the Spirit must it receive. Having then defined this point, and having proved that we are debtors to the Spirit, to show next for what benefits it is that we are debtors, he does not speak of those past (a thing which serves as a most striking proof of his judgment), but those which were to come; although even the former were enough for the purpose. Yet still he does not set them down in the present case, or mention even those unspeakable blessings, but the things to come. For a benefit once for all conferred does not, for the most part, draw men on so much as one which is expected, and is to come. After adding this then, he first uses the pains and ills that come of living after the flesh, to put them in fear, in the following words; "*For if you live after the flesh you shall die,*" so intimating to us that deathless death, punishment, and vengeance in hell. Or rather if one were to look accurately into this, such an one is, even in this present life, dead. And this we have made clear to you in the last discourse. "*But if you through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.*" You see that it is not the essence of the body whereof we are discoursing, but the deeds of the flesh. For he does not say, "*if you through the Spirit do mortify*" the essence "*of the body,*" but "*the deeds of*" it, and these not all deeds, but such as are evil. And this is plain in what follows:

for if you do this, "*you shall live*," he says. And how is it in the nature of things for this to be, if it was all deeds that his language applied to? For seeing and hearing and speaking and walking are deeds of the body; and if we mortify these, we shall be so far from living, that we shall have to suffer the punishment of a manslayer. What sort of deeds then does he mean us to mortify? Those which tend toward wickedness, those which go after vice, which there is no other way of mortifying save through the Spirit. For by killing yourself you may put an end to the others. And this you have no right to do. But to these (you can put an end) by the Spirit only. For if This be present, all the billows are laid low, and the passions cower under It, and nothing can exalt itself against us. So you see how it is on things to come, as I said before, that he grounds his exhortations to us, and shows that we are debtors not owing to what has been already done only. For the advantage of the Spirit is not this only, that He has set us free from our former sins, but that He renders us impregnable against future ones, and counts us worthy of the immortal life. Then, to state another reward also, he proceeds:

Ver. 14. "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*"

Now this is again a much greater honor than the first. And this is why he does not say merely, As many as live by the Spirit of God, but, "*as many as are led by the Spirit of God*," to show that he would have Him use such power over our life as a pilot does over a ship, or a charioteer over a pair of horses. And it is not the body only, but the soul itself too, that he is for setting under reins of this sort. For he would not have even that independent, but place its authority also under the power of the Spirit. For lest through a confidence in the Gift of the Font they should turn negligent of their conversation after it, he would say, that even supposing you receive

baptism, yet if you are not minded to be "*led by the Spirit*" afterwards, you lose the dignity bestowed upon you, and the pre-eminence of your adoption. This is why he does not say, As many as have received the Spirit, but, "*as many as are led by the Spirit*," that is, as many as live up to this all their life long, "*they are the sons of God*." Then since this dignity was given to the Jews also, for it says, "*I said you are Gods, and all of you children of the Most High*" [Psalm 82:6]; and again, "*I have nourished and brought up children*" [Isaiah 1:2]; and so, "*Israel is My first-born*" [Exodus 4:22]; and Paul too says, "*Whose is the adoption*" [Romans 9:4]— he next asserts the great difference between the latter and the former honor. For though the names are the same, he means, still, the things are not the same. And of these points he gives a clear demonstration, by introducing a comparison drawn both from the persons so advanced ([κατορθούντων]) and from what was given them, and from what was to come. And first he shows what they of old had given them. What then was this? "*A spirit of bondage*:" and so he thus proceeds,

Ver. 15. "*For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*."

Then not staying to mention that which stands in contradistinction to bondage, that is, the spirit of freedom, he has named what is far greater, that of adoption, through which he at the same time brings in the other, saying, "*But you have received the Spirit of adoption*."

But this is plain. But what the spirit of bondage may be, is not so plain, and there is need of making it clearer. Now what he says is so far from being clear, that it is in fact very perplexing. For the people of the Jews did not receive the Spirit. What then is his meaning here? It is the letter he gives this name to, for spiritual it was, and so he called the Law spiritual also, and the water from the Rock, and the Manna. "*For they did eat*," he

says, *"of the same spiritual meat, and all drank of the same spiritual drink."* [1 Corinthians 10:3-4] And to the Rock he gives this name, when he says, *"For they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them."* Now it is because all the rites then wrought were above nature that he calls them spiritual, and not because those who then partook of them received the Spirit. And in what sense were those letters, letters of bondage? Set before yourself the whole dispensation, and then you will have a clear view of this also. For recompenses were with them close at hand, and the reward followed immediately, being at once proportionate, and like a kind of daily ration given to domestic servants, and terrors in abundance came to their height before their eyes, and their purifications concerned their bodies, and their continency extended but to their actions. But with us it is not so, since the imagination even and the conscience gets purged out. For He does not say, *"You shall do no murder,"* only, but even you shall not be angry: so too, it is not, *"You shall not commit adultery,"* but you shall not look unchastely. So that it is not to be from fear of present punishment, but out of desire towards Himself, that both our being habitually virtuous, and all our single good deeds are to come. Neither does he promise a land flowing with milk and honey, but makes us joint-heir with the Only-Begotten, so making us by every means stand aloof from things present, and promising to give such things especially as are worth the acceptance of men made sons of God, nothing, that is, of a sensible kind or corporeal, but spiritual all of them. And so they, even if they had the name of sons, were but as slaves; but we as having been made free, have received the adoption, and are waiting for Heaven. And with them He discoursed through the intervention of others, with us by Himself. And all that they did was through the impulse of fear, but the spiritual act through a coveting and a vehement desire. And this they show by the fact of their overstepping the commandments. They, as

hirelings and obstinate persons, so never left murmuring: but these do all for the pleasing of the Father. So too they blasphemed when they had benefits done them: but we are thankful at being jeopardated. And if there be need of punishing both of us upon our sinning, even in this case the difference is great. For it is not on being stoned and branded and maimed by the priests, as they were, that we are brought round. But it is enough for us to be cast out from our Father's table, and to be out of sight for certain days. And with the Jews the honor of adoption was one of name only, but here the reality followed also, the cleansing of Baptism, the giving of the Spirit, the furnishing of the other blessings. And there are several other points besides, which go to show our high birth and their low condition. After intimating all these then by speaking of the Spirit, and fear, and the adoption, he gives a fresh proof again of having the Spirit of adoption. Now what is this? That *"we cry, Abba, Father."* And how great this is, the initiated know (St. Cyr. Jer. Cat. 23, §11, p. 276, O.T.), being with good reason bidden to use this word first in the Prayer of the initiated. What then, it may be said, did not they also call God Father? Do you not hear Moses, when he says, *"You deserted the God that begot you?"* [Deuteronomy 32:15, Septuagint] Do you not hear Malachi reproaching them, and saying, that *"one God formed you,"* and there is *"one Father of you all?"* [Malachi 2:10, Septuagint] Still, if these words and others besides are used, we do not find them anywhere calling God by the name, or praying in this language. But we all, priests and laymen, rulers and ruled, are ordered to pray herein. And this is the first language we give utterance to, after those marvellous throes, and that strange and unusual mode of labor. If in any other instances they so called Him, that was only of their own mind. But those in the state of grace do it through being moved by the in-working of the Spirit. For as there is a Spirit of Wisdom, after which they that were unwise became wise, and this

discloses itself in their teaching: and a Spirit of Power there is, whereby the feeble raised up the dead, and drove out devils; a Spirit also of the gift of healing, and a Spirit of prophecy, and a Spirit of tongues, so also a Spirit of adoption. And as we know the Spirit of prophecy, in that he who has it foretells things to come, not speaking of his own mind, but moved by the Grace; so too is the Spirit of adoption, whereby he that is gifted with it calls God, Father, as moved by the Spirit. Wishing to express this as a most true descent, he used also the Hebrew tongue, for he does not say only, "*Father*," but "*Abba, Father*," which name is a special sign of true-born children to their fathers. After mentioning then the diversity resulting from their conversation, that resulting from the grace which had been given, and that from their freedom, he brings forward another demonstration of the superiority which goes with this adoption. Now of what kind is this?

Ver. 16. "*The Spirit Itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*"

For it is not from the language merely, he says, that I make my assertion, but from the cause out of which the language has its birth; since it is from the Spirit suggesting it that we so speak. And this in another passage he has put into plainer words, thus: "*God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father.*" [Galatians 4:6] And what is that, "*Spirit bears witness with spirit?*" The Comforter, he means, with that Gift, which is given unto us. For it is not of the Gift alone that it is the voice, but of the Comforter also who gave the Gift, He Himself having taught us through the Gift so to speak. But when the "*Spirit bears witness*" what farther place for doubtfulness? For if it were a man, or angel, or archangel, or any other such power that promised this, then there might be reason in some doubting. But when it is the Highest Essence that bestows this Gift, and "*bears witness*" by the very words He bade us use in prayer, who would

doubt any more of our dignity? For not even when the Emperor elects any one, and proclaims in all men's hearing the honor done him, does anybody venture to gainsay.

Ver. 17. *"And if children, then heirs."*

Observe how he enhances the Gift little by little. For since it is a possible case to be children, and yet not become heirs (for it is not by any means all children that are heirs), he adds this besides— that we are heirs. But the Jews, besides their not having the same adoption as we, were also cast out from the inheritance. For *"He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen"* [Matthew 21:41]: and before this, He said that *"many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, but the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out."* (ib. 8:11, 12.) But even here he does not pause, but sets down something even greater than this. What may this be then? That we are heirs of God; and so he adds, *"heirs of God."* And what is more still, that we are not simply heirs, but also *"joints heirs with Christ."* Observe how ambitious he is of bringing us near to the Master. For since it is not all children that are heirs, he shows that we are both children and heirs; next, as it is not all heirs that are heirs to any great amount, he shows that we have this point with us too, as we are heirs of God. Again, since it were possible to be God's heir, but in no sense *"joint heir with"* the Only-Begotten, he shows that we have this also. And consider his wisdom. For after throwing the distasteful part into a short compass, when he was saying what was to become of such as *"live after the flesh,"* for instance, that they *"shall die,"* when he comes to the more soothing part, he leads forth his discourse into a large room, and so expands it on the recompense of rewards, and in pointing out that the gifts too are manifold and great. For if even the being a child were a grace unspeakable, just think how great a

thing it is to be heir! But if this be great, much more is it to be *"joint heir."* Then to show that the Gift is not of grace only, and to give at the same time a credibility to what he says, he proceeds, *"If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."* If, he would say, we be sharers with Him in what is painful, much more shall it be so in what is good. For He who bestowed such blessings upon those who had wrought no good, how, when He sees them laboring and suffering so much, shall he do else than give them greater requital? Having then shown that the thing was a matter of return, to make men give credit to what was said, and prevent any from doubting, he shows further that it has the virtue of a gift. The one he showed, that what was said might gain credit even with those that doubted, and that the receivers of it might not feel ashamed as being evermore receiving salvation for nought; and the other, that you might see that God outdoes the toils by His recompenses. And the one he has shown in the words, *"If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."* But the other in proceeding to add;

Ver. 18. *"The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in (Gr. [εἰς]) us."*

In what went before, he requires of the spiritual man the correcting of his habits (Mar. and 6 manuscripts passions), where he says, *"You are not debtors to live after the flesh,"* that such an one, for instance, should be above lust, anger, money, vainglory, grudging. But here having reminded them of the whole gift, both as given and as to come, and raised him up aloft with hopes, and placed him near to Christ, and showed him to be a joint-heir of the Only-Begotten; he now leads him forth with confidence even to dangers. For to get the better of the evil affections in us, is not the same thing with bearing up under those trials, scourges, famine, plunderings, bonds, chains, executions. For these last required much more

of a noble and vigorous spirit. And observe how he at once allays and rouses the spirit of the combatants. For after he had shown that the rewards were greater than the labors, he both exhorts to greater efforts, and yet will not let them be elated, as being still outdone by the crowns given in requital. And in another passage he says, *"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"* [2 Corinthians 4:17]: it being the deeper sort of persons he was then speaking to. Here, however, he does not allow that the afflictions were light; but still he mingles comfort with them by the compensation which good things to come afford, in the words, *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared,"* and he does not say, with the rest ([ἄ] [νῆσιν]) that is to come, but what is much greater, *"with the glory which is to come."* For it does not follow, that where rest is there is glory; but that where glory is there is rest, does follow: then as he had said that it is to come, he shows that it already is. For he does not say, that which is to be, but *"which shall be revealed in us,"* as if already existing but unrevealed. As also in another place he said in clearer words, *"Our life is hid with Christ in God."* Be then of a good heart about it. For already has it been prepared, and awaits your labors. But if it vexes you that it is yet to come, rather let this very thing rejoice you. For it is owing to its being great and unutterable, and transcending our present condition, that it is stored up there. And so he has not put barely *"the sufferings of this present time,"* but he speaks so as to show that it is not in quality only, but in quantity also, that the other life has the advantage. For these sufferings, whatever they are, are attached to our present life; but the blessings to come reach themselves out over ages without end. And since he had no way of giving a particular description of these, or of putting them before us in language, he gives them a name from what seems to be specially an object of desire with us, *"glory."*

For the summit of blessings and the sum of them, this seems to be. And to urge the hearer on in another way also, he gives a loftiness to his discourse by the mention of the creation, gaining two points by what he is next saying, the contempt of things present, and the desire of things to come, and a third beside these, or rather the first, is the showing how the human race is cared for on God's part and in what honor He holds our nature. And besides this, all the doctrines of the philosophers, which they had framed for themselves about this world, as a sort of cobweb or child's mound, he throws down with this one doctrine. But that these things may stand in a clearer light, let us hear the Apostle's own language.

Ver. 19, 20. *"For the earnest expectation of the creation waits,"* he says, *"for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope."*

And the meaning is something of this kind. The creation itself is in the midst of its pangs, waiting for and expecting these good things whereof we have just now spoken. For *"earnest expectation"* ([ἀ] [ποκαρδοκία], looking out) implies expecting intensely. And so his discourse becomes more emphatic, and he personifies this whole world as the prophets also do, when they introduce the floods clapping their hands, and little hills leaping, and mountains skipping, not that we are to fancy them alive, or ascribe any reasoning power to them, but that we may learn the greatness of the blessings, so great as to reach even to things without sense also. The very same thing they do many times also in the case of afflicting things, since they bring in the vine lamenting, and the wine too, and the mountains, and the boardings of the Temple howling, and in this case too it is that we may understand the extremity of the evils. It is then in imitation of these that the Apostle makes a living person of the creature here, and says that it groans

and travails: not that he heard any groan conveyed from the earth and heaven to him, but that he might show the exceeding greatness of the good things to come; and the desire of freedom from the ills which now pervaded them. *"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same."* What is the meaning of, *"the creation was made subject to vanity?"* Why that it became corruptible. For what cause, and on what account? On account of you, O man. For since you have taken a body mortal and liable to suffering, the earth too has received a curse, and brought forth thorns and thistles. But that the heaven, when it is waxen old along with the earth, is to change afterwards to a better portion ([λῆξις] v. p. 384) hear from the Prophet in his words; *"You, O Lord, from the beginning hast founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They shall perish, but you shall endure; and they all shall grow old like a garment, and You shall fold them up like a cloak, and they shall be changed."* [Psalm 102:25-26] Isaiah too declares the same, when he says, *"Look to the heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, for the heavens are as a firmament of smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall perish in like manner."* [Isaiah 51:6]. Now you see in what sense the creation is *"in bondage to vanity,"* and how it is to be freed from the ruined state. For the one says, *"You shall fold them up as a garment, and they shall be changed;"* and Isaiah says, *"and they that dwell therein shall perish in like manner,"* not of course meaning an utter perishing. For neither do they that dwell therein, mankind, that is, undergo such an one, but a temporary one, and through it they are changed into an incorruptible [1 Corinthians 15:53] state, and so therefore will the creature be. And all this he showed by the way, by his saying *"in like manner"* [2 Peter 3:13], which Paul also says farther on. At present, however, he speaks about the bondage itself, and shows for what reason it became such, and

gives ourselves as the cause of it. What then? Was it harshly treated on another's account? By no means, for it was on my account that it was made. What wrong then is done it, which was made for my sake, when it suffers these things for my correction? Or, indeed, one has no need to moot the question of right and wrong at all in the case of things void of soul and feeling. But Paul, since he had made it a living person, makes use of none of these topics I have mentioned, but another kind of language, as desiring to comfort the hearer with the utmost advantage. And of what kind is this? What have you to say? He means. It was evil intreated for your sake, and became corruptible; yet it has had no wrong done it. For incorruptible will it be for your sake again. This then is the meaning of "*in hope*." But when he says, it was "*not willingly*" that it was made subject, it is not to show that it is possessed of judgment that he says so, but that you may learn that the whole is brought about by Christ's care, and this is no achievement of its own. And now say in what hope?

Ver. 21. "*That the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.*"

Now what is this creation? Not yourself alone, but that also which is your inferior, and partakes not of reason or sense, this too shall be a sharer in your blessings. For "*it shall be freed*," he says, "*from the bondage of corruption*," that is, it shall no longer be corruptible, but shall go along with the beauty given to your body; just as when this became corruptible, that became corruptible also; so now it is made incorruptible, that also shall follow it too. And to show this he proceeds. ([εἰς]) "*Into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*" That is, because of their liberty. For as a nurse who is bringing up a king's child, when he has come to his father's power, does herself enjoy the good things along with him, thus also is the creation, he means. You see how in all respects man takes the lead, and that it is for his

sake that all things are made. See how he solaces the struggler, and shows the unspeakable love of God toward man. For why, he would say, do you fret at your temptations? You are suffering for yourself, the creation for you. Nor does he solace only, but also shows what he says to be trustworthy. For if the creation which was made entirely for you is *"in hope,"* much more ought thou to be, through whom the creation is to come to the enjoyment of those good things. Thus men (3 manuscripts fathers) also when a son is to appear at his coming to a dignity, clothe even the servants with a brighter garment, to the glory of the son; so will God also clothe the creature with incorruption for the glorious liberty of the children.

Ver. 22. *"For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now."*

Observe, how he shames the hearer, saying almost, Be not thou worse than the creation, neither find a pleasure in resting in things present. Not only ought we not to cling to them, but even to groan over the delay of our departure hence. For if the creation does this, much more ought thou to do so, honored with reason as you are. But as this was not yet enough to force their attention, he proceeds.

Ver. 23. *"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves."*

That is, having had a taste of the things to come. For even if any should be quite stone hard, he means what has been given already is enough to raise him up, and draw him off from things present, and to wing him after things to come in two ways, both by the greatness of the things that are given, and by the fact that, great and numerous as they are, they are but first-fruits. For if the first-fruits be so great that we are thereby freed even from our sins, and attain to righteousness and sanctification, and that those of that time both drove out devils, and raised the dead by their shadow

[Acts 5:15], or garments [Acts 19:12], consider how great the whole must be. And if the creation, devoid as it is of mind and reason, and though in ignorance of these things, yet groans, much more should we. Next, that he may give the heretics no handle, or seem to be disparaging our present world, we groan, he says, not as finding fault with the present system, but through a desire of those greater things. And this he shows in the words, *"Waiting for the adoption."* What do you say, let me hear? You insisted on it at every turn, and cried aloud, that we were already made sons, and now do you place this good thing among hopes, writing that we must needs wait for it? Now it is to set this right by the sequel that he says, *"to wit, the redemption of our body."* That is, the perfect glory. Our lot indeed is at present uncertainty to our last breath, since many of us that were sons have become dogs and prisoners. But if we de cease with a good hope, then is the gift unmovable, and clearer, and greater, having no longer any change to fear from death and sin. Then therefore will the grace be secure, when our body shall be freed from death and its countless ailments (or passions). For this is full redemption ([ἀ] [πολύτρωσις]), not a redemption only, but such, that we shall never again return to our former captivity. For that you may not be perplexed at hearing so much of glory without getting any distinct knowledge of it, he partially exposes to your view the things to come, setting before you the change of your body (Gr. changing your body), and along with it the change of the whole creation. And this he has put in a clearer light in another passage, where he says, *"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like His glorious Body."* [Philippians 3:21] And in another place again he writes and says, *"But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."* [1 Corinthians 15:54] But to show, that with the corruption of the body the constitution of the things of

this life will also come to an end, he wrote again elsewhere, "*For the fashion of this world passes away.*" [1 Corinthians 7:31]

Ver. 24. "*For we are saved by hope,*" he says.

Now since he had dwelt upon the promise of the things to come, and this seemed to pain the weaker hearer, if the blessings are all matter of hope; after proving before that they are surer than things present and visible, and discoursing at large on the gifts already given, and showing that we have received the first fruits of those good things, lest we should seek our all in this world, and be traitors to the nobility that faith gives us, he says, "*For we are (Gr. were) saved by hope.*" And this is about what he means. We are not to seek our all in this life, but to have hope also. For this is the only gift that we brought in to God, believing Him in what He promised shall come, and it was by this way alone we were saved. If then we lose this hope, we have lost all that was of our own contributing. For I put you this question, he would say, Were you not liable for countless sins? Were you not in despair? Were you not under sentence? Were not all out of heart about your salvation? What then saved you? It was your hoping in God alone, and trusting to Him about His promises and gifts, and nothing besides had you to bring in. If it was this then that saved you, hold it fast now also. For that which afforded you so great blessings, to a certainty will not deceive you in regard to things to come. For in that it found you dead, and ruined, and a prisoner, and an enemy, and yet made you a friend, and a son, and a freeman, and righteous, and a joint-heir, and yielded such great things as no one ever expected even, how, after such munificence and attachment, will it betray you in what is to follow? Say not to me, hopes again! expectations again! faith again! For it is in this way thou were saved from the beginning, and this dowry was the only one that you brought in to the Bridegroom. Hold it then fast and keep it: for if you demand to have

everything in this world, you have lost that well-doing of yours, through which you became bright, and this is why he proceeds to say, *"But hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for?"*

Ver. 25.— *"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*

That is, if you are to be looking for everything in this world, what need is there for hope? What is hope then? It is feeling confidence in things to come. What great demand then does God make upon you, since He Himself gives you blessings quite entire from His own stores? One thing only, hope, He asks of you, that you too may have somewhat of your own to contribute toward your salvation. And this he intimates in what he proceeds with: *"For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."* As then God crowns him that undergoes labors, and hardnesses, and countless toils, so does He him that hopes. For the name of patience belongs to hard work and much endurance. Yet even this He has granted to the man that hopes, that He might solace the wearied soul. And then to show that for this light task we enjoy abundant aid, he proceeds:

Ver. 26. *"Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities."*

For the one point is your own, that of patience, but the other comes of the Spirit's furnishings, Who also cherishes (Gr. anoints) you unto this hope, and through it again lightens your labors. Then that you might know that it is not in your labors only and dangers that this grace stands by you, but even in things the most easy seemingly, it works with you, and on all occasions bears its part in the alliance, he proceeds to say,

"For we know not what we should pray for as we ought."

And this he said to show the Spirit's great concern about us, and also to instruct them not to think for certainty that those things are desirable which to man's reasonings appear so. For since it was likely that they, when they

were scourged, and driven out, and suffering grievances without number, should be seeking a respite, and ask this favor of God, and think it was advantageous to them, by no means (he says) suppose that what seem blessings to you really are so. For we need the Spirit's aid even to do this. So feeble is man, and such a nothing by himself. For this is why he says, *"For we know not what we should pray for as we ought."* In order that the learner might not feel any shame at his ignorance, he does not say, you know not, but, *"we know not."* And that he did not say this merely to seem moderate, he plainly shows from other passages. For he desired in his prayers unceasingly to see Rome. Yet the time when he obtained it was not at once when he desired it. And for *"the thorn"* that was given him *"in the flesh"* [2 Corinthians 12:8], that is the dangers, he often besought God, and was entirely unsuccessful. And so was Moses, who in the Old Testament prays to see Palestine [Deuteronomy 3:26], and Jeremiah when he made supplication for the Jews [Jeremiah 15:1], and Abraham when he interceded for the people of Sodom. *"But the Spirit Itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."* This statement is not clear, owing to the cessation of many of the wonders which then used to take place. Wherefore I must needs inform you of the state of things at that time, and in this way the rest of the subject will be cleared. What therefore was the state of things then? God did in those days give to all that were baptized certain excellent gifts, and the name that these had was spirits. For *"the spirits of the Prophets,"* it says, *"are subject to the prophets."* [1 Corinthians 14:32] And one had the gift of prophecy and foretold things to come; and another of wisdom, and taught the many; and another of healings, and cured the sick; and another of miracles, and raised the dead; another of tongues, and spoke different languages. And with all these there was also a gift of prayer, which also was called a spirit, and he that had this prayed for all the people.

For since we are ignorant of much that is profitable for us and ask things that are not profitable, the gift of prayer came into some particular person of that day, and what was profitable for all the whole Church alike, he was the appointed person to ask for in behalf of all, and the instructor of the rest. Spirit then is the name that he gives here to the grace of this character, and the soul that receives the grace, and intercedes to God, and groans. For he that was counted worthy of such grace as this, standing with much compunction, and with many mental groanings falling before God, asked the things that were profitable for all. And of this the Deacon of the present day is a symbol when he offers up the prayers for the people. This then is what Paul means when he says, *"the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."*

Ver. 27. *"But He that searches the hearts."*

You see that it is not about the Comforter that he is speaking, but about the spiritual heart. Since if this were not so, he ought to have said, *"He that searches"* the Spirit. But that you may learn that the language is meant of a spiritual man, who has the gift of prayer, he proceeds, *"And he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit,"* that is, of the spiritual man.

"Because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Not (he means) that he informs God as if ignorant, but this is done that we may learn to pray for proper things, and to ask of God what is pleasing to Him. For this is what the *"according to God"* is. And so this was with a view to solace those that came to Him, and to yield them excellent instruction. For He that furnished the gifts, and gave besides blessings without number, was the Comforter. Hence it says, *"all these things works one and the self-same Spirit."* [1 Corinthians 12:11] And it is for our instruction that this takes place, and to show the love of the Spirit, it

condescends even to this. And it is from this that the person praying gets heard, because the prayer is made *"according to the will of God."*

You see from how many points he instructs them in the love that was shown them and the honor that was done them. And what is there that God has not done for us? The world He has made corruptible for us, and again for us incorruptible. He suffered His Prophets to be ill-treated for our sake, sent them into captivity for us, let them fall into the furnace, and undergo ills without number. Nay, He made them prophets for us, and the Apostles also He made for us. He gave up for us His Only-Begotten, He punishes the devil for us, He has seated us on the Right Hand, He was reproached for us. *"For the reproaches of them that reproached you,"* it says, *"fell upon me."* [Psalm 69:9] Yet still, when we are drawing back after so great favor, He leaves us not, but again entreats, and on our account incites others to entreat for us, that He may show us favor. And so it was with Moses. For to him He says, *"Let Me alone, that I may blot them out"* [Exodus 32:10], that He might drive him upon supplicating on their behalf. And now He does the same thing. Hence He gave the gift of prayer. But this He does, not as Himself standing in need of entreaty, but that we might not, from being saved without effort ([ἀ] [πλῶς]), grow indifferent. For this cause it is on account of David, and of this person and that, He often says, that He is reconciled with them, to establish again this very thing, that the reconciliation may be with all due formality. Still He would have looked more loving toward man, if it had not been through this and the other prophet, but of Himself, that He told them that He ceased to be angry. But the reason of His not holding to that point was, that this ground of reconciliation might not become an occasion for listlessness. Wherefore to Jeremiah also He said, *"Pray not for this people, for I will not hear you"* [Jeremiah 11:14], not as wishing to stop his praying (for He earnestly longs

for our salvation), but to terrify them: and this the prophet also seeing did not cease praying. And that you may see that it was not through a wish to turn him from it, but to shame them that He said this, hear what it says. *"Do you see not what these are doing?"* [Ezekiel 8:6, not verbally from Septuagint] And when He says to the city *"Though thou wash you with nitre, and take you much soap (Gr. herb), yet you are stained before Me"* [Jeremiah 2:22], it is not that He may cast them into despair that He so speaks, but that He may rouse them to repentance. For as in the case of the Ninevites, by giving the sentence without limitation, and holding out no good hope, He scared them the more, and led them to repentance, so He does here also, both to rouse them, and to render the prophet more venerated, that in this way at least they may hear him. Then, since they kept on in a state of incurable madness, and were not to be sobered even by the rest being carried away, he first exhorts them to remain there. But when they kept not up to this, but deserted to Egypt, this indeed He allowed them, but requires of them not to desert to irreligion as well as to Egypt. [Jeremiah 43:8] But when they did not comply in this either, He sends the prophet along with them, so that they might not after all suffer total wreck. [Jeremiah 44:28] For since they did not follow Him when He called, He next follows them to discipline them, and hinder their being hurried further into vice, and as a father full of affection does a child who takes all treatment in the same peevish way, conducting him about everywhere with himself, and following him about. This was the reason why He sent not Jeremiah only into Egypt, but also Ezekiel into Babylon, and they did not refuse to go. For when they found their Master love the people exceedingly, they continued themselves to do so likewise. Much as if a right-minded servant were to take compassion upon an intractable son when he saw his father grieving and lamenting about him. And what was there that they did

not suffer for them? They were sawn asunder, they were driven out, they were reproached, they were stoned, they underwent numberless grievances. And after all this they would run back to them. Samuel, for instance, ceased not to mourn for Saul, miserably insulted as he was by him, and injured irreparably. [1 Samuel 15:35] Still he held none of these things in remembrance. And for the people of the Jews, Jeremiah has composed Lamentations in writing. And when the general of the Persians had given him liberty to dwell securely, and with perfect freedom, wherever he pleased, he preferred above dwelling at home the affliction of the people, and their hard durance in a strange land. [Jeremiah 11:5] So Moses left the palace and the sort of living herein, and hasted to be among their calamities. And Daniel abode for twenty days following without food, pinching himself with the most severe fast, that he might reconcile God to them. [Daniel 10:2] And the three Children too, when in the furnace, and so fierce a fire, put up a supplication for them. For it was not on their account that they were grieved, as they were saved; but since they considered that then was the time for the greatest boldness of speech, they consequently prayed in their behalf; hence too they said, *"In a contrite heart and an humble spirit let us be accepted."* [Song. ver. 16] For them Joshua also rent his garments. [Joshua 7:6] For them Ezekiel too wailed and lamented when he saw them cut down. [Ezekiel 9:8] And Jeremy said, *"Let me alone, I will weep bitterly."* [Isaiah 22:4] And before this, when he did not venture openly to pray for a remittance of their sad estate, he sought for some limited period, when he says, *"How long, O, Lord?"* [Isaiah 6:11] For full of affectionateness is the whole race of the saints. Wherefore also St. Paul says, *"Put on therefore, as the elect saints of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind."* [Colossians 3:12] You see the strict propriety of the word, and how he would have us continually merciful. For

he does not say, "*show mercy*" only, but put it on, that like as our garment is always with us, so may mercy be. And he does not say merely mercy, but "*bowels of mercy*," that we may imitate the natural affection of relations.

But we do just the contrary, and if any one comes to ask a single penny of us, we insult them, abuse them, call them impostors. Do you not shudder, man, and blush to call him an impostor for bread? Why even supposing such an one is practising imposture, he deserves to be pitied for it, because he is so pressed with famine as to put on such a character. This then is a reproach to our cruelty. For since we had not the heart to bestow with readiness, they are compelled to practise a great many arts, so as to put a cheat off upon our inhumanity, and to soften down our harshness. Now if it was gold and silver that he asked of you, then there would be some reason in your suspicions. But if it is necessary food that he comes to you for, why be showing yourself wise so unseasonably, and take so over exact an account of him, accusing him of idleness and sloth? For if we must talk in this way, it is not others but ourselves that we ought to address. When therefore you are going to God to ask forgiveness for your sins, then call these words to mind, and you will know you deserve to have these things said to you by God, much more than the poor man by you. And yet God has never said such words to you as "*Stand off, since you are an impostor, always coming to church and hearing My laws, but when abroad, setting gold, and pleasure ([ἐ] [πιθυμίαν]), and friendship, and in fact anything above My commandments. And now you make yourself humble, but when your prayers are over you are bold, and cruel, and inhuman. Get you hence, therefore, and never come to Me any more.*" Yet this, and more than this, we deserve to have said to us; but still He never did reproach us in any such way, but is long-suffering and fulfils everything on His own part, and gives us more than we ask for. Calling this to mind then, let us relieve the poverty

of those that beg of us, and if they do impose upon us, let us not be over exact about it. For such a salvation is it that we ourselves require, one with pardon, with kindness ([φιλανθρωπίας]), with much mercy along with it. For it is not possible, it certainly is not, if our estate were searched into strictly, that we should ever be saved, but we must needs be punished and brought to ruin altogether. Let us not then be bitter judges of others lest we also get a strict account demanded of us. For we have sins that are too great to plead any excuse. And therefore let us show more mercy towards those who have committed inexcusable sins, that we also may lay up for ourselves the like mercy beforehand. And yet be as large-hearted as we may, we shall never be able to contribute such love toward man as we stand in need of at the hand of a God that loves man. How then is it other than monstrous, when we are in need of so many things ourselves, to be over exact with our fellow servants, and do all we can against ourselves? For thou dost not in this way so much prove him unworthy of your liberality, as yourself of God's love toward man. For he that deals over exactly with his fellow servant, will be the more sure to find the like treatment at God's hand. Let us not speak against ourselves, but even if they come out of idleness or wilfulness, let us bestow. For we also do many sins through wilfulness, or rather we do them all through wilfulness, and yet God does not presently call us to punishment, but gives us a set time for penance, nurturing us day by day, disciplining us, teaching us, supplying us with all other things, that we too may emulate this mercy of His. Let us then quell this cruelty, let us cast out this brutal spirit, as benefiting thereby ourselves rather than others. For to these we give money, and bread, and clothing, but for ourselves we are laying up beforehand very great glory, and such as there is no putting into words. For we receive again our bodies incorruptible, and are glorified together and reign together with Christ. And

how great this is we shall see from hence— or rather there is no means of making us see it clearly now. But to start from our present blessings, and to get from them at least some kind of scanty notice of it, I will endeavor so far as I may be able to put before you what I have been speaking of. Tell me then, if when you were grown old, and were living in poverty, and any one were to promise suddenly to make you young, and to bring you to the very prime of life, and to render you very strong, and preëminently beautiful, and were to give you the kingdom of the whole earth for a thousand years, a kingdom in the state of the deepest peace, what is there that you would not choose to do, and to suffer to gain this promise? (4 manuscripts and Sav. Mar. object.) See then, Christ promises not this, but much more than this. For the distance between old age and youth is not to be compared with the difference of corruption and incorruption, nor that of a kingdom and poverty to that of the present glory and the future, but the difference is that of dreams and a reality. Or rather I have yet said nothing to the purpose, since there is no language capable of setting before you the greatness of the difference between things to come and things present. And as for time, there is no place for the idea of difference. For what mode is there for a man to compare with our present state a life that has no limit? And as for the peace it is as far removed from any present peace, as peace is different from war; and for the incorruption, it is as much better as a clear pearl is than a clod of clay. Or rather, say as great a thing as one may, nothing can put it before you. For were I even to compare the beauty of our bodies then to the light of the sunbeam, or the brightest lightning, I shall not yet be saying anything that is worthy of that brilliancy. Now for such things as these what money so much that it were not worth the while to give up? What bodies, or rather what souls is it not worth one's while to give up? At present if any one were to lead you into the palace, and in presence of all were to give you an

opportunity of conversing with the king, and make you sit at his table, and join in his fare, you would call yourself the happiest of men. But when you are to go up to Heaven, and stand by the King of the universe Himself, and to vie with angels in brightness, and to enjoy even that unutterable glory, do you hesitate whether you ought to give up money? Whereas if you had to put off life itself, you ought to leap and exult, and mount on wings of pleasure. But you, that you may get an office ([ὅ] [ρχήν]), as a place to pillage from (for call a thing of this sort gain, I cannot), put all you have to hazard, and after borrowing of others, will, if need be, pawn your wife and children too without hesitation.

But when the kingdom of Heaven is set before you, that office ([ὅ] [ρχήν]) which has none to supersede you in it, and God bids you take not a part of a corner of the earth, but the whole of Heaven entirely, are you hesitating, and reluctant, and gaping after money, and forgetful that if the parts of that Heaven which we see are so fair and delightful, how greatly so must the upper Heaven be, and the Heaven of Heaven? But since we have as yet no means of seeing this with our bodily eyes, ascend in your thought, and standing above this Heaven, look up unto that Heaven beyond this, into that height without a bound, into that Light surcharged with awe, into the crowds of the Angels, into the endless ranks of Archangels, into the rest of the incorporeal Powers. And then lay hold again of the image (cf. *Plat. Rep.* vii. p. 516) thereof we have, after coming down from above, and make a sketch of the estate of a king with us, as his men in gold armor, and his pairs of white mules proudly decked with gold, and his chariots set with jewels and his snow-like cushions ([στρωμνήν] *Poll.* x. 41), and the spangles that flutter about the chariot, and the dragons shaped out in the silken hangings, and the shields with their gold bosses, and the straps that reach up from these to the rim of them through so many gems, and the

horses with the gilded trappings and the gold bits. But when we see the king we immediately lose sight of all these. For he alone turns our eyes to him, and to the purple robe, and the diadem, and the throne, and the clasp, and the shoes, all that splendor of his appearance. After gathering all these things together then with accuracy, then again remove your thoughts from these things to things above, and to that awful day in which Christ is coming. For then you will not see any pairs of mules, nor golden chariots, nor dragons and shields, but things that are big with a mighty awe, and strike such amazement that the very incorporeal Powers are astonished. For the "*powers of the Heavens*," He says, "*shall be shaken*." [Matthew 24:29] Then is the whole Heaven thrown open, and the gates of those concaves unfold themselves, and the Only-begotten Son of God comes down, not with twenty, not with a hundred men for His bodyguard, but with thousands, ten thousands of Angels and Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, and other Powers, and with fear and trembling shall everything be filled, whiles the earth is bursting itself up, and the men that ever were born, from Adam's birth up to that day, are rising from the earth, and all are caught up; [1 Thessalonians 4:17] when Himself appears with such great glory as that the sun, and the moon, and all light whatever, is cast into the shade, being outshone by that radiance. What language is to set before us that blessedness, brightness, glory? Alas! My soul. For weeping comes upon me and great groaning, as I reflect what good things we have fallen from, what blessedness we are estranged from. For estranged we are (I am now speaking of my own case still), unless we do some great and astonishing work; speak not then of hell to me now, for more grievous than any hell is the fall from this glory, and worse than punishments unnumbered the estrangement from that lot. But still we are gaping after this present world, and we take not thought of the devil's cunning, who by little things

bereaves us of those great ones, and gives us clay that he may snatch from us gold, or rather that he may snatch Heaven from us, and shows us a shadow that he may dispossess us of the reality, and puts phantoms before us in dreams (for such is the wealth of this world), that at daybreak he may prove us the poorest of men. Laying these things to heart, late though it be, let us fly from this craft, and pass to the side of things to come. For we cannot say that we were ignorant how exposed to accidents the present life is, since things every day din in our ears more loudly than a trumpet, the worthlessness, the ridiculousness, the shamefulness, the dangers, the pitfalls, of the present scene. What defence then shall we have to set up for pursuing things so subject to hazards, and laden with shame, with so much eagerness, and leaving things unfailing, which will make us glorious and bright, and giving our whole selves up to the thralldom of money? For the slavery to these things is worse than any bondage. And this they know who have been counted worthy to obtain their freedom from it. That ye then may also feel this goodly liberty, burst the bonds asunder, spring out of the snare. And let there be no gold lying by in your houses, but that which is more precious than millions of money, alms and love to man, for your treasure. For this gives us boldness toward God, but the other covers us with deep shame, and causes the devil to bear hard ([σφοδρὸν πνεῖν]) upon us. Why then arm your enemy, and make him stronger? Arm your right hand against him, and transfer all the splendor of your house into your soul, and stow away all your fortune in your mind, and instead of a chest and a house, let heaven keep your gold. And let us put all our property about our own selves; for we are much better than the walls, and more dignified than the pavement. Why then do we, to the neglect of our own selves, waste all our attention upon those things, which when we are gone we can no longer reach, and often even while we stay here we cannot keep hold of, when we

might have such riches as to be found not in this life only, but also in that, in the easiest circumstances? For he who carries about his farms and house and gold upon his soul, wherever he appears, appears with all this wealth. And how is this possible to be effected? One may ask. It is possible, and that with the utmost ease. For if you transfer them to Heaven by the poor man's hand, you will transfer them entire into your own soul. And if death should afterwards come upon you, no one will take them from you, but you will depart to be rich in the next world too. This was the kind of treasure Tabitha had. Hence it was not her house that proclaimed her wealth, nor the walls, nor the stones, nor the pillars, but the bodies of widows furnished with dress, and their tears that were shed, and death that played the runaway, and life that came back again. Let us also make unto ourselves such-like treasures, let us build up for ourselves such-like houses. In this way we shall have God for our Fellow-worker, and we ourselves shall be workers together with Him. For Himself brought the poor from not being into being, and you will prevent them, after they have been brought into life and being, from perishing with hunger and other distress, by tending them and setting them upright, staying up the Temple of God in every quarter. What can be equal to this in respect both of utility and of glory? Or if as yet you have not gained any clear notion of the great adornment He bestowed upon you when He bade you relieve poverty, consider this point with yourself. If He had given you so great power, that you were able to set up again even the Heaven if it were falling, would you not think the thing an honor far too great for you? See now He has held you worthy of a greater honor. For that which in His esteem is more precious than the Heavens, He has trusted you to repair. For of all things visible there is nothing in God's esteem equal to man. For Heaven and earth and sea did He make for him, and finds more pleasure in dwelling with him than in the Heaven. And yet

we, though with a knowledge of this, bestow no attention nor forethought upon the temples of God; but leaving them in a neglected state, we provide houses splendid and large for ourselves. This is why we are devoid of all good things, and greater beggars than the poorest poor, because we pride ourselves in these houses which we cannot take away with us when we go hence, and leave those alone which we might move away along with our own selves. For the bodies of the poor after dissolution must needs rise again; and God, Who has given this charge, will bring them forth, and praise those who have taken care of them, and treat such with regard ([θαυμάσεται]), because when they were on the point of falling to ruin at one time by starvation, at another by nakedness and cold, these repaired them by all means in their power. But still, even with all these praises set before us, we loiter yet, and decline undertaking this honorable charge. And Christ indeed has not where to lodge, but goes about a stranger, and naked, and hungry, and you set up houses out of town, and baths, and terraces, and chambers without number, in thoughtless vanity; and to Christ you give not even a share of a little hut, while for daws and vultures you deck out upper chambers. What can be worse than such insanity as this? What more grievous than such madness? For madness it is in the last stage of it, or rather one has no name to suit it, use whatever one may. Yet still if we be so minded, it is possible to beat off the disorder, tenacious as it is; and not possible only, but even easy; and not easy merely, but even easier is it to get rid of this pest than of the sufferings of the body, since the Physician is so much greater. Let us then draw Him to ourselves, and invite Him to aid us in the attempt, and let us contribute our share, good-will, I mean, and energy. For He will not require anything further, but if He can meet with this only, He will confer all that is His part. Let us then contribute our share,

that in this world we may enjoy a genuine health, and may attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man, etc.

Homily 15 on Romans

Rom. VIII. 28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

Here he seems to me to have mooted this whole topic with a view to those who were in danger; or, rather, not this only, but also what was said a little before this. For the words, *"the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us;"* and those, that *"the whole creation groans;"* and the saying, that *"we are saved by hope;"* and the phrase, *"we with patience wait for;"* and that, *"we know not what we should pray for as we ought;"* are all of them said to these. For he instructs them not to choose just what they may think, themselves, to be useful, but what the Spirit may suggest; for many things that seem to one's self profitable, do sometimes even cause much harm. Quiet, for instance, and freedom from dangers, and living out of fear, seemed to be advantageous for them. And what wonder if they did to them, since to the blessed Paul himself this seemed to be so? Still he came afterwards to know that the opposite to all these are the things advantageous, and when he came to know it, he was content. So he that besought the Lord thrice to be freed from hazards, when once he heard Him say, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My Power is perfected in weakness"* [2 Corinthians 12:8-9], was afterwards delighted at being persecuted, and insulted, and having irreparable ills done him. For, *"I glory,"* he says, *"in persecutions, in insults"* (Eng. V. reproaches), *"in necessities."* [2 Corinthians 12:10] And this was his reason for saying, *"For we know not what we should pray for as we ought."* And he exhorted all men to give up these matters to the

Spirit. For the Holy Spirit is very mindful of us, and this is the will of God. Having then cheered them by all methods, he proceeds to what we have heard today, putting forward a reason strong enough to reclaim them. For he says, "*we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*" Now when he speaks of "*all things*," he mentions even the things that seem painful. For should even tribulation, or poverty, or imprisonment, or famines, or deaths, or anything else whatsoever come upon us, God is able to change all these things into the opposite. For this is quite an instance of His unspeakable power, His making things seemingly painful to be lightsome to us, and turning them into that which is helpful to us. And so he does not say, that "*them that love God*," no grievance approaches, but, that it "*works together for good*," that is to say, that He uses the grievous things themselves to make the persons so plotted against approved. And this is a much greater thing than hindering the approach of such grievances, or stopping them when they have come. And this is what He did even with the furnace at Babylon. For He did not either prevent their falling into it, or extinguish the flame after those saints were cast into it, but let it burn on, and made them by this very flame greater objects of wonder, and with the Apostles too He wrought other like wonders continually. [Mark 16:18] For if men who have learned to be philosophic can use the things of nature to the opposite of their intention, and appear even when living in poverty in easier circumstances than the rich, and shine through disgrace: much more will God work for those that love Him both these and also greater things by far. For one needs only one thing, a genuine love of Him, and all things follow that. As then things seemingly harmful do good to these, so do even things profitable harm those who love Him not. For instance, the exhibition of miracles and wisdom in His teaching only injured the Jews, as did the rightness of doctrine; and for the former they called Him a possessed person

[John 8:48], for the other one that would be equal to God [John 5:18]: and because of the miracles (ib. 11:47, 53), they even went about to kill Him. But the thief when crucified, when nailed to the Cross, and reviled, and suffering ills unnumbered, not only was not hurt, but even gained the greatest good therefrom. See how for those who love God all things work together for good. After mentioning then this great blessing, one which far exceeds man's nature, since to many this seemed even past belief, he draws a proof of it from past blessings, in these words, *"to them who are called according to His purpose."* Now consider, he means, from the calling, for instance, what I have just said. Why then did He not from the first call all? Or why not Paul himself as soon as the rest? Does it not seem that the deferring was harmful? But it was still by the event shown to be for the best. The purpose he here mentions, however, that he might not ascribe everything to the calling; since in this way both Greeks and Jews would be sure to cavil. For if the calling alone were sufficient, how came it that all were not saved? Hence he says, that it is not the calling alone, but the purpose of those called too, that works the salvation. For the calling was not forced upon them, nor compulsory. All then were called, but all did not obey the call.

Ver. 29. *"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son."*

See what superb honor! For what the Only-begotten was by Nature, this they also have become by grace. And still he was not satisfied with this calling of them conformed thereto, but even adds another point, *"that He might be the first-born."* And even here he does not come to a pause, but again after this he proceeds to mention another point, *"Among many brethren."* So wishing to use all means of setting the relationship in a clear light. Now all these things you are to take as said of the Incarnation. For

according to the Godhead He is Only-begotten. See, what great things He has given unto us! Doubt not then about the future. For he shows even upon other grounds His concern for us by saying, that things were fore-ordered in this way from the beginning. For men have to derive from things their conceptions about them, but to God these things have been long determined upon, and from of old He bare good-will toward us ([πρὸς ἡμᾶς διέκειτο]), he says.

Ver. 30. *"Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified."*

Now He justified them by the regeneration of the laver. *"And whom He justified, them He also glorified"* by the gift, by the adoption.

Ver. 31. *"What shall we then say to these things?"*

As if he should say, Let me then hear no more about the dangers and the malicious devices from every quarter. For even if some disbelieve the things to come, still they have not a word to say against the good things that have already taken place; as, for instance, the friendship of God towards you from the first, the justifying, the glory. And yet these things He gave you by means seemingly distressing. And those things which you thought to be disgracing, the Cross, scourges, bonds, these are what have set the whole world aright. As then by what Himself suffered, though of aspect forbidding in man's eye, even by these He effected the liberty and salvation of the whole race; so also is He wont to do in regard to those things which you endure, turning your sufferings unto glory and renown for you. *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

Why, it may be said, who is there that is not against us? Why the world is against us, both kings and peoples, both relations and countrymen. Yet these that be against us, so far are they from thwarting us at all, that even without their will they become to us the causes of crowns, and procurers of

countless blessings, in that God's wisdom turns their plots unto our salvation and glory. See how really no one is against us! For it was this which gave new lustre to Job, the fact that the devil was in arms against him. For the devil moved at once friends against him, his wife against him, and wounds, and servants, and a thousand other machinations. And it turned out that none of them was against him on the whole. And yet this was no great thing to him, though it was great in itself, but what is a far greater thing is, that it turned out that they were all for him. For since God was for him, even things seemingly against him all became for him. And this happened with the Apostles also, inasmuch as both the Jews, and they of the Gentiles, and false brethren, and rulers, and peoples, and famines, and poverty, and ten thousand things were against them; and yet nothing was against them. For the things which made them the most bright and conspicuous, and great in the sight both of God and of men, were these. Just reflect then what a word Paul has uttered about the faithful, and those who are truly ([ἀ] [κρίβως]) crucified, such as not even the Emperor with his diadem can achieve. For against him there are abundance of barbarians that arm themselves, and of enemies that invade, and of bodyguards that plot, and of subjects many that oftentimes are ever and anon rebelling, and thousands of other things. But against the faithful who takes good heed unto God's laws, neither man, nor devil, nor anything besides, can stand! For if you take away his money, you have become the procurer of a reward to him. If you speak ill of him, by the evil report he gains fresh lustre in God's sight. If you cast him into starvation, the more will his glory and his reward be. If (what seems the most severe stroke of all) you give him over to death, you are twining a crown of martyrdom about him. What then is equivalent to this way of life, being that against which nothing can be done, but even they that seem to devise mischief are no less of service to him than

benefactors? This is why he says, *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* Next, not being satisfied with what he had already said, the greatest sign of His love for us, and that which he always is dwelling over, that he sets down here also; I mean, the slaying of His Son. For He did not only justify us, he means, and glorify us, and make us conformed to that Image, but not even His Son did He spare for you. And therefore he proceeds to say,

Ver. 32. *"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"*

And here the words he uses are high-wrought ([μεθ' ὑπερβολῆς]) and exceedingly warm, to show his love. How then is He to neglect us, in whose behalf *"He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all?"* For reflect what goodness it is not to spare even His own Son, but to give Him up, and to give Him up for all, and those worthless, and unfeeling, and enemies, and blasphemers. How then shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? What he means then is much as follows; If He gave His own Son, and not merely gave Him, but gave Him to death, why doubt any more about the rest, since you have the Master? Why be dubious about the chattels, when you have the Lord? For He that gave the greater thing to His enemies, how shall He do else than give the lesser things to His friends?

Ver. 33. *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"*

Here he is against those who say, that faith is no profit, and will not believe the complete change. (i.e. in baptism see p. 349.) And see how swiftly he stops their mouths, by the worthiness of Him that elected. He does not say, *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's"* servants? Or of God's faithful ones? But *"of God's elect?"* And election is a sign of virtue. For if when a horse-breaker has selected colts fit for the race, no one can find fault with them, but he would get laughed at who should find fault;

much more when God selects souls are they that *"lay any charge against"* them deserving of laughter.

"It is God that justifies."

Ver. 34. Who is He that condemns?

He does not say, it is God that forgave our sins, but what is much greater, *"It is God that justifies."* For when the Judge's sentence declares us just, and a Judge such as that too, what signifies the accuser? Hence neither is it right to fear temptations, for God is for us, and has shown it by what He has done; nor again Jewish triflings, for He has both elected and justified us, and the wondrous thing is that it was also by the death of His Son that He did so. Who then is to condemn us, since God crowns us, and Christ was put to death for us, and not only was put to death, but also after this intercedes for us?

For, *"It is Christ,"* he says, *"that died, yea rather, that is risen from the dead, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also makes intercession for us."*

For though seen now in His own dignity, He has not left caring for us, but even *"makes intercession for us,"* and still keeps up the same love. For He was not contented with being put to death alone. And this is a sign for the most part of very great love, to be doing not only what falls to His lot, but also to address Another on this behalf. For this is all he meant to signify by the interceding, using a way of speaking better suited to man, and more condescending, that he might point out love. Since unless we take the words, *"He spared not,"* also with the same understanding, many inconsistencies will come of it. And that you may see that such is the point he is aiming at, after first saying, that He *"is at the Right Hand,"* he next proceeds to say, that He *"makes intercession for us,"* when he had shown an equality of honor and rank, so that hence it may appear that the Intercession is not a sign of inferiority, but of love only. For being Life itself ([αὐτοζωή])

[Psalm 36:9], and a Well of good things of every kind, and with the same power as the Father, both to raise up the dead and to quicken them, and do all besides that He does, how could He need to be a suppliant in order to help us? [John 5:19-36] He that of His own power set free those who were given over and condemned, even from that condemnation; and made them righteous, and sons, and led them to the very highest honors, and brought to pass things which had never been hoped for: how should He, after having achieved all this, and having shown our nature on the King's throne, require to be a suppliant to do the easier things? [Acts 7:55; Hebrews 10:12; Revelation 7:17] You see how it is shown by every argument, that there is no other reason for his having mentioned intercession, save to show the warmth and vigorousness of His love for us; for the Father also is represented to us as beseeching men to be reconciled to Him. *"For we are ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us."* [2 Corinthians 5:20] Still, though God beseeches, and men are *"ambassadors in Christ's stead"* to men, we do not understand on that account anything done unworthy of that dignity; but one thing only do we gather from all that is told us, namely, the intenseness of the love. This then let us do here also. If then the Spirit even *"makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered,"* and Christ died and intercedes for us, and the Father *"spared not His own Son"* for you, and elected you, and justified you, why be afraid any more? Or why tremble when enjoying such great love, and having such great interest taken in you? In this way then, after showing His great providence over us from the first, he afterwards brings out what comes next in a bold style, and does not say, you ought also to love Him, but, as if grown enthusiastic at this unspeakable Providence over us, he says,

Ver. 35. *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"*

And he does not say of God, so indifferent is it to him whether he mentions the Name of Christ or of God. *"Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* Observe the blessed Paul's judgment. For he does not mention the things that we are daily getting taken by, love of money and desire of glory and the thralldom of anger, but things that are far more enthralling than these, and of power to put a force upon nature itself, and to wrench open the sternness of the resolution many times even against our will, are what he puts down here, tribulations and distresses. For even if the things mentioned are easy to tell up, still each single word has in it thousands of lines of temptation. For when he says, tribulation, he mentions prisons and bonds, and calumnies, and banishments, and all the other hardships, so in one word running through an ocean of dangers without stint, and exhibiting to us, in fact by a single word, all the evils that men meet with. Yet still he dares them all! Wherefore he brings them forward in the shape of questions, as if it was incontrovertible that nothing could move a person so beloved, and who had enjoyed so much providence over him. Then that this might not seem as if he had forgotten himself, he brings in the Prophet also, who declared this before, a long while ago and says,

Ver. 36. *"For Your sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."* [Psalm 43:22]

That is, we are exposed to all to be evil entreated of them. But yet against so many and so great dangers and these recent horrors, the object of our conflicts is given as a sufficient consolation, or rather not sufficient only, but even much more. For it is not for men, nor for any other of the things of this life that we suffer, but for the King (he says) of the universe. But this is not the only crown, for he encircles them with another besides, and that varied and manifold. Since then, as they were men they could not

have deaths without number to undergo, he shows that in this way the prize is none the less. For even if by nature it were fated to die once, by choice God has granted us to suffer this every day, if we be so minded. Whence it is plain that we shall depart with as many crowns as we have lived days, or rather with many more. For it is possible in a day to die not once alone or twice, but many times. For he who is always ready unto this, keeps continually receiving a full reward. This then is what the Psalmist ([Προφήτης]) hints at, when he says, "*all the day.*" And for this reason the Apostle also brought him before them to rouse them up the more. For if, he means, those in the old dispensation, who had the land as their reward, and the other things which come to a close along with this life, did so look down upon the present life and the temptations and dangers of it, what pardon should we find if we deal so languidly after the promise of Heaven, and the Kingdom above, and its unutterable blessings, so as not to come even up to the same measure as they? And this he does not say indeed, but leaves it to his hearers' consciences, and is satisfied with the quotation alone. He shows too that their bodies become a sacrifice, and that we must not be disturbed or troubled at God having so ordered it. And he exhorts them in other ways besides. For to prevent any from saying that he is merely philosophizing here before having any experience of realities, he adds, "*we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,*" meaning the daily deaths of the Apostles. You see his courage and his goodness. For as they, he means, when slaughtered make no resistance, so neither do we. But since the feebleness of the mind of man, even after so great things, was afraid of the multitude of temptations, see how he again rouses the hearer, and gives him a lofty and exulting spirit, by saying,

Ver. 37. "*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.*"

For what is indeed wonderful is this, not that we are conquerors only, but that we are so by the very things meant as plots against us. And we are not merely conquerors, but we are "*more than conquerors*," that is, are so with ease, without toil and labor. For without undergoing the real things, by only setting our mind aright, we raise our trophies against our enemies. And with good reason. For it is God that strives together with us. Do not then be doubtful, if though beaten we get the better of our beaters, if driven out we overcome our persecutors, if dying we put the living to fight. For when you take the power and also the love of God into account, there is nothing to prevent these wondrous and strange things from coming to pass, and that victory the most advantageous should shine upon us. For they did not merely conquer, but in a wondrous way, and so that one might learn that those who plotted against them had a war not against men, but against that invincible Might. See the Jews then with these among them, and at a loss quite, and saying, "*What are we to do to these men?*" [Acts 4:16] For it is marvellous indeed, that though they had hold of them and had got them liable to their courts, and imprisoned them and beat them, they were yet at a loss and in perplexity, as they got overcome by the very things whereby they expected to conquer. And neither kings nor people, nor ranks of demons, nor the devil himself, had power to get the better of them, but were all overcome at a very great disadvantage, finding that all they planned against them became for them. And therefore he says, "*we are more than conquerors*." For this was a new rule of victory for men to prevail by their adversaries, and in no instance to be overcome, but to go forth to these struggles as if they themselves had the issue in their own hands.

Ver. 38, 39. "*For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to*

come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

These are great things here mentioned. But the reason we do not enter into them is, because we have not so great love. Yet still though they are great, as he wished to show that they were nothing beside the love wherewith he was loved of God; after it he then places his own, lest he should seem to be saying great things about himself. And what he says is somewhat of this kind. Why speak, he means, of things present, and evils inherited in this life? For even if a person were to tell me of things to come, and of powers; of things, such as death and life; of powers, such as angels and archangels, and all the superior orders of beings; even these would be little to me compared with the love of Christ. For even if a person were to threaten me with that future death to which there is no death, to separate me from Christ, nor if he promised the life without end, would I agree to it. Why mention kings here below and consuls? And this one or that? For if you tell me of angels, or all the powers above, or all existing things, or all that are to come, they are all small to me, both those in the earth, and those in heaven, and those under the earth, and those above heaven, compared to this charm. Then as though these were not enough to set before them the strong desire which he had, he gives a being to others again of like magnitude, and says, "*nor any other creation.*" And what he means is nearly this, even if there were any other creation as great as the visible, and as great as the intelligible, none of them could part me from that love. This he says not as if the Angels attempted it, or the other Powers, far from it, but as wishing to show quite to the utmost the charm he had toward Christ. For Christ he loved not for the things of Christ, but for His sake the things that were His, and to Him alone he looked, and one thing he feared, and that

was falling from his love for Him. For this thing was in itself more dreadful than hell, as to abide in it was more desirable than the Kingdom.

What then should we now deserve, when he is found not to esteem even the things in Heaven as compared with the desire for Christ, and we set more store by things of mire and clay than by Christ? And he out of desire of Him would take up with falling into hell, and being banished from the Kingdom, if the choice between the two were put to him: but we are not even above the present life. Are we worthy then to touch his very shoes, when we have come to be so far short of his largeness of mind? For he for Christ's sake does not think anything even of a kingdom; but we think slightly of Himself, but things of His we make great account of. And would it were of things of His. But now it is not even this; but with a Kingdom held out to us, we let that alone, and keep pursuing shadows and dreams all our days. And yet God in His love toward man and exceeding gentleness, has done the same as if an affectionate father should, on his son's becoming disinclined to a continual stay with him, manage to bring this about in another way. For since we have not the right feeling of desire after Him, He keeps putting various other things before us, so as to hold us to Himself. Yet not even for this do we abide with Him, but we keep springing off to childish playthings. Not so Paul, but like a noble spirited child, who is open and attached to his father, he seeks only after the Father's presence, and other things he sets not so much store by; or rather, it is much more than a child. For he does not value the Father and things that are His at the same rate, but when he looks to the Father, he counts them nothing, but would choose rather to be chastised and beaten, so he was with Him, than to be apart from Him and indulge his ease. Let us then shudder, all of us that do not even feel above money for the sake of Christ, or rather such of us as do not feel above it for our own sakes. For it was Paul alone who

suffered in good earnest all things for Christ's sake, not for the sake of the kingdom, or his own honor, but owing to his affection to Him. But as for us, neither Christ nor the things of Christ draw us from the things of this life; but as serpents, or snakes, or swine, or even as all of them at once, so do we keep dragging on in the mire. For wherein are we better than those brutes, when with so many and such great examples before us we still keep bowing down, and have not the heart to look up to Heaven for ever so little a time? Yet did God give up even His Son. But you will not so much as share your bread with Him, Who was given up for you, Who was slain for you. The Father for your sake spared not Him, and this too when He was indeed His Son, but you do not look upon Him even when pining with starvation, and this too when you should but spend of His own, and spend it too for your own good! What can be worse than such a breach of law as this? He was given up for you, He was slain for you, He goes about in hunger for you, it is of His own you should give, that you may yourself get the gain, and still thou dost not give! What sort of stone is there than which these are not more senseless, who in despite of such great inducements, continue in this diabolical cruel-heartedness? For He was not satisfied even with death and the Cross only, but He took up with becoming poor also, and a stranger, and a beggar, and naked, and being thrown into prison, and undergoing sickness, that so at least He might call you off. If you will not requite Me, He says, as having suffered for you, show mercy on Me for My poverty. And if you are not minded to pity Me for My poverty, do for My disease be moved, for My imprisonment be softened. And if even these things make you not charitable, for the easiness of the request comply with Me. For it is no costly gift I ask, but bread and lodging, and words of comfort; but if even after this thou still continuest unsubdued, still for the Kingdom's sake be improved for the rewards which I have promised. Have you then no

regard even for these? Yet still for very nature's sake be softened at seeing Me naked, and remember that nakedness wherewith I was naked on the Cross for you; or, if not this, yet that wherewith I am now naked through the poor. I was then bound for you, nay, still am so for you, that whether moved by the former ground or the latter, you might be minded to show some pity. I fasted for you, again I am hungry for you. I was thirsty when hanging on the Cross, I am thirsty also through the poor, that by the former as also by the latter I may draw you to Myself, and make you charitable to your own salvation. Hence also of you that owest Me the requital of benefits without number, I make not demand as of one that owes, but crown you as one that favors Me, and a kingdom do I give you for these small things. For I do not say so much as put an end to My poverty, or give Me riches, and yet I did become poor for you; yet still I ask for bread and clothing, and a small solace for My hunger. And if I be thrown into prison, I do not insist upon your loosing My bonds and setting Me free, but one thing only do I seek after, that you would visit Me, Who was (or am) bound for you, and I shall have received favor enough, and for this only will I give you Heaven. And yet I delivered you from most galling bonds, but for Me it is quite enough, if you will but visit Me when in prison. For I am able indeed to crown you even without all this; yet I would fain be a debtor to you, that the crown may give you some feeling of confidence. This is why, though I am able to support Myself, I come about begging, and stand beside your door, and stretch out Mine hand, since My wish is to be supported by you. For I love you exceedingly, and so desire to eat at your table, which is the way with those that love a person. And I glory [John 15:8] in this. And when the whole world are spectators, then am I to herald you forth, and in the hearing of all men to display you as My supporter. Yet we, when we are supported by any one, feel ashamed, and cover our faces; but He, as loving

us exceedingly, even if we hold our peace, will then tell out what we did with much praise, and is not ashamed to say, that when Himself was naked we clothed Him, and fed Him when hungry. Let us then lay all these things to heart, and not be contented with passing mere praises upon them, but let us even accomplish what I have been speaking of. For what is the good of these applauses and clamors? I demand one thing only of you, and that is the display of them in real action, the obedience of deeds. This is my praise, this your gain, this gives me more lustre than a diadem. When you have left the Church then, this is the crown that you should make for me and for you, through the hand of the poor; that both in the present life we may be nourished with a goodly hope, and after we have departed to the life to come, we may attain to those good things without number, to which may all of us attain by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 16 on Romans

Rom. IX. 1

"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost."

Did I not seem yesterday to you to have spoken some great and exorbitant things of Paul's love toward Christ? And great indeed they were, too great for any words to express. Yet what you have heard today are as far above those things, as those things were above ours. And yet I did not think they could be exceeded, still when I came to what has been read today it did appear far more glorious than the whole of the former. And that he was aware of this himself he shows by his exordium. For as on the point of entering upon greater things than those, and therefore liable to be disbelieved by the generality, he first uses a strong asseveration about the matter he is going to speak of; which many are in the habit of doing when they are going to say somewhat which is not believed by the generality, and about which they feel the utmost certainty in their own minds. Hence he says, *"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, and my conscience bears witness,"*

Ver. 2, 3. *"That I have a great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ."*

What do you say, O Paul? From Christ, your beloved One, from Whom neither kingdom nor hell, nor things visible nor intelligible, nor another world as great, would separate you, is it from Him that you would now be accursed? What has happened? Have you changed, have you given over that love? No, he replies, fear not. Rather I have even made it more intense. How then is it that you would fain be accursed, and seekest a separation, and a removal to such a distance, that after it there is no

possibility of finding a more distant one? Because I love Him exceedingly, he may reply. How, pray, and in what manner? For the things seem a riddle. Or rather, if you will, let us learn what the curse is, and then we will question him upon these points, and shall understand this unspeakable and extraordinary love. What then is the curse? Hear his own words, *"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed."* [*anathema*, 1 Corinthians 16:22] That is, let him be set apart from all, removed from all. For as in the case of a thing dedicated ([ὁ] [νάθημα]), which is set apart for God, no one would venture so much as to touch it with his hand or even to come near it; so too with a man who is put apart from the Church, in cutting him off from all, and removing him as far off as possible, he calls him by this name ([ὁ] [νάθεμα]) in a contrary sense, thus with much fear denouncing to all men to keep apart from him, and to spring away from him. For the thing set apart, no one, from respect of it, ventures to come near to. But from him who is cut off, all men separate themselves from a very opposite feeling. And so the separation is the same, and both the one and the other are equally removed from the generality. Still, the mode of separation is not the same, but in this case it is the opposite to what it is in that. For from the one they keep back as being dedicated to God; from the other as being estranged from God, and broken off from the Church. This then is what Paul means when he says, *"I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ."* And he does not say merely that I could be willing, but using a stronger term, he says even, *"I could wish"* (or pray [ἠύχόμην]). But if what he says trouble you in your ([ὁ] [σθενέστερον]) feebleness, consider the real state of the case, not only that he wished to be separated, but also the cause for which he wished it, and then you will see the greatness of his love. For he even circumcised [Timothy, Acts 16:3], and we pay no attention to what was done, but to the intention of it, and the cause

of it, and hence we wonder at him the more. And he not only circumcised a person, but he even shaved himself and sacrificed [Acts 18:18; Acts 21:24], and yet surely we do not therefore assert him to be a Jew, but upon this very score to be perfectly free from Judaizing, and clear of it, and a genuine worshipper of Christ. As then when you see him circumcising and sacrificing, you do not therefore condemn him as Judaizing, but upon this very score have the best reason for crowning him as quite an alien to Judaism; thus when you see him to have become desirous of being accursed, do not therefore be troubled, but upon this very ground give him the loudest praise, when you know the cause why he wishes this. For if we do not look narrowly into the causes, we shall call Elijah a manslayer, and Abraham not a manslayer only, but a murderer of his son. And Phinees and Peter we shall implead for murder likewise. Nor is it in the case of the saints alone, but also of the God of the universe, that he who does not keep to this rule, will be suspecting sundry unbecoming things. Now to prevent this happening in all cases of the kind, let us bring together both the cause, and the intention, and the time, and all that makes in behalf of what is so done, and in this way let us investigate the actions. And this we must do now also in the case of this blessed soul. Now what is the cause? It is Jesus Himself Who is so beloved. And yet he does not say *for* Him; for what he says is, I would wish that I were accursed *from* Him for my brethren. And this comes of his humbleness of mind. For he has no wish to make himself conspicuous, as if he were saying something great, and doing Christ a favor in this. Wherefore also he said "*my kinsmen,*" that he may conceal his high aim ([πλεονέκτημα] []). Since to see that he wished it all for Christ's sake, just hear what comes next. After speaking of kinsmen then, he proceeds,

Ver. 4, 5. "*To whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the*

promises; whose are the father's, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

And what is this? One asks. For if with a view to the belief of others he was willing to become accursed, he ought to have also wished for this in the Gentiles' behalf. But if he wishes it in the Jews' behalf only, it is a proof that he did not wish it for Christ's sake, but for his own relationship to them. But in fact if he had prayed for the Gentiles only, this would not have been equally clear. But since it is for the Jews only, it is a clear proof that it is only for Christ's glory that he is thus earnest. And I am aware that what I am saying will seem a paradox to you. Still if you do not make a disturbance, I will presently endeavor to make it clear. For what he has said he has not said nakedly; but since all were talking and accusing God, that after being counted worthy of the name of sons, and receiving the Law, and knowing Him beyond all men, and enjoying such great glory, and serving him beyond the whole world, and receiving the promises, and being from fathers who were His friends, and what was the greatest thing of all, having been forefathers of Christ Himself (for this is the meaning of the words, "*of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came*"), they are now cast out and disgraced; and in their place are introduced men who had never known Him, of the Gentiles. Now since they said all this, and blasphemed God, Paul hearing it, and being cut to the heart, and vexed for God's glory's sake, wished that he were accursed, had it been possible, so that they might be saved, and this blasphemy be put a stop to, and God might not seem to have deceived the offspring of those to whom He promised the gifts. And that you may see that it was in sorrow for this, that the promise of God might not seem to fall to the ground, which said to Abraham, "*I will give this land to you and to your seed,*" that he uttered this wish, he proceeds,

Ver. 6. "*Not as though the word of God had taken none effect.*"

To show that he had courage (Mar. and 4 manuscripts wished) to bear all these things for the word of God, that is, the promise made to Abraham. For as Moses seemed to be pleading for the Jews, yet was doing everything for God's glory (for he says, *"Lest they say, Because He was not able to save them, He led them forth to destroy them in the wilderness"* [Deuteronomy 9:28]; stay Your wrath), so also does Paul, That they may not say (he means) that the promise of God has fallen to the ground, and He has disappointed us of that He vouched to us, and this word has not issued in deed, I could wish to be accursed. This then was why he did not speak of the Gentiles (for to them no promises had been made by Him, nor had they worshipped Him, wherefore neither did any blaspheme Him on their account), but it was for the Jews who had both received the promise, and had also been brought into closer connection with Him than others, that he expressed this wish. Do you see, that if he had expressed it for the Gentiles, he would not have been shown to be doing this so purely for Christ's glory? But since he was willing to become accursed in the Jews' behalf, then it was most evidenced that it was for Christ's sake only that he desired this. And for this cause he says,

"To whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the service of God, and the promises."

For the Law, he means, which speaks of Christ, comes from thence, and all the covenants made with them, and Himself came from them, and the Fathers who received the promises were all from them. Yet still the opposite has resulted, and they have fallen from all their good things. Hence, he means, I am vexed, and if it were possible to be separated from the company about Christ, and to be made an alien, not from the love of Him (that be far from him; for even all this he was doing through love), but from all that enjoyment and glory, I would accept that lot, provided my

Master were not to be blasphemed, that He might not have to hear some saying, that it has been all for stage-effect; He promises to one, and gives to another. He was sprung from one race, He saved another. It was to the forefathers of the Jews that He made the promises, and yet He has deserted their descendants, and put men, who never at any time knew Him, into their good things. They labored in the practice of the Law, and reading the Prophets, while men who have come but yesterday from heathen altars and images have been set up above them. What foresight is there in all this? Now that these things may not be said of my Master, he means, even if they are said unjustly, I would willingly lose even the kingdom and that glory unutterable, and any sufferings would I undergo, as considering it the greatest consolation possible no longer to hear Him Whom I so long for, so blasphemed. But if you be still against allowing this explanation, just reflect that many fathers have at many times taken up with thus much for their children, and have chosen to be separated from them, and rather to see them in honor, considering their honor dearer to them than their company. But since we are so short of love like this (Bacon, N. O. Aph. lib. 2, §7), we cannot even form an idea of what is here meant. For there be some that are so wholly unworthy even to hear the name of Paul, and that stand at such an interval and distance from that vehemency of his, as to fancy that he says this of temporal death. Who I should say were as ignorant of Paul, as the blind of the sun's rays, or even much more so. For he that died daily, and set before him dangers thick as a snow-storm, and then said, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine?"* and still unsatisfied with what he had said, and after going above the heaven and the heaven of heavens, and running through the Angels and Archangels, and all the higher orders of beings, and taking in at once things present, things to come, things visible, things

intelligible, things grievous, and things good, that were on either part, and leaving nothing out at all, yet not even thus satiated, but even bodying forth another non-existing creation, how should he, by way of saying some great thing after all those things, make mention of a temporal death? It is not so, surely it is not! But such a notion is that of worms nestling in their dunghill. For had he said this, in what sense would he be wishing himself accursed from Christ? For death [Philippians 1:23] of that sort would have joined him more closely with the band of Christ, and made him enjoy that glory the more. Yet some there are who venture to say things different from these, even more ridiculous. It was not then, they say, death that he wished to have, but to be a treasure, a thing set apart, of Christ's. And who even of the most worthless and indolent that would not wish for this? And in what way was this likely to be in his kinsmen's behalf? Let us then leave these fables and trifles (for it is no more worth while making a reply to these things than to children babbling at play), and let us go back again to the words themselves, luxuriating in this very ocean of love, and fearlessly swimming there in every direction, and reflecting upon the unspeakable flame of love — or rather say what one may, one shall say nothing worthy the subject. For there is no ocean so wide, no flame so intense, as this. And no language can set it forth as it deserves, but he alone knew it who in good earnest gained it. And now let me bring the words themselves before you again.

"For I could wish that I myself were accursed." What does the *"I myself"* mean? It means I that have been a teacher [1 Corinthians 9:27] of all, that have gathered together countless good deeds, that am waiting for countless crowns, that desired Him so much, as to value His love above all things, who all my days am burning for Him, and hold all things [Philippians 3:8] of second importance to the love of Him. For even being loved by Christ was not the only thing he cared for, but loving Him

exceedingly also. And this last he cared most for ([τούτου μάλιστα ἦν]). So it was that he looked to this only, and took all things light-heartedly. For he kept one aim in view in all circumstances, the fulfilling of this excellent love. And this he wishes for. But since things were not to take this course, nor he to become accursed, he next attempts to go into a defence against the charges, and so to bring what was bruited abroad by all before them as to overthrow it. And before he openly enters into his defence against these, he first lays down some seeds of it beforehand. For when he says, *"to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises,"* he does but say that God willed them indeed to be saved, and this he showed by His former dealings, and by Christ's having sprung from them, and by what He promised to the Fathers. But they out of their own untreatable temper thrust the benefit away from them. And this is also the reason of his setting down such things as set forth God's gift, not such as were encomiums upon them. For the adoption came of His grace, and so too the glory, and the promises, and the Law. After taking all these things then into consideration, and reflecting how earnest God along with His Son, had been for their salvation, he lifts up his voice aloud, and says, *"Who is blessed forever. Amen."*

So himself offering up thanksgiving for all men unto the Only-Begotten of God. What, he says, if others do blaspheme? Still we who know His mysteries, and His unspeakable Wisdom, and great Providence over us, know well that it is not to be blasphemed, but to be glorified, that He is worthy. Still not satisfied with being himself conscious of it, he endeavors next to use arguments, and to use a sharper way of speech against them. And he does not direct his aim at them, without first divesting them of a suspicion they had. Lest then he should seem to be addressing them as enemies, further on he says *"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God*

for Israel is, that they might be saved." [Romans 10:1] And here, along with other remarks, he so ordered things, as not to seem to be saying what he was going to say out of enmity against them. Hence he does not decline calling them even kinsmen and brothers. For even if it was for Christ's sake that he said what he did, still he is for drawing ([ἐ] [πισπᾶται]) their mind to him also, and paves his way to what he has to say, and quits himself of all suspicion owing to what had to be said against them, and then he at last goes into the subject most of them were looking for. For many, as I have already stated, wanted to know what was the reason why they who had received the promise fell short of it, while those who had even never heard of it were saved before them. Therefore, to clear up this difficulty, he brings forward the answer before the objection. For to prevent any from saying, What? Are you more thoughtful for God's glory than God is for His own? And does He need your aid that His word may not fall to the ground? In reply to these things he says, I spoke this not as if God's Word had fallen to the ground, but to show my love for Christ. For as things have had this issue, we are in no want of words in God's behalf, or of showing that stand His promise did. God said to Abraham, *"To you and to your seed will I give the land."* And, *"In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."* [Genesis 12:7] Let us see then, he says, of what sort this seed is. For it is not all that are from him that are his seed. Whence he says, *"For they are not all Israel that are of (or from) Israel."*

Ver. 7. *"Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children."*

Now when you come to know of what kind the seed of Abraham is, you will see that the promise is given to his seed, and know that the word has not fallen to the ground. Of what kind, pray, is the seed then? It is no saying of mine, he means, but the Old Testament itself explains itself by

saying as follows, *"In Isaac shall your seed be called."* [Genesis 21:12]
What is, *"In Isaac?"* Explain.

Ver. 8. *"That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise, these are counted for the seed."*

And observe the judgment and depth of Paul's mind. For in interpreting, he does not say, *"they which are the children of the flesh, these are not"* the children of Abraham, but, *"the children of God:"* so blending the former things with the present, and showing that even Isaac was not merely Abraham's son. And what he means is something of this sort: as many as have been born as Isaac was, they are sons of God, and of the seed of Abraham. And this is why he said, *"in Isaac shall your seed be called."* That one may learn that they who are born after the fashion of Isaac, these are in the truest sense Abraham's children. In what way was Isaac born then? Not according to the law of nature, not according to the power of the flesh, but according to the power of the promise. What is meant then by the power of *"the promise?"*

Ver. 9. *"At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son."*

This promise then and word of God it was that fashioned Isaac, and begot him. For what if a womb was its instrument and the belly of a woman? Since it was not the power of the belly, but the might of the promise that begot the child. Thus are we also gendered by the words of God. Since in the pool of water it is the words of God which generate and fashion us. For it is by being baptized into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost that we are gendered. And this birth is not of nature, but of the promise of God. [John 3:3; Ephesians 5:26; James 1:18; 1 Peter 3:21] For as after first foretelling the birth of Isaac, He then accomplished it; so ours also He had announced before, many ages ago by

all the Prophets, and afterwards brought it to pass. You know how great He has set it forth as being, and how, as He promised a great thing, He furnished it with abundant ease! [Hosea 2:1, etc] But if the Jews were to say, that the words, *"In Isaac shall your seed be called,"* mean this, that those born of Isaac should be reckoned to him for a seed, then the Edomites too, and all those people, ought to be denominated his sons, since their forefather Esau was a son of his. But now so far are they from being called sons, that they are the greatest possible aliens. You see then that it is not the children of the flesh that are the children of God, but that even in nature itself the generation by means of baptism from above was sketched out beforehand. And if you tell me of the womb, I in return have to tell you of the water. But as in this case all is of the Spirit, so in the other all was of promise. For the womb was more chilled than any water owing to barrenness and to old age. Let us then gain accurate knowledge of our own nobility, and display a life worthy of it. For in it is nothing fleshly or earthy: hence neither let there be in us. For it was neither sleep, nor the will of the flesh [John 1:13], nor embraces, nor the madness of desire, but *"God's love toward man,"* which wrought the whole. [Titus 3:5] And as in that case it was when the age was past hope, so in this also it was when the old age of sins had come over us, that Isaac suddenly sprang up in youth, and we all became the children of God, and the seed of Abraham. [Isaiah 40:31]

Ver. 10. *"And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac."*

The subject in question was an important one. Hence he turns to several arguments, and endeavors by all means to solve the difficulty. For if it was at once strange and new for them to be cast out after so great promises, it is much more strange that we even should come into their good things, who did not expect anything of the kind. And the case was the same

as if a king's son, who had promises made him that he should succeed to the power he had, were to be cast into the level of disreputable men, and in his place a condemned man, and one laden with evils unnumbered, after being taken out of prison, were to come into the power, which properly was the other's. For he means, what have you to say? That the son is unworthy? Well, but so is this man unworthy, and much more so. Hence he ought either to have been punished along with the former, or to have been honored along with him. Now it was something of this sort which befell the Jews and the Gentiles, or something far more strange than this. Now that all were unworthy, he has shown above, where he says, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* [Romans 3:23] But the new thing is, that when all were unworthy, the Gentiles were saved alone. And beside this there is another difficulty that some one may start, he says. If God had no intention of fulfilling the promises to them, why make them at all? For men who know not the future, and are many times deceived, do promise even the undeserving that they shall have their largesses. But He Who knows beforehand things to come as well as things present, and has a clear knowledge that they will make themselves undeserving of the promises, and therefore will not receive any of the things specified—why should He promise at all? Now what is Paul's way of meeting all this? It is by showing what the Israel is to whom He made the promise. For when this has been shown, there is at the same time demonstrated the fact that the promises were all fulfilled. And to point this out he said, *"For they are not all Israel that are of Israel."* And this is why he does not use the name of Jacob, but that of Israel, which was a sign of the virtue of that just man, and of a gift from above, and of having seen God. [Genesis 32:28] Yet, *"all,"* he says, *"have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* [Romans 3:23] Now if all have sinned, how come some to be saved, and some to perish? It is

because all were not minded to come to Him, since for His part all were saved, for all were called. However, he does not set this down yet awhile, but meets it from an advantageous position, and from other examples, by bringing before them another question, and as in the former case meets a difficulty very great, by another difficulty. For when he was discussing how by Christ being justified all the rest enjoyed that righteousness, he brought in Adam's case, saying, *"For if by one man's offense death reigned, much more they which receive abundance of grace shall reign in life."* [Romans 5:17]. And the case of Adam, indeed, he does not clear up, but from it he clears up His (or his own), and shows that it was more reasonable that He Who died in their behalf should have power over them at His will. For that when one had sinned all should be punished, does not seem to be so very reasonable to most men. But that when One had done aright all should be justified, is at once more reasonable and more suited to God. Yet still he has not solved the difficulty he raised. For the more obscure that point remained, the more the Jew was put to silence. And the difficulty of his position passed over to the other, and this become clearer from it (Mar. and 4 manuscripts *"than that"*). So in this passage also, it is by raising other difficulties that he meets the questions raised, inasmuch as it was against Jews that he was contending. Hence he takes no pains to solve the examples which he has brought before us. For he was not answerable for them as in the fight against the Jews. But from them he makes his own subject throughout clearer. Why do you feel surprised, he means, that some of the Jews were saved, and some not saved at this time? Why of old, in the patriarch's times, one may see this happening. For why was Isaac only called the seed, and yet he was the father of Ishmael also, and of several others. *"But he was of a mother that was a slave."* And what has this to do with his father? Still I will not be captious. Let this son be set aside on his

mother's account. What are we to say of those sprung from Keturah? Were they not free, and from a mother that was free? How came they not to be honored with the same preference as Isaac? And why do I speak of these? For Rebecca was even Isaac's only wife, and bearing two children she bore them both to Isaac; still those so born, though of the same father, and the same mother, and the fruit of the same labor, being both of one father and one mother, and twins besides, yet did not enjoy the same lot. And yet here you have no mother's slavery to account for it, as in Ishmael's case, nor can you say that one was begotten of this womb and the other of a different one, as in the case of Keturah and Sarah, since in this case they had the same hour in common to them for their birth. This was why Paul then, in order to give a clearer example, says that this happened not in Isaac's case only, *"but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac."*

Ver. 11-13. *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls, it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."*

What was the cause then why one was loved and the other hated? Why was it that one served, the other was served? It was because one was wicked, and the other good. And yet the children being not yet born, one was honored and the other condemned. For when they were not as yet born, God said, *"the elder shall serve the younger."* With what intent then did God say this? Because He does not wait, as man does, to see from the issue of their acts the good and him who is not so, but even before these He knows which is the wicked and which not such. And this took place in the Israelites' case also, in a still more wonderful way. Why, he says, do I speak of Esau and of Jacob, of whom one was wicked and the other good? For in

the Israelites' case, the sin belonged to all, since they all worshipped the calf. Yet notwithstanding some had mercy shown them, and others had not.

Ver. 15. *"For I will have mercy, He says, on whom I will have mercy, and I will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."* [Exodus 33:19]

This one may see also in the case of those who are punished, for what would you say of Pharaoh who was punished, and had to pay so heavy a penalty? You say he was hardened and disobedient. Was he then alone such, and not even one person else? How came he then to be so severely punished? Why even in the case of the Jews did he call that a people which was no people, or again, why not count all worthy of equal honor? *"For if they be"* (it says) *"as the sand of the sea, yet shall a remnant be saved."* [Isaiah 10:22] And why is it to be only a remnant? You see what difficulty he has filled the subject with. And with great propriety. For when you have power to throw your adversary into perplexity, do not at once bring forward the answer, because if he be found himself responsible for the same ignorance, why take unnecessary dangers upon yourself? Why make him more bold, by drawing it all upon yourself? Now tell me, O thou Jew, that hast so many perplexing questions, and art unable to answer any of them, how you come to annoy us on account of the call of the Gentiles? I, however, have a good reason to give you why the Gentiles were justified and you were cast out. And what is the reason? It is that they are of faith, you of the works of the Law. And it is owing to this obstinacy of yours that you have in every way (Mar. and several manuscripts all) been given up. For, *"they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."* [Romans 10:3] The clearing up then of the whole passage, to give the whole sense summarily, is here brought out by that

blessed person. But that this may be clearer, let us investigate the things he says also one by one; this knowing, that what the blessed Paul aimed at was, to show by all that he said that God only knows who are worthy, and no man whatever knows, even if he seem to know ever so well, but that in this sentence of his there are sundry aberrations. For He that knows the secrets of the hearts, He only knows for a certainty who deserve a crown, and who punishment and vengeance. Hence it is that many of those, by men esteemed good, He convicts and punishes, and those suspected to be bad He crowns, after showing it not to be so; thus forming his sentence not after the judgment of us slaves, but after his own keen and uncorrupt decision, and not waiting for the issue of actions to look at the wicked and him who is not so therefrom. But that we may not make the subject more obscure, again let us go to the very words of the Apostle.

Ver. 10. *"And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one."*

I might, he implies, have mentioned the children by Keturah besides, but I do not. But to gain the victory from a vantage ground it is those born of one and the same father, and mother too, that I bring forward. For they were both sprung from Rebecca, and from Isaac the true-born, the elect, the son honored above all, of whom He said, *"In Isaac shall your seed be called,"* who became *"the father of us all;"* but if he was our father, then should his sons have been our fathers; yet it was not so. You see how this happens not in Abraham's case only, but also in that of his son himself, and how it is faith and virtue in all cases that is conspicuous, and gives the real relationship its character. For hence we learn that it is not only from the manner of birth, but owing to their being worthy of the father's virtue, that the children are called children of him. For if it were only owing to the manner of the birth, then ought Esau to have enjoyed the same as Jacob did.

For he also was from a womb as good as dead, and his mother was barren. Yet this was not the only thing required, but the character too, which fact contributes no common amount of practical instruction for us. And he does not say that one is good and another bad, and so the former was honored; lest this kind of argument should be wielded against him, *"What, are those of the Gentiles good men rather than those of the circumcision?"* For even supposing the truth of the matter was so, still he does not state it yet, as that would have seemed to be vexatious. But it is upon God's knowledge that he has cast the whole, and this no one would venture to gainsay, though he were ever so frantic. *"For the children being not yet born,"* he says, *"it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger."* And he shows that noble birth after the flesh is of no avail, but we must seek for virtue of soul, which even before the works of it God knows of. For *"the children,"* he says, *"being not yet born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, it was said unto her that the elder shall serve the younger:"* for this was a sign of foreknowledge, that they were chosen from the very birth. That the election made according to foreknowledge, might be manifestly of God, from the first day He at once saw and proclaimed which was good and which not. Do not then tell me that you have read the Law (he means) and the Prophets, and hast been a servant for such a long time. For He that knows how to assay the soul, knows which is worthy of being saved. Yield then to the incomprehensibleness of the election. For it is He alone Who knows how to crown aright. How many, for instance, seemed better than St. Matthew; to go by the exhibition of works then visible. But He that knows things undeclared, and is able to assay the mind's aptitude, knew the pearl though lying in the mire, and after passing by others, and being well pleased with the beauty of this, He elected it, and by adding to the noble born free-will

grace from Himself, He made it approved. For if in the case of these arts which are perishable, and indeed in other matters, those that are good judges do not use the grounds on which the uninstructed form their decision, in selecting out of what is put before them; but from points which they are themselves well aware of, they many times disparage that which the uninstructed approve, and decide upon what they disparage: and horse-breakers often do this with horses, and so the judges of precious stones, and workmen in other arts: much more will the God that loves man, the infinite Wisdom, Who alone has a clear knowledge of all things, not allow of man's guesses, but will out of His own exact and unfailing Wisdom pass his sentence upon all men. Hence it was that He chose the publican, the thief, and the harlot; but dishonored priests, and elders, and rulers, and cast them out. And this one may see happening in the martyrs' case also. Many accordingly of those who were utterly cast aside, have in the time of trial been crowned. And, on the other hand, some that have been held great ones by many have stumbled and fallen. Do not then call the Creator to account, nor say, Why is it that one was crowned and another punished? For He knows how to do these things with exactness. Whence also he says, "*Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.*" That it was with justice, you indeed know from the result: but Himself even before the result knew it clearly. For it is not a mere exhibition of works that God searches after, but a nobleness of choice and an obedient temper ([γνώμην εὐγνώμονα]) besides. For a man of this kind, if he should ever sin through some surprise, will speedily recover himself. And if he should even stay long haply in a state of vice, he will not be overlooked, but God Who knows all things will speedily draw him out. And so he that is herein corrupted, even if he seem to do some good things, will perish, in that he does this with an ill intention. Hence even David, after committing murder and adultery, since he did this

as being carried away by surprise, and not from habitual practice of wickedness, speedily washed it out. The Pharisee, however, who had not perpetrated any such crime [Luke 18:11], but even had good deeds besides to boast of, lost all by the bad spirit he had chosen.

Ver. 14. *"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."*

Hence there is no such thing in the case of us and the Jews. And then he goes on with another thing, a more clear than this. And of what sort is it?

Ver. 15. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

Here again he adds force to the objection by dividing it in two and meeting it, and starting another fresh difficulty. But to make what I have said clearer, one must needs explain it. God, he means, said that *"the elder shall serve the younger,"* before the travail. What then? *"Is God unrighteous?"* By no means. Now listen to what follows also. For in that case the virtue or the vice, might be the decisive thing. But here there was one sin on which all the Jews joined, that of the molten calf, and still some were punished, and some were not punished. And this is why He says, *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."* [Exodus 33:19: observe context] For it is not yours to know, O Moses, he means, which are deserving of My love toward man, but leave this to Me. But if Moses had no right to know, much less have we. And this is why he did not barely quote the passage, but also called to our minds to whom it was said. For it is Moses, he means, that he is speaking to, that at least by the dignity of the person he might make the objector modest. Having then given a solution of the difficulties raised, he divides it in two, by bringing forward another objection besides, as follows:

Ver. 16, 17. *"So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy. For the Scripture says unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."*

As then in the one case, he means, some were saved and some were punished, so here also. This man was reserved for this very purpose. And then he again urges the objection.

Ver. 18, 19. *"Therefore He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens. You will say then unto me, Why does he then find fault? For who has resisted His will?"*

See what pains he takes to embarrass the subject in every way. And the answer he does not produce immediately, it being a useful thing not to do so, but he first stops the disputant's mouth, saying as follows,

Ver. 20. *"Nay but, O man, who are you that repliest against God?"*

This he does to take down the objector's unseasonable inquisitiveness, and excessive curiosity, and to put a check upon it, and teach him to know what God is, and what man, and how incomprehensible His foreknowledge is, and how far above our reason, and how obedience to Him in all points is binding. So when he has made this preparatory step in his hearer, and has hushed and softened down his spirit, then with great felicity he introduces the answer, having made what he says easy of admittance with him. And he does not say, it is impossible to answer questions of this kind, but that (5 manuscripts No, but what? That) it is presumptuous to raise them. For our business is to obey what God does, not to be curious even if we do not know the reason of them. Wherefore he said, *"Who are you that repliest against God?"* You see how very light he makes of him, how he bears down his swelling spirit! *"Who are you?"* are you a sharer of His power? [compare Job 38] nay, are you sitting in judgment upon God? Why in

comparison with Him you can not have a being even! nor this or that sort of being, but absolutely none! For the expression, "*who are you?*" does much more set him at naught than "*you are nothing.*" And he takes other ways of showing further his indignation in the question, and does not say, "*Who are you that*" answerest "*God?*" but, "*that repliest against,*" that is, that gainsayest, and that opposest. For the saying things ought to be so, and ought not to be so, is what a man does that "*replies against.*" See how he scares them, how he terrifies them, how he makes them tremble rather than be questioning and curious. This is what an excellent teacher does; he does not follow his disciples' fancy everywhere, but leads them to his own mind, and pulls up the thorns, and then puts the seed in, and does not answer at once in all cases to the questions put to him.

Ver. 20, 21. "*Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why have You made me thus? Hath not the potter [Read Jeremiah 18:1-10] power, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*"

Here it is not to do away with free-will that he says this, but to show, up to what point we ought to obey God. For in respect of calling God to account, we ought to be as little disposed to it as the clay is. For we ought to abstain not from gainsaying or questioning only, but even from speaking or thinking of it at all, and to become like that lifeless matter, which follows the potter's hands, and lets itself be drawn about anywhere he may please. And this is the only point he applied the illustration to, not, that is, to any enunciation of the rule of life, but to the complete obedience and silence enforced upon us. And this we ought to observe in all cases, that we are not to take the illustrations quite entire, but after selecting the good of them, and that for which they were introduced, to let the rest alone. As, for instance, when he says, "*He couched, he lay down as a lion;*" [Numbers

24:9] let us take out the indomitable and fearful part, not the brutality, nor any other of the things belonging to a lion. And again, when He says, *"I will meet them as a bereaved bear"* [Hosea 13:8], let us take the vindictiveness. And when he says, *"our God is a consuming fire"* [Hebrews 12:29], the wasting power exerted in punishing. So also here must we single out the clay, the potter, and the vessels. And when he does go on to say, *"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"* do not suppose that this is said by Paul as an account of the creation, nor as implying a necessity over the will, but to illustrate the sovereignty and difference of dispensations; for if we do not take it in this way, various incongruities will follow, for if here he were speaking about the will, and those who are good and those not so, He will be Himself the Maker of these, and man will be free from all responsibility. And at this rate, Paul will also be shown to be at variance with himself, as he always bestows chief honor upon free choice. There is nothing else then which he here wishes to do, save to persuade the hearer to yield entirely to God, and at no time to call Him to account for anything whatever. For as the potter (he says) of the same lump makes what he pleases, and no one forbids it; thus also when God, of the same race of men, punishes some, and honors others, be not thou curious nor meddlesome herein, but worship only, and imitate the clay. And as it follows the hands of the potter, so do thou also the mind of Him that so orders things. For He works nothing at random, or mere hazard, though thou be ignorant of the secret of His Wisdom. Yet you allow the other of the same lump to make various things, and findest no fault: but of Him you demand an account of His punishments and honors, and will not allow Him to know who is worthy and who is not so; but since the same lump is of the same substance, you assert that there are the same dispositions. And, how monstrous this is! And yet not even is

it on the potter that the honor and the dishonor of the things made of the lump depends, but upon the use made by those that handle them, so here also it depends on the free choice. Still, as I said before, one must take this illustration to have one bearing only, which is that one should not contravene God, but yield to His incomprehensible Wisdom. For the examples ought to be greater than the subject, and than the things on account of which they are brought forward, so as to draw on the hearer better. Since if they were not greater and did not mount far above it, he could not attack as he ought, and shame the objectors. However, their ill-timed obstinacy he silenced in this way with becoming superiority. And then he introduces his answer. Now what is the answer?

Ver. 22, 23, 24. *"What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He has chosen, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."*

What he means is somewhat as follows. Pharaoh was a vessel of wrath, that is, a man who by his own hard-heartedness had kindled the wrath of God. For after enjoying much long-suffering, he became no better, but remained unimproved. Wherefore he calls him not only *"a vessel of wrath,"* but also one *"fitted for destruction."* That is, fully fitted indeed, but by his own proper self. For neither had God left out anything of the things likely to recover him, nor did he leave out anything of those that would ruin him, and put him beyond any forgiveness. Yet still, though God knew this, *"He endured him with much long-suffering,"* being willing to bring him to repentance. For had He not willed this, then He would not have been thus long-suffering. But as he would not use the long-suffering in order to repentance, but fully fitted himself for wrath, He used him for the

correction of others, through the punishment inflicted upon him making them better, and in this way setting forth His power. For that it is not God's wish that His power be so made known, but in another way, by His benefits, namely, and kindnesses, he had shown above in all possible ways. For if Paul does not wish to appear powerful in this way (*"not that we should appear approved,"* he says, *"but that you should do that which is honest,"*) [2 Corinthians 13:7], much less does God. But after that he had shown long-suffering, that He might lead to repentance, but he did not repent, He suffered him a long time, that He might display at once His goodness and His power, even if that man were not minded to gain anything from this great long-suffering. As then by punishing this man, who continued incorrigible, He showed His power, so by having pitied those who had done many sins but repented, He manifested His love toward man. But it does not say, love towards man, but glory, to show that this is especially God's glory, and for this He was above all things earnest. But in saying, *"which He had afore prepared unto glory,"* he does not mean that all is God's doing. Since if this were so, there were nothing to hinder all men from being saved. But he is setting forth again His foreknowledge, and doing away with the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles. And on this topic again he grounds a defence of his statement, which is no small one. For it was not in the case of the Jews only that some men perished, and some were saved, but with the Gentiles also this was the case. Wherefore he does not say, all the Gentiles, but, *"of the Gentiles,"* nor, all the Jews, but, *"of the Jews."* As then Pharaoh became a vessel of wrath by his own lawlessness, so did these become vessels of mercy by their own readiness to obey. For though the more part is of God, still they also have contributed themselves some little. Whence he does not say either, vessels of well-doing, or vessels of boldness ([παρρησίας]), but *"vessels of mercy,"* to show that the whole is of God. For

the phrase, *"it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs,"* even if it comes in the course of the objection, still, were it said by Paul, would create no difficulty. Because when he says, *"it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs,"* he does not deprive us of free-will, but shows that all is not one's own, for that it requires grace from above. For it is binding on us to will, and also to run: but to confide not in our own labors, but in the love of God toward man. And this he has expressed elsewhere. *"Yet not I, but the grace which was with me."* [1 Corinthians 15:10] And he well says, *"Which He had afore prepared unto glory."* For since they reproached them with this, that they were saved by grace, and thought to make them ashamed, he far more than sets aside this insinuation. For if the thing brought glory even to God, much more to them through whom God was glorified. But observe his forbearance, and unspeakable wisdom. For when he had it in his power to adduce, as an instance of those punished, not Pharaoh, but such of the Jews as had sinned, and so make his discourse much clearer, and show that where there were the same fathers, and the same sins, some perished, and some had mercy shown them, and persuade them not to be doubtful-minded, even if some of the Gentiles were saved, while the Jews were perishing; that he might not make his discourse irksome, the showing forth of the punishment he draws from the foreigner, so that he may not be forced to call them *"vessels of wrath."* But those that obtained mercy he draws from the people of the Jews. And besides, he also has spoken in a sufficient way in God's behalf, because though He knew very well that the nation was fitting itself as a vessel of destruction, still He contributed all on His part, His patience, His long-suffering, and that not merely long-suffering, but *"much long-suffering;"* yet still he was not minded to state it barely against the Jews. Whence then are some vessels of wrath, and some of mercy? Of their own free choice. God, however, being very good, shows the same kindness to

both. For it was not those in a state of salvation only to whom He showed mercy, but also Pharaoh, as far as His part went. For of the same long-suffering, both they and he had the advantage. And if he was not saved, it was quite owing to his own will: since, as for what concerns God, he had as much done for him as they who were saved. Having then given to the question that answer which was furnished by facts, in order to give his discourse the advantage of other testimony in its favor, he introduces the prophets also making the same declarations aforetime. For Hosea, he says, of old put this in writing, as follows:

Ver. 25. *"I will call them My people, which were not My people; and her beloved, which was not beloved."*

Here to prevent their saying, that you are deceiving us here with specious reasoning, he calls Hosea to witness, who cries and says, *"I will call them My people, who were not My people."* [Hosea 2:23] Who then are the not-people? Plainly, the Gentiles. And who the not-beloved? The same again. However, he says, that they shall become at once people, and beloved, and sons of God.

Ver. 26. *"For even they shall be called,"* he says, *"the children of the living God."*

But if they should assert that this was said of those of the Jews who believed, even then the argument stands. For if with those who after so many benefits were hard-hearted and estranged, and had lost their being as a people, so great a change was wrought, what is there to prevent even those who were not estranged after being taken to Him, but were originally aliens, from being called, and, provided they obey, from being counted worthy of the same blessings? Having then done with Hosea, he does not content himself with him only, but also brings Isaiah in after him. sounding in harmony with him.

Ver. 27. *"For Esaias,"* he says, *"cries concerning Israel."*

That is, speaks out boldly, and uses no dissimulation. Why then lay a charge against us, when they afore declared the same thing with more than trumpet's loudness? And what does Isaiah cry? *"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."* [Isaiah 10:22]

Do you see that he too does not say that all are to be saved, but that those that are worthy shall? For I regard not the multitude, he means, nor does a race diffused so far distress me, but those only do I save that yield themselves worthy of it. And he does not mention the *"sand of the sea"* without a reason, but to remind them of the ancient promise whereof they had made themselves unworthy. Why then are you troubled, as though the promise had failed, when all the Prophets show that it is not all that are to be saved? Then he mentions the mode of the salvation also. Observe the accuracy of the Prophet, and the judgment of the Apostle, what a testimony he has cited, how exceedingly apposite! For it not only shows us that those to be saved are some and not all, but also adds the way they are to be saved. How then are they to be saved, and how will God count them worthy of the benefit?

Ver. 28. *"He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness,"* he says, *"because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."* [Isaiah 10:23, Septuagint]

What he means then is somewhat of this sort. There is no need of fetching a circuit, and of trouble, and the vexation of the works of the Law, for the salvation is by a very short way. For such is faith, it holds salvation in a few short words. *"For if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."* [Romans 10:9] Now you see what this, *"the Lord shall*

make a short word (LXX. lit.) upon earth," is. And what is indeed wonderful is, that this short word carries with it not salvation only, but also righteousness.

Ver 29. *"And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and had been made like Gomorrha."*
[Isaiah 1:9]

Here again he shows another thing, that not even those few were saved from their own resources. For they too would have perished, and met with Sodom's fate, that is, they would have had to undergo utter destruction (for they (of Sodom) were also destroyed root and branch, and left not even the slightest remnant of themselves,) and they too, he means, would have been like these, unless God had used much kindness to them, and had saved them by faith. And this happened also in the case of the visible captivity, the majority having been taken away captive and perished, and some few only being saved.

Ver. 30, 31. *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness."*

Here at last is the clearest answer. For since he had used a proof as well from facts (*"for they are not all Israel that are of Israel"*) as from the case of the forefathers Jacob and Esau, and from the prophets Hosea and Isaiah, he further gives the most decisive answer, after first adding to the perplexity. The points discussed, then, are two; one that the Gentiles attained, and the other that they attained it without following after it, that is, without taking pains about it. And again in the Jews' case also there are two difficulties of the same kind; one that Israel attained not, the other that, though they took pains, they attained not. Whence also his use of words is

more emphatical. For he does not say that they had, but that they *"attained to righteousness."* For what is especially new and unusual is, that they who followed after it attained not, but they which followed not after it attained. And he seems to be indulging them by saying, *"followed after."* But afterwards he strikes the blow home. For since he had a strong answer to give them, he had no fear of making the objection a little harsher. Hence he does not speak of faith either, and the righteousness ensuing thereon, but shows that before the faith even, on their own ground they were worsted and condemned. For thou, O Jew, he says, hast not found even the righteousness which was by the Law. For you have transgressed it, and become liable to the curse. But these that came not through the Law, but by another road, have found a greater righteousness than this, that, namely, which is of faith. And this he had also said before. *"For if Abraham was justified by works, he has whereof to glory, but not before God"* [Romans 4]: so showing that the other righteousness was greater than this. Before, then, I said that there were two difficulties, but now they have even become three questions: that the Gentiles found righteousness, and found it without following after it, and found a greater than that of the Law. These same difficulties are again felt in the Jews' case with an opposite view. That Israel did not find, and though he took pains he did not find, and did not find even the less. Having then thrust his hearer into perplexity, he proceeds to give a concise answer, and tells him the cause of all that is said. When then is the cause?

Ver. 32. *"Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law."*

This is the clearest answer in the passage, which if he had said immediately upon starting he would not have gained so easy a hearing. But since it is after many perplexities, and preparations, and demonstrations that

he sets it down, and after using countless preparatory steps, he has at last made it more intelligible, and also more easily admitted. For this he says is the cause of their destruction: *"Because it was not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law,"* that they wished to be justified. And he does not say, *"by works,"* but, *"as it were by the works of the Law,"* to show that they had not even this righteousness.

"For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;"

Ver. 33. *"As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offense: and whosoever believes in Him shall not be ashamed."*

You see again how it is from faith that the boldness comes, and the gift is universal; since it is not of the Jews only that this is said, but also of the whole human race. For every one, he would say, whether Jew, or Grecian, or Scythian, or Thracian, or whatsoever else he may be, will, if he believes, enjoy the privilege of great boldness. But the wonder in the Prophet is that he foretells not only that they should believe, but also that they should not believe. For to stumble is to disbelieve. As in the former passage he points out them that perish and them that are saved, where he says, *"If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved. And, If the Lord of Sabaoth had not left us a seed, we should have been as Sodoma."* And, *"He has called not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles;"* so here too he implies that some will believe, and some will stumble. But stumbling comes of not taking heed, of gaping after other things. Since then they did give heed to the Law, they stumbled on the stone, *"And a stone of stumbling and rock of offense"* he calls it from the character and end of those that believe not.

Is then the language used made plain to you? Or does it still want much in clearness? I think indeed that, to those who have been attending, it is easy to get a clear view of it. But if it has slipped anybody's memory, you

can meet in private, and learn what it was. And this is why I have continued longer upon this explanatory part of the discourse, that I might not be compelled to break off the continuity of the context, and so spoil the clearness of the statements. And for this cause too I will bring my discourse to a conclusion here, without saying anything to you on the more immediately practical points, as I generally do, lest I should make a fresh indistinctness in your memories by saying so much. It is time now to come to the proper conclusion, by shutting up the discourse with the doxology to the God of all. Let us then both pause, me that am speaking and you that are hearing, and offer up glory to Him. For His is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 17 on Romans

Rom. X. 1

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is, that they might be saved."

He is now going again to rebuke them more vehemently than before. Wherefore he again does away with every suspicion of hatred, and makes a great effort beforehand to correct misapprehension. Do not then, he says, mind words or accusations, but observe that it is not in any hostile spirit that I say this. For it is not likely that the same person should desire their salvation, and not desire it only, but even pray for it, and yet should also hate them, and feel aversion to them. For here he calls his exceeding desire, and the prayer which he makes ([εὐδοκίαν]), *"heart's desire."* For it is not the being freed from punishment only, but that they may also be saved, that he makes so great a point of, and prays for. Nor is it from this only, but also from the sequel that he shows the goodwill that he has towards them. For from what is open to him, as far as he can, he forces his way, and is contentious to find out some shadow at least of an excuse for them. And he has not the power, being overcome by the nature of the facts.

Ver. 2. *"For I bear them record,"* says he, *"that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."*

Ought not this then to be a ground for pardoning and not for accusing them? For if it is not of man that they are separated, but through zeal, they deserved to be pitied rather than punished. But observe how adroitly he favors them in the word, and yet shows their unseasonable obstinacy.

Ver. 3. *"For they being ignorant,"* he says, *"of God's righteousness."*

Again the word would lead to pardon. But the sequel to stronger accusation, and such as does away with defence of any kind.

"And going about," he says, "to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

And these things he says to show, that it was from a petulancy and love of power that they erred, rather than from ignorance, and that not even this righteousness from the deeds of the Law did they establish. [Matthew 21:38; John 12:19, 42] For saying *"going about to establish"* is what one would do to show this. And in plain words indeed he has not stated this (for he has not said, that they fell short of both righteousnesses), but he has given a hint of it in a very judicious manner, and with the wisdom so befitting him. For if they are still *"going about"* to establish that, it is very plain that they have not yet established it. If they have not submitted themselves to this, they have fallen short of this also. But he calls it their *"own righteousness,"* either because the Law was no longer of force, or because it was one of trouble and toil. But this he calls God's righteousness, that from faith, because it comes entirely from the grace from above, and because men are justified in this case, not by labors, but by the gift of God. But they that evermore resisted the Holy Ghost, and vexatiously tried to be justified by the Law, came not over to the faith. But as they did not come over to the faith, nor receive the righteousness thereupon ensuing, and were not able to be justified by the Law either, they were thrown out of all resources.

Ver. 4. *"For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believes."*

See the judgment of Paul. For as he had spoken of a righteousness, and a righteousness, lest they of the Jews which believed should seem to have the one but be excluded from the other, and to be accused of lawlessness

(for even these there was no less cause to fear about as being still newly come in), and lest Jews should again expect to achieve it, and should say, Though we have not at present fulfilled it, yet we certainly will fulfil it, see what ground he takes. He shows that there is but one righteousness, and that has its full issue in this, and that he that has taken to himself this, the one by faith, has fulfilled that also. But he that rejects this, falls short as well of that also. For if Christ be "*the end of the Law*," he that has not Christ, even if he seem to have that righteousness, has it not. But he that has Christ, even though he have not fulfilled the Law aright, has received the whole. For the end of the physician's art is health. As then he that can make whole, even though he has not the physician's art, has everything; but he that knows not how to heal, though he seem to be a follower of the art, comes short of everything: so is it in the case of the Law and of faith. He that has this has the end of that likewise, but he that is without this is an alien from both. For what was the object of the Law? To make man righteous. But it had not the power, for no one fulfilled it. This then was the end of the Law and to this it looked throughout, and for this all its parts were made, its feasts, and commandments, and sacrifices, and all besides, that man might be justified. But this end Christ gave a fuller accomplishment of through faith. Be not then afraid, he says, as if transgressing the Law in having come over to the faith. For then do you transgress it, when for it thou dost not believe Christ. If you believe in Him, then you have fulfilled it also, and much more than it commanded. For you have received a much greater righteousness. Next, since this was an assertion, he again brings proof of it from the Scriptures.

Ver. 5. "*For Moses*," he says, "*describes the righteousness which is of the Law.*"

What he means is this. Moses shows us the righteousness ensuing from the Law, what sort it is of, and whence. What sort is it then of, and what

does it consist in? In fulfilling the commandments. *"He (R.T. the man), that does these things,"* He says, *"shall live by (or in), them."* [Leviticus 18:5] And there is no other way of becoming righteous in the Law save by fulfilling the whole of it. But this has not been possible for any one, and therefore this righteousness has failed them. ([διαπέπτωκεν]). But tell us, Paul, of the other righteousness also, that which is of grace. What is that then, and of what does it consist? Hear the words in which he gives a clear sketch of it. For after he had refuted the other, he next goes on to this, and says,

Ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above): or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what says it? The word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach. That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

To prevent the Jews then from saying, How came they who had not found the lesser righteousness to find the greater? He gives a reason there was no answering, that this way was easier than that. For that requires the fulfilment of all things (for when you do all, then you shall live); but the righteousness which is of faith does not say this, but what?

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Then again that we may not seem to be making it contemptible by showing it to be easy and cheap, observe how he expands his account of it. For he does not come immediately to the words just given, but what does he say? *"But the righteousness which is of faith says on this wise; Say not in your heart,*

Who shall go up into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)"

For as to the virtue manifested in works there is opposed a listlessness, which relaxes our labors, and it requires a very wakeful soul not to yield to it: thus, when one is required to believe, there are reasonings which confuse and make havoc of the minds of most men, and it wants a soul of some vigor to shake them thoroughly off. And this is just why he brings the same before one. And as he did in Abraham's case, so he does here also. For having there shown that he was justified by faith, lest he should seem to have gotten so great a crown by a mere chance, as if it were a thing of no account, to extol the nature of faith, he says, *"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations. And being not weak in faith, he considered his own body now dead, and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform"* [Romans 4:18-21]: so he showed that there is need of vigor, and a lofty soul, that takes in things beyond expectation, and stumbles not at appearances. This then he does here also, and shows that it requires a wise mind, and a spirit heavenly (Gr. heaven-reaching) and great. And he does not say merely, *"Say not,"* but, *"Say not in your heart,"* that is, do not so much as think of doubting and saying with yourself, And how can this be? You see that this is a chief characteristic of faith, to leave all the consequences of this lower world, and so to seek for that which is above nature, and to cast out the feebleness of calculation, and so to accept everything from the Power of God. The Jews, however, did not merely assert this, but that it was not possible to be justified by faith. But himself turns even what had taken place to another account, that having shown the thing to be so great, that even after it had

taken place it required faith, he might seem with good reason to bestow a crown on these: and he uses the words which are found in the Old Testament, being always at pains to keep quite clear of the charges of love of novelties, and of opposition to it. For this, which he here says of faith, Moses says to them of the commandment, so showing that they had enjoyed at God's hand a great benefit. For there is no need to say, he means, that one must go up to heaven, or cross a great sea, and then receive the commandments, but things so great and grand has God made of easy access to us. And what means the phrase, "*The Word is near you?*" That is, It is easy. For in your mind and in your tongue is your salvation. There is no long journey to go, no seas to sail over, no mountains to pass, to get saved. But if you be not minded to cross so much as the threshold, you may even while you sit at home be saved. For "*in your mouth and in your heart*" is the source of salvation. And then on another score also he makes the word of faith easy, and says, that "*God raised Him from the dead.*" For just reflect upon the worthiness of the Worker, and you will no longer see any difficulty in the thing. That He is Lord then, is plain from the resurrection. And this he said at the beginning even of the Epistle. "*Which was declared to be the Son of God with power ... by the resurrection from the dead.*" [Romans 1:4] But that the resurrection is easy too, has been shown even to those who are very unbelieving, from the might of the Worker of it. Since then the righteousness is greater, and light and easy to receive, is it not a sign of the utmost contentiousness to leave what is light and easy, and set about impossibilities? For they could not say that it was a thing they declined as burdensome. See then how he deprives them of all excuse. For what do they deserve to have said in their defence, who choose what is burdensome and impracticable, and pass by what is light, and able to save them, and to give them those things which the Law could not give? All this can come only

from a contentious spirit, which is in a state of rebellion against God. For the Law is galling ([ἐ] [παχθῆς]), but grace is easy. The Law, though they dispute never so much, does not save; Grace yields the righteousness resulting from itself, and that from the Law likewise. What plea then is to rescue them, since they are disposed to be contentious against this, but cling to that to no purpose whatever? Then, since he had made a strong assertion, he again confirms it from the Scripture.

Ver. 11-13. *"For the Scripture says,"* he proceeds, *"Whosoever believes in Him, shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."*

You see how he produces witnesses, whether to the faith, or to the confession of it. For the words, *"Every one that believes,"* point out the faith. But the words, *"Whosoever shall call upon,"* set forth confession. Then again to proclaim the universality of the grace, and to lay their boasting low, what he had before demonstrated at length, he here briefly recalls to their memory, showing again that there is no difference between the Jew and the uncircumcised. *"For there is,"* he says, *"no difference between the Jew and the Greek."* And what he had said about the Father, when he was arguing this point, that he says here about the Son. For as before he said in asserting this, *"Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God"* [Romans 3:29-30]:— So he says here also, *"For the same Lord over all is rich unto all (and upon all)."* [Romans 3:22] You see how he sets Him forth as exceedingly desiring our salvation, since He even reckons this to be riches to Himself; so that they are not even now to despair, or fancy that, provided they would repent, they were unpardonable. For He who considers it as riches to Himself to save us, will not cease to be rich. Since even this is

riches, the fact of the gift being shed forth unto all. For since what distresses him the most was, that they, who were in the enjoyment of a prerogative over the whole world, should now by the faith be degraded from these thrones, and be no wit better off than others, he brings the Prophets in constantly as foretelling, that they would have equal honor with them. "*For whosoever,*" he says, "*believes in Him shall not be ashamed*" [Isaiah 28:16]; and, "*Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.*" [Joel 2:32] And the "*whosoever*" is put in all cases, that they might not say anything in reply. But there is nothing worse than vainglory. For it was this, this most especially, which proved their ruin. Whence Christ also said to them, "*How can you believe, which receive glory one of another, and seek not the glory which comes of God only?*" [John 5:44] This, with ruin, exposes men also to much ridicule and before the punishment in the other world involves them in ills unnumbered in this. And if it seem good, that you may learn this clearly, leaving for the present the heavens which that puts us out of, and the hell which it thrusts us into, let us investigate the whole matter as here before us. What then can be more wasteful than this? What more disgraceful, or more offensive? For that this disorder is a wasteful one is plain from the people who spend to no purpose whatsoever on theatres, horse-races, and other such irrelevant expenditures: from those that build the fine and expensive houses, and fit up everything in a useless style of extravagance, on which I must not enter in this discourse. But that a person diseased in this way must needs be extravagant, and expensive, and rapacious, and covetous, anybody can see. For that he may have food to give the brute, he thrusts his hand into the substance of others. And why do I talk of substance? It is not money only but souls also that this fire devours, and it works not death here only, but also hereafter. For vanity is the mother of hell, and greatly kindles that fire, and the venomous worm.

One may see that it has power even over the dead. And what can be worse than this? For the other passions are put an end to by death, but this even after death shows its force, and strives to display its nature even in the dead corpse. For when men give orders on their death-bed to raise to them fine monuments, which will waste all their substance, and take pains to lay out beforehand a vast extravagance in their funeral, and in their lifetime insult the poor that come to them for a penny and a single loaf, but when they are dead give a rich banquet to the worm, why seek any more exorbitant thralldom to the disease? From this mischief also irregular loves are conceived. For there are many whom it is not the beauty of the appearance, nor the desire of lying with her, but the wish to boast that *"I have made conquest of such an one,"* has even drawn into adultery. And why need I mention the other mischiefs that spring of this? For I had rather be long (3 manuscripts [διηνεκῶς]) the slave of ten thousand savages, than of vanity once. For even they do not put such commands upon their captives, as this vice lays upon its votaries. Because it says, Be thou every one's slave, be he nobler or be he lower than yourself. Despise your soul, neglect virtue, laugh at freedom, immolate your salvation, and if you do any good thing, do it not to please God, but to display it to the many, that for these things you may even lose your crown. And if you give alms, or if you fast, undergo the pains, but take care to lose the gain. What can be more cruel than these commands? Hence grudging bears sway, hence haughtiness, hence covetousness, the mother of evils. For the swarm of domestics, and the black servants liveried in gold, and the hangers on, and the flatterers, and the silver-tinselled chariots, and the other absurdities greater than these, are not had for any pleasure's sake or necessity, but for mere vanity. Yes, one will say, but that this affliction is an evil, anybody can see; but how we are to keep quite clear of it, this is what you should tell us. Well then, in the

first place, if you persuade yourself that this disorder is a baneful one, you will have made a very good beginning towards correcting it. For when a man is sick, he speedily sends for the physician, if he be first made acquainted with the fact that he is sick. But if you seek for another way besides to escape from hence, look to God continually, and be content with glory from Him; and if you find the passion tickling you, and stirring you to tell your well-doings to your fellow-servants, bethink yourself next, that after telling them you gain nothing. Quench the absurd desire, and say to your soul, Lo, you have been so long big with your own well-doings to tell them, and you have not had the courage to keep them to yourself, but hast blabbed them out to all. What good then have you gotten from this? None at all, but loss to the utmost, and avoidance of all that had been gathered together with much labor. And besides this, consider another thing also, which is, that most men's opinion is perverted, and not perverted only, but that it withers away so soon.

For supposing they do admire you for the time, when the occasion has gone by they will have forgotten it all, and have taken away from you the crown God had given, and have been unable to secure to you that from themselves. And yet if this were abiding, it were a most miserable thing to exchange that for this. But when even this has gone, what defence shall we be able to make for betraying the abiding one for the sake of the unabiding one, for losing such blessings for the sake of credit with a few? And indeed even if they who praise were numerous, even for this they were to be pitied, and the more so the more numerous those who do it. But if you are surprised at what I have said, hear Christ giving His sentence in this way, *"Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you."* [Luke 6:26] And so indeed it should seem. For if in every art you look to the workmen ([δημιουργους]) in it to be judges of it, how come you to trust the proving of virtue to the

many, and not most of all to Him Who knows it more surely than any, and is best able to applaud and to crown it? This saying then, let us inscribe both on our walls and our doors and our mind, and let us keep constantly saying to ourselves, *"Woe unto us, when all men speak well of us."* For even they that so speak slander one afterward as a vain person, and fond of honor, and covetous of their good word. But God does not so. But when He sees you coveting the glory that comes of Him, then He will praise you most, and respect ([θαυμάσεται] om. in most manuscripts) you, and proclaim you conqueror. Not so man; but, when he finds you slavish instead of free, by gratifying you often by bare words with false praise, he snatches from you your true meed, and makes you more of a menial than a purchased slave. For those last men get to obey them after their orders, but thou even without orders makest yourself a slave. For thou dost not even wait to hear something from them, but if you merely know wherein you may gratify them, even without their command you do all. What hell then should we not deserve, for giving the wicked pleasure, and courting their service before they give orders, while we will not hearken to God, even when He every day commands and exhorts us? And yet if you are covetous of glory and praise, avoid the praise that comes of men, and then you will attain to glory. Turn aside from fair speeches, and then you will obtain praises without number both from God and from men. For there is no one we are used to give so much glory to, as the man who looks down upon glory, or to praise and respect so much as the man who thinks scorn of getting respected and praised. And if we do so, much more will the God of the universe. And when He glorifies you and praises you, what man can be more justly pronounced blessed? For there is not a greater difference between glory and disgrace, than between the glory from above and that of men. Or rather, there is a much greater, aye an infinite difference. For if this, even when it

does not get put beside any other, is but a base and uncomely one, when we come to scrutinize it by the other's side, just consider how great its baseness will be found to be! For as a prostitute stands at her place and lets herself out to any one, so are they that be slaves of vanity. Or rather, these be more base than she. For that sort of women do in many instances treat those enamoured of them with scorn. But you prostitute yourself to everybody, whether runaway slaves, or thieves, or cut-purses (for it is of these and such as these that the play-houses that applaud you consist), and those whom as individuals you hold to be nothing worth, when in a body, you honor more than your own salvation and show yourself less worthy of honor than any of them. For how can you be else than less worthy, when you stand in need of the good word of others, and fancy that you have not enough by yourself, unless you receive the glory that comes of others? Do you not perceive, pray, beside what I have said, that as you are an object of notice, and known to every body, if you should commit a fault, you will have accusers unnumbered; but if unknown, you will remain in security? Yes, a man may say, but then if I do well I shall have admirers unnumbered. Now the fearful thing is, that it is not only when you sin, but even when you do aright, that the disorder of vanity does you mischief, in the former case subverting thousands, in the present bereaving you entirely of your reward. It is then a sad thing, and replete with disgrace of every kind, to be in love with glory even in civil matters. But when even in spiritual you are in the same plight what excuse is there left remaining for you, when you are not minded to yield God even as much honor as you have yourself from your servants? For even the slave "*looks to the eyes of his master*" [Psalm 123:2], and the hireling to his employer, who is to pay him wages, and the disciple to his master. But you do just the contrary. Having left the God that hired you, even your Master, you look to your fellow-servants; and this knowing that

God remembers your well-doings even after this life, but man only for the present. And when you have spectators assembled in Heaven, you are gathering together spectators upon earth. And where the wrestler struggles, there he would be honored; but thou, while your wrestling is above, art anxious to gain you a crown below. And what can be worse than madness like this? But let us look, if it seem proper, at the crowns also. For one is formed by haughtiness, and a second by grudging against another, and a third by dissimulation and flattery, another again by wealth, and another by servile obsequiousness. And like as children at their childish play put crowns of grass upon one another, and many a time laugh at him that is crowned behind his back; thus now also they that pass their praises upon you, many a time joke by themselves at their putting the grass upon us. And would it were grass only! But now the crown is laden with much mischief, and ruins all our well-doings. Taking then the vileness of it into consideration, flee from the damage entailed. For how many would you have to praise you? A hundred? Or twice, or thrice, or four times as many? Or rather, if you please, put them at ten times or twenty times as many, and let there be two or four thousand, or if you will, even ten thousand to applaud you. Still these be no better than so many daws cawing from above. Or rather taking the assemblage of the angels into consideration, these will seem more vile than even worms, and their good word of not so much solidity as a cobweb, or a smoke, or a dream.

Hear then how Paul, who saw through these things thoroughly, is so far from seeking after them, that he even deprecates them, in the words, *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ."* [Galatians 6:14] This glory then be thou also emulous of, that you may not provoke the Master, because in so doing you are insulting God, and not yourself alone. For if you even were a painter, and had some pupil, and he were to omit

showing you his practice of the art, but set forth his painting publicly just to any body that chanted to observe it, you would not take it quietly. But if this even with your fellow-servants were an insult, how much more with the Master! But if you have a mind to learn on other grounds to feel scorn for the thing, be of a lofty mind, laugh at appearances, increase your love of real glory, be filled with a spiritual temper, say to your soul as Paul did, "*Do you not know that we shall judge angels?*" [1 Corinthians 6:3] and having by this roused it up, go on to rebuke it, and say, You who judges the angels, will you let yourself be judged of off-scourings, and be praised with dancers, and mimics, and gladiators, and horse-drivers? For these men do follow after applause of this sort. But do thou poise your wing high above the din of these, and emulate that citizen of the wilderness, John, and learn how he was above regarding the multitude, and did not turn him to look at flatterers, but when he saw all the dwellers in Palestine poured forth about him, and wondering, and astonished at him, he was not puffed up with such honor as this, but rose up against them, and discoursing to his great concourse as if to one youth, he thus rebuked them and said, "*You serpents, you generation of vipers!*" [Matthew 3:7] Yet it was for him that they had run together, and left the cities, in order to see that holy personage, and still none of these things unnerved him. For he was far above glory, and free from all vanity. So also Stephen, when he saw the same people again, not honoring him, but mad upon him, and gnashing their teeth, being lifted above their wrath, said, "*You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart.*" [Acts 7:51] Thus also Elias, when those armies were present, and the king, and all the people, said, "*How long halt ye upon both your hips?*" [1 Kings 18:21, Septuagint, true sense of "*halt.*"] But we flatter all, court all, with this servile obsequiousness buying their honor. Wherefore all things are turned upside down, and for this favor the business of Christianity is

betrayed, and everything neglected for the opinion of the generality. Let us then banish this passion, and then we shall have a right notion of liberty, and of the haven, and the calm. For the vain man is ever like persons in a storm, trembling, and fearing, and serving a thousand masters. But he that is clear of this thralldom, is like men in havens, enjoying a liberty untainted. Not so that person, but as many acquaintances as he has, so many masters has he, and he is forced to be a slave to all of them. How then are we to get free from this hard bondage? It is by growing enamoured of another glory, which is really glory. For as with those that are enamoured of persons, the sight of some handsomer one does by its being seen take them off from the first: so with those that court the glory which comes from us men, the glory from heaven, if it gleams on them, has power to lead them off from this. Let us then look to this, and become thoroughly acquainted with it, that by feeling admiration of its beauty, we may shun the hideousness of the other, and have the benefit of much pleasure by enjoying this continually. Which may we all attain to by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 18 on Romans

Romans X. 14, 15

"How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written."

Here again he takes from them all excuse. For since he had said, *"I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,"* and that *"being ignorant of God's righteousness, they submitted not themselves"* to it: he next shows, that for this ignorance itself they were punishable before God. This he does not say indeed so, but he makes it good by carrying on his discourse in the way of question, and so convicting them more clearly, by framing the whole passage out of objections and answers. But look further back. The Prophet, says he, said, *"Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."* Now somebody might say perhaps, But how could they call upon Him Whom they had not believed? Then there is a question from him after the objection; And why did they not believe? Then an objection again. A person certainly may say, And how could they believe, since they had not heard? Yet hear they did, he implies. Then another objection again. *"And how could they hear without a preacher?"* Then an answer again. Yet preach they did, and there were many sent forth for this very purpose. And whence does it appear that these are those persons sent? Then he brings the prophet in next, who says, *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"* [Isaiah 3:7] You see how by the kind of preaching he points out the preachers. For there

was nothing else that these men went about telling everywhere, but those unspeakable good things, and the peace made by God with men. And so by disbelieving, it is not we, he implies, whom you disbelieve, but Isaiah the prophet, who spoke many years ago, that we were to be sent, and to preach, and to say what we do say. If the being saved, then, came of calling upon Him, and calling upon Him from believing, and believing from hearing, and hearing from preaching, and preaching from being sent, and if they were sent, and did preach, and the prophet went round with them to point them out, and proclaim them, and say that these were they whom they showed of so many ages ago, whose feet even they praised because of the matter of their preaching; then it is quite clear that the not believing was their own fault only. And that because God's part had been fulfilled completely.

Ver. 16, 17. *"But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Esaias says, Lord, who has believed our report? So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* [Isaiah 53:1]

Since they pressed him with another objection again to this effect, that if these were the persons sent upon the mission by God, all ought to have hearkened to them: observe Paul's judgment, and see how he shows that this very thing which made the confusion, did in fact do away with confusion and embarrassment. What offends you, O Jew, he would say, after so great and abundant evidence, and demonstration of the points? That all did not submit to the Gospel? Why this very thing, when taken along with the others, is of force to certify you of the truth of my statements, even in that some do not believe. For this too the prophet foretold. Notice his unspeakable wisdom too; how he shows more than they were looking for, or expected him to have to say in reply. For what is it that you say? He means. Is it that all have not believed the Gospel? Well! Isaiah foretold this too from of old. Or rather, not this only, but even much more than this. For

the complaint you make is Why did not all believe? But Isaiah goes further than this. For what is it he says? "*Lord, who has believed our report?*" Then since he had rid himself of this embarrassment. by making the Prophet a bulwark against them, he again keeps to the line he was before upon. For as he had said that they must call upon Him, but that they who call must believe, and they who believe must hear first, but they who are to hear must have preachers, and the preachers be sent, and as he had shown that they were sent, and had preached; as he is going to bring in another objection again, taking occasion first of another quotation from the Prophet, by which he had met the objection a little back, he thus interweaves it, and connects it with what went before. For since he had produced the Prophet as saying, "*Lord, who has believed our report*" ([ᾶ] [κοῖν])? He happily seizes on the quotation, as proving what he says, "*So then faith comes by hearing*" ([ᾶ] [κοῖνς]). And this he makes not a mere naked statement. But as the Jews were forever seeking a sign, and the sight of the Resurrection, and were gaping after the thing much; he says, Yet the Prophet promised no such thing, but that it was by hearing that we were to believe. Hence he makes this good first, and says, "*so then faith comes by hearing.*" And then since this seemed a mean thing to say, see how he elevates it. For he says, I was not speaking of mere hearing, nor of the need of hearing men's words and believing them, but I mean a great sort of hearing. For the hearing is "*by the word of God.*" They were not speaking their own, but they were telling what they learned from God. And this is a higher thing than miracles. For we are equally bound to believe and to obey God, whether speaking or working miracles. Since both works and miracles come of His words. For both the heaven and everything else was established in this way. [Psalm 33:6-8] After showing then that we ought to believe the prophets, who always speak

God's words, and not to look after anything more, he proceeds next to the objection I mentioned, and says,

Ver. 18. *"But I say, Have they not heard?"*

What, he means, if the preachers were sent, and did preach what they were bid, and these did not hear? Then comes a most perfect reply to the objection.

"Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

What do you say? He means. They have not heard? Why the whole world, and the ends of the earth, have heard. And have you, among whom the heralds abode such a long time, and of whose land they were, not heard? Now can this ever be? Sure if the ends of the world heard, much more must you. Then again another objection.

Ver. 19. *"But I say, Did not Israel know?"*

For what if they heard, he means, but did not know what was said, nor understand that these were the persons sent? Are they not to be forgiven for their ignorance? By no means. For Isaiah had described their character in the words, *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace."* [Isaiah 52:7] And before him the Lawgiver himself. Hence he proceeds.

"First Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." [Deuteronomy 32:21]

And so they ought even from him to have been able to distinguish the preachers, not from the fact of these disbelieving only, not from the fact of their preaching peace, not from the fact of their bringing the glad tidings of those good things, not from the word being sown in every part of the world, but from the very fact of their seeing their inferiors, those of the Gentiles, in greater honor. For what they had never heard, nor their forefathers, that

wisdom did these on a sudden embrace ([ἐ] [φιλοσόφουν]). And this was a mark of such intense honor, as should gall them, and lead them to jealousy, and to recollection of the prophecy of Moses, which said, *"I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people."* For it was not the greatness of the honor alone that was enough to throw them upon jealousy, but the fact too that a nation had come to enjoy these things which was of so little account that it could hardly be considered a nation at all. *"For I will provoke you to jealousy, by them which are no nation, and by a foolish nation will I anger you."* For what more foolish than the Greeks (Heathen, see pp. 373, 377)? Or what of less account? See how by every means God had given from of old indications and clear signs of these times, in order to remove their blindness. For it was not any little corner in which the thing was done, but in land, and in sea, and in every quarter of the globe. And they saw those in the enjoyment of countless blessings now, who had formerly been objects of their contempt. One should consider then that this is that people of which Moses said, *"I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you."* Was it Moses only then that said this? No, for Isaiah also after Him says so. And this is why Paul said, *"First Moses,"* to show that a second will come who says the same things in a clearer and plainer way. As then he says above, that Esaias cries, so too here.

Ver. 20. *"But Esaias is very bold, and says."*

Now what he means is something of this kind. He put a violence on himself, and was ambitious to speak, not some thing veiled over, but to set things even naked before your eyes, and choosing rather to run (Origen *in loc.*) into dangers from being plain spoken, than by looking to his own safety, to leave you any shelter for your impenetrableness; although it was not the manner of prophecy to say this so clearly; but still to stop your

mouths most completely, he tells the whole beforehand clearly and distinctly. The whole! What whole? Why your being cast out, and also their being brought in; speaking as follows, *"I was found of them that sought Me not, I was made manifest of them that asked not after Me."* [Isaiah 65:1] Who then are they that sought not? Who they that asked not after Him? Clearly not the Jews, but they of the Gentiles, who hitherto had not known Him. As then Moses gave their characteristic mark in the words, *"no people"* and *"a foolish nation,"* so here also he takes the same ground to point them out from, viz. their extreme ignorance. And this was a very great blame to attach to the Jews, that they who sought Him not found Him, and they who sought Him lost Him.

Ver. 21. *"But unto Israel He says, All the day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."* [Isaiah 65:2]

Observe now that difficulty, which so many make a subject of question, is discovered laid up from of old in the words of the Prophet, and with a clear solution to it too. And what is this? You heard Paul say before. *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained unto righteousness. But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness has not attained to the law of righteousness."* [Romans 9:30-31] This Esaias also says here. For to say, *"I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them which asked not after me,"* is the same with saying, *"that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained unto righteousness."* Then to show that what was happening was not of God's grace only, but also of the temper of those who came to Him, as also the casting off of the others came of the disputatiousness of those who disobeyed, hear what he proceeds with. *"But to Israel He says, All the day long have I stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people;"* here meaning by the day the whole

period of the former dispensation. But the stretching out of the hands, means calling and drawing them to Him, and inviting them. Then to show that the fault was all their own, he says "*to a disobedient and gainsaying people.*" You see what a great charge this is against them! For they did not obey Him even when He invited them, but they gainsaid Him, and that when they saw Him doing so, not once or twice or thrice, but the whole period. But others who had never known Him, had the power to draw Him to them. Not that he says they themselves had the power to do it, but to take away lofty imaginings even from those of the Gentiles, and to show that it was His grace that wrought the whole, He says, I was made manifest, and I was found. It may be said, Were they then void of everything? By no means, for the taking of the things found, and the getting a knowledge of what was manifested to them, was what they contributed themselves. Then to prevent these saying, But why were You not made manifest to us also? He sets down what is more than this, that I not only was made manifest, but I even continue with My hands stretched out, inviting them, and displaying all the concern of an affectionate father, and a mother that is set on her child. See how he has brought us a most lucid answer to all the difficulties before raised, by showing that it was from their own temper that ruin had befallen them, and that they are wholly undeserving of pardon. For though they had both heard and understood what was said, still not even then were they minded to come to Him. And what is far more, He did not cause them to hear these things and to understand them only, but a thing which has more force to rouse them up and draw them to Him, when they were disobedient and gain-saying, He added to the others. Now what is this? It is His exasperating them, and making them jealous. For you know the domineering might of the passion, and how great the power is which jealousy is naturally possessed of for bringing all disputatiousness to an

end, and rousing those who have grown remiss. And why need one say this of man when in brutes without reason, and children before they are of full age, the power it shows is so great? For a child often will not submit to its father when it is called, but continues obstinate. But when another child has notice taken of it, then it even though not called comes to its father's bosom, and what calling could not do, provoking to jealousy will. This then God also did. For He not only called and stretched out His hands, but stirred up in them the feeling of jealousy also, by bringing those far inferior to them (a thing which makes men excessively jealous) not into their good things, but (what was a much stronger step, and makes the feeling even more domineering,) into much greater good things, and of greater necessity than theirs, and such as they had never even fancied in a dream. But still they did not submit. What pardon then do they deserve who exhibit such excessive obstinacy? None. Yet this he does not say himself, but leaves it to the consciences of his hearers, to gather it from the conclusion of what he had stated, and again also confirms it by what he goes on to in his usual wisdom. And this he did also above, by introducing objections both in the case of the Law [see on Romans 7:7, pp. 420, I] and of the people, which presented an accusation beyond the true one; and then in the answer, which was to overthrow this, yielding as much as he pleased, and as the case allowed, so as to make what he was saying not unwelcome. And this he does here, writing as follows:

Chap. xi. ver. 1. *"I say then, Hath God cast away His people whom He foreknew? God forbid."*

And he introduces the form a person would use in doubt, as though taking occasion from what had been said, and after making this alarming statement, by the denial of it he causes the sequel to be allowed with readiness; and what by all the former arguments he had been laboring to

show that he makes good here also. What then is this? That even if there be but a few saved, the promise yet stands good. This is why he does not merely say "*people*," but "*people which He foreknew*." Then proceeding with the proof that the "*people*" were not cast off, "*For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin*."

I, he says, the instructor, the preacher. Now since this seemed contrary to what was said before in the words, "*Who has believed our report?*" and, "*All the day long have I stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people;*" and, "*I will provoke you to jealousy by them which are no people;*" he was not satisfied with the deprecation, nor with having said, "*God forbid*," but makes it good by taking it up again and saying, "*God has not cast away His people*." But this is not a confirmation, men may say, but an assertion. Observe then the confirmation, both the first, and that which follows it. For the first is that he was himself of that race. But He would not, if on the point of casting them off, have chosen from them him to whom He entrusted all the preaching, and the affairs of the world, and all mysteries, and the whole economy. This then is one proof, but the next, after it, is his saying, that "*people whom He foreknew*," that is, who He knew clearly were suited to it, and would receive the faith. [Pococke on Hos. p. 23. See Acts 2:41; 4:4; 21:20] For three, five, even ten thousand were believers from among them. And so to prevent any from saying, Are you the people, then? And because you have been called, has the nation been called? He proceeds.

Ver. 2. "*He has not cast off His people, whom He foreknew*."

As though he said, I have with me three, five, or ten thousand. What then? Has the people come to be three, five, or ten thousand? That seed that compared with the stars of heaven for multitude, or the sand of the sea? Is this the way you deceive us and put a cheat upon us, by making the whole

people yourself and the few that are with you; and did you inflate us with idle hopes, and say that the promise has been fulfilled, when all are lost, and the salvation comes down to a few? This is all bombast and vanity! We cannot away with such sophistry as this! Now, that they may not say this, see how in the sequel he proceeds to the answer, not giving the objection indeed, but before it grounding the answer to it upon ancient history. What then is the answer?

Ver. 2-5. *"Do you not know," he says, "what the Scripture says of Elias? How he (so most; manuscripts Sav. who) makes intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed Your prophets, and dug down Your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what says the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*

What he means is nearly this. *"God has not cast off His people."* For had He done so, He would have admitted none of them. But if He did admit some, He has not cast them off. Still it is said, if He had not cast off, He would have admitted all. This does not follow; since in Elijah's time the part to be saved had come down to *"seven thousand:"* and now also there are probably many that believe. But if you do not know who they are, this is no wonder, for that prophet, who was so great and good a man, did not know. But God ordered things for Himself when even the prophet knew them not. But consider his judgment. Now in proving what was before him, he covertly augments the charge against them. For this is why he gave the whole passage, that he might parade before them their untowardness, and show that they had been so from of old. For if he had not wished this, but had directed his whole attention to prove that the people lay in the few, he would have said that even in Elijah's time, seven thousand were left. But

now he reads to them the passage further back, as having been throughout at pains to show that it was no strange thing that they did with Christ, and the Apostles, but their habitual practice. For to prevent their saying that it was as a deceiver we put Christ to death, and as impostors that we persecute the Apostles, he brings forward the text which says, *"Lord, they have killed Your prophets, and dug down your altars."* [1 Kings 19:14] Then in order not to make his discourse galling to them, he attaches another reason to the bringing forward of the text. For he quotes it not as if it was on purpose to accuse them, but as if intent upon showing some other things. And he leaves them without any excuse even by what had before been done. For observe how strong the accusation is even from the person speaking. For it is neither Paul, nor Peter, nor James, nor John, but one whom they held in the greatest estimation, the chief of the Prophets, the friend of God, a man who had been so very zealous in their behalf as even to be given up to hunger for them, who even to this day has never died. What then does this man say? *"Lord, they have killed Your prophets, and dug down Your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* What could be more brutal cruelty than this? For when they should have besought pardon for the offenses they had already committed, they were minded even to kill him. And all these things put them quite beyond pardon. For it was not during the prevalence of the famine, but when the season was favorable, and their shame was done away, and the devils (i.e. false gods) had been put to shame, and the power of God had been shown, and the king had bowed beneath it, that they committed these audacities, passing from murder to murder, and making away with their teachers, and such as would bring them to a better mind. What then could they have to say to this? Were they too deceivers? Were they too impostors? Did they not know whence they were either? But they distressed you. Yes, but they also told you goodly things.

But what of the altars? The altars too did not surely distress you? Did they too exasperate you? See of what obstinacy, of what insolence they were ever yielding proofs! This is why in another passage too Paul says, when writing to the Thessalonians, You also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, who both killed the Lord, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men [1 Thessalonians 2:14-15]; which is what he says here too, that they both dug down the altars, and killed the prophets. But what says the answer of God unto him? *"I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."* [1 Kings 19:18] And what has this to do with the present subject? Some may say. It has a great deal to do with the present subject. For he shows here that it is the worthy that God uses to save even if the promise be made to the whole nation. And this he pointed out above when he said, *"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."* And, *"Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we should have become as Sodoma."* [Romans 9:27-29] And he points it out from this passage also. Wherefore he proceeds to say, *"Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace."* Observe that each word maintains its own rank, showing at once God's grace, and the obedient temper of them that receive salvation. For by saying election, he showed the approval of them, but by saying grace, he showed the gift of God.

Ver. 6. *"And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work."*

He again springs upon the disputatiousness of the Jews, in what has just been quoted; and on this ground bereaves them of excuse. For you

cannot, he means, so much as say, that the Prophets called indeed, and God invited, and the state of things cried aloud, and the provoking to jealousy was enough to draw us to Him, but what was enjoined was grievous, and this is why we could not draw near, since we had a display of works demanded of us, and laborious well-doings. For you cannot even say this. For how should God have demanded this of you, when this would just throw His grace into the shade? And this he said out of a wish to show that He was most desirous that they might be saved. [Deuteronomy 5:29] For not only would their salvation be easily brought about, but it was also God's greatest glory to display His love toward man. Why then are you afraid of drawing near, since you have no works demanded of you? Why are you bickering and quarrelsome, when grace is before you, and why keep putting me the Law forward to no purpose whatsoever? For you will not be saved by that, and will mar this gift also; since if you pertinaciously insist on being saved by it, you do away with this grace of God. Then that they might not think this strange, having first taken those seven thousand; he said that they were saved by grace. For when he says, *"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace;"* he shows that they also were saved by grace. And not hereby only, but likewise by saying, *"I have reserved unto Myself."* For this is the language of One Who shows that He Himself was the chief Contributor. And if by grace, it will be said, how came we all not to be saved? Because ye would not. For grace, though it be grace, saves the willing, not those who will not have it, and turn away from it, who persist in fighting against it, and opposing themselves to it. Observe how throughout the point he is proving is, *"Not as though the Word of God had taken none effect,"* by showing that the worthy were those to whom the promise came, and that these, few though they be, may yet be the people of God; and indeed he had stated it in the beginning

of the Epistle with much force, where he says, "*For what if some did not believe*" [Romans 3:3], and did not even stop at this, but proceeded, "*Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar.*" [Romans 3:4] And here again he confirms it another way, and shows the force of grace, and that always the one were being saved, the other perished. Let us then give thanks, that we belong to them that are being saved, and not having been able to save ourselves by works, were saved by the gift of God. But in giving thanks, let us not do this in words only, but in works and actions. For this is the genuine thanksgiving, when we do those things whereby God is sure to be glorified, and flee from those from which we have been set free. For if we, after insulting the King, instead of being punished have been honored, and then go and insult Him afresh, since we are detected in the utmost ingratitude, we should with justice have to suffer the utmost punishment, one greater far than the former. For the former insolence did not show us so ungrateful as that committed after honor and much attention shown us. Let us then flee those things from which we have been set free, and not give thanks with our mouths only, lest it be said of us also, "*This people honors Me with their lips, but with their heart is far from Me.*" [Isaiah 29:13] For how is it else than unseemly, when the "*heavens declare the glory of God*" [Psalm 19:1], and thou, for whom the heavens were made that glorify Him, doest such things that through you the God that made you is blasphemed? It is for this that not only he that blasphemes, but yourself also, will be liable to punishment. For the heavens also do not glorify God by sending forth a voice but by putting others upon doing it at the sight of them, and yet they are said "*to declare the glory of God.*" Thus too they that furnish a life to be wondered at, even though they hold their peace, yet glorify God, when others through them glorify Him. For He is not so much revered because of the heaven, as of a spotless life. When then we are discoursing with the

Gentiles, we cite (4 manuscripts read or point to the reading, *"let us not cite"*) not the heavens before them, but the men, whom though they were in worse plight than brutes, He has persuaded to be the Angels' competitors. And we (1 manuscripts *"let us"*) stop their mouths by speaking of this change. For far better than the heaven is man, and a soul brighter than their beauty may he possess. For it, though visible for so long a time, did not persuade much. But Paul, after preaching a short time, drew the whole world unto him. [St. Augustine on Psalm 19:4] For he possessed a soul no less than the heaven, which was able to draw all men unto him. Our soul is not a match even for the earth: but his is equal to the heavens. That stands indeed keeping to its own boundary and rule; but the loftiness of his soul transcended all the heavens, and conversed with Christ Himself. [2 Corinthians 10:15; Romans 15:19, etc.] And the beauty of it was so great, that even God heralds it forth. For the stars did the angels marvel at when they were made. [Job 38:7] But this He marvelled at when He says, *"He is a chosen vessel unto Me."* [Acts 9:15] And this Heaven does a cloud many times overshadow. But Paul's soul no temptation overshadowed but even in storms he was clearer to the sight than the hard sky ([σταθεράς] [μεσημβρίας] []) at noon, and shone constantly as it had done before the clouds came on. For the Sun who shone in him sent not forth such rays as to be over-clouded by the concourse of temptations, but even then shone forth the more. Wherefore he says, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My Strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] Let us then strive to be like him, and then even to what we are this heaven will be as nothing, if we wish it, nor yet the sun, nor the whole world. For these are for us, and not we for them. Let us show that we are worthy of having had these made for us. For if we be found unworthy of these, how shall we be worthy a kingdom? For indeed all that live so as to blaspheme God are

unworthy to see the sun. They who blaspheme Him are unworthy to enjoy the creatures who glorify Him: since even a son who insults his father is unworthy to be waited upon by the approved servants. Hence these will enjoy glory, and that great glory; but we shall have to undergo punishment and vengeance.

How miserable then will it be for the creation which was made for you to be fashioned "*according to the glorious liberty of the children of God,*" [Romans 8:21] but for us who were made children of God, through our much listlessness, to be sent away to destruction and hell, for whose sake the creation shall enjoy that great festal time? Now to keep this from coming to pass, let such of us as have a pure soul keep it still such, or rather let us make its brightness more intense. And let those of us that have a soiled one, not despair. For "*if*" (he says) "*your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow. And if they be as scarlet, I will make them white as wool.*" [Isaiah 1:18] But when it is God that promises, doubt not, but do those things whereby you may draw to you these promises. Are they unnumbered, the fearful and outrageous acts done by you? And what of this? For hitherto you are not gone away into the grave where no man shall confess. (ib. 38:18; Psalm 6:5.) Hitherto the arena ([θέατρον]) is not broken up for you, but you are standing within the line, and you are able even by a struggle at the last to recover all your defeats. You are not yet come to where the rich man was, for you to hear it said, "*there is a gulf between you and us.*" [Luke 16:26] The Bridegroom is not yet at hand, that one should fear to give you of his oil. Still can you buy and store up. And there is not one yet to say, "*Not so; lest there be not enough for us and and you*" [Matthew 25:9]; but there are many that sell, the naked, the hungry, the sick, the imprisoned. Give food to these, clothing to those, visit the sick, and the oil will come more than from fountains. The day of account is not

here. Use the time as need be, and make deductions from the debts, and to him that owes *"an hundred measures of oil, say, Take your bill and write fifty."* [Luke 16:6] And with money, and with words, and with every other thing do in like manner, imitating that steward. And advise this to yourself, and also to your relatives, for you have still the power of saying so. You are not yet come to the necessity of calling in another in their behalf, but you have power to give advice at once to yourself and to others. [Luke 16:28] But when you are gone away there, neither of these things will you have it in your power to do at need. And with good reason. For thou who hast had so long a period fixed you, and neither done yourself good, nor any else, how when you are under the Judge's hands shall you be able to obtain this grace? Putting all these things together then, let us cling fast to our own salvation, and not lose the opportunity of this life present. For it is possible, it is, even at our last breath to please God. It is possible to gain approval by your last will, not indeed in such way as in our lifetime, still it is possible. How, and in what way? If you leave Him among your heirs, and givest Him also ([καὶ αὐτῷ]) a portion of your whole estate. Have you not fed Him in your lifetime? At all events when departed, when you are no longer owner, give Him a share of your goods. He is loving unto man, He does not deal niggardly by you. It is a mark to be sure of a greater desire, and so it will be more rewarded, to feed Him in your lifetime. But if you have not done this, at all events do the next best thing. Leave Him joint-heir (see p. 384) with your children, and if you are dilatory over this, bethink yourself that His Father made you joint-heir with Him, and break down your inhuman spirit. For what excuse will you have if you dost not even make Him a sharer with your children, who made you share the Heaven, and was slain for you? And yet all that ever He did, He did not in repayment of a debt, but as bestowing a favor. But you after so great benefits, have been made a debtor as well.

And yet, though things are so, it is as if receiving a favor, not as demanding payment of a debt, that He crowns you; and this too when what He is to receive is His own. Give then your money, which is now no longer of any use to you, and of which you are no longer owner; and He will give you a Kingdom which shall be of service to you perpetually, and with it will bestow also the things of this life. For if He be made the joint heir of your children, He does lighten their orphanage for them, do away with plots against them, beat off insults, stop the mouths of pettifoggers. And if they themselves be unable to stand up for their bequeathments, He will Himself stand up, and not let them be broken through. But if He do even allow this, then He makes up of Himself all that was ordered in the will with still greater liberality, because He has been but mentioned in it. Leave Him then your heir. For it is to Him that you are upon the point of going. He will be your Judge Himself in the trial for all that has been done here. But there are some so miserable and pinched, that though they have no children, still they have not the courage to do this, but approve of giving that they have to hangers on, and to flatterers, and to this person and to that, sooner than to Christ, Who has done them so great benefits. And what can be more unreasonable than this conduct? For if one were to compare men of this cast to asses, aye, or to stones, one shall not still be saying anything tantamount to their unreasonableness and senselessness. Nor could one find a similitude to put before you their madness and dementedness. For what pardon shall they obtain for not having fed Him in their lifetime, who, even when they are on the point of departing to Him, have not the inclination to give Him but a trifle out of those goods, of which they are no longer the owners, but are of such an inimical and hostile disposition, as not even to give Him a share in what is useless to themselves? Do you not know how many of mankind have not even been counted worthy to obtain an end of this kind,

but have been snatched off suddenly? But you does God empower to give orders to your kindred, and to speak with them about your property, and set all that is in your house in order. What defence then will you have to set up, when even after receiving this favor from Him, you have treacherously given up the benefit, and art standing as it were in diametrical opposition to your forefathers in the faith? For they even in their lifetime sold all, and brought it to the Apostle's feet. But you, even at your death, dost not give any share to them that need. What is the better part, and gives one much boldness, is to remedy poverty in one's lifetime. But if you have not been minded to do this, at all events do upon your death-bed some noble act. For this is not what a strong love for Christ would do, yet still it is an act of love. For if you will not have the high place with the Lambs, still even to be after them at all is no light thing, and so not to be placed with the goats nor on the left hand. But if you will not do even this, what plea is to rescue you, when neither the fear of death nor your money having become henceforth of no use to you, nor the leaving of safety behind you to your children, nor the laying up of much pardon there against the time to come, will make you merciful to man? Wherefore I advise, as the best thing, that in your lifetime you give the larger half of your goods to the poor. But if there be any of so narrow a soul as not to have the heart to do so, at all events let them by necessity become merciful. For when you were living as if there were no death, then you clung close to your goods. But now since you have learned that you are to die, at least now give over your opinion, and deliberate about your affairs as one that must die. Or rather as one that ought to enjoy immortal life for evermore. For if what I am going to say be distasteful, and big with horror, still it must be said. Reckon with your slaves the Lord. Are you giving your slaves liberty? Give Christ liberty from famine, from distress, from imprisonment, from nakedness. Are you horrified at the

words? Is it not then more horrible when thou dost not even thus much? And here the word makes your blood curdle. But when you are gone to that world, and hast to hear things far more grievous than these, and see the tortures which are incurable, what will you say? To whom will you flee for refuge? Whom will you call to your alliance and assistance? Will it be Abraham? He will not hearken to you. Or those virgins? They will not give you of their oil. Your father then or your grandfather? But none even of these, if he be ever so holy, will have it in his power to reverse that sentence. Weighing then all these things, to Him Who alone is Lord to blot out the bill against you and to quench that flame, to Him make prayer and supplication, and propitiate Him, by now feeding Him and clothing Him continually: that in this world you may depart with a good hope, and when you are there you may enjoy eternal blessings, which may we all attain to by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 19 on Romans

Rom. XI. 7

"What then? Israel has not obtained that, which he seeks for; but the election has obtained it and the rest were blinded."

He had said that God did not cast off His people; and to show in what sense He had not cast them off, he takes refuge in the Prophets again. And having shown by them that the more part of the Jews were lost, that he might not seem to be again bringing forward an accusation of his own, and to make his discourse offensive, and to be attacking them as enemies, he takes refuge in David and Isaiah, and says,

Ver. 8. *"According as it is written, God has given them the spirit of slumber."* [Isaiah 29:10]

Or rather we should go back to the beginning of his argument. Having then mentioned the state of things in Elijah's time, and shown what grace is, he proceeds, *"What then? Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for."* Now this is as much what an accuser would say, as what one who was putting a question. For the Jew, he means, is inconsistent with himself when he seeks for righteousness, which he will not accept. Then to leave them with no excuse, he shows, from those who have accepted it, their unfeeling spirit, as he says, *"But the election has obtained it,"* and they are the condemnation of the others. And this is what Christ says, *"But if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Wherefore they shall be your judges."* [Luke 11:19] For to prevent any one from accusing the nature of the thing, and not their own temper, he points out those who had obtained it. Hence he uses the word with great propriety, to show at once the grace from above and the zeal of these. For it is not to

deny free-will that he speaks of their having "*obtained*" (as by chance, Gr. [ἐ] [πέτυχε]) it, but to show the greatness of the good things, and that the greater part was of grace, though not the whole. For we too are in the habit of saying, "*so and so chanced to get*" (same word), "*so and so met with,*" when the gain has been a great one. Because it is not by man's labors, but by God's gift, that the greater part was brought about.

"And the rest was blinded."

See how he has been bold enough to tell with his own voice the casting off of the rest. For he had indeed spoken of it already, but it was by bringing the prophets in as accusers. But from this point he declares it in his own person. Still even here he is not content with his own declaration, but brings Isaiah the prophet in again. For after saying, "*were blinded,*" he proceeds; "*according as it is written, God has given them the spirit of slumber.*" Now whence came this blinding? He had indeed mentioned the causes of it before, and turned it all upon their own heads, to show that it was from their unseasonable obstinacy that they had to bear this. And now he speaks of it too. For when he says, "*Eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,*" he is but finding fault with their contentious spirit. For when they had "*eyes to see*" the miracles, and were possessed of "*ears to hear*" that marvellous Teaching, they never used these as were fitting. And the "*He gave,*" do not imagine to mean here an agency, but a permission only. But "*slumber*" ([καταάνυξις] lit. piercing) is a name he here gives to the habit of soul inclinable to the worse, when incurably and unchangeably so. For in another passage David says, "*that my glory may sing unto You, and I may not be put to slumber*" [Psalm 30:12, Septuagint]: that is, I may not alter, may not be changed. For as a man who is hushed to slumber in a state of pious fear would not easily be made to change his side; so too he that is slumbering in wickedness would not change with facility. For to be

hushed to slumber here is nothing else but to be fixed and riveted to a thing. In pointing then to the incurable and unchangeable character of their spirit, he calls it "*a spirit of slumber.*" Then to show that for this unbelief they will be most severely punished, he brings the Prophet forward again, threatening the very things which in the event came to pass.

Ver. 9. "*Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block.*" [Psalm 69:22-23]

That is, let their comforts and all their good things change and perish, and let them be open to attack from any one. And to show that this is in punishment for sins that they suffer this, he adds, "*and a recompense unto them.*"

Ver. 10. "*Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back always.*"

Do these things then still require any interpreting? Are they not plain even to those ever so senseless? And before our words, the very issue of facts has anticipated us in bearing witness to what was said. For at what time have they ever been so open to attacks? At what time such an easy prey? At what time has He so "*bowed down their backs?*" At what time have they been set under such bondage? And what is more, there is not to be any unloosing from these terrors. And this the prophet has also hinted. For he does not say only, "*bow Thou down their back,*" but, "*forever bow Thou down.*" But if you are disposed to dispute, O Jew, about the issue, from what has gone before learn also the present case. Thou went down to Egypt; and two hundred years passed, and God freed you speedily from that bondage, and that though thou were irreligious, and went whoring with the most baneful whoredom. You were freed from Egypt, and you worshipped the calf, you sacrificed your sons to Baalpeor, you defiled the temple, you went after every sort of vice, you grew not to know nature itself. The

mountains, the groves, the hills, the springs, the rivers, the gardens did you fill with accursed sacrifices, you slew the prophets, overthrew the altars, exhibited every excess of wickedness and irreligion. Still, after giving you up for seventy years to the Babylonians, He brought you back again to your former freedom, and gave you back the temple, and your country, and your old form of polity and there were prophets again, and the gift of the Spirit. Or rather, even in the season of your captivity you were not deserted, but even there were Daniel, and Ezekiel, and in Egypt Jeremiah, and in the desert Moses. After this you reverted to your former vice again, and wast a reveller [ἐ] [ξεβακχεύθης] [2 Maccabees 14:33], therein, and changed your manner of life [πολιτείαν] to the Grecian in the time of Antiochus the impious Daniel 8:14; [1 Maccabees 4:54]. But even then for a three years and a little over only were ye given up to Antiochus, and then by the Maccabees ye raised those bright trophies again. But now there is nothing of the sort, for the reverse has happened throughout. And this is ground for the greatest surprise, as the vices have ceased, and the punishment has been increased, and is without any hope of a change. For it is not seventy years only that have passed away, nor a hundred, nor yet twice as many but three hundred, and a good deal over, and there is no finding even a shadow of a hope of the kind. And this though ye neither are idolaters, nor do the other audacious acts ye did before. What then is the cause? The reality has succeeded to the type, and grace has shut out the Law. And this the prophet foretelling from of old said, "*And ever bow Thou down their back.*" See the minuteness of prophecy, how it foretells their unbelief, and also points out their disputatiousness, and shows the judgment which should follow, and sets forth the endlessness of the punishment. For as many of the duller sort, through unbelief in what was to come to pass, wished to see things to come by the light of things present, from this point of time God gave proof of His

power on either part, by lifting those of the Gentiles who believed, above the heaven, but bringing down such of the Jews as believed not to the lowest estate of desolation, and giving them up to evils not to be ended. Having then urged them severely both about their not believing, and about what they had suffered and were yet to suffer, he again allays what he had said by writing as follows:

Ver. 11. *"I say then, Have they stumbled, that they should fall? God forbid."*

When he has shown that they were liable to evils without number, then he devises an allayment. And consider the judgment of Paul. The accusation he had introduced from the prophets, but the allayment he makes come from himself. For that they had sinned greatly, he would say, none will gainsay. But let us see if the fall is of such kind as to be incurable, and quite preclude their being set up again. But of such kind it is not. You see how he is attacking them again, and under the expectation of some allayment he proves them guilty of confessed sins. But let us see what even by way of allayment he does devise for them. Now what is the allayment? *"When the fullness of the Gentiles,"* he says, *"shall have come in, then shall all Israel be saved,"* at the time of his second coming, and the end of the world. Yet this he does not say at once. But since he had made a hard onset upon them, and linked accusations to accusations, bringing prophets in after prophets crying aloud against them, Isaiah, Elijah, David, Moses, Hosea, not once or twice, but several times; lest in this way he should both by driving these into despair, make a wall to bar their access to the faith, and should further make such of the Gentiles as believed unreasonably elated, and they also by being puffed up should take harm in matter of their faith, he further solaces them by saying, *"But rather through their fall salvation has come unto the Gentiles."* But we must not take what is here said literally, but get

acquainted with the spirit and object of the speaker, and what he aimed to compass. Which thing I ever entreat of your love. For if with this in our minds we take up what is here said, we shall not find a difficulty in any part of it. For his present anxiety is to remove from those of the Gentiles the haughtiness which might spring in them from what he had said. For in this way they too were more likely to continue unshaken in the faith, when they had learned to be reasonable, as also those of the Jews were, when quit of despair, more likely to come with readiness to grace. Having regard then to this object of his, let us so listen to all that is said on this passage. What does he say then? And whence does he show that their fall was not irremediable, nor their rejection final? He argues from the Gentiles, saying as follows:

"Through their fall salvation has come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

This language is not his own only, but in the Gospels too the parables mean this. For He who made a marriage feast for His Son, when the guests would not come, called those in the highways. [Matthew 22:9]. And He who planted the Vineyard, when the husbandmen slew the Heir, let out His Vineyard to others. [Matthew 21:38, etc] And without any parable, He Himself said, *"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel."* [Matthew 15:24] And to the Syrophœnician woman, when she persevered, He said somewhat further besides. *"It is not meet,"* He says, *"to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs."* [Matthew 15:26] And Paul to those of the Jews that raised a sedition, *"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you: but seeing ye judge yourselves unworthy, lo, we turn unto the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] And throughout it is clear that the natural course of things was this, that they should be the first to come in, and then those of the Gentiles; but since they disbelieved, the

order was reversed; and their unbelief and fall caused these to be brought in first. Hence it is that he says, *"through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."* But if he mentions what the course of things issued in, as if the chief design of Providence, do not feel surprised. For he wishes to solace their down-stricken souls, and his meaning is about this. Jesus came to them; they did not receive Him, though He did countless miracles, but crucified Him. Hence He drew the Gentiles to Him, that the honor they had, by cutting them to the heart for their insensibility might at least out of a moroseness against others persuade them to come over. For they ought to have been first admitted, and then we. And this was why he said, *"For it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."* [Romans 1:16] But as they had started off, we the last became first. See then how great honors he gathers for them even from this. One that he says, we were then called, when they were not willing; a second that he says, the reason of our being called was not that we only might be saved, but that they also, growing jealous at our salvation, might become better. What does he say then? That if it were not for the Jews' sake, we should not have been called and saved at all? We should not before them, but in the regular order. Wherefore also when He was speaking to the disciples, He did not say barely, *"Go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel"* [Matthew 10:6], but, *"Go rather to the sheep,"* to show that to those parts also they must come after these. And Paul again says not, *"It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken unto you,"* but *"should first have been spoken unto you"* [Acts 13:46], to show that in the second place it must be to us also. And this was both done and said, that they might not be able, shameless though they were, to pretend that they were overlooked, and that was why

they did not believe. This then was why Christ, though he knew all things before, yet came to them first.

Ver. 12. *"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness?"*

Here he is speaking to gratify them. For even if these had fallen a thousand times, the Gentiles would not have been saved unless they had shown faith. As the Jews likewise would not have perished unless they had been unbelieving and disputatious. But as I said, he is solacing them now they are laid low, giving them so much the more ground to be confident of their salvation if they altered. For if when they stumbled, he says, so many enjoyed salvation, and when they were cast out so many were called, just consider what will be the case when they return. But he does not put it thus, When they return. Now he does not say *"how much more their"* return, or their altering, or their well-doing, but *"how much more their fullness,"* that is, when they are all about coming in. And this he said to show that then also grace and God's gift will do the larger part, or almost the whole.

Ver. 13, 14. *"For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office; if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them."*

Again he endeavors much to get himself clear of untoward suspicion. And he seems to be blaming the Gentiles, and to be humbling their conceits, yet he gives a gentle provocation to the Jew also. And indeed he goes round about seeking to veil and allay this great ruin of theirs. But he finds no means of doing it, owing to the nature of the facts. For from what he had said, they deserved but the greater condemnation, when those who were far short of them had taken the good things prepared for them. This is why then he passes from the Jews to those of the Gentiles, and puts in between his

discourse the part about them, as wishing to show that he is saying all these things in order to instruct them to be reasonable. For I praise you, he means, for these two reasons; one, because I am necessitated to do so as being your commissioned minister; the other, that through you I may save others. And he does not say, my brethren, my kinsmen; but, *"my flesh."* And next, when pointing out their disputatious spirit, he does not say, *"if by any means I may"* persuade, but, *"provoke to jealousy and save;"* and here again not all, but, *"some of them."* So hard were they! And even amid his rebuke he shows again the Gentiles honored, for they are causes of their salvation, and not in the same way. For they became purveyors of blessings to them through unbelief, but these to the Jews by faith. Hence the estate of the Gentiles seems to be at once equal and superior. For what will you say, O Jew? That if we had not been cast out, he would not have been called so soon? This the man of the Gentiles may say too, If I had not been saved, you would not have been moved to jealousy. But if you would know wherein we have the advantage, I save you by believing, but it is by stumbling that you have afforded us an access before yourself. Then perceiving again that he had touched them to the quick, resuming his former argument, he says,

Ver. 15. *"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"*

Yet this again condemns them, since, while others gained by their sins, they did not profit by other men's well doings. But if he asserts that to be their doing which necessarily happened, be not surprised: since (as I have said several times) it is to humble these, and to exhort the other, that he throws his address into this form. For as I said before, if the Jews had been cast away a thousand times over, and the Gentiles had not shown faith, they would never have been saved. But he stands by the feeble party, and gives

assistance to the distressed one. But see also even in his favors to them, how he solaces them in words only. *"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,"* (and what is this to the Jews?) *"what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"* Yet even this was no boon to them, unless they had been received. But what he means is to this effect. If in anger with them He gave other men so great gifts, when He is reconciled to them what will He not give? But as the resurrection of the dead was not by the receiving of them, so neither now is our salvation through them. But they were cast out owing to their own folly, but it is by faith that we are saved, and by grace from above. But of all this nothing can be of service to them, unless they show the requisite faith. Yet doing as he is wont, he goes on to another encomium, which is not really one, but which only seems to be, so imitating the wisest physicians, who give their patients as much consolation as the nature of the sickness allows them. And what is it that he says?

Ver. 16. *"For if the first-fruits be holy, the lump also is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches;"*

So calling in this passage by the names of the first-fruit and root Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets, the patriarchs, all who were of note in the Old Testament; and the branches, those from them who believed. Then since the fact met him that many had disbelieved, observe how he undermines ([ὅ] [ποτέμνεται], see p. 345) it again, and says,

Ver. 17. *"And if some of the branches be broken off."*

And yet above you said that the more part perished, and a few were saved only. How came it then that speaking of those that perished, you have used a *"some,"* which is indicative of fewness? It is not, he replies, in opposition to myself, but out of a desire to court and recover those that are distressed. Observe how in the whole of the passage one finds him working

at this object, the wish to solace them. And if you deny it, many contradictions will follow. But let me beg you to notice his wisdom, how while he seems to be speaking for them, and devising a solace for them, he aims a secret blow at them, and shows that they are devoid of all excuse, even from the "*root*," from the "*first-fruit*." For consider the badness of the branches, which, when they have a sweet root, still do not imitate it; and the faultiness of the lump, when it is not altered even by the first-fruit. "*And if some of the branches were broken off.*" However, the greater part were broken off. Yet, as I said, he wishes to comfort them. And this is why it is not in his own person, but in theirs, that he brings in the words used, and even in this gives a secret stroke at them, and shows them to have fallen from being Abraham's kinsmen. [Matthew 3:9] For what he was desirous of saying was, that they had nothing in common with them. [John 8:39] For if the root be holy, and these be not holy, then these are far away from the root. Then under the appearance of solacing the Jews, he again by his accusation smites them of the Gentiles. For after saying, "*And if some of the branches were broken off,*" he proceeds.

"And thou being a wild olive were grafted in."

For the less esteem the man of the Gentiles is of, the more the Jew is vexed at seeing him enjoy his goods. And to the other, the disgrace of the little esteem he was of, is nothing to the honor of the change. And consider his skilfulness. He does not say, "*thou were*" planted "*in*," but "*thou were grafted in*," by this again cutting the Jew to the heart, as showing that the Gentile man was standing in his own tree, and himself lying on the ground. Wherefore he does not stop even here, nor after he had spoken of grafting in does he leave off (and yet in this he declared the whole matter), but still he dwells over the prosperous state of the Gentile, and enlarges upon his fair fame in the words, "*And with them partakest of the root and fatness of the*

olive tree." And he seems indeed to have viewed him in the light of an addition. But he shows that he was no whit the worse on that account, but in possession of everything, that the branch which had come up out of the root had. Lest then on hearing the words, *"and thou were grafted in,"* you should suppose him to be lacking when compared with the natural branch, see how he makes him equal to it by saying, that *"with them you partake of the root and fatness of the olive:"* that is, hast been put into the same noble rank, the same nature. Then in rebuking him, and saying,

Ver. 18. *"Boast not against the branches."* He seems indeed to be comforting the Jew, but points out his vileness and extreme dishonor. And this is why he says not, *"boast not,"* but, *"boast not against"* do not boast against them so as to sunder them. For it is into their place that you have been set, and their goods that you enjoy. Do you observe how he seems to be rebuking the one, while he is sharp upon the other?

"But if you boast," he says, *"you bear not the root, but the root you."*

Now what is this to the branches that are cut off? Nothing. For, as I said before, while seeming to devise a sort of weak shadow of consolation, and in the very midst of his aiming at the Gentile, he gives them a mortal blow; for by saying, *"boast not against them,"* and, *"if you boast, you bear not the root,"* he has shown the Jew that the things done deserved boasting of, even if it was not right to boast, thus at once rousing him and provoking him to faith, and smiting at him, in the attitude of an advocate, and pointing out to him the punishment he was undergoing, and that other men had possession of what were their goods.

Ver. 19. *"You will say then,"* he goes on, *"The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."*

Again he establishes, by way of objection, the opposite to the former position, to show that what he said before, he had not said as directly

belonging to the subject, but to draw them to him. For it was no longer by their fall that salvation came to the Gentiles, nor was it their fall that was the riches of the world. Nor was it by this that we were saved, because they had fallen, but the reverse. And he shows that the providence in regard to the Gentiles was a main object, even though he seems to put what he says into another form. And the whole passage is a tissue of objections, in which he clears himself of the suspicion of hatred, and makes his language such as will be acceptable.

Ver. 20. *"Well,"* he praises what they said, then he alarms them again by saying, *"Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you are grafted in by faith."*

So here another encomium, and for the other party an accusation. But he again lays their pride low by proceeding to say, *"be not high-minded, but fear."* For the thing is not matter of nature, but of belief and unbelief. And he seems to be again bridling the Gentile, but he is teaching the Jew that it is not right to cling to a natural kinsmanship. Hence he goes on with, *"Be not high-minded,"* and he does not say, but be humble, but, fear. For haughtiness genders a contempt and listlessness. Then as he is going into all the sorrows of their calamity, in order to make the statement less offensive, he states it in the way of a rebuke given to the other as follows:

Ver. 21. *"For if God spared not the natural branches,"* and then he does not say, neither will He spare you, but *"take heed, lest He also spare not you."* So paring ([ὅ] [ποτεμνόμενος]) away the distasteful from his statement, representing the believer as in the struggle, he at once draws the others to him, and humbles these also.

Ver. 22. *"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shall be cut off."*

And he does not say, Behold your well doing, behold your labors, but, *"Behold the goodness of God"* toward man, to show that the whole comes of grace from above, and to make us tremble. For this reason for boasting should make you to fear: since the Lord ([δεσπότης]) has been good unto you, do thou therefore fear. For the blessings do not abide by you unmovable if you turn listless, as neither do the evils with them, if they alter; *"For thou also,"* he says, *"unless thou continue in the faith, will be cut off."*

Ver. 23. *"And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in."*

For it was not God that cut them off, but they have broken themselves off and fallen, and he did well to say have broken themselves off. For He has never yet so (Sav. conj. manuscript corr. [οὗτος]) cast them off, though they have sinned so much and so often. You see what a great thing a man's free choice is, how great the efficacy of the mind is. For none of these things is immutable, neither your good nor his evil. You see too how he raises up even him in his despondency, and humbles the other in his confidence; and do not thou be faint at hearing of severity, nor thou be confident at hearing of goodness. The reason why He cut you off in severity was, that you might long to come back. The reason why He showed goodness to you was, that you might continue in (he does not say the faith, but) His goodness, that is, if you do things worthy of God's love toward man. For there is need of something more than faith. You see how he suffers neither these to lie low, nor those to be elated, but he also provokes them to jealousy, by giving through them a power to the Jew to be set again in this one's place, as he also had first taken the other's ground. And the Gentile he put in fear by the Jews, and what had happened to them, lest they should feel elated over it. But the Jew he tries to encourage by what had

been afforded to the Greek. For thou also, he says, will be cut off if you grow listless, (for the Jew was cut off), and he will be grafted in if he be earnest, for thou also wast grafted in. But it is very judicious in him to direct all he says to the Gentile, as he is always in the habit of doing, correcting the feeble by rebuking the stronger. This he does in the end of this Epistle too, when he is speaking of the observance of meats. Then, he grounds this on what had already happened, not upon what was to come only. And this was more likely to persuade his hearer. And as he means to enter on consecutiveness of reasonings, such as could not be spoken against, he first uses a demonstration drawn from the power of God. For if they were cut off, and cast aside, and others took precedence of them in what was theirs, still even now despair not.

"For God is able," he says, *"to graft them in again,"* since He does things beyond expectation. But if you wish for things to be in order, and reasons to be consecutive, you have from yourselves a demonstration which more than meets your wants.

Ver. 24. *"For if you were cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree."*

If then faith was able to do what was contrary to nature, much more will it that which is according to nature. For if this person, who was cut off from those by nature his fathers, came contrary to nature unto Abraham, much more will you be able to recover your own. For the Gentile's evil lot is according to nature (he being by nature a wild olive), and the good contrary to nature (it being contrary to nature for him to be grafted into Abraham), but your lot on the contrary is the good by nature. For it is not upon another root, as the Gentile, but on your own that you are to be fixed

if you are minded to come back. What then do you deserve, when after the Gentile had been able to do what was contrary to nature, you are not able to do that which is according to nature, but hast given up even this? Then as he had said *"contrary to nature,"* and, *"were grafted in,"* that you may not suppose the Jew to have the advantage, he again corrects this by saying that he also is grafted in. *"How much more shall these,"* says he, *"which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive-tree?"* And again, *"God is able to graft them in."* And before this he says, that if they *"abide not still in unbelief, they shall be also grafted in."* And when you hear that he keeps speaking of *"according to nature,"* and *"contrary to nature,"* do not suppose that he means the nature that is unchangeable, but he tells us in these words of the probable and the consecutive, and on the other hand of the improbable. For the good things and the bad are not such as are by nature, but by temper and determination alone. And consider also how inoffensive he is. For after saying that thou also will be cut off, if you dost not abide in the faith, and these will be grafted in, if they *"abide not still in unbelief,"* he leaves that of harsh aspect, and insists on that of kindlier sound, and in it he ends, putting great hopes before the Jews if they were minded not to abide so. Wherefore he goes on to say,

Ver. 25. *"For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise your own conceits."*

Meaning by mystery here, that which is unknown and unutterable, and has much of wonder and much of what one should not expect about it. As in another passage too he says, *"Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."* [1 Corinthians 15:51] What then is the mystery?

"That blindness in part has happened unto Israel." Here again he levels a blow at the Jew, while seeming to take down the Gentile. But his

meaning is nearly this, and he had said it before, that the unbelief is not universal, but only *"in part."* As when he says, *"But if any has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but in part"* [2 Corinthians 2:5]: And, so here too he says what he had said above, *"God has not cast off His people whom He foreknew"* [Romans 11:2]: and again, *"What then? Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid"* [Romans 11:11]: This then he says here also; that it is not the whole people that is pulled up, but many have already believed, and more are likely to believe. Then as he had promised a great thing, he adduces the prophet in evidence, speaking as follows. Now it is not for the fact of a blindness having happened that he quotes the passage (for every one could see that), but that they shall believe and be saved, he brings Isaiah to witness, who cries aloud and says,

Ver. 26. *"There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."* [Isaiah 59:20]

Then to give the mark that fixes its sense to salvation, to prevent any one from drawing it aside and attaching it to times gone by, he says,

Ver. 27. *"For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."*

Not when they are circumcised, not when they sacrifice, not when they do the other deeds of the Law, but when they attain to the forgiveness of sins. If then this has been promised, but has never yet happened in their case, nor have they ever enjoyed the remission of sins by baptism, certainly it will come to pass. Hence he proceeds,

Ver. 29. *"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."*

And even this is not all he says to solace them, for he uses what had already come about. And what came in of consequence, that he states as chiefly intended, putting it in these words,

Ver. 28. *"As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."*

That the Gentile then might not be puffed up, and say, *"I am standing, do not tell me of what would have been, but what has been,"* he uses this consideration to bring him down, and says, *"As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes."* For when you were called they became more captious. Nevertheless God has not even now cut short the calling of you, but He waits for all the Gentiles that are to believe to come in, and then they also shall come. Then he does them another kind favor, by saying, *"As touching election, they are beloved for the fathers sakes."* And what is this? For wherein they are enemies, punishment is theirs: but wherein they are beloved, the virtue of their ancestors has no influence on them, if they do not believe. Nevertheless, as I said, he ceases not to solace them with words, that he may bring them over. Wherefore by way of fresh proof for his former assertion, he says,

Ver. 30-32. *"For as you in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."*

He shows here that those of the Gentiles were called first. Then, as they would not come, the Jews were elected, and the same result occurred again. For when the Jews would not believe, again the Gentiles were brought over. And he does not stop here, nor does he draw the whole to a conclusion at their rejection, but at their having mercy shown them again. See how much he gives to those of the Gentiles, as much as he did to the Jews before. For when you, he would say, *"in times past did not obey,"* being of the Gentiles, then the Jews came in. Again, when these did not obey, you have come. However, they will not perish forever. *"For God has*

concluded them all in unbelief," that is, has convinced them, has shown them disobedient; not that they may remain in disobedience, but that He may save the one by the captiousness of the other, these by those and those by these. Now consider; you were disobedient, and they were saved. Again, they have been disobedient, and you have been saved. Yet you have not been so saved as to be put away again, as the Jews were, but so as to draw them over through jealousy while you abide.

Ver. 33. *"Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments!"*

Here after going back to former times, and looking back to God's original dispensation of things whereby the world has existed up to the present time, and having considered what special provision He had made for all occurrences, he is stricken with awe, and cries aloud, so making his hearers feel confident that certainly that will come to pass which he says. For he would not have cried aloud and been awe-struck, unless this was quite sure to come to pass. That it is a depth then, he knows: but how great, he knows not. For the language is that of a person wondering, not of one that knew the whole. But admiring and being awe-struck at the goodness, so far forth as in him lay, he heralds it forth by two intensive words, riches and depth, and then is awestruck at His having had both the will and the power to do all this, and by opposites effecting opposites. *"How unsearchable are His judgments."* For they are not only impossible to be comprehended, but even to be searched. *"And His ways past finding out;"* that is, His dispensations for these also are not only impossible to be known, but even to be sought into. For even I, he means, have not found out the whole, but a little part, not all. For He alone knows His own clearly. Wherefore he proceeds:

Ver. 34, 35. *"For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"*

What he means is nearly this: that though He is so wise, yet He has not His Wisdom from any other, but is Himself the Fountain of good things. And though He has done so great things, and made us so great presents, yet it was not by borrowing from any other that He gave them, but by making them spring forth from Himself; nor as owing any a return for having received from him, but as always being Himself the first to do the benefits; for this is a chief mark of riches, to overflow abundantly, and yet need no aid. Wherefore he proceeds to say, *"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things."* Himself devised, Himself created, Himself works together (Vulg. [συγκρατεῖ], manuscripts [συγκροτεῖ]). For He is rich, and needs not to receive from another. And wise, and needs no counsellor. Why speak I of a counsellor? To know the things of Him is no one able, save Himself alone, the Rich and Wise One. For it is proof of much riches that He should make them of the Gentiles thus well supplied; and of much wisdom that He should constitute the inferiors of the Jews their teachers. Then as he was awe-struck he offers up thanksgiving also in the word, *"To Whom be glory forever. Amen."*

For when he tells of any great and unutterable thing of this kind, he ends in wonder with a doxology. And this he does in regard to the Son also. For in that passage also he went on to the very same thing that he does here. Of whom is Christ according to the flesh, Who is over all God blessed forever. Amen. [Romans 9:5]

Him then let us also imitate, and let us glorify God in all things, by a heedful way of life, and let us not feel confidence in the virtues of our ancestry, knowing the example that has been made of the Jews. For this is

not, certainly it is not, the relationship of Christians, for theirs is the kinsmanship of the Spirit. So the Scythian becomes Abraham's son: and his son on the other hand more of an alien to him than the Scythian. Let us not then feel confidence in the well-doings of our fathers (most manuscripts "*of others*"), but if you have a parent who is a marvel even, fancy not that this will be enough to save you, or to get you honor and glory, unless you have the relationship of character to him. So too if you have a bad one, do not think that you will be condemned on this account, or be put to shame if at least you order your own doings aright. For what can be less honorable than the Gentiles? Still in faith they soon became related to the Saints. Or what more nearly connected than the Jews? Yet still by unbelief they were made aliens. For that relationship is of nature and necessity, after which we are all relations. For of Adam we all sprung, and none can be more a relation than another, both as regards Adam and as regards Noah, and as regards the earth, the common mother of all. But the relationship worthy of honors, is that which does distinguish us from the wicked. For it is not possible for all to be relations in this way, but those of the same character only. Nor do we call them brothers who come of the same labor with ourselves, but those who display the same zeal. In this way Christ gives men the name of children of God, and so on the other hand children of the devil, and so too children of disobedience, of hell, and of perdition likewise. So Timothy was Paul's son from goodness and was called "*my own son*" [1 Timothy 1:2]: but of his sister's son we do not know even the name. And yet the one was by nature related to him, and still that availed him not. But the other being both by nature and country far removed from him (as being a native of Lystra), still became most nearly related. Let us then also become the sons of the Saints, or rather let us become even God's sons. For that it is possible to become sons of God, hear what he says, "*Be therefore perfect, as your*

father which is in Heaven." [Matthew 5:48] This is why we call Him Father in prayer, and that not only to remind ourselves of the grace, but also of virtue, that we may not do anything unworthy of such a relationship. And how it may be said is it possible to be a son of God? By being free from all passions, and showing gentleness to them that affront and wrong us. For your Father is so to them that blaspheme Him. Wherefore, though He says various things at various times, yet in no case does He say that you may be like your Father, but when He says, "*Pray for them that despitefully use you, do good to them that hate you*" [Matthew 5:44], then He brings in this as the reward. For there is nothing that brings us so near to God, and makes us so like Him, as this well-doing. Therefore Paul also, when he says, "*Be followers of God*" [Ephesians 5:1], means them to be so in this respect. For we have need of all good deeds, chiefly however of love to man and gentleness, since we need so much of His love to man ourselves. For we commit many transgressions every day. Wherefore also we have need to show much mercy. But much and little is not measured by the quantity of things given, but by the amount of the givers' means. Let not then the rich be high-minded, nor the poor dejected as giving so little, for the latter often gives more than the former. We must not then make ourselves miserable because we are poor, since it makes almsgiving the easier for us. For he that has got much together is seized with haughtiness, as well as a greater affection to that (or "*lust beyond that*") he has. But he that has but a little is quit of either of these domineering passions: hence he finds more occasions for doing well. For this man will go cheerfully into a prison-house, and will visit the sick, and will give a cup of cold water. But the other will not take upon him any office of this sort, as pampered up ([φλεγμαίνων]) by his riches. Be not then out of heart at your poverty. For your poverty makes your traffic for heaven the easier to you. And if you have nothing, but have

a compassionating soul, even this will be laid up as a reward for you. Hence too Paul bade us *"weep with them that weep"* [Romans 12:15], and exhorted us to be to prisoners as though bound with them. [Hebrews 13:3] For it is not to them that weep only that it yields some solace that there be many that compassionate them, but to them who are in other afflicting circumstances. For there are cases where conversation has as much power to recover him that is cast down as money. For this then God exhorts us to give money to them that ask, not merely with a view to relieve their poverty, but that He may teach us to compassionate the misfortunes of our neighbors. For this also the covetous man is odious, in that he not only disregards men in a beggared state, but because he gets himself trained ([ἀ] [λαίφεται]) for cruelty and great inhumanity. And so he that, for their sakes, thinks little of money, is even on this account an object of love, that he is merciful and kind to man. And Christ, when He blesses the merciful, blesses and praises not those only that give the alms of money, but those also who have the will to do so. Let us then be so inclinable to mercy, and all other blessings will follow, for he that has a spirit of love and mercy, if he have money, will give it away, or if he see any in distress, will weep and bewail it; if he fall in with a person wronged, will stand up for him; if he sees one spitefully entreated, will reach out his hand to him. For as he has that treasure-house of blessings, a loving and merciful soul, he will make it a fountain for all his brethren's needs, and will enjoy all the rewards that are laid up with God (Field with 4 manuscripts [τῷ Θεῷ]). That we then may attain to these, let us of all things frame our souls accordingly. For so, while in this world, we shall do good deeds without number, and shall enjoy the crowns to come. To which may we all attain by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 20 on Romans

Rom. XII. 1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

After discoursing at large upon the love of God toward man, and pointing out His unspeakable concern for us, and unutterable goodness, which cannot even be searched into, he next puts it forward with a view of persuading those who have received the benefit to exhibit a conversation worthy of the gift. And though he is so great and good a person, yet he does not decline beseeching them, and that not for any enjoyment he was likely to get himself, but for that they would have to gain. And why wonder that he does not decline beseeching, where he is even putting God's mercies before them? For since, he means, it is from this you have those numberless blessings, from the mercies of God, reverence them, be moved to compassion by them. For they themselves take the attitude of suppliants, that you would show no conduct unworthy of them. I entreat you then, he means, by the very things through which you were saved. As if any one who wished to make a person, who had had great kindnesses done him, show regard, was to bring him the benefactor himself as a suppliant. And what do you beseech? Let me hear. *"That ye would present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."* For when he had said sacrifice, to prevent any from thinking he bade them kill themselves, he immediately added (Greek order) *"living."* Then to distinguish it from the Jewish, he calls it *"holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service."* For theirs was a material one, and not very

acceptable either. Since He says, *"Who has required this at your hands?"* [Isaiah 1:12] And in sundry other passages He clearly throws them aside. For it was not this, but this with the other, that He looked to have presented. Wherefore he says, *"The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me."* And again, *"I will praise the name of my God with a song, and this shall please him better than a bullock that puts forth horns and hoofs."* [Psalm 50:23; 69:30, 31] And so in another place He rejects it, and says, *"Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink goat's blood?"* [Psalm 50:13] and proceeds with, *"Offer unto God a sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows unto the Most High."* [Psalm 49:14] So Paul also here bids us *"present our bodies a living sacrifice."* And how is the body, it may be said, to become a sacrifice? Let the eye look upon no evil thing, and it has become a sacrifice; let your tongue speak nothing filthy, and it has become an offering; let your hand do no lawless deed, and it has become a whole burnt offering. Or rather this is not enough, but we must have good works also: let the hand do alms, the mouth bless them that cross one, and the hearing find leisure evermore for lections of Scripture. For sacrifice allows of no unclean thing: sacrifice is a first-fruit of the other actions. Let us then from our hands, and feet, and mouth, and all other members, yield a first-fruit unto God. Such a sacrifice is well pleasing, as that of the Jews was even unclean, for, *"their sacrifices,"* it says, *"are unto them as the bread of mourning."* [Hosea 9:4] Not so ours. That presented the thing sacrificed dead: this makes the thing sacrificed to be living. For when we have mortified our members, then we shall be able to live. For the law of this sacrifice is new, and so the sort of fire is a marvellous one. For it needs no wood or matter under it; but our fire lives of itself, and does not burn up the victim, but rather quickens it. This was the sacrifice that God sought of old. Wherefore the Prophet says, *"The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit."* [Psalm 51:17] And the three Children

offer this when they say, *"At this time there is neither prince, or prophet, or leader, or burnt offering, or place to sacrifice before You, and to find mercy. Nevertheless, in a contrite heart and an humble spirit let us be accepted."* [Daniel 3:15-16] And observe how great the exactness wherewith he uses each word. For he does not say, offer [ποιήσατε] [Exodus 29:39, Septuagint] your bodies as a sacrifice, but *"present"* ([παραστήσατε] see below) them, as if he had said, never more have any interest in them. You have given them up to another. For even they that furnish (same word) the war-horses have no further interest in them. And thou too hast presented your members for the war against the devil and for that dread battle-array. Do not let them down to selfish appliances. And he shows another thing also from this, that one must make them approved, if one means to present them. For it is not to any mortal being that we present them, but to God, the King of the universe; not to war only, but to have seated thereon the King Himself. For He does not refuse even to be seated upon our members, but even greatly desires it. And what no king who is but our fellow-servant would choose to do, that the Lord of Angels chooses. Since then it is both to be presented (i.e. as for a King's use) and is a sacrifice, rid it of every spot, since if it have a spot, it will no longer be a sacrifice. For neither can the eye that looks lecherously be sacrificed, nor the hand be presented that is grasping and rapacious, nor the feet that go lame and go to play-houses, nor the belly that is the slave of self-indulgence, and kindles lusts after pleasures, nor the heart that has rage in it, and harlots' love, nor the tongue that utters filthy things. Hence we must spy out the spots on our body upon every side. For if they that offered the sacrifices of old were bid to look on every side, and were not permitted to offer an animal *"that has anything superfluous or lacking, or is scurvy, or scabbed"* [Leviticus 22:22-23], much more must we, who offer not senseless animals, but ourselves, exhibit

more strictness, and be pure in all respects, that we also may be able to say as did Paul, *"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."* [2 Timothy 4:6] For he was purer than any sacrifice, and so he speaks of himself as *"ready to be offered."* But this will be brought about if we kill the old man, if we mortify our members that are upon the earth, if we crucify the world unto ourselves. In this way we shall not need the knife any more, nor altar, nor fire, or rather we shall want all these, but not made with the hands, but all of them will come to us from above, fire from above, and knife also, and our altar will the breadth of Heaven be. For if when Elijah offered the visible sacrifice, a flame, that came down from above consumed the whole water, wood, and stones, much more will this be done upon you. And if you have anything in you relaxed and secular, and yet offerest the sacrifice with a good intention, the fire of the Spirit will come down, and both wear away that worldliness, and perfect (so Field: manuscripts *"carry up"*) the whole sacrifice. But what is *"reasonable ([λογικῇ]) service?"* It means spiritual ministry, conversation according to Christ. As then he that ministers in the house of God, and officiates, of whatever sort he may be, then collects himself [συστέλλεται] Ezekiel 44:19, and becomes more dignified; so we ought to be minded all our whole life as serving and ministering. And this will be so, if every day you bring Him sacrifices (3 manuscripts *"yourself as a sacrifice"*), and become the priest of your own body, and of the virtue of your soul; as, for example, when you offer soberness, when almsgiving, when goodness and forbearance. For in doing this you offer *"a reasonable service"* (or worship, [λατρείαν]), that is, one without anything that is bodily, gross, visible. Having then raised the hearer by the names bestowed, and having shown that each man is a priest of his own flesh by his conversation, he mentions also the way whereby we may compass all this. What then is the way?

Ver. 2. *"And be not fashioned after this world; but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

For the fashion of this world is grovelling and worthless, and but for a time, neither has ought of loftiness, or lastingness, or straightforwardness, but is wholly perverted. If then you would walk upright (or aright [ὀρθῶς]), figure not yourself after the fashion of this life present. For in it there is nought abiding or stable. And this is why he calls it a *fashion* ([σχῆμα]); and so in another passage, *"the fashion of this world passes away."* [1 Corinthians 7:31] For it has no durability or fixedness, but all in it is but for a season; and so he calls it this age (or world, Gr. [αἰὼν] & 241liableness to misfortune, and by the word fashion its unsubstantialness. For speak of riches, or of glory, or beauty of person, or of luxury, or of whatever other of its seemingly great things you will, it is a fashion only, not reality, a show and a mask, not any abiding substance (ὄν) [πόστασις]). But *"be not thou fashioned after this, but be transformed,"* he says, *"by the renewing of your mind."* He says not change the fashion, but *"be transformed"* ([μεταμορφοῦ]), to show that the world's ways are a fashion, but virtue's not a fashion, but a kind of real form, with a natural beauty of its own, lacking not the trickeries and fashions of outward things, which no sooner appear than they go to nought. For all these things, even before they come to light, are dissolving. If then you throw the fashion aside, you will speedily come to the form. For nothing is more strengthless than vice, nothing so easily wears old. Then since it is likely that being men they would sin every day, he consoles his hearer by saying, *"renew yourself"* from day to day. This is what we do with houses, we keep constantly repairing them as they wear old, and so do thou unto yourself. Have you sinned today? Have you made your soul old? Despair not, despond not, but renew it by repentance, and tears [Hilary on Psalm 119], and confession,

and by doing of good things. And never fail of doing this. And how are we to do this?

"That ye may prove (things more expedient ([διαφέροντα]), and know) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

Either he means by this, be renewed, that you may learn what is more expedient for you, and what the will of God. Or rather, that you can get so renewed if you learn the things expedient, and what God may will. For if you see this, and know how to distinguish the nature of things, you are in possession of the whole way of virtue. And who, it may be said, is ignorant of what is expedient, and what is the will of God? They that are flurried with the things of this world, they that deem riches an enviable thing, they that make light of poverty, they that follow after power, they that are gaping after outward glory, they that think themselves great men when they raise fine houses, and buy costly sepulchres, and keep herds of slaves, and carry a great swarm of eunuchs about with them; these know not what is expedient for them, or what the will of God is. For both of these are but one thing. For God wills what things are expedient for us, and what God wills, that is also expedient for us. What then are the things which God wills? To live in poverty, in lowliness of mind, in contempt of glory; in continency, not in self-indulgence; in tribulation, not in ease; in sorrow, not in dissipation and laughter; in all the other points whereon He has given us laws. But the generality do even think these things of ill omen; so far are they from thinking them expedient, and the will of God. This then is why they never can come near even to the labors for virtue's sake. For they that do not know so much even as what virtue may be, but reverence vice in its place, and take unto their bed the harlot instead of the modest wife, how are they to be able to stand aloof from the present world? Wherefore we ought above all to have a correct estimate of things, and even if we do not follow

after virtue, to praise virtue, and even if we do not avoid vice, to stigmatize vice, that so far we may have our judgments uncorrupted. For so as we advance on our road, we shall be able to lay hold on the realities. This then is why he also bids you be renewed, *"that you may prove what is the will of God."* But here he seems to me to be attacking the Jews too, who cling to the Law. For the old dispensation was a will of God, yet not the ultimate purpose, but allowed owing to their feebleness. But that which is a perfect one, and well-pleasing, is the new conversation. So too when he called it *"a reasonable service,"* it was to set it in contrast with that other (v. note p. 496) that he gave it such a name.

Ver. 3. *"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith."*

After saying above, *"I beseech you by the mercies,"* here he says again, *"by the grace."* Observe the teacher's lowliness of mind, observe a spirit quite subdued! He means to say that he is in no respect worthy to be trusted in such an exhortation and counsel. But at one time he takes the mercies of God along with him, at another His grace. It is not my word, he would say, that I am speaking, but one from God. And he does not say, For I say unto you by the wisdom of God, or, for I say unto you by the Law given of God, but, *"by the grace,"* so reminding them continually of the benefits done them, so as to make them more submissive, and to show that even on this account, they were under an obligation to obey what is here said. *"To every man that is among you."* Not to this person and to that merely, but to the governor and to the governed, to the slave and to the free, to the unlearned and to the wise, to the woman and to the man, to the young and to the old. For the Law is common to all as being the Lord's. And by this he likewise

makes his language inoffensive, setting the lessons he gives to all, even to such as do not come under them, that those who do come under them may with more willingness accept such a reproof and correction. And what do you say? Let me hear. *"Not to think more highly than he ought to think."* Here he is bringing before us the mother of good deeds, which is lowliness of mind, in imitation of his own Master. For as He, when He went up into the mountain, and was going to give a tissue of moral precepts, took this for his first beginning, and made this the foundation, in the words, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit"* [Matthew 5:3]; so Paul too, as he has now passed from the doctrinal parts to those of a more practical kind, has taught us virtue in general terms, by requiring of us the admirable sacrifice; and being on the point of giving a more particular portrait of it, he begins from lowliness of mind as from the head, and tells us, *"not to think more highly of one's self than one ought to think,"* (for this is His will), (many manuscripts om. for etc.), *"but to think soberly."* But what he means is about this. We have received wisdom not that we should use it to make us haughty, but to make us sober-minded. And he does not say in order to be lowly in mind, but in order to sobriety, meaning by sobriety ([σωφροσύνη]) here not that virtue which contrasts with lewdness, nor the being free from intemperance, but being sober and healthful in mind. And the Greek name of it means keeping the mind safe. To show then that he who is not thus modest ([μετριάζοντα]), cannot be sober either, that is, cannot be staid and healthful minded (because such an one is bewildered, and out, of his wits, and is more crazed than any madman), he calls lowliness of mind, soberness of mind.

"According as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith." For since having gifts given them had made many unreasonably elated, both with these and with the Corinthians, see how he lays open the cause of the disease, and gradually removes it. For after saying that we should think

soberly, he proceeds, "*according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith*," meaning here the gift by faith: and by using the word "*dealt*," he solaces him who had the less, and humbles him who had the greater share. For if God dealt it, and it is no achievement of yours, why think highly of yourself? But if any one says that faith here does not mean the gift, this would only the more show that he was humbling the vain boasters. For if that which is the cause of the gift (so Field with most manuscripts: Vulg. "*If the faith by which miracles are wrought is the cause of the gift*"), that faith by which miracles are wrought, be itself from God, on what ground do you think highly of yourself? If He had not come, or been incarnate, then the things of faith would not have fared well either. And it is from hence that all the good things take their rise. But if it is He that gives it, He knows how He deals it. For He made all, and takes like care of all. And as His giving came of His love towards man, so does the quantity which He gives. For was He Who had shown His goodness in regard to the main point, which is the giving of the gift, likely to neglect you in regard to the measure? For had He wished to do you dishonor, then He had not given them at all. But if to save you and to honor you was what He had in view (and for this He came and distributed such great blessings), why are you confounded and disturbed, and abusest your wisdom to foolishness, making yourself more disgraceful than one who is by nature so? For being foolish by nature is no ground of complaint. But being foolish through wisdom, is at once bereaving one's self of excuse, and running into greater punishment.

Such then are those, who pride themselves upon their wisdom, and fall into the excess of recklessness. For recklessness of all things makes a person a fool. Wherefore the Prophet calls the barbarian by this name. But "*the fool*," he says, "*shall speak folly*." [Isaiah 32:6] But that you may see

the folly of him from his own words, hear what he says. *"Above the stars of heaven will I place my throne, and I will be like the Most High."* [Isaiah 14:14] *"I will take hold of the world as a nest, and as eggs that are left will I take them away."* [Isaiah 10:14] Now what can be more foolish than these words? And every instance of haughty language immediately draws on itself this reproach. And if I were to set before you every expression of them that are reckless, you would not be able to distinguish whether the words are those of a reckless man or a fool. So entirely the same is this failing and that. And another of a strange nation says again, *"I am God and not man"* [Ezech. 28:2]; and another again, Can God save you, or deliver you out of my hand? [Daniel 3:15] And the Egyptian too, *"I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."* [Exodus 5:2] And the foolish body in the Psalmist is of this character, who has *"said in his heart, There is no God."* [Psalm 14:1] And Cain, *"Am I my brother's keeper?"* [Genesis 4:9] Can you now distinguish whether the words are those of the reckless or those of the fool? For recklessness going out of due bounds, and being a departure from reason (whence its name recklessness, [ᾰ] [πρόνοια]), makes men both fools and vainglorious. For likewise, *"the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord"* [Proverbs 9:10], so then the beginning of folly is surely not knowing the Lord. If then knowing be wisdom, and not knowing Him folly, and this ignorance come of haughtiness ([ύ] [περηφανία]), (for the beginning of haughtiness is the not knowing of the Lord), then is haughtiness the extreme of folly. Such was Nabal, if not to Godward, at least toward man, having become senseless from his recklessness. But he afterwards died of fear. For when any falls from the measure of wisdom, he becomes at once a coward and bold ([θρασυδειλοῖ] Ar. *Eth.* iii.), his soul having been made feeble. For as the body when it loses its proper tone having become out of condition, is a prey to any disease, thus too the soul when it has lost its greatness of

nature and lowly-mindedness, having gotten any feeble habit ([ἔ] [ξiv]), becomes fearful, as well as bold and unreasonable, and loses its powers of self-consciousness. And he that has lost these, how is he to know things above himself? For as he that is seized with a frenzy, when he has so lost them, knows not even what is right before him; and the eye, when it is dimmed, darkens all the other members; so does it happen with this recklessness. Wherefore these are more miserable than the mad, or than those silly by nature. For like them they stir laughter, and like them they are ill-tempered. And they are out of their wits as the others are, but they are not pitied as they are. And they are beside themselves, as are these, but they are not excused, as are these, but are hated only. And while they have the failings of either, they are bereaved of the excuse of either, being ridiculous not owing to their words only, but to their whole appearance also. For why, pray, do you stiffen up your neck? Or why walk on tiptoe? Why knit up your brows? Why stick your breast out? You can not make one hair white or black, [Matthew 5:36] and you go with as lofty gait as if you could command everything. No doubt you would like to have wings, and not go upon the earth at all! No doubt you would wish to be a prodigy! For have you not made yourself prodigious now, when you are a man and triest to fly? Or rather flying from within, and bloated in every limb? What shall I call you to quit you of your recklessness? Shall I call you ashes, and dust, and smoke, and pothor? I have described your worthlessness to be sure, but still I have not laid hold of the exact image I wanted. For I want to put their bloatedness before me, and all its emptiness. What image am I to find then which will suit with all this? To me it seems to be like tow in a blaze. For it seems to swell when lighted, and to lift itself up; but when it is submitted to a slight touch of the hand, it all tumbles down, and turns out to be more worthless than the veriest ashes. Of this sort are the souls of these men; that

empty inflatedness of theirs even the commonest attack may humble and bring down. For he that behaves recklessly must of necessity be a thoroughly feeble person, since the height he has is not a sound one, but even as bubbles are easily burst, so are these men easily undone. But if you dost not believe, give me a bold reckless fellow, and you will find him more cowardly than a hare even at the most trivial circumstance. For as the flame that rises from dry sticks is no sooner lighted than it becomes dust, but stiff logs do not by their nature easily kindle up, and then keep up their flame a long time burning; so souls that be stern and firm are not easily kindled or extinguished; but these men undergo both of these in a single moment. Since then we know this, let us practise humble-mindedness. For there is nothing so powerful as it, since it is stronger even than a rock and harder than adamant, and places us in a safety greater than that of towers and cities and walls, being too high for any of the artillery of the devil. As then recklessness makes men an easy prey even to ordinary occurrences, being, as I was saying, easier broken than a bubble, and rent more speedily than a spider's web, and more quickly dissolved than a smoke; that we then may be walking upon the strong rock, let us leave that and take to this. For thus in this life present we shall find rest, and shall in the world to come have every blessing, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 21 on Romans

Romans XII. 4, 5

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Again he uses the same ensample as he does to the Corinthians, and that to allay the same passion. For great is the power of the medicine, and the force of this illustration for the correcting of this disease of haughtiness. Why (he means) do you think highly of yourself? Or why again does another utterly despise himself? Are we not all one body, both great and small? When then we are in the total number but one, and members one of another, why do you by your haughtiness separate yourself? Why do you put your brother to shame? For as he is a member of you, so are you also of him. And it is on this score that your claims to honor are so equal. For he has stated two things that might take down their haughty spirit: one that we are members one of another, not the small of the great only, but also the great of the small; and another, that we are all one body. Or rather there are three points, since he shows that the gift was one of grace. *"Therefore be not high-minded."* For it was given you of God; thou did not take it, nor find it even. Hence too, when he touches upon the gifts, he does not say that one received more, and another less, but what? *different*. For his words are, *"having then gifts,"* not less and greater, but, *"differing."* And what if you are not appointed to the same office, still the body is the same. And beginning with gifts, he ends with a good deed (4 manuscripts pl.); and so after mentioning prophecy, and ministry, and the like, he concludes with mercy, diligence, and succor. Since then it was likely that some would be

virtuous, yet not have prophecy, he shows how that this too is a gift, and a much greater one than the other (as he shows in the Epistle to the Corinthians), and so much the greater, as that one has a reward, the other is devoid of a recompense. For the whole is matter of gift and grace.

Wherefore he says,

Ver. 6. *"Having then gifts differing according to the grace of God that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."*

Since then he had sufficiently comforted them, he wishes also to make them vie with each other, and labor more in earnest, by showing that it is themselves that give the grounds for their receiving more or less. For he says indeed that it is given by God (as when he says, *"according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith;"* and again, *"according to the grace given unto us"*) [Romans 12:3], that he may subdue the haughty. But he says also that the beginnings lie with themselves, to rouse the listless. And this he does in the Epistle to the Corinthians also, to produce both these emotions. For when he says, *"covet earnestly the gifts,"* [1 Corinthians 12:31], he shows that they were themselves the cause of the differences in what was given. But when he says, *"Now all these things works one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will"* [1 Corinthians 12:11], he is proving that those who have received it ought not to be elated, so using every way open to him to allay their disorder. And this he does here also. And again, to rouse those who have fallen drowsy, he says, *"Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."* For though it is a grace, yet it is not poured forth at random, but framing its measure according to the recipients, it lets as much flow as it may find the vessel of faith that is brought to be capable of.

Ver. 7. *"Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering."*

Here he names a comprehensive thing. For the Apostleship even is called a ministry, and every spiritual work is a ministry. This is indeed a name of a peculiar office (viz. the diaconate); however, it is used in a general sense. "*Or he that teaches, on teaching.*" See with what indifference he places them, the little first and the great afterwards, again giving us the same lesson, not to be puffed up or elated.

Ver. 8. "*Or he that exhorts, on exhortation.*"

And this is a species of teaching too. For "*if you have any word of exhortation,*" it says, "*speak unto the people.*" [Acts 13:15] Then to show that it is no great good to follow after virtue unless this is done with the proper rule, he proceeds, "*He that gives*" ([μεταδιδούς], imparts), "*let him do it with simplicity.*" For it is not enough to give, but we must do it with munificence also, for this constantly answers to the name of simplicity. Since even the virgins had oil, still, since they had not enough, they were cast out from everything. "*He that defends*" (A.V. rules, [προϊστάμενος],) "*with diligence;*" for it is not enough to do undertake the defence. "*He that shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*" For it is not enough to show mercy, but it behooves us to do it with a largeness and an ungrudging spirit, or rather not with an ungrudging, but even with a cheerful and rejoicing one, for not grudging does not amount to rejoicing. And this same point, when he is writing to the Corinthians also, he insisted very strongly upon. For to rouse them to such largeness he said, He that sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. [2 Corinthians 9:6] But to correct their temper he added, "*Not grudgingly or of necessity.*" [2 Corinthians 9:7] For both the shower of mercy ought to have, both ungrudgingness and pleasure. And why do you bemoan yourself of giving alms? (Aristot. *Eth. N.* ii. 3 and iv. 1.) Why do you grieve at showing mercy, and lose the advantage of the good deed? For if you grieve you do

not do mercy, but are cruel and inhuman. For if you grieve, how shall you be able to raise up him that is in sorrow? For it is much if he suspects no ill, even, when you are giving with joyfulness. For since nothing seems to men such a disgrace as to be receiving from others, unless by an exceedingly cheerful look you remove the suspicion, and showest that you are receiving rather than giving, you will even cast down the receiver rather than raise him up. This is why he says, *"He that shows mercy, with cheerfulness."* For who that is receiving a kingdom, is of sad countenance? Who that is receiving pardon for his sins continues of dejected look? Mind not then the expenditure of the money; but the increase that comes of that expenditure. For if he that sows rejoices though sowing with uncertainty of return, much more should he do so that farms the Heaven. For in this way, even though thou give but little, you will be giving much; even as how much soever you give with a sad countenance, you will have made your much a little. Thus the widow outweighed many talents by the two mites, for her spirit was large. And how is it possible, it may be said, for one that dwells with poverty in the extreme, and empties forth his all, to do this with a ready mind? Ask the widow, and you will hear the way, and wilt know that it is not poverty that makes narrow circumstances, but the temper of a man that effects both this and its opposite. For it is possible even in poverty to be munificent ([μεγαλόψυχον]), and in riches to be niggardly. Hence in giving he looks for simplicity, and in showing mercy for cheerfulness, and in patronizing for diligence. For it is not with money only that he wishes us to render every assistance to those in want, but both with words, and deeds, and in person, and in every other way. And after mentioning the chief kind of aiding ([προστασίαν]), that which lies in teaching, namely, and that of exhorting (for this is a more necessary kind, in that it nurtures the soul), he

proceeds to that by way of money, and all other means; then to show how these may be practised aright, he brings in the mother of them, love.

Ver. 9. For, "*Let love be without dissimulation,*" he says,

If you have this, you will not perceive the loss of your money, the labor of your person, the toil of your words, your trouble, and your ministering, but you will bear all courageously, whether it be with person, or money, or word, or any other thing whatsoever, that you are to assist your neighbor. As then he does not ask for giving only, but that with simplicity, nor aiding, but that with diligence, nor alms, but that with cheerfulness; so even love too he requires not alone, but that without dissimulation. Since this is what love is. And if a man have this, everything else follows. For he that shows mercy does so with cheerfulness (for he is giving to himself): and he that aids, aids with diligence; for it is for himself he is aiding: and he that imparts does this with largeness; for he is bestowing it on himself. Then since there is a love even for ill things, such as is that of the intemperate, that of those who are of one mind for money, and for plunder's sake, and for revels and drinking clubs, he clears it of all these, by saying, "*Abhor* ([ἀ] [ποστὴν γοῦντες]) *that which is evil.*" And he does not speak of refraining from it, but of hating it, and not merely hating it, but hating it exceedingly. For this word [ἀ] [πὸ] is often of intensive force with him, as where he speaks of "*earnest expectation, looking out for,*" (complete) "*redemption.*" For since many who do not evil things still have a desire after them, therefore he says, "*Abhor.*" For what he wants is to purify the thought, and that we should have a mighty enmity, hatred and war against vice. For do not fancy, he means, because I said, "*Love one another,*" that I mean you to go so far as to coöperate even in bad actions with one another; for the law that I am laying down is just the reverse. Since it would have you an alien not from the action only, but even from the inclination towards vice; and

not merely an alien from this same inclination, but to have an excessive aversion and hatred of it too. And he is not content with only this, but he also brings in the practice of virtue. "*Cleave to that which is good.*"

He does not speak of doing only, but of being disposed too. For this the command to "*cleave to*" it indicates. So God, when He knit the man to the woman, said, "*For he shall cleave to his wife.*" [Genesis 2:24] Then he mentions reasons why we ought to love one another.

Ver. 10. "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.*"

You are brethren, he means, and have come of the same pangs. Hence even on this head you ought to love one another. And this Moses said to those who were quarrelling in Egypt, "*You are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?*" [Exodus 2:13] When then he is speaking of those without, he says, "*If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.*" [Romans 12:18] But when he is speaking of his own, he says, "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.*" For in the other case he requires abstinence from quarrelling, and hatred, and aversion: but here loving too, and not merely loving, but the loving of relatives. For not only must one's "*love be without dissimulation,*" but intense also, and warm, and glowing. Because, to what purpose would you love without fraud, and not love with warmth? Whence he says, kindly affectioned one towards another, that is, be friends, and warm ones too. Do not wait to be loved by another, but leap at it yourself, and be the first to begin it. For so will you reap the wages of his love also. Having mentioned the reason then why we ought to love one another, he tells us also the way in which the affection may grow unchangeable. Whence he proceeds, "*In honor preferring one another.*" For this is the way that affection is produced, and also when produced abides. And there is nothing which makes friends so much, as the earnest endeavor to overcome one's neighbor in honoring him. For what he

had mentioned before comes of love, and love of honor, as honor does too of love. Then that we may not honor only, he looks for something besides, when he says,

Ver. 11. *"Not backward in zeal."*

For this also genders love when with honor we also show a readiness to protect: as there is nothing that makes men beloved so much as honor and forethought. For to love is not enough, but there must be this also: or rather this also comes of loving, as also loving has its warmth from this, and they are confirmative one of another. For there are many that love in mind, yet reach not forth the hand. And this is why he uses every means to build up love. And how are we to become *"not backward in zeal?"*

"Fervent in spirit." See how in every instance he aims after higher degrees; for he does not say *"give"* only, but *"with largeness;"* nor *"rule,"* but do it *"with diligence;"* nor *"show mercy,"* but do it *"with cheerfulness;"* nor *"honor,"* but *"prefer one another;"* nor *"love,"* but do it *"without dissimulation;"* nor refrain from *"evil"* things, but *"hate"* them; nor hold to *"what is good,"* but *"cleave"* to it; nor *"love,"* but to do it *"with brotherly affection;"* nor be zealous, but be so without backwardness; nor have the *"Spirit,"* but have it *"fervent,"* that is, that you may be warm and awakened. For if you have those things aforesaid, you will draw the Spirit to you. And if This abide with you, It will likewise make you good for those purposes, and all things will be easy from the Spirit and the love, while you are made to glow from both sides. Do you not see the bulls (Hannibal. ap. Liv. xxii. 16) that carry a flame upon their back, how nobody is able to withstand them? So thou also will be more than the devil can sustain, if you take both these flames. *"Serving the Lord."* For it is possible to serve God in all these ways; in that whatever you do to your brother passes on to your Master, and as having been Himself benefited, He will reckon your reward accordingly.

See to what height he has raised the spirit of the man that works these things! Then to show how the flame of the Spirit might be kindled, he says,

Ver. 12. *"Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer."*

For all these things are fuel for that fire. For when he had required the expenditure of money and the labor of the person, and ruling, and zeal, and teaching, and other laborious occupations, he again supplies the wrestler with love, with the Spirit, through hope. For there is nothing which makes the soul so courageous and venturesome for anything as a good hope. Then even before the good things hoped for, he gives another reward again. For since hope is of things to come, he says, *"patient in tribulation."* And before the things to come, in this life present you will gain a great good [see on Romans 5:4, p. 397] from tribulation, that of becoming hardy and tried. And after this he affords them another help, when he says, *"continuing instant in prayer."* When therefore love makes things easy, and the Spirit assists, and hope lightens, and tribulation makes you tried and apt for bearing everything nobly, and you have along with these another very great weapon, to wit, *"prayer"* and the aidances that come of prayer, what further grievousness can there be in what he is enjoining? Surely none. You see how in every way he gives the wrestler firm footing and shows that the injunctions are perfectly easy. Consider again how he vindicates almsgiving, or rather not almsgiving absolutely, but that to the saints. For above when he says, *"he that shows mercy with cheerfulness,"* he makes us open-handed to everybody. Here, however, it is in behalf of the faithful that he is speaking. And so he proceeds to say,

Ver. 13. *"Sharing with the necessity ([χρειαίς], al. [μνείαις], memories) of the saints."*

He does not say, Bestow upon, but "*share with the necessity of the saints,*" to show that they receive more than they give, that it is a matter of merchandise, because it is a community. Do you bring in money? They bring you in boldness toward God. "*Given to (Gr. pursuing) hospitality.*" He does not say doing it, but "*given*" to it, so to instruct us not to wait for those that shall ask it, and see when they will come to us, but to run to them, and be given to finding them.

Thus did Lot, thus Abraham. For he spent the whole day upon it, waiting for this goodly prey, and when he saw it, leaped upon it, and ran to meet them, and worshipped upon the ground, and said, "*My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, pass not away from Your servant.*" [Genesis 18:3] Not as we do, if we happen to see a stranger or a poor man, knitting our brows, and not deigning even to speak to them. And if after thousands of entreaties we are softened, and bid the servant give them a trifle, we think we have quite done our duty. But he did not so, but assumed the fashion of a suppliant and a servant, though he did not know who he was going to take under his roof. But we, who have clear information that it is Christ Whom we take in, do not grow gentle even for this. But he both beseeches, and entreats, and falls on his knees to them, yet we insult those that come to us. And he indeed did all by himself and his wife, whereas we do it not even by our attendants. But if you have a mind to see the table that he set before them, there too you will see great bounteousness, but the bounteousness came not from excess of wealth, but of the riches of a ready will. Yet how many rich persons were there not then? Still none did anything of the kind. How many widows were there in Israel? Yet none showed hospitality to Elijah. How many wealthy persons again were there not in Elisha's day? But the Shunamite alone gathered in the fruits of hospitality; as did Abraham also, whom beside his largeness and ready

mind it is just especially to admire, on this ground, that when he had no knowledge who they were that had come, yet he so acted. Do not thou then be curious either: since for Christ thou dost receive him. And if you are always so scrupulous, many a time will you pass by a man of esteem, and lose your reward from him. And yet he that receives one that is not of esteem, has no fault found with him, but is even rewarded. For *"he that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward."* [Matthew 10:41] But he who out of this ill-timed scrupulousness passes one that should be admired, shall even suffer punishment. Do not then busy yourself with men's lives and doings. For this is the very extreme of niggardliness, for one loaf to be exact about a man's entire life. For if this person be a murderer, if a robber, or what not, does he therefore seem to you not to deserve a loaf and a few pence? And yet your Master causes even the sun to rise upon him! And do you judge him unworthy of food even for a day? I will put another case to you besides. Now even if you were positively certain that he were laden with countless iniquities, not even then would you have an excuse for depriving him of this day's sustenance. For you are the servant of Him Who said, *"You know not what spirit you are of."* [Luke 9:55] You are servant to Him Who healed those that stoned Him, or rather Who was crucified for them. And do not tell me that he killed another, for even if he were going to kill you yourself, even then you should not neglect him when starving. For you are a disciple of Him Who desired the salvation even of them that crucified Him Who said upon the Cross itself, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* [Luke 23:34] You are the servant of Him Who healed him that smote Him, Who upon the Cross itself crowned the man who had scorned Him. And what can equal this? For both the robbers at first scorned Him. Still to one of these He opened Paradise. And He bewails those who were upon the

point of killing Him, and is troubled and confounded at seeing the traitor, not because He was going to be crucified, but because he was lost. He was troubled then as having foreknowledge of the hanging, and the punishment after the hanging. And though He knelt his wickedness, He bore with him to the last hour, and thrust not away the traitor, but even kissed him. Your Master kisses, and with His lips receives him who was on the very point of shedding His precious Blood. And do you count the poor not worthy even of a loaf, and reverence not the Law which Christ laid down? Now by this He shows that we ought not to turn aside, not only from the poor, but not even from those that would lead us away to death. Do not tell me then, that so and so has done me grievous mischief, but just consider what Christ did near the Cross itself, wishing to amend by His kiss the traitor by whom He was on the point of being betrayed. And see with how much power to shame him. For He says, "*Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?*" [Luke 23:48] Who is there He would not have softened? Who is there that this address would not have made yielding? What beast? What adamant? Yet not that wretched man. Do not then say, that such an one murdered such an one, and that is why I turn aside from him. For even if he were upon the point of thrusting a sword down into you, and to plunge his hand into your neck itself, kiss this very right hand! since even Christ kissed that mouth which wrought His death! And therefore do not thou either hate, but bewail and pity him that plots against you. For such an one deserves pity at our hands, and tears. For we are the servants of Him Who kissed even the traitor (I will not leave off dwelling over that continually), and spoke words unto him more gentle than the kiss. For He did not even say, O thou foul and villanous traitor, is this the sort of recompense you return us for so great a benefit? But in what words? "*Judas;*" using his own name, which is more like a person bemoaning, and recalling him, than one

angry at him. And he does not say, your Teacher, your Master, and Benefactor, but, "*the Son of Man.*" For though He were neither Teacher nor Master, yet is it with One Who is so gently, so unfeignedly affected towards you, as even to kiss you at the time of betrayal, and that when a kiss too was the signal for the betrayal; is it with Him that you play the traitor's part? Blessed are You, O Lord! What lowliness of mind, what forbearance have You given us ensamples of! And to him He so behaved. But to those who came with staves and swords to Him, was it not so too? What can be more gentle than the words spoken to them? For when He had power to demolish them all in an instant, He did nothing of the kind, but as expostulating ([ἐ] [ντρεπτικῶς]), addressed them in the words, "*Why, are you come out as against a thief with swords and staves?*" [Matthew 26:55] And having cast them down backwards [John 18:6], as they continued insensible, He of His own accord gave Himself up next, and forbore while He saw them putting manacles upon His holy hands, while He had the power at once to confound all things, and overthrow them. But do you even after this deal fiercely with the poor? And even were he guilty of ten thousand sins, want and famine were enough to soften down a soul ever so blunted. But you stand brutalized, and imitating the rage of lions. Yet they never taste of dead bodies. But you, while you see him a very corpse ([τεταριχευμένον] lit. salter, or, a mummy) for distresses, yet leapest upon him now that he is down, and tearest his body by your insults, and gatherest storm after storm, and makest him as he is fleeing to the haven for refuge to split upon a rock, and bringest a shipwreck about more distressing than those in the sea. And how will you say to God, Have mercy upon me, and ask of Him remission of sins, when you are insolent to one who has done no sin, and callest him to account for this hunger and great necessity, and throwest all the brute beasts into the shade by your cruelty. For they indeed by the compulsion of

their belly lay hold of the food needful for them. But you, when nothing either thrusts you on or compels you, devourest your brother, bitest, and tearest him, if not with your teeth, yet with words that bite more cuttingly. How then will you receive the sacred Host ([προσφορὰν]), when you have empurpled your tongue in human gore? How give the kiss of peace, with mouth gorged with war? Nay, how enjoy every common nourishment, when you are gathering so much venom? Thou dost not relieve the poverty, why make it even more grinding? thou dost not lift up him that is fallen, why throw him down also? thou dost not remove despondency, why even increase it? You give no money, why use insulting words besides? Have you not heard what punishment they suffer that feed not the poor? To what vengeance they are condemned? For He says, "*Depart to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*" [Matthew 25:41] If then they that feed not are so condemned, what punishment are they to suffer, who besides not feeding, even insult? What punishment shall they undergo? What hell? That we kindle not so great evils against ourselves, whiles we have it in our power, let us correct this evil complaint also, and put a bridle on the tongue. And let us be so far from insulting, as even to invite them, both by words and actions, that by laying up much mercy for ourselves, we may obtain the blessings promised us. Which God grant that we may all attain unto by the grace and love towards man, etc.

Homily 22 on Romans

Rom. XII. 14

" Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not."

After teaching them how they ought to be minded towards one another, and after joining the members closely into one, he next proceeds to lead them forth to the battle without, which he makes easier as from this point. For as he who has not managed things well with those of his own side, will find more difficulty in arranging affairs with strangers, so he, that has practised himself duly among these, will with the more ease have the advantage of those without also. Hence then Paul also as he goes on in his journey, after the one places the other, and says, *"Bless them that persecute you."* He did not say, be not spiteful or revengeful, but required something far better. For that a man that was wise might do, but this is quite an angel's part. And after saying *"bless,"* he proceeds, *"and curse not,"* lest we should do both the one and the other, and not the former only. For they that persecute us are purveyors of a reward to us. But if you are sober-minded, there will be another reward after that one, which you will gain yourself. For he will yield you that for persecution, but you will yield yourself the one from the blessing of another, in that you bring forth a very great sign of love to Christ. For as he that curses his persecutor, shows that he is not much pleased at suffering this for Christ, thus he that blesses shows the greatness of his love. Do not then abuse him, that you yourself may gain the greater reward, and may teach him that the thing is matter of inclination, not of necessity, of holiday and feast, not of calamity or dejection. For this cause Christ Himself said, *"Rejoice when men speak all manner of evil against you falsely."* [Matthew 5:11] Hence too it was that the Apostles

returned with joy not from having been evil spoken of only, but also at having been scourged. [Acts 5:40-41] For besides what I have mentioned, there will be another gain, and that no small one, that you will make, both the abashing of your adversaries hereby, and instructing of them by your actions that you are travelling to another life; for if he see you joyous, and elevated, ([περούμενον]) from suffering ill, he will see clearly from the actions that you have other hopes greater than those of this life. So that if you dost not so, but weep and lamentest, how is he to be able to learn from that that you are tarrying for any other life? And besides this, you will compass yet another thing. For provided he see you not vexed at the affronts done you, but even blessing him, he will leave harassing you. See then how much that is good comes from this, both a greater reward for yourself and a less temptation, and he will forbear persecuting you, and God too will be glorified: and to him that is in error your endurance will be instruction in godliness. For this reason it was not those that insult us only, but even those that persecute us and deal despitefully with us, that he bade us requite with the contrary. And now he orders them to bless, but as he goes on, he exhorts them to do them good in deeds also.

Ver. 15. *"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."*

Since it is possible to bless and not to curse, and yet not to do this out of love, he wishes us to be penetrated with the warmth of friendship throughout. And this is why he goes on in these words, that we are not only to bless, but even feel compassion for their pains and sufferings, whenever we happen to see them fallen into trouble. Yes, it will be said, but to join in the sorrows of mourners one can see why he ordered them, but why ever did he command them the other thing, when it is no such great matter? Aye, but that requires more of a high Christian temper, to rejoice with them that

do rejoice, than to weep with them that weep. For this nature itself fulfils perfectly: and there is none so hard-hearted as not to weep over him that is in calamity: but the other requires a very noble soul, so as not only to keep from envying, but even to feel pleasure with the person who is in esteem. And this is why he placed it first. For there is nothing that ties love so firmly as sharing both joy and pain one with another. Do not then, because you are far from difficulties yourself, remain aloof from sympathizing too. For when your neighbor is ill-treated, you ought to make the calamity your own. Take share then in his tears, that you may lighten his low spirits. Take share in his joy, that you may make the joy strike deep root, and fix the love firmly, and be of service to yourself rather than to him in so doing, by your weeping rendering yourself merciful, and by your feeling his pleasure, purging yourself of envy and grudging. And let me draw your attention to Paul's considerateness. For he does not say, Put an end to the calamity, lest you should say in many cases (or perchance [πολλάκις]) that it is impossible: but he has enjoined the easier task, and that which you have in your power. For even if you are not able to remove the evil, yet contribute tears, and you will take the worst half away. And if you be not able to increase a man's prosperity, contribute joy, and you will have made a great addition to it. Therefore it is not abstaining from envy only, but what is a much greater thing that he exhorts us to, namely, joining in the pleasure. For this is a much greater thing than not envying.

Ver. 16. *"Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate."*

Here again he insists much upon lowliness of mind, the subject he had started this exhortation with. For there was a probability of their being full of high-mindedness, both on account of their city (see p. 343), and from sundry other causes; he therefore keeps drawing off ([ὅ] [ποσύρει], 2

manuscripts [ὁ] [πορύττει]) the morbid matter, and lowers the inflammation. For there is nothing that makes such schisms in the Churches as vanity does. And what does he mean by, "*Be of the same mind one towards another?*" Has a poor man come into your house? Be like him in your bearing, do not put on any unusual pompous air on account of your riches. There is no rich and poor in Christ. Be not then ashamed of him because of his external dress, but receive him because of his inward faith. And if you see him in sorrow, do not disdain to comfort him, nor if you see him in prosperity, feel abashed at sharing his pleasure, and being gladdened with him, but be of the same mind in his case, that you would be of in your own. For it says, "*Be of the same mind one towards another.*" For instance, if you think yourself a great man, therefore think him so likewise. Do you suspect that he is mean and little? Well then, pass this same sentence upon yourself, and cast aside all unevenness. And how is this to be? By your casting aside that reckless temper. Wherefore he proceeds: "*Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.*" That is, bring yourself down to their humble condition, associate with them, walk with them, do not be humbled in mind only, but help them also, and reach forth your hand to them, not by means of others, but in your own person, as a father taking care of a child, as the head taking care of the body. As he says in another place, "*being bound with them that are in bonds.*" [Hebrews 13:3] But here he means by those of low estate not merely the lowly-minded, but those of a low rank, and which one is apt to think scorn of.

"*Be not wise in your own conceits.*" This is, do not think that you can do for yourselves. Because the Scripture says in another place besides, "*Woe to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight.*" [Isaiah 5:22] And by this again, he secretly draws off recklessness, and reduces conceit and turgidity. For there is nothing that so elates men

and makes them feel different from other people, as the notion that they can do by themselves. Whence also God has placed us in need one of another, and though thou be wise you will be in need of another: but if you think that you are not in need of him, you will be the most foolish and feeble of men. For a man of this sort bares himself of all succor, and in whatever error he may run into, will not have the advantage either of correction or of pardon, and will provoke God by his recklessness, and will run into many errors. For it is the case, aye, and often too, that a wise man does not perceive what is needful, and a man of less shrewdness hits upon somewhat that is applicable. And this happened with Moses and his father-in-law, and with Saul and his servant, and with Isaac and Rebecca. Do not then suppose that you are lowered by needing another man. For this exalts you the more, this makes you the stronger, and the brighter too, and the more secure.

Ver. 17. *"Recompense to no man evil for evil."*

For if you find fault with another who plots against you, why do you make yourself liable to this accusation? If he did amiss how do you come not to shun imitating him? And observe how he puts no difference here but lays down one law for all. For he does not say, *"recompense not evil"* to the believer, but to *"no man,"* be he heathen, be he contaminated, or what not. *"Provide things honest in the sight of all men."*

Ver. 18. *"If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men."*

This is that: *"let your light shine before men"* [Matthew 5:16], not that we are to live for vanity, but that we are not to give those who have a mind for it a handle against us. Whence he says also in another place, *"Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God."* [1 Corinthians 10:32] And in what follows he limits his meaning well, by saying, *"If it be possible."* For there are cases in which it is not possible, as,

for instance, when we have to argue about religion, or to contend for those who are wronged. And why be surprised if this be not universally possible in the case of other persons, when even in the case of man and wife he broke through the rule? *"But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart."* [1 Corinthians 7:15] And his meaning is nearly as follows: Do your own part, and to none give occasion of war or fighting, neither to Jew nor Gentile. But if you see the cause of religion suffering anywhere, do not prize concord above truth, but make a noble stand even to death. And even then be not at war in soul, be not averse in temper, but fight with the things only. For this is the import of *"as much as in you lies, be at peace with all men."* But if the other will not be at peace, do not thou fill your soul with tempest, but in mind be friendly ([φίλος], several manuscripts [φιλόσοφος]) as I said before, without giving up the truth on any occasion.

Ver. 19. *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord."*

Unto what wrath? To the wrath of God. Now since what the injured man desires most to see is, himself having the pleasure of revenge, this very thing he gives him in full measure, that if you dost not avenge yourself, he means, God will be your avenger. Leave it then to Him to follow up your wrongs. For this is the force of *"give place unto wrath."* Then to give further comfort, he brings the quotation forward also, and after winning him more thoroughly to himself in this way, he demands more Christian heroism ([φιλοσοφίαν]) of him, and says:

Ver. 20, 21. *"If your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."*

Why, he means, am I telling you that you must keep peace? For I even insist upon your doing kindness. For he says, "*give him to eat, and give him to drink.*" Then as the command he gave was a very difficult and a great one, he proceeds: "*for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire upon his head.*" And this he said both to humble the one by fear, and to make the other more ready-minded through hope of a recompense. For he that is wronged, when he is feeble, is not so much taken with any goods of his own as with the vengeance upon the person who has pained him. For there nothing so sweet as to see an enemy chastised. What he is longing for, then, that he gives him first, and when he has let the venom go, then he again gives advice of a higher tone, saying, "*Be not overcome of evil.*" For he knew that if the enemy were a very brute, he would not continue an enemy when he had been fed. And if the man injured be of ever so little a soul, still when feeding him and giving him to drink, he will not himself even have any farther craving for his punishment. Hence, out of confidence in the result of the action, he does not simply threaten, but even dwells largely upon the vengeance. For he did not say, "*you shall take vengeance*" but, "*you shall heap coals of fire upon his head.*" Then he further declares him victor, by saying, "*be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*" And he gives a kind of gentle hint, that one is not to do it with that intention, since cherishing a grudge still would be "*being overcome of evil.*" But he did not say it at once, as he did not find it advisable yet. But when he had disburdened the man of his anger, then he proceeded to say, "*overcome evil with good.*" Since this would be a victory. For the combatant is rather then the conqueror, not when he brings himself under to take the blows, but when he withdraws himself, and makes his antagonist waste his strength upon the air. And in this way he will not be struck himself, and will also exhaust the whole of the other's strength. And this takes place in regard to

affronts also. For when you do affronts in return, you have the worse, not as overcome (so 1 manuscript [νικηθεὶς], Sav. [κινηθεὶς]) by a man, but what is far more disgraceful, by the slavish passion of anger. But if you are silent, then you will conquer, and erect a trophy without a fight, and will have thousands to crown you, and to condemn the slander of falsehood. For he that replies, seems to be speaking in return as if stung. And he that is stung, gives reason to suspect that he is conscious of being guilty of what is said of him. But if you laugh at it, by your laughing you do away with the sentence against you. And if you would have a clear proof of what has been said, ask the enemy himself, when he is most vexed? When you are heated, and insult him in return? Or when you laugh at him as he insults you? And you will be told the last rather. For he too is not so much pleased with not being insulted in return, as he is vexed because his abuse was not able to gain any hold upon you. Did you never see men in a passion, how they make no great account of their own wounds, but rush on with much violence, and are worse than very wild boars for seeking the hurt of their neighbor, and look to this alone, and are more given to this than to being on their guard against getting harmed? When therefore you deprive him of that he desires most, you bereave him of everything, by holding him thus cheap, and showing him to be easy to be despised, and a child rather than a man; and you indeed have gained the reputation of a wise man, and him you invest with the character of a noisome beast. This too let us do when we are struck, and when we wish to strike, let us abstain from striking again. But, would you give a mortal blow? *"Turn to him the other cheek also"* [Matthew 5:39], and you will smite him with countless wounds. For they that applaud, and wonder at you, are more annoying to him than men to stone him would be; and before them, his conscience will condemn him, and will exact the greatest punishment of him, and so he will go off with a confused look as if

he had been treated with the utmost rigor. And if it is the estimation of the multitude that you look for, this too you will have in larger share. And in a general way we have a kind of sympathy with those who are the sufferers; but when we also see that they do not strike (several manuscripts resist, [ὁ] [ντιπίπτοντας]) in return, but even give themselves up to it, we not only pity them, but even feel admiration for them.

Here then I find reason to lament, that we who might have things present, if we listened to Christ's Law as we should, and also attain to things to come, are cast out of both by not paying attention to what has been told us, but giving ourselves to unwarranted philosophising about them. For He has given us laws upon all these points for our good, and has shown us what makes us have a good name, what brings us to disgrace. And if it was likely to have proved His disciples ridiculous, He would not have enjoined this. But since this makes them the most notable of men namely, the not speaking ill, when we have ill spoken of us; the not doing ill when we have ill done us; this was His reason for enjoining it. But if this be so, much more the speaking of good when we have ill spoken of us, and the praising of those that insult us, and the doing good to those that plot against us, will make us so. This then was why He gave these laws. For He is careful for His own disciples, and knowing well what it is that makes little or great. If then He both cares and knows, why do you quarrel with Him, and wish to go another road? For conquering by doing ill is one of the devil's laws. Hence in the Olympic games which were celebrated to him it is so that all the competitors conquer. But in Christ's race this is not the rule about the prize, for, on the contrary, the law is for the person smitten, and not for the person smiting, to be crowned. For such is the character of His race, it has all its regulations the other way; so that it is not in the victory only, but also in the way of the victory, that the marvel is the greater. Now when things

which on the other side are signs of a victory, on this side he shows to be productive of defeat, this is the power of God, this the race of Heaven, this the theatre of Angels. I know that you are warmed thoroughly now, and have become as soft as any wax, but when you have gone hence you will spew it all out. This is why I sorrow, that what we are speaking of, we do not show in our actions, and this too though we should be greatest gainers thereby. For if we let our moderation be seen, we shall be invincible to any man; and there is nobody either great or small, who will have the power of doing us any hurt. For if any one abuses you, he has not hurt you at all, but himself severely. And if again he wrong you, the harm will be with the person who does the wrong. Did you never notice that even in the courts of law those who have had wrong done them are honored, and stand and speak out with entire freedom, but those who have done the wrong, are bowed down with shame and fear? And why do I talk of evil-speaking (Sav. conj. and 5 manuscripts [κακηγορίαν]) and of wrong? For were he even to whet his sword against you, and to stain his right hand in your life-blood ([εἰς τὸν λαϊμὸν], as p. 505), it is not you that he has done any harm to, but himself that he has butchered. And he will witness what I say who was first taken off thus by a brother's hand. For he went away to the haven without a billow, having gained a glory that dies not away; but the other lived a life worse than any death, groaning, and trembling, and in his body bearing about the accusation of what he had done. Let us not follow after this then, but that. For he that has ill done him, has not an evil that takes up its constant abode with him, since he is not the parent of it; but as he received it from others, he makes it good by his patient endurance. But he that does ill, has the well of the mischief in himself. Was not Joseph in prison, but the harlot that plotted against him in a fine and splendid house? Which then would you wish to have been? And let me not hear yet of the requital, but

examine the things that had taken place by themselves. For in this way you will rate Joseph's prison infinitely above the house with the harlot in it. For if you were to see the souls of them both, you would find the one full of enlargement and boldness, but that of the Egyptian woman in straitness, shame, dejection, confusion, and great despondency. And yet she seemed to conquer; but this was no real victor. Knowing all this then, let us fit ourselves for bearing ills, even that we may be freed from bearing ills, and may attain to the blessings to come. Which that we may all attain to, God grant, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 23 on Romans

Rom. XIII. 1

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."

Of this subject he makes much account in other epistles also, setting subjects under their rulers as household servants are under their masters. And this he does to show that it was not for the subversion of the commonwealth that Christ introduced His laws, but for the better ordering of it, and to teach men not to be taking up unnecessary and unprofitable wars. For the plots that are formed against us for the truth's sake are sufficient and we have no need to be adding temptations superfluous and unprofitable. And observe too how well-timed his entering upon this subject is. For when he had demanded that great spirit of heroism, and made men fit to deal either with friends or foes, and rendered them serviceable alike to the prosperous and those in adversity and need, and in fact to all, and had planted a conversation worthy of angels, and had discharged anger, and taken down recklessness, and had in every way made their mind even, he then introduces his exhortation upon these matters also. For if it be right to requite those that injure us with the opposite, much more is it our duty to obey those that are benefactors to us. But this he states toward the end of his exhortation, and hitherto does not enter on these reasonings which I mention, but those only that enjoin one to do this as a matter of debt. And to show that these regulations are for all, even for priests, and monks, and not for men of secular occupations only, he has made this plan at the outset, by saying as follows: *"let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,"* if you be an Apostle even, or an Evangelist, or a Prophet, or anything whatsoever, inasmuch as this subjection is not subversive of religion. And he does not

say merely "*obey*," but "*be subject*." And the first claim such an enactment has upon us, and the reasoning that suits the faithful, is, that all this is of God's appointment.

"For there is no power," he says, *"but of God."* What say you? It may be said; is every ruler then elected by God? This I do not say, he answers. Nor am I now speaking about individual rulers, but about the thing in itself. For that there should be rulers, and some rule and others be ruled, and that all things should not just be carried on in one confusion, the people swaying like waves in this direction and that; this, I say, is the work of God's wisdom. Hence he does not say, *"for there is no ruler but of God;"* but it is the thing he speaks of, and says, *"there is no power but of God. And the powers that be, are ordained of God."* Thus when a certain wise man says, *"It is by the Lord that a man is matched with a woman"* [Proverbs 19:14, Septuagint], he means this, God made marriage, and not that it is He that joins together every man that comes to be with a woman. For we see many that come to be with one another for evil, even by the law of marriage, and this we should not ascribe to God. But as He said Himself, *"He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."* [Matthew 19:4-5; Genesis 2:24] And this is what that wise man meant to explain. For since equality of honor does many times lead to fightings, He has made many governments and forms of subjection; as that, for instance, of man and wife, that of son and father, that of old men and young, that of bond and free, that of ruler and ruled, that of master and disciple. And why are you surprised in the case of mankind, when even in the body He has done the same thing? For even here He has not made all parts of equal honor, but He has made one less and another greater, and some of the limbs has He made to rule and some to be ruled.

And among the unreasoning creatures one may notice this same principle, as among bees, among cranes, among herds of wild cattle. And even the sea itself is not without this goodly subordination; for there too many of the clans are ranged under one among the fishes, and are led thus as an army, and make long expeditions from home. For anarchy, be where it may, is an evil, and a cause of confusion. After having said then whence governments come, he proceeds, "*Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God.*" See what he has led the subject on to, and how fearful he makes it, and how he shows this to be a matter of debt. For lest the believers should say, You are making us very cheap and despicable, when you put us, who are to enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven, under subjection to rulers, he shows that it is not to rulers, but to God again that he makes them subject in doing this. For it is to Him, that he who subjects himself to authorities is obedient. Yet he does not say this— for instance that it is God to Whom a man who listens to authorities is obedient— but he uses the opposite case to awe them, and gives it a more precise form by saying, that he who listens not thereto is fighting with God, Who framed these laws. And this he is in all cases at pains to show, that it is not by way of favor that we obey them, but by way of debt. For in this way he was more likely to draw the governors who were unbelievers to religion, and the believers to obedience. For there was quite a common report in those days (Tert. *Ap.* 1, 31, 32), which maligned the Apostles, as guilty of a sedition and revolutionary scheme, and as aiming in all they did and said at the subversion of the received institutions. When then you show our common Master giving this in charge to all His, you will at once stop the mouths of those that malign us as revolutionists, and with great boldness will speak for the doctrines of truth. Be not then ashamed, he says, at such subjection. For God has laid down this law, and is a strong Avenger of them if they be

despised. For it is no common punishment that He will exact of you, if you disobey, but the very greatest; and nothing will exempt you, that you can say to the contrary, but both of men you shall undergo the most severe vengeance, and there shall be no one to defend you, and you will also provoke God the more. And all this he intimates when he says,

"And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Then to show the gain of the thing after the fear, he uses reasons too to persuade them as follows:

Ver. 3. *"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil."*

For when he has given a deep wound, and stricken them down, he again uses gentler treatment, like a wise physician, who applies soothing medicines, and he comforts them, and says, why be afraid? Why shudder? For does he punish a person that is doing well? Or is he terrible to a person who lives in the practice of virtue? Wherefore also he proceeds, *"Will you then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same."* You see how he has made him friends ([ὃ] [κείωσεν]) with the ruler, by showing that he even praises him from his throne. You see how he has made wrath unmeaning.

Ver. 4. *"For he is the minister of God to you for good."*

So far is he from terrifying you, he says, that he even praises you: so far from being a hindrance to you, that he even works with you. When then you have his praise and his succor, how is it that you are not in subjection to him? For he makes virtue easier for you in other ways also, by chastising the wicked, by benefiting and honoring the good, and by working together with the will of God. Whence too he has even given him the name of *"Minister."* And consider: I give you counsel to be sober-minded, and he, by the laws, speaks the same language. I exhort you not to be rapacious and grasping. And he sits in judgment in such cases, and so is a worker together

with us, and an assistant to us, and has been commissioned by God for this end. Hence there are both reasons for reverencing him, both because he was commissioned by God, and because it was for such an object. *"But if you do that which is evil, be afraid."* It is not then the ruler that makes the fear, but our own wickedness.

"For he bears not the sword in vain." You see how he has furnished him with arms, and set him on guard like a soldier, for a terror to those that commit sin. *"For he is the minister of God to execute wrath, a revenger upon him that does evil."* Now lest you should start off at hearing again of punishment, and vengeance, and a sword, he says again that it is God's law he is carrying out. For what if he does not know it himself? Yet it is God that has so shaped things ([οὕτως ἐτύπωσεν]). If then, whether in punishing, or in honoring, he be a Minister, in avenging virtue's cause, in driving vice away, as God wills, why be captious against him, when he is the cause of so many good doings, and paves the way for yours too? Since there are many who first practised virtue through the fear of God. For there are a duller sort, whom things to come have not such a hold upon as things present. He then who by fear and rewards gives the soul of the majority a preparatory turn towards its becoming more suited for the word of doctrine, is with good reason called *"the Minister of God."*

Ver. 5. *"Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake."*

What is the meaning of, *"not only for wrath?"* It means not only because thou dost resist God by not being subject, nor only because you are procuring great evils for yourself, both from God and the rulers, but also because he is a benefactor to you in things of the greatest importance, as he procures peace to you, and the blessings of civil institutions. For there are countless blessings to states through these authorities; and if you were to

remove them, all things would go to ruin, and neither city nor country, nor private nor public buildings, nor anything else would stand, but all the world will be turned upside down, while the more powerful devour the weaker. And so even if some wrath were not to follow man's disobedience, even on this ground you ought to be subject, that you may not seem devoid of conscience and feeling towards the benefactor.

Ver. 6. *"For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually on this very thing."*

Without going one by one into the benefits done to states by the rulers, as that of good order and peace, the other services, as regarding the soldiery, and those over the public business, he shows the whole of this by a single case. For that you are benefited by him, he means, you bear witness yourself, by paying him a salary. Observe the wisdom and judgment of the blessed Paul. For that which seemed to be burdensome and annoying—the system of imposts—this he turns into a proof of their care for men. What is the reason, he means, that we pay tribute to a king? It is not as providing for us? And yet we should not have paid it unless we had known in the first instance that we were gainers from this superintendence. Yet it was for this that from of old all men came to an agreement that governors should be maintained by us, because to the neglect of their own affairs, they take charge of the public, and on this they spend their whole leisure, whereby our goods also are kept safe. After saying then what the external goods are, he again averts to the former line of argument (for in this way he was more likely to attract the believer to him), and he shows again that this is God's decree, and on it he makes his advice rest finally, in these words, *"they are God's ministers."* Then to show the pains they take, and their hard life, he proceeds,

"Waiting continually upon this very thing."

For this is their life, this their business, that you may enjoy peace. Wherefore in another Epistle, he bids them not only be subject, but also "*pray*" in their behalf. And as showing there too that the advantage was common to all, he adds, "*that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all things.*" [1 Timothy 2:1-2] For it is in no small degree that they contribute to the settled state of the present life, by keeping guard, beating off enemies, hindering those who are for sedition in the cities, putting an end to differences among any. For do not tell me of some one who makes an ill use of the thing, but look to the good order that is in the institution itself, and you will see the great wisdom of Him who enacted this law from the first.

Ver. 7, 8. "*Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Owe (or ye owe) no man anything, but to love one another.*"

He still keeps upon the same line, bidding them pay them not money only, but honor and fear. And how is it when he said above, "*Will you not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good;*" that he here says "*render fear?*" He does it meaning exceeding honor, and not the fear which comes from a bad conscience, which he alluded to before. And it is not "*give,*" that he says, but "*render*" (or "*give back,*" [ἀ] [πόδοτε]), and then adds to it, the "*dues.*" For it is not a favor that you confer by so doing, since the thing is matter of due. And if you do it not, you will be punished as obstinate. Do not suppose that you are lowering yourself, and detracting from the dignity of your own philosophy, if you rise up at the presence of a ruler, or if you uncover your head. For if he laid these laws down at that time, when the rulers were Gentiles, much more ought this to be done with them now they are believers. But if you mean to say, that you are entrusted with greater privileges, be informed that this is not your time. For you are a stranger and a sojourner. A time will be when you shall appear brighter than all. Now

your *"life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory"* [Colossians 3:3-4] Seek not then in this life of accidents your change, but even if you have to be with fear in a ruler's presence, do not think that this is unworthy your noble birth. For so God wills, that the ruler who has his place marked by Him, should have his own power. And when he who is conscious of no evil in himself, stands with fear in the judge's presence, much more will he who does evil things be affrighted, and thou in this way will be the more respected. For it is not from honoring that the lowering of self comes but from dishonoring him. And the ruler will treat you with greater respect, and he will glorify your Master owing to this, even if he be an unbeliever. *"Owe no man anything, but to love one another."* Again he has recourse to the mother of good deeds, and the instructress of the things spoken of, who is also productive of every virtue, and says that this is a debt also, not however such as the tribute or the custom, but a continuous one. For he does not wish it ever to be paid off, or rather he would have it always rendered, yet never fully so, but to be always owing. For this is the character of the debt, that one keeps giving and owing always. Having said then how he ought to love, he also shows the gain of it, saying,

"For he that loves another has fulfilled the Law."

And do not, pray, consider even this a favor; for this too is a debt. For you owe love to your brother, through your spiritual relationship. And not for this only, but also because *"we are members one of another."* And if love leave us, the whole body is rent in pieces. Love therefore your brother. For if from his friendship you gain so much as to fulfil the whole Law, you owe him love as being benefited by him.

Ver. 9. *"For this, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, and any other*

commandment, is briefly comprehended in this saying, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

He does not say merely it is fulfilled, but "*it is briefly comprehended,*" that is, the whole work of the commandments is concisely and in a few words completed. For the beginning and the end of virtue is love. This it has for its root, this for its groundwork, this for its summit. If then it be both beginning and fulfilment, what is there equal to it? But he does not seek love merely, but intense love. For he does not say merely "*love your neighbor,*" but, "*as yourself.*" Hence also Christ said that "*the Law and the Prophets hang upon*" it. And in making two kinds of love, see how He has raised this! For after saying that the first commandment is, "*You shall love the Lord your God,*" He added a second; and He did not stay, but added, "*like it; You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" What can be equal to this love to man, or this gentleness? That when we were at infinite distance from Him, He brings the love to us into comparison with that toward Himself, and says that "*is like this.*" Hence then, to put the measures of either as nearly the same, of the one He says, "*with all your heart, and with all your soul,*" but of this towards one's neighbor, He says, "*as yourself.*" But Paul said, that when this did not exist even the other was of no great profit to us. As then we, when we are fond of any one, say, if you love him, then you love me; so He also to show this says, "*is like it;*" and to Peter, "*If you love Me, feed My sheep.*" [John 21:16]

Ver. 10. "*Love works no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law.*"

Observe how it has both virtues, abstinence from evils (for it "*works no ill,*" he says), and the working of good deeds. "*For it is,*" he says, "*the fulfilling (or filling up) of the Law;*" not bringing before us instruction only on moral duties in a concise form, but making the accomplishment of them

easy also. For that we should become acquainted with things profitable to us was not all that he was careful for (which is the Law's care), but also with a view to the doing of them it brought us great assistance; accomplishing not some part of the commandments, but the whole sum of virtue in us. Let us then love one another, since in this way we shall also love God, Who loves us. For in the case of men, if you love a man's beloved, he that loves him is contentious at it. But here He deems you worthy to share His love, and hates you when you share not. For man's love is laden with envy and grudging; but God's is free from all passion, whence also He seeks for those to share His love. For He says, love thou with Me, and then yourself also will I love the more. You see the words of a vehement lover! If you love My beloved, then will I also reckon Myself to be greatly beloved of you. For He vehemently desires our salvation, and this He showed from of old. Now hear what He says when He was forming the man, *"Let Us make man in Our Image:"* and again, *"Let Us make an help meet for him. It is not good for him to be alone."* [Genesis 1:26] And when he had transgressed, He rebuked him, observe how gently; and He does not say, Wretch! Thou very wretch! After receiving so great benefits, have you after all trusted to the devil? And left your Benefactor, to take up with the evil spirit? But what says He? *"Who told you that you are naked, unless you have eaten of the Tree, from which alone I commanded you not to eat?"* [Genesis 3:11] As if a father were to say to a child, who was ordered not to touch a sword, and then disobeyed and got wounded, *"How camest thou wounded? You came so by not listening to me."* You see they are the words of a friend rather than a master, of a friend despised, and not even then forsaking. Let us then imitate Him, and when we rebuke, let us preserve this moderation. For even the woman He also rebukes again with the same gentleness. Or rather what He said was not so much rebuke as

admonition and correction, and security against the future. This is why He says nothing to the serpent. For he was the designer of the mischiefs, and had it not in his power to put off the accusation on any one else, wherefore He punished him severely: and even here He did not come to a pause, but made the earth also to share in the curse. But if He cast them out of paradise, and condemned them to labor, even for this we ought to adore and reverence Him the most. For since self-indulgence issues in listlessness, He trenches upon the pleasure by building a fort of pain against listlessness, that we may return to the love of Him. And what of Cain's case? Does he not meet with the same gentleness? For being by him also insulted, He does not reproach (same word as insult) in return, but entreats, (or comforts) him, and says, *"Why is your countenance fallen?"* [Genesis 4:6] And yet what he had done allowed of no excuse whatever. And this the younger brother shows. But still even then He does not rebuke him: but what says He? *"Have you sinned: keep peace;" "do so no more." "To you shall his turning be, and you shall rule over him"* [Genesis 4:7, Septuagint], meaning his brother. *"For if you are afraid, lest for this sacrifice,"* He means, *"I should deprive you of the preëminence of the first-born, be of good cheer, for the entire command over him do I put into your hands. Only be thou better, and love him that has done you no wrong; for I have an interest in you both. And what makes Me most glad is, that you be not at variance one with another."* For as a devoted mother, so does God do and plan everything to keep one from being torn from another; but that you may get a clearer view, by an example, of my meaning, call to your mind, pray, Rebecca in her trouble, and running about everywhere, when the elder son was at enmity with the younger. For if she loved Jacob, still she did not feel averse to Esau. And therefore she said, Lest by any means *"I be deprived of both of you, my children, in one day."* [Genesis 27:45] Therefore also God upon

that occasion said, *"You have sinned: be at peace: unto you shall his turning be"* [Genesis 4:7], so repressing the murder beforehand, and aiming at the peace of them both. But when he had murdered him, He did not even then bring His care for him to a close, but again answers the fratricide in gentle terms, saying, *"Where is your brother Abel?"* that even now, if he would, he might make a full confession. But he struggled in defence of his former misdeeds, with a greater and sadder shamelessness. But even then God does not leave him, but again speaks the language of an injured and despised lover, and says, *"The voice of your brother's blood cries unto Me."* [Genesis 4:10] And again He rebukes the earth with the murderer, turning His wrath off to it, and saying, *"Cursed be the earth, which opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood"* (ib. ii.); and doing like those who lament ([ἀ] [νακαλοῦντας]), as David also did when Saul was fallen. For he made an address to the mountains which received him as he died, in the words, *"You mountains of Gilboa, let there fall on you neither rain nor dew, because there were the shields of the mighty cast away."* [2 Samuel 1:21] And thus God also, as though singing some solitary dirge ([μονωδίαν]), says, *"The voice of your brother's blood cries unto Me; and now are you cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand."* And this He said to humble his fiery passion, and to persuade him to love him at least now he had gone. Have you extinguished his life? He would say; why do you not now extinguish the hatred also? But what does He do? He loves both the one and the other, since He made them both. What then? does (4 manuscripts will) He let the murderer go unpunished? Nay, he would but have grown worse. Will He punish him then? Nay, He has more tenderness than a father. See then how He at once punishes and also displays, even in this, His love. Or rather, He does not so much as punish, but only corrects. For He does not kill him, but only fetters him

with trembling, that he may divest himself of the crime, that so at least he may come back to a natural tenderness for the other, and that so at last he may make a truce with him now he has gone; for He were fain he should not go away to the other world in enmity with him that was deceased. This is the way wherein they that love, when in doing acts of kindness they meet with no love in return, are led on to be vehement and to threaten, not with their will indeed, but led by their love to do this: that at least in this way they may win over those that scorn them. Yet affection of this sort is one of compulsion, and still this even solaces them, through the vehemency of their love. And so punishment itself comes from affection, since unless pained at being hated, they would not choose to punish either. Now observe, how this is what Paul says to the Corinthians. For "*who is he*" (says he) "*that makes me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?*" [2 Corinthians 2:2] And so when he is going to the full extent of punishment, then he shows his love. Thus the Egyptian woman too, from her vehement love, as vehemently punished Joseph: and she indeed did so for mischief, the love being unchaste; but God for good, since the love was worthy of Him who loved. This is why He does not refuse even to condescend to grosser words, and to speak the names of human passions, and to call Himself jealous. For "*I am a jealous God*" [Exodus 20:5], He says, that you may learn the intenseness of the love. Let us then love Him as He would have us: for He sets great store thereby. And if we turn away, He keeps inviting us, and if we will not be converted, He chastens us through His affection, not through a wish to exact punishment of us. And see what He says in Ezekiel to the city that was beloved, yet had despised Him. "*I will bring your lovers against you, and will deliver you into their hands, and they shall stone you, and shall slay you, and My jealousy shall be taken away from you, and I will rest, and I will not trouble Myself any more.*"

[From Ezekiel 16:37-42] What more than this could a vehement lover have said, when despised by his beloved, and after all again ardently loving her? For God does everything that He may be loved by us, and owing to this He spared not even His Son. But we are unbending, and savage. Yet let us become gentle at last, and love God as we ought to love Him, that we may with pleasure enjoy virtue. For if any that has a beloved wife does not perceive any of the vexations that come day by day, He that loves with this divine and pure love, only consider what great pleasure he will have to enjoy! For this is, indeed it is, the kingdom of Heaven; this is fruition of good things, and pleasure, and cheerfulness, and joy, and blessedness. Or rather, say as many things as I may, I shall still be unable to give you any such representation of it as should be, but the trial of it alone can give a knowledge of this goodly thing. Wherefore also the Prophet says, "*Delight yourself in the Lord*" [Psalm 37:4], and, "*Taste and see that the Lord is gracious.*" [Psalm 34:8] Let us then be persuaded, and indulge ourselves in His love. For in this way we shall both see His Kingdom even from out of this life, and shall be living the life of Angels, and while we abide on earth, we shall be in as goodly a condition as they that dwell in heaven; and after our departing hence, shall stand the brightest of beings by the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall enjoy that glory unutterable, which may we all attain unto, by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ. For to Him is the glory forever, Amen.

Homily 24 on Romans

Rom. XIII. 11

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

Since he had given them what commands were fitting, he again thrusts them on to the performance of good works, in consideration of what was pressing upon them. For the time of judgment, he means, is at the doors. So too he wrote to the Corinthians also, *"The remaining time is short."* [1 Corinthians 7:29] And to the Hebrews again, *"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."* [Hebrews 10:37] But in those cases it was to cheer those in trouble, and to solace the toils of their closely successive temptations, that he said those things: but in the passage before us he does it to rouse those that are asleep, this language being useful to us for both the purposes: and what is that which he says, *"Now it is high time to awake out of sleep?"* It is, that near is the Resurrection, near the awful Judgment, and the day that burns as a furnace, near. Henceforward then we must be free from our listlessness; *"for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."* You see how he puts the Resurrection now close by them. For as the time advances, he means, the season of our present life is wasting away, and that of the life to come waxes nearer. If then thou be prepared, and hast done all whatsoever He has commanded, the day is salvation to you (3 manuscripts and Cat. [σωτηρία σοι]); but if the contrary, not so. For the present however, it is not upon alarming grounds that he exhorts them, but upon kindly ones, thus also to untie them from their fellow-feeling for the things of this present world. Then since it was not unlikely, that in the beginning of their early endeavors they would be most

earnest, in that their desire was then at its full vigor, but that as the time went on, the whole of their earnestness would wither down to nothing; he says that they ought however to be doing the reverse, not to get relaxed as time went on, but to be the more full of vigor. For the nearer the King may be at hand, the more ought they to get themselves in readiness; the nearer the prize is, the more wide awake ought they to be for the contest, since even the racers do this, when they are upon the end of the course, and towards the receiving of the prize, then they rouse themselves up the more. This is why he said, *"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."*

Ver. 12. *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand."*

If then this is upon ending, and the latter is drawing near, let us henceforth do what belongs to the latter, not to the former. For this is what is done in the things of this life. And when we see the night pressing on towards the morning, and hear the swallow twittering, we each of us awake our neighbor, although it be night still. But so soon as it is actually departing, we hasten one another, and say It is day now! And we all set about the works of the day, dressing, and leaving our dreams, and shaking our sleep thoroughly off, that the day may find us ready, and we may not have to begin getting up, and stretching ourselves, when the sunlight is up. What then we do in that case, that let us do here also. Let us put off imaginings, let us get clear of the dreams of this life present, let us lay aside its deep slumber, and be clad in virtue for garments. For it is to point out all this that he says,

"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

Yes, for the day is calling us to battle-array, and to the fight. Yet fear not at hearing of array and arms. For in the case of the visible suit of armor, to put it on is a heavy and abhorred task. But here it is desirable, and worth

being prayed for. For it is of Light the arms are! Hence they will set you forth brighter than the sunbeam, and giving out a great glistening, and they place you in security: for they are arms, and glittering do they make you: for arms of light are they! What then, is there no necessity for you to fight? Yea, needful is it to fight, yet not to be distressed and toil. For it is not in fact war, but a solemn dance and feast-day, such is the nature of the arms, such the power of the Commander. And as the bridegroom goes forth with joyous looks from his chamber, so does he too who is defended with these arms. For he is at once soldier and bridegroom. But when he says, "*the day is at hand*," he does not even allow it to be but near, but puts it even now beside us. For he says,

"Let us walk becomingly," (A.V. honestly, in this sense) *"as in the day."* For day it already is. And what most people insist upon very much in their exhortations, that he also uses to draw them on, the sense of the becoming. For they had a great regard to the esteem of the multitude. And he does not say, walk ye, but let us walk, so making the exhortation free from anything grating, and the reproof gentle.

"Not in rioting and drunkenness." Not that he would forbid drinking, but the doing it immoderately; not the enjoying of wine, but doing it to excess ([μετά παροινίας]). As also the next thing he states likewise with the same measure, in the words,

"Not in chambering and wantonness;" for here also he does not prohibit the intercourse of the sexes, but committing fornication. *"Not in strife and envying."* It is the deadly kind of passions then that he is for extinguishing, lust, namely, and anger. Wherefore it is not themselves only, but even the sources of them that he removes. For there is nothing that so kindles lust, and inflames wrath, as drunkenness, and sitting long at the wine. Wherefore after first saying, *"not in rioting and drunkenness,"* then

he proceeded with, *"not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."* And even here he does not pause, but after stripping us of these evil garments, hear how he proceeds to ornament us, when he says,

Ver. 14. *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."*

He no longer speaks of works, but he rouses them to greater things. For when he was speaking of vice, he mentioned the works of it: but when of virtue, he speaks not of works, but of arms, to show that virtue puts him that is possessed of it into complete safety, and complete brightness. And even here he does not pause, but leading his discourse on to what was greater, a thing far more awestriking; he gives us the Lord Himself for a garment, the King Himself: for he that is clad with Him, has absolutely all virtue. But in saying, *"Put on,"* he bids us be girt about with Him upon every side. As in another place he says, *"But if Christ be in you."* [Romans 8:10] And again, *"That Christ may dwell in the inner man."* [Ephesians 3:16-17, *al. punct.*] For He would have our soul to be a dwelling for Himself, and Himself to be laid round about us as a garment, that He may be unto us all things both from within and from without. For He is our fullness; for He is *"the fullness of Him that fills all in all"* [Ephesians 1:23]: and the Way, and the Husband, and the Bridegroom;— for *"I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to one husband,"* [2 Corinthians 11:2]: and a root, and drink, and meat, and life—for he says, *"I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me;"* [Galatians 2:20] and Apostle, and High-Priest, and Teacher, and Father, and Brother, and Joint-heir, and sharer of the tomb and Cross;— for it says, *"We were buried together with Him,"* and *"planted together in the likeness of His Death"* [Romans 6:4-5]: and a Suppliant;— *"For we are ambassadors in Christ's stead"* [2 Corinthians 5:20]: and an *"Advocate to the Father;"*— for *"He also makes,"* it says, *"intercession for us:"* [Romans 8:34] and house and inhabitant—for He says, *"He that abides in Me and I*

in Him" [John 15:5]: and a Friend; for, "*You are My friends*" [John 15:14]: and a Foundation, and Cornerstone. And we are His members and His heritage, and building, and branches, and fellow-workers. For what is there that He is not minded to be to us, when He makes us cleave and fit on to Him in every way? And this is a sign of one loving exceedingly. Be persuaded then, and rousing you from sleep, put Him on, and when you have done so, give your flesh up to His bridle. For this is what he intimates in saying,

"And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." For as he does not forbid drinking, but drinking to excess, not marrying, but doing wantonness; so too he does not forbid making provision for the flesh either, but doing so with a view "*to fulfil the lusts thereof,*" as, for instance, by going beyond necessities. For that he does bid make provision for it, hear from what he says to Timothy, "*Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities.*" [1 Timothy 5:23] So here too he is for taking care of it, but for health, and not wantonness. For this would cease to be making provision for it, when you were lighting up the flame, when you were making the furnace powerful. But that you may form a clearer notion what "*making provision*" for it "*to fulfil the lusts thereof*" is, and may shun such a provision, just call to mind the drunken, the gluttonous, those that pride themselves in dress, those that are effeminate, them that live a soft and relaxed life, and you will see what is meant. For they do everything not that they may be healthy, but that they may be wanton and kindle desire. But do thou, who hast put on Christ, prune away all those things, and seek for one thing only, to have your flesh in health. And to this degree do make provision for it, and not any further, but spend all your industry on the care of spiritual things. For then you will be able to rouse yourself out of this sleep, without being weighed down with these manifold desires. For the

present life is a sleep, and the things in it are no way different from dreams. And as they that are asleep often speak and see things other than healthful, so do we also, or rather we see much worse even. For he that does anything disgraceful or says the like in a dream, when he is rid of his sleep, is rid of his disgrace, also, and is not to be punished. But in this case it is not so, but the shame, and also the punishment, are immortal. Again, they that grow rich in a dream, when it is day are convicted of having been rich to no purpose. But in this case even before the day the conviction often comes upon them, and before they depart to the other life, those dreams have flown away.

Let us then shake off this evil sleep, for if the day find us sleeping, a deathless death will succeed, and before that day we shall be open to the attacks of all the enemies that are of this world, both men and devils: and if they be minded to undo us, there is nobody to hinder them. For if there were many watching, then the danger would not be so great; since however, one perhaps there is, or two, who have lighted a candle, and would be as it were watching in the depth of night, while men were sleeping; therefore now we have need of much sleeplessness, much guardedness, to prevent our falling into the most irremediable evils. Does it not now seem to be broad daylight? Do we not think that all men are awake and sober? Yet still (and perhaps you will smile at what I say, still say it I will) we seem all of us like men sleeping and snoring in the depth of night. And if indeed an incorporeal being could be seen, I would show you how most men are snoring, and the devil breaking through walls, and butchering us as we lie, and stealing away the goods within, doing everything fearlessly, as if in profound darkness. Or rather, even if it be impossible to see this with our eyes, let us sketch it out in words, and consider how many have been weighed down by evil desires, how many held down by the sore evil of

wantonness, and have quenched the light of the Spirit. Hence it comes that they see one thing instead of another, hear one thing instead of another, and take no notice of any of the things here told them. Or if I am mistaken in saying so, and you are awake, tell me what has been doing here this day, if you have not been hearing this as a dream. I am indeed aware that some can tell me (and I do not mean this of all); but do thou who comest under what has been said, who hast come here to no purpose, tell me what Prophet, what Apostle has been discoursing to us today? And on what subjects? And you would not have it in your power to tell me. For you have been talking a great deal here, just as in a dream, without hearing the realities. And this I would have said to the women too, as there is a great deal of sleeping among them. And would it were sleep! For he that is asleep says nothing either good or bad. But he that is awake as you are puts forth many a word even for mischief on his own head, telling his interest, casting up his creditor accounts, calling to memory some barefaced bargaining, planting the thorns thick in his own soul, and not letting the seed make even ever so little advance. But rouse yourself, and pull these thorns up by the roots, and shake the drunkenness off: for this is the cause of the sleep. But by drunkenness I mean, not that from wine only, but from worldly thoughts, and with them that from wine also. (See p. 443.) And this advice I am giving not to the rich only, but the poor too, and chiefly those that club together for social parties. For this is not really indulgence or relaxation, but punishment and vengeance. For indulgence lies not in speaking filthy things, but in talking solemnly, in being filled, not being ready to burst. But if you think this is pleasure, show me the pleasure by the evening! You can not! And hitherto I say nothing of the mischiefs it leads to, but at present have only been speaking to you of the pleasure that withers away so quickly. For the party is no sooner broken up, than all that went for mirth is

flown away. But when I come to mention the spewing, and the headaches, and the numberless disorders, and the soul's captivity, what have you to say to all this? Have we any business, because we are poor, to behave ourselves unseemly too? And in saying this I do not forbid your meeting together, or taking your suppers at a common table, but to prevent your behaving unseemly, and as wishing indulgence to be really indulgence, and not a punishment, nor a vengeance, or drunkenness and revelling. Let the Gentiles ([ἐ] [λλήνες]) see that Christians know best how to indulge, and to indulge in an orderly way. For it says, "*Rejoice in the Lord with trembling.*" [Psalm 2:11] But how then can one rejoice? Why, by saying hymns, making prayers, introducing psalms in the place of those low songs. Thus will Christ also be at our table, and will fill the whole feast with blessing, when you pray, when you sing spiritual songs, when you invite the poor to partake of what is set before you, when you set much orderliness and temperance over the feast. So you will make the party a Church, by hymning, in the room of ill-timed shouts and cheers, the Master of all things. And tell me not, that another custom has come to prevail, but correct what is thus amiss. "*For whether you eat,*" it says, "*or whether ye drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*" [1 Corinthians 10:31] For from banquets of that sort you have evil desires, and impurities, and wives come to be in disrepute, and harlots in honor among you. Hence come the upsetting of families and evils unnumbered, and all things are turned upside down, and you have left the pure fountain, and run to the conduit of mire. For that an harlot's body is mire, I do not enquire of any one else but of your own self that wallowest in the mire, if you dost not feel ashamed of yourself, if you dost not think yourself unclean after the sin is over. Wherefore I beseech you flee fornication, and the mother of it, drunkenness. Why sow where reaping is impossible, or rather even if you

dost reap, the fruit brings you great shame? For even if a child be born, it at once disgraces yourself, and has itself had injustice done it in being born through you illegitimate and base. And if you leave it never so much money, both the son of an harlot, and that of a servant-maid, is disreputable at home, disreputable in the city, disreputable in a court of law: disreputable too will you be also, both in your lifetime, and when dead. For if you have departed even, the memorials of your unseemliness abide. Why then bring disgrace upon all these? Why sow where the ground makes it its care to destroy the fruit? Where there are many efforts at abortion? Where there is murder before the birth? For even the harlot thou dost not let continue a mere harlot, but makest her a murderess also. You see how drunkenness leads to whoredom, whoredom to adultery, adultery to murder; or rather to a something even worse than murder. For I have no name to give it, since it does not take off the thing born, but prevent its being born. Why then do you abuse the gift of God, and fight with His laws, and follow after what is a curse as if a blessing, and make the chamber of procreation a chamber for murder, and arm the woman that was given for childbearing unto slaughter? For with a view to drawing more money by being agreeable and an object of longing to her lovers, even this she is not backward to do, so heaping upon your head a great pile of fire. For even if the daring deed be hers, yet the causing of it is yours. Hence too come idolatries, since many, with a view to become acceptable, devise incantations, and libations, and love-potions, and countless other plans. Yet still after such great unseemliness, after slaughters, after idolatries, the thing seems to many to belong to things indifferent, aye, and to many that have wives too. Whence the mingle ([φορὸς]) of mischief is the greater. For sorceries are applied not to the womb that is prostituted, but to the injured wife, and there are plottings without number, and invocations of devils, and necromancies, and daily

wars, and truceless fightings, and home-cherished jealousies. Wherefore also Paul, after saying, "*not in chamberings and wantonness*," proceeds, "*not in strife and envying*," as knowing the wars that result therefrom; the upsetting of families, the wrongs done to legitimate children, the other ills unnumbered. That we may then escape from all these, let us put on Christ, and be with Him continually. For this is what putting Him on is; never being without Him, having Him evermore visible in us, through our sanctification, through our moderation. So we say of friends, such an one is wrapped up ([ἐ] [νεδύσατο]) in such another, meaning their great love, and keeping together incessantly. For he that is wrapped up in anything, seems to be that which he is wrapped in. Let then Christ be seen in every part of us. And how is He to be seen? If you do His deeds. And what did He do? "*The Son of Man*," He says, "*has not where to lay His head*." [Luke 9:58] This do thou also aim after. He needed the use of food, and He fared upon barley loaves. He had occasion to travel, and there were no horses or beast of burden anywhere, but He walked so far as even to be weary. He had need of sleep, and He lay "*asleep upon the pillow in the fore ([πρόμνη], here [πρώρας]) part of the ship*." [Mark 4:38] There was occasion for sitting down to meat, and He bade them lie down upon the grass. And His garments were cheap; and often He stayed alone, with no train after Him. And what He did on the Cross, and what amidst the insults, and all, in a word, that He did, do thou learn by heart ([καταμαθὼν]) and imitate. And so will you have put on Christ, if you "*make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*." For the thing has no real pleasure, since these lusts gender again others more keen, and you will never find satisfaction, but wilt only make you one great torment. For as one who is in a continual thirst, even if he have ten thousand fountains hard by him, gets no good from this, as he is not able to extinguish the disorder, so is he that lives continually in lusts.

But if you keep to what is necessary, you will never come to have this fear, but all those things will go away, as well drunkenness as wantonness. Eat then only so much as to break your hunger, have only so much upon you as to be sheltered, and do not curiously deck your flesh with clothing, lest you ruin it. For you will make it more delicate, and wilt do injury to its healthfulness, by unnerving it with so much softness. That you may have it then a meet vehicle for the soul, that the helmsman may be securely seated over the rudder, and the soldier handle his arms with ease, you must make all parts to be fitly framed together. For it is not the having much, but requiring little, that keeps us from being injured. For the one man is afraid even if he is not wronged: this other, even if he be wronged, is in better case than those that have not been wronged, and even for this very thing is in the better spirits. Let the object of our search be then, not how we can keep any one from using us spitefully, but how even if he wish to do it, he may be without the power. And this there is no other source whence to obtain, save by keeping to necessities, and not coveting anything more. For in this way we shall be able to enjoy ourselves here, and shall attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 25 on Romans

Romans XIV. 1, 2

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believes that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eats herbs."

I Am aware that to most what is here said is a difficulty. And therefore I must first give the subject of the whole of this passage, and what he wishes to correct in writing this. What does he wish to correct then? There were many of the Jews which believed, who adhered of conscience to the Law, and after their believing, still kept to the observance of meats, as not having courage yet to quit the service of the Law entirely. Then that they might not be observed if they kept from swine's flesh only, they abstained in consequence from all flesh, and ate herbs only, that what they were doing might have more the appearance of a fast than of observance of the Law. Others again were farther advanced, ([τελειότεροι]) and kept up no one thing of the kind, who became to those, who did keep them, distressing and offensive, by reproaching them, accusing them, driving them to despondency. Therefore the blessed Paul, out of fear lest, from a wish to be right about a trifle, they should overthrow the whole, and from a wish to bring them to indifferency about what they ate, should put them in a fair way for deserting the faith, and out of a zeal to put everything right at once, before the fit opportunity had come, should do mischief on vital points, so by this continual rebuking setting them adrift from their agreement in ([ὁ] [μολογίας εἰς]) Christ, and so they should remain not righted in either respect: observe what great judgment he uses and how he concerns himself with both interests with his customary wisdom. For neither does he venture

to say to those who rebuke, You are doing amiss, that he may not seem to be confirming the other in their observances; nor again, You are doing right, lest he should make them the more vehement accusers: but he makes his rebuke to square with each. And in appearance he is rebuking the stronger, but he pours forth all he has to say against the other in his address to these. For the kind of correction most likely to be less grating is, when a person addresses some one else, while he is striking a blow at a different person, since this does not permit the person rebuked to fly into a passion, and introduces the medicine of correction unperceived. See now with what judgment he does this, and how well-timed he is with it. For after saying, *"make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof,"* then he proceeds to the discussion of these points, that he might not seem to be speaking in defence of those who were the rebukers, and were for eating of anything. For the weaker part ever requires more forethought. Wherefore he aims his blow against the strong, immediately saying as follows, *"Him that is weak in the faith."* You see one blow immediately given to him. For by calling him weak ([ὁ] [σθενοῦντα]), he points out that he is not healthy ([ἄ] [ρρωστον]). Then he adds next, *"receive,"* and point out again that he requires much attention. And this is a sign of extreme debility. *"Not to doubtful disputations."* See, he has laid on a third stripe. For here he makes it appear that his error is of such a nature, that even those who do not transgress in the same manner, and who nevertheless admit him to their affection, and are earnestly bent upon curing him, are at doubt. You see how in appearance he is conversing with these, but is rebuking others secretly and without giving offense. Then by placing them beside each other, one he gives encomiums, the other accusations. For he goes on to say, *"One believes that he may eat all things,"* commending him on the score of his faith. *"Another who is weak, eats herbs,"* disparaging this one again, on the

score of his weakness. Then since the blow he had given was deadly ([καίριον], used hyperbolically), he comforts him again in these words,

Ver. 3. *"Let not him that eats, despise him that eats not."*

He does not say, let him alone, nor does he say, do not blame him, nor yet, do not set him right; but do not reproach him, do not *"despise"* him, to show they were doing a thing perfectly ridiculous. But of this he speaks in other words. *"Let not him which eats not, judge him that eats."* For as the more advanced made light of these, as of little faith, and falsely healed, and spurious, and still Judaizers, so they too judged these as law-breakers, or as given to gluttony. And of these it is likely that many were of the Gentiles too. Wherefore he proceeds, for God has received him. But in the other's case he does not say this. And yet to be despised was the eater's share, as a glutton, but to be judged, his that did not eat, as of little faith. But he has made them change places, to show that he not only does not deserve to be despised, but that he can even despise. But do I condemn him? He means. By no means. For this is why he proceeds, *"for God has received him."* Why then do you speak to him of the law, as to a transgressor? *"For God has received him:"* that is, has shown His unspeakable grace about him, and has freed him from all charges against him; then again he turns to the strong.

Ver. 4. *"Who are you that judgest another man's servant?"*

Whence it appears that they too judged, and did not despise only. *"To his own Master he stands or falls."* See here is another stroke. And the indignation seems to be against the strong man, and he attacks him. When he says, *"Yea, he shall be holden up,"* he shows that he is still wavering, and requires so much attention as to call in God as a physician for this, *"for God,"* he says, *"is able to make him stand."* And this we say of things we are quite in despair about. Then, that he may not despair he both gives him

the name of a servant when he says, "*Who are you that judgest another man's servant?*" And here again he secretly attacks him. For it is not because he does things worthy to exempt him from being judged, that I bid you not judge him, but because he is Another's servant, that is, not yours, but God's. Then to solace him again he does not say, "*falls,*" but what? "*stands or falls.*" But whether it be the latter or the former, either of these is the Master's concernment, since the loss also goes to Him, if he does fall, as the riches too, if he stand. And this again if we do not attend to Paul's aim in not wishing them to be rebuked before a fitting opportunity, is very unworthy of the mutual care becoming for Christians. But (as I am always saying) we must examine the mind with which it is spoken, and the subject on which it is said and the object he would compass when he says it. But he makes them respectful by no slight motive, when he says this: for what he means is, if God, Who undergoes the loss, hitherto does nothing, how can you be else than ill-timed and out of all measure exact, when you seize on ([ἄ] [γκῶν], throttle) him and annoy him?

Ver. 5. "*One man esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike.*"

Here he seems to me to be giving a gentle hint about fasting. For it is not unlikely that some who fasted were always judging those who did not, or among the observances it is likely that there were some that on fixed days abstained, and on fixed days did not. Whence also he says, "*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*" And in this way he released those who kept the observances from fear, by saying that the thing was indifferent, and he removed also the quarrelsomeness of those who attacked them, by showing that it was no very desirable (or urgent, [περισπούδαστον]) task to be always making a trouble about these things. Yet it was not a very desirable task, not in its own nature, but on account of

the time chosen, and because they were novices in the faith. For when he is writing to the Colossians, it is with great earnestness that he forbids it, saying, *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ."* [Colossians 2:8, see p. 4] And again, *"Let no man judge you in meat or in drink"* [Colossians 2:16], and, *"let no man beguile you of your reward."* [Colossians 2:18] And when writing to the Galatians with great precision, he exalts of them Christian spirit and perfectness in this matter. But here he does not use this vehemency, because the faith was lately planted in them. Let us therefore not apply the phrase, *"Let every man be persuaded in his own mind,"* to all subjects. For when he is speaking of doctrines, hear what he says, *"If any one preaches unto you any gospel other than that you have received, let him be accursed"* ["even" if it be "an angel." And again, *"I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted."* 2 Corinthians 11:3] And in writing to the Philippians, he says, *"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."* [Philippians 3:2] But with the Romans, since it was not yet the proper time for setting things of this sort right, *"Let every man,"* he says, *"be fully persuaded in his own mind."* For he had been speaking of fasting. It was to clear away the vanity of the others and to release these from fear then, that he said as follows:

Ver. 6. *"He that regards the day, regards it unto the Lord; and he that regards not the day, to the Lord he does not regard it."* And, *"He that eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he that eats not, to the Lord he eats not, and gives God thanks."*

He still keeps to the same subject. And what he means is about this. The thing is not concerned with fundamentals. For the thing requisite is, if this person and the other are acting for God's sake, the thing requisite is

(these words are repeated 3 manuscripts), if both terminate in thanksgiving. For indeed both this man and that give thanks to God. If then both do give thanks to God, the difference is no great one. But let me draw your notice to the way in which here also he aims unawares a blow at the Judaizers. For if the thing required be this, the *"giving of thanks,"* it is plain enough that he which eats it is that *"gives thanks,"* and not *"he which eats not."* For how should he, while he still holds to the Law? As then he told the Galatians, *"As many of you as are justified by the Law are fallen from grace"*

[Galatians 5:4]; so here he hints it only, but does not unfold it so much. For as yet it was not time to do so. But for the present he bears with it (see p. 337): but by what follows he gives it a further opening. For where he says,

Ver. 7, 8. *"For none of us lives unto himself, and no man dies unto himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord,"* by this too he makes the same clearer. For how can he that lives unto the Law, be living unto Christ? But this is not the only thing that he effects by this, he also holds back the person who was in so much haste for their being set right, and persuades him to be patient, by showing that it is impossible for God to despise them, but that in due time He will set them right. What is the force then of *"none of us lives to himself?"* It means, We are not free, we have a Master who also would have us live, and wills not that we die, and to whom both of these are of more interest than to us. For by what is here said he shows that he has a greater concern for us than we have ourselves, and considers more than we do, as well our life to be wealth, as our death to be a loss. For we do not die to ourselves alone, but to our Master also, if we do die. But by death here he means that from the faith. However, this were enough to convince us that He takes care for us, in that it is to Him we live, and to Him we die. Still he is not satisfied with saying this, but proceeds further. For after saying, *"Whether we live,*

therefore, or die, we are the Lord's," and passing from that death to the physical one, that he may not give an appearance of harshness to his language, he gives another very great indication of His care for us. Now of what kind is this?

Ver. 9. *"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living."*

And so let us at least convince you, that He is thoughtful for our salvation. For had He not had this great care for us, where were the need of the Dispensation (or Incarnation, [οἰκονομίας])? He then that has shown so much anxiety about our becoming His, as to take the form of a servant, and to die, will He despise us after we have become so? This cannot be so, assuredly it cannot! Nor would He choose to waste so much pains. *"For to this end (he says) he also died,"* as if any one were to say, Such an one will not have the heart to despise his servant. For he minded his own purse. [Cf. Exodus 21:21] For indeed we are not so much in love with money, as is He with our salvation. Wherefore it was not money, but His own Blood that He gave as bail for us. And for this cause He would not have the heart to give them up, for whom He had laid down so great a price. See too how he shows that His power also is unspeakable. For he says, *"to this end He both died and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living."* And above he said, *"for whether we live or die, we are His."* See what a wide extended Mastery! see what unconquerable might! see what exact providence over us! For tell me not, he means, of the living. Even for the departed He takes care. But if He does of the departed, it is quite plain that He does of the living also. For He has not omitted any point for this Mastery, making out for Himself more claims than men do, and especially beside all other things in order to take care of us. For a man puts down money, and for this clings strongly to his own slave. But He Himself paid

down His death; and the salvation of one who was purchased at so great a price, and the Mastery over whom He had gained with so much anxiety and trouble, He is not likely to count of no value. But this he says to make the Judaizer abashed, and to persuade him to call to mind the greatness of the benefit, and how that when dead he had come to be alive, and that there was nothing that he gained from the Law, and how that it would be the last degree of unfeelingness, to leave Him Who had shown so much care toward him, and run away back to the Law. After attacking him then sufficiently, he relaxes again, and says,

Ver. 10. *"But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you set at nought your brother?"*

And so he seems to be setting them upon a level, but from that he has said, he shows that the difference between them is great. First then by the appellation of *"brother"* he does away with disputatiousness, and then also by calling that awful day to their mind. For after saying, *"Why do you set at nought your brother?"* he proceeds, *"For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."*

And he seems indeed to be again rebuking the more advanced in saying this, but he is putting the mind of the Judaizer to confusion by not only calling for his reverence to the benefit that had been done him, but also making him afraid of the punishment to come. *"For we shall all,"* he says, *"stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."*

Ver. 11, 12. *"For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."*

See how he again puts his mind into confusion, while he seems to be rebuking the other. For he intimates some such thing, as if he had said, How does it affect you? Are you to be punished for him? But this he does not

say, but hints at it by putting it in a milder form, and saying, *"For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ:"* and, *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* And he introduces the prophet in witness of the subjection of all to Him, yea a subjection extended even to those in the Old Testament, and of all absolutely. For he does not barely say every one shall worship, but *"shall confess,"* that is, shall give an account of what he has done. Be in anxiety then as seeing the Master of all sitting on his judgment-seat, and do not make schisms and divisions in the Church, by breaking away from grace, and running over to the Law. For the Law also is His. And why say I so of the Law? Even those in the Law and those before the Law are His. And it is not the Law that will demand an account of you, but Christ, of you and of all the human race. See how he has released us from the fear of the Law. Then that he may not seem to be saying this to frighten them for the occasion, but to have come to it in the course he had proposed himself, he again keeps to the same subject, and says,

Ver. 13. *"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."*

This does not apply to one less than the other: wherefore it may well fit with both, both the advanced man that was offended at the observance of meats, and the unadvanced that stumbled at the vehement rebuke given him. But consider, I pray you, the great punishment we shall suffer, if we give offense at all. For if in a case where the thing was against law, yet, as they rebuked unseasonably, he forbade their doing it, in order that a brother might not be made to offend and stumble; when we give an offense without having anything to set right even, what treatment shall we deserve? For if not saving others be a crime (and that it is so, he who buried the talent proves), what will be the effect of giving him offense also? But what if he

gives himself the offense, you may say, by being weak? Why this is just why you ought to be patient. For if he were strong, then he would not require so much attention. But now, since he is of the feebler sort, he does on this ground need considerable care. Let us then yield him this, and in all respects bear his burdens, as it is not of our own sins only that we shall have to give an account, but for those also wherein we cause others to offend. For if that account, were even by itself hard to pass, when these be added too, how are we to be saved? And let us not suppose, that if we can find accomplices in our sins, that will be an excuse; as this will prove an addition to our punishment. Since the serpent too was punished more than the woman, as was the woman likewise more than the man [1 Timothy 2:14]; and Jezebel also was punished more severely than Ahab, who had seized the vineyard; for it was she that devised the whole matter, and caused the king to offend. [1 Kings 21:23-29] And therefore thou, when you are the author of destruction to others, wilt suffer more severely than those who have been subverted by you. For sinning is not so ruinous as leading others also into the same. Wherefore he speaks of those who *"not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."* [Romans 1:32] And so when we see any sinning, let us, so far from thrusting them on, even pull them back from the pit of iniquity, that we may not have to be punished for the ruin of others besides ourselves. And let us be continually in mind of the awful judgment-seat, of the stream of fire, of the chains never to be loosed, of the darkness with no light, the gnashing of teeth, and the venomous worm. *"Ah, but God is merciful!"* Are these then mere words? And was not that rich man punished for despising Lazarus? Are not the foolish virgins cast out of the Bride-chamber? Do not they who did not feed Him go away into *"the fire prepared for the devil?"* [Matthew 25:41] Will not he that has soiled garments be *"bound hand and foot"* [Matthew 22:13], and go to ruin?

Will, not he that demanded the hundred pence to be paid, be given over to the tormentors? Is not that said of the adulterers true, that "*their worm shall not die, nor their fire be quenched?*" [Mark 9:43] Are these but mere threats then? Yea, it is answered. And from what source pray do you venture to make such an assertion, and that too when you pass judgment of your own opinion? Why, I shall be able to prove the contrary, both from what He said, and from what He did. [See John 5:22] For if you will not believe by the punishments that are to come, at least believe by those that have happened already. For what have happened, and have come forth into reality, surely are not threats and words. Who then was it that flooded the whole world, and affected that baleful wreck, and the utter destruction of our whole race! Who was it that after this hurled those thunders and lightnings upon the land of Sodom? Who that drowned all Egypt in the sea? Who that consumed the six hundred thousand men in the wilderness? Who that burnt up the synagogue of Abiram? Who that bade the earth open her mouth for the company of Core and Dathan, and swallow them up? Who that carried off the threescore and ten thousand at one sweep in David's time? Shall I mention also those that were punished individually! Cain, who was given up to a continual vengeance? (the son of) Charmi, who was stoned with his whole family? Or him, that suffered the same thing for gathering sticks on the sabbath? The forty children who were consumed by those beasts, and obtained no pardon even on the score of their age? And if you would see these same things even after the times of grace, just consider what great suffering the Jews had, how the women ate their children, some roasting them, and some consuming them in other ways: how after being given up to irremediable famine, and wars varied and severe, they threw all previous catastrophes into the shade by the exceeding greatness of their own calamities. For that it was Christ Who did these things unto them, hear Him

declaring as much, both by parables, and clearly and explicitly. By parables, as when He says, *"But those that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them"* [Luke 19:27]; and by that of the vineyard, and that of the marriage. But clearly and explicitly, as when He threatens that they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into the nations, and there shall be upon the earth *"distress of nations with perplexity, at the roaring of the sea and waves; men's hearts failing them for fear."* (ib. 21:24, 25, 26.) *"And there shall be tribulation, such as there never was, no, nor ever shall be."* [Matthew 24:21] And what a punishment Ananias too and Sapphira suffered, for the theft of a few pieces of money, you all know. Do you see not the daily calamities also? Or have these too not taken place? Do you see not now men that are pining with famine? Those that suffer elephantiasis, or are maimed in body? Those that live in constant poverty, those that suffer countless irreparable evils? Now then will it be reasonable for some to be punished, and some not? For if God be not unjust (and unjust He is not), thou also wilt assuredly suffer punishment, if you sin. But if because He is merciful He does not punish, then ought not these either to have been punished. But now because of these words of yours, God even here punishes many, that when you believe not the words of the threatening, the deeds of vengeance ye may at least believe.

And since things of old do not affright you so much, by things which happen in every generation, He corrects those that in every generation are growing listless. And what is the reason, it may be said, why He does not punish all here? That He may give the others an interval for repentance. Why then does He not take vengeance upon all in the next world? It is lest many should disbelieve in His providence. How many robbers are there who have been taken, and how many that have left this life unpunished?

Where is the mercy of God then? It is my turn now to ask of you. For supposing no one at all had vengeance taken upon him, then you might have taken refuge in this. But now that some are punished, and some are not, though they be the worse sinners, how can it be reasonable that there be not the same punishments for the same sins? How can those punished appear to be else than wronged? What reason is there then why all are not punished here? Hear His own defence for these things. For when some had died by the falling of a tower on them: He said to those who raised a question upon this, *"Suppose ye that they were sinners above all men? I tell you nay, but except ye repent, you shall all likewise perish"* [Luke 13:4-5]; so exhorting us not to feel confident when others suffer punishment, and we ourselves, though we have committed many transgressions, do not. For except we change our conduct, we assuredly shall suffer. And how, it may be said, is it that we are to be punished without end for sinning a short time here? How, I ask, is it that in this world, those who in a short moment of time have done one murder, are condemned to constant punishment in the mines? *"But it is not God that does this,"* it may be said. How then came He to keep the man with a palsy for thirty and eight years in so great punishments? For that it was for sins that He punished him, hear what He says, *"Behold, you are made whole, sin no more."* [John 5:14] Still it is said, he found a release. But the case is not so with the other life. For that there, there will never be any release, hear from His own mouth, *"Their worm will not die, nor their fire be quenched."* [Mark 9:44] And *"these shall go into everlasting life, but these into everlasting punishment."* [Matthew 25:46] Now if the life be eternal, the punishment is eternal. Do you see not how severely He threatened the Jews? Then have the things threatened come to pass, or were those that were told them a mere talk? *"One stone shall not remain upon another."* [Luke 21:6] And has it remained? But what, when

He says, *"There shall be tribulation such as has not been?"* [Matthew 24:21] Has it not come then? Read the history of Josephus, and you will not be able to draw your breath even, at only hearing what they suffered for their doings. This I say, not that I may pain you, but that I may make you secure, and lest by having humored you overmuch, I should but make a way for the endurance of sorer punishments. For why, pray, do you not deem it right you should be punished for sinning? Hath He not told you all beforehand? Hath He not threatened you? Not come to your aid? not done things even without number for your salvation's sake? Gave He you not the laver of Regeneration, and forgave He not all your former sins? Hath He not after this forgiveness, and the laver, also given you the succor of repentance if you sin? Hath He not made the way to forgiveness of sins, even after all this, easy to you? Hear then what He has enjoined: *"If you forgive your neighbor, I also will forgive you"* [Matthew 6:14], He says. What hardship is there in this? *"If you judge the cause of the fatherless, and see that the widow have right, come and let us converse together,"* He says, *"and if your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow."* [Isaiah 1:17-18] What labor is there here? *"Tell your sins, that you may be justified."* [Isaiah 43:26, Septuagint] What hardship is there in this? *"Redeem your sins with alms."* [Daniel 4:24] What toilsomeness is there in this? The Publican said, *"Be merciful to me a sinner,"* and *"went down home justified."* [Luke 18:13-14] What labor is it to imitate the Publican? And will you not be persuaded even after this that there is punishment and vengeance? At that rate you will deny that even the devil is punished. For, *"Depart,"* He says, *"into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels."* [Matthew 25:41] Now if there be no hell, then neither is he punished. But if he is punished, it is plain that we shall also. For we also have disobeyed, even if it be not in the same way. And how do you come not to be afraid to speak such daring things? For

when you say that God is merciful, and does not punish, if He should punish he will be found in your case to be no longer merciful. See then unto what language the devil leads you? And what are the monks that have taken up with the mountains, and yield examples of such manifold self-denial, to go away without their crown? For if the wicked are not to be punished, and there is no recompense made to any one, some one else will say, perhaps, that neither are the good crowned. Nay, it will be said, For this is suitable with God, that there should be a kingdom only, and not a hell. Well then, shall the whoremonger, and the adulterer, and the man who has done evils unnumbered, enjoy the same advantages with the man who has exhibited soberness and holiness, and Paul is to stand with Nero, or rather even the devil with Paul? For if there be no hell and yet there will be a Resurrection of all, then the wicked will attain to the same good things! And who would say this? Who even of men that were quite crazed? Or rather, which of the devils even would say this? For even they confess that there is a hell. Wherefore also they cried out and said, *"Have You come hither to torment us before the time?"* [Matthew 8:29]

How then do you come not to fear and tremble, when even the devils confess what yourself art denying? Or how is it that thou dost not see who is the teacher of these evil doctrines? For he who deceived the first man, and under the pretext of greater hopes, threw them out even of the blessings they had in possession, he it is who now suggests the saying and fancying of these things. And for this reason he persuades some to suspect there is no hell, that he may thrust them into hell. As God on the other hand threatens hell, and made hell ready, that by coming to know of it you might so live as not to fall into hell. And yet if, when there is a hell, the devil persuades you to these things, how came the devils to confess it, if it did not exist, whose aim and desire it is that we should not suspect anything of the kind, that

through fearlessness we might become the more listless, and so fall with them into that fire? How then (it will be said) came they to confess it? It was through their not bearing the compulsion laid upon them. Taking all these things into consideration then, let those who talk in this way leave off deceiving both themselves and others since even for these words of theirs they will be punished for detracting ([διασύροντες]) from those awful things, and relaxing the vigor of many who are minded to be in earnest, and do not even do as much as those barbarians, for they, though they were ignorant of everything, when they heard that the city was to be destroyed, were so far from disbelieving, that they even groaned, and girded themselves with sackcloth, and were confounded, and did not cease to use every means until they had allayed the wrath. [Jonah 3:5] But do you, who hast had so great experience of facts and of teaching, make light of what is told you? The contrary then will be your fate. For as they through fear of the words had not to undergo the vengeance in act, so thou who despisest the threatening by words, wilt have to undergo the punishment in very deed. And if now what you are told seems a fable to you, it will not, however, seem so when the very things convince you, in that Day. Have you never noticed what He did even in this world? How when He met with two thieves, He counted them not worthy of the same estate, but one He led into the Kingdom, and the other He sent away into Hell? And why speak I of a robber and murderer? For even the Apostle He did not spare, when he had become a traitor, but even when He saw him rushing to the halter, and hanging, and bursting asunder in the midst (for he did *"burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out"*) [Acts 1:18], still when He foresaw all these things, He let him suffer all the same, giving you from the present a proof of all that is in the other world also. Do not then cheat yourselves, through being persuaded of the devil. These devices are his. For if both judges, and

masters, and teachers, and savages, respect the good, and punish the evil, with what reason is the contrary to be the case with God, while the good man and he who is not so are deemed worthy of the same estate? And when will they leave off their wickedness? For they who now are expecting punishment, and are among so many terrors, those from the judges and from the laws, and yet do not for this depart from iniquity; when on their departing this life they are to lay aside even this fear, and are not only not to be cast into hell, but are even to obtain a kingdom; when will they leave doing wickedly? Is this then mercy, pray? To add to wickedness, to set up rewards for iniquity, to count the sober and the unchastened, the faithful and the irreligious, Paul and the devil, to have the same deserts? But how long am I to be trifling? Wherefore I exhort you to get you free from this madness, and having grown to be your own masters, persuade your souls to fear and to tremble, that they may at once be saved from the hell to come, and may, after passing the life in this world soberly, attain unto the good things to come by the grace and love towards man, etc.

Homily 26 on Romans

Rom. XIV. 14

"I know, and am persuaded by (Gr. in) the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him that esteems anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

After first rebuking the person who judges his brother, and moving him to leave off this reproaching, he then explains himself further upon the doctrinal part, and instructs in a dispassionate tone the weaker sort, displaying in this case too a great deal of gentleness. For he does not say he shall be punished, nor anything of the sort, but merely disburdens him of his fears in the matter, and that with a view to his being more easily persuaded with what he tells him; and he says, *"I know, and am persuaded."* And then to prevent any of those who did not trust him (or *"believe,"* [τῶν οὐ πιστῶν]) saying, And what is it to us if you are persuaded? For you are no trustworthy evidence to be set in competition with so great a law, and with oracles brought down from above, he proceeds, *"in the Lord."* That is, as having learned from Him, as having my confidence from Him. The judgment then is not one of the mind of man. What is it that you are persuaded of and know? Tell us. *"That there is nothing unclean of itself."* By nature, he says, nothing is unclean but it becomes so by the spirit in which a man uses it. Therefore it becomes so to himself only, and not to all. *"For to him that esteems anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."* What then? Why not correct your brother, that he may think it not unclean? Why not with full authority call him away from this habit of mind and conception of things, that he may never make it common? My reason is, he says, I am afraid to grieve him. Wherefore he proceeds,

Ver. 15. *"But if your brother be grieved with your meat, now you do not walk charitably."*

You see how far, for the present, he goes in affection for him, showing that he makes so great account of him, that with a view not to grieve him he does not venture even to enjoin things of great urgency, but by yieldingness would rather draw him to himself, and by charity. For even when he has freed him of his fears, he does not drag him and force him, but leaves him his own master. For keeping a person from meats is no such matter as overwhelming with grief. You see how much he insists upon charity. And this is because he is aware that it can do everything. And on this ground he makes somewhat larger demand upon them. For so far he says from its being proper for them to distress you at all, they ought even, if need be, not to hesitate at condescending to you. Whence he proceeds to say, *"Destroy not him with your meat, for whom Christ died."* Or do you not value your brother enough even to purchase his salvation at the price of abstinence from meats? And yet Christ refused not to become a slave, nor yet to die for him; but thou dost not despise even food, that you may save him. And yet with it all Christ was not to gain all, yet still He died for all; so fulfilling His own part. But are you aware that by meat you are overthrowing him in the more important matters, and yet makest a disputing? And him who is the object of such care unto Christ, do you consider so contemptible, and dishonor one whom He loves? Yet He died not for the weak only, but even for an enemy. And will you not refrain from meats even, for him that is weak? Yet Christ did what was greatest even, but thou not even the less. And He was Master, thou a brother. These words then were enough to tongue-tie him. For they show him to be of a little spirit, and after having the benefit of great things from God, not to give in return even little ones.

Ver. 16, 17. *"Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink."*

By their "*good*," he means here either their faith, or the hope of rewards hereafter, or the perfectness of their religious state. For it is not only that you fail to profit your brother, he means, but the doctrine itself, and the grace of God, and His gift, you cause to be evil spoken of. Now when you fight, when you quarrel, when you are vexatious, when you make schism in the Church, and reproachest your brother, and art distant with him, those that are without will speak evil of you. And so good is so far from coming of this, that just the opposite is the case. For your good is charity, love of the brotherhood, being united, being bound together, living at peace, living in gentleness ([ἐ] [παικείας]). He again, to put an end to his fears and the other's disputatiousness, says, *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink."* Is it by these, he means, that we are to be approved? As he says in another passage too, *"Neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse."* And he does not need any proof, but is content with stating it. And what he says is this, If you eat, does this lead you to the Kingdom? And this was why, by way of satirizing them as mightily pleased with themselves herein, he said, not "*meat*" only, but "*drink*." What then are the things that do bring us here? *"Righteousness, and peace, and joy,"* and a virtuous life, and peace with our brethren (whereto this quarrelsomeness is opposed), the joy from unanimity, which this rebuking puts an end to. But this he said not to one party only, but to both of them, it being a fit season for saying it to both. Then as he had mentioned peace and joy, but there is a peace and joy over bad actions also, he adds, *"in the Holy Ghost."* Since he that ruins his brother, has at once subverted peace, and wronged joy, more grievously than he that plunders money. And what is worse is, that Another saved him, and you wrong and ruinest him.

Since then eating, and the supposed perfect state, does not bring in these virtues, but the things subversive of them it does bring in, how can it be else than right to make light of little things, in order to give firmness to great ones? Then since this rebuking took place in some degree out of vanity, he proceeds to say,

Ver. 18. *"For he that in these things serves Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men."*

For they will not admire you so much for your perfect state, as all will for peace and amity. For this is a goodly thing, that all will have the benefit of, but of that not one even will.

Ver. 19. *"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify one another."*

This applies to the other, that he may grow peaceable. But the other to the latter too, that he may not destroy his brother. Still he has made both apply to either again, by saying, *"one another,"* and showing that without peace it is not easy to edify.

Ver. 20. *"For meat destroy not the work of God."*

Giving this name to the salvation of a brother, and adding greatly to the fears, and showing that he is doing the opposite of that he desires. For thou, he says, art so far from building up as you intend, that you dost even destroy, and that a building too not of man but of God, and not for any great end either, but for a trivial thing. For it was *"for meat,"* he says. Then lest so many indulgences should confirm the weaker brother in his misconception, he again becomes doctrinal, as follows,

"All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for that man who eats with offense."

Who does it, that is, with a bad conscience. And so if you should force him, and he should eat, there would be nothing gained. For it is not the

eating that makes unclean, but the intention with which a man eats. If then thou dost not set that aright, you have done all to no purpose, and hast made things worse: for thinking a thing unclean is not so bad as tasting it when one thinks it unclean. Here then you are committing two errors, one by increasing his prejudice through your quarrelsomeness, and another by getting him to taste of what is unclean. And so, as long as you do not persuade him, do not force him.

Ver. 21. *"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak."*

Again, he requires the greater alternative, that they should not only not force him, but even condescend to him. For he often did this himself also, as when he circumcised [Acts 16:3], when he was shorn [Acts 18:18], when he sacrificed that Jewish sacrifice. [Acts 21:26]. And he does not say to the man *"do so,"* but he states it in the form of a sentiment to prevent again making the other, the weaker man, too listless. And what are his words? *"It is good not to eat flesh."* And why do I say flesh? If it be wine, or any other thing of the sort besides, which gives offense, refrain. For nothing is so important as your brother's salvation. And this Christ shows us, since He came from Heaven, and suffered all that He went through, for our sakes. And let me beg you to observe, how he also drives it home upon the other, by the words *"stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak."* And do not tell me (he means) that he is so without reason but, that you have power to set it right. For the other has a sufficient claim to be helped in his weakness, and to you this were no loss, not being a case of hypocrisy, but of edification and economy. For if you force him, he is at once destroyed, and will condemn you, and fortify himself the more in not eating. But if you condescend to him, then he will love you, and will not suspect you as a teacher, and you will afterwards gain the power of sowing imperceptibly in

him the right views. But if he once hate you, then you have closed the entrance for your reasoning. Do not then compel him, but even yourself refrain for his sake, not refraining from it as unclean, but because he is offended, and he will love you the more. So Paul also advises when he says, *"It is good not to eat flesh,"* not because it was unclean, but because the brother is offended and is weak.

Ver. 22. *"Have you faith? Have it to yourself."*

Here he seems to me to be giving a gentle warning to the more advanced on the score of vanity. And what he says is this, Do you wish to show me that you are perfect, and fully furnished? Do not show it to me, but let your conscience suffice. And by faith, he here means that concerned not with doctrines, but with the subject in hand. For of the former it says, *"With the mouth confession is made unto salvation"* [Romans 10:10]; and, *"Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny."* [Luke 9:26] For the former by not being confessed, ruins us; and so does this by being confessed unseasonably. *"Happy is he that condemns not himself in the thing which he allows."* Again he strikes at the weaker one, and gives him (i.e. the stronger) a sufficient crown, in that of his conscience. Even if no man see, that is, you are able to be happy in yourself. For after saying, *"Have it to yourself,"* to prevent his thinking this a contemptible tribunal, he tells him this is better to you than the world. And if all accuse you, and thou condemn not yourself, and your conscience lay no charge against you, you are happy. But this is a statement he did not make to apply to any person whatever. For there are many that condemn not themselves, and yet are great transgressors: and these are the most miserable of men. But he still keeps to the subject in hand.

Ver. 23. *"And he that doubts is condemned if he eat."*

Again, it is to exhort him to spare the weaker, that he says this. For what good is it if he eat in doubt, and condemn himself? For I approve of him, who both eats, and does it not with doubting. See how he induces him not to eating only, but to eating with a good conscience too. Then he mentions likewise the reason why he is condemned continuing in these words,

"Because he eats not of faith." Not because it is unclean, but because it is not of faith. For he did not believe that it is clean, but though unclean he touched it. But by this he shows them also what great harm they do by compelling men, and not persuading them, to touch things which had hitherto appeared unclean to them, that for this at all events they might leave rebuking. *"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin."* For when a person does not feel sure, nor believe that a thing is clean, how can he do else than sin? Now all these things have been spoken by Paul of the subject in hand, not of everything. And observe what care he takes not to offend any; and he had said before, *"If your brother be grieved with your meat, now you do not walk charitably."* But if one should not grieve him, much less ought one to give him offense. And again, *"For meat destroy not the work of God."* For if it were a grievous act of iniquity to throw down a Church, much more so is it to do so to the spiritual Temple. Since a man is more dignified than a Church: for it was not for walls that Christ died, but for these temples.

Let us then watch our own conduct on all sides, and afford to no one ever so little handle. For this life present is a race-course and we ought to have thousands of eyes [Hilary in Psalm 119] on every side, and not even to fancy that ignorance will be an adequate excuse. For there is such a thing, there certainly is, as being punished for ignorance, when the ignorance is inexcusable. Since the Jews too were ignorant, yet not ignorant in an excusable way. And the Gentiles were ignorant, but they are without

excuse. [Romans 1:20] For when you are ignorant of those things which it is not possible to know, you will not be subject to any charge for it: but when of things easy and possible, you will be punished with the utmost rigor. Else if we be not excessively supine, but contribute our own share to its full amount, God will also reach forth His hand unto us in those things which we are ignorant of. And this is what Paul said to the Philippians likewise. *"If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."* [Philippians 3:15] But when we are not willing to do even what we are masters of, we shall not have the benefit of His assistance in this either. And this was the case with the Jews too. *"For this cause,"* He says, *"speak I unto them in parables, because seeing they see not."* [Matthew 13:13] In what sense was it that seeing they saw not? They saw devils cast out, and they said, He has a devil. They saw the dead raised, and they worshipped not, but attempted to kill Him. But not of this character was Cornelius. [Matthew 12:24] For this reason then, when he was doing the whole of his duty with sincerity, God added unto him that which was lacking also. Say not then, how came God to neglect such and such a one who was no formalist ([ἄ] [πλαστος]) and a good man, though a Gentile? For in the first place no man can possibly know for certain whether a person is no formalist, but He only who *"formed ([πλάσαντι]) the hearts severally."* [Psalm 33:15] And then there is this to be said too, that perchance ([πολλάκις]) such an one was neither thoughtful nor earnest. And how, it may be said, could he, as being very uninformed? ([ἄ] [πλαστος].) Let me beg you to consider then this simple and single-hearted man, and take notice of him in the affairs of life, and you will see him a pattern of the utmost scrupulousness, such that if he would have shown it in spiritual matters he would not have been overlooked: for the facts of the truth are clearer than the sun. And wherever a man may go, he might easily lay hold

of his own salvation, if he were minded, that is, to be heedful, and not to look on this as a by-work. For were the doings shut up into Palestine, or in a little corner of the world? Have you not heard the prophet say, "*All shall know Me from the least even to the greatest?*" [Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:11] Do not you see the things themselves uttering the truth? How then are these to be excused, seeing as they do the doctrine of the truth spread far and wide, and not troubling themselves, or caring to learn it? And do you require all this, it is asked, of a rude savage? Nay not of a rude savage only, but of any who is more savage than men of the present day. For why is it, pray, that in matters of this world he knows how to answer when he is wronged, and to resist when he has violence done him, and do and devise everything to prevent his ever having his will thwarted even in the slightest degree; but in spiritual concerns he has not used this same judgment? And when a man worships a stone, and thinks it a god, he both keeps feasts to it, and spends money on it, and shows much fear towards it, and in no case becomes listless from his simpleness. But when he has to seek to the very and true God, do you then mention singleness and simpleness to me? These things are not so, assuredly they are not! For the complaints are those of mere listlessness. For which do you think the most simple and rude, those in Abraham's day or those now? [Joshua 24:2] Clearly the former. And when that it was easiest to find religion out now or then? Clearly now. For now the Name of God is proclaimed even by all men, and the Prophets have preached, the things come to pass, the Gentiles been convinced. [Genesis 32:29; Judges 13:18] But at that day the majority were still in an uninstructed state, and sin was dominant. And there was no law to instruct, nor prophets, nor miracles, nor doctrine, nor multitude of men acquainted with it, nor anything else of the kind, but all things then lay as it were in a deep darkness, and a night moonless and stormy. And yet even then that

wondrous and noble man, though the obstacles were so great, still knew God and practised virtue, and led many to the same zeal; and this though he had not even the wisdom of those without. For how should he, when there were no letters even yet invented? Yet still he brought his own share in, and God joined to bring in what was lacking to him. For you cannot say even this, that Abraham received his religion from his fathers, because he [Terah, see Joshua 24:2] was an idolater. But still, though he was from such forefathers and was uncivilized, and lived among uncivilized people, and had no instructor in religion, yet he attained to a knowledge of God, and in comparison with all his descendants, who had the advantage both of the Law and the Prophets, he was so much more illustrious as no words can express. Why was it then? It was because in things of this world he did not give himself any great anxiety, but in things of the spirit he applied his whole attention. (In Gen. Hom. 33, etc.) And what of Melchizedek? Was not he also born about those times, and was so bright as to be called even a priest of God? (In Gen. Hom. 35, 36.) For it is impossible in the extreme, that the sober-minded ([νήφοντα]) should ever be overlooked. And let not these things be a trouble to us, but knowing that it is the mind with which in each case the power lies, let us look to our own duties, that we may grow better. Let us not be demanding an account of God or enquire why He let such an one alone, but called such an one. For we are doing the same as if a servant that had given offense were to pry into his master's housekeeping. Wretched and miserable man, when you ought to be thoughtful about the account you have to give, and how you will reconcile your master, do you call him to account for things that you are not to give an account of, passing over those things of which you are to give a reckoning? What am I to say to the Gentile? He asks. Why, the same that I have been saying. And look not merely to what you shall say to the Gentile, but also to the means of

amending yourself. When he is offended by examining into your life, then consider what you will say. For if he be offended, you will not be called to a reckoning for him, but if it be your way of life by which he is injured, you will have to undergo the greatest danger. When he sees you philosophizing about the kingdom, and fluttering at the things of this life, and at once afraid about hell, and trembling at the calamities of this life, then lay it to mind. When he sees this, and accuses you, and says, If you are in love with the Kingdom, how is it thou dost not look down upon the things of this life? If you are expecting the awful judgment, why do you not despise the terrors of this world? If you hope for immortality, why do you not think scorn of death? When he says this, be thou anxious what defence you will make. When he sees you trembling at the thought of losing your money, you that expectest the heavens, and exceedingly glad about a single penny, and selling your soul again for a little money, then lay it to mind. For these are the things, just these, that make the Gentiles stumble. And so, if you are thoughtful about his salvation, make your defence on these heads, not by words, but by actions. For it is not through that question that anybody ever blasphemed God, but through men's bad lives it is, that there are thousands of blasphemies in all quarters. Set him right then. For the Gentile will next ask you, How am I to know that God's commands are feasible? For thou that art of Christian extraction, and hast been brought up in this fine religion, dost not do anything of the kind. And what will you tell him? You will be sure to say, I will show you others that do; monks that dwell in the deserts. And are you not ashamed to confess to being a Christian, and yet to send to others, as unable to show that you display the temper of a Christian? For he also will say directly, What need have I to go to the mountains, and to hunt up the deserts? For if there is no possibility for a person who is living in the midst of cities to be a disciple, this is a sad imputation on this

rule of conduct, that we are to leave the cities, and run to the deserts. But show me a man who has a wife, and children, and family, and yet pursues wisdom. What are we then to say to all this? Must we not hang down our heads, and be ashamed? For Christ gave us no such commandment; but what? *"Let your light shine before men"* [Matthew 5:16], not mountains, and deserts, and wildernesses, and out-of-the-way places. And this I say, not as abusing those who have taken up with the mountains, but as bewailing those that dwell in cities, because they have banished virtue from thence. Wherefore I beseech you let us introduce the discipline they have there here also, that the cities may become cities indeed. This will improve the Gentile. This will free him from countless offenses. And so if you would set him free from scandal, and yourself enjoy rewards without number, set your own life in order, and make it shine forth upon all sides, *"that men may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* For so we also shall enjoy that unutterable and great glory, which God grant that we may all attain to, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 27 on Romans

Rom. XIV. 25-27

"Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and (manuscripts [τε] which Sav. omits) by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, to Him be glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

It is always a custom with Paul to conclude his exhortation with prayers and doxologies. For he knows that the thing is one of no slight importance. And it is out of affectionateness and caution that he is in the habit of doing this. For it is the character of a teacher devoted to his children, and to God, not to instruct them in words only, but by prayer too to bring upon his teaching the assistance which is from God. And this he does here also. But the connection is as follows: *"To Him that is of power to establish you, be glory for ever. Amen."* For he again clings to those weak brethren, and to them he directs his discourse. For when he was rebuking, he made all share his rebuke; but now, when he is praying, it is for these that he wears the attitude of a suppliant. And after saying, *"to establish,"* he proceeds to give the mode of it, *"according to my Gospel;"* and this was what one would do to show that as yet they were not firmly fixed, but stood, though with wavering. Then to give a trustworthiness to what he says, he proceeds, *"and the preaching of Jesus Christ;"* that is, which He Himself preached. But if He preached it, the doctrines are not ours, but the laws are of Him. And afterwards, in discussing the nature of the preaching, He

shows that this gift is one of much benefit, and of much honor; and this he first proves from the person of the declarer thereof, and then likewise from the things declared. For it was glad tidings. Besides, from His not having made anything of them known to any before us. And this he intimates in the words, *"according to the revelation of the mystery."* And this is a sign of the greatest friendliness, to make us share in the mysteries, and no one before us. *"Which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest."* For it had been determined long ago, but was only manifested now. How was it made manifest? *"By the Scriptures of the Prophets."* Here again he is releasing the weak person from fear. For what do you fear? Is it lest thou depart from the Law? This the Law wishes, this it foretold from of old. But if you pry into the cause of its being made manifest now, you are doing a thing not safe to do, in being curious about the mysteries of God, and calling Him to account. For we ought not with things of this nature to act as busybodies, but to be well pleased and content with them. Wherefore that he might himself put a check upon a spirit of this sort, he adds, *"according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for the obedience of faith."* For faith requires obedience, and not curiosity. And when God commands, one ought to be obedient, not curious. Then he uses another argument to encourage them, saying *"made known to all nations."* That is, it is not thou alone but the whole world that is of this Creed, as having had not man, but God for a Teacher. Wherefore also he adds, *"through Jesus Christ."* But it was not only made known, but also confirmed. Now both are His work. And on this ground too the way it is to be read is, *"Now to Him that is of power to establish you through Jesus Christ;"* and, as I was saying, he ascribes them both to Him; or rather, not both of these only, but the glory belonging (or ascribed, Gr. [τὴν εἰς]) to the Father also. And this too is why he said, *"to Whom be glory forever, Amen."* And he uses a

doxology again through awe at the incomprehensibleness of these mysteries. For even now they have appeared, there is no such thing as comprehending them by reasonings, but it is by faith we must come to a knowledge of them, for in no other way can we. He well says, "*To the only wise God.*" For if you will only reflect how He brought the nations in, and blended them with those who in olden time had wrought well, how He saved those who were desperate, how He brought men not worthy of the earth up to heaven, and brought those who had fallen from the present life into that undying and unalterable life, and made those who were trampled down by devils to vie with Angels, and opened Paradise, and put a stop to all the old evils, and this too in a short time and by an easy and compendious way, then will you learn His wisdom—when you see that which neither Angels nor Archangels knew, they of the Gentiles learned on a sudden through Jesus. (2 manuscripts add "*then will you know His power.*") Right then is it to admire His wisdom, and to give Him glory! But you keep dwelling over little things, still sitting under the shadow. And this is not much like one that gives glory. For he who has no confidence in Him, and no trust in the faith, does not bear testimony to the grandeur of His doings. But he himself offers glory up in their behalf, in order to bring them also to the same zeal. But when you hear him say, "*to the only wise God,*" think not that this is said in disparagement of the Son. For if all these things whereby His wisdom is made apparent were done [or made, see John 1:3] by Christ, and without Him no single one, it is quite plain that he is equal in wisdom also. What then is the reason of his saying "*only?*" To set Him in contrast with every created being. After giving the doxology then, he again goes from prayer to exhortation, directing his discourse against the stronger, and saying as follows:

Chap. xv. ver. 1. "*We then that are strong, ought*"— it is "*we ought,*" not "*we are so kind as to.*" What is it we ought to do?— "*to bear the infirmities of the weak.*"

See how he has roused their attention by his praises, not only by calling them powerful, but also by putting them alongside of himself. And not by this only, but by the advantage of the thing he again allures them, and by its not being burdensome. For thou, he says, art powerful, and art no whit the worse for condescending. But to him the hazard is of the last consequence, if he is not borne with. And he does not say the infirm, but the "*infirmities of the weak,*" so drawing him and bending him to mercy. As in another place too he says, "*You that are spiritual restore such an one.*" [Galatians 6:1] Are you become powerful? Render a return to God for making you so. But render it you will if you set the weakness of the sickly right. For we too were weak, but by grace we have become powerful. And this we are to do not in this case only, but also in the case of those who are weak in other respects. As, for instance, if any be passionate, or insolent, or has any such like failing bear with him. And how is this to be? Listen to what comes next. For after saying "*we ought to bear,*" he adds, "*and not to please ourselves.*"

Ver. 2. "*Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.*"

But what he says is this. Are you powerful? Let the weak have trial of your power. Let him come to know your strength; please him. And he does not barely say please, but for his good, and not barely for his good, lest the advanced person should say, See I am drawing him to his good! But he adds, "*to edification.*" And so if you be rich or be in power, please not yourself, but the poor and the needy, because in this way you will at once have true glory to enjoy, and be doing much service. For glory from things

of the world soon flies away, but that from things of the Spirit is abiding, if you do it to edification. Wherefore of all men he requires this. For it is not this and that person that is to do it, but *"each of you."* Then since it was a great thing he had commanded them, and had bidden them even relax their own perfectness in order to set right the other's weakness; he again introduces Christ, in the following words:

Ver. 3. *"For even Christ pleased not Himself."*

And this he always does. For when he was upon the subject of alms, he brought Him forward and said, *"You know the grace of the Lord, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor."* [2 Corinthians 8:9] And when he was exhorting to charity, it was from Him that he exhorted in the words *"As Christ also loved us."* [Ephesians 5:25] And when he was giving advice about bearing shame and dangers, he took refuge in Him and said, *"Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame."* [Hebrews 12:2]. So in this passage too he shows how He also did this, and how the prophet proclaimed it from of old. Wherefore also he proceeds:

"The reproaches of them that reproached You fell upon Me." [Psalm 69:9] But what is the import of, *"He pleased not Himself?"* He had power not to have been reproached, power not to have suffered what He did suffer, had He been minded to look to His own things. But yet He was not so minded. But through looking to our good He neglected His own. And why did he not say, *"He emptied Himself?"* [Philippians 2:7] It is because this was not the only thing he wished to point out, that He became man, but that He was also ill-treated, and obtained a bad reputation with many, being looked upon as weak. For it says, *"If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross."* [Matthew 27:40]. And, *"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."* [Matthew 27:42]. Hence he mentions a circumstance which

was available for his present subject, and proves much more than he undertook to do; for he shows that it was not Christ alone that was reproached, but the Father also. *"For the reproaches of them that reproached You fell,"* he says, *"upon Me."* But what he says is nearly this, What has happened is no new or strange thing. For they in the Old Testament who came to have a habit of reproaching Him, they also raved against His Son. But these things were written that we should not imitate them. And then he supplies (Gr. anoints) them for a patient endurance of temptations.

Ver. 4. *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime,"* he says, *"were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope."*

That is, that we might not fall away, (for there are sundry conflicts within and without), that being nerved and comforted by the Scriptures, we might exhibit patience, that by living in patience we might abide in hope. For these things are productive of each other, patience of hope, and hope of patience. And both of them are brought about by the Scriptures. Then he again brings his discourse into the form of prayer, and says,

Ver. 5. *"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus."*

For since he had given his own advice, and had also urged the example of Christ, he added the testimony of the Scriptures also, to show that with the Scripture Himself gives patience also. And this is why he said, *"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus."* For this is what love would do, be minded toward another even as toward himself. Then to show again that it is not mere love that he requires, he adds, *"according to Christ Jesus."* And

this he does, in all places, because there is also another sort of love. And what is the advantage of their agreeing?

Ver. 6. *"That ye may with one mind,"* he says, *"and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

He does not say merely with one mouth, but bids us do it with one will also. See how he has united the whole body into one, and how he concludes his address again with a doxology, whereby he gives the utmost inducement to unanimity and concord. Then again from this point he keeps to the same exhortation as before, and says,

Ver. 7. *"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God."*

The example again is as before, and the gain unspeakable. For this is a thing that does God special glory, the being closely united. And so if even against your will (Field *"being grieved for His sake,"* after Savile, but against manuscripts) and for His sake, thou be at variance with your brother, consider that by putting an end to your anger you are glorifying your Master, and if not on your brother's account, for this at all events be reconciled to him: or rather for this first. For Christ also insists upon this upon all possible grounds, and when addressing His Father he said, *"By this shall all men know that You have sent Me, if they be one."* [John 17:21]

Let us obey then, and knit ourselves to one another. For in this place it is not any longer the weak, but all that he is rousing. And were a man minded to break with you, do not thou break also. Nor give utterance to that cold saying, *"Him I love that loves me; if my right eye does not love me, I tear it out."* For these are satanical sayings, and fit for publicans, and the little spirit of the Gentiles. But thou that art called to a greater citizenship, and are enrolled in the books of Heaven, art liable to greater laws. Do not speak in this way, but when he is not minded to love you, then display the

more love, that you may draw him to you. For he is a member; and when by any force a member is sundered from the body, we do everything to unite it again, and then pay more attention to it. For the reward is the greater then, when one draws to one a person not minded to love. For if He bids us invite to supper those that cannot make us any recompense, that what goes for recompense may be the greater, much more ought we to do this in regard to friendship. Now he that is loved and loves, does pay you a recompense. But he that is loved and loves not, has made God a debtor to you in his own room. And besides, when he loves you he needs not much pains; but when he loves you not, then he stands in need of your assistance. Make not then the cause for painstaking a cause for listlessness; and say not, because he is sick, that is the reason I take no care of him (for a sickness indeed the dulling of love is), but do thou warm again that which has become chilled. But suppose he will not be warmed, "*what then?*" is the reply. Continue to do your own part. "*What if he grow more perverse?*" He is but procuring to you so much greater return, and shows you so much the greater imitator of Christ. For if the loving one another was to be the characteristic of disciples ("*For hereby,*" He says, "*shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another*"), [John 13:35] consider how great an one loving one that hates us must be. For your Master loved those that hated Him, and called them to Him; and the weaker they were, the greater the care He showed them; and He cried and said, "*They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*" [Matthew 9:12] And He deemed publicans and sinners worthy of the same table with Him. And as great as was the dishonor wherewith the Jewish people treated Him, so great was the honor and concern He showed for them, yea, and much greater. Him do thou also emulate: for this good work is no light one, but one without which not even he that is a martyr can please God much, as Paul says. Say not

then, I get hated, and that is why I do not love. For this is why you ought to love most. And besides, it is not in the nature of things for a man who loves to be soon hated, but brute as a person may be, he loves them that love him. For this He says the heathens and the publicans do. [Matthew 5:46] But if every one loves those that love him, who is there that would not love those who love while they are hated? Display then this conduct, and cease not to use this word, *"Hate me as much as you may, I will not leave off loving you,"* and then you will humble his quarrelsomeness, and cast out all coldness. For this disorder comes either from excessive heat ([φλεγμονή], inflammation), or from coldness; but both of these is the might of love wont to correct by its warmth. Did you never see those who indulge a base love beaten, spit upon, called names, ill-treated in a thousand ways by those fornicatresses? What then? Do the insults break off this love? In no wise: they even kindle it the more. And yet they who do these things, besides being harlots, are of a disreputable and low grade. But they who submit to it, have often illustrious ancestors to count up, and much other nobility to boast of. Yet still none of these things break the tie, nor keep them aloof from her whom they love. And are we not ashamed then to find what great power the love of the devil (v. p. 520) and the demons has, and not to be able to display as much in the love according to God? Do you not perceive that this is a very great weapon against the devil? Do you not see, that that wicked demon stands by, dragging to himself the man you hate, and desiring to snatch away the member? And do you run by, and give up the prize of the conflict? For your brother, lying between you, is the prize. And if you get the better, you receive a crown; but if you are listless, you go away without a crown. Cease then to give utterance to that satanical saying, *"if my eye hates me, I cannot see it."* For nothing is more shameful than this saying, and yet the generality lay it down for a sign of a noble spirit. But

nothing is more ignoble than all this, nothing more senseless, nothing more foolish. Therefore I am indeed quite grieved that the doings of vice are held to be those of virtue, that looking down on men, and despising them, should seem to be honorable and dignified. And this is the devil's greatest snare, to invest iniquity with a good repute, whereby it becomes hard to blot out. For I have often heard men taking credit to themselves at their not going near those who are averse to them. And yet your Master found a glory in this. How often do not men despise ([διέπτυσαν]) Him? How often show aversion to Him? Yet He ceases not to run unto them. Say not then that "*I cannot bear to come near those that hate me,*" but say, that "*I cannot bear to despise ([διαπτύσαι]) those that despise me.*" This is the language of Christ's disciple, as the other is of the devil's. This makes men honorable and glorious, as the other does shameful and ridiculous. It is on this ground we feel admiration for Moses, because even when God said, "*Let Me alone, that I may destroy them in Mine anger,*" [Exodus 32:10] he could not bear to despise those who had so often shown aversion to him, but said, "*If you will forgive them their trespass, forgive it; else blot out me also.*" [Exodus 32:32] This was owing to his being a friend of God, and a copyer of Him. And let us not pride ourselves in things for which we ought to hide our faces. Nor let us use the language of these lewd fellows, that are the scum of men, I know how to scorn ([καταπτύσαι], spit at) thousands. But even if another use it, let us laugh him down, and stop his mouth for taking a delight in what he ought to feel ashamed of. What say you, pray, do you scorn a man that believes, whom when unbelieving Christ scorned not? Why do I say scorned not? Why He had such love towards him, when he was vile and unsightly, as even to die for him. He then so loved, and that such a person, and do you now, when he has been made fair and admirable, scorn him; now he is made a member of Christ, and has been made your

Master's body? Do you not consider what you are uttering, nor perceive what you are venturing to do? He has Christ as a Head, and a Table, and a Garment, and Life, and Light, and a Bridegroom, and He is everything to him, and do you dare to say, "*this fellow I despise?*" and not this only, but thousands of others along with him? Stay you, O man, and cease from your madness; get to know your brother. Learn that these be words of unreasonableness, and frenzy, and say on the contrary, though he despise me ten thousand times, yet will I never stand aloof from him. In this way you will both gain your brother, and wilt live to the glory of God, and wilt share the good things to come. To which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 28 on Romans

Rom. XV. 8

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."

Again, he is speaking of Christ's concern for us, still holding to the same topic, and showing what great things He has done for us, and how *"He pleased not Himself."* [Romans 15:3] And besides this, there is another point which he makes good, that those of the Gentiles are debtors to a larger amount unto God. And if to a larger amount, then they ought to bear with the weak among the Jews. For since he had spoken very sharply to such, lest this should make these elated, he humbles their unreasonableness, by showing that it was by *"promise made to the fathers"* that they had the good things given them, while they of the Gentiles had them out of pity and love toward man only. And this is the reason of his saying, *"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy."* But that what is said may be made plainer, it is well to listen once more to the words themselves, that you may see what Christ's having been made *"a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers,"* means. What then is that which is stated? There had been a promise made to Abraham, saying, *"Unto you will I give the earth, and to your seed, and in your seed shall all the nations be blessed."* [Genesis 12:7; 22:18] But after this, they of the seed of Abraham all became subject to punishment. For the Law wrought wrath unto them by being transgressed, and thenceforward deprived them of that promise made unto the fathers. Therefore the Son came and wrought with the Father, in order that those promises might come true, and have their issue. For having fulfilled the

whole Law in which He also fulfilled the circumcision, and having by it, and by the Cross, freed them from the curse of the transgression, He suffered not this promise to fall to the ground. When then he calls Him "*a Minister of the circumcision,*" he means this, that by having come and fulfilled the Law, and been circumcised, and born of the seed of Abraham, He undid the curse, stayed the anger of God, made also those that were to receive the promises fit for them, as being once for all freed from their alienation. To prevent then these accused persons from saying, How then came Christ to be circumcised and to keep the whole Law? He turns their argument to the opposite conclusion. For it was not that the Law might continue, but that He might put an end to it, and free you from the curse thereof, and set you entirely at liberty from the dominion of that Law. For it was because you had transgressed the Law, that He fulfilled it, not that you might fulfil it, but that He might confirm to you the promises made unto the fathers, which the Law had caused to be suspended, by showing you to have offended, and to be unworthy of the inheritance. And so thou also art saved by grace, since you were cast off. Do not thou then bicker, nor perversely cling to the Law at this unsuitable time, since it would have cast you also out of the promise, unless Christ had suffered so many things for you. And He did suffer these, not because you were deserving of salvation, but that God might be true. And then that this might not puff up him of the Gentiles, he says.

Ver. 9. "*And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.*"

But what he means is this. Those of the Jews would have had promises, even though they were unworthy. But you had not this even, but wast saved from love towards man alone, even if, to put it at the lowest, they too would not have been the better for the promises, unless Christ had come. But yet that he might amalgamate (or temper, [κεράσῃ]) them and

not allow them to rise up against the weak, he makes mention of the promises. But of these he says that it was by mercy alone that they were saved. Hence they are the most bound to glorify God. And a glory it is to God that they be blended together, be united, praise with one mind, bear the weaker, neglect not the member that is broken off. Then he adds testimonies, in which he shows that the man of the Jews ought to blend himself with those of the Gentiles; and so he says, *"As it is written, For this cause I will confess to You among the Gentiles, O Lord, and will sing unto Your Name."* [Psalm 18:46]

Ver. 10-12. *"And, rejoice, you Gentiles, with His people. And, Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles"* [Deuteronomy 32:43]; *"and let all people laud Him."* [Psalm 117:1] *"And, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust."* [Isaiah 11:1, 10]

Now all these quotations he has given to show that we ought to be united, and to glorify God; and also, to humble the Jew, that he may not lift himself up over these, since all the prophets called these, as well as to persuade the man of the Gentiles to be lowly, by showing him that he had a larger grace to answer for. Then he concludes his argument with a prayer again.

Ver. 13. *"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."*

That is, that you may get clear of that heartlessness ([ἀ] [θυμίας]) towards one another, and may never be cast down by temptations. And this will be by your abounding in hope. Now this is the cause of all good things, and it comes from the Holy Ghost. But it is not simply from the Spirit, but on condition of our contributing our part also. This is why he says, *"in*

believing." For this is the way for you to be filled with joy, if you believe, if you hope. Yet he does not say if you hope, but, "*if you abound in hope,*" so as not to find comfort in troubles only, but even to have joy through the abundance of faith and hope. And in this way, you will also draw the Spirit to you. In this way, when He has come you will continually keep to all good things. For just as food maintains our life, and by this rules the body, so if we have good works, we shall have the Spirit; and if we have the Spirit, we shall also have good works. As also, on the other hand, if we have no works, the Spirit flies away. But if we be deserted by the Spirit, we shall also halt in our works. For when this has gone, the unclean one comes: this is plain from Saul. For what if he does not choke us as he did him, still he strangles us in some other way by wicked works. We have need then of the harp of David, that we may charm our souls with the divine songs, both these, and those from good actions. Since if we do the one only, and while we listen to the charm, war with the charmer by our actions, as he did of old [1 Samuel 19:10]; the remedy will even turn to judgment to us, and the madness become the more furious. For before we heard, the wicked demon was afraid lest we should hear it and recover. But when after hearing it even, we continue the same as we were, this is the very thing to rid him of his fear. Let us sing then the Psalm of good deeds, that we may cast out the sin that is worse than the demon. For a demon certainly will not deprive us of heaven, but does in some cases even work with the sober-minded. But sin will assuredly cast us out. For this is a demon we willingly receive, a self-chosen madness. Wherefore also it has none to pity it or to pardon it. Let us then sing charms over a soul in this plight, as well from the other Scriptures, as also from the blessed David. And let the mouth sing, and the mind be instructed. Even this is no small thing. For if we once teach the tongue to sing, the soul will be ashamed to be devising the opposite of what

this sings. Nor is this the only good thing that we shall gain, for we shall also come to know many things which are our interest. For he discourses to you both of things present, and things to come, and of things seen, and of the invisible Creation. And if you would learn about the Heaven, whether it abides as it is or shall be changed, he gives you a clear answer, and will say, *"The heavens shall wax old as does a garment, and as a vesture shall you fold them up, O God, and they shall be changed."* [Psalm 102:26] And if you wish to hear of the form of them again, you shall hear, *"That spreads forth the Heaven like a curtain"* ([δέρνν]). And if you be minded to know further about the back of them, he will tell you again, *"that covers His upper chambers with waters."* [Psalm 104:2-3] And even here he does not pause, but will likewise discourse with you on the breadth and height, and show you that these are of equal measure. For, *"As far as the east,"* he says, *"is from the west, so far has He set our iniquities from us. Like as the heaven's height above the earth, so is the Lord's mercy upon them that fear Him."* (ib. 103:12, 11.) But if you would busy yourself with the foundation of the earth, even this he will not hide from you, but you shall hear him singing and saying, *"He has founded it upon the seas."* [Psalm 24:2] And if of earthquakes you are desirous to know, whence they come, he will free you from this difficulty also, by saying, *"That looks upon the earth, and makes it tremble."* [Psalm 103:32] And if you enquire the use of the night, this too may thou learn, and know from him. For *"therein all the beasts of the forest do move."* [Psalm 103:20] And in what way the mountains are for use, he will tell you, *"The high mountains are for the stags."* And why there are rocks, *"The rocks are a refuge for the porcupines."* [Psalm 103:18] Why are there trees yielding no fruit? Learn from him, for *"there the sparrows build their nests."* [Psalm 103:17] Why are there fountains in the wildernesses? Hear, *"that by them the fowls of the heaven dwell, and the*

wild beasts." [Psalm 103:12] Why is there wine? Not that you may drink only (for water is of a nature to suffice for this), but that you may be gladdened also, *"For wine makes glad the heart of man."* [Psalm 103:15] And by knowing this you will know how far the use of wine is allowable. Whence are the fowls and the wild beasts nourished? You will hear from his words, *"All these wait upon You, to give them their meat in due season."* [Psalm 103:27] If you say, For what purpose are the cattle? He will answer you, that these also are for you, *"That causes the grass,"* he says, *"to grow for the cattle, and the green herb for the service (or retinue) of men."* [Psalm 103:14] What is the use of the moon? Hear him saying, *"He made the moon for seasons."* [Psalm 104:19] And that all things seen and those not seen are made, is a thing that he has also clearly taught us by saying, *"Himself spoke, and they were made, He commanded, and they were created."* [Psalm 32:9] And that there is an end of death, this he also teaches when he says, *"God shall deliver my soul from the hand of hell when He shall receive me."* [Psalm 43:15] Whence was our body made? He also tells us; *"He remembers that we are dust"* [Psalm 103:14]; and again, whither goes it away? *"It shall return to its dust."* [Psalm 104:29] Why was this universe made? For you: *"For you crown him with glory and honor, and settest him over the works of Your hands."* (ib. 8:5, 6.) Have we men any community with the Angels? This he also tells us, saying as follows, *"You have made him a little lower than the Angels."* Of the love of God, *"Like as a father pities his own children, even so is the Lord merciful to them that fear Him."* [Psalm 103:13] And of the things that are to meet us after our present life, and of that undisturbed condition, he teaches, *"Return unto your rest, O my soul."* [Psalm 116:7] Why the Heaven is so great, this he will also say. For it is because *"the heavens declare the glory of God."* [Psalm 19:1] Why day and night were made—not that they may shine and give us rest only, but

also that they may instruct us. *"For there are no speeches nor words, the sounds of which (i.e. day and night) are not heard."* [Psalm 18:3] How the sea lies round about the earth, this too you will learn from hence. *"The deep as a garment is the envelopment thereof."* For so the Hebrew has it.

But having a sample in what I have mentioned, you will have a notion of all the rest besides, the things about Christ, about the resurrection, about the life to come, about the resting, about punishment, about moral matters, all that concerns doctrines, and you will find the book filled with countless blessings. And if you fall into temptations, you will gain much comfort from hence. If you fall into sins even, you will find countless remedies stored up here, or if into poverty or tribulation, you will see many havens. And if you be righteous you will gain much security hence, and if a sinner much relief. For if you be just and art ill-treated, you will hear him say, *"For Your sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."* [Psalm 44:22] *"All these things have come upon us, and yet have we not forgotten You."* [Psalm 43:17] And if your well-doings make you high, you will hear him say, *"Enter not into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight shall no man living be justified"* [Psalm 143:2], and you will be straightway made lowly. And if you be a sinner, and hast despaired of yourself, you will hear him continually singing, *"Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation"* (ib. 95:7, 8), and you will be stayed up speedily. And if you have a crown even on your head, and art high-minded, you will learn that *"a king is not saved by a great host, neither shall a giant be saved by the greatness of his might"* [Psalm 33:16]: and you will find yourself able to be reasonable. If you be rich, and in reputation, again you will hear him singing, *"Woe to them that trust in their own might, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches,"* [Psalm 48:6] And, *"As for man, his days are as grass"* [Psalm

103:15], And *"His glory shall not go down with him, after him"* [Psalm 49:17]: and you will not think any of the things upon the earth are great. For when what is more splendid than all, even glory and power, is so worthless, what else of things on earth is worth accounting of? But are you in despondency? Hear him saying, *"Why are you so sorrowful, O my soul, and why do you so disturb me? Trust in God, for I will confess unto Him."* [Psalm 42:5] Or do you see men in honor who deserve it not? *"Fret not yourself at them that do wickedly. For as the grass shall they be dried up, and as the green herb shall they soon fall away."* (ib. 37:1, 2) Do you see both righteous and sinners punished? Be told that the cause is not the same. For *"many"* he says, *"are the plagues of sinners."* [Psalm 32:10] But in the case of the righteous, he does not say plagues, but, *"Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of them all."* [Psalm 34:19] And again, *"The death of the sinner is evil."* [Psalm 33:21] And, *"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."* [Psalm 116:15] These things do thou say continually: by these be instructed. For every single word of this has in it an undiscoverable ocean of meaning. For we have been just running over them only: but if you were minded to give these passages accurate investigation, you will see the riches to be great. But at present it is possible even by what I have given, to get cleared of the passions that lie on you. For since he forbids our envying, or being grieved, or despondent out of season, or thinking that riches are anything, or tribulation, or poverty, or fancying life itself to be anything, he frees you from all passions. So for this let us give thanks to God, and let us have our treasure always in hand, *"that by patience and comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope"* [Romans 15:4], and enjoy the good things to come. Which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ. By Whom and with Whom, etc.

Homily 29 on Romans

Rom. XV. 14

"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." (So most: S. Chrys. *"others."*)

He had said, *"Inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."* [Romans 11:13] He had said, *"Take heed lest He also spare not you."* [Romans 11:21] He had said, *"Be not wise in your own conceits"* [Romans 12:16]; and again, *"Why do you judge your brother?"* [Romans 14:10] And, *"Who are you that judgest another man's servant?"* [Romans 14:4] And several other like things besides. Since then he had often made his language somewhat harsh, he now speaks kindly ([θεραπεύει] []). And what he said in the beginning, that he does in the end also. At the beginning he said, *"I thank my God for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."* [Romans 1:8] But here he says, *"I am persuaded that you also are full of goodness, being able also to admonish others;"* and this is more than the former. And he does not say, I have heard, but, *"I am persuaded,"* and have no need to hear, from others. And, *"I myself,"* that is, I that rebuke, that accuse you. That *"you are full of goodness,"* this applies to the exhortation lately given. As if he said, It was not as if you were cruel, or haters of your brethren, that I gave you that exhortation, to receive, and not to neglect, and not to destroy *"the work of God."* For I am aware that *"you are full of goodness."* But he seems to me here to be calling their virtue perfect. And he does not say you have, but *"you are full of."* And the sequel is with the same intensitives: *"filled with all knowledge."* For suppose they had been affectionate, but yet did not know how to treat those

they loved properly. This was why he added, *"all knowledge. Able to admonish others,"* not to learn only, but also to teach.

Ver. 15. *"Nevertheless, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort."*

Observe the lowly-mindedness of Paul, observe his wisdom, how he gave a deep cut in the former part, and then when he had succeeded in what he wished, how he uses much kindness next. For even without what he has said, this very confession of his having been bold were enough to unstring their vehemency. And this he does in writing to the Hebrews also, speaking as follows, *"But, beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, and things which belong unto salvation, though we thus speak."* [Hebrews 6:9] And to the Corinthians again, *"Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you."* [1 Corinthians 11:2] And in writing to the Galatians he says, *"I have confidence in you, that you will be none otherwise minded."* [Galatians 5:10] And in all parts of his Epistles one may find this to be frequently observed. But here even in a greater degree. For they were in a higher rank, and there was need to bring down their fastidious spirit, not by astringents only, but by laxatives also. For he does this in different ways. Wherefore he says in this place too, *"I have written the more boldly unto you,"* and with this even he is not satisfied, but has added, *"in some sort,"* that is, gently; and even here he does not pause, but what does he say? *"As putting you in mind."* And he does not say as teaching, nor simply putting in mind, ([ὁ] [ναμιμνήσκων]) but he uses a word ([ἐ] [παναμιμνήσκων]) which means putting you in mind in a quiet way. Observe the end falling in with the introduction. For as in that passage he said, *"that your faith is made known in all the world."* [Romans 1:8] So in the end of the Epistle also, *"For your obedience has reached unto all."* [Romans 16:19] And as in the beginning

he wrote, *"For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that you may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you"* (ib. 1:11, 12); so here also he said, *"As putting you in mind."* And having come down from the seat of the master, both there and here, he speaks to them as brethren and friends of equal rank. And this is quite a Teacher's duty, to give his address that variety which is profitable to the hearers. See then how after saying, *"I have written the more boldly,"* and, *"in some sort,"* and, *"as putting you in mind,"* he was not satisfied even with these, but making his language still more lowly, he proceeds:

"Because of the grace that is given me of God." As he said at the beginning, *"I am a debtor."* [Romans 1:14] As if he had said, I have not snatched at the honor for myself, neither was I first to leap forward to it, but God commanded this, and this too according unto grace, not as if He had separated me for this office because I deserved it. Do not ye then be exasperated, since it is not I that raise myself up, but it is God that enjoins it. And as he there says, *"whom I serve in the Gospel of His Son"* [Romans 1:9], so also here, after saying, *"because of the grace given unto me by God,"* he adds,

Ver. 16. *"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering ([ἐπουροῦντα]) the Gospel of God."*

For after his abundant proof of his statements, he draws his discourse to a more lofty tone, not speaking of mere service, as in the beginning, but of service and priestly ministering ([λειτουργίαν καὶ ἱεουργίαν]). For to me this is a priesthood, this preaching and declaring. This is the sacrifice I bring. Now no one will find fault with a priest, for being anxious to offer the sacrifice without blemish. And he says this at once to elevate ([περῶν]) their thoughts, and show them that they are a sacrifice, and in apology for his own part in the matter, because he was appointed to this office. For my

knife, he says, is the Gospel, the word of the preaching. And the cause is not that I may be glorified, not that I may appear conspicuous, but that the *"offering up ([προσφορὰ]) of the Gentiles may be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."*

That is, that the souls of those that are taught by me, may be accepted. For it was not so much to honor me, that God led me to this pitch, as out of a concern for you. And how are they to become acceptable? In the Holy Ghost. For there is need not only of faith, but also of a spiritual way of life, that we may keep the Spirit that was given once for all. For it is not wood and fire, nor altar and knife, but the Spirit that is all in us. For this cause, I take all means to prevent that Fire from being extinguished, as I have been also enjoined to do. Why then do you speak to those that need it not? This is just the reason why I do not teach you, but put you in mind, he replies. As the priest stands by stirring up the fire, so I do, rousing up your ready-mindedness. And observe, he does not say, *"that the offering up of"* you *"may be"* etc. but *"of the Gentiles."* But when he says of the Gentiles, he means the whole world, the land, and the whole sea, to take down their haughtiness, that they might not disdain to have him for a teacher, who was putting himself forth ([τεινόμενον]) to the very end of the world. As he said in the beginning, *"as among the other Gentiles also, I am a debtor to Greeks, and also to barbarians, to wise, and to foolish."* [Romans 1:13-14]

Ver. 17. *"I have therefore whereof I may glory, through Jesus Christ, in those things which pertain to God."*

Inasmuch as he had humbled himself exceedingly, he again raised his style, doing this also for their sakes, lest he should seem to become readily an object of contempt. And while he raises himself, he remembers his own proper temper, and says, *"I have therefore whereof to glory."* I glory, he means, not in myself, not in our zeal, but in the *"grace of God."*

Ver. 18. *"For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not wrought by me, to make Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God."*

And none, he means, can say that my words are a mere boast. For of this priestly ministry of mine, the signs that I have, and the proofs of the appointment too, are many. Not the long garment ([ποδήρης]) and the bells as they of old, nor the mitre and the turban ([κίδαρις]), but signs and wonders, far more awful than these. Nor can it be said that I have been entrusted indeed with the charge, but yet have not executed it. Or rather, it is not I that have executed, but Christ. Wherefore also it is in Him that I boast, not about common things, but about spiritual. And this is the force of, *"in things which pertain to God."* For that I have accomplished the purpose for which I was sent, and that my words are not mere boast, the miracles, and the obedience of the Gentiles show. *"For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God."* See how violently he tries to show that the whole is God's doing, and nothing his own. For whether I speak anything, or do anything, or work miracles, He does all of them, the Holy Spirit all. And this he says to show the dignity of the Holy Spirit also. See how these things are more wondrous and more awful than those of old, the sacrifice, the offering, the symbols. For when he says, *"in word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders,"* he means this, the doctrine, the system ([φιλοσοφίαν]) relating to the Kingdom, the exhibition of actions and conversation, the dead that were raised, the devils that were cast out, and the blind that were healed, and the lame that leaped, and the other marvellous acts, all whereof the Holy Spirit wrought in us. Then the proof of these things (since all this is yet but an assertion) is the multitude of the disciples. Wherefore he adds, *"So that*

from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." Count up then cities, and places, and nations, and peoples, not those under the Romans only, but those also under barbarians. For I would not have you go the whole way through Phœnicia, and Syria, and the Cilicians, and Cappadocians, but reckon up also the parts behind, the country of the Saracens, and Persians, and Armenians, and that of the other savage nations. For this is why he said, *"round about,"* that you might not only go through the direct high road, but that you should run over the whole, even the southern part of Asia in your mind. And as he ran over miracles thick as snow, in a single word, by saying, *"through mighty signs and wonders,"* so he has comprehended again endless cities, and nations, and peoples, and places, in this one word *"round about."* For he was far removed from all boasting. And this, he said on their account, so that they should not be conceited about themselves. And at the beginning he said, that *"I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles."* But here he states the compulsion of his priesthood. For as he had spoken in a sharper tone, he shows also by it his power more clearly. This is why he there only says, *"even as among other Gentiles."* But here he insists on the topic fully, so that the conceit may be pruned away on all grounds. And he does not merely say, preached the Gospel, but *"have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."*

Ver. 20. *"Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named."*

See here another preeminence; that he had not only preached the Gospel to so many, and persuaded them, but he did not even go to those who had become disciples. So far was he from thrusting himself upon other men's disciples, and from doing this for glory's sake, that he even made it a point to teach those who had not heard. For neither does he say where they

were not persuaded, but *"where Christ was not even named,"* which is more. And what was the reason why he had this ambition? *"Lest I should build,"* he says, *"upon another man's foundation."*

This he says to show himself a stranger to vanity, and to instruct them that it was not from any love of glory, or of honor from them, that he came to write, but as fulfilling his ministry, as perfecting his priestly duty, as loving their salvation. But he calls the foundation of the Apostles *"another man's,"* not in regard to the quality of the person, or the nature of preaching, but in regard to the question of reward. For it was not that the preaching was that of another man, but so far as it went to another man's reward. For the reward of the labors of others was, to this man, another man's. Then he shows that a prophecy was fulfilled also saying,

Ver. 21. *"As it is written, To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand."* [Isaiah 3:15
[Septuagint]]

You see he runs to where the labor is more, the toil greater.

Ver. 22. *"For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you."*

Observe again, how he makes the end of the like texture with the introduction. For while he was quite at the beginning of the Epistle, he said, *"Oftentimes I purpose to come unto you, but was let hitherto."* [Romans 1:13] But here he gives the cause also by which he was let, and that not once, but twice even, aye, and many times. For as he says there, *"oftentimes I purposed to come to you,"* so here too, *"I have been much (or often, [τὰ πολλά]) hindered from coming to you."* Now it is a thing which proves a very strong desire, that he attempted it so often.

Ver. 23. *"But now having no more place in these parts."*

See how he shows that it was not from any coveting of glory from them, that he both wrote and was also coming. *"And having a great desire to come to you these many years,"*

Ver. 24. *"Whenever I take my journey into Spain, I trust to see you in my journey; and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company,"*

For that he might not seem to be holding them very cheap, by saying, Since I have not anything to do, therefore I am coming to you, he again touches on the point of love by saying, *"I have a great desire, these many years, to come unto you."* For the reason why I desire to come, is not because I am disengaged, but that I may give birth to that desire wherewith I am travailing so long. Then that this again should not puff them up, consider how he lowers them by saying, *"Whenever I take my journey into Spain, I trust to see you in my journey."* For this was why he stated this, that they should not be high-minded. For what he wants is to show his love, and at the same time to prevent them from being dainty. And so he places this close on the other, and uses things confirmative of either alternately. For this reason again that they might not say, Do you make us a by-object of your journey? He adds, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you: that is, that you may be my witnesses that it is not through any slight of you, but by force of necessity, that I run by you. But as this is still distressing, he heals it over more carefully, by saying, *"If I be first somewhat filled with your company."* For by his saying, *"in my journey,"* he shows that he did not covet their good opinion. But by saying *"be filled,"* that he was eager for their love, and not only was eager for it, but exceedingly so; and this is why he does not say *"be filled,"* but be *"somewhat"* so. That is, no length of time can fill me or create in me a satiety of your company. See how he shows his love, when even though in

haste he does not rise up until he be filled. And this is a sign of his great affectionateness, that he uses his words in so warm a way. For he does not say even I will see, but "*shall be filled*," imitating thus the language of parents. And at the beginning he said, "*that I might have some fruit*." [Romans 1:13] But here that I may be "*filled*." And both these are like a person who is drawing others to him. For the one was a very great commendation of them, if they were likely to yield him fruit from their obedience; and the other, a genuine proof of his own friendship. And in writing to the Corinthians he thus says, "*That ye may bring me on my journey wherever I go*" [1 Corinthians 16:6], so in all ways exhibiting an unrivalled love to his disciples. And so at the beginning of all his Epistles it is with this he starts, and at the end in this he concludes again. For as an indulgent father does an only and true born son, so did he love all the faithful. Whence it was that he said, "*Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?*" [2 Corinthians 11:29]

For before everything else this is what the teacher ought to have. Wherefore also to Peter Christ says, "*If you love Me, feed My sheep*." [John 21:16] For he who loves Christ loves also His flock. And Moses too did He then set over the people of the Jews, when he had shown a kindly feeling towards them. And David in this way came to be king, having been first seen to be affectionately-minded towards them; so much indeed, though yet young, did he grieve for the people, as to risk his life for them, when he killed that barbarian. But if he said, "*What shall be done to the man that kills this Philistine?*" [1 Samuel 19:5; ib. 17:26] he said it not in order to demand a reward, but out of a wish to have confidence placed in himself, and to have the battle with him delivered to his charge. And therefore, when he came to the king after the victory, he said nothing of these things. And Samuel too was very affectionate; whence it was that he said, "*But God*

forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray unto the Lord for you." [1 Samuel 12:23] In like way Paul also, or rather not in like way, but even in a far greater degree, burned towards all his subjects ([τῶν ἀρχομένων]). Wherefore he made his disciples of such affection towards himself, that he said, *"If were possible, you would have pulled out your eyes and given them to me."* [Galatians 4:15] On this ground too it is, that God charges the teachers of the Jews above all things with this, saying, *"Oh shepherds of Israel, do shepherds feed themselves? Do they not feed the flock?"* [Ezekiel 34:2-3] But they did the reverse. For he says, *"You eat the milk, and clothe you with the wool, and you kill them that are fed, but you feed not the flock."* And Christ, in bringing out the rule for the fittest Pastor, said, *"The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep."* [John 10:11] This David did also, both on sundry other occasions, and also when that fearful wrath from above came down upon the whole people. For while all were being slain he said, *"I the shepherd have sinned, I the shepherd have done amiss, and these the flock what have they done?"* [2 Samuel 24:17] And so in the choice of those punishments also, he chose not famine, nor flight before enemies, but the pestilence sent by God, whereby he hoped to place all the others in safety, but that he should himself in preference to all the rest be carried off. But since this was not so, he bewails, and says, *"On me be Your Hand:"* or if this be not enough, *"on my father's house"* also. *"For I,"* he says, *"the shepherd have sinned."* As though he had said, that if they also sinned, I was the person who should suffer the vengeance, as I corrected them not. But since the sin is mine also, it is I who deserve to suffer the vengeance. For wishing to increase the crime he used the name of *"Shepherd."* Thus then he stayed the wrath, thus he got the sentence revoked! So great is the power of confession. *"For the righteous is his own accuser first."* So great is the concern and sympathy of a good Pastor. For

his bowels were writhed at their falling, as when one's own children are killed. And on this ground he begged that the wrath might come upon himself. And in the beginning of the slaughter he would have done this, unless he had seen it advancing and expected that it would come to himself. When therefore he saw that this did not happen, but that the calamity was raging among them, he no longer forebore, but was touched more than for Amnon his first-born. For then he did not ask for death, but now he begs to fall in preference to the others. Such ought a ruler to be and to grieve rather at the calamities of others than his own. Some such thing he suffered in his son's case likewise, that you might see that he did not love his son more than his subjects, and yet the youth was unchaste, and an ill-user of his father ([πατραλοΐας]), and still he said, *"Would that I might have died for you!"* [2 Samuel 18:33] What do you say, thou blessed one, you meek of all men? Your son was set upon killing you, and compassed you about with ills unnumbered. And when he had been removed, and the trophy was raised, do you then pray to be slain? Yea, he says, for it is not for me that the army has been victorious, but I am warred against more violently than before, and my bowels are now more torn than before. These however were all thoughtful for those committed to their charge, but the blessed Abraham concerned himself much even for those that were not entrusted to him, and so much so as even to throw himself among alarming dangers. For when he did what he did, not for his nephew only, but for the people of Sodom also, he did not leave driving those Persians before him until he had set them all free: and yet he might have departed after he had taken him, yet he did not choose it. For he had the like concern for all, and this he showed likewise by his subsequent conduct. When then it was not a host of barbarians that was on the point of laying siege to them, but the wrath of God that was plucking their cities up from the foundations, and it was no longer the time

for arms, and battle, and array, but for supplication; so great was the zeal he showed for them, as, if he himself had been on the point of perishing. For this reason he comes once, twice, thrice, aye and many times to God, and finds a refuge (i.e. an excuse) in his nature by saying, *"I am dust and ashes"* [Genesis 18:27]: and since he saw that they were traitors to themselves, he begs that they may be saved for others. Wherefore also God said, *"I will hide not from Abraham My servant that thing which I am about to do"* [Genesis 18:17], that we might learn how loving to man the righteous is. And he would not have left off beseeching, unless God had left off first [so he takes Genesis 18:33]. And he seems indeed to be praying for the just, but is doing the whole for them. For the souls of the Saints are very gentle and, loving unto man, both in regard to their own, and to strangers. And even to the unreasoning creatures they extend their gentleness. Wherefore also a certain wise man said, *"The righteous pities the souls of his cattle."* But if he does those of cattle, how much more those of men. But since I have mentioned cattle, let us just consider the shepherds of the sheep who are in the Cappadocian land, and what they suffer in kind and degree in their guardianship of unreasoning creatures. They often stay for three days together buried down under the snows. And those in Libya are said to undergo no less hardships than these, ranging about for whole months through that wilderness, dreary as it is, and filled with the direst wild beasts ([θηρία] may include serpents). Now if for unreasonable things there be so much zeal, what defense are we to set up, who are entrusted with reasonable souls, and yet slumber on in this deep sleep? For is it right to be at rest, and in quiet, and not to be running about everywhere, and giving one's self up to endless deaths in behalf of these sheep? Or know ye not the dignity of this flock? Was it not for this that your Master took endless pains, and afterwards poured forth His blood? And do you seek for rest? Now what

can be worse than these Shepherds? Do you not perceive, that there stand round about these sheep wolves much more fierce and savage than those of this world? Do you not think with yourself, what a soul he ought to have who is to take in hand this office? Now men that lead the populace, if they have but common matters to deliberate on, add days to nights in watching. And we that are struggling in heaven's behalf sleep even in the daytime. And who is now to deliver us from the punishment for these things? For if the body were to be cut in pieces, if to undergo ten thousand deaths, ought one not to run to it as to a feast? And let not the shepherds only, but the sheep also hear this; that they may make the shepherds the more active minded, that they may the more encourage their good-will: I do not mean by anything else but by yielding all compliance and obedience. Thus Paul also bade them, saying, *"Obey them which have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] And when he says, *"watch,"* he means thousands of labors, cares and dangers. For the good Shepherd, who is such as Christ wishes for, is contending, before countless witnesses. For He died once for him; but this man ten thousand times for the flock, if, that is, he be such a shepherd as he ought to be; for such an one can die every day. [See on Romans 8:36] And therefore do ye, as being acquainted with what the labor is, coöperate with them, with prayers, with zeal, with readiness, with affection, that both we may have to boast of you, and you of us. For on this ground He entrusted this to the chief of the Apostles, who also loved Him more than the rest; after first asking him if He was loved by him, that you may learn that this before other things, is held as a proof of love to Him. For this requires a vigorous soul. This I have said of the best shepherds; not of myself and those of our days, but of any one that may be such as Paul was, such as Peter, such as Moses. These then let us imitate, both the rulers

of us and the ruled. For the ruled may be in the place of a shepherd to his family, to his friends, to his servants, to his wife, to his children: and if we so order our affairs we shall attain to all manner of good things. Which God grant that we may all attain unto, by the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 30 on Romans

Rom. XV. 25-27

"But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it has pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It has pleased them verily, and their debtors they are."

Since he had said that I have no longer *"more place in these parts,"* and, *"I have a great desire, these many years, to come unto you,"* but he still intended to delay; lest it should be thought that he was making a jest of them, he mentions the cause also why he still puts it off, and he says, that *"I am going unto Jerusalem,"* and is apparently giving the excuse for the delay. But by means of this he also makes good another object, which is the exhorting of them to alms, and making them more in earnest about it. Since if he had not been minded to effect this, it had sufficed to say, *"I am going unto Jerusalem."* But now he adds the reason of his journey. *"For I go,"* says he, *"to minister to the saints."* And he dwells over the subject, and enters into reasonings, and says that they *"are debtors,"* and that, *"if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things,"* that they might learn to imitate these. Wherefore also there is much reason to admire his wisdom for devising this way of giving the advice. For they were more likely to bear it in this way than if he had said it in the form of exhortation; as then he would have seemed to be insulting them, if, with a view to incite them, he had brought before them Corinthians and Macedonians. Indeed, this is the ground on which he does incite the others as follows, saying, *"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches in*

Macedonia." [2 Corinthians 8:1] And again he incites the Macedonians by these. *"For your zeal,"* he says, *"has provoked very many."* [2 Corinthians 9:2] And by the Galatians in like manner he does this, as when he says, *"As I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye."* [1 Corinthians 16:1] But in the case of the Romans he does not do so, but in a more covert way. And he does this also in regard to the preaching, as when he says, *"What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only?"* [1 Corinthians 14:36] For there is nothing so powerful as emulation. And so he often employs it. For elsewhere too he says, *"And so ordain I in all the Churches;"* [1 Corinthians 7:17]; and again, *"As I teach everywhere in every Church."* [1 Corinthians 4:17] And to the Colossians he says, *"that the Gospel increases and brings forth fruit in all the world."* [Colossians 1:6] This then he does here also in the case of alms. And consider what dignity there is in his expressions. For he does not say, I go to carry alms, but *"to minister"* ([διακονῶν]). But if Paul ministers, just consider how great a thing is doing, when the Teacher of the world undertakes to be the bearer, and when on the point of travelling to Rome, and so greatly desiring them too, he yet prefers this to that. *"For it has pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia,"* that is, it meets their approbation, their desire. *"A certain contribution."* And, he does not say alms, but *"contribution"* ([κοινωνίαν]). And the *"certain"* is not used without a meaning, but to prevent his seeming to reproach these. And he does not say the poor, merely, but the *"poor saints,"* so making his recommendation twofold, both that from their virtue and that from their poverty. And even with this alone he was not satisfied, but he adds, *"they are their debtors."* Then he shows how they are debtors. For if, he says, *"the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their debt (A.V. duty) is also to minister unto them in carnal things."* But what he means is this. It was for their sakes that Christ came. To them it

was that all the promises were made, to them of the Jews. Of them Christ came. (Wherefore also it said, *"Salvation is of the Jews."*) [John 4:22] From them were the Apostles, from them the Prophets, from them all good things. In all these things then the world was made a partaker. If then, he says, you have been made partakers in that which is greater, and when it was for them that the banquet was prepared, you have been brought in to enjoy the feast that was spread [Matthew 22:9], according to the Parable of the Gospel, you are debtors also to share your carnal things with them, and to impart to them. But he does not say to share, but *"to minister"* ([λειτουργῆσαι]), so ranking them with ministers ([διακόνων]), and those that pay the tribute to kings. And he does not say in your carnal things, as he did in *"their spiritual things."* For the spiritual things were theirs. But the carnal belonged not to these alone, but were the common property of all. For he bade money to be held to belong to all, not to those who were its possessors only.

Ver. 28. *"When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed unto them this fruit."*

That is, when I have laid it up as it were in the royal treasuries, as in a place secure from robbers and danger. And he does not say alms, but *"fruit"* again, to show that those who gave it were gainers by it. *"I will come by you into Spain."* He again mentions Spain to show his forwardness ([ἄ] [ό] [κvv]) and warmth towards them.

Ver. 29. *"And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ."*

What is the force of, *"In the fullness of the blessing?"* Either he speaks of alms (Gr. money), or generally of good deeds. For blessing is a name he very commonly gives to alms. As when he says, *"As a blessing and not as covetousness."* [2 Corinthians 9:5] And it was customary of old for the

thing to be so called. But as he has here added "*of the Gospel*," on this ground we assert that he speaks not of money only, but of all other things. As if he had said, I know that when I come I shall find you with the honor and freshness of all good deeds about you, and worthy of countless praises in the Gospel. And this is a very striking mode of advice, I mean this way of forestalling their attention by encomiums. For when he entreats them in the way of advice, this is the mode of setting them right that he adopts.

Ver. 30. "*Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit.*"

Here he again puts forward Christ and the Spirit, and makes no mention whatever of the Father. And I say this, that when you find him mentioning the Father and the Son, or the Father only, you may not despise either the Son or the Spirit. And he does not say the Spirit, but "*the love of the Spirit.*" For as Christ loved the world, and as the Father does, so does the Spirit also. And what is it that you beseech us, let me hear? "*To strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,*"

Ver. 31. "*That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea.*"

A great struggle then lies before him. And this too is why he calls for their prayers. And he does not say that I may be engaged in it, but "*I may be delivered,*" as Christ commanded, to "*pray that we enter not into temptation.*" [Matthew 26:41] And in saying this he showed, that certain evil wolves would attack them, and those who were wild beasts rather than men. And out of this he also found grounds for another thing, namely, for showing that he with good reason took the office of ministering to the Saints, if, that is, the unbelievers were in such force that he even prayed to be delivered from them. For they who were among so many enemies, were in danger of perishing by famine also. And therefore there was absolute

need of aid coming (or "*of his going*") from other quarters to them. "*And that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the Saints.*"

That is, that my sacrifice may be accepted, that with cheerfulness they may receive what is given them. See how he again exalts the dignity of those who were to receive it. Then he asks for the prayer of so great a people in order to what was sent being received. And by this he shows another point also, that to have given alms does not secure its being accepted. For when any one gives it constrainedly, or out of unjust gains, or for vanity, the fruit of it is gone.

Ver. 32. "*That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God.*"

As he had said at the beginning, "*If by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey, by the will of God, to come unto you*" [Romans 1:10]; so here again he takes refuge in the same Will, and says that this is why I press on and wish to be delivered from them, that I may see you shortly, and that with pleasure, without bringing any load of heaviness from thence. "*And may with you be refreshed.*"

See how he again shows unassumingness. For he does not say, I may teach you, and give you a lesson, but that, "*I may with you be refreshed.*" And yet he was the very man engaged in the striving and conflict. In what sense then does he say "*that I may be refreshed with you* (*[συναναπαύσωμαι]*)?" It is to gratify them on this point too, and to make them the more cheerful by making them sharers of his crown, and to show that they too struggle and labor. Then, as was always his custom to do, he adds prayer after the exhortation, and says,

Ver. 33. "*Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*"

Chap. xvi. ver. 1. "*I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a deaconess (A.V. servant) of the church which is at Cenchrea.*"

See how many ways he takes to give her dignity. For he has both mentioned her before all the rest, and called her sister. And it is no slight thing to be called the sister of Paul. Moreover he has added her rank, by mentioning her being *"deaconess."*

Ver. 2. *"That ye receive her in the Lord, as becomes saints."* (Gr. *"the saints."*)

That is, for the Lord's sake, that she may enjoy honor among you. For he that receives a person for the Lord's sake, though it be no great one that he receives, yet receives him with attention. But when it is a saint, consider what attention he ought to have shown him. And this is why he adds, *"as becomes saints,"* as such persons ought to be received. For she has two grounds for her having attention shown her by you, both that of her being received for the Lord's sake, and that of her being a saint herself. And that you assist her in whatsoever business she has need (or *"asks,"* [χρήζη]) of you. You see how little he burdens them. For he does not say, That ye dispatch, but that you contribute your own part, and reach out a hand to her: and that *"in whatsoever business she has need."* Not in whatsoever business she may be, but in such as she may ask of you. But she will ask in such things as lie in your power. Then again there comes a very great praise of her. *"For she has been a succorer of many and of myself also."*

See his judgment. First come the encomiums, then he makes an exhortation intervene, and then again gives encomiums, so placing on each side of the needs of this blessed woman her praises. For how can the woman be else than blessed who has the blessing of so favorable a testimony from Paul, who had also the power to render assistance to him who had righted the whole world? For this was the summit of her good deeds, and so he placed it the last, as he says, *"and of myself also."* But what does the phrase *"of myself also"* convey? Of the herald of the world, of

him who has suffered so much, of him who is equal to assisting tens of thousands ([μυρίοις ἀρκοῦντος]). Let us then imitate, both men and women, this holy woman and her that follows, with her husband also. And who are they?

Ver. 2. *"Greet,"* he says, *"Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus."*

To the excellence of these St. Luke also bears witness. Partly when he says that Paul *"abode with them, for by their occupation they were tent-makers"* [Acts 18:3]; and partly when he points out the woman as receiving Apollos, and instructing him in the way of the Lord. [Acts 18:26] Now these are great things, but what Paul mentions are greater. And what does he mention? In the first place he calls them *"helpers,"* to point out that they had been sharers of his very great labors and dangers. Then he says,

Ver. 4. *"Who for my life have laid down their own necks."*

You see they are thoroughly furnished martyrs. For in Nero's time it is probable that there were thousands of dangers, at the time as he even commanded all Jews to be removed from Rome. [Acts 8:2].

"Unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles."

Here he hints at their hospitality, and pecuniary assistance, holding them in admiration because they had both poured forth their blood, and had made their whole property open to all. You see these were noble women, hindered no way by their sex in the course of virtue. And this is as might be expected. *"For in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female."* [Galatians 3:28] And what he had said of the former, that he said also of this. For of her also he had said, *"she has been a succorer of many, and of myself also."* So too of this woman *"not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of*

the Gentiles." Now that in this he might not seem to be a flatterer, he also adduces a good many more witnesses to these women.

Ver. 5. *"Likewise greet the Church that is in their house."*

For she had been so estimable as even to make their house a Church, both by making all in it believers, and because they opened it to all strangers. For he was not in the habit of calling any houses Churches, save where there was much piety, and much fear of God deeply rooted in them. And on this ground he said to the Corinthians also, *"Salute Aquila and Priscilla, with the Church that is in their house."* [1 Corinthians 16:19] And when writing about Onesimus, *"Paul unto Philemon, and to the beloved Apphia, and to the Church that is in their house."* [Philemon 1, 2] For it is possible for a man even in the married state to be worthy of being looked up to, and noble. See then how these were in that state and became very honorable, and yet their occupation was far from being honorable; for they were *"tent-makers."* Still their virtue covered all this, and made them more conspicuous than the sun. And neither their trade nor their marriage [συζυγία] cf. Philippians 4:3 was any hurt to them, but the love which Christ required of them, that they exhibited. *"For greater love has no man than this, He says, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* [John 15:13] And that which is a proof of being a disciple, they achieve, since they took up the Cross and followed Him. For they who did this for Paul, would much rather have displayed their fortitude in Christ's behalf.

Let rich and poor both hear all this. For if they who lived from their labor, and were managers of a workshop, exhibited such profuseness as to be of service to many Churches; what pardon can they expect, who are rich, and yet neglect the poor? For they were not sparing even of their blood for the sake of God's will, but you are sparing even of scanty sums, and many times sparest not your own soul. But in regard to the teacher were they so,

and not so with regard to the disciples? Nay even this cannot be said. For *"the churches of the Gentiles,"* he says, *"thank them."* And yet they were of the Jews. But still they had such a clear ([εὐλικρινῶς]) faith, as to minister unto them also with all willingness. Such ought women to be, not adorning themselves with *"broidered hair, or gold, or costly array"* [1 Timothy 2:9], but in these good deeds. For what empress pray, was so conspicuous or so celebrated as this wife of the tent-maker? She is in everybody's mouth, not for ten or twenty years, but until the coming of Christ, and all proclaim her fame for things such as adorn far more than any royal diadem. For what is greater or so great, as to have been a succorer of Paul? At her own peril to have saved the teacher of the world? And consider: how many empresses there are that no one speaks of. But the wife of the tent-maker is everywhere reported of with the tent-maker (meaning perhaps St. Paul); and the width that the sun sees over, is no more of the world than what the glory of this woman runs unto. Persians, and Scythians, and Thracians, and they who dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, sing of the Christian spirit of this woman, and bless it. How much wealth, how many diadems and purples would you not be glad to venture upon obtaining such a testimony? For no one can say either, that in dangers they were of this character, and lavish with their money, and yet neglected the preaching. For he calls them *"fellow-workers and helpers"* on this ground. And this *"chosen vessel"* [Acts 9:15] does not feel ashamed to call a woman his helper but even finds an honor in doing so. For it is not the sex ([φίσει]) that he minds, but the will is what he honors. What is equal to this ornament? Where now is wealth overflowing on every side? And where the adorning of the person? And where is vainglory? Learn that the dress of woman is not that put about the body, but that which decorates the soul, which is never put off, which does not lie in a chest, but is laid up in the heavens. Look at their labor for

the preaching, the crown in martyrdom, the munificence in money, the love of Paul, the charm ([φίλτρον]) they found in Christ. Compare with this your own estate, your anxiety about money, your vying with harlots (i.e. in dress), your emulating of the grass, and then you will see who they were and who you are. Or rather do not compare only, but vie with this woman, and after laying aside the burdens of grass ([χλόης]), (for this is what your costly dressing is), take thou the dress from heaven, and learn whence Priscilla became such as she was. How then did they become so? For two years they entertained Paul as a guest: [Probably Acts 19:10] and what is there that these two years may not have done for their souls? What am I to do then, you will say because I have not Paul? If you be minded you may have him in a truer sense than they. For even with them the sight of Paul was not what made them of such a character, but the words of Paul. And so, if you be so minded, you shall have both Paul, and Peter, and John, and the whole choir of the Prophets, with the Apostles, associating with you continually. For take the books of these blessed ones, and hold a continual intercourse with their writings, and they will be able to make you like the tent-maker's wife. And why speak I of Paul? For if you will, you may have Paul's Master Himself. For through Paul's tongue even He will discourse with you. And in another way again you will be able to receive this Person, when you receive the saints, even when you tend those that believe in Him. And so even after their departure you will have many memorials of piety. For even the table at which the saint ate, and a seat on which he sat, and the couch on which he lay knows how to pierce him that received him; even after his departure. How then, think you, was that Shunamite pierced at entering the upper chamber where Elisha abode, when she saw the table, the couch on which the holy man slept; and what religiousness must she have felt come from it? For had this not been so, she would not have cast the

child there when dead, if she had not reaped great benefit from thence. For if so long time after upon entering in where Paul abode, where he was bound, where he sat and discoursed, we are elevated, and find ourselves starting off from the places to that memory (so Field: Vulg. *"the memory of that day"*); when the circumstances were still fresher, what must those have been likely to feel, who had religiously entertained him? Knowing all this then, let us receive the Saints, that the house may shine, that it may be freed from choking thorns, that the bedchamber may become a haven. And let us receive them, and wash their feet. You are not better than Sarah, nor more noble, nor more wealthy, though thou be an empress. For she had three hundred and eighteen homeborn servants, at a time when to have two servants even was to be wealthy. And why do I mention the three hundred and eighteen servants? She had become possessed of the whole world in her seed and in the promises, she had the *"friend of God"* [Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23] for her husband, God Himself as a Patron, a thing greater than any kingdom. And yet, though she was in so illustrious and honorable estate, this woman kneaded the flour, and did all the other servant's offices, and stood by them as they banqueted too in the rank of a servant. You are not of nobler birth than Abraham, who yet did the part of domestics after his exploits after his victories, after the honor paid him by the king of Egypt, after driving out the kings of the Persians, and raising the glorious trophies. And look not to this; that in appearance the Saints that lodge with you are but poor, and as beggars, and in rags many times, but be mindful of that voice which says, *"Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these, you have done it unto me."* [Matthew 25:40] And, *"Despise not one of these little ones, because their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 18:10] Receive them then with readiness of mind, bringing as they do ten thousand blessings to you, through the

greeting of peace. (ib. 10:12, 13.) And after Sarah, reflect upon Rebecca also, who both drew water and gave to drink, and called the stranger in, trampling down all haughtiness. However, through this, great were the rewards of hospitality she received! And thou, if you be so minded, wilt receive even greater than those. For it will not be the fruit of children only that God will give you, but the heaven, and the blessings there, and a freedom from hell, and a remission of sins. For great, yea, very great, is the fruit of hospitality. [Luke 11:41] Thus too Jethro, and that though he was a foreigner, gained for a relation him who with so great power commanded the sea. [Daniel 4:27; Exodus 3:1] For his daughters too drew into his net this honorable prey. [Numbers 10:29] Setting then your thoughts upon these things, and reflecting upon the manly and heroic temper of those women, trample upon the gorgeousness of this day, the adornments of dress, the costly jewelry, the anointing with perfumes. And have done with those wanton and delicate airs, and that mincing walk, and turn all this attentiveness unto the soul, and kindle up in your mind a longing for the heavens. For should but his love take hold of you, you will discern the mire and the clay, and ridicule the things now so admired. For it is not even possible for a woman adorned with spiritual attainments to be seeking after this ridiculousness. Having then cast this aside, which wives of the lewder sort of men, and actresses, and singers, have so much ambition in, clothe you with the love of wisdom, with hospitality, with the succoring of the Saints, with compunction, with continual prayer. These be better than cloth of gold, these more stately than jewels and than necklaces, these both make you of good repute among men, and bring you great reward with God. This is the dress of the Church, that of the playhouses. This is worthy of the heaven, that, of horses and mules; that is put even round dead corpses, this shines in a good soul alone wherein Christ dwells. Let this then be the dress

for us to acquire, that we also may have our praise sung everywhere, and be well-pleasing to Christ, by Whom and with Whom, etc. Amen.

Homily 31 on Romans

Rom. XVI. 5

"Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ."

I think that many even of those who have the appearance of being extremely good men, hasten over this part of the Epistle as superfluous, and having no great weight in it. And I think that the same befalls them in regard to the genealogy that is in the Gospel. For because it is a catalogue of names, they think they cannot get any great good from it. Yet the gold founders' people are careful even about the little fragments; while these pass over even such great cakes of gold. That this then may not befall them, what I have already said were enough to lead them off from their listlessness. For that the gain even from this is no contemptible one, we have shown even from what was said on a former occasion, when we lifted up your soul by means of these addresses. We will endeavor then today also to mine in this same place. For it is possible even from bare names to find a great treasure. If, for instance, you were shown why Abraham was so called, why Sarah, why Israel, why Samuel, you would find even from this a great many real subjects of research. And from times too, and from places, you may gather the same advantage. For the good man waxes rich even from these; but he that is slothful, does not gain even from the most evident things. Thus the very name of Adam teaches us no small wisdom, and that of his son, and of his wife, and most of the others. For names serve to remind us of several circumstances. They show at once God's benefits and women's thankfulness. For when they conceived by the gift of God, it was they who gave these names to the children. But why are we now

philosophizing about names, while meanings so important are neglected, and many do not so much as know the very names of the sacred books? Still even then we ought not to recede from an attention to things of this sort. For *"you ought,"* He says, *"to have put My money to the exchangers."* [Matthew 25:27] And therefore though there be nobody that listens to it, let us do our part, and show that there is nothing superfluous, nothing added at random in the Scriptures. For if these names had no use, they would not then have been added to the Epistle, nor would Paul have written what he has written. But there are some even so low-minded, and empty, and unworthy of Heaven, as not to think that names only, but whole books of the Bible are of no use, as Leviticus, Joshua, and more besides. And in this way many of the simple ones have been for rejecting the Old Testament, and advancing on in the way, that results from this evil habit of mind, have likewise pruned away many parts of the New Testament also. But of these men, as intoxicated and living to the flesh, we do not make much account. But if any be a lover of wisdom, and a friend to spiritual entertainments, let him be told that even the things which seem to be unimportant in Scripture, are not placed there at random and to no purpose, and that even the old laws have much to profit us. For it says, *"All these things are types (A.V. ensamples) and are written for our instruction."* [1 Corinthians 10:11] Wherefore to Timothy too he says, *"Give heed to reading, to exhortation"* [1 Timothy 4:13], so urging him to the reading of the old books, though he was a man with so great a spirit in him, as to be able to drive out devils, and to raise the dead. Let us now keep on with the subject in hand. *"Salute my well-beloved Epenetus."* It is worth learning from this how he distributes to each the different praises. For this praise is no slight one, but even very great, and a proof of great excellence in him, that Paul should hold him beloved, Paul who had no idea of loving by favor, and not by cool

judgment. Then another encomium comes, "*Who is the first-fruits of Achaia.*" For what he means is, either that he leaped forward before any one else, and became a believer (and this were no slight praise), or that he displayed more religious behavior than any other. And on this account after saying, "*who is the first-fruits of Achaia,*" he does not hold his peace, but to prevent your suspecting it to be a glory of the world's, he added, "*unto Christ.*" Now if in civil matters, he that is first seems to be great and honorable, much more so in these. As then it was likely that they were of low extraction, he speaks of the true noble birth and preëminency, and gives him his honors from this. And he says, that he "*is the first-fruits,*" not of Corinth only, but of the whole nation, as having become as it were a door, and an entrance to the rest. And to such, the reward is no small one. For such an one will reap much recompense also from the achievements of others, in that he too contributed much toward them by beginning.

Ver. 6. "*Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on us.*"

How is this? A woman again is honored and proclaimed victorious! Again are we men put to shame. Or rather, we are not put to shame only, but have even an honor conferred upon us. For an honor we have, in that there are such women among us, but we are put to shame, in that we men are left so far behind by them. But if we come to know whence it comes, that they are so adorned, we too shall speedily overtake them. Whence then is their adorning? Let both men and women listen. It is not from bracelets, or from necklaces, nor from their eunuchs either, and their maid-servants, and gold-broidered dresses, but from their toils in behalf of the truth. For he says, "*who bestowed much labor on us,*" that is, not on herself only, nor upon her own advancement, (see p. 520) (for this many women of the present day do, by fasting, and sleeping on the floor), but upon others also, so carrying on the race Apostles and Evangelists ran. In what sense then does he say, "*I*

suffer not a woman to teach?" [1 Timothy 2:12] He means to hinder her from publicly coming forward [1 Corinthians 14:35], and from the seat on the bema, not from the word of teaching. Since if this were the case, how would he have said to the woman that had an unbelieving husband, *"How do you know, O woman, if you shall save your husband?"* [1 Corinthians 7:16] Or how came he to suffer her to admonish children, when he says, but *"she shall be saved by child-bearing if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety?"* [1 Timothy 2:15] How came Priscilla to instruct even Apollos? It was not then to cut in sunder private conversing for advantage that he said this, but that before all, and which it was the teacher's duty to give in the public assembly; or again, in case the husband be believing and thoroughly furnished, able also to instruct her. When she is the wiser, then he does not forbid her teaching and improving him. And he does not say, who taught much, but *"who bestowed much labor,"* because along with teaching ([τοῦ λόγου]) she performs other ministries besides, those in the way of dangers, in the way of money, in the way of travels. For the women of those days were more spirited than lions, sharing with the Apostles their labors for the Gospel's sake. In this way they went travelling with them, and also performed all other ministries. And even in Christ's day there followed Him women, *"which ministered unto Him of their substance"* [Luke 8:3], and waited upon the Teacher.

Ver. 7. *"Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen."*

This also looks like an encomium. And what follows is much more so. And what sort is this of? *"And my fellow-prisoners."* For this is the greatest honor, the noble proclamation. And where was Paul a prisoner, that he should call them *"my fellow-prisoners?"* A prisoner indeed he had not been, but he had suffered things worse than prisoners, in being not an alien only to his country and his family, but in wrestling with famine and continual

death, and thousands of other things. For of a prisoner the only misfortune is this, that he is separated from his relations, and often has to be a slave instead of being free. But in this case one may mention temptations thick as snow-flakes, which this blessed person underwent by being carried and taken about, scourged, fettered, stoned, shipwrecked, with countless people plotting against him. And captives indeed have no further foe after they are led away, but they even experience great care from those who have taken them. But this man was continually in the midst of enemies, and saw spears on every side, and sharpened swords, and arrays, and battles. Since then it was likely that these shared many dangers with him, he calls them fellow-captives. As in another passage also, "*Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner.*" [Colossians 4:10] Then another praise besides. "*Who are of note among the Apostles.*" And indeed to be apostles at all is a great thing. But to be even among these of note, just consider what a great encomium this is! But they were of note owing to their works, to their achievements. Oh! How great is the devotion ([φιλοσοφία]) of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle! But even here he does not stop, but adds another encomium besides, and says, "*Who were also in Christ before me.*"

For this too is a very great praise, that they sprang forth and came before others. But let me draw your attention to the holy soul, how untainted it is by vanity. For after glory such as his in kind and degree, he sets others before himself, and does not hide from us the fact of his having come after them, nor is ashamed of confessing this. And why are you surprised at his not being ashamed of this, when he shuns not even to parade before men his former life, calling himself "*a blasphemer, and a persecutor?*" [1 Timothy 1:13] Since then he was not able to set them before others on this score, he looked out himself, who had come in after

others, and from this he did find means of bestowing a praise upon them by saying, *"Who were in Christ before me."*

Ver. 8. *"Greet Amplias my beloved."*

Here again he passes encomiums upon his person by his love. For the love of Paul was for God, carrying countless blessings with it. For if being loved by the king is a great thing, what a great encomium must it be to be beloved by Paul? For if he had not acquired great virtue, he would not have attracted his love? Since as for those who live in vice and transgressions he is accustomed ([οἷδε]) not only to abstain from loving them, but even to anathematize them. As when he says, *"If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be accursed"* [1 Corinthians 16:22]; and, *"If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed."* [Galatians 1:8]

Ver. 9. *"Salute Urbane, my helper in the Lord."*

This is a greater encomium than the other. For this even comprehends that. *"And Stachys, my beloved."* This again is an honor of the same kind.

Ver. 10. *"Salute Apelles, approved in Christ."*

There is no praise like this, being unblamable, and giving no handle in the things of God. For when he says, *"approved in Christ,"* he includes the whole list of virtues. And on what ground does he nowhere say my Lord such an one, my Master this? It is because these encomiums were greater than those. For those are mere titles of rank ([τιμῆς]), but these are of virtue. And this same honor he paid them not at random, or as addressing several of inferior virtue with the high and great characters. For so far as he is addressing, and that too one along with another, and in the same letter, he honors them all alike. But by stating the praises particularly to each, he sets before us the virtue peculiar to each; so as neither to give birth to envy by honoring one and dishonoring another, nor to work in them listlessness and

confusion, by giving them all the same dignity, though they did not deserve the same. See now how he again comes to the admirable women. For after saying, *"Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household,"*

Ver. 11. *"Salute Herodion my kinsman; greet them which be of the household of Narcissus;"*

Who, it is likely, were not so worthy as the afore-mentioned, on which account also he does not mention them all by name even, and after giving them the encomium which was suited to them, that of being faithful, (and this the meaning of,)

"Which are in the Lord."

He again reverts to the women, and says,

Ver. 12. *"Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord."*

And in regard to the former woman, he says that *"she bestowed labor upon you,"* but of these that they are still laboring. And this is no small encomium, that they should be in work throughout, and should not only work, but labor even. But Persis he calls beloved too, to show that she is greater than these.

For he says, *"Salute my beloved Persis."*

And of her great laborings he likewise bears testimony, and says, *"which labored much in the Lord."*

So well does he know how to name each after his deserts, so making these more eager by not depriving them of any of their dues, but commending even the slightest preëminence, and making the others more virtuous, and inciting them to the same zeal, by his encomiums upon these.

Ver. 12. *"Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine."*

Here again the good things are without any drawback, since the son and the mother are each of such a character, and the house is full of blessing, and the root agrees with the fruit; for he would not have simply

said, *"his mother and mine,"* unless he had been bearing testimony to the woman for great virtue.

Ver. 14. *"Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them."*

Here do not be looking to how he starts them without any encomium, but how he did not reckon them, though far inferior, as it seems, to all, unworthy of being addressed by him. Or rather even this is no slight praise that he even calls them brethren, as also those that are after them he calls saints. For he says,

Ver. 15. *"Salute Philologus, and Julius, and Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them;"*

Which was the greatest dignity, and unspeakable height of honor. Then to prevent any jealousy rising from his addressing one in one way and another in another, and some by name and some with no distinction, and some with more points of praise, and some with fewer, he again mingles them in the equality of charity, and in the holy kiss, saying,

Ver. 16. *"Salute one another with an holy kiss."*

To cast out of them, by this salutation, all arguing that confused them, and all grounds for little pride; that neither the great might despise the little, nor the little grudge at the greater, but that haughtiness and envy might be more driven away, when this kiss soothed down and levelled every one. And therefore he not only bids them salute in this way, but sends in like manner to them the greeting from the Churches. For *"there salute you,"* he says, not this or that person individually, but all of you in common,

"The Churches of Christ."

You see that they are no small gains that we earn from these addresses, and what treasures we should have passed hastily over, unless in this part of the Epistle also we had examined it with accuracy, such, I mean, as was in

our power. So if there be found any man of wisdom and spiritual, he will dive even deeper, and find a greater number of pearls. But since some have often made it a question wherefore it was that in this Epistle he addressed so many, which thing he has not done in any other Epistle, we might say that it is owing to his never having seen the Romans yet, that he does this. And yet one may say, *"Well, he had not seen the Colossians either, and yet he did not do anything of the kind."* But these were more honorable than others, and had come there from other cities, as to a safer and more royal city. Since then they were living in a foreign country, and they needed much provision for security, and some of them were of his acquaintance, but some too were there who had rendered him many important services, he with reason commends them by letters; for the glory of Paul was then not little, but so great, that even from his sending them letters, those who had the happiness to have an Epistle to them, gained much protection. For men not only revered him, but were even afraid of him. Had this not been so, he would not have said, who had been *"a succorer of many, and of myself also."* [Romans 16:2] And again, *"I could wish that myself were accursed."* [Romans 9:3] And to Philemon he wrote and said, *"as Paul the aged, and a prisoner of Jesus Christ."* [Galatians, *"Behold, I Paul say unto you."* Galatians 5:2] And, *"You received me even as Jesus Christ."* [Galatians 4:14] And writing to the Corinthians he said, *"Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come unto you."* [1 Corinthians 4:18] And again, *"These things I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos, that you might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written."* [1 Corinthians 4:6] Now from all these passages it is clear that all had a great opinion of him. Wishing then that they should feel on easy terms, and be in honor, he addressed each of them, setting forth their praise to the best advantage he might. For one he calls beloved, another kinsman, another both, another

fellow-prisoner, another fellow-worker, another approved, another elect. And of the women one he addresses by her title, for he does not call her servant of the Church in an undefined way (because if this were so he would have given Tryphena and Persis this name too), but this one as having the office of deaconess, and another as helper and assistant, another as mother, another from the labors she underwent, and some he addresses from the house they belonged to, some by the name of Brethren, some by the appellation of Saints. And some he honors by the mere fact of addressing them, and some by addressing them by name, and some by calling them first-fruits, and some by their precedence in time, but more than all, Priscilla and Aquila. ([τοὺς περὶ Πρ. κ. ᾿Α].) For even if all were believers, still all were not alike, but were different in their merits. Wherefore to lead them all to greater emulation, he keeps no man's encomiums concealed. For when they who labor more, do not receive the greater reward also, many become more listless. On this ground even in the kingdom, the honors are not equal, nor among the disciples were all alike, but the three were preëminent above the rest. And among these three again there was a great difference. For this is a very exact method observed by God even to the last. Hence, *"one star differs from another star in glory,"* [1 Corinthians 15:41], it says. And yet all were Apostles and all are to sit on twelve thrones, and all left their goods, and all companied with Him; still it was the three He took. And again, to these very three, He said it was possible ([ἐ] [γχαρῆν]) that some might even be superior. *"For to sit,"* He says, *"on My right hand and on My left, is not mine to give, save to those for whom it is prepared."* [Mark 10:40] And He sets Peter before them, when He says, *"Lovest thou Me more than these?"* [John 21:15] And John too was loved even above the rest. For there shall be a strict examination of all, and if you be but little better than your neighbor, if it be even an atom,

or anything ever so little, God will not overlook even this. And this even from of old one might see coming out. For even Lot was a righteous man, yet not so, as was Abraham; and Hezekiah again, yet not so as was David: and all the prophets, yet not so as was John.

Where then are they who with all this great exactness in view, yet will not allow that there is a hell? For if all the righteous are not to enjoy the same lot, if they exceed others even a little (*"for one star,"* it says, *"differs from another star in glory,"*) [1 Corinthians 15:41], how are sinners to be in the same lot with the righteous? Such a confusion as this even man would not make, much less God! But if you will, I will show you that even in the case of sinners, arguing from existing facts, there is this distinction, and exact just judgment. Now consider; Adam sinned, and Eve sinned, and both transgressed, yet they were not equally sinful. And therefore neither were they equally punished. For the difference was so great that Paul said, *"Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."* And yet the deceit was one. But still God's searching examination pointed out a difference so great, as that Paul should make this assertion. Again, Cain was punished, but Lamech, who committed a murder after him, did not suffer near so great a punishment. And yet this was a murder, and that was a murder, and that so much the worse, because even by the example he had not become the better. But since the one neither killed his brother after exhortation, nor needed an accuser, nor shrunk from answering when God questioned him, but even without any accuser both pleaded again himself, and condemned himself more severely, he obtained pardon. But the other as having done the opposite was punished. See with what exactness God sifts the facts. For this reason He punished those in the flood in one way, and those in Sodom in another; and the Israelites again, both those in Babylon, and those in Antiochus' time, in different ways: so showing that He keeps a

strict account of our doings. And these were slaves for seventy years, and those for four hundred, but others again ate their children, and underwent countless other more grievous calamities, and even in this way were not freed, either they or those that were burnt alive in Sodom. *"For it shall be more tolerable,"* He says, *"for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, than for that city."* [Matthew 10:15] For if He has no care for us, either when we sin or when we do aright, perhaps there will be some reason in saying that there is no punishment. But since He is so exceedingly urgent about our not sinning, and adopts so many means to keep us in the right, it is very plain that He punishes the wicked, and also crowns those that do right. But let me beg you to consider the unfairness of the generality. For they find fault with God because He so often long-suffering, overlooks so many that are impious, impure, or violent, without now suffering punishment. Again, if He threaten to punish them in the other world, they are vehement and pressing in their accusations. And yet if this be painful, they ought to accept and admire the other. But alas the folly! The unreasonable and asinine spirit! Alas the sin-loving soul, that gazes after vice! For it is from this that all these opinions have their birth. And so if they who utter these things should be minded to lay hold upon virtue, they will presently find themselves satisfied concerning hell also, and will not doubt. And where (it is said) and in what place is this hell? For some fablers say that it is in the valley of Josaphat, thus drawing that which was said about a certain by-gone war, to apply to hell. But the Scripture does not say this. But in what place, pray, will it be? Somewhere as I think at least quite out of the pale of this world. For as the prisons and mines are at a great distance from royal residences, so will hell be somewhere out of this world. Seek we not then to know where it is, but how we may escape it. Neither yet because God does not punish all here, therefore disbelieve things to come. For merciful and

long-suffering He is: that is why he threatens, and does not cast us into it immediately. For "*I desire not,*" He says, "*the death of a sinner.*" [Ezekiel 18:32] But if there is no death of a sinner, the words are but idle. And I know indeed that there is nothing less pleasant to you than these words. But to me nothing is pleasanter. And would it were possible at our dinner, and our supper, and our baths, and everywhere, to be discoursing about hell. For we should not then feel the pain at the evils in this world, nor the pleasure of its good things. For what would you tell me was an evil? poverty? Disease? captivity? Maiming of the body? Why all these things are sport compared to the punishment there, even should you speak of those who are tormented with famine all their life long; or those who are maimed from their earliest days, and beg, even this is luxury compared to those other evils. Let us then continually employ ourselves with talking about these things. For to remember hell prevents our falling into hell. Do you not hear St. Paul saying, "*Who shall suffer everlasting punishment from the face of the Lord?*" [2 Thessalonians 1:9] Do you not hear what Nero's character was, whom Paul even calls the Mystery of Antichrist? For "*the mystery of iniquity,*" he says, "*already works.*" [2 Thessalonians 2:7] What then? Is Nero to suffer nothing? Is Antichrist to suffer nothing? Or the Devil nothing? Then he will always be Antichrist, and so the Devil. For from mischief they will not leave off, unless they be punished. "Yea," you say, "*but that there is a hell everybody sees. But the unbelievers only are to fall into it.*" What is the reason, pray? It is because the believers acknowledge their Master. And what is this to the purpose? When their life is impure, they will on this ground be punished more severely than the unbelievers. "*For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: but as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.*" [Romans 2:12] And, "*The servant that knew his master's will, and did it not, shall be*

beaten with many stripes." [Luke 12:47] But if there is no such thing as giving an account of one's life, and all this is said in a loose way then neither will the Devil have vengeance taken upon him. For he too knows God, and far more than men too, and all the demons know Him, and tremble, and own He is their Judge. If then there is no giving an account of our life, nor of evil deeds, then will they also clean escape. These things are not so, surely they are not! Deceive not yourselves, beloved. For if there is no hell, how are the Apostles to judge the twelve tribes of Israel? How comes Paul to say, *"Do you not know that we shall judge Angels? How much more things of this life?"* [1 Corinthians 6:3] How came Christ to say, *"The men of Nineveh shall arise and condemn this generation"* [Matthew 12:41]; and, *"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment?"* [Matthew 11:24] Why then make merry with things that are no subjects for merriment? Why deceive yourself and put cheats upon your reason ([*παραλογίζη*], om. [*τὴν ψυχὴν σου*])? Why fight with the love of God toward man? For it was through this that He prepared it, and threatened, that we might not be cast into it, as having by this fear become better. And thus he that does away with speaking on these subjects does nothing else than thrust us into it, and drive us there by this deceit. Slacken not the hands of them then that labor for virtue, nor make the listlessness of them that sleep greater. For if the many be persuaded that there is no hell, when will they leave off vice? Or when will right be seen? I do not say between sinners and righteous men, but between sinners and sinners? For why is it that one is punished here, and another not punished, though he does the same sins, or even far worse? For if there be no hell, you will have nothing to say in defence of this to those who make it an objection. Wherefore my advice is, that we leave off this trifling, and stop the mouths of those that are gainsayers upon these subjects. For there will be an exact

searching into the smallest things, both in the way of sins and in the way of good deeds, and we shall be punished for unchaste looks, and for idle words, and for mere reproachful words, and for drunkenness we shall render an account, as even for a cup of cold water we shall receive a reward, and a sigh only. [Ecclesiastes 12:14] For it says, "*Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry.*" [Ezekiel 9:4] How then do you dare to say that He, who with so great exactness will search into our doings, threatened hell in bare words, and lightly? Do not, I beseech you, do not with these vain hopes destroy yourself and those that are persuaded by you! For if you disbelieve our words, make enquiry of Jews and Gentiles, and all heretics. And all of them as with one mouth will answer that a judgment there shall be, and a retribution. And are men not enough? Ask the devils themselves, and you will hear them cry, "*Why have you come there to torment us before the time.*" [Matthew 8:29] And putting all this together persuade your soul not to trifle idly, lest by experience thou come to know there is a hell, but from this you may be sobered, and so able to escape those tortures, and attain to the good things to come; whereof may we all partake by the grace and love towards man, etc.

Homily 32 on Romans

Romans XVI. 17, 18

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Again an exhortation, and prayer after the exhortation. For after telling them to *"mark them which cause divisions,"* and not to listen to them, he proceeds, *"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly:"* and, *"The grace of our Lord be with you."* And notice how gently too he exhorts them: doing it not in the character of a counsellor, but that of a servant, and with much respect. For he calls them brethren, and supplicates them likewise. For, *"I beseech you, brethren,"* (he says). Then he also puts them on the defensive by showing the deceitfulness of those who abused them. For as though they were not at once to be discerned, he says, *"I beseech you to mark,"* that is, to be exceedingly particular about, and to get acquainted with, and to search out thoroughly— whom, pray? Why, *"those that cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned."* For this is, if anything the subversion of the Church, the being in divisions. This is the devil's weapon, this turns all things upside-down. For so long as the body is joined into one, he has no power to get an entrance, but it is from division that the offense comes. And whence is division? From opinions contrary to the teaching of the Apostles. And whence come opinions of this sort? From men's being slaves to the belly, and the other passions. For *"such,"* he says, *"serve not the Lord, but their own belly."* And so there would be no offense, there would be no

division, unless some opinion were thought of contrary to the doctrine of the Apostles. And this he here points out by saying, *"contrary to the doctrine."* And he does not say which we have taught, but *"which you have learned,"* so anticipating them, and showing that they were persuaded of and had heard them and received them. And what are we to do to those who make mischief in this way? He does not say have a meeting and come to blows, but *"avoid them."* For if it was from ignorance or error that they did this, one ought to set them right. But if they sin willingly, spring away from them. And in another place too he says this. For he says, *"Withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly"* [2 Thessalonians 3:6]: and in speaking to Timothy about the coppersmith, he gives him the like advice, and says, *"Of whom also beware."* [2 Timothy 4:15] Then also to lash ([κωμωδοῦν]) those who dare to do such things, he mentions also the reason of their devising this division. *"For they that are such,"* he says, *"serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly."* And this he said too when he wrote to the Philippians, *"Whose god is their belly."* [Philippians 3:19] But here he appears to me to intimate those of the Jews, whom he ever uses particularly to find fault with as gluttonous. For in writing to Titus too, he said of them, *"Evil beasts, slow bellies."* [Titus 1:12, see 5:10] And Christ also blames them on this head: *"You devour widows' houses"* [Matthew 23:14], He says. And the Prophets accuse them of things of the kind. For, *"My beloved,"* He says, *"has waxen fat and gross, and has kicked"* [Deuteronomy 32:15]. Wherefore also Moses exhorted them, and said, *"When you have eaten and drunken and are full, remember the Lord your God."* (ib. 6:11, 12.) And in the Gospels, they who say to Christ, *"What sign do you show unto us?"* [John 6:30] pass over everything else, and remember the manna. So do they everywhere appear to be possessed with this affection. How then do you come not to be ashamed at having slaves of the belly for your teachers,

when you are a brother of Christ? Now the ground of the error is this, but the mode of attack is again a different disorder, viz. flattery. For it is by "*fair speeches*," he says, "*that they deceive the hearts of the simple*." For their attention reaches only to words; but their meaning is not such, for it is full of fraud. And he does not say that they deceive you, but "*the hearts of the simple*." And even with this he was not satisfied, but with a view to making this statement less grating, he says,

Ver. 19. "*For your obedience has come abroad unto all men*."

This he does, not to leave them free to be shameless, but to win them beforehand with encomiums, and the number of his witnesses, to arrest their attention. For neither is it I alone that am the witness, but the whole world. And he does not say for your understanding, but, "*your obedience*:" that is, their compliance, which was evidence of much meekness in them. "*I am glad therefore on your behalf*." And this is no small encomium too. Then, after the praise, admonition. For lest, after liberating them from any charges against them, he should make them the more listless, as not being observed; he gives them another hint in the words,

"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."

You see then how he attacks them again, and that without their suspecting it. For this looks like intimating that some of them were apt to be led astray.

Ver. 20. "*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*."

For since he had spoken of those who "*caused divisions and offenses among them*," he has mentioned "*the God of peace*" also, that they might feel hopeful about the riddance of these evils. For he that rejoices in this (i.e., peace) will put an end to that which makes havoc of it. And he does

not say, will subject, but *"will bruise"* [Genesis 3:19], which is a stronger expression. And not those people only, but also him who was the general over them herein, Satan. And not *"will bruise"* merely, but *"under your feet,"* so that they may obtain the victory themselves, and become noble by the trophy. And the time again is made a ground of comfort. For he adds, *"shortly."* And this was prayer and prophecy as well at once. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."*

That greatest weapon; that impregnable wall; that tower unshaken! For he reminds them of the grace, that he may give them the more alacrity. Because if you have been freed from the ills more grievous by far, and freed by grace only, much more will you be freed from the lesser, now you have become friends too, and contribute your own share likewise. You see how he neither puts prayer without works, nor works without prayer. For after giving them credit for their obedience, than he prays; to show that we need both, our own part as well as God's part, if we are to be duly saved. For it was not before only, but now too, even though we be great and in high esteem, we need grace from Him.

Ver. 21. *"Timotheus my work-fellow salutes you."*

Observe the customary encomiums again. *"And Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater my kinsmen."*

This Jason Luke also mentions, and sets before us his manliness also, when he says, that *"they drew"* him *"to the rulers of the city, crying,"* etc. [Acts 17:5] And it is likely that the others too were men of note. For he does not mention relations barely, unless they were also like him in religiousness.

Ver. 22. *"I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, salute you."*

This too is no small encomium, to be Paul's amanuensis. Still it is not to pass encomiums on himself that he says this, but that he might attach a

warm love to him on their part, for this ministration.

Ver. 23. *"Gaius mine host ([ξένοϛ]), and of the whole Church, salutes you."*

See what a crown he has framed for him by bearing witness to such great hospitality in him, and brought in the entire Church into this man's house! For by the word [ξένον], used here, he means a host, not a guest. But when you hear that he was Paul's host, do not admire him for his munificence only, but also for his strictness of life. For except he were worthy of Paul's excellency, he would never have lodged there, since he, who took pains to go beyond many of Christ's commands, would never have trespassed against that law, which bids us be very particular about who receive us, and about lodging with *"worthy"* persons. [Matthew 10:11] *"Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, salutes you, and Quartus a brother."* There is a purpose in his adding *"the chamberlain of the city,"* for as he wrote to the Philippians, *"They of Cæsar's household salute you"* [Philippians 4:22], that he might show that the Gospel had taken a hold upon great folk, so here too he mentions the title with a view to the same object, and to show that, to the man who gives heed, neither riches are a hindrance, nor the cares of government, nor anything else of the kind.

Ver. 24. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."*

See what we ought to begin and to end with everywhere! For in this he laid the foundation of the Epistle, and in this he puts on the roof, at once praying for the mother of all good things for them, and calling the whole of his loving-kindness to their mind. For this is the best proof of a generous teacher, to benefit his learners not by word only, but likewise by prayer, for which cause also one said, *"But let us give ourselves continually to prayers, and to the ministry of the word."* [Acts 6:4]

Who is there then to pray over us, since Paul has departed? These who are the imitators of Paul. Only let us yield ourselves worthy of such intercession ([συνηγορίας]), that it may not be that we hear Paul's voice here only, but that hereafter, when we are departed, we may be counted worthy to see the wrestler of Christ. Or rather, if we hear him here, we shall certainly see him hereafter, if not as standing near him, yet see him we certainly shall, glistening near the Throne of the king. Where the Cherubim sing the glory, where the Seraphim are flying, there shall we see Paul, with Peter, and as a chief and leader of the choir of the Saints, and shall enjoy his generous love. For if when here he loved men so, that when he had the choice of departing and being with Christ, he chose to be here, much more will he there display a warmer affection. I love Rome even for this, although indeed one has other grounds for praising it, both for its greatness, and its antiquity, and its beauty, and its populousness, and for its power, and its wealth, and for its successes in war. But I let all this pass, and esteem it blessed on this account, that both in his lifetime he wrote to them, and loved them so, and talked with them whiles he was with us, and brought his life to a close there. Wherefore the city is more notable upon this ground, than upon all others together. And as a body great and strong, it has as two glistening eyes the bodies of these Saints. Not so bright is the heaven, when the sun sends forth his rays, as is the city of Rome, sending out these two lights into all parts of the world. From thence will Paul be caught up, from thence Peter. Just bethink you, and shudder ([φρίξατε]) at the thought of what a sight Rome will see, when Paul arises suddenly from that deposit, together with Peter, and is lifted up to meet the Lord. [1 Thessalonians 4:17] What a rose will Rome send up to Christ! [Isaiah 35:1] what two crowns will the city have about it! What golden chains will she be girded with! What fountains possess! Therefore I admire the city, not for the much

gold, not for the columns, not for the other display there, but for these pillars of the Church. [1 Corinthians 15:38] Would that it were now given me to throw myself round ([περιχυθῆναι]) the body of Paul, and be riveted to the tomb, and to see the dust of that body that *"filled up that which was lacking"* after *"Christ"* [Colossians 1:24], that bore *"the marks"* ([στίγματα],) [Galatians 6:17] that sowed the Gospel everywhere yea, the dust of that body through which he ran to and fro everywhere! The dust of that body through which Christ spoke, and the Light shone forth more brilliant than any lightning, and the voice started out, more awful than any thunder to the devils! Through which he uttered that blessed voice, saying, *"I could wish that myself were accursed, for my brethren"* [Romans 9:3], through which he spoke *"before kings, and was not ashamed!"* [Psalm 119:46] through which we come to know Paul through which also Paul's Master! Not so awful to us is the thunder, as was that voice to the demons! For if they shuddered at his clothes [Acts 19:12], much more did they at his voice. This led them away captive, this cleansed out the world, this put a stop to diseases, cast out vice, lifted the truth on high, had Christ riding upon it, and everywhere went about with Him; and what the Cherubim were, this was Paul's voice, for as He was seated upon those Powers, so was He upon Paul's tongue. For it had become worthy of receiving Christ, by speaking those things only which were acceptable to Christ, and flying as the Seraphim to height unspeakable! For what more lofty than that voice which says, *"For I am persuaded that neither Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus?"* [Romans 8:38-39] What pinions does not this discourse seem to you to have? What eyes? [Ezekiel 10:12] It was owing to this that he said, *"for we are not ignorant of his devices."* [2 Corinthians

2:11] Owing to this did the devils flee not only at hearing him speak, but even at seeing his garments. This is the mouth, the dust whereof I would fain see, through which Christ spoke the great and secret things, and greater than in His own person, (for as He wrought, so He also spoke greater things by the disciples,) through which the Spirit gave those wondrous oracles to the world! For what good thing did not that mouth effect? Devils it drove out, sins it loosed, tyrants it muzzled, philosophers' mouths it stopped, the world it brought over to God, savages it persuaded to learn wisdom, all the whole order of the earth it altered. Things in Heaven too it disposed what way it listed [1 Corinthians 5:3-4], binding whom it would, and loosing in the other world, *"according unto the power given unto it."* [2 Corinthians 13:10] Nor is it that mouth only, but the heart too would fain see the dust of, which a man would not do wrong to call the heart of the world, and a fountain of countless blessings, and a beginning, and element of our life. For the spirit of life was furnished out of it all, and was distributed through the members of Christ, not as being sent forth by arteries, but by a free choice of good deeds. This heart was so large, as to take in entire cities, and peoples, and nations. *"For my heart"* he says, *"is enlarged."* [2 Corinthians 6:11] Yet even a heart thus large, did this very charity that enlarged it many a time straiten and oppress. For he says, *"Out of much affliction ([θλίψεως]) and anguish ([συννοχῆς]) of heart I wrote unto you."* [2 Corinthians 2:4] I were desirous to see that heart even after its dissolution, which burned at each one that was lost, which travailed a second time with the children that had proved abortions [Galatians 4:19], which saw God, (*"for the pure in heart,"* He says, *"shall see God,"*) [Matthew 5:8] which became a Sacrifice, (*"for a sacrifice to God is a contrite heart,"*) [Psalm 51:17] which was loftier than the heavens, which was wider than the world, which was brighter than the sun's beam, which was warmer than fire, which was

stronger than adamant, which sent forth rivers, (*"for rivers,"* it says, *"of living water shall flow out of his belly,"*) [John 7:38] wherein was a fountain springing up, and watering, not the face of the earth, but the souls of men, whence not rivers only, but even fountains of tears, issued day and night, which lived the new life, not this of ours, (for *"I live,"* he says, *"yet not I, but Christ lives in me,"* [Galatians 2:20] so Paul's heart was His heart, and a tablet of the Holy Spirit, and a book of grace); which trembled for the sins of others, (for I fear, he says, lest by any means *"I have bestowed labor upon you in vain; [Galatians 4:11] lest as the serpent beguiled Eve; [2 Corinthians 11:3] lest when I come I should find you not such as I would;"*) [2 Corinthians 12:20] which both feared for itself, and was confiding too, (for I fear, he says, *"lest by any means after having preached to others I myself should be a castaway,"* [1 Corinthians 9:27] And, *"I am persuaded that neither angels nor powers shall be able to separate us;"*) [alluding to Romans 9:3] which was counted worthy to love Christ as no other man loved Him: which despised death and hell, yet was broken down by brothers' tears, (for he says, *"what mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?"*) [Acts 21:13] which was most enduring, and yet could not bear to be absent from the Thessalonians by the space of an hour! [1 Thessalonians 2:17; 3:10] Fain would I see the dust of hands that were in a chain, through the imposition of which the Spirit was furnished, through which the divine writings were written, (for *"behold how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand:"* [and again, *"The salutation of me Paul with my own hand,"*) 1 Corinthians 16:21] of those hands at the sight of which the serpent *"fell off into the fire."* [Acts 28:5] Fain would I see the dust of those eyes which were blinded gloriously, which recovered their sight again for the salvation of the world; which even in the body were counted worthy to see Christ, which saw earthly things, yet saw them not, which saw the

things which are not seen, which saw not sleep, which were watchful at midnight, which were not effected as eyes are. I would also see the dust of those feet, which ran through the world and were not weary; which were bound in the stocks when the prison shook, which went through parts habitable or uninhabited, which walked on so many journeys. And why need I speak of single parts? Fain would I see the tomb, where the armor of righteousness is laid up, the armor of light, the limbs which now live, but which in life were made dead; and in all whereof Christ lived, which were crucified to the world, which were Christ's members, which were clad in Christ, were a temple of the Spirit, an holy building, "*bound in the Spirit,*" [Acts 20:22] riveted to the fear of God, which had the marks of Christ. This body is a wall to that City, which is safer than all towers, and than thousands of battlements. And with it is that of Peter. For he honored him while alive. For he "*went up to see Peter,*" [Galatians 1:18] and therefore even when departed grace deigned to give him the same abode with him. Fain would I see the spiritual Lion. For as a lion breathing (Gr. sending,) [Canticles 2:15] forth fire ([πῦρ ἀφίεις]) upon the herds of foxes, so rushed he upon the clan of demons and philosophers, and as the burst of some thunderbolt, was borne down into the host of the devil. [Luke 13:32] For he did not even come to set the battle in array against him, since he feared so and trembled at him, as that if he saw his shadow, and heard his voice, he fled even at a distance. And so did he deliver over to him the fornicator, though at a distance, and again snatched him out of his hands [1 Corinthians 5:5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-11]; and so others also, that they might be taught "*not to blaspheme.*" [1 Timothy 1:20] And consider how he sent forth his own liegemen against him, rousing them, suppling them. And at one time he says to the Ephesians, "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.*" [Ephesians 6:12] Then too he puts our prize in

heavenly places. For we struggle not for things of the earth, he says, but for Heaven, and the things in the Heavens. And to others, he says, *"Do you not know that we shall judge Angels? How much more the things of this life?"*

[1 Corinthians 6:3] Let us then, laying all this to heart, stand nobly; for Paul was a man, partaking of the same nature with us, and having everything else in common with us. But because he showed such great love toward Christ, he went up above the Heavens, and stood with the Angels. And so if we too would rouse ourselves up some little, and kindle in ourselves that fire, we shall be able to emulate that holy man. For were this impossible, he would never have cried aloud, and said, *"Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."* [1 Corinthians 11:1] Let us not then admire him only, or be struck with him only, but imitate him, that we too may, when we depart hence, be counted worthy to see him, and to share the glory unutterable, which God grant that we may all attain to by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom, be glory to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, now and evermore. Amen.

Homily on First Corinthians

(Argument)

As Corinth is now the first city of Greece, so of old it prided itself on many temporal advantages, and more than all the rest, on excess of wealth. And on this account one of the heathen writers entitled the place 'the rich.' For it lies on the isthmus of the Peloponnesus, and had great facilities for traffic. The city was also full of numerous orators, and philosophers, and one.' I think, of the seven called wise men, was of this city. Now these things we have mentioned, not for ostentation's sake, nor to make, a display of great learning: (for indeed what is there in knowing these things?) but they are of use to us in the argument of the Epistle.

Paul also himself suffered many things in this city; and Christ, too, in this city appears to him and says, (Act. xviii. 10), 'Be not silent, but speak; for I have much people in this city:' and he remained there two years. In this city [Acts xix. 16. Corinth put here, by lapse of memory, for Ephesus]. also the devil went out, whom the Jews endeavoring to exorcise, suffered so grievously. In this city did those of the magicians, who repented, collect together their books and burn them, and there appeared to be fifty thousand. (Acts xix. 18. *arguriou* omitted.) In this city also, in the time of Gallio the Proconsul, Paul was beaten before the judgment seat.

The devil, therefore, seeing that a great and populous city had laid hold of the truth, a city admired for wealth and wisdom, and the head of Greece; (for Athens and Lacedaemon were then and since in a miserable state, the dominion having long ago fallen away from them;) and seeing that with great readiness they had received the word of God; what does he do? He

divides the men. For he knew that even the strongest kingdom of all, divided against itself, shall not stand. He had a vantage ground too, for this device in the wealth, the wisdom of the inhabitants. Hence certain men, having made parties of their own, and having become self-elected made themselves leaders of the people, and some sided with these, and some with those; with one sort, as being rich; with another, as wise and able to teach something out of the common. Who on their part, receiving them, set themselves up forsooth to teach more than the Apostle did: at which he was hinting, when he said, 'I was not able to speak unto you as unto spiritual' (ch. iii. 1.); evidently not his inability, but their infirmity, was the cause of their not having been abundantly instructed. And this, (ch. iv. 8.) 'You have become rich without us,' is the remark of one pointing that way. And this was no small matter, but of all things most pernicious; that the Church should be torn asunder.

And another sin, too, besides these, was openly committed there: namely, a person who had had intercourse with his step-mother not only escaped rebuke, but was even a leader of the multitude, and gave occasion to his followers to be conceited. Wherefore he says, (ch. 5. 2.) 'And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned.' And after this again, certain of those who as they pretended were of the more perfect sort, and who for gluttony's sake used to eat of things offered unto idols, and sit at meat in the temples, Were bringing all to ruin. Others again, having contentions and strifes about money, committed unto the heathen courts (*tois exwqen sicadthriois*) all matters of that kind. Many persons also wearing long hair used to go about among them; whom he orders to be shorn. There was another fault besides, no trifling one; their eating in the churches apart by themselves, and giving no share to the needy.

And again, they were erring in another point, being puffed up with the gifts; and hence jealous of one another; which was also the chief cause of the distraction of the Church. The doctrine of the Resurrection, too, was lame (*ekwleue*) among them: for some of them had no strong belief that there is any resurrection of bodies, having still on them the disease of Grecian foolishness. For indeed all these things were the progeny of the madness which belongs to Heathen Philosophy, and she was the mother of all mischief. Hence, likewise, they had become divided; in this respect also having learned of the philosophers. For these latter were no less at mutual variance, always, through love of rule and vain glory contradicting one another's opinions, and bent upon making some new discovery in addition to all that was before. And the cause of this was, their having begun to trust themselves to reasonings.

They had written accordingly to him by the hand of Fortunatus and Stephanas and Achaicus, by whom also he himself writes; and this he has indicated in the end of the Epistle: not however upon all these subjects, but about marriage and virginity; wherefore also he said, (ch. vii. 1.) 'Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote' etc. And he proceeds to give injunctions, both on the points about which they had written, and those about which they had not written; having learnt with accuracy all their failings. Timothy, too, he sends with the letters, knowing that letters indeed have great force, yet that not a little would be added to them by the presence of the disciple also.

Now whereas those who had divided the Church among themselves, from a feeling of shame lest they should seem to have done so for ambition's sake, contrived cloaks for what had happened, their teaching (forsooth) more perfect doctrines, and being wiser than all others; Paul sets himself first against the disease itself, plucking up the root of the evils, and

its offshoot, the spirit of separation. And he uses great boldness of speech: for these were his own disciples, more than all others. Wherefore he saith (ch. ix. 2.) 'If to others I be not an Apostle, yet at least I am unto you; for the seal of my apostleship are ye.' Moreover they were in a weaker condition (to say the least of it) than the others. Wherefore he says, (ch. iii. 1, 2. *oude* for *oute*). 'For I have not spoken unto you as unto spiritual; for hitherto you were not able, neither yet even now are ye able.' (This he says, that they might not suppose that he speaks thus in regard of the time past alone.)

However, it was utterly improbable that all should have been corrupted; rather there were some among them who were very holy. And this he signified in the middle of the Epistle, where he says, (ch. iv. 3, 6.) 'To me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you:' and adds, 'these things I have in a figure transferred unto myself and Apollos.'

Since then from arrogance all these evils were springing, and from men's thinking that they knew something out of the common, this he purges away first of all, and in beginning says,

Homily 1 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours: Grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. See how immediately, from the very beginning, he casts down their pride, and dashes to the ground all their fond imagination, in that he speaks of himself as "*called*." For what I have learned, says he, I discovered not myself, nor acquired by my own wisdom, but while I was persecuting and laying waste the Church I was called. Now here of Him that calls is everything: of him that is called, nothing, (so to speak,) but only to obey.

"Of Jesus Christ." Your teacher is Christ; and do you register the names of men, as patrons of your doctrine?

"Through the will of God." For it was God who willed that you should be saved in this way. We ourselves have wrought no good thing, but by the will of God we have attained to this salvation; and because it seemed good to him, we were called, not because we were worthy.

"And Sosthenes our brother." Another instance of his modesty; he puts in the same rank with himself one inferior to Apollos; for great was the interval between Paul and Sosthenes. Now if where the interval was so wide he stations with himself one far beneath him, what can they have to say who despise their equals?

"Unto the Church of God." Not *"of this or of that man,"* but of God.

"Which is at Corinth." Do you see how at each word he puts down their swelling pride; training their thoughts in every way for heaven? He calls it, too, the Church *"of God;"* showing that it ought to be united. For if it be *"of God,"* it is united, and it is one, not in Corinth only, but also in all the world: for the Church's name ([ἐκκλησία]: properly *an assembly*) is not a name of separation, but of unity and concord.

"To the sanctified in Christ Jesus." Again the name of Jesus; the names of men he finds no place for. But what is Sanctification? The Laver, the Purification. For he reminds them of their own uncleanness, from which he had freed them; and so persuades them to lowliness of mind; for not by their own good deeds, but by the loving-kindness of God, had they been sanctified.

"Called to be Saints." For even this, to be saved by faith, is not says he, of yourselves; for you did not first draw near, but were called; so that not even this small matter is yours altogether. However, though you had drawn near, accountable as you are for innumerable wickednesses, not even so would the grace be yours, but God's. Hence also, writing to the Ephesians, he said, [Ephesians 2:8] *"By grace have you been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves;"* not even the faith is yours altogether; for you were not first with your belief, but obeyed a call.

"With all who call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Not *"of this or that man,"* but *"the Name of the Lord."*

2. *"In every place, both theirs and ours."* For although the letter be written to the Corinthians only, yet he makes mention of all the faithful that are in all the earth; showing that the Church throughout the world must be one, however separate in various places; and much more, that in Corinth. And though the place separate, the Lord binds them together, being

common to all. Wherefore also uniting them he adds, *"both theirs and ours."* And this is far more powerful [to unite], than the other [to separate]. For as men in one place, having many and contrary masters, become distracted, and their one place helps them not to be of one mind, their masters giving orders at variance with each other, and drawing each their own way, according to what Christ says, [Matthew 6:24] *"You cannot serve God and Mammon;"* so those in different places, if they have not different lords but one only, are not by the places injured in respect of unanimity, the One Lord binding them together. *"I say not then, (so he speaks,) that with Corinthians only, you being Corinthians ought to be of one mind, but with all that are in the whole world, inasmuch as you have a common Master."* This is also why he has a second time added *"our;"* for since he had said, *"the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord,"* lest he should appear to the inconsiderate to be making a distinction, he subjoins again, *"both our Lord and theirs."*

3. That my meaning may be clearer, I will read it according to its sense thus: *"Paul and Sosthenes to the Church of God which is in Corinth and to all who call upon the Name of Him who is both our Lord and theirs in every place, whether in Rome or wheresoever else they may be: grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Or again thus; which I also believe to be rather more correct: *"Paul and Sosthenes to those that are at Corinth, who have been sanctified, called to be Saints, together with all who call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in place, both theirs and ours;"* that is to say, *"grace unto you, and peace unto you, who are at Corinth, who have been sanctified and called;"* not to you alone, but *"with all who in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and theirs."*

Now if our peace be of grace, why have you high thoughts? Why are You so puffed up, being saved by grace? And if you have peace with God, why wish to assign yourself to others? Since this is what separation comes to. For what if you be at "*peace*" with this man, and with the other even find "*grace*?" My prayer is that both these may be yours from God; both from Him I say, and towards Him. For neither do they abide ([μένει], Savile in marg.) secure except they enjoy the influence from above; nor unless God be their object will they anything avail you: for it profits us nothing, though we be peaceful towards all men, if we be at war with God; even as it is no harm to us, although by all men we are held as enemies, if with God we are at peace. And again it is no gain to us, if all men approve, and the Lord be offended; neither is there any danger, though all shun and hate us, if with God we have acceptance and love. For that which is verily grace, and verily peace, comes of God, since he who finds grace in God's sight, though he suffer ten thousand horrors, fears no one; I say not only, no man, but not even the devil himself; but he that has offended God suspects all men, though he seem to be in security. For human nature is unstable, and not friends only and brethren, but fathers also, before now, have been altogether changed and often for a little thing he whom they begot, the branch of their planting, has been to them, more than all foes, an object of persecution. Children, too, have cast off their fathers. Thus, if you will mark it, David was in favor with God, Absalom was in favor with men. What was the end of each, and which of them gained most honor, you know. Abraham was in favor with God, Pharaoh with men; for to gratify him they gave up the just man's wife. [See St. John Chrysostom on Genesis 12:17] Which then of the two was the more illustrious, and the happy man? Every one knows. And why speak I of righteous men; The Israelites were in favor with God, but they were hated by men, the Egyptians; but nevertheless they prevailed

against their haters and vanquished them, with how great triumph, is well known to you all.

For this, therefore, let all of us labor earnestly; whether one be a slave, let him pray for this, that he may find grace with God rather than with his master; or a wife, let her seek grace from God her Saviour rather than from her husband; or a soldier, in preference to his king and commander let him seek that favor which comes from above. For thus among men also will you be an object of love.

4. But how shall a man find grace with God? How else, except by lowliness of mind? For God, says one, [James 4:6] *"resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble; and, [Psalm 51:17. ταταπεινωμένην] the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit, and a heart that is brought low God will not despise."* For if with men humility is so lovely, much more with God. Thus both they of the Gentiles found grace and the Jews no other way fell from grace; [Romans 10:13] *"for they were not subject unto the righteousness of God."* The lowly man of whom I am speaking, is pleasing and delightful to all men, and dwells in continual peace, and has in him no ground for contentions. For though you insult him, though you abuse him, whatsoever you say, he will be silent and will bear it meekly, and will have so great peace towards all men as one cannot even describe. Yea, and with God also. For the commandments of God are to be at peace with men: and thus our whole life is made prosperous, through peace one with another. For no man can injure God: His nature is imperishable, and above all suffering. Nothing makes the Christian so admirable as lowliness of mind. Hear, for instance, Abraham saying, [Genesis 18:27] *"But I am but dust and ashes;"* and again, God [saying] of Moses, that [Numbers 12:3] *"he was the meekest of all men."* For nothing was ever more humble than he; who, being leader of so great a people, and having overwhelmed in the sea the king and the

host of all the Egyptians, as if they had been flies; and having wrought so many wonders both in Egypt and by the Red Sea and in the wilderness, and received such high testimony, yet felt exactly as if he had been an ordinary person, and as a son-in-law was humbler than his father-in-law, [Exodus 18:24] and took advice from him, and was not indignant, nor did he say, *"What is this? After such and so great achievements, are you come to us with your counsel?"* This is what most people feel; though a man bring the best advice, despising it, because of the lowliness of the person. But not so did he: rather through lowliness of mind he wrought all things well. Hence also he despised the courts of kings, [Hebrews 11:24-26] since he was lowly indeed: for the sound mind and the high spirit are the fruit of humility. For of how great nobleness and magnanimity, do you think, was it a token, to despise the kingly palace and table? Since kings among the Egyptians are honored as gods, and enjoy wealth and treasures inexhaustible. But nevertheless, letting go all these and throwing away the very sceptres of Egypt, he hastened to join himself unto captives, and men worn down with toil, whose strength was spent in the clay and the making of bricks, men whom his own slaves abhorred, (for, says he [ἐβδελύσσοντο], Septuagint. Exodus 1:2 *"The Egyptians abhorred them;"*) unto these he ran and preferred them before their masters. From whence it is plain, that whoso is lowly, the same is high and great of soul. For pride comes from an ordinary mind and an ignoble spirit, but moderation, from greatness of mind and a lofty soul.

5. And if you please, let us try each by examples. For tell me, what was there ever more exalted than Abraham? And yet it was he that said, *"I am but dust and ashes;"* it was he who said, [Genesis 13:8] *"Let there be no strife between me and you."* But this man, so humble, [Genesis 14:21-24] despised (*"Persian,"* i.e. perhaps, *"of Elam."*) Persian spoils, and regarded

not Barbaric trophies; and this he did of much highmindedness, and of a spirit nobly nurtured. For he is indeed exalted who is truly humble; (not the flatterer nor the dissembler;) for true greatness is one thing, and arrogance another. And this is plain from hence; if one man esteem clay to be clay, and despise it, and another admire the clay as gold, and account it a great thing; which, I ask, is the man of exalted mind? Is it not he who refuses to admire the clay? And which, abject and mean? Is it not he who admires it, and set much store by it? Just so do thou esteem of this case also; that he who calls himself but dust and ashes is exalted, although he say it out of humility; but that he who does not consider himself dust and ashes, but treats himself lovingly and has high thoughts, this man for his part must be counted mean, esteeming little things to be great. Whence it is clear that out of great loftiness of thought the patriarch spoke that saying, *"I am but dust and ashes;"* from loftiness of thought, not from arrogance.

For as in bodies it is one thing to be healthy and plump, ([σφριγῶντα], firm and elastic.) and another thing to be swoln, although both indicate a full habit of flesh, (but in this case of unsound, in that of healthful flesh;) so also here: it is one thing to be arrogant, which is, as it were, to be swoln, and another thing to be high-souled, which is to be in a healthy state. And again, one man is tall from the stature of his person; another, being short, by adding buskins becomes taller; now tell me, which of the two should we call tall and large? Is it not quite plain, him whose height is from himself? For the other has it as something not his own; and stepping upon things low in themselves, turns out a tall person. Such is the case with many men who mount themselves up on wealth and glory; which is not exaltation, for he is exalted who wants none of these things, but despises them, and has his greatness from himself. Let us therefore become humble that we may become exalted; [Luke 14:11] *"For he that humbles himself shall be*

exalted." Now the self-willed man is not such as this; rather he is of all characters the most ordinary. For the bubble, too, is inflated, but the inflation is not sound; wherefore we call these persons "*puffed up.*"

Whereas the sober-minded man has no high thoughts, not even in high fortunes, knowing his own low estate; but the vulgar even in his trifling concerns indulges a proud fancy.

6. Let us then acquire that height which comes by humility. Let us look into the nature of human things, that we may kindle with the longing desire of the things to come; for in no other way is it possible to become humble, except by the love of what is divine and the contempt of what is present. For just as a man on the point of obtaining a kingdom, if instead of that purple robe one offer him some trivial compliment, will count it to be nothing; so shall we also laugh to scorn all things present, if we desire that other sort of honor. Do you not see the children, when in their play they make a band of soldiers, and heralds precede them and lictors, and a boy marches in the midst in the general's place, how childish it all is? Just such are all human affairs; yea and more worthless than these: today they are, and tomorrow they are not. Let us therefore be above these things; and let us not only not desire them, but even be ashamed if any one hold them forth to us. For thus, casting out the love of these things, we shall possess that other love which is divine, and shall enjoy immortal glory. Which may God grant us all to obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom be to the Father, together with the holy and good Spirit, the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 2 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:4-5

I thank my God always concerning you, for the Grace of God which was given you in Jesus Christ; that in every thing you were enriched in him.

1. That which he exhorts others to do, saying, "*[Philippians 4:6] Let your requests with thanksgiving be made known unto God,*" the same also he used to do himself: teaching us to begin always from these words, and before all things to give thanks unto God. For nothing is so acceptable to God as that men should be thankful, both for themselves and for others: wherefore also he prefaces almost every Epistle with this. But the occasion for his doing so is even more urgent here than in the other Epistles. For he that gives thanks, does so, both as being well off, and as in acknowledgment of a favor: now a favor is not a debt nor a requital nor a payment: which indeed every where is important to be said, but much more in the case of the Corinthians who were gaping after the dividers of the Church.

2. "*Unto my God.*" Out of great affection he seizes on that which is common, and makes it his own; as the prophets also from time to time use to say, [Psalm 43:4; 62:1] "*O God, my God;*" and by way of encouragement he incites them to use the same language also themselves. For such expressions belong to one who is retiring from all secular things, and moving towards Him whom he calls on with so much earnestness: since he alone can truly say this, who from things of this life is ever mounting upwards unto God, and always preferring Him to all, and giving thanks continually, not [only] for the grace already given, but whatever blessing has been since at any time bestowed, for this also he offers unto Him the

same praise. Wherefore he says not merely, *"I give thanks,"* but *"at all times, concerning you;"* instructing them to be thankful both always, and to no one else save God only.

3. *"For the grace of God."* Do you see how from every quarter he draws topics for correcting them? For where *"grace"* is, *"works"* are not; where *"works,"* it is no more *"grace."* If therefore it be *"grace,"* why are you high-minded? Whence is it that you are puffed up?

"Which is given you." And by whom was it given? By me, or by another Apostle? Not at all, but *"by Jesus Christ."* For the expression, *"In Jesus Christ,"* signifies this. Observe how in various places he uses the word [ἐν], *"in,"* instead of [δι' οὗ], *"through means of whom;"* therefore its sense is no less.

"That in every thing you were enriched." Again, by whom? By Him, is the reply. And not merely *"you were enriched,"* but *"in every thing."* Since then it is first of all, *"riches"* then, *"riches of God,"* next, *"in every thing,"* and lastly, *"through the Only-Begotten,"* reflect on the ineffable treasure!

1 Corinthians 1:5

"In all utterance, and all knowledge." *"Word"* [*"or utterance,"*] not such as the heathen, but that of God. For there is knowledge without *"word,"* and there is knowledge with *"word."* For so there are many who possess knowledge, but have not the power of speech; as those who are uneducated and unable to exhibit clearly what they have in their mind. You, says he, are not such as these, but competent both to understand and to speak.

1 Corinthians 1:6

"Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." Under the color of praises and thanksgiving he touches them sharply. *"For not by heathen philosophy,"* says he, neither by heathen discipline, but *"the grace of God,"* and by the *"riches,"* and the *"knowledge,"* and the *"word"* given by Him, were you enabled to learn the doctrines of the truth, and to be confirmed unto the testimony of the Lord; that is, unto the Gospel. For you had the benefit of many signs, many wonders, unspeakable grace, to make you receive the Gospel. If therefore you were established by signs and grace, why do you waver? Now these are the words of one both reproofing, and at the same time prepossessing them in his favor.

1 Corinthians 1:7

4. *"So that you come behind in no gift."* A great question here arises. They who had been *"enriched in all utterance,"* so as in no respect to *"come behind in any gift,"* are they carnal? For if they were such at the beginning, much more now. How then does he call them *"carnal?"* For, says he, [1 Corinthians 3:1] *"I was not able to speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal."* What must we say then? That having in the beginning believed, and obtained all gifts, (for indeed they sought them earnestly,) they became remiss afterwards. Or, if not so, that not unto all are either these things said or those; but the one to such as were amenable to his censures, the other to such as were adorned with his praises. For as to the fact that they still had gifts; [1 Corinthians 14:26-29] *"Each one,"* says he, *"has a psalm, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation; let all things be done unto edifying."* And, *"Let the prophets speak two or three."* Or we may state it somewhat differently; that as it is usual with us to call the greater part the whole, so also he has spoken in this place. Withal, I think he hints at his own proceedings; for he too had shown forth signs; even as also he says in the second Epistle to them, [2 Corinthians 12:12-13] *"Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience:"* and again, *"For what is there wherein you were inferior to other churches?"*

Or, as I was saying, he both reminds them of his own miracles and speaks thus with an eye to those who were still approved. For many holy men were there who had *"set themselves to minister unto the saints,"* and had become *"the first fruits of Achaia;"* as he declares [1 Corinthians 16:15] towards the end.

5. In any case, although the praises be not very close to the truth, still however they are inserted by way of precaution, ([οικονομικῶς]) preparing the way beforehand for his discourse. For whoever at the very outset speaks things unpleasant, excludes his words from a hearing among the weaker: since if the hearers be his equals in degree they feel angry; if vastly inferior they will be vexed. To avoid this, he begins with what seem to be praises. I say, seem; for not even did this praise belong to them, but to the grace of God. For that they had remission of sins, and were justified, this was of the Gift from above. Wherefore also he dwells upon these points, which show the loving-kindness of God, in order that he may the more fully purge out their malady.

6. *"Waiting for the revelation ([ἀποκάλυψιν].) of our Lord Jesus Christ."* *"Why do you make much ado,"* says he, *"why are you troubled that Christ is not come? Nay, he has come; and the Day is henceforth at the doors."* And consider his wisdom; how withdrawing them from human considerations he terrifies them by mention of the fearful judgment-seat, and thus implying that not only the beginnings must be good, but the end also. For with all these gifts, and with all else that is good, we must be mindful of that Day: and there is need of many labors to be able to come unto the end. *"Revelation"* is his word; implying that although He be not seen, yet He is, and is present even now, and then shall appear. Therefore there is need of patience: for to this end did you receive the wonders, that you may remain firm.

1 Corinthians 1:8

7. *"Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that you may be unreprouable."* Here he seems to court them, but the saying is free from all flattery; for he knows also how to press them home; as when he says, [1 Corinthians 4:18-21] *"Now some are puffed up as though I would not come to you:"* and again, *"What will you? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"* And, [2 Corinthians 13:3] *"Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me."* But he is also covertly accusing them: for, to say, *"He shall confirm,"* and the word *"unreprouable"* marks them out as still wavering, and liable to reproof.

But do thou consider how he always fastens them as with nails to the Name of Christ. And not any man nor teacher, but continually the Desired One Himself is remembered by him: setting himself, as it were to arouse those who were heavy-headed after some debauch. For no where in any other Epistle does the Name of Christ occur so continually. But here it is, many times in a few verses; and by means of it he weaves together, one may say, the whole of the proem. Look at it from the beginning. *"Paul called [to be] an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have been sanctified in Jesus Christ, who call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, grace [be] unto you and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God for the grace which has been given you by Jesus Christ, even as the testimony of Christ has been confirmed in you, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall confirm you unreprouable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you have been called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. And I beseech you by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Do you see the constant

repetition of the Name of Christ? From whence it is plain even to the most unobservant, that not by chance nor unwittingly he does this, but in order that by incessant application of that glorious Name he may foment their inflammation, and purge out the corruption of the disease.

1 Corinthians 1:9

8. *"God is faithful, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son."* Wonderful! How great a thing says he here! How vast in the magnitude of the gift which he declares! Into the fellowship of the Only-Begotten have you been called, and do you addict yourselves unto men? What can be worse than this wretchedness? And how have you been called? By the Father. For since *"through Him,"* and *"in Him,"* were phrases which he was constantly employing in regard of the Son, lest men might suppose that he so mentions Him as being less, he ascribes the same to the Father. For not by this one and that one, says he, but *"by the Father"* have you been called; by Him also have you been *"enriched."* Again, *"you have been called;"* ye did not yourselves approach. But what means, *"into the fellowship of His Son?"* Hear him declaring this very thing more clearly elsewhere. [2 Timothy 2:12] If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him; if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him. Then, because it was a great thing which He had said, he adds an argument fraught with unanswerable conviction; for, says he, *"God is faithful,"* i.e. *"true."* Now if *"true,"* what things He has promised He will also perform. And He has promised that He will make us partakers of His only-begotten Son; for to this end also did He call us. For [Romans 11:29] *"His gifts, and the calling of God,"* are without repentance.

These things, by a kind of divine art he inserts thus early, lest after the vehemence of the reproofs they might fall into despair. For assuredly God's part will ensue, if we be not quite impatient of His rein. ([ἀφηνιάσωμεν]) As the Jews, being called, would not receive the blessings; but this was no longer of Him that called, but of their lack of sense. For He indeed was

willing to give, but they, by refusing to receive, cast themselves away. For, had He called to a painful and toilsome undertaking, not even in that case were they pardonable in making excuse; however, they would have been able to say that so it was: but if the call be unto cleansing, [Comp. 1 Corinthians 1:4-7] and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and grace, and a free gift, and the good things in store, which eye has not seen, nor ear heard; and it be God that calls, and calls by Himself; what pardon can they deserve, who come not running to Him? Let no one therefore accuse God; for unbelief comes not of Him that calls, but of those who start away ([ἀποπηδῶντας]) from Him.

9. But some man will say, *"He ought to bring men in, even against their will."* Away with this. He does not use violence, nor compel; for who that bids to honors, and crowns, and banquets, and festivals, drags people, unwilling and bound? No one. For this is the part of one inflicting an insult. Unto hell He sends men against their will, but unto the kingdom He calls willing minds. To the fire He brings men bound and bewailing themselves: to the endless state of blessings not so. Else it is a reproach to the very blessings themselves, if their nature be not such as that men should run to them of their own accord and with many thanks.

"Whence it is then," say you, *"that all men do not choose them?"* From their own infirmity. *"And wherefore does He not cut off their infirmity?"* And how tell me— in what way— ought He to cut it off? Hath He not made a world that teaches His loving-kindness and His power? For [Psalm 19:1] *"the heavens,"* says one, *"declare the glory of God."* Hath He not also sent prophets? Hath He not both called and honored us? Hath He not done wonders? Hath He not given a law both written and natural? Hath He not sent His Son? Hath he not commissioned Apostles? Hath He not wrought sins? Hath He not threatened hell? Hath He not promised the kingdom?

Does He not every day make His sun to rise? Are not the things which He has enjoined so simple and easy, that many transcend His commandments in the greatness of their self-denial? *"What was there to do unto the vineyard and I have not done it?"* [Isaiah 5:4]

10. *"And why,"* say you, *"did He not make knowledge and virtue natural to us?"* Who speaks thus? The Greek or the Christian? Both of them, indeed, but not about the same things: for the one raises his objection with a view to knowledge, the other with a view to conduct. First, then, we will reply to him who is on our side; for I do not so much regard those without, as our own members.

What then says the Christian? *"It were meet to have implanted in us the knowledge itself of virtue."* He has implanted it; for if he had not done so, whence should we have known what things are to be done, what left undone? Whence are the laws and the tribunals? But *"God should have imparted not [merely] knowledge, but also the very doing of it [virtue]."* For what then would you have to be rewarded, if the whole were of God? For tell me, does God punish in the same manner you and the Greek upon committing sin? Surely not. For up to a certain point you have confidence, viz. that which arises from the true knowledge. What then, if any one should now say that on the score of knowledge thou and the Greek will be accounted of like desert? Would it not disgust you? I think so, indeed. For you would say that the Greek, having of his own wherewith to attain knowledge, was not willing. If then the latter also should say that God ought to have implanted knowledge in us naturally, will you not laugh him to scorn, and say to him, *"But why did you not seek for it? Why were you not in earnest even as I?"* And you will stand firm with much confidence, and say that it was extreme folly to blame God for not implanting knowledge by nature. And this you will say, because you have obtained

what appertains to knowledge. So also had you performed what appertains to practice, you would not have raised these questions: but you are tired of virtuous practice, therefore you shelter yourself with these inconsiderate words. But how could it be at all right to cause that by necessity one should become good? Then shall we next have the brute beasts contending with us about virtue, seeing that some of them are more temperate than ourselves.

But you say, *"I had rather have been good by necessity, and so forfeited all rewards, than evil by deliberate choice, to be punished and suffer vengeance."* But it is impossible that one should ever be good by necessity. If therefore you know not what ought to be done, show it, and then we will tell you what is right to say. But if you know that uncleanness is wicked, wherefore do you not fly from the evil thing?

"I cannot," you say. But others who have done greater things than this will plead against you, and will more than prevail to stop your mouth. For thou, perhaps, though living with a wife, are not chaste; but another even without a wife keeps his chastity inviolate. Now what excuse have you for not keeping the rule, while another even leaps beyond the lines that have been drawn to mark it?

But you say, *"I am not of this sort in my bodily frame, or my turn of mind."* That is for want, not of power, but of will. For thus I prove that all have a certain aptness towards virtue: That which a man cannot do, neither will he be able to do though necessity be laid upon him; but, if, necessity being laid upon him, he is able, he that leaves it undone, leaves it undone out of choice. The kind of thing I mean is this: to fly up and be borne towards heaven, having a heavy body, is even simply impossible. What then, if a king should command one to do this, and threaten death, saying, *"Those men who do not fly, I decree that they lose their heads, or be burnt, or some other such punishment:"* would any one obey him? Surely not. For

nature is not capable of it. But if in the case of chastity this same thing were done, and he were to lay down laws that the unclean should be punished, be burnt, be scourged, should suffer the extremity of torture, would not many obey the law? *"No"* you will say: *"for there is appointed, even now, a law forbidding to commit adultery and all do not obey it."* Not because the fear looses its power, but because the greater part expect to be unobserved. So that if when they were on the point of committing an unclean action the legislator and the judge came before them, the fear would be strong enough to cast out the lust. Nay, were I to apply another kind of force inferior to this; were I to take the man and remove him from the beloved person, and shut him up close in chains, he will be able to bear it, without suffering any great harm. Let us not say then that such an one is by nature evil: for if a man were by nature good, he could never at any time become evil; and if he were by nature evil, he could never be good. But now we see that changes take place rapidly, and that men quickly shift from this side to the other, and from that fall back again into this. And these things we may see not in the Scriptures only, for instance, that publicans have become apostles; and disciples, traitors; and harlots, chaste; and robbers, men of good repute; and magicians have worshipped; and ungodly men passed over unto godliness, both in the New Testament and in the Old; but even every day a man may see many such things occurring. Now if things were natural, they could not change. For so we, being by nature susceptible, could never by any exertions become void of feeling. For that which is whatever it is by nature, can never fall away from such its natural condition. No one, for example, ever changed from sleeping to not sleeping: no one from a state of corruption unto incorruption: no one from hunger to the perpetual absence of that sensation. Wherefore neither are these things matters of accusation, nor do we reproach ourselves for them; nor ever did any one, meaning to

blame another, say to him, "*O thou, corruptible and subject to passion:*" but either adultery or fornication, or something of that kind, we always lay to the charge of those who are responsible; and we bring them before judges, who blame and punish, and in the contrary cases award honors.

11. Since then both from our conduct towards one another, and from others' conduct to us when judged, and from the things about which we have written laws, and from the things wherein we condemn ourselves, though there be no one to accuse us; and from the instances of our becoming worse through indolence, and better through fear; and from the cases wherein we see others doing well and arriving at the height of self-command, ([φιλοσοφίας]) it is quite clear that we also have it in our power to do well: why do we, the most part, deceive ourselves in vain with heartless pretexts and excuses, bringing not only no pardon, but even punishment intolerable? When we ought to keep before our eyes that fearful day, and to give heed to virtue; and after a little labor, obtain the incorruptible crowns? For these words will be no defence to us; rather our fellow-servants, and those who have practised the contrary virtues, will condemn all who continue in sin: the cruel man will be condemned by the merciful; the evil, by the good; the fierce, by the gentle; the grudging, by the courteous; the vain-glorious, by the self-denying; the indolent, by the serious; the intemperate, by the sober-minded. Thus will God pass judgment upon us, and will set in their place both companies; on one bestowing praise, on the other punishment. But God forbid that any of those present should be among the punished and dishonored, but rather among those who are crowned and the winners of the kingdom. Which may God grant us all to obtain through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom unto the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and unto everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 3 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:10

Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak of the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

What I have continually been saying, that we must frame our rebukes gently and gradually, this Paul does here also; in that, being about to enter upon a subject full of many dangers and enough to tear up the Church from her foundations he uses very mild language. His word is that he "*beseeches*" them, and beseeches them "*through Christ*;" as though not even he were sufficient alone to make this supplication, and to prevail.

But what is this, "*I beseech you through Christ*?" "*I take Christ to fight on my side, and to aid me, His injured and insulted Name.*" An awful way of speaking indeed! lest they should prove hard and shameless: for sin makes men restless. Wherefore if at once ([ἄν μὲν εὐθέως ἐπιπλήξῃς] Savil. [ἄν μὴ] Ben.) you sharply rebuke you make a man fierce and impudent: but if you put him to shame, you bow down his neck, you check his confidence, you make him hang down his head. Which object being Paul's also, he is content for a while to beseech them through the Name of Christ. And what, of all things, is the object of his request?

"That ye may all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions [schisms] among you." The emphatic force of the word "*schism*," I mean the name itself, was a sufficient accusation. For it was not that they had become many parts, each entire within itself, but rather the One [Body

which originally existed] had perished. For had they been entire Churches, there might be many of them; but if they were divisions, then that first One had gone. For that which is entire within itself not only does not become many by division into many parts, but even the original One is lost. Such is the nature of divisions.

2. In the next place, because he had sharply dealt with them by using the word "*schism*," he again softens and soothes them, saying, "*That ye may be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" That is; since he had said, "*That ye may all speak the same thing;*" "*do not suppose,*" he adds, "*that I said concord should be only in words; I seek for that harmony which is of the mind.*" But since there is such a thing as agreement in words, and that hearty, not however on all subjects, therefore he added this, "*That ye may be perfected together.*" For he that is united in one thing, but in another dissents, is no longer "*perfected*," nor fitted in to complete accordance. There is also such a thing as harmony of opinions, where there is not yet harmony of sentiment; for instance, when having the same faith we are not joined together in love: for thus, in opinions we are one, (for we think the same things,) but in sentiment not so. And such was the case at that time; this person choosing one [leader], and that, another. For this reason he says it is necessary to agree both in "*mind*" and in "*judgment.*" For it was not from any difference in faith that the schisms arose, but from the division of their judgment through human contentiousness.

3. But seeing that whoso is blamed is unabashed so long as he has no witnesses, observe how, not permitting them to deny the fact, he adduces some to bear witness.

1 Corinthians 1:11

"For it has been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe." Neither did he say this at the very beginning, but first he brought forward his charge; as one who put confidence in his informants. Because, had it not been so, he would not have found fault: for Paul was not a person to believe lightly. Neither then did he immediately say, *"it has been signified,"* lest he might seem to blame on their authority: neither does he omit all mention of them, lest he should seem to speak only from himself. And again, he styles them *"brethren;"* for although the fault be plain, there is nothing against calling people brethren still. Consider also his prudence in not speaking of any distinct person, but of the entire family; so as not to make them hostile towards the informer: for in this way he both protects him, and fearlessly opens the accusation. For he had an eye to the benefit not of the one side only, but of the other also. Wherefore he says not, *"It has been declared to me by certain,"* but he indicates also the household, lest they might suppose that he was inventing.

4. What was declared? *"That there are contentions among you."* Thus, when he is rebuking them, he says, *"That there be no divisions among you;"* but when he is reporting the statements of others, he does it more gently; saying, For it has been declared unto me...that there are contentions among you; in order that he might not bring trouble upon the informants.

1 Corinthians 1:12

Next he declares also the kind of contention.

"That each one of you says, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas." *"I say, contentions,"* says he, *"I mean, not about private matters, but of the more grievous sort."* *"That each one of you says;"* for the corruption pervaded not a part, but the whole of the Church. And yet they were not speaking about himself, nor about Peter, nor about Apollos; but he signifies that if these were not to be leaned on, much less others. For that they had not spoken about them, he says further on: *"And these things I have transferred in a figure unto myself and Apollos, that you may learn in us not to go beyond the things which are written."* For if it were not right for them to call themselves by the name of Paul, and of Apollos, and of Cephas, much less of any others. If under the Teacher and the first of the Apostles, and one that had instructed so much people, it were not right to enroll themselves, much less under those who were nothing. By way of hyperbole then, seeking to withdraw them from their disease, he sets down these names. Besides, he makes his argument less severe, not mentioning by name the rude dividers of the Church, but concealing them, as behind a sort of masks, with the names of the Apostles.

"I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas." Not esteeming himself before Peter has he set his name last, but preferring Peter to himself, and that greatly. He arranged his statement in the way of climax, ([κατὰ ἀνξισιν]) that he might not be supposed to do this for envy; or, from jealousy, to be detracting from the honor of others. Wherefore also he put his own name first. For he who puts himself foremost to be rejected, does so not for love of honor, but for extreme contempt of this sort of reputation.

He puts himself, you see, in the way of the whole attack, and then mentions Apollos, and then Cephas. Not therefore to magnify himself did he do this, but in speaking of wrong things he administers the requisite correction in his own person first.

5. But that those who addicted themselves to this or that man were in error, is evident. And rightly he rebukes them, saying, "*You do not well in that you say, 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas.'*" But why did he add, "*And I of Christ?*" For although these who addicted themselves to men were in error, not surely ([οὔδε πού] Bened. [οὐ δὴ πού] Savil.) those who dedicated themselves unto Christ. But this was not his charge, that they called themselves by the Name of Christ, but that they did not all call themselves by that Name alone. And I think that he added this of himself, wishing to make the accusation more grievous, and to point out that by this rule Christ must be considered as belonging to one party only: although they were not so using the Name themselves. For that this was what he hinted at he declared in the sequel, saying,

1 Corinthians 1:13

"Is Christ divided." What he says comes to this: *"You have cut in pieces Christ, and distributed His body."* Here is anger! Here is chiding! Here are words full of indignation! For whenever instead of arguing he interrogates only, his doing so implies a confessed absurdity.

But some say that he glanced at something else, in saying, *"Christ is divided:"* as if he had said, *"He has distributed to men and parted the Church, and taken one share Himself, giving them the other."* Then in what follows, he labors to overthrow this absurdity, saying, *"Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?"* Observe his Christ-loving mind; how thenceforth he brings the whole matter to a point in his own name, showing, and more than showing, that this honor belongs to no one. And that no one might think it was envy which moved him to say these things, therefore he is constantly putting himself forward. Observe, too, his considerate way, in that he says not, *"Did Paul make the world? Did Paul from nothing produce you into being?"* But only those things which belonged as choice treasures to the faithful, and were regarded with great solicitude—those he specifies, the Cross, and Baptism, and the blessings following on these. For the loving-kindness of God towards men is shown by the creation of the world also: in nothing, however, so much as by the ([τῆς συγκαταβάσεως]) condescension through the Cross. And he said not, *"did Paul die for you?"* but, *"was Paul crucified?"* setting down also the kind of death.

"Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" Again, he says not, *"did Paul baptize you?"* For he did baptize many: but this was not the question, by whom they had been baptized, but, into whose name they had been

baptized! For since this also was a cause of schisms, their being called after the name of those who baptized them, he corrects this error likewise saying, *"Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" "Tell me not,"* says he, *"who baptized, but into whose name. For not he that baptizes, but he who is invoked in the Baptism, is the subject of enquiry. For this is He who forgives our sins. "*

And at this point he stays the discourse, and does not pursue the subject any further. For he says not, *"Did Paul declare to you the good things to come? Did Paul promise you the kingdom of heaven?"* Why, then, I ask, does he not add these questions also? Because it is not all as one, to promise a kingdom and to be crucified. For the former neither had danger nor brought shame; but the latter, all these. Moreover, he proves the former from the latter: for having said, [Romans 8:32] *"He that spared not His own Son,"* he adds, *"How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"* And again, [Romans 5:10] *"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled unto God by the death of His Son, much more bring reconciled, we shall be saved."* This was one reason for his not adding what I just mentioned: and also because the one they had not as yet, but of the other they had already made trial. The one were in promise; the other had already come to pass.

1 Corinthians 1:14

6. *"I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius."*
"Why are you elate at having baptized, when I for my part even give thanks that I have not done so!" Thus saying, by a kind of divine art ([οἰκονομικῶς]) he does away with their swelling pride upon this point; not with the efficacy of the baptism, (God forbid,) but with the folly of those who were puffed up at having been baptizers: first, by showing that the Gift is not theirs; and, secondly, by thanking God therefore. For Baptism truly is a great thing: but its greatness is not the work of the person baptizing, but of Him who is invoked in the Baptism: since to baptize is nothing as regards man's labor, but is much less than preaching the Gospel. Yea, again I say, great indeed is Baptism, and without baptism it is impossible to obtain the kingdom. Still a man of no singular excellence is able to baptize, but to preach the Gospel there is need of great labor.

1 Corinthians 1:15

He states also the reason, why he gives thanks that he had baptized no one. What then is this reason? *"Lest anyone should say that you were baptized into my own name."* Why, did he mean that they said this in those other cases? Not at all; but, *"I fear,"* says he, *"lest the disease should proceed even to that. For if, when insignificant persons and of little worth baptize, a heresy arises, had I, the first announcer of Baptism, baptized many, it was likely that they forming a party, would not only call themselves by my name, but also ascribe the Baptism to me."* For if from the inferiors so great an evil arose, from those of higher order it would perhaps have gone on to something far more grievous.

1 Corinthians 1:16

Then, having abashed those who were unsound in this respect and subjoining, "*I baptized also the house of Stephanas,*" he again drags down their pride, saying besides, "*I know not whether I baptized any other.*" For by this he signifies that neither did he seek much to enjoy the honor accruing hereby from the multitude, nor did he set about this work for glory's sake.

1 Corinthians 1:17

And not by these only, but also by the next words, he greatly represses their pride, saying, "*Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel:*" for the more laborious part, and that which needed much toil and a soul of iron, and that on which all depended, was this. And therefore it was that Paul had it put into his hand.

And why, not being sent to baptize, did he baptize? Not in contention with Him that sent him, but in this instance laboring beyond his task. For he says not, "*I was forbidden,*" but, "*I was not sent for this, but for that which was of the greatest necessity.*" For preaching the Gospel is a work perhaps for one or two; but baptizing, for everyone endowed with the priesthood. For a man being instructed and convinced, to take and baptize him is what any one whatever might do: for the rest, it is all effected by the will of the person drawing near, and the grace of God. But when unbelievers are to be instructed, there must be great labor, great wisdom. And at that time there was danger also annexed. In the former case the whole thing is done, and he is convinced, who is on the point of initiation: and it is no great thing when a man is convinced, to baptize him. But in the later case the labor is great, to change the deliberate will, to alter the turn of mind, and to tear up error by the roots, and to plant the truth in its place.

Not that he speaks out all this, neither does he argue in so many words that Baptism has no labor, but that preaching has. For he knows how always to subdue his tone, whereas in the comparison with heathen wisdom he is very earnest, the subject enabling him to use more vehemency of language.

Not therefore in opposition to Him that sent him did he baptize; but, as in the case of the widows, though the apostles had said, [Acts 6:2] "*it is not*

fit that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables," he discharged the office [Acts 12:25. τὴν διακονίαν] of a deacon, not in opposition to them, but as something beyond his task: so also here. For even now, we commit this matter to the simpler sort of presbyters, but the word of doctrine unto the wiser: for there is the labor and the sweat. Wherefore he says himself, [1 Timothy 5:17] *"Let the Elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and in teaching."* For as to teach the wrestlers in the games is the part of a spirited and skilful trainer, but to place the crown on the conquerors head may be that of one who cannot even wrestle, (although it be the crown which adds splendor to the conqueror,) so also in Baptism. It is impossible to be saved without it, yet it is no great thing which the baptizer does, finding the will ready prepared.

7. *"Not in wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect."*

Having brought down the swelling pride of those who were arrogant because of their baptizing, he changes his ground afterwards to meet those who boasted about heathen wisdom, and against them he puts on his armor with more vehemency. For to those who were puffed up with baptizing he said, *"I give thanks that I baptized no one;"* and, *"for Christ sent me not to baptize."* He speaks neither vehemently nor argumentatively, but, having just hinted his meaning in a few words, passes on quickly. But here at the very outset he gives a severe blow, saying, *"Lest the Cross of Christ be made void."* Why then pride yourself on a thing which ought to make you hide your face? Since, if this wisdom is at war with the Cross and fights with the Gospel, it is not meet to boast about it, but to retire with shame. For this was the cause why the Apostles were not wise; not through any weakness of the Gift, but lest the Gospel preached suffer harm. The sort of

people therefore above mentioned were not those employed in advocating the Word: rather they were among its defamers. The unlearned men were the establishers of it. This was able to check vain glory, this to repress arrogance, this to enforce moderation.

"But if it was 'not by wisdom of speech,' why did they send Apollos who was eloquent?" It was not, he replies, through confidence in his power of speech, but because he was [Acts 18:24-29] *"mighty in the Scriptures,"* and *"confuted the Jews."* And besides the point in question was that the leaders and first disseminators of the word were not eloquent; since these were the very persons to require some great power, for the expulsion of error in the first instance; and then, namely at the very outset, was the abundant strength needed. Now He who could do without educated persons at first, if afterwards some being eloquent were admitted by Him, He did so not because He wanted them, but because He would make no distinctions. For as He needed not wise men to effect whatever He would, so neither, if any were afterwards found such, did He reject them on that account.

8. But prove to me that Peter and Paul were eloquent. You can not: for they were *"unlearned and ignorant men!"* As therefore Christ, when He was sending out His disciples into the world, having shown unto them His power in Palestine first, and said, [Luke 22:35(ὑποδήματος], rec. text [ὑποδημάτων].) *"When I sent you forth without purse and wallet and shoe, lacked ye any thing?"* permitted them from that time forward to possess both a wallet and a purse; so also He has done here: for the point was the manifestation of Christ's power, not the rejection of persons from the Faith on account of their Gentile wisdom, if they were drawing near. When the Greeks then charge the disciples with being uneducated, let us be even more forward in the charge than they. Nor let anyone say, *"Paul was wise;"* but while we exalt those among them who were great in wisdom and admired

for their excellency of speech, let us allow that all on our side were uneducated; for it will be no slight overthrow which they will sustain from us in that respect also: and so the victory will be brilliant indeed.

I have said these things, because I once heard a Christian disputing in a ridiculous manner with a Greek, and both parties in their mutual fray ruining themselves. For what things the Christian ought to have said, these the Greek asserted; and what things it was natural to expect the Greek would say, these the Christian pleaded for himself. As thus: the dispute being about Paul and Plato, the Greek endeavored to show that Paul was unlearned and ignorant; but the Christian, from simplicity, was anxious to prove that Paul was more eloquent than Plato. And so the victory was on the side of the Greek, this argument being allowed to prevail. For if Paul was a more considerable person than Plato, many probably would object that it was not by grace, but by excellency of speech that he prevailed; so that the Christian's assertion made for the Greek. And what the Greek said made for the Christian's; for if Paul was uneducated and yet overcame Plato, the victory, as I was saying, was brilliant; the disciples of the latter, in a body, having been attracted by the former, unlearned as he was, and convinced, and brought over to his side. From whence it is plain that the Gospel was a result not of human wisdom, but of the grace of God.

Wherefore, lest we fall into the same error, and be laughed to scorn, arguing thus with Greeks whenever we have a controversy with them; let us charge the Apostles with want of learning; for this same charge is praise. And when they say that the Apostles were rude, let us follow up the remark and say that they were also untaught, and unlettered, and poor, and vile, and stupid, and obscure. It is not a slander on the Apostles to say so, but it is even a glory that, being such, they should have outshone the whole world. For these untrained, and rude, and illiterate men, as completely vanquished

the wise, and powerful, and the tyrants, and those who flourished in wealth and glory and all outward good things, as though they had not been men at all: from whence it is manifest that great is the power of the Cross; and that these things were done by no human strength. For the results do not keep the course of nature, rather what was done was above all nature. Now when any thing takes place above nature, and exceedingly above it, on the side of rectitude and utility; it is quite plain that these things are done by some Divine power and cooperation. And observe; the fisherman, the tentmaker, the publican, the ignorant, the unlettered, coming from the far distant country of Palestine, and having beaten off their own ground the philosophers, the masters of oratory, the skillful debaters, alone prevailed against them in a short space of time; in the midst of many perils; the opposition of peoples and kings, the striving of nature herself, length of time, the vehement resistance of inveterate custom, demons in arms, the devil in battle array and stirring up all, kings, rulers, peoples, nations, cities, barbarians, Greeks, philosophers, orators, sophists, historians, laws, tribunals, various kinds of punishments, deaths innumerable and of all sorts. But nevertheless all these were confuted and gave way when the fisherman spoke; just like the light dust which cannot bear the rush of violent winds. Now what I say is, let us learn thus to dispute with the Greeks; that we be not like beasts and cattle, but prepared concerning "*the hope which is in us.*" [1 St. Peter 3:15] And let us pause for a while to work out this topic, no unimportant one; and let us say to them, How did the weak overcome the strong; the twelve, the world? Not by using the same armor, but in nakedness contending with men in arms.

For say, if twelve men, unskilled in matters of war, were to leap into an immense and armed host of soldiers, themselves not only unarmed but of weak frame also; and to receive no harm from them, nor yet be wounded,

though assailed with ten thousand weapons; if while the darts were striking them, with bare naked body they overthrew all their foes using no weapons but striking with the hand, and in conclusion killed some, and others took captive and led away, themselves receiving not so much as a wound; would anyone have ever said that the thing was of man? And yet the trophy of the Apostles is much more wonderful than that. For a naked man's escaping a wound is not so wonderful by far as that the ordinary and unlettered person — that a fisherman— should overcome such a degree of talent:

([δεινότητος]) and neither for fewness, nor for poverty, nor for dangers, nor for prepossession of habit, nor for so great austerity of the precepts enjoined, nor for the daily deaths, nor for the multitude of those who were deceived, nor for the great reputation of the deceivers be turned from his purpose.

9. Let this, I say, be our way of overpowering them, and of conducting our warfare against them; and let us astound them by our way of life rather than by words. For this is the main battle, this is the unanswerable argument, the argument from conduct. For though we give ten thousand precepts of philosophy in words, if we do not exhibit a life better than theirs, the gain is nothing. For it is not what is said that draws their attention, but their enquiry is, what we do; and they say, *"First obey your own words, and then admonish others. But if while you say, infinite are the blessings in the world to come, thou seem yourself nailed down to this world, just as if no such things existed, your works to me are more credible than your words. For when I see you seizing other men's goods, weeping immoderately over the departed, doing ill in many other things, how shall I believe you that there is a resurrection?"* And what if men utter not this in words? They think it and turn it often in their minds. And this is what stays the unbelievers from becoming Christians.

Let us win them therefore by our life. Many, even among the untaught, have in that way astounded the minds of philosophers, as having exhibited in themselves also that philosophy which lies in deeds, and uttered a voice clearer than a trumpet by their mode of life and self-denial. For this is stronger than the tongue. But when I say, "*one ought not to bear malice,*" and then do all manner of evils to the Greek, how shall I be able by words to win him, while by my deeds I am frightening him away? Let us catch them then by our mode of life; and by these souls let us build up the Church, and of these let us amass our wealth. There is nothing to weigh against a soul, not even the whole world. So that although thou give countless treasure unto the poor, you will do no such work as he who converts one soul. [Jeremiah 15:19] "*For he that takes forth the precious from the vile shall be as my mouth:*" so He speaks. A great good it is, I grant, to have pity on the poor; but it is nothing equal to the withdrawing them from error. For he that does this resembles Paul and Peter: we being permitted to take up their Gospel, not with perils such as theirs—with endurance of famines and pestilences, and all other evils, (for the present is a season of peace;)—but so as to display that diligence which comes of zeal. For even while we sit at home we may practice this kind of fishery. Who has a friend or relation or inmate of his house, these things let him say, these do; and he shall be like Peter and Paul. And why do I say Peter and Paul? He shall be the mouth of Christ. For He says, "*He that takes forth the precious from the vile shall be as My mouth.*" And though thou persuade not today, tomorrow you shall persuade. And though thou never persuade, you shall have your own reward in full. And though thou persuade not all, a few out of many persuade all men; but still they discoursed with all, and for all they have their reward. For not according to the result of the things that are well done, but according to the intention of the doers, is God wont to assign

the crowns; though thou pay down but two farthings, He receives them; and what He did in the case of the widow, the same will He do also in the case of those who teach. Do not thou then, because you can not save the world, despise the few; nor through longing after great things, withdraw yourself from the lesser. If you can not an hundred, take thou charge of ten; if you can not ten, despise not even five; if you can not five, do not overlook one; and if you can not one, neither so despair, nor keep back what may be done by you. Do you see not how, in matters of trade, they who are so employed make their profit not only of gold but of silver also? For if we do not slight the little things, we shall keep hold also of the great. But if we despise the small, neither shall we easily lay hand upon the other. Thus individuals become rich, gathering both small things and great. And so let us act; that in all things enriched, we may obtain the kingdom of heaven; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom unto the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now and henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

Homily 4 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:18-20

For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent will I reject. Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of the World?

To the sick and gasping even wholesome meats are unpleasant, friends and relations burdensome; who are often times not even recognized, but are rather accounted intruders. Much like this often is the case of those who are perishing in their souls. For the things which tend to salvation they know not; and those who are careful about them they consider to be troublesome. Now this ensues not from the nature of the thing, but from their disease. And just what the insane do, hating those who take care of them, and besides reviling them, the same is the case with unbelievers also. But as in the case of the former, they who are insulted then more than ever compassionate them, and weep, taking this as the worst symptom of the disease in its intense form, when they know not their best friends; so also in the case of the Gentiles let us act; yea more than for our wives let us wail over them, because they know not the common salvation. For not so dearly ought a man to love his wife as we should love all men, and draw them over unto salvation; be a man a Gentile, or be he what he may. For these then let us weep; for *"the word of the Cross is to them foolishness,"* being itself Wisdom and Power. For, says he, *"the word of the Cross to them that perish is foolishness."*

For since it was likely that they, the Cross being derided by the Greeks, would resist and contend by aid of that wisdom, which came (forsooth) of themselves, as being disturbed by the expression of the Greeks; Paul comforting them says, think it not strange and unaccountable, which is taking place. This is the nature of the thing, that its power is not recognized by them that perish. For they are beside themselves, and behave as madmen; and so they rail and are disgusted at the medicines which bring health.

2. But what do you say, O man? Christ became a slave for you, *"having taken the form of a slave,"* [Philippians 2:7] and was crucified, and rose again. And when you ought for this reason to adore Him risen and admire His loving kindness; because what neither father, nor friend, nor son, did for you, all this the Lord wrought for you, the enemy and offender — when, I say, you ought to admire Him for these things, do you call that foolishness, which is full of so great wisdom? Well, it is nothing wonderful; for it is a mark of them that perish not to recognize the things which lead to salvation. Be not troubled, therefore, for it is no strange nor unaccountable event, that things truly great are mocked at by those who are beside themselves. Now such as are in this mind you cannot convince by human wisdom. Nay, if you want so to convince them, you do but the contrary. For the things which transcend reasoning require faith alone. Thus, should we set about convincing men by reasonings, how God became man, and entered into the Virgin's womb, and not commit the matter unto faith, they will but deride the more. Therefore they who inquire by reasonings, it is they who perish.

And why speak I of God? For in regard of created things, should we do this, great derision will ensue. For suppose a man, wishing to make out all things by reasoning; and let him try by your discourse to convince himself

how we see the light; and do thou try to convince him by reasoning. Nay, you can not: for if you say that it suffices to see by opening the eyes, you have not expressed the manner, but the fact. For *"why see we not,"* one will say, *"by our hearing, and with our eyes hear? And why hear we not with the nostril, and with the hearing smell?"* If then, he being in doubt about these things, and we unable to give the explanation of them, he is to begin laughing, shall not we rather laugh him to scorn? *"For since both have their origin from one brain, since the two members are near neighbors to each other, why can they not do the same work?"* Now we shall not be able to state the cause nor the method of the unspeakable and curious operation; and should we make the attempt, we should be laughed to scorn. Wherefore, leaving this unto God's power and boundless wisdom, let us be silent.

Just so with regard to the things of God; should we desire to explain them by the wisdom which is from without, great derision will ensue, not from their infirmity, but from the folly of men. For the great things of all no language can explain.

3. Now observe: when I say, *"He was crucified;"* the Greek says, *"And how can this be reasonable? Himself He helped not when undergoing crucifixion and sore trial at the moment of the Cross: how then after these things did He rise again and help others? For if He had been able, before death was the proper time."* (For this the Jews actually said.) [Matthew 27:41-42] *"But He who helped not Himself, how helped he others? There is no reason in it,"* says he. True, O man, for indeed it is above reason; and unspeakable is the power of the Cross. For that being actually in the midst of horrors, He should have shown Himself above all horrors; and being in the enemy's hold should have overcome; this comes of Infinite Power. For as in the case of the Three Children, their not entering the furnace would

not have been so astonishing, as that having entered in they trampled upon the fire—and in the case of Jonah, it was a greater thing by far, after he had been swallowed by the fish, to suffer no harm from the monster, than if he had not been swallowed at all—so also in regard of Christ; His not dying would not have been so inconceivable, as that having died He should loose the bands of death. Say not then, *"why did He not help Himself on the Cross?"* for He was hastening on to close conflict with death himself. (See Hooker, E. P. v. 48. 9.) He descended not from the Cross, not because He could not, but because He would not. For Him Whom the tyranny of death restrained not, how could the nails of the Cross restrain?

4. But these things, though known to us, are not so as yet to the unbelievers. Wherefore he said that *"the word of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent will I reject."* Nothing from himself which might give offense, does he advance up to this point; but first he comes to the testimony of the Scripture, and then furnished with boldness from thence, adopts more vehement words, and says,

1 Corinthians 1:20-21

"Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? Where is the wise? Where the Scribe? Where the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." Having said, *"It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,"* He subjoins demonstration from facts, saying, *"Where is the wise? Where the Scribe?"* at the same time glancing at both Gentiles and Jews. For what sort of philosopher, which among those who have studied logic, which of those knowing in Jewish matters, has saved us and made known the truth? Not one. It was the fisherman's work, the whole of it.

Having then drawn the conclusion which he had in view, and brought down their pride, and said, *"Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"* he states also the reason why these things were so done. *"For seeing that in the wisdom of God,"* says he, *"the world through its wisdom knew not God,"* the Cross appeared. Now what means, *"in the wisdom of God?"* The wisdom apparent in those works whereby it was His will to make Himself known. For to this end did he frame them, and frame them such as they are, that by a sort of proportion, ([ἀναλόγως]) from the things which are seen admiration of the Maker might be learned. Is the heaven great, and the earth boundless? Wonder then at Him who made them. For this heaven, great as it is, not only was made by Him, but made with ease; and that boundless earth, too, was brought into being even as if it had been nothing. Wherefore of the former He says, [Psalm 102:25. τῶν χειρῶν]. Septuagint *"The works of Your fingers are the heavens,"* and concerning the

earth, [Isaiah 40:23. Septuagint] "*Who has made the earth as it were nothing.*" Since then by this wisdom the world was unwilling to discover God, He employed what seemed to be foolishness, i.e. the Gospel, to persuade men; not by reasoning, but by faith. It remains that where God's wisdom is, there is no longer need of man's. For before, to infer that He who made the world such and so great, must in all reason be a God possessed of a certain uncontrollable, unspeakable power; and by these means to apprehend Him—this was the part of human wisdom. But now we need no more reasonings, but faith alone. For to believe in Him that was crucified and buried, and to be fully persuaded that this Person Himself both rose again and sat down on high; this needs not wisdom, nor reasonings, but faith. For the Apostles themselves came in not by wisdom, but by faith, and surpassed the heathen wise men in wisdom and loftiness, and that so much the more, as to raise disputings is less than to receive by faith the things of God. For this transcends all human understanding.

But how did He "*destroy wisdom?*" Being made known to us by Paul and others like him, He showed it to be unprofitable. For towards receiving the evangelical proclamation, neither is the wise profited at all by wisdom, nor the unlearned injured at all by ignorance. But if one may speak somewhat even wonderful, ignorance rather than wisdom is a condition suitable for that impression, and more easily dealt with. For the shepherd and the rustic will more quickly receive this, once for all both repressing all doubting thoughts and delivering himself to the Lord. In this way then He destroyed wisdom. For since she first cast herself down, she is ever after useful for nothing. Thus when she ought to have displayed her proper powers, and by the works to have seen the Lord, she would not. Wherefore though she were now willing to introduce herself, she is not able. For the matter is not of that kind; this way of knowing God being far greater than

the other. You see then, faith and simplicity are needed, and this we should seek every where, and prefer it before the wisdom which is from without. For "*God,*" says he, "*has made wisdom foolish.*"

But what is, "*He has made foolish?*" He has shown it foolish in regard of receiving the faith. For since they prided themselves on it, He lost no time in exposing it. For what sort of wisdom is it, when it cannot discover the chief of things that are good? He caused her therefore to appear foolish, after she had first convicted herself. For if when discoveries might have been made by reasoning, she proved nothing, now when things proceed on a larger scale, how will she be able to accomplish anything? Now when there is need of faith alone, and not of acuteness? You see then, God has shown her to be foolish.

It was His good pleasure, too, by the foolishness of the Gospel to save; foolishness, I say, not real, but appearing to be such. For that which is more wonderful yet is His having prevailed by bringing in, not another such wisdom more excellent than the first, but what seemed to be foolishness. He cast out Plato for example, not by means of another philosopher of more skill, but by an unlearned fisherman. For thus the defeat became greater, and the victory more splendid.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24

5. Next, to show the power of the Cross, he says, *"For Jews ask for signs and Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God."*

Vast is the import of the things here spoken! For he means to say how by contraries God has overcome, and how the Gospel is not of man. What he says is something of this sort. When, says he, we say unto the Jews, Believe; they answer, Raise the dead, Heal the demoniacs, Show unto us signs. But instead thereof what say we? That He was crucified, and died, who is preached. And this is enough, not only to fail in drawing over the unwilling, but even to drive away those even who are willing. Nevertheless, it drives not away, but attracts and holds fast and overcomes.

Again; the Greeks demand of us a rhetorical style, and the acuteness of sophistry. But preach we to these also the Cross: and that which, in the case of the Jews seemed to be weakness, this in the case of the Greeks is foolishness. Wherefore, when we not only fail in producing what they demand, but also produce the very opposites of their demand; (for the Cross has not merely no appearance of being a sign sought out by reasoning, but even the very annihilation of a sign—is not merely deemed no proof of power, but a conviction of weakness—not merely no display of wisdom, but a suggestion of foolishness;)—when therefore they who seek for signs and wisdom not only receive not the things which they ask, but even hear the contrary to what they desire, and then by means of contraries are persuaded—how is not the power of Him that is preached unspeakable? As

if to some one tempest-tost and longing for a haven, you were to show not a haven but another wilder portion of the sea, and so could make him follow with thankfulness? Or as if a physician could attract to himself the man that was wounded and in need of remedies, by promising to cure him not with drugs, but with burning of him again! For this is a result of great power indeed. So also the Apostles prevailed, not simply without a sign, but even by a thing which seemed contrary to all the known signs. Which thing also Christ did in the case of the blind man. For when He would heal him, He took away the blindness by a thing that increased it: i.e. He put on clay. [John 9:6] As then by means of clay He healed the blind man, so also by means of the Cross He brought the world to Himself. That certainly was adding an offense, not taking an offense away. So did He also in creation, working out things by their contraries. With sand, for instance, He walled in the sea, having made the weak a bridle to the strong. He placed the earth upon water, having taken order that the heavy and the dense should be borne on the soft and fluid. By means of the prophets again with a small piece of wood He raised up iron from the bottom. [2 Kings 6:5-7] In like manner also with the Cross He has drawn the world to Himself. For as the water bears up the earth, so also the Cross bears up the world. You see now, it is proof of great power and wisdom, to convince by means of the things which tell directly against us. Thus the Cross seems to be matter of offense; and yet far from offending, it even attracts.

1 Corinthians 1:25

6. All these things, therefore, Paul bearing in mind, and being struck with astonishment, said that *"the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men;"* in relation to the Cross, speaking of a folly and weakness, not real but apparent. For he is answering with respect unto the other party's opinion. For that which philosophers were not able by means of reasoning to accomplish, this, what seemed to be foolishness did excellently well. Which then is the wiser, he that persuades the many, or he that persuades few, or rather no one? He who persuades concerning the greatest points, or about matters which are nothing? ([μὴ δὲν ὄντων] Reg. ms. [μὴ δεόντων] Bened.) What great labors did Plato endure, and his followers, discoursing to us about a line, and an angle, and a point, and about numbers even and odd, and equal unto one another and unequal, and such-like spiderwebs; (for indeed those webs are not more useless to man's life than were these subjects;) and without doing good to any one great or small by their means, so he made an end of his life. How greatly did he labor, endeavoring to show that the soul was immortal! And even as he came he went away, having spoken nothing with certainty, nor persuaded any hearer. But the Cross wrought persuasion by means of unlearned men; yea it persuaded even the whole world: and not about common things, but in discourse of God, and the godliness which is according to truth, and the evangelical way of life, and the judgment of the things to come. And of all men it made philosophers: the very rustics, the utterly unlearned. Behold how *"the foolishness of God is wiser than men,"* and *"the weakness stronger?"* How *"stronger?"* Because it overran the whole world, and took all by main force, and while men were endeavoring by ten thousands to

extinguish the name of the Crucified, the contrary came to pass: that flourished and increased more and more, but they perished and wasted away; and the living at war with the dead, had no power. So that when the Greek calls me foolish, he shows himself above measure foolish: since I who am esteemed by him a fool, evidently appear wiser than the wise. When he calls me weak, then he shows himself to be weaker. For the noble things which publicans and fishermen were able to effect by the grace of God, these, philosophers, and rhetoricians, and tyrants, and in short the whole world, running ten thousand ways here and there, could not even form a notion of. For what did not the Cross introduce? The doctrine concerning the Immortality of the Soul; that concerning the Resurrection of the Body; that concerning the contempt of things present; that concerning the desire of things future. Yea, angels it has made of men, and all, every where, practice self-denial, ([φιλοσοφοῦσι]) and show forth all kinds of fortitude.

7. But among them also, it will be said, many have been found contemnors of death. Tell me who? Was it he who drank the hemlock? But if you will, I can bring forward ten thousand such from within the Church. For had it been lawful when prosecution befell them to drink hemlock and depart, all had become more famous than he. And besides, he drank when he was not at liberty to drink or not to drink; but willing or against his will he must have undergone it: no effect surely of fortitude, but of necessity, and nothing more. For even robbers and man-slayers, having fallen under the condemnation of their judges, have suffered things more grievous. But with us it is all quite the contrary. For not against their will did the martyrs endure, but of their will, and being at liberty not to suffer; showing forth fortitude harder than all adamant. This then you see is no great wonder, that he whom I was mentioning drank hemlock; it being no longer in his power

not to drink, and also when he had arrived at a very great age. For when he despised life he stated himself to be seventy years old; if this can be called despising. For I for my part could not affirm it: nor, what is more, can anyone else. But show me some one enduring firm in torments for godliness' sake, as I show you ten thousand every where in the world. Who, while his nails were tearing out, nobly endured? Who, while his body joints were wrenching ([ἀνασκαπτομένων]) asunder? Who, while his body was cut in pieces, ([τοῦ σώματος κατὰ μέρος πορθουμένου]; [τῆς] [κεφαλῆς];) member by member? Or his head? Who, while his bones were forced out by levers? ([ἀναμοχλευομένων]) Who, while placed without intermission upon frying-pans? Who, when thrown into a caldron? Show me these instances. For to die by hemlock is all as one with a man's continuing in a state of sleep. Nay even sweeter than sleep is this sort of death, if report say true. But if certain [of them] did endure torments, yet of these, too, the praise is gone to nothing. For on some disgraceful occasion they perished; some for revealing mysteries; some for aspiring to dominion; others detected in the foulest crimes; others again rashly, and fruitlessly, and foolishly, there being no reason for it, made away with themselves. But not so with us. Wherefore of the deeds of those nothing is said; but these flourish and daily increase. Which Paul having in mind said, "*The weakness of God is stronger than all men.*"

8. For that the Gospel is divine, even from hence is evident; namely, whence could it have occurred to twelve ignorant men to attempt such great things? Who sojourned in marshes, in rivers, in deserts; who never at any time perhaps had entered into a city nor into a forum;— whence did it occur, to set themselves in array against the whole world? For that they were timid and unmanly, he shows who wrote of them, not apologizing, nor enduring to throw their failings into the shade: which indeed of itself is a

very great token of the truth. What then does he say about them? That when Christ was apprehended, after ten thousand wonders, they fled; and he who remained, being the leader of the rest, denied. Whence was it then that they who when Christ was alive endured not the attack of the Jews; now that He was dead and buried, and as you say, had not risen again, nor had any talk with them, nor infused courage into them— whence did they set themselves in array against so great a world? Would they not have said among themselves, "*what means this? Himself He was not able to save, and will He protect us? Himself He defended not when alive, and will He stretch out the hand unto us now that he is dead? Himself, when alive, subdued not even one nation; and are we to convince the whole world by uttering His Name?*" How, I ask, could all this be reasonable, I will not say, as something to be done, but even as something to be imagined? From whence it is plain that had they not seen Him after He was risen, and received most ample proof of his power, they would not have ventured so great a cast.

9. For suppose they had possessed friends innumerable; would they not presently have made them all enemies, disturbing ancient customs, and removing their father's landmarks? ([ὄρῳ] Ms. Reg. [ἔθῃ] Ben.) But as it was, they had them for enemies, all, both their own countrymen and foreigners. For although they had been recommended to veneration by everything external, would not all men have abhorred them, introducing a new polity? But now they were even destitute of everything; and it was likely that even on that account all would hate and scorn them at once. For whom will you name? The Jews? Nay, they had against them an inexpressible hatred on account of the things which had been done unto the Master. The Greeks then? Why, first of all, these had rejected one not inferior to them; and no man knew this so well as the Greeks. For Plato, who wished to strike out a new form of government, or rather a part of

government; and that not by changing the customs relating to the gods, but merely by substituting one line of conduct for another; was cast out of Sicily, and went near to lose his life. This however did not ensue: so that he lost his liberty alone. And had not a certain Barbarian been more gentle than the tyrant of Sicily, nothing could have rescued the philosopher from slavery throughout life in a foreign land. And yet it is not all one to innovate in affairs of the kingdom, and in matters of religious worship. For the latter more than any thing else causes disturbance and troubles men. For to say, *"let such and such an one marry such a woman, and let the guardians [of the commonwealth] exercise their guardianship so and so,"* is not enough to cause any great disturbance: and especially when all this is lodged in a book, and no great anxiety on the part of the legislator to carry the proposals into practice. On the other hand, to say, *"they be no gods which men worship, but demons; He who was crucified is God;"* ye well know how great wrath it kindled, how severely men must have paid for it, what a flame of war it fanned.

For Protagoras, who was one of them, having dared to say, *"I know of no gods,"* not going round the world and proclaiming it, but in a single city, was in the most imminent peril of his life. And Diagoras the Milesian, and Theodorus, who was called Atheist, although they had friends, and that influence which comes from eloquence, and were held in admiration because of their philosophy; yet nevertheless none of these profited them. And the great Socrates, too, he who surpassed in philosophy all among them, for this reason drank hemlock, because in his discourses concerning the gods he was suspected of moving things a little aside. Now if the suspicion alone of innovation brought so great danger on philosophers and wise men, and on those who had attained boundless popularity; and if they were not only unable to do what they wished, but were themselves also

driven from life and county; how can you choose but be in admiration and astonishment, when you see that the fisherman has produced such an effect upon the world, and accomplished his purposes; has overcome all both Barbarians and Greeks.

10. But they did not, you will say, introduce strange gods as the others did. Well, and in that you are naming the very point most to be wondered at; that the innovation is twofold, both to pull down those which are, and to announce the Crucified. For from whence came it into their minds to proclaim such things? Whence, to be confident about their event? Whom of those before them could they perceive to have prospered in any such attempt? Were not all men worshipping demons? Were not all used to make gods of the elements? Was not the difference [but] in the mode of impiety? But nevertheless they attacked all, and overthrew all, and overran in a short time the whole world, like a sort of winged beings; making no account of dangers, of deaths, of the difficulty of the thing, of their own fewness, of the multitude of the opponents, of the authority, the power, the wisdom of those at war with them. For they had an ally greater than all these, the power of Him that had been crucified and was risen again. It would not have been so wondrous, had they chosen to wage war with the world in the literal sense, ([πόλεμον αἰσθητόν]) as this which in fact has taken place. For according to the law of battle they might have stood over against the enemies, and occupying some adverse ground, have arrayed themselves accordingly to meet their foes, and have taken their time for attack and close conflict. But in this case it is not so. For they had no camp of their own, but were mingled with their enemies, and thus overcame them. Even in the midst of their enemies as they went about, they eluded their grasp, ([λαβὰς] Reg. [βλαβὰς] Bened.) and became superior, and achieved a splendid victory; a victory which fulfils the prophecy that says, *"Even in the midst of your*

enemies you shall have dominion." [Psalm 110:2] For this it was, which was full of all astonishment, that their enemies having them in their power, and casting them into prison and chains not only did not vanquish them, but themselves also eventually had to bow down to them: the scourgers to the scourged, the binders in chains to those who were bound, the persecutors to the fugitives. All these things then we could say unto the Greeks, yea much more than these; for the truth has enough and greatly to spare. ([πολλή τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ περιουσία].) And if you will follow the argument, we will teach you the whole method of fighting against them. In the meanwhile let us here hold fast two heads; How did the weak overcome the strong? And, From whence came it into their thoughts, being such as they were, to form such plans, unless they enjoyed Divine aid?

11. So far then as to what we have to say. But let us show forth by our actions all excellencies of conduct, and kindle abundantly the fire of virtue. For *"you are lights,"* says he, *"shining in the midst of the world."* [Philippians 2:15] And unto each of us God has committed a greater function than He has to the sun: greater than heaven, and earth, and sea; by so much greater, as spiritual things be more excellent than things sensible. When then we look unto the solar orb, and admire the beauty, and the body and the brightness of the luminary, let us consider again that greater and better is the light which is in us, as indeed the darkness also is more dreadful unless we take heed. And in fact a deep night oppresses the whole world. This is what we have to dispel and dissolve. It is night not among heretics and among Greeks only, but also in the multitude on our side, in respect of doctrines and of life. For many entirely disbelieve the resurrection; many fortify themselves with their horoscope; ([γενεσιν ἑαυτοῖς] [ἐπιτειχίζουσιν]) many adhere to superstitious observances, and to omens, and auguries, and presages. And some likewise employ amulets and

charms. But to these also we will speak afterwards, when we have finished what we have to say to the Greeks.

In the meanwhile hold fast the things which have been said, and be ye fellow-helpers with me in the battle; by your way of life attracting them to us and changing them. For, as I am always saying, He that teaches high morality ([περὶ φιλοσοφίας]) ought first to teach it in his own person, and be such as his hearers cannot do without. Let us therefore become such, and make the Greeks feel kindly towards us. And this will come to pass if we make up our minds not only not to do ill, but also to suffer ill. Do we not see when little children being borne in their father's arms give him that carries them blows on the cheek, how sweetly the father lets the boy have his fill of wrath, and when he sees that he has spent his passion, how his countenance brightens up? In like manner let us also act; and as fathers with children, so let us discourse with the Greeks. For all the Greeks are children. And this, some of their own writers have said, that "*that people are children always, and no Greek is an old man.*" Now children cannot bear to take thought for any thing useful; so also the Greeks would be for ever at play; and they lie on the ground, grovelling in posture and in affections. Moreover, children oftentimes, when we are discoursing about important things, give no heed to anything that is said, but will even be laughing all the time: such also are the Greeks. When we discourse of the Kingdom, they laugh. And as spittle dropping in abundance from an infant's mouth, which oftentimes spoils its meat and drink, such also are the words flowing from the mouth of the Greeks, vain and unclean. Even if you are giving children their necessary food, they keep on vexing those who furnish it with evil speech, and we must bear with them all the while. ([διαβαστάζεσθαι]). Again, children, when they see a robber entering and taking away the furniture, far from resisting, even smile on the designing

fellow; but should you take away the little basket or the rattle ([σεῖστρα]) or any other of their playthings, they take it to heart and fret, tear themselves, and stamp on the floor; just so do the Greeks also: when they behold the devil pilfering all their patrimony, and even the things which support their life, they laugh, and run to him as to a friend: but should any one take away any possession, be it wealth or any childish thing whatsoever of that kind, they cry, they tear themselves. And as children expose their limbs unconsciously and blush not for shame; so the Greeks, wallowing in whoredoms and adulteries, and laying bare the laws of nature, and introducing unlawful intercourses, are not abashed.

You have given me vehement applause and acclamation , but with all your applause have a care lest you be among those of whom these things are said. Wherefore I beseech you all to become men: since, so long as we are children, how shall we teach them manliness? How shall we restrain them from childish folly? Let us, therefore, become men; that we may arrive at the measure of the stature which has been marked out for us by Christ, and may obtain the good things to come: through the grace and loving-kindness, etc. etc.

Homily 5 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:26-27

For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, [are called;] but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise.

He has said that *"the foolishness of God is wiser than men;"* he has showed that human wisdom is cast out, both by the testimony of the Scriptures and by the issue of events; by the testimony, where he says, *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;"* by the event, putting his argument in the form of a question, and saying, *"Where is the wise? Where the Scribe?"* Again; he proved at the same time that the thing is not new, but ancient, as it was presignified and foretold from the beginning. For, *"It is written,"* says he, *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise."* Withal he shows that it was neither inexpedient nor unaccountable for things to take this course: (for, *"seeing that in the wisdom of God the world,"* says he, *"knew not God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of preaching to save them which believe:"*) and that the Cross is a demonstration of ineffable power and wisdom, and that the foolishness of God is far mightier than the wisdom of man. And this again he proves not by means of the teachers, but by means of the disciples themselves. For, *"Behold your calling,"* says he: that not only teachers of an untrained sort, but disciples also of the like class, were objects of His choice; that He chose *"not many wise men"* (that is his word) *"according to the flesh."* And so that of which he is speaking is proved to surpass both in strength and wisdom, in that it convinces both the many and the unwise: it being extremely hard to convince an ignorant person,

especially when the discourse is concerning great and necessary things. However, they did work conviction. And of this he calls the Corinthians themselves as witnesses. For, "*behold your calling, brethren,*" says he: consider; examine: for that doctrines so wise, yea, wiser than all, should be received by ordinary men, testifies the greatest wisdom in the teacher.

2. But what means, "*according to the flesh?*" According to what is in sight; according to the life that now is; according to the discipline of the Gentiles. Then, lest he should seem to be at variance with himself, (for he had convinced both the Proconsul, [Acts 13:12] and the Areopagite, [Acts 17:34] and Apollos; [Acts 18:26: through Aquila and Priscilla] and other wise men, too, we have seen coming over to the Gospel;) he said not, No wise man, but, "*Not many wise men.*" For he did not designedly ([ἀποκεκληρωμένως]) call the ignorant and pass by the wise, but these also he received, yet the others in much larger number. And why? Because the wise man according to the flesh is full of extreme folly; and it is he who especially answers to the term "*foolish,*" when he will not cast away his corrupt doctrine. And as in the case of a physician who might wish to teach certain persons the secrets of his art, those who know a few things, having a bad and perverse mode of practicing the art which they make a point of retaining, would not endure to learn quietly, but they who knew nothing would most readily embrace what was said: even so it was here. The unlearned were more open to conviction, for they were free from the extreme madness of accounting themselves wise. For indeed the excess of folly is in these more than any, these, I say, who commit unto reasoning things which cannot be ascertained except by faith. Thus, suppose the smith by means of the tongs drawing out the red-hot iron; if any one should insist on doing it with his hand, we should vote him guilty of extreme folly: so in like manner the philosophers who insisted on finding out these things for

themselves disparaged the faith. And it was owing to this that they found none of the things they sought for.

"Not many mighty, not many noble;" for these also are filled with pride. And nothing is so useless towards an accurate knowledge of God as arrogance, and being nailed down ([προσηλωσθαι]) to wealth: for these dispose a man to admire things present, and make no account of the future; and they stop up the ears through the multitude of cares: but *"the foolish things of the world God chose:"* which thing is the greatest sign of victory, that they were uneducated by whom He conquers. For the Greeks feel not so much shame when they are defeated by means of the *"wise,"* but are then confounded, when they see the artisan and the sort of person one meets in the market more of a philosopher than themselves. Wherefore also he said himself, *"That He might put to shame the wise."* And not in this instance alone has he done this, also in the case of the other advantages of life. For, to proceed, *"the weak things of the world He chose that He might put to shame the strong."* For not unlearned persons only, but needy also, and contemptible and obscure He called, that He might humble those who were in high places.

1 Corinthians 1:28

"And the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, and the things that are not, that he might bring to naught the things that are." Now what does He call things *"that are not?"* Those persons who are considered to be nothing because of their great insignificance. Thus has He shown forth His great power, casting down the great by those who seem to be nothing. The same elsewhere he thus expresses, [2 Corinthians 12:9] *"For my strength is made perfect in weakness."* For a great power it is, to teach outcasts and such as never applied themselves to any branch of learning, how all at once to discourse wisely on the things which are above the heavens. For suppose a physician, an orator, or any one else: we then most admire him, when he convinces and instructs those completely uneducated. Now, if to instil into an uneducated man the rules of art be a very wonderful thing, much more things which pertain to so high philosophy.

3. But not for the wonders sake only, neither to show His own power, has He done this, but to check also the arrogant. And therefore he both said before, *"That he might confound the wise and the strong, that He might bring to nought the things which are,"* and here again,

1 Corinthians 1:29

"That no flesh should glory in the presence of God." For God does all things to this end, to repress vainglory and pride, to pull down boasting.

"Do you, too," says he, *"employ yourselves in that work."* He does all, that we may put nothing to our own account; that we may ascribe all unto God. And have you given yourselves over unto this person or to that? And what pardon will you obtain?

For God Himself has shown that it is not possible we should be saved only by ourselves: and this He did from the beginning. For neither then could men be saved by themselves; but it required their compassing the beauty of the heaven, and the extent of the earth, and the mass of creation besides; if so they might be led by the hand to the great artificer of all the works. And He did this, repressing beforehand the self-conceit which was after to arise. Just as if a master who had given his scholar charge to follow wheresoever he might lead, when he sees him forestalling, and desiring to learn all things of himself, should permit him to go quite astray; and when he has proved him incompetent to acquire the knowledge, should thereupon at length introduce to him what himself has to teach: so God also commanded in the beginning to trace Him by the idea which the creation gives; but since they would not, He, after showing by the experiment that they are not sufficient for themselves, conducts them again unto Him by another way. He gave for a tablet, the world; but the philosophers studied not in those things, neither were willing to obey Him, nor to approach unto Him by that way which Himself commanded. He introduces another way more evident than the former; one that might bring conviction that man is not of himself alone sufficient unto himself. For then scruples of reasoning

might be started, and the Gentile wisdom employed, on their part whom He through the creation was leading by the hand; but now, unless a man become a fool, that is, unless he dismiss all reasoning and all wisdom, and deliver up himself unto the faith, it is impossible to be saved. You see that besides making the way easy, he has rooted up hereby no trifling disease, namely, in forbidding to boast, and have high thoughts: *"that no flesh should glory:"* for hence came the sin, that men insisted on being wiser than the laws of God; not willing so to obtain knowledge as He had enacted: and therefore they did not obtain it at all. So also was it from the beginning. He said unto Adam, *"Do such a thing, and such another you must not do."* He, as thinking to find out something more, disobeyed; and even what he had, he lost. He spoke unto those that came after, *"Rest not in the creature; but by means of it contemplate the Creator."* They, forsooth, as if making out something wiser than what had been commanded, set in motion windings innumerable. Hence they kept dashing against themselves and one another, and neither found God, nor concerning the creature had any distinct knowledge; nor had any meet and true opinion about it. Wherefore again, with a very high hand, ([ἐκ πολλοῦ τοῦ περὶοντος]) lowering their conceit. He admitted the uneducated first, showing thereby that all men need the wisdom from above. And not only in the matter of knowledge, but also in all other things, both men and all other creatures He has constituted so as to be in great need of Him; that they might have this also as a most forcible motive of submission and attachment, lest turning away they should perish. For this cause He did not suffer them to be sufficient unto themselves. For if even now many, for all their indigency, despise Him, were the case not so, whither would they not have wandered in haughtiness? So that He stayed them from boasting as they did, not from any grudge to them, but to draw them away from the destruction thence ensuing.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

4. *"But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."*

The expression *"of Him,"* I suppose he uses here, not of our introduction into being, but with reference to the faith: that is, to our having become children of God, *"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh."* [John 1:13] *"Think not then, that having taken away our glorying, He left us so: for there is another, a greater glorying, His gift. For you are the children of Him in whose presence it is not meet to glory, having become so through Christ."* And since he has said, *"The foolish things of the world He chose, and the base,"* he signifies that they are nobler than all, having God for their Father. And of this nobility of ours, not this person or that, but Christ is the cause, having made us wise, and righteous, and holy. For so mean the words, *"He was made unto us wisdom."*

Who then is wiser than we are who have not the wisdom of Plato, but Christ Himself, God having so willed.

But what means, *"of God?"* Whenever he speaks great things concerning the Only-Begotten, he adds mention of the Father, lest any one should think that the Son is unbegotten. Since therefore he had affirmed His power to be so great, and had referred the whole unto the Son, saying that He had *"become wisdom unto us, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption;"*—through the Son again referring the whole to the Father, he says, *"of God."*

But why said he not, He has made us wise, but *"was made unto us wisdom?"* To show the copiousness of the gift. As if he had said, He gave unto us Himself. And observe how he goes on in order. For first He made us

wise by delivering from error, and then righteous and holy, by giving us the Spirit; and He has so delivered us from all our evils as to be *"of Him,"* and this is not meant to express communication of being, ([οὐσιώσεως]) but is spoken concerning the faith. Elsewhere we find him saying, *"We were made righteousness in Him;"* in these words, *"Him who knew no sin He made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him;"* [2 Corinthians 5:21] but now he says, *"He has been made righteousness unto us; so that whosoever will may partake plentifully."* For it is not this man or that who has made us wise, but Christ. *"He that glories,"* therefore, *"let him glory in Him,"* not in such or such an one. From Christ have proceeded all things. Wherefore, having said, *"Who was made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,"* he added, *"that, according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord."*

For this cause also he had vehemently inveighed against the wisdom of the Greeks, to teach men this lesson, ([τοῦτο αὐτὸ] Savile; [τούτῳ αὐτῷ] Bened.) and no other: that (as indeed is no more than just) they should boast themselves in the Lord. For when of ourselves we seek the things which are above us, nothing is more foolish, nothing weaker than we are. In such case, a tongue well whetted we may have; but stability of doctrine we cannot have. Rather, reasonings, being alone, are like the webs of spider. For unto such a point of madness have some advanced as to say that there is nothing real in the whole of being: yea, they maintain positively that all things are contrary to what appears.

Say not therefore that anything is from yourself, but in all things glory in God. Impute unto no man anything at any time. For if unto Paul nothing ought to be imputed much less unto any others. For, says he, [1 Corinthians 3:6] *"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."* He that has learned to make his boast in the Lord, will never be elated, but will be

moderate at all times, and thankful under all circumstances. But not such is the mind of the Greeks; they refer all to themselves; wherefore even of men they make gods. In so great shame has desperate arrogance plunged them.

([ἐξετραχήλισεν])

5. It is time then, in what remains, to go forth to battle against these. Recollect where we left our discourse on the former day. We were saying that it was not possible according to human cause and effect that fishermen should get the better of philosophers. But nevertheless it became possible: from whence it is clear that by grace it became so. We were saying that it was not possible for them even to conceive such great exploits: and we showed that they not only conceived, but brought them to a conclusion with great ease. Let us handle, today, the same head of our argument: viz. From whence did it enter their thoughts to expect to overcome the world, unless they had seen Christ after He was risen? What? Were they beside themselves, to reckon upon any such thing inconsiderately and at random? For it goes even beyond all madness, to look, without Divine grace, for success in so great an undertaking. How did they succeed in it, if they were insane and frenzied? But if they were in their sober senses, as indeed the events showed, how, but on receiving credible pledges from the heavens and enjoying the influence which is from above, did they undertake to go forth to so great wars, and to make their venture against earth and sea, and to strip and stand their ground so nobly, for a change in the customs of the whole world which had been so long time fixed, they being but twelve men?

And, what is more, what made them expect to convince their hearers, by inviting them to heaven and the mansions above? Even had they been brought up in honor, and wealth, and power, and erudition, not even so would it have been at all likely that they should be roused to so

burthensome an undertaking. However, there would have been somewhat more of reason in their expectation. But as the case now stands, some of them had been occupied about lakes, some about hides, some about the customs: than which pursuits nothing is more unprofitable towards philosophy, and the persuading men to have high imaginations: and especially when one has no example to show. Nay, they had not only no examples to make their success likely, but they had examples against all likelihood of success, and those within their own doors. ([ἐνανυλα]) For many for attempting innovations had been utterly extinguished, I say not among the Greeks, for all that was nothing, but among the Jews themselves at that very time; who not with twelve men, but with great numbers had applied themselves to the work. Thus both Theudas and Judas, having great bodies of men, perished together with their disciples. And the fear arising from their examples was enough to control these, had they not been strongly persuaded that victory without divine power was out of the question.

Yea, even if they did expect to prevail, with what sort of hopes undertook they such great dangers, except they had an eye to the world to come? But let us suppose that they hoped for no less than victory; what did they expect to gain from the bringing all men unto Him, "*who is not risen again,*" as you say? For if now, men who believe concerning the kingdom of heaven and blessings unnumbered with reluctance encounter dangers, how could they have undergone so many for nothing, yea rather, for evil? For if the things which were done did not take place, if Christ did not ascend into heaven; surely in their obstinate zeal to invent these things, and convince all the world of them, they were offending God, and must expect ten thousand thunderbolts from on high.

6. Or, in another point of view; if they had felt this great zeal while Christ was living, yet on His death they would have let it go out. For He would have seemed to them, had He not risen, as a sort of deceiver and pretender. Do you not know that armies while the general and king is alive, even though they be weak, keep together; but when those in such office have departed, however strong they may be, they are broken up?

Tell me then, what were the enticing arguments whereupon they acted, when about to take hold of the Gospel, and to go forth unto all the world? Was there any kind of impediment wanting to restrain them? If they had been mad, (for I will not cease repeating it,) they could not have succeeded at all; for no one follows the advice of madmen. But if they succeeded as in truth they did succeed, and the event proves, then none so wise as they. Now if none were so wise as they, it is quite plain, they would not lightly have entered upon the preaching. Had they not seen Him after He was risen, what was there sufficient to draw them out unto this war? What which would not have turned them away from it? He said unto them, *"After three days I will rise again,"* and He made promises concerning the kingdom of heaven. He said, they should master the whole world, after they had received the Holy Spirit; and ten thousand other things besides these, surpassing all nature. So that if none of these things had come to pass, although they believed in Him while alive, after His death they would not have believed in Him, unless they had seen Him after He was risen. For they have said, *"'After three days,' He said, 'I will rise again,' and He has not arisen. He promised that He would give the Spirit, and He has not sent Him. How then shall His sayings about the other world find credit with us, when His sayings about this are tried and found wanting?"*

And why, if He rose not again, did they preach that He was risen? *"Because they loved Him,"* you will say. But surely, it was likely that they

would hate Him afterwards, for deceiving and betraying them; and because, having lifted them up with innumerable hopes, and divorced them from house, and parents, and all things, and set in hostility against them the entire nation of Jews, He had betrayed them after all. And if indeed the thing were of weakness, they might have pardoned it; but now it would be deemed a result of exceeding malice. For He ought to have spoken the truth, and not have promised heaven, being a mortal man, as you say. So that the very opposite was the likely line for them to take; to proclaim the deception, and declare Him a pretender and imposter. Thus again would they have been rid of all their perils; thus have put an end to the war. Moreover, seeing that the Jews gave money unto the soldiers to say that they stole the body, if the disciples had come forward and said, "*We stole Him, He is not risen again,*" what honor would they not have enjoyed? Thus it was in their power to be honored, nay, crowned. Why then did they for insults and dangers barter away these things, if it was not some Divine power which influenced them, and proved mightier than all these?

7. But if we do not yet convince, take this also into consideration; that had this not been so, though they were ever so well disposed, they would not have preached this Gospel in His name, but would have treated Him with abhorrence. For you know that not even the names of those who deceive us in this sort are we willing to hear. But for what reason preached they also His name? Expecting to gain the mastery through Him? Truly the contrary was natural for them to expect; that even if they had been on the point of prevailing they were ruining themselves by bringing forward the name of a deceiver. But if they wished to throw into the shade former events, their line was to be silent; at any rate, to contend for them earnestly was to excite more and more both of serious hostility and of ridicule. From whence then did it enter their thoughts to invent such things? I say,

"invent:" for what they had heard, they had forgotten. But if, when there was no fear, they forgot many things, and some did not even understand, (as also the Evangelist himself says,) now that so great a danger came upon them, how could it be otherwise than that all should fleet away from them? Why speak I of words? When even their love towards their Master Himself began gradually to fade away, through fear of what was coming: wherewith also He upbraided them. For since, before this, they hung upon him, and were asking continually, *"Where are You going,"* but afterwards on His drawing out His discourse to so great length, and declaring the terrors which at the very time of the Cross, and after the Cross should befall them, they just continued speechless and frozen through fear—hear how He alleges to them this very point saying, *"None of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart."* [John 16:5-6] Now if the expectation that He would die and rise again was such a grief to them, had they failed to see Him after He was risen, how could it be less than annihilation? Yea, they would have been fain to sink into the depths of the earth, what with dejection at being so deceived, and what with dread of the future, feeling themselves sorely straightened.

Again: from whence came their high doctrines? For the higher points, He said, they should hear afterwards. For, says He, [John 16:12] *"I have many things to speak unto you, but you cannot bear them now."* So that the things not spoken were higher. And one of the disciples was not even willing to depart with Him into Judea, when he heard of dangers, but said, *"Let us also go that we may die with Him,"* [John 11:16] taking it hardly because he expected that he should die. Now if that disciple, while he was with Him, expected to die and shrunk back on that account, what must he not have expected afterwards, when parted from Him and the other

disciples, and when the exposure of their shameless conduct was so complete?

8. Besides, what had they to say when they went forth? For the passion indeed all the world knew: for He had been hanged on high, upon the frame of wood, ([ἵκρίου]) and in mid-day, and in a chief city, and at a principal feast and that from which it was least permitted that any should be absent. But the resurrection no man saw of those who were without: which was no small impediment to them in working conviction. Again, that He was buried, was the common talk of all: and that His disciples stole His body, the soldiers and all the Jews declared: but that He had risen again, no one of them who were without knew by sight. Upon what ground then did they expect to convince the world? For if, while miracles were taking place, certain soldiers were persuaded to testify the contrary, upon what ground did these expect without miracles to do the work of preachers, and without having a farthing to convince land and sea concerning the resurrection? Again, if through desire of glory they attempted this, so much the rather would they have ascribed doctrines each one to himself, and not to Him that was dead and gone. Will it be said, men would not have believed them? And which of the two was the likelier, being preached, to win their belief? He that was apprehended and crucified, or those who had escaped the hands of the Jews?

9. Next, tell me with what view were they to take such a course? They did not immediately, leaving Judæa, go into the Gentile cities, but went up and down within its limit. But how, unless they worked miracles, did they convince? For if such they really wrought, (and work them they did,) it was the result of God's power. If on the other hand they wrought none and prevailed, much more wonderful was the event. Knew they not the Jews—tell me— and their evil practice, and their soul full of grudgings? For they

stoned even Moses, [Numbers 14:10, comp. Exodus 17:4] after the sea which they had crossed on foot; after the victory, and that marvellous trophy which they raised without blood, by means of his hands, over the Egyptians who had enslaved them; after the manna; after the rocks, and the fountains of rivers which break out thence; after ten thousand miracles in the land of Egypt and the Red Sea and the wilderness. Jeremiah they cast into a pit, and many of the prophets they slew. Hear, for example, what says Elias, after that fearful famine, and the marvellous rain, and the torch which he brought down from heaven, and the strange holocaust; driven, as he was, to the very extreme edge of their country: *"Lord, your prophets they have killed, your altars they have dug down, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* [1 Kings 19:10] Yet were not those (who were so persecuted) disturbing any of the established rules. Tell me then, what ground had men for attending to these of whom we are speaking? For, on one hand, they were meaner persons than any of the prophets; on the other, they were introducing just such novelties as had caused the Jews to nail even their Master to the Cross.

And in another way, too, it seemed less unaccountable for Christ to utter such things than for them; for He, they might suppose, acted thus to acquire glory for himself; but these they would have hated even the more, as waging war with them in behalf of another.

10. But did the laws of the Romans help them? Nay, by these they were more involved in difficulties. For their language was, [John 19:12] *"Whosoever makes himself a king is not Cæsar's friend."* So that this alone was a sufficient impediment to them, that of Him who was accounted an usurper they were first disciples, and afterwards desirous to strengthen His cause. What in the world then set them upon rushing into such great dangers? And by what statements about Him would they be likely to gain

credit? That He was crucified? That He was born of a poor Jewish woman who had been betrothed to a Jewish carpenter? That He was of a nation hated by the world? Nay, all these things were enough not only to fail of persuading and attracting the hearers, but also to disgust every one; and especially when affirmed by the tent-maker and the fisherman. Would not the disciples then bear all these things in mind? Timid nature can imagine more than the reality, and such were their natures. Upon what ground then did they hope to succeed? Nay, rather, they had no hope, there being things innumerable to draw them aside, if so be that Christ had not risen. Is it not quite plain even unto most thoughtless that unless they had enjoyed a copious and mighty grace, and had received pledges of the resurrection, they would have been unable, I say not, to do and undertake these things, but even so much as to have them in their minds? For if when there were so great hinderances, in the way of their planning, I say not of their succeeding, they yet both planned and brought to effect and accomplishing things greater than all expectation, every one, I suppose, can see that not by human power but by divine grace they wrought things.

Now these arguments we ought to practice, not by ourselves only, but one with another; and thus also the discovery of what remains will be easier to us.

11. And do not, because you are an artisan, suppose that this sort of exercise is out of your province; for even Paul was a tent-maker.

"Yes," says some one, *"but at that time he was also filled with abundant grace, and out of that he spoke all things"* Well; but before this grace, he was at the feet of Gamaliel; yea, moreover, and he received the grace, because of this, that he showed a mind worthy of the grace; and after these things he again put his hand to his craft. Let no one, therefore, of those who have trades be ashamed; but those, who are brought up to

nothing and are idle, who employ many attendants, and are served by an immense retinue. For to be supported by continual hard work is a sort of asceticism. ([φιλοσοφίας?ἵδος] comp. Hooker, *E. P.* V. lxxii. 18.) The souls of such men are clearer, and their minds better strung. For the man who has nothing to do is apter to say many things at random, and do many things at random; and he is busy all day long about nothing, a huge lethargy taking him up entirely. But he that is employed will not lightly entertain in himself any thing useless, in deeds, in words, or in thoughts; for his whole soul is altogether intent upon his laborious way of livelihood. Let us not therefore despise those who support themselves by the labor of their own hands; but let us rather call them happy on this account. For tell me, what thanks are due unto you, when after having received your portion from your father, you go on not in any calling, but lavishing away the whole of it at random? Do you not know that we shall not all have to render the same account, but those who have enjoyed greater licence here a more exact one; those who were afflicted with labor, or poverty, or any thing else of this kind, one not so severe? And this is plain from Lazarus and the rich man. For as thou, for neglecting the right use of the leisure, art justly accused; so the poor man, who having full employment has spent his remnant of time upon right objects, great will be the crowns which he shall receive. But do you urge that a soldier's duties should at least excuse you; and do you charge them with your want of leisure? The excuse cannot be founded in reason. For Cornelius was a centurion, yet in no way did the soldier's belt impair his strict rule of life. But you, when you are keeping holiday with dancers and players, and making entire waste of your life upon the stage, never thinkest of excusing yourself from such engagements by the necessity of military service or the fear of rulers: but when it is the Church to which we call you, then occur these endless impediments.

And what will you say in the day, when you see the flame, and the rivers of fire, and the chains never to be broken; and shall hear the gnashing of teeth? Who shall stand up for you in that day, when you shall see him that has labored with his own hand and has lived uprightly, enjoying all glory; but yourself, who art now in soft raiment and redolent of perfumes, in incurable woe? What good will your wealth and superfluity do you? And the artisan— what harm will his poverty do him?

Therefore that we may not suffer then, let us fear what is said now, and let all our time be spent in employment on things which are really indispensable. For so, having propitiated God in regard of our past sins, and adding good deeds for the future, we shall be able to attain unto the kingdom of heaven: through the favor and loving-kindness, etc., etc.

Homily 6 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 2:1-2

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Nothing was ever more prepared for combat than the spirit of Paul; or rather, I should say, not his spirit, (for he was not himself the inventor of these things,) but, nothing was ever equal to the grace working within him, which overcomes all things. For sufficient indeed is what had been said before to cast down the pride of the boasters about wisdom; nay, even a part of it had been enough. But to enhance the splendor of the victory, he contends anew for the points which he had been affirming; trampling upon the prostrate foe. Look at it in this way. He had brought forward the prophecy which says, *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise."* He had shown the wisdom of God, in that by means of what seemed to be foolishness, He destroyed the philosophy of the Gentiles; he had shown that the *"foolishness of God is wiser than men;"* he had shown that not only did He teach by untaught persons, but also chose untaught persons to learn of Him. Now he shows that both the thing itself which was preached, and the manner of preaching it, were enough to stagger people; and yet did not stagger them. As thus: *"not only,"* says he, *"are the disciples uneducated, but I myself also, who am the preacher."*

Therefore he says, *"And I, brethren,"* (again he uses the word *"brethren,"* to smooth down the harshness of the utterance,) *"came not with*

excellency of speech, declaring unto you the testimony of God." *"What then? Tell me, had you chosen to come 'with excellency,' would you have been able?"* *"I, indeed, had I chosen, should not have been able; but Christ, if He had chosen, was able. But He would not, in order that He might render His trophy more brilliant."* Wherefore also in a former passage, showing that it was His work which had been done, His will that the word should be preached in an unlearned manner, he said, *"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; not with wisdom of words."* But far greater, yea, infinitely greater, than Paul's willing this, is the fact that Christ willed it.

"Not therefore," says he, *"by display of eloquence, neither armed with arguments from without, do I declare the testimony of God."* He says not *"the preaching,"* but *"the testimony of God;"* which word was itself sufficient to withhold him. For he went about preaching death: and for this reason he added, *"for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."* This was the meaning he meant to convey, that he is altogether destitute of the wisdom which is without; as indeed he was saying above, *"I came not with excellency of speech:"* for that he might have possessed this also is plain; for he whose garments raised the dead and whose shadow expelled diseases, much more was his soul capable of receiving eloquence. For this is a thing which may be taught: but the former transcends all art. He then who knows things beyond the reach of art, much more must he have had strength for lesser things. But Christ permitted not; for it was not expedient. Rightly therefore he says, *For I determined not to know any thing: "for I, too, for my part have just the same will as Christ."*

And to me it seems that he speaks to them in a lower tone even than to any others, in order to repress their pride. Thus, the expression, *"I*

determined to know nothing," was spoken in contradistinction to the wisdom which is without. For I came not weaving syllogisms nor sophisms, nor saying unto you anything else than "*Christ was crucified.*" They indeed have ten thousand things to say, and concerning ten thousand things they speak, winding out long courses of words, framing arguments and syllogisms, compounding sophisms without end. But I came unto you saying no other thing than "*Christ was crucified.*" and all of them I outstripped: which is a sign such as no words can express of the power of Him whom I preach.

1 Corinthians 2:3

2. *"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."*

This again is another topic: for not only are the believers unlearned persons; not only is he that speaks unlearned; not only is the manner of the teaching of an unlearned cast throughout; not only was the thing preached of itself enough to stagger people; (for the cross and death were the message brought;) but together with these there were also other hindrances, the dangers, and the plots, and the daily fear, and the being hunted about. For the word "*weakness*," with him in many places stands for the persecutions: as also elsewhere. "*My weakness which I had in my flesh you did not set at nought*:" [Galatians 4:13-14] and again, "*If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my weakness*." [2 Corinthians 11:30] What [weakness]? "*The governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, desirous to apprehend me*." [2 Corinthians 5:32] And again, "*Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness*:" [2 Corinthians 12:10] then, saying in what, he added, "*In injuries, in necessities, in distresses*." And here he makes the same statement; for having said, "*And I was in weakness*," etc. he did not stop at this point, but explaining the word "*weakness*" makes mention of his dangers. He adds again, "*and in fear, and in much trembling, I was with you*."

"*How do you say? Did Paul also fear dangers?*" He did fear, and dreaded them excessively; for though he was Paul, yet he was a man. But this is no charge against Paul, but infirmity of human nature; and it is to the praise of his fixed purpose of mind that when he even dreaded death and stripes, he did nothing wrong because of this fear. So that they who assert

that he feared not stripes, not only do not honor him, but rather abridge greatly his praises. For if he feared not, what endurance or what self-restraint was there in bearing the dangers? I, for my part, on this account admire him; because being in fear, and not simply in "*fear*," but even in "*trembling*" at his perils, he so ran as ever to keep his crown; and gave not in for any danger, in his task of purging out the world, and everywhere both by sea and land sowing the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 2:4

3. *"And my speech and my preaching was not in persuasive words of wisdom:"* that is, had not the wisdom from without. Now if the doctrine preached had nothing subtle, and they that were called were unlearned, and he that preached was of the same description, and thereto was added persecution, and trembling and fear; tell me, how did they overcome without Divine power? And this is why, having said, *"My speech and my preaching was not in persuasive words of wisdom,"* he added, *"but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."*

Do you perceive how *"the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness stronger?"* They for their part, being unlearned and preaching such a Gospel, in their chains and persecution overcame their persecutors. Whereby? Was it not by their furnishing that evidence which is of the Spirit? For this indeed is confessed demonstration. For who, tell me, after he had seen dead men rising to life and devils cast out, could have helped admitting it?

But seeing that there are also deceiving wonders, such as those of sorcerers, he removes this suspicion also. For he said not simply *"of power,"* but first, *"of the Spirit,"* and then, *"of power:"* signifying that the things done were spiritual.

It is no disparagement, therefore, that the Gospel was not declared by means of wisdom; rather it is a very great ornament. For this, it will be allowed, is the clearest token of its being divine and having its roots from above, out of the heavens. Wherefore he added also,

1 Corinthians 2:5

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Do you see how clearly in every way he has set forth the vast gain of this *"ignorance,"* and the great loss of this *"wisdom?"* For the latter made void the Cross, but the former proclaimed the power of God: the latter, besides their failing to discover any of those things which they most needed, set them also upon boasting of themselves; the former, besides their receiving the truth, led them also to pride themselves in God. Again, wisdom would have persuaded many to suspect that the doctrine was of man: this clearly demonstrated it to be divine, and to have come down from heaven. Now when demonstration is made by wisdom of words, even the worse oftentimes overcome the better, having more skill in words; and falsehood outstrips the truth. But in this case it is not so: for neither does the Spirit enter into an unclean soul, nor, having entered in, can it ever be subdued; even though all possible cleverness of speech assail it. For the demonstration by works and signs is far more evident than that by words.

4. But some one may say perhaps, *"If the Gospel is to prevail and has no need of words, lest the Cross be made of none effect; for what reason are signs withholden now?"* For what reason? Speakest thou in unbelief and not allowing that they were done even in the times of the Apostles, or do you truly seek to know? If in unbelief, I will first make my stand against this. I say then, If signs were not done at that time, how did they, chased, and persecuted, and trembling, and in chains, and having become the common enemies of the world, and exposed to all as a mark for ill usage, and with nothing of their own to allure, neither speech, nor show, nor wealth, nor

city, nor nation, nor family, nor pursuit ([ἐπιτήδευμα],) nor glory, nor any such like thing; but with all things contrary, ignorance, meanness, poverty, hatred, enmity, and setting themselves against whole commonwealths, and with such a message to declare; how, I say, did they work conviction? For both the precepts brought much labor, and the doctrines many dangers. And they that heard and were to obey, had been brought up in luxury and drunkenness, and in great wickedness. Tell me then, how did they convince? Whence had they their credibility? For, as I have just said, If without signs they wrought conviction, far greater does the wonder appear. Do not then urge the fact that signs are not done now, as a proof that they were not done then. For as then they were usefully wrought; so now are they no longer so wrought.

Nor does it necessarily follow from discourse being the only instrument of conviction, that now the "*preaching*" is in "*wisdom*." For both they who from the beginning sowed the word were unprofessional ([ἰδιῶται]) and unlearned, and spoke nothing of themselves; but what things they received from God, these they distributed to the world: and we ourselves at this time introduce no inventions of our own; but the things which from them we have received, we speak unto all. And not even now persuade we by argumentation; but from the Divine Scriptures and from the miracles done at that time we produce the proof of what we say. On the other hand, even they at that time persuaded not by signs alone, but also by discoursing. And the signs and the testimonies out of the Old Scriptures, not the cleverness of the things said, made their words appear more powerful.

5. How then, you will say, is it that signs were expedient then, and now inexpedient? Let us suppose a case, (for as yet I am contending against the Greek, and therefore I speak hypothetically of what must certainly come to pass,) let us, I say, suppose a case; and let the unbeliever consent to believe

our affirmations, though it be only by way of concession: ([κᾶν κατὰ συνδρομήν]) for instance, That Christ will come. When then Christ shall come and all the angels with Him, and be manifested as God, and all things made subject unto Him; will not even the Greek believe? It is quite plain that he will also fall down and worship, and confess Him God, though his stubbornness exceed all reckoning. For who, at sight of the heavens opened and Him coming upon the clouds, and all the congregation of the powers above spread around Him, and rivers of fire coming on, and all standing by and trembling, will not fall down before Him, and believe Him God? Tell me, then; shall that adoration and knowledge be accounted unto the Greek for faith? No, on no account. And why not? Because this is not faith. For necessity has done this, and the evidence of the things seen, and it is not of choice, but by the vastness of the spectacle the powers of the mind are dragged along. It follows that by how much the more evident and overpowering the course of events, by so much is the part of faith abridged. For this reason miracles are not done now.

And that this is the truth, hear what He says unto Thomas [John 20:29] *"Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."* Therefore, in proportion to the evidence wherewith the miracle is set forth is the reward of faith lessened. So that if now also miracles were wrought, the same thing would ensue. For that then we shall no longer know Him by faith, Paul has shown, saying, *"For now we walk by faith, not by sight."* [2 Corinthians 5:7. vñv]. As at that time, although thou believe, it shall not be imputed unto you, because the thing is so palpable; so also now, supposing that such miracles were done as were formerly. For when we admit things which in no degree and in no way can be made out by reasoning, then it is faith. It is for this that hell is threatened, but is not shown: for if it were shown, the same would again ensue.

6. Besides if signs be what you seek after, even now you may see signs, although not of the same kind; the numberless predictions and on an endless variety of subject: the conversion of the world, the self-denying ([φιλοσοφίαν]) course of the Barbarians, the change from savage customs, the greater intenseness of piety. *"What predictions?"* you will say. *"For all the things just mentioned were written after the present state of things had begun."* When? Where? By whom? Tell me. How many years ago? Will you have fifty, or an hundred? They had not then, a hundred years ago, anything written at all. How then did the world retain the doctrines and all the rest, since memory would not be sufficient? How knew they that Peter was crucified? ([ἀνεσκολοπίσθη]) How could it have entered the minds of men who came after the events had taken place to foretell, for instance, that the Gospel should be preached in every part of the whole world? That the Jewish institutions should cease, and never return again? And they who gave up their lives for the Gospel, how would they have endured to see the Gospel adulterated? And how would the writers have won credit, miracles having ceased? And how could the writings have penetrated to the region of Barbarians, and of Indians, and unto the very bounds of the ocean, if the relators had not been worthy of credit? The writers, too, who were they? When, how, and why, did they write at all? Was it to gain glory to themselves? Why then inscribed they the books with other men's names? *"Why, from a wish to recommend the doctrine."* As true, or as false? For if you say, they stuck to it, as being false; their joining it at all was out of all likelihood: but if as being truth, there was no need of inventions such as you speak of. And besides, the prophecies are of such a kind, as that even until now time has been unable to force aside the predicted course of things: ([ὥς μὴ δυνάσθαι βιάζεσθαι χρόνῳ τὰ εἰρημμένα]) for the destruction indeed of Jerusalem took place many years ago; but there are also other predictions

which extend along from that time until His coming; which examine as you please: for instance, this, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world: [Matthew 28:20] and, "*Upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it:*" [Matthew 16:18] and, "*This Gospel shall be preached unto all nations:*" [Matthew 24:14] and that which the woman which was an harlot did: and many others more than these. Whence then the truth of this prediction if indeed it were a forgery? How did "*the gates of hell*" not "*prevail*" against "*the Church*?" How is Christ always "*with us*?" For had He not been "*with us*," the Church would not have been victorious. How was the Gospel spread abroad in every part of the world? They also who have spoken against us are enough to testify the antiquity of the books; I mean, such as Celsus and he of Batanea, who came after him. For they, I suppose, were not speaking against books composed after their time.

[7] And besides, there is the whole world which with one consent has received the Gospel. Now there could not have been so great agreement from one end of the earth to the other, unless it had been the Grace of the Spirit; but the authors of the forgery would have been quickly found out. Neither could so great excellencies have originated from inventions and falsehoods. Do you not see the whole world coming in; error extinguished; the austere wisdom ([φιλοσοφίαν]) of the old monks shining brighter than the sun; the choirs of the virgins; the piety among Barbarians; all men serving under one yoke? For neither by us alone were these things foretold, but also from the beginning, by the Prophets. For you will not, I trow, cavil at their predictions also: for the books are with their enemies, and through the zeal of certain Greeks they have been transferred into the Greek tongue. Many things then do these also foretell concerning these matters, showing that it was God who should come among us.

[8] Why then do not all believe now? Because things have degenerated: and for this we are to blame. (For from hence the discourse is addressed unto us also.) For surely not even then did they trust to signs alone, but by the mode of life also many of the converts were attracted. For, *"Let your light so shine before men,"* says He, *"that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 5:16] And, *"They were all of one heart and one soul, neither said any man that anything of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common; and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need;"* [Acts 4:32-35] and they lived an angelic life. And if the same were done now, we should convert the whole world, even without miracles. But in the meanwhile, let those who will be saved attend to the Scriptures; for they shall find there both these noble doings, and those which are greater than these. For it may be added that the Teachers themselves surpassed the deeds of the others; living in hunger, in thirst, and nakedness. But we are desirous of enjoying great luxury, and rest, and ease; not so they: they cried aloud, Even unto the present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place. [1 Corinthians 4:11] And some ran from Jerusalem unto Illyricum, [Romans 15:19] and another unto the country of the Indians, and another unto that of the Moors, and this to one part of the world, that to another. Whereas we have not the courage to depart even out of our own country; but seek for luxurious living and splendid houses and all other superfluities. For which of us ever was famished for the word of God's sake? Which ever abode in a wilderness? Which ever set out on a distant peregrination? Which of our teachers lived by the labor of his hands to assist others? Which endured death daily? Hence it is that they also who are with us have become slothful. For suppose that one saw soldiers and generals struggling with

hunger, and thirst, and death, and with all dreadful things, and bearing cold and dangers and all like lions, and so prospering; then afterwards, relaxing that strictness, and becoming enervated, and fond of wealth, and addicted to business and bargains, and then overcome by their enemies, it were extreme folly to seek for the cause of all this. Now let us reason thus in our own case and that of our ancestors; for we too have become weaker than all, and are nailed down unto this present life.

And if one be found having a vestige of the ancient wisdom, leaving the cities and the market-places, and the society of the world, and the ordering of others, he betakes himself to the mountains: and if one ask the reason of that retirement, he invents a plea which cannot meet with allowance. For, says he, *"lest I perish too, and the edge of my goodness be taken off, I start aside."* Now how much better were it for you to become less keen, and to gain others, than abiding on high to neglect your perishing brethren?

When, however, the one sort are careless about virtue, and those who do regard it withdraw themselves far from our ranks, how are we to subdue our enemies? For even if miracles were wrought now, who would be persuaded? Or who of those without would give heed unto us, our iniquity being thus prevalent? For so it is, that our upright living seems unto the many the more trustworthy argument of the two: miracles admitting of a bad construction on the part of obstinate bad men: whereas a pure life will have abundant power to stop the mouth of the devil himself.

9. These things I say, both to governors and governed; and, before all others, unto myself; to the end that the way of life shown forth in us may be truly admirable, that taking our appropriate stations, we may look down on all things present; may despise wealth, and not despise hell; overlook glory, and not overlook salvation; endure toil and labor here, lest we fall into

punishment there. Thus let us wage war with the Greeks; thus let us take them captive with a captivity better than liberty.

But while we say these things without intermission, over and over, they occur very seldom. Howbeit, be they done or not, it is right to remind you of them continually. For if some are engaged in deceiving by their fair speech, so much more is it the duty of those who allure back unto the truth, not to grow weary of speaking what is profitable. Again: if the deceivers make use of so many contrivances— spending as they do money, and applying arguments, and undergoing dangers, and making a parade of their patronage— much more should we, who are winning men from deceit, endure both dangers and deaths, and all things; that we may both gain ourselves and others, and become to our enemies irresistible, and so obtain the promised blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness, etc.

Homily 7 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 2:6-7

Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect, yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to naught; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that has been hidden, which God fore-ordained before the worlds unto our glory.

Darkness seems to be more suitable than light to those that are diseased in their eyesight: wherefore they betake themselves by preference to some room that is thoroughly shaded over. This also is the case with the wisdom which is spiritual. As the wisdom which is of God seemed to be foolishness unto those without: so their own wisdom, being foolishness indeed, was accounted by them wisdom. The result has been just as if a man having skill in navigation were to promise that without a ship or sails he would pass over a boundless tract of sea, and then endeavor by reasonings to prove that the thing is possible; but some other person, ignorant of it all, committing himself to a ship and a steersman and sailors, were thus to sail in safety. For the seeming ignorance of this man is wiser than the wisdom of the other. For excellent is the art of managing a ship; but when it makes too great professions it is a kind of folly. And so is every art which is not contented with its own proper limits. Just so the wisdom which is without [were wisdom indeed] if it had had the benefit of the spirit. But since it trusted all to itself and supposed that it wanted none of that help, it became foolishness, although it seemed to be wisdom. Wherefore having first exposed it by the facts, then and not till then he calls it foolishness; and having first called the wisdom of God folly, according to their reckoning,

then and not till then he shows it to be wisdom. (For after our proofs, not before, we are best able to abash the gainsayers.)

His words then are, "*Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect:*" for when I, accounted foolish and a preacher of follies, get the better of the wise, I overcome wisdom, not by foolishness but by a more perfect wisdom; a wisdom, too, so ample and so much greater, that the other appears foolishness. Wherefore having before called it by a name such as they named it at that time, and having both proved his victory from the facts, and shown the extreme foolishness of the other side: he thenceforth bestows upon it its right name, saying, "*Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect.*" "*Wisdom*" is the name he gives to the Gospel, to the method of salvation, the being saved by the Cross. "*The perfect,*" are those who believe. For indeed they are "*perfect,*" who know all human things to be utterly helpless, and who overlook them from the conviction that by such they are profited nothing: such were the true believers.

"*But not a wisdom of this world.*" For where is the use of the wisdom which is without, terminating here and proceeding no further, and not even here able to profit its possessors?

Now by the "*rulers of the world,*" here, he means not certain demons, as some suspect, but those in authority, those in power, those who esteem the thing worth contending about, philosophers, rhetoricians and writers of speeches ([λογογράφους]). For these were the dominant sort and often became leaders of the people.

"*Rulers of the world*" he calls them, because beyond the present world their dominion extends not. Wherefore, he adds further, "*which are coming to nought;*" disparaging it both on its own account, and from those who wield it. For having shown that it is false, that it is foolish, that it can

discover nothing, that it is weak, he shows moreover that it is but of short duration.

2. *"But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery."* What mystery? For surely Christ says, [Matthew 10:27. ηκούσατε] rec. text [ἀκούετε] *"What you have heard in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops."* How then does he call it *"a mystery?"* Because that neither angel nor archangel, nor any other created power knew of it before it actually took place. Wherefore he says, [Ephesians 3:10] *"That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."* And this has God done in honor to us, so that they not without us should hear the mysteries. For we, too, ourselves, whomsoever we make our friends, use to speak of this as a sure proof of friendship towards them, that we tell our secrets to no one in preference to them. Let those hear who expose to shame the secrets of the Gospel, and unto all indiscriminately display the *"pearls"* and the doctrine, and who cast *"the holy things"* unto *"dogs,"* and *"swine,"* and useless reasonings. For the Mystery wants no argumentation; but just what it is, that only is to be declared. Since it will not be a mystery, divine and whole in all its parts, when you add any thing to it of yourself also.

And in another sense, too, a mystery is so called; because we do not behold the things which we see, but some things we see and others we believe. For such is the nature of our Mysteries. I, for instance, feel differently upon these subjects from an unbeliever. I hear, *"Christ was crucified;"* and immediately I admire His loving-kindness unto men: the other hears, and esteems it weakness. I hear, *"He became a servant;"* and I wonder at his care for us: the other hears, and counts it dishonor. I hear, *"He died;"* and am astonished at His might, that being in death He was not holden, but even broke the bands of death: the other hears, and surmises it to be helplessness. He hearing of the resurrection, says, the thing is a

legend; I, aware of the facts which demonstrate it, fall down and worship the dispensation of God. He hearing of a laver, counts it merely as water: but I behold not simply the thing which is seen, but the purification of the soul which is by the Spirit. He considers only that my body has been washed; but I have believed that the soul also has become both pure and holy; and I count it the sepulchre, the resurrection, the sanctification, the righteousness, the redemption, the adoption, the inheritance, the kingdom of heaven, the plenary effusion ([χορηγίαν]) of the Spirit. For not by the sight do I judge of the things that appear, but by the eyes of the mind. I hear of the "*Body of Christ*:" in one sense I understand the expression, in another sense the unbeliever.

And just as children, looking on their books, know not the meaning of the letters, neither know what they see; yea more, if even a grown man be unskilful in letters, the same thing will befall him; but the skilful will find much meaning stored up in the letters, even complete lives and histories: and an epistle in the hands of one that is unskilful will be accounted but paper and ink; but he that knows how to read will both hear a voice, and hold converse with the absent, and will reply whatsoever he chooses by means of writing: so it is also in regard of the Mystery. Unbelievers albeit they hear, seem not to hear: but the faithful, having the skill which is by the Spirit, behold the meaning of the things stored therein. For instance, it is this very thing that Paul signified, when he said that even now the word preached is hidden: for "*unto them that perish*," he says, "*it is hidden*." [2 Corinthians 4:3]

In another point of view, the word indicates also the Gospel's being contrary to all expectation. By no other name is Scripture wont to call what happens beyond all hope and above all thought of men. Wherefore also in another place, "*My mystery is for Me*," and for Mine. And Paul again, [2

Corinthians 15:51] *"Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."*

3. And though it be everywhere preached, still is it a mystery; for as we have been commanded, *"what things we have heard in the ear, to speak upon the house tops,"* so have we been also charged, *"not to give the holy things unto dogs nor yet to cast our pearls before swine."* [Matthew 7:9] For some are carnal and do not understand: others have a veil upon their hearts and do not see: wherefore that is above all things a mystery, which everywhere is preached, but is not known of those who have not a right mind; and is revealed not by wisdom but by the Holy Ghost, so far as is possible for us to receive it. And for this cause a man would not err, who in this respect also should entitle it a mystery, the utterance whereof is forbidden. ([ἀπόρρητον]) For not even unto us, the faithful, has been committed entire certainty and exactness. Wherefore Paul also said, [1 Corinthians 13:9] *"We know in part, and we prophesy in part: for now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face."*

4. For this cause he says, *"We speak wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God fore-ordained before the worlds unto our glory. Hidden:"* that is, that no one of the powers above has learned it before us; neither do the many know it now.

"Which he fore-ordained unto our glory" and yet, elsewhere he says, *"unto his own glory,"* for he considers our salvation to be His own glory: even as also He calls it His own riches, [vid. Ephesians 3:8] though He be Himself rich in good and need nothing in order that He may be rich.

"Fore-ordained," he says, pointing out the care had of us. For so those are accounted most both to honor and to love us, whosoever shall have laid themselves out to do us good from the very beginning: which indeed is what fathers do in the case of children. For although they give not their

goods until afterwards, yet at first and from the beginning they had predetermined this. And this is what Paul is earnest to point out now; that God always loved us even from the beginning and when as yet we were not. For unless He had loved us, He would not have fore-ordained our riches. Consider not then the enmity which has come between; for more ancient than that was the friendship.

As to the words, "*before the worlds*," ([πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων]) they mean eternal. For in another place also He says thus, "*Who is before the worlds*." The Son also, if you mark it, will be found to be eternal in the same sense. For concerning Him he says, [Hebrews 1:2] "*By Him He made the worlds*;" which is equivalent to subsistence before the worlds; for it is plain that the maker is before the things which are made.

1 Corinthians 2:8

5. *"Which none of the rulers of this world knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."*

Now if they knew not, how said He unto them, [John 7:28] *"You both know Me, and you know whence I am?"* Indeed, concerning Pilate the Scripture says, he knew not. [see John 19:9] It is likely also that neither did Herod know. These, one might say, are called rulers of this world: but if a man were to say that this is spoken concerning the Jews also and the Priests, he would not err. For to these also He says, [John 8:19] *"You know neither Me nor My Father."* How then says He a little before, *"You both know Me, and you know whence I am?"* However, the manner of this way of knowledge and of that has already been declared in the Gospel; (Hom. 49. on St. John,) and, not to be continually handling the same topic, there do we refer our readers.

What then? Was their sin in the matter of the Cross forgiven them? For He surely did say, *"Forgive them."* [Luke 23:34] If they repented, it was forgiven. For even he who set countless assailants on Stephen and persecuted the Church, even Paul, became the champion of the Church. Just so then, those others also who chose to repent, had forgiveness: and this indeed Paul himself meant, when he exclaims, [Romans 11:1-2]. *"I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid."* *"I say then, has God cast away His people whom He foreknew? God forbid."* Then, to show that their repentance was not precluded, he brought forward as a decisive proof his own conversion, saying, *"For I also am an Israelite."*

As to the words, *"They knew not;"* they seem to me to be said here not concerning Christ's Person, but only concerning the dispensation hidden in

that event: ([περὶ αὐτῆς τοῦ πράγματος τῆς οἰκονομίας]) as if he had said, what meant "*the death*," and the "*Cross*," they knew not. For in that passage also He said not, "*They know not Me*," but, "*They know not what they do*;" that is, the dispensation which is being accomplished, and the mystery, they are ignorant of. For they knew not that the Cross is to shine forth so brightly; that it is made the salvation of the world, and the reconciliation of God unto men; that their city should be taken; and that they should suffer the extreme of wretchedness.

By the name of "*wisdom*," he calls both Christ, and the Cross and the Gospel. Opportunely also he called Him, "*The Lord of glory*." For seeing that the Cross is counted a matter of ignominy, he signifies that the Cross was great glory: but that there was need of great wisdom in order not only to know God but also to learn this dispensation of God: and the wisdom which was without turned out an obstacle, not to the former only, but to the latter also.

1 Corinthians 2:9-13

6. *"But as it is written, Things which eye saw not and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him."*

Where are these words written? Why, it is said to have been *"written,"* then also, when it is set down, not in words, but in actual events, as in the historical books ; or when the same meaning is expressed, but not in the very same words, as in this place: for the words, *"They to whom it was not told about Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand,"* [Isaiah 52:15; Septuagint. Comp. Romans 15:21; Isaiah 64:4] are the same with *"the things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard."* Either then this is his meaning, or probably it was actually written in some books, and the copies have perished. For indeed many books were destroyed, and few were preserved entire even in the first captivity. And this is plain, in those which remain to us. For the Apostle says [Acts 3:24] *"From Samuel and the Prophets which follow after they have all spoken concerning Him:"* and these their words are not entirely extant. Paul, however, as being learned in the law and speaking by the Spirit, would of course know all with accuracy. And why speak I of the captivity? Even before the captivity many books had disappeared; the Jews having rushed headlong to the last degree of impiety: and this is plain from the end of the fourth book of Kings, [2 Kings 22:8; 2 Chronicles 34:14] for the book of Deuteronomy could hardly be found, having been buried somewhere in a dunghill.

And besides, there are in many places double prophecies, easy to be apprehended by the wiser sort; from which we may find out many of the things which are obscure.

7. What then, has *"eye not seen what God prepared?"* No. For who among men saw the things which were about to be dispensed? Neither then has *"the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man."* How is this? For if the Prophets spoke of it, how says he, *"Ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man?"* It did not enter; for not of himself alone is he speaking, but of the whole human race. What then? The Prophets, did not they hear? Yes, they heard; but the prophetic ear was not the ear *"of man:"* for not as men heard they, but as Prophets. Wherefore he said, [Isaiah 50:4. Septuagint] *"He has added unto me an ear to hear;"* meaning by *"addition"* that which was from the Spirit. From whence it was plain that before hearing it had not entered into the heart of man. For after the gift of the Spirit the heart of the Prophets was not the heart of man, but a spiritual heart; as also he says himself, *"We have the mind of Christ"* [1 Corinthians 2:16] as if he would say, *"Before we had the blessing of the Spirit and learned the things which no man can speak, no one of us nor yet of the Prophets conceived them in his mind. How should we? Since not even angels know them. For what need is there to speak,"* says he, *"concerning 'the rulers of this world,' seeing that no man knew them, nor yet the powers above?"*

What kind of things then are these? That by what is esteemed to be the foolishness of preaching He shall overcome the world, and the nations shall be brought in, and there shall be reconciliation of God with men, and so great blessings shall come upon us! How then have we *"known? Unto us,"* he says, *"God has revealed them by His Spirit;"* not by the wisdom which is without; for this like some dishonored handmaid has not been permitted to enter in, and stoop down and look into [see John 20:5] the mysteries pertaining to the Lord. Do you see how great is the difference between this wisdom and that? The things which angels knew not, these are what she has

taught us: but she that is without, has done the contrary. Not only has she failed to instruct, but she hindered and obstructed, and after the event sought to obscure His doings, making the Cross of none effect. Not then simply by our receiving the knowledge, does he describe the honor vouchsafed to us, nor by our receiving it with angels, but, what is more, by His Spirit conveying it to us.

7. Then to show its greatness, he says, If the Spirit which knows the secret things of God had not revealed them, we should not have learned them. Such an object of care was this whole subject to God, as to be among His secrets. Wherefore we needed also that Teacher who knows these things perfectly; for *"the Spirit,"* [1 Corinthians 2:10-12] says he, *"searches all things, even the deep things of God."* For the word *"to search"* is here indicative not of ignorance, but of accurate knowledge: it is the very same mode of speaking which he used even of God, saying, *"He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit."* [Romans 8:27] Then having spoken with exactness concerning the knowledge of the Spirit, and having pointed out that it is as fully equal to God's knowledge, as the knowledge of a man itself to itself; and also, that we have learned all things from it and necessarily from it; he added, *"which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."* Do you see to what point he exalted us because of the Teacher's dignity? For so much are we wiser than they as there is difference between Plato and the Holy Spirit; they having for masters the heathen rhetoricians but we, the Holy Spirit.

8. But what is this, *"comparing spiritual things with spiritual?"* When a thing is spiritual and of dubious meaning, we adduce testimonies from the things which are spiritual. For instance, I say, Christ rose again— was born of a Virgin; I adduce testimonies and types and demonstrations; the abode

of Jonah in the whale and his deliverance afterwards; the child-bearing of the barren, Sarah, Rebecca, and the rest; the springing up of the trees which took place in paradise [Genesis 2:5] when there had been no seeds sown, no rains sent down, no furrow drawn along. For the things to come were fashioned out and figured forth, as in shadow, by the former things, that these which are now might be believed when they came in. And again we show, how of the earth was man, and how of man alone the woman; and this without any intercourse whatever; how the earth itself of nothing, the power of the Great Artificer being every where sufficient for all things. Thus "*with spiritual things*" do I "*compare spiritual,*" and in no instance have I need of the Wisdom which is without— neither its reasonings nor its embellishments. For such persons do but agitate the weak understanding and confuse it; and are not able to demonstrate clearly any one of the things which they affirm, but even have the contrary effect. They rather disturb the mind and fill it with darkness and much perplexity. Wherefore he says, "*with spiritual things comparing spiritual.*" Do you see how superfluous he shows it to be? And not only superfluous, but even hostile and injurious: for this is meant by the expressions, "*lest the Cross of Christ be made of none effect,*" and, "*that our ('your faith,' rec. text) faith should not stand in the wisdom of men.*" And he points out here, that it is impossible for those who confidently entrust every thing to it, to learn any useful thing: for

1 Corinthians 2:14-16

9. *"The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit."*

It is necessary then to lay it aside first. *"What then,"* some man will say; *"is the wisdom from without stigmatized? And yet it is the work of God."* How is this clear? Since He made it not, but it was an invention of yours. For in this place he calls by the term *"wisdom"* curious research and superfluous elegance of words. But should any one say that he means the human understanding; even in this sense the fault is yours. For you bring a bad name upon it, who makest a bad use of it; who to the injury and thwarting of God demandest from it things which indeed it never had. Since then you boast therein and fightest with God, He has exposed its weakness. For strength of body also is an excellent thing, but when Cain used it not as he ought, God disabled him and made him tremble [Genesis 4:12-14. Septuagint. *"sighing and trembling,"* rec. ver. *"fugitive and vagabond."*] Wine also is a good thing; but because the Jews indulged in it immoderately, God prohibited the priests entirely from the use of the fruit. And since thou also hast abused wisdom unto the rejecting of God, and hast demanded of it more than it can do of its own strength; in order to withdraw you from human hope, he has showed you its weakness.

For (to proceed) he is *"a natural man,"* who attributes every thing to reasonings of the mind and considers not that he needs help from above; which is a mark of sheer folly. For God bestowed it that it might learn and receive help from Him, not that it should consider itself sufficient unto itself. For eyes are beautiful and useful, but should they choose to see without light, their beauty profits them nothing; nor yet their natural force,

but even does harm. So if you mark it, any soul also, if it choose to see without the Spirit, becomes even an impediment unto itself.

"How then, before this," it will be said, *"did she see all things of herself?"* Never at any time did she this of herself but she had creation for a book set before her in open view. But when men having left off to walk in the way which God commanded them, and by the beauty of visible objects to know the Great Artificer, had entrusted to disputations the leading-staff of knowledge; they became weak and sank in a sea of ungodliness; for they presently brought in that which was the abyss of all evil, asserting that nothing was produced from things which were not, but from uncreated matter; and from this source they became the parents of ten thousand heresies.

Moreover, in their extreme absurdities they agreed; but in those things wherein they seemed to dream out something wholesome, though it were only as in shadows, they fell out with one another; that on both sides they might be laughed to scorn. For that out of things which are not nothing is produced, nearly all with one accord have asserted and written; and this with great zeal. In these absurdities then they were urged on by the Devil. But in their profitable sayings, wherein they seemed, though it were but darkly, ([ἐν αἰνίγματι],) to find some part of what they sought, in these they waged war with one another: for instance, that the soul is immortal; that virtue needs nothing external; and that the being good or the contrary is not of necessity nor of fate.

Do you see the craft of the Devil? If any where he saw men speaking any thing corrupt, he made all to be of one mind; but if any where speaking any thing sound, he raised up others against them; so that the absurdities did not fail, being confirmed by the general consent, and the profitable parts died away, being variously understood. Observe how in every respect the

soul is unstrung, ([ἄτονος]) and is not sufficient unto herself. And this fell out as one might expect. For if, being such as she is, she aspire to have need of nothing and withdraw herself from God; suppose her not fallen into that condition, and into what extreme madness would she not have insensibly sunk? If, endowed with a mortal body, she expected greater things from the false promise of the Devil— [for, "*You shall be,*" said he, "*as gods*" Genesis 3:4]— to what extent would she not have cast herself away, had she received her body also, from the beginning, immortal. For, even after that, she asserted herself to be unbegotten and of the essence of God, through the corrupt mouth of the Manicheans , and it was this distemperature which gave occasion to her invention of the Grecian gods. On this account, as it seems to me, God made virtue laborious, with a view to bow down the soul and to bring it to moderation. And that you may convince yourself that this is true, (as far as from trifles ones may guess at any thing great,) let us learn it from the Israelites. They, it is well known, when they led not a life of toil but indulged in relaxation, not being able to bear prosperity, fell away into ungodliness. What then did God upon this? He laid upon them a multitude of laws with a view to restrain their licence. And to convince you that these laws contribute not to any virtue, but were given to them as a sort of curb, providing them with an occasion of perpetual labor; hear what says the prophet concerning them; "*I gave them statutes which were not good.*" Ezek. xx. 25. What means, "*not good?*" Such as did not much contribute towards virtue. Wherefore he adds also, "*and ordinances whereby they shall not live.*"

10. "*But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit.*"

For as with these eyes no man could learn the things in the heavens; so neither the soul unaided the things of the Spirit. And why speak I of the things in heaven? It receives not even those in earth, all of them. For

beholding afar off a square tower, we think it to be round; but such an opinion is mere deception of the eyes: so also we may be sure, when a man by means of his understanding alone examines the things which are afar off much ridicule will ensue. For not only will he not see them such as indeed they are, but will even account them the contraries of what they are.

Wherefore he added, "*for they are foolishness unto him.*" But this comes not of the nature of the things, but of his infirmity, unable as he is to attain to their greatness through the eyes of his soul.

11. Next, pursuing his contrast, he states the cause of this, saying, "*he knows not because they are spiritually discerned:*" i.e. the things asserted require faith, and to apprehend them by reasonings is not possible, for their magnitude exceeds by a great deal the meanness of our understanding.

Wherefore he says, "*but he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*" For he that has sight, beholds himself all things that appertain to the man that has no sight; but no sightless person discerns what the other is about. So also in the case before us, our own matters and those of unbelievers, all of them we for our part know; but ours, they know not henceforth any more. We know what is the nature of things present, what the dignity of things to come; and what some day shall become of the world when this state of things shall be no more, and what sinners shall suffer, and the righteous shall enjoy. And that things present are nothing worth, we both know, and their meanness we expose; (for to "*discern*" is also to expose;) ([ἀνακρίνειν, ἐλέγχειν]) and that the things to come are immortal and immoveable. All these things are known to the spiritual man; and what the natural man shall suffer when he is departed into that world; and what the faithful shall enjoy when he has fulfilled his journey from this: none of which are known to the natural man.

12. Wherefore also, subjoining a plain demonstration of what had been affirmed, he says, *"For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."* That is to say, the things which are in the mind of Christ, these we know, even the very things which He wills and has revealed. For since he had said, *"the Spirit had revealed them;"* lest any one should set aside the Son, he subjoins that Christ also showed us these things. Not meaning this, that all the things which He knows, we know; but that all the things which we know are not human so as to be open to suspicion, but of His mind and spiritual.

For the mind which we have about these things we have of Christ; that is, the knowledge which we have concerning the things of the faith is spiritual; so that with reason we are *"judged of no man."* For it is not possible that a natural man should know divine things. Wherefore also he said, *"For who has known the mind of the Lord?"* implying that our own mind which we have about these things, is His mind. And this, *"that he may instruct Him,"* he has not added without reason, but with reference to what he had just now said, *"the spiritual man no one discerns."* For if no man is able to know the mind of God, much less can he teach and correct it. For this is the meaning of, *"that he may instruct Him."*

Do you see how from every quarter he repels the wisdom which is without, and shows that the spiritual man knows more things and greater? For seeing that those reasons, *"That no flesh should glory;"* and, *"For this cause has He chosen the foolish things, that He might confound the wise men;"* and, *"Lest the Cross of Christ should be made void:"* seemed not to the unbelievers greatly worthy of credit, nor yet attractive, or necessary, or useful, he finishes by laying down the principal reason; because in this way we most easily see from Whom we may have the means of learning even high things, and things secret, and things which are above us. For reason

was absolutely made of none effect by our inability to apprehend through Gentile wisdom the things above us.

You may observe, too, that it was more advantageous to learn in this way from the Spirit. For that is the easiest and clearest of all teaching.

"But we have the mind of Christ." That is, spiritual, divine, that which has nothing human. For it is not of Plato, nor of Pythagoras, but it is Christ Himself, putting His own things into our mind.

This then, if naught else, let us revere, O beloved, and let our life shine forth as most excellent; since He also Himself makes this a sure proof of great friendship, viz. the revealing His secrets unto us: where He says, [John 15:15] *"Henceforth I call you not servants, for all you are My friends; for all things which I have heard from My Father I have told unto you:"* that is, I have had confidence towards you. Now if this by itself is a proof of friendship, namely, to have confidence: when it appears that He has not only confided to us the mysteries conveyed by words, ([τὰ διὰ ῥημάτων μυστηρία]) but also imparted to us the same conveyed by works, ([διὰ τῶν ἔργων], i.e. sacramental actions) consider how vast the love of which this is the fruit. This, if nothing else, let us revere; even though we will not make any such great account of hell, yet let it be more fearful than hell to be thankless and ungrateful to such a friend and benefactor. And not as hired servants, but as sons and freemen, let us do all things for the love of our Father; and let us at last cease from adhering to the world that we may put the Greeks also to shame. For even now desiring to put out my strength against them, I shrink from so doing, lest haply, surpass them as we may by our arguments and the truth of what we teach, we bring upon ourselves much derision from the comparison of our way of life; seeing that they indeed, cleaving unto error and having no such conviction, abide by philosophy, but we do just the contrary. However, I will say it. For it may

be, it may be that in practising how to contend against them, we shall long as rivals to become better than they in our mode of life also.

14. I was saying not long ago, that it would not have entered the Apostles' thoughts to preach what they did preach, had they not enjoyed Divine Grace; and that so far from succeeding, they would not even have devised such a thing. Well then, let us also today prosecute the same subject in our discourse; and let us show that it was a thing impossible so much as to be chosen or thought of by them, if they had not had Christ among them: not because they were arrayed, the weak against the strong, not because few against many, not because poor against rich, not because unlearned against wise, but because the strength of their prejudice, too, was great. For you know that nothing is so strong with men as the tyranny of ancient custom. So that although they had not been twelve only, and not so contemptible, and such as they really were, but another world as large as this, and with an equivalent number arrayed on their side, or even much greater; even in this case the result would have been hard to achieve. For the other party had custom on their side, but to these their novelty was an obstacle. For nothing so much disturbs the mind, though it be done for some beneficial purpose, as to innovate and introduce strange things, and most of all when this is done in matters relating to divine worship and the glory of God. And how great force there is in this circumstance I will now make plain; first having made the following statement that there was added also another difficulty with regard to the Jews. For in the case of the Greeks, they destroyed both their gods and their doctrines altogether; but not so did they dispute with the Jews, but many of their doctrines they abolished, while the God who had enacted the same they bade them worship. And affirming that men should honor the legislator, they said, "*obey not in all respects the law which is of Him;*" for instance, in the keeping the Sabbath, or observing circumcision,

or offering sacrifices, or doing any other like thing. So that not only was custom an impediment, but also the fact, that when they bade men worship God, they bade them break many of His laws.

15. But in the case of the Greeks great was the tyranny of custom. For if it had been a custom of ten years only, I say not of such a length of time, and if it had preoccupied but a few men, I say not the whole world, when these persons made their approaches; even in this case the revolution would have been hard to effect. But now sophists, and orators, and fathers, and grandfathers, and many more ancient than all these, had been preoccupied by the error: the very earth and sea, and mountains and groves, and all nations of Barbarians, and all tribes of the Greeks, and wise men and ignorant, rulers and subjects, women and men, young and old, masters and slaves, artificers and husbandmen, dwellers in cities and in the country; all of them. And those who were instructed would naturally say, *"What in the world is this? Have all that dwell in the world been deceived? Both sophists and orators, philosophers and historians, the present generation and they who were before this, Pythagoreans, Platonists, generals, consuls, kings, they who in all cities from the beginning were citizens and colonists, both Barbarians and Greeks? And are the twelve fishermen and tent-makers and publicans wiser than all these? Why, who could endure such a statement?"* However, they spoke not so, nor had it in their mind, but did endure them, and owned that they were wiser than all. Wherefore they overcame even all. And custom was no impediment to this, though accounted invincible when she has acquired her full swing by course of time.

And that you may learn how great is the strength of custom, it has oftentimes prevailed over the commands of God. And why do I say, commands? Even over very blessings. For so the Jews when they had manna, required garlic; enjoying liberty they were mindful of their slavery;

and they were continually longing for Egypt, because they were accustomed to it. Such a tyrannical thing is custom.

If you desire to hear of it from the heathens also; it is said that Plato, although well aware that all about the gods was a sort of imposture, condescended to all the feasts and all the rest of it, as being unable to contend with custom; and as having in fact learned this from his master. For he, too, being suspected of some such innovation, was so far from succeeding in what he desired that he even lost his life; and this, too, after making his defence. And how many men do we see now by prejudice held in idolatry, and having nothing plausible to say, when they are charged with being Greeks, but alleging the fathers, and grandfathers, and great grandfathers. For no other reason did some of the heathens call custom, second nature. But when doctrines are the subject-matter of the custom, it becomes yet more deeply rooted. For a man would change all things more easily than those pertaining to religion. The feeling of shame, too, coupled with custom, was enough to raise an obstacle; and the seeming to learn a new lesson in extreme old age, and that of those who were not so intelligent. And why wonder, should this happen in regard of the soul, seeing that even in the body custom has great force?

16. In the Apostles' case, however, there was yet another obstacle, more powerful than these; it was not merely changing custom so ancient and primitive, but there were perils also under which the change was effected. For they were not simply drawing men from one custom to another, but from a custom, wherein was no fear to an undertaking which held out threats of danger. For the believer must immediately incur confiscation, persecution, exile from his country; must suffer the worst ills, be hated of all men, be a common enemy both to his own people and to strangers. So that even if they had invited men to a customary thing out of

novelty, even in this case it would have been a difficult matter. But when it was from a custom to an innovation, and with all these terrors to boot, consider how vast was the obstacle!

And again, another thing, not less than those mentioned, was added to make the change difficult. For besides the custom and the dangers, these precepts were both more burdensome, and those from which they withdrew men were easy and light. For their call was from fornication unto chastity; from love of life unto sundry kinds of death; from drunkenness unto fasting; from laughter unto tears and compunction; from covetousness unto utter indigence; from safety unto dangers: and throughout all they required the strictest circumspection. For, "*Filthiness*," [Ephesians 5:4] says he, "*and foolish talking, and jesting, let it not proceed out of your mouth.*" And these things they spoke unto those who knew nothing else than how to be drunken and serve their bellies; who celebrated feasts made up of nothing but of "*filthiness*" and laughter and all manner of revellings ([κωμωδίας ἀπάσης].) So that not only from the matter pertaining to severity of life were the doctrines burthensome, but also from their being spoken unto men who had been brought up in careless ease, and "*filthiness*," and "*foolish talking*," and laughter and revellings. For who among those who had lived in these things, when he heard, [Matthew 10:38] "*If a man take not up his cross and follow Me, he is not worthy of Me;*" and, [Matthew 10:34] "*I came not to send peace but a sword, and to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter at variance with her mother,*" would not have felt himself chilled all over ([ἐνάρκησε])? And who, when he heard, "*If a man bid not farewell to home and country and possessions, he is not worthy of Me,*" would not have hesitated, would not have refused? And yet there were men, who not only felt no chill, neither shrunk away when they heard these things, but ran to meet them and rushed upon the hardships, and eagerly

caught at the precepts enjoined. Again, to be told, "*For every idle word we shall give account;*" [Matthew 12:36] and, "*whosoever looks upon a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her as soon as seen;*" [Matthew 5:28] and, "*whosoever is angry without cause shall fall into hell;*"— which of the men of that day would not these things have frightened off? And yet all came running in, and many even leaped over the boundaries of the course. What then was their attraction? Was it not, plainly, the power of Him who was preached? For suppose that the case were not as it is, but just contrary, that this side was the other, and the other this; would it have been easy, let me ask, to hold fast and to drag on those who resisted? We cannot say so. So that in every way that power is proved divine which wrought so excellently. Else how, tell me, did they prevail with the frivolous and the dissolute, urging them toward the severe and rough course of life?

17. Well; such was the nature of the precepts. But let us see whether the doctrine was attractive. Nay, in this respect also there was enough to frighten away the unbelievers. For what said the preachers? That we must worship the crucified, and count Him as God, who was born of a Jewish woman. Now who would have been persuaded by these words, unless divine power had led the way? That indeed He had been crucified and buried, all men knew; but that He had risen again and ascended, no one save the Apostles had seen.

But, you will say, they excited them by promises and deceived them by an empty sound of words. Nay, this very topic most particularly shows (even apart from all that has been said) that our doctrines are no deceit. For all its hardships took place here, but its consolations they were to promise after the resurrection. This very thing then, for I repeat it, shows that our Gospel is divine. For why did no one of the believers say, "*I close not with*

this, neither do I endure it? Thou threatenest me with hardships here, and the good things you promise after the resurrection. Why, how is it plain that there will be a resurrection? Which of the departed has returned? Which of those at rest has risen again? Which of these has said what shall be after our departure hence?" But none of these things entered into their minds; rather they gave up their very lives for the Crucified. So that this bare fact was more than anything a proof of great power; first, their working conviction at once, touching matters so important, in persons that had never in their lives before heard of any such thing; secondly, that they prevailed on them to take the difficulties upon trial, and to account the blessings as matter of hope. Now if they had been deceivers they would have done the contrary: their good things they would have promised as of this world [ἐντεῦθεν], so John 18:36; the fearful things they would not have mentioned, whether they related to the present life or the future. For so deceivers and flatterers act. Nothing harsh, nor galling, nor burdensome, do they hold out, but altogether the contrary. For this is the nature of deceit.

18. But *"the folly,"* it will be said, *"of the greater part caused them to believe what they were told."* How do you say? When they were under Greeks, they were not foolish; but when they came over to us, did their folly then begin? And yet they were not men of another sort nor out of another world, that the Apostles took and persuaded: they were men too who simply held the opinions of the Greeks, but ours they received with the accompaniment of dangers. So that if with better reason they had maintained the former, they would not have swerved from them, now that they had so long time been educated therein; and especially as not without danger was it possible to swerve. But when they came to know from the very nature of the things that all on that side was mockery and delusion, upon this, even under menaces of sundry deaths, they sprang off

([ἀπεπήδησαν]) from their customary ways, and came over voluntarily unto the new; inasmuch as the latter doctrine was according to nature, but the other contrary to nature.

But "*the persons convinced,*" it is said, "*were slaves, and woman, and nurses, and midwives, and eunuchs.*" Now in the first place, not of these alone does our Church consist; and this is plain unto all. But be it of these; this is what especially makes the Gospel worthy of admiration; that such doctrines as Plato and his followers could not apprehend, the fishermen had power on a sudden to persuade the most ignorant sort of all to receive. For if they had persuaded wise men only, the result would not have been so wonderful; but in advancing slaves, and nurses, and eunuchs unto such great severity of life as to make them rivals to angels, they offered the greatest proof of their divine inspiration. Again; had they enjoined I know not what trifling matters, it were reasonable perhaps to bring forward the conviction wrought in these persons, to show the trifling nature of the things which were spoken: but if things great, and high, and almost transcending human nature, and requiring high thoughts, were the matter of their lessons of wisdom; the more foolishness you show in those who were convinced, by so much the more do you show clearly that they who wrought the conviction were wise and filled with divine grace.

But, you will say, they prevailed on them through the excessive greatness of the promises. But tell me, is not this very thing a wonder to you, how they persuaded men to expect prizes and recompenses after death? For this, were there nothing else, is to me matter of amazement. But this, too, it will be said, came of folly. Inform me wherein is the folly of these things: that the soul is immortal; that an impartial tribunal will receive us after the present life; that we shall render an account of our deeds and words and thoughts unto God that knows all secrets; that we shall see the

evil undergoing punishment, and the good with crowns on their heads. Nay, these things are not of folly, but the highest instruction of wisdom. The folly is in the contrary opinions to these.

19. Were this then the only thing, the despising of things present, the setting much by virtue, the not seeking rewards here, but advancing far beyond in hopes, and the keeping the soul so intent and faithful as by no present terror to be hindered in respect of the hope of what shall be; tell me, to what high philosophy must this belong? But would you also learn the force of the promises and predictions in themselves, and the truth of those uttered both before and after this present state of things? Behold, I show you a golden chain, woven cunningly from the beginning! He spoke some things to them about Himself, and about the churches, and about the things to come; and as He spoke, He wrought mighty works. By the fulfilment therefore of what He said, it is plain that both the wonders wrought were real, and the future and promised things also.

But that my meaning may be yet plainer, let me illustrate it from the actual case. He raised up Lazarus by a single word merely, and showed him alive. Again, He said, The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church [Matthew 16:18] and, *"He that forsakes father or mother, shall receive an hundred-fold in this life, and shall inherit everlasting life."* [Matthew 19:29] The miracle then is one, the raising of Lazarus; but the predictions are two; made evident, the one here, the other in the world to come. Consider now, how they are all proved by one another. For if a man disbelieve the resurrection of Lazarus, from the prophecy uttered about the Church let him learn to believe the miracle. For the word spoken so many years before, came to pass then, and received accomplishment: for *"the gates of Hades prevailed not against the Church."* You see that He who spoke truth in the prophecy, it is clear that he also wrought the miracle: and

He who both wrought the miracle and brings to accomplishment the words which He spoke, it is clear that He speaks the truth also in the predictions of things yet to come, when He says, *"He who despises things present shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."* For the things which have been already done and spoken, He has given as the surest pledges of those which shall hereafter come to pass.

Of all these things then, and the like to these, collecting them together out of the Gospels, let us tell them, and so stop their mouths. But if any one say, Why then was not error completely extinguished? This may be our answer: You yourselves are to blame, who rebel against your own salvation. For God has so ordered this matter ([ὠκονόμησεν],) that not even a remnant of the old impiety need be left.

20. Now, briefly to recount what has been said: What is the natural course of things? That the weak should be overcome by the strong, or the contrary? Those who speak things easy, or things of the harsher sort? Those who attract men with dangers, or with security? innovators, or those who strengthen custom? Those who lead into a rough, or into a smooth way? Those who withdraw men from the institutions of their fathers, or those who lay down no strange laws? Those who promise all their good things after our departure from this world, or those who flatter in the present life? The few to overcome the many, or the many the few?

But you, too, says one, gave promises pertaining to this life. What then have we promised in this life? The forgiveness of sins and the laver of regeneration. Now in the first place, baptism itself has its chief part in things to come; and Paul exclaims, saying, [Colossians 3:4] *"For you died, and your life is hid with Christ in God: when your life shall be manifested, then shall you also with Him be manifested in glory."* But if in this life also it has advantages, as indeed it has, this also is more than all a matter of

great wonder, that they had power to persuade men who had done innumerable evil deeds, yea such as no one else had done, that they should wash themselves clean of all, and they should give account of none of their offenses. So that on this very account it were most of all meet to wonder that they persuaded Barbarians to embrace such a faith as this, and to have good hopes concerning things to come; and having thrown off the former burden of their sins, to apply themselves with the greatest zeal for the time to come to those toils which virtue requires, and not to gape after any object of sense, but rising to a height above all bodily things, to receive gifts purely spiritual: yea, that the Persian, the Sarmatian, the Moor, and the Indian should be acquainted with the purification of the soul, and the power of God, and His unspeakable mercy to men, and the severe discipline of faith, and the visitation of the Holy Spirit, and the resurrection of bodies, and the doctrines of life eternal. For in all these things, and in whatever is more than these, the fishermen, initiating by Baptism various races of Barbarians, persuaded them ([φιλοσοφεῖν]) to live on high principles.

Of all these things then, having observed them accurately, let us speak unto the Gentiles, and again, let us show them the evidence of our lives: that by both means we ourselves may be saved and they drawn over by our means unto the glory of God. For unto Him be the glory for ever. Amen.

Homily 8 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto Carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, and not with meat: for you were not yet able to bear it; nay, not even now are you able. For you are yet carnal.

After having overturned the philosophy which is from without, and cast down all its arrogance, he comes unto another argument. For it was likely that they would say, *"If we were putting forth the opinions of Plato, or of Pythagoras, or any other of the philosophers, reason were you should draw out such a long discourse against us. But if we announce the things of the Spirit, for what reason do you turn and toss up and down ([ἄνω καὶ κάτω στρέφεις]) the wisdom which is from without?"*

Hear then how he makes his stand against this. *"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual."* Why, in the first place, says he, though you had been perfect in spiritual things also, not even so ought you to be elated; for what you preach is not your own, nor such as yourselves have found from your own means. But now even these things you know not as you ought to know them, but you are learners, and the last of all.

Whether therefore the Gentile wisdom be the occasion of your high imaginations; that has been proved to be nothing, nay, in regard to spiritual things to be even contrary unto us: or if it be on account of things spiritual, in these, too, you come short and have your place among the hindmost.

Wherefore he says, *"I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual."* He said not, *"I did not speak,"* lest the thing might seem to proceed from his

grudging them somewhat; but in two ways he brings down their high spirit; first, because they knew not the things that are perfect; next, because their ignorance was owing to themselves: yea, in a third way besides these, by pointing out that *"not even now are they able [to bear it]."* For as to their want of ability at first, that perhaps arose from the nature of the case. In fact, however, he does not leave them even this excuse. For not through any inability on their part to receive high doctrines, does he say they received them not, but because they were *"carnal."* However, in the beginning this was not so blame-worthy; but that after so long a time, they had not yet arrived at the more perfect knowledge, this was a symptom of most utter dulness.

It may be observed, that he brings the same charge against the Hebrews, not however, with so much vehemence. For those, he says, are such, partly because of tribulation: but these, because of some appetite for wickedness. Now the two things are not the same. He implies too, that in the one case he was intending rebuke, in the other rather stirring them up, when he spoke these words of truth. For to these Corinthians he says, *"Neither yet now are you able;"* but unto the others [Hebrews 6:1] *"Wherefore let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection:"* and again, [Hebrews 5:9] *"we are persuaded better things concerning you, and things which accompany salvation, though we thus speak."*

2. And how calls he those *"carnal,"* who had attained so large a measure of the Spirit; and into whose praises, at the beginning he had entered so much at large? Because they also were carnal, unto whom the Lord says, [Matthew 7:22-23] *"Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity, I know you not;"* and yet they both cast out devils, and raised the dead, and uttered prophecies. So that it is possible even for one who wrought miracles

to be carnal. For so God wrought by Balaam, and unto Pharaoh He revealed things to come, and unto Nebuchadnezzar; and Caiaphas prophesied, not knowing what he said; yea, and some others cast out devils in His name, though they were [Luke 9:49] *"not with Him;"* since not for the doers' sake are these things done, but for others' sake: nor is it seldom, that those who were positively unworthy have been made instrumental to them. Now why wonder, if in the case of unworthy men these things are done for others' sake, seeing that so it is, even when they are wrought by saints? For Paul says, [1 Corinthians 3:22] *"All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death:"* and again, [Ephesians 4:11-12] *"He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering."* For if it were not so, there would have been no security against universal corruption. For it may be that rulers are wicked and polluted, and their subjects good and virtuous; that laymen may live in piety, and priests in wickedness; and there could not have been either baptism, or the body of Christ, or oblation, through such, if in every instance grace required merit. But as it is, God uses to work even by unworthy persons, and in no respect is the grace of baptism damaged by the conduct of the priest: else would the receiver suffer loss. Accordingly, though such things happen rarely, still, it must be owned, they do happen. Now these things I say, lest any one of the bystanders busying himself about the life of the priest, should be offended as concerning the things solemnized ([τὰ τελούμενα]). *"For man introduces nothing into the things which are set before us, but the whole is a work of the power of God, and He it is who initiates ([ὁ μυσταγωγῶν]) you into the mysteries."*

3. *"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. I fed you with milk, and not with meat. For you were not able [to bear it.]"*

For lest he should seem to have spoken ambitiously ([φιλοτιμίας ἔνεκα], to obtain favor) these things which he has just spoken; *"the spiritual man judges all things,"* and, *"he himself is judged of no man,"* and, *"we have the mind of Christ;"* with a view also to repress their pride: observe what he says. *"Not on this account,"* says he, *"was I silent, because I was not able to tell you more, but because 'you are carnal: neither yet now are you able.'"*

Why said he not, *"you are not willing,"* but *"you are not able?"* Even because he put the latter for the former. For as to the want of ability, it arises from the want of will. Which to them indeed is a matter of accusation, but to their teacher, of excuse. For if they had been unable by nature, one might perhaps have been forgiven them; but since it was from choice, they were bereft of all excuse. He then speaks of the particular point also which makes them carnal. *"For whereas there is among you strife, and jealousy, and division, are you not carnal and walk as men?"* Although he had fornications also and uncleannesses of theirs to speak of, he sets down rather that offense which he had been a good while endeavoring to correct. Now if *"jealousy"* makes men carnal, it is high time for us to bewail bitterly, and to clothe ourselves with sackcloth and lie in ashes. For who is pure from this passion? Except indeed I am but conjecturing the case of others from myself. If *"jealousy"* makes men *"carnal,"* and suffers them not to be *"spiritual,"* although they prophesy and show forth other wonderful works; now, when not even so much grace is with us, what place shall we find for our own doings; when not in this matter alone, but also in others of greater moment, we are convicted.

4. From this place we learn that Christ had good reason for saying, [John 3:20] *"He that does evil comes not to light;"* and that unclean life is an obstacle to high doctrines, not suffering the clear-sightedness of the

understanding to show itself. As then it is not in any case possible for a person in error, but living uprightly, to remain in error; so it is not easy for one brought up in iniquity, speedily to look up to the height of the doctrines delivered to us, but he must be clean from all the passions who is to hunt after the truth: for whoso is freed from these shall be freed also from his error and attain unto the truth. For do not, I beseech you, think that abstinence merely from covetousness or fornication may suffice you for this purpose. Not so. All must concur in him that seeks the truth. Wherefore says Peter, [Acts 10:34-35] *"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is acceptable to Him:"* that is, He calls and attracts him unto the truth. Do you see not Paul, that he was more vehement than any one in warring and persecuting? Yet because he led an irreproachable life, and did these things not through human passion, he was both received, and reached a mark beyond all. But if any one should say, *"How does such a one, a Greek, who is kind, and good, and humane, continue in error?"* this would be my answer: He has some other passion, vainglory, or indolence of mind, or want of carefulness about his own salvation, accounting that all things which concern him are drifted along loosely and at random. Peter calls the man irreproachable in all things one that *"works righteousness,"* [and Paul says] *"touching the righteousness which is in the law found blameless."* Again, *"I give thanks to God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience,"* [2 Timothy 1:3] How then, you will say, were unclean persons considered worthy of the Gospel? Because they wished and longed for it. Thus the one sort, though in error, are attracted by Him, because they are clean from passions; the others, of their own accord approaching, are not thrust back. Many also even from their ancestors have received the true religion.

1 Corinthians 3:3

5. *"For whereas there is among you jealousy and strife."*

At this point he prepares himself to wrestle with those whose part was obedience: for in what went before he has been casting down the rulers of the Church, where he said that wisdom of speech is nothing worth. But here he strikes at those in subjection, in the words,

1 Corinthians 3:4

"For when one says, I am Paul, and I of Apollos, are you not carnal?"

And he points out that this, so far from helping them at all or causing them to acquire any thing, had even become an obstacle to their profiting in the greater things. For this it was which brought forth jealousy, and jealousy had made them "*carnal*;" and the having become "*carnal*" left them not at liberty to hear truths of the sublimer sort.

1 Corinthians 3:5

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos?"

In this way, after producing and proving his facts, he makes his accusation henceforth more openly. Moreover, he employs his own name, doing away all harshness and not suffering them to be angry at what it is said. For if Paul is nothing and murmur not, much less ought they to think themselves ill used. Two ways, you see, he has of soothing them; first by bringing forward his own person, then by not robbing them of all as if they contributed nothing. Rather he allows them some small portion: small though it be, he does allow it. For having said, *"Who is Paul, and who Apollos,"* he adds, *"but ministers by whom you believed."* Now this in itself is a great thing, and deserving of great rewards: although in regard of the archetype and the root of all good, it is nothing. (For not he that *"ministers"* to our blessings, but he that provides and gives them, he is our Benefactor.) And he said not, *"Evangelists,"* but *"Ministers,"* which is more. For they had not merely preached the Gospel, but had also ministered unto us; the one being a matter of word only, while the other has deed also. And so, if even Christ be a minister only of good things, and not the root Himself and the fountain, (I mean, of course, in that He is a Son,) observe to what an issue this matter is brought. ([ποῦ τὸ πρᾶγμα κατάγεται] . *"how deep and high it is made to go."*) How then, you will ask, does he say that He was made a Minister of Circumcision? [Romans 15:8] He is speaking in that place of His secret dispensation in the Flesh, and not in the same sense which we have now mentioned. For there, by *"Minister,"* he means *"Fulfiller,"* ([πληρωτὴν], i.e. of types), and not one that of his own store gives out the blessings.

Further, he said not, *"Those who guide you into the Faith,"* but *"those by whom you believed;"* again attributing the greater share to themselves, and indicating by this also the subordinate class of ministers ([τοὺς διακόνους κἀντεῖθεν δηλῶν]). Now if they were ministering to another, how come they to seize the authority for themselves? But I would have you consider how in no wise he lays the blame on them as seizing it for themselves, but on those who endow them with it. For the ground-work of the error lay in the multitude; since, had the one fallen away, the other would have been broken up. Here are two points which he has skilfully provided for: in that first he has prepared, as by mining ([ὑπορύξας,]) in the quarter where it was necessary to overthrow the mischief; and next, on their side, in not attracting ill-will, nor yet making them more contentious.

"Even as Christ ([ὁ] [Κύριος], rec. text.) gave to every man."

For not even this small thing itself was of themselves, but of God, who put it into their hands. For lest they might say, What then? Are we not to love those that minister unto us? Yea, says he; but you should know to what extent. For not even this thing itself is of them, but of God who gave it.

1 Corinthians 3:6

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

That is, I first cast the word into the ground; but, in order that the seeds might not wither away through temptations, Apollos added his own part. But the whole was of God.

1 Corinthians 3:7

6. *"So then, neither is he that plants any thing, neither he that waters, but God that gives the increase."*

Do you observe the manner in which he soothes them, so that they should not be too much irritated, on hearing, *"Who is this person,"* and *"Who is that?"* *"Nay, both are invidious, namely, both the saying, 'Who is this person? Who the other,'"* and the saying, that *"neither he that plants nor he that waters is any thing."* How then does he soften these expressions? First, By attaching the contempt to his own person, *"Who is Paul, and who Apollos?"* and next, by referring the whole to God who gave all things. For after he had said, *"Such a person planted,"* and added, *"He that plants is nothing,"* he subjoined, *"but God that gives the increase."* Nor does he stop even here, but applies again another healing clause, in the words.

1 Corinthians 3:8

"He that plants and he that waters, are one."

For by means of this he establishes another point also, viz. that they should not be exalted one against another. His assertion, that they are one, refers to their inability to do any thing without *"God that gives the increase."* And thus saying, he permitted not either those who labored much to lift themselves up against those who had contributed less; nor these again to envy the former. In the next place, since this had a tendency to make men more indolent, I mean, all being esteemed as one, whether they have labored much or little; observe how he sets this right, saying, *"But each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor."* As if he said, Fear not, because I said, You are one; for, compared with the work of God, they are one; howbeit, in regard to labors, they are not so, but *"each shall receive his own reward."*

Then he smooths it still more, having succeeded in what he wished; and gratifies them, where it is allowed, with liberality.

1 Corinthians 3:9

For we are God's fellow-workers: *"you are God's husbandry, God's building."*

Do you see how to them also he has assigned no small work, having before laid it down that the whole is of God? For since he is always persuading them to obey those that have the rule over them, on this account he abstains from making very light of their teachers.

"You are God's husbandry."

For because he had said, *"I planted,"* he kept to the metaphor. Now if you be God's husbandry, it is right that you should be called not from those who cultivate you, but from God. For the field is not called the husbandman's, but the householder's.

"You are God's building."

Again, the building is not the workman's, but the master's. Now if you be a building, you must not be forced asunder: since this were no building. If you be a farm, you must not be divided, but be walled in with a single fence, namely, unanimity.

1 Corinthians 3:10

"According to the Grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise master-builder I laid a foundation."

In this place he calls himself wise, not exalting himself, but to give them an ensample, and to point out that this is a wise man's part, to lay a foundation. You may observe as one instance of his modest bearing, that in speaking of himself as wise, he allowed not this to stand as though it were something of his own; but first attributing himself entirely unto God, then and not till then calls himself by that name. For, *"according to the Grace of God,"* says he, *"which was given unto me."* Thus, at once he signifies both that the whole is of God; and that this most of all is Grace, viz. the not being divided, but resting on One Foundation.

7. *"Another builds thereon; but let each man take heed how he builds thereon."*

Here, I think, and in what follows, he puts them upon their trial concerning practice, after that he had once for all knit them together and made them one.

1 Corinthians 3:11

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

I say, no man can lay it so long as he is a master-builder; but if he lay it, ([τιθη] conj. for [τεθη] . *Douncæus ap. Savil. viii. not. p. 261.*) he ceases to be a master-builder.

See how even from men's common notions he proves the whole of his proposition. His meaning is this: *"I have preached Christ, I have delivered unto you the foundation. Take heed how you build thereon, lest haply it be in vainglory, lest haply so as to draw away the disciples unto men."* Let us not then give heed unto the heresies. *"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid."* Upon this then let us build, and as a foundation let us cleave to it, as a branch to a vine; and let there be no interval between us and Christ. For if there be any interval, immediately we perish. For the branch by its adherence draws in the fatness, and the building stands because it is cemented together. Since, if it stand apart it perishes, having nothing whereon to support itself. Let us not then merely keep hold of Christ, but let us be cemented to Him, for if we stand apart, we perish. *"For they who withdraw themselves far from You, shall perish;"* [Psalm 72:27. Septuagint] so it is said. Let us cleave then unto Him, and let us cleave by our works. *"For he that keeps my commandments, the same abides in Me"* [John 14:21. in substance] And accordingly, there are many images whereby He brings us into union. Thus, if you mark it, He is *"the Head,"* we are *"the body:"* can there be any empty interval between the head and body? He is *"a Foundation,"* we *"a building:"* He *"a Vine,"* we *"branches:"* He *"the Bridegroom,"* we *"the bride:"* He *"the Shepherd,"* we *"the sheep;"* He

is *"the Way,"* we *"they who walk therein."* Again, we are *"a temple,"* He *"the Indweller:"* He *"the First-Begotten,"* we *"the brethren:"* He *"the Heir,"* we *"the heirs together with Him:"* He *"the Life,"* we *"the living:"* He *"the Resurrection,"* we *"those who rise again:"* He *"the Light,"* we *"the enlightened."* All these things indicate unity; and they allow no void interval, not even the smallest. For he that removes but to a little distance will go on till he has become very far distant. For so the body, receiving though it be but a small cut by a sword, perishes: and the building, though there be but a small chink, falls to decay: and the branch, though it be but a little while cut off from the root, becomes useless. So that this trifle is no trifle, but is even almost the whole. Whenever then we commit some little fault or even negligence, let us not overlook that little; since this, being disregarded, quickly becomes great. So also when a garment has begun to be torn and is neglected, it is apt to prolong its rent all throughout; and a roof, when a few tiles have fallen, being disregarded, brings down the whole house.

8. These things then let us bear in mind, and never slight the small things, lest we fall into those which are great. But if so be that we have slighted them and have come into the abyss of evils, not even when we have come there let us despond, lest we fall into recklessness ([καρηβαρίαν]). For to emerge from thence is hard ever after, for one who is not extremely watchful; not because of the distance alone, but of the very position, too, wherein we find ourselves. For sin also is a deep, and is wont to bear down and crush. And just as those who have fallen into a well cannot with ease get out, but will want others to draw them up; so also is he that has come into any depth of sins. To such then we must lower ropes and draw them up. Nay rather, we need not others only, but ourselves also, that we for our part may fasten on ourselves and ascend, I say not so much as we have

descended, but much further, if we be willing: for why? God also helps: for He wills not the death of a sinner so much as his conversion. Let no one then despair; let no one have the feeling of the ungodly; for to them properly belongs this kind of sin: *"an ungodly man having come into any depth of evils, makes light of it."* So that it is not the multitude of men's sins which causes their despair, but their ungodly mind.

Shouldest thou then have gone all lengths in wickedness, yet say unto yourself, God is loving unto men and he desires our salvation: for *"though your sins be as scarlet, I will whiten you as snow,"* [Isaiah 1:10. Septuagint] says He; and unto the contrary habit I will change you. Let us not therefore give up in despair; for to fall is not so grievous, as to lie where we have fallen; nor to be wounded so dreadful, as after wounds to refuse healing. *"For who shall boast that he has his heart chaste? Or who shall say confidently that he is pure from sin?"* [Proverbs 20:9. Septuagint] These things I say not to make you more negligent, but to prevent your despairing.

Would you know how good our Master is? The Publican went up full of ten thousand wickednesses, and saying only, *"Be merciful unto me,"* went down justified. [St. 48 13, 14] Yea, God says by the prophet, *"Because of sin for some little season I grieved him,"* [Isaiah 57:17-18. Septuagint] and I saw that ([εἶδον δτι] not in Sept.) he was grieved and went sorrowful, and I healed his ways" ([ἰασάμην αὐτὸν], Sept.) What is there equal to this loving-kindness? On condition [ἵνα στυγνάσῃ] . See John 8:56. [ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν] of his *"being but sorrowful,"* so he speaks, *"I forgave him his sins."* But we do not even this: wherefore we especially provoke God to wrath. (For he, who by little things even is made propitious, when He meets not with so much as these, is of course indignant and exacts of us the last penalty; for this comes of exceeding contempt.) Who is there, for instance, that has ever become melancholy for his sins? Who has bemoaned himself?

Who has beaten his breast? Who has taken anxious thought? Not one, to my thinking. But days without number do men weep for dead servants; for the loss of money: while as to the soul which we are ruining day by day, we give it not a thought. How then will you be able to render God propitious, when you know not even that you have sinned?

"Yea," says some one, *"I have sinned."* "Yea," is your word to me with the tongue: say it to me with your mind, and with the word mourn heavily, that you may have continual cheerfulness. Since, if we did grieve for our sins, if we mourned heavily over our offenses, nothing else could give us sorrow, this one pang would expel all kinds of dejection. Here then is another thing also which we should gain by our thorough confession; namely, the not being overwhelmed ([βαπτίζεσθαι]) with the pains of the present life, nor puffed up with its splendors. And in this way, again, we should more entirely propitiate God; just as by our present conduct we provoke Him to anger. For tell me, if you have a servant, and he, after suffering much evil at the hands of his fellow-servants, takes no account of any one of the rest, but is only anxious not to provoke his master; is he not able by this alone to do away your anger? But what, if his offenses against you are no manner of care to him, while on those against his fellow-servants he is full of thought; will you not lay on him the heavier punishment? So also God does: when we neglect His wrath, He brings it upon us more heavily; but when we regard it, more gently. Yea, rather, He lays it on us no more at all. He wills that we should exact vengeance of ourselves for our offenses, and thenceforth He does not exact it Himself. For this is why He at all threatens punishment; that by fear He may destroy contempt; and when the threat alone is sufficient to cause fear in us, He does not suffer us to undergo the actual trial. See, for instance, what He says unto Jeremiah, [Jeremiah 7:17-18. Septuagint, transposing the first and

second clauses] *"Do you see not what they do? Their fathers light a fire, their children gather sticks together, their women knead dough."* It is to be feared lest the same kind of thing be said also concerning us. *"Do you see not what they do? No one seeks the things of Christ, but all their own. Their children run into uncleanness, their fathers into covetousness and rapine, their wives so far from keeping back their husbands from the pomps and vanities of life, do rather sharpen their appetites for them."* Just take your stand in the market place; question the comers and goers, and not one will you see hastening upon a spiritual errand, but all running after carnal things. How long ere we awake from our surfeiting? How long are we to keep sinking down into deep slumber? Have we not had our fill of evils?

9. And yet one might think that even without words experience itself is sufficient to teach you the nothingness of things present, and their utter meanness. At all events, there have been men, who, exercising mere heathen wisdom and knowing nothing of the future, because they had proved the great worthlessness of present things, have left them on this account alone. What pardon then can you expect to obtain, grovelling on the ground and not despising the little things and transient for the sake of the great and everlasting: who also hear God Himself declaring and revealing these things unto you, and hast such promises from Him? For that things here have no sufficient power to detain a man, those have shown who even without any promise of things greater have kept away from them. For what wealth did they expect that they came to poverty? There was none. But it was from their knowing full well that such poverty is better than wealth. What sort of life did they hope for that they forsook luxury, and gave themselves up unto severe discipline? Not any. But they had become aware of the very nature of things; and perceived that this of the two is

more suitable, both for the strict training of the soul, and for the health of the body.

These things then duly estimating, and revolving with ourselves continually the future blessings, let us withdraw from this present world that we may obtain that other which is to come; through the favor and loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost etc., etc.

Homily 9 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 3:12-15

If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.

This is no small subject of enquiry which we propose, but rather about things which are of the first necessity and which all men enquire about; namely, whether hell fire have any end. For that it has no end Christ indeed declared when he said, *"Their fire shall not be quenched, and their worm shall not die."* [Mark 8:44, 46, 48.]

Well: I know that a chill comes over you ([ναρκᾶτε]) on hearing these things; but what am I to do? For this is God's own command, continually to sound these things in your ears, where He says, Charge this people; [Fors. Exodus 19:10, 20. διαμαρτύραι], Septuagint. here [διάστειλαι] and ordained as we have been unto the ministry of the word, we must give pain to our hearers, not willingly but on compulsion. Nay rather, if you will, we shall avoid giving you pain. For says He, [Romans 13:3, in substance] *"if you do that which is good, fear not:"* so that it is possible for you to hear me not only without ill-will, but even with pleasure.

As I said then; that it has no end, Christ has declared. Paul also says, in pointing out the eternity of the punishment, that the sinners *"shall pay the penalty of destruction, and that for ever"* [2 Thessalonians 1:9] And again,

[1 Corinthians 6:9] *"Be not deceived; neither fornicators. nor adulterers, nor effeminate, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* And also unto the Hebrews he says, [Hebrews 12:14] *"Follow peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord."* And Christ also, to those who said, *"In your Name we have done many wonderful works,"* says, *"Depart from Me, I know you not, you workers of iniquity"* [Matthew 7:22] And the virgins too who were shut out, entered in no more. And also about those who gave Him no food, He says, [Matthew 25:46] *"They shall go away into everlasting punishment."*

2. And say not unto me, *"where is the rule of justice preserved entire, if the punishment has no end?"* Rather, when God does any thing, obey His decisions and submit not what is said to human reasonings. But moreover, how can it be any thing else than just for one who has experienced innumerable blessings from the beginning, and then committed deeds worthy of punishment, and neither by threat nor benefit improved at all, to suffer punishment? For if you enquire what is absolute justice; it was meet that we should have perished immediately from the beginning, according to the definition of strict justice. Rather not even then according to the rule of justice only; for the result would have had in it kindness too, if we had suffered this also. For when any one insults him that has done him no wrong, according to the rule of justice he suffers punishment: but when it is his benefactor, who, bound by no previous favor, bestowed innumerable kindnesses, who alone is the Author of his being, who is God, who breathed his soul into him, who gave ten thousand gifts of grace, whose will is to take him up into heaven;— when, I say, such an one, after so great blessings, is met by insult, daily insult, in the conduct of the other party; how can that other be thought worthy of pardon? Do you not see how He punished Adam for one single sin?

"Yes," you will say; *"but He had given him Paradise and caused him to enjoy much favor."* Nay, surely it is not all as one, for a man to sin in the enjoyment of security and ease, and in a state of great affliction. In fact, this is the dreadful circumstance that your sins are the sins of one not in any Paradise but amid the innumerable evils of this life; that you are not sobered even by affliction, as though one in prison should still practise his crime. However, unto you He has promised things yet greater than Paradise. But neither has He given them now, lest He should unnerve you in the season of conflicts; nor has He been silent about them, lest He should quite cast you down with your labors. As for Adam, he committed but one sin and brought on himself certain death; whereas we commit ten thousand transgressions daily. Now if he by that one act brought on himself so great an evil and introduced death; what shall not we suffer who continually live in sins, and instead of Paradise, have the expectation of heaven?

The argument is irksome and pains the hearer: were it only by my own feelings, I know this. For indeed my heart is troubled and throbs; and the more I see the account of hell confirmed, the more do I tremble and shrink through fear. But it is necessary to say these things lest we fall into hell. What you received was not paradise, nor trees and plants, but heaven and the good things in the heavens. Now if he that had received less was condemned, and no consideration exempted him, much more shall we who have sinned more abundantly, and have been called unto greater things, endure the woes without remedy.

Consider, for example, how long a time, but for one single sin, our race abides in death. Five thousand years and more have passed, and death has not yet been done away, on account of one single sin. And we cannot even say that Adam had heard prophets, that he had seen others punished for sins, and it was meet that he should have been terrified thereby and

corrected, were it only by the example. For he was at that time first, and alone; but nevertheless he was punished. But you can not have anything of this sort to advance, who after so many examples art become worse; to whom so excellent a Spirit has been vouch-safed, and yet you draw upon yourself not one sin, nor two, nor three, but sins without number! For do not, because the sin is committed in a small moment, calculate that therefore the punishment also must be a matter of a moment. Do you see not those men, who for a single theft or a single act of adultery, committed in a small moment of time, oftentimes have spent their whole life in prisons, and in mines, struggling with continual hunger and every kind of death? And there was no one to set them at liberty, or to say, *"The offense took place in a small moment of time; the punishment too should have its time equivalent to that of the sin."*

3. But, *"They are men,"* some one will say, *"who do these things; as for God, He is loving unto men."* Now, first of all, not even men do these things in cruelty, but in humanity. And God Himself, as *"He is loving unto men,"* in the same character does He punish sins. [Sirach 16:12] *"For as His mercy is great, so also is His reproof."* When therefore you say unto me, *"God is loving unto men,"* then you tell me of so much the greater reason for punishing: namely, our sinning against such a Being. Hence also Paul said, [Hebrews 10:31] *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."* Endure I beseech you, the fiery force of the words, for perhaps — perhaps you will have some consolation from hence! Who among men can punish as God has punished? When He caused a deluge and entire destruction of a race so numerous; and again, when, a little while after, He rained fire from above, and utterly destroyed them all? What punishment from men can be like that? Do you see not that the punishment even in this world is almost eternal? Four thousand years have passed away, and the

punishment of the Sodomites abides at its height. For as His mercy is great, so also is His punishment.

Again: if He had imposed any burdensome or impossible things, one might perhaps have been able to urge difficulty of the laws: but if they be extremely easy, what can we say for our not regarding even these? Suppose you are unable to fast or to practice virginity; although you are able if you will, and they who have been able are a condemnation to us. But, however, God has not used this strictness towards us; neither has He enjoined these things nor laid them down as laws, but left the choice to be at the discretion of the hearers. Nevertheless, you are able to be chaste in marriage; and you are able to abstain from drunkenness. Are you unable to empty yourself of all your goods? Nay surely you are able; and they who have done so prove it. But nevertheless He has not enjoined this, but has commanded not to be rapacious, and of our means to assist those who are in want. But if a man say, I cannot even be content with a wife only, he deceives himself and reasons falsely; and they condemn him who without a wife lives in chastity. But how, tell me, can you help using abusive words? Can you not help cursing? Why, the doing these things is irksome, not the refraining from them. What excuse then have we for not observing precepts so easy and light? We cannot name any at all. That the punishment then is eternal is plain from all that has been said.

4. But since Paul's saying appears to some to tell the other way, come let us bring it forward also and search it out thoroughly. For having said, *"If any man's work abide which he has built thereon, he shall receive a reward; and if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss,"* he adds, *"but himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire."* What shall we say then to this? Let us consider first what is *"the Foundation,"* and what *"the gold,"* and what *"the precious stones,"* and what *"the hay,"* and what the *"stubble."*

"The Foundation," then, he has himself plainly signified to be Christ, saying, *"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which,"* he says *"is Jesus Christ."*

Next, the building seems to me to be actions. Although some maintain that this also is spoken concerning teachers and disciples and concerning corrupt heresies: but the reasoning does not admit it. For if this be it, in what sense, while *"the work is destroyed,"* is the *"builder"* to be *"saved,"* though it be *"through fire?"* Of right, the author ought rather of the two to perish; but now it will be found that the severer penalty is assigned to him who has been built into the work. For if the teacher was the cause of the wickedness, he is worthy to suffer severer punishment: how then shall he be *"saved?"* If, on the contrary, he was not the cause but the disciples became such through their own perverseness, he is no whit deserving of punishment, no, nor yet of sustaining loss: he, I say, who built so well. In what sense then does he say, *"he shall suffer loss?"*

From this it is plain that the discourse is about actions. For since he means next in course to put out his strength against the man who had committed fornication, he begins high up and long beforehand to lay down the preliminaries. For he knew how while discussing one subject, in the very discourse about that thing to prepare the grounds of another to which he intends to pass on. For so in his rebuke for not awaiting one another at their meals, he laid the grounds of his discourse concerning the mysteries. And also because now he is hastening on towards the fornicator, while speaking about the *"Foundation,"* he adds, Do you not know that you are the Temple of God? And that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroy ([Φθείρη], rec. version, *"defile."*) the Temple of God, him will God destroy. Now these things, he said, as beginning now to agitate with fears the soul of him that had been unchaste.

1 Corinthians 3:12

5. *"If any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble."* For after the faith there is need of edification: and therefore he says elsewhere, *"Edify one another with these words."* [perhaps 1 Thessalonians 5:11; 4:5] For both the artificer and the learner contribute to the edifying. Wherefore he says, *"But let every man take heed how he builds thereon."* [1 Corinthians 3:10] But if faith had been the subject of these sayings, the thing affirmed is not reasonable. For in the faith all ought to be equal, since *"there is but one faith,"* [Ephesians 4:5] but in goodness of life it is not possible that all should be the same. Because the faith is not in one case less, in another more excellent, but the same in all those who truly believe. But in life there is room for some to be more diligent, others more slothful; some stricter, and others more ordinary; that some should have done well in greater things, others in less; that the errors of some should have been more grievous, of others less notable. On this account he says, *"Gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble—every man's work shall be made manifest:"*—his conduct; that is what he speaks of here:—*"If any man's work abide which he built thereupon, he shall receive a reward; if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss."* Whereas, if the saying related to disciples and teachers, he ought not to *"suffer loss"* for disciples refusing to hear. And therefore he says, *"Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor"* not according to the result, but according to *"the labor."* For what if the hearers gave no heed? Wherefore this passage also proves that the saying is about actions.

Now his meaning is this: If any man have an ill life with a right faith, his faith shall not shelter him from punishment, his work being burnt up. The phrase, *"shall be burned up,"* means, *"shall not endure the violence of*

the fire." But just as if a man having golden armor on were to pass through a river of fire, he comes from crossing it all the brighter; but if he were to pass through it with hay, so far from profiting, he destroys himself besides; so also is the case in regard of men's works. For he does not say this as if he were discoursing of material things being burnt up, but with a view of making their fear more intense, and of showing how naked of all defence he is who abides in wickedness. Wherefore he said, *"He shall suffer loss:"* lo, here is one punishment: *"but he himself shall be saved, but so as by fire;"* lo, again, here is a second. And his meaning is, He himself shall not perish in the same way as his works, passing into nought, but he shall abide in the fire.

6. He calls it, however, *"Salvation,"* you will say; why, that is the cause of his adding, *"so as by fire:"* since we also used to say, *"It is preserved in the fire,"* when we speak of those substances which do not immediately burn up and become ashes. For do not at sound of the word fire imagine that those who are burning pass into annihilation. And though he call such punishment Salvation, be not astonished. For his custom is in things which have an ill sound to use fair expressions, and in good things the contrary. For example, the word *"Captivity"* seems to be the name of an evil thing, but Paul has applied it in a good sense, when he says, *"Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."* [2 Corinthians 10:5] And again, to an evil thing he has applied a good word, saying, *"Sin reigned,"* [Romans 5:21] here surely the term *"reigning"* is rather of auspicious sound. And so here in saying, *"he shall be saved,"* he has but darkly hinted at the intensity of the penalty: as if he had said, *"But himself shall remain forever in punishment."* He then makes an inference, saying,

1 Corinthians 3:16

7. *"Do you not know that you are the Temple of God?"* For since he had discoursed in the section before, concerning those who were dividing the Church, he thenceforward attacks him also who had been guilty of uncleanness; not indeed as yet in plain terms but in a general way; hinting at his corrupt mode of life and enhancing the sin, by the Gift which had been already given to him. Then also he puts all the rest to shame, arguing from these very blessings which they had already: for this is what he is ever doing, either from the future or from the past, whether grievous or encouraging. First, from things future; *"For the day shall declare it, because it is revealed by fire."* Again, from things already come to pass; *"Do you not know that you are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?"*

1 Corinthians 3:17

"If any man destroy the Temple of God, him will God destroy." Do you mark the sweeping vehemence of his words? However, so long as the person is unknown, what is spoken is not so invidious, all dividing among themselves the fear of rebuke.

"Him will God destroy," that is, will cause him to perish. And this is not the word of one denouncing a curse, but of one that prophesies.

"For the Temple of God is holy:" but he that has committed fornication is profane.

Then, in order that he might not seem to spend his earnestness upon that one, in saying, *"for the Temple of God is holy,"* he adds, *"which you are."*

1 Corinthians 3:18

8. *"Let no man deceive himself."* This also is in reference to that person, as thinking himself to be somewhat and flattering himself on wisdom. But that he might not seem to press on him at great length in a mere digression; he first throws him into a kind of agony and delivers him over unto fear, and then brings back his discourse to the common fault, saying, If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become ([γένηται] . rec. vers. *"be."*) wise. And this he does afterwards with great boldness of speech, as having sufficiently beaten them down , and shaken with that fear the mind not of that unclean person only, but of all the hearers also: so accurately does he measure the reach of what he has to say. For what if a man be rich, what if he be noble; he is viler than all the vile, when made captive by sin. For as if a man were a king and enslaved to barbarians, he is of all men most wretched, so also is it in regard to sin: since sin is a barbarian, and the soul which has been once taken captive she knows not how to spare, but plays the tyrant to the ruin of all those who admit her.

9. For nothing is so inconsiderate as sin: nothing so senseless, so utterly foolish and outrageous. All is overturned and confounded and destroyed by it, wheresoever it may alight. Unsightly to behold, disgusting and grievous. And should a painter draw her picture , he would not, methinks, err in fashioning her after this sort. A woman with the form of a beast, savage, breathing flames, hideous, black; such as the heathen poets depict their Scyllas. For with ten thousand hands she lays hold of our thoughts, and comes on unexpected, and tears everything in pieces, like those dogs that bite slily.

But rather, what need of the painter's art, when we should rather bring forward those who are made after sin's likeness?

Whom then will you that we should portray first? The covetous and rapacious? And what more shameless than those eyes? What more immodest, more like a greedy dog? For no dog keeps his ground with such shameless impudence as he when he is grasping at all men's goods. What more polluted than those hands? What more audacious than that mouth, swallowing all down and not satisfied? Nay, look not on the countenance and the eyes as being a man's. For such looks belong not to the eyes of men. He sees not men as men; he sees not the heaven as heaven. He does not even lift up his head unto the Lord; but all is money in his account. The eyes of men are wont to look upon poor persons in affliction, and to be softened; but these of the rapacious man, at sight of the poor, glare like wild beasts'. The eyes of men do not behold other men's goods as if they were their own, but rather their own as others; and they covet not the things given to others, but rather exhaust upon others their own means: but these are not content unless they take all men's property. For it is not a man's eye which they have, but a wild beast's. The eyes of men endure not to see their own body stripped of clothing, (for it is their own, though in person it belong to others,) but these, unless they strip every one and lodge all men's property in their own home, are never cloyed; yea rather they never have enough. Insomuch that one might say that their hands are not wild beasts' only, but even far more savage and cruel than these. For bears and wolves when they are satiated leave off their kind of eating: but these know not any satiety. And yet for this cause God made us hands, to assist others, not to plot against them. And if we were to use them for that purpose, better had they been cut off and we left without them. But you, if a wild beast rend a sheep, art grieved; but when doing the same unto one of your own flesh and blood,

do you think that your deed is nothing atrocious? How then can you be a man? Do you see not that we call a thing humane, when it is full of mercy and loving-kindness? But when a man does any thing cruel or savage, inhuman is the title we give to such a one. You see then that the stamp of man as we portray him is his showing mercy; of a beast the contrary; according to constant saying, "*Why, is a man a wild beast, or a dog?*" [see 2 Kings 8:13] For men relieve poverty; they do not aggravate it. Again these men's mouths are the mouths of wild beasts; yea rather these are the fiercer of the two. For the words also, which they utter, emit poison, more than the wild beasts' teeth, working slaughter. And if one were to go through all particulars, one should then see clearly how inhumanity turns those who practise it from men into beasts.

10. But were he to search out the mind also of that sort of people, he would no longer call them beasts only, but demons. For first, they are full of great cruelty and of hatred against their fellow-servant: [Matthew 18:33] and neither is love of the kingdom there, nor fear of hell; no reverence for men, no pity, no sympathy: but shamelessness and audacity, and contempt of all things to come. And unto them the words of God concerning punishment seem to be a fable, and His threats mirth. For such is the mind of the covetous man. Since then within they are demons, and without, wild beasts; yea, worse than wild beasts; where are we to place such as they are? For that they are worse even than wild beasts, is plain from this. The beasts are such as they are by nature: but these, endowed by nature with gentleness, forcibly strive against nature to train themselves to that which is savage. The demons too have the plotters among men to help them, to such an extent that if they had no such aid, the greater part of their wiles against us would be done away: but these, when such as they have spitefully entreated are vying with them, still try to be more spiteful than they. Again,

the devil wages war with man, not with the demons of his own kind: but he of whom we speak is urgent in all ways to do harm to his own kindred and family, and does not even reverence nature.

I know that many hate us because of these words; but I feel no hatred towards them; rather I pity and bewail those who are so disposed. Even should they choose to strike, I would gladly endure it, if they would but abstain from this their savage mind. For not I alone, but the prophet also with me, banishes all such from the family of men saying, [Psalm 49:20, Septuagint. τοῖς ἀνοήτοις] *"Man being in honor has no understanding, but is like the senseless beasts."*

Let us then become men at last, and let us look up unto heaven; and that which is according to His image, [Colossians 3:10] let us receive and recover: that we may obtain also the blessings to come through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now and always, and unto everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 10 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 3:18-19

Let no man deceive himself. If any man ([ἐνῶμῆν] omitted.) thinks that he is wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

As I said before, having launched out before the proper time into accusation of the fornicator, and having half opened it obscurely in a few words, and made the man's conscience to quail, he hastens again to the battle with heathen wisdom, and to his accusations of those who were puffed up there-with, and who were dividing the Church: in order that having added what remained and completed the whole topic with accuracy, he might thenceforth suffer his tongue to be carried away with vehement impulse against the unclean person, having had but a preliminary skirmishing with him in what he had said before. For this, "*Let no man deceive himself,*" is the expression of one aiming chiefly at him and quelling him beforehand by fear: and the saying about the "*stubble,*" suits best with one hinting at him. And so does the phrase, "*Do you not know that you are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?*" For these two things are most apt to withdraw us from sin; when we have in mind the punishment appointed for the sin; and when we reckon up the amount of our true dignity. By bringing forward then "*the hay*" and "*the stubble,*" he terrifies; but by speaking of the dignity of that noble birth which was theirs, he puts them to shame; by the former striving to amend the more insensible kind, by the latter the more considerate.

2. *"Let no man deceive himself; if any man thinks that he is wise in this world, let him become a fool."*

As he bids one become, as it were, dead unto the world—and this deadness harms not at all, but rather profits, being made a cause of life:—so also he bids him become foolish unto this world, introducing to us hereby the true wisdom. Now he becomes a fool unto the world, who slights the wisdom from without, and is persuaded that it contributes nothing towards his comprehension of the faith. As then that poverty which is according to God is the cause of wealth, and lowliness, of exaltation, and to despise glory is the cause of glory; so also the becoming a fool makes a man wiser than all. For all, with us, goes by contraries.

Further: why said he not, *"Let him put off wisdom,"* but, *"Let him become a fool?"* That he might most exceedingly disparage the heathen instruction. For it was not the same thing to say, *"Lay aside your wisdom,"* and, *"become a fool."* And besides, he is also training people not to be ashamed at the want of refinement among us; for he quite laughs to scorn all heathen things. And for the same sort of reason he shrinks not from the names, trusting as he does to the power of the things [which he speaks of].

Wherefore, as the Cross, though counted ignominious, became the author of innumerable blessings, and the foundation and root of glory unspeakable; so also that which was accounted to be foolishness became unto us the cause of wisdom. For as he who has learned anything ill, unless he put away the whole, and make his soul level and clear, and so offer it to him who is to write on it, will know no wholesome truth for certain; so also in regard of the wisdom from without. Unless thou turn out the whole and sweep your mind clear, and like one that is ignorant yield up yourself unto the faith, you will know accurately nothing excellent. For so those also who see imperfectly if they will not shut their eyes and commit themselves unto

others, but will be trusting their own matters to their own faulty eyesight, they will commit many more mistakes than those who see not.

But how, you will say, are men to put off this wisdom? By not acting on its precepts.

3. Then, seeing that he bade men so urgently withdraw themselves from it, he adds the cause, saying, *"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."* For not only it contributes nothing, but it even hinders. We must then withdraw ourselves from it, as doing harm. Do you mark with what a high hand he carries off the spoils of victory, having proved that so far from profiting us at all, it is even an opponent?

And he is not content with his own arguments, but he has also adduced testimony again, saying, *"For it is written, [Job 5:13] He takes the wise in their own craftiness."* By *"craftiness,"* i.e. by their own arms getting the better of them. For seeing that they made use of their wisdom to the doing away of all need of God, by it and no other thing He refuted them, showing that they were specially in need of God. How and by what method? Because having by it become fools, by it, as was meet, they were taken. For they who supposed that they needed not God, were reduced to so great a strait as to appear inferior to fishermen and unlettered persons; and from that time forth to be unable to do without them. Wherefore he says, *"In their own craftiness"* He took them. For the saying *"I will destroy their wisdom,"* was spoken in regard to its introducing nothing useful; but this, *"who takes the wise in their own craftiness, with a view of showing the power of God."*

Next, he declares also the mode in which God took them, adding another testimony:

1 Corinthians 3:20

"For the Lord," says he, *"knows the reasonings of men [Psalm 94:11. ἀνθρώπων] Septuagint that they are vain."* Now when the Wisdom which is boundless pronounces this edict concerning them, and declares them to be such, what other proof do you seek of their extreme folly? For men's judgments, it is true, in many instances fail; but the decree of God is unexceptionable and uncorrupt in every case.

4. Thus having set up so splendid a trophy of the judgment from on high, he employs in what follows a certain vehemence of style, turning it against those who were under his ministry, ([ἀρχομένους]) and speaking thus:

1 Corinthians 3:21

"Wherefore let no man glory in men; for all things are yours." He comes again to the former topic, pointing out that not even for their spiritual things ought they to be highminded, as having nothing of themselves.

"Since then the wisdom from without is hurtful, and the spiritual gifts were not given by you, what have you wherein to boast?" And in regard to the wisdom from without, *"Let no man deceive himself,"* says he, because they were conceited about a thing which in truth did more harm than good. But here, inasmuch as the thing spoken of was really advantageous, *"Let no man glory."* And he orders his speech more gently: *"for all things are yours."*

1 Corinthians 3:22-23

"Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; and you are Christ's and Christ is God's." For because he had handled them sharply, he refreshes them again. And as above he had said, [1 Corinthians 3:9] *"We are fellow-workers with God;"* and by many other expressions had soothed them: so here too he says, *"All things are yours;"* taking down the pride of the teachers, and signifying that so far from bestowing any favor on them, they themselves ought to be grateful to the others. Since for their sake they were made such as they were, yea, moreover, had received grace. But seeing that these also were sure to boast, on this account he cuts out beforehand this disease too, saying, *"As God gave to every man,"* [Supr. vi. 5. 6] and, *"God gave the increase:"* to the end that neither the one party might be puffed up as bestowers of good; nor the others, on their hearing a second time, *"All things are yours,"* be again elated. *"For, indeed, though it were for your sakes, yet the whole was God's doing."* And I wish you to observe how he has kept on throughout, making suppositions in his own name and that of Peter.

But what is, *"or death?"* That even though they die, for your sakes they die, encountering dangers for your salvation. Do you mark how he again takes down the high spirit of the disciples, and raises the spirit of the teachers? In fact, he talks with them as with children of high birth, who have preceptors, and who are to be heirs of all.

We may say also, in another sense, that both the death of Adam was for our sakes, that we might be corrected; and the death of Christ, that we might be saved.

"And you are Christ's; and Christ is God's." In one sense "we are Christ's," and in another sense "Christ is God's," and in a third sense is "the world ours." For we indeed are Christ's, as his work: "Christ is God's," as a genuine Offspring, not as a work: in which sense neither is the world ours. So that though the saying is the same, yet the meaning is different. For "the world is ours," as being a thing made for our sakes: but "Christ is God's," as having Him the Author of his being, in that He is Father. And "we are Christ's," as having been formed by Him. Now "if they are yours," says he, "why have you done what is just contrary to this, in calling yourselves after their name, and not after Christ, and God?"

1 Corinthians 4:1

5. *"Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."* After he had cast down their spirit, mark how again he refreshes it, saying, *"as ministers of Christ."* Do not thou then, letting go the Master, receive a name from the servants and ministers. *"Stewards;"* says he, indicating that we ought not to give these things unto all, but unto whom it is due, and to whom it is fitting we should minister.

1 Corinthians 4:2

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful:" that is, that he do not appropriate to himself his master's goods, that he do not as a master lay claim for himself but administer as a steward. For a steward's part is to administer well the things committed to his charge: not to say that his master's things are his own; but, on the contrary, that his own are his master's. Let every one think on these things, both he that has power in speech and he that possesses wealth, namely, that he has been entrusted with a master's goods and that they are not his own; let him not keep them with himself, nor set them down to his own account; but let him impute them unto God who gave them all. Would you see faithful stewards? Hear what says Peter, *"Why do you look so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man to walk?"* [Acts 3:12] Unto Cornelius also he says, *"We also are men of like passions with you:"* and unto Christ Himself, *"Lo, we have left all, and followed You."* [Matthew 19:27] And Paul, no less, when he had said, *"I labored more abundantly than they all,"* [1 Corinthians 15:10] added, *"yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* Elsewhere also, setting himself strongly against the same persons, he said, *"For what have you which thou did not receive?"* [C. 1 Corinthians 4:7] *"For you have nothing of your own, neither wealth, nor speech, nor life itself; for this also is surely the Lord's. Wherefore, when necessity calls, do thou lay down this also. But if you doatest on life, and being ordered to lay it down refusest, you are no longer a faithful steward."*

"And how is it possible, when God calls, to resist?" Well, that is just what I say too: and on this account do I chiefly admire the loving-kindness of God, that the things which He is able, even against your will, to take

from you, these He wills not to be paid in ([εἰσενεχθῆναι]) by you unwillingly, that you may have a reward besides. For instance, He can take away life without your consent; but His will is to do so with your consent, that you may say with Paul, *"I die daily,"* [1 Corinthians 15:31] He can take away your glory without your consent, and bring you low: but He will have it from you with your own goodwill, that you may have a recompense. He can make you poor, though unwilling, but He will have you willingly become such, that He may weave crowns for you. Do you see God's mercy to man? Do you see our own brutish stupidity?

What if you have come to great dignity, and hast at any time obtained some office of Church government? Be not high-minded. You have not acquired the glory, but God has put it on you. As if it were another's, therefore, use it sparingly; neither abusing it nor using it upon unsuitable things, nor puffed up, nor appropriating it unto yourself; but esteem yourself to be poor and inglorious. For never—had you been entrusted with a king's purple to keep—never would it have become you to abuse the robe and spoil it, but with the more exactness to keep it for the giver. Is utterance given you? Be not puffed up; be not arrogant; for the gracious gift is not yours. Be not grudging about your Master's good, but distribute them among your fellow-servants; and neither be thou elated with these things as if they were your own, nor be sparing as to the distribution of them. Again, if you have children, they are God's which you have. If such be your thought, you will both be thankful for having them, and if bereft you will not take it hard. Such was Job when he said, [Job 1:21] *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away."*

For we have all things from Christ. Both existence itself we have through Him, and life, and breath, and light, and air, and earth. And if He were to exclude us from any one of these, we are lost and undone. For [1

Peter 2:11] *"we are sojourners and pilgrims."* And all this about *"mine,"* and *"yours,"* is bare words only, and does not stand for things. For if you do but say the house is yours, it is a word without a reality: since the very air, earth, matter, are the Creator's; and so are you too yourself, who hast framed it; and all other things also. But supposing the use to be yours, even this is uncertain, not on account of death alone, but also before death, because of the instability of things.

6. These things then continually picturing to ourselves, let us lead strict lives; and we shall gain two of the greatest advantages. For first, we shall be thankful both when we have and when we are bereaved; and we shall not be enslaved to things which are fleeting by, and things not our own. For whether it be wealth that He takes, He has taken but His own; or honor, or glory, or the body, or the life itself: be it that He takes away your son, it is not your son that He has taken, but His own servant. For you formed him not, but He made him. Thou but ministered to his appearing; the whole was God's own work. Let us give thanks therefore that we have been counted worthy to be His ministers in this matter. But what? Would you have had him for ever? This again proves you grudging, and ignorant that it was another's child which you had, and not your own. As therefore those who part resignedly are but aware that they have what was not theirs; so whoever gives way to grief is in fact counting the King's property his own. For, if we are not our own, how can they be ours? I say, we: for in two ways we are His, both on account of our creation, and also on account of the faith. Wherefore David says, *"My substance is with You:"* [ὕπόστασις] Septuagint *"hope"* rec. vers. of. ver. 6; Psalm 139:14 and Paul too, *"For in Him we live and move and have our being:"* [Acts 17:28] and plying the argument about the faith, he says, [1 Corinthians 6:19-20] *"You are not your own,"* and *"you were bought with a price."* For all things are God's. When

then He calls and chooses to take, let us not, like grudging servants, fly from the reckoning, nor purloin our Master's goods. Your soul is not yours; and how can your wealth be yours? How is it then that you spend on what is unnecessary the things which are not yours? Do you not know that for this we are soon to be put on our trial, that is, if we have used them badly? But seeing that they are not our's but our Master's, it were right to expend them upon our fellow-servants. It is worth considering that the omission of this was the charge brought against that rich man: and against those also who had not given food to the Lord. [Luke 14:21. Matthew 25:42]

7. Say not then, *"I am but spending my own, and of my own I live delicately."* It is not of your own, but of other men's. Other men's, I say, because such is your own choice: for God's will is that those things should be yours, which have been entrusted unto you on behalf of your brethren. Now the things which are not your own become yours, if you spend them upon others: but if you spend on yourself unsparingly, your own things become no longer yours. For since you use them cruelly, and sayest, *"That my own things should be altogether spent on my own enjoyment is fair:"* therefore I call them not your own. For they are common to you and your fellow-servants; just as the sun is common, the air, the earth, and all the rest. For as in the case of the body, each ministration belongs both to the whole body and to each several member; but when it is applied to one single member only, it destroys the proper function of that very member: so also it comes to pass in the case of wealth. And that what I say may be made plainer; the food of the body which is given in common to the members, should it pass into one member, even to that it turns out alien in the end. For when it cannot be digested nor afford nourishment, even to that part, I say, it turns out alien. But if it be made common, both that part and all the rest have it as their own.

So also in regard of wealth. If you enjoy it alone, you too have lost it: for you will not reap its reward. But if you possess it jointly with the rest, then will it be more your own, and then will you reap the benefit of it. Do you see not that the hands minister, and the mouth softens, and the stomach receives? Does the stomach say, Since I have received, I ought to keep it all? Then do not thou I pray, in regard to riches, use this language. For it belongs to the receiver to impart. As then it is a vice in the stomach to retain the food and not to distribute it, (for it is injurious to the whole body,) so it is a vice in those that are rich to keep to themselves what they have. For this destroys both themselves and others. Again, the eye receives all the light: but it does not itself alone retain it, but enlightens the entire body. For it is not its nature to keep it to itself, so long as it is an eye. Again, the nostrils are sensible of perfume; but they do not keep it all to themselves, but transmit it to the brain, and affect the stomach with a sweet savor, and by their means refresh the entire man. The feet alone walk; but they move not away themselves only, but transfer also the whole body. In like manner do thou, whatsoever you have been entrusted withal, keep it not to yourself alone, since you are doing harm to the whole and to yourself more than all.

And not in the case of the limbs only may one see this occurring: for the smith also, if he chose to impart of his craft to no one, ruins both himself and all other crafts. Likewise the cordwainer, the husbandman, the baker, and everyone of those who pursue any necessary calling; if he chose not to communicate to anyone of the results of his art, will ruin not the others only but himself also with them.

And why do I say, "*the rich*?" For the poor too, if they followed after the wickedness of you who are covetous and rich, would injure you very greatly and soon make you poor; yea rather, they would quite destroy you, were they in your want unwilling to impart of their own: the tiller of the

ground, (for instance,) of the labor of his hands; the sailor, of the gain from his voyages; the soldier, of his distinction won in the wars.

Wherefore if nothing else can, yet let this at least put you to shame, and do you imitate their benevolence. Do you impart none of your wealth unto any? Then should you not receive any thing from another: in which case, the world will be turned upside down. For in every thing to give and receive is the principle of numerous blessings: in seeds, in scholars, in arts. For if any one desire to keep his art to himself, he subverts both himself and the whole course of things. And the husbandman, if he bury and keep the seeds in his house, will bring about a grievous famine. So also the rich man, if he act thus in regard of his wealth, will destroy himself before the poor, heaping up the fire of hell more grievous upon his own head.

8. Therefore as teachers, however many scholars they have, impart some of their lore unto each; so let your possession be, many to whom you have done good. And let all say, *"such an one he freed from poverty, such an one from dangers. Such an one would have perished, had he not, next to the grace of God, enjoyed your patronage. This man's disease you cured, another you rid of false accusation, another being a stranger you took in, another being naked you clothed."* Wealth inexhaustible and many treasures are not so good as such sayings. They draw all men's gaze more powerfully than your golden vestments, and horses, and slaves. For these make a man appear even odious: ([φορτικόν], a conj. of Saville's for [φορτικά]) they cause him to be hated as a common foe; but the former proclaim him as a common father and benefactor. And, what is greatest of all, Favor from God waits on you in every part of your proceedings. What I mean is, let one man say, He helped to portion out my daughter: another, And he afforded my son the means of taking his station among men: ([εἰς ἄνδρας ἐμφανῆναι]) another, He made my calamity to cease: another, He delivered me from

dangers. Better than golden crowns are words such as these, that a man should have in his city innumerable persons to proclaim his beneficence. Voices such as these are pleasanter far, and sweeter than the voices of the heralds marching before the archons; to be called saviour, benefactor, defender, (the very names of God;) and not, covetous, proud, insatiate, and mean. Let us not, I beseech you, let us not have a fancy for any of these titles, but the contrary. For if these, spoken on earth, make one so splendid and illustrious; when they are written in heaven, and God proclaims them on the day that shall come, think what renown, what splendor you shall enjoy! Which may it be the lot of us all to obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom unto the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and always and unto everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 11 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 4:3-5

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea I judge not my own self. For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judges me is the Lord.

Together with all other ills, I know not how, there has come upon man's nature the disease of restless prying and of unseasonable curiosity, which Christ Himself chastised, saying, [Matthew 7:1] *"Judge not, that you be not judged."* A kind of thing, which has no pleasure as all other sins have, but only punishment and vengeance. For though we are ourselves full of ten thousand evils, and bearing the *"beams"* in our own eyes, we become exact inquisitors of the offenses of our neighbor which are not at all bigger than *"motes."* And so this matter at Corinth was falling out. Religious men and dear to God were ridiculed and cast out for their want of learning; while others, brimful of evils innumerable, were classed highly because of their fluent speech. Then like persons sitting in public to try causes, these were the sort of votes they kept rashly passing: *"such an one is worthy: such an one is better than such another; this man is inferior to that; that, better than this."* And, leaving off to mourn for their own bad ways, they had become judges of others; and in this way again were kindling grievous warfare.

Mark then, how wisely Paul corrects them, doing away with this disease. For since he had said, *"Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful,"* and it seemed as if he were giving them an opening to judge and pry into each man's life, and this was aggravating the party feeling; lest such should be the effect on them, he draws them away from

that kind of petty disputation, saying, *"With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you;"* again in his own person carrying on the discourse.

2. But what means, *"With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's day?"* ([ἡμέρας]) *"I judge myself unworthy,"* says he, *"of being judged by you."* And why say I, *"by you?"* I will add, *"by ([καὶ τὸ] [[τοῦ]]) any one else."* Howbeit, let no one condemn Paul of arrogance; though he says that no man is worthy to pass sentence concerning him. For first, he says these things not for his own sake, but wishing to rescue others from the odium which they had incurred from the Corinthians. And in the next place, he limits not the matter to the Corinthians merely, but himself also he deposes from this right of judging; saying, that to decree such things was a matter beyond his decision. At least he adds, *"I judge not my own self."*

But besides what has been said, we must search out the ground upon which these expressions were uttered. For he knew well in many cases how to speak with high spirit: and that, not of pride or arrogance, but of a certain excellent management [[οἰκονομίας ἀρίστης]] seeing that in the present case also he says this, not as lifting up himself, but as taking down other men's sails, and earnestly seeking to invest the saints with due honor. For in proof that he was one of the very humble, hear what he says, bringing forward the testimony of his enemies on this point; His bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account; [2 Corinthians 10:10] and again, *"Last of all, as to one born out of due time, He appeared unto me also."* [2 Corinthians 15:8] But notwithstanding, see this lowly man, when the time called on him, to what a pitch he raises the spirit of the disciples, not teaching pride but instilling a wholesome courage. For with these same discoursing he says, And if the world shall be judged by you, are you

unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 1 Cor. vi. 2. For as the Christian ought to be far removed from arrogance, so also from flattery and a mean spirit. Thus, if any one says, *"I count money as nothing, but all things here are to me as a shadow, and a dream, and child's play;"* we are not at all to charge him as arrogant; since in this way we shall have to accuse Solomon himself of arrogance, for speaking austere ([φιλοσοφοῦντα]) on these things, saying *"Vanity of vanities [Ecclesiastes 1:2] all is vanity."* But God forbid that we should call the strict rule of life by the name of arrogance. Wherefore to despise these things is not haughtiness, but greatness of soul; albeit we see kings, and rulers, and potentates, making much of them. But many a poor man, leading a strict life despises them; and we are not therefore to call him arrogant but highminded: just as, on the other hand, if any be extremely addicted to them, we do not call him lowly of heart and moderate, but weak, and poor spirited, and ignoble. For so, should a son despise the pursuits which become his father and affect slavish ways, we should not commend him as lowly of heart, but as base and servile we should reproach him. What we should admire in him would be, his despising those meaner things and making much account of what came to him from his father. For this is arrogance, to think one's self better than one's fellow-servants: but to pass the true sentence on things comes not of boasting, but of strictness of life.

On this account Paul also, not to exalt himself, but to humble others, and to keep down those who were rising up out of their places, and to persuade them to be modest, said, *"With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's day."* Observe how he soothes the other party also. For whosoever is told that he looks down on all alike, and deigns not to be judged of any one, will not thenceforth any more feel pain, as though himself were the only one excluded. For if he had said, *"Of you,"*

only, and so held his peace; this were enough to gall them as if treated contemptuously. But now, by introducing, "*nor yet of man's day*," he brought alleviation to the blow; giving them partners in the contempt. Nay, he even softens this point again, saying, "*not even do I judge myself*." Mark the expression, how entirely free from arrogance: in that not even he himself, he says, is capable of so great exactness.

3. Then because this saying also seemed to be that of one extolling himself greatly, this too he corrects, saying, "*Yet am I not hereby justified*." What then? Ought we not to judge ourselves and our own misdeeds? Yes surely: there is great need to do this when we sin. But Paul said not this, "*For I know nothing*," says he, "*against myself*." What misdeed then was he to judge, when he "*knew nothing against himself*?" Yet, says he, "*he was not justified*." [1 Corinthians 6:3] We then who have our conscience filled with ten thousand wounds, and are conscious to ourselves of nothing good, but quite the contrary; what can we say?

And how could it be, if he knew nothing against himself that he was not justified? Because it was possible for him to have committed certain sins, not however, knowing that they were sins. From this make your estimate how great shall be the strictness of the future judgment. It is not, you see, as considering himself unblameable that he says it is so unmeet for him to be judged by them, but to stop the mouths of those who were doing so unreasonably. At least in another place, even though men's sins be notorious, he permits not judgment unto others, because the occasion required it. "*For why do you judge your brother*," says he, [Romans 14:10] or, "*thou, why do you set at nought your brother*?" For thou were not enjoined, O man, to judge others, but to test your own doings. Why then do you seize upon the office of the Lord? Judgment is His, not yours.

To which effect, he adds, *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come; who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall each man have his praise from God."* What then? Is it not right that our teachers should do this? It is right in the case of open and confessed sins, and that with fitting opportunity, and even then with pain and inward vexation: not as these were acting at that time, of vain-glory and arrogance. For neither in this instance is he speaking of those sins which all own to be such, but about preferring one before another, and making comparisons of modes of life. For these things He alone knows how to judge with accuracy, who is to judge our secret doings, which of these be worthy of greater and which of less punishment and honor. But we do all this according to what meets our eye. *"For if in my own errors,"* says he, *"I know nothing clearly, how can I be worthy to pass sentence on other men? And how shall I who know not my own case with accuracy, be able to judge the state of others?"* Now if Paul felt this, much more we. For (to proceed) he spoke these things, not to exhibit himself as faultless, but to show that even should there be among them some such person, free from transgression, not even he would be worthy to judge the lives of others: and that if he, though conscious to himself of nothing declare himself guilty, much more they who have ten thousand sins to be conscious of in themselves.

4. Having thus, you see, stopped the mouths of those who pass such sentences, he travails next with strong feeling ready to break out and come upon the unclean person. And like as when a storm is coming on, some clouds fraught with darkness run before it; afterwards, when the crash of the thunders arises and works the whole heavens into one black cloud, then all at once the rain bursts down upon the earth: so also did it then happen. For though he might in deep indignation have dealt with the fornicator, he does

not so; but with fearful words he first represses the swelling pride of the man, since in truth, what had occurred was a twofold sin, fornication, and, that which is worse than fornication, the not grieving over the sin committed. For not so much does he bewail the sin, as him that committed it and did not as yet repent. Thus, *"I shall bewail many of those,"* says he, not simply *"who have sinned heretofore,"* but he adds, *"who have not repented of the uncleanness and impurity which they wrought."* [2 Corinthians 12:21] For he who after sinning has practised repentance, is a worthy object not of grief but of gratulations, having passed over into the choir of the righteous. For, [Isaiah 43:26] *"declare thou your iniquities first, that you may be justified:"* but if after sinning one is void of shame, he is not so much to be pitied for falling as for lying where he is fallen.

Now if it be a grievous fault not to repent after sins; to be puffed up because of sins, what sort of punishment does it deserve? For if he who is elate for his good deeds is unclean, what pardon shall he meet with who has that feeling with regard to his sins?

Since then the fornicator was of this sort, and had rendered his mind so headstrong and unyielding through his sin, he of course begins by casting down his pride. And he neither puts the charge first, for fear of making him hardened, as singled out for accusation before the rest; nor yet later, lest he should suppose that what related to him was but incidental. But, having first excited great alarm in him by his plain speaking towards others, then, and not till then, he goes on to him, in the course of his rebuke to others giving the man's wilfulness a share beforehand.

For these same words, viz. *"I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified,"* and this, *"He that judges me is the Lord, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts,"* glance not lightly both upon that person, and upon such as

act in concert with him and despise the saints. *"For what,"* says he, *"if any outwardly appear to be virtuous and admirable persons? He, the Judge, is not a discerner of externals only, but also brings to light all secrets."*

5. On two accounts you see, or rather on three, correct judgement belongs not to us. One, because, though we be conscious to ourselves of nothing, still we need one to reprove our sins with strictness. Another, because the most part of the things which are done escape us and are concealed. And for a third besides these, because many things which are done by others seem to us indeed fair, but they come not of a right mind. Why do you say then, that no sin has been committed by this or that person? That such an one is better than such another? Seeing that this we are not to pronounce, not even concerning him who knows nothing against himself. For He who discerns secrets, He it is who with certainty judges.

Behold, for example; I for my part know nothing against myself: yet neither so am I justified, that is, I am not quit of accounts to be given, nor of charges to be answered. For he does not say this, *"I rank not among the righteous;"* but *"I am not pure from sin."* For elsewhere he says also, [Romans 6:7, δεδικαίωται, τουτεστιν ἀπήλλακται] *"He that has died is justified from sin,"* that is, *"is liberated."*

Again, many things we do, good indeed, but not of a right mind. For so we commend many, not from a wish to render them conspicuous, but to wound others by means of them. And the thing done indeed is right for the well-doer is praised; but the intention is corrupt: for it is done of a satanical purpose. For this one has often done, not rejoicing with his brother, but desiring to wound the other party.

Again, a man has committed a great error; some other person, wishing to supplant him, says that he has done nothing, and comforts him forsooth in his error by recurring to the common frailty of nature. But oftentimes he

does this from no mind to sympathize, but to make him more easy in his faults.

Again, a man rebukes oftentimes not so much to reprove and admonish, as publicly to ([ἐκπομπεῦσαι καὶ ἐκτραγωδεῖν]) display and exaggerate his neighbor's sin. Our counsels however themselves men do not know; but, [Romans 8:27] *"He that searches the hearts,"* knows them perfectly; and He will bring all such things into view at that time. Wherefore he says, *"Who will bring to light the secret things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts."*

6. Seeing then that not even where we *"know nothing against ourselves,"* can we be clean from accusations, and where we do any thing good, but do it not of a right mind, we are liable to punishment; consider how vastly men are deceived in their judgments. For all these matters are not be come at by men, but by the unsleeping Eye alone: and though we may deceive men, our sophistry will never avail against Him. Say not then, darkness is around me and walls; who sees me? For He who by Himself formed our hearts, Himself knows all things. [Psalm 139:12] *"For darkness is no darkness with Him."* And yet he who is committing sin, well says, *"Darkness is around me and walls;"* for were there not a darkness in his mind he would not have cast out the fear of God and acted as he pleased. For unless the ruling principle be first darkened, the entrance of sin without fear is a thing impossible. Say not then, who sees me? For there is that [Hebrews 4:12] *"pierces even unto soul and spirit, joints and marrow;"* but you see not yourself nor can you pierce the cloud; but as if you had a wall on all sides surrounding you, you are without power to look up unto the heaven.

For whatsoever sin you will, first let us examine, and you shall see that so it is engendered. For as robbers and they who dig through walls when

they desire to carry off any valuable thing, put out the candle and then do their work; so also does men's perverse reasoning in the case of those who are committing sin. Since in us also surely there is a light, the light of reason, ever burning. But if the spirit of wickedness coming eagerly on with its strong blast quench that flame, it straightway darkens the soul and prevails against it, and despoils it straightway of all that is laid up therein. For when by unclean desire the soul is made captive, even as a cloud and mist the eyes of the body, so that desire intercepts the foresight of the mind, and suffers it to see nothing at any distance, either precipice, or hell, or fear; but thenceforth, having that deceit as a tyrant over him, he comes to be easily vanquished by sin; and there is raised up before his eyes as it were a wall without windows, which suffers not the ray of righteousness to shine in upon the mind, the absurd conceits of lust enclosing it as with a rampart on all sides. And from that time forward the unchaste woman is everywhere meeting him: standing present before his eyes, before his mind, before his thoughts. And as the blind, although they stand at high noon beneath the very central point of the heaven, receive not the light, their eyes being fast closed up; just so these also, though ten thousand doctrines of salvation sound in their ears from all quarters, having their soul preoccupied with this passion stop their ears against such discourses. And they know it well who have made the trial. But God forbid that you should know it from actual experience.

7. And not only this sin has these effects, but every misplaced affection as well. For let us transfer, if you please, the argument from the unchaste woman unto money, and we shall see here also thick and unbroken darkness. For in the former case, inasmuch as the beloved object is one and shut up in one place, the feeling is not so violent; but in the case of money which shows itself every where, in silversmiths' shops, in taverns, in

foundries for gold, in the houses of the wealthy, the passion blows a vehement gale. For when servants swaggering in the market place, horses with golden trappings, men decked with costly garments, are seen with desire by him who has that distemper, the darkness becomes intense which envelopes him. And why speak of houses and silversmiths' shops? For my part I think that such persons, though it be but in a picture and image that they see the wealth, are convulsed, and grow wild, and rave. So that from all quarters the darkness gathers around them. And if they chance to behold a portraiture of a King, they admire not the beauty of the precious stones, nor yet the gold, nor the purple robe, but they pine away. And as the wretched lover before mentioned, though he see but the image of the woman beloved, cleaves unto the lifeless thing; so this man also, beholding a lifeless image of wealth, is more strongly affected in the same way, as being holden of a more tyrannical passion. And he must henceforth either abide at home, or if he venture into the Forum, return home with innumerable hurts. For many are the objects which grieve his eyes. And just as the former sees nothing else save the woman, even so the latter hastens by poor persons, and all things else, that he may not obtain so much as a slight alleviation. But upon the wealthy he steadily fixes his eyes; by the sight of them introducing the fire into his own soul mightily and vehemently. For it is a fire that miserably devours the person that falls into it; and if no hell were threatened nor yet punishment, this condition were itself punishment; to be continually tormented and never able to find an end to the malady.

8. Well: these things alone might suffice to recommend our fleeing from this distemper. But there is no greater evil than inconsideration which causes men to be rivetted unto things that bring sorrow of heart and no advantage. Wherefore I exhort that you cut off the passion at its beginning:

for just as a fever on its first attack, does not violently burn up the patients with thirst, but on its increase and the heightening of its fire causes from that time incurable thirst; and though one should let them fill themselves full of drink, it puts not out the furnace but makes it burn fiercer: so also it happens in regard to this passion; unless when it first invades our soul we stop it and shut the doors; having got in, from that time it makes the disease of those who have admitted it incurable. For so both good things and bad, the longer they abide in us, the more powerful they become.

And in all other things too, any one may see that this comes to pass. For so a plant but lately set in the ground is easily pulled up; but no more so when rooted for a long time; it then requires great strength in the lever. And a building newly put together is easily thrown down by those who push against it; but once well fixed, it gives great trouble to those who attempt to pull it down. And a wild beast that has made his accustomed haunt in certain places for a long time is with difficulty driven away.

Those therefore who are not yet possessed by the passion in question, I exhort not to be taken captive. For it is more easy to guard against falling into it, than having fallen to get away.

9. But unto those who are seized by it and broken down, if they will consent to put themselves into the hands of the Word of healing, I promise large hope of salvation, by the Grace of God. For if they will consider those who have suffered and fallen into that distemper and have recovered, they will have good hopes respecting the removal of the disease. Who then ever fell into this disease, and was easily rid of it? That well-known Zacchæus. For who could be more fond of money than a publican? But all at once he became a man of strict life, ([Φιλόσοφος]) and put out all that blaze. Matthew in like manner: for he too was a publican, living in continual rapine. But he likewise all at once stripped himself of the mischief, and

quenched his thirst, and followed after spiritual gain. Considering therefore these, and the like to them, despair not even thou. For if you will, quickly you shall be able to recover. And if you please, according to the rule of physicians, we will prescribe accurately what you should do.

It is necessary then, before all other things, to be right in this, that we never despond, nor despair of our salvation. Next, we must look not only upon the examples of those who have done well, but also upon the sufferings of those who have persisted in sin. For as we have considered Zacchæus, and Matthew, even so ought we also to take account of Judas, and Gehazi, and Ahar, [perhaps Achan, Josh. vii.] and Ahab, and Ananias, and Sapphira, in order that by the one, we may cast out all despair, and by the other cut off all indolence; and that the soul become not reckless of the remedies suggested. And let us teach them of themselves to say what the Jews said on that day, approaching unto Peter, [Acts 2:37, cf. 16:30] "*What must we do to be saved?*" And let them hear what they must do.

10. What then must we do? We must know how worthless the things in question are, and that wealth is a run-away slave, and heartless, and encompasses its possessors with ills innumerable. And such words, like charms, let us sound in their ears continually. And as physicians soothe their patients when they ask for cold water, by saying that they will give it, making excuses about the spring, and the vessel, and the fit time, and many more such, (for should they refuse at once, they make them wild with phrensy,) so let us also act towards the lovers of money. When they say we desire to be rich, let us not say immediately that wealth is an evil thing; but let us assent, and say that we also desire it; but in due time; yea, true wealth; yea, that which has undying pleasure: yea, that which is gathered for yourself, and not for others, and those often our enemies. And let us produce the lessons of true wisdom, and say, we forbid not riches, but ill-

gotten riches. For it is lawful to be rich, but without covetousness, without rapine and violence, and an ill report from all men. With these arguments let us first smooth them down, and not as yet discourse of hell. For the sick man endures not yet such sayings. Wherefore let us go to this world for all our arguments upon these matters; and say, Why is it your choice to be rich through covetousness? That the gold and the silver may be laid up for others, but for you, curses and accusations innumerable? That he whom you have defrauded may be stung by want of the very necessities of life, and bewail himself, and draw down upon you the censure of thousands; and may go at fall of evening about the market place, encountering every one in the alleys, and in utter perplexity, and not knowing what to trust to even for that one night? For how is he to sleep after all, with pangs of the belly, restless famine besetting him, and that often while it is freezing, and the rain coming down on him? And while thou, having washed, returnest home from the bath, in a glow with soft raiment, merry of heart and rejoicing, and hastening unto a banquet prepared and costly: he, driven every where about the market place by cold and hunger, takes his round, stooping low and stretching out his hands; nor has he even spirit without trembling to make his suit for his necessary food to one so full fed and so bent on taking his ease; nay, often he has to retire with insult. When therefore you have returned home, when you lie down on your couch, when the lights round your house shine bright, when the table is prepared and plentiful, at that time call to remembrance that poor miserable man wandering about, like the dogs in the alleys, in darkness and in mire; except indeed when, as is often the case, he has to depart thence, not unto house, nor wife, nor bed, but unto a pallet of straw; even as we see the dogs baying all through the night. And thou, if you see but a little drop falling from the roof, throwest

the whole house into confusion, calling your slaves and disturbing every thing: while he, laid in rags, and straw, and dirt, has to bear all the cold.

What wild beast would not be softened by these things? Who is there so savage and inhuman that these things should not make him mild? And yet there are some who are arrived at such a pitch of cruelty as even to say that they deserve what they suffer. Yea, when they ought to pity, and weep, and help to alleviate men's calamities, they on the contrary visit them with savage and inhuman censures. Of these I should be glad to ask, Tell me, why do they deserve what they suffer? Is it because they would be fed and not starve?

No, you will reply; but because they would be fed in idleness. And thou, dost not thou wanton in idleness? What say I? Are you not oft-times toiling in an occupation more grievous than any idleness, grasping, and oppressing, and coveting? Better were it if you too were idle after this sort; for it is better to be idle in this way, than to be covetous. But now thou even tramplest on the calamities of others, not only idling, not only pursuing an occupation worse than idleness, but also maligning those who spend their days in misery.

And let us farther narrate to them the disasters of others; the untimely bereavements, the dwellers in prison, those who are torn to pieces before tribunals, those who are trembling for life; the unlooked for widowhood of women; the sudden reverse of the rich: and with this let us soften their minds. For by our narrations concerning others, we shall induce them by all means to fear these evils in their own case too. For when they hear that the son of such an one who was a covetous and grasping man, or ([ἡ τοῦ δεῖνοϛ] instead of [ἦν]; [τοῦ δεῖνοϛ]) the wife of such an one who did many tyrannical actions, after the death of her husband endured afflictions without end; the injured persons setting upon the wife and the children, and

a general war being raised from all quarters against his house; although a man be the most senseless of beings, yet expecting himself also to suffer the same, and fearing for his own lest they undergo the same fate, he will become more moderate. Now we find life full of many such histories, and we shall not be at a loss for correctives of this kind.

But when we speak these things, let us not speak them as giving advice or counsel, lest our discourse become too irksome: but as in the order of the narrative and by association with something else, let us proceed in each case unto that kind of conversation, and let us be constantly putting them upon stories of the kind, permitting them to speak of no subject except these which follow: How such an one's splendid and famous mansion fell down; How it is so entirely desolate that all things that were in it have come into the hands of others; How many trials have taken place daily about this same property, what a stir; How many of that man's relations ([οἶκεται], probably [οἰκεῖτοι]) have died either beggars, or inhabitants of a prison.

All these things let us speak as in pity for the deceased, and as depreciating things present; in order that by fear and by pity we may soften the cruel mind. And when we see men shrinking into themselves at these narrations, then and not till then let us introduce to their notice also the doctrine of hell, not as terrifying these, but in compassion for others. And let us say, But why speak of things present? For far, indeed, will our concern be from ending with these; a yet more grievous punishment will await all such persons: even a river of fire, and a poisonous worm, and darkness interminable, and undying tortures. If with such addresses we succeed in throwing a spell over them, we shall correct both ourselves and them, and quickly get the better of our infirmity.

And on that day we shall have God to praise us: as also Paul says, *"And then shall each man have praise from God."* For that which comes

from men, is both fleeting, and sometimes it proceeds from no good intentions. But that which comes from God both abides continually, and shines out clearly. For when He who knew all things before their creation, and who is free from all passion, gives praise, then also the demonstration of our virtue is even unquestionable.

Knowing these things therefore, let us act so as to be praised of God, and to acquire the greatest blessings; which God grant us all to obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now and always, and unto all the ages of eternity. Amen.

Homily 12 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 4:6

Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us you might learn not to think of men above that which is written.

So long as there was need of expressions as harsh as these, he refrained from drawing up the curtain, and went on arguing as if he were himself the person to whom they were addressed; in order that the dignity of the persons censured tending to counteract the censurers, no room might be left for flying out in wrath at the charges. But when the time came for a gentler process, then he strips it off, and removes the mask, and shows the persons concealed by the appellation of Paul and Apollos. And on this account he said, *"These things, brethren, I have transferred in a figure unto myself and Apollos."*

And as in the case of the sick, when the child being out of health kicks and turns away from the food offered by the physicians, the attendants call the father or the tutor, and bid them take the food from the physician's hands and bring it, so that out of fear towards them he may take it and be quiet: so also Paul, intending to censure them about certain other persons, of whom some, he thought, were injured, others honored above measure, did not set down the persons themselves, but conducted the argument in his own name and that of Apollos, in order that reverencing these they might receive his mode of cure. But that once received, he presently makes known in whose behalf he was so expressing himself.

Now this was not hypocrisy, but condescension ([συγκατάβασις]) and tact ([οἰκονομία]). For if he had said openly, *"As for you, the men whom you are judging are saints, and worthy of all admiration;"* they might have taken it ill and ([κἂν ἀπεπήδησαν]) started back. But now in saying, *"But to me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you:"* and again, *"Who is Paul, and who is Apollos?"* he rendered his speech easy of reception.

This, if you mark it, is the reason why he says here, *"These things have I transferred in a figure unto myself for your sakes, that in us you may learn not to be wise above what is written,"* signifying that if he had applied his argument in their persons, they would not have learned all that they needed to learn, nor would have admitted the correction, being vexed at what was said. But as it was, revering Paul, they bore the rebuke well.

2. But what is the meaning of, *"not to be wise above what is written?"* It is written, [Matthew 7:3] *"Why do you behold the mote that is in your brothers's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in your own eye?"* and *"Judge not, that you be not judged."* For if we are one and are mutually bound together, it behooves us not to rise up against one another. For *"he that humbles himself shall be exalted,"* says he. And [Matthew 20:26-27; Mark 10:43; not verbatim] *"He that will be first of all, let him be the servant of all."* These are the things which *"are written."*

"That no one of you be puffed up for one against another." Again, having dismissed the teachers, he rebukes the disciples. For it was they who caused the former to be elated.

And besides, the leaders would not quietly receive that kind of speech because of their desire of outward glory: for they were even blinded with that passion. Whereas the disciples, as not reaping themselves the fruits of the glory, but procuring it for others, would both endure the chiding with

more temper, and had it more in their power than the leading men to destroy the disease.

It seems then, that this also is a symptom of being "*puffed up*," to be elated on another's account, even though a man have no such feeling in regard of what is his own. For as he who is proud of another's wealth, is so out of arrogance; so also in the case of another's glory.

And he has well called it "*being puffed up*." For when one particular member rises up over the rest, it is nothing else but inflammation and disease; since in no other way does one member become higher than another, except when a swelling takes place. (So in our language "*proud flesh*.") And so in the body of the Church also; whoever is inflamed and puffed up, he must be the diseased one; for he is swollen above the proportion of the rest. For this [disproportion] is what we mean by "*swelling*." And so comes it to pass in the body, when some spurious and evil humor gathers, instead of the wonted nourishment. So also arrogance is born; notions to which we have no right coming over us. And mark with what literal propriety he says, be not "*puffed up*:" for that which is puffed up has a certain tumor of spirit, from being filled with corrupt humor.

These things, however, he says, not to preclude all soothing, but such soothing as leads to harm. "*Would you wait upon this or that person? I forbid you not: but do it not to the injury of another.*" For not that we might array ourselves one against another were teachers given us, but that we might all be mutually united. For so the general to this end is set over the host, that of those who are separate he may make one body. But if he is to break up the army, he stands in the place of an enemy rather than of a general.

1 Corinthians 4:7

3. *"For who makes you to differ? For what have you which thou did not receive?"*

From this point, dismissing the governed, he turns to the governors. What he says comes to this: From whence is evident that you are worthy of being praised? Why, has any judgment taken place? Any inquiry proceeded? Any essay? Any severe testing? Nay, you can not say it: and if men give their votes, their judgment is not upright. But let us suppose that thou really art worthy of praise and hast indeed the gracious gift, and that the judgment of men is not corrupt: yet not even in this case were it right to be high-minded; for you have nothing of yourself but from God received it. Why then do you pretend to have that which you have not? You will say, *"you have it:"* and others have it with you: well then, you have it upon receiving it: not merely this thing or that, but all things whatsoever you have.

For not to you belong these excellencies, but to the grace of God. Whether you name faith, it came of His calling; or whether it be the forgiveness of sins which you speak of, or spiritual gifts, or the word of teaching, or the miracles; you received all from thence. Now what have you, tell me, which you have not received, but hast rather achieved of your own self? You have nothing to say. Well: you have received; and does that make you high-minded? Nay, it ought to make you shrink back into yourself. For it is not yours, what has been given, but the giver's. What if you received it? You received it of him. And if you received of him, it was not yours which you received, and if you but received what was not your own, why are you exalted as if you had something of your own? Wherefore

he added also, Now if you received it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?

4. Thus having, you see, made good his argument by concession, ([κατὰ συνδρομὴν].) he indicates that they have their deficiencies; and those not a few: and says, *"In the first place, though you had received all things, it were not meet to glory, for nothing is your own; but as the case really stands there are many things of which you are destitute."* And in the beginning he did but hint at this, saying, *"I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual:"* and, *"I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."* But here he does it in a way to abash them, saying,

1 Corinthians 4:8

"Already you are filled, already you are rich:" that is, you want nothing henceforth; you have become perfect; you have attained the very summit; you stand, as you think, in need of no one, either among Apostles or teachers.

"Already you are filled." And well says he *"already;"* pointing out, from the time, the incredibility of their statements and their unreasonable notion of themselves. It was therefore in mockery that he said to them, *"So quickly have you come to the end;"* which thing was impossible in the time: for all the more perfect things wait long in futurity: but to be *"full"* with a little betokens a feeble soul; and from a little to imagine one's self *"rich,"* a sick and miserable one. For piety is an insatiable thing; and it argues a childish mind to imagine from just the beginnings that you have obtained the whole: and for men who are not yet even in the prelude of a matter, to be high-minded as if they had laid hold of the end.

Then also by means of what follows he puts them yet more out of countenance; for having said, *"Already you are full,"* he added, *"you have become rich, you have reigned without us: yea and I would to God you reigned, that we also might reign with you."* Full of great austerity is the speech: which is why it comes last, being introduced by him after that abundance of reproof. For then is our admonition respected and easily received, when after our accusations we introduce our humiliating expressions, ([τὰ ἐντροπικὰ ῥήματα].) For this were enough to repress even the shameless soul and strike it more sharply than direct accusation, and correct the bitterness and hardened feeling likely to arise from the charge brought. It being certain that this more than anything else is the

admirable quality of those arguments which appeal to our sense of shame, that they possess two contrary advantages. On the one hand, one cuts deeper than by open invective: on the other hand, it causes the person reprimanded to bear that severer stab with more entire patience.

5. *"You have reigned without us."* Herein there is great force, as concerns both the teachers and the disciples: and their ignorance, too, of themselves ([τὸ ἀσυνείδητον].) is pointed out, and their great inconsideration. For what he says is this: *"In labors indeed,"* says he, *"all things are common both to us and to you, but in the rewards and the crowns you are first. Not that I say this in vexation:"* wherefore he added also, *"I would indeed that you did reign:"* then, lest there should seem to be some irony, he added, *"that we also might reign with you;"* for, says he, we also should be in possession ([ἐπιτύχοιμεν], ms. Reg., [ἐπιτύχωμεν] Edd.) of these blessings. Do you see how he shows in himself all at once his severity and his care over them and his self-denying mind? Do you see how he takes down their pride?

1 Corinthians 4:9

"For I think that God has set forth us the Apostles last of all, as men doomed to death."

There is great depth of meaning and severity implied again in his saying, "us:" and not even with this was he satisfied, but added also his dignity, hitting them vehemently: *"us the Apostles;"* who are enduring such innumerable ills; who are sowing the word of Godliness; who are leading you unto this severe rule of life. These *"He has set forth last, as doomed to death,"* that is, as condemned. For since he had said, *"That we also might reign with you,"* and by that expression had relaxed his vehemency in order not to dispirit them; he takes it up again with greater gravity, and says, *"For I think that God has set forth us the Apostles last, as men doomed to death."* *"For according to what I see,"* says he, *"and from what you say, the most abject of all men and emphatically the condemned, are we who are put forward for continual suffering. But you have already a kingdom and honors and great rewards in your fancy."* And wishing to carry out their reasoning to still greater absurdity, and to exhibit it as incredible in the highest degree, he said not merely, *"We are 'last,'"* but, *"God made us last;"* nor was he satisfied with saying, *"last,"* but he added also, *"doomed to death:"* to the end that even one quite void of understanding might feel the statement to be quite incredible, and his words to be the words of one vexed and vehemently abashing them.

Observe too the good sense of Paul. The topics by which, when it is the proper time, he exalts and shows himself honorable and makes himself great; by these he now puts them to shame, calling himself *"condemned."* Of so great consequence is it to do all things at the befitting season. By

"doomed to death," in this place he means "condemned," and deserving of ten thousand deaths.

6. *"For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."*

What means, *"We have become a spectacle unto the world?"* "Not in a single corner nor yet in a small part of the world suffer we these things," says he; *"but every where and before all."* But what means, *"unto angels?"* It is possible to *"become a spectacle unto men,"* but not so unto angels, when the things done are ordinary. But our wrestlings are such as to be worthy even of angelic contemplation. Behold from the things by which he vilifies himself, how again he shows himself great; and from the things about which they are proud, how he displays their meanness. For since to be fools was accounted a meaner thing than to appear wise; to be weak, than to be made strong; and unhonored, than glorious and distinguished; and that he is about to cast on them the one set of epithets, while he himself accepted the other; he signifies that the latter are better than the former; if at least because of them he turned the throng I say not of men only, but also of the very angels unto the contemplation of themselves. For not with men only is our wrestling but also with incorporeal powers. Therefore also a mighty theatre is set ([μέγα θέατρον κάθηται].)

1 Corinthians 4:10

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ."

Again, this also he spoke in a way to abash them; implying that it is impossible for these contraries to agree, neither can things so distant from one another concur. *"For how can it be,"* says he, *"that you should be wise, but we fools in the things relating to Christ?"* That is: the one sort beaten and despised and dishonored and esteemed as nothing; the others enjoying honor and looked up to by many as a wise and prudent kind of people; it gives him occasion to speak thus: as if he had said, *"How can it be that they who preach such things should be looked upon as practically engaged in their contraries?"*

"We are weak, but you are strong." That is, we are driven about and persecuted; but you enjoy security and are much waited upon; howbeit the nature of the Gospel endures it not.

"We are despised, but you are honorable." Here he sets himself against the noble and those who plumed themselves upon external advantages.

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and we toil, working with our own hands." That is, *"It is not an old story that I am telling but just what the very time present bears me witness of: that of human things we take no account nor yet of any outward pomp; but we look unto God only."* Which thing we too have need to practice in every place. For not only are angels looking on, but even more than they He that presides over the spectacle.

7. Let us not then desire any others to applaud us. For this is to insult Him; hastening by Him, as if insufficient to admire us, we make the best of

our way to our fellow servants. For just as they who contend in a small theatre seek a large one, as if this were insufficient for their display; so also do they, who contending in the sight of God afterwards seek the applause of men; giving up the greater praise and eager for the less, they draw upon themselves severe punishment. What but this has turned every thing upside down? This puts the whole world into confusion, that we do all things with an eye to men, and even for our good things, we esteem it nothing to have God as an admirer, but seek the approbation which comes from our fellow-servants: and for the contrary things again, despising Him we fear men. And yet surely they shall stand with us before that tribunal, doing us no good. But God whom we despise now shall Himself pass the sentence upon us.

But yet, though we know these things, we still gape after men, which is the first of sins. Thus were a man looking on no one would choose to commit fornication; but even though he be ten thousand times on fire with that plague, the tyranny of the passion is conquered by his reverence for men. But in God's sight men not only commit adultery and fornication; but other things also much more dreadful many have dared and still dare to do. This then alone, is it not enough to bring down from above ten thousand thunderbolts? Adulteries, did I say, and fornications? Nay, things even far less than these we fear to do before men: but in God's sight we fear no longer. From hence, in fact, all the world's evils have originated; because in things really bad we reverence not God but men.

On this account, you see, both things which are truly good, not accounted such by the generality, become objects of our aversion, we not investigating the nature of the things, but having respect unto the opinion of the many: and again, in the case of evil things, acting on this same principle. Certain things therefore not really good, but seeming fair unto the

many, we pursue, as goods, through the same habit. So that on either side we go to destruction.

8. Perhaps many may find this remark somewhat obscure. Wherefore we must express it more clearly. When we commit uncleanness, (for we must begin from the instances alleged,) we fear men more than God. When therefore we have thus subjected ourselves unto them and made them lords over us; there are many other things also which seem unto these our lords to be evil, not being such; these also we flee for our part in like manner. For instance; To live in poverty, many account disgraceful: and we flee poverty, not because it is disgraceful nor because we are so persuaded, but because our masters count it disgraceful; and we fear them. Again, to be unhonored and contemptible, and void of all authority seems likewise unto the most part a matter of great shame and vileness. This again we flee; not condemning the thing itself, but because of the sentence of our masters.

Again on the contrary side also we undergo the same mischief. As wealth is counted a good thing, and pride, and pomp, and to be conspicuous. Accordingly this again we pursue, not either in this case from considering the nature of the things as good, but persuaded by the opinion of our masters. For the people is our master and the great mob ([ὁ πολὺς ὄχλος]); a savage master and a severe tyrant: not so much as a command being needed in order to make us listen to him; it is enough that we just know what he wills, and without a command we submit: so great good will do we bear towards him. Again, God threatening and admonishing day by day is not heard; but the common people, full of disorder, made up of all manner of dregs, has no occasion for one word of command; enough for it only to signify with what it is well pleased, and in all things we obey immediately.

9. *"But how,"* says some one, *"is a man to flee from these masters?"* By getting a mind greater than their's; by looking into the nature of things; by condemning the voice of the multitude; before all, by training himself in things really disgraceful to fear not men, but the unsleeping Eye; and again, in all good things, to seek the crowns which come from Him. For thus neither in other sort of things shall we be able to tolerate them. For whoso when he does right judges them unworthy to know his good deeds, and contents himself with the suffrage of God; neither will he take account of them in matters of the contrary sort.

"And how can this be?" you will say. Consider what man is, what God; whom you desert, and unto whom you fly for refuge; and you will soon be right altogether. Man lies under the same sin as yourself, and the same condemnation, and the same punishment. *"Man is like to vanity,"* [Psalm 144:4, Septuagint] and has not correct judgment, and needs the correction from above. *"Man is dust and ashes,"* and if he bestow praise, he will often bestow it at random, or out of favor, or ill will. And if he calumniate and accuse, this again will he do out of the same kind of purpose. But God does not so: rather irrefragable in His sentence, and pure His judgment. Wherefore we must always flee to Him for refuge; and not for these reasons alone, but because He both made, and more than all spares you, and loves you better than thou dost yourself.

Why then, neglecting to have so admirable ([θαυμαστόν]) an approver, betake we ourselves unto man, who is nothing, all rashness, all at random? Does he call you wicked and polluted when you are not so? So much the more do thou pity him, and weep because he is corrupt; and despise his opinion, because the eyes of his understanding are darkened. For even the Apostles were thus evil reported of; and they laughed to scorn their calumniators. But does he call you good and kind? If such indeed you are,

yet be not at all puffed up by the opinion: but if you are not such, despise it the more, and esteem the thing to be mockery.

Would you know the judgments of the greater part of men, how corrupt they are, how useless, and worthy of ridicule; some of them coming only from raving and distracted persons, others from children at the breast? Hear what has been from the beginning. I will tell you of judgments, not of the people only, but also of those who passed for the wisest, of those who were legislators from the earliest period. For who would be counted wiser among the multitude than the person considered worthy of legislating for cities and peoples? But yet to these wise men fornication seems to be nothing evil nor worthy of punishment. At least, no one of the heathen laws makes its penal or brings men to trial on account of it. And should any one bring another into court for things of that kind, the multitude laughs it to scorn, and the judge will not suffer it. Dice-playing, again, is exempt from all their punishments: nor did any one among them ever incur penalty for it. Drunkenness and gluttony, so far from being a crime, are considered by many even as a fine thing. And in military carousals it is a point of great emulation; and they who most of all need a sober mind and a strong body, these are most of all given over to the tyranny of drunkenness; both utterly weakening the body and darkening the soul. Yet of the lawgivers not one has punished this fault. What can be worse than this madness?

Is then the good word of men so disposed an object of desire to you, and do you not hide yourself in the earth? For even though all such admired you, ought you not to feel ashamed and cover your face, at being applauded by men of such corrupt judgment?

Again, blasphemy by legislators in general is accounted nothing terrible. At any rate, no one for having blasphemed God was ever brought to trial and punishment. But if a man steal another's garment, or cut his

purse, his sides are flayed, and he is often given over unto death: while he that blasphemes God has nothing laid to his charge by the heathen legislators. And if a man seduce a female servant when he has a wife, it seems nothing to the heathen laws nor to men in general.

10. Will you hear besides of some things of another class which show their folly? For as they punish not these things, so there are others which they enforce by law. What then are these? They collect crowds to fill theatres, and there they introduce choirs of harlots and prostituted children, yea such as trample on nature herself; and they make the whole people sit on high, and so they captivate their city; so they crown these mighty kings whom they are perpetually admiring for their trophies and victories. And yet, what can be more insipid than this honor? What more undelightful than this delight? From among these then do you seek judges to applaud your deeds? And is it in company with dancers, and effeminate, and buffoons, and harlots, that you are fain to enjoy the sound of compliment? Answer me.

How can these things be other than proofs of extreme infatuation? For I should like to ask them, is it or is it not, a dreadful thing to subvert the laws of nature, and introduce unlawful intercourse? They will surely say, it is dreadful: at any rate, they make a show of inflicting a penalty on that crime. Why then do you bring on the stage those abused wretches; and not only bring them in, but honor them also with honors innumerable, and gifts not to be told? In other places you punish those who dare such things; but here even as on common benefactors of the city, you spend money upon them and supportest them at the public expense.

"However," you will say, *"they are ([ἄτιμοι]) infamous."* Why then train them up? ([παιδοτριβεῖς]) Why choose the infamous to pay honor to kings withal? And why ruin our ([ἐκτραχηλίζεις], Plutarch, [περὶ παίδων

ἀγωγῆς], c. 17.) cities ? Or why spend so much upon these persons? Since if they be infamous expulsion is properest for the infamous. For why did you render them infamous? In praise or in condemnation? Of course in condemnation. Is the next thing to be, that although as after condemnation you make them infamous, yet as if they were honorable you run to see them, and admire and praise and applaud? Why need I speak of the sort of charm which is found in the horse races? Or in the contests of the wild beasts? For those places too being full of all senseless excitement train the populace to acquire a merciless and savage and inhuman kind of temper, and practise them in seeing men torn in pieces, and blood flowing, and the ferocity of wild beasts confounding all things. Now all these our wise lawgivers from the beginning introduced, being so many plagues! And our cities applaud and admire.

11. But, if you will, dismissing these things which clearly and confessedly are abominable, but seemed ([οὐκ ἔδοξε] . perhaps "*were not decreed.*") not [so] to the heathen legislators, let us proceed to their grave precepts; and you shall see these too corrupted through the opinion of the multitude. Thus marriage is accounted an honorable thing [Hebrews 13:4] both by us and by those without: and it is honorable. But when marriages are solemnized, such ridiculous things take place as you shall hear of immediately: because the most part, possessed and beguiled by custom, are not even aware of their absurdity, but need others to teach them. For dancing, and cymbals, and flutes, and shameful words, and songs, and drunkenness, and revellings, and all the Devil's great heap ([πολὸς ὁ τοῦ διαβόλου φορυσμός]) of garbage is then introduced.

I know indeed that I shall appear ridiculous in finding fault with these things; and shall incur the charge of great folly with the generality, as disturbing the ancient laws: for, as I said before, great is the deceptive

power of custom. But nevertheless, I will not cease repeating these things: for there is, there is surely a chance, that although not all, yet some few will receive our saying and will choose to be laughed to scorn with us, rather than we laugh with them such a laughter as deserves tears and overflowing punishment and vengeance.

For how can it be other than worthy of the utmost condemnation that a damsel who has spent her life entirely at home and been schooled in modesty from earliest childhood, should be compelled on a sudden to cast off all shame, and from the very commencement of her marriage be instructed in imprudence; and find herself put forward in the midst of wanton and rude men, and unchaste, and effeminate? What evil will not be implanted in the bride from that day forth? Immodesty, petulance, insolence, the love of vain glory: since they will naturally go on and desire to have all their days such as these. Hence our women become expensive and profuse; hence are they void of modesty, hence proceed their unnumbered evils.

And tell me not of the custom: for if it be an evil thing, let it not be done even once: but if good, let it be done constantly. For tell me, is not committing fornication evil? Shall we then allow just once this to be done? By no means. Why? Because though it be done only once, it is evil all the same. So also that the bride be entertained in this way, if it be evil, let it not be done even once; but if it be not evil, let it even be done always.

"What then," says one, "do you find fault with marriage? Tell me." That be far from me. I am not so senseless: but the things which are so unworthily appended to marriage, the painting the face, the coloring the eyebrows, and all the other niceness of that kind. For indeed from that day she will receive many lovers even before her destined consort.

"But many will admire the woman for her beauty." And what of that? Even if discreet, she will hardly avoid evil suspicion; but if careless, she will be quickly overtaken, having got that very day a starting point in dissolute behavior.

Yet though the evils are so great, the omission of these proceedings is called an insult, by certain who are no better than brute beasts, and they are indignant that the woman is not exhibited to a multitude, that she is not set forth as a stage spectacle, common to all beholders: whereas most assuredly they should rather count it insult when these things do take place; and a laughing stock, and a farce. For even now I know that men will condemn me of much folly and make me a laughing stock: but the derision I can bear when any gain accrues from it. For I should indeed be worthy of derision, if while I was exhorting to contempt of the opinion of the many, I myself, of all men, were subdued by that feeling.

Behold then what follows from all this. Not in the day only but also in the evening, they provide on purpose men that have well drunk, besotted, and inflamed with luxurious fare, to look upon the beauty of the damsel's countenance; nor yet in the house only but even through the market-place do they lead her in pomp to make an exhibition; conducting her with torches late in the evening so as that she may be seen of all: by their doings recommending nothing else than that henceforth she put off all modesty. And they do not even stop here; but with shameful words do they conduct her. And this with the multitude is a law. And runaway slaves and convicts, thousands of them and of desperate character, go on with impunity uttering whatever they please, both against her and against him who is going to take her to his home. Nor is there any thing solemn, but all base and full of indecency. Will it not be a fine lesson in chastity for the bride to see and hear such things? [Savile reads this sentence with a question.] And there is

a sort of diabolical rivalry among these profligates to outdo one another in their zealous use of reproaches and foul words, whereby they put the whole company out of countenance, and those go away victorious who have found the largest store of railings and the greatest indecencies to throw at their neighbors.

Now I know that I am a troublesome, sort of person and disagreeable, and morose, as though I were curtailing life of some of its pleasure. Why, this is the very cause of my mourning that things so displeasing are esteemed a sort of pleasure. For how, I ask, can it be other than displeasing to be insulted and reviled? To be reproached by all, together with your bride? If any one in the market place speak ill of your wife, you make ado without end and countest life not worth living: and can it be that disgracing yourself with your future consort in the presence of the whole city, you are pleased and lookest gay on the matter? Why, what strange madness is this!

"But," says one, *"the thing is customary."* Nay, for this very reason we ought most to bewail it, because the devil has hedged in the thing with custom. In fact, since marriage is a solemn thing and that which recruits our race and the cause of numerous blessings; that evil one, inwardly pining and knowing that it was ordained as a barrier against uncleanness, by a new device introduces into it all kinds of uncleanness. At any rate, in such assemblages many virgins have been even corrupted. And if not so in every case, it is because for the time the devil is content with those words and those songs, so flagitious; with making a show of the bride openly, and leading the bridegroom in triumph through the market-place.

Moreover, because all this takes place in the evening, that not even the darkness may be a veil to these evils, many torches are brought in, suffering not the disgraceful scene to be concealed. For what means the vast throng, and what the wassail, and what the pipes? Most clearly to prevent even

those who are in their houses and plunged [[βαπτίζόμενοι]] in deep sleep from remaining ignorant of these proceedings; that being wakened by the pipe and leaning to look out of the lattices, they may be witnesses of the comedy such as it is.

What can one say of the songs themselves, crammed as they are with all uncleanness, introducing monstrous amours, and unlawful connections, and subversions of houses, and tragic scenes without end; and making continual mention of the titles of "*friend and lover*," "*mistress and beloved*?" And, what is still more grievous, that young women are present at these things, having divested themselves of all modesty; in honor of the bride, rather I should say to insult her, exposing even their own salvation, and in the midst of wanton young men acting a shameless part with their disorderly songs, with their foul words, with their devilish harmony. Tell me then: do you still enquire, "*Whence come adulteries? Whence fornications? Whence violations of marriage?*"

12. "*But they are not noble nor decent women*," you will say, "*who do these things.*" Why then laugh me to scorn for this remonstrance, having been yourself aware of this law, before I said any thing. I say, if the proceedings are right, allow those well-born women also to enact them. For what if these others live in poverty? Are not they also virgins? Ought not they also to be careful of chastity? But now here is a virgin dancing in a public theatre of licentious youths; and, I ask, seems she not unto you more dishonored than a harlot?

But if you say, "*Female servants do these things*;" neither so do I acquit you of my charge: for neither to these ought such things to have been permitted. For hence all these evils have their origin, that of our household we make no account. But it is enough in the way of contempt to say, "*He is a slave*," and, "*They are handmaids.*" And yet, day after day we hear,

[Galatians 3:28] *"In Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free."* Again, were it a horse or an ass, thou dost not overlook it but takest all pains not to have it of an inferior kind; and your slaves who have souls like your own do you neglect? And why do I say slaves, when I might say sons and daughters? What then must follow? It cannot be but grief ([λύπην], qu. [λύμην], *"mischief."*) must immediately enter in, when all these are going to ruin. And often also very great losses must ensue, valuable golden ornaments being lost in the crowd and the confusion.

13. Then after the marriage if perchance a child is born, in this case again we shall see the same folly and many practices [[σύμβολα]] full of absurdity. For when the time has come for giving the infant a name, caring not to call it after the saints as the ancients at first did, they light lamps and give them names, and name the child after that one which continues burning the longest; from thence conjecturing that he will live a long time. After all, should there be many instances of the child's untimely death, (and there are many,) great laughter on the devil's part will ensue, at his having made sport of them as if they were silly children. What shall we say about the amulets and the bells which are hung upon the hand, and the scarlet woof, and the other things full of such extreme folly; when they ought to invest the child with nothing else save the protection of the Cross. But now that is despised which has converted the whole world and given the sore wound to the devil and overthrown all his power: while the thread, and the woof, and the other amulets of that kind are entrusted with the child's safety.

May I mention another thing yet more ridiculous than this? Only let no one tax us with speaking out of season, should our argument proceed with that instance also. For he that would cleanse an ulcer will not hesitate first to pollute his own hands. What then is this so very ridiculous custom? It is counted indeed as nothing; (and this is why I grieve;) but it is the beginning

of folly and madness in the extreme. The women in the bath, nurses and waiting-maids, take up mud and smearing it with the finger make a mark on the child's forehead; and if one ask, What means the mud, and the clay? The answer is, *"It turns away an evil eye, witchcraft and envy."* Astonishing! What power in the mud! What might in the clay! What mighty force is this which it has? It averts all the host of the devil. Tell me, can you help hiding yourselves for shame? Will you never come to understand the snares of the devil, how from earliest life he gradually brings in the several evils which he has devised? For if the mud has this effect, why do you not yourself also do the same to your own forehead, when you are a man and your character is formed; and you are likelier than the child to have such as envy you? Why do you not as well bemire the whole body? I say, if on the forehead its virtue be so great, why not anoint yourself all over with mud? All this is mirth and stage-play to Satan, not mockery only but hell-fire being the consummation to which these deceived ones are tending.

14. Now that among Greeks such things should be done is no wonder: but among the worshippers of the Cross, ([τὸν σταυρὸν προσκυνοῦσι]) and partakers in unspeakable mysteries, and professors of such high morality, ([τοσαῦτα φιλοσοφοῦσιν]) that such unseemliness should prevail, this is especially to be deplored again and again. God has honored you with spiritual anointing; and do you defile your child with mud? God has honored you, and do you dishonor yourself? And when you should inscribe on his forehead the Cross which affords invincible security; do you forego this, and cast yourself into the madness of Satan?

If any look on these things as trifles, let them know that they are the source of great evils; and that not even unto Paul did it seem right to overlook the lesser things. For, tell me, what can be less than a man's covering his head? Yet observe how great a matter he makes of this and

with how great earnestness he forbids it; saying, among many things, "*He dishonors his head.*" [1 Corinthians 11:4] Now if he that covers himself "*dishonors his head*"; he that besmears his child with mud, how can it be less than making it abominable? For how, I want to know, can he bring it to the hands of the priest? How can you require that on that forehead the seal should be placed by the hand of the presbyter, where you have been smearing the mud? Nay, my brethren, do not these things, but from earliest life encompass them with spiritual armor and instruct them to seal the forehead with the hand ([τῇ χειρὶ παιδεύτε σφραγίζειν τὸ μέτωπον]): and before they are able to do this with their own hand, do you imprint upon them the Cross.

Why should one speak of the other satanical observances in the case of travail-pangs and childbirths, which the midwives introduce with a mischief on their own heads? Of the outcries which take place at each person's death, and when he is carried to his burial; the irrational wailings, the folly enacted at the funerals; the zeal about men's monuments; the importunate and ridiculous swarm of the mourning women; the observances of days; the days, I mean, of entrance into the world and of departure?

15. Are these then, I beseech you, the persons whose good opinion you follow after? And what can it be but the extreme of folly to seek earnestly the praise of men, so corrupt in their ideas, men whose conduct is all at random? When we ought always to resort to the unsleeping Eye, and look to His sentence in all that we do and speak? For these, even if they approve, will have no power to profit us. But He, should He accept our doings, will both here make us glorious, and in the future day will impart to us of the unspeakable good things: which may it be the lot of us all to obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom to the

Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now and always, and unto everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 13 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 4:10

"We are fools for Christ's sake:" (For it is necessary from this point to resume our discourse:) *"but you are wise in Christ: we are weak, but you are strong: you have glory, but we have dishonor."*

Having filled his speech with much severity which conveys a sharper blow than any direct charge and having said, *"You have reigned without us;"* and *"God has set forth us last, as men doomed to death"* he shows by what comes next how they are *"doomed to death;"* saying, We are fools, and weak, and despised, and hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and toil, working with our own hands: which were very signs of genuine teachers and apostles. Whereas the others prided themselves on the things which are contrary to these, on wisdom, glory, wealth, consideration.

Desiring therefore to take down their self-conceit and to point out that in respect of these things, so far from taking credit to themselves, they ought rather to be ashamed; he first of all mocks them, saying, *"You have reigned without us."* As if he had said, *"My sentence is that the present is not a time of honor nor of glory, which kind of things you enjoy, but of persecution and insult, such as we are suffering. If however it be not so; if this rather be the time of remuneration: then as far as I see,"* (but this he says in irony,) *"ye, the disciples, for your part have become no less than kings: but we the teachers and apostles, and before all entitled to receive the reward, not only have fallen very far behind you, but even, as persons doomed to death, that is, condemned convicts, spend our lives entirely in*

dishonors, and dangers, and hunger: yea insulted as fools, and driven about, and enduring all intolerable things."

Now these things he said that he might hereby cause them also to consider, that they should zealously seek the condition of the Apostles; their dangers and their indignities, not their honors and glories. For these, not the other, are what the Gospel requires. But to this effect he speaks not directly, not to show himself disagreeable to them: rather in a way characteristic of himself he takes in hand this rebuke. For if he had introduced his address in a direct manner, he would have spoken thus; *"You err, and are beguiled, and have swerved far from the mode of instruction. For every apostle and minister of Christ ought to be esteemed a fool, ought to live in affliction and dishonor; which indeed is our state: whereas you are in the contrary case."*

But thus might his expressions have offended them yet more, as containing but praises of the Apostles; and might have made them fiercer, censured as they were for indolence and vainglory and luxuriousness. Wherefore he conducts not his statement in this way, but in another, more striking but less offensive; and this is why he proceeds with his address as follows, saying ironically, *"But you are strong and honorable;"* since, if he had not used irony, he would have spoken to this effect; *"It is not possible that one man should be esteemed foolish, and another wise; one strong, and another weak; the Gospel requiring both the one and the other. For if it were in the nature of things that one should be this, and another that, perchance there might be some reason in what you say. But now it is not permitted, either to be counted wise, or honorable, or to be free from dangers. If otherwise, it follows of necessity that you are preferred before us in the sight of God; you the disciples before us the teachers, and that after our endless hardships."* If this be too bad for anyone to say, it remains for you to make our condition your object.

2. And *"let no one,"* says he, *"think that I speak only of the past:"*

1 Corinthians 4:11

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked." Do you see that all the life of Christians must be such as this; and not merely a day or two? For though the wrestler who is victorious in a single contest only, be crowned, he is not crowned again if he suffer a fall.

"And hunger;" against the luxurious. *"And are buffeted;"* against those who are puffed up. *"And have no certain dwelling-place;"* for we are driven about. *"And are naked;"* against the rich.

1 Corinthians 4:12-13

"And labor;" now against the false apostles who endure neither toil nor peril, while they themselves receive the fruits. "But not so are we," says he: "but together with our perils from without, we also strain ourselves to the utmost with perpetual labor. And what is still more, no one can say that we fret at these things, for the contrary is our requital to them that so deal with us: this, I say, is the main point, not our suffering evil, for that is common to all, but our suffering without despondency or vexation. But we so far from desponding are full of exultation. And a sure proof of this is our requiting with the contrary those who do us wrong."

Now as to the fact that so they did, hear what follows.

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world." This is the meaning of *"fools for Christ's sake."* For whoso suffers wrong and avenges not himself nor is vexed, is reckoned a fool by the heathen; and dishonored and weak. And in order that he might not render his speech too unpalatable by referring the sufferings he was speaking of to their city, what says he? *"We are made the filth,"* not, *"of your city,"* but, *"of the world."* And again, *"the off-scouring of all men;"* not of you alone, but of all. As then when he is discoursing of the providential care of Christ, letting pass the earth, the heaven, the whole creation, the Cross is what he brings forward; so also when he desires to attract them to himself hurrying by all his miracles, he speaks of his sufferings on their account. So also it is our method when we be injured by any and despised, whatsoever we have endured for them, to bring the same forward.

"The offscouring of all men, even until now." This is a vigorous blow which he gave at the end, *"of all men;" "not of the persecutors only,"* says he, *"but of those also for whom we suffer these things: Oh greatly am I obliged to them."* It is the expression of one seriously concerned; not in pain himself, but desiring to make them feel, ([πλῆξαι]) that he who has innumerable complaints to make should even salute them. And therefore did Christ command us to bear insults meekly that we might both exercise ourselves in a high strain of virtue, and put the other party to the more shame. For that effect one produces not so well by reproach as by silence.

1 Corinthians 4:14

3. Then since he saw that the blow could not well be borne, he speedily heals it; saying, *"I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children."* *"For not as abashing you,"* says he, *"do I speak these things."* The very thing which by his words he had done, this he says he had not done: rather he allows that he had done it, not however with an evil and spiteful mind. Why, this mode of soothing is the very best, if we should say what we have to say and add the apology from our motive. For not to speak was impossible, since they would have remained uncorrected: on the other hand, after he had spoken, to leave the wound untended, were hard. Wherefore along with his severity he apologizes: for this so far from destroying the effect of the knife, rather makes it sink deeper in, while it moderates the full pain of the wound. Since when a man is told that not in reproach but in love are these things said, he the more readily receives correction.

However, even here also is great severity, and a strong appeal to their sense of shame, ([ἐντροπή]) in that he said not, *"As a master"* nor yet *"as an apostle,"* nor yet *"as having you for my disciples;"* (which had well suited his claims on them;) but, *"as my beloved children I admonish you."* And not simply, children; but, *"longed after."* *"Forgive me,"* says he. *"If anything disagreeable has been said, it all proceeds of love."* And he said not, *"I rebuke,"* but *"I admonish."* Now, who would not bear with a father in grief, and in the act of giving good advice? Wherefore he did not say this before, but after he had given the blow.

"What then?" some might say; *"Do not other teachers spare us?"* *"I say not so, but, they carry not their forbearance so far."* This however he

spoke not out at once, but by their professions and titles gave indication of it; "*Tutor*" and "*Father*" being the terms which he employs.

1 Corinthians 4:15

4. *"For though,"* says he, *"you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers."* He is not here setting forth his dignity, but the exceeding greatness of his love. Thus neither did he wound the other teachers: since he adds the clause, *"in Christ:"* but rather soothed them, designating not as parasites but as tutors those among them who were zealous and patient of labor: and also manifested his own anxious care of them. On this account he said not, *"Yet not many masters,"* but, *"not many fathers."* So little was it his object to set down any name of dignity, or to argue that of him they had received the greater benefit: but granting to the others the great pains they had taken for the Corinthians, (for that is the force of the word Tutor,) the superiority in love he reserves for his own portion: for that again is the force of the word Father.

And he says not merely, No one loves you so much; a statement which admitted not of being called in question; but he also brings forward a real fact. What then is this? *"For in Christ Jesus I begot you through the Gospel. In Christ Jesus."* Not unto myself do I impute this. Again, he strikes at those who gave their own names to their teaching. For *"ye,"* says he, *"are the seal of mine Apostleship."* And again, *"I planted:"* and in this place, *"I begot."* He said not, *"I preached the word,"* but, *"I begot;"* using the words of natural relationship. ([τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ὀνόμασι]) For his one care at the moment was, to show forth the love which he had for them. *"For they indeed received you from me, and led you on; but that you are believers at all came to pass through me."* Thus, because he had said, *"as children;"* lest you should suppose that the expression was flattery he produces also the matter of fact.

1 Corinthians 4:16

5. *"I beseech you, be imitators of me, as I also am of Christ."* [κάθως καὶ ὁ Χριστοῦ], omitted in our version: the Vulgate has it, see 1 Corinthians 11:1 Astonishing! How great is our teacher's boldness of speech! How highly finished the image, when he can even exhort others hereunto! Not that in self-exaltation he does so, but implying that virtue is an easy thing. As if he had said, *"Tell me not, 'I am not able to imitate you. You are a Teacher, and a great one.' For the difference between me and you is not so great as between Christ and me: and yet I have imitated Him."*

On the other hand, writing to the Ephesians, he interposes no mention of himself, but leads them all straight to the one point, *"Be imitators of God,"* is his word. [Ephesians 5:1] But in this place, since his discourse was addressed to weak persons, he puts himself in by the way.

And besides, too, he signifies that it is possible even thus to imitate Christ. For he who copies the perfect impression of the seal, copies the original model.

Let us see then in what way he followed Christ: for this imitation needs not time and art, but a steady purpose alone. Thus if we go into the study of a painter, we shall not be able to copy the portrait, though we see it ten thousand times. But to copy him we are enabled by hearing alone. Will ye then that we bring the tablet before you and sketch out for you Paul's manner of life? Well, let it be produced, that picture far brighter than all the images of Emperors: for its material is not boards glued together, nor canvass stretched out; but the material is the work of God: being as it is a soul and a body: a soul, the work of God, not of men; and a body again in like wise.

Did you utter applause here? Nay, not here is the time for plaudits; but in what follows: for applauding, I say, and for imitating too: for so far we have but the material which is common to all without exception: inasmuch as soul differs not from soul in regard of its being a soul: but the purpose of heart shows the difference. For as one body differs not from another in so far as it is a body, but Paul's body is like every one's else, only dangers make one body more brilliant than another: just so is it in the case of the soul also.

6. Suppose then our tablet to be the soul of Paul: this tablet was lately lying covered with soot, full of spider's webs; (for nothing can be worse than blasphemy;) but when He came who transforms all things, and saw that not through indolence or sluggishness were his lines so drawn but through inexperience and his not having the tints ([τὰ ἄνθη]) of true piety: (for zeal indeed he had, but the colors were not there; for he had not "*the zeal according to knowledge*:"") He gives him the tint of the truth, that is, grace: and in a moment he exhibited the imperial image. For having got the colors and learned what he was ignorant of, he waited no time, but immediately appeared a most excellent artist. And first he shows the head of the king, preaching Christ; then also the remainder of the body; the body of a perfect Christian life. Now painters we know shut themselves up and execute all their works with great nicety and in quiet; not opening the doors to any one: but this man, setting forth his tablet in the view of the world, in the midst of universal opposition, clamor, disturbance, did under such circumstances work out this Royal Image, and was not hindered. And therefore he said, "*We are made a spectacle unto the world*;" in the midst of earth, and sea, and the heaven, and the whole habitable globe, and the world both material and intellectual, he was drawing that portrait of his.

Would you like to see the other parts also thereof from the head downwards? Or will you that from below we carry our description upwards? Contemplate then a statue of gold or rather of something more costly than gold, and such as might stand in heaven; not fixed with lead nor placed in one spot, but hurrying from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum, [Romans 15:19] and setting forth into Spain, and borne as it were on wings over every part of the world. For what could be more *"beautiful"* than these *"feet"* which visited the whole earth under the sun? This same *"beauty"* the prophet also from of old proclaims, saying, [Isaiah 52:7] *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace!"* Have you seen how fair are the feet? Will you see the bosom too? Come, let me show you this also, and you shall behold it far more splendid than these beautiful, yea even than the bosom itself of the ancient lawgiver. For Moses indeed carried tablets of stone: but this man within him had Christ Himself: it was the very image of the King which he bore.

For this cause he was more awful than the Mercy Seat and the Cherubim. For no such voice went out from them as from hence; but from them it talked with men chiefly about things of sense, from the tongue of Paul on the other hand about the things above the heavens. Again, from the Mercy Seat it spoke oracles to the Jews alone; but from hence to the whole world: and there it was by things without life; but here by a soul instinct with virtue.

This Mercy Seat was brighter even than heaven, not shining forth with variety of stars nor with rays from the sun, but the very Sun of righteousness was there, and from hence He sent forth His rays. Again, from time to time in this our heaven, any cloud coursing over at times makes it gloomy; but that bosom never had any such storm sweeping across it. Or rather there did sweep over it many storms and oft: but the light they

darkened not; rather in the midst of the temptation and dangers the light shone out. Wherefore also he himself when bound with his chain kept exclaiming, [2 Timothy 2:9] *"The word of God is not bound."* Thus continually by means of that tongue was It sending forth its rays. And no fear, no danger made that bosom gloomy. Perhaps the bosom seems to outdo the feet; however, both they as feet are beautiful, and this as a bosom.

Will you see also the belly with its proper beauty? Hear what he says about it, [1 Corinthians 8:13] *"If meat make my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh while the world stands: [Romans 14:21] It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak: [1 Corinthians 6:13] Meats for the belly and the belly for meats."* What can be more beautiful in its kind than this belly thus instructed to be quiet, and taught all temperance, and knowing how both to hunger and be famished, and also to suffer thirst? For as a well-trained horse with a golden bridle, so also did this walk with measured paces, having vanquished the necessity of nature. For it was Christ walking in it. Now this being so temperate, it is quite plain that the whole body of vice besides was done away.

Would you see the hands too? Those which he now has? Or would you rather behold first their former wickedness? [Acts 8:3] *"Entering (this very man) into the houses, he haled,"* of late, *"men and women,"* with the hands not of man, but of some fierce wild beast. But as soon as he had received the colors of the Truth and the spiritual experience, no longer were these the hands of a man, but spiritual; day by day being bound with chains. And they never struck any one, but they were stricken times without number. Once even a viper [Acts 28:3-5] revered those hands: for they were the hands of a human being no longer; and therefore it did not even fasten on them.

And will you see also the back, resembling as it does the other members? Hear what he says about this also. [2 Corinthians 11:24-25]
"Five times I received of the Jews forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep."

7. But lest we too should fall into an interminable deep, and be carried away far and wide, going over each of his members severally; come let us quit the body and look at another sort of beauty, that, namely, which proceeds from his garments; to which even devils showed reverence; and therefore both they made off, and diseases took flight. And wheresoever Paul happened to show himself, they all retired and got out of the way, as if the champion of the whole world had appeared. And as they who have been often wounded in war, should they see but some part of the armor of him that wounded them feel a shuddering; much in the same way the devils also, at sight of *"handkerchiefs"* only were astonished. Where be now the rich, and they that have high thoughts about wealth? Where they who count over their own titles and their costly robes? With these things if they compare themselves, it will be clay in their sight and dirt, all they have of their own. And why speak I of garments and golden ornaments? Why, if one would grant me the whole world in possession, the mere nail of Paul I should esteem more powerful than all that dominion: his poverty than all luxury: his dishonor, than all glory: his nakedness than all riches: no security would I compare with the buffeting of that sacred head: no diadem, with the stones to which he was a mark. This crown let us long for, beloved: and if persecution be not now, let us mean while prepare ourselves. For neither was he of whom we speak glorious by persecutions alone: for he said also, [1 Corinthians 9:27. ὑποπιέζω] rec. text, [ὑποπιάζω] *"I keep under my body;"* now in this one may attain excellence without persecutions. And he

exhorted not to [Romans 3:14] *"make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof."* And again, [1 Timothy 6:8] *"Having food and covering, let us be therewith content."* For to these purposes we have no need of persecutions. And the wealthy too he sought to moderate, saying, [1 Timothy 6:9] *"They that desire to be rich fall into temptation."*

If therefore we also thus exercise ourselves, when we enter into the contest we shall be crowned: and though there be no persecution before us, we shall receive for these things many rewards. But if we pamper the body and live the life of a swine, even in peace we shall often sin and bear shame.

Do you see not with whom we wrestle? With the incorporeal powers. How then, being ourselves flesh, are we to get the better of these? For if wrestling with men one have need to be temperate in diet, much more with evil spirits. But when together with fullness of flesh we are also bound down to wealth, whence are we to overcome our antagonists? For wealth is a chain, a grievous chain, to those who know not how to use it; a tyrant savage and inhuman, imposing all his commands by way of outrage on those who serve him. Howbeit, if we will, this bitter tyranny we shall depose from its throne, and make it yield to us, instead of commanding. How then shall this be? By distributing our wealth unto all. For so long as it stands against us, each single handed, like any robber in a wilderness it works all its bad ends: but when we bring it forth among others, it will master us no more, holden as it will be in chains, on all sides, by all men.

8. And these things I say, not because riches are a sin: the sin is in not distributing them to the poor, and in the wrong use of them. For God made nothing evil but all things very good; so that riches too are good; i.e. if they do not master their owners; if the wants of our neighbors be done away by them. For neither is that light good which instead of dissipating darkness

rather makes it intense: nor should I call that wealth, which instead of doing away poverty rather increases it. For the rich man seeks not to take from others but to help others: but he that seeks to receive from others is no longer rich, but is emphatically poor. So that it is not riches that are an evil, but the needy mind which turns wealth into poverty. These are more wretched than those who ask alms in the narrow streets, carrying a wallet and mutilated in body. I say, clothed in rags as they are, not so miserable as those in silks and shining garments. Those who strut in the market-place are more to be pitied than those who haunt the crossings of the streets, and enter into the courts, and cry from their cellars, and ask charity. For these for their part do utter praises to God, and speak words of mercy and a strict morality. And therefore we pity them, and stretch out the hand, and never find fault with them. But those who are rich to bad purpose; cruelty and inhumanity, ravening and satanical lust, are in the words they belch out. And therefore by all are they detested and laughed to scorn. Do but consider; which of the two among all men is reckoned disgraceful, to beg of the rich or the poor. Every one, I suppose, sees it at once:— of the poor. Now this, if you mark it, is what the rich do; for they dared not apply to those who are richer than themselves: whereas those who beg do so of the wealthy: for one beggar asks not alms of another, but of a rich man; but the rich man tears the poor in pieces.

Again tell me, which is the more dignified, to receive from those who are willing and are obliged to you, or when men are unwilling, to compel and tease them? Clearly not to trouble those who are unwilling. But this also the rich do: for the poor receive from willing hands, and such as are obliged to them; but the rich from persons unwilling and repugnant, which is an indication of greater poverty. For if no one would like so much as to go to a meal, unless the inviter were to feel obliged to the guest, how can it

be honorable to take one's share of any property by compulsion? Do we not on this account get out of the way of dogs and fly from their baying, because by their much besetting they fairly force us off? This also our rich men do.

"But, that fear should accompany the gift, is more dignified." Nay, this is of all most disgraceful. For he who moves heaven and earth about his gains, who can be so laughed to scorn as he? For even unto dogs, not seldom, through fear, we throw whatever we had hold of. Which I ask again, is more disgraceful? That one clothed with rags should beg, or one who wears silk? Thus when a rich man pays court to old and poor persons, so as to get possession of their property, and this when there are children, what pardon can he deserve?

Further: If you will, let us examine the very words; what the rich beggars say, and what the poor. What then says the poor man? That he who gives alms will never have to give by measure ([μετριάσει] perhaps corrupt: conj. [πεινάσει], will never hunger); that he is giving of what is God's: that God is loving unto men, and recompenses more abundantly; all which are words of high morality, and exhortation, and counsel. For he recommends you to look unto the Lord, and he takes away your fear of the poverty to come. And one may perceive much instruction in the words of those who ask alms: but of what kind are those of the rich? Why, of swine, and dogs, and wolves, and all other wild beasts. For some of them discourse perpetually on banquets, and dishes, and delicacies, and wine of all sorts, and ointments, and vestures, and all the rest of that extravagance. And others about the interest of money and loans. And making out accounts and increasing the mass of debts to an intolerable amount, as if it had begun in the time of men's fathers or grandfathers, one they rob of his house, another of his field, and another of his slave, and of all that he has. Why should one

speaking of their wills, which are written in blood instead of ink? For either by surrounding them with some intolerable danger, or else bewitching them with some paltry promises, whomsoever they may see in possession of some small property, those they persuade to pass by all their relations, and that oftentimes when perishing through poverty, and instead of them to enter their own names. Is there any madness and ferocity of wild beasts of any sort which these things do not throw into the shade?

8. Wherefore I beseech you, all such wealth as this let us flee, disgraceful as it is and in deaths abundant; and let us obtain that which is spiritual, and let us seek after the treasures in the heavens. For whoso possess these, they are the rich, they are the wealthy, both here and there enjoying things; even all things. Since whoso will be poor, according to the word of God, has all men's houses opened to him. For unto him that for God's sake has ceased to possess any thing, every one will contribute of his own. But whoso will hold a little with injustice, shuts the doors of all against him. To the end, then, that we may attain both to the good things here and to those which are there, let us choose the wealth which cannot be removed, that immortal abundance: which may God grant us all to obtain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

Homily 14 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 4:17

For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ Jesus.

Consider here also, I entreat, the noble soul, the soul more glowing and keener than fire: how he was indeed especially desirous to be present himself with the Corinthians, thus distempered and broken into parties. For he knew well what a help to the disciples his presence was and what a mischief his absence. And the former he declared in the Epistle to the Philippians, saying, [Philippians 2:12. καὶ[] om. in rec. text *"Not as in my presence only, but also now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."* The latter he signifies in this Epistle, saying, [78 18] *"Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you; but I will come."* He was urgent, it seems, and desirous to be present himself. But as this was not possible for a time, he corrects them by the promise of his appearance; and not this only, but also by the sending of his disciple. *"For this,"* he says, *"I have sent unto you Timothy."* *"For this cause:"* how is that? *"Because I care for you as for children, and as having begotten you."* And the message is accompanied with a recommendation of his person: *"Who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord."* Now this he said, both to show his love of him, and to prepare them to look on him with respect. And not simply *"faithful,"* but, *"in the Lord;"* that is, in the things pertaining to the Lord. Now if in worldly things it is high praise for a man to be faithful, much more in things spiritual.

If then he was his *"beloved child,"* consider how great was Paul's love, in choosing to be separated from him for the Corinthian's sake, And if *"faithful"* also, he will be unexceptionable in his ministering to their affairs.

"Who shall put you in remembrance." He said not, *"shall teach,"* lest they should take it ill, as being used to learn from himself. Wherefore also towards the end he says, [1 Corinthians 16:10-11] *"For he works the work of the Lord, as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him."* For there was no envy among the Apostles, but they had an eye unto one thing, the edification of the Church. And if he that was employed was their inferior, they did as it were support ([συνεκρότουν]) him with all earnestness. Wherefore neither was he contented with saying, *"He shall put you in remembrance;"* but purposing to cut out their envy more completely—for Timothy was young—with this view, I say, he adds, *"my ways;"* not *"his,"* but *"mine;"* that is, his methods, ([τὰς οἰκονομίας].) his dangers, his customs, his laws, his ordinances, his Apostolical Canons, and all the rest. For since he had said, *"We are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place: all these things,"* says he, *"he will remind you of;"* and also of the laws of Christ; for destroying all heresies. Then, carrying his argument higher, he adds, *"which be in Christ;"* ascribing all, as was his wont, unto the Lord, and on that ground establishing the credibility of what is to follow. Wherefore he subjoins, *"Even as I teach every where in every church."* *"Nothing new have I spoken unto you: of these my proceedings all the other Churches are cognizant as well as you."* Further: he calls them *"ways in Christ,"* to show that they have in them nothing human, and that with the aid from that source he does all things well.

2. And having said these things and so soothed them, and being just about to enter on his charge against the unclean person, he again utters words full of anger; not that in himself he felt so but in order to correct

them: and giving over the fornicator, he directs his discourse to the rest, as not deeming him worthy even of words from himself; just as we act in regard to our servants when they have given us great offense.

Next, after that he had said, I send Timothy, lest they should thereupon take things too easily, mark what he says:

1 Corinthians 4:18

"Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming unto you." For there he glances both at them and at certain others, casting down their highmindedness: since the love of preeminence is in fault, when men abuse the absence of their teacher for their own self-will. For when he addresses himself unto the people, observe how he does it by way of appeal to their sense of shame; when unto the originators of the mischief, his manner is more vehement. Thus unto the former he says, *"We are the offscouring of all:"* and soothing them he says, *"Not to shame you I write these things;"* but to the latter, *"Now as though I were not coming to you, some are puffed up;"* showing that their self-will argued a childish turn of mind. For so boys in the absence of their master wax more negligent.

This then is one thing here indicated; and another is that his presence was sufficient for their correction. For as the presence of a lion makes all living creatures shrink away, so also does that of Paul the corrupters of the Church.

1 Corinthians 4:19

And therefore he goes on, "*But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will.*" Now to say this only would seem to be mere threatening. But to promise himself and demand from them the requisite proof by actions also; this was a course for a truly high spirit. Accordingly he added this too, saying,

"And I will know, not the word of them which are puffed up, but the power." For not from any excellencies of their own but from their teacher's absence, this self-will arose. Which again itself was a mark of a scornful mind towards him. And this is why, having said, "*I have sent Timothy,*" he did not at once add, "*I will come;*" but waited until he had brought his charge against them of being "*puffed up:*" after that he says, "*I will come.*" Since, had he put it before the charge, it would rather have been an apology for himself as not having been deficient, instead of a threat; nor even so ([οὐτως] so the King's ms. [οὕτως] the rec. text.) would the statement have been convincing. But as it is, placing it after the accusation, he rendered himself such as they would both believe and fear.

Mark also how solid and secure he makes his ground: for he says not simply, "*I will come:*" but, "*If the Lord will:*" and he appoints no set time. For since he might perhaps be tardy in coming, by that uncertainty he would fain keep them anxiously engaged. And, lest they should hereupon fall back again, he added, "*shortly,*"

3. "*And I will know, not the word of them that are puffed up, but the power.*" He said not, "*I will know not the wisdom, nor the signs,*" but what? "*not the word:*" by the term he employs at the same time depressing the one and exalting the other. And for a while he is setting himself against the

generality of them who were countenancing the fornicator. For if he were speaking of him, he would not say, "*the power*;" but, "*the works*," the corrupt works which he did.

Now why do you not seek after "*the word*?" "*Not because I am wanting in word but because all our doings are 'in power.'*" As therefore in war success is not for those who talk much but those who effect much; so also in this case, not speakers, but doers have the victory. "*You*," says he, "*art proud of this fine speaking. Well, if it were a contest and a time for orators, you might reasonably be elated thereat: but if of Apostles preaching truth, and by signs confirming the same, why are you puffed up for a thing superfluous and unreal, and to the present purpose utterly inefficient? For what could a display of words avail towards raising the dead, or expelling evil spirits, or working any other such deed of wonder? But these are what we want now, and by these our cause stands.*"

Whereupon also he adds,

1 Corinthians 4:20

"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." By signs, says he, not by fine speaking, we have prevailed: and that our teaching is divine and really announces the Kingdom of Heaven we give the greater proof, namely, our signs which we work by the power of the Spirit. If those who are now puffed up desire to be some great ones; as soon as I have come, let them show whether they have any such power. And let me not find them sheltering themselves behind a pomp of words: for that kind of art is nothing to us.

1 Corinthians 4:21

4. *"What will you? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of meekness?"*

There is much both of terror and of gentleness in this saying. For to say, *"I will know,"* was the language of one as yet withholding himself: but to say, *"What will you? Must I come unto you with a rod?"* are the words of one thenceforth ascending the teacher's seat, and from thence holding discourses with them and taking upon him all his authority.

What means, *"with a rod?"* With punishment, with vengeance: that is, I will destroy; I will strike with blindness: the kind of thing which Peter did in the case of Sapphira, and himself in the case of Elymas the sorcerer. For henceforth he no longer speaks as bringing himself into a close comparison with the other teachers, but with authority. And in the second Epistle too he appears to say the same, when he writes, *"Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me."*

"Shall I come with a rod, or in love?" What then? To come with a rod, was it not an instance of love? Of love it was surely. But because through his great love he shrinks back in punishing, therefore he so expresses himself.

Further; when he spoke about punishment, he said not, *"in a spirit of meekness,"* but, [simply,] *"with a rod:"* and yet of that too the Spirit was author. For there is a spirit of meekness, and a spirit of severity. He does not, however, choose so to call it, but from its milder aspect ([ἀπὸ τῶν χρηστοτέρων].) And for a like reason also, God, although avenging Himself, has it often affirmed of Him that He is *"gracious and long-*

suffering, and rich in mercy and pity:" but that He is apt to punish, once perhaps or twice, and sparingly, and that upon some urgent cause.

5. Consider then the wisdom of Paul; holding the authority in his own hands, he leaves both his and that in the power of others, saying, *"What will you?" "The matter is at your disposal."*

For we too have depending on us both sides of the alternative; both falling into hell, and obtaining the kingdom: since God has so willed it. For, *"behold,"* says he, *"fire and water: whichever way you will, you may stretch forth your hand"* [Sirach 15:16] And, *"If you be willing, and will hearken unto me, you shall eat the good of the land; [Isaiah 1:19,] but if you be not willing, the sword shall devour you."*

But perhaps one will say, *"I am willing; (and no one is so void of understanding as not to be willing;) but to will is not sufficient for me."* Nay, but it is sufficient, if you be duly willing, and do the deeds of one that is willing. But as it is, you are not greatly willing.

And let us try this in other things, if it seem good. For tell me, he that would marry a wife, is he content with wishing? By no means; but he looks out for women to advance his suit, and request friends to keep watch with him, and gets together money. Again, the merchant is not content with sitting at home and wishing, but he first hires a vessel, then selects sailors and rowers, then takes up money on interest, and is inquisitive about a market and the price of merchandise. Is it not then strange for men to show themselves so much in earnest about earthly things, but that when they are to make a venture for heaven, they should be content with wishing only? Rather I should say, not even in this do they show themselves properly in earnest. For he that wills a thing as he ought, puts also his hand unto the means which lead to the object of his desire. Thus, when hunger compels you to take nourishment, you wait not for the viands to come unto you of

their own accord, but omittest nothing to gather victuals together. So in thirst, and cold and all other such things, you are industrious and duly prepared to take care of the body. Now do this in respect of God's kingdom also, and surely you shall obtain it.

For to this end God made you a free agent, that you might not afterwards accuse God, as though some necessity had bound you: but you, in regard of those very things wherein you have been honored, murmur.

For in fact I have often heard people say, *"But why did He then make my goodness depend on me?"* Nay, but how was He to bring you, slumbering and sleeping, and in love with all iniquity, and living delicately, and pampering yourself; how was He to bring you up to heaven? If He had, you would not have abstained from vice. For if now, even in the face of threatening, you do not turn aside from your wickedness; had he added no less than heaven as the end of your race, when would you have ceased waxing more careless and worse by far? ([χείρων πολλῶ. πολλῶν] Bened.)

Neither again will you be able to allege, He has showed me indeed what things were good but gave no help, for abundant also is His promise to you of aid.

6. *"But,"* say you, *"Virtue is burdensome and distasteful; while with vice great pleasure is blended; and the one is wide and broad, but the other strait and narrow."*

Tell me then, are they respectively such throughout, or only from the beginning? For in fact what you here say, you say, not intending it, in behalf of virtue; so potent a thing is truth. For suppose there were two roads, the one leading to a furnace, and the other to a Paradise; and that the one unto the furnace were broad, the other unto Paradise, narrow; which road would you take in preference? For although you may now gainsay for contradiction's sake, yet things which are plainly allowed on all hands,

however shameless, you will not be able to gainsay. Now that that way is rather to be chosen which has its beginning difficult but not its end, I will endeavor to teach you from what is quite obvious. And, if you please, let us first take in hand the arts. For these have their beginning full of toil, but the end gainful. *"But,"* say you, *"no one applies himself to an art without some one to compel him; for,"* you add, *"so long as the boy is his own master, he will choose rather to take his ease at first, and in the end to endure the evil, how great soever, than to live hardly at the outset, and afterwards reap the fruit of those labors."* Well then, to make such a choice comes of a mind left to itself, ([ὁρφανικῆς διανοίας]) and of childish idleness: but the contrary choice, of sense and manliness. And so it is with us: were we not children in mind, we should not be like the child aforesaid, forsaken ([ὁρφάνῳ]) as he is and thoughtless, but like him that has a father. We must cast out then our own childish mind, and not find fault with the things themselves; and we must set a charioteer over our conscience, who will not allow us to indulge our appetite, but make us run and strive mightily. For what else but absurdity is it to inure our children with pains at first unto pursuits which have laborious beginnings, but their end good and pleasant; while we ourselves in spiritual things take just the contrary turn?

And yet even in those earthly things it is not quite plain that the end will be good and pleasant: since before now untimely death, or poverty, or false accusation, or reverse of fortune, or other such things, of which there are many, have caused men after their long toil to be deprived of all its fruits. What is more, those who have such pursuits, though they succeed, it is no great gain which they will reap. For with the present life all those things are dissolved. But here, not for such fruitless and perishable things is our race, neither have we fears about the end; but greater and more secure is our hope after our departure hence. What pardon then can there be, what

excuse for those who will not strip themselves for the evils to be endured for virtue's sake?

And do they yet ask, "*Wherefore is the way narrow?*" Why, thou dost not deem it right that any fornicator or lewd or drunken ([καὶ τῶν μεθύοντων] inserted from the King's ms.) person should enter into the courts of earthly kings; and do you claim for men to be let into heaven itself with licentiousness, and luxury, and drunkenness, and covetousness, and all manner of iniquity? And how can these things be pardonable?

7. "*Nay,*" you reply, I say not that, but why has not virtue a "*broad way?*" In good truth if we be willing, its way is very easy. For whether is easier, tell me; to dig through a wall and take other men's goods and so be cast into prison; or to be content with what you have and freed from all fear? I have not however said all. For whether is easier, tell me; to steal all men's goods and revel in few of them for a short time, and then to be racked and scourged eternally; or having lived in righteous poverty for a short time, to live ever after in delights? (For let us not enquire as yet which is the more profitable, but for the present, which is the more easy.) Whether again is it pleasanter, to see a good dream and to be punished in reality; or after having had a disagreeable dream to be really in enjoyment? Of course the latter. Tell me then, In what sense do you call virtue harsh? I grant, it is harsh, tried by comparison with our carelessness. However, that it is really easy and smooth, hear what Christ says, [Matthew 11:30] "*My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*" But if you perceive not the lightness, plainly it is for want of courageous zeal; since where that is, even heavy things are light; and by the same rule where it is not, even light things are heavy. For tell me, what could be sweeter and more easily obtained than the banquet of manna? Yet the Jews were discontented, though enjoying such delightful fare. What more bitter than hunger and all the other hardships which Paul

endured? Yet he leaped up, and rejoiced, and said, [Colossians 1:24] *"Now I rejoice in my sufferings."* What then is the cause? The difference of the mind. If then you frame this as it ought to be, you will see the easiness of virtue.

"What then," say you, *"does she only become such through the mind of those who pursue her?"* She is such, not from their mind alone, but by nature as well. Which I thus prove: If the one had been throughout a thing painful, the other throughout of the contrary sort, then with some plausibility might some fallen persons have said that the latter was easier than the former. But if they have their beginnings, the one in hardship, the other in pleasure, but their respective ends again just opposite to these; and if those ends be both infinite, in the one the pleasure, in the other the burden; tell me, which is the more easy to choose?

"Why then do many not choose that which is easy?" Because some disbelieve; and others, who believe, have their judgment corrupt, and would prefer pleasure for a season to that which is everlasting. *"Is not this then easy?"* Not so: but this comes of a sick soul. And as the reason why persons in a fever long after cool drink is not upon calculation that the momentary luxury is pleasanter than being burned up from beginning to end, but because they cannot restrain their inordinate desire; so also these. Since if one brought them to their punishment at the very moment of their pleasure, assuredly they never would have chosen it. Thus you see in what sense vice is not an easy thing.

8. But if you will, let us try this same point over again by an example in the proper subject matter. Tell me, for instance, which is pleasanter and easier? (only let us not take again the desire of the many for our rule in the matter; since one ought to decide, not by the sick, but by the whole; just as you might show me ten thousand men in a fever, seeking things

unwholesome upon choice to suffer for it afterwards; but I should not allow such choice;) which, I repeat, brings more ease, tell me; to desire much wealth, or to be above that desire? For I, for my part, think the latter. If you disbelieve it, let the argument be brought to the facts themselves.

Let us then suppose one man desiring much, another nothing. Which now is the better state, tell me, and which the more respectable? However, let that pass. For this is agreed upon, that the latter is a finer character than the former. And we are making no enquiry about this at present, but which lives the easier and pleasanter life? Well then: the lover of money will not enjoy even what he has: for that which he loves he cannot choose to spend; but would gladly even carve ([κατακόψει]) himself out, and part with his flesh rather than with his gold. But he that despises wealth, gains this the while, that he enjoys what he has quietly and with great security, and that he values himself more than it. Which then is the pleasanter; to enjoy what one has with freedom, or to live under a master, namely wealth, and not dare to touch a single thing even of one's own? Why, it seems to me to be much the same as if any two men, having wives and loving them exceedingly, were not upon the same terms with them; but the one were allowed the presence and intercourse of his wife, the other not even permitted to come near his.

There is another thing which I wish to mention, indicating the pleasure of the one and the discomfort of the other. He that is greedy of gain will never be stayed in that desire, not only because it is impossible, for him to obtain all men's goods, but also because whatever he may have compassed, he counts himself to have nothing. But the despiser of riches will deem it all superfluous, and will not have to punish his soul with endless desires. I say, punish; for nothing so completely answers the definition of punishment as desire deprived of gratification; a thing too which especially marks his perverse mind. Look at it in this way. He that lusts after riches and has

increased his store, he is the sort of person to feel as if he had nothing. I ask then, what more complicated than this disease? And the strange thing is not this only, but that although having, he thinks he has not the very things which are in his hold, and as though he had them not he bewails himself. If he even get all men's goods, his pain is but greater. And should he gain an hundred talents, he is vexed that he has not received a thousand: and if he received a thousand; he is stung to the quick that it is not ten thousand: and if he receive ten thousand, he utterly bemoans himself ([κατακόπτεται]) because it is not ten times as much. And the acquisition of more to him becomes so much more poverty; for the more he receives so much the more he desires. So then, the more he receives, the more he becomes poor: since whoso desires more, is more truly poor. When then he has an hundred talents, is he not very poor? for he desires a thousand. When he has got a thousand, then he becomes yet poorer. For it is no longer a thousand as before, but ten thousand that he professes himself to want. Now if you say that to wish and not to obtain is pleasure, you seem to me to be very ignorant of the nature of pleasure.

9. To show that this sort of thing is not pleasure but punishment, take another case, and so let us search it out. When we are thirsty, do we not therefore feel pleasure in drinking because we quench our thirst; and is it not therefore a pleasure to drink because it relieves us from a great torment, the desire, I mean, of drinking? Every one, I suppose, can tell. But were we always to remain in such a state of desire, we should be as badly off as the rich man in the parable of Lazarus for the matter of punishment; for his punishment was just this that vehemently desiring one little drop, he obtained it not. And this very thing all covetous persons seem to me continually to suffer, and to resemble him where he begs that he may obtain that drop, and obtains it not. For their soul is more on fire than his.

Well indeed has one said, that all lovers of money are in a sort of dropsy; for as they, bearing much water in their bodies, are the more burnt up: so also the covetous, bearing about with them great wealth, are greedy of more. The reason is that neither do the one keep the water in the parts of the body where it should be, nor the other their desire in the limits of becoming thought.

Let us then flee this strange and craving ([ξένην καὶ κενὴν]: a play on the sound of the words,) disease; let us flee the root of all evils; let us flee that which is present hell; for it is a hell, the desire of these things. Only just lay open the soul of each, of him who despises wealth and of him who does not so; and you will see that the one is like the distracted, choosing neither to hear nor see any thing: the other, like a harbor free from waves: and he is the friend of all, as the other is the enemy. For whether one take any thing of his, it gives him no annoyance; or if whether, on the contrary, one give him anything, it puffs him not up; but there is a certain freedom about him with entire security. The one is forced to flatter and feign before all; the other, to no man.

If now to be fond of money is to be both poor and timid and a dissembler and a hypocrite and to be full of fears and great penal anguish and chastisement: while he that despises wealth has all the contrary enjoyments: is it not quite plain that virtue is the more pleasant?

Now we might have gone through all the other evils also whereby it is shown that there is no vice which has pleasure in it, had we not spoken before so much at large.

Wherefore knowing these things, let us choose virtue; to the end that we may both enjoy such pleasure as is here, and may attain unto the blessings which are to come, through the grace and loving-kindness, etc. etc.

Homily 15 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 5:1-2

It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even named among the Gentiles, that one of you has his father's wife. And you are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you.

When he was discoursing about their divisions, he did not indeed at once address them vehemently, but more gently at first; and afterwards, he ended in accusation, saying thus, [1 Corinthians 1:11] *"For it has been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you."* But in this place, not so; but he lays about him immediately and makes the reproach of the accusation as general as possible. For he said not, *"Why did such an one commit fornication?"* but, *"It is reported that there is fornication among you;"* that they might as persons altogether aloof from his charge take it easily; but might be filled with such anxiety as was natural when the whole body was wounded, and the Church had incurred reproach. *"For no one,"* says he, *"will state it thus, 'such an one has committed fornication,' but, 'in the Church of Corinthians that sin has been committed.'"*

And he said not, *"Fornication is perpetrated,"* but, *"Is reported—such as is not even named among the Gentiles."* For so continually he makes the Gentiles a topic of reproach to the believers. Thus writing to the Thessalonians, he said, [1 Thessalonians 4:4-5, καὶ τιμῇ] om. [τὰ λοιπὰ] inserted *"Let every one possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification, not in the passion of lust, even as the rest of the Gentiles."* And to the

Colossians and Ephesians, [Ephesians 4:17. cf. Colossians 3:6-7] *"That you should no longer walk, as the other Gentiles walk."* Now if their committing the same sins was unpardonable, when they even outdid the Gentiles, what place can we find for them? Tell me: *"inasmuch as among the Gentiles,"* so he speaks, not only they dare no such thing, but they do not even give it a name. Do you see to what point he aggravated his charge? For when they are convicted of inventing such modes of uncleanness as the unbelievers, so far from venturing on them, do not even know of, the sin must be exceeding great, beyond all words. And the clause, *"among you,"* is spoken also emphatically; that is, *"Among you, the faithful, who have been favored with so high mysteries, the partakers of secrets, the guests invited to heaven."* Do you mark with what indignant feeling his words overflow? With what anger against all? For had it not been for the great wrath of which he was full, had he not been setting himself against them all, he would have spoken thus: *"Having heard that such and such a person has committed fornication, I charge you to punish him."* But as it is he does not so; he rather challenges all at once. And indeed, if they had written first, this is what he probably would have said. Since however so far from writing, they had even thrown the fault into the shade, on this account he orders his discourse more vehemently.

2. *"That one of you should have his father's wife."* Wherefore said he not, *"That he should abuse his father's wife?"* The extreme foulness of the deed caused him to shrink. He hurries by it accordingly, with a sort of scrupulousness as though it had been explicitly mentioned before. And hereby again he aggravates the charge, implying that such things are ventured on among them as even to speak plainly of was intolerable for Paul. Wherefore also, as he goes on, he uses the same mode of speech, saying, *"Him who has so done this thing:"* and is again ashamed and

blushes to speak out; which also we are wont to do in regard of matters extremely disgraceful. And he said not, "*his step-mother*," but, "*his father's wife*;" so as to strike much more severely. For when the mere terms are sufficient to convey the charge, he proceeds with them simply, adding nothing.

And "*tell me not*," says he, "*that the fornicator is but one: the charge has become common to all*." Wherefore at once he added, "*and you are puffed up*:" he said not, "*with the sin*;" for this would imply want of all reason: but with the doctrine you have heard from that person. This however he set not down himself, but left it undetermined, that he might inflict a heavier blow.

And mark the good sense of Paul. Having first overthrown the wisdom from without, and signified that it is nothing by itself although no sin were associated with it; then and not till then he discourses about the sin also. For if by way of comparison with the fornicator who perhaps was some wise one, he had maintained the greatness of his own spiritual gift; he had done no great thing: but even when unattended with sin to take down the heathen wisdom and demonstrate it to be nothing, this was indicating its extreme worthlessness indeed. Wherefore first, as I said, having made the comparison, he afterwards mentions the man's sin also.

And with him indeed he condescends not to debate, and thereby signifies the exceeding greatness of his dishonor. But to the others he says, "*You ought to weep and wail, and cover your faces, but now ye do the contrary*." And this is the force of the next clause, "*And you are puffed up, and did not rather mourn*."

"*And why are we to weep?*" some might say. Because the reproach has made its way even unto the whole body of your Church. "*And what good are we to get by our weeping?*" "*That such an one should be taken away*

from you." Not even here does he mention his name; rather, I should say, not any where; which in all monstrous things is our usual way.

And he said not, *"You have not rather cast him out,"* but, as in the case of any disease or pestilence, *"there is need of mourning,"* says he, *"and of intense supplication, 'that he may be taken away.'* And you should have used prayer for this, and left nothing undone that he should be cut off."

Nor yet does he accuse them for not having given him information, but for not having mourned so that the man should be taken away; implying that even without their Teacher this ought to have been done, because of the notoriety of the offense.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

3. *"For I verily being absent in body, but present in spirit."*

Mark his energy. He suffers them not even to wait for his presence, nor to receive him first and then pass the sentence of binding: but as if on the point of expelling some contagion before that it have spread itself into the rest of the body, he hastens to restrain it. And therefore he subjoins the clause, *"I have judged already, as though I were present."* These things moreover he said, not only to urge them unto the declaration of their sentence and to give them no opportunity of contriving something else, but also to frighten them, as one who knew what was to be done and determined there. For this is the meaning of being *"present in spirit:"* as Elisha was present with Gehazi, and said, Went not my heart with you? [2 Kings 5:26] Wonderful! How great is the power of the gift, in that it makes all to be together and as one; and qualifies them to know the things which are far off. *"I have judged already as though I were present."*

He permits them not to have any other device. *"Now I have uttered my decision as if I were present: let there be no delays and puttings off: for nothing else must be done."*

Then lest he should be thought too authoritative and his speech sound rather self-willed, mark how he makes them also partners in the sentence. For having said, *"I have judged,"* he adds, concerning him that has so wrought this thing, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan.

Now what means, *"In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ?"* *"According to God;"* *"not possessed with any human prejudice."*

Some, however, read thus, *"Him that has so wrought this thing in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,"* and putting a stop there or a break, then subjoin what follows, saying, *"When you are gathered together and my spirit to deliver such an one unto Satan:"* and they assert that the sense of this reading is as follows, *"Him that has done this thing in the Name of Christ,"* says St. Paul, *"deliver ye unto Satan;"* that is, *"him that has done insult unto the Name of Christ, him that, after he had become a believer and was called after that appellation, has dared to do such things, deliver ye unto Satan."* But to me the former exposition ([ἐκδοσις] . It seems to mean *"enunciation."*) appears the truer.

What then is this? *"When you are gathered together in the Name of the Lord."* That is; His Name, in whose behalf you have met, collecting you together.

"And my spirit." Again he sets himself at their head in order that when they should pass sentence, they might no otherwise cut off the offender than as if he were present; and that no one might dare to judge him pardonable, knowing that Paul would be aware of the proceedings.

4. Then making it yet more awful, he says, *"with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ;"* that is, either that Christ is able to give you such grace as that you should have power to deliver him to the devil; or that He is Himself together with you passing that sentence against him.

And he said not, *"Give up"* such an one to Satan, but *"deliver;"* opening unto him the doors of repentance, and delivering up such an one as it were to a schoolmaster. And again it is, *"such an one:"* he no where can endure to make mention of his name.

"For the destruction of the flesh." As was done in the case of the blessed Job, but not upon the same ground. For in that case it was for brighter crowns, but here for loosing of sins; that he might scourge him with

a grievous sore or some other disease. True it is that elsewhere he says, "*Of the Lord are we judged, [1 Corinthians 11:32] when we suffer these things.*" But here, desirous of making them feel it more severely, he "*delivers up unto Satan.*" And so this too which God had determined ensued, that the man's flesh was chastised. For because inordinate eating and carnal luxuriousness are the parents of desires, it is the flesh which he chastises.

"*That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;*" that is the soul. Not as though this were saved alone, but because it was a settled point that if that were saved, without all controversy the body too would partake in its salvation. For as it became mortal because of the soul's sinning: so if this do righteousness, that also on the other hand shall enjoy great glory.

But some maintain, that "*the Spirit*" is the Gracious Gift which is extinguished when we sin. "*In order then that this may not happen,*" says he, "*let him be punished; that thereby becoming better, he may draw down to himself God's grace, and be found having it safe in that day.*" So that all comes as from one exercising a nurse's or a physician's office, not merely scourging nor punishing rashly and at random. For the gain is greater than the punishment: one being but for a season, the other everlasting.

And he said not simply, "*That the spirit may be saved,*" but "*in that day.*" Well and seasonably does he remind them of that day in order that both they might more readily apply themselves to the cure, and that the person censured might the rather receive his words, not as it were of anger, but as the forethought of an anxious father. For this cause also he said, "*unto the destruction of the flesh:*" proceeding to lay down regulations for the devil and not suffering him to go a step too far. As in the instance of Job, God said, [Job 2:6] "*But touch not his life.*"

5. Then, having ended his sentence, and spoken it in brief without dwelling on it, he brings in again a rebuke, directing himself against them;

1 Corinthians 5:6

"Your glorying is not good:" signifying that it was they up to the present time who had hindered him from repenting, by taking pride in him. Next he shows that he is taking this step in order to spare not that person only, but also those to whom he writes. To which effect he adds,

"Do you not know, that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" "For," says he, *"though the offense be his, yet if neglected it has power to waste the rest of the body of the Church also. For when the first transgressor escapes punishment, speedily will others also commit the same faults."*

In these words he indicates moreover that their struggle and their danger is for the whole Church, not for any one person. For which purpose he needs also the similitude of the leaven. For *"as that,"* says he, *"though it be but little, transforms unto its own nature the whole lump; so also this man, if he be let go unpunished and this sin turn out unavenged, will corrupt likewise all the rest."*

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

"Purge out the old leaven," that is, this evil one. Not that he speaks concerning this one only; rather he glances at others with him. For, *"the old leaven"* is not fornication only, but also sin of every kind. And he said not, *"purge,"* but *"purge out;"* *"cleanse with accuracy so that there be not so much as a remnant nor a shadow of that sort."* In saying then, *"purge out,"* he signifies that there was still iniquity among them. But in saying, *"that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened,"* he affirms and declares that not over very many was the wickedness prevailing. But though he says, *"as you are unleavened,"* he means it not as a fact that all were clean, but as to what sort of people you ought to be.

6. *"For our Passover also has been sacrificed for us, even Christ; wherefore let us keep the feast: not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."* So also Christ called His doctrine Leaven. And further he himself dwells upon the metaphor, reminding them of an ancient history, and of the Passover and unleavened bread, and of their blessings both then and now, and their punishments and their plagues.

It is festival, therefore, the whole time in which we live. For though he said, *"Let us keep the feast,"* not with a view to the presence of the Passover or of Pentecost did he say it; but as pointing out that the whole of time is a festival unto Christians, because of the excellency of the good things which have been given. For what has not come to pass that is good? The Son of God was made man for you; He freed you from death; and called you to a kingdom. You therefore who hast obtained and art still obtaining such things, how can it be less than your duty to *"keep the feast"* all your life?

Let no one then be downcast about poverty, and disease, and craft of enemies. For it is a festival, even the whole of our time. Wherefore says Paul, [Philippians 4:4] *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice."* Upon the festival days no one puts on filthy garments. Neither then let us do so. For a marriage has been made, a spiritual marriage. For, *"the kingdom of Heaven,"* says He, *"is likened unto a certain king which would make [Matthew 22:1. ἡθέλησε ποιῆσαι], rec. text [ἐποίησε] a marriage feast for his son."* Now where it is a king making a marriage, and a marriage for his son, what can be greater than this feast? Let no one then enter in clad in rags. Not about garments is our discourse but about unclean actions. For if where all wore bright apparel one alone, being found at the marriage in filthy garments, was cast out with dishonor, consider how great strictness and purity the entrance into that marriage feast requires.

7. However, not on this account only does he remind them of the *"unleavened bread,"* but also to point out the affinity of the Old Testament with the New; and to point out also that it was impossible, after the *"unleavened bread,"* again to enter into Egypt; but if any one chose to return, he would suffer the same things as did they. For those things were a shadow of these; however obstinate the Jew may be. Wherefore should you enquire of him, he will speak, no great thing, rather it is great which he will speak of, but nothing like what we speak of: because he knows not the truth. For he for his part will say, *"the Egyptians who detained us were so changed by the Almighty that they themselves urged and drove us out, who before held us forcibly; they did not suffer us so much as to leaven our dough."* But if a man asks me, he shall hear not of Egypt nor of Pharaoh; but of our deliverance from the deceit of demons and the darkness of the devil: not of Moses but of the Son of God; not of a Red Sea but of a

Baptism overflowing with ten thousand blessings, where the *"old man"* is drowned.

Again, should you ask the Jew why he expels all leaven from all his borders; here he will even be silent and will not so much as state any reason. And this is because, although some indeed of the circumstances were both types of things to come, and also due to things then happening; yet others were not so, that the Jews might not deal deceitfully; that they might not abide in the shadow. For tell me, what is the meaning of the Lamb's being a *"Male,"* and *"Unblemished,"* and a *"year old,"* and of, *"a bone shall not be broken?"* and what means the command to call the neighbors also, [Exodus 12:4] and that it should be eaten *"standing"* and *"in the evening;"* or the fortifying the house with blood? He will have nothing else to say but over and over all about Egypt. But I can tell you the meaning both of the Blood, and of the Evening, and the Eating all together, and of the rule that all should be standing.

8. But first let us explain why the leaven is cast out of all their borders. What then is the hidden meaning? The believer must be freed from all iniquity. For as among them he perishes with whomsoever is found old leaven, so also with us wheresoever is found iniquity: since of course the punishment being so great in that which is a shadow, in our case it cannot choose but be much greater. For if they so carefully clear their houses of leaven, and pry into mouse-holes; much more ought we to search through the soul so as to cast out every unclean thought.

This however was done by them of late; but now no longer. For every where there is leaven, where a Jew is found. For it is in the midst of cities that the feast of unleavened bread is kept: a thing which is now rather a game at play than a law. For since the Truth has come, the Types have no longer any place.

So that by means of this example also he mightily drives the fornicator out of the Church. For, says he, so far from his presence profiting, he even does harm, injuring the common estate of the body. For one knows not whence is the evil savor while the corrupt part is concealed, and so one imputes it to the whole. Wherefore he urges upon them strongly to *"purge out the leaven, that you may be,"* says he, *"a new lump, even as you are unleavened."*

"For our Passover has been sacrificed for us even Christ." He said not, has died, but more in point to the subject in hand, *"has been sacrificed."* Seek not then unleavened bread of this kind, since neither have you a lamb of the same kind. Seek not leaven of this description, seeing that your unleavened bread is not such as this.

9. Thus, in the case of material leaven, the unleavened might become leavened, but never the reverse; whereas here there is a chance of the direct contrary occurring. This however he has not plainly declared: and observe his good sense. In the former Epistle he gives the fornicator no hope of return, but orders that his whole life should be spent in repentance, lest he should make him less energetic through the promise. For he said not, *"Deliver him up to Satan,"* that having repented he might be commended again unto the Church. But what says he? *"That he may be saved in the last day."* For he conducts him on unto that time in order to make him full of anxiety. And what favors he intended him after the repentance, he reveals not, imitating his own Master. For as God says, [Jonah 3:4. Septuagint: rec. text, *"forty days."*] *"Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown,"* and added not, *"but if she repent she shall be saved:"* so also he did not say here, *"But if he repent worthily, we will 'confirm our love towards him.'"* [2 Corinthians 2:8]. But he waits for him to do the work that so he may then receive the favor. For if he had said this at the beginning he might have set

him free from the fear. Wherefore he not only does not so, but by the instance of leaven allows him not even a hope of return, but reserves him unto that day: *"Purge out (so he says) the old leaven;"* and, *"let us not keep the feast with old leaven."* But as soon as he had repented, he brought him in again with all earnestness.

10. But why does he call it *"old?"* Either because our former life was of this sort, or because that which is old is *"ready to vanish away,"* [Hebrews 8:13] and is unsavory and foul; which is the nature of sin. For He neither simply finds fault with the old, nor simply praises the new, but with reference to the subject matter. And thus elsewhere He says, [Sirach 9:15] *"New wine is as a new friend: but if it become old, then with pleasure shall you drink it:"* in the case of friendship bestowing his praise rather upon the old than the new. And again, *"The Ancient of days sat,"* [Daniel 7:9] here again, taking the term *"ancient"* as among those laudatory expressions which confer highest glory. Elsewhere the Scripture takes the term *"old"* in the sense of blame; for seeing that the things are of various aspect as being composed of many parts, it uses the same words both in a good and an evil import, not according to the same shade of meaning. Of which you may see an instance in the blame cast elsewhere on the old: [Psalm 17:46. ap. Septuagint] *"They waxed old, and they halted from their paths."* And again, [Psalm 6:7. ap. Septuagint] *"I have become old in the midst of all mine enemies."* And again, [Daniel 13:52. Hist. Susan] *"O you that are become old in evil days."* So also the *"Leaven"* is often taken for the kingdom of Heaven, although here found fault with. But in that place it is used with one aspect, and in this with another.

11. But I have a strong conviction that the saying about the leaven refers also to the priests who suffer a vast deal of the old leaven to be within, not purging out from their borders, that is, out of the Church, the

covetous, the extortioners, and whatsoever would exclude from the kingdom of Heaven. For surely covetousness is an *"old leaven;"* and whenever it lights and into whatsoever house it enters, makes it unclean: and though you may gain but little by your injustice, it leavens the whole of your substance. Wherefore not seldom the dishonest gain being little, has cast out the stock honestly laid up however abundant. For nothing is more rotten than covetousness. You may fasten up that man's closet with key, and door, and bolt: you do all in vain, while you shut up within covetousness, the worst of robbers, and able to carry off all.

"But what," say you, *"if there are many covetous who do not experience this?"* In the first place, they will experience it, though their experience come not immediately. And should they now escape, then fear it the more: for they are reserved for greater punishment. Add to this, that in the event of themselves escaping, yet those who inherit their wealth will have the same to endure. *"But how can this be just,"* you will say? It is quite just. For he that has succeeded to an inheritance; full of injustice, though he have committed no rapine himself, detains nevertheless the property of others; and is perfectly aware of this; and it is fair he should suffer for it. For if this or that person had robbed and you received a thing, and then the owner came and demanded it back; would it avail you in defence to say that you had not seized it? By no means. For what would be your plea when accused! Tell me. That it was another who seized it? Well: but you are keeping possession. That it was he who robbed? But you are enjoying it. Why these rules even the laws of the heathen recognise, which acquitting those who have seized and stolen, bid you demand satisfaction from those persons in whose possession you happen to find your things all laid up.

If then you know who are the injured, restore and do what Zacchæus did, with much increase. But if you know not, I offer you another way yet; I

do not preclude you from the remedy. Distribute all these things to the poor: and thus you will mitigate the evil.

But if some have transmitted these things even to children and descendants, still in retribution they have suffered other disasters.

12. And why speak I of things in this present life? In that day at any rate will none of these things be said, when both appear naked, both the spoiled and the spoilers. Or rather not alike naked. Of riches indeed both will be equally stripped; but the one will be full of the charges to which they gave occasion. What then shall we do on that day, when before the dread tribunal he that has been evil entreated and lost his all is brought forward into the midst, and you have no one to speak a word for you? What will you say to the Judge? Now indeed you may be able even to corrupt the judgment, being but of men; but in that court and at that time, it will be no longer so: no, nor yet now will you be able. For even at this moment that tribunal is present: since God both sees our doings and is near unto the injured, though not invoked: it being certain that whoever suffers wrong, however in himself unworthy to obtain any redress, yet nevertheless seeing that what is done pleases not God, he has most assuredly one to avenge him.

"How then," you will say, *"is such an one well off, who is wicked?"* Nay, it will not be so unto the end. Hear what says the Prophet; [Psalm 37:1-2] *"Fret not yourself because of the evil doers, because as grass they shall quickly wither away."* For where, tell me, where is he who wrought rapine, after his departure hence? Where are his bright hopes! Where his august name? Are they not all passed and gone? Is it not a dream and a shadow, all that was his? And this you must expect in the case of every such person, both in his own person while living, and in that of him who shall come after him. But not such is the state of the saints, nor will it be possible

for you to say the same things in their case also, that it is shadow and a dream and a tale, what belongs to them.

13. And if you please, he who spoke these things, the tent-maker, the Cilician, the man whose very parentage is unknown, let him be the example we produce. You will say, *"How is it possible to become such as he was?"* Do you then thoroughly desire it? Are you thoroughly anxious to become such? *"Yes,"* you will say. Well then, go the same way as he went and they that were with him. Now what way went he? One says, [2 Corinthians 11:27] *"In hunger, and thirst, and nakedness."* Another, [Acts 3:6] *"Silver and gold I have none."* Thus they *"had nothing and yet possessed all things."* [2 Corinthians 6:10] What can be nobler than this saying? What more blessed or more abundant in riches? Others indeed pride themselves on the contrary things, saying, *"I have this or that number of talents of gold, and acres of land without end, and houses, and slaves;"* but this man on his being naked of all things; and he shrinks not from poverty, (which is the feeling of the unwise,) nor hides his face, but he even wears it as an ornament.

Where now be the rich men, they who count up their interest simple and compound, they who take from all men and are never satisfied? Have ye heard the voice of Peter, that voice which sets forth poverty as the mother of wealth? That voice which has nothing, yet is wealthier than those who wear diadems? For this is that voice, which having nothing, raised the dead, and set upright the lame, and drove away devils, and bestowed such gracious gifts, as those who are clad in the purple robe and lead the mighty and terrible legions never were able to bestow. This is the voice of those who are now removed into heaven, of those who have attained unto that height.

14. Thus it is possible that he who has nothing may possess all men's goods. Thus may he who possesses nothing acquire the goods of all: whereas, were we to get all men's goods, we are bereft of all. Perhaps this saying seems to be a paradox; but it is not. *"But,"* you will say, *"how does he who has nothing possess all men's goods? Does he not have much more who has what belongs to all?"* By no means: but the contrary. For he who has nothing commands all, even as they did. And throughout the world all houses were open to them, and they who offered them took their coming as a favor, and they came to them as to friends and kindred. For so they came to the woman who was a seller of purple, [Acts 16:14] and she like a servant set before them what she had. And to the keeper of the prison; and he opened to them all his house. And to innumerable others. Thus they had all things and had nothing: for [Acts 4:32] *"they said that none of the things which they possessed was their own;"* therefore all things were theirs. For he that considers all things to be common, will not only use his own, but also the things of others as if they belonged to him. But he that parts things off and sets himself as master over his own only, will not be master even of these. And this is plain from an example. He who possesses nothing at all, neither house, nor table, nor garment to spare, but for God's sake is bereft of all, uses the things which are in common as his own; and he shall receive from all whatsoever he may desire, and thus he that has nothing possesses the things of all. But he that has some things, will not be master even of these. For first, no one will give to him that has possessions; and, secondly, his property shall belong to robbers and thieves and informers and changing events and be any body's rather than his. Paul, for instance, went up and down throughout all the world, carrying nothing with him, though he went neither unto friends nor kindred. Nay, at first he was a common enemy to all: but nevertheless he had all men's goods after he had made good his

entrance. But Ananias and Sapphira, hastening to gain a little more than their own, lost all together with life itself. Withdraw then from your own, that you may use others' goods as your own.

15. But I must stop: I know not how I have been carried into such a transport in speaking such words as these unto men who think it a great thing to impart but ever so little of their own. Wherefore let these my words have been spoken to the perfect. But to the more imperfect, this is what we may say, Give of what you have unto the needy. Increase your substance. For, says He, [Proverbs 19:17] "*He that gives unto the poor, lends unto God.*" But if you are in a hurry and wait not for the time of recompense, think of those who lend money to men: for not even these desire to get their interest immediately; but they are anxious that the principal should remain a good long while in the hands of the borrower, provided only the repayment be secure and they have no mistrust of the borrower. Let this be done then in the present case also. Leave them with God that He may pay you your wages manifold. Seek not to have the whole here; for if you recover it all here, how will you receive it back there? And it is on this account that God stores them up there, inasmuch as this present life is full of decay. But He gives even here also; for, "*Seek ye,*" says He, "*the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you.*" [Matthew 6:33] Well then, let us look towards the kingdom, and not be in a hurry for the repayment of the whole, lest we diminish our recompense. But let us wait for the fit season. For the interest in these cases is not of that kind, but is such as is meet to be given to God. This then having collected together in great abundance, so let us depart hence, that we may obtain both the present and the future blessings; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom unto the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

Homily 16 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 5:9-11

I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the world: but now I write unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or a reviler, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

For since he had said, *"You have not rather mourned, that such an one should be taken away;"* and, *"Purge out the old leaven;"* and it was likely that they would surmise it to be their duty to avoid all fornicators: for if he that has sinned imparts some of his own mischief to those who have not sinned, much more is it meet to keep one's self away from those without: (for if one ought not to spare a friend on account of such mischief arising from him, much less any others;) and under this impression, it was probable that they would separate themselves from the fornicators among the Greeks also, and the matter thus turning out impossible, they would have taken it more to heart: he used this mode of correction, saying, *"I wrote unto you to have no company with fornicators, yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world:"* using the word *"altogether,"* as if it were an acknowledged thing. For that they might not think that he charged not this upon them as being rather imperfect, and should attempt to do it under the erroneous impression that they were perfect, he shows that this were even impossible to be done, though they wished it ever so much. For it would be necessary to seek another world. Wherefore he added, *"For you must needs then go*

out of the world." Do you see that he is no hard master, and that in his legislation he constantly regards not only what may be done, but also what may be easily done. For how is it possible, says he, for a man having care of a house and children, and engaged in the affairs of the city, or who is an artisan or a soldier, (the greater part of mankind being Greeks,) to avoid the unclean who are to be found every where? For by *"the fornicators of the world,"* he means those who are among the Greeks. *"But now I write unto you, If any brother"* be of this kind, *"with such an one no not to eat."* Here also he glances at others who were living in wickedness.

But how can one *"that is a brother"* be an idolater? As was the case once in regard to the Samaritans who chose piety but by halves. And besides he is laying down his ground beforehand for the discourse concerning things offered in sacrifice to idols, which after this he intends to handle.

"Or covetous." For with these also he enters into conflict. Wherefore he said also, *"Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Nay, you yourselves do wrong and defraud."*

"Or a drunkard." For this also he lays to their charge further on; as when he says, *"One is hungry and another is drunken:"* and, *"meats for the belly and the belly for meats."*

"Or a reviler, or an extortioner:" for these too he had rebuked before.

2. Next he adds also the reason why he forbids them not to mix with heathens of that character, implying that it is not only impossible, but also superfluous.

1 Corinthians 5:12-13

"For what have I to do with judging them that are without?" Calling the Christians and the Greeks, *"those within"* and *"those without,"* as also he says elsewhere, [1 Timothy 3:7] *"He must also have a good report of them that are without."* And in the Epistle to the Thessalonians he speaks the same language, saying, [2 Thessalonians 3:14] *"Have no intercourse with him to the end that he may be put to shame."* And, *"Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."* Here, however, he does not add the reason. Why? Because in the other case he wished to soothe them, but in this, not so. For the fault in this case and in that was not the same, but in the Thessalonians it was less. For there he is reproving indolence; but here fornication and other most grievous sins. And if any one wished to go over to the Greeks, he hinders not him from eating with such persons; this too for the same reason. So also do we act; for our children and our brethren we leave nothing undone, but of strangers we do not make much account. How then? Did not Paul care for them that were without as well? Yes, he cared for them; but it was not till after they received the Gospel and he had made them subject to the doctrine of Christ, that he laid down laws for them. But so long as they despised, it was superfluous to speak the precepts of Christ to those who knew not Christ Himself.

"Do not ye judge them that are within, whereas them that are without, God judges?" For since he had said, *"What have I to do with judging those without;"* lest any one should think that these were left unpunished, there is another tribunal which he sets over them, and that a fearful one. And this he said, both to terrify those, and to console these; intimating also that this punishment which is for a season snatches them away from that which is

undying and perpetual: which also he has plainly declared elsewhere, saying, [1 Corinthians 11:32] *"But now being judged, we are chastened, that we should not be condemned with the world."*

3. *"Put away from among yourselves the wicked person."* He used an expression found in the Old Testament, [Deuteronomy 17:7] partly hinting that they too will be very great gainers, in being freed as it were from some grievous plague; and partly to show that this kind of thing is no innovation, but even from the beginning it seemed good to the legislator that such as these should be cut off. But in that instance it was done with more severity, in this with more gentleness. On which account one might reasonably question, why in that case he conceded that the sinner should be severely punished and stoned, but in the present instance not so; rather he leads him to repentance. Why then were the lines drawn in the former instance one way and in the latter another? For these two causes: one, because these were led into a greater trial and needed greater long-suffering; the other and truer one, because these by their impunity were more easily to be corrected, coming as they might to repentance; but the others were likely to go on to greater wickedness. For if when they saw the first undergoing punishment they persisted in the same things, had none at all been punished, much more would this have been their feeling. For which reason in that dispensation death is immediately inflicted upon the adulterer and the manslayer; but in this, if through repentance they are absolved, they have escaped the punishment. However, both here one may see some instances of heavier punishment, and in the Old Testament some less severe, in order that it may be signified in every way that the covenants are akin to each other, and of one and the same lawgiver: and you may see the punishment following immediately both in that covenant and in this, and in both often after a long interval. Nay, and oftentimes not even after a long interval, repentance

alone being taken as satisfaction by the Almighty. Thus in the Old Testament, David, who had committed adultery and murder, was saved by means of repentance; and in the New, Ananias, who withdrew but a small portion of the price of the land, perished together with his wife. Now if these instances are more frequent in the Old Testament, and those of the contrary kind in the New, the difference of the persons produces the difference in the treatment adopted in such matters.

1 Corinthians 6:1-2

4. *"Dare any one of you, having a matter against his brother, ([τὸν ἀδελφὸν], rec. text [τὸν ἑτερον].) go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?"*

Here also he again makes his complaint upon acknowledged grounds; for in that other place he says, *"It is actually reported that there is fornication among you."* And in this place, *"Dare any one of you?"* From the very first outset giving signs of his anger, and implying that the thing spoken of comes of a daring and lawless spirit.

Now wherefore did he bring in by the way that discourse about covetousness and about the duty of not going to law without the Church? In fulfilment of his own rule. For it is a custom with him to set to right things as they fall in his way; just as when speaking about the tables which they used in common, he launched out into the discourse about the mysteries. So here, you see, since he had made mention of covetous brethren, burning with anxiety to correct those in sin, he brooks not exactly to observe order; but he again corrects the sin which had been introduced out of the regular course, and so returns to the former subject.

Let us hear then what he also says about this. *"Dare any of you, having a matter, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?"* For a while, he employs those personal terms to expose, discredit, and blame their proceedings: nor does he quite from the beginning subvert the custom of seeking judgment before the believers: but when he had stricken them down by many words, then he even takes away entirely all going to law. *"For in the first place,"* says he, *"if one must go to law it were wrong to do so before the unrighteous. But you ought not to go to law at all."* This however he

adds afterwards. For the present he thoroughly sifts the former subject, namely, that they should not submit matters to external arbitration. *"For,"* says he, *"how can it be otherwise than absurd that one who is at variance ([μικροψυχοῦτα]) with his friend should take his enemy to be a reconciler between them? And how can you avoid feeling shame and blushing when a Greek sits to judge a Christian? And if about private matters it is not right to go to law before Greeks, how shall we submit to their decisions about other things of greater importance?"*

Observe, moreover, how he speaks. He says not, *"Before the unbelievers,"* but, *"Before the unrighteous;"* using the expression of which he had most particular need for the matter before him, in order to deter and keep them away. For see that his discourse was about going to law, and those who are engaged in suits seek for nothing so much as that the judges should feel great interest about what is just; he takes this as a ground of dissuasion, all but saying, *"Where are you going? What are you doing, O man, bringing on yourself the contrary to what you wish, and in order to obtain justice committing yourself to unjust men?"* And because it would have been intolerable to be told at once not to go to law, he did not immediately add this, but only changed the judges, bringing the party engaged in the trial from without into the Church.

5. Then, since it seemed easily open to contempt, I mean our being judged by those who were within, and especially at that time, (for they were not perhaps competent to comprehend a point, nor were they such as the heathen judges, well skilled in laws and rhetoric, inasmuch as the greater part of them were uneducated men,) mark how he makes them worthy of credit, first calling them *"Saints."*

But seeing that this bore witness to purity of life, and not to accuracy in hearing a case, observe how he orderly handles this part also, saying

thus, *"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"* How then can you who art in your day to judge them, endure to be judged by them now? They will not indeed judge, taking their seat in person and demanding account, yet they shall condemn. This at least he plainly said; *"And if the world is judged in you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"* He says not *"by you,"* but *"in you:"* just as when He said, [Matthew 12:42] *"The queen of the south shall rise up and condemn this generation:"* and, *"The men of Nineveh shall arise and condemn this generation."* For when beholding the same sun and sharing all the same things, we shall be found believers but they unbelievers, they will not be able to take refuge in ignorance. For we shall accuse them, simply by the things which we have done. And many such ways of judgment one will find there.

Then, that no one should think he speaks about other persons, mark how he generalizes his speech. *"And if the world is judged in you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"*

The thing is a disgrace to you, he says, and an unspeakable reproach. For since it was likely that they would be out of countenance at being judged by those that were within; *"nay,"* says he, *"on the contrary, the disgrace is when you are judged by those without: for those are the very small controversies, not these."*

1 Corinthians 6:3

"Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things which pertain to this life?"

Some say that here the priests are hinted at, but away with this. His speech is about demons. For had he been speaking about corrupt priests, he would have meant them above when he said, *"the world is judged in you:"* (for the Scripture is wont to call evil men also *"The world:"*) and he would not have said the same thing twice, nor would he, as if he was saying something of greater consequence, have put it down afterwards. But he speaks concerning those angels about whom Christ says, *"Depart ye into the fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels."* [Matthew 25:41] And Paul, *"his angels fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness."* [2 Corinthians 11:15] For when the very incorporeal powers shall be found inferior to us who are clothed with flesh, they shall suffer heavier punishment.

But if some should still contend that he speaks of priests, *"What sort of priests?"* let us ask. Those whose walk in life has been worldly, of course. In what sense then does he say, *"We shall judge angels, much more things that relate to this life?"* He mentions the angels, in contradistinction to *"things relating to this life"*: likely enough; for they are removed from the need of these things, because of the superior excellence of their nature.

1 Corinthians 6:4

6. *"If then you have to judge things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are of no account in the Church."*

Wishing to instruct us as forcibly as possible that they ought not to commit themselves to those without, whatsoever the matter may be; having raised what seemed to be an objection, he answers it in the first instance. For what he says is something like this: Perhaps some one will say, *"No one among you is wise, nor competent to pass sentence; all are contemptible."* Now what follows? *"Even though none be wise,"* says he, *"I bid you entrust things to those who are of least weight."*

1 Corinthians 6:5

"But this I say to move you to shame." These are the words of one exposing their objection as being an idle pretext: and therefore he adds, *"Is it so that there is not a wise man among you, no not even one?"* Is the scarcity, says he, so great? So great the want of sensible persons among you? And what he subjoins strikes even still harder. For having said, *"Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one?"* he adds, *"who shall be able to judge in the case of his brother."* For when brother goes to law with brother, there is never any need of understanding and talent in the person who is mediating in the cause, the feeling and relationship contributing greatly to the settlement of such a quarrel.

"But brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers." Do you observe with what effect he disparaged the judges at first by calling them unrighteous; whereas here, to move shame, he calls them Unbelievers? For surely it is extremely disgraceful if the priest could not be the author of reconciliation even among brethren, but recourse must be had to those without. So that when he said, *"those who are of no account,"* his chief meaning was not ([οὐ τοῦτο εἶπε προηγουμένως]) that the Church's outcasts should be appointed as judges, but to find fault with them. For that it was proper to make reference to those who were able to decide, he has shown by saying, *"Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one?"* And with great impressiveness he stops their mouths, and says, *"Even though there were not a single wise man, the hearing ought to have been left to you who are unwise rather than that those without should judge."* For what else can it be than absurd, that whereas on a quarrel arising in a house we call in no one from without and feel ashamed if news get abroad among

strangers of what is going on within doors; where the Church is, the treasure of the unutterable Mysteries, there all things should be published without?

1 Corinthians 6:6

"But brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers."

The charge is twofold; both that he *"goes to law,"* and *"before the unbelievers."* For if even the thing by itself, To go to law with a brother, be a fault, to do it also before aliens, what pardon does it admit of?

1 Corinthians 6:7

7. *"Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that you have lawsuits one with another."*

Do you see for what place he reserved this point? And how he has cleared the discussion of it in good time? For *"I talk not yet,"* says he, *"which injures, or which is injured."* Thus far, the act itself of going to law brings each party under his censure, and in that respect one is not at all better than another. But whether one go to law justly or unjustly, that is quite another subject. Say not then, *"which did the wrong?"* For on this ground I at once condemn you, even for the act of going to law.

Now if being unable to bear a wrong-doer be a fault, what accusation can come up to the actual wrong? *"Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?"*

1 Corinthians 6:8-10

"Nay, you yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."

Again, it is a twofold crime, perhaps even threefold or fourfold. One, not to know how to bear being wronged. Another, actually to do wrong. A third, to commit the settlement of these matters even unto the unjust. And yet a fourth, that it should be so done to a brother. For men's offenses are not judged by the same rule, when they are committed against any chance person, and towards one's own member. For it must be a greater degree of recklessness to venture upon that. In the other case, the nature of the thing is alone trampled on; but in this, the quality of the person also.

8. Having thus, you see, abashed them from arguments on general principles, and before that, from the rewards proposed ; he shuts up the exhortation with a threat, making his speech more peremptory, and saying thus, [1 Corinthians 6:9] *"Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, [1 Corinthians 6:10] nor covetous, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* What do you say? When discoursing about covetous persons, have you brought in upon us so vast a crowd of lawless men? *"Yes,"* says he, *"but in doing this, I am not confusing my discourse, but going on in regular order."* For as when discoursing about the unclean he made mention of all together; so again, on mentioning the covetous he brings forward all, thus making his rebukes familiar to those who have such things on their conscience. For the continual mention of the punishment laid up for others makes the reproof easy to be received, when it comes into conflict with our own sins. And so

in the present instance he utters his threat, not at all as being conscious of their doing such things, nor as calling them to account, a thing which has special force to hold the hearer and keep him from starting off; namely, the discourse having no respect unto him, but being spoken indefinitely and so wounding his conscience secretly.

"Be not deceived." Here he glances at certain who maintain (what indeed most men assert now) that God being good and kind to man, takes not vengeance upon our misdeeds: *"Let us not then be afraid."* For never will he exact justice of any one for any thing. And it is on account of these that he says, *"Be not deceived."* For it belongs to the extreme of error and delusion, after depending on good to meet with the contrary; and to surmise such things about God as even in man no one would think of. Wherefore says the Prophet in His person, [Psalm 49:21] *"You have conceived iniquity, that I shall be like you: I will reprove you and set before your face your iniquities."* And Paul here, *"Be not deceived; neither fornicators,"* (he puts first the one that was already condemned,) *"nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor drunkards, nor revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of God."*

Many have attacked this place as extremely severe, since he places the drunkard and the reviler with the adulterer and the abominable and the abuser of himself with mankind. And yet the offenses are not equal: how then is the award of punishment the same? What shall we say then? First, that drunkenness is no small thing nor reviling, seeing that Christ Himself delivered over to hell him that called his brother Fool. And often that sin has brought forth death. Again, the Jewish people too committed the greatest of their sins through drunkenness. In the next place, it is not of punishment that he is so far discoursing, but of exclusion from the kingdom. Now from the kingdom both one and the other are equally thrust

out; but whether in hell they will find any difference, it belongs not to this present occasion to enquire. For that subject is not before us just now.

1 Corinthians 6:11

9. *"And such were some of you: but you were washed, but you were sanctified."*

In a way to abash them exceedingly, he adds this: as if he said, Consider from what evils God delivered us; how great an experiment and demonstration of loving-kindness He afforded us! He did not limit His redemption to mere deliverance, but greatly extended the benefit: for He also made you clean. Was this then all? Nay: but He also *"sanctified."* Nor even is this all: He also *"justified."* Yet even bare deliverance from our sins were a great gift: but now He also filled you with countless blessing. And this He has done, *"In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ;"* not in this name or in that: yea also, *"In the Spirit of our God."*

Knowing therefore these things, beloved, and bearing in mind the greatness of the blessing which has been wrought, let us both continue to live soberly, being pure from all things that have been enumerated; and let us avoid the tribunals which are in the forums of the Gentiles; and the noble birth which God has freely given us, the same let us preserve to the end. For think how full of shame it is that a Greek should take his seat and deal out justice to you.

But you will say, what if he that is within judge contrary to the law? Why should he? Tell me. For I would know by what kind of laws the Greek administers justice, and by what the Christian? Is it not quite plain that the laws of men are the rule of the Greek, but those of God, of the Christian? Surely then with the latter there is greater chance of justice, seeing that these laws are even sent from heaven. For in regard to those without, besides what has been said, there are many other things also to suspect;

talent in speakers and corruption in magistrates and many other things which are the ruin of justice. But with us, nothing of this sort.

"What then," you will say, if the adversary be one in high place? Well, for this reason more than all one ought to go to law in Christian courts: for in the courts without he will get the better of you at all events. *"But what if he acquiesce not, but both despise those within and forcibly drag the course without?"* Better were it to submit willingly to what you are likely to endure by compulsion, and not go to law, that you may have also a reward. For, [Matthew 5:40] *"If any one will go to law with you, and take away your coat, you shall let him have your cloak also:"* and, [Matthew 5:25] *"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are with him in the way."* And why need I speak of our rules? For even the pleaders in the heathen courts very often tell us this, saying, *"it were better to make up matters out of court."* But, O wealth, or rather, O the absurd love of wealth! It subverts all things and casts them down; and all things are to the many an idle tale and fables because of money! Now that those who give trouble to courts of laws should be worldly men is no marvel: but that many of those who have bid farewell to the world should do the very same, this is a thing from which all pardon is cut off. For if you choose to see how far you should keep from this sort of need, I mean that of the tribunals, by rule of the Scripture, and to learn for whom the laws are appointed, hear what Paul says; [1 Timothy 1:9] *"For a righteous man law is not made, but for the lawless, and unruly."* And if he says these things about the Mosaic Law, much more about the laws of the heathen.

10. Now then, if you commit injustice, it is plain that you cannot be righteous: but if you are injured and bear it, (for this is a special mark of a righteous man,) you have no need of the laws which are without. *"How then,"* say you, *"shall I be able to bear it when injured?"* And yet Christ has

commanded something even more than this. For not only has he commanded you when injured to bear it, but even to give abundantly more to the wrong-doer; and in your zeal for suffering ill to surpass his eagerness for doing it. For he said not, "*to him that will sue you at law, and take away your coat, give your coat,*" but, "*together with that give also your cloak.*" But I bid you overcome him, says He, by suffering, not by doing, evil: for this is the certain and splendid victory. Wherefore also Paul goes on to say, Now then it is altogether a defect in ([ἥττημα] rec. vers. "*a fault.*") you that you have lawsuits one with another. And, "*Wherefore do ye not rather take wrong?*" For that the injured person overcomes, rather than he who cannot endure being injured, this I will make evident to you. He that cannot endure injury, though he force the other into court and gain the verdict, yet is he then most of all defeated. For that which he would not, he has suffered; in that the adversary has compelled him both to feel pain and to go to law. For what is it to the point that you have prevailed? And what, that you have recovered all the money? You have in the meanwhile borne what you did not desire, having been compelled to decide the matter by law. But if you endure the injustice, you overcome; deprived indeed of the money, but not at all of the victory which is annexed to such self-command. For the other had no power to oblige you to do what you did not like.

And to show that this is true; tell me, which conquered at the dunghill? Which was defeated? Job who was stripped of all, or the devil who stripped him of all? Evidently the devil who stripped him of all. Whom do we admire for the victory, the devil that smote, or Job that was smitten? Clearly, Job. And yet he could not retain his perishing wealth nor save his children. Why speak I of riches and children? He could not insure to himself bodily health. Yet nevertheless this is the conqueror, he that lost all that he had. His riches indeed he could not keep; but his piety he kept with

all strictness. *"But his children when perishing he could not help."* And what then? Since what happened both made them more glorious, and besides in this way he protected himself against the spiteful usage. Now had he not have suffered ill and been wronged of the devil, he would not have gained that signal victory. Had it been an evil thing to suffer wrong, God would not have enjoined it upon us: for God enjoins not evil things. What, know ye not that He is the God of Glory? That it could not be His will to encompass us with shame and ridicule and loss, but to introduce ([προξενῆσαι]) us to the contrary of these? Therefore He commands us to suffer wrong, and does all to withdraw us from worldly things, and to convince us what is glory, and what shame; what loss, and what gain.

"But it is hard to suffer wrong and be spitefully entreated." Nay, O man, it is not, it is not hard. How long will your heart be fluttering about things present? For God, you may be sure, would not have commanded this, had it been hard. Just consider. The wrong-doer goes his way with the money, but with an evil conscience besides: the receiver of the wrong, defrauded indeed of some money, but enriched with confidence towards God; an acquisition more valuable than countless treasures.

11. Knowing these things, therefore, let us of our free choice go on strict principles, and not be like the unwise, who think that they are then not wronged, when their suffering wrong is the result of a trial. But, quite on the contrary, that is the greatest harm; and so in every case when we exercise self-restraint in these matters, not willingly, but after being worsted in that other quarter. For it is no advantage that a man defeated in a trial endures it; for it becomes thenceforth a matter of necessity. What then is the splendid victory? When you look down on it: when you refuse to go to law.

"How say you? Have I been stripped of every thing," says one, *"and do you bid me keep silent? Have I been shamefully used, and do you exhort me*

to bear it meekly? And how shall I be able?" Nay, but it is most easy if you will look up unto heaven; if you will behold the beauty that is in sight; and whither God has promised to receive you, if you bear wrong nobly. Do this then; and looking up unto the heaven, think that you are made like Him that sits there upon the Cherubim. For He also was injured and He bore it; He was reproached and avenged not Himself; and was beaten, yet He asserted not His cause. Nay, He made return, in the contrary kind, to those who did such things, even in benefits without number; and He commanded us to be imitators of Him. Consider that you came naked out of your mother's womb, and that naked both you and he that has done you wrong shall depart; rather, he for his part, with innumerable wounds, breeding worms. Consider that things present are but for a season; count over the tombs of your ancestors; acquaint yourself accurately with past events; and you shall see that the wrong-doer has made you stronger. For his own passion he has aggravated, his covetousness I mean; but yours, he has alleviated, taking away the food of the wild beast. And besides all this, he has set you free from cares, agony, envy, informers, trouble, worry, perpetual fear; and the foul mass of evils he has heaped upon his own head.

"What then," says one, *"if I have to struggle with hunger?"* You endure this with Paul, who says, [1 Corinthians 4:10] *"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked."* But he did it, you will say, *"for God's sake:"* do it also for God's sake. For when you abstain from avenging, you do so for God's sake.

"But he that wronged me, takes his pleasure with the wealthy." Nay, rather with the devil. But be you crowned with Paul.

Therefore fear not hunger, for [Proverbs 10:3] *"the Lord will not kill with hunger the souls of the righteous."* And again, another says, [Psalm 55:23] *"Cast upon the Lord your care, and He will nourish you."* For if the

sparrows of the field are nourished by Him, how shall He not nourish you? Now let us not be of little faith nor of little soul, O my beloved! For He who has promised the kingdom of heaven and such great blessings, how shall He not give things present? Let us not covet superfluous things, but let us keep to a sufficiency, and we shall always be rich. Let shelter be what we seek and food, and we shall obtain all things; both these, and such as are far greater.

But if you are still grieving and bowing down, I should like to show you the soul of the wrongdoer after his victory, how it has become ashes. For truly sin is that kind of thing: while one commits it, it affords a certain pleasure; but when it is finished, then the trifling pleasure is gone, one knows not how, and in its place comes dejection. And this is our feeling when we do hurt to any: afterwards, at any rate, we condemn ourselves. So also when we over-reach we have pleasure; but afterwards we are stung by conscience. Do you see in any one's possession some poor man's home? Weep not for him that is spoiled, but for the spoiler: for he has not inflicted, but sustained an evil. For he robbed the other of things present; but himself he cast out of the blessings which cannot be uttered. For if he who gives not to the poor shall go away into hell; what shall he suffer who takes the goods of the poor?

"Yet," says one, *"where is the gain, if I suffer ill?"* Indeed, the gain is great. For not of the punishment of him that has done you harm does God frame a compensation for you: since that would be no great thing. For what great good is it, if I suffer ill and he suffer ill? And yet I know of many, who consider this the greatest comfort, and who think they have got all back again, when they see those who had insulted them undergoing punishment. But God does not limit His recompense to this.

Would you then desire to know in earnest how great are the blessings which await you? He opens for you the whole heaven; He makes you a fellow-citizen with the Saints; He fits you to bear a part in their choir: from sins He absolves; with righteousness He crowns. For if such as forgive offenders shall obtain forgiveness, those who not only forgive but who also give largely to boot, what blessing shall they not inherit?

Therefore, bear it not with a poor spirit, but even pray for him that injured you. It is for yourself that you do this. Has he taken your money? Well: he took your sins too: which was the case with Naaman and Gehazi. How much wealth would you not give to have your iniquities forgiven you? This, believe me, is the case now. For if you endure nobly and curse not, you have bound on you a glorious crown. It is not my word, but you have heard Christ speaking, *"Pray for those that despitefully use you."* And consider the reward how great! *"That ye may be like your Father which is in the heavens."* So then you have been deprived of nothing, yea, you have been a gainer: you have received no wrongs, rather you have been crowned; in that you have become better disciplined in soul; are made like to God; are set free from the care of money; are made possessor of the kingdom of heaven.

All these things therefore taking into account, let us restrain ourselves in injuries, beloved, in order that we may both be freed from the tumult of this present life, and cast out all unprofitable sadness of spirit, and may obtain the joy to come; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, honor, now, henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 17 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 6:12

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought into the power of any.

Here he glances at the gluttons. For since he intends to assail the fornicator again, and fornication arises from luxuriousness and want of moderation, he strongly chastises this passion. It cannot be that he speaks thus with regard to things forbidden, such not being "*lawful*:" but of things which seem to be indifferent. To illustrate my meaning: "*It is lawful*," he says, "*to eat and to drink; but it is not expedient with excess*." And so that marvellous and unexpected turn of his, which he is often wont to adopt; [Cf. Romans 12:21; 1 Corinthians 7:23] bringing his argument clear round to its contrary, this he manages to introduce here also; and he signifies that to do what is in one's power not only is not expedient, but even is not a part of power, but of slavery.

And first, he dissuades them on the ground of the inexpediency of the thing, saying, "*they are not expedient*:" in the next place, on that of its contrariety to itself, saying, "*I will not be brought under the power of any*." This is his meaning: "*You are at liberty to eat*," says he; "*well then, remain in liberty, and take heed that you do not become a slave to this appetite: for he who uses it properly, he is master of it; but he that exceeds the proper measure is no longer its master but its slave, since gluttony reigns paramount within him*." Do you perceive how, where the man thought he had authority Paul points out that he is under authority? For this is his custom, as I was saying before, to give all objections a turn the contrary

way. It is just this which he has done here. For mark; each of them was saying, *"I have power to live luxuriously."* He replies, *"In doing so, you are not so much acting as one who had power over a thing, but rather as being yourself subject to some such power. For you have not power even over your own belly, so long as you are dissolute, but it has power over you."* And the same we may say both of riches and of other things.

1 Corinthians 6:13

"Meats for the belly." By *"the belly"* here he means not the stomach, but the stomach's voraciousness. As when he says, [Philippians 3:19] *"Whose God is their belly:"* not speaking about that part of the body, but about greediness. To prove that so it is, hear what follows: *"And the belly for meats; but the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord."* And yet *"the belly"* also is of *"the body."* But he puts down two pairs of things, *"meats"* and gluttony, (which he terms *"the belly;"*) *"Christ,"* and *"the body."*

What then is the meaning of, *"Meats for the belly?"* *"Meats,"* he says, are on good terms with gluttony, and it with them. It cannot therefore lead us unto Christ, but drags towards these. For it is a strong and brutal passion, and makes us slaves, and puts us upon ministering to the belly. Why then are you excited and gaping after food, O man? For the end of that service is this, and nothing further shall be seen of it: but as one was waiting on some mistress, it abides keeping up this slavery, and advances no further, and has no other employment but this same fruitless one. And the two are connected together and destroyed together; *"the belly"* with *"the meats,"* and *"the meats"* with *"the belly;"* winding out a sort of interminable course; just as from a corrupt body worms may be produced, and again by worms the body consumed; or as it were a wave swoln high and breaking, and having no further effect. But these things he says not concerning food and the body, but it is the passion of greediness and excess in eatables which he is censuring: and what follows shows it. For he proceeds:

"But God shall bring to nought both it and them:" speaking not of the stomach, but of immoderate desire: not of food but of high feeding. For

with the former he is not angry, but even lays down rules about them, saying, [1 Timothy 6:8] "*Having food and covering we shall be therewith content.*" However, thus he stigmatizes the whole thing; its amendment (after advice given) being left by him to prayer.

But some say that the words are a prophecy, declaring the state which shall be in the life to come, and that there is no eating or drinking there. Now if that which is moderate shall have an end, much more ought we to abstain from excess.

Then lest any one should suppose that the body is the object of his censure, and suspect that from a part he is blaming the whole, and say that the nature of the body was the cause of gluttony or of fornication, hear what follows. "*I blame not,*" he says, "*the nature of the body, but the immoderate license of the mind.*" And therefore he subjoins, "*Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord;*" for it was not formed for this purpose, to live riotously and commit fornication, as neither was the belly to be greedy; but that it might follow Christ as a Head, and that the Lord might be set over the body. Let us be overcome with shame, let us be horror-struck, that after we have been counted worthy of such great honor as to become members of Him that sits on high, we defile ourselves with so great evils.

2. Having now sufficiently condemned the glutton, he uses also the hope of things to come to divert us from this wickedness: saying,

1 Corinthians 6:14

And God both raised up the Lord, and will raise up us also through His power.

Do you perceive again his Apostolical wisdom? For he is always establishing the credibility of the Resurrection from Christ, and especially now. For if our body be a member of Christ, and Christ be risen, the body also shall surely follow the Head.

"Through his power." For since he had asserted a thing disbelieved and not to be apprehended by reasonings, he has left entirely to His incomprehensible power the circumstances of Christ's own Resurrection, producing this too as no small demonstration against them. And concerning the Resurrection of Christ he did not insert this: for he did not say, *"And God shall also raise up the Lord;"*— for the thing was past and gone—but how? *"And God both raised up the Lord;"* nor was there need of any proof. But concerning our resurrection, since it has not yet come to pass, he spoke not thus, but how? *"And will raise up us also through His power:"* by the reliance to be placed on the power of the Worker, he stops the mouths of the gainsayers.

Further: if he ascribe unto the Father the Resurrection of Christ, let not this at all disturb you. For not as though Christ were powerless, has he put this down, for He it is Himself who says, [John 2:19] *"Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up:"* and again, [John 10:18] *"I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again."* And Luke also in the Acts says, [cf. Acts 1:3] *"To whom also He showed Himself alive."* Wherefore then does Paul so speak? Because both the acts of the Son are

imputed unto the Father, and the Father's unto the Son. For He says, [John 5:19] *"Whatsoever things He does, these the Son also does in like manner."*

And very opportunely he here made mention of the Resurrection, keeping down by those hopes the tyranny of gluttonous desire; and all but saying, You have eaten, hast drunk to excess: and what is the result? Nothing, save only destruction. You have been conjoined unto Christ; and what is the result? A great and marvellous thing: the future Resurrection, that glorious one, and transcending all utterance!

3. Let no one therefore go on disbelieving the Resurrection: but if a man disbelieve, let him think how many things He made from nothing, and admit it as a proof also of the other. For the things which are already past are stranger by far, and fraught with overpowering wonder. Just consider. He took earth and mixed it, and made man; earth which existed not before this. How then did the earth become man? And how was it produced from nothing? And, how, all the things that were made from it? The endless sorts of irrational creatures; of seeds; of plants; no pangs of travail having preceded in the one case, no rains having come down upon the others; no tillage seen, no oxen, no plough, nor any thing else contributing to their production? Why, for this cause the lifeless and senseless thing was made to put forth in the beginning so many kinds of plants and irrational creatures, in order that from the very first He might instruct you in the doctrine of Resurrection. For this is more inexplicable than the Resurrection. For it is not the same thing to rekindle an extinguished lamp, and to show fire that has never yet appeared. It is not the same thing to raise up again a house which has fallen down, and to produce one which has never at all had an existence. For in the former case, if nothing else, yet the material was given to work with: but in the latter, not even the substance appeared. Wherefore He made first that which seemed to be the more difficult, to the end that

hereby you might admit that which is the more easy; more difficult, I say, not to God, but as far as our reasonings can follow the subject. For with God nothing is difficult: but as the painter who has made one likeness will make ten thousand with ease, so also with God it is easy to make worlds without number and end. Rather, as it is easy for you to conceive a city and worlds without bound, so unto God is it easy to make them; or rather again it is easier by far. For you consume time, brief though it be, in your conception; but God not even this, but as much as stones are heavier than any of the lightest things, yea even than our minds; so much is our mind surpassed by the rapidity of God's work of creation.

Do you marvel at His power on the earth? Think again how the heaven was made, not yet being; how the innumerable stars, how the sun, how the moon; and all these things not yet being. Again, tell me how after they were made they stood fast, and upon what? What foundation have they? And what the earth? What comes next to the earth? And again, what after that which came next to the earth? Do you see into what an eddy the eye of your mind is plunged, unless you quickly take refuge in faith and the incomprehensible power of the Maker?

But if you choose from human things also to make conjecture, you will be able by degrees to find wings for your understanding. *"What kind of human things?"* may be asked. Do you not see the potters, how they fashion the vase which had been broken in pieces and become shapeless? Those who fuse the ore from the mine, how the earth in their hands turns out ([τὴν γῆν χρύσιον ἀποφαίνουσι]) gold, or silver, or copper? Others again who work in glass, how they transform the sand into one compact and transparent substance? Shall I speak of the dressers of leather, the dyers of purple vestments; how they make that which had received their tint show as one thing, when it had been another? Shall I speak of the generation of our

own race? Does not a small seed, at first without form and impress, enter into the womb which receives it? Whence then the so intricate formation of the living creature? What is the wheat? Is it not cast a naked seed into the earth? After it has been cast there, does it not decay? Whence is the ear, the beard, the stalk, and all the other parts? Does not often a little grain of a fig fall into the ground, and produce both root, and branches, and fruit? And do you hereupon admit each of these and make no curious enquiries, and of God alone do you demand account, in His work of changing the fashion of our body? And how can such things be pardonable?

These things and such like we say to the Greeks. For to those who are obedient to the Scriptures, I have no occasion to speak at all.

I say, if you intend to pry curiously into all His doings, what shall God have more than men? And yet even of men there are many about whom we do not so enquire. Much more then ought we to abstain from impertinent inquiry about the wisdom of God, and from demanding accounts of it: in the first place, because He is trustworthy who affirms: in the second place, because the matter admits not investigation by reasonings. For God is not so abjectly poor as to work such things only as can be apprehended by the weakness of your reasonings. And if you comprehend not the work of an artisan, much less of God, the best of artificers. Disbelieve not then the Resurrection, for very far will you be from the hope of that which is to come.

But what is the wise argument of the gain-sayers; rather, I should say, their exceeding senseless one? *"Why how, when the body is mixed up with the earth and has become earth, and this again is removed elsewhere, how,"* say they, *"shall it rise again?"* To you this seems impossible, but not to the unsleeping Eye. For unto that all things are clear. And thou in that confusion see no distinction of parts; but He knows them all. Since also the

heart of your neighbor you know not, nor the things in it; but He knows all. If then, because of your not knowing how God raises men up, you believe not that He does raise them, will you disbelieve that He knows also what is in your mind? For neither is that obvious to view. And yet in the body it is visible matter, though it be dissolved: but those thoughts are invisible. Shall He then who knows with all certainty the invisible things, not see the things which be visible, and easily distinguish the scattered parts of the body? I suppose this is plain to every one.

Do not then disbelieve the Resurrection; for this is a doctrine of the Devil. This is what the Devil is earnest for, not only that the Resurrection may be disbelieved, but good works also may be done away with. For the man who does not expect that he shall rise again and give an account of the things which he has done, will not quickly apply himself to virtue; will in turn come to disbelieve the Resurrection entirely: for both these are established by each other; vice by unbelief, and unbelief by vice. For the conscience filled with many wickednesses, fearing and trembling for the recompense to come and not willing to provide itself with comfort by changing to what is most excellent, is fain to repose in unbelief. Thus when you deny resurrection and judgment, the other for his part will say, *"Then shall I also not have to render account of my bold deeds."*

4. But why says Christ? [Matthew 22:29] *"You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."* For God would not have wrought so many things, had He intended not to raise us up again, but to dissolve and blot us out in annihilation. He would not have spread out this heaven, He would not have stretched the earth beneath, He would not have made all the rest of the universe only for this short life. But if all these are for the present, what will He not do for that which is to come? If, on the contrary, there is to be no future life, we are in this respect of far meaner account than

the things which have been made for our sakes. For both the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the rivers, are more lasting than we are: and some even of the brutes; since the raven, and the race of elephants, and many other creatures, have a longer enjoyment of the present life. To us, moreover, life is both short and toilsome, but not to them. Theirs is both long, and freer from grief and cares.

"What then? Tell me: has he made the slaves better than the masters?"

Do not, I beseech you, do not reason thus, O man, nor be so poverty-stricken in mind, nor be ignorant of the riches of God, having such a Master. For even from the beginning God desired to make you immortal, but thou were not willing. Since the things also of that time were dark hints of immortality: the converse with God; the absence of uneasiness from life; the freedom from grief, and cares, and toils, and other things which belong to a temporary existence. For Adam had no need either of a garment or a shelter, or any other provision of this sort; but rather was like to the Angels; and many of the things to come he foreknew, and was filled with great wisdom. Even what God did in secret, he knew, I mean with regard to the woman: wherefore also he said, *"This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh."* [Genesis 2:23] Labor came into being afterwards: so did sweat, so did shame, and cowardice, and want of confidence. But on that day there was no grief, nor pain, nor lamentation. But he abode not in that dignity.

What then, says one, am I to do? Must I perish on his account? I reply, first, It is not on his account: for neither have you remained without sin: though it be not the same sin, at least there is some other which you have committed. And again, you have not been injured by his punishment, but rather have been a gainer. For if you had been to remain altogether mortal, perchance what is said would have had some reason in it. But now you are immortal, and if you will, you may shine brighter than the sun itself.

5. *"But,"* says one, *"had I not received a mortal body, I had not sinned."* Tell me then, had he a mortal body when he sinned? Surely not: for if it had been mortal before, it would not have undergone death as a punishment afterwards. And that a mortal body is no hindrance to virtue, but that it keeps men in order and is of the greatest service, is plain from what follows. If the expectation of immortality alone so lifted up Adam; had he been even immortal in reality, to what a pitch of arrogance would he not have proceeded? And as things are, after sinning you may do away with your sins, the body being abject, falling away, and subject to dissolution: for these thoughts are sufficient to sober a man. But if you had sinned in an immortal body, your sins were likely to have been more lasting.

Mortality then is not the cause of sin: accuse it not: but the wicked will is the root of all the mischief. For why was not Abel at all the worse for his body? Why are the devils not at all the better for being incorporeal? Will you hear why the body's becoming mortal, so far from hurting, has been positively useful? Mark how much you gain thereby, if you are sober. It drags you back and pulls you off from wickedness, by griefs and pains and labors and other such things. *"But it tempts men to uncleanness,"* perhaps you will say. Not the body, but incontinence, does this. For all these things which I was mentioning certainly do belong to the body: on which account it is impossible that a man who has entered into this life should escape disease and pain and lowness of spirits: but that he commit no uncleanness is possible. Thus it appears that if the affections of vice were part of the nature of the body they would be universal: since all things natural are so; but to commit fornication is not so. Pain indeed comes of nature: but to commit fornication proceeds from deliberate purpose.

Blame not the body then; let not the Devil take away your honor, which God has given you. For if we choose, the body is an excellent bridle

to curb the wanton sallies of the soul, to pull down haughtiness, to repress arrogance, to minister to us in the greatest achievements of virtue. For tell me not of those who have lost their senses; since we often see horses, after they have thrown out their drivers, dashing with their reins over the precipices, and yet we do not blame the rein. For it is not the breaking of that which caused it all, but the driver not holding them in was the ruin of every thing. Just so do thou reason in this case. If you see a young person living in orphanhood and doing innumerable evil things, blame not the body, but the charioteer who is dragged on, I mean, the man's faculty of reasoning. For as the reins give no trouble to the charioteer, but the charioteer is the cause of all the mischief through his not holding them properly: (and therefore do they often exact a penalty of him, entangling themselves with him, and dragging him on, and compelling him to partake in their own mishap:) so is it also in the case before us. *"I,"* say the reins, *"made bloody the horse's mouth as long as you held me: but since you threw me away, I require satisfaction for your contempt, and I entwine myself about you, and drag you along, so as not to incur the same usage again."* Let no one then blame the reins, but himself and his own corrupt mind. For over us too is a charioteer, even reason: and the reins are the body, connecting the horses with the charioteer; if then these be in good condition, you will suffer no harm: but if you let them go, you have annihilated and ruined every thing. Let us be temperate then, and lay all blame not on the body, but on the evil mind. For this is the Devil's special work, to make foolish men accuse the body and God and their neighbor, rather than their own perverted minds; lest, having discovered the cause, they get free from the root of the evils.

But do ye, being aware of his design, direct your wrath against him: and having set the charioteer upon the car, bend the eye of your minds

towards God. For in all other instances he that appoints the games contributes nothing, but only awaits the end. But in this case, He is all in all, who appointed the contest, even God. Him therefore let us render propitious, and surely we shall obtain the blessings in store; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

Homily 18 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 6:15-16

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid.

Having passed on from the fornicator to the covetous person, he comes back to the former from the latter, no longer henceforth discoursing with him but with the others who had not committed fornication. And in the act of securing them lest they fall into the same sins, he assails him again. For he that has committed sin, though you direct your words to another, is stung even in that way; his conscience being thoroughly awakened and scourging him.

Now the fear of punishment indeed was enough to keep them in chastity. But seeing that he does not wish by fear alone to set these matters right, he uses both threatenings and reasons.

Now upon that other occasion, having stated the sin, and prescribed the punishment, and pointed out the harm which intercourse with the fornicator brought upon all, he left off, and passed to the subject of covetousness: and having threatened the covetous and all the rest whom he mentioned with expulsion from the kingdom, he so concluded his discourse. But here he takes in hand the work of admonition in a yet more terrific manner. For as he that only punishes a sin and does nothing to point out its most extreme lawlessness, produces no such great effect by his chastisement: so again, he who only abashes and fails to terrify by his mode of punishing, does not very keenly hit men of hardened minds. Wherefore Paul does both: here he

abashes, saying, *"Do you not know that we shall judge angels?"* there again he terrifies, saying, *"Do you not know that the covetous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?"*

And in regard to the fornicator, he again uses this order of discourse. For having terrified him by what he had said before; first cutting him off and delivering him to Satan, and then reminding him of that day which is coming; he abashes him again by saying, *"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?"* thenceforth speaking as to children of noble birth. For whereas he had said, *"Now the body is for the Lord,"* he indicates it more plainly now. And in another place as well he does this same thing, saying, [1 Corinthians 12:27] *"Now you are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof."* And the same figure he often employs, not with the same aim, but at one time to show His love, and at another to increase their fear. But here he has employed it to startle and fill them with alarm. *"Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid."* Nothing can be apter to strike horror than this expression. He said not, *"Shall I take the members of Christ, and join them on to a harlot?"* but what? *"make them members of a harlot;"* which surely would strike more keenly.

Then he makes out how the fornicator becomes this, saying thus, *"Do you not know that he that is joined unto a harlot is one body?"* How is this evident? *"For the two, says He, shall become one."*

1 Corinthians 6:17

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

For the conjunction suffers the two no longer to be two, but makes them both one.

2. Now mark again, how he proceeds by means of the bare terms, conducting his accusation in the names of the harlot and of Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:18

"Flee fornication."

He said not, *"abstain from fornication,"* but *"Flee:"* that is, with all zeal make to yourselves deliverance from that evil. *"Every sin that a man does is without the body; but he that commits fornication sins against his own body."* This is less than what went before; but since he had to speak of fornicators, he amplifies that guilt by topics drawn from all quarters, from greater things and smaller alike, making the charge heinous. And, in fact, that former topic was addressed to the more religious, but this to the weaker sort. For this also is characteristic of the wisdom of Paul, not only to allege the great things wherewith to abash men, but the lesser also, and the consideration of what is disgraceful and unseemly.

"What then," say you, *"does not the murderer stain his hand? What, of the covetous person and the extortioner?"* I suppose it is plain to every one. But since it was not possible to mention anything worse than the fornicator, he amplifies the crime in another way, by saying that in the fornicator the entire body becomes defiled. For it is as polluted as if it had fallen into a vessel of filth, and been immersed in defilement. And this too is our way. For from covetousness and extortion no one would make haste to go into a bath, but as if nothing had happened returns to his house. Whereas from intercourse with a harlot, as having become altogether unclean, he goes to a bath. To such a degree does the conscience retain from this sin a kind of sense of unusual shame. Both however are bad, both covetousness and fornication; and both cast into hell. But as Paul does every thing with good management, so by whatever topics he had he magnified the sin of fornication.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

3. *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?"* He did not merely say, *"of the Spirit,"* but, *"which is in you;"* which was the part of one who also was soothing. And again, explaining himself still further, he added, *"which you have from God."* He mentioned Him that gave also, both exalting the hearer and putting him in fear, both by the magnitude of the deposit, and by the munificence of Him that made it.

"And you are not your own." This is not only to abash, but even to force men towards virtue. *"For why,"* says he; *"doest thou what you will? You are not your own master."* But these things he said, not to take away free-will. For so in saying, *"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are expedient,"* he does not take away our liberty. And here again, writing, *"You are not your own;"* he makes no infringement upon freedom of choice, but he leads away from vice and indicates the guardian care of the Lord. And therefore he added, *"For you were bought with a price."*

But if I am not my own, upon what ground do you demand of me duties to be done? And why do you go on to say again, *"Glorify God therefore in your body and in your spirit, which are God's?"* What then is the meaning of, *"you are not your own?"* And what does he wish to prove thereby? To settle them in a state of security against sin, and against following the improper desires of the mind. For indeed we have many improper wishes: but we must repress them, for we can. And if we could not, exhortation would be in vain. Mark, accordingly, how he secures his ground. For having said, *"You are not your own,"* he adds not, *"But are under compulsion;"* but, *"You were bought with a price."* Why do you say

this? Surely on another ground, one might say perhaps, you should have persuaded men, pointing out that we have a Master. But this is common to the Greeks also together with us: whereas the expression, *"You were bought with a price."* belongs to us peculiarly. For he reminds us of the greatness of the benefit and of the mode of our salvation, signifying that when we were alienated, we were *"bought:"* and not simply *"bought,"* but, *"with a price."*

"Glorify then, take up and bear, God in your body, and in your spirit." Now these things he says, that we may not only flee fornication in the body, but also in the spirit of our mind abstain from every wicked thought, and from driving away grace.

"Which are God's." For as he had said *"your,"* he added therefore, *"which are God's:"* continually reminding us that all things belong to the Lord, both body and soul and spirit: For some say, that the words *"in the spirit"* mean the gracious Gift; for if That be in us, God is glorified. And this will be, if we have a clean heart.

But He has spoken of these things as God's, not only because He brought them into being, but also because, when they were alienated, He won them again a second time, paying as the price, the blood of the Son. Mark how He brought the whole to completion in Christ, how He raised us up into heaven. *"You are members of Christ,"* says he, *"you are a temple of the Spirit."* Become not then *"members of a harlot:"* for it is not your body which is insulted; since it is not your body at all, but Christ's. And these things he spoke, both to make manifest His loving-kindness in that our body is His, and to withdraw us from all evil license. For if the body be another's, *"you have no authority,"* says he, *"to insult another's body; and especially when it is the Lord's; nor yet to pollute a temple of the Spirit."* For if any one who invades a private house and makes his way revelling into it, must

answer for it most severely; think what dreadful things he shall endure who makes a temple of the King a robber's lurking place.

Considering these things therefore, reverence thou Him that dwells within. For the Paraclete is He. Thrill before Him that is enfolded and cleaves unto you; for Christ is He. Have you indeed made yourself members of Christ? Think thus, and continue chaste; whose members they were, and Whose they have become. Erewhile they were members of an harlot, and Christ has made them members of His own Body. You have therefore henceforth no authority over them. Serve Him that has set you free.

For supposing you had a daughter, and in extreme madness had let her out to a procurer for hire, and made her live a harlot's life, and then a king's son were to pass by, and free her from that slavery, and join her in marriage to himself; you could have no power thenceforth to bring her into the brothel. For you gave her up once for all, and sold her. Such as this is our case also. We let out our own flesh for hire unto the Devil, that grievous procurer: Christ saw and set it free, and withdrew it from that evil tyranny; it is not then ours any more but His who delivered it. If you be willing to use it as a King's bride, there is none to hinder; but if you bring it where it was before, you will suffer just what they ought who are guilty of such outrages. Wherefore you should rather adorn instead of disgracing it. For you have no authority over the flesh in the wicked lusts, but in those things alone which God may enjoin. Let the thought enter your mind at least from what great outrage God has delivered it. For in truth never did any harlot expose herself so shamefully as our nature before this. For robberies, murders, and every wicked thought entered in and lay with the soul, and for a small and vulgar hire, the present pleasure. For the soul, being mixed up with all wicked devices and deeds, reaped this reward and no other.

However, in the time before this, bad though it were to be such as these, it was not so bad: but after heaven, after the King's courts, after partaking of the tremendous Mysteries, again to be contaminated, what pardon shall this have? Or, do you not think that the covetous too, and all those whom he recounted before, have the Devil to lie with them? And do you not judge that the women who beautify themselves for pollution have intercourse with him? Why, who shall gainsay this word? But if any be contentious, let him uncover the soul of the women who behave in this unseemly manner, and he will surely see that the wicked demon closely entwined with them. For it is hard, brethren, it is hard, perchance even impossible, when the body is thus beautified, for the soul to be beautified at the same time: but one must needs be neglected, while the other is cared for. For nature does not allow these to take place together.

4. Wherefore he says, *"He that is joined to a harlot is one body; but he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit."* For such an one becomes thenceforth Spirit, although a body envelope him. For when nothing corporeal nor gross nor earthly is around him, the body does but merely envelope him; since the whole government of him is in the soul and the Spirit. In this way God is glorified. Wherefore both in the Prayer we are commanded to say, *"Hallowed be Your Name:"* and Christ says also, *"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

So do the heavens also glorify Him, uttering no voice, but by the view of them attracting wonder and referring the glory unto the Great Artificer. So let us glorify Him also, or rather more than they. For we can if we will. For not so much do the heaven nor day nor night glorify God, as a holy soul. For as one that gazes upon the beauty of the heaven, says, *"Glory be to You, O God! How fair a work have you formed!"* so too when beholding

virtue in any man: nay, and much more so in the latter instance. For from these works of creation all do not glorify God; but many even assert that the things which exist are self-moving: and others impute to demons the workmanship of the world and providence; and these indeed greatly and unpardonably err: but in regard to the virtue of man, no one shall have power to hold these shameless opinions, but shall assuredly glorify God when he sees him that serves Him living in goodness. For who shall help being astonished when one being a man, and partaking of our common nature, and living among other men, like adamant yields not at all to the swarm of passions? When being in the midst of fire and iron and wild beasts, he is even harder than adamant and vanquishes all for the Word of godliness' sake? When he is injured, and blesses; when he is evil reported of, and praises; when he is despitefully used, and prays for those who injure him; when he is plotted against, and does good to those that fight with him and lay snares for him? For these things, and such as these, will glorify God far more than the heaven. For the Greeks when they behold the heavens feel no awe; but when they see a holy man exhibiting a severe course of life with all strictness, they shrink away and condemn themselves. Since when he that partakes of the same nature as themselves is so much above them, a great deal more so than the heaven is above the earth, even against their inclination they think that it is a Divine power which works these things. Wherefore He says, *"And glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

5. Will you learn also from another place how by the life of His servants God is glorified, and how by miracles? Nebuchadnezzar once threw the Three Children into the furnace. Then when he saw that the fire had not prevailed over them, he says, [Daniel 3:28. Septuagint. ἐκ τῆς καμίνου] added *"Blessed be God, who has sent His Angel, and delivered his servants out of the furnace, because they trusted in Him and have changed*

the word of the king." *"How do you say? Have you been despised, and do you admire those who have spit upon you?"* "Yes," says he, *"and for this very reason, that I was despised."* And of the marvel he gives this reason. So that not because of the miracle alone was glory given to God at that time, but also because of the purpose of those who have been thrown in. Now if any one would examine this point and the other, as they are in themselves, this will appear not less than that: for to persuade souls to brave a furnace is not less in respect of the wonder than to deliver from a furnace. For how can it be otherwise than astonishing for the Emperor of the world, with so many arms around him, and legions, and generals, and viceroys, and consuls, and land and sea subject to his sway, to be despised by captive children; for the bound to overcome the binder and conquer all that army? Neither was there any power in the king and his company to do what they would, no, not even with the furnaces for an ally. But they who were naked, and slaves, and strangers, and few, (for what number could be more contemptible than three?) being in chains, vanquished an innumerable army. For already now was death despised, since Christ was henceforth about to sojourn in the world. And as when the sun is on the point of rising, even before his rays appear the light of the day grows bright; so also when then the Sun of Righteousness was about to come, death henceforth began to withdraw himself. What could be more splendid than that theatre? What more conspicuous than that victory? What more signal than those new trophies of theirs?

The same thing is done in our time also. Even now is there a king of the Babylonish furnace, even now he kindles a flame fiercer than that. There is even now such an image, and one who gives command to admire it. At his side are satraps and soldiers and bewitching music. And many gaze in admiration upon this image, so varied, so great. For somewhat of

the same kind of thing as that image is covetousness, which does not despise even iron, but unlike as the materials are whereof it is composed, it gives command to admire all, both brass and iron, and things much more ordinary than they.

But as these things are, so also even now are there some who are emulous of these children: who say, *"your gods we serve not, and your images we worship not;"* but both the furnace of poverty we endure and all other distress, for the sake of God's laws. And the wealthy for their part, even as those at that time, oftentimes, worship this image too and are burnt. But those who possess nothing despite even this, and although in poverty, are more in the dew than those who live in affluence. Even as at that time they who cast into the fire were burnt up; but those in the midst of it found themselves in dew as it were rain. Then also that tyrant was more burnt up with the flame, his wrath kindling him violently, than those children. As to them, the fire had no power even to touch the ends of their hair: but more fiercely than that fire did wrath burn up his mind. For consider what a thing it was that with so many to look on, he should be scorned by captive children. And it was a sign that his taking their city also had not been through his own might, but by reason of the sin of the multitude among them. Since if he had not the power to overcome these men in chains, and that when they were cast into a furnace, how could he have overcome the Jews in regular warfare, had they been all such as these? From which it is plain that the sins of the multitude betrayed the city.

6. But mark also the children's freedom from vain-glory. For they did not leap into the furnace, but they kept beforehand the commandment of Christ where he says, [Matthew 26:41] *"Pray that you enter not into temptation."* Neither did they shrink when they were brought to it; but stood in the midst nobly, neither contending without a summons, nor yet when

summoned playing the coward: but ready for everything, and noble, and full of all boldness of speech.

But let us hear also what they say, that from this also we may learn their lofty spirit. [Daniel 3:17] *"There is a God in heaven able to deliver us:"* they take no care for themselves, but even when about to be burned the glory of God is all their thought. For what they say comes to this, Lest perchance if we are burnt you should charge God with weakness, we now declare unto you accurately our whole doctrine. *"There is a God in heaven,"* not such as this image here on earth, this lifeless and mute thing, but able to snatch even from the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Condemn him not then of weakness for permitting us to fall into it. So powerful is He that after our fall, He is able to snatch us out again out of the flame. *"But if not, be it known unto you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up."* Observe that they by a special dispensation are ignorant of the future: for if they had foreknown, there would have been nothing wonderful in their doing what they did. For what marvel is it if when they had a guarantee for safety, they defied all terrors? Then God indeed would have been glorified in that He was able to deliver from the furnace: but they would not have been wondered at, inasmuch as they would not have cast themselves into any dangers. For this cause He suffered them to be ignorant of the future that He might glorify them the more. And as they cautioned ([ἡψαλίζοντο]) the king that he was not to condemn God of weakness though they might be burnt, so God accomplished both purposes; the showing forth His own power and the causing the zeal of the children to appear more conspicuous.

From whence then arose their doubting and their not feeling confident that they should at all events be preserved? Because they esteemed themselves assuredly too mean, and unworthy of such a benefit. And to

prove that I say not this upon conjecture; when they fell into the furnace, they bewailed themselves after this sort, saying, [Daniel 4:6-10] *"We have sinned, we have done iniquity, we cannot open our mouth."* And therefore they said, *"But if not."* But if they did not plainly say this, namely, *"God is able to deliver us; but if he deliver us not, for our sin's sake He will not deliver us;"* wonder not at it. For they would have seemed to the barbarians to be sheltering the weakness of God under the pretext of their own sins. Wherefore His power only is what they speak of: the reason they allege not. And besides, they were well disciplined not to be over-curious about the judgments of God.

With these words then, they entered into the fire; and they neither cast insult upon the king, nor overturned the statue. For such should the courageous man be, temperate and mild; and that especially in dangers; that he may not seem to go forth to such contests in wrath and vain-glory; but with fortitude and self-possession. For whoso deals insolently undergoes the suspicion of those faults: but he that endures, and is forced into the struggle, and goes through the trial with meekness, is not only admired as brave, but his self-possession also and consideration cause him to be no less extolled. And this is what they did at that time; showing forth all fortitude and gentleness, and doing nothing for reward nor for recompense or return. *"Though He be not willing 'so it stands' to deliver us, we will not serve your gods:' for we have already our recompense in that we are counted worthy to be kept from all impiety, and for that end to give our bodies to be burned."*

We then also having already our recompense, (for indeed we have it in that we have been vouchsafed the full knowledge of Him, vouch-safed to be made members of Christ,) let us take care that we make them not members of an harlot. For with this most tremendous saying we must conclude our

discourse, in order that having the fear of the threat in full efficacy, we may remain purer than gold, this fear helping to make us so. For so shall we be able, delivered from all fornication, to see Christ. Whom God grant us all to behold with boldness at that day, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to Whom be the glory, for evermore. Amen.

Homily 19 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 7:1-2

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of fornications, let each man have his own wife; and let each woman have her own husband.

Having corrected the three heaviest things laid to their charge, one, the distraction of the Church, another, about the fornicator, a third, about the covetous person, he thenceforth uses a milder sort of speech. And he interposes some exhortation and advice about marriage and virginity, giving the hearers some respite from more unpleasant subjects. But in the second Epistle he does the contrary; he begins from the milder topics, and ends with the more distressing. And here also, after he has finished his discourse about virginity, he again launches forth into matter more akin to reproof; not setting all down in regular order, but varying his discourse in either kind, as the occasion required and the exigency of the matters in hand.

Wherefore he says, *"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me."* For they had written to him, *"Whether it was right to abstain from one's wife, or not:"* and writing back in answer to this and giving rules about marriage, he introduces also the discourse concerning virginity: *"It is good for a man not to touch a woman."* *"For if,"* says he, *"thou enquire what is the excellent and greatly superior course, it is better not to have any connection whatever with a woman: but if you ask what is safe and helpful to your own infirmity, be connected by marriage."*

But since it was likely, as also happens now, that the husband might be willing but the wife not, or perhaps the reverse, mark how he discusses each

case. Some indeed say that this discourse was addressed by him to priests. But I, judging from what follows, could not affirm that it was so: since he would not have given his advice in general terms. For if he were writing these things only for the priests, he would have said, *"It is good for the teacher not to touch a woman."* But now he has made it of universal application, saying, *"It is good for a man;"* not for priest only. And again, *"Are you loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife."* He said not, *"You who are a priest and teacher,"* but indefinitely. And the whole of his speech goes on entirely in the same tones. And in saying, *"Because of fornications, let every man have his own wife"* by the very cause alleged for the concession he guides men to continence.

1 Corinthians 7:3-4

2. *"Let the husband pay the wife the honor due to her: in like manner the wife the husband."*

Now what is the meaning of *"the due honor? The wife has not power over her own body;"* but is both the slave and the mistress of the husband. And if you decline the service which is due, you have offended God. But if you wish to withdraw yourself, it must be with the husband's permission, though it be but a for short time. For this is why he calls the matter a debt, to show that no one is master of himself but that they are servants to each other.

When therefore you see an harlot tempting you, say, *"My body is not mine, but my wife's."* The same also let the woman say to those who would undermine her chastity, *"My body is not mine, but my husband's."*

Now if neither husband nor wife has power even over their own body, much less have they over their property. Hear ye, all that have husbands and all that have wives: that if you must not count your body your own, much less your money.

Elsewhere I grant He gives to the husband abundant precedence, both in the New Testament, and the Old saying, ([ἡ ἀποστρόφή σου], LXX. Genesis 3:16.) *"Your turning shall be towards your husband, and he shall rule over you."* Paul does so too by making a distinction thus, and writing, [Ephesians 5:25-33] *"Husbands, love your wives; and let the wife see that she reverence her husband."* But in this place we hear no more of greater and less, but it is one and the same right. Now why is this? Because his speech was about chastity. *"In all other things,"* says he, *"let the husband have the prerogative; but not so where the question is about chastity."* *"The*

husband has no power over his own body, neither the wife." There is great equality of honor, and no prerogative.

1 Corinthians 7:5-9

3. *"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent."*

What then can this mean? *"Let not the wife,"* says he, *"exercise continence, if the husband be unwilling; nor yet the husband without the wife's consent."* Why so? Because great evils spring from this sort of continence. For adulteries and fornications and the ruin of families have often arisen from hence. For if when men have their own wives they commit fornication, much more if you defraud them of this consolation. And well says he, *"Defraud not; fraud"* here, and *"debt"* above, that he might show the strictness of the right of dominion in question. For that one should practice continence against the will of the other is *"defrauding;"* but not so, with the other's consent: any more than I count myself defrauded, if after persuading me you take away any thing of mine. Since only he defrauds who takes against another's will and by force. A thing which many women do, working sin rather than righteousness, and thereby becoming accountable for the husband's uncleanness, and rending all asunder. Whereas they should value concord above all things, since this is more important than all beside.

We will, if you please, consider it with a view to actual cases. Thus, suppose a wife and husband, and let the wife be continent, without consent of her husband; well then, if hereupon he commit fornication, or though abstaining from fornication fret and grow restless and be heated and quarrel and give all kind of trouble to his wife; where is all the gain of the fasting and the continence, a breach being made in love? There is none. For what strange reproaches, how much trouble, how great a war must of course arise! since when in an house man and wife are at variance, the house will

be no better off than a ship in a storm when the master is upon ill terms with the man at the head. Wherefore he says, *"Defraud not one another, unless it be by consent for a season, that you may give yourselves unto prayer."* It is prayer with unusual earnestness which he here means. For if he is forbidding those who have intercourse with one another to pray, how could *"pray without ceasing"* have any place? It is possible then to live with a wife and yet give heed unto prayer. But by continence prayer is made more perfect. For he did not say merely, *"That ye may pray;"* but, *"That ye may give yourselves unto it;"* as though what he speaks of might cause not uncleanness but much occupation.

"And may be together again, that Satan tempt you not." Thus lest it should seem to be a matter of express enactment, he adds the reason. And what is it? *"That Satan tempt you not."* And that you may understand that it is not the devil only who causes this crime, I mean adultery, he adds, *"because of your incontinency."*

"But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself; in a state of continence." This he does in many places when he is advising about difficult matters; he brings forward himself, and says, *"Be imitators of me."*

"Howbeit each man has his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that." Thus since he had heavily charged them saying, *"for your incontinence,"* he again comforts them by the words, *"each one has his own gift of God;"* not declaring that towards that virtue there is no need of zeal on our part, but, as I was saying before, to comfort them. For if it be a *"gift,"* and man contributes nothing thereunto, how do you say, *"But [1 Corinthians 7:8] I say to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I: [1 Corinthians 7:9] but if they have not continency let them marry?"* Do you see the strong sense of Paul how he

both signifies that continence is better, and yet puts no force on the person who cannot attain to it; fearing lest some offense arise?

"For it is better to marry than to burn." He indicates how great is the tyranny of concupiscence. What he means is something like this: *"If you have to endure much violence and burning desire, withdraw yourself from your pains and toils, lest haply you be subverted."*

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

4. *"But to the married I give charge, yet not I, but the Lord."*

Because it is a law expressly appointed by Christ which he is about to read to them about the not putting away a wife without fornication; [Matthew 5:32, 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18] therefore he says, *"Not I."* True it is what was before spoken though it were not expressly stated, yet it also is His decree. But this, you see, He had delivered in express words. So that the words *"I and not I"* have this difference of meaning. For that you might not imagine even his own words to be human, therefore he added, *"For I think that I also have the Spirit of God."*

Now what is that which *"to the married the Lord commanded? That the wife depart not from her husband: [1 Corinthians 7:11] but if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled unto her husband."*

Here, seeing that both on the score of continence and other pretexts, and because of infirmities of temper, ([μικροψυχίας].) it fell out that separations took place: it were better, he says, that such things should not be at all; but however if they take place, let the wife remain with her husband, if not to cohabit with him, yet so as not to introduce any other to be her husband.

1 Corinthians 7:12-14

"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord. If any brother have a wife that believes not, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And if any woman has an husband that believes not, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave him."

For as when discoursing about separating from fornicators, he made the matter easy by the correction which he applied to his words, saying, *"Howbeit, not altogether with the fornicators of this world;"* so also in this case he provides for the abundant easiness of the duty, saying, *"If any wife have a husband, or husband a wife, that believes not, let him not leave her."* What do you say? *"If he be an unbeliever, let him remain with the wife, but not if he be a fornicator? And yet fornication is a less sin than unbelief."* I grant, fornication is a less sin: but God spares your infirmities extremely. And this is what He does about the sacrifice, saying, [Matthew 5:24] *"Leave the sacrifice, and be reconciled to your brother."* This also in the case of the man who owed ten thousand talents. For him too He did not punish for owing him ten thousand talents, but for demanding back a hundred pence from his fellow-servant He took vengeance on him.

Then lest the woman might fear, as though she became unclean because of intercourse with her husband, he says, *"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband."* And yet, if *"he that is joined to an harlot is one body,"* it is quite clear that the woman also who is joined to an idolater is one body. Well: it is one body; nevertheless she becomes not unclean, but the cleanness of the wife overcomes the uncleanness of the husband; and again,

the cleanness of the believing husband overcomes the uncleanness of the unbelieving wife.

How then in this case is the uncleanness overcome, and therefore the intercourse allowed; while in the woman who prostitutes herself, the husband is not condemned in casting her out? Because here there is hope that the lost member may be saved through the marriage; but in the other case the marriage has already been dissolved; and there again both are corrupted; but here the fault is in one only of the two. I mean something like this: she that has been guilty of fornication is utterly abominable: if then *"he that is joined to an harlot is one body,"* he also becomes abominable by having connection with an harlot; wherefore all the purity flits away. But in the case before us it is not so. But how? The idolater is unclean but the woman is not unclean. For if indeed she were a partner with him in that wherein he is unclean, I mean his impiety, she herself would also become unclean. But now the idolater is unclean in one way, and the wife holds communion with him in another wherein he is not unclean. For marriage and mixture of bodies is that wherein the communion consists.

Again, there is a hope that this man may be reclaimed by his wife for she is made completely his own: but for the other it is not very easy. For how will she who dishonored him in former times and became another's and destroyed the rights of marriage, have power to reclaim him whom she had wronged; him, moreover, who still remains to her as an alien?

Again in that case, after the fornication the husband is not a husband: but here, although the wife be an idolatress, the husband's rights are not destroyed.

However, he does not simply recommend cohabitation with the unbeliever, but with the qualification that he wills it. Wherefore he said, *"And he himself be content to dwell with her."* For, tell me, what harm is

there when the duties of piety remain unimpaired and there are good hopes about the unbeliever, that those already joined should so abide and not bring in occasions of unnecessary warfare? For the question now is not about those who have never yet come together, but about those who are already joined. He did not say, If any one wish to take an unbelieving wife, but, *"If any one has an unbelieving wife."* Which means, If any after marrying or being married have received the word of godliness, and then the other party which had continued in unbelief still yearn for them to dwell together, let not the marriage be broken off. *"For,"* says he, *"the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife."* So great is the superabundance of your purity.

What then, is the Greek holy? Certainly not: for he said not, He is holy; but, *"He is sanctified in his wife."* And this he said, not to signify that he is holy, but to deliver the woman as completely as possible from her fear and lead the man to desire the truth. For the uncleanness is not in the bodies wherein there is communion, but in the mind and the thoughts. And here follows the proof; namely, that if you continuing unclean have offspring, the child, not being of you alone, is of course unclean or half clean. But now it is not unclean. To which effect he adds, *"else were your children unclean; but now are they holy;"* that is, not unclean. But the Apostle calls them, *"holy,"* by the intensity of the expression again casting out the dread arising from that sort of suspicion.

1 Corinthians 7:15

"Yet if the unbelieving departs, let him depart," for in this case the matter is no longer fornication. But what is the meaning of, *"if the unbelieving departs?"* For instance, if he bid you sacrifice and take part in his ungodliness on account of your marriage, or else part company; it were better the marriage were annulled, and no breach made in godliness. Wherefore he adds, *"A brother is not under bondage, nor yet a sister, in such cases."* If day by day he buffet you and keep up combats on this account, it is better to separate. For this is what he glances at, saying, *"But God has called us in peace."* For it is the other party who furnished the ground of separation, even as he did who committed uncleanness.

1 Corinthians 7:16

"For how do you know, O wife, whether you shall save your husband?"

This again refers to that expression, *"let her not leave him."* That is, *"if he makes no disturbance, remain,"* says he, *"for there is even profit in this; remain and advise and give counsel and persuade."* For no teacher will have such power to prevail (Reg. [πεῖσαι] . Bened. [ἰσχυῖσαι] .) as a wife. And neither, on one hand, does he lay any necessity upon her and absolutely demand the point of her, that he may not again do what would be too painful; nor, on the other, does he tell her to despair: but he leaves the matter in suspense through the uncertainty of the future, saying, *"For how do you know, O wife, whether you shall save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband whether you shall save your wife?"*

1 Corinthians 7:17-22

5. And again, *"Only as God has distributed to each man, as the Lord has called each, so let him walk. Was any one called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was any called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. Were you called, being a slave? Care not for it."* These things contribute nothing unto faith, says he. Be not then contentious neither be troubled; for the faith has cast out all these things.

Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. Have you been called, having an unbelieving wife? Continue to have her. Cast not out your wife for the faith's sake. Have you been called, being a slave? Care not for it. Continue to be a slave. Have you been called, being in uncircumcision? Remain uncircumcised. Being circumcised, did you become a believer? Continue circumcised. For this is the meaning of, *"As God has distributed unto each man."* For these are no hindrances to piety. You are called, being a slave; another, with an unbelieving wife; another, being circumcised.

Astonishing! Where has he put slavery? As circumcision profits not: and uncircumcision does no harm; so neither does slavery, nor yet liberty. And that he might point out this with surpassing clearness, he says, *"But even ([ὅλλ' εἰ καὶ] [δυνάσαι]) if you can become free, use it rather:"* that is, rather continue a slave. Now upon what possible ground does he tell the person who might be set free to remain a slave? He means to point out that slavery is no harm but rather an advantage.

Now we are not ignorant that some say, the words, *"use it rather,"* are spoken with regard to liberty: interpreting it, *"if you can become free, become free."* But the expression would be very contrary to Paul's manner if he intended this. For he would not, when consoling the slave and signifying that he was in no respect injured, have told him to get free. Since perhaps some one might say, *"What then, if I am not able? I am an injured and degraded person."* This then is not what he says: but as I said, meaning to point out that a man gets nothing by being made free, he says, *"Though you have it in your power to be made free, remain rather in slavery."*

Next he adds also the cause; *"For he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's free man: likewise he that was called, being free, is Christ's bondservant."* "For," says he, in the things that relate to Christ, both are equal: and like as you are the slave of Christ, so also is your master. How then is the slave a free man? Because He has freed you not only from sin, but also from outward slavery while continuing a slave. For he suffers not the slave to be a slave, not even though he be a man abiding in slavery: and this is the great wonder.

But how is the slave a free man while continuing a slave? When he is freed from passions and the diseases of the mind: when he looks down upon riches and wrath and all other the like passions.

1 Corinthians 7:23-24

"You were bought with a price: become not bondservants of men." This saying is addressed not to slaves only but also to free men. For it is possible for one who is a slave not to be a slave; and for one who is a freeman to be a slave. *"And how can one be a slave and not a slave?"* When he does all for God: when he feigns nothing, and does nothing out of eye-service towards men: that is how one that is a slave to men can be free. Or again, how does one that is free become a slave? When he serves men in any evil service, either for gluttony or desire of wealth or for office' sake. For such an one, though he be free, is more of a slave than any man.

And consider both these points. Joseph was a slave but not a slave to men: wherefore even in slavery he was freer than all that are free. For instance, he yielded not to his mistress; yielded not to the purposes which she who possessed him desired. Again she was free; yet none ever so like a slave, courting and beseeching her own servant. But she prevailed not on him, who was free, to do what he would not. This then was not slavery; but it was liberty of the most exalted kind. For what impediment to virtue had he from his slavery? Let men hear, both slaves and free. Which was the slave? He that was entreated or she that did entreat? She that besought or he that despised her supplication?

In fact, there are limits set to slaves by God Himself; and up to what point one ought to keep them, has also been determined, and to transgress them is wrong. Namely, when your master commands nothing which is displeasing to God, it is right to follow and to obey; but no farther. For thus the slave becomes free. But if you go further, even though you are free you

have become a slave. At least he intimates this, saying, *"Be not ye the servants of men."*

But if this be not the meaning, if he bade them forsake their masters and strive contentiously to become free, in what sense did he exhort them, saying, *"Let each one remain in the calling in which he is called?"* And in another place, [1 Timothy 6:1-2] *"As many servants as are under the yoke, let them count their own masters worthy of all honor; and those that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren who partake of the benefit."* And writing to the Ephesians also and to the Colossians, he ordains and exacts the same rules. Whence it is plain that it is not this slavery which he annuls, but that which caused as it is by vice befalls free men also: and this is the worst kind of slavery, though he be a free man who is in bondage to it. For what profit had Joseph's brethren of their freedom? Were they not more servile than all slaves; both speaking lies to their father, and to the merchants using false pretences, as well as to their brother? But not such was the free man: rather every where and in all things he was true. And nothing had power to enslave him, neither chain nor bondage nor the love of his mistress nor his being in a strange land. But he abode free every where. For this is liberty in the truest sense when even in bondage it shines through.

6. Such a thing is Christianity; in slavery it bestows freedom. And as that which is by nature an invulnerable body then shows itself to be invulnerable when having received a dart it suffers no harm; so also he that is strictly free then shows himself, when even under masters he is not enslaved. For this cause his bidding is, *"remain a slave."* But if it is impossible for one who is a slave to be a Christian such as he ought to be, the Greeks will condemn true religion of great weakness: whereas if they can be taught that slavery in no way impairs godliness, they will admire our

doctrine. For if death hurt us not, nor scourges, nor chains, much less slavery. Fire and iron and tyrannies innumerable and diseases and poverty and wild beasts and countless things more dreadful than these, have not been able to injure the faithful; nay, they have made them even mightier. And how shall slavery be able to hurt? It is not slavery itself, beloved, that hurts; but the real slavery is that of sin. And if you be not a slave in this sense, be bold and rejoice. No one shall have power to do you any wrong, having the temper which cannot be enslaved. But if you be a slave to sin, even though thou be ten thousand times free you have no good of your freedom.

For, tell me, what profit is it when, though not in bondage to a man, you lie down in subjection to your passions? Since men indeed often know how to spare; but those masters are never satiated with your destruction. Are you in bondage to a man? Why, your master also is slave to you, in arranging about your food, in taking care of your health and in looking after your shoes and all the other things. And thou dost not fear so much less you should offend your master, as he fears lest any of those necessities should fail you. *"But he sits down, while you stand."* And what of that? Since this may be said of you as well as of him. Often, at least, when you are lying down and sleeping sweetly, he is not only standing, but undergoing endless discomforts in the market-place; and he lies awake more painfully than thou.

For instance; what did Joseph suffer from his mistress to be compared with what she suffered from her evil desire? For he indeed did not the things which she wished to put upon him; but she performed every thing which her mistress ordered her, I mean her spirit of unchastity: which left not off until it had put her to open shame. What master commands such things? What savage tyrant? *"Intreat your slave,"* that is the word: *"flatter*

the person bought with your money, supplicate the captive; even if he reject you with disgust, again besiege him: even if you speak to him oftentimes, and he consent not, watch for his being alone, and force him, and become an object of derision." What can be more dishonorable, what more shameful, than these words? *"And if even by these means you make no progress, why, accuse him falsely and deceive your husband."* Mark how mean, how shameful are the commands, how unmerciful and savage and frantic. What command does the master ever lay on his slave, such as those which her wantonness then laid upon that royal woman? And yet she dare not disobey. But Joseph underwent nothing of this sort, but every thing on the contrary which brought glory and honor.

Would you like to see yet another man under severe orders from a hard mistress, and without spirit to disobey any of them? Consider Cain, what commands were laid on him by his envy. She ordered him to slay his brother, to lie unto God, to grieve his father, to cast off shame; and he did it all, and in nothing refused to obey. And why marvel that over a single person so great should be the power of this mistress? She has often destroyed entire nations. For instance, the Midianitish women took the Jews, and all but bound them in captivity; their own beauty kindling desire, was the means of their vanquishing that whole nation. Paul then to cast out this sort of slavery, said, *"Become not servants of men;"* that is, *"Obey not men commanding unreasonable things: nay, obey not yourselves."* Then having raised up their mind and made it mount on high, he says,

1 Corinthians 7:25-26

7. *"Now concerning virgins. I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give my judgment, as one that has obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."*

Advancing on his way in regular order, he proceeds next to speak concerning virginity. For after that he had exercised and trained them, in his words concerning continence, he goes forth towards what is greater, saying, *"I have no commandment, but I esteem it to be good."* For what reason? For the self-same reason as he had mentioned respecting continence.

1 Corinthians 7:27-34

"Are you bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife."

These words carry no contradiction to what had been said before but rather the most entire agreement with them. For he says in that place also, *"Except it be by consent:"* as here he says, *"Are you bound unto a wife? Seek not separation."* This is no contradiction. For its being against consent makes a dissolution: but if with consent both live continently, it is no dissolution.

Then, lest this should seem to be laying down a law, he subjoins, [1 Corinthians 7:28] *"but if you marry, you have not sinned."* He next alleges the existing state of things, *"the present distress, the shortness of the time,"* and *"the affliction."* For marriage draws along with it many things, which indeed he has glanced at, as well here as also in the discourse about continence: there, by saying, *"the wife has not power over herself;"* and here, by the expression, *"You are bound."*

"But if and thou marry, you have not sinned." He is not speaking about her who has made choice of virginity, for if it comes to that, she has sinned. Since if the widows are condemned for having to do with second marriages after they have once chosen widowhood, much more the virgins.

"But such shall have trouble in the flesh." *"And pleasure too,"* you will say: but observe how he curtails this by the shortness of the time, saying, [1 Corinthians 7:28] *"the time is shortened;"* that is, *"we are exhorted to depart now and go forth, but you are running further in."* And yet even although marriage had no troubles, even so we ought to press on towards things to come. But when it has affliction too, what need to draw

on one's self an additional burden. What occasion to take up such a load, when even after taking it you must use it as having it not? For "*those even that have wives must be,*" he says, "*as though they had none.*"

Then, having interposed something about the future, he brings back his speech to the present. For some of his topics are spiritual; as that, "*the one cares about the things which be her husband's, the other about those which be God's.*" Others relate to this present life; as, "*I would have you to be free from cares.*" But still with all this he leaves it to their own choice: inasmuch as he who after proving what is best goes back to compulsion, seems as if he did not trust his own statements. Wherefore he rather attracts them by concession, and checks them as follows:

1 Corinthians 7:35

And this I say for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is seemly, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction. Let the virgins hear that not by that one point is virginity defined; for she that is careful about the things of the world cannot be a virgin, nor seemly. Thus, when he said, "*There is difference between a wife and a virgin,*" he added this as the difference, and that wherein they are distinguished from each other. And laying down the definition of a virgin and her that is not a virgin, he names, not marriage nor continence but leisure from engagements and multiplicity of engagements. For the evil is not in the cohabitation, but in the impediment to the strictness of life.

1 Corinthians 7:36-40

"But if any man think that he behaves himself unseemly toward his virgin."

Here he seems to be talking about marriage; but all that he says relates to virginity; for he allows even a second marriage, saying, *"only in the Lord."* Now what means, *"in the Lord?"* With chastity, with honor: for this is needed every where, and must be pursued for else we cannot see God.

Now if we have passed lightly by what he says of virginity, let no one accuse us of negligence; for indeed an entire book has been composed by us upon this topic and as we have there with all the accuracy which we could, gone through every branch of the subject, we considered it a waste of words to introduce it again here. Wherefore, referring the hearer to that work as concerns these things, we will say this one thing here: We must follow after continence. For, says he, *"follow after peace, and the sanctification without which no one shall see the Lord."* Therefore that we may be accounted worthy to see Him, whether we be in virginity or in the first marriage or the second, let us follow after this that we may obtain the kingdom of heaven, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to Whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now, henceforth, and for everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 20 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 8:1

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

It is necessary first to say what the meaning of this passage is: for so shall we readily comprehend the Apostle's discourse. For he that sees a charge brought against any one, except he first perceive the nature of the offense will not understand what is said. What then is it of which he was then accusing the Corinthians? A heavy charge and the cause of many evils. Well, what is it? Many among them, having learned that [Matthew 15:11] *"not the things which enter in defile the man, but the things which proceed out,"* and that idols of wood and stone, and demons, have no power to hurt or help, had made an immoderate use of their perfect knowledge of this to the harm both of others and of themselves. They had both gone in where idols were and had partaken of the tables there, and were producing thereby great and ruinous evil. For, on the one hand, those who still retained the fear of idols and knew not how to condemn them, took part in those meals, because they saw the more perfect sort doing this; and hence they got the greatest injury: since they did not touch what was set before them with the same mind as the others, but as things offered in sacrifice to idols; and the thing was becoming a way to idolatry. On the other hand, these very persons who pretended to be more perfect were injured in no common way, partaking in the tables of demons.

This then was the subject of complaint. Now this blessed man being about to correct it, did not immediately begin to speak vehemently; for that

which was done came more of folly than of wickedness: wherefore in the first instance there was need rather of exhortation than of severe rebuke and wrath. Now herein observe his good sense, how he immediately begins to admonish.

"Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge." Leaving alone the weak, which he always does, he discourses with the strong first. And this is what he did also in the Epistle to the Romans, saying, [Romans 14:10] *"But you, why do you judge your brother?"* for this is the sort of person that is able to receive rebuke also with readiness. Exactly the same then he does here also.

And first he makes void their conceit by declaring that this very thing which they considered as peculiar to themselves, the having perfect knowledge, was common to all. Thus, *"we know,"* says he, *"that we all have knowledge."* For if allowing them to have high thoughts, he had first pointed out how hurtful the thing was to others, he would not have done them so much good as harm. For the ambitious soul when it plumes itself upon any thing, even though the same do harm to others, yet strongly adheres to it because of the tyranny of vain-glory. Wherefore Paul first examines the matter itself by itself: just as he had done before in the case of the wisdom from without, demolishing it with a high hand. But in that case he did it as we might have expected: for the whole thing was altogether blameworthy and his task was very easy. Wherefore he signifies it to be not only useless, but even contrary to the Gospel. But in the present case it was not possible to do this. For what was done was of knowledge, and perfect knowledge. Nor was it safe to overthrow it, and yet in no other way was it possible to cast out the conceit which had resulted from it. What then does he? First, by signifying that it was common, he curbs that swelling pride of theirs. For they who possess something great and excellent are more elated,

when they alone have it; but if it be made out that they possess it in common with others, they no longer have so much of this feeling. First then he makes it common property, because they considered it to belong to themselves alone.

Next, having made it common, he does not make himself singly a sharer in it with them; for in this way too he would have rather set them up; for as to be the only possessor elates, so to have one partner or two perhaps among leading persons has this effect just as much. For this reason he does not mention himself but all: he said not, *"I too have knowledge,"* but, *"we know that we all have knowledge."*

2. This then is one way, and the first, by which he cast down their pride; the next has greater force. What then is this? In that he shows that not even this thing itself was in all points complete, but imperfect, and extremely so. And not only imperfect, but also injurious, unless there were another thing joined together with it. For having said that *"we have knowledge,"* he added, *"Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies:"* so that when it is without love, it lifts men up to absolute arrogance.

"And yet not even love," you will say, *"without knowledge has any advantage."* Well: this he did not say; but omitting it as a thing allowed by all, he signifies that knowledge stands in extreme need of love. For he who loves, inasmuch as he fulfils the commandment which is most absolute of all, even though he have some defects, will quickly be blest with knowledge because of his love; as Cornelius and many others. But he that has knowledge but has not love, not only shall gain nothing more, but shall also be cast out of that which he has, in many cases falling into arrogance. It seems then that knowledge is not productive of love, but on the contrary debars from it him that is not on his guard, puffing him up and elating him. For arrogance is wont to cause divisions: but love both draws together and

leads to knowledge. And to make this plain he says, *"But if any man loves God, the same is known of Him."* So that *"I forbid not this,"* says he, *"namely, your having perfect knowledge; but your having it with love, that I enjoin; else is it no gain, but rather loss."*

Do you see how he already sounds the first note of his discourse concerning love? For since all these evils were springing from the following root, i.e., not from perfect knowledge, but from their not greatly loving nor sparing their neighbors; whence ensued both their variance and their self-satisfaction, and all the rest which he had charged them with; both before this and after he is continually providing for love; so correcting the fountain of all good things. *"Now why,"* says he, *"are you puffed up about knowledge? For if you have not love, you shall even be injured thereby. For what is worse than boasting? But if the other be added, the first also will be in safety. For although you may know something more than your neighbor, if you love him you will not set yourself up but lead him also to the same."* Wherefore also having said, *"Knowledge puffs up,"* he added, *"but love edifies."* He did not say, *"Behaves itself modestly,"* but what is much more, and more gainful. For their knowledge was not only puffing them up but also distracting them. On this account he opposes the one to the other.

3. And then he adds a third consideration, which was of force to set them down. What then is this? That although charity be joined with it, yet not even in that case is this our knowledge perfect. And therefore he adds,

1 Corinthians 8:2

"But if any man think that he knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know." This is a mortal blow. *"I dwell not,"* says he, on the knowledge being common to all. I say not that by hating your neighbor and by arrogance, you injure yourself most. But even though you have it by yourself alone, though you be modest, though you love your brother, even in this case you are imperfect in regard of knowledge. *"For as yet you know nothing as you ought to know,"* Now if we possess as yet exact knowledge of nothing, how is it that some have rushed on to such a pitch of frenzy as to say that they know God with all exactness? Whereas, though we had an exact knowledge of all other things, not even so were it possible to possess this knowledge to such an extent. For how far He is apart from all things, it is impossible even to say.

And mark how he pulls down their swelling pride: for he said not, *"of the matters before us you have not the proper knowledge,"* but, *"about every thing."* And he did not say, *"ye,"* but, *"no one whatever,"* be it Peter, be it Paul, be it any one else. For by this he both soothed them and carefully kept them under.

1 Corinthians 8:3

"But if any man love God, the same," he does not say, *"knows Him,"* but, *"is known of Him."* For we have not known Him, but He has known us. And therefore did Christ say, *"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."* And Paul elsewhere, *"Then shall I know fully, even as also I have been known."*

Observe now, I pray, by what means he brings down their high-mindedness. First, he points out that not they alone knew the things which they knew; for *"we all,"* he says, have knowledge. Next, that the thing itself was hurtful so long as it was without love; for *"knowledge,"* says he, *"puffs up."* Thirdly, that even joined with love it is not complete nor perfect. *"For if any man thinks that he knows any thing, he knows nothing as yet as he ought to know,"* so he speaks. In addition to this, that they have not even this from themselves, but by gift from God. For he said not, *"has known God,"* but, *"is known of Him."* Again, that this very thing comes of love which they have not as they ought. For, *"if any man,"* says he, *"love God, the same is known of Him."* Having then so much at large allayed their irritation, he begins to speak doctrinally, saying thus.

1 Corinthians 8:4

4. *"Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one."* Look what a strait he has fallen into! For indeed his mind is to prove both; that one ought to abstain from this kind of banquet, and that it has no power to hurt those who partake of it: things which were not greatly in agreement with each other. For when they were told that they had no harm in them, they would naturally run to them as indifferent things. But when forbidden to touch them, they would suspect, on the contrary, that their having power to do hurt occasioned the prohibition. Wherefore, you see, he puts down their opinion about idols, and then states as a first reason for their abstaining the scandals which they place in the way of their brethren; in these words: *"Now concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world."* Again he makes it common property and does not allow this to be theirs alone, but extends the knowledge all over the world. For *"not among you alone,"* says he, *"but every where on earth this doctrine prevails."* What then is it? *"That no idol is anything in the world; that there is no God but one."* What then? Are there no idols? No statues? Indeed there are; but they have no power: neither are they gods, but stones and demons. For he is now setting himself against both parties; both the grosser sort among them, and those who were accounted lovers of wisdom. Thus, seeing that the former know of no more than the mere stones, the others assert that certain powers reside in them, which they also call gods; to the former accordingly he says, that *"no idol is anything in the world,"* to the other, that *"there is no God but one."*

Do you mark how he writes these things, not simply as laying down doctrine, but in opposition to those without? A thing indeed which we must at all times narrowly observe, whether he says anything abstractedly, or whether he is opposing any persons. For this contributes in no ordinary way to the accuracy of our doctrinal views, and to the exact understanding of his expressions.

1 Corinthians 8:5-6

5. *"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we through Him."* Since he had said, that *"an idol is nothing"* and that *"there is no other God;"* and yet there were idols and there were those that were called gods; that he might not seem to be contradicting plain facts, he goes on to say, *"For though there be that are called gods, as indeed there are;"* not absolutely, *"there are;"* but, *"called,"* not in reality having this but in name: *"be it in heaven or on earth: — in heaven,"* meaning the sun and the moon and the remainder of the choir of stars; for these too the Greeks worshipped: but upon the earth demons, and all those who had been made gods of men:— *"yet to us there is One God, the Father."* In the first instance having expressed it without the word *"Father,"* and said, *"there is no God but one,"* he now adds this also, when he had utterly cast out the others.

Next, he adduces what indeed is the greatest token of divinity; *"of Whom are all things."* For this implies also that those others are not gods. For it is said [Jeremiah 10:11], *"Let the gods who made not the heaven and the earth perish."* Then he subjoins what is not less than this, *"and we unto Him."* For when he says, *"of Whom are all things,"* he means the creation and the bringing of things out of nothing into existence. But when he says, *"and we unto Him,"* he speaks of the word of faith and mutual appropriation ([οἰκειώσεως]), as also he said before [1 Corinthians 1:30], *"but of Him are you also in Christ Jesus."* In two ways we are of Him, by being made when we were not, and by being made believers. For this also is a creation: a

thing which he also declares elsewhere; [Ephesians 2:15] *"that He might create in Himself of the two one new man."*

"And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we through Him." And in regard to Christ again, we must conceive of this in like manner. For through Him the race of men was both produced out of nothing into existence, and returned from error to truth. So that as to the phrase *"of Whom,"* it is not to be understood apart from Christ. For of Him, through Christ, were we created.

6. Nor yet, if you observe, has he distributed the names as if belonging exclusively, assigning to the Son the name Lord, and to the Father, God. For the Scripture uses also often to interchange them; as when it says, [Psalm 110:1] *"The Lord says unto My Lord;"* and again, [Psalm 65:8] *"Wherefore God Your God has appointed You;"* and, [Romans 9:5] *"Of Whom is Christ according to the flesh, Who is God over all."* And in many instances you may see these names changing their places. Besides, if they were allotted to each nature severally, and if the Son were not God, and God as the Father, yet continuing a Son: after saying, *"but to us there is but One God,"* it would have been superfluous, his adding the word *"Father,"* with a view to declare the Unbegotten. For the word of God was sufficient to explain this, if it were such as to denote Him only.

And this is not all, but there is another remark to make: that if you say, *"Because it is said 'One God,' therefore the word God does not apply to the Son;"* observe that the same holds of the Son also. For the Son also is called *"One Lord,"* yet we do not maintain that therefore the term Lord applies to Him alone. So then, the same force which the expression *"One"* has, applied to the Son, it has also, applied to the Father. And as the Father is not thrust out from being the Lord, in the same sense as the Son is the Lord, because He, the Son, is spoken of as one Lord; so neither does it cast out the Son

from being God, in the same sense as the Father is God, because the Father is styled One God.

7. Now if any were to say, "*Why did he make no mention of the Spirit?*" our answer might be this: His argument was with idolaters, and the contention was about "*gods many and lords many.*" And this is why, having called the Father, God, he calls the Son, Lord. If now he ventured not to call the Father Lord together with the Son, lest they might suspect him to be speaking of two Lords; nor yet the Son, God, with the Father, lest he might be supposed to speak of two Gods: why marvel at his not having mentioned the Spirit? His contest was, so far, with the Gentiles: his point, to signify that with us there is no plurality of Gods. Wherefore he keeps hold continually of this word, "*One;*" saying, "*There is no God but One; and, to us there is One God, and One Lord.*" From which it is plain, that to spare the weakness of the hearers he used this mode of explanation, and for this reason made no mention at all of the Spirit. For if it be not this, neither ought he to make mention of the Spirit elsewhere, nor to join Him with the Father and the Son. For if He be rejected from the Father and Son, much more ought He not to be put in the same rank with them in the matter of Baptism; where most especially the dignity of the Godhead appears and gifts are bestowed which pertain to God alone to afford. Thus then I have assigned the cause why in this place He is passed over in silence. Now do thou if this be not the true reason, tell me, why He is ranked with Them in Baptism? But you can not give any other reason but His being of equal honor. At any rate, when he has no such constraint upon him, he puts Him in the same rank, saying thus: [2 Corinthians 13:14] "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all:*" and again, [2 Corinthians 12:4] "*There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit: and there are diversities of*

administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of workings but the same God." But because now his speech was with Greeks and the weaker sort of the converts from among Greeks, for this reason he husbands it ([ταμιεύεται]) so far. And this is what the prophets do in regard of the Son; no where making mention of Him plainly because of the infirmity of the hearers.

1 Corinthians 8:7

"But not in all is knowledge," says he. What knowledge does he mean? About God, or about things offered in sacrifice to idols? For either he here glances at the Greeks who say that there are many gods and lords, and who know not Him that is truly God; or at the converts from among Greeks who were still rather infirm, such as did not yet know clearly that they ought not to fear idols and that *"an idol is nothing in the world."* But in saying this, he gently soothes and encourages the latter. For there was no need of mentioning all he had to reprove, particularly as he intended to visit them again with more severity.

8. *"But some being used to the idol eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled."* They still tremble at idols, he says. For tell me not of the present establishment, and that you have received the true religion from your ancestors. But carry back your thoughts to those times, and consider when the Gospel was just set on foot, and impiety was still at its height, and altars burning, and sacrifices and libations offering up, and the greater part of men were Gentiles; think, I say, of those who from their ancestors had received impiety, and who were the descendants of fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers like themselves, and who had suffered great miseries from the demons. How must they have felt after their sudden change! How would they face and tremble at the assaults of the demons! For their sake also he employs some reserve, saying, *"But some with conscience of the things sacrificed to an idol."* Thus he neither exposed them openly, nor to strike them hard; nor does he pass by them altogether: but makes mention of them in a vague manner, saying, *"Now some with conscience of the idol even until now eat*

as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; that is, with the same thoughts as they did in former times: 'and their conscience being weak is defiled;'" not yet being able to despise and once for all laugh them to scorn, but still in some doubt. Just as if a man were to think that by touching a dead body he should pollute himself according to the Jewish custom, and then seeing others touching it with a clear conscience, but not with the same mind touching it himself, would be polluted. This was their state of feeling at that time. *"For some,"* says he, *"with conscience of the idol do it even until now."* Not without cause did he add, *"even until now;"* but to signify that they gained no ground by their refusing to condescend. For this was not the way to bring them in, but in some other way persuading them by word and by teaching.

"And their conscience being weak is defiled." No where as yet does he state his argument about the nature of the thing, but turns himself this way and that as concerning the conscience of the person partaking. For he was afraid lest in his wish to correct the weak person, he should inflict a heavy blow upon the strong one, and make him also weak. On which account he spares the one no less than the other. Nor does he allow the thing itself to be thought of any consequence, but makes his argument very full to prevent any suspicion of the kind.

1 Corinthians 8:8

9. *"But meat does not commend us to God. For neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we eat not are we the worse."* Do you see how again he takes down their high spirit? In that, after saying that *"not only they but all of us have knowledge,"* and that *"no one knows any thing as he ought to know,"* and that *"knowledge puffs up;"* then having soothed them, and said that *"this knowledge is not in all,"* and that *"weakness is the cause of these being defiled,"* in order that they might not say, *"And what is it to us, if knowledge be not in all? Why then has not such an one knowledge? Why is he weak?"*—I say, in order that they might not rejoin in these terms, he did not proceed immediately to point out clearly that for fear of the other's harm one ought to abstain: but having first made but a sort of skirmish upon mention of him, he points out what is more than this. What then is this? That although no one were injured nor any perversion of another ensued, not even in this case were it right so to do. For the former topic by itself is laboring in vain. Since he that hears of another being hurt while himself has the gain, is not very apt to abstain; but then rather he does so, when he finds out that he himself is no way advantaged by the thing. Wherefore he sets this down first, saying, *"But meat commends us not to God."* See how cheap he holds that which was accounted to spring from perfect knowledge! *"For neither if we eat are we the better,"* (that is, stand higher in God's estimation, as if we had done any thing good or great:) *"nor if we eat not are we the worse,"* that is, fall in any way short of others. So far then he has signified that the thing itself is superfluous, and as nothing. For that which being done profits not, and which being left undone injures not, must be superfluous.

10. But as he goes on, he discloses all the harm which was likely to arise from the matter. For the present, however, that which befell the brethren is his subject.

1 Corinthians 8:9

"For take heed," says he, *"lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to the weak among the brethren."* ([τῶν ἀδελφῶν] not in rec. text.)

He did not say, *"Your liberty has become a stumbling-block,"* nor did he positively affirm it that he might not make them more shameless; but how? *"Take heed;"* frightening them, and making them ashamed, and leading them to disavow any such conduct. And he said not, *"This your knowledge,"* which would have sounded more like praise; nor *"this your perfectness;"* but, *"your liberty;"* a thing which seemed to savor more of rashness and obstinacy and arrogance. Neither said he, *"To the brethren,"* but, *"To those of the brethren who are weak;"* enhancing his accusation from their not even sparing the weak, and those too their brethren. For let it be so that you correct them not, nor arouse them: yet why trip them up, and make them to stumble, when you ought to stretch out the hand? But for that you have no mind: well then, at least avoid casting them down. Since if one were wicked, he required punishment; if weak, healing: but now he is not only weak, but also a brother.

1 Corinthians 8:10

"For if a man see you who hast knowledge, sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols?"

After having said, *"Take heed lest this your liberty become a stumbling-block,"* he explains how and in what manner it becomes so: and he continually employs the term *"weakness,"* that the mischief may not be thought to arise from the nature of the thing, nor demons appear formidable. As thus: *"At present,"* says he, *"a man is on the point of withdrawing himself entirely from all idols; but when he sees you fond of loitering about them, he takes the circumstance for a recommendation and abides there himself also. So that not only his weakness, but also your ill-timed behavior, helps to further the plot against him; for it is you who make him weaker."*

1 Corinthians 8:11

"And through your meat he that is weak perishes, the brother for whose sake Christ died."

For there are two things which deprive you of excuse in this mischief; one, that he is weak, the other, that he is your brother: rather, I should say, there is a third also, and one more terrible than all. What then is this? That whereas Christ refused not even to die for him, you can not bear even to accommodate yourself to him. By these means, you see, he reminds the perfect man also, what he too was before, and that for him He died. And he said not, *"For whom even to die was your duty;"* but what is much stronger, that even Christ died for his sake. Did your Lord then not refuse to die for him, and do you so make him of none account as not even to abstain from a polluted table for his sake? Yea, do you permit him to perish, after the salvation so wrought, and, what is still more grievous, 'for a morsel of meat?' For he said not, *"for your perfectness,"* nor *"for your knowledge,"* but *"for your meat."* So that the charges are four, and these extremely heavy: that it was a brother, that he was weak, and one of whom Christ made so much account as even to die for him, and that after all this for a *"morsel of meat"* he is destroyed.

1 Corinthians 8:12

"And thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their weak conscience, you sin against Christ."

Do you observe how quietly and gradually he has brought their offense up to the very summit of iniquity? And again, he makes mention of the infirmity of the other sort: and so, the very thing which these considered to make for them, that he every where turns round upon their own head. And he said not, *"Putting stumbling-blocks in their way,"* but, *"wounding;"* so as by the force of his expression to indicate their cruelty. For what can be more savage than a man who wounds the sick? And yet no wound is so grievous as making a man to stumble. Often, in fact, is this also the cause of death.

But how do they *"sin against Christ?"* In one way, because He considers the concerns of His servants as His own; in another, because those who are wounded go to make up His Body and that which is part of Him: in a third way, because that work of His which He built up by His own blood, these are destroying for their ambition's sake.

1 Corinthians 8:13

11. *"Wherefore, if meat make my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for ever."* This is like the best of teachers, to teach in his own person the things which he speaks. Nor did he say whether justly or unjustly; but in any case. *"I say not,"* (such is his tone,) *"meat offered in sacrifice to an idol, which is already prohibited for another reason; but if any even of those things which are within license and are permitted causes stumbling, from these also will I abstain: and not one or two days, but all the time of my life."* For he says, *"I will eat no flesh for ever."* And he said not, *"Lest I destroy my brother,"* but simply, *"That I make not my brother to stumble."* For indeed it comes of folly in the extreme that what things are greatly cared for by Christ, and such as He should have even chosen to die for them, these we should esteem so entirely beneath our notice as not even to abstain from meats on their account.

Now these things might be seasonably spoken not to them only, but also to us, apt as we are to esteem lightly the salvation of our neighbors and to utter those satanical words. I say, satanical: for the expression, *"What care I, though such an one stumble, and such another perish?"* savors of his cruelty and inhuman mind. And yet in that instance, the infirmity also of those who were offended had some share in the result: but in our case it is not so, sinning as we do in such a way as to offend even the strong. For when we smite, and raven, and overreach, and use the free as if they were slaves, whom is not this enough to offend? Tell me not of such a man's being a shoemaker, another a dyer, another a brazier: but bear in mind that he is a believer and a brother. Why these are they whose disciples we are; the fishermen, the publicans, the tent-makers, of Him who was brought up

in the house of a carpenter; and who deigned to have the carpenter's betrothed wife for a mother; and who was laid, after His swaddling clothes, in a manger; and who had not where to lay His head—of Him whose journeys were so long that His very journeying was enough to tire Him down; of Him who was supported by others.

12. Think on these things, and esteem the pride of man to be nothing. But count the tent-maker as well as your brother, as him that is borne upon a chariot and has innumerable servants and struts in the market-place: nay, rather the former than the latter; since the term brother would more naturally be used where there is the greater resemblance. Which then resembles the fisherman? He who is supported by daily labor and has neither servant nor dwelling, but is quite beset with privations; or that other who is surrounded with such vast pomp, and who acts contrary to the laws of God? Despise not then him that is more of the two your brother, for he comes nearer to the Apostolic pattern.

"Not however," say you, *"of his own accord, but by compulsion; for he does not this of his own mind."* How comes this? Have you not heard, *"Judge not, that you be not judged?"* But, to convince yourself that he does it not against his inclination, approach and give him ten thousand talents of gold, and you shall see him putting it away from him. And thus, even though he have received no wealth by inheritance from his ancestors, yet when it is in his power to take it, and he lets it not come near him neither adds to his goods, he exhibits a mighty proof of his contempt of wealth. For so John was the son of Zebedee that extremely poor man: yet I suppose we are not therefore to say that his poverty was forced upon him.

Whenever then you see one driving nails, smiting with a hammer, covered with soot, do not therefore hold him cheap, but rather for that

reason admire him. Since even Peter girded himself, and handled the dragnet, and went a fishing after the Resurrection of the Lord.

And why say I Peter? For this same Paul himself, after his incessant runnings to and fro and all those vast miracles, standing in a tent-maker's shop, sewed hides together: while angels were reverencing him and demons trembling. And he was not ashamed to say, [Acts 20:34] *"Unto my necessities, and to those who were with me, these hands ministered."* What say I, that he was not ashamed? Yea, he gloried in this very thing.

But you will say, *"Who is there now to be compared with the virtue of Paul?"* I too am aware that there is no one, yet not on this account are those who live now to be despised: for if for Christ's sake thou give honor, though one be last of all, yet if he be a believer he shall justly be honored. For suppose a general and a common soldier both present themselves before you, being friends of the king, and you open your house to both: in which of their persons would you seem to pay most honor to the king? Plainly in that of a soldier. For there were in the general, beside his loyalty to the king, many other things apt to win such a mark of respect from you: but the soldier had nothing else but his loyalty to the king.

Wherefore God bade us call to our suppers and our feasts the lame, and the maimed, and those who cannot repay us; for these are most of all properly called good deeds which are done for God's sake. Whereas if you entertain some great and distinguished man, it is not such pure mercy, what you do, but some portion many times is assigned to yourself also, both by vain-glory, and by the return of the favor, and by your rising in many men's estimation on account of your guest. At any rate, I think I could point out many who with this view pay court to the more distinguished among the saints, namely, that by their means they may enjoy a greater intimacy with rulers, and that they may find them thenceforth more useful in their own

affairs and to their families. And many such favors do they ask in recompense from those saints; a thing which mars the repayment of their hospitality, they seeking it with such a mind.

And why need I say this about the saints? Since he who seeks, even from God, the reward of his labors in the present life and follows after virtue for this world's good, is sure to diminish his recompense. But he that asks for all his crowns wholly there, is found far more admirable; like that Lazarus, who even now is *"receiving"* [Luke 16:25] there all *"his good things;"* like those Three Children, who when they were on the point of being thrown into the furnace said, [Daniel 17:17-18] *"There is a God in heaven able to deliver us; and if not, be it known unto you, O king, that we serve not your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up:"* like Abraham, who even offered his son and slew him; and this he did, not for any reward, but esteeming this one thing the greatest recompense, to obey the Lord.

These let us also imitate. For so shall we be visited with a return of all our good deeds and that abundantly, because we do all with such a mind as this: so shall we obtain also the brighter crowns. And God grant that we may all obtain them, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now, henceforth, and for everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 21 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 9:1

Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

Inasmuch as he had said, *"If meat make my brother to stumble I will eat no flesh forever;"* a thing which he had not yet done, but professed he would do if need require: lest any man should say, *"You vaunt yourself at random, and art severe in discourse, and utterest words of promise, a thing easy to me or to any body; but if these sayings come from your heart, show by deeds something which you have slighted in order to avoid making your brother stumble:"* for this cause, I say, in what follows he is compelled to enter on the proof of this also, and to point out how he was used to forego even things permitted that he might not give offense, although without any law to enforce his doing so.

And we are not yet come to the admirable part of the matter: though it be admirable that he abstain even from things lawful to avoid offense: but it is his habit of doing so at the cost of so much trouble and danger. *"For why,"* says he, *"speak of the idol sacrifices? Since although Christ had enjoined that those who preach the Gospel should live at the charge of their disciples, I did not so, but chose, if need were, to end my life with famine and die the most grievous of deaths, so I might avoid receiving of those whom I instruct."*

Not because they would otherwise be made to stumble, but because his not receiving would edify them : a much greater thing for him to do. And to witness this he summons themselves, among whom he was used to live in

toil and in hunger, nourished by others, and put to straits, in order not to offend them. And yet there was no ground for their taking offense, for it would but have been a law which he was fulfilling. But for all this, by a sort of supererogation he used to spare them.

Now if he did more than was enacted lest they should take offense, and abstained from permitted things to edify others; what must they deserve who abstain not from idol sacrifices? And that, when many perish thereby? A thing which even apart from all scandal one ought to shrink from, as being *"the table of demons."*

The sum therefore of this whole topic is this which he works out in many verses. But we must resume it and make a fresh entrance on what he has alleged. For neither has he set it down thus expressly as I have worded it; nor does he leap at once upon it; but begins from another topic, thus speaking;

2. *"Am I not an Apostle?"* For besides all that has been said, this also makes no small difference that Paul himself is the person thus conducting himself. As thus: To prevent their alleging, *"You may taste of the sacrifices, sealing at the same time:"* for a while he withstands not that statement, but argues, *"Though it were lawful, your brethren's harm should keep you from doing so;"* and afterwards he proves that it is not even lawful. In this particular place, however, he establishes the former point from circumstances relating to himself. And intending presently to say that he had received nothing from them, he sets it not down at once, but his own dignity is what he first affirms: *"Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free?"*

Thus, to hinder their saying, *"True; thou did not receive, but the reason thou did not was its not being lawful;"* he sets down therefore first the causes why he might reasonably have received, had he been willing to do so.

Further: that there might not seem to be any thing invidious in regard of Peter and such as Peter, in his saying these things, (for they did not use to decline receiving;) he first shows that they had authority to receive, and then that no one might say, *"Peter had authority to receive but you had not,"* he possesses the hearer beforehand with these encomiums of himself. And perceiving that he must praise himself, (for that was the way to correct the Corinthians,) yet disliking to say any great thing of himself, see how he has tempered both feelings as the occasion required: limiting his own panegyric, not by what he knew of himself, but by what the subject of necessity required. For he might have said, *"I most of all had a right to receive, even more than they, because 'I labored more abundantly than they.'"* But this he omits, being a point wherein he surpassed them; and those points wherein they were great and which were just grounds for their receiving, those only he sets down: as follows:

"Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free?" i.e. *"have I not authority over myself? Am I under any, to overrule me and forbid my receiving?"*

"But they have an advantage over you, in having been with Christ."

"Nay, neither is this denied me." With a view to which he says,

"Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" For *"last of all,"* [1 Corinthians 15:8] says he, *"as unto one born out of due time, He appeared unto me also."* Now this likewise was no small dignity: since *"many Prophets,"* [Matthew 13:17] says He, *"and righteous men have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them:"* and, *"Days will come when you shall desire to see one of these days."* [Luke 17:22]

"What then, though thou be 'an Apostle,' and 'free,' and hast 'seen Christ,' if you have not exhibited any work of an Apostle; how then can it be right for you to receive?" Wherefore after this he adds,

"Are you not my work in the Lord?" For this is the great thing; and those others avail nothing, apart from this. Even Judas himself was *"an Apostle,"* and *"free,"* and *"saw Christ;"* but because he had not *"the work of an Apostle,"* all those things profited him not. You see then why he adds this also, and calls themselves to be witnesses of it.

Moreover, because it was a great thing which he had uttered, see how he chastens it, adding, *"In the Lord:"* i.e., *"the work is God's, not mine."*

1 Corinthians 9:2

"If to others I am not an Apostle, yet at least I am to you."

Do you see how far he is from enlarging here without necessity? And yet he had the whole world to speak of, and barbarous nations, and sea and land. However, he mentions none of these things, but carries his point by concession, and even granting more than he need. As if he had said, *"Why need I dwell on things over and above, since these even alone are enough for my present purpose? I speak not, you will observe, of my achievements in other quarters, but of those which have you for witnesses. Upon which it follows that if from no other quarter, yet from you I have a right to receive. Nevertheless, from whom I had most right to receive, even you whose teacher I was, from those I received not."*

"If to others I am not an Apostle, yet at least I am to you." Again, he states his point by concession. For the whole world had him for its Apostle. *"However,"* says he, *"I say not that, I am not contending nor disputing, but what concerns you I lay down. 'For the seal of mine Apostleship are you:'"* i.e., its proof. *"Should any one, moreover, desire to learn whence I am an Apostle, you are the persons whom I bring forward: for all the signs of an Apostle have I exhibited among you, and not one have I failed in."* As also he speaks in the Second Epistle, saying, [2 Corinthians 12:12] *"Though I am nothing, truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works. For what is there wherein you were made inferior to the rest of the Churches?"* Wherefore he says, *"The seal of mine Apostleship are you."* *"For I both exhibited miracles, and taught by word, and underwent dangers, and showed forth a blameless life."* And these topics you may see fully set forth by these two

Epistles, how he lays before them the demonstration of each with all exactness.

1 Corinthians 9:3

3. *"My defence to them that examine me is this." What is, "My defence to them that examine me is this?" "To those who seek to know whereby I am proved to be an Apostle, or who accuse me as receiving money, or inquire the cause of my not receiving, or would fain show that I am not an Apostle: to all such, my instruction given to you and these things which I am about to say, may stand for a full explanation and defence." What then are these?*

1 Corinthians 9:4-5

"Have we no right to eat and to drink? Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer?" Why, how are these sayings a defence? *"Because, when it appears that I abstain even from things which are allowed, it cannot be just to look suspiciously on me as a deceiver or one acting for gain."*

Wherefore, from what was before alleged and from my having instructed you and from this which I have now said, I have matter sufficient to make my defence to you: and all who examine me I meet upon this ground, alleging both what has gone before and this which follows: Have we no right to eat and to drink? Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer? *"Yet for all this, having it I abstain?"*

What then? Did he not use to eat or to drink? It were most true to say that in many places he really did not eat nor drink: for [1 Corinthians 4:11] *"in hunger,"* says he, *"and in thirst, and in nakedness"* we were abiding. Here, however, this is not his meaning; but what? *"We eat not nor drink, receiving of those whom we instruct, though we have a right so to receive."*

"Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" Observe his skilfulness. The leader of the choir stands last in his arrangement: since that is the time for laying down the strongest of all one's topics. Nor was it so wonderful for one to be able to point out examples of this conduct in the rest, as in the foremost champion and in him who was entrusted with the keys of heaven. But neither does he mention Peter alone, but all of them: as if he had said, Whether you seek the inferior sort or the more eminent, in all you find patterns of this sort.

For the brethren too of the Lord, being freed from their first unbelief [see John 7:5], had come to be among those who were approved, although they attained not to the Apostles. And accordingly the middle place is that which he has assigned to them, setting down those who were in the extremes before and after.

1 Corinthians 9:6

"Or I only and Barnabas, have we not a right to forbear working?"

(See his humility of mind and his soul pure from envy, how he takes care not to conceal him whom he knew to be a partaker with himself in this perfection.) For if the other things be common, how is not this common? Both they and we are apostles and are free, and have seen Christ, and have exhibited the works of Apostles. Therefore we likewise have a right both to live without working and to be supported by our disciples.

1 Corinthians 9:7

4. *"What soldier ever serves at his own charges?"* For since, which was the strongest point, he had proved from the Apostles that it is lawful to do so, he next comes to examples and to the common practice; as he uses to do: *"What soldier serves at his own charges?"* says he. But do thou consider, I pray, how very suitable are the examples to his proposed subject, and how he mentions first that which is accompanied with danger; viz. soldiership and arms and wars. For such a kind of thing was the Apostolate, nay rather much more hazardous than these. For not with men alone was their warfare, but with demons also, and against the prince of those beings was their battle array. What he says therefore is this: *"Not even do heathen governors, cruel and unjust as they are, require their soldiers to endure service and peril and live on their own means. How then could Christ ever have required this?"*

Nor is he satisfied with one example. For to him who is rather simple and dull, this also is wont to come as a great refreshment, viz. their seeing the common custom also going along with the laws of God. Wherefore he proceeds to another topic also and says, *"Who plants a vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof?"* For as by the former he indicated his dangers, so by this his labor and abundant travail and care.

He adds likewise a third example, saying, *"Who feeds a flock, and eats not of the milk thereof?"* He is exhibiting the great concern which it becomes a teacher to show for those who are under his rule. For, in fact, the Apostles were both soldiers and husbandmen and shepherds, not of the earth nor of irrational animals, nor in such wars as are perceptible by sense; but of reasonable souls and in battle array with the demons.

It also must be remarked how every where he preserves moderation, seeking the useful only, not the extraordinary. For he said not, "*What soldier serves and is not enriched?*" but, "*What soldier ever serves at his own charges?*" Neither did he say, "*Who plants a vineyard, and gathers not gold, or spares to collect the whole fruit?*" but, "*Who eats not of the fruit thereof?*" Neither did he say, "*Who feeds a flock, and makes not merchandize of the lambs?*" But what? "*And eats not of the milk thereof?*" Not of the lambs, but of the milk; signifying, that a little relief should be enough for the teacher, even his necessary food alone. (This refers to those who would devour all and gather the whole of the fruit.) "*So likewise the Lord ordained,*" saying, "*The laborer is worthy of his food.*" [Matthew 10:10]

And not this only does he establish by his illustrations, but he shows also what kind of man a priest ought to be. For he ought to possess both the courage of a soldier and the diligence of a husbandman and the carefulness of a shepherd, and after all these, to seek nothing more than necessities.

5. Having shown, as you see, both from the Apostles, that it is not forbidden the teacher to receive, and from illustrations found in common life, he proceeds also to a third head, thus saying,

1 Corinthians 9:8

"Do I speak these things after the manner of men? Or says not the law also the same?"

For since he had hitherto alleged nothing out of the Scriptures, but put forward the common custom; *"think not,"* says he, *"that I am confident in these alone, nor that I go to the opinions of men for the ground of these enactments. For I can show that these things are also well-pleasing to God, and I read an ancient law enjoining them."* Wherefore also he carries on his discourse in the form of a question, which is apt to be done in things fully acknowledged; thus saying, *"Say I these things after the manner of men?"* i.e. *"do I strengthen myself only by human examples?"* *"or says not the law also the same?"*

1 Corinthians 9:9-10

"For it is written in the law of Moses, You shall not muzzle the ox when he treads out the grain."

And on what account has he mentioned this, having the example of the priests? Wishing to establish it far beyond what the case required. Further, lest any should say, *"And what have we to do with the saying about the oxen?"* he works it out more exactly, saying, *"Is it for the oxen that God cares;"* Does God then, tell me, take no care for oxen? Well, He does take care of them, but not so as to make a law concerning such a thing as this. So that had he not been hinting at something important, training the Jews to mercy in the case of the brutes, and through these, discoursing with them of the teachers also; he would not have taken so much interest as even to make a law to forbid the muzzling of oxen.

Wherein he points out another thing likewise, that the labor of teachers both is and ought to be great.

And again another thing. What then is this? That whatever is said by the Old Testament respecting care for brutes, in its principal meaning bears on the instruction of human beings: as in fact do all the rest: the precepts, for example, concerning various garments; and those concerning vineyards and seeds and not making the ground bear various crops, and those concerning leprosy; and, in a word, all the rest: for they being of a duller sort He was discoursing with them from these topics, advancing them little by little.

And see how in what follows he does not even confirm it, as being clear and self-evident. For having said, *"Is it for the oxen that God cares?"* he added, *"or says he it altogether for our sake?"* Not adding even the

"altogether" at random, but that he might not leave the hearer any thing whatever to reply.

And he dwells upon the metaphor, saying and declaring, *"Yea for our sakes it was written, because he who plowes ought to plow in hope;"* i.e., the teacher ought to enjoy the returns of his labors; *"and he that threshes ought to thresh in hope of partaking."* And observe his wisdom in that from the seed he transferred the matter to the threshing floor; herein also again manifesting the many toils of the teachers, that they in their own persons both plough and tread the floor. And of the ploughing, because there was nothing to reap, but labor only, he used the word, *"hope;"* but of treading the floor he presently allows the fruit, saying, *"He that threshes is a partaker of his hope."*

Further, lest any should say, *"Is this then the return for so many toils,"* he adds, *"in hope,"* i.e., *"which is to come."* No other thing therefore does the mouth of this animal being unmuzzled declare than this; that the teachers who labor ought also to enjoy some return.

1 Corinthians 9:11

6. *"If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?"*

Lo, he adds also a fourth argument for the duty of yielding support. For since he had said, *"What soldier ever serves at his own charges?"* and, *"who plants a vineyard?"* and, *"who feeds a flock?"* and introduced the ox that treads the grain; he points out likewise another most reasonable cause on account of which they might justly receive; viz. having bestowed much greater gifts, no more as having labored only. What is it then? *"if we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?"* Do you see a most just allegation and fuller of reason than all the former? For *"in those instances,"* says he, *"carnal is the seed, carnal also is the fruit; but here not so, but the seed is spiritual, the return carnal."* Thus, to prevent high thoughts in those who contribute to their teachers, he signified that they receive more than they give. As if he had said, *"Husbandmen, whatsoever they sow, this also do they receive; but we, sowing in your souls spiritual things, do reap carnal."* For such is the kind of support given by them. Further, and still more to put them to the blush.

1 Corinthians 9:12

"If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more?"

See also again another argument, and this too from examples though not of the same kind. For it is not Peter whom he mentions here nor the Apostles, but certain other spurious ones, with whom he afterwards enters into combat, and concerning whom he says, [2 Corinthians 11:20] *"If a man devour you, if he take you captive, if he exalt himself, if he smite you on the face,"* and already he is sounding the prelude to the fight with them.

Wherefore neither did he say, *"If others take of you,"* but pointing out their insolence and tyranny and trafficking, he says, *"if others partake of this right over you,"* i.e., *"rule you, exercise authority, use you as servants, not taking you captive only, but with much authority."* Wherefore he added *"do not we yet more?"* which he would not have said if the discourse were concerning the Apostles. But it is evident that he hints at certain pestilent men, and deceivers of them. *"So that besides the law of Moses even ye yourselves have made a law in behalf of the duty of contribution."*

And having said, *"do not we yet more?"* he does not prove why yet more, but leaves it to their consciences to convince them of that, wishing at the same time both to alarm and to abash them more thoroughly.

7. Nevertheless, we did not use this right; i.e., *"did not receive."* Do you see, when he had by so many reasons before proved that receiving is not unlawful, how he next says, *"we receive not,"* that he might not seem to abstain as from a thing forbidden? *"For not because it is unlawful,"* says he, *"do I not receive; for it is lawful and this we have many ways shown: from the Apostles; from the affairs of life, the soldier, the husbandman, and the shepherd; from the law of Moses; from the very nature of the case, in that*

we have sown unto you spiritual things; from what yourselves have done to others." But as he had laid down these things, lest he should seem to put to shame the Apostles who were in the habit of receiving; abashing them and signifying that not as from a forbidden thing does he abstain from it: so again, lest by his large store of proof and the examples and reasonings by which he had pointed out the propriety of receiving, he should seem to be anxious to receive himself and therefore to say these things; he now corrects it. And afterwards he laid it down more clearly where he says, *"And I wrote not these things, that it may be so done in my case;"* but here his words are, *"we did not use this right."*

And what is a still greater thing, neither could any have this to say, that being in abundance we declined using it; rather, when necessity pressed upon us we would not yield to the necessity. Which also in the second Epistle he says; *"I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you; and when I was present with you, and was in want, I was not a burden on any man."* [2 Corinthians 11:8-9] And in this Epistle again, *"We both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted."* [1 Corinthians 4:11] And here again he hints the same thing, saying, *"But we bear all things."* For by saying, *"we bear all things,"* he intimates both hunger and great straits and all the other things. *"But not even thus have we been compelled,"* says he, to break the law which we laid down for ourselves. Wherefore? *"that we may cause no hinderance to the Gospel of Christ."* For since the Corinthians were rather weak-minded, *"lest we should wound you,"* says he *"by receiving, we chose to do even more than was commanded rather than hinder the Gospel,"* i.e., your instruction. Now if we in a matter left free to us, and when we were both enduring much hardship and having Apostles for our pattern, used abstinence lest we should give hindrance, (and he did not say, *"subversion,"* but *"hindrance;"*

nor simply "*hindrance*," but "*any*" hindrance,) that we might not, so to speak, cause so much as the slightest suspense and delay to the course of the Word: "*If now*," says he, "*we used so great care, how much more ought you to abstain, who both come far short of the Apostles and have no law to mention, giving you permission: but contrariwise are both putting your hand to things forbidden and things which tend to the great injury of the Gospel, not to its hindrance only ; and not even having any pressing necessity in view.*" For all this discussion he had moved on account of these Corinthians, who were making their weaker brethren to stumble by eating of things sacrificed to idols.

8. These things also let us listen to, beloved; that we may not despise those who are offended, nor, "*cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ;*" that we may not betray our own salvation. And say not thou to me when your brother is offended, "*this or that, whereby he is offended, has not been forbidden; it is permitted.*" For I have something greater to say to you: "*although Christ Himself have permitted it, yet if you see any injured, stop and do not use the permission.*" For this also did Paul; when he might have received, Christ having granted permission, he received not. Thus has our Lord in His mercy mingled much gentleness with His precepts that it might not be all merely of commandment, but that we might do much also of our own mind. Since it was in His power, had He not been so minded, to extend the commandments further and to say, "*he who fasts not continually, let him be chastised; he who keeps not his virginity, let him be punished; he that does not strip himself of all that he has, let him suffer the severest penalty.*" But he did not so, giving you occasion, if you will, to be forward in doing more. Wherefore both when He was discoursing about virginity, He said, "*He that is able to receive, let him receive it:*" and in the case of the rich man, some things He commanded, but some He left to the determination of

his mind. For He said not, *"Sell what you have,"* but, *"If you will be perfect, sell."*

But we are not only not forward to do more, and to go beyond the precepts, but we fall very short even of the measure of things commanded. And whereas Paul suffered hunger that he might not hinder the Gospel; we have not the heart even to touch what is in our own stores, though we see innumerable souls overthrown. *"Yea"* says one, *"let the moth eat, and let not the poor eat; let the worm devour, and let not the naked be clothed; let all be wasted away with time, and let not Christ be fed; and this when He hungers."* *"Why, who said this?"* it will be asked. Nay, this is the very grievance, that not in words but in deeds these things are said: for it were less grievous uttered in words than done in deeds. For is not this the cry, day by day, of the inhuman and cruel tyrant, Covetousness, to those who are led captive by her? *"Let your goods be set before informers and robbers and traitors for luxury, and not before the hungry and needy for their sustenance."* Is it not ye then who make robbers? Is it not ye who minister fuel to the fire of the envious? Is it not ye who make vagabonds and traitors, putting your wealth before them for a bait? What madness is this? (for a madness it is, and plain distraction,) to fill your chests with apparel, and overlook him that is made after God's image and similitude, naked and trembling with cold, and with difficulty keeping himself upright.

"But he pretends," says one, *"this tremor and weakness."* And do you not fear lest a thunderbolt from heaven, kindled by this word, should fall upon you? (For I am bursting with wrath: bear with me.) You, I say, pampering and fattening yourself and extending your potations to the dead of night and comforting yourself in soft coverlets, dost not deem yourself liable to judgment, so lawlessly using the gifts of God: (for wine was not made that we should be drunken; nor food, that we should pamper our

appetites; nor meats, that we should distend the belly.) But from the poor, the wretched, from him that is as good as dead, from him do you demand strict accounts, and do you not fear Christ's tribunal, so full of all awfulness and terror? Why, if he do play the hypocrite, he does it of necessity and want, because of your cruelty and inhumanity, requiring the use of such masks and refusing all inclination to mercy. For who is so wretched and miserable as without urgent necessity, for one loaf of bread, to submit to such disgrace, and to bewail himself and endure so severe a punishment? So that this hypocrisy of his goes about, the herald of your inhumanity. For since by supplicating and beseeching and uttering piteous expressions and lamenting and weeping and going about all day, he does not obtain even necessary food, he devised perhaps even this contrivance also, the disgrace and blame whereof falls not so much on himself as on you: for he indeed is meet to be pitied because he has fallen into so great necessity; but we are worthy of innumerable punishments because we compel the poor to suffer such things. For if we would easily give way, never would he have chosen to endure such things.

And why speak I of nakedness and trembling? For I will tell a thing yet more to be shuddered at, that some have been compelled even to deprive their children of sight at an early age in order that they might touch our insensibility. For since when they could see and went about naked, neither by their age nor by their misfortunes could they win favor of the un pitying, they added to so great evils another yet sterner tragedy, that they might remove their hunger; thinking it to be a lighter thing to be deprived of this common light and that sunshine which is given to all, than to struggle with continual famine and endure the most miserable of deaths. Thus, since you have not learned to pity poverty, but delight yourselves in misfortunes,

they satisfy your insatiable desire, and both for themselves and for us kindle a fiercer flame in hell.

9. And to convince you that this is the reason why these and such like things are done, I will tell you of an acknowledged proof which no man can gainsay. There are other poor men, of light and unsteady minds and not knowing how to bear hunger, but rather enduring every thing than it. These having often tried to deal with us by piteous gestures and words and finding that they availed nothing, have left off those supplications and henceforward our very wonder-workers are surpassed by them, some chewing the skins of worn-out shoes, and some fixing sharp nails into their heads, others lying about in frozen pools with naked stomachs, and others enduring different things yet more horrid than these, that they may draw around them the ungodly spectators. And thou, while these things are going on, standest laughing and wondering the while and making a fine show of other men's miseries, our common nature disgracing itself. And what could a fierce demon do more? Next, you give him money in abundance that he may do these things more promptly. And to him that prays and calls on God and approaches with modesty, you vouchsafe neither an answer nor a look: rather you utter to him, continually teasing you, those disgusting expressions, *"Ought this fellow to live? Or at all to breathe and see this sun?"* whereas to the other sort you are both cheerful and liberal, as though you were appointed to dispense the prize of that ridiculous and Satanic unseemliness. Wherefore with more propriety to those who appoint these sports and bestow nothing till they see others punishing themselves, might these words be addressed, *"Ought these men to live, to breathe at all, or see the sun, who transgress against our common nature, who insult God?"* For whereas God says, *"Give alms, and I give you the kingdom of heaven,"* you hear not: but when the Devil shows you a head pierced with nails, on a

sudden you have become liberal. And the contrivance of the evil spirit pregnant with so much mischief, has wrought upon you more than the promise of God bringing innumerable blessings. If gold were to be laid down to prevent the doing of these things or the looking upon them when done, there is nothing which you ought not to practise and endure, to get rid of so excessive madness; but you contrive every thing to have them done, and look on the doing of them. Still do you ask then, tell me, to what end is hell-fire? Nay, ask not that any more, but how is there one hell only? For of how many punishments are not they worthy, who get up this cruel and merciless spectacle and laugh at what both they and yourselves ought to weep over; yea, rather of the two, you who compel them to such unseemly doings.

"But I do not compel them," say you. What else but compelling is it, I should like to know? Those who are more modest and shed tears and invoke God, you are impatient even of listening to; but for these thou both findest silver in abundance and bringest around you many to admire them.

"Well, let us leave off," say you, *"pitying them. And do you too enjoin this?"* Nay, it is not pity, O man, to demand so severe a punishment for a few pence, to order men to maim themselves for necessary food and cut into many pieces the skin of their head so mercilessly and pitifully.

"Gently," say you, *"for it is not we who pierce those heads."* Would it were thou, and the horror would not be so horrible. For he that slays a man does a much more grievous thing than he who bids him slay himself, which indeed happens in the case of these persons. For they endure more bitter pains when they are bidden to be themselves the executors of these wicked commands.

And all this in Antioch, where men were first called Christians, wherein are bred the most civilized of mankind, where in old time the fruit

of charity flourished so abundantly. For not only to those at hand but also to those very far off, they used to send, and this when famine was expected.

10. What then ought we to do? Say you. To cease from this savage practice: and to convince all that are in need that by doing these things they will gain nothing, but if they modestly approach they shall find your liberality great. Let them be once aware of this, even though they be of all men most miserable, they will never choose to punish themselves so severely, I pledge myself; nay, they will even give you thanks for delivering them both from the mockery and the pain of that way of life. But as it is, for charioteers you would let out even your own children, and for dancers you would throw away your very souls, while for Christ an hungered you spare not the smallest portion of your substance. But if you give a little silver, you think as much of it as if you had laid out all you have, not knowing that not the giving but the giving liberally, this is true almsgiving. Wherefore also it is not those simply who give whom the prophet proclaims and calls happy, but those who bestow liberally. For he does not say simply, He has given, but what? [Psalm 112:8] *"he has dispersed abroad, he has given to the poor."* For what profit is it, when out of it you give as it were a glass of water out of the sea, and even a widow's magnanimity is beyond your emulation? And how will you say, *"Pity me, O Lord, according to your great pity, and according to the multitude of your mercies blot out my transgression,"* yourself not pitying according to any great pity, nay, haply not according to any little. For I am greatly ashamed, I own, when I see many of the rich riding upon their golden-bitted chargers with a train of domestics clad in gold, and having couches of silver and other and more pomp, and yet when there is need to give to a poor man, becoming more beggarly than the very poorest.

11. But what is their constant talk? "*He has,*" they say, "*the common church-allowance.*" And what is that to you? For you will not be saved because I give; nor if the Church bestow have you blotted out your own sins. For this cause do you not give, because the Church ought to give to the needy? Because the priests pray, will you never pray yourself? And because others fast, will you be continually drunken? Do you not know that God enacted not almsgiving so much for the sake of the poor as for the sake of the persons themselves who bestow?

But do you suspect the priest? Why this thing itself, to begin with, is a grievous sin. However, I will not examine the matter too nicely. Do thou it all in your own person, and so shall you reap a double reward. Since in fact, what we say in behalf of almsgiving, we say not, that you should offer to us, but that you should yourself minister by your own hands. For if you bring your alms to me, perhaps you may even be led captive by vain-glory, and oftentimes likewise you shall go away offended through suspicion of something evil: but if you do all things by yourselves, you shall both be rid of offenses and of unreasonable suspicion, and greater is your reward. Not therefore to compel you to bring your money hither, do I say these things; nor from indignation on account of the priests being ill-reported of. For if one must be indignant and grieve, for you should be our grief, who say this ill. Since to them who are spoken ill of falsely and vainly the reward is greater, but to the speakers the condemnation and punishment is heavier. I say not these things therefore in their behalf, but in solicitude and care for you. For what marvel is it if some in our generation are suspected, when in the case of those holy men who imitated the angels, who possessed nothing of their own, I mean the Apostles, there was a murmuring in the ministration to the widows [Acts 6:1] that the poor were overlooked? When

"not one said that anything of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common?" [Acts 4:32]

Let us not then put forward these pretexts, nor account it an excuse that the Church is wealthy. But when you see the greatness of her substance, bear in mind also the crowds of poor who are on her list, the multitudes of her sick, her occasions of endless expenses. Investigate, scrutinize, there is none to forbid, nay, they are even ready to give you an account. But I wish to go much farther. Namely, when we have given in our accounts and proved that our expenditure is no less than our income, nay, sometimes more, I would gladly ask you this further question: When we depart hence and shall hear Christ saying, *"You saw me hungry, and gave me no meat; naked, and you clothed me not;"* what shall we say? What apology shall we make? Shall we bring forward such and such a person who disobeyed these commands? Or some of the priests who were suspected? *"Nay, what is this to you? For I accuse you,"* says He, *"of those things wherein you have yourself sinned. And the apology for these would be, to have washed away your own offenses, not to point to others whose errors have been the same as yours."*

In fact, the Church through your meanness is compelled to have such property as it has now. Since, if men did all things according to the laws, its revenue should have been your good will, which were both a secure chest and an inexhaustible treasury. But now when you lay up for yourselves treasures upon the earth and shut up all things in your own stores, while the Church is compelled to be at charges with bands of widows, choirs of virgins, sojournings of strangers, distresses of foreigners, the misfortunes of prisoners, the necessities of the sick and maimed, and other such like causes, what must be done? Turn away from all these, and block up so many ports? Who then could endure the shipwrecks that would ensue; the

weepings, the lamentations, the wailings which would reach us from every quarter?

Let us not then speak at random what comes into our mind. For now, as I have just said, we are really prepared to render up our accounts to you. But even if it were the reverse, and you had corrupt teachers plundering and grasping at every thing, not even so were their wickedness an apology for you. For the Lover of mankind and All-wise, the Only-Begotten Son of God, seeing all things, and knowing the chance that in so great length of time and in so vast a world there would be many corrupt priests; lest the carelessness of those under their rule should increase through their neglect, removing every excuse for indifference; *"In Moses' seat,"* says He, *"sit the Scribes and the Pharisees; all things, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, these do ye, but do not ye after their works:"* implying, that even if you have a bad teacher, this will not avail you, should you not attend to the things which are spoken. For not from what your teacher has done but from what you have heard and disobeyed, from that, I say, does God pass his sentence upon you. So that if you do the things commanded, you shall then stand with much boldness: but if you disobey the things spoken, even though you should show ten thousand corrupt priests, this will not plead for you at all. Since Judas also was an apostle, but nevertheless this shall never be any apology for the sacrilegious and covetous. Nor will any be able when accused to say, *"Why the Apostle was a thief and sacrilegious, and a traitor;"* yea, this very thing shall most of all be our punishment and condemnation that not even by the evils of others were we corrected. For this cause also these things were written that we might shun all emulation of such things.

Wherefore, leaving this person and that, let us take heed to ourselves. For *"each of us shall give account of himself to God."* In order therefore that

we may render up this account with a good defence, let us well order our own lives and stretch out a liberal hand to the needy, knowing that this only is our defence, the showing ourselves to have rightly done the things commanded; there is no other whatever. And if we be able to produce this, we shall escape those intolerable pains of hell, and obtain the good things to come; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 22 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 9:13-14

Do you not know that they which minister about sacred things eat of the temple? And they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel.

He takes great care to show that the receiving was not forbidden. Whereupon having said so much before, he was not content but proceeds also to the Law, furnishing an example closer to the point than the former. For it was not the same thing to bring forward the oxen and to adduce the law expressly given concerning priests.

But consider, I pray, in this also the wisdom of Paul, how he mentions the matter in a way to give it dignity. For he did not say, *"They which minister about sacred things receive of those who offer them."* But what? *"They eat of the temple:"* so that neither they who receive may be blamed nor they who give may be lifted up. Wherefore also what follows he has set down in the same way.

For neither did he say, *"They which wait upon the altar receive of them which sacrifice,"* but, *"have their portion with the altar."* For the things offered now no longer belonged to those who offered them, but to the temple and the altar. And he said not, *"They receive the holy things,"* but, they *"eat of the temple,"* indicating again their moderation, and that it behooves them not to make money nor to be rich. And though he say that they have their portion *"with the altar,"* he does not speak of equal distribution but of relief given them as their due. And yet the case of the

Apostles was much stronger. For in the former instance the priesthood was an honor, but in the latter it was dangers and slaughters and violent deaths. Wherefore all the other examples together did not come up to the saying, *"If we sowed unto you spiritual things:"* since in saying, *"we sowed,"* he points out the storms, the danger, the snares, the unspeakable evils, which they endured in preaching. Nevertheless, though the superiority was so great, he was unwilling either to abase the things of the old law or to exalt the things which belong to himself: nay he even contracts his own, reckoning the superiority not from the dangers, but from the greatness of the gift. For he said not, *"if we have jeopardized ourselves"* or *"exposed ourselves to snares"* but *"if we sowed unto you spiritual things."*

And the part of the priests, as far as possible, he exalts, saying, *"They which minister about sacred things,"* and *"they that wait upon the altar,"* thereby intending to point out their continual servitude and patience. Again, as he had spoken of the priests among the Jews, viz. both the Levites and the Chief Priests, so he has expressed each of the orders, both the inferior and the superior; the one by saying, *"they which minister about sacred things,"* and the other by saying, *"they which wait upon the altar."* For not to all was one work commanded; but some were entrusted with the coarser, others with the more exalted offices. Comprehending therefore all these, lest any should say, *"why talk to us of the old law? Do you not know that ours is the time of more perfect commandments?"* after all those topics he placed that which is strongest of all, saying,

"Even so did the Lord ordain that they who proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel." [1 Corinthians 9:14]

Nor does he even here say that they are supported by men, but as in the case of the priests, of *"the temple"* and *"of the altar,"* so likewise here, *"of the Gospel;"* and as there he says, *"eat,"* so here, *"live,"* not make

merchandize nor lay up treasures. *"For the laborer,"* says He, *"is worthy of his hire."*

1 Corinthians 9:15

2. *"But I have used none of these things:"*

What then if you have not used them now, says one, but intendest to use them at a future time, and on this account sayest these things. Far from it; for he speedily corrected the notion, thus saying;

"And I write not these things that it may be so done in my case."

And see with what vehemence he disavows and repels the thing:

"For it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void."

And not once nor twice, but many times he uses this expression. For above he said, *"We did not use this right:"* and after this again, *"that I abuse not my right:"* and here, *"but I have used none of these things."* *"These things;"* what things? The many examples. That is to say, many things giving me license; the soldier, the husbandman, the shepherd, the Apostles, the law, the things done by us unto you, the things done by you unto the others, the priests, the ordinance of Christ; by none of these have I been induced to abolish my own law, and to receive. And speak not to me of the past: (although I could say, that I have endured much even in past times on this account,) nevertheless I do not rest on it alone, but likewise concerning the future I pledge myself, that I would choose rather to die of hunger than be deprived of these crowns.

"For it were good for me rather to die," says he, *"than that any man should make my glorying void."*

He said not, *"that any man should abolish my law,"* but, *"my glorying."* For lest any should say, *"he does it indeed but not cheerfully, but with lamentation and grief,"* willing to show the excess of his joy and the

abundance of his zeal, he even calls the matter "*glorying*." So far was he from vexing himself that he even glories, and chooses rather to die than to fall from this "*glorying*." So much dearer to him even than life itself was that proceeding of his.

3. Next, he exalts it from another consideration also, and signifies that it was a great thing, not that he might show himself famous, (for far was he from that disposition,) but to signify that he rejoices, and with a view more abundantly to take away all suspicion. For on this account, as I before said, he also called it a glorying: and what says he?

1 Corinthians 9:16-18

"For if I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward: but if not of my own will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. What then is my reward? That when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the Gospel."

What do you say? Tell me. *"If you preach the Gospel, it is nothing for you to glory of, but it is, if you make the Gospel of Christ without charge?"* Is this therefore greater than that? By no means; but in another point of view it has some advantage, inasmuch as the one is a command, but the other is a good deed of my own free-will: for what things are done beyond the commandment, have a great reward in this respect: but such as are in pursuance of a commandment, not so great: and so in this respect he says, the one is more than the other; not in the very nature of the thing. For what is equal to preaching; since it makes men vie even with the angels themselves. Nevertheless since the one is a commandment and a debt, the other a forwardness of free-will, in this respect this is more than that. Wherefore he says, explaining the same, what I just now mentioned:

"For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, a stewardship is entrusted to me;" taking the words of my own *"will"* and *"not of my own will,"* of its being committed or not committed to him. And thus we must understand the expression, *"for necessity is laid upon me;"* not as though he did anything of these things against his will, God forbid, but as though he were bound by the things commanded, and for contradistinction to the liberty in receiving before mentioned. Wherefore

also Christ said to the disciples, [Luke 17:10] *"When you have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants; for we have done that which was our duty to do."*

"What then is my reward? That when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel without charge." What then, tell me, has Peter no reward? Nay, who can ever have so great an one as he? And what shall we say of the other Apostles? How then said he, *"If I do this of my own will I have a reward, but if not of my own will, a stewardship is entrusted to me?"* Do you see here also his wisdom? For he said not, *"But if not of my own will,"* I have no reward, but, *"a stewardship is committed unto me:"* implying that even thus he has a reward, but such as he obtains who has performed what was commanded, not such as belongs to him who has of his own resources been generous and exceeded the commandment.

"What then is the reward? That, when I preach the Gospel," says he, *"I may make the Gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the Gospel."* See how throughout he uses the term *"right,"* intimating this, as I have often observed; that neither are they who receive worthy of blame. But he added, *"in the Gospel,"* partly to show the reasonableness of it, partly also to forbid our carrying the matter out into every case. For the teacher ought to receive, but not the mere drone also.

1 Corinthians 9:19

4. *"For though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more."*

Here again he introduces another high step in advance. For a great thing it is even not to receive, but this which he is about to mention is much more than that. What then is it that he says? *"Not only have I not received,"* says he, not only have I not used this right, but I have even made myself a slave, and in a slavery manifold and universal. For not in money alone, but, which was much more than money, in employments many and various have I made good this same rule: and I have made myself a slave when I was subject to none, having no necessity in any respect, (for this is the meaning of, *"though I was free from all men;"*) and not to any single person have I been a slave, but to the whole world.

Wherefore also he subjoined, *"I brought myself under bondage to all."* That is, *"To preach the Gospel I was commanded, and to proclaim the things committed to my trust; but the contriving and devising numberless things beside, all that was of my own zeal. For I was only under obligation to invest the money, whereas I did every thing in order to get a return for it, attempting more than was commanded."* Thus doing as he did all things of free choice and zeal and love to Christ, he had an insatiable desire for the salvation of mankind. Wherefore also he used to overpass by a very great deal the lines marked out, in every way springing higher than the very heaven.

5. Next, having mentioned his servitude, he describes in what follows the various modes of it. And what are these?

1 Corinthians 9:20

"And I became," says he, *"to the Jews as a Jew, that I might gain Jews."* And how did this take place? When he circumcised that he might abolish circumcision. Wherefore he said not, *"a Jew,"* but, *"as a Jew,"* which was a wise arrangement. What do you say? The herald of the world and he who touched the very heavens and shone so bright in grace, does he all at once descend so low? Yea. For this is to ascend. For you are not to look to the fact only of his descending, but also to his raising up him that was bowed down and bringing him up to himself.

"To them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law." Either it is the explanation of what went before, or he hints at some other thing besides the former: calling those Jews, who were such originally and from the first: but *"under the law,"* the proselytes, or those who became believers and yet adhered to the law. For they were no longer as Jews, yet 'under the law.' And when was he under the law? When he shaved his head; when he offered sacrifice. Now these things were done, not because his mind changed, (since such conduct would have been wickedness,) but because his love condescended. For that he might bring over to this faith those who were really Jews, he became such himself not really, showing himself such only, but not such in fact nor doing these things from a mind so disposed. Indeed, how could he, zealous as he was to convert others also, and doing these things only in order that he might free others who did them from that degradation?

1 Corinthians 9:21

"To them that are without law, as without law." These were neither Jews, nor Christians, nor Greeks; but 'outside of the Law,' as was Cornelius, and if there were any others like him. For among these also making his appearance, he used to assume many of their ways. But some say that he hints at his discourse with the Athenians from the inscription on the altar, and that so he says, *"to them that are without law, as without law."*

Then, lest any should think that the matter was a change of mind, he added, *"not being without law to God, but under law to Christ;"* i.e., *"so far from being without law, I am not simply under the Law, but I have that law which is much more exalted than the older one, viz. that of the Spirit and of grace."* Wherefore also he adds, *"to Christ."* Then again, having made them confident of his judgment, he states also the gain of such condescension, saying, *"that I might gain them that are without law."* And every where he brings forward the cause of his condescension, and stops not even here, but says,

1 Corinthians 9:22

"To the weak became I weak, that I might gain the weak:" in this part coming to their case, with a view to which also all these things have been spoken. However, those were much greater things, but this more to the purpose; whence also he has placed it after them. Indeed he did the same thing likewise in his Epistle to the Romans, when he was finding fault about meats; and so in many other places.

Next, not to waste time by naming all severally, he says, *"I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some."*

Do you see how far it is carried? *"I have become all things to all men,"* not expecting, however, to save all, but that I may save though it be but a few. And so great care and service have I undergone, as one naturally would who was about saving all, far however from hoping to gain all: which was truly magnanimous and a proof of burning zeal. Since likewise the sower sowed every where, and saved not all the seed, notwithstanding he did his part. And having mentioned the fewness of those who are saved, again, adding, *"by all means,"* he consoled those to whom this was a grief. For though it be not possible that all the seed should be saved, nevertheless it cannot be that all should perish. Wherefore he said, *"by all means,"* because one so ardently zealous must certainly have some success.

1 Corinthians 9:23

"And I do all things for the Gospel's sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof."

That is, that I may seem also myself to have added some contribution of my own, and may partake of the crowns laid up for the faithful. For as he spoke of *"living of the Gospel,"* i.e., of the believers; so also here, *"that I may be a joint partaker in the Gospel, that I may be able to partake with them that have believed in the Gospel."* Do you perceive his humility, how in the recompense of rewards he places himself as one of the many, though he had exceeded all in his labors? Whence it is evident that he would in his reward also. Nevertheless, he claims not to enjoy the first prize, but is content if so be he may partake with the others in the crowns laid up for them. But these things he said, not because he did this for any reward, but that hereby at least he might draw them on, and by these hopes might induce them to do all things for their brethren's sake. Do you see his wisdom! Do you see the excellency of his perfection? How he wrought beyond the things commanded, not receiving when it was lawful to receive. Do you see the exceeding greatness of his condescension? How he that was *"under law to Christ,"* and kept that highest law, *"to them that were without law,"* was *"as one without law,"* to the Jews, as a Jew, in either kind showing himself preeminent, and surpassing all.

6. This also do thou, and think not being eminent, that you lower yourself, when for your brother's sake you submit to some abasement. For this is not to fall, but to descend. For he who falls, lies prostrate, hardly to be raised up again; but he who descends shall also rise again with much advantage. As also Paul descended indeed alone, but ascended with the

whole world: not acting a part, for he would not have sought the gain of them that are saved had he been acting. Since the hypocrite seeks men's perdition, and feigns, that he may receive, not that he may give. But the apostle not so: as a physician rather, as a teacher, as a father, the one to the sick, the other to the disciple, the third to the son, condescends for his correction, not for his hurt; so likewise did he.

To show that the things which have been stated were not pretence; in a case where he is not compelled to do or say any such thing but means to express his affection and his confidence; hear him saying, [Romans 8:39] *"neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Do you see a love more ardent than fire? So let us also love Christ. For indeed it is easy, if we will. For neither was the Apostle such by nature. On this account, you see, his former life was recorded, so contrary to this, that we may learn that the work is one of choice, and that to the willing all things are easy.

Let us not then despair, but even though thou be a reviler, or covetous, or whatsoever you are, consider that Paul was [1 Timothy 13-16] *"a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious, and the chief of sinners,"* and suddenly rose to the very summit of virtue, and his former life proved no hindrance to him. And yet none with so great frenzy clings to vice as he did to the war against the Church. For at that time he put his very life into it; and because he had not ten thousand hands that he might stone Stephen with all of them, he was vexed. Notwithstanding, even thus he found how he might stone him with more hands, to wit, those of the false witnesses whose clothes he kept. And again, when he entered into houses like a wild beast and no otherwise did he rush in, haling, tearing men and women,

filling all things with tumult and confusion and innumerable conflicts. For instance, so terrible was he that the Apostles, [Acts 9:26] even after his most glorious change, did not yet venture to join themselves to him. Nevertheless, after all those things he became such as he was: for I need not say more.

7. Where now are they who build up the necessity of fate against the freedom of the will? Let them hear these things, and let their mouths be stopped. For there is nothing to hinder him that wills to become good, even though before he should be one of the vilest. And in fact we are more aptly disposed that way, inasmuch as virtue is agreeable to our nature, and vice contrary to it, even as sickness and health. For God has given us eyes, not that we may look wantonly, but that, admiring his handi-work, we may worship the Creator. And that this is the use of our eyes is evident from the things which are seen. For the lustre of the sun and of the sky we see from an immeasurable distance, but a woman's beauty one cannot discern so far off. Do you see that for this end our eye was chiefly given? Again, he made the ear that we should entertain not blasphemous words, but saving doctrines. Wherefore you see, when it receives any thing dissonant, both our soul shudders and our very body also. *"For,"* says one, [Sirach 27:5] *"the talk of him that swears much makes the hair stand upright."* And if we hear any thing cruel or merciless, again our flesh creeps; but if any thing decorous and kind, we even exult and rejoice. Again, if our mouth utter base words, it causes us to be ashamed and hide ourselves, but if grave words, it utters them with ease and all freedom. Now for those things which are according to nature no one would blush, but for those which are against nature. And the hands when they steal hide themselves, and seek excuses; but if they give alms, they even glory. So that if we will, we have from every side a great inclination towards virtue. But if you talk to me of the

pleasure which arises from vice, consider that this also is a thing which we reap more of from virtue. For to have a good conscience and to be looked up to by all and to entertain good hopes, is of all things most pleasant to him that has seen into the nature of pleasure, even as the reverse is of all things the most grievous to him that knows the nature of pain; such as to be reproached by all, to be accused by our own conscience, to tremble and fear both at the future and the present.

And that what I say may become more evident, let us suppose for argument's sake one man having a wife, yet defiling the marriage-bed of his neighbor and taking pleasure in this wicked robbery, enjoying his paramour. Then let us again oppose to him another who loves his own spouse. And that the victory may be greater and more evident, let the man who enjoys his own wife only, have a fancy also for the other, the adulteress, but restrain his passion and do nothing evil: (although neither is this pure chastity.) However, granting more than is necessary, that you may convince yourself how great is the pleasure of virtue, for this cause have we so framed our story.

Now then, having brought them together, let us ask them accordingly, whose is the pleasanter life: and you will hear the one glorying and exulting in the conquest over his lust: but the other— or rather, there is no need to wait to be informed of any thing by him. For you shall see him, though he deny it times without number, more wretched than men in a prison. For he fears and suspects all, both his own wife and the husband of the adulteress and the adulteress herself, and domestics, and friends, and kinsmen, and walls, and shadows, and himself, and what is worst of all, he has his conscience crying out against him, barking aloud every day. But if he should also bring to mind the judgment-seat of God, he will not be able even to stand. And the pleasure is short: but the pain from it unceasing. For

both at even, and in the night, in the desert and the city and every where, the accuser haunts him, pointing to a sharpened sword and the intolerable punishment, and with that terror consuming and wasting him. But the other, the chaste person, is free from all these things, and is at liberty, and with comfort looks upon his wife, his children, his friends, and meets all with unembarrassed eyes. Now if he that is enamored but is master of himself enjoy so great pleasure, he that indulges no such passion but is truly chaste, what harbor, what calm will be so sweet and serene as the mind which he will attain? And on this account you may see few adulterers but many chaste persons. But if the former were the pleasanter, it would be preferred by the greater number. And tell me not of the terror of the laws. For this is not that which restrains them, but the excessive unreasonableness, and the fact that the pains of it are more than the pleasures, and the sentence of conscience.

8. Such then is the adulterer. Now, if you please, let us bring before you the covetous, laying bare again another lawless passion. For him too we shall see afraid of the same things and unable to enjoy real pleasure: in that calling to mind both those whom he has wronged, and those who sympathize with them, and the public sentence of all concerning himself, he has ten thousand agitations.

And this is not his only vexation, but not even his beloved object can he enjoy. For such is the way of the covetous; not that they may enjoy do they possess, but that they may not enjoy. But if this seem to you a riddle, hear next what is yet worse than this and more perplexing; that not in this way only are they deprived of the pleasure of their goods, by their not venturing to use them as they would, but also by their never being filled with them but living in a continual thirst: than which what can be more grievous? But the just man is not so, but is delivered both from trembling

and hatred and fear and this incurable thirst: and as all men curse the one, even so do all men conspire to bless the other: and as the one has no friend, so has the other no enemy.

What now, these things being so acknowledged, can be more unpleasing than vice or more pleasant than virtue? Nay, rather, though we should speak for ever, no one shall be able to represent in discourse either the pain of this, or the pleasure of the other, until we shall experience it. For then shall we find vice more bitter than gall, when we shall have fully tasted the honey of virtue. Not but vice is even now unpleasant, and disgusting, and burdensome, and this not even her very votaries gainsay; but when we withdraw from her, then do we more clearly discern the bitterness of her commands. But if the multitude run to her, it is no marvel; since children also oftentimes, choosing things less pleasant, despise those which are more delightful and the sick for a momentary gratification lose the perpetual and more certain joy. But this comes of the weakness and folly of those who are possessed with any fondness, not of the nature of the things. For it is the virtuous man who lives in pleasure; he who is rich indeed and free indeed.

But if any one would grant the rest to virtue—liberty, security, freedom from cares, the fearing no man, the suspecting no man—but would not grant it pleasure; to laugh, and that heartily, occurs to me, I confess, as the only course to be taken. For what else is pleasure, but freedom from care and fear and despondency, and the not being under the power of any? And who is in pleasure, tell me, the man in frenzy and convulsion, who is goaded by various lusts, and is not even himself; or he who is freed from all these waves, and is settled in the love of wisdom, as it were in a harbor? Is it not evident, the latter? But this would seem to be a thing peculiar to virtue. So that vice has merely the name of pleasure, but of the substance it is destitute. And before the enjoyment, it is madness, not pleasure: but after

the enjoyment, straightway this also is extinguished. Now then if neither at the beginning nor afterwards can one discern the pleasure of it, when will it appear, and where?

And that you may more clearly understand what I say, let us try the force of the argument in an example. Now consider. One is enamored of a fair and lovely woman: this man as long as he cannot obtain his desire is like men beside themselves and frantic; but after that he has obtained it, he has quenched his appetite. If therefore neither at the beginning does he feel pleasure, (for the affair is madness,) nor in the end, (for by the indulgence of his lust he cools down his wild fancy,) where after all are we to find it? But our doings are not such, but both at the beginning they are freed from all disturbance, and to the end the pleasure remains in its bloom: nay rather there is no end of our pleasure, nor have our good things a limit, nor is this pleasure ever done away.

Upon all these considerations, then, if we love pleasure, let us lay hold on virtue that we may win good things both now and hereafter: unto which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy, etc.

Homily 23 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 9:24

Do you not know that they which run in a race run all, but one receives the prize?

Having pointed out the manifold usefulness of condescension and that this is the highest perfectness, and that he himself having risen higher than all towards perfection, or rather having gone beyond it by declining to receive, descended lower than all again; and having made known to us the times for each of these, both for the perfectness and for the condescension; he touches them more sharply in what follows, covertly intimating that this which was done by them and which was counted a mark of perfectness, is a kind of superfluous and useless labor. And he says it not thus out clearly, lest they should become insolent; but the methods of proof employed by him makes this evident.

And having said that they sin against Christ and destroy the brethren, and are nothing profited by this perfect knowledge, except charity be added; he again proceeds to a common example, and says,

"Do you not know that they which run in a race run all, but one receives the prize?" Now this he says, not as though here also one only out of many would be saved; far from it; but to set forth the exceeding diligence which it is our duty to use. For as there, though many descend into the course not many are crowned, but this befalls one only; and it is not enough to descend into the contest, nor to anoint one's self and wrestle: so likewise here it is not sufficient to believe, and to contend in any way; but unless we have so run as unto the end to show ourselves unblameable, and to come

near the prize, it will profit us nothing. For even though thou consider yourself to be perfect according to knowledge, you have not yet attained the whole; which hinting at, he said, "*so run, that you may obtain.*" They had not then yet, as it seems, attained. And having said thus, he teaches them also the manner.

1 Corinthians 9:25

"And every man that strives in the games is temperate in all things."

What is, *"all things?"* He does not abstain from one and err in another, but he masters entirely gluttony and lasciviousness and drunkenness and all his passions. *"For this,"* says he, *"takes place even in the heathen games.*

For neither is excess of wine permitted to those who contend at the time of the contest, nor wantonness, lest they should weaken their vigor, nor yet so much as to be busied about any thing else, but separating themselves altogether from all things they apply themselves to their exercise only."

Now if there these things be so where the crown falls to one, much more here, where the incitement in emulation is more abundant. For here neither is one to be crowned alone, and the rewards also far surpass the labors.

Wherefore also he puts it so as to shame them, saying, *"Now they do it receive to a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."*

1 Corinthians 9:26

2. *"I therefore so run, as not uncertainly."*

Thus having shamed them from those that are without, he next brings forward himself also, which kind of thing is a most excellent method of teaching: and accordingly we find him every where doing so.

But what is, *"not uncertainly?"* *"Looking to some mark,"* says he, not at random and in vain, as you do. For what profit have ye of entering into idol-temples, and exhibiting for-truth that perfectness? None. But not such am I, but all things whatsoever I do, I do for the salvation of my neighbor. Whether I show forth perfectness, it is for their sake; or condescension, for their sake again: whether I surpass Peter in declining to receive [compensation], it is that they may not be offended; or descend lower than all, being circumcised and shaving my head, it is that they may not be subverted. This is, *"not uncertainly."* But you, why do you eat in idol-temples, tell me? Nay, you can not assign any reasonable cause. For *"meat commends you not to God; neither if you eat are you the better, nor if you eat not are you the worse."* [1 Corinthians 8:8] Plainly then you run at random: for this is, *"uncertainly."*

"So fight I, as not beating the air." This he says, again intimating that he acted not at random nor in vain. *"For I have one at whom I may strike, i.e., the devil. But thou dost not strike him, but simply throwest away your strength."*

Now so far then, altogether bearing with them, he thus speaks. For since he had dealt somewhat vehemently with them in the preceding part, he now on the contrary keeps back his rebuke, reserving for the end of the discourse the deep wound of all. Since here he says that they act at random

and in vain; but afterwards signifies that it is at the risk of no less than utter ruin to their own soul, and that even apart from all injury to their brethren, neither are they themselves guiltless in daring so to act.

1 Corinthians 9:27

"But I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected."

Here he implies that they are subject to the lust of the belly and give up the reins to it, and under a pretence of perfection fulfil their own greediness; a thought which before also he was travailing to express, when he said, *"meats for the belly, and the belly for meats."* [1 Corinthians 6:13] For since both fornication is caused by luxury, and it also brought forth idolatry, he naturally oftentimes inveighs against this disease; and pointing out how great things he suffered for the Gospel, he sets this also down among them. *"As I went,"* says he, *"beyond the commands, and this when it was no light matter for me:"* ("for we endure all things," it is said,) *"so also here I submit to much labor in order to live soberly. Stubborn as appetite is and the tyranny of the belly, nevertheless I bridle it and give not myself up to the passion, but endure all labor not to be drawn aside by it."*

"For do not, I pray you, suppose that by taking things easily I arrive at this desirable result. For it is a race and a manifold struggle, and a tyrannical nature continually rising up against me and seeking to free itself. But I bear not with it but keep it down, and bring it into subjection with many struggles." Now this he says that none may despairingly withdraw from the conflicts in behalf of virtue because the undertaking is laborious. Wherefore he says, *"I buffet and bring into bondage."* He said not, *"I kill:"* nor, *"I punish"* for the flesh is not to be hated, but, *"I buffet and bring into bondage;"* which is the part of a master not of an enemy, of a teacher not of a foe, of a gymnastic master not of an adversary.

"Lest by any means, having preached to others, I myself should be a rejected."

Now if Paul feared this who had taught so many, and feared it after his preaching and becoming an angel and undertaking the leadership of the whole world; what can we say?

For, *"think not,"* says he, *"because you have believed, that this is sufficient for your salvation: since if to me neither preaching nor teaching nor bringing over innumerable persons, is enough for salvation unless I exhibit my own conduct also unblameable, much less to you."*

3. Then he comes to other illustrations again. And as above he alleged the examples of the Apostles and those of common custom and those of the priests, and his own, so also here having set forth those of the Olympic games and those of his own course, he again proceeds to the histories of the Old Testament. And because what he has to say will be somewhat unpleasing he makes his exhortation general, and discourses not only concerning the subject before him, but also generally concerning all the evils among the Corinthians. And in the case of the heathen games, *"Do you not know?"* says he: but here,

1 Corinthians 10:1-4

"For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant."

Now this he said, implying that they were not very well instructed in these things. And what is this which you would not have us ignorant of?

"That our fathers," says he, "were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual Rock that followed them: and the Rock was Christ. Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased."

And wherefore says he these things? To point out that as they were nothing profited by the enjoyment of so great a gift, so neither these by obtaining Baptism and partaking of spiritual Mysteries, except they go on and show forth a life worthy of this grace. Wherefore also he introduces the types both of Baptism and of the Mysteries.

But what is, *"They were baptized into Moses?"* Like as we, on our belief in Christ and His resurrection, are baptized, as being destined in our own persons to partake in the same mysteries; for, *"we are baptized,"* says he, *"for the dead,"* i.e., for our own bodies; even so they putting confidence in Moses, i.e., having seen him cross first, ventured also themselves into the waters. But because he wishes to bring the Type near the Truth; he speaks it not thus, but uses the terms of the Truth even concerning the Type.

Further: this was a symbol of the Font, and that which follows, of the Holy Table. For as you eat the Lord's Body, so they the manna: and as you drink the Blood, so they water from a rock. For though they were things of sense which were produced, yet were they spiritually exhibited, not according to the order of nature, but according to the gracious intention of

the gift, and together with the body nourished also the soul, leading it unto faith. On this account, you see, touching the food he made no remark, for it was entirely different, not in mode only but in nature also; (for it was manna;) but respecting the drink, since the manner only of the supply was extraordinary and required proof, therefore having said that *"they drank the same spiritual drink,"* he added, *"for they drank of a spiritual Rock that followed them,"* and he subjoined, *"and the Rock was Christ."* For it was not the nature of the rock which sent forth the water, (such is his meaning,) else would it as well have gushed out before this time: but another sort of Rock, a spiritual One, performed the whole, even Christ who was every where with them and wrought all the wonders. For on this account he said, *"that followed them."*

Perceivest thou the wisdom of Paul, how in both cases he points cut Him as the Giver, and thereby brings the Type near to the Truth? *"For He who set those things before them,"* says he, *"the same also has prepared this our Table: and the same Person both brought them through the sea and you through Baptism; and before them set manna, but before you His Body and Blood."*

4. As touching His gift then, such is the case: now let us observe also what follows, and consider, whether when they showed themselves unworthy of the gift, He spared them. Nay, this you can not say. Wherefore also he added, *"Howbeit with most of them God was not well-pleased;"* although He had honored them with so great honor. Yea, it profited them nothing, but most of them perished. The truth is, they all perished, but that he might not seem to prophesy total destruction to these also, therefore he said, *"most of them."* And yet they were innumerable, but their number profited them nothing: and these were all so many tokens of love; but not

even did this profit them, inasmuch as they did not themselves show forth the fruits of love.

Thus, since most men disbelieve the things said of hell, as not being present nor in sight; he alleges the things heretofore done as a proof that God does punish all who sin, even though He have bestowed innumerable benefits upon them: *"for if you disbelieve the things to come,"* so he speaks, *"yet surely the things that are past ye will not disbelieve."* Consider, for example, how great benefits He bestowed on them: from Egypt and the slavery there He set them free, the sea He made their path, from heaven he brought down manna, from beneath He sent forth strange and marvellous fountains of waters; He was with them every where, doing wonders and fencing them in on every side: nevertheless since they showed forth nothing worthy of this gift, He spared them not, but destroyed them all.

1 Corinthians 10:5

"For they were overthrown," says he, *"in the wilderness."* Declaring by this word both the sweeping destruction, and the punishments and the vengeance inflicted by God, and that they did not so much as attain to the rewards proposed to them. Neither were they in the land of promise when He did these things unto them, but without and afar somewhere, and wide of that country; He thus visiting them with a double vengeance, both by not permitting them to see the land, and this too though promised unto them, and also by actual severe punishment.

And what are these things to us? Say you. To you surely they belong. Wherefore also he adds,

1 Corinthians 10:6

"Now these things were figures of us. "

For as the gifts are figures, even so are the punishments figures: and as Baptism and the Table were sketched out prophetically, so also by what ensued, the certainty of punishment coming on those who are unworthy of this gift was proclaimed beforehand for our sake that we by these examples might learn soberness. Wherefore also he adds,

"To the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."

For as in the benefits the types went before and the substance followed, such shall be the order also in the punishments. Do you see how he signifies not only the fact that these shall be punished, but also the degree, more severely than those ancients? For if the one be type, and the other substance, it must needs be that the punishments should as far exceed as the gifts.

And see whom he handles first: those who eat in the idol-temples. For having said, *"that we should not lust after evil things,"* which was general, he subjoins that which is particular, implying that each of their sins arose from evil lusting. And first he said this,

1 Corinthians 10:7-8

"Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, 'the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.'"

Do you hear how he even calls them *"idolaters?"* here indeed making the declaration, but afterwards bringing the proof. And he assigned the cause too wherefore they ran to those tables; and this was gluttony. Wherefore having said, *"to the intent that we should not lust after evil things,"* and having added, nor *"be idolaters,"* he names the cause of such transgression; and this was gluttony. *"For the people sat down,"* says he, *"to eat and to drink,"* and he adds the end thereof, *"they rose up to play."* *"For even as they,"* says he, *"from sensuality passed into idolatry; so there is a fear lest ye also may fall from the one into the other."* Do you see how he signifies that these, perfect men forsooth, were more imperfect than the others whom they censured? Not in this respect only, their not bearing with their brethren throughout, but also in that the one sin from ignorance, but the others from gluttony. And from the ruin of the former he reckons the punishment to these, but allows not these to lay upon another the cause of their own sin but pronounces them responsible both for their injury, and for their own.

"Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed."

Wherefore does he here make mention of fornication again, having so largely discoursed concerning it before? It is ever Paul's custom when he brings a charge of many sins, both to set them forth in order and separately to proceed with his proposed topics, and again in his discourses concerning other things to make mention also of the former: which thing God also used to do in the Old Testament, in reference to each several transgression,

reminding the Jews of the calf and bringing that sin before them. This then Paul also does here, at the same time both reminding them of that sin, and teaching that the parent of this evil also was luxury and gluttony. Wherefore also he adds, *"Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand."*

And wherefore names he not likewise the punishment for their idolatry? Either because it was clear and more notorious, or because the plague was not so great at that time, as in the matter of Balaam, when they joined themselves to Baalpeor, the Midianitish women appearing in the camp and alluring them to wantonness according to the counsel of Balaam. For that this evil counsel was Balaam's Moses shows after this, in the following statement at the end of the Book of Numbers. [Numbers 31:8-16 in our translation] *"Balaam also the son of Beor they slew in the war of Midian with the sword and they brought the spoils.... And Moses was angry, and said, Wherefore have ye saved all the women alive? For these were to the children of Israel for a stumbling-block, according to the word of Balaam, to cause them to depart from and despise the word of the Lord for Peor's sake."*

1 Corinthians 10:9

"Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and perished by serpents."

By this he again hints at another charge which he likewise states at the end, blaming them because they contended about signs. And indeed they were destroyed on account of trials, saying, *"when will the good things come? When the rewards?"* Wherefore also he adds, on this account correcting and alarming them,

1 Corinthians 10:10

"Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer."

For what is required is not only to suffer for Christ, but also nobly to bear the things that come on us, and with all gladness: since this is the nature of every crown. Yea, and unless this be so, punishment rather will attend men who take calamity with a bad grace. Wherefore, both the Apostles when they were beaten rejoiced, and Paul gloried in his sufferings.

1 Corinthians 10:11

5. *"Now all these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."*

Again he terrifies them speaking of the *"ends,"* and prepares them to expect things greater than had already taken place. *"For that we shall suffer punishment is manifest,"* says he, *"from what has been said, even to those who disbelieve the statements concerning hell-fire; but that the punishment also will be most severe, is evident, from the more numerous blessings which we have enjoyed, and from the things of which those were but figures. Since, if in the gifts one go beyond the other, it is most evident that so it will be in the punishment likewise."* For this cause he both called them types, and said that they were *"written for us"* and made mention of an *"end"* that he might remind them of the consummation of all things. For not such will be the penalties then as to admit of a termination and be done away, but the punishment will be eternal; for even as the punishments in this world are ended with the present life, so those in the next continually remain. But when he said, *"the ends of the ages,"* he means nothing else than that the fearful judgment is henceforth near at hand.

1 Corinthians 10:12

"Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

Again, he casts down their pride who thought highly of their knowledge. For if they who had so great privileges suffered such things; and some for murmuring alone were visited with such punishment, and others for tempting, and neither their multitude moved God to repent, nor their having attained to such things; much more shall it be so in our case, except we be sober. And well said he, *"he that thinks he stands:"* for this is not even standing as one ought to stand, to rely on yourself: for quickly will such an one fall: since they too, had they not been high-minded and self-confident, but of a subdued frame of mind, would not have suffered these things. Whence it is evident, that chiefly pride, and carelessness from which comes gluttony also, are the sources of these evils. Wherefore even though thou stand, yet take heed lest you fall. For our standing here is not secure standing, no not until we be delivered out of the waves of this present life and have sailed into the tranquil haven. Be not therefore high-minded at your standing, but guard against your falling; for if Paul feared who was firmer than all, much more ought we to fear.

6. Now the Apostle's word, as we have seen, was, *"Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall;"* but we cannot say even this; all of us, so to speak, having fallen, and lying prostrate on the ground. For to whom am I to say this? To him that commits extortion every day? Nay, he lies prostrate with a mighty fall. To the fornicator? He too is cast down to the ground. To the drunkard? He also is fallen, and knows not even that he is fallen. So that it is not the season for this word, but for that saying of the prophet which he spoke even to the Jews, [Jeremiah 8:4]— *"He that falls,*

does he not rise again?" For all are fallen, and to rise again they have no mind. So that our exhortation is not concerning the not falling, but concerning the ability of them that are fallen to arise. Let us rise again then, late though it be, beloved, let us rise again, and let us stand nobly. How long do we lie prostrate? How long are we drunken, besotted with the excessive desire of the things of this life? It is a meet opportunity now to say, [Jeremiah 6:10] *"To whom shall I speak and testify?"* So deaf are all men become even to the very instruction of virtue, and thence filled with abundance of evils. And were it possible to discern their souls naked; as in armies when the battle is ended one may behold some dead, and some wounded, so also in the Church we might see. Wherefore I beseech and implore you, let us stretch out a hand to each other and thoroughly raise ourselves up. For I myself am of them that are smitten, and require one to apply some remedies.

Do not however despair on this account. For what if the wounds be severe? Yet are they not incurable; such is our physician: only let us feel our wounds. Although we be arrived at the very extreme of wickedness, many are the ways of safety which He strikes out for us. Thus, if you forbear to be angry with your neighbor, your own sins shall be forgiven. *"For if you forgive men,"* says He, *"your heavenly Father will also forgive you."* [Matthew 6:14] And if you give alms, He will remit you your sins; for, *"break off your sins,"* says He, *"by alms."* [Daniel 4:24] And if you pray earnestly, you shall enjoy forgiveness: and this the widow signifies who prevailed upon that cruel judge by the importunity of her prayer. And if you accuse your own sins, you have relief: for *"declare thou your iniquities first, that you may be justified:"* [Isaiah 47:26] and if you are sorrowful on account of these things, this too will be to you a powerful remedy: *"for I saw,"* says He, *"that he was grieved and went sorrowful, and I healed his*

ways." [Isaiah 57:17] And if, when you suffer any evil, thou bear it nobly, you have put away the whole. For this also did Abraham say to the rich man, that "*Lazarus received his evil things, and here he is comforted.*" And if you have pity on the widow, your sins are washed away. For, "*Judge,*" says He, "*the orphan, and plead for the widow, and come and let us reason together, says the Lord. And if your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; and if they be as crimson, I will make them white as wool.*" [Isaiah 1:17] For not even a single scar of the wounds does He suffer to appear. Yea, and though we be come to that depth of misery into which he fell, who devoured his father's substance and fed upon husks, and should repent, we are undoubtedly saved. And though we owe ten thousand talents, if we fall down before God and bear no malice, all things are forgiven us. Although we have wandered away to that place whither the sheep strayed from his keeper, even thence He recovers us again: only let us be willing, beloved. For God is merciful. Wherefore both in the case of him that owed ten thousand talents, He was content with His falling down before Him; and in the case of him who had devoured his father's goods, with his return only; and in the case of the sheep, with its willingness to be borne.

7. Considering therefore the greatness of His mercy, let us here make Him propitious unto us, and "*let us come before His face by a full confession,*" [Psalm 95:2. Septuagint] that we may not depart hence without excuse, and have to endure the extreme punishment. For if in the present life we exhibit even an ordinary diligence, we shall gain the greatest rewards: but if we depart having become nothing better here, even though we repent ever so earnestly there it will do us no good. For it was our duty to strive while yet remaining within the lists, not after the assembly was broken up idly to lament and weep: as that rich man did, bewailing and deploring himself, but to no purpose and in vain, since he overlooked the

time in which he ought to have done these things. And not he alone, but many others there are like him now among the rich; not willing to despise wealth, but despising their own souls for wealth's sake: at whom I cannot but wonder, when I see men continually interceding with God for mercy, while they are doing themselves incurable harm, and unsparing of their very soul as if it were an enemy. Let us not then trifle, beloved, let us not trifle nor delude ourselves, beseeching God to have mercy upon us, while we ourselves prefer both money and luxury, and, in fact, all things to this mercy. For neither, if any one brought before you a case and said in accusation of such an one, that being to suffer ten thousand deaths and having it in his power to rid himself of the sentence by a little money, he chose rather to die than to give up any of his property, would you say that he was worthy of any mercy or compassion. Now in this same way do thou also reason touching yourself. For we too act in this way, and making light of our own salvation, we are sparing of our money. How then do you beseech God to spare you, when you yourself art so unsparing of yourself, and honorest money above your soul?

Wherefore also I am greatly astonished to see, how great witchery lies hid in wealth, or rather not in wealth, but in the souls of those that are beguiled. For there are, there are those that utterly derided this sorcery. For which among the things therein is really capable of bewitching us? Is it not inanimate matter? Is it not transitory? Is not the possession thereof unworthy of trust? Is it not full of fears and? Dangers? Nay, of murders and conspiracy? Of enmity and hatred? Of carelessness and much vice? Is it not dust and ashes? What madness have we here? What disease?

"But," say you, "we ought not merely to bring such accusations against those that are so diseased, but also to destroy the passion." And in what

other way shall we destroy it, except by pointing out its baseness and how full it is of innumerable evils?

But of this it is not easy to persuade a lover concerning the objects of his love. Well then, we must set before him another sort of beauty. But incorporeal beauty he sees not, being yet in his disease. Well then, let us show him some beauty of a corporeal kind, and say to him, Consider the meadows and the flowers therein, which are more sparkling than any gold, and more elegant and transparent than all kinds of precious stones. Consider the limpid streams from their fountains, the rivers which like oil flow noiselessly out of the earth. Ascend to heaven and behold the lustre of the sun, the beauty of the moon, the stars that cluster like flowers. *"Why, what is this,"* say you, *"since we do not, I suppose, make use of them as of wealth?"* Nay, we use them more than wealth, inasmuch as the use thereof is more needful, the enjoyment more secure. For you have no fear, lest, like money, any one should take them and go off: but you may be ever confident of having them, and that without anxiety or care. But if you grieve because you enjoy them in common with others, and dost not possess them alone like money; it is not money, but mere covetousness, which you seem to me to be in love with: nor would even the money be an object of your desire, if it had been placed within reach of all in common.

8. Therefore, since we have found the beloved object, I mean Covetousness, come let me show you how she hates and abhors you, how many swords she sharpens against you, how many pits she digs, how many nooses she ties, how many precipices she prepares; that thus at any rate you may do away with the charm. Whence then are we to obtain this knowledge? From the highways, from the wars, from the sea, from the courts of justice. For she has both filled the sea with blood, and the swords of the judges she often reddens contrary to law, and arms those who on the

highway lie in wait day and night, and persuades men to forget nature, and makes parricides and matricides, and introduces all sorts of evils into man's life. Which is the reason why Paul entitles her "*a root of these things*." [1 Timothy 6:10] She suffers not her lovers to be in any better condition than those who work in the mines. For as they, perpetually shut up in darkness and in chains, labor unprofitably; so also these buried in the caves of avarice, no one using any force with them, voluntarily draw on their punishment, binding on themselves fetters that cannot be broken. And those condemned to the mines at least when even comes on, are released from their toils; but these both by day and night are digging in these wretched mines. And to those there is a definite limit of that hard labor, but these know no limit, but the more they dig so much the greater hardship do they desire. And what if those do it unwillingly, but these of their own will? In that you tell me of the grievous part of the disease, that it is even impossible for them to be rid of it, since they do not so much as hate their wretchedness. But as a swine in mud, so also do these delight to wallow in the noisome mire of avarice, suffering worse things than those condemned ones. As to the fact that they are in a worse condition, hear the circumstances of the one, and then you will know the state of the other.

Now it is said that that soil which is impregnated with gold has certain clefts and recesses in those gloomy caverns. The malefactor then condemned to labor in that place, taking for that purpose a lamp and a mattock, so, we are told, enters within, and carries with him a cruse to drop oil from thence into the lamp, because there is darkness even by day, without a ray of light, as I said before. Then when the time of day calls him to his wretched meal, himself, they say, is ignorant of the time, but his jailor from above striking violently on the cave, by that clattering sound declares to those who are at work below the end of the day.

Do ye not shudder when you hear all this? Let us see now, whether there be not things more grievous than these in the case of the covetous. For these too, in the first place, have a severer jailor, viz. avarice, and so much severer, as that besides their body he chains also their soul. And this darkness also is more awful than that. For it is not subject to sense, but they producing it within, wherever they go, carry it about with themselves. For the eye of their soul is put out: which is the reason why more than all Christ calls them wretched, saying, *"But if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness."* [Matthew 6:23] And they for their part have at least a lamp shining, but these are deprived even of this beam of light; and therefore every day they fall into countless pitfalls. And the condemned when night overtakes them have a respite, sailing into that calm port which is common to all the unfortunate, I mean the night: but against the covetous even this harbor is blocked up by their own avarice: such grievous thoughts have they even at night, since then, without disturbance from any one, at full leisure they cut themselves to pieces.

Such are their circumstances in this world; but those in the next, what discourse shall exhibit? The intolerable furnaces, the rivers burning with fire, the gnashing of teeth, the chains never to be loosed, the envenomed worm, the rayless gloom, the never-ending miseries. Let us fear them, beloved, let us fear the fountain of so great punishments, the insatiate madness, the destroyer of our salvation. For it is impossible at the same time to love both money and your soul. Let us be convinced that wealth is dust and ashes, that it leaves us when we depart hence, or rather that even before our departure it oftentimes darts away from us, and injures us both in regard of the future and in respect of the present life. For before hell fire, and before that punishment, even here it surrounds us with innumerable wars, and stirs up strifes and contests. For nothing is so apt to cause war as

avarice: nothing so apt to produce beggary, whether it show itself in wealth or in poverty. For in the souls of poor men also this grievous disease arises, and aggravates their poverty the more. And if there be found a poor covetous man, such an one suffers not punishment in money, but in hunger. For he allows not himself to enjoy his moderate means with comfort, but both racks his belly with hunger and punishes his whole body with nakedness and cold, and every where appears more squalid and filthy than any prisoners; and is always wailing and lamenting as though he were more wretched than all, though there be ten thousand poorer than he. This man, whether he go into the market-place, goes away with many a stripe; or into the bath, or into the theatre, he will still be receiving more wounds, not only from the spectators, but also from those upon the stage, where he beholds not a few of the unchaste women glittering in gold. This man again, whether he sail upon the sea, regarding the merchants and their richly-freighted ships and their enormous profits, will not even count himself to live: or whether he travel by land, reckoning up the fields, the suburban farms, the inns, the baths, the revenues arising out of them, will count his own life thenceforth not worth living; or whether thou shut him up at home, he will but rub and fret the wounds received in the market, and so do greater despite to his own soul: and he knows only one consolation for the evils which oppress him; death and deliverance from this life.

And these things not the poor man only, but the rich also, will suffer, who falls into this disease, and so much more than the poor, inasmuch as the tyranny presses more vehemently on him, and the intoxication is greater. Wherefore also he will account himself poorer than all; or rather, he is poorer. For riches and poverty are determined not by the measure of the substance, but by the disposition of the mind: and he rather is the poorest of

all, who is always hangering after more and is never able to stay this wicked lust.

On all these accounts then let us flee covetousness, the maker of beggars, the destroyer of souls, the friend of hell, the enemy of the kingdom of heaven, the mother of all evils together; and let us despise wealth that we may enjoy wealth, and with wealth may enjoy also the good things laid up for us; unto which may we all attain, etc.

Homily 24 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 10:13

There has no temptation taken you, but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Thus, because he terrified them greatly, relating the ancient examples, and threw them into an agony, saying, Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall; though they had borne many temptations, and had exercised themselves many times therein; for *"I was with you,"* says he, *"in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling:"* [1 Corinthians 2:3] lest they should say, *"Why terrify and alarm us? We are not unexercised in these troubles, for we have been both driven and persecuted, and many and continual dangers have we endured:"* repressing again their pride, he says, *"there has no temptation taken you but such as man can bear,"* i.e., small, brief, moderate. For he uses the expression *"man can bear,"* in respect of what is small; as when he says, *"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh."* [Romans 6:19] *"Think not then great things,"* says he, *"as though ye had overcome the storm. For never have ye seen a danger threatening death nor a temptation intending slaughter:"* which also he said to the Hebrews, *"you have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."* [Hebrews 12:4]

Then, because he terrified them, see how again he raises them up, at the same time recommending moderation; in the words, *"God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able."* There are

therefore temptations which we are not able to bear. And what are these? All, so to speak. For the ability lies in God's gracious influence; a power which we draw down by our own will. Wherefore that you may know and see that not only those which exceed our power, but not even these which are "*common to man*" is it possible without assistance from God easily to bear, he added,

"But will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."

For, says he, not even those moderate temptations, as I was remarking, may we bear by our own power: but even in them we require aid from Him in our warfare that we may pass through them, and until we have passed, bear them. For He gives patience and brings on a speedy release; so that in this way also the temptation becomes bearable. This he covertly intimates, saying, "*will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it:*" and all things he refers to Him.

1 Corinthians 10:14

2. *"Wherefore, my brethren , flee from idolatry."*

Again he courts them by the name of kindred, and urges them to be rid of this sin with all speed. For he did not say, simply, depart, but *"flee;"* and he calls the matter *"idolatry,"* and no longer bids them quit it merely on account of the injury to their neighbor, but signifies that the very thing of itself is sufficient to bring a great destruction.

1 Corinthians 10:15

"I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say."

Because he has cried out aloud and heightened the accusation, calling it idolatry; that he might not seem to exasperate them and to make his speech disgusting, in what follows he refers the decision to them, and sets his judges down on their tribunal with an encomium. *"For I speak as to wise men,"* says he: which is the mark of one very confident of his own rights, that he should make the accused himself the judge of his allegations.

Thus also he more elevates the hearer, when he discourses not as commanding nor as laying down the law, but as advising with them and as actually pleading before them. For with the Jews, as more foolishly and childishly disposed, God did not so discourse, nor did He in every instance acquaint them with the reasons of the commands, but merely enjoined them; but here, because we have the privilege of great liberty, we are even admitted to be counsellors. And he discourses as with friends, and says, *"I need no other judges, do ye yourselves pass this sentence upon me, I take you for arbiters."*

1 Corinthians 10:16

3. *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the Blood of Christ?"*

What do you say, O blessed Paul? When you would appeal to the hearer's reverence, when you are making mention of awful mysteries, do you give the title of *"cup of blessing"* to that fearful and most tremendous cup? *"Yea,"* says he; *"and no mean title is that which was spoken. For when I call it 'blessing,' I mean thanksgiving, and when I call it thanksgiving I unfold all the treasure of God's goodness, and call to mind those mighty gifts."* Since we too, recounting over the cup the unspeakable mercies of God and all that we have been made partakers of, so draw near to Him, and communicate; giving Him thanks that He has delivered from error the whole race of mankind ; that being afar off, He made them near; that when they had no hope and were without God in the world, He constituted them His own brethren and fellow-heirs. For these and all such things, giving thanks, thus we approach. *"How then are not your doings inconsistent,"* says he, *"O you Corinthians; blessing God for delivering you from idols, yet running again to their tables?"*

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the Blood of Christ?" Very persuasively spoke he, and awfully. For what he says is this: *"This which is in the cup is that which flowed from His side, and of that do we partake."* But he called it a cup of blessing, because holding it in our hands, we so exalt Him in our hymn, wondering, astonished at His unspeakable gift, blessing Him, among other things, for the pouring out of this self-same draught that we might not abide in error: and not only for the pouring it out, but also for the imparting thereof to us

all. *"Wherefore if you desire blood,"* says He, *"redden not the altar of idols with the slaughter of brute beasts, but My altar with My blood."* Tell me, What can be more tremendous than this? What more tenderly kind? This also lovers do. When they see those whom they love desiring what belongs to strangers and despising their own, they give what belongs to themselves, and so persuade them to withdraw themselves from the gifts of those others. Lovers, however, display this liberality in goods and money and garments, but in blood none ever did so. Whereas Christ even herein exhibited His care and fervent love for us. And in the old covenant, because they were in an imperfect state, the blood which they used to offer to idols He Himself submitted to receive, that He might separate them from those idols; which very thing again was a proof of His unspeakable affection: but here He transferred the service to that which is far more awful and glorious, changing the very sacrifice itself, and instead of the slaughter of irrational creatures, commanding to offer up Himself.

4. *"The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?"* Wherefore said he not, the participation? Because he intended to express something more and to point out how close was the union: in that we communicate not only by participating and partaking, but also by being united. For as that body is united to Christ, so also are we united to him by this bread.

But why adds he also, *"which we break?"* For although in the Eucharist one may see this done, yet on the cross not so, but the very contrary. For, *"A bone of Him,"* says one, *"shall not be broken."* But that which He suffered not on the cross, this He suffers in the oblation for your sake, and submits to be broken, that he may fill all men.

Further, because he said, *"a communion of the Body,"* and that which communicates is another thing from that whereof it communicates; even

this which seems to be but a small difference, he took away. For having said, "*a communion of the Body*," he sought again to express something nearer. Wherefore also he added,

1 Corinthians 10:17

"For we, who are many, are one bread, one body." "For why speak I of communion?" says he, *"we are that self-same body."* For what is the bread? The Body of Christ. And what do they become who partake of it? The Body of Christ: not many bodies, but one body. For as the bread consisting of many grains is made one, so that the grains no where appear; they exist indeed, but their difference is not seen by reason of their conjunction; so are we conjoined both with each other and with Christ: there not being one body for you, and another for your neighbor to be nourished by, but the very same for all. Wherefore also he adds,

"For we all partake of the one bread." Now if we are all nourished of the same and all become the same, why do we not also show forth the same love, and become also in this respect one? For this was the old way too in the time of our forefathers: *"for the multitude of them that believed,"* says the text, *"were of one heart and soul."* [Acts 4:32] Not so, however, now, but altogether the reverse. Many and various are the contests between all, and worse than wild beasts are we affected towards each other's members. And Christ indeed made you so far remote, one with himself: but thou dost not deign to be united even to your brother with due exactness, but separatest yourself, having had the privilege of so great love and life from the Lord. For he gave not simply even His own body; but because the former nature of the flesh which was framed out of earth, had first become deadened by sin and destitute of life; He brought in, as one may say, another sort of dough and leaven, His own flesh, by nature indeed the same, but free from sin and full of life; and gave to all to partake thereof, that being nourished by this and laying aside the old dead material, we might be

blended together unto that which is living and eternal, by means of this table.

1 Corinthians 10:18

5. *"Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they which eat the sacrifices communion with the altar?"*

Again, from the old covenant he leads them unto this point also. For because they were far beneath the greatness of the things which had been spoken, he persuades them both from former things and from those to which they were accustomed. And he says well, *"according to the flesh,"* as though they themselves were according to the Spirit. And what he says is of this nature: *"even from persons of the grosser sort ye may be instructed that they who eat the sacrifices, have communion with the altar."* Do you see how he intimates that they who seemed to be perfect have not perfect knowledge, if they know not even this, that the result of these sacrifices to many oftentimes is a certain communion and friendship with devils, the practice drawing them on by degrees? For if among men the fellowship of salt and the table becomes an occasion and token of friendship, it is possible that this may happen also in the case of devils.

But do thou, I pray, consider, how with regard to the Jews he said not, *"they are par-takers with God,"* but, *"they have communion with the altar;"* for what was placed thereon was burnt: but in respect to the Body of Christ, not so. But how? It is *"a Communion of the Lord's Body."* For not with the altar, but with Christ Himself, do we have communion.

But having said that they have *"communion with the altar,"* afterwards fearing lest he should seem to discourse as if the idols had any power and could do some injury, see again how he overthrows them, saying,

1 Corinthians 10:19

"What say I then? That an idol is any thing? Or that a thing sacrificed to idols is any thing?"

As if he had said, *"Now these things I affirm, and try to withdraw you from the idols, not as though they could do any injury or had any power: for an idol is nothing; but I wish you to despise them."* *"And if you will have us despise them,"* says one, *"wherefore do you carefully withdraw us from them?"* Because they are not offered to your Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:20

"For that which the Gentiles sacrifice," says he, "they sacrifice to demons, and not to God."

Do not then run to the contrary things. For neither if you were a king's son, and having the privilege of your father's table, should leave it and choose to partake of the table of the condemned and the prisoners in the dungeon, would your father permit it, but with great vehemence he would withdraw you; not as though the table could harm you, but because it disgraces your nobility and the royal table. For verily these too are servants who have offended; dishonored, condemned, prisoners reserved for intolerable punishment, accountable for ten thousand crimes. How then are you not ashamed to imitate the gluttonous and vulgar crew, in that when these condemned persons set out a table, you run there and partakest of the viands? Here is the cause why I seek to withdraw you. For the intention of the sacrificers, and the person of the receivers, makes the things set before you unclean.

"And I would not that you should have communion with demon." Perceivest thou the kindness of a careful father? Perceivest thou also the very word, what force it has to express his feeling? *"For it is my wish,"* says he, *"that you have nothing in common with them."*

6. Next, because he brought in the saying by way of exhortation, lest any of the grosser sort should make light of it as having license, because he said, *"I would not,"* and, *"judge ye;"* he positively affirms in what follows and lays down the law, saying,

1 Corinthians 10:21

"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the Lord's table, and of the table of demons."

And he contents himself with the mere terms, for the purpose of keeping them away. Then, speaking also to their sense of shame,

1 Corinthians 10:22

"Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?" i.e., "Are we tempting Him, whether He is able to punish us, and irritating Him by going over to the adversaries and taking our stand with His enemies?"

And this he said, reminding them of an ancient history and of their fathers' transgression. Wherefore also he makes use of this expression, which Moses likewise of old used against the Jews, accusing them of idolatry in the person of God. *"For they,"* says He, *"moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God; they provoked Me to anger with their idols."*

[Deuteronomy 32:21]

"Are we stronger than He?" Do you see how terribly, how awfully he rebukes them, thoroughly shaking their very nerves, and by his way of reducing them to an absurdity, touching them to the quick and bringing down their pride? *"Well, but why,"* some one will say, *"did he not set down these things at first, which would be most effectual to withdraw them?"* Because it is his custom to prove his point by many particulars, and to place the strongest last, and to prevail by proving more than was necessary. On this account then, he began from the lesser topics, and so made his way to that which is the sum of all evils: since thus that last point also became more easily admitted, their mind having been smoothed down by the things said before.

1 Corinthians 10:23-24

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good."

Do you see his exact wisdom? Because it was likely that they might say, *"I am perfect and master of myself, and it does me no harm to partake of what is set before me;"* *"Even so,"* says he, *"perfect you are and master of yourself; do not however look to this, but whether the result involve not injury, nay subversion."* For both these he mentioned, saying, *"All things are not expedient, all things edify not;"* and using the former with reference to one's self, the latter, to one's brother: since the clause, *"are not expedient,"* is a covert intimation of the ruin of the person to whom he speaks; but the clause, *"edify not,"* of the stumbling block to the brother.

Wherefore also he adds, *"Let no man seek his own;"* which he every where through the whole Epistle insists upon and in that to the Romans; when he says, *"For even Christ pleased not Himself:"* [Romans 15:3] and again, *"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit."* [1 Corinthians 10:33] And again in this place; he does not, however, fully work it out here. That is, since in what had gone before he had established it at length, and shown that he no where *"seeks his own,"* but both *"to the Jews became as a Jew and to them that are without law as without law,"* and used not his own *"liberty"* and *"right"* at random, but to the profit of all, serving all; he here broke off, content with a few words, by these few guiding them to the remembrance of all which had been said.

7. These things therefore knowing, let us also, beloved, consult for the good of the brethren and preserve unity with them. For to this that fearful

and tremendous sacrifice leads us, warning us above all things to approach it with one mind and fervent love, and thereby becoming eagles, so to mount up to the very heaven, nay, even beyond the heaven. "*For wheresoever the carcass is,*" says He, "*there also will be the eagles,*" [Matthew 24:28] calling His body a carcass by reason of His death. For unless He had fallen, we should not have risen again. But He calls us eagles, implying that he who draws near to this Body must be on high and have nothing common with the earth, nor wind himself downwards and creep along; but must ever be soaring heavenwards, and look on the Sun of Righteousness, and have the eye of his mind quick-sighted. For eagles, not daws, have a right to this table. Those also shall then meet Him descending from heaven, who now worthily have this privilege, even as they who do so unworthily, shall suffer the extremest torments.

For if one would not inconsiderately receive a king— (why say I a king? Nay were it but a royal robe, one would not inconsiderately touch it with unclean hands;)— though he should be in solitude, though alone, though no man were at hand: and yet the robe is nought but certain threads spun by worms: and if you admire the dye, this too is the blood of a dead fish; nevertheless, one would not choose to venture on it with polluted hands: I say now, if even a man's garment be what one would not venture inconsiderately to touch, what shall we say of the Body of Him Who is God over all, spotless, pure, associate with the Divine Nature, the Body whereby we are, and live; whereby the gates of hell were broken down and the sanctuaries of heaven opened? How shall we receive this with so great insolence? Let us not, I pray you, let us not slay ourselves by our irreverence, but with all awfulness and purity draw near to It; and when you see It set before you, say thou to yourself, "*Because of this Body am I no longer earth and ashes, no longer a prisoner, but free: because of this I*

hope for heaven, and to receive the good things therein, immortal life, the portion of angels, converse with Christ; this Body, nailed and scourged, was more than death could stand against; this Body the very sun saw sacrificed, and turned aside his beams; for this both the veil was rent in that moment, and rocks were burst asunder, and all the earth was shaken. This is even that Body, the blood-stained, the pierced, and that out of which gushed the saving fountains, the one of blood, the other of water, for all the world."

Would you from another source also learn its power? Ask of her diseased with an issue of blood, who laid hold not of Itself, but of the garment with which It was clad; nay not of the whole of this, but of the hem: ask of the sea, which bare It on its back: ask even of the Devil himself, and say, "*Whence have you that incurable stroke? Whence have you no longer any power? Whence are you captive? By whom have you been seized in your flight?*" And he will give no other answer than this, "*The Body that was crucified.*" By this were his goads broken in pieces; by this was his head crushed; by this were the powers and the principalities made a show of. "*For,*" says he, "*having put off from himself principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*" [Colossians 2:15]

Ask also Death, and say, "*whence is it that your sting has been taken away? Your victory abolished? Your sinews cut out? And thou become the laughing-stock of girls and children, who wast before a terror even to kings and to all righteous men?*" And he will ascribe it to this Body. For when this was crucified, then were the dead raised up, then was that prison burst, and the gates of brass were broken, and the dead were loosed, and the keepers of hell-gate all cowered in fear. And yet, had He been one of the many, death on the contrary should have become more mighty; but it was not so. For He was not one of the many. Therefore was death dissolved.

And as they who take food which they are unable to retain, on account of that vomit up also what was before lodged in them; so also it happened unto death. That Body, which he could not digest, he received: and therefore had to cast forth that which he had within him. Yea, he travailed in pain, while he held Him, and was straitened until He vomited Him up. Wherefore says the Apostle, "*Having loosed the pains of death.*" [Acts 11:24] For never woman labouring of child was so full of anguish as he was torn and racked in sunder, while he held the Body of the Lord. And that which happened to the Babylonian dragon, when, having taken the food it burst asunder in the midst, this also happened unto him. For Christ came not forth again by the mouth of death, but having burst asunder and ripped up in the very midst, the belly of the dragon, thus from His secret chambers [Psalm 19:5] right gloriously He issued forth and flung abroad His beams not to this heaven alone, but to the very throne most high. For even there did He carry it up.

This Body has He given to us both to hold and to eat; a thing appropriate to intense love. For those whom we kiss vehemently, we oft-times even bite with our teeth. Wherefore also Job, indicating the love of his servants towards him, said, that they oftentimes, out of their great affection towards him, said, "*Oh! That we were filled with his flesh!*" [Job 31:31] Even so Christ has given to us to be filled with His flesh, drawing us on to greater love.

8. Let us draw near to Him then with fervency and with inflamed love, that we may not have to endure punishment. For in proportion to the greatness of the benefits bestowed on us, so much the more exceedingly are we chastised when we show ourselves unworthy of the bountifulness. This Body, even lying in a manger, Magi revered. Yea, men profane and barbarous, leaving their country and their home, both set out on a long journey, and when they came, with fear and great trembling worshipped

Him. Let us, then, at least imitate those Barbarians, we who are citizens of heaven. For they indeed when they saw Him but in a manger, and in a hut, and no such thing was in sight as you behold now, drew near with great awe; but you behold Him not in the manger but on the altar, not a woman holding Him in her arms, but the priest standing by, and the Spirit with exceeding bounty hovering over the gifts set before us. You do not see merely this Body itself as they did, but you know also Its power, and the whole economy, and art ignorant of none of the holy things which are brought to pass by It, having been exactly initiated into all.

Let us therefore rouse ourselves up and be filled with horror, and let us show forth a reverence far beyond that of those Barbarians; that we may not by random and careless approaches heap fire upon our own heads. But these things I say, not to keep us from approaching, but to keep us from approaching without consideration. For as the approaching at random is dangerous, so the not communicating in those mystical suppers is famine and death. For this Table is the sinews of our soul, the bond of our mind, the foundation of our confidence, our hope, our salvation, our light, our life. When with this sacrifice we depart into the outer world, with much confidence we shall tread the sacred threshold, fenced round on every side as with a kind of golden armor.

And why speak I of the world to come? Since here this mystery makes earth become to you a heaven. Open only for once the gates of heaven and look in; nay, rather not of heaven, but of the heaven of heavens; and then you will behold what I have been speaking of. For what is there most precious of all, this will I show you lying upon the earth. For as in royal palaces, what is most glorious of all is not walls, nor golden roofs, but the person of the king sitting on the throne; so likewise in heaven the Body of the King. But this, you are now permitted to see upon earth. For it is not

angels, nor archangels, nor heavens and heavens of heavens, that I show you, but the very Lord and Owner of these. Perceivest thou how that which is more precious than all things is seen by you on earth; and not seen only, but also touched; and not only touched, but likewise eaten; and after receiving It you go home?

Make your soul clean then, prepare your mind for the reception of these mysteries. For if you were entrusted to carry a king's child with the robes, the purple, and the diadem, you would cast away all things which are upon the earth. But now that it is no child of man how royal soever, but the only-begotten Son of God Himself, Whom you received, do you not thrill with awe, tell me, and cast away all the love of all worldly things, and have no bravery but that wherewith to adorn yourself? Or do you still look towards earth, and love money, and pant after gold? What pardon then can you have? What excuse? Do you not know that all this worldly luxury is loathsome to your Lord? Was it not for this that on His birth He was laid in a manger, and took to Himself a mother of low estate? Did He not for this say to him that was looking after gain, *"But the Son of Man has not where to lay His head?"* [Matthew 8:20]

And what did the disciples? Did they not observe the same law, being taken to houses of the poor and lodged, one with a tanner, another with a tent-maker, and with the seller of purple? For they inquired not after the splendor of the house, but for the virtues of men's souls.

These therefore let us also emulate, hastening by the beauty of pillars and of marbles, and seeking the mansions which are above; and let us tread under foot all the pride here below with all love of money, and acquire a lofty mind. For if we be sober-minded, not even this whole world is worthy of us, much less porticoes and arcades. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us adorn our souls, let us fit up this house which we are also to have with us

when we depart; that we may attain even to the eternal blessings, through the grace and mercy, etc.

Homily 25 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 10:25

Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

Having said that *"they could not drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devils,"* and having once for all led them away from those tables, by Jewish examples, by human reasonings, by the tremendous Mysteries, by the rites solemnized among the idols ; and having filled them with great fear; that he might not by this fear drive again to another extreme, and they be forced, exercising a greater scrupulosity than was necessary, to feel alarm, lest possibly even without their knowledge there might come in some such thing either from the market or from some other quarter; to release them from this strait, he says, *"Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question."* *"For,"* says he, *"if you eat in ignorance and not knowingly, you are not subject to the punishment: it being thenceforth a matter not of greediness, but of ignorance."*

Nor does he free the man only from this anxiety, but also from another, establishing them in thorough security and liberty. For he does not even suffer them to *"question;"* i.e., to search and enquire, whether it be an idol-sacrifice or no such thing; but simply to eat every thing which comes from the market, not even acquainting one's self with so much as this, what it is that is set before us. So that even he that eats, if in ignorance, may be rid of anxiety. For such is the nature of those things which are not in their essence evil, but through the man's intention make him unclean. Wherefore he says, *"asking no question."*

1 Corinthians 10:26

"For to the Lord belongs the earth and the fullness thereof." Not to the devils. Now if the earth and the fruits and the beasts be all His, nothing is unclean: but it becomes unclean otherwise, from our intention and our disobedience. Wherefore he not only gave permission, but also,

1 Corinthians 10:27

"If one of them that believe not bids you," says he, "to a feast, and you are disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake."

See again his moderation. For he did not command and make a law that they should withdraw themselves, yet neither did he forbid it. And again, should they depart, he frees them from all suspicion. Now what may be the account of this? That so great curiousness might not seem to arise from any fear and cowardice. For he who makes scrupulous enquiry does so as being in dread: but he who, on hearing the fact, abstains, abstains as out of contempt and hatred and aversion. Wherefore Paul, purposing to establish both points, says, *"Whatsoever is set before you, eat."*

1 Corinthians 10:28-29

"But if any man say unto you, This has been offered in sacrifice unto idols; eat not, for his sake that showed it."

Thus it is not at all for any power that they have but as accursed, that he bids abstain from them. Neither then, as though they could injure you, fly from them, (for they have no strength;) nor yet, because they have no strength, indifferently partake: for it is the table of beings hostile and degraded. Wherefore he said, *"eat not for his sake that showed it, and for conscience sake. For the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."*

Do you see how both when he bids them eat and when they must abstain, he brings forward the same testimony? *"For I do not forbid,"* says he, for this cause as though they belonged to others: (*"for the earth is the Lord's:"*) but for the reason I mentioned, for conscience sake; i.e., that it may not be injured. Ought one therefore to inquire scrupulously? *"Nay"* says he *"for I said not your conscience, but his. For I have already said, 'for his sake that showed it.'"* And again, v. 29, *"Conscience, I say, not your own, but the other's."*

2. But perhaps some one may say, *"The brethren indeed, as is natural, you spare, and dost not suffer us to taste for their sakes, lest their conscience being weak might be emboldened to eat the idol sacrifices. But if it be some heathen, what is this man to you? Was it not your own word, 'What have I to do with judging them that are without?' [1 Corinthians 5:12] Wherefore then do you on the contrary care for them?"* *"Not for him is my care,"* he replies, *"but in this case also for you."* To which effect also he adds,

"For why is my liberty judged by another conscience?" meaning by "liberty," that which is left without caution or prohibition. For this is liberty, freed from Jewish bondage. And what he means is this: "God has made me free and above all reach of injury, but the Gentile knows not how to judge of my rule of life, nor to see into the liberality of my Master, but will condemn and say to himself, 'Christianity is a fable; they abstain from the idols, they shun demons, and yet cleave to the things offered to them: great is their gluttony.'" *"And what then?"* it may be said. *"What harm is it to us, should he judge us unfairly?"* But how much better to give him no room to judge at all! For if you abstain, he will not even say this. *"How,"* say you, *"will he not say it? For when he sees me not making these inquiries, either in the shambles or in the banquet; what should hinder him from using this language and condemning me, as one who partakes without discrimination?"* It is not so at all. For you partake, not as of idol-sacrifices, but as of things clean. And if you make no nice enquiry, it is that you may signify that you fear not the things set before you; this being the reason why, whether you enter a house of Gentiles or go into the market, I suffer you not to ask questions; viz. lest you become timid and perplexed, and occasion yourself needless trouble.

1 Corinthians 10:30

"If I by grace partake, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?" "Of what do you 'by grace partake?' tell me." Of the gifts of God. For His grace is so great, as to render my soul unstained and above all pollution. For as the sun sending down his beams upon many spots of pollution, withdraws them again pure; so likewise and much more, we, living in the midst of the world remain pure, if we will, by how much the power we have is even greater than his. "Why then abstain?" say you. Not as though I should become unclean, far from it; but for my brother's sake, and that I may not become a partaker with devils, and that I may not be judged by the unbeliever. For in this case it is no longer now the nature of the thing, but the disobedience and the friendship with devils which makes me unclean, and the purpose of heart works the pollution.

But what is, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? *"I, for my part," says he, "give thanks to God that He has thus set me on high, and above the low estate of the Jews, so that from no quarter am I injured. But the Gentiles not knowing my high rule of life will suspect the contrary, and will say, 'Here are Christians indulging a taste for our customs; they are a kind of hypocrites, abusing the demons and loathing them, yet running to their tables; than which what can be more senseless? We conclude that not for truth's sake, but through ambition and love of power they have betaken themselves to this doctrine.' What folly then would it be that in respect of those things whereby I have been so benefited as even to give solemn thanks, in respect of these I should become the cause of evil-speaking?" "But these things, even as it is," say you, "will the Gentile allege, when he sees me not making enquiry." In no wise. For all things are*

not full of idol-sacrifices so that he should suspect this: nor dost you yourself taste of them as idol-sacrifices. But not then scrupulous overmuch, nor again, on the other hand, when any say that it is an idol-sacrifice, do thou partake. For Christ gave you grace and set you on high and above all injury from that quarter, not that you might be evil spoken of, nor that the circumstance which has been such a gain to you as to be matter of special thanksgiving, should so injure others as to make them even blaspheme.

"Nay, why," says he, *"do I not say to the Gentile, 'I eat, I am no wise injured, and I do not this as one in friendship with the demons'?"* Because you can not persuade him, even though you should say it ten thousand times: weak as he is and hostile. For if your brother has not yet been persuaded by you, much less the enemy and the Gentile. If he is possessed by his consciousness of the idol-sacrifice, much more the unbeliever. And besides, what occasion have we for so great trouble?

"What then? Whereas we have known Christ and give thanks, while they blaspheme, shall we therefore abandon this custom also?" Far from it. For the thing is not the same. For in the one case, great is our gain from bearing the reproach; but in the other, there will be no advantage. Wherefore also he said before, *"for neither if we eat, are we the better; nor if we eat not, are we the worse."* [1 Corinthians 8:8] And besides this too he showed that the thing was to be avoided, so that even on another ground ought they to be abstained from, not on this account only but also for the other reasons which he assigned.

1 Corinthians 10:31

3. *"Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."*

Perceivest thou how from the subject before him, he carried out the exhortation to what was general, giving us one, the most excellent of all aims, that God in all things should be glorified?

1 Corinthians 10:32

"Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the Church of God:" i.e., give no handle to anyone: since in the case supposed, both your brother is offended, and the Jew will the more hate and condemn you, and the Gentile in like manner deride you even as a gluttonous man and a hypocrite.

Not only, however, should the brethren receive no hurt from us, but to the utmost of our power not even those that are without. For if we are *"light,"* and *"leaven,"* and *"luminaries,"* and *"salt,"* we ought to enlighten, not to darken; to bind, not to loosen; to draw to ourselves the unbelievers, not to drive them away. Why then do you put to flight those whom you ought to draw to you? Since even Gentiles are hurt, when they see us reverting to such things: for they know not our mind nor that our soul has come to be above all pollution of sense. And the Jews too, and the weaker brethren, will suffer the same.

Do you see how many reasons he has assigned for which we ought to abstain from the idol-sacrifices? Because of their unprofitableness, because of their needlessness, because of the injury to our brother, because of the evil-speaking of the Jew, because of the reviling of the Gentile, because we ought not to be partakers with demons, because the thing is a kind of idolatry.

Further, because he had said, *"give no occasion of stumbling,"* and he made them responsible for the injury done, both to the Gentiles and to the Jews; and the saying was grievous; see how he renders it acceptable and light, putting himself forward, and saying,

1 Corinthians 10:33

"Even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved."

1 Corinthians 11:1

"Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ."

This is a rule of the most perfect Christianity, this is a landmark exactly laid down, this is the point that stands highest of all; viz. the seeking those things which are for the common profit: which also Paul himself declared, by adding, *"even as I also am of Christ."* For nothing can so make a man an imitator of Christ as caring for his neighbors. Nay, though you should fast, though you should lie upon the ground, and even strangle yourself, but take no thought for your neighbor; you have wrought nothing great, but still standest far from this Image, while so doing. However, in the case before us, even the very thing itself is naturally useful, viz; the abstaining from idol-sacrifices. But *"I,"* says he, have done many of those things which were unprofitable also: e.g., when I used circumcision, when I offered sacrifice; for these, were any one to examine them in themselves, rather destroy those that follow after them and cause them to fall from salvation: nevertheless, I submitted even to these on account of the advantage therefrom: but here is no such thing. For in that case, except there accrue a certain benefit and except they be done for others' sake, then the thing becomes injurious: but in this, though there be none made to stumble, even so ought one to abstain from the things forbidden.

But not only to things hurtful have I submitted, but also to things toilsome. For, *"I robbed other Churches,"* says he, *"taking wages of them; [2 Corinthians 11:8] and when it was lawful to eat and not to work, I sought not this, but chose to perish of hunger rather than offend another."* This is why he says, *"I please all men in all things."* *"Though it be against the law, though it be laborious and hazardous, which is to be done, I endure*

all for the profit of others. So then, being above all in perfection, he became beneath all in condescension."

4. For no virtuous action can be very exalted, when it does not distribute its benefit to others also: as is shown by him who brought the one talent safe, and was cut in sunder because he had not made more of it. And thou then, brother, though you should remain without food, though you should sleep upon the ground, though you should eat ashes and be ever wailing, and do good to no other; you will do no great work. For so also those great and noble persons who were in the beginning made this their chiefest care: examine accurately their life, and you will see clearly that none of them ever looked to his own things, but each one to the things of his neighbor, whence also they shone the brighter. For so Moses (to mention him first) wrought many and great wonders and signs; but nothing made him so great as that blessed voice which he uttered unto God, saying, *"If You will forgive their sin,"* forgive; *"but if not, blot me also out."* [Exodus 32:32] Such too was David: wherefore also he said, *"I the shepherd have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but these, the flock, what have they done? Let Your hand be upon me and upon my father's house."* [2 Samuel 24:17] So likewise Abraham sought not his own profit, but the profit of many. Wherefore he both exposed himself to dangers and besought God for those who in no wise belonged to him.

Well: these indeed so became glorious. But as for those who sought their own, consider what harm too they received. The nephew, for instance, of the last mentioned, because he listened to the saying, *"If you will go to the right, I will go to the left;"* [Genesis 13:9] and accepting the choice, sought his own profit, did not even find his own: but this region was burned up, while that remained untouched. Jonah again, not seeking the profit of many, but his own, was in danger even of perishing: and while the city

stood fast, he himself was tossed about and overwhelmed in the sea. But when he sought the profit of many, then he also found his own. So likewise Jacob among the flocks, not seeking his own gain, had exceeding riches for his portion. And Joseph also, seeking the profit of his brethren, found his own. At least, being sent by his father, [Genesis 37:14] he said not, *"What is this? Have you not heard that for a vision and certain dreams they even attempted to tear me in pieces, and I was held responsible for my dreams, and suffer punishment for being beloved of you? What then will they not do when they get me in the midst of them?"* He said none of these things, he thought not of them, but prefers the care of his brethren above all. Therefore he enjoyed also all the good things which followed, which both made him very brilliant and declared him glorious. Thus also Moses—for nothing hinders that we should a second time make mention of him, and behold how he overlooked his own things and sought the things of others:— I say this Moses, being conversant in a king's court, because he *"counted the reproach of Christ [Hebrews 11:26] greater riches than the treasures of Egypt;"* and having cast them even all out of his hands, became a partaker of the afflictions of the Hebrews;— so far from being himself enslaved, he liberated them also from bondage.

Well: these surely are great things and worthy of an angelical life. But the conduct of Paul far exceeds this. For all the rest leaving their own blessings chose to be partakers in the afflictions of others: but Paul did a thing much greater. For it was not that he consented to be a partaker in others' misfortunes, but he chose himself to be at all extremities that other men might enjoy blessings. Now it is not the same for one who lives in luxury to cast away his luxury and suffer adversity, as for one himself alone suffering adversity, to cause others to be in security and honor. For in the former case, though it be a great thing to exchange prosperity for affliction

for your neighbor's sake, nevertheless it brings some consolation to have partakers in the misfortune. But consenting to be himself alone in the distress that others may enjoy their good things—this belongs to a much more energetic soul, and to Paul's own spirit.

And not by this only, but by another and greater excellency does he surpass all those before mentioned. That is, Abraham and all the rest exposed themselves to dangers in the present life, and all these were but asking for this kind of death once for all: but Paul prayed [Romans 9:3] that he might fall from the glory of the world to come for the sake of others' salvation.

I may mention also a third point of superiority. And what is this? That some of those, though they interceded for the persons who conspired against them, nevertheless it was for those with whose guidance they had been entrusted: and the same thing happened as if one should stand up for a wild and lawless son, but still a son: whereas Paul wished to be accursed in the stead of those with whose guardianship he was not entrusted. For to the Gentiles was he sent. Do you perceive the greatness of his soul and the loftiness of his spirit, transcending the very heaven? This man do thou emulate: but if you can not, at least follow those who shone in the old covenant. For thus shall you find your own profit, if you seek that of your neighbor. Wherefore when you feel backward to care for your brother, considering that no otherwise can you be saved, at least for your own sake stand thou up for him and his interests.

5. And although what has been said is sufficient to convince you that no otherwise is it possible to secure our own benefit: yet if you would also assure yourself of it by the examples of common life, conceive a fire happening any where to be kindled in a house, and then some of the neighbors with a view to their own interest refusing to confront the danger

but shutting themselves up and remaining at home, in fear lest some one find his way in and purloin some part of the household goods; how great punishment will they endure? Since the fire will come on and burn down likewise all that is theirs; and because they looked not to the profit of their neighbor, they lose even their own besides. For so God, willing to bind us all to each other, has imposed upon things such a necessity, that in the profit of one neighbor that of the other is bound up; and the whole world is thus constituted. And therefore in a vessel too, if a storm come on, and the steersman, leaving the profit of the many, should seek his own only, he will quickly sink both himself and them. And of each several art too we may say that should it look to its own profit only, life could never stand, nor even the art itself which so seeks its own. Therefore the husbandman sows not so much grain only as is sufficient for himself, since he would long ago have famished both himself and others; but seeks the profit of the many: and the soldier takes the field against dangers, not that he may save himself, but that he may also place his cities in security: and the merchant brings not home so much as may be sufficient for himself alone, but for many others also.

Now if any say, *"each man does this, not looking to my interest, but his own, for he engages in all these things to obtain for himself money and glory and security, so that in seeking my profit he seeks his own:"* this also do I say and long since wished to hear from you, and for this have I framed all my discourse; viz. to signify that your neighbor then seeks his own profit, when he looks to yours. For since men would no otherwise make up their mind to seek the things of their neighbor, except they were reduced to this necessity; therefore God has thus joined things together, and suffers them not to arrive at their own profit except they first travel through the profit of others.

Well then, this is natural to man, thus to follow after his neighbors' advantage; but one ought to be persuaded not from this reason, but from what pleases God. For it is not possible to be saved, wanting this; but though you should exercise the highest perfection of the work and neglect others who are perishing, you will gain no confidence towards God. Whence is this evident? From what the blessed Paul declared. *"For if I bestow my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing,"* [1 Corinthians 13:3] says he. Sees thou how much Paul requires of us? And yet he that bestowed his goods to feed the poor, sought not his own good, but that of his neighbor. But this alone is not enough, he says. For he would have it done with sincerity and much sympathy. For therefore also God made it a law that he might bring us into the bond of love. When therefore He demands so large a measure, and we do not render even that which is less, of what indulgence shall we be worthy?

"And how," says one, *"did God say to Lot by the Angels, 'Escape for your life?'"* [Genesis 19:17] Say, when, and why. When the punishment was brought near, not when there was an opportunity of correction but when they were condemned and incurably diseased, and old and young had rushed into the same passions, and henceforth they must needs be burned up, and in that day when the thunderbolts were about to be launched. And besides, this was not spoken of vice and virtue but of the chastisement inflicted by God. For what was he to do, tell me? Sit still and await the punishment, and without at all profiting them, be burned up? Nay, this were the extremest folly.

For I do not affirm this, that one ought to bring chastisement on one's self without discrimination and at random, apart from the will of God. But when a man tarries long in sin, then I bid you push yourself forward and

correct him: if you will, for your neighbor's sake: but if not, at least for your own profit. It is true, the first is the better course: but if you reach not yet unto that height, do it even for this. And let no man seek his own that he may find his own; and bearing in mind that neither voluntary poverty nor martyrdom, nor any other thing, can testify in our favor, unless we have the crowning virtue of love; let us preserve this beyond the rest, that through it we may also obtain all other, both present and promised blessings; at which may we all arrive through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; Whom be the glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 11:2

Now I praise you that you remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you.

Having completed the discourse concerning the idol-sacrifices as became him, and having rendered it most perfect in all respects, he proceeds to another thing, which also itself was a complaint, but not so great a one. For that which I said before, this do I also now say, that he does not set down all the heavy accusations continuously, but after disposing them in due order, he inserts among them the lighter matters, mitigating what the readers would else feel offensive in his discourse on account of his continually reproving.

Wherefore also he set the most serious of all last, that relating to the resurrection. But for the present he goes to another, a lighter thing, saying, *"Now I praise you that you remember me in all things."* Thus when the offense is admitted, he both accuses vehemently and threatens: but when it is questioned, he first proves it and then rebukes. And what was admitted, he aggravates: but what was likely to be disputed, he shows to be admitted. Their fornication, for instance, was a thing admitted. Wherefore there was no need to show that there was an offense; but in that case he proved the magnitude of the transgression, and conducted his discourse by way of comparison. Again, their going to law before aliens was an offense, but not so great a one. Wherefore he considered by the way, and proved it. The matter of the idol-sacrifices again was questioned. It was however, a most serious evil. Wherefore he both shows it to be an offense, and amplifies it

by his discourse. But when he does this, he not only withdraws them from the several crimes, but invites them also to their contraries. Thus he said not only that one must not commit fornication, but likewise that one ought to exhibit great holiness. Wherefore he added, "*Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit.*" [1 Corinthians 6:20] And having said again that one ought not to be wise with the wisdom that is without, he is not content with this, but bids him also to "*become a fool.*" [1 Corinthians 3:18] And where he advises them not to go to law before them that are without, and to do no wrong; he goes further, and takes away even the very going to law, and counsels them not only to do no wrong, but even to suffer wrong. [c. vi. 7, 8]

And discoursing concerning the idol-sacrifices, he said not that one ought to abstain from things forbidden only, but also from things permitted when offense is given: and not only not to hurt the brethren, but not even Greeks, nor Jews. Thus, "*give no occasion of stumbling,*" says he, "*either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the Church of God.*" [1 Corinthians 10:32]

2. Having finished therefore all the discourses concerning all these things, he next proceeds also to another accusation. And what was this? Their women used both to pray and prophesy unveiled and with their head bare, (for then women also used to prophesy;) but the men went so far as to wear long hair as having spent their time in philosophy, and covered their heads when praying and prophesying, each of which was a Grecian custom. Since then he had already admonished them concerning these things when present, and some perhaps listened to him and others disobeyed; therefore in his letter also again, he foment the place, like a physician, by his mode of addressing them, and so corrects the offense. For that he had heretofore admonished them in person is evident from what he begins with. Why else, having said nothing of this matter any where in the Epistle before, but

passing on from other accusations, does he straightway say, *"Now I praise you that you remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you?"*

You see that some obeyed, whom he praises; and others disobeyed, whom he corrects by what comes afterwards, saying, *"Now if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom."* [1 Corinthians 11:16] For if after some had done well but others disobeyed, he had included all in his accusation, he would both have made the one sort bolder, and have caused the others to become more remiss; whereas now by praising and approving the one, and rebuking the other, he both refreshes the one more effectually, and causes the other to shrink before him. For the accusation even by itself was such as might well wound them; but now that it takes place in contrast with others who have done well and are praised, it comes with a sharper sting. However, for the present he begins not with accusation, but with encomiums and great encomiums, saying, *"Now I praise you that you remember me in all things."* For such is the character of Paul; though it be but for small matters he weaves a web of high praise; nor is it for flattery that he does so: far from it; how could he so act to whom neither money was desirable, nor glory, nor any other such thing? But for their salvation he orders all his proceedings. And this is why he amplifies the encomium, saying, *"Now I praise you that you remember me in all things."*

All what things? For hitherto his discourse was only concerning their not wearing long hair and not covering their heads; but, as I said, he is very bountiful in his praises, rendering them more forward. Wherefore he says,

"That ye remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you." It appears then that he used at that time to deliver many things also not in writing, which he shows too in many other places. But at that time he only delivered them, whereas now he adds an

explanation of their reason: thus both rendering the one sort, the obedient, more steadfast, and pulling down the others' pride, who oppose themselves. Further, he does not say, "*you have obeyed, while others disobeyed,*" but without exciting suspicion, intimates it by his mode of teaching in what follows, where he says,

1 Corinthians 11:3

"But I would have ye know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of every woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

This is his account of the reason of the thing, and he states it to make the weaker more attentive. He indeed that is faithful, as he ought to be, and steadfast, does not require any reason or cause of those things which are commanded him, but is content with the ordinance alone. But he that is weaker, when he also learns the cause, then both retains what is said with more care and obeys with much readiness.

Wherefore neither did he state the cause until he saw the commandment transgressed. What then is the cause? *"The head of every man is Christ."* Is He then Head of the Gentile also? In no wise. For if *"we are the Body of Christ, and severally members thereof,"* [1 Corinthians 12:27] and in this way He is our head, He cannot be the head of them who are not in the Body and rank not among the members. So that when he says, *"of every man,"* one must understand it of the believer. Perceivest thou how every where he appeals to the hearer's shame by arguing from on high? Thus both when he was discoursing on love, and when on humility, and when on almsgiving, it was from thence that he drew his examples.

3. *"But the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."* Here the heretics rush upon us with a certain declaration of inferiority, which out of these words they contrive against the Son. But they stumble against themselves. For if *"the man be the head of the woman,"* and the head be of the same substance with the body, and *"the head of Christ is God,"* the Son is of the same substance with the Father. *"Nay,"* say they, *"it is not His being of another substance which we intend to show from hence,*

but that He is under subjection." What then are we to say to this? In the first place, when any thing lowly is said of him conjoined as He is with the Flesh, there is no disparagement of the Godhead in what is said, the Economy admitting the expression. However, tell me how you intend to prove this from the passage? Why, as the man governs the wife, says he, "*so also the Father, Christ.*" Therefore also as Christ governs the man, so likewise the Father, the Son. "*For the head of every man,*" we read, "*is Christ.*" And who could ever admit this? For if the superiority of the Son compared with us, be the measure of the Father's compared with the Son, consider to what meanness you will bring Him. So that we must not try all things by like measure in respect of ourselves and of God, though the language used concerning them be similar; but we must assign to God a certain appropriate excellency, and so great as belongs to God. For should they not grant this, many absurdities will follow. As thus; "*the head of Christ is God:*" and, "*Christ is the head of the man, and he of the woman.*" Therefore if we choose to take the term, "*head,*" in the like sense in all the clauses, the Son will be as far removed from the Father as we are from Him. Nay, and the woman will be as far removed from us as we are from the Word of God. And what the Son is to the Father, this both we are to the Son and the woman again to the man. And who will endure this?

But do you understand the term "*head*" differently in the case of the man and the woman, from what thou dost in the case of Christ? Therefore in the case of the Father and the Son, must we understand it differently also. "*How understand it differently?*" says the objector. According to the occasion. For had Paul meant to speak of rule and subjection, as you say, he would not have brought forward the instance of a wife, but rather of a slave and a master. For what if the wife be under subjection to us? It is as a wife, as free, as equal in honor. And the Son also, though He did become

obedient to the Father, it was as the Son of God, it was as God. For as the obedience of the Son to the Father is greater than we find in men towards the authors of their being, so also His liberty is greater. Since it will not of course be said that the circumstances of the Son's relation to the Father are greater and more intimate than among men, and of the Father's to the Son, less. For if we admire the Son that He was obedient so as to come even unto death, and the death of the cross, and reckon this the great wonder concerning Him; we ought to admire the Father also, that He begot such a son, not as a slave under command, but as free, yielding obedience and giving counsel. For the counsellor is no slave. But again, when you hear of a counsellor, do not understand it as though the Father were in need, but that the Son has the same honor with Him that begot Him. Do not therefore strain the example of the man and the woman to all particulars.

For with us indeed the woman is reasonably subjected to the man: since equality of honor causes contention. And not for this cause only, but by reason also of the deceit [1 Timothy 2:14] which happened in the beginning. Wherefore you see, she was not subjected as soon as she was made; nor, when He brought her to the man, did either she hear any such thing from God, nor did the man say any such word to her: he said indeed that she was *"bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh:"* [Genesis 2:23] but of rule or subjection he no where made mention unto her. But when she made an ill use of her privilege and she who had been made a helper was found to be an ensnarer and ruined all, then she is justly told for the future, *"your turning shall be to your husband."* [Genesis 3:16]

To account for which; it was likely that this sin would have thrown our race into a state of warfare; (for her having been made out of him would not have contributed any thing to peace, when this had happened, nay, rather this very thing would have made the man even the harsher, that she made as

she was out of him should not have spared even him who was a member of herself:) wherefore God, considering the malice of the Devil, raised up the bulwark of this word and what enmity was likely to arise from his evil device, He took away by means of this sentence and by the desire implanted in us: thus pulling down the partition-wall, i.e., the resentment caused by that sin of hers. But in God and in that undefiled Essence, one must not suppose any such thing.

Do not therefore apply the examples to all, since elsewhere also from this source many grievous errors will occur. For so in the beginning of this very Epistle, he said, [1 Corinthians 3:22-23] *"All are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."* What then? Are all in like manner ours, as *"we are Christ's, and Christ is God's?"* In no wise, but even to the very simple the difference is evident, although the same expression is used of God, and Christ, and us. And elsewhere also having called the husband *"head of the wife,"* he added, [Ephesians 5:23] *"Even as Christ is Head and Saviour and Defender of the Church, so also ought the man to be of his own wife."* Are we then to understand in like manner the saying in the text, both this, and all that after this is written to the Ephesians concerning this subject? Far from it. It is impossible. For although the same words are spoken of God and of men, they do not have the same force in respect to God and to men, but in one way those must be understood, and in another these. Not however on the other hand all things diversely: since contrariwise they will seem to have been introduced at random and in vain, we reaping no benefit from them. But as we must not receive all things alike, so neither must we absolutely reject all.

Now that what I say may become clearer, I will endeavor to make it manifest in an example. Christ is called *"the Head of the Church."* If I am to take nothing from what is human in the idea, why, I would know, is the

expression used at all? On the other hand, if I understand all in that way, extreme absurdity will result. For the head is of like passions with the body and liable to the same things. What then ought we to let go, and what to accept? We should let go these particulars which I have mentioned, but accept the notion of a perfect union, and the first principle; and not even these ideas absolutely, but here also we must form a notion, as we may by ourselves, of that which is too high for us and suitable to the Godhead: for both the union is surer and the beginning more honorable.

Again, you hear the word "*Son*;" do not thou in this case admit all particulars; yet neither ought thou to reject all: but admitting whatever is meet for God, e.g. that He is of the same essence, that He is of God; the things which are incongruous and belong to human weakness, leave thou upon the earth.

Again, God is called "*Light*." Shall we then admit all circumstances which belong to natural light? In no wise. For this light yields to darkness, and is circumscribed by space, and is moved by another power, and is overshadowed; none of which it is lawful even to imagine of That Essence. We will not however reject all things on this account, but will reap something useful from the example. The illumination which comes to us from God, the deliverance from darkness, this will be what we gather from it.

4. Thus much in answer to the heretics: but we must also orderly go over the whole passage. For perhaps some one might here have doubt also, questioning with himself, what sort of a crime it was for the woman to be uncovered, or the man covered? What sort of crime it is, learn now from hence.

Symbols many and diverse have been given both to man and woman; to him of rule, to her of subjection: and among them this also, that she

should be covered, while he has his head bare. If now these be symbols you see that both err when they disturb the proper order, and transgress the disposition of God, and their own proper limits, both the man falling into the woman's inferiority, and the woman rising up against the man by her outward habiliments.

For if exchange of garments be not lawful, so that neither she should be clad with a cloak, nor he with a mantle or a veil: (*"for the woman,"* says He, *"shall not wear that which pertains to a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garments:"*) much more is it unseemly for these [Deuteronomy 22:5] things to be interchanged. For the former indeed were ordained by men, even although God afterwards ratified them: but this by nature, I mean the being covered or uncovered. But when I say Nature, I mean God. For He it is Who created Nature. When therefore you overturn these boundaries, see how great injuries ensue.

And tell me not this, that the error is but small. For first, it is great even of itself: being as it is disobedience. Next, though it were small, it became great because of the greatness of the things whereof it is a sign. However, that it is a great matter, is evident from its ministering so effectually to good order among mankind, the governor and the governed being regularly kept in their several places by it.

So that he who transgresses disturbs all things, and betrays the gifts of God, and casts to the ground the honor bestowed on him from above; not however the man only, but also the woman. For to her also it is the greatest of honors to preserve her own rank; as indeed of disgraces, the behavior of a rebel. Wherefore he laid it down concerning both, thus saying,

1 Corinthians 11:4-5

"Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonors her head."

For there were, as I said, both men who prophesied and women who had this gift at that time, as the daughters of Philip, [Acts 21:9] as others before them and after them: concerning whom also the prophet spoke of old: *"your sons shall prophesy, and your daughters shall see visions."* [Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17]

Well then: the man he compels not to be always uncovered, but only when he prays. *"For every man,"* says he, *"praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head."* But the woman he commands to be at all times covered. Wherefore also having said, *"Every woman that prays or prophesies with her head unveiled, dishonors her head,"* he stayed not at this point only, but also proceeded to say, *"for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven."* But if to be shaven is always dishonorable, it is plain too that being uncovered is always a reproach. And not even with this only was he content, but added again, saying, *"The woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels."* He signifies that not at the time of prayer only but also continually, she ought to be covered. But with regard to the man, it is no longer about covering but about wearing long hair, that he so forms his discourse. To be covered he then only forbids, when a man is praying; but the wearing long hair he discourages at all times. Wherefore, as touching the woman, he said, *"But if she be not veiled, let her also be shorn;"* so likewise touching the man, *"If he have long hair, it is a dishonor unto him."* He said not, *"if he be covered"* but, *"if he have*

long hair." Wherefore also he said at the beginning, *"Every man praying or prophesying, having any thing on his head, dishonors his head."* He said not, *"covered,"* but *"having any thing on his head;"* signifying that even though he pray with the head bare, yet if he have long hair, he is like to one covered. *"For the hair,"* says he, *"is given for a covering."*

1 Corinthians 11:6

"But if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled."

Thus, in the beginning he simply requires that the head be not bare: but as he proceeds he intimates both the continuance of the rule, saying, *"for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven,"* and the keeping of it with all care and diligence. For he said not merely covered, but *"covered over,"* meaning that she be carefully wrapped up on every side. And by reducing it to an absurdity, he appeals to their shame, saying by way of severe reprimand, *"but if she be not covered, let her also be shorn."* As if he had said, *"If you cast away the covering appointed by the law of God, cast away likewise that appointed by nature."*

But if any say, *"Nay, how can this be a shame to the woman, if she mount up to the glory of the man?"* we might make this answer; *"She does not mount up, but rather falls from her own proper honor."* Since not to abide within our own limits and the laws ordained of God, but to go beyond, is not an addition but a diminuation. For as he that desires other men's goods and seizes what is not his own, has not gained any thing more, but is diminished, having lost even that which he had, (which kind of thing also happened in paradise) so likewise the woman acquires not the man's dignity, but loses even the woman's decency which she had. And not from hence only is her shame and reproach, but also on account of her covetousness.

Having taken then what was confessedly shameful, and having said, *"but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven,"* he states in what follows his own conclusion, saying, *"let her be covered."* And he said not,

"let her have long hair," but, "let her be covered," ordaining both these to be one, and establishing them both ways, from what was customary and from their contraries: in that he both affirms the covering and the hair to be one, and also that she again who is shaven is the same with her whose head is bare. *"For it is one and the same thing,"* says he, *"as if she were shaven."* But if any say, *"And how is it one, if this woman have the covering of nature, but the other who is shaven have not even this?"* we answer, that as far as her will goes, she threw that off likewise by having the head bare. And if it be not bare of tresses, that is nature's doing, not her own. So that as she who is shaven has her head bare, so this woman in like manner. For this cause He left it to nature to provide her with a covering, that even of it she might learn this lesson and veil herself.

Then he states also a cause, as one discoursing with those who are free: a thing which in many places I have remarked. What then is the cause?

1 Corinthians 11:7

"For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God."

This is again another cause. *"Not only,"* so he speaks, *"because he has Christ to be His Head ought he not to cover the head, but because also he rules over the woman."* For the ruler when he comes before the king ought to have the symbol of his rule. As therefore no ruler without military girdle and cloak, would venture to appear before him that has the diadem: so neither do thou without the symbols of your rule, (one of which is the not being covered,) pray before God, lest you insult both yourself and Him that has honored you.

And the same thing likewise one may say regarding the woman. For to her also is it a reproach, the not having the symbols of her subjection. *"But the woman is the glory of the man."* Therefore the rule of the man is natural.

5. Then, having affirmed his point, he states again other reasons and causes also, leading you to the first creation, and saying thus:

1 Corinthians 11:8

"For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man."

But if to be of any one, is a glory to him of whom one is, much more the being an image of him.

1 Corinthians 11:9

"For neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man."

This is again a second superiority, nay, rather also a third, and a fourth, the first being, that Christ is the head of us, and we of the woman; a second, that we are the glory of God, but the woman of us; a third, that we are not of the woman, but she of us; a fourth, that we are not for her, but she for us.

1 Corinthians 11:10

"For this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head."

"For this cause:" what cause, tell me? *"For all these which have been mentioned,"* says he; or rather not for these only, but also *"because of the angels."* *"For although thou despise your husband,"* says he, *"yet reverence the angels."*

It follows that being covered is a mark of subjection and authority. For it induces her to look down and be ashamed and preserve entire her proper virtue. For the virtue and honor of the governed is to abide in his obedience.

Again: the man is not compelled to do this; for he is the image of his Lord: but the woman is; and that reasonably. Consider then the excess of the transgression when being honored with so high a prerogative, you put yourself to shame, seizing the woman's dress. And you do the same as if having received a diadem, you should cast the diadem from your head, and instead of it take a slave's garment.

1 Corinthians 11:11

"Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord."

Thus, because he had given great superiority to the man, having said that the woman is of him and for him and under him; that he might neither lift up the men more than was due nor depress the women, see how he brings in the correction, saying, *"Howbeit neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord."* "Examine not, I pray," says he, *"the first things only, and that creation. Since if you enquire into what comes after, each one of the two is the cause of the other; or rather not even thus each of the other, but God of all."* Wherefore he says, *"neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord."*

1 Corinthians 11:12

"For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman."

He said not, *"of the woman,"* but he repeats the expression, [from 1 Corinthians 11:7] *"of the man."* For still this particular prerogative remains entire with the man. Yet are not these excellencies the property of the man, but of God. Wherefore also he adds, *"but all things of God."* If therefore all things belong to God, and he commands these things, do thou obey and gainsay not.

1 Corinthians 11:13

"Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God veiled?" Again he places them as judges of the things said, which also he did respecting the idol-sacrifices. For as there he says, *"judge ye what I say:"* [c. 1 Corinthians 10:15] so here, *"judge in yourselves:"* and he hints something more awful here. For he says that the affront here passes on unto God: although thus indeed he does not express himself, but in something of a milder and more enigmatical form of speech: *"is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled?"*

1 Corinthians 11:14

"Does not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor unto him?"

1 Corinthians 11:15

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering."

His constant practice of stating commonly received reasons he adopts also in this place, betaking himself to the common custom, and greatly abashing those who waited to be taught these things from him, which even from men's ordinary practice they might have learned. For such things are not unknown even to Barbarians: and see how he every where deals in piercing expressions: *"every man praying having his head covered dishonors his head;"* and again, *"but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled:"* and here again, *"if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him; but if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering."*

"And if it be given her for a covering," say you, *"wherefore need she add another covering?"* That not nature only, but also her own will may have part in her acknowledgment of subjection. For that you ought to be covered nature herself by anticipation enacted a law. Add now, I pray, your own part also, that you may not seem to subvert the very laws of nature; a proof of most insolent rashness, to buffet not only with us, but with nature also. This is why God accusing the Jews said, [Ezekiel 16:21-22] *"You have slain your sons and your daughters: this is beyond all your abominations."*

And again, Paul rebuking the unclean among the Romans thus aggravates the accusation, saying, that their usage was not only against the law of God, but even against nature. *"For they changed the natural use into that which is against nature."* [Romans 1:26] For this cause then here also he employs this argument signifying this very thing, both that he is not

enacting any strange law and that among Gentiles their inventions would all be reckoned as a kind of novelty against nature. So also Christ, implying the same, said, "*Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also so them;*" showing that He is not introducing any thing new.

1 Corinthians 11:16

"But if any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God."

It is then contentiousness to oppose these things, and not any exercise of reason. Notwithstanding, even thus it is a measured sort of rebuke which he adopts, to fill them the more with self-reproach; which in truth rendered his saying the more severe. *"For we,"* says he, *"have no such custom,"* so as to contend and to strive and to oppose ourselves. And he stopped not even here, but also added, *"neither the Churches of God;"* signifying that they resist and oppose themselves to the whole world by not yielding. However, even if the Corinthians were then contentious, yet now the whole world has both received and kept this law. So great is the power of the Crucified.

6. But I fear lest having assumed the dress, yet in their deeds some of our women should be found immodest and in other ways uncovered. For therefore also writing to Timothy Paul was not content with these things, but added others, saying, *"that they adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold."* [1 Timothy 2:9] For if one ought not to have the head bare, but everywhere to carry about the token of authority, much more is it becoming to exhibit the same in our deeds. Thus at any rate the former women also used both to call their husbands lords, [1 Peter 3:6] and to yield the precedence to them. *"Because they for their part,"* you say, *"used to love their own wives."* I know that as well as you: I am not ignorant of it. But when we are exhorting you concerning your own duties, let not theirs take all your attention. For so, when we exhort children to be obedient to parents, saying, that it is written, *"honor your father and your mother,"* they reply to us, *"mention*

also what follows, 'and you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath,'"
[Ephesians 6:1-4] And servants when we tell them that it is written that they should *"obey their masters, and not serve with eye-service,"* they also again demand of us what follows, bidding us also give the same advice to masters. For Paul bade them also, they saw, *"to forbear threatening."* But let us not do thus nor enquire into the things enjoined on others, when we are charged with regard to our own: for neither will your obtaining a partner in the charges free you from the blame: but look to one thing only, how you may rid yourself of those charges which lie against yourself. Since Adam also laid the blame on the woman, and she again on the serpent, but this did in no wise deliver them. Do not thou, therefore, for your part, say this to me now, but be careful with all consideration to render what you owe to your husband: since also when I am discoursing with your husband, advising him to love and cherish you, I suffer him not to bring forward the law that is appointed for the woman, but I require of him that which is written for himself. And do thou therefore busy yourself with those things only which belong to you, and show yourself tractable to your consort. And accordingly if it be really for God's sake that you obey your husband, tell me not of the things which ought to be done by him, but for what things you have been made responsible by the lawgiver, those perform with exactness. For this is especially to obey God, not to transgress the law even when suffering things contrary to it. And by the same rule, he that being beloved loves, is not reckoned to do any great thing. But he that waits upon a person who hates him, this above all is the man to receive a crown. In the same manner then do thou also reckon that if your husband give you disgust, and thou endure it, you shall receive a glorious crown: but if he be gentle and mild, what will there be for God to reward in you? And these things I say, not bidding the husbands be harsh; but persuading the wives to bear even with

harshness in their husbands. Since when each is careful to fulfil his own duty, his neighbor's part also will quickly follow: as when the wife is prepared to bear even with rough behavior in the husband, and the husband refrains from abusing her in her angry mood; then all is a calm and a harbor free from waves.

7. So also was it with those of old time. Each was employed in fulfilling his own duty, not in exacting that of his neighbor. Thus, if you mark it, Abraham took his brother's son: his wife found no fault with him. He commanded her to travel a long journey; she spoke not even against this but followed. Again, after those many miseries and labors and toils having become lord of all, he yielded the precedence to Lot. And so far from Sarah being offended at this, she did not even open her mouth, nor uttered any such thing as many of the women of these days utter, when they see their own husbands coming off inferior in such allotments, and especially in dealing with inferiors; reproaching them, and calling them fools and senseless and unmanly and traitors and stupid. But no such thing did she say or think, but was pleased with all things that were done by him.

And another thing, and that a greater: after that Lot had the choice put in his power, and had thrown the inferior part upon his uncle, a great danger fell upon him.

Whereof the patriarch hearing, armed all his people, and set himself against the whole army of the Persians with his own domestics only, and not even then did she detain him, nor say, as was likely, *"O man, where are you going, thrusting yourself down precipices, and exposing yourself to so great hazards; for one who wronged you and seized on all that was yours, shedding your blood? Yea, and even if you make light of yourself, yet have pity on me which have left house and country and friends and kindred, and have followed you in so long a pilgrimage; and involve me not in*

widowhood, and in the miseries of widowhood." None of these things she said: she thought not of them but bore all in silence.

After this, her womb continuing barren, she herself suffers not the grief of women nor laments: but he complains, though not to his wife, but to God. And see how each preserves his own appropriate part: for he neither despised Sarah as childless, nor reproached her with any such thing: and she again was anxious to devise some consolation to him for her childlessness by means of the handmaid. For these things had not yet been forbidden then as now. For now neither is it lawful for women to indulge their husbands in such things, nor for the men, with or without the wife's knowledge, to form such connexions, even though the grief of their childlessness should infinitely harass them: since they also shall hear the sentence, *"their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched."* For now it is not permitted, but then it had not been forbidden. Wherefore both his wife commanded this, and he obeyed, yet not even thus for pleasure's sake. But *"behold,"* it will be said, *"how he cast Hagar out again at her bidding."* Well, this is what I want to point out, that both he obeyed her in all things, and she him. But do not thou give heed to these things only, but examine, thou who urgest this plea, into what had gone before also, Hagar's insulting her, her boasting herself against her mistress; than which what can be more vexatious to a free and honorable woman?

8. Let not then the wife tarry for the virtue of the husband and then show her own, for this is nothing great; nor, on the other hand, the husband, for the obedience of the wife and then exercise self-command; for neither would this any more be his own well-doing; but let each, as I said, furnish his own share first. For if to the Gentiles smiting us on the right, we must turn the other cheek; much more ought one to bear with harsh behavior in a husband.

And I say not this for a wife to be beaten; far from it: for this is the extremest affront, not to her that is beaten, but to him who beats. But even if by some misfortune thou have such a yokefellow allotted you, take it not ill, O woman, considering the reward which is laid up for such things and their praise too in this present life. And to you husbands also this I say: make it a rule that there can be no such offense as to bring you under the necessity of striking a wife. And why say I a wife? Since not even upon his handmaiden could a free man endure to inflict blows and lay violent hands. But if the shame be great for a man to beat a maidservant, much more to stretch forth the right hand against her that is free. And this one might see even from heathen legislatures who no longer compel her that has been so treated to live with him that beat her, as being unworthy of her fellowship. For surely it comes of extreme lawlessness when your partner of life, she who in the most intimate relations and in the highest degree, is united with you; when she, like a base slave, is dishonored by you. Wherefore also such a man, if indeed one must call him a man and not rather a wild beast, I should say, was like a parricide and a murderer of his mother. For if for a wife's sake we were commanded to leave even father and mother, not wronging them but fulfilling a divine law; and a law so grateful to our parents themselves that even they, the very persons whom we are leaving, are thankful, and bring it about with great eagerness; what but extreme frenzy can it be to insult her for whose sake God bade us leave even our parents?

But we may well ask, Is it only madness? There is the shame too: I would fain know who can endure it. And what description can set it before us; when shrieks and wailings are borne along the alleys, and there is a running to the house of him that is so disgracing himself, both of the neighbors and the passers by, as though some wild beast were ravaging

within? Better were it that the earth should gape asunder for one so frantic, than that he should be seen at all in the forum after it.

"But the woman is insolent," says he. Consider nevertheless that she is a woman, the weaker vessel, whereas you are a man. For therefore were thou ordained to be ruler; and were assigned to her in place of a head, that you might bear with the weakness of her that is set under you. Make then your rule glorious. And glorious it will be when the subject of it meets with no dishonor from you. And as the monarch will appear so much the more dignified, as he manifests more dignity in the officer under him; but if he dishonor and depreciate the greatness of that rank, he is indirectly cutting off no small portion of his own glory likewise: so also thou dishonor her who governs next to yourself, wilt in no common degree mar the honor of your governance.

Considering therefore all these things, command yourself: and withal think also of that evening on which the father having called you, delivered you his daughter as a kind of deposit, and having separated her from all, from her mother, from himself, from the family, entrusted her entire guardianship to your right hand. Consider that (under God) through her you have children and hast become a father, and be thou also on that account gentle towards her.

Do you see not the husbandmen, how the earth which has once received the seed, they tend with all various methods of culture, though it have ten thousand disadvantages; e.g., though it be an unkindly soil or bear ill weeds, or though it be vexed with excessive rain through the nature of its situation? This also do thou. For thus shall you be first to enjoy both the fruit and the calm. Since your wife is to you both a harbor, and a potent healing charm to rejoice your heart. Well then: if you shall free your harbor from winds and waves, you shall enjoy much tranquility on your return

from the market-place: but if you fill it with clamor and tumult, thou dost but prepare for yourself a more grievous shipwreck. In order then to prevent this, let what I advise be done: When any thing uncomfortable happens in the household, if she be in the wrong console her and do not aggravate the discomfort. For even if you should lose all, nothing is more grievous than to have a wife without good-will sharing your abode. And whatever offense you can mention, you will tell me of nothing so very painful as being at strife with her. So that if it were only for such reasons as these, let her love be more precious than all things. For if one another's burdens are to be borne, much more our own wife's.

Though she be poor do not upbraid her: though she be foolish, do not trample on her, but train her rather: because she is a member of you, and you have become one flesh. *"But she is trifling and drunken and passionate."* You ought then to grieve over these things, not to be angry; and to beseech God, and exhort her and give her advice, and do every thing to remove the evil. But if you strike her thou dost aggravate the disease: for fierceness is removed by moderation, not by rival fierceness. With these things bear in mind also the reward from God: that when it is permitted you to cut her off, and you do not so for the fear of God, but bearest with so great defects, fearing the law appointed in such matters which forbids to put away a wife whatsoever disease she may have: you shall receive an unspeakable reward. Yea, and before the reward you shall be a very great gainer, both rendering her more obedient and becoming yourself more gentle thereby. It is said, for instance, that one of the heathen philosophers, who had a bad wife, a trifler and a brawler, when asked, *"Why, having such an one, he endured her;"* made reply, *"That he might have in his house a school and training-place of philosophy. For I shall be to all the rest meeker,"* says he, *"being here disciplined every day."* Did you utter a great

shout? Why, I at this moment am greatly mourning, when heathens prove better lovers of wisdom than we; we who are commanded to imitate angels, nay rather who are commanded to follow God Himself in respect of gentleness.

But to proceed: it is said that for this reason the philosopher having a bad wife, cast her not out; and some say that this very thing was the reason of his marrying her. But I, because many men have dispositions not exactly reasonable, advise that at first they do all they can, and be careful that they take a suitable partner and one full of all virtue. Should it happen, however, that they miss their end, and she whom they have brought into the house prove no good or tolerable bride, then I would have them at any rate try to be like this philosopher, and train her in every way, and consider nothing more important than this. Since neither will a merchant, until he have made a compact with his partner capable of procuring peace, launch the vessel into the deep, nor apply himself to the rest of the transaction. And let us then use every effort that she who is partner with us in the business of life and in this our vessel, may be kept in all peace within. For thus shall our other affairs too be all in calm, and with tranquility shall we run our course through the ocean of the present life. Compared with this, let house, and slaves, and money, and lands, and the business itself of the state, be less in our account. And let it be more valuable than all in our eyes that she who with us sits at the oars should not be in mutiny and disunion with us. For so shall our other matters proceed with a favoring tide, and in spiritual things also we shall find ourselves much the freer from hindrance, drawing this yoke with one accord; and having done all things well, we shall obtain the blessings laid up in store; unto which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the

Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 27 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 11:17

But in giving you this charge, I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse.

It is necessary in considering the present charge to state also first the occasion of it. For thus again will our discourse be more intelligible. What then is this occasion?

As in the case of the three thousand who believed in the beginning, all had eaten their meals in common and had all things common; such also was the practice at the time when the Apostle wrote this: not such indeed exactly; but as it were a certain outflowing of that communion which abode among them descended also to them that came after. And because of course some were poor, but others rich, they laid not down all their goods in the midst, but made the tables open on stated days, as it should seem; and when the solemn service was completed, after the communion of the Mysteries, they all went to a common entertainment, the rich bringing their provisions with them, and the poor and destitute being invited by them, and all feasting in common. But afterward this custom also became corrupt. And the reason was, their being divided and addicting themselves, some to this party, and others to that, and saying, *"I am of such a one,"* and *"I of such a one;"* which thing also to correct he said in the beginning of the Epistle, *"For it has been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you says, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas."* Not that Paul was the person to whom they were attaching

themselves; for he would not have borne it: but wishing by concession to tear up this custom from the root, he introduced himself, indicating that if any one had inscribed upon himself even his name when breaking off from the common body, even so the thing done was profane and extreme wickedness. And if in his case it were wickedness, much more in the case of those who were inferior to him.

2. Since therefore this custom was broken through, a custom most excellent and most useful; (for it was a foundation of love, and a comfort to poverty, and a corrective of riches, and an occasion of the highest philosophy, and an instruction of humility) since however he saw so great advantages in a way to be destroyed, he naturally addresses them with severity, thus saying: *"But in giving you this charge, I praise you not."* For in the former charge, as there were many who kept (the ordinances), he began otherwise, saying thus: *"Now I praise you that you remember me in all things:"* but here contrariwise, *"But in giving you this charge, I praise you not."* And here is the reason why he placed it not after the rebuke of them that eat the idol-sacrifices. But because that was unusually harsh he interposes the discourse about wearing of long hair, that he might not have to pass from one set of vehement reproofs to others again of an invidious kind and so appear too harsh: and then he returns to the more vehement tone, and says, *"But in giving you this charge, I praise you not."* What is this? That which I am about to tell you of. What is, *"giving you this charge, I praise you not?"* *"I do not approve you,"* says he, *"because you have reduced me to the necessity of giving advice: I do not praise you, because you have required instruction in regard to this, because you have need of an admonition from me."* Do you perceive how from his beginning he signifies that what was done was very profane? For when he that errs ought not to

require so much as a hint to prevent his erring, the error would seem to be unpardonable.

And why do you not praise? Because "*ye come together*," says he, "*not for the better but for the worse*;" i.e., because ye do not go forward unto virtue. For it were meet that your liberality should increase and become manifold, but you have taken rather from the custom which already prevailed, and have so taken from it as even to need warning from me, in order that you may return to the former order.

Further, that he might not seem to say these things on account of the poor only, he does not at once strike in to the discourse concerning the tables, lest he render his rebuke such as they might easily come to think slightly of, but he searches for an expression most confounding and very fearful. For what says he?

1 Corinthians 11:18

"For first of all, when you come together in the Church, I hear that divisions exist among you."

And he says not, *"For fear that you do not sup together in common;"* *"for I hear that you feast in private, and not with the poor:"* but what was most calculated thoroughly to shake their minds, that he set down, the name of division, which was the cause of this mischief also: and so he reminded them again of that which was said in the beginning of the Epistle, and was *"signified by them of the house of Chloe."* [1 Corinthians 1:11] *"And I partly believe it."*

Thus, lest they should say, *"But what if the accusers speak falsely?"* he neither says, *"I believe it,"* lest he should rather make them reckless; nor again, on the other hand, *"I disbelieve it,"* lest he should seem to reprove without cause, but, *"I partly believe it,"* says he, i.e., *"I believe it in a small part;"* making them anxious and inviting them to return to correction.

1 Corinthians 11:19

3. *"For there must be also factions among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."*

By "*factions*," here he means those which concern not the doctrines, but these present divisions. But even if he had spoken of the doctrinal heresies, not even thus did he give them any handle. For Christ Himself said, *"it must needs be that occasions of stumbling come,"* [Matthew 18:7] not destroying the liberty of the will nor appointing any necessity and compulsion over man's life, but foretelling what would certainly ensue from the evil mind of men; which would take place, not because of his prediction, but because the incurably disposed are so minded. For not because he foretold them did these things happen: but because they were certainly about to happen, therefore he foretold them. Since, if the occasions of stumbling were of necessity and not of the mind of them that bring them in, it was superfluous His saying, *"Woe to that man by whom the occasion comes."* But these things we discussed more at length when we were upon the passage itself; now we must proceed to what is before us.

Now that he said these things of these factions relating to the tables, and that contention and division, he made manifest also from what follows. For having said, *"I hear that there are divisions among you,"* he stopped not here, but signifying what divisions he means he goes on to say, *"each one takes before other his own supper;"* and again, *"What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the Church of God?"* However, that of these he was speaking is evident. And if he call them divisions, marvel not. For, as I said, he wishes to touch them by the expression: whereas had they been divisions of doctrine, he would not have discoursed with them thus

mildly. Hear him, for instance, when he speaks of any such thing, how vehement he is both in assertion and in reproof: in assertion, as when he says, *"If even an angel preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed;"* [Galatians 1:8] but in reproof, as when he says, *"Whosoever of you would be justified by the law, you are fallen away from grace."* [Galatians 5:4] And at one time he calls the corrupters *"dogs,"* saying, *"Beware of dogs:"* [Philippians 3:2] at another, *"having their consciences seared with a hot iron."* [1 Timothy 4:2] And again, *"angels of Satan:"* [2 Corinthians 11:14-15] but here he said no such thing, but spoke in a gentle and subdued tone.

But what is, *"that they which are approved may be made manifest among you?"* That they may shine the more. And what he intends to say is this, that those who are unchangeable and firm are so far from being at all injured hereby, but even shows them the more, and that it makes them more glorious. For the word, *"that ,"* is not every where indicative of cause, but frequently also of the event of things. Thus Christ Himself uses it, when He says, *"For judgement I have come into this world; that they which see not may see, and that they which see may be made blind."* [John 9:39] So likewise Paul in another place, when discoursing of the law, he writes, *"And the Law came in beside, that the trespass might abound."* [Romans 5:20] But neither was the law given to this end that the trespasses of the Jews might be increased: (though this did ensue:) nor did Christ come for this end that they which see might be made blind, but for the contrary; but the result was such. Thus then also here must one understand the expression, *"that they which are approved may be made manifest."* For not at all with this view came heresies into being, that *"they which are approved may be made manifest,"* but on these heresies taking place such was the result. Now these things he said to console the poor, those of them who nobly bore that

sort of contempt. Wherefore he said not, "*that they may become approved,*" but, that they which are approved may be made manifest; showing that before this also they were such, but they were mixed up with the multitude, and while enjoying such relief as was afforded them by the rich, they were not very conspicuous: but now this strife and contentiousness made them manifest, even as the storm shows the pilot. And he said not, "*that you may appear approved,*" but, "*that they which are approved may be made manifest, those among you who are such.*" For neither when he is accusing does he lay them open, that he may not render them more reckless; nor when praising, that he may not make them more boastful; but he leaves both this expression and that in suspense, allowing each man's own conscience to make the application of what he says.

Nor does he here seem to me to be comforting the poor only, but those also who were not violating the custom. For it was likely that there were among them also those that observed it.

And this is why he said, "*I partly believe it.*" Justly then does he call these "*approved,*" who not only with the rest observed the custom, but even without them kept this good law undisturbed. And he does this, studying by such praises to render both others and these persons themselves more forward.

4. Then at last he adds the very form of offense. And what is it?

1 Corinthians 11:20

"When ye assemble yourselves together," says he, "it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper."

Do you see how effectually appealing to their shame, even already by way of narrative he contrives to give them his counsel? *"For the appearance of your assembly,"* says he, *"is different. It is one of love and brotherly affection. At least one place receives you all, and you are together in one flock. But the Banquet, when you come to that, bears no resemblance to the Assembly of worshippers."* And he said not, When ye come together, this is not to eat in common; *"this is not to feast with one another;"* but otherwise again and much more fearfully he reprimands them, saying, *"it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper,"* sending them away now from this point to that evening on which Christ delivered the awful Mysteries.

Therefore also he called the early meal *"a supper."* For that supper too had them all reclining at meat together: yet surely not so great was the distance between the rich and the poor as between the Teacher and the disciples. For that is infinite. And why say I the Teacher and the disciples? Think of the interval between the Teacher and the traitor: nevertheless, the Lord Himself both sat at meat with them and did not even cast him out, but both gave him his portion of salt and made him partaker of the Mysteries.

Next he explains how *"it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper."*

1 Corinthians 11:21

"For in your eating, each one takes before other his own supper," says he, "and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

Perceivest thou how he intimates that they were disgracing themselves rather? For that which is the Lord's, they make a private matter: so that themselves are the first to suffer indignity, depriving their own table of its greatest prerogative. How and in what manner? Because the Lord's Supper, i.e. the Master's, ought to be common. For the property of the master belongs not to this servant without belonging to that, but in common to all. So that by *"the Lord's"* Supper he expresses this, the *"community"* of the feast. As if he had said, *"If it be your master's, as assuredly it is, you ought not to withdraw it as private, but as belonging to your Lord and Master to set it in common before all. For this is the meaning of, 'the Lord's.'* But now thou dost not suffer it to be the Lord's, not suffering it to be common but *feasting by yourself."* Wherefore also he goes on to say,

"For each one takes before other his own supper." And he said not, *"cuts off,"* but *"takes before,"* tacitly censuring them both for greediness and for precipitancy. This at least the sequel also shows. For having said this, he added again, *"and one is hungry, and another is drunken,"* each of which showed a want of moderation, both the craving and the excess. See also a second fault again whereby those same persons are injured: the first, that they dishonor their supper: the second, that they are greedy and drunken; and what is yet worse, even when the poor are hungry. For what was intended to be set before all in common, that these men fed on alone, and proceeded both to surfeiting and to drunkenness. Wherefore neither did he say, *"one is hungry, and another is filled:"* but, *"is drunken."* Now each of

these, even by itself, is worthy of censure: for it is a fault to be drunken even without despising the poor; and to despise the poor without being drunken, is an accusation. When both then are joined together at the same time, consider how exceeding great is the transgression.

Next, having pointed out their profaneness, he adds his reprimand in what follows, with much anger, saying,

1 Corinthians 11:22

"What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the Church of God, and put them to shame that have not?"

Do you see how he transferred the charge from the indignity offered to the poor to the Church, that his words might make a deeper impression of disgust? Here now you see is yet a fourth accusation, when not the poor only, but the Church likewise is insulted. For even as you make the Lord's Supper a private meal, so also the place again, using the Church as a house. For it was made a Church, not that we who come together might be divided, but that they who are divided might be joined: and this act of assembling shows.

"And put them to shame that have not." He said not, *"and kill with hunger them that have not,"* but so as much more to put them to the blush, *"shame them;"* to point out that it is not food which he cares for so much as the wrong done unto them. Behold again a fifth accusation, not only to overlook the poor but even to shame them. Now this he said, partly as treating with reverence the concerns of the poor, and intimating that they grieve not so for the belly as for the shame; and partly also drawing the hearer to compassion.

Having therefore pointed out so great impieties, indignity to the Supper, indignity to the Church, the contempt practised towards the poor; he relaxes again the tones of his reproof, saying, all of a sudden, *"Shall I praise you? In this I praise you not."* Wherein one might especially marvel at him that when there was need to strike and chide more vehemently after the proof of so great offenses, he does the contrary rather, gives way, and permits them to recover breath. What then may the cause be? He had

touched more painfully than usual in aggravating the charge, and being a most excellent physician, he adapts the incision to the wounds, neither cutting superficially those parts which require a deep stroke; (for you have heard him how he cut off among those very persons him that had committed fornication;) nor delivering over to the knife those things which require the milder sort of remedies. For this cause then here also he conducts his address more mildly, and in another point of view likewise, he sought especially to render them gentle to the poor: and this is why he discourses with them rather in a subdued tone.

5. Next, wishing also from another topic to shame them yet more, he takes again the points which were most essential and of them weaves his discourse.

1 Corinthians 11:23

"For I received of the Lord," says he, "that which also I delivered unto you: how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread:"

1 Corinthians 11:24

"And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is My Body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

Wherefore does he here make mention of the Mysteries? Because that argument was very necessary to his present purpose. As thus: *"Your Master,"* says he, *"counted all worthy of the same Table, though it be very awful and far exceeding the dignity of all: but you consider them to be unworthy even of your own, small and mean as we see it is; and while they have no advantage over you in spiritual things, you rob them in the temporal things. For neither are these your own."*

However, he does not express himself thus, to prevent his discourse becoming harsh: but he frames it in a gentler form, saying, that *"the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread."*

And wherefore does he remind us of the time, and of that evening, and of the betrayal? Not indifferently nor without some reason, but that he might exceedingly fill them with compunction, were it but from consideration of the time. For even if one be a very stone, yet when he considers that night, how He was with His disciples, *"very heavy,"* how He was betrayed, how He was bound, how He was led away, how He was judged, how He suffered all the rest in order, he becomes softer than wax, and is withdrawn from earth and all the pomp of this world. Therefore he leads us to the remembrance of all those things, by His time, and His table, and His betrayal, putting us to shame and saying, *"Your Master gave up even Himself for you: and thou dost not even share a little meat with your brother for your own sake."*

But how says he, that *"he received it from the Lord?"* since certainly he was not present then but was one of the persecutors. That you may know that the first table had no advantage above that which comes after it. For even today also it is He who does all, and delivers it even as then.

And not on this account only does he remind us of that night, but that he may also in another way bring us to compunction. For as we particularly remember those words which we hear last from those who are departing; and to their heirs if they should venture to transgress their commands, when we would put them to shame we say, *"Consider that this was the last word that your father uttered to you, and until the evening when he was just about to breathe his last he kept repeating these injunctions:"* just so Paul, purposing hence also to make his argument full of awfulness; *"Remember,"* says he, *"that this was the last mysterious rite He gave unto you, and in that night on which He was about to be slain for us, He commanded these things, and having delivered to us that Supper after that He added nothing further."*

Next also he proceeds to recount the very things that were done, saying, *"He took bread, and, when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is My Body, which is broken for you."* If therefore you come for a sacrifice of thanksgiving, do thou on your part nothing unworthy of that sacrifice: by no means either dishonor your brother, or neglect him in his hunger; be not drunken, insult not the Church. As you come giving thanks for what you have enjoyed: so do you yourself accordingly make return, and not cut yourself off from your neighbor. Since Christ for His part gave equally to all, saying, *"Take, eat."* He gave His Body equally, but dost not thou give so much as the common bread equally? Yea, it was indeed broken for all alike, and became the Body equally for all.

1 Corinthians 11:25

"In like manner also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in My Blood: this do, as oft as you drink of it, in remembrance of Me."

What do you say? Are you making a remembrance of Christ, and do you despise the poor and tremblest not? Why, if a son or brother had died and thou were making a remembrance of him, you would have been smitten by your conscience, had you not fulfilled the custom and invited the poor: and when you are making remembrance of your Master, do you not so much as simply give a portion of the Table?

But what is it which He says, *"This cup is the New Covenant?"* Because there was also a cup of the Old Covenant; the libations and the blood of the brute creatures. For after sacrificing, they used to receive the blood in a chalice and bowl and so pour it out. Since then instead of the blood of beasts He brought in His own Blood; lest any should be troubled on hearing this, He reminds them of that ancient sacrifice.

6. Next, having spoken concerning that Supper, he connects the things present with the things of that time, that even as on that very evening and reclining on that very couch and receiving from Christ himself this sacrifice, so also now might men be affected; and he says,

1 Corinthians 11:26

"For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He come."

For as Christ in regard to the bread and the cup said, *"Do this in remembrance of Me,"* revealing to us the cause of the giving of the Mystery, and besides what else He said, declaring this to be a sufficient cause to ground our religious fear upon:— (for when you consider what your Master has suffered for you, you will the better deny yourself:)— so also Paul says here: *"as often as you eat ye do proclaim His death."* And this is that Supper. Then intimating that it abides unto the end, he says, *"till He come."*

1 Corinthians 11:27

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord."

Why so? Because he poured it out, and makes the thing appear a slaughter and no longer a sacrifice. Much therefore as they who then pierced Him, pierced Him not that they might drink but that they might shed His blood: so likewise does he that comes for it unworthily and reaps no profit thereby. Do you see how fearful he makes his discourse, and inveighs against them very exceedingly, signifying that if they are thus to drink, they partake unworthily of the elements ? For how can it be other than unworthily when it is he who neglects the hungry? Who besides overlooking him puts him to shame? Since if not giving to the poor casts one out of the kingdom, even though one should be a virgin; or rather, not giving liberally: (for even those virgins too had oil, only they had it not abundantly:) consider how great the evil will prove, to have wrought so many impieties?

"What impieties?" say you. Why do you say, what impieties? You have partaken of such a Table and when you ought to be more gentle than any and like the angels, none so cruel as you have become. You have tasted the Blood of the Lord, and not even thereupon do you acknowledge your brother. Of what indulgence then are you worthy? Whereas if even before this you had not known him, you ought to have come to the knowledge of him from the Table; but now you dishonor the Table itself; he having been deemed worthy to partake of it and thou not judging him worthy of your meat. Have you not heard how much he suffered who demanded the hundred pence? How he made void the gift vouchsafed to him ? Does it not

come into your mind what thou were and what you have become? Do you not put yourself in remembrance that if this man be poor in possessions, you were much more beggarly in good works, being full of ten thousand sins? Notwithstanding, God delivered you from all those and counted you worthy of such a Table: but you are not even thus become more merciful: therefore of course nothing else remains but that you should be "*delivered to the tormentors.*"

7. These words let us also listen to, all of us, as many as in this place approach with the poor to this holy Table, but when we go out, do not seem even to have seen them, but are both drunken and pass heedlessly by the hungry; the very things whereof the Corinthians were accused. And when is this done? Say you. At all times indeed, but especially at the festivals, where above all times it ought not so to be. Is it not so, that at such times, immediately after Communion, drunkenness succeeds and contempt of the poor? And having partaken of the Blood, when it were a time for you to fast and watch, you give yourself up to wine and revelling. And yet if you have by chance made your morning meal on any thing good, you keep yourself lest by any other unsavory viand thou spoil the taste of the former: and now that you have been feasting on the Spirit you bring in a satanical luxury. Consider, when the Apostles partook of that holy Supper, what they did: did they not betake themselves to prayers and singing of hymns? To sacred vigils? To that long work of teaching, so full of all self-denial? For then He related and delivered to them those great and wonderful things, when Judas had gone out to call them who were about to crucify Him. Have you not heard how the three thousand also who partook of the Communion continued even in prayer and teaching, not in drunken feasts and revellings? But thou before you have partaken fastest, that in a certain way you may appear worthy of the Communion: but when you have partaken, and you

ought to increase your temperance, you undo all. And yet surely it is not the same to fast before this and after it. Since although it is our duty to be temperate at both times, yet most particularly after we have received the Bridegroom. Before, that you may become worthy of receiving: after, that you may not be found unworthy of what you have received.

"What then? Ought we to fast after receiving?" I say not this, neither do I use any compulsion. This indeed were well: however, I do not enforce this, but I exhort you not to feast to excess. For if one never ought to live luxuriously, and Paul showed this when he said, *"she that gives herself to pleasure is dead while she lives"* [1 Timothy 5:6]; much more will she then be dead. And if luxury be death to a woman, much more to a man: and if this done at another time is fatal, much more after the communion of the Mysteries. And do you having taken the bread of life, do an action of death and not shudder? Do you not know how great evils are brought in by luxury? Unseasonable laughter, disorderly expressions, buffoonery fraught with perdition, unprofitable trifling, all the other things, which it is not seemly even to name. And these things you do when you have enjoyed the Table of Christ, on that day on which you have been counted worthy to touch His flesh with your tongue. What then is to be done to prevent these things? Purify your right hand, your tongue, your lips, which have become a threshold for Christ to tread upon. Consider the time in which you drew near and set forth a material table, raise your mind to that Table, to the Supper of the Lord, to the vigil of the disciples, in that night, that holy night. Nay, rather should one accurately examine, this very present state is night. Let us watch then with the Lord, let us be pricked in our hearts with the disciples. It is the season of prayers, not of drunkenness; ever indeed, but especially during a festival. For a festival is therefore appointed, not

that we may behave ourselves unseemly, not that we may accumulate sins, but rather that we may blot out those which exist.

I know, indeed, that I say these things in vain, yet will I not cease to say them. For if you do not all obey, yet surely ye will not all disobey; or rather, even though ye should all be disobedient, my reward will be greater, though yours will be more condemnation. However, that it may not be more, to this end I will not cease to speak. For perchance, perchance, by my perseverance I shall be able to reach you.

Wherefore I beseech you that we do not this to condemnation; let us nourish Christ, let us give Him drink, let us clothe Him. These things are worthy of that Table. Have you heard holy hymns? Have you seen a spiritual marriage? Have you enjoyed a royal Table? Have you been filled with the Holy Ghost? Have you joined in the choir of the Seraphim? Have you become partaker of the powers above? Cast not away so great a joy, waste not the treasure, bring not in drunkenness, the mother of dejection, the joy of the devil, the parent of ten thousand evils. For hence is a sleep like death, and heaviness of head, and disease, and obliviousness, and an image of dead men's condition. Further, if you would not choose to meet with a friend when intoxicated, when you have Christ within, dared thou, tell me, to thrust in upon Him so great an excess?

But do you love enjoyment? Then, on this very account cease being drunken. For I, too, would have you enjoy yourself, but with the real enjoyment, that which never fades. What then is the real enjoyment, ever blooming? Invite Christ to sup [Revelation 2:20] with you; give Him to partake of yours, or rather of His own. This brings pleasure without limit, and in its prime everlastingly. But the things of sense are not such; rather as soon as they appear they vanish away; and he that has enjoyed them will be in no better condition than he who has not, or rather in a worse. For the one

is settled as it were in a harbor, but the other exposes himself to a kind of torrent, a besieging army of distempers, and has not even any power to endure the first swell of the sea.

That these things be therefore not so, let us follow after moderation. For thus we shall both be in a good state of body, and we shall possess our souls in security, and shall be delivered from evils both present and future: from which may we all be delivered, and attain unto the kingdom, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 28 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 11:28

But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

What mean these words, when another object is proposed to us? This is Paul's custom, as also I said before, not only to treat of those things which he had proposed to himself, but also if an argument incidental to his purpose occur, to proceed upon this also with great diligence, and especially when it relates to very necessary and urgent matters. Thus, when he was discoursing with married persons, and the question about the servants fell in his way, he handled it very strenuously and at great length. Again, when he was speaking of the duty of not going to law before those courts, then also having fallen upon the admonition respecting covetousness, he discoursed at length concerning this subject likewise. Now the same thing he has also done here: in that having once found occasion to remind them of the Mysteries, he judged it necessary to proceed with that subject. For indeed it was no ordinary one. Wherefore also he discoursed very awfully concerning it, providing for that which is the sum of all good things, viz. their approaching those Mysteries with a pure conscience. Whence neither was he content with the things said before alone, but adds these also, saying,

"But let a man prove himself:" which also he says in the second Epistle: *"try your own selves, prove your own selves:"* [2 Corinthians 13:5] not as we do now, approaching because of the season rather than from any earnestness of mind. For we do not consider how we may approach prepared, with the ills that were within us purged out, and full of

compunction, but how we may come at festivals and whenever all do so. But not thus did Paul bid us come: he knows only one season of access and communion, the purity of a man's conscience. Since if even that kind of banquet which the senses take cognizance of cannot be partaken of by us when feverish and full of bad humors, without risk of perishing: much more is it unlawful for us to touch this Table with profane lusts, which are more grievous than fevers. Now when I say profane lusts, I mean both those of the body, and of money, and of anger, and of malice, and, in a word, all that are profane. And it becomes him that approaches, first to empty himself of all these things and so to touch that pure sacrifice. And neither if indolently disposed and reluctantly ought he to be compelled to approach by reason of the festival; nor, on the other hand, if penitent and prepared, should any one prevent him because it is not a festival. For a festival is a showing forth of good works, and a reverence of soul, and exactness of deportment. And if you have these things, you may at all times keep festival and at all times approach. Wherefore he says, "*But let each man prove himself, and then let him approach.*" And he bids not one examine another, but each himself, making the tribunal not a public one and the conviction without a witness.

1 Corinthians 11:29

2. *"For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself."*

What do you say, tell me? Is this Table which is the cause of so many blessings and teeming with life, become judgment? Not from its own nature, says he, but from the will of him that approaches. For as His presence, which conveyed to us those great and unutterable blessings, condemned the more them that received it not: so also the Mysteries become provisions of greater punishment to such as partake unworthily.

But why does he eat judgment to himself? *"Not discerning the Lord's body:"* i.e., not searching, not bearing in mind, as he ought, the greatness of the things set before him; not estimating the weight of the gift. For if you should come to know accurately Who it is that lies before you, and Who He is that gives Himself, and to whom, you will need no other argument, but this is enough for you to use all vigilance; unless you should be altogether fallen.

1 Corinthians 11:30

"For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep."

Here he no longer brings his examples from others as he did in the case of the idol-sacrifices, relating the ancient histories and the chastisements in the wilderness, but from the Corinthians themselves; which also made the discourse apt to strike them more keenly. For whereas he was saying, *"he eats judgment to himself,"* and, *"he is guilty;"* that he might not seem to speak mere words, he points to deeds also and calls themselves to witness; a kind of thing which comes home to men more than threatening, by showing that the threat has issued in some real fact. He was not however content with these things alone, but from these he also introduced and confirmed the argument concerning hell-fire, terrifying them in both ways; and solving an inquiry which is handled everywhere. I mean, since many question one with another, *"whence arise the untimely deaths, whence the long diseases of men;"* he tells them that these unexpected events are many of them conditional upon certain sins. *"What then? They who are in continual health,"* say you, *"and come to a green old age, do they not sin?"* Nay, who dared say this? *"How then,"* say you, *"do they not suffer punishment?"* Because there they shall suffer a severer one. But we, if we would, neither here nor there need suffer it.

1 Corinthians 11:31

"For if we discerned ourselves," says he, "we should not be judged."

And he said not, *"if we punished ourselves, if we were revenged on ourselves,"* but if we were only willing to acknowledge our offense, to pass sentence on ourselves, to condemn the things done amiss, we should be rid of the punishment both in this world and the next. For he that condemns himself propitiates God in two ways, both by acknowledging his sins, and by being more on his guard for the future. But since we are not willing to do even this light thing, as we ought to do it, not even thus does He endure to punish us with the world, but even thus spares us, exacting punishment in this world, where the penalty is for a season and the consolation great; for the result is both deliverance from sins, and a good hope of things to come, alleviating the present evils. And these things he says, at the same time comforting the sick and rendering the rest more serious. Wherefore he says,

1 Corinthians 11:32

"But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord."

He said not, we are punished, he said not, we have vengeance taken on us, but, *"we are chastened."* For what is done belongs rather to admonition than condemnation, to healing than vengeance, to correction than punishment. And not so only but by the threat of a greater evil he makes the present light, saying, *"that we may not be condemned with the world."* Do you see how he brings in hell also and that tremendous judgment-seat, and signifies that that trial and punishment is necessary and by all means must be? For if the faithful, and such as God especially cares for, escape not without punishment in whatsoever things they offend, (and this is evident from things present,) much more the unbelieving and they who commit the unpardonable and incurable sins.

1 Corinthians 11:33

3. *"Wherefore when you come together to eat, wait one for another."*

Thus, while their fear was yet at its height and the terror of hell remained, he chooses again to bring in also the exhortation in behalf of the poor, on account of which he said all these things; implying that if they do not this they must partake unworthily. But if the not imparting of our goods excludes from that Table, much more the violently taking away. And he said not, *"wherefore, when you come together, impart to them that need,"* but, which has a more reverential sound, *"wait one for another."* For this also prepared the way for and intimated that, and in a becoming form introduced the exhortation. Then further to shame them,

1 Corinthians 11:34

"And if any man is hungry, let him eat at home."

By permitting, he hinders it, and more strongly than by an absolute prohibition. For he brings him out of the church and sends him to his house, hereby severely reprimanding and ridiculing them, as slaves to the belly and unable to contain themselves. For he said not, *"if any despise the poor,"* but, *"if any hunger,"* discoursing as with impatient children; as with brute beasts which are slaves to appetite. Since it would be indeed very ridiculous, if, because they were hungry they were to eat at home.

Yet he was not content with this, but added also another more fearful thing, saying, *"that your coming together be not unto judgment:"* that you come not unto chastisement, unto punishment, insulting the Church, dishonoring your brother. *"For for this cause ye come together,"* says he, *"that you may love one another, that you may profit and be profited. But if the contrary happen, it were better for you to feed yourselves at home."*

This, however, he said, that he might attract them to him the more. Yea, this was the very purpose both of his pointing out the injury that would arise from hence, and of his saying that condemnation was no trifling one, and terrifying them in every way, by the Mysteries, by the sick, by those that had died, by the other things before mentioned.

Then also he alarms them again in another way, saying, *"and the rest will I set in order whenever I come:"* with reference either to some other things, or to this very matter. For since it was likely that they would yet have some reasons to allege, and it was not possible to set all to rights by letter, *"the things which I have charged you, let them be observed for the present,"* says he; *"but if you have any thing else to mention, let it be kept*

for my coming;" speaking either of this matter, as I said, or of some other things not very urgent. And this he does that hence too he may render them more serious. For being anxious about his coming, they would correct the error. For the sojourning of Paul in any place was no ordinary thing: and to signify this he said, *"some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you;"* [1 Corinthians 4:18] and elsewhere again, *"not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."* [Philippians 2:12] And therefore neither did he merely promise that he would come, lest they should disbelieve him and become more negligent; but he also states a necessary cause for his sojourning with them, saying, the rest I will set in order when I come; which implies, that the correction of the things that remained, even had he not in any case been desirous, would have drawn him there.

4. Hearing therefore all these things, let us both take great care of the poor, and restrain our appetite, and rid ourselves of drunkenness, and be careful worthily to partake of the Mysteries; and whatsoever we suffer, let us not take it bitterly, neither for ourselves nor for others; as when untimely death happen or long diseases. For this is deliverance from punishment, this is correction, this is most excellent admonition. Who says this? He that has Christ speaking in him.

But nevertheless even after this many of our women are so foolishly disposed as even to go beyond the unbelievers in the excess of their grief. And some do this blinded by their passion, but others for ostentation, and to avoid the censures of them that are without: who most of all are deprived of excuse, to my mind. For, *"lest such a one accuse me,"* says she, *"let God be my accuser: lest men more senseless than the brute beasts condemn me, let the law of the King of all be trampled under foot."* Why, how many thunderbolts do not these sayings deserve?

Again; If any one invite you to a funeral supper after your affliction there is no one to say any thing against it, because there is a law of men which enjoins such things: but when God by His law forbids your mourning, all thus contradict it. Does not Job come into your mind, O woman? Rememberest thou not his words at the misfortune of his children, which adorned that holy head more than ten thousand crowns, and made proclamation louder than many trumpets? Do you make no account of the greatness of his misfortunes, of that unprecedented shipwreck, and that strange and portentous tragedy? For thou possibly hast lost one, or a second, or third: but he so many sons and daughters: and he that had many children suddenly became childless. And not even by degrees were his bowels wasted away: but at one sweep all the fruit of his body was snatched from him. Nor was it by the common law of nature, when they had come to old age, but by a death both untimely and violent: and all together, and when he was not present nor sitting by them, that at least by hearing their last words he might have some consolation for so bitter an end of theirs: but contrary to all expectation and without his knowing any thing of what took place, they were all at once overwhelmed, and their house became their grave and their snare.

And not only their untimely death, but many things besides there were to grieve him; such as their being all in the flower of their age, all virtuous and loving, all together, that not one of either sex was left, that it befell them not by the common law of nature, that it came after so great a loss, that when he was unconscious of any sin on his own part or on theirs, he suffered these things. For each of these circumstances is enough even by itself to disturb the mind: but when we find them even concurring together, imagine the height of those waves, how great the excess of that storm. And what in particular is greater and worse than his bereavement, he did not

even know wherefore all these things happened. On this account then, having no cause to assign for the misfortune, he ascends to the good pleasure of God, and says, *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away:"* as it pleased the Lord, even so it happened; *"blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* [Job 2:21] And these things he said, when he saw himself who had followed after all virtue in the last extremity; but evil men and impostors, prospering, luxurious, revelling on all sides. And he uttered no such word as it is likely that some of the weaker sort would have uttered, *"Was it for this that I brought up my children and trained them with all exactness? For this did I open my house to all that passed by, that after those many courses run in behalf of the needy, the naked, the orphans, I might receive this recompense?"* But instead of these, he offered up those words better than all sacrifice, saying, *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there."* If however he rent his clothes and shaved his head, marvel not. For he was a father and a loving father: and it was meet that both the compassion of his nature should be shown, and also the self-command of his spirit. Whereas, had he not done this, perhaps one would have thought this self-command to be of mere insensibility. Therefore he indicates both his natural affection and the exactness of his piety, and in his grief he was not overthrown.

5. Yea, and when his trial proceeded further, he is again adorned with other crowns on account of his reply to his wife, saying, *"If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not endure evil?"* [Job 2:10] For in fact his wife was by this time the only one left, all his having been clean destroyed, both his children and his possessions and his very body, and she reserved to tempt and to ensnare him. And this indeed was the reason why the devil did not destroy her with the children, nor asked her death, because he expected that she would contribute much towards the

ensnaring of that holy man. Therefore he left her as a kind of implement, and a formidable one, for himself. *"For if even out of paradise,"* says he, *"I cast mankind by her means, much more shall I be able to trip him up on the dunghill."*

And observe his craft. He did not apply this stratagem when the oxen or the asses or the camels were lost, nor even when the house fell and the children were buried under it, but so long looking on the combatant, he suffers her to be silent and quiet. But when the fountain of worms gushed forth, when the skin began to putrify and drop off, and the flesh wasting away to emit most offensive discharge, and the hand of the devil was wearing him out with sharper pain than gridirons and furnaces and any flame, consuming on every side and eating away his body more grievously than any wild beast, and when a long time had been spent in this misery ; then he brings her to him, seasoned and worn down. Whereas if she had approached him at the beginning of his misfortune, neither would she have found him so unnerved, nor would she have had it in her power so to swell out and exaggerate the misfortune by her words. But now when she saw him through the length of time thirsting for release, and desiring the termination of what pressed on him vehemently then does she come upon him. For to show that he was quite worn down, and by this time had become unable even to draw breath, yea, and desired even to die, hear what he says; *"For I would I could lay hands on myself, or could request another and he should do it for me;"* And observe, I pray, the wickedness of his wife, from what topic she at once begins: namely, from the length of time, saying, *"How long will you hold out ?"*

Now, if often even when there were no realities words alone have prevailed to unman a person, consider what it was likely he then should feel, when, besides these words, the things themselves also were galling

him; and what, as it should seem, was worst of all, it was a wife also who spoke thus, and a wife who had sunk down utterly and was giving herself up, and on this account was seeking to cast him also into desperation. However, that we may see more clearly the engine which was brought against that adamant wall, let us listen to the very words. What then are these? *"How long will you hold out? Saying, Lo! I wait a short time longer, expecting the hope of my salvation."* *"Nay,"* says she, *"the time has exposed the folly of your words, while it is protracted, yet shows no mode of escape."* And these things she said, not only thrusting him into desperation, but also reproaching and jesting upon him.

For he, ever consoling her as she pressed upon him, and putting her off, would speak as follows: *"Wait a little longer, and there will soon be an end of these things."* Reproaching him therefore, she speaks: *"Will you now again say the same thing? For a long time has now run by, and no end of these things has appeared."* And observe her malice, that she makes no mention of the oxen, the sheep or the camels, as knowing that he was not very much vexed about these; but she goes at once to nature, and reminds him of his children. For on their death she saw him both rending his clothes and shaving off his hair. And she said not, *"your children are dead,"* but very pathetically, *"your memorial is perished from the earth,"* *"the thing for which your children were desirable."* For if, even now after that the resurrection has been made known children are longed for because they preserve the memory of the departed; much more then. Wherefore also her curse becomes from that consideration more bitter. For in that case, he that cursed, said not, *"Let his children be utterly rooted out,"* but, *"his memorial from the earth."* *"Your sons and your daughters."* Thus whereas she said, *"the memorial,"* she again accurately makes mention of either sex. *"But if you,"* says she, *"carest not for these, at least consider what is mine."* *"The*

pains of my womb, and labors which I have endured in vain with sorrow."
Now what she means is this: *"I, who endured the more, am wronged for your sake, and having undergone the toils I am deprived of the fruits."*

And see how she neither makes express mention of his loss of property, nor is silent about it and hurries by; but in that point of view in which it also might be most pathetically narrated, in that she covertly refers to it. For when she says, *"I too am a vagabond and a slave, going about from place to place, from house to house,"* she both hints at the loss and indicates her great distress: these expressions being such as even to enhance that misfortune. *"For I come to the doors of others,"* says she; *"nor do I beg only, but am a wanderer also and serve a strange and unusual servitude, going round everywhere and carrying about the tokens of my calamity, and teaching all men of my woes;"* which is most piteous of all, to change house after house. And she stayed not even at these lamentations, but proceeded to say, *"Waiting for the sun when it will set, and I shall rest from my miseries and the pains that encompass me, by which I am now straitened."* *"Thus, that which is sweet to others,"* says she, *"to behold the light, this to me is grievous: but the night and the darkness is a desirable thing. For this only gives me rest from my toils, this becomes a comfort to my miseries. But speak somewhat against the Lord, and die."* Perceivest thou here too her crafty wickedness? How she did not even in the act of advising at once introduce the deadly counsel, but having first pitifully related her misfortunes and having drawn out the tragedy at length, she couches in a few words what she would recommend, and does not even declare it plainly, but throwing a shade over that, she holds out to him the deliverance which he greatly longed for, and promises death, the thing which he then most of all desired.

And mark from this also the malice of the devil: that because he knew the longing of Job towards God, he suffers not his wife to accuse God, lest he should at once turn away from her as an enemy. For this cause she nowhere mentions Him, but the actual calamities she is continually harping on.

And do thou, besides what has been said, add the circumstance that it was a woman who gave this counsel, a wonderful orator to beguile the heedless. Many at least even without external accidents have been cast down by the counsel of woman alone.

6. What then did the blessed saint, and firmer than adamant? Looking bitterly upon her, by his aspect even before he spoke, he repelled her devices: since she no doubt expected to excite fountains of tears; but he became fiercer than a lion, full of wrath and indignation, not on account of his sufferings, but on account of her diabolical suggestions; and having signified his anger by his looks in a subdued tone he gives his rebuke; for even in misfortune he kept his self-command. And what says he? *"Why do you speak as one of the foolish women?" "I have not so taught you,"* says he, *"I did not so nurture you; and this is why I do not now recognize even my own consort. For these words are the counsel of a 'foolish woman,' and of one beside herself."* Seest thou not here an instance of wounding in moderation, and inflicting a blow just sufficient to cure the disease?

Then, after the infliction, he brings in advice sufficient on the other hand to console her, and very rational, thus speaking: *"if we have received our good things at the hand of the Lord, shall we not endure our evils?" "For remember,"* says he, *"those former things and make account of the Author of them, and you will bear even these nobly."* Do you see the modesty of the man? That he does not at all impute his patience to his own courage, but says it was part of the natural result of what happened. *"For in*

return for what did God give us these former things? What recompense did he repay? None, but from mere goodness. For they were a gift, not a recompense; a grace, not a reward. Well then, let us bear these also nobly."

This discourse let us, both men and women, have recorded, and let us engrave the words in our minds, both these and those before them: and by sketching upon our minds as in picture the history of their sufferings, I mean the loss of wealth, the bereavement of children, the disease of body, the reproaches, the mockings, the devices of his wife, the snare of the devil, in a word, all the calamities of that righteous man, and that with exactness, let us provide ourselves with a most ample port of refuge: that, enduring all things nobly and thankfully, we may both in the present life cast off all despondency, and receive the rewards that belong to this good way of taking things; by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and forever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 29 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 12:1-2

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. You know that when you were Gentiles, you were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led.

This whole place is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place. And why do they not happen now? Why look now, the cause too of the obscurity has produced us again another question: namely, why did they then happen, and now do so no more?

This however let us defer to another time, but for the present let us state what things were occurring then. Well: what did happen then? Whoever was baptized he straightway spoke with tongues and not with tongues only, but many also prophesied, and some also performed many other wonderful works. For since on their coming over from idols, without any clear knowledge or training in the ancient Scriptures, they at once on their baptism received the Spirit, yet the Spirit they saw not, for It is invisible; therefore God's grace bestowed some sensible proof of that energy. And one straightway spoke in the Persian, another in the Roman, another in the Indian, another in some other such tongue: and this made manifest to them that were without that it is the Spirit in the very person speaking. Wherefore also he so calls it, saying, *"But to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withal;"* [1 Corinthians 12:7] calling the gifts *"a manifestation of the Spirit."* For as the Apostles

themselves had received this sign first, so also the faithful went on receiving it, I mean, the gift of tongues; yet not this only but also many others: inasmuch as many used even to raise the dead and to cast out devils and to perform many other such wonders: and they had gifts too, some less, and some more. But more abundant than all was the gift of tongues among them: and this became to them a cause of division; not from its own nature but from the perverseness of them that had received it: in that on the one hand the possessors of the greater gifts were lifted up against them that had the lesser: and these again were grieved, and envied the owners of the greater. And Paul himself as he proceeds intimates this.

Since then herefrom they were receiving a fatal blow in the dissolution of their charity, he takes great care to correct it. For this happened indeed in Rome also, but not in the same way. And this is why in the Epistle to the Romans he moots it indeed, but obscurely and briefly, saying thus: *"For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office; so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teaches to his teaching."* [Romans 12:4-8] And that the Romans also were falling into wilfulness hereby, this he intimates in the beginning of that discourse, thus saying: *"For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God has dealt to each man a measure of faith."* [Romans 12:3] With these, however, (for the disease of division and pride had not proceeded to any length,) he thus discoursed: but here with great anxiety; for the distemper had greatly spread.

And this was not the only thing to disturb them, but there were also in the place many soothsayers, inasmuch as the city was more than usually addicted to Grecian customs, and this with the rest was tending to offense and disturbance among them. This is the reason why he begins by first stating the difference between soothsaying and prophecy. For this cause also they received discerning of spirits, so as to discern and know which is he that speaks by a pure spirit, and which by an impure.

For because it was not possible to supply the evidence of the things uttered from within themselves at the moment; (for prophecy supplies the proof of its own truth not at the time when it is spoken, but at the time of the event;) and it was not easy to distinguish the true prophet from the pretender; (for the devil himself, accursed as he is, had entered into them that prophesied, [See 1 Kings 22:23.] bringing in false prophets, as if forsooth they also could foretell things to come) and further, men were easily deceived, because the things spoken could not for the present be brought to trial, ere yet the events had come to pass concerning which the prophecy was; (for it was the end that proved the false prophet and the true:)—in order that the hearers might not be deceived before the end, he gives them a sign which even before the event served to indicate the one and the other. And hence taking his order and beginning, he thus goes on also to the discourse concerning the gifts and corrects the contentiousness that arose from hence likewise. For the present however he begins the discourse concerning the soothsayers, thus saying,

2. *"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant;"* calling the signs *"spiritual,"* because they are the works of the Spirit alone, human effort contributing nothing to the working such wonders. And intending to discourse concerning them, first, as I said, he lays down the difference between soothsaying and prophecy, thus saying,

"You know that when you were Gentiles, you were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led." Now what he means is this: *"In the idol-temples,"* says he, if any were at any time possessed by an unclean spirit and began to divine, even as one dragged away, so was he drawn by that spirit in chains: knowing nothing of the things which he utters. For this is peculiar to the soothsayer, to be beside himself, to be under compulsion, to be pushed, to be dragged, to be haled as a madman. But the prophet not so, but with sober mind and composed temper and knowing what he is saying, he utters all things. Therefore even before the event do thou from this distinguish the soothsayer and the prophet. And consider how he frees his discourse of all suspicion; calling themselves to witness who had made trial of the matter. As if he had said, *"that I lie not nor rashly traduce the religion of the Gentiles, feigning like an enemy, do ye yourselves bear me witness: knowing as you do, when you were Gentiles, how you were pulled and dragged away then."*

But if any should say that these too are suspected as believers, come, even from them that are without will I make this manifest to you. Hear, for example, Plato saying thus: (Apol. Soc. c. 7.) *"Even as they who deliver oracles and the soothsayers say many and excellent things, but know nothing of what they utter."* Hear again another, a poet, giving the same intimation. For whereas by certain mystical rites and witchcrafts a certain person had imprisoned a demon in a man, and the man divined, and in his divination was thrown down and torn, and was unable to endure the violence of the demon, but was on the point of perishing in that convulsion; he says to the persons who were practicing such mystical arts,

Loose me, I pray you:

The mighty God no longer mortal flesh
Can hold.

And again,

Unbind my wreaths, and bathe my feet in drops
From the pure stream; erase these mystic lines,
And let me go.

For these and such like things, (for one might mention many more,) point out to us both of these facts which follow; the compulsion which holds down the demons and makes them slaves; and the violence to which they submit who have once given themselves up to them, so as to swerve even from their natural reason. And the Pythoness too : (for I am compelled now to bring forward and expose another disgraceful custom of theirs, which it were well to pass by, because it is unseemly for us to mention such things; but that you may more clearly know their shame it is necessary to mention it, that hence at least ye may come to know the madness and exceeding mockery of those that make use of the soothsayers): this same Pythoness then is said, being a female, to sit at times upon the tripod of Apollo astride, and thus the evil spirit ascending from beneath and entering the lower part of her body, fills the woman with madness, and she with dishevelled hair begins to play the bacchanal and to foam at the mouth, and thus being in a frenzy to utter the words of her madness. I know that you are ashamed and blush when you hear these things: but they glory both in the disgrace and in the madness which I have described. These then and all such things. Paul was bringing forward when he said, *"You know that when you were Gentiles, you were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led."*

And because he was discoursing with those who knew well, he states not all things with exact care, not wishing to be troublesome to them, but

having reminded them only and brought all into their recollection, he soon quits the point, hastening to the subject before him.

But what is, "*unto those dumb idols?*" These soothsayers used to be led and dragged unto them.

But if they be themselves dumb, how did they give responses to others? And wherefore did the demon lead them to the images? As men taken in war, and in chains, and rendering at the same time his deceit plausible. Thus, to keep men from the notion that it was just a dumb stone, they were earnest to rivet the people to the idols that their own style and title might be inscribed upon them. But our rites are not such. He did not however state ours, I mean the prophesyings. For it was well known to them all, and prophecy was exercised among them, as was meet for their condition, with understanding and with entire freedom. Therefore, you see, they had power either to speak or to refrain from speaking. For they were not bound by necessity, but were honored with a privilege. For this cause Jonah fled; [Jonah 1:3] for this cause Ezekiel delayed; [Ezekiel 3:15] for this cause Jeremiah excused himself. [Jeremiah 1:6] And God thrusts them not on by compulsion, but advising, exhorting, threatening; not darkening their mind; for to cause distraction and madness and great darkness, is the proper work of a demon: but it is God's work to illuminate and with consideration to teach things needful.

3. This then is the first difference between a soothsayer and a prophet; but a second and a different one is that which he next states, saying,

1 Corinthians 12:3

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed:" and then another: *"and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but in the Holy Ghost."*

"When you see," says he, *"any one not uttering His name, or anathematizing Him, he is a soothsayer. Again, when you see another speaking all things with His Name, understand that he is spiritual."* *"What then,"* say you, must we say concerning the Catechumens? For if, no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost, what must we say of them who name indeed His Name, but are destitute of His Spirit ? But his discourse at this time was not concerning these for there were not at that time Catechumens, but concerning believers and unbelievers. What then, does no demon call upon God's Name? Did not the demoniacs say, We know You who You are, the Holy One of God? [Mark 1:24] Did they not say to Paul, these men are the servants of the Most High God? [Acts 16:17] They did, but upon scourging, upon compulsion; never of their own will and without being scourged.

But here it is proper to enquire, both why the demon uttered these things and why Paul rebuked him. In imitation of his Teacher; for so Christ did also rebuke: since it was not his will to have testimony from them. And wherefore did the devil also practise this? Intending to confound the order of things, and to seize upon the dignity of the Apostles, and to persuade many to pay attention to them : which had it happened, they would easily have made themselves appear from hence worthy of credit, and have brought in their own designs. That these things then might not be, and the deceit might not have a beginning, he stops their mouths even when

speaking the truth, so that in their falsehoods men should not at all give heed unto them, but stop their ears altogether against the things said by them.

4. Having therefore made manifest the soothsayers and the prophets both by the first sign and also by the second, he next discourses of the wonders; not passing without reason to this topic, but so as to remove the dissension which had thence arisen, and to persuade both those that had the less portion not to grieve and those who had the greater not to be elated. Wherefore also he thus began.

1 Corinthians 12:4

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."

And first he attends on him that had the lesser gift, and was grieved on this account. *"For wherefore,"* says he, *"are you dejected? Because you have not received as much as another? Still, consider that it is a free gift and not a debt, and you will be able to soothe your pain."* For this cause he spoke thus in the very beginning: *"but there are diversities of gifts."* And he said not *"of signs,"* nor *"of wonders,"* but of *"gifts,"* by the name of free gifts prevailing on them not only not to grieve but even to be thankful. *"And withal consider this also,"* says he, that even if you are made inferior in the measure of what is given; in that it has been vouchsafed you to receive from the same source as the other who has received more, you have equal honor. For certainly you can not say that the Spirit bestowed the gift on him, but an angel on you: since the Spirit bestowed it both on you and him. Wherefore he added, *"but the same Spirit."* So that even if there be a difference in the gift, yet is there no difference in the Giver. For from the same Fountain you are drawing, both thou and he.

1 Corinthians 12:5

"And there are diversities of ministrations, but the same Lord."

Thus, enriching the consolation, he adds mention of the Son also, and of the Father. And again, he calls these gifts by another name, designing by this also an increase of consolation. Wherefore also he thus said: *"there are diversities of ministrations, but the same Lord."* For he that hears of *"a gift,"* and has received a less share, perhaps might grieve; but when we speak of *"a ministration,"* the case is different. For the thing implies labor and sweat. *"Why do you grieve then,"* says he, *"if he has bidden another labor more, sparing you?"*

1 Corinthians 12:6

"And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who works all things in all."

1 Corinthians 12:7

"But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal."

"And what," says one, *"is a working?"* and what *"a gift?"* and what *"a ministration?"* They are mere differences of names, since the things are the same. For what *"a gift"* is, that is *"a ministration,"* that he calls *"an operation"* also. Thus fulfil your ministry; [2 Timothy 4:5. *ministry*] and, *"I magnify my ministration:"* [Romans 11:13. *office*] and writing to Timothy, he says, Therefore I put you in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in you. [2 Timothy 1:6] And again, writing to the Galatians, he said, for he that wrought in Peter to the Apostleship, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles. [Galatians 2:8] Do you see that he implies that there is no difference in the gifts of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Not confounding the Persons, God forbid! But declaring the equal honor of the Essence. For that which the Spirit bestows, this he says that God also works; this, that the Son likewise ordains and grants. Yet surely if the one were inferior to the other, or the other to it, he would not have thus set it down nor would this have been his way of consoling the person who was vexed.

5. Now after this, he comforts him also in another kind of way; by the consideration that the measure vouchsafed is profitable to him, even though it be not so large. For having said, that it is *"the same Spirit,"* and *"the same Lord,"* and *"the same God,"* and having thereby recovered him, he brings in again another consolation, thus saying, *"but to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal."* For lest one should say, *"what if*

there be the same Lord, the same Spirit, the same God? Yet I have received less:" he says, that thus it was profitable.

But he calls miracles a "*manifestation of the Spirit,*" with evident reason. For to me who am a believer, he that has the Spirit is manifest from his having been baptized: but to the unbeliever this will in no way be manifest, except from the miracles: so that hence also again there is no small consolation. For though there be a difference of gifts, yet the evidence is one: since whether you have much or little, you are equally manifest. So that if you desire to show this, that you have the Spirit, you have a sufficient demonstration.

Wherefore, now that both the Giver is one and the thing given a pure favor, and the manifestation takes place thereby, and this is more profitable for you; grieve not as if despised. For not to dishonor you has God done it, nor to declare you inferior to another, but to spare you and with a view to your welfare. To receive more than one has ability to bear, this rather is unprofitable, and injurious, and a fit cause of dejection.

1 Corinthians 12:8

"For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;"

1 Corinthians 12:9

"To another, faith in the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing in the one Spirit."

Do you see how he every where makes this addition, saying, *"through the same Spirit, and according to the same Spirit?"* For he knew that the comfort from thence was great.

1 Corinthians 12:10

"To another working of miracles; to another prophecies; to another discernings of spirits; to another various kind of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."

Thus, since they boasted themselves in this, therefore he placed it last, and added,

1 Corinthians 12:11

"But all these works one and the same Spirit."

The universal medicine in which his consolation consists is that out of the same root, out of the same treasures, out of the same streams, they all receive. And accordingly, from time to time dwelling on this expression, he levels the apparent inequality, and consoles them. And above indeed he points out both the Spirit, and the Son, and the Father, as supplying the gifts, but here he was content to make the Spirit, that even hence again you may understand their dignity to be the same.

But what is *"the word of wisdom?"* That which Paul had, which John had, the son of thunder.

And what is *"the word of knowledge?"* That which most of the faithful had, possessing indeed knowledge, but not thereupon able to teach nor easily to convey to another what they knew.

"And to another, faith:" not meaning by this faith the faith of doctrines, but the faith of miracles; concerning which Christ says, *"If you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove."* [Matthew 17:20] And the Apostles too concerning this besought Him, saying, *"Increase our faith:"* [Luke 17:5] for this is the mother of the miracles. But to possess the power of working miracles and gifts of healing, is not the same thing: for he that had a gift of healing used only to do cures: but he that possessed powers for working miracles used to punish also. For a miracle is not the healing only, but the punishing also: even as Paul inflicted blindness: as Peter slew.

"To another prophecies; and to another discernings of spirits." What is, *"discernings of spirits?"* the knowing who is spiritual, and who is not:

who is a prophet, and who a deceiver: as he said to the Thessalonians, *"despise not prophesyings:"* [1 Thessalonians 5:20-21] but proving all things, hold fast that which is good. For great was at that time the rush of the false prophets, the devil striving underhand to substitute falsehood for the truth. *"To another various kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."* For one person knew what he spoke himself, but was unable to interpret to another; while another had acquired both these or the other of the two. Now this seemed to be a great gift because both the Apostles received it first, and the most among the Corinthians had obtained it. But the word of teaching not so. Wherefore that he places first, but this last: for this was on account of that, and so indeed were all the rest; both prophecies, and working of miracles, and various kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. For none is equal to this. Wherefore also he said, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and in teaching."* [1 Timothy 5:17] And to Timothy he wrote, saying, *"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to teaching; neglect not the gift that is in you."* [1 Timothy 4:13-14] Do you see how he calls it also a gift?

6. Next, the comfort which he before gave, when he said, *"the same Spirit,"* this also he here sets before us, saying, *"But all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will."* And he not only gives consolation but also stops the mouth of the gainsayer, saying here, *"dividing to each one severally even as he will."* For it was necessary to bind up also, not to heal only, as he does also in the Epistle to the Romans, when he says, But who are you that repliest against God? [Romans 9:20] So likewise here, *"dividing to each one severally as he will."*

And that which was of the Father, this he signifies to be of the Spirit also. For as concerning the Father, he says, *"but it is the same God who*

works all things in all;" so also concerning the Spirit, *"but all these things works one and the same Spirit."* But, it will be said, *"He does it, actuated by God."* Nay, he no where said this, but you feign it. For when he says, *"who actuates all things in all,"* he says this concerning men: you will hardly say that among those men he numbers also the Spirit, though you should be ever so manifold in your doting and madness. For because he had said *"through the Spirit,"* that you might not suppose this word, *"through,"* to denote inferiority or the being actuated, he adds, that *"the Spirit works,"* not *"is worked,"* and works *"as he will,"* not as he is bidden. For as concerning the Father, the Son says that *"He raises up the dead and quickens;"* in like manner also, concerning Himself, that *"He quickens whom He will:"* [John 5:21] thus also of the Spirit, in another place, that He does all things with authority and that there is nothing that hinders Him; (for the expression, *"blows where it lists"* [John 3:8,] though it be spoken of the wind is apt to establish this) but here, that *"He works all things as He will."* And from another place to learn that He is not one of the things actuated, but of those that actuate. *"For who knows,"* says he, *"the things of a man, but the spirit of the man? Even so the things of God none knows save the Spirit of God."* [1 Corinthians 2:11] Now that *"the spirit of a man,"* i.e., the soul, requires not to be actuated that it may know the things of itself, is, I suppose, evident to every one. Therefore neither does the Holy Ghost, that he may *"know the things of God."* For his meaning is like this, *"the secret things of God"* are known to the Holy Spirit as to the soul of man the secret things of herself. But if this be not actuated for that end, much less would That which knows the depths of God and needs no actuation for that knowledge, require any actuating Power in order to the giving gifts to the Apostles.

But besides these things, that also, which I before spoke of, I will mention again now. What then is this? That if the Spirit were inferior and of

another substance, there would have been no avail in his consolation, nor in our hearing the words, *"of the same Spirit."* For he who has received from the king, I grant, may find it a very soothing circumstance, that he himself gave to him; but if it be from the slave, he is then rather vexed, when one reproaches him with it. So that even hence is it evident, that the Holy Spirit is not of the substance of the servant, but of the King.

7. Wherefore as he comforted them, when he said, that *"there are diversities of ministrations, but the same Lord; and diversities of operations, but the same God;"* so also when he said above, *"there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit;"* and after this again when he said, *"But all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."*

"Let us not, I pray you, be at a loss," says he; *"neither let us grieve, saying, 'Why have I received this and not received that?' neither let us demand an account of the Holy Spirit. For if you know that he vouchsafed it from providential care, consider that from the same care he has given also the measure of it, and be content and rejoice in what you have received: but murmur not at what you have not received; yea, rather confess God's favor that you have not received things beyond your power."*

5. And if in spiritual things one ought not to be over-curious, much more in temporal things; but to be quiet and not nicely enquire why one is rich and another poor. For, first of all, not every single rich man is rich from God, but many even of unrighteousness, and rapine, and avarice. For he that forbade to be rich, how can he have granted that which he forbade to receive?

But that I may, far above what the case requires, stop the mouths of those who concerning these things gainsay us, come, let us carry our discourse higher up, to the time when riches used to be given by God; and

answer me. Wherefore was Abraham rich whereas Jacob wanted even bread? Were not both the one and the other righteous? Does He not say concerning the three alike, *"I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob?"* [Exodus 3:6] Wherefore then was the one a rich man, and the other a hired servant? Or rather, why was Esau rich, who was unrighteous and a murderer of his brother, while Jacob was in bondage for so long a time? Wherefore again did Isaac live in ease all his time, but Jacob in toils and miseries? For which cause also he said, *"Few and evil are my days."* [Genesis 47:9]

Wherefore did David, who was both a prophet and a king, himself also live all his time in toils? Whereas Solomon his son spent forty years in security above all men, in the enjoyment of profound peace, glory, and honor, and going through every kind of deliciousness? What again could be the reason, that among the prophets also one was afflicted more, and another less? Because so it was expedient for each. Wherefore upon each our remark must be, *"Your judgments are a great deep."* [Psalm 36:6] For if those great and wonderful men were not alike exercised by God, but one by poverty, and another by riches; one by ease, and another by trouble; much more ought we now to bear these things in mind.

8. But besides this, it becomes one to consider also that many of the things which happen do not take place according to His mind, but arise from our wickedness. Say not then, *"Why is one man rich who is wicked, and another poor who is righteous?"* For first of all, one may give an account of these things also, and say that neither does the righteous receive any harm from his poverty, nay, even a greater addition of honor; and that the bad man in his riches possesses but a store of punishment on his future road, unless he be changed: and, even before punishment, often-times his riches become to him the cause of many evils, and lead him into ten

thousand pitfalls. But God permits it, at the same to signify the free choice of the will, and also to teach all others not to be mad nor rave after money.

"How is it then, when a man being wicked is rich, and suffers nothing dreadful?" say you. *"Since if being good he has wealth, he has it justly: but if bad, what shall we say?"* That even therein he is to be pitied. For wealth added to wickedness aggravates the mischief. But is he a good man, and poor? Yet is he nothing injured. Is he then a bad man, and poor? This is he so justly and by desert, or rather even with advantage to himself. *"But such an one,"* say you, *"received his riches from his ancestors and lavishes it upon harlots and parasites, and suffers no evil."* What do you say? Does he commit whoredom, and do you say, *"he suffers no evils?"* Is he drunken, and do you think that he is in luxury? Does he spend for no good, and do you judge that he is to be envied? Nay what can be worse than this wealth which destroys the very soul? But you, if the body were distorted and maimed, wouldest say that his was a case for great lamentation; and do you see his whole soul mutilated, yet countest him even happy? *"But he does not perceive it,"* say you. Well then, for this very reason again is he to be pitied, as all frantic persons are. For he that knows he is sick will of course both seek the physician and submit to remedies; but he that is ignorant of it will have no chance at all of deliverance. Do you call such an one happy, tell me?

But it is no marvel: for the more part are ignorant of the true love of wisdom. Therefore do we suffer the extremest penalty, being chastised and not even withdrawing ourselves from the punishment. For this cause are angers, dejections, and continual tumults; because when God has shown us a life without sorrow, the life of virtue, we leave this and mark out another way, the way of riches and money, full of infinite evils. And we do the same, as if one, not knowing how to discern the beauty of men's bodies but

attributing the whole to the clothes and the ornaments worn, when he saw a handsome woman and possessed of natural beauty, should pass quickly by her, but when he beheld one ugly, ill-shaped, and deformed, but clothed in beautiful garments, should take her for his wife. Now also in some such way are the multitude affected about virtue and vice. They admit the one that is deformed by nature on account of her external ornaments, but turn away from her that is fair and lovely, on account of her unadorned beauty, for which cause they ought especially to choose her.

9. Therefore am I ashamed that among the foolish heathen there are those that practise this philosophy, if not in deeds, yet so far at least as judgment goes; and who know the perishable nature of things present: whereas among us some do not even understand these things, but have their very judgment corrupted: and this while the Scripture is ever and anon sounding in our ears, and saying, *"In his sight the vile person is contemned, but he honors them that fear the Lord: [Psalm 15:4] the fear of the Lord excels every thing ; fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole of man: [Ecclesiastes 12:13;] be not thou envious of evil men; [Psalm 49:16;] all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass;" [Isaiah 40:7]* For these and such-like things though we hear every day, we are yet nailed to earth. And as ignorant children, who learn their letters continuously, if they be examined concerning their order when they are disarranged, naming one instead of another, make much laughter: so also ye, when here we recount them in order, follow us in a manner; but when we ask you out of doors and in no set order, what we ought to place first and what next among things, and which after which; not knowing how to answer, you become ridiculous. Is it not a matter of great laughter, tell me, that they who expect immortality and the good *"things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,"* should

strive about things which linger here and count them enviable? For if you have need yet to learn these things that riches are no great thing, that things present are a shadow and a dream, that like smoke they are dissolved and fly away: stand for the present without the sanctuary: abide in the vestibule: since you are not yet worthy of the entrance to the palace-courts on high. For if you know not to discern their nature which is unstable and continually passing away, when will you be able to despise them?

But if you say you know, cease curiously to inquire and busy yourself, what can be the reason why such an one is rich and such an one poor: for you do the same when you ask these questions, as if you went round and enquire, why one is fair and another black, or one hook-nosed and another flat-nosed. For as these things make no difference to us, whether it be thus or thus; so neither poverty nor riches, and much less than they. But the whole depends upon the way in which we use them. Whether you are poor, you may live cheerfully denying yourself; or rich, you are most miserable of all men if you fly from virtue. For these are what really concern us, the things of virtue. And if these things be not added, the rest are useless. For this cause also are those continual questions, because the most think that indifferent things are of importance to them, but of the important things they make no account: since that which is of importance to us is virtue and love of wisdom.

Because then ye stand I know not where, at some far distance from her, therefore is there confusion of thoughts, therefore the many waves, therefore the tempest. For when men have fallen from heavenly glory and the love of heaven, they desire present glory and become slaves and captives. *"And how is it that we desire this,"* say you? From the not greatly desiring that. And this very thing, whence happens it? From negligence. And whence the negligence? From contempt. And whence the contempt?

From folly and cleaving to things present and unwillingness to investigate accurately the nature of things. And whence again does this latter arise? From the neither giving heed to the reading of the Scripture nor conversing with holy men, and from following the assemblies of the wicked.

That this therefore may not always be so, and lest wave after wave receiving us should carry us out into the deep of miseries and altogether drown and destroy us; while there is time, let us bear up and standing upon the rock, I mean of the divine doctrines and words, let us look down upon the surge of this present life. For thus shall we both ourselves escape the same, and having drawn up others who are making shipwreck, we shall obtain the blessings which are to come, through the grace and mercy, etc.

Homily 30 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 12:12

For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

After soothing them from the considerations that the thing given was of free favor; that they received all from *"one and the self-same Spirit;"* that it was given *"to profit withal,"* that even by the lesser gifts a manifestation was made; and withal having also stopped their mouth from the duty of yielding to the authority of the Spirit: (*"for all these,"* says he, *"works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will;"* wherefore it is not right to be over-curious:) he proceeds now to soothe them in like manner from another common example, and betakes himself to nature itself, as was his use to do.

For when he was discoursing about the hair of men and women, after all the rest he drew matter thence also to correct them, saying, *"Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her?"* [1 Corinthians 11:14-15] And when he spoke concerning the idol-sacrifices, forbidding to touch them, he drew an argument from the examples also of them that are without, both making mention of the Olympic games, where he says, *"they which run in a race run all, but one receives the prize:"* [1 Corinthians 9:24] and confirming these views from shepherds and soldiers and husbandmen. Wherefore he brings forward here also a common example by which he presses on and fights hard to prove that no one was really put in a worse condition: a thing which was marvellous and surprising to be able to

show, and calculated to refresh the weaker sort, I mean, the example of the body. For nothing so consoles the person of small spirit and inferior gifts, or so persuades him not to grieve, as the being convinced that he is not left with less than his share. Wherefore also Paul making out this point, thus expresses himself: *"for as the body is one and has many members."*

Do you see his exact consideration? He is pointing out the same thing to be both one and many. Wherefore also he adds, pressing the point more vigorously, *"and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body."* He said not, *"being many, are of one body,"* but *"the one body itself is many:"* and those many members are this one thing. If therefore the one is many, and the many are one, where is the difference? Where the superiority? Where the disadvantage? For all, says he, are one: and not simply one, but being strictly considered in respect of that even which is principal, i.e., their being a body, they are found all to be one: but when considered as to their particular natures, then the difference comes out, and the difference is in all alike. For none of them by itself can make a body, but each is alike deficient in the making a body, and there is need of a coming together since when the many become one, then and not till then is there one body. Wherefore also covertly intimating this very thing, he said, *"And all the members of the one body, being many, are one body."* And he said not, *"the superior and the inferior,"* but *"being many,"* which is common to all.

And how is it possible that they should be one? When throwing out the difference of the members, you consider the body. For the same thing which the eye is, this also is the foot in regard of its being a member and constituting a body. For there is no difference in this respect. Nor can you say that one of the members makes a body of itself, but another does not. For they are all equal in this, for the very reason that they are all one body.

But having said this and having shown it clearly from the common judgment of all, he added, "*so also is Christ.*" And when he should have said, "*so also is the Church,*" for this was the natural consequent he does not say it but instead of it places the name of Christ, carrying the discourse up on high and appealing more and more to the hearer's reverence. But his meaning is this: "*So also is the body of Christ, which is the Church.*" For as the body and the head are one man, so he said that the Church and Christ are one. Wherefore also he placed Christ instead of the Church, giving that name to His body. "*As then,*" says he, "*our body is one thing though it be composed of many: so also in the Church we all are one thing. For though the Church be composed of many members, yet these many form one body.*"

2. Thus having, you see, recovered and raised up by this common example him who thought himself depreciated, again he leaves the topic of common experience, and comes to another, a spiritual one, bringing greater consolation and indicative of great equality of honor. What then is this?

1 Corinthians 12:13

"For in one Spirit, says he, were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free."

Now his meaning is this: that which established us to become one body and regenerated us, is one Spirit: for not in one Spirit was one baptized, and another another. And not only is that which has baptized us one, but also that unto which He baptized us, i.e., for which He baptized us, is one. For we were baptized not that so many several bodies might be formed, but that we might all preserve one with another the perfect nature of one body: i.e., that we might all be one body, into the same were we baptized.

So that both He who formed it is one, and that into which He formed it is one. And he said not, *"that we might all come to be of the same body;"* but, *"that we might all be one body."* For he ever strives to use the more expressive phrases. And well said he, *"we all,"* adding also himself. *"For not even I, the Apostle, have any more than thou in this respect,"* says he. *"For you are the body even as I, and I even as thou, and we have all the same Head and have passed through the same birth-pains. Wherefore we are also the same body."* *"And why speak I,"* says he, *"of the Jews? Since even the Gentiles who were so far off from us, He has brought into the entireness of one body."* Wherefore having said, *"we all,"* he stopped not here, but added, *"whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free."* Now if, having before been so far off, we were united and have become one, much more after that we have become one, we can have no right to grieve and be dejected. Yea, the difference, in fact, has no place. For if to Greeks and Jews, to bond and free, He has vouchsafed the same blessings, how can it

be that after so vouchsafing He divides them, now that He has bestowed a greater perfection of unity by the supply of His gifts?

"And were all made to drink of one Spirit."

1 Corinthians 12:14

"For the body is not one member, but many."

i.e., We have come to the same initiation, we enjoy the same Table. And why said he not, *"we are nourished by the same body and drink the same blood?"* Because by saying *"Spirit,"* he declared them both, as well the flesh as the blood. For through both are we *"made to drink of the Spirit."*

But to me he appears now to speak of that visitation of the Spirit which takes place in us after Baptism and before the Mysteries. And he said, *"We were made to drink,"* because this metaphorical speech suited him extremely well for his proposed subject: as if he had said respecting plants and a garden, that by the same fountain all the trees are watered, or by the same water; so also here, *"we all drank the same Spirit, we enjoyed the same grace,"* says he.

If now one Spirit both formed us and gathered us all together into one body; for this is the meaning of, *"we were baptized into one body:"* and vouchsafed us one table, and gave us all the same watering, (for this is the meaning of, *"we were made to drink into one Spirit,"*) and united persons so widely separated; and if many things then become a body when they are made one: why, I pray, are you continually tossing to and from their difference? But if you say, *"Because there are many members and diverse,"* know that this very thing is the wonder and the peculiar excellency of the body, when the things which are many and diverse make one. But if they were not many, it were not so wonderful and incredible that they should be one body; nay, rather they would not be a body at all.

3. This however he states last; but for the present he goes to the members themselves, saying thus:

1 Corinthians 12:15

*"If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body;
is it therefore not of the body?"*

1 Corinthians 12:16

"And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"

For if the one being made inferior and the other superior, does not allow their being of the body, the whole is done away. Do not say therefore, *"I am not the body, because I am inferior."* For the foot also has the inferior post, yet is it of the body: for the being or not being part of the body, is not from the one lying in this place and the other in that; (which is what constitutes difference of place;) but from the being conjoined or separated. For the being or not being a body, arises from the having been made one or not. But do thou, I pray, mark his considerate way, how he applies their words to our members. For as he said above, *"These things have I in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos,"* [1 Corinthians 4:6] just so likewise here, to make his argument free from invidiousness and acceptable, he introduces the members speaking: that when they shall hear nature answering them, being thus convicted by experience herself and by the general voice, they may have nothing further to oppose. *"For say, if you will,"* says he, *"this very thing, murmur as you please, you cannot be out of the body. For as the law of nature, so much more does the power of grace guard all things and preserve them entire."* And see how he kept to the rule of having nothing superfluous; not working out his argument on all the members, but on two only and these the extremes; having specified both the most honorable of all, the eye, and the meanest of all, the feet. And he does not make the foot to discourse with the eye, but with the hand which is mounted a little above it; and the ear with the eyes. For because we are

wont to envy not those who are very far above us, but those who are a little higher, therefore he also conducts his comparison thus.

1 Corinthians 12:17

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?"

Thus, because, having fallen upon the difference of the members, and having mentioned feet, and hands, and eyes, and ears, he led them to the consideration of their own inferiority and superiority: see how again he consoles them, intimating that so it was expedient: and that their being many and diverse, this especially causes them to be a body. But if they all were some one, they would not be a body. Wherefore, he says, *"If they were all one member, where were the body?"* This however, he mentions not till afterwards; but here he points out also something more; that besides the impossibility of any one being a body, it even takes away the being of the rest.

"For if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling," says he.

4. Then because after all they were yet disturbed: that which he had done above, the same he does also now. For as there he first alleged the expediency to comfort them and afterwards stopped their mouths, vehemently saying, *"But all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one man severally even as He will:"* so also here having stated reasons for which he showed that it was profitable that all should so be, he refers the whole again to the counsel of God, saying,

1 Corinthians 12:18

"But now God has set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him."

Even as he said of the Spirit, *"as He will,"* so also here, *"as it pleased Him."* Now do not thou seek further into the cause, why it is thus and why not thus. For though we have ten thousand reasons to give, we shall not be so able to show them that it is well done, as when we say, that as the best Artificer pleased, so it came to pass. For as it is expedient, so He wills it. Now if in this body of ours we do not curiously enquire about the members, much more in the Church. And see his thoughtfulness in that he does not state the difference which arises from their nature nor that from their operation, but that from their local situation. For *"now,"* says he, *"God has set the members each one of them in the body even as it pleased Him."* And he said well, *"each one,"* pointing out that the use extends to all. For you can not say, *"This He has Himself placed but not that: but every one according to His will, so it is situated."* So that to the foot also it is profitable that it should be so stationed, and not to the head only: and if it should invert the order and leaving its own place, should go to another, though it might seem to have bettered its condition, it would be the undoing and ruin of the whole. For it both falls from its own, and reaches not the other station.

1 Corinthians 12:19-20

5. *"And if they were all one member, where were the body?" "But now are they many members, but one body."*

Thus having silenced them sufficiently by God's own arrangement, again he states reasons. And he neither does this always nor that, but alternates and varies his discourse. Since on the one hand, he who merely silences, confounds the hearer, and he, on the contrary, who accustoms him to demand reasons for all things, injures him in the matter of faith; for this cause then Paul is continually practising both the one and the other, that they may both believe and may not be confounded; and after silencing them, he again gives a reason likewise. And mark his earnestness in the combat and the completeness of his victory. For from what things they supposed themselves unequal in honor because in them there was great diversity, even from these things he shows that for this very reason they are equal in honor. How, I will tell you.

"If all were one member," says he, *"where were the body?"*

Now what he means is, If there were not among you great diversity, you could not be a body; and not being a body, you could not be one; and not being one, you could not be equal in honor. Whence it follows again that if you were all equal in honor, you were not a body; and not being a body, you were not one; and not being one, how could ye be equal in honor? As it is, however, because you are not all endowed with some one gift, therefore are you a body; and being a body, you are all one, and differ nothing from one another in this that you are a body. So that this very difference is that which chiefly causes your equality in honor. And accordingly he adds, *"But now they are many members, yet one body."*

6. These things then let us also consider and cast out all envy, and neither grudge against them that have greater gifts nor despise them that possess the lesser. For thus had God willed: let us then not oppose ourselves. But if you are still disturbed, consider that your work is oft-times such as your brother is unable to perform. So that even if you are inferior, yet in this you have the advantage: and though he be greater, he is worse off in this respect; and so equality takes place. For in the body even the little members seem to contribute no little, but the great ones themselves are often injured by them, I mean by their removal. Thus what in the body is more insignificant than the hair? Yet if you should remove this, insignificant as it is, from the eyebrows and the eyelids, you have destroyed all the grace of the countenance, and the eye will no longer appear equally beautiful. And yet the loss is of a trifle; but notwithstanding even thus all the comeliness is destroyed. And not the comeliness only, but much also of the use of the eyes. The reason is that every one of our members has both a working of its own and one which is common; and likewise there is in us a beauty which is peculiar and another which is common. And these kinds of beauty appear indeed to be divided, but they are perfectly bound together, and when one is destroyed, the other perishes also along with it. To explain myself: let there be bright eyes, and a smiling cheek, and a red lip, and straight nose, and open brow; nevertheless, if you mar but the slightest of these, you have marred the common beauty of all; all is full of dejection; all will appear foul to look on, which before was so beautiful: thus if you should crush only the tip of the nose you have brought great deformity upon all: and yet it is the maiming of but a single member. And likewise in the hand, if you should take away the nail from one finger, you would see the same result. If now you would see the same taking place in respect of their

function also, take away one finger, and you will see the rest less active and no longer performing their part equally.

Since then the loss of a member is a common deformity, and its safety beauty to all, let us not be lifted up nor trample on our neighbors. For through that small member even the great one is fair and beautiful, and by the eyelids, slight as they are, is the eye adorned. So that he who wars with his brother wars with himself: for the injury done reaches not only unto that one, but himself also shall undergo no small loss.

7. That this then may not be, let us care for our neighbors as for ourselves, and let us transfer this image of the body now also to the Church, and be careful for all as for our own members. For in the Church there are members many and diverse: and some are more honorable and some more deficient. For example, there are choirs of virgins, there are assemblies of widows, there are fraternities of those who shine in holy wedlock ; in short, many are the degrees of virtue. And in almsgiving again in like manner. For some empty themselves of all their goods: others care for a competency alone and seek nothing more than necessities; others give of their superfluity: nevertheless, all these adorn one another; and if the greater should set at nought the less, he would in the greatest degree injure himself. Thus, suppose a virgin to deal scornfully with a married woman, she has cut off no small part of her reward; and he again that emptied himself of all should he upbraid him that has not done so, has emptied himself of much of the fruit of his labors. And why speak I of virgins, and widows, and men without possessions? What is meaner than those who beg? And yet even these fulfill a most important office in the Church, clinging to the doors of the sanctuary and supplying one of its greatest ornaments: and without these there could be no perfecting the fullness of the Church. Which thing, as it seems, the Apostles also observing made a law from the beginning, as in

regard to all other things, so also that there should be widows: and so great care did they use about the matter as also to set over them seven deacons. For as bishops and presbyters and deacons and virgins and continent persons, enter into my enumeration, where I am reckoning up the members of the Church, so also do widows. Yea, and it is no mean office which they fill. For thou indeed comest here when you will: but these both day and night sing psalms and attend: not for alms only doing this; since if that were their object, they might walk in the market place and beg in the alleys: but there is in them piety also in no small degree. At least, behold in what a furnace of poverty they are; yet never shall you hear a blasphemous word from them nor an impatient one, after the manner of many rich men's wives. Yet some of them often lie down to their rest in hunger, and others continue constantly frozen by the cold; nevertheless, they pass their time in thanksgiving and giving glory. Though you give but a penny, they give thanks and implore ten thousand blessings on the giver; and if you give nothing they do not complain, but even so they bless, and think themselves happy to enjoy their daily food.

"Yes," it is replied, *"since whether they will or no, they must bear it."* Why, tell me? Wherefore have you uttered this bitter expression? Are there not shameful arts which bring gain to the aged, both men and women? Had they not power to support themselves by those means in great abundance, provided they had chosen to cast off all care of upright living? Do you see not how many persons of that age, by becoming pimps and panders and by other such ministrations, both live, and live in luxury ? Not so these, but they choose rather to perish of hunger than to dishonor their own life and betray their salvation; and they sit throughout the whole day, preparing a medicine of salvation for you.

For no physician stretching out the hand to apply the knife, works so effectually to cut out the corruption from our wounds, as does a poor man stretching out his right hand and receiving alms, to take away the scars which the wounds have left. And what is truly wonderful, they perform this excellent chirurgery without pain and anguish: and we who are set over the people and give you so much wholesome advice, do not more truly discourse than he does, who sits before the doors of the church, by his silence and his countenance. For we too sound these things in your ears every day, saying, *"Be not high-minded, O man; human nature is a thing that soon declines and is ready to fall away; our youth hastens on to old age, our beauty to deformity, our strength to weakness, our honor to contempt, our health falls away to sickness, our glory to meanness, our riches to poverty; our concerns are like a violent current that never will stand still, but keeps hastening down the steep."*

The same advice do they also give and more than this, by their appearance and by their experience itself too, which is a yet plainer kind of advice. How many, for instance, of those who now sit without, were in the bloom of youth and did great things? How many of these loathsome looking persons surpassed many, both in vigor of body and in beauty of countenance? Nay, disbelieve it not nor deride. For surely, life is full of ten thousand such examples. For if from mean and humble persons many have oftentimes become kings, what marvel is it if from being great and glorious, some have been made humble and mean? Since the former is much the more extraordinary: but the latter, of perpetual occurrence. So that one ought not to be incredulous that any of them ever flourished in arts, and arms, and abundance of wealth, but rather to pity them with great compassion and to fear for ourselves, lest we too should sometime suffer the same things. For we too are men and are subject to this speedy change.

8. But perchance some one of the thoughtless, and of those who are accustomed to scoff, will object to what has been said, and will altogether deride us, saying, *"How long will you not cease continually introducing poor men and beggars in your discourses, and prophesying to us of misfortunes, and denouncing poverty to come, and desiring to make us beggars?"* Not from a desire to make beggars of you, O man, do I say these things, but hastening to open unto you the riches of heaven. Since he too, who to the healthy man makes mention of the sick and relates their anguish, says it not to make him diseased, but to preserve him in health, by the fear of their calamities cutting off his remissness. Poverty seems to you to be a fearful thing and to be dreaded, even to the mere name of it. Yea, and therefore are we poor, because we are afraid of poverty; though we have ten thousand talents. For not he who has nothing is poor, but he who shudders at poverty. Since in men's calamities also it is not those who suffer great evils whom we lament and account wretched, but those who know not how to bear them, even though they be small. Whereas he that knows how to bear them is, as all know, worthy of praises and crowns. And to prove that this is so, whom do we applaud in the games? Those who are much beaten and do not vex themselves, but hold their head on high; or those who fly after the first strokes? Are not those even crowned by us as manly and noble; while we laugh at these as unmanly and cowards? So then let us do in the affairs of life. Him that bears all easily let us crown, as we do that noble champion ; but weep over him that shrinks and trembles at his dangers, and who before he receives the blow is dead with fear. For so in the games; if any before he raised his hands, at the mere sight of his adversary extending his right hand, should fly, though he receive no wound, he will be laughed to scorn as feeble and effeminate and unversed in such

struggles. Now this is like what happens to these who fear poverty, and cannot so much as endure the expectation of it.

Evidently then it is not we that make you wretched, but you yourselves. For how can it be that the devil should not hence-forth make sport of you, seeing you even before the stroke afraid and trembling at the menace? Or rather, when thou dost but esteem this a threat, he will have no need so much as to strike you any more, but leaving you to keep your wealth, by the expectation of its being taken away he will render you softer than any wax. And because it is our nature (so to speak,) not to consider the objects of our dread so fearful after suffering, as before and while yet untried: therefore to prevent you from acquiring even this virtue, he detains you in the very height of fear; by the fear of poverty, before all experience of it, melting you down as wax in the fire. Yea, and such a man is softer than any wax and lives a life more wretched than Cain himself. For the things which he has in excess, he is in fear: for those which he has not, in grief; and again, concerning what he has he trembles, keeping his wealth within as a wilful runaway slave, and beset by I know not what various and unaccountable passions. For unaccountable desire, and manifold fear and anxiety, and trembling on every side, agitate them. And they are like a vessel driven by contrary winds from every quarter, and enduring many heavy seas. And how much better for such a man to depart than to be enduring a continual storm? Since for Cain also it were more tolerable to have died than to be for ever trembling.

Lest we then for our part suffer these things, let us laugh to scorn the device of the devil, let us burst his cords asunder, let us sever the point of his terrible spear and fortify every approach. For if you laugh at money, he has not where to strike, he has not where he may lay hold. Then have you

rooted up the root of evils; and when the root is no more, neither will any evil fruit grow.

9. Well: these things we are always saying and never leave off saying them: but whether our sayings do any good, the day will declare, even that day which is revealed by fire, which tries every man's work, [1 Corinthians 3:13] which shows what lamps are bright and what are not so. Then shall he who has oil, and he who has it not, be manifest. But may none then be found destitute of the comfort; rather may all, bringing in with them abundance of mercy, and having their lamps bright, enter in together with the Bridegroom.

Since nothing is more fearful and full of anguish than that voice which they who departed without abundant almsgiving shall then hear the Bridegroom, *"I know you not."* [Matthew 25:12] But may we never hear this voice, but rather that most pleasant and desirable one, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* [Matthew 25:34] For thus shall we live the happy life, and enjoy all the good things which even pass man's understanding: unto which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy, etc.

Homily 31 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 12:21

And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

Having checked the envy of those in lower rank, and having taken off the dejection which it was likely that they would feel from greater gifts having been vouchsafed to others, he humbles also the pride of these latter who had received the greater gifts. He had done the same indeed in his discourse also with the former. For the statement that it was a gift and not an achievement was intended to declare this. But now he does it again even more vehemently, dwelling on the same image. For from the body in what follows, and from the unity thence arising, he proceeds to the actual comparison of the members, a thing on which they were especially seeking to be instructed. Since there was not so much power to console them in the circumstance of their being all one body, as in the conviction that in the very things wherewith they were endowed, they were not left greatly behind. And he says, *"The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."*

For though the gift be less, yet is it necessary: and as when the one is absent, many functions are impeded, so also without the other there is a maim in the fullness of the Church. And he said not, *"will not say,"* but *"cannot say."* So that even though it wish it, though it should actually say so, it is out of the question nor is the thing consistent with nature. For this cause having taken the two extremes, he makes trial of his argument in

them, first in respect of the hand and the eye, and secondly, in respect of the head and feet, adding force to the example.

For what is meaner than the foot? Or what more honorable and more necessary than the head? For this, the head, more than any thing, is the man. Nevertheless, it is not of itself sufficient nor could it alone perform all things; since if this were so, our feet would be a superfluous addition.

2. And neither did he stop here, but seeks also another amplification, a kind of thing which he is always doing, contending not only to be on equal terms but even advancing beyond. Wherefore also he adds, saying,

1 Corinthians 12:22

Nay, much rather those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble are necessary:

1 Corinthians 12:23

"And those parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness."

In every clause adding the term *"body,"* and thereby both consoling the one and checking the other. *"For I affirm not this only,"* says he, *"that the greater have need of the less, but that they have also much need. Since if there be any thing weak in us, if any thing dishonorable, this is both necessary and enjoys greater honor."* And he well said, *"which seem,"* and, *"which we think;"* pointing out that the judgment arises not from the nature of the things, but from the opinion of the many. For nothing in us is dishonorable, seeing it is God's work. Thus what in us is esteemed less honorable than our genital members? Nevertheless, they enjoy greater honor. And the very poor, even if they have the rest of the body naked, cannot endure to exhibit those members naked. Yet surely this is not the condition of things dishonorable; but it was natural for them to be despised rather than the rest. For so in a house the servant who is dishonored, so far from enjoying greater attention, has not even an equal share vouchsafed him. By the same rule likewise, if this member were dishonorable, instead of having greater privileges it ought not even to enjoy the same: whereas now it has more honor for its portion: and this too the wisdom of God has effected. For to some parts by their nature He has given not to need it: but to others, not having granted it by their nature, He has compelled us to yield it. Yet are they not therefore dishonorable. Since the animals too by their nature have a sufficiency, and need neither clothing nor shoes nor a roof,

the greater part of them: yet not on this account is our body less honorable than they, because it needs all these things.

Yea rather, were one to consider accurately, these parts in question are even by nature itself both honorable and necessary. Which in truth Paul himself imitated, giving his judgment in their favor not from our care and from their enjoying greater honor, but from the very nature of the things.

Wherefore when he calls them "*weak*" and "*less honorable*," he uses the expression, "*which seem*:" but when he calls them "*necessary*," he no longer adds "*which seem*," but himself gives his judgment, saying, "*they are necessary*;" and very properly. For they are useful to procreation of children and the succession of our race. Wherefore also the Roman legislators punish them that mutilate these members and make men eunuchs, as persons who do injury to our common stock and affront nature herself.

But woe to the dissolute who bring reproach on the handy-works of God. For as many are wont to curse wine on account of the drunken, and womankind on account of the unchaste; so also they account these members base because of those who use them not as they ought. But improperly. For the sin is not allotted to the thing as a portion of its nature, but the transgression is produced by the will of him that ventures on it.

But some suppose that the expressions, "*the feeble members*," and "*less honorable*," and "*necessary*," and "*which enjoy more abundant honor*," are used by Paul of eyes and feet, and that he speaks of the eye as "*more feeble*," and "*necessary*," because though deficient in strength, they have the advantage in utility: but of the feet as the "*less honorable*:" for these also receive from us great consideration.

3. Next, not to work out yet another amplification, he says,

1 Corinthians 12:24

"But our comely parts have no need:"

That is, lest any should say, *"Why what kind of speech is this, to despise the honorable and pay court to the less honored?"* *"we do not this in contempt,"* says he, *"but because they 'have no need.'"* And see how large a measure of praise he thus sets down in brief, and so hastens on: a thing most conveniently and usefully done. And neither is he content with this, but adds also the cause, saying, *"But God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor unto that part which lacked:"*

1 Corinthians 12:25

"That there should be no schism in the body."

Now if He tempered it together, He did not suffer that which is more uncomely to appear. For that which is mingled becomes one thing, and it does not appear what it was before: since otherwise we could not say that it was tempered. And see how he continually hastens by the defects, saying, *"that which lacked."* He said not, *"to that which is dishonorable," "to that which is unseemly,"* but, to that which lacked, (*"that which lacked;"* how? By nature,) giving more abundant honor. And wherefore? *"That there should be no schism in the body."* Thus because, though they enjoyed an endless store of consolation, they nevertheless indulged grief as if they had received less than others, he signifies that they were rather honored. For his phrase is, *"Giving more abundant honor to that which lacked."*

Next he also adds the reason, showing that with a view to their profit he both caused it to lack and more abundantly honored it. And what is the reason? *"That there should be no schism,"* says he, *"in the body."* (And he said not, *"in the members,"* but, *"in the body."*) For there would indeed be a great and unfair advantage, if some members were cared for both by nature and by our forethought, others not even by either one of these. Then would they be cut off from one another, from inability to endure the connection. And when these were cut off, there would be harm done also to the rest. Do you see how he points out, that of necessity *"greater honor"* is given to *"that which lacks?"* *"For had not this been so, the injury would have become common to all,"* says he. And the reason is, that unless these received great consideration on our part, they would have been rudely treated, as not having the help of nature: and this rude treatment would have

been their ruin: their ruin would have divided the body; and the body having been divided, the other members also would have perished, which are far greater than these.

Do you see that the care of these latter is connected with making provision for those? For they have not their being so much in their own nature, as in their being one, by virtue of the body. Wherefore if the body perish, they profit nothing by such health as they have severally. But if the eye remain or the nose, preserving its proper function, yet when the bond of union is broken there will be no use for them ever after; whereas, suppose this remaining, and those injured, they both support themselves through it and speedily return to health.

But perhaps some one may say, *"this indeed in the body has reason, that 'that which lacks has received more abundant honor,' but among men how may this be made out?"* Why, among men most especially you may see this taking place. For so they who came at the eleventh hour first received their hire; and the sheep that had wandered induced the shepherd to leave behind the ninety and nine and run after it, and when it was found, he bore and did not drive it; and the prodigal son obtained more honor than he who was approved; and the thief was crowned and proclaimed before the Apostles. And in the case of the talents also you may see this happen: in that to him that received the five talents, and to him that received two, were vouchsafed the same rewards; yea, by the very circumstance that he received the two, he was the more favored with great providential care. Since had he been entrusted with the five, with his want of ability he would have fallen from the whole: but having received the two and fulfilled his own duty, he was thought worthy of the same with him that had gained the five, having so far the advantage, as with less labor to obtain the same crown. And yet he too was a man as well as the one that traded with the

five. Nevertheless, his Master does not in any wise call him to a strict account, nor compel him to do the same with his fellow-servant, nor does he say, "*Why can you not gain the five?*" (though he might justly have said so,) but assigned him likewise his crown.

4. Knowing these things therefore, you that are greater, trample not on the less, lest, instead of them, you injure yourselves. For when they are cut off, the whole body is destroyed. Since, what else is a body than the existence of many members? As also Paul himself says, that "*the body is not one member; but many.*" If therefore this be the essence of a body, let us take care that the many continue many. Since, unless this be entirely preserved, the stroke is in the vital parts; which is the reason also why the Apostle does not require this only, their not being separated, but also their being closely united. For instance, having said, "*that there be no schism in the body,*" he was not content with this, but added, "*that the members should have the same care one for another.*" Adding this other cause also of the less enjoying more honor. For not only lest they should be separated one from another has God so contrived it, but also that there may be abundant love and concord. For if each man's being depends on his neighbor's safety, tell me not of the less and the more: in this case there is no more and less. While the body continues you may see the difference too, but when it perishes, no longer. And perish it will, unless the lesser parts also continue.

If now even the greater members will perish when the less are broken off, these ought to care in like manner for the less, and so as for themselves, inasmuch as in the safety of these the greater likewise remain. So then, should you say ten thousand times, "*such member is dishonored and inferior,*" still if you provide not for it in like manner as for yourself, if you neglect it as inferior, the injury will pass on to yourself. Wherefore he said not only, that "*the members should care one for another,*" but he added,

"that they should have the same care one for another," i.e., in like manner the small should enjoy the same providential care with great.

Say not then, that such is an ordinary person, but consider he is a member of that body which holds together the whole: and as the eye, so also does he cause the body to be a body. For where the body is built up, there none has anything more than his neighbor: since neither does this make a body, there being one part greater and another less, but their being many and diverse. For even as thou, because you are greater, helped to make up the body, so also he, because he is less. So that his comparative deficiency, when the body is to be built up, turns out of equal value with you unto this noble contribution : yea, he avails as much as yourself. And it is evident from hence. Let there be no member greater or less, nor more and less honorable: but let all be eye or all head: will not the body perish? Every one sees it. Again, if all be inferior, the same thing will happen. So that in this respect also the less are proved equal. Yea, and if one must say something more, the purpose of the less being less is that the body may remain. So that for your sake he is less, in order that you may continue to be great. And here is the cause of his demanding the same care from all. And having said, *"that the members may have the same care one for another,"* he explains *"the same thing"* again, by saying,

1 Corinthians 12:26

5. *"And whether one member suffers all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."*

"Yea, with no other view," says he, *"did He make the care He requires common, establishing unity in so great diversity, but that of all events there might be complete communion. Because, if our care for our neighbor be the common safety, it follows also that our glory and our sadness must be common."* Three things therefore he here demands: the not being divided but united in perfection: the having like care for another: and the considering all that happens common. And as above he says, *"He has given more abundant honor to that part which lacked,"* because it needs it; signifying that the very inferiority was become an introduction to greater honor; so here he equalizes them in respect of the care also which takes place mutually among them. For *"therefore did he cause them to partake of greater honor,"* says he, *"that they might not meet with less care."* And not from hence only, but also by all that befalls them, good and painful, are the members bound to one another. Thus often when a thorn is fixed in the heel, the whole body feels it and cares for it: both the back is bent and the belly and thighs are contracted, and the hands coming forth as guards and servants draw out what was so fixed, and the head stoops over it, and the eyes observe it with much care. So that even if the foot has inferiority from its inability to ascend, yet by its bringing down the head it has an equality, and is favored with the same honor; and especially whenever the feet are the cause of the head's coming down, not by favor but by their claim on it. And thus, if by being the more honorable it has an advantage; yet in that, being so it owes such honor and care to the lesser and likewise equal

sympathy: by this it indicates great equality. Since what is meaner than the heel? What more honorable than the head? Yet this member reaches to that, and moves them all together with itself. Again if anything is the matter with the eyes, all complain and all are idle: and neither do the feet walk nor the hands work, nor does the stomach enjoy its accustomed food; and yet the affection is of the eyes. Why do you cause the stomach to pine? Why keep your feet still? Why bind your hands? Because they are tied to the feet, and in an unspeakable manner the whole body suffers. For if it shared not in the suffering, it would not endure to partake of the care. Wherefore having said, *"that the members may have the same care one for another,"* he added, *"whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."* *"And how do they rejoice with it?"* say you. The head is crowned, and the whole man is honored. The mouth speaks, and the eyes laugh and are delighted. Yet the credit belongs not to the beauty of the eyes, but to the tongue. Again if the eyes appear beautiful, the whole woman is embellished: as indeed these also, when a straight nose and upright neck and other members are praised, rejoice and appear cheerful: and again they shed tears in great abundance over their griefs and misfortunes, though themselves continue uninjured.

6. Let us all then, considering these things, imitate the love of these members; let us not in any wise do the contrary, trampling on the miseries of our neighbor and envying his good things. For this is the part of madmen and persons beside themselves. Just as he that digs out his own eye has displayed a very great proof of senselessness; and he that devours his own hand exhibits a clear evidence of downright madness.

Now if this be the case with regard to the members, so likewise, when it happens among the brethren, it fastens on us the reputation of folly and brings on no common mischief. For as long as he shines, your comeliness

also is apparent and the whole body is beautified. For not at all does he confine the beauty to himself alone, but permits you also to glory. But if you extinguish him, you bring a common darkness upon the whole body, and the misfortune you cause is common to all the members: as indeed if you preserve him in brightness, you preserve the bloom of the entire body. For no man says, *"the eye is beautiful:"* but what? *"such a woman is beautiful."* And if it also be praised, it comes after the common encomium. So likewise it happens in the Church. I mean, if there be any celebrated persons, the community reaps the good report of it. For the enemies are not apt to divide the praises, but connect them together. And if any be brilliant in speech, they do not praise him alone but likewise the whole Church. For they do not say only, *"such a one is a wonderful man,"* but what? *"the Christians have a wonderful teacher:"* and so they make the possession common.

7. And now let me ask, do heathens bind together, and do you divide and war with your own body, and withstand your own members? Do you not know that this overturns all? For even a *"kingdom,"* says he, *"divided against itself shall not stand."* [Matthew 12:25]

But nothing so divides and separates as envy and jealousy, that grievous disease, and exempt from all pardon, and in some respect worse than *"the root of all evils."* [1 Timothy 6:12] For the covetous is then pleased when himself has received: but the envious is then pleased, when another has failed to receive, not when himself has received. For he thinks the misfortunes of others a benefit to himself, rather than prosperity; going about a common enemy of mankind, and smiting the members of Christ, than which what can be more akin to madness? A demon is envious, but of men, not of any demon: but thou being a man enviest men, and withstandest what is of your own tribe and family, which not even a demon does. And

what pardon shall you obtain, what excuse? Trembling and turning pale at sight of a brother in prosperity, when you ought to crown yourself and to rejoice and exult.

If indeed you wish to emulate him, I forbid not that: emulate, but with a view to be like him who is approved: not in order to depress him but that you may reach the same lofty point, that you may display the same excellence. This is wholesome rivalry, imitation without contention: not to grieve at the good things of others but to be vexed at our own evils: the contrary to which is the result of envy. For neglecting its own evils, it pines away at the good fortune of other men. And thus the poor is not so vexed by his own poverty as by the plenty of his neighbor; than which what can be more grievous? Yea, in this respect the envious, as I before said, is worse than the covetous; the one rejoicing at some acquisition of his own, while the other finds his delight in some one else failing to receive.

Wherefore I beseech you, leaving this evil way, to change to a proper emulation, (for it is a violent thing, this kind of zeal, and hotter than any fire,) and to win thereby mighty blessings. Thus also Paul used to guide those of Jewish origin unto the faith, saying, *"If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and may save some of them."* [Romans 11:14] For he whose emulation is like what Paul wished for does not pine when he sees the other in reputation, but when he sees himself left behind: the envious not so, but at the sight of another's prosperity. And he is a kind of drone, injuring other men's labors; and himself never anxious to rise, but weeping when he sees another rising, and doing every thing to throw him down. To what then might one compare this passion? It seems to me to be like as if a sluggish ass and heavy with abundance of flesh, being yoked with a winged courser, should neither himself be willing to rise, and should attempt to drag the other down by the weight of his carcass. For so

this man takes no thought nor anxiety to be himself rid of this deep slumber, but does every thing to supplant and throw down him that is flying towards heaven, becoming an exact emulator of the devil: since he too, seeing man in paradise, sought not to change his own condition, but to cast him out of paradise. And again, seeing him seated in heaven and the rest hastening there, he holds to the same plan, supplanting them who are hastening there and hereby heaping up the furnace more abundantly for himself. For in every instance this happens: both he that is envied, if he be vigilant, becoming more eminent; and he that is envious, accumulating to himself more evils. Thus also Joseph became eminent, thus Aaron the priest: the conspiracy of the envious caused God once and again to give His suffrage for him, and was the occasion of the rod's budding. Thus Jacob attained his abundant wealth and all those other blessings. Thus the envious pierce themselves through with ten thousand evils. Knowing as we do all these things, let us flee such emulation. For wherefore, tell me, do you envy? Because your brother has received spiritual grace? And from whom did he receive it? Answer me. Was it not from God? Clearly then He is the object of the enmity to Which you are committing yourself, He the bestower of the gift. Do you see which way the evil is tending, and with what sort of a point it is crowning the heap of your sins; and how deep the pit of vengeance which it is digging for you?

Let us flee it, then, beloved, and neither envy others, nor fail to pray for our enviers and do all we can to extinguish their passion: neither let us feel as the unthinking do who being minded to exact punishment of them, do all in their power to light up their flame. But let not us do so; rather let us weep for them and lament. For they are the injured persons, having continual worm gnawing through their heart, and collecting a fountain of poison more bitter than any gall. Come now, let us beseech the merciful

God, both to change their state of feeling and that we may never fall into that disease: since heaven is indeed inaccessible to him that has this wasting sore, and before heaven too, even this present life is not worth living in. For not so thoroughly are timber and wool wont to be eaten through by moth and worm abiding therein, as does the fever of envy devour the very bones of the envious and destroy all self-command in their soul.

In order then that we may deliver both ourselves and others from these innumerable woes, let us expel from within us this evil fever, this that is more grievous than any gangrene: that having regained spiritual strength, we may both finish the present course and obtain the future crowns; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 32 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 12:27

Now you are the body of Christ and severally members thereof.

For lest any should say, "*What is the example of the body to us? Since the body is a slave to nature but our good deeds are of choice;*" he applies it to our own concerns; and to signify that we ought to have the same concord of design as they have from nature, he says, "*Now you are the body of Christ.*" But if our body ought not to be divided, much less the body of Christ, and so much less as grace is more powerful than nature.

But what is the expression, "*severally?*" "*So far at least as appertains to you; and so far as naturally a part should be built up from you.*" For because he had said, "*the body,*" whereas the whole body was not the Corinthian Church, but the Church in every part of the world, therefore he said, "*severally:*" i.e., the Church among you is a part of the Church existing every where and of the body which is made up of all the Churches: so that not only with yourselves alone, but also with the whole Church throughout the world, you ought to be at peace, if at least ye be members of the whole body.

1 Corinthians 12:28

2. *"And God has set some in the Church: first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, various kinds of tongues."*

Thus what I spoke of before, this also he now does. Because they thought highly of themselves in respect of the tongues he sets it last every where. For the terms, *"first"* and *"secondly,"* are not used by him here at random, but in order by enumeration to point out the more honorable and the inferior. Wherefore also he set the apostles first who had all the gifts in themselves. And he said not, *"God has set certain in the Church, apostles"* simply, *"or prophets,"* but he employs *"first, second,"* and *"third,"* signifying that same thing which I told you of.

"Secondly, prophets." For they used to prophesy, as the daughters of Philip, as Agabus, as these very persons among the Corinthians, of whom he says, *"Let the prophets speak, two or three."* [1 Corinthians 14:29] And writing also to Timothy, he said, *"Neglect not the gift that is in you, which was given you by prophecy."* [1 Timothy 4:14] And they were much more many that prophesied. And if Christ says, *"The Law and the Prophets prophesied until John,"* [Matthew 11:13] He says it of those prophets who before proclaimed His coming.

"Thirdly, teachers." For he that prophesies speaks all things from the Spirit; but he that teaches sometimes discourses also out of his own mind. Wherefore also he said, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and in teaching:"* [1 Timothy 5:17] whereas he that speaks all things by the Spirit does not labor. This accordingly is the reason why he set him after the prophet, because the

one is wholly a gift but the other is also man's labor. For he speaks many things of his own mind, agreeing however with the sacred Scriptures.

3. *"Then miracles, then gifts of healings."* Do you see how he again divides the healings from the power, which also he did before. For the power is more than the healing: since he that has power both punishes and heals, but he that has the gift of healings does cures only. And observe how excellent the order he made use of, when he set the prophecy before the miracles and the healings. For above when he said, *"To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge,"* he spoke, not setting them in order, but indifferently. Here, on the other hand, he sets a first and a second rank. Wherefore then does he set prophecy first? Because even in the old covenant the matter has this order. For example, when Isaiah was discoursing with the Jews, and exhibiting a demonstration of the power of God, and bringing forward the evidence of the worthlessness of the demons, he stated this also as the greater evidence of his divinity, his foretelling things to come. [Isaiah 41:22-23] And Christ Himself after working so many signs says that this was no small sign of His divinity: and continually adds, *"But these things have I told you, that when it has come to pass, you may believe that I am He."* [John 13:19; 14:29; 16:4]

"Well then; the gifts of healing are justly inferior to prophecy. But why likewise to teaching?" Because it is not the same thing to declare the word of preaching and sow piety in the hearts of the hearers, as it is to work miracles: since these are done merely for the sake of that. When therefore any one teaches both by word and life, he is greater than all. For those he calls emphatically teachers, who both teach by deeds and instruct in word. For instance: this made the Apostles themselves to become Apostles. And those gifts certain others also, of no great worth, received in the beginning,

as they who said, "*Lord, did we not prophesy by Your Name, and do mighty works?*" and after this were told, "*I never knew you; depart from Me, you that work iniquity.*" [Matthew 7:22] But this twofold mode of teaching, I mean that by deeds and by words, no bad man would ever undertake. As to his setting the prophets first marvel not at it. For he is not speaking of prophets simply, but of those who by prophecy do also teach and say every thing to the common benefit: which in proceeding he makes more clear to us.

"Helps, governments." What is, "*helps?*" To support the weak. Is this then a gift, tell me? In the first place, this too is of the Gift of God, aptness for a patron's office ; the dispensing spiritual things; besides which he calls many even of our own good deeds, "*gifts;*" not meaning us to lose heart, but showing that in every case we need God's help, and preparing them to be thankful, and thereby making them more forward and stirring up their minds.

"Divers kind of tongues." Do you see where he has set this gift, and how he every where assigns it the last rank?

4. Further, since again by this catalogue he had pointed out a great difference, and stirred up the afore-mentioned distemper of those that had lesser gifts, he darts upon them in what follows with great vehemence, because he had already given them those many proofs of their not being left much inferior. What I mean is; because it was likely that on hearing these things they would say, "*And why were we not all made Apostles?*"—whereas above he had made use of a more soothing tone of discourse, proving at length the necessity of this result, even from the image of the body; for "*the body,*" says he, "*is not one member;*" and again, "*but if all were one member, where were the body?*" and from the fact that they were given for use; for to each one is given "*the manifestation of the Spirit,*" says

he, *"to profit withal:"* and from all being watered from the same Spirit: and from what is bestowed being a free gift and not a debt; *"for there are,"* says he, *"diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit:"* and from the manifestation of the Spirit being made alike through all; for *"to each one,"* says he, *"is given the manifestation through the Spirit:"* and from the fact that these things were shaped according to the pleasure of the Spirit and of God; *"for all these,"* says he, *"works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will:"* and, *"God has set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him:"* and from the inferior members also being necessary; *"for those which seem,"* says he, *"to be more feeble are necessary:"* from their being alike necessary, in that they from the greater too needing the less: *"for the head,"* says he, *"cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you:"* from these latter enjoying even more honor; for *"to that which lacks,"* says he, *"He has given more abundant honor:"* from the care of them being common and equal; for *"for all the members have the same care one for another:"* and from there being one honor and one grief of them all; for *"whether,"* says he, *"one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it:"*— whereas, I say, he had above exhorted them by these topics, here and henceforth he uses language so as to bear them down and rebuke them. For, as I said, it behooves us neither always to exhort people nor always to silence them. Therefore also Paul himself, because he at length exhorted them, does henceforth vehemently attack them, saying,

1 Corinthians 12:29

"Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Have all gifts of healing?"

And he does not stop at the first and the second gift, but proceeds to the last, either meaning this that all cannot be all things, (even as he there says, *"if all were one member, where were the body?"*) or establishing some other point also along with these, which may tell in the way of consolation again. What then is this? His signifying that even the lesser gifts are contended for equally with the greater, from the circumstance that not even these were given absolutely to all? For *"why,"* says he, *"do you grieve that you have not gifts of healing? Consider that what you have, even though it be less, is oftentimes not possessed by him that has the greater."* Wherefore he says,

1 Corinthians 12:30

"Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?"

For even as the great gifts God has not vouchsafed all to all men, but to some this, and to others that, so also did He in respect of the less, not proposing these either to all. And this He did, procuring thereby abundant harmony and love, that each one standing in need of the other might be brought close to his brother. This economy He established also in the arts, this also in the elements, this also in the plants, and in our members, and absolutely in all things.

5. Then he subjoins further the most powerful consolation, and sufficient to recover them and quiet their vexed souls. And what is this?

1 Corinthians 12:31

"Desire earnestly," says he, *"the better gifts. And a still more excellent way show I unto you."*

Now by saying this, he gently hinted that they were the cause of their own receiving the lesser gifts, and had it in their power, if they would, to receive the greater. For when he says, *"desire earnestly,"* he demands from them all diligence and desire for spiritual things. And he said not, the greater gifts, but *"the better,"* i.e., the more useful, those which would profit. And what he means is this: *"continue to desire gifts; and I point out to you a fountain of gifts."* For neither did he say, *"a gift,"* but *"a way,"* that he might the more extol that which he intends to mention. As if he said, It is not one, or two, or three gifts that I point out to you, but one way which leads to all these : and not merely a way, but both *"a more excellent way"* and one that is open in common to all. For not as the gifts are vouchsafed, to some these, to others those, but not all to all; so also in this case: but it is an universal gift. Wherefore also he invites all to it. *"Desire earnestly,"* says he, *"the better gifts and yet show I unto you a more excellent way;"* meaning love towards our neighbor.

Then intending to proceed to the discourse concerning it and the encomium of this virtue, he first lowers these by comparison with it, intimating that they are nothing without it; very considerably. For if he had at once discoursed of love, and having said, *"I show unto you a way,"* had added, *"but this is love,"* and had not conducted his discourse by way of comparison; some might possibly have scoffed at what was said, not understanding clearly the force of the thing spoken of but still gaping after these. Wherefore he does not at once unfold it, but first excites the hearer

by the promise, and says, "*I show unto you a more excellent way,*" and so having led him to desire it, he does not even thus straightway proceed to it, but augmenting still further and extending their desire, he discourses first of these very things, and shows that without it they are nothing; reducing them to the greatest necessity of loving one another; seeing also that from neglect of it sprang that which caused all their evils. So that in this respect also it might justly appear great, if the gifts not only brought them not together, but divided them even when united: but this, when many were so divided, would reunite them by virtue of its own and make them one body. This however he does not say at once, but what they chiefly longed for, that he sets down; as that the thing was a gift and a most excellent way to all the gifts. So that, even if you will not love your brother on the score of friendship, yet for the sake of obtaining a better sign and an abundant gift, cherish love.

6. And see whence he first begins; from that which was marvellous in their eyes and great, the gift of tongues. And in bringing forward that gift, he mentions it not just in the degree they had it in, but far more. For he did not say, "*if I speak with tongues,*" but,

1 Corinthians 13:1

"If I speak with the tongues of men—"

What is, *"of men?"* Of all nations in every part of the world. And neither was he content with this amplification, but he likewise uses another much greater, adding the words, *"and of angels—and have not love, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal."*

Do you see to what point he first exalted the gift, and to what afterwards he lowered and cast it down? For neither did he simply say, *"I am nothing,"* but, *"I have become sounding brass,"* a thing senseless and inanimate. But how *"sounding brass?"* Emitting a sound indeed, but at random and in vain, and for no good end. Since besides my profiting nothing, I am counted by most men as one giving impertinent trouble, an annoying and wearisome kind of person. Do you see how one void of love is like to things inanimate and senseless?

Now he here speaks of the *"tongues of angels,"* not investing angels with a body, but what he means is this: *"should I even so speak as angels are wont to discourse unto each other, without this I am nothing, nay rather a burden and an annoyance."* Thus (to mention one other example) where he says, *"To Him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth,"* [Philippians 2:10] he does not say these things as if he attributed to angels knees and bones, far from it, but it is their intense adoration which he intends to shadow out by the fashion among us: so also here he calls it *"a tongue"* not meaning an instrument of flesh, but intending to indicate their converse with each other by the manner which is known among us.

7. Then, in order that his discourse may be acceptable, he stops not at the gift of tongues, but proceeds also to the remaining gifts; and having depreciated all in the absence of love, he then depicts her image. And because he preferred to conduct his argument by amplification, he begins from the less and ascends to the greater. For whereas, when he indicated their order, he placed the gift of tongues last, this he now numbers first; by degrees, as I said, ascending to the greater gifts. Thus having spoken of tongues, he proceeds immediately to prophecy; and says;

1 Corinthians 13:2

"And if I have the gift of prophecy."

And this gift again with an excellency. For as in that case he mentioned not tongues, but the tongues of all mankind, and as he proceeded, those of angels, and then signified that the gift was nothing without love: so also here he mentions not prophecy alone but the very highest prophecy: in having said, *"If I have prophecy,"* he added, *"and know all mysteries and all knowledge;"* expressing this gift also with intensity.

Then after this also he proceeds to the other gifts. And again, that he might not seem to weary them, naming each one of the gifts, he sets down the mother and fountain of all, and this again with an excellency, thus saying, *"And if I have all faith."* Neither was he content with this, but even that which Christ spoke of as greatest, this also he added, saying, *"so as to remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing."* And consider how again here also he lowers the dignity of the tongues. For whereas in regard of prophecy he signifies the great advantage arising from it, *"the understanding mysteries, and having all knowledge;"* and in regard of faith, no trifling work, even *"the removing mountains;"* in respect of tongues, on the other hand, having named the gift itself only, he quits it.

But do thou, I pray, consider this also, how in brief he comprehended all gifts when he named prophecy and faith: for miracles are either in words or deeds. And how does Christ say, that the least degree of faith is the being able to remove a mountain? For as though he were speaking something very small, did He express Himself when He said, *"If you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove;"* [Matthew 17:20] whereas Paul says that this is *"all faith."* What

then must one say? Since this was a great thing, the removing a mountain, therefore also he mentioned it, not as though *"all faith"* were only able to do this, but since this seemed to be great to the grosser sort because of the bulk of the outward mass, from this also he extols his subject. And what he says is this:

"If I have all faith, and can remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

1 Corinthians 13:3

8. *"And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing."*

Wonderful amplification! For even these things too he states with another addition: in that he said not, *"if I give to the poor the half of my goods,"* or *"two or three parts,"* but, *"though I give all my goods."* And he said not, *"give,"* but, *"distribute in morsels,"* so that to the expense may be added the administering also with all care.

But not even yet have I pointed out the whole of the excellency, until I bring forward the testimonies of Christ which were spoken concerning almsgiving and death. What then are His testimonies? To the rich man He says, *"If you would be perfect, sell what you have and give to the poor, and come, follow me."* [Matthew 19:21] And discoursing likewise of love to one's neighbor, He says, *"Greater love has no man than this, that a man may lay down his life for his friends."* [John 14:13] Whence it is evident, that even before God this is greatest of all. But, *"I declare,"* said Paul, that even if we should lay down life for God's sake, and not merely lay it down, but so as even to be burned, (for this is the meaning of, *"if I give my body to be burned,"*) we shall have no great advantage if we love not our neighbor. Well then, the saying that the gifts are of no great profit without charity is no marvel: since our gifts are a secondary consideration to our way of life. At any rate, many have displayed gifts, and yet on becoming vicious have been punished: as those who *"prophesied in His name, and cast out many demons, and wrought many mighty works;"* as Judas the traitor: while others, exhibiting as believers a pure life, have needed nothing else in order to their salvation. Wherefore, that the gifts should, as I said, require this, is

no marvel: but that an exact life even should avail nothing without it, this is what brings the intensity of expression strongly out and causes great perplexity: especially too when Christ appears to adjudge His great rewards to both these, I mean to the giving up our possessions, and to the perils of martyrdom. For both to the rich man He says, as I before observed, *"If you will be perfect, sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come, follow me:"* and discoursing with the disciples, of martyrdom He says, *"Whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it;"* and, *"Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven."* For great indeed is the labor of this achievement, and well near surpassing nature itself, and this is well known to such as have had these crowns vouchsafed to them. For no language can set it before us: so noble a soul does the deed belong to and so exceedingly wonderful is it.

9. But nevertheless, this so wonderful thing Paul said was of no great profit without love, even though it have the giving up of one's goods joined with it. Wherefore then has he thus spoken? This will I now endeavor to explain, first having enquired of this, How is it possible that one who gives all his goods to feed the poor can be wanting in love? I grant, indeed, he that is ready to be burned and has the gifts, may perhaps possibly not have love: but he who not only gives his goods, but even distributes them in morsels; how has not he love? What then are we to say? Either that he supposed an unreal case as real; which kind of thing he is ever wont to do, when he intends to set before us something in excess; as when writing to the Galatians he says, *"If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that you receive let him be accursed."* [Galatians 1:8] And yet neither was himself nor an angel about to do so; but to signify that he meant to carry the matter as far as possible, he set down even that which could never by any means happen. And again, when he writes to the

Romans, and says, "*Neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers, shall be able to separate us from the love of God;*" for neither was this about to be done by any angels: but here too he supposes a thing which was not; as indeed also in what comes next, saying, "*nor any other creature,*" whereas there is no other creature, for he had comprehended the whole creation, having spoken of all things both above and below. Nevertheless here also he mentions that which was not, by way of hypothesis, so as to show his exceeding desire. Now the same thing he does here also, saying, "*If a man give all, and have not love, it profits him nothing.*"

Either then we may say this, or that his meaning is for those who give to be also joined closely to those who retire, and not merely to give without sympathy, but in pity and condescension, bowing down and grieving with the needy. For therefore also has almsgiving been enacted by God: since God might have nourished the poor as well without this, but that he might bind us together unto charity and that we might be thoroughly fervent toward each other, he commanded them to be nourished by us. Therefore one says in another place also; "*a good word is better than a gift;*" [Sirach 18:16-17] and, "*behold, a word is beyond a good gift.*" [Sirach 18:16-17] And He Himself says, "*I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.*" [Matthew 9:30; Hosea 6:6] For since it is usual, both for men to love those who are benefited by them, and for those who receive benefits to be more kindly affected towards their benefactors; he made this law, constituting it a bond of friendship.

10. But the point proposed for enquiry above is, How, after Christ had said that both these belong to perfection, Paul affirms, that these without charity are imperfect? Not contradicting Him, God forbid: but harmonizing with Him, and that exactly. For so in the case of the rich man, He said, not merely, "*sell your goods, and give to the poor,*" but He added, "*and come,*

follow Me." Now not even the following Him proves any man a disciple of Christ so completely as the loving one another. For, *"by this shall all men know,"* says He, *"that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another."* [John 13:35] And also when He says, *"Whosoever loses his life for My sake, shall find it;"* [Matthew 10:39] and, *"whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven;"* He means not this, that it is not necessary to have love, but He declares the reward which is laid up for these labors. Since that along with martyrdom He requires also this, is what He elsewhere strongly intimates, thus saying, *"You shall indeed drink of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with;"* [Matthew 20:23] i.e., you shall be martyrs, you shall be slain for My sake; but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, (not as though any sit on the right hand and the left, but meaning the highest precedency and honor) *"is not Mine to give,"* says He, *"but to those for whom it is prepared."* Then signifying for whom it is prepared, He calls them and says, *"whosoever among you will be chief, let him be servant to you all;"* [Matthew 20:26] setting forth humility and love. And the love which He requires is intense; wherefore He stopped not even at this, but added, *"even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many;"* pointing out that we ought so to love as even to be slain for our beloved. For this above all is to love Him. Wherefore also He says to Peter, *"If you love Me, feed My sheep."* [John 21:16]

11. And that you may learn how great a work of virtue it is, let us sketch it out in word, since in deeds we see it no where appearing; and let us consider, if it were every where in abundance, how great benefits would ensue: how there were no need then of laws, or tribunals or punishments, or avenging, or any other such things since if all loved and were beloved, no

man would injure another. Yea, murders, and strifes, and wars, and divisions, and rapines, and frauds, and all evils would be removed, and vice be unknown even in name. Miracles, however, would not have effected this; they rather puff up such as are not on their guard, unto vain-glory and folly.

Again: what is indeed the marvellous part of love; all the other good things have their evils yoked with them: as he that gives up his possessions is oftentimes puffed up on this account: the eloquent is affected with a wild passion for glory; the humble-minded, on this very ground, not seldom thinks highly of himself in his conscience. But love is free from every such mischief. For none could ever be lifted up against the person whom he loves. And do not, I pray, suppose one person only loving but all alike; and then will you see its virtue. Or rather, if you will, first suppose one single person beloved, and one loving; loving, however, as it is meet to love. Why, he will so live on earth as if it were heaven, every where enjoying a calm and weaving for himself innumerable crowns. For both from envy, and wrath, and jealousy, and pride, and vain-glory, and evil concupiscence, and every profane love, and every distemper, such a man will keep his own soul pure. Yea, even as no one would do himself an injury so neither would this man his neighbors. And being such, he shall stand with Gabriel himself, even while he walks on earth.

Such then is he that has love. But he that works miracles and has perfect knowledge, without this, though he raises ten thousand from the dead, will not be much profited, broken off as he is from all and not enduring to mix himself up with any of his fellow-servants. For no other cause than this did Christ say that the sign of perfect love towards Him is the loving one's neighbors. For, *"if you love Me,"* says He, *"O Peter, more than these, feed My sheep."* [John 21:15] Do you see how hence also He again covertly intimates, in what case this is greater than martyrdom? For if

any one had a beloved child in whose behalf he would even give up his life, and some one were to love the father, but pay no regard whatever to the son, he would greatly incense the father; nor would he feel the love for himself, because of the overlooking his son. Now if this ensue in the case of father and son, much more in the case of God and men: since surely God is more loving than any parents.

Wherefore, having said, "*The first and great commandment is, You shall love the Lord your God,*" he added, "*and the second— (He leaves it not in silence, but sets it down also)— is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" And see how with nearly the same excellency He demands also this. For as concerning God, He says, "*with all your heart:*" so concerning your neighbor, "*as yourself,*" which is tantamount to, "*with all your heart.*"

Yea, and if this were duly observed, there would be neither slave nor free, neither ruler nor ruled, neither rich nor poor, neither small nor great; nor would any devil then ever have been known: I say not, Satan only, but whatever other such spirit there be, nay, rather were there a hundred or ten thousand such, they would have no power, while love existed. For sooner would grass endure the application of fire than the devil the flame of love. She is stronger than any wall, she is firmer than any adamant; or if you can name any material stronger than this the firmness of love transcends them all. Her, neither wealth nor poverty overcomes: nay, rather there would be no poverty, no unbounded wealth, if there were love, but the good parts only from each estate. For from the one we should reap its abundance, and from the other its freedom from care: and should neither have to undergo the anxieties of riches, nor the dread of poverty.

12. And why do I mention the advantages arising from it? Yea, rather consider how great a blessing it is of itself to exercise love; what

cheerfulness it produces, in how great grace it establishes the soul; a thing which above all is a choice quality of it. For the other parts of virtue have each their troubles yoked with them; as fasting, temperance, watching, have envy, concupiscence, and contempt. But love along with the gain has great pleasure, too, and no trouble, and like an industrious bee, gathering the sweets from every flower, deposits them in the soul of him who loves. Though any one be a slave, it renders slavery sweeter than liberty. For he who loves rejoices not so much in commanding, as in being commanded, although to command is sweet: but love changes the nature of things and presents herself with all blessings in her hands, gentler than any mother, wealthier than any queen, and makes difficulties light and easy, causing our virtues to be facile, but vice very bitter to us. As thus: to expend seems grievous, yet love makes it pleasant: to receive other men's goods, pleasant, but love suffers it not to appear pleasant, but frames our minds to avoid it as an evil. Again, to speak evil seems to be pleasant to all; but love, while she makes this out to be bitter, causes speaking well to be pleasant; for nothing is so sweet to us as to be praising one whom we love. Again, anger has a kind of pleasure; but in this case no longer, rather all its sinews are taken away. Though he that is beloved should grieve him who loves him, anger nowhere shows itself; but tears and exhortations, and supplications; so far is love from being exasperated: and should she behold one in error, she mourns and is in pain; yet even this pain itself brings pleasure. For the very tears and the grief of love, are sweeter than any mirth and joy. For instance: they that laugh are not so refreshed as they that weep for their friends. And if you doubt it, stop their tears; and they repine at it not otherwise than as persons intolerably ill-used. *"But there is,"* said one, *"an unbecoming pleasure in love."* Go away, and hold your peace, whoever you are. For nothing is so pure from such pleasure as genuine love.

For tell me not of this ordinary sort, the vulgar and low-minded, and a disease rather than love, but of this which Paul seeks after, which considers the profit of them that are loved; and you shall see that no fathers are so affectionate as persons of this stamp. And even as they who love money cannot endure to spend money, but would with more pleasure be in straits than see their wealth diminishing: so too, he that is kindly affected towards any one, would choose to suffer ten thousand evils than see his beloved one injured.

13. *"How then,"* says one, *"did the Egyptian woman who loved Joseph wish to injure him?"* Because she loved with this diabolical love. Joseph however not with this, but with that which Paul requires. Consider then how great a love his words were tokens of, and the action which she was speaking of. *"Insult me and make me an adulteress, and wrong my husband, and overthrow all my house, and cast yourself out from your confidence towards God:"* which were expressions of one who so far from loving him did not even love herself. But because he truly loved, he sought to avert her from all these. And to convince you that it was in anxiety for her, learn the nature of it from his advice. For he not only thrust her away, but also introduced an exhortation capable of quenching every flame: namely *"if on my account, my master,"* says he, *"knows not any thing which is in his house."* He at once reminds her of her husband that he might put her to shame. And he said not, *"your husband,"* but *"my master,"* which was more apt to restrain her and induce her to consider who she was, and of whom she was enamored—a mistress, of a slave. *"For if he be lord, then are you mistress. Be ashamed then of familiarity with a servant, and consider whose wife you are, and with whom you would be connected, and towards whom you are becoming thankless and inconsiderate, and that I repay him greater good-will."* And see how he extols his benefits. For since that barbarous and

abandoned woman could entertain no lofty sentiment, he shames her from human considerations, saying, *"He knows nothing through me,"* i.e., *"he is a great benefactor to me, and I cannot strike my patron in a vital part. He has made me a second lord of his house, and no one has been kept back from me, but you."* Here he endeavors to raise her mind, that so at any rate he might persuade her to be ashamed, and might signify the greatness of her honor. Nor did he stop even here, but likewise added a name sufficient to restrain her, saying, *"Because you are his wife; and how shall I do this wickedness? But what do you say? That your husband is not present, nor knows that he is wronged? But God will behold it."* She however profited nothing by his advice, but still sought to attract him. For desiring to satiate her own frenzy, not through love of Joseph, she did these things; and this is evident from what she did afterwards. As that she institutes a trial, and brings in accusation, and bears false witness, and exposes to a wild beast him that had done no wrong, and casts him into a prison; or rather for her part, she even slew him, in such a manner did she arm the judge against him. What then? Was then Joseph too such as she was? Nay, altogether the contrary, for he neither contradicted nor accused the woman. *"Yes,"* it may be said: *"for he would have been disbelieved."* And yet he was greatly beloved; and this is evident not only from the beginning but also from the end. For had not his barbarian master loved him greatly, he would even have slain him in his silence, making no defence: being as he was an Egyptian and a ruler, and wronged in his marriage-bed as he supposed, and by a servant, and a servant to whom he had been so great a benefactor. But all these things gave way to his regard for him, and the grace which God poured down upon him. And together with this grace and love, he had also other no small proofs, had he been minded to justify himself; the garments themselves. For if it were she to whom violence was done, her own vest

should have been torn, her face lacerated, instead of her retaining his garments. But *"he heard,"* says she, *"that I lifted up my voice, and left his garments, and went out."* And wherefore then did you take them from him? Since unto one suffering violence, the one thing desirable is to be rid of the intruder.

But not from hence alone, but also from the subsequent events, shall I be able to point out his good-will and his love. Yea even when he fell into a necessity of mentioning the cause of his imprisonment, and his remaining there, he did not even then declare the whole course of the story. But what says he? *"I too have done nothing: but indeed I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews;"* and he no where mentioned the adulteress nor does he plume himself on the matter, which would have been any one's feeling, if not for vain-glory, yet so as not to appear to have been cast into that cell for an evil cause. For if men in the act of doing wrong by no means abstain even so from blaming the same things, although to do so brings reproach; of what admiration is not he worthy, because, pure as he was he did not mention the woman's passion nor make a show of her sin; nor when he ascended the throne and became ruler of all Egypt, remember the wrong done by the woman nor exact any punishment?

Do you see how he cared for her? But her's was not love, but madness. For it was not Joseph that she loved, but she sought to fulfil her own lust. And the very words too, if one would examine them accurately, were accompanied with wrath and great blood-thirstiness. For what says she? *"You have brought in a Hebrew servant to mock us:"* upbraiding her husband for the kindness; and she exhibited the garments, having become herself more savage than any wild beast: but not so he. And why speak I of his good-will to her, when he was such, we know, towards his brethren who

would slay him; and never said one harsh thing of them, either within doors or without?

14. Therefore Paul says, that the love which we are speaking of is the mother of all good things, and prefers it to miracles and all other gifts. For as where there are vests and sandals of gold, we require also some other garments whereby to distinguish the king: but if we see the purple and the diadem, we require not to see any other sign of his royalty: just so here likewise, when the diadem of love is upon our head, it is enough to point out the genuine disciple of Christ, not to ourselves only, but also to the unbelievers. For, *"by this,"* says He, *"shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another."* [John 13:35] So that this sign is greater surely than all signs, in that the disciple is recognised by it. For though any should work ten thousand signs, but be at strife one with another, they will be a scorn to the unbelievers. Just as if they do no sign, but love one another exactly, they will continue both revered and inviolable by all men. Since Paul himself we admire on this account, not for the dead whom he raised, nor for the lepers whom he cleansed, but because he said, *"who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?"* [2 Corinthians 11:29] For should you have ten thousand miracles to compare with this, you will have nothing equal to it to say. Since Paul also himself said, that a great reward was laid up for him, not because he wrought miracles, but because *"to the weak he became as weak. For what is my reward?"* says he. *"That, when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel without charge."* [1 Corinthians 9:18] And when he puts himself before the Apostles, he says not, *"I have wrought miracles more abundant than they,"* but, *"I have labored more abundantly than they."* [1 Corinthians 15:10] And even by famine was he willing to perish for the salvation of the disciples. *"For it were better for me to die,"* says he, *"than*

that any man should make my glorying void:" [1 Corinthians 9:15] not because he was glorying, but that he might not seem to reproach them. For he no where is wont to glory in his own achievements, when the season does not call to it; but even if he be compelled so to do he calls himself "*a fool.*" But if he ever glory it is "*in infirmities,*" in wrongs, in greatly sympathizing with those who are injured: even as here also he says, "*who is weak, and I am not weak?*" These words are greater even than perils. Wherefore also he sets them last, amplifying his discourse.

Of what then must we be worthy compared with him, who neither condemn wealth for our own sake, nor give up the superfluities of our goods? But not so Paul; rather both soul and body did he use to give up, that they who stoned and beat him with rods, might obtain the kingdom. "*For thus,*" says he, "*has Christ taught me to love;*" who left behind Him the new commandment concerning love, which also Himself fulfilled in deed. For being Lord of all, and of that Blessed Nature; from men, whom He created out of nothing and on whom He had bestowed innumerable benefits, from these, insulting and spitting on Him, He turned not away, but even became man for their sakes, and conversed with harlots and publicans, and healed the demoniacs, and promised heaven. And after all these things they apprehended and beat him with rods, bound, scourged, mocked, and at last crucified Him. And not even so did He turn away, but even when He was on high upon the cross, He says, "*Father, forgive them their sin.*" But the thief who before this reviled Him, He translated into very paradise; and made the persecutor Paul, an Apostle; and gave up His own disciples, who were His intimates and wholly devoted to Him, unto death for the Jews' sake who crucified Him.

Recollecting therefore in our minds all these things, both those of God and of men, let us emulate these high deeds, and possess ourselves of the

love which is above all gifts, that we may obtain both the present and the future blessings: the which may we all obtain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 33 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up.

Thus, whereas he had showed, that both faith and knowledge and prophecy and tongues and gifts and healing and a perfect life and martyrdom, if love be absent, are no great advantage; of necessity he next makes an outline of its matchless beauty, adorning its image with the parts of virtue as with a sort of colors, and putting together all its members with exactness. But do not thou hastily pass by, beloved, the things spoken, but examine each one of them with much care, that you may know both the treasure which is in the thing and the art of the painter. Consider, for example, from what point he at once began, and what he set first, as the cause of all its excellence. And what is this? Long-suffering. This is the root of all self-denial. Wherefore also a certain wise man said, *"A man that is long-suffering is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit is mightily foolish."*

And comparing it too with a strong city, he said that it is more secure than that. For it is both an invincible weapon and a sort of impregnable tower, easily beating off all annoyances. And as a spark falling into the deep does it no injury, but is itself easily quenched: so upon a long-suffering soul whatever unexpected thing falls, this indeed speedily vanishes, but the soul it disturbs not: for of a truth there is nothing so impenetrable as long-suffering. You may talk of armies, money, horses, walls, arms, or any thing else whatsoever; you will name nothing like long-suffering. For he that is

encompassed with those, oftentimes, being overcome by anger, is upset like a worthless child, and fills all with confusion and tempest: but this man, settled as it were in a harbor, enjoys a profound calm. Though thou surround him with loss, you have not moved the rock; though thou bring insult upon him, you have not shaken the tower: and though thou bruise him with stripes, you have not wounded the adamant.

Yea, and therefore is he called long-suffering, because he has a kind of long and great soul. For that which is long is also called great. But this excellence is born of love, both to them who possess and to them who enjoy it contributing no small advantage. For tell me not of those abandoned wretches, who, doing evil and suffering none, become worse: since here, not from his long-suffering, but from those who abuse it, this result arises. Tell me not therefore of these, but of those gentler persons, who gain great benefit therefrom. For when, having done ill, they suffer none, admiring the meekness of the sufferer, they reap thereby a very great lesson of self command.

But Paul does not stop here, but adds also the other high achievements of love, saying, "*is kind*." For since there are some who practise their long-suffering with a view not to their own self-denial, but to the punishment of those who have provoked them, to make them burst with wrath; he says that neither has charity this defect. Wherefore also he added, "*is kind*." For not at all with a view to light up the fire, in those who are inflamed by anger, do they deal more gently with them, but in order to appease and extinguish it: and not only by enduring nobly, but also by soothing and comforting, do they cure the sore and heal the wound of passion.

"*Envies not*." For it is possible for one to be both long-suffering and envious, and thereby that excellency is spoiled. But love avoids this also.

"Vaunts not itself;" i.e., is not rash. For it renders him who loves both considerate, and grave, and steadfast. In truth, one mark of those who love unlawfully is a defect in this point. Whereas he to whom this love is known, is of all men the most entirely freed from these evils. For when there is no anger within, both rashness and insolence are clean taken away. Love, like some excellent husbandman, taking her seat inwardly in the soul and not suffering any of these thorns to spring up.

"Is not puffed up." For so we see many who think highly of themselves on the score of these very excellencies; for example, on not being envious, nor grudging, nor mean-spirited, nor rash: these evils being incidental not to wealth and poverty only, but even to things naturally good. But love perfectly purges out all. And consider: he that is long-suffering is not of course also kind. But if he be not kind, the thing becomes a vice, and he is in danger of falling into malice. Therefore she supplies a medicine, I mean kindness, and preserves the virtue pure. Again, the kind person often becomes over-complaisant; but this also she corrects. For *"love,"* says he, *"vaunts not itself, is not puffed up:"* the kind and long-suffering is often ostentatious; but she takes away this vice also.

And see how he adorns her not only from what she has, but also from what she has not. For he says that she both brings in virtue, and extirpates vice, nay rather she suffers it not to spring up at all. Thus he said not, *"She envies, indeed, but overcomes envy;"* nor, *"is arrogant, but chastises that passion;"* but, *"envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up;"* which truly is most to be admired, that even without toil she accomplishes her good things, and without war and battle-array her trophy is set up: she not permitting him that possesses her to toil and so to attain the crown, but without labor conveying to him her prize. For where there is not passion to contend against sober reason, what labor can there be?

2. *"Does not behave itself unseemly."* "Nay, why," says he, *"do I say, she 'is not puffed up,' when she is so far from that feeling, that in suffering the most shameful things for him whom she loves, she does not even count the thing an unseemliness?"* Again, he did not say, *"she suffers unseemliness but bears the shame nobly,"* but, *"she does not even entertain any sense at all of the shame."* For if the lovers of money endure all manner of reproaches for the sake of that sordid traffic of theirs, and far from hiding their faces, do even exult in it: much more he that has this praiseworthy love will refuse nothing whatsoever for the safety's sake of those whom he loves: nay, nor will any thing that he can suffer shame him.

And that we may not fetch our example from any thing base, let us examine this same statement in its application to Christ, and then we shall see the force of what has been said. For our Lord Jesus Christ was both spit upon and beaten with rods by pitiful slaves; and not only did He not count it an unseemliness, but He even exulted and called the thing glory; and bringing in a robber and murderer with Himself before the rest into paradise, and discoursing with a harlot, and this when the standers-by all accused Him, He counted not the thing to be disgraceful, but both allowed her to kiss His feet, and to bedew His body with her tears, and to wipe them away with her hair, and this amid a company of spectators who were foes and enemies; *"for love does nothing unseemly."*

Therefore also fathers, though they be the first of philosophers and orators, are not ashamed to lisp with their children; and none of those who see them find fault with them, but the thing is esteemed so good and right as to be even worthy of prayer. And again, should they become vicious, the parents keep on correcting, caring for them, abridging the reproaches they incur, and are not ashamed. For love *"does nothing unseemly,"* but as it were with certain golden wings covers up all the offenses of the beloved.

Thus also Jonathan loved David; and hearing his father say, [1 Samuel 20:30] *"Thou son of damsels that have run away from their homes, thou womanly bred,"* he was not ashamed, though the words be full of great reproach. For what he means is this: *"Thou son of mean harlots who are mad after men, who run after the passers-by, thou unnerved and effeminate wretch, who hast nothing of a man, but livest to the shame of yourself and the mother who bare you."* What then? Did he grieve at these things, and hide his face, and turn away from his beloved? Nay, quite the contrary; he displayed his fondness as an ornament. And yet the one was at that time a king, and a king's son, even Jonathan; the other a fugitive and a wanderer, I mean, David. But not even thus was he ashamed of his friendship. For love does not behave itself unseemly. Yea, this is its wonderful quality that not only it suffers not the injured to grieve and feel galled, but even disposes him to rejoice. Accordingly, he too, of whom we are speaking, after all these things, just as though he had a crown put on him, went away and fell on David's neck. For love knows not what sort of thing shame may be. Therefore it glories in those things for which another hides his face. Since the shame is, not to know how to love; not, when you love, to incur danger and endure all for the beloved.

But when I say, *"all,"* do not suppose I mean things injurious also; for example, assisting a youth in a love affair, or whatsoever hurtful thing any one may beseech another to do for him. For such a person does not love, and this I showed you lately from the Egyptian woman: since in truth he only is the lover who seeks what is profitable to the beloved: so that if any pursue not this, even what is right and good, though he make ten thousand professions of love, he is more hostile than any enemies.

So also Rebecca aforetime, because she exceedingly clung to her son, both perpetrated a theft, and was not ashamed of detection, neither was she

afraid, though the risk was no common one; but even when her son raised scruples to her, "*upon me be your curse, my son,*" she said. Do you see even in a woman the soul of the Apostle how, even as Paul chose, (if one may compare a small thing with a great,) to be anathema for the Jews' sake, [Romans 9:3] so also she, that her son might be blessed, chose to be no less than accursed. And the good things she gave up to him, for she was not, it seems, to be blessed with him, but the evils she was prepared to endure herself alone: nevertheless, she rejoiced, and hastened, and this where so great a danger lay before her, and she was grieved at the delay of the business: for she feared lest Esau might anticipate them and render her wisdom vain. Wherefore also she cuts short the conversation and urges on the young man, and just permitting him to answer what had been said, states a reason sufficient to persuade him. For she said not, "*you say these things without reason, and in vain you fear, your father having grown old and being deprived of clearness of sight:*" but what? "*upon me be your curse, my son. Only do thou not mar the plot, nor lose the object of our chase, nor give up the treasure.*"

And this very Jacob, served he not for wages with his kinsmen twice seven years? Was he not together with the bondage subject to mockery in respect of that trick? What then? Did he feel the mockery? Did he count it behaving himself unseemly, that being a freeman, and free born, and well brought up, he endured slaves' treatment among his own kinsmen: a thing which is wont to be most vexing, when one receives opprobrious treatment from one's friends? In no wise. And the cause was his love, which made the time, though long, appear short. "*For they were,*" says he, [Genesis 29:20] "*in his sight as a few days.*" So far was he from being galled and blushing for this his bondage. Justly then said the blessed Paul, "*Love does not behave itself unseemly.*"

3. 1. *"Seeks not its own, is not provoked."*

Thus having said, *"does not behave itself unseemly,"* he shows also the temper of mind, on account of which she does not behave herself unseemly. And what is that temper? That she *"seeks not her own."* For the beloved she esteems to be all, and then only *"behaves herself unseemly,"* when she cannot free him from such unseemliness; so that if it be possible by her own unseemliness to benefit her beloved, she does not so much as count the thing unseemliness; for the other party thereafter is yourself, when you love : since this is friendship, that the lover and the beloved should no longer be two persons divided, but in a manner one single person; a thing which no how takes place except from love. Seek not therefore your own, that you may find your own. For he that seeks his own, finds not his own. Wherefore also Paul said, *"Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good."* [1 Corinthians 10:24] For your own profit lies in the profit of your neighbor, and his in yours. As therefore one that had his own gold buried in the house of his neighbor, should he refuse to go and there seek and dig it up, will never seek it; so likewise here, he that will not seek his own profit in the advantage of his neighbor, will not attain unto the crowns due to this: God Himself having therefore so disposed of it, in order that we should be mutually bound together: and even as one awakening a slumbering child to follow his brother, when he is of himself unwilling, places in the brother's hand that which he desires and longs for, that through desire of obtaining it he may pursue after him that holds it, and accordingly so it takes place: thus also here, each man's own profit has he given to his neighbor, that hence we may run after one another, and not be torn asunder.

And if you will, see this also in our case who address you. For my profit depends on you, and your advantage on me. Thus, on the one hand it profits you to be taught the things that please God, but with this have I been

entrusted, that you might receive it from me, and therefore might be compelled to run unto me; and on the other hand it profits me that you should be made better: for the reward which I shall receive for this will be great; but this again lies in you; and therefore am I compelled to follow after you that you may be better, and that I may receive my profit from you. Wherefore also Paul says, *"For what is my hope? Are not even ye?"* And again, *"My hope, and my joy, and the crown of my rejoicing."* [1 Thessalonians 2:19] So that the joy of Paul was the disciples, and his joy they had. Therefore he even wept when he saw them perishing.

Again their profit depended on Paul: wherefore he said, For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. [Acts 28:20] And again, These things I endure for the elect's sakes that they may obtain eternal life. [2 Timothy 2:10] And this one may see in worldly things. *"For the wife,"* says he, *"has not power over her own body, nor yet the husband; but the wife over the husband's, and the husband over the wife's."* [1 Corinthians 7:4] So likewise we, when we wish to bind any together, do this. We leave neither of them in his own power, but extending a chain between them, we cause the one to be holden of the other, and the other of the one. Will you also see this in the case of governors? He that judges sits not in judgment for himself, but seeking the profit of his neighbor. The governed on the other hand, seek the profit of the governor by their attendance, by their ministry, by all the other things. Soldiers take up their arms for us, for on our account they peril themselves. We for them are in straits; for from us are their supplies.

But if you say, *"each one does this seeking his own,"* this also say I, but I add, that by the good of another one's own is won. Thus both the soldier, unless he fight for them that support him, has none that ministers to

him for this end: and this same on the other hand, unless he nourish the soldier, has none to arm himself in his behalf.

4. Do you see love, how it is everywhere extended and manages all things? But be not weary, until thou have thoroughly acquainted yourself with this golden chain. For having said, "*seeks not her own*," he mentions again the good things produced by this. And what are these?

"Is not easily provoked, thinks no evil." See love again not only subduing vice, but not even suffering it to arise at all. For he said not, "*though provoked, she overcomes*," but, "*is not provoked*." And he said not, "*works no evil*," but, "*not even thinks*;" i.e., so far from contriving any evil, she does not even suspect it of the beloved. How then could she work any, or how be provoked? Who does not even endure to admit an evil surmise; whence is the fountain of wrath.

1 Corinthians 13:6-7

"Rejoices not in unrighteousness:" i.e., does not feel pleasure over those that suffer ill: and not this only, but also, what is much greater, *"rejoices with the truth."* *"She feels pleasure,"* says he, *"with them that are well spoken of,"* as Paul says, *"Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep."* [Romans 12:15]

Hence, she *"envies not,"* hence she *"is not puffed up:"* since in fact she accounts the good things of others her own.

Do you see how by degrees love makes her nursling an angel? For when he is void of anger, and pure from envy, and free from every tyrannical passion, consider that even from the nature of man he is delivered from henceforth, and has arrived at the very serenity of angels.

Nevertheless, he is not content with these, but has something even more than these to say: according to his plan of stating the stronger points later. Wherefore he says, *"bears all things."* From her long-suffering, from her goodness; whether they be burdensome, or grievous, or insults, or stripes, or death, or whatsoever else. And this again one may perceive from the case of blessed David. For what could be more intolerable than to see a son rising up against him, and aiming at the usurpation, and thirsting for a father's blood? Yet this did that blessed one endure, nor even so could he bear to throw out one bitter expression against the parricide; but even when he left all the rest to his captains, gave a strong injunction respecting his safety. For strong was the foundation of his love. Wherefore also it *"bears all things."*

Now its power the Apostle here intimates, but its goodness, by what follows. For, *"it hopes all things,"* says he, *"believes all things, endures all*

things." What is, *"hopes all things?"* It does not despair, says he, *"of the beloved, but even though he be worthless, it continues to correct, to provide, to care for him."*

"Believes all things." *"For it does not merely hope,"* says he, *"but also believes from its great affection."* And even if these good things should not turn out according to its hope, but the other person should prove yet more intolerable, it bears even these. For, says he, it *"endures all things."*

1 Corinthians 13:8

5. *"Love never fails."*

Do you see when he put the crown on the arch, and what of all things is peculiar to this gift? For what is, *"fails not?"* it is not severed, is not dissolved by endurance. For it puts up with everything: since happen what will, he that loves never can hate. This then is the greatest of its excellencies.

Such a person was Paul. Wherefore also he said, *"If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh;"* [Romans 11:14] and he continued hoping. And to Timothy he gave a charge, saying, *"And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all....in meekness correcting those that oppose themselves, if God perhaps may give them the knowledge of the truth."* [2 Timothy 2:24-25]

"What then," says one, *"if they be enemies and heathens, must one hate them?"* One must hate, not them but their doctrine: not the man, but the wicked conduct, the corrupt mind. For the man is God's work, but the deceit is the devil's work. Do thou not therefore confound the things of God and the things of the devil. Since the Jews were both blasphemers, and persecutors, and injurious, and spoke ten thousand evil things of Christ. Did Paul then hate them, he who of all men most loved Christ? In no wise, but he both loved them, and did everything for their sakes: and at one time he says, *"My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them that they may be saved:"* [Romans 10:1; 9:3] and at another, *"I could wish that myself were anathema from Christ for their sakes."* Thus also Ezekiel seeing them slain says, *"Alas, O Lord, dost Thou blot out the remnant of Israel?"*

[Ezekiel 9:8] And Moses, *"If You will forgive their sin, forgive."* [Exodus 32:32]

Why then says David, *"Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate You, and against Your enemies did I not pine away? I hate them with perfect hatred."* [Psalm 139:21-22]

Now, in the first place, not all things spoken in the Psalms by David, are spoken in the person of David. For it is he himself who says, *"I have dwelt in the tents of Kedar;"* [Psalm 120:5] and, *"By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept:"* [Psalm 137:1] yet he neither saw Babylon, nor the tents of Kedar.

But besides this, we require now a completer self-command. Wherefore also when the disciples besought that fire might come down, even as in the case of Elias, *"You know not,"* says Christ, what manner of spirit you are of. [Luke 9:55] For at that time not the ungodliness only, but also the ungodly themselves, they were commanded to hate, in order that their friendship might not prove an occasion of transgression unto them. Therefore he severed their connections, both by blood and marriage, and on every side he fenced them off.

But now because he has brought us to a more entire self-command and set us on high above that mischief, he bids us rather admit and soothe them. For we get no harm from them, but they get good by us. What then does he say? We must not hate, but pity. Since if you shall hate, how will you easily convert him that is in error? How will you pray for the unbeliever? For that one ought to pray, hear what Paul says: *"I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayer, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men."* [1 Timothy 2:1] But that all were not then believers, is, I suppose, evident unto every one. And again, *"for kings and all that are in high place."* But that these were ungodly and transgressors, this also is equally manifest. Further,

mentioning also the reason for the prayer, he adds, *"for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."* Therefore, if he find a Gentile wife consorting with a believer, he dissolves not the marriage. Yet what is more closely joined than a man to his wife? *"For they two shall be one flesh,"* [Genesis 2:24] and great in that instance is the charm, and ardent the desire. But if we are to hate ungodly and lawless men, we shall go on to hate also sinners; and thus in regular process you will be broken off from the most even of your brethren, or rather from all: for there is not one, no, not one, without sin. For if it be our duty to hate the enemies of God, one must not hate the ungodly only, but also sinners: and thus we shall be worse than wild beasts, shunning all, and puffed up with pride; even as that Pharisee. But not thus did Paul command us, but how? *"Admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward all."* [1 Thessalonians 5:14]

6. What then does he mean when he says, *"If any obeys not our word by this epistle, note that man, that you have no company with him?"* [2 Thessalonians 3:14] In the first place, he says this of brethren, however not even so without limitation, but this too with gentleness. For do not thou cut off what follows, but subjoin also the next clause: how, having said, *"keep no company,"* he added, *"yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."* Do you see how he bade us hate the deed that is evil, and not the man? For indeed it is the work of the devil to tear us asunder from one another, and he has ever used great diligence to take away love that he may cut off the way of correction, and may retain him in error and you in enmity, and thus block up the way of his salvation. For when both the physician hates the sick man and flies from him, and the sick man turns away from the physician, when will the distempered person be restored,

seeing that neither the one will call in the other's aid, nor will the other go to him?

But wherefore, tell me, do you at all turn away from him and avoid him? Because he is ungodly? Truly for this cause ought thou to welcome and attend him, that you may raise him up in his sickness. But if he be incurably sick, still you have been bidden to do your part. Since Judas also was incurably diseased, yet God left not off attending upon him. Wherefore, neither do thou grow weary. For even if after much labor thou fail to deliver him from his ungodliness, yet shall you receive the deliverer's reward, and wilt cause him to wonder at your gentleness, and so all this praise will pass on to God. For though you should work wonders, and raise the dead, and whatsoever work you do, the Heathen will never wonder at you so much, as when they see you displaying a meek, gentle, mild disposition. And this is no small achievement: since many will even be entirely delivered from their evil way; there being nothing that has such power to allure men as love. For in respect of the former they will rather be jealous of you, I mean the signs and wonders; but for this they will both admire and love you: and if they love, they will also lay hold of the truth in due course. If however he become not all at once a believer, wonder not nor hurry on, neither do thou require all things at once, but suffer him for the present to praise, and love, and unto this in due course he will come.

7. And that you may clearly know how great a thing this is, hear how even Paul, going before an unbelieving judge, made his defence. *"I think myself happy,"* says he, *"That I am to make my defence before you."* [Acts 26:2] And these things he said, not to flatter him, far from it; but wishing to gain him by his gentleness. And he did in part gain him, and he that was till then considered to be condemned took captive his judge, and the victory is confessed by the person himself who was made captive, with a loud voice

in the presence of all, saying, *"With but little persuasion you would fain make me a Christian."* [Acts 26:28-29] What then says Paul? He spread his net the wider, and says, *"I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds."* What do you say, O Paul? *"except these bonds?"* And what confidence remains for you, if you are ashamed of these things, and fliest from them, and this before so great a multitude? Do you not every where in your Epistles boast of this matter, and call yourself a prisoner? Do you not every where carry about this chain in our sight as a diadem? What then has happened now that you deprecate these bonds? *"I myself deprecate them not,"* says he, *"nor am I ashamed of them, but I condescend to their weakness. For they are not yet able to receive my glorying; and I have learned from my Lord not to put 'a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment:' [Matthew 9:16] therefore did I thus speak. For, in fact, unto this time they have heard ill reports of our doctrine, and abhor the cross. If therefore I should add also bonds, their hatred becomes greater; I removed these, therefore, that the other might be made acceptable. So it is, that to them it seems disgraceful to be bound, because they have not as yet tasted of the Glory which is with us. One must therefore condescend: and when they shall have learned of the true life, then will they know the beauty also of this iron, and the lustre which comes of these bonds."* Furthermore, discoursing with others, he even calls the thing a free gift, saying, *"It has been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in His behalf."* [Philippians 1:29] But for the time then present, it was a great thing for the hearers not to be ashamed of the cross: for which cause he goes on gradually. Thus, neither does any one introducing a person to a palace, before that he beholds the vestibule, compel him, yet standing without, to

survey what is within: since in that way it will not even seem admirable, unless one enter in and so acquaint one's self with all.

So then let us also deal with the heathen sort: with condescension, with love. For love is a great teacher, and able both to withdraw men from error, and to reform the character, and to lead them by the hand unto self-denial, and out of stones to make men.

8. And if you would learn her power, bring me a man timid and fearful of every sound, and trembling at shadows; or passionate, and harsh, and a wild beast rather than a man; or wanton and licentious; or wholly given to wickedness; and deliver him into the hands of love, and introduce him into this school; and you will speedily see that cowardly and timid creature made brave and magnanimous, and venturing upon all things cheerfully. And what is wonderful, not from any change in nature do these things result, but in the coward soul itself love manifests her peculiar power; and it is much the same as if one should cause a leaden sword, not turned into steel but continuing in the nature of lead, to do the work of steel. As thus: Jacob was a plain man, [Genesis 25:27] dwelling in a house, and unpracticed in toils and dangers, living a kind of remiss and easy life, and like a virgin in her chamber, so also he was compelled for the most part to sit within doors and keep the house; withdrawn from the forum and all tumults of the forum, and from all such matters, and even continuing in ease and quietness. What then? After that the torch of love had set him on fire, see how it made this plain and home-keeping man strong to endure and fond of toil. And of this hear not what I say, but what the patriarch himself says: how finding fault with his kinsman, his words are, *"These twenty years am I with you."* [Genesis 31:36] And how were thou these twenty years? (For this also he adds,) *"Consumed by the heat in the day time, and*

with the frost by night, and sleep departed from my eyes." Thus speaks that "plain man, keeping at home," and living that easy life.

Again, that he was timid is evident, in that, expecting to see Esau, he was dead with fear. But see again, how this timid man became bolder than a lion under the influence of love. For putting himself forward like some champion before the rest, he was ready to be first in receiving that savage and slaughter-breathing brother as he supposed him to be, and with his own body to purchase the safety of his wives: and him whom he feared and shuddered at, he desired to behold himself foremost in the array. For this fear was not so strong as his affection for his wives. Do you see how, being timid, he became suddenly adventurous, not by changing his character, but being invigorated by love? For that after this also he was timid, is evident by his changing from place to place.

But let no man consider what has been said to be a charge against that righteous man: since being timid is no reproach, for this is a man's nature; but the doing any thing unseemly for timidity's sake. For it is possible for one that is timid by nature to become courageous through piety. What did Moses? Did he not, through fear of a single Egyptian, fly, and go away into banishment? Nevertheless, this fugitive who could not endure the menace of a single man, after that he tasted of the honey of love, nobly and without compulsion from any man, was forward to perish together with them whom he loved. *"For if you will forgive their sin,"* says he, forgive; and if not, blot me, I pray you, out of Your book which you have written. [Exodus 32:32]

9. Moreover, that love makes also the fierce moderate, and the wanton chaste, we have no longer need of any examples: this being evident to all men. Though a man be more savage than any wild beast, no sheep so gentle as he is rendered by love. Thus, what could be more savage and frantic than Saul? But when his daughter let his enemy go, he uttered not against her

even a bitter word. And he that unsparingly put to the sword all the priests for David's sake, seeing that his daughter had sent him away from the house, was not indignant with her even as far as words; and this when so great a fraud had been contrived against him: because he was restrained by the stronger bridle of love.

Now as moderation, so chastity, is an ordinary effect of love. If a man love his own wife as he ought to love, even though he be never so much inclined to wantonness, he will not endure to look upon another woman, on account of his affection for her. "*For love,*" [Canticles 8:5] says one, "*is strong as death.*" So that from no other source does wanton behavior arise than from want of love.

Since then love is the Artificer of all virtue, let us with all exactness implant her in our own souls, that she may produce for us many blessings, and that we may have her fruit continually abounding, the fruit which is ever fresh and never decays. For thus shall we obtain no less than eternal blessings: which may we all obtain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, and also the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 34 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 13:8

But whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.

Having shown the excellency of love from its being requisite both to the spiritual gifts, and to the virtues of life; and from rehearsal of all its good qualities, and by showing it to be the foundation of exact self-denial; from another, a third head, again he points out its worth. And this he does, first from a wish to persuade those who seemed to be accounted inferior that it is in their power to have the chief of all signs, and that they will be no worse off than the possessors of the gifts, if they have this, but rather much better: secondly, with regard on the other hand to them that had the greater gifts and were lifted up thereby, studying to bring them down and to show that they have nothing unless they have this. For thus they would both love one another, envy as well as pride being hereby taken away; and reciprocally, loving one another, they would still further banish these passions. *"For love envies not, is not puffed up."* So that on every side he throws around them an impregnable wall, and a manifold unanimity, which first removes all their disorders, and thereby again waxes stronger.

Therefore also he put forward innumerable reasons which might comfort their dejection. As thus: both *"the same Spirit,"* says he, is the giver; and He *"gives to profit withal; and divides as he will,"* and it is a gift which He divides, not a debt. Though thou receive but a little, thou dost equally contribute to the body, and even thus you enjoy much honor. And he that

has the greater, needs you who hast the less. And, *"Love is the greatest gift, and 'the more excellent way.'"*

Now all this he said doubly to bind them to each other, both by their not considering themselves disparaged while they had this; and because, after pursuit and attainment of it, they henceforth would not feel human infirmity; both as having the root of all gifts, and as no longer capable of contentiousness even though they had nothing. For he that is once led captive by love is freed from contentiousness.

And this is why, pointing out to them how great advantages they shall thence reap, he sketched out its fruits; by his praises of it repressing their disorders: inasmuch as each one of the things mentioned by him was a sufficient medicine to heal their wounds. Wherefore also he said, *"suffers long,"* to them that are at strife one with another; *"is kind,"* to them that stand mutually aloof, and bear a secret grudge; *"envies not,"* to them that look grudgingly on their superiors; *"vaunts not itself,"* to them that are separated; *"is not puffed up,"* to them that boast themselves against others; *"does not behave itself unseemly,"* to them that do not think it their duty to condescend; *"seeks not her own,"* to them that overlook the rest; *"is not provoked, takes not account of evil,"* to them that are insolent; *"rejoices not in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth,"* to them again that are envious; *"bears all things,"* to them that are treacherous; *"hopes all things,"* to the despairing; *"endures all things, never fails,"* to them that easily separate themselves.

2. Now then after that in every way he had shown her to be very exceedingly great, again he does so from another most important head, by a fresh comparison exalting her dignity, and saying thus; *"but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease."* For if both these were brought in in order to the faith; when

that is every where sown abroad, the use of these is henceforth superfluous. But the loving one another shall not cease, rather it shall even advance further, both here and hereafter, and then more than now. For here there are many things that weaken our love; wealth, business, passions of the body, disorders of the soul; but there none of these.

But although it be no marvel that prophecies and tongues should be done away, that knowledge should be done away, this is what may cause some perplexity. For this also he added, "*Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.*" What then? Are we then to live in ignorance? Far from it. Nay, then specially it is probable that our knowledge is made intense. Wherefore also he said, "*Then shall I know, even as also I am known.*" For this reason, if you mark it, that you might not suppose this to be done away equally with the prophecy and the tongues, having said, "*Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away,*" he was not silent, but added also the manner of its vanishing away, immediately subjoining the saying,

1 Corinthians 13:9-10

"We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

It is not therefore knowledge that is done away, but the circumstance that our knowledge is in part. For we shall not only know as much but even a great deal more. But that I may also make it plain by example; now we know that God is every where, but how, we know not. That He made out of things that are not the things that are we know; but of the manner we are ignorant. That He was born of a virgin, we know; but how, we know not yet. But then shall we know somewhat more and clearer concerning these things. Next he points out also how great is the distance between the two, and that our deficiency is no small one, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:11

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; but now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things."

And by another example too he manifests the same thing again, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:12

"For now we see in a mirror." Further, because the glass sets before us the thing seen indefinitely, he added, *"darkly,"* to show very strongly that the present knowledge is most partial.

"But then face to face." Not as though God has a face, but to express the notion of greater clearness and perspicuity. Do you see how we learn all things by gradual addition?

"Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known." Do you see how in two ways he pulls down their pride? Both because their knowledge is in part, and because not even this have they of themselves. *"For I knew Him not, but He made Himself known to me,"* says he. Wherefore, even as now He first knew me, and Himself hastened towards me, so shall I hasten towards Him then much more than now. For so he that sits in darkness, as long as he sees not the sun does not of himself hasten to meet the beauty of its beam, which indeed shows itself as soon as it has begun to shine: but when he perceives its brightness, then also himself at length follows after its light: This then is the meaning of the expression, *"even as also I have been known."* Not that we shall so know him as He is, but that even as He hastened toward us now, so also shall we cleave unto Him then, and shall know many of the things which are now secret, and shall enjoy that most blessed society and wisdom. For if Paul who knew so much was a child, consider what those things must be. If these be *"a glass"* and *"a riddle,"* do thou hence again infer, God's open Face, how great a thing It is.

3. But that I may open out to you some small part of this difference, and may impart some faint ray of this thought to your soul, I would have

you recall to mind things as they were in the Law, now after that grace has shone forth. For those things too, that came before grace, had a certain great and marvellous appearance: nevertheless, hear what Paul says of them after grace came: *"That which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasses."* [2 Corinthians 3:10]

But that what I say may be made yet clearer, let us apply the argument to some one of the rites then performed, and then you will see how great is the difference. And if you will, let us bring forward that passover and this, and then shall you be aware of our superiority. For the Jews indeed celebrated it, but they celebrated it *"so as in a mirror, and darkly."* But these hidden mysteries they never at any time did even conceive in their mind, nor what things they prefigured. They saw a lamb slain, and the blood of a beast, and door-posts sprinkled with it; but that the Son of God incarnate shall be slain, and shall set free the whole world, and shall grant both to Greeks and Barbarians to taste of this Blood, and shall open heaven to all, and shall offer what is there to the whole human race, and having taken His blood-stained flesh shall exalt it above the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and, in a word, above all the hosts on high, of the angels and archangels and all the other powers, and shall cause it shining in unspeakable glory—to sit down upon the throne itself of the King, on the right hand of the Father these things, I say, no one, either of them or of the rest of mankind, either foreknew or was able ever to conceive.

4. But what say those who shrink from nothing? That the expression, *"now I know in part,"* is spoken in dispensations; for that the Apostle had the perfect knowledge of God. And now he calls himself a child? How sees he *"in a mirror?"* How *"darkly,"* if he has the sum of knowledge? And why does he refer to it as something peculiar to the Spirit, and to no other power in the creation, saying, *"For who among men knows the things of a man,*

save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knows, save the Spirit of God." [1 Corinthians 2:11] And Christ again says that this belongs to Himself alone, thus saying, *"Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is from God, He has seen the Father,"* [John 6:46] giving the name, *"sight,"* to the most clear and perfect knowledge.

And how shall he who knows the Essence, be ignorant of the dispensations? Since that knowledge is greater than this.

"Are we then," says he, *"ignorant of God?"* Far from it. That He is, we know, but what He is, as regards His Essence, we know not yet. And that you may understand that not concerning the dispensations did he speak the words, *"now I know in part,"* hear what follows. He adds then, *"but then shall I know, even as also I have been known."* He was surely known not by the dispensations, but by God.

Let none therefore consider this to be a small or simple transgression, but twofold, and threefold, yea and manifold. For not only is there this impiety that they boast of knowing those things which belong to the Spirit alone; and to the only-begotten Son of God, but also that when Paul could not acquire even this knowledge *"which is in part"* without the revelation from above, these men say that they have obtained the whole from their own reasonings. For neither are they able to point out that the Scripture has any where discoursed to us of these things.

5. But however, leaving their madness, let us give heed to the words which follow concerning love. For he was not content with these things, but adds again, saying,

1 Corinthians 13:13

"And now abides, faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

For faith indeed and hope, when the good things believed and hoped for have come, cease. And to show this Paul said, *"For hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for that which he sees."* Again, *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen."* [Romans 8:24; Hebrews 11:1] So that these cease when those appear; but love is then most elevated, and becomes more vehement. Another encomium of love. For neither is he content with those before mentioned, but he strives to discover yet another. And observe: he has said that it is a great gift, and a still more excellent way to these. He has said, that without it there is no great profit in our gifts; he has shadowed out its image at length; he intends again and in another manner to exalt it, and to show that it is great from its abiding. Wherefore also he said, *"But now abides faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."* How then is love the greater? In that those pass away.

If now so great is the virtue of love, with good reason does he add and say, *"Follow after love."* For there is surely need of *"following,"* and a kind of vehement running after her: in such sort does she fly from us, and so many are the things which trip us up in that direction. Wherefore we have ever need of great earnestness in order to overtake her. And to point out this, Paul said not, *"follow love,"* but, *"pursue"* her; stirring us up, and inflaming us to lay hold on her.

For so God from the beginning contrived ten thousand ways for implanting her in us. Thus, first, He granted one head to all, Adam. For why

do we not all spring out of the earth? Why not full grown, as he was? In order that both the birth and the bringings up of children, and the being born of another, might bind us mutually together. For this cause neither made He woman out of the earth: and because the thing of the same substance was not equally sufficient to shame us into unanimity, unless we had also the same progenitor, He provided also for this: since, if now, being only separated by place, we consider ourselves alien from one another; much more would this have happened if our race had had two originals. For this cause therefore, as it were from some one head, he bound together the whole body of the human race. And because from the beginning they seemed to be in a manner two, see how he fastens them together again, and gathers them into one by marriage. For, *"therefore,"* says He, *"shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be for one flesh."* [Genesis 2:24] And he said not, *"the woman,"* but, *"the man,"* because the desire too is stronger in him. Yea, and for this cause He made it also stronger, that it might bow the superior party to the absolute sway of this passion, and might subjugate it to the weaker. And since marriage also must needs be introduced, him from whom she sprang He made husband to the woman. For all things in the eye of God are second to love. And if when things had thus begun, the first man straightway became so frantic, and the devil sowed among them so great warfare and envy; what would he not have done, had they not sprung from one root?

Further, in order that the one might be subject, and the other rule; (for equality is wont oftentimes to bring in strife;) he suffered it not to be a democracy, but a monarchy; and as in an army, this order one may see in every family. In the rank of monarch, for instance, there is the husband; but in the rank of lieutenant and general, the wife; and the children too are allotted a third station in command. Then after these a fourth order, that of

the servant. For these also bear rule over their inferiors, and some one of them is oftentimes set over the whole, keeping ever the post of the master, but still as a servant. And together with this again another command, and among the children themselves again another, according to their age and sex; since among the children the female does not possess equal sway. And every where has God made governments at small distances and thick together, that all might abide in concord and much good order. Therefore even before the race was increased to a multitude, when the first two only were in being, He bade him govern, and her obey. And in order again that He might not despise her as inferior, and separate from her, see how He honored her, and made them one, even before her creation. For, *"Let us make for man,"* says He, *"a help meet,"* implying that she was made for his need, and thereby drawing him unto her who was made for his sake: since to all those things are we more kindly disposed, which are done for our sakes. But that she, on the other hand, might not be elated, as being granted him for help, nor might burst this bond, He makes her out of his side, signifying that she is a part of the whole body. And that neither might the man be elated therefore, He no longer permits that to belong to him alone which before was his alone, but effected the contrary to this, by bringing in procreation of children, and herein too giving the chief honor unto the man, not however allowing the whole to be his.

Do you see how many bonds of love God has wrought? And these indeed by force of nature He has lodged in us as pledges of concord. For both our being of the same substance leads to this; (for every animal loves its like;) and the woman being produced from the man, and again the children from both. Whence also many kinds of affection arise. For one we love as a father, another as a grandfather; one as a mother, another as a nurse; and one as a son or grandson or great-grandson again, and another as

a daughter, or grand-daughter; and one as a brother, another as a nephew; and one as a sister, another as a niece. And why need one recount all the names of consanguinity?

And He devised also another foundation of affection. For having forbidden the marriage of kindred, he led us out unto strangers and drew them again unto us. For since by this natural kindred it was not possible that they should be connected with us, he connected us anew by marriage, uniting together whole families by the single person of the bride, and mingling entire races with races.

For, "*marry not,*" says the Lord, [Leviticus 18:6] "*your sister, nor your father's sister, nor any damsel which has such consanguinity with you,*" as utterly hinders the marriage; naming the degrees of such relationship. It is enough for your affection towards them that you were the fruit of the same birth-pangs, and that the others are in a different relation to you. Why do you narrow the breadth of love? Why do you idly throw away a ground of affection towards her, such as that you might thereby provide yourself with distinct source for affection to spring from; I mean, by taking a wife from another family, and through her a chain of kinsmen, both mother, and father, and brethren, and their connexions!

7. Do you see by how many ways He has bound us together? Nevertheless, not even this sufficed Him, but He likewise made us to stand in need of one another, that thus also He might bring us together, because necessities above all create friendships. For no other reason neither suffered He all things to be produced in every place, that hence also He might compel us to mix with one another. But having set us in need of one another, He on the other hand made the intercourse easy. Since if this were not so, the matter would have turned out painful and difficult in another way. For if one that wanted a physician, or a carpenter, or any other

workman, had need to set off on a long foreign sojourn, the whole had come to nought. Here then is why He founded cities also, and brought all into one place. And accordingly that we might easily keep up intercourse with distant countries, He spread the level of the sea between us, and gave us the swiftness of winds, thereby making our voyages easy. And at the beginning He even gathered all men together in one spot, and did not disperse them until they who first received the gift abused their concord unto sin.

However, He has drawn us together in every way; both by nature, and by consanguinity, and by language, and by place; and as he willed not that we should fall from paradise; (for had He willed it, He would not have placed there at all *"the man whom He had formed,"* but he that disobeyed was the cause;) so neither was it His will that men should have various tongues; since otherwise He would have made it so from the beginning. But now *"the whole earth was of one language, and all had one speech."* [Genesis 11:1]

Here is the reason why, when it was needful that the earth should be destroyed, not even then did He make us of other matter, nor did He translate the righteous man, but leaving him in the midst of the deluge, like a kind of spark of the world, He rekindled our race from thence, even by the blessed Noah. And from the beginning He made one sovereignty only, setting the man over the woman. But after that our race ran headlong into extreme disorder, He appointed other sovereignties also, those of Masters, and those of Governors, and this too for love's sake. That is, since vice was a thing apt to dissolve and subvert our race, He set those who administer justice in the midst of our cities as a kind of physicians, that driving away vice, as it were a plague to love, they might gather together all in one.

And that not only in cities, but also in each family there might be great unanimity, He honored the man with rule and superiority; the woman on the

other hand He armed with desire: and the gift also of procreation of children, He committed in common to both, and withal He furnished also other things apt to conciliate love: neither entrusting all to the man, nor all to the woman; but *"dividing these things also severally to each;"* to her entrusting the house, and to him the market; to him the work of feeding, for he tills the ground; to her that of clothing, for loom and distaff are the woman's. For it is God Himself who gave to woman-kind skill in woven work. Woe be to covetousness, which suffers not this difference to appear! For the general effeminacy has gone so far as to introduce our men to the looms, and put shuttles into their hands, and the woof, and threads. Nevertheless, even thus the forethought of the divine economy shines out. For we still greatly need the woman in other more necessary things, and we require the help of our inferiors in those things which keep our life together.

8. And so strong is the compulsion of this need that though one be richer than all men, not even thus is he rid of this close conjunction, and of his want of that which is inferior to himself. For it is not, we see, the poor only who need the rich, but the rich also the poor; and these require those more than the others them. And that you may see it more clearly, let us suppose, if it seem good, two cities, the one of rich only, but the other of poor; and neither in that of the rich let there be any poor man, nor in that of the poor any rich; but let us purge out both thoroughly, and see which will be the more able to support itself. For if we find that of the poor able, it is evident that the rich will more stand in need of them.

Now then, in that city of the affluent there will be no manufacturer, no builder, no carpenter, no shoe-maker, no baker, no husbandman, no brazier, no rope-maker, nor any other such trade. For who among the rich would ever choose to follow these crafts, seeing that the very men who take them in hand, when they become rich, endure no longer the discomfort caused by

these works? How then shall this our city stand? "*The rich*," it is replied, "*giving money, will buy these things of the poor*." Well then, they will not be sufficient for themselves, their needing the others proves that. But how will they build houses? Will they purchase this too? But the nature of things cannot admit this. Therefore they must needs invite the artificers there, and destroy the law, which we made at first when we were founding the city. For you remember, that we said, "*let there be no poor man within it*." But, lo, necessity, even against our will, has invited and brought them in. Whence it is evident that it is impossible without poor for a city to subsist: since if the city were to continue refusing to admit any of these, it will be no longer a city but will perish. Plainly then it will not support itself, unless it shall collect the poor as a kind of preservers, to be within itself.

But let us look also upon the city of the poor, whether this too will be in a like needy condition, on being deprived of the rich. And first let us in our discourse thoroughly clear the nature of riches, and point them out plainly. What then may riches be? Gold, and silver, and precious stones, and garments silken, purple, and embroidered with gold. Now then that we have seen what riches are, let us drive them away from our city of the poor: and if we are to make it purely a city of poor persons, let not any gold appear there, no not in a dream, nor garments of such quality; and if you will, neither silver, nor vessels of silver. What then? Because of this will that city and its concerns live in want, tell me? Not at all. For suppose first there should be need to build; one does not want gold and silver and pearls, but skill, and hands, and hands not of any kind, but such as have become callous, and fingers hardened, and great strength, and wood, and stones: suppose again one would weave a garment, neither here have we need of gold and silver, but, as before, of hands and skill, and women to work. And what if one require husbandry, and digging the ground? Is it rich men who

are wanted, or poor? It is evident to every one, poor. And when iron too is to be wrought, or any such thing to be done, this is the race of men whereof we most stand in need. What respect then remains wherein we may stand in need of the rich? Except the thing required be, to pull down this city. For should that sort of people make an entrance, and these philosophers, for (for I call them philosophers, who seek after nothing superfluous,) should fall to desiring gold and jewels, giving themselves up to idleness and luxury; they will ruin everything from that day forward.

9. *"But unless wealth be useful,"* says one, *"wherefore has it been given by God?"* And whence is it evident, that being rich is from God? *"The Scripture says, 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' and to whomsoever I will, I will give it."* [Haggai 2:8] Here, if I were not doing an unseemly thing, I could at this moment laugh loudly, in derision of those who say these things: because as little children admitted to a King's table, together with that food they thrust into their mouth everything that comes to hand; so also do these together with the divine Scriptures privily bring in their own notions. For this, *"the silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,"* I know to have been spoken by the Prophet; but that, *"to whomsoever I will, I will give it,"* is not added, but is brought in by these offscourings of the people. And as to the former, why it was said, I will explain. The Prophet Haggai, because he was continually promising to the Jews after their return from Babylon, that he would show the temple in its former appearance, and some doubted of the thing spoken, and considered it to be well near impossible that after being reduced to dust and ashes, the house should appear again such as it was—he, to remove their unbelief, in the person of God says these things; as if he said, *"Why are you afraid? And why do ye refuse to believe? 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' and I need not to borrow from others, and so to beautify the house."* And to show that this

is the meaning he adds, *"and the glory of this house, the latter glory shall be greater than the glory of the former."* Let us not then bring in spiders' webs upon the royal robe. For if any person, detected in weaving a counterfeit thread in a purple vest, is to suffer the severest punishment, much more in spiritual things; since neither is it an ordinary sin, which is hereby committed. And why say I, by adding and taking away? By a mere point, and by a mere circumstance of delivery in the reading, many impious thoughts have not seldom been brought into being.

"Whence then the rich," says one? *"for it has been said, 'Riches and poverty are from the Lord.'"* Let us then ask those who object these things against us, whether all riches and all poverty are from the Lord? Nay, who would say this? For we see that both by rapine, and by wickedly breaking open of tombs, and by witchcraft, and by other such devices, great wealth is gathered by many, and the possessors are not worthy even to live. What then, tell me, do we say that this wealth is from God? Far from it. Whence then? From sin. For so the harlot by doing indignity to her own body grows rich, and a handsome youth oftentimes selling his bloom with disgrace brings himself gold, and the tomb-spoiler by breaking open men's sepulchres gathers together unjust wealth, and the robber by digging through walls. All wealth therefore is not from God. *"What then,"* says one, *"shall we say to this expression?"* Acquaint yourself first with a kind of poverty which proceeds not from God, and then we will proceed to the saying itself. I mean, that when any dissolute youth spends his wealth either on harlots, or on conjurors, or on any other such evil desires, and becomes poor, is it not very evident that this has not come from God, but from his own profligacy? Again, if any through idleness become poor, if any through folly be brought down to beggary, if any, by taking in hand perilous and

unlawful practices; is it not quite evident, that neither has any one of these and other such persons been brought down to this their poverty by God?

"Does then the Scripture speak falsely?" God forbid! But they do foolishly, who neglect to examine with due exactness all things written. For if this on the one hand be acknowledged, that the Scriptures cannot lie; and this on the other hand proved, that not all wealth is from God; the weakness of inconsiderate readers is the cause of the difficulty.

10. Now it were right for us to dismiss you, having herein exculpated the Scripture, that you may suffer this punishment at our hands for your negligence concerning the Scriptures: but because I greatly spare you and cannot any longer bear to look on you confused and disturbed, let us also add the solution, having first mentioned the speaker, and when it was spoken, and to whom. For not alike to all does God speak, as neither do we deal alike with children and men. When then was it spoken, and by whom, and to whom? By Solomon in the Old Testament to the Jews, who knew no other than things of sense, and by these proved the power of God. For these are they who say, *"Can He give bread also?"* and, *"What sign showest Thou unto us? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert:— whose God is their belly."* [Psalm 78:24; Matthew 12:38; John 6:31; Philippians 3:19] Since then they were proving Him by these things, He says to them, *"This is also possible with God to make both rich and poor;"* not that it is of course He Himself who makes them, but that He can, when He will. Just as when he says, *"Who rebukes the sea, and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers,"* [Nahum 1:4] and yet this was never done. How then does the prophet say so? Not as though it were a doing always, but as a thing that was possible for Him to do.

What kind of poverty then does He give, and what kind of wealth? Remember the patriarch, and you shall know the kind of wealth that is

given by God. For He made both Abraham rich, and after him Job, even as Job himself says; *"If we have received good from the Lord, shall we not also receive evil?"* [Job 2:10] And the wealth of Jacob thence had its beginning. There is also a poverty which comes from Him, that which is commended, such as He once would have introduced to the knowledge of that rich man, saying, *"If you would be perfect, sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me."* [Matthew 19:21] And to the disciples again, making a law and saying, *"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor two coats."* [Matthew 9:10] Say not then that all wealth is His gift: seeing that cases have been pointed out of its being collected both by murderers, and by rapine, and by ten thousand other devices.

But again the discourse reverts to our former question: viz. *"if the rich are no way useful to us, wherefore are they made rich?"* What then must we say? That these are not useful who so make themselves rich; whereas those surely who are made so by God are in the highest degree useful. And do thou learn this from the very things done by those whom we just now mentioned. Thus Abraham possessed wealth for all strangers, and for all in need. For he who on the approach of three men, as he supposed, sacrificed a calf and kneaded three measures of fine flour, and that while sitting in his door in the heat of the day; consider with what liberality and readiness he used to spend his substance on all, together with his goods giving also the service of his body, and this at such an advanced age; being a harbor to strangers, to all who had come to any kind of want, and possessing nothing as his own, not even his son: since at God's command he actually delivered up even him; and along with his son he gave up also himself and all his house, when he hastened to snatch his brother's son out of danger; and this he did not for lucre's sake, but of mere humanity. When, for instance, they

who were saved by him would put the spoils at his disposal, he rejected all, even to *"a thread and a shoe-latchet."* [Genesis 14:23]

Such also was the blessed Job. *"For my door,"* says, was open to every one who came: [Job 20:15] *"I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame: I was a father of the helpless, the stranger lodged not without, and the helpless, whatever need they had, failed not of it, neither suffered I one helpless man to go out of my door with a empty bosom."* And much more too than these, that we may not now recount all, he continued to do, spending all his wealth on the needy.

Will you also look upon those who have become rich but not of God, that you may learn how they employed their wealth? Behold him in the parable of Lazarus, how he imparted not so much as a share of his crumbs. Behold Ahab, how not even the vineyard is free from his extortion: behold Gehazi: behold all such. Thus they on the one hand who make just acquisitions, as having received from God, spend on the commands of God: but they who in act of acquiring offend God, in the expending also do the same: consuming it on harlots and parasites, or burying and shutting it up, but laying out nothing upon the poor.

"And wherefore," says one, *"does God suffer such men to be rich?"* Because He is long-suffering: because He would bring us to repentance; because He has prepared hell; because *"He has appointed a day in which He is to judge the world."* [Acts 17:31] Whereas did He use at once to punish them that are rich and not virtuously, Zacchæus would not have had an appointed time for repentance, so as even to restore fourfold whatever he had unjustly taken, and to add half of his goods; nor Matthew, to be converted and become an Apostle, taken off as he would have been before the due season; nor yet many other such. Therefore does He bear with them, calling all to repentance. But if they will not, but continue in the same, they

shall hear Paul saying that after their hardness and impenitent heart they treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation, and righteous judgment of God: [Romans 2:5] which wrath that we may escape, let us become rich with the riches of heaven, and follow after the laudable sort of poverty. For thus shall we obtain also the good things to come: the which may we all obtain through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 35 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 14:1

Follow after love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts; but rather that you may prophesy.

Thus, inasmuch as he had with exactness rehearsed unto them all the excellence of love, he exhorts them in what follows, with alacrity to lay hold of it. Wherefore also he said, "*Follow after:*" for he that is in chase beholds that only which is chased, and towards that he strains himself, and leaves not off until he lay hold of it. He that is in chase, when by himself he cannot, by those that are before him he does overtake the fugitive, beseeching those who are near with much eagerness to seize and keep it so seized for him until he shall come up. This then let us also do. When of ourselves we do not reach unto love, let us bid them that are near her to hold her, till we come up with her, and when we have apprehended, no more let her go, that she may not again escape us. For continually she springs away from us, because we use her not as we ought, but prefer all things unto her. Therefore we ought to make every effort, so as perfectly to retain her. For if this be done, we require not henceforth much labor, nay rather scarce any; but taking our ease, and keeping holiday, we shall march on in the narrow path of virtue. Wherefore he says, "*Follow after her.*"

Then that they might not suppose that for no other end he brought in the discourse of charity, except that he might extinguish the gifts, he subjoins as follows;

"Yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts; but rather that you may prophesy."

1 Corinthians 14:2

*"For he that speaks in a tongue, speaks not unto men, but unto God:
for no man understands; but in the Spirit he speaks mysteries."*

1 Corinthians 14:3

"But he that prophesies speaks unto men edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

At this point he makes a comparison between the gifts, and lowers that of the tongues, showing it to be neither altogether useless, nor very profitable by itself. For in fact they were greatly puffed up on account of this, because the gift was considered to be a great one. And it was thought great because the Apostles received it first, and with so great display; it was not however therefore to be esteemed above all the others. Wherefore then did the Apostles receive it before the rest? Because they were to go abroad every where. And as in the time of building the tower the one tongue was divided into many; so then the many tongues frequently met in one man, and the same person used to discourse both in the Persian, and the Roman, and the Indian, and many other tongues, the Spirit sounding within him: and the gift was called the gift of tongues because he could all at once speak various languages. See accordingly how he both depresses and elevates it. Thus, by saying, *"He that speaks with tongues, speaks not unto men, but unto God, for no man understands,"* he depressed it, implying that the profit of it was not great; but by adding, *"but in the Spirit he speaks mysteries"* he again elevated it, that it might not seem to be superfluous and useless and given in vain.

"But he that prophesies speaks unto men edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

Do you see by what he signifies the choice nature of this gift? I.e., by the common benefit? And how every where he gives the higher honor to that which tends to the profit of the many? For do not the former speak unto

men also? Tell me. But not so much *"edification, and exhortation, and comfort."* So that the being powered by the Spirit is common to both, as well to him that prophesies, as to him that speaks with tongues; but in this, the one (he, I mean, who prophesies) has the advantage in that he is also profitable unto the hearers. For they who with tongues were not understood by them that had not the gift.

What then? Did they edify no man? *"Yes,"* says he, *"themselves alone:"* wherefore also he adds,

1 Corinthians 14:4

"He that speaks in tongue edifies himself."

And how, if he know not what he says? Why, for the present, he is speaking of them who understand what they say—understand it themselves, but know not how to render it unto others.

"But he that prophesies edifies the Church." Now as great as is the difference between a single person and the Church, so great is the interval between these two. Do you see his wisdom, how he does not thrust out the gift and make nothing of it, but signifies it to have some advantage, small though it be, and such as to suffice the possessor only?

2. Next, lest they should suppose that in envy to them he depresses the tongues, (for the more part had this gift,) to correct their suspicion he says,

1 Corinthians 14:5

"I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that you should prophesy: for greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks with tongues, except he interpret, that the Church may receive edifying."

But "*rather*" and "*greater*," do not mark opposition, but superiority. So that hence also it is evident that he is not disparaging the gift, but leading them to better things, displaying both his carefulness on their behalf, and a spirit free from all envy. For neither did he say, "*I would that two or three*," but, "*that you all spoke with tongues*" and not this only, but also, "*that you prophesied*;" and this rather than that; "*for greater is he that prophesies*." For since he has established and proved it, he next proceeds also to assert it; not however simply, but with a qualification. Accordingly he adds, "*except he interpret*;" since if he be able to do this, I mean the interpreting, "*he has become equal unto the prophet*," so he speaks, "*because then there are many who reap the advantage of it*;" a thing to be especially observed, how this throughout, before all else, is his object,

1 Corinthians 14:6

"But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?"

"And why speak I," says he, "of the rest? Nay, let the person who speaks with tongues be Paul: for not even so will any good come to the hearers." And these things he says to signify that he is seeking their profit, not bearing any grudge against them that have the gift; since not even in his own person does he shrink from pointing out its unprofitableness. And indeed it is his constant way to work out the disagreeable topics in his own person: as in the beginning of the Epistle he said, "Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos? And who is Cephas?" This same then he does also here, saying, "Not even I shall profit you, except I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of prophesying, or of knowledge, or of teaching." And what he means is, "if I say not somewhat that can be made intelligible to you and that may be clear, but merely make display of my having the gift of tongues; — tongues which you do not understand, you will go away with no sort of profit. For how should you profit by a voice which you understand not?"

1 Corinthians 14:7

[3] *"Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped?"*

"And why do I say," says he, that in our case this is unprofitable, and that only useful which is clear and easy to be apprehended by the hearers? Since even in musical instruments without life one may see this: for whether it be pipe or harp, yet if it be struck or blown confusedly and unskilfully, without proper cadence or harmony, it will captivate none of the hearers. For even in these inarticulate sounds there is need of some distinctness: and if you strike not or breathe into the pipe according to art, you have done nothing. Now if from things without life we require so much distinctness, and harmony, and appropriateness, and into those inarticulate sounds we strive and contend to infuse so much meaning, much more in men indued with life and reason, and in spiritual gifts, ought one to make significancy an object.

1 Corinthians 14:8

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?"

Thus from things merely ornamental he carries on his argument to those which are more necessary and useful; and says that not in the harp alone, but in the trumpet also one may see this effect produced. For in that also there are certain measures; and they give out at one time a warlike note, and at another one that is not so; and again sometimes it leads out to line of battle and at others recalls from it: and unless one know this, there is great danger. Which is just what he means, and the mischief of it what he is manifesting, when he says, *"who shall prepare himself for war?"* So then, if it have not this quality, it is the ruin of all. *"And what is this to us,"* says one? Truly it concerns you very especially; wherefore also he adds,

1 Corinthians 14:9

"So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue, speech easy to be understood, you will be speaking into the air:" i.e., calling to nobody, speaking unto no one. Thus every where he shows its unprofitableness.

4. *"But if it be unprofitable, why was it given?"* says one. So as to be useful to him that has received it. But if it is to be so to others also, there must be added interpretation. Now this he says, bringing them near to one another; that if a person himself have not the gift of interpretation, he may take unto him another that has it, and make his own gift useful through him. Wherefore he every where points out its imperfection, that so he may bind them together. Any how, he that accounts it to be sufficient for itself, does not so much commend it as disparage it, not suffering it to shine brightly by the interpretation. For excellent indeed and necessary is the gift, but it is so when it has one to explain what is spoken. Since the finger too is a necessary thing, but when you separate it from the other members, it will not be equally useful: and the trumpet is necessary, but when it sounds at random, it is rather an annoyance. Yea, neither shall any art come to light, without matter subject to it; nor is matter put into shape, if no form be assigned to it. Suppose then the voice to be as the subject-matter, but the distinctness as that form, which not being present, there will be no use in the material.

1 Corinthians 14:10

"There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification:" i.e., so many tongues, so many voices of Scythians, Thracians, Romans, Persians, Moors, Indians, Egyptians, innumerable other nations.

1 Corinthians 14:11

"If then I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaks a barbarian." "For suppose not," says he, *"that this happens only in our case; rather in all one may see this taking place: so that I do not say this to disparage the voice, but to signify that to me it is useless, as long as it is not intelligible."* Next, that he may not render the accusation unpalatable, he makes his charge alike for the two, saying, *"He shall be unto me a barbarian, and I to him."* Not from the nature of the voice, but from our ignorance. Do you see how little by little he draws men to that which is akin to the subject. Which is his use to do, to fetch his examples from afar, and to end with what more properly belongs to the matter. For having spoken of a pipe and harp, wherein is much that is inferior and unprofitable, he comes to the trumpet, a thing more useful; next, from that he proceeds to the very voice itself. So also before, when he was discoursing to show that it was not forbidden the Apostles to receive, beginning first with husbandmen, and shepherds, and soldiers, then he brought the discourse on to that which is nearer to the subject, the priests in the old covenant.

But do thou, I pray, consider, how every where he has given diligence to free the gift from censure, and to bring round the charge to the receivers of it. For he said not, *"I shall be a barbarian,"* but, *"unto him that speaks, a barbarian."* And again, he did not say, *"he that speaks shall be a barbarian,"* but *"he that speaks shall be a barbarian unto me."*

5. *"What then must be done?"* says he. Why, so far from disparaging, one ought to recommend and to teach it; as indeed himself also does. Since

after he had accused and rebuked it and shown its unprofitableness, he proceeds to counsel them; saying,

1 Corinthians 14:12

"So also ye, since as you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that you may abound unto the edifying of the Church."

Do you see his aim every where, how he looks to one thing continually and in all cases, the general utility, the profiting the Church; laying this down as a kind of rule? And he did not say, *"that you may obtain the gifts"* but, *"that you may abound,"* i.e., that you may even possess them in great plenitude. Thus, so far am I from wishing you not to possess them, that I even wish you to abound in them, only so that you handle them with a view to the common advantage. And how is this to be done? This he adds, saying,

1 Corinthians 14:13

"Wherefore let him that speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret."

1 Corinthians 14:14

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful."

1 Corinthians 14:15

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

Here he shows that it is in their power to obtain the gift. For, *"let him pray,"* says he, i.e., *"let him contribute his own part,"* since if you ask diligently, you will surely receive. Ask accordingly not to have the gift of tongue only, but also of interpretation, that you may become useful unto all, and not shut up your gift in yourself alone. *"For if I pray in a tongue,"* says he, *"my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful."* Do you see how by degrees bringing his argument to a point, he signifies that not to others only is such an one useless, but also to himself; if at least *"his understanding is unfruitful?"* For if a man should speak only in the Persian, or any other foreign tongue, and not understand what he says, then of course to himself also will he be thenceforth a barbarian, not to another only, from not knowing the meaning of the sound. For there were of old many who had also a gift of prayer, together with a tongue; and they prayed, and the tongue spoke, praying either in the Persian or Latin language, but their understanding knew not what was spoken. Wherefore also he said, *"If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays,"* i.e., the gift which is given me and which moves my tongue, *"but my understanding is unfruitful."*

What then may that be which is best in itself, and does good? And how ought one to act, or what request of God? To pray, *"both with the spirit,"* i.e., the gift, and *"with the understanding."* Wherefore also he said, *"I will*

pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

6. He signifies the same thing here also, that both the tongue may speak, and the understanding may not be ignorant of the things spoken. For except this be so, there will also be another confusion.

1 Corinthians 14:16

"Else," says he, "if you bless with the spirit, how shall he that fills the place of the unlearned say the Amen at your giving of thanks, seeing he knows not what you say."

1 Corinthians 14:17

"For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified."

Observe how again here he brings his stone to the plumb-line, every where seeking the edification of the Church. Now by the *"unlearned"* he means the laymen, and signifies that he also suffers no little loss when he is unable to say the Amen. And what he says is this: *"if you shall bless in a barbarian tongue, not knowing what you say, nor able to interpret, the layman cannot respond the Amen. For not hearing the words, 'forever and ever,' which are at the end, he does not say the Amen."* Then again, comforting him concerning this, that he might not seem to hold the gift too cheap; the same kind of remark as he made above, that *"he speaks mysteries,"* and *"speaks unto God,"* and *"edifies himself,"* and *"prays with the spirit,"* intending no little comfort from these things, this also he utters here, saying, *"for thou indeed givest thanks well,"* since you speak being moved by the Spirit: but the other hearing nothing nor knowing what is said, stands there, receiving no great advantage by it.

7. Further, because he had run down the possessors of this gift, as though they had no such great thing; that he might not seem to hold them cheap, as being himself destitute of it, see what he says:

1 Corinthians 14:18

"I thank God, speaking with tongues more than ye all."

And this he does also in another place intending, namely, to take away the advantages of Judaism and to show that henceforth they are nothing, he begins by declaring that himself had been endowed with them, yea, and that in very great excess; and then he calls them *"loss,"* thus saying, *"If any man thinks to have confidence in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church; as touching the righteousness which is the law, found blameless."* [Philippians 3:4-7] And then, having signified himself to have the advantage of all, he says, *"Howbeit what things were gain to me, those have I counted loss for Christ."* So also he does here, saying, *"I speak with tongues more than ye all."* Do not ye therefore glory as though ye only had the gift. For I also possess it, yea more than ye.

1 Corinthians 14:19

"Howbeit in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also."

What is that, *"speak with my understanding, that I might instruct others also?"* "Understanding what I say," and *"words which I can both interpret to others, and speak intelligently, and teach the hearers."* "Than ten thousand words in a tongue." Wherefore? *"That I may instruct others,"* says he. For the one has but display only; the other, great utility: this being what he everywhere seeks, I mean the common profit. And yet the gift of tongues was strange, but that of prophecy familiar and ancient and heretofore given to many; this on the contrary then first given: howbeit it was not much cared for by him. Wherefore neither did he employ it; not because he had it not, but because he always sought the more profitable things: being as he was free from all vain-glory, and considering one thing only, how he might render the hearers better.

8. And here is the reason of the faculty he had of looking to the expedient both to himself and to others: viz. because he was free from vain-glory. Since he assuredly that is enslaved by it, so far from discerning what is good to others, will not even know his own.

Such was Simon, who, because he looked to vain-glory, did not even see his own advantage. Such also were the Jews, who because of this sacrificed their own salvation to the devil. Hence also did idols spring, and by this madness did the heathen philosophers excite themselves, and make shipwreck in their false doctrines. And observe the perverseness of this passion: how because of it some of them also made themselves poor, others were eager for wealth. So potent is its tyranny that it prevails even in direct

contraries. Thus one man is vain of chastity, and contrariwise another of adultery; and this man of justice, and another of injustice; so of luxury and fasting, modesty and rashness, riches and poverty. I say poverty: since some of them that were with out, when it was in their power to receive, for admiration's sake forbore to receive. But not so the Apostles: that they were pure from vainglory, they showed by their doings: in that, when some were calling them Gods and were ready to sacrifice-unto them oxen with garlands, they did not merely just forbid what was doing, but they even rent their clothes. [Acts 14:13-14] And after they had set the lame man upright, when all with open mouths were gazing at them, they said, *"Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power we had made this man to walk ?"* And those, among men who admired poverty, chose to themselves a state of poverty: but these among persons who despised poverty and gave praise to wealth. And these, if they received anything, ministered to the needy. Thus, not vain-glory but benevolence, was the motive of all they did. But those quite the reverse; as enemies and pests of our common nature, and no otherwise, did they such things. Thus one sunk all his goods in the sea for no good purpose, imitating fools and madmen: and another let all his land go to sheep common. Thus they did every thing for vain-glory. But not so the Apostles; rather they both received what was given them, and distributed to the needy with so great liberality that they even lived in continual hunger. But if they had been enamored of glory, they would not have practiced this, the receiving and distributing, for fear of some suspicion arising against them. For he who throws away his own for glory, will much more refuse to receive the things of others, that he may not be accounted to stand in need of others nor incur any suspicion. But these you see both ministering to the poor, and themselves begging for them. So truly were they more loving than any fathers.

9. And observe also their laws, how moderate and freed from all vain-glory. Thus: "*Having*" says he, food and covering, let us therewith be content. [1 Timothy 6:8] Not like him of Sinope, who clothed in rags and living in a cask to no good end, astonished many, but profited none: whereas Paul did none of these things; (for neither had he an eye to ostentation;) but was both clothed in ordinary apparel with all decency, and lived in a house continually, and displayed all exactness in the practice of all other virtue; which the cynic despised, living impurely and publicly disgracing himself, and dragged away by his mad passion for glory. For if any one ask the reason of his living in a cask, he will find no other but vain-glory alone. But Paul also paid rent for the house wherein he abode at Rome. Although he who was able to do things far severer, could much more have had strength for this. But he looked not to glory, that savage monster, that fearful demon, that pest of the world, that poisonous viper. Since, as that animal tears through the womb of her parent with her teeth, so also this passion tears in pieces him that begets it.

10. By what means then may one find a remedy for this manifold distemper? By bringing forward those that have trodden it under foot, and with an eye to their image so ordering one's own life. For so the patriarch Abraham.— nay, let none accuse me of tautology if I often make mention of him, and on all occasions: this being that which most of all shows him wonderful, and deprives them that refuse to imitate him of all excuse. For, if we exhibit one doing well in this particular, and another in that, some one might say that virtue is hardly to be attained; for that it is scarcely possible to succeed in all those things together, whereof each one of the saints has performed only a part. But when one and the same person is found to possess all, what excuse will they have, who after the law and grace are not able to attain unto the same measure with them that were before the law and

grace? How then did this Patriarch overcome and subdue this monster, when he had a dispute with his nephew? [Genesis 13:8] For so it was, that coming off worst and losing the first share, he was not vexed. But ye know that in such matters the shame is worse than the loss to the vulgar-minded, and particularly when a person having all in his own power, as he had then, and having been the first to give honor, was not honored in return. Nevertheless, none of these things vexed him, but he was content to receive the second place, and when wronged by the young man, himself old, an uncle by a nephew, he was not indignant nor took it ill, but loved him equally and ministered to him. Again, having been victorious in that great and terrible fight, and having mightily put to flight the Barbarians [Genesis 14] he does not add show to victory, nor erect a trophy. For he wished to save only, not to exhibit himself. Again, he entertained strangers, yet did he not here act vain-gloriously, but himself both ran to them and bowed down to them, not as though he were giving, but receiving a benefit, and he calls them lords, without knowing who they are who have come to him, and presents his wife in the place of a handmaiden. [Genesis 18] And in Egypt too before this, when he had appeared so extraordinary a person, and had received back this very woman, his wife, and had enjoyed so great honor [Genesis 12] he shows it to no man. And though the inhabitants of the place called him prince, he himself even laid down the price of the sepulchre. [Genesis 23:6] And when he sent to betroth a wife for his son, he gave no command to speak in high and dignified terms of him, [Genesis 24] but merely to bring the bride.

11. Will you examine also the conduct of those under grace, when from every side great was the glory of the teaching flowing round them, and will you see then also this passion cast out? Consider, I pray, this same Apostle who speaks these things, how he ever ascribes the whole to God,

how of his sins he makes mention continually, but of his good deeds never, unless perchance it should be needful to correct the disciples; and even if he be compelled to do this, he calls the matter folly, and yields the first place to Peter, and is not ashamed to labor with Priscilla and Aquila, and every where he is eager to show himself lowly, not swaggering in the market place, nor carrying crowds with him, but setting himself down among the obscure. Wherefore also he said, "*but his bodily presence is weak.*" [2 Corinthians 10:10] i.e., easy to be despised, and not at all accompanied with display. And again, "*I pray that you do no evil, not that we may appear approved.*" And what marvel if he despise this glory? Seeing that he despises the glory of heaven, and the kingdom, and hell, for that which was pleasing unto Christ: for he wishes himself to be accursed from Christ for the glory of Christ. For if he says that he is willing to suffer this for the Jews' sake, he says it on this account that none of those without understanding might think to take to himself the promises made to them. If therefore he were ready to pass by those things, what marvel is it if he despise human things?

12. But the men of our time are overwhelmed by all things, not by desire of glory only, but also, on the other hand, by insult and fear of dishonor. Thus, should any one praise, it would puff you up, and if he blame, it would cast you down. And as weak bodies are by common accidents injured, so also souls which grovel on earth. For such not poverty alone, but even wealth destroys, not grief only, but likewise joy, and prosperity more than adversity. For poverty compels to be wise, but wealth leads on oftentimes into some great evil. And as men in a fever are hard to be pleased in any thing, so also they that are depraved in mind on every side receive hurt.

Knowing therefore these things, let us not shun poverty, let us not admire riches: but prepare our soul to be sufficient for all estates. For so any one building an house does not consider how neither rain may descend, nor sunbeam light on it, (for this were impossible,) but how it may be made capable of enduring all. And he again that builds a ship does not fashion and design any thing to keep waves from breaking against it, or any tempest from rising in the sea: (for this too were impossible:) but that the sides of the ship may be ready to meet all. And again, he that cares for the body does not look to this that there may be no inequality in the temperature, but that the body may easily endure all these things. So accordingly let us act in respect of the soul, and neither be anxious to fly poverty nor to become rich, but to regulate each of them for our own safety.

Wherefore, letting alone these things, let us render our soul meet both for wealth and poverty. For although no calamity, such as man is subject to, befall, which is for the most part impossible, even thus, better is he that seeks not wealth, but knows how to bear all things easily than he that is always rich. And why? First, such an one has his safety from within, but the other from without. And as he is a better soldier who trusts to his bodily powers and skill in fighting, than he that has his strength in his armor only; so he that relies on his wealth, compared with him that is fenced in by his virtue, is inferior. Secondly, because even if he do not fall into poverty, it is impossible that he should be without trouble. For wealth has many storms and troubles; but not so virtue, but pleasure only and safety. Yea, and it puts a man out of the reach of them that lay snares for him, but wealth quite the contrary, rendering him easy to be attacked and taken. And as among animals, stags and hares are of all most easily taken through their natural timidity, but the wild boar, and the bull, and the lion, would not easily fall in the way of the liers-in-wait; just so one may see in the case of the rich, and

of them that live voluntarily in poverty. The one is like the lion and the bull, the other like the stag and the hare. For whom does not the rich man fear? Are there not robbers, potentates, enviers, informers? And why speak I of robbers and informers, in a case where a man suspects his very domestics?

13. And why say I, "*when he is alive?*" Not even when dead is he freed from the villainy of the robbers, nor has death power to set him in safety, but the evil doers despoil him even when dead, so dangerous a thing is wealth. For not only do they dig into houses, but they even burst open tombs and coffins. What then can be more wretched than this man, since not even death can furnish him with this security, but that wretched body, even when deprived of life, is not freed from the evils of life, those that commit such wickedness hastening to war even with dust and ashes, and much more grievously than when it was alive? For then, it might be, entering his storehouse, they would remove his chests, but abstain from his person, and would not take so much as to strip the body itself but now the accursed hands of the tombbreakers do not even abstain from these, but move and turn it about, and with much cruelty insult it. For after it has been committed to the ground, having stripped it both of its covering of earth and of that which its grave-clothes constitute, they leave it thus to be cast out.

What foe then so deadly as wealth, which destroys both the soul of the living, and insults the body of the dead, not suffering it even to lie buried in the ground, which is common even to the condemned and to them that have been taken in the vilest crimes? For of them the legislators having exacted the punishment of death, inquire no further; but of these, wealth even after death exacts a most bitter punishment, exposing them naked and unburied, a dreadful and pitiable spectacle: since even those who suffer this after sentence and by the anger of their judges, do not suffer so grievously as

these. For they indeed remain unburied the first and second day, and so are committed to the ground; but these, when they have been committed to the ground, are then stripped naked and insulted. And if the robbers depart without taking the coffin too, there is still no thanks to their wealth, but in this case also to their poverty. For she it is that guards it. Whereas most assuredly, had we intruded wealth with even so much as this, and leaving off to form it of stone, had forged it of gold, we should have lost this also.

So faithless a thing is wealth; which belongs not so much to them that have it, as to them that endeavor to seize it. So that it is but a superfluous argument which aims to show that wealth is irresistible, seeing that not even on the day of their death do its possessors obtain security. And yet who is not reconciled with the departed, whether it be wild beast, or demon, or whatever else? The very sight being enough to bend even one who is altogether iron, and quite past feeling. Wherefore, you know, when one sees a corpse, though it be an enemy public or private whom he sees, yet he weeps for him in common with his dearest friends; and his wrath is extinguished with life, and pity is brought in. And it would be impossible, in time of mourning and carrying out of burial, to distinguish an enemy from him who is not such. So greatly do all men revere their common nature, and the customs which have been introduced respecting it. But wealth not even on obtaining this, remits her anger against her possessors; nay, it renders them that have been no way wronged enemies of the dead; if at least to strip the dead body be an act of persons very bitter and hostile. And nature for her part reconciles even his enemies to him then: but wealth makes foes of them that have nothing to accuse him of, and cruelly intreats the body in its utter desolation. And yet in that case there are many things which might lead one to pity, the fact of its being a corpse, its inability to move, and tending to earth and corruption, the absence of any one to help:

but none of these things soften those accursed wretches, because of the tyranny they are under from their base cupidity. For the passion of covetousness, like some ruthless tyrant, is at hand, enjoining those inhuman commands and having made wild beasts of them, so brings them to the tombs. Yea, like wild beasts attacking the dead, they would not even abstain from their flesh, if their limbs were any way useful unto them. Such is our enjoyment of wealth; to be insulted even after death, and deprived of sepulture which even the most desperate criminals obtain.

14. Are we still then, tell me, to be fond of so grievous an enemy? Nay, I beseech you, nay, my brethren! But let us fly from it without turning to look: and if it come into our hands, let us not keep it within, but bind it fast by the hands of the poor. For these are the bonds which have more power to hold it, and from those treasures it will never more escape; and so this faithless one abides for the time to come faithful, tractable, tame, the right hand of Mercy producing this effect on it.

As I have said then, if it ever come to us, let us hand it over to her; but if it come not, let us not seek after it, nor fret ourselves, nor count its possessors happy; for what sort of a notion of happiness is this? Unless you would also say that those who fight with beasts are to be envied, because those high-priced animals are shut up and reserved by the proposers of such contests for themselves: who however not daring themselves to approach or to touch them, but fearing and trembling because of them, hand over others to them. Something like this, I say, is the case of the wealthy, when they have shut up their wealth in their treasures as if it were some savage beast, and day by day receive from it innumerable wounds: in this latter unlike to the beasts: since they, when you lead them out, then, and not till then, hurt such as meet them: but this, when it is shut up and preserved, then destroys its possessors and hoarders.

But let us make this beast tame. And it will be tame, if we do not shut it up, but give it into the hands of all who are in need. So shall we reap from this quarter the greatest blessings, both living in the present life with safety and a good hope, and in the day that is to come standing with boldness: to which may we all attain, through the grace and mercy, etc. etc.

Homily 36 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 14:20

Brethren, be not children in mind; howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men.

As might be expected, after his long argument and demonstration he adopts a more vehement style and abundance of rebuke; and mentions an example suited to the subject. For children too are wont to gape after trifles and to be fluttered, but of things very great they have not so much admiration. Since then these also having the gift of tongues, which was the lowest of all, thought they had the whole; therefore he says, "*Be not children,*" i.e., be not without understanding where ye ought to be considerate, but there be ye childlike and simple, where unrighteousness is, where vain-glory, where pride. For he that is a babe in wickedness ought also to be wise. Since as wisdom with wickedness would not be wisdom, so also simplicity with folly would not be simplicity, it being requisite both in simplicity to avoid folly, and in wisdom wickedness. For as neither bitter nor sweet medicines in excess do good, so neither does simplicity by itself, nor wisdom: and this is why Christ enjoining us to mix both said, "*Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*" [Matthew 10:16]

But what is it to be a babe in wickedness? Not even to know what wickedness is: yea, such he willed them to be. Wherefore also he said, "*It is actually reported that there is fornication among you.*" [1 Corinthians 5:1] He said not, "*is done,*" but is "*reported:*" as if he said, "*you are not without knowledge of the thing; you have heard of it some time.*" I say, he would have them both to be men and children; the one however in wickedness, but

the other in wisdom. For so even the man may become a man, if he be also a child: but as long as he is not a child in wickedness, neither will he be a man. For the wicked, instead of being mature, will be but a fool.

1 Corinthians 14:21

"In the law it is written, By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear me, says the Lord."

Yet surely it is no where written in the Law, but as I said before, he calls always the whole of the Old Testament, the Law: both the prophets and the historical books. And he brings forward his testimony from Esaias the prophet, again covertly detracting from the glory of the gift, for their profit; nevertheless, even thus he states it with praise. For the expression, *"not even thus,"* has force to point out that the miracle was enough to astonish them; and if they did not believe, the fault was theirs. And wherefore did God work it, if they were not to believe? That He might in every case appear to do His part.

2. Having shown then even from the prophecy, that the sign in question is not of great use, he adds,

1 Corinthians 14:22

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying is for a sign not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe."

1 Corinthians 14:23

"If therefore the whole Church be assembled together, and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that you are mad?"

1 Corinthians 14:24

"But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved by all, he is judged by all:"

1 Corinthians 14:25

"And thus the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed."

Great in this place is the difficulty which one seems to find arising from what is said. For if tongues are for a sign to them that believe not, how says he, if they that believe not should see you speaking with tongues, they will say that *"you are mad?"* And if prophecy be *"not for the unbelieving, but for them that believe,"* how shall also the unbelievers gain thereby?

"For if there come in," says he, *"when you are prophesying, one that believes not, he is reproved by all, and judged."*

And not only this, but also after this another question hence springs up: since the tongue will appear on the contrary greater than the prophecy. For if the tongues are for a sign to the unbelieving, but prophecy to them that believe, that which draws in aliens and makes of the household, is greater than that which regulates those of the household. What then is the meaning of that expression? Nothing difficult nor obscure, nor contrary to what went before, but rather very agreeable to it, if we give heed: viz., that prophecy is suitable to both, but then tongue not so. Wherefore having said of the tongue, *"it is for a sign,"* he adds, *"not to them that believe, but to the unbelievers,"* and to them *"for a sign,"* i.e., for astonishment, not so much for instruction.

"But in the case of prophecy too," says some one, *"he did the very same thing, saying, 'but prophesying serves not for the unbelieving, but for them which believe.' For the believer has no need to see a sign, but requires only teaching and catechizing. How then do you say,"* says he, *"that*

prophecy is of use to both, when Paul says 'not to the unbelieving, but to them which believe?'" If you will accurately examine, you will understand what is said. For he said not, "*prophecy is not useful to them unbelieving,*" but, "*is not for a sign,*" as the tongue, i.e., a mere sign without profit: nor is the tongue any way useful to believers; for its only work is to astonish and to confound; the word "*sign*" being one of those which may be taken two ways: as when he says, "*show me a sign,*" [Psalm 86:17] and adds, "*for good:*" and again, "*I have become as a wonder unto many,*" [Psalm 71:7] i.e., a sign.

And to show you that he introduced the term "*sign*" here, not as a thing which of course did some good, he added that which resulted from it. And what was this? "*They will say,*" says he, "*that you are mad.*" This however not from the nature of the sign, but from their folly. But when you hear of unbelievers, do not suppose that the same persons are in every case intended, but at one time they which are incurably diseased and abide uncorrected, and at another they which may be changed; such as were they who in the times of the Apostles admire the mighty things of God which they hear of; such as in the case of Cornelius. His meaning accordingly is this; that prophecy avails both among the unbelieving and among them that believe: as to the tongue, when heard by the unbelieving and inconsiderate, instead of profiting by it, they rather deride the utterers as madmen. For, in fact, it is to them but for a sign, i.e., in order to astonish them merely; whereas they who had understanding used also to profit by it: with a view to which the sign was given. Even as then there were not only certain who accused them of drunkenness, but many also admired them as relating the wonderful works of God. It appears then that the mockers were those without understanding. Wherefore also Paul did not simply say, "*they will say that you are mad,*" but added, "*unlearned and unbelievers.*"

But prophecy is not for a sign merely, but is also suitable and useful for faith and for profit unto both classes. And this, if not directly, yet in the sequel he more clearly explained, saying, *"he is reproved by all. For, if all prophesy,"* says he, *"and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved by all; he is judged by all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed."*

So that not in this only is prophecy greater, in its availing with each class, but also in its attracting the more shameless of the unbelievers. For it was not the same wonder, when Peter convicted Sapphira, which was a work of prophecy, and when he spoke with tongues: but in the former case all shrank into themselves; whereas, when he spoke with tongues, he got the credit of being even beside himself.

3. Having said then, that a tongue profited not, and having again qualified this statement by turning the charge upon the Jews, he proceeds to signify that it even does injury. *"And wherefore was it given?"* That it might go forth with interpretation: since without this, it has even the contrary effect among them that are without understanding. *"For if,"* says he, *"all speak with tongues, and there come in unbelievers or unlearned, they will say that you are mad;"* as indeed even the Apostles incurred the suspicion of being drunken: for *"these men,"* it says, are filled with new wine: [Acts 2:13] but it is not the fault of the sign, but of their unskilfulness; therefore he added, *"unlearned and unbelievers,"* to show that the notion belongs to their ignorance and want of faith; for, as I before said, his object is to rank that gift not among things that are disparaged, but among those which do not greatly profit, and this, in order to repress them, and bring them to a necessity of seeking for an interpreter. For since the greater part looked not to this, but made use of it for display and rivalry, this is what he especially

withdraws them from, intimating that their credit is injured, they bringing on themselves a suspicion of madness. And this especially is what Paul continually attempts to establish, when he wants to lead men away from any thing: he shows that the person suffers loss in respect of those very things which he desires.

And do thou accordingly likewise: if you would lead men away from pleasure, show that the thing is bitter: if you would withdraw them from vain-glory, show that the thing is full of dishonor: thus also was Paul used to do. When he would tear away the rich from their love of money, he said not merely that wealth is a hurtful thing, but also that it casts into temptations. *"For they that desire to be rich,"* says he, *fall into a temptation.* [1 Timothy 6:9] Thus, since it seems to deliver from temptations, he attributes to it the contrary of that which the rich supposed. Others again held fast by the wisdom that is without, as though by it establishing Christ's doctrine; he signifies that not only it gives no aid to the cross, but even makes it void. They held to going to law before strangers, thinking it unmeet to be judged by their own, as if those without were wiser: he points out that going to law before them that are without is shameful. They clave to things offered in sacrifice to idols, as displaying perfect knowledge: he intimates that this is a mark of imperfect knowledge, not to know how to manage in the things which concern our neighbors. So also here, because they were wild about this gift of tongues, through their love of glory, he signifies that this on the other hand more than any thing brings shame upon them, not only depriving them of glory, but also involving them in a suspicion of madness. But he did not at once say this, but having spoken very many things before, when he had made his discourse acceptable, then he brings in that topic so very contrary to their opinion. And this in fact is no more than the common rule; that he who intends thoroughly to shake a

deep-rooted opinion and to turn men round to its contrary, must not at once state the opposites: otherwise he will be ridiculous in the eyes of them that are preoccupied by the contrary conviction. Since that which is very much beside expectation cannot be from the beginning easily received, but you must first well undermine by other arguments, and then give it the contrary turn.

Thus for example he did when discoursing of marriage: I mean, since many regarded it as a thing which brings ease, and he wished to intimate that the abstaining from marriage was ease; if he had said this at once he would not so easily have made it acceptable: whereas now, having stated it after much other matter and timing its introduction exactly, he strongly touched the hearers. This also he did in respect of virginity. For before this having said much, and after this again, at last he says, "*I spare you,*" and, "*I would have you to be free from cares.*" [1 Corinthians 7:28-32]

This then he does in respect of the tongues, showing that they not only deprive of glory, but also bring shame upon those who have them in the eyes of the unbelievers. But prophecy, on the contrary, is both free from reproach among the unbelievers, and has very great credit and usefulness. For none will say in regard to prophesying, "*they are mad;*" nor will any one deride them that prophesy; but, on the contrary, will be astonished at and admire them. For "*he is reprov'd by all,*" i.e., the things which he has in his heart, are brought forward and shown unto all: now it is not the same thing for any one to come in and see one speaking in Persian and another in Syriac, and to come in and hear the secrets of his own mind; as whether he comes in as a tempter and with evil mind, or sincerely; or that such and such a thing has been done by him, and such another designed. For this is much more awful and more profitable than the other. For this cause therefore, whereas of the tongues he says, "*you are mad;*" not however

affirming this of himself, but of their judgment: i.e., *"they will say,"* says he, *"that you are mad;"* here, on the contrary, he makes use both of the verdict of the facts, and that of those who are the objects of the benefit. *"For he is reproved by all,"* says he, he is judged by all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is around you indeed. Do you see that this is not capable of two interpretations: how in the former case what is done may be doubted of, and here and there an unbeliever might ascribe it to madness? Whereas here there will be no such thing, but he will both wonder and worship, first making a confession by his deeds, and then by his words also. Thus also Nebuchadnezzar worshipped God, saying, *"Of a truth, your God, He is the God that reveals secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret."* [Daniel 2:47] Do you see the might of prophecy, how it changed that savage one and brought him under instruction and introduced him to faith?

1 Corinthians 14:26

4. *"What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying."*

Do you see the foundation and the rule of Christianity? How, as it is the artificer's work to build, so it is the Christian's to profit his neighbors in all things.

But since he had vehemently run down the gift; lest it might seem to be superfluous, for with a view to pull down their pride and no more, he did this:— again he reckons it with the other gifts, saying, *"has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue."* For of old they used also to make psalms by a gift and to teach by a gift. Nevertheless, *"let all these look to one thing,"* says he, the correction of their neighbor: let nothing be done at random. For if you come not to edify your brother, why do you come here at all? In fact, I do not make much account of the difference of the gifts. One thing concerns me, one thing is my desire, to do all things *"unto edifying."* Thus also he that has the lesser gift will outrun him that has the greater, if this be not wanting. Yea, therefore are the gifts bestowed, that each might be edified; since unless this take place, the gift will rather turn to the condemnation of the receiver. For what, tell me, is the use of prophesying? What is the use of raising the dead, when there is none who profits by it? But if this be the end of the gifts, and if it be possible to effect it in another way without gifts, boast not yourself on the score of the signs, nor do thou bewail yourself to whom the gifts are denied.

1 Corinthians 14:27

5. *"And if any man speaks in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that in turn; and let one interpret."*

1 Corinthians 14:28

"But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church; and let him speak to himself, and to God."

What do you say, tell me? Having spoken so much of tongues, that the gift is a thing unprofitable, a thing superfluous, if it have no interpreter, do you command again to speak with tongues? I do not command, says he, neither do I forbid; as when he says, *"if any of them that believe not bid you to a feast and you be disposed to go,"* he says it not laying down a law for them to go, but not hindering them: so likewise here. *"And let him speak to himself and to God."* If he endure not to be silent, says he, but is so ambitious and vain-glorious, *"let him speak by himself."* And thus, by the very fact of so permitting, he greatly checked and put them to shame. Which he does also elsewhere, discoursing of converse with a wife and saying, *"But this I say because of your incontinency."* But not so did he speak, when he was discoursing of prophecy. How then? In a tone of command and legislation: *"Let the prophets speak, two or three."* And he nowhere here seeks the interpreter, nor does he stop the mouth of him that prophesies as under the former head, saying, *"If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence;"* because in fact he who speaks in a tongue is not sufficient of himself. Wherefore if any has both gifts, let him speak. But if he has not, yet wish to speak, let him do so with the interpreter's aid. For the prophet is an interpreter, but of God; whereas you are of man. *"But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence:"* for nothing ought to be done superfluously, nothing for ambition. Only *"let him speak to himself and to God;"* i.e., mentally, or quietly and without noise: at least, if he will speak. For this is surely not the tone of one making a law, but it may be of one who

shames them more even by his permission; as when he says, "*but if any hunger, let him eat at home:*" and seeming to give permission, he touches them hereby the more sharply. "*For you come not together for this purpose,*" says he, "*that you may show that you have a gift, but that you may edify the hearers;*" which also he before said, "*Let all things be done unto edifying.*"

1 Corinthians 14:29

6. *"Let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others discern."*

No where has he added, *"at the most,"* as in the case of the tongues.

And how is this, one says? For he makes out that neither is prophesy sufficient in itself, if at least he permits the judgment to others. Nay, surely it is quite sufficient; and this is why he did not stop the mouth of the prophet, as of the other, when there is no interpreter; nor, as in his case he said, *"if there be no interpreter let him keep silence,"* so also in the case of the prophet, *"if there be none to discern, let him not prophesy;"* but he only secured the hearer; since for the satisfaction of the hearers he said this, that no diviner might throw himself in among them. For of this also at the beginning he bade them beware, when he introduced a distinction between divination and prophecy, and now he bids them discriminate and spy out the matter, so that no Satanic teacher might privily enter.

1 Corinthians 14:30

"But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence."

1 Corinthians 14:31

"For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted."

What may this be which is spoken? *"If when you prophesy,"* says he, *"and art speaking, the spirit of another stir him up, be silent thenceforth."* For that which he said in the case of the tongues, this also here he requires, that it should be done *"in turn,"* only in a diviner way here. For he made not use of the very expression, *"in turn ?"* but *"if a revelation be made to another."* Since what need was there further, that when the second was moved to prophesy the first should speak? Ought they then both? Nay, this were profane and would produce confusion. Ought the first? This too were out of place. For to this end when the one was speaking, the Spirit moved the other, in order that he too might say somewhat.

So then, comforting him that had been silenced, he says, *"For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted."* Do you see how again he states the reason wherefore he does all things? For if him that speaks with tongues he altogether forbid to speak, when he has not an interpreter, because of the unprofitableness; reasonably also he bids restrain prophecy, if it have not this quality, but creates confusion and disturbance and unseasonable tumult.

1 Corinthians 14:32

"And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

Do you see how he put him to shame earnestly and fearfully? For that the man might not strive nor be factious, he signifies that the gift itself was under subjection. For by "*spirit*" here, he means its actual working. But if the spirit be subject, much more thou its possessor canst not justly be contentious.

7. Then he signifies that this is pleasing also to God, subjoining and saying,

1 Corinthians 14:33

"For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as [I teach] in all the Churches of the saints."

Do you see by how many reasons he leads him to silence and soothes him, in the act of giving way to the other? By one thing and that the chief, that he was not shut up by such a proceeding; *"for you all can prophesy,"* says he, *"one by one."* By a second, that this seems good to the Spirit Himself; *"for the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."* Besides these, that this is according to the mind of God; *"for God,"* says he, *"is not a God of confusion, but of peace:"* and by a fourth, that in every part of the world this custom prevails, and no strange thing is enjoined upon them. For thus, says he, *"I teach in all the Churches of the saints."*

What now can be more awful than these things? For in truth the Church was a heaven then, the Spirit governing all things, and moving each one of the rulers and making him inspired. But now we retain only the symbols of those gifts. For now also we speak two or three, and in turn, and when one is silent, another begins. But these are only signs and memorials of those things. Wherefore when we begin to speak, the people respond, *"with your Spirit,"* indicating that of old they thus used to speak, not of their own wisdom, but moved by the Spirit. But not so now: (I speak of my own case so far.) But the present Church is like a woman who has fallen from her former prosperous days, and in many respects retains the symbols only of that ancient prosperity; displaying indeed the repositories and caskets of her golden ornaments, but bereft of her wealth: such an one does the present Church resemble. And I say not this in respect of gifts: for it were nothing marvelous if it were this only: but in respect also of life and

virtue. Thus the list of her widows, and the choir of her virgins, then gave great ornament to the churches: but now she is made desolate and void, and the tokens only remain. There are indeed widows now, there are also virgins; but they retain not that adornment which women should have who prepare themselves for such wrestlings. For the special distinction of the virgin is the caring for the things of God alone, and the waiting on Him without distraction: and the widow's mark too should be not so much the not engaging in a second marriage, as the other things, charity to the poor, hospitality, continuing instant in prayers, all those other things, which Paul writing to Timothy requires with great exactness. One may see also the married women exhibiting among us great seemliness. But this is not the only thing required, but rather that sedulous attention to the needy, through which those women of old shone out most brightly. Not as the generality now-a-days. For then instead of gold they were clothed with the fair array of almsgiving: but now, having left off this, they are decked out on every side with cords of gold woven of the chain of their sins.

Shall I speak of another repository too emptied of its hereditary splendor? They all met together in old time and sang psalms in common. This we do also now: but then among all was there one soul and one heart: but now not in one single soul can one see that unanimity, rather great is the warfare every where.

"Peace," even now, *"to all,"* he that presides in the Church prays for, entering as it were into his Father's house: but of this peace the name is frequent, but the reality no where.

8. Then the very houses were churches: but now the church itself is a house, or rather worse than any house. For in a house one may see much good order: since both the mistress of the house is seated on her chair with all seemliness, and the maidens weave in silence, and each of the domestics

has his appointed task in hand. But here great is the tumult, great the confusion, and our assemblies differ in nothing from a vintner's shop, so loud is the laughter, so great the disturbance; as in baths, as in markets, the cry and tumult is universal. And these things are here only: since elsewhere it is not permitted even to address one's neighbor in the church, not even if one have received back a long absent friend, but these things are done without, and very properly. For the church is no barber's or perfumer's shop, nor any other merchant's warehouse in the market-place, but a place of angels, a place of archangels, a palace of God, heaven itself. As therefore if one had parted the heaven and had brought you in there, though you should see your father or your brother, you would not venture to speak; so neither here ought one to utter any other sound but these which are spiritual. For, in truth, the things in this place are also a heaven.

And if you believe not, look to this table, call to mind for Whose sake it is set, and why: consider Who it is that is coming forth here; tremble with awe even before the time. For so, when one sees the throne only of a king, in heart he rises up, expecting the king's coming forth. And do thou accordingly thrill with awe even before that thrilling moment: raise up yourself, and before you see the veils drawn aside and the choir of angels marching forth, ascend thou to the very heaven.

But the uninitiated knows not these things. Well then, it is necessary with a view to him also to introduce other topics. For neither towards him shall we want reasons able to stir him up thoroughly and cause him to soar.

Thou then who know not these things, when you shall hear the prophet saying, "*Thus says the Lord,*" quit the earth, ascend thou also unto heaven, consider who it is that by him discourses with you.

But as things are, for a buffoon who is moving laughter or for a whorish and abandoned woman, so vast an assemblage of spectators is set,

listening in entire quietness to what is spoken, and this when none commands silence ; and there is neither tumult, nor cry, nor any the least noise: but when God is speaking from heaven on subjects so awful, we behave ourselves more impudently than dogs, and even to the harlot women we pay greater respect than to God.

Does it make your flesh creep to be told of these things? Nay then, much rather let it creep when you do them.

9. That which Paul said of them that despised the poor and feasted alone, "*What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not?*" [1 Corinthians 11:22]—the same allow me also to say of those who make a disturbance and hold conversations in this place. "*What? Have ye not houses to trifle in? Or despise ye the Church of God, and corrupt those even who would be modest and quiet?*" "*But it is sweet and pleasant for you to converse with your friends.*" I do not forbid this, but let it be done in the house, in the market, in the baths. For the church is not a place of conversation, but of teaching. But now it differs not from the market; nay, if it be not too bold a word, haply, not even from the stage; in such sort do the women who assemble here adorn themselves more wantonly than the unchaste who are to be found there. Accordingly we see that even hither many profligates are enticed by them; and if any one is trying or intending to corrupt a woman, there is no place, I suppose, that seems to him more suitable than the church. And if anything be to be sold or bought, the church appears more convenient than the market. For on such subjects also there is more talk here than in the shops themselves. Or if any wish to say or to hear any scandal, you will find that this too is to be had here more than in the forum without. And if you wish to hear any thing of political matters, or the affairs of private families, or the camp, go not to the judgment-hall, nor sit in the

apothecary's shop; for here, here I say are those who report all these things more accurately; and our assemblies are any thing rather than a church.

Can it be that I have touched you to the quick? I for my part think not. For while you continue in the same practices, how am I to know that you are touched by what has been said? Therefore I must needs handle the same topics again.

Are these things then to be endured? Are these things to be borne? We weary and distract ourselves every day that you may not depart without having learned something useful: and none of you go away at all the better, but rather injured the more. Yea, and *"ye come together unto judgment,"* having no longer any cloak for your sin, and you thrust out the more modest, disturbing them with your fooleries on every side.

But what do the multitude say? *"I do not hear what is read,"* says one, *"nor do I know what the words are which are spoken."* Because you make a tumult and confusion, because you come not with a reverent soul. What do you say? *"I know not what things are said."* Well then, for this very reason ought thou to give heed. But if not even the obscurity stir up your soul, much more if things were clear would you hurry them by. Yea, this is the reason why neither all things are clear, lest you should indulge indolence; nor obscure, lest you should be in despair.

And whereas that eunuch and barbarian [Acts 8:20] said none of these things, but surrounded as he was with a crowd of so important affairs and on his journey, had a book in his hands and was reading: do you, both abounding in teachers, and having others to read to you privately, allege to me your excuses and pretexts? Do you not know what is said? Why then pray that you may learn: but sure it is impossible to be ignorant of all things. For many things are of themselves evident and clear. And further, even if you be ignorant of all, even so ought thou to be quiet, not to put out

them that are attentive; that God, accepting your quietness and your reverence, may make the obscure things also plain. But can you not be silent? Well then, go out, not to become a mischief to others also.

For in truth there ought to be but one voice in the church always, even as there is but one body. Therefore both he that reads utters his voice alone, and the Bishop himself is content to sit in silence; and he who chants chants alone; and though all utter the response, the voice is wafted as from one mouth. And he that pronounces a homily pronounces it alone. But when there are many conversing on many and diverse subjects, why do we disturb you for no good? Since surely unless ye thought that we are but disturbing you for no good, you would not in the midst of our speech on such high matters, discourse on things of no consequence.

10. Therefore not in your conduct only, but in your very estimation of things, there is great perversion. And ye gape after superfluities, and leaving the truth pursue all sorts of shadows and dreams. Are not all present things a shadow and dreams, and worse than a shadow? For both before they appear, they fly away; and before they are flown, the trouble they give is much, and more than the pleasure. Let one acquire in this world and bury in the earth ever such abundance of wealth, yet when the night is past, naked he shall depart hence, and no wonder. Since they too who are rich but in a dream, on rising from their couch have nothing of what they seemed to have while sleeping. So also are the greedy of gain: or rather not so, but in a much worse condition. For he that dreams of being rich, neither has the money which he fancied he had, nor is any other mischief found to have accrued to him from this phantasy when he arises, but this man is both deprived of his riches, and has also to depart, filled with the sins which arise out of them; and in his wealth having but enjoyed a phantasy, the evils resulting from his wealth he sees not in fancy any more, but in the very

truth of things; and his pleasure was in dreams, but the punishment ensuing on his pleasure turns out no more a dream, but is matter of actual experience. Yea rather, even before that punishment, even here he pays the heaviest penalty, in the very collecting of his wealth wearing into himself innumerable sadnesses, anxieties, accusations, calumnies, tumults, perturbations.

In order therefore that we may be delivered both from the dreams and from the evils that are not in dreams, instead of covetousness let us choose almsgiving, instead of rapine, mercy to mankind. For thus we shall obtain the good things both present and to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 37 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 14:34

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also says the law.

Having abated the disturbance both from the tongues and from the prophesyings; and having made a law to prevent confusion, that they who speak with tongues should do this in turn, and that they who prophesy should be silent when another begins; he next in course proceeds to the disorder which arose from the women, cutting off their unseasonable boldness of speech: and that very opportunely. For if to them that have the gifts it is not permitted to speak inconsiderately, nor when they will, and this, though they be moved by the Spirit; much less to those women who prate idly and to no purpose. Therefore he represses their babbling with much authority, and taking the law along with him, thus he sews up their mouths; not simply exhorting here or giving counsel, but even laying his commands on them vehemently, by the recitation of an ancient law on that subject. For having said, *"Let your women keep silence in the churches;"* and *"it is not permitted unto them to speak, but let them be in subjection;"* he added, *"as also says the law."* And where does the law say this? *"Your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you."* [Genesis 3:16] Do you see the wisdom of Paul, what kind of testimony he adduced, one that not only enjoins on them silence, but silence too with fear; and with as great fear as that wherewith a maid servant ought to keep herself quiet. Wherefore also having himself said, *"it is not permitted unto them to speak,"* he added not, *"but to be silent,"* but instead of *"to be silent,"* he set

down what is more, to wit, "*the being in subjection.*" And if this be so in respect of husbands, much more in respect of teachers, and fathers, and the general assembly of the Church. "*But if they are not even to speak,*" says one, "*nor ask a question, to what end are they to be present?*" That they may hear what they ought; but the points which are questioned let them learn at home from their husbands. Wherefore also he added,

1 Corinthians 14:35

"And if they would learn any thing, let them ask their own husbands at home."

Thus, *"not only, as it seems, are they not allowed to speak,"* says he, *"at random, but not even to ask any question in the church."* Now if they ought not to ask questions, much more is their speaking at pleasure contrary to law. And what may be the cause of his setting them under so great subjection? Because the woman is in some sort a weaker being and easily carried away and light minded. Here you see why he set over them their husbands as teachers, for the benefit of both. For so he both rendered the women orderly, and the husbands he made anxious, as having to deliver to their wives very exactly what they heard.

Further, because they supposed this to be an ornament to them, I mean their speaking in public; again he brings round the discourse to the opposite point, saying, *"For it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church."* That is, first he made this out from the law of God, then from common reason and our received custom; even when he was discoursing with the women about long hair, he said, *"Does not even nature herself teach you?"* [1 Corinthians 11:14] And everywhere you may find this to be his manner, not only from the divine Scriptures, but also from the common custom, to put them to shame.

2. But besides these things, he also shames them by consideration of what all agreed on, and what was every where prescribed; which topic also here he has set down, saying,

1 Corinthians 14:36

"What? Was it from you that the word of God went forth? Or came it unto you alone?"

Thus he brings in the other Churches also as holding this law, both abating the disturbance by consideration of the novelty of the thing, and by the general voice making his saying acceptable. Wherefore also elsewhere he said, *"Who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in all the Churches."* [1 Corinthians 4:17] And again, *"God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the Churches of the saints."* [1 Corinthians 14:33] And here, *"What? Was it from you that the word of God went forth? Or came it unto you alone?"* i.e., *"neither first, nor alone are you believers, but the whole world."* Which also writing to the Colossians he said, *"even as it is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world,"* [Colossians 1:6] speaking of the Gospel.

But he turns it also at another time to the encouragement of his hearers; as when he says that theirs were the first fruits, and were manifest unto all. Thus, writing to the Thessalonians he said, *"For from you has sounded forth the word of God,"* and, *"in every place your faith to Godward is gone forth."* [1 Thessalonians 1:8] And again to the Romans, *"Your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world."* For both are apt to shame and stir up, as well the being commended of others, as that they have others partakers in their judgment. Wherefore also here he says; *"What? Was it from you that the word of God went forth? Or came it unto you only?"* *"For neither can you say this,"* says he; *"we were made teachers to the rest, and it cannot be right for us to learn of others;"* nor, *"the faith remained in this place only, and no precedents from other quarters ought to be received."* Do

you see by how many arguments he put them to shame? He introduced the law, he signified the shamefulfulness of the thing, he brought forward the other Churches.

3. Next, what is strongest of all he puts last, saying, "*God ordains these things even at this time by me.*"

1 Corinthians 14:37

Thus: "if any man thinks himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you that they are the commandments of the Lord."

1 Corinthians 14:38

"But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant."

And wherefore did he add this? Intimating that he is not using violence nor contention, which is a sign of them who wish not to set up their own things, but aim at what is profitable to others. Wherefore also in another place he says, *"But if any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom."* [1 Corinthians 11:16] But he does not this everywhere, but only where the offenses are not very great, and then rather as putting them to shame. Since when he discourses of other sins, he speaks not thus. But how? *"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor effeminate, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* [1 Corinthians 6:9-10] And again, *"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing."* [Galatians 5:2] But here, since his discourse was of silence, he does not very keenly inveigh against them, by this very thing attracting them the more. Then, as he is ever wont to do, unto the former subject whence he digressed to say these things, he brings back his discourse as follows:

1 Corinthians 14:39

"Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."

For this too is his wont, not only to work out what is before him, but also starting from that to set right whatever seems to him in any way akin to it, and again to return to the former, so as not to appear to wander from the subject. For so when he was discoursing of their concord in their banquets, he digressed to their Communion in the Mysteries, and having thence put them to shame, he returns again to the former, saying, *"Wherefore, when you come together to eat, wait one for another."* [1 Corinthians 11:33]

And here, accordingly, having discoursed of good order in their gifts, and of its being a duty neither to faint in the lesser, nor to be puffed up on account of the greater; then having made an excursion from thence to the sobriety becoming women and having established it, he returns again to his subject, saying, *"Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."* Do you see how to the end he preserved the difference of these? And how he signifies that the one is very necessary, the other not so? Wherefore of the one he says, *"desire earnestly,"* but of the other, *"forbid not."*

4. Then, as in brief summary, setting all things right, he adds the words,

1 Corinthians 14:40

"Let all things be done decently and in order."

Again giving a blow to them who chose to behave themselves unseemly without cause, and to incur the imputation of madness; and who keep not their proper rank. For nothing does so build up as good order, as peace, as love; even as their contraries tend to pull down. And not only in things spiritual, but also in all others one may observe this. Thus whether it be in a dance, or a ship, or in a chariot, or a camp, if you should confound the order, and casting the greater out of their proper place, should bring in the lesser into their rank, you destroy all, and thus things are turned upside down. Neither let us then destroy our order, nor place the head below and the feet above: now this is done when we cast down right reason, and set our lusts, passions, and pleasure, over the rational part: whence violent are the billows, and great the confusion, and intolerable the tempest, all things being wrapt in darkness.

And, if you will, let us first examine the unseemliness which arises herefrom, and then the loss. How then may this be clear to us, and thoroughly known? Let us bring forward a man in that frame of mind; enamoured of a harlot and overcome by a dishonorable passion; and then we shall see the mockery which this comes to. For what can be baser than a man watching the doors before the harlots' chambers, and beaten by a whorish woman, and weeping, and lamenting, and turning his glory into shame? And if you will also see the loss, call to mind, I pray, the expenditure of money, the extreme risks, the contests with rival lovers, the wounds, the stripes received in such affrays.

Such also are they who are holden by the lust of wealth; or rather they behave themselves more unseemly. For whereas these are wholly occupied about one person; the covetous busy themselves about all men's substance alike, both poor and rich, and long for things that are not; a thing which above all denotes the wildness of their passion. For they say not, "*I would fain have the substance of such a person or of such another,*" only, but they want the very mountains to be gold, and the houses and all that they see; and they go forth into another world, and this passion they feel to a boundless degree, and at no point cease from their lusting. What discourse can set before us the tempest of those thoughts, the waves, the darkness? And where the waves and tempest are so great, what pleasure can there be? There is not any; but tumult, and anguish, and black clouds which instead of rain bring great sorrow of heart: the kind of thing which is wont to happen in the case of those who are enamoured of beauty not their own. Wherefore they who have no passionate love at all are in more pleasure than any lovers.

5. This however no man would gainsay. But to me even he who loves, but restrains his passion, seems to live more pleasurably than he who continually enjoys his mistress. For though the proof be rather difficult, nevertheless even at that disadvantage the argument must be ventured on: the cause of the increased difficulty not being the nature of the thing, but because of the want of meet hearers for this high morality. Thus: whether is it pleasanter, tell me, to the lover, to be despised by his beloved, or to be honored, and to look down upon her? Evidently the latter. Whom then, tell me, will the harlot value more? Him that is a slave to her and is already led captive at her will, or him that is above her nets and soars higher than her arrows? Every one must see, the latter. And about whom will she take more thought, the fallen, or him that is not yet so? Him that is not yet so, of

course. And which will be more an object of desire, he who is subdued, or he who is not yet taken? He who up to this time is not yet taken. And if you disbelieve it, I will produce my proof from what takes place within yourselves. As thus: of which woman would a man be more enamored; one that easily submits and gives herself up to him, or one that denies, and gives him trouble? Evidently of this last; since hereby the longing is more vehemently kindled. Of course then in the woman's case also exactly the same thing will happen. And him will they honor and admire more who looks down upon them. But if this be true, so likewise is the other, that he enjoys greater pleasure who is more honored and beloved. Since the general too lets alone the city that has been once taken, but that which stands out and maintains the struggle he besets with all diligence: and the hunter, when the animal is caught, keeps it shut up in darkness as the harlot does her lover, but pursues that which flies from him.

But I shall be told, "*the one enjoys his desire, the other not so.*" But freedom from disgrace, and from being a slave under her tyrannical commands, the not being led and dragged about by her as a drudge, beaten, spit upon, pitched head foremost; do you consider this to be a small pleasure, tell me? Nay, if one would accurately examine these things, and were able to gather into one their insults, complaints, everlasting quarrels, some arising from their tempers, others from their wantonness, their enmities, and all the rest, such as they only that feel them know—he will find that there is no war but has more truces than this wretched life of theirs. What pleasure then do you mean, tell me? The temporary and brief enjoyment of intercourse? But this speedily does strife overtake, and storms, and rage, and the same madness again.

6. And these things have been said by us, as one would speak discoursing with licentious youths, who do not very patiently submit to hear

our discourses of the kingdom and of hell.

And now that we are bringing forward these topics also, it is not even possible to say how great is the pleasure of the continent; if one frame in one's own mind his crowns, his rewards, his converse with the angels, the proclaiming of him before the world, his boldness, those blessed and immortal hopes of his.

"But intercourse has a certain pleasure:" for this they are continually repeating: *"while the continent continually suffers pain contending with the tyranny of nature."* Nay, but one shall find just the contrary result. For this violence and tumult is present with the unchaste rather: there being in his body a violent tempest, and no sea in a storm so grievously vexed as he; never withstanding his passion, but ever receiving blows from it; as the possessed and they that are continually rent in the midst by evil spirits. Whereas the temperate like a noble champion continually giving blows to it, reaps the best of pleasures, and sweeter than ten thousand of that kind; and this victory and his good conscience, and those illustrious trophies, are ornaments for him continually to deck himself withal.

As to the other, if after his intercourse he has a little respite, it must be counted nothing. For again the storm comes on, and again there are waves. But he that commands himself does not suffer this tumult to lay hold of him at all, nor the sea to arise, nor the wild beast to roar. And even if he endure some violence in restraining such an impulse, yet so does the other also, continually receiving blows and stabs, and unable to endure the sting: and it is like as if there were a wild horse furious and struggling, and one should check with the bridle, and hold him in with all skill: while another giving him the rein to escape the trouble, were dragged along by him and carried hither and there.

If I have spoken these things more plainly than is becoming, let no man blame me. For I desire not to make a brave show by a gravity of words, but to make my hearers grave.

Therefore also the prophets spare no such words, wishing to extirpate the licentiousness of the Jews, but do even more nakedly inveigh against them than we do now in the things we have spoken. For so a physician wishing to remove an ulcer does not consider how he may keep his hands clean, but how he may rid the patient of the ulcer; and he who would raise on high the lowly, first makes himself lowly; and he who seeks to slay the conspirator stains himself with blood as well as the other, and this makes him the more brilliant. Since if one were to see a soldier returning from the war, stained with gore and blood and brains, he will not loathe him nor turn from him on this account, but will even admire him the more. So then let us do, when we see any one returning, covered with blood after the slaughter of his evil desire, let us the more admire him and become partakers of his battle and victory, and say to those who indulge this wild love, *"show us the pleasure you derive from lust; for the continent has that which comes of his victory, but thou none from any quarter. But if you should mention that which is connected with the criminal act, yet the other is more manifest and satisfactory. For you have from the enjoyment something brief and hardly apparent; but he from his conscience, has both a greater and an enduring and a sweeter joy. The company of a woman has surely no such power as self-command, to preserve the soul undisturbed and give it wings."*

Well then: the continent man, as I said, thus evidently makes his pleasure out to us: but in your case I see the dejection arising from defeat, but the pleasure, desiring to see, I find not. For what do you consider the moment of pleasure? That before the criminal action? Nay, it is not so, for it is a time of madness and delirium and frenzy: to grind the teeth and be

beside one's self is not any pleasure: and if it were pleasure, it would not produce the same effects on you which they who are in pain endure. For they who strike with their fists and are stricken grind their teeth, and women in travail distracted with pains do the same. So that this is no pleasure, but frenzy rather, and confusion, and tumult. Shall we say then, the time after the action? Nay, neither is this. For neither could we say that a woman just delivered is in pleasure, but in release from certain pains. But this is by no means pleasure, but weakness rather and falling away: and there is a great difference between these two. What then is the time of pleasure, tell me? There is none. But if there be any, it is so brief as not even to be apparent. At least, having zealously sought in a great many ways to detect and apprehend it, we have not been able. But the time of the chaste man's pleasure is not such, rather it is wider and evident to all. Or rather, all his life is in pleasure, his conscience crowned, the waves laid, no disturbance from any quarter arising within him.

Since then this man's life is more in pleasure, while the life spent in love of pleasure is in dejection and disquiets; let us flee from licentiousness, let us keep hold on continence, that we may also obtain the good things to come, through the grace and mercy, etc., etc.

Homily 38 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:1-2

Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand; by which also you are saved: in what words I preached it unto you.

Having finished the discourse of spiritual gifts, he passes to that which is of all most necessary, the subject of the resurrection. For in this too they were greatly unsound. And as in men's bodies, when the fever lays actual hold of their solid parts, I mean the nerves and the veins and the primary elements, the mischief becomes incurable unless it receive much attention; just so at that time also it was like to happen. Since to the very elements of godliness the mischief was proceeding. Wherefore also Paul uses great earnestness. For not of morals was his discourse henceforth nor about one man's being a fornicator, another covetous, and another having his head covered; but about the very sum of all good things. For touching the resurrection itself they were at variance. Because this being all our hope, against this point did the devil make a vehement stand, and at one time he was wholly subverting it, at another his word was that it was "*past already*;" which also Paul writing to Timothy called a gangrene, I mean, this wicked doctrine, and those that brought it in he branded, saying, "*Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some.*" [2 Timothy 2:17-18] At one time then they said thus, but at another that the body rises not again but the purification of the soul is the resurrection.

But these things that wicked demon persuaded them to say, not wishing to overturn the resurrection only, but also to show that all the things done for our sakes are a fable. For if they were persuaded that there is no resurrection of bodies, he would have gradually persuaded them that neither was Christ raised. And thereupon he would introduce also this in due course, that He had not come nor had done what He did. For such is the craft of the devil. Wherefore also Paul calls it "*cunning craftiness*," because he does not straightway signify what he intends to effect, for fear of being detected, but dressing himself up in a mask of one kind, he fabricates arts of another kind: and like a crafty enemy attacking a city with walls, he secretly undermines it from below: so as thereby to be hardly guarded against and to succeed in his endeavors. Therefore such snares on his part being continually detected, and these his crafty ambushes hunted out by this admirable and mighty man, he said, "*For we are not ignorant of his devices.*" [2 Corinthians 2:11] So also here he unfolds his whole guile and points out all his stratagems, and whatsoever he would fain effect, Paul puts before us, with much exactness going over all. Yea, and therefore he put this head after the rest, both because it was extremely necessary and because it involves the whole of our condition.

And observe his consideration: how first having secured his own, he then proceeds even beyond in his discourse, and them that are without he does abundantly reduce to silence. Now he secures his own, not by reasonings, but by things which had already happened and which themselves had received and believed to have taken place: a thing which was most of all apt to shame them, and capable of laying hold on them. Since if they were unwilling to believe after this, it was no longer Paul but themselves they would disbelieve: which thing was a censure on those who had once for all received it and changed their minds. For this cause then he

begins also from hence, implying that he needs no other witnesses to prove his speaking truth, but those very persons who were deceived.

2. But that what I say may become clearer, we must needs in what follows attend to the very words. What then are these? *"I make known unto you, brethren,"* says he, *"the gospel which I preached unto you."* Do you see with what modesty he commences? Do you see how from the beginning he points out that he is bringing in no new nor strange thing? For he who *"makes known"* that which was already known but afterwards had fallen into oblivion, *"makes known"* by recalling it into memory.

And when he called them *"brethren,"* even from hence he laid the foundation of no mean part of the proof of his assertions. For by no other cause became we *"brethren,"* but by the dispensation of Christ according to the flesh. And this is just the reason why he thus called them, at the same time soothing and courting them, and likewise reminding them of their innumerable blessings.

And what comes next again is demonstrative of the same. What then is this? *"The gospel."* For the sum of the gospels has its original hence, from God having become man and having been crucified and having risen again. This gospel also Gabriel preached to the Virgin, this also the prophets to the world, this also the apostles all of them.

"Which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand. By which also you are saved, in what word I preached unto you; if you hold it fast, except ye believed in vain."

Do you see how he calls themselves to be witnesses of the things spoken? And he says not, *"which you heard,"* but, *"which you received,"* demanding it of them as a kind of deposit, and showing that not in word only, but also by deeds and signs and wonders they received it, and that they should hold it safe.

Next, because he was speaking of the things long past, he referred also to the present time, saying, "*wherein also ye stand*," taking the vantage ground of them that disavowal might be out of their power, though they wished it never so much. And this is why at the beginning he said not, "*I teach you*," but, 'I make known unto you' what has already been made manifest.

And how says he that they who were so tossed with waves "*stand*?" He feigns ignorance to profit them; which also he does in the case of the Galatians, but not in like manner. For inasmuch as he could not in that case affect ignorance, he frames his address in another way, saying, "*I have confidence toward you in the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded*." [Galatians 5:10] He said not, "*that you were none otherwise minded*," because their fault was acknowledged and evident, but he answers for the future; and yet this too was uncertain; but it was to draw them to him more effectually. Here however he does feign ignorance, saying, "*wherein also ye stand*."

Then comes the advantage; "*by which also you are saved, in what words I preached it unto you*." "*So then, this present exposition is for doctrine clearness and interpretation. For the doctrine itself ye need not*," says he, "*to learn, but to be reminded of it and corrected*." And these things he says, leaving them no room to plunge into recklessness once for all.

But what is, "*in what word I preached it unto you*?" After what manner did I say, says he, "*that the resurrection takes place? For that there is a resurrection I would not say that you doubt: but you seek perhaps to obtain a clearer knowledge of that saying. This then will I provide for you: for indeed I am well assured that you hold the doctrine*." Next, because he was directly affirming, "*wherein also ye stand*;" that he might not thereby make them more remiss, he alarms them again, saying, "*If you hold it fast, except*

ye believed in vain;" intimating that the stroke is on the chief head, and the contest for no common things but in behalf of the whole of the faith. And for the present he says it with reserve, but as he goes on and waxes warm, he throws off the veil and proceeds to cry out , and say, "*But if Christ has not been raised then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain: you are yet in your sins:*" but in the beginning not so: for thus it was expedient to proceed, gently and by degrees.

1 Corinthians 15:3

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received."

Neither here does he say, *"I said unto you,"* nor, *"I taught you,"* but uses the same expression again, saying, *"I delivered unto you that which also I received:"* nor again here does he say, *"I was taught,"* but, *"I received:"* establishing these two things; first, that one ought to introduce nothing from one's self; next, that by demonstration from his deeds they were fully persuaded, not by bare words: and by degrees while he is rendering his argument credible, he refers the whole to Christ, and signifies that nothing was of man in these doctrines.

But what is this, *"For I delivered unto you first of all?"* for that is his word. *"In the beginning, not now."* And thus saying he brings the time for a witness, and that it were the greatest disgrace for those who had so long time been persuaded now to change their minds: and not this only, but also that the doctrine is necessary. Wherefore also it was *"delivered"* among *"the first,"* and from the beginning straightway. And what did you so deliver? Tell me. But this he does not say straightway, but first, *"I received."* And what did you receive? *"That Christ died for our sins."* He said not immediately that there is a resurrection of our bodies, yet this very thing in truth he does establish, but afar off and by other topics saying that *"Christ died,"* and laying before a kind of strong base and irrefragable foundation of the doctrine concerning the resurrection. For neither did he simply say that *"Christ died;"* although even this were sufficient to declare the resurrection, but with an addition, *"Christ died for our sins."*

3. But first it is worth while to hear what those who are infected with the Manichæan doctrines say here, who are both enemies to the truth and

war against their own salvation. What then do these allege? By death here, they say, Paul means nothing else than our being in sin; and by resurrection, our being delivered from our sins. Do you see how nothing is weaker than error? And how it is taken by its own wings, and needs not the warfare from without, but by itself it is pierced through? Consider, for instance, these men, how they too have pierced themselves through by their own statements. Since if this be death, and Christ did not take a body, as you suppose, and yet died, He was in sin according to you. For I indeed say that He took unto Himself a body and His death, I say, was that of the flesh; but thou denying this, will be compelled to affirm the other. But if He was in sin, how says He, *"Which of you convinces Me of sin?"* and *"The prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me?"* [John 8:46; 14:30] and again, *"Thus it becomes Us to fulfill all righteousness?"* [Matthew 3:15] Nay, how did He at all die for sinners, if Himself were in sin? For he who dies for sinners ought himself to be without sin. Since if he himself also sin, how shall he die for other sinners? But if for others' sins He died, He died being without sin: and if being without sin He died, He died— not the death of sin; for how could He being without sin?— but the death of the body. Wherefore also Paul did not simply say, *"He died,"* but added, *"for our sins:"* both forcing these heretics against their will to the confession of His bodily death, and signifying also by this that before death He was without sin: for he that dies for others' sins, it follows must himself be without sin.

Neither was he content with this, but added, *"according to the Scriptures:"* hereby both again making his argument credible, and intimating what kind of death he was speaking of: since it is the death of the body which the Scriptures everywhere proclaim. For, *"they pierced My hands and My feet,"* [Psalm 21:18] says He, and, *"they shall look on Him Whom they pierced."* [John 19:37; Zechariah 12:10] And many other

instances, too not to name all one by one, partly in words and partly in types, one may see in them stored up, setting forth His slaughter in the flesh and that He was slain for our sins. For, *"for the sins of my people,"* says one, *"is He come to death:"* and, *"the Lord delivered Him up for our sins:"* and, *"He was wounded for our transgressions."* [Isaiah 53] But if you dost not endure the Old Testament, hear John crying out and declaring both, as well His slaughter in the body as the cause of it: thus, *"Behold,"* says he, *"the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world:"* [John 1:29] and Paul saying, *"For Him Who knew no sin, He made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him:"* [2 Corinthians 5:21] and again, *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us:"* [Galatians 3:13] and again, *"having put off from himself principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them;"* [Colossians 2:15] and ten thousand other sayings to show what happened at His death in the body, and because of our sins. Yea, and Christ Himself says, *"for your sakes I sanctify Myself "* and, *"now the prince of this world has been condemned ;"* showing that having no sin he was slain.

1 Corinthians 15:4

4. *"And that he was buried."*

And this also confirms the former topics, for that which is buried is doubtless a body. And here he no longer adds, *"according to the Scriptures."* He had wherewithal, nevertheless he adds it not. For what cause? Either because the burial was evident unto all, both then and now, or because the expression, *"according to the Scriptures,"* is set down of both in common. Wherefore then does he add, *"according to the Scriptures,"* in this place, *"and that He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures,"* and is not content with the former clause, so spoken in common? Because this also was to most men obscure: wherefore here again he brings in *"the Scriptures"* by inspiration, having so conceived this thought so wise and divine.

How is it then that he does the same in regard of His death ? Because in that case too, although the cross was evident unto all and in the sight of all He was stretched upon it; yet the cause was no longer equally so. The fact indeed of his death all knew, but that He suffered this for the sins of the world was no longer equally known to the multitude. Wherefore he brings in the testimony from the Scriptures.

This however has been sufficiently proved by what we have said. But where have the Scriptures said that He was buried, and on the third day shall rise again? By the type of Jonah which also Himself alleges, saying, *"As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall also the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* [Matthew 12:40] By the bush in the desert. For even as that burned, yet was not consumed, [Exodus 3:2] so also that body died indeed, but was not

holden of death continually. And the dragon also in Daniel shadows out this. For as the dragon having taken the food which the prophet gave, burst asunder in the midst; even so Hades having swallowed down that Body, was rent asunder, the Body of itself cutting asunder its womb and rising again.

Now if you desire to hear also in words those things which you have seen in types, listen to Isaiah, saying, *"His life is taken from the earth,"* [Isaiah 53:8-11] and, it pleases the Lord to cleanse Him from His wound...to show unto Him light: and David before him, *"You will not leave My soul to Hades, nor will You suffer Your Holy One to see corruption."* [Psalm 16:10]

Therefore Paul also sends you on to the Scriptures, that you may learn that not without cause nor at random were these things done. For how could they, when so many prophets are describing and proclaiming them beforehand? And no where does the Scripture mean the death of sin, when it makes mention of our Lord's death, but that of the body, and a burial and resurrection of the same kind.

1 Corinthians 15:5

5. *"And that He appeared to Cephas:"* he names immediately the most credible of all. *"Then to the twelve."*

1 Corinthians 15:6

"Then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep."

1 Corinthians 15:7

"Then he appeared to James; then to all the Apostles."

1 Corinthians 15:8

"And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also."

Thus, since he had mentioned the proof from the Scriptures, he adds also that by the events, producing as witnesses of the resurrection, after the prophets, the apostles and other faithful men. Whereas if he meant that other resurrection, the deliverance from sin, it were idle for him to say, He appeared to such and such an one; for this is the argument of one who is establishing the resurrection of the body, not of one obscurely teaching deliverance from sins. Wherefore neither said he once for all, *"He appeared,"* although it were sufficient for him to do so, setting down the expression in common: but now both twice and thrice, and almost in each several case of them that had seen Him he employs it. For *"He appeared,"* says he, *"to Cephas, He appeared to above five hundred brethren, He appeared to me also."* Yet surely the Gospel says the contrary, that He was seen of Mary first. [Mark 16:9] But among men He was seen of him first who did most of all long to see Him.

But of what twelve apostles does he here speak ? For after He was received up, Matthias was taken into the number, not after the resurrection immediately. But it is likely that He appeared even after He was received up. At any rate, this our apostle himself after His ascension was both called, and saw Him. Therefore neither does he set down the time, but simply and without defining recounts the appearance. For indeed it is probable that many took place; wherefore also John said, *"This third time He was manifested."* [John 21:14]

"Then He appeared to above five hundred brethren." Some say that *"above ,"* is above from heaven; that is, *"not walking upon earth, but above and overhead He appeared to them:"* adding, that it was Paul's purpose to confirm, not the resurrection only, but also the ascension. Others say that the expression, *"above five hundred,"* means, *"more than five hundred."*

"Of whom the greater part remain until now." Thus, *"though I relate events of old,"* says he, *"yet have I living witnesses."* *"But some are fallen asleep."* He said not, *"are dead,"* but, *"are fallen asleep,"* by this expression also again confirming the resurrection. *"After that, He was seen of James."* I suppose, His brother. For the Lord is said to have Himself ordained him and made him Bishop in Jerusalem first. *"Then to all the apostles."* For there were also other apostles, as the seventy.

"And last of all he appeared unto me also, as unto one born out of due time." This is rather an expression of modesty than any thing else. For not because he was the least, therefore did he appear to him after the rest. Since even if He did call him last, yet he appeared more illustrious than many which were before him, yea rather than all. And the five hundred brethren too were not surely better than James, because He appeared to them before him.

Why did He not appear to all at the same time? That He might first sow the seeds of faith. For he that saw Him first and was exactly and fully assured, told it unto the residue: then their report coming first placed the hearer in expectation of this great wonder, and made way before for the faith of sight. Therefore neither did He appear to all together, nor in the beginning to many, but to one alone first, and him the leader of the whole company and the most faithful: since indeed there was great need of a most faithful soul to be first to receive this sight. For those who saw him after others had seen him, and heard it from them, had in their testimony what

contributed in no small degree to their own faith and tended to prepare their mind beforehand; but he who was first counted worthy to see Him, had need, as I have said, of great faith, not to be confounded by a sight so contrary to expectation. Therefore he appears to Peter first. For he that first confessed Him to be Christ was justly also counted worthy first to behold His resurrection. And not on this account alone does He appear to him first, but also because he had denied Him, more abundantly to comfort him and to signify that he is not despaired of, before the rest He vouchsafed him even this sight and to him first entrusted His sheep. Therefore also He appeared to the women first. Because this sex was made inferior, therefore both in His birth and in His resurrection this first tastes of His grace.

But after Peter, He appears also to each at intervals, and at one time to fewer, at another to more, hereby making them witnesses and teachers of each other, and rendering His apostles trustworthy in all that they said.

6. *"And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also."* What mean here his expressions of humility, or wherein are they seasonable? For if he wishes to show himself worthy of credit and to enrol himself among the witnesses of the resurrection, he is doing the contrary of what he wishes: since it were meet that he exalt himself and show that he was great, which in many places he does, the occasion calling for it. Well, the very reason why he here also speaks modestly is his being about to do this. Not straightway, however, but with his own peculiar good sense: in that having first spoken modestly and heaped up against himself many charges, he then magnifies the things concerning himself. What may the reason be? That, when he comes to utter that great and lofty expression concerning himself, *"I labored more abundantly than all,"* his discourse may be rendered more acceptable, both hereby, and by its being spoken as a consequence of what went before and not as a leading topic. Therefore also

writing to Timothy, and intending to say great things concerning himself, he first sets down his charges against himself. For so all persons, when speaking in high terms of others, speak out freely and with boldness: but he that is compelled to praise himself, and especially when he also calls himself to witness, is disconcerted and blushes. Therefore also this blessed man first declares his own misery, and then utters that lofty expression. This then he does, partly to abate the offensiveness of speaking about himself, and partly that he might hereby recommend to their belief what he had to say afterwards. For he that truly states what things are discreditable to him and conceals none of them, such as that he persecuted the Church, that he laid waste the faith, does hereby cause the things that are honorable to him also to be above suspicion.

And consider the exceeding greatness of his humility. For having said, *"and last of all He appeared to me also,"* he was not content with this: *"For many that are last shall be first,"* says He, *"and the first last."* [Matthew 20:16] Therefore he added, *"as unto one born out of due time."* Neither did he stop here, but adds also his own judgment and with a reason, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:9

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God."

And he said not, of the twelve alone, but also of all the other apostles. And all these things he spoke, both as one speaking modestly and because he was really so disposed as I said, making arrangements also beforehand for what was intended to be spoken and rendering it more acceptable. For had he come forward and said, *"You ought to believe me that Christ rose from the dead; for I saw Him and of all I am the most worthy of credit, inasmuch as I have labored more,"* the expression might have offended the hearers: but now by first dwelling on the humiliating topics and those which involve accusation, he both took off what might be grating in such a narrative, and prepared the way for their belief in his testimony.

On this account therefore neither does he simply, as I said, declare himself to be the last and unworthy of the appellation of an apostle, but also states the reason, saying, *"because I persecuted the Church."* And yet all those things were forgiven, but nevertheless he himself never forgot them, desiring to signify the greatness of God's favor: wherefore also he goes on to say,

1 Corinthians 15:10

7. *"But by the grace of God I am what I am."*

Do you see again another excess of humility? In that the defects he imputes to himself, but of the good deeds nothing; rather he refers all to God. Next, lest he might hereby render his hearer supine, he says, *"And His grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain."* And this again with reserve: in that he said not, *"I have displayed a diligence worthy of His grace,"* but, *"it was not found vain."*

"But I labored more abundantly than they all." He said not, *"I was honored,"* but, *"I labored;"* and when he had perils and deaths to speak of, by the name of labor he again abates his expression.

Then again practicing his wonted humility, this also he speedily passes by and refers the whole to God, saying, *"Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* What can be more admirable than such a soul? Who having in so many ways depressed himself and uttered but one lofty word, not even this does he call his own; on every side finding ways, both from the former things and from them that follow after, to contract this lofty expression, and that because it was of necessity that he came to it.

But consider how he abounds in the expressions of humility. For so, *"to me last of all He appeared,"* says he. Wherefore neither does he with himself mention any other, and says, *"as of one born out of due time,"* and that himself is *"the least of the apostles,"* and not even worthy of this appellation. And he was not content even with these, but that he might not seem in mere words to be humble-minded, he states both reasons and proofs: of his being *"one born out of due time,"* his seeing Jesus last; and of his being unworthy even of the name of an apostle, *"his persecuting the*

Church." For he that is simply humble-minded does not this: but he that also sets down the reasons utters all from a contrite mind. Wherefore also he elsewhere makes mention of these same things, saying, *"And I thank him that enabled me; even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that He counted me faithful, appointing me to his service, though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious."* [1 Timothy 1:12-13]

But wherefore did he utter at all that same lofty expression, *"I labored more abundantly than they?"* He saw that the occasion compelled him. For had he not said this, had he only depreciated himself, how could he with boldness call himself to witness, and number himself with the rest, and say,

1 Corinthians 15:11

"Whether then it be I or they, so we preach."

For the witness ought to be trustworthy, and a great man. But how he *"labored more abundantly than they,"* he indicated above, saying, *"Have we no right to eat and to drink, as also the other Apostles?"* And again, *"to them that are without law as without law."* Thus, both where exactness was to be displayed, he overshot all: and where there was need to condescend, he displayed again the same great superiority.

But some cite his being sent to the Gentiles and his overrunning the larger part of the world. Whence it is evident that he enjoyed more grace. For if he labored more, the grace was also more: but he enjoyed more grace, because he displayed also more diligence. Do you see how by those particulars whereby he contends and strives to throw into shade the things concerning himself, he is shown to be first of all?

8. And these things when we hear, let us also make open show of our defects, but of our excellencies let us say nothing. Or if the opportunity force it upon us, let us speak of them with reserve and impute the whole to God's grace: which accordingly the Apostle also does, ever and anon putting a bad mark upon his former life, but his after-state imputing to grace, that he might signify the mercy of God from every circumstance: from His having saved him such as he was and when saved making him again such as he is. Let none accordingly of those who are in sin despair, let none of those in virtue be confident, but let the one be exceeding fearful and the other forward. For neither shall any slothful man be able to abide in virtue, nor one that is diligent be weak to escape from evil. And of both these the blessed David is an example, who after he slumbered a little, had a

great downfall: and when he was pricked in his heart, again hastened up to his former height. Since in fact both are alike evils, both despair and slothfulness; the one quickly casting a man down from the very arch of the heavens; the other not suffering the fallen to rise again. Wherefore with respect to the one, Paul said, *"Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall:"* [1 Corinthians 10:12] but unto the other, Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts: [Hebrews 4:7] and again, *"Lift up the hands that hang down and the palsied knees."* [Hebrews 12:12] And him too that had committed fornication but repented, he therefore quickly refreshes, *"that such an one might not be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow?"* [2 Corinthians 2:7]

Why then in regard of other griefs art you cast down, O man? Since if for sins, where only grief is beneficial, excess works much mischief, much more for all other things. For wherefore do you grieve? That you have lost money? Nay, think of those that are not even filled with bread, and you shall very speedily obtain consolation. And in each of the things that are grievous to you mourn not the things that have happened, but for the disasters that have not happened give thanks. Had you money and did you lose it? Weep not for the loss, but give thanks for the time when you enjoyed it. Say like Job, *"Have we received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?"* [Job 2:10] And together with that use this argument also; that even if you lost your money, yet your body you have still sound and hast not with your poverty to grieve that it also is maimed. But has your body too endured some outrage? Yet is not this the bottom of human calamities, but in the middle of the cask you are as yet carried along. For many along with poverty and maiming, both wrestle with a demon and wander in deserts: others again endure other things more grievous than

these. For may it never be our lot to suffer all that it is possible for one to bear.

These things then ever considering, bear in mind them that suffer worse, and be vexed at none of those things: but when you sin, only then sigh, then weep; I forbid you not, nay I enjoin you rather; though even then with moderation, remembering that there is returning, there is reconciliation. But do you see others in luxury and yourself in poverty: and another in goodly robes, and in preeminence? Look not however on these things alone, but also on the miseries that arise out of these. And in your poverty too, consider not the beggary alone, but the pleasure also thence arising do thou take into account. For wealth has indeed a cheerful mask, but its inward parts are full of gloom; and poverty the reverse. And should you unfold each man's conscience, in the soul of the poor you will see great security and freedom: but in that of the rich, confusions, disorders, tempests. And if you grieve, seeing him rich, he too is vexed much more than thou when he beholds one richer than himself. And as you fear him, even so does he another, and he has no advantage over you in this. But you are vexed to see him in office, because you are in a private station and one of the governed. Recollect however the day of his ceasing to hold office. And even before that day the tumults, the perils, the fatigues, the flatteries, the sleepless nights, and all the miseries.

9. And these things we say to those who have no mind for high morality: since if you know this, there are other and greater things whereby we may comfort you: but for the present we must use the coarser topics to argue with you. When therefore you see one that is rich, think of him that is richer than he, and you will see him in the same condition with yourself. And after him look also on him that is poorer than yourself, consider how many have gone to bed hungry, and have lost their patrimony, and live in a

dungeon, and pray for death every day. For neither does poverty breed sadness, nor wealth pleasure, but both the one and the other our own thoughts are wont to produce in us. And consider, beginning from beneath: the scavenger grieves and is vexed that he cannot be rid of this his business so wretched and esteemed so disgraceful: but if you rid him of this, and cause him, with security, to have plenty of the necessities of life, he will grieve again that he has not more than he wants: and if you grant him more, he will wish to double them again, and will therefore vex himself no less than before: and if you grant him twofold or threefold, he will be out of heart again because he has no part in the state: and if you provide him with this also, he will count himself wretched because he is not one of the highest officers of state. And when he has obtained this honor, he will mourn that he is not a ruler; and when he shall be ruler, that it is not of a whole nation; and when of a whole nation, that it is not of many nations; and when of many nations, that it is not of all. When he becomes a deputy, he will vex himself again that he is not a king; and if a king, that he is not so alone; and if alone, that he is not also of barbarous nations; and if of barbarous nations, that he is not of the whole world even: and if of the whole world, why not likewise of another world? And so his course of thought going on without end does not suffer him ever to be pleased. Do you see, how even if from being mean and poor you should make a man a king, thou dost not remove his dejection, without first correcting his turn of thought, enamored as it is of having more?

Come, let me show you the contrary too, that even if from a higher station you should bring down to a lower one him that has consideration, you will not cast him into dejection and grief. And if you will, let us descend the same ladder, and do thou bring down the satrap from his throne and in supposition deprive him of that dignity. I say that he will not on this

account vex himself, if he choose to bear in mind the things of which I have spoken. For he will not reckon up the things of which he has been deprived, but what he has still, the glory arising from his office. But if you take away this also, he will reckon up them who are in private stations and have never ascended to such sway, and for consolation his riches will suffice him. And if you also cast him out again from this, he will look to them that have a moderate estate. And if you should take away even moderate wealth, and should allow him to partake only of necessary food, he may think upon them that have not even this, but wrestle with incessant hunger and live in prison. And even if you should bring him into that prison-house, when he reflects on them that lie under incurable diseases and irremediable pains, he will see himself to be in much better circumstances. And as the scavenger before mentioned not even on being made a king will reap any cheerfulness, so neither will this man ever vex himself if he become a prisoner. It is not then wealth that is the foundation of pleasure, nor poverty of sadness, but our own judgment, and the fact, that the eyes of our mind are not pure, nor are fixed anywhere and abide, but without limit flutter abroad. And as healthy bodies, if they be nourished with bread alone, are in good and vigorous condition: but those that are sickly, even if they enjoy a plentiful and varied diet, become so much the weaker; so also it is wont to happen in regard of the soul. The mean spirited, not even in a diadem and unspeakable honors can be happy: but the denying, even in bonds and fetters and poverty, will enjoy a pure pleasure.

10. These things then bearing in mind, let us ever look to them that are beneath us. There is indeed, I grant, another consolation, but of a high strain in morality, and mounting above the grossness of the multitude. What is this? That wealth is naught, poverty is naught, disgrace is naught, honor is naught, but for a brief time and only in words do they differ from each

other. And along with this there is another soothing topic also, greater than it; the consideration of the things to come, both evil and good, the things which are really evil and really good, and the being comforted by them. But since many, as I said, stand aloof from these doctrines, therefore were we compelled to dwell on other topics, that in course we might lead on to them the receivers of what had been said before.

Let us then, taking all these things into account, by every means frame ourselves aright, and we shall never grieve at these unexpected things. For neither if we should see men rich in a picture, should we say they were to be envied, any more than on seeing poor men there depicted we should call them wretched and pitiable: although those are surely more abiding than they whom we reckon wealthy. Since one abides rich in the picture longer than in the nature itself of things. For the one often lasts, appearing such, even to a hundred years, but the other sometimes, not having had so much as a year to live at his ease in his possessions, has been suddenly stripped of all. Meditating then on all these things, let us from all quarters build up cheerfulness as an outwork against our irrational sorrow, that we may both pass the present life with pleasure, and obtain the good things to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and forever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 39 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:11

Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

Having exalted the Apostles and abased himself, then again having exalted himself above them that he might make out an equality: (for he did effect an equality, when he showed that he had advantages over them as well as they over him,) and having thereby proved himself worthy of credit; neither so does he dismiss them, but again ranks himself with them, pointing out their concord in Christ. Nevertheless he does it not so as that he should seem to have been tacked on to them, but as himself also to appear in the same rank. For so it was profitable for the Gospel. Wherefore also he was equally earnest, on the one hand, that he might not seem to overlook them; on the other, that he might not be on account of the honor paid to them held cheap by those that were under his authority. Therefore he also now makes himself equal again, saying,

"Whether then it be I or they, so we preach." "From whomsoever," says he, *"ye choose to learn, learn; there is no difference between us."* And he said not, *"if you will not believe me, believe them;"* but while he makes himself worthy of credit and says that he is of himself sufficient, he affirms the same also of them by themselves. For the difference of persons took no effect, their authority being equal. And in the Epistle to the Galatians he does this, taking them with him, not as also standing in need of them, but saying indeed that even himself was sufficient: *"For they who were of repute imparted nothing to me:"* [Galatians 2:6] nevertheless, even so I follow after agreement with them. *"For they gave unto me,"* says he, *"their*

right hands." [Galatians 2:9] For if the credit of Paul were always to depend on others and to be confirmed by testimony from others, the disciples would hence have received infinite injury. It is not therefore to exalt himself that he does this, but fearing for the Gospel. Wherefore also he here says, making himself equal, "*Whether it be I or they, so we preach.*"

Well did he say, "*we preach,*" indicating his great boldness of speech. For we speak not secretly, nor in a corner, but we utter a voice clearer than a trumpet. And he said not, "*we preached,*" but, "*even now 'so we preach.'*" "*And so ye believed.*" Here he said not, "*ye believe,*" but, "*ye believed.*" Because they were shaken in mind, therefore he ran back to the former times, and proceeds to add the witness from themselves.

1 Corinthians 15:12

2. *"Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"*

Do you see how excellently he reasons, and proves the resurrection from the fact of Christ's being raised, having first established the former in many ways? *"For both the prophets spoke of it,"* says he, *"and the Lord Himself showed it by His appearing, and we preach, and you believed;"* weaving thus his fourfold testimony; the witness of the prophets, the witness of the issue of events, the witness of the apostles, the witness of the disciples; or rather a fivefold. For this very cause too itself implies the resurrection; viz. his dying for others' sins. If therefore this has been proved, it is evident that the other also follows, viz. that the other dead likewise are raised. And this is why, as concerning an admitted fact, he challenges and questions them, saying, *"Now if Christ has been raised, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"*

Hereby also again abating the boldness of the gainsayers: in that he said not, *"how say, ye,"* but, *"how say some among you."* And neither does he bring a charge against all nor declare openly the very persons whom he accuses, in order not to make them more reckless: neither on the other hand does he conceal it wholly, that he may correct them. For this purpose accordingly, separating them from the multitude, he strips himself for the contest with them, by this both weakening and confounding them, and holding the rest in their conflicts with these firmer to the truth, nor suffering them to desert to those that were busy to destroy them: he being in fact prepared to adopt a vehement mode of speech.

Further, lest they should say, "*this indeed is clear and evident unto all that Christ is raised, and none doubts it; this does not however necessarily imply the other also, to wit, the resurrection of mankind.*"— for the one was both before proclaimed and came to pass, and was testified of by his appearing; the fact, namely, of Christ's resurrection: but the other is yet in hope, i.e., our own part:— see what he does; from the other side again he makes it out: which is a proof of great power. Thus, "*why do some say,*" says he, "*that there is no resurrection of the dead?*" Of course then the former also in its turn is subverted by this, the fact, namely, that Christ is raised. Wherefore also he adds, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:13

"But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised."

Do you see Paul's energy, and his spirit for the combat, so invincible? How not only from what is evident he demonstrates what is doubted, but also from what is doubted, endeavors to demonstrate to gainsayers the former evident proposition? Not because what had already taken place required demonstration, but that he might signify this to be equally worthy of belief with that.

3. *"And what kind of consequence is this?"* says one. *"For if Christ be not raised, that then neither should others be raised, does follow: but that if others be not raised, neither should Christ be raised, what reason can there be in this?"* Since then this does not appear to be very reasonable, see how he works it out wisely, scattering his seeds beforehand from the beginning, even from the very groundwork of the Gospel: as, that *"having died for our sins,"* He was raised; and that He is *"the first-fruits of them that slept."* For the first-fruits— of what can He be the first-fruits, except of them that are raised? And how can He be first-fruits, if they rise not of whom He is first-fruits? How then are they not raised?

Again, if they be not raised, wherefore was Christ raised? Wherefore came He? Wherefore did He take upon Him flesh, if he were not about to raise flesh again? For He stood not in need of it Himself but for our sakes. But these things he afterwards set down as he goes on; for the present he says, *"If the dead be not raised, neither has Christ been raised,"* as though that were connected with this. For had He not intended to raise Himself, He would not have wrought that other work. Do you see by degrees the whole

economy overthrown by those words of theirs and by their unbelief in the resurrection? But as yet he says nothing of the incarnation, but of the resurrection. For not His having become incarnate, but His having died, took away death; since while He had flesh, the tyranny of death still had dominion.

1 Corinthians 15:14

"And if Christ has not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain."

Although what followed in due course would have been, *"but if Christ be not risen, you fight against things evident, and against so many prophets, and the truth of facts;"* nevertheless he states what is much more fearful to them: *"then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain."* For he wishes to shake thoroughly their mind: *"we have lost all,"* says he, *"all is over, if He be not risen."* Do you see how great is the mystery of the œconomy? As thus: if after death He could not rise again, neither is sin loosed nor death taken away nor the curse removed. Yea, and not only have we preached in vain, but you also have believed in vain.

4. And not hereby alone does he show the impiety of these evil doctrines, but he further contends earnestly against them, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:15

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we witnessed of Him that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised."

But if this be absurd, (for it is a charge against God and a calumny,) and He raised Him not, as you say, not only this, but other absurdities too will follow.

And again he establishes it all, and takes it up again, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:16

"For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised."

For had He not intended to do this, He would not have come into the world. And he names not this, but the end, to wit, His resurrection; through it drawing all things.

1 Corinthians 15:17

"And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain."

With whatever is clear and confessed, he keeps on surrounding the resurrection of Christ, by means of the stronger point making even that which seems to be weak and doubtful, strong and clear.

"You are yet in your sins." For if He was not raised, neither did He die; and if He died not, neither did He take away sin: His death being the taking away of sin. *"For behold,"* says one, *"the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world."* [John 1:29] But how *"takes away?"* By His death. Wherefore also he called him a Lamb, as one slain. But if He rose not again, neither was He slain: and if He was not slain, neither was sin taken away: and if it was not taken away, you are in it: and if you are in it, we have preached in vain: and if we have preached in vain, you have believed in vain that you were reconciled. And besides, death remains immortal, if He did not arise. For if He too was holden of death and loosed not its pains, how released He all others, being as yet Himself holden of it? Wherefore also he adds,

1 Corinthians 15:18

"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ have perished."

"And why speak I of you," says he, "when all those also are perished, who have done all and are no longer subject to the uncertainty of the future?" But by the expression, "in Christ," he means either "in the faith," or "they who died for His sake, who endured many perils, many miseries, who walked in the narrow way. "

Where are those foul-mouthed Manichees who say that by the resurrection here means the liberation from sin ? For these compact and continuous syllogisms, holding as they do also conversely, indicate nothing of what they say, but what we affirm. It is true, *"rising again"* is spoken of one who has fallen: and this is why he keeps on explaining, and says not only that He was raised, but adds this also, *"from the dead."* And the Corinthians too doubted not of the forgiveness of sins, but of the resurrection of bodies.

But what necessity is there at all, that except mankind be not without sin, neither should Christ Himself be so? Whereas, if He were not to raise men up, it were natural to say, *"wherefore came He and took our flesh and rose again?"* But on our supposition not so. Yea, and whether men sin or do not sin, there is ever with God an impossibility of sinning, and what happens to us reaches not to Him, nor does one case answer to the other by way of conversion, as in the matter of the resurrection of the body.

1 Corinthians 15:19

4. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable.

What do you say, O Paul? How *"in this life only have we hope,"* if our bodies be not raised, the soul abiding and being immortal? Because even if the soul abide, even if it be infinitely immortal, as indeed it is, without the flesh it shall not receive those hidden good things, as neither truly shall it be punished. For all things shall be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, *"that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad."* [2 Corinthians 5:10]

Therefore he says, *"if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable."* For if the body rise not again, the soul abides uncrowned without that blessedness which is in heaven. And if this be so, we shall enjoy nothing then at all: and if nothing then, in the present life is our recompense. *"What then in this respect can be more wretched than we?"* says he.

But these things he said, as well to confirm them in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, as to persuade them concerning that immortal life, in order that they might not suppose that all our concerns end with the present world. For having sufficiently established what he purposed by the former arguments, and having said, *"if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised; but if Christ were not raised, we have perished, and we are yet in our sins;"* again he also subjoins this, thoroughly demolishing their arrogance. For so when he intends to introduce any of the necessary doctrines, he first shakes thoroughly their hardness of heart by fear: which accordingly he did here, having both above scattered those seeds, and made

them anxious, as those who had fallen from all: and now again after another manner, and so as they should most severely feel it, doing this same thing and saying, "*we are of all men most pitiable, 'if after so great conflicts and deaths and those innumerable evils, we are to fall from so great blessings, and our happiness is limited by the present life.*" For in fact all depends on the resurrection. So that even hence it is evident that his discourse was not of a resurrection from sins, but of bodies, and of the life present and to come.

1 Corinthians 15:20

5. *"But now has Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep."*

Having signified how great mischiefs are bred from not believing the resurrection, he takes up the discourse again, and says, *"But now has Christ been raised from the dead;"* continually adding, *"from the dead,"* so as to stop the mouths of the heretics. *"The first-fruits of them that slept."* But if their first-fruits, then themselves also, must needs rise again. Whereas if he were speaking of the resurrection from sins, and none is without sin—for even Paul says, *"I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified ;"*—how shall there be any who rise again, according to you? Do you see that his discourse was of bodies? And that he might make it worthy of credit, he continually brings forward Christ who rose again in the flesh.

Next he also assigns a reason. For, as I said, when one asserts but does not state the reason, his discourse is not easily received by the multitude. What then is the reason?

1 Corinthians 15:21

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

But if by a man, doubtless by one having a body. And observe his thoughtfulness, how on another ground also he makes his argument inevitable. As thus: *"he that is defeated,"* says he, *"must in his own person also renew the conflict, the nature which was cast down must itself also gain the victory. For so the reproach was wiped away."*

But let us see what kind of death he is speaking of.

1 Corinthians 15:22

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

What then? Tell me; did all die in Adam the death of sin ? How then was Noah righteous in his generation? And how Abraham? And how Job? And how all the rest? And what, I pray? Shall all be made alive in Christ? Where then are those who are led away into hell fire? Thus, if this be said of the body, the doctrine stands: but if of righteousness and sin, it does so no longer.

Further, lest, on hearing that the making alive is common to all, you should also suppose that sinners are saved, he adds,

1 Corinthians 15:23

"But every man in his own order."

For do not, because you hear of a resurrection, imagine that all enjoy the same benefits. Since if in the punishment all will not suffer alike but the difference is great; much more where there are sinners and righteous men shall the separation be yet wider.

"Christ the first-fruits, then they that are Christ's;" i.e., the faithful and the approved.

1 Corinthians 15:24

"Then comes the end."

For when these shall have risen again, all things shall have an end, not as now when after Christ's resurrection things abide yet in suspense.

Wherefore he added, *"at His coming,"* that you may learn that he is speaking of that time, *"when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power."*

6. Here, give heed to me carefully, and see that no part escape you of what I say. For our contest is with enemies : wherefore we first must practice the *reductio ad absurdum* which also Paul often does. Since in this way shall we find what they say most easy of detection. Let us ask them then first, what is the meaning of the saying, *"When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father?"* For if we take this just as it stands and not in a sense becoming Deity, He will not after this retain it. For he that has delivered up to another, ceases any longer to retain a thing himself. And not only will there be this absurdity, but that also the other person who receives it will be found not to be possessor of it before he has so received it. Therefore according to them, neither was the Father a King before, governing our affairs: nor will it seem that the Son after these things will be a King. How then, first of all, concerning the Father does the Son Himself say, *"My Father works hitherto, and I work:"* [John 5:17] and of Him Daniel, *"That His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not pass away?"* [Daniel 7:14] Do you see how many absurdities are produced, and repugnant to the Scriptures, when one takes the thing spoken after the manner of men?

But what "*rule*," then does he here say, that Christ "*puts down*?" That of the angels? Far from it. That of the faithful? Neither is it this. What rule then? That of the devils, concerning which he says, "*Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness:*" [Ephesians 6:12] For now it is not as yet "*put down*" perfectly, they working in many places, but then shall they cease.

1 Corinthians 15:25

"For He must reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet."

Again from hence also another absurdity is produced, unless we take this also in a way becoming Deity. For the expression "*until*," is one of end and limitation: but in reference to God, this does not exist.

1 Corinthians 15:26

"The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

How the last? After all, after the devil, after all the other things. For so in the beginning also death came in last; the counsel of the devil having come first, and our disobedience, and then death. Virtually then indeed it is even now abolished: but actually, at that time.

1 Corinthians 15:27

7. "For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, All things are put in subjection, it is manifest that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him."

1 Corinthians 15:28

"And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected unto Him that did subject all things unto Him."

And yet before he said not that it was the Father who *"put things under Him,"* but He Himself who *"abolishes."* For *"when He shall have abolished,"* says he, *"all rule and authority:"* and again, *"for He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet."* How then does he here say, *"the Father?"*

And not only is there this apparent perplexity, but also that he is afraid with a very unaccountable fear, and uses a correction, saying, *"He is excepted, who did subject all things unto Him,"* as though some would suspect, whether the Father might Himself not be subject unto the Son; than which what can be more irrational? Nevertheless, he fears this.

How then is it? For in truth there are many questions following one upon another. Well, give me then your earnest attention; since in fact it is necessary for us first to speak of the scope of Paul and his mind, which one may find everywhere shining forth, and then to subjoin our solution: this being itself an ingredient in our solution.

What then is Paul's mind, and what is his custom? He speaks in one way when he discourses of the Godhead alone, and in another when he falls into the argument of the economy. Thus having once taken hold of our Lord's Flesh, he freely thereafter uses all the sayings that humiliate Him; without fear as though that were able to bear all such expressions. Let us see therefore here also, whether his discourse is of the simple Godhead, or whether in view of the incarnation he asserts of Him those things which he says: or rather let us first point out where he did this of which I have

spoken. Where then did he this? Writing to the Philippians he says, *"Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore has God highly exalted Him."* [Philippians 2:6-9]

Do you see how when he was discoursing of the Godhead alone, he uttered those great things, that He *"was in the form of God"* and that He *"was equal with"* Him that begot Him, and to Him refers the whole? But when He showed Him to you made flesh, he lowered again the discourse. For except thou distinguish these things, there is great variance between the things spoken. Since, if He were *"equal with God,"* how did He highly exalt one equal with Himself? If He were *"in the form of God,"* how *"gave"* He Him *"a name?"* for he that gives, gives to one that has not, and he that exalts, exalts one that is before abased. He will be found then to be imperfect and in need, before He has received the *"exaltation"* and *"the Name;"* and many other absurd corollaries will hence follow. But if you should add the incarnation, you will not err in saying these things. These things then here also consider, and with this mind receive thou the expressions.

8. Now together with these we will state also other reasons why this pericope of Scripture was thus composed. But at present it is necessary to mention this: first, that Paul's discourse was of the resurrection, a thing counted to be impossible and greatly disbelieved: next, he was writing to Corinthians among whom there were many philosophers who mocked at such things always. For although in other things wrangling one with another, in this they all, as with one mouth, conspired, dogmatically declaring that there is no resurrection. Contending therefore for such a

subject so disbelieved and ridiculed, both on account of the prejudice which had been formed, and on account of the difficulty of the thing; and wishing to demonstrate its possibility, he first effects this from the resurrection of Christ. And having proved it both from the prophets, and from those who had seen, and from those who believed: when he had obtained an admitted *reductio ad absurdum*, he proves in what follows the resurrection of mankind also. "*For if the dead rise not,*" says he, "*neither has Christ been raised.*"

Further; having closely urged these converse arguments in the former verses, he tries it again in another way, calling Him the "*first-fruits,*" and pointing to His "*abolishing all rule and authority and power, and death last.*" "*How then should death be put down,*" says he, "*unless he first loose the bodies which he held?*" Since then he had spoken great things of the Only-Begotten, that He "*gives up the kingdom,*" i.e., that He Himself brings these things to pass, and Himself is victor in the war, and "*puts all things under His feet,*" he adds, to correct the unbelief of the multitude, "*for He must reign till He has put all His enemies under His feet.*" Not as putting an end to the kingdom, did he use the expression "*until,*" but to render what was said worthy of credit, and induce them to be confident. For "*do not,*" says he, "*because you have heard that He will abolish all rule, and authority and power,*" to wit, the devil, and the bands of demons, (many as there are,) and the multitudes of unbelievers, and the tyranny of death, and all evils: do not thou fear as though His strength was exhausted. For until He shall have done all these things, "*He must reign;*" not saying this, that after He has brought it to pass He does not reign; but establishing this other, that even if it be not now, undoubtedly it will be. For His kingdom is not cut off: yea, He rules and prevails and abides until He shall have set to right all things.

And this manner of speech one might find also in the Old Testament; as when it is said, "*But the word of the Lord abides for ever;*" [Psalm 119:89] and, "*You are the same, and Your years shall not fail.*" [Psalm 102:27] Now these and such-like things the Prophet says, when he is telling of things which a long space of time must achieve and which must by all means come to pass; casting out the fearfulness of the duller sort of hearers.

But that the expression, "*until,*" spoken of God, and "*unto,*" do not signify an end, hear what one says: "*From everlasting unto everlasting You are God:*" [Psalm 90:2] and again, "*I am, I am,*" and "*Even to your old age I am He.*" [Isaiah 46:4]

For this cause indeed does he set death last, that from the victory over the rest this also might be easily admitted by the unbeliever. For when He destroys the devil who brought in death, much more will He put an end to His work.

9. Since then he referred all to Him, the "*abolishing rule and authority,*" the perfecting of His kingdom, (I mean the salvation of the faithful, the peace of the world, the taking away of evils, for this is to perfect His kingdom,) the putting an end to death; and he said not, "*the Father by Him,*" but, "*Himself shall put down, and Himself shall put under His feet,*" and he no where mentioned Him that begot Him; he was afraid afterward, lest on this account among some of the more irrational persons, either the Son might seem to be greater than the Father, or to be a certain distinct principle, unbegotten. And therefore, gently guarding himself, he qualifies the magnitude of his expressions, saying, "*for He put all things in subjection under His feet,*" again referring to the Father these high achievements; not as though the Son were without power. For how could He be, of whom he testified so great things before, and referred to Him all that was said? But it was for the reason which I mentioned, and that he

might show all things to be common to Father and Son which were done in our behalf. For that Himself alone was sufficient to *"put all things in subjection under Him,"* hear again Paul saying, [Philippians 3:21] *"Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."*

Then also he uses a correction, saying, *"But when He says, all things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him,"* testifying even thence no small glory to the Only-Begotten. For if He were less and much inferior, this fear would never have been entertained by him. Neither is he content with this, but also adds another thing, as follows. I say, lest any should doubtingly ask, *"And what if the Father has not been 'put under Him?' this does not at all hinder the Son from being the more mighty;"* fearing this impious supposition, because that expression was not sufficient to point out this also, he added, going very much beyond it, *"But when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected;"* showing His great concord with the Father, and that He is the principle of all other good things and the first Cause, who has begotten One so great in power and in achievements.

10. But if he said more than the subject-matter demanded, marvel not. For in imitation of his Master he does this: since He too purposing to show His concord with Him that begot Him, and that He has not come without His mind, descends so far, I say not, as the proof of concord demanded, but as the weakness of the persons present required. For He prays to His Father for no other cause but this; and stating the reason He says, *"that they may believe that You have sent Me."* [John 11:42] In imitation therefore of Him, Paul here in his manner of speech goes beyond what was required; not that you might have any suspicion of a forced servitude, far from it; but that he

might the more entirely cast out those impious doctrines. For so when he is minded to pull up any thing by the roots, he is wont to do it, and abundantly more with it. Thus too, for example, when he spoke of a believing wife and an unbelieving husband, companying with one another by the law of marriage, that the wife might not consider herself defiled by that intercourse and the embraces of the unbeliever, he said not, "*the wife is not unclean,*" nor, "*she is no wise harmed by the unbeliever,*" but, which was much more, "*the unbeliever is even 'sanctified' by her,*" not meaning to signify that the heathen was made holy through her, but by the very great strength of the expression anxious to remove her fear. So also here, his zeal to take away that impious doctrine by a very strong utterance was the cause of his expressing himself as he did. For as to suspect the Son of weakness is extreme impiety: (wherefore he corrects it, saying, "*He shall put all enemies under His feet:*") so on the other hand is it more impious to consider the Father inferior to Him. Wherefore he takes it also away with exceeding force. And observe how he puts it. For he said not simply, "*He is excepted which put all things under Him,*" but, "*it is manifest,*" "*for even if it be admitted,*" says he, "*nevertheless I make it sure.*" "

And that you may learn that this is the reason of the things spoken, I would ask you this question: Does an additional "*subjection*" at that time befall the Son? And how can this be other than impious and unworthy of God? For the greatest subjection and obedience is this, that He who is God took the form of a servant. How then will He be "*subjected*?" Do you see, that to take away the impious notion, he used this expression? And this too in a suitable though reserved sense? For he becomes a Son and a divine Person, so He obeys; not humanly, but as one acting freely and having all authority. Otherwise how is he co-enthroned? How, "*as the Father raises up, even so He, whom He will*?" [John 5:21] How are "*all things that the*"

Father has His," and all that He has, the Father's? [John 16:15] For these phrases indicate to us an authority exactly measured by that of Him that begot Him.

11. But what is this, *"When He shall deliver up the kingdom?"* The Scripture acknowledges two kingdoms of God, the one by appropriation , the other by creation. Thus, He is King over all, both Greeks and Jews and devils and His adversaries, in respect of His creation: but He is King of the faithful and willing and subject, in respect of His making them His own. This is the kingdom which is said also to have a beginning. For concerning this He says also in the second Psalm, *"Ask of Me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance."* [Psalm 2:8] Touching this also, He Himself said to His disciples, *"All authority has been given unto Me by My father,"* [Matthew 28:18] referring all to Him that begot Him, not as though of Himself He were not sufficient, but to signify that He is a Son, and not unbegotten. This kingdom then He does *"deliver up,"* i.e., *"bring to a right end."*

"What then," says one, *"can be the reason why He spoke nothing of the Spirit?"* Because of Him he was not discoursing now, nor does he confound all things together. Since also where he says, *"There is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus,"* undoubtedly not as allowing the Spirit to be inferior, is he therefore silent, but because for the time it was not urgent, he so expressed himself. For he is wont also to make mention of the Father only, yet we must not therefore cast out the Son: he is wont to speak also of the Son and of the Spirit only, yet not for this are we to deny the Father.

But what is, *"that God may be all in all?"* That all things may be dependent upon Him, that none may suppose two authorities without a beginning, nor another kingdom separated off; that nothing may exist independent of him. For when the enemies shall be lying under the feet of

the Son, and He having them cast under His feet be at no variance with His Father, but at concord with Him in entire perfection, then He shall Himself *"be all in all."*

But some say that he spoke this to declare the removal of wickedness, as though all would yield thenceforth and none would resist nor do iniquity. For when there is no sin, it is evident that *"God shall be all in all."*

12. But if bodies do not rise again, how are these things true? For the worst enemy of all, death, remains, having wrought whatever he listed. *"Nay,"* says one, *"for they shall sin no more."* And what of that? For he is not discoursing here of the death of the soul, but of that of the body? How then is he *"put down?"* For victory is this, the winning of those things which have been carried off and detained. But if men's bodies are to be detained in the earth, it follows that the tyranny of death remains, these bodies for their part being holden, and there being no other body for him to be vanquished in. But if this which Paul spoke of, ensue, as undoubtedly it will ensue, God's victory will appear, and that a glorious one, in His being able to raise again the bodies which were holden thereby. Since an enemy too is then vanquished, when a man takes the spoils, not when he suffers them to remain in the other's possession: but unless one venture to take what is his, how can we say that he is vanquished? After this manner of victory does Christ Himself say in the Gospels that He has been victorious, thus speaking, *"When he shall bind the strong man, then shall he also spoil his goods."* [Matthew 12:29] Since if this were not so, it would not be at all a manifest victory. For as in the death of the soul, *"he that has died is justified from sin;"* [Romans 6:7] (and yet we cannot say that this is a victory, for he is not the victor who adds no more to his wickedness, but he who has done away the former captivity of his passions;) just so in this instance also, I should not call death's being stayed from feeding on the bodies of men a

splendid victory, but rather that the bodies heretofore holden by him should be snatched away from him.

But if they should still be contentious and should say that these things were spoken of the soul's death, how is this "*destroyed last?*" since in the case of each one at his Baptism it has been destroyed perfectly. If however you speak of the body, the expression is admissible; I mean, such a saying as that it will be "*last destroyed.*"

But if any should doubt why discoursing of the resurrection, he did not bring forward the bodies which rose again in the time of our Lord, our answer might be the following: that this could not be alleged in behalf of the resurrection. For to point out those who after rising died again, suited not one employed in proving that death is entirely destroyed. Yea, this is the very reason why he said that he is "*destroyed last,*" that you might never more suspect his rising again. For when sin is taken away, much more shall death cease: it being out of all reason when the fountain is dried up, that the stream flowing from it should still subsist; and when the root is annihilated, that the fruit should remain.

13. Since then in the last day the enemies of God shall be destroyed, together with death and the devil and the evil spirits, let us not be dejected at the prosperity of the enemies of God. For the enemies of the Lord in the moment of their glory and exaltation fail; "*yea, like smoke have they failed away.*" [Psalm 37:20] When you see any enemy of God wealthy, with armed attendants and many flatterers, be not cast down, but lament, weep, call upon God, that He may enrol him among His friends: and the more he prospers being God's enemy, so much the more do thou mourn for him. For sinners we ought always to bewail, but especially when they enjoy wealth and abundance of good days; even as one should the sick, when they eat and drink to excess.

But there are some, who when they hear these words are of so unhappy a disposition, as to sigh bitterly thereupon, and say, "*Tears are due to me who have nothing.*" You have well said, "*who have nothing,*" not because you have not what another has, but because you account the thing such as to be called happy; yea, for this cause are you worthy of infinite lamentations: even as, if a person living in health should count happy him that is sick and lying on a soft couch, this latter is not near so wretched and miserable as he, because he has no sense of his own advantages. Just such a result one may observe in these men's case also: nay, and hereby our whole life is confounded and disordered. For these sayings have undone many, and betrayed them to the devil, and made them more pitiable than such as are wasted with famine. Yea, that those who long after more, are more wretched than mendicants, as being possessed with a greater and bitterer sorrow than they, is evident from what follows.

A drought once overtook our city, and all were trembling for the last of evils, and were beseeching God to rid them of this fear. And one might see then that which was spoken of by Moses; [Deuteronomy 28:23] "*the heavens become brass,*" and a death, of all deaths the most horrible, waited for every day. But afterwards, when it seemed good to the merciful God, beyond all expectation there was wafted down from heaven a great and plentiful rain, and thenceforth all were in holiday and feasting, as having come up from the very gates of death. But in the midst of so great blessings and the common gladness of all, one of those exceedingly wealthy people went about with a gloomy and downcast countenance, quite dead with sorrow; and when many enquired the reason, wherefore in the common joy of all men he alone is sorrowful, he could not even keep within him his savage passion, but goaded by the tyranny of the disease, declared before them all the reason. "*Why,*" says he, "*having in my possession ten thousand*

measures of wheat, I have no means of disposing of them left." Shall we then count him happy, tell me, for these words, for which he deserved to be stoned? Him that was more cruel than any wild beast, the common enemy? What do you say, man? Are you sad because all did not perish, that you might gather gold? Have you not heard what Solomon says, [Proverbs 11:26] *"He that withholds grain, the people shall curse him?"* but goest about a common enemy of the blessings of the world, and a foe to the liberality of the Lord of the world, and a friend of Mammon, or rather his slave? Nay, does not that tongue deserve to be cut out, and the heart to be quenched, that brought forth these words?

14. Do you see how gold does not suffer men to be men, but wild beasts and fiends? For what can be more pitiful than this rich man, whose daily prayer is that there may be famine, in order that he may have a little gold? Yea, and his passion by this time has come round to the contrary of itself: he not even rejoicing in his abundant store of the fruits of the earth, but on this very account grieving the rather, (to such a pass is he come,) that his possessions are infinite. Although one who has much ought to be joyful: but this man on that very account is dejected. Do you see that, as I said, the rich do not reap as much pleasure from what is present, as they endure sorrow for what has not yet been added? For he that had innumerable quantities of wheat did more grieve and lament than he who suffered hunger. And while the one, on merely having his necessary food, was crowning himself and leaping for joy and giving thanks to God; the other, who had so much, was fretting and thought he was undone. It is not then the superfluity which causes our pleasure, but a self-controlling mind: since without this, though one obtain and have all, he will feel as one deprived of all and will mourn accordingly: inasmuch as this man too of whom we are now speaking, even if he had sold all he had for as large a sum as he

wished, would again have grieved that it was not for more; and if he could have had more, he would again have sought another advance; and if he had disposed of the bushel for one pound, he would even then have been distracted for sorrow, that the half bushel could not be sold for as much. And if the price were not set so high at first, marvel not. Since drunkards also are not at first inflamed, but when they have loaded themselves with much wine, then they kindle the flame into greater fierceness: so these men, by how much more they have grasped, in so much the greater poverty do they find themselves, and they who gain more than others, are the very persons to be the most in want.

15. But I say these things not only to this man, but also to each one of those who are so diseased: those, I say, who raise the price of their wares and make a traffic of the poverty of their neighbors. For of humanity none any where makes account: but every where the covetous desire brings out many at the time of sale. And oil and wine is sold by one quicker, by another more slowly, but neither out of regard to others; rather the one seeks gain, the other to avoid loss by the spoiling of his produce. Thus, because most men not making much account of the laws of God, shut up and keep all in doors, God by other means leading them to humanity—that were it but of necessity they may do something kind—has infused into them the fear of greater loss, not allowing the fruits of the earth to keep any long time, in order that out of mere dread of the damage from their spoiling, they may expose for sale to the needy, even against their will, such things as they wickedly bury at home and keep. However, after all this, some are so insatiable as not even thereby to be corrected. Many, for example, have gone so far as to empty whole casks, not giving even a cup-full to the poor man, nor a piece of money to the needy, but after it has become vinegar, they dash it all upon the ground, and destroy their casks together with the

fruit. Others again who would not give a part of a single cake to the hungry, have thrown whole granaries into some river: and because they listened not to God who bade them give to the needy, at the bidding of the moth, even unwillingly, they emptied out all they had in their houses, in utter destruction and waste; drawing down upon their own heads together with this loss much scorn and many a curse.

And such is the course of their affairs here; but the hereafter, what words shall set before us? For as these men in this world cast their moth-eaten grain, become useless, into rivers; even so the doers of such things, on this very account become useless, God casts into the river of fire. Because as the grain by the moth and worm, so are their souls devoured by cruelty and inhumanity. And the reason of these things is their being nailed to things present, and gaping after this life only. Whence also such men are full of infinite sadness; for name whatever pleasure you will, the fear of their end is enough to annihilate all, and such an one *"is dead, while he is yet alive."* [1 Timothy 5:6]

Now then that unbelievers should have these feelings, is no marvel; but when they who have partaken of so great mysteries and learned such high rules of self-denial concerning things to come, delight to dwell in things present, what indulgence do they deserve?

16. Whence then arises their loving to dwell in present things? From giving their mind to luxury, and fattening their flesh, and making their soul delicate, and rendering their burden heavy, and their darkness great, and their veil thick. For in luxury the better part is enslaved, but the worse prevails; and the former is blinded on every side and dragged on in its maimed condition; while the other draws and leads men about every where, though it ought to be in the rank of things that are led.

Since great indeed is the bond between the soul and the body; the Maker having contrived this, lest any should induce us to abhor it as alien. For God indeed bade us love our enemies; but the devil has so far prevailed as to induce some even to hate their own body. Since when a man says that it is of the devil, he proves nothing else than this; which is the extreme of dotage. For if it be of the devil, what is this so perfect harmony, such as to render it meet in every way for the energies of the self-controlling soul? "Nay," says one, *"if it be meet, how does the body blind it?"* It is not the body which blinds the soul; far from it, O man; but the luxury. But whence do we desire the luxury? Not from our having a body, by no means; but from an evil choice. For the body requires feeding, not high feeding, the body needs nourishing, not breaking up and falling apart. You see that not to the soul only, but to the very body also which receives the nourishment, the luxury is hostile. For it becomes weaker instead of strong, and softer instead of firm, and sickly instead of healthful, and heavier instead of light, and slighter instead of compact, and ill-favored instead of handsome, and unsavory instead of fragrant, and impure instead of clean, and full of pain instead of being at ease, and useless instead of useful, and old instead of young, and decaying instead of strong, and slow and dull instead of quick, and maimed instead of whole. Whereas if it were of the devil, it ought not to receive injury from the things of the devil, I mean, from sin.

17. But neither is the body, nor food, of the devil, but luxury alone. For by means of it that malignant fiend brings to pass his innumerable evils. Thus did he make victims of a whole people. *"For the beloved waxed fat,"* says one, *"and grew thick, and was enlarged, and kicked."* [Deuteronomy 32:15] And thence also was the beginning of those thunderbolts on Sodom. And to declare this, Ezekiel said, *"But this was the iniquity of Sodom, in pride and fullness of bread and refinements they waxed wanton."* [Ezekiel

16:4] Therefore also Paul said, [1 Timothy 5:6] *"She that gives herself to pleasure, is dead while she lives."* How should this be? Because as a sepulchre she bears about her body, bound close to innumerable evils. And if the body so perish, how will the soul be affected; what disorder, what waves, what a tempest will she be filled with? Hereby, you see, she becomes unfitted for every duty, and will have no power easily to speak, or hear, or take counsel, or do anything that is needful. But as a pilot when the storm has got the better of his skill, is plunged into the deep, vessels and sailors and all: so also the soul together with the body is drowned in the grievous abyss of insensibility.

For, in fact, God has set the stomach in our bodies as a kind of mill, giving it a proportionate power, and appointing a set measure which it ought to grind every day. If therefore one cast in more, remaining undigested it does injury to the whole body. Hence diseases and weaknesses and deformities: since in truth luxury makes the beautiful woman not only sickly, but also foul to look upon. For when she is continually sending forth unpleasant exhalations, and breathes fumes of stale wine, and is more florid than she ought to be, and spoils the symmetry that beseems a woman, and loses all her seemliness, and her body becomes flabby, her eyelids bloodshot and distended, and her bulk unduly great, and her flesh an useless load; consider what a disgust it all produces.

Moreover, I have heard a physician say that many have been hindered from reaching their proper height by nothing so much as luxurious living. For the breath being obstructed by the multitude of things which are cast in and being occupied in the digestion of such things, that which ought to serve for growth is spent on this digestion of superfluities. Why need one speak of gout, rheum dispersed every where, the other diseases hence arising, the whole abomination? For nothing is so disgusting as a woman

pampering herself with much food. Therefore among the poorer women one may see more of beauty: the superfluities being consumed and not cleaving to them, like some superfluous clay, of no use and benefit. For their daily exercise, and labors, and hardships, and their frugal table, and spare diet, minister unto them much soundness of body, and thence also much bloom.

18. But if you talk of the pleasure of luxury, you will find it to go no farther than the throat: since as soon as it has passed the tongue, it is flown away, leaving behind in the body much that is disgusting. For do not I pray look on the voluptuaries at table only, but when you see them rise up, then follow them, and you will see bodies rather of wild beasts and irrational creatures than of human beings. You will see them with headache, distended, bound up, needing a bed and a couch and plenty of rest, and like men who are tossed in a great tempest and require others to save them, and long for that condition in which they were before they were swelled even to bursting : they carrying their bellies about with a burden like that of women with child, and can scarce step forward, and scarce see, and scarce speak, and scarce do any thing. But if it should chance that they sleep a little, they see again strange dreams and full of all manner of fancies.

What should one say of that other madness of theirs? The madness of lust, I mean, for this also has its fountains from hence. Yea, as horses wild after the female, so they, goaded on by the sting of their drunkenness, leap upon all, more irrational than they, and more frantic in their boundings; and committing many more unseemlinesses which but to name is unlawful. For they know not in fact any longer what they suffer, nor what they do.

But not so he that keeps from luxury: rather he sits in harbor, beholding other men's shipwrecks, and enjoys a pleasure pure and lasting, following after that life which becomes him that is free. Knowing therefore these things, let us flee from the evil banquets of luxury and cleave to a

spare table; that being of a good habit both of soul and body, we may both practice all virtue, and attain the good things to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 40 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:29

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for the dead?

He takes in hand again another topic, establishing what he said at one time from what God does, and at another from the very things which they practice. And this also is no small plea for the defence of any cause when a man brings forward the gainsayers themselves as witnessing by their own actions what he affirms. What then is that which he means? Or will you that I should first mention how they who are infected with the Marcionite heresy pervert this expression? And I know indeed that I shall excite much laughter; nevertheless, even on this account most of all I will mention it that you may the more completely avoid this disease: viz., when any Catechumen departs among them, having concealed the living man under the couch of the dead, they approach the corpse and talk with him, and ask him if he wishes to receive baptism; then when he makes no answer, he that is concealed underneath says in his stead that of course he should wish to be baptized; and so they baptize him instead of the departed, like men jesting upon the stage. So great power has the devil over the souls of careless sinners. Then being called to account, they allege this expression, saying that even the Apostle has said, "*They who are baptized for the dead.*" Do you see their extreme ridiculousness? Is it meet then to answer these things? I trow not; unless it were necessary to discourse with madmen of what they in their frenzy utter. But that none of the more exceedingly simple folk may be led captive, one must needs submit to answer even these men. As thus, if

this was Paul's meaning wherefore did God threaten him that is not baptized? For it is impossible that any should not be baptized henceforth, this being once devised: and besides, the fault no longer lies with the dead, but with the living. But to whom spoke he, *"Unless you eat My flesh, and drink My blood, you have no life in yourselves?"* [John 6:53] To the living, or to the dead, tell me? And again, *"Unless a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* [John 3:5] For if this be permitted, and there be no need of the mind of the receiver nor of his assent while he lives, what hinders both Greeks and Jews thus to become believers, other men after their decease doing these things in their stead?

But not to prolong fruitless toil in cutting asunder their petty spiders' webs, come let us unfold unto you the force of this expression. What then is Paul speaking of?

2. But first I wish to remind you who are initiated of the response, which on that evening they who introduce you to the mysteries bid you make; and then I will also explain the saying of Paul: so this likewise will be clearer to you; we after all the other things adding this which Paul now says. And I desire indeed expressly to utter it, but I dare not on account of the uninitiated; for these add a difficulty to our exposition, compelling us either not to speak clearly or to declare unto them the ineffable mysteries. Nevertheless, as I may be able, I will speak as through a veil.

As thus: after the enunciation of those mystical and fearful words, and the awful rules of the doctrines which have come down from heaven, this also we add at the end when we are about to baptize, bidding them say, *"I believe in the resurrection of the dead,"* and upon this faith we are baptized. For after we have confessed this together with the rest, then at last are we let down into the fountain of those sacred streams. This therefore Paul recalling to their minds said, *"if there be no resurrection, why are you then*

baptized for the dead ?" i.e., the dead bodies. For in fact with a view to this are you baptized, the resurrection of your dead body, believing that it no longer remains dead. And thou indeed in the words makest mention of a resurrection of the dead; but the priest, as in a kind of image, signifies to you by very deed the things which you have believed and confessed in words. When without a sign you believe, then he gives you the sign also; when you have done your own part, then also does God fully assure you. How and in what manner? By the water. For the being baptized and immersed and then emerging, is a symbol of the descent into Hades and return thence. Wherefore also Paul calls baptism a burial, saying, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death." [Romans 6:4] By this he makes that also which is to come credible, I mean, the resurrection of our bodies. For the blotting out sins is a much greater thing than the raising up of a body. And this Christ declaring, said, "For whether is easier to say, Your sins are forgiven, or to say, Take up your bed, and walk?" [Matthew 9:5] "The former is the more difficult," says He, "but since you disbelieve it as being hidden, and make the easier instead of the more difficult the demonstration of my power, neither will I refuse to afford you this proof." Then says He to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house."

"And how is this difficult," says one, "when it is possible to kings also and rulers? For they too forgive adulterers and homicides." You are jesting, O man, who sayest these things. For to forgive sins with God only is possible. But rulers and kings, whether it is adulterers whom they forgive or homicides, release them indeed from the present punishment; but their sin they do not purge out. Though they should advance to offices them that have been forgiven, though they should invest them with the purple itself, though they should set the diadem upon their heads, yet so they would only

make them kings, but could not free them from their sin. It being God alone who does this; which accordingly in the Laver of Regeneration He will bring to pass. For His grace touches the very soul, and thence plucks up the sin by the root. Here is the reason why he that has been forgiven by the king may be seen with his soul yet impure, but the soul of the baptized no longer so, but purer than the very sun-beams, and such as it was originally formed, nay rather much better than that. For it is blessed with a Spirit, on every side enkindling it and making its holiness intense. And as when you are recasting iron or gold you make it pure and new once more, just so the Holy Ghost also, recasting the soul in baptism as in a furnace and consuming its sins, causes it to glisten with more purity than all purest gold.

Further, the credibility of the resurrection of our bodies he signifies to you again from what follows: viz., that since sin brought in death, now that the root is dried up, one must not after that doubt of the destruction of the fruit. Therefore having first mentioned "*the forgiveness of sins*," you next confess also "*the resurrection of the dead*;" the one guides you as by hand on to the other.

Yet again, because the term Resurrection is not sufficient to indicate the whole: for many after rising have again departed, as those in the Old Testament, as Lazarus, as they at the time of the crucifixion: one is bid to say, "*and the life everlasting*," that none may any longer have a notion of death after that resurrection.

These words therefore Paul recalling to their minds, says, "*What shall they do which are baptized for the dead?*" "*For if there be no resurrection*," says he, "*these words are but scenery. If there be no resurrection, how persuade we them to believe things which we do not bestow?*" Just as if a person bidding another to deliver a document to the effect that he had received so much, should never give the sum named therein, yet after the

subscription should demand of him the specified monies. What then will remain for the subscriber to do, now that he has made himself responsible, without having received what he admitted he had received? This then he here says of those who are baptized also. *"What shall they do which are baptized,"* says he, *"having subscribed to the resurrection of dead bodies, and not receiving it, but suffering fraud? And what need was there at all of this confession, if the fact did not follow?"*

1 Corinthians 15:30-31

3. *"Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour?"*

"I protest by that glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily."

See again whence he endeavors to establish the doctrine, from his own suffrage: or rather not from his only, but from that also of the other apostles. And this too is no small thing; that the teachers whom you produce were full of vehement conviction and signified the same not by words only, but also by very deeds. Therefore, you see, he does not say simply, *"we are persuaded,"* for this alone was not sufficient to persuade them, but he also furnishes the proof by facts; as if he should say, *"in words to confess these things haply seems to you no marvel; but if we should also produce unto you the voice which deeds send forth, what can you have to say against that? Hear ye then, how by our perils also day by day we confess these things?"* And he said not *"I,"* but *"we,"* taking along with him all the apostles together, and thereby at once speaking modestly and adding credibility to his discourse.

For what can you have to say? That we are deceiving you when we preach these things, and that our doctrines come of vain-glory? Nay, our perils suffer you not to pass such a sentence. For who would choose to be in continual jeopardy to no purpose and with no effect? Wherefore also he said, *"Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour?"* For if one should even choose it through vain-glory, such his choice will be but for once and again, not all his life long, like ours. For we have assigned our whole life to this purpose.

"I protest by that glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily:" by glorying here, meaning their advancement. Thus since he had intimated that his perils were many, lest he might seem to say this by way of lamentation, *"far from grieving,"* says he, *"I even glory in suffering this for your sake."* And doubly, he says, he takes delight in it, both as being in jeopardy for their sakes and as beholding their proficiency. Then doing what is usual with him, because he had uttered great things, he refers both to Christ.

But how does he *"die daily?"* by his readiness and preparation for that event. And wherefore says he these words? Again by these also to establish the doctrine of the resurrection. *"For who would choose,"* says he, *"to undergo so many deaths, if there be no resurrection nor life after this? Yea, if they who believe in the resurrection would scarcely put themselves in jeopardy for it except they were very noble of heart: much more would not the unbeliever (so he speaks) choose to undergo so many deaths and so terrible."* Thus, see by degrees how very high he mounts up. He had said, *"we stand in jeopardy,"* he added, *"every hour,"* then, *"daily,"* then, *"I not only 'stand in jeopardy,'"* says he, but *"I even 'die:'"* he concludes accordingly by pointing out also what kind of deaths they were; thus saying,

1 Corinthians 15:32

"If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me?"

What is, *"if after the manner of men?"* "As far as pertains to men I fought with beasts: for what if God snatched me out of those dangers? So that I am he who ought most to be in care about these things; I, who endure so great dangers and have not yet received any return. For if no time of recompense is at hand, but our reward is shut up in this present world, ours is the greater loss. For you have believed without jeopardy, but we are slaughtered every day."

But all these things he said, not because he had no advantage even in the very suffering, but on account of the weakness of the many, and to establish them in the doctrine of the resurrection: not because he himself was running for hire; for it was a sufficient recompense to him to do that which was pleasing to God. So that when he adds, *"If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable,"* it is there again for their sakes, that he might by the fear of this misery overthrow their unbelief of the resurrection. And in condescension to their weakness, he thus speaks. Since in truth, the great reward is to please Christ at all times: and apart from the recompense, it is a very great requital to be in jeopardy for His sake.

4. *"If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."*

This word, be sure, is spoken in mockery: wherefore neither did he bring it forward of himself, but summoned the prophet of loftiest sound, Isaiah, who discoursing of certain insensible and reprobate persons made

use of these words, *"Who slay oxen and kill sheep to eat flesh and drink wine; who say, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. These things are revealed to the ears of the Lord of Hosts, and this iniquity shall not be forgiven you, till ye die."* [Isaiah 22:13-14, Septuagint] Now if then they were deprived of pardon who spoke thus, much more in the time of Grace.

Then that he might not make his discourse too rough, he dwells not long upon his *"reduc tio ad absurdum,"* but again turns his discourse to exhortation, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:33

"Be not deceived: evil company does corrupt good manners."

And this he said, both to rebuke them as without understanding, (for here he by a charitable expression, calls "*good*" that which is easily deceived,) and also, as far as he could, to make some allowance to them for the past with a view to their return, and to remove from them and transfer to others the greater part of his charges, and so by this way also to allure them to repentance. Which he does likewise in the Epistle to the Galatians, saying, "*But he that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.*" [Galatians 5:10]

1 Corinthians 15:34

"Awake up righteously and sin not."

As if he were speaking to drunkards and madmen. For suddenly to cast every thing out of their hands, was the part of drunkards and madmen, in not seeing any longer what they saw nor believing what they had before confessed. But what is, *"righteously?"* with a view to what is profitable and useful. For it is possible to awake up unrighteously, when a man is thoroughly roused up to the injury of his own soul. And well did he add, *"sin not,"* implying that hence were the sins of their unbelief. And in many places he covertly signifies this, that a corrupt life is the parent of evil doctrines; as when he says, *"The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, which some reaching after, have been led astray from the faith."* [1 Timothy 6:10] Yea, and many of those who are conscious of wickedness and would fain not pay its penalty are by this fear damaged also in their faith concerning the resurrection: even as they who do very virtuously desire even daily to behold it.

"For some have no knowledge of God; I speak this to move you to shame."

See how again he transfers his accusations to others. For he said not, *"You have no knowledge,"* but, *"some have no knowledge."* Because disbelieving the resurrection is the temper of one not fully aware that the power of God is irresistible and sufficient for all things. For if out of the things which are not He made the things that are, much more will He be able to raise again those which have been dissolved.

And because he had touched them to the quick and exceedingly mocked them, accusing them of gluttony, of folly, of madness; mitigating

those expressions, he says, "*I speak to move you to shame*," that is, to set upright, to bring back, to make you better, by this shame of yours. For he feared lest if he cut too deep, he should cause them to start away.

5. But let us not consider these things as spoken to them only, but as addressed now also to all who labor under the same disease, and live a corrupt life. Since in truth not they who hold corrupt doctrines only, but they too who are holden of grievous sins, are both drunken and frantic. Wherefore also to them may it be justly said, "*Awake*," and especially to those who are weighed down by the lethargy of avarice; who rob wickedly. For there is a robbery which is good, the robbery of Heaven, which injures not. And although in respect of money it is impossible for one to become rich, unless another first become poor: yet in spiritual things this is not so, but wholly the reverse: it is impossible that any should become rich without making another's store plentiful. For if you help no one, you will not be able to grow wealthy. Thus, whereas in temporal things imparting causes diminution: in spiritual things, on the contrary, imparting works increase, and the not imparting, this produces great poverty and brings on extreme punishment. And this is signified by him who buried the talent. Yea, and he too who has a word of wisdom, by imparting to another increases his own abundance, by making many wise: but he that buries it at home, deprives himself of his abundance by neglecting to win the profit of the many. Again, he that had other gifts, by healing many augmented his own gift: and was neither himself emptied by the imparting, and filled many others with his own spiritual gift. And in all spiritual things this rule abides unshaken. Thus also in the Kingdom, he that makes many partakers with himself of the Kingdom will hereby the more completely have the fruits of it in return: but he that studies not to have any partaker will himself be cast out of those many blessings. For if the wisdom of this world of sense is not spent,

though ten thousand are forcibly seizing it; nor does the artificer by making many artificers lose his own skill; much less does he who seizes the Kingdom make it less, but then will our riches be increased when we call many to us for that purpose.

Let us seize then the things which cannot be spent but increase while we seize them: let us seize the things which admit of none to defraud us of them by false accusation, none to envy us for them. For so, if there were a place which had a fountain of gold gushing forth with continual flood, and flowing the more as more was drawn from it; and there were another place which had a treasure buried in the earth; from which would you desire to be enriched? Would it not be from the first? Plainly. But that this may not be a mere conception in words, consider the saying in reference to the air and the sun. For these are seized by all, and satisfy all. These, however, whether men enjoy or do not enjoy them, abide the same undiminished: but what I spoke of is a much greater thing; for spiritual wisdom abides not the same distributed or not distributed: but it rather increases in the distribution.

But if any endure not what I have said, but still cleave to the poverty of worldly things, snatching at the things which endure diminution: even in respect of those again, let him call to mind the food of manna [Exodus 16:20] and tremble at the example of that punishment. For what happened in that instance, this same result may one now also see in the case of covetous men. But what then happened in worms were bred from their covetousness. This also now happens in their case. For the measure of the food is the same for all; we having but one stomach to fill; only you who eat luxuriously have more to get rid of. And as in that case they who in their houses gathered more than the lawful quantity, gathered not manna, but more worms and rottenness; just so both in luxury and in covetousness, the gluttonous and drunken gather not more dainties but more corruption.

6. Nevertheless, so much worse than they are the men of our time, in that they experienced this once for all and received correction; but these every day bringing into their own houses this worm much more grievous than that, neither perceive it nor are satiated. For that these things do resemble those in respect of our useless labor on them: (for in regard of punishment these are much worse:) here is the proof for you to consider.

Wherein, I ask, differs the rich man from the poor? Has he not one body to clothe? One belly to feed? In what then has he the advantage? In cares, in spending himself, in disobeying God, in corrupting the flesh, in wasting the soul. Yea, these are the things in which he has the advantage of the poor: since if he had many stomachs to fill, perhaps he might have somewhat to say, as that his need was more and the necessity of expense greater. But even *"now they may,"* says one, *"reply, that they fill many bellies, those of their domestics, those of their hand-maidens."* But this is done, not through need nor for humanity's sake, but from mere pride: whence one cannot put up with their excuse.

For why have you many servants? Since as in our apparel we ought to follow our need only, and in our table, so also in our servants. What need is there then? None at all. For, in fact, one master need only employ one servant; or rather two or three masters one servant. But if this be grievous, consider them that have none and enjoy more prompt attendance. For God has made men sufficient to minister unto themselves, or rather unto their neighbor also. And if you believe it not, hear Paul saying, *"These hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me."* [Acts 20:34] After that he, the teacher of the world and worthy of heaven, disdained not to serve innumerable others; do you think it a disgrace, unless you carry about whole herds of slaves, not knowing that this in truth is what most of all brings shame upon you? For to that end did God grant us both

hands and feet, that we might not stand in need of servants. Since not at all for need's sake was the class of slaves introduced, else even along with Adam had a slave been formed; but it is the penalty of sin and the punishment of disobedience. But when Christ came, He put an end also to this. *"For in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free."* [Galatians 3:28] So that it is not necessary to have a slave: or if it be at all necessary, let it be about one only, or at the most two. What mean the swarms of servants? For as the sellers of sheep and the slave-dealers, so do our rich men take their round, in the baths and in the forum.

However, I will not be too exact. We will allow you to keep a second servant. But if you collect many, thou dost it not for humanity's sake, but in self-indulgence. Since if it be in care for them, I bid you occupy none of them in ministering to yourself, but when you have purchased them and hast taught them trades whereby to support themselves, let them go free. But when you scourge, when you put them in chains, it is no more a work of humanity.

And I know that I am giving disgust to my hearers. But what must I do? For this I am set, and I shall not cease to say these things, whether any thing come of them or not. For what means your clearing the way before you in the market place? Are you walking then among wild beasts that you drive away them that meet you? Be not afraid; none of these bite who approach you and walk near you. But do you consider it an insult to walk along side of other men? What madness is this, what prodigious folly, when a horse is following close after you, to think not of his bringing on you any insult; but if it be a man, unless he be driven an hundred miles off, to reckon that he disgraces you. And why have you also servants to carry fasces, employing freemen as slaves, or rather yourself living more dishonorably

than any slave? For, in truth, meaner than any servant is he who bears about with him so much pride.

Therefore they shall not so much as have a sight of the real liberty, who have enslaved themselves to this grievous passion. Nay, if you must drive and clear away, let it not be them that come near you, but your own pride which you drive away; not by your servant, but by yourself: not with this scourge, but with that which is spiritual. Since now your servant drives away them that walk by your side, but you are yourself driven from your high place more disgracefully by your own self-will than any servant can drive your neighbor. But if, descending from your horse, you will drive away pride by humility, you shall sit higher and place yourself in greater honor, needing no servant to do this. I mean, that when you have become modest and walkest on the ground, you will be seated on the car of humility which bears you up to the very heavens, that car which has winged steeds : but if falling from it, thou pass into that of arrogance, you will be in no better state than the beggars who are drawn along the ground, nay even much more wretched and pitiable than they: since them the imperfection of their bodies compels thus to be drawn, but you the disease of your own arrogance. *"For every one that exalts himself,"* says He, *"shall be abused."* [Matthew 23:12] That we then may not be abused but exalted, let us approach towards that exaltation. For thus also shall we *"find rest for our souls"* according to the divine oracle, and shall obtain the true and most exalted honor; the which may we all obtain, through the grace and mercy, etc. etc.

Homily 41 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:35-36

But some one will say, How are the dead raised? And with what manner of body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which you yourself sowest is not quickened, except it die.

Gentle and lowly as the apostle is to a great degree every where, he here adopts a style rather pungent, because of the impiety of the gainsayers. He is not however content with this, but he also employs reasons and examples, subduing thereby even the very contentious. And above he says, *"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead;"* but here he solves an objection brought in by the Gentiles. And see how again he abates the vehemence of his censure; in that he said not, *"but perhaps you will say,"* but he set down the objector indefinitely, in order that, although employing his impetuous style with all freedom, he might not too severely wound his hearers. And he states two difficulties, one touching the manner of the resurrection, the other, the kind of bodies. For of both they on their part made a question, saying, *"How is that which has been dissolved raised up?"* and, *"with what manner of body do they come?"* But what means, *"with what manner of body?"* It is as if they had said, *"with this which has been wasted, which has perished, or with some other?"*

Then, to point out that the objects of their enquiry are not questionable but admitted points, he at once meets them more sharply, saying, *"Thou foolish one, that which you yourself sowest is not quickened, except it die."* Which we also are wont to do in the case of those who gainsay things acknowledged.

2. And wherefore did he not at once appeal to the power of God? Because he is discoursing with unbelievers. For when his discourse is addressed to believers, he has not much need of reasons. Wherefore having said elsewhere, *"He shall change the body of your humiliation, that it may be fashioned like to the body of his glory,"* [Philippians 3:2] and having indicated somewhat more than the resurrection, he stated no analogies, but instead of any demonstration, brought forward the power of God, going on to say, *"according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things to Himself."* But here he also urges reasons. That is, having established it from the Scriptures, he adds also in what comes after, these things over and above, with an eye to them who do not obey the Scriptures; and he says, *"O foolish one, that which You sow:"* i.e., *"from yourself you have the proof of these things, by what you do every day, and do you doubt yet? Therefore do I call you foolish because of the things daily done by your own self you are ignorant, and being yourself an artificer of a resurrection, you doubt concerning God."* Wherefore very emphatically he said, *"what You sow,"* thou who art mortal and perishing.

And see how he uses expressions appropriate to the purpose he had in view: thus, *"it is not quickened,"* says he, *"except it die."* Leaving, you see, the terms appropriate to seed, as that *"it buds,"* and *"grows,"* and *"is dissolved,"* he adopts those which correspond to our flesh, viz. *"it is quickened,"* and, *"except it die;"* which do not properly belong to seeds, but to bodies.

And he said not, *"after it is dead it lives,"* but, which is a greater thing, *"therefore it lives, because it dies."* Do you see, what I am always observing, that he continually gives their argument the contrary turn? Thus what they made a sure sign of our not rising again, the same he makes a demonstration of our rising. For they said, *"the body rises not again,"*

because it is dead." What then does he, retorting their argument, say? *"Nay, but unless it died, it could not rise again: and therefore it rises again, because it died."* For as Christ more clearly signifies this very thing, in the words, *"Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides by itself alone: but if it die, it bears much fruit:"* [John 12:24] thence also Paul, drawing this example, said not, *"it does not live,"* but, *"is not quickened;"* again assuming the power of God and showing that not the nature of the ground, but God Himself, brings it all to pass.

And what can be the reason that he did not bring that forward, which was more akin to the subject: I mean, the seed of mankind? (For our generation too begins from a sort of decay, even as that of the grain.) Because it was not of equal force, but the latter was a more complete instance: for he wants a case of something that perished entirely, whereas this was but a part; wherefore he rather alleges the other. Besides, that proceeds from a living body and falls into a living womb; but here it is no flesh, but the earth into which the seed is cast, and into the same it is dissolved, like the body which is dead. Wherefore on this account too the example was more appropriate.

1 Corinthians 15:37

3. *"And he who sows, sows not that body that shall be. "*

For the things before spoken meet the question, *"how they are raised;"* but this, the doubt, *"with what manner of body they come."* But what is, *"you sow not that body which shall be?"* Not an entire ear of grain, nor new grain. For here his discourse no longer regards the resurrection, but the manner of the resurrection, what is the kind of body which shall rise again; as whether it be of the same kind, or better and more glorious. And he takes both from the same analogy, intimating that it will be much better.

But the heretics, considering none of these things, dart in upon us and say, *"one body falls and another body rises again. How then is there a resurrection? For the resurrection is of that which was fallen. But where is that wonderful and surprising trophy over death, if one body fall and another rise again? For he will no longer appear to have given back that which he took captive. And how can the alleged analogy suit the things before mentioned?"* Why, it is not one substance that is sown, and another that is raised, but the same substance improved. Else neither will Christ have resumed the same body when He became the first-fruits of them that rise again: but according to you He threw aside the former body, although it had not sinned, and took another. Whence then is that other? For this body was from the Virgin, but that, whence was it? Do you see to what absurdity the argument has come round? For wherefore shows He the very prints of the nails? Was it not to prove that it is that same body which was crucified, and the same again that rose from the dead? And what means also His type of Jonah? For surely it was not one Jonah that was swallowed up and another that was cast out upon dry land. And why did He also say, *"Destroy*

this temple, and in three days I will raise it up?" For that which was destroyed, the same clearly He raised again. Wherefore also the Evangelist added, that *"He spoke of the temple of His body."* [John 2:19-21]

What is that then which he says, *"You sow not the body that shall be?"* i.e. not the ear of grain: for it is the same, and not the same; the same, because the substance is the same; but not the same, because this is more excellent, the substance remaining the same but its beauty becoming greater, and the same body rising up new. Since if this were not so, there were no need of a resurrection, I mean if it were not to rise again improved. For why did He at all pull down His house, except He were about to build it more glorious?

This now, you see, he said to them who think that it is utter corruption. Next, that none again might suspect from this place that another body is spoken of, he qualifies the dark saying, and himself interprets what he had spoken, not allowing the hearer to turn his thoughts from hence in any other direction. What need is there then of our reasonings? Hear himself speaking, and explaining the phrase, *"You sow not the body that shall be."* For he straightway adds, *"but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind;"* i.e., it is not the body that shall be; not so clothed, for instance; not having a stalk and beard, but *"a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind."*

1 Corinthians 15:38

"But God gives it a body even as it pleased Him."

"Yes," says one, *"but in that case it is the work of nature."* Of what nature, tell me? For in that case likewise God surely does the whole; not nature, nor the earth, nor the rain. Wherefore also he making these things manifest, leaves out both earth and rain, atmosphere, sun, and hands of husbandmen, and subjoins, *"God gives it a body as it pleased Him."* Do not thou therefore curiously inquire, nor busy yourself with the how and in what manner, when you hear of the power and will of God.

"And to each seed a body of its own." Where then is the alien matter which they speak of? For He gives to each *"his own."* So that when he says, *"You sow not that which shall be,"* he says not this, that one substance is raised up instead of another, but that it is improved, that it is more glorious. For *"to each of the seeds,"* says he, *"a body of its own."*

4. From hence in what follows, he introducing also the difference of the resurrection which shall then be. For do not suppose, because grain is sown and all come up ears of grain, that therefore there is also in the resurrection an equality of honor. For in the first place, neither in seeds is there only one rank, but some are more valuable, and some inferior. Wherefore also he added, *"to each seed a body of its own."*

However, he is not content with this, but seeks another difference greater and more manifest. For that you may not, when hearing, as I said, that all rise again, suppose that all enjoy the same reward; he laid before even in the preceding verses the seeds of this thought, saying, *"But each in his own order."* But he brings it out here also more clearly, saying,

1 Corinthians 15:39

"All flesh is not the same flesh." For why speak I, says he, in respect of seeds? In respect of bodies let us agitate this point, concerning which we are discoursing now. Wherefore also he adds, and says,

"But there is one flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of birds, and another of fishes."

1 Corinthians 15:40

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another."

1 Corinthians 15:41

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory."

And what means he by these expressions? Wherefore from the resurrection of the body did he throw himself into the discourse of the stars and the sun? He did not throw himself out, neither did he break off from his purpose; far from it: but he still keeps to it. For whereas he had established the doctrine concerning the resurrection, he intimates in what follows that great will be then the difference of glory, though there be but one resurrection. And for the present he divides the whole into two: into *"bodies celestial,"* and *"bodies terrestrial."* For that the bodies are raised again, he signified by the grain: but that they are not all in the same glory, he signifies by this. For as the disbelief of the resurrection makes men supine, so again it makes them indolent to think that all are vouchsafed the same reward. Wherefore he corrects both. And the one in the preceeding verses he had completed; but this he begins now. And having made two ranks, of the righteous and of sinners, these same two he subdivides again into many parts, signifying that neither righteous nor sinners shall obtain the same; neither righteous men, all of them, alike with other righteous, nor sinners with other sinners.

Now he makes, you see, first, one separation between righteous and sinners, where he says, *"bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial:"* by the *"terrestrial"* intimating the latter, and by the *"celestial,"* the former. Then farther he introduces a difference of sinners from sinners, saying, *"All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of fishes, another of birds, and another of beasts."* And yet all are bodies; but some are in more, and some

in lesser vileness. And that in their manner of living too, and in their very constitution.

And having said this, he ascends again to the heaven, saying, "*There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon.*" For as in the earthly bodies there is a difference, so also in the heavenly; and that difference no ordinary one, but reaching even to the uttermost: there being not only a difference between sun and moon, and stars, but also between stars and stars. For what though they be all in the heaven? Yet some have a larger, others a less share of glory. What do we learn from hence? That although they be all in God's kingdom, all shall not enjoy the same reward; and though all sinners be in hell, all shall not endure the same punishment. Wherefore he added,

1 Corinthians 15:42

"So also is the resurrection of the dead."

"So," How? With considerable difference. Then leaving this doctrine as sufficiently proved, he again comes to the proof itself of the resurrection and the manner of it, saying,

5. *"It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."* And observe his consideration. As in the case of seeds, he used the term proper to bodies, saying, *"it is not quickened, except it die:"* so in the case of bodies, the expression belonging to seeds, saying, *"it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."* He said not, *"is produced,"* that you might not think it a work of the earth, but is *"raised."* And by sowing here, he means not our generation in the womb, but the burial in the earth of our dead bodies, their dissolution, their ashes. Wherefore having said, *"it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption,"* he adds,

1 Corinthians 15:43

"It is sown in dishonor." For what is more unsightly than a corpse in dissolution? *"It is raised in glory."*

"It is sown in weakness." For before thirty days the whole is gone, and the flesh cannot keep itself together nor hold out for one day. *"It is raised in power."* For there shall nothing prevail against it for all the future.

Here is why he stood in need of those former analogies, lest many on hearing of these things, that they are *"raised in incorruption and glory and power,"* might suppose that there is no difference among those who rise again. For all indeed rise again, both in power and in incorruption; and in this glory of their incorruption yet are not all in the same state of honor and safety.

1 Corinthians 15:44

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

What do you say? Is not *"this"* body spiritual? It is indeed spiritual, but that will be much more so. For now oftentimes both the abundant grace of the Holy Ghost flies away on men's committing great sins; and again, the Spirit continuing present, the life of the flesh depends on the soul: and the result in such a case is a void, without the Spirit. But in that day not so: rather he abides continually in the flesh of the righteous, and the victory shall be His, the natural soul also being present.

For either it was some such thing which he intimated by saying, *"a spiritual body,"* or that it shall be lighter and more subtle and such as even to be wafted upon air; or rather he meant both these. And if you disbelieve the doctrine, behold the heavenly bodies which are so glorious and (for this time) so durable, and abide in undecaying tranquillity; and believe thou from hence, that God can also make these corruptible bodies incorruptible and much more excellent than those which are visible.

1 Corinthians 15:45

6. *"So also it is written, [Genesis 2:7] the first man Adam became a living soul: the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit."*

And yet the one indeed is written, but the other not written. How then said he, *"it is written?"* He modified the expression according to the issue of events: as he is wont continually to do: and indeed as it is the way of every prophet. For so Jerusalem, the prophet said, should be *"called a city of righteousness;"* [Isaiah 1:26] yet it was not so called. What then? Did the prophet speak false? By no means. For he is speaking of the issue of events. And that Christ too should be called Immanuel; [Isaiah 7:14] yet was he not so called. But the facts utter this voice; so also here, *"the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit."*

And these things he said that you may learn that the signs and pledges both of the present life and of that which is to come have already come upon us; to wit, of the present life, Adam, and of the life to come, Christ. For since he sets down the better things as matters of hope, he signifies that their beginning has already come to pass, and their root and their fountain been brought to light. But if the root and the fountain be evident to all, there is no need to doubt of the fruits. Wherefore he says, *"The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit."* And elsewhere too, He *"shall quicken your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwells in you."* [Romans 7:11] It is the Spirit's work then to quicken.

Further, lest any should say, *"why are the worse things the elder? And why has the one sort, to wit, the natural, come to pass not merely as far as the first-fruits, but altogether; the other as far as the first-fruits only?"*— he signifies that the principles also of each were so ordered.

1 Corinthians 15:46

"For that is not first," says he, "which is spiritual, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual."

And he says not, why, but is content with the ordinance of God, having the evidence from the facts testifying to that most excellent œconomy of God, and implying that our state is always going forward to the better; at the same time by this also adding credibility to his argument. For if the lesser have come to pass, much more ought we to expect the better.

7. Since then we are to enjoy so great blessings, let us take our station in this array, and bewail not the departed, but rather those that have ended their life ill. For so the husbandman, when he sees the grain dissolving, does not mourn; rather, as long as he beholds it continuing solid in the ground he is in fear and trembling, but when he sees it dissolved rejoices. For the beginning of the future crop is its dissolving. So let us also then rejoice when the corruptible house falls, when the man is sown. And marvel not if he called the burial *"a sowing;"* for, in truth, this is the better sowing: inasmuch as that sowing is succeeded by deaths and labors and dangers and cares; but this, if we lived well, by crowns and rewards; and that, by corruption and death but this by incorruption and immortality, and those infinite blessings. To that kind of sowing there went embraces and pleasures and sleep: but to this, only a voice coming down from heaven, and all is at once brought to perfection. And he that rises again is no more led to a life full of toil, but to a place where anguish and sorrow and sighing are fled away.

If you require protection and therefore mournest your husband, betake yourself to God, the common Protector and Saviour and Benefactor of all,

to that irresistible alliance, to that ready aid, to that abiding shelter which is every where present, and is as a wall unto us on every side.

"But your intercourse was a thing desirable and lovely." I too know it. But if you will trust sound reason with this grief, and wilt consider with yourself who has taken him away, and that by nobly bearing it you offer your mind as a sacrifice to our God, even this wave will not be too strong for you to stem. And that which time brings to pass, the same do thou by your self-command. But if you shall yield to weakness, your emotion will cease indeed in time, but it will bring you no reward.

And together with these reasons collect also examples, some in the present life, some in the Holy Scriptures. Consider that Abraham slew his own son, and neither shed a tear nor uttered a bitter word. *"But he,"* you say, *"was Abraham."* Nay, thou surely hast been called to a nobler field of action. And Job grieved indeed, but so much as was proper for a father who loved his children and was very solicitous for the departed; whereas what we now do, is surely the part of haters and enemies. For if when a man was taken up to court and crowned, thou were smiting yourself and lamenting, I should not say that you were a friend of him who was crowned, but a great enemy and adversary. *"Nay,"* say you, *"not even as it is do I mourn for him, but for myself."* Well, but this is not the part of an affectionate person, to wish for your own sake that he were still in the conflict and subject to the uncertainty of the future, when he might be crowned and come to anchor; or that he should be tossed in mid ocean, when he might have been in port.

8. *"But I know not whither he has gone,"* say you. Wherefore do you not know, tell me? For according as he lived well or otherwise, it is evident whither he will go. *"Nay, on this very account I lament,"* say you, *"because he departed being a sinner."* This is a mere pretext and excuse. For if this were the reason of your mourning for the departed, you ought to have

formed and corrected him, when he was alive. The fact is thou dost every where look to what concerns yourself, not him.

But grant that he departed with sin upon him, even on this account one ought to rejoice, that he was stopped short in his sins and added not to his iniquity; and help him as far as possible, not by tears, but by prayers and supplications and alms and offerings. For not unmeaningly have these things been devised, nor do we in vain make mention of the departed in the course of the divine mysteries, and approach God in their behalf, beseeching the Lamb Who is before us, Who takes away the sin of the world—not in vain, but that some refreshment may thereby ensue to them. Not in vain does he that stands by the altar cry out when the tremendous mysteries are celebrated, *"For all that have fallen asleep in Christ, and for those who perform commemorations in their behalf."* For if there were no commemorations for them, these things would not have been spoken: since our service is not a mere stage show, God forbid! Yea, it is by the ordinance of the Spirit that these things are done.

Let us then give them aid and perform commemoration for them. For if the children of Job were purged by the sacrifice of their father, why do you doubt that when we too offer for the departed, some consolation arises to them? Since God is wont to grant the petitions of those who ask for others. And this Paul signified saying, *"that in a manifold Person your gift towards us bestowed by many may be acknowledged with thanksgiving on your behalf."* [2 Corinthians 1:11] Let us not then be weary in giving aid to the departed, both by offering on their behalf and obtaining prayers for them: for the common Expiation of the world is even before us. Therefore with boldness do we then intreat for the whole world, and name their names with those of martyrs, of confessors, of priests. For in truth one body are we all, though some members are more glorious than others; and it is possible from

every source to gather pardon for them, from our prayers, from our gifts in their behalf, from those whose names are named with theirs. Why therefore do you grieve? Why mourn, when it is in your power to gather so much pardon for the departed?

9. Is it then that you have become desolate and hast lost a protector? Nay, never mention this. For you have not surely lost your God. And so, as long as you have Him, He will be better to you than husband and father and child and kinsman: since even when they were alive, He it was who did all things.

These things therefore think upon, and say with David, The Lord is my light and my Saviour, whom shall I fear? [Psalm 27:1] Say, You are a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows: [Psalm 68:5] and draw down His aid, and you shall have Him to care for you now more than before, by how much you are in a state of greater difficulty.

Or have you lost a child? You have not lost it; say not so. This thing is sleep, not death; removal, not destruction; a journeying from the worse unto the better. Do not then provoke God to anger; but propitiate Him. For if you bear it nobly, there will thence accrue some relief both to the departed and to yourself; but if the contrary, thou dost the more kindle God's anger. For if when a servant was chastised by his master, you stood by and complain, you would the more exasperate the master against yourself. Do not then so; but give thanks, that hereby also this cloud of sadness may be scattered from you. Say with that blessed one, *"the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away."* [Job 1:21] Consider how many more well-pleasing in His sight have never received children at all, nor been called fathers. *"Nor would I wish to have been so,"* say you, *"for surely it were better not to have had experience than after having tasted the pleasure to fall from it."* Nay, I beseech you, say not so, provoke not thus also the Lord to wrath: but for what you have

received, give Him thanks; and for what you have not to the end, give Him glory. Job said not that which you say unthankfully, *"it were better not to have received,"* but both for the one he gave thanks, saying, *"The Lord gave;"* and for the other he blessed God, saying, *"The Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* And his wife he thus silenced, justifying himself against her, and uttering those admirable words, *"Have we received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?"* And yet after this a fiercer temptation befell him: yet was he not even thus unnerved, but in like manner bore it nobly and glorified God.

This also do thou, and consider with yourself that man has not taken him, but God who made him, who more than yourself cares for him and knows what is good for him: who is no enemy nor liar-in-wait. See how many, living, have made life intolerable to their parents. *"But do you not see the right-hearted ones?"* say you. I see these too, but even these are not so safe as your child is. For though they are now approved, yet it is uncertain what their end will be; but for him you have no longer any fear, nor do you tremble lest anything should happen to him or he experience any change.

These things also do thou consider respecting a good wife and guardian of your house, and for all things give thanks unto God. And even if you shall lose a wife, give thanks. Perhaps God's will is to lead you to continence, He calls you to a nobler field of conflict, He was pleased to set you free from this bond. If we thus command ourselves, we shall both gain the joy of this life and obtain the crowns which are to come, etc. etc.

Homily 42 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 15:47

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Having said that "*the natural was first,*" and "*the spiritual afterward,*" he again states another difference, speaking of "*the earthy*" and "*the heavenly.*" For the first difference was between the present life and that which is to come: but this between that before grace and that after grace. And he stated it with a view to the most excellent way of life, saying—(for to hinder men, as I said, from such confidence in the resurrection as would make them neglectful of their practice and of perfection, from this topic also again he renders them anxious and exhorts to virtue, saying,)— "*The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven:*" calling the whole by the name of "*man* ," and naming the one from the better, and the other from the worst part.

1 Corinthians 15:48

"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy:" so shall they perish and have an end. *"As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly:"* so shall they abide immortal and glorious.

What then? Did not This Man too die? He died indeed, but received no injury therefrom, yea rather by this He put an end to death. Do you see how on this part of his subject also, he makes use of death to establish the doctrine of the resurrection? *"For having, as I said before, the beginning and the head,"* so he speaks, *"doubt not of the whole body."*

Moreover also he frames hereby his advice concerning the best way of living, proposing standards of a lofty and severe life and of that which is not such, and bringing forward the principles of both these, of the one Christ, but of the other Adam. Therefore neither did he simply say, *"of the earth,"* but *"earthy,"* i.e., *"gross, nailed down to things present:"* and again with respect to Christ the reverse, *"the Lord from heaven."*

2. But if any should say, therefore the Lord has not a body because He is said to be *"from heaven,"* although what is said before is enough to stop their mouths: yet nothing hinders our silencing them from this consideration also: viz. what is, *"the Lord from heaven?"* Does he speak of His nature, or His most perfect life? It is I suppose evident to every one that he speaks of His life. Wherefore also he adds,

1 Corinthians 15:49

"As we have borne the image of the earthy," i.e., as we have done evil, *"let us also bear the image of the heavenly,"* i.e., let us practise all goodness.

But besides this, I would fain ask you, is it of nature that it is said, *"he that is of the earth, earthy,"* and, *"the Lord from heaven?"* "Yea," says one. What then? Was Adam only *"earthy,"* or had he also another kind of substance congenial with heavenly and incorporeal beings, which the Scripture calls *"soul,"* and *"spirit?"* Every one sees that he had this also. Therefore neither was the Lord from above only although He is said to be *"from heaven,"* but He had also assumed our flesh. But Paul's meaning is such as this: *"as we have borne the image of the earthy,"* i.e., evil deeds, *"let us also bear the image of the heavenly,"* the manner of life which is in the heavens. Whereas if he were speaking of nature, the thing needed not exhortation nor advice. So that hence also it is evident that the expression relates to our manner of life.

Wherefore also he introduces the saying in the manner of advice and calls it an *"image,"* here too again showing that he is speaking of conduct, not of nature. For therefore are we become earthy, because we have done evil: not because we were originally formed *"earthy,"* but because we sinned. For sin came first, and then death and then the sentence, *"Dust thou art, and unto dust shall you return."* [Genesis 3:19] Then also entered in the swarm of the passions. For it is not simply the being born *"of earth"* that makes a man *"earthy,"* (since the Lord also was of this mass and lump,) but the doing earthly things, even as also he is made *"heavenly"* by performing things meet for heaven.

But enough: for why need I labor overmuch in the proof of this, when the apostle himself goes on to unfold the thought to us, thus saying,

1 Corinthians 15:50

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Do you see how he explains himself again, relieving us of the trouble? Which he often does: for by flesh he here denotes men's evil deeds, which he has done also elsewhere; as when he says, *"But you are not in the flesh:"* and again, *"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."* [Romans 8:8-9] So that when he says, *"Now this I say,"* he means nothing else than this: *"therefore said I these things that you may learn that evil deeds conduct not to a kingdom."* Thus from the resurrection he straightway introduced also the doctrine of the kingdom also; wherefore also he adds, *"neither does corruption inherit incorruption,"* i.e., neither shall wickedness inherit that glory and the enjoyment of the things incorruptible. For in many other places he calls wickedness by this name, saying, *"He that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."* [Galatians 6:8] Now if he were speaking of the body and not of evil doing, he would not have said *"corruption."* For he nowhere calls the body *"corruption,"* since neither is it corruption, but a thing corruptible: wherefore proceeding to discourse also of it, he calls it not *"corruption,"* but *"corruptible,"* saying, *"for this corruptible must put on incorruption."*

3. Next, having completed his advice concerning our manner of life, according to his constant custom blending closely subject with subject, he passes again to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body: as follows:

1 Corinthians 15:51

"Behold, I tell you a mystery."

It is something awful and ineffable and which all know not, which he is about to speak of: which also indicates the greatness of the honor he confers on them; I mean, his speaking mysteries to them. But what is this?

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." He means as follows: *"we shall not all die, 'but we shall all be changed,'" even those who die not. For they too are mortal. "Do not thou therefore because you die, on this account fear," says he, "as if you should not rise again: for there are, there are some who shall even escape this, and yet this suffices them not for that resurrection, but even those bodies which die not must be changed and be transformed into incorruption."*

1 Corinthians 15:52

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

After he had discoursed much of the resurrection, then opportunely he points out also its very marvellous character. As thus: *"not this only,"* says he, is wonderful that our bodies first turn to corruption, and then are raised; nor that the bodies which rise again after their corruption are better than these present ones; nor that they pass on to a much better state, nor that each receives back his own and none that of another; but that things so many and so great, and surpassing all man's reason and conception, are done *"in a moment,"* i.e., in an instant of time: and to show this more clearly, *"in the twinkling of an eye,"* says he, *"while one can wink an eyelid."* Further, because he had said a great thing and full of astonishment; that so many and so great results should take place so quickly; he alleges, to prove it, the credibility of Him who performs it; as follows, *"For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."* The expression, *"we,"* he uses not of himself, but of them that are then found alive.

1 Corinthians 15:53

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption."

Thus lest any, hearing that *"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,"* should suppose that our bodies do not rise again; he adds, *"this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* Now the body is *"corruptible,"* the body is *"mortal:"* so that the body indeed remains, for it is the body which is put on; but its mortality and corruption vanish away, when immortality and incorruption come upon it. Do not thou therefore question hereafter how it shall live an endless life, now that you have heard of its becoming incorruptible.

1 Corinthians 15:54

4. *"But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."*

Thus, since he was speaking of great and secret things, he again takes prophecy [Hosea 13:14] to confirm his word. *"Death is swallowed up in victory: "* i.e., utterly; not so much as a fragment of it remains nor a hope of returning, incorruption having consumed corruption.

1 Corinthians 15:55

"O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

Do you see his noble soul? How even as one who is offering sacrifices for victory, having become inspired and seeing already things future as things past, he leaps and tramples upon death fallen at his feet, and shouts a cry of triumph over its head where it lies, exclaiming mightily and saying, *"O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"* It is clean gone, it is perished, it is utterly vanished away, and in vain have you done all those former things. For He not only disarmed death and vanquished it, but even destroyed it, and made it quite cease from being.

1 Corinthians 15:56

"Now the sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law."

Do you see how the discourse is of the death of the body? Therefore also of the resurrection of the body. For if these bodies do not rise again, how is death *"swallowed up?"* And not this only, but how is *"the law the power of sin?"* For that *"sin"* indeed is *"the sting of death,"* and more bitter than it, and by it has its power, is evident; but how is *"the law also the power"* thereof? Because without the law sin was weak, being practised indeed, but not able so entirely to condemn: since although the evil took place, it was not so clearly pointed out. So that it was no small change which the law brought in, first causing us to know sin better, and then enhancing the punishment. And if meaning to check sin it did but develop it more fearfully, this is no charge against the physician, but against the abuse of the remedy. Since even the presence of Christ made the Jews' burden heavier, yet must we not therefore blame it, but while we the more admire it, we must hate them the more, for having been injured by things which ought to have profited them? Yea, to show that it was not the law of itself which gives strength to sin, Christ Himself fulfilled it all and was without sin.

But I would have you consider how from this topic also he confirms the resurrection. For if this were the cause of death, viz. our committing sin, and if Christ came and took away sin, and delivered us from it through baptism, and together with sin put an end also to the law in the transgression of which sin consists, why do you doubt any more of the resurrection? For whence, after all this, is death to prevail? Through the law? Nay, it is done away. Through sin? Nay, it is clean destroyed.

1 Corinthians 15:57

"But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

For the trophy He Himself erected, but the crowns He has caused us also to partake of. And this not of debt, but of mere mercy.

1 Corinthians 15:58

5. *"Wherefore, brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable."*

Just and seasonable is this exhortation after all that had gone before. For nothing so disquiets as the thought that we are buffeted without cause or profit.

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord:" i.e., in the pure life. And he said not, *"working that which is good,"* but *"abounding;"* that we might do it abundantly, and might overpass the lists.

"Knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

What do you say? Labor again? But followed by crowns, and those above the heavens. For that former labor on man's expulsion from paradise, was the punishment of his transgressions; but this is the ground of the rewards to come. So that it cannot in fact be labor, both on this account and by reason of the great help which it receives from above: which is the cause of his adding also, *"in the Lord."* For the purpose of the former was that we might suffer punishment; but of this, that we might obtain the good things to come.

Let us not therefore sleep, my beloved. For it cannot, it cannot be that any one by sloth should attain to the kingdom of heaven, nor they that live luxuriously and softly. Yea it is a great thing, if straining ourselves and *"keeping under the body"* and enduring innumerable labors, we are able to reach those blessings. See ye not how vast this distance between heaven and earth? And how great a conflict is at hand? And how prone a thing to evil man is? And how easily sin *"besets us?"* And how many snares are in the way?

Why then do we draw upon ourselves so great cares over and above those of nature, and give ourselves more trouble, and make our burden greater? Is it not enough, our having to care for our food and clothing and houses? Is it not enough to take thought for things necessary? Although even from these Christ withdraws us, saying, "*Be not anxious for your life what you shall eat, neither for your body what you shall put on.*" [Matthew 6:25] But if one ought not to be anxious for necessary food and clothing, nor for tomorrow; they who bring on so great a mass of rubbish and bury themselves under it, when shall they shall have power to emerge? Have you not heard Paul saying, "*No soldier on service entangles himself in the affairs of this life?*" [2 Timothy 2:4] But we even live luxuriously and eat and drink to excess and endure buffeting for external things, but in the things of heaven behave ourselves unmanly. Do you not know that the promise is too high for man? It cannot be that one walking on the ground should ascend the arches of heaven. But we do not even study to live like men, but have become worse than the brutes.

Do you not know before what a tribunal we are to stand? Do ye not consider that both for our words and thoughts an account is demanded of us, and we take no heed even to our actions. "*For whosoever looks on a woman,*" says He, "*to lust after her has already committed adultery with her.*" [Matthew 5:28] And yet they who must be accountable for a mere idle look, refuse not even to lie rotting in the sin itself. "*Whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be cast into hell fire.*" [Matthew 5:22] But we even dishonor them with ten thousand reproaches and plot against them craftily. "*He that loves one that loves him is no better than the heathen:*" [Matthew 5:46-47] but we even envy them. What indulgence then shall we have, when commanded as we are to pass over the old lines, we weave ourselves a thread of life by a yet more scanty measure than theirs? What

plea shall deliver us? Who will stand up and help us when we are punished? There is no one; but it must needs be that wailing and weeping and gnashing our teeth, we shall be led away tortured into that rayless gloom, the pangs which no prayer can avert, the punishments which cannot be assuaged.

Wherefore I entreat and beseech, and lay hold of your very knees, that while we have this scant viaticum of life, you would be pricked in your hearts by what has been said, that you would be converted, that you would become better men; that we may not, like that rich man, lament to no purpose in that world after our departure, and continue thenceforth in incurable wailings. For though you should have father or son or friend or any soever who has confidence towards God, none of these shall ever deliver you, your own works having destroyed you. For such is that tribunal: it judges by our actions alone, and in no other way is it possible there to be saved.

And these things I say, not to grieve you nor to throw you into despair, but lest nourished by vain and cold hopes, and placing confidence in this person or that, we should neglect our own proper goodness. For if we be slothful, there will be neither righteous man nor prophet nor apostle nor any one to stand by us; but if we have been earnest, having in sufficiency the plea which comes from each man's own works, we shall depart with confidence, and shall obtain the good things that are laid up for them that love God; to which may we all attain, etc. etc.

Homily 43 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 16:1

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the Churches of Galatia, so also do ye.

Having completed his discourse concerning doctrines, and being about to enter upon that which belongs rather to morals, he dismisses every thing else and proceeds to the chief of good things, discoursing about alms. Nor does he discuss morals in general, but when he has treated of this matter alone, he leaves off. A thing however obviously unlike what he did every where else; for of alms and of temperance and of meekness and of long-suffering and of all the rest, he treats in the other Epistles in the conclusion. For what reason then does he handle here this part only of practical morality? Because the greater part also of what had been spoken before was of an ethical nature: I mean, where he chastised the fornicator; where he was correcting those who go to law among Gentiles; where he terrified the drunkards and the gluttons; where he condemned the seditious, the contentious, and those who loved to have the preeminence; where those who unworthily approach the Mysteries were delivered over by him unto that intolerable sentence; where he discoursed concerning love. For this cause, I say, the subject which most pressed on him, viz. the aid required for the saints, this alone he mentions.

And observe his consideration. When he had persuaded them concerning the resurrection, and made them more earnest, then and not till then he discusses this point also.

It is true indeed that on these matters he had spoken to them before, when he said, *"If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?"* And, *"Who plants a vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof?"* But because he knew the greatness of this moral achievement, he refuses not to add a fresh mention at the end of his letter.

And he calls the collection [λογίαν] (a *"contribution,"*) immediately from the very first making out the things to be easy. For when contribution is made by all together, that becomes light which is charged upon each.

But having spoken about the collection, he did not say immediately, *"Let every one of you lay up in store with himself;"* although this of course was the natural consequence; but having first said, *"As I gave order to the Churches of Galatia,"* he added this, kindling their emulation by the account of the well-doings of others, and putting it in the form of a narration. And this also he did when writing to the Romans; for to them also while appearing to narrate the reason why he was going away to Jerusalem, he introduces thereupon his discourse about alms; *"But now I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints: for it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints."* [Romans 15:25] Only those he stimulates by mention of Macedonians and Corinthians; these of Galatians. For he says, *"As I gave order to the Churches of Galatia, so also do ye:"* for they would surely feel ashamed ever afterwards to be found inferior to Galatians. And he says not, *"I advised,"* and, *"I counselled;"* but, *"I gave order,"* which is more authoritative. And he does not bring forward a single city, or two, or three, but an entire nation: which also he does in his doctrinal instructions, saying, *"Even as also in all the Churches of the saints."* For if this be potent for conviction of doctrines, much more for imitation of actions.

1 Corinthians 16:2

2. *"What then, I ask, did you give order about?"*

"On the first day of the week," that is, the Lord's day, *"let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper."* Mark how he exhorts them even from the time: for indeed the day was enough to lead them to almsgiving. Wherefore *"call to mind,"* says he, what ye attained to on this day: how all the unutterable blessings, and that which is the root and the beginning of our life took place on this day. But not in this regard only is the season convenient for a zealous benevolence, but also because it has rest and immunity from toils: the souls when released from labors becoming readier and apter to show pity. Moreover, the communicating also on that day in Mysteries so tremendous and immortal instils great zealousness. On it, accordingly, *"let each one of you,"* not merely this or that individual, but *"each one of you,"* whether poor or rich, woman or man, slave or free, *"lay by him store."* He said not, *"Let him bring it the church,"* lest they might feel ashamed because of the smallness of the sum; but *"having by gradual additions swelled his contribution, let him then produce it, when I have come but for the present lay it up,"* says he, *"at home, and make your house a church; your little box a treasury. Become a guardian sacred wealth, a self-ordained steward of the poor. Your benevolent mind assigns to you this priesthood."*

Of this our treasury even now is a sign: but the sign remains, the thing itself no where.

3. Now I am aware that many of this congregation will again find fault with me when I treat of these subjects, and say, *"Be not, I beseech you, be not harsh and disagreeable to your audience. Make allowances for their*

disposition; give way to the mind of the hearers. For in this case you really do put us to shame; you make us blush." But I may not endure such words: since neither was Paul ashamed to be continually troublesome upon such points as these and to speak words such as mendicants use. I grant indeed that if I said, *"give it me,"* and *"lay it up in my house,"* there might perchance be something to be ashamed of in what I said: hardly however even in that case; for *"they who wait upon the altar,"* we read, *"have their portion with the altar."* [1 Corinthians 9:13] However, some one perhaps might find fault as if he were framing an argument for his own interest. But now it is for the poor that I make my supplication; nay, not so much for the poor, as for your sake who bestow the gift. Wherefore also I am bold to speak out. For what shame is it to say, Give unto your Lord in His hunger: Put raiment on Him going about naked; Receive Him being a stranger? Your Lord is not ashamed before the whole world to speak thus: *"I was an hungred, and you gave Me not to eat,"* He who is void of all want and requires nothing. And am I to be ashamed and hesitate? Away with this. This shame is of the snare of the devil. I will not then be ashamed, but will say, and that boldly, *"Give to the needy;"* I will say it with a louder voice than the needy themselves. True it is, if any one can show and prove that in saying these things we are drawing you over unto ourselves, and under the pretence of the poor are ourselves making gain, such a course would be worthy, I say not of shame, but even of ten thousand thunderbolts; and life itself would be more than persons so behaving would deserve. If, on the contrary, by the grace of God, we are in nothing troublesome about ourselves, but *"have made the Gospel without charge"* to you; laboring indeed in no wise like Paul, but being contented with our own—with all boldness of speech I will say, *"Give unto the needy:"* yea, and I will not leave off saying it, and of those who give not I will be a severe accuser. For

so, if I were a general and had soldiers, I should not feel ashamed at demanding food for my men: for I vehemently set my heart upon your salvation.

4. But that my argument may both be more forcible and more effective, I will take Paul for my comrade, and like him will discourse and say, "*Let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper.*" Now observe also how he avoids being burdensome. He said not, "*so much,*" or "*so much,*" but "*as he may prosper,*" whether much or little. Neither said he, "*what any one may have gained,*" but, "*as he may prosper:*" signifying that the supply is of God. And not only so, but also by his not enjoining them to deposit all at once, he makes his counsel easy: since the gathering little by little hinders all perception of the burden and the cost. Here you see the reason too for his not enjoining them to produce it immediately, but giving them a long day ; whereof adding the cause, he says, "*That there be no gatherings when I come:*" which means, that you may not when the season has come for paying in contributions just then be compelled to collect them. And this too in no ordinary degree encouraged them again: the expectation of Paul being sure to make them more earnest.

1 Corinthians 16:3

"And when I arrive, whomsoever you shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty to Jerusalem."

He said not, *"this person,"* and *"that,"* but, *"whomsoever you shall approve,"* whomsoever you shall choose, thus freeing his ministration from suspicion. Wherefore to them he leaves the right of voting in the choice of those who are to convey it. He is far enough from saying, *"The payment is yours, but the privilege of selecting those who are to carry it is not yours."* Next, that they might not think him quite absent, he adds his letters, saying, *"Whomsoever you approve, I will send with letters."* As if he had said, I also will be with them and share in the ministration, by my letters. And he said not, *"These will I send to bear your alms,"* but, *"your bounty;"* to signify that they were doing great deeds; to mark that they were gainers themselves. And elsewhere he calls it both *"a blessing"* and *"a distribution."* [2 Corinthians 9:5-13] The one that he might not make them less active, the other that he might not elate them. But in no case whatever has he called it *"alms."*

1 Corinthians 16:4

"And if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me."

Here again he exhorts them to liberality. As thus: *"if it be so much,"* says he, *"as to require my presence also, neither will I decline this."* But he did not in the first instance promise this, nor say, *"When I have come I will carry it."* For he would not have made so much of it, if he had so set it down from the first. Afterwards however he adds it well and seasonably. Here then you have the reason why he did not immediately promise, nor yet altogether hold his peace concerning it: but having said, *"I will send,"* then at length he adds himself also. And here too again he leaves it to their own decision; in saying, *"If it be meet for me to go also:"* whereas this rested with them, namely, to make their collection large; so large even, as to affect his plans and cause him in person to make the journey.

1 Corinthians 16:5

5. *"But I will come to you,"* says he, *"when I shall have passed through Macedonia."* This he had said also above; then however with anger: at least he added, [1 Corinthians 4:19] *"And I will know not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power:"* but here, more mildly; that they might even long for his coming. Then, that they might not say, *"Why is it that you honor the Macedonians above us?"* he said not, *"When I depart,"* but, *"When I shall have passed through Macedonia; for I do pass through Macedonia."*

1 Corinthians 16:6

"But with you it may be that I shall abide, or even winter." For I do not at all wish to take you merely in my way, but to continue among you and spend some time. For when he wrote this letter, he was in Ephesus, and it was winter; as you may know by his saying, *"Until Pentecost I will tarry at Ephesus; but after this I shall go away to Macedonia, and after having gone through it, I will be with you in the summer; and perhaps I shall even spend the winter with you."* And why did he say, *"perhaps;"* and did not positively affirm it? Because Paul did not foreknow all things; for good purposes. Wherefore neither does he absolutely affirm, in order that if it came not to pass, he might have something to resort to; first, his previous mention of it having been indefinite; and next, the power of the Spirit leading him wheresoever It willed, not where he himself desired. And this also he expresses in the second Epistle, when excusing himself on account of his delay, and saying, *"Or the things which I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea yea and the nay nay?"* [2 Corinthians 1:17]

"That ye may set me forward on my journey wheresoever I go." This also is a mark of love, and great strength of affection.

1 Corinthians 16:7

"For I do not wish to see you now by the way; for I hope to tarry awhile with you, if the Lord permit."

Now these things he said, both to signify his love and also to terrify the sinners, not however openly, but with outward demonstration of friendship.

1 Corinthians 16:8

"But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost."

As we should expect, he tells them all exactly, informing them as friends. For this too is a mark of friendship to say the reason why he was not with them, why he delayed, and where he was staying.

1 Corinthians 16:9

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

Now if it was "*great*," how could there be "*adversaries*?" Why on this very account the adversaries were many, because men's faith was great; because the entrance was great and wide. But what means, "*A great door*?" There are many prepared to receive the faith, many ready to approach and be converted. There is a spacious entrance for me, things being now come to that point that the mind of those approaching is at its prime for the obedience of the faith. On this account, vehement was the blast of the breath of the devil, because he saw many turning away from him.

You see then on both accounts it was needful for him to stay; both because the gain was abundant, and because the struggle was great.

And herewith also he cheered them up, namely, by saying, that henceforth the word works every where and springs up readily. And if there be many who plot against it, this also is a sign of the advance of the Gospel. For at no time does that evil demon wax fierce, except on seeing his goods made spoil of abundantly. [Matthew 12]

6. Let us then, when we desire to effect any thing great and noble, not regard this, the greatness of the labor which it brings, but let us rather look to the gain. Mark, for instance, Paul, not therefore lingering, not therefore shrinking back, because "*there were many adversaries*;" but because "*there was a great door*," pressing on and persevering. Yea, and as I was saying, this was a sign that the devil was being stripped, for it is not, depend on it, by little and mean achievements that men provoke that evil monster to wrath. And so when you see a righteous man performing great and excellent

deeds, yet suffering innumerable ills, marvel not; on the contrary, one might well marvel, if the devil receiving so many blows were to keep quiet and bear the wounds meekly. Even as you ought not to be surprised were a serpent, continually goaded, to grow fierce and spring on the person that goaded it. Now no serpent steals on you so fierce as the devil, leaping up against all; and, like a scorpion with its sting raised, he raises himself upright. Let not this then disturb you: since of course he that returns from war and victory and slaughter must needs be bloody, and oftentimes also have received wounds. Do thou, then, for your part, when you see any one doing alms and performing numberless other good works and so curtailing the power of the devil, and then falling into temptations and perils; be not troubled thereupon. This is the very reason why he fell into temptations, because he mightily smote the devil.

"And how did God permit it?" you will say. That he might be crowned more signally: that the other might receive a severer wound. For when after benefits conferred a man suffers, and that grievously, and yet continually gives thanks, it is a blow to the devil. For it is a great thing, even when our affairs are flowing on prosperously, to show mercy and to adhere to virtue: but it is far greater in grievous calamity not to desist from this noble occupation; this is he who may be most truly said to do so for God's sake. So then, though we be in peril, beloved, though we suffer ever so greatly, let us with the greater zeal apply ourselves to our labors for virtue's sake. For this is not at all the season for retribution.

Here then let us not ask for our crowns, lest when the crowns come in their season, we diminish our recompense. For as in the case of artificers, they who support themselves and work receive higher pay; while those who have their maintenance with their employers, are curtailed in no small part of the wages; so also in regard to the saints: he that does immense good and

suffers extreme evil has his reward unimpaired and a far more abundant recompense, not only for the good things which he has done, but also for the evil which he has suffered. But he that enjoys rest and luxury here, has not such bright crowns there. Let us not then seek for our recompense here. But "*then*" of all times let us rejoice, when doing well we suffer ill. For God has in store for us in that world not only the reward of our good deeds, but that of our temptations also.

But to explain myself more clearly: suppose two rich merciful men, and let them give to the poor: then let one continue in his riches and enjoy all prosperity: the other fall into poverty and diseases and calamities, and give God thanks. Now when these are gone away into the other world, which will receive the greater reward? Is it not quite plain that it will be he who is sick and in adversity, seeing that though he did well and suffered ill, he felt not according to human infirmity? I suppose this is plain to every one. And, in truth, this is the adamant statue, this is the considerate servant. [See Matthew 25:21] But if we ought not to do any thing good for the hope of the kingdom, but because it so pleases God, which is more than any kingdom; what does he deserve, who because he does not receive his recompense here, has become more remiss concerning virtue?

Let us then not be troubled when we see that such an one who invited widows and made continual feasts lost his house by fire, or sustained some other such like disaster. Yea, for this very thing he shall receive his reward. For even Job was not so much admired for his almsdeeds as he was for his sufferings afterwards. For this reason his friends also are little esteemed and deemed of no account; because they sought for the recompenses of the present world, and with a view to this gave sentence against the just man. Let us then not seek for our return here; let us not become poor and needy; since surely it is of extreme meanness, when heaven is proposed, and things

which are above the heaven, to be looking round on the things which are here. Let us not by any means do so; but whichsoever of unexpected things come upon us, hold we fast the commands of God continually, and obey the blessed Paul.

7. And let us make a little chest for the poor at home; and near the place at which you stand praying, there let it be put: and as often as you enter in to pray, first deposit your alms, and then send up your prayer; and as you would not wish to pray with unwashen hands , so neither do so without alms: since not even the Gospel hanging by our bed is more important than that alms should be laid up for you; for if you hang up the Gospel and do nothing, it will do you no such great good. But if you have this little coffer, you have a defence against the devil, you give wings to your prayer, you make your house holy, having meat for the King [Matthew 25:34] there laid up in store. And for this reason let the little coffer be placed also near the bed , and the night will not be troubled with fantasies. Only let nothing be cast into it, which is the fruit of injustice. For this thing is charity; and it cannot be that charity should ever spring out of hardheartedness.

Will you have mention also of the resources out of which you should make your deposits, so as in this respect also to make this kind of contribution easy? The handicraft man, for instance, the sandal-maker, or the leather-cutter, or the brass-founder, or any other artificer—when he sells any article of his trade, let him give the first-fruits of its price unto God: let him cast in a small portion here, and assign something to God out of his portion, though it be rather scanty. For neither do I ask any great thing; but so much as the childish ones among the Jews , full as they are of innumerable evils, just so much let us cast in, we who look forward to heaven. And this I say not as laying down a law, neither as forbidding more,

but as recommending a deposit of not less than a tenth part. And this also do thou practise not in selling only, but also in buying and receiving a recompense. Let those also who possess land observe this law in regard to their rents: yea, let it be a law for all who gather their incomes in an honest way. For with those who demand usury I have no concern, neither with soldiers who do violence to others and turn to their own advantage their neighbors' calamities. Since from that quarter God will accept nothing. But these things I say to those who gather their substance by righteous labor.

Yea, and if we establish ourselves in this kind of habit, we are ever after stung by our conscience if ever we omit this rule; and after a while we shall not even think it a hard thing; and by degrees we shall arrive at the greater things, and by practising how to despise wealth, and by pulling up the root of evils, we shall both pass the present life in peace, and obtain the life to come; which may it be the portion of us all to attain unto, etc. etc.

Homily 44 on First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 16:10

Now if Timothy come to you , see that he be with you without fear.

Perhaps some one may think there is something unworthy of Timothy's courage in this piece of advice. But not on Timothy's account is this said, but for the hearers' sake: lest by their design against him they should hurt themselves: since he for his part had his station always in the way of dangers.

"For as a child serves a father," says he, *"so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel."* [Philippians 2:22] But lest from boldness towards the disciple they should proceed also to the teacher, and become worse, he checks them from afar off, saying, *"that he may be with you without fear;"* that is, that none of those desperate persons rise up against him. For he intended perhaps to rebuke them about the things concerning which Paul also had written: and indeed Paul professed to send him for this very reason. *"For I have sent Timothy unto you,"* says he, [1 Corinthians 4:17] *"who shall put you in remembrance of my ways in Christ even as I teach every where in every Church."* In order then that they might not through confidence in their high birth and wealth, and the support of the people, and the wisdom from without, attack him and spit upon him and plot against him, being grieved at the reproofs which came from him; or lest in revenge for the teacher's rebuke they should demand satisfaction of him, so punishing the other; therefore he says, *"that he be without fear with you."* As if he had said, *"Tell me not of those who are without, the Gentiles and unbelievers. It is your part that I require, you for whom also the whole*

Epistle was composed," the persons also whom in the beginning and the outset he had frightened. Wherefore he says, *"with you."*

Then in virtue of his ministry he sets him forth as a person to be fully trusted; saying *"For the work of the Lord he works."* That is; *"look not,"* says he, *"to this, his not being rich, namely, nor highly educated, nor old: but what commands are laid upon him, what work he is doing. 'For the work of the Lord he works.'"* And this serves him instead of all nobility and wealth and age and wisdom.

And he is not content with this, but adds, *"Even as I also."* And some way above, *"Who is my beloved son and faithful in the Lord; he shall put you in remembrance of my ways in Christ."* Seeing then that he was both young, and had been singly entrusted with the improvement of so numerous a people, both of which things tended to bring him into contempt, he adds, as we might expect,

1 Corinthians 16:11

"Let no one therefore despise him." And not this only does he demand of them, but also greater honor; wherefore also he says, *"but set him forward in peace;"* that is, without fear; causing no fightings or contentions, no enmities or hatreds, but rendering all subjection as to a teacher.

"That he may come unto me: for I expect him with the brethren." This also was the language of one that would alarm them. That is, in order that they might become more considerate, as knowing that all would be told him whatever Timothy's treatment might be, he adds therefore, *"for I expect him."* And besides, hereby he both shows that Timothy is worthy of their confidence; since being on the point of departing he waits for him; and also signifies the love which he has towards them, it appearing that for their sakes he sent away one so useful to him.

1 Corinthians 16:12

"But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren."

This man appears to have been both well-educated and also older than Timothy. Lest they should say then, *"For what possible reason did he not send the man grown, but the youth instead of him?"* observe how he softens down this point also, both calling him a brother, and saying that he had besought him much. For lest he should seem to have held Timothy in higher honor than him and to have exalted him more, and on this account not to have sent him, and cause their envy to burst out more abundantly, he adds, *"I besought him much to come."* What then: did not the other yield nor consent? Did he resist and show himself contentious? He says not this, but that he might not excite prejudice against him, and also might make excuse for himself, he says, *"and it was not at all his will to come now."* Then to prevent their saying that all this was an excuse and pretence, he added, *"but he will come to you when he shall have opportunity."* This was both an excuse for him, and a refreshment to them who desired to see him, by the hope which it gave of his coming.

2. Afterwards indicating that not in the teachers but in themselves they ought to have their hopes of salvation, he says,

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith."

Not in the wisdom which is without: for there it is not possible to stand, but to be borne along; even as *"in the faith"* ye may *"stand."* *"Quit you like men, be strong."* *"Let all that you do be done in love."* Now in saying these things, he seems indeed to advise; but he is reprimanding them as indolent. Wherefore he says, *"Watch,"* as though they slept; *"Stand,"* as though they were rocking to and fro: *"Quit you like men,"* as though they were playing the coward: *"Let all that you do be done in love,"* as though they were in dissensions. And the first caution refers to the deceivers, viz., *"Watch," "stand:"* the next, to those who plot against us, *"Quit you like men:"* the third, to those who make parties and endeavor to distract, *"Let all that you do be done in love;"* which thing is *"the bond of perfectness,"* and the root and fountain of all blessings.

But what means, *"All things in love?" "Whether any one rebuke,"* says he, *"or rule or be ruled, or learn or teach, let all be in love:"* since in fact all the things which have been mentioned arose from neglect of it. For if this had not been neglected, they would not have been puffed up, they would not have said, *"I am of Paul, and I of Apollos."* If this had existed, they would not have gone to law before heathens, or rather they would not have gone to law at all. If this had existed, that notorious person would not have taken his father's wife: they would not have despised the weak brethren; there would have been no factions among them; they would not have been vain-glorious about their gifts. Therefore it is that he says, *"Let all things be done in love."*

1 Corinthians 16:15-16

3. *"Now I beseech you, brethren;— ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have set themselves to minister unto the saints."*

In the beginning too he mentions this man, saying, *"I baptized also the home of Stephanas:"* and now he speaks of him as *"the first-fruits"* not of Corinth only, but also of all Greece. And this too is no small encomium that he was the first to come to Christ. Wherefore also in the Epistle to the Romans, praising certain persons on this account, he said, *"Who also were in Christ before me."* [Romans 16:7] And he said not, that they were the first who believed, but were the *"first-fruits;"* implying that together with their faith they showed forth also a most excellent life, in every way proving themselves worthy, as in the case of fruits. For so the first-fruits ought to be better than the rest of those things whereof they are the first-fruits: a kind of praise which Paul has attributed to these also by this expression: namely, that they not only had a genuine faith, as I was saying, but also they exhibited great piety, and the climax of virtue, and liberality in almsgiving.

And not from hence only, but from another topic likewise he indicates their piety, i.e., from their having filled their whole house also with godliness.

And that they flourished in good works also, he declares by what follows, saying, *"They have set themselves to minister unto the saints."* Hear ye, how vast are the praises of their hospitality? For he did not say, *"they minister,"* but, *"have set themselves:"* this kind of life they have chosen altogether, this is their business in which they are always busy.

That ye also be in subjection unto such, that is, *"that you take a share with them both in expenditure of money, and in personal service: that you be partakers with them."* For both to them the labor will be light when they have comrades, and the results of their active benevolence will extend to more.

And he said not merely, *"be fellow-helpers,"* but added, *"whatsoever directions they give, obey;"* implying the strictest obedience. And that he might not appear to be favoring them, he adds, *"and to every one that helps in the work and labors."* *"Let this,"* says he, *"be a general rule: for I do not speak about them individually, but if there be any one like them, let him also have the same advantages."* And therefore when he begins to commend, he calls upon themselves as witnesses, saying, *"I beseech you, you know the house of Stephanas."* *"For you also yourselves are aware,"* says he, *"how they labor, and have no need to learn from us."*

1 Corinthians 16:17

"But I was glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for that which was lacking on your part they supplied."

1 Corinthians 16:18

"For they refreshed my spirit and yours."

Thus, since it was natural for them to be greatly irritated against these persons, for it was they who had come and showed him all about the division, inasmuch as by them also they had written the questions about the virgins, and about the married persons:— mark how he softened them down; both in the beginning of his Epistle by saying, *"For it has been signified unto me by them which are of the house of Chloe;"* thus at once concealing these and bringing forward the others: (for it should seem that the latter had given their information by means of the former:) and in this place again, *"They have supplied your lack, and refreshed my spirit and yours:"* signifying that they had come instead of all, and had chosen to undertake so great a journey on their behalf. How then may this, their peculiar praise, become common? *"If you will solace me for what was wanting on your part by your kindness towards them; if you will honor, if you will receive, them, if you will communicate with them in doing good."* Wherefore he says, *"Acknowledge ye then them that are such."* And while praising those that came, he embraces also the others in his praise, the senders together with the sent: where he says, *"They refreshed my spirit and yours, therefore acknowledge such as these, because for your sakes they left country and home."* Do you perceive his consideration? He implies that they had obliged not Paul only, but the Corinthians likewise, in that they bore about in themselves the whole city. A thing which both added credit to them, and did not allow the others to sever themselves from them, inasmuch as in their persons they had presented themselves to Paul.

1 Corinthians 16:19

"All the Churches of Asia salute you." He is continually making the members combine and cleave together in one by means of the salutation.

"Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord;"— for with them he was lodging, being a tent-maker— *"with the Church which is in their house."* This thing too is no small excellency, that they had made their very house a Church.

1 Corinthians 16:20

4. *"All the brethren salute you. Salute one another with an holy kiss."*

This addition of the *"holy kiss"* he makes only here. What may the reason be? They had been widely at variance with one another on account of their saying, *"I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ;"* on account of *"one being hungry, and another drunken;"* on account of their having contentions and jealousies and suits. And from the gifts there was much envying and great pride. Having then knit them together by his exhortation, he naturally bids them use the holy kiss also as a means of union: for this unites, and produces one body. This is holy, when free from deceit and hypocrisy.

1 Corinthians 16:21

"The salutation of me Paul with my own hand;" intimates that the Epistle was composed with great seriousness; and therefore he added,

1 Corinthians 16:22

"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema."

By this one word he strikes fear into all: those who made their members the members of an harlot; those who put stumbling blocks in the way of their brethren by the things offered in sacrifice unto idols; those who named themselves after men; those who refuse to believe the resurrection. And he not only strikes fear, but also points out the way of virtue and the fountain of vice, viz. that as when our love towards Him has become intense, there is no kind of sin but is extinguished and cast out thereby; so when it is too weak, it causes the same to spring up.

" Maran atha." For what reason is this word used? And wherefore too in the Hebrew-tongue? Seeing that arrogance was the cause of all the evils, and this arrogance the wisdom from without produced, and this was the sum and substance of all the evils, a thing which especially distracted Corinth; in repressing their arrogance he did not even use the Greek tongue, but the Hebrew: signifying that so far from being ashamed of that sort of simplicity, he even embraces it with much warmth.

But what is the meaning of *" Maran atha?"* *"Our Lord has come."* For what reason then does he use this phrase in particular? To confirm the doctrine of the Economy: out of which class of topics more than any other he has put together those arguments which are the seeds of the Resurrection. And not only this, but also to rebuke them; as if he had said, *"The common Lord of all has condescended to come down thus far, and are you in the same state, and do ye abide in your sins? Are ye not thrilled with the excess of His love, the crown of His blessings? Yea, consider but this*

one thing," says he, "and it will suffice you for progress in all virtue, and you shall be able to extinguish all sin."

1 Corinthians 16:23

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

This is like a teacher, to help not only with advice, but also with prayers.

1 Corinthians 16:24

"My love be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen."

Thus to hinder them from thinking that in flattery to them he so ended, he says, *"In Christ Jesus."* It having nothing in it human or carnal, but being of a sort of spiritual nature. Wherefore it is thoroughly genuine. For indeed the expression was that of one who loves deeply. As thus; because he was separated from them as regards place, as it were by the stretching out of a right hand he incloses them with the arms of his love, saying, *"My love be with you all;"* just as if he said, *"With all of you I am."* Whereby he intimates that the things written came not of wrath or anger, but of provident care, seeing that after so heavy an accusation he does not turn himself away, but rather loves them, and embraces them when they are afar off, by these epistles and writings throwing himself into their arms.

5. For so ought he that corrects to do: since he at least, who acts merely from anger is but satisfying his own feeling; but he who after correcting the sinner renders also the offices of love, shows that those words also, whatsoever he spoke in reproof, were words of fond affection. Just so let us too chasten one another; and let neither the corrector be angry, (for this belongs not to correction, but to passion,) nor let him that is corrected take it ill. For what is done is healing, not despite. Now if physicians use cautery and are not found fault with, and that too, frequently, though they quite miss their object; but even in their pain the subjects of the cautery and amputation esteem as benefactors those who excite this pain; much more ought he who receives reproof to be so disposed, and as to a physician so to give heed to the corrector, and not as to an enemy. And let us also who rebuke approach with great gentleness, with great prudence.

And if you see a brother committing sin, as Christ commanded, make not your rebuke public, but "*between you and him alone:*" [Matthew 18:15] not reproaching nor insulting over him when down, but in pain and with a melting heart. And show yourself ready also to receive reproof, if you commit error in any thing.

Now that what I say may be plainer, let us put an imaginary case and so try our rule. For God forbid that in very deed we should be provided with such an illustration of it. Suppose any brother dwelling in the same house with a virgin, in honor and chastity, and yet not even so quite escaping evil report. If then you should hear talk of this their dwelling together, be not contemptuous, nor say, "*Why, has he no understanding? Does he not himself know what is for his good? Get love for nothing, but do not for nothing get hatred. Why, what have I to do with taking up a gratuitous enmity?*" These are the doting words of wild beasts, or rather of demons: for it is not so that he is hated for nothing who does this for his brother's correction, rather it is for great blessings and crowns unutterable.

But if you say, "*What? Has he no understanding?*" you shall hear from me that he has not: drunken as he is with his passion. For if in the heathen courts of justice, those who are injured must not speak for themselves while glowing with wrath; (although there be no fault in that kind of sympathy;) how much more those whom evil habit holds in subjection. Wherefore I say that manifold as his wisdom may be, he has not his mind awake. For what can be wiser than David, the man who said, "*The dark and the hidden things of Your wisdom You have made known unto me?*" [267 li. 6. ap, Septuagint. l. 6] But when he looked on the wife of the soldier with unjust eyes, then according to what he himself said [Psalm 107:27] of those who sail on the raging sea, "*all his wisdom was swallowed up;*" and he stood in need of others to correct him, and did not even perceive amidst what evils

he was. Wherefore also, bewailing his offenses, he said, *"As a heavy burden they weighed grievously upon me: my wounds stank and were corrupt because of my folly."* [Psalm 38:5] He therefore that commits sin has no understanding. For he is drunken and is in darkness. Do not then say these things, neither add that other remark, *"I care not at all about it. 'For each man shall bear his own burden.'"* [Galatians 6:5] Nay, against yourself also it grows up into a grievous accusation, that seeing one in error thou dost not restore him. For if it was not right according to the law of the Jews [Exodus 23:4-5] to slight the beast of one's enemy; he who despises not the beast of burden nor yet the soul of an enemy perishing, but that of a friend, what pardon shall he obtain?

Yea, neither is it enough for our excuse that he has understanding: since we too after our many and manifold exhortations have not been sufficient, nor proved useful, unto ourselves. Bear this in mind then in regard to him also that is in error; that it is natural he should receive the best counsel rather from you than from himself.

And say not, *"But what care I about these things?"* Fear thou him who first spoke this word; for the saying, *"Am I my brother's keeper?"* [Genesis 4:9] tends to the same point as this. This is the mother of all our evils that we esteem the concerns of our own body as foreign to us. What do you say? You care not for your brother? Who then is to care for him? The unbeliever who rejoices over and reproaches and insults him? Or the devil who urges him on and supplants him?

And whence comes this? *"How do I know that I shall accomplish anything,"* says he, *"though I speak and advise what is right."* But how is it clear that you will do no good? Why, this again is extreme folly, while the end remains in obscurity to incur the manifold blame of confessed indifference. And yet God who foresees the future often speaks and does no

good; yet does He not even so give up; and that, knowing that He shall not even persuade men. Now if He who knows beforehand that He shall win no advantage, ceases not from the work of correction, what excuse will you have, who art completely ignorant of the future and yet faintest and art benumbed? Yea, and many have succeeded by frequent attempts: and when they most of all despaired, then did they most gain their point. And though you should gain no advantage, you have done your own part.

Be not then inhuman, nor unmerciful, nor careless: for that these words come of cruelty and indifference is plain from what follows: viz. What is the reason that when one of the members of your body is in pain, you say not, "*What care I?*" Yet whence is it plain, that if it be taken due care of, it is restored? And yet you leave nothing undone, that even although thou profit not, you may not have to blame yourself for the omission of any thing which ought to have been done. Hereupon I ask, are we to take such care for the members of our body and to neglect those of Christ? Nay, how can such things deserve pardon? For if I make no impression upon you by saying, "*Have a care of your own member;*" in order that you may become better were it only through fear, I put you in mind of the body of Christ. But how can it be other than a matter of horror to see His flesh putrefying, and neglect it? And if you had a slave or an ass afflicted with a mortifying sore, you could not have the heart to neglect it: but do you see the Body of Christ full of scurvy, and hurriest by? And thinkest not that such things deserve innumerable thunder-bolts? For this cause all things are turned upside down, because of this our inhumanity, because of our indifference.

Wherefore now, I beseech you, let this cruelty be cast out from among us.

6. Draw near to him whom I speak of, as dwelling with a virgin, and speak some small praise of your brother, making it up from the other excellencies which he has. And foment him with your commendations as it

were with warm water, and so mitigate the tumor of his wound. Speak of yourself also as wretched; accuse the common race of mankind; point out that we are all in sins; ask for pardon, saying, that you are undertaking things too great for you, but love persuades you to dare all things. Then in giving your advice, do it not imperiously, but in a brotherly way. And when by all these means you have reduced the swelling and soothed the pain arising from the cutting reproof which is in store for him, and when you have again and again deprecated and besought him not to be angry: when you have bound him down with these things, then use the knife; neither pressing the matter too close, nor yet undoing it; that he may neither fly off on the one hand, nor on the other think little of it. For if you strike not to the quick you have done no good, and if your blow be violent, you make him start away.

Wherefore, even after all this, being on the very point of the reproof, mix up again commendation with your censures. And seeing that this proceeding considered in itself cannot be matter of praise, (for it is not commendable to keep house with a damsel that is a virgin;) let the purpose of him who does so be your topic for effecting this; and say, *"I know indeed that you do it for God's sake, and that the desolation and unprotected state of that poor woman met your eye, and caused you to stretch out your hand to her."* And although he may not be doing it with this intention, do thou speak so; and after this add what follows also; again excusing yourself and saying, *"These things I speak not to direct but to remind you. You do it for God's sake; I too know that. But let us see whether another evil be not produced thereby. And if there be none, keep her in your house, and cling to this excellent purpose. There is no one to hinder you. But if any mischief arise from hence exceeding the advantage, let us take care, I beseech you, lest while we are earnest to comfort one soul, we put a stumbling-block in*

the way of ten thousand." And do not add immediately the punishments due to those who give offense, but take his own testimony also, saying, You have no need to learn these things from me: you yourself know, 'if any one offend one of these little ones,' how great a penalty is threatened. And thus, having sweetened your speech and smoothed down his wrath, apply the medicine of your correction. And should he again urge her forlorn condition, do not thou even so expose his pretence, but say to him, *"Let nothing of this sort make you afraid: you will have an ample plea, the offense given to others: since not for indifference, but in care towards them, did you cease from this your purpose."*

And let the matter of your advice be brief, for there is no need of much teaching; but let the expressions of forbearance on the other hand be many and close upon one another. And continually have thou recourse to the topic of love; throwing into shade the painfulness of what you say, and giving him his full power, and saying, *"This is what I for my part advise and recommend; but about taking the advice you are only judge: for I do not compel and force you, but submit the whole thing to your own discretion."*

If we so manage our reproof, we shall easily be able to correct those in error: even as what we now do is surely more like the conduct of wild beasts or irrational creatures than of men. For if any persons now perceive any one committing errors of this kind, with the person himself they do not at all confer, but themselves, like silly old women who have drunk too much, whisper with another. And the saying, *"Get love for nothing, but do not get hatred for nothing,"* has not here any place in their opinion. But, when they have a fancy to speak evil, they mind not being *"hated for nothing,"* rather I should say, *"being punished;"* since it is not hatred alone that is hereby produced, but also punishment. But when there is need of correction, they allege both this, and innumerable other pretexts. Whereas

then would be the time to think of these things, when you speak evil, when you calumniate. I mean the saying, "*Be not hated for nothing,*" and "*I can do nothing,*" and "*it is no care of mine.*" But as things are, in the former case, you are vehemently and idly curious, and carest not for hatred and ills innumerable; but when you should be taking thought for the salvation of your brother, then it is your pleasure to be a sort of unofficious, inoffensive person. And yet from evil speaking arises hatred both on God's part and on men's; and this is no great care to you: but by giving advice privately, and reproofs of that kind, both he and God will be made your friends. And even should he hate you, God goes on loving you the rather on this account. Nay, in fact, not even so will he hate you, as when his hatred came from your evil speaking: but in that case he will avoid you as a foe and an enemy, whereas now he will consider you more venerable than any father. And if he apparently take it ill, inwardly and privately he will feel much obliged to you.

7. Bearing in mind these things therefore let us have a care of our own members, and not sharpen the tongue against one another, nor speak words "*which may do hurt,*" undermining the fame of our neighbor, and as in war and battle, giving and receiving blows. For what after all is the good of fasting or watching, when the tongue is drunken, and feasts itself at a table more unclean than of dog's flesh; when it is grown ravening after blood, and pours out filth, and makes the mouth a channel of a sewer, nay rather something more abominable than that? For that which proceeds from thence pollutes the body: but what comes from the tongue often suffocates the soul.

These things I say, not in anxiety about those who have an ill report falsely: for they are worthy even of crowns, when they bear what is said nobly; but in anxiety for you that so speak. For him that is evil reported of

falsely, the Scriptures pronounce "*blessed*;" but the evil-speaker they expel from the holy Mysteries, nay even from the very precincts. For it is said, [Psalm 101:5] "*Him that privily speaks against his neighbor, this man did I chase out.*" And he says too that such a one is unworthy to read the sacred books. For, "*Why*," says He, [Psalm 50:16] "*do you declare My righteous laws, and takest My covenant in your mouth?*" Then, annexing the cause He says [Psalm 49:20] "*Thou sat and spoke against your brother.*" And here indeed he does not distinctly add whether they be things true or false which he speaks. But elsewhere this too makes part of His prohibition: He implying, that even though thou speak truths, yet such things are not to be uttered by you. For, "*Judge not*," says He, that you be not judged: [Matthew 7:1] since he too who spoke evil of the publican was condemned, although it was true which he laid to his neighbor's charge.

"*What then*," you will say, "*if any one be daring and polluted, must we not correct him? Must we not expose him?*" We must both expose and correct: but in the way which I mentioned before. But if you do it upbraiding him, take heed lest your imitation of that Pharisee cause you to fall into his state. For no advantage accrues from hence; none to you who speakest, none to him who hears you, none to the person accused. But the latter, for his part, becomes more reckless: since as long as he is unobserved, he is sensible of shame; but as soon as he becomes manifest and notorious, he casts off the curb also which that feeling imposed on him.

And the hearer will in his turn be yet more injured. For whether he be conscious to himself of good deeds, he becomes puffed and swoln up with the accusation brought against another; or of faults, he then becomes more eager for iniquity.

Thirdly, the speaker too himself will both incur the bad opinion of the hearer, and will provoke God to more anger against himself.

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us cast from us every word that is unsavory. If there be any thing good unto edification, this let us speak.

But have you a fancy to avenge yourself on the other person? Why then punish yourself instead of him? Nay, do thou, who art so earnestly seeking redress from those who have annoyed you, avenge yourself as Paul recommended to take vengeance. *"If your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."* [Romans 12:20] But if you do not so, but only plot against him, you point the sword against yourself.

Wherefore if that other speak evil, answer him with praises and commendations. For so will you be able both to take vengeance on him, and wilt deliver yourself from evil surmising. Since he that feels pain at hearing ill of himself, is thought to be so affected because of some consciousness of evil: but he that laughs to scorn what is said, exhibits a most unquestionable token of his not being conscious to himself of any evil thing.

Seeing then that you profit neither your hearer, nor yourself, nor him that is accused, and dost but point your sword at your own self, even from such considerations do thou learn more soberness. For one ought indeed to be moved by the thought of the kingdom of heaven, and of what pleases God: but since you are of grosser disposition and bitest like a wild beast, hereby even be thou instructed; that these arguments having corrected you, you may be able to order yourself simply from consideration of what pleases God; and having come to be above every passion, may obtain the heavenly blessings:— which may God grant us all to obtain, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His mercy towards mankind; with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and henceforth, and unto everlasting ages. Amen.

Homily 1 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1:1-4

Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia: grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; Who comfort us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

It is meet to enquire, first, why to the former Epistle he adds a second: and what can be his reason for thus beginning with the mercies and consolation of God.

Why then does he add a second Epistle? Whereas in the first he had said, *"I will come to you, and will know not the word of them which are puffed up, but the power;"* [1 Corinthians 4:19] and again towards the end had promised the same in milder terms, thus, *"I will come unto you when I shall have passed through Macedonia; for I do pass through Macedonia; and it may be that I shall abide, or even winter with you;"* [1 Corinthians 16:5-6] yet now after along interval, he came not; but was still lingering and delaying even though the time appointed had passed away; the Spirit detaining him in other matters of far greater necessity than these. For this reason he had need to write a second Epistle, which he had not needed had he but a little out-tarried his time.

2 Corinthians 1:5

But not for this reason only, but also because they were amended by the former; for him that had committed fornication whom before they applauded and were puffed up about, they had cut off and separated altogether. And this he shows where he says, *"But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all. Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many."* [2 Corinthians 2:5-6] And as he proceeds, he alludes again to the same thing when he says, *"For behold that you were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what longing, yea, what zeal, yea, what avenging! In every thing ye approved yourselves to be pure in this matter."* [2 Corinthians 7:11] Moreover, the collection which he enjoined, they gathered with much forwardness. Wherefore also he says, *"For I know your readiness of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia has been prepared for a year past."* [2 Corinthians 9:2] And Titus too, whom he sent, they received with all kindness, as he shows when he says again, *"His inward affection is more abundantly toward you, while he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him."* [2 Corinthians 7:15] For all these reasons he writes the second Epistle. For it was right that, as when they were in fault he rebuked them, so upon their amendment he should approve and commend them. On which account the Epistle is not very severe throughout, but only in a few parts towards the end. For there were even among them Jews who thought highly of themselves, and accused Paul as being a boaster and worthy of no regard; whence also that speech of theirs;

"His letters are weighty, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account:" [2 Corinthians 10:10] meaning thereby, when he is present he appears of no account, (for this is the meaning of, *"his bodily presence is weak,"*) but when he is away he boasts greatly in what he writes, (for such is the signification of *"his letters are weighty."*) Moreover, to enhance their own credit these persons made a pretence of receiving nothing, to which he also alludes where he says, *"that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we."* [2 Corinthians 11:12] And besides, possessing also the power of language, they were immediately greatly elated. Wherefore also he calls himself *"rude in speech,"* [2 Corinthians 11:6] showing that he is not ashamed thereof; nor deems the contrary any great acquisition. Seeing then it was likely that by these persons some would be seduced, after commending what was right in their conduct, and beating down their senseless pride in the things of Judaism, in that out of season they were contentious to observe them, he administers a gentle rebuke on this subject also.

2. Such then, to speak summarily and by the way, appears to me the argument of this Epistle. It remains to consider the introduction, and to say why after his accustomed salutation he begins, as he does, with the mercies of God. But first, it is necessary to speak of the very beginning, and inquire why he here associates Timothy with himself. For, he says, *"Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Timothy our brother."* In the first Epistle he promised he would send him; and charged them, saying, *"Now if Timothy come, see that he be with you without fear."* [1 Corinthians 16:10] How then is it that he associates him here in the outset with himself? After he had been among them, agreeably to that promise of his teacher, *"I have sent unto you Timothy who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ,"* [1 Corinthians 4:17] and had

set everything in order, he had returned back to Paul; who on sending him, had said, "*Set him forward on his journey in peace that he may come to me, for I expect him with the brethren.*" [1 Corinthians 16:11]

Since then Timothy was restored to his teacher, and after having with him set in order the things in Asia, [for, says he, "*I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost,*" 1 Corinthians 16:8;] had crossed again into Macedonia; Paul not unreasonably associates him hereafter as abiding with himself. For then he wrote from Asia, but now from Macedonia. Moreover, thus associating him he at once gains increased respect for him, and displays his own exceeding humility : for Timothy was very inferior to himself, yet does love bring all things together. Whence also he everywhere makes him equal with himself; at one time saying, "*as a child serves a father so he served with me;*" [Philippians 2:22] at another, "*for he works the work of the Lord, as I also do;*" [1 Corinthians 16:10] and here, he even calls him, "*brother;*" by all making him an object of respect to the Corinthians among whom he had been, as I have said, and given proof of his worth.

"*To the Church of God which is at Corinth.*" Again he calls them "*the Church,*" to bring and bind them all together in one. For it could not be one Church, while those within her were sundered and stood apart. With all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia. In thus saluting all through the Epistle addressed to the Corinthians, he would at once honor these, and bring together the whole nation. But he calls them "*saints,*" thereby implying that if any be an impure person, he has no share in this salutation. But why, writing to the mother city, does he address all through her, since he does not so everywhere? For instance, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians he addressed not the Macedonians also; and in like manner in that to the Ephesians he does not include all Asia; neither was that to the Romans written to those also who dwell in Italy. But in this Epistle he does so; and

in that to the Galatians. For there also he writes not to one city, or two, or three, but to all who are scattered every where, saying, *"Paul an Apostle, (not from men neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead,) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of Galatia. Grace to you and peace."* [Galatians 1:1-3] To the Hebrews also he writes one Epistle to all collectively; not distinguishing them into their several cities. What then can be the reason of this? Because, as I think, in this case all were involved in one common disorder, wherefore also he addresses them in common, as needing one common remedy. For the Galatians were all of them infected. So too were the Hebrews, and so I think these (Achaians) also.

3. So then having brought the whole nation together in one, and saluted them with his accustomed greeting, for, says he, *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:"* [2 Corinthians 1:2] hear how aptly to the purpose in hand he begins, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort."* [2 Corinthians 1:3] Do you ask, how is this aptly to the purpose in hand? I reply, Very much so; for observe, they were greatly vexed and troubled that the Apostle had not come to them, and that, though he had promised, but had spent the whole time in Macedonia; preferring as it seemed others to themselves. Setting himself then to meet this feeling against him, he declares the cause of his absence; not however directly stating it, as thus; *"I know, indeed, I promised to come, but since I was hindered by afflictions forgive me, nor judge me guilty of any sort of contempt or neglect towards you:"* but after another manner he invests the subject at once with more dignity and trustworthiness, and gives it greatness by the nature of the consolation, so that thereafter they might not so much as ask the reason of his delay. Just as if one, having promised to come to

one he longed for, at length arriving after dangers innumerable, should say, *"Glory to You, O God, for letting me see the sight so longed for of his dear countenance! Blessed be Thou, O God, from what perils have You delivered me!"* for such a doxology is an answer to him who was preparing to find fault, and will not let him so much as complain of the delay; for one that is thanking God for deliverance from such great calamities he cannot for shame drag to the bar, and bid clear himself of loitering. Whence Paul thus begins, *"Blessed be the God of mercies,"* implying by the very words that he had been both brought into and delivered from mighty perils. For as David also does not address God every where in one way or with the same titles; but when he is upon battle and victory, *"I will love You, he says, O Lord my strength; the Lord is my buckler :"* when again upon delivery from affliction and the darkness which overwhelmed him, *"The Lord is my light and my salvation;"* [Psalm 27:1] and as the immediate occasion suggests, he names Him now from His loving-kindness, now from His justice, now from His righteous judgment:— in like way Paul also here at the beginning describes Him by His loving-kindness, calling Him *"the God of mercies,"* that is, *"Who has showed me so great mercies as to bring me up from the very gates of death."*

And thus to have mercy is the peculiar and excellent attribute of God, and the most inherent in His nature; whence he calls Him the *"God of mercies."*

And observe, I pray you, herein also the lowly-mindedness of Paul. For though he were in peril because of the Gospel he preached; yet says he not, he was saved for his merit, but for the mercies of God. But this he afterwards declares more clearly, and now goes on to say, *"Who comforts us in all affliction."* [2 Corinthians 1:4] He says not, *"Who suffers us not to come into affliction:"* but, *"Who comforts in affliction."* For this at once

declares the power of God; and increases the patience of those afflicted. For, says he, *"tribulation works patience."* [Romans 5:3] And so also the prophet, *"You have set me at large when I was in distress."* [Psalm 4:1] He does not say, *"You have not suffered me to fall into affliction,"* nor yet, *"You have quickly removed my affliction,"* but, while it continues, *"You have set me at large:"* [Daniel 3:21, etc.] that is, *"hast granted me much freedom and refreshment."* Which truly happened also in the case of the three children, for neither did He prevent their being cast into the flame, nor when so cast, did He quench it, but while the furnace was burning He gave them liberty. And such is ever God's way of dealing; as Paul also implies when he says, *"Who comforts us in all affliction."*

But he teaches something more in these words: Do you ask what? Namely, that God does this not once, nor twice, but without intermission. For He does not one while comfort, another not, but ever and constantly. Wherefore he says, *"Who comforts,"* not, *"Who has comforted,"* and, *"in all affliction,"* not, *"in this or that,"* but, *"in all."*

"That we may be able to comfort them which are in any affliction through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." See you not how he is beforehand with his defence by suggesting to the hearer the thought of some great affliction; and herein also is his modesty again apparent, that he says not for their own merits was this mercy showed, but for the sake of those that need their assistance; *"for,"* says he, *"to this end has He comforted us that we might comfort one another."* And hereby also he manifests the excellency of the Apostles, showing that having been comforted and breathed awhile, he lies not softly down as we, but goes on his way to anoint, to nerve, to rouse others. Some, however, consider this as the Apostle's meaning. *"Our consolation is that of others also:"* but my opinion is that in this introduction, he is also censuring the false Apostles,

those vain boasters who sat at home and lived in luxury; but this covertly and, as it were, incidentally, the leading object being to apologise for his delay. *"For,"* [he would say,] *"if for this end we were comforted that we might comfort others also, do not blame us that we came not; for in this was our whole time spent, in providing against the conspiracies, the violence, the terrors which assailed us."*

4. *"For as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also abounds through Christ."* Not to depress the disciples by an aggravated account of his sufferings; he declares on the other hand that great and superabundant was the consolation also, and lifts up their heart not hereby alone, but also by putting them in mind of Christ and calling the sufferings *"His,"* and prior to the consolation derives a comfort from the very sufferings themselves. For what joy can I have so great as to be partaker with Christ, and for His sake to suffer these things? What consolation can equal this? But not from this source only does he raise the spirits of the afflicted, but from another also. Ask you what other? In that he says, *"abound:"* for he does not say, *"As the sufferings of Christ"* are *"in us,"* but as they *"abound,"* thereby declaring that they endure not His sufferings only, but even more than these. For, says he, not whatsoever He suffered, that have we suffered; *"but even more ,"* for, consider, *"Christ was cast out, persecuted, scourged, died,"* but we, says he, *"more than all this,"* which even of itself were consolation enough. Now let no one condemn this speech of boldness; for he elsewhere says, *"Now I rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh."* [Colossians 1:24] Yet neither here nor there is it from boldness or any presumptuousness. For as they wrought greater miracles than He according to that saying of His, *"he that believes in Me shall do greater works than these,"* [John 14:12] but all is of Him that works in them; so did

they suffer also more than He, but all again is of Him that comforts them, and fits them to bear the evils that betide them.

With which respect Paul aware how great a thing he had said, does again remarkably restrain it by adding, "*So our comfort also abounds through Christ;*" thus at once ascribing all to Him, and proclaiming herein also His loving-kindness; for, he says not, "*As our affliction, such our consolation;*" but "*far more;*" for, he says not, "*our comfort is equal to our sufferings,*" but, "*our comfort abounds,*" so that the season of struggles was the season also of fresh crowns. For, say, what is equal to being scourged for Christ's sake and holding converse with God; and being more than match for all things, and gaining the better of those who cast us out, and being unconquered by the whole world, and expecting hence such good things "*as eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man!*" [1 Corinthians 2:9] And what is equal to suffering affliction for godliness' sake, and receiving from God consolations infinite, and being rescued from sins so great, and counted worthy of the Spirit, and of being sanctified and justified, and regarding no man with fear and trembling, and in peril itself outshining all.

5. Let us then not sink down when tempted. For no self-indulger has fellowship with Christ, nor sleeper, nor supine [person], nor any of these lax and dissolute livers. But Whoso is in affliction and temptation, this man stands near to Him, whoso is journeying on the narrow way. For He Himself trode this; whence too He says, "*the Son of Man has not where to lay His head.*" So then grieve not when you are in affliction; considering with Whom you have fellowship, and how you are purified by trials; and how great gain is yours. For there is nothing miserable save the offending against God; but this apart, neither afflictions nor conspiracies, nor any other thing has power to grieve the right-minded soul: but like as a little

spark, if you cast it into a mighty deep, thou presently puttest it out, so does even a total and excessive sorrow if it light on a good conscience easily die away and disappear.

Such then was the spring of Paul's continual joy: because in whatever was of God he was full of hope; and did not so much as take count of ills so great, but though he grieved as a man yet sank not. So too was that Patriarch encompassed with joy in the midst of much painful suffering; for consider, he forsook his country, underwent journeyings long and hard; when he came into a strange land, had "*not so much as to set his foot on.*" [Acts 7:5] Then again a famine awaited him which made him once more a wanderer; after the famine again came the seizure of his wife, then the fear of death, and childlessness, and battle, and peril, and conspiracies, and at the last that crowning trial, the slaying of his only-begotten and true son, that grievous irreparable [sacrifice.] For think not, I pray you, that because he readily obeyed, he felt not all the things he underwent. For though his righteousness had been, as indeed it was, inestimable, yet was he a man and felt as nature bade. But yet did none of these things cast him down, but he stood like a noble athlete, and for each one was proclaimed and crowned a victor. So also the blessed Paul, though seeing trials in very snow-showers assailing him daily, rejoiced and exulted as though in the mid-delights of Paradise. As then he who is gladdened with this joy cannot be a prey to despair; so he who makes not this his own is easily overcome of all; and is as one that has unsound armor, and is wounded by even a common stroke: but not so he who is well encased at all points, and proof against every shaft that comes upon him. And truly stouter than any armor is joy in God; and whoso has it, nothing can ever make his head droop or his countenance sad, but he bears all things nobly. For what is worse to bear than fire? What more painful than continual torture? truly it is more overpowering in pain

than the loss of untold wealth, of children, of any thing; for, says he, "*Skin for skin, yea, all that a man has will he give for his life.*" [Job 2:4] So nothing can be harder to bear than bodily pain; nevertheless, because of this joy in God, what even to hear of is intolerable, becomes both tolerable and longed for: and if you take from the cross or from the gridiron the martyr yet just breathing, you will find such a treasure of joy within him as admits not of being told.

6. And does any one say, What am I to do ; for now is no time of martyrdom? What do you say? Is now no time of martyrdom? Never is it not a time; but ever is it before our eyes; if we will keep them open. For it is not the hanging on a cross only that makes a Martyr, for were this so, then was Job excluded from this crown; for he neither stood at bar, nor heard Judge's voice, nor looked on executioner; no, nor while hanging on tree aloft had his sides mangled; yet he suffered worse than many martyrs; more sharply than any stroke did the tale of those successive messengers strike, and goad him on every side: and keener the gnawings of the worms which devoured him in every part than thousand executioners.

Against what martyr then may he not worthily be set? Surely against ten thousand. For in every kind [of suffering] he both wrestled and was crowned; in goods, and children, and person, and wife, and friends, and enemies, and servants, (for these too even did spit in his face,) in hunger and visions and pains and noisomeness; it was for this I said he might worthily be set, not against one nor two nor three, but against ten thousand Martyrs. For besides what I have mentioned, the time also makes a great addition to his crown; in that it was before the Law, before Grace, he thus suffered, and that, many months, and each in its worst form; and all these evils assailed him at once. And yet each individual evil by itself intolerable, even that which seems most tolerable, the loss of his goods. For many have

patiently borne stripes, but could not bear the loss of their goods; but rather than relinquish any part of them were content even to be scourged for their sake and suffer countless ills; and this blow, the loss of goods, appeared to them heavier than all. So then here is another method of martyrdom for one who bears this loss nobly. And does any ask, How shall we bear it nobly? When you have learned that by one word of thanksgiving you shall gain more than all you have lost. For if at the tidings of our loss we be not troubled, but say, "*Blessed be God,*" we have found far more abundant riches. For truly such great fruit you shall not reap by expending all your wealth on the needy, by going about and seeking out the poor, and scattering your substance to the hungry, as you shall gain by the same word. And so neither Job do I admire so much in setting wide his house to the needy, as I am struck with and extol his taking the spoiling of his substance thankfully. The same in the loss of children it happens to see. For herein, also, reward no less than his who offered his son and presented him in sacrifice shall you receive, if as you see yours die you shall thank the God of love. For how shall such an one be less than Abraham? He saw not his son stretched out a corpse, but only looked to do so. So if he gain in the comparison by his purpose to slay and his stretching forth his hand to take the knife, [Genesis 22:10] yet does he lose in that the child is lying dead here. And besides, he had some comfort in the prospect of a good work done, and the thought that this so excellent achievement was the work of his own fortitude, and that the voice he heard came from above made him the readier. But here is no such thing. So that he had need have a soul of adamant, who can bear with calmness to see a child, his only one, brought up in affluence, in the dawn of fair promise, lying upon the bier an outstretched corpse. And should such an one, hushing to rest the heavings of nature, be strengthened to say the words of Job without a tear, "*The Lord*

gave, the Lord has taken away;" [Job 1:21] for those words' sake alone, he shall stand with Abraham himself and with Job be proclaimed a victor. And if, staying the wailings of the women and breaking up the bands of mourners, he shall rouse them all to sing glory [to God], he shall receive above, below, rewards unnumbered; men admiring, angels applauding, God crowning him.

7. And do you say, How is it possible for one that is man not to mourn? I reply, If you will reflect how neither the Patriarch nor Job, who both were men, gave way to any thing of the kind; and this too in either case before the Law, and Grace, and the excellent wisdom of the laws [we have]: if you will account that the deceased has removed into a better country, and bounded away to a happier inheritance, and that you have not lost your son but bestowed him henceforward in an inviolable spot. Say not then, I pray you, I am no longer called "*father*," for why are you no longer called so, when your son abides? For surely thou did not part with your child nor lose your son? Rather you have gotten him, and hast him in greater safety. Wherefore, no longer shall you be called "*father*" here only, but also in heaven; so that you have not lost the title "*father*," but hast gained it in a nobler sense; for henceforth you shall be called father not of a mortal child, but of an immortal; of a noble soldier; on duty continually within [the palace]. For think not because he is not present that therefore he is lost; for had he been absent in a foreign land, the title of your relationship had not gone from you with his body. Do not then gaze on the countenance of what lies there, for so thou dost but kindle afresh your grief; but away with your thought from him that lies there, up to heaven. That is not your child which is lying there, but he who has flown away and sprung aloft into boundless height. When then you see the eyes closed, the lips locked together, the body motionless, Oh be not these your thoughts, "*These lips no*

longer speak, these eyes no longer see, these feet no longer walk, but are all on their way to corruption!" Oh say not so: but say the reverse of this, These lips shall speak better, and the eyes see greater things, and the feet shall mount upon the clouds; and this body which now rots away shall put on immortality, and I shall receive my son back more glorious. But if what you see distress you, say to yourself the while, This is [only] clothing and he has put it off to receive it back more precious; this is an house and it is taken down to be restored in greater splendor. For like as we, when purposing to take houses down, allow not the inmates to stay, that they may escape the dust and noise; but causing them to remove a little while, when we have built up the tenement securely, admit them freely; so also does God; Who taking down this His decaying tabernacle has received him the while into His paternal dwelling and unto Himself, that when it has been taken down and built anew He may then return it to him more glorious.

Say not then, *"He is perished and shall no more be;"* for these be the words of unbelievers; but say, *"He sleeps and will rise again," "He is gone a journey and will return with the King."* Who says this? He that has Christ speaking in him. *"For,"* says he, *"if we believe that Jesus died and rose again"* and revived, *"even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."* [1 Thessalonians 4:14] If then thou seek your son, there seek him where the King is, where is the army of the Angels; not in the grave; not in the earth; lest while he is so highly exalted, yourself remain grovelling on the ground.

If we have this true wisdom, we shall easily repel all this kind of distress; and *"the God of mercies and Father of all comfort"* comfort all our hearts, both those who are oppressed with such grief and those held down with any other sorrow; and grant us deliverance from all despair and increase of spiritual joy; and to obtain the good things to come; whereunto

may all we attain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom unto the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1:6-7

Whether we be afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation, which works in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: and our hope for you is steadfast.

Having spoken of one, and that the chief ground of comfort and consolation, namely, having fellowship [by sufferings] with Christ: he lays down as second this which he now mentions, namely, that the salvation of the disciples themselves was procured thereby. *"Faint not, therefore, he says, nor be confounded and afraid because we are afflicted; for this same thing were rather a reason for your being of good cheer: for had we not been afflicted, this had been the ruin of you all."* How and wherein? For if through lack of spirit and fear of danger we had not preached unto you the word whereby ye learned the true knowledge, your situation had been desperate. Do you see again the vehemence and earnest contention of Paul? The very things which troubled them he uses for their comfort. For, says he, the greater the intensity of our persecutions, the greater should be the increase of your good hope; because the more abundant also in proportion is your salvation and consolation. For what has equal force of consolation with this of having obtained such good things through the preaching. Then that he may not seem to be bringing the encomium round to himself alone, see how he makes them too to share these praises. For to the words, *"Whether we be afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation:"* he adds, *"which works in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer."* [2 Corinthians 1:7] Afterwards, indeed, he states this more clearly,

thus saying, *"As you are partakers of the sufferings, so also are you of the consolation;"* but here also meanwhile he alludes to it in the words, *"the same sufferings,"* so making what he says include them. For what he says is this, *"Your salvation is not our work alone, but your own as well; for both we in preaching to you the word endure affliction, and you in receiving it endure the very same; we to impart to you that which we received, you to receive what is imparted and not to let it go."* Now what humility can compare with this, seeing that those who fell so far short of him he raises to the same dignity of endurance? For he says, *"Which worked in the enduring of the same sufferings;"* for not through believing only comes your salvation, but also through the suffering and enduring the same things with us. For like as a pugilist is an object of admiration, when he does but show himself and is in good training and has his skill within himself, but when he is in action, enduring blows and striking his adversary, then most of all shines forth, because that then his good training is most put in action, and the proof of his skill evidently shown; so truly is your salvation also then more especially put into action, that is, is displayed, increased, heightened, when it has endurance, when it suffers and bears all things nobly. So then the work of salvation consists not in doing evil, but in suffering evil. Moreover he says not, *"which works,"* but, *"which is wrought,"* to show that together with their own willingness of mind, grace also which wrought in them did contribute much.

2 Corinthians 1:7

"And our hope for you is steadfast." That is, though ye should suffer ills innumerable, we are confident that you will not turn round, either upon your own trials or upon our persecutions. For so far are we from suspecting

you of being confounded on account of our sufferings that even when yourselves are in peril, we are then confident concerning you.

2. Do you see how great had been their advance since the former Epistle? For he has here witnessed of them far greater things than of the Macedonians, whom throughout that Epistle he extols and commends. For on their [the Macedonians'] account he feared and says, *"We sent,"* unto you, *"Timothy...to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith, that no man be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed."* [1 Thessalonians 3:2-3] And again: *"For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by any means the tempter has tempted you: and our labor should be in vain."* [2 Corinthians 1:5] But of these [the Corinthians] he says nothing of this kind, but quite the contrary, *"Our hope for you is steadfast."*

2 Corinthians 1:6-7

"Or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. Knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also are you of the comfort."

That for their sakes the Apostles were afflicted, he showed when he said, *"whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation:"* he wishes also to show that for their sakes also they were comforted. He said this indeed even a little above, although somewhat generally, thus; *"Blessed be God, Who comforts us in all our afflictions, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any affliction."* He repeats it here too in other words more clearly and more home to their needs. *"For whether we be comforted,"* says he, *"it is for your comfort."* What he means is this; our comfort becomes your refreshment, even though we should not comfort you

by word. If we be but a little refreshed, this avails for encouragement to you; and if we be ourselves comforted, this becomes your comfort. For as you consider our sufferings your own, so do ye also make our comfort your own. For surely it cannot be that, when you share in worse fortune with us, you will not share in the better. If then ye share in everything, as in tribulation so in comfort, you will in no wise blame us for this delay and slowness in coming, because that both for your sakes we are in tribulation and for your sakes in comfort. For lest any should think this a hard saying, *"for your sakes we thus suffer,"* he adds, *"for your sakes also we are comforted,"* and *"not we alone are in peril; for you also,"* says he, *"are partakers of the same sufferings."* Thus then, by admitting them to be partakers in the perils and ascribing to them the cause of their own comfort, he softens what he says. If then we be beset by craft, be of good cheer; we endure this that your faith may grow in strength. And if we be comforted, glory in this also; for we enjoy this too for your sakes, that thereby ye may receive some encouragement by sharing in our joy. And that the comfort he here speaks of is that which they enjoyed not only from being comforted by themselves, (the Apostles) but also from knowing them (the Apostles) to be at rest, hear him declaring in what follows next, *"Knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also are you of the comfort."* For as when we suffer persecution, you are in distress as though yourselves so suffering; so are we sure that when we are comforted, you think the enjoyment also your own. What more humble-minded than this spirit? He who so greatly surpasses in perils, calls them *"partakers,"* who endured no part of them whatever; while of the comfort he ascribes the whole cause to them, not to his own labors.

3. Next, having spoken before only generally of troubles, he now makes mention of the place too where they (Ben. he) endured them.

2 Corinthians 1:8

"For we would not, Brethren, have you ignorant concerning our affliction which befell us in Asia."

"These things we speak," says he, *"that you may not be ignorant of what befell us; for we wish, yea have earnestly endeavored, that you should know our affairs:"* which is a very high proof of love. Of this even in the former Epistle he had before given notice, where he said, *"For a great door and effectual is opened to me at Ephesus, and there are many adversaries."* [1 Corinthians 16:8-9] Putting them then in mind of this, and recounting how much he suffered, he says, *"I would not have you ignorant of our affliction which befell us in Asia."* And in his Epistle to the Ephesians too he said the same. For having sent Tychicus to them, he gives this as the reason of his journey: whence he says, *"But that you also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things; whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that you may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts."* [Ephesians 6:21-22] And in other Epistles also he does the very same. Nor is it superfluous, but even exceedingly necessary: both because of his exceeding affection for the disciples, and because of their continued trials; wherein the knowledge of each other's fortunes was a very great comfort; so that if these were calamitous, they might be prepared both to be energetic and to be safer against falling; or if these were good, they might rejoice with them. He here, however, speaks as well of being delivered from trials as of being assaulted by them, saying, *"We were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power."* Like a vessel sinking under some mighty burden. He may seem to have said, only one thing here

"exceedingly" and "beyond our power:" it is, however, not one but two; for lest one should object, "What then? Granting the peril were exceeding, yet it was not great to you;" he added, it both was great and surpassed our strength, yea, so surpassed it, "That we despaired even of life."

That is, we had no longer any expectation of living. What David calls *"the gates of hell, the pangs"* and *"the shadow of death,"* this he expresses by saying, *"We endured peril pregnant with certain death."*

2 Corinthians 1:9

"But we had the answer of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead."

What is this, *"the answer of death?"* The vote, the judgment, the expectation. For so spoke our affairs; our fortunes gave this answer, *"We shall surely die."*

To be sure, this did not come to the proof, but only as far as to our anticipations, and stopped there: for the nature of our affairs did so declare, yet the power of God allowed not the declaration to take effect, but permitted it to happen only in our thought and in expectation: wherefore he says, *"We had the answer of death in ourselves,"* not in fact. And wherefore permitted He peril so great as to take away our hope and cause us to despair? *"That we should not trust in ourselves,"* says he, *"but in God."* These words Paul said, not that this was his own temper. Away with such a thought, but as attuning the rest by what he says of himself, and in his great care to speak modestly. Whence also further on he says, *"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, (meaning his trials,) lest I should be exalted overmuch."* [2 Corinthians 12:7] And yet God does not say that He permitted them for this, but for another reason. What other? That His strength might be the more displayed; *"For,"* says he, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 1:9] But, as I said, he no where forgets his own peculiar character, classing himself with those who fall short exceedingly and stand in need of much discipline and correction. For if one or two trials suffice to sober even ordinary men, how should he who of all men had most cultivated lowliness of mind his whole life long and had suffered as no

other man did, after so many years and a practice of wisdom worthy of the heavens, be in need of this admonition? Whence it is plain that here too, it is from modesty and to calm down those who thought highly of themselves and boasted, that he thus speaks, *"That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God."*

4. And observe how he treats them tenderly here also. For, says he, these trials were permitted to come upon us for your sakes; of so great price are you in God's sight; for *"whether we be afflicted,"* says he, *"it is for your consolation and salvation;"* but they were *"out of measure"* for our sake, lest we should be high minded. *"For we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power; that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God that raises the dead."* He again puts them in mind of the doctrine of the Resurrection whereon he said so much in the former Epistle, and confirms it from the present circumstance; whence he added,

2 Corinthians 1:10-11

"Who delivered us out of so great deaths. "

He said not, *"from so great dangers,"* at once showing the insupportable severity of the trials, and confirming the doctrine I have mentioned. For whereas the Resurrection was a thing future, he shows that it happens every day: for when [God] lifts up again a man who is despaired of and has been brought to the very gates of Hades, He shows none other thing than a resurrection, snatching out of the very jaws of death him that had fallen into them: whence in the case of those despaired of and then restored either out of grievous sickness or insupportable trials, it is an ordinary way of speaking to say, We have seen a resurrection of the dead in his case.

"And we have set our hope that He will also still deliver us; ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many , thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf."

Since the words, *"that we should not trust in ourselves,"* might seem to be a common charge and an accusation that pointed to some among them; he softens again what he said, by calling their prayers a great protection and at the same time showing that [this] our life must be throughout a scene of conflict. For in those words, *"And we have set our hope that He will also still deliver us,"* he predicts a future sleet of many trials: but still no where anything of being forsaken, but of succor again and support. Then, lest on hearing that they were to be continually in perils they should be cast down, he showed before the use of perils; for instance, *"that we should not trust in ourselves;"* that is, that he may keep us in continual humility, and that their

salvation may be wrought; and many other uses besides; the being partakers with Christ; ("*for,*" says he, "*the sufferings of Christ abound in us;*") the suffering for the faithful; ("*for,*" says he, "*whether we be afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation;*") the superior lustre this last (i.e., their salvation) should shine with; "*which,*" says he, "*works*" [in you] "*in the patient enduring of the same sufferings;*" their being made hardy; and besides all these, that of seeing the resurrection vividly portrayed before their eyes: for, "*He has delivered us out of so great death;*" being of an earnest mind and ever looking unto Him, "*for,*" says he, "*we have set our hope that he will deliver*" us; its rivetting them to prayers, for he says, "*ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication.*" Thus having shown the gain of affliction and then having made them energetic: he anoints once more their spirits [for the combat], and animates them to virtue by witnessing great things of their prayers, for that to these God had granted Paul; as he says, "*You helping together on our behalf by prayer.*" But what is this: "*That for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many on our behalf? He delivered us from those deaths,*" says he, "*ye also helping together by prayer;*" that is, praying all of you for us. For "*the gift bestowed upon us,*" that is, our being saved, He was pleased to grant to you all, in order that many persons might give Him thanks, because that many also received the boon.

5. And this he said, at once to stir them up to prayer for others, and to accustom them always to give thanks to God for whatever befalls others, showing that He too wills this exceedingly. For they that are careful to do both these for others, will much more for themselves show an example of both. And besides this, he both teaches them humility and leads on to more fervent love. For if he who was so high above them owns himself to have been saved by their prayers: and that to their prayers himself had been

granted as a boon of God, think what their modesty and disposition ought to have been. And observe, I pray you, this also; that even if God does any thing in mercy, yet prayer does mightily contribute thereunto. For at the first he attributed his salvation to His mercies; for *"The God of mercies,"* he says, Himself *"delivered us,"* but here to the prayers also. For on him too that owed the ten thousand talents He had mercy after that he fell at His feet; [Matthew 18:24-27] although it is written, that *"being moved with compassion, He loosed him."* And again to the *"woman of Canaan,"* it was after that long attendance and importunity of hers, [Matthew 15:22] that He finally granted the healing of her daughter, even though of His mercy He healed her. Hereby then we learn that even though we are to receive mercy, we must first make ourselves worthy of the mercy; for though there be mercy, yet it seeks out those that are worthy. It will not come upon all without distinction; those even who have no feeling; for He says, *"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."* [Romans 9:15] Observe at least what he says here, *"You also helping together by prayer."* He has neither ascribed the whole of the good work to them lest he should lift them up, nor yet deprived them of all share whatever in it, in order to encourage them and animate their zeal, and bring them together one to another. Whence also he said, *"He also granted to you my safety."* For oftentimes also God is abashed by a multitude praying with one mind and mouth. Whence also He said to the prophet, *"And shall not I spare this city wherein dwell more than six score thousand persons?"* [Jonah 4:11] Then lest you think He respects the multitude only, He says, *"Though the number of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."* [Isaiah 10:22] How then saved He the Ninevites? Because in their case, there was not only a multitude, but a multitude and virtue too. For each one *"turned from" his "evil way."* [Jonah 3:10; 4:11] And besides,

when He saved them, He said that they discerned not "*between their right hand and their left hand:*" whence it is plain that even before, they sinned more out of simpleness than of wickedness: it is plain too from their being converted, as they were, by hearing a few words. But if their being six score thousand were of itself enough to save them, what hindered even before this that they should be saved? And why says He not to the Prophet, And shall I not spare this city which so turns itself? But brings forward the score thousands. He produces this also as a reason over and above. For that they had turned was known to the prophet, but he knew not either their numbers or their simpleness. So by every possible consideration he is desirous to soften them. For even greatness of number has power, when there is virtue withal. And truly the Scripture elsewhere also shows this plainly, where it says, "*But prayer was made earnestly of the Church unto God for him:*" [Acts 12:5] and so great power had it, even when the doors were shut and chains lay on him and keepers were sleeping by on either side, that it led the Apostle forth and delivered him from them all. But as where there is virtue, greatness of number has mighty power; so where wickedness is, it profits nothing. For the Israelites of whom He says that the number of them was as the sand of the sea, perished every one, and those too in the days of Noe were both many, yea, numberless; and yet this profited them nothing. For greatness of number has no power of itself, but only as an adjunct.

6. Let us then be diligent in coming together in supplication; and let us pray for one another, as they did for the Apostles. For [so] we both fulfil a commandment, and are "*anointed*" unto love: (and when I say love, I speak of every good thing:) and also learn to give thanks with more earnestness: for they that give thanks for the things of others, much more will they for their own. This also was David wont to do, saying, "*Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together;*" [Psalm 34:3] this the Apostle too

does every where require. This let us too labor in; and let us show forth unto all the beneficence of God that we may get companions in the act of praise: for if when we have received any good from men, by proclaiming it forth we make them the readier to serve us: much more shall we, by telling abroad the benefits of God, draw Him on to more good-will. And if when we have received benefits of men we stir up others also to join us in the giving of thanks, much more ought we to bring many unto God who may give thanks for us. For if Paul who had so great confidence [toward God] does this, much more is it necessary for us to do it. Let us then exhort the saints to give thanks for us; and let us do the same ourselves for one another. To priests especially this good work belongs, since it is an exceeding privilege. For drawing near, we first give thanks for the whole world and the good things common [to all]. For even though the blessings of God be common, yet does the common preservation include your own; so that thou both owest common thanksgivings for your own peculiar blessing, and for the common blessings should of right render up your own peculiar praise: for He lighted up the sun not for you alone, but also for all in common; but nevertheless thou for your part hast it whole. For it was made so large for the common good; and yet thou individually see it as large as all men have seen it; so that you owe a thanksgiving as great as all together; and you ought to give thanks for what all have in common and likewise for the virtue of others; for on account of others, too, we receive many blessings: for had there been found in Sodom ten righteous only, they had not suffered what they did. So then let us give thanks also for the confidence of others [toward God]. For this custom is an ancient one, planted in the Church from the beginning. Thus Paul also gives thanks for the Romans, [Romans 1:8] for the Corinthians, [1 Corinthians 1:4] for the whole world, [1 Timothy 2:1] And tell me not, *"The good work is none of*

mine;" for though it be none of yours, yet even so ought thou to give thanks that your member is such an one. And besides, by your acclamation you make it your own, and sharest in the crown, and shall yourself also receive the gift. On this account it is that the laws of the Church command prayer also to be thus made, and that not for the faithful only, but also for the Catechumens. For the law stirs up the faithful to make supplication for the uninitiated. For when the Deacon says , "*Let us pray earnestly for the Catechumens,*" he does no other than excite the whole multitude of the faithful to pray for them; although the Catechumens are as yet aliens. For they are not yet of the Body of Christ, they have not yet partaken of the Mysteries, but are still divided from the spiritual flock. But if we ought to intercede for these, much more for our own members. And even therefore he says, "*earnestly let us pray,*" that you should not disown them as aliens, that you should not disregard them as strangers. For as yet they have not the appointed prayer, which Christ brought in; as yet they have not confidence, but have need of others' aid who have been initiated. For without the king's courts they stand, far from the sacred precincts. Therefore they are even driven away while those awful prayers are being offered. Therefore also he exhorts you to pray for them that they may become members of you, that they may be no longer strangers and aliens. For the words, "*Let us pray,*" are not addressed to the priests alone, but also to those that make up the people: for when he says, "*Let us stand in order : let us pray;*" he exhorts all to the prayer.

7. Then beginning the prayer, he says, "*That the all-pitying and merciful God would listen to their prayers.*" For that you may not say, What shall we pray? They are aliens, not yet united [to the body]. Whereby can I constrain the regard of God? Whence can I prevail with Him to impart unto them mercy and forgiveness? That you may not be perplexed with such

questions as these, see how he disentangles your perplexity, saying, *"that the all-pitying and merciful God."* Heardest thou? *"All-pitying God."* Be perplexed no more. For the All-pitying pities all, both sinners and friends. Say not then, *"How shall I approach Him for them?"* Himself will listen to their prayers. And the Catechumens' prayer, what can it be but that they may not remain Catechumens? Next, he suggests also the manner of the prayer. And what is this? *"That He would open the ears of their hearts;"* for they are as yet shut and stopped up. *"Ears,"* he says, not these which be outward, but those of the understanding, *"so as to hear 'the things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.'"* [1 Corinthians 2:9; Isaiah 54:4] For they have not heard the untold mysteries; but they stand somewhere at a distance and far off from them; and even if they should hear, they know not what is said; for those [mysteries] need much understanding, not hearing only: and the inward ears as yet they have not: wherefore also he next invokes for them a Prophet's gift, for the Prophet spoke on this wise; *"God gives me the tongue of instruction, that I should know how to speak a word in season; for He opened my mouth; He gave to me betimes in the morning; He granted me a hearing ear."* [Isaiah 1:4. Septuagint] For as the Prophets heard otherwise than the many, so also do the faithful than the Catechumens. Hereby the Catechumen also is taught not to learn to hear these things of men, (for He says, Call no man master upon the earth, but from above, from heaven, *"For they shall be all taught of God."* [Isaiah 54:13])

Wherefore he says, *"And instil into them the word of truth,"* so that it may be inwardly learned; for as yet they know not the word of truth as they ought to know. *"That He would sow His fear in them."* But this is not enough; for *"some fell by the wayside, and some upon the rock."* But we ask not thus; but as on rich soil the plough opens the furrows, so we pray it may

be here also, that having the fallow ground of their minds tilled deep, they may receive what is dropped upon them and accurately retain everything they have heard. Whence also he adds, "*And confirm His faith in their minds;*" that is, that it may not lie on the surface, but strike its root deep downwards. "*That He would unveil to them the Gospel of Righteousness.*" He shows that the veil is two-fold, partly that the eyes of their understanding were shut, partly that the Gospel was hidden from them. Whence he said a little above, "*that He would open the ears of their hearts,*" and here, "*that he would unveil unto them the Gospel of Righteousness;*" that is, both that He would render them wise and apt for receiving seed, and that He would teach them and drop the seed into them; for though they should be apt, yet if God reveal not, this profits nothing; and if God should unveil but they receive not, there results like unprofitableness. Therefore we ask for both: that He would both open their hearts and unveil the Gospel. For neither if kingly ornaments lie underneath a veil, will it profit at all that the eyes be looking; nor yet that they be laid bare, if the eyes be not waking. But both will be granted, if first they themselves desire it. But what then is "*the Gospel of Righteousness?*" That which makes righteous. By these words he leads them to the desire of Baptism, showing that the Gospel is for the working not only of the remission of sins, but also of righteousness.

8. "*That He would grant to them a godly mind, sound judgment, and virtuous manner of life.*" Let such of the faithful attend as are rivetted to the things of [this] life. For if we are bidden to ask these things for the uninitiated: think in what things we ought to be occupied who ask these things for others. For the manner of life ought to keep pace with the Gospel. Whence surely also the order of the prayer shifts from the doctrines [of the Gospel] to the deportment: for to the words, "*that He would unveil to them*

the Gospel of Righteousness;" it has added, *"that He would give unto them a Godly mind."* And what is this *"Godly?"* That God may dwell in it. For He says, *"I will dwell in them, and walk in them;"* [Leviticus 26:12] for when the mind has become righteous, when it has put off its sins, it becomes God's dwelling. [Romans 6:16] But when God indwells, nothing of man will be left. And thus does the mind become Godly, speaking every word from Him, even as in truth an house of God dwelling in it. Surely then the filthy in speech has not a Godly mind, nor he who delights in jesting and laughter.

"Sound judgment." And what can it be to have *"a sound judgment?"* To enjoy the health that pertains to the soul: for he that is held down by wicked lusts and dazzled with present things, never can be sound, that is, healthy. But as one who is diseased lusts even after things which are unfit for him, so also does he. *"And a virtuous mode of life,"* for the doctrines need a mode of life [answerable]. Attend to this, you who come to baptism at the close of life, for we indeed pray that after baptism ye may have also this deportment, but you are seeking and doing your utmost to depart without it. For, what though thou be justified : yet is it of faith only. But we pray that you should have as well the confidence that comes of good works.

"Continually to think those things which be His, to mind those things which be His, to practise those things which be His:" for we ask not to have sound judgment and virtuous deportment for one day only, or for two or three, but through the whole tenor and period of our life; and as the foundation of all good things, *"to mind those things which be His."* For the many *"seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."* [Philippians 2:21] How then might this be? (For besides prayer, need is that we contribute also our own endeavors.) If we be occupied in His law day and night. Whence he goes on to ask this also, *"to be occupied in His law;"* and

as he said above, "*continually*," so here "*day and night*." Wherefore I even blush for these who scarce once in the year are seen in church. For what excuse can they have who are bidden not simply "*day and night*" to commune with the law but "*to be occupied in*," that is, to be for ever holding converse with it, and yet scarce do so for the smallest fraction of their life?

"To remember His commandments, to keep His judgments." Do you see what an excellent chain is here? And how each link hangs by the next compacted with more strength and beauty than any chain of gold? For having asked for a Godly mind, he tells whereby this may be produced. Whereby? By continually practising it. And how might this be brought about? By constantly giving heed to the Law. And how might men be persuaded to this? If they should keep His Commandments: yea rather, from giving heed to the law comes also the keeping His Commandments; as likewise from minding the things which be His and from having a Godly mind, comes the practising the things which be His. For each of the things mentioned jointly procures and is procured by the next, both linking it and being linked by it.

9. *"Let us beseech for them yet more earnestly."* For since by length of speaking the soul uses to grow drowsy, he again arouses it up, for he purposes to ask again certain great and lofty things. Wherefore he says, *"Let us beseech for them yet more earnestly."* And what is this? *"That He would deliver them from every evil and inordinate thing."* Here we ask for them that they may not enter into temptation, but be delivered from every snare, a deliverance as well bodily as spiritual. Wherefore also he goes on to say, *"from every devilish sin and from every besetment of the adversary,"* meaning, temptations and sins. For sin does easily beset, taking its stand on every side, before, behind, and so casting down. For, after telling us what

ought to be done by us, namely, to be occupied in His law, to remember His Commandments, to keep His judgments, he assures us next that not even is this enough, except Himself stand by and succor. For, *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it;"* [Psalm 127:1] and especially in the case of those who are yet exposed to the devil and are under his dominion. And ye that are initiated know this well. For call to mind, for instance, those words wherein ye renounced his usurped rule, and bent the knee and deserted to The King, and uttered those awful words whereby we are taught in nothing whatever to obey him. But he calls him adversary and accuser, because he both accuses God to man and us to God, and us again one to another. For at one time he accused Job to God, saying, *"Does Job serve the Lord for nought?"* [Job 1:16] at another time God to Job, *"Fire came down from heaven."* And again, God to Adam, [Genesis 3:5] when He said their eyes would be opened. And to many men at this day, saying, that God takes no care for the visible order of things, but has delegated your affairs to demons. And to many of the Jews he accused Christ, calling Him a deceiver and a sorcerer. But perchance some one wishes to hear in what manner he works. When he finds not a godly mind, finds not a sound understanding, then, as into a soul left empty, he leads his revel there ; when one remembers not the commandments of God nor keeps His judgments, then he takes him captive and departs. Had Adam, for instance, remembered the commandment which said, *"Of every tree you may eat:"* [Genesis 2:16] had he kept the judgment which said, *"In the day in which you eat thereof, then shall you surely die;"* it had not fared with him as it did.

"That He would count them worthy in due season of the regeneration of the laver, of the remission of sins." For we ask some things to come now, some to come hereafter; and we expound the doctrine of the laver, and in

asking instruct them to know its power. For what is said thenceforth familiarizes them to know already that what is there done is a regeneration, and that we are born again of the waters, just as of the womb; that they say not after Nicodemus, *"How can one be born when he is old! Can he enter into his mother's womb, and be born again?"* Then, because he had spoken of *"remission of sins,"* he confirms this by the words next following, *"of the clothing of incorruption;"* for he that puts on sonship plainly becomes incorruptible. But what is that *"in due season?"* When any is well disposed, when any comes thereunto with earnestness and faith; for this is the *"due season"* of the believer.

10. *"That He would bless their coming in and their going out, the whole course of their life."* Here they are directed to ask even for some bodily good, as being yet somewhat weak. *"Their houses and their households,"* that is, if they have servants or kinsfolk or any others belonging to them. For these were the rewards of the old Covenant; and nothing then was feared so much as widowhood, childlessness, untimely mournings, to be visited with famine, to have their affairs go on unprosperously. And hence it is, that he allows these also fondly to linger over petitions rather material, making them mount little by little to higher things. For so too does Christ; so too does Paul, making mention of the ancient blessings: Christ, when He says, *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;"* Paul, when he says, *"Honor your father and your mother....and you shall live long on the earth."* *"That He would increase their children and bless them, and bring them to full age, and teach them wisdom."* Here again is both a bodily and spiritual thing, as for persons yet but too much babes in disposition. Then what follows is altogether spiritual, *"that He would direct all that is before them unto good;"* for he says not simply, *"all that is before them,"* but, *"all that is before them unto good."*

For often a journey is before a man, but it is not good; or some other such thing, which is not profitable. Hereby they are taught in every thing to give thanks to God, as happening for good. After all this, he bids them stand up during what follows. For having before cast them to the ground, when they have asked what they have asked and have been filled with confidence, now the word given raises them up, and bids them during what follows engage for themselves also in supplication to God. For part we say ourselves, and part we permit them to say, now opening unto them the door of prayer, (exactly as we first teach children [what to say], and then bid them say it of themselves,) saying, *"Pray ye, Catechumens, for the angel of peace;"* for there is an angel that punishes, as when He says, *"A band of evil angels,"* [Psalm 78:49] there is that destroys. Wherefore we bid them ask for the angel of peace, teaching them to seek that which is the bond of all good things, peace; so that they may be delivered from all fightings, all wars, all seditions. *"That all that is before you may be peaceful;"* for even if a thing be burdensome, if a man have peace, it is light. Wherefore Christ also said, *"My peace I give unto you"* [John 14:27] for the devil has no weapon so strong as fighting, and enmity, and war. *"Pray that this day and all the days of your life be full of peace."* Do you see how he again insists that the whole life be passed in virtue? *"That your ends be Christian;"* your highest good, the honorable and the expedient ; for what is not honorable is not expedient either. For our idea of the nature of expediency is different from that of the many. *"Commend yourselves to the living God and to His Christ;"* for as yet we trust them not to pray for others, but it is sufficient to be able to pray for themselves.

Do you see the completeness of this prayer, both in regard of doctrine and of behavior? For when we have mentioned the Gospel and the clothing of incorruption and the Laver of Regeneration, we have mentioned all the

doctrines: when again we spoke of a Godly mind, a sound understanding, and the rest of what we said, we suggested the mode of life. Then we bid them bow their heads; regarding it as a proof of their prayers being heard that God blessed them. For surely it is not a man that blesses; but by means of his hand and his tongue we bring unto the King Himself the heads of those that are present. And all together shout the "*Amen.*"

Now why have I said all this? To teach you that we ought to seek the things of others, that the faithful may not think it no concern of theirs when these things are said. For not to the walls surely does the Deacon say, "*Let us pray for the Catechumens.*" But some are so without understanding, so stupid, so depraved, as to stand and talk not only during the time of the Catechumens, but also during the time of the faithful. Hence all is perverted; hence all is utterly lost: for at the very time when we ought most to propitiate God, we go away having provoked Him. So again in [the prayers of] the faithful, we are bidden to approach the God that loves men, for Bishops, for Priests, for Kings, for those in authority, for earth and sea, for the seasons, for the whole world. When then we who ought to have such boldness as to pray for others, are scarce awake even while praying for ourselves, how can we excuse ourselves? How find pardon? Wherefore I beseech you that laying all this to heart, you would know the time of prayer, and be lifted up and disengaged from earth, and touch the vault itself of heaven; so that we may have power to make God propitious and obtain the good things promised, whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 3 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1:12

For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves in the world.

Here again he opens to us yet another ground of comfort, and that not small, yea rather, exceeding great, and well fitted to upraise a mind sinking under perils. For seeing he had said, God comforted us, and God delivered us, and had ascribed all to His mercies and their prayers, lest he should thus make the hearer supine, presuming on God's mercy only and the prayers of others, he shows that they themselves had contributed not a little of their own. And indeed he showed as much even before, when he said, *"For as the sufferings of Christ abound [in us,] so our consolation also abounds."* [2 Corinthians 1:5] But here he is speaking of a certain other good work, properly their own. What then is this? That, says he, in a conscience pure and without guile we behave ourselves every where in the world: and this avails not a little to our encouragement and comfort; yea, rather, not to comfort merely, but even unto somewhat else far greater than comfort, even to our glorying. And this he said, teaching them too not to sink down in their afflictions, but, if so be they have a pure conscience, even to be proud of them; and at the same time quietly though gently hitting at the false Apostles. And as in the former Epistle he says, *"Christ sent me to preach the Gospel, not in wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect:"* [1 Corinthians 1:17] and, *"that your faith should not stand*

in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;" [1 Corinthians 2:5] so here also, *"Not in wisdom, but in the grace of Christ."*

And he hinted also something besides, by employing the words, *"not in wisdom,"* that is, 'not in deceit,' here too striking at the heathen discipline. *"For our glorying,"* says he, *"is this, the testimony of our conscience;"* that is, our conscience not having whereof to condemn us, as if for evil doings we were persecuted. For though we suffer countless horrors, though from every quarter we be shot at and in peril, it is enough for our comfort, yea rather not only for comfort, but even for our crowning, that our conscience is pure and testifies unto us that for no evil-doing, but for that which is well-pleasing to God, we thus suffer; for virtue's sake, for heavenly wisdom's, for the salvation of the many. Now that previous consolation was from God: but this was contributed by themselves and from the purity of their life. Wherefore also he calls it their glorying, because it was the achievement of their own virtue. What then is this glorying and what does our conscience testify unto us? *"That in sincerity,"* that is to say, having no deceitful thing, no hypocrisy, no dissimulation, no flattery, no ambush or guile, nor any other such thing, but in all frankness, in simplicity, in truth, in a pure and unmalicious spirit, in a guileless mind, having nothing concealed, no festering sore. *"Not in fleshly wisdom;"* that is, not with evil artifice, nor with wickedness, nor with cleverness of words, nor with webs of sophistries, for this he means by 'fleshly wisdom:' and that whereupon they greatly prided themselves, he disclaims and thrusts aside: showing very abundantly that this is no worthy ground for glorying: and that not only he does not seek it, but he even rejects and is ashamed of it.

"But in the grace of God we behaved ourselves in the world."

What is, *"in the grace of God?"* Displaying the wisdom that is from Him, the power from Him given unto us, by the signs wrought, by

overcoming sages, rhetoricians, philosophers, kings, peoples, unlearned as we are and bringing with us nothing of the wisdom that is without. No ordinary comfort and glorying, however, was this, to be conscious to themselves that it was not men's power they had used; but that by Divine grace they had achieved all success.

[*"In the world. "*] So not in Corinth only, but also in every part of the world.

"And more abundantly to you-ward." What more abundantly to you-ward? *"In the grace of God we behaved ourselves."* For we showed both signs and wonders among you, and greater strictness , and a life unblameable; for he calls these too the grace of God, ascribing his own good works also unto it. For in Corinth he even overleapt the goal , making the Gospel without charge, because he spared their weakness.

2 Corinthians 1:13

"For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge."

For since he spoke great things of himself and seemed to be bearing witness to himself, an odious thing, he again appeals to them as witnesses of what he says. For, he says, let no one think that what I say is a boastful flourish of writing; for we declare unto you what yourselves know; and that we lie not ye more than all others can bear us witness. For, when you read, you acknowledge that what ye know that we perform in our actions, this we say also in our writings, and your testimony does not contradict our epistles; but the knowledge which you had before of us is in harmony with your reading.

2 Corinthians 1:14

"As also ye did acknowledge us in part."

For your knowledge of us, he says, is not from hearsay but from actual experience. The words *"in part"* he added from humility. For this is his wont, when necessity constrains him to say any high sounding thing, (for he never does so otherwise,) as desiring quickly to repress again the elation arising from what he had said.

"And I hope you will acknowledge even to the end."

2. Do you see again how from the past he draws pledges for the future; and not from the past only, but also from the power of God? For he affirmed not absolutely, but cast the whole upon God and his hope in Him.

"That we are your glorying, even as you also are our's, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. "

Here he cuts at the root of the envy that his speech might occasion, by making them sharers and partners in the glory of his good works. 'For these stick not with us, but pass over unto you also, and again from you to us.' For seeing he had extolled himself, and produced proof of the past and given security for the future ; lest his hearers should reflect on him for talking proudly, or, as I have said, be hurried to enviousness, he makes the rejoicing a common one and declares that this crown of praises is theirs. For if, he says, we have shown ourselves to be such, our praise is your glory: even as when you also are approved, we rejoice and leap for joy and are crowned. Here also again he displays his great humility by what he says. For he so levels his expressions, not as a master discoursing to disciples, but as a disciple unto fellow disciples of his own rank. And observe how he lifts them on high and fills them with philosophy, sending them on to That Day.

For, he says, tell me not of the present things, that is, the reproaches, the revilings, the scoffings of the many, for the things here are no great matter, neither the good nor the painful; nor the scoffings nor the praises which come from men: but remember, I pray, that day of fear and shuddering in the which all things are revealed. For then both we shall glory in you, and you in us; when you shall be seen to have such teachers, who teach no doctrine of men nor live in wickedness nor give [men] any handle; and we to have such disciples, neither affected after the manner of men nor shaken, but taking all things with readiness of mind, and unseduced by sophistries from what side soever. For this is plain even now to those that have understanding, but then to all. So that even if we are afflicted now, we have this, and that no light, consolation which the conscience affords now, and the manifestation itself then. For now indeed our conscience knows that we do all things by the grace of God, as you also know and shall know: but then, all men as well will learn both our doings and yours: and shall behold us glorified through each other. For that he may not appear himself alone to derive lustre from this glorying, he gives to them also a cause of boasting, and leads them away from their present distresses. And as he did in respect to the consolation when he said, "*We are comforted for your sakes,*" [2 Corinthians 1:6] so he does here also, saying, 'we glory on your account, as you also on ours,' every where making them partakers of every thing, of his comfort, his sufferings, his preservation. For this his preservation he ascribes to their prayers. "*For God delivered us,*" he says, "*ye helping together by prayer.*" In like manner also he makes the gloryings common. For as in that place he says, "*Knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also of the consolation:*" so here too, "*we are your glorying, as you also are ours.*"

2 Corinthians 1:15

"And in this confidence I was minded to come before unto you."

What confidence? 'In relying exceedingly on you, glorying over you, being your glorying, loving you exceedingly, being conscious to myself of nothing evil, being confident that all is spiritual with us, and having you as witnesses of this.'

"I was minded to come unto you, and by you to pass into Macedonia."

And yet he promised the contrary in his former Epistle, saying thus:

"Now I will come unto you when I shall have passed through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia." [1 Corinthians 16:5] How is it then that he here says the contrary? He does not say the contrary: away with the thought. For it is contrary indeed to what he wrote, but not contrary to what he wished.

Wherefore also here he said not, 'I wrote that I would pass by you into Macedonia; but, 'I was minded.' 'For though I did not write on that wise,' he says, 'nevertheless I was greatly desirous, and 'was minded,' even before, to have come unto you: so far was I from wishing to be later than my promise that I would gladly have come before it.' *"That you might have a second benefit."* What is, a second benefit? 'That you might have a double benefit, both that from my writings, and that from my presence.' By *"benefit"* he here means pleasure.

2 Corinthians 1:16-17

"And by you to pass into Macedonia, and to come again from Macedonia unto you, and of you to be set forward on my journey unto Judæa. When I therefore was thus minded, did I show fickleness?"

3. Here in what follows, he directly does away with the charge arising out of his delay and absence. For what he says is of this nature. *"I was minded to come unto you."* 'Wherefore then did I not come? Is it as light-minded and changeable?' for this is, *"did I show fickleness?"* By no means. But wherefore? *"Because what things I purpose, I purpose not according to the flesh."* What is, *"not according to the flesh?"* I purpose not 'carnally.'

2 Corinthians 1:17. *"That with me there should be the yea yea and the nay nay."*

But still even this is obscure. What is it then he says? The carnal man, that is, he that is rivetted to the present things and is continually occupied in them, and is without the sphere of the Spirit's influence, has power to go every where, and to wander wherever he will. But he that is the servant of the Spirit, and is led, and led about by Him, cannot everywhere be lord of his own purpose, having made it dependent upon the authority thence given; but it so fares with him as if a trusty servant, whose motions are always ruled by his lord's biddings and who has no power over himself nor is able to rest even a little, should make some promise to his fellow-servants, and then because his master would have it otherwise should fail to perform his promise. This then is what he means by, *"I purpose not according to the flesh."* I am not beyond the Spirit's governance, nor have liberty to go where I will. For I am subject to lordship and commands, the Comforter's, and by His decrees I am led, and led about. For this cause I

was unable to come, for it was not the Spirit's will. As happened also frequently in the Acts; for when he had purposed to come to one place, the Spirit bade him go to another. So that it was not from lightness, that is, fickleness in me that I came not, but that being subject to the Spirit I obeyed Him. Did you mark again his accustomed logic? That by which they thought to prove that *"he purposed according to the flesh,"* namely, the non-fulfilment of his promise, he uses as the special proof that he purposed according to the Spirit, and that the contrary had been purposing according to the flesh. What then? Says one: was it not with the Spirit that he promised what he did? By no means. For I have already said that Paul did not foreknow every thing that was to happen or was expedient. And it is for this reason that he says in the former Epistle, *"that you may set me forward on my journey wherever I go;"* [1 Corinthians 16:6] entertaining this very fear that after he had said, 'into Judæa,' he might be compelled to go elsewhither; but now when his intention had been frustrated, he says it, *"And of you be set forward on my journey unto Judæa."* So much as was of love, he states, namely, the coming to them; but that which had no reference to them, his going, namely, from them into Judæa, he does not add definitely. When however he had been proved wrong, he afterwards says here boldly, *"toward Judæa."* And this too befell for good, lest any among them should conceive of them [the Apostles, Acts 14:13] more highly than they deserved. For if in the face of these things they wished to sacrifice bulls to them, upon what impiety would they not have driven, had they not given many instances of human weakness? And why marvel if he knew not all things that were to happen, seeing that oftentimes he even in prayers knows not what is expedient.

"For," says he *"we know not what we should pray for as we ought."* And that he may not seem to be speaking modestly, he not only says this,

but instances wherein he knew not in prayers what was expedient. Wherein then was it? When he entreated to be delivered from his trials, saying,
"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for My power is made perfect in weakness."
[2 Corinthians 12:7-9] Do you see how he knew not to ask what was expedient, and so although he asked often he obtained not.

2 Corinthians 1:18

"But as God is faithful, our word toward you was not yea and nay."

He skillfully overturns a rising objection. For one might say, If after having promised, you have put off coming, and yea is not yea, and nay nay, with you, but what you say now you unsay afterwards, as you did in the case of this Journey: woe is unto us, if all this were the case in the Preaching too. Now lest they should have these thoughts and be troubled thereat, he says, *"But as God is faithful, our word toward you was not yea and nay."* This, says he, was not the case in the Preaching, but only in our travels and journeyings; whereas whatever things we have said in our preaching, these abide steadfast and unmoveable, (for he calls his preaching here, *"word."*) Then he brings proof of this that cannot be gainsaid, by referring all to God. What he says is this; 'the promise of my coming was my own and I gave that promise from myself: but the preaching is not my own, nor of man, but of God, and what is of God it is impossible should lie.' Whereupon also he said, *"God is faithful,"* that is, *"true."* 'Mistrust not then what is from Him, for there is nought of man in it.'

4. And seeing he had said *"word,"* he adds what follows to explain what kind of word he means. Of what kind then is it?

2 Corinthians 1:19

"For the Son of God," says he, "Who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus, and Timothy, was not yea and nay."

For on this account he brings before them the company of the teachers also, as thence too giving credibility to the testimony by those who taught, and not who heard it only. And yet they were disciples; however in his modesty he counts them as in the rank of teachers. But what is, *"was not yea and nay?"* I have never, he says, unsaid what before I said in the Preaching. My discourse to you was not now this, now that. For this is not of faith, but of an erring mind.

"But in Him was the yea." That is, just as I said, the word abides unshaken and steadfast.

2 Corinthians 1:20

"For how many soever be the promises of God," in Him is the yea, and in Him the Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

What is this, *"how many soever the promises of God?"* The Preaching promised many things; and these many things they proffered and preached. For they discoursed of being raised again, and of being taken up, and of incorruption, and of those great rewards and unspeakable goods. As to these promises then, he says that they abide immoveable, and in them is no yea and nay, that is, the things spoken were not now true, and now false, as was the case about my being with you, but always true. And first indeed he contends for the articles of the faith, and the word concerning Christ, saying, *"My word"* and my preaching, *"was not yea and nay;"* next, for the promises *"for how many soever be the promises, of God, in Him is the yea."* But if the things He promised are sure and He will certainly give them, much more is He Himself and the word concerning Him, sure, and it can not be said that He is now, and now is not, but He *"always"* is, and is the same. But what is, *"In Him is the yea, and the Amen."* He signifies that which shall certainly be. For in Him, not in man, the promises have their being and fulfilment. Fear not, therefore; for it is not man so that you should mistrust; but it is God Who both said and fulfills. *"Unto the glory of God through us."* What is, *"unto [His] glory through us?"* He fulfills them by us, that is, and by His benefits towards us unto His glory; for this is *"for the glory of God."* But if they be for the glory of God, they will certainly come to pass. For His own glory He will not think little of, even did He think little of our salvation. But as it is, He thinks not little of our salvation either, both because He loves mankind exceedingly, and because our

salvation is bound up with His glory from these things accruing. So that if the promises are for His glory, our salvation also will certainly follow; to which also, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he reverts continually, saying, *"to the maintenance of His glory ;"* [Ephesians 1:14] and every where he lays down this, and shows the necessity of this result. And in this regard he here says, that His promises lie not: for they not only save us, but also glorify Him. Dwell not on this therefore that they were promised by us; and so doubt. For they are not fulfilled by us, but by Him. Yea, and the promises were by Him; for we spoke not to you our own words, but His.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

"Now He which establishes us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; Who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

Again, from the past He establishes the future. For if it is He that establishes us in Christ; (i.e., who suffers us not to be shaken from the faith which is in Christ;) and He that anointed us and gave the Spirit in our hearts, how shall He not give us the future things?

For if He gave the principles and the foundations, and the root and the fount, (to wit, the true knowledge of Him, the partaking of the Spirit,) how shall He not give the things that come of these: for if for the sake of these those are given, much more will he supply those. And if to such as were enemies he gave these, much more when now made friends will He *"freely give"* to them those. Wherefore He said not simply *"the Spirit,"* but named *"earnest,"* that from this you might have a good hope of the whole as well. For did He not purpose to give the whole, He would never have chosen to give *"the earnest"* and to waste it without object or result. And observe Paul's candor. For why need I say, says he, that the truth of the promises stands not in us? The fact of your standing unwavering and fixed is not in us, but this too is of God; *"for"* says he, *"He who establishes us is God."* It is not we who strengthen you: for even we also need Him that establishes. So then let none imagine that the Preaching is hazardous in us. He has undertaken the whole, He cared for the whole.

And what is, *"anointed,"* and *"sealed?"* Gave the Spirit by Whom He did both these things, making at once prophets and priests and kings, for in old times these three sorts were anointed. But we have now not one of these

dignities, but all three preeminently. For we are both to enjoy a kingdom and are made priests by offering our bodies for a sacrifice, (for, says he, present your members a living sacrifice unto God;) and withal we are constituted prophets too: for what things *"eye has not seen, nor ear heard,"* [1 Corinthians 2:9] these have been revealed unto us.

5. And in another way too we become kings: if we have the mind to get dominion over our unruly thoughts, for that such an one is a king and more than he who wears the diadem, I will now make plain to you. He has many armies, but we again have thoughts exceeding them in number; for it is impossible to number the infinite multitude of the thoughts within us. Nor is their multitude all that one is to consider, but also that in this multitude of thoughts, there are many generals, and colonels, and captains, and archers, and slingers. What else makes a king? His apparel? But this one too is arrayed in a better and braver robe, which neither does moth devour nor age impair. A crown too he has of curious workmanship, that of glory, that of the tender mercies of God. For says [the Psalmist], *"Bless the Lord, O my soul, that crowns you with pity and tender mercies."* [Psalm 103:2-4] Again, that of glory: *"For you have crowned him with glory and honor."* [Psalm 8:6] And *"with favor You have crowned us with a shield."* [Psalm 5:12. Septuagint] Again, that of grace: *"For you shall receive a crown of grace upon your head."* [Proverbs 1:9. Septuagint] Do you see this diadem of many wreaths, and surpassing the other in grace. But let us institute anew and from the beginning a stricter inquiry into the condition of these kings. That king has dominion over his guards, and issues orders to all, and all obey and serve him; but here I show you greater authority. For the number here is as great or even greater: it remains to inquire into their obedience. And bring me not forth those that have ruled amiss, since I too bring those that have been driven from their kingdom and murdered by their very body

guards. Let us then bring forth these instances, but seek for those of either kind who have ordered well their kingdom. And do thou put forward whom you will. I oppose unto you the patriarch against all. For when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, consider how many thoughts then rose up against him. Nevertheless, he brought all under submission, and all trembled before him more than before a king his guards; and with a look only he stilled them all and not one of them dared so much as mutter; but down they bowed and as unto a king gave place, one and all, though much exasperated and exceeding relentless. For even the heads of spears raised upright by many soldiers are not as fearful as were then those fearful thoughts, armed not with spears, but what is harder to deal with than many spears, the sympathy of nature! Wherefore they had power to pierce his soul more than sharpened spear point. For never spear could be so sharp as were the goads of those thoughts, which, sharpened and upraised from beneath, from his affections, were piercing through and through the mind of that righteous man. For here there needs time and purpose and a stroke and pain, and then death follows; but there, there needed none of these, so much were the wounds speedier and acuter. But still though so many thoughts were then in arms against him, there was a deep calm, and they stood all in fair array; adorning rather than daunting him. See him at least stretching out the knife, and set forth as many as thou wilt, kings, emperors, Cæsars, yet shall you tell of nought like this, have no like mien to point to, so noble, so worthy of the heavens. For that righteous man erected a trophy at that movement over the most arbitrary of tyrannies. For nothing is so tyrannical as nature; and find ten thousand tyrannicides, one like this shall you never show us. For it was the triumph in that moment of an angel, not a man. For consider. Nature was dashed to the ground with all her weapons, with all her host: and he stood with outstretched hand, grasping not a crown, but a

knife more glorious than any crown, and the throng of angels applauded, and God from heaven proclaimed him conquerer.

For seeing that his citizenship was in heaven, thence also he received that proclamation. [Philippians 3:20] What could be more glorious than this? Rather, what trophy could ever be equal to it? For if on occasion of a wrestler's success, not a herald below but the king above should have risen up and himself proclaimed the Olympic Victor, would not this have seemed to him more glorious than the crown, and have turned the gaze of the whole theatre upon him? When then no mortal king, but God Himself, not in this theatre but in the theatre of the universe, in the assembly of the angels, the archangels, proclaims his name with uplifted voice shouting from heaven, tell me what place shall we assign to this holy man?

6. But if you will, let us listen too to the voice itself. What then was the voice? *"Abraham, Abraham, lay not your hand upon Isaac, neither do thou any thing unto him. For now I know that you fear God, and hast not spared your son, your well-beloved, for My sake."* [Genesis 22:11-12] What is this? He that knows all things before they are, did He now know! And yet even to man the Patriarch's fear of God was evident: so many proofs had he given that his heart was right toward God, as when He said to him, *"Get you out of your country, and from your kindred;"* [Genesis 12:1] when for His sake and the honor due to Him he relinquished to his sister's son his priority; when He delivered him out of so great perils; when He bade him go into Egypt, and on his wife's being taken from him, he repined not, and more instances besides; and as I said, from these things even man would have learned the Patriarch's fear of God, much more than God Who waits not for the acts to know the end. And how too justified he him, if He knew not? For it is written, *"Abraham believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."* [Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3]

What then means this, "*Now I know?*" The Syriac has, "*Now you have made known;*" that is, to men. For I knew of old, even before all those commandments. And why, to men even, "*now?*" for were not those acts enough to prove his mind was right toward God? They were enough indeed, but this one so much greater than them all that they appear nothing beside it. As exalting then this good work and showing its superiority to all, He so spoke. For of things which exceed and surpass all that went before, most men are wont to speak so: for instance, if one receive from another a gift greater than any former one, he often says, "*Now I know that such an one loves me,*" not hereby meaning that he knew not in the time past, but as intending to declare what is now given to be greater than all. So also God, speaking after the manner of men, says, "*Now I know,*" intending only to mark the exceeding greatness of the exploit; not that He "*then*" came to know either his fear or the greatness of it. For when He says, "*Come, let Us go down and see,*" [Genesis 11:7; 18:21] He says it not as needing to go down, (for He both fills all things and knows all things certainly,) but to teach us not to give sentence lightly. And when He says, "*The Lord looked down from Heaven:*" [Psalm 14:2] it describes His perfect knowledge by a metaphor taken from men. So also here He says, "*Now I know,*" to declare this to be greater than all which had preceded it. Of this itself too He furnishes proof by adding, Because you spared not your son, your well-beloved, for My sake; He says not "*your son*" only, but yet more, "*your well-beloved.*" For it was not nature only, but also parental fondness, which having both by natural disposition and by the great goodness of his child, he yet dared in him to spurn. And if about worthless children parents are not easily indifferent, but mourn even for them; when it is his son, his only-begotten, and his well-beloved, even Isaac, and the father himself is on the point of immolating him; who can describe the excessiveness of such

philosophy? This exploit outshines thousands of diadems and crowns innumerable. For the wearer of that crown, both death oftentimes assails and annoys, and before death, assaults of circumstances without number; but this diadem shall no one have strength to take from him that wears it; no not even after death; neither of his own household, nor of strangers. And let me point you out the costliest stone in this diadem. For as a costly stone, so this comes at the end and clasps it. What then is this? The words, "*for My sake?*" for not herein is the marvel, that he spared not, but that it was "*for His sake.*"

Oh! blessed right hand, of what a knife was it accounted worthy? Oh! Wondrous knife, of what a right hand was it accounted worthy? Oh! Wondrous knife, for what a purpose was it prepared? To what an office did it serve? To what a type did it minister? How was it bloodied? How was it not bloodied? For I know not what to say, so awful was that mystery. It touched not the neck of the child, nor passed through the throat of that holy one: nor was crimsoned with the blood of the righteous; rather it both touched, and passed through, and was crimsoned, and was bathed in it, yet was not bathed. Perchance I seem to you beside myself, uttering such contradictions. For, in truth, I am beside myself, with the thought of the wondrous deed of that righteous man; but I utter no contradictions. For indeed the righteous man's hand thrust it in the throat of the lad, but God's Hand suffered it not, so thrust, to be stained with blood of the lad. For it was not Abraham alone that held it back, but God also: and he by his purpose gave the stroke, God by His voice restrained it. For the same voice both armed and disarmed that right hand, which, marshalled under God, as if under a leader, performed all things at His beck, and all were ministered at His voice. For observe; He said, "*Slay,*" and straightway it was armed: He

said, "*Slay not*," and straightway it was disarmed: for every thing [before] had been fully prepared.

And now God showed the soldier and general to the whole world; this crowned victor to the theatre of the angels; this priest, this king, crowned with that knife beyond a diadem, this trophy-bearer, this champion, this conqueror without a fight. For as if some general having a most valiant soldier, should use his mastery of his weapons, his bearing, his ordered movements to dismay the adversary; so also God, by the purpose, the attitude, the bearing only of that righteous man, dismayed and routed the common enemy of us all, the Devil. For I deem that even he then shrunk away aghast. But if any one say, 'And why did he not suffer that right hand to be bathed, and then immediately raise him up after being sacrificed?' Because God might not accept such bloody offerings; such a table were that of avenging demons. But here two things were displayed, both the loving kindness of the Master, and the faithfulness of the servant. And before, indeed, he went out from his country: but then he abandoned even nature. Wherefore also he received his principal with usury: and very reasonably. For he chose to lose the name of father, to show himself a faithful servant. Wherefore he became not a father only, but also a priest; and because for God's sake he gave up his own, therefore also did God give him with these His own besides. When then enemies devise mischief, He allows it to come even to the trial, and then works miracles; as in the case of the furnace and the lions; [Daniel 3 and Daniel 6] but when Himself bids, readiness attained, He stays His bidding. What then, I ask, was wanting further in this noble deed? For did Abraham foreknow what would happen? Did he bargain for the mercy of God? For even though he were a prophet, yet the prophet knows not all things. So the actual sacrifice afterwards was superfluous and unworthy of God. And if it was fit he should learn that God

was able to raise from the dead, by the womb he had learned this much more marvellously, or rather he learned it even before that proof, for he had faith.

7. Do not then only admire this righteous man, but also imitate him, and when you see him amid so great uproar and surge of waves sailing as in a calm, take thou in hand in like way the helm of obedience and fortitude. For look, pray, not only at this that he built up the altar and the wood; but remember too the voice of the lad, and reflect what hosts like snow storms assaulted him to dismay him, when he heard the lad say, "*My father, where is the lamb?*" Bethink you how many thoughts were then stirred up armed not with iron, but with darts of flame; and piercing into and cutting him through on every side. If even now many, and those not parents, are broken down, and would have wept, did they not know the end: and many, I see, do weep, though they know it; what must it be thought he would feel, who begot, who nurtured him, in old age had him, had him only, him such an one, who sees, who hears him, and is presently about to slay him? What intelligence in the words! What meekness in the question! Who then is here at work? The Devil that he might set nature in a flame? God forbid! But God, the more to prove the golden soul of the righteous man. For when indeed the wife of Job speaks, a Devil is at work. For of such sort the advice is. But this one utters nothing blasphemous, but what is both very devout and thoughtful; and great the grace that overspread the words, much the honey that dropped therefrom, flowing from a calm and gentle soul. Even a heart of stone these words were enough to soften. But they turned not aside, nay, shook not that adamant. Nor said he, 'Why do you call him father, who in a little while will not be your father, yea, who has already lost that title of honor?' And why does the lad ask the question? Not of impertinence merely, not of curiosity, but as anxious about what was

proposed. For he reflected that had his father not meant to make him a partner in what was done, he would not have left the servants below, and taken him only with him. For this reason, too, surely, it is that when they were alone, then he asks him, when none heard what was said. So great was the judgment of the lad. Are you not all warmed towards him, both men and women? Does not each one of you mentally infold and kiss the child, and marvel at his judgment; and venerate the piety which, when he was both bound and laid on the wood, made him not be dismayed nor struggle nor accuse his father as mad; but he was even bound and lifted up and laid upon it, and endured all in silence, like a lamb, yea, rather like the common Lord of all. For of Him he both imitated the gentleness, and kept to the type. For *"He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before his shearer."* [Isaiah 53:7] And yet Isaac spoke; for his Lord spoke also. How dumb then? This means, he spoke nothing wilful or harsh, but all was sweet and mild, and the words more than the silence manifested his gentleness. For Christ also said, *"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you smite Me?"* [John 18:23] and manifested His gentleness more than if He had held His peace. And as this one speaks with his father from the altar, so too does He from the Cross, saying, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* What then said the Patriarch? [Genesis 22:8] *"God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering, my son."* Either uses the names of nature; the former, father; the latter, son; and on either side arduous is the war stirred up, and mighty the storm, and yet wreck no where: for religion triumphed over all. Then after he heard of God, he spoke no further word nor was impertinently curious. Of such judgment was the child even in the very bloom of youth. Do you see the king, over how many armies, in how many battles which beset him, he has been victorious? For the barbarians were not so fearful to the city of

Jerusalem when they assaulted her oftentimes, as were to this man the thoughts on every side besieging him: but still he overcame all. Would you see the priest also? The instance is at hand. For when you have seen him with fire and a knife; and standing over an altar, what do you doubt after as to his priesthood? But if you would see the sacrifice also, lo, here a twofold one. For he offered a son, he offered also a ram, yea, more and above all, his own will. And with the blood of the lamb he consecrated his right hand, with the sacrifice of his son, his soul. Thus was he ordained a priest, by the blood of his only-begotten, by the sacrifice of a lamb; for the priests also were consecrated by the blood of the victims which were offered to God. Would you see the prophet also? It is written, *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad."* [Leviticus 8; John 8:56]

So also art you yourself made king and priest and prophet in the Laver; a king, having dashed to earth all the deeds of wickedness and slain your sins; a priest, in that you offer yourself to God, having sacrificed your body and being yourself slain also, *"for if we died with Him,"* says he, *"we shall also live with Him;"* [2 Timothy 2:11] a prophet, knowing what shall be, and being inspired of God, and sealed. For as upon soldiers a seal, so is also the Spirit put upon the faithful. And if you desert, you are manifest [by it] to all. For the Jews had circumcision for a seal, but we, the earnest of the Spirit. Knowing then all this, and considering our high estate, let us exhibit a life worthy of the grace, that we may obtain also the kingdom to come; which may we all obtain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 4 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1:23

But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbore to come unto Corinth.

What do you say, O blessed Paul? To spare them you came not to Corinth? Surely you present us with something of a contradiction. For a little above you said that thou therefore camest not, because you purpose not according to the flesh nor art your own master, but art led about every where by the authority of the Spirit, and set forth your afflictions. But here you say it was your own act that you came not, and not from the authority of the Spirit; for he says, *"To spare you I forbore to come to Corinth."* What then is one to say? Either, that this too was itself of the Spirit, and that he himself wished to come but the Spirit suggested to him not to do so, urging the motive of sparing them; or else, that he is speaking of some other coming, and would signify that before he wrote the former Epistle he was minded to come, and for love's sake restrained himself lest he should find them yet unamended. Perhaps also, after the second Epistle though the Spirit no longer forbade him to go, he involuntarily stayed away for this reason. And this suspicion is the more probable, that in the first instance the Spirit forbade him: but afterwards upon his own conviction also that this was more advisable, he stayed away.

And observe, I pray you, how he remembers again his own custom, (which I shall never cease to observe,) of making what seems against him tell in his favor. For since it was natural for them to respect this and say, 'It was because you hated us, you would not come unto us,' he shows on the

contrary, that the cause for which he would not come was that he loved them.

What is the expression, *"to spare you?"* I heard, he says, that some among you had committed fornication; I would not therefore come and make you sorry: for had I come, I must needs have enquired into the matter, and prosecuted and punished, and exacted justice from many. I judged it then better to be away and to give opportunity for repentance, than to be with you and to prosecute, and be still more incensed. For towards the end of this Epistle he has plainly declared it, saying, *"I fear lest when I come, my God should humble me before you, and that I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the lasciviousness and uncleanness which they committed."* [2 Corinthians 12:20-21] This therefore here also he intimates, and he says it indeed as in his own defence; yet rebukes them most severely and puts them in fear; for he implied that they were open to punishment, and will also have somewhat to suffer, unless they be quickly reformed. And he says the same thing again at the end of the Epistle thus; *"If I come again, I will not spare."* [2 Corinthians 13:2] Only there he says it more plainly: but here, as it was the proem, he does not say it so but in a repressed tone; nor is he content even with this, but he softens it down, applying a corrective. For seeing the expression was that of one asserting great authority, (for a man spares those whom he has also power to punish,) in order to relieve it, and draw a shade over what seems harsh, he says,

2 Corinthians 1:24

"Not for that we have lordship over your faith."

That is, I did not therefore say, *"To spare you I came not,"* as lording it over you. Again, he said not you, but *"your faith,"* which was at once gentler and truer. For him that has no mind to believe, who has power to compel?

"But are helpers of your joy."

For since, says he, your joy is ours, I came not, that I might not plunge you into sorrow and increase my own despondency; but I stayed away that you being reformed by the threat might be made glad. For we do every thing in order to your joy, and give diligence in this behalf, because we are ourselves partakers of it. *"For by faith you stand."*

Behold him again speaking repressedly. For he was afraid to rebuke them again; since he had handled them severely in the former Epistle, and they had made some reformation. And if, now that they were reformed, they again received the same reproof, this was likely to throw them back. Whence this Epistle is much gentler than the former.

2 Corinthians 1:25

"But I determined for myself that I would not come again to you with sorrow."

The expression "*again*" proves that he had already been made sorry from thence, and while he seems to be speaking in his own defence he covertly rebukes them. Now if they had both already made him sorry and were about again to make him sorry, consider how great the displeasure was likely to be. But he says not thus, 'You made me sorry,' but turns the expression differently yet implying the very same thing thus, 'For this cause I came not that I might not make you sorry:' which has the same force as what I said, but is more palatable.

2 Corinthians 2:1-2

2. *"For if I make you sorry, who then is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me?"*

What is this consequence? A very just one indeed. For observe, I would not, he says, come unto you, lest I should increase your sorrow, rebuking, showing anger and disgust. Then seeing that even this was strong and implied accusation that they so lived as to make Paul sorry, he applies a corrective in the words, *"For if I make you sorry, who then is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me?"*

What he says is of this kind. 'Even though I were to be in sorrow, being compelled to rebuke you and to see you sorry, still nevertheless this very thing would have made me glad. For this is a proof of the greatest love, that you hold me in such esteem as to be hurt at my being displeased with you.'

Behold too his prudence. Their doing what all disciples do, namely, smarting and feeling it when rebuked, he produces as an instance of their gratifying him; for, says he, 'No man makes me so glad as he that gives heed to my words, and is sorry when he sees me angry.'

Yet what followed naturally was to say, 'For if I make you sorry, who then is he that can make you glad?' But he does not say this, but turns his speech back again, dealing tenderly with them, and says, 'Though I make you sorry, even herein you bestow on me a very great favor in that you are hurt at what I say.'

2 Corinthians 2:3

"And I wrote this very thing unto you."

What? That for this cause I came not, to spare you. When wrote he? In the former Epistle when he said, *"I do not wish to see you now by the way?"* [1 Corinthians 16:7] I think not; but in this Epistle when he said, *"Lest when I come again, my God should humble me before you."* [2 Corinthians 12:21] I have written then towards the end this same, says he, *"lest when I come, my God will humble me, and I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore."*

But why did you write? *"Lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all?"* For whereas he said he was made glad by their sorrow, and this was too arrogant and harsh, again he gave it a different turn and softened it by what he subjoined. For, he says, I therefore wrote unto you before, that I might not with anguish find you unreformed; and I said this, *"lest I should have sorrow,"* out of regard not to my own interest but yours. For I know that if you see me rejoicing you rejoice, and if you behold me sad you are sad. Observe therefore again the connection of what he said; for so his words will be more easy to understand. I came not, he says, lest I should cause you sorrow when finding you unreformed. And this I did, not studying my own advantage, but yours. For as to myself, when you are made sorry I receive no little pleasure, seeing that you care so much about me as to be sorry and distressed at my being displeased. *"For who is he that makes me glad, but he that is made sorry by me."* However, though it be so with myself, yet because I study your advantage, I wrote this same thing to you that I might not be made sorry, herein also again studying not my

advantage, but yours; for I know, that were ye to see me sad, you also would be sorry; as also you are glad when you see me rejoicing. Observe now his prudence. He said, I came not, that I might not make you sorry; although, says he, this makes me glad. Then, lest he should seem to take pleasure in their pain, he says, In this respect I am glad inasmuch as I make you feel, for in another respect I am sorry in that I am compelled to make those sorry who love me so much, not only by this rebuke, but also by being myself in sorrow and by this means causing you fresh sorrow.

But observe how he puts this so as to mingle praise; saying, *"from them of whom I ought to rejoice,"* for these are the words of one testifying kindred and much tender affection; as if one were speaking of sons on whom he had bestowed many benefits and for whom he had toiled. If then for this I write and come not; it is with weighty meaning I come not, and not because I feel hate or aversion, but rather exceeding love.

3. Next, whereas he said, he that makes me sorry makes me glad; lest they should say 'this then is what you study, that you might be made glad and might exhibit to all the extent of your power;' he added,

2 Corinthians 2:4

"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears, not that you should be made sorry, but that you might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you."

What more tenderly affectioned than this man's spirit is? For he shows himself to have been not less pained than they who had sinned, but even much more. For he says not *"out of affliction"* merely, but *"out of much,"* nor *"with tears,"* but *"with many tears"* and *"anguish of heart,"* that is, I was suffocated, I was choked with despondency; and when I could no longer endure the cloud of despondency, *"I wrote unto you: not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love,"* says he, *"which I have more abundantly unto you."* And yet what naturally followed was to say, not that you might be grieved, but that you might be corrected: (for indeed with this purpose he wrote.) This however he does not say, but, (more to sweeten his words, and win them to a greater affection,) he puts this for it, showing that he does all from love. And he says not simply *"the love,"* but *"which I have more abundantly unto you."* For hereby also he desires to win them, by showing that he loves them more than all and feels towards them as to chosen disciples. Whence he says, *"Even if I be not an Apostle unto others, yet at least I am to you;"* [1 Corinthians 9:2] and, *"Though you have many tutors, yet have ye not many fathers;"* [1 Corinthians 4:15] and again, *"By the grace of God we behaved ourselves in the world, and more abundantly to you ward;"* [2 Corinthians 1:12] and farther on, *"Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved;"* and here *"Which I have more abundantly unto you;"* [2 Corinthians 12:15] So that if my words were full of anger, yet out of much love and sadness was the anger; and while writing

the Epistle, I suffered, I was pained, not because ye had sinned only, but also because I was compelled to make you sorry. And this itself was out of love. Just as a father whose legitimate son is afflicted with a gangrene, being compelled to use the knife and cautery, is pained on both accounts, that he is diseased and that he is compelled to use the knife to him. So that what ye consider a sign of hating you was indeed a sign of excessive love. And if to have made you sorry was out of love, much more my gladness at that sorrow.

4. Having made this defence of himself, (for he frequently defends himself, without being ashamed; for if God does so, saying, "*O My people, what have I done unto you?*" [Micah 6:3] much more might Paul,) having, I say, made this defence of himself, and being now about to pass on to the plea for him who had committed fornication, in order that they might not be distracted as at receiving contradictory commands, nor take to cavilling because he it was who both then was angry and was now commanding to forgive him, see how he provided for this beforehand, both by what he has said and what he is going to say. For what says he?

2 Corinthians 2:5

"But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me."

Having first praised them as feeling joy and sorrow for the same things as himself, he then strikes into the subject of this person, having said first, *"my joy is the joy of you all."* But if my joy is the joy of you all, need is that you should also now feel pleasure with me, as you then were pained with me: for both in that you were made sorry, you made me glad; and now in that you rejoice, (if as I suppose you shall feel pleasure,) ye will do the same. He said not, my sorrow is the sorrow of you all; but having established this in the rest of what he said, he has now put forward that only which he most desired, namely, the joy: saying, my joy is the joy of you all. Then, he makes mention also of the former matter, saying,

"But if any has caused sorrow he has caused sorrow not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all."

I know, he says, that you shared in my anger and indignation against him that had committed fornication, and that what had taken place grieved in part all of you. And therefore said I *"in part,"* not as though you were less hurt than I, but that I might not weigh down him that had committed fornication. He did not then grieve me only but you also equally, even though to spare him I said, *"in part."* Do you see how at once he moderated their anger, by declaring that they shared also in his indignation.

2 Corinthians 2:6

"Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many."

And he says not *"to him that has committed fornication,"* but here again *"to such a one,"* as also in the former Epistle. Not however for the same reason; but there out of shame, here out of mercy. Wherefore he nowhere subsequently so much as mentions the crime; for it was time now to excuse.

2 Corinthians 2:7

"So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow."

He bids them not only take off the censure; but, besides, restores him to his former estate; for if one let go him that has been scourged and heal him not, he has done nothing. And see how him too he keeps down lest he should be rendered worse by the forgiveness. For though he had both confessed and repented, he makes it manifest that he obtains remission not so much by his penitence as by this free gift. Wherefore he says, *"to forgive him and to comfort him,"* and what follows again makes the same thing plain. 'For' says he, 'it is not because he is worthy, not because he has shown sufficient penitence; but because he is weak, it is for this I request it.' Whence also he added, *"lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."* And this is both as testifying to his deep repentance and as not allowing him to fall into despair.

But what means this, *"swallowed up?"* Either doing as Judas did, or even in living becoming worse. For, says he, if he should rush away from longer enduring the anguish of this lengthened censure, perchance also despairing he will either come to hang himself, or fall into greater crimes afterwards. One ought then to take steps beforehand, lest the sore become too hard to deal with; and lest what we have well done we lose by want of moderation.

Now this he said, (as I have already observed,) both to keep him low, and to teach him not to be over-lustless after this restoration. For, not as one who has washed all quite away; but as fearing lest he should work anything

of deeper mischief, I have received him, he says. Whence we learn that we must determine the penance, not only by the nature of the sins, but by the disposition and habit of them that sin. As the Apostle did in that instance. For he feared his weakness, and therefore said, "*lest he be swallowed up,*" as though by a wild beast, by a storm, by a billow.

2 Corinthians 2:8

"Wherefore I beseech you."

He no longer commands but beseeches, not as a teacher but as an equal; and having seated them on the judgment seat he placed himself in the rank of an advocate; for having succeeded in his object, for joy he adopts without restraint the tone of supplication. And what can it be that you beseech? Tell me.

"To confirm your love toward him."

That is, 'make it strong,' not simply have intercourse with him, nor any how. Herein, again, he bears testimony to their virtue as very great; since they who were so friendly and so applauded him as even to be puffed up, were so estranged that Paul takes such pains to make them confirm their love towards him. Herein is excellence of disciples, herein excellence of teachers; that they should so obey the rein, he so manage their motions. If this were so even now, they who sin would not have transgressed senselessly. For one ought neither to love carelessly, nor to be estranged without some reason.

2 Corinthians 2:9

5. *"For to this end also did I write to you , that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things;"* not only in cutting off but also in reuniting. Do you see how here again he brings the danger to their doors. For as when he sinned, he alarmed their minds, except they should cut him off, saying, *"A little leaven leavens the whole lump,"* [1 Corinthians 5:6] and several other things; so here too again he confronts them with the fear of disobedience, as good as saying, 'As then ye had to consult not for him, but for yourselves too, so now must ye not less for yourselves than for him; lest ye seem to be of such as love contention and have not human sensibilities, and not to be in all things obedient. And hence he says, *"For to this end also did I write to you, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things."*

For the former instance might have seemed to proceed even of envy and malice, but this shows very especially the obedience to be pure, and whether you are apt unto loving kindness. For this is the test of right minded disciples; if they obey not only when ordered to do certain things, but when the contrary also. Therefore he said, *"in all things,"* showing that if they disobey, they disgrace not him so much as themselves, earning the character of lovers of contention; and he does this that hence also he may drive them to obey. Whence also he says, *"For to this end did I write to you;"* and yet he wrote not for this end, but he says so in order to win them. For the leading object was the salvation of that person. But where it does no harm, he also gratifies them. And by saying, *"In all things,"* he again praises them, recalling to memory and bringing forth to view their former obedience.

2 Corinthians 2:10

"To whom you forgive any thing, I forgive also."

Do you see how again he assigns the second part to himself, showing them as beginning, himself following. This is the way to soften an exasperated, to compose a contentious spirit. Then lest he should make them careless, as though they were arbiters, and they should refuse forgiveness; he again constrains them unto this, saying, that himself also had forgiven him.

"For what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I forgiven it." For, this very thing I have done for your sakes, he says. And as when he commanded them to cut him off, he left not with them the power to forgive, saying, *"I have judged already to deliver such an one unto Satan,"* [1 Corinthians 5:3-5] and again made them partners in his decision saying, *"ye being gathered together to deliver him,"* (ib. 4, 5.) (thereby securing two most important things, viz., that the sentence should be passed; yet not without their consent, lest herein he might seem to hurt them;) and neither himself alone pronounces it, lest they should consider him self-willed, and themselves to be overlooked, nor yet leaves all to them, lest when possessed of the power they should deal treacherously with the offender by unseasonably forgiving him: so also does he here, saying, 'I have already forgiven, who in the former Epistle had already judged.' Then lest they should be hurt, as though overlooked, he adds, *"for your sakes."* What then? Did he for men's sake pardon? No; for on this account he added, *"In the person of Christ."*

What is *"in the person of Christ?"* Either he means according to [the will of] God, or unto the glory of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:11

"That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Do you see how he both commits the power to them and again takes away that by that he may soften them, by this eradicate their self will. But this is not all that he provides for by this, but shows also that should they be disobedient the harm would reach to all, just as he did at the outset also. For then too he said, *"A little leaven leavens the whole lump."* [1 Corinthians 5:6] And here again, *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us."* And throughout, he makes this forgiveness the joint act of himself and them. Consider it from the first. *"But if any,"* says he, *"have caused sorrow he has caused sorrow not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all."* Then again, *"Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was"* inflicted by the *"many."* This is his own decision and opinion. He rested not however with this decision, but again makes them partners saying, *"So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive"* him *"and comfort"* him. *"Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love towards him."* Having thus again made the whole their act, he passes to his own authority, saying, *"For to this end did I write unto you, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things."* Then, again, he makes the favor theirs, saying, *"To whom you forgive anything."* Then, his own, *"I"* forgive *"also:"* saying, *"if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sakes."* Then both theirs and his, *"For,"* says he, *"if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ,"* either [that is] for the glory of Christ, or as though Christ commanding this also, which was most effectual to prevail with them. For after this they would have feared not to grant that which tended to

His glory and which He willed. Then again he signifies the common harm should they disobey, when he says, "*Lest Satan should get an advantage of us;*" well naming it, getting advantage. For he no more takes his own, but violently seizes ours, for he is reformed. And tell me not that this one only becomes the wild beast's prey, but consider this also, that the number of the herd is diminished, and now especially when it might recover what it had lost. "*For we are not ignorant of his devices,*" That he destroys even under the show of piety. For not only by leading into fornication can he destroy, but even by the contrary, the unmeasured sorrow following on the repentance for it. When then besides his own he takes ours too, when both by bidding to sin, he destroys; and when we bid repent, violently seizes; how is not this case getting "*advantage ?*" For he is not content with striking down by sin, but even by repentance he does this except we be vigilant. Wherefore also with reason did he call it getting advantage, when he even conquers our own weapons. For to take by sin is his proper work; by repentance, however, is no more his; for ours, not his, is that weapon. When then even by this he is able to take, think how disgraceful the defeat, how he will laugh at and run us down as weak and pitiful, if he is to subdue us with our own weapons. For it were matter for exceeding scorn and of the last disgrace, that he should inflict wounds on us through our own remedies. Therefore he said, "*for we are not ignorant of his devices,*" exposing his versatility, his craftiness, his evil devices, his malice, his capacity to injure under a show of piety.

6. These things then having in mind, let us too never despise any one; nor ever, though we fall into sin, despair; on the other hand, again, let us not be easy-minded afterwards, but, when we transgress, afflict our minds and not merely give vent to words. For I know many who say indeed that they bewail their sins, but do nothing of account. They fast and wear rough

garments; but after money are more eager than hucksters, are more the prey of anger than wild beasts, and take more pleasure in detraction than others do in commendations. These things are not repentance, these things are the semblance and shadow only of repentance, not repentance itself. Wherefore in the case of these persons too it is well to say, Take heed *"lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices;"* for some he destroys through sins, others through repentance; but these in yet another way, by suffering them to gain no fruit from repentance. For when he found not how he might destroy them by direct [attack,] he came another road, heightening their toils, while robbing them of the fruits, and persuading them, as if they had successfully accomplished all they had to do, therefore to be neglectful of what remains.

That we may not then fruitlessly afflict ourselves, let us address a few words to women of this character; for to women this disorder especially belongs. Praiseworthy indeed is even that which now ye do, your fasting and lying on the ground and ashes; but except the rest be added, these are of no avail. God has showed how He remits sins. Why then forsaking that path, do ye carve another for yourselves. In old time the Ninevites sinned, and they did the things which you too now are doing. Let us see however what it was that availed them. For as in the case of the sick, physicians apply many remedies; howbeit the man of understanding regards not that the sick person has tried this and that, but what was of service to him; such must be also our inquiry here. What then was it that availed those barbarians? They applied fasting unto the wounds, yea applied extreme fasting, lying on the ground too, putting on of sackcloth, and ashes, and lamentations; they applied also a change of life. Let us then see which of these things made them whole. And whence, says one, shall we know? If we come to the Physician, if we ask Him: for He will not hide it from us,

but will even eagerly disclose it. Rather that none may be ignorant, nor need to ask, He has even set down in writing the medicine that restored them. What then is this? *"God,"* says He, *"saw that they turned every one from his evil way, and He repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them."* [Jonah 3:10] He said not, He saw [their] fasting and sackcloth and ashes. And I say not this to overturn fasting, (God forbid!) but to exhort you that with fasting ye do that which is better than fasting, the abstaining from all evil. David also sinned. [2 Samuel 12:17, etc.] Let us see then how he too repented. Three days he sat on ashes. But this he did not for the sin's sake, but for the child's, being as yet stupefied with that affliction. But the sin by other means did he wipe away, by humbleness, contrition of heart, compunction of soul, by falling into the like no more, by remembering it always, by bearing thankfully every thing that befalls him, by sparing those that grieve him, by forbearing to requite those who conspire against him; yea, even preventing those who desire to do this. For instance, when Shimei was bespattering him with reproaches without number [2 Samuel 16:5-9] and the captain who was with him was greatly indignant, he said, *"Let him curse me, for the Lord has bidden him:"* for he had a contrite and humbled heart, and it was this especially which wiped away his sins. For this is confession, this is repentance. But if while we fast we are proud, we have been not only nothing profited but even injured.

7. Humble then your heart, thou too, that you may draw God unto you. *"For the Lord is near unto them that are of a contrite heart."* [Psalm 33:19] Do you see not in the gorgeous houses those who are in disgrace; how they answer not again when even the lower servants insult them, but put up with it because of the disgrace with which their fault has surrounded them? So do thou too: and if any one revile you, wax not fierce, but groan, not for the insult, but for that sin which cast you into disgrace. Groan when you have

sinned, not because you are to be punished, (for this is nothing,) but because you have offended your Master, one so gentle, one so kind, one that so loves you and longs for your salvation as to have given even His Son for you. For this groan, and do this continually: for this is confession. Be not today cheerful, tomorrow of a sad countenance, then again cheerful; but continue ever in mourning and self contrition. For, "*Blessed*," says he, "*are they that mourn*," that is, that do this perpetually. Continue then to do this perpetually, and to take heed to yourself, and to afflict your heart; as one who had lost a beloved son might mourn. "*Rend*," says he, "*your hearts, and not your garments*." [Joel 2:13] That which is rent will not lift itself on high; that which has been broken cannot rise up again. Hence one says, "*Rend*," and another, "*a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise*." [Psalm 51:17] Yea, though thou be wise, or wealthy, or a ruler, rend your heart. Suffer it not to have high thoughts nor to be inflated. For that which is rent is not inflated, and even if there be something to make it rise, from being rent it cannot retain the inflation. So also do thou be humble-minded. Consider that the publican was justified by one word, although that was not humiliation, but a true confession. Now if this has power so great, how much more humiliation. Remit offenses to those who have transgressed against you, for this too remits sins. And concerning the former He says, "*I saw that he went sorrowful, and I healed his ways*;" [Isaiah 57:17-18; Septuagint] and in Ahab's case, this appeased the wrath of God: [1 Kings 21:29] concerning the latter, "*Remit, and it shall be remitted unto you*." There is also again another way which brings us this medicine; condemning what we have done amiss; for, "*Declare first your transgressions, that you may be justified*." [Isaiah 43:26. Septuagint] And for one in afflictions to give thanks looses his sins; and almsgiving, which is greater than all.

Reckon up therefore the medicines which heal your wounds, and apply all unremittingly , humbleness, confession, forgetting wrongs, giving thanks in afflictions, showing mercy both in alms and actions, persevering in prayer. So did the widow propitiate the cruel and unyielding judge. And if she the unjust, much more thou the gentle. There is yet another way along with these, defending the oppressed; *"for,"* He says, *"judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow; and come, and let us reason together, and though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow."* [Isaiah 1:17-18]

What excuse then can we deserve if with so many ways leading us up to heaven, and so many medicines to heal our wounds, even after the Laver we continue where we were. Let us then not only continue so, but let those indeed who have never yet fallen abide in their proper loveliness; yea, rather let them cultivate it more and more, (for these good works, where they find not sins, make the beauty greater:) and let us who in many things have done amiss, in order to the correction of our sins use the means mentioned: that we may stand at the tribunal of Christ with much boldness, whereunto may all we attain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, and power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 5 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 2:12-13

Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened unto me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother.

These words seem on the one hand to be unworthy of Paul, if because of a brother's absence he threw away so great an opportunity of saving; and on the other, to hang apart from the context. What then? Will ye that we should first prove that they hang upon the context, or, that he has said nothing unworthy of himself? As I think, the second, for so the other point also will be easier and clearer.

How then do these (words) hang upon those before them? Let us recall to mind what those were, and so we shall perceive this. What then were those before? What he said at the beginning. *"I would not have you,"* says he, *"ignorant concerning our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power."* [2 Corinthians 1:8] Now having shown the manner of his deliverance, and inserted the intermediate matter, he is of necessity led to teach them again that in yet another way he had been afflicted. How, and in what way? In not finding Titus. [vii. 6; 8:6, 16, 22, 23, 12:18] Fearful indeed, and enough to prostrate the soul, is it even to endure trials; but when there is none to comfort and that can help to bear the burden, the tempest becomes greater. Now Titus is he, whom further on he speaks of as having come to him from them, and of whom he runs through many and great praises, and whom he said he had sent. With

the view then of showing that in this point also he had been afflicted for their sakes, he said these things.

That the words then in question hang on what went before is from all this plain. And I will attempt to prove also that they are not unworthy of Paul. For He does not say that the absence of Titus impeded the salvation of those who were about to come over, nor yet that he neglected those that believed on this account, but that he had no relief, that is, 'I was afflicted, I was distressed for the absence of my brother;' showing how great a matter a brother's absence is; and therefore he departed thence. But what means, "*when I came to Troas, for the Gospel?*" he says not simply 'I arrived,' but 'so as to preach.' But still, though I had both come for that and found very much to do, (for "*a door was opened unto me in the Lord,*") I had, says he, "*no relief,*" not that for this he impeded the work. How then says he,

2 Corinthians 2:13. "*Taking my leave of them, I went from thence?*"

That is, 'I spent no longer time, being straitened and distressed.' And perhaps the work was even impeded by his absence. And this was no light consolation to them too. For if when a door was opened there, and for this purpose he had come; yet because he found not the brother, he quickly started away; much more, he says, ought ye to make allowance for the compulsion of those affairs which lead us and lead us about everywhere, and suffer us not according as we desire either to journey, or to tarry longer among those with whom we may wish to remain. Whence also he proceeds in this place again to refer his journeyings to God, as he did above to the Spirit, saying,

2 Corinthians 2:14

"But thanks be to God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest through us the savor of His knowledge in every place."

For that he may not seem as though in sorrow to be lamenting these things, he sends up thanks to God. Now what he says is this: 'Every where is trouble, every where straitness. I came into Asia, I was burdened beyond strength. I came to Troas, I found not the brother. I came not to you; this too bred in me no slight, yea rather, exceeding great dejection, both because many among you had sinned, and because on this account I see you not. For, *"To spare you,"* he says, *"I came not as yet unto Corinth."* That then he may not seem to be complaining in so speaking, he adds, 'We not only do not grieve in these afflictions, but we even rejoice; and, what is still greater, not for the sake of the rewards to come only, but those too even which are present. For even here we are by these things made glorious and conspicuous. So far then are we from lamenting, that we even call the thing a triumph ; and glory in what happens.' For which cause also he said, *"Now thanks be unto God, Which always causes us to triumph,"* that is, 'Who makes us renowned unto all. For what seems to be matter of disgrace, being persecuted from every quarter, this appears to us to be matter of very great honor.' Wherefore he said not, *"Which makes us seen of all,"* but, *"Which causes us to triumph:"* showing that these persecutions set up a series of trophies against the devil in every part of the world. Then having mentioned along with the author, the subject also of the triumph, he thereby also raises up the hearer. 'For not only are we made to triumph by God, but also *"in Christ;"* that is, on account of Christ and the Gospel. 'For seeing it behooves to triumph, all need is that we also who carry the trophy are seen

of all, because we bear Him. For this reason we become observed and conspicuous.'

2. 2 Corinthians 2:14. *"And which makes manifest through us the savor of His knowledge in every place."*

He said above, *"Which always causes us to triumph."* Here he says *"in every place,"* showing that every place and every time is full of the Apostles' labors. And he uses yet another metaphor, that of the sweet savor. For 'like as those who bear ointment, so are we,' says he, 'manifest to all'; calling the knowledge a very precious ointment. Moreover, he said not, 'the knowledge;' but *"the savor of the knowledge;"* for such is the nature of the present knowledge, not very clear nor uncovered. Whence also he said in the former Epistle, *"For now we see in a mirror darkly."* [1 Corinthians 13:12] And here he calls that which is such a *"savor."* Now he that perceives the savor knows that there is ointment lying somewhere; but of what nature it is he knows not yet, unless he happens before to have seen it. 'So also we. That God is, we know, but what in substance we know not yet. We are then, as it were, a Royal censer, breathing wherever we go of the heavenly ointment and the spiritual sweet savor.' Now he said this, at once both to set forth the power of the Preaching, in that by the very designs formed against them, they shine more than those who prosecute them and who cause the whole world to know both their trophies and their sweet savor: and to exhort them in regard to their afflictions and trials to bear all nobly, seeing that even before the Recompense they reap this glory inexpressible.

2 Corinthians 2:15

"For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved and in them that perish."

Whether, says he, one be saved or be lost, the Gospel continues to have its proper virtue: and as the light, although it blinds the weakly, is still light, though causing blindness; and as honey, though it be bitter to those who are diseased, is in its nature sweet; so also is the Gospel of sweet savor, even though some should be lost who believe it not. For not It, but their own perverseness, works the perdition. And by this most of all is its sweet savor manifested, by which the corrupt and vicious perish; so that not only by the salvation of the good, but also by the perdition of the wicked is its excellence declared. Since both the sun, for this reason most especially that he is exceeding bright, does wound the eyes of the weak: and the Saviour is *"for the fall and rising again of many,"* [Luke 2:34] but still He continues to be a Saviour, though ten thousand fall; and His coming brought a sorer punishment upon them that believe not, but still it continues to be full of healing. Whence also he says, *"We are unto God a sweet savor;"* that is, 'even though some be lost we continue to be that which we are.' Moreover he said not simply *"a sweet savor,"* but *"unto God."* And when we are a sweet savor unto God, and He decrees these things, who shall henceforth gainsay?

The expression also, *"sweet savor of Christ,"* appears to me to admit of a double interpretation: for he means either that in dying they offered themselves a sacrifice: or that they were a sweet savor of the death of Christ, as if one should say, this incense is a sweet savor of this victim. The

expression then, sweet savor, either signifies this, or, as I first said, that they are daily sacrificed for Christ's sake.

3. Do you see to what a height he has advanced the trials, terming them a triumph and a sweet savor and a sacrifice offered unto God. Then, whereas he said, *"we are a sweet savor, even in them that perish,"* lest you should think that these too are acceptable, he added,

2 Corinthians 2:16

"To the one a savor from death unto death, to the other a savor from life unto life."

For this sweet savor some so receive that they are saved, others so that they perish. So that should any one be lost, the fault is from himself: for both ointment is said to suffocate swine, and light (as I before observed,) to blind the weak. And such is the nature of good things; they not only correct what is akin to them, but also destroy the opposite: and in this way is their power most displayed. For so both fire, not only when it gives light and when it purifies gold, but even when it consumes thorns, does very greatly display its proper power, and so show itself to be fire: and Christ too herein also does discover His own majesty when He *"shall consume"* Antichrist *"with the breath of His mouth, and bring him to nought with the manifestation of His coming."* [2 Thessalonians 2:8]

"And who is sufficient for these things?"

Seeing he had uttered great things, that 'we are a sacrifice of Christ and a sweet savor, and are every where made to triumph,' he again uses moderation, referring all to God. Whence also he says, *"and who is sufficient for these things?"* 'for all,' says he, 'is Christ's, nothing our own.' Do you see how opposite his language to the false Apostles'? For they indeed glory, as contributing somewhat from themselves unto the message: he, on the contrary, says, he therefore glories, because he says that nothing is his own. *"For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves in the world."* And that which they considered it a glory to acquire, I mean the wisdom from without, he makes it his to take away. Whence also he here

says, "*And who is sufficient for these things?*" But if none are sufficient, that which is done is of grace.

2 Corinthians 2:17

"For we are not as the rest, which corrupt the word of God."

'For even if we use great sounding words, yet we declared nothing to be our own that we achieved, but all Christ's. For we will not imitate the false apostles; the men who say that most is of themselves.' For this is *"to corrupt,"* when one adulterates the wine; when one sells for money what he ought to give freely. For he seems to me to be here both taunting them in respect to money, and again hinting at the very thing I have said, as that they mingle their own things with God's; which is the charge Isaiah brings when he said, *"Your vintners mingle wine with water:"* [Isaiah 1:22, Septuagint] for even if this was said of wine, yet one would not err in expounding it of doctrine too. 'But we,' says he, 'do not so: but such as we have been entrusted with, such do we offer you, pouring out the word undiluted.' Whence he added, *"But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."*

'We do not,' says he 'beguile you and so preach, as conferring a gift on you, or as bringing in and mingling somewhat from ourselves, *"but as of God;"* that is, we do not say that we confer any thing of our own, but that God has given all.' For *"of God"* means this; To glory in nothing as if we had it of our own, but to refer every thing to Him. *"Speak we in Christ."*

Not by our own wisdom, but instructed by the power that comes from Him. Those who glory speak not in this way, but as bringing in something from themselves. Whence he elsewhere also turns them into ridicule, saying, *"For what have you that thou did not receive? But if you received it, why do you glory as if you had not received it."* [1 Corinthians 4:7] This is the highest virtue, to refer every thing to God, to consider nothing to be our

own, to do nothing out of regard to men's opinion, but to what God wills. For He it is that requires the account. Now however this order is reversed: and of Him that shall sit upon the tribunal and require the account, we have no exceeding fear, yet tremble at those who stand and are judged with us.

4. Whence then is this disease? Whence has it broken out in our souls? From not meditating continually on the things of that world, but being rivetted to present things. Hence we both easily fall into wicked doings, and even if we do any good thing we do it for display, so that thence also loss comes to us. For instance, one has looked on a person often with unbridled eyes, unseen of her or of those who walk with her, yet of the Eye that never sleeps was not unseen. For even before the commission of the sin, It saw the unbridled soul, and that madness within, and the thoughts that were whirled about in storm and surge; for no need has He of witnesses and proofs Who knows all things. Look not then to your fellow-servants: for though man praise, it avails not if God accept not; and though man condemn, it harms not if God do not condemn. Oh! provoke not so your Judge; of your fellow-servants making great account, yet when Himself is angry, not in fear and trembling at Him. Let us then despise the praise that comes of men. How long shall we be low-minded and grovelling? How long, when God lifts us to heaven, take we pains to be trailed along the ground? The brethren of Joseph, had they had the fear of God before their eyes, as men ought to have, would not have taken their brother in a lonely place and killed him. [Genesis 37] Cain again, had he feared that sentence as he should have feared, would not have said, "*Come, and let us go into the field:*" [Genesis 4:8, Septuagint] for to what end, O miserable and wretched! Do you take him apart from him that begot him, and leadest him out into a lonely place? For does not God see the daring deed even in the field? Have you not been taught by what befell your father that He knows

all things, and is present at all things that are done? And why, when he denied, said not God this unto him: 'Hidest thou from Me Who am present every where, and know the things that are secret?' Because as yet he knew not aright to comprehend these high truths. But what says he? "*The voice of your brother's blood cries unto Me.*" Not as though blood had a voice; but like as we say when things are plain and clear, "*the matter speaks for itself.*"

Wherefore surely it behooves to have before our eyes the sentence of God, and all terrors are extinguished. So too in prayers we can keep awake, if we bear in mind with whom we are conversing, if we reflect that we are offering sacrifice and have in our hands a knife and fire and wood; if in thought we throw wide the gates of heaven, if we transport ourselves there and taking the sword of the Spirit infix it in the throat of the victim: make watchfulness the sacrifice and tears the libation to Him. For such is the blood of this victim. Such the slaughter that crimsones that altar. Suffer not then anything of worldly thoughts to occupy your soul then. Bethink you that Abraham also, when offering sacrifice, suffered nor wife nor servant nor any other to be present. Neither then do thou suffer any of the slavish and ignoble passions to be present unto you, but go up alone into the mountain where he went up, where no second person is permitted to go up. And should any such thoughts attempt to go up with you, command them with authority, and say, "*Sit there, and I and the lad will worship and return to you;*" [Genesis 22:5. Septuagint] and leaving the ass and the servants below, and whatever is void of reason and sense, go up, taking with you whatever is reasonable, as he took Isaac. And build your altar so as he, as having nothing human, but having outstepped nature. For he too, had he not outstepped nature, would not have slain his child. And let nothing disturb you then, but be lift up above the very heavens. Groan bitterly, sacrifice

confession, [for, says he, "*Declare first your transgressions that you may be justified,*" Isaiah 43:26, Septuagint], sacrifice contrition of heart. These victims turn not to ashes nor dissolve into smoke nor melt into air; neither need they wood and fire, but only a deep-pricked heart. This is wood, this is fire to burn, yet not consume them. For he that prays with warmth is burnt, yet not consumed; but like gold that is tried by fire becomes brighter.

5. And withal observe heedfully one thing more, in praying to say none of those things that provoke your Master; neither draw near [to pray] against enemies. For if to have enemies be a reproach, consider how great the evil to pray against them. For need is that thou defend yourself and show why you have enemies: but thou even accusest them. And what forgiveness shall you obtain, when thou both revilest, and at such a time when yourself needest much mercy. For you drew near to supplicate for your own sins: make not mention then of those of others, lest you recall the memory of your own. For if you say, 'Smite mine enemy,' you have stopped your mouth, you have cut off boldness from your tongue; first, indeed, because you have angered the Judge at once in beginning; next, because thou asks things at variance with the character of your prayer. For if you come near for forgiveness of sins, how do you discourse of punishment? The contrary surely was there need to do, and to pray for them in order that we may with boldness beseech this for ourselves also. But now you have forestalled the Judge's sentence by your own, demanding that He punish them that sin: for this deprives of all pardon. But if you pray for them, even if you say nothing in your own sins' behalf, you have achieved all. Consider how many sacrifices there are in the law; a sacrifice of praise, a sacrifice of acknowledgment, a sacrifice of peace, a sacrifice of purifications, and numberless others, and not one of them against enemies, but all in behalf of either one's own sins or one's own successes. For do you come to another

God? To him you come that said, "*Pray for your enemies.*" [Luke 6:27-35; Romans 12:14] How then do you cry against them? How do you beseech God to break his own law? This is not the guise of a suppliant. None supplicates the destruction of another, but the safety of himself. Why then do you wear the guise of a suppliant, but hast the words of an accuser? Yet when we pray for ourselves, we scratch ourselves and yawn, and fall into ten thousand thoughts; but when against our enemies, we do so wakefully. For since the devil knows that we are thrusting the sword against ourselves, he does not distract nor call us off then, that he may work us the greater harm. But, says one, 'I have been wronged and am afflicted.' Why not then pray against the devil, who injures us most of all. This you have also been commanded to say, "*Deliver us from the evil one.*" He is your irreconcilable foe, but man, do whatsoever he will, is a friend and brother. With him then let us all be angry; against him let us beseech God, saying, "*Bruise Satan under our feet;*" [Romans 16:20] for he it is that breeds also the enemies [we have]. But if you pray against enemies, you pray so as he would have you pray, just as if for your enemies, then against him. Why then letting him go who is your enemy indeed, do you tear your own members, more cruel in this than wild beasts. 'But,' says one, 'he insulted me and robbed me of money;' and which has need to grieve, he that suffered injury, or he that inflicted injury? Plainly he that inflicted injury, since while he gained money he cast himself out of the favor of God, and lost more than he gained: so that he is the injured party. Surely then need is not that one pray against, but for him, that God would be merciful to him. See how many things the three children suffered, though they had done no harm. They lost country, liberty, were taken captive and made slaves; and when carried away into a foreign and barbarous land, were even on the point of being slain on account of the dream, without cause or object. [Daniel 2:13]

What then? When they had entered in with Daniel, what prayed they? What said they? Dash down Nabuchodonosor, pull down his diadem, hurl him from the throne? Nothing of this sort; but they desired "*mercies of God.*" [Daniel 2:18. Septuagint] And when they were in the furnace, likewise. But not so ye: but when you suffer far less than they, and oftentimes justly, you cease not to vent ten thousand imprecations. And one says, 'Strike down my enemy as You overwhelmed the chariot of Pharaoh;' another, 'Blast his flesh;' another again, 'Requite it on his children.' Recognize ye not these words? Whence then is this your laughter? Do you see how laughable this is, when it is uttered without passion. And so all sin then discovers how vile it is, when you strip it of the state of mind of the perpetrator. Should thou remind one who has been angered of the words which he said in his passion, he will sink for shame and scorn himself and wish he had suffered a thousand punishments rather than those words to be his. And should you, when the embrace is over, bring the unchaste to the woman he sinned with, he too will turn away from her as disgusting. And so do ye, because you are not under the influence of the passion, laugh now. For worthy to be laughed at are they, and the words of drunken old gossips; and springing from a womanish littleness of soul. And yet Joseph, though he had been sold and made a slave, and had tenanted a prison, uttered not even then a bitter word against the authors of his sorrows. But what says he? "*Indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews;*" [Genesis 40:15] and adds not by whom. For he feels more ashamed for the wickedness of his brethren, than they who wrought them. Such too ought to be our disposition, to grieve for them who wrong us more than they themselves do. For the hurt passes on to them. As then they who kick against nails, yet are proud of it, are fit objects of pity and lamentation on account of this madness; so they who wrong those that do them no evil, inasmuch as they wound their own souls, are fit

objects for many moans and lamentations, not for curses. For nothing is more polluted than a soul that curses, or more impure than a tongue that offers such sacrifices. You are a man; vomit not forth the poison of asps. You are a man; become not a wild beast. For this was your mouth made, not that you should bite but that you should heal the wounds of others. 'Remember the charge I have given you,' says God, 'to pardon and forgive. But you beseech Me also to be a party to the overthrow of my own commandments, and devourest your brother, and reddenest your tongue, as madmen do their teeth on their own members.' How, do you think, the devil is pleased and laughs, when he hears such a prayer? And how, God is provoked, and turns from and abhors you, when you beseech things like these? Than which, what can be more dangerous? For if none should approach the mysteries that has enemies: how must not he, that not only has, but also prays against them, be excluded even from the outer courts themselves? Thinking then on these things, and considering the Subject of the Sacrifice, that He was sacrificed for enemies; let us not have an enemy: and if we have, let us pray for him; that we too having obtained forgiveness of the sins we have committed, may stand with boldness at the tribunal of Christ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 3:1

Are we beginning, again to commend ourselves? Or need we, as do some, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you?

He anticipates and puts himself an objection which others would have urged against him, 'Thou vauntest yourself;' and this though he had before employed so strong a corrective in the expressions, *"Who is sufficient for these things?"* and, *"of sincerity...speak we."* [2 Corinthians 2:16-17] Howbeit he is not satisfied with these. For such is his character. From appearing to say any thing great of himself he is far removed, and avoids it even to great superfluity and excess. And mark, I pray you, by this instance also, the abundance of his wisdom. For a thing of woeful aspect, I mean tribulations, he so much exalted and showed to be bright and lustrous, that out of what he said the present objection rose up against him. And he does so also towards the end. For after having enumerated numberless perils, insults, straits, necessities, and as many such like things as be, he added, *"We commend not ourselves, but speak as giving you occasion to glory."* [2 Corinthians 5:12] And he expresses this again with vehemence in that place, and with more of encouragement. For here the words are those of love, *"Need we, as do some, epistles of commendation?"* but there what he says is full of a kind of pride even, necessarily and properly so, of pride, I say, and anger. *"For we commend not ourselves again,"* says he, *"but speak as giving you occasion to glory;"* [2 Corinthians 5:12] and, *"Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? For in the sight of God speak we in*

Christ. For I fear lest by any means when I come I should not find you such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as you would not." (ib. 12:19, 20.) For to prevent all appearance of a wish to flatter, as though he desired honor from them, he speaks thus, *"I fear lest by any means when I come I should not find you such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as you would not."* This however comes after many accusations ; But in the beginning he speaks not so, but more gently. And what is it he says? He spoke of his trials and his perils, and that every where he is conducted as in procession by God in Christ, and that the whole world knows of these triumphs. Since then he has uttered great things of himself, he urges this objection against himself, *"Are we beginning again to commend ourselves?"* Now what he says is this: Perchance some one will object, 'What is this, O Paul? Do you say these things of yourself, and exaltest yourself?' To do away then with this suspicion, he says, We desire not this, that is, to boast and exalt ourselves; yea, so far are we from needing epistles of commendation to you that you are to us instead of an epistle. *"For,"* says he,

2 Corinthians 3:2

"You are our epistle."

What means this, "*you are?*" 'Did we need to be commended to others, we should have produced you before them instead of an epistle.' And this he said in the former Epistle. "*For the seal of mine Apostleship are you.*" [1 Corinthians 9:2] But he does not here say it in this manner, but in irony so as to make his question, "*Do we need epistles of commendation?*" more cutting. And in allusion to the false apostles, he added, "*as do some, [epistles of commendation] to you, or letters of commendation from you*" to others. Then because what he had said was severe, he softens it by adding, You are our epistle, written in our hearts, known of all,

2 Corinthians 3:3

"Being made manifest that you are an epistle of Christ."

Here he testifies not only to their love, but also to their good works: since they are able to show unto all men by their own virtue the high worth of their teacher, for this is the meaning of, *"You are our epistle."*

What letters would have done to commend and gain respect for us, that you do both as seen and heard of; for the virtue of the disciples is wont to adorn and to commend the teacher more than any letter.

"Written in our hearts."

That is, which all know; we so bear you about every where and have you in mind. As though he said, You are our commendation to others, for we both have you continually in our heart and proclaim to all your good works. Because then that even to others yourselves are our commendation, we need no epistles from you; but further, because we love you exceedingly, we need no commendation to you. For to those who are strangers one has need of letters, but you are in our mind. Yet he said not merely, *"you are [in it],"* but *"written in [it],"* that is, you cannot slide out of it. For just as from letters by reading, so from our heart by perceiving, all are acquainted with the love we bear you. If then the object of a letter be to certify, *"such an one is my friend and let him have free intercourse [with you],"* your love is sufficient to secure all this. For should we go to you, we have no need of others to commend us, seeing your love anticipates this; and should we go to others, again we need no letters, the same love again sufficing unto us in their stead, for we carry about the epistle in our hearts.

2. Then exalting them still higher, he even calls them the epistle of Christ, saying,

2 Corinthians 3:3. *"Being made manifest that you are an epistle of Christ."*

And having said this, he afterwards hence takes ground and occasion for a discussion on the Law. And there is another aim in his here styling them His epistle. For above as commending him, he called them an epistle; but here an epistle of Christ, as having the Law of God written in them. For what things God wished to declare to all and to you, these are written in your hearts. But it was we who prepared you to receive the writing. For just as Moses hewed the stones and tables, so we, your souls. Whence he says,

"Ministered by us."

Yet in this they were on an equality; for the former were written on by God, and these by the Spirit. Where then is the difference?

"Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh."

Wide as the difference between the Spirit and ink, and a stony table and a fleshy, so wide is that between these and those; consequently between themselves who ministered, and him who ministered to them. Yet because it was a great thing he had uttered, he therefore quickly checks himself, saying,

2 Corinthians 3:4

"And such confidence have we through Christ to Godward,"

And again refers all to God: for it is Christ, says he, Who is the Author of these things to us.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account any thing as from ourselves."

See again, yet another corrective. For he possesses this virtue, humility I mean, in singular perfection. Wherefore whenever he says any thing great of himself, he makes all diligence to soften down extremely and by every means, what he has said. And so he does in this place also, saying, *"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account any thing as from ourselves:"* that is, I said not, *"We have confidence,"* as though part were ours and part God's; but I refer and ascribe the whole to Him.

"For our sufficiency is from God; who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant."

What means, *"made us sufficient?"* Made us able and fitting. And it is not a little thing to be the bearer to the world of such tables and letters, greater far than the former. Whence also he added,

"Not of the letter, but of the spirit." See again another difference. What then? Was not that Law spiritual? How then says he, *"We know that the Law is spiritual?"* [Romans 7:14] Spiritual indeed, but it bestowed not a spirit. For Moses bare not a spirit, but letters; but we have been entrusted with the giving of a spirit. Whence also in further completion of this [contrast,] he says,

"For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life."

Yet these things he says not absolutely ; but in allusion to those who prided themselves upon the things of Judaism. And by *"letter"* here he means the Law which punishes them that transgress; but by *"spirit"* the grace which through Baptism gives life to them who by sins were made

dead. For having mentioned the difference arising from the nature of the tables, he does not dwell upon it, but rapidly passing it by, bestows more labor upon this, which most enabled him to lay hold on his hearer from considerations of what was advantageous and easy; for, says he, it is not laborious, and the gift it offers is greater. For if when discoursing of Christ, he puts especially forward those things which are of His lovingkindness, more than of our merit, and which are mutually connected, much greater necessity is there for his doing so when treating of the covenant. What then is the meaning of *"the letter kills?"* He had said tables of stone and hearts of flesh: so far he seemed to mention no great difference. He added that the former [covenant] was written with letters or ink, but this with the Spirit. Neither did this rouse them thoroughly, He says at last what is indeed enough to give them wings ; the one *"kills,"* the other *"gives life."* And what does this mean? In the Law, he that has sin is punished; here, he that has sins comes and is baptized and is made righteous, and being made righteous, he lives, being delivered from the death of sin. The Law, if it lay hold on a murderer, puts him to death; the Gospel, if it lay hold on a murderer, enlightens, and gives him life. And why do I instance a murderer? The Law laid hold on one that gathered sticks on a sabbath day, and stoned him. [Numbers 15:32-36] This is the meaning of, *"the letter kills."* The Gospel takes hold on thousands of homicides and robbers, and baptizing delivers them from their former vices. This is the meaning of, *"the Spirit gives life."* The former makes its captive dead from being alive, the latter renders the man it has convicted alive from being dead. For, *"come unto me, you that labor and are heavy laden,"* [Matthew 11:28] and, He said not, 'I will punish you,' but, *"I will give you rest."* For in Baptism the sins are buried, the former things are blotted out, the man is made alive, the entire grace written upon his heart as it were a table. Consider then how high is

the dignity of the Spirit, seeing that His tables are better than those former ones; seeing that even a greater thing is shown forth than the resurrection itself. For indeed, that state of death from which He delivers, is more irremediable than the former one: as much more so, as soul is of more value than the body: and this life is conferred by that, by that which the Spirit gives. But if It be able to bestow this, much more then that which is less. For, that prophets wrought, but this they could not: for none can remit sins but God only; nor did the prophets bestow that life without the Spirit. But this is not the marvel only, that it gives life, but that it enabled others also to do this. For He says, "*Receive the Holy Ghost.*" [John 20:22] Wherefore? Because without the Spirit it might not be? [Yes,] but God, as showing that It is of supreme authority, and of that Kingly Essence, and has the same power [with Himself,] says this too. Whence also He adds, "*Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*" [John 20:23]

3. Since then It has given us life, let us remain living and not return again to the former deadness: for "*Christ dies no more; for the death that He died, He died unto sin once:*" [Romans 6:9-10] and He will not have us always saved by grace: for so we shall be empty of all things. Wherefore He will have us contribute something also from ourselves. Let us then contribute, and preserve to the soul its life. And what is life in a soul, learn from the body. For the body too we then affirm to live, when it moves with a healthy kind of motion; but when it lies prostrate and powerless, or its motions are disorderly, though it retain the semblance of life or motion, such a life is more grievous than any death: and should it utter nothing sane but words of the crazy, and see one object instead of another, such a man again is more pitiable than those who are dead. So also the soul when it has no healthiness, though it retain a semblance of life, is dead: when it does

not see gold as gold but as something great and precious; when it thinks not of the future but crawls upon the ground; when it does one thing in place of another. For whence is it clear that we have a soul? Is it not from its operations? When then it does not perform the things proper to it, is it not dead? When, for instance, it has no care for virtue, but is rapacious and transgresses the law; whence can I tell that you have a soul? Because you walk? But this belongs to the irrational creatures as well. Because you eat and drinkest? But this too belongs to wild beasts. Well then, because you stand upright on two feet? This convinces me rather that you are a beast in human form. For when you resemble one in all other respects, but not in its manner of erecting itself, thou dost the more disturb and terrify me; and I the more consider that which I see to be a monster. For did I see a beast speaking with the voice of a man, I should not for that reason say it was a man, but even for that very reason a beast more monstrous than a beast. Whence then can I learn that you have the soul of a man, when you kick like the ass, when you bear malice like the camel, when you bite like the bear, when you devour like the wolf, when you steal like the fox, when you are wily as the serpent, when you are shameless as the dog? Whence can I learn that you have the soul of a man? Will ye that I show you a dead soul and a living? Let us turn the discourse back to those men of old; and, if you will, let us set before us the rich man [in the story] of Lazarus, and we shall know what is death in a soul; for he had a dead soul, and it is plain from what he did. For, of the works of the soul he did not one, but ate and drank and lived in pleasure only. Such are even now the unmerciful and cruel, for these too have a dead soul as he had. For all its warmth that flows out of the love of our neighbor has been spent, and it is deader than a lifeless body. But the poor man was not such, but standing on the very summit of heavenly wisdom shone out; and though wrestling with continual hunger,

and not even supplied with the food that was necessary, neither so spoke he anything of blasphemy against God, but endured all nobly. Now this is no trifling work of the soul; but a very high proof that it is well-strung and healthful. And when there are not these qualities, it is plainly because the soul is dead that they have perished. Or, tell me, shall we not pronounce that soul dead which the Devil falls upon, striking, biting, spurning it, yet has it no sense of any of these things, but lies deadened nor grieves when being robbed of its wealth; but he even leaps upon it, yet it remains unmoved, like a body when the soul is departed, nor even feels it? For when the fear of God is not present with strictness, such must the soul needs be, and then the dead more miserable. For the soul is not dissolved into corruption and ashes and dust, but into things of fouler odor than these, into drunkenness and anger and covetousness, into improper loves and unseasonable desires. But if you would know more exactly how foul an odor it has, give me a soul that is pure, and then you will see clearly how foul the odor of this filthy and impure one. For at present you will not be able to perceive it. For so long as we are in contact habitually with a foul odor, we are not sensible of it. But when we are fed with spiritual words, then shall we be cognizant of that evil. And yet to many this seems of no importance. And I say nothing as yet of hell; but let us, if you will, examine what is present, and how worthy of derision is he, not that practises, but that utters filthiness; how first he loads himself with contumely; just as one that sputters any filth from the mouth, so he defiles himself. For if the stream is so impure, think what must be the fountain of this filth! *"for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."* [Matthew 12:34] Yet not for this alone do I grieve, but because that to some this does not even seem to be reckoned among improper things. Hence the evils are all made worse, when we both sin, and do not think we even do amiss.

4. Will you then learn how great an evil is filthy talking? See how the hearers blush at your indecency. For what is viler than a filthy talker? What more infamous? For such thrust themselves into the rank of buffoons and of prostituted women, yea rather these have more shame than you. How can you teach a wife to be modest when by such language you are training her to proceed unto lasciviousness? Better vent rottenness from the mouth than a filthy word. Now if your mouth have an ill-odor, you partake not even of the common meats; when then you had so foul a stink in your soul, tell me, do you dare to partake of mysteries? Did any one take a dirty vessel and set it upon the table, you would have beaten him with clubs and driven him out: yet God at His own table, (for His table our mouth is when filled with thanksgiving,) when you pour out words more disgusting than any unclean vessel, tell me, do you think that you provoke not? And how is this possible? For nothing does so exasperate the holy and pure as do such words; nothing makes men so impudent and shameless as to say and listen to such; nothing does so unstring the sinews of modesty as the flame which these kindle. God has set perfumes in your mouth, but you store up words of fouler odor than a corpse, and destroyest the soul itself and makest it incapable of motion. For when you insult, this is not the voice of the soul, but of anger; when you talk filthily, it is lewdness, and not she that spoke; when you detract, it is envy; when you scheme, covetousness. These are not her works, but those of the affections and the diseases belonging to her. As then corruption comes not simply of the body, but of the death and the passion which is thus in the body; so also, in truth, these things come of the passions which grow upon the soul. For if you will hear a voice from a living soul, hear Paul saying, *"Having food and covering, we shall be therewith content:"* [1 Timothy 6:8] and *"Godliness is great gain:"* [1 Timothy 6:6] and, *"The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."*

[Galatians 6:14] Hear Peter saying, *"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I you."* [Acts 3:6] Hear Job giving thanks and saying, *"The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away."* [Job 1:21] These things are the words of a living soul, of a soul discharging the functions proper to it. Thus also Jacob said, *"If the Lord will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on."* [Genesis 28:20] Thus also Joseph, *"How shall I do this wickedness, and sin before God?"* [Genesis 39:9] But not so that barbarian woman; but as one drunken and insane, so spoke she, saying, *"Lie with me."* [Genesis 39:7] These things then knowing, let us earnestly covet the living soul, let us flee the dead one, that we may also obtain the life to come; of which may all we be made partakers, through the grace and love toward men of our Lord Jesus Christ, though Whom and with Whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 7 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 3:7-8

2 Corinthians 3:7, 8

But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses, for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?

He said that the tables of Moses were of stone, as [also] they were written with letters; and that these were of flesh, I mean the hearts of the Apostles, and had been written on by the Spirit; and that the letter indeed kills, but the Spirit gives life. There was yet wanting to this comparison the addition of a further and not trifling particular, that of the glory of Moses; such as in the case of the New Covenant none saw with the eyes of the body. And even for this cause it appeared a great thing in that the glory was perceived by the senses; (for it was seen by the bodily eyes, even though it might not be approached;) but that of the New Covenant is perceived by the understanding. For to the weaker sort the apprehension of such a superiority is not clear; but the other did more take them, and turn them unto itself. Having then fallen upon this comparison and being set upon showing the superiority [in question], which yet was exceedingly difficult because of the dulness of the hearers; see what he does, and with what method he proceeds in it, first by arguments placing the difference before them, and constructing these out of what he had said before.

For if that ministration were of death, but this of life, doubtless, says he, the latter glory is also greater than the former. For since he could not

exhibit it to the bodily eyes, by this logical inference he established its superiority, saying,

2 Corinthians 3:8. *"But if the ministration of death came with glory, how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?"*

Now by "*ministration of death*" he means the Law. And mark too how great the caution he uses in the comparison so as to give no handle to the heretics; for he said not, 'which causes death,' but, "*the ministration of death*;" for it ministers unto, but was not the parent of, death; for that which caused death was sin; but [the Law] brought in the punishment, and showed the sin, not caused it. For it more distinctly revealed the evil and punished it: it did not impel unto the evil: and it ministered not to the existence of sin or death, but to the suffering of retribution by the sinner. So that in this way it was even destructive of sin. For that which shows it to be so fearful, it is obvious, makes it also to be avoided. As then he that takes the sword in his hands and cuts off the condemned, ministers to the judge that passes sentence, and it is not he that is his destruction, although he cuts him off; nay, nor yet is it he who passes sentence and condemns, but the wickedness of him that is punished; so truly here also it is not that destroys, but sin. This did both destroy and condemn, but that by punishing undermined its strength, by the fear of the punishment holding it back. But he was not content with this consideration only in order to establish the superiority [in question]; but he adds yet another, saying, "*written, and engraven on stones*." See how he again cuts at the root of the Jewish arrogancy. For the Law was nothing else but letters: a certain succor was not found leaping forth from out the letters and inspiring them that combat, as is the case in Baptism; but pillars and writings bearing death to those who transgress the letters. Do you see how in correcting the Jewish contentiousness, by his very expressions even he lessens its authority, speaking of stone and letters

and a ministration of death, and adding that it was engraven? For hereby he declares nothing else than this, that the Law was fixed in one place; not, as the Spirit, was present everywhere, breathing great might into all; or that the letters breathe much threatening, and threatening too which can not be effaced but remains for ever, as being engraved in stone. Then even while seeming to praise the old things, he again mixes up accusation of the Jews. For having said, *"written and engraven in stones, came with glory,"* he added, *"so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses;"* which was a mark of their great weakness and grovelling spirit. And again he does not say, 'for the glory of the tables,' but, *"for the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away;"* for he shows that he who bears them is made glorious, and not they. For he said not, 'because they could not look steadfastly upon the tables,' but, *"the face of Moses;"* and again, not, 'for the glory of the tables,' but, *"for the glory of his face."* Then after he had extolled it, see how again he lowers it, saying, *"which was passing away."* Not however that this is in accusation, but in diminution; for he did not say, 'which was corrupt, which was evil,' but, 'which ceases and has an end.'

"How shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?" for henceforth with confidence he extols the things of the New [Covenant] as indisputable. And observe what he does. He opposed 'stone' to 'heart,' and 'letter' to 'spirit.' Then having shown the results of each, he does not set down the results of each; but having set down the work of the latter, namely, death and condemnation, he sets not down that of the spirit, namely, life and righteousness; but the Spirit Itself; which added greatness to the argument. For the New Covenant not only gave life, but supplied also 'The Spirit?' Which gives the life, a far greater thing than the life.

Wherefore he said, "*the ministration of the Spirit.*" Then he again reverts to the same thing, saying,

2 Corinthians 3:9

"For if the ministration of condemnation is glory."

Also, he interprets more clearly the meaning of the words, *"The letter kills,"* declaring it to be that which we have said above, namely, that the Law showed sin, not caused it.

"Much rather does the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

For those Tables indeed showed the sinners and punished them, but this not only did not punish the sinners, but even made them righteous: for this did Baptism confer.

2 Corinthians 3:10

2. *"For verily that which has been made glorious has not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasses."*

Now in what has gone before, indeed, he showed that this also is with glory; and not simply is with glory, but even exceeds in it: for he did not say, *"How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather in glory?"* but, *"exceed in glory;"* deriving the proof from the arguments before stated. Here he also shows the superiority, how great it is, saying, 'if I compare this with that, the glory of the Old Covenant is not glory at all;' not absolutely laying down that there was no glory, but in view of the comparison. Wherefore also he added, *"in this respect,"* that is, in respect of the comparison. Not that this does disparage the Old Covenant, yea rather it highly commends it: for comparisons are wont to be made between things which are the same in kind. Next, he sets on foot yet another argument to prove the superiority also from a fresh ground. What then is this argument? That based upon duration, saying,

2 Corinthians 3:11

"For if that which passes away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory."

For the one ceased, but the other abides continually.

2 Corinthians 3:12

"Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech."

For since when he had heard so many and so great things concerning the New [Covenant,] the hearer would be desirous of seeing this glory manifested to the eye, mark whither he hurls him, [even] to the world to come. Wherefore also he brought forward the *"hope,"* saying, *"Having therefore such a hope."* Such? Of what nature? That we have been counted worthy of greater things than Moses; not we the Apostles only, but also all the faithful. *"We use great boldness of speech."* Towards whom? Tell me. Towards God, or towards the disciples? Towards you who are receiving instruction, he says; that is, we speak every where with freedom, hiding nothing, withholding nothing, mistrusting nothing, but speaking openly; and we have not feared lest we should wound your eyesight, as Moses did that of the Jews. For that he alluded to this, hear what follows; or rather, it is necessary first to relate the history, for he himself keeps dwelling upon it. What then is the history? When, having received the Tables a second time, Moses came down, a certain glory darting from his countenance shone so much that the Jews were not able to approach and talk with him until he put a veil over his face. And thus it is written in Exodus, [Exodus 34:29-34] *"When Moses came down from the Mount, the two Tables [were] in his hands. And Moses knew not that the skin of his countenance was made glorious to behold. And they were afraid to come near him. And Moses called them, and spoke unto them. And when Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. But when he went in before the Lord to speak [with Him], he took the veil off until he came out."*

Putting them in mind then of this history, he says,

2 Corinthians 3:13

"And not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face, so that the children of Israel should not look steadfastly on the end of that which was passing away."

Now what he says is of this nature. There is no need for us to cover ourselves as Moses did; for you are able to look upon this glory which we are encircled with, although it is far greater and brighter than the other. Do you see the advance? For he that in the former Epistle said, *"I have fed you with milk, not with meat;"* says here, *"We use great boldness of speech."* And he produces Moses before them, carrying forward the discourse by means of comparison, and thus leading his hearer upwards.

And for the present he sets them above the Jews, saying that 'we have no need of a veil as he had with those he governed;' but in what comes afterwards he advances them even to the dignity itself of the Lawgiver, or even to a much greater.

Mean time, however, let us hear what follows next.

2 Corinthians 3:14

"But their minds were hardened, for until this day remains the same veil in the reading of the Old Covenant, [it] not being revealed to them that it is done away in Christ."

See what he establishes by this. For what happened then once in the case of Moses, the same happens continually in the case of the Law. What is said, therefore, is no accusation of the Law, as neither is it of Moses that he then veiled himself, but only the senseless Jews. For the law has its proper glory, but they were unable to see it. 'Why therefore are you perplexed,' he says, 'if they are unable to see this glory of the Grace, since they saw not that lesser one of Moses, nor were able to look steadfastly upon his countenance? And why are you troubled that the Jews believe not Christ, seeing at least that they believe not even the Law? For they were therefore ignorant of the Grace also, because they knew not even the Old Covenant nor the glory which was in it. For the glory of the Law is to turn [men] unto Christ.'

3. Do you see how from this consideration also he takes down the inflation of the Jews? By that in which they thought they had the advantage, namely, that Moses' face shone, he proves their grossness and groveling nature. Let them not therefore pride themselves on that, for what was that to Jews who enjoyed it not? Wherefore also he keeps on dwelling upon it, saying one while, *"The same veil in the reading of the old covenant remains,"* it *"not being revealed that it is done away in Christ:"* another while, that *"unto this day when Moses is read,"* [2 Corinthians 3:15] the same veil lies upon their heart; showing that the veil lies both on the reading and on their heart; and above, *"So that the children of Israel could*

not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which [2 Corinthians 3:7] *glory "was passing away."* Than which what could mark less worth in them? Seeing that even of a glory that is to be done away, or rather is in comparison no glory at all, they are not able to be spectators, but it is covered from them, *"so that they could not steadfastly look on the end of that which was passing away;"* that is, of the law, because it has an end; *"but their minds were hardened."* 'And what,' says one, 'has this to do with the veil then?' Because it prefigured what would be. For not only did they not then perceive; but they do not even now see the Law. And the fault lies with themselves, for the hardness is that of an unimpressible and perverse judgment. So that it is we who know the law also; but to them not only Grace, but this as well is covered with a shadow; *"For until this day the same veil upon the reading of the old covenant remains,"* he says, it *"not being revealed that it is done away in Christ."* Now what he says is this. This very thing they cannot see, that it is brought to an end, because they believe not Christ. For if it be brought to an end by Christ, as in truth it is brought to an end, and this the Law said by anticipation, how will they who receive not Christ that has done away the Law, be able to see that the Law is done away? And being incapable of seeing this, it is very plain that even of the Law itself which asserted these things, they know not the power nor the full glory. 'And where,' says one, 'did it say this that it is done away in Christ.' It did not say it merely, but also showed it by what was done. And first indeed by shutting up its sacrifices and its whole ritual in one place, the Temple, and afterwards destroying this. For had He not meant to bring these to an end and the whole of the Law concerning them, He would have done one or other of two things; either not destroyed the Temple, or having destroyed it, not forbidden to sacrifice elsewhere. But, as it is, the whole world and even

Jerusalem itself He has made forbidden ground for such religious rites; having allowed and appointed for them only the Temple. Then having destroyed this itself afterwards He showed completely even by what was done that the things of the Law are brought to an end by Christ; for the Temple also Christ destroyed. But if you will see in words as well how the Law is done away in Christ, hear the Lawgiver himself speaking thus; "*A Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you of your brethren, like me; [Deuteronomy 17:15-19] Him shall you hear in all things whatsoever He shall command you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed.*" [Acts 3:22-23] Do you see how the Law showed that it is done away in Christ? For this Prophet, that is, Christ according to the flesh, Whom Moses commanded them to hear, made to cease both sabbath and circumcision and all the other things. And David too, showing the very same thing, said concerning Christ, "*You are a Priest after the order of Melchizedek,*" [Psalm 110:4;] not after the order of Aaron. Wherefore also Paul, giving a clear interpretation of this, says, "*The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.*" [Hebrews 7:12] And in another place also he says again, "*Sacrifice and offering you would not. In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come.*" [Hebrews 10:5-7] And other testimonies far more numerous than these may be adduced out of the Old Testament, showing how the Law is done away by Christ. So that when you shall have forsaken the Law, you shall then see the Law clearly; but so long as you hold by it and believest not Christ, you know not even the Law itself. Wherefore also he added, to establish this very thing more clearly;

2 Corinthians 3:15

"But even unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their heart."

For since he said that in the reading of the Old Testament the veil remains, lest any should think that this that is said is from the obscurity of the Law, he both by other things showed even before what his meaning was, (for by saying, *"their minds were hardened,"* he shows that the fault was their own,) and, in this place too, again. For he said not, 'The veil remains on the writing,' but *"in the reading;"* (now the reading is the act of those that read;) and again, *"When Moses is read."* He showed this however with greater clearness in the expression which follows next, saying unreservedly, *"The veil lies upon their heart."* For even upon the face of Moses it lay, not because of Moses, but because of the grossness and carnal mind of these.

4. Having then suitably accused them, he points out also the manner of their correction. And what is this?

2 Corinthians 3:16

"Nevertheless when [one] shall turn to the Lord," which is, to forsake the Law, *"the veil is taken away."*

Do you see that not over the face of Moses was there that veil, but over the eyesight of the Jews? For it was done, not that the glory of Moses might be hidden, but that the Jews might not see. For they were not capable. So that in them was the deficiency, for it caused not him to be ignorant of any thing, but them. And he did not say indeed, *"when you shall let go the Law,"* but he implied it, for *"when you shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away."* To the very last he kept to the history. For when Moses talked with the Jews he kept his face covered; but when he turned to God it was uncovered. Now this was a type of that which was to come to pass, that when we have turned to the Lord, then we shall see the glory of the Law, and the face of the Lawgiver bare; yea rather, not this alone, but we shall then be even in the same rank with Moses. Do you see how he invites the Jew unto the faith, by showing, that by coming unto Grace he is able not only to see Moses, but also to stand in the very same rank with the Lawgiver. 'For not only,' he says, 'shall you look on the glory which then you saw not, but you shall yourself also be included in the same glory; yea rather, in a greater glory, even so great that that other shall not seem glory at all when compared with this.' How and in what manner? 'Because that when you have turned to the Lord and art included in the grace, you will enjoy that glory, unto which the glory of Moses, if compared, is so much less as to be no glory at all. But still, small though it be and exceedingly below that other, while you are a Jew, even this will not be vouchsafed you ; but having become a believer, it will then be vouchsafed you to behold even

that which is far greater than it.' And when he was addressing himself to the believers, he said, that *"that which was made glorious had no glory;"* but here he speaks not so; but how? *"When one shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away:"* leading him up little by little, and first setting him in Moses' rank, and then making him partake of the greater things. For when you have seen Moses in glory, then afterwards you shall also turn unto God and enjoy this greater glory.

5. See then from the beginning, how many things he has laid down, as constituting the difference and showing the superiority, not the enmity or contradiction, of the New Covenant in respect to the old. That, says he, is letter, and stone, and a ministration of death, and is done away: and yet the Jews were not even vouchsafed this glory. (Or, the glory of this.) This table is of the flesh, and spirit, and righteousness, and remains; and unto all of us is it vouchsafed, not to one only, as to Moses of the lesser then. [2 Corinthians 3:18] *"For,"* says he, *"we all with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord,"* not that of Moses. But since some maintain that the expression, *"when one shall turn to the Lord,"* is spoken of the Son, in contradiction to what is quite acknowledged; let us examine the point more accurately, having first stated the ground on which they think to establish this. What then is this? Like, says one, as it is said, *"God is a Spirit;"* [John 4:24] so also here, 'The Lord is a Spirit.' But he did not say, 'The Lord is a Spirit,' but, *"The Spirit is the Lord."* And there is a great difference between this construction and that. For when he is desirous of speaking so as you say, he does not join the article to the predicate. And besides, let us review all his discourse from the first, of whom has he spoken? For instance, when he said, *"The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life:"* [2 Corinthians 3:6] and again, *"Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God;"* [2 Corinthians 3:3] was he speaking of God, or of the

Spirit? It is very plain that it was of the Spirit; for unto It he was calling them from the letter. For lest any, hearing of the Spirit, and then reflecting that Moses turned unto the Lord, but himself unto the Spirit, should think himself to have the worse, to correct such a suspicion as this, he says,

2 Corinthians 3:17

"Now the Spirit is the Lord." This too is Lord, he says. And that you may know that he is speaking of the Paraclete, he added,

"And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

For surely you will not assert, that he says, 'And where the Lord of the Lord is.' *"Liberty,"* he said, with reference to the former bondage. Then, that you may not think that he is speaking of a time to come, he says,

2 Corinthians 3:18

"But we all, with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord."

Not that which is brought to an end, but that which remains.

"Are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

Do you see how again he places the Spirit in the rank of God, (vide infra) and raises them up to the rank of the Apostles. For he said before, *"You are the Epistle of Christ;"* and here, *"But we all with open face."* Yet they came, like Moses, bringing a law. But like as we, he says, needed no veil, so neither ye who received it. And yet, this glory is far greater, for this is not of our countenance, but of the Spirit; but nevertheless you are able as well as we to look steadfastly upon it. For they indeed could not even by a mediator, but you even without a mediator can [look steadfastly on] a greater. They were not able to look upon that of Moses, you even upon that of the Spirit. Now had the Spirit been at all inferior, He would not have set down these things as greater than those. But what is, *"we reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image."* This indeed was shown more clearly when the gifts of miracles were in operation; howbeit it is not even now difficult to see it, for one who has believing eyes. For as soon as we are baptized, the soul beams even more than the sun, being cleansed by the Spirit; and not only do we behold the glory of God, but from it also receive a sort of splendor. Just as if pure silver be turned towards the sun's rays, it will itself also shoot forth rays, not from its own natural property merely but also from the solar lustre; so also does the soul being cleansed and made brighter than silver, receive a ray

from the glory of the Spirit, and send it back. Wherefore also he says, *"Reflecting as a mirror we are transformed into the same image from glory,"* that of the Spirit, *"to glory,"* our own, that which is generated in us; and that, of such sort, as one might expect from the Lord the Spirit. See how here also he calls the Spirit, Lord. And in other places too one may see that lordship of His. For, says he, *"As they ministered and fasted unto the Lord, the Spirit said, Separate me Paul and Barnabas."* [Acts 13:2] For therefore he said, *"as they ministered unto the Lord, Separate me,"* in order to show the [Spirit's] equality in honor. And again Christ says, *"The servant knows not what his lord does;"* but even as a man knows his own things, so does the Spirit know the things of God; not by being taught [them,] for so the similitude holds not good. Also the working as He wills shows His authority and lordship. This transforms us. This suffers not to be conformed to this world; for such is the creation of which This is the Author. For as he says, *"Created in Christ Jesus,"* [Ephesians 2:10] so says he, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in my inward parts."* [Psalm 51:10, Septuagint]

6. Will you that I show you this also from the Apostles more obviously to the sense. Consider Paul, whose garments wrought: Peter, whose very shadows were mighty. [Acts 19:12; 5:15] For had they not borne a King's image and their radiancy been unapproachable, their garments and shadows had not wrought so mightily. For the garments of a king are terrible even to robbers. Would you see this beaming even through the body? *"Looking steadfastly,"* said he, *"upon the face of Stephen, they saw it as it had been the face of an angel."* [Acts 6:15] But this was nothing to the glory flashing within. For what Moses had upon his countenance, that did these carry about with them on their souls, yea 'rather' even far more. For that of Moses indeed was more obvious to the senses, but this was incorporeal. And like

as fire-bright bodies streaming down from the shining bodies upon those which lie near them, impart to them also somewhat of their own splendor, so truly does it also happen with the faithful. Therefore surely they with whom it is thus are set free from earth, and have their dreams of the things in the heavens. Woe is me! For well is it that we should here even groan bitterly, for that we who enjoy a birth so noble do not so much as know what is said, because we quickly lose the reality, and are dazzled about the objects of sense. For this glory, the unspeakable and awful, remains in us for a day or two, and then we quench it, bringing over it the winter of worldly concerns, and with the thickness of those clouds repelling its rays. For worldly things are a winter, and than winter more lowering. For not frost is engendered thence nor rain, neither does it produce mire and deep swamps; but, things than all these more grievous, it forms hell and the miseries of hell. And as in severe frost all the limbs are stiffened and are dead, so truly the soul shuddering in the winter of sins also, performs none of its proper functions, stiffened, as it were, by a frost, as to conscience. For what cold is to the body, that an evil conscience is to the soul, whence also comes cowardice. For nothing is more cowardly than the man that is rivetted to worldly things; for such an one lives the life of Cain, trembling every day. And why do I mention deaths, and losses, and offenses, and flatteries, and services? For even without these he is in fear of ten thousand vicissitudes. And his coffers indeed are full of gold, but his soul is not freed from the fear of poverty. And very reasonably. For he is moored as it were on rotten and swiftly shifting things, and even though in his own case he experienced not the reverse, yet is he undone by seeing it happen in others; and great is his cowardice, great his unmanliness. For not only is such an one spiritless as to danger, but also as to all other things. And if desire of wealth assail him, he does not like a free man beat off the assault; but like a

bought slave, does all [it bids], serving the love of money as it were a severe mistress. If again he have beheld some comely damsel, down he crouches at once made captive, and follows like a raging dog, though it behooves to do the opposite. For when you have beheld a beautiful woman, consider not how you may enjoy your lust, but how be delivered from your lust. 'And how is this possible,' says one? 'for loving is not my own doing.' Whose then? Tell me. It is from the Devil's malice. You are quite convinced that that which plots against you is a devil; wrestle then and fight with a distemper. But I cannot, he says. Come then, let us first teach you this, that what happens is from your own listlessness, and that thou at the first gavest entrance to the Devil, and now if you have a mind, with much ease may drive him off. They that commit adultery, is it from lust they commit it, or simply from desire of dangers? Plainly from lust. Do they then therefore obtain forgiveness? Certainly not. Why not? Because the sin is their own. 'But,' says one, 'why, pray, string syllogisms? For my conscience bears me witness that I wish to repel the passion; and cannot, but it keeps close, presses me sore, and afflicts me grievously.' O man, thou dost wish to repel it, but thou dost not the things repellers should do; but it is with you just as with a man in a fever, who drinking of cold streams to the fill, should say, 'How many things I devise with the wish to quench this fever, and I cannot; but they stir up my flame the more.' Let us see then whether at all thou too dost the things that inflame, yet thinkest you are devising such as quench. 'I do not,' he says. Tell me then, what have you ever essayed to do in order to quench the passion? And what is it, in fine, that will increase the passion? For even supposing we be not all of us obnoxious to these particular charges; (for more may be found who are captivated by the love of money than of beauty;) still the remedy to be proposed will be common to all, both to these and to those. For both that is an unreasonable passion, and this, is

keener and fiercer than that. When then we have proved victorious over the greater, it is very plain that we shall easily subdue the less also. 'And how is it,' says one, 'that if this be keener, all persons are not made captive by the vice, but a greater number are mad after money?' Because in the first place this last desire appears to be unattended with danger: next, although that of beauty be even fiercer, yet it is more speedily extinguished; for were it to continue like that of money, it would wholly destroy its captive.

7. Come then, let us discourse to you on this, the love of beauty, and let us see whereby the mischief is increased; for so we shall know whether the fault be ours, or not ours. And if ours, let us do everything to get the better of it; whereas if not ours, why do we afflict ourselves for nought? And why do we not pardon, but find fault, with those who are made captive by it? Whence then is this love engendered? 'From comeliness of feature,' says one, 'when she that wounds one is beautiful and of fair countenance.' It is said idly and in vain. For if it were beauty that attracted lovers, then would the maiden who is such have all men for her lovers; but if she has not all, this thing comes not of nature nor from beauty, but from unchaste eyes. For it was when by eyeing too curiously, you admired and become enamored, that you received the shaft. 'And who,' says one, 'when he sees a beautiful woman, can refrain from commending her he sees? If then admiring such things comes not of deliberate choice, it follows that love depends not on ourselves.' Stop, O man! Why do you crowd all things together, running round and round on every side, and not choosing to see the root of the evil? For I see numbers admiring and commending, who yet are not enamored. 'And how is it possible to admire and not be enamored?' Clamor not, (for this I am coming to speak of,) but wait, and you shall hear Moses admiring the son of Jacob, and saying, *"And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored exceedingly."* [Genesis 39:6, Septuagint] Was he

then enamored who speaks this? By no means. 'For,' says he, 'he did not even see him whom he commended.' We are affected, however, somewhat similarly towards beauties also which are described to us, not only which are beheld. But that thou cavil not with us on this point:— David, was he not comely exceedingly, and ruddy with beauty of eyes? [So 1 Samuel 16:12 and 17:42, Septuagint] and indeed this beauty of the eyes, is even especially, a component of beauteousness of more despotic power than any. Was then any one enamored of him? By no means. Then to be also enamored comes not [necessarily] with admiring. For many too have had mothers blooming exceedingly in beauty of person. What then? Were their children enamored of them? Away with the thought! But they admire what they see, yet fall not into a shameful love. 'No, for again this good provision is Nature's.' How Nature's? Tell me. 'Because they are mothers,' he says. Then do you not hear that Persians, and that without any compulsion, have intercourse with their own mothers, and that not one or two individuals, but a whole nation? But independent of these, it is hence also evident that this distemper comes not from bloom of person nor from beauty merely, but from a listless and wandering soul. Many at least it is certain, oftentimes, having passed over thousands of well-favored women, have given themselves to such as were plainer. Whence it is evident that love depends not on beauty: for otherwise, surely, those would have caught such as fell into it, before these. What then is its cause? 'For,' says he, 'if it be not beauty that causes love, whence has it its beginning and its root? From a wicked Demon?' It has it indeed, thence also, but this is not what we are inquiring about, but whether we ourselves too be not the cause. For the plot is not theirs only, but along with them our own too in the first place. For from no other source is this wicked distemper so engendered as from habit, and flattering words, and leisure, and idleness, and having nothing to do. For

great, great is the tyranny of habit, even so great as to be moulded into a necessity of nature. Now if it be habit's to gender it, it is very evident that it is also [habit's] to extinguish it. Certain it is at least that many have in this way ceased to be enamored, from not seeing those they were enamored of. Now this for a little while indeed appears to be a bitter thing and exceedingly unpleasant; but in time it becomes pleasant, and even were they to wish it, they could not afterwards resume the passion.

8. How then, when without habit one is taken captive at first sight? Here also it is indolence of body, or self-indulgence, and not attending to one's duties, nor being occupied in necessary business. For such an one, wandering about like some vagabond, is transfixed by any wickedness; and like a child let loose, any one that likes makes such a soul his slave. For since it is its wont to be at work, when you stop its workings in what is good, seeing it cannot be unemployed, it is compelled to engender what is otherwise. For just as the earth, when it is not sown nor planted, sends up simply weeds; so also the soul, when it has nought of necessary things to do, being desirous by all means to be doing, gives herself unto wicked deeds. And as the eye never ceases from seeing, and therefore will see wicked things, when good things are not set before it; so also does the thought, when it secludes itself from necessary things, busy itself thereafter about such as are unprofitable. For that even the first assault occupation and thought are able to beat off, is evident from many things. When then you have looked on a beautiful woman, and were moved towards her, look no more, and you are delivered. 'And how shall I be able to look no more,' says he, 'when drawn by that desire?' Give yourself to other things which may distract the soul, to books, to necessary cares, to protecting others, to assisting the injured, to prayers, to the wisdom which considers the things to come: with such things as these bind down your soul. By these means,

not only shall you cure a recent wound, but shall wear away a confirmed and inveterate one easily. For if an insult according to the proverb prevails with the lover to give over his love, how shall not these spiritual charms much rather be victorious over the evil, if only we have a mind to stand aloof. But if we are always conversing and associating with those who shoot such arrows at us, and talking with them and hearing what they say, we cherish the distemper. How then do you expect the fire to be quenched, when day by day you stir up the flame?

And let this that we have said about habit be our speech unto the young; since to those who are men and taught in heavenly wisdom, stronger than all is the fear of God, the remembrance of hell, the desire of the kingdom of heaven; for these are able to quench the fire. And along with these take that thought also, that what you see is nothing else than rheum, and blood, and juices of decomposed food. 'Yet a gladsome thing is the bloom of the features,' says one. But nothing is more gladsome than the blossoms of the earth, and these too rot and wither. Do not then in this either give heed to the bloom, but pass on further inward in your thought, and stripping off that beauteous skin in your thought, scan curiously what lies beneath it. For even the bodies of the dropsical shine brightly, and the surface has nothing offensive; but still, shocked with the thought of the humor stored within we cannot love such persons. 'But languishing is the eye and glancing, and beautifully arched the brow, and dark the lashes, and soft the eyeball, and serene the look.' But see how even this itself again is nothing else than nerves, and veins, and membranes, and arteries. Think too, I pray, of this beautiful eye, when diseased and old, wasting with despair, swelling with anger, how hateful to the sight it is, how quickly it perishes, how sooner even than pictured ones, it is effaced. From these things make your mind pass to the true beauty. 'But,' says he, 'I do not see

beauty of soul.' But if you will choose, you shall see it: and as the absent beautiful may be with the mind admired, though with one's eyes unseen, so it is possible to see without eyes beauty of soul. Have you not often sketched a beauteous form, and felt moved unto the drawing? Image also now beauty of soul, and revel in that loveliness. 'But,' says he, 'I do not see things incorporeal.' And yet we see these, rather than the corporeal, with the mind. Therefore it is, for instance, that although we see them not, we admire angels also and archangels, and habits of character, and virtue of soul. And if you see a man considerate and moderate, you will more admire him than that beautiful countenance. And if you see one insulted, yet bearing it; wronged, yet giving way, admire and love such, even though they be stricken in age. For such a thing is the beauty of the soul; even in old age it has many enamored of it, and it never fades, but blooms for ever. In order then that we also may gain this beauty, let us go in quest of those that have it, and be enamored of them. For so shall we too be able, when we have attained this beauty, to obtain the good things eternal, whereof may all we partake, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be glory and might, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 8 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 4:1-2

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy we faint not, but we have renounced the hidden things of shame.

Seeing he had uttered great things and had set himself and all the faithful before Moses, aware of the height and greatness of what he had said, observe how he moderates his tone again. For it was necessary on account of the false Apostles to exalt his hearers also, and again to calm down that swelling; yet not to do it away, since this would be a trifler's part. Wherefore he manages this in another manner, by showing that not of their own merits was it, but all of the loving-kindness of God. Wherefore also he says, "*Therefore seeing we have this ministry.*" For nothing more did we contribute, except that we became ministers, and made ourselves subservient to the things given by God. Wherefore he said not 'largess ,' nor 'supply ,' but 'ministry.' Nor was he contented with this even, but added, "*as we obtained mercy.*" For even this itself, he says, the ministering to these things, is of mercy and loving-kindness. Yet it is mercy's to deliver from evils, not to give so many good things besides: but the mercy of God includes this also.

"*We faint not.*" And this indeed is to be imputed to His loving-kindness. For the clause, "*as we obtained mercy,*" take to be said with reference both to the "*ministry,*" and to the words, "*we faint not.*" And observe how earnestly he endeavors to lower his own things. 'For,' says he, 'that one who has been counted worthy of such and so great things, and this from mercy only and loving-kindness, should show forth such labors, and

undergo dangers, and endure temptations, is no great matter. Therefore we not only do not sink down, but we even rejoice and speak boldly.' For instance, having said, "*we faint not*," he added,

2 Corinthians 4:2. "*But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully.*"

And what are "*the hidden things of shame*?" We do not, he says, profess and promise great things, and in our actions show other things, as they do; wherefore also he said, "*You look on things after the outward appearance*;" but such we are as we appear, not having any duplicity, nor saying and doing such things as we ought to hide and veil over with shame and blushes. And to interpret this, he added, "*not walking in craftiness.*" For what they considered to be praise, that he proves to be shameful and worthy of scorn. But what is, "*in craftiness*?" They had the reputation of taking nothing, but they took and kept it secret; they had the character of saints and approved Apostles, but they were full of numberless evil things. But, says he, "*we have renounced*" these things: (for these are what he also calls the "*hidden things of shame*;" being such as we appear to be, and keeping nothing veiled over. And that not in this [our] life only, but also in the Preaching itself. For this is, "*nor handling the word of God deceitfully.*"

"But by the manifestation of the truth."

Not by the countenance and the outward show, but by the very proof of our actions.

"Commending ourselves to every man's conscience."

For not to believers only, but also to unbelievers, we are manifest; lying open unto all that they may test our actions, as they may choose; and by this we commend ourselves, not by acting a part and carrying about a specious mask. We say then, that we take nothing, and we call you for witnesses; we say that we are conscious of no wickedness, and of this again

we derive the testimony from you, not as they (sc. false Apostles) who, veiling over their things, deceive many. But we both set forth our life before all men; and we lay bare the Preaching, so that all comprehend it.

2. Then because the unbelievers knew not its power, he added, this is no fault of ours, but of their own insensibility. Wherefore also he says,

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

"But if our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are lost; in whom the God of this world has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving."

As he said also before, *"To some a savor from death unto death, to others a savor from life unto life,"* [2 Corinthians 2:16] so he says here too. But what is *"the God of this world?"* Those that are infected with Marcion's notions, affirm that this is said of the Creator, the just only, and not good; for they say that there is a certain God, just and not good. But the Manichees say that the devil is here intended, desiring from this passage to introduce another creator of the world besides the True One, very senselessly. For the Scripture uses often to employ the term God, not in regard of the dignity of that so designated, but of the weakness of those in subjection to it; as when it calls Mammon lord, and the belly god. But neither is the belly therefore God, nor Mammon Lord, save only of those who bow down themselves to them. But we assert of this passage that it is spoken neither of the devil nor of another creator, but of the God of the Universe, and that it is to be read thus; *"God has blinded the minds of the unbelievers of this world."* For the world to come has no unbelievers; but the present only. But if any one should read it even otherwise, as, for instance, *"the God of this world;"* neither does this afford any handle, for this does not show Him to be the God of this world only. For He is called *"the God of Heaven,"* [Psalm 136:26, etc.] yet is He not the God of Heaven only; and we say, 'God of the present day;' yet we say this not as limiting His power to it alone. And moreover He is called the *"God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;"* [Exodus 3:6, etc.] and yet He is not the God of them alone. And one may find many other like testimonies

in the Scriptures. How then *"has"* He *"blinded"* them? Not by working unto this end; away with the thought! But by suffering and allowing it. For it is usual with the Scripture so to speak, as when it says, *"God gave them up unto a reprobate mind."* For when they themselves first disbelieved, and rendered themselves unworthy to see the mysteries; He Himself also thereafter permitted it. But what did it behoove Him to do? To draw them by force, and reveal to those who would not see? But so they would have despised the more, and would not have seen either. Wherefore also he added,

"That the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ should not dawn upon them."

Not that they might disbelieve in God, but that unbelief might not see what are the things within, as also He enjoined us, commanding not to *"cast the pearls before the swine."* [Matthew 7:6] For had He revealed even to those who disbelieve, their disease would have been the rather aggravated. For if one compel a man laboring under ophthalmia to look at the sunbeams, he the rather increases his infirmity. Therefore the physicians even shut them up in darkness, so as not to aggravate their disorder. So then here also we must consider that these persons indeed became unbelievers of themselves, but having become so, they no longer saw the secret things of the Gospel, God thenceforth excluding its beams from them. As also he said to the disciples, *"Therefore I speak unto them in proverbs , [Matthew 13:13] because hearing they hear not."* But what I say may also become clearer by an example; suppose a Greek, accounting our religion to be fables. This man then, how will he be more advantaged? By going in and seeing the mysteries, or by remaining without? Therefore he says, *"That the light should not dawn upon them,"* still dwelling on the history of Moses. For what happened to the Jews in his case, this happens to all unbelievers in the

case of the Gospel. And what is that which is overshadowed, and which is not illuminated unto them? Hear him saying, *"That the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the Image of God, should not dawn upon them."* Namely, that the Cross is the salvation of the world, and His glory; that this Crucified One himself is about to come with much splendor; all the other things, those present, those to come, those seen, those not seen, the unspeakable splendor of the things looked for. Therefore also he said, *"dawn,"* that you may not look for the whole here, for that which is [here] given is only, as it were, a little dawning of the Spirit. Therefore, also above as indicating this, he spoke of *"savor;"* [2 Corinthians 2:16] and again, *"earnest,"* [2 Corinthians 1:25] showing that the greater part remains there. But nevertheless all these things have been hidden from them; but had been hidden because they disbelieved first. Then to show that they are not only ignorant of the Glory of Christ, but of the Father's also, since they know not His, he added, *"Who is the Image of God?"* For do not halt at Christ only. For as by Him you see the Father, so if you are ignorant of His Glory, neither will you know the Father's.

2 Corinthians 4:5

3. *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."*

And what is the nature of the connection there? What has this in common with what has been said? He either hints at them as exalting themselves, and persuading the disciples to name themselves after them: as he said in the former Epistle, *"I am of Paul and I of Apollos;"* or else another thing of the gravest character. What then is this? Seeing that they waged fierce war against them, and plotted against them on every side; 'Is it,' he says, 'with us ye fight and war? [Nay but] with Him that is preached by us, *"for we preach not ourselves."* I am a servant, I am [but] a minister even of those who receive the Gospel, transacting every thing for Another, and for His glory doing whatsoever I do. So that in warring against me you throw down what is His. For so far am I from turning to my own personal advantage any part of the Gospel, that I will not refuse to be even your servant for Christ's sake; seeing it seemed good to Him so to honor you, seeing He so loved you and did all things for you.' Wherefore also he says, *"and ourselves your servants for Christ's sake."* Do you see a soul pure from glory? 'For in truth,' says he, 'we not only do not take to ourselves anything of our Master's, but even to you we submit ourselves for His sake.'

2 Corinthians 4:6

"Seeing it is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in your hearts."

Do you see how again to those who were desirous of seeing that surpassing glory, I mean that of Moses, he shows it flashing with added lustre ? 'As upon the face of Moses, so also has it shined unto your hearts,' he says. And first, he puts them in mind of what was made in the beginning of the Creation, sensible light and darkness sensible, showing that this creation is greater. And where commanded He light to shine out of darkness? In the beginning and in prelude to the Creation; for, says he, *"Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."* Howbeit then indeed He said, *"Let it be, and it was:"* but now He said nothing, but Himself became Light for us. For he said not, 'has also now commanded,' but *"has" Himself "shined."* Therefore neither do we see sensible objects by the shining of this Light, but God Himself through Christ. Do you see the invariableness in the Trinity? For of the Spirit, he says, *"But we all with unveiled face reflecting in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory even as from the Lord the Spirit."* [2 Corinthians 3:18] And of the Son; *"That the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the Image of God, should not dawn upon them."* [2 Corinthians 4:4] And of the Father; *"He that said Light shall shine out of darkness shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."* For as when he had said, *"Of the Gospel of the glory of Christ,"* he added, *"Who is the Image of God,"* showing that they were deprived of His glory also; So after saying, *"the knowledge of God,"* he added, in the face of Christ, to

show that through Him we know the Father, even as through the Spirit also we are brought unto Him.

2 Corinthians 4:7

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves."

For seeing he had spoken many and great things of the unspeakable glory, lest any should say, 'And how enjoying so great a glory remain we in a mortal body?' he says, that this very thing is indeed the chiefest marvel and a very great example of the power of God, that an earthen vessel has been enabled to bear so great a brightness and to keep so high a treasure. And therefore as admiring this, he said, *"That the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves;"* again alluding to those who gloried in themselves. For both the greatness of the things given and the weakness of them that receive show His power; in that He not only gave great things, but also to those who are little. For he used the term *"earthen"* in allusion to the frailty of our mortal nature, and to declare the weakness of our flesh. For it is nothing better constituted than earthenware; so is it soon damaged, and by death and disease and variations of temperature and ten thousand other things easily dissolved. And he said these things both to take down their inflation, and to show to all that none of the things we hold is human. For then is the power of God chiefly conspicuous, when by vile it works mighty things. Wherefore also in another place He said, *"For My power is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] And indeed in the Old [Testament] whole hosts of barbarians were turned to flight by gnats and flies, wherefore also He calls the caterpillar His mighty force ; [Joel 2:25] and in the beginning, by only confounding tongues, He put a stop to that great tower in Babylon. And in their wars too, at one time, He routed innumerable hosts by three hundred men; at another He overthrew cities by

trumpets; and afterwards by a little and poor stripling, David, He turned to flight the whole army of barbarians. So then here also, sending forth twelve only He overcame the world; twelve, and those, persecuted, warred against.

4. Let us then be amazed at the Power of God, admire, adore it. Let us ask Jews, let us ask Greeks, who persuaded the whole world to desert from their fathers' usages, and to go over to another way of life? The fisherman, or the tentmaker? The publican, or the unlearned and ignorant? And how can these things stand with reason, except it were Divine Power which achieves all by their means? And what too did they say to persuade them? 'Be baptized in the Name of The Crucified.' Of what kind of man? One they had not seen nor looked upon. But nevertheless saying and preaching these things, they persuaded them that they who gave them oracles, and whom they had received by tradition from their forefathers, were no Gods: while this Christ, He Who was nailed [to the wood,] drew them all unto Himself. And yet that He was indeed crucified and buried, was manifest in a manner to all; but that He was risen again, none save a few saw. But still of this too they persuaded those who had not beheld; and not that He rose again only, but that He ascended also into Heaven, and comes to judge quick and dead. Whence then the persuasiveness of these sayings, tell me? From nothing else than the Power of God. For, in the first place, innovation itself was offensive to all; but when too one innovates in such things, the matter becomes more grievous: when one tears up the foundations of ancient custom, when one plucks laws from their seat. And besides all this, neither did the heralds seem worthy of credit, but they were both of a nation hated among all men, and were timorous and ignorant. Whence then overcame they the world? Whence cast they out you, and those your forefathers who were reputed to be philosophers, along with their very gods? Is it not quite evident that it was from having God with them? For

neither are these successes of human, but of some divine and unspeakable, power. 'No,' says one, 'but of witchcraft.' Then certainly ought the power of the demons to have increased and the worship of idols to have extended. How then have they been overthrown and have vanished, and our things the reverse of these? So that from this even it is manifest that what was done was the decree of God; and not from the Preaching only, but also from the title of life itself. For when was virginity so largely planted every where in the world? When contempt of wealth, and of life, and of all things besides? For such as were wicked and wizards, would have effected nothing like this, but the contrary in all respects: while these introduced among us the life of angels; and not introduced merely, but established it in our own land, in that of the barbarians, in the very extremities of the earth. Whence it is manifest that it was the power of Christ every where that effected all, which every where shines, and swifter than any lightning illumines the hearts of men. All these things, then, considering, and accepting what has been done as a clear proof of the promise of the things to come, worship with us the invincible might of The Crucified, that you may both escape the intolerable punishments, and obtain the everlasting kingdom; of which may all we partake through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 9 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 4:8-9

We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken.

He still dwells upon proving that the whole work is to be ascribed to the power of God, repressing the highmindedness of those that glory in themselves. 'For not this only,' says he, 'is marvelous, that we keep this treasure in earthen vessels, but that even when enduring ten thousand hardships, and battered on every side, we [still] preserve and lose it not. Yet though there were a vessel of adamant, it would neither have been strong enough to carry so vast a treasure, nor have sufficed against so many machinations; yet, as it is, it both bears it and suffers no harm, through God's grace.' For, "*we are pressed on every side,*" says he, "*but not straitened.*" What is, "*on every side?*"

'In respect of our foes, in respect of our friends, in respect of necessities, in respect of other needs, by them which be hostile, by them of our own household.' "*Yet not straitened.*" And see how he speaks contrarieties, that thence also he may show the strength of God. For, "*we are pressed on every side, yet not straitened,*" says he; "*perplexed, yet not unto despair;*" that is, 'we do not quite fall off. For we are often, indeed, wrong in our calculations, and miss our aim, yet not so as to fall away from what is set before us: for these things are permitted by God for our discipline, not for our defeat.'

2 Corinthians 4:9. "*Pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed.*" For these trials do indeed befall, but not the consequences of the

trials. And this indeed through the power and Grace of God. In other places indeed he says that these things were permitted in order both to their own humble-mindedness, and to the safety of others: for "*that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn,*" [2 Corinthians 12:7] he says: and again, "*Lest any man should account of me above that which he sees me to be, or hears from me;*" and in another place again, "*that we should not trust in ourselves:*" [2 Corinthians 1:9] here, however, that the power of God might be manifested. Do you see how great the gain of his trials? For it both showed the power of God, and more disclosed His grace. For, says He, "*My grace is sufficient for you.*" [2 Corinthians 12:9] It also anointed them unto lowliness of mind, and prepared them for keeping down the rest, and made them to be more hardy. "*For patience,*" says he, "*works probation, and probation hope.*" [Romans 5:4] For they who had fallen into ten thousand dangers and through the hope they had in God had been recovered , were taught to hold by it more and more in all things.

2 Corinthians 4:10

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body."

And what is the *"dying of the Lord Jesus,"* which they bare about? Their daily deaths by which also the resurrection was showed. 'For if any believe not,' he says, 'that Jesus died and rose again, beholding us every day die and rise again, let him believe henceforward in the resurrection.' Do you see how he has discovered yet another reason for the trials? What then is this reason? *"That his life also may be manifested in our body."* He says, 'by snatching us out of the perils. So that this which seems a mark of weakness and destitution, this, [I say,] proclaims His resurrection. For His power had not so appeared in our suffering no unpleasantness, as it is now shown in our suffering indeed, but without being overcome.'

2 Corinthians 4:11

"For we which live are also delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in us in our mortal flesh."

For every where when he has said any thing obscure, he interprets himself again. So he has done here also, giving a clear interpretation of this which I have cited. 'For therefore, "*we are delivered,*"' he says, 'in other words, we bear about His dying that the power of His life may be made manifest, who permits not mortal flesh, though undergoing so great sufferings, to be overcome by the snowstorm of these calamities.' And it may be taken too in another way. How? As he says in another place, "*If we die with him, we shall also live with Him.*" [2 Timothy 2:11] 'For as we endure His dying now, and choose while living to die for His sake: so also will he choose, when we are dead, to beget us then unto life. For if we from life come into death, He also will from death lead us by the hand into life.'

2 Corinthians 4:12

"So then death works in us, but life in you."

Speaking no more of death in the strict sense , but of trials and of rest. 'For we indeed,' he says, 'are in perils and trials, but you in rest; reaping the life which is the fruit of these perils. And we indeed endure the dangerous, but you enjoy the good things; for you undergo not so great trials.'

2 Corinthians 4:13

2. *"But having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak; that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus."* [Psalm 116:10]

He has reminded us of a Psalm which abounds in heavenly wisdom, and is especially fitted to encourage in dangers. For this saying that just man uttered when he was in great dangers, and from which there was no other possibility of recovery than by the aid of God. Since then kindred circumstances are most effective in comforting, therefore he says, *"having the same Spirit;"* that is, 'by the same succor by which he was saved, we also are saved; by the Spirit through which he spoke, we also speak.'

Whence he shows, that between the New and Old Covenants great harmony exists, and that the same Spirit wrought in either; and that not we alone are in dangers, but all those of old were so too; and that we must find a remedy through faith and hope, and not seek at once to be released from what is laid upon us. For having showed by arguments the resurrection and the life, and that the danger was not a mark of helplessness or destitution; he thenceforward brings in faith also, and to it commits the whole. But still of this also, he furnishes a proof, the resurrection, namely, of Christ, saying, *"we also believe, and therefore also we speak."* What do we believe? Tell me.

2 Corinthians 4:14-15

"That He which raised up Jesus, shall raise up also, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound unto the glory of God."

Again, he fills them with lofty thoughts , that they may not hold themselves indebted to men, I mean to the false Apostles. For the whole is of God Who wills to bestow upon many, so that the grace may appear the greater. For your sakes, therefore, was the resurrection and all the other things. For He did not these things for the sake of one only, but of all.

2 Corinthians 4:16

"Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

How does it decay? Being scourged, being persecuted, suffering ten thousand extremities. *"Yet the inward man is renewed day by day."* How is it renewed? By faith, by hope, by a forward will, finally, by braving those extremities. For in proportion as the body suffers ten thousand things, in the like proportion has the soul goodlier hopes and becomes brighter, like gold refined in the fire more and more. And see how he brings to nothing the sorrows of this present life.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

"For the light affliction," he says, "which is for the moment, works more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

Having closed the question by a reference to hope, (and, as he said in his Epistle to the Romans, *"We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope;"* [Romans 8:24] establishing the same point here also,) he sets side by side the things present with the things to come, the momentary with the eternal, the light with the weighty, the affliction with the glory. And neither is he content with this, but he adds another expression, doubling it and saying, *"more and more exceedingly."* Next he also shows the mode how so great afflictions are light. How then light? *"While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen."* So will both this present be light and that future great, if we withdraw ourselves from the things that are seen. *"For the things that are seen are temporal."* [2 Corinthians 4:18] Therefore the afflictions are so too. *"But the things that are not seen are eternal."* Therefore the crowns are so also. And he said not the afflictions are so, but *"the things that are seen;"* all of them, whether punishment or rest, so that we should be neither puffed up by the one nor overborne by the other. And therefore when speaking of the things to come, he said not the kingdom is eternal; but, *"the things which are not seen are eternal,"* whether they be a kingdom, or again punishment; so as both to alarm by the one and to encourage by the other.

3. Since then *"the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal,"* let us look to them. For what excuse even can we have, if we choose the temporal instead of the eternal? For even if the

present be pleasurable, yet it is not abiding; while the woe it entails is abiding and irremissible. For what excuse will they have who have been counted worthy of the Spirit and have enjoyed so great a gift, if they become of grovelling mind and fall down to the earth. For I hear many saying these words worthy of all scorn, 'Give me today and take tomorrow.' 'For,' says one, 'if indeed there be such things there as you affirm, then it is one for one; but if there be no such thing at all, then it is two for nothing.' What can be more lawless than these words? Or what more idle prating? We are discoursing about Heaven and those unspeakable good things; and you bring forth unto us the terms of the race-course, yet art not ashamed nor hidest your face, while uttering such things as befit maniacs? Blushest thou not that art so rivetted to the present things? Will you not cease from being distraught and beside yourself, and in youth a dotard? Were Greeks indeed to talk in this way, it were no marvel: but that believers should vent such dotage, of what forgiveness does it admit? For do you hold those immortal hopes in utter suspicion? Do you think these things to be utterly doubtful? And in what are these things deserving of pardon? 'And who has come,' says one, 'and brought back word what is there?' Of men indeed not any one, but God, more trustworthy than all, has declared these things. But you behold not what is there. Neither do you see God. Will you then deny that there is a God, because you see Him not? 'Yes,' he replies, 'I firmly believe there is a God.' If then an infidel should ask you, 'And who came from Heaven and brought back word of this?' what will you answer? Whence do you know that there is a God? 'From the things that are seen,' he answers, 'from the fair order existing through the whole creation, from its being manifest to all.' Therefore receive also in the same way the doctrine of the judgment. 'How?' he asks. I will question you, and do thou answer me. Is this God just, and will He render to each according to his deserving?

Or, on the contrary, does He will the wicked should live happily and in luxury, and the good in the contrary things? 'By no means,' he answers, 'for man even would not feel thus.' Where then shall they who have done virtuously here, enjoy the things that be good? And where the wicked the opposites, except there is to be a life and retribution hereafter? Do you see that at present it is one for one, and not two for one. But I will show you, as I proceed, that it is not even one against one, but it shall be for the righteous two for nothing; and for the sinners and these that live here riotously, quite the contrary. For they that have lived riotously here have received not even one for one; but those who pass their life in virtue two for nothing. For who are at in rest, they that have abused this present life, or they that followed heavenly wisdom? Perhaps you will say the former, but I prove it of the latter, summoning for my witnesses those very men that have enjoyed these present things; and they will not be so shameless as to deny what I am going to say. For oftentimes have they imprecated curses upon matchmakers and upon the day that their bridal chamber was wreathed, and have proclaimed them happy who have not married. Many too of the young, even when they might have married, have refused for no other reason than the troublesomeness of the thing. And this I say, not as accusing marriage; for it is "*honorable*;" [Hebrews 13:4] but those who have used it amiss. Now if they who have lived a married life, often considered their life not worth the living; what shall we say of those who have been swept down into whores' deep pits, and are more slavishly and wretchedly treated than any captive? What of those who have grown rotten in luxury and have enveloped their bodies with a thousand diseases? 'But it is a pleasure to be had in honor.' Yea, rather, nothing is bitterer than this slavery. For he that seeks vain honor is more servile than any slave, and desirous of pleasing any body; but he that treads it under foot is superior to all, who cares not for

the glory that comes from others. 'But the possession of wealth is desirable.' Yet we have often shown that they who are loose from it and have nothing, enjoy greater riches and repose. 'But to be drunken is pleasant.' But who will say this? Surely then if to be without riches is pleasanter than to have them, and not to marry than to marry, and not to seek vainglory than to seek it, and not to live luxuriously than to live so; even in this world they who are not riveted to those present things have the advantage. And as yet I say not how that the former, even though he be racked with ten thousand tortures, has that good hope to carry him through: while the latter, even though he is in the enjoyment of a thousand delights, has the fear of the future disquieting and confounding his pleasure. For this, too, is no light sort of punishment; nor therefore the contrary, of enjoyment and repose. And besides these there is a third sort. And what is this? In that the things of worldly delight do not even while they are present appear such, being refuted both by nature and time; but the others not only are, but also abide immovable. Do you see that we shall be able to put not two for nothing only, but three even, and five, and ten, and twenty, and ten thousand for nothing? But that you may learn this same truth by an example also—the rich man and Lazarus,— the one enjoyed the things present, the other those to come. [Luke 16:19, etc.] Seems it then to you to be one and one, to be punished throughout all time, and to be an hungered for a little season? To be diseased in your corruptible body, and to scorch miserably in an undying one? To be crowned and live in undying delights after that little sickness, and to be endlessly tormented after that short enjoyment of his goods. And who will say this? For what will you we should compare? The quantity? The quality? The rank? The decision of God concerning each? How long will you utter the words of beetles that are for ever wallowing in dung! For these are not the words of reasoning men, to throw away a soul which is so

precious for nothing, when there needs little labor to receive heaven. Will you that I teach you also in another way that there is an awful tribunal there? Open the doors of your conscience, and behold the judge that sits in your heart. Now if you condemn yourself, although a lover of yourself, and canst not refrain from passing a righteous verdict, will not God much rather make great provision for that which is just, and pass that impartial judgment upon all; or will He permit everything to go on loosely and at random? And who will say this? No one; but both Greeks and barbarians, both poets and philosophers, yea the whole race of men in this agree with us, though differing in particulars, and affirm that there are tribunals of some sort in Hades; so manifest and uncontroverted is the thing.

4. 'And wherefore,' says one, 'does he not punish here?' That He may display that longsuffering of His, and may offer to us the salvation that comes by repentance, and not make our race to be swept away, nor pluck away those who by an excellent change are able to be saved, before that salvation. For if he instantly punished upon the commission of sins, and destroyed, how should Paul have been saved, how should Peter, the chief teachers of the world? How should David have reaped the salvation that came by his repentance? How the Galatians? How many others? For this reason then He neither exacts the penalty from all here, (but only from some out of all,) nor yet there from all, but from one here, and from another there; that He may both rouse those who are exceedingly insensible by means of those whom He punishes, and may cause them to expect the future things by those whom He punishes not. Or do you not see many punished here, as those, for instance, who were buried under the ruins of that tower; [Luke 13:4-7] as those whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices; as those who perished by an untimely death among the Corinthians, because they partook unworthily of the mysteries [1

Corinthians 11:30]; as Pharaoh; as those of the Jews who were slain by the barbarians; as many others, both then, and now, and continually? And yet others too, having sinned in many things, departed without suffering the penalty here; as the rich man in the story of Lazarus; as many others. [Luke 16] Now these things He does, both to arouse those who quite disbelieve in the things to come, and to make those who do believe and are careless more diligent. *"For God is a righteous Judge, and strong, and longsuffering, and visits not with wrath every day."* [Psalm 7:11. Septuagint] But if we abuse His longsuffering, there will come a time when He will no more be longsuffering even for a little, but will straightway inflict the penalty.

Let us not then, in order that for a single moment (for such is this present life) we may live luxuriously, draw on ourselves punishment through endless ages: but let us toil for a moment, that we may be crowned for ever. See ye not that even in worldly things most men act in this manner; and choose a brief toil in order to a long rest, even though the opposite falls out unto them? For in this life indeed there is an equal portion of toils and reward; yea, often, on the contrary, the toil is endless while the fruit is little, or not even a little; but in the case of the kingdom conversely, the labor is little while the pleasure is great and boundless. For consider: the husbandman wearies himself the whole year through, and at the very end of his hope of times misses of the fruit of those many toils. The shipmaster again and the soldier, until extreme old age, are occupied with wars and labors; and oftentimes has each of them departed, the one with the loss of his wealthy cargoes, the other, along with victory, of life itself. What excuse then shall we have, tell me, if in worldly matters indeed we prefer what is laborious in order that we may rest for a little, or not a little even; (for the hope of this is uncertain;) but in spiritual things do the converse of this and draw upon ourselves unutterable punishment for a little sloth? Wherefore I

beseech you all, though late, yet still at length to recover from this frenzy. For none shall deliver us in that day; neither brother, nor father, nor child, nor friend, nor neighbor, nor any other: but if our works play us false, all will be over and we must needs perish. How many lamentations did that rich man make, and besought the Patriarch and begged that Lazarus might be sent! But hear what Abraham said unto him: *"There is a gulf between us and you, so that they who wish to go forth cannot pass there."* [Luke 16:26] How many petitions did those virgins make to their fellows for a little oil! But hear what they also say; *"Peradventure there will not be enough for you and for us;"* [Matthew 25:9] and none was able to bring them in to the bridal chamber.

Thinking then on these things let us also be careful of that which is our life. For mention what toils soever and bring forward besides what punishment soever; all these combined will be nothing in comparison of the good things to come. Instance therefore, if you will, fire and steel and wild beasts, and if there be anything sorer than these; but yet these are not even a shadow compared with those torments. For these things when applied in excess become then especially light, making the release speedy ; since the body suffices not unto intensity at once and long continuance of suffering; but both meet together, both prolongation and excess, alike in the good and the grievous. Whilst we have time then, *"let us come before His presence with confession,"* [Psalm 95:2, Septuagint] that in that day we may behold Him gentle and serene, that we may escape altogether those threat-bearing Powers. Do you see not how this world's soldiers who perform the bidding of those in authority drag men about; how they chain, how they scourge them, how they pierce their sides, how they apply torches to their torments, how they dismember them? Yet all these things are but plays and joke unto those punishments. For these punishments are temporal; but there neither

the worm dies nor is the fire quenched: for that body of all is incorruptible, which is then to be raised up. But God grant that we may never learn these things by experience; but that these fearful things may never be nearer unto us than in the mention of them ; and that we be not delivered over to those tormentors, but may be hence made wise. How many things shall we then say in accusation of ourselves! How many lamentations shall we utter! How many groans! But it will thenceforth be of no avail. For neither can sailors, when the ship has gone to pieces and has sunk, thereafter be of any service; nor physicians when the patient is departed; but they will often say indeed that so and so ought to have been done; but all is fruitless and in vain. For as long indeed as hopes remain from amendment, one ought both to say and do every thing: but when we have no longer any thing in our power, all being quite ruined, it is to no purpose that all is said and done. For even then Jews will then say, "*Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord:*" [Matthew 23:39] but they will be able to reap none advantage of this cry towards escaping their punishment; for when they ought to have said it, they said it not. That then this be not the case with us in respect to our life, let us now and from this time reform that we may stand at the tribunal of Christ with all boldness; whereunto may all of us attain through the grace and love toward men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 10 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:1

For we know, that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

Again he arouses their zeal because many trials drew on. For it was likely that they, in consequence of his absence, were weaker in respect to this [need]. What then says he? One ought not to wonder that we suffer affliction; nor to be confounded, for we even reap many gains thereby. And some of these he mentioned before; for instance, that we *"bear about the dying of Jesus,"* and present the greatest proof of His power: for he says, *"that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God:"* and we exhibit a clear proof of the Resurrection, for, says he, *"that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."* But since along with these things he said that our inward man is thus made better also; for *"though our outward man is decaying,"* says he, *"yet the inward man is renewed day by day;"* showing again that this being scourged and persecuted is proportionately useful, he adds, that when this is done thoroughly, then the countless good things will spring up for those who have endured these things. For lest when you hear that your outward man perishes, you should grieve; he says, that when this is completely effected, then most of all shall you rejoice and shall come unto a better inheritance. So that not only ought not one to grieve at its perishing now in part, but even earnestly to seek for the completion of that destruction, for this most conducts you to immortality. Wherefore also he added, *"For we know, that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be*

dissolved: we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." For since he is urging again the doctrine of the Resurrection in respect to which they were particularly unsound; he calls in aid the judgment of his hearers also, and so establishes it; not however in the same way as before, but, as it were, arriving at it out of another subject: (for they had been already corrected:) and says, "*We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" Some indeed say that the 'earthly house' is this world; But I should maintain that he alludes rather to the body. But observe, I pray, how by the terms [he uses,] he shows the superiority of the future things to the present. For having said "*earthly*" he has opposed to it "*the heavenly*;" having said, "*house of tabernacle*," thereby declaring both that it is easily taken to pieces and is temporary, he has opposed to it the "*eternal*," for the name "*tabernacle*" often times denotes temporariness. Wherefore He says, "*In My Father's house are many abiding places.*" [John 14:2] But if He anywhere also calls the resting places of the saints tabernacles; He calls them not tabernacles simply, but adds an epithet; for he said not, that "*they may receive you*" into their tabernacles, but "*into the eternal tabernacles.*" [Luke 16:9] Moreover also in that he said, "*not made with hands*," he alluded to that which was made with hands. What then? Is the body made with hands? By no means; but he either alludes to the houses here that are made with hands, or if not this, then he called the body which is not made with hands, 'a house of tabernacle.' For he has not used the term in antithesis and contradistinction to this, but to heighten those eulogies and swell those commendations.

2 Corinthians 5:2

2. *"For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven."*

What habitation? Tell me. The incorruptible body. And why do we groan now? Because that is far better. And *"from heaven"* he calls it because of its incorruptibleness. For it is not surely that a body will come down to us from above: but by this expression he signifies the grace which is sent from thence. So far then ought we to be from grieving at these trials which are in part that we ought to seek even for their fullness, as if he had said: Groanest thou, that you are persecuted, that this your man is decaying? Groan that this is not done unto excess and that it perishes not entirely. Do you see how he has turned round what was said unto the contrary; having proved that they ought to groan that those things were not done fully; for which because they were done partially; they groaned. Therefore he henceforth calls it not a tabernacle, but a house, and with great reason. For a tabernacle indeed is easily taken to pieces; but a house abides continually.

2 Corinthians 5:3

"If so be that being unclothed we shall not be found naked."

That is, even if we have put off the body, we shall not be presented there without a body, but even with the same one made incorruptible. But some read, and it deserves very much to be adopted, *"If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked."* For lest all should be confident because of the Resurrection, he says, *"If so be that being clothed,"* that is, having obtained incorruption and an incorruptible body, *"we shall not be found naked"* of glory and safety. As he also said in the former Epistle; *"We shall all be raised; but each in his own order."* And, *"There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial."* [1 Corinthians 15:22-23] (ib. 40.) For the Resurrection indeed is common to all, but the glory is not common; but some shall rise in honor and others in dishonor, and some to a kingdom but others to punishment. This surely he signified here also, when he said; *"If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked."*

2 Corinthians 5:4

3. *"For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan , not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon."* Here again he has utterly and manifestly stopped the mouths of the heretics, showing that he is not speaking absolutely of a body differing in identity , but of corruption and incorruption: 'For we do not therefore groan,' says he, 'that we may be delivered from the body: for of this we do not wish to be unclothed; but we hasten to be delivered from the corruption that is in it.' Wherefore he says, 'we wish not to be unclothed of the body, but that it should be clothed upon with incorruption.' Then he also interprets it [thus,] *"That what is mortal may be swallowed up of life."* For since putting off the body appeared to many a grievous thing; and he was contradicting the judgments of all, when he said, *"we groan,"* not wishing to be set free from it; ('for if,' says one, 'the soul in being separated from it so suffers and laments, how do you say that we groan because we are not separated from it?') lest then this should be urged against him, he says, 'Neither do I assert that we therefore groan, that we may put it off; (for no one puts it off without pain, seeing that Christ says even of Peter, 'They shall *"carry you,"* and lead you *"whither you would not;"* [John 21:18]) but that we may have it clothed upon with incorruption.' For it is in this respect that we are burdened by the body; not because it is a body, but because we are encompassed with a corruptible body and liable to suffering , for it is this that also causes us pain. But the life when it arrives destroys and uses up the corruption; the corruption, I say, not the body. 'And how comes this to pass?' says one. Inquire not; God does it; be not too curious. Wherefore also he added,

2 Corinthians 5:5

"Now he that has wrought us for this very thing is God."

Hereby he shows that these things were prefigured from the first. For not now was this decreed: but when at the first He fashioned us from earth and created Adam; for not for this created He him, that he should die, but that He might make him even immortal. Then as showing the credibility of this and furnishing the proof of it, he added,

"Who also gave the earnest of the Spirit." For even then He fashioned us for this; and now He has wrought unto this by baptism, and has furnished us with no light security thereof, the Holy Spirit. And he continually calls It an earnest, wishing to prove God to be a debtor of the whole, and thereby also to make what he says more credible unto the grosser sort.

2 Corinthians 5:6

4. *"Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing."*

The word *"of good courage"* is used with reference to the persecutions, the plottings, and the continual deaths: as if he had said, 'Does any vex and persecute and slay you? Be not cast down, for your good all is done. Be not afraid: but of good courage. For that which you groan and grieve for, that you are in bondage to corruption, he removes from henceforward out of the way, and frees you the sooner from this bondage.' Wherefore also he says, *"Being therefore always of good courage,"* not in the seasons of rest only, but also in those of tribulation; *"and knowing,"*

2 Corinthians 5:7-8

"That while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord."

That which is greater than all he has put last, for to be with Christ is better, than receiving an incorruptible [body.] But what he means is this: 'He quenches not our life that wars against and kills us; be not afraid; be of good courage even when hewn in pieces. For not only does he set you free from corruption and a burden, but he also sends you quickly to the Lord.' Wherefore neither did he say, *"while we 'are' in the body:"* as of those who are in a foreign and strange land. *"Knowing therefore that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: we are of good courage, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord."* Do you see how keeping back what was painful, the names of death and the end, he has employed instead of them such as excite great longing, calling them presence with God; and passing over those things which are accounted to be sweet, the things of life, he has expressed them by painful names, calling the life here an absence from the Lord? Now this he did, both that no one might fondly linger among present things, but rather be weary of them; and that none when about to die might be disquieted, but might even rejoice as departing unto greater goods. Then that none might say on hearing that we are absent from the Lord, 'Why do you speak thus? Are we then estranged from Him while we are here?' he in anticipation corrected such a thought, saying, *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."* Even here indeed we know Him, but not so clearly. As he says also elsewhere, [1 Corinthians 13:12] *"in a mirror,"* and *"darkly."*

"We are of good courage, I say, and willing." Wonderful! To what has he brought round the discourse? To an extreme desire of death, having shown the grievous to be pleasurable, and the pleasurable grievous. For by the term, *"we are willing"* he means, 'we are desirous.' Of what are we desirous? Of being *"absent from the body, and at home with the Lord."* And thus he does perpetually, (as I showed also before) turning round the objection of his opponents unto the very contrary.

2 Corinthians 5:9

"Wherefore also we make it our aim whether at home or absent, to be well pleasing unto him."

'For what we seek for is this,' says he, 'whether we be there or here, to live according to His will; for this is the principal thing. So that by this you have the kingdom already in possession without a probation.' For lest when they had arrived at so great a desire of being there, they should again be disquieted at its being so long first, in this he gives them already the chief of those good things. And what is this? To be well *"pleasing."* For as to depart is not absolutely good, but to do so in [God's] favor, which is what makes departing also become a good; so to remain here is not absolutely grievous, but to remain offending Him. Deem not then that departure from the body is enough; for virtue is always necessary. For as when he spoke of a Resurrection, he allowed [them] not by it alone to be of good courage, saying, *"If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked;"* so also having showed a departure, lest you should think that this is enough to save you, he added that it is needful that we be well pleasing.

5. Seeing then he has persuaded them by many good things, henceforth he alarms them also by those of gloomier aspect. For our interest consists both in the attainment of the good things and the avoidance of the evil things, in other words, hell and the kingdom. But since this, the avoiding of punishment, is the more forcible motive; for where penalty reaches only to the not receiving good things, the most will bear this contentedly; but if it also extend to the suffering of evil, do so no longer: (for they ought, indeed, to consider the former intolerable, but from the weakness and grovelling nature of the many, the latter appears to them more hard to bear:) since then

(I say) the giving of the good things does not so arouse the general hearer as the threat of the punishments, he is obliged to conclude with this, saying,

2 Corinthians 5:10

"For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat."

Then having alarmed and shaken the hearer by the mention of that judgment-seat, he has not even here set down the woeful without the good things, but has mingled something of pleasure, saying,

"That each one may receive the things done in the body," as many as *"he has done, whether"* it be *"good or bad."*

By saying these words, he both revives those who have done virtuously and are persecuted with those hopes, and makes those who have fallen back more earnest by that fear. And he thus confirmed his words touching the resurrection of the body. 'For surely,' says he, 'that which has ministered to the one and to the other shall not stand excluded from the recompenses: but along with the soul shall in the one case be punished, in the other crowned.' But some of the heretics say, that it is another body that is raised. How so? Tell me. Did one sin, and is another punished? Did one do virtuously, and is another crowned? And what will you answer to Paul, saying, *"We would not be unclothed, but clothed upon?"* And how is that which is mortal *"swallowed up of life?"* For he said not, that the mortal or corruptible body should be swallowed up of the incorruptible body; but that corruption [should be swallowed up] *"of life."* For then this happens when the same body is raised; but if, giving up that body, He should prepare another, no longer is corruption swallowed up but continues dominant. Therefore this is not so; but *"this corruptible,"* that is to say the body, *"must put on incorruption."* For the body is in a middle state, being at present in this and hereafter to be in that; and for this reason in this first, because it is impossible for the incorruption to be dissolved. *"For neither does*

corruption inherit incorruption," says he, (for, how is it [then] incorruption?) but on the contrary, *"corruption is swallowed up of life:"* for this indeed survives the other, but not the other this. For as wax is melted by fire but itself does not melt the fire: so also does corruption melt and vanish away under incorruption, but is never able itself to get the better of incorruption.

6. Let us then hear the voice of Paul, saying, that *"we must stand at the judgment-seat of Christ;"* and let us picture to ourselves that court of justice, and imagine it to be present now and the reckoning to be required. For I will speak of it more at large. For Paul, seeing that he was discoursing on affliction, and he had no mind to afflict them again, did not dwell on the subject; but having in brief expressed its austerity, *"Each one shall receive according to what he has done,"* he quickly passed on. Let us then imagine it to be present now, and reckon each one of us with his own conscience, and account the Judge to be already present, and everything to be revealed and brought forth. For we must not merely stand, but also be manifested. Do ye not blush? Are ye not astonished? But if now, when the reality is not yet present, but is granted in supposition merely and imaged in thought; if now [I say] we perish conscience-struck; what shall we do when [it] shall arrive, when the whole world shall be present, when angels and archangels, when ranks upon ranks, and all hurrying at once, and some caught up on the clouds, and an array full of trembling; when there shall be the trumpets, one upon another, [when] those unceasing voices?

For suppose there were no hell, yet in the midst of so great brightness to be rejected and to go away dishonored—how great the punishment! For if even now, when the Emperor rides in and his train with him, we contemplating each one of us our own poverty, derive not so much pleasure from the spectacle, as we endure dejection at having no share in what is

going on about the Emperor, nor being near the Sovereign; what will it be then? Or do you think it is a light punishment, not to be ranked in that company, not to be counted worthy of that unutterable glory, from that assemblage and those untold good things, to be cast forth some-wither far and distant? But when there is also darkness, and gnashing of teeth, and chains indissoluble, and an undying worm, and fire unquenchable, and affliction, and straitness, and tongues scorching like the rich man's; and we wail, and none hears; and we groan and gnash our teeth for anguish, and none regards; and we look all round, and no where is there any to comfort us; where shall we rank those that are in this condition? What is there more miserable than are those souls? What more pitiable? For if, when we enter a prison and see its inmates, some squalid, some chained and famishing, some again shut up in darkness, we are moved with compassion, we shudder, we use all diligence that we may never be cast into that place; how will it be with us, when we are led and dragged away into the torture-dungeons themselves of hell? For not of iron are those chains, but of fire that is never quenched; nor are they that are set over us our fellows whom it is often possible even to mollify; but angels whom one may not so much as look in the face, exceedingly enraged at our insults to their Master. Nor is it given, as here, to see some bringing in money, some food, some words of comfort, and to meet with consolation; but all is irremissible there: and though it should be Noah, or Job, or Daniel, and he should see his own kindred punished, he dares not succor. For even natural sympathy too comes then to be done away. For since it happens that there are righteous fathers of wicked children, and [righteous] children of [wicked] fathers; that so their pleasure may be unalloyed, and those who enjoy the good things may not be moved with sorrow through the constraining force of sympathy, even this sympathy, I affirm, is extinguished, and themselves are indignant

together with the Master against their own bowels. For if the common run of men, when they see their own children vicious, disown and cut them off from that relationship; much rather will the righteous then. Therefore let no one hope for good things, if he have not wrought any good thing, even though he have ten thousand righteous ancestors. *"For each one shall receive the things done in the body according to what he has done."* Here he seems to me to be alluding also to them that commit fornication: and to raise up as a wall unto them the fear of that world, not however to them alone; but also to all that in any wise transgress.

7. Let us hear then, us also. And if you have the fire of lust, set against it that other fire, and this will presently be quenched and gone. And if you purpose to utter some harsh sounding [speech], think of the gnashing of teeth, and the fear will be a bridle to you. And if you purpose to plunder, hear the Judge commanding, and saying, *"Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness,"* [Matthew 22:13] and you will cast out this lust also. And if you are drunken, and surfeitest continually, hear the rich man saying, 'Send Lazarus, that with the tip of his finger he may cool this scorching tongue;' [Luke 16:24] yet not obtaining this; and you will hold yourself aloof from that distemper. But if you love luxury, think of the affliction and the straitness there, and you will not think at all of this. If again you are harsh and cruel, bethink you of those virgins who when their lamps had gone out missed so of the bridal chamber, and you will quickly become humane. Or sluggish are you, and remiss? Consider him that hid the talent, and you will be more vehement than fire. Or does desire of your neighbor's substance devour you? Think of the worm that dies not, and you will easily both put away from you this disease, and in all other things wilt do virtuously. For He has enjoined nothing irksome or oppressive. Whence then do His injunctions appear irksome to us? From our own slothfulness.

For as if we labor diligently, even what appears intolerable will be light and easy; so if we are slothful, even things tolerable will seem to us difficult.

Considering then all these things, let us think not of the luxurious, but what is their end; here indeed filth and obesity, there the worm and fire: not of the rapacious, but what is their end; cares here, and fears, and anxieties; there chains indissoluble: not of the lovers of glory, but what these things bring forth; here slavery and dissemblings, and there both loss intolerable and perpetual burnings. For if we thus discourse with ourselves, and if with these and such like things we charm perpetually our evil lusts, quickly shall we both cast out the love of the present things, and kindle that of the things to come. Let us therefore kindle it and make it blaze. For if the conception of them, although a faint sort of one, affords so great pleasure; think how great the gladness, the manifest experience itself shall bring us. Blessed, and thrice blessed, yea, thrice blessed many times, are they who enjoy those good things; just as, consequently, pitiable and thrice wretched are they Who endure the opposite of these. That then we may be not of these but those, let us choose virtue. For so shall we attain unto the good things to come as well; which may all we attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ; by Whom, and with Whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, and honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 11 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:11

Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men but we are made manifest unto God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences.

Knowing therefore, he says, these things, that terrible seat of judgment, we do every thing so as not to give you a handle nor offense, nor any false suspicion of evil practice against us. Do you see the strictness of life, and zeal of a watchful soul? 'For we are not only open to accusation,' he says 'if we commit any evil deed; but even if we do not commit, yet are suspected, and having it in our power to repel the suspicion, brave it, we are punished.'

2 Corinthians 5:12

"We are not again commending ourselves unto you, but speak as giving you occasion of glorying in our behalf."

See how he is continually obviating the suspicion of appearing to praise himself. For nothing is so offensive to the hearers as for any one to say great and marvellous things about himself. Since then he was compelled in what he said to fall upon that subject, he uses a corrective, saying, 'we do this for your sakes, not for ours, that you may have somewhat to glory of, not that we may.' And not even this absolutely, but because of the false Apostles. Wherefore also he added, *"To answer them that glory in appearance, and not in heart."* Do you see how he has detached them from them, and drawn them to himself; having shown that even the Corinthians themselves are longing to get hold of some occasion, whereby they may have it in their power to speak on their behalf and to defend them unto their accusers. For, says he, 'we say these things not that we may boast, but that you may have wherein to speak freely on our behalf;' which is the language of one testifying to their great love: 'and not that you may boast merely: but that you may not be drawn aside.' But this he does not say explicitly, but manages his words otherwise and in a gentler form, and without dealing them a blow, saying,

"That ye may have somewhat to glory towards those which glory in appearance." But neither this does he bid them do absolutely, when no cause exists, but when they extol themselves; for in all things he looks out for the fitting occasion. He does not then do this in order to show himself to be illustrious, but to stop those men who were using the thing improperly and to the injury of these. But what is *"in appearance?"* In what is seen, in

what is for display. For of such sort were they, doing every thing out of a love of honor, while they were both empty inwardly and wore indeed an appearance of piety and of venerable seeming, but of good works were destitute.

2 Corinthians 5:13

2. *"For whether we are beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you."*

And if, says he, we have uttered any great thing, (for this is what he here calls being beside himself, as therefore in other places also he calls it folly [2 Corinthians 11:1, 17, 21]) for God's sake we do this, lest ye thinking us to be worthless should despise us and perish; or if again any modest and lowly thing, it is for your sakes that you may learn to be lowly-minded. Or else, again, he means this. If any one thinks us to be mad, we seek for our reward from God, for Whose sake we are of this suspected; but if he thinks us sober, let him reap the advantage of our soberness. And again, in another way. Does any one say we are mad? For God's sake are we in such sort mad. Wherefore also he subjoins;

2 Corinthians 5:14

"For the love of God constrains us, because we thus judge."

'For not the fear of things to come only,' he says, 'but also those which have already happened allow us not to be slothful nor to slumber; but stir us up and impel us to these our labors on your behalf.' And what are those things which have already happened?

"That if one died for all, then all died." 'Surely then it was because all were lost,' says he. For except all were dead, He had not died for all. For here the opportunities of salvation exist; but there are found no longer. Therefore, he says, *"The love of God constrains us,"* and allows us not to be at rest. For it comes of extreme wretchedness and is worse than hell itself, that when He has set forth an act so mighty, any should be found after so great an instance of His provident care reaping no benefit. For great was the excess of that love, both to die for a world of such extent, and dying for it when in such a state.

2 Corinthians 5:15

"That they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again."

If therefore we ought not to live unto ourselves, 'be not troubled,' says he, 'nor be confounded when dangers and deaths assail you.' And he assigns besides an indubitable argument by which he shows that the thing is a debt. For if through Him we live who were dead; to Him we ought to live through Whom we live. And what is said appears indeed to be one thing, but if any one accurately examine it, it is two: one that we live by Him, another that He died for us: either of which even by itself is enough to make us liable; but when even both are united consider how great the debt is. Yea, rather, there are three things here. For the First-fruits also for your sake He raised up, and led up to heaven: wherefore also he added, *"Who for our sakes died and rose again."*

2 Corinthians 5:16

3. *"Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh."*

For if all died and all rose again; and in such sort died as the tyranny of sin condemned them; but rose again *"through the laver of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;"* [Titus 3:5] he says with reason, *"we know none"* of the faithful *"after the flesh."* For what if even they be in the flesh? Yet is that fleshly life destroyed, and we are born again by the Spirit, and have learned another deportment and rule and life and condition, that, namely, in the heavens. And again of this itself he shows Christ to be the Author. Wherefore also he added,

"Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more."

What then? Tell me. Did He put away the flesh, and is He now not with that body? Away with the thought, for He is even now clothed in flesh; for this Jesus Who is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come. So? How? In flesh, with His body. How then does he say, *"Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth no more?"* [Acts 1:11] For in us indeed *"after the flesh"* is being in sins, and *"not after the flesh"* not being in sins; but in Christ, *"after the flesh"* is His being subject to the affections of nature, such as to thirst, to hunger, to weariness, to sleep. For *"He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."* [1 Peter 2:22] Wherefore He also said, *"Which of you convicts Me of sin?"* [John 8:46] and again, *"The prince of this world comes, and he has nothing in Me."* [John 14:30] And *"not after the flesh"* is being thenceforward freed even from these things, not the being without flesh. For with this also He comes to judge the world, His being impassible and pure. Whereunto we also shall

advance when *"our body"* has been *"fashioned like His glorious body."*
[Philippians 3:21]

2 Corinthians 5:17

4. *"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature."*

For seeing he had exhorted unto virtue from His love, he now leads them on to this from what has been actually done for them; wherefore also he added, *"If any man is in Christ,"* he is *"a new creature."* *"If any,"* says he, *"have believed in Him, he has come to another creation, for he has been born again by the Spirit."* So that for this cause also, he says, we ought to live unto Him, not because we are not our own only, nor because He died for us only, nor because He raised up our First-fruits only, but because we have also come unto another life. See how many just grounds he urges for a life of virtue. For on this account he also calls the reformation by a grosser name, in order to show the transition and the change to be great. Then following out farther what he had said, and showing how it is *"a new creation,"* he adds, *"The old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new."*

What old things? He means either sins and impieties, or else all the Judaical observances. Yea rather, he means both the one and the other. *"Behold, all things have become new."*

2 Corinthians 5:18

"But all things are of God."

Nothing of ourselves. For remission of sins and adoption and unspeakable glory are given to us by Him. For he exhorts them no longer from the things to come only, but even from those now present. For consider. He said, that we shall be raised again, and go on unto incorruption, and have an eternal house; but since present things have more force to persuade than things to come, with those who believe not in these as they ought to believe, he shows how great things they have even already received, and being themselves what. What then being, received they them? Dead all; (for he says, *"all died;"* and, *"He died for all;"* so loved He all alike;) inveterate all, and grown old in their vices. But behold, both a new soul, (for it was cleansed,) and a new body, and a new worship, and promises new, and covenant, and life, and table, and dress, and all things new absolutely. For instead of the Jerusalem below we have received that mother city which is above [Galatians 4:26]; and instead of a material temple have seen a spiritual temple; instead of tables of stone, fleshy ones; instead of circumcision, baptism; instead of the manna, the Lord's body; instead of water from a rock, blood from His side; instead of Moses' or Aaron's rod, the Cross; instead of the promised [land] , the kingdom of heaven; instead of a thousand priests, One High Priest; instead of a lamb without reason , a Spiritual Lamb. With these and such like things in his thought he said, *"all things are new."* But *"all"* these *"things are of God,"* by Christ, and His free gift. Wherefore also he added,

"Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation."

For from Him are all the good things. For He that made us friends is Himself also the cause of the other things which God has given to His friends. For He rendered not these things unto us, allowing us to continue enemies, but having made us friends unto Himself. But when I say that Christ is the cause of our reconciliation, I say the Father is so also: when I say that the Father gave, I say the Son gave also. *"For all things were made by Him;"* [John 1:3] and of this too He is the Author. For we ran not unto Him, but He Himself called us. How called He us? By the sacrifice of Christ.

"And gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation."

Here again he sets forth the dignity of the Apostles; showing how great a thing was committed to their hands, and the surpassing greatness of the love of God. For even when they would not hear the Ambassador that came, He was not exasperated nor left them to themselves, but continues to exhort them both in His own person and by others. Who can be fittingly amazed at this solicitude? The Son Who came to reconcile, His True and Only-Begotten, was slain, yet not even so did the Father turn away from His murderers; nor say, *"I sent My Son as an Ambassador, but they not only would not hear Him, but even slew and crucified Him, it is meet henceforth to leave them to themselves:"* but quite the contrary, when the Son departed, He entrusted the business to us; for he says, gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:19

5. *"To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their tresspasses."*

Do you see love surpassing all expression, all conception? Who was the aggrieved one? Himself. Who first sought the reconciliation? Himself. 'And yet,' says one, 'He sent the Son, He did not come Himself.' The Son indeed it was He sent; still not He alone besought, but both with Him and by Him the Father; wherefore he said, that, *"God was reconciling the world unto Himself in Christ:"* that is, by Christ. For seeing he had said, *"Who gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation;"* he here used a corrective, saying, *"Think not that we act of our own authority in the business: we are ministers; and He that does the whole is God, Who reconciled the world by the Only-Begotten."* And how did He reconcile it unto Himself? For this is the marvel, not that it was made a friend only, but also by this way a friend. This way? What way? Forgiving them their sins; for in no other way was it possible. Wherefore also he added, *"Not reckoning unto them their tresspasses."* For had it been His pleasure to require an account of the things we had transgressed in, we should all have perished; for *"all died."* But nevertheless though our sins were so great, He not only did not require satisfaction, but even became reconciled; He not only forgave, but He did not even *"reckon."* So ought we also to forgive our enemies, that ourselves too may obtain the like forgiveness.

"And having committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

For neither have we come now on any odious office; but to make all men friends with God. For He says, 'Since they were not persuaded by Me,

do ye continue beseeching until you have persuaded them.' Wherefore also he added,

2 Corinthians 5:20

"We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God."

Do you see how he has extolled the thing by introducing Christ thus in the form of a suppliant ; yea rather not Christ only, but even the Father? For what he says is this: 'The Father sent the Son to beseech, and to be His Ambassador unto mankind. When then He was slain and gone, we succeeded to the embassy; and in His stead and the Father's we beseech you. So greatly does He prize mankind that He gave up even the Son, and that knowing He would be slain, and made us Apostles for your sakes; so that he said with reason, *"All things are for your sakes."* [2 Corinthians 4:15] *"We are therefore ambassadors on behalf of Christ,"* that is, instead of Christ; for we have succeeded to His functions.' But if this appears to you a great thing, hear also what follows wherein he shows that they do this not in His stead only, but also in stead of the Father. For therefore he also added, *"As though God were entreating by us."* 'For not by the Son Himself only does He beseech, but also by us who have succeeded to the office of the Son. Think not therefore,' he says, 'that by us you are entreated; Christ Himself, the Father Himself of Christ, beseeches you by us. What can come up to this excess [of goodness]? He was outraged who had conferred innumerable benefits; having been outraged, He not only exacted not justice, but even gave His son that we might be reconciled. They that received Him were not reconciled, but even slew Him. Again, He sent other ambassadors to beseech, and though these are sent, it is Himself that entreats. And what does He entreat? *"Be reconciled unto God."* And he said

not, 'Reconcile God to yourselves;' for it is not He that bears enmity, but you; for God never bears enmity. Urging moreover his cause, like an ambassador on his mission, he says,

2 Corinthians 5:21

"For Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our account."

'I say nothing of what has gone before, that you have outraged Him, Him that had done you no wrong, Him that had done you good, that He exacted not justice, that He is first to beseech, though first outraged; let none of these things be set down at present. Ought ye not in justice to be reconciled for this one thing only that He has done to you now?' And what has He done? *"Him that knew no sin He made to be sin, for you."* For had He achieved nothing but done only this, think how great a thing it were to give His Son for those that had outraged Him. But now He has both well achieved mighty things, and besides, has suffered Him that did no wrong to be punished for those who had done wrong. But he did not say this: but mentioned that which is far greater than this. What then is this? *"Him that knew no sin,"* he says, Him that was righteousness itself, *"He made sin,"* that is suffered as a sinner to be condemned, as one cursed to die. *"For cursed is he that hangs on a tree."* [Galatians 3:13] For to die thus was far greater than to die; and this he also elsewhere implying, says, *"Becoming obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross."* [Philippians 2:8] For this thing carried with it not only punishment, but also disgrace. Reflect therefore how great things He bestowed on you. For a great thing indeed it were for even a sinner to die for any one whatever; but when He who undergoes this both is righteous and dies for sinners; and not dies only, but even as one cursed; and not as cursed [dies] only, but thereby freely bestows upon us those great goods which we never looked for; (for he says, that *"we might become the righteousness of God in Him;"*) what words, what thought shall be adequate to realize these things? 'For the righteous,'

says he, 'He made a sinner; that He might make the sinners righteous.' Yea rather, he said not even so, but what was greater far; for the word he employed is not the habit, but the quality itself. For he said not "*made*" [Him] a sinner, but "*sin;*" not, 'Him that had not sinned' only, but "*that had not even known sin; that we*" also "*might become,*" he did not say 'righteous,' but, "*righteousness,*" and, "*the righteousness of God.*" For this is [the righteousness] "*of God*" when we are justified not by works, (in which case it were necessary that not a spot even should be found,) but by grace, in which case all sin is done away. And this at the same time that it suffers us not to be lifted up, (seeing the whole is the free gift of God,) teaches us also the greatness of that which is given. For that which was before was a righteousness of the Law and of works, but this is "*the righteousness of God.*"

6. Reflecting then on these things, let us fear these words more than hell; let us reverence the things [they express] more than the kingdom, and let us not deem it grievous to be punished, but to sin. For were He not to punish us, we ought to take vengeance on ourselves, who have been so ungrateful towards our Benefactor. Now he that has an object of affection, has often even slain himself, when unsuccessful in his love; and though successful, if he has been guilty of a fault towards her, counts it not fit that he should even live; and shall not we, when we outrage One so loving and gentle, cast ourselves into the fire of hell? Shall I say something strange, and marvellous, and to many perhaps incredible? To one who has understanding and loves the Lord as it behooves to love Him, there will be greater comfort if punished after provoking One so loving, than if not punished. And this one may see by the common practice. For he that has wronged his dearest friend feels then the greatest relief, when he has wreaked vengeance on himself and suffered evil. And accordingly David

said, *"I the shepherd have sinned, and I the shepherd have done amiss; and these the flock, what have they done? Let Your hand be upon me, and upon my father's house."* [2 Samuel 24:17. Septuagint] And when he lost Absalom he wreaked the extremest vengeance upon himself, although he was not the injurer but the injured; but nevertheless, because he loved the departed exceedingly, he racked himself with anguish, in this manner comforting himself. Let us therefore also, when we sin against Him Whom we ought not to sin against, take vengeance on ourselves. See you not those who have lost true-born children, that they therefore both beat themselves and tear their hair, because to punish themselves for the sake of those they loved carries comfort with it. But if, when we have caused no harm to those dearest to us, to suffer because of what has befallen them brings consolation; when we ourselves are the persons who have given provocation and wrong, will it not much rather be a relief to us to suffer the penalty and will not the being unpunished punish? Every one in a manner will see this. If any love Christ as it behooves to love Him, he knows what I say; how, even when He forgives, he will not endure to go unpunished; for you undergo the severest punishment in having provoked Him. And I know indeed that I am speaking what will not be believed by the many; but nevertheless it is so as I have said. If then we love Christ as it behooves to love Him, we shall punish ourselves when we sin. For to those who love any whomsoever, not the suffering somewhat because they have provoked the beloved one is displeasing; but above all, that they have provoked the person loved. And if this last when angered does not punish, he has tortured his lover more; but if he exacts satisfaction, he has comforted him rather. Let us therefore not fear hell, but offending God; for it is more grievous than that when He turns away in wrath: this is worse than all, this heavier than all. And that you may learn what a thing it is, consider this which I say.

If one that was himself a king, beholding a robber and malefactor under punishment, gave his well-beloved son, his only-begotten and true, to be slain; and transferred the death and the guilt as well, from him to his son, (who was himself of no such character,) that he might both save the condemned man and clear him from his evil reputation ; and then if, having subsequently promoted him to great dignity, he had yet, after thus saving him and advancing him to that glory unspeakable, been outraged by the person that had received such treatment: would not that man, if he had any sense, have chosen ten thousand deaths rather than appear guilty of so great ingratitude? This then let us also now consider with ourselves, and groan bitterly for the provocations we have offered our Benefactor; nor let us therefore presume, because though outraged He bears it with long-suffering; but rather for this very reason be full of remorse. For among men too, when one that has been smitten on the right cheek offers the left also, he more avenges himself than if he gave ten thousand blows; and when one that has been reviled, not only reviles not again but even blesses, he has stricken [his adversary] more heavily, than if he rained upon him ten thousand reproaches. Now if in the case of men we feel ashamed when offering insults we meet with long-suffering; much rather, in respect to God, ought they to be afraid who go on continually sinning yet suffer no calamity. For, even for evil unto their own heads is the unspeakable punishment treasured up for them. These things then bearing in mind, let us above all things be afraid of sin; for this is punishment, this is hell, this is ten thousand ills. And let us not only be afraid of, but also flee from it, and strive to please God continually; for this is the kingdom, this is life, this is ten thousand goods. So shall we also even here obtain already the kingdom and the good things to come; whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom to the Father, with the

Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 12 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

And working together with Him we intreat also that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he says, At an acceptable time I hearkened unto you. And in a day of salvation did I succor you.

For since he said, God beseeches, and we are ambassadors and suppliants unto you, that you be "*reconciled unto God*:" lest they should become supine, he hereby again alarms and arouses them, saying: "*We intreat that you receive not the grace of God in vain.*" 'For let us not,' he says, 'therefore be at ease, because He beseeches and has sent some to be ambassadors; nay, but for this very reason let us make haste to please God and to collect spiritual merchandise;' as also he said above, "*The love of God constrains us*," [2 Corinthians 5:14] that is presses, drives, urges us, 'that you may not after so much affectionate care, by being supine and exhibiting no nobleness, miss of such great blessings. Do not therefore because He has sent some to exhort you, deem that this will always be so. It will be so until His second coming; until then He beseeches, so long as we are here; but after that is judgment and punishment.' Therefore, he says, "*we are constrained.*"

For not only from the greatness of the blessings and His loving kindness, but also from the shortness of the time he urges them continually. Wherefore he says also elsewhere, "*For now is our salvation nearer.*" [Romans 13:11] And again; "*The Lord is at hand.*" [Philippians 4:5] But here he does something yet more. For not from the fact that the remainder

of the time is short and little, but also from its being the only season available, for salvation, he incited them.

For, "*Behold*," he says, "*now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*" Let us therefore not let slip the favorable opportunity but display a zeal worthy of the grace. For therefore is it that we also press forward, knowing both the shortness and the suitableness of the time. Wherefore also he said; "*And working together we intreat also. Working together*" with you; 'for we work together with you, rather than with God for Whom we are ambassadors. For He is in need of nothing, but the salvation all passes over to you.' But if it is even with God that he speaks of working together, he repudiates not even this [interpretation]; for he says in another place, "*we are God's fellow-workers:*" [1 Corinthians 3:9] in this way, says he, to save men. Again, "*We entreat also.*" For he indeed, when beseeching, does not barely beseech, but sets forth these His just claims; namely, that He gave His Son, the Righteous One that did not so much as know sin, and made Him to be sin for us sinners, that we might become righteous: which claims having, and being God, He displayed such goodness. But what we beseech is that you would receive the benefit and not reject the gift. Be persuaded therefore by us, and "*receive not the grace in vain.*" For lest they should think that this of itself is "*reconciliation,*" believing on Him that calls; he adds these words, requiting that earnestness which respects the life. For, for one who has been freed from sins and made a friend to wallow in the former things, is to return again unto enmity, and to "*receive the grace in vain,*" in respect of the life. For from "*the grace*" we reap no benefit towards salvation, if we live impurely; nay, we are even harmed, having this greater aggravation even of our sins, in that after such knowledge and such a gift we have gone back to our former vices. This however he does not mention as yet: that he may not make his work harsh,

but says only that we reap no benefit. Then he also reminds of a prophecy, urging and compelling them to bestir themselves in order to lay hold of their own salvation.

"For," says he, He says,

At an acceptable time I hearkened unto you,

And in a day of salvation did I succor you:

"behold, now is the acceptable time: behold, now is the day of salvation."

"The acceptable time." What is this? That of the Gift, that of the Grace, when it is appointed not that an account should be required of our sins nor penalty exacted; but besides being delivered, that we should also enjoy ten thousand goods, righteousness, sanctification, and all the rest. For how much toil would it have behooved us to undergo in order to obtain this *"time!"* But, behold, without our toiling at all it has come, bringing remission of all that was before. Wherefore also He calls it *"acceptable,"* because He both accepted those that had transgressed in ten thousand things, and not acceded merely, but advanced them to the highest honor; just as when a monarch arrives, it is a time not for judgment, but for grace and pardon. Wherefore also He calls it acceptable. Whilst then we are yet in the lists, while we are at work in the vineyard, while the eleventh hour is left [us], let us draw near and show forth life; for it is also easy. For he that strives for the mastery at such a time, when so great a gift has been shed forth, when so great grace, will early obtain the prizes. For in the case of monarchs here below also, at the time of their festivals, and when they appear in the dress of Consuls, he who brings a small offering receives large gifts; but on the days in which they sit in judgment, much strictness, much sifting is requisite. Let us too therefore strive for the mastery in the time of

this gift. It is a day of grace, of grace divine; wherefore with ease even we shall obtain the crown. For if when laden with so great evils He both received and delivered us: when delivered from all and contributing our part, shall He not rather accept us?

2. Then, as it is his constant wont, namely, to place himself before them and bid them hence to take their example, so he does in this place also. Wherefore also he adds,

2 Corinthians 6:3

"Giving no occasion of stumbling, that our ministration be not blamed," persuading them not from considering *"the time"* only, but also those that had successfully labored with them. And behold with what absence of pride. For he said not, 'Look at us how we are such and such,' but, for the present, it is only to do away accusation that he relates his own conduct. And he mentions two chief points of a blameless life, *"none"* in *"any"* thing. And he said not 'accusation,' but, what was far less, *"occasion of stumbling;"* that is, giving ground against us to none for censure, for condemnation, *"that our ministration be not blamed;"* that is, that none may take hold of it. And again, he said not, 'that it be not accused,' but that it may not have the least fault, nor any one have it in his power to animadvert upon it in any particular.

2 Corinthians 6:4

"But in every thing commending ourselves as ministers of God."

This is far greater. For it is not the same thing to be free from accusation; and to exhibit such a character as in everything to appear *"ministers of God."* For neither is it the same thing to be quit of accusation, and to be covered with praises. And he said not appearing, but *"commending,"* that is 'proving.' Then he mentions also whence they became such. Whence then was it? *"In much patience,"* he says, laying the foundation of those good things. Wherefore he said not barely *"patience,"* but *"much,"* and he shows also how great it was. For to bear some one or two things is no great matter. But he adds even snow storms of trials in the words, *"In afflictions, in necessities."* This is a heightening of affliction, when the evils are unavoidable, and there lies upon one as it were a necessity hardly extricable of misfortune. *"In distresses."* Either he means those of hunger and of other necessities, or else simply those of their trials.

2 Corinthians 6:5-6

"In stripes, in imprisonments, in tossings to and fro. "

Yet every one of these by itself was intolerable, the being scourged only, and being bound only, and being unable through persecution to remain fixed any where, (for this is in 'tossings to and fro,') but when both all, and all at once, assail, consider what a soul they need. Then along with the things from without, he mentions those imposed by himself.

"In labors, in watchings, in fastings; in pureness. "

But by "*pureness*" here, he means either chasteness again, or general purity, or incorruptness, or even his preaching the Gospel freely.

"In knowledge." What is "*in knowledge?*" In wisdom such as is given from God; that which is truly knowledge; not as those that seem to be wise and boast of their acquaintance with the heathen discipline, but are deficient in this.

"In long-suffering, in kindness." For this also is a great note of a noble soul, though exasperated and goaded on every side, to bear all with long-suffering. Then to show whence he became such, he added;

"In the Holy Ghost." 'For in Him,' he says, 'we do all these good works.' But observe when it is that he has mentioned the aid of the Holy Ghost. After he had set forth what was from himself. Moreover, he seems to me to say another thing herein. What then is this? Namely, 'we have both been filled with abundance of the Spirit and hereby also give a proof of our Apostleship in that we have been counted worthy of spiritual gifts.' For if this be grace also, yet still he himself was the cause who by his good works and his toils attracted that grace. And if any should assert that besides what has been said, he shows that in his use of the gifts of the Spirit also he gave

none offense; he would not miss of his meaning. For they who received the [gift of] tongues among them and were lifted up, were blamed. For it is possible for one even in receiving a gift of the Spirit, not to use it aright. 'But not so we,' he says, 'but in the Spirit also, that is, in the gifts also, we have been blameless.'

"In love unfeigned." This was the cause of all those good things; this made him what he was; this caused the Spirit also to abide with him, by Whose aid also all things were rightly done of him.

2 Corinthians 6:7

"In the word of truth."

A thing he says in many places, that 'we continued neither to handle the word of God deceitfully nor to adulterate it.'

"In the power of God." That which he always does ascribing nothing to himself but the whole to God, and imputing whatsoever he has done aright to Him, this he has done here also. For since he uttered great things, and affirmed that he had manifested in all things an irreproachable life and exalted wisdom, he ascribes this to the Spirit and to God. For neither were those commonplace things which he had said. For if it be a difficult thing even for one who lives in quiet to do aright and be irreproachable, consider him who was harassed by so great temptations, and yet shone forth through all, what a spirit he was of! And yet he underwent not these alone, but even far more than these, as he mentions next. And what is indeed marvelous is, not that he was irreproachable though sailing in such mighty waves, nor that he endured all nobly, but all with pleasure even. Which things, all, he makes clear to us by the next words, saying,

"By the armor of righteousness on the right and the left."

3. Do you see his self-possession of soul and well-strung spirit? For he shows that afflictions are arms not only which strike not down, but do even fortify and make stronger. And he calls those things 'left,' which seem to be painful; for such those are which bring with them the reward. Wherefore then does he call them thus? Either in conformity with the conception of the generality, or because God commanded us to pray that we enter not into temptation.

2 Corinthians 6:8

"By glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report."

What saying thou? That you enjoy honor, and setting down this as a great thing? 'Yes,' he says. Why, forsooth? For to bear dishonor indeed is a great thing, but to partake of honor requires not a vigorous soul. Nay, it needs a vigorous and exceeding great soul, that he who enjoys it may not be thrown and break his neck. Wherefore he glories in this as well as in that, for he shone equally in both. But how is it a weapon of righteousness? Because that the teachers are held in honor induces many unto godliness. And besides, this is a proof of good works, and this glorifies God. And this is, further, an instance of the wise contrivance of God, that by things which are opposite He brings in the Preaching. For consider. Was Paul bound? This too was on behalf of the Gospel. For, says he, *"the things which happened unto me have fallen out unto the progress of the Gospel; so that most of the brethren, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word without fear."* [Philippians 1:12-14] Again, did he enjoy honor? This too again rendered them more forward. *"By evil report and good report."* For not only did he bear those things nobly which happen to the body, the 'afflictions,' and whatever he enumerated, but those also which touch the soul; for neither are these wont to disturb slightly. Jeremiah at least having borne many temptations, gave in upon these, and when he was reproached, said, *"I will not prophesy, neither will I name the Name of the Lord."* [Jeremiah 20:9] And David too many places complains of reproach. Isaiah also, after many things, exhorts concerning this, saying, *"Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye overcome by their reviling."* [Isaiah 51:7. Septuagint] And again, Christ also

to His disciples; *"When they shall speak all manner of evil against you falsely, rejoice and be exceeding glad,"* [Matthew 5:11-12] He says, *"for great is your reward in heaven."* Elsewhere too He says, And leap for joy. [Luke 6:23] But He would not have made the reward so great, had not the contest been a great one. For in tortures the body also shares the anguish with the soul; for the pain is both of the body and of the soul; but here it is of the soul alone. Many at any rate have fallen by these alone, and have lost their own souls. And to Job also the reproaches of his friends appeared more grievous than the worms and the sores. For there is nothing, there is nothing more intolerable to those in affliction than a word capable of stinging the soul. Wherefore along with the perils and the toils he names these also, saying, *"By glory and dishonor."* At any rate, many of the Jews also on account of glory derived from the many would not believe. For they feared, not lest they should be punished, but lest they should be put out of the synagogue. Wherefore He says, *"How can you believe which receive glory one of another?"* [John 5:44] And we may see numbers who have indeed despised all dangers, but have been worsted by glory.

4. *"As deceivers, and yet true."*

This is, *"by evil report and good report."*

2 Corinthians 6:9

"As unknown, and yet well known." This is, *"by glory and dishonor."* For by some they were well known and much sought after, while others designed not to know them at all.

"As dying, and behold, we live."

As under sentence of death and condemned; which was itself also matter of dishonor. But this he said, to show both the unspeakable power of God and their own patience. For so far as those who plotted against us were concerned, we died; and this is what all suppose; but by God's aid we escaped the dangers. Then to manifest also on what account God permits these things, he added, *"As chastened, and not killed."*

Showing that the gain accruing to them from their temptations, even before the rewards, was great, and that their enemies against their will did them service.

2 Corinthians 6:10

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

For by those that are without, indeed, we are suspected of being in despair; but we give no heed to them; yea, we have our pleasure at the full. And he said not *"rejoicing"* only, but added also its perpetuity, for he says *"always rejoicing."* What then can come up to this life? Wherein, although dangers so great assault, the joy becomes greater.

"As poor, yet making many rich."

Some indeed affirm that the spiritual riches are spoken of here; but I would say that the carnal are so too; for they were rich in these also, having, after a new kind of manner, the houses of all opened to them. And this too he signified by what follows, saying,

"As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

And how can this be? Yea rather, how can the opposite be? For he that possesses many things has nothing; and he that has nothing possesses the goods of all. And not here only, but also in the other points, contraries were produced by their contraries. But if you marvel how it is possible for one that has nothing to have all things, let us bring forth this man himself into the midst, who commanded the world and was lord not only of their substance, but of their very eyes even. *"If possible,"* he says, *"ye would have plucked out your eyes, and have given them to me."* [Galatians 4:15]

Now these things he says, to instruct us not to be disturbed at the opinions of the many, though they call us deceivers, though they know us not, though they count us condemned, and appointed unto death, to be in sorrow, to be in poverty, to have nothing, to be (us, who are in cheerfulness) desponding: because that the sun even is not clear to the blind, nor the

pleasure of the sane intelligible to the mad. For the faithful only are right judges of these matters, and are not pleased and pained at the same things as other people. For if any one who knew nothing of the games were to see a boxer, having wounds upon him and wearing a crown; he would think him in pain on account of the wounds, not understanding the pleasure the crown would give him. And these therefore, because they know what we suffer but do not know for what we suffer them, naturally suspect that there is nought besides these; for they see indeed the wrestling and the dangers, but not the prizes and the crowns and the subject of the contest. What then were the *"all things"* which Paul possessed, when he said, *"As having nothing, and yet possessing all things?"* Things temporal, things spiritual. For he whom the cities received as an angel, for whom they would have plucked out their own eyes and have given them to him, [Galatians 4:14-15] he for whom they laid down their own necks, how had he not all things that were theirs? [Romans 16:4] But if you desire to see the spiritual also, you will find him in these things also especially rich. For he that was so dear to the King of all as even to share in unspeakable things with the Lord of the angels, [2 Corinthians 12:4] how was not he more opulent than all men, and had all things? Devils had not else been so subject to him, suffering and disease had not so fled away.

5. And let us therefore, when we suffer anything for Christ's sake, not merely bear it nobly but also rejoice. If we fast, let us leap for joy as if enjoying luxury; if we be insulted, let us dance as if praised; if we spend, let us feel as if gaining; if we bestow on the poor, let us count ourselves to receive: for he that gives not thus will not give readily. When then you have a mind to scatter abroad, look not at this only in almsgiving, but also in every kind of virtue, compute not alone the severity of the toils, but also the sweetness of the prizes; and before all the subjects of this wrestling, our

Lord Jesus; and you will readily enter upon the contest, and wilt live the whole time in pleasure. For nothing is wont so to cause pleasure as a good conscience.

Therefore Paul indeed, though wounded every day, rejoiced and exulted; but the men of this day, although they endure not a shadow even of what he did, grieve and make lamentations from no other cause than that they have not a mind full of heavenly philosophy. For, tell me, wherefore the lamentation? Because you are poor, and in want of necessities? Surely for this you ought rather to make lamentation, [not] because you weep, not because you are poor, but because you are mean-spirited; not because you have not money, but because you prize money so highly. Paul died daily, yet wept not but even rejoiced; he fought with continual hunger, yet grieved not but even gloried in it. And do you, because you have not all the year's provisions stored up, grieve and beat yourself? 'Yes,' he replies, 'for he had to care only for his own needs, while I have besides to care for servants, and children, and wife.' Rather, he alone had not to care for his own needs, but for the whole world's. And thou indeed [hast to care] for one household, but he for those so many poor at Jerusalem, for those in Macedonia, for those everywhere in poverty, for those who give to them no less than for those who receive. For his care for the world was of a twofold nature, both that they might not be destitute of necessities, and that they might be rich in spiritual things. And your famishing children distress not you so much as all the concerns of the faithful did him. Why do I say, of the faithful? For neither was he free from care for the unfaithful, but was so eaten up with it that he wished even to become accursed for their sakes; but thou, were a famine to rage ten thousand times over, wouldest never choose to die for any whomsoever. And thou indeed carest for one woman, but he for the Churches throughout the world. For he says, *"My anxiety for all the*

Churches." [2 Corinthians 11:28] How long then, O man, do you trifle, comparing yourself with Paul; and will not cease from this your much meanness of spirit? For it behooves to weep, not when we are in poverty but when we sin; for this is worthy of lamentations, as all the other things are of ridicule even. 'But,' he says, 'this is not all that grieves me; but that also such an one is in power, while I am unhonored and outcast.' And what is this? For the blessed Paul too appeared to the many to be unhonored and an outcast. 'But,' says he, 'he was Paul.' Plainly then not the nature of the things, but your feebleness of spirit causes your desponding. Lament not therefore your poverty, but yourself who art so minded, yea rather, lament not yourself, but reform you; and seek not for money, but pursue that which makes men of more cheerful countenance than thousands of money, philosophy and virtue. For where indeed these are, there is no harm in poverty; and where these are not there is no good in money. For tell me, what good is it when men are rich indeed, but have beggarly souls? Thou dost not bewail yourself, so much as that rich man himself, because he has not the wealth of all. And if he does not weep as you do, yet lay open his conscience, and you will see his wailings and lamentations.

Will you that I show you your own riches, that you may cease to count them happy that are rich in money? Do you see this heaven here, the sun, this bright and far shining star, and that gladdens our eyes, is not this too set out common to all? And do not all enjoy it equally, both poor and rich? And the wreath of the stars and the orb of the moon, are they not left equally to all? Yea, rather, if I must speak somewhat marvellous, we poor enjoy these more than they. For they indeed being for the most part steeped in drunkenness, and passing their time in revellings and deep sleep, do not even perceive these things, being always under cover and reared in the shade : but the poor do more than any enjoy the luxury of these elements.

And further, if you will look into the air which is every where diffused, you will see the poor man enjoying it in greater both freshness and abundance. For wayfarers and husbandmen enjoy these luxuries more than the inhabitants of the city; and again, of those same inhabitants of the city, the handicraftsmen more than those who are drunken all the day. What too of the earth, is not this left common to all? 'No,' he says. How do you say so? Tell me. 'Because the rich man, even in the city, having gotten himself several plethra, raises up long fences round them; and in the country cuts off for himself many portions.' What then? When he cuts them off, does he alone enjoy them? By no means, though he should contend for it ever so earnestly. For the produce he is compelled to distribute among all, and for you he cultivates grain, and wine, and oil, and every where ministers unto you. And those long fences and buildings, after his untold expense and his toils and drudgery he is preparing for your use, receiving from you only a small piece of silver for so great a service. And in baths and every where, one may see the same thing obtaining; the rich of it all with perfect ease. And his enjoyment of the earth is no more than yours; for sure he fills not ten stomachs, and thou only one. 'But he partakes of costlier meats?' Truly, this is no mighty superiority; howbeit, even here, we shall find you to have the advantage. For this costliness is therefore thought by you a matter of envy because the pleasure with it is greater. Yet this is greater in the poor man's case; yet not pleasure only, but health also; and in this alone is the advantage with the rich, that he makes his constitution feebler and collects more abundant fountains of disease. For the poor man's diet is all ordered according to nature, but his through its excess results in corruption and disease.

6. But if you will, let us also look at this same thing in an example. For if it were requisite to light a furnace, and then one man were to throw in

silken garments and fine linens, many and numberless, and so kindle it; and another logs of oak and pine, what advantage would this man have over that? None, but even disadvantage. But what? (for there is nothing to prevent our turning the same illustration round after another manner,) if one were to throw in logs, and another were to light his fire under bodies, by which furnace would you like to stand, that with the logs, or that with the bodies? Very plainly that with the logs. For that burns naturally and is a pleasant spectacle to the beholders: while this with the steam, and juices, and smoke, and the stench of the bones would drive every one away. Did you shudder at the hearing, and loathe that furnace? Like it are the bellies of the rich. For in them one would find more rottenness than in that furnace, and stinking vapors, and filthy humors, because that, all over in every part, indigestion abounds in consequence of their surfeiting. For the natural heat not sufficing for the digestion of the whole but being smothered under them, they lie smoking above, and the unpleasantness produced is great. To what then should one compare those stomachs of theirs? Yet do not be offended at what I say, but if I do not say true things, refute me. To what then should one compare them? For even what has been said is not enough to show their wretched plight. I have found another resemblance yet. What then is it? As in the sewers where there is accumulation of refuse, of dung, hay, stubble, stones, clay, frequent stoppages occur; and then the stream of filth overflows at top: so also it happens with the stomachs of those people. For these being stopped up below, the greater part of these villainous streams spurts up above. But not so with the poor, but like those fountains which well forth pure streams, and water gardens and pleasure grounds, so also are their stomachs pure from such-like superfluities. But not such are the stomachs of the rich, or rather of the luxurious; but they are filled with humors, phlegm, bile, corrupted blood, putrid rheums, and other suchlike

matters. Wherefore no one, if he lives always in luxury, can bear it even for a short time; but his life will be spent in continual sicknesses. Wherefore I would gladly ask them, for what end are meats given? That we may be destroyed, or be nourished? That we may be diseased, or be strong? That we may be healthful, or be sickly? Very plainly, for nourishment, creating unto the body disease and sickness? But not so the poor man; on the contrary, by his plain diet he purchases to himself health, and vigor, and strength. Weep not then on account of poverty, the mother of health, but even exult in it; and if you would be rich, despise riches. For this, not the having money but the not wanting to have it, is truly affluence. If we can achieve this, we shall both be here more affluent than all that are rich, and there shall obtain the good things to come, whereunto may all we attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 13 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 6:11-12

Our mouth is open unto you, O you Corinthians, our heart is enlarged, you are not straitened in us, but you are straitened in your own affections.

Having detailed his own trials and afflictions, for "*in patience*," says he, "*in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, (v. 4, 5.) in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumult, in labors, in watchings;*" and having shown that the thing was a great good, for "*as sorrowful*," says he, "*yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things;*" [2 Corinthians 6:10] and having called those things "*armor*," for "*as chastened*," says he, "*and not killed:*" and having hereby represented God's abundant care and power, for he says, "*that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not of us;*" [2 Corinthians 4:7] and having recounted his labors, for he says, "*we always bear about His dying;*" and that this is a clear demonstration of the Resurrection, for he says, "*that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh;*" [2 Corinthians 4:10] and of what things he was made partaker, and with what he had been entrusted, for "*we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ*," [2 Corinthians 3:20] says he, "*as though God were entreating by us;*" and of what things he is a minister, namely, "*not of the letter, but of the Spirit;*" [2 Corinthians 3:6] and that he was entitled to reverence not only on this account, but also for his trials, for, "*Thanks be to God*," says he, "*which always causes us to triumph:*" he purposes now also to rebuke them as not being too well minded towards himself. But though purposing he does not immediately come upon this, but having his discussion of these things. For

if even from his own good deeds he that rebukes be entitled to reverence; yet still, when he also displays the love, which he bears towards those who are censured, he makes his speech less offensive. Therefore the Apostle also having stepped out of the subject of his own trials and toils and contests, passes on into speaking of his love, and in this way touches them to the quick. What then are the indications of his love? *"Our mouth is open unto you, O you Corinthians."* And what kind of sign of love is this? Or what meaning even have the words at all? 'We cannot endure,' he says, 'to be silent towards you, but are always desiring and longing to speak to and converse with you;' which is the wont of those who love. For what grasping of the hands is to the body, that is interchange of language to the soul. And along with this he implies another thing also. Of what kind then is this? That 'we discourse unto nothing.' For since afterwards he proposes to rebuke, he asks forgiveness, using the rebuking them with freedom as itself a proof of his loving them exceedingly. Moreover the addition of their name is a mark of great love and warmth and affection; for we are accustomed to be repeating continually the bare names of those we love.

"Our heart is enlarged." For as that which warms is wont to dilate; so also to enlarge is the work of love. For virtue is warm and fervent. This both opened the mouth of Paul and enlarged his heart. For, 'neither do I love with the mouth only,' says he, 'but I have also a heart in union. Therefore I speak with openness, with my whole mouth, with my whole mind.' For nothing is wider than was Paul's heart which loved all the faithful with all the vehemence that one might bear towards the object of his affection; this his love not being divided and therefore weakened, but abiding in full entirety with each. And what marvel that this was so in the case of the faithful, seeing that even in that of the unfaithful, the heart of Paul embraced the whole world? Therefore he said not 'I love you,' but with

more emphasis, *"Our mouth is open, our heart is enlarged,"* we have you all within it, and not this merely, but with much largeness of room. For he that is beloved walks with great unrestraint within the heart of him that loves. Wherefore he says, *"You are not straitened in us, but you are straightened in your own affections."* And this reproof, see it administered with forbearance, as is the wont of such as love exceedingly. He did not say, 'ye do not love us,' but, 'not in the same measure,' for he does not wish to touch them too sensibly. And indeed every where one may see how he is inflamed toward the faithful, by selecting words out of every Epistle. For to the Romans he says, *"I long to see you;"* and, *"oftentimes I purposed to come unto you;"* and, *"If by any means now at length I may be prospered to come unto you."* [Romans 1:11-13] And to the Galatians, he says, *"My little children of whom I am again in travail."* [Galatians 4:19] To the Ephesians again, *"For this cause I bow my knees"* for you. [Ephesians 3:14] And to the Philippians, *"For what is my hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye?"* and he said that he bare them about in his heart, and in his bonds. [Philippians 1:7] And to the Colossians, *"But I would that you knew greatly I strive for you, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that your hearts might be comforted."* [Colossians 2:1-2] And to the Thessalonians, *"As when a nurse cherishes her children, even so being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the Gospel only, but also our own souls."* [1 Thessalonians 2:7-8] And to Timothy, *"Remembering your tears, that I may be filled with joy."* [2 Timothy 1:4] And to Titus, *To my beloved son;* [Titus 1:4] and to Philemon, in like manner. [Philemon 1] And to the Hebrews too, he writes many other such-like things, and ceases not to beseech them, and say, *"A very little while, and he that comes shall come, and shall not tarry:"* [Hebrews 10:37] just like a mother to her pettish children. And to themselves he says, *"You*

are not straitened in us." But he does not say only that he loves, but also that he is beloved by them, in order that hereby also he may the rather win them. And indeed testifying to this in them, he says, Titus came and *"told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal."* [2 Corinthians 7:7] And to the Galatians, *"If possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me,"* [Galatians 4:15] And to the Thessalonians, *"What manner of entering in we had unto you."* [1 Thessalonians 1:9] And to Timothy also, *"Remembering your tears, that I may be filled with joy."* [2 Timothy 1:4] And also throughout his Epistles one may find him bearing this testimony to the disciples, both that he loved and that he is loved, not however equally. And here he says, *"Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."* [2 Corinthians 12:15] This, however, is near the end; but at present more vehemently, *"You are not straitened in us, but you are straitened in your own affections,"* 'You receive one,' he says, 'but I a whole city, and so great a population.' And he said not, 'ye do not receive us,' but, 'you are straitened;' implying indeed the same thing but with forbearance and without touching them too deeply.

2 Corinthians 6:13

"Now for a recompense in like kind (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."

And yet it is not an equal return, first to be loved, afterwards to love. For even if one were to contribute that which is equal in amount, he is inferior in that he comes to it second. 'But nevertheless I am not going to reckon strictly, ' says he, 'and if you after having received the first advances from me do but show forth the same amount, I am well-pleased and contented.' Then to show that to do this was even a debt, and that what he said was void of flattery, he says, *"I speak as unto my children."* What means, *"as unto my children?"* 'I ask no great thing, if being your father I wish to be loved by you.' And see wisdom and moderation of mind. He mentions not here his dangers on their behalf, and his labors, and his deaths, although he had many to tell of: (so free from pride is he!) but his love: and on this account he claims to be loved; 'because,' says he, 'I was your father, because I exceedingly burn for you,' [for] it is often especially offensive to the person beloved when a man sets forth his benefits to him; for he seems to reproach. Wherefore Paul does not this; but, 'like children, love your father,' says he, which rather proceeds from instinct ; and is the due of every father. Then that he may not seem to speak these things for his own sake, he shows that it is for their advantage even that he invites this love from them. And therefore he added,

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

He said not, 'Intermix not with unbelievers,' but rather dealing sharply with them, as transgressing what was right, 'Suffer not yourselves to turn aside,' says he, *"For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity?"* Here in what follows he institutes a comparison, not between his own love and theirs who corrupt them, but between their nobleness and the others' dishonor. For thus his discourse became more dignified and more befitting himself, and would rather win them. Just as if one should say to a son that despised his parents, and gave himself up to vicious persons, 'What are you doing, child? Do you despise your father and prefer impure men filled with ten thousand vices? Do you not know how much better and more respectable you are than they?' For so he detaches him more [readily] from their society than if he should express admiration of his father. For were he to say indeed, 'Do you not know how much your father is better than they?' he will not produce so much effect; but if, leaving mention of his father, he bring himself before them, saying, 'Do you not know who you are and what they are? Do you not bear in mind your own high birth and gentle blood, and their infamy? For what communion have you with them, those thieves, those adulterers, those impostors?' by elevating him with these praises of himself, he will quickly prepare him to break off from them. For the former address indeed, he will not entertain with overmuch acceptance, because the exalting of his father is an accusation of himself, when he is shown to be not only grieving a father, but such a father; but in this case he will have no such feeling. For none would choose not to be praised, and therefore, along with these praises of him that hears, the rebuke

becomes easy of digestion. For the listener is softened, and is filled with high thoughts, and disdains the society of those persons.

But not this only is the point to be admired in him that thus he prosecuted his comparison, but that he imagined another thing also still greater and more astounding; in the first place, prosecuting his speech in the form of interrogation, which is proper to things that are clear and admitted, and then dilating it by the quick succession and multitude of his terms. For he employs not one or two or three only, but several. Add to this that instead of the persons he employs the names of the things, and he delineates here high virtue and there extreme vice; and shows the difference between them to be great and infinite so as not even to need demonstration. *"For what fellowship,"* says he, *"have righteousness and iniquity?"*

"And what communion has light with darkness?" (v. 15, 16.) *"And what concord has Christ with Beliar ? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has a temple of God with idols?"*

Do you see how he uses the bare names, and how adequately to his purpose of dissuasion. For he did not say, 'neglect of righteousness ,' [but] what was stronger [iniquity]; nor did he say those who are of the light, and those who are of the darkness; but he uses opposites themselves which can not admit of their opposites, 'light and darkness.' Nor said he those who are of Christ, with those who are of the devil; but, which was far wider apart, Christ and Beliar, so calling that apostate one, in the Hebrew tongue. *"Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever?"* Here, at length, that he may not seem simply to be going through a censure of vice and an encomium of virtue, he mentions persons also without particularizing. And he said not, 'communion,' but spoke of the rewards, using the term *"portion."* *What agreement has a temple of God with idols?"*

"For you are a temple of the living God." Now what he says is this. Neither has your King anything in common with him, *"for what concord has Christ with Beliar?"* nor have the things [anything in common], *"for what communion has light with darkness?"* Therefore neither should ye. And first he mentions their king and then themselves; by this separating them most effectually. Then having said, *"a temple of God with idols,"* and having declared, *"For you are a temple of the living God,"* he is necessitated to subjoin also the testimony of this to show that the thing is no flattery. For he that praises except he also exhibit proof, even appears to flatter. What then is his testimony? For,

"I will dwell in them," says he, *"and walk in them. I will dwell in,"* as in temples, *"and walk in them,"* signifying the more abundant attachment to them.

"And they shall be my people and I will be their God." "What?" says he, 'Do you bear God within you, and runnest unto them? God That has nothing in common with them? And in what can this deserve forgiveness? Bear in mind Who walks, Who dwells in you.'

2 Corinthians 6:17

Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, says the Lord.

And He said not, 'Do not unclean things;' but, requiring greater strictness, 'do not even touch,' says he, 'nor go near them.' But what is filthiness of the flesh? Adultery, fornication, lasciviousness of every kind. And what of the soul? Unclean thoughts, as gazing with unchaste eyes, malice, deceits, and whatsoever such things there be. He wishes then that they should be clean in both. Do you see how great the prize? To be delivered from what is evil, to be made one with God. Hear also what follows.

2 Corinthians 6:18

"And I will be to you a Father, and you shall be to me sons and daughters, says the Lord."

Do you see how from the beginning the Prophet fore-announces our present high birth, the Regeneration by grace?

2 Corinthians 7:1

"Having therefore these promises, beloved."

What promises? That we should be temples of God, sons and daughters, have Him indwelling, and walking in us, be His people, have Him for our God and Father.

"Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit."

Let us neither touch unclean things, for this is cleansing of the flesh; nor things which defile the soul, for this is cleansing of the spirit. Yet he is not content with this only, but adds also,

"Perfecting holiness in the fear of God." For not to touch the unclean thing does not make clean, but there needs something else besides to our becoming holy; earnestness, heedfulness, piety. And he well said, *"In the fear of God."* For it is possible to perfect chasteness, not in the fear of God but for vainglory. And along with this he implies yet another thing, by saying, *"In the fear of God;"* the manner, namely, whereafter holiness may be perfected. For if lust be even an imperious thing, still if you occupy its territory with the fear of God, you have stayed its frenzy.

4. Now by holiness here he means not chastity alone, but the freedom from every kind of sin, for he is holy that is pure. Now one will become pure, not if he be free from fornication only, but if from covetousness also, and envy, and pride, and vainglory, yea especially from vainglory which in every thing indeed it behooves to avoid, but much more in almsgiving; since neither will it be almsgiving, if it have this distemper, but display and cruelty. For when thou dost it not out of mercy, but from parade, such deed is not only no alms but even an insult; for you have put your brother to open shame. Not then the giving money, but the giving it out of mercy, is

almsgiving. For people too at the theatres give, both to prostitute boys and to others who are on the stage; but such a deed is not almsgiving. And they too give that abuse the persons of prostitute women; but this is not lovingkindness, but insolent treatment. Like this is the vainglorious also. For just as he that abuses the person of the harlot, pays her a price for that abuse; so too do you demand a price of him that receives of you, your insult of him and your investing him as well as yourself with an evil notoriety. And besides this, the loss is unspeakable. For just as a wild beast and a mad dog springing upon us might, so does this ill disease and this inhumanity make prey of our good things. For inhumanity and cruelty such a course is; yea, rather more grievous even than this. For the cruel indeed would not give to him that asked; but thou dost more than this; you hinder those that wish to give. For when you parade your giving, you have both lowered the reputation of the receiver, and hast pulled back him that was about to give, if he be of a careless mind. For he will not give to him thenceforth, on the ground of his having already received, and so not being in want; yea he will often accuse him even, if after having received he should draw near to beg, and will think him impudent. What sort of almsgiving then is this when thou both shamest yourself and him that receives; and also in two ways Him that enjoined it: both because while having Him for a spectator of your alms, you seek the eyes of your fellow-servants besides Him, and because you transgress the law laid down by Him forbidding these things.

I could have wished to carry this out into those other subjects as well, both fasting and prayer, and to show in how many respects vainglory is injurious there also; but I remember that in the discourse before this I left unfinished a certain necessary point. What was the point? I was saying, that the poor have the advantage of the rich in the things of this life, when I discoursed concerning health and pleasure; and this was shown indistinctly.

Come then, today let us show this, that not in the things of this life only, but also in those that are higher, the advantage is with them. For what leads unto a kingdom, riches or poverty? Let us hear the Lord Himself of the heavens saying of those, that *"it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven:"* [Matthew 19:24] but of the poor the contrary, *"If you will be perfect, sell that you have, and give to the poor; and come, follow Me; and you shall have treasure in heaven."* [Matthew 19:21] But if you will, let us see what is said on either side. *"Narrow and straitened is the way,"* He says, *"that leads unto life."* [Matthew 7:14] Who then treads the narrow way, he that is in luxury, or that is in poverty; that is independent, or that carries ten thousand burdens; the lax and dissolute, or the thoughtful and anxious? But what need of these arguments, when it is best to betake one's self to the persons themselves. Lazarus was poor, yea very poor; and he that passed him by as he lay at his gateway was rich. Which then entered into the kingdom, and was in delights in Abraham's bosom? And which of them was scorched, with not even a drop at his command? But, says one, 'both many poor will be lost, and [many] rich will enjoy those unspeakable goods.' Nay rather, one may see the contrary, few rich saved, but of the poor far more. For, consider, making accurate measure of the hindrances of riches and the defects of poverty, (or rather, neither of riches nor of poverty are they, but each of those who have riches or poverty; howbeit,) let us at least see which is the more available weapon. What defect then does poverty seem to possess? Lying. And what, wealth? Pride, the mother of evils; which also made the devil a devil, who was not such before. Again, *"the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."* [1 Timothy 6:10] Which then stands near this root, the rich man, or the poor? Is it not very plainly the rich? For the more things anyone surrounds himself with, he desires so much the more.

Vainglory again damages tens of thousands of good deeds, and near this too again the rich man has his dwelling. *"But,"* says one, *"you mention not the [evils] of the poor man, his affliction, his straits."* Nay, but this is both common to the rich, and is his more than the poor man's; so that those indeed which appear to be evils of poverty are common to either: while those of riches are riches' only. 'But what,' says one, 'when for want of necessities the poor man commits many horrible things?' But no poor man, no, not one, commits as many horrible things from want, as do the rich for the sake of surrounding themselves with more, and of not losing what stores they have. For the poor man does not so eagerly desire necessities as the rich does superfluities; nor again has he as much strength to put wickedness in practice as the other has power. If then the rich man is both more willing and able, it is quite plain that he will rather commit such, and more of them. Nor is the poor man so much afraid in respect of hunger, as the rich trembles and is anxious in respect of the loss of what he has, and because he has not yet gotten all men's possessions. Since then he is near both vainglory and arrogance, and the love of money, the root of all evils, what hope of salvation shall he have except he display much wisdom? And how shall he walk the narrow way? Let us not therefore carry about the notions of the many, but examine into the facts. For how is it not absurd that in respect to money, indeed, we do not trust to others, but refer this to figures and calculation; but in calculating upon facts we are lightly drawn aside by the notions of others; and that too, though we possess an exact balance, and square and rule for all things, the declaration of the divine laws? Wherefore I exhort and entreat you all, disregard what this man and that man thinks about these things, and inquire from the Scriptures all these things; and having learned what are the true riches, let us pursue after them that we may obtain also the eternal good things; which may we all obtain, through the

grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 7:2-4

Open your hearts to us: we wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we took advantage of no man. I say it not to condemn you; for I have said before, [as I have also declared above] , that you are in our hearts to die together and live together.

Again he raises the discourse about love, mitigating the harshness of his rebuke. For since he had convicted and reproached them as being beloved indeed, yet not loving in an equal degree, but breaking away from his love and mixing up with other pestilent fellows; again he softens the vehemence of his rebuke, saying, *"Make room for us,"* that is, *"love us;"* and prays to receive a favor involving no burden, and advantaging them that confer above them that receive it. And he said not, 'love,' but with a stronger appeal to their pity , *"make room for."* 'Who expelled us?' says he: 'Who cast us out of your hearts? How come we to be straitened in you?' for since he said above, *"You are straitened in your affections;"* here declaring it more clearly, he said, *"make room for us:"* in this way also again winning them to himself. For nothing does so produce love as for the beloved to know that he that loves him exceedingly desires his love.

"We wronged no man." See how again he does not mention the benefits [done by him], but frames his speech in another way, so as to be both less offensive and more cutting. And at the same time he also alludes to the false apostles, saying, *"We wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we defrauded no man."*

What is "*we corrupted?*" That is, we beguiled no man; as he says elsewhere also. "*Lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should be corrupted.*" [2 Corinthians 11:3]

"*We defrauded no man;*" we plundered, plotted against no man. And he for the present forbears to say, 'we benefited you in such and such ways;' but framing his language so as more to shame them, "*We wronged no man,*" he says; as much as saying, 'Even had we in no wise benefited you, not even so ought ye to turn away from us; for you have nothing to lay to our charge, either small or great.' Then, for he felt the heaviness of his rebuke, he tempers it again. And he was neither silent altogether, for so he would not have aroused them; nor yet did he let the harshness of his language go unmodified, for so he would have wounded them too much. And what says he?

2 Corinthians 7:3. "*I say it not to condemn you.*"

How is this evident? "*For I have said before,*" he adds, "*that you are in our hearts to die and live with you.*" This is the greatest affection, when even though treated with contempt, he chooses both to die and live with them. 'For neither are you merely in our hearts,' he says, 'but in such sort as I said. For it is possible both to love and to shun dangers, but we do not thus.' And behold here also wisdom unspeakable. For he spoke not of what had been done for them, that he might not seem to be again reproaching them, but he promises for the future. 'For should it chance,' says he, 'that danger should invade, for your sakes I am ready to suffer every thing; and neither death nor life seems anything to me in itself, but in whichever ye be, that is to me more desirable, both death than life and life than death.' Howbeit, dying indeed is manifestly a proof of love; but living, who is there that would not choose, even of those who are not friends? Why then does the Apostle mention it as something great? Because it is even exceeding

great. For numbers indeed sympathize with their friends when they are in misfortune, but when they are in honor rejoice not with, but envy, them. 'But not so we; but whether ye be in calamity, we are not afraid to share your ill fortune; or whether ye be prosperous, we are not wounded with envy.'

2. Then after he had continually repeated these things, saying, "*You are not straitened in us;*" and, "*You are straitened in your own affections;*" and, "*make room for us;*" and, "*Be also enlarged;*" and, "*We wronged no man;*" and all these things seemed to be a condemnation of them: observe how he also in another manner alleviates this severity by saying, "*Great is my boldness of speech towards you.*" 'Therefore I venture upon such things,' he says, 'not to condemn you by what I say, but out of my great boldness of speech,' which also farther signifying, he said, "*Great is my glorying on your behalf.*" 'For think not indeed,' he says, 'that because I thus speak, I speak as though I had condemned you altogether; (for I am exceedingly proud of, and glory in, you;) but both out of tender concern and a desire that you should make greater increase unto virtue.' And so he said to the Hebrews also after much rebuke; "*But we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: and we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence to the fullness of hope even to the end.*" [Hebrews 6:9-11] So indeed here also, "*Great is my glorying on your behalf.*" 'We glory to others of you,' he says. Do you see what genuine comfort he has given? 'And,' he says, 'I do not simply glory, but also, greatly.' Accordingly he added these words; "*I am filled with comfort.*" What comfort? 'That coming from you; because that you, having been reformed, comforted me by your conduct.' This is the test of one that loves, both to complain of not being loved and to fear lest he should inflict pain by complaining immoderately. Therefore he says, "*I am filled with*

comfort, I overflow with joy." 'But these expressions,' says one, 'seem to contradict the former.' They do not do so, however, but are even exceedingly in harmony with them. For these procure for the former a favorable reception; and the praise which they convey makes the benefit of those rebukes more genuine, by quietly abstracting what was painful in them. Wherefore he uses these expressions, but with great genuineness and earnestness. For he did not say, 'I am filled with joy;' but, "*I abound;*" or rather, not "*abound*" either, but "*superabound;*" in this way also again showing his yearning, that even though he be so loved as to rejoice and exult, he does not yet think himself loved as he ought to be loved, nor to have received full payment; so insatiable was he out of his exceeding love of them. For the joy it brings to be loved in any degree by those one passionately loves, is great by reason of our loving them exceedingly. So that this again was a proof of his affection. And of the comfort indeed, he says, "*I am filled;*" 'I have received what was owing to me;' but of the joy, "*I superabound;*" that is, 'I was desponding about you; but you have sufficiently excused yourselves and supplied comfort: for you have not only removed the ground of my sorrow, but have even increased joy.' Then showing its greatness, he not only declares it by saying, "*I superabound in joy,*" but also by adding, "*in all our affliction.*" 'For so great was the delight arising to us on your account that it was not even dimmed by so great tribulation, but through the excess of its own greatness it overcame the sorrows that had hold of us, and suffered us not to feel the sense of them.'

2 Corinthians 7:5

"For even when we had come into Macedonia, our flesh had no relief."

For since he said, *"our tribulation;"* he both explains of what sort it was, and magnifies it by his words, in order to show that the consolation and joys received from them was great, seeing it had repelled so great a sorrow. *"But we were afflicted on every side."*

How on every side? For *"without were fightings,"* from the unbelievers; *"within were fears;"* because of the weak among the believers, lest they should be drawn aside. For not among the Corinthians only did these things happen, but elsewhere also.

2 Corinthians 7:6-7

"Nevertheless He that comforts the lowly comforted us by the coming of Titus."

For since he had testified great things of them in what he said, that he may not seem to be flattering them he cites as witness Titus the brother , who had come from them to Paul after the first Epistle to declare unto him the particulars of their amendment. But consider, I pray you, how in every place he makes a great matter of the coming of Titus. For he says also before, *"Furthermore when I came to Troas for the Gospel, I had no relief for my spirit because I found not Titus my brother;"* [c. ii. 12, 13] and in this place again *"we were comforted,"* he says, *"by the coming of Titus."* For he is desirous also of establishing the man in their confidence and of making him exceedingly dear to them. And observe how he provides for both these things. For by saying on the one hand, *"I had no relief for my spirit,"* he shows the greatness of his virtue; and by saying on the other, that, in our tribulation his coming sufficed unto comfort; yet *"not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you,"* he endears the man unto the Corinthians. For nothing does so produce and cement friendships as the saying something sound and favorable of any one. And such he testifies Titus did; when he says that 'by his coming he has given us wings with pleasure; such things did he report of you. On this ground his coming made us glad. For we were delighted not *"only by his coming, but also for the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you."* And how was he comforted? By your virtue, by your good deeds.' Wherefore also he adds, *"While he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me."* 'These things made him glad,' he says, 'these things comforted him.' Do you

see how he shows that he also is an earnest lover of theirs, seeing he considers their good report as a consolation to himself; and when he had come, gloried, as though on account of his own good things, unto Paul.

And observe with what warmth of expression he reports these things, *"Your longing, your mourning, your zeal."* For it was likely that they would mourn and grieve why the blessed Paul was so much displeased, why he had kept away from them so long. And therefore he did not say simply tears, but *"mourning;"* nor desire, but *"longing;"* nor anger, but *"zeal;"* and again *"zeal toward him,"* which they displayed both about him that had committed fornication and about those who were accusing him. 'For,' says he, 'you were inflamed and blazed out on receiving my letters.' On these accounts he abounds in joy, on these accounts he is filled with consolation, because he made them feel. It seems to me, however, that these things are said not only to soften what has gone before, but also in encouragement of those who had acted in these things virtuously. For although I suppose that some were obnoxious to those former accusations and unworthy of these praises; nevertheless, he does not distinguish them, but makes both the praises and the accusations common, leaving it to the conscience of his hearers to select that which belongs to them. For so both the one would be void of offense, and the other lead them on to much fervor of mind.

4. Such also now should be the feelings of those who are reprehended; thus should they lament and mourn; thus yearn after their teachers; thus, more than fathers, seek them. For by those indeed living comes, but by these good living. Thus ought they to bear the rebukes of their fathers, thus to sympathize with their rulers on account of those that sin. For it does not rest all with them, but with you also. For if he that has sinned perceives that he was rebuked indeed by his father, but flattered by his brethren; he becomes more easy of mind. But when the father rebukes, be thou too angry

as well, whether as concerned for your brother or as joining in your father's indignation; only be the earnestness you show great; and mourn, not that he was rebuked, but that he sinned. But if I build up and thou pull down, what profit have we had but labor? [Sirach 34:23] Yea, rather, your loss stops not here, but you bring also punishment on yourself. For he that hinders the wound from being healed is punished not less than he that inflicted it, but even more. For it is not an equal offense to wound and to hinder that which is wounded from being healed; for this indeed necessarily genders death, but that not necessarily. Now I have spoken thus to you; that you may join in the anger of your rulers whenever they are indignant justly; that when you see any one rebuked, you may all shun him more than does the teacher. Let him that has offended fear you more than his rulers. For if he is afraid of his teacher only, he will readily sin: but if he have to dread so many eyes, so many tongues, he will be in greater safety. For as, if we do not thus act, we shall suffer the extremest punishment; so, if we perform these things, we shall partake of the gain that accrues from his reformation. Thus then let us act; and if any one shall say, 'be humane towards your brother, this is a Christian's duty.' let him be taught, that he is humane who is angry [with him], not he who sets him at ease prematurely and allows him not even to come to a sense of his transgression. For which, tell me, pities the man in a fever and laboring under delirium, he that lays him on his bed, and binds him down, and keeps him from meats and drinks that are not fit for him; or he that allows him to glut himself with strong drink, and orders him to have his liberty, and to act in every respect as one that is in health? Does not this person even aggravate the distemper, the man that seems to act humanely, whereas the other amends it? Such truly ought our decision to be in this case also. For it is the part of humanity, not to humor the sick in every thing nor to flatter their unseasonable desires. No one so loved him that

committed fornication among the Corinthians, as Paul who commands to deliver him to Satan; no one so hated him as they that applaud and court him; and the event showed it. For they indeed both puffed him up and increased his inflammation; but [the Apostle] both lowered it and left him not until he brought him to perfect health. And they indeed added to the existing mischief, he eradicated even that which existed from the first. These laws, then, of humanity let us learn also. For if you see a horse hurrying down a precipice, you apply a bit and holdest him in with violence and lashest him frequently; although this is punishment, yet the punishment itself is the mother of safety. Thus act also in the case of those that sin. Bind him that has transgressed until he have appeased God; let him not go loose, that he be not bound the faster by the anger of God. If I bind, God does not chain; if I bind not, the indissoluble chains await him. For if we judged ourselves, we should not be judged. [1 Corinthians 11:31] Think not, then, that thus to act comes of cruelty and inhumanity; nay, but of the highest gentleness and the most skillful leechcraft and of much tender care. But, says one, they have been punished for a long time. How long? Tell me. A year, and two, and three years? Howbeit, I require not this, length of time, but amendment of soul. This then show, whether they have been pricked to the heart, whether they have reformed, and all is done: since if there be not this, there is no advantage in the time. For neither do we inquire whether the wound has been often bandaged, but whether the bandage has been of any service. If therefore it has been of service, although in a short time, let it be kept on no longer: but if it has done no service, even at the end of ten years, let it be still kept on: and let this fix the term of release, the good of him that is bound. If we are thus careful both of ourselves and of others, and regard not honor and dishonor at the hands of men; but bearing in mind the punishment and the disgrace that is there, and above all the provoking of

God, apply with energy the medicines of repentance: we shall both presently arrive at the perfect health, and shall obtain the good things to come; which may all we obtain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 15 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 7:8-9

So that though I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret.

He goes on to apologize for his Epistle, when, (the sin having been corrected,) to treat them tenderly was unattended with danger; and he shows the advantage of the thing. For he did this indeed even before, when he said, *"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you: not that you should be made sorry, but that you might know the love which I have toward you."* [2 Corinthians 2:4] And he does it also now, establishing this same point in more words. And he said not, 'I regretted indeed before, but now I do not regret;' but how? *"I regret not now, though I did regret."* 'Even if what I wrote,' he says, 'was such as to overstep the [due] measure of rebuke, and to cause me to regret; still the great advantage which has accrued from them does not allow me to regret.' And this he said, not as though he had rebuked them beyond due measure, but to heighten his praises of them. 'For the amendment ye manifested was so great,' says he, 'that even if I did happen to smite you too severely insomuch that I even condemned myself, I praise myself now from the result.' Just as with little children, when they have undergone a painful remedy, such as an incision, or cautery, or bitter physic, afterwards we are not afraid to soothe them; so also does Paul.

"For I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season. Now I rejoice not that you were made sorry, but that you were made sorry unto repentance."

Having said, *"I do not regret,"* he tells the reason also; alleging the good that resulted from his letter; and skillfully excusing himself by saying, *"though but for a season."* For truly that which was painful was brief, but that which was profitable was perpetual. And what indeed followed naturally was to say, 'even though it grieved you for a season, yet it made you glad and benefited you forever.' But he does not say this: but before mentioning the gain he passes again to his praises of them, and the proof of his own concern for them, saying, *"Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry,"* ('for what gain came to me from you being made sorry?') *"but that you were made sorry unto repentance,"* that the sorrow brought some gain.' For a father also when he sees his son under the knife rejoices not that he is being pained, but that he is being cured; so also does this man. But observe how he transfers all that was well achieved in the matter unto themselves; and lays whatever was painful to the account of the Epistle, saying, *"It made you sorry for a season;"* while the benefit that resulted from it he speaks of as their own good achieving. For he said not, 'The Epistle corrected you,' although this was the case; but, *"ye sorrowed unto repentance."*

"For you were made sorry after a godly sort, that you might suffer loss by us in nothing."

Do you see wisdom unspeakable? 'For had we not done this,' he says, 'we had done you damage.' And he affirms that indeed which was well achieved to be theirs, but the damage his own, if indeed he had been silent. For if they are likely to be corrected by a sharp rebuke, then, if we did not sharply rebuke, we should have done you damage; and the injury would not be with you alone, but also with us. For just as he that gives not to the merchant what is necessary for his voyage, he it is that causes the damage; so also we, if we did not offer you that occasion of repentance, should have

wrought you damage. Do you see that the not rebuking those that sin is a damage both to the master and to the disciple?

2 Corinthians 7:10

2. *"For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, a repentance which brings no regret."*

'Therefore,' he says, 'though I did regret before I saw the fruit and the gain, how great they were I do not regret now .' For such a thing is godly sorrow. And then he philosophizes about it, showing that sorrow is not in all cases a grievous thing, but when it is worldly. And what is worldly? If you be in sorrow for money, for reputation, for him that is departed, all these are worldly. Wherefore also they work death. For he that is in sorrow for reputation's sake feels envy and is driven oftentimes to perish: such sorrow was that which Cain sorrowed, such Esau. By this worldly sorrow then he means that which is to the harm of those that sorrow. For only in respect to sins is sorrow a profitable thing; as is evident in this way. He that sorrowes for loss of wealth repairs not that damage; he that sorrowes for one deceased raises not the dead to life again; he that sorrowes for a sickness, not only is not made well but even aggravates the disease: he that sorrowes for sins, he alone attains some advantage from his sorrow, for he makes his sins wane and disappear. For since the medicine has been prepared for this thing, in this case only is it potent and displays its profitableness; and in the other cases is even injurious. 'And yet Cain,' says one, 'sorrowed because he was not accepted with God.' It was not for this, but because he saw his brother glorious in honor ; for had he grieved for this, it behooved him to emulate and rejoice with him; but, as it was, grieving, he showed that his was a worldly sorrow. But not so did David, nor Peter, nor any of the righteous. Wherefore they were accepted, when grieving either over their own sins or those of others. And yet what is more oppressive than sorrow?

Still when it is after a godly sort, it is better than the joy in the world. For this indeed ends in nothing; but that *"works repentance unto salvation, a salvation that brings no regret."* For what is admirable in it is this that one who had thus sorrowed would never repent, while this is a special characteristic of worldly sorrow. For what is more regretted than a true born son? And what is a heavier grief than a death of this sort? But yet those fathers who in the height of their grief endure nobody and who wildly beat themselves, after a time repent because they have grieved immoderately; as having thereby nothing benefitted themselves, but even added to their affliction. But not such as this is godly sorrow; but it possesses two advantages, that of not being condemned in that a man grieves for, and that this sorrow ends in salvation; of both which that is deprived. For they both sorrow unto harm and after they have sorrowed vehemently condemn themselves, bringing forth this greatest token of having done it unto harm. But godly sorrow is the reverse [of this]: wherefore also he said, *"works repentance unto salvation, a repentance that brings no regret."* For no one will condemn himself if he have sorrowed for sin, if he have mourned and afflicted himself. Which also when the blessed Paul has said he needs not to adduce from other sources the proof of what he said, nor to bring forward those in the old histories who sorrowed, but he adduces the Corinthians themselves; and furnishes his proof from what they had done; that along with praises he might both instruct them and the rather win them to himself.

2 Corinthians 7:11

"For behold," he says, *"this self-same thing, that you were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you."* 'For not only,' he says, 'did your sorrow not cast you into that condemning of yourselves, as having acted idly in so doing; but it made you even more careful.' Then he speaks of the certain tokens of that carefulness;

"Yea," what *"clearing of yourselves,"* towards me. *"Yea, what indignation"* against him that had sinned. *"Yea, what fear."* [2 Corinthians 7:11] For so great carefulness and very speedy reformation was the part of men who feared exceedingly. And that he might not seem to be exalting himself, see how quickly he softened it by saying,

"Yea, what longing," that towards me. *"Yea, what zeal,"* that on God's behalf. *"Yea, what avenging:"* for you also avenged the laws of God that had been outraged.

"In every thing ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter." Not only by not having perpetrated, for this was evident before, but also by not consenting unto it. For since he said in the former Epistle, *"and you are puffed up;"* [1 Corinthians 5:2] he also says here, 'you have cleared yourselves of this suspicion also; not only by not praising, but also by rebuking and being indignant.'

2 Corinthians 7:12

3. *"So although I wrote unto you," I wrote "not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong."* For that they might not say, Why then do you rebuke us if we were *"clear in the matter?"* setting himself to meet this even further above, and disposing of it beforehand, he said what he said, namely, *"I do not regret, though I did regret."* 'For so far,' says he, 'am I from repenting now of what I wrote then, that I repented then more than I do now when you have approved yourselves.' Do you see again his vehemence and earnest contention, how he has turned around what was said unto the very opposite. For what they thought would have made him recant in confusion as having rebuked them hastily, by reason of their amendment; that he uses as a proof that it was right in him to speak freely. For neither does he refuse afterwards to humor them fearlessly, when he finds he can do this. For he that said farther above such things as these, *"He that is joined to an harlot is one body,"* [1 Corinthians 6:16] and, *"Deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,"* [1 Corinthians 5:5] and, *"Every sin that a man does is without the body,"* [1 Corinthians 6:18] and such like things; how says he here, *"Not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong?"* Not contradicting, but being even exceedingly consistent with himself. How consistent with himself? Because it was a very great point with him to show the affection he bore towards them. He does not therefore discard concern for him, but shows at the same time, as I said, the love he had for them, and that a greater fear agitated him, [namely] for the whole Church. For he had feared lest the evil should eat further, and advancing on its way should seize upon the whole Church. Wherefore also he said, *"A little leaven leavens the*

whole lump." [1 Corinthians 5:6] This however he said at the time; but now that they had well done, he no longer puts it so but differently: and implies indeed the same thing, but manages his expressions more agreeably, saying,

"That our care for you might appear unto you. "

That is, 'that you might know how I love you.' Now this is the same thing as the former, but being differently expressed seemed to convey another meaning. For [to convince yourself] that it is the same, unfold his conception and you will perceive the difference to be nothing. 'For because I love you exceedingly,' says he, 'I was afraid lest ye should suffer any injury from that quarter, and yourselves succeed to that sorrow.' As therefore when he says, *"Does God take care for oxen?"* [1 Corinthians 9:9] he does not mean that He cares not, (for it is not possible for any existing thing to consist if deserted by the Providence of God): but that He did not legislate primarily for oxen, so also here he means to say, 'I wrote first indeed on your account, but secondly on his also. And I had indeed that love in myself,' he says, 'even independently of mine Epistle: but I was desirous of showing it both to you, and in a word to all, by that writing.'

2 Corinthians 7:13

"Therefore we have been comforted."

Since we both showed our care for you and have been wholly successful. As he said also in another place, *"Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord;"* [1 Thessalonians 3:8] and again, *"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye?"* [1 Thessalonians 2:19] For this is life, this comfort, this consolation to a teacher possessed of understanding; the growth of his disciples.

4. For nothing does so declare him that bears rule as paternal affection for the ruled. For begetting alone constitutes not a father; but after begetting, also loving. But if where nature is concerned there is so great need of love, much more where grace is concerned. In this way were all the ancients distinguished. As many, for instance, as obtained a good report among the Hebrews, by this were made manifest. So was Samuel shown to be great, saying, *"But God forbid that I should sin against God in ceasing to pray for you:"* [1 Samuel 12:23] so was David, so Abraham, so Elijah, and so each one of the righteous, those in the New Testament and those in the Old. For so Moses for the sake of those he ruled left so great riches and treasures untold, *"choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God,"* [Hebrews 11:25] and before his appointment was leader of the people by his actions. Wherefore also very foolishly did that Hebrew say to him, *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?"* [Exodus 2:14] What do you say? You see the actions and doubttest of the title? Just as if one seeing a physician using the knife excellently well, and succoring that limb in the body which was diseased, should say, 'Who made you a physician and ordered you to use the knife?' 'Art, my good Sir, and your own ailment.' So

too did his knowledge make him (i.e., Moses,) what he claimed to be. For ruling is an art, not merely a dignity, and an art above all arts. For if the rule of those without is an art and science superior to all other, much more this. For this rule is as much better than that, as that than the rest; yea, rather, even much more. And, if you will, let us examine this argument more accurately. There is an art of agriculture, of weaving, of building; which are both very necessary and tend greatly to preserve our life. For others surely are but ancillary to these; the coppersmith's, the carpenter's, the shepherd's. But further, of arts themselves the most necessary of all is the agricultural, which was even that which God first introduced when He had formed man. For without shoes and clothes it is possible to live; but without agriculture it is impossible. And such they say are the Hamaxobii, the Nomads among the Scythians, and the Indian Gymnosophists. For these troubled not themselves with the arts of housebuilding, and weaving, and shoemaking, but need only that of agriculture. Blush ye that have need of those arts that be superfluous, cooks, confectioners, embroiderers, and ten thousand other such people, that you may live; blush ye that introduce vain refinements into life; blush ye who are unbelievers, before those barbarians who have no need of art. For God made nature exceedingly independent, needing only a few things. However, I do not compel you nor lay it down for law that you should live thus; but as Jacob asked. And what did he ask? *"If the Lord will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on."* [Genesis 28:20] So also Paul commanded, saying, *"And having food and covering let us be therewith content."* [1 Timothy 6:8] First then comes agriculture; second, weaving; and third after it, building; and shoemaking last of all; for among us at any rate there are many both servants and laborers who live without shoes. These, therefore, are the useful and necessary arts. Come, then, let us compare them with that of ruling. For I have therefore brought forward

these that are of all most important, that when it shall have been seen to be superior to them, its victory over the rest may be unquestioned. Whereby then shall we show that it is more necessary than all? Because without it there is no advantage in these. And if you think good, let us leave mention of the rest and bring on the stage that one which stands higher and is more important than any, that of agriculture. Where then will be the advantage of the many hands of your laborers, if they are at war with one another and plunder one another's goods? For, as it is, the fear of the ruler restrains them and protects that which is wrought by them; but if you take this away, in vain is their labor. But if one examine accurately, he will find yet another rule which is the parent and bond of this. What then may this be? That according to which it behooves each man to control and rule himself, chastising his unworthy passions, but both nourishing and promoting the growth of all the germs of virtue with all care.

For there are [these] species of rule; one, that whereby men rule peoples and states, regulating this the political life; which Paul denoting said, *"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God."* [Romans 13:1-4] Afterwards to show the advantage of this, he went on to say, that the ruler *"is a minister of God for good;"* and again, *"he is a minister of God, and avenger to execute wrath on him that does evil."*

A second there is whereby every one that has understanding rules himself; and this also the Apostle further denoted, saying, *"Would you have no fear of the power? Do that which is good;"* [Romans 12:3] speaking of him that rules himself.

5. Here, however, there is yet another rule, higher than the political rule. And what is this? That in the Church. And this also itself Paul mentions, saying, *"Obey them that have the rule over you and submit to them; for they watch in behalf of your souls as they that shall give account."*

[Hebrews 13:17] For this rule is as much better than the political as heaven is than earth; yea rather, even much more. For, in the first place, it considers principally not how it may punish sins committed, but how, they may never be committed at all; next, when committed, not how it may remove the deceased [member], but how they may be blotted out. And of the things of this life indeed it makes not much account, but all its transactions are about the things in heaven. *"For our citizenship is in heaven."* [Philippians 3:20] And our life is here. *"For our life,"* says he, *"is hid with Christ in God."* [Colossians 3:3] And our prizes are there, and our race is for the crowns that be there. For this life is not dissolved after the end, but then shines forth the more. And therefore, in truth, they who bear this rule have a greater honor committed to their hands, not only than viceroys but even than those themselves who wear diadems, seeing that they mould men in greater, and for greater, things. But neither he that pursues political rule nor he that pursues spiritual, will be able well to administer it, unless they have first ruled themselves as they ought, and have observed with all strictness the respective laws of their polity. For as the rule over the many is in a manner twofold, so also is that which each one exerts over himself. And again, in this point also the spiritual rule transcends the political, as what we have said proved. But one may observe certain also of the arts imitating rule; and in particular, that of agriculture. For just as the tiller of the soil is in a sort a ruler over the plants, clipping and keeping back some, making others grow and fostering them: just so also the best rulers punish and cut off such as are wicked and injure the many; while they advance the good and orderly. For this cause also the Scripture likens rulers to vine-dressers. For what though plants utter no cry, as in states the injured do? Nevertheless they still show the wrong by their appearance, withering, straitened for room by the worthless weeds. And like as wickedness is punished by laws, so truly here

also by this art both badness of soil and degeneracy and wildness in plants, are corrected. For all the varieties of human dispositions we shall find here also, roughness, weakness, timidity, forwardness, steadiness : and some of them through wealth luxuriating unseasonably, and to the damage of their neighbors, and others impoverished and injured; as, for instance, when hedges are raised to luxuriance at the cost of the neighboring plants; when other barren and wild trees, running up to a great height, hinder the growth of those beneath them. And like as rulers and kings have those that vex their rule with outrage and war; so also has the tiller of the soil attacks of wild beasts, irregularity of weather, hail, mildew, great rain, drought, and all such things. But these things happen in order that you may constantly look unto the hope of God's aid. For the other arts indeed hold their way through the diligence of men as well; but this gets the better as God determines the balance, and is throughout almost wholly dependent thereupon; and it needs rains from above, and the admixture of weathers, and, above all, His Providence. *"For neither is he that plants any thing, nor he that waters, but God that gives the increase."* [1 Corinthians 3:7]

Here also there is death and life, and throes and procreation, just as with men. For here happen instances both of being cut off, and of bearing fruit, and of dying, and of being born (the same that was dead) over again, wherein the earth discourses to us both variously and clearly of a resurrection. For when the root bears fruit, when the seed shoots, is not the thing a resurrection? And one might perceive a large measure of God's providence and wisdom involved in this rule, if one go over it point by point. But what I wished to say is that this [rule] is concerned with earth and plants; but ours with care of souls. And great as is the difference between plants and a soul; so great is the superiority of this to that. And the rulers of the present life again are as much inferior to that [rule], as it is

better to have mastery over the willing than the unwilling. For this is also a natural rule; for truly in that case every thing is done through fear and by constraint; but here, what is done aright is of choice and purpose. And not in this point alone does this excel the other, but in that it is not only a rule, but a fatherhood so to speak; for it has the gentleness of a father; and while enjoining greater things, [still] persuades. For the temporal ruler indeed says, 'If you commit adultery, you have forfeited your life,' but this, should you look with unchaste eyes, threatens the highest punishments. For awful is this judgment court, and for the correction of soul, not of body only. As great then as the difference between soul and body, is that which separates this rule again from that. And the one indeed sits as judge of things that are open; yea, rather, not of all these even, but of such as can be fully proved; and oftentimes moreover, even in these deals treacherously, but this court instructs those that enter it that He that judges in our case, will bring forward "*all things naked and laid open*," [Hebrews 4:13] before the common theatre of the world, and that to be hidden will be impossible. So that Christianity keeps together this our life far more than temporal laws. For if to tremble about secret sins makes a man safer than to fear for such as are open; and if to call him to account even for those offenses which be less does rather excite him unto virtue, than to punish the graver only; then it is easily seen that this rule, more than all others, welds our life together.

6. But, if you will, let us consider also the mode of electing the rulers; for here too you shall behold the difference to be great. For it is not possible to gain this authority by giving money, but by having displayed a highly virtuous character; and not as unto glory with men and ease unto himself, but as unto toils and labors and the welfare of the many, thus, (I say,) is he that has been appointed inducted unto this rule. Wherefore also abundant is the assistance he enjoys from the Spirit. And in that case indeed the rule can

go no further than to declare merely what is to be done; but in this it adds besides the help derived from prayers and from the Spirit. But further; in that case indeed is not a word about philosophy, nor does any sit to teach what a soul is, and what the world, and what we are to be hereafter, and unto what things we shall depart hence, and how we shall achieve virtue. Howbeit of contracts and bonds and money, there is much speech, but of those things not a thought; whereas in the Church one may see that these are the subjects of every discourse. Wherefore also with justice may one call it by all these names, a court of justice, and a hospital, and a school of philosophy, and a nursery of the soul, and a training course for that race that leads unto heaven. Further, that this rule is also the mildest of all, even though requiring greater strictness, is plain from hence. For the temporal ruler if he catch an adulterer straightway punishes him. And yet what is the advantage of this? For this is not to destroy the passion, but to send away the soul with its wound upon it. But this ruler, when he has detected, considers not how he shall avenge, but how extirpate the passion. For thou indeed dost the same thing, as if when there was a disease of the head, you should not stay the disease, but cut off the head. But I do not thus: but I cut off the disease. And I exclude him indeed from mysteries and hallowed precincts; but when I have restored him I receive him back again, at once delivered from that viciousness and amended by his repentance. 'And how is it possible,' says one, 'to extirpate adultery?' It is possible, yea, very possible, if a man comes under these laws. For the Church is a spiritual bath, which wipes away not filth of body, but stains of soul, by its many methods of repentance. For thou, indeed, both if you let a man go unpunished hast made him worse, and if you punish hast sent him away uncured: but I neither let him go unpunished, nor punish him, as thou, but both exact a satisfaction which becomes me, and set that right which has

been done. Will you learn in yet another way how that thou indeed, though drawing swords and displaying flames to them that offend, work not any considerable cure; while I, without these things, have conducted them to perfect health? But no need have I of arguments or words, but I bring forth earth and sea, and human nature itself, [for witnesses.] And inquire, before this court held its sittings, what was the condition of human affairs; how, not even the names of the good works which now are done, were ever heard of. For who braved death? Who despised money? Who was indifferent to glory? Who, fleeing from the turmoils of life, bade welcome to mountains and solitude, the mother of heavenly wisdom? Where was at all the name of virginity? For all these things, and more than these, were the good work of this judgment court, the doings of this rule. Knowing these things then, and well understanding that from this proceeds every benefit of our life, and the reformation of the world, come frequently unto the hearing of the Divine words, and our assemblies here, and the prayers. For if you thus order yourselves, you will be able, having displayed a deportment worthy of heaven, to obtain the promised good things; which may all we obtain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 16 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 7:13

And in your comfort, we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

See again how he exalts their praises, and shows their love. For having said, 'I was pleased that my Epistle wrought so much and that you gained so much,' for "*I rejoice,*" he says, "*not that you were made sorry, but that you were made sorry unto repentance;*" and having shown his own love, for he says, "*Though I wrote unto you, I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that our care for you might be made manifest to you:*" again he mentions another sign of their good will, which brings them great praise and shows the genuineness of their affection. For, "*in your comfort,*" he says, "*we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus.*" And yet this is no sign of one that loves them exceedingly; rejoicing rather for Titus than for them. 'Yes,' he replies, 'it is, for I joyed not so much for his cause as for yours.' Therefore also he subjoins the reason, saying, "*because his bowels were refreshed by you all.*" He said not, 'he,' but "*his bowels;*" that is, 'his love for you.' And how were they refreshed? "*By all.*" For this too is a very great praise.

2 Corinthians 7:14

"For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf."

It is high praise when the teacher boasted, for he says, *"I was not put to shame."* I therefore rejoiced, because ye showed yourselves to be amended and proved my words by your deeds. So that the honor accruing to me was twofold; first, in that you had made progress; next, in that I was not found to fall short of the truth.

2 Corinthians 7:14. *"But as we spoke always to you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth."*

Here he alludes to something further. As we spoke all things among you in truth, (for it is probable that he had also spoken to them much in praise of this man ,) so also, what we said of you to Titus has been proved true.

2 Corinthians 7:15

"And his inward affection is more abundant toward you."

What follows is in commendation of him, as exceedingly consumed with love and attached to them. And he said not 'his love.' Then that he may not appear to be flattering, he everywhere mentions the causes of his affection; in order that he may, as I said, both escape the imputation of flattery and the more encourage them by making the praise redound unto them, and by showing that it was they who had infused into him the beginning and ground of this so great love. For having said, *"his inward affection is more abundant toward you;"* he added,

"Whilst he remembers the obedience of you all." Now this both shows that Titus was grateful to his benefactors, seeing he had returned, having them all in his heart, and continually remembers them, and bears them on his lips and in his mind; and also is a greater distinction to the Corinthians, seeing that so vanquished they sent him away. Then he mentions their obedience also, magnifying their zeal: wherefore also he adds these words,

"How with fear and trembling ye received him." Not with love only, but also with excessive honor. Do you see how he bears witness to a twofold virtue in them, both that they loved him as a father and had feared him as a ruler, neither for fear dimming love, nor for love relaxing fear. He expressed this also above, *"That ye sorrow after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you; yea what fear, yea what longing."*

2 Corinthians 7:16

"I rejoice therefore, that in every thing I am of good courage concerning you." Do you see that he rejoices more on their account; 'because,' he says, 'you have in no particular shamed your teacher, nor show yourselves unworthy of my testimony.' So that he joyed not so much for Titus?' sake, that he enjoyed so great honor; as for their own, that they had displayed so much good feeling. For that he may not be imagined to joy rather on Titus?' account, observe how in this place also he states the reason. As then he said above, *"If in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf I was not put to shame;"* so here also, *"In everything I am of good courage concerning you."* 'Should need require me to rebuke, I have no apprehension of your being alienated; or again to boast, I fear not to be convicted of falsehood; or to praise you as obeying the rein, or as loving, or as full of zeal, I have confidence in you. I bade you cut off, and you did cut off; I bade you receive, and you did receive; I said before Titus that you were great and admirable kind of people and knew to reverence teachers: ye proved these things true by your conduct. And he learned these things not so much from me as from you. At any rate when he returned, he had become a passionate lover of you: your behavior having surpassed what he had been told.'

2 Corinthians 8:1

2. *"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the Churches of Macedonia."*

Having encouraged them with these encomiums, he again tries exhortation. For on this account he mingled these praises with his rebuke, that he might not by proceeding from rebuke to exhortation make what he had to say ill received; but having soothed their ears, might by this means pave the way for his exhortation. For he purposes to discourse of almsgiving; wherefore also he says beforehand, *"I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you;"* by their past good works, making them the more ready to this duty also. And he said not at once, 'Therefore give alms,' but observe his wisdom, how he draws from a distance and from on high the preparation for his discourse. For he says, *"I make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the Churches of Macedonia."* For that they might not be uplifted he calls what they did *"grace;"* and while relating what others did he works greater zeal in them by his encomiums on others. And he mentions together two praises of the Macedonians, or rather three; namely, that they bear trials nobly; and that they know how to pity; and that, though poor, they had displayed profuseness in almsgiving, for their property had been also plundered. And when he wrote his Epistle to them, it was as signifying this that he said, *"For you became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa, for you also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews."* [1 Thessalonians 2:14] Hear what he said afterwards in writing to the Hebrews, *"For you took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions."* [Hebrews 10:34] But He calls what they did *"grace,"* not in order to keep them humble merely; but

both to provoke them to emulation and to prevent what he said from proving invidious. Wherefore he also added the name of "*brethren*" so as to undermine all envious feeling; for he is about to praise them in high-flown terms. Listen, at least, to his praises. For having said, "*I make known to you the grace of God,*" he said not 'which has been given in this or that city,' but praises the entire nation, saying, "*in the Churches of Macedonia.*" Then he details also this same grace.

2 Corinthians 8:2

"How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy."

Do you see his wisdom? For he says not first, that which he wishes; but another thing before it, that he may not seem to do this of set purpose, but to arrive at it by a different connection. *"In much proof of affliction."* This was what he said in his Epistle to the Macedonians themselves, *"You became imitators of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost;"* and again, *"From you sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place, your faith to God-ward is gone forth."* [1 Thessalonians 1:6-8] But what is, *"in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy?"* Both, he says, happened to them in excess; both the affliction and the joy. Wherefore also the strangeness was great that so great an excess of pleasure sprang up to them out of affliction. For in truth the affliction not only was not the parent of grief, but it even became unto them an occasion of gladness; and this too, though it was *"great."* Now this he said, to prepare them to be noble and firm in their trials. For they were not merely afflicted, but so as also to have become approved by their patience: yea rather, he says not by their patience, but what was more than patience, *"joy."* And neither said he *"joy"* simply, but *"abundance of joy,"* for it sprang up in them, great and unspeakable.

3. *"And their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."*

Again, both these with excessiveness. For as their great affliction gave birth to great joy, yea, *"abundance of joy,"* so their great poverty gave birth to great riches of alms. For this he showed, saying, *"abounded unto the*

riches of their liberality." For munificence is determined not by the measure of what is given, but by the mind of those that bestow it.

Wherefore he nowhere says, 'the richness of the gifts,' but "*the riches of their liberality.*" Now what he says is to this effect; 'their poverty not only was no impediment to their being bountiful, but was even an occasion to them of abounding, just as affliction was of feeling joy. For the poorer they were, the more munificent they were and contributed the more readily.' Wherefore also he admires them exceedingly, for that in the midst of so great poverty they had displayed so great munificence. For "*their deep,*" that is, 'their great and unspeakable,' "*poverty,*" showed their "*liberality.*" But he said not 'showed,' but "*abounded;*" and he said not "*liberality,*" but "*riches of liberality;*" that is, an equipoise to the greatness of their poverty, or rather much outweighing it, was the bountifulness they displayed. Then he even explains this more clearly, saying,

2 Corinthians 8:3

"For according to their power, I bear witness." Trustworthy is the witness. *"And beyond their power."* That is, it *"abounded unto the riches of their liberality."* Or rather, he makes this plain, not by this expression alone, but also by all that follows; for he says, *"of their own accord."* Lo! Yet another excessiveness.

2 Corinthians 8:4

"With much intreaty." Lo! Yet a third and a fourth. *"Praying us."* Lo! even a fifth. And when they were in affliction and in poverty. Here are a sixth and seventh. And they gave with excessiveness. Then since this is what he most of all wishes to provide for in the Corinthians' case, namely, the giving deliberately, he dwells especially upon it, saying, *"with much intreaty,"* and *"praying us."* 'We prayed not them, but they us.' Pray us what? *"That the grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints."* Do you see how he again exalts the deed, calling it by venerable names. For since they were ambitious of spiritual gifts, he calls it by the name grace that they might eagerly pursue it; and again by that of *"fellowship,"* that they might learn that they receive, not give only. 'This therefore they intreated us,' he says, 'that we would take upon us such a ministry. '

2 Corinthians 8:5

"And" this, "not as we hoped." This he says with reference both to the amount and to their afflictions. 'For we could never have hoped,' he says, 'that while in so great affliction and poverty, they would even have urged us and so greatly intreated us.' He showed also their carefulness of life in other respects, by saying,

"But first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God."

'For in everything their obedience was beyond our expectations; nor because they showed mercy did they neglect the other virtues,' *"but first gave themselves to the Lord."* What is, *"gave themselves to the Lord?"* 'They offered up [themselves]; they showed themselves approved in faith; they displayed much fortitude in their trials, order, goodness, love, in all things both readiness and zeal.' What means, *"and to us?"* 'They were tractable to the rein, loved, obeyed us; both fulfilling the laws of God and bound unto us by love.' And observe how here also he again shows their earnestness, saying, *"gave themselves to the Lord."* They did not in some things obey God, and in some the world; but in all things Him; and gave themselves wholly unto God. For neither because they showed mercy were they filled up with senseless pride, but displaying much lowlymindedness, much obedience, much reverence, much heavenly wisdom, they so wrought their almsdeeds also. But what is, *"by the will of God?"* Since he had said, they *"gave themselves to us,"* yet was it not *"to us,"* after the manner of men, but they did this also according to the mind of God.

2 Corinthians 8:6

4. *"Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also. "*

And what connection is there here? Much; and closely bearing on what went before. 'For because we saw them vehement,' he says, 'and fervent in all things, in temptations, in almsgiving, in their love toward us, in the purity otherwise of their life: in order that you too might be made their equals, we sent Titus.' Howbeit he did not say this, though he implied it. Behold excessiveness of love. 'For though intreated and desired by them,' he says, 'we were anxious about your state, lest by any means ye should come short of them. Wherefore also we sent Titus, that by this also being stirred up and put in mind, you might emulate the Macedonians.' For Titus happened to be there when this Epistle was writing. Yet he shows that he had made a beginning in this matter before Paul's exhortation; *"that as he had made a beginning before,"* he says. Wherefore also he bestows great praise on him; for instance, in the beginning [of the Epistle]; *"Because I found not Titus my brother, I had no relief for my spirit:"* [2 Corinthians 2:13] and here all those things which he has said, and this too itself. For this also is no light praise, the having begun before even: for this evinces a warm and fervent spirit. Wherefore also he sent him, infusing among them in this also a very great incentive unto giving, the presence of Titus. On this account also he extols him with praises, wishing to endear him more exceedingly to the Corinthians. For this too has a great weight unto persuading, when he who counsels is upon intimate terms. And well does he both once and twice and thrice, having made mention of almsgiving, call 'it grace,' now indeed saying, *"Moreover, brethren, I make known to you the*

grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia;" and now, "they of their own accord, praying us with much intreaty in regard of this grace and fellowship:" and again, "that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you this grace also."

5. For this is a great good and a gift of God; and rightly done assimilates us, so far as may be, unto God; for such an one is in the highest sense a man. A certain one, at least, giving a model of a man has mentioned this, for "*Man,*" says he, "*is a great thing; and a merciful man is an honorable thing.*" [Proverbs 20:6. Septuagint] Greater is this gift than to raise the dead. For far greater is it to feed Christ when an hungered than to raise the dead by the name of Jesus: for in the former case you do good to Christ, in the latter He to you. And the reward surely comes by doing good, not by receiving good. For here indeed, in the case of miracles I mean, you are God's debtor; in that of almsgiving, you have God for a debtor. Now it is almsgiving, when it is done with willingness, when with bountifulness, when you deem yourself not to give but to receive, when done as if you were benefitted, as if gaining and not losing; for so this were not a grace. For he that shows mercy on another ought to feel joyful, not peevish. For how is it not absurd, if while removing another's downheartedness, you are yourself downhearted? For so thou no longer sufferest it to be alms. For if you are downhearted because you have delivered another from downheartedness, you furnish an example of extreme cruelty and inhumanity; for it were better not to deliver him, than so to deliver him. And why are you also downhearted at all, O man? For fear your gold should diminish? If such are your thoughts, do not give at all: if you are not quite sure that it is multiplied for you in heaven, do not bestow. But you seek the recompense here. Wherefore? Let your alms be alms, and not traffic. Now many have indeed received a recompense even here; but have not so

received it, as if they should have an advantage over those who received it not here; but some of them as being weaker than they ought, because they were not so strongly attracted by the things which are there. And as those who are greedy, and ill-mannered, and slaves of their bellies, being invited to a royal banquet, and unable to wait till the proper time, just like little children mar their own enjoyment, by taking food beforehand and stuffing themselves with inferior dishes: even so in truth do these who seek for and receive [recompense] here, diminish their reward there. Further, when you lend, you wish to receive your principal after a longer interval, and perhaps even not to receive it at all, in order that by the delay you may make the interest greater; but, in this case, do you ask back immediately; and that too when you are about to be not here, but there forever; when you are about not to be here to be judged, but to render your account? And if indeed one were building you mansions where thou were not going to remain, you would deem it to be a loss; but now, do you desire here to be rich, whence possibly you are to depart even before the evening? Do you not know that we live in a foreign land, as though strangers and sojourners? Do you not know that it is the lot of sojourners to be ejected when they think not, expect not? Which is also our lot. For this reason then, whatsoever things we have prepared, we leave here. For the Lord does not allow us to receive them and depart, if we have built houses, if we have bought fields, if slaves, if gear, if any other such thing. But not only does He not allow us to take them and depart hence, but does not even account to you the price of them. For He forwarned you that you should not build, nor spend what is other men's but your own. Why therefore, leaving what is your own, do you work and be at cost in what is another's, so as to lose both your toil and your wages and to suffer the extremest punishment? Do not so, I beseech you; but seeing we are by nature sojourners, let us also be so by choice; that we

be not there sojourners and dishonored and cast out. For if we are set upon being citizens here, we shall be so neither here nor there; but if we continue to be sojourners, and live in such wise as sojourners ought to live in, we shall enjoy the freedom of citizens both here and there. For the just, although having nothing, will both dwell here amidst all men's possessions as though they were his own; and also, when he has departed to heaven, shall see those his eternal habitations. And he shall both here suffer no discomfort, (for none will ever be able to make him a stranger that has every land for his city;) and when he has been restored to his own country, shall receive the true riches. In order that we may gain both the things of this life and of that, let us use aright the things we have. For so shall we be citizens of the heavens, and shall enjoy much boldness; whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father with the Holy Ghost, be glory and power for ever. Amen.

Homily 17 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 8:7

Therefore that ye abound in every thing; in faith and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness.

See again his exhortation accompanied with commendations, greater commendations. And he said not, 'that you give,' but "*that you abound; in faith,*" namely, of the gifts, and "*in utterance,*" the word of wisdom, and "*knowledge,*" namely, of the doctrines, and "*in all earnestness,*" to the attaining of all other virtue.

"*And in your love,*" that, namely of which I have before spoken, of which I have also made proof.

"*That ye may abound in this grace also.*" Do you see that for this reason it was that he began by those praises, that advancing forward he might draw them on to the same diligence in these things also.

2 Corinthians 8:8

"I speak not by way of commandment."

See how constantly he humors them, how he avoids offensiveness, and is not violent nor compulsory; or rather what he says has both these, with the inoffensiveness of that which is uncompelled. For after he had repeatedly exhorted them and had greatly commended the Macedonians, in order that this might not seem to constitute a necessity, he says,

"I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others, the sincerity also of your love."

'Not as doubting it,' (for that is not what he would here imply,) 'but to make it approved, display it and frame it unto greater strength. For I therefore say these things that I may provoke you to the same forwardness. And I mention their zeal to brighten, to cheer, to stimulate your inclinations.' Then from this he proceeded to another and a greater point. For he lets slip no mode of persuasion, but moves heaven and earth in handling his argument. For he exhorted them both by other men's praises, saying, You know *"the grace of God which has been given in the Churches of Macedonia;"* and by their own, *"therefore that you abound in everything, in utterance and knowledge."* For this has power to sting man more that he falls short of himself, than that he does so of others. Then he proceeds afterwards to the head and crown of his persuasion.

2 Corinthians 8:9

"For you know the grace of our Lord, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich."

'For have in mind,' says he, 'ponder and consider the grace of God and do not lightly pass it by, but aim at realizing the greatness of it both as to extent and nature , and you will grudge nothing of yours. He emptied Himself of His glory that you, not through His riches but through His poverty, might be rich. If you believe not that poverty is productive of riches, have in mind your Lord and you will doubt no longer. For had He not become poor, you would not have become rich. For this is the marvel, that poverty has made riches rich.' And by riches here he means the knowledge of godliness, the cleansing away of sins, justification, sanctification, the countless good things which He bestowed upon us and purposes to bestow. And all these things accrued to us through His poverty. What poverty? Through His taking flesh on Him and becoming man and suffering what He suffered. And yet he owed not this, but thou dost owe to Him.

2 Corinthians 8:10

"And herein I give you my advice for your profit."

See how again he is careful to give no offense and softens down what he says, by these two things, by saying, *"I give advice,"* and, *"for your profit."* 'For, neither do I compel and force you,' says he, 'or demand it from unwilling subjects; nor do I say these things with an eye so much to the receivers benefit as to yours.' Then the instance also which follows is drawn from themselves, and not from others.

"Who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will."

See how he shows both that themselves were willing, and had come to this resolution without persuasion. For since he had borne this witness to the Thessalonians, that *"of their own accord with much intreaty,"* they had prosecuted this giving of alms; he is desirous of showing of these also that this good work is their own. Wherefore he said, *"not only to do, but also to will,"* and not *"begun,"* but *"begun before, a year ago."* Unto these things therefore I exhort you, whereunto ye beforehand bestirred yourselves with all forwardness.

2 Corinthians 8:11

"And now also you have completed the doing of it."

He said not, you have done it, but, you have put a completion to it,

"That as there was the readiness to will, so also [there may be] the completion also out of your ability."

That this good work halt not at readiness but receive also the reward that follows upon deeds.

2 Corinthians 8:12

2. *"For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man has, not according as he has not."*

See wisdom unspeakable. In that (having pointed out those who were doing beyond their power, I mean the Thessalonians, and having praised them for this and said, *"I bear them record that even beyond their power;"*) he exhorts the Corinthians to do only *"after"* their power, leaving the example to do its own work; for he knew that not so much exhortation, as emulation, incites unto imitation of the like; wherefore he says, *"For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man has, not according as he has not."*

'Fear not,' he means, 'because I have said these things, for what I said was an encomium upon their munificence, but God requires things after a man's power,' *"according as he has, not according as he has not."* For the word *"is acceptable,"* here implies 'is required.' And he softens it greatly, in confident reliance upon this example, and as winning them more surely by leaving them at liberty. Wherefore also he added,

2 Corinthians 8:13

"For I say not this, that others may be eased, and you distressed."

And yet Christ praised the contrary conduct in the widow's case, that she emptied out all of her living and gave out of her want. [Mark 12:43] But because he was discoursing to Corinthians among whom he chose to suffer hunger; *"for it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void;"* [1 Corinthians 9:15] he therefore uses a tempered exhortation, praising indeed those who had done beyond their power, but not compelling these to do so; not because he did not desire it, but because they were somewhat weak. For wherefore does he praise those, because *"in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality:"* and because they gave *"beyond their power?"* is it not very evident that it is as inducing these also to this conduct? So that even if he appears to permit a lower standard; he does so, that by it he may raise them to this. Consider, for instance, how even in what follows he is covertly preparing the way for this. For having said these things, he added,

2 Corinthians 8:14

"Your abundance being a supply for their want."

For not only by the words he has before used but by these also, he is desirous of making the commandment light. Nor yet from this consideration alone, but from that of the recompense also, again he makes it easier; and utters higher things than they deserve, saying, *"That there may be equality at this time, and their abundance"* a supply *"for your want."* Now what is it that he says? 'You are flourishing in money; they in life and in boldness towards God.' 'Give ye to them, therefore, of the money which you abound in but they have not; that you may receive of that boldness wherein they are rich and you are lacking.' See how he has covertly prepared for their giving beyond their power and of their want. 'For,' he says, 'if you desire to receive of their abundance, give of your abundance; but if to win for yourself the whole, you will give of your want and beyond your power.' He does not say this, however, but leaves it to the reasoning of his hearers; and himself meanwhile works out his object and the exhortation that was meet, adding in keeping with what appeared, the words, that *"there may be equality at this time."* How equality? You and they mutually giving your superabundance, and filling up your wants. And what sort of equality is this, giving spiritual things for carnal? For great is the advantage on that side; how then does he call it *"equality?"* either in respect of each abounding and wanting, does he say that this [equality] takes place; or else in respect of the present life only. And therefore after saying *"equality,"* he added, *"at this time."* Now this he said, both to subdue the high-mindedness of the rich, and to show that after our departure hence the spiritual possess the greater advantage. For here indeed we all enjoy much equality of honor;

but then there will be a wide distinction and a very great superiority, when the just shine brighter than the sun. Then since he showed that they were to be not only giving, but also receiving, and more, in return; he tries by a further consideration to make them forward, showing that if they did not give of their substance to others, they would not gain anything by gathering all together within. And he adduces an ancient story, thus saying,

2 Corinthians 8:15

"As it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack."

Now this happened in the case of the manna. For both they that gathered more, and they that gathered less, were found to have the same quantity, God in this way punishing insatiableness. And this he said at once both to alarm them by what then happened, and to persuade them never to desire to have more nor to grieve at having less. And this one may see happening now in things of this life not in the manna only. For if we all fill but one belly, and live the same length of time, and clothe one body; neither will the rich gain anything by his abundance nor the poor lose anything by his poverty.

3. Why then do you tremble at poverty? And why do you pursue after wealth? 'I fear,' says one, 'lest I be compelled to go to other men's doors and to beg from my neighbor.' And I constantly hear also many praying to this effect, and saying, 'Allow me not at any time to stand in need of men.' And I laugh exceedingly when I hear these prayers, for this fear is even childish. For every day and in every thing, so to speak, do we stand in need of one another. So that these are the words of an unthinking and puffed up spirit, and that does not clearly discern the nature of things. Do you see not that all of us are in need one of another? The soldier of the artisan, the artisan of the merchant, the merchant of the husbandman, the slave of the free man, the master of the slave, the poor man of the rich, the rich man of the poor, he that works not of him that gives alms, he that bestows of him that receives. For he that receives alms supplies a very great want, a want greater than any. For if there were no poor, the greater part of our salvation would be

overthrown, in that we should not have where to bestow our wealth. So that even the poor man who appears to be more useless than any is the most useful of any. But if to be in need of another is disgraceful, it remains to die; for it is not possible for a man to live who is afraid of this. 'But,' says one, 'I cannot bear blows arched [in scorn.]' Why do you in accusing another of arrogance, disgrace yourself by this accusation? For to be unable to endure the inflation of a proud soul is arrogant. And why do you fear these things, and tremblest at these things, and on account of these things which are worthy of no account, dreadest poverty also? For if you be rich, thou wilt stand in need of more, yea of more and meaner. For just in proportion to your wealth do you subject yourself to this curse. So ignorant are you of what you pray when you ask for wealth in order to be in need of no man; just as if one having come to a sea, where there is need both of sailors and a ship and endless stores of outfit, should pray that he might be in need of nothing at all. For if you are desirous of being exceedingly independent of every one, pray for poverty; and [then] if you are dependent on any, you will be so only for bread and raiment; but in the other case you will have need of others, both for lands, and for houses, and for imposts, and for wages, and for rank, and for safety, and for honor, and for magistrates, and those subject to them, both those in the city and those in the country, and for merchants, and for shopkeepers. Do you see that those words are words of extreme carelessness? For, in a word, if to be in need one of another appears to you a dreadful thing, [know that] it is impossible altogether to escape it; but if you will avoid the tumult, (for you may take refuge in the waveless haven of poverty,) cut off the great tumult of your affairs, and deem it not disgraceful to be in need of another; for this is the doing of God's unspeakable wisdom. For if we stand in need one of another, yet even the compulsion of this need draws us not together unto love; had

we been independent, should we not have been untamed wild beasts? Perforce and of compulsion God has subjected us one to another, and every day we are in collision one with another. And had He removed this curb, who is there who would readily have longed after his neighbor's love? Let us then neither deem this to be disgraceful, nor pray against it and say, 'Grant us not to stand in need of any one;' but let us pray and say, 'Suffer us not, when we are in need, to refuse those who are able to help us.' It is not the standing in need of others, but seizing the things of others, that is grievous. But now we have never prayed in respect to that nor said, 'Grant me not to covet other men's goods.' but to stand in need, this we think a fit subject of deprecation. Yet Paul stood in need many times, and was not ashamed; nay, even prided himself upon it, and praised those that had ministered to him, saying, *"For you sent once and again to my need;"* [Philippians 4:16] and again, *"I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you."* [2 Corinthians 11:8] It is no mark therefore of a generous temper, but of weakness and of a low minded and senseless spirit, to be ashamed of this. For it is even God's decree that we should stand in need one of another. Push not therefore your philosophy beyond the mean. 'But,' says one, 'I cannot bear a man that is entreated often and complies not.' And how shall God bear you who art entreated by Him, and yet obeyest not; and entreated too in things that advantage you? *"For we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ,"* [2 Corinthians 5:20] says he, *"as though God were entreating by us; be ye reconciled unto God."* 'And yet, I am His servant,' says he. And what of that? For when thou, the servant, art drunken, while He, the Master, is hungry and has not even necessary food, how shall your name of servant stand you in stead? Nay, this itself will even the more weigh you down, when thou indeed abidest in a three-storied dwelling while He owns not even a decent shelter; when thou [liest] upon

soft couches while He has not even a pillow. 'But,' says one, 'I have given.' But you ought not to leave off so doing. For then only will you have an excuse, when you have not what [to give], when you possess nothing; but so long as you have, (though thou have given to ten thousand,) and there be others hungering, there is no excuse for you. But when thou both shuttest up grain and raisest the price, and devisest other unusual tricks of traffic; what hope of salvation shall you have henceforth? You have been bidden to give freely to the hungry, but thou dost not give at a suitable price even. He emptied Himself of so great glory for your sake, but thou dost not count Him deserving even of a loaf; but your dog is fed to fullness while Christ wastes with hunger; and your servant bursts with surfeiting while your Lord and his is in want of necessary food. And how are these the deeds of friends? *"Be reconciled unto God,"* [2 Corinthians 5:20] for these are [the deeds] of enemies and such as are in hostility.

4. Let us then think with shame on the great benefits we have already received, the great benefits we are yet to receive. And if a poor man come to us and beg, let us receive him with much good will, comforting, raising him up with [our] words, that we ourselves also may meet with the like, both from God and from men. *"For whatsoever ye would that they should do unto you, do ye also unto them."* [Matthew 7:12] Nothing burdensome, nothing offensive, does this law contain. 'What you would receive, that do,' it says. The return is equal. And it said not, 'what you would not receive, that do not,' but what is more. For that indeed is an abstinence from evil things, but this is a doing of good things, in which the other is involved. Also He said not 'that do ye also wish, but do, to them.' And what is the advantage? *"This is the Law and the Prophets."* Would you have mercy shown you? Then show mercy. Would you obtain forgiveness? Then grant it. Would you not be evil spoken of? Then speak not evil. Longest thou to

receive praise? Then bestow it. Would you not be wronged? Then do not thou plunder. Do you see how He shows that virtue is natural, and that we need no external laws nor teachers? For in the things we wish to receive, or not to receive from our neighbors, we legislate unto ourselves. So that if you would not receive a thing, yet doest it, or if you would receive it, yet doest it not, you have become self-condemned and art henceforth without any excuse, on the ground of ignorance and of not knowing what ought to be done. Wherefore, I beseech you, having set up this law in ourselves for ourselves, and reading this that is written so clearly and succinctly, let us become such to our neighbors, as we would have them be to ourselves; that may we both enjoy present immunity , and obtain the future good things, though the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 18 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 8:16

But thanks be to God, Which put the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus.

Again he praises Titus. For since he had discoursed of almsgiving, he afterwards discourses also of those who are to receive the money from them and carry it away. For this was of aid towards this collection, and towards increasing the forwardness of the contributors. For he that feels confidence as to him that ministers, and suspects not those who are to be receivers, gives with the fuller bountifulness. And that this might be the case then also, hear how he commends those that had come for this purpose, the first of whom was Titus. Wherefore also he says, "*But thanks be to God, Which put (literally, 'gave') the same earnest care into the heart of Titus.*" What is "*the same?*" Which he had also in respect to the Thessalonians, or "*the same*" with me. And mark here wisdom. Showing this to be the work of God, he also gives thanks to Him that gave, so as to incite by this also. 'For if God stirred him up and sent him to you, He asks through Him. Think not therefore that what has happened is of men.' And whence is it manifest that God incited him?

2 Corinthians 8:17

"For indeed he accepted our exhortation, but being himself very earnest, he went forth of his own accord."

Observe how he also represents him as fulfilling his own part, and needing no prompting from others. And having mentioned the grace of God, he does not leave the whole to be God's; again, that by this also he may win them unto greater love, having said that he was stirred up from himself also. For, *"being very earnest, he went forth of his own accord,"* 'he seized at the thing, he rushed upon the treasure, he considered your service to be his own advantage; and because he loved you exceedingly, he needed not the exhortation I gave; but though he was exhorted by me also, yet it was not by that he was stirred up; but from himself and by the grace of God.'

2 Corinthians 8:18

"And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the Churches."

And who is this brother? Some indeed say, Luke, because of the history which he wrote, but some, Barnabas; for he calls the unwritten preaching also Gospel. And for what cause does he not mention their names; while he both makes Titus known [see also 2 Corinthians 8:23] by name, and praises him for his cooperation in the Gospel, (seeing that he was so useful that by reason of his absence even Paul could do nothing great and noble; for, *"because I found not Titus my brother, I had no relief for my spirit,"* 2 Corinthians 2:13) and for his love towards them, (for, says he, *"his inward affection is more abundant towards you;"* 2 Corinthians 7:15) and for his zeal in this matter (*"for,"* he says, *"of his own accord he went"*)? But these he neither equally commends, nor mentions by name? What then is one to say? Perhaps they did not know them; wherefore he does not dwell upon their praises because as yet they had had no experience of them, but only says so much as was sufficient for their commendation unto them (i.e. the Corinthians,) and to their escaping all evil suspicion. However, let us see on what score he eulogizes this man himself also. On what score then does he eulogize? First, praising him from his preaching; that he not only preached, but also as he ought, and with the befitting earnestness. For he said not, 'he preaches and proclaims the Gospel,' but, *"whose praise is in the Gospel."* And that he may not seem to flatter him, he brings not one or two or three men, but whole Churches to testify to him, saying, *"through all the churches."* Then he makes him respected also from the judgment of those

that had chosen him. And this too is no light matter. Therefore after saying,
"Whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the churches," he added,

2 Corinthians 8:19

"And not only so."

What is, *"and not only so?"* 'Not only on this account,' he says, 'is respect due to him, that he is approved as a preacher and is praised by all.'

"But he was also appointed by the churches along with us."

Whence it seems to me, that Barnabas is the person intimated. And he signifies his dignity to be great, for he shows also for what office he was appointed. For he says,

"To travel with us in the matter of this grace which is ministered by us." Do you see how great are these praises of him? He shone as a preacher of the Gospel and had all the churches testifying to this. He was chosen by us; and unto the same office with Paul, and everywhere was partner with him, both in his trials and in his dangers, for this is implied in the word *"travel."* But what is, *"with this grace which is ministered by us?"* So as to proclaim the word, he means, and to preach the Gospel; or to minister also in respect of the money; yea rather, he seems to me to refer to both of these. Then he adds,

"To the glory of the same Lord, and to show your readiness." What he means is this: 'We thought good,' he says, 'that he should be chosen with us and be appointed unto this work, so as to become a dispenser and a minister of the sacred money.' Nor was this a little matter. For, *"Look ye out,"* it says, *"from among you seven men of good report;"* [Acts 6:3] and he was chosen by the churches, and there was a vote of the whole people taken. What is, *"to the glory of the same Lord, and your readiness?"* 'That both God may be glorified and you may become the readier, they who are to receive this money being of proved character, and no one able to engender any false

suspicion against them. Therefore we sought out such persons, and entrusted not the whole to one person only, that he might escape this suspicion also; but we sent both Titus and another with him. Then to interpret this same expression, *"to the glory of the Lord and your ready mind:"* he added,

2 Corinthians 8:20

"Avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us."

What can this be which is said? A thing worthy of the virtue of Paul; and showing the greatness of his tender care and his condescension. 'For,' he says, 'that none should suspect us, nor have the slightest cavil against us, as though we purloined anything of the money placed in our hands; therefore we send such persons, and not one only, but even two or three.' Do you see how he clears them of all suspicions? Not on account of the Gospel, nor of their having been chosen merely; but also, from their being persons of proved character, (and for this very reason) having been chosen, that they might not be suspected. And he said not 'that you should not blame,' but 'that no other person should.' And yet it was on their account that he did this; and he implied as much in saying, *"to the glory of the same Lord, and your readiness:"* however, he does not wish to wound them; and so expresses himself differently,

"Avoiding this." And he is not satisfied with this either, but by what he adds, soothes again, saying,

"In the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us," and mingling his severity with praise. For that they might not feel hurt, and say, 'Is he obliged then to eye us stealthily, and are we so miserable as ever to have been suspected of these things?' Providing a correction against this too, he says, 'the money sent by you is of large amount, and this abundance, that is, the large amount of the money, is enough to afford suspicion to the evil-minded had we not offered that security. '

2 Corinthians 8:21

For *"we take thought for things, honorable not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."*

What can compare with Paul? For he said not, 'Perdition and woe to him who chooses to suspect anything of the kind: so long as my conscience does not condemn me, I waste not a thought on those who suspect.' Rather, the weaker they were, the more he condescended. For it is meet not to be angry with, but help, him that is sick. And yet from what sin are we so removed as he was from any such suspicion? For not even a demon could have suspected that blessed saint of this unfaithfulness. But still although so far removed from that evil suspicion, he does everything and resorts to every expedient, so as not to leave a shadow even to those who might be desirous in any way of suspecting something wrong; and he avoids not only accusations, but also blame and the slightest censure, even bare suspicion.

2 Corinthians 8:22

2. *"And we have sent with them our brother."*

Behold, again he adds yet another, and him also with an encomium; both his own judgment, and many other witnesses [to him].

"Whom," says he, *"we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest."* And having praised him from his own good works, he extols him also from his love towards them; and what he said of Titus, that *"being very earnest he went forth of his own accord;"* this he says of this person also, saying, *"but now much more earnest;"* laying up beforehand for them the seeds of [the proof of their] love toward the Corinthians.

And then, after having showed forth their virtue, he exhorts them also on their behalf, saying,

2 Corinthians 8:23

"Whether any inquire about Titus; he is my partner and my fellow-worker to youward."

What is, *"Whether about Titus?"* 'If,' says he, 'it be necessary to say any thing, this I have to say,' *"that he is my partner and fellow-worker to youward."* For he either means this; or, 'if you will do anything for Titus, you will do it unto no ordinary person, for he is *"my partner."*' And while appearing to be praising him, he magnifies them, showing them to be so disposed towards himself as that it were sufficient ground of honor among them that any one should appear to be his *"partner."* But, nevertheless, he was not content with this, but he also added another thing, saying, *"fellow-worker to youward."* Not merely *"fellow-worker,"* 'but in matters concerning you, in your progress, in your growth, in our friendship, in our zeal for you;' which last would avail most especially to endear him unto them.

"Or our brethren:" 'or whether you wish,' he says, 'to hear any thing about the others: they too have great claims to be commended to you. For they also,' he says, 'are our brethren, and,

"The messengers of the Churches," that is, sent by the Churches. Then, which is greater than all,

"The glory of Christ;" for to Him is referred whatever shall be done to them. 'Whether then ye wish to receive them as brethren, or as Apostles of the Churches, or as acting for the glory of Christ; you have many motives for good will towards them. For on behalf of Titus, I have to say, that he is both *"my partner,"* and a lover of you; on behalf of these, that they are *"brethren,"* that they are *"the messengers of the churches,"* that they are *"the glory of Christ."* Do you see that it is plain from hence also, that they were

of such as were unknown to them? For otherwise he would have set them off by those things with which he had also set off Titus, namely, his love towards them. But whereas as yet they were not known to them, 'Receive them,' he says, 'as brethren, as messengers of the churches, as acting for the glory of Christ.' On which account he adds;

2 Corinthians 8:24

"Wherefore show ye unto them, to the person of the churches, the proof of your love, and of our glorying on your behalf."

'Now show,' he says, 'how ye love us; and how we do not lightly nor vainly boast in you: and this you will show, if you show forth love towards them.' Then he also makes his words more solemn, by saying, *"unto the person of the churches."* He means, to the glory, the honor, of the churches. 'For if you honor them, you have honored the churches that sent them. For the honor passes not to them alone, but also to those that sent them forth, who ordained them, and more than these, unto the glory of God.' For when we honor those that minister to Him, the kind reception passes unto Him, unto the common body of the churches. Now this too is no light thing, for great is the potency of that assembly.

3. Certain it is at least that the prayer of the churches loosed Peter from his chains, opened the mouth of Paul; their voice in no slight degree equips those that arrive unto spiritual rule. Therefore indeed it is that both he who is going to ordain calls at that time for their prayers also, and that they add their votes and assent by acclamations which the initiated know: for it is not lawful before the uninitiated to unbare all things. But there are occasions in which there is no difference at all between the priest and those under him; for instance, when we are to partake of the awful mysteries; for we are all alike counted worthy of the same things: not as under the Old Testament [when] the priest ate some things and those under him others, and it was not lawful for the people to partake of those things whereof the priest partook. But not so now, but before all one body is set and one cup. And in the prayers also, one may observe the people contributing much. For in behalf

of the possessed, in behalf of those under penance, the prayers are made in common both by the priest and by them; and all say one prayer, the prayer replete with pity. Again when we exclude from the holy precincts those who are unable to partake of the holy table, it behooves that another prayer be offered, and we all alike fall upon the ground, and all alike rise up. Again, in the most awful mysteries themselves, the priest prays for the people and the people also pray for the priest; for the words, "*with your spirit,*" are nothing else than this. The offering of thanksgiving again is common: for neither does he give thanks alone, but also all the people. For having first taken their voices, next when they assent that it is "*meet and right so to do,*" then he begins the thanksgiving. And why do you marvel that the people any where utter anything with the priest, when indeed even with the very Cherubim, and the powers above, they send up in common those sacred hymns? Now I have said all this in order that each one of the laity also may be wary, that we may understand that we are all one body, having such difference among ourselves as members with members; and may not throw the whole upon the priests but ourselves also so care for the whole Church as for a body common to us. For this course will provide for our greater safety, and for your greater growth unto virtue. Here, at least, in the case of the Apostles, how frequently they admitted the laity to share in their decisions. For when they ordained the seven, [Acts 6:2-3] they first communicated with the people; and when Peter ordained Matthias, with all that were then present, both men and women. [Acts 1:15, etc.] For here is no pride of rulers nor slavishness in the ruled; but a spiritual rule, in this particular usurping most, in taking on itself the greater share of the labor and of the care which is on your behalf, not in seeking larger honors. For so ought the Church to dwell as one house; as one body so to be all disposed; just as therefore there is both one Baptism, and one table, and one fountain,

and one creation, and one Father. Why then are we divided, when so great things unite us; why are we torn asunder? For we are compelled again to bewail the same things, which I have lamented often. The state in which we are calls for lamentation; so widely are we severed from each other, when we ought to image the conjunction of one body. For in this way will he that is greater, be able to gain even from him that is less. For if Moses learned from his father-in-law somewhat expedient which himself had not perceived, [Exodus 18:14, etc.] much more in the Church may this happen. And how then came it that what he that was an unbeliever perceived, he that was spiritual perceived not? That all those of that time might understand that he was a man; and though he divide the sea, though he cleave the rock, he needs the influence of God, and that those acts were not of man's nature, but of God's power. And so let another rise up and speak; and so now, if such and such an one does not say expedient things, let another rise up and speak; though he be an inferior, yet if he say somewhat to the purpose , confirm his opinion; and even if he be of the very meanest, do not show him disrespect. For no one of these is at so great a distance from his neighbor, as Moses' father-in-law was from him, yet he disdained not to listen to him, but even admitted his opinion, and was persuaded, and recorded it; and was not ashamed to hand down the circumstances to history; casting down [so] the pride of the many. Wherefore also he left this story to the world engraven as it were on a pillar, for he knew that it would be useful to many. Let us then not overlook those who give us behooveful counsel, even though they be of the meaner sort, nor insist that those counsels prevail which we have ourselves introduced; but whatever shall appear to be best, let that be approved by all. For many of duller sight have perceived things sooner than those of acute vision, by means of diligence and attention. And say not, *"why do you call me to council, if you hearken*

not to what I say?" These accusations are not a counsellor's, but a despot's. For the counsellor has only power to speak his own opinion; but if something else appear more profitable, and yet he will carry his own opinion into effect, he is no longer a counsellor but a despot, as I said. Let us not, then, act in this manner; but having freed our souls from all arrogancy and pride, let us consider, not how our counsels only may stand, but how that opinion which is best may prevail, even though it may not have been brought forward by us. For no light gain will be ours, even though we should not have discovered what behooves, if ourselves accepted what has been pointed out by others; and abundant is the reward we shall receive from God, and so too shall we best attain to glory. For as he is wise that speaks that which is behooveful, so shall we that have accepted it, ourselves also reap the praise of prudence and of candor. Thus if both houses and states, thus too if the Church be ordered, she will receive a larger increase ; and so too shall we ourselves, having thus best ordered our present lives, receive the good things to come: whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 19 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 9:1-2

For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you.

Though he had said so much about it, he says here, "*It is superfluous for me to write to you.*" And his wisdom is shown not only in this, that though he had said so much about it, he says, "*it is superfluous for me to write to you,*" but in that he yet again speaks of it. For what he said indeed a little above, he said concerning those who received the money, to ensure them the enjoyment of great honor: but what he said before that, (his account of the Macedonians, that "*their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality,*" and all the rest,) was concerning loving-kindness and almsgiving. But nevertheless even though he had said so much before and was going to speak again, he says, "*it is superfluous for me to write to you.*" And this he does the rather to win them to himself. For a man who has so high a reputation as not to stand in need even of advice, is ashamed to appear inferior to, and come short of, that opinion of him. And he does this often in accusation also, using the rhetorical figure, omission, for this is very effective. For the judge seeing the magnanimity of the accuser entertains no suspicions even. For he argues, 'he who when he might say much, yet says it not, how should he invent what is not true?' And he gives occasion to suspect even more than he says, and invests himself with the presumption of a good disposition. This also in his advice and in his praises he does. For having said, "*It is superfluous for me to write to you,*" observe how he advises them.

"For I know your readiness of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia." Now it was a great thing that he even knew it himself, but much greater, that he also published it to others: for the force it has is greater: for they would not like to be so widely disgraced. Do you see his wisdom of purpose? He exhorted them by others' example, the Macedonians, for, he says, *"I make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the Churches of Macedonia."* He exhorted them by their own, for he says, *"who were the first to make a beginning a year ago not only to do, but also to will."* He exhorted them by the Lord's, for *"ye know"* he says, *"the grace of our Lord, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor."* [2 Corinthians 8:9] Again he retreats upon that strong main point, the conduct of others. For mankind is emulous. And truly the example of the Lord ought to have had most power to draw them over: and next to it, the [consideration] of the recompense: but because they were somewhat weak, this draws them most. For nothing does so much as emulation. But observe how he introduces it in a somewhat novel way. For He did not say, 'Imitate them;' but what?

"And your zeal has stirred up very many." What do you say? A little before you said, [they did it] *"of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty,"* how then now, *"your zeal?"* 'Yes,' he says, 'we did not advise, we did not exhort, but we only praised you, we only boasted of you, and this was enough to incite them. Do you see how he rouses them each by the other, these by those, and those by these, and, along with the emulation, has intermingled also a very high encomium. Then, that he may not elate them, he follows it up in a tempered tone, saying, *"Your zeal has stirred up very many."* Now consider what a thing it is that those who have been the occasion to others of this munificence, should be themselves behind hand in this contribution. Therefore he did not say, 'Imitate them,' for it would not

have kindled so great an emulation, but how? 'They have imitated you; see then that you the teachers appear not inferior to your disciples.'

And see how, while stirring up and inflaming them still more, he feigns to be standing by them, as if espousing their party in some rivalry and contention. For, as he said above, "*Of their own accord, with much entreaty they came to us, insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would complete this grace;*" so also he says here,

2 Corinthians 9:3

"For this cause have I sent the brethren that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void."

Do you see that he is in anxiety and terror, lest he should seem to have said what he said only for exhortation's sake? 'But because so it is,' says he, *"I have sent the brethren;"* 'so earnest am I on your behalf,' *"that our glorying may not be made void."* And he appears to make himself of the Corinthians' party throughout, although caring for all alike. What he says is this; 'I am very proud of you, I glory before all, I boasted even unto them , so that if you be found wanting, I am partner in the shame.' And this indeed he says under limitation, for he added,

"In this respect," not, in all points;

"That even as I said, you may be prepared." 'For I did not say, 'they are purposing,' but 'all is ready; and nothing is now wanting on their part. This then,' he says, 'I wish to be shown by your deeds.' Then he even heightens the anxiety, saying,

2 Corinthians 9:4

"Lest by any means if there come with me any from Macedonia, we, (that we say not ye,) should be put to shame in this confidence." The shame is greater when the spectators he has arrayed against them are many, even those same persons who had heard [his boasting.] And he did not say, 'for I am bringing with me Macedonians.' 'for there are Macedonians coming with me;' lest he should seem to do it on purpose; but how [said he?] *"Lest by any means, if there come with me any from Macedonia?"* 'For this may happen,' he says, 'it is matter of possibility.' For thus he also made what he said unsuspected, but had he expressed himself in that other way, he would have even made them the more contentious. See how he leads them on, not from spiritual motives only, but from human ones as well. 'For,' says he, 'though you make no great account of me, and reckon confidently on my excusing you, yet think of them of Macedonia,' *"lest by any means, if they come and find you;"* and he did not say 'unwillingly,' but *"unprepared,"* not having got all completed. But if this be a disgrace, not to contribute quickly; consider how great it were to contribute either not at all, or less than behooved. Then he lays down what would thereupon follow, in terms at once gentle and pungent, thus saying, *"We, (that we say not ye,) should be put to shame."* And he tempers it again, saying, *"in this confidence"* not as making them more listless, but as showing that they who were approved in all other respects, ought in this one also to have great fearlessness.

2 Corinthians 9:5

2. *"I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would make up beforehand this your bounty, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty and not of extortion. "*

Again, he resumed the subject in a different manner: and that he may not seem to be saying these things without object, he asserts that the sole reason for this journey was, that they might not be put to shame. Do you see how his words, *"It is superfluous for me to write,"* were the beginning of advising? You see, at least, how many things he discourses concerning this ministering. And along with this, one may further remark that, (lest he should seem to contradict himself as having said, *"It is superfluous,"* yet discoursing at length about it,) he passed on unto discourse of quickness and largeness and forwardness [in contributing,] by this means securing that point also. For these three things he requires. And indeed he moved these three main points even at the first, for when he says, *"In much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality,"* he says nothing else than that they contributed both much and gladly and quickly; and that not only did not giving much pain them, but not even being in trials, which is more grievous than giving. And the words, *"they gave themselves to us;"* these also show both their forwardness and the greatness of their faith. And here too again he treats of those heads. For since these are opposed to [each other,] munificence and forwardness, and one that has given much is often sorrowful, while another, that he may not be sorry, gives less; observe how he takes care for each, and with the wisdom which belongs to him. For he did not say, 'it is better to give a little and of free choice, than much of necessity;' because he wished

them to contribute both much and of free choice; but how says he? that they might make up beforehand this your bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty , and not extortion. He begins first with that which is pleasantest and lighter; namely, the 'not of necessity,' for, it is "*bounty*" he says. Observe how in the form of his exhortation he represents at once the fruit as springing up, and the givers as filled with blessing. And by the term employed he won them over, for no one gives a blessing with pain. Yet neither was he content with this; but added, "*not as of extortion.*" 'Think not,' he says, 'that we take it as extortioners, but that we may be the cause of a blessing unto you.' For extortion belongs to the unwilling, so that whoso gives alms unwillingly gives of extortion. Then from this he passed on again unto that, the giving munificently.

2 Corinthians 9:6

"But this I say:" that is, along with this I say also that. What?

"He that sows sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And he did not say niggardly, but a milder expression, employing the name of the sparing. And he called the thing sowing; that you might at once look unto the recompense, and having in mind the harvest, might feel that you receive more than you give.

Wherefore he did not say, 'He that gives,' but *"He that sows:"* and he said not 'ye, if you sow,' but made what he said general. Neither did he say, 'largely,' but *"bountifully,"* which is far greater than this. And again, he betakes himself to that former point of gladness; saying,

2 Corinthians 9:7

"Let each man do according as he has purposed in his heart." For a man when left to himself, does a thing more readily than when compelled. Wherefore also he dwells upon this: for having said, *"according as he is disposed,"* he added,

"Not grudgingly, nor of necessity." And neither was he content with this, but he adds a testimony from Scripture also, saying,

"For God loves a cheerful giver." Do you see how frequently he lays this down? *"I speak not by commandment:"* and, *"Herein I give my advice:"* and, *"as a matter of bounty, and not as of extortion,"* and again, *"not grudgingly, nor of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."* In this passage I am of opinion that a large [giver] is intended; the Apostle however has taken it as giving with readiness. For because the example of the Macedonians and all those other things were enough to produce sumptuousness, he does not say many things on that head, but upon giving without reluctance. For if it is a work of virtue, and yet all that is done of necessity is shorn of its reward, with reason also he labors at this point. And he does not advise merely, but also adds a prayer, as his wont is to do, saying,

2 Corinthians 9:8

"And may God, that is able, fulfill all grace towards you."

By this prayer he takes out the way a thought which lay in wait against this liberality and which is now also an hinderance to many. For many persons are afraid to give alms, saying, 'Lest perchance I become poor,' 'lest perchance I need aid from others.' To do away with this fear then, he adds this prayer, saying, May *"He make all grace abound towards you."* Not merely fulfil, but *"make it abound."* And what is *"make grace abound?"* 'Fill you,' he means, 'with so great things, that you may be able to abound in this liberality.'

"That ye, having always all sufficiency in every thing, may abound to every good work."

Observe, even in this his prayer, his great philosophy. He prays not for riches nor for abundance, but for all sufficiency. Nor is this all that is admirable in him; but that as he prayed not for superfluity, so he does not press sore on them nor compel them to give of their want, condescending to their weakness; but asks for a *"sufficiency,"* and shows at the same time that they ought not to abuse the gifts received from God. *"That ye may abound,"* he says, *"to every good work."* 'It is therefore,' says he, 'I ask for this, that you may bestow on others also.' Yet he did not say, 'bestow,' but 'abound.' For in carnal things he asks for a sufficiency for them, but in spiritual things for abundance even; not in almsgiving only, but in all other things also, *"unto every good work."* Then he brings forward unto them the prophet for a counsellor, having sought out a testimony inviting them to bountifulness, and says,

2 Corinthians 9:9

As it is written,
He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor;
His righteousness abides for ever.

This is the import of "*abound*;" for the words, "*he has dispersed abroad*," signify nothing else but the giving plentifully. For if the things themselves abide not, yet their results abide. For this is the thing to be admired, that when they are kept they are lost; but when dispersed abroad they abide, yea, abide for ever. Now by "*righteousness*," here, he means love towards men. For this makes righteous, consuming sins like a fire when it is plentifully poured out.

3. Let us not therefore nicely calculate, but sow with a profuse hand. Do you see not how much others give to players and harlots? Give at any rate the half to Christ, of what they give to dancers. As much as they give of ostentation to those upon the stage, so much at any rate give thou unto the hungry. For they indeed even clothe the persons of wantons with untold gold; but thou not even with a threadbare garment the flesh of Christ, and that though beholding it naked. What forgiveness does this deserve, yea, how great a punishment does it not deserve, when he indeed bestows so much upon her that ruins and shames him, but thou not the least thing on Him that saves you and makes you brighter? But as long as you spend it upon your belly and on drunkenness and dissipation, thou never thinkest of poverty: but when need is to relieve poverty, you have become poorer than any body. And when feeding parasites and flatterers, you are as joyous as though you had fountains to spend from; but if you chance to see a poor

man, then the fear of poverty besets you. Therefore surely we shall in that day be condemned, both by ourselves and by others, both by those that have done well and those that have done amiss. For He will say to you, 'Wherefore were you not thus magnanimous in things where it became you? But here is a man who, when giving to an harlot, thought not of any of these things; while thou, bestowing upon your Master Who has bid you "*not be anxious*" [Matthew 6:25], art full of fear and trembling.' And what forgiveness then shall you deserve? For if a man who has received will not overlook, but will requite the favor, much more will Christ. For He that gives even without receiving, how will He not give after receiving? 'What then,' says one, 'when some who have spent much come to need other men's help?' You speak of those that have spent their all; when you yourself bestowest not a farthing. Promise to strip yourself of every thing and then ask questions about such men; but as long as you are a niggard and bestowest little of your substance, why throw me out excuses and pretenses? For neither am I leading you to the lofty peak of entire poverty but for the present I require you to cut off superfluities and to desire a sufficiency alone. Now the boundary of sufficiency is the using those things which it is impossible to live without. No one debars you from these; nor forbids you your daily food. I say food, not feasting; raiment, not ornament. Yea rather, if one should enquire accurately, this is in the best sense feasting. For, consider. Which should we say more truly feasted, he whose diet was herbs, and who was in sound health and suffered no uneasiness: or he who had the table of a Sybarite, and was full of ten thousand disorders? Very plainly the former. Therefore let us seek nothing more than this, if we would at once live luxuriously and healthfully: and let us set these boundaries to sufficiency. And let him that can be satisfied with pulse and can keep in good health, seek for nothing more; but let him who is weaker

and requires to be dieted with garden herbs, not be hindered of this. But if any be even weaker than this and require the support of flesh in moderation, we will not debar him from this either. For we do not advise these things, to kill and injure men but to cut off what is superfluous; and that is superfluous which is more than we need. For when we are able even without a thing to live healthfully and respectably, certainly the addition of that thing is a superfluity.

4. Thus let us think also in regard of clothing and of the table and of a dwelling house and of all our other wants; and in every thing inquire what is necessary. For what is superfluous is also useless. When you shall have practised living on what is sufficient; then if you have a mind to emulate that widow, we will lead you on to greater things than these. For you have not yet attained to the philosophy of that woman, while you are anxious about what is sufficient. For she soared higher even than this; for what was to have been her support; that she cast in, all of it. Will you then still distress yourself about such things as be necessary; and do you not blush to be vanquished by a woman; and not only not to emulate her, but to be left even of her far behind? For she did not say the things we say, 'But what, if when I have spent all I be compelled to beg of another?' but in her munificence stripped herself of all she had. What shall we say of the widow in the Old Testament in the time of the prophet Elias? For the risk she ran was not of poverty, but even of death and extinction, and not her own only, but her children's too. For neither had she any expectation of receiving from others, but of presently dying. 'But,' says one, 'she saw the prophet, and that made her munificent.' But do not ye see saints without number? And why do I speak of saints? You see the Lord of the prophets asking an alms, and yet not even so do ye become humane; but though you have coffers spewing one into another, do not even impart of your superfluity. What do

you say? Was he a prophet that came to her, and did this persuade her to so great a magnanimity? This of itself deserves much admiration, that she was persuaded of his being a great and wonderful person. For how was it she did not say, as it would have been likely that a barbarian woman and a foreigner would have reasoned, 'If he were a prophet, he would not have begged of me. If he were a friend of God, He would not have neglected him. Be it that because of sins the Jews suffer this punishment: but whence, and wherefore, does this man suffer?' But she entertained none of these thoughts; but opened to him her house, and before her house, her heart; and set before him all she had; and putting nature on one side and disregarding her children, preferred the stranger unto all. Consider then how great punishment will be laid up for us, if we shall come behind and be weaker than a woman, a widow, poor, a foreigner, a barbarian, a mother of children, knowing nothing of these things which we know! For because we have strength of body, we are not therefore manly persons. For he alone has this virtue, yea though he be laid upon his bed, whose strength is from within; since without this, though a man should tear up a mountain by his strength of body, I would call him nothing stronger than a girl or wretched crone. For the one struggles with incorporeal ills, but the other dares not even look them in the face. And that you may learn that this is the measure of manliness, collect it from this very example. For what could be more manly than that woman who both against the tyranny of nature, and against the force of hunger, and against the threat of death, stood nobly fast, and proved stronger than all? Hear at least how Christ proclaims her. For, says He, *"there were many widows in the days of Elias, and to none of them was the prophet sent but to her."* [Luke 4:25-26] Shall I say something great and startling? This woman gave more to hospitality, than our father Abraham. For she *"ran"* not *"unto the herd,"* as he, [Genesis 18:7] but by that

"handful" [1 Kings 17:12] outstripped all that have been renowned for hospitality. For in this was his excellence that he set himself to do that office; but hers, in that for the sake of the stranger she spared not her children even, and that too, though she looked not for the things to come. But we, though a heaven exists, though a hell is threatened, though (which is greater than all) God has wrought such great things for us and is made glad and rejoices over such things, sink back supinely. Not so, I beseech you: but let us *"scatter abroad,"* let us *"give to the poor"* as we ought to give. For what is much and what little, God defines, not by the measure of what is given, but by the extent of the substance of him that gives. Often surely have you who cast in an hundred staters of gold offered less than he that offered but one obol, for you cast in of your superfluity. Howbeit do if but this, and you will come quickly even to greater munificence. Scatter wealth that you may gather righteousness. For along with wealth this refuses to come to us; yet through it, though not with it, it is made present to us. For it is not possible that lust of wealth and righteousness should dwell together; they have their tents apart. Do not then obstinately strive to bring things together which are incompatible, but banish the usurper covetousness, if you would obtain the kingdom. For this is the [rightful] queen, and of slaves makes freemen, the contrary of which the other does. Wherefore with all earnestness let us shun the one and welcome the other, that we may both gain freedom in this life and obtain the kingdom of heaven, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 20 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 9:10

Now He that supplied seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the fruits of your righteousness.

Herein one may particularly admire the wisdom of Paul, that after having exhorted from spiritual considerations and from temporal, in respect of the recompense also he again does the very same, making the returns he mentions of either kind. This, (for instance,) "*He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor, his righteousness abides for ever,*" belongs to a spiritual return; that again, "*multiply your seed for sowing,*" to a temporal recompense. Still, however, he rests not here, but even again passes back to what is spiritual, placing the two continually side by side; for "*increase the fruits of your righteousness,*" is spiritual. This he does, and gives variety by it to his discourse, tearing up by the roots those their unmanly and faint-hearted reasonings, and using many arguments to dissipate their fear of poverty, as also the example which he now brings. For if even to those that sow the earth God gives, if to those that feed the body He grants abundance; much more will He to those who till the soil of heaven, to those who take care for the soul; for these things He wills should yet more enjoy His providing care. However, he does not state this in the way of inference nor in the manner I have done, but in the form of a prayer; thus at once making the reference plain, and the rather leading them on to hope, not only from what [commonly] takes place, but also from his own prayer: for, 'May He minister,' says he, 'and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the

fruits of your righteousness.' Here also again he hints, in an unsuspecting way, at largeness [in giving], for the words, "*multiply and increase*," are by way of indicating this; and at the same time he allows them to seek for nothing more than necessities, saying, "*bread for food*." For this also is particularly worthy of admiration in him, (and it is a point he successfully established even before,) namely, that in things which be necessary, he allows them to seek for nothing more than need requires; but in spiritual things counsels them to get for themselves a large superabundance.

Wherefore he said above also, "*that having a sufficiency ye may abound to every good wor⁹*:" and here, "*He that ministers bread for food, multiply your seed for sowing*;" that is to say, the spiritual [seed]. For he asks not almsgiving merely, but with largeness. Wherefore also he continually calls it "*seed*." For like as the grain cast into the ground shows luxuriant crops, so also many are the handfuls almsgiving produces of righteousness, and unspeakable the fruits it shows. Then having prayed for great affluence unto them, he shows again in what they ought to expend it, saying,

2 Corinthians 9:11

"That being enriched in every thing to all liberality, which works through us thanksgiving to God."

Not that you may consume it upon things not fitting, but upon such as bring much thanksgiving to God. For God made us to have the disposal of great things, and reserving to Himself that which is less yielded to us that which is greater. For corporeal nourishment is at His sole disposal, but mental He permitted to us; for we have it at our own disposal whether the crops we have to show be luxuriant. For no need is here of rains and of variety of seasons, but of the will only, and they run up to heaven itself. And largeness in giving is what he here calls liberality. *"Which works through us thanksgiving to God."* For neither is that which is done almsgiving merely, but also the ground of much thanksgiving: yea rather, not of thanksgiving only, but of many other things besides. And these as he goes on he mentions, that by showing it to be the cause of many good works, he may make them thereby the forwarder.

2. What then are these many good works? Hear him saying:

2 Corinthians 9:12-14

"For the ministration of this service, not only fills up the measure of the wants of the saints, but abounds also through many thanksgivings unto God; seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the Gospel, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all; while they also with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you."

What he says is this; 'in the first place ye not only supply the wants of the saints, but you are abundant even;' that is, 'ye furnish them with even more than they need: next, through them ye send up thanksgiving to God, for they glorify Him for the obedience of your confession.' For that he may not represent them as giving thanks on this account solely, (I mean, because they received somewhat,) see how high-minded he makes them, exactly as he himself says to the Philippians, *"Not that I desire a gift."* [Philippians 4:17] 'To them too I bear record of the same thing. For they rejoice indeed that you supply their wants and alleviate their poverty; but far more, in that you are so subjected to the Gospel; whereof this is an evidence, your contributing so largely.' For this the Gospel enjoins.

"And for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all." 'And on this account,' he says, 'they glorify God that you are so liberal, not unto them only, but also unto all.' And this again is made a praise unto them that they gave thanks even for that which is bestowed upon others. 'For,' says he, 'they do honor, not to their own concerns only, but also to those of others, and this although they are in the extremest poverty; which is an evidence of their great virtue. For nothing is so full of envy as the whole

race of such as are in poverty. But they are pure from this passion; being so far from feeling pained because of the things ye impart to others, that they even rejoice over it no less than over the things themselves receive.'

"While they themselves also with supplication." 'For in respect of these things,' says he, 'they give thanks to God, but in respect of your love and your coming together, they beseech Him that they may be counted worthy to see you. For they long after this, not for the money's sake, but that they may be witnesses of the grace that has been bestowed upon you.' Do you see Paul's wisdom, how after having exalted them, he ascribed the whole to God by calling the thing *"grace?"* For seeing he had spoken great things of them, in that he called them ministers and exalted them unto a great height, (since they offered service while he himself did but administer,) and termed them 'proved,' he shows that God was the Author of all these things. And he himself again, along with them, sends up thanksgiving, saying,

2 Corinthians 9:15

"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

And here he calls "*gift*," even those so many good things which are wrought by almsgiving, both to them that receive and them that give; or else, those unspeakable good things which through His advent He gave unto the whole world with great munificence, which one may suspect to be the most probable. For that he may at once both sober, and make them more liberal, he puts them in mind of the benefits they had received from God. For this avails very greatly in inciting unto all virtue; and therefore he concluded his discourse with it. But if His Gift be unspeakable, what can match their frenzy who raise curious questions as to His Essence? But not only is His Gift unspeakable, but that "*peace*" also "*passes all understanding*," [Philippians 4:7] whereby He reconciled the things which are above with those which are below.

3. Seeing then that we are in the enjoyment of so great grace, let us strive to exhibit a virtue of life worthy of it, and to make much account of almsgiving. And this we shall do, if we shun excess and drunkenness and gluttony. For God gave meat and drink not for excess, but for nourishment. For it is not the wine that produces drunkenness, for if that were the case, every body would needs be drunken. 'But,' says one, 'it would be better, if even to drink it largely did not injure.' These are drunkards' words. For if to drink it largely does injure, and yet not even so you desist from your excess in it; if this is so disgraceful and injurious, and yet you cease not even so from your depraved longing; if it were possible both to drink largely and be nothing harmed, where would you have stayed in your excess? Would you not have longed that the rivers even might become wine? Would you not

have destroyed and ruined everything? If there is a mean in food which when we overpass we are injured, and yet even so you can not bear the curb, but snapping it as under seizest on what every body else has, to minister to the wicked tyranny of this gluttony; what would you not have done, if this natural mean were abolished? Would you not have spent your whole time upon it? Would it then have been well to strengthen a lust so unreasonable, and not prevent the harm arising from excess? And to how many other harms would not this have given birth?

But O the senseless ones! Who wallowing as in mire, in drunkenness and all other debauchery, when they have got a little sober again, sit down and do nothing but utter such sort of sayings, 'Why does this end in this way?' when they ought to be condemning their own transgressions. For instead of what thou now sayest, 'Why has He set bounds? Why do not all things go on without any order?' say, 'Why do we not cease from being drunken? Why are we never satiated? Why are we more senseless than creatures without reason?' For these things they ought to ask one another, and to hearken to the voice of the Apostle and learn how many good things he witnesses to the Corinthians proceed from almsgiving, and to seize upon this treasure. For to contemn money makes men approved, as he said; and provides that God be glorified; and warms love; and works in men loftiness of soul; and constitutes them priests, yea of a priesthood that brings great reward. For the merciful man is not arrayed in a vest reaching to the feet, nor does he carry about bells, nor wear a crown; but he is wrapped in the robe of loving-kindness, a holier than the sacred vestment; and is anointed with oil, not composed of material elements, but produced by the Spirit, and he bears a crown of mercies, for it is said, *"Who crowns you with pity and mercies;"* [Psalm 103:4] and instead of wearing a plate bearing the Name of

God, is himself like to God. For how? "*You,*" says He, "*shall be like unto your Father which is in heaven.*" [Matthew 5:45]

Would you see His altar also? Bezaleel built it not, nor any other but God Himself; not of stones, but of a material brighter than the heaven, of reasonable souls. But the priest enters into the holy of holies. Into yet more awful places may thou enter when you offer this sacrifice, where none is present but "*your Father, Which sees in secret,*" [Matthew 6:4] where no other beholds. 'And how,' says one, 'is it possible that none should behold, when the altar stands in public view?' Because this it is that is admirable, that in those times double doors and veils made the seclusion: but now, though doing your sacrifice in public view, you may do it as in the holy of holies, and in a far more awful manner. For when you do it not for display before men; though the whole world has seen, none has seen, because you have so done it. For He said not simply, "*Do*" it "*not before men,*" but added, "*to be seen of them.*" [Matthew 6:1] This altar is composed of the very members of Christ, and the body of the Lord is made your altar. That then revere; on the flesh of the Lord you sacrifice the victim. This altar is more awful even than this which we now use, not only than that used of old. Nay, clamor not. For this altar is admirable because of the sacrifice that is laid upon it: but that, the merciful man's, not only on this account, but also because it is even composed of the very sacrifice which makes the other to be admired. Again, this is but a stone by nature; but become holy because it receives Christ's Body: but that is holy because it is itself Christ's Body. So that this beside which thou, the layman, standest, is more awful than that. Whether then does Aaron seem to you anything in comparison of this, or his crown, or his bells, or the holy of holies? For what need is there henceforth to make our comparison refer to Aaron's altar, when even compared with this, it has been shown to be so glorious? But you honor

indeed this altar, because it receives Christ's body; but him that is himself the body of Christ you treat with contumely, and when perishing, neglectest. This altar may thou everywhere see lying, both in lanes and in market places, and may sacrifice upon it every hour; for on this too is sacrifice performed. And as the priest stands invoking the Spirit, so do you too invoke the Spirit, not by speech, but by deeds. For nothing does so sustain and kindle the fire of the Spirit, as this oil largely poured out. But if you would see also what becomes of the things laid upon it, come hither, and I will show you them. What then is the smoke, what the sweet savor of this altar? Praise and thanksgiving. And how far does it ascend? As far as unto heaven? By no means, but it passes beyond the heaven itself, and the heaven of heaven, and arrives even at the throne of the King. For, *"Your prayers,"* says he, *"and your alms have come up before God."* [Acts 10:4] And the sweet savor which the sense perceives pierces not far into the air, but this opened the very vault of heaven. And thou indeed art silent, but your work speaks : and a sacrifice of praise is made, no heifer slain nor hide burnt, but a spiritual soul presenting her proper offering. For such a sacrifice is more acceptable than any loving-kindness. When then you see a poor believer, think that you behold an altar: when you see such an one a beggar, not only insult him not, but even reverence him, and if you see another insulting him, prevent, repel it. For so shall you yourself be able both to have God propitious to you, and to obtain the promised good things, whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom and with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and forever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 21 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 10:1-2

Now I Paul myself entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage toward you: yea, I beseech you, that I may not when present show courage with the confidence, wherewith I count to be bold against some, which count of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Having completed, in such sort as behooved his discourse of almsgiving, and having shown that he loves them more than he is loved, and having recounted the circumstances of his patience and trials, he now opportunely enters upon points involving more of reproof, making allusion to the false apostles, and concluding his discourse with more disagreeable matter, and with commendations of himself. For he makes this his business also throughout the Epistle. Which also perceiving, he hence oftentimes corrects himself, saying in so many words ; *"Do we begin again to commend ourselves?"* [2 Corinthians 3:1] and further on; *"We commend not ourselves again, but give you occasion to glory:"* [2 Corinthians 5:12] and afterwards; *"I have become a fool in glorying; you have compelled me."* [2 Corinthians 12:11] And many such correctives does he use. And one would not be wrong in styling this Epistle an eulogium of Paul; he makes such large mention both of his grace and his patience. For since there were some among them who thought great things of themselves, and set themselves above the Apostle, and accused him as a boaster, and as being nothing, and teaching no sound doctrine; (now this was in itself the most certain evidence of their own corruptness;) see how he begins his rebuke of them;

"Now I Paul myself." Do you see what severity, what dignity, is here? For what he would say is this, 'I beseech you do not compel me, nor leave me to use my power against those that hold us cheap, and think of us as carnal.' This is severer than those threats towards them uttered in the former Epistle; *"Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of meekness?"* [1 Corinthians 4:21] and then again; *"Now some are puffed up as though I were not coming to you; but I will come, and will know, not the word of them that are puffed up, but the power."* (ib. 18, 19.) For in this place he shows both things, both his power, and his philosophy and forbearance; since he so beseeches them, and with such earnestness, that he may not be compelled to come to a display of the avenging power pertaining to him, and to smite and chastise them and exact the extreme penalty. For he implied this in saying, *"But I beseech you, that I may not when present show courage with the confidence, wherewith I count to be bold against some which count of us as if we walked according to the flesh."* For the present, however, let us speak of the commencement. *"Now I Paul myself."* Great emphasis, great weight is here. So he says elsewhere, *"Behold I Paul say unto you;"* [Galatians 5:2] and again, *"As Paul the aged;"* [Philemon 9] and again in another place, *"Who has been a succorer of many, and of me."* [Romans 16:2] So also here, *"Now I Paul myself."* This even is a great thing, that himself beseeches; but that other is greater which he added, saying, *"by the meekness and gentleness of Christ."* For with the wish of greatly shaming them, he puts forward that *"meekness and gentleness,"* making his entreaty in this way more forcible; as if he had said, 'Reverence the gentleness of Christ by which I beseech you.' And this he said, at the same time also showing that although they should lay ever so strong a necessity upon him, he himself is more inclined to this: it is from

being meek, not from want of power, that he does not proceed against them: for Christ also did in like manner.

"Who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage toward you." What, pray, is this? Surely he speaks in irony, using their speeches. For they said this, that 'when he is present indeed, he is worthy of no account, but poor and contemptible; but when absent, swells, and brags, and sets himself up against us, and threatens.' This at least he implies also afterwards, saying, *"for his letters,"* say they, *"are weighty, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account."* [2 Corinthians 10:10] He either then speaks in irony, manifesting great severity and saying, 'I, the base, I, the mean, when present, (as they say,) and when absent, lofty:' or else meaning that even though he should utter great things, it is not out of pride, but out of his confidence in them.

"But I beseech you, that I may not when present show courage with the confidence, wherewith I count to be bold against some which count of us as if we walked according to the flesh." Do you see how great his indignation, and how complete his refutation of those sayings of theirs? For he says, 'I beseech you, do not compel me to show that even present I am strong and have power.' For since they said that 'when absent, he is quite bold against us and exalts himself,' he uses their very words, 'I beseech therefore that they compel me not to use my power.' For this is the meaning of, *"the confidence."* And he said not, 'wherewith I am prepared,' but 'wherewith I count.' 'For I have not yet resolved upon this; they however give me reason enough, but not even so do I wish it.' And yet he was doing this not to vindicate himself, but the Gospel. Now if where it was necessary to vindicate the Message, he is not harsh, but draws back and delays, and beseeches that there may be no such necessity; much more would he never have done any thing of the kind in his own vindication. 'Grant me then this

favor,' he says, 'that you compel me not to show, that even when present I am able to be bold against whomsoever it may be necessary; that is, to chastise and punish them.' Do you see how free he was from ambition, how he did nothing for display, since even where it was matter of necessity, he hesitates not to call the act, boldness. *"For I beseech you,"* he says, *"that I may not when present show courage with the confidence, wherewith I think to be bold"* against some. For this especially is the part of a teacher, not to be hasty in taking vengeance, but to work a reformation, and ever to be reluctant and slow in his punishments. How, pray, does he describe those whom he threatens? *"Those that count of us as though we walked according to the flesh:"* for they accused him as a hypocrite, as wicked, as a boaster.

2 Corinthians 10:3

2. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

Here he goes on to alarm them also by the figure he uses, 'for,' says he, 'we are indeed encompassed with flesh; I own it, but we do not live by the flesh;' or rather, he said not even this, but for the present reserves it, for it belongs to the encomium on his life: but first discourses of the Preaching, and shows that it is not of man, nor needs aid from beneath. Wherefore he said not, 'we do not live according to the flesh,' but, "*we do not war according to the flesh,*" that is, 'we have undertaken a war and a combat; but we do not war with carnal weapons, nor by help of any human succors.'

2 Corinthians 10:4

"For our weapons are not of the flesh."

For what sort of weapons are of the flesh? Wealth, glory, power, fluency, cleverness, circumventions, flatteries, hypocrisies, whatsoever else is similar to these. But ours are not of this sort: but of what kind are they?

"Mighty before God."

And he said not, 'we are not carnal,' but, *"our weapons."* For as I said, for the present he discourses of the Preaching, and refers the whole power to God. And he says not, 'spiritual,' although this was the fitting opposite to *"carnal,"* but *"mighty,"* in this implying the other also, and showing that their weapons are weak and powerless. And mark the absence of pride in him; for he said not, 'we are mighty,' but, *"our weapons are mighty before God."* 'We did not make them such, but God Himself.' For because they were scourged, were persecuted, and suffered wrongs incurable without number, which things were proofs of weakness: to show the strength of God he says, *"but they are mighty before God."* For this especially shows His strength, that by these things He gains the victory. So that even though we are encompassed with them, yet it is He that wars and works by them. Then he goes through a long eulogium upon them, saying,

"To the casting down of strong holds." And lest when hearing of strong holds you should think of anything material, he says,

2 Corinthians 10:5

"Casting down imaginations."

First giving emphasis by the figure, and then by this additional expression declaring the spiritual character of the warfare. For these strongholds besiege souls, not bodies. Whence they are stronger than the others, and therefore also the weapons they require are mightier. But by strongholds he means the Grecian pride, and the strength of their sophisms and their syllogisms. But nevertheless, 'these weapons,' he says, 'confounded every thing that stood up against them; for they cast down imaginations,

'And every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God.' He persisted in the metaphor that he might make the emphasis greater. 'For though there should be strongholds,' he says, 'though fortifications, though any other thing soever, they yield and give way before these weapons.

"And bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." And yet the name, "*captivity*," has an ill sound with it; for it is the destruction of liberty. Wherefore then has he used it? With a meaning of its own, in regard to another point. For the word "*captivity*" conveys two ideas, the loss of liberty, and the being so violently overpowered as not to rise up again. It is therefore in respect to this second meaning that he took it. As when he shall say "*I robbed other churches*," [2 Corinthians 11:8] he does not intend the taking stealthily, but the stripping and taking their all, so also here in saying, "*bringing into captivity*." For the fight was not equally maintained, but he conquered with great ease. Wherefore he did not say, 'we conquer and have the better,' only; but 'we even bring "*into captivity*;" just as above, he did not say, 'we advance engines against the "*strongholds*:"'

but, 'we cast them down, for great is the superiority of our weapons.' 'For we war not with words,' he says, but with deeds against words, not with fleshly wisdom, but with the spirit of meekness and of power. How was it likely then I should hunt after honor, and boast in words, and threaten by letters;' (as they accused him, saying, "*his letters are weighty,*") 'when our might lay not in these things?' But having said, "*bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,*" because the name of "*captivity*" was unpleasant, he presently afterwards put an end to the metaphor, saying, "*unto the obedience of Christ:*" from slavery unto liberty, from death unto life, from destruction to salvation. For we came not merely to strike down, but to bring over to the truth those who are opposed to us.

2 Corinthians 10:6

3. *"And being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be fulfilled."*

Here he alarmed these also, not those alone: 'for,' says he, 'we were waiting for you, that when by our exhortations and threatenings we have reformed you, and purged and separated you from their fellowship; then, when those only are left who are incurably diseased, we may visit with punishment, after we see that you have really separated from them. For even now indeed ye obey, but not perfectly.' 'And yet if you had done it now,' says one, you would have wrought greater gain.' 'By no means, for if I had done it now, I should have involved you also in the punishment. Howbeit it behooved to punish them, indeed, but to spare you. Yet if I spared, I should have seemed to do it out of favor: now this I do not desire, but first to amend you, and then to proceed against them.' What can be tenderer than the heart of the Apostle? Who because he saw his own mixed up with aliens, desires indeed to inflict the blow, but forbears, and restrains his indignation until these shall have withdrawn, that he may smite these alone; yea rather, not these even. For he therefore threatens this, and says he is desirous to separate unto punishment them alone, that they also being amended by the fear may change, and he let loose his anger against no one. For just like a most excellent physician, and common father, and patron, and guardian, so did he all things, so cared he for all, removing impediments, checking the pestilent, running about every whither. For not by fighting did he so achieve the work, but advancing as if to a ready and an easy victory, he planted his trophies, undermining, casting down, overthrowing the strongholds of the devil, and the engines of the demons;

and carried over their whole booty to the camp of Christ. Nor did he even take breath a little, bounding off from these to those, and from those again to others, like some very able general, raising trophies every day, or rather every hour. For having entered into the battle with nothing but a little tunic , the tongue of Paul took the cities of his enemies with their men and bows and spears and darts and all.

For he spoke only; and, falling upon his enemies more fiercely than any fire, his words drove out the demons and brought over unto him the men that were possessed of them. For when he cast out that demon, the evil one, fifty thousand sorcerers coming together burnt their books of magic and revolted to the truth. [See Acts 19:19] And like as in a war, when a tower has fallen or a tyrant been brought low, all his partizans cast away their arms and run unto the [opposing] general; so truly did it happen then also. For when the demon was cast out, they all having been besieged, and having cast away, yea rather having destroyed, their books, ran unto the feet of Paul. But he setting himself against the world as though against a single army, no where stayed his march, but did all things as if he were some man endued with wings : and now restored a lame, now raised a dead man, now blinded a third, (I mean the sorcerer,) nor even when shut up in a prison indulged in rest, but even there brought over to himself the jailor, effecting the goodly captivity we treat of.

4. Let us also imitate him after our power. And why do I say, after our power? For he that wills may come even near unto him, and behold his valor, and imitate his heroism. For still he is doing this work, *"casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God."* And although many heretics have attempted to cut him in pieces; yet still, even though dismembered, he displays a mighty strength. For both Marcion and Manichæus use him indeed, but after cutting him in pieces; but

still even so they are refuted by the several members. For even a hand only of this champion being found among them puts them utterly to the rout; and a foot only, left among others, pursues and prostrates them, in order that you may learn the superabundance of his power, and that, although shorn of his limbs even, he is able to destroy all his adversaries. 'This however,' says one, 'is an instance of perversion, that those who are battling with each other should all use him.' An instance of perversion certainly, but not in Paul, (God forbid,) but in them who use him. For he was not parti-colored , but uniform and clear, but they perverted his words to their own notions. 'And wherefore,' says one, 'were they so spoken as to give handles to those that wished for them?' He did not give handles, but their frenzy used his words not rightly; since this whole world also is both wonderful and great, and a sure proof of the wisdom of God, and *"the heavens declare the glory of God, and day unto day utters speech, and night unto night declares knowledge;"* [Psalm 19:1-2] but nevertheless, many have stumbled at it and in contrary directions to one another. And some have admired it so much above its worth as to think it God; while others have been so insensible of its beauty as to assert it to be unworthy of God's creating hand , and to ascribe the greater share in it to a certain evil matter. And yet God provided for both points by making it beautiful and great that it might not be deemed alien from his wisdom; yet defective and not sufficient unto itself that it might not be suspected to be God. But nevertheless those who were blinded by their own reasonings fell away into contradictory notions, refuting one another, and becoming each the other's accuser, and vindicating the wisdom of God even by the very reasonings which led them astray. And why do I speak of the sun and the heaven? The Jews saw so many marvels happen before their eyes, yet straightway worshipped a calf. Again they saw Christ casting out demons, yet called him one that had a demon. But this was no

imputation against him that cast them out, but an accusation of their understanding who were so blinded. Condemn not then Paul on account of their judgment who have used him amiss; but understand well the treasures in him, and develop his riches, so shall you make noble stand against all, fenced by his armor. So shall you be able to stop the mouths both of Greeks and Jews. 'And how,' says one, 'seeing they believe him not?' By the things wrought through him, by the reformation effected in the world. For it was not of human power that so great things could be done, but the Might of the Crucified, breathing on him, made him such as he was, and showed him more powerful than orators and philosophers and tyrants and kings and all men. He was not only able to arm himself and to strike down his adversaries, but to make others also such as himself. Therefore in order that we may become useful both to ourselves and to others, let us continually have him in our hands, using his writings for a meadow and garden of delight. For so shall we be able both to be delivered from vice and to choose virtue, and to obtain the promised good things, whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 22 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 10:7

You look at the things that are before your face. If any man trusts in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again with himself that even as he is Christ's, so also are we.

What one may especially admire in Paul among other things is this, that when he has fallen upon an urgent necessity for exalting himself, he manages both to accomplish this point, and also not to appear offensive to the many on account of this egotism; a thing we may see particularly in his Epistle to the Galatians. For having there fallen upon such an argument, he provides for both these points; a matter of the very utmost difficulty and demanding much prudence; he is at once modest and says somewhat great of himself. And observe how in this place also he makes it of great account, *"You look at the things that are before your face."* Behold here also prudence. For having rebuked those that deceived them, he confined not his remarks to them, but he leaps away from them to these too; and he does so constantly. For, in truth, he scourges not those only that lead astray, but the deceived also. For had he let even them go without calling them to an account, they would not so easily have been reformed by what was said to the others; but would have been greatly elated even, as not being amenable to accusations. Therefore he scourges them also. And this is not all that is to be admired in him, but this farther, that he rebukes either party in a manner suitable to each. Hear at least what he says to these, *"You look at the things that are before your face."* The accusation is no light one; but a mark of men exceedingly easy to be deceived. Now what he says is this, 'ye test by

what appear, by things carnal, by things bodily.' What is meant by 'what appear?' If one is rich, if one is puffed up, if one is surrounded by many flatterers, if one says great things of himself, if one is vain-glorious, if one makes a pretence of virtue without having virtue, for this is the meaning of, *"ye look at the things that are before your face."*

"If any man trust in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again with himself, that even as he is Christ's, even so also are we." For he does not wish to be vehement at the beginning, but he increases and draws to a head little by little. But observe here how much harshness and covert meaning there is. He shows this by using the words *"with himself."* For he says, 'Let him not wait to learn this from us; that is, by our rebuke of himself,' but *"let him consider this with himself, that even as he is Christ's, so also are we;"* not that he was Christ's in such manner as the other was, but, *"that even as he is Christ's, so also am I Christ's."* Thus far the community holds good: for it is not surely the case that he indeed is Christ's, but I some other's. Then having laid down this equality between them, he goes on to add wherein he exceeded, saying,

2 Corinthians 10:8

For though I should glory somewhat abundantly concerning our authority which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down, I shall not be put to shame.

For since he was going to say somewhat great, observe how he softens it. For nothing does so offend the majority of hearers as for any one to praise himself. Wherefore to cut at the root of this offensiveness, he says, *"For though I should glory somewhat abundantly."* And he did not say, 'if any man trust that he is Christ's let him think that he is far short of us. For I possess much authority from Him, so as to punish and to kill whomsoever I choose;' but what? *"For though I should glory even somewhat abundantly."* And yet he possessed more than can be told, but nevertheless he lowers it in his way of speaking. And he said not, 'I glory,' but, *"if I should glory,"* if I should choose to do so: at once both showing modesty, and declaring his superiority. If therefore he says, *"I should glory concerning the authority which the Lord gave me."* Again, he ascribes the whole to Him, and makes the gift common. *"For building up, and not for casting down."* Do you see how again he allays the envy his praises might give rise to, and draws the hearer over to himself by mentioning the use for which he received it? Then why does he say, *"Casting down imaginations?"* Because this is itself a special form of building up, the removing of hindrances, and detecting the unsound, and laying the true together in the building. For this end therefore we received it, that we might build up. But if any should spar and battle with us, and be incurable, we will use that other power also, destroying and overthrowing him. Wherefore also he says, *"I shall not be put to shame,"* that is, I shall not be proved a liar or a boaster.

2 Corinthians 10:9-11

2. *"But that I may not seem as if I would terrify you: for his letters, say they, are weighty and strong: but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account. Let such a one reckon this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present."*

What he says is this: 'I could boast indeed, but that they may not say the same things again, to wit, that I boast in my letters, and am contemptible when present, I will say nothing great.' And yet afterwards he did say something great, but not about this power by which he was formidable, but about revelations and at greater lengths about trials. 'Therefore, that I may not seem to be terrifying you, *"let such an one reckon this, that what we are by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present."*' For since they said, 'he writes great things of himself, but when he is present he is worthy of no consideration,' therefore he says these things, and those again in a moderated form. For he did not say, 'as we write great things, so when we are present we also do great things,' but in more subdued phrase. For when he addressed himself to the others indeed, he stated it with vehemency, saying, *"I beseech you that I may not when present show courage with the confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some:"* but when to these, he is more subdued. And therefore he says, 'what we are when present, such too when absent, that is, lowly, modest, no where boasting. And it is plain from what follows,

2 Corinthians 10:12

"For we are not bold to number, or compare in ourselves with some that commend themselves."

Here he both shows that those false Apostles are boasters and say great things of themselves: and ridicules them as commending themselves. 'But we do no such thing: but even if we shall do any thing great, we refer all unto God, and compare ourselves with one another.' Wherefore also he added,

"But they themselves measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves are without understanding." Now what he says is this: 'we do not compare ourselves with them, but with one another.' For further on he says, *"in nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles;"* [2 Corinthians 12:11] and in the former Epistle, *"I labored more abundantly than they all;"* [1 Corinthians 15:10] and again, *"Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience."* [2 Corinthians 12:12] 'So that we compare ourselves with ourselves, not with those that have nothing: for such arrogance comes of folly.' Either then he says this with reference to himself, or with reference to them, that 'we dare not compare ourselves with those who contend with one another and boast great things and do not understand:' that is, do not perceive how ridiculous they are in being thus arrogant, and in exalting themselves among one another.

2 Corinthians 10:13

"But we will not glory beyond our measure:" as they do.

For it is probable that in their boasting they said, 'we have converted the world, we have reached unto the ends of the earth,' and vented many other such like big words. 'But not so we,' he says,

"But according to the measure of the province which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even unto you." So that his humility is evident on either hand, both in that he boasted nothing more than he had wrought, and that he refers even this itself to God. For, *"according to the measure of the province,"* says he, *"which God apportioned to us, a measure to reach even unto you."* Just as if portioning out a vine to husbandmen, even so He meted out unto us. As far then as we have been counted worthy to attain to, so far we boast.

2 Corinthians 10:14

"For we stretch not ourselves overmuch, as though we reached not unto you: for we came even as far as unto you in preaching the Gospel of Christ."

Not simply 'we came,' but, 'we announced, we preached, we persuaded, we succeeded.' For it is probable that they having merely come to the disciples of the Apostles, ascribed the whole to themselves, from their bare presence among them. 'But not so we: nor can any one say that we were not able to come as far as to you, and that we stretched our boasting as far as to you in words only; for we also preached the word to you.'

2 Corinthians 10:15-16

3. *"Not glorying beyond" our "measure," that is, "in other men's labors, but having hope that as your faith grows, we shall be magnified in you according to our province unto further abundance, so as to preach the Gospel even unto the parts beyond you, and not to glory in another's province in regard of things ready to our hand."*

He sets forth a large accusation of them on these grounds, both that they boasted of things without their measure, and of other men's labors; and that while the whole of the toil was the Apostles', they plumed themselves upon their labors. 'But we,' says he, 'showed these things in our deeds. We will not imitate those men therefore, but will say such things where our deeds bear us witness. And why,' says he, 'do I say, you?' *"for I have hope that as your faith grows;"* for he does not assert absolutely, preserving his own character, but, 'I hope,' he says, 'if you make progress, that our province will be extended even farther, *"to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond."* For we shall advance farther yet,' he says, 'so as to preach and labor, not so as to boast in words of what other men have labored.' And well did he call it *"province and measure,"* as though he had come into possession of the world, and a rich inheritance; and showing that the whole was wholly God's. 'Having then such works,' he says, 'and expecting greater, we do not boast as they do who have nothing, nor do we ascribe any part to ourselves, but the whole to God. Wherefore also he adds,

2 Corinthians 10:17

"He that glories, let him glory in the Lord." This also, he says, accrues to us from God.

2 Corinthians 10:18

"For not he that commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends."

He did not say, we are so, *"but whom the Lord commends."* Do you see how modestly he speaks? But if as he proceeds he stirs up loftier words, wonder not, for this also comes of Paul's prudence. For if he had gone on in every part to speak lowly words, he would not have hit these men so effectually, nor have extricated the disciples from their error. For it is possible both by modesty ill-timed to do harm, and by saying something admirable of one's self at a proper time to do good. As therefore he also did. For there was no little danger in the disciples being persuaded into any mean opinion of Paul. Not that Paul sought the glory that comes of men. For had he sought this, he would not have kept silence so long on those great and marvellous matters of *"fourteen years ago;"* [2 Corinthians 12:20] nor would he, when necessity was laid upon him, have so shrunk back and hesitated to speak of them; very evidently he would not even then have spoken, had he not been compelled. Certainly then it was not from a desire after the glory which comes from men that he said these things, but out of tender care for the disciples. For since they cast reproaches at him as a braggart, and as boastful in words but able to show nothing in deeds, he is compelled subsequently to come to those revelations. Although he had it in his power to convince them by his deeds, at the time when he said these things: yet he still persists, nevertheless, in using menaces in words. For he was most especially free from vain-glory; and this his whole life proves, both before and after this. For instance, it was because of this that he changed all at once; and having changed, confounded the Jews and cast

away all that honor he had from them, although he was himself their head and their champion. But he considered none of those things when he had found the truth; but took instead their insults and contumely; for he looked to the salvation of the many, thinking this everything. For he that thinks nothing of hell nor of heaven nor of ten thousand worlds in regard of his longing after Christ, how should he hunt after the glory which comes from the many? By no means; but he is even very lowly when he may be so, and brands his former life with infamy when he calls himself, *"a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious."* [1 Timothy 1:13] And his disciple Luke too says many things of him, evidently having learned them from himself, himself displaying fully his former life no less than that after his conversion.

4. Now I say these things, not that we may hear merely, but that we may learn also. For if he remembered those transgressions before the Laver, although they were all effaced, what forgiveness can we have who are unmindful of those after the Laver ourselves? What do you say, O man? You have offended God, and do you forget? This is a second offense, a second enmity. Of what sins then do you ask forgiveness? Of those which thou even know not yourself? Surely, (for is it not so?) you are deeply anxious and thoughtful how you may give account of them, thou who dost not so much as care to remember them, but sportest with what is no sporting matter. But there will come a time when our sport can go on no longer. For we must needs die: (for the great insensibility of the many obliges me to speak even of things that are evident:) and must needs rise again, and be judged, and be punished; nay rather this needs not, if we choose. For those other things are not at our own disposal; neither our end, nor our resurrection, nor our judgment, but at our Lord's; but our suffering punishment or not is at our own disposal; for this is of those things that may

or may not happen. But if we choose, we shall make it of the number of impossible things; just as Paul, as Peter, as all the saints did; for it is even impossible for them to be punished. If therefore we have a mind, it is in like manner impossible also that we should suffer ought. For even if we have offended in ten thousand things, it is possible to recover ourselves so long as we are here. Let us then recover ourselves: and let the old man consider that in a little while hence he will depart, since he took his pleasure long enough in his lifetime; (although what sort of pleasure is this, to live in wickedness? But for the present I so speak in respect to his way of thinking;) let him consider, besides, that it is possible for him in a short time to wash away all. The young man again, let him also consider the uncertainty of death, and that oftentimes, when many older persons continued here, the young were carried off before them. For, for this reason, that we may not make traffic of our death, it is left in uncertainty.

Wherefore also a certain wise man advises, saying, *"Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day: for you know not what tomorrow shall bring forth."* [Sirach 5:7; Proverbs 27:1] For by putting off there is danger and fear; but by not putting off manifest and secure salvation. Hold fast then by virtue. For so, even if you have departed young, you have departed in safety; and if you should come to old age, you shall arrive [at death] with great provision made, and shall have a double feast all your life long; both in that you abstain from vice, and layest hold on virtue. Say not, 'there will come a time when it may be well to turn,' for this language provokes God exceedingly. And why so? Because He has promised you countless ages, but you are not even willing to labor during this present life, this short life that endures but a season; but art so indolent and unmanly as to seek a shorter even than this. Are there not the same revellings daily? Are there not the same tables, the same harlots, the same

theatres, the same wealth? How long will you love those things as though they were anything? How long will your appetite for evil remain insatiate? Consider that as often as you have fornicated, so often have you condemned yourself. For such is the nature of sin: once committed, the Judge has also passed his sentence. Have you been drunken, been gluttonous, or robbed? Hold now, turn right back, acknowledge it to God as a mercy that He snatched you not away in the midst of your sins; seek not yet another set time wherein to work evil. Many have been snatched away in the midst of their covetousness, and have departed to manifest punishment. Fear lest you also should suffer this, and without excuse. 'But God gave to many a set time for confession in extreme old age.' What then? Will He give it to you also? 'Perhaps He will,' says one. Why do you say 'perhaps,' and 'sometimes,' and 'often?' Consider that you are deliberating about your soul, and put also the contrary case, and calculate, and say, 'But what if He should not give it?' 'But what if He should give it?' says he. God has indeed given it; but still this supposition is safer and more profitable than that. For if you begin now, you have gained all, whether you have a set time granted you or not; but if you are always putting off, for this very cause perhaps you shall not have one given you. When you go out to battle, thou dost not say, 'there is no need to make my will, perhaps I shall come back safe;' nor do you when deliberating about marriage, say 'suppose I take a poor wife, many have even in this way got rich contrary to expectation;' nor when building a house, 'suppose I lay a rotten foundation, many houses have stood even so;' yet in deliberating about the soul, you lean on things more rotten still; urging your 'perhaps,' and 'often,' and 'sometimes,' and trustest yourself to these uncertainties. 'Nay,' says one, 'not to an uncertainty, but to the mercy of God, for God is merciful.' I know it too; but still this merciful God snatched those away of whom I spoke. And what if after you have had

time given you, you shall still continue as thou were? For this sort of man will be listless even in old age. 'Nay,' he said, 'not so.' For this mode of reasoning even after the eighty years desires ninety, and after the ninety an hundred, and after the hundred will be yet more indisposed to act. And so the whole of life will have been consumed in vain, and what was spoken of the Jews will happen also to you; *"Their days were consumed in vanity."* [Psalm 78:33] And would that in vanity only, and not unto evil also. For when we have departed there bearing the heavy burden of our sins, this will be unto evil also. For we shall carry away fuel for the fire and a plentiful feast for the worm. Wherefore I pray and conjure you to halt at length in noble wise, and to desist from wickedness, that we may also obtain the promised good things: whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 23 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 11:1-2

Would that you could bear with me in a little foolishness and, indeed ye do bear with me.

Being about to enter upon his own praises he uses much previous correction. And he does this not once or twice, although the necessity of the subject, and what he had often said, were sufficient excuse for him. For he that remembers sins which God remembered not, and who therefore says that he was unworthy of the very name of the Apostles, even by the most insensate is seen clearly not to be saying what he is now going to say, for the sake of glory. For if one must say something startling, even this would be especially injurious to his glory, his speaking something about himself; and to the more part it is offensive. But nevertheless he regarded not timidly any of these things, but he looked to one thing, the salvation of his hearers. But still in order that he might not cause harm to the unthinking by this, by saying, I mean, great things of himself, he employs out of abundant caution these many preparatory correctives, and says, "*Would that you could bear with me,*" while I play the fool in some little things, yea, rather, "*ye do indeed bear with me.*" Beholdest thou wisdom? For when he says, "*would that,*" it is as putting it at their disposal: but when he even asserts [that they do], it is as confiding greatly in their affection, and as declaring that he both loves and is loved. Yea, rather, not from bare love merely, but from a sort of warm and insane passion he says that they ought to bear with him even when he plays the fool. And therefore he added, "*For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy.*" He did not say, 'for I love you,' but uses a term far

more vehement than this. For those souls are jealous which burn ardently for those they love, and jealousy can in no other way be begotten than out of a vehement affection. Then that they may not think, that it is for the sake of power, or honor, or wealth, or any other such like thing, that he desires their affection, he added, "*with a jealousy of God.*" For God also is said to be jealous, not that any should suppose passion, (for the Godhead is impassible,) but that all may know that He does all things from no other regard than their sakes over whom He is jealous; not that Himself may gain anything, but that He may save them. Among men indeed jealousy arises not from this cause, but for the sake of their own repose; not because the beloved ones sustain outrage, but lest these who love them should be wounded, and be outshone in the good graces, and stand lower in the affections, of the beloved. But here it is not so. 'For I care not,' he says, 'for this, lest I should stand lower in your esteem; but lest I should see you corrupted. For such is God's jealousy; and such is mine also, intense at once and pure.' Then there is also this necessary reason;

"For I espoused you to one husband, as a pure virgin." 'Therefore I am jealous, not for myself, but for him to whom I have espoused you.' For the present time is the time of espousal, but the time of the nuptials is another; when they sing, 'the Bridegroom has risen up.' Oh what things unheard of! In the world they are virgins before the marriage, but after the marriage no longer. But here it is not so: but even though they be not virgins before this marriage, after the marriage they become virgins. So the whole Church is a virgin. For addressing himself even to all, both husbands and wives, he speaks thus. But let us see what he brought and espoused us with, what kind of nuptial gifts. Not gold, not silver, but the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore also he said, "*We are ambassadors on behalf of Christ,*" and beseeches them, when he was about to receive the Bride. What happened in

Abraham's case was a type of this. [Genesis 24:4, etc.] For he sent his faithful servant to seek a Gentile maiden in marriage; and in this case God sent His own servants to seek the Church in marriage for His son, and prophets from of old saying, *"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and forget your own people and your father's house, and the King shall desire your beauty."* [Psalm 45:10-11] Do you see the prophet also espousing? Do you see the Apostle too expressing the same thing himself with much boldness, and saying, *"I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ?"* Do you see wisdom again? For having said, 'You ought to bear with me,' he did not say, 'for I am your teacher and I speak not for my own sake:' but he uses this expression which invested them with special dignity, placing himself in the room of her who promotes a match, and them in the rank of the bride; and he adds these words;

2 Corinthians 11:3

"But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is toward Christ. "

'For although the destruction be yours [alone], yet is the sorrow mine as well.' And consider his wisdom. For he does not assert, although they were corrupted; and so he showed when he said, *"When your obedience is fulfilled,"* [2 Corinthians 10:6] and *"I shall bewail many which have sinned already;"* [2 Corinthians 12:21] but still he does not leave them to get shameless. And therefore he says, *"lest at any time."* For this neither condemns nor is silent; for neither course were safe, whether to speak out plainly or to conceal perpetually. Therefore he employs this middle form, saying, *"lest at any time."* For this is the language neither of one that entirely distrusts, nor entirely relies on them, but of one who stands between these two. In this way then he palliated, but by his mention of that history threw them into an indescribable terror, and cuts them off from all forgiveness. For even although the serpent was malignant, and she senseless, yet did none of these things snatch the woman from punishment. 'Beware then,' he says, 'lest such be your fate, and there be naught to screen you. For he too promising greater things, so deceived.' Whence it is plain that these too, by boasting and puffing themselves up, deceived. And this may be conjectured not from this place only, but also from what he says afterwards,

2 Corinthians 11:4

"If he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if you receive a different Spirit which you did not receive, or a different Gospel which you did not accept, you do well to bear with him."

And he does not say, 'Lest by any means as Adam was deceived.' but shows that those men are but women who are thus abused, for it is the part of woman to be deceived. And he did not say, 'so ye also should be deceived.' but keeping up the metaphor, he says, *"so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is toward Christ."* 'From the simplicity, I say, not from wickedness; neither out of wickedness [is it], nor out of your not believing, but out of simplicity.' But, nevertheless, not even under such circumstances are the deceived entitled to forgiveness, as Eve showed. But if this does not entitle to forgiveness, much more will it not do so, when through vain-glory any is so.

2. *"For if he that comes preaches another Jesus whom we did not preach:"* showing hereby that their deceivers were not Corinthians, but persons from some other quarter previously corrupted: wherefore he says, *"he that comes."*

"If you receive a different Spirit, if a different Gospel which you did not accept, you do well to bear" with him. What do you say? You that said to the Galatians, *"If any preach another Gospel to you than that you have received, let him be anathema;"* do you now say, *"ye do well to bear"* with him? And yet on this account it were meet not to bear with, but to recoil, from them; but if they say the same things, it is meet to bear with them. How then do you say, 'because they say the same things, it is not meet to bear with them?' for he says, 'if they said other things, it were meet to bear

with them.' Let us then give good heed, for the danger is great, and the precipice deep, if men run past this carelessly; and what is here said gives an entrance to all the heresies. What then is the sense of these words? Those persons so boasted as if the Apostles taught incompletely, and they were introducing somewhat more than they. For it is probable that with much idle talk, they were bringing in senseless rubbish so as to overlay these doctrines. And therefore he made mention of the serpent and of Eve who was thus deceived by the expectation of acquiring more. And alluding to this in the former Epistle also, he said, *"Now you have become rich, you have reigned as kings without us;"* and again, *"we are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ."* [1 Corinthians 4:8] Since then it was probable that using the wisdom which is without, they talked much idly, what he says is this: that 'if these persons said any thing more, and preached a different Christ who ought to have been preached, but we omitted it, *"ye do well to bear"* with them.' For on this account he added, *"whom we did not preach."* 'But if the chief points of the faith are the same, what have ye the more of them? For whatsoever things they may say, they will say nothing more than what we have said.' And observe with what precision he states the case. For he did not say, 'if he that comes says any thing more;' for they did say something more, haranguing with more authority and with much beauty of language; wherefore he did not say this, but what? [If] *"he that comes preaches another Jesus,"* a thing which had no need of that array of words: *"or ye receive a different Spirit,"* (for neither was there need of words in this case;) that is to say, 'makes you richer in grace;' or *"a different Gospel which you did not accept,"* (nor did this again stand in need of words,) *"ye do well to bear"* with him. But consider, I pray you, how he every where uses such a definition as shows that nothing very great, nor indeed any thing more, had been introduced by them. For when he had said,

"If he that comes preaches another Jesus," he added, *"whom we did not preach;"* and *"ye receive a different Spirit,"* he subjoined, *"which you did not receive; or a different Gospel,"* he added, *"which you did not accept,"* by all these showing that it is meet to attend to them, not simply if they say something more, but if they said any thing more which ought to have been said and was by us omitted. But if it ought not to have been said, and was therefore not said by us; or if they say only the same things as we, why gape ye so admiringly upon them? 'And yet if they say the same things,' says one, 'wherefore do you hinder them?' Because that using hypocrisy, they introduce strange doctrines. This however for the present he does not say, but afterwards asserts it, when he says, *"They fashion themselves into Apostles of Christ;"* [2 Corinthians 11:13] for the present he withdraws the disciples from their authority by less offensive considerations; and this not out of envy to them, but to secure these. Else why does he not hinder Apollos, who was, however, a *"learned man, and mighty in the Scriptures;"* [Acts 18:24; 1 Corinthians 16:12] but even beseeches him, and promises he will send him? Because together with his learning he preserved also the integrity of the doctrines; but with these it was the reverse. And therefore he wars with them and blames the disciples for gaping admiringly upon them, saying, 'if anything that should have been said we omitted and they supplied, we do not hinder you from giving heed to them: but if all has been fully completed by us and nothing left deficient, whence is it that they caught you?' Wherefore also he adds,

2 Corinthians 11:5

"For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles," no longer making comparison of himself with them, but with Peter and the rest. 'So that if they know more than I do, [they know more] than they also.' And observe how here also he shows modesty. For he did not say, 'the Apostles said nothing more than I,' but what? *"I reckon,"* so I deem, *"that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles."* For since this also appeared to bespeak an inferiority in him, that those having preceded him were of greater name; and more respect was entertained for them, and these persons were intending to foist themselves in; therefore he makes this comparison of himself with them with the dignity that becomes him. Therefore he also mentions them with encomiums, not speaking simply of *"the Apostles,"* but *"the very chiefest,"* meaning Peter and James and John.

2 Corinthians 11:6

3. *"But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge."*

For since those that corrupted the Corinthians had the advantage in this, that they were not rude; he mentions this also, showing that he was not ashamed of, but even prided himself upon it. And he said not, *"But though I be rude in speech,"* yet so also are they, for this would have seemed to be accusing them as well as himself, and exalting these: but he overthrows the thing itself, the wisdom from without. And indeed in his former Epistle he contends even vehemently about this thing, saying that it not only contributes nothing to the Preaching, but it even throws a shadow on the glory of the Cross; [1 Corinthians 2:1] for he says, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom unto you, lest the cross of Christ should be made void; [1 Corinthians 1:17] and many other things of the same kind; because *"in knowledge"* they were *"rude,"* which is also the extremest form of rudeness. When therefore it was necessary to institute a comparison in those things which were great, he compares himself with the Apostles: but when to show that which appeared to be a deficiency, he no longer does this, but grapples with the thing itself and shows that it was a superiority. And when indeed no necessity urged him, he says that he is *"the least of the Apostles,"* and not worthy even of the title; but here again when occasion called, he says that he is *"not a whit behind the very chieftest Apostles."* For he knew that this would most advantage the disciples. Wherefore also he adds,

"Nay, in every thing we have made it manifest among all men to youward." For here again he accuses the false Apostles as *"walking in craftiness."* [2 Corinthians 4:2] And he said this of himself before also, that

he did not live after the outward appearance, nor preach handling the word deceitfully [2 Corinthians 4:2] and corrupting it. But those men were one thing and appeared another. But not so he. Wherefore also he every where assumes a high tone, as doing nothing with a view to men's opinion nor concealing anything about himself. As he also said before, *"by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience,"* [2 Corinthians 4:2] so now again he says *"in every thing we have made it manifest to you."* But what does this mean? 'We are rude,' he said, 'and do not conceal it: we receive from some persons and we do not keep it secret. We receive then from you, and we pretend not that we do not receive, as they do when they receive, but we make every thing that we do manifest unto you;' which was the conduct of one that both had exceeding confidence in them, and told them every thing truly. Wherefore he also calls them witnesses, saying now, *"among all men to youward,"* and also before, *"For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge."* [2 Corinthians 1:13]

4. Then after he had defended his own conduct he goes on next to say with severity,

2 Corinthians 11:7

"Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that you might be exalted?"

And in explanation of this, he adds,

2 Corinthians 11:8

"I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you."

What he says is this; 'I lived in straitness;' for this is the force of *"abasing myself."* 'Can you then lay this to my charge? And do ye therefore lift up yourselves against me, because I abased myself by begging, by enduring straits, by suffering, by hungering, that you might be exalted?' And how were they exalted by his being in straits? They were more edified and were not offended; which also might [well] be a very great accusation of them and a reproach of their weakness; that it was not possible in any other way to lead them on than by first abasing himself. 'Do ye then lay it to my charge that I abased myself? But thereby you were exalted.' For since he said even above that they accused him, for that when present he was lowly, and when absent bold, in defending himself he here strikes them again, saying, 'this too was for your sakes.'

"I robbed other churches." Here finally he speaks reproachfully, but his former words prevent these from seeming offensive; for he said, *"Bear with me in a little foolishness:"* and before all his other achievements makes this his first boast. For this worldly men look to especially, and on this also those his adversaries greatly prided themselves. Therefore it is that he does not first enter on the subject of his perils, nor yet of his miracles, but on this of his contempt of money, because they prided themselves on this; and at the same time he also hints that they were wealthy. But what is to be admired in him is this, that when he was able to say that he was even supported by his own hands, he did not say this; but says that which especially shamed them and yet was no encomium on himself, namely, 'I

took from others.' And he did not say "*took*," but "*robbed*," that is, 'I stripped them, and made them poor.' And what surely is greater, that it was not for superfluities, but for his necessities, for when he says 'wages,' he means necessary subsistence. And what is more grievous yet, "*to minister unto you*." We preach to you; and when I ought to be supported by you, I have enjoyed this at others' hands. The accusation is twofold, or rather three-fold; that when both living among them and ministering to them, and seeking necessary support, he had others supplying his wants. Great the excess, of the one negligence, of the other in zeal! For these sent to him even when at a great distance, and those did not even support him when among them.

5. Then because he had vehemently scourged them, he quietly again relaxes the vehemence of his rebuke, saying,

2 Corinthians 11:9

"And when I was present with you, and was in want, I was not a burden on any man."

For he did not say, 'ye did not give to me,' but, 'I did not take,' for as yet he spares them. But nevertheless even in the subduedness of his language he covertly strikes them again, for the word, "*present*," is exceedingly emphatic, and so is "*in want*." For that they might not say, 'what matter then, if you had [enough]?' he added, "*and was in want*."

"I was not a burden" on you. Here again he hits them gently, as making such contributions reluctantly, as feeling them a burden. Then comes the reason also, full of accusation and fraught with jealousy. Wherefore also he introduced it, not in the way of a leading point, but as informing them whence and by whom he was supported, so as to stimulate them again, in an unsuspecting way, as to the point of almsgiving;

"For the measure of my want," he says, *"the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied."* Do you see how he provokes them again, by bringing forward those that had ministered to him? For inspiring them first with a desire of knowing who these could be, when he said, *"I robbed other churches;"* he then mentions them also by name; which would incite them also unto almsgiving. For he thus persuades those who had been beaten [by them] in the matter of supporting the Apostle, not to be also beaten in the succor they gave to the poor. And he says this also in his Epistle to the Macedonians themselves, *"For in my necessities ye sent unto me once and again, even in the beginning of the Gospel;"* [Philippians 4:16] which point also was a very great commendation of them, that from the very beginning they shone forth. But observe how everywhere he mentions his "*necessity*,"

and no where a superfluity. Now therefore by saying "*present*," and in "*want*" he showed that he ought to have been supported by the Corinthians; and by the words, "*they supplied the measure of my want*," he shows that he did not so much as ask. And he assigns a reason which was not the real one. What then is this? That he had received from others; "*for*," says he, "*the measure of my want those that came supplied*." 'For this reason,' he says, 'I was not a burden; not because I had no confidence in you.' And yet it is for this latter reason that he so acts, and he shows it in what follows; but does not say it plainly, but throws it into the shade, leaving it to the conscience of his hearers. And he gives proof of it covertly in what follows, by saying,

"*And in every*" thing "*I kept myself from being burdensome, and so will I keep*" myself. "*For think not*," says he, "*that I say these things that I may receive*." Now the words "*so will I keep myself*," are severer, if he has not even yet confidence in them; but once for all had given up the idea of receiving anything from them. He shows, moreover, that they even considered this to be a burden; wherefore he said, "*I have kept myself from being burdensome, and so will I keep myself*." He says this in his former Epistle also, "*I write not this that it may be so done unto me; for*" it were "*good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void*." [1 Corinthians 9:15] And here again, "*I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep*" myself.

6. Then, that he may not seem to speak these things for the sake of winning them on the better [to do this], he says,

2 Corinthians 11:10

"As the truth of Christ is in me." 'Do not think that I therefore have spoken, that I may receive, that I may the rather draw you on: for,' says he, as the truth is in me,

"No man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia." For that none should think again that he is grieved at this, or that he speaks these things in anger, he even calls the thing a *"glorying."* And in his former Epistle too he dressed it out in like terms. For so that he may not wound them there either, he says, *"What then is my reward?" "That when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge."* [1 Corinthians 9:18] And as he there calls it *"reward,"* so does he here *"glorying,"* that they may not be excessively ashamed at what he said, as if he were asking and they gave not to him. 'For, what, if even ye would give?' says he, 'Yet I do not accept it.' And the expression, *"shall not stop me,"* is a metaphor taken from rivers, or from the report, as if running every where, of his receiving nothing. 'You stop not with your giving this my freedom of speech.' But he said not, 'ye stop not,' which would have been too cutting, but it *"no man shall stop me in the regions of Achaia."* This again was like giving them a fatal blow, and exceedingly apt to deject and pain them, since they were the only persons he refused [to take from]. 'For if he made that his boast, it were meet to make it so every where: but if he only does so among us, perchance this is owing to our weakness.' Lest therefore they should so reason and be dejected, see how he corrects this.

2 Corinthians 11:11

"Wherefore? Because I love you not? God knows."

Quickly [is it done], and by an easy method. But still, not even so did he rid them of those charges. For he neither said, 'you are not weak,' nor yet, 'you are strong;' but, *"I love you,"* which very greatly aggravated the accusation against them. For the not receiving from them, because they felt it an exceeding grievance, was a proof of special love toward them. So he acted in two contrary ways out of love; he both did receive, and did not receive: but this contrariety was on account of the disposition of the givers. And he did not say, 'I therefore do not take of you, because I exceedingly love you,' for this would have contained an accusation of their weakness and have thrown them into distress; but he turned what he said to another reason. What then is this?

2 Corinthians 11:12

"That I may cut off occasion from them that desire an occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we."

For since this they sought earnestly, to find some handle against him, it is necessary to remove this also. For this is the one point on which they pique themselves. Therefore that they might not have any advantage whatever, it was necessary to set this right; for in other things they were inferior. For, as I have said, nothing does so edify worldly people as the receiving nothing from them. Therefore the devil in his craftiness dropped this bait especially, when desirous to injure them in other respects. But it appears to me that this even was in hypocrisy. And therefore he did not say, 'wherein they have well done,' but what? *"wherein they glory;"* which also was as jeering at their glorying; for they gloried also of that which they were not. But the man of noble spirit not only ought not to boast of what he has not, but not even of what he possesses; as this blessed saint was wont to do, as the patriarch Abraham did, saying, *"But I am earth and ashes."* [Genesis 18:27] For since he had no sins to speak of, but shone with good works; having run about in every direction and found no very great handle against himself, he betakes himself to his nature; and since the name of *"earth"* is in some way or other one of dignity, he added to it that of *"ashes."* Wherefore also another says, *"Why is earth and ashes proud?"* [Sirach 10:9]

7. For tell me not of the bloom of the countenance, nor of the uplifted neck, nor of the mantle, and the horse, and the followers; but reflect where all these things do end, and put that to them. But and if you tell me of what appears to the eye, I too will tell you of things in pictures, brighter far than

these. But as we do not admire those for their appearance, as seeing what their nature is, that all is clay; so therefore let us not these either, for these too are but clay. Yea rather, even before they are dissolved and become dust, show me this uplifted [neck] a prey to fever and gasping out life; and then will I discourse with you and will ask, What has become of all that profuse ornament? Whither has that crowd of flatterers vanished, that attendance of slaves, that abundance of wealth and possessions? What wind has visited and blown all away? Nay, even stretched upon the bier, he bears the tokens of that wealth and that pride; a splendid garment thrown over him, poor and rich following him forth, the assembled crowds breathing words of good omen. Surely this also is a very mockery; howbeit even this besides is presently proved naught, like a blossom that perishes. For when we have passed over the threshold of the city gates, and after having delivered over the body to the worms, return, I will ask you again, where is that vast crowd gone to? What has become of the clamor and uproar? Where are the torches? Where the bands of women? Are not these things, then, a dream? And what too has become of the shouts? Where are those many lips that cried, and bade him 'be of good cheer, for no man is immortal?' These things ought not now to be said to one that hears not, but when he made prey of others, when he was overreaching, then with a slight change should it have been said to him, 'Be not of good cheer, no man is immortal; hold in your madness, extinguish your lust;' but 'Be of good cheer' is for the injured party. For to chant such things over this man now, is but like men exulting over him and speaking irony; for he ought not for this now to be of good cheer, but to fear and tremble.

And if even this advice is now of no use to him since he has run his course, yet at least let those of the rich who labor under the same disease, and follow him to the tomb, hear it. For although beforehand through the

intoxication of wealth, they have no such thing in mind, yet at that season when the sight of him that is laid out even confirms what is said, let them be sober, let them be instructed: reflecting that yet a little while and they will come that shall bear them away to that fearful account, and to suffer the penalty of their acts of rapacity and extortion. 'And what is this to the poor?' says one. Why, to many this also is a satisfaction, to see him that has wronged them punished. 'But to us it is no satisfaction, but the escaping suffering ourselves.' I praise you exceedingly and approve of you in that you exult not over the calamities of others, but seek only your own safety. Come then, I will ensure you this also. For if we suffer evil at the hands of men, we cut off no small part of our debt by bearing what is done to us nobly. We receive therefore no injury; for God reckons the ill-treatment towards our debt, not according to the principle of justice but of His loving-kindness; and because He succored not him that suffered evil. 'Whence does this appear?' says one. The Jews once suffered evil at the hand of the Babylonians; and God did not prevent it: but they were carried away, children and women; yet afterwards did this captivity become a consolation to them in respect of their sins. Therefore He says to Isaiah, *"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, you priests: speak unto the heart of Jerusalem, for she has received of the Lord's hand double for sins."* [Isaiah 40:1-2] And again; *"Grant us peace, for You have repaid us every thing."* [Isaiah 26:12, Septuagint] And David says; *"Behold mine enemies, for they are multiplied; and forgive all my sins."* [Psalm 25:19] And when he bore with Shimei cursing him, he said, *"Let him alone, that the Lord may see my abasement, and requite me good for this day."* [389 11, 12] For when He aids us not when we suffer wrong, then most of all are we advantaged; for He sets it to the account of our sins, if we bear it thankfully.

8. So that when you see a rich man plundering a poor, leave him that suffers wrong, and weep for the plunderer. For the one puts off filth, the other bedaubes himself with more filth. Such was the fate of Elisha's servant in the story of Naaman [2 Kings 5:20, etc.] For though he took not by violence, yet he did a wrong; for to get money by deceit is a wrong. What then befell? With the wrong he received also the leprosy; and he that was wronged was benefited, but he that did the wrong received the greatest possible harm. The same happens now also in the case of the soul. And this is of so great force that often by itself it has propitiated God; yea though he who suffers evil be unworthy of aid; yet when he so suffers in excess, by this alone he draws God unto the forgiveness of himself, and to the punishment of him that did the wrong. Wherefore also God said of old to the heathen, *"I indeed delivered them over unto a few things, but they have set themselves on together unto evil things;"* [Zechariah 1:15. Septuagint] they shall suffer ills irremediable. For there is nothing, no, nothing, that does so much exasperate God as rapine and violence and extortion. And why forsooth? Because it is very easy to abstain from this sin. For here it is not any natural desire that perturbs the mind, but it arises from wilful negligence. How then does the Apostle call it, *"a root of evils."* [1 Timothy 6:10] Why, I say so too, but this root is from us, and not from the nature of the things. And, if you will, let us make a comparison and see which is the more imperious, the desire of money or of beauty ; for that which shall be found to have struck down great men is the more difficult to master. Let us see then what great man the desire of money ever got possession of. Not one; only of exceeding pitiful and abject persons, Gehazi, Ahab, Judas, the priests of the Jews: but the desire for beauty overcame even the great prophet David. And this I say, not as extending forgiveness to those who are conquered by such a lust, but rather, as preparing them to be watchful. For

when I have shown the strength of the passion, then, most especially, I show them to be deprived of every claim to forgiveness. For if indeed you had not known the wild beast, you would have this to take refuge in; but now, having known, yet falling into it, you will have no excuse. After him, it took possession of his son still more completely. And yet there was never man wiser than he, and all other virtue did he attain; still, however, he was seized so violently by this passion, that even in his vitals he received the wound. And the father indeed rose up again and renewed the struggle, and was crowned again; but the son showed nothing of the kind.

Therefore also Paul said, "*It is better to marry than to burn:*" [1 Corinthians 7:9] and Christ, "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*" [Matthew 14:12] But concerning money He spoke not so, but, "*whoso has forsaken*" his goods "*shall receive an hundredfold.*" [Matthew 14:29] 'How then,' says one, 'did He say of the rich, that they shall hardly obtain the kingdom.' Again implying their weakness of character; not the imperiousness of money, but their utter slavery. And this is evident also from the advice which Paul gave. For from that lust he leads men quite away, saying, "*But they that desire to be rich fall into temptation;*" [1 Timothy 6:9] but in the case of the other not so; but having separated them "*for a season*" only, and that by "*consent,*" he advises to 'come together again' [1 Corinthians 7:5] For he feared the billows of lust lest they should occasion a grievous shipwreck. This passion is even more vehement than anger. For it is not possible to feel anger when there is nothing provoking it, but a man cannot help desiring even when the face which moves to it is not seen. Therefore this passion indeed He did not cut off altogether, but added the words, "*without a cause.*" [Matthew 5:22] Nor again did He abolish all desire, but only that which is unlawful, for he says, "*Nevertheless, because of desires, let every man have his own wife.*" [1 Corinthians 7:2] But to lay

up treasure He allowed not, either with cause or without. For those passions were implanted in our nature for a necessary end; desire, for the procreation of children, and anger, for the succor of the injured, but desire of money not so. Therefore neither is the passion natural to us. So then if you are made captive by it, you will suffer so much the more the vilest punishment. Therefore surely, it is, that Paul, permitting even a second marriage, demands in the case of money great strictness, saying, "*Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?*" [1 Corinthians 6:7] And when treating of virginity, he says, "*I have no commandment,*" [1 Corinthians 7:25] and "*I speak this for your profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you;*" [1 Corinthians 7:35] but when his discourse is of money, he says, "*Having raiment and food, let us be therewith content.*" [1 Timothy 6:8] 'How then is it,' says one, 'that by this, more than the other, are many overcome?' Because they stand not so much on their guard against it as against lasciviousness and fornication; for if they had thought it equally dangerous, they would not, perhaps, have been made its captives. So also were those wretched virgins cast out of the bridechamber, because that, having struck down the great adversary, they were wounded by one weaker, and who was nothing. [Matthew 25:1, etc.] Besides this, one may say further, that if any, subduing lust, is overcome by money, often he does not in fact subdue lust, but has received from nature the gift of suffering no great uneasiness of that sort; for all are not equally inclined to it. Knowing then these things, and revolving frequently with ourselves the example of the virgins, let us shun this evil wild beast. For if virginity profited them nothing, but after countless toils and labors they perished through the love of money, who shall deliver us if we fall into this passion? Wherefore I beseech you to do all you can, both that you be not taken captive by it, and that if taken, you continue not in captivity, but break asunder those hard

bonds. For so shall we be able to secure a footing in heaven and to obtain the countless good things; whereunto may all we attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 24 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 11:13

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into Apostles of Christ.

What do you say? They that preach Christ, they that take not money, they that bring not in a different gospel, *"false apostles?"* 'Yes,' he says, and for this very reason most of all, because they make pretense of all these things for the purpose of deceiving. *"Deceitful workers,"* for they do work indeed, but pull up what has been planted. For being well aware that otherwise they would not be well received, they take the mask of truth and so enact the drama of error. 'And yet,' says one, 'they take no money.' That they may take greater things; that they may destroy the soul. Yea rather, even that was a falsehood; and they took money but did it secretly: and he shows this in what follows. And indeed he already hinted this where he said, *"that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we:"* [2 Corinthians 11:12] in what follows, however, he hinted it more plainly, saying, *"If a man devour you, if a man take you captive, if a man exalt himself, you bear with him."* [2 Corinthians 11:20] But at present he accuses them on another account, saying, *"fashioning themselves."* They had only a *"fashion;"* the skin of the sheep was but outside clothing.

2 Corinthians 11:14-15

"And no marvel; for if even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light, is it a great thing if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness?"

So that if one ought to marvel, this is what he ought to marvel at, and not at their transformation. For when their teacher dares do any thing, no marvel that the disciples also follow. But what is *"an angel of light?"* That has free liberty to speak, that stands near to God. For there are also angels of darkness; those which be the devil's, those dark and cruel ones. And the devil has deceived many so, fashioning himself *"into,"* not becoming, *"an angel of light."* So do also do these bear about them the form of an Apostle, not the power itself, for this they cannot. But nothing is so like the devil as to do things for display. But what is *"a ministry of righteousness?"* That which we are who preach to you a Gospel having righteousness. For he either means this, or else that they invest themselves with the character of righteous men. How then shall we know them? *"By their works,"* as Christ said. Wherefore he is compelled to place his own good deeds and their wickedness side by side, that the spurious may become evident by the comparison. And when about again to enter upon his own praises, he first accuses them, in order to show that such an argument was forced upon him, lest any should accuse him for speaking about himself, and says,

2 Corinthians 11:16

"Again I say." For he had even already used much preparatory corrective: 'But nevertheless I am not contented with what I have said, but I say yet again,'

"Let no man think me foolish." For this was what they did—boasted without a reason.—But observe, I pray you, how often, when about to enter upon his own praises, he checks himself. 'For indeed it is the act of folly,' he says, 'to boast: but I do it, not as playing the fool, but because compelled. But if you do not believe me, but though ye see there is a necessity will condemn me; not even so will I decline the task.' Do you see how he showed that there was great necessity for his speaking. For he that shunned not even this suspicion, consider what violent impulsion to speak he must have undergone, how he travailed and was constrained to speak. But, nevertheless, even so he employs this thing with moderation. For he did not say, 'that I may glory.' And when about to do *"a little,"* again he uses yet another deprecatory expression, saying,

2 Corinthians 11:17

"That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of glorifying."

Do you see how glorying is not *"after the Lord?"* For He says, *"When you shall have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants."* [Luke 17:10] Howbeit, by itself indeed it is not *"after the Lord,"* but by the intention it becomes so. And therefore he said, *"That which I speak,"* not accusing the motive, but the words. Since his aim is so admirable as to dignify the words also. For as a manslayer, though his action be of those most strictly forbidden, has often been approved from the intention; and as circumcision, although it is not 'after the Lord,' has become so from the intention, so also glorying. And wherefore then does he not use so great strictness of expression? Because he is hastening on to another point, and he freely gratifies even to superfluity those who are desirous to find a handle against him, so that he may say only the things that are profitable; for when said they were enough to extinguish all that suspicion. *"But as in foolishness."* Before he says, *"Would that you could bear with me in a little foolishness,"* [2 Corinthians 11:4] but now *"as in foolishness;"* for the farther he proceeds, the more he clears his language. Then that you may not think that he plays the fool on all points, he added, *"in this confidence of glorifying."* In this particular he means: just as in another place he said, *"that we be not put to shame,"* and added, *"in this confidence of glorifying."* [2 Corinthians 9:4] And again, in another place, having said, *"Or what I purpose do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea yea, and the nay nay?"* [2 Corinthians 1:17] And having shown that he cannot in all cases even fulfil what he promises, because he does not purpose after the flesh,

lest any should make this suspicion stretch to the doctrine also, he adds,
"But as God is faithful our word towards you was not yea and nay." [2
Corinthians 1:18]

2. And observe how after having said so many things before, he again
sets down yet other grounds of excuse, saying further thus,

2 Corinthians 11:18

"Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also."

What is, *"after the flesh?"* Of things external, of high birth, of wealth, of wisdom, of being circumcised, of Hebrew ancestry, of popular renown. And behold wisdom. He sets down those things which he shows to be nothings, and then, folly also. For if to glory in what are really good things be folly, much more is it so [to glory in] those that are nothing. And this is what he calls, *"not after the Lord."* For it is no advantage to be a Hebrew, or any such like things soever. 'Think not, therefore, that I set these down as a virtue; no; but because those men boast I also am compelled to institute my comparison on these points.' Which he does also in another place, saying, *"If any man thinks that he may trust in the flesh, I more:"* [Philippians 3:4] and there, it is on their account that trusted in this. Just as if one who had come of an illustrious race but had chosen a philosophic life, should see others priding themselves greatly on being well-born; and being desirous of taking down their vanity, should be compelled to speak of his own distinction; not to adorn himself, but to humble them; so, truly, does Paul also do. Then leaving those, he empties all his censure upon the Corinthians, saying,

2 Corinthians 11:19

"For you bear with the foolish gladly." 'So that you are to blame for this, and more than they. For if you had not borne with them, and so far as it lay in them received damage, I would not have spoken a word; but I do it out of a tender care for your salvation, and in condescension. And behold, how he accompanies even his censure with praise. For having said, *"ye bear with the foolish gladly;"* he added,

"Being wise yourselves." For it was a sign of folly to glory, and on such matters. And yet it behooved to rebuke them, and say, 'Do not bear with the foolish;' he does this, however, at greater advantage. For in that case he would have seemed to rebuke them because he himself was destitute of these advantages; but now having showed himself to be their superior even in these points, and to esteem them to be nothing, he corrects them with greater effect. At present, however, before entering upon his own praises and the comparison, he also reproaches the Corinthians with their great slavishness, because they were extravagantly submissive to them. And observe how he ridicules them.

2 Corinthians 11:20

"For you bear with a man," he says, "if he devour you."

How then did you say, *"that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we?"* [2 Corinthians 11:12] Do you see that he shows that they did take of them, and not simply take, but even in excess: for the term *"devour"* plainly shows this,

"If a man bring you into bondage." 'You have given away both your money,' he says, 'and your persons, and your freedom. For this is more than taking of you; to be masters not only of your money, but of yourselves also.' And he makes this plain even before, where he says, *"If others partake of this right over you, do not we much more?"* [1 Corinthians 9:12] Then he adds what is more severe, saying,

"If a man exalt himself." 'For neither is your slavery of a moderate sort, nor are your masters gentle, but burdensome and odious.'

"If a man smite you on the face." Do you see again a further stretch of tyranny? He said this, not meaning that they were stricken on the face, but that they spat upon and dishonored them; wherefore he added,

2 Corinthians 11:21

"I speak by way of disparagement," for you suffer no whit less than men smitten on the face. What now can be stronger than this? What oppression more bitter than this? When having taken from you both your money and your freedom and your honor, they even so are not gentle towards you nor suffer you to abide in the rank of servants, but have used you more insultingly than any bought slave.

"As though we had been weak." The expression is obscure. For since it was a disagreeable subject he therefore so expressed it as to steal away the offensiveness by the obscurity. For what he wishes to say is this. 'For cannot we also do these things? Yes, but we do them not. Wherefore then do ye bear with these men, as though we could not do these things? Surely it were something to impute to you that you even bear with men who play the fool; but that you do this, even when they so despise you, plunder you, exalt themselves, smite you, can admit neither of excuse nor any reason at all. For this is a new fashion of deceiving. For men that deceive both give and flatter; but these both deceive, and take and insult you. Whence ye cannot have a shadow of allowance, seeing that you spit on those that humble themselves for your sakes that you may be exalted, but admire those who exalt themselves that you may be humbled. For could not we too do these things? Yes, but we do not wish it, looking to your advantage. For they indeed sacrificing your interests seek their own, but we sacrificing our own interests seek for yours.' Do you see how in every instance, while speaking plainly to them, he also alarms them by what he says. 'For,' he says, 'if it be on this account that you honor them, because they smite and insult you, we also can do this, enslave, smite, exalt ourselves against you.'

3. Do you see how he lays upon them the whole blame, both of their senseless pride and of what seems to be folly in himself. 'For not that I may show myself more conspicuous, but that I may set you free from this bitter slavery, am I compelled to glory some little. But it is meet to examine not simply things that are said, but, in addition, the reason also. For Samuel also put together a high panegyric upon himself, when he anointed Saul, saying, *"Whose ass have I taken, or calf, or shoes? Or have I oppressed any of you?"* [1 Samuel 12:3, Septuagint] And yet no one finds fault with him. And the reason is because he did not say it by way of setting off himself; but because he was going to appoint a king, he wishes under the form of a defence [of himself] to instruct him to be meek and gentle. And observe the wisdom of the prophet, or rather the loving kindness of God. For because he wished to turn them from [their design,] bringing together a number of grievous things he asserted them of their future king, as, for instance, that he would make their wives grind at the mill, [1 Samuel 8:11-18] the men shepherds and muleteers; for he went through all the service appertaining to the kingdom with minuteness. But when he saw that they would not be hindered by any of these things, but were incurably distempered; he thus both spares them and composes their king to gentleness. [1 Samuel 12:5] Therefore he also takes him to witness. For indeed no one was then bringing suit or charge against him that he needed to defend himself, but he said those things in order to make him better. And therefore also he added, to take down his pride, *"If you will hearken, you and your king,"* [1 Samuel 12:14] such and such good things shall be yours; *"but if you will not hearken, then the reverse of all."* Amos also said, *"I was no prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but only a herdsman, a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And God took me."* [Amos 7:14-15] But he did not say this to exalt himself, but to stop their mouths that suspected him as no prophet, and to show that he is

no deceiver, nor says of his own mind the things which he says. Again, another also, to show the very same thing, said, "*But truly I am full of power by the spirit and might of the Lord.*" [Micah 3:8] And David also when he related the matter of the lion and of the bear, [1 Samuel 17:34, etc.] spoke not to glorify himself, but to bring about a great and admirable end. For since it was not believed possible he could conquer the barbarian unarmed, he that was not able even to bear arms; he was compelled to give proofs of his own valor. And when he cut off Saul's skirt, he said not what he said out of display, but to repel an ill suspicion which they had scattered abroad against him, saying, that he wished to kill him. [1 Samuel 24:4, etc.] It is meet therefore every where to seek for the reason. For he that looks to the advantage of his hearers even though he should praise himself, not only deserves not to be found fault with, but even to be crowned; and if he is silent, then to be found fault with. For if David had then been silent in the matter of Goliath, they would not have allowed him to go out to the battle, nor to have raised that illustrious trophy. On this account then he speaks being compelled; and that not to his brethren, although he was distrusted by them too as well as by the king; but envy stopped their ears. Therefore leaving them alone, he tells his tale to him who was not as yet envious of him.

4. For envy is a fearful, a fearful thing, and persuades men to despise their own salvation. In this way did both Cain destroy himself, and again, before his time, the devil who was the destroyer of his father. So did Saul invite an evil demon against his own soul; and when he had invited, he again envied his physician. For such is the nature of envy; he knew that he was saved, yet he would rather have perished than see him that saved him had in honor. What can be more grievous than this passion? One cannot err in calling it the devil's offspring. And in it is contained the fruit of

vainglory, or rather its root also; for both these evils are wont mutually to produce each other. And thus in truth it was that Saul even thus envied, when they said, "*David smote by ten thousands*," [1 Samuel 18:7] than which what can be more senseless? For why do you envy? Tell me!

'Because such an one praised him?' Yet surely you ought to rejoice; besides, thou dost not know even whether the praise be true. And do you therefore grieve because without being admirable he has been praised as such? And yet you ought to feel pity. For if he be good, you ought not to envy him when praised, but yourself to praise along with those that speak well of him; but if not such, why are you galled? Why thrust the sword against yourself? 'Because admired by men.' But men today are and tomorrow are not. 'But because he enjoys glory?' Of what sort, tell me? That of which the prophet says that it is "*the flower of grass*." [Isaiah 40:6. Septuagint] Are you then therefore envious because you bear no burden, nor carriest about with you such loads of grass? But if he seems to you to be enviable on this account, then why not also woodcutters who carry burdens every day and come to the city [with them]? For that burden is nothing better than this, but even worse. For theirs indeed galls the body only, but this has oftentimes harmed the soul even and occasioned greater solicitude than pleasure. And should one have gained renown through eloquence, the fear he endures is greater than the good report he bears; yea, what is more, the one is short, the other perpetual. 'But he is in favor with those in authority?' In that too again is danger and envy. For as you feel towards him, so do many others feel. 'But he is praised continually?' This produces bitter slavery. For he will not dare to do fearlessly anything of what according to his judgment he should, lest he should offend those that extol him, for that distinction is a hard bondage to him. So that the more he is known to, so many the more masters he has, and his slavery becomes the greater, as masters of his are

found in every quarter. A servant indeed, when he is released from the eye of his master, both takes breath and lives in all freedom; but this man meets with masters at every turn, for he is the slave of all that appear in the forum. And even should some necessary object press, he dares not set foot in the forum, except it be with his servants following, and his horse, and all his other show set in array, lest his masters condemn him. And if he sees some friend of those who are truly so, he has not the boldness to talk with him on an equal footing: for he is afraid of his masters, lest they depose him from his glory. So that the more distinguished he is, so much the more he is enslaved. And if he suffer anything that is disagreeable, the insult is the more annoying, both in that he has more to witness it and it seems to infringe his dignity. It is not only an insult, but a calamity also, for he has also many who exult at it; and in like way if he come to the enjoyment of any good thing, he has more who envy and detract and do their vigilance to destroy him. Is this then a good? Tell me. Is this glory? By no means; but ingloriousness, and slavery, and bonds, and every burdensome thing one can say. But if the glory that comes of men be so greatly to be coveted in your account, and if it quite disquiets you that such and such an one is applauded of the many; when you behold him in the enjoyment of that applause, pass over in your thought to the world to come and the glory which is there. And just as when hurrying to escape the onset of a wild beast, you enter into a cabin and shuttest to the doors; so now also flee unto the life to come, and that unspeakable glory. For so shall you both tread this under your feet, and wilt easily lay hold upon that, and wilt enjoy the true liberty, and the eternal good things; whereunto may we all attain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 25 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 11:21

Yet whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak in foolishness,) I am bold also.

See him again drawing back and using depreciation and correctives beforehand, although he has already even said many such things: *"Would that you could bear with me in a little foolishness;"* [2 Corinthians 11:1] and again, *"Let no man think me foolish: if you do, yet as foolish receive me."* [2 Corinthians 11:16] *"That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as in foolishness."* [2 Corinthians 11:17] *"Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also;"* [2 Corinthians 11:18] and here again, *"Whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak in foolishness) I am bold also."* Boldness and folly he calls it to speak anything great of himself, and that though there was a necessity, teaching us even to an excess to avoid any thing of the sort. For if after we have done all, we ought to call ourselves unprofitable; of what forgiveness can he be worthy who, when no reason presses, exalts himself and boasts? Therefore also did the Pharisee meet the fate he did, and even in harbor suffered shipwreck because he struck upon this rock. Therefore also does Paul, although he sees very ample necessity for it, draw back nevertheless, and keep on observing that such speaking is a mark of foolishness. And then at length he makes the venture, putting forward the plea of necessity, and says,

2 Corinthians 11:22-23

"Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I."

For it was not all Hebrews that were Israelites, since both the Ammonites and Moabites were Hebrews. Wherefore he added somewhat to clear his nobility of descent, and says,

"Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ. (I speak as one beside himself,) I more."

He is not content with his former deprecation, but uses it again here also. *"I speak as one beside himself, I more."* I am their superior and their better. And indeed he possessed clear proofs of his superiority, but nevertheless even so he terms the thing a folly. And yet if they were false Apostles, he heeded not to have introduced his own superiority by way of comparison, but to have destroyed their claim to *"be ministers"* at all. Well, he did destroy it, saying, *"False Apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into Apostles of Christ,"* [2 Corinthians 11:13] but now he does not proceed in that way, for his discourse was about to proceed to strict examination; and no one when an examination is in hand simply asserts; but having first stated the case in the way of comparison, he shows it to be negatived by the facts, a very strong negative. But besides, it is their opinion he gives, not his own assertion, when he says, *"Are they ministers of Christ?"* And having said, *"I more,"* he proceeds in his comparison, and shows that not by bare assertions, but by furnishing the proof that facts supply, he maintains the impress of the Apostleship. And leaving all his miracles, he begins with his trials; thus saying,

"In labors more abundantly, in stripes above measure." This latter is greater than the former; to be both beaten and scourged.

"In prisons more abundantly." Here too again is there an increase. *"In deaths oft."* [1 Corinthians 15:31] For, *"I die,"* says he, *"daily."* But here, even in reality; 'for I have oft been delivered into mortal dangers. '

2 Corinthians 11:24

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."

Why, *"save one?"* There was an ancient law that he who had received more than the forty should be held disgraced among them. Lest then the vehemence and impetuosity of the executioner by inflicting more than the number should cause a man to be disgraced, they decreed that they should be inflicted, *"save one,"* that even if the executioner should exceed, he might not overpass the forty, but remaining within the prescribed number might not bring degradation on him that was scourged.

2 Corinthians 11:25

"Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck."

And what has this to do with the Gospel? Because he went forth on long journeys; and those by sea.

"A night and a day I have been in the deep." Some say this means out on the open sea, others, swimming upon it, which is also the truer interpretation. There is nothing wonderful, at least, about the former, nor would he have placed it as greater than his shipwrecks.

2 Corinthians 11:26

"In perils of rivers."

For he was compelled also to cross rivers. *"In perils of robbers, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness."* 'Everywhere were contests set before me, in places, in countries, in cities, in deserts.'

"In perils from the Gentiles, in perils among false brethren."

Behold another kind of warfare. For not only did such as were enemies strike at him, but those also who played the hypocrite; and he had need of much firmness, much prudence.

2 Corinthians 11:27-28

2. *"In labor and travail."*

Perils succeed to labors, labors to perils, one upon other and unintermitted, and allowed him not to take breath even for a little.

"In journeyings often, in hunger and thirst and nakedness, besides those things that are without."

What is left out is more than what is enumerated. Yea rather, one cannot count the number of those even which are enumerated; for he has not set them down specifically, but has mentioned those the number of which was small and easily comprehended, saying, *"thrice"* and *"thrice,"* [2 Corinthians 11:25] and [again] *"once;"* but of the others he does not mention the number because he had endured them often. And he recounts not their results as that he had converted so many and so many, but only what he suffered on behalf of the Preaching; at once out of modesty, and as showing that even should nothing have been gained but labor, even so his title to wages has been fulfilled.

"That which presses upon me daily." The tumults, the disturbances, the assaults of mobs, onsets of cities. For the Jews waged war against this man most of all because he most of all confounded them, and his changing sides all at once was the greatest refutation of their madness. And there breathed a mighty war against him, from his own people, from strangers, from false brethren; and every where were billows and precipices, in the inhabited world, in the uninhabited, by land, by sea, without, within. And he had not even a full supply of necessary food, nor even of thin clothing, but the champion of the world wrestled in nakedness and fought in hunger; so far

was he from enriching himself. Yet he murmured not, but was grateful for these things to the Judge of the combat.

"Anxiety for all the Churches." This was the chief thing of all, that his soul too was distracted, and his thoughts divided. For even if nothing from without had assailed him; yet the war within was enough, those waves on waves, that sleet of cares, that war of thoughts. For if one that has charge of but a single house, and has servants and superintendents and stewards, often cannot take breath for cares, though there be none that molests him: he that has the care not of a single house, but of cities and peoples and nations and of the whole world; and in respect to such great concerns, and with so many spitefully entreating him, and single-handed, and suffering so many things, and so tenderly concerned as not even a father is for his children— consider what he endured. For that you may not say, What if he was anxious, yet the anxiety was slight , he added further the intensity of the care, saying,

2 Corinthians 11:29

"Who is weak, and I am not weak?" He did not say, 'and I share not in his dejection?' but, 'so am I troubled and disturbed, as though I myself were laboring under that very affection, that very infirmity.'

"Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?" See, again, how he places before us the excess of his grief by calling it *"burning."* 'I am on fire,' 'I am in a flame,' he says, which is surely greater than any thing he has said. For those other things, although violent, yet both pass quickly by, and brought with them that pleasure which is unfading; but this was what afflicted and straightened him, and pierced his mind through and through; the suffering such things for each one of the weak, whosoever he might be. For he did not feel pained for the greater sort only and despise the lesser, but counted even the abject among his familiar friends. Wherefore also he said, *"who is weak?"* whosoever he may be; and as though he were himself the Church throughout the world, so was he distressed for every member.

2 Corinthians 11:30

"If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my weakness."

Do you see that he no where glories of miracles, but of his persecutions and his trials? For this is meant by "*weaknesses*." And he shows that his warfare was of a diversified character. For both the Jews warred upon him, and the Gentiles stood against him, and the false brethren fought with him, and brethren caused him sorrow, through their weakness and by taking offense:— on every side he found trouble and disturbance, from friends and from strangers. This is the special mark of an Apostle, by these things is the Gospel woven.

2 Corinthians 11:31-33

"The God and Father of the Lord Jesus knows that I lie not. The Governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, desiring to apprehend me."

What can be the reason that he here strongly confirms and gives assurance of [his truth], seeing he did not so in respect to any of the former things? Because, perhaps, this was of older date and not so well known ; while of those other facts, his care for the churches, and all the rest, they were themselves cognisant. See then how great the war [against him] was, since on his account the city was "*guarded*." And when I say this of the war, I say it of the zeal of Paul; for except this had breathed intensely, it had not kindled the governor to so great madness. These things are the part of an apostolic soul, to suffer so great things and yet in nothing to veer about, but to bear nobly whatever befalls; yet not to go out to meet dangers, nor to rush upon them. See for instance here, how he was content to evade the siege, by being "*let down through a window in a basket*." For though he were even desirous "*to depart hence*;" still nevertheless he also passionately affected the salvation of men. And therefore he oftentimes had recourse even to such devices as these, preserving himself for the Preaching; and he refused not to use even human contrivances when the occasion called for them; so sober and watchful was he. For in cases where evils were inevitable, he needed only grace; but where the trial was of a measured character, he devises many things of himself even, here again ascribing the whole to God. And just as a spark of unquenchable fire, if it fell into the sea, would be merged as many waves swept over it, yet would again rise shining to the surface; even so surely the blessed Paul also would now be

overwhelmed by perils, and now again, having dived through them, would come up more radiant, overcoming by suffering evil.

3. For this is the brilliant victory, this is the Church's trophy, thus is the Devil overthrown when we suffer injury. For when we suffer, he is taken captive; and himself suffers harm, when he would fain inflict it on us. And this happened in Paul's case also; and the more he plied him with perils, the more was he defeated. Nor did he raise up against him only one kind of trials, but various and diverse. For some involved labor, others sorrow, others fear, others pain, others care, others shame, others all these at once; but yet he was victorious in all. And like as if a single soldier, having the whole world fighting against him, should move through the mid ranks of his enemies, and suffer no harm: even so did Paul, showing himself singly, among barbarians, among Greeks, on every land, on every sea, abide unconquered. And as a spark, falling upon reeds and hay, changes into its own nature the things so kindled; so also did this man setting upon all make things change over unto the truth; like a winter torrent, sweeping over all things and overturning every obstacle. And like some champion who wrestles, runs, and boxes too; or soldier engaged by turns in storming, fighting on foot, on shipboard; so did he try by turns every form of fight, and breathed out fire, and was unapproachable by all; with his single body taking possession of the world, with his single tongue putting all to flight. Not with such force did those many trumpets fall upon the stones of Jericho and throw them down, as did the sound of this man's voice both dash to the earth the devil's strong-holds and bring over to himself those that were against him. And when he had collected a multitude of captives, having armed the same, he made them again his own army, and by their means conquered. Wonderful was David who laid Goliath low with a single stone; but if you will examine Paul's achievements, that is a child's exploit, and

great as is the difference between a shepherd and a general, so great the difference you shall see here. For this man brought down no Goliath by the hurling of a stone, but by speaking only he scattered the whole array of the Devil; as a lion roaring and darting out flame from his tongue, so was he found by all irresistible; and bounded everywhere by turns continually; he ran to these, he came to those, he turned about to these, he bounded away to others, swifter in his attack than the wind; governing the whole world, as though a single house or a single ship; rescuing the sinking, steadying the dizzied, cheering the sailors, sitting at the tiller, keeping an eye to the prow, tightening the yards, handling an oar, pulling at the mast, watching the sky; being all things in himself, both sailor, and pilot, and pilot's mate , and sail, and ship; and suffering all things in order to relieve the evils of others. For consider. He endured shipwreck that he might stay the shipwreck of the world; *"a day and a night he passed in the deep,"* that he might draw it up from the deep of error; he was *"in weariness"* that he might refresh the weary; he endured smiting that he might heal those that had been smitten of the devil; he passed his time in prisons that he might lead forth to the light those that were sitting in prison and in darkness; he was *"in deaths oft"* that he might deliver from grievous deaths; *"five times he received forty stripes save one"* that he might free those that inflicted them from the scourge of the devil; he was *"beaten with rods"* that he might bring them under *"the rod and the staff"* of Christ; [Psalm 23:4] he *"was stoned,"* that he might deliver them from the senseless stones; he *"was in the wilderness ,"* that he might take them out of the wilderness; *"in journeying,"* to stay their wanderings and open the way that leads to heaven; he *"was in perils in the cities,"* that he might show the city which is above; *"in hunger and thirst,"* to deliver from a more grievous hunger; *"in nakedness,"* to clothe their unseemliness with the robe of Christ; set upon by the mob, to extricate them

from the besetment of fiends; he burned, that he might quench the burning darts of the devil: *"through a window was let down from the wall,"* to send up from below those that lay prostrate upon the ground. Shall we then talk any more, seeing we do not so much as know what Paul suffered? Shall we make mention any more of goods, or even of wife, or city, or freedom, when we have seen him ten thousand times despising even life itself? The martyr dies once for all: but that blessed saint in his one body and one soul endured so many perils as were enough to disturb even a soul of adamant; and what things all the saints together have suffered in so many bodies, those all he himself endured in one: he entered into the world as if a race-course, and stripped himself of all, and so made a noble stand. For he knew the fiends that were wrestling with him. Wherefore also he shone forth brightly at once from the beginning, from the very starting-post, and even to the end he continued the same; yea, rather he even increased the intensity of his pursuit as he drew nearer to the prize. And what surely is wonderful is that though suffering and doing such great things, he knew how to maintain an exceeding modesty. For when he was driven upon the necessity of relating his own good deeds, he ran quickly over them all; although he might have filled books without number, had he wished to unfold in detail every thing he mentioned; if he had specified the Churches he was in care for, if his prisons and his achievements in them, if of the other things one by one, the besetments, the assaults. But he would not. Knowing then these things, let us also learn to be modest and not to glory at any time in wealth or other worldly things, but in the reproaches we suffer for Christ's sake, and in these, only when need compels; for if there be nothing urging it, let us not mention these even, (lest we be puffed up,) but our sins only. For so shall we both easily be released from them and shall have God propitious to us, and shall attain the life to come; whereunto may we all attain through

the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 12:1

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory, [for] I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

What is this? Does he who has spoken such great things say, [It is not expedient] *"doubtless to glory?"* as if he had said nothing? No; not as if he had said nothing: but because he is going to pass to another species of boasting, which is not intended indeed by so great a reward, but which to the many (though not to careful examiners) seems to set him off in brighter colors, he says, *"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory."* For truly the great grounds of boasting were those which he had recounted, those of his trials; he has however other things also to tell of, such as concern the revelations, the unspeakable mysteries. And wherefore, says he, *"It is not expedient for me?"* he means, 'lest it lift me up to pride.' What do you say? For if you speak not of them, yet do you not know of them? But our knowing of them ourselves does not lift us up so much as our publishing them to others. For it is not the nature of good deeds that uses to lift a man up, but their being witnessed to, and known of, by the many. For this cause therefore he says, *"It is not expedient for me;"* and, 'that I may not implant too great an idea of me in those who hear.' For those men indeed, the false apostles, said even what was not true about themselves; but this man hides even what is true, and that too although so great necessity lies upon him, and says, *"It is not expedient for me;"* teaching one and all even to superfluity to avoid any thing of the sort. For this thing is attended with no advantage, but even with harm, except there be some necessary and useful

reason which induces us thereto. Having then spoken of his perils, trials, snares, dejections, shipwrecks, he passes to another species of boasting, saying,

2 Corinthians 12:2-5

"I knew a man, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or out of the body, I know not: God knows;) such an one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know how that he was caught up into Paradise, (whether in the body, I know not; or out of the body, I know not;) and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. On behalf of such an one will I glory: but on my own behalf I will not glory."

Great indeed was this revelation. But this was not the only one: there were many others besides, but he mentions one out of many. For that there were many, hear what he says: *"Lest I should be exalted overmuch through the exceeding greatness of the revelations."* 'And yet,' a man may say, 'if he wished to conceal them, he ought not to have given any intimation whatever or said any thing of the sort; but if he wished to speak of them, to speak plainly.' Wherefore then is it that he neither spoke plainly nor kept silence? To show by this also that he resorts to the thing unwillingly. And therefore also he has stated the time, *"fourteen years."* For he does not mention it without an object, but to show that he who had refrained for so long a time would not now have spoken out, except the necessity for doing so had been great. But he would have still kept silence, had he not seen the brethren perishing. Now if Paul from the very beginning was such an one as to be counted worthy of such a revelation, when as yet he had not wrought such good works; consider what he must have grown to in fourteen years. And observe how even in this very matter he shows modesty, by his saying some things, but confessing that of others he is ignorant. For that he was caught up indeed, he declared, but whether *"in the body"* or *"out of the body"* he says he does not know. And yet it would have been quite enough, if he had

told of his being caught up and had been silent [about the other]; but as it is, in his modesty he adds this also. What then? Was it the mind that was caught up and the soul, while the body remained dead? Or was the body caught up? It is impossible to tell. For if Paul who was caught up and whom things unspeakable, so many and so great, had befallen was in ignorance, much more we. For, indeed, that he was in Paradise he knew, and that he was in the third heaven he was not ignorant, but the manner he knew not clearly. And see from yet another consideration how free he is from pride. For in his narrative about "*the city of the Damascenes*" [2 Corinthians 11:32] he confirms what he says, but here not; for it was not his aim to establish this fact strongly, but to mention and intimate it only. Wherefore also he goes on to say, "*Of such an one will I glory;*" not meaning that he who was caught up was some other person, but he so frames his language in the best manner he possibly could, so as at once to mention the fact, and to avoid speaking of himself openly. For what sequence would there be in bringing some one else forward, when discoursing about himself? Wherefore then did he so put it? It was not all one to say, 'I was caught up,' and, "*I knew one that was caught up;*" and 'I will glory of myself,' and, "*I will glory of such an one.*" Now if any should say, 'And how is it possible to be caught up without a body?' I will ask him, 'How is it possible to be caught up with a body?' for this is even more inexplicable than the other, if you examine by reasonings and do not give place to faith.

2. But wherefore was he also caught up? As I think, that he might not seem to be inferior to the rest of the Apostles. For since they had companied with Christ, but Paul had not: He therefore caught up unto glory him also. "*Into Paradise.*" For great was the name of this place, and it was everywhere celebrated. Wherefore also Christ said, "*Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.*" [Luke 23:43]

"On behalf of such an one will I glory?" wherefore? For if another were caught up, wherefore do you glory? Whence it is evident that he said these things of himself. And if he added, *"but of myself I will not glory,"* he says nothing else than this, that, 'when there is no necessity, I will say nothing of that kind fruitlessly and at random;' or else he is again throwing obscurity over what he had said, as best he might. For that the whole discourse was about himself, what follows also clearly shows; for he went on to say,

2 Corinthians 12:6

"But if I should even desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth."

How then did you say before, *"Would that you could bear with me a little in my foolishness;"* [2 Corinthians 11:1] and, *"That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly;"* [2 Corinthians 11:17] but here, *"Though I should even desire to glory, I shall not be foolish?"* Not in regard of glorying, but of lying; for if glorying be foolishness, how much more lying?

It is then with regard to this that he says, *"I shall not be foolish."* Wherefore also he added,

"For I shall speak the truth; but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above that which he sees, or that he hears from me." Here you have the acknowledged reason; for they even deemed them to be gods, on account of the greatness of their miracles. As then in the case of the elements, God has done both things, creating them at once weak and glorious; the one, to proclaim His own power; the other, to prevent the error of mankind : so truly here also were they both wonderful and weak, so that by the facts themselves were the unbelievers instructed. For if while continuing to be wonderful only and giving no proof of weakness, they had by words tried to draw away the many from conceiving of them more than the truth; not only would they have nothing succeeded, but they would even have brought about the contrary. For those dissuasions in words would have seemed rather to spring of lowliness of mind, and would have caused them to be the more admired. Therefore in act and by deeds was their weakness disclosed. And one may see this exemplified in the men who lived under

the old dispensation. For Elias was wonderful, but on one occasion he stood convicted of faint-heartedness; and Moses was great, but he also fled under the influence of the same passion. Now such things befell them, because God stood aloof and permitted their human nature to stand confessed. For if because he led them out they said, 'Where is Moses?' what would they not have said, if he had also led them in? Wherefore also [Paul] himself says, "*I forbear, lest any should account of me.*" He said not, 'say of me,' but, "*lest any should even account of me*" beyond my desert.' Whence it is evident from this also that the whole discourse relates to himself. Wherefore even when he began, he said, "*It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory,*" which he would not have said, had he been going to speak the things which he said of another man. For wherefore is it "*not expedient to glory*" about another? But it was himself that was counted worthy of these things; and therefore it is that he goes on to say,

2 Corinthians 12:7

"And that I should not be exalted overmuch, through the exceeding greatness of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet me."

What do you say? He that counted not the kingdom to be any thing; no, nor yet hell in respect of his longing after Christ; did he deem honor from the many to be any thing, so as both to be lifted up and to need that curb continually? For he did not say, 'that he *"might"* buffet me,' but *"that he"* may *"buffet me."* Yet who is there would say this? What then is the meaning of what is said? When we have explained what is meant at all by the *"thorn,"* and who is this *"messenger of Satan,"* then will we declare this also. There are some then who have said that he means a kind of pain in the head which was inflicted of the devil; but God forbid! For the body of Paul never could have been given over to the hands of the devil, seeing that the devil himself submitted to the same Paul at his mere bidding; and he set him laws and bounds, when he delivered over the fornicator for the destruction of the flesh, and he dared not to transgress them. What then is the meaning of what is said? An adversary is called, in the Hebrew, Satan; and in the third Book of Kings the Scripture has so termed such as were adversaries; and speaking of Solomon, says, 'In his days there was no Satan,' that is, no adversary, enemy, or opponent. [1 Kings 5:4] What he says then is this: God would not permit the Preaching to progress, in order to check our high thoughts; but permitted the adversaries to set upon us. For this indeed was enough to pluck down his high thoughts; not so that, pains in the head. And so by the *"messenger of Satan,"* he means Alexander the coppersmith, the party of Hymenæus and Philetus, all the adversaries of the

word; those who contended with and fought against him, those that cast him into a prison, those that beat him, that led him away to death ; for they did Satan's business. As then he calls those Jews children of the devil, who were imitating his deeds, so also he calls a *"messenger of Satan"* every one that opposes. He says therefore, *"There was given to me a thorn to buffet me;"* not as if God puts arms into such men's hands, God forbid! not that He does chastise or punish, but for the time allows and permits them.

2 Corinthians 12:8

3. *"Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice."*

That is, oftentimes. This also is a mark of great lowliness of mind, his not concealing that he could not bear those insidious plottings, that he fainted under them and was reduced to pray for deliverance.

2 Corinthians 12:9

"And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you; for my power is made perfect in weakness."

That is to say, 'It is sufficient for you that you raise the dead, that you cure the blind, that you cleanse lepers, that you work those other miracles; seek not also exemption from danger and fear and to preach without annoyances. But are you pained and dejected lest it should seem to be owing to My weakness, that there are many who plot against and beat you and harass and scourge you? Why this very thing does show My power. *"For My power,"* He says, *"is made perfect in weakness,"* when being persecuted ye overcome your persecutors; when being harassed ye get the better of them that harass you; when being put in bonds ye convert them that put you in bonds. Seek not then more than is needed.' Do you see how he himself assigns one reason, and God another? For he himself says, *"Lest I should be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn;"* but he says that God said He permitted it in order to show His power. 'You seek therefore a thing which is not only not needed, but which also obscures the glory of My power.' For by the words, *"is sufficient for you,"* He would signify this, that nothing else need be added, but the whole was complete. So that from this also it is plain that he does not intend pains in the head; for in truth they did not preach when they were sick, for they could not preach when ill; but that harassed and persecuted, they overcame all. 'After having heard this then,' he says,

"Most gladly therefore will I glory in my weaknesses." For that they may not sink down, when those false Apostles are glorying over their contrary lot and these are suffering persecution, he shows that he shines all

the brighter for this, and that thus the power of God shines forth the rather, and what happens is just matter for glorying. Wherefore he says, "*Most gladly therefore will I glory.*" 'Not as therefore sorrowing did I speak of the things which I enumerated, or of that which I have just now said, "*there was given to me a thorn;*" but as priding myself upon them and drawing to myself greater power.' Wherefore also he adds,

"That the strength of Christ may rest upon me." Here he hints at another thing also, namely, that in proportion as the trials waxed in intensity, in the same proportion the grace was increased and continued.

2 Corinthians 12:10

"Wherefore I take pleasure in many weaknesses." Of what sort? Tell me. *"In injuries, in persecutions, in necessities, in distresses."*

Do you see how he has now revealed it in the clearest manner? For in mentioning the species of the infirmity he spoke not of fevers, nor any return of that sort, nor any other bodily ailment, but of *"injuries, persecutions, distresses."* Do you see a single-minded soul? He longs to be delivered from those dangers; but when he heard God's answer that this befits not, he was not only not sorry that he was disappointed of his prayer, but was even glad. Wherefore he said, *"I take pleasure,"* 'I rejoice, I long, to be injured, persecuted, distressed for Christ's sake.' And he said these things both to check those, and to raise the spirits of these that they might not be ashamed at Paul's sufferings. For that ground was enough to make them shine brighter than all men. Then he mentions another reason also.

"For when I am weak, then am I strong." 'Why do you marvel that the power of God is then conspicuous? I too am strong *"then;"* for then most of all did grace come upon him. *"For as His sufferings abound, so does our consolation abound also."* [2 Corinthians 1:5]

4. Where affliction is, there is also consolation; where consolation, there is grace also. For instance when he was thrown into the prison, then it was he wrought those marvellous things; when he was shipwrecked and cast away upon that barbarous country, then more than ever was he glorified. When he went bound into the judgment-hall, then he overcame even the judge. And so it was too in the Old Testament; by their trials the righteous flourished. So it was with the three children, so with Daniel, with Moses, and Joseph; thence did they all shine and were counted worthy of

great crowns. For then the soul also is purified, when it is afflicted for God's sake: it then enjoys greater assistance as needing more help and worthy of more grace. And truly, before the reward which is proposed to it by God, it reaps a rich harvest of good things by becoming philosophic. For affliction rends pride away and prunes out all listlessness and exercises unto patience: it reveals the meanness of human things and leads unto much philosophy. For all the passions give way before it, envy, emulation, lust, rage, desire of riches, of beauty, boastfulness, pride, anger; and the whole remaining swarm of these distempers. And if you desire to see this in actual working, I shall be able to show you both a single individual and a whole people, as well under affliction as at ease; and so to teach you how great advantage comes of the one, and how great listlessness from the other.

For the people of the Hebrews, when they were vexed and persecuted, groaned and besought God, and drew down upon themselves great influences from above: but when they waxed fat, they kicked. The Ninevites again, when they were in the enjoyment of security, so exasperated God that He threatened to pluck up the entire city from its foundations: but after they had been humbled by that preaching, they displayed all virtue. But if you would see also a single individual, consider Solomon. For he, when deliberating with anxiety and trouble concerning the government of that nation, was vouchsafed that vision: but when he was in the enjoyment of luxury, he slid into the very pit of iniquity. And what did his father? When was he admirable and passing belief? Was it not when he was in trials? And Absalom, was he not sober-minded, while still an exile; but after his return, became both tyrannical and a parricide? And what did Job? He indeed shone even in prosperity, but showed yet brighter after his affliction. And why must one speak of the old and ancient things? For if one do but examine our own state at present, he will see how great is the

advantage of affliction. For now indeed that we are in the enjoyment of peace, we have become supine, and lax and have filled the Church with countless evils; but when we were persecuted, we were more sober-minded, and kinder, and more earnest, and more ready as to these assemblies and as to hearing. For what fire is to gold, that is affliction unto souls; wiping away filth, rendering men clean, making them bright and shining. It leads unto the kingdom, that unto hell. And therefore the one way is broad, the other narrow. Wherefore also, He Himself said, "*In the world you shall have tribulation,*" [John 16:33] as though he were leaving some great good behind unto us. If then you are a disciple, travel thou the straight and narrow way, and be not disgusted nor discouraged. For even if you be not afflicted in that way; you must inevitably be afflicted on other grounds, of no advantage to you. For the envious man also, and the lover of money, and he that burns for an harlot, and the vainglorious, and each one of the rest that follow whatsoever is evil, endures many disheartenings and afflictions, and is not less afflicted than they who mourn. And if he does not weep nor mourn, it is for shame and insensibility: since if you should look into his soul, you will see it filled with countless waves. Since then whether we follow this way of life or that, we must needs be afflicted: wherefore choose we not this way which along with affliction brings crowns innumerable? For thus has God led all the saints through affliction and distress, at once doing them service, and securing the rest of men against entertaining a higher opinion of them than they deserve. For thus it was that idolatries gained ground at first; men being held in admiration beyond their desert. Thus the Roman senate decreed Alexander to be the thirteenth God, for it possessed the privilege of electing and enrolling Gods. For instance, when all about Christ had been reported, the ruler of the nation sent to inquire, whether they would be pleased to elect Him also a God. They however

refused their consent, being angry and indignant that previous to their vote and decree, the Power of the Crucified flashing abroad had won over the whole world to its own worship. But thus it was ordered even against their will that the Divinity of Christ was not proclaimed by man's decree, nor was He counted one of the many that were by them elected. For they counted even boxers to be Gods, and the favorite of Hadrian; after whom the city Antinous is named. For since death testifies against their moral nature, the devil invented another way, that of the soul's immortality; and mingling therewith that excessive flattery, he seduced many into impiety. And observe what wicked artifice. When we advance that doctrine for a good purpose, he overthrows our words; but when he himself is desirous of framing an argument for mischief, he is very zealous in setting it up. And if any one ask, 'How is Alexander a God? Is he not dead? And miserably too?' 'Yes, but the soul is immortal?' he replies. Now you argue and philosophizest for immortality, to detach men from the God Who is over all: but when we declare that this is God's greatest gift, you persuade your dupes that men are low and grovelling, and in no better case than the brutes. And if we say, 'the Crucified lives,' laughter follows immediately: although the whole world proclaims it, both in old time and now; in old time by miracles, now by converts; for truly these successes are not those of a dead man: but if one say, 'Alexander lives,' you believe, although you have no miracle to allege.

5. 'Yes,' one replies; 'I have; for when he lived he wrought many and great achievements; for he subdued both nations and cities, and in many wars and battles he conquered, and erected trophies.'

If then I shall show [somewhat] which he when alive never dreamed of, neither he, nor any other man that ever lived, what other proof of the resurrection will you require? For that while alive one should win battles

and victories, being a king and having armies at his disposal, is nothing marvelous, no, nor startling or novel; but that after a Cross and Tomb one should perform such great things throughout every land and sea, this it is which is most especially replete with such amazement, and proclaims His divine and unutterable Power. And Alexander indeed after his decease never restored again his kingdom which had been rent in pieces and quite abolished: indeed how was it likely he, dead, should do so? But Christ then most of all set up His after He was dead. And why speak I of Christ? Seeing that He granted to His disciples also, after their deaths, to shine? For, tell me, where is the tomb of Alexander? Show it me and tell me the day on which he died. But of the servants of Christ the very tombs are glorious, seeing they have taken possession of the most loyal city; and their days are well known, making festivals for the world. And his tomb even his own people know not, but this man's the very barbarians know. And the tombs of the servants of the Crucified are more splendid than the palaces of kings; not for the size and beauty of the buildings, (yet even in this they surpass them,) but, what is far more, in the zeal of those who frequent them. For he that wears the purple himself goes to embrace those tombs, and, laying aside his pride, stands begging the saints to be his advocates with God, and he that has the diadem implores the tent-maker and the fisherman, though dead, to be his patrons. Will you dare then, tell me, to call the Lord of these dead; whose servants even after their decease are the patrons of the kings of the world? And this one may see take place not in Rome only, but in Constantinople also. For there also Constantine the Great, his son considered he should be honoring with great honor, if he buried him in the porch of the fisherman; and what porters are to kings in their palaces, that kings are at the tomb to fisherman. And these indeed as lords of the place occupy the inside, while the others as though but sojourners and neighbors

were glad to have the gate of the porch assigned them; showing by what is done in this world, even to the unbelievers, that in the Resurrection the fisherman will be yet more their superiors. For if here it is so in the burial [of each], much more will it in the resurrection. And their rank is interchanged; kings assume that of servants and ministers, and subjects the dignity of kings, yea rather a brighter still. And that this is no piece of flattery, the truth itself demonstrates; for by those these have become more illustrious. For far greater reverence is paid to these tombs than to the other royal sepulchres; for there indeed is profound solitude, while here there is an immense concourse. But if you will compare these tombs with the royal palaces, here again the palm remains with them. For there indeed there are many who keep off, but here many who invite and draw to them rich, poor, men, women, bond, free; there, is much fear; here, pleasure unutterable. 'But,' says one, 'it is a sweet sight to look on a king covered with gold and crowned, and standing by his side, generals, commanders, captains of horse and foot, lieutenants.' Well, but this of ours is so much grander and more awful that that must be judged, compared with it, to be stage scenery and child's play. For the instant you have stepped across the threshold, at once the place sends up your thoughts to heaven, to the King above, to the army of the Angels, to the lofty throne, to the unapproachable glory. And here indeed He has put in the ruler's power, of his subjects to loose one, and bind another; but the bones of the saints possess no such pitiful and mean authority, but that which is far greater. For they summon demons and put them to the torture, and loose from those bitterest of all bonds, them that are bound. What is more fearful than this tribunal? Though no one is seen, though no one piles the sides of the demon, yet are there cries, and tearings, lashes, tortures, burning tongues, because the demon cannot endure that marvellous power. And they that once wore bodies, are victorious over

bodiless powers; [their] dust and bones and ashes rack those invisible natures. And therefore in truth it is that none would ever travel abroad to see the palaces of kings, but many kings and have often traveled to see this spectacle. For the Martyries of the saints exhibit outlines and symbols of the judgment to come; in that demons are scourged, men chastened and delivered. Do you see the power of saints, even dead? Do you see the weakness of sinners, even living? Flee then wickedness, that you may have power over such; and pursue virtue with all your might. For if the case be thus here, consider what it will be in the world to come. And as being evermore possessed with this love, lay hold on the life eternal; whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 27 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 12:11

I have become foolish in glorying; ye compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you.

Having fully completed what he had to say about his own praises, he did not stay at this; but again excuses himself and asks pardon for what he said, declaring that his doing so was of necessity and not of choice. Still nevertheless, although there was necessity, he calls himself "*a fool*." And when he began indeed, he said, "*As foolish receive me*," and "*as in foolishness*;" but now, leaving out the 'as,' he calls himself "*foolish*." For after he had established the point he wished by saying what he did, he afterwards boldly and unsparingly grapples with all failing of the sort, teaching all persons that none should ever praise himself where there is no necessity, seeing that even where a reason for it existed, Paul termed himself a fool [for so doing]. Then he turns the blame also of his so speaking not upon the false Apostles, but wholly upon the disciples. For "*ye*," he says, "*compelled me*." 'For if they gloried, but were not by doing so leading you astray nor causing your destruction, I should not have been thus led on to descend unto this discussion: but because they were corrupting the whole Church, with a view to your advantage I was compelled to become foolish.' And he did not say, 'For I feared lest if they obtained the highest estimation with you, they should sow their doctrines,' yet this indeed he set down above when he said, "*I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve, so your minds should be corrupted*." [2 Corinthians 11:3] Here however he does not so express himself, but in a more commanding

manner and with more authority, having gained boldness from what he had said, *"For I ought to have been commended of you."* Then he also assigns the reason; and again he mentions not his revelations nor his miracles only, but his temptations also.

"For in nothing was I behind the chiefest Apostles." See how he here too again speaks out with greater authoritativeness. For, before indeed he said, *"I reckon I am not a whit behind,"* but here, after those proofs, he now boldly speaks out asserting the fact, as I said, thus absolutely. Not that even thus he departs from the mean, nor from his proper character. For as though he had uttered something great and exceeding his deserts, in that he numbered himself with the Apostles, he thus again speaks modestly, and adds,

2 Corinthians 12:12

"Although I be nothing, the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you."

'Look not thou at this,' he says, 'whether I be mean and little, but whether you have not enjoyed those things which from an Apostle it was meet you should enjoy.' Yet he did not say 'mean,' but what was lower, *"nothing."* For where is the good of being great, and of use to nobody? Even as there is no advantage in a skilful physician if he heals none of those that be sick. 'Do not then,' he says, 'scrutinize this that I am nothing, but consider that, that wherein ye ought to have been benefitted, I have failed in nothing, but have given proof of mine Apostleship. There ought then to have been no need for me to say anything.' Now he thus spoke, not as wanting to be commended, (for how should he, he who counted heaven itself to be a small thing in comparison with his longing after Christ?) but as desiring their salvation. Then lest they should say, 'And what is it to us, even though you were not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles?' he therefore added,

"The signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, and by signs and wonders." Amazing! What a sea of good works has he traversed in a few words! And observe what it is he puts first, *"patience."* For this is the note of an Apostle, bearing all things nobly. This then he expressed shortly by a single word; but upon the miracles, which were not of his own achieving, he employs more. For consider how many prisons, how many stripes, how many dangers, how many conspiracies, how many sleet-showers of temptations, how many civil, how many foreign wars, how many pains, how many attacks he has implied here in that word, *"patience!"*

And by "*signs*" again, how many dead raised, how many blind healed, how many lepers cleansed, how many devils cast out! Hearing these things, let us learn if we happen upon a necessity for such recitals to cut our good deeds short, as he too did.

2. Then lest any should say, Well! If you be both great, and have wrought many things, still you have not wrought such great things, as the Apostles have in the other Churches, he added,

2 Corinthians 12:13

"For what is there wherein you were made inferior to the rest of the Churches?"

'You were partakers,' he says, 'of no less grace than the others.' But perhaps some one will say, 'What can be the reason that he turns the discourse upon the Apostles, abandoning the contest against the false Apostles?' Because he is desirous to erect their spirits yet further, and to show that he is not only superior to them, but not even inferior to the great Apostles. Therefore, surely, when he is speaking of those he says, *"I am more;"* but when he compares himself with the Apostles, he considers it a great thing not to be *"behind,"* although he labored more than they. And thence he shows that they insult the Apostles, in holding him who is their equal second to these men.

"Except it be that I myself was not a burden to you?" Again he has pronounced their rebuke with great severity. And what follows is of yet more odious import.

"Forgive me this wrong." Still, nevertheless, this severity contains both words of love and a commendation of themselves; if, that is, they consider it a wrong done to them, that the Apostle did not consent to receive anything from them, nor relied on them enough to be supported by them. 'If,' says he, 'ye blame me for this:' he did not say, 'You blame me wrongly,' but with great sweetness, 'I ask your pardon, forgive me this fault.' And observe his prudence. For because the mooted this continually tended to bring disgrace upon them, he continually softens it down; saying above, for instance, *"As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting shall not be stopped in me;"* [2 Corinthians 11:10] then again, *"Because I love you not? God*

knows.....But that I may cut off occasion from them that desire occasion, and that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we." [Chap. 11:11, 12] And in the former Epistle *"What is my reward then?"* Verily, *"that when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel without charge."* [1 Corinthians 9:18] And here; *"Forgive me this wrong."* For every where he avoids showing that it is on account of their weakness he takes not [from them]; and here not to wound them. And therefore here he thus expresses himself; 'If you think this to be an offense, I ask forgiveness.' Now he spoke thus, at once to wound and to heal. For do not say this, I pray you; 'If you mean to wound, why excuse it? But if you excuse it, why wound?' For this is wisdom's part, at once to lance, and to bind up the sore. Then that he may not seem, as he also said before, to be continually harping upon this for the sake of receiving from them, he remedies this [suspicion], even in his former Epistle, saying, *"But I write not these things that it may be so done in my case; for it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void;"* [1 Corinthians 9:15] but here with more sweetness and gentleness. How, and in what manner?

2 Corinthians 12:14

"Behold this is the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."

What he says is this; 'It is not because I do not receive of you that I do not come to you; nay, I have already come twice; and I am prepared to come this third time, *"and I will not be a burden to you."*' And the reason is a noble one. For he did not say, 'because you are mean,' 'because you are hurt at it,' 'because, you are weak:' but what? *"For I seek not yours, but you."* 'I seek greater things; souls instead of goods; instead of gold, salvation.' Then because there still hung about the matter some suspicion, as if he were displeased at them; he therefore even states an argument. For since it was likely they would say, 'Can you not have both us and ours?' he adds with much grace this excuse for them, saying, *"For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children;"* instead of teachers and disciples, employing the term parents and children, and showing that he does as a matter of duty what was not of duty. For Christ did not so command, but he says this to spare them; and therefore he adds also something further. For he did not only say that *"the children ought not to lay up,"* but also that the parents ought to. Therefore since it is meet to give,

2 Corinthians 12:15

"I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls."

'For the law of nature indeed has commanded the parents to lay up for the children; but I do not do this only, but I give myself also besides.' And this lavishness of his, the not only not receiving, but giving also besides, is not in common sort but accompanied with great liberality, and out of his own want; for the words, *"I will be spent,"* are of one who would imply this. 'For should it be necessary to spend my very flesh, I will not spare it for your salvation.' And that which follows contains at once accusation and love, *"though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."* 'And I do this,' he says, 'for the sake of those who are beloved by me, yet love me not equally.' Observe then, now, how many steps there are in this matter. He had a right to receive, but he did not receive; here is good work the first: and this, though in want; [good work] the second; and though preaching to them, the third; he gives besides, the fourth; and not merely gives, but lavishly too, the fifth; not money only, but himself, the sixth; for those who loved him not greatly, the seventh; and for those whom he greatly loved, the eighth.

3. Let us then also emulate this man! For it is a serious charge, the not loving even; but becomes more serious, when although one is loved he loves not. For if he that loves one that loves him be no better than the publicans; [Matthew 5:46] he that does not so much as this ranks with the beasts; yea rather, is even below them. What do you say, O man? Lovest thou not him that loves you? What then do you live for? Wherein will you be of use hereafter? In what sort of matters? In public? In private? By no means; for nothing is more useless than a man that knows not to love. This

law even robbers have oftentimes respected, and murderers, and housebreakers; and having only taken salt with one, have been made his friends, letting the board change their disposition, and thou that sharest not salt only, but words and deeds, and comings in and goings out, with him, do you not love? Nay: those that live impurely lavish even whole estates on their strumpets; and thou who hast a worthy love, are you so cold, and weak, and unmanly, as not to be willing to love, even when it costs you nothing? 'And who,' one asks, 'would be so vile, who such a wild beast, as to turn away from and to hate him that loves him?' Thou dost well indeed to disbelieve it, because of the unnaturalness of the thing; but if I shall show that there are many such persons, how shall we then bear the shame? For when you speak ill of him whom you love, when you hear another speak ill of him and you defend him not, when you grudge that he should be well accounted of, what sort of affection is this? And yet it is not sufficient proof of love, not grudging, nor yet again not being at enmity or war with, but only supporting and advancing him that loves you: but when a man does and says everything to pull down his neighbor even, what can be more wretched than such a spirit? Yesterday and the day before his friend, you both conversed and ate with him: then because all at once you saw your own member highly thought of, casting off the mask of friendship, you put on that of enmity, or rather of madness. For glaring madness it is, to be annoyed at the goodness of neighbors; for this is the act of mad and rabid dogs. For like them, these also fly at all men's faces, exasperated with envy. Better to have a serpent twining about one's entrails than envy crawling in us. For that it is often possible to vomit up by means of medicines, or by food to quiet: but envy twines not in entrails but harbors in the bosom of the soul, and is a passion hard to be effaced. And indeed if such a serpent were within one, it would not touch men's bodies so long as it had a supply of

food; but envy, even though thou spread for it ever so endless a banquet, devours the soul itself, gnawing on every side, tearing, tugging, and it is not possible to find any palliative whereby to make it quit its madness, save one only, the adversity of the prosperous; so is it appeased, nay rather, not so even. For even should this man suffer adversity, yet still he sees some other prosperous, and is possessed by the same pangs, and everywhere are wounds, everywhere blows. For it is not possible to live in the world and not see persons well reputed of. And such is the extravagance of this distemper, that even if one should shut its victim up at home, he envies the men of old who are dead.

Now, that men of the world should feel in this way, is indeed a grievous thing, yet it is not so very dreadful; but that those who are freed from the turmoils of busy life should be possessed by this distemper,— this is most grievous of all. And I could have wished indeed to be silent: and if silence took away too the disgrace of those doings, it were a gain to say nothing: if however, though I should hold my peace the doings will cry out more loudly than my tongue, no harm will accrue from my words, because of their parading these evils before us, but possibly some gain and advantage. For this distemper has infected even the Church, it has turned everything topsy-turvy, and dissevered the connection of the body, and we stand opposed to each other, and envy supplies us arms. Therefore great is the disruption. For if when all build up, it is a great thing if our disciples stand; when all at once are pulling down, what will the end be?

4. What doest thou, O man? You think to pull down your neighbor's; but before his you pull down your own. Do you see not them that are gardeners, that are husbandmen, how they all concur in one object? One has dug the soil, another planted, a third carefully covered the roots, another waters what is planted, another hedges it round and fortifies it, another

drives off the cattle; and all look to one end, the safety of the plant. Here, however, it is not so: but I plant indeed myself, and another shakes and disturbs [the plant.] At least, allow it to get nicely fixed, that it may be strong enough to resist the assault. Thou destroyest not my work, but abandonest your own. I planted, you ought to have watered. If then thou shake it, you have torn it up by the roots, and hast not wherein to display your watering. But you see the planter highly esteemed. Fear not: neither am I anything, nor thou. *"For neither is he that plants nor he that waters any thing;"* [1 Corinthians 3:7] one's is the work, God's. So it is with Him you fight and warrest, in plucking up what is planted.

Let us then at length come to our sober senses again, let us watch. For I fear not so much the battle without, as the fight within; for the root also, when it is well fitted into the ground, will suffer no damage from the winds; but if it be itself shaken, a worm gnawing through it from within, the tree will fall, even though none molest it. How long gnaw we the root of the Church like worms? For of earth such imaginings are begotten also, or rather not of earth, but of dung, having corruption for their mother; and they cease not from the detestable flattery that is from women. Let us at length be generous men, let us be champions of philosophy, let us drive back the violent career of these evils. For I behold the mass of the Church prostrate now, as though it were a corpse. And as in a body newly dead, one may see eyes and hands and feet and neck and head, and yet no one limb performing its proper office; so, truly, here also, all who are here are of the faithful, but their faith is not active; for we have quenched its warmth and made the body of Christ a corpse. Now if this sounds awful when said, it is much more awful when it appears in actions. For we have indeed the name of brothers, but do the deeds of foes; and while all are called members, we are divided against each other like wild beasts. I have said this not from a desire

to parade our condition, but to shame you and make you desist. Such and such a man goes into a house; honor is paid to him; you ought to give God thanks because your member is honored and God is glorified; but you do the contrary: you speak evil of him to the man that honored him, so that you trip up the heels of both, and, besides, disgracest yourself. And wherefore, wretched and miserable one? Have you heard your brother praised, either among men or women? Add to his praises, for so you shall praise yourself also. But if you overthrow the praise, first, you have spoken evil of yourself, having so acquired an ill character, and you have raised him the higher. When you hear one praised, become thou a partner in what is said; if not in your life and virtue, yet still in rejoicing over his excellencies. Hath such an one praised? Do thou too admire: so shall he praise you also as good and candid. Fear not, as though you were ruining your own interest by your praises of another: for this is [rather] the result of accusation of him. For mankind is of a contentious spirit; and when it sees you speaking ill of any, it heaps on its praises, wishing to mortify by so doing; and reprobates those that are accusers, both in its own mind and to others. Do you see what disgrace we are the causes of to ourselves? How we destroy and rend the flock? Let us at length be members (of one another), let us become one body. And let him that is praised repudiate the praises, and transfer the encomium to his brother; and let him that hears another praised, feel pleasure to himself. If we thus come together ourselves, we shall also draw unto ourselves the Head; but if we live parted from each other, we shall also put from us the aid which comes from thence; and when that is put aside, the body will receive great damage, not being bound together from above. That this then may not happen, let us, banishing ill will and envy, and despising what the many may think of us, embrace love and concord. For thus we shall obtain both the present good things and those to come;

whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and forever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 28 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 12:16-18

2 Corinthians 12:16-18

But be it so, I myself did not burden you: but being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I take advantage of you by any one of them whom I have sent unto you? I exhorted Titus, and with him I sent the brother. Did Titus take any advantage of you? Walked we not by the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?

Paul has spoken these words very obscurely, but not without a meaning or purpose. For seeing he was speaking about money, and his defence on that score, it is reasonable that what he says must be wrapt in obscureness. What then is the meaning of what he says? He had said, 'I received not, nay I am ready even to give besides, and to spend;' and much discourse is made on this subject both in the former Epistle and in this. Now he says something else, introducing the subject in the form of an objection and meeting it by anticipation. What he says is something like this; 'I indeed have not made a gain of you: but perhaps some one has it to say that I did not receive [of you] indeed myself, but, being crafty, I procured those who were sent by me to ask for something of you as for themselves, and through them I myself received, yet keeping myself clear of seeming to receive, by receiving through others. But none can have this to say either; and you are witnesses.' Wherefore also he proceeds by question, saying, "*I exhorted Titus, and with him I sent the brother. Did Titus make a gain of you?*" 'walked he not just as I walked.' That is to say, neither did he receive. Do you see how intense a strictness [is here], in that he not only keeps

himself clear of that receiving, but so modulates those also who are sent by him that he may not give so much as a slight pretence to those who were desirous of attacking him. For this is far greater than that which the Patriarch did. [Genesis 14:24] For he indeed, when he had returned from his victory, and the king would have given him the spoil, refused to accept anything save what the men had eaten; but this man neither himself enjoyed [from them] his necessary food, nor allowed his partners to partake of such: thus abundantly stopping the mouths of the shameless. Wherefore he makes no assertion, nor does he say that they did not receive either; but what was far more than this, he cites the Corinthians themselves as witnesses that they had received nothing, that he may not seem to be witnessing in his own person, but by their verdict; which course we are accustomed to take in matters fully admitted and about which we are confident. 'For tell me,' he says, 'Did any one of those who were sent by us make unfair gain of you?' He did not say, 'Did any one receive anything from you?' but he calls the things 'unfair gain;' attacking them and shaming them exceedingly, and showing that to receive of an unwilling [giver] is 'unfair gain.' And he said not 'did Titus.' but, "*did any?*" 'For you cannot say this either,' he says, 'that such an one certainly did not receive, but another did. No single one of those who came did so.' "*I exhorted Titus.*" This too is severely said. For he did not say, 'I sent Titus,' but, 'I exhorted' him; showing that if he had received even, he would have done so justly; but, nevertheless, even so he remained pure. Wherefore he asks them again, saying, "*Did Titus take any advantage of you? Walked we not by the same spirit?*" What means, "*by the same spirit?*" He ascribes the whole to grace and shows that the whole of this praise is the good result not of our labors, but of the gift of the Spirit and of Grace. For it was a very great instance of grace that although both in want and hunger they would receive nothing for the edification of the

disciples. *"Walked we not in the same steps?"* That is to say, they did not depart the least from this strictness, but preserved the same rule entire.

2 Corinthians 12:19

2. *"Again, think ye that we are excusing ourselves unto you?"*

Do you see how he is continually in fear, lest he should incur the suspicion of flattery? Do you see an Apostle's prudence, how constantly he mentions this? For he said before, *"We commend not ourselves again, but give you occasion to glory;"* [2 Corinthians 5:12] and in the commencement of the Epistle, *"Do we need letters of commendation?"* [2 Corinthians 3:1]

"But all things are for your edifying." Again he is soothing them. And he does not here either say clearly, 'on this account we receive not, because of your weakness;' but, 'in order that we may edify you;' speaking out indeed more clearly than he did before, and revealing that wherewith he travailed; but yet without severity. For he did not say, 'because of your weakness;' but, 'that you may be edified.'

2 Corinthians 12:20

"For I fear, lest by any means when I come, I should not find you such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as you would not."

He is going to say something great and offensive. And therefore he also inserts this excuse [for it], both by saying, *"All things are for your edifying,"* and by adding, *"I fear,"* softening the harshness of what was presently going to be said. For it was not here out of arrogance nor the authority of a teacher, but out of a father's tender concern, when he is more fearful and trembling than the sinners themselves at that which is likely to reform them. And not even so does he run them down or make an absolute assertion; but says doubtingly, *"lest by any means when I come, I should not find you such as I would."* He did not say, 'not virtuous,' but *"not such as I would,"* everywhere employing the terms of affection. And the words, *"I should find,"* are of one who would express what is out of natural expectation, as are also those, *"I shall be found by you."* For the thing is not of deliberate choice, but of a necessity originating with you. Wherefore he says, *"I should be found such as you would not."* He said not here, *"such as I would not,"* but, with more severity, *"such as you wish not."* For it would in that case become his own will, not indeed what he would first have willed, but his will nevertheless. For he might indeed have said again, 'such as I would not,' and so have showed his love: but he wishes not to relax his hearer. Yea rather, his words would in that case have been even harsher; but now he has at once dealt them a smarter blow and showed himself more gentle. For this is the characteristic of his wisdom; cutting more deeply, to strike more gently. Then, because he had spoken obscurely, he unveils his meaning, saying,

"Lest there be strife, jealousy, wraths, backbitings, whisperings, swellings."

And what he might well put first, that he puts last: for they were very proud against him. Therefore, that he may not seem principally to be seeking his own, he first mentions what was common. For all these things were gendered of envy, their slanderings, accusations, dissensions. For just like some evil root, envy produced wrath, accusation, pride, and all those other evils, and by them was increased further,

2 Corinthians 12:21

And *"lest when I come again, my God should humble me among you."*

And the word *"again,"* too, is as smiting them. For he means, 'What happened before is enough;' as he said also in the beginning [of the Epistle], *"to spare you, I came not as yet to Corinth."* [Chap. 1:18, 23] Do you see how he shows both indignation and tender affection? But what means, *"will humble me?"* And yet this is glorious rather, to accuse, to take vengeance, to call to account, to be seated in the place of judge; howbeit he calls it a humbling. So far was he from being ashamed of that [cause of] humbling, because, *"his bodily presence was weak, and his speech of no account,"* that he wished to be even for ever in that case, and deprecated the contrary. And he says this more clearly as he proceeds; and he counts this to be especially humbling, to be involved in such a necessity as the present, of punishing and taking vengeance. And wherefore did he not say, 'lest when I come I shall be humbled,' but, *"lest when I come my God will humble me."*

'Because had it not been for His sake, I should have paid no attention nor been anxious. For it is not as possessing authority and for my own pleasure, that I demand satisfaction, but because of His commandment.' Now above, indeed, he expressed himself thus, *"I shall be found;"* here, however, he relaxes and adopts milder and gentler language, saying,

"I shall mourn for many of them who have sinned." Not simply, *"who have sinned,"* but,

"Who have not repented." And he said not, 'all,' but *"many;"* nor made it clear who these were either, thereby making the return unto repentance easy to them; and to make it plain that a repentance is able to right transgressions, he bewails those that repent not, those who are incurably

diseased, those who continue in their wounds. Observe then Apostolic virtue, in that, conscious of no evil in himself, he laments over the evils of others and is humbled for other men's transgressions. For this is the special mark of a teacher, so to sympathize with the calamities of his disciples, and to mourn over the wounds of those who are under him. Then he mentions also the specific sin.

"Of the lasciviousness and uncleanness which they committed." Now in these words he alludes indeed to fornication; but if one carefully examine the subject, every kind of sin can be called by this name. For although the fornicator and adulterer is preeminently styled unclean, yet still the other sins also produce uncleanness in the soul. And therefore it is that Christ also calls the Jews unclean, not charging them with fornication only, but with wickedness of other kinds as well. Wherefore also He says that they made the outside clean, and that *"not the things which enter in defile the man, but those which come out from him;"* [Matthew 15:11] and it is said in another place, *"Every one that is proud in heart is unclean before the Lord."* [Proverbs 16:5. Septuagint]

3. For nothing is purer than virtue, nothing cleaner than vice; for the one is brighter than the sun, the other more stinking than mire. And to this they will themselves bear witness, who are wallowing in that mire and living in that darkness; at any rate, when one prepares them a little to see clearly. For as long as they are by themselves, and inebriate with the passion, just as if living in darkness they lie in unseemly wise to their much infamy, conscious even then where they are, although not fully; but after they have seen any of those who live in virtue reproving them or even showing himself, then they understand their own wretchedness more clearly; and as if a sunbeam had darted upon them, they cover up their own unseemliness and blush before those who know of their doings, yea, though

the one be a slave and the other free, though the one be a king and the other a subject. Thus when Ahab saw Elijah, he was ashamed, even when he had as yet said nothing; standing convicted by the mere sight of him; and when his accuser was silent, he pronounced a judgment condemnatory of himself; uttering the language of such as are caught, and saying, "*You have found me, O mine enemy!*" [1 Kings 21:20] Thus Elijah himself conversed with that tyrant then with great boldness. Thus Herod, unable to bear the shame of those reproofs, (which [shame] the sound of the prophet's tongue with mighty and transparent clearness exposed more evidently,) cast John into the prison: like one who was naked and attempting to put out the light, that he might be in the dark again; or rather he himself dared not put it out, but, as it were, placed it in the house under a bushel; and that wretched and miserable woman compelled it to be done. But not even so could they cover the reproof, nay, they lit it up the more. For both they that asked, Wherefore does John dwell in prison? Learned the reason, and all they that since have dwelt on land or sea, who then lived, or now live, and who shall be hereafter, both have known and shall know clearly these wicked tragedies, both that of their lewdness and that of their bloodguiltiness, and no time shall be able to wipe out the remembrance of them.

So great a thing is virtue: so immortal is its memory, so completely even by words only does it strike down its adversaries. For wherefore did he cast him into the prison? Wherefore did he not despise him? Was he going to drag him before the judgment-seat? Did he demand vengeance upon him for his adultery? Was not what he said then simply a reproof? Why then does he fear and tremble? Was it not words and talk merely? But they stung him more than deeds. He led him not to any judgment-seat, but he dragged him before that other tribunal of conscience; and he sets as judges upon him all who freely gave their verdicts in their thought.

Therefore the tyrant trembled, unable to endure the lustre of virtue. Do you see how great a thing is philosophy? It made a prisoner more lustrous than a king, and the latter is afraid and trembles before him. He indeed only put him in bonds; but that polluted woman rushed on to his slaughter also, although the rebuke was leveled rather against him, [than herself.] For he did not then meet "*her*" and say, Why do you cohabit with the king? Not that she was guiltless, (how should she be so?) but he wished by that other means to put all to rights. Wherefore he blamed the king, and yet not him with violence of manner. For he did not say, O polluted and all-polluted and lawless and profane one, you have trodden under foot the law of God, you have despised the commandments, you have made your might law. None of these things; but even in his rebukings great was the gentleness of the man, great his meekness. For, "*It is not lawful for you,*" he says, "*to have your brother Philip's wife.*" The words are those of one who teaches rather than reproves, instructs rather than chastens, who composes to order rather than exposes, who amends rather than tramples on him. But, as I said, the light is hateful to the thief, and the mere sight of the just man is odious to sinners; "*for he is grievous unto us even to behold.*" [Wisdom 2:15] For they cannot bear his radiance, even as diseased eyes cannot bear the sun's. But to many of the wicked he is grievous not to behold only, but even to hear of. And therefore that polluted and all-polluted woman, the procuress of her girl, yea rather her murderess, although she had never seen him nor heard his voice, rushed on to his slaughter; and prepares her whom she brought up in lasciviousness to proceed also to murder, so extravagantly did she fear him.

4. And what says she? "*Give me here in a charger the head of John the Baptist.*" [Matthew 14:8] Whither do you rush over precipices, wretched and miserable one? What? Is the accuser before you? Is he in sight and troubles you? Others said, "*He is grievous unto us even to behold;*" but to

her, as I said, he was grievous to even hear of. Wherefore she says, "*Give me here in a charger the head of John.*" And yet because of you he inhabits a prison, and is laden with chains, and you are free to wanton over your love and to say, 'So completely have I subdued the king, that though publicly reproached he yielded not, nor desisted from his passion, nor tore asunder his adulterous connection with me, but even put him that reproached him in bonds.' Why are you mad and rabid, when even after that reproof of his sin you retain your paramour? Why do you seek a table of furies, and preparest a banquet of avenging demons? Do you see how nothing-worth, how cowardly, how unmanly, is vice; how when it shall most succeed, it then becomes more feeble? For this woman was not so much disturbed before she had cast John into prison, as she is troubled after he is bound, and she is urgent, saying, "*Give me here in a charger the head of John.*" And wherefore so? 'I fear,' she says, 'lest there be any hushing up of his murder, lest any should rescue him from his peril.' And wherefore do you not require the whole corpse, but the head? 'The tongue,' she says, 'that pained me, that I long to see silent.' But the contrary will happen, as indeed it also has done, thou wretched and miserable one! It will cry louder afterwards, when it is cut out. For then indeed it cried in Judæa only, but now it will reach to the ends of the world; and wheresoever you enter into a church, whether it be among the Moors, or among the Persians, or even unto the British isles themselves, you hear John crying, "*It is not lawful for you to have your brother Phillip's wife.*" But she, unknowing to reason in any such way, urges and presses, and thrusts on the senseless tyrant to the murder, fearing lest he change his mind. But from this too learn thou again the power of virtue. Not even when he was shut up and bound and silent, does she bear the righteous man. Do you see how weak a thing vice is? How unclean? For in the place of meats it brings in a human head upon a

charger. What is more polluted, what more accursed, what more immodest, than that damsel? What a voice she uttered in that theatre of the devil, in that banquet of demons! Do you see this tongue and that; the one bringing healthful medicines, the other one with poison on it, and made the purveyor to a devilish banquet. But wherefore did she not command him to be murdered within there, at the feast, when her pleasure would have been greater? She feared lest if he should come there and be seen, he should change them all by his look, by his boldness. Therefore surely it is that she demands his head, wishing to set up a bright trophy of fornication; and give it to her mother. Do you see the wages of dancing, do you see the spoils of that devilish plot? I mean not the head of John, but her paramour himself. For if one examine it carefully, against the king that trophy was set up, and the victress was vanquished, and the beheaded was crowned, and proclaimed victor, even after his death shaking more vehemently the hearts of the offenders. And that what I have said is no [mere] boast, ask of Herod himself; who, when he heard of the miracles of Christ, said, *"This is John, he is risen from the dead: and therefore do these powers work in him."* [Matthew 14:2] So lively was the fear, so abiding the agony he retained; and none had power to cast down the terror of his conscience, but that incorruptible Judge continued to take him by the throat, and day by day to demand of him satisfaction for the murder. Knowing, then, these things, let us not fear to suffer evil, but to do evil; for that indeed is victory, but this defeat.

Wherefore also Paul said, *"Why not rather take wrong, why not rather be defrauded. Nay, you yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."* For by the suffering evil [come] those crowns, those prizes, that proclamation [of victory]. And this may be seen in all the saints. Since then they all were thus crowned, thus proclaimed, let us too travel this road, and

let us pray indeed that we enter not into temptation; but if it should come, let us make stand with much manliness and display the proper readiness of mind, that we may obtain the good things to come, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 29 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 13:1

This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established.

The wisdom of Paul and his much tender affection, one may observe in many other circumstances, but especially in this, his being so abundant and vehement in his admonitions, but so tardy and procrastinating in his punishments. For he did not chastise them immediately on their sinning, but warned them once and again; and not even so, upon their paying no attention, does he exact punishment, but warns again, saying, *"This is the third time I am coming to you;"* and 'before I come I write again.' Then, that his procrastinating may not produce indifference, see how he corrects this result also, by threatening continually and holding the blow suspended over them, and saying, *"If I come again I will not spare;"* and *"lest when I come again I should mourn for many."* These things, then, he does and speaks, in this too imitating the Lord of all: because that God also threatens indeed continually and warns often, but not often chastises and punishes. And so in truth also does Paul, and therefore he said also before, *"To spare you I came not as yet to Corinth."* What is, *"to spare you?"* Lest finding you to have sinned and to continue unamended, I should visit with chastisement and punishment. And here, *"This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established."* He joins the unwritten to the written, as he has done also in another place, saying, *"He that is joined to an harlot is one body; for the two,"* says He, *"shall become one flesh."* [1 Corinthians 6:16] Howbeit, this was spoken of lawful

marriage; but he diverted its application unto this thing conveniently, so as to terrify them the more. And so he does here also, setting his comings and his warnings in the place of witnesses. And what he says is this: 'I spoke once and again when I was with you; I speak also now by letter. And if indeed ye attend to me, what I desired is accomplished; but if you pay no attention, it is necessary henceforth to stop speaking, and to inflict the punishment.' Wherefore he says,

2 Corinthians 13:2

"I have said beforehand, and I do say beforehand when I was present the second time; so now being absent I write to them that sinned heretofore and to all the rest, that if I come again, I will not spare."

'For if at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word shall be established, and I have come twice and spoken, and speak now also by this Epistle; it follows, I must after this keep my word. For think not, I pray you, that my writing is of less account than my coming; for as I spoke when present, so now I write also when absent.' Do you see his fraternal solicitude? Do you see forethought becoming a teacher? He neither kept silence nor punished, but he both foretells often, and continues ever threatening, and puts off the punishment, and if they should continue unamended, then he threatens to bring it to the proof. 'But what did you tell them before when present, and when absent writest?' *"That if I come again, I will not spare."* Having showed before that he is unable to do this unless he is compelled, and having called the thing a mourning, and a humbling; (for he says, lest my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for them that have sinned heretofore, and not repented; [2 Corinthians 12:21]) and having made his excuse unto them, namely, that he had told them before, once and twice and thrice, and that he does and contrives all he can so as to hold back the punishment, and by the fear of his words to make them better, he then used this unpleasing and terrifying expression, *"If I come again, I will not spare."* He did not say, 'I will avenge and punish and exact satisfaction:' but again expresses even punishment itself in paternal language; showing his tender affection, and his heart to be grieved along with them; because that he always to *"spare"* them put off.

Then that they may not think now also that there will be again a putting off, and merely a threat in words, therefore he both said before, "*At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established;*" and [now], "*If I come again, I will not spare.*" Now what he means is this: 'I will no longer put off, if (which God forbid) I find you unamended; but will certainly visit it, and make good what I have said.'

2. Then with much anger and vehement indignation against those who make a mock of him as weak, and ridicule his presence, and say, "*his presence is weak, and his speech of no account;*" [2 Corinthians 10:10] aiming his efforts at these men, he says,

2 Corinthians 13:3-4

"Seeing that you seek a proof of Christ that speaks in me."

For he said this, dealing at once a blow at these, and at the same time lashing those also. Now what he means is this; 'Since you are desirous of proving whether Christ dwells in me, and call me to an account, and on this score make a mock of me as mean and despicable, as if I were destitute of that Power; you shall know that we are not destitute, if you give us occasion, which God forbid.' What then? Tell me. Do you therefore punish, because they seek a proof? 'No,' he says; for had he sought this, he would have punished them at the first on their sinning, and would not have put off. But that he does not seek this, he has shown more clearly as he proceeds, saying, *"Now I pray that you do no evil, not that we may appear approved, but that you may be approved, though we be as reprobates."* [2 Corinthians 13:7]

He does not employ those words then as assigning a reason, but rather in indignation, rather as attacking those that despise him. 'For,' he says, 'I have no desire indeed to give you such a proof, but if you yourselves should furnish cause and should choose to challenge me, you shall know by very deeds.' And observe how grievous he makes what he says. For he said not, 'Since ye seek a proof of me,' but *"of Christ that speakest in me, showing that it was against Him they sinned."* And he did not say merely, 'dwelling in me,' but *"speaking in me,"* showing that his words are spiritual. But if he does not display His power nor punish, (for thenceforward the Apostle transferred what he said from himself to Christ, thus making his threat more fearful,) it is not from weakness; for He can do it: but from long suffering. Let none then think His forbearance to be weakness. For why do you

marvel that He does not now proceed against sinners, nor in his forbearance and long suffering exacts satisfaction, seeing that He endured even to be crucified, and though suffering such things punished not? Wherefore also he added,

"Who to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He lives through the Power of God."

These words have much obscurity and give disturbance to the weaker sort. Wherefore it is necessary to unfold them more clearly, and to explain the signification of the expression as to which the obscurity exists, that no one may be offended, even of the simpler sort. What then, at all, is that which is here said, and what the term "*weakness*" designates, and in what signification it is used, it is necessary to learn. For the term is indeed one, but it has many meanings. For bodily sickness is termed 'weakness:' whence it is even said in the Gospel, "*Behold, he whom You love is weak,*" [John 11:3-4] concerning Lazarus; and He Himself said, "*This weakness is not unto death;*" and Paul, speaking of Epaphras, "*For indeed he was weak near unto death, but God had mercy on him;*" [Philippians 2:57] and of Timothy, "*Use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your often weaknesses.*" [1 Timothy 5:23] For all these denote bodily sickness. Again, the not being established firmly in the faith is called 'weakness;' the not being perfect and complete. And denoting this Paul said, "*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye but not to doubtful disputations;*" [Romans 14:1-2] and again, "*One believes that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eats herbs,*" denoting him who is weak in the faith. Here then are two significations of the term 'weakness;' there is yet a third thing which is called 'weakness.' What then is this? Persecutions, plottings, insults, trials, assaults. And denoting this Paul said, "*For this thing I besought the Lord thrice. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for My power is*

made perfect in weakness." [Chap. 12:8, 9] What is "*in weakness*?" In persecutions, in dangers, in trials, in plottings, in deaths. And denoting this he said, Wherefore, I take pleasure in weakness. Then showing what kind of weakness he means, he spoke not of fever, nor of doubt about the faith; but what? "*in injuries, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then am I strong.*" [2 Corinthians 12:10] That is to say 'when I am persecuted, when I am driven up and down, when I am plotted against, then am I strong, then the rather I prevail over, and get the better of them that plot against me, because that grace rests upon me, more largely. It is then in this third sense that Paul uses "*weakness*;" and this is what he means by it; aiming again, as I said also before, at that point, his seeming to them to be mean and contemptible. For indeed he had no desire to boast, nor to seem to be what he really was, nor yet to display the power which he possessed of punishing and revenging; whence also he was accounted to be mean. When then as so accounting they were going on in great indifference and insensibility, and repented not of their sins, he seizes a favorable opportunity, discourses with much vigor upon these points also, and shows that it was not from weakness he did nothing, but from long-suffering.

3. Then, as I said, by transferring the argument from himself to Christ, he enhances their fear, he increases his threat. And what he says is this; 'for even supposing I should do something and chastise and take vengeance on the guilty ones, is it I that chastise and take vengeance? It is He that dwells in me, Christ Himself. But if you do not believe this, but are desirous of receiving a proof by deeds of Him that dwells in me, you shall know presently; "*For he is not weak to you-ward, but is even powerful.*" And wherefore added he "*to you-ward*," seeing He is mighty everywhere? For should He be minded to punish unbelievers, He is able; or demons, or

anything whatsoever. What then is the import of the addition? The expression is either as shaming them exceedingly by remembrance of the proofs they have already received; or else as declaring this, that meanwhile He shows His power in you who ought to be corrected. As he said also in another place, *"For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?"* [1 Corinthians 5:12] 'For those that are without,' he says, 'He will then call to account in the day of judgment, but you even now, so as to rescue you from that punishment.' But nevertheless even this instance of his solicitude, although arising from tender affection, observe how he combines with fear and much anger, saying, *"Who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you."*

2 Corinthians 13:4

"For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He lives through the Power of God."

What is, *"though He was crucified through weakness?"* 'For though He chose,' he says, 'to endure a thing which seems to carry a notion of weakness, still this in no way breaks in upon His Power. That still remains invincible, and that thing which seems to be of weakness, has nothing harmed it, nay this very thing itself shows His Power most of all, in that He endured even such a thing, and yet His Power was not mutilated.' Let not then the expression *"weakness"* disturb you; for elsewhere also he says, *"The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men;"* [1 Corinthians 1:25] although in God is nothing either foolish or weak: but he called the Cross so, as setting forth the conception of the unbelieving regarding it. Hear him, at least, interpreting himself. *"For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto*

us which are saved it is the power of God." [1 Corinthians 1:18] And again; *"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."* (Ib. 23, 24.) And again; *"But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him."* [1 Corinthians 2:14] Observe, how in every place he expresses the conception of the unbelieving, who look upon the Cross as foolishness and weakness. And so, in truth, here also he means not *"weakness"* really such, but what was suspected to be such with the unbelieving. He does not then say this, that because He was weak He was crucified. Away with the thought! For that He had it in His power not to have been crucified He showed throughout; when He now cast men down prostrate, now turned back the beams of the sun, and withered a fig-tree, and blinded their eyes that came against Him, and wrought ten thousand other things. What then is this which he says, *"through weakness!"* That even although He was crucified after enduring peril and treachery, (for we have showed that peril and treachery are called weakness,) yet still He was nothing harmed thereby. And he said this to draw the example unto his own case. For since the Corinthians beheld them persecuted, driven about, despised, and not avenging nor visiting it, in order to teach them that neither do they so suffer from want of power, nor from being unable to visit it, he leads on the argument up to The Master, because 'He too,' says he, 'was crucified, was bound, suffered ten thousand things, and He visited them not, but continued to endure things which appeared to argue weakness, and in this way displaying His Power, in that although He punishes not nor requites, He is not injured any thing at all. For instance, the Cross did not cut asunder His life, nor yet impeded His resurrection, but He both rose again and lives.' And when you hear of the Cross and of life, expect to find

the doctrine concerning the Incarnation, for all that is said here has reference to that. And if he says *"though the Power of God,"* it is not as though He were Himself void of strength to quicken His flesh; but it was indifferent with him to mention either Father or Son. For when he said, *"the Power of God,"* he said by His own Power. For that both He Himself raised it up and sustains it, hear Him saying, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* [John 2:19] But if that which is His, this he says to be the Father's, be not disturbed; *"For,"* He says, *"all My Father's things are Mine."* [John 16:15] And again, *"All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine."* [John 17:10] 'As then He that was crucified was nothing harmed,' he says, 'so neither are we when persecuted and warred against;' wherefore also he adds,

"For even we also if we are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him through the Power of God."

What is the meaning of *"we are weak in Him?"* We are persecuted, are driven here and there, suffer extremity. But what is *"with Him?"* 'Because of the preaching,' he says, 'and our faith in Him. But if for His sake we undergo what is sad and disagreeable, it is quite plain that we shall what is pleasant also:' and so he added, *"but we are saved with Him by the Power of God."*

2 Corinthians 13:5-6

4. *"Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves. Do you not know as to your own selves, that Christ is in you, unless indeed ye be reprobate? But I hope that you shall know that we are not reprobate."*

For since by what he has said he has shown that even if he does not punish, it is not because he has not Christ in himself, but because he intimates His long-suffering, Who was crucified and yet avenged not Himself; he again, in another manner, produces the same effect, and still more irrefragably, establishing his argument by the disciples. 'For why speak I of myself,' he says 'the teacher, who have so much care upon me and am entrusted with the whole world and have done such great miracles. For if you will but examine yourselves who are in the rank of disciples, you will see that Christ is in you also. But if in you, then much more in your teacher. For if you have faith, Christ is in you also.' For they who then believed wrought miracles. Wherefore also he added, *"Try your own selves, prove your own selves, whether ye be in the faith. Do you not know as to your own selves, unless indeed that Christ is in you, you be reprobate?"* 'But if in you, much more in your teacher?' He seems to me here to speak of the *"faith"* which relates to miracles. 'For if you have faith,' he says, *"Christ is in you, except you have become reprobates."* Do you see how again he terrifies them, and shows even to superfluity that Christ is with Him. For he seems to me to be here alluding to them, even as to their lives. For since faith is not enough [by itself] to draw down the energy of the Spirit, and he had said that *"if you are in the faith"* you have Christ in you,' and it happened that many who had faith were destitute of that energy; in order to

solve the difficulty, he says, "*except ye be reprobate,*" except [that is] you are corrupt in life. "*But I hope that you shall know that we are not reprobate.*" What followed naturally was to have said, "*but if you have become reprobate, yet we have not.*" He does not, however, say so, for fear of wounding them, but he hints it in an obscure manner, without either making the assertion thus, 'you are reprobate,' or proceeding by question and saying, 'But if you are reprobate,' but leaving out even this way of putting it by question, he indicates it obscurely by adding, "*But I hope that you shall know that we are not reprobate.*" Here also again, great is the threat, great the alarm. 'For since you desire,' he says, 'in this way, by your own punishment to receive the proof, we shall have no difficulty in giving you that demonstration.' But he does not indeed so express himself, but with more weight and threatening. "*But I hope that you shall know that we are not reprobate.*" 'For you ought indeed,' he says, 'to have known even without this what we are, and that we have Christ speaking and working in us; but since you desire to receive the proof of it by deeds also, you shall know that we are not reprobate.' Then when he has held the threat suspended over their heads, and brought the punishment now up to their doors, and has set them a trembling, and made them look for vengeance; see how again he sweetens down his words and soothes their fear, and shows his unambitious temper, his tender solicitude towards his disciples, his high-principledness of purpose, his loftiness and freedom from vain-glory. For he exhibits all these qualities in what he adds, saying,

2 Corinthians 13:7-9

"Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we may appear approved, but that you may do that which is honorable, though we be as reprobate. For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth. For we rejoice when we are weak, and you are strong. For this also we pray for even your perfecting."

5. What can be equal to this soul? He was despised, he was spit upon, he was ridiculed, he was mocked, as mean, as contemptible, as a braggart, as boastful in his words but in his deeds unable to make even a little show; and although seeing so great a necessity for showing his own power, he not only puts off, not only shrinks back, but even prays that he may not fall into such a position. For he says, *"I pray that you do no evil, not that we may appear approved, but that you may do that which is honorable, though we be as reprobate."* What is it he says? 'I entreat God. I beseech Him,' he says, 'that I may find no one unreformed, may find no one' that has not repented? Yea, rather, not this alone, but that none may have sinned at all. For,' he says, 'that you have done no [evil], but if you have perchance sinned, then that you may have changed your conduct, and been beforehand with me in reforming, and arresting all wrath. For this is not what I am eager about, that we should be approved in this way, but clean the contrary, that we should not appear approved. For if you should continue,' he says, 'sinning and not repenting, it will be necessary for us to chastise, to punish, to maim your bodies; (as happened in the case of Sapphira and of Magus;) and we have given proof of our power. But we pray not for this, but the contrary, that we may not be shown to be approved in this way, that we may not in this way exhibit the proof of the power which is in us, by chastising you

and punishing you as sinning and as incurably diseased, but what? *"That ye should do that which is honorable,"* we pray for this, that you should ever live in virtue, ever in amendment; *"and we should be as reprobate,"* not displaying our power of punishing.' And he said not, *"reprobate"* for he would not *"be"* reprobate, even though he did not punish, nay rather for this very reason he would be *"approved;"* 'but even if some suspect us,' he says, 'on account of our not displaying our power, to be contemptible and cast away, we care nothing for this. Better we should be so deemed of by those, than display the power which God has given to us in those stripes, and in that unreformedness of heart.'

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." For that he may not seem [merely] to be gratifying them, (for this is what one who was void of vain-glory might do,) but to be doing what the nature of the thing demanded, he added this, *"for we can do nothing against the truth."* 'For if we find you,' he says, 'in good repute, having driven away your sins by repentance and having boldness towards God; we shall not be able thereafter, were we never so willing, to punish you, but should we attempt it even, God will not work with us. For to this end gave He us our power that the judgment we give should be true and righteous, not contrary to the truth.' Do you see how in every way he can, he makes what he says void of offensiveness, and softens the harshness of his menace? Moreover as he has eagerly endeavored this, so is he desirous also to show that his mind was quite joined to them; wherefore also he added, *"For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong, and this also we pray for even your perfecting."* 'For most certainly,' he says, 'we cannot do any thing against the truth, that is, punish you if you are well pleasing [to God]; besides, because we cannot, we therefore do not wish it, and even desire the contrary. Nay, we are particularly glad of this very thing, when we find you giving us no

occasion to show that power of ours for punishment. For even if the doing of such things shows men glorious and approved and strong; still we desire the contrary, that you should be approved and unblamable, and that we should never at any time reap the glory thence arising.' Wherefore he says, *"For we are glad when we are weak."* What is, *"are weak?"* 'When we may be thought weak.' Not when we are weak, but when we are thought weak; for they were thought so by their enemies, because they displayed not their power of punishing. 'But still we are glad, when your behavior is of such a sort as to give us no pretence for punishing you. And it is a pleasure to us to be in this way considered weak, so that only ye be blameless;' wherefore he adds, *"and you are strong,"* that is, 'are approved, are virtuous. And we do not only wish for this, but we pray for this, that you may be blameless, perfect, and afford us no handle.'

6. This is paternal affection, to prefer the salvation of the disciples before his own good name. This is the part of a soul free from vainglory; this best releases from the bonds of the body and makes one to rise aloft from earth to heaven, the being pure from vain-glory; just as therefore the contrary leads unto many sins. For it is impossible that one who is not pure from vain-glory, should be lofty and great and noble; but he must needs grovel on the ground, and do much damage, while the slave of a polluted mistress, more cruel than any barbarian. For what can be fiercer than she who, when most courted, is then most savage? Even wild beasts are not this, but are tamed by much attention. But vain-glory is quite the contrary, by being contemned she is made tame, by being honored she is made savage and is armed against her honorer. The Jews honored her and were punished with exceeding severity; the disciples slighted her and were crowned. And why speak I of punishment and crowns? For to this very point of being seen to be glorious, it contributes more than any thing, to spit

upon vainglory. And you shall see even in this world that they who honor it are damaged, while those who slight it are benefited. For the disciples who slighted it, (for there is no obstacle to our using the same example again,) and preferred the things of God, outshine the sun, having gained themselves an immortal memory even after their death; while the Jews who crouched to it have become cityless, heartless, degraded, fugitives, exiles, mean, contemptible. Do thou, therefore, if you desire to receive glory, repel glory; but if you pursue glory, you shall miss glory. And, if you will, let us also try this doctrine in worldly matters. For whom do we make sport of in our jests? Is it not of those whose minds are set upon it? Certainly then, these men are the most entirely destitute of it, having countless accusers and being slighted by all. And whom do we admire, tell me; is it not those who despise it? Certainly then, these are they that are glorified. For as he is rich, not who is in need of many things, but who is in need of nothing; so he is glorious, not who loves glory, but who despises it; for this glory is but a shadow of glory. No one having seen a loaf painted, though he should be pressed with hunger ever so much, will attack the picture. Neither then do thou pursue these shadows, for this is a shadow of glory, not glory. And that you may know that this is the manner of it and that it is a shadow, consider this that it must be so, when the thing has a bad name among men, when all consider it a thing to be avoided, they even who desire it; and when he who has it and he covets it are ashamed to be called after it. 'Whence then is this desire,' says one, 'and how is the passion engendered?' By littleness of soul, (for one ought not only to accuse it, but also to correct it,) by an imperfect mind, by a childish judgment. Let us then cease to be children, and let us become men: and let us every where pursue the reality, not the shadows, both in wealth, and in pleasure, and in luxury, and in glory, and in power; and this disease will cease, and many others also. For to pursue shadows is

a madman's part. Wherefore also Paul said, *"Awake up righteously and sin not."* [1 Corinthians 15:34] For there is yet another madness, sorer than that caused by devils, than that from frenzy. For that admits of forgiveness, but this is destitute of excuse, seeing the soul itself is corrupted and its right judgment lost; and that of frenzy indeed is an affection of the body, but this madness has its seat in the artificer mind. As then of fevers those are sorer, yea incurable, which seize upon firm bodies and lurk in the recesses of the nerves and are hidden away in the veins, so truly is this madness also, seeing it lurks in the recesses of the mind itself, perverting and destroying it. For how is it not clear and evident madness, yea, a distemper sorer than any madness, to despise the things which abide forever, and to cling with great eagerness to those which perish? For, tell me, if one were to chase the wind or try to hold it, should we not say that he was mad? And what? If one should grasp a shadow and neglect the reality; if one should hate his own wife and embrace her shadow; or loathe his son and again love his shadow, would you seek any other clearer sign in proof of madness? Such are they also who greedily follow the present things. For they are all shadow, yea, whether thou mention glory, or power, or good report, or wealth, or luxury, or any other thing of this life. And therefore truly it is that the prophet said, *"Surely man walks in a shadow, yea, he disquiets himself in vain;"* [Psalm 39:6] and again, *"Our days decline like a shadow."* [Psalm 102:11] And in another place, he calls human things smoke and the flower of grass. But it is not only his good things which are shadow, but his evils also, whether it be death thou mention, or poverty, or disease, or any other thing. What then are those things which abide, both good and evil? The eternal kingdom and the everlasting hell. For *"neither shall the worm die, nor shall the fire be quenched:"* [Mark 9:44] and *"these shall rise again to everlasting life: and these to everlasting punishment."* [Mark 25:46] That then we may escape

the one and enjoy the other, letting go the shadow, let us cling to the real things with all earnestness, for so shall we obtain the kingdom of heaven, which may we all obtain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 30 on Second Corinthians

2 Corinthians 13:10

For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down.

He was sensible he had spoken more vehemently than his wont, and especially towards the end of the Epistle. For he said before, *"Now I Paul myself entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ; I who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage towards you: Yea, I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present, with the confidence wherewith I count to be bold against some which count of us as if we walked according to the flesh;"* [Chap. 10:1, 2] and, *"being in readiness to avenge all disobedience when your obedience shall be fulfilled:"* [2 Corinthians 10:6] and, *"I fear lest when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as you would not;"* [2 Corinthians 12:20] and again, *"lest when I come my God should humble me before you, and that I should mourn many of them which have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the lasciviousness and uncleanness which they committed:"* [2 Corinthians 12:21] and afterwards, *"I told you before and foretell you, as if I were present the second time, and being absent now I write, that, if I come again, I will not spare; seeing that you seek a proof of Christ, that speaks in me."* [Chap. 13:2, 3] Since then he had said these things and more besides, terrifying, shaming, reproaching, lashing them, he says, in excuse for all, *"For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply."* For I am desirous

the sharpness should lie in my letters and not in my deeds. I wish my threats to be vehement, that they may continue threats and never go forth into action. Again even in this his apology he makes what he says more terrible, showing that it is not himself who is to punish, but God; for he added, *"according to the authority which the Lord gave me;"* and again, to show that he desires not to use his power to their punishment, he added, *"not for casting down, but for building up."* And he hinted indeed this now, as I said, but he left it to them to draw the conclusion that if they should continue unamended, even this again is building up, to punish those that are of such a mind. For so it is, and he knew it and showed it by his deeds.

2 Corinthians 13:11

"For the rest, brethren, rejoice, be perfected, be comforted, be of the same mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

What means, *"for the rest, brethren, rejoice?"* You have pained, terrified, thrown them into an agony, made them to tremble and fear, and how do you bid them rejoice? 'Why, for this very reason I bid them rejoice. For,' he says, 'if what is your part follow' upon mine, there will be nothing to prevent that joy. For all my part has been done; I have suffered long, I have delayed, I have forborne to cut off, I have besought, I have advised, I have alarmed, I have threatened, so as by every means to gather you in unto the fruit of repentance. And now it behooves that your part be done, and so your joy will be unfading.'

"Be perfected." What is, *"be perfected?"* 'Be complete, fill up what is deficient.'

"Be comforted." For, since their trials were numerous, and their perils great, he says, *"be comforted,"* both by one another, and by us, and by your change unto the better. For if you should have joy of conscience and become complete, nothing is wanting unto your cheerfulness and comfort. For nothing does so produce comfort as a pure conscience, yea, though innumerable trials surround.'

"Be of the same mind, live in peace." The request he made in the former Epistle also, at the opening. For it is possible to be of one mind, and yet not to live in peace, [for instance], when people agree in doctrine, but in their dealings with each other are at variance. But Paul requires both.

"And the God of love and peace shall be with you." For truly he not only recommends and advises, but also prays. For either he prays for this,

or else foretells what shall happen; or rather, both. 'For if you do these things,' he says, 'for instance, if you be "*of one mind*" and "*live in peace*," God also will be with you, for He is "*the God of love and of peace*," and in these things He delights, He rejoices. Hence shall peace also be yours from His love; hence shall every evil be removed. This saved the world, this ended the long war, this blended together heaven and earth, this made men angels. This then let us also imitate, for love is the mother of countless good things. By this we were saved, by this all those unspeakable good things [come] to us.'

2. Then to lead them on unto it, he says,

2 Corinthians 13:12

"Salute one another with a holy kiss."

What is "*holy*?" not hollow, not treacherous, like the kiss which Judas gave to Christ. For therefore is the kiss given, that it may be fuel unto love, that it may kindle the disposition, that we may so love each other, as brothers brothers, as children parents, as parents children; yea, rather even far more. For those things are a disposition implanted by nature, but these by spiritual grace. Thus our souls bound unto each other. And therefore when we return after an absence we kiss each other, our souls hastening unto mutual intercourse. For this is that member which most of all declares to us the workings of the soul. But about this holy kiss somewhat else may yet be said. To what effect? We are the temple of Christ; we kiss then the porch and entrance of the temple when we kiss each other. See ye not how many kiss even the porch of this temple, some stooping down, others grasping it with their hand, and putting their hand to their mouth. And through these gates and doors Christ both had entered into us, and does enter, whenever we communicate. You who partake of the mysteries understand what I say. For it is in no common manner that our lips are honored, when they receive the Lord's Body. It is for this reason chiefly that we here kiss. Let them give ear who speak filthy things, who utter railing, and let them shudder to think what that mouth is they dishonor; let those give ear who kiss obscenely. Hear what things God has proclaimed by your mouth, and keep it undefiled. He has discoursed of the life to come, of the resurrection, of immortality, that death is not death, of those other innumerable mysteries. For he that is about to be initiated comes to the priest's mouth as it were an oracle, to hear things full of awe. For he lost his

life even from his forefathers, and comes to seek it again, and to ask how he may haply find and get it back. Then God announces to him how it may be found, and that mouth becomes more awful than the very mercy-seat. For that mercy-seat never sent forth a voice like this, but spoke much of lesser things, of wars and such peace as is here below: but this speaks all about heaven and the life to come, and things new and that pass understanding. And having said,

2 Corinthians 13:13

"Salute one another with an holy kiss," he added, "All the saints salute you."

By this also giving them good hopes. He has added this in the place of the kiss, knitting them together by the salutation, for the words also proceed from the same mouth from which the kiss. Do you see how he brings them all together, both those who are widely separated in the body and those who are near, these by the kiss and those by the written message?

2 Corinthians 13:14

3. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,"* and the Father, *"and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."* After having united them to one other by the salutations and the kisses, he again closes his speech with prayer, with much carefulness uniting them unto God also. Where now are they who say that because the Holy Spirit is not inserted in the beginnings of the Epistles, He is not of the same substance? For, behold, he has now enumerated Him with the Father and Son. And besides this, one may remark, that when writing to the Colossians and saying, *"Grace to you, and peace from God our Father,"* he was silent of the Son, and added not, as in all his Epistles, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Is then the Son not of the same substance either, because of this? Nay, these reasonings are of extreme folly. For this very thing especially shows Him to be of the same substance, that Paul uses the expression [or not] indifferently. And that what is here said is no conjecture, hear how he mentions Son and Spirit, and is quite silent of the Father. For, writing to the Corinthians, he says, *"But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."* [1 Corinthians 6:11] What then, tell me? Were these not baptized into the Father? Then assuredly they were neither washed nor sanctified. But did they baptize them? Doubtless then just as also they did baptize. How then did he not say, 'You are washed in the name of the Father.' Because it was indifferent in his view, at one time to make mention of this, at another of that Person; and you may observe this custom in many places of the Epistles. For writing to the Romans he says, *"I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God,"* [Romans 12:1] although those mercies are of the

Son; and, *"I beseech you by the love of the Spirit,"* [Romans 15:30] although love is of the Father. Wherefore then mentioned he not the Son in *"the mercies,"* nor the Father in *"the love?"* Because as being things plain and admitted, he was silent about them. Moreover, he will be found again, to put the gifts also themselves transposedly. For having said here, *"The grace of Christ, and the love of God and the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost;"* he in another place speaks of *"the communion of the Son,"* and of *"the love of the Spirit."* For, *"I beseech you,"* he says, *"by the love of the Spirit."* [Romans 15:30] And in his Epistle to the Corinthians, *"God is faithful, by Whom you were called into the communion of His Son."* [1 Corinthians 1:9] Thus the things of the Trinity are undivided: and whereas the communion is of the Spirit, it has been found of the Son; and whereas the grace is of the Son, it is also of the Father and of the Holy Spirit; for [we read], *"Grace be to you from God the Father."* And in another place, having enumerated many forms of it, he added, *"But all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as He will."* [1 Corinthians 12:11] And I say these things, not confounding the Persons, (away with the thought!) but knowing both the individuality and distinctness of These, and the Unity of the Substance.

4. Let us then continue both to hold these doctrines in their strictness, and to draw to us the love of God. For before indeed He loved us when hating Him, and reconciled us who were His enemies; but henceforth He wishes to love us as loving Him. Let us then continue to love Him, so that we may be also loved by Him. For if when beloved by powerful men we are formidable to all, much more when [beloved] by God. And should it be needful to give wealth, or body, or even life itself for this love, let us not grudge them. For it is not enough to say in words that we love, but we ought to give also the proof of deeds; for neither did He show love by

words only, but by deeds also. Do thou then also show this by your deeds and do those things which please Him, for so shall you yourself reap again the advantage. For He needs nothing that we have to bestow, and this is also a special proof of a sincere love, when one who needs nothing and is not in any necessity, does all for the sake of being loved by us. Wherefore also Moses said, *"For what does the Lord God require of you, but to love Him, and that you should be ready to walk after Him?"* [Deuteronomy 10:12] So that when He bids you love Him, He then most of all shows that He loves you. For nothing does so secure our salvation as to love Him. See then, how that all His commandments even tend together to our repose and salvation and good report. For when he says, *"Blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the meek, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the peacemakers;"* [Matthew 5:3-9] He Himself indeed reaps no advantage from these, but he enjoins them for our adorning and attuning; and when He says, *"I was an hungred,"* it is not as needing that ministry from us, but as exciting you to humanity. For He was well able even without you to feed the poor man; but as bestowing upon you an exceeding treasure, he laid these commands upon you. For if the sun, which is but a creature, needs not our eyes; for he abides in his own proper brightness, even though none should look upon him, and we it is who are the gainers when we enjoy his beams; much more is this so with God. But that you may learn this in yet another way; how great will you have the distance to be between God and us? As great as between gnats and us, or much greater? Quite plainly it is much greater, yea, infinite. If then we vainglorious creatures need not service nor honor from gnats, much rather the Divine Nature [none from us], seeing It is impassible and needing nothing. The measure of that which He enjoys by us is but the greatness of our benefit, and the delight He takes in our salvation. For this reason He also oftentimes

relinquishes His own, and seeks yours. *"For if any,"* he says, have a wife that believes not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away; [1 Corinthians 7:12] and, *"He that puts away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery."* Do you see what unspeakable goodness? 'If a wife be a harlot,' He says, 'I do not compel the husband to live with her; and if she be an unbeliever, I do not forbid him.' Again, 'if you be grieved against any one, I command him that has grieved you to leave My gift and to run to you.' For He says, *"If you are offering your gift, and there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift before the altar, and go your way, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."* [Matthew 5:23-24] And what says the parable of him that had devoured his all? [Matthew 18:24, etc.] Does it not show this? For when he had eaten up those ten thousand talents, He had mercy on him, and let him go; but when he demanded of his fellowservant an hundred pence, he both called him wicked and delivered him over to the punishment. So great account does He make of your ease. The barbarian was about to sin against the wife of the just man, and He says, *"I spared you from sinning against me."* [Genesis 20:6] Paul persecuted the Apostles, and He says to him, *"Why do you persecute Me?"* Others are hungry, and He Himself says He is an hungred, and wanders about naked and a stranger, wishing to shame you, and so to force you into the way of almsgiving.

Reflecting then upon the love, how great He has shown in all things, and still shows it to be, both having vouchsafed to make Himself known to us, (which is the greatest crown of good things, and light to the understanding and instruction in virtue,) and to lay down laws for the best mode of life, and having done all things for our sakes, having given His Son, and promised a kingdom, and invited us to those unspeakable good

things, and prepared for us a most blessed life, let us do and say every thing so as both to appear worthy of His love and to obtain the good things to come; whereunto may we all attain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Whom to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be glory now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily on Ephesians

Ephesus is the metropolis of Asia. It was dedicated to Diana, whom especially they worshipped there as their great goddess. Indeed so great was the superstition of her worshippers, that when her temple was burnt, they would not so much as divulge the name of the man who burnt it.

The blessed John the Evangelist spent the chief part of his time there: he was there when he was banished, and there he died. It was there too that Paul left Timothy, as he says in writing to him, *"As I exhorted you to tarry at Ephesus."* [1 Timothy 1:3]

Most of the philosophers also, those more particularly who flourished in Asia, were there; and even Pythagoras himself is said to have come from thence; perhaps because Samos, whence he really came, is an island of Ionia. It was the resort also of the disciples of Parmenides, and Zeno, and Democritus, and you may see a number of philosophers there even to the present day.

These facts I mention, not merely as such, but with a view of showing that Paul would needs take great pains and trouble in writing to these Ephesians. He is said indeed to have entrusted them, as being persons already well-instructed, with his profoundest conceptions; and the Epistle itself is full of sublime thoughts and doctrines.

He wrote the Epistle from Rome, and, as he himself informs us, in bonds. *"Pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains."* [Ephesians 6:19] It abounds with sentiments of overwhelming loftiness and grandeur. Thoughts which he scarcely so much as utters any where else, he here plainly declares; as when he says,

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God." [Ephesians 3:10] And again; "He raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in heavenly places." [Ephesians 2:6] And again; "Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ." [Ephesians 3:5]

Homily 1 on Ephesians

Chapter I. Verses 1-2

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Observe, he applies the word *"through"* to the Father. But what then? Shall we say that He is inferior? Surely not.

"To the saints," says he, *"which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus."*

Observe that he calls saints, men with wives, and children, and domestics. For that these are they whom he calls by this name is plain from the end of the Epistle, as, when he says, *"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands."* [Ephesians 5:22] And again, *"Children, obey your parents:"* [Ephesians 6:1] and, *"Servants, be obedient to your masters."* [Ephesians 6:5] Think how great is the indolence that possesses us now, how rare is any thing like virtue now and how great the abundance of virtuous men must have been then, when even secular men could be called *"saints and faithful."* *"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."* *"Grace"* is his word; and he calls God, *"Father,"* since this name is a sure token of that gift of grace. And how so? Hear what he says elsewhere; *"Because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father."* [Galatians 4:6]

"And from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Because for us men Christ was born, and appeared in the flesh.

Ver. 3. *"Blessed be the God,"* he says, *"and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Observe; The God of Him that was Incarnate. And though you will not, The Father of God the Word.

Ver. 3. *"Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."*

He is here alluding to the blessings of the Jews ; for that was blessing also, but it was not spiritual blessing. For how did it run? *"The Lord bless you, He will bless the fruit of your body;"* [Deuteronomy 7:13] and *"He will bless your going out and your coming in."* [Deuteronomy 28:4] But here it is not thus, but how? *"With every spiritual blessing."* And what do you lack yet? You are made immortal, you are made free, you are made a son, you are made righteous, you are made a brother, you are made a fellow-heir, you reign with Christ, you are glorified with Christ; all things are freely given you. *"How,"* says he, *"shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?"* [Romans 8:32] Your First-fruits is adored by Angels, by the Cherubim, by the Seraphim! What do you lack yet? *"With every spiritual blessing."* There is nothing carnal here. Accordingly He excluded all those former blessings, when He said, *"In the world you have tribulation,"* [John 16:33] to lead us on to these. For as they who possessed carnal things were unable to hear of spiritual things, so they who aim at spiritual things cannot attain to them unless they first stand aloof from carnal things.

What again is *"spiritual blessing in the heavenly places?"* It is not upon earth, he means, as was the case with the Jews. *"You shall eat the good of the land."* [Isaiah 1:19] *"Unto a land flowing with milk and honey."* [Exodus 3:8] *"The Lord shall bless your land."* [Deuteronomy 7:13] Here we have nothing of this sort, but what have we? *"If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and I and My Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* [John 14:23] *"Every one therefore which hears these words of Mine, and does them, shall be likened unto a wise man which built*

his house upon the rock, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon the rock." [Matthew 7:24-25] And what is that rock but those heavenly things which are above the reach of every change? *"Every one therefore who,"* says Christ, *"shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in Heaven: But whosoever shall deny Me, him will I also deny."* [Matthew 10:32-33] Again, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* [Matthew 5:8] And again, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 5:3] And again, *"Blessed are you which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for great is your reward in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:11-12] Observe, how every where He speaks of Heaven, no where of earth, or of the things on the earth. And again, *"Our citizenship is in Heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ."* [Philippians 3:20] And again, *"Not setting your mind on the things that are on the earth, but on the things which are above."* [Colossians 3:3]

"In Christ."

That is to say, this blessing was not by the hand of Moses, but by Christ Jesus: so that we surpass them not only in the quality of the blessings, but in the Mediator also. As moreover he says in the Epistle to the Hebrews; *"And Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken; but Christ as a Son over His house, whose house are we."* [Hebrews 3:5-6]

Ver. 4. *"Even as,"* he proceeds, *"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love."*

His meaning is somewhat of this sort. Through whom He has blessed us, through Him He has also chosen us. And He, then, it is that shall bestow upon us all those rewards hereafter. He is the very Judge that shall say,

"Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." [Matthew 25:34] And again, *"I will that where I am they will also be with Me."* [John 17:24] And this is a point which he is anxious to prove in almost all his Epistles, that ours is no novel system, but that it had thus been figured from the very first, that it is not the result of any change of purpose, but had been in fact a divine dispensation and fore-ordained. And this is a mark of great solicitude for us.

What is meant by, *"He chose us in Him?"* By means of the faith which is in Him, Christ, he means, happily ordered this for us before we were born; nay more, before the foundation of the world. And beautiful is that word *"foundation,"* as though he were pointing to the world as cast down from some vast height. Yea, vast indeed and ineffable is the height of God, so far removed not in place but in incommunicableness of nature; so wide the distance between creation and Creator! A word which heretics may be ashamed to hear.

But wherefore has He chosen us? *"That we should be holy and without a blemish before Him."* That you may not then, when you hear that *"He has chosen us,"* imagine that faith alone is sufficient, he proceeds to add life and conduct. To this end, says he, has He chosen us, and on this condition, *"that we should be holy and without blemish."* And so formerly he chose the Jews. On what terms? *"This nation, says he, has He chosen from the rest of the nations."* [Deuteronomy 14:2] Now if men in their choices choose what is best, much more does God. And indeed the fact of their being chosen is at once a token of the loving kindness of God, and of their moral goodness. For by all means would he have chosen those who were approved. He has Himself rendered us holy, but then we must continue holy. A holy man is he who is a partaker of faith; a blameless man is he who leads an irreproachable life. It is not however simply holiness and

irreproachableness that He requires, but that we should appear such *"before Him."* For there are holy and blameless characters, who yet are esteemed as such only by men, those who are like whited sepulchres, and like such as wear sheep's clothing. It is not such, however, He requires, but such as the Prophet speaks of; *"And according to the cleanness of my hands."* [Psalm 18:24] What cleanness? That which is so *"in His eyesight."* He requires that holiness on which the eye of God may look.

Having thus spoken of the good works of these, he again recurs to His grace. *"In love,"* says he, *"having predestinated us."* Because this comes not of any pains, nor of any good works of ours, but of love; and yet not of love alone, but of our virtue also. For if indeed of love alone, it would follow that all must be saved; whereas again were it the result of our virtue alone, then were His coming needless, and the whole dispensation. But it is the result neither of His love alone, nor yet of our virtue, but of both. *"He chose us,"* says the Apostle; and He that chooses, knows what it is that He chooses. *"In love,"* he adds, *"having foreordained us;"* for virtue would never have saved any one, had there not been love. For tell me, what would Paul have profited, how would he have exhibited what he has exhibited, if God had not both called him from the beginning, and, in that He loved him, drawn him to Himself? But besides, His vouchsafing us so great privileges, was the effect of His love, not of our virtue. Because our being rendered virtuous, and believing, and coming near unto Him, even this again was the work of Him that called us Himself, and yet, notwithstanding, it is ours also. But that on our coming near unto Him, He should vouchsafe us so high privileges, as to bring us at once from a state of enmity, to the adoption of children, this is indeed the work of a really transcendent love.

Ver. 4, 5. *"In love,"* says he, *"having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself."*

Do you observe how that nothing is done without Christ? Nothing without the Father? The one has predestinated, the other has brought us near. And these words he adds by way of heightening the things which have been done, in the same way as he says also elsewhere, "*And not only so, but we also rejoice in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" [Romans 5:11] For great indeed are the blessings bestowed, yet are they made far greater in being bestowed through Christ; because He sent not any servant, though it was to servants He sent, but the Only-begotten Son Himself.

Ver. 5. "*According to the good pleasure,*" he continues, "*of His will.*"

That is to say, because He earnestly willed it. This is, as one might say, His earnest desire. For the word "*good pleasure*" every where means the precedent will, for there is also another will. As for example, the first will is that sinners should not perish; the second will is, that, if men become wicked, they shall perish. For surely it is not by necessity that He punishes them, but because He wills it. You may see something of the sort even in the words of Paul, where he says, "*I would that all men were even as I myself.*" [1 Corinthians 7:7] And again, "*I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children.*" [1 Timothy 5:14] By "*good pleasure*" then he means the first will, the earnest will, the will accompanied with earnest desire, as in case of us, for I shall not refuse to employ even a somewhat familiar expression, in order to speak with clearness to the simpler sort; for thus we ourselves, to express the intentness of the will, speak of acting according to our resolve. What he means to say then is this, God earnestly aims at, earnestly desires, our salvation. Wherefore then is it that He so loves us, whence has He such affection? It is of His goodness alone. For grace itself is the fruit of goodness. And for this cause, he says, has He predestinated us to the adoption of children; this being His will, and the object of His earnest

wish, that the glory of His grace may be displayed. *"According to the good pleasure of His will,"* he proceeds,

Ver. 6. *"To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."*

That the glory of His grace may be displayed, he says, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Now then if for this He has shown grace to us, to the praise of the glory of His grace, and that He may display His grace, let us abide therein. *"To the praise of His glory."* What is this? That who should praise Him? That who should glorify Him? That we, that Angels, that Archangels, yea, or the whole creation? And what were that? Nothing. The Divine nature knows no want. And wherefore then would He have us praise and glorify Him? It is that our love towards Him may be kindled more fervently within us. He desires nothing we can render; not our service, not our praise, nor any thing else, nothing but our salvation; this is His object in every thing He does. And he who praises and marvels at the grace displayed towards himself will thus be more devoted and more earnest.

"Which He freely bestowed on us," he says. He does not say, *"Which He has graciously given us,"* ([ἐ] [χαρίσατο]) but, *"wherein He has shown grace to us."* ([ἐ] [χαρίτωσεν]) That is to say, He has not only released us from our sins, but has also made us meet objects of His love. It is as though one were to take a leper, wasted by distemper, and disease, by age, and poverty, and famine, and were to turn him all at once into a graceful youth, surpassing all mankind in beauty, shedding a bright lustre from his cheeks, and eclipsing the sun-beams with the glances of his eyes; and then were to set him in the very flower of his age, and after that array him in purple and a diadem and all the attire of royalty. It is thus that God has arrayed and adorned this soul of ours, and clothed it with beauty, and rendered it an

object of His delight and love. Such a soul Angels desire to look into, yea, Archangels, and all the holy ones. Such grace has He shed over us, so dear has He rendered us to Himself. *"The King,"* says the Psalmist, *"shall greatly desire your beauty."* [Psalm 45:11] Think what injurious words we uttered heretofore, and look, what gracious words we utter now. Wealth has no longer charms for us, nor the things that are here below, but only heavenly things, the things that are in the heavens. When a child has outward beauty, and has besides a pervading grace in all its sayings, do we not call it a beautiful child? Such as this are the faithful. Look, what words the initiated utter! What can be more beautiful than that mouth that breathes those wondrous words, and with a pure heart and pure lips, and beaming with cheerful confidence, partakes of such a mystical table? What more beautiful than the words, with which we renounce the service of the Devil, and enlist in the service of Christ? Than both that confession which is before the Baptismal laver, and that which is after it? Let us reflect as many of us as have defiled our Baptism, and weep that we may be able again to repair it.

Ver. 6. *"In the Beloved,"* he says, *"in whom we have our redemption through His Blood."*

And how is this? Not only is there this marvel, that He has given His Son, but yet further that He has given Him in such a way, as that the Beloved One Himself should be slain!

Yea, and more transcendent still! He has given the Beloved for them that were hated. See, how high a price he sets upon us. If, when we hated Him and were enemies, He gave the Beloved, what will He not do now, when we are reconciled by Him through grace?

Ver. 7. *"The forgiveness,"* says he, *"of our trespasses."*

Again he descends from high to low: first speaking of adoption, and sanctification, and blamelessness, and then of the Passion, and in this not

lowering his discourse and bringing it down from greater things to lesser, no rather, he was heightening it, and raising it from the lesser to the greater. For nothing is so great as that the blood of this Son should be shed for us. Greater this than both the adoption, and all the other gifts of grace, that He spared not even the Son. For great indeed is the forgiveness of sins, yet this is the far greater thing, that it should be done by the Lord's blood. For that this is far greater than all, look how here again he exclaims,

Ver. 7, 8. *"According to the riches of His grace, which He made to abound toward us."*

The abovementioned gifts are riches, yet is this far more so. *"Which,"* says he, *"He made to abound toward us."* They are both *"riches"* and *"they have abounded,"* that is to say, were poured forth in ineffable measure. It is not possible to represent in words what blessings we have in fact experienced. For riches indeed they are, abounding riches, and He has given in abundance riches not of man but of God, so that on all hands it is impossible that they should be expressed. And to show us how He gave it to such abundance, he adds,

Ver. 8, 9. *"In all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of His will."*

That is to say, Making us wise and prudent, in that which is true wisdom, and that which is true prudence. Strange! What friendship! For He tells us His secrets; the mysteries, says he, of His will, as if one should say, He has made known to us the things that are in His heart. For here is indeed the mystery which is full of all wisdom and prudence. For what will you mention equal to this wisdom! Those that were worth nothing, it has discovered a way of raising them to wealth and abundance. What can equal this wise contrivance? He that was an enemy, he that was hated, he is in a moment lifted up on high. And not this only—but, yet more, that it should

be done at this particular time, this again was the work of wisdom; and that it should be done by means of the Cross. It were matter of long discourse here to point out, how all this was the work of wisdom, and how He had made us wise. And therefore he repeats again the words,

"According to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him."

That is to say, this He desired, this He travailed for, as one might say, that He might be able to reveal to us the mystery. What mystery? That He would have man seated up on high. And this has come to pass.

Ver. 10. *"Unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, even in Him."*

Heavenly things, he means to say, had been severed from earthly. They had no longer one Head. So far indeed as the system of the creation went, there was over all One God, but so far as management of one household went, this, amid the wide spread of Gentile error, was not the case, but they had been severed from His obedience.

"Unto a dispensation," says he, *"of the fullness of the times."*

The fullness of the times, he calls it. Observe with what nicety he speaks. And whereas he points out the origination, the purpose, the will, the first intention, as proceeding from the Father, and the fulfillment and execution as effected by the agency of the Son, yet no where does he apply to him the term minister.

"He chose us," says he, *"in Him, having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself;"* and, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, in whom we have redemption through His blood,— which He purposed in Him, unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ;"* and no where has he called Him minister. If however the word *"in"* and the word *"by"* implies a mere minister, look what the

matter comes to. Just in the very beginning of the Epistle, he used the expression *"through the will of the Father."* The Father, he means, willed, the Son wrought. But neither does it follow, that because the Father willed, the Son is excluded from the willing; nor because the Son wrought, that the Father is deprived of the working. But to the Father and the Son, all things are common. *"For all Mine are Yours,"* says He, *"and Yours are Mine."* [John 17:10]

The fullness of the times, however, was His coming. After, then, He had done everything, by the ministry both of Angels, and of Prophets, and of the Law, and nothing came of it, and it was well near come to this, that man had been made in vain, brought into the world in vain, nay, rather to his ruin; when all were absolutely perishing, more fearfully than in the deluge, He devised this dispensation, that is by grace; that it might not be in vain, might not be to no purpose that man was created. This he calls *"the fullness of the times,"* and *"wisdom."* And why so? Because at that time when they were on the very point of perishing, then they were rescued.

That *"He might sum up"* he says.

What is the meaning of this word, *"sum up?"* It is *"to knit together."* Let us, however, endeavor to get near the exact import. With ourselves then, in common conversation, the word means the summing into a brief compass things spoken at length, the concise account of matters described in detail. And it has this meaning. For Christ has gathered up in Himself the dispensations carried on through a lengthened period, that is to say, He has cut them short. For *"by finishing His word and cutting it short in righteousness,"* [Romans 9:28] He both comprehended former dispensations, and added others beside. This is the meaning of *"summing up."*

It has also another signification; and of what nature is this? He has set over all one and the same Head, i.e., Christ according to the flesh, alike over Angels and men. That is to say, He has given to Angels and men one and the same government; to the one the Incarnate, to the other God the Word. Just as one might say of a house which has some part decayed and the other sound, He has rebuilt the house, that is to say, He has made it stronger, and laid a firmer foundation. So also here He has brought all under one and the same Head. For thus will an union be effected, thus will a close bond be effected, if one and all can be brought under one and the same Head, and thus have some constraining bond of union from above. Honored then as we are with so great a blessing, so high a privilege, so great loving-kindness, let us not shame our Benefactor, let us not render in vain so great grace. Let us exemplify the life of Angels, the virtue of Angels, the conversation of Angels, yea, I entreat and conjure you, that all these things turn not to our judgment, nor to our condemnation, but to our enjoyment of those good things, which may God grant we may all attain, in Christ Jesus, our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, etc. etc.

Homily 2 on Ephesians

Chapter I. Verses 11-14

"In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of his will."

Paul earnestly endeavors on all occasions to display the unspeakable loving-kindness of God towards us, to the utmost of his power. For that it is impossible to do so adequately, hear his own words. *"O! The depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out."* [Romans 11:33] Still, notwithstanding, so far as it is possible, he does display it. What then is this which he is saying; *"In whom also we were made a heritage, being predestinated?"* Above he used the word, *"He chose us;"* here he says, *"we were made a heritage."* But inasmuch as a lot is a matter of chance, not of deliberate choice, nor of virtue, (for it is closely allied to ignorance and accident, and oftentimes passing over the virtuous, brings forward the worthless into notice,) observe how he corrects this very point: *"having been foreordained,"* says he, *"according to the purpose of Him who works all things."* That is to say, not merely have we been made a heritage, as, again, we have not merely been chosen, (for it is God who chooses,) and so neither have we merely been allotted, (for it is God who allots,) but it is *"according to a purpose."* This is what he says also in the Epistle to the Romans, [Romans 8:28-30] *"To them that are called according to His purpose;"* and *"whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them he also glorified."* Having first used the expression, *"to them that are called according to a purpose,"* and at the same time wishing to

declare their privilege compared with the rest of mankind, he speaks also of inheritance by lot, yet so as not to divest them of free will. That point then, which more properly belongs to happy fortune, is the very point he insists upon. For this inheritance by lot depends not on virtue, but, as one might say, on fortuitous circumstances. It is as though he had said, lots were cast, and He has chosen us; but the whole is of deliberate choice. Men predestinated, that is to say, having chosen them to Himself, He has separated. He saw us, as it were, chosen by lot before we were born. For marvellous is the foreknowledge of God, and acquainted with all things before their beginning.

But mark now how on all occasions he takes pains to point out, that it is not the result of any change of purpose, but that these matters had been thus modeled from the very first, so that we are in no wise inferior to the Jews in this respect; and how, in consequence, he does every thing with this view. How then is it that Christ Himself says, *"I was not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel?"* [Matthew 15:24] And said again to his disciples, *"Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans."* [Matthew 10:5] And Paul again himself says, *"It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] These expressions, I say, are used with this design, that no one may suppose that this work came to pass incidentally only. *"According to the purpose,"* he says, *"of Him who works all things after the counsel of His will."* That is to say, He had no after workings; having modeled all things from the very first, thus he leads forward all things *"according to the counsel of His will."* So that it was not merely because the Jews did not listen that He called the Gentiles, nor was it of mere necessity, nor was it on any inducement arising from them.

Ver. 12, 13. *"To the end that we should be unto the praise of His glory, we who had before hoped in Christ. In whom you also having heard the word of the truth, the Gospel of your salvation."*

That is to say, through whom. Observe how he on all occasions speaks of Christ, as the Author of all things, and in no case gives Him the title of a subordinate agent, or a minister. And so again, elsewhere, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, *"that God, having of old time spoken unto the Fathers in the prophets, has at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son,"* [Hebrews 1:1] that is *"through"* His Son.

"The word of truth," he says, no longer that of the type, nor of the image.

"The Gospel of your salvation." And well does he call it the Gospel of salvation, intimating in the one word a contrast to the law, in the other, a contrast with punishment to come. For what is the message, but the Gospel of salvation, which forbears to destroy those that are worthy of destruction.

Ver. 14. *"In whom having also believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance."*

Here again, the word *"sealed,"* is an indication of special forecast. He does not speak of our being predestinated only, nor of our being allotted, but further, of our being sealed. For just as though one were to make those who should fall to his lot manifest, so also did God separate them for believing, and sealed them for the allotment of the things to come.

You see how, in process of time, He makes them objects of wonder. So long as they were in His foreknowledge, they were manifest to no one, but when they were sealed, they became manifest, though not in the same way as we are; for they will be manifest except a few. The Israelites also were sealed, but that was by circumcision, like the brutes and reasonless creatures. We too are sealed, but it is as sons, *"with the Spirit."*

But what is meant by, "*with the Spirit of promise?*" Doubtless it means that we have received that Spirit according to promise. For there are two promises, the one by the prophets, the other from the Son.

By the Prophets.—Hearken to the words of Joel; "*I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions,*" [Joel 2:28] And hearken again to the words of Christ; "*But you shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*" [Acts 1:8] And truly, the Apostle means, He ought, as God, to have been believed; however, he does not ground his affirmation upon this, but examines it like a case where man is concerned, speaking much as he does in the Epistle to the Hebrews; [Hebrews 6:18] where he says, "*That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement.*" Thus here also he makes the things already bestowed a sure token of the promise of those which are yet to come. For this reason he further calls it an "*earnest,*" [Cf. also 2 Corinthians 1:22] for an earnest is a part of the whole. He has purchased what we are most concerned in, our salvation; and has given us an earnest in the mean while. Why then did He not give the whole at once? Because neither have we, on our part, done the whole of our work. We have believed. This is a beginning; and He too on His part has given an earnest. When we show our faith by our works, then He will add the rest. Nay, more, He has given yet another pledge, His own blood, and has promised another still. In the same way as in case of war between nation and nation they give hostages: just so has God also given His Son as a pledge of peace and solemn treaties, and, further, the Holy Spirit also which is from Him. For they, that are indeed partakers of the Spirit, know that He is the earnest

of our inheritance. Such an one was Paul, who already had here a foretaste of the blessings there. And this is why he was so eager, and yearned to be released from things below, and groaned within himself. He transferred his whole mind there, and saw every thing with different eyes. You have no part in the reality, and therefore failest to understand the description. Were we all partakers of the Spirit, as we ought to be partakers, then should we behold Heaven, and the order of things that is there.

It is an earnest, however, of what? Of

Ver. 14. *"The redemption of God's own possession."*

For our absolute redemption takes place then. For now we have our life in the world, we are liable to many human accidents, and are living among ungodly men. But our absolute redemption will be then, when there shall be no sins, no human sufferings, when we shall not be indiscriminately mixed with all kinds of people.

At present, however, there is but an earnest, because at present we are far distant from these blessings. Yet is our citizenship not upon earth; even now we are out of the pale of the things that are here below. Yes, we are sojourners even now.

Ver. 14. *"Unto the praise of His glory."*

This he adds in immediate connection. And why? Because it would serve to give those who heard it full assurance. Were it for our sake only, he means to say, that God did this, there might be some room for misgiving. But if it be for His own sake, and in order to display His goodness, he assigns, as a sort of witness, a reason why these things never possibly could be otherwise. We find the same language everywhere applied to the case of the Israelites. *"Do Thou this for us for Your Name's sake;"* [Psalm 109:21] and again, God Himself said, *"I do it for My own sake;"* [Isaiah 48:11] and so Moses, *"Do it, if for nothing else, yet for the glory of Your Name."* This

gives those who hear it full assurance; it relieves them to be told, that whatever He promises, for His own goodness' sake He will most surely perform.

Moral. Let not the hearing, however, make us too much at our ease; for although He does it for His own sake, yet notwithstanding He requires a duty on our part. If He says, *"Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed,"* [1 Samuel 2:30] let us reflect that there is that which He requires of us also. True, it is the praise of His glory to save those that are enemies, but those who, after being made friends, continue His friends. So that if they were to return back to their former state of enmity, all were vain and to no purpose. There is not another Baptism, nor is there a second reconciliation again, but *"a certain fearful expectation of judgment which shall devour the adversaries."* [Hebrews 10:27] If we intend at the same time to be always at enmity with Him and yet to claim forgiveness at His hand, we shall never cease to be at enmity, and to be wanton, to grow in depravity, and to be blind to the Sun of Righteousness which has risen. Do you not see the ray that shall open your eyes? Render them then good and sound and quicksighted. He has showed you the true light; if you shun it, and runnest back again into the darkness, what shall be your excuse? What sort of allowance shall be made for you? None from that moment. For this is a mark of unspeakable enmity. When indeed you knew not God, then if you were at enmity with Him, you had, be it how it might, some excuse. But when you have tasted the goodness and the honey, if you again abandonest them, and turnest to your own vomit, what else are you doing but bringing forward evidence of excessive hatred and contempt? 'Nay,' you will say, 'but I am constrained to it by nature. I love Christ indeed, but I am constrained by nature.' If you are

under the power and force of constraint, you will have allowance made; but if you yield from indolence, not for a moment.

Now then, come, let us examine this very question, whether sins are the effect of force and constraint, or of indolence and great carelessness. The law says, "*You shall not kill.*" What sort of force, what sort of violence, is there here? Violence indeed must one use to force himself to kill, for who among us would as a matter of choice plunge his sword into the throat of his neighbor, and stain his hand with blood? Not one. You see then that, on the contrary, sin is more properly matter of violence and constraint. For God has implanted in our nature a charm, which binds us to love one another. "*Every beast (it says) loves his like, and every man loves his neighbor.*" [Sirach 13:15] Do you see that we have from our nature seeds which tend to virtue; whereas those of vice are contrary to nature? And if these latter predominate, this is but an evidence of our exceeding indolence.

Again, what is adultery? What sort of necessity is there to bring us to this? Doubtless, it will be said, the tyranny of lust. But why, tell me, should this be? What, is it not in every one's power to have his own wife, and thus to put a stop to this tyranny? True, he will say, but a sort of passion for my neighbor's wife seizes hold on me. Here the question is no longer one of necessity. Passion is no matter of necessity, no one loves of necessity, but of deliberate choice and free will. Indulgence of nature, indeed, is perhaps matter of necessity, but to love one woman rather than another is no matter of necessity. Nor is the point with you natural desire, but vanity, and wantonness, and unbounded licentiousness. For which is according to reason, that a man should have an espoused wife, and her the mother of his children, or one not acknowledged? Do you not know that it is intimacy that breeds attachment. This, therefore, is not the fault of nature. Blame not natural desire. Natural desire was bestowed with a view to marriage; it was

given with a view to the procreation of children, not with a view to adultery and corruption. The laws, too, know how to make allowance for those sins which are of necessity,— or rather nothing is sin when it arises from necessity but all sin rises from wantonness. God has not so framed man's nature as that he should have any necessity to sin, since were this the case, there would be no such thing as punishment. We ourselves exact no account of things done of necessity and by constraint, much less would God, so full of mercy and loving-kindness.

Again, what is stealing? Is it matter of necessity? Yes, a man will say, because poverty causes this. Poverty, however, rather compels us to work, not to steal. Poverty, therefore, has in fact the contrary effect. Theft is the effect of idleness; whereas poverty produces usually not idleness, but a love of labor. So that this sin is the effect of indolence, as you may learn from hence. Which, I ask, is the more difficult, the more distasteful, to wander about at night without sleep, to break open houses, and walk about in the dark, and to have one's life in one's hand, and to be always prepared for murder, and to be shivering and dead with fear; or to be attending to one's daily task, in full enjoyment of safety and security? This last is the easier task; and it is because this is easier, that the majority practise it rather than the other. You see then that it is virtue which is according to nature, and vice which is against nature, in the same way as disease and health are.

What, again, are falsehood and perjury? What necessity can they possibly imply? None whatever, nor any compulsion; it is a matter to which we proceed voluntarily. We are distrusted, it will be said. True, distrusted we are, because we choose it. For we might, if we would, be trusted more upon our character, than upon our oath. Why, tell me, is it that we do not trust some, no, not on their oath, while we deem others trustworthy even independently of oaths. Do you see that there is no need of oaths in any

case? 'When such an one speaks,' we say, 'I believe him, even without any oath, but you, no, not with your oaths.' Thus then an oath is unnecessary; and is in fact an evidence rather of distrust than of confidence. For where a man is over ready to take his oath, he does not leave us to entertain any great idea of his scrupulousness. So that the man who is most constant in his use of oaths, has on no occasion any necessity for using one, and he who never uses one on any occasion, has in himself the full benefit of its use. Some one says there is a necessity for an oath, to produce confidence; but we see that they are the more readily trusted who abstain from taking oaths.

But again, if one is a man of violence, is this a matter of necessity? Yes, he will say, because his passion carries him away, and burns within him, and does not let the soul be at rest. Man, to act with violence is not the effect of anger, but of littleness of mind. Were it the effect of anger, all men, whenever they were angry, would never cease committing acts of violence. We have anger given us, not that we may commit acts of violence on our neighbors, but that we may correct those that are in sin, that we may bestir ourselves, that we may not be sluggish. Anger is implanted in us as a sort of sting, to make us gnash with our teeth against the devil, to make us vehement against him, not to set us in array against each other. We have arms, not to make us at war among ourselves, but that we may employ our whole armor against the enemy. Are you prone to anger? Be so against your own sins: chastise your soul, scourge your conscience, be a severe judge, and merciless in your sentence against your own sins. This is the way to turn anger to account. It was for this that God implanted it within us.

But again, is plunder a matter of necessity? No, in no wise. Tell me, what manner of necessity is there to be grasping: what manner of compulsion? Poverty, a man will say, causes it, and the fear of being without common necessities. Now this is the very reason why you ought

not to be grasping. Wealth so gotten has no security in it. You are doing the very same thing as a man would do, who, if he were asked why he laid the foundation of his house in the sand, should say, he did it because of the frost and rain. Whereas this would be the very reason why he should not lay it in the sand. They are the very foundations which the rain, and blasts, and wind, most quickly overturn. So that if you would be wealthy, never be rapacious; if you would transmit wealth to your children, get righteous wealth, at least, if any there be that is such. Because this abides, and remains firm, whereas that which is not such, quickly wastes and perishes. Tell me, have you a mind to be rich, and do you take the goods of others? Surely this is not wealth: wealth consists in possessing what is your own. He that is in possession of the goods of others, never can be a wealthy man; since at that rate even your very silk venders, who receive their goods as a consignment from others, would be the wealthiest and the richest of men. Though for the time, indeed, it is theirs, still we do not call them wealthy. And why forsooth? Because they are in possession of what belongs to others. For though the piece itself happens to be theirs, still the money it is worth is not theirs. Nay, and even if the money is in their hands, still this is not wealth. Now, if consignments thus given render not men more wealthy because we so soon resign them, how can those which arise from rapine render them wealthy? However, if at any rate you desire to be wealthy, (for the matter is not one of necessity,) what greater good is it that you would fain enjoy? Is it a longer life? Yet, surely men of this character quickly become short-lived. Oftentimes they pay as the penalty of plunder and rapaciousness, an untimely death; and not only suffer as a penalty the loss of the enjoyment of their gains, but go out of life having gained but little, and hell to boot. Oftentimes too they die of diseases, which are the fruits of self-indulgence, and of toil, and of anxiety. Fain would I understand why it

is that wealth is so eagerly pursued by mankind. Why surely for this reason has God set a limit and a boundary to our nature, that we may have no need to go on seeking wealth beyond it. For instance He has commanded us, to clothe the body in one, or perhaps in two garments; and there is no need of any more to cover us. Where is the good of ten thousand changes of raiment, and those moth-eaten? The stomach has its appointed bound, and any thing given beyond this, will of necessity destroy the whole man. Where then is the use of your herds, and flocks, and cutting up of flesh? We require but one roof to shelter us. Where then is the use of your vast ground-plots, and costly buildings? Do you strip the poor, that vultures and jackdaws may have where to dwell? And what a hell do not these things deserve? Many are frequently raising edifices that glisten with pillars and costly marbles, in places which they never so much as saw. What scheme is there indeed that they have not adopted? Yet neither themselves reap the benefit, nor any one else. The desolateness does not allow them to get away there; and yet not even thus do they desist. You see that these things are not done for profit's-sake, but in all these cases folly, and absurdity, and vainglory, is the motive. And this, I beseech you to avoid, that we may be enabled to avoid also every other evil, and may obtain those good things which are promised to them that love Him, in our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, honor forever. Amen.

Homily 3 on Ephesians

Chapter I. Verses 15-20

"For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus, which is among you, and which you show toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: having the eyes of your heart enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead."

Never was anything equal to the yearnings of the Apostle, never anything like the sympathy and the affectionateness of the blessed Paul, who made his every prayer in behalf of whole cities and peoples, and writes the same to all, *"I thank my God for you, making mention of you in my prayers."* Think how many he had in his mind, whom it were a labor so much as to remember; how many he made mention of in his prayers, giving thanks to God for them all as though he himself had received the greatest blessing.

"Wherefore," he says, i.e., because of what is to come, because of the good things that are laid up in store for them who rightly believe and live. And it is meet then to give thanks to God both for all the things which mankind have received at His hands, both heretofore and hereafter; and meet to give Him thanks also for the faith of them that believe.

"Having heard," says he, "of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and which you show toward all the saints."

He on all occasions knits together and combines faith and love, a glorious pair; nor does he mention the saints of that country only, but all.

"I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."

What is your prayer, and what your entreaty? It is

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation." Two things he requires them to understand, as it is their duty to understand them; to what blessings they are called, and how they have been released from their former state. He says, however, himself, that these points are three. How then are they three? In order that we may understand touching the things to come; for from the good things laid up for us, we shall know His ineffable and surpassing riches, and from understanding who we were, and how we believed, we shall know His power and sovereignty, in turning again to Himself those who had been so long time estranged from Him, *"For the weakness of God is stronger than men."* [1 Corinthians 1:25] Inasmuch as it is by the self-same power by which He raised Christ from the dead, that He has also drawn us to Himself. Nor is that power limited to the resurrection, but far exceeds it.

Ver. 21, 22. *"And made Him to sit at His right hand, in the Heavenly places, far above all rule and authority, and power and dominion, and every name that is named: and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all."*

Vast indeed are the mysteries and secrets of which He has made us partakers. And these it is not possible for us to understand otherwise than

by being partakers of the Holy Ghost, and by receiving abundant grace. And it is for this reason that Paul prays. *"The Father of glory,"* that is, He that has given us vast blessings, for he constantly addresses Him according to the subject he is upon, as, for instance, when he says, *"The Father of mercies and God of all comfort."* [2 Corinthians 1:3] And, again, the Prophet says, *"The Lord is my strength and my might."* [Psalm 18:1]

"The Father of glory."

He has no name by which he may represent these things, and on all occasions calls them *"glory,"* which is in fact, with us, the name and appellation of every kind of magnificence. Mark, he says, the Father of glory; [cf. Acts 7:2] but of Christ the God. What then? Is the Son inferior to the glory? No, there is no one, not even a maniac, would say so.

"May give unto you,"

That is, may raise and wing your understanding, for it is not possible otherwise to understand these things. *"For the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him."* [1 Corinthians 2:14] So then, there is need of spiritual *"wisdom,"* that we may perceive things spiritual, that we may see things hidden. That Spirit *"reveals"* all things. He is going to set forth the mysteries of God. Now the knowledge of the mysteries of God, the Spirit alone comprehends, who also searches the deep things of Him. It is not said, *"that Angel, or Archangel, or any other created power, may give,"* that is, confer upon you a spiritual gift. And if this be of revelation, then is the discovery of arguments consequently vain. For he that has learned God, and knows God, shall no longer dispute concerning any thing. He will not say, This is impossible, and That is possible, and How did the other thing come to pass? If we learn God, as we ought to know Him; if we learn God from Him from whom we

ought to learn Him, that is from the Spirit Himself; then shall we no longer dispute concerning any thing. And hence it is that he says,

"Having the eyes of your heart enlightened in the knowledge of Him."

He that has learned what God is, will have no misgiving about His promises, and disbelief about what has been already brought to pass. He prays, then, that there may be given them *"a spirit of wisdom and revelation."* Yet still he also establishes it, as far as he can himself, by arguments, and from *"already"* existing facts. For, whereas he was about to mention some things which had already come to pass, and others which had not as yet happened; he makes those which have been brought to pass, a pledge of those which have not: in some such way, I mean, as this,

"That you may know," says he, *"what is the hope of His calling."*

It is as yet, he means, hidden, but not so to the faithful.

"And," again, *"what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."*

This too is as yet hidden.

But what is clear? That through His power we have believed that He has raised Christ. For to persuade souls, is a thing far more miraculous than to raise a dead body. I will endeavor to make this clear. Hearken then. Christ said to the dead, *"Lazarus, come forth,"* [John 11:43] and straightway he obeyed. Peter said, *"Tabitha, arise,"* [Acts 9:40] and she did not refuse. He Himself shall speak the word at the last day, and all shall rise, and that so quickly, that *"they which are yet alive, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep,"* [1 Thessalonians 4:15] and all shall come to pass, all run together *"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."* [1 Corinthians 15:52] But in the matter of believing, it is not thus, but how is it? Hearken then to Him again, how He says, *"How often would I have gathered your children together, and you would not."* [Matthew 23:37] You perceive that this last is

the more difficult. Accordingly, it is upon this that he builds up the whole argument; because by human calculations it is far more difficult to influence the choice, than to work upon nature. And the reason is this, it is because He would thus have us become good of our own will. Thus with good reason does he say,

"The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe."

Yes, when Prophets had availed nothing, nor Angels, nor Archangels, when the whole creation, both visible and invisible, had failed, (the visible lying before us, and without any power to guide us, and much also which is invisible,) then He ordered His own coming, to show us that it was a matter which required Divine power.

"The riches of the glory,"

That is, the unutterable glory; for what language shall be adequate to express that glory of which the saints shall then be partakers? None. But verily there is need of grace in order that the understanding may perceive it, and admit even so much as at least one little ray. Some things indeed they knew even before; now he was desirous that they should learn more, and know it more clearly. Do you see how great things He has wrought? He has raised up Christ. Is this a small thing? But look again. He has set Him at His right hand. And shall any language then be able to represent this? Him that is of the earth, more mute than the fishes, and made the sport of devils, He has in a moment raised up on high. Truly this is indeed the *"exceeding greatness of His power."* And behold, whither He has raised Him.

"In the heavenly places;"

He has made Him far above all created nature, far above all rule and authority.

"Far above all rule," he says.

Need then indeed is there of the Spirit, of an understanding wise in the knowledge of Him. Need then is there indeed of revelation. Reflect, how vast is the distance between the nature of man and of God. Yet from this vile estate has He exalted Him to that high dignity. Nor does He mount by degrees, first one step, then another, then a third. Amazing! He does not simply say, "*above*," but, "*far above*;" for God is above those powers which are above. And there then has He raised Him, Him that is one of us, brought Him from the lowest point to the supremest sovereignty, to that beyond which there is no other honor. Above "*all*" principality, he says, not, i.e., over one and not over another, but over all,

"Rule and authority and power, and dominion, and every name that is named."

Whatever there be in Heaven, He has become above all. And this is said of Him that was raised from the dead which is worthy of our admiration; for of God the Word, it cannot possibly be, because what insects are in comparison of man, this the whole creation is in comparison of God. If all mankind are to be counted as spittle and were counted as the turn of a balance, consider the invisible powers as insects. But of Him that was one of us, this is great and surprising indeed. For He raised Him up from the very lowest parts of the earth. If all the nations are as a drop, how small a portion then of that drop is a single man! Yet Him has He made higher than all things, "*not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*." Therefore powers there are whose names are to us unintelligible, and unknown.

"And He put all things in subjection under His feet."

Not simply so set Him above them as to be honored above them, nor by way of comparison with them, but so that He should sit over them as His slaves. Amazing! Awful indeed are these things; every created power has

been made the slave of man by reason of God the Word dwelling in Him. For it is possible for a man to be above others, without having others in subjection, but only as preferred before them. But here it is not so. No, *"He put all things in subjection under His feet."* And not simply put them in subjection, but in the most abject subjection, that below which there can be none. Therefore he adds, *"under His feet."*

"And gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church."

Amazing again, whither has He raised the Church? As though he were lifting it up by some engine, he has raised it up to a vast height, and set it on yonder throne; for where the Head is, there is the body also. There is no interval to separate between the Head and the body; for were there a separation, then were it no longer a body, then were it no longer a head. *"Over all things,"* he says. What is meant by *"over all things?"* He has suffered neither Angel nor Archangel nor any other being to be above Him. But not only in this way has He honored us, in exalting that which is of ourselves, but also in that He has prepared the whole race in common to follow Him, to cling to Him, to accompany His train.

"Which is His body."

In order then that when you hear of the Head you may not conceive the notion of supremacy only, but also of consolidation, and that you may behold Him not as supreme Ruler only, but as Head of a body.

"The fullness of Him that fills all in all" he says.

As though this were not sufficient to show the close connection and relationship, what does he add? *"The fullness of Christ is the Church."* And rightly, for the complement of the head is the body, and the complement of the body is the head. Mark what great arrangement Paul observes, how he spares not a single word, that he may represent the glory of God. *"The, complement,"* he says, i.e., the head is, as it were, filled up by the body,

because the body is composed and made up of all its several parts, and he introduces Him as having need of each single one and not only of all in common and together; for unless we be many, and one be the hand, and another the foot, and another some other member, the whole body is not filled up. It is by all then that His body is filled up. Then is the head filled up, then is the body rendered perfect, when we are all knit together and united. Perceivest thou then the *"riches of the glory of His inheritance? The exceeding greatness of His power towards them that believe? The hope of your calling?"*

Moral. Let us reverence our Head, let us reflect of what a Head we are the body—a Head, to whom all things are put in subjection. According to this representation we ought to be better, yea, than the very angels, and greater than the Archangels, in that we have been honored above them all. God *"took not hold of Angels,"* as he says in writing to the Hebrews, *"but He took hold of the seed of Abraham."* [Hebrews 2:16] He took hold of neither principality nor power, nor dominion, nor any other authority, but He took up our nature, and made it to sit on His right hand. And why do I say, has made it sit? He has made it His garment, and not only so, but has put all things in subjection under His feet. How many sorts of death do you suppose? How many souls? Ten thousand? Yea, and ten thousand times told, but nothing equal to it will you mention. Two things He has done, the greatest things. He has both Himself descended to the lowest depth of humiliation, and has raised up man to the height of exaltation. He saved him by His blood. He spoke of the former first, how that He so greatly humbled Himself. He speaks now of what is stronger than that— a great thing, the crown of all. Surely, even had we been counted worthy of nothing, it were enough. Or, had we been counted worthy even of this honor, it were enough, without the slaying of the Son. But where there are the two, what

power of language must it not transcend and surpass? The very resurrection is not great, when I reflect on these things. It is of Him that he says, "*The God of our Lord Jesus Christ*," not of God the Word.

Let us feel awed at the closeness of our relation, let us dread lest any one should be cut off from this body, lest any one should fall from it, lest any one should appear unworthy of it. If any one were to place a diadem about our head, a crown of gold, should we not do every thing that we might seem worthy of the lifeless jewels? But now it is not a diadem that is about our head, but, what is far greater, Christ is made our very Head, and yet we pay no regard to it. Yet Angels reverence that Head, and Archangels, and all those powers above. And shall we, which are His body, be awed neither on the one account nor the other? And what then shall be our hope of salvation? Conceive to yourself the royal throne, conceive the excess of the honor. This, at least if we chose, might more avail to startle us, yea, even than hell itself. For, even though hell were not, that we having been honored with such an honor, should be found base and unworthy of it, what punishment, what vengeance must not this carry with it? Think near whom your Head is seated, (this single consideration is amply sufficient for any purpose whatever,) on whose right hand He is placed, far above all principality, and power, and might. Yet is the body of this Head trampled on by the very devils. Nay, God forbid it should be thus; for were it thus, such a body could be His body no longer. Your own head the more respectable of your servants reverence, and do you subject your body to be the sport of them that insult it? How sore punishment then shall you not deserve? If a man should bind the feet of the emperor with bonds and fetters, will he not be liable to the extremity of punishment? Do you expose the whole body to fierce monsters, and not shudder?

However, since our discourse is concerning the Lord's body, come, and let us turn our thoughts to it, even that which was crucified, which was nailed, which is sacrificed. If you are the body of Christ, bear the Cross, for He bore it: bear spitting, bear buffetings, bear nails. Such was that Body; that Body *"did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."* [1 Peter 2:22] His hands did every thing for the benefit of them that needed, His mouth uttered not a word of those things which are not convenient. He heard them say, *"You have a devil,"* and He answered nothing.

Further, our discourse is concerning this Body, and as many of us as partake of that Body and taste of that Blood, are partaking of that which is in no wise different from that Body, nor separate. Consider that we taste of that Body that sits above, that is adored by Angels, that is next to the Power that is incorruptible. Alas! How many ways to salvation are open to us! He has made us His own body, He has imparted to us His own body, and yet not one of these things turns us away from what is evil. Oh the darkness, the depth of the abyss, the apathy! *"Set your mind,"* says he, *"on the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God."* [Colossians 3:1] And after all this, some set their affections upon money, or licentiousness, others are carried captive by their passions!

Do you not see, that even in our own body, when any part is superfluous and useless, it is cut off, is cut away? It is of no use that it has belonged to the body, when it is mutilated, when it is mortified, when it is decayed, when it is detrimental to the rest. Let us not then be too confident, because we have been once made members of this body. If this body of ours, though but a natural body, nevertheless suffers amputation, what dreadful evil shall it not undergo, if the moral principle should fail? When the body partakes not of this natural food, when the pores are stopped up, then it mortifies; when the ducts are closed, then it is palsied. So is it with

us also, when we stop our ears, our soul becomes palsied; when we partake not of the spiritual food, when, instead of corrupt bodily humors, evil dispositions impair us, all these things engender disease, dangerous disease, disease that wastes. And then there will be need of that fire, there will be need of that cutting asunder. For Christ cannot endure that we should enter into the bride-chamber with such a body as this. If He led away, and cast out the man that was clothed in filthy garments, what will He not do unto the man who attaches filth to the body; how will He not dispose of him?

I observe many partaking of Christ's Body lightly and just as it happens, and rather from custom and form, than consideration and understanding. When, says a man, the holy season of Lent sets in, whatever a man may be, he partakes of the mysteries, or, when the day of the Lord's Epiphany comes. And yet it is not the Epiphany, nor is it Lent, that makes a fit time for approaching, but it is sincerity and purity of soul. With this, approach at all times; without it, never. *"For as often,"* [1 Corinthians 11:26] says he, *"as you do this, you proclaim the Lord's death,"* i.e., *"you make a remembrance of the salvation that has been wrought for you, and of the benefits which I have bestowed."* Consider those who partook of the sacrifices under the old Covenant, how great abstinence did they practise? How did they not conduct themselves? What did they not perform? They were always purifying themselves. And do you, when you draw near to a sacrifice, at which the very Angels tremble, do you measure the matter by the revolutions of seasons? And how shall you present yourself before the judgment-seat of Christ, thou who presumest upon His body with polluted hands and lips? You would not presume to kiss a king with an unclean mouth, and the King of heaven do you kiss with an unclean soul? It is an outrage. Tell me, would you choose to come to the Sacrifice with unwashen hands? No, I suppose, not. But you would rather choose not to come at all,

than come with soiled hands. And then, thus scrupulous as you are in this little matter, do you come with soiled soul, and thus dare to touch it? And yet the hands hold it but for a time, whereas into the soul it is dissolved entirely. What, do you not see the holy vessels so thoroughly cleansed all over, so resplendent? Our souls ought to be purer than they, more holy, more brilliant. And why so? Because those vessels are made so for our sakes. They partake not of Him that is in them, they perceive Him not. But we do—yes, verily. Now then, you would not choose to make use of a soiled vessel, and do you approach with a soiled soul? Observe the vast inconsistency of the thing. At the other times you come not, no, not though often you are clean; but at Easter, however flagrant an act you may have committed, you come. Oh! The force of custom and of prejudice! In vain is the daily Sacrifice, in vain do we stand before the Altar; there is no one to partake. These things I am saying, not to induce you to partake any how, but that you should render yourselves worthy to partake. Are you not worthy of the Sacrifice, nor of the participation? If so, then neither are you of the prayer. You hear the herald, standing, and saying, "*As many as are in penitence, all pray.*" As many as do not partake, are in penitence. If you are one of those that are in penitence, you ought not to partake; for he that partakes not, is one of those that are in penitence. Why then does he say, "*Depart, you that are not qualified to pray,*" while you have the effrontery to stand still? But no, you are not of that number, you are of the number of those who are qualified to partake, and yet art indifferent about it, and regardest the matter as nothing.

Look, I entreat: a royal table is set before you, Angels minister at that table, the King Himself is there, and do you stand gaping? Are your garments defiled, and yet do you make no account of it?— or are they clean? Then fall down and partake. Every day He comes in to see the

guests, and converses with them all. Yes, at this moment is he speaking to your conscience; *"Friends, how are you standing here, not having on a wedding garment?"* He said not, Why did you sit down? No, before he sat down, He declared him to be unworthy, so much as to come in. He says not, *"Why did you sit down to eat,"* but, *"Why did you come in?"* And these are the words that He is at this very moment addressing to one and all of us that stand here with such shameless effrontery. For every one, that partakes not of the mysteries, is standing here in shameless effrontery. It is for this reason, that they which are in sins are first of all put forth; for just as when a master is present at his table, it is not right that those servants who have offended him should be present, but they are sent out of the way: just so also here when the sacrifice is brought forth, and Christ, the Lord's sheep, is sacrificed; when you hear the words, *"Let us pray together,"* when you behold the curtains drawn up, then imagine that the Heavens are let down from above, and that the Angels are descending!

As then it is not meet that any one of the uninitiated be present, so neither is it that one of them that are initiated, and yet at the same time defiled. Tell me, suppose any one were invited to a feast, and were to wash his hands, and sit down, and be all ready at the table, and after all refuse to partake; is he not insulting the man who invited him? Were it not better for such an one never to have come at all? Now it is just in the same way that you have come here. You have sung the Hymn with the rest: you have declared yourself to be of the number of them that are Worthy, by not departing with them that are unworthy. Why stay, and yet not partake of the table? I am unworthy, you will say. Then are you also unworthy of that communion you have had in prayers. For it is not by means of the offerings only, but also by means of those canticles that the Spirit descends all around. Do we not see our own servants, first scouring the table with a

sponge, and cleaning the house, and then setting out the entertainment? This is what is done by the prayers, by the cry of the herald. We scour the Church, as it were, with a sponge, that all things may be set out in a pure church, that there may be *"neither spot nor wrinkle."* [Ephesians 5:27] Unworthy, indeed, both our eyes of these sights, and unworthy are our ears! *"And if even a beast,"* it is said, *"touch the mountain, it shall be stoned."* [Exodus 19:13] Thus then they were not worthy so much as to set foot on it, and yet afterwards they both came near, and beheld where God had stood. And you may, afterwards, come near, and behold: when, however, He is present, depart. You are no more allowed to be here than the Catechumen is. For it is not at all the same thing never to have reached the mysteries, and when you have reached them, to stumble at them and despise them, and to make yourself unworthy of this thing. One might enter upon more points, and those more awful still; not however to burden your understanding, these will suffice. They who are not brought to their right senses with these, certainly will not be with more.

That I may not then be the means of increasing your condemnation, I entreat you, not to forbear coming, but to render yourselves worthy both of being present, and of approaching. Tell me, were any king to give command and to say, *"If any man does this, let him partake of my table;"* say, would ye not do all you could to be admitted? He has invited us to heaven, to the table of the great and wonderful King, and do we shrink and hesitate, instead of hastening and running to it? And what then is our hope of salvation? We cannot lay the blame on our weakness; we cannot on our nature. It is indolence and nothing else that renders us unworthy.

So far have I spoken of myself. But may He that pricks the heart, He that gives the Spirit of compunction, pierce your hearts, and plant the seeds in the depth of them, that so through His fear ye may conceive, and bring

forth the spirit of salvation, and come near with boldness. For, "*your children*," it is said, "*are like olive plants round about your table*." [Psalm 128:3] O, then, let there be nothing old, nothing wild, nothing harsh. For of such sort are the young plants that are fit for fruit, for the beautiful fruit, fruit I mean of the olive-tree. And thriving they are, so as all to be round about the table, and come together here, not in vain or by chance, but with fear and reverence. For thus shall you behold with boldness even Christ Himself in heaven, and shall be counted worthy of that heavenly kingdom, which may God grant we may all attain, in Jesus Christ, our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and for ages of ages. Amen.

Homily 4 on Ephesians

Chapter II. Verses 1-3

"And you did He quicken, when you were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived, in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest."

There is, we know, a corporal, and there is also a spiritual, dying. Of the first it is no crime to partake, nor is there any peril in it, inasmuch as there is no blame attached to it, for it is a matter of nature, not of deliberate choice. It had its origin in the transgression of the first-created man, and thenceforward in its issue it passed into a nature, and, at all events, will quickly be brought to a termination; whereas this spiritual dying, being a matter of deliberate choice, has criminality, and has no termination. Observe then how Paul, having already shown how exceedingly great a thing it is, in so much that to heal a deadened soul is a far greater thing than to raise the dead, so now again lays it down in all its real greatness.

"And you," says he *"when you were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience."* You observe the gentleness of Paul, and how on all occasions he encourages the hearer, not bearing too hard upon him. For whereas he had said, You have arrived at the very last degree of wickedness, (for such is the meaning of becoming dead,) that he may not excessively distress them, (because men are put to shame when their former

misdeeds are brought forward, cancelled though they be, and no longer attended with danger,) he gives them, as it were, an accomplice, that it may not be supposed that the work is all their own, and that accomplice a powerful one. And who then is this? The Devil. He does much the same also in the Epistle to the Corinthians, where, after saying, "*Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters,*" [1 Corinthians 6:9] and after enumerating all the other vices, and adding in conclusion, "*shall inherit the kingdom of God;*" he then adds, "*and such were some of you;*" he does not say absolutely, "*you were,*" but "*some of you were,*" that is, thus in some sort were ye. Here the heretics attack us. They tell us that these expressions ("*prince of all the power of the air,*" etc.) are used with reference to God, and letting loose their unbridled tongue, they fit these things to God, which belong to the Devil alone. How then are we to put them to silence? By the very words they themselves use; for, if He is righteous, as they themselves allow, and yet has done these things, this is no longer the act of a righteous being, but rather of a being most unrighteous and corrupted; and corrupted God cannot possibly be.

Further, why does he call the Devil "*the prince*" of the world? Because nearly the whole human race has surrendered itself to him and all are willingly and of deliberate choice his slaves. And to Christ, though He promises unnumbered blessings, not any one so much as gives any heed; while to the Devil, though promising nothing of the sort, but sending them on to hell, all yield themselves. His kingdom then is in this world, and he has, with few exceptions, more subjects and more obedient subjects than God, in consequence of our indolence.

"According to the power," says he, *"of the air, of the spirit."*

Here again he means, that Satan occupies the space under Heaven, and that the incorporeal powers are spirits of the air, under his operation. For

that his kingdom is of this age, i.e., will cease with the present age, hear what he says at the end of the Epistle; *"Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this darkness;"* [Ephesians 6:12] where, lest when you hear of world rulers you should therefore say that the Devil is uncreated, he elsewhere [Galatians 1:4] calls a perverse time, *"an evil world,"* not of the creatures. For he seems to me, having had dominion beneath the sky, not to have fallen from his dominion, even after his transgression.

"That now works," he says, *"in the sons of disobedience."*

You observe that it is not by force, nor by compulsion, but by persuasion, he wins us over; *"disobedience"* or *"untractableness"* is his word, as though one were to say, by guile and persuasion he draws all his votaries to himself. And not only does he give them a word of encouragement by telling them they have an associate, but also by ranking himself with them, for he says,

"Among whom we also all once lived."

"All," because he cannot say that any one is excepted.

"In the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

That is, having no spiritual affections. Yet, lest he should slander the flesh, or lest it should be supposed that the transgression was not great, observe how he guards the matter,

"Doing," he says, *"the desires of the flesh and of the mind."*

That is, the pleasurable passions. We provoked God to anger, he says, we provoked Him to wrath, we were wrath, and nothing else. For as he who is a child of man is by nature man, so also were we children of wrath even as others; i.e., no one was free, but we all did things worthy of wrath.

Ver. 4. *"But God, being rich in mercy."*

Not merely merciful, but rich in mercy; as it is said also in another place; *"In the multitude of your mercies."* [Psalm 69:17] And again, *"Have mercy upon me, according to the multitude of your tender mercies."* [Psalm 51:1]

Ver. 4. *"For His great love, wherewith He loved us."*

Why did He love us? For these things are not deserving of love, but of the sorest wrath, and punishment. And thus it was of great mercy.

Ver. 5. *"Even when we were dead through our trespasses He quickened us together with Christ."*

Again is Christ introduced, and it is a matter well worthy of our belief, because if the Firstfruits live, so do we also. He has quickened both Him, and us. Do you see that all this is said of Christ incarnate? Beholdest thou *"the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe?"* [Ephesians 1:19] Them that were dead, them that were children of wrath, them has he quickened. Beholdest thou *"the hope of his calling?"*

Ver. 6. *"He raised us up with Him and made us sit with Him."*

Beholdest thou the glory of His inheritance? That *"He has raised us up together,"* is plain. But that He *"has made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"* how does this hold? It holds as truly, as that He has raised us together. For as yet no one is actually raised, excepting that inasmuch as as the Head has risen, we also are raised, just as in the history, when Jacob did obeisance, his wife also did obeisance to Joseph. [Genesis 37:9-10] And so in the same way *"has He also made us to sit with Him."* For since the Head sits, the body sits also with it, and therefore he adds *"in Christ Jesus."* Or again, if it means, not this, it means that by the laver of Baptism He has *"raised us up with Him."* How then in that case has He made *"us to sit with Him?"* Because, says he, *"if we suffer we shall also reign with Him,"* [2 Timothy 2:12] if we be dead with Him we shall also

live with Him. Truly there is need of the Spirit and of revelation, in order to understand the depth of these mysteries. And then that you may have no distrust about the matter, observe what he adds further.

Ver. 7. *"That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in kindness towards us, in Christ Jesus."*

Whereas he had been speaking of the things which concerned Christ, and these might be nothing to us, (for what, it might be said, is it to us, that He rose) therefore he shows that they do moreover extend to us, inasmuch as He is made one with us. Only that our concern in the matter he states separately. *"Us,"* says he, *"who were dead through our trespasses He raised up with Him, and made us sit with Him."* Wherefore, as I was saying, be not unbelieving, take the demonstration he adduces both from former things, and from His Headship, and also from His desire to show forth His goodness. For how will He show it, unless this come to pass? And He will show it in the ages to come. What? That the blessings are both great, and more certain than any other. For now the things which are said may to the unbelievers seem to be foolishness; but then all shall know them. Would you understand too, how He has made us sit together with Him? Hear what Christ Himself says to the disciples, *"You also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* [Matthew 19:28] And again, *"But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give, but it is for them for whom it has been prepared of My Father."* [Matthew 20:23] So that it has been prepared. And well says he, *"in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus,"* for to sit on His right hand is honor above all honor, it is that beyond which there is none other. This then he says, that even we shall sit there. Truly this is surpassing riches, truly surpassing is the greatness of His power, to make us sit down with Christ, Yea, had you ten thousand souls, would you not lose them for His sake? Yea, had you to enter the flames,

ought you not readily to endure it? And He Himself too says again, *"Where I am, there shall also My servant be."* [John 12:26] Why surely had ye to be cut to pieces every day, ought ye not, for the sake of these promises cheerfully to embrace it? Think, where He sits? Above all principality and power. And with whom it is that you sit? With Him. And who you are? One dead, by nature a child of wrath. And what good have you done? None. Truly now it is high time to exclaim, *"Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!"* [Romans 11:33]

Ver. 8. *"For by grace,"* says he *"have you been saved."*

In order then that the greatness of the benefits bestowed may not raise you too high, observe how he brings you down: *"by grace you have been saved,"* says he,

"Through faith;"

Then, that, on the other hand, our free-will be not impaired, he adds also our part in the work, and yet again cancels it, and adds,

"And that not of ourselves."

Neither is faith, he means, *"of ourselves."* Because had He not come, had He not called us, how had we been able to believe? For *"how,"* says he, *"shall they believe, unless they hear?"* [Romans 10:14] So that the work of faith itself is not our own.

"It is the gift," said he, *"of God,"* it is *"not of works."*

Was faith then, you will say, enough to save us? No; but God, says he, has required this, lest He should save us, barren and without work at all. His expression is, that faith saves, but it is because God so wills, that faith saves. Since, how, tell me, does faith save, without works? This itself is the gift of God.

Ver. 9. *"That no man should glory."*

That he may excite in us proper feeling touching this gift of grace. *"What then?"* says a man, *"Hath He Himself hindered our being justified by works?"* By no means. But no one, he says, is justified by works, in order that the grace and loving-kindness of God may be shown. He did not reject us as having works, but as abandoned of works He has saved us by grace; so that no man henceforth may have whereof to boast. And then, lest when you hear that the whole work is accomplished not of works but by faith, you should become idle, observe how he continues,

Ver. 10. *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."*

Observe the words he uses. He here alludes to the regeneration, which is in reality a second creation. We have been brought from non-existence into being. As to what we were before, that is, the old man, we are dead. What we are now become, before, we were not. Truly then is this work a creation, yea, and more noble than the first; for from that one, we have our being; but from this last, we have, over and above, our well being.

"For good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

Not merely that we should begin, but that we should walk in them, for we need a virtue which shall last throughout, and be extended on to our dying day. If we had to travel a road leading to a royal city, and then when we had passed over the greater part of it, were to flag and sit down near the very close, it were of no use to us. This is the hope of our calling; for *"for good works"* he says. Otherwise it would profit us nothing.

Moral. Thus here he rejoices not that we should work one work, but all; for, as we have five senses, and ought to make use of all in their proper season, so ought we also the several virtues. Now were a man to be temperate and yet unmerciful, or were he to be merciful and yet grasping, or

were he to abstain indeed from other people's goods, and yet not bestow his own, it would be all in vain. For a single virtue alone is not enough to present us with boldness before the judgment-seat of Christ; no, we require it to be great, and various, and universal, and entire. Hear what Christ says to the disciples, *"Go, you and make disciples of all the nations—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."* [Matthew 28:19] And again, *"Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven,"* [Matthew 5:19] that is, in the resurrection; nay, he shall not enter into the kingdom; for He is wont to call the time also of the resurrection, the kingdom. *"If he break one,"* says He, *"he shall be called least,"* so that we have need of all. And observe how it is not possible to enter without works of mercy; but if even this alone be wanting, we shall depart into the fire. For, says He, *"Depart, you cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels."* Why and wherefore? *"For I was an hungered, and you gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink."* [Matthew 25:42] Beholdest thou, how without any other charge laid against them, for this one alone they perished. And for this reason alone too were the virgins also excluded from the bride-chamber, though sobriety surely they did possess. As the Apostle says *"and the sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord."* [Hebrews 12:14] Consider then, that without sobriety, it is impossible to see the Lord; yet it does not necessarily follow that with sobriety it is possible to see Him, because often-times something else stands in the way. Again, if we do all things ever so rightly, and yet do our neighbor no service, neither in that case shall we enter into the kingdom. Whence is this evident? From the parable of the servants entrusted with the talents. For, in that instance, the man's virtue was in every point unimpaired, and there had been nothing lacking, but forasmuch as he was slothful in his business, he was rightly

cast out. Nay, it is possible, even by railing only, to fall into Hell. "*For whosoever*" says Christ, "*shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire.*" [Matthew 5:22] And if a man be ever so right in all things, and yet be injurious, he shall not enter.

And let no one impute cruelty to God, in that he excludes those who fail in this matter, from the kingdom of Heaven. For even with men, if any one do any thing whatsoever contrary to the law, he is banished from the king's presence. And if he transgresses so much as one of the established laws, if he lays a false accusation against another, he forfeits his office. And if he commits adultery, and is detected, he is disgraced, and even though he have done ten thousand right acts, he is undone; and if he commits murder, and is convicted, this again is enough to destroy him. Now if the laws of men are so carefully guarded, how much more should those of God be. "*But He is good,*" a man says. How long are we to be uttering this foolish talk? Foolish, I say, not because He is not good, but in that we keep thinking that His goodness will be available to us for these purposes, though I have again and again used ten thousand arguments on this subject. Listen to the Scripture, which says, "*Say not, His mercy is great, He will be pacified for the multitude of my sins.*" [Sirach 5:6] He does not forbid us to say, "*His mercy is great.*" This is not what He enjoins; rather he would have us constantly say it, and with this object Paul raises all sorts of arguments, but his object is what follows. Do not, he means, admire the loving-kindness of God with this view, with a view to sinning, and saying, "*His mercy will be pacified for the multitude of my sins.*" For it is with this object that I too discourse so much concerning His goodness, not that we may presume upon it, and do any thing we choose, because in that way this goodness will be to the prejudice of our salvation; but that we may not despair in our sins, but may repent. For "*the goodness of God leads you to repentance,*" [Romans

2:4] not to greater wickedness. And if you become depraved, because of His goodness, you are rather belying Him before men. I see many persons thus impugning the long-suffering of God; so that if you use it not aright, you shall pay the penalty. Is God a God of loving-kindness? Yes, but He is also a righteous Judge. Is He one who makes allowance for sins? True, yet renders He to every man according to his works. Does He pass by iniquity and blot out transgressions? True, yet makes He inquisition also. How then is it, that these things are not contradictions? Contradictions they are not, if we distinguish them by their times. He does away iniquity here, both by the laver of Baptism, and by penitence. There He makes inquisition of what we have done by fire and torment. *"If then,"* some man may say, *"I am cast out, and forfeit the kingdom, whether I have wrought ten thousand evil deeds or only one, wherefore may I not do all sorts of evil deeds?"* This is the argument of an ungrateful servant; still nevertheless, we will proceed to solve even this. Never do that which is evil in order to do yourself good; for we shall, all alike fall short of the kingdom, yet in Hell we shall not all undergo the same punishment, but one a severer, another a milder one. For now, if you and another have *"despised God's goodness,"* [Romans 2:4] the one in many instances, and the other in a few, you will alike forfeit the kingdom. But if you have not alike despised Him, but the one in a greater, the other in a less degree, in Hell you shall feel the difference.

Now then, why, it may be said, does He threaten them who have not done works of mercy, that they shall depart into the fire, and not simply into the fire, but into that which is *"prepared for the devil and his angels?"* [Matthew 25:41] Why and wherefore is this? Because nothing so provokes God to wrath. He puts this before all terrible things; for if it is our duty to love our enemies, of what punishment shall not he be worthy, who turns away even from them that love him, and is in this respect worse than the

heathen? So that in this case the greatness of the sin will make such an one go away with the devil. Woe to him, it is said, who does not alms; and if this was the case under the Old Covenant, much more is it under the New. If, where the getting of wealth was allowed, and the enjoyment of it, and the care of it, there was such provision made for the succoring the poor, how much more in that Dispensation, where we are commanded to surrender all we have? For what did not they of old do? They gave tithes, and tithes again upon tithes for orphans, widows, and strangers; whereas some one was saying to me in astonishment at another, *"Why, such an one gives tithes."* What a load of disgrace does this expression imply, since what was not a matter of wonder with the Jews has come to be so in the case of the Christians? If there was danger then in omitting tithes, think how great it must be now.

Again, drunkenness shall not inherit the kingdom. Yet what is the language of most people? *"Well, if both I and he are in the same case, that is no little comfort."* What then? First of all, that you and he shall not reap the same punishment; but were it otherwise, neither is that any comfort. Fellowship in sufferings has comfort in it, when the miseries have any proportion in them; but when they exceed all proportion, and carry us beyond ourselves, no longer do they allow of our receiving any comfort at all. For tell the man that is being tortured, and has entered into the flames, that such an one is undergoing the same, still he will not feel the comfort. Did not all the Israelites perish together? What manner of comfort did that afford them? Rather, did not this very thing distress them? And this was why they kept saying, We are lost, we are perished, we are wasted away. What manner of comfort then is there here? In vain do we comfort ourselves with such hopes as these. There is but one only comfort, to avoid falling into that unquenchable fire; but it is not possible for one who has

fallen into it to find comfort, where there is the gnashing of teeth, where there is the weeping, where is the worm that dies not, and the fire that is not quenched. For shall you conceive any comfort at all, tell me, when you are in so great tribulation and distress? Will you then be any longer yourself? Let us not, I pray and entreat you, let us not vainly deceive ourselves and comfort ourselves with arguments like these; no, let us practise those virtues, which shall avail to save us. The object before us is to sit together with Christ, and are you trifling about such matters as these? Why, were there no other sin at all, how great punishment ought we not to suffer for these very speeches themselves, because we are so insensate, so wretched, and so indolent, as, even with so vast a privilege before us, to talk thus? Oh! How much shall you have to lament, when you shall then consider them that have done good! When you shall behold slaves and base-born who have labored but a little here, there made partakers of the royal throne, will not these things be worse to you than torment? For if even now, when you see any in high reputation, though you are suffering no evil, you regard this as worse than any punishment, and by this alone art consumed, and bemoanest yourself, and weepst, and judgest it to be as bad as ten thousand deaths; what shall you suffer then? Why, even were there no hell at all, the very thought of the kingdom, were it not enough to destroy and consume you? And that such will be the case, we have enough in our own experience of things to teach us. Let us not then vainly flatter our own souls with speeches like these; no, let us take heed, let us have a regard for our own salvation, let us make virtue our care, let us rouse ourselves to the practice of good works, that we may be counted worthy to attain to this exceeding glory, in Jesus Christ our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever, and for ages of ages. Amen.

Homily 5 on Ephesians

Chapter II. Verses 11, 12

"Wherefore remember, that aforetime ye the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that you were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

There are many things to show the loving-kindness of God. First, the fact, that by Himself He has saved us, and by Himself through such a method as this. Secondly, that He has saved us, as being what we were. Thirdly, that He has exalted us to the place where we are. For all these things both contain in themselves the greatest demonstration of His loving-kindness, and they are the very subjects which Paul is now agitating in his Epistle. He had been saying, that when we were dead through our trespasses, and children of wrath, He saved us; He is now telling us further, to whom He has made us equal. *"Wherefore,"* says he, *"remember;"* because it is usual with us, one and all, when we are raised from a state of great meanness to corresponding, or perhaps a greater, dignity, not so much as even to retain any recollection of our former condition, being nourished in this our new glory. On this account it is that he says, *"Wherefore remember."*— *"Wherefore."* Why, *"wherefore?"* Because we have been created unto good works, and this were sufficient to induce us to cultivate virtue; *"remember,"*— for that remembrance is sufficient to make us grateful to our Benefactor,— *"that you were aforetime Gentiles."* Observe how he lowers the superior advantages of the Jews and admires the

disadvantages of the Gentiles; disadvantage indeed it was not, but he is arguing with each respectively from their character and manner of life.

"Who are called Uncircumcision."

The honor then of the Jews is in names, their prerogative is in the flesh. For uncircumcision is nothing, and circumcision is nothing.

"By that which is called," says he, Circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that you were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

You, says he, who were thus called by the Jews. But why when he is about to show that the benefit bestowed upon them consisted in this, in having fellowship with Israel, does he disparage the Israelitish prerogative? He does not disparage it. In essential points he enhances it, but only in these points, in which they had no fellowship, he disparages it. For further on he says, *"You are fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God."* Mark, how far he is from disparaging it. These points, says he, are indifferent. Never think, says he, that because ye happen not to be circumcised, and are now in uncircumcision, that there is any difference in this. No, the real trouble was this, the being *"without Christ,"* the being *"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."* Whereas this circumcision is not *"the commonwealth."* Again, the being strangers from the covenants of promise, the having no hope to come, the being without God in this world, all these were parts of their condition. He was speaking of heavenly things; he speaks also of those which are upon earth; since the Jews had a great opinion of these. Thus also Christ in comforting His disciples, after saying, *"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"* adds the lesser point of consolation, *"for so,"* says He, *"persecuted they the prophets which were before you."*

[Matthew 5:10-12] For this, compared with the greatness of the other, is far less, yet in regard to the being near, and believing, it is great and sufficient, and has much force. This then was the sharing in the commonwealth. His word is not, *"separated,"* but *"alienated from the commonwealth."* His word is not, *"ye took no interest in,"* but, *"ye had not so much as any part in, and were strangers."* The expressions are most emphatic, and indicate the separation to be very wide. Because the Israelites themselves were without this commonwealth, not however as aliens, but as indifferent to it, and they fell from the covenants, not however as strangers, but as unworthy.

But what were *"the covenants of the promise?"* *"To you and to your seed,"* says He, *"will I give this land,"* [Genesis 17:8] and whatever else He promised.

"Having no hope," he adds, *"and without God."* Though gods indeed they worshipped, but they were no gods: *"for an idol is not any thing."* [1 Corinthians 10:19]

Ver. 13-15. *"But now, in Christ Jesus, you that once were far off, are made near in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity."*

Is this then the great privilege, it may be said, that we are admitted into the commonwealth of the Jews? What are you saying? *"He has summed up all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth,"* and now do you tell us about Israelites? Yes, he would say. Those higher privileges we must apprehend by faith; these, by the things themselves. *"But now,"* says he, *"in Christ Jesus, you that once were far off, are made near,"* in reference to the commonwealth. For the *"far off,"* and the *"near,"* are matters of will and choice only.

"For He is our peace, Who made both one."

What is this, "*both one*?" He does not mean this, that He has raised us to that high descent of theirs, but that he has raised both us and them to a yet higher. Only that the blessing to us is greater, because to these it had been promised, and they were nearer than we; to us it had not been promised, and we were farther off than they. Therefore it is that he says, "*And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.*" [Romans 15:9] The promise indeed He gave to the Israelites, but they were unworthy; to us He gave no promise, nay, we were even strangers, we had nothing in common with them; yet has He made us one, not by knitting us to them, but by knitting both them and us together into one. I will give you an illustration. Let us suppose there to be two statues, the one of silver, the other of lead, and then that both shall be melted down, and that the two shall come out gold. Behold, thus has He made the two one. Or put the case again in another way. Let the two be, one a slave, the other an adopted son: and let both offend Him, the one as a disinherited child, the other as a fugitive, and one who never knew a father. Then let both be made heirs, both trueborn sons. Behold, they are exalted to one and the same dignity, the two have become one, the one coming from a longer, the other from a nearer distance, and the slave becoming more noble than he was before he offended.

"And broke down," he proceeds, *"the middle wall of partition."*

What the middle wall of partition is, he interprets by saying, "*the enmity having abolished in His flesh, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.*" Some indeed affirm that he means the wall of the Jews against the Greeks, because it did not allow the Jews to hold intercourse with the Greeks. To me, however, this does not seem to be the meaning, but rather that he calls "*the enmity in the flesh,*" a middle wall, in that it is a common barrier, cutting us off alike from God. As the Prophet

says, *"Your iniquities separate between you and Me;"* [Isaiah 59:2] for that enmity which He had both against Jews and Gentiles was, as it were, a middle wall. And this, while the law existed, was not only not abolished, but rather was strengthened; *"for the law,"* says the Apostle, *"works wrath."* [Romans 4:15] Just in the same way then as when he says in that passage, *"the law works wrath,"* he does not ascribe the whole of this effect to the law itself, but it is to be understood, that it is because we have transgressed it; so also in this place he calls it a middle wall, because through being disobeyed it wrought enmity. The law was a hedge, but this it was made for the sake of security, and for this reason was called *"a hedge,"* to the intent that it might form an inclosure. For listen again to the Prophet, where he says, *"I made a trench about it."* [Isaiah 5:2] And again, *"You have broken down her fences, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her."* [Psalm 80:12] Here therefore it means security and so again, *"I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be trodden down."* [Isaiah 5:5] And again, *"He gave them the law for a defence."* [Isaiah 8:20] And again, *"The Lord executes righteous acts and made known His ways unto Israel."* [Psalm 103:6-7] It became, however, a middle wall, no longer establishing them in security, but cutting them off from God. Such then is the middle wall of partition formed out of the hedge. And to explain what this is, he subjoins, *"the enmity in His flesh having abolished, the law of commandments."*

How so? In that He was slain and dissolved the enmity therein. And not in this way only but also by keeping it. But what then, if we are released from the former transgression, and yet are again compelled to keep it? Then were the case the same over again, whereas He has destroyed the very law itself. For he says, *"Having abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances."* Oh! amazing loving-kindness! He gave us a law that we

should keep it, and when we kept it not, and ought to have been punished, He even abrogated the law itself. As if a man, who, having committed a child to a schoolmaster, if he should turn out disobedient, should set him at liberty even from the schoolmaster, and take him away. How great loving-kindness were this! What is meant by,

"Having abolished by ordinances?"

For he makes a wide distinction between *"commandments"* and *"ordinances."* He either then means *"faith,"* calling that an *"ordinance,"* (for by faith alone He saved us,) or he means *"precept,"* such as Christ gave, when He said, *"But I say unto you, that you are not to be angry at all."* [Matthew 5:22] That is to say, *"If you shall believe that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."* [Romans 10:6-9] And again, *"The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart. Say not, Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the abyss?"* or, who has *"brought Him again from the dead?"* Instead of a certain manner of life, He brought in faith. For that He might not save us to no purpose, He both Himself underwent the penalty, and also required of men the faith that is by doctrines.

"That he might create in Himself of the two, one new man."

Observe thou, that it is not that the Gentile has become a Jew, but that both the one and the other are entered into another condition. It was not with a view of merely making this last other than he was, but rather, in order to create the two anew. And well does he on all occasions employ the word *"create,"* and does not say *"change,"* in order to point out the power of what was done, and that even though the creation be invisible, yet it is no less a creation than that is, and that we ought not henceforward start away from this, as from natural things.

"That He might in Himself of the two."

That is, by Himself. He gave not this charge to another, but Himself, by Himself, melted both the one and the other, and produced a glorious one, and one greater than the first creation; and that one, first, was Himself. For this is the meaning of *"in Himself."* He Himself first gave the type and example. Laying hold on the one hand of the Jew, and on the other of the Gentile, and Himself being in the midst, He blended them together, made all the estrangement which existed between them to disappear, and fashioned them anew from above by fire and by water; no longer with water and earth, but with water and fire. He became a Jew by circumcision, He became accursed, He became a Gentile without the law, and was over both Gentiles and Jews.

"One new man," says he, *"so making peace."*

Peace for them both towards God, and towards each other. For so long as they continued still Jews and Gentiles, they could not have been reconciled. And had they not been delivered each from his own peculiar condition, they would not have arrived at another and a higher one. For the Jew is then united to the Gentile when he becomes a believer. It is like persons being in a house, with two chambers below, and one large and grand one above: they would not be able to see each other, till they had got above.

"Making peace," more especially towards God; for this the context shows, for what says he?

Ver. 16. *"And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the Cross."*

He says, not merely *"might reconcile,"* ([καταλλάξῃ]) but *"might reconcile thoroughly"* ([ἀ] [ποκαταλλάξῃ]) indicating that heretofore human nature had been easily reconciled, as, e.g., in the case of the saints and before the time of the Law.

"In one body," says he, and that His own, *"unto God."* How is this effected? By Himself, he means, suffering the due penalty.

"Through the cross having slain the enmity thereby."

Nothing can be more decisive, nothing more expressive than these words. His death, says the Apostle, has *"slain"* the enmity. He has *"wounded"* and *"killed"* it, not by giving charge to another, nor by what He wrought only, but also by what He suffered. He does not say *"having dissolved,"* he does say *"having cancelled,"* but what is stronger than all, *"having slain,"* so that it never should rise again. How then is it that it does rise again? From our exceeding depravity. For as long as we abide in the body of Christ, as long as we are united, it rises not again, but lies dead; or rather that former enmity never rises again at all. But if we breed another, it is no longer because of Him, who has destroyed and put to death the former one. It is thou, forsooth, that travailest with a fresh one. *"For the mind of the flesh,"* says he, *"is enmity against God;"* [Romans 8:6] if we are in nothing carnally-minded, there will be no fresh enmity produced, but that *"peace"* shall remain.

Moral. Think then, how vast an evil is it, when God has employed so many methods to reconcile us, and has effected it, that we should again fall back into enmity! This enmity no fresh Baptism, but hell itself awaits; no fresh remission, but searching trial. The mind of the flesh is luxury and indolence, the *"mind of the flesh"* is covetousness and all kinds of sin. Why is it said the mind of the flesh? While yet the flesh could do nothing without the soul. He does not say this to the disparagement of the flesh, any more than when he says the *"natural man,"* [1 Corinthians 2:14] he uses that expression to the disparagement of the soul, for neither body nor soul in itself, if it receive not the impulse which is far above, is able to achieve any thing great or noble. Hence he calls those acts which the soul performs of

herself, "*natural*;" [*ψυχικά*] " and those which the body performs of itself "*carnal*." Not because these are natural, but because, inasmuch as they receive not that direction from heaven, they perish. So the eyes are good, but without light, will commit innumerable errors; this, however, is the fault of their weakness, not of nature. Were the errors natural, then should we never be able to use them aright at all. For nothing that is natural is evil. Why then does he call carnal affections sins? Because whenever the flesh exalts herself, and gets the mastery over her charioteer, she produces ten thousand mischiefs. The virtue of the flesh is, her subjection to the soul. It is her vice to govern the soul. As the horse then may be good and nimble, and yet this is not shown without a rider; so also the flesh will then show her goodness, when we cut off her prancings. But neither again is the rider shown, if he have not skill. Nay he himself will do mischief yet more fearful than that before named. So that on all hands we must have the Spirit at hand. This being at hand will impart new strength to the rider; this will give beauty both to body and soul. For just as the soul, while dwelling in the body, makes it beautiful, but when she leaves it destitute of her own native energy and departs, like a painter confounding his colors together, the greatest loathsomeness ensues, every one of the several parts hastening to corruption, and dissolution:— so is it also when the Spirit forsakes the body and the soul, the loathsomeness which ensues is worse and greater. Do not then, because the body is inferior to the soul, revile it, for neither do I endure to revile the soul because it has no strength without the Spirit. If one need say anything at all, the soul is deserving of the greater censure than the body; for the body indeed can do no greivous harm without the soul, whereas the soul can do much without the body. Because, we know, when the one is even wasting away, and has no wantonness, the soul is busily employed. Even as those sorcerers, magicians, envious persons, enchanters,

especially cause the body to waste away. But besides this, not even luxury is the effect of the necessity of the body, but rather of the inattentiveness of the soul; for food, not feasting, is the object of the necessity of the body. For if I have a mind to put on a strong curb, I stop the horse; but the body is unable to check the soul in her evil courses. Wherefore then does he call it the carnal mind? Because it comes to be wholly of the flesh, for when she has the mastery, then she goes wrong, as soon as ever she has deprived herself of reason, and of the supremacy of the soul. The virtue therefore of the body consists in this, in its submission to the soul, since of itself the flesh is neither good nor evil. For what could the body ever do of itself? It is then by its connection that the body is good, good because of its subjection, but of itself neither good nor evil, with capacity, however, both for one and for the other, and having an equal tendency either way. The body has a natural desire, not however of fornication, nor of adultery, but of pleasure; the body has a desire not of feasting, but of food; not of drunkenness, but of drink. For in proof that it is not drunkenness that is the natural desire of the body, mark how, whenever you exceed the measure, when you go beyond the boundary-lines, it cannot hold out a moment longer. Up to this point it is of the body, but all the rest of the excesses, as e.g., when she is hurried away into sensualities, when she becomes stupefied, these are of the soul. For though the body be good, still it is vastly inferior to the soul, as lead is less of value than gold, and yet gold needs lead to solder it, and just so has the soul need also of the body. Or in the same way as a noble child requires a conductor, so again does the soul stand in need of the body. For, as we speak of childish things, not to the disparagement of childhood, but only of those acts which are done during childhood; so also are we now speaking of the body.

Yet it is in our power, if we will, no longer to be in the flesh, no, nor upon the earth, but in heaven, and in the Spirit. For our being here or there, is not determined so much by our position, as by our disposition. Of many people, at least, who are in some place, we say they are not there, when we say, *"You were not here. And again You are not here."* And why do I say this? We often say, *"You are not at ([é] [v]) yourself, I am not at ([é] [v]) myself,"* and yet what can be more material (a stronger instance of corporeal locality) than this, that a man is near to himself? And yet, notwithstanding, we say that he is not at himself. Let us then be in ourselves, in heaven, in the Spirit. Let us abide in the peace and in the grace of God, that we may be set at liberty from all the things of the flesh, and may be able to attain to those good things which are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, and might, and honor, now and henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on Ephesians

Chapter II. Verses 17-22

"And He came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were near, for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then you are no more strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone. In whom each several building, fitly framed together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

He sent not, says the Apostle, by the hand of another, nor did He announce these tidings to us by means of any other, but Himself did it in His own person. He sent not Angel nor Archangel on the mission, because to repair so many and vast mischiefs and to declare what had been wrought was in the power of none other, but required His own coming. The Lord then took upon Himself the rank of a servant, nay, almost of a minister, *"and came, and preached peace to you,"* says he, *"that were far off, and to them that were near."* To the Jews, he means, who as compared with ourselves were near. *"For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father."*

"Peace," says he, that *"peace"* which is towards God. He has reconciled us. For the Lord Himself also says, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you."* [John 14:27] And again, *"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."* [John 16:33] And again, *"Whatsoever you shall ask in my name that will I do."* [John 14:14] And again, *"For the Father loves you."* [John 16:27] These are so many evidences of peace. But how towards

the Gentiles? *"Because through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father,"* not ye less, and they more, but all by one and the same grace. The wrath He appeased by His death, and has made us meet for the Father's love through the Spirit. Mark again, the *"in"* means *"by"* or *"through."* By Himself and the Spirit that is, He has brought us unto the Father. *"So then you are no more strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints."*

Perceive ye that it is not with the Jews simply, no, but with those saintly and great men, such as Abraham, and Moses, and Elias? It is for the self-same city with these we are enrolled, for that we declare ourselves. *"For they that say such things,"* says he, *"make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own."* [Hebrews 11:14] No longer are we strangers from the saints, nor foreigners. For they who shall not attain to heavenly blessings, are foreigners. *"For the Son,"* says Christ, *"abides for ever."* [John 8:35]

"And of the household," he continues, *"of God."*

The very thing which they at the first had, by means of so many toils and troubles, has been for you accomplished by the grace of God. Behold the hope of your calling.

"Being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets."

Observe how he blends all together, the Gentiles, the Jews, the Apostles, the Prophets, and Christ, and illustrates the union sometimes from the body, and sometimes from the building: *"built,"* says he, *"upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets;"* that is, the Apostles and Prophets are a foundation, and he places the Apostles first, though they are in order of time last, doubtless to represent and express this, that both the one and the other are alike a foundation, and that the whole is one building, and that there is one root. Consider, that the Gentiles have the Patriarchs as a

foundation. He here speaks more strongly of that point than he does when he speaks of a *"grafting in."* There he rather attaches them on. Then he adds, that He who binds the whole together in Christ. For the chief corner-stone binds together both the walls, and the foundations.

"In whom each several building."

Mark, how he knits it all together, and represents Him at one time, as holding down the whole body from above, and welding it together; at another time, as supporting the building from below, and being, as it were, a root, or base. And whereas he had used the expression, *"He created in Himself of the two one new man;"* [Ephesians 2:15] by this he clearly shows us, that by Himself Christ knits together the two walls: and again, that in Him it was created. And *"He is the first-born,"* says he, *"of all creation,"* that is, He Himself supports all things.

"In whom each several building, fitly framed together."

Whether you speak of the roof, or of the walls, or of any other part whatsoever, He it is supports the whole. Thus he elsewhere calls Him a foundation. *"For other foundations,"* says he, *"can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* [1 Corinthians 3:11] *"In whom each several building,"* he says, *"fitly framed together."* Here he displays the perfectness of it, and indicates that one cannot otherwise have place in it, unless by living with great exactness. *"It grows says he into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also,"* he adds, *"are built together."* He is speaking continuously: *"Into a holy temple, for a habitation of God in the Spirit."* What then is the object of this building? It is that God may dwell in this temple. For each of you severally is a temple, and all of you together are a temple. And He dwells in you as in the body of Christ, and as in a Spiritual temple. He does not use the word which means our coming to God, ([*πρόσδοος*]) but which implies God's bringing us to Himself,

([προσαγωγή]) for we came not out of ourselves, but we were brought near by Him. *"No one,"* says Christ, *"comes unto the Father but by Me."* And again, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* [John 14:6]

He joins them with the Saints and again returns to his former image, nowhere suffering them to be disunited from Christ. Doubtless then, this is a building that shall go on until His coming. Doubtless it was for this reason that Paul said, *"As a wise master builder, I laid a foundation."* [1 Corinthians 3:10-11] And again that Christ is the foundation. What then means all this? You observe that the comparisons have all referred to the subject-matters, and that we must not expound them to the very letter. The Apostle speaks from analogy as Christ does, where He calls the Father an husbandman, [John 15:1] and Himself a root. [Revelation 22:16]

Chap. iii. ver. 1. *"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles."*

He has mentioned Christ's great and affectionate care; he now passes on to his own, insignificant indeed as it is, and a very nothing in comparison with that, and yet this is enough to engage them to himself. For this cause, says he, am I also bound. For if my Lord was crucified for your sakes, much more am I bound. He not only was bound Himself, but allows His servants to be bound also—*"for you Gentiles."* It is full of emphasis; not only do we no longer loathe you, but we are even bound, says he, for your sakes and of this exceeding grace am I partaker.

Ver. 2. *"If so be that you have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God, which was given me to you-ward."*

He alludes to the prediction addressed to Ananias concerning him at Damascus, when the Lord said, *"Go your way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and Kings."* [Acts 9:15]

By "*dispensation of grace*," he means the revelation made to him. As much as to say, I learned it not from man. [Galatians 1:12] He vouchsafed to reveal it even to me, though but an individual for your sakes. For Himself said unto me, says he, "*Depart, for I will send you forth far hence unto the Gentiles.*" [Acts 22:21] "*If so be that you have heard*" for a dispensation it was, a mighty one; to call one, uninfluenced from any other quarter, immediately from above, and to say, "*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?*" and to strike him blind with that ineffable light! "*if so be that you have heard,*" says he, "*of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward.*"

Ver. 3. "*How that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words.*"

Perhaps he had informed them of it by some persons, or had not long before been writing to them. Here he is pointing out that the whole is of God, that we have contributed nothing. For what? I ask, was not Paul himself, the wonderful, he that was so versed in the law, he that was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel according to the most perfect manner, was not he saved by grace? With good reason too does he call this a mystery, for a mystery it is, to raise the Gentiles in a moment to a higher rank than the Jews. "*As I wrote afore,*" says he, "*in few words,*" i.e., briefly,

Ver. 4. "*Whereby, when you read, you can perceive.*"

Amazing! So then he wrote not the whole, nor so much as he should have written. But here the nature of the subject prevented it. Elsewhere, as in the case of the Hebrews [Hebrews 5:11] and the Corinthians, [1 Corinthians 3:2] the incapacity of the hearers. "*Whereby, when you read, you can perceive,*" says he, "*my understanding in the mystery of Christ,*" i.e., how I knew, how I understood either such things as God has spoken, or else, that Christ sits at the right hand of God; and then too the dignity, in

that God *"has not dealt so with any nation."* [Psalm 147:20] And then to explain what nation this is with whom God has thus dealt, he adds,

Ver. 5. *"Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit."*

What then, tell me, did not the Prophets know it? How then does Christ say, that Moses and the Prophets wrote *"these things concerning Me?"* And again, *"If you believed Moses, you would believe Me."* [John 5:46] And again, *"You search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them you have eternal life, and these are they which bear witness of me."* [John 5:39] His meaning is this, either that it was not revealed unto all men, for he adds, *"which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed;"* or else, that it was not thus made known by the very facts and realities themselves, *"as it has now been revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit."* For reflect. Peter, had he not been instructed by the Spirit, never would have gone to the Gentiles. For hear what he says, *"Then has God given unto them the Holy Ghost, as well as unto us."* [Acts 10:47] That it was by the Spirit that God chose that they should receive the grace. The Prophets then spoke, yet they knew it not thus perfectly; so far from it, that not even did the Apostles, after they had heard it. So far did it surpass all human calculation, and the common expectation.

Ver. 6. *"That the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body and fellow partakers."*

What is this; *"fellow-heirs, and fellow-partakers of the promise, and fellow-members of the body?"* This last is the great thing, that they should be one body; this exceeding closeness of relation to Him. For that they were to be called indeed, that they knew, but that it was so great, as yet they knew not. This therefore he calls the mystery. *"Of the promise."* The

Israelites were partakers, and the Gentiles also were fellow-partakers of the promise of God.

"In Christ Jesus through the Gospel."

That is, by His being sent unto them also, and by their believing; for it is not said they are fellow-heirs simply, but *"through the Gospel."* However, this indeed, is nothing so great, it is in fact a small thing, and it discloses to us another and greater thing, that not only men knew not this, but that neither Angels nor Archangels, nor any other created power, knew it. For it was a mystery, and was not revealed. *"That ye can perceive,"* he says, *"my understanding."* This alludes, perhaps, to what he said to them in the Acts, that he had some knowledge that the Gentiles also were called. This, he says, is his own knowledge, *"the knowledge of the mystery,"* which he had mentioned, viz., *"that Christ will in Himself make of the two one new man."* For by revelation he was instructed, both he and Peter, that they must not spurn the Gentiles; and this he states in his defence.

Ver. 7. *"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power."*

He had said, *"I am a prisoner;"* but now again he says, that all is of God, as he says, *"according to the gift of His grace;"* for according to the power of the gift is the dignity of this privilege. But the gift would not have been enough, had it not also implanted in him power.

Moral. For a work indeed it was of power, of mighty power, and such as no human diligence was equal to. For he brought three qualifications to the preaching of the word, a zeal fervent and venturous, a soul ready to undergo any possible hardship, and knowledge and wisdom combined. For his love of enterprise, his blamelessness of life, had availed nothing, had he not also received the power of the Spirit. And look at it as seen first in himself, or rather hear his own words. *"That our ministration be not*

blamed." [2 Corinthians 6:3] And again, *"For our exhortation, is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, nor a cloke of covetousness."* [1 Thessalonians 2:3-5] Thus you have seen his blamelessness. And again, *"For we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."* [2 Corinthians 8:21] Then again, besides these; *"I protest by that glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily."* [1 Corinthians 15:31] And again; *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution?"* [Romans 8:35] And again; *"In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in watchings."* [2 Corinthians 6:4-5] Then again, his prudence and management; *"To the Jews I became as a Jew, to them that are without law as without law, to them that are under the law as under the law."* [1 Corinthians 9:20] He shaves his head also, [Acts 21:24-26] and does numberless things of the sort. But the crown of all is in the power of the Holy Ghost. *"For I will not dare to speak,"* says he, *"of any things save those which Christ wrought through me."* [Romans 15:18] And again, *"For what is there wherein you were made inferior to the rest of the Churches?"* [2 Corinthians 12:13] And again, *"For in nothing was I behind the very chiefest Apostles though I am nothing."* [2 Corinthians 12:11] Without these things, the work had been impossible.

It was not then by his miracles that men were made believers; no, it was not the miracles that did this, nor was it upon the ground of these that he claimed his high pretension, but upon those other grounds. For a man must be alike irreproachable in conduct, prudent and discreet in his dealings with others, regardless of danger, and apt to teach. It was by these qualifications that the greater part of his success was achieved. Where there were these, there was no need of miracles. At least we see he was successful in numberless such cases, quite antecedently to the use of

miracles. But, now-a-days, we without any of these would fain command all things. Yet if one of them be separated from the other, it henceforth becomes useless. What is the advantage of a man's being ever so regardless of danger, if his life be open to censure. *"For if the light that is in you be darkness,"* says Christ, *"how great is that darkness?"* [Matthew 6:23] Again, what the advantage of a man's being of an irreproachable life, if he is sluggish and indolent? *"For, he that does not take his cross, and follow after Me,"* says He, *"is not worthy of Me;"* [Matthew 10:38] and so, *"The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."* [John 10:11] Again, what is the advantage of being both these, unless a man is at the same time prudent and discreet in *"knowing how he ought to answer each one?"* [Colossians 4:6] Even if miracles be not in our power, yet both these qualities are in our power. Still however, notwithstanding Paul contributed so much from himself, yet did he attribute all to grace. This is the act of a grateful servant. And we should never so much as have heard of his good deeds, had he not been brought to a necessity of declaring them.

And are we worthy then so much as even to mention the name of Paul? He, who had moreover grace to aid him, yet was not satisfied, but contributed to the work ten thousand perils; while we, who are destitute of that source of confidence, whence, tell me, do we expect either to preserve those who are committed to our charge, or to gain those who are not come to the fold—men, as we are, who have been making a study of self-indulgence, who are searching the world over for ease, and who are unable, or rather who are unwilling, to endure even the very shadow of danger, and are as far distant from his wisdom as heaven is from earth? Hence it is too that they who are under us are at so great a distance behind the men of those days; because the disciples of those days were better than the teachers of these, isolated as they were in the midst of the populace, and of tyrants, and

having all men on all sides their enemies, and yet not in the slightest degree dragged down or yielding. Hear at least what he says to the Philippians, [Philippians 1:29] *"Because to you it has been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in his behalf."* And again to the Thessalonians, [1 Thessalonians 2:14] *"For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judæa."* And again in writing to the Hebrews [Hebrews 10:34] he said, *"And ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions."* And to the Colossians [Colossians 3:3] he testifies, saying, *"For you died, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* And indeed to these very Ephesians he bears witness of many perils and dangers. And again in writing to the Galatians, [Galatians 3:4] he says, *"Did ye suffer so many things in vain? If it be indeed in vain."* And you see them too, all employed in doing good. Hence it was that both grace wrought effectually in those days, hence also that they lived in good works. Hear, moreover, what he writes to the Corinthians, against whom he brings charges out of number; yet does he not bear even them record, where he says, *"Yea, what zeal it wrought in you, yea, what longing!"* [1 Corinthians 7:11] And again, in how many points does he bear them record on this subject? These things one shall not see now-a-days, even in teachers. They are all gone and perished. And the cause is, that love has waxed cold, that sinners go unpunished; (for hear what he says writing to Timothy, [1 Timothy 5:20] *"Them that sin, reprove in the sight of all;"*) it is that the rulers are in a sickly state; for if the head be not sound, how can the rest of the body maintain its vigor? But mark how great is the present disorder. They, who were living virtuously, and who under any circumstance might have confidence, have taken possession of the tops of the mountains, and have escaped out of the world, separating themselves as from an enemy and an alien and not from a body to which they belonged.

Plagues too, teeming with untold mischiefs, have lighted upon the Churches. The chief offices have become saleable. Hence numberless evils are springing, and there is no one to redress, no one to reprove them. Nay, the disorder has assumed a sort of method and consistency. Has a man done wrong, and been arraigned for it? His effort is not to prove himself guiltless, but to find if possible accomplices in his crimes. What is to become of us? Since hell is our threatened portion. Believe me, had not God stored up punishment for us there, you would see every day tragedies deeper than the disasters of the Jews. What then? However let no one take offense, for I mention no names; suppose some one were to come into this church to present you that are here at this moment, those that are now with me, and to make inquisition of them; or rather not now, but suppose on Easter day any one, endued with such a spirit, as to have a thorough knowledge of the things they had been doing, should narrowly examine all that came to Communion, and were being washed [in Baptism] after they had attended the mysteries; many things would be discovered more shocking than the Jewish horrors. He would find persons who practise augury, who make use of charms, and omens and incantations, and who have committed fornication, adulterers, drunkards, and revilers,— covetous, I am unwilling to add, lest I should hurt the feelings of any of those who are standing here. What more? Suppose any one should make scrutiny into all the communicants in the world, what kind of transgression is there which he would not detect? And what if he examined those in authority? Would he not find them eagerly bent upon gain? Making traffic of high places? envious, malignant, vainglorious, gluttonous, and slaves to money?

Where then there is such impiety as this going on, what dreadful calamity must we not expect? And to be assured how sore vengeance they incur who are guilty of such sins as these, consider the examples of old.

One single man, a common soldier, stole the sacred property, and all were smitten. You know, doubtless, the history I mean? I am speaking of Acham the son of Carmi, the man who stole the consecrated spoil. [Joshua 7:1-26] The time too when the Prophet spoke, was a time when their country was full of soothsayers, like that of the Philistines. [Isaiah 2:6] Whereas now there are evils out of number at the full, and not one fears. Oh, henceforth let us take the alarm. God is accustomed to punish the righteous also with the wicked; such was the case with Daniel, and with the three holy Children, such has been the case with ten thousand others, such is the case in the wars that are taking place even at the present day. For the one indeed, whatever burden of sins they have upon them, by this means lay aside even that; but not so the other.

On account of all these things, let us take heed to ourselves. Do ye not see these wars? Do ye not hear of these disasters? Do ye learn no lesson from these things? Nations and whole cities are swallowed up and destroyed, and myriads as many again are enslaved to the barbarians.

If hell bring us not to our senses, yet let these things. What, are these too mere threats, are they not facts that have already taken place? Great is the punishment they have suffered, yet a greater still shall we suffer, who are not brought to our senses even by their fate. Is this discourse wearing? I am aware it is myself, but if we attend to it, it has its advantage; because this it has not, the quality of an address to please—nay more, nor ever shall have, but ever those topics which may avail to humble and to chasten the soul. For these will be to us the ground-work of those blessings to come hereafter, to which God grant that we may all attain, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost be glory and might and honor, now and henceforth, and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 7 on Ephesians

Chapter III. Verses 8-11

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from all ages has been hid in God, who created all things: to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

They who go to the physician's have not merely to go there and nothing further; they have to learn how to treat themselves, and to apply remedies. And so with us then who come here, we must not do this and nothing else, we must learn our lesson, the surpassing lowliness of Paul. What? When he was about to speak of the vastness of the grace of God, hear what he says, *"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given."* Lowliness indeed it was even to bewail his former sins, although blotted out, and to make mention of them, and to hold himself within his true measure as where he calls himself *"a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious;"* [1 Timothy 1:13] yet nothing was equal to this: for *"formerly,"* says he, such was I; and again he calls himself, *"one born out of due time."* [1 Corinthians 15:8] But that after so many great and good deeds and at that time he should thus humble himself, and call himself *"less than the least of all,"* this is indeed great and surpassing moderation. *"To one who am less than the least of all saints;"* he says not, *"than the Apostles."* So that that expression is less strong than this before us. There his words are, *"I am not meet to be called an Apostle."* [1 Corinthians 15:9]

Here he says that he is even *"less than the least of all saints;"* *"to me,"* says he, *"who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given."* What grace? *"To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from all ages has been hid in God, who created all things, to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God."* True, to man it was not revealed; and are you enlightening Angels and Archangels and Principalities and Powers? I am, says he. For it was *"hid in God,"* even *"in God who created all things."* And do you venture to utter this? I do, says he. But whence has this been made manifest to the Angels? By the Church. Again he says, not merely the manifold ([ποικίλος]) but the much-manifold ([πολυποικίλος]) wisdom, that is, *"the multiplied and varied."* What then is this? Did not Angels know it? No, nothing of it; for if Principalities knew it not, much less could Angels ever have known it. What then? Did not even Archangels know it? No, nor even they. But whence were they going to know it? Who was to reveal it? When we were taught it, then were they also by us. For hear what the Angel says to Joseph; *"You shall call His Name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."* [Matthew 1:21]

Paul himself was sent to the Gentiles, the other Apostles to the Circumcision. So that the more marvellous and astonishing commission was given, says he, *"to me, who am less than the least."* And this too was of grace, that he that was least should have the greatest things entrusted to him; that he should be made the herald of these tidings. For he that is made a herald of the greater tidings, is in this way great.

"To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

If His *"riches are unsearchable,"* and that too after his appearing, much more is His essence. If it is still a mystery, much more was it before it was made known; for a mystery he calls it on this account, because neither did the Angels know it, nor was it manifest to any one else.

"And to make all men see," says he, *"what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages has been hid in God, who created all things."*

Angels knew only this, that *"The Lord's portion was His people."* [Deuteronomy 32:8-9] And again it is said, *"The Prince of Persia withstood me."* [Daniel 10:13] So that it is nothing to be wondered at that they were ignorant of this; for if they were ignorant of the circumstances of the return from the Captivity, much more would they be of these things. For this is the gospel. *"It is He that shall save,"* it says, *"His people."* [Matthew 1:21] Not a word about the Gentiles. But what concerns the Gentiles the Spirit reveals. That they were called indeed, the Angels knew, but that it was to the same privileges as Israel, yea, even to sit upon the throne of God, this, who would ever have expected? Who would ever have believed?

"Which has been hid," says he, *"in God."*

This *"dispensation,"* however, he more clearly unfolds in the Epistle to the Romans. *"In God,"* he continues, *"who created all things by Jesus Christ."* And he does well to say *"by Jesus Christ;"* forasmuch as He who created all things by Him, reveals also this by Him; for He has made nothing without Him; for *"without Him,"* it is said, *"was not any thing made."* [John 1:30]

In speaking of *"principalities"* and *"powers,"* he speaks both of those above and those beneath.

"According to the eternal purpose." It has been now, he means, brought to pass, but not now decreed, it had been planned beforehand from the very first. *"According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in*

Christ Jesus our Lord." That is, according to the eternal foreknowledge; foreknowing the things to come, i.e., he means the ages to come; for He knew what was to be, and thus decreed it. According to the purpose of the ages, of those, perhaps, which He has made by Christ Jesus, because it was by Christ that every thing was made.

Ver. 12. *"In whom we have,"* says he, *"boldness, and access in confidence through our faith in him."*

"Have access," not as prisoners, he says, nor yet, as persons candidates for pardon, nor as sinners; for, says he, we have even *"boldness with confidence,"* that is, accompanied with cheerful trust; arising from what source? *"through our faith in Him."*

Ver. 13. *"Wherefore I ask that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which are your glory."*

How is it *"for them?"* How is it *"their glory?"* It is because God so loved them, as to give even the Son for them, and to afflict His servants for them: for it was in order that they might attain so many blessings, that Paul was in prison. Surely this was from God's exceeding love towards them: it is what God also says concerning the Prophets, *"I have slain them by the words of my mouth."* [Hosea 6:5] But how was it that they fainted, when another was afflicted? He means, they were troubled, were distressed. This also he says when writing to the Thessalonians, *"that no man be moved by these afflictions."* [1 Thessalonians 3:3] For not only ought we not to grieve, but we ought even to rejoice. If you find consolation in the forewarning, we tell you beforehand that here we have tribulation. And why pray? Because thus has the Lord ordered.

Ver. 14, 15. *"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named."*

He here shows the spirit of his prayer for them. He does not say simply, *"I pray,"* but manifests the supplication to be heartfelt, by the *"bowing of the knees."*

"From whom every family."

That is, no longer, he means, reckoned, according to the number of Angels, but according to Him who has created the tribes both in heaven above and in earth beneath, not as the Jewish.

Ver. 16, 17. *"That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory that you may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."*

Mark with what insatiable earnestness he invokes these blessings upon them, that they may not be tossed about. But how shall this be effected? By the *"Holy Spirit in your inward man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."* How again shall this be?

Ver. 18, 19. *"To the end that you being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge."*

Thus is his prayer now again, the very same as when he began. For what were his words in the beginning? *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give unto you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints; and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe."* And now again he says the same. *"That ye may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth;"* i.e., to know perfectly the mystery which has been providentially ordered in our behalf: *"and the*

breadth, and length, and height, and depth;" that is, too, the immensity of the love of God, and how it extends every where. And he outlines it by the visible dimensions of solid bodies, pointing as it were to a man. He comprehends the upper and under and sides. I have thus spoken indeed, he would say, yet is it not for any words of mine to teach you these things; that must be the work of the Holy Spirit. *"By His might,"* says he, is it that you must be *"strengthened"* against the trials that await you, and in order to remain unshaken; so that there is no other way to be strengthened but by the Holy Ghost, both on account of trials and carnal reasonings.

But how does Christ dwell in the hearts? Hear what Christ Himself says, *"I and my Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* [John 14:23] He dwells in those hearts that are faithful, in those that are *"rooted"* in His love, those that remain firm and unshaken.

"That ye may be" thoroughly *"strong,"* says he; so that there is great strength needed.

"That ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God."

What he means is this. Although the love of Christ lies above the reach of all human knowledge, yet shall you know it, if you shall have Christ dwelling in you, yea, not only shall know from Him this, but shall even *"be filled unto all the fullness of God;"* meaning by the *"fullness of God,"* either the knowledge how God is worshipped in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or else urging them thus to use every effort, in order to be filled with all virtue, of which God is full.

Ver. 20. *"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."*

That God has done *"abundantly above all that we ask or think,"* is evident from what the Apostle himself has written. For I indeed, says he, pray, but He of Himself, even without any prayer of mine, will do works

greater than all we ask, not simply *"greater,"* nor *"abundantly greater,"* but *"exceeding abundantly."* And this is evident from *"the power, that works in us:"* for neither did we ever ask these things, nor did we expect them.

Ver. 21. *"Unto Him be the glory,"* he concludes, *"in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations forever and ever. Amen."*

Well does he close the discourse with prayer and doxology; for right were it that He, who has bestowed upon us such vast gifts, should be glorified and blessed, so that this is even a proper part of our amazement at His mercies, to give glory for the things advanced to us at God's hands through Jesus Christ.

"The glory in the Church." Well might he say this, forasmuch as the Church alone can last on to eternity.

It seems necessary to state what are meant by *"families."* ([πατριάι]) Here on earth, indeed there are *"families"* that is races sprung from one parent stock; but in heaven how can this be, where none is born of another? Surely then, by *"families,"* he means either the assemblies and orders of heavenly beings; as also we find it written in Scripture, *"the family of Amattari:"* [1 Samuel 10:21. See Septuagint] or else that it is from Him from whom earthly fathers have their name of father.

However, he does not ask the whole of God, but demands of them also faith and love, and not simply love, but love *"rooted and grounded,"* so that neither any blasts can shake it, nor any thing else overturn it. He had said, that *"tribulations"* are *"glory,"* and if mine are so to you, he would say, much more will your own be: so that to be afflicted is no token of men being forsaken, for He who has wrought so great things for us, never would do this.

Again, if in order to understand the love of God, it was necessary for Paul to pray, and there was need of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who

by following mere reasonings shall understand the nature of Christ? And why is it a difficult thing to learn that God loves us? Beloved, it is extremely difficult. For some know not even this; wherefore, they even say, numberless evils come to be in the world; and others know not the extent of this love. Nor, indeed, is Paul seeking to know its extent, nor with any view to measure it; for how could he? But only to understand this, that it is transcendent, and great. And this very thing, he says, he is able to show, even from the knowledge which has been vouchsafed to us.

However, what is higher than the being "*strengthened with might*," in order to have Christ within? Vast are the things we ask, says he, yet is He able to do above even them, so that not only does He love us, but does so intensely. Be it our care therefore, beloved, to understand the love of God. A great thing indeed is this; nothing is so beneficial to us, nothing so deeply touches us: more availing this to convince our souls than the fear of hell itself. Whence then shall we understand it? Both from the sources now mentioned, and from the things which happen every day. For from what motive have these things been done for us? From what necessity on His part? None whatever. Over and over again he lays down love as the cause. But the highest degree of love is that where men receive a benefit, without any prior service on their part to call for it.

Moral. And let us then be followers of Him; let us do good to our enemies, to them that hate us, let us draw near to those who turn their backs upon us. This renders us like God. "*For if you love them that love you,*" says Christ, "*what reward will you have?*" "*Do not even the Gentiles the same.*" [Matthew 5:46] But what is a sure proof of love? To love him that hates you. I wish to give you some example, (pardon me,) and since I find it not among them that are spiritual, I shall quote an instance from them that are without. See ye not those lovers? How many insults are wreaked upon

them by their mistresses, how many artifices practised, how many punishments inflicted: yet they are enchained to them, they burn for them, and love them better than their own souls, passing whole nights before their thresholds. From them let us take our example, not indeed to love such as those—women, I mean, that are harlots; no, but thus to love our enemies. For tell me, do not harlots treat their lovers with greater insolence than all the enemies in the world, and squander away their substance, and cast insult in their face, and impose upon them more servile tasks than upon their own menials? And yet still they desist not, though no one has so great an enemy in any one, as the lover in his mistress. Yea, this beloved one disdains, and reviles, and oftentimes maltreats him, and the more she is loved, the more she scorns him. And what can be more brutal than a spirit like this? Yet notwithstanding he loves her still.

But possibly we shall find love like this in spiritual characters also, not in those of our day, (for it has "*waxed cold*,") [Matthew 24:12] but in those great and glorious men of old. Moses, the blessed Moses, surpassed even those that love with human passion. How, and in what way? First, he gave up the court, and the luxury, and the retinue, and the glory attending it, and chose rather to be with the Israelites. Yet is this not only what no one else would ever have done, but would have even been ashamed, were another to have discovered him, of being found to be a kinsman of men, who were slaves and not only slaves, but were looked upon as even execrable. Yet was he not only not ashamed of his kindred, but with all his spirit defended them, and threw himself into dangers for their sake. [Acts 7:24] How? Seeing, it is said, one doing an injury to one of them, he defended him that suffered the injury, and slew him that inflicted it. But this is not as yet for the sake of enemies. Great indeed is this act of itself, but not so great as what comes afterwards. The next day, then, he saw the same thing taking

place, and when he saw him whom he had defended doing his neighbor wrong, he admonished him to desist from his wrong-doing. But he said, with great ingratitude, *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?"* [Acts 7:27] Who would not have taken fire at these words? Had then the former act been that of passion and frenzy, then would he have smitten and killed this man also; for surely he on whose behalf it was done, never would have informed against him. But because they were brethren, it is said, he spoke thus. When he [the Hebrew] was being wronged, he uttered no such word *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?"* *"Why did you not say this yesterday?"* Moses would say, *"Your injustice, and your cruelty, these make me a ruler and a judge."*

But now, mark, how that some, in fact, say as much even to God Himself. Whenever they are wronged indeed, they would have Him a God of vengeance, and complain of His long suffering; but when themselves do wrong, not for a moment.

However, what could be more bitter than words like these? And yet notwithstanding, after this, when he was sent to that ungrateful, to that thankless race, he went, and shrunk not back. Yea, and after those miracles, and after the wonders wrought by his hand, oftentimes they sought to stone him to death and he escaped out of their hands. They kept murmuring too incessantly, and yet still, notwithstanding, so passionately did he love them, as to say unto God, when they committed that heinous sin, *"Yet now if You will forgive, forgive their sin; and if not, blot even me also out of the book which You have written."* [Exodus 32:32] Fain would I perish, says he, with them, rather than without them be saved. Here, verily, is love even to madness, verily, unbounded love. What do you say, Moses? Are you regardless of Heaven? I am, says he, for I love those who have wronged me. Prayest thou to be blotted out? Yea, says he, what can I do, for it is love?

And what again after these things? Hear what the Scripture says elsewhere; *"And it went ill with Moses for their sakes."* [Psalm 106:32] How often did they wax wanton? How often did they reject both himself and his brother? How often did they seek to return back to Egypt? And yet after all these things did he burn, yea, was beside himself with love for them, and was ready to suffer for their sakes.

Thus ought a man to love his enemies; by lamentation, by unwearied endurance, by doing everything, by showing all favor, to aim at their salvation.

And what again, tell me, did Paul? Did he not ask even to be accursed in their stead? [Romans 9:3] But the great pattern we must of necessity derive from the Lord, for thus does He also Himself, where he says, *"For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good,"* [Matthew 5:45] adducing the example from His Father; but we from Christ Himself. He came unto them, in His Incarnation, I mean, He became a servant for their sakes, *"He humbled Himself, He emptied Himself, He took the form of a servant."* [Philippians 2:7-8] And when He came unto them, He went not Himself aside *"into any way of the Gentiles,"* [Matthew 10:5] and gave the same charge to His disciples, and not only so, but *"He went about healing all manner of disease, and all manner of sickness."* [Matthew 4:23] And what then? All the rest indeed were astonished, and marvelled, and said, *"Whence, then, has this man all these things?"* [Matthew 13:56] But these, the objects of His beneficence, these said, *"He has a devil,"* [John 10:20] and *"blasphemes,"* [John 10:36] and *"is mad,"* and is a *"deceiver,"* [John 7:12 and Matthew 27:63] Did he therefore cast them away? No, in no wise, but when He heard these sayings, He even yet more signally bestowed His benefits upon them, and went straightway to them that were about to crucify Him, to the intent that He might but only save them. And after He was

crucified, what were His words? *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* [Luke 23:34] Both cruelly treated before this, and cruelly treated after this, even to the very latest breath, for them He did every thing, in their behalf He prayed. Yea, and after the Cross itself, what did He not do for their sakes? Did He not send Apostles? Did He not work miracles? Did He not shake the whole world?

Thus is it we ought to love our enemies, thus to imitate Christ. Thus did Paul. Stoned, suffering unnumbered cruelties, yet did he all things for their good. Hear his own words. *"My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them that they may be saved."* [Romans 10:1-2] And again; *"For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God."* And again; *"If you, being a wild olive tree wast grafted in, how much more shall these be grafted into their own olive tree?"* [Romans 11:24] How tender, do you think, must be the affection from which these expressions proceed, how vast the benevolence? It is impossible to express it, impossible.

Thus is it we ought to love our enemies. This is to love God, Who has enjoined it, Who has given it as His law. To imitate Him is to love our enemy. Consider it is not your enemy you are benefiting, but yourself; you are not loving him, but art obeying God. Knowing therefore these things, let us confirm our love one to another, that we may perform this duty perfectly, and attain those good things that are promised in Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 8 on Ephesians

Chapter IV. Verses 1, 2

"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called, with all lowliness and meekness."

It is the virtue of teachers to aim not at praise, nor at esteem from those under their authority, but at their salvation, and to do every thing with this object; since the man who should make the other end his aim, would not be a teacher but a tyrant. Surely it is not for this that God set you over them, that you should enjoy greater court and service, but that your own interests should be disregarded, and every one of theirs built up. This is a teacher's duty: such an one was the blessed Paul, a man who was free from all manner of vanity, and was contented to be one of the many, nay more, to be the very least even of them. Hence he even calls himself their servant, and so generally speaks in a tone of supplication. Observe him then even now writing nothing dictatorial, nothing imperious, but all chastened and subdued.

"I therefore," says he, *"the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called."* What is it, tell me, you are beseeching? Is it that you may gain any end for yourself? No, says he, in no wise; it is that I may save others. And yet surely they who beseech, do so for things which are of importance to themselves. True; and this, says he, is of importance to myself, according to what he says also elsewhere in his writings, *"Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord;"* [1 Thessalonians 3:8] for he ever earnestly desired the salvation of those whom he was instructing.

"I, the prisoner in the Lord." Great and mighty dignity! Greater than that of king or of consul, or of any other. Hence it is the very title he uses in writing to Philemon, *"As Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Jesus Christ."* [Philemon 9] For nothing is so glorious as a bond for Christ's sake, as the chains that were bound around those holy hands; more glorious is it to be a prisoner for Christ's sake than to be an Apostle, than to be a Teacher, than to be an Evangelist. Is there any that loves Christ, he will understand what I am saying. Is any transported and fired with devotion for the Lord, he knows the power of these bonds. Such an one would rather choose to be a prisoner for Christ's sake, than to have the Heavens for his dwelling. More glorious than any gold were the hands he was showing to them, yea, than any royal diadem. Yes, no jewelled tiara bound around the head invests it with such glory, as an iron chain for Christ's sake. Then was the prison more glorious than palaces, yea, than heaven itself. Why say I than palaces? Because it contained a prisoner of Christ. Is there any that loves Christ, he knows the dignity of this title, he knows what a virtue is this, he knows how great a boon he bestowed upon mankind, even this, to be bound for His sake. More glorious this, perhaps to be bound for His sake, than *"to sit at His right hand,"* [Matthew 20:21] more august this, than to *"sit upon the twelve thrones."* [Matthew 19:28]

And why speak I of human glories? I am ashamed to compare earthly riches and golden attire to these bonds. But forbearing to speak of those great and heavenly glories, even were the thing attended with no reward at all, this alone were a great reward, this an ample recompense, to suffer these hardships for the sake of the Beloved. They that love, even though it be not God, but man, they know what I am saying, since they are more delighted to suffer for, than to be honored by those they love. But to fully understand these things belongs to the holy company, the Apostles, I mean, and them

alone. For hearken to what the blessed Luke says, [Acts 5:11] "*that they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.*" To all others indeed it seems to be foolishness, that to suffer dishonor is to be counted worthy, that to suffer dishonor is to rejoice. But to them that understand the love of Christ, this is esteemed of all things the most blessed. Were any to offer me my choice, the whole Heaven or that chain, that chain I would prefer. Were any to ask whether he should place me on high with the Angels, or with Paul in his bonds, the prison I would choose. Were any about to change me into one of those powers, that are in Heaven, that are round about the throne, or into such a prisoner as this, such a prisoner I would choose to be. Nothing is more blessed than that chain. Would that I could be at this moment in that very spot, (for the bonds are said to be still in existence,) to behold and admire those men, for their love of Christ. Would that I could behold the chains, at which the devils fear and tremble, but which Angels reverence. Nothing is more noble than to suffer any evil for Christ's sake. I count not Paul so happy, because he was "*caught up into Paradise,*" [2 Corinthians 12:4] as because he was cast into the dungeon; I count him not so happy, because he heard "*unspeakable words,*" as because he endured those bonds. I count him not so happy, because he was "*caught up into the third Heaven,*" [2 Corinthians 12:2] as I count him happy for those bonds' sake. For that these are greater than those, hear how even he himself knew this; for he says not, I who "*heard unspeakable words,*" beseech you: but what? "*I, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you.*" Nor yet are we to wonder, though he inscribes not this in all his Epistles, for he was not always in prison, but only at certain times.

I deem it more desirable to suffer evil for Christ's sake, than to receive honor at Christ's hands. This is transcendent honor, this is glory that

surpasses all things. If He Himself who became a servant for my sake, and "*emptied*" [Philippians 2:7] His glory, yet thought not Himself so truly in glory, as when He was crucified for my sake, what ought not I to endure? For hear His own words: "*Father, glorify Thou Me.*" [John 17:1] What is this you are saying? You are being led to the cross with thieves and plunderers of graves, you endure the death of the accursed; You are about to be spit upon and buffeted; and callest Thou this glory? Yes, He says, for I suffer these things for My beloved ones, and I count them altogether glory. If He who loved the miserable and wretched calls this glory, not to be on His Father's throne, nor in His Father's glory, but in dishonor—if this was His glory, and if this He set before the other: much more ought I to regard these things as glory. Oh! Those blessed bonds! Oh! Those blessed hands which that chain adorned! Not so worthy were Paul's hands when they lifted up and raised the lame man at Lystra, as when they were bound around with those chains. Had I been living in those times, how eagerly would I have embraced them, and put them to the very apple of my eyes. Never would I have ceased kissing those hands which were counted worthy to be bound for my Lord. Marvellest thou at Paul, when the viper fastened on his hand, and did him no hurt? Marvel not. It revered his chain. Yea, and the whole sea revered it; for then too was he bound, when he was saved from shipwreck. Were any one to grant me power to raise the dead at this moment, I would not choose that power, but this chain. Were I free from the cares of the Church, had I my body strong and vigorous, I would not shrink from undertaking so long a journey, only for the sake of beholding those chains, for the sake of seeing the prison where he was bound. The traces indeed of his miracles are numerous in all parts of the world, yet are they not so dear as those of his scars. [Galatians 6:17] Nor in the Scriptures does he so delight me when he is working miracles, as when he is suffering evil,

being scourged, and dragged about. Insomuch that from his body were carried away handkerchiefs or aprons. Marvellous, truly marvellous, are these things, and yet not so marvellous as those. *"When they had laid many stripes upon him, they cast him into prison."* [Acts 16:23] And again; being in bonds, *"they were singing hymns unto God."* [Acts 16:25] And again; *"They stoned him, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead."* [Acts 14:19] Would ye know how mighty a thing is an iron chain for Christ's sake, bound about His servant's body? Harken to what Christ Himself says, *"Blessed are you."* [Matthew 5:11] Why? When you shall raise the dead? No. But why? When you shall heal the blind? Not at all. But why then? *"When men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake."* [Matthew 5:11] Now, if to be evil spoken of renders men thus blessed, to be evil entreated, what may not that achieve? Harken to what this blessed one himself says elsewhere; *"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness:"* [2 Timothy 4:8] and yet, more glorious than this crown is the chain: of this, says he, the Lord will count me worthy, and I am in no wise inquisitive about those things. Enough it is for me for every recompense, to suffer evil for Christ's sake. Let Him but grant me to say, that *"I fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ:"* [Colossians 1:24] and I ask nothing further.

Peter also was counted worthy of this chain; for he, we read, was bound, and delivered to soldiers, and was sleeping. [Acts 12:6] Yet he rejoiced and was not diverted from his right mind and he fell into deep sleep which could not have been, had he been in any great anxiety. However, he was sleeping, being between two soldiers: and an Angel came unto him, and smote him on the side, and raised him up. Now then, were any one to say to me, Which would you? Would you be the Angel that struck Peter, or Peter that was delivered? I would rather choose to be Peter,

for whose sake even the Angel came, yea, I would that I might enjoy those chains. And how is it, say ye, that, as being released from great evils, he prays? Marvel not: he prays, because he is afraid lest he should die; and of dying he is afraid, because he would fain have his life to be still a subject for further sufferings. For hearken to what the blessed Paul himself also says. [Philippians 1:23-24] *"To depart, and to be with Christ, is very far better;" "Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."* This he calls even a favor where he writes, and says, *"To you it has been granted, (as a favor [ἐ] [χαρίσθη]) in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in His behalf."* [Philippians 1:29] So that this latter is greater than the other: for He gave it of His free grace; verily, a favor it is, exceeding great, yea greater than any one of those, greater than to make the sun and the moon stand still, than to move the world! greater this than to have power over devils, or to cast out devils. The devils grieve not so much at being cast out by the faith which we exert, as when they behold us suffering any evil, and imprisoned for Christ's sake. For this increases our boldness. Not for this is it a noble thing to be in bonds for Christ's sake that it procures for us a kingdom; it is that it is done for Christ's sake. Not for this do I bless those bonds, for that they conduct on to Heaven; it is because they are worn for the sake of the Lord of Heaven. How great a boast to know that he was bound for Christ's sake! How great a happiness, how high an honor, how illustrious a distinction! Fain would I ever be dwelling on these subjects. Fain would I cling to this chain. Fain would I, though in reality I have not the power, yet still in idea, bind this chain round my soul by a temper like his.

"The foundations of the prison-house," we read, *"were shaken"* where Paul was bound, *"and every one's bands were loosed."* [Acts 16:26] Beholdest thou then in bonds a nature that can dissolve bonds themselves?

For as the Lord's death put death itself to death, so also did Paul's bonds loose the men in bonds, shake the house of bondage, open the doors. Yet is not this the natural effect of bonds, but the very reverse; it is to keep him that is bound in safety, not to open for him the prison walls. No, of bonds then in general this is not the nature, but of those bonds which are for Christ's sake, it is. *"The jailor fell down before Paul and Silas."* [Acts 16:29] And yet neither is this again the effect of chains in general, to lay the binders at the feet of the bound: no, but, on the contrary, to put these last under the hands of the former. Whereas here, the man who was free was under the feet of the man who had been bound. The binder was beseeching him whom he had bound to release him from his fear. Tell me, was it not thou that bound him? Did you not cast him into the inner prison? Did you not make his feet fast in the stocks? Why do you tremble? Why are you troubled? Why do you weep? Why have you drawn your sword? Never bound I, says he, anything like this! I knew not that the prisoners of Christ had power so mighty as this. What do you say? They received power to open Heaven, and should they not be able to open a prison? They loosed them that were bound by evil spirits, and was a piece of iron likely to conquer them? You know not the men. And therefore also were thou pardoned. That prisoner is Paul, whom all the Angels reverence. He is Paul, whose very handkerchiefs and napkins cast out devils, and chase diseases to flight. And sure the bond which is of the devil is adamantine, and far more indissoluble than iron; for this indeed binds the soul, the other only the body. He therefore that released souls that were bound, shall not he have power to release his own body? He that could burst asunder the bonds of evil spirits, shall he not unloose a rivet of iron? He that by his very garments unloosed those prisoners, and released them from the spell of devils, shall not he of himself set himself at liberty? For this was he first

bound himself, and then loosed the prisoners, that you might understand that Christ's servants in bonds possess a power far greater than they that are at liberty. Had one who was at liberty wrought this, then had it not been so marvellous. So then the chain was not a token of weakness, but rather of a greater power, and thus is the saint's might more illustriously displayed, when, even though in bonds, he overpowers them that are at liberty, when he that is in bonds sets not only himself at liberty, but them that are in bonds also. Where is the use of walls? What the advantage of thrusting him into the inner prison, whereas he opened the outer also? And why too was it done in the night? And why with an earthquake?

Oh, bear with me a little, and give me leave while I refrain from the Apostle's words, and revel in the Apostle's deeds, and banquet on Paul's chain; grant me still longer to dwell upon it. I have laid hold on that chain, and no one shall part me from it. More securely at this moment am I bound by affection, than was he then in the stocks. This is a bond which no one can loose, for it is formed of the love of Christ; this neither the Angels, no, nor the kingdom of Heaven, has power to unloose. We may hear Paul's own words; [Romans 8:38-39] *"Neither angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Now then, why did the event take place at midnight? And wherefore too with an earthquake? Hearken, and marvel at the providential orderings of God. Every one's bands were loosed, and the doors were opened. And yet was this done only for the jailor's sake, not with a view to display, but with a view to his salvation: for that the prisoners knew not that they were loosed, is evident from Paul's exclamation; for what said he? *"He cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."* [Acts 16:28] But never would they all have been within, had they seen the doors

opened, and themselves set at liberty. They who were used to cut through walls, and to scale roofs and parapets, and to venture on all sorts of attempts in chains, never would have endured to remain within, with their bands loosed, and the doors opened, with the jailer himself asleep; no, but the bond of sleep was to them instead of the bonds of iron. So that the thing took place and yet no damage ensued from the miracle to the jailer who was to be saved. And besides this too, they that are bound are bound most securely in the night, not in the day; and so accordingly might we behold them bound again with all care and sleeping: but had these things been done in the day time, there would have been great stir and tumult.

Then again, wherefore was the building shaken? It was to arouse the jailer, to behold what was done, for he alone was worthy of being saved. And do thou too, behold, I pray, the exceeding greatness of the grace of Christ, for well were it in the midst of Paul's bonds to make mention also of the grace of God, nay indeed the very bonds themselves are of the gift and grace of God. Some indeed there are who complain "*Why was the jailer saved?*" and from those very circumstances, for which they ought to admire the loving-kindness of God they find fault with it. Nor is it anything to be wondered at. Such are those sickly persons, that find fault even with the food that nourishes them, which they ought to prize, and who affirm that honey is bitter: and those dimsighted persons who are darkened by the very thing which ought to enlighten them. Not that these effects arise from the nature of the objects themselves, but from the weakness of the persons who are unable to use them properly. What, however, was I saying? When they ought to be admiring God's loving-kindness, in that He took a man who had fallen into the most desperate wickedness, and was making him better, they find fault: "*Why, how was it that he did not take the thing to be the work of witchcraft and of sorcery, and confine them the more closely, and cry out?*"

Many things conspired to prevent this; first, that he heard them singing praises to God. And sorcerers never would have been singing such hymns as those, for he heard them, it is said, singing praises unto God. Secondly, the fact, that they themselves did not take flight, but even withheld him from killing himself. Now had they done it for their own sake, they never would have remained still within; they would themselves have escaped first of all. Great again was their kindness also; they withheld the man from killing himself, even him who had bound them, thus all but saying unto him, *"Truly, you bound us with all safety, and most cruelly, that you yourself might be loosed from the most cruel of all bonds."* For every one is shackled with the chains of his own sins; and those bonds are accursed, whereas these for Christ's sake are blessed, and worth many an earnest prayer. For that these bonds can loose those other bonds of sin, he showed to us by things which are matters of sense. Did you behold them released, who had been bound with iron? You shall see yourself also delivered from other galling bonds. These bonds, the prisoners' bonds, not those of Paul, I mean, are the effect of those other bonds, the bonds of sins. They who were confined within, were doubly prisoners, and the jailer himself was a prisoner. They indeed were bound both with iron and with sins, he with sins only. Them did Paul loose to assure the faith of him, for the chains which he loosed were visible. And thus too did Christ Himself; but rather in the inverse order. In that instance, there was a double palsy. What was it? There was that of the soul by sins, and also that of the body. What then did the Lord do? *"Son,"* says He, *"be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven."* [Matthew 9:3-6] He first loosed the bonds of the real and true palsy, and then proceeds to the other: for when *"certain of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemes; Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Your*

sins are forgiven, or to say, Arise, and walk? But, that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, (then says he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, and take up your bed, and go unto your house." Having wrought the invisible miracle, He confirmed it by the visible, the spiritual by the bodily cure. And why did He do thus? That it might be fulfilled, which is spoken, [Luke 19:22] *"Out of your own mouth will I judge you, thou wicked servant."* For what said they? *"None can forgive sins, but God alone."* Of course, therefore, no Angel, nor Archangel, nor any other created power. This you have yourselves confessed. And what then ought to be said? If I shall be shown to have forgiven sins, it is fully evident that I am God. However, He said it not thus, but what said He? *"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins; then says He to the sick of the palsy, Arise, and take up your bed, and go unto your house."* [Matthew 9:6] When therefore, He would say, I work the more difficult miracle, it is plain that there is no pretext left you, no room for gainsaying about the easier one. Hence it was that He wrought the invisible miracle first, because there were many gainsayers; and then He led them from the invisible to the visible itself.

Surely then the faith of the jailer was no light or hasty faith. He saw the prisoners. And he saw nothing, he heard nothing wrong; he saw that nothing was done by sorcery, for they were singing hymns unto God. He saw that every thing done proceeded from overflowing kindness, for they did not avenge themselves against him, although they had it in their power; for it was in their power to rescue both themselves and the prisoners, and escape; and if not the prisoners, at all events themselves; but they did not do this. Thus did they challenge his reverence, not only by the miracle, but also by their behavior. For how did Paul cry out? *"He cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."* You see at once his

freedom from vain-glory and arrogance, and his fellow-feeling. He said not, *"It is for us these wonders have been wrought,"* but as though he were merely one of the prisoners, he said, *"For we are all here."* And yet, even though they had not before this loosed themselves, nor had done so by means of the miracle, still they might have been silent, and have set all that were bound at liberty. For had they held their peace, and had they not with their loud crying stayed his hand, he would have thrust the sword through his throat. Wherefore also Paul cried out, because he had been cast into the inner ward: as though he had said, *"To your own injury have you done this, that you have thrust in so far those that could deliver you from the danger."* However they imitated not the treatment they had received at his hands; though, had he died, all would have escaped. You see that they chose rather to remain in bonds, than to suffer him to perish. Hence too might he reason within himself, *"Had they been sorcerers, doubtless they would have set the others at liberty, and have released themselves from their bonds:"* (for it is likely that many such had also been imprisoned.) He was the more amazed, in that having often received sorcerers in charge, he had yet witnessed nothing done like this. A sorcerer never would have shaken the foundations, so as to startle the jailer from sleep, and thus render his own escape more difficult.

Now, however, let us proceed to look at the jailor's faith. *"And,"* says the Scripture, *"he called for lights and sprang in, and trembling for fear fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* He grasped fire and sword, and cried, *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* *"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your house."* [Acts 16:29-31] *"This is not the act of sorcerers,"* he would say, *"to deliver a doctrine like this. No mention any where here of an evil spirit."* You see how worthy he was to be

saved: for when he beheld the miracle, and was relieved from his terror, he did not forget what most concerned him, but even in the midst of so great peril, he was solicitous about that salvation which concerned his soul: and came before them in such a manner as it was meet to come before teachers: he fell down at their feet. *"And they spoke,"* it continues, *"the word of the Lord, unto him with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately."* [Acts 16:32-33] Observe the fervency of the man! He did not delay; he did not say, *"Let day come, let us see, let us look about us;"* but with great fervency, he was both himself baptized, and all his house. Yes, not like most men now-a-days, who suffer both servants and wives and children to go unbaptized. Be, I beseech you, like the jailor. I say not, in authority, but in purpose; for what is the benefit of authority, where purpose is weak? The savage one, the inhuman one, who lived in the practice of unnumbered wrongs and made this his constant study, has become all at once so humane, so tenderly attentive. *"He washed,"* it is said, *"their stripes."*

And mark, on the other hand, the fervency of Paul also. Bound, scourged, thus he preached the Gospel. Oh, that blessed chain, with how great travail did it travail that night, what children did it bring forth! Yea of them too may he say, *"Whom I have begotten in my bonds."* [Philemon 10] Mark thou, how he glories, and will have the children thus begotten, to be on that account the more illustrious! Mark thou, how transcendent is the glory of those bonds, in that they give lustre not only to him that wore them, but also to them who were on that occasion begotten by him. They have some advantage, who were begotten in Paul's bonds, I say not in respect of grace, (for grace is one and the same,) nor in respect of remission, (for remission is one and the same to all,) but in that they are thus from the very

outset taught to rejoice and to glory in such things. *"The same hour of the night,"* it is said, *"he took them, and washed their stripes, and was baptized."*

And now then behold the fruit. He straightway recompensed them with his carnal things. *"He brought them up into his house, and set meat before them, and rejoiced greatly with all his house, having believed in God."* For what was he not ready to do, now that by the opening of the prison doors, heaven itself was opened to him? He washed his teacher, he set food before him, and rejoiced. Paul's chain entered into the prison, and transformed all things there into a Church; it drew in its train the body of Christ, it prepared the spiritual feast, and travailed with that birth, at which Angels rejoice. And was it without reason then that I said that the prison was more glorious than Heaven? For it became a source of joy there; yes, if *"there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repents,"* [Luke 15:7] if, *"where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there is Christ in the midst of them;"* [Matthew 18:20] how much more, where Paul and Silas, and the jailor and all his house were, and faith so earnest as theirs! Observe the intense earnestness of their faith.

But this prison has reminded me of another prison. And what then is that? It is that where Peter was. Not, however, that any thing like this took place there. No. He was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him and he sang not, he watched not, but he slept; neither, again, had he been scourged. And yet was the peril greater, for in the case before us indeed the end was accomplished, and the prisoners Paul and Silas, had undergone their punishment; but in his case it was yet to come. So that though there were no stripes to torture him, yet was there the anticipation of the future to distress him. And mark too the miracle there. *"Behold, an angel of the Lord,"* it is related, *"stood by him, and a light shined in the cell;*

and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands." [Acts 12:7] In order that he might not imagine the transaction to be the work of the light alone, he also struck Peter. Now no one saw the light, save himself only, and he thought it was a vision. So insensible are they that are asleep to the mercies of God. "*And the angel,"* it proceeds, "*said unto him, Gird yourself and bind on your sandals; and he did so. And he says unto him, Cast your garment about you, and follow me. And he went out and followed, and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. And when they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate, that leads unto the city, which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him."* [Acts 12:8-10] Why was not the same thing done here as was done in the case of Paul and Silas? Because in that case they were intending to release them. On that account God willed not that they should be released in this manner. Whereas in blessed Peter's case, they were intending to lead him forth to execution. But what then? Would it not have been far more marvellous, some one may say, had he been led forth, and delivered over into the king's hands, and then had been snatched away from the very midst of his imminent peril, and sustained no harm? For thus moreover, neither had the soldiers perished. Great is the question which has been raised upon this matter. What! Did God, it is said, save His own servant with the punishment of others, with the destruction of others? Now in the first place, it was not with the destruction of others; for this did not arise from the ordering of providence, but arose from the cruelty of the judge. How so? God had so providentially ordered it, as that not only these men need not perish, but moreover that even he, the judge, should have been saved, just as in this case of the jailor. But he did not use the boon

aright. *"Now as soon as it was day,"* it continues, *"there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter."* And what then? Herod makes strict inquiry into the matter, *"and he examined the guards,"* it is related, *"and commanded that they should be put to death."* [Acts 12:18-19] Now, indeed, had he not examined them, there might have been some excuse for executing them. Whereas, as it is, he had them brought before him, he examined them, he found that Peter had been bound, that the prison had been well secured, that the keepers were before the doors. No wall had been broken through, no door had been opened, nor was there any other evidence whatever of false dealing. He ought upon this to have been awed by the power of God, which had snatched Peter from the very midst of perils, and to have adored Him who was able to do such mighty works. But, on the contrary, he ordered those men off to execution. How then in this case is God the cause? Had He indeed caused the wall to be broken through, and thus had extricated Peter, possibly the deed might have been put to the account of their negligence. But if He so providentially ordered it, as that the matter should be shown to be the work not of the evil agency of man, but of the miraculous agency of God, why did Herod act thus? For had Peter intended to flee, he would have fled as he was, with his chains on. Had he intended to fly, in his confusion he never would have had so great forethought as to take even his sandals, but he would have left them. Whereas, as it is, the object of the Angel's saying unto him, *"Bind on your sandals,"* was that they might know that he had done the thing not in the act of flight, but with full leisure. For, bound as he was, and fixed between the two soldiers, he never would have found sufficient time to unbind the chains also, and especially as he too, like Paul, was in the inner ward. Thus then was the punishment of the keepers owing to the unrighteousness of the judge. For why did not the Jews act in the same way? For now again I am

reminded of yet another prison. The first was that at Rome, next, was this at Cæsarea, now we come to that at Jerusalem. When then the chief Priests and the Pharisees heard from those whom they had sent to the prison to bring Peter out, that *"they found no man within,"* but both doors *"closed,"* and *"the keepers standing at the doors,"* why was it that they not only did not put the keepers to death, but, so far from it, *"they were much perplexed concerning them whereunto this would grow."* Now if the Jews, murderous as they were in their designs against them, yet entertained not a thought of the kind, much more should not thou, who did every thing to please those Jews. For this unrighteous sentence vengeance quickly overtook Herod.

But now if any complain of this, then complain too about those who are killed on the highway, and about the ten thousand others who are unjustly put to death, and further, of the infants also that were slaughtered at the time of Christ's birth; for Christ also, according to what you allege, was the cause of their deaths. But it was not Christ, but rather the madness and tyranny of Herod's father. Do you ask, Why then did He not snatch Him out of Herod's hands? True, He might have done so, but there would have been nothing gained by so doing. How many times, at least, did Christ escape even from the grasp of their hands? And yet what good did this do to that unfeeling people? Whereas here there is even much profit arising to the faithful from what was done. For as there were records made, and the enemies themselves bore testimony to the facts, the testimony was above suspicion. As therefore in that instance the mouths of the enemies were stopped in no other way whatever, but only by the persons who came acknowledging the facts, so was it also here. For why did the jailor here do nothing like what Herod did? Nay, and the things which Herod witnessed were not at all less wonderful than those which this man witnessed. So far as wonder goes, it is no less wonderful to be assured that a prisoner came

out when the doors were closed, than it is to behold them set open. Indeed this last might rather have seemed to be perhaps a vision of the imagination, the other never could, when exactly and circumstantially reported. So that, had this man been as wicked as Herod, he would have slain Paul, as Herod did the soldiers; but such he was not.

If any one should ask, 'Why was it that God permitted the children also to be murdered?' I should fall, probably, into a longer discourse, than was originally intended to be addressed to you.

At this point, however, let us terminate our discourse, with many thanks to Paul's chain, for that it has been made to us the source of so many blessings, and exhorting you, should you have to suffer any thing for Christ's sake, not only not to repine, but to rejoice, as the Apostles did, yea, and to glory; as Paul said, *"Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities,"* [2 Corinthians 12:9] for because of this it was that he heard also those words, *"My grace is sufficient for you."* Paul glories in bonds; and do you pride yourself in riches? The Apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to be scourged, and do you seek for ease and self-indulgence? On what ground then, do you wish to attain the same end as they, if here on earth you are traveling the contrary road from them? *"And now,"* says Paul, *"I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost testifies unto me in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me."* [Acts 20:22] And why then do you set out, if bonds and afflictions abide you? For this very reason, says he, that I may be bound for Christ's sake, that I may die for His sake. *"For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus."* [Acts 21:13]

Moral. Nothing can be more blessed than that soul. In what does he glory? In bonds, in afflictions, in chains, in scars; *"I bear branded on my*

body," says he, *"the marks of Jesus,"* [Galatians 6:17] as though they were some great trophy. And again, *"For because of the hope of Israel,"* says he, *"I am bound with this chain."* [Acts 28:20] And again, *"For which I am an ambassador in chains."* [Ephesians 6:20] What is this? Are you not ashamed, are you not afraid going about the world as a prisoner? Do you not fear lest any one should charge your God with weakness? Lest any one should on this account refuse to come near you and to join the fold? No, says he, not such are my bonds. They can shine brightly even in kings' palaces. *"So that my bonds,"* says he, *"became manifest in Christ, throughout the whole prætorian guard: and most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear."* [Philippians 1:13-14] Behold ye a force in bonds stronger than the raising of the dead. They beheld me bound, and they are the more courageous. For where bonds are, there of necessity is something great also. Where affliction is, there verily is salvation also, there verily is solace, there verily are great achievements. For when the devil kicks, then is he, doubtless, hit. When he binds God's servants, then most of all does the word gain ground. And mark how this is every where the case. Paul was imprisoned; and in the prison he did these things, yea, says he, by my very bonds themselves. He was imprisoned at Rome, and brought the more converts to the faith; for not only was he himself emboldened, but many others also because of him. He was imprisoned at Jerusalem, and preaching in his bonds he struck the king with amazement, [Acts 26:28] and made the governor tremble. [Acts 24:25] For being afraid, it is related, he let him go, and he that had bound him was not ashamed to receive instruction concerning the things to come at the hands of him whom he had bound. In bonds he sailed, and retrieved the wreck, and bound fast the tempest. It was when he was in bonds that the monster fastened on him, and

fell off from his hand, having done him no hurt. He was bound at Rome, and preaching in bonds drew thousands to his cause, holding forward, in the place of every other, this very argument, I mean his chain.

It is not however our lot to be bound now-a-days. And yet there is another chain if we have a mind to wear it. And what is it? It is to restrain our hand, to be not so forward to covetousness. With this chain let us bind ourselves. Let the fear of God be unto us instead of a bond of iron. Let us loose them that are bound by poverty, by affliction. There is no comparison between opening the doors of a prison, and releasing an enthralled soul. There is no comparison between loosing the bonds of prisoners and "*setting at liberty them that are bruised*;" [Luke 4:18] this last is far greater than the other; for the other there is no reward in store, for this last there are ten thousand rewards.

Paul's chain has proved a long one, and has detained us a length of time. Yea, long indeed it is, and more beautiful than any cord of gold. A chain this, which draws them that are bound by it, as it were by a kind of invisible machinery, to Heaven, and, like a golden cord let down, draws them up to the Heaven of heavens. And the wonderful thing is this, that, bound, as it is, below, it draws its captives upwards: and indeed this is not the nature of the things themselves. But where God orders and disposes, look not for the nature of things, nor for natural sentence, but for things above nature and natural sequence.

Let us learn not to sink under affliction, nor to repine; for look at this blessed saint. He had been scourged, and sorely scourged, for it is said, "*When they had laid many stripes upon them.*" He had been bound too, and that again sorely, for the jailor cast him into the inner ward, and with extraordinary security. And though he was in so many perils, at midnight, when even the most wakeful are asleep with sleep, another and a stronger

bond upon them, they chanted and sang praise unto the Lord. What can be more adamantine than these souls? They bethought them how that the holy Children sang even in fire and furnace. [Daniel 3:1-30] Perhaps they thus reasoned with themselves, *"we have as yet suffered nothing like that."*

But our discourse has done well, in that it has thus brought us out again to other bonds, and into another prison. What am I to do? I would fain be silent, but am not able. I have discovered another prison, far more wonderful and more astonishing than the former. But, come now, rouse yourselves, as though I were just commencing my discourse, and attend to me with your minds fresh. I would fain break off the discourse, but it will not suffer me; for just as a man in the midst of drinking cannot bear to break off his draught, whatever any one may promise him; so I too, now I have laid hold of this glorious cup of the prison of them that were bound for Christ's sake, I cannot leave off, I cannot hold my peace. For if Paul in the prison, and in the night, kept not silence, no, nor under the scourge; shall I, who am sitting here by daylight, and speaking so much at my ease, shall I hold my peace, when men in bonds, and under the scourge, and at midnight could not endure to do so? The holy Children were not silent, no, not in the furnace and in the fire, and are not we ashamed to hold our peace? Let us look then at this prison also. Here too, they were bound, but at once and from the very outset it was evident that they were not about to be burned, but only to enter as into a prison. For why do ye bind men who are about to be committed to the flames? They were bound, as Paul was, hand and foot. They were bound with as great violence as he was. For the jailor thrust him into the inner prison; and the king commanded the furnace to be intensely heated. And now let us see the issue. When Paul and Silas sang, the prison was shaken, and the doors were opened. When the three Children sang, the bonds both of their feet and hands were loosed. The prison was opened, and

the doors of the furnace were opened: for a dewy breeze whistled through it.

But many thoughts crowd around me. I know not which to utter first, and which second. Wherefore, let no one, I entreat, require order of me, for the subjects are closely allied.

They who were bound together with Paul and Silas were loosed, and yet nevertheless they slept. In the case of the three Children, instead of that, something else took place. The men who had cast them in, were themselves burned to death. And then, as I was fain to tell you, the king beheld them loose, and fell down before them: he heard them singing their song of praise, and beheld four walking, and he called them. As Paul, though able to do so, came not forth, until he who had cast him in, called him, and brought him forth: so neither did the three Children come forth, until he who had cast them in commanded them to come forth. What lesson are we taught from this? Not to be over hasty in courting persecution, nor when in tribulation to be over eager for deliverance, and on the other hand when they release us not to continue in it. Further, the jailor, inasmuch as he was able to enter in where the saints were, fell down at their feet. The king came but to the door and fell down. He dared not approach into the prison which he had prepared for them in the fire. And now mark their words. The one cried, *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* [Acts 16:30] The other, though not indeed with so great humility, yet uttered a voice no less sweet, *"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither."* [Daniel 3:26] Mighty dignity! *"You servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither."* How are they to come forth, O king? Thou cast them into the fire bound; they have continued this long time in the fire. Why, had they been made of adamant, had they been blocks of metal, in singing that entire hymn, must they not have perished?

On this account then they were saved, because they sang praises to God. The fire revered their readiness to suffer and afterwards it revered that wonderful song, and their hymns of praise. By what title do you call them? I said before, *"You servants of the most high God."* Yes, to the servants of God, all things are possible; for if some, who are the servants of men, have, nevertheless, power, and authority, and the disposal of their concerns, much more have the servants of God. He called them by the name most delightful to them, he knew that by this means he flattered them most: for indeed, if it was in order to continue servants of God, that they entered into the fire, there could be no sound more delightful to them than this. Had he called them kings, had he called them lords of the world, yet would he not so truly have rejoiced them as when he said, *"You servants of the most high God."* And why marvel at this? When, in writing to the mighty city, to her who was mistress of the world, and prided herself upon her high dignities, Paul set down as equivalent in dignity, nay, as far greater, yea incomparably greater than consulship, or kingly name, or than the empire of the world, this title, *"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."* [Romans 1:1] *"You servants of the most high God."* "Yes," he would say, *"if they show so great zeal as to be bond-servants, doubtless this is the title by which we shall conciliate them."*

Again, observe also the piety of the Children: they showed no indignation, no anger, no gain-saying, but they came forth. Had they regarded it as an act of vengeance that they had been thrown into the furnace, they would have been grieved against the man who had cast them in; as it is, there is nothing of the kind; but, as though they were going forth from Heaven itself, so went they forth. And what the Prophet says of the Sun, that *"He is as a bridegroom coming forth out of his chamber,"* [Psalm 19:5] one would not go amiss in saying also of them. But though he goes

forth thus, yet came they forth there more gloriously than he, for he indeed comes forth to enlighten the world with natural light, they to enlighten the world in a different way, I mean, spiritually. For because of them the king straightway issued a decree, containing these words, *"It has seemed good unto me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has wrought toward me. How great are His signs! And how mighty are His wonders!"* [Daniel 4:2-3] So that they went forth, shedding a yet more glorious radiance, beaming indeed in that region itself, but, what is more than all, capable, by means of the king's writings, of being diffused over the world and thus of dispelling the darkness which every where prevails. *"Come forth,"* said he, *"and come hither."* He gave no commandment to extinguish the flame, but hereby most especially honored them, by believing that they were able not only to walk within it, but even to come out of it while it was still burning.

But let us look again, if it seem good to you, at the words of the jailor, *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* What language sweeter than this? This makes the very Angels leap for joy. To hear this language, even the Only-begotten Son of God Himself became a servant. This language they who believed at the beginning addressed to Peter. [Acts 2:37] *"What shall we do?"* And what said he in answer? *"Repent and be baptized."* To have heard this language from the Jews, gladly would Paul have been cast even in to hell, in his eagerness for their salvation and obedience. But observe, he commits the whole matter to them, he wastes no unnecessary pains. Let us however look at the next point. The king here does not say, What must I do to be saved? But the teaching is plainer in his case than any language whatever; for he straightway becomes a preacher, he needs not to be instructed like the jailor. He proclaims God, and makes confession of His power. *"Of a truth your God is the God of Gods and the Lord of Kings,*

because He has sent His Angel, and has delivered you." [Daniel 2:47; 3:28]

And what was the sequel? Not one single jailor, but numbers are instructed by the king's writings, by the sight of the facts. For that the king would not have told a falsehood is evident enough to every one, because he never would have chosen to bear such testimony to captives, nor to overthrow his own acts; he never would have chosen to incur the imputation of such utter madness: so that had not the truth been abundantly manifest, he would not have written in such terms, and with so many persons present.

Perceive ye how great is the power of bonds? How great the force of those praises that are sung in tribulation? Their heart failed not, they were not cast down, but were then yet more vigorous, and their courage then yet greater and justly so.

While we are considering these things one question yet remains for us: Why was it that in the prison on the one hand, the prisoners were loosed, while in the furnace the executioners were burnt to death: for that indeed should have been the king's fate, because neither were they who bound them, nor they who cast them into the furnace, guilty of so great sin as the man who commanded this should be done. Why then did they perish? On this point there is not any very great need of minute examination; for they were wicked men. And therefore this was providentially ordered, that the power of the fire might be shown, and the miracle might be made more signal; for if it thus devoured them that were without, how did it show them unscathed that were within it? It was that the power of God might be made manifest. And let no one wonder that I have put the king on a level with the jailor, for he did the same thing; the one was in no wise more noble than the other, and they both had their reward.

But, as I said, the righteous, when they are in tribulations, are then especially more energetic, and when they are in bonds: for to suffer any

thing for Christ's sake is the sweetest of all consolation.

Will ye that I remind you of yet another prison? It seems necessary to go on from this chain to another prison still. And which will you? Shall it be that of Jeremiah, or of Joseph, or of John? Thanks to Paul's chain; how many prisons has it opened to our discourse? Will you have that of John? He also was once bound for Christ's sake, and for the law of God. What then? Was he idle when he was in prison? Was it not from thence he sent, by his disciples, and said, "*Are You He that comes, or look we for another?*" [Matthew 11:2-3] Even when there, then, it seems he taught, for surely he did not disregard his duty. But again, did not Jeremiah prophesy concerning the king of Babylon, and fulfil his work even there in prison? And what of Joseph? Was he not in prison thirteen years? What then? Not even there did he forget his virtue. I have yet to mention the bonds of one and therewith will close my discourse. Our Master Himself was bound, He who loosed the world from sins. Those hands were bound, those hands that wrought ten thousand good deeds. For, "*they bound Him,*" it says, "*and led Him away to Caiaphas;*" [Matthew 27:2; John 18:24] yes, He was bound who had wrought so many marvellous works.

Reflecting on these things, let us never repine; but whether we be in bonds, let us rejoice; or whether we be not in bonds, let us be as though we were bound together with Him. See how great a blessing are bonds! Knowing all these things, let us send up our thanksgiving for all things to God, through Christ Jesus our Lord with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 9 on Ephesians

Chapter IV. Verses 1-3

"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Great has the power of Paul's chain been shown to be, and more glorious than miracles. It is not in vain then, as it should seem, nor without an object, that he here holds it forward, but as the means of all others most likely to touch them. And what says he? *"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called."* And how is that? *"with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."*

It is not the being merely a prisoner that is honorable, but the being so for Christ's sake. Hence he says, *"in the Lord,"* i.e., the prisoner for Christ's sake. Nothing is equal to this. But now the chain is dragging me away still more from my subject, and pulling me back again, and I cannot bear to resist it, but am drawn along willingly—yea, rather, with all my heart; and would that it were always my lot to be descanting on Paul's chain.

But now do not become drowsy: for I am yet desirous to solve that other question, which many raise, when they say, Why, if tribulation be a glory, how came Paul himself to say in his defence to Agrippa, *"I would to God that whether with little or with much not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds?"* [Acts 26:29] He said not this, God forbid! As deeming the thing a matter to be deprecated; no; for had it been such, he would not have gloried in bonds, in

imprisonments, in those other tribulations; and when writing elsewhere he says, *"Most gladly will I rather glory in my weaknesses."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] But what is the case? This was itself a proof how great a thing he considered those bonds; for as in writing to the Corinthians he said, *"I fed you with milk, not with meat, for you were not yet able to bear it;"* [1 Corinthians 3:2] so also here. They before whom he spoke were not able to hear of the beauty, nor the comeliness, nor the blessing of those bonds. Hence it was he added, *"except these bonds."* To the Hebrews however he spoke not thus, but exhorted them to *"be bound with"* [Hebrews 13:3] them that were in bonds. And hence too did he himself rejoice in his bonds, and was bound, and was led with the prisoners into the inner prison. Mighty is the power of Paul's chain! A spectacle this, which may suffice for every other, to behold Paul bound, and led forth from his prison; to behold him bound, and sitting within it, what pleasure can come up to this? What would I not give for such a sight? Do ye see the emperors, the consuls, borne along in their chariots and arrayed in gold, and their bodyguard with every thing about them of gold? Their halberds of gold, their shields of gold, their raiment of gold, their horses with trappings of gold? How much more delightful than such a spectacle is his! I would rather see Paul once, going forth with the prisoners from his prison, than behold these ten thousand times over, parading along with all that retinue. When he was thus led forth, how many Angels, suppose ye, led the way before him? And to show that I speak no fiction, I will make the fact manifest to you from a certain ancient narrative.

Elisha the prophet, (perhaps ye know the man,) at the time [2 Kings 6:8-12] when the king of Syria was at war with the king of Israel, sitting at his own home, brought to light all the counsels which the king of Syria was taking in his chamber with them that were privy to his designs, and

rendered the king's counsels of none effect, by telling beforehand his secrets, and not suffering the king of Israel to fall into the snares which he was laying. This sorely troubled the king; he was disheartened, and was reduced to greater perplexity, not knowing how to discover him who was disclosing all that passed, and plotting against him, and disappointing his schemes. Whilst therefore he was in this perplexity, and enquiring into the cause, one of his armor-bearers told him, that there was a certain prophet, one Elisha, dwelling in Samaria, who suffered not the king's designs to stand, but disclosed all that passed. The king imagined that he had discovered the whole matter. Sure, never was any one more miserably misled than he. When he ought to have honored the man, to have revered him, to have been awed that he really possessed so great power, as that, seated, as he was, so many furlongs off, he should know all that passed in the king's chamber, without any one at all to tell him; this indeed he did not, but being exasperated, and wholly carried away by his passion, he equips horsemen, and soldiers, and dispatches them to bring the prophet before him.

Now Elisha had a disciple as yet only on the threshold of prophecy, [2 Kings 6:13 ff.] as yet far from being judged worthy of revelations of this kind. The king's soldiers arrived at the spot, as intending to bind the man, or rather the prophet.— Again I am falling upon bonds, so entirely is this discourse interwoven with them.— And when the disciple saw the host of soldiers, he was affrighted, and ran full of trembling to his master, and told him the calamity, as he thought, and informed him of the inevitable peril. The prophet smiled at him for fearing things not worthy to be feared, and bade him be of good cheer. The disciple, however, being as yet imperfect, did not listen to him, but being still amazed at the sight, remained in fear. Upon this, what did the prophet do? "*Lord,*" said he, "*open the eyes of this*

young man, and let him see that they which are with us, are more than they which are with them;" [2 Kings 6:16-17] and immediately he beheld the whole mountain, where the prophet then dwelt, filled with so great a multitude of horses and chariots of fire. Now these were nothing else than ranks of Angels. But if only for an occasion like this so great a band of Angels attended Elisha what must Paul have had? This is what the prophet David tells us. *"The Angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him."* [Psalm 34:7] And again; *"They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone."* [Psalm 91:2] And why do I speak of Angels? The Lord Himself was with him then as he went forth; for surely it cannot be that He was seen by Abraham, and yet was not with Paul. No, it was His own promise, *"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* [Matthew 28:20] And again, when He appeared to him, He said, *"Be not afraid, but speak, for I am with you, and no man shall set on you to harm you."* [96 9, 10] Again, He stood by him in a dream, and said, *"Be of good cheer, for as you have testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."* [Acts 23:11]

The saints, though they are at all times a glorious sight, and are full of abundant grace, yet are so, most of all, when they are in perils for Christ's sake, when they are prisoners; for as a brave soldier is at all times and of himself a pleasing spectacle to them that behold him, but most of all when he is standing, and in ranks at the king's side; thus also imagine to yourselves Paul, how great a thing it was to see him teaching in his bonds.

Shall I mention, in passing, a thought, which just at this moment occurs to me? The blessed martyr Babylas was bound, and he too for the very same cause as John also was, because he reproved a king in his transgression. This man when he was dying gave charge that his bonds should be laid with his body, and that the body should be buried bound; and

to this day the fetters lie mingled with his ashes, so devoted was his affection for the bonds he had worn for Christ's sake. *"He was laid in chains of iron"* as the Prophet says of Joseph. [Psalm 105:18] And even women have before now had trial of these bonds.

We however are not in bonds, nor am I recommending this, since now is not the time for them. But you, bind not your hands, but bind your heart and mind. There are yet other bonds, and they that wear not the one, shall have to wear the other. Hear what Christ says, *"Bind him hand and foot."* [Matthew 22:13] But God forbid we should have trial of those bonds! But of these may He grant us even to take our fill!

On these accounts he says, *"I, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called."* But what is this calling? You were called as His body, it is said. You have Christ as your head; and though you were *"enemies,"* and had committed misdeeds out of number, yet *"has He raised you up with Him and made you to sit with Him."* [Ephesians 2:6] A high calling this, and to high privileges, not only in that we have been called from that former state, but in that we are called both to such privileges, and by such a method.

But how is it possible to *"walk worthily"* of it? *"With all lowliness."* Such an one walks worthily. This is the basis of all virtue. If you be lowly, and bethink you what you are, and how you were saved, you will take this recollection as a motive to all virtue. You will neither be elated with bonds, nor with those very privileges which I mentioned, but as knowing that all is of grace, you will humble yourself. The lowly-minded man is able to be at once a generous and a grateful servant. *"For what have you,"* says he, *"that thou did not receive?"* [1 Corinthians 4:7] And again, hear his words, *"I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* [1 Corinthians 15:10]

"With all lowliness," says he; not that which is in words, nor that which is in actions only, but even in one's very bearing and tone of voice: not lowly towards one, and rude towards another; be lowly towards all men, be he friend or foe, be he great or small. This is lowliness. Even in your good deeds be lowly; for hear what Christ says, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit;"* [Matthew 5:3] and He places this first in order. Wherefore also the Apostle himself says, *"With all lowliness, and meekness, and long-suffering."* For it is possible for a man to be lowly, and yet quick and irritable, and thus all is to no purpose; for oftentimes he will be possessed by his anger, and ruin all.

"Forbearing," he proceeds, *"one another in love."*

How is it possible to forbear, if a man be passionate or censorious? He has told us therefore the manner: *"in love,"* says he. If you, he would say, are not forbearing to your neighbor, how shall God be forbearing to you? If you bear not with your fellow-servant, how shall the Master bear with you? Wherever there is love, all things are to be borne.

"Giving diligence," says he, *"to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* Bind therefore your hands with moderation. Again that goodly name of *"bond."* We had dismissed it, and it has of itself come back on us again. A goodly bond was that, and goodly is this one also, and that other is the fruit of this. Bind yourself to your brother. They bear all things lightly who are bound together in love. Bind yourself to him and him to you; you are lord of both, for whomsoever I may be desirous to make my friend, I can by means of kindness accomplish it.

"Giving diligence," he says; a thing not to be done easily, and not in every one's power.

"Giving diligence," he proceeds, *"to keep the unity of the Spirit."* What is this *"unity of Spirit?"* In the human body there is a spirit which holds all together, though in different members. So is it also here; for to this end was

the Spirit given, that He might unite those who are separated by race and by different manners; for old and young, rich and poor, child and youth, woman and man, and every soul become in a manner one, and more entirely so than if there were one body. For this spiritual relation is far higher than the other natural one, and the perfectness of the union more entire; because the conjunction of the soul is more perfect, inasmuch as it is both simple and uniform. And how then is this unity preserved? *"In the bond of peace."* It is not possible for this to exist in enmity and discord. *"For whereas there is,"* says he, *"among you jealousy and strife, are you not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?"* [1 Corinthians 3:3] For as fire when it finds dry pieces of wood works up all together into one blazing pile, but when wet does not act at all nor unite them; so also it is here. Nothing that is of a cold nature can bring about this union, whereas any warm one for the most part can. Hence at least it is that the glow of charity is produced; by the *"bond of peace,"* he is desirous to bind us all together. For just in the same way, he would say, as if you would attach yourself to another, you can do it in no other way except by attaching him to yourself; and if you should wish to make the tie double, he must needs in turn attach himself to you; so also here he would have us tied one to another; not simply that we be at peace, not simply that we love one another, but that all should be only even one soul. A glorious bond is this; with this bond let us bind ourselves together with one another and unto God. This is a bond that bruises not, nor cramps the hands it binds, but it leaves them free, and gives them ample play, and greater courage than those which are at liberty. The strong if he be bound to the weak, will support him, and not suffer him to perish: and if again he be tied to the indolent, him he will rather rouse and animate. *"Brother helped by brother,"* it is said, *"is as a strong city."* This chain no distance of place can interrupt, neither heaven, nor earth, nor death, nor any thing else, but it

is more powerful and strong than all things. This, though it issue from but one soul, is able to embrace numbers at once; for hear what Paul says, "*You are not straitened in us, but you are straitened in your own affections; be ye also enlarged.*" [2 Corinthians 6:12]

Now then, what impairs this bond? Love of money, passion for power, for glory, and the like, loosens them, and severs them asunder. How then are we to see that they be not cut asunder? If these tempers be got rid of, and none of those things which destroy charity come in by the way to trouble us. For hear what Christ says, [Matthew 24:12] "*Because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold.*" Nothing is so opposed to love as sin, and I mean not love towards God, but that towards our neighbor also. But how then, it may be said, are even robbers at peace? When are they, tell me? Not when they are acting in a spirit which is that of robbers; for if they fail to observe the rules of justice among those with whom they divide the spoil, and to render to every one his right, you will find them too in wars and broils. So that neither among the wicked is it possible to find peace: but where men are living in righteousness and virtue, you may find it every where. But again, are rivals ever at peace? Never. And whom then would you have me mention? The covetous man can never possibly be at peace with the covetous. So that were there not just and good persons, even though wronged by them, to stand between them, the whole race of them would be torn to pieces. When two wild beasts are famished, if there be not something put between them to consume, they will devour one another. The same would be the case with the covetous and the vicious. So that it is not possible there should be peace where virtue is not already put in practice beforehand. Let us form, if you please, a city entirely of covetous men, give them equal privileges, and let no one bear to be wronged, but let all wrong one another. Can that city possibly hold together? It is impossible. Again, is

there peace among adulterers? No, not any two will you find of the same mind.

So then, to return, there is no other reason for this, than that *"love has waxed cold;"* and the cause again why love has waxed cold, is that *"iniquity abounds."* For this leads to selfishness, and divides and severs the body, and relaxes it and rends it to pieces. But where virtue is, it does the reverse. Because the man that is virtuous is also above money; so that were there ten thousand such in poverty they would still be peaceable; while the covetous, where there are but two, can never be at peace. Thus then if we are virtuous, love will not perish, for virtue springs from love, and love from virtue. And how this is, I will tell you. The virtuous man does not value money above friendship, nor does he remember injuries, nor does wrong to his neighbor; he is not insolent, he endures all things nobly. Of these things love consists. Again, he who loves submits to all these things, and thus do they reciprocally produce one another. And this indeed, that love springs from virtue, appears from hence, because our Lord when He says, *"because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold,"* plainly tells us this. And that virtue springs from love, Paul tells us, saying, *"He that loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law."* [Romans 13:10] So then a man must be one of the two, either very affectionate and much beloved, or else very virtuous; for he who has the one, of necessity possesses the other; and, on the contrary, he who knows not how to love, will therefore commit many evil actions; and he who commits evil actions, knows not what it is to love.

Moral. Let us therefore follow after charity; it is a safeguard which will not allow us to suffer any evil. Let us bind ourselves together. Let there be no deceit among us, no hollowness. For where friendship is, there nothing of the sort is found. This too another certain wise man tells us.

"Though you drew a sword at your friend, yet despair not: for there may be a returning again to favor. If you have opened your mouth against your friend, fear not; for there may be a reconciliation: except for upbraiding, or disclosing of secrets, or a treacherous wound: for for these things a friend will depart." [Sirach 22:21-22] For *"disclosing,"* says he, *"of secrets."* Now if we be all friends, there is no need of secrets; for as no man has any secret with himself and cannot conceal anything from himself, so neither will he from his friends. Where then no secrets exist, separation arising from this is impossible. For no other reason have we secrets, than because we have not confidence in all men. So then it is the waxing cold of love, which has produced secrets. For what secret have you? Do you desire to wrong your neighbor? Or, are you hindering him from sharing some benefit, and on this account concealest it? But, no, perhaps it is none of these things. What then, is it that you are ashamed? If so, then this is a token of want of confidence. Now then if there be love, there will be no *"revealing of secrets,"* neither any *"upbraiding."* For who, tell me, would ever upbraid his own soul? And suppose even such a thing were done, it would be for some good; for we upbraid children, we know, when we desire to make them feel. And so Christ too on that occasion began to upbraid the cities, saying, *"Woe unto you, Chorazin! Woe unto you, Bethsaida!"* [Luke 10:13] in order that He might deliver them from upbraidings. For nothing has such power to lay hold of the mind, or can more strongly arouse it, or brace it up when relaxed. Let us then never use upbraiding to one another merely for the sake of upbraiding. For what? Will you upbraid your friend on the score of money? Surely not, if at least you possess what you have in common. Will you then for his faults? No nor this, but you will rather in that case correct him. Or, as it goes on, *"for a treacherous wound;"* who in the world will kill himself, or who wound himself? No one.

Let us then *"follow after love;"* he says not simply let us love; but let us *"follow after love."* [1 Corinthians 14:1] There is need of much eagerness: she is soon out of sight, she is most rapid in her flight; so many things are there in life which injure her. If we follow her, she will not outstrip us and get away, but we shall speedily recover her. The love of God is that which united earth to Heaven. It was the love of God that seated man upon the kingly throne. It was the love of God that manifested God upon earth. It was the love of God that made the Lord a servant. It was the love of God that caused the Beloved to be delivered up for His enemies, the Son for them that hated Him, the Lord for His servants, God for men, the free for slaves. Nor did it stop here, but called us to yet greater things. Yes, not only did it release us from our former evils, but promised, moreover, to bestow upon us other much greater blessings. For these things then let us give thanks to God, and follow after every virtue; and before all things, let us with all strictness practice love, that we may be counted worthy to attain the promised blessings; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 10 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:4

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling."

When the blessed Paul exhorts us to anything of special importance, so truly wise and spiritual as he is, he grounds his exhortation upon things in Heaven: this itself being a lesson he had learned from the Lord. Thus he says also elsewhere, *"Walk in love, even as Christ also has loved us."* [Ephesians 5:2] And again, *"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."* [Philippians 2:5-6] This is what he is doing here also, for whenever the examples he is setting before us are great, he is intense in his zeal and feeling. What then does he say, now he is inciting us to unity? *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling:"*

Ver. 5. *"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."*

Now what is this one body? The faithful throughout the whole world, both which are, and which have been, and which shall be. And again, they that before Christ's coming pleased God, are *"one body."* How so? Because they also knew Christ. Whence does this appear? *"Your father Abraham,"* says He, *"rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad."* [John 8:56] And again, *"If you had believed Moses,"* He says, *"ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me."* [John 5:46] And the prophets too would not have written of One, of whom they knew not what they said; whereas they both knew Him, and worshipped Him. Thus then were they also *"one body."*

The body is not disjoined from the spirit, for then would it not be a body. Thus it is customary also with us, touching things which are united, and which have any great consistency or coherence, to say, they are one body. And thus again, touching union, we take that to be a body which is under one head. If there be one head, then is there one body. The body is composed of members both honorable and dishonorable. Only the greater is not to rise up even against the meanest, nor this latter to envy the other. They do not all indeed contribute the same share, but severally according to the proportion of need. And forasmuch as all are formed for necessary and for different purposes, all are of equal honor. Some indeed there are, which are more especially principal members, others less so: for example, the head is more a principal member than all the rest of the body, as containing within itself all the senses, and the governing principle of the soul. And to live without the head is impossible; whereas many persons have lived for a long time with their feet cut off. So that it is better than they, not only by its position, but also by its very vital energy and its function.

Now why am I saying this? There are great numbers in the Church; there are those who, like the head, are raised up to a height; who, like the eyes that are in the head, survey heavenly things, who stand far aloof from the earth, and have nothing in common with it, while others occupy the rank of feet, and tread upon the earth; of healthy feet indeed, for to tread upon the earth is no crime in feet, but to run to evil. *"Their feet,"* says the Prophet, *"run to evil."* [Isaiah 59:7] Neither then let these, the head, says he, be high-minded against the feet, nor the feet look with evil eye at them. For thus the peculiar beauty of each is destroyed, and the perfectness of its function impeded. And naturally enough; inasmuch as he who lays snares for his neighbor will be laying snares first of all for himself. And should the feet therefore not choose to convey the head anywhere upon its necessary

journey, they will at the same time be injuring themselves by their inactivity and sloth. Or again, should the head not choose to take any care of the feet, itself will be the first to sustain the damage. However, those members do not rise up one against the other; it is not likely, for it has been so ordered by nature that they should not. But with man, how is it possible for him not to rise up against man? No one, we know, ever rises up against Angels; since neither do they rise against the Archangels. Nor, on the other hand, can the irrational creatures proudly exalt themselves over us; but where the nature is equal in dignity, and the gift one, and where one has no more than another, how shall this be prevented?

And yet surely these are the very reasons why you ought not to rise up against your neighbors. For if all things are common, and one has nothing more than another, whence this mad folly? We partake of the same nature, partake alike of soul and body, we breathe the same air, we use the same food. Whence this rebellious rising of one against another? And yet truly the being able by one's virtue to overcome the incorporeal powers, that were enough to lead to arrogance; or rather arrogance it would not be, for with good reason am I high-minded, and exceedingly high-minded against the evil spirit. And behold even Paul, how high-minded he was against that evil spirit. For when the evil spirit was speaking great and marvelous things concerning him, he made him hold his peace, and endured him not even in his flattery. For when that damsel, *"who had the spirit of divination,"* cried, saying, *"These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation"* [Acts 16:16-17], he rebuked him severely, and silenced his forward tongue. And again he elsewhere writes, and says, *"God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."* [Romans 16:20] Will the difference of nature have any effect? Perceivest thou not that the difference between natures has no effect whatever, but only the difference of purpose?

Because of their principle therefore they are far worse than all. Well, a man may say, but I am not rising up against an Angel, because there is so vast a distance between my nature and his. And yet surely you ought no more to rise up against a man than against an Angel, for the Angel indeed differs from you in nature, a matter which can be neither an honor to him, nor a disgrace to you: whereas man differs from man not at all in nature, but in principle; and there is such a thing as an Angel too even among men. So that if you rise not up against Angels, much more should you not against men, against those who have become angels in this our nature; for should any one among men become as virtuous as an Angel, that man is in a far higher degree superior to you, than an Angel is. And why so? Because what the one possesses by nature, the other has achieved of his own purpose. And again, because the Angel has his home far from you in distance also, and dwells in Heaven; whereas this man is living with you, and giving an impulse to your emulation. And indeed he lives farther apart from you than the Angel. For *"our citizenship,"* says the Apostle, *"is in Heaven."*

[Philippians 3:20] And to show you that this man has his home still farther distant, hear where his Head is seated; upon the throne, says he, the royal throne! And the farther distant that throne is from us, the farther is he also.

Well, but I see him, you will say, in the enjoyment of honor, and I am led to jealousy. Why, this is the very thing which has turned all things upside down, which has filled not the world only, but the Church also, with countless troubles. And just as fierce blasts setting in across a calm harbor, render it more dangerous than any rock, or than any strait whatever; so the lust of glory entering in, overturns and confounds everything.

You have oftentimes been present at the burning of large houses. You have seen how the smoke keeps rising up to Heaven; and if no one comes near to put a stop to the mischief, but every one keeps looking to himself,

the flame spreads freely on, and devours everything. And oftentimes the whole city will stand around; they will stand round indeed as spectators of the evil, not to aid nor assist. And there you may see them one and all standing round, and doing nothing but each individual stretching out his hand, and pointing out to some one who may be just come to the spot, either a flaming brand that moment flying through a window, or beams hurled down, or the whole circuit of the walls forced out, and tumbling violently to the ground. Many too there are of the more daring and venturesome, who will have the hardihood even to come close to the very buildings themselves while they are burning, not in order to stretch forth a hand towards them, and to put a stop to the mischief, but that they may the more fully enjoy the sight, being able from the nearer place to observe closely all that which often escapes those at a distance. Then if the house happen to be large and magnificent, it appears to them a pitiable spectacle, and deserving of many tears. And truly there is a pitiable spectacle for us to behold; capitals of columns crumbled to dust, and many columns themselves shattered to pieces, some consumed by the fire, others thrown down often by the very hands which erected them, that they may not add fuel to the flame. Statues again, which stood with so much gracefulness, with the ceiling resting on them, these you may see all exposed, with the roof torn off, and themselves standing hideously disfigured in the open air. And why should one go on to describe the wealth stored up within? The tissues of gold, and the vessels of silver? And where the lord of the house and his consort scarcely entered, where was the treasurehouse of tissues and perfumes, and the caskets of the costly jewels—all has become one blazing fire, and within now, are bath-men and street-cleaners, and runaway slaves, and everybody; and everything within is one mass of fire and water, of mud, and dust, and half-burnt beams!

Now why have I drawn out so full a picture as this? Not simply because I wish to represent to you the conflagration of a house, (for what concern is that of mine?) but because I wish to set before your eyes, as vividly as I can, the calamities of the Church. For like a conflagration indeed, or like a thunderbolt hurled from on high, have they lighted upon the roof of the Church, and yet they rouse up no one; but while our Father's house is burning, we are sleeping, as it were, a deep and stupid sleep. And yet who is there whom this fire does not touch? Which of the statues that stand in the Church? For the Church is nothing else than a house built of the souls of us men. Now this house is not of equal honor throughout, but of the stones which contribute to it, some are bright and shining, while others are smaller and more dull than they, and yet superior again to others. There we may see many who are in the place of gold also, the gold which adorns the ceiling. Others again we may see, who give the beauty and gracefulness produced by statues. Many we may see, standing like pillars. For he is accustomed to call men also "*pillars*" [Galatians 2:9], not only on account of their strength but also on account of their beauty, adding as they do, much grace, and having their heads overlaid with gold. We may see a multitude, forming generally the wide middle space and the whole extent of the circumference; for the body at large occupies the place of those stones of which the outer walls are built. Or rather we must go on to a more splendid picture yet. This Church, of which I speak, is not built of these stones, such as we see around us, but of gold and silver, and of precious stones, and there is abundance of gold dispersed everywhere throughout it. But, oh the bitter tears this calls forth! For all these things has the lawless rule of vainglory consumed; that all-devouring flame, which no one has yet got under. And we stand gazing in amazement at the flames, but no longer able to quench the evil: or if we do quench it for a short time, yet after two

or three days as a spark blown up from a heap of ashes overturns all, and consumes no less than it did before, so it is here also: for this is just what is wont to happen in such a conflagration. And as to the cause, it has devoured the supports of the very pillars of the Church; those of us who supported the roof, and who formerly held the whole building together it has enveloped in the flame. Hence too was a ready communication to the rest of the outer walls: for so also in the case of buildings, when the fire lays hold of the timbers, it is better armed for its attack upon the stones; but when it has brought down the pillars and leveled them with the ground, nothing more is wanted to consume all the rest in the flames. For when the props and supports of the upper parts fall down, those parts also themselves will speedily enough follow them. Thus is it also at this moment with the Church: the fire has laid hold on every part. We seek the honors that come from man, we burn for glory, and we hearken not to Job when he says,

If like Adam (or after the manner of men) I covered my
transgressions

By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom,
Because I feared the great multitude.

Behold ye a virtuous spirit? I was not ashamed, he says, to own before the whole multitude my involuntary sins: And if he was not ashamed to confess, much more were it our duty to do so. For says the prophet, "*Set thou forth your cause, that you may be justified.*" [Isaiah 43:26] Great is the violence of this evil, everything is overturned by it and annihilated. We have forsaken the Lord, and have become slaves of honor. We are no longer able to rebuke those who are under our rule, because we ourselves also are possessed with the same fever as they. We who are appointed by God to heal others, need the physician ourselves. What further hope of recovery is

there left, when even the very physicians themselves need the healing hand of others?

I have not said these things without an object, nor am I making lamentations to no purpose, but with the view that one and all, with our women and children, having sprinkled ourselves with ashes, and girded ourselves about with sackcloth, may keep a long fast, may beseech God Himself to stretch forth His hand to us, and to stay the peril. For need is there indeed of His hand, that mighty, that marvelous hand. Greater things are required of us than of the Ninevites. "*Yet three days,*" said the prophet, "*and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*" [Jonah 3:4] A fearful message, and burdened with tremendous threat. And how should it be otherwise? To expect that within three days, the city should become their tomb, and that all should perish in one common judgment. For if, when it happens that two children die at the same time in one house, the hardship becomes intolerable, and if to Job this of all things seemed the most intolerable, that the roof fell in upon all his children, and they were thus killed; what must it be to behold not one house, nor two children, but a nation of a hundred and twenty thousand buried beneath the ruins!

You know how terrible a disaster is this, for lately has this very warning happened to us, not that any prophet uttered a voice, for we are not worthy to hear such a voice, but the warning crying aloud from on high more distinctly than any trumpet. However, as I was saying, "*Yet three days,*" said the prophet, "*and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*" A terrible warning indeed, but now we have nothing even like that; no, there are no longer "*three days,*" nor is there a Nineveh to be overthrown, but many days are already past since the Church throughout all the world has been overthrown, and leveled with the ground, and all alike are overwhelmed in the evil; nay more, of those that are in high places the stress is so much the

greater. Wonder not therefore if I should exhort you to do greater things than the Ninevites; and why? Nay more, I do not now proclaim a fast only, but I suggest to you the remedy which raised up that city also when falling. And what was that? *"God saw their works,"* says the prophet, *"that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil which He said He would do unto them."* [Jonah 3:10] This let us do, both we and you. Let us renounce the passion for riches, the lust for glory, beseeching God to stretch forth His hand, and to raise up our fallen members. And well may we, for our fear is not for the same objects as theirs; for then indeed it was only stones and timbers that were to fall, and bodies that were to perish; but now it is none of these; no, but souls are about to be delivered over to hell fire. Let us implore, let us confess unto Him, let us give thanks unto Him for what is past, let us entreat Him for what is to come, that we may be counted worthy to be delivered from this fierce and most terrible monster, and to lift up our thanksgivings to the loving God and Father with whom, to the Son, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now, henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 11 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:4-7

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

The love Paul requires of us is no common love, but that which cements us together, and makes us cleave inseparably to one another, and effects as great and as perfect a union as though it were between limb and limb. For this is that love which produces great and glorious fruits. Hence he says, there is *"one body"*; one, both by sympathy, and by not opposing the good of others, and by sharing their joy, having expressed all at once by this figure. He then beautifully adds, *"and one Spirit,"* showing that from the one body there will be one Spirit: or, that it is possible that there may be indeed one body, and yet not one Spirit; as, for instance, if any member of it should be a friend of heretics: or else he is, by this expression, shaming them into unanimity, saying, as it were, *"You who have received one Spirit, and have been made to drink at one fountain, ought not to be divided in mind"*; or else by spirit here he means their zeal. Then he adds, *"Even as you were called in one hope of your calling,"* that is, God has called you all on the same terms. He has bestowed nothing upon one more than upon another. To all He has freely given immortality, to all eternal life, to all immortal glory, to all brotherhood, to all inheritance. He is the common Head of all; *"He has raised all"* up, *"and made them sit with Him."*

[Ephesians 2:6] You then who in the spiritual world have so great equality of privileges, whence is it that you are high-minded? Is it that one is

wealthy and another strong? How ridiculous must this be? For tell me, if the emperor some day were to take ten persons, and to array them all in purple, and seat them on the royal throne, and to bestow upon all the same honor, would any one of these, think ye, venture to reproach another, as being more wealthy or more illustrious than he? Surely never. And I have not yet said all; for the difference is not so great in heaven as here below we differ. There is *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism."* Behold *"the hope of your calling. One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."* For can it be, that you are called by the name of a greater God, another, of a lesser God? That you are saved by faith, and another by works? That you have received remission in baptism, while another has not? *"There is one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."* *"Who is over all,"* that is, the Lord and above all; and *"through all,"* that is, providing for, ordering all; and *"in you all,"* that is, who dwells in you all. Now this they own to be an attribute of the Son; so that were it an argument of inferiority, it never would have been said of the Father.

"But unto each one of us was the grace given."

What then? He says, whence are those diverse spiritual gifts? For this subject was continually carrying away both the Ephesians themselves, and the Corinthians, and many others, some into vain arrogance, and others into despondency or envy. Hence he everywhere takes along with him this illustration of the body. Hence it is that now also he has proposed it, inasmuch as he was about to make mention of diverse gifts. He enters indeed into the subject more fully in the Epistle to the Corinthians, because it was among them that this malady most especially reigned: here however he has only alluded to it. And mark what he says: he does not say, *"according to the faith of each,"* lest he should throw those who have no large attainments into despondency. But what says he? *"According to the*

measure of the gift of Christ." The chief and principal points of all, he says—Baptism, the being saved by faith, the having God for our Father, our all partaking of the same Spirit,— these are common to all. If then this or that man possesses any superiority in any spiritual gift, grieve not at it; since his labor also is greater. He that had received the five talents, had five required of him; while he that had received the two, brought only two, and yet received no less a reward than the other. And therefore the Apostle here also encourages the hearer on the same ground, showing that gifts are bestowed not for the honor of one above another, but for the work of the church, even as he says further on:

"For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering unto the building up of the body of Christ."

Hence it is that even he himself says, *"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."* [1 Corinthians 9:16] For example: he received the grace of Apostleship, but for this very reason, *"woe unto him,"* because he received it: whereas you are free from the danger.

"According to the measure."

What is meant by, *"according to the measure"*? It means, *"not according to our merit,"* for then would no one have received what he has received: but of the free gift we have all received. And why then one more, and another less? There is nothing to cause this, he would say, but the matter itself is indifferent; for every one contributes towards *"the building."* And by this too he shows, that it is not of his own intrinsic merit that one has received more and another less, but that it is for the sake of others, as God Himself has measured it; since he says also elsewhere, *"But now has God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him."* [1 Corinthians 12:18] And he mentions not the reason, lest he should deject or dispirit the hearers.

Ver. 8. *"Wherefore he says, When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."*

As though he had said, Why are you high-minded? The whole is of God. The Prophet says in the Psalm, *"You have received gifts among men"* [Psalm 68:18.], whereas the Apostle says, *"He gave gifts unto men."* The one is the same as the other.

Ver. 9, 10. *"Now this, He ascended, what is it, but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things."*

When you hear these words, think not of a mere removal from one place to another; for what Paul establishes in the Epistle to the Philippians [Philippians 2:5-8], that very argument is he also insisting upon here. In the same way as there, when exhorting them concerning lowliness, he brings forward Christ as an example, so does he here also, saying, *"He descended into the lower parts of the earth."* For were not this so, this expression which he uses, *"He became obedient even unto death"* [Philippians 2:8-9], were superfluous; whereas from His ascending, he implies His descent, and by *"the lower parts of the earth,"* he means *"death,"* according to the notions of men; as Jacob also said, *"Then shall you bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."* [Genesis 32:48] And again as it is in the Psalm, *"Lest I become like them that go down into the pit"* [Psalm 143:7], that is like the dead. Why does he descant upon this region here? And of what captivity does he speak? Of that of the devil; for He took the tyrant captive, the devil, I mean, and death, and the curse, and sin. Behold His spoils and His trophies.

"Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended?"

This strikes at Paul of Samosata and his school.

"He that descended, is the same also that ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things."

He descended, says he, into the lower parts of the earth, beyond which there are none other: and He ascended up far above all things, to that place, beyond which there is none other. This is to show His divine energy, and supreme dominion. For indeed even of old had all things been filled.

Ver. 11, 12. *"And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."*

What he said elsewhere, *"Wherefore also God has highly exalted Him"* [Philippians 2:9], that says he also here. *"He that descended, is the same also that ascended."* It did Him no injury that He came down into the lower parts of the earth, nor was it any hindrance to His becoming far higher than the Heavens. So that the more a man is humbled, so much the more is he exalted. For as in the case of water, the more a man presses it downwards, the more he forces it up; and the further a man retires to hurl a javelin, the surer his aim; so is it also with humility. However, when we speak of ascents with reference to God, we must needs conceive a descent first; but when with reference to man, not at all so. Then he goes on to show further His providential care, and His wisdom, for He who has wrought such things as these, who had such might, and who refused not to go down even to those lower parts for our sakes, never would He have made these distributions of spiritual gifts without a purpose. Now elsewhere he tells us that this was the work of the Spirit, in the words, *"In the which the Holy Ghost has made you bishops to feed the Church of God."* And here he says that it is the Son; and elsewhere that it is God. *"And He gave to the Church some apostles, and some prophets."* But in the Epistle to the Corinthians, he

says, *"I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."* And again, *"Now he that plants and he that waters are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor."* [1 Corinthians 3:6-8] So is it also here; for what if you bring in but little? You have received so much. First, he says, *"apostles"*; for these had all gifts; secondarily, *"prophets,"* for there were some who were not indeed apostles, but prophets, as Agabus; thirdly, *"evangelists,"* who did not go about everywhere, but only preached the Gospel, as Priscilla and Aquila; *"pastors and teachers,"* those who were entrusted with the charge of a whole nation. What then? Are the pastors and the teachers inferior? Yes, surely; those who were settled and employed about one spot, as Timothy and Titus, were inferior to those who went about the world and preached the Gospel. However, it is not possible from this passage to frame the subordination and precedence, but from another Epistle. *"He gave,"* says he; you must not say a word to gainsay it. Or perhaps by *"evangelists"* he means those who wrote the Gospel.

"For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."

Perceive ye the dignity of the office? Each one edifies, each one perfects, each one ministers.

Ver. 13. *"Till we all attain,"* he proceeds, *"unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."*

By *"stature"* here he means perfect *"knowledge"*; for as a man will stand firmly, whereas children are carried about and waver in mind, so is it also with believers.

"To the unity," says he, *"of the faith."*

That is, until we shall be shown to have all one faith: for this is unity of faith, when we all are one, when we shall all alike acknowledge the

common bond. Till then you must labor to this end. If for this you have received a gift, that you might edify others, look well that thou overturn not yourself, by envying another. God has honored you, and ordained you, that you should build up another. Yea, for about this was the Apostle also engaged; and for this was the prophet prophesying and persuading, and the Evangelist preaching the Gospel, and for this was the pastor and teacher; all had undertaken one common work. For tell me not of the difference of the spiritual gifts; but that all had one work. Now when we shall all believe alike then shall there be unity; for that this is what he calls "*a perfect man*," is plain. And yet he elsewhere calls us "*babes*" [1 Corinthians 13:11], even when we are of mature age; but he is there looking to another comparison, for there it is in comparison with our future knowledge that he there calls us babes. For having said, "*We know in part*" [1 Corinthians 13:9-12], he adds also the word "*darkly*," and the like: whereas here he speaks with reference to another thing, with reference to changeableness, as he says also elsewhere, "*But solid food is for full-grown men*." [Hebrews 5:14] Do you see then also in what sense he there calls them full-grown? Observe also in what sense he calls men "*perfect*" here, by the words next added, where he says, "*that we may be no longer children*." That we keep, he means to say, that little measure, which we may have received, with all diligence, with firmness and steadfastness.

Ver. 14. "*That we may be no longer*."— The word, "*no longer*," shows that they had of old been in this case, and he reckons himself moreover as a subject for correction, and corrects himself. For this cause, he would say, are there so many workmen, that the building may not be shaken, may not be "*carried about*," that the stones may be firmly fixed. For this is the character of children, to be tossed to and fro, to be carried about and shaken. "*That we may be no longer*," says he, "*children, tossed to and fro*,

and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error." "And carried about," says he, "with every wind." He comes to this figure of speech, to point out in how great peril doubting souls are. "With every wind," says he, "by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error." The word "sleight" means the art of gamesters. Such are the "crafty," whenever they lay hold on the simpler sort. For they also change and shift about everything. He here glances also at human life.

Ver. 15, 16. "But speaking truth," says he, "in love, may grow up in all things into Him, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom," (that is, from Christ,) "all the body fitly framed and knit together, through that which every joint supplies, according to the working in due measure of each several part, makes increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

He expresses himself with great obscurity, from his desire to utter everything at once. What he means, however, is this. In the same way as the spirit, or vital principle, which descends from the brain, communicates the sensitive faculty which is conveyed through the nerves, not simply to all the members, but according to the proportion of each member, to that which is capable of receiving more, more, to that which is capable of less, less, (for the spirit is the root or source;) so also is Christ. For the souls of men being dependent upon Him as members, His provident care, and supply of the spiritual gifts according to a due proportion in the measure of every single member, effects their increase. But what is the meaning of this, "by the touch of the supply"? that is to say, by the sensitive faculty. For that spirit which is supplied to the members from the head, "touches," each single member, and thus actuates it. As though one should say, "the body receiving the supply according to the proportion of its several members, thus makes

the increase"; or, in other words, *"the members receiving the supply according to the proportion of their proper measure, thus make increase"*; or otherwise again thus, the spirit flowing plenteously from above, and touching all the members, and supplying them as each is capable of *"receiving it, thus makes increase."* But wherefore does he add, *"in love"*? Because in no other way is it possible for that Spirit to descend. For as, in case a hand should happen to be torn from the body, the spirit which proceeds from the brain seeks the limb, and if it finds it not, does not leap forth from the body, and fly about and go to the hand, but if it finds it not in its place, does not touch it; so also will it be here, if we be not bound together in love. All these expressions he uses as tending to humility. For what, he seems to say, if this or that man receives more than another? He has received the same Spirit, sent forth from the same Head, effectually working in all alike, communicating itself to all alike.

"Fitly framed and knit together."

That is, having great care bestowed upon it; for the body must not be put together anyhow, but with exceeding art and nicety, since if it gets out of place, it is no longer. So that each must not only be united to the body, but also occupy his proper place, since if you shall go beyond this, you are not united to it, neither do you receive the Spirit. Do you not see, that in those dislocations of the bones which take place in any accident, when a bone gets out of its proper place and occupies that of another, how it injures the whole body, and oftentimes will produce death? So that sometimes it will be found to be no longer worth preserving. For many in many cases will cut it off, and leave a void in its place; because everywhere what is in excess is an evil. And so again with the elements, if they lose their proper proportion and be in excess, they impair the whole system. This is the meaning of the being *"fitly framed and knit together."* Consider then of how

vast importance it is, that each should remain in his own proper place, and not encroach on another which in nowise appertains to him. You put the members together, He supplies them from above. For as there are in the body such recipient organs, as we have seen, so is it also with the Spirit, the whole root or source being from above. For example, the heart is the recipient of the breath, the liver of the blood, the spleen of the bile, and the other organs, some of one thing, others of another, but all these have their source from the brain. So also has God done, highly honoring man, and being unwilling to be far from him, He has made Himself indeed the source of his dependence, and has constituted them fellow-workers with Himself; and some He has appointed to one office, and others to another. For example, the Apostle is the most vital vessel of the whole body, receiving everything from Him; so that He makes eternal life to run through them to all, as through veins and arteries, I mean through their discourse. The Prophet foretells things to come, while He alone orders the same; You put the members together, but He supplies them with life, *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry."* Love builds up, and makes men cleave one to another, and be fastened and fitted together.

Moral. If therefore we desire to have the benefit of that Spirit which is from the Head, let us cleave one to another. For there are two kinds of separation from the body of the Church; the one, when we wax cold in love, the other, when we dare commit things unworthy of our belonging to that body; for in either way we cut ourselves off from the *"fullness of Christ."* But if we are appointed to build up others also, what shall not be done to them who are first to make division? Nothing will so avail to divide the Church as love of power. Nothing so provokes God's anger as the division of the Church. Yea, though we have achieved ten thousand glorious acts, yet shall we, if we cut to pieces the fullness of the Church, suffer punishment

no less sore than they who mangled His body. For that indeed was brought to pass for the benefit of the world, even though it was done with no such intention; whereas this produces no advantage in any case, but the injury is excessive. These remarks I am addressing not to the governors only, but also to the governed. Now a certain holy man said what might seem to be a bold thing; yet, nevertheless, he spoke it out. What then is this? He said, that not even the blood of martyrdom can wash out this sin. For tell me for what do you suffer as a martyr? Is it not for the glory of Christ? Thou then that yieldest up your life for Christ's sake, how do you lay waste the Church, for whose sake Christ yielded up His life? Hear what Paul says, "*I am not meet to be called an Apostle [1 Corinthians 15:9], because I persecuted the Church of God and made havoc of it.*" [Galatians 1:13] This injury is not less than that received at the hands of enemies, nay, it is far greater. For that indeed renders her even more glorious, whereas this, when she is warred upon by her own children, disgraces her even before her enemies. Because it seems to them a great mark of hypocrisy, that those who have been born in her, and nurtured in her bosom, and have learned perfectly her secrets, that these should of a sudden change, and do her enemies' work.

I mean these remarks for those who give themselves up indiscriminately to the men who are dividing the Church. For if on the one hand those men have doctrines also contrary to ours, then on that account further it is not right to mix with them: if, on the other hand, they hold the same opinions, the reason for not mixing with them is greater still. And why so? Because then the disease is from lust of authority. Do you not know what was the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? [Numbers 16:1-35] Of them only did I say? Was it not also of them that were with them? What will you say? Shall it be said, "*Their faith is the same, they are orthodox as well*

as we"? If so, why then are they not with us? There is *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism."* If their cause is right, then is ours wrong; if ours is right, then is theirs wrong. *"Children,"* says he, *"tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind."* Tell me, do you think this is enough, to say that they are orthodox? Is then the ordination of clergy past and done away? And what is the advantage of other things, if this be not strictly observed? For as we must needs contend for the faith; so must we for this also. For if it is lawful for any one, according to the phrase of them of old, *"to fill his hands,"* and to become a priest, let all approach to minister. In vain has this altar been raised, in vain the fullness of the Church, in vain the number of the priests. Let us take them away and destroy them. *"God forbid!"* you will say. You are doing these things, and do ye say, *"God forbid"*? How say ye, *"God forbid,"* when the very things are taking place? I speak and testify, not looking to my own interest, but to your salvation. But if any one be indifferent, he must see to it himself: if these things are a care to no one else, yet are they a care to me. *"I planted,"* says he, *"Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."* [1 Corinthians 3:6] How shall we bear the ridicule of the Greeks? For if they reproach us on account of our heresies, what will they not say of these things? *"If they have the same doctrines, if the same mysteries, wherefore does a ruler in one Church invade another? See ye,"* say they, *"how all things among the Christians are full of vainglory? And there is an ambition among them, and hypocrisy. Strip them,"* say they, *"of their numbers, and they are nothing. Cut out the disease, the corrupt multitude."* Would you have me tell what they say of our city, how they accuse us on the score of our easy compliances? Any one, say they, that chooses may find followers, and would never be at a loss for them. Oh, what a sneer is that, what a disgrace are these things! And yet the sneer is one thing, the disgrace is another. If any among us are convicted of deeds

the most disgraceful, and are about to meet with some penalty, great is the alarm, great is the fear on all sides, lest he should start away, people say, and join the other side. Yea, let such an one start away ten thousand times, and let him join them. And I speak not only of those who have sinned, but if there be any one free from offense, and he has a mind to depart, let him depart. I am grieved indeed at it, and bewail and lament it, and am cut to the very heart, as though I were being deprived of one of my own limbs; and yet I am not so grieved, as to be compelled to do anything wrong through such fear as this. We have "*not lordship over your faith*" [2 Corinthians 1:24], beloved, nor command we these things as your lords and masters. We are appointed for the teaching of the word, not for power, nor for absolute authority. We hold the place of counselors to advise you. The counselor speaks his own sentiments, not forcing the hearer, but leaving him full master of his choice upon what is said; in this case alone is he blameable, if he fail to utter the things which present themselves. For this cause do we also say these things, these things do we assert, that it may not be in your power in that day to say, "*No one told us, no one gave us commandment, we were ignorant, we thought it was no sin at all.*" Therefore I assert and protest, that to make a schism in the Church is no less an evil than to fall into heresy. Tell me, suppose a subject of some king, though he did not join himself to another king, nor give himself to any other, yet should take and keep hold of his king's royal purple, and should tear it all from its clasp, and rend it into many shreds; would he suffer less punishment than those who join themselves to the service of another? And what, if withal he were to seize the king himself by the throat and slay him, and tear his body limb from limb, what punishment could he undergo, that should be equal to his deserts? Now if in doing this toward a king, his fellow-servant, he would be committing an act too great for any punishment to reach; of what hell shall

not he be worthy who slays Christ, and plucks Him limb from limb? Of that one which is threatened? No, I think not, but of another far more dreadful.

Speak, you women, that are present—for this generally is a failing of women, — relate to them that are absent this similitude which I have made; startle them. If any think to grieve me and thus to have their revenge, let them be well aware that they do these things in vain. For if you wish to revenge yourself on me, I will give you a method by which you may take vengeance without injury to yourself; or rather without injury it is not possible to revenge yourself, but at all events with less injury. Buffet me, woman, spit upon me, when you meet me in the public way, and aim blows at me. Do you shudder at hearing this? When I bid you buffet me, do you shudder, and do you tear your Lord and Master and not shudder? Do you pluck asunder the limbs of your Lord and Master, and not tremble? The Church is our Father's house. *"There is one body, and one Spirit."* But do you wish to revenge yourself on me? Yet stop at me. Why do you revenge yourself on Christ in my stead? Nay, rather, why kick against the nails? In no case indeed is revenge good and right, but to assault one when another has done the wrong is far worse. Is it I that wronged you? Why then inflict pain on Him who has not wronged you? This is the very extreme of madness. I speak not in irony what I am about to say, nor without purpose, but as I really think and as I feel. I would that every one of those who with you are exasperated against me, and who by this exasperation are injuring themselves, and departing elsewhere, would direct his blows at me in my very face, would strip me and scourge me, be his charge against me just or unjust, and let loose his wrath upon me, rather than that they should dare to commit what they now dare. If this were done, it were nothing; nothing, that a man who is a mere nothing and of no account whatever, should be so treated. And besides, I, the wronged and injured person, might call upon

God, and He might forgive you your sins. Not because I have so great confidence; but because when he who has been wronged, entreats for him who has done the wrong, he gains great confidence. *"If one man sin against another,"* it is said, *"then shall they pray for him"* [1 Samuel 2:25]; and if I were unable, I might seek for other holy men, and entreat them, and they might do it. But now whom shall we even entreat, when God is outraged by us?

Mark the consistency; for of those who belong to this Church, some never approach to communicate at all, or but once in the year, and then without purpose, and just as it may happen; others more regularly indeed, yet they too carelessly and without purpose, and while engaged in conversation, and trifling about nothing: while those who, forsooth, seem to be in earnest, these are the very persons who work this mischief. Yet surely, if it is for these things you are in earnest, it were better that you also were in the ranks of the indifferent; or rather it were better still, that neither they should be indifferent, nor you such as you are. I speak not of you that are present, but of those who are deserting from us. The act is adultery. And if you bear not to hear these things of them, neither should ye of us. There must be breach of the law either on the one side or the other. If then you have these suspicions concerning me, I am ready to retire from my office, and resign it to whomsoever ye may choose. Only let the Church be one. But if I have been lawfully made and consecrated, entreat those who have contrary to the law mounted the episcopal throne to resign it.

These things I have said, not as dictating to you, but only to secure and protect you. Since every one of you has come to age, and will have to give account of the things which he has done, I entreat you not to cast the whole matter on us, and consider yourselves to be irresponsible, that you may not go on fruitlessly deceiving yourselves, and at last bewail it. An account

indeed we shall have to give of your souls; but it will be when we have been wanting on our part, when we fail to exhort, when we fail to admonish, when we fail to protest. But after these words, allow even me to say that "*I am pure from the blood of all men*" [Acts 20:26]; and that "*God will deliver my soul.*" [Ezekiel 3:19-21] Say what you will, give a just cause why ye depart, and I will answer you. But no, you will not state it. Wherefore I entreat you, endeavor henceforward both to resist nobly and to bring back those who have seceded, that we may with one accord lift up thanksgiving to God; for to Him belongs the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 12 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:17

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding."

It is the duty of the teacher to build up and restore the souls of his disciples, not only by counseling and instructing them, but also by alarming them, and delivering them up to God. For when the words spoken by men as coming from fellow-servants are not sufficient to kindle the soul, it then becomes necessary to make over the case to God. This accordingly Paul does also; for having discoursed concerning lowliness, and concerning unity, and concerning our duty not to rise up one against another, hear what he says. *"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk."* He does not say, *"That ye henceforth walk not as you are now walking,"* for that expression would have struck too hard. But he plainly indicates the same thing, only he brings his example from others. And so in writing to the Thessalonians, he does this very same thing, where he says, *"Not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God."* [1 Thessalonians 4:5] You differ from them, he means to say, in doctrine, but that is wholly God's work: what I require on your path is the life and the course of behavior that is after God. This is your own. And I call the Lord to witness what I have said, that I have not shrunk, but have told you how ye ought to walk.

"In the vanity," says he, *"of their mind."*

What is vanity of mind? It is the being busied about vain things. And what are those vain things, but all things in the present life? Of which the

Preacher says, "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 1:2] But a man will say, If they be vain and vanity, wherefore were they made? If they are God's works, how are they vain? And great is the dispute concerning these things. But hearken, beloved: it is not the works of God which he calls vain; God forbid! The Heaven is not vain, the earth is not vain—God forbid!—nor the sun, nor the moon and stars, nor our own body. No, all these are "*very good.*" [Genesis 1:31] But what is vain? Let us hear the Preacher himself, what he says; "*I planted me vineyards, I gat me men singers and women singers, I made me pools of water, I had great possession of herds and flocks, I gathered me also silver and gold, and I saw that these are vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 2:4-8] And again, "*Vanity of vanities, all things are vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 12:8] Hear also what the Prophet says, "*He heaps up riches, and knows not who shall gather them.*" [Psalm 39:6] Such is "*vanity of vanities,*" your splendid buildings, your vast and overflowing riches, the herds of slaves that bustle along the public square, your pomp and vainglory, your high thoughts, and your ostentation. For all these are vain; they came not from the hand of God, but are of our own creating. But why then are they vain? Because they have no useful end. Riches are vain when they are spent upon luxury; but they cease to be vain when they are "*dispersed and given to the needy.*" [Psalm 112:9] But when you have spent them upon luxury, let us look at the end of them, what it is—grossness of body, flatulence, pantings, fullness of belly, heaviness of head, softness of flesh, feverishness, enervation; for as a man who shall draw into a leaking vessel labors in vain, so also does the one who lives in luxury and self-indulgence draw into a leaking vessel. But again, that is called "*vain,*" which is expected indeed to contain something, but contains it not—that which men call empty, as when they speak of "*empty hopes.*" And generally that is called "*vain,*" which is bare and purposeless, which is

of no use. Let us see then whether all human things are not of this sort. *"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."* [1 Corinthians 15:32] What then, tell me, is the end? Corruption. Let us put on clothing and raiment. And what is the result? Nothing. Such are the lives of the Greeks. They philosophized, but in vain. They made a show of a life of hardship, but of mere hardship, not looking to any beneficial end, but to vainglory, and to honor from the many. But what is the honor of the many? It is nothing, for if they themselves which render the honor perish, much more does the honor. He that renders honor to another, ought first to render it to himself; for if he gain not honor for himself, how can he ever render it to another? Whereas now we seek even honors from vile and despicable characters, themselves dishonorable, and objects of reproach. What kind of honor then is this? Perceive ye, how that all things are *"vanity of vanities"*? Therefore, says he, *"in the vanity of their mind."*

But further, is not their religion of this sort, wood and stone? He has made the sun to shine for a lamp to light us. Who will worship his own lamp? The sun supplies us with light, but where he cannot, a lamp can do it. Then why not worship your lamp? *"Nay,"* one will say, *"I worship the fire."* Oh, how ridiculous! So great is the absurdity, and yet look again at another absurdity. Why extinguish the object of your worship? Why destroy, why annihilate your god? Wherefore do you not suffer your house to be filled with him? For if the fire be god, let him feed upon your body. Put not your god under the bottom of your kettle, or your cauldron. Bring him into your inner chambers, bring him within your silken draperies. Whereas not only do you not bring him in, but if by any accident he has found entrance, you drive him out from every place, you call everybody together, and, as though some wild beast had entered, you weep and wailest, and callest the presence of your god an overwhelming calamity. I have a God, and I do all I can to

enshrine Him in my bosom, and I deem it my true bliss, not when He visits my dwelling, but when I can draw Him even to my heart. Do thou too draw the fire to your heart. This is folly and vanity. Fire is good for use, not for adoration; good for ministration and for service, to be my slave, not to be my master. It was made for me, not I for it. If you are a worshiper of fire, why recline upon your couch yourself, and order your cook to stand before your god? Take up the art of cookery yourself, become a baker if you will, or a coppersmith, for nothing can be more honorable than these arts, since these are they that your god visits. Why deem that art a disgrace, where your god is all in all? Why commit it to your slaves, and not be ambitious of it yourself? Fire is good, inasmuch as it is the work of a good Creator, but it is not God. It is the work of God, it was not called God. Do you see not how ungovernable is its nature;— how when it lays hold on a building it stops nowhere? But if it seizes anything continuous, it destroys all; and, except the hands of workmen or others quench its fury, it knows not friends nor foes, but deals with all alike. Is this then your god, and are you not ashamed? Well indeed does he say, *"in the vanity of their mind."*

But the sun, they say, is God. Tell me, how and wherefore. Is it that he sheds abundance of light? Yet do you not see him overcome by clouds, and in bondage to the necessity of nature, and eclipsed, and hidden by the moon? And yet the cloud is weaker than the sun; but still it often gains the mastery of him. And this indeed is the work of God's wisdom. God must needs be all sufficient: but the sun needs many things; and this is not like a god. For he requires air to shine in, and that, too, thin air; since the air, when it is greatly condensed, suffers not the rays to pass through it. He requires also water, and other restraining power, to prevent him from consuming. For were it not that fountains, and lakes, and rivers, and seas, formed some moisture by the emission of their vapors, there would be

nothing to prevent an universal conflagration. Do you see then, say ye, that he is a god? What folly, what madness! A god, say ye, because he has power to do harm. Nay, rather, for this very reason is he no god, because where he does harm he needs nothing; whereas, where he does good, he requires many things besides. Now to do harm, is foreign to God's nature; to do good, is His property. Where then the reverse is the case, how can he be God? Do you see not that poisonous drugs injure, and need nothing; but when they are to do good, need many things? For your sake then is he such as he is, both good, and powerless; good, that you may acknowledge his Lord; and powerless, that you may not say that he is lord. "*But,*" say they, "*he nourishes the plants and the seeds.*" What then, at that rate is not the very dung a god? For even that also nourishes. And why not at that rate the scythe as well, and the hands of the husbandman? Prove to me that the sun alone does the work of nourishing without needing the help of either earth, or water, or tillage; but let the seeds be sown, and let him shed forth his rays, and produce the ears of grain. But now if this work be not his alone, but that of the rains also, wherefore is not the water a god also? But of this I speak not yet. Why is not the earth too a god, and why not the dung, and the hoe? Shall we then, tell me, worship all? Alas, what trifling! And indeed rather might the ear of grain be produced without sun, than without earth and water; and so with plants and all other things. Were there no earth, none of these things could ever appear. And if any one, as children and women do, were to put some earth into a pot, and to fill up the pot with a quantity of dung, and to place it under the roof, plants, though they may be weak ones, will be produced from it. So that the contribution of the earth and of the dung is greater, and these therefore we ought to worship rather than the sun. He requires the sky, he requires the air, he requires these waters, to prevent his doing harm, to be as bridles to curb the fierceness of his power,

and to restrain him from letting loose his rays over the world, like some furious horse. And now tell me, where is he at night? Whither has your god taken his departure? For this is not like a god, to be circumscribed and limited. This is in fact the property of bodies only. But, say they, there is some sort of power residing in him, and he has motion. Is this power then, I pray you, itself God? Why then is it insufficient in itself, and why does it not restrain the fire? For again, I come to the same argument. But what is that power? Is it productive of light, or does it by the sun give light, though of itself possessing none of these qualities? If so, then is the sun superior to it. How far shall we unwind this maze?

Again, what is water? Is not that too, they say, a god? This again is a matter of truly absurd disputation. Is that not a god, they say, which we make use of for so many purposes? And so again, in like manner, of the earth. Truly *"they walk in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding."*

But these words he is now using concerning life and conduct. The Greeks are fornicators and adulterers. Of course. They who paint to themselves such gods as these, will naturally do all these things; and if they can but escape the eyes of men, there is no one to restrain them. For what will avail the argument of a resurrection, if it appear to them a mere fable? Yea, and what that of the torments of hell?— they too are but a fable. And mark the Satanic notion. When they are told of gods who are fornicators, they deny that these are fables, but believe them. Yet whenever any shall discourse to them of punishment, *"these,"* they say, *"are poets, men who turn everything into fable, that man's happy condition may be on all sides overturned."*

But the philosophers, it is said, discovered something truly grand, and far better than these. How? They who introduced fate, and who tell us that

nothing is providential, and that there is no one to care for anything, but that all things consist of atoms? Or, others again who say that God is a body? Or who, tell me, are they? Are they those who would turn the souls of men into the souls of dogs, and would pervade mankind that one was once a dog, and a lion, and a fish? How long will you go on and never cease trifling, *"being darkened in the understanding"*? For they say and do all things as though they were indeed in the dark, both in those things which concern doctrine, and those which concern life and conduct; for the man who is in darkness sees none of the things which lie before him, but oftentimes when he sees a rope, he will take it for a live serpent; or again, if he is caught by a hedge, he will think that a man or an evil spirit has hold of him, and great is the alarm, and great the perturbation. Such as these are the things they fear. *"There were they in great fear,"* it says, *"where no fear was"* [Psalm 53:5]; but the things which they ought to fear, these they fear not. But just as children in their nurses' arms thrust their hands incautiously into the fire, and boldly into the candle also, and yet are scared at a man clothed in sackcloth; just so these Greeks, as if they were really always children, (as some one also among themselves has said, the Greeks are always children,) fear those things that are no sins, such as filthiness of the body, the pollution of a funeral, a bed, or the keeping of days, and the like: whereas those which are really sins, unnatural lust, adultery, fornication, of these they make no account at all. No, you may see a man washing himself from the pollution of a dead body, but from dead works, never; and, again, spending much zeal in the pursuit of riches, and yet supposing the whole is undone by the crowing of a single cock. *"So darkened are they in their understanding."* Their soul is filled with all sorts of terrors. For instance: *"Such a person,"* one will say, *"was the first who met me, as I was going out of the house"*; of course ten thousand evils must certainly ensue. At another

time, *"the wretch of a servant in giving me my shoes, held out the left shoe first,"*— terrible mishaps and mischiefs! *"I myself in coming out set forth with the left foot foremost"*; and this too is a token of misfortune. And these are the evils that occur about the house. Then, as I go out, my right eye shoots up from beneath. This is a sure sign of tears. Again the women, when the reeds strike against the standards, and ring, or when they themselves are scratched by the shuttle, turn this also into a sign. And again, when they strike the web with the shuttle, and do it with some vehemence, and then the reeds on the top from the intensity of the blow strike against the standards and ring, this again they make a sign, and ten thousand things besides, deserving of ridicule. And so if an ass should bray, or a cock should crow, or a man should sneeze, or whatever else may happen, like men bound with ten thousand chains, or, as I was saying, like men confined in the dark, they suspect everything, and are more slavish than all the slaves in the world.

But let it not be so with us. But scorning all these things, as men living in the light, and having our citizenship in Heaven, and having nothing in common with earth, let us regard but one thing as terrible, that is, sin, and offending against God. And if there be not this, let us scorn all the rest, and him that brought them in, the Devil. For these things let us give thanks to God. Let us be diligent, not only that we ourselves be never caught by this slavery, but if any of those who are dear to us have been caught, let us break his bonds asunder, let us release him from this most bitter and contemptible captivity, let us make him free and unshackled for his course toward Heaven, let us raise up his flagging wings, and teach him to be wise for life and doctrine's sake. Let us give thanks to God for all things. Let us beseech Him that He will not declare us unworthy of the gifts offered to us, and let us ourselves withal endeavor to contribute our own part, that we may teach

not only by speaking, but by acting also. For thus shall we be able to attain His unnumbered blessings, of which God grant we may all be counted worthy, in Christ Jesus our Lord with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, might, and honor, now, henceforth, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 13 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:17-19

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart: who being past feeling, gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

These words are not addressed to the Ephesians only, but are now addressed also to you; and that, not from me, but from Paul; or rather, neither from me nor from Paul, but from the grace of the Spirit. And we then ought so to feel, as though that grace itself were uttering them. And now hear what it says. *"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart."* If then it is ignorance, if it is hardening, why blame it? if a man is ignorant, it were just, not that he should be ill-treated for it, nor be blamed, but that he should be informed of those things of which he is ignorant. But mark how at once he cuts them off from all excuse. *"Who being past feeling,"* says he, *"gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; but you did not so learn Christ."* Here he shows us, that the cause of their hardening was their way of life, and that their life was the consequence of their own indolence and want of feeling.

"Who being past feeling," says he, *"gave themselves up."*

Whenever then ye hear, that "*God gave them up unto a reprobate mind*" [Romans 1:28], remember this expression, that "*they gave themselves up.*" If then they gave themselves over, how did God give them over? And if again God gave them over, how did they give themselves over? You see the seeming contradiction. The word, "*gave them over,*" then, means this, He permitted them to be given over. Do you see, that the impure life is the ground for like doctrines also? "*Every one,*" says the Lord, "*that does ill hates the light, and comes not to the light.*" [John 3:20] For how could a profligate man, one more immersed in the practice of indiscriminate lewdness than the swine that wallow in the mire, and who is a lover of money, and has not so much as any desire after temperance, enter upon a life like this? They made the thing, says he, their "*work.*" Hence their "*hardening*" [Ephesians 4:19], hence the "*darkness of their understanding.*" There is such a thing as being in the dark, even while the light is shining, when the eyes are weak; and weak they become, either by the influx of ill humors, or by superabundance of rheum. And so surely is it also here; when the strong current of the affairs of this life overwhelms the perceptive power of the understanding, it is thrown into a state of darkness. And in the same way as if we were placed in the depths under water, we should be unable to see the sun through the quantity of water lying, like a sort of barrier, above us, so surely, in the eyes of the understanding also a blindness of the heart takes place, that is, an insensibility, whenever there is no fear to agitate the soul. "*There is no fear of God,*" it says, "*before his eyes*" [Psalm 36:1]; and again, "*The fool has said in his heart, There is no God.*" [Psalm 14:1] Now blindness arises from no other cause than from want of feeling; this clogs the channel; for whenever the fluids are curdled and collected into one place, the limb becomes dead and void of feeling; and though thou burn it, or cut it, or do what you will with it, still it feels not. So is it also with those

persons, when they have once given themselves over to lasciviousness: though thou apply the word to them like fire, or steel, yet nothing touches, nothing reaches them; their limb is utterly dead. And unless you can remove the insensibility, so as to touch the healthy members, everything you do is vain.

"With greediness," says he.

Here he has most completely taken away their excuse; for it was in their power, if at least they chose it, not to be *"greedy,"* nor to be *"lascivious,"* nor gluttonous, and yet to enjoy their desires. It was in their power to partake in moderation of riches, and even of pleasure and of luxury; but when they indulged the thing immoderately, they destroyed all.

"To work all uncleanness," says he.

You see how he strips them of all excuse by speaking of *"working uncleanness."* They did not sin, he means, by making a false step, but they worked out these horrid deeds, and they made the thing a matter of study. *"All uncleanness";* uncleanness is all adultery, fornication, unnatural lust, envy, every kind of profligacy and lasciviousness.

Ver. 20, 21. *"But ye did not so learn Christ,"* he continues, *"if so be that you heard Him, and were taught in Him even as truth is in Jesus."*

The expression, *"If so be that you heard Him,"* is not that of one doubting, but of one even strongly affirming: as he also speaks elsewhere, *"If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you."* [2 Thessalonians 1:6] That is to say, It was not for these purposes that *"ye learned Christ."*

Ver. 22. *"That ye put away as concerning your former manner of life, the old man."*

This then surely is to learn Christ, to live rightly; for he that lives wickedly knows not God, neither is known of Him; for hear what he says

elsewhere, *"They profess that they know God, but by their works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16]

"As truth is in Jesus; that you put away as concerning your former manner of life, the old man."

That is to say, It was not on these terms that you entered into covenant. What is found among us is not vanity, but truth. As the doctrines are true, so is the life also. Sin is vanity and falsehood; but a right life is truth. For temperance is indeed truth, for it has a great end; whereas profligacy ends in nothing.

"Which waxes corrupt," says he, *"after the lusts of deceit."* As his lusts became corrupt, so himself also. How then do his lusts become corrupt? By death all things are dissolved; for hear the Prophet, how he says, *"In that very day his thoughts perish."* [Psalm 146:4] And not by death only, but by many things besides; for instance, beauty, at the advance of either disease or old age, withdraws and dies away, and suffers corruption. Bodily vigor again is destroyed by the same means; nor does luxury itself afford the same pleasure in old age, as is evident from the case of Barzillai: the history, no doubt, you know. Or again, in another sense, lust corrupts and destroys the old man; for as wool is destroyed by the very same means by which it is produced, so likewise is the old man. For love of glory destroys him, and pleasures will often destroy him, and *"lust"* will utterly *"deceive"* him. For this is not really pleasure but bitterness and deceit, all pretense and outward show. The surface, indeed, of the things is bright, but the things themselves are only full of misery and extreme wretchedness, and loathsomeness, and utter poverty. Take off the mask, and lay bare the true face, and you shall see the cheat, for cheat it is, when that which is, appears not, and that which is not, is displayed. And it is thus that impositions are effected.

The Apostle delineates for us four men. Of these I shall give an explanation. In this place he mentions two, speaking thus, *"Putting away the old man, be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man."* And in the Epistle to the Romans, two more, as where he says, *"But I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."* [Romans 7:23] And these latter bear affinity to those former two, the *"new man"* to the *"inner man,"* and the *"old man"* to the *"outer man."* However, three of these four were subject to corruption. Or rather there are three, the new man, the old, and this, man in his substance and nature.

Ver. 23. *"And that you be renewed,"* says he, *"in the spirit of your mind."*

In order that no one may suppose that, whereas he speaks of old and new, he is introducing a different person, observe his expression, *"That ye be renewed."* To be renewed is, when the selfsame thing which has grown old is renewed, changed from one thing into the other. So that the subject indeed is the same, but the change is in that which is accidental. Just as the body indeed is the same, and the change in that which is accidental, so is it here. How then is the renewal to take place? *"In the spirit of your mind,"* says he. Whosoever therefore has the Spirit, will perform no old deed, for the Spirit will not endure old deeds. *"In the spirit,"* says he, *"of your mind,"* that is, in the spirit which is in your mind.

Ver. 24. *"And put on the new man."*

Do you see that the subject is one, but the clothing is twofold, that which is put off, and that which is put on? *"The new man,"* he continues, *"which after God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."* Now wherefore does he call virtue a man? And wherefore vice, a man? Because a man cannot be shown without acting; so that these things, no less

than nature, show a man, whether he be good or evil. Now as to undress one's self and to dress one's self is easy, so may we see it is with virtue and vice. The young man is strong; wherefore let us also become strong for the performance of good actions. The young man has no wrinkle, therefore neither should we have. The young man wavers not, nor is he easily taken with diseases, therefore neither should we be.

Observe here how he calls this realizing of virtue, this bringing of it into being from nothing, a "*creation*." But what? Was not that other former creation after God? No, in no-wise, but after the devil. He is the sole creator of sin.

How is this? For man is created henceforth, not of water, nor of earth, but "*in righteousness and holiness of truth*." What is this? He straightway created him, he means, to be a son: for this takes place from Baptism. This it is which is the reality, "*in righteousness and holiness of truth*." There was of old a righteousness, there was likewise a holiness with the Jews. Yet was that righteousness not in truth, but in figure. For the being clean in body was a type of purity, not the truth of purity; was a type of righteousness, not the truth of righteousness. "*In righteousness*," says he, "*and holiness*," which are "*of truth*."

And this expression is used with reference to falsehood; for many there are, who to them that are without, seem to be righteous, yet are false. Now by righteousness is meant universal virtue. For hearken to Christ, how He says, "*Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven*." [Matthew 5:20] And again, he is called righteous, who has no charge against him; for so even in courts of justice we say that that man is righteous, who has been unrighteously treated, and has not done unrighteously in return. If therefore we also before the terrible Tribunal

shall be able to appear righteous one towards another, we may meet with some lovingkindness. Toward God indeed it is impossible we should appear so, whatever we may have to show. For everywhere He overcomes in what is righteous, as the Prophet also says, *"That You might prevail when You come into judgment."* But if we violate not what is righteous towards each other, then shall we be righteous. If we shall be able to show that we have been treated unrighteously, then shall we be righteous.

How does he say to them who are already clothed, *"put on"*? He is now speaking of that clothing which is from life and good works. Before, the clothing was from Baptism, whereas now it is from the daily life and from works; no longer *"after the lusts of deceit,"* but *"after God."* But what means the word *"holy"*? It is that which is pure, that which is due; hence also we use the word of the last duty in the case of the departed, as much as to say, *"I owe them nothing further, I have nothing else to answer for."* Thus it is usual for us to say, *"I have acquitted myself of all obligations,"* and the like, meaning, *"I owe nothing more."*

Moral. Our part then is, never to put off the garment of righteousness, which also the Prophet calls, *"the garment of salvation"* [Isaiah 61:10], that so we may be made like God. For He indeed has put on righteousness. This garment let us put on. Now the word, *"put on,"* plainly declares nothing else, than that we should never at all put it off. For hear the Prophet, where he says, *"He clothed himself also with cursing as with his garment, and it came into his inward parts."* [Psalm 109:18] And again, *"Who coverest Yourself with light as with a garment."* [Psalm 104:2] And again, it is usual with us to speak concerning men, such an one has *"put on"* such an one. So then it is not for one day, nor for two, nor for three, but he would have us ever arrayed in virtue, and never stripped of this garment. For a man is not so disfigured when he is stripped of his clothing, as when he is stripped of

his virtue. In the former case his fellow-servants behold his nakedness, in the latter his Lord and the Angels. If ever thou happen to see any one going out naked through the public square, tell me, are you not distressed? When then you go about stripped of this garment, what shall we say? Seest not those beggars whom we are wont to call strollers, how they roam about, how we pity even them? And yet nevertheless they are without excuse. We do not excuse them when they have lost their clothes by gaming; and how then, if we lose this garment, shall God pardon us? For whenever the devil sees a man stripped of his virtue, he straightway disguises and disfigures his face, and wounds him, and drives him to great straits.

Let us strip ourselves of our riches, that we be not stripped of righteousness. The garb of wealth mars this garment. It is a robe of thorns. Thorns are of this nature; and the more closely they are wrapped around us, the more naked are we made. Lasciviousness strips us of this garment; for it is a fire, and the fire will consume this garment. Wealth is a moth; and as the moth eats through all things alike, and spares not even silken garments, so does this also. All these therefore let us put off, that we may become righteous, that we may "*put on the new man.*" Let us keep nothing old, nothing outward, nothing that is "*corrupt.*" Virtue is not toilsome, she is not difficult to attain. Do you not see them that are in the mountains? They forsake both houses, and wives, and children, and all preëminence, and shut themselves away from the world, and clothe themselves in sackcloth, and strew ashes beneath them; they wear collars hung about their necks, and have pent themselves up in a narrow cell. Nor do they stop here, but torture themselves with fastings and continual hunger. Did I now enjoin you to do the like, would ye not all start away? Would ye not say, it is intolerable? But no, I say not that we must needs do anything like this:— I would fain indeed that it were so, still I lay down no law. What then? Enjoy your baths,

take care of your body, and throw yourself freely into the world, and keep a household, have your servants to wait on you, and make free use of your meats and drinks! But everywhere drive out excess, for that it is which causes sin, and the same thing, whatever it be, if it becomes excessive, becomes a sin; so that excess is nothing else than sin. For observe, when anger is excited above what is meet, then it rushes out into insult, then it commits every sort of injury; so does inordinate passion for beauty, for riches, for glory, or for anything else. And tell me not, that indeed, those of whom I spoke were strong; for many far weaker and richer, and more luxurious than you are, have taken upon them that austere and rugged life. And why speak I of men? Damsels not yet twenty years old, who have spent their whole time in inner chambers, and in a delicate and effeminate mode of life, in inner chambers full of sweet ointments and perfumes, reclining on soft couches, themselves soft in their nature, and rendered yet more tender by their over indulgence, who all the day long have had no other business than to adorn themselves, to wear jewels, and to enjoy every luxury, who never waited on themselves, but had numerous handmaids standing beside them, who wore soft raiment softer than their skin, fine linen and delicate, who reveled continually in roses and such like sweet odors—yea, these very ones, in a moment, seized with Christ's flame, have put off all that indolence and even their very nature, have forgotten their delicateness and youth, and like so many noble wrestlers, have stripped themselves of that soft clothing, and rushed into the midst of the contest. And perhaps I shall appear to be telling things incredible, yet nevertheless are they true. These then, these very tender damsels, as I myself have heard, have brought themselves to such a degree of severe training, that they will wrap the coarsest horsehair about their own naked bodies, and go with those tender soles unsandaled, and will lie upon a bed of leaves: nay more, that

they watch the greater part of the night, and that they take no heed of perfumes nor of any other of their old delights, but will even let their head, once so carefully dressed, go without special care, with the hair just plainly and simply bound up, so as not to fall into unseemliness. And their only meal is in the evening, a meal not even of herbs nor of bread, but of flour and beans and pulse and olives and figs. They spin without intermission, and labor far harder than their handmaids at home. What more? They will take upon them to wait upon women who are sick, carrying their beds, and washing their feet. Nay, many of them even cook. So great is the power of the flame of Christ; so far does their zeal surpass their very nature.

However, I demand nothing like this of you, seeing you have a mind to be outstripped by women. Yet at least, if there be any tasks not too laborious, at least perform these: restrain the rude hand, and the incontinent eye. What is there, tell me, so hard, what so difficult? Do what is just and right, wrong no man, be ye poor or rich, shopkeepers or hired servants; for unrighteousness may extend even to the poor. Or see ye not how many broils these engage in, and turn all things upside down? Marry freely, and have children. Paul also gave charge to such, to such he wrote. Is that struggle I spoke of too great, and the rock too lofty, and its top too near unto Heaven, and are you unable to attain to such an height? At least then lay hold on lesser things, and aim at those which are lower. Have you not courage to get rid of your own riches? At least then forbear to seize on the things of others, and to do them wrong. Are you unable to fast? At least then give not yourself to self-indulgence. Are you unable to lie upon a bed of leaves? Still, prepare not for yourselves couches inlaid with silver; but use a couch and coverings formed not for display, but for refreshment; not couches of ivory. Make yourself small. Why fill your vessel with overwhelming cargoes? If you be lightly equipped, you shall have nothing

to fear, no envy, no robbers, no liars in wait. For indeed you are not so rich in money as you are in cares. Thou aboundest not so much in possessions, as in anxieties and in perils, "*which bring in many temptations and lusts.*" [1 Timothy 6:9] These things they endure, who desire to gain great possessions. I say not, minister unto the sick; yet, at least, bid your servant do it. Do you see then how that this is no toilsome task? No, for how can it be, when tender damsels surpass us by so great a distance? Let us be ashamed of ourselves, I entreat you; for in worldly matters, to be sure, we in no point yield to them, neither in wars, nor in games; but in the spiritual contest they get the advantage of us, and are the first to seize the prize, and soar higher, like so many eagles: while we, like jackdaws, are ever living in the steam and smoke; for truly is it the business of jackdaws, and of greedy dogs, to be setting one's thoughts upon caterers and cooks. Hearken about the women of old; they were great characters, great women and admirable; such were Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Deborah, and Hannah; and such there were also in the days of Christ. Yet did they in no case outstrip the men, but occupied the second rank. But now it is the very contrary; women outstrip and eclipse us. How contemptible! What a shame is this! We hold the place of the head, and are surpassed by the body. We are ordained to rule over them; not merely that we may rule, but that we may rule in goodness also; for he that rules, ought especially to rule in this respect, by excelling in virtue; whereas if he is surpassed, he is no longer ruler. Perceive ye how great is the power of Christ's coming? How He dissolved the curse? For indeed there are more virgins than before among women, there is more modesty in those virgins, and there are more widows. No woman would lightly utter so much as an unseemly word. Wherefore then, tell me, do you use filthy speech? For tell me not that they were virgins in despondency or despair.

The sex is fond of ornament, and it has this failing. Yet even in this you husbands surpass them, who pride yourselves even upon them, as your own proper ornament; for I do not think that the wife is so ostentatious of her own jewels, as the husband is of those of his wife. He is not so proud of his own golden girdle, as he is of his wife's wearing jewels of gold. So that even of this you are the causes, who light the spark and kindle up the flame. But what is more, it is not so great a sin in a woman as in a man. You are ordained to regulate her; in every way you claim to have the preëminence. Show her then in this also, that you take no interest in this costliness of hers, by your own apparel. It is more suitable for a woman to adorn herself, than for a man. If then thou escape not the temptation, how shall she escape it? They have moreover their share of vainglory, but this is common to them with men. They are in a measure passionate, and this again is common to them with men. But as to those things wherein they excel, these are no longer common to them with men; their sanctity, I mean, their fervency, their devotion, their love towards Christ. Wherefore then, one may say, did Paul exclude them from the teacher's seat? And here again is a proof how great a distance they were from the men, and that the women of those days were great. For, tell me, while Paul was teaching, or Peter, or those saints of old, had it been right that a woman should intrude into the office? Whereas we have gone on till we have come so debased, that it is worthy of question, why women are not teachers. So truly have we come to the same weakness as they. These things I have said not from any desire to elate them, but to shame ourselves, to chastise, and to admonish us, that so we may resume the authority that belongs to us, not inasmuch as we are greater in size, but because of our foresight, our protection of them, and our virtue. For thus shall the body also be in the order which befits it, when it has the best head to rule. And God grant that all, both wives and husbands, may live

according to His good pleasure, that we may all in that terrible day be counted worthy to enjoy the lovingkindness of our Master, and to attain those good things which are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 14 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:25-27

"Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor; for we are members one of another. Be angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil."

Having spoken of the *"old man"* generally, he next draws him also in detail; for this kind of teaching is more easily learned when we learn by particulars. And what says he? *"Wherefore, putting away falsehood."* What sort of falsehood? Idols does he mean? Surely not; not indeed but that they are falsehood also. However, he is not now speaking of them, because these persons had nothing to do with them; but he is speaking of that which passes between one man and another, meaning that which is deceitful and false. *"Speak ye truth, each one,"* says he, *"with his neighbor"*; then what is more touching to the conscience still, *"because we are members one of another."* Let no man deceive his neighbor. As the Psalmist says here and there; *"With flattering lip and with a double heart do they speak."* [Psalm 12:2] For there is nothing, no, nothing so productive of enmity as deceit and guile.

Observe how everywhere he shames them by this similitude of the body. Let not the eye, says he, lie to the foot, nor the foot to the eye. For example, if there shall be a deep pit, and then by having reeds laid across upon the mouth of it upon the earth, and yet concealed under earth, it shall by its appearance furnish to the eye an expectation of solid ground, will not the eye use the foot, and discover whether it yields and is hollow underneath, or whether it is firm and resists? Will the foot tell a lie, and not report the truth as it is? And what again? If the eye were to spy a serpent or

a wild beast, will it lie to the foot? Will it not at once inform it, and the foot thus informed by it refrain from going on? And what again, when neither the foot nor the eye shall know how to distinguish, but all shall depend upon the smelling, as, for example, whether a drug be deadly or not; will the smelling lie to the mouth? And why not? Because it will be destroying itself also. But it tells the truth as it appears to itself. And what again? Will the tongue lie to the stomach? Does it not, when a thing is bitter, reject it, and, if it is sweet, pass it on? Observe ministration, and interchange of service; observe a provident care arising from truth, and, as one might say, spontaneously from the heart. So surely should it be with us also; let us not lie, since we are "*members one of another.*" This is a sure token of friendship; whereas the contrary is of enmity. What then, you will ask, if a man shall use treachery against you? Hearken to the truth. If he use treachery, he is not a member; whereas he says, "*lie not towards the members.*"

"Be angry, and sin not."

Observe his wisdom. He both speaks to prevent our sinning, and, if we do not listen, still does not forsake us; for his fatherly compassion does not desert him. For just as the physician prescribes to the sick what he must do, and if he does not submit to it, still does not treat him with contempt, but proceeding to add what advice he can by persuasion, again goes on with the cure; so also does Paul. For he indeed who does otherwise, aims only at reputation, and is annoyed at being disregarded; whereas he who on all occasions aims at the recovery of the patient, has this single object in view, how he may restore the patient, and raise him up again. This then is what Paul is doing. He has said, "*Lie not.*" Yet if ever lying should produce anger, he goes on again to cure this also. For what says he? "*Be angry, and sin not.*" It were good indeed never to be angry. Yet if ever any one should fall

into passion, still let him not fall into so great a degree. "*For let not the sun,*" says he, "*go down upon your wrath.*" Would you have your fill of anger? One hour, or two, or three, is enough for you; let not the sun depart, and leave you both at enmity. It was of God's goodness that he rose: let him not depart, having shone on unworthy men. For if the Lord of His great goodness sent him, and has Himself forgiven you your sins, and yet you forgive not your neighbor, look, how great an evil is this! And there is yet another besides this. The blessed Paul dreads the night, lest overtaking in solitude him that was wronged, still burning with anger, it should again kindle up the fire. For as long as there are many things in the daytime to banish it, you are free to indulge it; but as soon as ever the evening comes on, be reconciled, extinguish the evil while it is yet fresh; for should night overtake it, the morrow will not avail to extinguish the further evil which will have been collected in the night. Nay, even though you should cut off the greater portion, and yet not be able to cut off the whole, it will again supply from what is left for the following night, to make the blaze more violent. And just as, should the sun be unable by the heat of the day to soften and disperse that part of the air which has been during the night condensed into cloud, it affords material for a tempest, night overtaking the remainder, and feeding it again with fresh vapors: so also is it in the case of anger.

"Neither give place to the devil."

So then to be at war with one another, is "*to give place to the devil*"; for, whereas we had need to be all in close array, and to make our stand against him, we have relaxed our enmity against him, and are giving the signal for turning against each other; for never has the devil such *place* as in our enmities. Numberless are the evils thence produced. And as stones in a building, so long as they are closely fitted together and leave no interstice,

will stand firm, while if there is but a single needle's passage through, or a crevice no broader than a hair, this destroys and ruins all; so is it with the devil. So long indeed as we are closely set and compacted together, he cannot introduce one of his wiles; but when he causes us to relax a little, he rushes in like a torrent. In every case he needs only a beginning, and this is the thing which it is difficult to accomplish; but this done, he makes room on all sides for himself. For henceforth he opens the ear to slanders, and they who speak lies are the more trusted: they have enmity which plays the advocate, not truth which judges justly. And as, where friendship is, even those evils which are true appear false, so where there is enmity, even the false appear true. There is a different mind, a different tribunal, which does not hear fairly, but with great bias and partiality. As, in a balance, if lead is cast into the scale, it will drag down the whole; so is it also here, only that the weight of enmity is far heavier than any lead. Wherefore, let us, I beseech you, do all we can to extinguish our enmities before the going down of the sun. For if you fail to master it on the very first day, both on the following, and oftentimes even for a year, you will be protracting it, and the enmity will thenceforward augment itself, and require nothing to aid it. For by causing us to suspect that words spoken in one sense were meant in another, and gestures also, and everything, it infuriates and exasperates us, and makes us more distempered than madmen, not enduring either to utter a name, or to hear it, but saying everything in invective and abuse. How then are we to allay this passion? How shall we extinguish the flame? By reflecting on our own sins, and how much we have to answer for to God; by reflecting that we are wreaking vengeance, not on an enemy, but on ourselves; by reflecting that we are delighting the devil, that we are strengthening our enemy, our real enemy, and that for him we are doing wrong to our own members. Would you be revengeful and be at enmity? Be

at enmity, but be so with the devil, and not with a member of your own. For this purpose it is that God has armed us with anger, not that we should thrust the sword against our own bodies, but that we should baptize the whole blade in the devil's breast. There bury the sword up to the hilt; yea, if you will, hilt and all, and never draw it out again, but add yet another and another. And this actually comes to pass when we are merciful to those of our own spiritual family and peaceably disposed one towards another. Perish money, perish glory and reputation; my own member is dearer to me than they all. Thus let us say to ourselves; let us not do violence to our own nature to gain wealth, to obtain glory.

Ver. 28. *"Let him that stole," says he, "steal no more."*

Do you see what are the members of the old man? Falsehood, revenge, theft. Why said he not, *"Let him that stole"* be punished, be tortured, be racked; but, *"let him steal no more"*? *"But rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that has need."*

Where are they which are called pure; they that are full of all defilement, and yet dare to give themselves a name like this? For it is possible, very possible, to put off the reproach, not only by ceasing from the sin, but by working some good thing also. Perceive ye how we ought to get quit of the sin? *"They stole."* This is the sin. *"They steal no more."* This is not to do away the sin. But how shall they? If they labor, and charitably communicate to others, thus will they do away the sin. He does not simply desire that we should work, but so *"work"* as to *"labor,"* so as that we may *"communicate"* to others. For the thief indeed works, but it is that which is evil.

Ver. 29. *"Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth."*

What is *"corrupt speech"*? That which is said elsewhere to be also *"idle, backbiting, filthy communication, jesting, foolish talking."* See ye how he is cutting up the very roots of anger? Lying, theft, unseasonable conversation. The words, however, *"Let him steal no more,"* he does not say so much excusing them, as to pacify the injured parties, and to recommend them to be content, if they never suffer the like again. And well too does he give advice concerning conversation; inasmuch as we shall pay the penalty, not for our deeds only, but also for our words.

"But such as is good," he proceeds, *"for edifying, as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear."*

That is to say, What edifies your neighbor, that only speak, not a word more. For to this end God gave you a mouth and a tongue, that you might give thanks to Him, that you might build up your neighbor. So that if you destroy that building, better were it to be silent, and never to speak at all. For indeed the hands of the workmen, if instead of raising the walls, they should learn to pull them down, would justly deserve to be cut off. For so also says the Psalmist; *"The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips."* [Psalm 12:3] The mouth—this is the cause of all evil; or rather not the mouth, but they that make an evil use of it. From thence proceed insults, revilings, blasphemies, incentives to lusts, murders, adulteries, thefts, all have their origin from this. And how, you will say, do murders? Because from insult you will go on to anger, from anger to blows, from blows to murder. And how, again, adultery? *"Such a woman,"* one will say, *"loves you, she said something nice about you."* This at once unstrings your firmness, and thus are your passions kindled within you.

Therefore Paul said, *"such as is good."* Since then there is so vast a flow of words, he with good reason speaks indefinitely, charging us to use expressions of that kind, and giving us a pattern of communication. What

then is this? By saying, "*for edifying*," either he means this, that he who hears you may be grateful to you: as, for instance, a brother has committed fornication; do not make a display of the offense, nor revel in it; you will be doing no good to him that hears you; rather, it is likely, you will hurt him, by giving him a stimulus. Whereas, advise him what to do, and you are conferring on him a great obligation. Discipline him how to keep silence, teach him to revile no man, and you have taught him his best lesson, you will have conferred upon him the highest obligation. Discourse with him on contrition, on piety, on almsgiving; all these things will soften his soul, for all these things he will own his obligation. Whereas by exciting his laughter, or by filthy communication, you will rather be inflaming him. Applaud the wickedness, and you will overturn and ruin him.

Or else he means thus, "*that it may make them, the hearers, full of grace*." For as sweet ointment gives grace to them that partake of it, so also does good speech. Hence it was moreover that one said, "*Your name is as ointment poured forth*." [Canticles 1:3] It caused them to exhale that sweet perfume. You see that what he continually recommends, he is saying now also, charging every one according to his several ability to edify his neighbors. Thou then that givest such advice to others, how much more to yourself!

Ver. 30. "*And grieve not*," he adds, "*the Holy Spirit of God*."

A matter this more terrible and startling, as he also says in the Epistle to the Thessalonians; for there too he uses an expression of this sort. "*He that rejects, rejects not man, but God*." [1 Thessalonians 4:8] So also here. If you utter a reproachful word, if you strike your brother, you are not striking him, you are "*grieving the Holy Spirit*." And then is added further the benefit bestowed, in order to heighten the rebuke.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit," says He, "in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption."

He it is who marks us as a royal flock; He, who separates us from all former things; He, who suffers us not to lie among them that are exposed to the wrath of God—and do you grieve Him? Look how startling are his words there; *"For he that rejects,"* says he, *"rejects not man, but God:"* and how cutting they are here, *"Grieve not the Holy Spirit,"* says he, *"in whom you were sealed."*

Moral. Let this seal then abide upon your mouth, and never destroy the impression. A spiritual mouth never utters a thing of the kind. Say not, *"It is nothing, if I do utter an unseemly word, if I do insult such an one."* For this very reason is it a great evil, because it seems to be nothing. For things which seem to be nothing are thus easily thought lightly of; and those which are thought lightly of go on increasing; and those which go on increasing become incurable.

You have a spiritual mouth. Think what words you uttered immediately upon being born, — what words are worthy of your mouth. You call God, *"Father,"* and do you straightway revile your brother? Think, whence is it you call God, *"Father"?* Is it from nature? No, you could never say so. Is it from your goodness? No, nor is it thus. But whence then is it? It is from pure lovingkindness, from tenderness, from His great mercy. Whenever then you call God, *"Father,"* consider not only this, that by reviling you are committing things unworthy of that, your high birth, but also that it is of lovingkindness that you have that high birth. Disgrace it not then, after receiving it from pure lovingkindness, by showing cruelty towards your brethren. Do you call God *"Father,"* and yet revile? No, these are not the works of the Son of God. These are very far from Him. The work of the Son of God was to forgive His enemies, to pray for them that

crucified Him, to shed His blood for them that hated Him. These are works worthy of the Son of God, to make His enemies—the ungrateful, the dishonest, the reckless, the treacherous—to make these brethren and heirs: not to treat them that have become brethren with ignominy like slaves.

Think what words your mouth uttered—of what table these words are worthy. Think what your mouth touches, what it tastes, of what manner of food it partakes! Do you deem yourself to be doing nothing grievous in railing at your brother? How then do you call him brother? And yet if he be not a brother, how do you say, "*Our Father*"? For the word "*Our*" is indicative of many persons. Think with whom you stand at the time of the mysteries! With the Cherubim, with the Seraphim! The Seraphim revile not: no, their mouth fulfills this one only duty, to sing the Hymn of praise, to glorify God. And how then shall you be able to say with them, "*Holy, Holy, Holy*," if you use your mouth for reviling? Tell me, I pray. Suppose there were a royal vessel, and that always full of royal dainties, and set apart for that purpose, and then that any one of the servants were to take and use it for holding dung. Would he ever venture again, after it had been filled with dung, to store it away with those other vessels, set apart for those other uses? Surely not. Now railing is like this, reviling is like this. "*Our Father!*" But what? Is this all? Hear also the words, which follow, "*which art in Heaven*." The moment you say, "*Our Father, which art in Heaven*," the word raises you up, it gives wings to your mind, it points out to you that you have a Father in Heaven. Do then nothing, speak nothing of things upon earth. He has set you among that host above, He has numbered you with that heavenly choir. Why do you drag yourself down? You are standing beside the royal throne, and you revile. Are you not afraid lest the king should deem it an outrage? Why, if a servant, even with us, beats his fellow-servant or assaults him, even though he do it justly, yet we at once rebuke

him, and deem the act an outrage; and yet do you, who art standing with the Cherubim beside the king's throne, revile your brother? Do you see not these holy vessels? Are they not used continually for only one purpose? Does any one ever venture to use them for any other? Yet are you holier than these vessels, yea, far holier. Why then defile, why contaminate yourself? Standest thou in Heaven, and do you revile? Have you your citizenship with Angels, and do you revile? Are you counted worthy the Lord's kiss, and do you revile? Hath God graced your mouth with so many and great things, with hymns angelic, with food, not angelic, no, but more than angelic, with His own kiss, with His own embrace, and do you revile? Oh, no, I implore you. Vast are the evils of which this is the source; far be it from a Christian soul. Do I not convince you as I am speaking, do I not shame you? Then does it now become my duty to alarm you. For hear what Christ says: *"Whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire."* [Matthew 5:22] Now if that which is lightest of all leads to hell, of what shall not he be worthy, who utters presumptuous words? Let us discipline our mouth to silence. Great is the advantage from this, great the mischief from ill language. We must not spend our riches here. Let us put door and bolt upon them. Let us devour ourselves alive if ever a vexatious word slip out of our mouth. Let us entreat God, let us entreat him whom we have reviled. Let us not think it beneath us to do so. It is ourselves we have wounded, not him. Let us apply the remedy, prayer, and reconciliation with him whom we have reviled. If in our words we are to take such forethought, much more let us impose laws upon ourselves in our deeds. Yea, and if we have friends, whoever they may be, and they should speak evil to any man or revile him, demand of them and exact satisfaction. Let us by all means learn that such conduct is even sin; for if we learn this, we shall soon depart from it.

Now the God of peace keep both your mind and your tongue, and
fence you with a sure fence, even His fear, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory forever.
Amen.

Homily 15 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:31

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice."

As bees will never settle down in an unclean vessel—and this is the reason why those who are skilled in these matters sprinkle the spot with perfumes, and scented ointments, and sweet odors; and the wicker baskets also, in which they will have to settle as soon as they come out of the hives they sprinkle with fragrant wines, and all other sweets, that there may be no noisome smell to annoy them, and drive them away again—so in truth is it also with the Holy Spirit. Our soul is a sort of vessel or basket, capable of receiving the swarms of spiritual gifts; but if there shall be within it gall, and *"bitterness, and wrath,"* the swarms will fly away. Hence this blessed and wise husbandman well and thoroughly cleanses our vessels, withholding neither knife nor any other instrument of iron, and invites us to this spiritual swarm; and as he gathers it, he cleanses us with prayers, and labors, and all the rest. Mark then how he cleanses out our heart. He has banished lying, he has banished anger. Now, again, he is pointing out how that evil may be yet more entirely eradicated; if we be not, says he, *"bitter"* in spirit. For it is as is wont to happen with our bile, if there chance to be but little of it, there will be but little disturbance if the receptacle should burst: but if ever the strength and acridness of this quality becomes excessive, the vessel which before held it, containing it no longer, is as if it were eaten through by a scorching fire, and it is no longer able to hold it and contain it within its appointed bounds, but, rent asunder by its intense sharpness, it lets it escape and injure the whole body. And it is like some

very fierce and frightful wild beast, that has been brought into a city; as long as it is confined in the cages made for it, however it may rage, however it may roar, it will be unable to do harm to any one; but if it is overcome by rage, and breaks through the intervening bars, and is able to leap out, it fills the city with all sorts of confusion and disturbance, and puts everybody to flight. Such indeed is the nature also of bile. As long as it is kept within its proper limits, it will do us no great mischief; but as soon as ever the membrane that incloses it bursts, and there is nothing to hinder its being at once dispersed over the whole system, then, I say, at that moment, though it be so very trifling in quantity, yet by reason of the inordinate strength of its quality it taints all the other elements of our nature with its own peculiar virulence. For finding the blood, for instance, near to it, alike in place and in quality, and rendering the heat which is in that blood more acrid, and everything else in fact which is near it; passing from its just temperature it overflows its bounds, turns all into gall, and therewith at once attacks likewise the other parts of the body; and thus infusing into all its own poisonous quality, it renders the man speechless, and causes him to expire, expelling life. Now, why have I stated all these things with such minuteness? It is in order that, understanding from this bitterness which is of the body the intolerable evil of that bitterness which is of the soul, and how entirely it destroys first of all the very soul that engenders it, making everything bitter, we may escape experience of it. For as the one inflames the whole constitution, so does the other the thoughts, and carries away its captive to the abyss of hell. In order then that by carefully examining these matters we may escape this evil, and bridle the monster, or rather utterly root it out, let us hearken to what Paul says, "*Let all bitterness be*" (not destroyed, but) "*put away*" from you. For what need have I of trouble to restrain it, what necessity is there to keep watch on a monster, when it is in

my power to expel him from my soul, to remove him and drive him out, as it were, into banishment? Let us hearken then to Paul when he says, *"Let all bitterness be put away from you."* But, ah, the perversity that possesses us! Though we ought to do everything to effect this, yet are there some so truly senseless as to congratulate themselves upon this evil, and to pride themselves upon it, and to glory in it, and who are envied by others. *"Such a one,"* say they, *"is a bitter man, he is a scorpion, a serpent, a viper."* They look upon him as one to be feared. But wherefore, good man, do you fear the bitter person? *"I fear,"* you say, *"lest he injure me, lest he destroy me; I am not proof against his malice, I am afraid lest he should take me who am a simple man, and unable to foresee any of his schemes, and throw me into his snares, and entangle us in the toils which he has set to deceive us."* Now I cannot but smile. And why forsooth? Because these are the arguments of children, who fear things which are not to be feared. Surely there is nothing we ought so to despise, nothing we ought so to laugh to scorn, as a bitter and malicious man. For there is nothing so powerless as bitterness. It makes men fools and senseless.

Do ye not see that malice is blind? Have ye never heard, that he that digs a pit for his neighbors, digs it for himself? How, it may be said, ought we not to fear a soul full of tumult? If indeed we are to fear the bitter in the same way as we fear evil spirits, and fools and madmen, (for they indeed do everything at random,) I grant it myself; but if we are to fear them as men skillful in the conduct of affairs, that never. For nothing is so necessary for the proper conduct of affairs as prudence; and there is no greater hindrance to prudence than wickedness, and malice, and hollowness. Look at bilious persons, how unsightly they are, with all their bloom withered away. How weak they are, and puny, and unfit for anything. So also are souls of this nature. What else is wickedness, but a jaundice of the soul? Wickedness

then has no strength in it, indeed it has not. Have ye a mind that I again make what I am saying plain to you by an instance, by setting before you the portraits of a treacherous and a guileless man? Absalom was a treacherous man, and *"stole all men's hearts."* [2 Samuel 15:6] And observe how great was his treachery. *"He went about,"* it says, *"and said, 'Have you no judgment.'"* wishing to conciliate every one to himself. But David was guileless. What then? Look at the end of them both, look, how full of utter madness was the former! For inasmuch as he looked solely to the hurt of his father, in all other things he was blinded. But not so David. For *"he that walks uprightly, walks surely"* [Proverbs 10:9]; and reasonably; he is one that manages nothing over-subtly, the man who devises no evil. Let us listen then to the blessed Paul, and let us pity, yea, let us weep for the bitter-minded, and let us practice every method, let us do everything to extirpate this vice from their souls. For how is it not absurd, that when there is bile within us (though that indeed is a useful element, for without bile a man cannot possibly exist, that bile, I mean, which is an element of his nature,) how then, I say, is it not absurd that we should do all we can to get rid of this, though we are so highly benefited by it; and yet that we should do nothing, nor take any pains, to get rid of that which is in the soul, though it is in no case beneficial, but even in the highest degree injurious. He that thinks that he is *"wise among you,"* says he, *"let him become a fool, that he may become wise."* [1 Corinthians 3:18] Hearken too again to what Luke says, *"They did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."* [Acts 2:46-47] Why, do we not see even now that the simple and guileless enjoy the common esteem of all? No one envies such an one when he is in prosperity, no one tramples upon him when he is in adversity, but all rejoice with him when he does well, and grieve with him in misfortune. Whereas whenever a bitter

man fares prosperously, one and all lament it, as though some evil thing happened; but if he is unfortunate, one and all rejoice. Let us then pity them, for they have common enemies all over the world. Jacob was a guileless man, yet he overcame the treacherous Esau. *"For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter."* [Wisdom 1:4] *"Let all bitterness be put away from you."* Let not even a remnant remain, for it will be sure, if stirred, as if from a smouldering brand, to turn all within to an entire blaze. Let us then distinctly understand what this bitterness is. Take, for example, the hollow-hearted man, the crafty, the man who is on the watch to do mischief, the man of evil suspicion. From him then *"wrath"* and *"anger"* are ever produced; for it is not possible for a soul like this to be in tranquillity, but the very root of *"anger"* and *"wrath"* is *"bitterness."* The man of this character is both sullen, and never unbends his soul; he is always moody, always gloomy. For as I was saying, they themselves are the first to reap the fruit of their own evil ways.

"And clamor," he adds.

What now, and do you take away clamor also? Yes, for the mild man must needs be of such a character, because clamor carries anger, as a horse his rider; trip the horse, and you will throw the rider.

Moral. This let women above all attend to, them who on every occasion cry aloud and bawl. There is but one thing in which it is useful to cry aloud, in preaching and in teaching. But in no other case whatever, no, not even in prayer. And if you would learn a practical lesson, never cry aloud at all, and then will you never be angry at all. Behold a way to keep your temper; for as it is not possible that the man that does not cry out should be enraged, so is it not that the man who does cry out should be otherwise than enraged. For tell me not of a man being implacable, and

revengeful, and of pure natural bitterness, and natural choler. We are now speaking of the sudden paroxysm of this passion.

It contributes then no little to this end, to discipline the soul never to raise the voice and cry aloud at all. Cut off clamor, and you will clip the wings of anger, thou dost repress the first rising of the heart. For as it is impossible for a man to wrestle without lifting up his hands, so is it not possible that he should be entangled in a quarrel without lifting up his voice. Bind the hands of the boxer, and then bid him strike. He will be unable to do so. So likewise will wrath be disarmed. But clamor raises it, even where it does not exist. And hence it is especially that the female sex are so easily overtaken in it. Women, whenever they are angry with their maid-servants, fill the whole house with their own clamor. And oftentimes too, if the house happens to be built along a narrow street, then all the passers-by hear the mistress scolding, and the maid weeping and wailing. What can possibly be more disgraceful than the sound of those wailings? What in the world has happened there? All the women round immediately peep in and one of them says, "*Such a one is beating her own maid.*" Whatever can be more shameless than this? "*What then, ought one not to strike at all?*" No, I say not so, (for it must be done,) but then it must be neither frequently, nor immoderately, nor for any wrongs of your own, as I am constantly saying, nor for any little failure in her service, but only if she is doing harm to her own soul. If you chastise her for a fault of this kind, all will applaud, and there will be none to upbraid you; but if you do it for any reasons of your own, all will condemn your cruelty and harshness. And what is more base than all, there are some so fierce and so savage as to lash them to such a degree, that the bruises will not disappear with the day. For they will strip the damsels, and call their husbands for the purpose, and oftentimes tie them to the pallets. Alas! At that moment, tell me, does no

recollection of hell come over you? What? Do you strip your handmaid, and expose her to your husband? And are you not ashamed, lest he should condemn you for it? And then do you exasperate him yet more, and threaten to put her in chains, having first taunted the wretched and pitiable creature with ten thousand reproachful names, and called her "*Thessalian witch, runaway, and prostitute*"?

For her passion allows her not to spare even her own mouth, but she looks to one single object, how she may wreak her vengeance on the other, even though she disgrace herself. And then after all these things forsooth, she will sit in state like any tyrant, and call her children, and summon her foolish husband, and treat him as a hangman. Ought these things to take place in the houses of Christians? "*Aye*" say ye, "*but slaves are a troublesome, audacious, impudent, incorrigible race.*" True, I know it myself, but there are other ways to keep them in order; by terrors, by threats, by words; which may both touch her more powerfully, and save you from disgrace. Thou who art a free woman hast uttered foul words, and do you not disgrace yourself more than her? Then if she shall have occasion to go out to the bath, there are bruises on her back when she is naked, and she carries about with her the marks of your cruelty. "*But,*" say ye, "*the whole tribe of slaves is intolerable if it meet with indulgence.*" True, I know it myself. But then, as I was saying, correct them in some other way, not by the scourge only, and by terror, but even by flattering them, and by acts of kindness. If she is a believer, she is your sister. Consider that you are her mistress, and that she ministers unto you. If she be intemperate, cut off the occasions of drunkenness; call your husband, and admonish her. Or do you not feel how disgraceful a thing it is for a woman to be beaten? They at least who have enacted ten thousand punishments for men,— the stake, and the rack,— will scarcely ever hang a woman, but limit men's anger to

smiting her on the cheek; and so great respect have they observed towards the sex, that not even when there is absolute necessity have they often hung a woman, if she happen to be pregnant. For it is a disgrace for a man to strike a woman; and if for a man, much more for one of her own sex. It is moreover by these things that women become odious to their husbands.

"What then," ye may say, *"if she shall act the harlot?"* Marry her to a husband; cut off the occasions of fornication, suffer her not to be too high fed. *"What then, if she shall steal?"* Take care of her, and watch her.—

"Extravagant!" you will say; *"What, am I to be her keeper? How absurd!"*

And why, I pray, are you not to be her keeper? Has she not the same kind of soul as thou? Has she not been vouchsafed the same privileges by God? Does she not partake of the same table? Does she not share with you the same high birth? *"But what then,"* you will say, *"if she shall be a railer, or a gossip, or a drunkard?"* Yet, how many free women are such? Now, with all the failings of women God has charged men to bear: only, He says, let not a woman be an harlot, but every other failing besides bear with. Yea, be she drunkard, or railer, or gossip, or evil-eyed, or extravagant, and a squanderer of your substance, you have her for the partner of your life. Train and restrain her. Necessity is upon you. It is for this you are the head. Regulate her therefore, do your own part. Yea, and if she remain incorrigible, yea, though she steal, take care of your goods, and do not punish her so much. If she be a gossip, silence her. This is the very highest philosophy.

Now, however, some have come to such a height of indecency as to uncover the head, and to drag their maid-servants by the hair.— Why do ye all blush? I am not addressing myself to all, but to those who are carried away into such brutal conduct. Paul says, *"Let not a woman be uncovered."* [1 Corinthians 11:5-15] And do you then entirely strip off her headdress? Do you see how you are doing outrage to yourself? If indeed she makes her

appearance to you with her head bare, you call it an insult. And do you say that there is nothing shocking when you bare it yourself? Then you will say, *"What if she be not corrected?"* Chasten her then with the rod and with stripes. And yet how many failings have you also yourself, and yet you are not corrected! These things I am saying not for their sakes, but for the sake of you free-women, that you do nothing so unworthy, nothing to disgrace you, that you do yourselves no wrong. If you will learn this lesson in your household in dealing with your maid-servant, and not be harsh but gentle and forbearing, much more will you be so in your behavior to your husband. For she who, though having authority, does nothing of the sort, will do it much less where there is a check. So that the discipline employed about your maid-servants, will be of the greatest service to you in gaining the goodwill of your husbands. *"For with what measure ye mete,"* He says, *"it shall be measured unto you."* [Matthew 7:2] Set a bridle upon your mouth. If you are disciplined to bear bravely with a servant when she answers back, you will not be annoyed with the insolence of an equal, and in being above annoyance, wilt have attained to the highest philosophy. But some there are who add even oaths, but there is nothing more shocking than a woman so enraged. But what again, you will say, if she dress gaily? Why then, forbid this; you have my consent; but check it by first beginning with yourself, not so much by fear as by example. Be in everything yourself a perfect pattern.

"And let railing," says he, *"be put away from you."* Observe the progress of mischief. Bitterness produces wrath, wrath anger, anger clamor, clamor railing, that is, revilings; next from evil-speaking it goes on to blows, from blows to wounds, from wounds to death. Paul, however, did not wish to mention any of these, but only this, *"let this,"* says he, *"be put away from you, with all malice."* What is *"with all malice"*? It ends with

this. For there are some, like those dogs that bite secretly, which do not bark at all at those that come near them, nor are angry, but which fawn, and display a gentle aspect; but when they catch us off our guard, will fix their teeth in us. These are more dangerous than those that take up open enmity. Now since there are men too that are dogs, who neither cry out, nor fly in a passion, nor threaten us when they are offended, yet in secret are weaving plots, and contriving ten thousand mischiefs, and revenging themselves not in words but in deeds; he hints at these. Let those things be put away from you, says he, "*with all malice.*" Do not spare your words, and then revenge yourself in acts. My purpose in chastising my tongue and curtailing its clamor, is to prevent its kindling up a more violent blaze. But if you without any clamor art doing the same thing, and art cherishing the fire and the live coals within, where is the good of your silence? Do you not know that those conflagrations are the most destructive of all which are fed within, and appear not to those that are without? And that those wounds are the deadliest which never break out to the surface; and those fevers the worst which burn up the vitals? So also is this anger the most dangerous that preys upon the soul. But let this too be put away from you, says he, "*with all malice,*" of every kind and degree, great and little. Let us then hearken to him, let us cast out all "*bitterness and all malice,*" that we "*grieve not the Holy Spirit.*" Let us destroy all bitterness; let us cut it up by the very roots. Nothing good, nothing healthful, can ever come from a bitter soul; nothing but misfortunes, nothing but tears, nothing but weeping and wailing. Do ye not see those beasts that roar or cry out, how we turn away from them; the lion, for instance, and the bear? But not so from the sheep; for there is no roaring, but a mild and gentle voice. And so again with musical instruments, those which are loud and harsh are the most unpleasant to the ear, such as the drum and trumpet; whereas those which are not so, but are

soothing, these are pleasant, as the flute and lyre and pipe. Let us then prepare our soul so as never to cry aloud, and thus shall we be enabled also to gain the mastery over our anger. And when we have cut out this, we ourselves shall be the first to enjoy the calm, and we shall sail into that peaceful haven, which God grant we may all attain, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now, and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

Homily 16 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:31, 32

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you."

If we are to attain to the kingdom of Heaven, it is not enough to abandon wickedness, but there must be abundant practice of that which is good also. To be delivered indeed from hell we must abstain from wickedness; but to attain to the kingdom we must cleave fast to virtue. Do you not know that even in the tribunals of the heathen, when examination is made of men's deeds, and the whole city is assembled, this is the case? Nay, there was an ancient custom among the heathen, to crown with a golden crown, — not the man who had done no evil to his country, for this were in itself no more than enough to save him from punishment—but him who had displayed great public services. It was thus that a man was to be advanced to this distinction. But what I had special need to say, had, I know not how, well near escaped me. Accordingly having made some slight correction of what I have said, I retract the first portion of this division.

For as I was saying that the departure from evil is sufficient to prevent our falling into hell, while I was speaking, there stole upon me a certain awful sentence, which does not merely bring down vengeance on them that dare to commit evil, but which also punishes those who omit any opportunity of doing good. What sentence then is this? When the day, the dreadful day, He says, was arrived, and the set time had come, the Judge, seated on the judgment seat, set the sheep on the right hand and the goats on the left; and to the sheep He said, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit*

the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an
hungered, and you gave me meat." [Matthew 25:34] So far, well. For it was
meet that for such compassion they should receive this reward. That those,
however, who did not communicate of their own possessions to them that
were in need, that they should be punished, not merely by the loss of
blessings, but by being also sent to hell-fire, what just reason, I say, can
there be in this? Most certainly this too will have a fair show of reason, no
less than the other case: for we are hence instructed, that they that have
done good shall enjoy those good things that are in heaven, but they, who,
though they have no evil indeed to be charged with, yet have omitted to do
good, will be hurried away with them that have done evil into hell-fire.
Unless one might indeed say this, that the very not doing good is a part of
wickedness, inasmuch as it comes of indolence, and indolence is a part of
vice, or rather, not a part, but a source and baneful root of it. For idleness is
the teacher of all vice. Let us not then foolishly ask such questions as these,
what place shall he occupy, who has done neither any evil nor any good?
For the very not doing good, is in itself doing evil. Tell me, if you had a
servant, who should neither steal, nor insult, nor contradict you, who
moreover should keep from drunkenness and every other kind of vice, and
yet should sit perpetually in idleness, and not doing one of those duties
which a servant owes to his master, would you not chastise him, would you
not put him to the rack? Tell me. And yet forsooth he has done no evil. No,
but this is in itself doing evil. But let us, if you please, apply this to other
cases in life. Suppose then that of an husbandman. He does no damage to
our property, he lays no plots against us, and he is not a thief, he only ties
his hands behind him, and sits at home, neither sowing, nor cutting a single
furrow, nor harnessing oxen to the yoke, nor looking after a vine, nor in fact
discharging any one of those other labors required in husbandry. Now, I say,

should we not punish such a man? And yet he has done no wrong to any one; we have no charge to make against him. No, but by this very thing has he done wrong. He does wrong in that he does not contribute his own share to the common stock of good. And what again, tell me, if every single artisan or mechanic were only to do no harm, say to one of a different craft—nay, were to do no harm, even to one of his own, but only were to be idle, would not our whole life at that rate be utterly at an end and perish? Do you wish that I yet further extend the discourse with reference to the body also? Let the hand then neither strike the head, nor cut out the tongue, nor pluck out the eye, nor do any evil of this sort, but only remain idle, and not render its due service to the body at large; would it not be more fitting that it should be cut off, than that one should carry it about in idleness, and a detriment to the whole body? And what too, if the mouth, without either devouring the hand, or biting the breast, should nevertheless fail in all its proper duties; were it not far better that it should be stopped up? If therefore both in the case of servants, and of mechanics, and of the whole body, not only the commission of evil, but also the omission of what is good, is great unrighteousness, much more will this be the case in regard to the body of Christ.

Moral. And therefore the blessed Paul also, in leading us away from sin, leads us on to virtue. For where, tell me, is the advantage of all the thorns being cut out, if the good seeds be not sown? For our labor, remaining unfinished, will come round and end in the same mischief. And therefore Paul also, in his deep and affectionate anxiety for us, does not let his admonitions stop at eradicating and destroying evil tempers, but urges us at once to evidence the implanting of good ones. For having said, "*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and railing be put away from you, with all malice,*" he adds, "*And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted,*

forgiving each other." For all these are habits and dispositions. And our abandonment of the one thing is not sufficient to settle us in the habitual practice of the other, but there is need again of some fresh impulse, and of an effort not less than that made in our avoidance of evil dispositions, in order to our acquiring good ones. For so in the case of the body, the black man, if he gets rid of this complexion, does not straightway become white. Or rather let us not conduct our discourse with an argument from physical subjects, but draw our example from those which concern moral choice. He who is not our enemy, is not necessarily our friend; but there is an intermediate state, neither of enmity nor of friendship, which is perhaps that in which the greater part of mankind stand toward us. He that is not crying is not therefore necessarily also laughing, but there is a state between the two. And so, I say, is the case here. He that is not "*bitter*" is not necessarily "*kind*," neither is he that is not "*wrathful*" necessarily "*tender-hearted*"; but there is need of a distinct effort, in order to acquire this excellence. And now look how the blessed Paul, according to the rules of the best husbandry, thoroughly cleans and works the land entrusted to him by the Husbandman. He has taken away the bad seeds; he now exhorts us to retain the good plants. "*Be kind*," says he, for if, when the thorns are plucked up, the field remains idle, it will again bear unprofitable weeds. And therefore there is need to preoccupy its unoccupied and fallow state by the setting of good seeds and plants. He takes away "*anger*," he puts in "*kindness*"; he takes away "*bitterness*," he puts in "*tender-heartedness*"; he extirpates "*malice*" and "*railing*," he plants "*forgiveness*" in their stead. For the expression, "*forgiving one another*," is this; be disposed, he means, to forgive one another. And this forgiveness is greater than that which is shown in money-matters. For he indeed who forgives a debt of money to him that has borrowed of him, does, it is true, a noble and admirable deed,

but then the kindness is confined to the body, though to himself indeed he repays a full recompense by that benefit which is spiritual and concerns the soul; whereas he who forgives trespasses will be benefiting alike his own soul, and the soul of him who receives the forgiveness. For by this way of acting, he not only renders himself, but the other also, more charitable. Because we do not so deeply touch the souls of those who have wronged us by revenging ourselves, as by pardoning them, and thus shaming them and putting them out of countenance. For by the other course we shall be doing no good, either to ourselves or to them, but shall be doing harm to both by seeking ourselves for retaliation, like the rulers of the Jews, and by kindling up the wrath that is in them; but if we return injustice with gentleness, we shall disarm all his anger, and shall be setting up in his breast a tribunal which will give a verdict in our favor, and will condemn him more severely than we ourselves could. For he will convict and will pass sentence upon himself, and will look for every pretext for repaying the share of long-suffering granted him with fuller measure, knowing that, if he repay it in equal measure, he is thus at a disadvantage, in not having himself made the beginning, but received the example from us. He will strive accordingly to exceed in measure, in order to eclipse, by the excess of his recompense, the disadvantage he himself sustains in having been second in making advances towards requital; and the disadvantage again which accrues to the other from the time, if he was the first sufferer, this he will make up by excess of kindness. For men, if they are right-minded, are not so affected by evil as by the good treatment they may receive at the hands of those whom they have injured. For it is a base sin, and it is matter of reproach and scorn for a man who is well-treated not to return it; while for a man who is ill-treated, not to go about to resent it, this has the praise and applause, and the good

word of all. And therefore they are more deeply touched by this conduct than any.

So that if you have a wish to revenge yourself, revenge yourself in this manner. Return good for evil, that you may render him even your debtor, and achieve a glorious victory. Have you suffered evil? Do good; thus avenge you of your enemy. For if you shall go about to resent it, all will blame both you and him alike. Whereas if you shall endure it, it will be otherwise. You they will applaud and admire; but him they will reproach. And what greater punishment can there be to an enemy, than to behold his enemy admired and applauded by all men? What more bitter to an enemy, than to behold himself reproached by all before his enemy's face? If you shall avenge you on him, you will both be condemned perhaps yourself, and will be the sole avenger; whereas, if you shall forgive him, all will be avengers in your stead. And this will be far more severe than any evil he can suffer, that his enemy should have so many to avenge him. If you open your mouth, they will be silent; but if you are silent, not with one tongue only, but with ten thousand tongues of others, you smite him, and art the more avenged. And on you indeed, if you shall reproach him, many again will cast imputations (for they will say that your words are those of passion); but when others who have suffered no wrong from him thus overwhelm him with reproaches, then is the revenge especially clear of all suspicion. For when they who have suffered no mischief, in consequence of your excessive forbearance feel and sympathize with you, as though they had been wronged themselves, this is a vengeance clear of all suspicion. *"But what then,"* you will say, *"if no man should take vengeance?"* It cannot be that men will be such stones, as to behold such wisdom and not admire it. And though they wreak not their vengeance on him at the time; still, afterwards, when they are in the mood, they will do so, and they will

continue to scoff at him and abuse him. And if no one else admire you, the man himself will most surely admire you, though he may not own it. For our judgment of what is right, even though we be come to the very depth of wickedness, remains impartial and unbiased. Why, suppose ye, did our Lord Christ say, "*Whosoever smites you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also*"? [Matthew 5:39] Is it not because the more long-suffering a man is, the more signal the benefit he confers both on himself and on the other? For this cause He charges us to "*turn the other also*," to satisfy the desire of the enraged. For who is such a monster as not to be at once put to shame? The very dogs are said to feel it; for if they bark and attack a man, and he throws himself on his back and does nothing, he puts a stop to all their wrath. If they then reverence the man who is ready to suffer evil from them, much more will the race of man do so, inasmuch as they are more rational.

However, it is right not to overlook what a little before came into my recollection, and was brought forward for a testimony. And what then was this? We were speaking of the Jews, and of the chief rulers among them, how that they were blamed, as seeking retaliation. And yet this the law permitted them; "*eye for eye, and tooth for tooth*." [Leviticus 24:20] True, but not to the intent that men should pluck out each other's eyes, but that they should check boldness in aggression, by fear of suffering in return, and thus should neither do any evil to others, nor suffer any evil from others themselves. Therefore it was said, "*eye for eye*," to bind the hands of the aggressor, not to let yours loose against him; not to ward off the hurt from your eyes only, but also to preserve his eyes safe and sound.

But, as to what I was enquiring about—why, if retaliation was allowed, were they arraigned who practiced it? Whatever can this mean? He here speaks of vindictiveness; for on the spur of the moment he allows the sufferer to act, as I was saying, in order to check the aggressor; but to bear a

grudge he permits no longer; because the act then is no longer one of passion, nor of boiling rage, but of malice premeditated. Now God forgives those who may be carried away, perhaps upon a sense of outrage, and rush out to resent it. Hence He says, *"eye for eye"*; and yet again, *"the ways of the revengeful lead to death."* Now, if, where it was permitted to put out eye for eye, so great a punishment is reserved for the revengeful, how much more for those who are bidden even to expose themselves to ill-treatment. Let us not then be revengeful, but let us quench our anger, that we may be counted worthy of the lovingkindness, which comes from God (*"for with what measure,"* says Christ, *"ye mete, it shall be measured unto you, and with what judgment ye judge, you shall be judged"*) [Matthew 7:2], and that we may both escape the snares of this present life, and in the day that is at hand, may obtain pardon at His hands, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, both now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 17 on Ephesians

Ephesians 4:32 and 5:1, 2

"And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell."

The events which are past have greater force than those which are yet to come, and appear to be both more wonderful and more convincing. And hence accordingly Paul founds his exhortation upon the things which have already been done for us, inasmuch as they, on Christ's account, have a greater force. For to say, *"Forgive, and you shall be forgiven"* [Matthew 6:14], and *"if you forgive not, you shall in nowise be forgiven"* [Matthew 6:15]—this addressed to men of understanding, and men who believe in the things to come, is of great weight; but Paul appeals to the conscience not by these arguments only, but also by things already done for us. In the former way we may escape punishment, whereas in this latter we may have our share of some positive good. Thou imitatest Christ. This alone is enough to recommend virtue, that it is *"to imitate God."* This is a higher principle than the other, *"for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] Because he does not merely say that we are *"imitating God,"* but that we do so in those things wherein we receive ourselves such benefits. He would have us cherish the tender heart of fathers towards each other. For by heart, here, is meant lovingkindness and compassion. For inasmuch as it cannot be that, being men, we shall avoid either giving pain or suffering it, he does the next

thing, he devises a remedy—that we should forgive one another. And yet there is no comparison. For if you indeed should at this moment forgive any one, he will forgive you again in return; whereas to God you have neither given nor forgiven anything. And thou indeed art forgiving a fellow-servant; whereas God is forgiving a servant, and an enemy, and one that hates Him.

"Even as God," says he, "also in Christ forgave you."

And this, moreover, contains a high allusion. Not simply, he would say, has He forgiven us, and at no risk or cost, but at the sacrifice of His Son; for that He might forgive you, He sacrificed the Son; whereas thou, oftentimes, even when you see pardon to be both without risk and without cost, yet dost not grant it.

"Be therefore imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us an offering and sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell."

That you may not then think it an act of necessity, hear how He says, that *"He gave Himself up."* As your Master loved you, love thou your friend. Nay, but neither will you be able so to love; yet still do so as far as you are able. Oh, what can be more blessed than a sound like this! Tell me of royalty or whatever else you will, there is no comparison. Forgive another, and you are *"imitating God,"* you are made like God. It is more our duty to forgive trespasses than debts of money; for if you forgive debts, you have not *"imitated God"*; whereas if you shall forgive trespasses, you are *"imitating God."* And yet how shall you be able to say, *"I am poor, and am not able to forgive it,"* that is, a debt, when you forgive not that which you are able to forgive, that is, a trespass? And surely thou dost not deem that in this case there is any loss. Yea, is it not rather wealth, is it not abundance, is it not a plentiful store?

And behold yet another and a nobler incitement: — *"as beloved children,"* says he. You have yet another cogent reason to imitate Him, not only in that you have received such good at His hands, but also in that you are called His children. And since not all children imitate their fathers, but those which are beloved, therefore he says, *"as beloved children."*

Ver. 2. *"Walk in love."*

Behold, here, the groundwork of all! So then where this is, there is no *"wrath, no anger, no clamor, no railing,"* but all are done away. Accordingly he puts the chief point last. Whence were you made a child? Because you were forgiven. On the same ground on which you have had so vast a privilege vouch-safed you, on that selfsame ground forgive your neighbor. Tell me, I say, if you were in prison, and had ten thousand misdeeds to answer for, and some one were to bring you into the palace; or rather to pass over this argument, suppose thou were in a fever and in the agonies of death, and some one were to benefit you by some medicine, would you not value him more than all, yea and the very name of the medicine? For if we thus regard occasions and places by which we are benefited, even as our own souls, much more shall we the things themselves. Be a lover then of love; for by this are you saved, by this have you been made a son. And if you shall have it in your power to save another, will you not use the same remedy, and give the advice to all, *"Forgive, that you may be forgiven"*? Thus to incite one another, were the part of grateful, of generous, and noble spirits.

"Even as Christ also," he adds, *"loved you."*

You are only sparing friends, He enemies. So then far greater is that boon which comes from our Master. For how in our case is the *"even as"* preserved. Surely it is clear that it will be, by our doing good to our enemies.

"And gave Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell."

Do you see that to suffer for one's enemies is *"a sweet-smelling savor,"* and an *"acceptable sacrifice"*? And if you shall die, then will you be indeed a sacrifice. This it is to *"imitate God."*

Ver. 3. *"But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becomes saints."*

He has spoken of the bitter passion, of wrath; he now comes to the lesser evil: for that lust is the lesser evil, hear how Moses also in the law says, first, *"You shall do no murder"* [Exodus 20:13], which is the work of wrath, and then, *"You shall not commit adultery"* [Exodus 20:14], which is of lust. For as *"bitterness,"* and *"clamor,"* and *"all malice,"* and *"railing,"* and the like, are the works of the passionate man, so likewise are *"fornication, uncleanness, covetousness,"* those of the lustful; since avarice and sensuality spring from the same passion. But just as in the former case he took away *"clamor"* as being the vehicle of *"anger,"* so now does he *"filthy talking"* and *"jesting"* as being the vehicle of lust; for he proceeds,

Ver. 4. *"Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting; but rather giving of thanks."*

Have no witticisms, no obscenities, either in word or in deed, and you will quench the flame— *"let them not even be named,"* says he, *"among you,"* that is, let them not anywhere even make their appearance. This he says also in writing to the Corinthians. *"It is actually reported that there is fornication among you"* [1 Corinthians 5:1]; as much as to say, Be all pure. For words are the way to acts. Then, that he may not appear a forbidding kind of person and austere, and a destroyer of playfulness, he goes on to add the reason, by saying, *"which are not befitting,"* which have nothing to do with us— *"but rather giving of thanks."* What good is there in uttering a

witticism? thou only raisest a laugh. Tell me, will the shoemaker ever busy himself about anything which does not belong to or *befit* his trade? Or will he purchase any tool of that kind? No, never. Because the things we do not need, are nothing to us.

Moral. Let there not be one idle word; for from idle words we fall also into foul words. The present is no season of loose merriment, but of mourning, of tribulation, and lamentation: and do you play the jester? What wrestler on entering the ring neglects the struggle with his adversary, and utters witticisms? The devil stands hard at hand, "*he is going about roaring*" [1 Peter 5:8] to catch you, he is moving everything, and turning everything against your life, and is scheming to force you from your retreat, he is grinding his teeth and bellowing, he is breathing fire against your salvation; and do you sit uttering witticisms, and "*talking folly*," and uttering things "*which are not befitting*." Full nobly then will you be able to overcome him! We are in sport, beloved. Would you know the life of the saints? Listen to what Paul says. "*By the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears*." [Acts 20:31] And if so great was the zeal he exerted in behalf of them of Miletus and Ephesus, not making pleasant speeches, but introducing his admonition with tears, what should one say of the rest? But hearken again to what he says to the Corinthians. "*Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears*." [2 Corinthians 2:4] And again, "*Who is weak, and I am not weak?*" "*Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?*" [2 Corinthians 11:29] And hearken again to what he says elsewhere, desiring every day, as one might say, to depart out of the world. "*For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan*" [2 Corinthians 5:4]; and do you laugh and play? It is war-time, and are you handling the dancers' instruments? Look at the countenances of men in battle, their dark and contracted mien, their brow

terrible and full of awe. Mark the stern eye, the heart eager and beating and throbbing, their spirit collected, and trembling and intensely anxious. All is good order, all is good discipline, all is silence in the camps of those who are arrayed against each other. They speak not, I do not say, an impertinent word, but they utter not a single sound. Now if they who have visible enemies, and who are in nowise injured by words, yet observe so great silence, do you who hast your warfare, and the chief of your warfare in words, do you leave this part naked and exposed? Or are you ignorant that it is here that we are most beset with snares? Are you amusing and enjoying yourself, and uttering witticisms and raising a laugh, and regarding the matter as a mere nothing? How many perjuries, how many injuries, how many filthy speeches have arisen from witticisms! *"But no,"* you will say, *"pleasantries are not like this."* Yet hear how he excludes all kinds of jesting. It is a time now of war and fighting, of watch and guard, of arming and arraying ourselves. The time of laughter can have no place here; for that is of the world. Hear what Christ says: *"The world shall rejoice, but you shall be sorrowful."* [John 16:20] Christ was crucified for your ills, and do you laugh? He was buffeted, and endured so great sufferings because of your calamity, and the tempest that had overtaken you; and do you play the reveler? And how will you not then rather provoke Him?

But since the matter appears to some to be one of indifference, which moreover is difficult to be guarded against, let us discuss this point a little, to show you how vast an evil it is. For indeed this is a work of the devil, to make us disregard things indifferent. First of all then, even if it were indifferent, not even in that case were it right to disregard it, when one knows that the greatest evils are both produced and increased by it, and that it oftentimes terminates in fornication. However, that it is not even indifferent is evident from hence. Let us see then whence it is produced. Or

rather, let us see what sort of a person a saint ought to be:— gentle, meek, sorrowful, mournful, contrite. The man then who deals in jests is no saint. Nay, were he even a Greek, such an one would be scorned. These are things allowed to those only who are on the stage. Where filthiness is, there also is jesting; where unseasonable laughter is, there also is jesting. Harken to what the Prophet says, "*Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice with trembling.*" [Psalm 2:11] Jestings renders the soul soft and indolent. It excites the soul unduly, and often it teems with acts of violence, and creates wars. But what more? In fine, have you not come to be among men? Then "*put away childish things.*" [1 Corinthians 13:11] Why, you will not allow your own servant in the market place to speak an impertinent word: and do you then, who sayest you are a servant of God, go uttering your witticisms in the public square? It is well if the soul that is "*sober*" be not stolen away; but one that is relaxed and dissolute, who cannot carry off? It will be its own murderer, and will stand in no need of the crafts or assaults of the devil.

But, moreover, in order to understand this, look too at the very name. It means the versatile man, the man of all complexions, the unstable, the pliable, the man that can be anything and everything. But far is this from those who are servants to the Rock. Such a character quickly turns and changes; for he must needs mimic both gesture and speech, and laugh and gait, and everything, aye, and such an one is obliged to invent jokes: for he needs this also. But far be this from a Christian, to play the buffoon. Farther, the man who plays the jester must of necessity incur the signal hatred of the objects of his random ridicule, whether they be present, or being absent hear of it.

If the thing is creditable, why is it left to mountebanks? What, do you make yourself a mountebank, and yet art not ashamed? Why is it ye permit not your gentlewomen to do so? Is it not that you set it down as a mark of

an immodest, and not of a discreet character? Great are the evils that dwell in a soul given to jesting; great is the ruin and desolation. Its consistency is broken, the building is decayed, fear is banished, reverence is gone. A tongue you have, not that you may ridicule another man, but that you may give thanks unto God. Look at your merriment-makers, as they are called, those buffoons. These are your jesters. Banish from your souls, I entreat you, this graceless accomplishment. It is the business of parasites, of mountebanks, of dancers, of harlots; far be it from a generous, far be it from a highborn soul, aye, far too even from slaves. If there be any one who has lost respect, if there be any vile person, that man is also a jester. To many indeed the thing appears to be even a virtue, and this truly calls for our sorrow. Just as lust little by little drives headlong into fornication, so also does a turn for jesting. It seems to have a grace about it, yet there is nothing more graceless than this. For hear the Scripture which says, *"Before the thunder goes lightning, and before a shamefaced man shall go favor."* Now there is nothing more shameless than the jester; so that his mouth is not full of favor, but of pain. Let us banish this custom from our tables. Yet are there some who teach it even to the poor! O monstrous! They make men in affliction play the jester. Why, where shall not this pest be found next? Already has it been brought into the Church itself. Already has it laid hold of the very Scriptures. Need I say anything to prove the enormity of the evil? I am ashamed indeed, but still nevertheless I will speak; for I am desirous to show to what a length the mischief has advanced, that I may not appear to be trifling, or to be discoursing to you on some trifling subject; that even thus I may be enabled to withdraw you from this delusion. And let no one think that I am fabricating, but I will tell you what I have really heard. A certain person happened to be in company with one of those who pride themselves highly on their knowledge (now I know I shall excite a

smile, but still I will say it notwithstanding); and when the platter was set before him, he said, "*Take and eat, children, lest your belly be angry!*" And again, others say, "*Woe unto you, Mammon, and to him that has you not;*" and many like enormities has jesting introduced; as when they say, "*Now is there no nativity.*" And this I say to show the enormity of this base temper; for these are the expressions of a soul destitute of all reverence. And are not these things enough to call down thunderbolts? And one might find many other such things which have been said by these men.

Wherefore, I entreat you, let us banish the custom universally, and speak those things which become us. Let not holy mouths utter the words of dishonorable and base men. "*For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity, or what communion has light with darkness?*" [2 Corinthians 6:14] Happy will it be for us, if, having kept ourselves aloof from all such foul things, we be thus able to attain to the promised blessings; far indeed from dragging such a train after us, and sullyng the purity of our minds by so many. For the man who will play the jester will soon go on to be a railer, and the railer will go on to heap ten thousand other mischiefs on himself. When then we shall have disciplined these two faculties of the soul, anger and desire (vid. Plat. Phædr. cc. 25, 34), and have put them like well-broken horses under the yoke of reason, then let us set over them the mind as charioteer, that we may "*gain the prize of our high calling*" [Philippians 3:14]; which God grant that we may all attain, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now, and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

Homily 18 on Ephesians

Ephesians 5:5, 6

"For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."

There were, it is likely, in the time of our forefathers also, some who *"weakened the hands of the people"* [Jeremiah 38:4], and brought into practice that which is mentioned by Ezekiel,— or rather who did the works of the false prophets, who *"profaned God among His people for handfuls of barley"* [Ezekiel 13:19]; a thing, by the way, done methinks by some even at this day. When, for example, we say that he who calls his brother a fool shall depart into hell-fire, others say, *"What? Is he that calls his brother a fool to depart into hell-fire? Impossible,"* say they. And again, when we say that *"the covetous man is an idolater,"* in this too again they make abatements, and say the expression is hyperbolical. And in this manner they underrate and explain away all the commandments. It was in allusion then to these that the blessed Paul, at this time when he wrote to the Ephesians, spoke thus, *"For this ye know, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God";* adding, *"let no man deceive you with empty words."* Now *"empty words"* are those which for a while are gratifying, but are in nowise borne out in facts; because the whole case is a deception.

"Because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."

Because of "*fornication*," he means, because of "*covetousness*," because of "*uncleanness*," or both because of these things, and because of the "*deceit*," inasmuch as there are deceivers. "*Sons of disobedience*"; he thus calls those who are utterly disobedient, those who disobey Him.

Ver. 7, 8. "*Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord.*"

Observe how wisely he urges them forward; first, from the thought of Christ, that you love one another, and do injury to no man; then, on the other hand, from the thought of punishment and hell-fire. "*For you were once darkness*," says he, "*but are now light in the Lord.*" Which is what he says also in the Epistle to the Romans; "*What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof you are now ashamed?*" [Romans 6:21], and reminds them of their former wickedness. That is to say, thinking what ye once were, and what you are now become, do not run back into your former wickedness, nor do "*despite to the grace*" [Hebrews 10:29] of God.

"You were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord!"

Not, he says, by your own virtue, but through the grace of God has this accrued to you. That is to say, you also were sometime worthy of the same punishments, but now are so no more. "*Walk*" therefore "*as children of light.*" What is meant however by "*children of light*," he adds afterwards.

Ver. 9, 10. "*For the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord.*"

"*In all goodness*," he says: this is opposed to the angry, and the bitter: "*and righteousness*"; this to the covetous: "*and truth*"; this to false pleasure: not those former things, he says, which I was mentioning, but their opposites. "*In all*"; that is, the fruit of the Spirit ought to be evinced in everything. "*Proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord*"; so that those things are tokens of a childish and imperfect mind.

Ver. 11, 12, 13. *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them. For the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of. But all things when they are reproved, are made manifest by the light."*

He had said, *"you are light."* Now the light reproves by exposing the things which take place in the darkness. So that if you, says he, are virtuous, and conspicuous, the wicked will be unable to lie hidden. For just as when a candle is set, all are brought to light, and the thief cannot enter; so if your light shine, the wicked being discovered shall be caught. So then it is our duty to expose them. How then does our Lord say, *"Judge not, that you be not judged"*? [Matthew 7:1-3] Paul did not say *"judge,"* he said *"reprove,"* that is, correct. And the words, *"Judge not, that you be not judged,"* He spoke with reference to very small errors. Indeed, He added, *"Why do you behold the mote that is in your brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in your own eye?"* But what Paul is saying is of this sort. As a wound, so long as it is imbedded and concealed outwardly, and runs beneath the surface, receives no attention, so also sin, as long as it is concealed, being as it were in darkness, is daringly committed in full security; but as soon as *"it is made manifest,"* becomes *"light"*; not indeed the sin itself, (for how could that be?) but the sinner. For when he has been brought out to light, when he has been admonished, when he has repented, when he has obtained pardon, have you not cleared away all his darkness? Have you not then healed his wound? Have you not called his unfruitfulness into fruit? Either this is his meaning, or else what I said above, that your life *"being manifest, is light."* For no one hides an irreproachable life; whereas things which are hidden, are hidden by darkness covering them.

Ver. 14. *"Wherefore he says, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you."*

By the *"sleeper"* and the *"dead,"* he means the man that is in sin; for he both exhales noisome odors like the dead, and is inactive like one that is asleep, and like him he sees nothing, but is dreaming, and forming fancies and illusions. Some indeed read, *"And you shall touch Christ"*; but others, *"And Christ shall shine upon you"*; and it is rather this latter. Depart from sin, and you shall be able to behold Christ. *"For every one that does ill, hates the light, and comes not to the light."* [John 3:20] He therefore that does it not, comes to the light.

Now he is not saying this with reference to the unbelievers only, for many of the faithful, no less than unbelievers, hold fast by wickedness; nay, some far more. Therefore to these also it is necessary to exclaim, *"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you."* To these it is fitting to say this also, *"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* [Matthew 22:32] If then he is not the God of the dead, let us live.

Now there are some who say that the words, *"the covetous man is an idolater,"* are hyperbolical. However, the statement is not hyperbolical, it is true. How, and in what way? Because the covetous man apostatizes from God, just as the idolater does. And lest you should imagine this is a bare assertion, there is a declaration of Christ which says, *"You cannot serve God and Mammon."* [Matthew 6:24] If then it is not possible to serve God and Mammon, they who serve Mammon have thrown themselves out of the service of God; and they who have denied His sovereignty, and serve lifeless gold, it is plain enough that they are idolaters. *"But I never made an idol,"* a man will say, *"nor set up an altar, nor sacrificed sheep, nor poured libations of wine; no, I came into the church, and lifted up my hands to the*

Only-begotten Son of God; I partake of the mysteries, I communicate in prayer, and in everything else which is a Christian's duty. How then," he will say, *"am I a worshiper of idols?"* Yes, and this is the very thing which is the most astonishing of all, that when you have had experience, and hast *"tasted"* the lovingkindness of God, and *"hast seen that the Lord is gracious"* [Psalm 34:8], you should abandon Him who is gracious, and take to yourself a cruel tyrant, and should pretend to be serving Him, while in reality you have submitted yourself to the hard and galling yoke of covetousness. You have not yet told me of your own duty done, but only of your Master's gifts. For tell me, I beseech you, whence do we judge of a soldier? Is it when he is on duty guarding the king, and is fed by him, and called the king's own, or is it when he is minding his own affairs and interests? To pretend to be with him, and to be attentive to his interests, while he is advancing the cause of the enemy, we declare to be worse than if he breaks away from the king's service, and joins the enemy. Now then you are doing despite to God, just as an idolater does, not with your own mouth singly, but with the ten thousands of those whom you have wronged. Yet you will say, *"an idolater he is not."* But surely, whenever they say, *"Oh! That Christian, that covetous fellow,"* then not only is he himself committing outrage by his own act, but he frequently forces those also whom he has wronged to use these words; and if they use them not, this is to be set to the account of their reverence.

Do we not see that such is the fact? What else is an idolater? Or does not he too worship passions, oftentimes not mastering his passions? I mean, for example, when we say that the pagan idolater worships idols, he will say, *"No, but it is Venus, or it is Mars."* And if we say, Who is this Venus? The more modest among them will say, It is pleasure. Or what is this Mars? It is wrath. And in the same way do you worship Mammon. If we say, Who

is this Mammon? It is covetousness, and this you are worshipping. "*I worship it not,*" you will say. Why not? Because thou dost not bow yourself down? Nay, but as it is, you are far more a worshiper in your deeds and practices; for this is the higher kind of worship. And that you may understand this, look in the case of God; who more truly worship Him, they who merely stand up at the prayers, or they who do His will? Clearly enough, these latter. The same also is it with the worshipers of Mammon; they who do his will, they truly are his worshipers. However, they who worship the passions are oftentimes free from the passions. One may see a worshiper of Mars oftentimes governing his wrath. But this is not true of you; you make yourself a slave to your passion.

Yes, but you slay no sheep? No, you slay men, reasonable souls, some by famine, others by blasphemies. Nothing can be more frenzied than a sacrifice like this. Who ever beheld souls sacrificed? How accursed is the altar of covetousness! When you pass by this idol's altar here, you shall see it reeking with the blood of bullocks and goats; but when you shall pass by the altar of covetousness, you shall see it breathing the shocking odor of human blood. Stand here before it in this world, and you shall see, not the wings of birds burning, no vapor, no smoke exhaled, but the bodies of men perishing. For some throw themselves among precipices, others tie the halter, others thrust the dagger through their throat. Have you seen the cruel and inhuman sacrifices? Would you see yet more shocking ones than these? Then I will show you no longer the bodies of men, but the souls of men slaughtered in the other world. Yes, for it is possible for a soul to be slain with the slaughter peculiar to the soul; for as there is a death of the body, so is there also of the soul. "*The soul that sins,*" says the Prophet, "*it shall die.*" [Ezekiel 18:4] The death of the soul, however, is not like the death of the body; it is far more shocking. For this bodily death, separating the soul and

the body the one from the other, releases the one from many anxieties and toils, and transmits the other into a manifest abode: then when the body has been in time dissolved and crumbled away, it is again gathered together in incorruption, and receives back its own proper soul. Such we see is this bodily death. But that of the soul is awful and terrific. For this death, when dissolution takes place, does not let it pass, as the body does, but binds it down again to an imperishable body, and consigns it to the unquenchable fire. This then is the death of the soul. And as therefore there is a death of the soul, so is there also a slaughter of the soul. What is the slaughter of the body? It is the being turned into a corpse, the being stripped of the energy derived from the soul. What is the slaughter of the soul? It is its being made a corpse also. And how is the soul made a corpse? Because as the body then becomes a corpse when the soul leaves it destitute of its own vital energy, so also does the soul then become a corpse, when the Holy Spirit leaves it destitute of His spiritual energy.

Such for the most part are the slaughters made at the altar of covetousness. They are not satisfied, they do not stop at men's blood; no, the altar of covetousness is not glutted, unless it sacrifice the very soul itself also, unless it receive the souls of both, the sacrificer and the sacrificed. For he who sacrifices must first be sacrificed, and then he sacrifices; and the dead sacrifices him who is yet living. For when he utters blasphemies, when he reviles, when he is irritated, are not these so many incurable wounds of the soul?

You have seen that the expression is no hyperbole. Would you hear again another argument, to teach you how covetousness is idolatry, and more shocking than idolatry? Idolaters worship the creatures of God (*"for they worshipped,"* it is said, *"and served the creature rather than the Creator"*) [Romans 1:25]; but you are worshiping a creature of your own.

For God made not covetousness but your own insatiable appetite invented it. And look at the madness and folly. They that worship idols, honor also the idols they worship; and if any one speak of them with disrespect or ridicule, they stand up in their defense; whereas thou, as if in a sort of intoxication, art worshiping an object, which is so far from being free from accusation, that it is even full of impiety. So that thou, even more than they, excellest in wickedness. You can never have it to say as an excuse, that it is no evil. If even they are in the highest degree without excuse, yet are you in a far higher, who art forever censuring covetousness, and reviling those who devote themselves to it, and who yet does serve and obey it.

We will examine, if you please, whence idolatry took its rise. A certain wise man [Wisdom 14:16] tells us, that a certain rich man afflicted with untimely mourning for his son, and having no consolation for his sorrow, consoled his passion in this way: having made a lifeless image of the dead, and constantly gazing at it, he seemed through the image to have his departed one still; while certain flatterers, *"whose God was their belly"* [Philippians 3:19], treating the image with reverence in order to do him honor, carried on the custom into idolatry. So then it took its rise from weakness of soul, from a senseless custom, from extravagance. But not so covetousness: from weakness of soul indeed it is, only that it is from a worse weakness. It is not that any one has lost a son, nor that he is seeking for consolation in sorrow, nor that he is drawn on by flatterers. But how is it? I will tell you. Cain in covetousness overreached God; what ought to have been given to Him, he kept to himself; what he should have kept himself, this he offered to Him; and thus the evil began even from God. For if we are God's, much more are the first-fruits of our possessions. Again, men's violent passion for women arose from covetousness. *"They saw the daughters of men"* [Genesis 6:2], and they rushed headlong into lust. And

from hence again it went on to money; for the wish to have more than one's neighbor of this world's goods, arises from no other source, than from "*love waxing cold*." The wish to have more than one's share arises from no other source than recklessness, misanthropy, and arrogance toward others. Look at the earth, how wide is its extent? How far greater than we can use the expanse of the sky and the heaven? It is that He might put an end to your covetousness, that God has thus widely extended the bounds of the creation. And are you then still grasping and even thus? And do you hear that covetousness is idolatry, and not shudder even at this? Do you wish to inherit the earth? Then have you no inheritance in heaven. Are you eager to leave an inheritance to others, that you may rob yourself of it? Tell me, if any one were to offer you power to possess all things, would you be unwilling? It is in your power now, if you will. Some, however, say, that they are grieved when they transmit the inheritance to others, and would fain have consumed it themselves, rather than see others become its masters. Nor do I acquit you of this weakness; for this too is characteristic of a weak soul. However, at least let as much as this be done. In your will leave Christ your heir. It were your duty indeed to do so in your lifetime, for this would show a right disposition. Still, at all events, be a little generous, though it be but by necessity. For Christ indeed charged us to give to the poor with this object, to make us wise in our lifetime, to induce us to despise money, to teach us to look down upon earthly things. It is no contempt of money, as you think, to bestow it upon this man and upon that man when one dies, and is no longer master of it. You are then no longer giving of your own, but of absolute necessity: thanks to death, not to you. This is no act of affection, it is your loss. However, let it be done even thus; at least then give up your passion.

Moral. Consider how many acts of plunder, how many acts of covetousness, you have committed. Restore all fourfold. Thus plead your cause to God. Some, however, there are who are arrived at such a pitch of madness and blindness, as not even then to comprehend their duty; but who go on acting in all cases, just as if they were taking pains to make the judgment of God yet heavier to themselves. This is the reason why our blessed Apostle writes and says, *"Walk as children of light."* Now the covetous man of all others lives in darkness, and spreads great darkness over all things around.

"And have no fellowship," he adds, *"with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; for the things which are done by them in secret, it is a shame even to speak of; but all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light."* Hearken, I entreat you, all, as many of you as like not to be hated for nothing, but to be loved. *"What need is there to be hated?"* one says. A man commits a robbery, and do you not reprove him, but art afraid of his hatred? Though this, however, is not being hated for nothing. But do you justly convict him, and yet fear the hatred? Convict your brother, incur enmity for the love's sake which you owe to Christ, for the love's sake which you owe to your brother. Arrest him as he is on his road to the pit of destruction. For to admit him to our table, to treat him with civil speeches, with salutations, and with entertainments, these are no signal proofs of friendship. No, those I have mentioned are the boons which we must bestow upon our friends, that we may rescue their souls from the wrath of God. When we see them lying prostrate in the furnace of wickedness, let us raise them up. *"But,"* they say, *"it is of no use, he is incorrigible."* However, do thou your duty, and then you have excused yourself to God. Hide not your talent. It is for this that you have speech, it is for this you have a mouth and a tongue, that you may correct your neighbor.

It is dumb and reasonless creatures only that have no care for their neighbor, and take no account of others. But do you while calling God, "*Father*," and your neighbor, "*brother*," when you see him committing unnumbered wickednesses, do you prefer his good-will to his welfare? No, do not so, I entreat you. There is no evidence of friendship so true as never to overlook the sins of our brethren. Did you see them at enmity? Reconcile them. Did you see them guilty of covetousness? Check them. Did you see them wronged? Stand up in their defense. It is not on them, it is on yourself you are conferring the chief benefit. It is for this we are friends, that we may be of use one to another. A man will listen in a different spirit to a friend, and to any other chance person. A chance person he will regard perhaps with suspicion, and so in like manner will he a teacher, but not so a friend.

"For," he says, *"the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of: but all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light."* What is it he means to say here? He means this. That some sins in this world are done in secret, and some also openly; but in the other it shall not be so. Now there is no one who is not conscious to himself of some sin. This is why he says, *"But all the things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light."* What then? Is this again, it will be said, meant concerning idolatry? It is not; the argument is about our life and our sins. *"For everything that is made manifest,"* says he, *"is light."*

Wherefore, I entreat you, be ye never backward to reprove, nor displeased at being reproved. For as long indeed as anything is carried on in the dark, it is carried on with greater security; but when it has many to witness what is done, it is brought to light. By all means then let us do all we can to chase away the deadness which is in our brethren, to scatter the darkness, and to attract to us the "*Sun of righteousness*." For if there be

many shining lights, the path of virtue will be easy to themselves, and they which are in darkness will be more easily detected, while the light is held forth and puts the darkness to flight. Whereas if it be the reverse, there is fear lest as the thick mist of darkness and of sin overpowers the light, and dispels its transparency, those shining lights themselves should be extinguished. Let us be then disposed to benefit one another, that one and all, we may offer up praise and glory to the God of lovingkindness, by the grace and lovingkindness of the only begotten Son with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, honor now and forever and forever. Amen.

Homily 19 on Ephesians

Ephesians 5:15, 16, 17

"Look then carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

He is still cleansing away the root of bitterness, still cutting off the very groundwork of anger. For what is he saying? *"Look carefully how ye walk."* *"They are sheep in the midst of wolves,"* and he charges them to be also *"as doves."* For *"you shall be harmless,"* says he, *"as doves."* [Matthew 10:16] Forasmuch then as they were both among wolves, and were besides commanded not to defend themselves, but to suffer evil, they needed this admonition. Not indeed but that the former was sufficient to render them stronger; but now that there is besides the addition of the two, reflect how exceedingly it is heightened. Observe then here also, how carefully he secures them, by saying, *"Look how ye walk."* Whole cities were at war with them; yea, this war made its way also into houses. They were divided, father against son, and son against father, mother against daughter, and daughter against mother. What then? Whence these divisions? They heard Christ say, *"He that loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me."* [Matthew 10:37] Lest therefore they should think that he was without reason introducing wars and fightings, (since there was likely to be much anger produced, if they on their part were to retaliate,) to prevent this, he says, *"See carefully how ye walk."* That is to say, *"Except the Gospel message, give no other handle on any score whatever, for the hatred which you will incur."* Let this be the only ground of hatred. Let no one have any other charge to make against you; but show all deference and obedience,

whenever it does no harm to the message, whenever it does not stand in the way of godliness. For it is said, "*Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom.*" [Romans 13:7] For when among the rest of the world they shall see us forbearing, they will be put to shame.

"Not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time."

It is not from any wish that you should be artful, and versatile, that he gives this advice. But what he means is this. The time is not yours. At present you are strangers, and sojourners, and foreigners, and aliens; seek not honors, seek not glory, seek not authority, nor revenge; bear all things, and in this way, "*redeem the time*"; give up many things, anything they may require. Imagine now, I say, a man had a magnificent house, and persons were to make their way in, on purpose to murder him, and he were to give a large sum, and thus to rescue himself. Then we should say, he has redeemed himself. So also have you a large house, and a true faith in your keeping. They will come to take all away. Give whatever they may demand, only preserve the principal thing, I mean the faith.

"Because the days," says he, *"are evil."*

What is the evil of the day? The evil of the day ought to belong to the day. What is the evil of a body? Disease. And what again the evil of the soul? Wickedness. What is the evil of water? Bitterness. And the evil of each particular thing, is with reference to that nature of it which is affected by the evil. If then there is an evil in the day, it ought to belong to the day, to the hours, to the day-light. So also Christ says, "*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*" [Matthew 6:34] And from this expression we shall understand the other. In what sense then does he call "*the days evil*"? In what sense the "*time*" evil? It is not the essence of the thing, not the things as so created, but it is the things transacted in them. In the same way as we are in the habit of saying, "*I have passed a disagreeable and wretched day.*"

And yet how could it be disagreeable, except from the circumstances which took place in it? Now the events which take place in it are, good things from God, but evil things from bad men. So then of the evils which happen in the times, men are the creators, and hence it is that the times are said to be evil. And thus we also call the times evil.

Ver. 17, 18. *"Wherefore,"* he adds, *"be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is; and be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot."*

For indeed intemperance in this renders men passionate and violent, and hot-headed, and irritable and savage. Wine has been given us for cheerfulness, not for drunkenness. Whereas now it appears to be an unmanly and contemptible thing for a man not to get drunk. And what sort of hope then is there of salvation? What? Contemptible, tell me, not to get drunk, where to get drunk ought of all things in the world to be most contemptible? For it is of all things right for even a private individual to keep himself far from drunkenness; but how much more so for a soldier, a man who lives among swords, and bloodshed, and slaughter: much more, I say, for the soldier, when his temper is sharpened by other causes also, by power, by authority, by being constantly in the midst of stratagems and battles. Would you know where wine is good? Hear what the Scripture says, *"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul."* [Proverbs 31:6] And justly, because it can mitigate asperity and gloominess, and drive away clouds from the brow. *"Wine makes glad the heart of man"* [Psalm 104:15], says the Psalmist. How then does wine produce drunkenness? For it cannot be that one and the same thing should work opposite effects. Drunkenness then surely does not arise from wine, but from intemperance. Wine is bestowed upon us for no other purpose than for bodily health; but this purpose also is thwarted by immoderate use. But

hear moreover what our blessed Apostle writes and says to Timothy, *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities."*

This is the reason why God has formed our bodies in moderate proportions, and so as to be satisfied with a little, from thence at once instructing us that He has made us adapted to another life. And that life He would fain have bestowed upon us even from the very beginning; but since we rendered ourselves unworthy of it, He deferred it; and in the time during which He deferred it, not even in that does He allow us immoderate indulgence; for a little cup of wine and a single loaf is enough to satisfy a man's hunger. And man the lord of all the brute creation has He formed so as to require less food in proportion than they, and his body small; thereby declaring to us nothing else than this, that we are hastening onward to another life. *"Be not drunk,"* says he, *"with wine, wherein is riot";* for it does not save but it destroys; and that, not the body only, but the soul also.

Ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. *"But be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ."*

Do you wish, he says, to be cheerful, do you wish to employ the day? I give you spiritual drink; for drunkenness even cuts off the articulate sound of our tongue; it makes us lisp and stammer, and distorts the eyes, and the whole frame together. Learn to sing psalms, and you shall see the delightfulness of the employment. For they who sing psalms are filled with the Holy Spirit, as they who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit.

What is meant by *"with your hearts to the Lord"*? It means, with close attention and understanding. For they who do not attend closely, merely

sing, uttering the words, while their heart is roaming elsewhere.

"Always," he says, "giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ unto God even the Father, subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ."

That is, *"let your requests be made known unto God, with thanksgiving"* [Philippians 4:6]; for there is nothing so pleasing to God, as for a man to be thankful. But we shall be best able to give thanks unto God, by withdrawing our souls from the things before mentioned, and by thoroughly cleansing them by the means he has told us.

"But be filled," says he, "with the Spirit."

And is then this Spirit within us? Yes, indeed, within us. For when we have driven away lying, and bitterness, and fornication, and uncleanness, and covetousness, from our souls, when we have become kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, when there is no jesting, when we have rendered ourselves worthy of it, what is there to hinder the Holy Spirit from coming and lighting upon us? And not only will He come unto us, but He will fill our hearts; and when we have so great a light kindled within us, then will the way of virtue be no longer difficult to attain, but will be easy and simple.

"Giving thanks always," he says, "for all things."

What then? Are we to give thanks for everything that befalls us? Yes; be it even disease, be it even penury. For if a certain wise man gave this advice in the Old Testament, and said, *"Whatsoever is brought upon you take cheerfully, and be patient when you are changed to a low estate"* [Sirach 2:4]; much more ought this to be the case in the New. Yes, even though thou know not the word, give thanks. For this is thanksgiving. But if you give thanks when you are in comfort and in affluence, in success and in prosperity, there is nothing great, nothing wonderful in that. What is

required is, for a man to give thanks when he is in afflictions, in anguish, in discouragements. Utter no word in preference to this, "*Lord, I thank you.*" And why do I speak of the afflictions of this world? It is our duty to give God thanks, even for hell itself, for the torments and punishments of the next world. For surely it is a thing beneficial to those who attend to it, when the dread of hell is laid like a bridle on our hearts. Let us therefore give thanks not only for blessings which we see, but also for those which we see not, and for those which we receive against our will. For many are the blessings He bestows upon us, without our desire, without our knowledge. And if you believe me not, I will at once proceed to make the case clear to you. For consider, I pray, do not the impious and unbelieving Gentiles ascribe everything to the sun and to their idols? But what then? Does He not bestow blessings even upon them? Is it not the work of His providence, that they both have life, and health, and children, and the like? And again they that are called Marcionites, and the Manichees, do they not even blaspheme Him? But what then? Does He not bestow blessings on them every day? Now if He bestows blessings on them that know them not, much more does he bestow them upon us. For what else is the peculiar work of God if it be not this, to do good to all mankind, alike by chastisements and by enjoyments? Let us not then give thanks only when we are in prosperity, for there is nothing great in this. And this the devil also well knows, and therefore he said, "*Does Job fear God for nought? Have You not made an hedge about him and about all that he has on every side? Touch all that he has; no doubt, he will renounce You to Your face!*" [Job 1:10-11] However, that cursed one gained no advantage; and God forbid he should gain any advantage of us either; but whenever we are either in penury, or in sicknesses, or in disasters, then let us increase our thanksgiving; thanksgiving, I mean, not in words, nor in tongue, but in deeds and works,

in mind and in heart. Let us give thanks unto Him with all our souls. For He loves us more than our parents; and wide as is the difference between evil and goodness, so great is the difference between the love of God and that of our fathers. And these are not my words, but those of Christ Himself Who loves us. And hear what He Himself says, *"What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"* [Matthew 7:9-11] And again, bear what He says also elsewhere: *"Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget you, says the Lord."* [Isaiah 49:15] For if He loves us not, wherefore did He create us? Had He any necessity? Do we supply to Him any ministry and service? Needs He anything that we can render? Hear what the Prophet says; *"I have said unto the Lord, You are my Lord, I have no good beyond You."* [Psalm 16:2]

The ungrateful, however, and unfeeling say, that this were worthy of God's goodness, that there should be an equality among all. Tell me, ungrateful mortal, what sort of things are they which you deny to be of God's goodness, and what equality do you mean? *"Such an one,"* you will say, *"has been a cripple from his childhood; another is mad, and is possessed; another has arrived at extreme old age, and has spent his whole life in poverty; another in the most painful diseases: are these works of Providence? One man is deaf, another dumb, another poor, while another, impious, yea, utterly impious, and full of ten thousand vices, enjoys wealth, and keeps concubines, and parasites, and is owner of a splendid mansion, and lives an idle life."* And many instances of the sort they string together, and weave a long account of complaint against the providence of God.

What then are we to say to them? Now if they were Greeks, and were to tell us that the universe is governed by some one or other, we should in turn address to them the self-same words, *"What then, are things without a providence? How then is it that you reverence gods, and worship genii and heroes? For if there is a providence, some one or other superintends the whole."* But if any, whether Christians or Heathen, should be impatient at this, and be wavering, what shall we say to them? Why, could so many good things, tell me, arise of themselves? The daily light? The beautiful order and the forethought that exist in all things? The mazy dances of the stars? The equable course of nights and days? The regular gradation of nature in vegetables, and animals, and men? Who, tell me, is it that orders these? If there were no superintending Being, but all things combined together of themselves, who then was it that made this vault revolve, so beautiful, so vast, I mean the sky, and set it upon the earth, nay more, upon the waters? Who is it that gives the fruitful seasons? Who implanted so great power in seeds and vegetables? For that which is accidental is necessarily disorderly; whereas that which is orderly implies design. For which, tell me, of the things around us that are accidental, is not full of great disorder, and of great tumult and confusion? Nor do I speak of things accidental only, but of those also which imply some agent, but an unskillful agent. For example, let there be timber and stone, and let there be lime withal; and let a man unskilled in building take them, and begin building, and set hard to work; will he not spoil and destroy everything? Again, take a vessel without a pilot, containing everything which a vessel ought to contain, without a shipwright; I do not say that it is unequipped and unfinished, but though well equipped, it will not be able to sail. And could the vast extent of earth standing on the waters, tell me, ever stand so firmly, and so long a time, without some power to hold it together? And can these

views have any reason? Is it not the extreme of absurdity to conceive such a notion? And if the earth supports the heaven, behold another burden still; but if the heaven also is borne upon the waters, there arises again another question. Or rather not another question, for it is the work of providence. For things which are borne upon the water ought not to be made convex, but concave. Wherefore? Because the whole body of anything which is concave is immersed in the waters, as is the case with a ship; whereas of the convex the body is entirely above, and only the rim rests upon the surface; so that it requires a resisting body, hard, and able to sustain it, in order to bear the burden imposed. But does the atmosphere then support the heaven? Why, that is far softer, and more yielding even than water, and cannot sustain anything, no, not the very lightest things, much less so vast a bulk. In fine, if we chose to follow out the argument of providence, both generally and in detail, time itself would fail us. For I will now ask him who would start those questions above mentioned, are these things the result of providence, or of the want of providence? And if he shall say, that they are not from providence, then again I will ask, how then did they arise? But no, he will never be able to give any account at all. And do you not know that?

Much more then is it your duty not to question, not to be over curious, in those things which concern man. And why not? Because man is nobler than all these, and these were made for his sake, not he for their sake. If then you know not so much as the skill and contrivance that are visible in His providence, how shall you be able to know the reasons, where he himself is the subject? Tell me, I pray, why did God form him so small, so far below the height of heaven, as that he should even doubt of the things which appear above him? Why are the northern and southern climes uninhabitable? Tell me, I say, why is the night made longer in winter and shorter in summer? Why are the degrees of cold and heat such as they are?

Why is the body mortal? And ten thousand questions besides I will ask you, and if you will, will never cease asking. And in one and all you will surely be at a loss to answer. And thus is this of all things most providential, that the reasons of things are kept secret from us. For surely, one would have imagined man to be the cause of all things, were there not this to humble our understanding.

"But such an one," you will say, *"is poor, and poverty is an evil. And what is it to be sick, and what is it to be crippled?"* Oh, man, they are nothing. One thing alone is evil, that is to sin; this is the only thing we ought to search to the bottom. And yet we omit to search into the causes of what are really evils, and busy ourselves about other things. Why is it that not one of us ever examines why he has sinned? To sin—is it then in my power, or is it not in my power? And why need I go round about me for a number of reasons? I will seek for the matter within myself. Now then did I ever master my wrath? Did I ever master my anger, either through shame, or through fear of man? Then whenever I discover this done, I shall discover that to sin is in my own power. No one examines these matters, no one busies himself about them. But only according to Job, *"Man in a way altogether different swims upon words."* For why does it concern you, if such an one is blind, or such an one poor? God has not commanded you to look to this, but to what you yourself art doing. For if on the one hand you doubt that there is any power superintending the world, you are of all men the most senseless; but if you are persuaded of this, why doubt that it is our duty to please God?

"Giving thanks always," he says, *"for all things to God."*

Go to the physician's, and you will see him, whenever a man is discovered to have a wound, using the knife and the cautery. But no, in your case, I say not so much as this; but go to the carpenter's. And yet thou dost

not examine his reasons, although you understand not one of the things which are done there, and many things will appear to you to be difficulties; as, for instance, when he hollows the wood, when he alters its outward shape. Nay, I would bring you to a more intelligible craft still, for instance, that of the painter, and there your head will swim. For tell me, does he not seem to be doing what he does, at random? For what do his lines mean, and the turns and bends of the lines? But when he puts on the colors, then the beauty of the art will become conspicuous. Yet still, not even then will you be able to attain to any accurate understanding of it. But why do I speak of carpenters, and painters, our fellow-servants? Tell me, how does the bee frame her comb, and then shall you speak about God also. Master the handiwork of the ant, the spider, and the swallow, and then shall you speak about God also. Tell me these things. But no, thou never canst. Will you not cease then, O man, your vain enquiries? For vain indeed they are. Will you not cease busying yourself in vain about many things? Nothing so wise as this ignorance, where they that profess they know nothing are wisest of all, and they that spend overmuch labor on these questions, the most foolish of all. So that to profess knowledge is not everywhere a sign of wisdom, but sometimes of folly also. For tell me, suppose there were two men, and one of them should profess to stretch out his lines, and to measure the expanse that intervenes between the earth and heaven, and the other were to laugh at him, and declare that he did not understand it, tell me, I pray, which should we laugh at, him that said he knew, or him that knew not? Evidently, the man that said that he knew. He that is ignorant, therefore, is wiser than he that professes to know. And what again? If any one were to profess to tell us how many cups of water the sea contains, and another should profess his ignorance, is not the ignorance here again wiser than the knowledge? Surely, vastly so. And why so? Because that knowledge itself is but intense

ignorance. For he indeed who says that he is ignorant, knows something. And what is that? That it is incomprehensible to man. Yes, and this is no small portion of knowledge. Whereas he that says he knows, he of all others knows not what he says he knows, and is for this very reason utterly ridiculous.

Moral. Alas! How many things are there to teach us to bridle this unseasonable impertinence and idle curiosity; and yet we refrain not, but are curious about the lives of others; as, why one is a cripple, and why another is poor. And so by this way of reasoning we shall fall into another sort of trifling which is endless, as, why such an one is a woman? And, why all are not men? Why there is such a thing as an ass? Why an ox? Why a dog? Why a wolf? Why a stone? Why wood? And thus the argument will run out to an interminable length. This in truth is the reason, why God has marked out limits to our knowledge, and has laid them deep in nature. And mark, now, the excess of this busy curiosity. For though we look up to so great a height as from earth to heaven, and are not at all affected by it; yet as soon as ever we go up to the top of a lofty tower, and have a mind to stoop over a little, and look down, a sort of giddiness and dizziness immediately seizes us. Now, tell me the reason of this. No, you could never find out a reason for it. Why is it that the eye possesses greater power than other senses, and is caught by more distant objects? And one might see it by comparison with the case of hearing. For no one will ever be able to shout so loudly, as to fill the air as far as the eye can reach, nor to hear at so great a distance. Why are not all the members of equal honor? Why have not all received one function and one place? Paul also searched into these questions; or rather he did not search into them, for he was wise; but where he comes by chance upon this topic, he says, *"Each one of them, has God set even as it has pleased Him."* [1 Corinthians 12:18] He assigns the whole

to His will. And so then let us only *"give thanks for all things."*

"Wherefore," says he, *"give thanks for all things."* This is the part of a well-disposed, of a wise, of an intelligent servant; the opposite is that of a tattler, and an idler, and a busy-body. Do we not see among servants, that those among them who are worthless and good for nothing, are both tattlers, and triflers and that they pry into the concerns of their masters, which they are desirous to conceal: whereas the intelligent and well-disposed look to one thing only, how they may fulfill their service. He that says much, does nothing: as he that does much, never says a word out of season. Hence Paul said, where he wrote concerning widows, *"And they learn not only to be idle, but tattlers also."* [1 Timothy 5:13] Tell me, now, which is the widest difference, between our age and that of children, or between God and men? Between ourselves compared with gnats, or God compared with us? Plainly between God and us. Why then do you busy yourself to such an extent in all these questions? *"Give thanks for all things."* *"But what,"* say you, *"if a heathen should ask the question? How am I to answer him? He desires to learn from me whether there is a Providence, for he himself denies that there is any being thus exercising foresight."* Turn round then, and ask him the same question yourself. He will deny therefore that there is a Providence. Yet that there is a Providence, is plain from what you have said; but that it is incomprehensible, is plain from those things whereof we cannot discover the reason. For if in things where men are the disposers, we oftentimes do not understand the method of the disposition, and in truth many of them appear to us inconsistent, and yet at the same time we acquiesce, how much more will this be so in the case of God? However, with God nothing either is inconsistent, or appears so to the faithful. Wherefore let us *"give thanks for all things,"* let us give Him glory for all things.

"Subjecting yourselves one to another," he says, *"in the fear of Christ."* For if you submit yourself for a ruler's sake, or for money's sake, or from respectfulness, much more from the fear of Christ. Let there be an interchange of service and submission. For then will there be no such thing as slavish service. Let not one sit down in the rank of a freeman, and the other in the rank of a slave; rather it were better that both masters and slaves be servants to one another—far better to be a slave in this way than free in any other; as will be evident from hence. Suppose the case of a man who should have an hundred slaves, and he should in no way serve them; and suppose again a different case, of an hundred friends, all waiting upon one another. Which will lead the happier life? Which with the greater pleasure, with the more enjoyment? In the one case there is no anger, no provocation, no wrath, nor anything else of the kind whatever; in the other all is fear and apprehension. In the one case too the whole is forced, in the other is of free choice. In the one case they serve one another because they are forced to do so, in the other with mutual gratification. Thus does God will it to be; for this He washed His disciples' feet. Nay more, if you have a mind to examine the matter nicely, there is indeed on the part of masters a return of service. For what if pride suffer not that return of service to appear? Yet if the slave on the one hand render his bodily service, and thou maintain that body, and supply it with food and clothing and shoes, this is an exchange of service: because unless thou render your service as well, neither will he render his, but will be free, and no law will compel him to do it if he is not supported. If this then is the case with servants, where is the absurdity, if it should also become the case with free men. *"Subjecting yourselves in the fear,"* says he, *"of Christ."* How great then the obligation, when we shall also have a reward. But he does not choose to submit himself to you? However do thou submit yourself; not simply yield, but submit yourself.

Entertain this feeling towards all, as if all were your masters. For thus shall you soon have all as your slaves, enslaved to you with the most abject slavery. For you will then more surely make them yours, when without receiving anything of theirs, thou of yourself renderest them of your own. This is "*subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ,*" in order that we may subdue all the passions, be servants of God, and preserve the love we owe to one another. And then shall we be able also to be counted worthy of the lovingkindness which comes of God, through the grace and mercies of His only-begotten Son, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 20 on Ephesians

Ephesians 5:22-24

Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church: being Himself the Saviour of the body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.

A certain wise man, setting down a number of things in the rank of blessings, set down this also in the rank of a blessing, "*A wife agreeing with her husband.*" [Sirach 25:1] And elsewhere again he sets it down among blessings, that a woman should dwell in harmony with her husband. [Sirach 40:23] And indeed from the beginning, God appears to have made special provision for this union; and discoursing of the two as one, He said thus, "*Male and female created He them*" [Genesis 1:27]; and again, "*There is neither male nor female.*" [Galatians 3:28] For there is no relationship between man and man so close as that between man and wife, if they be joined together as they should be. And therefore a certain blessed man too, when he would express surpassing love, and was mourning for one that was dear to him, and of one soul with him, did not mention father, nor mother, nor child, nor brother, nor friend, but what? "*Your love to me was wonderful,*" says he, "*passing the love of women.*" [2 Samuel 1:26] For indeed, in very deed, this love is more despotic than any despotism: for others indeed may be strong, but this passion is not only strong, but unfading. For there is a certain love deeply seated in our nature, which imperceptibly to ourselves knits together these bodies of ours. Thus even from the very beginning woman sprang from man, and afterwards from man and woman sprang both man and woman. Perceivest thou the close

bond and connection? And how that God suffered not a different kind of nature to enter in from without? And mark, how many providential arrangements He made. He permitted the man to marry his own sister; or rather not his sister, but his daughter; nay, nor yet his daughter, but something more than his daughter, even his own flesh. And thus the whole He framed from one beginning, gathering all together, like stones in a building, into one. For neither on the one hand did He form her from without, and this was that the man might not feel towards her as towards an alien; nor again did He confine marriage to her, that she might not, by contracting herself, and making all center in herself, be cut off from the rest. Thus as in the case of plants, they are of all others the best, which have but a single stem, and spread out into a number of branches; (since were all confined to the root alone, all would be to no purpose, whereas again had it a number of roots, the tree would be no longer worthy of admiration;) so, I say, is the case here also. From one, namely Adam, He made the whole race to spring, preventing them by the strongest necessity from being ever torn asunder, or separated; and afterwards, making it more restricted, He no longer allowed sisters and daughters to be wives, lest we should on the other hand contract our love to one point, and thus in another manner be cut off from one another. Hence Christ said, *"He which made them from the beginning, made them male and female."* [Matthew 19:4]

For great evils are hence produced, and great benefits, both to families and to states. For there is nothing which so welds our life together as the love of man and wife. For this many will lay aside even their arms, for this they will give up life itself. And Paul would never without a reason and without an object have spent so much pains on this subject, as when he says here, *"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."* And why so? Because when they are in harmony, the children are well

brought up, and the domestics are in good order, and neighbors, and friends, and relations enjoy the fragrance. But if it be otherwise, all is turned upside down, and thrown into confusion. And just as when the generals of an army are at peace one with another, all things are in due subordination, whereas on the other hand, if they are at variance, everything is turned upside down; so, I say, is it also here. Wherefore, says he, *"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."*

Yet how strange! For how then is it, that it is said elsewhere, *"If one bid not farewell both to wife and to husband, he cannot follow me"*? [Luke 14:26] For if it is their duty to be in subjection *"as unto the Lord,"* how says He that they must depart from them for the Lord's sake? Yet their duty indeed it is, their bounden duty. But the word *"as"* is not necessarily and universally expressive of exact equality. He either means this, *"as' knowing that you are servants to the Lord"*; (which, by the way, is what he says elsewhere, that, even though they do it not for the husband's sake, yet must they primarily for the Lord's sake;) or else he means, *"when you obey your husband, do so as serving the Lord."* For if he who resists these external authorities, those of governments, I mean, *"withstands the ordinance of God"* [Romans 13:2], much more does she who submits not herself to her husband. Such was God's will from the beginning.

Let us take as our fundamental position then that the husband occupies the place of the *"head,"* and the wife the place of the *"body."*

Ver. 23, 24. Then, he proceeds with arguments and says that *"the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church, being Himself the Saviour of the body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything."*

Then after saying, *"The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is of the Church,"* he further adds, *"and He is the Saviour of the body."* For

indeed the head is the saving health of the body. He had already laid down beforehand for man and wife, the ground and provision of their love, assigning to each their proper place, to the one that of authority and forethought, to the other that of submission. As then *"the Church,"* that is, both husbands and wives, *"is subject unto Christ, so also ye wives submit yourselves to your husbands, as unto God."*

Ver. 25. *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church."*

You have heard how great the submission; you have extolled and marvelled at Paul, how, like an admirable and spiritual man, he welds together our whole life. Thou did well. But now hear what he also requires at your hands; for again he employs the same example.

"Husbands," says he, *"love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church."*

You have seen the measure of obedience, hear also the measure of love. Would you have your wife obedient unto you, as the Church is to Christ? Take then yourself the same provident care for her, as Christ takes for the Church. Yea, even if it shall be needful for you to give your life for her, yea, and to be cut into pieces ten thousand times, yea, and to endure and undergo any suffering whatever—refuse it not. Though you should undergo all this, yet will you not, no, not even then, have done anything like Christ. For thou indeed art doing it for one to whom you are already knit; but He for one who turned her back on Him and hated Him. In the same way then as He laid at His feet her who turned her back on Him, who hated, and spurned, and disdained Him, not by menaces, nor by violence, nor by terror, nor by anything else of the kind, but by his unwearied affection; so also do thou behave yourself toward your wife. Yea, though thou see her looking down upon you, and disdainingly, and scorning you, yet by your

great thoughtfulness for her, by affection, by kindness, you will be able to lay her at your feet. For there is nothing more powerful to sway than these bonds, and especially for husband and wife. A servant, indeed, one will be able, perhaps, to bind down by fear; nay not even him, for he will soon start away and be gone. But the partner of one's life, the mother of one's children, the foundation of one's every joy, one ought never to chain down by fear and menaces, but with love and good temper. For what sort of union is that, where the wife trembles at her husband? And what sort of pleasure will the husband himself enjoy, if he dwells with his wife as with a slave, and not as with a free-woman? Yea, though you should suffer anything on her account, do not upbraid her; for neither did Christ do this.

Ver. 26. *"And gave Himself up,"* he says, *"for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it."*

So then she was unclean! So then she had blemishes, so then she was unsightly, so then she was worthless! Whatsoever kind of wife you shall take, yet shall you never take such a bride as the Church, when Christ took her, nor one so far removed from you as the Church was from Christ. And yet for all that, He did not abhor her, nor loathe her for her surpassing deformity. Would you hear her deformity described? Hear what Paul says, *"For you were once darkness."* [Ephesians 5:8] Did you see the blackness of her hue? What blacker than darkness? But look again at her boldness, *"living,"* says he, *"in malice and envy."* [Titus 3:3] Look again at her impurity; *"disobedient, foolish."* But what am I saying? She was both foolish, and of an evil tongue; and yet notwithstanding, though so many were her blemishes, yet did He give Himself up for her in her deformity, as for one in the bloom of youth, as for one dearly beloved, as for one of wonderful beauty. And it was in admiration of this that Paul said, For scarcely for a righteous man will one die [Romans 5:7]; and again, *"in that*

while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." [Romans 5:8] And though such as this, He took her, He arrayed her in beauty, and washed her, and refused not even this, to give Himself for her.

Ver. 26, 27. *"That He might sanctify it having cleansed it,"* he proceeds, *"by the washing of water with the word; that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

"By the washing or laver" He washes her uncleanness. *"By the word,"* says he. What word? *"In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* [Matthew 28:19] And not simply has He adorned her, but has made her *"glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."* Let us then also seek after this beauty ourselves, and we shall be able to create it. Seek not thou at your wife's hand, things which she is not able to possess. Do you see that the Church had all things at her Lord's hands? By Him was made glorious, by Him was made pure, by Him made without blemish? Turn not your back on your wife because of her deformity. Hear the Scripture that says, *"The bee is little among such as fly, but her fruit is the chief of sweet things."* [Sirach 11:3] She is of God's fashioning. Thou reproachest not her, but Him that made her; what can the woman do? Praise her not for her beauty. Praise and hatred and love based on personal beauty belong to unchastened souls. Seek thou for beauty of soul. Imitate the Bridegroom of the Church. Outward beauty is full of conceit and great license, and throws men into jealousy, and the thing often makes you suspect monstrous things. But has it any pleasure? For the first or second month, perhaps, or at most for the year: but then no longer; the admiration by familiarity wastes away. Meanwhile the evils which arose from the beauty still abide, the pride, the folly, the contemptuousness. Whereas in one who is not such, there is nothing of this kind. But the love having begun

on just grounds, still continues ardent, since its object is beauty of soul, and not of body. What better, tell me, than heaven? What better than the stars? Tell me of what body you will, yet is there none so fair. Tell me of what eyes you will, yet are there none so sparkling. When these were created, the very Angels gazed with wonder, and we gaze with wonder now; yet not in the same degree as at first. Such is familiarity; things do not strike us in the same degree. How much more in the case of a wife! And if moreover disease come too, all is at once fled. Let us seek in a wife affectionateness, modest-mindedness, gentleness; these are the characteristics of beauty. But loveliness of person let us not seek, nor upbraid her upon these points, over which she has no power, nay, rather, let us not upbraid at all, (it were rudeness,) nor let us be impatient, nor sullen. Do ye not see how many, after living with beautiful wives, have ended their lives pitiably, and how many, who have lived with those of no great beauty, have run on to extreme old age with great enjoyment. Let us wipe off the "*spot*" that is within, let us smooth the "*wrinkles*" that are within, let us do away the "*blemishes*" that are on the soul. Such is the beauty God requires. Let us make her fair in God's sight, not in our own. Let us not look for wealth, nor for that high-birth which is outward, but for that true nobility which is in the soul. Let no one endure to get rich by a wife; for such riches are base and disgraceful; no, by no means let any one seek to get rich from this source. *"For they that desire to be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, and into destruction and perdition."* [1 Timothy 6:9] Seek not therefore in your wife abundance of wealth, and you shall find everything else go well. Who, tell me, would overlook the most important things, to attend to those which are less so? And yet, alas! This is in every case our feeling. Yes, if we have a son, we concern ourselves not how he may be made virtuous, but how we may get him a rich wife; not how he may be

well-mannered, but well-monied: if we follow a business, we enquire not how it may be clear of sin, but how it may bring us in most profit. And everything has become money; and thus is everything corrupted and ruined, because that passion possesses us.

Ver. 28. *"Even so ought husbands to love their own wives,"* says he, *"as their own bodies."*

What, again, means this? To how much greater a similitude, and stronger example has he come; and not only so, but also to one how much nearer and clearer, and to a fresh obligation. For that other one was of no very constraining force, for He was Christ, and was God, and gave Himself. He now manages his argument on a different ground, saying, *"so ought men"*; because the thing is not a favor, but a debt. Then, *"as their own bodies."* And why?

Ver. 29. *"For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it."*

That is, tends it with exceeding care. And how is she his flesh? Harken; *"This now is bone of my bones,"* says Adam, *"and flesh of my flesh."* [Genesis 2:23] For she is made of matter taken from us. And not only so, but also, *"they shall be,"* says God, *"one flesh."* [Genesis 2:24]

"Even as Christ also the Church." Here he returns to the former example.

Ver. 30. *"Because we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones."*

Ver. 31. *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*

Behold again a third ground of obligation; for he shows that a man leaving them that begot him, and from whom he was born, is knit to his wife; and that then the one flesh is, father, and mother, and the child, from

the substance of the two commingled. For indeed by the commingling of their seeds is the child produced, so that the three are one flesh. Thus then are we in relation to Christ; we become one flesh by participation, and we much more than the child. And why and how so? Because so it has been from the beginning.

Tell me not that such and such things are so. Do you see not that we have in our own flesh itself many defects? For one man, for instance, is lame, another has his feet distorted, another his hands withered, another some other member weak; and yet nevertheless he does not grieve at it, nor cut it off, but oftentimes prefers it even to the other. Naturally enough; for it is part of himself. As great love as each entertains towards himself, so great he would have us entertain towards a wife. Not because we partake of the same nature; no, this ground of duty towards a wife is far greater than that; it is that there are not two bodies but one; he the head, she the body. And how says he elsewhere *"and the Head of Christ is God"*? [1 Corinthians 11:3] This I too say, that as we are one body, so also are Christ and the Father One. And thus then is the Father also found to be our Head. He sets down two examples, that of the natural body and that of Christ's body. And hence he further adds,

Ver. 32. *"This is great mystery: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the Church."*

Why does he call it a great mystery? That it was something great and wonderful, the blessed Moses, or rather God, intimated. For the present, however, says he, I speak regarding Christ, that having left the Father, He came down, and came to the Bride, and became one Spirit. *"For he that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit."* [1 Corinthians 6:17] And well says he, *"it is a great mystery."* And then as though he were saying, *"But still nevertheless the allegory does not destroy affection,"* he adds,

Ver. 33. *"Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband."*

For indeed, in very deed, a mystery it is, yea, a great mystery, that a man should leave him that gave him being, him that begot him, and that brought him up, and her that travailed with him and had sorrow, those that have bestowed upon him so many and great benefits, those with whom he has been in familiar intercourse, and be joined to one who was never even seen by him and who has nothing in common with him, and should honor her before all others. A mystery it is indeed. And yet are parents not distressed when these events take place, but rather, when they do not take place; and are delighted when their wealth is spent and lavished upon it.—A great mystery indeed! And one that contains some hidden wisdom. Such Moses prophetically showed it to be from the very first; such now also Paul proclaims it, where he says, *"concerning Christ and the Church."*

However not for the husband's sake alone it is thus said, but for the wife's sake also, that *"he cherish her as his own flesh, as Christ also the Church,"* and, *"that the wife fear her husband."* He is no longer setting down the duties of love only, but what? *"That she fear her husband."* The wife is a second authority; let not her then demand equality, for she is under the head; nor let him despise her as being in subjection, for she is the body; and if the head despise the body, it will itself also perish. But let him bring in love on his part as a counterpoise to obedience on her part. For example, let the hands and the feet, and all the rest of the members be given up for service to the head, but let the head provide for the body, seeing it contains every sense in itself. Nothing can be better than this union.

And yet how can there ever be love, one may say, where there is fear? It will exist there, I say, preëminently. For she that fears and reverences, loves also; and she that loves, fears and reverences him as being the head,

and loves him as being a member, since the head itself is a member of the body at large. Hence he places the one in subjection, and the other in authority, that there may be peace; for where there is equal authority there can never be peace; neither where a house is a democracy, nor where all are rulers; but the ruling power must of necessity be one. And this is universally the case with matters referring to the body, inasmuch as when men are spiritual, there will be peace. There were *"five thousand souls,"* and not one of them said, *"that anything of the things which he possessed was his own"* [Acts 4:32], but they were subject one to another; an indication this of wisdom, and of the fear of God. The principle of love, however, he explains; that of fear he does not. And mark, how on that of love he enlarges, stating the arguments relating to Christ and those relating to one's own flesh, the words, *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother."* [Ephesians 5:31] Whereas upon those drawn from fear he forbears to enlarge. And why so? Because he would rather that this principle prevail, this, namely, of love; for where this exists, everything else follows of course, but where the other exists, not necessarily. For the man who loves his wife, even though she be not a very obedient one, still will bear with everything. So difficult and impracticable is unanimity, where persons are not bound together by that love which is founded in supreme authority; at all events, fear will not necessarily effect this. Accordingly, he dwells the more upon this, which is the strong tie. And the wife though seeming to be the loser in that she was charged to fear, is the gainer, because the principal duty, love, is charged upon the husband. *"But what,"* one may say, *"if a wife reverence me not?"* Never mind, you are to love, fulfill your own duty. For though that which is due from others may not follow, we ought of course to do our duty. This is an example of what I mean. He says, *"submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ."* And what then if another

submit not himself? Still obey thou the law of God. Just so, I say, is it also here. Let the wife at least, though she be not loved, still reverence notwithstanding, that nothing may lie at her door; and let the husband, though his wife reverence him not, still show her love notwithstanding, that he himself be not wanting in any point. For each has received his own.

This then is marriage when it takes place according to Christ, spiritual marriage, and spiritual birth, not of blood, nor of travail, nor of the will of the flesh. Such was the birth of Christ, not of blood, nor of travail. Such also was that of Isaac. Hear how the Scripture says, *"And it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women."* [Genesis 18:11] Yea, a marriage it is, not of passion, nor of the flesh, but wholly spiritual, the soul being united to God by a union unspeakable, and which He alone knows. Therefore he says, *"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."* [1 Corinthians 6:17] Mark how earnestly he endeavors to unite both flesh with flesh, and spirit with spirit. And where are the heretics? Never surely, if marriage were a thing to be condemned, would he have called Christ and the Church a bride and bridegroom; never would he have brought forward by way of exhortation the words, *"A man shall leave his father and his mother";* and again have added, that it was *"spoken in regard of Christ and of the Church."* For of her it is that the Psalmist also says, *"Hearken, O daughter; and consider; and incline your ear; forget also your own people, and your father's house. So shall the king desire your beauty."* [Psalm 45:10-11] Therefore also Christ says, *"I came out from the Father, and have come."* [John 16:28] But when I say, that He left the Father, imagine not such a thing as happens among men, a change of place; for just in the same way as the word *"go forth"* is used, not because He literally came forth, but because of His incarnation, so also is the expression, *"He left the Father."*

Now why did he not say of the wife also, She shall be joined unto her husband? Why, I say, is this? Because he was discoursing concerning love, and was discoursing to the husband. For to her indeed he discourses concerning reverence, and says, "*the husband is the head of the wife*" [Ephesians 5:23], and again, "*Christ is the Head of the Church.*" Whereas to him he discourses concerning love, and commits to him this province of love, and declares to him that which pertains to love, thus binding him and cementing him to her. For the man that leaves his father for the sake of his wife, and then again, leaves this very wife herself and abandons her, what forbearance can he deserve?

Do you see not how great a share of honor God would have her enjoy, in that he has taken you away from your father, and has linked you to her? What then, a man may say, if our duty is done, and yet she does not follow the example? "*Yet if the unbelieving departs, let him depart; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases.*" [1 Corinthians 7:15]

However, when you hear of "*fear*," demand that fear which becomes a free woman, not as though thou were exacting it of a slave. For she is your own body; and if you do this, you reproach yourself in dishonoring your own body. And of what nature is this "*fear*"? It is the not contradicting, the not rebelling, the not being fond of the preëminence. It is enough that fear be kept within these bounds. But if you love, as you are commanded, you will make it yet greater. Or rather it will not be any longer by fear that you will be doing this, but love itself will have its effect. The sex is somehow weaker, and needs much support, much condescension.

But what will they say, who are knit together in second marriages? I speak not at all in condemnation of them, God forbid; for the Apostle himself permits them, though indeed by way of condescension.

Supply her with everything. Do everything and endure trouble for her sake. Necessity is laid upon you.

Here he does not think it right to introduce his counsel, as he in many cases does, with examples from them that are without. That of Christ, so great and forcible, were alone enough; and more especially as regards the argument of subjection. "*A man shall leave,*" he says, "*his father and mother.*" Behold, this then is from without. But he does not say, and "*shall dwell with,*" but "*shall cleave unto,*" thus showing the closeness of the union, and the fervent love. Nay, he is not content with this, but further by what he adds, he explains the subjection in such a way as that the two appear no longer two. He does not say, "*one spirit,*" he does not say, "*one soul*" (for that is manifest, and is possible to any one), but so as to be "*one flesh.*" She is a second authority, possessing indeed an authority, and a considerable equality of dignity; but at the same time the husband has somewhat of superiority. In this consists most chiefly the well-being of the house. For he took that former argument, the example of Christ, to show that we ought not only to love, but also to govern; "*that she may be,*" says he, "*holy and without blemish.*" But the word "*flesh*" has reference to love — and the word "*shall cleave*" has in like manner reference to love. For if you shall make her "*holy and without blemish,*" everything else will follow. Seek the things which are of God, and those which are of man will follow readily enough. Govern your wife, and thus will the whole house be in harmony. Hear what Paul says. "*And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home.*" [1 Corinthians 14:35] If we thus regulate our own houses, we shall be also fit for the management of the Church. For indeed a house is a little Church. Thus it is possible for us by becoming good husbands and wives, to surpass all others.

Consider Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac, and the three hundred and eighteen born in his house. [Genesis 14:14] How the whole house was harmoniously knit together, how the whole was full of piety and fulfilled the Apostolic injunction. She also *"reverenced her husband"*; for hear her own words, *"It has not yet happened unto me even until now, and my lord is old also."* [Genesis 18:12] And he again so loved her, that in all things he obeyed her commands. And the young child was virtuous, and the servants born in the house, they too were so excellent that they refused not even to hazard their lives with their master; they delayed not, nor asked the reason. Nay, one of them, the chief, was so admirable, that he was even entrusted with the marriage of the only-begotten child, and with a journey into a foreign country. [Genesis 24:1-67] For just as with a general, when his soldiery also is well organized, the enemy has no quarter to attack; so, I say, is it also here: when husband and wife and children and servants are all interested in the same things, great is the harmony of the house. Since where this is not the case, the whole is oftentimes overthrown and broken up by one bad servant; and that single one will often mar and utterly destroy the whole.

Moral. Let us then be very thoughtful both for our wives, and children, and servants; knowing that we shall thus be establishing for ourselves an easy government, and shall have our accounts with them gentle and lenient, and say, *"Behold I, and the children which God has given me."* [Isaiah 8:18] If the husband command respect, and the head be honorable, then will the rest of the body sustain no violence. Now what is the wife's fitting behavior, and what the husband's, he states accurately, charging her to reverence him as the head, and him to love her as a wife; but how, it may be said, can these things be? That they ought indeed so to be, he has proved. But how they can be so, I will tell you. They will be so, if we will despise money, if we will

look but to one thing only, excellence of soul, if we will keep the fear of God before our eyes. For what he says in his discourse to servants, *"whatsoever any man does, whether it be good or evil, the same shall he receive of the Lord"* [Ephesians 6:8]; this is also the case here. Love her therefore not for her sake so much as for Christ's sake. This, at least, he as much as intimates, in saying, *"as unto the Lord."* So then do everything, as in obedience to the Lord, and as doing everything for His sake. This were enough to induce and to persuade us, and not to suffer that there should be any teasing and dissension. Let none be believed when slandering the husband to his wife; no, nor let the husband believe anything at random against the wife, nor let the wife be without reason inquisitive about his goings out and his comings in. No, nor on any account let the husband ever render himself worthy of any suspicion whatever. For what, tell me, what if you shall devote yourself all the day to your friends, and give the evening to your wife, and not even thus be able to content her, and place her out of reach of suspicion? Though your wife complain, yet be not annoyed— it is her love, not her folly— they are the complaints of fervent attachment, and burning affection, and fear. Yes, she is afraid lest any one have stolen her marriage bed, lest any one have injured her in that which is the summit of her blessings, lest any one have taken away from her him who is her head, lest any one have broken through her marriage chamber.

There is also another ground of petty jealousy. Let neither claim too much service of the servants, neither the husband from the maid-servant, nor the wife from the man-servant. For these things also are enough to beget suspicion. For consider, I say, that righteous household I spoke of. Sarah herself bade the patriarch take Hagar. She herself directed it, no one compelled her, nor did the husband attempt it; no, although he had dragged on so long a period childless, yet he chose never to become a father, rather

than to grieve his wife. And yet even after all this, what said Sarah? "*The Lord judge between me and you.*" [Genesis 16:5] Now, I say, had he been any one else would he not have been moved to anger? Would he not also have stretched forth his hand, saying as it were, "*What do you mean? I had no desire to have anything to do with the woman; it was all your own doing; and do you turn again and accuse me?*"— But no, he says nothing of the sort—but what? "*Behold, your maid is in your hand; do to her that which is good in your eyes.*" [Genesis 16:6] He delivered up the partner of his bed, that he might not grieve Sarah. And yet surely is there nothing greater than this for producing affection. For if partaking of the same table produces unanimity even in robbers towards their foes, (and the Psalmist says, "*Who ate sweet food at the same table with me*"); much more will the becoming one flesh—for such is the being the partner of the bed—be effectual to draw us together. Yet did none of these things avail to overcome him; but he delivered Hagar up to his wife, to show that nothing had been done by his own fault. Nay, and what is more, he sent her forth when with child. Who would not have pitied one that had conceived a child by himself? Yet was the just man unmoved, for he set before everything else the love he owed his wife.

Let us then imitate him ourselves. Let no one reproach his neighbor with his poverty; let no one be in love with money; and then all difficulties will be at an end.

Neither let a wife say to her husband, "*Unmanly coward that you are, full of sluggishness and dullness, and fast asleep! Here is such a one, a low man, and of low parentage, who runs his risks, and makes his voyages, and has made a good fortune; and his wife wears her jewels, and goes out with her pair of milk-white mules; she rides about everywhere, she has troops of slaves, and a swarm of eunuchs, but you have cowered down and livest to*

no purpose." Let not a wife say these things, nor anything like them. For she is the body, not to dictate to the head, but to submit herself and obey. *"But how,"* some one will say, *"is she to endure poverty? Where is she to look for consolation?"* Let her select and put beside her those who are poorer still. Let her again consider how many noble and high-born maidens have not only received nothing of their husbands, but have even given dowries to them, and have spent their all upon them. Let her reflect on the perils which arise from such riches, and she will cling to this quiet life. In short, if she is affectionately disposed towards her husband, she will utter nothing of the sort. No, she will rather choose to have him near her, though gaining nothing, than gaining ten thousand talents of gold, accompanied with that care and anxiety which always arise to wives from those distant voyages.

Neither, however, let the husband, when he hears these things, on the score of his having the supreme authority, betake himself to revilings and to blows; but let him exhort, let him admonish her, as being less perfect, let him persuade her with arguments. Let him never once lift his hand—far be this from a noble spirit,—no, nor give expression to insults, or taunts, or revilings; but let him regulate and direct her as being wanting in wisdom. Yet how shall this be done? If she be instructed in the true riches, in the heavenly philosophy, she will make no complaints like these. Let him teach her then, that poverty is no evil. Let him teach her, not by what he says only, but also by what he does. Let him teach her to despise glory; and then his wife will speak of nothing, and will desire nothing of the kind. Let him, as if he had an image given into his hands to mould, let him, from that very evening on which he first receives her into the bridal chamber, teach her temperance, gentleness, and how to live, casting down the love of money at once from the outset, and from the very threshold. Let him discipline her in

wisdom, and advise her never to have bits of gold hanging at her ears, and down her cheeks, and laid round about her neck, nor laid up about the chamber, nor golden and costly garments stored up. But let her chamber be handsome, still let not what is handsome degenerate into finery. No, leave these things to the people of the stage. Adorn your house yourself with all possible neatness, so as rather to breathe an air of soberness than much perfume. For hence will arise two or three good results. First then, the bride will not be grieved, when the apartments are opened, and the tissues, and the golden ornaments, and silver vessels, are sent back to their several owners. Next, the bridegroom will have no anxiety about the loss, nor for the security of the accumulated treasures. Thirdly again, in addition to this, which is the crown of all these benefits, by these very points he will be showing his own judgment, that indeed he has no pleasure in any of these things, and that he will moreover put an end to everything else in keeping with them, and will never so much as allow the existence either of dances, or of immodest songs. I am aware that I shall appear perhaps ridiculous to many persons, in giving such admonitions. Still nevertheless, if you will but listen to me, as time goes on, and the benefit of the practice accrues to you, then you will understand the advantage of it. And the laughter will pass off, and you will laugh at the present fashion, and will see that the present practice is really that of silly children and of drunken men. Whereas what I recommend is the part of soberness, and wisdom, and of the sublimest way of life. What then do I say is our duty? Take away from marriage all those shameful, those Satanic, those immodest songs, those companies of profligate young people, and this will avail to chasten the spirit of your bride. For she will at once thus reason with herself; *"Wonderful! What a philosopher this man is! He regards the present life as nothing, he has brought me here into his house, to be a mother, to bring up his children, to*

manage his household affairs." "Yes, but these things are distasteful to a bride?" Just for the first or second day—but not afterwards; nay, she will even reap from them the greatest delight, and relieve herself of all suspicion. For a man who can endure neither flute-players, nor dancers, nor broken songs, and that too at the very time of his wedding, that man will scarcely endure ever to do or say anything shameful. And then after this, when you have stripped the marriage of all these things, then take her, and form and mould her carefully, encouraging her bashfulness to a considerable length of time, and not destroying it suddenly. For even if the damsel be very bold, yet for a time she will keep silence out of reverence for her husband, and feeling herself a novice in the circumstances. Thou then break not off this reserve too hastily, as unchaste husbands do, but encourage it for a long time. For this will be a great advantage to you. Meanwhile she will not complain, she will not find fault with any laws you may frame for her. During that time therefore, during which shame, like a sort of bridle laid upon the soul, suffers her not to make any murmur, nor to complain of what is done, lay down all your laws. For as soon as ever she acquires boldness, she will overturn and confound everything without any sense of fear. When is there then another time so advantageous for moulding a wife, as that during which she reverences her husband, and is still timid, and still shy? Then lay down all your laws for her, and willing or unwilling, she will certainly obey them. But how shall you help spoiling her modesty? By showing her that you yourself art no less modest than she is, addressing to her but few words, and those too with great gravity and collectedness. Then entrust her with the discourses of wisdom, for her soul will receive them. And establish her in that loveliest habit, I mean modesty. If you wish me, I will also tell you by way of specimen, what sort of language should be addressed to her. For if Paul shrank not from saying,

"Defraud ye not one the other" [2 Corinthians 7:5], and spoke the language of a bridesmaid, or rather not of a bridesmaid, but of a spiritual soul, much more will not we shrink from speaking. What then is the language we ought to address to her? With great delicacy then we may say to her, "I have taken you, my child, to be partner of my life, and have brought you in to share with me in the closest and most honorable ties, in my children, and the superintendence of my house. And what advice then shall I now recommend you?" But rather, first talk with her of your love for her; for there is nothing that so contributes to persuade a hearer to admit sincerely the things that are said, as to be assured that they are said with hearty affection. How then are you to show that affection? By saying, "when it was in my power to take many to wife, both with better fortunes, and of noble family, I did not so choose, but I was enamoured of you, and your beautiful life, your modesty, your gentleness, and soberness of mind." Then immediately from these beginnings open the way to your discourse on true wisdom, and with some circumlocution make a protest against riches. For if you direct your argument at once against riches, you will bear too heavily upon her; but if you do it by taking an occasion, you will succeed entirely. For you will appear to be doing it in the way of an apology, not as a morose sort of person, and ungracious, and over-nice about trifles. But when you take occasion from what relates to herself, she will be even pleased. You will say then, (for I must now take up the discourse again,) that "whereas I might have married a rich woman, and with good fortune, I could not endure it. And why so? Not capriciously, and without reason; but I was taught well and truly, that money is no real possession, but a most despicable thing, a thing which moreover belongs as well to thieves, and to harlots, and to grave-robbers. So I gave up these things, and went on till I fell in with the excellence of your soul, which I value above all gold. For a young damsel

who is discreet and ingenuous, and whose heart is set on piety, is worth the whole world. For these reasons then, I courted you, and I love you, and prefer you to my own soul. For the present life is nothing. And I pray, and beseech, and do all I can, that we may be counted worthy so to live this present life, as that we may be able also there in the world to come to be united to one another in perfect security. For our time here is brief and fleeting. But if we shall be counted worthy by having pleased God to so exchange this life for that one, then shall we ever be both with Christ and with each other, with more abundant pleasure. I value your affection above all things, and nothing is so bitter or so painful to me, as ever to be at variance with you. Yes, though it should be my lot to lose my all, and to become poorer than Iru, and undergo the extremest hazards, and suffer any pain whatsoever, all will be tolerable and endurable, so long as your feelings are true towards me. And then will my children be most dear to me, while you are affectionately disposed towards me. But you must do these duties too." Then mingle also with your discourse the Apostle's words, that *"thus God would have our affections blended together; for listen to the Scripture, which says, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife.' Let us have no pretext for narrow-minded jealousy. Perish riches, and retinue of slaves, and all your outward pomps. To me this is more valuable than all."* What weight of gold, what amount of treasures, are so dear to a wife as these words? Never fear that because she is beloved she will ever rave against you, but confess that you love her. For courtezans indeed, who now attach themselves to one and now to another, would naturally enough feel contempt towards their lovers, should they hear such expressions as these; but a free-born wife or a noble damsel would never be so affected with such words; no, she will be so much the more subdued. Show her too, that you set a high value on her company, and that

you are more desirous to be at home for her sake, than in the market-place. And esteem her before all your friends, and above the children that are born of her, and let these very children be beloved by you for her sake. If she does any good act, praise and admire it; if any foolish one, and such as girls may chance to do, advise her and remind her. Condemn out and out all riches and extravagance, and gently point out the ornament that there is in neatness and in modesty; and be continually teaching her the things that are profitable.

Let your prayers be common. Let each go to Church; and let the husband ask his wife at home, and she again ask her husband, the account of the things which were said and read there. If any poverty should overtake you, cite the case of those holy men, Paul and Peter, who were more honored than any kings or rich men; and yet how they spent their lives, in hunger and in thirst. Teach her that there is nothing in life that is to be feared, save only offending against God. If any marry thus, with these views, he will be but little inferior to monks; the married but little below the unmarried.

If you have a mind to give dinners, and to make entertainments, let there be nothing immodest, nothing disorderly. If you should find any poor saint able to bless your house, able only just by setting his foot in it to bring in the whole blessing of God, invite him. And shall I say moreover another thing? Let no one of you make it his endeavor to marry a rich woman, but much rather a poor one. When she comes in, she will not bring so great a source of pleasure from her riches, as she will annoyance from her taunts, from her demanding more than she brought, from her insolence, her extravagance, her vexatious language. For she will say perhaps, *"I have not yet spent anything of yours, I am still wearing my own apparel, bought with what my parents settled upon me."* What do you say, O woman? Still

wearing your own! And what can be more miserable than this language? Why, you have no longer a body of your own, and have you money of your own? After marriage you are no longer two, but have become one flesh, and are then your possessions two, and not one? Oh! This love of money! You both have become one man, one living creature; and do you still say "*my own*"? Cursed and abominable word that it is, it was brought in by the devil. Things far nearer and dearer to us than these has God made all common to us, and are these then not common? We cannot say, "*my own light, my own sun, my own water*": all our greater blessings are common, and are riches not common? Perish the riches ten thousand times over! Or rather not the riches, but those tempers of mind which know not how to make use of riches, but esteem them above all things.

Teach her these lessons also with the rest, but with much graciousness. For since the recommendation of virtue has in itself much that is stern, and especially to a young and tender damsel, whenever discourses on true wisdom are to be made, contrive that your manner be full of grace and kindness. And above all banish this notion from her soul, of "*mine and yours*." If she say the word "*mine*," say unto her, "*What things do you call yours? For in truth I know not; I for my part have nothing of my own. How then do you speak of 'mine,' when all things are yours?*" Freely grant her the word. Do you not perceive that such is our practice with children? When, while we are holding anything, a child snatches it, and wishes again to get hold of some other thing, we allow it, and say, "*Yes, and this is yours, and that is yours*." The same also let us do with a wife; for her temper is more or less like a child's; and if she says "*mine*," say, "*why, everything is yours, and I am yours*." Nor is the expression one of flattery, but of exceeding wisdom. Thus will you be able to abate her wrath, and put an end to her disappointment. For it is flattery when a man does an unworthy act with an

evil object: whereas this is the highest philosophy. Say then, *"Even I am yours, my child; this advice Paul gives me where he says, 'The husband has not power over his own body, but the wife.' [1 Corinthians 7:4] If I have no power over my body, but you have, much more have you over my possessions."* By saying these things you will have quieted her, you will have quenched the fire, you will have shamed the devil, you will have made her more your slave than one bought with money, with this language you will have bound her fast. Thus then, by your own language, teach her never to speak of *"mine and yours."* And again, never call her simply by her name, but with terms of endearment, with honor, with much love. Honor her, and she will not need honor from others; she will not want the glory that comes from others, if she enjoys that which comes from you. Prefer her before all, on every account, both for her beauty and her discernment, and praise her. You will thus persuade her to give heed to none that are without, but to scorn all the world except yourself. Teach her the fear of God, and all good things will flow from this as from a fountain, and the house will be full of ten thousand blessings. If we seek the things that are incorruptible, these corruptible things will follow. *"For,"* says He, *"seek first His kingdom, and all these things shall be added unto you."* [Matthew 6:33] What sort of persons, think you, must the children of such parents be? What the servants of such masters? What all others who come near them? Will not they too eventually be loaded with blessings out of number? For generally the servants also have their characters formed after their master's, and are fashioned after their humors, love the same objects, which they have been taught to love, speak the same language, and engage with them in the same pursuits. If thus we regulate ourselves, and attentively study the Scriptures, in most things we shall derive instruction from them. And thus shall be able to please God, and to pass through the whole of the present life virtuously,

and to attain those blessings which are promised to those that love Him, of which God grant that we may all be counted worthy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, power, and honor, now, and ever, through all ages. Amen.

Homily 21 on Ephesians

Ephesians 6:1-3

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth."

As a man in forming a body, places the head first, after that the neck, then the feet, so does the blessed Paul proceed in his discourse. He has spoken of the husband, he has spoken of the wife, who is second in authority, he now goes on by gradual advances to the third rank—which is that of children. For the husband has authority over the wife, and the husband and the wife over the children. Now then mark what he is saying.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is the first commandment with promise."

Here he has not a word of discourse concerning Christ, not a word on high subjects, for he is as yet addressing his discourse to tender understandings. And it is for this reason, moreover, that he makes his exhortation short, inasmuch as children cannot follow up a long argument. For this reason also he does not discourse at all about a kingdom, (because it does not belong to the tender age of childhood to understand these subjects,) but what a child's soul most especially longs to hear, that he says, namely, that it shall *"live long."* For if any one shall enquire why it is that he omitted to discourse concerning a kingdom, but set before them the commandment laid down in the law, he does this because he speaks to them as infantile, and because he is well aware that if the husband and the wife are thus disposed according to the law which he has laid down, there will be but little trouble in securing the submission of the children. For whenever

any matter has a good and sound and orderly principle and foundation, everything will thenceforward go on with method and regularity, with much facility: the more difficult thing is to settle the foundation, to lay down a firm basis. "*Children*," says he, "*obey your parents in the Lord*," that is, according to the Lord. This, he means to say, is what God commands you. But what then if they shall command foolish things? Generally a father, however foolish he may be himself, does not command foolish things. However, even in that case, the Apostle has guarded the matter, by saying, "*in the Lord*"; that is, wherever you will not be offending against God. So that if the father be a gentile or a heretic, we ought no longer to obey, because the command is not then, "*in the Lord*." But how is it that he says, "*Which is the first commandment*"? For the first is, "*You shall not commit adultery—You shall not kill*." He does not speak of it then as first in rank, but in respect of the promise. For upon those others there is no reward annexed, as being enacted with reference to evil things, and to departure from evil things. Whereas in these others, where there is the practice of good, there is further a promise held out. And observe how admirable a foundation he has laid for the path of virtue, that is, honor and reverence towards parents. When he would lead us away from wicked practices, and is just about to enter upon virtuous ones, this is the first thing he enjoins, honor towards parents; inasmuch as they before all others are, after God, the authors of our being, so that it is reasonable they should be the first to reap the fruits of our right actions; and then all the rest of mankind. For if a man have not this honor for parents he will never be gentle toward those unconnected with him.

However, having given the necessary injunctions to children, he passes to the fathers, and says,

Ver. 4. *"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."*

He does not say, *"love them,"* because to this nature draws them even against their own will, and it were superfluous to lay down a law on such subjects. But what does he say? *"Provoke not your children to wrath,"* as many do by disinheriting them, and disowning them, and treating them overbearingly, not as free, but as slaves. This is why he says, *"Provoke not your children to wrath."* Then, which is the chief thing of all, he shows how they will be led to obedience, referring the whole source of it to the head and chief authority. And in the same way as he has shown the husband to be the cause of the wife's obedience, (which is the reason also why he addresses the greater part of his arguments to him, advising him to attach her to himself by the power of love,) so, I say, here also, he refers the efficiency to him, by saying, *"But bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* You see that where there are spiritual ties, the natural ties will follow. Do you wish your son to be obedient? From the very first *"Bring him up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* Never deem it an unnecessary thing that he should be a diligent hearer of the divine Scriptures. For there the first thing he hears will be this, *"Honor your father and your mother";* so that this makes for you. Never say, this is the business of monks. Am I making a monk of him? No. There is no need he should become a monk. Why be so afraid of a thing so replete with so much advantage? Make him a Christian. For it is of all things necessary for laymen to be acquainted with the lessons derived from this source; but especially for children. For theirs is an age full of folly; and to this folly are superadded the bad examples derived from the heathen tales, where they are made acquainted with those heroes so admired among them, slaves of their passions, and cowards with regard to death; as, for example, Achilles, when

he relents, when he dies for his concubine, when another gets drunk, and many other things of the sort. He requires therefore the remedies against these things. How is it not absurd to send children out to trades, and to school, and to do all you can for these objects, and yet, not to *"bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord"*? And for this reason truly we are the first to reap the fruits, because we bring up our children to be insolent and profligate, disobedient, and mere vulgar fellows. Let us not then do this; no, let us listen to this blessed Apostle's admonition. *"Let us bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* Let us give them a pattern. Let us make them from the earliest age apply themselves to the reading of the Scriptures. Alas, that so constantly as I repeat this, I am looked upon as trifling! Still, I shall not cease to do my duty. Why, tell me, do ye not imitate them of old? You women, especially, emulate those admirable women. Has a child been born to any one? Imitate Hannah's example [1 Samuel 1:24]; look at what she did. She brought him up at once to the temple. Who among you would not rather that his son should become a Samuel than that he should be king of the whole world ten thousand times over? *"And how,"* you will say, *"is it possible he should become such a one?"* Why is it not possible? It is because thou dost not choose it yourself, nor committest him to the care of those who are able to make him such a one. *"And who,"* it will be said, *"is such a one as this?"* God. Since she put him into the hands of God. For not even Eli himself was one of those in any great degree qualified to form him; (how could he be, he who was not able to form even his own children?) No, it was the faith of the mother and her earnest zeal that wrought the whole. He was her first child, and her only one, and she knew not whether she should ever have others besides. Yet she did not say, *"I will wait till the child is grown up, that he may have a taste of the things of this life, I will allow him to have his pastime in them a little*

in his childish years." No, all these thoughts the woman repudiated, she was absorbed in one object, how from the very beginning she might dedicate the spiritual image to God. Well may we men be put to the blush at the wisdom of this woman. She offered him up to God, and there she left him. And therefore was her married state more glorious, in that she had made spiritual objects her first care, in that she dedicated the first-fruits to God. Therefore was her womb fruitful, and she obtained other children besides. And therefore she saw him honorable even in the world. For if men when they are honored, render honor in return, will not God much more, He who does this, even without being honored? How long are we to be mere lumps of flesh? How long are we to be stooping to the earth? Let everything be secondary with us to the provident care we should take of our children, and to our *"bringing them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* If from the very first he is taught to be a lover of true wisdom, then wealth greater than all wealth has he acquired and a more imposing name. You will effect nothing so great by teaching him an art, and giving him that outward learning by which he will gain riches, as if you teach him the art of despising riches. If you desire to make him rich, do this. For the rich man is not he who desires great riches, and is encircled with great riches; but the man who has need of nothing. Discipline your son in this, teach him this. This is the greatest riches. Seek not how to give him reputation and high character in outward learning, but consider deeply how you shall teach him to despise the glory that belongs to this present life. By this means would he become more distinguished and more truly glorious. This it is possible for the poor man and the rich man alike to accomplish. These are lessons which a man does not learn from a master, nor by art, but by means of the divine oracles. Seek not how he shall enjoy a long life here, but how he shall enjoy a boundless and endless life hereafter. Give him the great things, not the

little things. Hear what Paul says, "*Bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord*"; study not to make him an orator, but train him up to be a philosopher. In the want of the one there will be no harm whatever; in the absence of the other, all the rhetoric in the world will be of no advantage. Tempers are wanted, not talking; character, not cleverness; deeds, not words. These gain a man the kingdom. These confer what are benefits indeed. Whet not his tongue, but cleanse his soul. I do not say this to prevent your teaching him these things, but to prevent your attending to them exclusively. Do not imagine that the monk alone stands in need of these lessons from Scripture. Of all others, the children just about to enter into the world specially need them. For just in the same way as the man who is always at anchor in harbor, is not the man who requires his ship to be fitted out and who needs a pilot and a crew, but he who is always out at sea; so is it with the man of the world and the monk. The one is entered as it were into a waveless harbor, and lives an untroubled life, and far removed from every storm; while the other is ever on the ocean, and lives out at sea in the very midst of the ocean, battling with billows without number.

And though he may not need it himself, still he ought to be so prepared as to stop the mouths of others. Thus the more distinguished he is in the present life, so much the more he stands in need of this education. If he passes his life in courts, there are many Heathens, and philosophers, and persons puffed up with the glory of this life. It is like a place full of dropsical people. Such in some sort is the court. All are, as it were, puffed up, and in a state of inflammation. And they who are not so are studying to become so. Now then reflect how vast a benefit it is, that your son on entering there, should enter like an excellent physician, furnished with instruments which may allay every one's peculiar inflammation, and should go up to every one, and converse with him, and restore the diseased body to

health, applying the remedies derived from the Scriptures, and pouring forth discourses of the true philosophy. For with whom is the recluse to converse? With his wall and his ceiling? Yea, or again with the wilderness and the woods? Or with the birds and the trees? He therefore has not so great need of this sort of discipline. Still, however, he makes it his business to perfect this work, not so much with a view of disciplining others as himself. There is then every need of much discipline of this sort to those that are to mix in the present world, because such an one has a stronger temptation to sin than the other. And if you have a mind to understand it, he will further be a more useful person even in the world itself. For all will have a reverence for him from these words, when they see him in the fire without being burnt, and not desirous of power. But power he will then obtain, when he least desires it, and will be a still higher object of respect to the king; for it is not possible that such a character should be hid. Amongst a number of healthy persons, indeed, a healthy man will not be noticed; but when there is one healthy man among a number of sick, the report will quickly spread and reach the king's ears, and he will make him ruler over many nations. Knowing then these things, *"bring up your children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."*

"But suppose a man is poor." Still he will be in no wise more insignificant than the man who lives in kings' courts, because he is not in kings' courts; no, he will be held in admiration, and will soon gain that authority which is yielded voluntarily, and not by any compulsion. For if a set of Greeks, men worthless as they are, and dogs, by taking up that worthless philosophy of theirs, (for such the Grecian philosophy is,) or rather not itself but only its mere name, and wearing the threadbare cloak, and letting their hair grow, impress many; how much more will he who is a true philosopher? If a false appearance, if a mere shadow of philosophy at

first sight so catches us, what if we should love the true and pure philosophy? Will not all court it, and entrust both houses, and wives, and children, with full confidence to such men? But there is not, no, there is not such a philosopher existing now. And therefore, it is not possible to find an example of the sort. Amongst recluses, indeed, there are such, but among people in the world no longer. And that among recluses there are such, it would be possible to adduce a number of instances. However, I will mention one out of many. You know, doubtless, and have heard of, and some, perhaps, have also seen, the man whom I am now about to mention. I mean, the admirable Julian. This man was a rustic, in humble life, and of humble parentage, and totally uninstructed in all outward accomplishments, but full of unadorned wisdom. When he came into the cities, (and this was but rarely,) never did such a concourse take place, not when orators, or sophists, or any one else rode in. But what am I saying? Is not his very name more glorious than that of any king's, and celebrated even to this day? And if these things were in this world, in the world in which the Lord promised us no one good thing, in which He has told us we are strangers, let us consider how great will be the blessings laid up for us in the heavens. If, where they were sojourners they enjoyed so great honor, how great glory shall they enjoy where their own city is! If, where He promised tribulation, they meet with such attentive care, then where He promises true honors, how great shall be their rest!

And now would you have me exhibit examples of secular men? At present, indeed, we have none; still there are perhaps even secular men who are excellent, though not arrived at the highest philosophy. I shall therefore quote you examples from the saints of the ancient times. How many, who had wives to keep and children to bring up, were inferior in no respect, no, in no respect to those who have been mentioned? Now, however, it is no

longer so, *"by reason of the present distress"* [1 Corinthians 7:26], as this blessed Apostle says. Now then whom would you have me mention? Noah, or Abraham? The son of the one or of the other? Or again, Joseph? Or would you have me go to the Prophets? Moses I mean, or Isaiah? However, if you will, let us carry our discourse to Abraham, whom all are continually bringing forward to us above all others. Had he not a wife? Had he not children? Yes, for I too use the same language to you, as you do to me. He had a wife, but it was not because he had a wife that he was so remarkable. He had riches, but it was not because he had riches that he pleased God. He begot children, but it was not because he begot children that he was pronounced blessed. He had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house, but it was not on this account that he was accounted wonderful. But would you know why it was? It was for his hospitality, for his contempt of riches, for his chastened conduct. For what, tell me, is the duty of a philosopher? Is it not to despise both riches and glory? Is it not to be above both envy and every other passion? Come now then, let us bring him forward and strip him, and show you what a philosopher he was. First of all, he esteemed his fatherland as nothing. God said, *"Get you out of your country, and from your kindred"* [Genesis 12:1], and immediately he went forth. He was not bound to his house, (or surely he would never have gone forth,) nor to his love of familiar friends, nor to anything else whatever. But what? glory and money he despised above all others. For when he had put an end to war by turning the enemy to flight, and was requested to take the spoil, he rejected it. [Genesis 14:21-23]

Again, the son of this great man was revered, not because of his riches, but for his hospitality: not because of his children, but for his obedience: not because of his wife, but for the barrenness inflicted on his wife. [Genesis 25:21]

They looked upon the present life as nothing, they followed not after gain, they despised all things. Tell me, which sort of plants are the best? Are not those which have their strength from themselves and are injured neither by rains, nor by hailstorms, nor by gusts of wind, nor by any other vicissitude of the sort, but stand naked in defiance of them all, and needing neither wall nor fence to protect them? Such is the true philosopher, such is that wealth of which we spoke. He has nothing, and has all things: he has all things, and has nothing. For a fence is not within, but only without; a wall is not a thing of nature, but only built round from without. And what again, I ask, what sort of body is a strong one? Is it not that which is in health, and which is overcome neither by hunger nor repletion, nor by cold, nor by heat; or is it that which in view of all these things, needs both caterers, and weavers, and hunters, and physicians, to give it health? He is the rich man, the true philosopher, who needs none of these things. For this cause it was that this blessed Apostle said, *"Bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* Surround them not with outward defenses. For such is wealth, such is glory; for when these fall, and they do fall, the plant stands naked and defenseless, not only having derived no profit from them during the time past, but even injury. For those very shelters that prevented its being injured to the attacks of the winds, will now have prepared it for perishing all at once. And so wealth is injurious rather, because it renders us undisciplined for the vicissitudes of life. Let us therefore train up our children to be such, that they shall be able to bear up against every trial, and not be surprised at what may come upon them; *"let us bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."* And great will be the reward which will be thus laid up in store for us. For if men for making statues and painting portraits of kings enjoy so great honor, shall not we who adorn the image of the King of kings, (for man is the image of God,) receive ten

thousand blessings, if we effect a true likeness? For the likeness is in this, in the virtue of the soul, when we train our children to be good, to be meek, to be forgiving, (because all these are attributes of God,) to be beneficent, to be humane; when we train them to regard the present world as nothing. Let this then be our task, to mold and to direct both ourselves and them according to what is right. Otherwise with what sort of boldness shall we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ? If a man who has unruly children is unworthy to be a Bishop [Titus 1:6], much more is he unworthy of the kingdom of Heaven. What do you say? If we have an unruly wife, or unruly children, shall we have to render account? Yes, we shall, if we do not with exactness bring in that which is due from ourselves; for our own individual virtue is not enough in order to salvation. If the man who laid aside the one talent gained nothing, but was punished even in such a manner, it is plain that one's own individual virtue is not enough in order to salvation, but there is need of that of another also. Let us therefore entertain great solicitude for our wives, and take great care of our children, and of our servants, and of ourselves. And in our government both of ourselves and of them, let us beseech God that He aid us in the work. If He shall see us interested in this work, and solicitous about it, He will aid us; but if He shall see us paying no regard to it, He will not give us His hand. For He does not vouchsafe us His assistance when we sleep, but when we labor also ourselves. For a helper, (as the name implies,) is not a helper of one that is inactive, but of one who works also himself. But the good God is able of Himself to bring the work to perfection, that we may be all counted worthy to attain to the blessings promised us, through the grace and compassions of His only begotten Son, with Whom together with the Holy Ghost be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

Homily 22 on Ephesians

Ephesians 6:5-8

"Servants, be obedient unto them that, according to the flesh, are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers: but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: knowing that whatsoever good thing each one does, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

Thus then it is not husband only, nor wife, nor children, but virtuous servants also that contribute to the organization and protection of a house. Therefore the blessed Paul has not overlooked this department even. He comes to it, however, in the last place, because it is last in dignity and rank. Still he addresses much discourse also to them, no longer in the same tone as to children, but in a far more advanced way, inasmuch as he does not hold out to these the promise in this world, but in that which is to come. *"Knowing,"* says he, *"that whatsoever good or evil thing each one does, the same shall he receive of the Lord,"* and thus at once instructs them to love wisdom. For though they be inferior to the children in dignity, still in mind they are superior to them.

"Servants," says he, *"be obedient to them that, according to the flesh, are your masters."*

Thus at once he raises up, at once soothes the wounded soul. Be not grieved, he seems to say, that you are inferior to the wife and the children. Slavery is nothing but a name. The mastership is *"according to the flesh,"* brief and temporary; for whatever is of the flesh, is transitory.

"With fear," he adds, "and trembling."

You see that he does not require the same fear from slaves as from wives: for in that case he simply said, *"and let the wife see that she fear her husband"*; whereas in this case he heightens the expression, *"with fear,"* he says, *"and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ."* This is what he constantly says. What do you mean, blessed Paul? He is a brother, or rather he has become a brother, he enjoys the same privileges, he belongs to the same body. Yea, more, he is the brother, not of his own master only, but also of the Son of God, he is partaker of all the same privileges; yet do you say, *"obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling"*? Yes, for this very reason, he would say, I say it. For if I charge free men to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God—as he said above, *"submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ"*;— if I charge moreover the wife to fear and reverence her husband, although she is his equal; much more must I so speak to the servant. It is no sign of low birth, rather it is the truest nobility, to understand how to lower ourselves, to be modest and unassuming, and to give way to our neighbor. And the free have served the free with much fear and trembling.

"In singleness of heart," he says.

And it is well said, since it is possible to serve with fear and trembling, and yet not of good will, but in just any way that may be possible. Many servants in many instances secretly cheat their masters. And this cheating accordingly he does away, by saying, *"in singleness of your heart as unto Christ, not in the way of eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men."* Do you see how many words he requires, in order to implant this good principle, *"with goodwill,"* I mean, and *"from the heart"*? That other service, *"with fear and trembling"* I mean,

we see many rendering to their masters, and the master's threat goes far to secure that. But show, says he, that you serve as "*the servant of Christ*," not of man. Make the right action your own, not one of compulsion. Just as in the words which follow, he persuades and instructs the man who is ill-treated by another to make the right action his own, and the work of his own free choice. Because inasmuch as the man that smites the cheek, is not supposed to come to that act in consequence of any intention in the person struck, but only of his own individual malice, what says He? "*Turn to him the other also*" [Matthew 5:39]; to show him that in submitting to the first thou were not unwilling. For he that is lavish in suffering wrong, makes that his own which is not his own act, by suffering himself to be smitten on the other cheek also, and not merely by enduring the first blow. For this latter will have perhaps the appearance even of cowardice; but that of a high philosophy.— Thus you will show that it was for the sake of wisdom that you bore the first blow also. And so in the present case, show here too, that you bear this slavery also willingly. The man-pleaser then is no servant of Christ. The servant of Christ is not a man-pleaser. [Galatians 1:10] For who that is the servant of God, makes it his object to please men? And who that pleases men, can be a servant of God?

"*From the heart*," says he, "*with good-will doing service*." For since it is possible to do service even with singleness of heart and not wrongfully, and yet not with all one's might, but only so far as fulfilling one's bounden duty, therefore he says, do it with alacrity, not of necessity, upon principle, not upon constraint. If thus thou do service, you are no slave; if you do it upon principle, if with good-will, if from the heart, and if for Christ's sake. For this is the servitude that even Paul, the free man, serves, and exclaims, "*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake*." [2 Corinthians 4:5] Look how he divests

your slavery of its meanness. For just in the same way as the man who has been robbed, if he gives still more to him who has taken, is not ranked among those robbed, but rather among liberal givers; not among those who suffer evil, but among those who do good; and rather clothes the other with disgrace by his liberality, than is clothed with disgrace by being robbed—so, I say, in this case, by his generosity he will appear at once more high-minded, and by showing that he does not feel the wrong, will put the other to shame.

Let us then do service to our masters for Christ's sake, "*knowing*," he continues, "*that whatsoever good thing each one does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*" For inasmuch as it was probable that many masters, as being unbelievers, would have no sense of shame, and would make no return to their slaves for their obedience, observe how he has given them encouragement, so that they may have no misgiving about the remuneration, but may have full confidence respecting the recompense. For as they who receive a benefit, when they make no return, make God a debtor to their benefactors; so, I say, do masters also, if, when well-treated by you, they fail to requite you, requite you the more, by rendering God your debtor.

Ver. 9. "*And ye masters,*" he continues, "*do the same things unto them.*"

The same things. What are these? "*With good-will do service.*" However he does not actually say, "*do service,*" though by saying, "*the same things,*" he plainly shows this to be his meaning. For the master himself is a servant. "*Not as men-pleasers,*" he means, "*and with fear and trembling*": that is, toward God, fearing lest He one day accuse you for your negligence toward your slaves.

"*And forbear threatening;*" be not irritating, he means, nor oppressive.

"Knowing that both their Master and yours is in Heaven."

Ah! How mighty a Master does he hint at here! How startling the suggestion! It is this. *"With what measure you measure, it shall be measured unto you again"* [Matthew 7:2]; lest you hear the sentence, *"Thou wicked servant. I forgave you all that debt."* [Matthew 18:32]

"And there is no respect of persons," he says, *"with Him."*

Think not, he would say, that what is done towards a servant, He will therefore forgive, because done to a servant. Heathen laws indeed as being the laws of men, recognize a difference between these kinds of offenses. But the law of the common Lord and Master of all, as doing good to all alike, and dispensing the same rights to all, knows no such difference.

But should any one ask, whence is slavery, and why it has found entrance into human life, (and many I know are both glad to ask such questions, and desirous to be informed of them,) I will tell you. Slavery is the fruit of covetousness, of degradation, of savagery; since Noah, we know, had no servant, nor had Abel, nor Seth, no, nor they who came after them. The thing was the fruit of sin, of rebellion against parents. Let children hearken to this, that whenever they are undutiful to their parents, they deserve to be servants. Such a child strips himself of his nobility of birth; for he who rebels against his father is no longer a son; and if he who rebels against his father is not a son, how shall he be a son who rebels against our true Father? He has departed from his nobility of birth, he has done outrage to nature. Then come also wars, and battles, and take their prisoners. Well, but Abraham, you will say, had servants. Yes, but he used them not as servants.

Observe how everything depends upon the head; the wife, by telling him *"to love her"*; the children, by telling him *"to bring them up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord"*; the servants, by the words,

"knowing that both their Master and yours is in Heaven." So, says he, you also in like manner, as being yourselves servants, shall be kind and indulgent. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might."*

But if, before considering this next, you have a mind to hearken, I shall make the same remarks concerning servants, as I have also made before concerning children. Teach them to be religious, and everything else will follow of necessity. But now, when any one is going to the theater, or going off to the bath, he drags all his servants after him; but when he goes to church, not for a moment; nor does he compel them to attend and hear. Now how shall your servant listen, when thou his master art attending to other things? Have you purchased, have you bought your slave? Before all things enjoin him what God would have him do, to be gentle towards his fellow-servants, and to make much account of virtue.

Every one's house is a city; and every man is a prince in his own house. That the house of the rich is of this character, is plain enough, where there are both lands, and stewards, and rulers over rulers. But I say that the house of the poor also is a city. Because here too there are offices of authority; for instance, the husband has authority over the wife, the wife over the servants, the servants again over their own wives; again the wives and the husbands over the children. Does he not seem to you to be, as it were, a sort of king, having so many authorities under his own authority? And that it were meet that he should be more skilled both in domestic and general government than all the rest? For he who knows how to manage these in their several relations, will know how to select the fittest men for offices, yes, and will choose excellent ones. And thus the wife will be a second king in the house, lacking only the diadem; and he who knows how to choose this king, will excellently regulate all the rest.

Ver. 10. *"Finally,"* says he, *"be strong in the Lord."*

Whenever the discourse is about to conclude, he always employs this turn. Said I not well from the first, that every man's house is a camp in itself? For look, having disposed of the several offices, he proceeds to arm them, and to lead them out to war. If no one usurps the other's office, but every one remains at his post, all will be well ordered.

"Be strong," says he, "in the Lord, and in the strength of His might."

That is, in the hope which we have in Him, by means of His aid. For as he had enjoined many duties, which were necessary to be done, fear not, he seems to say, cast your hope upon the Lord, and He will make all easy.

Ver. 11. *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."*

He says not, against the fightings, nor against the hostilities, but against the *"wiles."* For this enemy is at war with us, not simply, nor openly, but by *"wiles."* What is meant by wiles? To use *"wiles,"* is to deceive and to take by artifice or contrivance; a thing which takes place both in the case of the arts, and by words, and actions, and stratagems, in the case of those who seduce us. I mean something like this. The Devil never proposes to us sins in their proper colors; he does not speak of idolatry, but he sets it off in another dress, using *"wiles,"* that is, making his discourse plausible, employing disguises. Now therefore the Apostle is by this means both rousing the soldiers, and making them vigilant, by persuading and instructing them, that our conflict is with one skilled in the arts of war, and with one who wars not simply, nor directly, but with much wiliness. And first then he arouses the disciples from the consideration of the Devil's skill; but in the second place, from his nature, and the number of his forces. It is not from any desire to dispirit the soldiers that stand under him, but to arouse, and to awaken them, that he mentions these stratagems, and prepares them to be vigilant; for had he merely detailed their power, and

there stopped his discourse, he must have dispirited them. But now, whereas both before and after this, he shows that it is possible to overcome such an enemy, he rather raises their courage; for the more clearly the strength of our adversaries is stated on our part to our own people, so much the more earnest will it render our soldiers.

Ver. 12. *"For our wrestling is not,"* says he, *"against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness, in the heavenly places."*

Having stimulated them by the character of the conflict, he next goes on to arouse them also by the prizes set before them. For what is his argument? Having said that the enemies are fierce, he adds further, that they despoil us of vast blessings. What are these? The conflict lies *"in the heavenlies"*; the struggle is not about riches, not about glory, but about our being enslaved. And thus is the enmity irreconcilable. The strife and the conflict are fiercer when for vast interests at stake; for the expression *"in the heavenlies"* is equivalent to, *"for the heavenly things."* It is not that they may gain anything by the conquest, but that they may despoil us. As if one were to say, *"In what does the contract lie?"* In gold. The word *"in,"* means, *"in behalf of"*; the word *"in,"* also means, *"on account of."* Observe how the power of the enemy startles us; how it makes us all circumspection, to know that the hazard is on behalf of vast interests, and the victory for the sake of great rewards. For he is doing his best to cast us out of Heaven.

He speaks of certain *"principalities, and powers, and world rulers of this darkness."* What darkness? Is it that of night? No, but of wickedness. *"For you were,"* says he, *"once darkness"* [Ephesians 5:8]; so naming that wickedness which is in this present life; for beyond it, it will have no place, not in Heaven, nor in the world to come.

"World-rulers" he calls them, not as having the mastery over the world, but the Scripture is wont to call wicked practices *"the world,"* as, for example, where Christ says, *"They are not of this world, even as I am not of the world."* [John 17:16] What then, were they not of the world? Were they not clothed with flesh? Were they not of those who are in the world? And again; *"The world hates Me, but you it cannot hate."* [John 7:7] Where again He calls wicked practices by this name. Thus the Apostle here by the world means wicked men, and the evil spirits have more special power over them. *"Against the spiritual hosts of wickedness,"* says he, *"in the heavenly places."* *"Principalities, and powers,"* he speaks of; just as in the heavenly places there are *"thrones and dominions, principalities and powers."* [Colossians 1:16]

Ver. 13. *"Wherefore,"* says he, *"take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand."*

By *"evil day"* he means the present life, and calls it too *"this present evil world"* [Galatians 1:4], from the evils which are done in it. It is as much as to say, Always be armed. And again, *"having done all,"* says he; that is, both passions, and vile lusts, and all things else that trouble us. He speaks not merely of doing the deed, but of completing it, so as not only to slay, but to stand also after we have slain. For many who have gained this victory, have fallen again. *"Having done,"* says he, *"all";* not having done one, but not the other. For even after the victory, we must stand. An enemy may be struck, but things that are struck revive again if we do not stand. But if after having fallen they rise up again, so long as we stand, they are fallen. So long as we waver not, the adversary rises not again.

"Let us put on the whole armor of God." Do you see how he banishes all fear? For if it be possible *"to do all, and to stand,"* his describing in

detail the power of the enemy does not create cowardice and fear, but it shakes off indolence. *"That ye may be able,"* he says, *"to withstand in the evil day."* And he further gives them encouragement too from the time; the time, he seems to say, is short; so that you must needs stand; faint not when the slaughter is achieved.

Moral. If then it is a warfare, if such are the forces arrayed against us, if *"the principalities"* are incorporeal, if they are *"rulers of the world,"* if they are *"the spiritual hosts of wickedness,"* how, tell me, can you live in self-indulgence? How can you be dissolute? How if we are unarmed, shall we be able to overcome? These words let every one repeat to himself every day, whenever he is under the influence of anger, or of lust, whenever he is aiming, and all to no profit, after this languid life. Let him hearken to the blessed Paul, saying to him, *"Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers."* A harder warfare this than that which is matter of sense, a fiercer conflict. Think how long time this enemy is wrestling, for what it is that he is fighting, and be more guarded than ever. *"Nay,"* a man will say, *"but as he is the devil, he ought to have been removed out of the way, and then all had been saved."* These are the pretenses to which some of your indolent ones in self-defense give utterance. When you ought to be thankful, O man, that, if you have a mind, you have the victory over such a foe, you are on the contrary even discontented, and givest utterance to the words of some sluggish and sleepy soldier. You know the points of attack, if you choose. Reconnoiter on all sides, fortify yourself. Not against the devil alone is the conflict, but also against his powers. How then, you may say, are we to wrestle with the darkness? By becoming light. How with the *"spiritual hosts of wickedness"*? By becoming good. For wickedness is contrary to good, and light drives away darkness. But if we ourselves too be darkness, we shall

inevitably be taken captive. How then shall we overcome them? If, what they are by nature, that we become by choice, free from flesh and blood, thus shall we vanquish them. For once it was probable that the disciples would have many persecutors, *"imagine not,"* he would say, *"that it is they who war with you. They that really war with you, are the spirits that work in them. Against them is our conflict."* Two things he provides for by these considerations; he renders them in themselves more courageous and he lets loose their wrath against those who war against them. And wherefore is our conflict against these? Since we have also an invincible ally, the grace of the Spirit. We have been taught an art, such as shall enable us to wrestle not against men, but against spirits. Nay, if we have a mind, neither shall we wrestle at all; for it is because we choose it, that there is a struggle, since so great is the power of Him that dwells in us, as that He said, *"Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."* [Luke 10:19] All power has He given us, both of wrestling and of not wrestling. It is because we are slothful, that we have to wrestle with them; for that Paul wrestled not, hear what he says himself, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* [Romans 8:35] And again hear his words, *"God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."* [Romans 16:20] For he had him under his subjection; whence also he said, *"I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her."* [Acts 16:18] And this is not the language of one wrestling; for he that wrestles has not yet conquered, and he that has conquered no longer wrestles; he has subdued, has taken his captive. And so Peter again wrestled not with the devil, but he did that which was better than wrestling. In the case of the faithful, the obedient, the catechumens, they prevailed over him to vast advantage and over his powers. Hence too was it that the blessed

Paul said, *"For we are not ignorant of his devices"* [2 Corinthians 2:11], which was the way moreover in which he especially overcame him; and again hear his words, *"And no marvel— if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness."* [2 Corinthians 11:14-15] So well knew he every part of the conflict, and nothing escaped him. Again, *"For the mystery of lawlessness,"* says he, *"does already work."* [2 Thessalonians 2:7]

But against us is the struggle; for hearken again to him, saying, *"I am persuaded, that neither angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ."* [Romans 8:38] He says not simply, *"from Christ,"* but, *"from the love of Christ."* For many there are who are united forsooth to Christ, and who yet love Him not. Not only, says he, shall you not persuade me to deny Him, but, not even to love Him less. And if the powers above had not strength to do this, who else should move him? Not, however, that he says this, as though they were actually attempting it, but upon the supposition; wherefore also he said, *"I am persuaded."* So then he did not wrestle, yet nevertheless he fears his artifices; for hear what he says, *"I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is toward Christ."* [2 Corinthians 11:3] True, you will say, but he uses this word touching himself also, where he says, *"For I fear lest, by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected."* How then are you *"persuaded that no one shall separate you"*? Perceivest thou that the expression is that of lowliness and of humility? For he already dwelt in Heaven. And hence also it was that he said, *"For I know nothing against myself"* [1 Corinthians 4:4]; and again, *"I have finished the course."* [2 Timothy 4:7] So that it was not with regard to these matters that the devil

placed obstacles in his way, but with reference to the interests of the disciples. And why forsooth? Because in these points he was not himself sole master, but also their own will. There the devil prevailed in some cases; nay, neither there was it over him that he prevailed, but over the indolence of persons who took no heed. If indeed, whether from slothfulness, or anything else of the sort, he had failed to fulfill his own duty, then had the devil prevailed over him; but if he himself on his part did all he could, and they obeyed not it was not over him he prevailed, but over their disobedience; and the disease prevailed not over the physician, but over the unruliness of the patient; for, when the physician takes every precaution, and the patient undoes all, the patient is defeated, not the physician. Thus then in no instance did he prevail over Paul. But in our own case, it is matter for contentment that we should be so much as able to wrestle. For the Romans indeed this is not what he asks, but what? *"He shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."* [Romans 16:20] And for these Ephesians he invokes, *"Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."* [Ephesians 3:20] He that wrestles is still held fast, but it is enough for him that he has not fallen. When we depart hence, then, and not till then, will the glorious victory be achieved. For instance, take the case of some evil lust. The extraordinary thing would be, not even to entertain it, but to stifle it. If, however, this be not possible, then though we may have to wrestle with it, and retain it to the last, yet if we depart still wrestling, we are conquerors. For the case is not the same here as it is with wrestlers; for there if you throw not your antagonist, you have not conquered; but here if you be not thrown, you have conquered; if you are not thrown, you have thrown him; and with reason, because there both strive for the victory, and when the one is thrown, the other is crowned; here, however, it is not thus, but the devil is striving for our defeat; when then I strip him of that upon

which he is bent, I am conqueror. For it is not to overthrow us, but to make us share his overthrow that he is eager. Already then am I conqueror, for he is already cast down, and in a state of ruin; and his victory consists not in being himself crowned, but in effecting my ruin; so that though I overthrow him not, yet if I be not overthrown, I have conquered. What then is a glorious victory? It is, over and above, to trample him underfoot, as Paul did, by regarding the things of this present world as nothing. Let us too imitate him, and strive to become above them, and nowhere to give him a hold upon us. Wealth, possessions, vain-glory, give him a hold. And oftentimes indeed this has roused him, and oftentimes exasperated him. But what need is there of wrestling? What need of engaging with him? He who is engaged in the act of wrestling has the issue in uncertainty, whether he may not be himself defeated and captured. Whereas he that tramples him under foot, has the victory certain.

Oh then, let us trample under foot the power of the devil; let us trample under foot our sins, I mean everything that pertains to this life, wrath, lust, vain-glory, every passion; that when we depart to that world, we may not be convicted of betraying that power which God has given us; for thus shall we attain also the blessings that are to come. But if in this we are unfaithful, who will entrust us with those things which are greater? If we were not able to trample down one who had fallen, who had been disgraced, who had been despised, who was lying beneath our feet, how shall the Father give us a Father's rewards? If we subdue not one so placed in subjection to us, what confidence shall we have to enter into our Father's house? For, tell me, suppose you had a son, and, that he, disregarding the well-disposed part of your household, should associate with them that have distressed you, with them that have been expelled his father's house, with them that spend their time at the gaming table, and that he should go on so doing to the very last;

will he not be disinherited? It is plain enough he will. And so too shall we; if, disregarding the Angels who have well pleased our Father and whom He has set over us, we have our conversation with the devil, inevitably we shall be disinherited, which God forbid; but let us engage in the war we have to wage with him.

If any one has an enemy, if any one has been wronged by him, if any one is exasperated, let him collect together all that wrath, all that fierceness, and pour it out upon the head of the devil. Here wrath is a good thing, here anger is profitable, here revenge is praiseworthy, for just as among the heathen, revenge is a vice, so truly here is revenge a virtue. So then if you have any failings, rid yourself of them here. And if you are not able yourself to put them away, do it, though with your members also. Hath any one struck you? Bear malice against the devil, and never relinquish your hatred towards him. Or again, has no one struck you? Yet bear him malice still, because he insulted, because he offended your Lord and Master, because he injures and wars against your brethren. With him be ever at enmity, ever implacable, ever merciless. Thus shall he be humbled, thus despicable, thus shall he be an easy prey. If we are fierce towards him, he shall never be fierce towards us. If we are compliant, then he will be fierce; it is not with him as it is with our brethren. He is the foe and enemy, both of life and salvation, both ours and his own. If he loves not himself, how shall he be able to love us? Let us then put ourselves in array and wound him, having for our mighty confederate the Lord Jesus Christ, who can both render us impregnable to his snares, and worthy of the good things to come; which God grant that we may all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

Homily 23 on Ephesians

Ephesians 6:14

"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth."

Having drawn up this army, and roused their zeal—for both these things were requisite, both that they should be drawn up in array and subject to each other, and that their spirit should be aroused—and having inspired them with courage, for this was requisite also, he next proceeds also to arm them. For arms had been of no use, had they not been first posted each in his own place, and had not the spirit of the soldier's soul been roused; for we must first arm him within, and then without.

Now if this is the case with soldiers, much more is it with spiritual soldiers. Or rather in their case, there is no such thing as arming them without, but everything is within. He has roused their ardor, and set it on fire, he has added confidence. He has set them in due array. Observe how he also puts on the armor. *"Stand therefore,"* says he. The very first feature in tactics is, to know how to stand well, and many things will depend upon that. Hence he discourses much concerning standing, saying also elsewhere, *"Watch ye, stand fast."* [1 Corinthians 16:13] And again, *"So stand fast in the Lord."* [Philippians 4:1] And again, *"Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall."* [1 Corinthians 10:12] And again, *"That ye may be able, having done all, to stand."* [Ephesians 6:13] Doubtless then he does not mean merely any way of standing, but a correct way, and as many as have had experience in wars know how great a point it is to know how to stand. For if in the case of boxers and wrestlers, the trainer recommends this before anything else, namely, to stand firm, much more will it be the first thing in warfare, and military matters.

The man who, in a true sense, stands, is upright; he stands not in a lazy attitude, not leaning upon anything. Exact uprightness discovers itself by the way of standing, so that they who are perfectly upright, they stand. But they who do not stand, cannot be upright, but are unstrung and disjointed. The luxurious man does not stand upright, but is bent; so is the lewd man, and the lover of money. He who knows how to stand will from his very standing, as from a sort of foundation, find every part of the conflict easy to him.

"Stand therefore," says he, "having girded your loins with truth."

He is not speaking of a literal, physical girdle, for all the language in this passage he employs in a spiritual sense. And observe how methodically he proceeds. First he girds up his soldier. What then is the meaning of this? The man that is loose in his life, and is dissolved in his lusts, and that has his thoughts trailing on the ground, him he braces up by means of this girdle, not suffering him to be impeded by the garments entangling his legs, but leaving him to run with his feet well at liberty. *"Stand therefore, having girded your loins,"* says he. By the *"loins"* here he means this; just what the keel is in ships, the same are the loins with us, the basis or groundwork of the whole body: for they are, as it were, a foundation, and upon them as the schools of the physicians tell you, the whole frame is built. So then in *"girding up the loins"* he compacts the foundation of our soul; for he is not of course speaking of these loins of our body, but is discoursing spiritually: and as the loins are the foundation alike of the parts both above and below, so is it also in the case of these spiritual loins. Oftentimes, we know, when persons are fatigued, they put their hands there as if upon a sort of foundation, and in that manner support themselves; and for this reason it is that the girdle is used in war, that it may bind and hold together this foundation, as it were, in our frame; for this reason too it is that when we

run we gird ourselves. It is this which guards our strength. Let this then, says he, be done also with respect to the soul, and then in doing anything whatsoever we shall be strong; and it is a thing most especially becoming to soldiers.

True, you may say, but these our natural loins we gird with a leathern band; but we, spiritual soldiers, with what? I answer, with that which is the head and crown of all our thoughts, I mean, *"with truth."* *"Having girded your loins,"* says he, *"with truth."* What then is the meaning of *"with truth"*? Let us love nothing like falsehood, all our duties let us pursue *"with truth,"* let us not lie one to another. Whether it be an opinion, let us seek the truth, or whether it be a line of life, let us seek the true one. If we fortify ourselves with this, if we *"gird ourselves with truth,"* then shall no one overcome us. He who seeks the doctrine of truth, shall never fall down to the earth; for that the things which are not true are of the earth, is evident from this, that all they that are without are enslaved to the passions, following their own reasonings; and therefore if we are sober, we shall need no instruction in the tales of the Greeks. Do you see how weak and frivolous they are? Incapable of entertaining about God one severe thought or anything above human reasoning? Why? Because they are not *"girded about with truth"*; because their loins, the receptacle of the seed of life, and the main strength of their reasonings, are ungirt; nothing then can be weaker than these. And the Manicheans again, do you see, how all the things they have the boldness to utter, are from their own reasonings? *"It was impossible,"* say they, *"for God to create the world without matter."* Whence is this so evident? These things they say, groveling, and from the earth, and from what happens among ourselves; because man, they say, cannot create otherwise. Marcion again, look what he says. *"God, if He took upon Him flesh, could not remain pure."* Whence is this evident? *"Because,"* says he, *"neither can*

men." But men are able to do this. Valentinus again, with his reasonings all trailing along the ground, speaks the things of the earth; and in like manner Paul of Samosata. And Arius, what does he say? *"It was impossible for God when He begot, to beget without passion."* Whence, Arius, have you the boldness to allege this; merely from the things which take place among ourselves? Do you see how the reasonings of all these trail along on the ground? All are, as it were, let loose and unconfined, and savoring of the earth? And so much then for doctrines. With regard to life and conduct, again, whoremongers, lovers of money, and of glory, and of everything else, trail on the ground. They have not their loins themselves standing firm, so that when they are weary they may rest upon them; but when they are weary, they do not put their hands upon them and stand upright, but flag. He, however, who *"is girt about with the truth,"* first, never is weary; and secondly, if he should be weary, he will rest himself upon the truth itself. What? Will poverty, tell me, render him weary? No, in nowise; for he will repose on the true riches, and by this poverty will understand what is true poverty. Or again, will slavery make him weary? No, in nowise, for he will know what is the true slavery. Or shall disease? No, nor even that. *"Let your loins,"* says Christ, *"be girded about, and your lamps burning"* [Luke 12:35], with that light which shall never be put out. This is what the Israelites also, when they were departing out of Egypt [Exodus 12:11], were charged to do. For why did they eat the passover with their loins girded? Are you desirous to hear the ground of it? According to the historical fact, or according to its mystical sense, shall I state it? But I will state them both, and do ye retain it in mind, for I am not doing it without an object, merely that I may tell you the solution, but also that my words may become in you reality. They had, we read, their loins girded, and their staff in their hands, and their shoes on their feet, and thus they ate the Passover. Awful and

terrible mysteries, and of vast depth; and if so terrible in the type, how much more in the reality? They come forth out of Egypt, they eat the Passover. Attend. *"Our Passover has been sacrificed, even Christ,"* it is said. Wherefore did they have their loins girded? Their guise is that of wayfarers; for their having shoes, and staves in their hands, and their eating standing, declares nothing else than this. Will ye hear the history first, or the mystery? Better the history first. What then is the design of the history? The Jews were continually forgetting God's benefits to them. Accordingly then, God tied the sense of these, His benefits, not only to the time, but also to the very habit of them that were to eat. For this is why they were to eat girded and sandalled, that when they were asked the reason, they might say, *"we were ready for our journey, we were just about to go forth out of Egypt to the land of promise and we were ready for our exodus."* This then is the historical type. But the reality is this; we too eat a Passover, even Christ; *"for,"* says he, *"our Passover has been sacrificed, even Christ."* [1 Corinthians 5:7] What then? We too ought to eat it, both sandalled and girded. And why? That we too may be ready for our Exodus, for our departure hence.

Moral. Let not any one of them that eat this Passover look towards Egypt, but towards Heaven, towards *"Jerusalem that is above."* [Galatians 4:26] On this account you eat with your loins girded, on this account you eat with shoes on your feet, that you may know, that from the moment you first begin to eat the Passover, you ought to set out, and to be upon your journey. And this implies two things, both that we must depart out of Egypt, and that, while we stay, we must stay henceforth as in a strange country; *"for our citizenship,"* says he, *"is in Heaven"* [Philippians 3:20]; and that all our life long we should ever be prepared, so that when we are called we may not put it off, but say, *"My heart is fixed."* [Psalm 108:1] *"Yes, but this*

Paul indeed could say, who knew nothing against himself; but I, who require a long time for repentance, I cannot say it." Yet that to be girded is the part of a waking soul, hearken to what God says to that righteous man, *"Gird up now your loins like a man, for I will demand of you, and declare thou unto Me."* [Job 38:3] This He says also to all the prophets, and this He says again to Moses, to be girded. And He Himself also appears to Ezekiel [Ezekiel 9:11, Septuagint] girded. Nay more, and the Angels, too, appear to us girded [Revelation 15:6], as being soldiers. From our being girded about, it comes that we also stand bravely as from our standing our being girded comes.

For we also are going to depart, and many are the difficulties that intervene. When we have crossed this plain, straightway the devil is upon us, doing everything, contriving every artifice, to the end that those who have been saved out of Egypt, those who have passed the Red Sea, those who are delivered at once from the evil demons, and from unnumbered plagues, may be taken and destroyed by him. But, if we be vigilant, we too have a pillar of fire, the grace of the Spirit. The same both enlightens and overshadows us. We have manna; yea rather not manna, but far more than manna. Spiritual drink we have, not water, that springs forth from the Rock. So have we too our encampment [Revelation 20:9], and we dwell in the desert even now; for a desert indeed without virtue, is the earth even now, even more desolate than that wilderness. Why was that desert so terrible? Was it not because it had scorpions in it, and adders? [Deuteronomy 8:15] *"A land,"* it is said, *"which none passed through."* [Jeremiah 2:6]. Yet is not that wilderness, no, it is not so barren of fruits, as is this human nature. At this instant, how many scorpions, how many asps are in this wilderness, how many serpents, how many *"offsprings of vipers"* [Matthew 3:7] are

these through whom we at this instant pass! Yet let us not be afraid; for the leader of this our Exodus is not Moses, but Jesus.

How then is it that we shall not suffer the same things? Let us not commit the same acts, and then shall we not suffer the same punishment. They murmured, they were ungrateful; let us therefore not cherish these passions. How was it that they fell all of them? *"They despised the pleasant land."* [Psalm 106:24] *"How 'despised' it? Surely they prized it highly."* By becoming indolent and cowardly, and not choosing to undergo any labors to obtain it. Let not us then *"despise"* Heaven! This is what is meant by *"despising."* Again, among us also has fruit been brought, fruit from Heaven, not the cluster of grapes borne upon the staff [Numbers 13:23], but the *"earnest of the Spirit"* [2 Corinthians 1:22], *"the citizenship which is in Heaven"* [Philippians 3:20], which Paul and the whole company of the Apostles, those marvelous husbandmen, have taught us. It is not Caleb the son of Jephunneh, nor Jesus the son of Nun, that has brought these fruits; but Jesus the Son of *"the Father of mercies"* [2 Corinthians 1:3], the Son of the Very God, has brought every virtue, has brought down from Heaven all the fruits that are from thence, the songs of heaven has He brought. For the words which the Cherubim above say, these has He charged us to say also, *"Holy, Holy, Holy."* He has brought to us the virtue of the Angels. *"The Angels marry not, neither are given in marriage"* [Matthew 22:30]; this fair plant has He planted here also. They love not money, nor anything like it; and this too has He sown among us. They never die; and this has He freely given us also, for death is no longer death, but sleep. For hearken to what He says, *"Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep."* [John 11:11]

Do you see then the fruits of *"Jerusalem that is above"*? [Galatians 4:26] And what is indeed more stupendous than all is this, that our warfare is not decided, but all these things are given us before the attainment of the

promise! For they indeed toiled even after they had entered into the land of promise—rather, they toiled not, for had they chosen to obey God, they might have taken all the cities, without either arms or array. Jericho, we know, they overturned, more after the fashion of dancers than of warriors. We however have no warfare after we have entered into the land of promise, that is, into Heaven, but only so long as we are in the wilderness, that is, in the present life. *"For he that is entered into his rest has himself also rested from his works as God did from His."* [Hebrews 4:10] *"Let us not then be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."* [Galatians 6:9] Do you see how that just as He led them, so also He leads us? In their case, touching the manna and the wilderness, it is said, *"He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack."* [Exodus 16:18] And we have this charge given us, *"not to lay up treasure upon the earth."* [Matthew 6:19] But if we do lay up treasure, it is no longer the earthly worm that corrupts it, as was the case with the manna, but that which dwells eternally with fire. Let us then *"subdue all things,"* that we furnish not food to this worm. For *"he,"* it is said, *"who gathered much had nothing over."* For this too happens with ourselves also every day. We all of us have but the same capacity of hunger to satisfy. And that which is more than this, is but an addition of cares. For what He intended in after-times to deliver, saying, *"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"* [Matthew 6:34], this had He thus been teaching even from the very beginning, and not even thus did they receive it. But as to us, let us not be insatiable, let us not be discontented, let us not be seeking out for splendid houses; for we are on our pilgrimage, not at home; so that if there be any that knows that the present life is a sort of journey, and expedition, and, as one might say, it is what they call an entrenched camp, he will not be seeking for splendid buildings. For who, tell me, be he ever so rich, would

choose to build a splendid house in an encampment? No one; he would be a laughing stock, he would be building for his enemies, and would the more effectually invite them on; and so then, if we be in our senses, neither shall we. The present life is nothing else than a march and an encampment.

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us do all we can, so as to lay up no treasure here; for if the thief should come, we must in a moment arise and depart. *"Watch,"* says He, *"for you know not at what hour the thief comes"* [Matthew 24:42-43], thus naming death. O then, before he comes, let us send away everything before us to our native country; but here let us be *"well girded,"* that we may be enabled to overcome our enemies, whom God grant that we may overcome, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father glory, strength, honor forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 24 on Ephesians

Ephesians 6:14-17

"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

"Having girded your loins," says he, *"with truth."* What can be the meaning of this? I have stated in the preceding discourse, that he ought to be lightly accoutered, in order that there should be no impediment whatever to his running.

"And having on," he continues, *"the breastplate of righteousness."* As the breastplate is impenetrable, so also is righteousness, and by righteousness here he means a life of universal virtue. Such a life no one shall ever be able to overthrow; it is true, many wound him, but no one cuts through him, no, not the devil himself. It is as though one were to say, *"having righteous deeds fixed in the breast";* of these it is that Christ says, *"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."* [Matthew 5:6] Thus is he firm and strong like a breastplate. Such a man will never be put out of temper.

"And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace." It is more uncertain in what sense this was said. What then is its meaning? They are noble greaves, doubtless, with which he invests us. Either then he means this, that we should be prepared for the gospel, and should make use of our feet for this, and should prepare and make ready its

way before it; or if not this, at least that we ourselves should be prepared for our departure. *"The preparation,"* then, *"of the gospel of peace,"* is nothing else than a most virtuous life; according to what the Prophet says. *"You will prepare their heart, you will cause your ear to hear."* [Psalm 10:17] *"Of the gospel,"* he says, *"of peace,"* and with reason; for inasmuch as he had made mention of warfare and fighting, he shows us that this conflict with the evil spirits we must needs have: for the gospel is *"the gospel of peace"*; this war which we have against them, puts an end to another war, that, namely, which is between us and God; if we are at war with the devil, we are at peace with God. Fear not therefore, beloved; it is a *"gospel,"* that is, a word of good news; already is the victory won.

"Withal taking up the shield of faith."

By *"faith"* in this place, he means, not knowledge, (for that he never would have ranged last,) but that gift by which miracles are wrought. And with reason does he term this *"'faith' a shield"*; for as the shield is put before the whole body, as if it were a sort of rampart, just so is this faith; for all things yield to it.

"Wherewith you shall be able," says he, *"to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one."*

For this shield nothing shall be able to resist; for hearken to what Christ says to His disciples, *"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove."* [Matthew 17:20] But how are we to have this faith? When we have rightly performed all those duties.

"By the darts of the evil one," he means, both temptations, and vile desires; and *"fiery,"* he says, for such is the character of these desires. Yet if faith can command the evil spirits, much more can it also the passions of the soul.

"And take the helmet," he continues, *"of salvation,"* that is, of your salvation. For he is casing them in armor.

"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." He either means the Spirit, or else, *"the spiritual sword"*: for by this all things are severed, by this all things are cleft asunder, by this we cut off even the serpent's head.

Ver. 18, 19, 20. *"With all prayer and supplication,"* says he, *"praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and on my behalf that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."*

As the word of God has power to do all things, so also has he who has the spiritual gift. *"For the word of God,"* says he, *"is living, and active and sharper than any two-edged sword."* [Hebrews 4:12] Now mark the wisdom of this blessed Apostle. He has armed them with all security. What then is necessary after that? To call upon the King, that He may stretch forth His hand. *"With all prayer, and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit"*; for it is possible *"to pray"* not *"in the Spirit,"* when one *"uses vain repetitions"* [Matthew 6:7]; *"and watching thereunto,"* he adds, that is, keeping sober; for such ought the armed warrior, he that stands at the King's side, to be; wakeful and temperate:— *"in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and on my behalf that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth."* What do you say, blessed Paul? Have you, then, need of your disciples? And well does he say, *"in opening my mouth."* He did not then study what he used to say, but according to what Christ said, *"When they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what you shall speak"* [Matthew 10:19]: so truly

did he do everything by faith, everything by grace. *"With boldness,"* he proceeds, *"to make known the mystery of the Gospel";* that is, that I may answer for myself in its defense, as I ought. And are you bound in your chain, and still needest the aid of others? Yea, says he, for so was Peter also bound in his chain, and yet nevertheless *"was prayer made earnestly for him."* [Acts 12:5] *"For which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak";* that is, that I may answer with confidence, with courage, with great prudence.

Ver. 21. *"But that you also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things."*

As soon as he had mentioned his chains, he leaves something for Tychicus also to relate to them of his own accord. For whatever topics there were of doctrine and of exhortation, all these he explained by his letter: but what were matters of bare recital, these he entrusted to the bearer of the letter. *"That ye may know my affairs,"* that is, may be informed of them. This manifests both the love which he entertained towards them, and their love towards him.

Ver. 22. *"Whom I have sent unto you,"* says he, *"for this very purpose, that you may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts."*

This language he employs, not without a purpose, but in consequence of what he had been saying previously; *"having girded your loins, having on the breastplate,"* etc., which are a token of a constant and unceasing advance; for hear what the Prophet says, *"Let it be unto him as the raiment wherewith he covers himself, and for the girdle wherewith he is girded continually"* [Psalm 109:19]; and the Prophet Isaiah again says, that God has *"put on righteousness as a breastplate"* [Isaiah 59:17]; by these expressions instructing us that these are things which we must have, not for

a short time only, but continually, inasmuch as there is continual need of warfare. *"For it is said the righteous are bold as a lion."* [Proverbs 28:1] For he that is armed with such a breastplate, it cannot be that he should fear the array that is against him, but he will leap into the midst of the enemy. And again Isaiah says, *"How beautiful are the feet of him that brings good tidings."* [Isaiah 52:7] Who would not run, who would not serve in such a cause; to publish the good tidings of peace, peace between God and man, peace, where men have toiled not, but where God has wrought all?

But what is the *"preparation of the Gospel"*? Let us hearken to what John says, *"Make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."* [Matthew 3:3] But again there is need also of another *"preparation"* after baptism, so that we may do nothing unworthy of *"peace."* And then, since the feet are usually a token of the way of life, hence he is constantly exhorting in this language, *"Look, therefore, carefully how ye walk."* [Ephesians 5:15] On this account, he would say, let us exhibit a practice and example worthy of the Gospel; that is, make our life and conduct pure. The good tidings of peace have been proclaimed to you, give to these good tidings a ready way; since if you again become enemies, there is no more *"preparation of peace."* Be ready, be not backward to embrace this peace. As you were ready and disposed for peace and faith, so also continue. The shield is that which first receives the assaults of the adversary, and preserves the armor uninjured. So long then as faith be right and the life be right, the armor remains uninjured.

He discourses, however, much concerning faith, but most especially in writing to the Hebrews, as he does also concerning hope. Believe, says he, in the good things to come, and none of this armor shall be injured. In dangers, in toils, by holding out your hope and your faith to protect you, you will preserve your armor uninjured. *"He that comes to God must*

believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him."

[Hebrews 11:6] Faith is a shield; but wherever there are quibbles, and reasonings, and scrutinizings, then is it no longer a shield, but it impedes us. Let this our faith be such as shall cover and screen the whole frame. Let it not then be scanty, so as to leave the feet or any other part exposed, but let the shield be commensurate with the whole body.

"Fiery darts." For many doubtful reasonings there are, which set the soul, as it were, on fire, many difficulties, many perplexities, but all of them faith sets entirely at rest; many things does the devil dart in, to inflame our soul and bring us into uncertainty; as, for example, when some persons say, *"Is there then a resurrection?" "Is there a judgment?" "Is there a retribution?" "But is there faith?"* the apostle would say, *"you shall with it quench the darts of the devil. Has any base lust assaulted you? Hold before you your faith in the good things to come, and it will not even show itself, yea, it will perish."* *"All the darts";* not some quenched, and others not. Harken to what Paul says, *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward."* [Romans 8:18] Do you see how many darts the righteous quenched in those days? Seems it not to you to be *"fiery darts,"* when the patriarch burned with inward fire, as he was offering up his son? Yea, and other righteous men also have quenched *"all his darts."* Whether then they be reasonings that assault us, let us hold out this; or whether they be base desires, let us use this; or whether again labors and distresses, upon this let us repose. Of all the other armor, this is the safeguard; if we have not this, they will be quickly pierced through. *"Withal,"* says he, *"taking up the shield of faith."* What is the meaning of *"withal"*? It means both *"in truth,"* and *"in righteousness,"* and *"in the preparation of the gospel";* that is to say, all these have need of the aid of faith.

And therefore he adds further, "*and take the helmet of salvation*"; that is to say, finally by this shall you be able to be in security. To receive the helmet of salvation is to escape the peril. For as the helmet covers the head perfectly in every part, and suffers it not to sustain any injury, but preserves it, so also does faith supply alike the place of a shield, and of a helmet to preserve us. For if we quench his darts, quickly shall we receive also those saving thoughts that suffer not our governing principle to sustain any harm; for if these, the thoughts that are adverse to our salvation, are quenched, those which are not so, but which contribute to our salvation, and inspire us with good hopes, will be generated within us, and will rest upon our governing principle, as a helmet does upon the head.

And not only this, but we shall take also "*the sword of the Spirit*," and thus not only ward off his missiles, but smite the devil himself. For a soul that does not despair of herself, and is proof against those fiery darts, will stand with all intrepidity to face the enemy, and will cleave open his breastplate with this very sword with which Paul also burst through it, and "*brought into captivity his devices*" [2 Corinthians 10:5]; he will cut off and behead the serpent.

"Which is the word of God."

By the "*word of God*" in this place, he means on the one hand the ordinance of God, or the word of command; or on the other that it is in the Name of Christ. For if we keep his commandments, by these we shall kill and slay the dragon himself, "*the crooked serpent*." [Isaiah 27:1] And as he said, "*You shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the evil one*"; that he might not puff them up, he shows them, that above all things they stand in need of God; for what does he say?

"With all prayer and supplication," he says, these things shall be done, and you shall accomplish all by praying. But when you draw near, never ask

for yourself only: thus shall you have God favorable to you.

"With all prayer and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance for all the saints." Limit it not, I say, to certain times of the day, for hear what he is saying; approach at all times; *"pray,"* says he, *"without ceasing."* [1 Thessalonians 5:17] Have you never heard of that widow, how by her importunity she prevailed? [Luke 18:1-7] Have you never heard of that friend, who at midnight shamed his friend into yielding by his perseverance? [Luke 11:5-8] Have you not heard of the Syrophœnician woman [Mark 7:25-30], how by the constancy of her entreaty she called forth the Lord's compassion? These all of them gained their object by their importunity.

"Praying at all seasons," says he, *"in the Spirit."*

That is to say, let us seek for the things which are according to God, nothing of this world, nothing pertaining to this life.

Therefore, is there need not only that we *"pray without ceasing,"* but also, that we should do so *"watching—and watching,"* says he, *"thereunto."* Whether he is here speaking of vigils; or of the wakefulness of the soul, I admit both meanings. Do you see how that Canaanitish woman watched unto prayer? And though the Lord gave her no answer, nay, even shook her off, and called her a dog, she said, *"Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table"* [Matthew 15:27], and desisted not until she obtained her request. How, too, did that widow cry, and persist so long, until she was able to shame into yielding that ruler, that neither feared God, nor regarded man [Luke 18:1-7]? And how, again, did the friend persist, remaining before the door in the dead of night, till he shamed the other into yielding by his importunity, and made him arise. [Luke 11:5-8] This is to be watchful.

Would you understand what watchfulness in prayer is? Go to Hannah, hearken to her very words, "*Adonai Eloi Sabaoth.*" [1 Samuel 1:11] Nay, rather, hear what preceded those words; "*they all rose up,*" says the history, "*from the table*" [1 Samuel 1:9], and she, immediately, did not betake herself to sleep, nor to repose. Whence she appears to me even when she was sitting at the table to have partaken lightly, and not to have been made heavy with viands. Otherwise never could she have shed so many tears; for if we, when we are fasting and foodless, hardly pray thus, or rather never pray thus, much more would not she ever have prayed thus after a meal, unless even at the meal she had been as they that eat not. Let us be ashamed, us that are men, at the example of this woman; let us be ashamed, that are suing and gasping for a kingdom, at her, praying and weeping for a little child. "*And she stood,*" it says, "*before the Lord*" [1 Samuel 1:10]; and what are her words? "*Adonai, Lord, Eloi Sabaoth!*" and this is, being interpreted, "*O Lord, the God of Hosts.*" Her tears went before her tongue; by these she hoped to prevail with God to bend to her request. Where tears are, there is always affliction also: where affliction is, there is great wisdom and heedfulness. "*If you will indeed,*" she continues, "*look on the affliction of your handmaid, and wilt give unto your handmaid a man child, then will I give him unto the Lord all the days of his life.*" [1 Samuel 1:11] She said not, "*for one year,*" or, "*for two,*" as we do—nor said she, "*if you will give me a child, I will give you money*"; but, "*I give back to You the very gift itself entire, my first-born, the son of my prayer.*" Truly here was a daughter of Abraham. He gave when it was demanded of him. She offers even before it is demanded.

But observe even after this her deep reverence. "*Only her lips moved, but her voice,*" it says, "*was not heard.*" [1 Samuel 1:13] And thus does he who would gain his request draw near unto God; not consulting his ease,

nor gaping, nor lounging, nor scratching his head, nor with utter listlessness. What, was not God able to grant, even without any prayer at all? What, did He not know the woman's desire even before she asked? And yet had He granted it before she asked, then the woman's earnestness would not have been shown, her virtue would not have been made manifest, she would not have gained so great a reward. So that the delay is not the result of envy or of witchcraft, but of providential kindness. When therefore ye hear the Scripture saying, that "*the Lord had shut up her womb*" (ver. 5, 6.), and that, "*her rival provoked her sore*"; consider that it is His intention to prove the woman's seriousness. For, mark, she had a husband devoted to her, for he said [1 Samuel 1:8], "*Am I not better to you than ten sons?*" "*And her rival,*" it says, "*provoked her sore,*" that is, reproached her, insulted over her. And yet did she never once retaliate, nor utter imprecation against her, nor say, "*Avenge me, for my rival reviles me.*" The other had children, but this woman had her husband's love to make amends. With this at least he even consoled her, saying, "*Am not I better to you than ten sons?*"

But let us look, again, at the deep wisdom of this woman. "*And Eli,*" it says, "*thought she had been drunken.*" [1 Samuel 1:13] Yet observe what she says to him also, "*Nay, count not your handmaid for a daughter of Belial, for out of the abundance of my complaint and my provocation have I spoken hitherto.*" [1 Samuel 1:16] Here is truly the proof of a contrite heart, when we are not angry with those that revile us, when we are not indignant against them, when we reply but in self-defense. Nothing renders the heart so wise as affliction; nothing is there so sweet as "*godly mourning.*" [2 Corinthians 7:10] "*Out of the abundance,*" says she, "*of my complaint and my provocation have I spoken hitherto.*" Her let us imitate, one and all. Harken, you that are barren, harken, you that desire children, harken,

both husbands and wives; yes, for husbands, too, used oftentimes to contribute their part; for hear what the Scripture says, *"And Isaac intreated the Lord for Rebekah his wife, because she was barren."* [Genesis 25:21] For prayer is able to accomplish great things.

"With all prayer and supplication," says he, *"for all the saints, and for me,"* placing himself last. What doest thou, O blessed Paul, in thus placing yourself last? Yea, says he, *"that utterance may be given unto me, in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains."* And where are you an ambassador? *"To mankind,"* says he. Oh! amazing lovingkindness of God! He sent from Heaven in His own Name ambassadors for peace, and lo, men took them, and bound them, and revered not so much as the law of nations, that an ambassador never suffers any hurt. *"But, however, I am an ambassador in bonds. The chain lies like a bridle upon me, restraining my boldness, but your prayer shall open my mouth"* in order that I may speak all things I was sent to speak.

"But that you also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things." If *"faithful,"* he will tell no falsehood, he will in everything speak the truth:— *"whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that you might know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts."* Amazing, transcendent affection! *"that it may not be in the power,"* he means, *"of them that would, to affright you."* For it is probable that they were in tribulation; for the expression, *"may comfort your hearts,"* intimates as much; that is, *"may not suffer you to sink under it."*

Ver. 23. *"Peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

He invokes upon them, *"peace and love with faith."* He says well: for he would not that they should have regard to love by itself, and mingle themselves with those of a different faith. Either he means this, or that above described, namely, that they should have faith also, so as to have a cheerful confidence of the good things to come. The *"peace"* which is towards God, and the *"love."* And if there be peace, there will also be love; if love, there will be peace also. *"With faith,"* because without faith, love amounts to nothing; or rather love could not exist at all without it.

Ver. 24. *"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness."*

Why does he separate the two here, placing *"peace"* by itself, and *"grace"* by itself?

"In uncorruptness," he concludes.

What is this, *"in uncorruptness"*? It either means, *"in purity"*; or else, *"for the sake of those things which are incorruptible,"* as, for example, not in riches, nor in glory, but in those treasures which are incorruptible. The *"in"* means, *"through."* *"Through uncorruptness,"* that is, *"through virtue."* Because all sin is corruption. And in the same way as we say a virgin is corrupted, so also do we speak of the soul. Hence Paul says, *"Lest by any means your minds should be corrupted."* [2 Corinthians 11:3] And again elsewhere, he says, *"In doctrine, showing uncorruptness."* For what, tell me, is corruption of the body? Is it not the dissolution of the whole frame, and of its union? This then is what takes place also in the soul when sin enters. The beauty of the soul is temperance, and righteousness; the health of the soul is courage, and prudence; for the base man is hideous in our eyes, so is the covetous, so is the man who gives himself up to evil practices, and so the coward and unmanly man is sick, and the foolish man is out of health. Now that sins work corruption, is evident from this, that

they render men base, and weak, and cause them to be sick and diseased. Nay, and when we say that a virgin is corrupted, we say so, strictly speaking, on this account also, not only because the body is defiled, but because of the transgression. For the mere act is natural; and if in that consisted the "*corruption*," then were marriage corruption. Hence is it not the act that is corruption, but the sin, for it dishonors and puts her to shame. And again, what would be corruption in the case of a house? Its dissolution. And so, universally, corruption is a change which takes place for the worse, a change into another state, to the utter extinction of the former one. For hear what the Scripture says, "*All flesh had corrupted his way*" [Genesis 6:12]; and again, "*In intolerable corruption*" [Exodus 18:18]; and again, "*Men corrupted in mind.*" [2 Timothy 3:8] Our body is corruptible, but our soul is incorruptible. Oh then, let us not make that corruptible also. This, the corruption of the body, was the work of former sin; but sin which is after the Laver, has the power also to render the soul corruptible, and to make it an easy prey to "*the worm that dies not.*" For never had that worm touched it, had it not found the soul corruptible. The worm touches not adamant, and even if he touches it, he can do it no harm. Oh then, corrupt not the soul; for that which is corrupted is full of foul stench; for hearken to the Prophet who says, "*My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.*" [Psalm 38:5]

However, "*this corruption*" of the body "*shall put on incorruption*" [1 Corinthians 15:53], but the other of the soul, never; for where incorruption is, there is no corruption. Thus is it a corruption which is incorruptible, which has no end, a deathless death; which would have been, had the body remained deathless. Now if we shall depart into the next world having not corruption, we have that corruption incorruptible and endless; for to be ever burning, and not burnt up, ever wasted by the worm, is corruption

incorruptible; like as was the case with the blessed Job. He was corrupted, and died not, and that through a lengthened period, and *"wasted continually, scraping the clods of dust from his sore."* Some such torment as this shall it undergo, when the worms surround and devour it, not for two years nor for three, nor for ten, nor for ten thousand, but for years without end; for *"their worm,"* says He, *"dies not."*

Moral. Let us take the alarm then, I entreat you, let us dread the words, that we meet not with the realities. Covetousness is corruption, corruption more dangerous than any other, and leading on to idolatry. Let us shun the corruption, let us choose the incorruption. Have you in covetousness overreached and defrauded some one? The fruits of your covetousness perish, but the covetousness remains; a corruption which is the foundation of incorruptible corruption. The enjoyment indeed passes away, but the sin remains imperishable. A fearful evil is it for us not to strip ourselves of everything in this present world; a great calamity to depart into the next with loads of sins about us. *"For in Sheol,"* it is said *"who shall give You thanks?"* [Psalm 6:5] There is the place of judgment; then is there no longer season for repentance. How many things did the rich man bewail then? [Luke 16:23] And yet it availed him nothing. How many things did they say who had neglected to feed Christ? [Matthew 25:41] Yet were they led away notwithstanding into the everlasting fire. How many things had they then to say: *"that had wrought iniquity"; "Lord, did we not prophesy by Your Name, and by Your Name cast out devils?"* And yet notwithstanding, they were not owned. All these things therefore will take place then; but it will be of no avail, if they be not done now. Let us fear then, lest ever we should have to say then, *"Lord, when saw we You an hungered, and fed You not?"* [Matthew 25:44] Let us feed Him now, not one day, nor two, nor three days. *"For let not mercy and truth,"* says the Wise Man, *"forsake you."* [Proverbs

3:3] He says not *"do it once, nor twice."* The Virgins, we know, had oil, but not enough to last out. [Matthew 25:3-8] And thus we need much oil, and thus should we be *"like a green olive tree in the house of God."* [Psalm 52:8] Let us reflect then how many burdens of sins each of us has about him, and let us make our acts of mercy counterbalance them; nay rather, far exceed them, that not only the sins may be quenched, but that the acts of righteousness may be also accounted unto us for righteousness. For if the good deeds be not so many in number as to put aside the crimes laid against us, and out of the remainder to be counted unto us for righteousness, then shall no one rescue us from that punishment, from which God grant that we may be all delivered, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, etc.

Homily on Philippians

The Philippians are of a city in Macedonia, a city that is a colony, as Luke says. Here that seller of purple was converted, a woman of uncommon piety and heedfulness. Here the ruler of the synagogue believed. Here was Paul scourged with Silas. Here the magistrates requested them to depart, and were afraid of them, and the preaching had an illustrious commencement. And he bears them many and high testimonies himself, calling them his own crown, and saying they had suffered much. For, *"To you,"* he says, *"it has been granted of God, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in His behalf."* [Philippians 1:29] But when he wrote to them, it happened that he was in bonds. Therefore he says, *"So that my bonds became manifest in Christ in the whole prætorium,"* calling the palace of Nero the prætorium. But he was bound and let go again, and this he showed to Timothy by saying, *"At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me."* [2 Timothy 4:16] He speaks of the bonds then in which he was before that defence. For that Timothy was not present then, is evident: for, *"At my first defence,"* he says, *"no man took my part";* and this, by writing, he was making known to him. He would not then, had he already known it, have written thus to him. But when he wrote this epistle, Timothy was with him. And he shows it by what he says: *"But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you."* [Philippians 2:19] And again, *"Him I hope to send immediately so soon as I shall see how it will go with me."* For he was loosed from his bonds and again bound after he had been to them. But if he says, *"Yea, and I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith,"* it is not as though this were now come to pass, but as

much as to say, *"and whenever this takes place I am glad,"* raising them from their dejection at his bonds. For that he was not about to die at that time is plain from what he says: *"But I hope in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly unto you."* [Philippians 2:24] And again, *"And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all."*

2. But the Philippians had sent to him Epaphroditus, to carry him money, and to know the things concerning him, for they were most lovingly disposed toward him. For that they sent, hear himself, saying, *"I have all things, and abound; I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you."* At the same time they sent to know this. For that they sent also to know this he shows at once in the beginning of the epistle, writing of his own matters, and saying, *"But I would have you know that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the Gospel."* [Philippians 1:12] And again, *"I hope to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state."* This, *"that I also,"* is as if he meant *"as you for full assurance sent to know the things concerning me, so 'I also,' that I may be of good comfort when I know the things concerning you."* Since then they had also been a long time without sending (for this he proves by saying, *"Now at length you have revived your thought for me"*) [Philippians 4:10], and then they heard that he was in bonds [Philippians 2:26]; for if they heard about Epaphroditus, that he was sick, he being no such very remarkable person as Paul was, much more did they hear about Paul, and it was reasonable that they should be disturbed; therefore, in the opening of the epistle he offers them much consolation about his bonds, showing that they should not merely not be disturbed, but even rejoice. Then he gives them counsel about unanimity and humility, teaching them that this was their greatest safety, and that so they could easily overcome their enemies. For it is not being in

bonds that is painful to your teachers, but their disciples not being of one mind. For the former brings even furtherance to the Gospel, but the latter distracts.

3. So then after admonishing them to be of one mind, and showing that unanimity comes of humility, and then aiming a shaft at those Jews who were everywhere corrupting the doctrine under a show of Christianity, and calling them "*dogs*" and "*evil workers*" [Philippians 3:2], and giving admonition to keep away from them, and teaching to whom it is right to attend, and discoursing at length on moral points, and bringing them to order, and recalling them to themselves, by saying, "*The Lord is at hand*" [Philippians 4:5], he makes mention also, with his usual wisdom, of what had been sent, and then offers them abundant consolation. But he appears in writing to be doing them special honor, and never in any place writes any thing of reproof, which is a proof of their virtue, in that they gave no occasion to their teacher, and that he has written to them not in the way of rebuke, but throughout in the way of encouragement. And as I said also at first, this city showed great readiness for the faith; inasmuch as the very jailor, (and you know it is a business full of all wickedness,) at once, upon one miracle, both ran to them, and was baptized with all his house. For the miracle that took place he saw alone, but the gain he reaped not alone, but jointly with his wife and all his house. Nay, even the magistrates who scourged him seem to have done this rather of sudden impulse than out of wickedness, both from their sending at once to let him go, and from their being afterwards afraid. And he bears testimony to them not only in faith, or in perils, but also in well-doing, where he says, "*That even in the beginning of the Gospel, you sent once and again unto my need*" [Philippians 4:15-16], when no one else did so; for he says, "*no Church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving*"; and that their intermission had

been rather from lack of opportunity than from choice, saying, *"Not that you took no thought for me, but you lacked opportunity."* [Philippians 4:10] Let us also, knowing these things, and having so many patterns, and the love that he bore them— for that he loved them greatly appears in his saying, *"For I have no man like minded, who will care truly for your state"* [Philippians 2:20]; and again, *"Because I have you in my heart, and in my bonds,"*—

4. let us also, knowing these things, show ourselves worthy of such examples, by being ready to suffer for Christ. But now the persecution is no more. So then, if there is nothing else, let us imitate their earnestness in well doing, and not think, if we have given once or twice, that we have fulfilled all. For we must do this through our whole life. For it is not once that we have to please God, but constantly. The racer, if, after running even ten heats, he leave the remaining one undone, has lost all; and we, if we begin with good works, and afterward faint, have lost all, have spoiled all. Listen to that profitable admonition that says, *"Let not mercy and truth forsake you."* [Proverbs 3:3] He says not do so once, nor the second time, nor the third, nor the tenth, nor the hundredth, but continually: *"let them not forsake you."* And he did not say, Do not forsake them, but, *"Let them not forsake you,"* showing that we are in need of them, and not they of us; and teaching us that we ought to make every effort to keep them with us. And *"bind them,"* says he, *"about your neck."* For as the children of the wealthy have an ornament of gold about their neck, and never put it off, because it exhibits a token of their high birth, so should we too wear mercy ever about us, showing that we are children of the compassionate one, *"who makes the sun to rise upon the evil and the good"* [Matthew 5:45]. *"But the unbelievers,"* you say, *"do not believe it."* I say then, hereby shall they believe, if we do these works. If they see that we take pity on all, and are

enrolled under Him for our Teacher, they will know that it is in imitation of Him that we so act. For *"mercy,"* it says, *"and true faith."* He well said *"true."* For He wills it not to be of rapine or fraud. For this were not *"faith";* this were not *"truth."* For he that plunders must lie and forswear himself. So do not thou, says he, but have faith with your mercy.

Let us put on this ornament. Let us make a golden chain for our soul, of mercy I mean, while we are here. For if this age pass, we can use it no longer. And why? There there are no poor, There there are no riches, no more want There. While we are children, let us not rob ourselves of this ornament. For as with children, if they become men, these are taken away, and they are advanced to other adornment; so too is it with us. There will be no more alms by money, but other and far nobler. Let us not then deprive ourselves of this! Let us make our soul appear beautiful! Great is alms, beautiful, and honorable, great is that gift, but greater is goodness. If we learn to despise riches, we shall learn other things besides. For behold how many good things spring from hence! He that gives alms, as he ought to give, learns to despise wealth. He that has learned to despise wealth has cut up the root of evils. So that he does not do a greater good than he receives, not merely in that there is a due recompense and a requital for alms, but also in that his soul becomes philosophic, and elevated, and rich. He that gives alms is instructed not to admire riches or gold. And this lesson once fixed in his mind, he has gotten a great step toward mounting to Heaven, and has cut away ten thousand occasions of strife, and contention, and envy, and dejection. For you know, you too know, that all things are done for riches, and unnumbered wars are made for riches. But he that has learned to despise them, has placed himself in a quiet harbor, he no longer fears damage. For this has alms taught him. He no longer desires what is his neighbor's; for how should he, that parts with his own, and gives? He no

longer envies the rich man; for how should he, that is willing to become poor? He clears the eye of his soul. And these are but here. But hereafter it is not to be told what blessings he shall win. He shall not abide without with the foolish virgins, but shall enter in with those that were wise, together with the Bridegroom, having his lamps bright. And though they have endured hardship in virginity, he that has not so much as tasted these hardships shall be better than they. Such is the power of Mercy. She brings in her nurslings with much boldness. For she is known to the porters in Heaven, that keep the gates of the Bride-Chamber, and not known only, but revered; and those whom she knows to have honored her, she will bring in with much boldness, and none will gainsay, but all make room. For if she brought God down to earth, and persuaded him to become man, much more shall she be able to raise a man to Heaven; for great is her might. If then from mercy and loving-kindness God became man, and He persuaded Himself to become a servant, much rather will He bring His servants into His own house. Her let us love, on her let us set our affection, not one day, nor two, but all our life long, that she may acknowledge us. If she acknowledge us, the Lord will acknowledge us too. If she disown us, the Lord too will disown us, and will say, *"I know you not."* But may it not be ours to hear this voice, but that happy one instead, *"Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* [Matthew 25:34] Which may we all obtain, by His grace and lovingkindness, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, strength, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on Philippians

[Philippians 1:1, 2]

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, fellow-Bishops and Deacons: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Here, as writing to those of equal honor, he does not set down his rank of Teacher, but another, and that a great one. And what is that? He calls himself a *"servant,"* and not an Apostle. For great truly is this rank too, and the sum of all good things, to be a servant of Christ, and not merely to be called so. *"The servant of Christ,"* this is truly a free man in respect to sin, and being a genuine servant, he is not a servant to any other, since he would not be Christ's servant, but by halves. And in again writing to the Romans also, he says, *"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."* [Romans 1:1] But writing to the Corinthians and to Timothy he calls himself an *"Apostle."* On what account then is this? Not because they were superior to Timothy. Far from it. But rather he honors them, and shows them attention, beyond all others to whom he wrote. For he also bears witness to great virtue in them. For besides, there indeed he was about to order many things, and therefore assumed his rank as an Apostle. But here he gives them no injunctions but such as they could perceive of themselves.

"To the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." Since it was likely that the Jews too would call themselves *"saints"* from the first oracle, when they were called a *"holy people, a people for God's own possession"* [Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6, etc.]; for this reason he added, *"to the saints in Christ Jesus."* For these alone are holy, and those hence-forward profane. *"To the fellow-Bishops and Deacons."* What is this? Were there

several Bishops of one city? Certainly not; but he called the Presbyters so. For then they still interchanged the titles, and the Bishop was called a Deacon. For this cause in writing to Timothy, he said, *"Fulfil your ministry,"* when he was a Bishop. For that he was a Bishop appears by his saying to him, *"Lay hands hastily on no man."* [1 Timothy 5:22] And again, *"Which was given you with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery."* [1 Timothy 4:14] Yet Presbyters would not have laid hands on a Bishop. And again, in writing to Titus, he says, *"For this cause I left you in Crete, that you should appoint elders in every city, as I gave you charge. If any man is blameless, the husband of one wife"* [Titus 1:5-6]; which he says of the Bishop. And after saying this, he adds immediately, *"For the Bishop must be blameless, as God's steward, not self-willed."* [Titus 1:7] So then, as I said, both the Presbyters were of old called Bishops and Deacons of Christ, and the Bishops Presbyters; and hence even now many Bishops write, *"To my fellow-Presbyter,"* and, *"To my fellow-Deacon."* But otherwise the specific name is distinctly appropriated to each, the Bishop and the Presbyter. *"To the fellow-Bishops,"* he says, and Deacons,

Ver. 2. *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

How is it that though he nowhere else writes to the Clergy, not in Rome, nor in Corinth, nor in Ephesus, nor anywhere, but in general, to *"all the saints, the believers, the beloved,"* yet here he writes to the Clergy? Because it was they that sent, and bare fruit, and it was they that dispatched Epaphroditus to him.

Ver. 3. *"I thank my God,"* he says, *"upon all my remembrance of you."*

He said in another of his writings, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief."*

[Hebrews 13:17] If then the *"grief"* be due to the wickedness of the disciples, the doing it *"with joy"* would be due to their advancement. As often as I remember you, I glorify God. But this he does from his being conscious of many good things in them. I both glorify, he says, and pray. I do not, because you have advanced unto virtue, cease praying for you. But *"I thank my God,"* he says, *"upon all my remembrance of you,"*

Ver. 4. *"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request also with joy."*

"Always," not only while I am praying. *"With joy."* For it is possible to do this with grief too, as when he says elsewhere, *"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears."* [2 Corinthians 2:4]

Ver. 5. *"For your fellowship in furtherance of the Gospel from the first day even until now."*

Great is that he here witnesses of them, and very great, and what one might have witnessed of Apostles and Evangelists. You did not, because you were entrusted with one city, he says, care for that only, but you leave nothing undone to be sharers of my labors, being everywhere at hand and working with me, and taking part in my preaching. It is not once, or the second, or third time, but always, from the time ye believed until now, you have assumed the readiness of Apostles. Behold how those indeed that were in Rome turned away from him; for hear him saying, *"This you know, that all that are in Asia turned away from me."* [2 Timothy 1:15] And again, *"Demas forsook me":* and *"at my first defence no one took my part."* [2 Timothy 4:10-16] But these, although absent, shared in his tribulations, both sending men to him, and ministering to him according to their ability, and leaving out nothing at all. And this ye do not now only, says he, but always, in every way assisting me. So then it is a *"fellowship in furtherance*

of the Gospel." For when one preaches, and you wait on the preacher, you share his crowns. Since even in the contests that are without, the crown is not only for him that strives, but for the trainer, and the attendant, and all that help to prepare the athlete. For they that strengthen him, and recover him, may fairly participate in his victory. And in wars too, not only he that wins the prize of valor, but all they too that attend him, may fairly claim a share in the trophies, and partake of the glory, as having shared in his conflict by their attendance on him. For it avails not a little to wait on saints, but very much. For it makes us sharers in the rewards that are laid up for them. Thus; suppose some one has given up great possessions for God, continually devotes himself to God, practices great virtue, and even to words, and even to thoughts, and even in everything observes extreme strictness. It is open to you too, even without showing such strictness, to have a share in the rewards that are laid up for him for these things. How? If you aid him both in word and deed. If you encourage him both by supplying his needs, and by doing him every possible service. For then the smoother of that rugged path will be yourself. So then if you admire those in the deserts that have adopted the angelic life, those in the churches that practice the same virtues with them; if you admire, and are grieved that you are far behind them; ye may, in another way, share with them, by waiting on them, and aiding them. For indeed this too is of God's lovingkindness, to bring those that are less zealous, and are not able to undertake the hard and rugged and strict life, to bring, I say, even those, by another way, into the same rank with the others. And this Paul means by "*fellowship*." They give a share to us, he means, in carnal things, and we give a share to them in spiritual things. For if God for little and worthless things grants the kingdom, His servants too, for little and material things, give a share in spiritual things: or rather it is He that gives both the one and the other by

means of them. You can not fast, nor be alone, nor lie on the ground, nor watch all night? Yet may thou gain the reward of all these things, if you go about the matter another way, by attending on him that labors in them, and refreshing and anointing him constantly, and lightening the pains of these works. He, for his part, stands fighting and taking blows. Do thou wait on him when he returns from the combat, receive him in your arms, wipe off the sweat, and refresh him; comfort, soothe, restore his wearied soul. If we will but minister to the saints with such readiness, we shall be partakers of their rewards. This Christ also tells us. *"Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into their eternal tabernacles."* [Luke 16:9] Do you see that they have become sharers? *"From the first day,"* he says, *"even until now."* And *"I rejoice"* not only for what is past, but also for the future; for from the past I guess that too.

Ver. 6. *"Being confident of this very thing, that He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

See how he also teaches them to be unassuming. For since he had witnessed a great thing of them, that they may not feel as men are apt to do, he presently teaches them to refer both the past and the future to Christ. How? By saying, not, *"Being confident that as you began you will also finish,"* but what? *"He which began a good work in you will perfect it."* He did not rob them of the achievement, (for he said, *"I rejoice for your fellowship,"* clearly as if making it their act,) nor did he call their good deeds solely their own, but primarily of God. *"For I am confident,"* says he, *"that He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."* That is, God will. And it is not about yourselves, he implies, but about those descending from you that I feel thus. And indeed it is no small praise, that God should work in one. For if He is *"no respecter of*

persons," as indeed He is none, but is looking to our purpose when He aids us in good deeds, it is evident that we are agents in drawing Him to us; so that even in this view he did not rob them of their praise. Since if His in working were indiscriminate, there would have been nothing to hinder but that even Heathens and all men might have Him working in them, that is, if He moved us like logs and stones, and required not our part. So that in saying *"God will perfect it,"* this also again is made their praise, who have drawn to them the grace of God, so that He aids them in going beyond human nature. And in another way also a praise, as that *"such are your good deeds that they cannot be of man, but require the divine impulse."* But if God will perfect, then neither shall there be much labor, but it is right to be of good courage, for that they shall easily accomplish all, as being assisted by Him.

Ver. 7. *"Even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace."*

Greatly still does he show here his longing desire, in that he had them in his heart; and in the very prison, and though bound, he remembered the Philippians. And it is not a little to the praise of these men, since it is not of prejudice that this Saint conceived his love, but of judgment, and right reasons. So that to be loved of Paul so earnestly is a proof of one's being something great and admirable. *"And in the defense,"* he says, *"and confirmation of the Gospel."* And what wonder if he had them when in prison, since not even at the moment of going before the tribunal to make my defense, he says, did ye slip from my memory. For so imperial a thing is spiritual love, that it gives way to no season, but ever keeps hold of the soul of him who loves, and allows no trouble or pain to overcome that soul. For

as in the case of the Babylonian furnace, when so vast a flame was raised, it was a dew to those blessed Children. So too does friendship occupying the soul of one who loves, and who pleases God, shake off every flame, and produce a marvelous dew.

"And in the confirmation of the Gospel," he says. So then his bonds were a confirmation of the Gospel, and a defense. And most truly so. How? For if he had shunned bonds, he might have been thought a deceiver; but he that endures every thing, both bonds and affliction, shows that he suffers this for no human reason, but for God, who rewards. For no one would have been willing to die, or to incur such great risks, no one would have chosen to come into collision with such a king, I mean Nero, unless he looked to another far greater King. Truly a *"confirmation of the Gospel"* were his bonds. See how he more than succeeded in turning all things to their opposite. For what they supposed to be a weakness and a detraction, that he calls a confirmation; and had this not taken place, there had been a weakness. Then he shows that his love was not of prejudice, but of judgment. Why? I have you (in my heart), he says, in my bonds, and in my defense, because of your being *"partakers of my grace."* What is this? Was this the *"grace"* of the Apostle, to be bound, to be driven about, to suffer ten thousand evils? Yes. For He says, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] *"Wherefore,"* says he, *"I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries."* Since then I see you in your actions giving proof of your virtue, and being partakers of this grace, and that with readiness, I reasonably suppose thus much. For I that have had trial of you, and more than any have known you, and your good deeds; how that even when so distant from us, you strive not to be wanting to us in our troubles, but to partake in our trials for the Gospel's sake, and to take no less

share than myself, who am engaged in the combat, far off as you are; am doing but justice in witnessing to these things.

And why did he not say "*partakers*," but "*partakers with me*"? I myself too, he means, share with another, that I may be a partaker of the Gospel; that is, that I may share in the good things laid up for the Gospel. And the wonder indeed is that they were all so minded; for he says that "*ye all are fellow-partakers of grace*." From these beginnings, then, I am confident that such ye will be even to the end. For it cannot be that so bright a commencement should be quenched, and fail, but it points to great results.

Since then it is possible also in other ways to partake of grace, and of trials, and of tribulations, let us also, I beseech you, be partakers. How many of those who stand here, yea, rather all, would fain share with Paul in the good things to come! It is in your power if you are willing, on behalf of those who have succeeded to his ministry, when they suffer any hardship for Christ's sake, to take their part and succor them. Have you seen your brother in trial? Hold out a hand! Have you seen your teacher in conflict? Stand by him! But, says one, there is no one like Paul! now for disdain! now for criticism! So there is no one like Paul? Well, I grant it. But, "*He that receives*," says He, "*a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward*." [Matthew 10:41] For was it for this that these were honored, that they coöperated with *Paul*? Not for this, but because they coöperated with one who had undertaken the preaching. Paul was honorable for this, that he suffered these things for Christ's sake.

There is indeed no one like Paul. No, not even but a little approaching to that blessed one. But the preaching is the same as it was then.

And not only in his bonds did they have fellowship with him, but also from the beginning. For hear him saying, "*And ye yourselves also know, you Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, no Church had fellowship*

with me in the matter of giving and receiving, but you only." [Philippians 4:15] And even apart from trials, the teacher has much labor, watching, toiling in the word, teaching, complaints, accusations, imputations, envyings. Is this a little matter, to bear ten thousand tongues, when one might have but one's own anxieties? Alas! What shall I do? For I am in a strait between two things. I long to urge you on and encourage you to the alliance and succor of the saints of God; but I fear lest some one should suspect another thing, that I say this not for your sakes, but for theirs. But know that it is not for their sakes I say these things, but for your own. And if you are willing to attend, I convince you by my very words; the gain is not equal to you and to them. For you, if you give, will give those things from which, willing or unwilling, you must soon after part, and give place to others; but what you receive is great and far more abundant. Or, are you not so disposed, that in giving you will receive? For if you are not so disposed, I do not even wish you to give. So far am I from making a speech for them! Except one have first so disposed himself, as receiving rather than giving, as gaining ten thousand fold, as benefited rather than a benefactor, let him not give. If as one granting a favor to the receiver, let him not give. For this is not so much my care, that the saints may be supported. For even if you give not, another will give. So that what I want is this, that you may have a relief from your own sins. But he that gives not so will have no relief. For it is not giving that is doing alms, but the doing it with readiness; the rejoicing, the feeling grateful to him that receives. For, "*not grudgingly,*" says he, "*or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*" [2 Corinthians 9:7] Except then one so give, let him not give: for that is loss, not alms. If then ye know that you will gain, not they, know that your gain becomes greater. For as for them the body is fed, but your soul is approved; for them, not one of their sins is forgiven when they receive, but for you,

the more part of your offenses is removed. Let us then share with them in their great prizes. When men adopt kings they do not think they give more than they receive. Adopt thou Christ, and you shall have great security. Will you also share with Paul? Why do I say Paul when it is Christ that receives?

But that you may know that all is for your sakes that I say and do, and not of care for the comfort of others, if there is any of the rulers of the church that lives in abundance and wants nothing, though he be a saint, give not, but prefer to him one that is in want, though he be not so admirable.

And wherefore? Because Christ too so wills, as when He says, *"If you make a supper or a dinner, call not your friends, neither your kinsmen, but the maimed, the lame, the blind, that cannot recompense you."* [Luke 14:12]

For it is not indiscriminately that one should pay such attentions, but to the hungry, but to the thirsty, but to those who need clothing, but to strangers, but to those who from riches have been reduced to poverty. For He said not simply, *"I was fed,"* but *"I was an hungered,"* for, *"You saw me an hungered,"* He says, *"and fed me."* [Matthew 25:35] Twofold is the claim, both that he is a saint and that he is hungry. For if he that is simply hungry ought to be fed, much more when he is a saint too that is hungry. If then he is a saint, but not in need, give not; for this were no gain. For neither did Christ enjoin it; or rather, neither is he a saint that is in abundance and receives. Do you see that it is not for filthy lucre that these things have been said to you, but for your profit? Feed the hungry, that you may not feed the fire of hell. He, eating of what is yours, sanctifies also what remains. [Luke 11:41] Think how the widow maintained Elias; and she did not more feed than she was fed: she did not more give than receive. This now also takes place in a much greater thing. For it is not a *"barrel of meal,"* nor *"a cruse of oil"* [1 Kings 17:14], but what? *"An hundred fold, and eternal life"* [Matthew 19:21-29], is the recompense for such— the mercy of God you

become, the spiritual food; a pure leaven. She was a widow, famine was pressing, and none of these things hindered her. Children too she had, and not even so was she withheld. [1 Kings 17:12] This woman has become equal to her that cast in the two mites. She said not to herself, *"What shall I receive from this man? He stands in need of me. If he had any power he had not hungered, he had broken the drought, he had not been subject to like sufferings. Perchance he too offends God."* None of these things did she think of. Do you see how great a good it is to do well with simplicity, and not to be over curious about the person benefited? If she had chosen to be curious she would have doubted; she would not have believed. So, too, Abraham, if he had chosen to be curious, would not have received angels. For it cannot, indeed it cannot be, that one who is exceeding nice in these matters, should ever meet with them. No, such an one usually lights on impostors; and how that is, I will tell you. The pious man is not desirous to appear pious, and does not clothe himself in show, and is likely to be rejected. But the impostor, as he makes a business of it, puts on a deal of piety that is hard to see through. So that while he who does good, even to those who seem not pious, will fall in with those who are so, he who seeks out those who are thought to be pious, will often fall in with those who are not so. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us do all things in simplicity. For let us even suppose that he is an impostor that comes; you are not bidden to be curious about this. For, *"Give,"* says he, *"to every one that asks you"* [Luke 6:30]; and, *"Forbear not to redeem him that is to be slain."* [Proverbs 24:11] Yet most of those that are slain suffer this for some evil they are convicted of; still he says, *"Forbear not."* For in this shall we be like God, thus shall we be admired, and shall obtain those immortal blessings, which may we all be thought worthy of, through the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy

Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and forever, and world without end.
Amen.

Homily 2 on Philippians

[Philippians 1:8-11]

"For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; that you may approve the things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and void of offense unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

He calls not God to witness as though he should be doubted, but does this from his great affection, and his exceeding persuasion and confidence; for after saying that they had fellowship with him, he adds this also, *"in the tender mercies of Christ,"* lest they should think that his longing for them was for this cause, and not simply for their own sake. And what mean these words, *"in the tender mercies of Christ"*? They stand for *"according to Christ."* Because you are believers, because ye love Christ, because of the love that is according to Christ. He does not say *"love,"* but uses a still warmer expression, *"the tender mercies of Christ,"* as though he had said, *"having become as a father to you through the relationship which is in Christ."* For this imparts to us bowels warm and glowing. For He gives such bowels to His true servants. *"In these bowels,"* says He, as though one should say, *"I love you with no natural bowels, but with warmer ones, namely, those of Christ."* *"How I long after you all."* I long after all, since you are all of this nature; I am unable in words to represent to you my longing; it is therefore impossible to tell. For this cause I leave it to God, whose range is in the heart, to know this. Now had he been flattering them,

he would not have called God to witness, for this cannot be done without peril.

Ver. 9. *"And this,"* says he, *"I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more."* For this is a good of which there is no satiety; for see, being so loved he wished to be loved still more, for he who loves the object of his love, is willing to stay at no point of love, for it is impossible there should be a measure of so noble a thing. Paul desires that the debt of love should always be owing; *"Owe no man any thing, save to love one another."* [Romans 13:8] The measure of love is, to stop nowhere; *"that your love,"* says he, *"may abound yet more and more."* Consider the character of the expression, *"that it may abound yet more and more,"* he says, *"in knowledge and all discernment."* He does not extol friendship merely, nor love merely, but such as comes of knowledge; that is, You should not apply the same love to all: for this comes not of love, but from want of feeling. What means he by *"in knowledge"*? He means, with judgment, with reason, with discrimination. There are who love without reason, simply and any how, whence it comes that such friendships are weak. He says, *"in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent,"* that is, the things that are profitable. This I say not for my own sake, says he, but for yours, for there is danger lest any one be spoiled by the love of the heretics; for all this he hints at, and see how he brings it in. Not for my own sake, says he, do I say this, but that you may be sincere, that is, that you receive no spurious doctrine under the pretence of love. How then, says he, *"If it be possible, live peaceably with all men"*? *"Live peaceably"* [Romans 12:18], he says, not, Love so as to be harmed by that friendship; for he says, *"if your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from you; that you may be sincere"* [Matthew 5:29], that is, before God, *"and without offense,"* that is, before men, for many men's friendships are

often a hurt to them. Even though it hurts you not, says he, still another may stumble thereat. *"Unto the day of Christ"*; i.e. that you may then be found pure, having caused no one to stumble.

Ver. 11. *"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are through Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God;"* i.e. holding, together with true doctrine, an upright life.

And not merely upright, but *"filled with the fruits of righteousness."* For there is indeed a righteousness not according to Christ, as, for example, a moral life. *"Which are through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God."* Do you see that I speak not of my own glory, but the righteousness of God; and oftentimes he calls mercy itself too righteousness; let not your love, he says, indirectly injure you, by hindering your perception of things profitable, and take heed lest you fall through your love to any one. For I would indeed that your love should be increased, but not so that you should be injured by it. And I would not that it should be simply of prejudice, but upon proof whether I speak well or no. He says not, that you may take up my opinion, but that you may *"prove"* it. He does not say outright, join not yourself to this or that man, but, I would that your love should have respect to what is profitable, not that you should be void of understanding. For it is a foolish thing if you work not righteousness for Christ's sake and through Him. Mark the words, *"through Him."* Does he then use God as a mere assistant? Away with the thought. Not that I may receive praise, says he, but that God may be glorified.

Ver. 12, 13. *"Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the Gospel, so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest."*

It was likely they would grieve when they heard he was in bonds, and imagine that the preaching was at a stand. What then? He straightway destroys this suspicion. And this also shows his affection, that he declares the things which had happened to him, because they were anxious. What say you? You are in bonds! You are hindered! How then does the Gospel advance? He answers, *"so that my bonds in Christ became manifest in all the prætorium."* This thing not only did not silence the rest, nor affright them, but contrariwise rather encouraged them. If then they who were near the dangers were not only nothing hurt, but even received greater confidence, much more should you. Had he when in bonds taken it hardly, and held his peace, it were probable that they would be affected in like sort. But as he spoke more boldly when in bonds, he gave them more confidence than if he had not been bound. And how have his bonds *"turned to the progress of the Gospel"*? So God in His dispensation ordered, he means, that my bonds were not hid, my bonds which were *"in"* Christ, which were *"for"* Christ.

"In the whole prætorium." For up to that time they so called the palace. And in the whole city, says he.

Ver. 14. *"And that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word without fear."*

This shows that they were of good courage even before, and spoke with boldness, but much more now. If others then, says he, are of good courage through my bonds, much more am I; if I am the cause of confidence to others, much more to myself. *"And most of the brethren in the Lord."* As it was a great thing to say, My bonds gave confidence to them, he therefore adds beforehand, *"in the Lord."* Do you see how, even when he sees himself constrained to speak great things, he departs not from

moderation? *"Are more abundantly bold,"* he says, *"to speak the word without fear";* the words *"more abundantly"* show that they had already begun.

Ver. 15. *"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will."*

And what this means is worth enquiry. Since Paul was under restraint, many of the unbelievers, willing to stir up more vehemently the persecution from the Emperor, themselves also preached Christ, in order that the Emperor's wrath might be increased at the spread of the Gospel, and all his anger might fall on the head of Paul. From my bonds then two lines of action have sprung. One party took great courage thereat; the other, from hope to work my destruction, set themselves to preach Christ; *"some of them through envy,"* that is, envying my reputation and constancy, and from desire of my destruction, and the spirit of strife, work with me; or that they themselves may be esteemed, and from the expectation that they will draw to themselves somewhat of my glory. *"And some also of good will,"* that is, without hypocrisy, with all earnestness.

Ver. 16. *"The one proclaim Christ of faction not sincerely."*

That is, not with pure motives, nor from regard to the matter itself; but why? *"thinking to add affliction to my bonds."* As they think that I shall thus fall into greater peril, they add affliction to affliction. O cruelty! O devilish instigation! They saw him in bonds, and cast into prison, and still they envied him. They would increase his calamities, and render him subject to greater anger: well said he, *"thinking,"* for it did not so turn out. They thought indeed to grieve me by this; but I rejoiced that the Gospel was furthered.

Ver. 17. *"But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the Gospel."*

What means, "*that I am set for the defense of the Gospel*"? It is, They are preparing for the account which I must give to God, and assisting me.

What is meant by "*for the defense*"? I have been appointed to preach, I must give account, and answer for the work to which I have been appointed; they assist me, that my defense may be easy; for if there be found many who have been instructed and have believed, my defense will be easy. So it is possible to do a good work, from a motive which is not good. And not only is there no reward in store for such an action, but punishment. For as they preached Christ from a desire to involve the preacher of Christ in greater perils, not only shall they receive no reward, but shall be subject to vengeance and punishment. "*And some of love.*" That is, they know that I must give account for the Gospel.

Ver. 18. "*What then? Only that every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is proclaimed.*"

But see the wisdom of the Man. He did not vehemently accuse them, but mentioned the result; what difference does it make to me, says he, whether it be done in this or that way? Only that every way, "*whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed.*" He did not say, "*Let him be proclaimed,*" as some suppose, stating that he opens the way for the heresies, but, "*He is proclaimed.*" For in the first place he did not lay down the law and say, as if laying down the law, "*Let Him be proclaimed,*" but he reported what was taking place; secondly, if he even spoke as laying down the law, not even thus would he be opening the way for the heresies.

For let us examine the matter. For even if he gave permission to preach as they preached, not even thus was he opening the way for the heresies. How so? In that they preached healthfully; though the aim and purpose on which they acted was corrupted, still the preaching itself was not changed, and they were forced so to preach. And why? Because, had they preached

otherwise than as Paul preached, had they taught otherwise than as he taught, they would not have increased the wrath of the Emperor. But now by furthering his preaching, by teaching in the same way, and making disciples as he did, they had power to exasperate the Emperor, when he saw the multitude of the disciples numerous. But then some wicked and senseless man, taking hold of this passage, says, Verily they would have done the contrary, they would have driven off those who had already believed, instead of making believers to abound, had they wished to annoy him. What shall we answer? That they looked to this thing only, how they might involve him in present danger, and leave him no escape; and thus they thought to grieve him, and to quench the Gospel, rather than in the other way.

By that other course they would have extinguished the wrath of the Emperor, they would have let him go at large and preach again; but by this course they thought that because of him all would be ruined, could they but destroy him. The many however could not have this intention, but certain bitter men alone.

Then "*and therein,*" says he, "*I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*" What means, "*yea, I will rejoice*"? Even if this be done still more, he means. For they coöperate with me even against their will; and will receive punishment for their toil, while I, who contributed nothing thereto, shall receive reward. Is there anything beyond this villainy of the Devil, to contrive the punishment of the preaching, and vengeance for the toils? Do you see with how many evils he pierces through his own! How else would a hater and an enemy of their salvation have arranged all this? Do you see how he who wages war against the truth has no power, but rather wounds himself, as one who kicks against the goads?

Ver. 19. *"For I know,"* says he, *"that this shall turn to my salvation through your supplication, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."*

Nothing is more villainous than the Devil. So does he everywhere involve his own in unprofitable toils, and rends them. Not only does he not suffer them to obtain the prizes, but he even subjects them to punishment.

For not only does he command them the preaching of the Gospel, but likewise fasting and virginity, in such sort as will not only deprive them of their reward, but will bring down heavy evil on those who pursue that course. Concerning whom he says elsewhere, also, *"Branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron."* [1 Timothy 4:2]

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us give thanks to God for all things, since he has both lightened our toil, and increased our reward. For such as among them live in virginity enjoy not the rewards, which they do who among us live chastely in wedlock; but they who live as virgins among the heretics are subject to the condemnation of the fornicators. All this springs from their not acting with a right aim, but as accusing God's creatures, and His unspeakable Wisdom.

Let us not then be sluggish. God has placed before us contests within measure, having no toil. Yet let us not despise them for this. For if the heretics put themselves to the stretch in unprofitable toils, what excuse shall we have if we will not endure those which are less, and which have a greater reward? For which of Christ's ordinances is burdensome? Which is grievous? Are you unable to live a virgin life? You are permitted to marry. Are you unable to strip yourself of all you have? You are permitted to supply the needs of others from what you have. Let *"your abundance be a supply for their want."* [2 Corinthians 8:14] These things indeed appear burdensome. What things? I mean to despise money, and to overcome the desires of the body. But His other commands require no cost, no violence.

For tell me, what violence is there in speaking no ill, in simply abstaining from slander? What violence is there in envying not another man's goods? What violence in not being led away by vain-glory? To be tortured, and endure it, is the part of strength. The exercise of philosophy is the part of strength. To bear poverty through life is the part of strength. It is the part of strength to wrestle with hunger and thirst. Where none of these things are, but where you may enjoy your own, as becomes a Christian, without envying others, what violence is there?

From this source springs envy; nay, rather all evils spring from no other source than this, that we cleave to things present. For did you hold money and the glory of this world to be nought, you would not cast an evil eye on its possessors. But since you gape at these things, and idolize them, and are flattered by them, for this reason envy troubles you, and vain-glory; it all springs from idolizing the things of the present life. Are you envious because another man is rich? Nay, such an one is an object for pity and for tears. But you laugh and answer straight, I am the object for tears, not he! Thou also art an object for tears, not because you are poor, but because you think yourself wretched. For we weep for those who have nothing the matter, and are discontented, not because they have anything the matter, but because, without having, they think they have. For example: if any one, cured of a fever, still is restless and rolls about, lying in health on his bed, is he not more to be wept for than those in fever, not that he has a fever, for he has none, but because having no sickness he still thinks he has? And you are an object for tears just because you think yourself wretched, not for your poverty. For your poverty you are to be thought happy.

Why do you envy the rich man? Is it because he has subjected himself to many cares? To a harder slavery? Because he is bound like a dog, with ten thousand chains— namely, his riches? Evening overtakes him, night

overtakes him, but the season of rest is to him a time of trouble of anguish, of pain, of anxiety. There is a noise: he straightway jumps up. Has his neighbor been plundered? He who has lost nothing cares more for it than the loser. For that man has lost once, but having endured the pain he lays aside his care; but the other has it always with him. Night comes on, the haven of our ills, the solace of our woes, the medicine of our wounds. For they who are weighed down by excess of grief, often give no ear to their friends, to their relations, to their intimates—ofttimes not even to a father when he would give comfort, but take their very words amiss; but when sleep bids them rest, none has the power to look him in the face. For worse than any burning does the bitterness of grief afflict our souls. And as the body, when parched and worn down by struggling against the violence of the sunbeams, is brought to a caravansary with many fountains, and the soothing of a gentle breeze, so does night hand over our soul to sleep. Yea, rather, I should say, not night nor sleep does this, but God, who knows our toil-worn race, has wrought this, while we have no compassion on ourselves, but, as though at enmity with ourselves, have devised a tyranny more powerful than natural want of rest—the sleeplessness which comes of wealth. For it is said, "*The anxieties of wealth drive away sleep.*" [Sirach 31:1] See how great is the care of God. But He has not committed rest to our will, nor our need of sleep to choice, but has bound it up in the necessities of nature, that good may be done to us even against our wills. For to sleep is of nature. But we, as mighty haters of ourselves, like enemies and persecutors of others, have devised a tyranny greater than this necessity of nature that, namely, which comes of money. Has day dawned? Then such an one is in dread of the informers. Hath night overtaken him? He trembles at robbers. Is death at hand? The thought that he must leave his goods to others preys upon him worse than death. Hath he a son? His desires are

increased; and then he fancies himself poor. Has he none? His pains are greater. Deemest thou him blessed who is unable to receive pleasure from any quarter? Can you envy him thus tempest-tossed, while you yourself are placed in the quiet haven of poverty? Of a truth this is the imperfection of human nature; that it bears not its good nobly, but casts insults on its very prosperity.

And all this on earth; but when we depart there, listen what the rich man, who was lord of innumerable goods, as you say (since for my part I call not these things good, but indifferent), listen to what this lord of innumerable goods says, and of what he stands in need: "*Father Abraham,*" he exclaims, "*send Lazarus, that with the tip of his finger he may drop water on my tongue, for I am scorched in this flame.*" For even if that rich man had endured none of the things I have mentioned, if he had passed his whole life without dread and care— why say I his whole life? Rather that one moment (for it is a moment, our whole life is but one moment, compared with that eternity which has no end)— if all things had turned out according to his desire; must he not be pitied for these words, yea, rather, for this state of things? Was not your table once deluged with wine? Now you are not master even of a drop of water, and that, too, in your greatest need. Did not you neglect that poor man full of sores? But now you ask a sight of him, and no one gives leave. He lay at your gate; but now in Abraham's bosom. You then lay under your lofty ceiling; but now in the fire of hell.

These things let the rich men hear. Yea, rather not the rich, but the pitiless. For not in that he was rich was he punished, but because he showed no pity; for it is possible that a man who is at the same time rich and pitiful, should meet with every good. And for this cause the rich man's eyes were fixed on no one else, but on him alone, who then begged his alms; that he

might learn from memory of his former actions, that his punishment was just. Were there not ten thousand poor men who were righteous? But he, who then lay at his gate, alone is seen by him, to instruct him and us, how great a good it is to put no trust in riches. His poverty hindered not the one in obtaining the kingdom; his riches helped not the other to avoid hell.

Where is the point at which a man is poor? Where is the point at which he is reduced to beggary? He is not, he is not poor, who has nought, but he who desires many things! He is not rich who has large possessions, but he who stands in need of nothing. For what profit is there to possess the whole world, and yet live in greater despondency than he who has nothing? Their dispositions make men rich and poor, not the abundance or the want of money. Would you, who are a poor man, become rich? You may have your will, and no one can hinder you. Despise the world's wealth, think it nought, as it is nought. Cast out the desire of wealth, and you are straightway rich. He is rich who does not desire to become rich; he who is unwilling to be poor, is the poor man. As he is the diseased man, who even in health bemoans his case, and not the man who bears his disease more lightly than perfect health, so also he is poor who cannot endure poverty, but in the midst of wealth thinks himself poorer than the poor; not he who bears his poverty more lightly than they their riches, for he is a richer man.

For tell me, wherefore do you fear poverty? Wherefore do you tremble? Is it not by reason of hunger? Is it not for thirst? Is it not for cold? Is it not indeed for these things? There is not, there is not any one who is ever destitute in these things! *"For look at the generations of old, and see, did ever any one trust in the Lord, and was forsaken? Or did any one hope in Him, and was made ashamed?"* [Sirach 2:11]

And again, *"Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feeds them."*

[Matthew 6:26] No one can readily point us out any one who has perished by hunger and cold. Wherefore then do you tremble at poverty? You can not say. For if you have necessities enough, wherefore do you tremble at it? Because you have not a multitude of servants? This truly is to be quit of masters; this is continual happiness, this is freedom from care. Is it because your vessels, your couches, your furniture are not formed of silver? And what greater enjoyment than yours has he who possesses these things? None at all. The use is the same, whether they are of this or that material. Is it because you are not an object of fear to the many? May you never become so! For what pleasure is it that any should stand in dread and fear of you? Is it because you are afraid of others? But you can not be alarmed. For *"would you have no fear of the power? Do that which is good, and you shall have praise from the same."* [Romans 13:3] Does any say, It is because we are subject to contempt, and apt to suffer ill? It is not poverty but wickedness which causes this; for many poor men have quietly passed through life, while rulers, and the rich, and powerful, have ended their days more wretchedly than all evil doers, than bandits, than grave-robbers. For what poverty brings in your case, that does wealth in theirs. For that which they who would ill-treat you do through your contemptible estate, they do to him from envy and the evil eye they cast upon him, and the latter still more than the former, for this is the stronger craving to ill-treat another. He who envies does everything with all his might and main, while the despiser oftentimes has even pity on the despised; and his very poverty, and utter want of power, has often been the cause of his deliverance.

And sometimes by saying to him, *"A great deed it will be if you make away with such an one! If you slay one poor man, what vast advantage will you reap?"* we may thus soften down his anger. But envy sets itself against the rich, and ceases not until it has wrought its will, and has poured forth its

venom. See you, neither poverty nor wealth is good in itself, but our own disposition. Let us bring it to a good tone, let us discipline it in true wisdom. If this be well affected, riches cannot cast us out of the kingdom, poverty will not make us come short. But we shall meekly bear our poverty, and receive no loss in respect to the enjoyment of future goods, nor even here on earth. But we shall both enjoy what is good on earth, and obtain the good things in heaven, which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 3 on Philippians

[Philippians 1:18-20]

"And therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your supplication, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death."

None of the grievous things which are in this present life can fix their fangs upon that lofty soul, which is truly philosophic, neither enmity, nor accusations, nor slanders, nor dangers, nor plots. It flies for refuge as it were to a mighty fortress, securely defended there against all that attack it from this lower earth. Such was the soul of Paul; it had taken possession of a place higher than any fortress, the seat of spiritual wisdom, that is, true philosophy. For that of those without, i.e. the heathen, is mere words, and childish toys. But it is not of these we now speak, but at present concerning the things of Paul. That blessed one had both the Emperor for his enemy, and in addition, many other foes many ways afflicting him, even with bitter slander. And what says he? Not only do I not grieve nor sink beneath these things, but *"I even rejoice, yea, and will rejoice,"* not for a season, but always will I rejoice for these things. *"For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation,"* that which is to come, when even their enmity and jealousy towards me further the Gospel. *"Through your supplication,"* he adds, *"and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ according to my earnest expectation and hope."* Behold the humble-mindedness of this blessed one; he was striving in the contest, he was now close to his crown, he had done ten

thousand exploits, for he was Paul, and what can one add to this? Still he writes to the Philippians, I may be saved *"through your supplication,"* I who have gained salvation through countless achievements. *"And the supply,"* says he, *"of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."* It is as though he said, if I am thought worthy of your prayers, I shall also be thought worthy of more grace. For the meaning of *"supply"* is this, if the Spirit be supplied to me, be given to me more abundantly. Or he is speaking of deliverance, *"unto salvation"*; that is, I shall also escape the present as I did the former danger. Of this same matter he says, *"At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me; may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me."* [2 Timothy 4:16] This then he now predicts: *"Through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope,"* for thus do I hope. For that he may persuade us not to leave the whole matter to the prayers made for us, and contribute nothing ourselves, behold how he lays down his own part, which is Hope, the source of all good, as the Prophet says. *"Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in You."* [Psalm 33:22] And as it is written in another place, *"Look to the generations of old and see, did any one hope in the Lord, and was made ashamed?"* [Sirach 2:10] And again, this same blessed one says, *"Hope puts not to shame."* [Romans 5:5] This is Paul's hope, the hoping that I shall nowhere be put to shame.

"According to my earnest expectation and hope," says he, *"that in nothing shall I be put to shame."* Do you see how great a thing it is to hope in God? Whatever happens, he says, I shall not be put to shame, i.e. they will not obtain the mastery, over me, *"but with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body."* They forsooth expected to catch Paul in this snare, and to quench the preaching of the Gospel, as

though their craftiness were of any power. This then, he says, shall not be so, I shall not now die, but *"as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body."* How so? Ofttimes have I fallen into dangers, when all men gave us up, and what is more, when I myself did. For *"we had the answer of death within ourselves"* [2 Corinthians 1:9], but from all the Lord delivered me, so now too he shall be magnified in my body. What then? Lest any one should suppose and say, If you die, will He not then be magnified? Yes, he answers, I know He will; for this cause I did not say that my life alone shall magnify him, but my death too. At present he means *"by life"*; they will not destroy me; even did they so, Christ will even thus be magnified. How so? Through life, because He delivered me, but through my death, because even death itself could not persuade me to deny Him, since He gave me such readiness, and made me stronger than death. On the one hand because He freed me from peril; on the other, because He suffered me not to fear the tyranny of death: thus shall he be magnified through life and death. And this he says, not as though he were about to die, but lest on his death they should be affected as men are apt to be.

But that you may know these his words did not point to immediate death, the thought that pained them most, see how he relieves it by almost saying, These things I say, not as one about to die; wherefore he soon after adds, *"And having this confidence I know that I shall abide, yea and abide with you all."* *"In nothing,"* says he, *"shall I be put to shame"*; that is, death brings no shame to me, but rather great gain. Why so? Because I am not immortal, but I shall shine more brightly than if I were so, for it is not the same thing for one immortal, and for one who is mortal, to despise death; so that not even instant death is shame to me, yet shall I not die; *"in nothing shall I be put to shame,"* neither in life nor death. For I will bear either nobly, whether life or death. Well says he! This is the part of a Christian

soul! But he adds, "*with all boldness.*" Do you see how entirely I am freed from shame? For if the fear of death had cut short my boldness, death would have been worthy of shame, but if death at its approach cast no terror on me, no shame is here; but whether it be through life I shall not be put to shame, for I still preach the Preaching, or whether it be through death I shall not be put to shame; fear does not hold me back, since I still exhibit the same boldness. Do not, when I mention my bonds, think shame of the matter; so manifold good has it caused to me, that it has even given confidence to others. For that we should be bound for Christ, is no shame, but for fear of bonds to betray anything that is Christ's, this is shame. When there is no such thing, bonds are even a cause of boldness. But since I have oftentimes escaped dangers, and have this to boast of to the unbelievers, do not straightway think I am put to shame, if now it should turn out otherwise. The one event no less than the other gives you boldness. Note how he brings this forward in his own person, which he does in many places, as in the Epistle to the Romans; "*For I am not ashamed of the Gospel.*" [Romans 1:16] And again in that to the Corinthians; "*And these things I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos.*" [1 Corinthians 4:6]— "*Whether by life or by death*": this he says not as in ignorance, (for he knew that he was not then to die, but some time after); yet even now does he prepare their soul.

Ver. 21. "*For to me,*" he says, "*to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*"

For even in dying, he means, I shall not have died, for I have my life in myself: then would they truly have slain me, had they had power through this fear to cast faith out of my soul. But as long as Christ is with me, even though death overtake me, still I live, and in this present life, not this, but Christ is my life. Since, then, not even in the present life is it so, "*but that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith;*" so I say in that state also, "*I*

live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me." [Galatians 2:20] Such ought a Christian to be! I live not, he says, the common life. How do you live then, O blessed Paul? Do you not see the sun, do you not breathe the common air? Are you not nourished with the same food as others? Do you not tread the earth as we? Do you not need sleep, nor clothing, nor shoes? What do you mean by, *"I live not"*? How do you not live? Why boastest you yourself? No boasting is here. For if indeed the fact did not witness to him, a man might with some show have called it boasting; but if facts do witness, how is boasting here? Let us then learn how he lives not, for he himself says in another place, *"I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me."* [Galatians 6:14] Hear then how he says, *"I no longer live."* And how he says, *"to me to live is Christ."* The word *"life"* is much significant, beloved, as also the word *"death."* There is this life of the body, there is the life of sin, as he himself elsewhere says, *"But if we died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"* [Romans 6:2] It is then possible to live the life of sin. Attend diligently, I entreat you, lest my labor be vain. There is the life everlasting and immortal; with eternal life the heavenly; *"for our citizenship,"* says he, *"is in heaven"* [Philippians 3:20] There is the life of the body whereof he speaks, *"through him we live and move and have our being."* [Acts 17:28] He does not then deny that he lives the natural life, but that of sin, which all men live. He who desires not the present life, how does he live it? He who is hastening to another, how does he live this life? He who despises death, how does he live this life? He who desires nothing, how does he live it? For as one made of adamant, though he were struck a thousand blows, would never attend to it, no more would Paul. And *"I live,"* says he, *"but no longer I,"* that is, no longer the old man; as again elsewhere, *"Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death!"* [Romans 7:24] How too does he live who does nought for

the sake of food, nought for the sake of clothing, nought for any of these present things? Such an one does not even live the natural life: he who takes thought for none of the things which sustain life, lives not. We live this life, whose every action regards it. But he lived not; he busied himself about nought of the things here. How then lived he? Just as we are accustomed to say, in common matters, such an one is not with me, when he does nothing that pertains to me. Again, in like sort, such a man lives not for me.

Elsewhere he shows that he rejects not the natural life: *"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"* [Galatians 2:20]; i.e. a certain new life I live, an altered one. And truly all these things he said to comfort the Philippians.

Think not, says he, that I shall be deprived of this life, for neither while alive did I live this life, but that which Christ willed. For tell me? He who despises money, luxury, hunger, thirst, dangers, health, safety, does he live this life? He who has nothing here, and is oftentimes willing to cast life away, if need be, and clings not to it, does he live this life? By no means. This I must make clear to you by a kind of example. Let us imagine some one in great wealth, with many servants, and much gold, and who makes no use of all these things; is such an one rich for all his wealth? By no means. Let him see his children dissipating his property, strolling idly about; let him feel no concern for them; when beaten let him not even be pained; shall we call him a man of wealth? By no means; although his wealth is his own. *"To me,"* he says, *"to live is Christ;"* if you will enquire of my life, it is He.

"And to die is gain." Wherefore? Because I shall more clearly be present with Him; so that my death is rather a coming to life; they who kill me will work on me no dreadful thing, they will only send me onward to my proper life, and free me from that which is not mine. What then, while thou were here, were thou not Christ's? Yes, and in a high degree.

Ver. 22. *"But if to live in the flesh—if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I know not."*

Lest any should say, If what you say is life, wherefore has Christ left you here? *"It is,"* he says, *"the fruit of my work;"* so that it is possible to use to good purpose the present life, while not living it. Lest you should think that reproach is cast upon life. For if we gain no advantage here, wherefore do we not make away with ourselves, nor slay ourselves? By no means, he answers. It is open to us to profit even here, if we live not this, but another life. But perchance one will say, does this bear you fruit? Yes! He answers. Where are now the heretics? Behold now; *"to live in the flesh,"* this is *"the fruit of his work."* *"That which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith;"* therefore it is *"the fruit of my work."*

"And what I shall choose I know not." Marvelous! How great was his philosophy! How has he both cast out the desire of the present life, and yet thrown no reproach upon it! For in that he says, *"to die is gain,"* by this he has cast out the desire, but in that he says, *"to live in the flesh is the fruit of my work,"* here he shows that the present life also is needful, if we use it as need is, if we bear fruit; since if it be unfruitful, it is no longer life. For we despise those trees which bear no fruit, as though they were dry, and give them up to the fire. Life itself belongs to that middle class of indifferent things, while to live well or ill is in ourselves. We do not then hate life, for we may live well too. So even if we use it ill, we do not even then cast the blame on it. And wherefore? Because not itself, but the free choice of those who use it ill is to blame. For God has made you live, that you may live to Him. But you, by living through corruption unto sin, makest yourself accountable for all blame. What do you say, tell me. You know not what to choose? Here has he revealed a great mystery, in that his departure was in his own power; for where choice is, there have we power. *"What I shall*

choose," says he, *"I know not."* Is it in your own power? Yes, he answers, if I would ask this grace of God.

Ver. 23. *"I am in a strait between the two, having the desire."*

See the affection of this blessed one; in this way too he comforts them, when they see that he is master of his own choice, and that this is done not by man's sin, but by the dispensation of God. Why mourn ye, says he, at my death? It had been far better to have passed away long since. *"For to depart,"* he says, *"and to be with Christ, is very far better."*

Ver. 24. *"Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."*

These words were to prepare them for his death when it came, that they might bear it nobly: this was to teach true wisdom. *"It is good for me to depart and be with Christ,"* for even death is a thing indifferent; since death itself is no ill, but to be punished after death is an ill. Nor is death a good, but it is good after our departure *"to be with Christ."* What follows death is either good or ill.

Let us then not simply grieve for the dead, nor joy for the living simply. But how? Let us grieve for sinners, not only when dying, but also while living. Let us joy for the just, not only while living, but also when dead. For those though living are dead, while these although dead, yet live: those even while here are to be pitied of all, because they are at enmity with God; the other even when they have departed Thither, are blessed, because they are gone to Christ. Sinners, wherever they are, are far from the King. Therefore they are subjects for tears; while the just, be they here, or be they there, are with the King; and there, in a higher and nearer degree, not through an entrance, or by faith, but *"face to face."* [1 Corinthians 13:12]

Let us then not make wailings for the dead simply, but for those who have died in sins. They deserve wailing; they deserve beating of the breast and tears. For tell me what hope is there, when our sins accompany us

Thither, where there is no putting off sins? As long as they were here, perchance there was great expectation that they would change, that they would become better; but when they are gone to Hades, where nought can be gained from repentance (for it is written, *"In Sheol who shall give you thanks?"*) [Psalm 6:5], are they not worthy of our lamentation? Let us wail for those who depart hence in such sort; let us wail, I hinder you not; yet in no unseemly way, not in tearing our hair, or baring our arms, or lacerating our face, or wearing black apparel, but only in soul, shedding in quiet the bitter tear. For we may weep bitterly without all that display. And not as in sport only. For the laments which many make differ not from sport. Those public mournings do not proceed from sympathy, but from display, from emulation and vainglory. Many women do this as of their craft. Weep bitterly; moan at home, when no one sees you; this is the part of true sympathy; by this you profit yourself too. For he who laments another in such sort, will be much the more earnest never to fall into the same sins. Sin henceforth will be an object of dread to you. Weep for the unbelievers; weep for those who differ in nowise from them, those who depart hence without the illumination, without the seal! They indeed deserve our wailing, they deserve our groans; they are outside the Palace, with the culprits, with the condemned: for, *"Verily I say unto you, Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* Mourn for those who have died in wealth, and did not from their wealth think of any solace for their soul, who had power to wash away their sins and would not. Let us all weep for these in private and in public, but with propriety, with gravity, not so as to make exhibitions of ourselves; let us weep for these, not one day, or two, but all our life. Such tears spring not from senseless passion, but from true affection. The other sort are of senseless passion. For this cause they are quickly quenched, whereas if they spring from the fear

of God, they always abide with us. Let us weep for these; let us assist them according to our power; let us think of some assistance for them, small though it be, yet still let us assist them. How and in what way? By praying and entreating others to make prayers for them, by continually giving to the poor on their behalf. This deed has some consolation; for hear the words of God Himself, when He says, *"I will defend this city for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake."* [2 Kings 20:6] If the remembrance only of a just man had so great power when deeds are done for one, how great power will it not have? Not in vain did the Apostles order that remembrance should be made of the dead in the dreadful Mysteries. They know that great gain results to them, great benefit; for when the whole people stands with uplifted hands, a priestly assembly, and that awful Sacrifice lies displayed, how shall we not prevail with God by our entreaties for them? And this we do for those who have departed in faith, while the catechumens are not thought worthy even of this consolation, but are deprived of all means of help save one. And what is this? We may give to the poor on their behalf. This deed in a certain way refreshes them. For God wills that we should be mutually assisted; else why has He ordered us to pray for peace and the good estate of the world? Why on behalf of all men? Since in this number are included robbers, violators of tombs, thieves, men laden with untold crimes; and yet we pray on behalf of all; perchance they may turn. As then we pray for those living, who differ not from the dead, so too we may pray for them. Job offered sacrifice for his children, and freed them from their sins. *"It may be,"* said he, *"that they have renounced God in their hearts."* [Job 1:5] Thus does one provide for one's children! He said not, as many do nowadays, I will leave them property; he said not, I will procure them honor; he said not, I will purchase an office; he said not, I will buy them land; but, *"it may be that they have renounced God in their hearts."* For

what profit is there in those things? None at all, in those that remain here. I will make the King of all things favorable to them, and then they will no more want any thing. *"The Lord,"* says one, *"is my Shepherd, I shall not want."* [Psalm 23:4] This is great wealth, this is treasure. If we have the fear of God, we want nothing; if we have not this, though we have royalty itself, we are the poorest of all men. Nothing is like the man that fears the Lord. For *"the fear of the Lord,"* it is said, *"surpasses all things."* [Sirach 25:11] This let us procure; let us do all things for its sake. If need be that we lay down our lives, if our body must be mangled, let us not spare them; let us do all, to obtain this fear. For thus shall we abound above all men; and shall obtain those good things to come in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom, etc.

Homily 4 on Philippians

[Philippians 1:22-26]

"Then what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait between the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; which is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying may abound in Jesus Christ in me, through my presence with you again."

Nothing can be more blessed than the spirit of Paul, for the reason that nothing is more noble. We all shudder at death, I am wont to say, some by reason of our many sins, of whom I too am one, others from love of life, and cowardice, of whom may I never be one; for they who are subject to this fear are mere animals. This then, which we all shudder at, he prayed for, and hasted toward Him; saying, *"To depart is very far better."* What do you say? When you are about to change from earth to heaven, and to be with Christ, do you not know what to choose? Nay, far is this from the spirit of Paul; for if such an offer were made to any one on sure grounds, would he not straightway seize it? Yes, for as it is not ours *"to depart and be with Christ,"* neither, if we were able to attain to this, were it ours to remain here. Both are of Paul, and of his spirit. He was confidently persuaded. What? Are you about to be with Christ? And do you say, *"What I shall choose I know not"*? And not this only, but do you choose that which is here, *"to abide in the flesh"*? What in the world? Did you not live an exceeding bitter life, in *"watchings,"* in shipwrecks, in *"hunger and thirst,"* and *"nakedness,"* in cares and anxiety? *"with the weak"* thou were *"weak,"* and for those who *"were made to stumble"* you *"burn."* [2 Corinthians 11:23-29] *"In much*

patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in fastings, in pureness." [2 Corinthians 6:5-6] *"Five times" did you "receive forty stripes save one," "thrice" were you "beaten with rods, once" were you "stoned" "a night and a day" you have "been in the deep, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren."* [2 Corinthians 11:24-26] Did you not, when the whole nation of the Galatians returned to the observance of the law, did you not cry aloud, and say, *"Whosoever of you would be justified by the law, you are fallen away from grace"*? [Galatians 5:4] How great was then your grief, and still do you desire this perishing life? Had none of these things befallen you, but had your success, wherever success attended you, been without fear, and full of delight, yet should not thou hasten to some harbor, from fear of the uncertain future? For tell me, what trader, whose vessel is full of untold wealth, when he may run into port, and be at rest, would prefer to be still at sea? What wrestler, when he might be crowned, would prefer to contend? What boxer, when he might put on his crown, would choose to enter afresh into the contest, and offer his head to wounds? What general is there, who when he might be quit of war with good report, and trophies, and might with the king refresh himself in the palace, would choose still to toil, and to stand in battle array? How then do you, who livest a life so exceeding bitter, wish to remain still here? Did you not say, I am in dread, *"lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected?"* [1 Corinthians 9:27] If for no other cause, yet surely for this, you ought to desire your release; were the present full of innumerable goods, yet for the sake of Christ your Desire.

Oh that spirit of Paul! nothing was ever like it, nor ever will be! Thou fearest the future, you are compassed by innumerable dreadful things, and

will you not be with Christ? No, he answers, and this for Christ's sake, that I may render more loving unto Him those whom I have made his servants, that I may make the plot which I have planted bear much fruit. [1 Corinthians 3:9]. Did you not hear me, when I declared that I sought not *"that which profited myself"* [1 Corinthians 10:33], but my neighbor? Heardest thou not these words, *"I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ"* [Romans 9:3], that many might come unto Him? I, who chose that part, shall I not much rather choose this, shall I not with pleasure harm myself by this delay and postponement, that they may be saved?

"Who shall utter Your mighty acts, O Lord" [Psalm 106:2], because You suffered not Paul to be hidden, because You made manifest to the world such a man? All the Angels of God praised You with one accord, when You made the stars [Job 38:7], and so too surely when You made the sun, but not so much as when You manifested Paul to the whole world. By this, the earth was made more brilliant than the heaven, for he is brighter than the solar light, he has shot forth more brilliant rays, he has shed abroad more joyous beams. What fruit has this man borne for us! not by making fat our grain, not by nurturing our pomegranates, but by producing and perfecting the fruit of holiness, and when falling to pieces, continually recovering them. For the sun itself can nothing profit fruits that are once decayed, but Paul has called out of their sins those who had manifold decays. And it gives place to the night, but he had mastery over the Devil. Nothing ever subdued him, nothing mastered him. The sun, when it mounts the heavens, darts down its rays, but he, as he rose from beneath, filled not the mid space of heaven and earth with light, but as soon as he opened his mouth, filled the Angels with exceeding joy. For if *"there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents"* [Luke 15:7], while he at his first address caught multitudes, does he not fill with joy the Powers above? What say I?

It suffices that Paul should only be named, and the heavens leap for joy. For if when the Israelites *"went forth out of Egypt, the mountains skipped like rams"* [Psalm 114:4], how great, do you think, was the joy, when men ascended from earth to heaven!

Ver. 24. For this cause *"to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."*

And what excuse is left to us? oftentimes it happens that a man who possesses a little and poor city, chooses not to depart to another place, preferring his own rest. Paul might depart to Christ, and would not, (Christ whom he so desired, as for his sake to choose even hell,) but still remained in the contest on behalf of man. What excuse shall we have? May we then even make mention of Paul? Look to his deeds. He showed that to depart was better, persuading himself not to grieve: he showed them, that if he remained, he remained for their sake, that it proceeded not from wickedness of those who plotted against him. He subjoined also the reason, that he might secure their belief. For if this is necessary, that is, I shall by all means remain, and I will not *"remain"* simply, but *"will remain with you."* For this is the meaning of the word, *"and I shall abide with,"* i.e. I shall see you. For what cause? *"For your progress and joy in the faith."* Here too he rouses them, to take heed unto themselves. If, says he, for your sakes I abide, see that you shame not my abiding. *"For your progress,"* I have chosen to remain, when I was about to see Christ. I have chosen to remain, because my presence advances both your faith and your joy. What then? Did he remain for the sake of the Philippians only? He stayed not for their sake only; but this he says, that he may show regard to them. And how were they to *"progress"* in *"the faith"*? That you may be more strengthened, like young fowl, who need their mother until their feathers are set. This is a

proof of his great love. In like sort, we also rouse some of you, when we say, for your sake have I remained, that I may make you good.

Ver. 26. *"That your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me, through my presence with you again."*

You see that this explains the word *"abide with you."* Behold his humility. Having said, *"for your progress,"* he shows that it was for his own profit too. This also he does, when he writes to the Romans, and says, *"That is, that we may be comforted together in you."* [Romans 1:11-12] Having previously said, *"That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift."* And what means, *"That your glorying may abound"*? This glorying was, their establishment in the faith. For an upright life is glorying in Christ. And do you say, *"Your glorying in me, through my presence with you again"*? Yes, he answers; *"For what is our hope, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye?"* [1 Thessalonians 2:19] Because *"you are our glorying, even as we also are yours"* [2 Corinthians 1:14], i.e. that I may be able to rejoice in you greatly. How do you say, *"That your glorying may abound"*? I may glory the more when you make progress.

"Through my presence with you again." What then! Did he come to them? Search ye whether he came.

Ver. 27. *"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ."*

Do you see, how all that he has said, tends to turn them to this one thing, advancement in virtue? *"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ."* What means this word *"only,"* but that this, and nought else, is the only thing we should seek? If we have this, nothing grievous will befall us. *"That whether I come and see you, or be absent, I may hear of your state."* This he says not as if he had changed his purpose, and no longer meant to visit them. But if this come to pass, he says, even though

absent, I am able to rejoice. *"If,"* that is, *"I hear that you stand fast in one spirit, with one soul."* This is what above all things unites believers, and maintains love unbroken, *"that they may be one."* [John 17:11] For a *"kingdom divided against itself shall not stand."* [Mark 3:24] For this cause he everywhere counsels his disciples much to be of one mind. And Christ says, *"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* [John 13:35] That is, do not look with expectation toward me, and therefore slumber, as waiting for my coming, and then, when you see me not coming faint. For even from report I can receive pleasure likewise.

What means, *"In one spirit"*? By the same gift of grace, viz. that of concord, and zeal; for the Spirit is one, and he shows it; for then are we able to stand in *"one soul,"* also, when we all have *"one Spirit."* See how the word *"one"* is used for concord. See how their souls being many are called one. Thus was it of old. *"For they were all,"* it is written, *"of one heart and of one soul. Striving together for the faith of the Gospel."* [Acts 4:32] Does he say, striving together for each other, as though the faith did strive? For did they wrestle against each other? But help each other, he says, in your striving for the faith of the Gospel.

Ver. 28. *"And in nothing affrighted by the adversaries; which is for them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation."*

Well said he, *"affrighted,"* this is what befalls us from our enemies, they only frighten. *"In nothing"* therefore, he says, whatever happens, whether dangers—whether plots. For this is the part of those who stand upright; the enemy can do nought but frighten only. Since it was likely that they should be greatly troubled, when Paul suffered such numberless ills, he says, I exhort you not only not to be shaken, but not to be affrighted, yea rather to despise them heartily; for if you are thus affected, you will straightway, by this means, make evident at once their destruction, and your

salvation. For when they see, that with their innumerable plots they are unable to frighten you, they will take it as a proof of their own destruction. For when the persecutors prevail not over the persecuted, the plotters over the objects of their plots, the powerful over those subject to their power, will it not be self-evident, that their perdition is at hand, that their power is nought, that their part is false, that their part is weak? *"And this,"* he says, *"comes from God."*

Ver. 29. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in his behalf."*

Again does he teach them moderation of spirit by referring all to God, and saying that sufferings in behalf of Christ are of grace, the gift of grace, a free gift. Be not then ashamed of the gift of grace, for it is more wonderful than the power of raising the dead, or working miracles; for there I am a debtor, but here I have Christ for my debtor. Wherefore ought we not only not to be ashamed, but even to rejoice, in that we have this gift. Virtues he calls gifts, yet not in like sort as other things, for those are entirely of God, but in these we have a share. But since even here the greatest part is of God, he ascribes it entirely to Him, not to overturn our free will, but to make us humble and rightly disposed.

Ver. 30. *"Having the same conflict which you saw in me";* i.e. you have also an example. Here again he raises them up, by showing them that everywhere their conflicts were the same with his, their struggles were the same with his, both severally, and in that they united with him in bearing trials. He said not, you have heard, but *"ye saw,"* for he strove too at Philippi. Truly this is an exceeding virtue. Wherefore writing to the Galatians, also he said, *"Did ye suffer so many things in vain, if it be indeed in vain."* [Galatians 3:4] And again, writing to the Hebrews, he said, *"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were enlightened,*

you endured a great conflict of suffering; partly, being made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions." [Hebrews 10:32-33] And writing again to Macedonians, that is, to the Thessalonians, he said, *"For they themselves report concerning us, what manner of entering in we had unto you."* [1 Thessalonians 1:9] And again, *"For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it has not been found vain."* [1 Thessalonians 2:1] And in like sort does he witness the same things of them all, labors and strivings. But such things ye will not now find among us; now it is much if one suffer a little in goods alone. And in respect of their goods also he witnesses great things of them. For to some he says, *"For you took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions"* [Hebrews 10:34]; and to others, *"For it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor"* [Romans 15:26]; and *"your zeal has stirred up very many of them."* [2 Corinthians 9:2]

Do you see the praises of the men of that time? But we endure not so much as buffetings or blows, neither insult nor loss of our possessions: they were straightway zealous, and all of them strove as martyrs, while we have grown cold in love toward Christ. Again I am constrained to accuse things present; and what shall I do? It is against my will, yet am I constrained. Were I able by my silence of things which are done, by holding my peace, and not mentioning anything, to remove them, it would behoove me to be silent. But if the contrary comes to pass; if not only are these things not removed by our silence, but even become worse, we are forced to speak. For he who rebukes sinners, if he does nought else, suffers them not to go farther. For there is no such shameless and rash soul, as not to turn, and remit the extravagance of its evil deeds, on hearing any one continually rebuking it. There is, there is indeed, even in the shameless, a small portion of shame. For God has sown in our nature the seeds of shame; for since fear

was insufficient to bring us to a right tone, He has also prepared many other ways for avoiding sin. For example, that a man should be accused, fear of the enacted laws, love of reputation, the desire of forming friendships; for all these are paths to avoid sin. Ofttimes that which was not done for God's sake, was done through shame; that which was not done for God's sake, was done for fear of men. That which we seek for is, in the first place not to sin, and we shall afterwards succeed in doing this for God's sake. Else why did Paul exhort those, who were about to overcome their enemies, not by the fear of God, but on the score of waiting for the vengeance? *"For by so doing,"* he says, *"you shall heap coals of fire upon his head."* [Romans 12:20] For this is his first wish, that our virtue should be established. As I said then, there is in us a sense of shame. We have many good natural affections, which lead to virtue; as, for example, all of us men are naturally moved to pity, and no other good thing so inheres in our nature, but this alone. Whence any one might reasonably enquire, wherefore these seeds have above all others been sown in our nature, by which we melt at tears, by which we are turned to compassion, and are ready to pity. No one is naturally idle, no one is naturally regardless of his reputation, no one is naturally above emulation, but pity lies deep in every one's nature, however fierce and ungentle he be. And what wonder? We pity beasts, such a superabundance of pity lies deep in us. If we see a lion's cub, we are somewhat affected; much more in the case of one of our race. See, how many maimed are there! And this is sufficient to lead us to pity. Nothing so much pleases God as mercy. Wherefore with this the priests were anointed, and the kings, and the prophets, for they had, in oil, a type of God's love to man; and they further learned, that rulers should have a greater share of mercy. It showed that the Spirit is to come to men through mercy, since God pities and is kind to man. For, *"You have mercy upon all,"* it is written, *"for*

You can do all things." [Wisdom 11:23] For this cause they were anointed with oil: and indeed it was from mercy He appointed the priesthood. And kings were anointed with oil; and would one praise a ruler, he can make mention of nothing so becoming him as mercy. For pity is peculiar to power. Consider that the world was established by pity, and then imitate your Lord. *"The mercy of man is toward his neighbor, but the mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh."* [Sirach 18:13] How *"upon all flesh"*? Whether you mean sinners, or just men, we all need the mercy of God; we all enjoy it, be it Paul, be it Peter, or be it John. And listen to their own words; there is no need of mine. For what says this blessed one? *"But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly."* [1 Timothy 1:13] What then, was there afterwards no need of mercy? Hear what he says; *"But I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* [1 Corinthians 15:10] And of Epaphroditus he says, *"For indeed he was sick, near unto death; but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow."* [Philippians 2:27] And again he says, *"We were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life. Yea, we ourselves have had the answer of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver."* [2 Corinthians 1:8-10] And again, *"And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion; and the Lord will deliver me."* [2 Timothy 4:17-18] And everywhere we shall find him glorying in this, that by mercy he was saved. Peter, too, became so great, because mercy was shown him. For hear Christ saying to him, *"Satan has desired to sift you as wheat; and I made supplication for you, that your faith fail not."* [Luke 22:31-32] John, too, became so great through mercy, and in short all of them. For listen to Christ when He says, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you."* [John 15:16] For we all have

need of the mercy of God, as it is written, *"The mercy of God is upon all flesh."* But if these men needed the mercy of God, what should one say of the rest? For why, tell me, does He *"make the sun to rise on the evil and the good"*? Did He withhold the rain for one year, would He not destroy all? And what if He caused overwhelming rain? What if He rained down fire? What if He sent flies? But what do I say? If He were so to do as He once did, would not all perish? If He were to shake the earth, would not all perish? It is now seasonable to say, *"What is man, that You are mindful of him?"* [Psalm 8:4] Were He only to threaten the earth, all men would become one tomb. *"As a drop of water from the bucket,"* it is written, *"so are the nations in His sight, they shall be counted as very small dust, as the turning of the balance."* [Isaiah 40:15] It were as easy for Him to destroy all things, and to make them again, as for us to turn the balance. He then who has such power over us, and sees us sinning every day, and yet punishes us not, how is it but by mercy He bears with us? Since beasts too exist by mercy: *"You, Lord, wilt preserve both men and beasts."* [Psalm 36:7] He looked upon the earth, and filled it with living things. And wherefore? For your sake! And wherefore did He make you? Through His goodness.

There is nothing better than oil. It is the cause of light, and there also it is the cause of light. *"Then shall your light break forth as the morning"* [Isaiah 58:8], says the Prophet, if you show pity upon your neighbour. And as natural oil contains light, so then does mercy [alms] grant us a great, a marvelous light. Much mention does Paul, too, make of this mercy. In one place, hear him say, *"Only that we should remember the poor."* [Galatians 2:10] And in another, *"If it be meet for me to go also."* [1 Corinthians 16:4] And in every place, turn where you will, you see him anxious about this very thing. And again, *"And let our people also learn to maintain good works."* [Titus 3:14] And again, *"These things are good and profitable unto*

men." [Titus 3:8] Listen to a certain other one who says, "*Alms do deliver from death*" [Tobit 12:9]; If You take away pity, "*Lord, Lord, who shall stand*" [Psalm 130:3]; and it is said, If You enter "*into judgment with your servant*" [Psalm 143:2]; "*A great thing is man*"; why? "*and an honorable thing is a merciful man.*" [Proverbs 20:6, Septuagint] For this is the true character of man, to be merciful, yea rather the character of God, to show mercy. Do you see, how strong is the mercy of God? This made all things, this formed the world, this made the angels, it was through mere goodness. For this cause, too, He threatened hell, that we may attain unto the kingdom, and through mercy we do attain unto the kingdom. For wherefore did God, being alone, create so many beings? Was it not through goodness? Was it not through love to men? If you ask why such and such things are, you will always find your answer in Goodness. Let us show mercy to our neighbors, that mercy may be shown to us. These acts of mercy we show not so much to them, as lay up for ourselves against That Day. When the flame of the fire is great, this oil (mercy) is that which quenches the fire, and this brings light to us. Thus by this means shall we be freed from the fire of hell. For whence will He be compassionate and show mercy? Mercy comes of love! Nothing incenses God so much as to be pitiless. "*A man was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents, and he was moved with compassion, and forgave him. And there were owing to that man from his fellow-servant a hundred pence, and he caught him by the throat. Therefore the Lord delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay what was due.*" Let us on hearing this be merciful to those who are our debtors in money or in sins. Let no one remember evils, if at least he does not wish to injure himself; for he does not so much aggrieve the other (as he injures himself). For he either will follow him with vengeance, or he has not done so; but dost you yourself, while not forgiving your neighbor his sins, seek for a

kingdom? Lest this should happen to us, let us forgive all, (for it is ourselves that we pardon,) that God may forgive us our sins, and so we may obtain the good things which are in store, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 5 on Philippians

[Philippians 2:1-4]

"If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, fulfil ye my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

There is nothing better, there is nothing more affectionate, than a spiritual teacher; such an one surpasses the kindness of any natural father. Do but consider, how this blessed one entreats the Philippians concerning the things which were to their own advantage. What says he, in exhorting them concerning concord, that cause of all good things? See how earnestly, how vehemently, with how much sympathy he speaks, *"If there be therefore any comfort in Christ,"* that is, if you have any comfort in Christ, as if he had said, If you make any account of me, if you have any care of me, if you have ever received good at my hands, do this. This mode of earnestness we use when we claim a matter which we prefer to everything else. For if we did not prefer it to everything, we should not wish to receive in it our recompense for all things, nor say that through it all is represented. We indeed remind men of our carnal claims; for example, if a father were to say, If you have any reverence for your father, if any remembrance of my care in nourishing you, if any affection towards me, if any memory of the honor you have received of me, if any of my kindness, be not at enmity with your brother; that is, for all those things, this is what I ask in return.

But Paul does not so; he calls to our remembrance no carnal, but all of them spiritual benefits. That is, if you wish to give me any comfort in my temptations, and encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if you wish to show any communion in the Spirit, if you have any tender mercies and compassions, fulfil ye my joy. *"If any tender mercies and compassions."* Paul speaks of the concord of his disciples as compassion towards himself, thus showing that the danger was extreme, if they were not of one mind. If I can obtain comfort from you, if I can obtain any consolation from our love, if I can communicate with you in the Spirit, if I can have fellowship with you in the Lord, if I can find mercy and compassion at your hands, show by your love the return of all this. All this have I gained, if you love one another.

Ver. 2. *"Fulfil ye my joy."*

That the exhortation might not seem to be made to people who were still deficient, see how he says not, *"do me joy,"* but *"fulfil my joy"*; that is, You have begun to plant it in me, you have already given me some portion of peacefulness, but I desire to arrive at its fullness? Say, what would you? That we deliver you from dangers? That we supply somewhat to your need? Not so, but *"that you be of the same mind, having the same love,"* in which you have begun, *"being of one accord, of one mind."* Just see, how often he repeats the same thing by reason of his great affection! *"That ye be of the same mind,"* or rather, *"that you be of one mind."* For this is more than *"the same."*

"Having the same love." That is, let it not be simply about faith alone, but also in all other things; for there is such a thing as to be of the same mind, and yet not to have love. *"Having the same love,"* that is, love and be loved alike; do not thou enjoy much love, and show less love, so as to be covetous even in this matter; but do not suffer it in yourself. *"Of one*

accord," he adds, that is, appropriating with one soul, the bodies of all, not in substance, for that is impossible, but in purpose and intention. Let all things proceed as from one soul. What means "*of one accord*"? He shows when he says "*of one mind*." Let your mind be one, as if from one soul.

Ver. 3. "*Doing nothing through faction*."

He finally demands this of them, and tells them the way how this may be. "*Doing nothing through faction or vainglory*." This, as I always say, is the cause of all evil. Hence come fightings and contentions. Hence come envyings and strifes. Hence it is that love waxes cold, when we love the praise of men, when we are slaves to the honor which is paid by the many, for it is not possible for a man to be the slave of praise, and also a true servant of God. How then shall we flee vainglory? For you have not yet told us the way. Listen then to what follows.

"But in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself." Oh how full of true wisdom, how universal a gathering-word of our salvation is the lesson he has put forth! If you deem, he means, that another is greater than yourself, and persuadest yourself so, yea more, if you not only sayest it, but art fully assured of it, then you assign him the honor, and if you assign him the honor, you will not be displeased at seeing him honored by another. Do not then think him simply greater than yourself, but "*better*," which is a very great superiority, and thou dost not think it strange nor be pained thereby, if you see him honored. Yea, though he treat you with scorn, thou dost bear it nobly, for you have esteemed him greater than yourself. Though he revile you, thou dost submit. Though he treat you ill, you bear it in silence. For when once the soul is fully assured that he is greater, it falls not into anger when it is ill-treated by him, nor yet into envy, for no one would envy those who are very far above himself, for all things belong to his superiority.

Here then he instructs the one party to be thus minded. But when he too, who enjoys such honor from you, is thus affected toward you, consider what a double wall there is erected of gentle forbearance [comp. Philip. iv. 5.]; for when you esteem him thus worthy of honor, and he you likewise, no painful thing can possibly arise; for if this conduct when shown by one is sufficient to destroy all strife, who shall break down the safeguard, when it is shown by both? Not even the Devil himself. The defense is threefold, and fourfold, yea manifold, for humanity is the cause of all good; and that you may learn this, listen to the prophet, saying, *"Had you desired sacrifice, I would have given it: You will not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifice for God is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise."* [Psalm 51:16-17] Not simply humility, but intense humility. As in the case of bodily substances, that which is *"broken"* will not rise against that which is *"solid,"* but, how many ills soever it may suffer, will perish itself rather than attack the other, so too the soul, even if constantly suffering ill, will choose rather to die, than to avenge itself by attack.

How long shall we be puffed up thus ridiculously? For as we laugh, when we see children drawing themselves up, and looking haughty, or when we see them picking up stones and throwing them, thus too the haughtiness of men belongs to a puerile intellect, and an unformed mind. *"Why are earth and ashes proud?"* [Sirach 10:9] Are you highminded, O man? And why? Tell me what is the gain? Whence are you highminded against those of your own kind? Do you not share the same nature? The same life? Have you not received like honor from God? But you are wise? You ought to be thankful, not to be puffed up. Haughtiness is the first act of ingratitude, for it denies the gift of grace. He that is puffed up, is puffed up as if he had excelled by his own strength, and he who thinks he has thus excelled is ungrateful toward Him who bestowed that honor. Have you any good? Be

thankful to Him who gave it. Listen to what Joseph said, and what Daniel. For when the king of Egypt sent for him, and in the presence of all his host asked him concerning that matter in which the Egyptians, who were most learned in these things, had forsaken the field, when he was on the point of carrying off everything from them, and of appearing wiser than the astrologers, the enchanters, the magicians, and all the wise men of those times, and that from captivity and servitude, and he but a youth (and his glory was thus greater, for it is not the same thing to shine when known, and contrary to expectation, so that its being unlooked for rendered him the more admirable); what then, when he came before Pharaoh? Was it "*Yea, I know*"? But what? When no one urged it on him, he said from his own excellent spirit, "*Do not interpretations belong to God?*" Behold he straightway glorified his Master, therefore he was glorified. And this also is no small thing. For that God had revealed it to him was a far greater thing than if he had himself excelled. For he showed that his words were worthy of credit, and it was a very great proof of his intimacy with God. There is no one thing so good as to be the intimate friend of God. "*For if,*" says the Scripture, "*he [Abraham] was justified by works, he has whereof to glory, but not toward God.*" [Romans 4:2] For if he who has been vouchsafed grace makes his boast in God, that he is loved of Him, because his sins are forgiven, he too that works has whereof to boast, but not before God, as the other (for it is a proof of our excessive weakness); he who has received wisdom of God, how much more admirable is he? He glorifies God and is glorified of Him, for He says, "*Them that honor Me, I will honor.*" [1 Samuel 2:30]

Again, listen to him who descended from Joseph, than whom no one was wiser. "*Are you wiser,*" says he, "*than Daniel?*" [Ezekiel 28:3] This Daniel then, when all the wise men that were in Babylon, and the

astrologers moreover, the prophets, the magicians, the enchanters, yea when the whole of their wisdom was not only coming to be convicted, but to be wholly destroyed (for their being destroyed was a clear proof that they had deceived before), this Daniel coming forward, and preparing to solve the king's question, does not take the honor to himself, but first ascribes the whole to God, and says, *"But as for me, O king, it is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have beyond all men."* [Daniel 2:30] And *"the king worshipped him, and commanded that they should offer an oblation."* [Daniel 2:46] Do you see his humility? Do you see his excellent spirit? Do you see this habit of lowliness? Listen also to the Apostles, saying at one time, "Why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man to walk? [Acts 3:12] And again, *"We are men of like passions with you."* [Acts 14:15] Now if they thus refused the honors paid them, men who by reason of the humility and power of Christ wrought greater deeds than Christ (for He says, *"He that believes in Me shall do greater works than those that I do"* [John 14:12, abr]), shall not we wretched and miserable men do so, who cannot even beat away gnats, much less devils? Who have not power to benefit a single man, much less the whole world, and yet think so much of ourselves that the Devil himself is not like us?

There is nothing so foreign to a Christian soul as haughtiness. Haughtiness, I say, not boldness nor courage, for these are congenial. But these are one thing, and that another; so too humility is one thing, and meanness, flattery, and adulation another.

I will now, if you wish, give you examples of all these qualities. For these things which are contraries, seem in some way to be placed near together, as the tares to the wheat, and the thorns to the rose. But while babes might easily be deceived, they who are men in truth, and are skilled

in spiritual husbandry, know how to separate what is really good from the bad. Let me then lay before you examples of these qualities from the Scriptures. What is flattery, and meanness, and adulation? Ziba flattered David out of season, and falsely slandered his master. [2 Samuel 16:1-3] Much more did Ahitophel flatter Absalom. [2 Samuel 17:1-4] But David was not so, but he was humble. For the deceitful are flatterers, as when they say, *"O king, live for ever."* [Daniel 2:4] Again, what flatterers the magicians are.

We shall find much to exemplify this in the case of Paul in the Acts. When he disputed with the Jews he did not flatter them, but was humble-minded (for he knew how to speak boldly), as when he says, *"I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem."* [Acts 28:17]

That these were the words of humility, listen how he rebukes them in what follows, *"Well spoke the Holy Ghost, By hearing you shall hear, and shall in nowise understand, and seeing you shall see, and in nowise perceive."* [Acts 28:25]

Do you see his courage? Behold also the courage of John the Baptist, which he used before Herod; when he said, *"It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife."* [Mark 6:18] This was boldness, this was courage. Not so the words of Shimei, when he said, *"Begone, thou man of blood"* [2 Samuel 16:7], and yet he too spoke with boldness; but this is not courage, but audacity, and insolence, and an unbridled tongue. Jezebel too reproached Jehu, when she said, *"The slayer of his master"* [2 Kings 9:31], but this was audacity, not boldness. Elias too reproached, but this was boldness and courage; *"I do not trouble Israel, but you and your father's house."* [1 Kings 18:18] Again, Elias spoke with boldness to the whole people, saying, *"How long will you go lame on both your thighs?"* [1 Kings

18:21, Septuagint] Thus to rebuke was boldness and courage. This too the prophets did, but that other was audacity.

Would you see words both of humility and not of flattery, listen to Paul, saying, *"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not my own self. For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified."* [1 Corinthians 4:3-4] This is of a spirit that becomes a Christian; and again, *"Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints"?* [1 Corinthians 6:1]

Would you see the flattery of the foolish Jews? Listen to them, saying, *"We have no king but Cæsar."* [John 19:15] Would you see humility? Listen to Paul again, when he says, *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."* [2 Corinthians 4:5] Would you see both flattery and audacity? *"Audacity"* [1 Samuel 25:10] in the case of Nabal, and *"flattery"* [1 Samuel 23:20] in that of the Ziphites? For in their purpose they betrayed David. Would you see *"wisdom"* [1 Samuel 26:5-12] and not flattery, that of David, how he gat Saul into his power, and yet spared him? Would you see the flattery of those who murdered Mephibosheth, whom also David slew? In fine, and as it were in outline, to sum up all, audacity is shown when one is enraged, and insults another for no just cause, either to avenge himself, or in some unjust way is audacious; but boldness and courage are when we dare to face perils and deaths, and despise friendships and enmities for the sake of what is pleasing to God. Again, flattery and meanness are when one courts another not for any right end, but hunting after some of the things of this life; but humility, when one does this for the sake of things pleasing to God, and descends from his own proper station that he may perform something great and admirable. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them. For to

know them is not enough. For Scripture says, "*Not the hearers of a law, but the doers of a law shall be justified.*" [Romans 2:13] Yea, knowledge itself condemns, when it is without action and deeds of virtue. Wherefore that we may escape the condemnation, let us follow after the practice, that we may obtain those good things that are promised to us, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily 6 on Philippians

[Philippians 2:5-8]

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, when exhorting His disciples to great actions, places before them Himself, and the Father, and the Prophets, as examples; as when He says, *"For thus they did unto the Prophets which were before you"* [Matthew 5:12; Luke 6:23]; and again, *"If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you"* [John 15:20]; and, *"Learn of me, for I am meek"* [Matthew 11:29]; and again, *"Be merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."* [Luke 6:36] This too the blessed Paul did; in exhorting them to humility, he brought forward Christ. And he does so not here only, but also when he discourses of love towards the poor, he speaks in this wise. *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor."* [2 Corinthians 8:9] Nothing rouses a great and philosophic soul to the performance of good works, so much as learning that in this it is likened to God. What encouragement is equal to this? None. This Paul well knowing, when he would exhort them to humility, first beseeches and supplicates them, then to awe them he says, *"That ye stand fast in one Spirit"*; he says also, that it *"is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation."* [Philippians 1:27-28] And last of all he says this, *"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an*

equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant." [Philippians 2:5-7] Attend, I entreat you, and rouse yourselves. For as a sharp two-edged sword, wheresoever it falls, though it be among ten thousand phalanxes, easily cuts through and destroys, because it is sharp on every side, and nought can bear its edge; so are the words of the Spirit. [Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 1:16] For by these words he has laid low the followers of Arius of Alexandria, of Paul of Samosata, of Marcellus the Galatian, of Sabellius the Libyan, of Marcion that was of Pontus, of Valentinus, of Manes, of Apollinarius of Laodicea, of Photinus, of Sophronius, and, in one word, all the heresies. Rouse yourselves then to behold so great a spectacle, so many armies falling by one stroke, lest the pleasure of such a sight should escape you. For if when chariots contend in the horse race there is nothing so pleasing as when one of them dashes against and overthrows whole chariots with their drivers, and after throwing down many with the charioteers that stood thereon, drives by alone towards the goal, and the end of the course, and amid the applause and clamor which rises on all sides to heaven, with coursers winged as it were by that joy and that applause, sweeps over the whole ground; how much greater will the pleasure be here, when by the grace of God we overthrow at once and in a body the combinations and devilish machinations of all these heresies together with their charioteers?

And if it seem good to you, we will first arrange the heresies themselves in order. Would you have them in the order of their impiety, or of their dates? In the order of time, for it is difficult to judge of the order of their impiety. First then let Sabellius the Libyan come forward. What does he assert? That the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are mere names given to one Person. Marcion of Pontus says, that God the Creator of all things is not good, nor the Father of the good Christ, but another righteous one, and that

he did not take flesh for us. Marcellus, and Photinus, and Sophronius assert, that the Word is an energy, and that it was this energy that dwelt in Him who was of the seed of David, and not a personal substance.

Arius confesses indeed the Son, but only in word; he says that He is a creature, and much inferior to the Father. And others say that He has not a soul. Do you see the chariots standing? See then their fall, how he overthrows them all together, and with a single stroke. How? *"Have the same mind in you,"* he says, *"which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."* And Paul of Samosata has fallen, and Marcellus, and Sabellius. For he says, *"Being in the form of God."* If *"in the form"* how do you say, O wicked one, that He took His origin from Mary, and was not before? And how do you say that He was an energy? For it is written, *"The form of God took the form of a servant."* *"The form of a servant,"* is it the energy of a servant, or the nature of a servant? By all means, I fancy, the nature of a servant. Thus too the form of God, is the nature of God, and therefore not an energy. Behold also Marcellus of Galatia, Sophronius and Photinus have fallen.

Behold Sabellius too. It is written, *"He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."* Now equality is not predicated, where there is but one person, for that which is equal has somewhat to which it is equal. Do you see not the substance of two Persons, and not empty names without things? Do you not hear the eternal pre-existence of the Only-begotten?

Lastly, What shall we say against Arius, who asserts the Son is of a different substance? Tell me now, what means, *"He took the form of a servant"*? It means, He became man. Wherefore *"being in the form of God,"* He was God. For one *"form"* and another *"form"* is named; if the one be true, the other is also. *"The form of a servant"* means, Man by nature, wherefore *"the form of God"* means, God by nature. And he not only bears

record of this, but of His equality too, as John also does, that he is no way inferior to the Father, for he says, *"He thought it not a thing to seize, to be equal with God."* Now what is their wise reasoning? Nay, say they, he proves the very contrary; for he says, that, *"being in the form of God, He seized not equality with God."* How if He were God, how was He able *"to seize upon it"*? And is not this without meaning? Who would say that one, being a man, seized not on being a man? For how would any one seize on that which he is? No, say they, but he means that being a little God, He seized not upon being equal to the great God, Who was greater than He. Is there a great and a little God? And do ye bring in the doctrines of the Greeks upon those of the Church? With them there is a great and a little God. If it be so with you, I know not. For you will find it nowhere in the Scriptures: there you will find a great God throughout, a little one nowhere. If He were little, how would he also be God? If man is not little and great, but one nature, and if that which is not of this one nature is not man, how can there be a little God and a great one?

He who is not of that nature is not God. For He is everywhere called great in Scripture; *"Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised."* [Psalm 48:1] This is said of the Son also, for it always calls Him Lord. *"You are great, and doest wondrous things. You are God alone."* [Psalm 86:10] And again, *"Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and of His greatness there is no end."* [Psalm 145:3]

But the Son, he says, is little. But it is thou that sayest this, for the Scripture says the contrary: as of the Father, so it speaks of the Son; for listen to Paul, saying, *"Looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of our great God."* [Titus 2:13] But can he have said *"appearing"* of the Father? Nay, that he may the more convince you, he has added with reference to the appearing *"of the great God."* Is it then not said of the

Father? By no means. For the sequel suffers it not which says, "*The appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" See, the Son is great also. How then do you speak of small and great?

Listen to the Prophet too, calling him "*The Messenger of great counsel.*" [Isaiah 9:6] "*The Messenger of great counsel,*" is He not great Himself? "*The mighty God,*" is He small and not great? What mean then these shameless and reckless men when they say, that being little He is a God? I repeat oftentimes what they say, that you may the more avoid them. He being a lesser God seized not for Himself to be like the greater God! Tell me now (but think not that these words are mine), if he were little, as they say, and far inferior to the Father in power, how could He possibly have seized to Himself equality with God? For an inferior nature could not seize for himself admission into that which is great; for example, a man could not seize on becoming equal to an angel in nature; a horse could not, though he wished it, seize on being equal to a man in nature. But besides all that, I will say this too. What does Paul wish to establish by this example? Surely, to lead the Philippians to humility. To what purpose then did he bring forward this example? For no one who would exhort to humility speaks thus; "*Be thou humble, and think less of yourself than of your equals in honor; for such an one who is a slave has not risen against his master; do thou imitate him.*" This, any one would say, is not humility, but arrogance. Learn ye what humility is, you who have a devilish pride! What then is humility? To be lowly minded. And he is lowly minded who humbles himself, not he who is lowly by necessity. To explain what I say; and do ye attend; he who is lowly minded, when he has it in his power to be high minded, is humble, but he who is so because he is not able to be high minded, is no longer humble. For instance, If a King subjects himself to his own officer, he is humble, for he descends from his high estate; but if an

officer does so, he will not be lowly minded; for how? He has not humbled himself from any high estate. It is not possible to show humble-mindedness except it be in our power to do otherwise. For if it is necessary for us to be humble even against our will, that excellency comes not from the spirit or the will, but from necessity. This virtue is called humble-mindedness, because it is the humbling of the mind.

If he who has it not in his power to snatch at another's goods, continues in the possession of his own; should we praise him, think you, for his justice? I trow not, and why? The praise of free choice is taken away by the necessity. If he, who has it not in his power to usurp and be a king, remains a private citizen, should we praise him for his quietness? I trow not. The same rule applies here. For praise, O you most senseless ones, is not given for abstaining from these things, but for the performance of good deeds; for the former is free indeed from blame, but partakes not yet of praise, while eulogy of the other is meet. Observe accordingly that Christ gives praise on this principle, when He says, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and you gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink."* [Matthew 25:34-35] He did not say, Because you have not been covetous, because you have not robbed; these are slight things; but because *"ye saw Me an hungered, and fed Me."* Who ever praised either his friends or his enemies in this sort? No one ever praised even Paul. Why say Paul? No one ever praised even a common man, as thou dost praise Christ, because he did not take that rule which was not his due. To admire for such things as this, is to give evidence of much evil. And why? Because with evil men this is a matter of praise, as of one that steals, if he steal no more; but it is otherwise among good men. [Ephesians 4:28] Because a man has not

seized on a rule and an honor which was not his due, is he praiseworthy? What folly is this?

Attend, I entreat you, for the reasoning is long. Again, who would ever exhort to humility from such grounds as this? Examples ought to be much greater than the subject, to which we are exhorting, for no one will be moved by what is foreign to the subject. For instance, when Christ would lead us to do good to our enemies, He brought a great example, even that of His Father, *"For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] When He would lead to endurance of wrong He brought an example, *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."* [Matthew 11:29] And again, *"If I your Lord and Master do these things, how much more should ye?"* [John 13:14] Do you see how these examples are not distant, for there is no need they should be so distant, for indeed we also do these things, especially as in this case the example is not even near. And how? If He be a servant, He is inferior, and subject to Him that is greater; but this is not lowliness of mind. It was requisite to show the contrary, namely, that the greater person subjected himself to the lesser. But since he found not this distinction in the case of God, between greater and lesser, he made at least an equality. Now if the Son were inferior, this were not a sufficient example to lead us to humility. And why? Because it is not humility, for the lesser not to rise against the greater, not to snatch at rule, and to be *"obedient unto death."*

Again, consider what he says after the example, *"In lowliness of mind, each counting other better than themselves."* [Philippians 2:3] He says, *"counting,"* for as you are one in substance, and in the honor which comes of God, it follows that the matter is one of estimation. Now in the case of those who are greater and lesser, he would not have said *"counting,"* but honor them that are better than yourselves, as he says in another place,

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them." [Hebrews 13:17] In that instance subjection is the result of the nature of the case, in this of our own judgment. *"In lowliness of mind,"* he says, *"each counting other better than themselves,"* as Christ also did.

Thus are their explanations overthrown. It remains that I speak of our own after I have first spoken of theirs summarily. When exhorting to lowliness of mind, Paul would never have brought forward a lesser one, as obedient to a greater. If he were exhorting servants to obey their masters, he might have done so with propriety, but when exhorting the free to obey the free, to what purpose could he bring forward the subjection of a servant to a master? Of a lesser to a greater? He says not, *"Let the lesser be subject to the greater,"* but you who are of equal honor with each other be ye subject, *"each counting other better than themselves."* Why then did he not bring forward even the obedience of the wife, and say, As the wife obeys her husband, so do ye also obey. Now if he did not bring forward that state in which there is equality and liberty, since in that the subjection is but slight, how much less would he have brought forward the subjection of a slave? I said above, that no one so praises a man for abstaining from evil, nor even mentions him at all; no one who desires to praise a man for continence would say, he has not committed adultery, but, he has abstained from his own wife; for we do not consider abstinence from evil as a matter of praise at all, it would be ridiculous.

I said that the *"form of a servant"* was a true form, and nothing less. Therefore *"the form of God"* also is perfect, and no less. Why says he not, *"being made in the form of God,"* but *"being in the form of God"*? This is the same as the saying, *"I am that I am."* [Exodus 3:14] *"Form"* implies unchangeableness, so far as it is form. It is not possible that things of one

substance should have the form of another, as no man has the form of an angel, neither has a beast the form of a man. How then should the Son?

Now in our own case, since we men are of a compound nature, form pertains to the body, but in the case of a simple and altogether uncompounded nature it is of the substance. But if you contend that he speaks not of the Father, because the word is used without the article, in many places this is meant, though the word be used without the article. Why say I, in many places? For in this very place he says, "*He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,*" using the word without the article, though speaking of God the Father.

I would add our own explanation, but I fear that I shall overwhelm your minds. Meanwhile remember what has been said for their refutation; meanwhile let us root out the thorns, and then we will scatter the good seed after that the thorns have been rooted out, and a little rest has been given to the land; that when rid of all the evil thence contracted, it may receive the divine seed with full virtue.

Let us give thanks to God for what has been spoken; let us entreat Him to grant us the guarding and safe keeping thereof, that both we and you may rejoice, and the heretics may be put to shame. Let us beseech Him to open our mouth for what follows, that we may with the same earnestness lay down our own views. Let us supplicate Him to vouchsafe us a life worthy of the faith, that we may live to His glory, and that His name may not be blasphemed through us. For, "*woe unto you,*" it is written, "*through whom the name of God is blasphemed.*" [Isaiah 52:5, Septuagint. nearly] For if, when we have a son, (and what is there more our own than a son,) if therefore when we have a son, and are blasphemed through him, we publicly renounce him, turn away from him, and will not receive him; how much more will God, when He has ungrateful servants who blaspheme and

insult Him, turn away from them and hate them? And who will take up him whom God hates and turns away from, but the Devil and the demons? And whomsoever the demons take, what hope of salvation is left for him? What consolation in life?

As long as we are in the hand of God, *"no one is able to pluck us out"* [John 10:28], for that hand is strong; but when we fall away from that hand and that help, then are we lost, then are we exposed, ready to be snatched away, as a *"bowing wall, and a tottering fence"* [Psalm 62:3]; when the wall is weak, it will be easy for all to surmount. Think not this which I am about to say refers to Jerusalem alone, but to all men. And what was spoken of Jerusalem? *"Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching His vineyard. My well-beloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and I made a fence about it, and surrounded it with a dike, and planted it with the vine of Sorech, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also dug a wine press in it, and I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth thorns. And now, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, judge between Me and My vineyard. What should have been done to My vineyard, that I have not done to it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth thorns? Now therefore I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be for a prey, and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will leave My vineyard, and it shall not be pruned or dug, but thorns shall come up upon it, as upon a desert land. I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant. I looked that it should do judgment, but it did iniquity, and a cry instead of righteousness."* [Isaiah 5:1-7, Septuagint] This is spoken also of every soul. For when God who loves man has done all that is

needful and man then brings forth thorns instead of grapes, He will take away the fence, and break down the wall, and we shall be for a prey. For hear what another prophet speaks in his lamentations: *"Why have you broken down her fences, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood does ravage it, and the wild beasts of the field feed on it."* [Psalm 80:12-13] In the former place He speaks of the Mede and the Babylonian, here nought is said of them, but *"the boar,"* and *"the solitary beast"* is the Devil and all his host, because of the ferocity and impurity of his disposition. For when it would show us his rapacity, it says, *"As a roaring lion he walks about, seeking whom he may devour"* [1 Peter 5:8]: when his poisonous, his deadly, his destructive nature, it calls him a snake, and a scorpion; *"For tread,"* says He, *"upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy"* [Luke 10:19]: when it would represent his strength as well as his venom, it calls him a dragon; as when it says, This dragon *"whom you have formed to take his pastime therein."* [Psalm 104:26] Scripture everywhere calls him a dragon, and a crooked serpent, and an adder [Psalm 74:13-14]; he is a beast of many folds, and varied in his devices, and his strength is great, he moves all things, he disturbs all things, he turns all things up and down. [Isaiah 27:1; 51:9; Ezekiel 29:3; 32:2] But fear not, neither be afraid; watch only, and he will be as a sparrow; *"for,"* says He, *"tread upon serpents and scorpions."* If we will, He causes him to be trodden down under our feet.

See now what scorn is it, yea, what misery, to see him standing over our heads, who has been given to us to tread down. And whence is this? It is of ourselves. If we choose, he becomes great; and if we choose, he becomes of small power. If we take heed to ourselves, and take up our stand with Him who is our King, he draws himself in, and will be no better than a little child in his warfare against us. Whenever we stand apart from Him, he

puffs himself up greatly, he utters terrible sounds, he grinds his teeth, because he finds us without our greatest help. For he will not approach to us, except God permit him; for if he dared not to enter into the herd of swine, except by God's permission, how much less into men's souls. But God does permit him, either chastening or punishing us, or making us more approved, as in the case of Job. Do you see that he came not to him, neither dared to be near him, but trembled and quaked? Why speak I of Job? When he leaped upon Judas, he dared not to seize on him wholly, and to enter into him, until Christ had severed him from the sacred band. He attacked him indeed from without, but he dared not enter in, but when he saw him cut off from that holy flock, he leaped upon him with more than wolfish vehemence, and left him not till he had slain him with a double death.

These things are written for our admonition. What gain have we from knowing that one of the twelve was a traitor? What profit? What advantage? Much. For, when we know whence it was that he arrived at this deadly counsel, we are on our guard that we too suffer not the like. Whence came he to this? From the love of money. He was a thief. For thirty pieces of silver he betrayed his Lord. So drunken was he with the passion, he betrayed the Lord of the world for thirty pieces of silver. What can be worse than this madness? Him to whom nothing is equivalent, nothing is equal, *"before whom the nations are as nothing"* [Isaiah 40:15], Him did he betray for thirty pieces of silver. A grievous tyrant indeed is the love of gold, and terrible in putting the soul beside itself. A man is not so beside himself through drunkenness as through love of money, not so much from madness and insanity as from love of money.

For tell me, why did you betray Him? He called you, when a man unmarked and unknown. He made you one of the twelve, He gave you a share in His teaching, He promised you ten thousand good things, He

caused you to work wonders, thou were sharer of the same table, the same journeys, the same company, the same intercourse, as the rest. And were not these things sufficient to restrain you? For what reason did you betray Him? What had you to charge Him with, O wicked one? Rather, what good did you not receive at His hands? He knew your mind, and ceased not to do His part. He often said, "*One of you shall betray Me.*" [Matthew 26:21] He often marked you, and yet spared you, and though He knew you to be such an one, yet cast you not out of the band. He still bore with you, He still honored you, and loved you, as a true disciple, and as one of the twelve, and last of all (oh, for your vileness!), He took a towel, and with His own unsullied hands He washed your polluted feet, and even this did not keep you back. You stole the things of the poor, and that you might not go on to greater sin, He bore this too. Nothing persuaded you. Had you been a beast, or a stone, would you not have been changed by these kindnesses towards you, by these wonders, by these teachings? Though you were thus brutalized, yet still He called you, and by wondrous works He drew you, you were more senseless than a stone, to Himself. Yet for none of these things did you become better.

You wonder perhaps at such folly of the traitor; dread therefore that which wounded him. He became such from avarice, from the love of money. Cut out this passion, for to these diseases does it give birth; it makes us impious, and causes us to be ignorant of God, though we have received ten thousand benefits at His hands. Cut it out, I entreat you, it is no common disease, it knows how to give birth to a thousand destructive deaths. We have seen his tragedy. Let us fear lest we too fall into the same snares. For this is it written, that we too should not suffer the same things. Hence did all the Evangelists relate it, that they might restrain us. Flee then far from it. Covetousness consists not alone in the love of much money, but in loving

money at all. It is grievous avarice to desire more than we need. Was it talents of gold that persuaded the traitor? For thirty pieces of silver he betrayed his Lord. Do ye not remember what I said before, that covetousness is not shown in receiving much, but rather in receiving little things? See how great a crime he committed for a little gold, rather not for gold, but for pieces of silver.

It cannot, it cannot be that an avaricious man should ever see the face of Christ! This is one of the things which are impossible. It is a root of evils, and if he that possesses one evil thing, falls from that glory, where shall he stand who bears with him the root? He who is the servant of money cannot be a true servant of Christ. Christ Himself has declared that the thing is impossible. *"You cannot,"* He says, *"serve God and Mammon,"* and, *"No man can serve two masters"* [Matthew 6:24], for they lay upon us contrary orders. Christ says, *"Spare the poor";* Mammon says, *"Even from the naked strip off the things they have."* Christ says, *"Empty yourself of what you have";* Mammon says, *"Take also what you have not."* Do you see the opposition, do you see the strife? How is it that a man cannot easily obey both, but must despise one? Nay, does it need proof? How so? Do we not see in very deed, that Christ is despised, and Mammon honored? Perceive ye not how that the very words are painful? How much more then the thing itself? But it does not appear so painful in reality, because we are possessed with the disease. Now if the soul be but a little cleansed of the disease, as long as it remains here, it can judge right; but when it departs elsewhere, and is seized by the fever, and is engaged in the pleasure of the thing, it has not its perception clear, it has not its tribunal uncorrupt. Christ says, *"Whosoever he be of you that renounces not all that he has, he cannot be My disciple"* [Luke 14:33]; Mammon says, *"Take the bread from the hungry."* Christ says, *"Cover the naked"* [Isaiah 58:7]; the other says, *"Strip*

the naked." Christ says, *"You shall not hide yourself from your own flesh,"* [Isaiah 58:7] and those of your own house; Mammon says, *"You shall not pity those of your own seed; though you see your mother or your father in want, despise them."* Why say I father or mother? *"Even your own soul,"* he says, *"destroy it also."* And he is obeyed! Alas! He who commands us cruel, and mad, and brutal things, is listened to rather than He who bids us gentle and healthful things! For this is hell appointed; for this, fire; for this, a river of fire; for this, a worm that dies not.

I know that many hear me say these things with pain, and indeed it is not without pain I say them. But why need I say these things? I could wish the things concerning the kingdom to be ever my discourse, of the rest, of the waters of rest, of the green pastures, as the Scripture says, *"He makes me to lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside the still waters"* [Psalm 23:2], there He makes me to dwell. I could wish to speak of the place, whence *"sorrow and sighing shall flee away."* [Isaiah 51:11]

I could wish to discourse of the pleasures of being with Christ, though they pass all expression and all understanding. Yet would I speak of these things according to my power. But what shall I do? It is not possible to speak concerning a kingdom to one that is diseased and in fever; then we must needs speak of health. It is not possible to speak of honor to one that is brought to trial, for at that time his desire is that he be freed from judgment, and penalty, and punishment. If this be not effected, how shall the other be? It is for this cause that I am continually speaking of these things, that we may the sooner pass over to those other. For this cause does God threaten hell, that none may fall into hell, that we all may obtain the kingdom; for this cause we too make mention continually of hell, that we may thrust you onward towards the kingdom, that when we have softened your minds by fear, we may bring you to act worthily of the kingdom. Be not then

displeased at the heaviness of our words, for the heaviness of these words lightens our souls from sin. Iron is heavy, and the hammer is heavy, but it forms vessels fit for use, both of gold and silver, and straightens things which are crooked; and if it were not heavy, it would have no power to straighten the distorted substance. Thus too our heavy speech has power to bring the soul into its proper tone. Let us not then flee from heaviness of speech, nor the strokes it gives; the stroke is not given that it may break in pieces or tear the soul, but to straighten it. We know how we strike, how by the grace of God we inflict the stroke, so as not to crush the vessel, but to polish it, to render it straight, and meet for the Master's use, to offer it glittering in soundness, skillfully wrought against that Day of the river of fire, to offer it having no need of that burning pile. For if we expose not ourselves to fire here, we must needs be burned there, it cannot be otherwise; *"For the day of the Lord is revealed by fire."* [1 Corinthians 3:13] Better is it that you be burned for a little space by our words, than for ever in that flame. That this will indeed be so, is plain, and I have oftentimes given you reasons which cannot be gainsaid. We ought truly to be persuaded from the Scriptures, but forasmuch as some are contentious, we have also brought forward many arguments from reason. Nothing hinders that I now mention them, and what were they? God is just. We all acknowledge this, both Greeks and Jews, and Heretics, and Christians. But many sinners have had their departure without punishment, many righteous men have had their departure after suffering ten thousand grievous things. If then God be just, where will He reward their good to the one, and their punishment to the other, if there be no hell, if there be no resurrection? This reason then do ye constantly repeat to them and to yourselves, and it will not suffer you to disbelieve the resurrection, and whoso disbelieves not the resurrection will take care to live with all heed so as to obtain eternal

happiness, of which may we all be counted worthy, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 7 on Philippians

[Philippians 2:5-11]

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God; but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name: that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

I have stated the views of the heretics. It is befitting that I now speak of what is our own. They say that the words, *"He counted it not a prize,"* are of wrongfully seizing. We have proved, that this is altogether vapid and impertinent, for no man would exhort another to humility on such grounds, nor in this sort does he praise God, or even man. What is it then, beloved? Give heed to what I now say. Since many men think, that, when they are lowly, they are deprived of their proper right, and debased, Paul, to take away this fear, and to show that we must not be affected thus, says that God, the only begotten, who was in the form of God, who was no whit inferior to the Father, who was equal to Him, *"counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."*

Now learn what this means. Whatsoever a man robs, and takes contrary to his right, he dares not lay aside, from fear lest it perish, and fall from his possession, but he keeps hold of it continually. He who possesses some dignity which is natural to him, fears not to descend from that dignity,

being assured that nothing of this sort will happen to him. As for example, Absalom usurped the government, and dared not afterwards to lay it aside. We will go to another example, but if example cannot present the whole matter to you, take it not amiss, for this is the nature of examples, they leave the greater part for the imagination to reason out. A man rebels against his sovereign, and usurps the kingdom: he dares not lay aside and hide the matter, for if he once hide it, straightway it is gone. Let us also take another example; if a man takes anything violently, he keeps firm hold of it continually, for if he lay it down, he straightway loses it. And generally speaking, they who have anything by rapine are afraid to lay it by, or hide it, or not to keep constantly in that state which they have assumed. Not so they, who have possessions not procured by rapine, as Man, who possesses the dignity of being a reasonable being. But here examples fail me, for there is no natural preëminence among us, for no good thing is naturally our own; but they are inherent in the nature of God. What does one say then? That the Son of God feared not to descend from His right, for He thought not Deity a prize seized. He was not afraid that any would strip Him of that nature or that right, Wherefore He laid it aside, being confident that He should take it up again. He hid it, knowing that He was not made inferior by so doing. For this cause, Paul says not, "*He seized not,*" but, "*He counted it not a prize*"; He possessed not that estate by seizure, but it was natural, not conferred, it was enduring and safe. Wherefore he refused not to take the form of an inferior. The tyrant fears to lay aside the purple robe in war, while the king does it with much safety. Why so? Because he holds his power not as a matter of seizure. He did not refuse to lay it aside, as one who had usurped it, but since He had it as His own by nature, since it could never be parted from Him, He hid it.

This equality with God He had not by seizure, but as his own by nature. Wherefore *"He emptied Himself."* Where be they who affirm, that He underwent constraint, that He was subjected? Scripture says, *"He emptied Himself, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death."* How did He empty Himself? By taking *"the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man."* It is written, *"He emptied Himself"* in reference to the text, *"each counting other better than himself."* Since had He been subjected, had He not chosen it of His own accord, and of His own free will, it would not have been an act of humility. For if He knew not that so it must be, He would have been imperfect. If, not knowing it, He had waited for the time of action, then would He not have known the season. But if He both knew that so it must be, and when it must be, wherefore should He submit to be subjected? To show, they say, the superiority of the Father. But this shows not the superiority of the Father, but His own inferiority. For is not the name of the Father sufficient to show the priority of the Father? For apart from Him, the son has all the same things. For this honor is not capable of passing from the Father to the Son.

What then say the heretics? See, say they, He did not become man. The Marcionites, I mean. But why? He was *"made in the likeness of man."* But how can one be *"made in the likeness of men"*? By putting on a shadow? But this is a phantom, and no longer the likeness of a man, for the likeness of a man is another man. And what will you answer to John, when he says, *"The Word became flesh"*? [John 1:14] But this same blessed one himself also says in another place, *"in the likeness of sinful flesh."* [Romans 8:3]

"And being found in fashion as a man." See, they say, both *"in fashion,"* and *"as a man."* To be as a man, and to be a man in fashion, is not

to be a man indeed. To be a man in fashion is not to be a man by nature. See with what ingenuousness I lay down what our enemies say, for that is a brilliant victory, and amply gained, when we do not conceal what seem to be their strong points. For this is deceit rather than victory. What then do they say? Let me repeat their argument. To be a man in fashion is not to be a man by nature; and to be as a man, and in the fashion of a man, this is not to be a man. So then to take the form of a servant, is not to take the form of a servant. Here then is an inconsistency; and wherefore do you not first of all solve this difficulty? For as you think that this contradicts us, so do we say that the other contradicts you. He says not, "*as the form of a servant,*" nor "*in the likeness of the form of a servant,*" nor "*in the fashion of the form of a servant,*" but "*He took the form of a servant.*" What then is this? For there is a contradiction. There is no contradiction. God forbid! It is a cold and ridiculous argument of theirs. He took, say they, the form of a servant, when He girded Himself with a towel, and washed the feet of His disciples. Is this the form of a servant? Nay, this is not the form, but the work of a servant. It is one thing that there should be the work of a servant, and another to take the form of a servant. Why did he not say, He did the work of a servant, which were clearer? But nowhere in Scripture is "*form*" put for "*work*," for the difference is great: the one is the result of nature, the other of action. In common speaking, too, we never use "*form*" for "*work*." Besides, according to them, He did not even take the work of a servant, nor even gird Himself. For if all was a mere shadow, there was no reality. If He had not real hands, how did He wash their feet? If He had not real loins, how did He gird Himself with a towel? And what kind of garments did he take? For Scripture says, "*He took His garments.*" [John 13:12] So then not even the work is found to have really taken place, but it was all a deception,

nor did He even wash the disciples. For if that incorporeal nature did not appear, it was not in a body. Who then washed the disciples' feet?

Again, what in opposition to Paul of Samosata? For what did he affirm? The very same. But it is no emptying of Himself, that one who is of human nature, and a mere man, should wash his fellow-servants. For what we said against the Arians, we must repeat against these too, for they differ not from one another, save by a little space of time; both the one and the other affirm the Son of God to be a creature. What then shall we say to them? If He being a man washed man, He emptied not, He humbled not Himself. If He being a man seized not on being equal with God, He is not deserving of praise. That God should become man, is great, unspeakable, inexpressible humility; but what humility is there in that one, who was a man should do the works of men? And where is the work of God ever called "*the form of God*"? For if he were a mere man, and was called the form of God by reason of His works, why do we not do the same of Peter, for he wrought greater deeds than Christ Himself? Why say you not of Paul, that he had the form of God? Why did not Paul give an example of himself, for he wrought a thousand servile works, and did not even refuse to say, "*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*" [2 Corinthians 4:5]

These are absurdities and trifles! Scripture says, He "*emptied Himself.*" How did He empty Himself? Tell me. What was His emptying? What His humiliation? Was it because He wrought wonders? This both Paul and Peter did, so that this was not peculiar to the Son. What then means, "*Being made in the likeness of men*"? He had many things belonging to us, and many He had not; for instance, He was not born of wedlock. He did no sin. These things had He which no man has. He was not what he seemed only, but He was God also; He seemed to be a man, but He was not like the mass of men.

For He was like them in flesh. He means then, that He was not a mere man. Wherefore he says, "*in the likeness of men.*" For we indeed are soul and body, but He was God, and soul and body, wherefore he says, "*in the likeness.*" For lest when you hear that He emptied Himself, you should think that some change, and degeneracy, and loss is here; he says, while He remained what He was, He took that which He was not, and being made flesh He remained God, in that He was the Word. [John 1:14]

In this then He was like man, and for this cause Paul says, "*and in fashion.*" Not that His nature degenerated, nor that any confusion arose, but He became man in fashion. For when He had said that "*He took the form of a servant,*" he made bold to say this also, seeing that the first would silence all objectors; since when he says, "*In the likeness of sinful flesh,*" he says not that He had not flesh, but that that flesh sinned not, but was like to sinful flesh. Like in what? In nature, not in sin, therefore was His like a sinful soul. As then in the former case the term similarity was used, because He was not equal in everything, so here also there is similarity, because He is not equal in everything, as His not being born of wedlock, His being without sin, His being not a mere man. And he well said "*as a man,*" for He was not one of the many, but "*as*" one of the many. The Word who was God did not degenerate into man, nor was His substance changed, but he appeared as a man; not to delude us with a phantom, but to instruct us in humility. When therefore he says, "*as a man,*" this is what He means; since he calls Him a man elsewhere also, when he says, "*there is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus.*" [1 Timothy 2:5]

Thus much against these heretics. I must now speak against such as deny that He took a soul. If "*the form of God*" is "*perfect God,*" then the "*form of a servant*" is "*a perfect servant.*" Again, against the Arians. Here

concerning His divinity, we no longer find *"He became," "He took,"* but *"He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men";* here concerning his humanity we find *"He took, He became."* He became the latter, He took the latter; He was the former. Let us not then confound nor divide the natures. There is one God, there is one Christ, the Son of God; when I say *"One,"* I mean a union, not a confusion; the one Nature did not degenerate into the other, but was united with it.

"He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross." See, says one, He voluntarily became obedient; he was not equal to Him whom He obeyed. O you obstinate ones and unwise! This does not at all lower Him. For we too become obedient to our friends, yet this has no effect. He became obedient as a Son to His Father; He fell not thus into a servile state, but by this very act above all others guarded his wondrous Sonship, by thus greatly honoring the Father. He honored the Father, not that you should dishonor Him, but that you should the rather admire Him, and learn from this act, that He is a true Son, in honoring His Father more than all besides. No one has thus honored God. As was His height, such was the correspondent humiliation which He underwent. As He is greater than all, and no one is equal to Him, so in honoring His Father, He surpassed all, not by necessity, nor unwillingly, but this too is part of His excellence; yea, words fail me. Truly it is a great and unspeakable thing, that He became a servant; that He underwent death, is far greater; but there is something still greater, and more strange; why? All deaths are not alike; His death seemed to be the most ignominious of all, to be full of shame, to be accursed; for it is written, *"Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree."* [Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13] For this cause the Jews also eagerly desired to slay Him in this manner, to make Him a reproach, that if no one fell away from Him by reason of His death, yet they might from the manner of His death. For this

cause two robbers were crucified with Him, and He in the midst, that He might share their ill repute, and that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "*And he was numbered with the transgressors.*" [Isaiah 53:12] Yet so much the more does truth shine forth, so much the more does it become bright; for when His enemies plot such things against His glory, and it yet shines forth, so much the greater does the matter seem. Not by slaying Him, but by slaying Him in such sort did they think to make Him abominable, to prove Him more abominable than all men, but they availed nothing. And both the robbers also were such impious ones, (for it was afterward that the one repented,) that, even when on the cross, they reviled Him; neither the consciousness of their own sins, nor their present punishment, nor their suffering the same things themselves, restrained their madness. Wherefore the one spoke to the other, and silenced him by saying, "*Do you not even fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation?*" [Luke 23:40] So great was their wickedness. Wherefore it is written, "*God also highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name.*" When the blessed Paul has made mention of the flesh, he fearlessly speaks of all His humiliation. For until he had mentioned that He took the form of a servant, and while he was speaking of His Divinity, behold how loftily he does it, (loftily, I say, according to his power; for he speaks not according to His own worthiness, seeing that he is not able). "*Being in the form of God, He counted it not a prize to be equal with God.*" But when he had said, that He became Man, henceforth he fearlessly discourses of His low estate, being confident that the mention of His low estate would not harm His Divinity, since His flesh admitted this.

Ver. 9-11. "*Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave Him the Name which is above every name: that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the*

earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Let us say against the heretics, If this is spoken of one who was not incarnate, if of God the Word, how did He highly exalt Him? Was it as if He gave Him something more than He had before? He would then have been imperfect in this point, and would have been made perfect for our sakes. For if He had not done good deeds to us, He would not have obtained that honor! *"And gave Him the Name."* See, He had not even a name, as you say! But how, if He received it as His due, is He found here to have received it by grace, and as a gift? And that *"the Name which is above every name"*: and of what kind, let us see, is the Name? *"That at the Name of Jesus,"* says He, *"every knee should bow."* They (the heretics) explain name by glory. This glory then is above all glory, and this glory is in short that all worship Him! But ye hold yourselves far off from the greatness of God, who think that you know God, as He knows Himself, and from this it is plain, how far off you are from right thoughts of God. And this is plain from hence. Is this, tell me, glory? Therefore before men were created, before the angels or the archangels, He was not in glory. If this be the glory which is above every glory, (for this is the name that is *"above every name,"*) though He were in glory before, yet was He in glory inferior to this. It was for this then that He made the things that are, that He might be raised to glory, not from His own goodness, but because He required glory from us! See ye not their folly? See ye not their impiety?

Now if they had said this of Him that was incarnate, there had been reason, for God the Word allows that this be said of His flesh. It touches not His divine nature, but has to do altogether with the dispensation. What means *"of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth"*? It means the whole world, and angels, and men, and demons; or that both the just and the living and sinners,

"And every tongue," should "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." That is, that all should say so; and this is glory to the Father. Do you see how wherever the Son is glorified, the Father is also glorified? Thus too when the Son is dishonored, the Father is dishonored also. If this be so with us, where the difference is great between fathers and sons, much more in respect of God, where there is no difference, does honor and insult pass on to Him. If the world be subjected to the Son, this is glory to the Father. And so when we say that He is perfect, wanting nothing, and not inferior to the Father, this is glory to the Father, that he begot such a one. This is a great proof of His power also, and goodness, and wisdom, that He begot one no whit inferior, neither in wisdom nor in goodness. When I say that He is wise as the Father, and no whit inferior, this is a proof of the great wisdom of the Father; when I say that He is powerful as the Father, this is a proof of the Father's power. When I say that He is good as the Father, this is the greatest evidence of His goodness, that He begot such (a Son), in no whit less or inferior to Himself. When I say that He begot Him not inferior in substance but equal, and not of another substance, in this I again wonder at God, His power, and goodness, and wisdom, that He has manifested to us another, of Himself, such as Himself, except in His not being the Father. Thus whatsoever great things I say of the Son, pass on to the Father. Now if this small and light matter (for it is but a light thing to God's glory that the world should worship Him) is to the glory of God, how much more so are all those other things?

Let us then believe to His glory, let us live to His glory, for one is no use without the other; when we glorify Him rightly, but live not rightly, then do we especially insult Him, because we are enrolled under Him as a Master and Teacher, and yet despise Him, and stand in no dread of that fearful judgment seat. It is no wonder that the heathen live impurely; this

merits not such condemnation. But that Christians, who partake in such great mysteries, who enjoy so great glory, that they should live thus impurely, this is worst of all, and unbearable. For tell me; He was obedient to the uttermost, wherefore He received the honor which is on high. He became a servant, wherefore He is Lord of all, both of Angels, and of all other. Let us too not suppose then that we descend from what is our due, when we humble ourselves. For thus may we be more highly exalted; and with reason; then do we especially become admirable. For that the lofty man is really low, and that the lowly man is exalted, the sentence of Christ sufficiently declares. Let us however examine the matter itself. What is it to be humbled? Is it not to be blamed, to be accused, and calumniated? What is it to be exalted? It is to be honored, to be praised, to be glorified. Well. Let us see how the matter is. Satan was an angel, he exalted himself. What then? Was he not humbled beyond all other? Has he not the earth as his place? Is he not condemned and accused by all? Paul was a man, and humbled himself. What then? Is he not admired? Is he not praised? Is he not lauded? Is he not the friend of Christ? Wrought he not greater things than Christ? Did he not oftentimes command the devil as a captive slave? Did he not carry him about as an executioner? did he not hold him up to scorn? Held he not his head bruised under his feet? Did he not with much boldness beg of God that others too might do the same? Why am I saying? Absalom exalted himself, David humbled himself; which of the two was raised up, which became glorious? For what could be a more evident proof of humility than these words which that blessed Prophet spoke of Shimei, *"Let him curse, for the Lord has bidden him."* [2 Samuel 16:11] And if you please, we will examine the very cases themselves. The Publican humbled himself, although the case can hardly be called humility; but how? He answered in a right-minded manner. The Pharisee exalted himself. What

then? Let us also examine the matters. Let there be two men, both rich, and highly honored, and elevated by wisdom and power, and other worldly advantages; then let one of them seek honor from all, let him be angry if he receive it not, let him require more than is due and exalt himself; let the other despise the whole matter, bear himself unkindly towards no one on this account, and evade honor when offered to him. For it is not possible to obtain glory any other way than by fleeing from glory, for as long as we pursue it, it flies from us, but when we flee from it, then it pursues us. If you would be glorious, do not desire glory. If you would be lofty, do not make yourself lofty. And further, all honor him who does not grasp at honor, but spurn him who seeks it. For the human race somehow or other is fond of contention, and leans to contrary feeling. Let us therefore despise glory, for thus we shall be enabled to become lowly, or rather to become exalted. Exalt not yourself, that you may be exalted by another; he that is exalted by himself is not exalted by others, he who is humbled by himself is not humbled by others. Haughtiness is a great evil, it is better to be a fool than haughty; for in the one case, the folly is only a perversion of intellect, but in the other case it is still worse, and is folly joined with madness: the fool is an evil to himself; but the haughty man is a plague to others too. This misery comes of senselessness. One cannot be haughty-minded without being a fool; and he that is brimfull of folly is haughty.

Listen to the Wise Man, who says, *"I saw a man wise in his own conceit; there is more hope of a fool than of him."* [Proverbs 26:12] Do you see how it was not without reason I said that the evil of which I am speaking is worse than that of folly, for it is written, *"There is more hope of a fool than of him"*? Wherefore, Paul too said, *"Be not wise in your own conceits."* [Romans 12:16] Tell me what description of bodies do we say are in good health, those which are much inflated, and are inwardly full of

much air and water, or those which are kept low, and have their surface such as marks restraint? It is manifest that we should choose the latter. So, too with the soul, that which is puffed up has a worse disease than dropsy, while that which is under restraint is freed from all evil. How great then are the good things which lowliness of mind brings to us! What would you have? Forbearance? Freedom from anger? love to our fellow-men? soberness? attentiveness? All these good things spring from lowly-mindedness, and their contraries from haughtiness: the haughty man must needs be also insolent, a brawler, wrathful, bitter, sullen, a beast rather than a man. Are you strong, and proud thereat? You should rather be humble on this account. Why are you proud for a thing of nought? For even a lion is bolder than thou, a wild boar is stronger, and you are not even as a fly in comparison with them. Robbers too, and violaters of tombs, and gladiators, and even your own slaves, and those perchance who are more stupid still, are stronger than thou. Is this then a fit subject for praise? Are you proud of such a matter? Bury yourself for shame!

But are you handsome and beautiful? This is the boast of crows! You are not fairer than the peacock, as regards either its color or its plumage; the bird beats you in plumage, it far surpasses you in its feathers and in its color. The swan too is passing fair, and many other birds, with whom if you are compared you will see that you are nought. Often too worthless boys, and unmarried girls, and harlots, and effeminate men have had this boast; is this then a cause for haughtiness? But are you rich? Whence so? What have you? Gold, silver, precious stones! This is the boast of robbers also, of man-slayers, of those who work in the mines. That which is the labor of criminals becomes to you a boast! But do you adorn and deck yourself out? Well, we may see horses also decked out, and among the Persians camels too, and as for men, all those who are about the stage. Are you not ashamed

to boast yourself of these things, if unreasoning animals, and slaves, and man-slayers, and effeminate, and robbers, and violaters of tombs, share with you? Do you build splendid palaces? And what of this? Many jackdaws dwell in more splendid houses, and have more noble retreats. Do you not see how many, who were mad after money, have built houses in fields and desert places, that are retreats for jackdaws? But are you proud on account of your voice. You can by no means sing with clearer and sweeter tones than the swan or the nightingale. Is it for your varied knowledge of arts? But what is wiser than the bee in this; what embroiderer, what painter, what geometrician, can imitate her works? Is it for the fineness of your apparel? But here the spiders beat you. Is it for the swiftness of your feet? Again the first prize is with unreasoning animals, the hare, and the gazelle, and all the beasts which are not wanting in swiftness of foot. Have you traveled much? Not more than the birds; their transit is more easily made, they have no need of provisions for the way, nor beasts of burden, for their wings are all-sufficient for them; this is their vessel, this their beast of burden, this their car, this is even their wind, in short, all that a man can name. But are you clear sighted? Not as the gazelle; not as the eagle. Are you quick of hearing? The ass is more so. Of scent? The hound suffers you not to surpass him. Are you a good provider? Yet you are inferior to the ant. Do you gather gold? Yet not as the Indian ants. Are you proud because of your health? Unreasoning creatures are far better than we both in habit of body, and in independence; they fear no poverty. *"Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns."* [Matthew 6:26] *"And surely,"* He means, *"God has not created the irrational animals superior to ourselves."* Do you mark what want of consideration is here? Do you observe the lack of all investigation? Do you observe the great advantage which we derive from an investigation of the points? He, whose

mind is lifted up above all men, is found to be even lower than the irrational creatures.

But we will have pity upon him, and not follow his example; nor because the limits of our mortal nature are too narrow for his conceit of himself, will we proceed to lower him to the level of the beasts that are without reason, but will lift him up from thence, not for his own sake, for he deserves no better fate, but that we may set forth the lovingkindness of God, and the honor which He has vouchsafed us. For there are things, yes, there are things wherein the irrational animals have no participation with us. And of what sort are these? Piety, and a life based on virtue. Here you can never speak of fornicators, nor of effeminate persons, nor of murderers, for from them we have been severed. And what then is this which is found here? We know God, His Providence we acknowledge, and are imbued with true philosophy concerning immortality. Here let the irrational animals give place. They cannot contend with us in these points. We live in self-command. Here the irrational animals have nothing in common with us. For, while coming behind all of them, we exercise dominion over them; for herein lies the superiority of our dominion, that, while coming behind them, we yet reign over them: that you might be instructed that the cause of these things is, not yourself, but God who made you, and gave you reason. We set nets and toils for them, we drive them in, and they are at our mercy.

Self-command, a compliant temper, mildness, contempt of money, are prerogatives of our race; but since thou who art one of those blinded by presumption hast none of these, you do well in entertaining notions either above the level of mankind, or beneath the very irrational creatures. For this is the nature of folly and of audacity; it is either unduly elevated, or on the other hand it is equally depressed, never observing a proper proportion. We are equal to angels in this respect, that we have a Kingdom pledged to us,

the choir, unto which Christ is joined. He that is a man may be scourged, yet does he not succumb. A man laughs at death, is a stranger to fear and trembling, he does not covet more than he has. So that they all who are not like this are beneath the irrational animals. For when in the things of the body you would have the advantage, but hast no advantage in the things that concern the soul, how are you anything else than inferior to the irrational animals? For bring forward one of the vicious and unthinking, of those that are living in excess and to self. The horse surpasses him in warlike spirit, the boar in strength, the hare in swiftness, the peacock in grace, the swan in fineness of voice, the elephant in size, the eagle in keenness of sight, all birds in wealth. Whence then do you derive your title to rule the irrational creatures? From reason? But you have it not? For whosoever ceases to make a due use of it, is again inferior to them; for when though possessing reason he is more irrational than they, it had been better if he had never from the first become capable of exercising reason. For it is not the same thing after having received dominion to betray the trust, as to let pass the season to receive it. That sovereign, who is below the level of his guards, had better never have had on the purple. And it is the very self-same thing in this case. Knowing then that without virtue we are inferior to the very irrational animals, let us exercise ourselves therein, that we may become men, yea rather angels, and that we may enjoy the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 8 on Philippians

[Philippians 2:12-16]

"So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that you may be blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ."

The admonitions which we give ought to be accompanied with commendations; for thus they become even welcome, when we refer those whom we admonish to that measure of zeal which they have themselves exhibited; as Paul, for instance, did here; and observe with what singular discretion; *"So then, my beloved,"* he says; he did not say simply *"be obedient,"* not until he had first commended them in these words, *"even as you have always obeyed";* i.e. *"it is not other men, but your own selves, whom I bid you take example by."* *"Not as in my presence only, but much more in my absence."* And why, *"much more in my absence"*? *"You seemed perhaps at that time to be doing everything out of respect to me, and from a principle of shame, but that is no longer so; if then ye make it evident that you now strive more earnestly, it is also made evident that neither then was it done out of consideration to me, but for God's sake."* Tell me, what would you? *"not that you give heed to me, but that you 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling'";* for it is impossible for one, who lives devoid of fear, to set forth any high or commanding example; and he said

not merely "*with fear*," but "*and with trembling*," which is an excessive degree of fear. Such fear had Paul: and therefore he said, I fear "*lest having preached to others, I myself should be rejected*." [1 Corinthians 9:27] For if without the aid of fear temporal things can never be achieved, how much less spiritual matters; for I desire to know, who ever learned his letters without fear? Who has become a proficient in any art, without fear? But if, when the devil does not lie in the way, where indolence is the only obstacle, so much of fear is necessary merely in order that we may master that indolence which is natural to us; where there is so fierce a war, so great hindrances, how can we by any possibility be saved without fear?

And how may this fear be produced? If we but consider that God is everywhere present, hears all things, sees all things, not only whatsoever is done and said, but also all that is in the heart, and in the depth of the soul, for He is "*quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart*" [Hebrews 4:12], if we so dispose ourselves, we shall not do or say or imagine anything that is evil. Tell me, if you had to stand constantly near the person of a ruler, wouldest not thou stand there with fear? And how standing in God's presence, do you laugh and throw yourself back, and not conceive fear and dread? Let it never be that you despise His patient endurance, for it is to bring you to repentance that He is longsuffering. Whenever you eat, consider that God is present, for He is present; whenever you are preparing to sleep, or giving way to passion, if you are robbing another, or indulging in luxury, or whatever you are about, you will never fall into laughter, never be inflamed with rage. If this be your thought continually, you will continually be in "*fear and trembling*," forasmuch as you are standing beside the King. The architect, though he be experienced, though he be perfectly master of his art, yet stands with "*fear and trembling*," lest he fall down from the building. Thou too hast believed, you have performed many

good deeds, you have mounted high: secure yourself, be in fear as you stand, and keep a wary eye, lest you fall thence. For manifold are the spiritual sorts of wickedness which aim to cast you down. [Ephesians 6:12] *"Serve the Lord with fear,"* he says, *"and rejoice unto Him with trembling."* [Psalm 2:11] And how is rejoicing compatible with *"trembling"*? Yet this, be assured, is the only rejoicing; for when we perform some good work, and such as beseems those who do anything *"with trembling,"* then only do we rejoice. *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"*: he says not *"work,"* but *"work out,"* i.e. with much earnestness, with much diligence; but as he had said, *"with fear and trembling,"* see how he relieves their anxiety: for what does he say? *"It is God that works in you."* Fear not because I said, *"with fear and trembling."* I said it not with this view, that you should give up in despair, that you should suppose virtue to be somewhat difficult to be attained, but that you might be led to follow after it, and not spend yourself in vain pursuits; if this be the case, God will work all things. Do thou be bold; *"for it is God that works in you."* If then He works, it is our part to bring a mind ever resolute, clenched and unrelaxed. *"For it is God that works in you both to will and to work."* *"If He does Himself work in us to will, how do you exhort us? For if He works Himself even the will, the words, which you speak to us, have no meaning, 'that you have obeyed'; for we have not 'obeyed'; it is without meaning that you say, 'with fear and trembling'; for the whole is of God."* It was not for this that I said to you, *"for it is He that works in you both to will and to work,"* but my object was to relieve your anxiety. If you will, in that case He will *"work in you to will."* Be not affrighted, you are not worsted; both the hearty desire and the accomplishment are a gift from Him: for where we have the will, thenceforward He will increase our will. For instance, I desire to do some good work: He has wrought the good work itself, and by means of it He has

wrought also the will. Or he says this in the excess of his piety, as when he declares that our well-doings are gifts of grace.

As then, when he calls these gifts, he does not put us out of the pale of free will, but accords to us free will, so when he says, *"to work in us to will,"* he does not deprive us of free will, but he shows that by actually doing right we greatly increase our heartiness in willing. For as doing comes of doing, so of not doing comes not doing. Have you given an alms? You are the more incited to give. Have you refused to give? You have become so much the more disinclined. Have you practiced temperance for one day? You have an incitement for the next likewise. Have you indulged to excess? You have increased the inclination to self-indulgence. *"When a wicked man comes into the depth of vice, then he despises."* [Proverbs 18:3] As, then, when a man comes into the depth of iniquity, he turns a despiser; so when he comes into the depth of goodness, he quickens his exertions. For as the one runs riot in despair, so the second, under a sense of the multitude of good things, exerts himself the more, fearing lest he should lose the whole. *"For His good pleasure,"* he says, that is, *"for love's sake,"* for the sake of pleasing Him; to the end that what is acceptable to Him may take place; that things may take place according to His will. Here he shows, and makes it a ground of confidence, that He is sure to work in us, for it is His will that we live as He desires we should, and if He desires it, He Himself both works in us to this end, and will certainly accomplish it; for it is His will that we live aright. Do you see, how he does not deprive us of free will?

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings." The devil, when he finds that he has no power to withdraw us from doing right, wishes to spoil our reward by other means. For he has taken occasion to insinuate pride or vainglory, or if none of these things, then murmuring, or, if not this,

misgivings. Now then see how Paul sweeps away all these. He said on the subject of humility all that he did say, to overthrow pride; he spoke of vainglory, that is, *"not as in my presence only"*; he here speaks of *"murmuring and disputing."* But why, I want to know, when in the case of the Corinthians he was engaged in uprooting this evil tendency, did he remind them of the Israelites, but here has said nothing of the sort, but simply charged them? Because in that case the mischief was already done, for which reason there was need of a more severe stroke and a sharper rebuke; but here he is giving admonitions to prevent its being done. Severe measures then were not called for in order to secure those that had not yet been guilty; as in leading them to humility he did not subjoin the instance in the Gospel, wherein the proud were punished, but laid the charge as from God's lips; [Luke 16:23 and 18:14] and he addresses them as free, as children of pure birth, not as servants; for in the practice of virtue a rightminded and generous person is influenced by those who do well, but one of bad principles by those who do not do well; the one by the consideration of honor, the other of punishment. Wherefore also writing to the Hebrews, he said, bringing forward the example of Esau, *"Who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright"* [Hebrews 12:16]; and again, *"if he shrink back, my soul has no pleasure in him."* [Hebrews 10:38] And among the Corinthians were many who had been guilty of fornication. Therefore he said, *"Lest when I come again my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for many that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they committed. [2 Corinthians 12:21] That you may be blameless,"* says he, *"and harmless";* i.e. irreproachable, unsullied; for murmuring occasions no slight stain. And what means *"without disputing"*? Is it good, or not good? Do not dispute, he says, though it be trouble, or labor, or any thing else

whatever. He did not say, "*that you be not punished,*" for punishment is reserved for the thing; and this he made evident in the Epistle to the Corinthians; but here he said nothing of the sort; but he says, "*That you may be blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ.*" Observe thou that he is instructing these not to murmur? So that murmuring is left for unprincipled and graceless slaves. For tell me, what manner of son is that, who murmurs at the very time that he is employed in the affairs of his father, and is working for his own benefit? Consider, he says, that you are laboring for yourself, that it is for yourself that you are laying up; it is for those to murmur, when others profit by their labors, others reap the fruit, while they bear the burden; but he that is gathering for himself, why should he murmur? Because his wealth does not increase? But it is not so. Why does he murmur who acts of free-will, and not by constraint? It is better to do nothing than to do it with murmuring, for even the very thing itself is spoilt. And do you not remark that in our own families we are continually saying this; "*it were better for these things never to be done, than to have them done with murmuring*"? And we had often rather be deprived of the services some one owes us, than submit to the inconvenience of his murmuring. For murmuring is intolerable, most intolerable; it borders upon blasphemy. Otherwise why had those men to pay a penalty so severe? It is a proof of ingratitude; the murmurer is ungrateful to God, but whoso is ungrateful to God does thereby become a blasphemer. Now there were at that time, if ever, uninterrupted troubles, and dangers without cessation: there was no pause, no remission: innumerable were the horrors, which pressed upon them from all quarters; but now we have profound peace, a perfect calm.

Wherefore then murmur? Because you are poor? Yet think of Job. Or because sickness is your lot? What then if, with the consciousness of as many excellencies and as high attainments as that holy man, you had been so afflicted? Again reflect on him, how that for a long time he never ceased to breed worms, sitting upon a dunghill and scraping his sores; for the account says that *"(after a long time had passed,) then said his wife unto him, How long will you persist, saying, Yet a little while I bide in expectation? Speak some word against the Lord, and die."* [Job 2:9, Septuagint] But your child is dead? What then if you had lost all your children, and that by an evil fate, as he did? For you know, you know well, that it is no slight alleviation to take our place beside the sick man, to close the mouth, to shut the eyes, to stroke the beard, to hear the last accents; but that just man was vouchsafed none of these consolations, they all being overwhelmed at once. And what do I say? Had you, your own self, been bidden to slay and offer up your own son, and to see the body consumed, like that blessed Patriarch, what then would you have felt while erecting the altar, laying on the wood, binding the child? But there are some who revile you? What then would be your feelings did your friends, come to administer consolation to you, speak like Job's? For, as it is, innumerable are our sins, and we deserve to be reproached; but in that case he who was true, just, godly, who kept himself from every evil deed, heard the contrary of those laid to his charge by his friends. What then, tell me, if you had heard your wife exclaiming in accents of reproach; *"I am a vagabond and a servant, wandering from place to place, and from house to house, waiting until the sun goes down, that I may rest from the woes that encompass me."* [Job 2:9, Septuagint] Why do you speak so, O foolish woman? For is your husband to blame for these things? Nay, but the devil. *"Speak a word against God,"* she says, *"and die";*— and if thereupon the stricken man had

cursed and died, how would you be the better?— No disease you can name is worse than that of his, though you name ten thousand. It was so grievous, that he could no longer be in the house and under cover; such, that all men gave him up. For if he had not been irrecoverably gone, he would never have taken his seat without the city, a more pitiable object than those afflicted with leprosy; for these are both admitted into houses, and they do herd together; but he passing the night in the open air, was naked upon a dunghill, and could not even bear a garment upon his body. How so? Perhaps there would only have been an addition to his pangs. For *"I melt the clods of the earth,"* he says, *"while I scrape off my sore."* [Job 7:5, Septuagint] His flesh bred sores and worms in him, and that continually. Do you see how each one of us sickens at the hearing of these things? But if they are intolerable to hear, is the sight of them more tolerable? And if the sight of them is intolerable, how much more intolerable to undergo them? And yet that righteous man did undergo them, not for two or three days, but for a long while, and he did not sin, not even with his lips. What disease can you describe to me like this, so exquisitely painful? For was not this worse than blindness? *"I look on my food,"* he says, *"as a fetid mass."* [Job 6:7] And not only this, but that which affords cessation to others, night and sleep, brought no alleviation to him, nay, were worse than any torture. Hear his words: *"Why do you scare me with dreams, and terrify me through visions? If it be morning, I say, When will it be evening?"* [Job 7:14], and he murmured not. And there was not only this; but reputation in the eyes of the world was added; for they immediately concluded him to be guilty of endless crimes, judging from all that he suffered. And accordingly this is the consideration, which his friends urged upon him; *"Know therefore that God exacts less of you than your iniquities deserve."* [Job 11:6] Wherefore he himself said, *"But now they that are younger than I have me in derision,*

whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock." [Job 30:1] And was not this worse than many deaths? Yet though assaulted on all sides by a flood like this, when there raged around him a fearful storm, clouds, rain, lightnings, whirling winds, and waterspouts, he remained himself unmoved, seated as it were in the midst of this surge, thus awful and overwhelming, as in a perfect calm, and no murmur escaped him; and this before the gift of grace, before that anything was declared concerning a resurrection, before anything concerning hell and punishment and vengeance. Yet we, who hear both Prophets and Apostles and Evangelists speaking to us, and have innumerable examples set before us, and have been taught the tidings of a Resurrection, yet harbor discontent, though no man can say that such a fate as this has been his own. For if one has lost money, yet not all that great number of sons and daughters, or if he has, perchance it was that he had sinned; but for him, he lost them suddenly, in the midst of his sacrifices, in the midst of the service which he was rendering to God. And if any man has at one blow lost property to the same amount, which can never be, yet he has not had the further affliction of a sore all over his body, he has not scraped the humors that covered him; or if this likewise has been his fate, yet he has not had men to upbraid and reproach him, which is above all things calculated to wound the feelings, more than the calamities we suffer. For if when we have persons to cheer and console us in our misfortunes, and to hold out to us fair prospects, we yet despond, consider what it was to have men upbraiding him. If the words, *"I looked for some to have pity, but there was no man, and for comforters, but I found none"* [Psalm 69:20], describe intolerable misery, how great an aggravation to find revilers instead of comforters! *"Miserable comforters are you all"* [Job 16:2], he says. If we did but revolve these subjects continually in our minds, if we well weighed them, no ills of this present time could ever have force to

disturb our peace, when we turned our eyes to that athlete, that soul of adamant, that spirit impenetrable as brass. For as though he had borne about him a body of brass or stone, he met all events with a noble and constant spirit.

Taking these things to heart, let us do everything *"without murmuring and disputing."* Is it some good work that you have before you, and do you murmur? Wherefore? Are you then forced? For that there are many about you who force you to murmur, I know well, says he. This he intimated by saying, *"in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation"*; but it is this that deserves admiration, that we admit no such feeling when under galling provocation. For the stars too give light in the night, they shine in the dark, and receive no blemish to their own beauty, yea they even shine the brighter; but when light returns, they no longer shine so. Thus thou too dost appear with the greater lustre, while you hold straight in the midst of the crooked. This it is which deserves our admiration, the being *"blameless"*; for that they might not urge this plea, he himself set it down by anticipation. What means *"holding fast the word of life"*? I.e. *"being destined to live, being of those that are gaining salvation."* Observe how immediately he subjoins the rewards, which are in reserve. Lights [i.e. luminaries], he says, retain the principle of light; so do ye the principle of life. What means *"the word of life"*? Having the seed of life, i.e. having pledges of life, holding life itself, i.e. *"having in yourselves the seed of life,"* this is what he calls *"the word of life."* Consequently the rest are all dead, for by these words he signified as much; for otherwise those others likewise would have held *"the word of life."* *"That I may have whereof to glory,"* he says; what is this? I too participate in your good deeds, he says. So great is your virtue, as not only to save yourselves, but to render me illustrious. Strange kind of *"boasting,"* thou blessed Paul! You are scourged, driven about, reviled for

our sakes: therefore he adds, *"in the day of Christ, that I did not run,"* he says, *"in vain, nor labored in vain,"* but I always have a right to glory, he means, that I did not run in vain.

"Yea, and if I am offered." He said not, *"and if I die even,"* nor did he when writing to Timothy, for there, too, he has made use of the same expression, *"For I am already being offered."* [2 Timothy 4:6] He is both consoling them about his own death, and instructing them to bear gladly the death that is for Christ's sake. I have become, he says, as it were a libation and a sacrifice. O blessed soul! His bringing them to God he calls a sacrifice. It is much better to present a soul than to present oxen. *"If, then, over and above this offering,"* he says, *"I add myself, my death as a libation, I rejoice."* For this he implies, when he says, *"Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service, I joy and rejoice with you all; and in the same manner do ye also joy and rejoice with me."* Why do you rejoice with them? Do you see that he shows that it is their duty to rejoice? On the one hand then, I rejoice in being made a libation; on the other, I rejoice with you, in having presented a sacrifice; *"and in the same manner do ye also joy and rejoice with me,"* that I am offered up; *"rejoice with me," "who rejoice in myself."* So that the death of the just is no subject for tears, but for joy. If they rejoice, we should rejoice with them. For it is misplaced for us to weep, while they rejoice. *"But,"* it is urged, *"we long for our wonted intercourse."* This is a mere pretext and excuse; and that it is so, mark what he enjoins: *"Rejoice with me, and joy."* Do you miss your wonted intercourse? If you were yourself destined to remain here, there would be reason in what you say, but if after a brief space you will overtake him who has departed, what is that intercourse which thou dost seek? For it is only when he is forever severed from him that a man misses the society of another, but if he will go the same way that you will go, what is the

intercourse which you long for? Why do we not bewail all that are upon foreign travel? Do we not just a little, and cease after the first or the second day? If you long for your wonted intercourse with him, weep so far only. *"It is no evil that I suffer,"* says he, *"but I even rejoice in going to Christ, and do ye not rejoice."* *"Rejoice with me."* Let us too rejoice when we see a righteous man dying, and yet more even when any of the desperately wicked; for the first is going to receive the reward of his labors, but the other has abated somewhat from the score of his sins. But it is said, perhaps he might have altered, had he lived. Yet God would never have taken him away, if there had been really a prospect of an alteration. For why should not He who orders all events for our salvation, allow him the opportunity, who gave promise of pleasing Him? If He leaves those, who never alter, much more those that do. Let then the sharpness of our sorrow be everywhere cut away, let the voice of lamentation cease. Let us thank God under all events: let us do all things without murmuring; let us be cheerful, and let us become pleasing to Him in all things, that we may also attain the good things to come, by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 9 on Philippians

[Philippians 2:19-21]

"But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ."

He had said, *"have fallen out unto the progress of the Gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard."* [Philippians 1:12-13] Again, *"Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith."* [Philippians 2:17] By these words he strengthened them. Perchance they might suspect that his former words were spoken just to comfort them. What then? *"I send Timothy unto you,"* says he; for they desired to hear all things that concerned him. And wherefore said he not, *"that you may know my state,"* but, *"that I may know yours"*? Because Epaphroditus would have reported his state before the arrival of Timothy. Wherefore further on he says, But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother [Philippians 2:25]; but I wish to learn of your affairs. For it is likely that he had remained long time with Paul through his bodily weakness. So that he says, I wish to *"know your state."* See then how he refers everything to Christ, even the mission of Timothy, saying, *"I hope in the Lord Jesus,"* that is, I am confident that God will facilitate this for me, that I too may be of good courage, when I know your state. As I refreshed you when you heard the very things of me which you had prayed for, that the Gospel had advanced, that its enemies were put to shame, that the means by which they thought to injure, rather made me rejoice; thus too do I wish to learn of your affairs, that I too may be of good

courage when I know your state. Here he shows that they ought to rejoice for his bonds, and to be conformed to them, for they begot in him great pleasure; for the words, "*that I too may be of good comfort*," imply, just as you are.

Oh, what longing had he toward Macedonia! He testifies the same to the Thessalonians, as when he says, "*But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season*," etc. [1 Thessalonians 2:17] And here he says, "*I hope to send Timothy*" that I may "*know your state*," which is a proof of excessive care: for when he could not himself be with them, he sent his disciples, as he could not endure to remain, even for a little time, in ignorance of their state. For he did not learn all things by revelation of the Spirit, and for this we can see some reason; for if the disciples had believed that it were so, they would have lost all sense of shame, but now from expectation of concealment, they were more easily corrected. In a high degree did he call their attention by saying, "*that I too may be of good comfort*," and rendered them more zealous, so that, when Timothy came he might not find any other state of things, and report it to him. He seems to have acted in like sort in his own person, when he delayed his coming to the Corinthians, that they might repent; wherefore he wrote, "*to spare you I forbore to come to Corinth*." [2 Corinthians 1:23] For his love was manifested not simply in reporting his own state, but in his desire to learn of theirs; for this is the part of a soul which has a care of others, which takes thought for them, which is always wrestling for them.

At the same time too, he honors them by sending Timothy. "*What do you say? Do you send Timothy? And wherefore?*" Because "*I have no one likeminded*"; that is, none of those whose care is like mine, none who "*will care truly for you*." [Philippians 2:20] Had he then no one of those who were with him? No one likeminded, that is, who has yearnings and takes

thought for you as I do. No one would lightly choose, he means, to make so long a journey for this purpose. Timothy is the one with me who loves you. For I might have sent others, but there was none like him. This then is that likemindedness, to love the disciples as the master loves them. *"Who,"* says he, *"will truly care for you,"* that is, as a father. *"For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ"* [Philippians 2:21], their own comfort, their own safety. This too he writes to Timothy. But why does he lament such things as these? To teach us his hearers not to fall in like sort, to teach his hearers not to seek for remission from toil; for he who seeks remission from toil, seeks not the things that are Christ's, but his own. We ought to be prepared against every toil, against every distress.

Ver. 22. *"You know the proof of him, that as a child serves a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel."*

And that I speak not at random, *"you yourselves,"* he says, *"know, that as a child serves a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel."* He presents then Timothy to them, and with reason, that he might enjoy much honor from them. This too he does when he writes to the Corinthians, and he says, *"Let no man therefore despise him, for he works the work of the Lord as I also do."* [1 Corinthians 16:10] This he said not as caring for him, but for those who receive him, that they might receive a great reward.

Ver. 23. *"Him therefore,"* he says, *"I hope to send immediately, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me,"* that is, when I see where I stand, and what end my affairs will have.

Ver. 24. *"But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come to you shortly."*

I am not therefore sending him, as though I myself would not come, but that I may be of good courage when I know your state, that even in the

mean time I may not be ignorant of it. *"But I trust in the Lord,"* says he. See how he makes all things depend on God, and speaks nothing of his own mind. That is, God willing.

Ver. 25. *"But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier."*

And him too he sends with the same praises as Timothy, for he commended him on these two points; first, in that he loved them, when he says, *"who will care truly for you"*; and secondly, in that he had approved himself in the Gospel. And for the same reason, and in the same terms, he praises this man also: and how? By calling him a brother, and a fellow-worker, and not stopping at this point, but also *"fellow-soldier,"* he showed how he shared in his dangers, and testifies of him the same things which he testifies of himself. For *"fellow-soldier"* is more than *"fellow-worker"*; for perchance he gave aid in quiet matters, yet not so in wars and dangers; but in saying *"fellow-soldier,"* he showed this too.

Ver. 25. *"To send to you your messenger, and minister to my needs";* that is, I give you your own, since I send to you him that is your own, or, perhaps, that is your Teacher. Again he adds many things concerning his love, in saying,

Ver. 26, 27. *"Since he longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick near unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow."*

Here he aims at a farther point, making it manifest, that Epaphroditus too was well aware, how he was beloved of them. And this is no light thing toward loving. You know how he was sick, he says; and he grieved that on his recovery he did not see you, and free you from the grief you had by reason of his sickness. Here too he gives another reason for sending so late

to them, not from any remissness, but he kept Timothy because he had no one else, (for, as he had written, he had *"no one likeminded,"*) and Epaphroditus because of his sickness. He then shows that this was a long sickness, and had consumed much time, by adding, *"for he was sick near unto death."* You see how anxious Paul is to cut off from his disciples all occasion of slighting or contempt, and every suspicion that his not coming was because he despised them. For nothing will have such power to draw a disciple toward one, as the persuasion that his superior cares for him, and that he is full of heaviness on his account, for this is the part of exceeding love. Because *"you have heard,"* he says, *"that he was sick; for he was sick near unto death."* And that I am not making an excuse, hear what follows. *"But God had mercy on him."* What do you say, O heretic? Here it is written, that God's mercy retained and brought back again him who was on the point of departure. And yet if the world is evil, it is no mercy to leave a man in the evil. Our answer to the heretic is easy, but what shall we say to the Christian? For he perchance will question, and say, *"if to depart and to be with Christ is far better,"* how says he that he has obtained mercy? I would ask why the same Apostle says, that *"it is more needful to abide with you"*? For as it was needful for him, so too for this man, who would hereafter depart to God with more exceeding riches, and greater boldness. Hereafter that would take place, even if it did not now, but the winning souls is at an end for those who have once departed there. In many places too, Paul speaks according to the common habits of his hearers, and not every where in accordance with his own heavenly wisdom: for he had to speak to men of the world who still feared death. Then he shows how he esteemed Epaphroditus, and thence he gets for him respect, by saying, that his preservation was so useful to himself, that the mercy which had been shown to Epaphroditus reached him also. Moreover, without this the present

life is a good; were it not so, why does Paul rank with punishment untimely deaths? As when he says, *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and not a few sleep"* [1 Corinthians 11:30]; for the future life is not (merely) better than an evil state, since (then) it were not good, but better than a good state.

"Lest I should have," he says, *"sorrow upon sorrow"*; sorrow from his death in addition to that which sprung from his sickness. By this he shows how much he prized Epaphroditus.

Ver. 28. *"I have sent him therefore the more diligently."* What means *"more diligently"*? It is, without procrastination, without delay, with much speed, having bidden him lay all aside, and to go to you, that he might be freed from heaviness; for we rejoice not on hearing of the health of those we love, so much as when we see them, and chiefly so when this happens contrary to hope, as it was in the case of Epaphroditus.

"I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that when you see him again, you may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful." How *"less sorrowful"*? Because if you rejoice, I too rejoice, and he too joys at a pleasure of such sort, and I shall be *"less sorrowful."* He said not sorrowless, but *"less sorrowful,"* to show that his soul never was free from sorrow: for he who said, *"Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?"* [2 Corinthians 11:29], when could such an one be free from sorrow? That is, this despondency I now cast off.

Ver. 29. *"Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy."*

"In the Lord" either means spiritually and with much zeal, or rather *"in the Lord"* means God willing. Receive him in a manner worthy of saints, as saints should be received with all joy.

All this he does for their sakes, not for that of his messengers, for greater gain has the doer than the receiver of a good deed. *"And such hold*

in honor," that is, receive him in a manner worthy of saints.

Ver. 30. *"Because for the work of Christ he came near unto death, hazarding his life, to supply that which was lacking in your service towards me."*

This man had been publicly sent by the city of the Philippians, who had come as minister to Paul, and perchance bringing him some contribution, for toward the end of the Epistle he shows that he also brought him money, when he says, *"Having received of Epaphroditus the things that came from you."* [Philippians 4:18]

It is probable then, that on his arrival at the city of Rome, he found Paul in great and urgent peril, so that those who were accustomed to resort to him were unable safely to do so, but were themselves in peril by their very attendance; which is wont to happen chiefly in very great dangers, and the exceeding wrath of kings, (for when any one has offended the king, and is cast into prison, and is strictly guarded, then even his servants are debarred from access, which probably then befell Paul,) and that Epaphroditus, being of a noble nature, despised all danger, that he might go in unto him, and minister unto him, and do everything which need required. He therefore sets forth two facts, by which he gains for him their respect; the one, that he was in jeopardy well near unto death, he says, for my sake; the other, that in so suffering he was representing their city, so that the recompense for that his peril would be accounted to those who sent him, as if the city had sent him as their ambassador, so that a kind reception of him and approval of what he had done may rather be called a participation in the things that he had dared. And he said not, *"for my sake,"* but obtains the more credit for his words, by saying, *"because for the work of God,"* since he acted not for my sake, but for God's sake *"he was near unto death."* What then? Though by the providence of God he died not, yet he himself

regarded not his life, and gave himself up to any suffering that might befall him, so as not to remit his attendance on me. And if he gave himself up to death to attend on Paul, much more would he have endured this for the Gospel's sake. Or rather, this also had been for the Gospel's sake, even to have died for Paul. For we may bind about our brows the crown of martyrdom, not only by refusing to sacrifice, but such causes as these also make death martyrdom, and if I may say something startling, these latter do so far more than the former. For he who dares to face death for the lesser cause, will much rather for the greater. Let us therefore, when we see the Saints in danger, regard not our life, for it is impossible without daring ever to perform any noble act, but need is that he who takes thought beforehand for his safety here, should fall from that which is to come.

"To supply," he says, *"your lack of service toward me."* What is this? The city was not present, but by sending him, it fulfilled through him all service toward me. He therefore supplied your lack of service, so that for this reason too he deserves to enjoy much honor, since, what ye all should have done, this has he performed on your behalf. Here he shows that there is also a foregoing service rendered by those in safety to those in danger, for so he speaks of the lack, and the lack of service. Do you see the spirit of the Apostle? These words spring not from arrogance, but from his great care towards them; for he calls the matter a *"service"* and a *"lack,"* that they may not be puffed up, but be moderate, nor think that they have rendered some great thing, but rather be humble-minded.

For we owe the saints a debt, and are not doing them a favor. For as supplies are due by those who are in peace and not engaged in war to such as stand in the army and fight (for these stand on their behalf), thus too is it here. For if Paul had not taught, who would have cast him into prison? Wherefore we ought to minister to the Saints. For is it not absurd to

contribute to an earthly king, when engaged in war, all that he wants, as clothing and food, not according to his need alone, but abundantly, while to the King of Heaven, when engaged in war, and contending against far more bitter foes (for it is written, "*our wrestling is not against flesh and blood*") [Ephesians 6:12], we will not supply urgent necessity? What folly is this! What ingratitude! What base love of gain! But, as it seems, the fear of man has greater force with us than hell, and the future torments. For this cause, in truth, all things are turned upside down; for political affairs are daily accomplished with much earnestness, and one must not be left behind, while of spiritual things there is no account taken at all; but the things which are demanded of us of necessity, and with compulsion, as though we were slaves, and against our wills, are laid down by us with much readiness, while such as are asked from willing minds, and as if from free men, are again deficient. I speak not against all, but against those who are behindhand with these supplies. For might not God have made these contributions compulsory? Yet He would not, for He has more care of you than of those whom you support. Wherefore He would not that you should contribute of necessity, since there is no recompense. And yet many of those who stand here are lower minded than the Jews. Consider how great things the Jews gave, tithes, first-fruits, tithes again, and again other tithes, and besides this thirteenths, and the shekel, and no one said, how much they devour; for the more they receive, the greater is the reward. They say not, They receive much, they are gluttons; which words I hear now from some. They for their part, while they are building houses, and buying estates, still think they have nothing; but if any priest is clothed in dress more bright than usual, and enjoys more than what is necessary for his sustenance, or has an attendant, that he may not be forced himself to act unbecomingly, they set the matter down for riches. And in truth we are rich even at this

rate, and they admit it against their will; for we, though we have but little, are rich, while they, though they get everything about them, are poor.

How far shall our folly extend? Does it not suffice to our punishment that we do no good deed, but must we add to it the punishment of evil speaking? For if what he has were your gifts, you lose your reward by upbraiding him for what you gave. In a word, if you gave it, why do you upbraid him? You have already borne witness to his poverty, by saying that what he has are your gifts. Why then do you upbraid? You should not have given, did you intend so to do. But do you speak thus, when another gives? It is then more grievous, in that when you yourself hast not given, you upbraid for another man's good deeds. How great reward do you think those who are thus spoken of will receive? It is for God's sake they thus suffer. How and wherefore? Had they so willed, they might have taken up a trader's life, even though they received it not from their ancestors. For I hear many speaking thus at random, when we say that a certain man is poor. Had he willed, they say, he might have been rich, and then tauntingly add, His father, his grandfather, and I know not who was so; but now see what a robe he wears! But what? Tell me, ought he to go about naked? You then start nice questionings on these points, but see lest you thus speakest against yourself. Listen to that exhortation of Christ, which says, "*Judge not that you be not judged.*" [Matthew 7:1] He might, it is true, if he had willed, have led a trader's or a merchant's life, and would surely not have lacked. But he would not. What then, says one, is he here profited? Tell me, what is he profited? Does he wear silken robes? Does he proudly clear his way through the forum with a troop of followers? Is he borne along on horseback? Does he build houses, having where to dwell? If he act so, I too accuse him, and spare him not, but declare that he is unworthy of the priesthood. For how can he exhort others not to spend their time on these

superfluities, who cannot advise himself? But if he has sufficient for support, is he therefore doing wrong? Would you have him lead a vagabond life, and beg? Would you, his disciple, not also be put to shame? But if your father in the flesh did this, you would think shame of the thing. If your spiritual father be compelled so to do, will you not veil your head, and even think you are sinking into the earth? It is written, *"A father's dishonor is a reproach to the children."* [Sirach 3:11] But what? Should he perish with famine? This were not like a pious man; for God wills it not. But what do they straightway philosophize? It is written, say they, *"Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, neither two coats, nor yet staves"* [Matthew 10:9-10], while these men have three or four garments, and beds well spread. I am forced now to heave a bitter sigh, and, but that it had been indecorous, I had wept too! How so? Because we are such curious searchers into the motes of others, while we feel not the beams in our own eyes. Tell me, why do you not say this to yourself? The answer is, Because the command is laid only on our Teachers. When then Paul says, *"having food and covering we shall be therewith content"* [1 Timothy 6:8], says he this only to Teachers? By no means, but to all men; and this is clear, if we will begin farther back. For what does he say? *"Godliness with contentment is great gain [1 Timothy 6:6]; for we brought nothing into this world, it is certain that neither can we carry anything out"* [1 Timothy 6:7]; he then straightway adds, *"And having food and covering, we shall be therewith content; but they that desire to be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts."* [1 Timothy 6:8-9] You see that this is spoken to all; and how is it when he says again, *"Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof"* [Romans 13:14], is not this said absolutely to all? And what when he says, *"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall bring to nought both it and them"* [1 Corinthians 6:13]; or

what when he says, "*But she that gives herself to pleasure, is dead while she lives*" [1 Timothy 5:6], speaking of a widow. Is then the widow a Teacher? Has not he said himself, "*But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man*"? [1 Timothy 2:12] But if a widow, in old age, (and age has need of great attendance,) and a woman's nature too, (for the woman's sex, being weak, has need of more refreshment,) if then, where there is both the age and the nature, he suffers her not to live in luxury, but even says that she is dead, (for he did not simply forbid a life of luxury, but said, "*she who gives herself to luxury is dead while she lives,*") and thus has cut her off, (for she that is dead is cut off,) what indulgence then will any man have, who does those things, for which a woman and an aged one too is punished?

Yet no one gives a thought to these things, no one searches them out. And this I have been compelled to say, not from any wish to free the priests from these charges, but to spare you. They indeed suffer no harm at your hands, even if it is with cause and justice that they are thus charged of being greedy of gain; for, whether you speak, or whether you forbear, they must there give an account to the Judge, so that your words hurt them not at all; but if your words are false besides, they for their part gain by these false accusations, while you hurt yourselves by these means. But it is not so with you; for be the things true, which you bring against them, or be they false, you speak ill of them to your hurt. And how so? If they be true, in that you judge your Teachers, and subvert order, you do it to your hurt. For if we must not judge a brother, much less a Teacher. But if they be false, the punishment and retribution is intolerable; for of "*every idle word you shall give account.*" [Matthew 12:36] For your sake then I thus act and labor.

But as I said, no one searches out these things, no one busies himself about these things, no one communes with himself on any of these things.

Would ye that I should add still more? *"Whosoever forsakes not all that he has, says the Christ, is not worthy of Me."* [Luke 14:33; Matthew 10:37] What when he says, *"It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven"*? [Matthew 19:23; Mark 10:24] What when he says again, *"Woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation"*? [Luke 6:24] No one searches this out, no one bears it in mind, no one reasons with himself, but all sit as severe inquisitors on other men's cases. Yet this is to make themselves sharers in the charges. But listen, that for your own sake I may free the priests from the charges, which you say lie against them, for the persuasion that they transgress the law of God, inclines you not a little towards evil. Come then, let us examine this matter. Christ said, *"Provide neither gold nor silver, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor girdle, nor yet staves."* [Matthew 10:9-10] What then? Tell me, did Peter transgress this command? Surely he did so, in having a girdle and a garment, and shoes, for listen to the words of the Angel, *"Gird yourself, and bind on your sandals."* [Acts 12:8] And yet he had no such great need of sandals, for at that season a man may go even unshod; their great use is in the winter, and yet he had them. What shall we say of Paul, when he writes thus to Timothy, *"Do your diligence to come before winter"*? [2 Timothy 4:21] He gives him orders too and says, *"The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus bring when you come, and the books, especially the parchments."* [2 Timothy 4:13] See he speaks of a cloak, and no one can say that he had not another which he wore; for if he did not wear one at all, it were superfluous to order this one to be brought, and if he could not be without one to wear, it is clear he had a second.

What shall we say of his remaining *"two whole years in his own hired dwelling"*? [Acts 28:30] Did then this chosen vessel disobey Christ? This man who said, *"Yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me"*

[Galatians 2:20], concerning whom Christ testified, saying, "*He is a chosen vessel unto Me*"? [Acts 9:15] I ought to leave this difficulty with you, without supplying any solution to the question. I ought to exact of you this penalty for your negligence in the Scriptures, for this is the origin of all such difficulties. For we know not the Scriptures, we are not trained in the law of God, and so we become sharp inquirers into the faults of others, while we take no account of our own. I ought then to have exacted from you this penalty. But what shall I do? Fathers freely give to their sons many things beyond what is fitting: when their fatherly compassion is kindled, on seeing their child with downcast look, and wasted with grief, they themselves also feel sharper pangs than he, and rest not until they have removed the ground of his dejection.

So be it at least here, be ye at least dejected at not receiving, that you may receive well. What then is it? They opposed not, far be it; but diligently followed the commands of Christ, for those commands were but for a season, and not enduring; and this I say not from conjecture, but from the divine Scriptures. And how? Luke relates that Christ said to His disciples, "*When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and girdle, and shoes, did you lack anything? And they said nothing. But for the future provide them.*" [Luke 22:35] But tell me, what could he do? Could he have but one coat? How then? If need was that this be washed, should he, because without it, stay at home? Should he without it go abroad in an unbecoming manner, when need called? Consider what a thing it would have been that Paul, who made the circuit of the world with such great success, should remain at home for want of raiment, and thus hinder his noble work. And what if violent cold had set in, or rain had drenched it, or perhaps frozen in, how could he dry his raiment? Must he again remain without it? And what if cold had deprived his body of strength? Must he

waste away with disease, and be unable to speak? For hear what he says to Timothy, to prove that they were not furnished with adamantine bodies, *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities."* [1 Timothy 5:23] And again, when he speaks of another, *"I counted it necessary to send to you your messenger, and minister to my needs."* [Philippians 2:25] *"For indeed he was sick, near unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also."* [Philippians 2:27] So that they were subject to every sort of sickness. What then? Must they die? By no means. For what cause then did Christ at that time give them that command? To show His own power, and to prove that in after times He was able to do it, though He did it not. But wherefore did He not do it? They were much more admirable than the Israelites, whose shoes did not wax old, neither their garments, and that too while they were journeying through that desert where the glowing rays of the sun strike so hot, that they are capable of consuming even stones. [cf. Deuteronomy 29:5] Why then did he do this? For your sake. For since you would not remain in health, but be full of wounds, He gave you that which might serve for medicine. And this is hence manifest; could He not Himself have fed them? He that gave to you, who wast an enemy with Him, would He not much more have given to Paul? He who gave to the Israelites, those murmurers, those fornicators, those idolaters, would He not much more have given to Peter, who spent all for His sake? He who suffered wicked men to possess anything, would He not much more have freely given to John, who for Him forsook even his father? Yet he would not: through your hands he feeds them, that you may be sanctified. And see the excess of His lovingkindness. He chose that His disciples should be in want, that you might be a little refreshed.

For if He had freed them from all want, they would have been much more admirable, far more glorious. But then that which is to you salvation

would have been cut off. God willed not then that they should be admirable, that you might be saved, but that they should rather be lowered. He has suffered them to be less accounted of, that you might be able to be saved. The Teacher who receives is not equally revered, but he who receives not is chiefly honored. But then in the latter case the disciple is not benefited, he is hindered of his fruit. Do you see the wisdom of God who thus loves man? For as He Himself sought not His own glory, nor had respect to Himself, but when He was in glory, chose to be dishonored for your sake, thus too is it in the case of your Teachers. When they might have been highly revered, He preferred that they should be subject to contempt for your sake, that you might be able to profit, that you might be able to be rich. For he is in want of the things of this life, that you may abound in things spiritual. If then He might have made them above all want, He showed that for your sake He suffers them to be in want. Knowing then these things, let us turn ourselves to well doing, not to accusations. Let us not be overcurious about the failings of others, but take account of our own; let us reckon up the excellences of other men, while we bear in mind our faults; and thus shall we be well pleasing to God. For he who looks at the faults of others, and at his own excellences, is injured in two ways; by the latter he is carried up to arrogance, through the former he falls into listlessness. For when he perceives that such an one has sinned, very easily will he sin himself; when he perceives that he has in anything excelled, very easily becomes he arrogant. He who consigns to oblivion his own excellences, and looks at his failings only, while he is a curious enquirer of the excellences, not the sins, of others, is profited in many ways. And how? When he sees that such an one has done excellently, he is raised to emulate the same; when he sees that he himself has sinned, he is rendered humble and modest. If we act thus, if we thus regulate ourselves, we shall be able to

obtain the good things which are promised, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 10 on Philippians

[Philippians 3:1-3]

"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

[Dejection] and care, whenever they strain the soul beyond due measure, bereave it of its native force. And therefore Paul relieves the Philippians, who were in great despondency, and they were in despondency because they did not know how matters were with Paul; they were in despondency because they thought that it was already over with him, because of the preaching, because of Epaphroditus. It is in giving them assurance on all these points that he introduces the words, *"Finally, my brethren, rejoice."* *"You no longer have,"* he says, *"cause for despondency. You have Epaphroditus, for whose sake you were grieved; you have Timothy; I am myself coming to you; the Gospel is gaining ground. What is henceforth wanting to you? Rejoice!"*

Now he calls the Galatians indeed *"children"* [Galatians 4:19], but these *"brethren."* For when he aims either to correct anything or to show his fondness, he calls them *"children"*; but when he addresses them with greater honor, *"brethren"* is the title. *"Finally, my brethren,"* he says, *"rejoice in the Lord."* He said rightly *"in the Lord,"* not *"after the world."* for this is no rejoicing. These tribulations, he says, which are according to Christ bring joy. *"To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs."* Do you mark how he forbears to bring in

the exhortation at the beginning? But after he had given them much commendation, after he had shown his admiration of them, then he does this, and again repeats his commendation. For this mode of speech seems to bear somewhat hard upon them. Wherefore he overshadows it on every side. But whom does he style "*dogs*"? There were at this place some of those, whom he hints at in all his Epistles, base and contemptible Jews, greedy of vile lucre and fond of power, who, desiring to draw aside many of the faithful, preached both Christianity and Judaism at the same time, corrupting the Gospel. As then they were not easily discernible, therefore he says, "*beware of the dogs*": the Jews are no longer children; once the Gentiles were called dogs, but now the Jews. Wherefore? Because as the Gentiles were strangers both to God and to Christ, even so are these become this now. And he shows forth their shamelessness and violence, and their infinite distance from the relation of children, for that the Gentiles were once called "*dogs*," hear what the Canaanitish woman says, "*Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*" [Matthew 15:27] But that they might not have this advantage, since even dogs are at the table, he adds that, whereby he makes them aliens also, saying, "*Beware of the evil workers*"; he admirably expressed himself, "*beware of the evil workers*"; they work, he means, but for a bad end, and a work that is much worse than idleness, plucking up what is laid in goodly order.

"*Beware*," he says, "*of the concision.*" The rite of circumcision was venerable in the Jews' account, forasmuch as the Law itself gave way thereto, and the Sabbath was less esteemed than circumcision. For that circumcision might be performed the Sabbath was broken; but that the Sabbath might be kept, circumcision was never broken; and mark, I pray, the dispensation of God. This is found to be even more solemn than the

Sabbath, as not being omitted at certain times. When then it is done away, much more is the Sabbath. Wherefore Paul makes a concision of the name, and says, "*Beware of the concision*"; and he did not say "*that circumcision is evil, that it is superfluous*," lest he should strike the men with dismay, but he manages it more wisely, withdrawing them from the thing, but gratifying them with the word, nay, rather with the thing too, in a more serious way. But not so in the case of the Galatians, for since in that case the disease was great, he immediately adopts the remedy of amputation with open front and with all boldness; but in this case, as they had done nothing of the sort, he vouchsafes them the gratification of the title, he casts out the others, and says, "*Beware of the concision; for we are the circumcision*"— how?— "*who worship God in spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh*." He said not that "*we test the one circumcision and the other, which is the better of the two*"; but he would not even allow it a share in the name; but what does he say? That that circumcision is "*concision*." Why? Because they do nothing but cut the flesh up. For when what is done is not of the law, it is nothing else than a concision and cutting up of the flesh; it was then either for this reason that he called it so, or because they were trying to cut the Church in two; and we call the thing "*cutting up*" in those who do this at random, without aim and without skill. Now if you must seek circumcision, he says, you will find it among us, "*who worship God in spirit*," i.e. who worship spiritually.

For answer me, which is superior, the soul or the body? Evidently the former. Therefore that circumcision is also superior, or rather, no longer superior, but this is the only circumcision; for while the type stood, He rightly brought it forward in conjunction, writing, "*For you shall circumcise the foreskins of your hearts*." [Jeremiah 4:4] In the same way in the Epistle to the Romans he does away with it, saying, "*for he is not a Jew which is*

one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter." [Romans 2:28-29] And lastly, he takes from it the very name, "*neither is it circumcision,*" he maintains; for the type while the reality is yet to come, is called this, but when the reality has come, it no longer retains the title. As in delineation, a man has drawn a king in outline; so long as the colors are not put on we say, Lo, there is the king, but when they are added, the type is lost in the reality, and ceases to show. And he said not, "*for the circumcision is in us,*" but "*we are the circumcision,*" and justly; for this is the Man, the circumcision in virtue, this is really the Man. And he did not say, "*For among them is the concision*"; for they themselves are henceforth in a condition of ruin and of wickedness. But no longer, says he, is circumcision performed in the body, but in the heart. "*And have no confidence,*" says he, "*in the flesh; though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh.*" [Philippians 3:4] What does he call "*confidence*" here, and "*in the flesh*"? Boasting, boldness, a high tone. And he did well to add this; for if he had been of the Gentiles, and had condemned circumcision, and not only circumcision, but all those that adopted it out of place, it would have seemed that he was running it down, because he lacked the high ancestry of Judaism, as being a stranger to its solemn rites, and having no part therein. But as it is, he, who, though a sharer, yet blames them, will not therefore blame them as having no share in them, but as disowning them; not from ignorance, but most especially from acquaintance with them. Accordingly observe what he says in his Epistle to the Galatians also; having been brought into a necessity of saying great things about himself, how even in these circumstances does he manifest nought but humility. "*For you have heard, of my manner of life in time past,*" he says, "*in the Jews' religion*" [Galatians 1:13]; and again here; "*if any other man thinks to*

have confidence in the flesh, I more." [Philippians 3:4]. And he immediately added, *"a Hebrew of Hebrews."* But *"if any other man,"* says he, showing the necessity, showing that it was on their account that he spoke. *"If you have confidence,"* he says, I also say so, since I am silent. And observe the absence of all ungraciousness in the reproofs; by forbearing to do it by name, he gave even them the opportunity of retracing their steps. *"If any one thinks to have confidence";* and it was well to say *"thinks,"* either inasmuch as they really had no such confidence, or as that confidence was no real confidence, for all was by necessity, and not of choice.

"Circumcised on the eighth day"; and he sets down the first that wherein they chiefly boasted, viz. the ordinance of circumcision. *"Of the stock of Israel."* He pointed out both these circumstances, that he was neither a proselyte, nor born of proselytes; for from his being circumcised on the eighth day, it follows that he was not a proselyte, and from his being of the stock of Israel, that he was not of proselyte parents. But that you may not imagine that he was of the stock of Israel as coming of the ten tribes, he says, *"of the tribe of Benjamin."* So that he was of the more approved portion, for the place of the priests was in the lot of this tribe. *"An Hebrew of Hebrews."* Because he was not a proselyte, but from of old, of distinguished Jews; for he might have been of Israel, and yet not *"an Hebrew of Hebrews,"* for many were already corrupting the matter, and were strangers to the language, being encircled by other nations; it is either this then, or the great superiority of his birth, that he shows. *"According to the law a Pharisee."* He is coming now to the circumstances dependent on his own will; for all those things were apart from the will, for his being circumcised was not of himself, nor that he was of the stock of Israel, nor that he was of the tribe of Benjamin. So that, even among these he has a larger share, even though there were really many who partook with him.

Where then are we to place the *"rather"*? Particularly herein that he was not a proselyte; for to be of the most distinguished tribe and sect, and this from his ancestors of old, was a thing which belonged not to many. But he comes to the things which are matters of choice, wherein we have the *"rather."* *"As touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church."* But this is not sufficient; for it is possible to be a Pharisee even, and yet not very zealous. But this also he adds; behold the *"rather."* *"According to righteousness."* It is possible, however, to be adventurous, or to act thus from ambition, and not out of zeal for the law, as the chief priests did. Yet neither was this the case, but, *"according to the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless."* If then both for purity of descent, and earnestness, and habits, and mode of life, I surpassed all, why have I renounced all those dignities, he asks, but because I found that the things of Christ are better, and better far? Wherefore he added; *"howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ."* [Philippians 3:7]

Such a course of life, so strictly regulated, and entered upon from earliest childhood, such unblemished extraction, such dangers, plots, labors, forwardness, did Paul renounce, *"counting them but loss,"* which before were *"gain,"* that he might *"win Christ."* But we do not even condemn money, that we may *"win Christ,"* but prefer to fail of the life to come rather than of the good things of the present life. And yet this is nothing else than loss; for tell me now, let us examine in detail the conditions of riches, and see whether it be not loss accompanied with trouble, and without any gain. For tell me, what is the advantage of those stores of costly garments, what good do we gain when we are arrayed in them? None, nay, we are only losers. How so? Because even the poor man, in his cheap and threadbare clothing, does not bear the scorching in time of heat any wise worse than yourself; nay, rather he bears it better, for clothes that are threadbare and

worn single allow more ease to the body, but not so with those which are new made, though they be finer than the spider's web. Besides, you, from your excessive self-importance, wear even two and often three inner garments, and a cloak and girdle, and breeches too, but no one blames him if he wears but a single inner garment; so that he is the man that endures most easily. It is owing to this that we see rich men sweating, but the poor subject to nothing of the sort. Since then his cheap clothing, which is sold for a trifle, answers the same or even a better purpose to him, and those clothes, which oblige a man to pay down much gold, do only the same thing, is not this great superabundance so much loss? For it has added nothing in respect of its use and service, but your purse is emptied of so much the more gold, and the same use and service. You who have riches have purchased for a hundred pieces of gold, or even more, but the poor man for a trifling sum of silver. Do you perceive the loss? No, for your pride will not let you see it. Would you have us make out this account in the case of the gold ornaments too, which men put alike about their horses and their wives? For besides the other evils, the possession of money makes fools of men; they account their wives and horses to be worthy of the same honor, and the ornamentation of both is the same; and they would make themselves finer by the same means as the very beasts that carry them, or as the very skins of the awnings, wherein they are borne. What now is the use of decking out a mule or a horse with gold? Or the lady, that has such a weight of gold and jewels about her person, what does she gain? *"But the golden ornaments are never worn out,"* he answers. Assuredly this also is said that in the baths and many places both precious stones and gold ornaments lose much of their value. But be it so, and grant that they are not injured, tell me, what is the gain? And how is it when they drop out, and are lost? Is there no loss sustained? And how when they draw down upon you

envy and intrigues? Is there no loss then? For when they do the wearer no good, but rather inflame the eyes of the envious, and act as an incitement to the robber, do they not become loss? And again, say, when a man may use them for a serviceable purpose, but is unable on account of the extravagance of his wife, and is obliged to starve and to stint himself, that he may see her arrayed in gold, is it not a matter of loss? For it was on this account that goods have their name from use, not that we should use them thus like goldsmiths' samples, but that we should do some good therewith; so then when love of gold does not allow this, is not the whole thing loss? For he that dares not use them forbears the use as if they were another's property, and there is no use of them in any way.

Again, how is it when we erect splendid and spacious mansions, decorated with columns, marbles, porticos, arcades, and in every possible way, setting images and statues everywhere? Many indeed even call demons out of these, i.e. the images, but let us omit the examination of those points. What too is the meaning of the gilded ceiling? Does it not supply the same need as to him, whose house is on a moderate scale? "*But there is great delight in it,*" he says. Yes, for the first or second day, and afterwards, none at all, but it stands merely for nothing. For if the sun does not strike us with wonder, from its being customary, much more do works of art fail, and we only look at them like things of clay. For tell me, what does a range of pillars contribute to make your dwelling superior to others, or the finest statues, or the gilding spread over the wall? Nothing; rather, these come of luxury and insolence, and overweening pride and folly; for everything there ought to be necessary and useful, not superfluous things. Do you see that the thing is loss? Do you see that it is superfluous and unprofitable? For if it supplies no further use or delight, (and it "*does,*" in

the course of time, bring satiety,) it is nothing else than loss, and vainglory is the hindrance, which will not let us see this.

Did Paul then forsake those things which he "*counted gain*," and shall not we even quit our loss, for Christ's sake? How long shall we be riveted to the earth? How long till we shall look up to heaven? Do ye not mark the aged, what little perception they have of the past? Do ye not mark those that are finishing their course, both men in age, and men in youth? Do ye not see persons in the midst of life bereft of them? Why are we so wedded to unstable objects? Why are we linked to things that are shifting? How long before we lay hold of the things that last? What would not the old give, were it granted them to divest themselves of their old age? How irrational then to wish to return to our former youth, and gladly to give everything for the sake of this, that we might become younger, and yet when it is ours to receive a youth that knows no old age, a youth too, which, joined with great riches, has far more of spirit, to be unwilling to give up a little trifle, but to hold fast things that contribute not a whit to the present life. They can never rescue you from death, they have no power to drive away disease, to stay old age, or any one of those events, which happen by necessity and according to the law of nature. And do you still hold to them? Tell me, what do you gain? Drunkenness, gluttony, pleasures contrary to nature and various in kind, which are far worse torturers than the hardest masters.

These are the advantages which we gain from riches, nor is there one besides, since we are not so minded, for if we had had the mind, we might have won heaven itself for our inheritance by our riches. "*So then riches are good*," he says. It is not riches, but the will of the possessor that effects this, for because it is the will that does this, it is in the power even of a poor man to win heaven. For, as I have often said, God does not regard the amount of the gifts, but the will of the givers; it is possible even for one in poverty,

who has given but little, to bear off all, for God requires a measure proportioned to our ability, neither will riches secure heaven to us, nor poverty, hell; but a good or a bad will, either one or the other. This then let us correct, this let us repossess, this let us regulate, and all will then be easy to us.

For as the artificer works the wood the same, whether his axe be of iron or of gold, or rather he does it the better with an implement of iron, so here too, the straight path of virtue is more easily kept in a state of poverty. For touching riches we read, *"It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 19:24] But He has made no such declarations about poverty; nay, the very reverse. *"Sell your goods, and give to the poor, and come follow Me"* [Matthew 19:21]; as if the act of following were to spring from the selling.

Never then let us flee from poverty as an evil, for it is the procurer of heaven. Again, let us never follow riches as a good; for they are the ruin of such as walk unwarily, but in everything directing our eyes to God, let us, as occasion requires, use those gifts which He has vouchsafed us, both strength of body, and abundance of money, and every other gift; for it is unnatural that we, who have our being for Him, should make these things serviceable to others, yet not to Him who has made us. He formed your eye: make it serviceable to Him, not to the devil. But how serviceable to Him? By contemplating His creatures and praising and glorifying Him, and by withdrawing it from all gaze at women. Did He make your hands? Preserve them for His use, not for the devil, not putting them out for robbery and rapine, but for His commandments and for good deeds, for earnest prayers, for holding out help to the fallen. Hath He made your ears? Give these to Him, and not to effeminate strains nor to disgraceful tales; but *"let all your*

communication be in the law of the Most High." [Sirach 9:15] For *"stand,"* he says, *"in the multitude of the elders, and whoever is wise, cleave unto him."* [Sirach 6:34] Did he make your mouth? Let it do nought that is displeasing to Him, but sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. *"Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth,"* says the Apostle, *"but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear"* [Ephesians 4:29]; for edification and not for subversion, for fair words and not for evil speaking and plotting against other, but the very opposite. He has made your feet, not that you should run to do evil, but to do good. He made your belly, not that you should cram it to bursting, but to practice lessons of wisdom. For the production of children, He implanted desire in your mind, not for fornication, nor for adultery. He gave you understanding, not to make of you a blasphemer or a reviler, but that you might be without falsehood. He gave us both money to be used on fitting occasion, and strength likewise to be used on fitting occasion. He instituted arts, that our present state of existence might be held together by them, not that we should separate ourselves from spiritual things, not that we should devote ourselves to the base arts but to the necessary ones, that we might minister to one another's good, and not that we should plot one against another. He gave us a roof, that it might afford shelter from the rain, and no more, not that it should be decked out with gold, while the poor man perishes with hunger. He gave clothing to cover us, not to make a display withal, not that things like these should have much gold lavished upon them, and that Christ should perish naked. He gave you a place of shelter, not that you should keep it to yourself, but to offer it to others also. He gave you land, not that, cutting off the chief portion of it, you should spend the good gifts of God upon harlots, and dancers, and actors, and flute players, and harp players, but upon those that hunger and are in want. He gave you

the sea to sail on, that you might not be wearied with journeying, not that you should pry into its depths, and bring up thence precious stones and all the other things of the same kind, nor that you should make this your business.

"Why then are there precious stones?" he says. Nay, do you tell me why these stones are such, and why one class are regarded as of great value, while the others are more useful? For these may be conducive to building, but those to no purpose; and these are stronger than those. *"But they,"* he says, *"produce a beautiful effect."* How so? It is a matter of fancy. Are they whiter? No, they are not whiter than pure white marble, nor nearly equal to it. But are they stronger? Not even this can be said for them. Well then, are they more useful? Are they larger? Not even this. Whence then are they so admired, save from fancy? For if they are neither more beautiful, (for we shall find others more shining and more white,) nor useful, nor stronger, whence came they to be so admired? Was it not from mere fancy? Why then did God give them? They were not His gift, but it is your own imagination that they are anything great. *"How is it, then,"* he answers, *"that even the Scripture shows admiration of them?"* So far it addresses itself to your fancy. As a master too in talking to a child often admires the same object as it does, when he desires to attract and engage it.

Why do you aim at finery in your clothing? He clothed you with a garment and with sandals. But where is there any reason for these things? *"The judgments of God,"* he says, *"are more to be desired than gold; yea than much fine gold."* [Psalm 19:10] These, beloved, are of no use. Had they been of use, he would not have bidden us despise them. And for Holy Scripture, it speaks with reference to our notion, and this too is an instance of God's lovingkindness. *"Why then,"* he asks, *"did He give purple and the like?"* These things are products of God's gift. For He has willed by other

things also to show forth His own riches. And He gave you grain too by itself; but from this you make many things, cakes and sweetmeats, of every sort and variety, having much enjoyment. Pleasure and vainglory give rise to all these inventions. It pleased you to set them before everything. For if a foreigner or a rustic, who was ignorant of the land, should put the question, and, seeing your admiration, were to say, "*Why do you admire these?*" What have you to say? That they are fair to look at? But not so. Let us then give up such notions; let us lay hold of the things that are truly real. These are not, but simply pass away, only flowing past like a river. Wherefore I charge you, let us take our stand upon the rock, that we both escape being easily turned about, and that we may obtain the good things to come, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 11 on Philippians

[Philippians 3:7-10]

"Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I counted all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God."

In our contests with heretics, we must make the attack with minds in vigor, that they may be able to give exact attention. I will therefore begin my present discourse where the last ended. And what was that? Having enumerated every Jewish boast, both those from his birth, and those that were from choice, he added, *"Howbeit, what things were gain to me, these have I counted to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ."* Here the heretics spring to their attack: for even this comes of the wisdom of the Spirit, to suggest to them hopes of victory, that they may undertake the fight.

For if it had been spoken plainly, they would have acted here as they have done in other places, they would have blotted out the words, they would have denied the Scripture, when they were unable at all to look it in the face. But as in the case of fishes, that which can take them is concealed so that they may swim up, and does not lie open to view; this in truth has come to pass here too. The Law, they say, is called *"dung"* by Paul, it is called *"loss."* He says, it was not possible to gain Christ except I *"suffered"*

this "loss." All these things induced the heretics to accept this passage, thinking it to be favorable to them: but when they had taken it, then did he enclose them on all sides with his nets. For what do they themselves say? Lo! The Law is "loss," is "dung"; how then do ye say that it is of God?

But these very words are favorable to the Law, and how they are so, shall be hence manifest. Let us attend accurately to his very words. He said not, The Law is loss: but "*I counted it loss.*" But when he spoke of gain, he said not, I counted them, but "*they were gain.*" But when he spoke of loss he said, "*I counted*": and this rightly; for the former was naturally so, but the latter became so, from my opinion. "*What then? Is it not so?*" says he. It is loss for Christ.

And how has the law become gain? And it was not *counted* gain, but *was* so. For consider how great a thing it was, to bring men, brutalized in their nature, to the shape of men. If the law had not been, grace would not have been given. Wherefore? Because it became a sort of bridge; for when it was impossible to mount on high from a state of great abasement, a ladder was formed. But he who has ascended has no longer need of the ladder; yet he does not despise it, but is even grateful to it. For it has placed him in such a position, as no longer to require it. And yet for this very reason, that he does not require it, it is just that he should acknowledge his obligation, for he could not fly up. And thus is it with the Law, it has led us up on high; wherefore it was gain, but for the future we esteem it loss. How? Not because it is loss, but because grace is far greater. For as a poor man, that was in hunger, as long as he has silver, escapes hunger, but when he finds gold, and it is not allowable to keep both, considers it loss to retain the former, and having thrown it away, takes the gold coin; so also here; not because the silver is loss, for it is not; but because it is impossible to take both at once, but it is necessary to leave one. Not the Law then is loss, but

for a man to cleave to the Law, and desert Christ. Wherefore it is then loss when it leads us away from Christ. But if it sends us on to Him, it is no longer so. For this cause he says *"loss for Christ"*; if for Christ, it is not so naturally. But why does not the Law suffer us to come to Christ? For this very cause, he tells us, was it given. And Christ is the fulfilling of the Law, and Christ is the end of the Law. It does suffer us if we will. *"For Christ is the end of the Law."* He who obeys the Law, leaves the Law itself. It suffers, if we take heed to it, but if we do not take heed, it suffers not. *"Yea verily, and I have counted all things but loss."* Why, he means, do I say this of the Law? Is not the world good? Is not the present life good? But if they draw me away from Christ, I count these things loss. Why? *"for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord."* For when the sun has appeared, it is loss to sit by a candle: so that the loss comes by comparison, by the superiority of the other. You see that Paul makes a comparison from superiority, not from diversity of kind; for that which is superior, is superior to somewhat of like nature to itself. So that he shows the connection of that knowledge by the same means, by which he draws the superiority from the comparison. *"For whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them dung, that I may gain Christ."* It is not yet manifest, whether he speaks of the Law, for it is likely that he applies it to the things of this world. For when he says, *"the things which were gain to me, those I have counted loss for Christ; yea verily,"* he adds, *"I count all things loss."* Although he said all things, yet it is things present; and if you wish it to be the Law too, not even so is it insulted. For dung comes from wheat, and the strength of the wheat is the dung, I mean, the chaff. But as the dung was useful in its former state, so that we gather it together with the wheat, and had there been no dung, there would have been no wheat, thus too is it with the Law.

Do you see, how everywhere he calls it *"loss,"* not in itself, but for Christ. *"Yea verily, and I count all things but loss."* Wherefore again? *"For the excellency of the knowledge (of Him), for whom I suffered the loss of all things."* Again, *"wherefore too I count all things to be loss, that I may gain Christ."*

See how, from every point, he lays hold of Christ as his foundation, and suffers not the Law to be anywhere exposed, or receive a blow, but guards it on every side. *"And that I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own, even that which is of the Law."* If he who had righteousness, ran to this other righteousness because his own was nothing, how much rather ought they, who have it not, to run to Him? And he well said, *"a righteousness of my own,"* not that which I gained by labor and toil, but that which I found from grace. If then he who was so excellent is saved by grace, much more are you. For since it was likely they would say that the righteousness which comes from toil is the greater, he shows that it is dung in comparison with the other. For otherwise I, who was so excellent in it, would not have cast it away, and run to the other. But what is that other? That which is from the faith of God, i.e. it too is given by God. This is the righteousness of God; this is altogether a gift. And the gifts of God far exceed those worthless good deeds, which are due to our own diligence.

But what is *"By faith that I may know Him"*? So then knowledge is through faith, and without faith it is impossible to know Him. Why how? Through it we must *"know the power of His resurrection."* For what reason can demonstrate to us the Resurrection? None, but faith only. For if the resurrection of Christ, who was according to the flesh, is known by faith, how can the generation of the Word of God be comprehended by reasoning? For the resurrection is less than the generation. Why? Because of that there have been many examples, but of this none ever; for many dead arose

before Christ, though after their resurrection they died, but no one was ever born of a virgin. If then we must comprehend by faith that which is inferior to the generation according to the flesh, how can that which is far greater, immeasurably and incomparably greater, be comprehended by reason? These things make the righteousness; this must we believe that He was able to do, but how He was able we cannot prove. For from faith is the fellowship of His sufferings. But how? Had we not believed, neither should we have suffered: had we not believed, that *"if we endure with Him, we shall also reign with Him"* [2 Timothy 2:12], we should not have endured the sufferings. Both the generation and the resurrection is comprehended by faith. Do you see, that faith must not be absolutely, but through good works; for he especially believes that Christ has risen, who in like sort gives himself up to dangers, who has fellowship with Him in His sufferings. For he has fellowship with Him who rose again, with Him who lives; wherefore he says, *"And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead."* He says, being made conformable unto His death, i.e. having fellowship; whereas He suffered from men, thus I too; wherefore he said, *"becoming conformed"* and again in another place, *"and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh."* [Colossians 1:24] That is, these persecutions and sufferings work the image of His death, for He sought not His own, but the good of many.

Therefore persecutions, and afflictions, and straits, ought not to disturb you, but ought even to make you glad, because through them we are *"conformed to His death."* As if he had said, We are molded to His likeness;

as he says in another place, where he writes, "*bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*" [2 Corinthians 4:10] And this too comes from great faith. For we not only believe that He arose, but that after His resurrection also He has great power: wherefore we travel the same road which He travelled, i.e. we become brethren to Him in this respect also. As if he had said, We become Christ's in this respect. O how great is the dignity of sufferings! We believe that we become "*conformed to His death*" through sufferings! For as in baptism, we were "*buried with the likeness of His death,*" so here, with His death. There did he rightly say, "*The likeness of His death*" [Romans 6:4-5], for there we died not entirely, we died not in the flesh, to the body, but to sin. Since then a death is spoken of, and a death; but He indeed died in the body, while we died to sin, and there the Man died which He assumed, who was in our flesh, but here the man of sin; for this cause he says, "*the likeness of His death,*" but here, no longer the likeness of His death, but His death itself. For Paul, in his persecutions, no longer died to sin, but in his very body. Wherefore, he endured the same death. "*If by any means,*" says he, "*I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.*" What do you say? All men will have a share in that. "*For we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*" [1 Corinthians 15:51], and shall all share not only in the Resurrection, but in incorruption. Some indeed to honor, but others as a means of punishment. If therefore all have a share in the Resurrection, and not in the Resurrection only, but also in incorruption, how said he, "*If by any means I may attain,*" as if about to share in some special thing? "*For this cause,*" says he, "*I endure these things, if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.*" For if you had not died, you would not arise. What is it then? Some great thing seems here to be hinted at. So great was it, that he dared not openly assert it, but says, "*If by any means.*" I have believed in Him and His

resurrection, nay, moreover, I suffer for Him, yet I am unable to be confident concerning the Resurrection. What resurrection does he here mention? That which leads to Christ Himself. I said, that I believed in *"Him, and in the power of His resurrection,"* and that I *"have fellowship with His sufferings,"* and that I *"become conformed to His death."* Yet after all these things I am by no means confident; as he said elsewhere, *"Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall."* [1 Corinthians 10:12] And again, *"I fear lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected."* [1 Corinthians 9:27]

Ver. 12. *"Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."*

"Not that I have already obtained." What means *"already obtained"*? He speaks of the prize, but if he who had endured such sufferings, he who was persecuted, he *"who had in him the dying of the Lord Jesus,"* was not yet confident about that resurrection, what can we say? What means, *"if I may apprehend"*? What he before said, *"If I may attain to the resurrection of the dead."* [2 Corinthians 4:10] If I may apprehend, he says, His resurrection; i.e. if I may be able to endure so great things, if I may be able to imitate Him, if I may be able to become conformed to Him. For example, Christ suffered many things, He was spit upon, He was stricken, was scourged, at last He suffered what things he suffered. This is the entire course. Through all these things it is needful that men should endure the whole contest, and so come to His resurrection. Or he means this, if I am thought worthy to attain the glorious resurrection, which is a matter of confidence, in order to His resurrection. For if I am able to endure all the contests, I shall be able also to have His resurrection, and to rise with glory. For not as yet, says he, am I worthy, but *"I press on, if so be that I may*

apprehend." My life is still one of contest, I am still far from the end, I am still distant from the prize, still I run, still I pursue. And He said not, I run, but *"I pursue."* For you know with what eagerness a man pursues. He sees no one, he thrusts aside with great violence all who would interrupt his pursuit. He collects together his mind, and sight, and strength, and soul, and body, looking to nothing else than the prize. But if Paul, who so pursued, who had suffered so many things, yet says, *"if I may attain,"* what should we say, who have relaxed our efforts? Then to show that the thing is of debt, he says, *"For which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."* I was, he says, of the number of the lost, I gasped for breath, I was near dead, God apprehended me. For He pursued us, when we fled from Him, with all speed. So that he points out all those things; for the words, *"I was apprehended,"* show the earnestness of Him who wishes to apprehend us, and our great aversion to Him, our wandering, our flight from Him.

So that we are liable for a vast debt, and no one grieves, no one weeps, no one groans, all having returned to their former state. For as before the appearance of Christ we fled from God, so now also. For we can flee from God, not in place, for He is everywhere; and hear the Prophet, when he says, *"Whither shall I go from Your Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Your presence"?* [Psalm 139:7] How then can we flee from God? Even as we can become distant from God, even as we can be removed afar off. *"They that are far from You,"* it says, *"shall perish."* [Psalm 73:27] And again, *"Have not your iniquities separated between Me and you?"* [Isaiah 59:2] How then comes this removal, how comes this separation? In purpose and soul: for it cannot be in place. For how could one fly from Him who is everywhere present? The sinner then flies. This is what the Scripture says, *"The wicked flees when no man pursues him."* [Proverbs 28:1] We eagerly fly from God,

although He always pursues us. The Apostle hasted, that he might be near Him. We haste, that we may be far off.

Are not these things then worthy of lamentation? Are they not worthy of tears? Whither do you fly, wretched and miserable man? Whither do you fly from your Life and your Salvation? If you fly from God, with whom will you take refuge? If you fly from the Light, whither will you cast your eyes? If you fly from your Life, whence will you henceforth live? Let us fly from the enemy of our Salvation! Whenever we sin we fly from God, we are as runaways, we depart to a foreign land, as he who consumed his paternal goods and departed into a foreign land, who wasted all his father's substance, and lived in want. We too have substance from our Father; and what is this? He has freed us from our sins; He has freely given to us power, strength for works of virtue; He has freely given to us readiness, patience; He has freely given to us the Holy Ghost in our baptism; if we waste these things we shall henceforth be in want. For as the sick, as long as they are troubled with fevers, and badness of their juices, are unable to arise or work, or do anything, but if any one sets them free, and brings them to health, if they then work not, this comes from their own sloth; thus too is it with us. For the disease was heavy and the fever excessive. And we lay not upon a bed, but upon wickedness itself, cast away in crime, as on a dunghill, full of sores, and evil odors, squalid, wasting away, more like ghosts than men. Evil spirits encompassed us about, the Prince of this world deriding and assaulting us; the Only-Begotten Son of God came, sent forth the rays of His Presence, and straightway dispelled the darkness. The King, who is on His Father's throne, came to us, having left His Father's throne. And when I say having left, think not of any removal, for He fills the heavens and the earth, but I speak of the economy; He came to an enemy, who hated Him, who turned himself away, who could not endure to behold

Him, who blasphemed Him every day. He saw him lying on a dunghill, eaten with worms, afflicted with fever and hunger, having every sort of disease; for both fever vexed him, which is evil desire; and inflammation lay heavy on him, this is pride; and gnawing hunger had hold of him, which is covetousness; and putrefying sores on every side, for this is fornication; and blindness of eyes, which is idolatry; and dumbness, and madness, which is to worship stocks and stones, and address them; and great deformity, for wickedness is this, foul to behold, and a most heavy disease. And he saw us speaking more foolishly than the mad, and calling stocks our God, and stones likewise; He saw us in such great guilt, he did not reject us; was not angry, turned not away, hated us not, for He was a Master, and could not hate His own creation. But what does he do? As a most excellent physician, He prepares medicines of great price, and Himself tastes them first. For He Himself first followed after virtue, and thus gave it to us. And He first gave us the washing, like some antidote, and thus we vomited up all our guilt, and all things took their flight at once, and our inflammation ceased, and our fever was quenched, and our sores were dried up. For all the evils which are from covetousness, and anger, and all the rest, were dissipated by the Spirit. Our eyes were opened, our ears were opened, our tongue spoke holy words: our soul received strength, our body received such beauty and bloom, as it is like that he who is born a son of God should have from the grace of the Spirit; such glory as it is like that the new-born son of a king should have, nurtured in purple. Alas! How great nobility did He confer on us!

We were born, we were nurtured, why do we again fly from our Benefactor? He then, who has done all these things, gives us strength too, for it was not possible, for a soul bowed down by the disease to endure it, did not He Himself give us the strength. He gave us remission of our sins.

We devoured all things. He gave us strength, we wasted it. He gave us grace, we quenched it; and how? We consumed it upon nought that was fitting, we used it for no useful end. These things have destroyed us, and what is more dreadful than all, when we are in a foreign country, and feeding on husks, we say not, Let us return to our Father, and say, "*We have sinned against Heaven, and against You.*" [Luke 15:18] And that too, when we have so loving a Father, who eagerly desires our return. If we will only return to Him, He does not even bear to call in question our former deeds, only let us quit them. It is sufficient apology with Him, that we have returned. Not only He Himself calls not in question, but if another does so, He stops his mouth, though the accuser be one of good repute. Let us return! How long do we stand afar off? Let us perceive our dishonor, let us be sensible of our vileness. Sin makes us swine, sin brings famine to the soul; let us regain ourselves, and be sober again, and return to our former high birth, that we may obtain the good things which are to come, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever and world without end.

Homily 12 on Philippians

[Philippians 3:13, 14]

"Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Nothing so renders our real excellences vain and puffs them away, as to be remembering the good deeds we have done; for this produces two evils, it both renders us remiss, and raises us to haughtiness. Wherefore see how Paul, since he knew our nature to be easily inclined to remissness, though he had given great praise to the Philippians, now subdues their mind by many other things above, but chiefly by his present words. And what are they? *"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended."* But if Paul had not as yet apprehended, and is not confident about the Resurrection and things to come, hardly should they be so, who have not attained the smallest proportion of his excellence. That is, I consider that I have not as yet apprehended all virtue, as if one were speaking of a runner. Not as yet, says he, have I completed all. And if in another place he says, *"I have fought the good fight"* [2 Timothy 4:7], but here, *"I count myself not as yet to have apprehended"*; any one who reads carefully will well know the reason both of those, and of the present words; (for it is not necessary to dwell continually on the same point;) and that he spoke these words at a much earlier date, but the others near his death. But I am solely engaged on *"one thing,"* says he, *"in stretching forward to the things which are before."* But *"one thing,"* says he, *"forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the*

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." For what made him reach forward unto the things which are before, was his forgetting the things that are behind. He then, who thinks that all is accomplished, and that nothing is wanting to him for the perfecting of virtue, may cease running, as having apprehended all. But he who thinks that he is still distant from the goal, will never cease running. This then we should always consider, even though we have wrought ten thousand good deeds; for if Paul, after ten thousand deaths, after so many dangers, considered this, how much more should we? For I fainted not, says he, although I availed not, after running so much; nor did I despair, but I still run, I still strive. This thing only I consider, that I may in truth advance. Thus too we should act, we should forget our successes, and throw them behind us. For the runner reckons not up how many circuits he has finished, but how many are left. We too should reckon up, not how far we are advanced in virtue, but how much remains for us. For what does that which is finished profit us, when that which is deficient is not added? Moreover he did not say, I do not reckon up, but I do not even remember. For we thus become eager, when we apply all diligence to what is left, when we give to oblivion everything else. "*Stretching forward*," says he; before we arrive, we strive to obtain. For he that stretches forward is one who, though his feet are running, endeavors to outstrip them with the rest of his body, stretching himself towards the front, and reaching out his hands, that he may accomplish somewhat more of the course. And this comes from great eagerness, from much warmth; thus the runner should run with great earnestness, with so great eagerness, without relaxation. As far as one who so runs differs from him who lies supine, so far does Paul differ from us. He died daily, he was approved daily, there was no season, there was no time in which his course advanced not. He wished not to take, but to

snatch the prize; for in this way we may take it. He who gives the prize stands on high, the prize is laid up on high.

See how great a distance this is that must be run over! See how great an ascent! Thither we must fly up with the wings of the Spirit, otherwise it is impossible to surmount this height. Thither must we go with the body, for it is allowed. *"For our citizenship is in heaven"* [Philippians 3:20], there is the prize; do you see the runners, how they live by rule, how they touch nothing that relaxes their strength, how they exercise themselves every day in the palæstra, under a master, and by rule? Imitate them, or rather exhibit even greater eagerness, for the prizes are not equal: many are those who would hinder you; live by rule: many are the things which relax your strength; make its feet agile: for it is possible so to do, it comes not naturally, but by our will. Let us bring it to lightness, lest our swiftness of foot be hindered by the weight of other things. Teach your feet to be sure, for there are many slippery places, and if you fall, straightway you lose much. But yet if you fall, rise up again. Even thus may you obtain the victory. Never attempt slippery things, and you will not fall; walk upon firm ground, up with your head, up with your eyes; these commands the trainers give to those who run. Thus your strength is supported; but if you stoop downward, you fall; you are relaxed. Look upward, where the prize is; the sight of the prize increases the determination of our will. The hope of taking it suffers not to perceive the toils, it makes the distance appear short. And what is this prize? No palm branch; but what? The kingdom of heaven, everlasting rest, glory together with Christ, the inheritance, brotherhood, ten thousand good things, which it is impossible to name. It is impossible to describe the beauty of that prize; he who has it alone knows it, and he who is about to receive it. It is not of gold, it is not set with jewels, it is far more precious. Gold is mire, in comparison with that prize, precious stones are

mere bricks in comparison with its beauty. If you have this, and takest your departure to heaven, you will be able to walk there with great honor; the angels will reverence you, when you bear this prize, with much confidence will you approach them all. *"In Christ Jesus."* See the humility of his mind; this I do, says he, *"in Christ Jesus,"* for it is impossible without an impulse from Him to pass over so vast an interval: we have need of much aid, of a mighty alliance; He has willed that you should struggle below, on high He crowns you. Not as in this world; the crown is not here, where the contest is; but the crown is in that bright place. See ye not, even here, that the most honored of the wrestlers and charioteers are not crowned in the course below, but the king calls them up, and crowns them there? Thus too is it here, in heaven you receive the prize.

Ver. 15. *"Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded,"* says he. *"And if in anything you are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you."* What sort of thing? That we should *"forget the things which are behind."* Wherefore it belongs to him who is perfect not to consider himself perfect. How therefore do you say, *"as many as are perfect"*? For tell me, are we minded as you are? For if you have not attained nor art perfected, how do you command those that are perfect to be so minded as you are, who art not yet perfect? Yea, for this, says he, is perfection. And *"if you are in anything otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you."* That is, if any one considers that he has attained all excellence. He puts them on their guard, not by speaking directly, but what says he? *"If in anything you are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you."* See how humbly he says this! God shall teach you, i.e. God shall persuade you, not teach you; for Paul was teaching, but God shall lead them on. And he said not, shall lead you on, but *"shall reveal,"* that this may rather seem to spring from ignorance. These words were spoken not

concerning doctrines, but concerning perfection of life, and our not considering ourselves to be perfect, for he who considers that he has apprehended all, has nothing.

Ver. 16. *"Only, whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk, let us mind the same thing."*

"Only, whereunto we have attained." What means this? Let us hold fast, he says, that in which we have succeeded; love, concord, and peace: for in this we have succeeded. *"Whereto we have attained: to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing."* *"Whereunto we have attained,"* i.e. in this we have already succeeded. Do you see, that he wills that his precepts should be a rule to us? And a rule admits neither addition, nor subtraction, since that destroys its being a rule. *"By the same rule,"* i.e. by the same faith, within the same limits.

Ver. 17. *"Brethren, be ye imitators of me, and mark them which so walk even as you have us for an ensample."*

He had said above, *"beware of dogs,"* from such he had led them away; he brings them near to these whom they ought to imitate. If any one, says he, wishes to imitate me, if any one wishes to walk the same road, let him take heed to them; though I am not present, you know the manner of my walk, that is, my conduct in life. For not by words only did he teach, but by deeds too; as in the chorus, and the army, the rest must imitate the leader of the chorus or the army, and thus advance in good order. For it is possible that the order may be dissolved by sedition.

The Apostles therefore were a type, and kept throughout a certain archetypal model. Consider how entirely accurate their life was, so that they are proposed as an archetype and example, and as living laws. For what was said in their writings, they manifested to all in their actions. This is the best teaching; thus he will be able to carry on his disciple. But if he indeed

speaks as a philosopher, yet in his actions does the contrary, he is no longer a teacher. For mere verbal philosophy is easy even for the disciple: but there is need of that teaching and leading which comes of deeds. For this both makes the teacher to be revered, and prepares the disciple to yield obedience. How so? When one sees him delivering philosophy in words, he will say he commands impossibilities; that they are impossibilities, he himself is the first to show, who does not practice them. But if he sees his virtue fully carried out in action, he will no longer be able to speak thus. Yet although the life of our teacher be careless, let us take heed to ourselves, and let us listen to the words of the prophet; *"They shall be all taught of God."* [Isaiah 54:13] *"And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them."* [Jeremiah 31:34] Have you a teacher who is not virtuous? Still you have Him who is truly a Teacher, whom alone you should call a Teacher. Learn from Him: He has said, *"Learn of Me, for I am meek."* [Matthew 11:29] Take not heed, then, to your teacher, but to Him and to His lessons. Take thence your examples, you have a most excellent model, to it conform yourself. There are innumerable models laid before you in the Scriptures of virtuous lives; whichsoever you will, come, and after the Master find it in the disciples. One has shown forth through poverty, another through riches; for example, Elijah through poverty, Abraham through riches. Go to that example, which you esteem most easy, most befitting yourself to practice. Again, one by marriage, the other by virginity; Abraham by marriage, the other by virginity. Follow whichever you will: for both lead to heaven. One shone forth by fasting, as John, another without fasting, as Job. Again, this latter had a care for his wife, his children, his daughters, his family, and possessed great wealth; the other possessed nothing but the garment of hair. And why do I make mention of

family, or wealth, or money, when it is possible that even one in a kingdom should lay hold on virtue, for the house of a king would be found more full of trouble than any private family. David then shone forth in his kingdom; the purple and the diadem rendered him not at all remiss. To another it was entrusted to preside over a whole people, I mean Moses, which was a more difficult task, for there the power was greater, whence the difficulty too became greater. You have seen men approved in wealth, you have seen them in poverty also, you have seen them in marriage, you have seen them in virginity too; on the contrary, behold some lost in marriage and in virginity, in wealth and in poverty. For example, many men have perished in marriage, as Samson, yet not from marriage, but from their own deliberate choice. Likewise in virginity, as the five virgins. In wealth, as the rich man, who disregarded Lazarus: in poverty, innumerable poor men even now are lost. In a kingdom, I can point to many who have perished, and in ruling the people. Would you see men saved in the rank of a soldier? There is Cornelius; and in the government of a household? There is the eunuch of the Ethiopian Queen. Thus is it universally. If we use our wealth as is fit, nothing will destroy us; but if not, all things will destroy us, whether a kingdom, or poverty, or wealth. But nothing will have power to hurt the man, who keeps well awake.

For tell me, was captivity any harm? None at all. For consider, I pray you, Joseph, who became a slave, and preserved his virtue. Consider Daniel, and the Three Children, who became captives, and how much the more they shone forth, for virtue shines everywhere, is invincible, and nothing can put hindrances in its way. But why make I mention of poverty, and captivity, and slavery; and hunger, and sores, and grievous disease? For disease is more hard to endure than slavery. Such was Lazarus, such was Job, such was also Timothy, straitened by "*often infirmities.*" [1 Timothy

5:23] You see that nothing can obtain the mastery over virtue; neither wealth, nor poverty, nor dominion, nor subjection, nor the preëminence in affairs, nor disease, nor contempt, nor abandonment. But having left all these things below, and upon the earth, it hastens towards Heaven. Only let the soul be noble, and nought can hinder it from being virtuous. For when he who works is in vigor, nothing external can hinder him; for as in the arts, when the artificer is experienced and persevering, and thoroughly acquainted with his art, if disease overtakes him, he still has it; if he became poor, he still has it; whether he has his tools in his hand or has them not, whether he works or works not, he loses not at all his art: for the science of it is contained within him. Thus too the virtuous man, who is devoted to God, manifests his art, if you cast him into wealth, or if into poverty, if into disease, if into health, if into dishonor, if into great honor. Did not the Apostles work in every state, *"By glory and dishonor, by good report and evil report"*? [2 Corinthians 6:8] This is an athlete, to be prepared for everything; for such is also the nature of virtue.

If you say, I am not able to preside over many, I ought to lead a solitary life; you offer an insult to virtue, for it can make use of every state, and shine through all: only let it be in the soul. Is there a famine? Or is there abundance? It shows forth its own strength, as Paul says, *"I know how to abound, and how to be in want."* [Philippians 4:12; Acts 28:30] Was he required to work? He was not ashamed, but wrought two years. Was hunger to be undergone? He sank not under it, nor wavered. Was death to be borne? He became not dejected, through all he exhibited his noble mind and art. Him therefore let us imitate, and we shall have no cause of grief: for tell me, what will have power to grieve such an one? Nothing. As long as no one deprives us of this art, this will be the most blessed of all men, even in this life as well as in that to come. For suppose the good man has a wife and

children, and riches, and great honor, with all these things he remains alike virtuous. Take them away, and again in like sort he will be virtuous, neither overwhelmed by his misfortunes, nor puffed up by prosperity, but as a rock stands equally unmoved in the raging sea and in calm, neither broken by the waves nor influenced at all by the calm, thus too the solid mind stands firm both in calm and in storm. And as little children, when sailing in a ship, are tossed about, while the pilot sits by, laughing and undisturbed, and delighted to see their confusion; thus too the soul which is truly wise, when all others are in confusion, or else are inopportunistly smiling at any change of circumstance, sits unmoved, as it were, at the tiller and helm of piety. For tell me, what can disturb the pious soul? Can death? This is the beginning of a better life. Can poverty? This helps her on toward virtue. Can disease? She regards not its presence. She regards neither ease, nor affliction; for being beforehand with it, she has afflicted herself. Can dishonor? The world has been crucified to her. Can the loss of children? She fears it not, when she is fully persuaded of the Resurrection. What then can surprise her? None of all these things. Does wealth elevate her? By no means, she knows that money is nothing. Does glory? She has been taught that *"all the glory of man is as the flower of grass."* [Isaiah 40:6] Does luxury? She has heard Paul say, *"She that gives herself to pleasure is dead while she lives."* [1 Timothy 5:6] Since then she is neither inflamed nor cramped, what can equal such health as this?

Other souls, meanwhile, are not such, but change more frequently than the sea, or theameleon, so that you have great cause to smile, when you see the same man at one time laughing, at another weeping, at one time full of care, at another beyond measure relaxed and languid. For this cause Paul says, *"Be not fashioned according to this world."* [Romans 12:2] For we are citizens of heaven, where there is no turning. Prizes which change not are

held out to us. Let us make manifest this our citizenship, let us thence already receive our good things. But why do we cast ourselves into the Euripus, into tempest, into storm, into foam? Let us be in calm. It all depends not on wealth, nor on poverty, nor honor, nor dishonor, nor on sickness, nor on health, nor on weakness, but on our own soul. If it is solid, and well-instructed in the science of virtue, all things will be easy to it. Even hence it will already behold its rest, and that quiet harbor, and, on its departure, will there attain innumerable good things, the which may we all attain, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 13 on Philippians

[Philippians 3:18-21]

"For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

Nothing is so incongruous in a Christian, and foreign to his character, as to seek ease and rest; and to be engrossed with the present life is foreign to our profession and enlistment. Your Master was crucified, and do you seek ease? Your Master was pierced with nails, and do you live delicately? Do these things become a noble soldier? Wherefore Paul says, *"Many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."* Since there were some who made a pretense of Christianity, yet lived in ease and luxury, and this is contrary to the Cross: therefore he thus spoke. For the cross belongs to a soul at its post for the fight, longing to die, seeking nothing like ease, while their conduct is of the contrary sort. So that even if they say, they are Christ's, still they are as it were enemies of the Cross. For did they love the Cross, they would strive to live the crucified life. Was not your Master hung upon the tree? Do thou otherwise imitate Him. Crucify yourself, though no one crucify you. Crucify yourself, not that you may slay yourself, God forbid, for that is a wicked thing, but as Paul said, *"The world has been crucified unto me and I*

unto the world." [Galatians 6:14] If you love your Master, die His death. Learn how great is the power of the Cross; how many good things it has achieved, and does still: how it is the safety of our life. Through it all things are done. Baptism is through the Cross, for we must receive that seal. The laying on of hands is through the Cross. If we are on journeys, if we are at home, wherever we are, the Cross is a great good, the armor of salvation, a shield which cannot be beaten down, a weapon to oppose the devil; you bear the Cross when you are at enmity with him, not simply when you seal yourself by it, but when you suffer the things belonging to the Cross. Christ thought fit to call our sufferings by the name of the Cross. As when he says, *"Except a man take up his cross and follow Me"* [Matthew 16:24], i.e. except he be prepared to die.

But these being base, and lovers of life, and lovers of their bodies, are enemies of the Cross. And every one, who is a friend of luxury, and of present safety, is an enemy of that Cross in which Paul makes his boast: which he embraces, with which he desires to be incorporated. As when he says, *"I am crucified unto the world, and the world unto me."* But here he says, *"I now tell you weeping."* Wherefore? Because the evil was urgent, because such deserve tears. Of a truth the luxurious are worthy of tears, who make fat that which is thrown about them, I mean the body, and take no thought of that soul which must give account. Behold you live delicately, behold you are drunken, today and tomorrow, ten years, twenty, thirty, fifty, a hundred, which is impossible; but if you will, let us suppose it. What is the end? What is the gain? Nought at all. Does it not then deserve tears, and lamentations, to lead such a life; God has brought us into this course, that He may crown us, and we take our departure without doing any noble action. Wherefore Paul weeps, where others laugh, and live in pleasure. So sympathetic is he: such thought takes he for all men. *"Whose god,"* says he,

"is the belly." For this have they a God! That is, *"let us eat and drink!"* Do you see, how great an evil luxury is? To some their wealth, and to others their belly is a god. Are not these too idolaters, and worse than the common? And their *"glory is in their shame."* [1 Corinthians 15:32] Some say it is circumcision. I think not so, but this is its meaning, they make a boast of those things, of which they ought to be ashamed. It is a fearful thing to do shameful actions; yet to do them, and be ashamed, is only half so dreadful. But where a man even boasts himself of them, it is excessive senselessness.

Do these words apply to them alone? And do those who are here present escape the charge? And will no one have account to render of these things? Does no one make a god of his belly, or glory in his shame? I wish, earnestly I wish, that none of these charges lay against us, and that I did not know any one involved in what I have said. But I fear lest the words have more reference to us than to the men of those times. For when one consumes his whole life in drinking and reveling, and expends some small trifle on the poor, while he consumes the larger portion on his belly, will not these words with justice apply to him? No words are more apt to call attention, or more cutting in reproof, than these: *"Whose god is the belly, whose glory is in their shame."* And who are these? They, he says, who mind earthly things. *"Let us build houses."* Where, I ask? On the earth, they answer. Let us purchase farms; on the earth again: let us obtain power; again on the earth: let us gain glory; again on the earth: let us enrich ourselves; all these things are on the earth. These are they, whose god is their belly; for if they have no spiritual thoughts, but have all their possessions here, and mind these things, with reason have they their belly for their god, in saying, *"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."* And about your body, you grieve, tell me, that it is of earth, though thus you are

not at all injured. But your soul you drag down to the earth, when you ought to render even your body spiritual; for you may, if you will. You have received a belly, that you may feed, not distend it, that you may have the mastery over it, not have it as mistress over you: that it may minister to you for the nourishment of the other parts, not that you may minister to it, not that you may exceed limits. The sea, when it passes its bounds, does not work so many evils, as the belly does to our body, together with our soul. The former overflows all the earth, the latter all the body. Put moderation for a boundary to it, as God has put the sand for the sea. Then if its waves arise, and rage furiously, rebuke it, with the power which is in you. See how God has honored you, that you might imitate Him, and you will not; but you see the belly overflowing, destroying and overwhelming your whole nature, and darest not to restrain or moderate it.

"Whose God," he says, *"is their belly."* Let us see how Paul served God: let us see how gluttons serve their belly. Do not they undergo ten thousand such deaths? Do not they fear to disobey whatever it orders? Do not they minister impossibilities to it? Are not they worse than slaves? *"But our citizenship,"* says he, *"is in Heaven."* Let us not then seek for ease here; there do we shine, where also our citizenship is. *"From whence also,"* says he, *"we wait for a Saviour,"* the Lord Jesus Christ: *"who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory."* By little and little he has carried us up. He says, *"From Heaven"* and *"Our Saviour,"* showing, from the place and from the Person, the dignity of the subject. *"Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation,"* says he. The body now suffers many things: it is bound with chains, it is scourged, it suffers innumerable evils; but the body of Christ suffered the same. This, then, he hinted at when he said, *"That it may be conformed to the body of his glory."* Wherefore the body is the same, but puts on incorruption. *"Shall*

fashion anew." Wherefore the fashion is different; or perchance he has spoken figuratively of the change.

He says, "*the body of our humiliation,*" because it is now humbled, subject to destruction, to pain, because it seems to be worthless, and to have nothing beyond that of other animals. "*That it may be conformed to the body of his glory.*" What? Shall this our body be fashioned like Him, who sits at the right hand of the Father, to Him who is worshipped by the Angels, before whom do stand the incorporeal Powers, to Him who is above all rule and power, and might? If then the whole world were to take up weeping and lament for those who have fallen from this hope, could it worthily lament? Because, when a promise is given us of our body being made like to Him, it still departs with the demons. I care not for hell henceforth; whatever can be said, having fallen from so great glory, now and henceforth consider hell to be nothing to this falling away. What do you say, O Paul? To be made like Him? Yes, he answers; then, lest you should disbelieve, he adds a reason; "*According to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.*" He has power, says he, to subject all things unto Himself, wherefore also destruction and death. Or rather, He does this also with the same power. For tell me, which requires the greater power, to subject demons, and Angels, and Archangels, and Cherubim, and Seraphim, or to make the body incorruptible and immortal? The latter certainly much more than the former; he showed forth the greater works of His power, that you might believe these too. Wherefore, though ye see these men rejoicing, and honored, yet stand firm, be not offended at them, be not moved. These our hopes are sufficient to raise up even the most sluggish and indolent.

Chap. iv. ver. 1. "*Wherefore,*" says he, "*my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.*"

"So." How? Unmoved. See how he adds praise after exhortation, *"my joy and my crown,"* not simply joy but glory too, not simply glory but my crown too. Which glory nought can equal, since it is the crown of Paul. *"So stand fast in the Lord, my beloved,"* i.e. in the hope of God.

Ver. 2, 3. *"I exhort Euodia, and exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yea, I beseech you also, true yokefellow, help these women."*

Some say Paul here exhorts his own wife; but it is not so, but some other woman, or the husband of one of them. *"Help these women, for they labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life."* Do you see how great a testimony he bears to their virtue? For as Christ says to his Apostles, *"Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in the book of life"* [Luke 10:20]; so Paul testifies to them, saying, *"whose names are in the book of life."* These women seem to me to be the chief of the Church which was there, and he commends them to some notable man whom he calls his *"yokefellow,"* to whom perchance he was wont to commend them, as to a fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier, and brother, and companion, as he does in the Epistle to the Romans, when he says, *"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, who is a servant of the Church that is at Cenchrea."* [Romans 16:1] *"Yokefellow;"* either some brother of theirs, or a husband of hers; as if he had said, Now you are a true brother, now a true husband, because you have become a Member. *"For they labored with me in the Gospel."* This protection came from home, not from friendship, but for good deeds. *"Labored with me."* What do you say? Did women labor with you? Yes, he answers, they too contributed no small portion. Although many were they who wrought together with him, yet these women also acted with him among the many. The Churches then were

no little edified, for many good ends are gained where they who are approved, be they men, or be they women, enjoy from the rest such honor. For in the first place the rest were led on to a like zeal; in the second place, they also gained by the respect shown; and thirdly, they made those very persons more zealous and earnest. Wherefore you see that Paul has everywhere a care for this, and commends such men for consideration. As he says in the Epistle to the Corinthians: "*Who are the first-fruits of Achaia,*" [1 Corinthians 16:15] Some say that the word "*yokefellow,*" (Syzygus,) is a proper name. Well, what? Whether it be so, or no, we need not accurately enquire, but observe that he gives his orders, that these women should enjoy much protection.

All we have, says he, is in the heavens, our Saviour, our city, whatever a man can name: "*whence,*" says he, "*we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*" And this is an act of His kindness and love toward man. He Himself again comes to us, he does not drag us there, but takes us, and so departs with us. And this is a mark of great honor; for if He came to us when we were enemies, much rather does He now when we have become friends. He does not commit this to the Angels, nor to servants, but Himself comes to call us to His royal mansion. See, we also "*shall be caught up in the clouds*" [1 Thessalonians 4:17], doing him honor.

Who then is to be found "*the faithful and wise servant*"? Who are they that are deemed worthy of such good things? How miserable are those who fail! For if we were forever to weep, should we do anything worthy of the occasion? For were you to make mention of hells innumerable, you would name nothing equal to that pain which the soul sustains, when all the world is in confusion, when the trumpets are sounding, when the Angels are rushing forward, the first, then the second, then the third, then ten thousand ranks, are pouring forth upon the earth; then the Cherubim, (and many are

these and infinite;) the Seraphim; when He Himself is coming, with His ineffable glory; when those meet Him, who had gone to gather the elect into the midst; when Paul and his companions, and all who in his time had been approved, are crowned, are proclaimed aloud, are honored by the King, before all His heavenly host. For if hell did not exist, how fearful a thing it is, that the one part should be honored, and the other dishonored! Hell, I confess, is intolerable, yea, very intolerable, but more intolerable than it is the loss of the Kingdom. Consider; if any king, or the son of a king, having taken his departure, and been successful in innumerable wars, and become the object of admiration, should with his army entire, return to any city, in his chariot, with his trophies, with his innumerable ranks of golden shields, with his spearmen, his bodyguard all about him, while the whole city was adorned with crowns, while all the rulers of the world accompanied him, and all the soldiery of foreign nations followed him as captives, then præfects, satraps, and in the presence of all the rulers, and all that splendor, he should receive the citizens who meet him, and kiss them, and stretch forth his hand, and give them freedom of access, and converse with them, all standing around, as with friends, and tell them that all that journey was undertaken for their sake, and should lead them into his palace, and give them a share of it, even if the rest should not be punished, to how great punishment would not this be equal? But if in the case of men it were a bitter thing to fall away from this glory, much more is it so with God, when all the heavenly Powers are present with the King, when the demons, bound, and bowing down their heads, and the devil himself is led along in chains, and all military force that opposes itself, when the Powers of the heavens, when He Himself, comes upon the clouds.

Believe me, I am not even able to finish my words, from the grief which lays hold of my soul at this relation. Consider of how great glory we

shall be deprived, when it is in our power not to be deprived of it. For this is the misery, that we suffer these things, when it is in our power not to suffer them. When he receives the one part and leads them to His Father in heaven, and rejects the other, whom Angels take and drag against their will, weeping, and hanging down their heads, to the fire of hell, when they have first been made a spectacle to the whole world, what grief, think you, is there? Let us then make haste, while there is time, and take great thought of our own salvation. How many things have we to say like the rich man? If any one would now suffer us, we would take counsel of the things that are profitable! But no one does suffer us. And that we shall so say, is clear, not from him alone, but from many others. And that you may learn this, how many men have been in fevers, and said, if we recover, we shall never again fall into the same state. Many such words we shall then say, but we shall be answered as the rich man was, that there is a gulf, that we have received our good things here. [Luke 16:25-26] Let us groan then, I entreat you, bitterly, rather let us not only groan, but pursue virtue too; let us lament now, for salvation, that we may not then lament in vain. Let us weep now, and not weep then, at our evil lot. This weeping is of virtue, that of unprofitable repentance; let us afflict ourselves now, that we may not then; for it is not the same thing to be afflicted here and there. Here, you are afflicted for a little time, or rather thou dost not perceive your affliction, knowing that you are afflicted for your good. But there, the affliction is more bitter, because it is not in hope, nor for any escape, but without limit, and throughout.

But may we all be freed from this, and obtain remission. But let us pray and be diligent, that we may obtain the remission. Let us be diligent, I entreat; for if we are diligent, we prevail even through our prayer: if we pray earnestly, God grants our request; but if we neither ask Him, nor do earnestly anything of this sort, nor work, how is it possible that we should

ever succeed? By sleeping? Not at all. For it is much if even by running, and stretching forth, and being conformed to His death, as Paul said, we shall be able to succeed, not to say sleeping. *"If by any means I may attain,"* says he. But if Paul said, *"If by any means I may attain,"* what shall we say? For it is not possible by sleeping to accomplish even worldly business, not to say spiritual. By sleeping, not even from friends can anything be received, far less from God. Not even fathers honor them who sleep, far less does God. Let us labor for a little time, that we may have rest for ever. We must at all events be afflicted. If we are not afflicted here, it awaits us there. Why choose we not to be afflicted here, that there we may have rest, and obtain the unspeakable blessings, in Christ Jesus, with whom, to the Father together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on Philippians

[Philippians 4:4-7]

"Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts through Christ Jesus."

"[Blessed] are they that mourn," and "woe unto them that laugh" [Matthew 5:4; Luke 6:25], says Christ. How then says Paul, *"Rejoice in the Lord always"*? *"Woe to them that laugh,"* said Christ, the laughter of this world which arises from the things which are present. He blessed also those that mourn, not simply for the loss of relatives, but those who are pricked at heart, who mourn their own faults, and take count of their own sins, or even those of others. This joy is not contrary to that grief, but from that grief it too is born. For he who grieves for his own faults, and confesses them, rejoices. Moreover, it is possible to grieve for our own sins, and yet to rejoice in Christ. Since then they were afflicted by their sufferings, *"for to you it is given not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him"* [Philippians 1:29], therefore he says, *"Rejoice in the Lord."* For this can but mean, If you exhibit such a life that you may rejoice. Or when your communion with God is not hindered, rejoice. Or else the word *"in"* may stand for *"with"*: as if he had said, with the Lord. *"Alway; again I will say, Rejoice."* These are the words of one who brings comfort; as, for example, he who is in God rejoices always. Yea though he be afflicted, yea whatever he may suffer, such a man always rejoices. Hear what Luke says, that *"they*

returned from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be scourged for His name." [Acts 5:41] If scourging and bonds, which seem to be the most grievous of all things, bring forth joy, what else will be able to produce grief in us?

"Again I will say, Rejoice." Well has he repeated. For since the nature of the things brought forth grief, he shows by repeating, that they should by all means rejoice.

"Let your forbearance be known unto all men." He said above, *"Whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame,"* and that they *"mind earthly things."* [Philippians 3:19] It was probable that they would be at enmity with the wicked; he therefore exhorted them to have nothing in common with them, but to use them with all forbearance, and that not only their brethren, but also their enemies and opposers. *"The Lord is at hand, in nothing be anxious."* For why, tell me? Do they ever rise in opposition? And if you see them living in luxury, why are you in affliction? Already the judgment is near; shortly will they give account of their actions. Are ye in affliction, and they in luxury? But these things shall shortly receive their end. Do they plot against you, and threaten you? *"In nothing be anxious."* The judgment is already at hand, when these things shall be reversed. *"In nothing be anxious."* If you are kindly affected toward those who prepare evil against you, yet it shall not at last turn out to their profit. Already the recompense is at hand, if poverty, if death, if anything else that is terrible be upon you. *"But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."* There is this for one consolation, *"the Lord is at hand."* And again, *"I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world."* [Matthew 28:20] Behold another consolation, a medicine which heals grief, and distress, and all that is painful. And what is this? Prayer, thanksgiving in all things. And so He

wills that our prayers should not simply be requests, but thanksgivings too for what we have. For how should he ask for future things, who is not thankful for the past? *"But in everything by prayer and supplication."* Wherefore we ought to give thanks for all things, even for those which seem to be grievous, for this is the part of the truly thankful man. In the other case the nature of the things demands it; but this springs from a grateful soul, and one earnestly affected toward God. God acknowledges these prayers, but others He knows not. Offer up such prayers as may be acknowledged; for He disposes all things for our profit, though we know it not. And this is a proof that it greatly profits, namely, that we know it not. *"And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."* What means this? *"The peace of God"* which He has wrought toward men, surpasses all understanding. For who could have expected, who could have hoped, that such good things would have come? They exceed all man's understanding, not his speech alone. For His enemies, for those who hated Him, for those who determined to turn themselves away, for these, he refused not to deliver up His Only Begotten Son, that He might make peace with us. This peace then, i.e. the reconciliation, the love of God, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts.

For this is the part of a teacher, not only to exhort, but also to pray, and to assist by supplication, that they may neither be overwhelmed by temptations, nor carried about by deceit. As if he had said, May He who has delivered you in such sort as mind cannot comprehend, may He Himself guard you, and secure you, so that you suffer no ill. Either he means this, or that that peace of which Christ says, *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you"* [John 14:27]: this shall guard you, for this peace exceeds all man's understanding. How? When he tells us to be at peace with our enemies, with those who treat us unjustly, with those who are at war and

enmity toward us; is it not beyond man's understanding? But rather let us look to the former. If the peace surpasses all understanding, much more does God Himself, who gives peace, pass all understanding, not ours only, but also that of Angels, and the Powers above. What means "*in Christ Jesus*"? Shall guard us in Him, so that you may remain firm, and not fall from His faith.

Ver. 8. "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just.*" What is "*Finally*"? It stands for, "*I have said all.*" It is the word of one that is in haste, and has nothing to do with present things.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Ver. 9. "*The things which you both learned and received, and heard and saw in me.*"

What means, "*whatsoever things are lovely*"? Lovely to the faithful, lovely to God. "*Whatsoever things are true.*" Virtue is really true, vice is falsehood. For the pleasure of it is a falsehood, and its glory is falsehood, and all things of the world are falsehood. "*Whatsoever things are pure.*" This is opposed to the words "*who mind earthly things.*" "*Whatsoever things are honorable.*" This is opposed to the words "*whose god is their belly.*" "*Whatsoever things are just,*" i.e. says he, "*whatsoever things are of good report.*" "*If there be any virtue, if there be any praise.*" Here he wills them to take thought of those things too which regard men. "*Think on these things,*" says he. Do you see, that he desires to banish every evil thought from our souls; for evil actions spring from thoughts. "*The things which you both learned and received.*" This is teaching, in all his exhortations to

propose himself for a model: as he says in another place, "*even as you have us for an ensample.*" [Philippians 3:17] And again here, "*What things ye learned and received,*" i.e. have been taught by word of mouth, "*and heard and saw in me*": both in respect of my words and actions and conduct. Do you see, how about everything he lays these commands on us? For since it was not possible to make an accurate enumeration of all things, of our coming in, and going out, and speech, and carriage, and intercourse (for of all these things it is needful that a Christian should have thought), he said shortly, and as it were in a summary, "*ye heard and saw in me.*" I have led you forward both by deeds and by words. "*These things do,*" not only in words, but *do* them also. "*And the God of peace shall be with you,*" i.e. you shall be in a calm, in great safety, you shall suffer nothing painful, nor contrary to your will. For when we are at peace with Him, and we are so through virtue, much more will He be at peace with us. For He who so loved us, as to show favor to us even against our will, will He not, if He sees us hastening toward Him, Himself yet much more exhibit His love toward us?

Nothing is such an enemy of our nature as vice. And from many things it is evident, how vice is at enmity with us, and virtue friendly toward us. What will you? That I should speak of fornication? It makes men subject to reproach, poor, objects of ridicule, despicable to all, just as enemies treat them. Ofttimes it has involved men in disease and danger; many men have perished or been wounded in behalf of their mistresses. And if fornication produces these things, much rather does adultery. But does almsgiving so? By no means. But as a loving mother sets her son in great propriety, in good order, in good report, and gives him leisure to engage in necessary work, thus almsgiving does not release us nor lead us away from our necessary

work, but even renders the soul more wise. For nothing is more foolish than a mistress.

But what do you will? To look upon covetousness? It too treats us like an enemy. And how? It makes us hated by all. It prepares all men to vaunt themselves against us; both those who have been treated unjustly by us, and those who have not, who share the grief of the former, and are in fear for themselves. All men look upon us as their common foes, as wild beasts, as demons. Everywhere are there innumerable accusations, plots against us, envyings, all which are the acts of enemies. But justice, on the contrary, makes all men friends, all men sociable, all men well disposed towards us, by all men prayers are made in our behalf; our affairs are in perfect safety, there is no danger, there is no suspicion. But sleep also fearlessly comes over us with perfect safety, no care is there, no lamenting.

How much better this sort of life is! And what? Is it best to envy, or to rejoice with one another? Let us search out all these things, and we shall find that virtue, like a truly kind mother, places us in safety, while vice is a treacherous thing, and full of danger. For hear the prophet, who says, "*The Lord is a stronghold of them that fear Him, and His covenant is to show them.*" [Psalm 25:14, Septuagint] He fears no one, who is not conscious to himself of any wickedness; on the contrary, he who lives in crime is never confident, but trembles at his domestics, and looks at them with suspicion. Why say, his domestics? He cannot bear the tribunal of his own conscience. Not only those who are without, but his inward thoughts affect him likewise, and suffer him not to be in quiet. What then, says Paul? Ought we to live dependent on praise? He said not, look to praise, but do praiseworthy actions, yet not for the sake of praise.

"*Whatsoever things are true,*" for the things we have been speaking of are false. "*Whatsoever things are honorable.*" That which is "*honorable*"

belongs to external virtue, that which is "*pure*" to the soul. Give no cause of stumbling, says he, nor handle of accusation. Because he had said, "*Whatsoever things are of good report,*" lest you should think that he means only those things which are so in the sight of men, he proceeds, "*if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things*"— do these things. He wills us ever to be in these things, to care for these things, to think on these things. For if we will be at peace with each other, God too will be with us, but if we raise up war, the God of peace will not be with us. For nothing is so hostile to the soul as vice. That is, peace and virtue place it in safety. Wherefore we must make a beginning on our part, and then we shall draw God toward us.

God is not a God of war and fighting. Make war and fighting to cease, both that which is against Him, and that which is against your neighbor. Be at peace with all men, consider with what character God saves you.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

[Matthew 5:9] Such always imitate the Son of God: do thou imitate Him too. Be at peace. The more your brother wars against you, by so much the greater will be your reward. For hear the prophet who says, "*With the haters of peace I was peaceful.*" [Psalm 120:7, Septuagint] This is virtue, this is above man's understanding, this makes us near God; nothing so much delights God as to remember no evil. This sets you free from your sins, this looses the charges against you: but if we are fighting and buffeting, we become far off from God: for enmities are produced by conflict, and from enmity springs remembrance of evil.

Cut out the root, and there will be no fruit. Thus shall we learn to despise the things of this life, for there is no conflict, none, in spiritual things, but whatever you see, either conflicts or envy, or whatever a man can mention, all these spring from the things of this life. Every conflict has

its beginning either in covetousness, or envy, or vainglory. If therefore we are at peace, we shall learn to despise the things of the earth. Hath a man stolen our money? He has not injured us, only let him not steal our treasure which is above. Hath he hindered your glory? Yet not that which is from God, but that which is of no account. For this is no glory, but a mere name of glory, or rather a shame. Hath he stolen your honor? Rather not yours but his own. For as he who commits injustice does not so much inflict as receive injustice, thus too he who plots against his neighbor, first destroys himself.

For *"he who digs a pit for his neighbor, falls into it."* [Proverbs 26:27] Let us then not plot against others, lest we injure ourselves. When we supplant the reputation of others, let us consider that we injure ourselves, it is against ourselves we plot. For perchance with men we do him harm, if we have power, but we injure ourselves in the sight of God, by provoking Him against us. Let us not then harm ourselves. For as we injure ourselves when we injure our neighbors, so by benefiting them we benefit ourselves. If then your enemy harm you, he has benefited you if you are wise, and so requite him not with the same things, but even do him good. But the blow, you say, remains severe. Consider then that thou dost not benefit, but punishest him, and benefitest yourself, and quickly you will come to do him good. What then? Shall we act from this motive? We ought not to act on this motive, but if your heart will not hear other reason, induce it, says he, even by this, and you will quickly persuade it to dismiss its enmity, and wilt for the future do good to your enemy as to a friend, and wilt obtain the good things which are to come, to which God grant that we may all attain in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Homily 15 on Philippians

[Philippians 4:10-14]

"But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length you have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abused, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengthens me. Howbeit, you did well, that you had fellowship with my affliction."

I have oftentimes said, that almsgiving has been introduced not for the sake of the receivers, but of the givers, for the latter are they which make the greatest gain. And this Paul shows here also. In what way? The Philippians had sent him somewhat, after a long time, and had committed the same to Epaphroditus. See then, how when he is about to send Epaphroditus as the bearer of this Epistle, he praises them, and shows that this action was for the need, not of the receiver, but of the givers. This he does, both that they who benefited him may not be lifted up with arrogance, and that they may become more zealous in well-doing, since they rather benefit themselves; and that they who receive may not fearlessly rush forward to receive, lest they meet with condemnation. For *"it is more blessed,"* He says, *"to give than to receive."* [Acts 20:35] Why then does he say, *"I rejoice in the Lord greatly"*? Not with worldly rejoicing, says he, nor with the joy of this life, but in the Lord. Not because I had refreshment, but because ye advanced; for this is my refreshment. Wherefore he also says

"greatly"; since this joy was not corporeal, nor on account of his own refreshment, but because of their advancement.

And see how, when he had gently rebuked them on account of the times that were passed, he quickly throws a shadow over this, and teaches them constantly and always to remain in well doing. *"Because at length,"* says he. The words, *"at length,"* show long time to have elapsed. *"You have revived,"* as fruits which have shot forth, dried up, and afterwards shot forth. Here he shows, that being at first blooming, then having faded, they again budded forth. So that the word *"flourished again,"* has both rebuke and praise. For it is no small thing, that he who has withered should flourish again. He shows also, that it was from indolence all this had happened to them. But here he signifies, that even in former time they were wont to be zealous in these things. Wherefore he adds, *"your thought for me, wherein ye did indeed take thought."* And lest you should think, that in other things too they had been more zealous, and had then withered, but in this thing alone, behold how he has added, *"your thought for me."* I apply the words, *"now at length,"* only to this; for in other things it is not so.

Here some one may enquire, how when he had said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* [Acts 20:25-34]; and, *"These hands ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me";* and again when writing to the Corinthians, *"For it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void"* [1 Corinthians 9:15]; he suffers his glorying to be made void? And how? By receiving. For if his glorying was, that he received not, how does he now endure so to do? What is it then? Probably, he then did not receive on account of the false Apostles, *"that wherein they glory"* [2 Corinthians 11:12], says he, *"they may be found even as we."* And he said not *"are,"* but *"glory";* for they received but secretly. Wherefore he said, *"wherein they glory."* Wherefore he also said, *"No man shall stop me*

of this glorying." [2 Corinthians 11:10] And he said not simply, shall not stop me, but what? *"in the regions of Achaia."* And again, *"I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you."* [2 Corinthians 11:8] Here he showed that he did receive. But Paul indeed received rightly, having so great a work; if in truth he did receive. But they who work not, how can they receive? *"Yet I pray,"* says one. But there is no work. For this may be done together with work. *"But I fast."* Neither is this work. For see this blessed one, preaching in many places, and working too. *"But ye lacked opportunity."* What means lacked opportunity? It came not; says he, of indolence, but of necessity. You had it not in your hands, nor were in abundance. This is the meaning of, *"You lacked opportunity."* Thus most men speak, when the things of this life do not flow in to them abundantly, and are in short supply.

"Not that I speak in respect of want." I said, says he, *"now at length,"* and I rebuked you, not seeking my own, nor censuring you on this account, as if I were in want: for I sought it not on this account. Whence is this, O Paul, that you make no vain boasting? To the Corinthians he says, *"For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge."* [2 Corinthians 1:13] And in this case he would not have spoken to them so as to be convicted, he would not, had he been making boasts, have spoken thus. He was speaking to those who knew the facts, with whom detection would have been a greater disgrace. *"For I have learned,"* says he, *"in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content."* Wherefore, this is an object of discipline, and exercise, and care, for it is not easy of attainment, but very difficult, and a new thing. *"In whatsoever state I am,"* says he, *"therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound. In everything and in all things have I learned the secret."* That is, I know how to use little, to bear hunger and want. *"Both to abound, and to suffer need."*

"But, says one, there is no need of wisdom or of virtue in order to abound." There is great need of virtue, not less than in the other case. For as want inclines us to do many evil things, so too does plenty. For many oftentimes, coming into plenty, have become indolent, and have not known how to bear their good fortune. Many men have taken it as an occasion of no longer working. But Paul did not so, for what he received he consumed on others, and emptied himself for them. This is to know. He was in nowise relaxed, nor did he exult at his abundance; but was the same in want and in plenty, he was neither oppressed on the one hand, nor rendered a boaster on the other. *"Both to be filled,"* says he, *"and to be hungry, both to abound, and to be in want."* Many know not how to be full, as for example, the Israelites, *"ate, and kicked"* [Deuteronomy 32:15], but I am equally well ordered in all. He shows that he neither is now elated, nor was before grieved: or if he grieved, it was on their account, not on his own, for he himself was similarly affected.

"In everything," says he, *"and in all things I have learned the secret,"* i.e. I have had experience of all things in this long time, and these things have all succeeded with me. But since boasting might seem to have a place here, see how quickly he checks up, and says, *"I can do all things in Christ that strengthens me."* The success is not my own, but His who has given me strength. But since they who confer benefits, when they see the receiver not well affected toward them, but despising the gifts, are themselves rendered more remiss, (for they considered themselves as conferring a benefit and refreshment,) if therefore Paul despises the refreshment, they must necessarily become remiss, in order then that this may not happen, see how he heals it again. By what he has said above, he has brought down their proud thoughts, by what follows he makes their readiness revive, by saying, *"Howbeit ye did well, that you had fellowship with my affliction."* Do you

see, how he removed himself, and again united himself to them. This is the part of true and spiritual friendship. Think not, says he, because I was not in want, that I had no need of this act of yours. I have need of it for your sake. How then, did they share his afflictions? By this means. As he said when in bonds, *"You all are partakers with me of grace."* [Philippians 1:7] For it is grace to suffer for Christ, as he himself says in another place, *"For to you it is given from God not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him."* [Philippians 1:29] For since those former words by themselves might have made them regardless, for this cause he consoles them, and receives them, and praises them again. And this in measured words. For he said not, *"gave,"* but *"had fellowship,"* to show that they too were profited by becoming partakers of his labors. He said not, you did lighten, but you did communicate with my affliction, which was something more elevated. Do you see the humility of Paul? Do you see his noble nature? When he has shown that he had no need of their gifts on his own account, he afterward uses freely such lowly words as they do who make a request; *"since you are wont to give."* For he refuses neither to do, nor say anything. That is, *"Think not that my words show want of shame, wherein I accuse you, and say, 'Now at length you have revived,' or are those of one in necessity; I speak not thus because I am in need, but why? From my exceeding confidence in you, and of this also ye yourselves are the authors."*

Do you see how he soothes them? How are you the authors? In that you hastened to the work before all the others; and have given me confidence to remind you of these things. And observe his elevation; he accuses them not while they did not send, lest he should seem to regard his own benefit, but when they had sent, then he rebuked them for the time past, and they received it, for he could not seem after that to regard his own benefit.

Ver. 15. *"You yourselves also know, you Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church had communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but you only."*

Lo, how great is his commendation! For the Corinthians and Romans are stirred up by hearing these things from him, while the Philippians did it without any other Church having made a beginning. For *"in the beginning of the Gospel,"* says he, they manifested such zeal towards the holy Apostle, as themselves first to begin, without having any example, to bear this fruit. And no one can say that they did these things because he abode with them, or for their own benefit; for he says, *"When I departed from Macedonia, no Church had fellowship with me, in the matter of giving and receiving, but you only."* What means *"receiving,"* and what *"had fellowship"*? Wherefore said he not, *"no Church gave to me,"* but *"had fellowship with me, in the matter of giving and receiving"*? Because it is a case of communication. He says, *"If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things."* [1 Corinthians 9:11] And again, *"That your abundance may be a supply to their want."* [2 Corinthians 8:14] How did they communicate? In the matter of giving carnal things, and receiving spiritual. For as they who sell and buy communicate with each other, by mutually giving what they have, (and this is communication,) so too is it here. For there is not anything more profitable than this trade and traffic. It is performed on the earth, but is completed in heaven. They who buy are on the earth, but they buy and agree about heavenly things, while they lay down an earthly price.

But despond not; heavenly things are not to be bought with money, riches cannot purchase these things, but the purpose of him who gives the money, his true wisdom, his superiority to earthly things, his love toward man, his mercifulness. For if money could purchase it, she who threw in the

two mites would have gained nothing great. But since it was not the money, but the purpose that availed, she received everything, who exhibited a full purpose of mind. Let us not then say, that the Kingdom can be bought with money; it is not by money, but by purpose of mind which is exhibited by the money. Therefore, will one answer, there is no need of money? There is no need of money, but of the disposition; if you have this, you will be able even by two mites to purchase Heaven; where this is not, not even ten thousand talents of gold will be able to do that, which the two mites could. Wherefore? Because if you who hast much throwest in but a small portion, you gave an alms indeed, but not so great as the widow did; for thou did not throw it in with the same readiness as she. For she deprived herself of all she had, or rather she deprived not, but gave it all as a free gift to herself. Not for a cup of cold water has God promised the kingdom, but for readiness of heart; not for death, but for purpose of mind. For indeed it is no great thing. For what is it to give one life? That is giving one man; but one man is not of worth enough.

Ver. 16. *"For even in Thessalonica, you sent once and again unto my need."*

Here again is great praise, that he, when dwelling in the metropolis, should be nourished by a little city. And lest, by always withdrawing himself from the supposition of want, he should, as I said at first, render them amiss, having previously shown by so many proofs that he is not in want, he here does it by one word only, by saying *"needs."* And he said not *"my,"* but absolutely,— having a care of dignity. And not this only, but what follows too, for since he was conscious that it was a very lowly thing, he again secures it, by adding as a correction,

Ver. 17. *"Not that I seek for the gift."*

As he said above, *"Not that I speak in respect of want"*; that is stronger than this. For it is one thing, that he who is in want, should not seek, and another that he who is in want should not even consider himself to be in want. *"Not that I seek for the gift,"* he says, *"but I seek for the fruit, that increases to your account."* Not my own. Do you see, that the fruit is produced for them? This say I for your sake, says he, not for my own, for your salvation. For I gain nothing when I receive, but the grace belongs to the givers, for the recompense is yonder in store for givers, but the gifts are here consumed by them who receive. Again even his desire is combined with praise and sympathy.

When he had said, I do not seek, lest he should again render them remiss, he adds,

Ver. 18. *"But I have all things and abound,"* i.e. through this gift you have filled up what was wanting, which would make them more eager. For benefactors, the wiser they are, the more do they seek gratitude from the benefited. That is, you have not only filled up what was deficient in former time, but you have gone beyond. For lest by these words he should seem to accuse them, see how he seals up all. After he had said, *"Not that I seek for the gift,"* and *"Now at length"*; and had shown that their deed was a debt, for this is meant by, *"I have all,"* then again he shows, that they had acted above what was due, and says, *"I have all things and abound, I am filled."* I say not this at hazard, or only from the feeling of my mind, but why?

"Having received of Epaphroditus the things that came from you, an odor of a sweet smell; a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." Lo, whither he has raised their gift; not I, he says, received, but God through me.

Wherefore though I be not in need, regard it not, for God had no need, and He received at their hands in such sort, that the Holy Scriptures shrunk not from saying, *"God smelled a sweet savor"* [Genesis 8:21], which denotes

one who was pleased. For you know, indeed ye know, how our soul is affected by sweet saviors, how it is pleased, how it is delighted. The Scriptures therefore shrunk not from applying to God a word so human, and so lowly, that it might show to men that their gifts have become acceptable. For not the fat, not the smoke, made them acceptable, but the purpose of mind which offered them. Had it been otherwise, Cain's offering too had been received. It says then, that He is even pleased, and how He is pleased. For men could not without this have learned. He then, who has no need, says that He is thus pleased, that they may not become remiss by the absence of need. And afterward, when they had no care for other virtues, and trusted to their offerings alone, behold, how again he sets them right by saying, *"Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?"* [Psalm 50:13] This Paul also says. *"Not that I seek,"* says he, *"for the gift."*

Ver. 19. *"And may my God fulfill every need of yours, according to His riches in glory, in Christ Jesus."*

Behold how he invokes blessings upon them, as poor men do. But if even Paul blesses those who give, much more let us not be ashamed to do this when we receive. Let us not receive as though we ourselves had need, let us not rejoice on our own account, but on that of the givers. Thus we too who receive shall have a reward, if we rejoice for their sake. Thus we shall not take it hardly, when men do not give, but rather shall grieve for their sake. So shall we render them more zealous, if we teach them, that not for our own sake do we so act; *"but may my God"* fulfill every need of yours, or every grace, or every joy. If the second be true, *"every grace,"* he means not only the alms, which are of earth, but every excellency. If the first, *"your every need,"* which I think too should rather be read, this is what he means to show. As he had said, *"ye lacked opportunity,"* he here makes an addition, as he does in the Epistle to the Corinthians, saying, *"And He that*

supplies seed to the sower; may He supply bread for food, and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness." [2

Corinthians 9:10] He invokes blessings upon them, that they may abound, and have wherewith to sow. He blesses them too, not simply that they might abound, but *"according to His riches,"* so that this too is done in measured terms. For had they been as he was, so truly wise, so crucified, he would not have done this; but since they were men that were handicraftsmen, poor, having wives, bringing up children, ruling their families, and who had given these very gifts out of small possessions, and had certain desires of the things of this world, he blesses them appropriately. For it is not unseemly to invoke sufficiency and plenty upon those who thus use them. See too what he said. He said not, May He make you rich, and to abound greatly; but what said he? *"May He fulfill every need of yours,"* so that you may not be in want, but have things for your necessities. Since Christ too, when He gave us a form of prayer, inserted also this in the prayer, when He taught us to say,

"Give us this day our daily bread." [Matthew 6:11]

"According to His riches." That is, according to His free gift, i.e. it is easy to Him, and possible, and quickly. And since I have spoken of need, do not think that he will drive you into straits. Wherefore he added, *"according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."* So shall all things abound to you, that you may have them to His glory. Or, you are wanting in nothing; (for it is written, *"great grace was upon them all, neither was there any that lacked."*) [Acts 4:33] Or, so as to do all things for His glory, as if he had said, that you may use your abundance to His glory.

Ver. 20. *"Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."* For the glory of which he speaks belongs not only to the Son, but to the Father too, for when the Son is glorified, then is the Father also. For

when he said, This is done to the glory of Christ, lest any one should suppose that it is to His glory alone, he continued, *"Unto our God and Father be the glory,"* that glory which is paid to the Son.

Ver. 21. *"Salute every saint in Christ Jesus."* This also is no small thing. For it is a proof of great good will, to salute them through letters. *"The brethren which are with me salute you."* And yet you said that you have *"no one like-minded, who will care truly for your state."* How then do you say now, *"The brethren which are with me"*? He either says, *"The brethren which are with me,"* because he has no one like-minded of those who are with him, (where he does not speak of those in the city, for how were they constrained to undertake the affairs of the Apostles?) or that he did not refuse to call even those brethren.

Ver. 22, 23. *"All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."*

He elevated them and strengthened them, by showing that his preaching had reached even to the king's household. For if those who were in the king's palace despised all things for the sake of the King of Heaven, far more ought they to do this. And this too was a proof of the love of Paul, and that he had told many things of them, and said great things of them, whence he had even led those who were in the palace to a longing for them, so that those who had never seen them saluted them. Especially because the faithful were then in affliction, his love was great. And those who were absent from each other were closely conjoined together as if real limbs. And the poor man was similarly disposed toward the rich, and the rich toward the poor, and there was no preëminence, in that they were all equally hated and cast out, and that for the same cause. For as, if captives taken from various cities should arise and come to the same towns, they eagerly embrace each other, their common calamity binding them together; thus too

at that time they had great love one toward another, the communion of their afflictions and persecutions uniting them.

Moral. For affliction is an unbroken bond, the increase of love, the occasion of compunction and piety. Hear the words of David, *"It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes."* [Psalm 119:71] And again another prophet, who says, *"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."* [Lamentations 3:27] And again, *"Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord."* [Psalm 94:12] And another who says, *"Despise not the chastening of the Lord."* [Proverbs 3:11] And *"if you come near to serve the Lord, prepare your soul for temptation."* [Sirach 11:1] And Christ also said to His disciples, *"In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer."* [John 16:33] And again, *"You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice."* [John 16:20] And again, *"Narrow and straitened is the way."* [Matthew 7:14] Do you see how tribulation is everywhere lauded, everywhere assumed as needful for us? For if in the contests of the world, no one without this receives the crown, unless he fortify himself by toil, by abstinence from delicacies, by living according to rule, by watchings, and innumerable other things, much more so here. For whom will you name as an instance? The king? Not even he lives a life free from care, but one burdened with much tribulation and anxiety. For look not to his diadem, but to his sea of cares, by which the crown is produced for him. Nor look to his purple robe, but to his soul, which is darker than that purple. His crown does not so closely bind his brow, as care does his soul. Nor look to the multitude of his spearmen, but to the multitude of his disquietudes. For it is not possible to find a private house laden with so many cares as a king's palace. Violent deaths are each day expected, and a vision of blood is seen as they sit down to eat and drink. Nor can we say how oft he is disturbed in the night season, and leaps up, haunted with

visions. And all this in peace; but if war should overtake him, what could be more piteous than such a life as this! What evils has he from those that are his own, I mean, those who are under his dominion. Nay, and of a truth the pavement of a king's house is always full of blood, the blood of his own relations. And if you will, I will also relate some instances, and you will presently know; chiefly old occurrences— but also some things that have happened in our own times— yet still preserved in memory. One, it is said, having suspected his wife of adultery, bound her naked upon mules, and exposed her to wild beasts, though she had already been the mother to him of many princes. What sort of life, think ye, could that man have lived? For he would not have broken out into such vengeance, had he not been deeply affected with that distress. Moreover, this same man slew his own son, or rather his brother did so. Of his sons, the one indeed slew himself when seized by a tyrant, and another put to death his cousin, his colleague in the kingdom, to which he had appointed him; and saw his wife destroyed by pessaries, for when she bore not, a certain wretched and miserable woman (for such indeed she was who thought to supply the gift of God by her own wisdom) gave her pessaries, and destroyed the queen, and herself perished with her. And this man is said to have also killed his own brother. Another again, his successor, was destroyed by noxious drugs, and his cup was to him no longer drink, but death. And his son had an eye put out, from fear of what was to follow, though he had done no wrong. It is not befitting to mention how another ended his life miserably. And after them, one was burnt, like some miserable wretch, among horses, and beams, and all sorts of things, and left his wife in widowhood. For it is not possible to relate the woes which he was compelled to undergo in his lifetime, when he rose up in revolt. And has not he who now rules, from the time he received the crown, been in toil, in danger, in grief, in dejection, in misfortune, exposed

to conspiracies? Such is not the kingdom of heaven, but after it is received, there is peace, life, joy, delight. But as I said, life cannot be without pain. For if in the affairs of this world even he who is accounted most happy, if the king is burdened with so many misfortunes, what thinkest you must be true of private life? I cannot say how many other evils there are! How many stories have oftentimes been woven on these subjects! For nearly all the tragedies of the stage, as well as the mythical stories, have kings for their subjects. For most of these stories are formed from true incidents, for it is thus they please. As for example, Thyestes' banquet, and the destruction to all that family by their misfortunes.

These things we know from the writers that are without: but if you will, I will adduce instances from the Scripture too. Saul was the first king, and you knew how he perished, after experiencing numberless ills. After him, David, Solomon, Abia, Hezekiah, Josiah, in like sort. For it is not possible, without affliction and toil, and without dejection of mind, to pass through the present life. But let us be cast down in mind, not for such things as these, for which kings grieve, but for those things, whence we (thus) have great gain. *"For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, a repentance which brings no regret."* [2 Corinthians 7:10] On account of these things we should be grieved, for these things we should be pained, for these things we should be pricked at heart; thus was Paul grieved for sinners, thus did he weep. *"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you in many tears."* [2 Corinthians 2:4] For when he had no cause of grief on his own account, he did so on account of others, or rather he accounted those things too to be his own, at least as far as grief went. Others were offended, and he burned; others were weak, and he was weak: such grief as this is good, is superior to all worldly joy. Him who so grieves I prefer to all men, or rather the Lord Himself pronounces them blessed,

who so grieve, who are sympathizing. I do not so much admire him in dangers, or rather I do not admire him less for the dangers by which he died daily, yet this still more captivates me. For it came of a soul devoted to God, and full of affection: from the love which Christ Himself seeks: from a brotherly and a fatherly sympathy, or rather, of one greater than both these. Thus we should be affected, thus weep; such tears as these are full of great delight; such grief as this is the ground of joy.

And say not to me: What do they for whom I grieve gain by my so doing? Though we no way profit them for whom we grieve, at all events we shall profit ourselves. For he who grieves thus on account of others, much more will so do for himself; he who thus weeps for the sins of others will not pass by his own transgressions unwept, or rather, he will not quickly sin. But this is dreadful, that when we are ordered so to grieve for them that sin, we do not even exhibit any repentance for our own sins, but when sinning remain without feeling, and have care for and take account of anything, rather than our own sins. For this cause we rejoice with a worthless joy, which is the joy of the world, and straightway quenched, and which brings forth griefs innumerable. Let us then grieve with grief which is the mother of joy, and let us not rejoice with joy which brings forth grief. Let us shed tears which are the seeds of great joy, and not laugh with that laughter, which brings forth the gnashing of teeth for us. Let us be afflicted with affliction, from which springs up ease, and let us not seek luxury, whence great affliction and pain is born. Let us labor a little time upon the earth, that we may have continual enjoyment in heaven. Let us afflict ourselves in this transitory life, that we may attain rest in that which is endless. Let us not be remiss in this short life, lest we groan in that which is endless.

See ye not how many are here in affliction for the sake of worldly things? Consider that thou also art one of them, and bear your affliction and your pain, feeding on the hope of things to come. You are not better than Paul or Peter, who never obtained rest, who passed all their life in hunger and thirst and nakedness. If you would attain the same things with them, why do you journey along a contrary road? If you would arrive at that City, of which they have been deemed worthy, walk along the path which leads there. The way of ease leads not there, but that of affliction. The former is broad, the latter is narrow; along this let us walk, that we may attain eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be honor, might, power, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on Colossians

[Colossians 1:1, 2]

"Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossæ: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father."

Holy indeed are all the Epistles of Paul: but some advantage have those which he sent after he was in bonds: those, for instance, to the Ephesians and Philemon: that to Timothy, that to the Philippians, and the one before us: for this also was sent when he was a prisoner, since he writes in it thus: *"for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak."* [Colossians 4:3-4] But this Epistle appears to have been written after that to the Romans. For the one to the Romans he wrote before he had seen them, but this Epistle, after; and near upon the close of his preaching. And it is evident from hence; that in the Epistle to Philemon he says, *"Being such an one as Paul the aged"* [Philemon 9], and makes request for Onesimus; but in this he sends Onesimus himself, as he says, *"With Onesimus the faithful and beloved brother"* [Colossians 4:9]: calling him faithful, and beloved, and brother. Wherefore also he boldly says in this Epistle, *"from the hope of the Gospel which you heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven."* [Colossians 1:23] For it had now been preached for a long time. I think then that the Epistle to Timothy was written after this; and when he was now come to the very end of his life, for there he says, *"for I am already being offered"* [2 Timothy 4:6]; this is later however than that to the Philippians, for in that Epistle he was just entering upon his imprisonment at Rome.

But why do I say that these Epistles have some advantage over the rest in this respect, because he writes while in bonds? As if a champion were to write in the midst of carnage and victory; so also in truth did he. For himself too was aware that this was a great thing, for writing to Philemon he says, *"Whom I have begotten in my bonds."* [Philemon 10] And this he said, that we should not be dispirited when in adversity, but even rejoice. At this place was Philemon with these (Colossians). For in the Epistle to him he says, *"And to Archippus our fellow-soldier"* [Philemon 2]; and in this, *"Say to Archippus."* [Colossians 4:17] This man seems to me to have been charged with some office in the Church.

But he had not seen either these people, or the Romans, or the Hebrews, when he wrote to them. That this is true of the others, he shows in many places; with regard to the Colossians, hear him saying, *"And as many as have not seen my face in the flesh"* [Colossians 2:1-5]: and again, *"Though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit."* So great a thing did he know his presence everywhere to be. And always, even though he be absent, he makes himself present. So, when he punishes the fornicator, look how he places himself on the tribunal; *"for,"* he says, *"I verily being absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present"* [1 Corinthians 5:3]: and again, *"I will come to you, and will know not the word of them which are puffed up, but the power"* [1 Corinthians 4:19]: and again, *"Not only when I am present with you, but much more when I am absent."* [Philippians 2:12; Galatians 4:18]

"Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God."

It were well also to say, what from considering this Epistle we have found to be its occasion and subject. What then is it? They used to approach God through angels; they held many Jewish and Grecian observances. These things then he is correcting. Wherefore in the very outset he says,

"Through the will of God." So here again he has used the expression *"through."* *"And Timothy the brother,"* he says; of course then he too was an Apostle, and probably also known to them. *"To the saints which are at Colossæ."* This was a city of Phrygia, as is plain from Laodicea's being near to it. *"And faithful brethren in Christ."* [Colossians 4:16] Whence, says he, are you made a saint? Tell me. Whence are you called faithful? Is it not because thou were sanctified through death? Is it not because you have faith in Christ? Whence are you made a brother? For neither in deed, nor in word, nor in achievement did you show yourself faithful. Tell me, whence is it that you have been entrusted with so great mysteries? Is it not because of Christ?

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father." Whence comes grace to you? Whence peace? *"From God,"* says he, *"our Father."* Although he uses not in this place the name of Christ.

I will ask those who speak disparagingly of the Spirit, Whence is God the Father of servants? Who wrought these mighty achievements? Who made you a saint? Who faithful? Who a son of God? He who made you worthy to be trusted, the same is also the cause of your being entrusted with all.

For we are called faithful, not only because we have faith, but also because we are entrusted of God with mysteries which not even angels knew before us. However, to Paul it was indifferent whether or not to put it thus.

Ver. 3. *"We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

He seems to me to refer everything to the Father, that what he has to say may not at once offend them.

"Praying always for you."

He shows his love, not by giving thanks only, but also by continual prayer, in that those whom he did not see, he had continually within himself.

Ver. 4. [*"Having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus."*

A little above he said, *"our Lord."* *"He,"* says he, *"is Lord, not the servants."* *"Of Jesus Christ."* These names also are symbols of His benefit to us, for *"He,"* it means, *"shall save His people from their sins."* [Matthew 1:21]]

Ver. 4. *"Having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have toward all the saints."*

Already he conciliates them. It was Epaphroditus who brought him this account. But he sends the Epistle by Tychicus, retaining Epaphroditus with himself. *"And of the love,"* he says, *"which you have toward all the saints,"* not toward this one and that: of course then toward us also.

Ver. 5. *"Because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens."*

He speaks of the good things to come. This is with a view to their temptations, that they should not seek their rest here. For lest any should say, *"And where is the good of their love toward the saints, if they themselves are in affliction?"* he says, *"We rejoice that you are securing for yourselves a noble reception in heaven."* *"Because of the hope,"* he says, *"which is laid up."* He shows its secureness. *"Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth."* Here the expression is as if he would chide them, as having changed from it when they had long held it.

"Whereof," says he, *"ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel."* And he bears witness to its truth. With good reason, for in it there is nothing false.

"Of the Gospel." He does not say, *"of the preaching,"* but he calls it the *"Gospel,"* continually reminding them of God's benefits. And having first

praised them, he next reminds them of these.

Ver. 6. *"Which has come unto you, even as it is also in all the world."*

He now gives them credit. *"Is come,"* he said metaphorically. He means, it did not come and go away, but that it remained, and was there. Then because to the many the strongest confirmation of doctrines is that they hold them in common with many, he therefore added, *"As also it is in all the world."*

It is present everywhere, everywhere victorious, everywhere established.

"And is bearing fruit, and increasing, as it does in you also."

"Bearing fruit." In works. *"Increasing."* By the accession of many, by becoming firmer; for plants then begin to thicken when they have become firm.

"As also among you," says he.

He first gains the hearer by his praises, so that even though disinclined, he may not refuse to hear him.

"Since the day ye heard it."

Marvelous! That you quickly came unto it and believed; and straightway, from the very first, showed forth its fruits.

"Since the day ye heard, and knew the grace of God in truth."

Not in word, says he, nor in deceit, but in very deeds. Either then this is what he means by *"bearing fruit,"* or else, the signs and wonders. Because as soon as you received it, so soon ye knew the grace of God. What then immediately gave proofs of its inherent virtue, is it not a hard thing that that should now be disbelieved?

Ver. 7. *"Even as you learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant."*

He, it is probable, had preached there. *"You learned"* the Gospel. Then to show the trustworthiness of the man, he says, *"our fellow servant."*

"Who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf; who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit."

Doubt not, he says, of the hope which is to come: ye see that the world is being converted. And what need to allege the cases of others? What happened in your own is even independently a sufficient ground for belief, for, *"ye knew the grace of God in truth:"* that is, in works. So that these two things, viz. the belief of all, and your own too, confirm the things that are to come. Nor was the fact one thing, and what Epaphras said, another. *"Who is,"* says he, *"faithful,"* that is, true. How, *"a minister on your behalf"*? In that he had gone to him. *"Who also declared to us,"* says he, *"your love in the Spirit,"* that is, the spiritual love ye bear us. If this man be the minister of Christ; how say ye, that you approach God by angels? *"Who also declared unto us,"* says he, *"your love in the Spirit."* For this love is wonderful and steadfast; all other has but the name. And there are some persons who are not of this kind, but such is not friendship, wherefore also it is easily dissolved.

There are many causes which produce friendship; and we will pass over those which are infamous, (for none will take an objection against us in their favor, seeing they are evil.) But let us, if you will, review those which are natural, and those which arise out of the relations of life. Now of the social sort are these, for instance; one receives a kindness, or inherits a friend from forefathers, or has been a companion at table or in travel: or is neighbor to another (and these are virtuous); or is of the same trade, which last however is not sincere; for it is attended by a certain emulation and envy. But the natural are such as that of father to son, son to father, brother to brother, grandfather to descendant, mother to children, and if you like let us add also that of wife to husband; for all matrimonial attachments are also of this life, and earthly. Now these latter appear stronger than the former:

appear, I said, because often they are surpassed by them. For friends have at times shown a more genuinely kind disposition than brothers, or than sons toward fathers; and when he whom a man has begotten would not succor him, one who knew him not has stood by him, and succored him. But the spiritual love is higher than all, as it were some queen ruling her subjects; and in her form is bright: for not as the other, has she anything of earth for her parent; neither habitual intercourse, nor benefits, nor nature, nor time; but she descends from above, out of heaven. And why do you wonder that she needs no benefits in order that she should subsist, seeing that neither by injuries is she overthrown?

Now that this love is greater than the other, hear Paul saying; *"For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren."* [Romans 9:3] What father would have thus wished himself in misery? And again, *"To depart, and to be with Christ"* is *"very far better; yet to abide in the flesh"* is *"more needful for your sake."* [Philippians 1:23-24] What mother would have chosen so to speak, regardless of herself? And again hear him saying, *"For being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence, not in heart."* [1 Thessalonians 2:17] And here indeed [in the world], when a father has been insulted, he withdraws his love; not so however there, but he went to those who stoned him, seeking to do them good. For nothing, nothing is so strong as the bond of the Spirit. For he who became a friend from receiving benefits, will, should these be discontinued, become an enemy; he whom habitual intercourse made inseparable, will, when the habit is broken through, let his friendship become extinct. A wife again, should a broil have taken place, will leave her husband, and withdraw affection; the son, when he sees his father living to a great age, is dissatisfied. But in case of spiritual love there is nothing of this. For by none of these things can it be dissolved; seeing it is not composed out of

them. Neither time, nor length of journey, nor ill usage, nor being evil spoken of, nor anger, nor insult, nor any other thing, make inroads upon it, nor have the power of dissolving it. And that you may know this Moses was stoned, and yet he made entreaty for them. [Exodus 17:4] What father would have done this for one that stoned him, and would not rather have stoned him too to death?

Let us then follow after these friendships which are of the Spirit, for they are strong, and hard to be dissolved, and not those which arise from the table, for these we are forbidden to carry in Thither. For hear Christ saying in the Gospel, Call not your friends nor your neighbors, if you make a feast, but the lame, the maimed. [Luke 14:12] With reason: for great is the recompense for these. But you can not, nor endurest to feast with lame and blind, but thinkest it grievous and offensive, and refusest. Now it were indeed best that you should not refuse, however it is not necessary to do it. If you seat them not with you, send to them of the dishes on your own table. And he that invites his friends, has done no great thing: for he has received his recompense here. But he that called the maimed, and poor, has God for his Debtor. Let us then not repine when we receive not a reward here, but when we do receive; for we shall have nothing more to receive There. In like manner, if man recompense, God recompenses not; if man recompense not, then God will recompense. Let us then not seek those out for our benefits, who have it in their power to requite us again, nor bestow our favors on them with such an expectation: this were a cold thought. If you invite a friend, the gratitude lasts till evening; and therefore the friendship for the nonce is spent more quickly than the expenses are paid. But if you call the poor and the maimed, never shall the gratitude perish, for God, who remembers ever, and never forgets, you have even Him for your Debtor. What squeamishness is this, pray, that you can not sit down in company

with the poor? What do you say? He is unclean and filthy? Then wash him, and lead him up to your table. But he has filthy garments? Then change them, and give him clean apparel. Do you see not how great the gain is? Christ comes unto you through him, and do you make petty calculations of such things? When you are inviting the King to your table, do you fear because of such things as these?

Let us suppose two tables, and let one be filled with those, and have the blind, the halt, the maimed in hand or leg, the barefoot, those clad with but one scanty garment, and that worn out: but let the other have grandees, generals, governors, great officers, arrayed in costly robes, and fine lawn, belted with golden girdles. Again, here at the table of the poor let there be neither silver, nor store of wine, but just enough to refresh and gladden, and let the drinking cups and the rest of the vessels be made from glass only; but there, at the table of the rich, let all the vessels be of silver and gold, and the semicircular table, not such as one person can lift, but as two young men can with difficulty move, and the wine-jars lie in order, glittering far beyond the silver with gold, and let the semicircle be smoothly laid all over with soft drapery. Here, again, let there be many servants, in garments not less ornamented than those of the guests, and bravely appareled, and wearing loose trowsers, men beauteous to look upon, in the very flower of life, plump, and well conditioned; but there let there be only two servants disdaining all that proud vanity. And let those have costly meats, but these only enough to appease hunger and inspire cheerfulness. Have I said enough? And are both tables laid out with sufficient minuteness? Is anything wanting? I think not. For I have gone over the guests, and the costliness both of the vessels, and of the linen, and the meats. However, if we should have omitted anything, we shall discover it as we proceed with the discourse.

Come then, now that we have correctly drawn each table in its proper outline, let us see at which you will seat yourselves. For I for my part am going to that of the blind, and the lame, but probably the more part of you will choose the other, that of the generals, that is so gay and splendid. Let us then see which of them does more abound in pleasure; for as yet let us not examine into the things of hereafter, seeing that in those at least this of mine has the superiority. Wherefore? Because this one has Christ sitting down at it, the other men, this has the Master, that the servants. But say we nothing of these things as yet; but let us see which has the more of present pleasure. And even in this respect, then, this pleasure is greater, for it is more pleasure to sit down with a King than with his servants. But let us withdraw this consideration also; let us examine the matter simply by itself. I, then, and those who choose the table I do, shall with much freedom and ease of mind both say and hear everything: but you trembling and fearing, and ashamed before those you sit down with, will not even have the heart to reach out your hands, just as though you had got to a school, and not a dinner, just as though you were trembling before dreadful masters. But not so they. But, says one, the honor is great. Nay, I further am in more honor; for your mean estate appears grander, when even while sharing the same table, the words ye utter are those of slaves.

For the servant then most of all shows as such, when he sits down with his master; for he is in a place where he ought not to be; nor has he from such familiarity so much dignity as he has abasement, for he is then abased exceedingly. And one may see a servant by himself make a brave appearance, and the poor man seem splendid by himself, rather than when he is walking with a rich one; for the low when near the lofty, then appears low, and the juxtaposition makes the low seem lower, not loftier. So too your sitting down with them makes you seem as of yet meaner condition.

But not so, us. In these two things, then, we have the advantage, in freedom, and in honor; which have nothing equal to them in regard of pleasure. For I at least would prefer a crust with freedom, to thousands of dainties with slavery. For, says one, *"Better is an entertainment of herbs with love and kindness, than an ox from the stall with hatred."* [Proverbs 15:17] For whatsoever those may say, they who are present must needs praise it, or give offense; assuming thus the rank of parasites, or rather, being worse than they. For parasites indeed, even though it be with shame and insult, have yet liberty of speech: but you have not even this. But your meanness is indeed as great, (for you fear and crouch,) but not so your honor. Surely then that table is deprived of every pleasure, but this is replete with all delight of soul.

But let us examine the nature even of the meats themselves. For there indeed it is necessary to burst one's self with the large quantity of wine, even against one's will, but here none who is disinclined need eat or drink. So that there indeed the pleasure arising from the quality of the food is cancelled by the dishonor which precedes, and the discomfort which follows the surfeit. For not less than hunger does surfeiting destroy and rack our bodies; but even far more grievously; and whomsoever you like to give me, I shall more easily destroy by bursting him with surfeit than by hunger. For thus the latter is easier to be borne than the other, for one might indeed endure hunger for twenty days, but surfeiting not for as many as two only. And the country people who are perpetually struggling with the one, are healthy, and need no physicians; but the other, surfeiting I mean, none can endure without perpetually calling in physicians; yea, rather, its tyranny has often baffled even their attempt to rescue.

So far then as pleasure is concerned, this [table of mine] has the advantage. For if honor has more pleasure than dishonor, if authority than

subjection, and if manly confidence than trembling and fear, and if enjoyment of what is enough, than to be plunged out of depth in the tide of luxury; on the score of pleasure this table is better than the other. It is besides better in regard of expense; for the other is expensive, but this, not so.

But what? Is it then to the guests alone that this table is the more pleasurable, or brings it more pleasure than the other to him who invites them, as well? For this is what we are enquiring after rather. Now he who invites those makes preparation many days before, and is forced to have trouble and anxious thoughts and cares, neither sleeping by night, nor resting by day; but forming with himself many plans, conversing with cooks, confectioners, deckers of tables. Then when the very day has come, one may see him in greater fear than those who are going to fight a boxing match, lest anything should turn out other than was expected, lest he be shot with the glance of envy, lest he thereby procure himself a multitude of accusers. But the other escapes all this anxious thought and trouble by extemporizing his table, and not being careful about it for many days before. And then, truly, after this, the former indeed has straightway lost the grateful return; but the other has God for his Debtor; and is nourished with good hopes, being every day feasted from off that table. For the meats indeed are spent, but the grateful thought is never spent, but every day he rejoices and exults more than they that are gorged with their excess of wine. For nothing does so nourish the soul as a virtuous hope, and the expectation of good things.

But now let us consider what follows. There indeed are flutes, and harps, and pipes; but here is no music of sounds unsuitable; but what? hymns, singing of psalms. There indeed the Demons are hymned; but here, the Lord of all, God. Do you see with what gratitude this one abounds, with

what ingratitude and insensibility that? For, tell me, when God has nourished you with His good things, and when you ought to give Him thanks after being fed, do you even introduce the Demons? For these songs to the lyre, are none other than songs to Demons. When you ought to say, *"Blessed are You, O Lord, that You have nourished me with Your good things,"* do you like a worthless dog not even so much as remember Him, but, over and above, introduce the Demons? Nay rather, dogs, whether they receive anything or not, fawn upon those they know, but thou dost not even this. The dog, although he receives nothing, fawns upon his master; but thou, even when you have received, barkest at Him. Again, the dog, even though he be well treated by a stranger, not even so will be reconciled of his hatred of him, nor be enticed on to be friends with him: but thou, even though suffering mischief incalculable from the Demons, introduce them at your feasts. So that, in two ways, you are worse than the dog. And the mention I have now made of dogs is happy, in regard of those who give thanks then only when they receive a benefit. Take shame, I pray you, at the dogs, which when famishing still fawn upon their masters. But you, if you have haply heard that the Demon has cured anyone, straightway forsakest your Master; O more unreasoning than the dogs!

But, says one, the harlots are a pleasure to look upon. What sort of pleasure are they? Yea rather what infamy are they not? Your house has become a brothel, madness, and fury; and are you not ashamed to call this pleasure? If then it be allowed to use them, greater than all pleasure is the shame, and the discomfort which arises from the shame, to make one's house a brothel, like hogs in wallowing in the mire? But if so far only be allowed as to see them, lo! Again the pain is greater. For to see is no pleasure, where to use is not allowed, but the lust becomes only the greater, and the flame the fiercer.

But would you learn the end? Those, indeed, when they rise up from the table, are like the madmen and those that have lost their wits; foolhardy, quarrelsome, laughing-stocks for the very slaves; and the servants indeed retire sober, but these, drunk. O the shame! But with the other is nothing of this sort; but closing the table with thanksgiving, they so retire to their homes, with pleasure sleeping, with pleasure waking, free from all shame and accusation.

If you will consider also the guests themselves, you will see that the one are within just what the others are without; blind, maimed, lame; and as are the bodies of these, such are the souls of those, laboring under dropsy and inflammation. For of such sort is pride; for after the luxurious gratification a maiming takes place; of such sort is surfeiting and drunkenness, making men lame and maimed. And you will see too that these have souls like the bodies of the others, brilliant, ornamented. For they who live in giving of thanks, who seek nothing beyond a sufficiency, they whose philosophy is of this sort are in all brightness.

But let us see the end both here and there. There, indeed, is unchaste pleasure, loose laughter, drunkenness, buffoonery, filthy language; (for since they in their own persons are ashamed to talk filthily, this is brought about by means of the harlots;) but here is love of mankind, gentleness. Near to him who invites those stands vainglory arming him, but near the other, love of man, and gentleness. For the one table, love of man prepares, but the other, vainglory, and cruelty, out of injustice and grasping. And that one ends in what I have said, in loss of wits, in delirium, in madness; (for such are the offshoots of vainglory;) but this one in thanksgiving and the glory of God. And the praise too, which comes of men, attends more abundantly upon this; for that man is even regarded with an envious eye, but this all men regard as their common father, even they who have

received no benefit at his hands. And as with the injured even they who have not been injured sympathize, and all become in common enemies (to the injurer): so too, when some receive kindness, they also who have not received any, not less than they who have, praise and admire him that conferred it. And there indeed is much envy, but here much tender solicitude, many prayers from all.

And so much indeed here; but There, when Christ has come, this one indeed shall stand with much boldness, and shall hear before the whole world, *"Thou saw Me an hungered, and fed Me; naked, and clothed Me; a stranger, and took Me in"* [Matthew 25:35]; and all the like words: but the other shall hear the contrary; *"Wicked and slothful servant"* [Matthew 25:26]; and again, *"Woe unto them that luxuriate upon their couches, and sleep upon beds of ivory, and drink the refined wine, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; they counted upon these things as staying, and not as fleeting."* [Amos 6:4-6; Septuagint]

I have not said this without purpose, but with the view of changing your minds; and that you should do nothing that is fruitless. What then, says one, of the fact that I do both the one and the other? This argument is much resorted to by all. And what need, tell me, when everything might be done usefully, to make a division, and to expend part on what is not wanted, but even without any purpose at all, and part usefully? Tell me, had you, when sowing, cast some upon a rock, and some upon very good ground; is it likely that you would have been contented so, and have said, Where is the harm, if we cast some to no purpose, and some upon very good ground? For why not all into the very good ground? Why lessen the gain? And if you have occasion to be getting money together, you will not talk in that way, but wilt get it together from every quarter; but in the other case thou dost not so. And if to lend on usury; you will not say, *"Wherefore shall we give*

some to the poor, and some to the rich," but all is given to the former: yet in the case before us, where the gain is so great, thou dost not thus calculate, and will not at length desist from expending without purpose, and laying out without return?

"But," says one, *"this also has a gain."* Of what kind, tell me? *"It increases friendships."* Nothing is colder than men who are made friends by these things, by the table, and surfeiting. The friendships of parasites are born only from that source.

Insult not a thing so marvelous as love, nor say that this is its root. As if one were to say, that a tree which bore gold and precious stones had not its root of the same, but that it was gendered of rottenness; so doest even thou: for even though friendship should be born from that source, nothing could possibly be colder. But those other tables produce friendship, not with man, but with God; and that an intense one, so thou be intent on preparing them. For he that expends part in this way and part in that, even should he have bestowed much, has done no great thing: but he that expends all in this way, even though he should have given little, has done the whole. For what is required is that we give, not much or little, but not less than is in our power. Think we on him with the five talents, and on him with the two. [Matthew 25:15] Think we on her who cast in those two mites. [Mark 12:41] Think we on the widow in Elijah's days. She who threw in those two mites said not, What harm if I keep the one mite for myself, and give the other? But gave her whole living. [1 Kings 17] But you, in the midst of so great plenty, art more penurious than she. Let us then not be careless of our own salvation, but apply ourselves to almsgiving. For nothing is better than this, as the time to come shall show; meanwhile the present shows it also. Live we then to the glory of God, and do those things that please Him, that we may be counted worthy of the good things of promise; which may all we

obtain, through the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the power and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on Colossians

[Colossians 1:9, 10]

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding; to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

"For this cause." What cause? Because we heard of your faith and love, because we have good hopes, we are hopeful to ask for future blessings also. For as in the games we cheer on those most who are near upon gaining the victory, just so does Paul also most exhort those who have achieved the greater part.

"Since the day we heard it," says he, *"we do not cease to pray for you."* Not for one day do we pray for you, nor yet for two, nor three. Herein he both shows his love, and gives them a gentle hint that they had not yet arrived at the end. For the words, *"that you may be filled,"* are of this significance. And observe, I pray, the prudence of this blessed one. He nowhere says that they are destitute of everything, but that they are deficient; everywhere the words, *"that you may be filled,"* show this. And again, *"unto all pleasing, in every good work"* [Colossians 1:11], and again, *"strengthened with all power,"* and again, *"unto all patience and long-suffering";* for the constant addition of *"all"* bears witness to their doing well in part, though, it might be, not in all. And, *"that you may be filled,"* he says; not, *"that you may receive,"* for they had received; but *"that you may be filled"* with what as yet was lacking. Thus both the rebuke was given without offense, and the praise did not suffer them to sink down, and

become supine, as if it had been complete. But what is, *"that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will"*? That through the Son we should be brought unto Him, and no more through Angels. Now that you must be brought unto Him, you have learned, but it remains for you to learn this, and why He sent the Son. For had it been that we were to have been saved by Angels, He would not have sent Him, would not have given Him up. *"In all spiritual wisdom,"* he says, *"and understanding."* For since the philosophers deceived them; I wish you, he says, to be in spiritual wisdom, not after the wisdom of men. But if in order to know the will of God, there needs spiritual wisdom; to know His Essence what it is, there is need of continual prayers.

And Paul shows here, that since that time he has been praying, and has not yet prevailed, and yet has not desisted; for the words, *"from the day we heard it,"* show this. But it implies condemnation to them, if, from that time, even assisted by prayers, they had not amended themselves. *"And making request,"* he says, with much earnestness, for this the expression *"ye knew"* shows. But it is necessary still to know somewhat besides. *"To walk worthily,"* he says, *"of the Lord."* Here he speaks of life and its works, for so he does also everywhere: with faith he always couples conduct. *"Unto all pleasing."* And how, *"all pleasing"*? *"Bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."* Seeing, says he, He has fully revealed Himself unto you, and seeing you have received knowledge so great; do ye then show forth a conduct worthy of the faith; for this needs elevated conduct, greater far than the old dispensation. For, he that has known God, and been counted worthy to be God's servant, yea, rather, even His Son, see how great virtue he needs. *"Strengthened with all power."* He is here speaking of trials and persecutions. We pray that you might be filled with strength, that you faint not for sorrow, nor despair. *"According to the might*

of His glory." But that you may take up again such forwardness as it becomes the power of His glory to give. *"Unto all patience and long-suffering."* What he says is of this sort. Summarily, he says, we pray that you may lead a life of virtue, and worthy of your citizenship, and may stand firmly, being strengthened as it is reasonable to be strengthened by God. For this cause he does not as yet touch upon doctrines, but dwells upon life, wherein he had nothing to charge them with, and having praised them where praise was due, he then comes down to accusation. And this he does everywhere: when he is about writing to any with somewhat to blame them for, and somewhat to praise, he first praises them, and then comes down to his charges. For he first conciliates the hearer, and frees his accusation from all suspicion, and shows that for his own part he could have been glad to praise them throughout; but by the necessity of the case is forced into saying what he does. And so he does in the first Epistle to the Corinthians. For after having exceedingly praised them as loving him, even from the case of the fornicator, he comes down to accuse them. But in that to the Galatians not so, but the reverse. Yea, rather, if one should look close into it, even there the accusation follows upon praise. For seeing he had no good deeds of theirs then to speak of, and the charge was an exceeding grave one, and they were every one of them corrupted; and were able to bear it because they were strong, he begins with accusation, saying, *"I marvel."* [Galatians 1:6] So that this also is praise. But afterwards he praises them, not for what they were, but what they had been, saying, *"If possible, you would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me."* [Galatians 5:15].

"Bearing fruit," he says: this has reference to works. *"Strengthened":* this to trials. *"Unto all patience and longsuffering":* long-suffering towards one another, patience towards those without. For longsuffering is toward those whom we can requite, but patience toward those whom we cannot.

For this reason the term patient is never applied to God, but longsuffering frequently; as this same blessed one says elsewhere in his writings, *"Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering?" "Unto all pleasing."* Not, one while, and afterwards not so. *"In all spiritual wisdom,"* he says, *"and understanding."* For otherwise it is not possible to know His will. Although indeed they thought they had His will; but that wisdom was not spiritual. *"To walk,"* says he, *"worthily of the Lord."* For this is the way of the best life. For he that has understood God's love to man, (and he does understand it if he have seen the Son delivered up,) will have greater forwardness. And besides, we pray not for this alone that you may know, but that you may show forth your knowledge in works; for he that knows without doing, is even in the way to punishment. *"To walk,"* he says, that is, always, not once, but continually. As to walk is necessary for us, so also is to live rightly. And when on this subject he constantly uses the term *"walk,"* and with reason, showing that such is the life set before us. But not of this sort is that of the world. And great too is the praise. *"To walk,"* he says, *"worthily of the Lord,"* and *"in every good work,"* so as to be always advancing, and nowhere standing still, and, with a metaphor, *"bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God,"* that you might be in such measure *"strengthened,"* according to the might of God, as is possible for man to be. *"Through His power,"* great is the consolation.—He said not strength, but *"power,"* which is greater: *"through the power,"* he says, *"of His glory,"* because that everywhere His glory has the power. He thus comforts him that is under reproach: and again, *"To walk worthily of the Lord."* He says of the Son, that He has the power everywhere both in heaven and in earth, because His glory reigns everywhere. He says not *"strengthened"* simply, but so, as they might be expected to be who are in the service of so strong a Master. *"In the knowledge of God."* And at the

same time he touches in passing upon the methods of knowledge; for this is to be in error, not to know God as one ought; or he means, so as to increase in the knowledge of God. For if he that has not known the Son, knows not the Father either; justly is there need of increased knowledge: for there is no use in life without this. *"Unto all patience and longsuffering,"* he says, *"with joy, giving thanks"* [Colossians 1:12] unto God. Then being about to exhort them, he makes no mention of what by and by shall be laid up for them; he did hint at this however in the beginning of the Epistle, saying, *"Because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens"* [Colossians 1:5]: but in this place he mentions the things which were already theirs, for these are the causes of the other. And he does the same in many places. For that which has already come to pass gains belief, and more carries the hearer along with it. *"With joy,"* he says, *"giving thanks"* to God. The connection is this. We cease not praying for you, and giving thanks for the benefits already received.

Do you see how he bears himself along into speaking of the Son? For if *"we give thanks with much joy,"* it is a great thing that is spoken of. For it is possible to give thanks only from fear, it is possible to give thanks even when in sorrow. For instance; Job gave thanks indeed, but in anguish; and he said, *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away."* [Job 1:21] For, let not any say that what had come to pass pained him not, nor clothed him with dejection of soul; nor let his great praise be taken away from that righteous one. But when it is thus, it is not for fear, nor because of His being Lord alone, but for the very nature of the things themselves, that we give thanks. *"To Him who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."* He has said a great thing. What has been given, he says, is of this nature; He has not only given, but also made us strong to receive. Now by saying, *"Who made us meet,"* he showed that the thing was one of great

weight. For example, were some low person to have become a king, he has it in his power to give a governorship to whom he will; and this is the extent of his power, to give the dignity: he cannot also make the person fit for the office, and oftentimes the honor makes one so preferred even ridiculous. If however he have both conferred on one the dignity, and also made him fit for the honor, and equal to the administration, then indeed the thing is an honor. This then is what he also says here; that He has not only given us the honor, but has also made us strong enough to receive it.

For the honor here is twofold, the giving, and the making fit for the gift. He said not, gave, simply; but, *"made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,"* that is, who has appointed us a place with the saints. But he did not say simply placed us, but has given us to enjoy even the very same things, for *"the portion"* is that which each one receives. For it is possible to be in the same city, and yet not enjoy the same things; but to have the same *"portion,"* and yet not enjoy the same, is impossible. It is possible to be in the same inheritance, and yet not to have the same portion; for instance, all we (clergy) are in the inheritance, but we have not all the same portion. But here he does not say this, but with the inheritance adds the portion also. But why does he call it inheritance (or lot)? To show that by his own achievements no one obtains the kingdom, but as a lot is rather the result of good luck, so in truth is it here also. For a life so good as to be counted worthy of the kingdom does no one show forth, but the whole is of His free gift. Therefore He says, *"When you have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants, for we have done that which was our duty to do."* [Luke 17:10] *"To be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,"*— he means, both the future and the present light, — that is, in knowledge. He seems to me to be speaking at once of both the present and the future. Then he shows of what things we have been counted worthy. For this is not the

only marvel, that we are counted worthy of the kingdom; but it should also be added who we are that are so counted; for it is not unimportant. And he does this in the Epistle to the Romans, saying, *"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, but perhaps for the good man some one would even dare to die."* [Romans 5:7]

Ver. 13. *"Who delivered us,"* he says, *"from the power of darkness."*

The whole is of Him, the giving both of these things and those; for nowhere is any achievement of ours. *"From the power of darkness,"* he says, that is, of error, the dominion of the devil. He said not *"darkness,"* but *"power"*; for it had great power over us, and held us fast. For it is grievous indeed even to be under the devil at all, but to be so *"with power,"* this is far more grievous. *"And translated us,"* he says, *"into the kingdom of the Son of His love."* Not then so as to deliver man from darkness only, did He show His love toward him. A great thing indeed is it to have delivered from darkness even; but to have brought into a kingdom too, is a far greater. See then how manifold the gift, that he has delivered us who lay in the pit; in the second place, that He has not only delivered us, but also has translated us into a kingdom. *"Who delivered us."* He said not, has sent us forth, but *"delivered"*: showing our great misery, and their capture of us. Then to show also the ease with which the power of God works, he says, *"And translated us,"* just as if one were to lead over a soldier from one position to another. And he said not, *"has led over"*; nor yet *"has transposed,"* for so the whole would be of him who transposed, nothing of him who went over; but he said, *"translated"*; so that it is both of us and of Him. *"Into the kingdom of the Son of His love."* He said not simply, *"the kingdom of heaven,"* but gave a grandeur to his discourse by saying, *"The kingdom of the Son,"* for no praise can be greater than this, as he says elsewhere also: *"If we endure, we shall also reign with Him."* [2 Timothy 2:12] He has

counted us worthy of the same things with the Son; and not only so, but what gives it greater force, with His Beloved Son. Those that were enemies, those that were in darkness, as it were on a sudden he had translated to where the Son is, to the same honor with Him. Nor was he content with only this, in order to show the greatness of the gift; he was not content with saying, "*kingdom*," but he also added, "*of the Son*"; nor yet with this, but he added also "*beloved*"; nor yet with this, but he added yet, the dignity of His nature. For what says he? "*Who is the Image of the invisible God.*" But he proceeded not to say this immediately, but meanwhile inserted the benefit which He bestowed upon us. For lest, when you hear that the whole is of the Father, you should suppose the Son excluded, he ascribes the whole to the Son, and the whole to the Father. For He indeed translated us, but the Son furnished the cause. For what says he? "*Who delivered us out of the power of darkness.*" But the same is, "*In whom we have the full redemption, even the forgiveness of sins.*" For had we not been forgiven our sins, we should not have been "*translated.*" So here again the words, "*In whom.*" And he said not "*redemption*," but "*full redemption*," so that we shall not fall any more, nor become liable to death.

Ver. 15. "*Who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation.*"

We light here upon a question of heresy. So it were well we should put it off today and proceed with it tomorrow, addressing it to your ears when they are fresh.

But if one ought to say anything more: the work of the Son is the greater. How? Because it were a thing impossible to give the kingdom to men while continuing in their sins; but thus it is an easier thing, so that He prepared the way for the gift. What do you say? He Himself loosed you

from your sins: surely then He Himself also has brought you near; already he has laid by anticipation the foundation of his doctrine.

But we must put a close to this discourse, when first we have made one remark. And what is this? Seeing we have come to enjoy so great a benefit, we ought to be ever mindful of it, and continually to turn in our minds the free gift of God, and to reflect upon what we have been delivered from, what we have obtained; and so we shall be thankful; so we shall heighten our love toward Him. What do you say, O man? You are called to a kingdom, to the kingdom of the Son of God— and are you full of yawning, and scratching, and dozing? If need were that you should leap into ten thousand deaths every day, ought you not to endure all? For the sake of office you do all manner of things; when then you are going to share the kingdom of the Only-Begotten, will you not spring down upon ten thousand swords? Would you not leap into fire? And this is not all that is strange, but that when about to depart even, you bewail, and wouldest gladly dwell among the things which are here, being a lover of the body. What fancy is this? Do you regard even death as a thing of terror? The cause of this is luxury, ease: for he at least that should live an embittered life would wish even for wings, and to be loosed from hence. But now it is the same with us as with the spoiled nestlings, which would willingly remain for ever in the nest. But the longer they remain, the feebler they become. For the present life is a nest cemented together with sticks and mire. Yea, should you show me even the great mansions, yea the royal palace itself glittering with all its gold and precious stones; I shall think them no better than the nests of swallows, for when the winter has come they will all fall of themselves. By winter I mean That Day, not that it will be a winter to all. For God also calls it both night and day; the first in regard of sinners, the latter of the just. So do I also now call it winter. If in the summer we have not been well brought

up, so as to be able to fly when winter has come, our mothers will not take us, but will leave us to die of hunger, or to perish when the nest falls; for easily as it were a nest, or rather more easily, will God in that day remove all things, undoing and new molding all. But they which are unfledged, and not able to meet Him in the air, but have been so grossly brought up that they have no lightness of wing, will suffer those things which reason is such characters should suffer. Now the brood of swallows, when they are fallen, perish quickly; but we shall not perish, but be punished for ever. That season will be winter; or rather, more severe than winter. For, not winter torrents of water roll down, but rivers of fire; not darkness that rises from clouds is there, but darkness that cannot be dispelled, and without a ray of light, so that they cannot see either the heaven, or the air, but are more straitened than those who have been buried in the earth.

Oftentimes do we say these things, but there are whom we cannot bring to believe. But it is nothing wonderful if we, men of small account, are thus treated, when we discourse of such things, since the same happened to the Prophets also; when they spoke not of such matters only, but also of war and captivity. [Jeremiah 21:11; 27:12, etc.] And Zedekiah was rebuked by Jeremiah, and was not ashamed. Therefore the Prophets said, *"Woe unto them that say, Let God hasten with speed His work, that we may see it, and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel come, that we may know it."* [Isaiah 5:18-19] Let us not wonder at this. For neither did those believe who were in the days of the ark; they believed, however, when their belief was of no gain to them; neither did they of Sodom expect [their fate], howbeit they too believed, when they gained nothing by believing. And why do I speak of the future? Who would have expected these things which are now happening in various places; these earthquakes, these overthrows of cities?

And yet were these things easier to believe than those; those, I mean, which happened in the days of the ark.

Whence is this evident? Because that the men of those times had no other example to look at, neither had they heard the Scriptures, but with us, on the other hand, are countless instances that have happened both in our own, and in former years. But whence arose the unbelief of these persons? From a softened soul; they drank and ate, and therefore they believed not. For, what a man wishes, he thinks, and expects; and they that gainsay him are a jest.

But let it not be so with us; for hereafter it will not be a flood; nor the punishment till death only; but death will be the beginning of punishment for persons who believe not that there is a Judgment. And does any ask, who has come from thence, and said so? If now you speak thus in jest, not even so is it well; for one ought not to jest in such matters; and we jest, not where jesting is in place, but with peril; but if what thou really feelest, and you are of opinion that there is nothing hereafter, how is it that you call yourself a Christian? For I take not into account those who are without. Why do you receive the Laver? Why do you set foot within the Church? Is it that we promise you magistracies? All our hope is in the things to come. Why then do you come, if you believe not the Scriptures? If you dost not believe Christ, I cannot call such an one a Christian; God forbid! But worse than even Greeks. In what respect? In this; that when you think Christ is God, you believe Him not as God. For in that other impiety there is at least consistency; for he who thinks not that Christ is God, necessarily will also not believe Him; but this impiety has not even consistency; to confess Him to be God, and yet not to think Him worthy of belief in what He has said; these are the words of drunkenness, of luxury, of riot. *"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."* [1 Corinthians 15:32] Not tomorrow; but now you

are dead, when you thus speak. Shall we then be in nothing different from swine and asses? Tell me. For if there be neither a judgment, nor a retribution, nor a tribunal, wherefore have we been honored with such a gift as reason, and have all things put under us? Why do we rule, and are they ruled? See how the devil is on every side urgent to persuade us to be ignorant of the Gift of God. He mixes together the slaves with their masters, like some man-stealer and ungrateful servant; he strives to degrade the free to the level of the criminal. And he seems indeed to be overthrowing the Judgment, but he is overthrowing the being of God.

For such is ever the devil's way; he puts forward everything in a wily, and not in a straightforward manner, to put us on our guard. If there is no Judgment, God is not just (I speak as a man): if God is not just, then there is no God at all: if there is no God, all things go on at haphazard, virtue is nought, vice nought. But he says nothing of this openly. Do you see the drift of this satanical argument? How, instead of men, he wishes to make us brutes, or rather, wild beasts, or rather, demons? Let us then not be persuaded by him. For there is a Judgment, O wretched and miserable man! I know whence you come to use such words. You have committed many sins, you have offended, you have no confidence, you think that the nature of things will even follow your arguments. Meanwhile, says he, I will not torment my soul with the expectation of hell, and, if there be a hell, I will persuade it that there is none; meanwhile I will live here in luxury! Why do you add sin to sin? If when you have sinned you believe that there is a hell, you will depart with the penalty of your sins only to pay; but if you add this further impiety, you will also for your impiety, and for this your thought, suffer the uttermost punishment; and what was a cold and shortlived comfort to you, will be a ground for your being punished for ever. You have sinned: be it so: why do you encourage others also to sin, by saying that

there is no hell? Why did you mislead the simpler sort? Why unnerve the hands of the people? So far as you are concerned, everything is turned upside down; neither will the good become better, but listless; nor the wicked desist from their wickedness. For, if we corrupt others, do we get allowance for our sins? Do you see not the devil, how he attempted to bring down Adam? And has there then been allowance for him? Nay, surely it will be the occasion of a greater punishment, that he may be punished not for his own sins only, but also for those of others. Let us not then suppose that to bring down others into the same destruction with ourselves will make the Judgment-seat more lenient to us. Surely this will make it more severe. Why thrust we ourselves on destruction? The whole of this comes of Satan.

O man, have you sinned? You have for your Master One that loves man. Entreat, implore, weep, groan; and terrify others, and pray them that they fall not into the same. If in a house some servant, of those that had offended their master, says to his son, "*My child, I have offended the master, do thou be careful to please him, that you be not as I*": tell me, will he not have some forgiveness? will he not bend and soften his master? But if, leaving so to speak, he shall say such words as these, that he will not requite every one according to his deserts; that all things are jumbled together indiscriminately, both good and bad; that there is no thanks in this house; what do you think will be the master's mind concerning him? will he not suffer a severer punishment for his own misdoings? Justly so; for in the former case his feeling will plead for him, though it be but weakly; but in this, nobody. If no other then, yet imitate at least that rich man in hell, who said, "*Father Abraham, send to my kinsmen, lest they come into this place,*" since he could not go himself, so that they might not fall into the same condemnation. Let us have done with such Satanical words.

What then, says he, when the Greeks put questions to us; would you not that we should try to cure them? But by casting the Christian into perplexity, under pretense of curing the Greek, you aim at establishing your Satanical doctrine. For since, when communing with your soul alone of these things, you persuade her not; you desire to bring forward others as witnesses. But if one must reason with a Greek, the discussion should not begin with this; but whether Christ be God, and the Son of God; whether those gods of theirs be demons. If these points be established, all the others follow; but, before making good the beginning, it is vain to dispute about the end; before learning the first elements, it is superfluous and unprofitable to come to the conclusion. The Greek disbelieves the Judgment, and he is in the same case with yourself, seeing that he too has many who have treated these things in their philosophy; and albeit when they so spoke they held the soul as separated from the body, still they set up a seat of judgment. And the thing is so very clear, that no one scarcely is ignorant of it, but both poets and all are agreed among themselves that there is both a Tribunal and a Judgment. So that the Greek also disbelieves his own authorities; and the Jew does not doubt about these things nor in a word does any man.

Why then deceive we ourselves? See, you say these things to me. What will you say to God, *"that fashioned our hearts one by one"* [Psalm 33:15]; that knows everything that is in the mind; *"that is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword"*? [Hebrews 4:12] For tell me with truth; Do you not condemn yourself? And how should wisdom so great, as that one who sins should condemn himself, come by chance, for this is a work of mighty wisdom. You condemn yourself. And will he who gives you such thoughts leave everything to go on at hazard? The following rule then will hold universally and strictly. Not one of those who live in virtue wholly disbelieves the doctrine of the Judgment, even though he be Greek or

heretic. None, save a few, of those who live in great wickedness, receives the doctrine of the Resurrection. And this is what the Psalmist says, "*Your judgments are taken away from before his face.*" [Psalm 10:5] Wherefore? Because "*his ways are always profane*"; for he says, "*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.*"

Do you see that thus to speak is the mark of the grovelling? Of eating and drinking come these sayings which are subversive of the Resurrection. For the soul endures not, I say, it endures not the tribunal which the conscience supplies, and so it is with it, as with a murderer, who first suggests to himself that he shall not be detected, and so goes on to slay; for had his conscience been his judge, he would not hastily have come to that daring wickedness. And still he knows, and pretends not to know, lest he should be tortured by conscience and fear, for, certainly, in that case, he would have been less resolute for the daring deed. So too, assuredly, they who sin, and day by day wallow in the same wickedness, are unwilling to know it, although their consciences pluck at them.

But let us give no heed to such persons, for there will be, there will assuredly be, a Judgment and a Resurrection, and God will not leave so great works without direction. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us leave off wickedness, and lay fast hold on virtue, that we may receive the true doctrine in Christ Jesus our Lord. And yet, which is easier to receive? The doctrine of the Resurrection, or that of Fate? The latter is full of injustice, of absurdity, of cruelty, of inhumanity; the other of righteousness, awarding according to desert; and still men do not receive it. But the fault is, indolence, for no one that has understanding receives the other. For among the Greeks even, they who did receive that doctrine, were those who in their definition of pleasure affirmed it to be the "*end*," but they who loved virtue, would not receive it, but they cast it out as absurd. But if among the Greeks

this were so, much more will it hold good with the doctrine of the Resurrection. And observe, I pray you, how the devil has established two contrary things: for in order that we may neglect virtue; and pay honor to demons, he brought in this Necessity, and by means of each he procured the belief of both. What reason then will he be able to give, who obstinately disbelieves a thing so admirable, and is persuaded by those who talk so idly? Do not then support yourself with the consolation, that you will meet with forgiveness; but let us, collecting all our strength, stir ourselves up to virtue, and let us live truly to God, in Christ Jesus our Lord, etc.

Homily 3 on Colossians

[Colossians 1:15-18]

"Who is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation: for in Him were all things created, in the heavens, and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers: all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church."

Today it is necessary for me to pay the debt, which yesterday I deferred, in order that I might address it to your minds when in full force. Paul, discoursing as we showed of the dignity of the Son, says these words: *"Who is the Image of the invisible God."* Whose image then will you have Him be? God's? Then he is exactly like the one to whom you assign Him. For if as a man's image, say so, and I will have done with you as a madman. But if as God and God's Son, God's image, he shows the exact likeness. Wherefore has no Angel anywhere been called either *"image"* or *"son,"* but man both? Wherefore? Because in the former case indeed the exaltedness of their nature might presently have thrust the many into this impiety ; but in the other case the mean and low nature is a pledge of security against this, and will not allow any, even should they desire it, to suspect anything of the kind, nor to bring down the Word so low. For this cause, where the meanness is great, the Scripture boldly asserts the honor, but where the nature is higher, it forbears. *"The Image of the Invisible"* is itself also invisible, and invisible in like manner, for otherwise it would not be an image. For an image, so far as it is an image, even among us, ought to be exactly similar, as, for example, in respect of the features and the likeness.

But here indeed among us, this is by no means possible; for human art fails in many respects, or rather fails in all, if you examine with accuracy. But where God is, there is no error, no failure.

But if a creature: how is He the Image of the Creator? For neither is a horse the image of a man. If *"the Image"* mean not exact likeness to the Invisible, what hinders the Angels also from being His Image? For they too are invisible; but not to one another: but the soul is invisible: but because it is invisible, it is simply on that account an image, and not in such sort as he and angels are images.

"The Firstborn of all creation." *"What then,"* says one, *"Lo, He is a creature."* Whence? Tell me. *"Because he said 'Firstborn.'* " However, he said not *"first created,"* but *"firstborn."* Then it is reasonable that he should be called many things. For he must also be called a brother *"in all things."* [Hebrews 2:17] And we must take from Him His being Creator; and insist that neither in dignity nor in any other thing is He superior to us? And who that has understanding would say this? For the word *"firstborn"* is not expressive of dignity and honor, nor of anything else, but of time only. What does *"the firstborn"* signify? That he is created, is the answer. Well. If then this be so, it has also kindred expressions. But otherwise the firstborn is of the same essence with those of whom he is firstborn. Therefore he will be the firstborn son of all things— for it said *"of every creature"*; therefore of stones also, and of me, is God the Word firstborn. But again, of what, tell me, are the words *"firstborn from the dead"* [Colossians 1:18; Romans 8:29] declaratory? Not that He first rose; for he said not simply, *"of the dead,"* but *"firstborn from the dead,"* nor yet, *"that He died first,"* but that He rose the firstborn from the dead. So that they declare nothing else than this, that He is the Firstfruits of the Resurrection. Surely then neither in the place before us. Next he proceeds to the doctrine itself. For that they may

not think Him to be of more recent existence, because that in former times the approach was through Angels, but now through Him; he shows first, that they had no power (for else it had not been "*out of darkness*" [ver. 13] that he brought), next, that He is also before them. And he uses as a proof of His being before them, this; that they were created by him. "*For in Him,*" he says, "*were all things created.*" What say here the followers of Paul of Samosata? "*The things in the heavens.*" What was in question, he has placed first; "*and the things upon the earth.*" Then he says, "*the visible and the invisible things*"; invisible, such as soul, and all that has come to exist in heaven; visible, such as men, sun, sky. "*Whether thrones.*" And what is granted, he lets alone, but what is doubted he asserts. "*Whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.*" The words "*whether,*" "*or,*" comprehend the whole of things; but by means of the greater things show it of the less also. But the Spirit is not among the "*powers.*" "*All things,*" he says, "*have been created through Him, and unto Him.*" Lo, "*in Him,*" is "*through Him,*" for having said "*in Him,*" he added, "*through Him.*" But what "*unto Him*"? It is this; the subsistence of all things depends on Him. Not only did He Himself bring them out of nothing into being, but Himself sustains them now, so that were they dissevered from His Providence, they were at once undone and destroyed. But He said not, "*He continues them,*" which had been a grosser way of speaking, but what is more subtle, that "*on*" Him they depend. To have only a bearing on Him is enough to continue anything and bind it fast. So also the word "*firstborn,*" in the sense of a foundation. But this does not show the creatures to be consubstantial with Him; but that all things are through Him, and in Him are upheld. Since Paul also when he says elsewhere, "*I have laid a foundation*" [1 Corinthians 3:10], is speaking not concerning substance, but operation. For, that you may not think Him to be a minister, he says that He continues them, which

is not less than making them. Certainly, with us it is greater even: for to the former, art conducts us; but to the latter, not so, it does not even stay a thing in decay.

"And He is before all things," he says. This is befitting God. Where is Paul of Samosata? *"And in Him all things consist,"* that is, they are created into Him. He repeats these expressions in close sequence; with their close succession, as it were with rapid strokes, tearing up the deadly doctrine by the roots. For, if even when such great things had been declared, still after so long a time Paul of Samosata sprung up, how much more [would such have been the case], had not these things been said before? *"And in Him,"* he says, *"all things consist."* How *"consist"* in one who was not? So that the things also done through Angels are of Him.

"And He is the head of the body, the Church."

Then having spoken of His dignity, he afterwards speaks of His love to man also. *"He is,"* says he, *"the Head of the body, the Church."* And he said not *"of the fullness,"* (although this too is signified,) out of a wish to show His great friendliness to us, in that He who is thus above, and above all, connected Himself with those below. For everywhere He is first; above first; in the Church first, for He is the Head; in the Resurrection first. That is,

Ver. 18. *"That He might have the preëminence."* So that in generation also He is first. And this is what Paul is chiefly endeavoring to show. For if this be made good, that He was before all the Angels; then there is brought in along with it this also as a consequence, that He did their works by commanding them. And what is indeed wonderful, he makes a point to show that He is first in the later generation. Although elsewhere he calls Adam first [1 Corinthians 15:45], as in truth he is; but here he takes the Church for the whole race of mankind. For He is first of the Church; and

first of men after the flesh, like as of the Creation. And therefore he here uses the word "*firstborn*."

What is in this place the meaning of "*the Firstborn*"? Who was created first, or rose before all; as in the former place it means, Who was before all things. And here indeed he uses the word "*firstfruits*," saying, "*Who is the Firstfruits, the Firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the preëminence*," showing that the rest also are such as He; but in the former place it is not the "*Firstfruits*" of creation. And it is there, "*The Image of the invisible God*," and then, "*Firstborn*."

Ver. 19, 20. "*For it was the good pleasure of the Father, that in Him should all the fullness dwell. And having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.*"

Whatsoever things are of the Father, these he says are of the Son also, and that with more of intensity, because that He both became "*dead*" for, and united Himself to us. He said, "*Firstfruits*," as of fruits. He said not "*Resurrection*," but "*Firstfruits*," showing that He has sanctified us all, and offered us, as it were, a sacrifice. The term "*fullness*" some use of the Godhead, like as John said, "*Of His fullness have all we received.*" That is, whatever was the Son, the whole Son dwelt there, not a sort of energy, but a Substance.

He has no cause to assign but the will of God: for this is the import of, "*it was the good pleasure...in Him. And...through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.*" Lest you should think that He undertook the office of a minister only, he says, "*unto Himself.*" [2 Corinthians 5:18] And yet he elsewhere says, that He reconciled us to God, as in the Epistle he wrote to the Corinthians. And he well said, "*Through Him to make an end of reconciling*"; for they were already reconciled; but completely, he says, and

in such sort, as no more to be at enmity with Him. How? For not only the reconciliation was set forth, but also the manner of the reconciliation.

"Having made peace through the Blood of His Cross." The word *"reconcile,"* shows the enmity; the words *"having made peace,"* the war. *"Through the Blood of His Cross, through Himself, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens."* A great thing indeed it is to reconcile; but that this should be through Himself too, is a greater thing; and a greater still—how through Himself? Through His Blood. Through His Blood; and he said not simply His Blood, but what is yet greater, through the Cross. So that the marvels are five: He reconciled us; to God; through Himself; through Death; through the Cross. Admirable again! How he has mixed them up! For lest you should think that it is one thing merely, or that the Cross is anything of itself, he says *"through Himself."* How well he knows that this was a great thing. Because not by speaking words, but by giving Himself up for the reconciliation, He so wrought everything.

But what is *"things in the heavens"*? For with reason indeed is it said, *"the things upon the earth,"* for those were filled with enmity, and manifoldly divided, and each one of us was utterly at variance with himself, and with the many; but how made He peace among *"the things in the heavens"*? Was war and battle there also? How then do we pray, saying, *"Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth"*? [Matthew 6:10] What is it then? The earth was divided from heaven, the Angels had become enemies to men, through seeing the Lord insulted. *"To sum up,"* he says, *"all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth."* [Ephesians 1:10] How? The things in heaven indeed in this way: He translated Man there, He brought up to them the enemy, the hated one. Not only made He the things on earth to be at peace, but He brought up to them him that was their enemy and foe. Here was peace profound. Angels again

appeared on the earth thereafter, because that Man too had appeared in heaven. And it seems to me that Paul was caught up on this account [2 Corinthians 12:2], and to show that the Son also had been received up there. For in the earth indeed, the peace was twofold; with the things of heaven, and with themselves; but in heaven it was simple. For if the Angels rejoice over one sinner that repents, much more will they over so many.

All this God's power has wrought. Why then place ye confidence in Angels? says he. For so far are they from bringing you near, that they were ever your enemies, except God Himself had reconciled you with them. Why then run ye to them? Would you know the hatred which the Angels had against us, how great it was; and how averse to us they always were? They were sent to take vengeance in the cases of the Israelites, of David, of the Sodomites, of the Valley of weeping. [Exodus 23:20] Not so however now, but, on the contrary, they sang upon the earth [2 Samuel 24:16] with exceeding joy. And He led these down to men [Genesis 19:13], and led men up to them.

And observe, I pray you, the marvel in this: He brought these first down hither, and then he took up man to them; earth became heaven, because that heaven was about to receive the things of earth. Therefore when we give thanks, we say, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."* Behold, he says, even men appeared well-pleasing to Him thereafter. What is *"good will"*? [Ephesians 2:14; Deuteronomy 32:8, Septuagint] Reconciliation. No longer is the heaven a wall of partition. At first the Angels were according to the number of the nations; but now, not to the number of the nations, but that of the believers. Whence is this evident? Hear Christ saying, *"See that you despise not one of these little ones, for their Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 18:10] For each believer has an Angel; since

even from the beginning, every one of those that were approved had his Angel, as Jacob says, *"The Angel that feeds me, and delivers me from my youth."* [Genesis 48:15-16], nearly If then we have Angels, let us be sober, as though we were in the presence of tutors; for there is a demon present also. Therefore we pray, asking for the Angel of peace, and everywhere we ask for peace (for there is nothing equal to this); peace, in the Churches, in the prayers, in the supplications, in the salutations; and once, and twice, and thrice, and many times, does he that is over the Church give it, *"Peace be unto you."* Wherefore? Because this is the Mother of all good things; this is the foundation of joy. Therefore Christ also commanded the Apostles on entering into the houses straightway to say this, as being a sort of symbol of the good things; for He says, *"When ye come into the houses, say, Peace be unto you;"* for where this is wanting, everything is useless. And to His disciples Christ said, *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."* [John 14:27] This prepares the way for love. And he that is over the Church, says not, *"Peace be unto you,"* simply, but *"Peace be unto all."* For what if with this man we have peace, but with another, war and fighting? What is the gain? For neither in the body, should some of its elements be at rest and others in a state of variance, is it possible that health should ever be upheld; but only when the whole of them are in good order, and harmony, and peace, and except the whole are at rest, and continue within their proper limits, all will be overturned. And, further, in our minds, except all our thoughts are at rest, peace will not exist. So great a good is peace, as that the makers and producers of it are called the sons of God [Matthew 5:9-45], with reason; because the Son of God for this cause came upon the earth, to set at peace the things in the earth, and those in the heavens. But if the peacemakers are the sons of God, the makers of disturbance are sons of the devil.

What do you say? Do you excite contentions and fightings? And does any ask who is so unhappy? Many there are who rejoice at evil, and who do rather rend in pieces the Body of Christ, than did the soldiers pierce it with the spear, or the Jews who struck it through with the nails. A less evil was that than this; those Members, so cut through, again united, but these when torn off, if they be not united here, will never be united, but remain apart from the Fullness. When you are minded to war against your brother, bethink you that you war against the members of Christ, and cease from your madness. For what if he be an outcast? What if he be vile? What if he be open to contempt? So says He, *"It is not the will of My Father that one of these little ones should perish."* [Matthew 18:14] And again, *"Their Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 18:10] God for his sake and yours even became a servant, and was slain; and do you consider him to be nothing? Surely in this respect also you fight against God, in that you deliver a judgment contrary to His. When he that is over the Church comes in, he straightway says, *"Peace unto all"*; when he preaches, *"Peace unto all"*; when he blesses, *"Peace unto all"*; when he bids to salute, *"Peace unto all"*; when the Sacrifice is finished, *"Peace unto all"*: and again, in the middle, *"Grace to you and peace."* How then is it not monstrous, if, while hearing so many times that we are to have peace, we are in a state of feud with each other; and receiving peace, and giving it back, are at war with him that gives it to us? You say, *"And to your spirit."* And do you traduce him abroad? Woe is me! That the majestic usages of the Church have become forms of things merely, not a truth. Woe is me! That the watchwords of this army proceed no farther than to be only words. Whence also you are ignorant wherefore is said, *"Peace unto all."* But hear what follows, what Christ says; *"And into whatsoever city or village you shall enter...as you enter into the house, salute it; and if the house be*

worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." [Matthew 10:11-13] We are therefore ignorant; because we look upon this merely as a figure of words; and we assent not to them in our minds. For do I give the Peace? It is Christ who deigns to speak by us. Even if at all other times we are void of grace, yet are we not now, for your sakes. For if the Grace of God wrought in an ass and a diviner, for the sake of an economy, and the advantage of the Israelites [Numbers 22], it is quite clear that it will not refuse to operate even in us, but for your sakes will endure even this.

Let none say then that I am mean, and low, and worthy of no consideration, and in such a frame of mind attend to me. For such I am; but God's way always is, to be present even with such for the sake of the many. And, that you may know this, with Cain He vouchsafed to talk for Abel's sake [Genesis 4], with the devil for Job's [Job 1], with Pharaoh for Joseph's [Genesis 41], with Nebuchadnezzar for Daniel's [Daniel 2 and Daniel 4], with Belshazzar, for the same [Daniel 5]. And Magi moreover obtained a revelation [Matthew 2]; and Caiaphas prophesied, though a slayer of Christ, and an unworthy man, because of the worthiness of the priesthood. [John 11:49] And it is said to have been for this reason that Aaron was not smitten with leprosy. For why, tell me, when both had spoken against Moses did she alone suffer the punishment? [Numbers 12] Marvel not: for if in worldly dignities, even though ten thousand charges be laid against a man, yet is he not brought to trial before he has laid down his office, in order that it may not be dishonored along with him; much more in the case of spiritual office, be he whosoever he may, the grace of God works in him, for otherwise everything is lost: but when he has laid it down, either after he is departed or even here, then indeed, then he will suffer a sorer punishment.

Do not, I pray you, think that these things are spoken from us; it is the Grace of God which works in the unworthy, not for our sakes, but for yours. Hear ye then what Christ says. *"If the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it."* [Matthew 10:13-15] And how becomes it worthy? If *"they receive you"* [Luke 10:8], He says. *"But if they receive you not, nor hear your words,...verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."* What boots it then, that you receive us, and hear not the things we say? What gain is it that you wait upon us, and give no heed to the things which are spoken to you? This will be honor to us, this the admirable service, which is profitable both to you and to us, if you hear us. Hear also Paul saying, *"I knew not, brethren, that he was High Priest."* [Acts 23:5] Hear also Christ saying, *"All whatsoever they bid you observe"* [Matthew 23:3], that *"observe and do."* Thou despisest not me, but the Priesthood; when you see me stripped of this, then despise me; then no more will I endure to impose commands. But so long as we sit upon this throne, so long as we have the first place, we have both the dignity and the power, even though we are unworthy. If the throne of Moses was of such reverence, that for its sake they were to be heard, much more the throne of Christ. It, we have received by succession; from it we speak; since the time that Christ has vested in us the ministry of reconciliation.

Ambassadors, whatever be their sort, because of the dignity of an embassy, enjoy much honor. For observe; they go alone into the heart of the land of barbarians, through the midst of so many enemies; and because the law of embassy is of mighty power, all honor them; all look towards them with respect, all send them forth with safety. And we now have received a word of embassy, and we have come from God, for this is the dignity of the Episcopate. We have come to you on an embassy, requesting you to put an

end to the war, and we say on what terms; not promising to give cities, nor so and so many measures of grain, nor slaves, nor gold; but the kingdom of heaven, eternal life, society with Christ, the other good things, which neither are we able to tell you, so long as we are in this flesh, and the present life. Ambassadors then we are, and we wish to enjoy honor, not for our own sakes, far be it, for we know its worthlessness, but for yours; that you may hear with earnestness the things we say; that you may be profited, that not with listlessness or indifference ye may attend to what is spoken. See ye not ambassadors, how all pay court to them? We are God's ambassadors to men; but, if this offend you, not we, but the Episcopate itself, not this man or that, but the Bishop. Let no one hear me, but the dignity. Let us then do everything according to the will of God, that we may live to the glory of God, and be counted worthy of the good things promised to those that love Him, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc. etc.

Homily 4 on Colossians

[Colossians 1:21, 22]

"And you, being in time past, enemies and alienated in your mind, in your evil works, yet now has He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before Him."

Here he goes to show that He reconciled those even who were unworthy of reconciliation. For by the saying that they were under the power of darkness, he shows the calamity in which they were. [Colossians 1:13] But lest, on hearing of *"the power of darkness,"* you should consider it Necessity, he adds, *"And you that were alienated,"* so that though it appear to be the same thing that he says, yet it is not so; for it is not the same thing to deliver out of the evils him that through necessity came to suffer, and him that of his own will endures. For the former indeed is worthy to be pitied, but the latter hated. But nevertheless, he says, you that are not against your wills, nor from compulsion, but with your wills, and wishes, sprang away from Him, and are unworthy of it, He has reconciled. And seeing he had made mention of the *"things in the heavens,"* he shows, that all the enmity had its origin from hence, not thence. For they indeed were long ago desirous, and God also, but you were not willing.

And throughout he is showing that the Angels had no power in the successive times, forasmuch as men continued enemies; they could neither persuade them, nor, if persuaded, could they deliver them from the devil. For neither would persuading them be any gain, except he that held them were bound; nor would binding him have been of any service, except they whom he detained were willing to return. But both of these were needed,

and they could do neither of them, but Christ did both. So that even more marvelous than loosing death, is the persuading them. For the former was wholly of Himself, and the power lay wholly in Himself, but of the latter, not in Himself alone, but in us also; but we accomplish those things more easily of which the power lies in ourselves. Therefore, as being the greater, he puts it last. And he said not simply "*were at enmity*," but "*were alienated*," which denotes great enmity, nor yet "*alienated*" [only], but without any expectation even of returning. "*And enemies in your mind*," he says; then the alienation had not proceeded so far as purpose only— but what? "*in your wicked works*" also. You were both enemies, he says, and you did the works of enemies.

"Yet now has He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before Him." Again he lays down also the manner of the reconciliation, that it was "*in the Body*," not by being merely beaten, nor scourged, nor sold, but even by dying a death the most shameful. Again he makes mention of the Cross, and again lays down another benefit. For He did not only "*deliver*," but, as he says above, "*Who made us meet*" [Colossians 1:12], to the same he alludes here also. "*Through*" His "*death*," he says, "*to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before Him.*" For truly, He has not only delivered from sins, but has also placed among the approved. For, not that He might deliver us from evils only, did He suffer so great things, but that also we might obtain the first rewards; as if one should not only free a condemned criminal from his punishment, but also advance him to honor. And he has ranked you with those who have not sinned, yea rather not with those who have done no sin only, but even with those who have wrought the greatest righteousness; and, what is truly a great thing, has given the holiness which is before Him, and the being unreprouable. Now an advance upon

unblamable is unprovable, when we have done nothing either to be condemned for, or charged with. But, since he ascribed the whole to Him, because through His death He achieved these things; *"what then, says one, is it to us? We need nothing."* Therefore he added,

Ver. 23. *"If so be that you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the Gospel."*

Here he strikes a blow at their listlessness. And he said not simply *"continue,"* for it is possible to continue wavering, and vacillating; it is possible to stand, and continue, though turned this way and that. *"If so be that you continue,"* he says, *"grounded and steadfast, and not moved away."* Wonderful! What a forcible metaphor he uses; he says not only not tossed to and fro, but not even moved. And observe, he lays down so far nothing burdensome, nor toilsome, but faith and hope; that is, if you continue believing, that the hope of the things to come is true. For this indeed is possible; but, as regards virtuous living, it is not possible to avoid being shaken about, though it be but a little; so (what he enjoins) is not grievous.

"From the hope," he says, *"of the Gospel, which you heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven."* But what is the hope of the Gospel, except Christ? For He Himself is our peace, that has wrought all these things: so that he who ascribes them to others is *"moved away"*: for he has lost all, unless he believe in Christ. *"Which ye heard,"* he says. And again he brings themselves as witnesses, then the whole world. He says not, *"which is being preached,"* but has already been believed and preached. As he did also at the outset [Colossians 1:6], being desirous by the witness of the many to establish these also. *"Whereof I Paul was made a minister."* This also contributes to make it credible; *"I,"* says he, *"Paul a minister."* For great was his authority, as being now everywhere celebrated, and the teacher of the world.

Ver. 24. *"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church."*

And what is the connection of this? It seems indeed not to be connected, but it is even closely so. And *"minister,"* he says, that is, bringing in nothing from myself, but announcing what is from another. I so believe, that I suffer even for His sake, and not suffer only, but even rejoice in suffering, looking unto the hope which is to come, and I suffer not for myself, but for you. *"And fill up,"* he says, *"that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh."* It seems indeed to be a great thing he has said; but it is not of arrogance, far be it, but even of much tender love towards Christ; for he will not have the sufferings to be his own, but His, through desire of conciliating these persons to Him. And what things I suffer, I suffer, he says, on His account: not to me, therefore, express your gratitude, but to him, for it is He Himself who suffers. Just as if one, when sent to a person, should make request to another, saying, I beseech you, go for me to this person, then the other should say, *"it is on his account I am doing it."* So that He is not ashamed to call these sufferings also his own. For He did not only die for us, but even after His death He is ready to be afflicted for your sakes. He is eagerly and vehemently set upon showing that He is even now exposed to peril in His own Body for the Church's sake, and he aims at this point, namely, you are not brought unto God by us, but by Him, even though we do these things, for we have not undertaken a work of our own, but His. And it is the same as if there were a band which had its allotted leader to protect it, and it should stand in battle, and then when he had gone, his lieutenant should succeed to his wounds until the battle were brought to a close.

Next, that for His sake also he does these things, hearken: *"For His Body's sake,"* he says, assuredly meaning to say this: *"I pleasure not you, but Christ: for what things He should have suffered, I suffer instead of Him."* See how many things he establishes. Great, he shows, is the claim upon their love. As in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, he wrote, saying, *"he committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation"* [2 Corinthians 5:20]; and again, *"We are ambassadors on behalf of Christ; as though God were entreating by us."* So also here he says, *"For his sake I suffer,"* that he may the more draw them to Him. That is, though He who is your debtor is gone away, yet I repay. For, on this account he also said, *"that which is lacking,"* to show that not even yet does he consider Him to have suffered all. *"For your sake,"* he says, and even after His death He suffers; seeing that still there remains a deficiency. The same thing he does in another way in the Epistle to the Romans, saying, *"Who also makes intercession for us"* [Romans 8:34], showing that He was not satisfied with His death alone, but even afterwards He does countless things.

He does not then say this to exalt himself, but through a desire to show that Christ is even yet caring for them. And he shows what he says to be credible, by adding, *"for His Body's sake."* For that so it is, and that there is no unlikelihood in it, is plain from these things being done for His body's sake. Look how He has knitted us unto Himself. Why then introduce Angels between? *"Whereof I was made,"* he says, *"a minister."* Why introduce Angels besides? *"I am a minister."* Then he shows that he had himself done nothing, albeit he is a minister. *"Of which I was made,"* says he, *"a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given me to youward, to fulfill the word of God."* *"The dispensation."* Either he means, He so willed that after His own departure we should succeed to the dispensation, in order that you might not feel as deserted, (for it is Himself

that suffers, Himself that is ambassador;) or he means this, namely, me who was more than all a persecutor, for this end He permitted to persecute, that in my preaching I might gain belief; or by "*dispensation*" he means, that He required not deeds, nor actions, nor good works, but faith and baptism. For you would not otherwise have received the word. "*For you,*" he says, "*to fulfill the word of God.*" He speaks of the Gentiles, showing that they were yet wavering, by the expression, "*fulfill.*" For that the cast-away Gentiles should have been able to receive such lofty doctrines was not of Paul, but of the dispensation of God; "*for I never could have had the power,*" he says. Having shown that which is greater, that his sufferings are Christ's, he next subjoins what is more evident, that this also is of God, "*to fulfill His word in you.*" And he shows here covertly, that this too is of dispensation, that it is spoken to you now, when you are able to hear it, and comes not of neglect, but to the end ye may receive it. For God does not all things on a sudden, but uses condescension because of His plenteous love toward man. And this is the reason why Christ came at this time, and not of old. And He shows in the Gospel, that for this reason He sent the servants first, that they might not proceed to kill the Son. For if they did not reverence the Son, even when He came after the servants, much less would they had He come sooner; if they gave no heed to the lesser commandments, how would they to the greater? What then, does one object? Are there not Jews even now, and Greeks who are in a very imperfect condition? This, however, is an excess of listlessness. For after so long a time, after such great instructions, still to continue imperfect, is a proof of great stupidity.

When then the Greeks say, why did Christ come at this time? Let us not allow them so to speak, but let us ask them, whether He did not succeed? For as, if He had come at the very first, and had not succeeded, the time would not have been for us a sufficient excusation, so, seeing He

has succeeded, we cannot with justice be brought to account on the score of *"the time."* For neither does any one demand of a physician, who has removed the disease, and restored one to health, to give an account of his treatment, nor yet does any examine closely a general who has gained a victory, why at this time, and why in this place. For these things it were in place to ask, had he not been successful; but when he has been successful, they must even be taken for granted. For, tell me, whether is more worthy of credit, your reasoning and calumny, or the perfection of the thing?

Conquered He, or conquered He not? Show this. Prevailed He, or prevailed He not? Accomplished He what He said, or no? These are the articles of enquiry. Tell me, I pray. Thou fully grantest that God is, even though not Christ? I ask you then; Is God without beginning? You will say, Certainly. Tell me then, why made He not men myriads of years before? For they would have lived through a longer time. They were now losers by that time during which they were not. Nay, they were not losers; but how, He who made them alone knows. Again, I ask you, why did He not make all men at once? But his soul, whoever was first made, has so many years of existence, of which that one is deprived which is not yet created. Wherefore made He the one to be brought first into this world, and the other afterwards?

Although these things are really fit subjects for enquiry: yet not for a meddling curiosity: for this is not for enquiry at all. For I will tell you the reason I spoke of. For suppose human nature as being some one continued life, and that in the first times our race was in the position of boyhood; in those that succeeded, of manhood; and in these that are near extreme age, of an old man. Now when the soul is at its perfection, when the limbs of the body are unstrung, and our war is over, we are then brought to philosophy. On the contrary, one may say, we teach boys while young. Yes, but not the great doctrines, but rhetoric, and expertness with language; and the other

when they have come to ripeness of age. See God also doing the same with the Jews. For just as though the Jews had been little children, he placed Moses over them as a schoolmaster, and like little children he managed these things for them through shadowy representations, as we teach letters. *"For the law had a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things."* [Hebrews 10:1] As we both buy cakes for children and give them pieces of money, requiring of them one thing only, that for the present they would go to school; so also God at that time gave them both wealth and luxury, purchasing from them by this His great indulgence one only thing, that they would listen to Moses. Therefore He delivered them over to a schoolmaster, that they might not despise Himself as a tender, loving Father. See then that they feared him only; for they said not, Where is God? But, Where is Moses? And his very presence was fearful. So when they did amiss, observe how he punished them. For God indeed was desirous of casting them off; but he would not permit Him. Or rather the whole was of God; just as when a Father threatens while a schoolmaster entreats Him, and says, *"Forgive them, I pray, on my account, and henceforward I undertake for them."* In this way was the wilderness a school. And as children who have been a long while at school are desirous of quitting it, so also were they at that time continually desiring Egypt, and weeping, saying, *"We are lost, we are wholly consumed, we are utterly undone."* [Exodus 16:3] And Moses broke their tablet, having written for them, as it were, certain words [Exodus 32:19]; just as a schoolmaster would do, who having taken up the writing tablet, and found it badly written, throws away the tablet itself, desiring to show great anger; and if he have broken it, the father is not angry. For he indeed was busy writing, but they not attending to him, but turning themselves other ways, were committing disorder. And as in school, they strike each other, so also, on

that occasion, he bade them strike and slay each other. And again, having given them as it were lessons to learn, then asking for them, and finding they had not learned them, he would punish them. For instance. What writings were those that denoted the power of God? The events in Egypt? Yes, says one, but these writings represented the plagues, that He punishes His enemies. And to them it was a school. For what else was the punishment of your enemies but your benefit? And in other respects too, He benefited you. And it was the same as if one should say he knew his letters, but when asked up and down, should be at fault, and be beaten. So they also said indeed that they knew the power of God, but when asked their knowledge up and down, they could not give it, and therefore were beaten. Have you seen water? You ought to be reminded of the water in Egypt. For He that of water made blood, will be also of power to do this. As we also say often to the children, *"when in a book you see the letter A, remember that you had it in your tablet."* Have you seen famine? Remember that it was He that destroyed the crops! Have you seen wars? Remember the drowning! Have you seen that they are mighty who inhabit the land? But not mightier than the Egyptians. He who took you out of the midst of them, will He not much more save you when out? But they knew not how to answer their letters out of order, and therefore they were beaten. *"They ate,"* and drank, *"and kicked."* [Deuteronomy 32:15] When fed with their manna they ought not to have asked for luxury, seeing they had known the evils which proceed from it. And they acted precisely as if a free child, when sent to school, should ask to be reckoned with the slaves, and to wait on them—so did these also in seeking Egypt—and when receiving all needful sustenance, and such as becomes a free person, and sitting at his father's table, should have a longing for the ill-savored and noisy one of the servants. And they said to Moses, *"Yea, Lord, all that you have spoken will*

we do, and be obedient." [Exodus 24:7] And as it happens in the case of desperately bad children, that when the father would put them to death, the schoolmaster perseveringly entreats for them, the same was the case at that time also.

Why have we said these things? Because we differ in nothing from children. Will you hear their doctrines also, that they are those of children? *"Eye for eye,"* it is said, *"and tooth for tooth."* [Leviticus 24:20] For nothing is so eager to revenge as a childish mind. For seeing it is a passion of irrationality, and there is much irrationality, and great lack of consideration in that age, no wonder the child is tyrannized over by anger; and so great is the tyranny, that oftentimes after stumbling and getting up again, they will smite their knee for passion, or overturn the footstool, and so will allay their pain, and quench their rage. In some such way as this did God also deal with them, when He allowed them to strike out *"Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,"* and destroyed the Egyptians and the Amalekites that had grieved them. And He promised such things; as if to one who said, *"Father, such and such an one has beaten me,"* the father should then reply, *"Such and such an one is a bad man, and let us hate him."* So also does God say, *"I will be their enemy that are your enemies, and I will hate them that hate you."* [Exodus 23:22] And again, when Balaam prayed, the condescension which was used towards them was childish. For as with children, when having been frightened at anything not frightful, such as either a lock of wool, or any other thing of like sort, they are suddenly alarmed; that their fear may not continue in them, we bring the thing up to their hands, and make their nurses show it them: so also did God; seeing that the Prophet was a terror to them, he turned the terror of him into confidence. And as children who are under weaning have all manner of things in little baskets, so also did He give them everything, and dainties in abundance. Still the

child longs for the breast; so did these also for Egypt and the flesh that was there.

So that one would not be wrong in calling Moses both a teacher, and a nursing-father, and a conductor [Exodus 16:3; Numbers 11:4-5]; the man's wisdom was great. Howbeit it is not the same thing to guide men who are already philosophers, and to rule unreasoning children. And, if you are inclined to hear yet another particular; as the nurse says to the child, When you ease yourself, take up your garments, and for as long as you sit, so also did Moses. [Deuteronomy 23:13] For all the passions are tyrannous in children (for as yet they have not that which is to bridle them), vainglory, desire, irrationality, anger, envy; just as in children, so they prevailed; they spat upon, they beat, Moses. And as a child takes up a stone, and we all exclaim, O do not throw it; so did they also take up stones against their father; and he fled from them. And as, if a father have any ornament, the child, being fond of ornament, asks him for it, in like manner, truly, did the party of Dathan and Abiram act, when they rebelled for the priesthood. [Numbers 16] And besides, they were of all people the most envious, and little-minded, and in all respects imperfect.

Ought then Christ, tell me, to have appeared at that time, at that time to have given them these teachings of true wisdom, when they were raging with lust, when they were as horses mad for the mare, when they were the slaves of money, of the belly? Nay, He would but have wasted his lessons of wisdom in discoursing with those of no understanding; and they would have neither learned one thing nor the other. And as he who teaches to read before he has taught the alphabet, will never teach even so much as the alphabet; so indeed would it then have been also. But not so now, for by the grace of God much forbearance, much virtue, has been planted everywhere. Let us give thanks then for all things, and not be over curious. For it is not

we that know the due time, but He, The Maker of the time, and The Creator of the ages.

In everything then yield we to Him: for this is to glorify God, not to demand of Him an account of what He does. In this way too did Abraham give glory to God; *"And being fully persuaded,"* we read, *"that what He had promised, He was able to perform."* [Romans 4:21] He did not ask about the future even; but we scrutinize the account even of the past. See how great folly, how great ingratitude, is here. But let us for the future have done, for no gain comes of it, but much harm even; and let our minds be gratefully disposed towards our Master, and let us send up glory to God, that making for all things an offering of thanksgiving, we may be counted worthy of His lovingkindness, through the grace and love toward man of His Only-begotten, with whom, etc.

Homily 5 on Colossians

[Colossians 1:26-28]

"Even the mystery which has been hid from all ages and generations: but now has it been manifested to His saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we proclaim, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ."

Having said what we have come to, and showed the lovingkindness of God and the honor, by the greatness of the things given, he introduces yet another consideration that heightens them, namely, that neither before us did any one know Him. As he does also in the Epistle to the Ephesians, saying, neither Angels, nor principalities, nor any other created power, but only the Son of God knew. [Ephesians 3:5-10] And he said, not simply hid, but *"quite hid,"* and that even if it has but now come to pass, yet it is of old, and from the beginning God willed these things, and they were so planned out; but why, he says not yet. *"From the ages,"* from the beginning, as one might say. And with reason he calls that a mystery, which none knew, save God. And where hid? In Christ; as he says in the Epistle to the Ephesians [Ephesians 3:9], or as when the Prophet says, *"From everlasting even to everlasting You are."* [Psalm 90:2] But now has been manifested, he says, *"to His saints."* So that it is altogether of the dispensation of God. *"But now has been manifested,"* he says. He says not, *"has come to pass,"* but, *"has been manifested to His saints."* So that it is even now still hid, since it has been manifested to His saints alone.

Let not others therefore deceive you, for they know not. Why to them alone? *"To whom He was pleased,"* he says. See how everywhere He stops the mouth of their questions. *"To whom God was pleased to make known,"* he says. Yet His will is not without reason. By way of making them accountable for grace, rather than allowing them to have high thoughts, as though it were of their own achieving, he said, *"To whom he was pleased to make known."* *"What is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles."* He has spoken loftily, and accumulated emphasis, seeking, out of his great earnestness, for amplification upon amplification. For this also is an amplification, the saying indefinitely, *"The riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles."* For it is most of all apparent among the Gentiles, as he also says elsewhere, *"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy."* [Romans 15:9] For the great glory of this mystery is apparent among others also, but much more among these. For, on a sudden, to have brought men more senseless than stones to the dignity of Angels, simply through bare words, and faith alone, without any laboriousness, is indeed glory and riches of mystery: just as if one were to take a dog, quite consumed with hunger and the mange, foul, and loathsome to see, and not so much as able to move, but lying cast out, and make him all at once into a man, and to display him upon the royal throne. They were wont to worship stones and the earth; but they learned that themselves are better both than the heaven and the sun, and that the whole world serves them; they were captives and prisoners of the devil: on a sudden they are placed above his head, and lay commands on him and scourge him: from being captives and slaves to demons, they have become the body of The Master of the Angels and the Archangels; from not knowing even what God is, they have become all at once sharers even in God's throne. Would you see the countless steps they overleaped? First, they had to learn that stones are not gods; secondly,

that they not only are not gods, but inferior even to men; thirdly, to brutes even; fourthly, to plants even; fifthly, they brought together the extremes: that not only stones but not earth even, nor animals, nor plants, nor man, nor heaven; or, to begin again, that not stones, not animals, not plants, not elements, not things above, not things below, not man, not demons, not Angels, not Archangels, not any of those Powers above, ought to be worshipped by the nature of man. Being drawn up, as it were, from some deep, they had to learn that the Lord of all, He is God, that Him alone is it right to worship; that the virtuous life is a good thing; that this present death is not death, nor this life, life; that the body is raised, that it becomes incorruptible, that it will ascend into heaven, that it obtains even immortality, that it stands with Angels, that it is removed there. But Him who was there below, having cleared at a bound all these steps, He has placed on high upon the throne, having made Him that was lower than the stones, higher in dominion than the Angels, and the Archangels, and the thrones, and the dominions. Truly *"What is the riches of the glory of this mystery?"* Just as if one should show a fool to be all at once made a philosopher; yea rather, whatsoever one should say, it would be as nothing: for even the words of Paul are undefined. *"What is the riches,"* he says, *"of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you?"* Again, they had to learn that He who is above, and who rules Angels and dominions, and all the other Powers, came down below, and was made Man, and suffered countless things, and rose again, and was received up.

All these things were of the mystery; and he sets them down together with lofty praise, saying, *"Which is Christ in you?"* But if He be in you, why seek ye Angels? *"Of this mystery."* For there are other mysteries besides. But this is really a mystery, which no one knew, which is marvelous, which is beside the common expectation, which was hid.

"Which is Christ in you," he says, *"the hope of glory, whom we proclaim,"* bringing Him from above. *"Whom we,"* not Angels: *"teaching"* and *"admonishing"*: not imperiously nor using constraint, for this too is of God's lovingkindness to men, not to bring them to Him after the manner of a tyrant. Seeing it was a great thing he had said, *"teaching,"* he added, *"admonishing,"* which is rather like a father than an instructor. *"Whom,"* says he, *"we proclaim, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom."* So that all wisdom is needed. That is, saying all things in wisdom. For the ability to learn such things exists not in every one. *"That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."* What do you say, *"every man"*? Yea; this is what we are earnestly desirous of doing, he says. For what, if this do not come to pass? The blessed Paul endeavored. *"Perfect."* This then is perfection, the other is imperfect: so that if one have not even the whole of wisdom, he is imperfect. *"Perfect in Christ Jesus,"* not in the Law, nor in Angels, for that is not perfection. *"In Christ,"* that is, in the knowledge of Christ. For he that knows what Christ has done, will have higher thoughts than to be satisfied with Angels.

"In Christ Jesus"; Ver. 29. *"Whereunto I labor also, striving."* And he said not, *"I am desirous"* merely, nor in any indifferent way, but *"I labor, striving,"* with great earnestness, with much watching. If I, for your good, thus watch, much more ought ye. Then again, showing that it is of God, he says, *"according to His working which works in me mightily."* He shows that this is the work of God. He, now, that makes me strong for this, evidently wills it. Wherefore also when beginning he says, *"Through the will of God."* [Colossians 1:1] So that it is not only out of modesty he so expresses himself, but insisting on the truth of the Word as well. *"And striving."* In saying this, he shows that many are fighting against him. Then great is his tender affection.

Chap. ii. v. 1. *"For I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea."*

Then lest this should seem owing to their peculiar weakness, he joined others also with them, and as yet condemned them not. But why does he say, *"And as many as have not seen my face in the flesh"*? He shows here after a divine manner, that they saw him constantly in the Spirit. And he bears witness to their great love.

Ver. 2, 3. *"That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God the Father, and of Christ: in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden."*

Now henceforward he is hastening and in pangs to enter upon the doctrine, neither accusing them, nor clearing them of accusation. *"I strive,"* he says. To what end? That they may be knit together. What he means is something like this; that they may stand firm in the faith. He does not however so express himself; but extenuates the matter of accusation. That is, that they may be united with love, not with necessity nor with force. For as I have said, he always avoids offending, by leaving it to themselves; and therefore *"striving,"* because I wish it to be with love, and willingly. For I do not wish it to be with the lips merely, nor merely that they shall be brought together, but *"that their hearts may be comforted."*

"Being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding." That is, that they may doubt about nothing, that they may be fully assured in all things. But I meant full assurance which is by faith, for there is a full assurance which comes by arguments, but that is worthy of no consideration. I know, he says, that you believe, but I would have you fully assured: not *"unto riches"* only, but *"unto all riches"*; that your full assurance may be intense, as well as in all things. And observe the wisdom

of this blessed one. He said not, *"You do ill that you are not fully assured,"* nor accused them; but, you know not how desirous I am that you may be fully assured, and not merely so, but with understanding. For seeing he spoke of faith; suppose not, he says, that I meant barely and unprofitably, but with understanding and love. *"That they may know the mystery of God the Father and of Christ."* So that this is the mystery of God, the being brought unto Him by the Son. *"And of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* But if they are in Him, then wisely also no doubt He came at this time. Wherefore then do some foolish persons object to Him, *"See how He discourses with the simpler sort."* *"In whom are all the treasures."* He himself knows all things. *"Hid,"* for think not in truth that you already have all; they are hidden also even from Angels, not, from you only; so that you ought to ask all things from Him. He himself gives wisdom and knowledge. Now by saying, *"treasures,"* he shows their largeness, by *"All,"* that He is ignorant of nothing, by *"hid,"* that He alone knows.

Ver. 4. *"This I say, that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech."*

Do you see that he says, I have therefore said this, that you may not seek it from men. *"Delude you,"* he says, *"with persuasiveness of speech."* For what if any does speak, and speak persuasively?

Ver. 5. *"For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit."*

The direct thing to have said here was, *"even though I be absent in the flesh, yet, nevertheless, I know the deceivers";* but instead he has ended with praise, *"Joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."* *"Your order,"* he means, your good order. *"And the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."* This is still more in the way of

encomium. And he said not "*faith*," but steadfastness, as to soldiers standing in good order and firmly. Now that which is steadfast, neither deceit nor trial can shake asunder. Not only, he says, have ye not fallen, but no one has so much as thrown you into disorder. He has set himself over them, that they may fear him as though present; for thus is order preserved. From solidity follows compactedness, for you will then produce solidity, when having brought many things together, you shall cement them compactedly and inseparably; thus a solidity is produced, as in the case of a wall. But this is the peculiar work of love; for those who were by themselves, when it has closely cemented and knit them together, it renders solid. And faith, again, does the same thing; when it allows not reasonings to intrude themselves. For as reasonings divide, and shake loose, so faith causes solidity and compactness.

For seeing God has bestowed upon us benefits surpassing man's reasoning, suitably enough He has brought in faith. It is not possible to be steadfast, when demanding reasons. For behold all our lofty doctrines, how destitute they are of reasonings, and dependent upon faith alone. God is not anywhere, and is everywhere. What has less reason in it than this? Each by itself is full of difficulty. For, indeed, He is not in place; nor is there any place in which He is. He was not made, He made not Himself, He never began to be. What reasoning will receive this, if there be not faith? Does it not seem to be utterly ridiculous, and more endless than a riddle?

Now that He has no beginning, and is uncreate, and uncircumscribed, and infinite, is, as we have said, a manifest difficulty; but let us consider His incorporeality, whether we can search out this by reasoning. God is incorporeal. What is incorporeal? A bare word, and no more, for the apprehension has received nothing, has impressed nothing upon itself; for if it does so impress, it comes to nature, and what constitutes body. So that the

mouth speaks indeed, but the understanding knows not what it speaks, save one thing only, that it is not body, this is all it knows. And why do I speak of God? In the case of the soul, which is created, inclosed, circumscribed, what is incorporeality? Say! show! You can not. Is it air? But air is body, even though it be not compact, and it is plain from many proofs that it is a yielding body. Fire is body, while the energy of the soul is bodiless. Wherefore? Since it penetrates everywhere. If it is not itself body, then that which is incorporeal exists in place, therefore it is circumscribed; and that which is circumscribed has figure; and figures are linear, and lines belong to bodies. Again, that which is without figure, what conception does it admit? It has no figure, no form, no outline. Do you see how the understanding becomes dizzy?

Again, That Nature [viz. God's] is not susceptible of evil. But He is also good of His own will; it is therefore susceptible. But one may not so say, far be it! Again, was He brought into being, willing it, or not willing it? But neither may one say this. Again, circumscribes He the world, or no? If He circumscribes it not, He is Himself circumscribed, but if He circumscribes it, He is infinite in His nature. Again, circumscribes He Himself? If He circumscribes Himself, then He is not without beginning to Himself, but to us; therefore He is not in His nature without beginning. Everywhere one must grant contradictories.

Do you see how great the darkness is; and how everywhere there is need of faith. This it is, that is solid. But, if you will, let us come to things which are less than these. That substance has an operation. And what in His case is operation? Is it a certain motion? Then He is not immutable: for that which is moved, is not immutable: for, from being motionless it becomes in motion. But nevertheless He is in motion, and never stands still. But what kind of motion, tell me; for among us there are seven kinds; down, up, in,

out, right, left, circular, or, if not this, increase, decrease, generation, destruction, alteration. But is His motion none of these, but such as the mind is moved with? No, nor this either. Far be it! For in many things the mind is even absurdly moved. Is to will, to operate, or not? If to will is to operate, and He wills all men to be good, and to be saved [1 Timothy 2:4], how comes it not to pass? But to will is one thing, to operate, another. To will then is not sufficient for operation. How then says the Scripture, "*He has done whatsoever He willed*"? [Psalm 115:3] And again, the leper says unto Christ, "*If You will, You can make me clean.*" [Matthew 8:2] For if this follows in company with the will, what is to be said? Will ye that I mention yet another thing? How were the things that are, made out of things that are not? How will they be resolved into nothing? What is above the heaven? And again, what above that? And what above that? And beyond that? And so on to infinity. What is below the earth? Sea, and beyond this, what? And beyond that again? Nay; to the right, and to the left, is there not the same difficulty?

But these indeed are things unseen. Will ye that I lead the discourse to those which are seen; those which have already happened? Tell me, how did the beast contain Jonah in its belly, without his perishing? Is it not void of reason, and its motions without control? How spared it the righteous man? How was it that the heat did not suffocate him? How was it that it putrefied him not? For if to be in the deep only, is past contriving, to be both in the creature's bowels, and in that heat, is very far more unaccountable. If from within we breathe the air, how did the respiration suffice for two animals? And how did it also vomit him forth unharmed? And how too did he speak? And how too was he self-possessed, and prayed? Are not these things incredible? If we test them by reasonings, they are incredible, if by faith, they are exceeding credible.

Shall I say something more than this? The wheat in the earth's bosom decays, and rises again. Behold marvels, opposite, and each surpassing the other; marvelous is the not becoming corrupted, marvelous, after becoming so, is the rising again. Where are they that make sport of such things, and disbelieve the Resurrection and say, This bone how shall it be cemented to that? And introduce such like silly tales. Tell me, how did Elias ascend in a chariot of fire? Fire is wont to burn, not to carry aloft. How lives he so long a time? In what place is he? Why was this done? Whither was Enoch translated? Lives he on like food with us? And what is it hinders him from being here? Nay, but does he not eat? And wherefore was he translated? Behold how God schools us little by little. He translated Enoch; no very great thing that. This instructed us for the taking up of Elias. He shut in Noe into the ark [Genesis 7:7]; nor is this either any very great thing. This instructed us for the shutting up of the prophet within the whale. Thus even the things of old stood in need of forerunners and types. For as in a ladder the first step sends on to the second, and from the first it is not possible to step to the fourth, and this sends one on to that, that that may be the way to the next; and as it is not possible either to get to the second before the first; so also is it here.

And observe the signs of signs, and you will discern this in the ladder which Jacob saw. *"Above,"* it is said, *"the Lord stood fast, and underneath Angels were ascending and descending."* [Genesis 28:13] It was prophesied that the Father has a Son; it was necessary this should be believed. Whence would you that I show you the signs of this? From above, downward? From beneath, upward? Because He begets without passion, for this reason did she that was barren first bear. Let us rather go higher. It was necessary to be believed, that He begot of Himself. What then? The thing happens obscurely indeed, as in type and shadow, but still it does happen, and as it

goes on it becomes somehow clearer. A woman is formed out of man alone, and he remains whole and entire. Again, it was necessary there should be some sure sign of the Conception of a Virgin. So the barren bears, not once only, but a second time and a third, and many times. Of His birth then of a Virgin, the barren is a type, and she sends the mind forward to faith. Again, this was a type of God being able to beget alone. For if man is the chief agent, and birth takes place without him, in a more excellent way, much rather, is One begotten of the Chiefest Agent. There is still another generation, which is a type of the Truth. I mean, ours by the Spirit. Of this again the barren a type, the fact that it is not of blood [John 1:13]; this pertains to the generation above. The one— as also the types— shows that the generation is to be without passion; the other, that it could proceed from one above.

Christ is above, ruling over all things: it was necessary this should be believed. The same takes place in the earth with respect to man. *"Let Us make man after Our image and likeness"* [Genesis 1:26], for dominion of all the brutes. Thus He instructed us, not by words, but by actions. Paradise showed the separateness of his nature, and that man was the best thing of all. Christ was to rise again; see now how many sure signs there were; Enoch, Elias, Jonas, the fiery furnace, the case of Noah, baptism, the seeds, the plants, our own generation, that of all animals. For since on this everything was at stake, it, more than any other, had abundance of types.

That the Universe is not without a Providence we may conjecture from things among ourselves, for nothing will continue to exist, if not provided for; but even herds, and all other things stand in need of governance. And that the Universe was not made by chance, Hell is a proof, and so was the deluge in Noah's day, the fire, the overwhelming of the Egyptians in the sea, the things which happened in the wilderness.

It was necessary too that many things should prepare the way for Baptism; yea, thousands of things; those, for instance, in the Old Testament, those in the Pool, the cleansing of him that was not sound in health, the deluge itself, and all the things that have been done in water, the baptism of John.

It was necessary to be believed that God gives up His Son; a man did this by anticipation, Abraham the Patriarch. Types then of all these things, if we are so inclined, we shall find by searching in the Scriptures. But let us not be weary, but attune ourselves by these things. Let us hold the faith steadfastly, and show forth strictness of life: that having through all things returned thanks to God, we may be counted worthy of the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 6 on Colossians

[Colossians 2:6, 7]

"As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and established in your faith, even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."

Again, he takes hold on them beforehand with their own testimony, saying, *"As therefore ye received."* We introduce no strange addition, he says, neither do ye. *"Walk ye in Him,"* for He is the Way that leads to the Father: not in the Angels; this way leads not there. *"Rooted,"* that is, fixed; not one while going this way, another that, but *"rooted"*: now that which is rooted, never can remove. Observe how appropriate are the expressions he employs. *"And built up,"* that is, in thought attaining unto Him. *"And established"* in Him, that is, holding Him, built as on a foundation. He shows that they had fallen down, for the word *"built"* has this force. For the faith is in truth a building; and needs both a strong foundation, and secure construction. For both if any one build not upon a secure foundation it will shake; and even though he do, if it be not firm, it will not stand. *"As you were taught."* Again, the word *"As."* *"Abounding,"* he says, *"in thanksgiving"*; for this is the part of well-disposed persons, I say not simply to give thanks, but with great abundance, more than ye learned, if possible, with much ambition.

Ver. 8. *"Take heed lest there shall be any one that makes spoil of you."*

Do you see how he shows him to be a thief, and an alien, and one that enters in softly? For he has already represented him to be entering in. *"Beware."* And he well said *"makes spoil."* As one digging away a mound from underneath, may give no perceptible sign, yet it gradually settles, so

do you also beware; for this is his main point, not even to let himself be perceived. As if some one were robbing every day, and he (the owner of the house) were told, "*Beware lest there be some one*"; and he shows the way—through this way— as if we were to say, through this chamber; so, "*through philosophy*," says he.

Then because the term "*philosophy*" has an appearance of dignity, he added, "*and vain deceit*." For there is also a good deceit; such as many have been deceived by, which one ought not even to call a deceit at all. Whereof Jeremiah speaks; "*O Lord, You have deceived me, and I was deceived*" [Jeremiah 20:7]; for such as this one ought not to call a deceit at all; for Jacob also deceived his father, but that was not a deceit, but an economy. "*Through his philosophy*," he says, "*and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*." Now he sets about to reprove their observance of particular days, meaning by elements of the world the sun and moon; as he also said in the Epistle to the Galatians, "*How turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly elements?*" [Galatians 4:9] And he said not observances of days, but in general of the present world, to show its worthlessness: for if the present world be nothing, much more then its elements. Having first shown how great benefits and kindnesses they had received, he afterwards brings on his accusation, thereby to show its greater seriousness, and to convict his hearers. Thus too the Prophets do. They always first point out the benefits, and then they magnify their accusation; as Esaias says, "*I have begotten children, and exalted them, but they have rejected me*" [Isaiah 1:2, Septuagint]; and again, "*O my people, what have I done unto you, or wherein have I grieved you, or wherein have I wearied you*?" [Micah 6:3] and David; as when he says, "*I heard you in the secret place of the tempest*"

[Psalm 81:7, Septuagint]; and again, *"Open your mouth, and I will fill it."* [Psalm 81:10] And everywhere you will find it the same.

That indeed were most one's duty, not to be persuaded by them, even did they say anything to the purpose; as it is, however, obligations apart even, it would be our duty to shun those things. *"And not after Christ,"* he says. For were it in such sort a matter done by halves, that you were able to serve both the one and the other, not even so ought ye to do it; as it is, however, he suffers you not to be *"after Christ."* Those things withdraw you from Him. Having first shaken to pieces the Grecian observances, he next overthrows the Jewish ones also. For both Greeks and Jews practiced many observances, but the former from philosophy, the latter from the Law. First then, he makes at those against whom lay the heavier accusation. How, *"not after Christ"*?

Ver. 9, 10. *"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily: and in Him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power."*

Observe how in his accusing of the one he thrusts through the other, by first giving the solution, and then the objection. For such a solution is not suspected, and the hearer accepts it the rather, that the speaker is not making it his aim. For in that case indeed he would make a point of not coming off worsted, but in this, not so. *"For in Him dwells,"* that is, for God dwells in Him. But that you may not think Him enclosed, as in a body, he says, *"All the fullness of the Godhead bodily: and you are made full in Him."* Others say that he intends the Church filled by His Godhead, as he elsewhere says, *"of Him that fills all in all"* [Ephesians 1:23], and that the term *"bodily"* is here, as the body in the head. How is it then that he did not add, *"which is the Church"*? Some again say it is with reference to The Father, that he says that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him, but wrongly. First, because

"to dwell," cannot strictly be said of God: next, because the *"fullness"* is not that which receives, for *"the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof"* [Psalm 24:1]; and again the Apostle, *"until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."* [Romans 11:25] By *"fullness"* is meant *"the whole."* Then the word *"bodily,"* what did it intend? *"As in a head."* But why does he say the same thing over again? *"And you are made full in Him."* What then does it mean? That you have nothing less than He. As it dwelt in Him, so also in you. For Paul is ever straining to bring us near to Christ; as when he says, *"Hath raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him"* [Ephesians 2:6]: and, *"If we endure, we shall also reign with Him"* [2 Timothy 2:12]: and, *"How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things"* [Romans 8:32]: and calling us *"fellow-heirs."* Then as for His dignity. And He *"is the head of all principality and power."* [Ephesians 3:6] He that is above all, The Cause, is He not Consubstantial? Then he has added the benefit in a marvelous way; and far more marvelous than in the Epistle to the Romans. For there indeed he says, *"circumcision of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter"* [Romans 2:29], but here, in Christ.

Ver. 11. *"In whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ."*

See how near he has come to the thing. He says, *"In the putting"* quite away, not putting off merely. *"The body of sins."* He means, *"the old life."* He is continually adverting to this in different ways, as he said above, *"Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and reconciled us who were alienated,"* that we should be *"holy and without blemish."* [Colossians 1:13-21] No longer, he says, is the circumcision with the knife, but in Christ Himself; for no hand imparts this circumcision, as is the case there, but the Spirit. It circumcises not a part, but the whole man. It is the body both in the

one and the other case, but in the one it is carnally, in the other it is spiritually circumcised; but not as the Jews, for you have not put off flesh, but sins. When and where? In Baptism. And what he calls circumcision, he again calls burial. Observe how he again passes on to the subject of righteous doings; *"of the sins,"* he says, *"of the flesh,"* the things they had done in the flesh. He speaks of a greater thing than circumcision, for they did not merely cast away that of which they were circumcised, but they destroyed it, they annihilated it.

Ver. 12. *"Buried with him,"* he says, *"in Baptism, wherein you were also raised with Him, through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."*

But it is not burial only: for behold what he says, *"Wherein you were also raised with Him, through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."* He has well said, *"of faith,"* for it is all of faith. You believed that God is able to raise, and so you were raised. Then note also His worthiness of belief, *"Who raised Him,"* he says, *"from the dead."*

He now shows the Resurrection. *"And you who sometime were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did He quicken together with Him."* For you lay under judgment of death. But even though ye died, it was a profitable death. Observe how again he shows what they deserved in the words he subjoins:

Ver. 13, 14, 15. *"Having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the Cross; having put off from himself the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."*

"Having forgiven us," he says, *"all our trespasses,"* those which produced that deadness. What then? Did He allow them to remain? No, He

even wiped them out; He did not scratch them out merely; so that they could not be seen. *"In doctrines"* [ordinances], he says. What doctrines? The Faith. It is enough to believe. He has not set works against works, but works against faith. And what next? Blotting out is an advance upon remission; again he says, *"And has taken it out of the way."* Nor yet even so did He preserve it, but rent it even in sunder, *"by nailing it to His Cross."* *"Having put off from himself the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* Nowhere has he spoken in so lofty a strain.

Do you see how great His earnestness that the bond should be done away? To wit, we all were under sin and punishment. He Himself, through suffering punishment, did away with both the sin and the punishment, and He was punished on the Cross. To the Cross then He affixed it; as having power, He tore it asunder. What bond? He means either that which they said to Moses, namely, *"All that God has said will we do, and be obedient"* [Exodus 24:3], or, if not that, this, that we owe to God obedience; or if not this, he means that the devil held possession of it, the bond which God made for Adam, saying, *"In the day you eat of the tree, you shall die."* [Genesis 2:17] This bond then the devil held in his possession. And Christ did not give it to us, but Himself tore it in two, the action of one who remits joyfully.

"Having put off from himself the principalities and the powers." He means the diabolical powers; because human nature had arrayed itself in these, or because they had, as it were, a hold, when He became Man He put away from Himself that hold. What is the meaning of *"He made a show of them"*? And well said he so; never yet was the devil in so shameful a plight. For while expecting to have Him, he lost even those he had; and when That Body was nailed to the Cross, the dead arose. There death received his

wound, having met his death-stroke from a dead body. And as an athlete, when he thinks he has hit his adversary, himself is caught in a fatal grasp; so truly does Christ also show, that to die with confidence is the devil's shame.

For he would have done everything to persuade men that He did not die, had he had the power. For seeing that of His Resurrection indeed all succeeding time was proof demonstrative; while of His death, no other time save that whereat it happened could ever furnish proof; therefore it was, that He died publicly in the sight of all men, but He arose not publicly, knowing that the aftertime would bear witness to the truth. For, that while the world was looking on, the serpent should be slain on high upon the Cross, herein is the marvel. For what did not the devil do, that He might die in secret? Hear Pilate saying, *"Take ye Him away, and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him"* [John 19:6], and withstanding them in a thousand ways. And again the Jews said unto Him, *"If You are the Son of God, come down from the Cross."* [Matthew 27:40] Then further, when He had received a mortal wound, and He came not down, for this reason He was also committed to burial; for it was in His power to have risen immediately: but He did not, that the fact might be believed. And yet in cases of private death indeed, it is possible to impute them to a swoon, but here, it is not possible to do this either. For even the soldiers broke not His legs, like those of the others, that it might be made manifest that He was dead. And those who buried The Body are known; and therefore too the Jews themselves seal the stone along with the soldiers. For, what was most of all attended to, was this very thing, that it should not be in obscurity. And the witnesses to it are from enemies, from the Jews. Hear them saying to Pilate, *"That deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre"* [Matthew 26:63-64] be guarded by the soldiers. This was

accordingly done, themselves also sealing it. Hear them further saying even afterwards to the Apostles, "*You intend to bring this Man's blood upon us.*" [Acts 5:28] He suffered not the very fashion of His Cross to be put to shame. For since the Angels have suffered nothing like it, He therefore does everything for this, showing that His death achieved a mighty work. There was, as it were, a single combat. Death wounded Christ: but Christ, being wounded, did afterwards kill death. He that seemed to be immortal, was destroyed by a mortal body; and this the whole world saw. And what is truly wonderful is, that He committed not this thing to another. But there was made again a second bond of another kind than the former.

Beware then lest we be condemned by this, after saying, I renounce Satan, and array myself with You, O Christ. Rather however this should not be called "*a bond*," but a covenant. For that is "*a bond*," whereby one is held accountable for debts: but this is a covenant. It has no penalty, nor says it, If this be done or if this be not done: what Moses said when he sprinkled the blood of the covenant, by this God also promised everlasting life. All this is a covenant. There, it was slave with master, here it is friend with friend: there, it is said, "*In the day that you eat thereof you shall die*" [Genesis 2:17]; an immediate threatening; but here is nothing of the kind. God arrives, and here is nakedness, and there was nakedness; there, however, one that had sinned was made naked, because he sinned, but here, one is made naked, that he may be set free. Then, man put off the glory which he had; now, he puts off the old man; and before going up (to the contest), puts him off as easily, as it were his garments. He is anointed, as wrestlers about to enter the lists. For he is born at once; and as that first man was, not little by little, but immediately. (He is anointed,) not as the priests of old time, on the head alone, but rather in more abundant measure. For he indeed was anointed on the head, the right ear, the hand [Leviticus 8:23-24];

to excite him to obedience, and to good works; but this one, all over. For he comes not to be instructed merely; but to wrestle, and to be exercised; he is advanced to another creation. For when one confesses (his belief) in the life everlasting, he has confessed a second creation. He took dust from the earth, and formed man [Genesis 2:7]: but now, dust no longer, but the Holy Spirit; with This he is formed, with this harmonized, even as Himself was in the womb of the Virgin. He said not in Paradise, but *"in Heaven."* For deem not that, because the subject is earth, it is done on earth; he is removed there, to Heaven, there these things are transacted, in the midst of Angels: God takes up your soul above, above He harmonizes it anew, He places you near to the Kingly Throne. He is formed in the water, he receives spirit instead of a soul. And after he is formed, He brings to him, not beasts, but demons, and their prince, and says, *"Tread upon serpents and scorpions."* [Luke 10:19] He says not, *"Let Us make man in our image, and after our likeness"* [Genesis 1:26], but what? *"He gives them to become the sons of God; but of God,"* he says, *"they were born."* [John 1:12-13] Then that thou give no ear to the serpent, straightway he teaches you to say, *"I renounce you,"* that is, *"whatsoever you say, I will not hear you."* Then, that he destroy you not by means of others, it is said, *"and your pomp, and your service, and your angels."* He has set him no more to keep Paradise, but to have his citizenship in heaven. For straightway when he comes up he pronounces these words, *"Our Father, Which art in Heaven,...Your will be done, as in Heaven, so on earth."* The plain falls not on your sight, you see not tree, nor fountain, but straightway you take into you the Lord Himself, you are mingled with His Body, you are intermixed with that Body that lies above, whither the devil cannot approach. No woman is there, for him to approach, and deceive as the weaker; for it is said, *"There is neither female, nor male."* [Galatians 3:28] If you go not down to him, he will not have

power to come up where you are; for you are in Heaven, and Heaven is unapproachable by the devil. It has no tree with knowledge of good and evil, but the Tree of Life only. No more shall woman be formed from your side, but we all are one from the side of Christ. For if they who have been anointed of men take no harm by serpents, neither will you take any harm at all, so long as you are anointed; that you may be able to grasp the Serpent and choke him, *"to tread upon serpents and scorpions."* [Luke 10:19] But as the gifts are great, so is the punishment great also. It is not possible for him that has fallen from Paradise, to dwell *"in front of Paradise"* [Genesis 3:24], nor to reascend there from whence we have fallen. But what after this? Hell, and the worm undying. But far be it that any of us should become amenable to this punishment! But living virtuously, let us earnestly strive to do throughout His will. Let us become well-pleasing to God, that we may be able both to escape the punishment, and to obtain the good things eternal, of which may we all be counted worthy, through the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 7 on Colossians

[Colossians 2:16-19]

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's. Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the Angels, dwelling in the things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body being supplied and knit together, through the joints and bands, increases with the increase of God."

Having first said darkly, *"Take heed lest there shall be any one that makes spoil of you after the tradition of men"* [Colossians 2:8]; and again, further back, *"This, I say, that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech"* [Colossians 2:4]; thus preoccupying their soul, and working in it anxious thoughts; next, having inserted those benefits, and increased this effect, he then brings in his reproof last, and says, *"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a sabbath day."* Do you see how he depreciates them? If you have obtained such things, he says, why make yourselves accountable for these petty matters? And he makes light of them, saying, *"or in the part of a feast day,"* for in truth they did not retain the whole of the former rule, *"or a new moon, or a sabbath day."* He said not, *"Do not then observe them,"* but, *"let no man judge you."* He showed that they were transgressing, and undoing, but he brought his charge against others. Endure not those that judge you, he says, nay, not so much as this either, but he argues with those persons, almost stopping their mouths, and saying, You ought not to judge. But he would not have reflected on these. He said not *"in clean and unclean,"* nor

yet *"in feasts of Tabernacles, and unleavened bread, and Pentecost,"* but *"in part of a feast"*: for they ventured not to keep the whole; and if they did observe it, yet not so as to celebrate the feast. *"In part,"* he says, showing that the greater part is done away. For even if they did keep sabbath, they did not do so with precision. *"Which are a shadow of the things to come"*; he means, of the New Covenant; *"but the body"* is *"Christ's."* Some persons here punctuate thus, *"but the body"* is *"of Christ,"* i.e. the truth has come in with Christ: others thus; *"The Body of Christ let no man adjudge away from you,"* that is, thwart you of it. The term [καταβραβευθῆναι], is employed when the victory is with one party, and the prize with another, when though a victor you are thwarted. You stand above the devil and sin; why do you again subject yourself to sin? Therefore he said that *"he is a debtor to fulfill the whole law"* [Galatians 5:3]; and again, *"Is Christ"* found to be *"the minister of sin"* [Galatians 2:17]? Which he said when writing to the Galatians. When he had filled them with anger through saying, *"adjudge away from you,"* then he begins; *"being a voluntary,"* he says, *"in humility and worshiping of Angels, intruding into things he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."* How *"in humility,"* or how *"puffed up"*? He shows that the whole arose out of vainglory. But what is on the whole the drift of what is said? There are some who maintain that we must be brought near by Angels, not by Christ, that were too great a thing for us. Therefore it is that he turns over and over again what has been done by Christ, *"through the Blood of His Cross"* [Colossians 1:20]; on this account he says that *"He suffered for us"*; that *"He loved us."* [1 Peter 2:21] And besides in this very same thing, moreover, they were elevated afresh. And he said not *"introduction by,"* but *"worshiping of"* Angels. *"Intruding into things he has not seen."* [Ephesians 2:4] For he has not seen Angels, and yet is affected as though he had. Therefore he says, *"Puffed up by his fleshly mind vainly,"*

not about any true fact. About this doctrine, he is puffed up, and puts forward a show of humility. By his carnal mind, not spiritual; his reasoning is of man. *"And not holding fast the Head,"* he says, *"from whom all the body."* All the body thence has its being, and its well-being. Why, letting go the Head, do you cling to the members? If you are fallen off from it, you are lost. *"From whom all the body."* Every one, be he who he may, thence has not life only, but also even connection. All the Church, so long as she holds The Head, increases; because here is no more passion of pride and vainglory, nor invention of human fancy.

Mark that *"from whom,"* meaning the Son. *"Through the joints and bands,"* he says, *"being supplied, and knit together, increases with the increase of God";* he means, that which is according to God, that of the best life.

Ver. 20. *"If you died with Christ."*

He puts that in the middle, and on either side, expressions of greater vehemence. *"If you died with Christ from the elements of the world,"* he says, *"why as though living in the world do ye subject yourselves to ordinances?"* This is not the consequence, for what ought to have been said is, *"how as though living are you subject to those elements?"* But letting this pass, what says he?

Ver. 21, 22. *"Handle not, nor taste, nor touch; all which things are to perish with the using; after the precepts and doctrines of men."*

You are not in the world, he says, how is it you are subject to its elements? How to its observances? And mark how he makes sport of them, *"touch not, handle not, taste not,"* as though they were cowards and keeping themselves clear of some great matters, *"all which things are to perish with the using."* He has taken down the swollenness of the many, and added, *"after the precepts and doctrines of men."* What do you say? Do you speak

even of the Law? Henceforth it is but a doctrine of men, after the time has come. Or, because they adulterated it, or else, he alludes to the Gentile institutions. The doctrine, he says, is altogether of man.

Ver. 23. *"Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."*

"Show," he says; not power, not truth. So that even though they have a show of wisdom, let us turn away from them. For he may seem to be a religious person, and modest, and to have a contempt for the body.

"Not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." For God has given it honor, but they use it not with honor. Thus, when it is a doctrine, he knows how to call it honor. They dishonor the flesh, he says, depriving it, and stripping it of its liberty, not giving leave to rule it with its will. God has honored the flesh.

Chap. iii. ver. 1. *"If then you were raised together with Christ."*

He brings them together, having above established that He died. Therefore he says, *"If then you were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above."* No observances are there. *"Where Christ is seated on the right hand of God."* Wonderful! Whither has he led our minds aloft! How has he filled them with mighty aspiration! It was not enough to say, *"the things that are above,"* nor yet, *"where Christ is,"* but what? *"seated on the right hand of God."* From that point he was preparing them henceforward to see the earth.

Ver. 2, 3, 4. *"Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For you died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life shall be manifested, then shall you also with Him be manifested in glory."*

This is not your life, he says, it is some other one. He is now urgent to remove them, and insists upon showing that they are seated above, and are dead; from both considerations establishing the position, that they are not to seek the things which are here. For whether ye be dead, you ought not to seek them; or Whether ye be above, you ought not to seek them. Does Christ appear? Neither does your life. It is in God, above. What then? When shall we live? When Christ shall be manifested, who is your life; then seek ye glory, then life, then enjoyment.

This is to prepare the way for drawing them off from pleasure and ease. Such is his wont: when establishing one position, he darts off to another; as, for instance, when discoursing of those who at supper were beforehand with one another, he all at once falls upon the observance of the Mysteries. For he has a great rebuke when it is administered unsuspected. *"It is hid,"* he says, from you. *"Then shall you also with Him be manifested."* So that, now, you do not appear. See how he has removed them into the very heaven. For, as I said, he is always bent upon showing that they have the very same things which Christ has; and through all his Epistles, the tenor is this, to show that in all things they are partakers with Him. Therefore he uses the terms, Head, and Body, and does everything to convey this to them.

If therefore we shall then be manifested, let us not grieve, when we enjoy not honor: if this life be not life, but it be hidden, we ought to live this life as though dead. *"Then shall you also,"* he says, *"with Him be manifested in glory."* *"In glory,"* he said, not merely *"manifested."* For the pearl too is hidden so long as it is within the oyster. If then we be treated with insult, let us not grieve; or whatever it be we suffer; for this life is not our life, we are strangers and sojourners. *"For you died,"* he says. Who is so witless, as for a corpse, dead and buried, either to buy servants, or build

houses, or prepare costly raiment? None. Neither then do ye; but as we seek one thing only, namely, that we be not in a naked state, so here too let us seek one thing and no more. Our first man is buried: buried not in earth, but in water; not death-destroyed, but buried by death's destroyer, not by the law of nature, but by the governing command that is stronger than nature. For what has been done by nature, may perchance be undone; but what has been done by His command, never. Nothing is more blessed than this burial, whereat all are rejoicing, both Angels, and men, and the Lord of Angels. At this burial, no need is there of vestments, nor of coffin, nor of anything else of that kind. Would you see the symbol of this? I will show you a pool wherein the one was buried, the other raised; in the Red Sea the Egyptians were sunk beneath it, but the Israelites went up from out of it; in the same act he buries the one, generates the other.

Marvel not that generation and destruction take place in Baptism; for, tell me, dissolving and cementing, are they not opposite? It is evident to all. Such is the effect of fire; for fire dissolves and destroys wax, but it cements together metallic earth, and works it into gold. So in truth here also, the force of the fire, having obliterated the statue of wax, has displayed a golden one in its stead; for in truth before the Bath we were of clay, but after it of gold. Whence is this evident? Hear him saying, *"The first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven."* [1 Corinthians 15:47] I spoke of a difference as great as that between clay and gold; but greater still do I find the difference between heavenly and earthy; not so widely do clay and gold differ, as do things earthy and heavenly. Waxen we were, and clay-formed. For the flame of lust did much more melt us, than fire does wax, and any chance temptation did far rather shatter us than a stone does things of clay. And, if you will, let us give an outline of

the former life, and see whether all was not earth and water, and full of fluctuation and dust, and instability, and flowing away.

And if you will, let us scrutinize not the former things, but the present, and see whether we shall not find everything that is, mere dust and water. For what will you tell me of? Authority and power? For nothing in this present life is thought to be more enviable than these. But sooner may one find the dust when on the air stationary, than these things; especially now. For to whom are they not under subjection? To those who are lovers of them; to eunuchs; to those who will do anything for the sake of money; to the passions of the populace; to the wrath of the more powerful. He who was yesterday up high on his tribunal, who had his heralds shouting with thrilling voice, and many to run before, and haughtily clear the way for him through the forum, is today mean and low, and of all those things bereft and bare, like dust blast-driven, like a stream that has passed by. And like as the dust is raised by our feet, so truly are magistracies also produced by those who are engaged about money, and in the whole of life have the rank and condition of feet; and like as the dust when it is raised occupies a large portion of the air, though itself be but a small body, so too does power; and like as the dust blinds the eyes, so too does the pride of power bedim the eyes of the understanding.

But what? Will you that we examine that object of many prayers, wealth? Come, let us examine it in its several parts. It has luxury, it has honors, it has power. First then, if you will, let us examine luxury. Is it not dust? Yea, rather, it goes by swifter than dust, for the pleasure of luxurious living reaches only to the tongue, and when the belly is filled, not to the tongue even. But, says one, honors are of themselves pleasant things. Yet what can be less pleasant than that same honor, when it is rendered with a view to money? When it is not from free choice and with a readiness of

mind, it is not thou that reapest the honor, but your wealth. So that this very thing makes the man of wealth, most of all men, dishonored. For, tell me; suppose all men honored you, who had a friend; the while confessing that thou, to be sure, were good for nothing, but that they were compelled to honor you on his account; could they possibly in any other way have so dishonored you? So that our wealth is the cause of dishonor to us, seeing it is more honored than are its very possessors, and a proof rather of weakness than of power. How then is it not absurd that we are not counted of as much value as earth and ashes, (for such is gold,) but that we are honored for its sake? With reason. But not so he that despises wealth; for it were better not to be honored at all, than so honored. For tell me, were one to say to you, I think you worthy of no honor at all, but for your servants' sakes I honor you, could now anything be worse than this dishonor? But if to be honored for the sake of servants, who are partakers of the same soul and nature with ourselves, be a disgrace, much more then is it such, to be honored for the sake of meaner things, such as the walls and courts of houses, and vessels of gold, and garments. A scorn indeed were this, and shame; better die than be so honored. For, tell me, if you were in peril in this your pride, and some low and disgusting person were to be willing to extricate you from your peril, what could be worse than this? What ye say one to another about the city, I wish to say to you. Once on a time our city gave offense to the Emperor, and he gave orders that the whole of it should utterly be destroyed, men, children, houses, and all. (For such is the wrath of kings, they indulge their power as much as ever they choose, so great an evil is power.) It was then in the extremest of perils. The neighboring city, however, this one on the sea-coast, went and besought the king in our behalf: upon which the inhabitants of our city said that this was worse than if the city had been razed to the ground. So, to be thus honored is worse

than being dishonored. For see whence honor has its root. The hands of cooks procure us to be honored, so that to them we ought to feel gratitude; and swineherds supplying us with a rich table, and weavers, and spinners, and workers in metal, and confectioners, and table furnishers.

Were it not then better not to be honored at all, than to be beholden to these for the honor? And besides this, moreover, I will endeavor to prove clearly that opulence is a condition full of dishonor; it embases the soul; and what is more dishonorable than this? For tell me, suppose one had a comely person, and passing all in beauty, and wealth were to go to him and promise to make it ugly, and instead of healthy, diseased, instead of cool, inflamed; and having filled every limb with dropsy, were to make the countenance bloated, and distend it all over; and were to swell out the feet, and make them heavier than logs, and to puff up the belly, and make it larger than any tun; and after this, it should promise not even to grant permission to cure him, to those who should be desirous of doing so, (for such is the way with power,) but would give him so much liberty as to punish any one that should approach him to withdraw him from what was harming him; well then, tell me, when wealth works these effects in the soul, how can it be honorable?

But this power is a more grievous thing than the disease itself; as for one in disease not to be obedient to the physician's injunctions is a more serious evil than the being diseased; and this is the case with wealth, seeing it creates inflammation in every part of the soul, and forbids the physicians to come near it. So let us not felicitate these on the score of their power, but pity them; for neither were I to see a dropsical patient lying, and nobody forbidding him to take his fill of whatever drinks he pleased and of meats that are harmful, would I felicitate him because of his power. For not in all cases is power a good thing, nor are honors either, for these too fill one with

much arrogance. But if you would not choose that the body should along with wealth contract such a disease, how do you come to overlook the soul, and when contracting not this scourge alone, but another also? For it is on fire all over with burning fevers and inflammations, and that burning fever none can quench, for wealth will not allow of this, having persuaded it that those things are gains, which are really losses, such as not enduring any one and doing everything at will. For no other soul will one find so replete with lusts so great and so extravagant, as theirs who are desirous of being rich. For what silly trifles do they not picture to themselves! One may see these devising more extravagant things than limners of hippocentaurs, and chimæras, and dragon-footed things, and Scyllas, and monsters. And if one should choose to give a picture of one lust of theirs, neither Scylla, nor chimæra, nor hippocentaur will appear anything at all by the side of such a prodigy; but you will find it to contain every wild beast at once.

And perchance some one will suppose that I have been myself possessed of much wealth, seeing I am so true to what really comes of it. It is reported of one (for I will first confirm what I have said from the legends of the Greeks)— it is reported among them of a certain king, that he became so insolent in luxury, as to make a plane tree of gold, and a sky above it, and there sate, and this too when invading a people skilled in warfare. Now was not this lust hippocentaurean, was it not Scyllæan? Another, again, used to cast men into a wooden bull. Was not this a very Scylla? And even him, the king I just mentioned, the warrior, wealth made, from a man a woman, from a woman, what shall I say? A brute beast, and yet more degraded than this for the beasts, if they lodge under a tree, take up with nature, and seek for nothing further; but the man in question overshot the nature even of beasts.

What then can be more senseless than are the wealthy? And this arises from the greediness of their desires. But, are there not many that admire him? Therefore truly do they share in the laughter he incurs. That displayed not his wealth but his folly. How much better than that golden plane tree is that which the earth produces! For the natural is more grateful than the unnatural. But what meant that your golden heaven, O senseless one? Do you see how wealth that is abundant makes men mad? How it inflamed them? I suppose he knows not the sea even, and perchance will presently have a mind to walk upon it. Now is not this a chimaera? Is it not a hippocentaur? But there are, at this time also, some who fall not short even of him, but are actually much more senseless. For in point of senselessness, wherein do they differ, tell me, from that golden plane tree, who make silver jars, pitchers, and scent bottles? And wherein do those women differ, (ashamed indeed I am, but it is necessary to speak it,) who make chamber utensils of silver? It is ye should be ashamed, that are the makers of these things. When Christ is famishing, do you so revel in luxury? Yea rather, so play the fool! What punishment shall these not suffer? And do you inquire still, why there are robbers? Why murderers? Why such evils? When the devil has thus made you ridiculous. For the mere having of silver dishes indeed, this even is not in keeping with a soul devoted to wisdom, but is altogether a piece of luxury; but the making unclean vessels also of silver, is this then luxury? Nay, I will not call it luxury, but senselessness; nay, nor yet this, but madness; nay rather, worse than even madness.

I know that many persons make jokes at me for this; but I heed them not, only let some good result from it. In truth, to be wealthy does make people senseless and mad. Did their power reach to such an excess, they would have the earth too of gold, and walls of gold, perchance the heaven too, and the air of gold. What a madness is this, what an iniquity, what a

burning fever! Another, made after the image of God, is perishing of cold; and do you furnish yourself with such things as these? O the senseless pride! What more would a madman have done? Do you pay such honor to your excrements, as to receive them in silver? I know that you are shocked at hearing this; but those women that make such things ought to be shocked, and the husbands that minister to such distempers. For this is wantonness, and savageness, and inhumanity, and brutishness, and lasciviousness. What Scylla, what chimæra, what dragon, yea rather what demon, what devil would have acted on this wise? What is the benefit of Christ? What of the Faith? When one has to put up with men being heathens, yea rather, not heathens, but demons? If to adorn the head with gold and pearls be not right; one that uses silver for a service so unclean, how shall he obtain pardon? Is not the rest enough, although even it is not bearable, chairs and footstools all of silver? Although even these come of senselessness. But everywhere is excessive pride; everywhere is vainglory. Nowhere is it use, but everywhere excess.

I am afraid lest, under the impulse of this madness, the race of woman should go on to assume some portentous form: for it is likely that they will wish to have even their hair of gold. Else declare that you were not at all affected by what was said, nor were excited greatly, and fell a longing, and had not shame withheld you, would not have refused. For if they dare to do what is even more absurd than this, much more, I think, will they long for their hair, and lips, and eyebrows, and every part to be overlaid with molten gold.

But if you are incredulous, and think I am speaking in jest, I will relate what I have heard, or rather what is now existing. The king of the Persians wears his beard golden; those who are adepts at such work winding leaf of gold about his hairs as about the woof, and it is laid up as a prodigy.

Glory to You, O Christ; with how many good things have You filled us! How have You provided for our health! From how great monstrosity, from how great unreasonableness, have You set us free! Mark! I forewarn you, I advise no longer; but I command and charge; let him that wills, obey, and him that wills not, be disobedient; that if you women do continue thus to act, I will not suffer it, nor receive you, nor permit you to pass across this threshold. For what need have I of a crowd of distempered people? And what if, in my training of you, I do not forbid what is not excessive? And yet Paul forbade both gold and pearls. [1 Timothy 2:9] We are laughed at by the Greeks, our religion appears a fable.

And to the men I give this advice: Are you come to school to be instructed in spiritual philosophy? Divest yourself of that pride! This is my advice both to men and women; and if any act otherwise, henceforward I will not suffer it. The disciples were but twelve, and hear what Christ says unto them, "*Would ye also go away?*" [John 6:67] For if we go on for ever flattering you, when shall we reclaim you? When shall we do you service? "*But,*" says one, "*there are other sects, and people go over.*" This is a cold argument, "*Better is one that does the will of the Lord, than ten thousand transgressors.*" [Sirach 16:3] For, what would you choose yourself, tell me; to have ten thousand servants that were runaways and thieves, or a single one that loved you? Lo! I admonish and command you to break up both those gay deckings for the face, and such vessels as I have described, and give to the poor, and not to be so mad.

Let him that likes quit me at once; let him that likes accuse me, I will not suffer it in any one. When I am about to be judged at the Tribunal of Christ, you stand afar off, and your favor, while I am giving in my account. "*Those words have ruined all! He says, 'let him not go and transfer himself*

to another sect!' Nay! He is weak! condescend to him!" To what point? Till when? Once, and twice, and thrice, but not perpetually.

Lo! I charge you again, and protest after the pattern of the blessed Paul, *"that if I come again I will not spare."* [2 Corinthians 13:2] But when you have done as you ought, then you will know how great the gain is, how great the advantage. Yes! I entreat and beseech you, and would not refuse to clasp your knees and supplicate you in this behalf. What softness is it! What luxury, what wantonness! This is not luxury, but wantonness. What senselessness is it! What madness! So many poor stand around the Church; and though the Church has so many children, and so wealthy, she is unable to give relief to even one poor person; *"but one is hungry, and another is drunken"* [1 Corinthians 11:21]; one voids his excrement even into silver, another has not so much as bread! What madness! What brutishness so great as this? May we never come to the proof, whether we will prosecute the disobedient, nor to the indignation which allowing these practices would cause us; but that willingly and with patience we may avoid all this, that we may live to God's glory, and be delivered from the punishment in the other world, and may obtain the good things promised to those who love Him, through the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 8 on Colossians

[Colossians 3:5-7]

"Mortify your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake, comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience; in the which you also walked aforetime, when you lived in these things."

I [know] that many are offended by the foregoing discourse, but what can I do? You heard what the Master enjoined. Am I to blame? What shall I do? Have you not seen the creditors, when debtors are obstinate, how they wear collars? Did you hear what Paul proclaimed today? *"Mortify,"* he says, *"your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."* What is worse than such a covetousness? This is worse than any desire. This is still more grievous than what I was speaking of, the madness, and the silly weakness about silver. *"And covetousness,"* he says, *"which is idolatry."* See in what the evil ends. Do not, I pray, take what I said amiss, for not by my own good-will, nor without reason, would I have enemies; but I was wishful that you should attain to such virtue, as that I might hear of you the things I ought. So that I said it not for authority's sake, nor of imperiousness, but out of pain and of sorrow. Forgive me, forgive! I have no wish to violate decency by discoursing upon such subjects, but I am compelled to it.

Not for the sake of the sorrows of the poor do I say these things, but for your salvation; for they will perish, will perish, that have not fed Christ. For what, if you dost feed some poor man? Still so long as you live so voluptuously and luxuriously, all is to no purpose. For what is required is,

not the giving much, but not too little for the property you have; for this is but playing at it.

"Mortify therefore your members," he says, *"which are upon the earth."* What do you say? Was it not you that said, *"You are buried; you are buried together with Him; you are circumcised: we have put off the body of the sins of the flesh"* [c. 2:11, 12; Romans 6:4]; how then again do you say, *"Mortify"*? Are you sporting? Do you thus discourse, as though those things were in us? There is no contradiction; but like as if one, who has clean scoured a statue that was filthy, or rather who has recast it, and displayed it bright afresh, should say that the rust was eaten off and destroyed, and yet should again recommend diligence in clearing away the rust, he does not contradict himself, for it is not that rust which he scoured off that he recommends should be cleared away, but that which grew afterwards; so it is not that former putting to death he speaks of, nor those fornications, but those which do afterwards grow.

He said that this is not our life, but another, that which is in heaven. Tell me now. When he said, Mortify your members that are upon the earth, is then the earth also accused? Or does he speak of the things upon the earth as themselves sins?

"Fornication, uncleanness," he says. He has passed over the actions which it is not becoming even to mention, and by *"uncleanness"* has expressed all together.

"Passion," he said, *"evil desire."*

Lo! He has expressed the whole in the class. For envy, anger, sorrow, all are *"evil desire."*

"And covetousness," he says, *"which is idolatry. For which things' sake comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."*

By many things he had been withdrawing them; by the benefits which are already given, by the evils to come from which we had been delivered, being who, and wherefore; and all those considerations, as, for instance, who we were, and in what circumstances, and that we were delivered therefrom, how, and in what manner, and on what terms. These were enough to turn one away, but this one is of greater force than all; unpleasant indeed to speak of, not however to disservice, but even serviceable. *"For which things' sake comes,"* he says, *"the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."* He said not, *"upon you,"* but, *"upon the sons of disobedience."*

"In the which you also walked aforetime, when you lived in them." In order to shame them, he says, *"when you lived in them,"* and implying praise, as now no more so living: at that time they might.

Ver. 8. *"But now put away all these also."*

He speaks always both universally and particularly; but this is from earnestness.

Ver. 8, 9. *"Anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth. Lie not one to another."*

"Shameful speaking," he says, *"out of your mouth,"* clearly intimating that it pollutes it.

Ver. 9, 10. *"Seeing that you have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him."*

It is worth enquiring here, what can be the reason why he calls the corrupt life, *"members,"* and *"man,"* and *"body,"* and again the virtuous life, the same. And if *"the man"* means *"sins,"* how is it that he says, *"with his doings"*? For once he said, *"the old man,"* showing that this is not man, but the other. The moral choice does rather determine one than the substance,

and is rather "*man*" than the other. For his substance casts him not into hell, nor leads him into the kingdom, but men themselves: and we neither love nor hate any one so far as he is man, but so far as he is such or such a man. If then the substance be the body, and in either sort cannot be accountable, how does he say that it is evil? But what is that he says, "*with his doings*"? He means the choice, with the acts. And he calls him "*old*," on purpose to show his deformity, and hideousness, and imbecility; and "*new*," as if to say, Do not expect that it will be with this one even as with the other, but the reverse: for ever as he farther advances, he hastens not on to old age, but to a youthfulness greater than the preceding. For when he has received a fuller knowledge, he is both counted worthy of greater things, and is in more perfect maturity, in higher vigor; and this, not from youthfulness alone, but from that "*likeness*" also, "*after*" which he is. Lo! The best life is styled a creation, after the image of Christ: for this is the meaning of, "*after the image of Him that created him*," for Christ too came not finally to old age, but was so beautiful as it is not even possible to tell.

Ver. 11. "*Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all.*"

Lo! Here is a third encomium of this "*man*." With him, there is no difference admitted either of nation, or of rank, or of ancestry, seeing he has nothing of externals, nor needs them; for all external things are such as these, "*circumcision, and uncircumcision, bondman, freeman, Greek*," that is, proselyte, "*and Jew*," from his ancestors. If you have only this "*man*," you will obtain the same things with the others that have him.

"*But Christ*," he says, "*is all, and in all*": Christ will be all things to you, both rank, and descent, "*and*" Himself "*in you all*." Or he says another thing, to wit, that you all have become one Christ, being His body.

Ver. 12. *"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved."*

He shows the easiness of virtue, so that they might both possess it continually, and use it as the greatest ornament. The exhortation is accompanied also with praise, for then its force is greatest. For they had been before holy, but not elect; but now both *"elect, and holy, and beloved."*

"A heart of compassion." He said not *"mercy,"* but with greater emphasis used the two words. And he said not, that it should be as towards brethren, but, as fathers towards children. For tell me not that he sinned, therefore he said *"a heart."* And he said not *"compassion,"* lest he should place them in light estimation, but *"a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."*

Again, he speaks after the class, and he always does it; for from kindness comes humbleness of mind, and from this, longsuffering. *"Forbearing,"* he says, *"one another,"* that is, passing things over. And see, how he has shown it to be nothing, by calling it a *"complaint,"* and saying, *"even as Christ forgave you."* Great is the example! And thus he always does; he exhorts them after Christ. *"Complaint,"* he calls it. In these words indeed he showed it to be a petty matter; but when he has set before us the example, he has persuaded us that even if we had serious charges to bring, we ought to forgive. For the expression, *"Even as Christ,"* signifies this, and not this only, but also with all the heart; and not this alone, but that they ought even to love. For Christ being brought into the midst, brings in all these things, both that even if the matters be great, and even if we have not been the first to injure, even if we be of great, they of small account, even if they are sure to insult us afterwards, we ought to lay down our lives for

them, (for the words, "*even as,*" demand this;) and that not even at death only ought one to stop, but if possible, to go on even after death.

Ver. 14. "*And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.*"

Do you see that he says this? For since it is possible for one who forgives, not to love; yea, he says, you must love him too, and he points out a way whereby it becomes possible to forgive. For it is possible for one to be kind, and meek, and humbleminded, and longsuffering, and yet not affectionate. And therefore, he said at the first, "*A heart of compassion,*" both love and pity. "*And above all these things, love, which is the bond of perfectness.*" Now what he wishes to say is this; that there is no profit in those things, for all those things fall asunder, except they be done with love; this it is which clenches them all together; whatsoever good thing it be you mention, if love be away, it is nothing, it melts away. And it is as in a ship, even though her rigging be large, yet if there be no girding ropes, it is of no service; and in an house, if there be no tie beams, it is the same; and in a body, though the bones be large, if there be no ligaments, they are of no service. For whatsoever good deeds any may have, all do vanish away, if love be not there. He said not that it is the summit, but what is greater, "*the bond*"; this is more necessary than the other. For "*summit*" indeed is an intensity of perfectness, but "*bond*" is the holding fast together of those things which produce the perfectness; it is, as it were, the root.

Ver. 15. "*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*"

"*The peace of God.*" This is that which is fixed and steadfast. If on man's account indeed you have peace, it quickly comes to dissolution, but if on God's account, never. Although he had spoken of love universally, yet again he comes to the particular. For there is a love too which is

immoderate; for instance, when out of much love one makes accusations without reason, and is engaged in contentions, and contracts aversions. Not this, says he, not this do I desire; not overdoing things, but as God made peace with you, so do ye also make it. How made He peace? Of His own will, not having received anything of you. What is this? *"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."* If two thoughts are fighting together, set not anger, set not spitefulness to hold the prize, but peace; for instance, suppose one to have been insulted unjustly; of the insult are born two thoughts, the one bidding him to revenge, the other to endure; and these wrestle with one another: if the Peace of God stand forward as umpire, it bestows the prize on that which bids endure, and puts the other to shame. How? By persuading him that God is Peace, that He has made peace with us. Not without reason he shows the great struggle there is in the matter. Let not anger, he says, act as umpire, let not contentiousness, let not human peace, for human peace comes of avenging, of suffering no dreadful ill. But not this do I intend, he says, but that which He Himself left.

He has represented an arena within, in the thoughts, and a contest, and a wrestling, and an umpire. Then again, exhortation, *"to the which you were called,"* he says, that is, for the which you were called. He has reminded them of how many good things peace is the cause; on account of this He called you, for this He called you, so as to receive a worthy prize. For wherefore made He us *"one body"*? Was it not that she might rule? Was it not that we might have occasion of being at peace? Wherefore are we all one body? And now are we one body? Because of peace we are one body, and because we are one body, we are at peace. But why said he not, *"Let the peace of God be victorious,"* but *"be umpire"*? He made her the more honorable. He would not have the evil thought to come to wrestle with her, but to stand below. And the very name *"prize"* cheered the hearer. For if she

have given the prize to the good thought, however impudently the other behave, it is thereafter of no use. And besides, the other being aware that, perform what feats he might, he should not receive the prize; however he might puff, and attempt still more vehement onsets, would desist as laboring without profit. And he well added, "*And be thankful.*" For this is to be thankful, and very effectively, to deal with his fellow-servants as God does with himself, to submit himself to the Master, to obey; to express his gratitude for all things, even though one insult him, or beat him.

For in truth he that confesses thanks due to God for what he suffers, will not revenge himself on him that has done him wrong, since he at least that takes revenge, acknowledges no gratitude. But let not us follow him (that exacted) the hundred pence, lest we hear, "*Thou wicked servant,*" for nothing is worse than this ingratitude. So that they who revenge are ungrateful.

But why did he begin his list with fornication? For having said, "*Mortify your members which are upon the earth*" [Colossians 3:5], he immediately says, "*fornication*"; and so he does almost everywhere. Because this passion has the greatest sway. For even when writing his Epistle to the Thessalonians he did the same. [1 Thessalonians 4:3] And what wonder? Since to Timothy even he says, "*Keep yourself pure*" [1 Timothy 5:22]; and again elsewhere, "*Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification,*" without which "*no man shall see the Lord.*" [Hebrews 12:14] "*Put to death,*" he says, "*your members.*" You know of what sort that is which is dead, namely, hated, loathed, dropping to decay. If you put anything to death, it does not when dead continue dead, but presently is corrupted, like the body. Extinguish then the heat; and nothing that is dead will continue. He shows one having the same thing in hand, which Christ wrought in the Laver; therefore also he calls them "*members,*" as though

introducing some champion, thus advancing his discourse to greater emphasis. And he well said, "*Which are upon the earth,*" for here they continue, and here they are corrupted, far rather than these our members. So that not so truly is the body of the earth, as sin is earthly, for the former indeed appears even beautiful at times, but those members never. And those members lust after all things that are upon the earth. If the eye be such, it sees not the things in the heavens; if the ear, if the hand, if you mention any other member whatsoever. The eye sees bodies, and beauties, and riches; these are the things of earth, with these it is delighted: the ear with soft strains, and harp, and pipe, and filthy talking; these are things which are concerned with earth.

When therefore he has placed his hearers above, near the throne, he then says, "*Mortify your members which are upon the earth.*" For it is not possible to stand above with these members; for there is nothing there for them to work upon. And this clay is worse than that, for that clay indeed becomes gold, "*for this corruptible,*" he says, "*must put on incorruption*" [1 Corinthians 15:53], but this clay can never be retempered more. So that these members are rather "*upon the earth*" than those. Therefore he said not, "*of the earth,*" but, "*which are upon the earth,*" for it is possible that these should not be upon the earth. For it is necessary that these should be "*upon the earth,*" but that those should, is not necessary. For when the ear hears nothing of what is here uttered, but only in the heavens, when the eye sees nothing of what is here, but only what is above, it is not "*upon the earth*"; when the mouth speaks nothing of the things here, it is not "*upon the earth*"; when the hand does no evil thing— these are not of things "*upon the earth,*" but of those in the heavens.

So Christ also says, "*If your right eye causes you to stumble,*" that is, if you look unchastely, "*cut it out*" [Matthew 5:29], that is, your evil thought.

And he (Paul) seems to me to speak of "*fornication, uncleanness, passion, desire*" as the same, namely fornication: by means of all these expressions drawing us away from that thing. For in truth this is "*a passion*"; and like as the body is subject to any affection, either to fever or to wounds, so also is it with this. And he said not *Restrain*, but "*Mortify*" (put to death), so that they never rise up more, and "*put them away*." That which is dead, we put away; for instance, if there be callosities in the body, their body is dead, and we put it away. Now, if you cut into that which is quick, it produces pain, but if into that which is dead, we are not even sensible of it. So, in truth, is it with the passions; they make the soul unclean; they make the soul, which is immortal, passible.

How covetousness is said to be idolatry, we have oftentimes explained. For the things which do most of all lord it over the human race, are these, covetousness, and unchasteness, and evil desire. "*For which things' sake comes,*" he says, "*the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.*" Sons of disobedience, he calls them, to deprive them of excuse, and to show that it was because they would not be obedient, that they were in that condition. "*In the which you also,*" he says, "*walked aforetime,*" and (afterward) became obedient. He points them out as still in them, and praises them, saying, "*But now do ye also put away all these, anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking.*" But against others he advances his discourse. Under the head of "*passion and railing*" he means revilings, just as under "*wrath*" he means wickedness. And in another place, to shame them, he says, "*for we are members one of another.*" [Ephesians 4:25] He makes them out to be as it were manufacturers of men; casting away this one, and receiving that. He spoke of a man's "*members*" [Colossians 3:5]; here he says, "*all.*" He spoke of his heart, wrath, mouth, blasphemy, eyes, fornication, covetousness, hands and feet, lying, the understanding itself,

and the old mind. One royal form it has, that, namely, of Christ. They whom he has in view, appear to me rather to be of the Gentiles. For like as earth, being but sand, even though one part be greater, another less, losing its own previous form, does afterwards become gold; and like as wool, of whatever kind it be, receives another aspect, and hides its former one: so truly is it also with the faithful. "*Forbearing*," he says, "*one another*"; he shows what is just. Thou forbearst him, and he you; and so he says in the Epistle to the Galatians, "*Bear one another's burdens.*" [Galatians 6:2] "*And be thankful*," he says. For this is what he everywhere especially seeks; the chiefest of good things.

Give we thanks then in all things; whatever may have happened; for this is thankfulness. For to do so in prosperity indeed, is no great thing, for the nature of the circumstances of itself impels one thereto; but when being in extremities we give thanks, then it is admirable. For when, in circumstances under which others blaspheme, and exclaim discontentedly, we give thanks, see how great philosophy is here. First, you have rejoiced God; next, you have shamed the devil; thirdly, you have even made that which has happened to be nothing; for all at once, thou both givest thanks, and God cuts short the pain, and the devil departs. For if you have exclaimed discontentedly, he, as having succeeded to his wish, stands close by you, and God, as being blasphemed, leaves you, and your calamity is heightened; but if you have given thanks, he, as gaining nought, departs; and God, as being honored, requites you with greater honor. And it is not possible, that a man, who gives thanks for his evils should be sensible of them. For his soul rejoices, as doing what is right; immediately his conscience is bright, it exults in its own commendation; and that soul which is bright, cannot possibly be sad of countenance. But in the other case,

along with the misfortune, conscience also assails him with her lash; while in this she crowns, and proclaims him.

Nothing is holier than that tongue, which in evils gives thanks to God; truly in no respect does it fall short of that of martyrs; both are alike crowned, both this, and they. For over this one also stands the executioner to force it to deny God, by blasphemy; the devil stands over it, torturing it with executioner thoughts, darkening it with despondencies. If then one bear his griefs, and give thanks, he has gained a crown of martyrdom. For instance, is her little child sick, and does she give God thanks? This is a crown to her. What torture so bad that despondency is not worse? Still it does not force her to vent forth a bitter word. It dies: again she has given thanks. She has become the daughter of Abraham. For if she sacrificed not with her own hand, yet was she pleased with the sacrifice, which is the same; she felt no indignation when the gift was taken away.

Again, is her child sick? She has made no amulets. It is counted to her as martyrdom, for she sacrificed her son in her resolve. For what, even though those things are unavailing, and a mere cheat and mockery, still there were nevertheless those who persuaded her that they do avail: and she chose rather to see her child dead, than to put up with idolatry. As then she is a martyr, whether it be in her own case, or in her son's, that she has thus acted; or in her husband's, or in any other's of her dearest; so is that other one an idolatress. For it is evident that she would have done sacrifice, had it been allowed her to do sacrifice; yea, rather, she has even now performed the act of sacrifice. For these amulets, though they who make money by them are forever rationalizing about them, and saying, "*we call upon God, and do nothing extraordinary,*" and the like; and "*the old woman is a Christian,*" says he, "*and one of the faithful*"; the thing is idolatry. Are you one of the faithful? Sign the Cross; say, this I have for my only weapon; this

for my remedy; and other I know none. Tell me, if a physician should come to one, and, neglecting the remedies belonging to his art, should use incantation, should we call that man a physician? By no means: for we see not the medicines of the healing art; so neither, in this case, do we see those of Christianity.

Other women again tie about them the names of rivers, and venture numberless things of like nature. Lo, I say, and forewarn you all, that if any be detected, I will not spare them again, whether they have made amulet, or incantation, or any other thing of such an art as this. What then, says one, is the child to die? If he have lived through this means, he did then die, but if he have died without this, he then lived. But now, if you see him attaching himself to harlots, you wish him buried, and sayest, *"why, what good is it for him to live?"* but when you see him in peril of his salvation, do you wish to see him live? Heardest thou not Christ saying, *"He that loses his life, shall find it; and he that finds it, shall lose it"*? [Matthew 16:25] Believest thou these sayings, or do they seem to you fables? Tell me now, should one say, *"Take him away to an idol temple, and he will live"*; would you endure it? No! she replies. Why? *"Because,"* she says, *"he urges me to commit idolatry; but here, there is no idolatry, but simple incantation:"* this is the device of Satan, this is that wiliness of the devil to cloak over the deceit, and to give the deleterious drug in honey. After he found that he could not prevail with you in the other way, he has gone this way about, to stitched charms, and old wives' fables; and the Cross indeed is dishonored, and these charms preferred before it. Christ is cast out, and a drunken and silly old woman is brought in. That mystery of ours is trodden under foot, and the imposture of the devil dances.

Wherefore then, says one, does not God reprove the aid from such sources? He has many times reproved, and yet has not persuaded you; He

now leaves you to your error, for It says, "*God gave them up unto a reprobate mind.*" [Romans 1:28] These things, moreover, not even a Greek who has understanding could endure. A certain demagogue in Athens is reported once to have hung these things about him: when a philosopher who was his instructor, on beholding them, rebuked him, expostulated, satirized, made sport of him. For in so wretched a plight are we, as even to believe in these things!

Why, says one, are there not now those who raise the dead, and perform cures? Yes, then, why, I say: why are there not now those who have a contempt for this present life? Do we serve God for hire? When man's nature was weaker, when the Faith had to be planted, there were even many such; but now he would not have us to hang upon these signs, but to be ready for death. Why then do you cling to the present life? Why do you not look on the future? And for the sake of this indeed canst bear even to commit idolatry, but for the other not so much as to restrain sadness? For this cause it is that there are none such now; because that (future) life has seemed to us honorless, seeing that for its sake we do nothing, while for this there is nothing we refuse to undergo. And why too that other farce, ashes, and soot, and salt? And the old woman again brought in? A farce truly, and a shame! And then, "*an eye,*" say they, "*has caught the child.*"

Where will these satanical doings end? How will not the Greeks laugh? How will they not gibe when we say unto them, "*Great is the virtue of the Cross*"; how will they be won, when they see us having recourse to those things, which themselves laugh to scorn? Was it for this that God gave physicians and medicines? What then? Suppose they do not cure him, but the child depart? Whither will he depart? Tell me, miserable and wretched one! Will he depart to the demons? Will he depart to some tyrant? Will he not depart to heaven? Will he not depart to his own Lord? Why then do you

grieve? Why do you weep? Why do you mourn? Why do you love your infant more than your Lord? Is it not through Him that you have this also? Why are you ungrateful? Do you love the gift more than the Giver? *"But I am weak,"* she replies, *"and cannot bear the fear of God."* Well, if in bodily evils the greater covers the less, much rather in the soul, fear destroyed fear, and sorrow, sorrow. Was the child beautiful? But be it what it may, not more beautiful is he than Isaac: and he too was an only one. Was it born in your old age? So too was he. But is it fair? Well: however fair it may be, it is not lovelier than Moses [Acts 7:20], who drew even barbarian eyes unto a tender love of him, and this too at a time of life when beauty is not yet disclosed; and yet this beloved thing did the parents cast into the river. You indeed both see it laid out, and deliver it to the burying, and go to its monument; but they did not so much as know whether it would be food for fishes, or for dogs, or for other beasts that prey in the sea; and this they did, knowing as yet nothing of the Kingdom, nor of the Resurrection.

But suppose it is not an only child; but that after you have lost many, this also has departed. But not so sudden is your calamity as was Job's, and (his was) of sadder aspect? It is not when a roof has fallen in, it is not as they are feasting the while, it is not following on the tidings of other calamities.

But was it beloved by you? But not more so than Joseph, the devoured of wild beasts; but still the father bore the calamity, and that which followed it, and the next to that. He wept; but acted not with impiety; he mourned, but he uttered not discontent, but stayed at those words, saying, *"Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and will you take Benjamin away? All these things are against me."* [Genesis 42:36] Do you see how the constraint of famine prevailed with him to be regardless of his children? And does not the fear of God prevail with you as much as famine?

Weep: I do not forbid you: but anything blasphemous neither say nor do. Be your child what he may, he is not like Abel; and yet nought of this kind did Adam say; although that calamity was a sore one, that his brother should have killed him. But I am reminded of others also that have killed their brothers; when, for instance, Absalom killed Amnon the eldest born [2 Samuel 13], and King David loved his child, and sat indeed in sackcloth and ashes, but he neither brought soothsayers, nor enchanters, (although there were such then, as Saul shows,) but he made supplication to God. So do thou likewise: as that just man did, so do thou also; the same words say thou, when your child is dead, *"I shall go to him, but he will not come to me."* [2 Samuel 12:23] This is true wisdom, this is affection. However much you may love your child, you will not love so much as he did then. For even though his child were born of adultery, yet that blessed man's love of the mother was at its height, and you know that the offspring shares the love of the parents. And so great was his love toward it, that he even wished it to live, though it would be his own accuser, but still he gave thanks to God. What, do you think, did Rebecca suffer, when his brother threatened Jacob, and she grieved not her husband, but bade him send her son away? [Genesis 27:46; 28:1] When you have suffered any calamity, think on what is worse than it; and you will have a sufficient consolation; and consider with yourself, what if he had died in battle? What if in fire? And whatsoever our sufferings may be, let us think upon things yet more fearful, and we shall have comfort sufficient, and let us ever look around us on those who have undergone more terrible things, and if we ourselves have ever suffered heavier calamities. So does Paul also exhort us; as when he says, *"You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin"* [Hebrews 12:4]: and again, *"There has no temptation taken you but such as man can bear."* [1 Corinthians 10:13] Be then our sufferings what they may, let us look round

on what is worse; (for we shall find such,) and thus shall we be thankful. And above all, let us give thanks for all things continually; for so, both these things will be eased, and we shall live to the glory of God, and obtain the promised good things, whereunto may all we attain, through the grace and love toward man, etc.

Homily 9 on Colossians

[Colossians 3:16, 17]

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God. And whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Having exhorted them to be thankful, he shows also the way, that, of which I have lately discoursed to you. And what does he say? *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"*; or rather not this way alone, but another also. For I indeed said that we ought to reckon up those who have suffered things more terrible, and those who have undergone sufferings more grievous than ours, and to give thanks that such have not fallen to our lot; but what does he say? *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you"*; that is, the teaching, the doctrines, the exhortation, wherein He says, that the present life is nothing, nor yet its good things. If we know this, we shall yield to no hardships whatever. Matthew 6:25, etc./span> *"Let it dwell in you,"* he says, *"richly,"* not simply dwell, but with great abundance. Harken ye, as many as are worldly, and have the charge of wife and children; how to you too he commits especially the reading of the Scriptures and that not to be done lightly, nor in any sort of way, but with much earnestness. For as the rich in money can bear fine and damages, so he that is rich in the doctrines of philosophy will bear not poverty only, but all calamities also easily, yea, more easily than that one. For as for him, by discharging the fine, the man who is rich must needs be impoverished, and found wanting, and if he should often suffer in that way, will no longer be able to bear it, but in this

case it is not so; for we do not even expend our wholesome thoughts when it is necessary for us to bear anything we would not choose, but they abide with us continually. And mark the wisdom of this blessed man. He said not, *"Let the word of Christ"* be in you, simply, but what? *"dwell in you,"* and *"richly."*

"In all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another." *"In all,"* says he. Virtue he calls wisdom, and lowliness of mind is wisdom, and almsgiving, and other such like things, are wisdom; just as the contraries are folly, for cruelty too comes of folly. Whence in many places it calls the whole of sin folly. *"The fool,"* says one, *"has said in his heart, There is no God"* [Psalm 14:1]; and again, *"My wounds stink and are corrupt from the face of my foolishness."* [Psalm 38:5, Septuagint] For what is more foolish, tell me, than one who indeed wraps himself about in his own garments, but regards not his brethren that are naked; who feeds dogs, and cares not that the image of God is famishing; who is merely persuaded that human things are nought, and yet clings to them as if immortal. As then nothing is more foolish than such an one, so is nothing wiser than one that achieves virtue. For mark; how wise he is, says one. He imparts of his substance, he is pitiful, he is loving to men, he has well considered that he bears a common nature with them; he has well considered the use of wealth, that it is worthy of no estimation; that one ought to be sparing of bodies that are of kin to one, rather than of wealth. He that is a despiser of glory is wholly wise, for he knows human affairs; the knowledge of things divine and human, is philosophy. So then he knows what things are divine, and what are human, and from the one he keeps himself, on the other he bestows his pains. And he knows how to give thanks also to God in all things, he considers the present life as nothing; therefore he is neither delighted with prosperity, nor grieved with the opposite condition.

Tarry not, I entreat, for another to teach you; you have the oracles of God. No man teaches you as they; for he indeed oft grudges much for vainglory's sake and envy. Hearken, I entreat you, all you that are careful for this life, and procure books that will be medicines for the soul. If you will not any other, yet get you at least the New Testament, the Apostolic Epistles, the Acts, the Gospels, for your constant teachers. If grief befall you, dive into them as into a chest of medicines; take thence comfort of your trouble, be it loss, or death, or bereavement of relations; or rather dive not into them merely, but take them wholly to you; keep them in your mind.

This is the cause of all evils, the not knowing the Scriptures. We go into battle without arms, and how ought we to come off safe? Well contented should we be if we can be safe with them, let alone without them. Throw not the whole upon us! Sheep you are, still not without reason, but rational; Paul commits much to you also. They that are under instruction, are not for ever learning; for then they are not taught. If you are for ever learning, you will never learn. Do not so come as meaning to be always learning; (for so you will never know;) but so as to finish learning, and to teach others. In the arts do not all persons continue for set times, in the sciences, and in a word, in all the arts? Thus we all fix definitely a certain known time; but if you are ever learning, it is a certain proof that you have learned nothing.

This reproach God spoke against the Jews. *"Borne from the belly, and instructed even to old age."* [Isaiah 46:3-4, Septuagint] If you had not always been expecting this, all things would not have gone backward in this way. Had it been so, that some had finished learning, and others were about to have finished, our work would have been forward; you would both have given place to others, and would have helped us as well. Tell me, were some to go to a grammarian and continue always learning their letters,

would they not give their teacher much trouble? How long shall I have to discourse to you concerning life? In the Apostles' times it was not thus, but they continually leaped from place to place, appointing those who first learned to be the teachers of any others that were under instruction. Thus they were enabled to circle the world, through not being bound to one place. How much instruction, do you think, do your brethren in the country stand in need of, [they] and their teachers? But you hold me riveted fast here. For, before the head is set right, it is superfluous to proceed to the rest of the body. You throw everything upon us. You alone ought to learn from us, and your wives from you, your children from you; but you leave all to us. Therefore our toil is excessive.

"Teaching," he says, *"and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."* Mark also the considerateness of Paul. Seeing that reading is toilsome, and its irksomeness great, he led them not to histories, but to psalms, that you might at once delight your soul with singing, and gently beguile your labors. *"Hymns,"* he says, *"and spiritual songs."* But now your children will utter songs and dances of Satan, like cooks, and caterers, and musicians; no one knows any psalm, but it seems a thing to be ashamed of even, and a mockery, and a joke. There is the treasury house of all these evils. For whatsoever soil the plant stands in, such is the fruit it bears; if in a sandy and salty soil, of like nature is its fruit; if in a sweet and rich one, it is again similar. So the matter of instruction is a sort of fountain. Teach him to sing those psalms which are so full of the love of wisdom; as at once concerning chastity, or rather, before all, of not companying with the wicked, immediately with the very beginning of the book; (for therefore also it was that the prophet began on this wise, *"Blessed is the man that has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly"*; [Psalm 1:1], and again, *"I have not sat in the council of vanity"*; [Psalm 26:4,

Septuagint], and again, *"in his sight a wicked doer is contemned, but he honors those that fear the Lord,"* [Psalm 15:4, Septuagint] of companying with the good, (and these subjects you will find there in abundance,) of restraining the belly, of restraining the hand, of refraining from excess, of not overreaching; that money is nothing, nor glory, and other things such like.

When in these you have led him on from childhood, little by little you will lead him forward even to the higher things. The Psalms contain all things, but the Hymns again have nothing human. When he has been instructed out of the Psalms, he will then know hymns also, as a diviner thing. For the Powers above chant hymns, not psalms. For *"a hymn,"* says one, *"is not comely in the mouth of a sinner"* [Sirach 15:9]; and again, *"My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they sit together with me"* [Psalm 101:6-7, Septuagint]; and again, *"he that works haughtiness has not dwelt in the midst of my house";* and again, *"He that walks in a blameless way, he ministered unto me."* [Psalm 101:6, Septuagint]

So that you should safely guard them from intermixing themselves, not only with friends, but even with servants. For the harm done to the free is incalculable, when we place over them corrupt slaves. For if when enjoying all the benefit of a father's affection and wisdom, they can with difficulty be preserved safe throughout; when we hand them over to the unscrupulousness of servants, they use them like enemies, thinking that they will prove milder masters to them, when they have made them perfect fools, and weak, and worthy of no respect.

More than than all other things together, let us attend seriously to this. *"I have loved,"* says he, *"those that love your law."* [Psalm 119:165, not exact] This man then let us too emulate, and such let us love. And that the young may further be taught chastity, let them hear the Prophet, saying,

"My loins are filled with illusions" [Psalm 38:7, Septuagint]; and again let them hear him saying, *"You will utterly destroy every one that goes a whoring from You."* [Psalm 73:27, Septuagint] And, that one ought to restrain the belly, let them hear again, *"And slew,"* he says, *"the more part of them while the meat was yet in their mouths."* [Psalm 78:30, Septuagint] And that they ought to be above bribes, *"If riches become abundant, set [not] your heart upon them"* [Psalm 62:10]; and that they ought to keep glory in subjection, *"Nor shall his glory descend together after him."* [Psalm 49:17] And not to envy the wicked, *"Be not envious against them that work unrighteousness."* [Psalm 37:1] And to count power as nothing, *"I saw the ungodly in exceeding high place, and lifting himself up as the cedars of Libanus, and I passed by, and lo! He was not."* [Psalm 37:35] And to count these present things as nothing, *"They counted the people happy, that are in such a case; happy are the people, whose helper is the Lord their God."* [Psalm 144:15, Septuagint] That we do not sin without notice, but that there is a retribution, *"for,"* he says, *"You shall render to every man according to his works."* [Psalm 62:12, Septuagint] But why does he not so requite them day by day? *"God is a judge,"* he says, *"righteous, and strong, and longsuffering."* [Psalm 7:11] That lowliness of mind is good, *"Lord,"* he says, *"my heart is not lifted up"* [Psalm 131:1]; that pride is evil, *"Therefore,"* he said, *"pride took hold on them wholly"* [Psalm 73:6, Septuagint]; and again, *"The Lord resists the proud";* and again, *"Their injustice shall come out as of fatness."* That almsgiving is good, *"He has dispersed, he has given to the needy, his righteousness endures for ever."* [Proverbs 3:34] And that to pity is praiseworthy, *"He is a good man that pities, and lends."* [Psalm 73:7, Septuagint] And you will find there many more doctrines than these, full of true philosophy; such as, that one ought

not to speak evil, *"Him that privily slanders his neighbor, him did I chase from me."* [Psalm 112:9]

What is the hymn of those above? The Faithful know. What say the cherubim above? What say the Angels? *"Glory to God in the highest."* [Psalm 112:5] Therefore after the psalmody come the hymns, as a thing of more perfection. *"With psalms,"* he says, *"with hymns, with spiritual songs, with grace singing in your hearts to God."* [Psalm 101:5, Septuagint] He means either this, that God because of grace has given us these things; or, with the songs in grace; or, admonishing and teaching one another in grace; or, that they had these gifts in grace; or, it is an epexegetis and he means, from the grace of the Spirit. *"Singing in your hearts to God."* Not simply with the mouth, he means, but with heedfulness. For this is to *"sing to God,"* but that to the air, for the voice is scattered without result. Not for display, he means. And even if you be in the market-place, you can collect yourself, and sing unto God, no one hearing you. For Moses also in this way prayed, and was heard, for He says, *"Why do you cry unto Me?"* [Exodus 14:15] albeit he said nothing, but cried in thought— wherefore also God alone heard him— with a contrite heart. For it is not forbidden one even when walking to pray in his heart, and to dwell above.

Ver. 17. *"And whatsoever you do,"* he says, *"in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."*

For if we thus do, there will be nothing polluted, nothing unclean, wherever Christ is called on. If you eat, if you drink, if you marry, if you travel, do all in the Name of God, that is, calling Him to aid you: in everything first praying to Him, so take hold of your business. Would you speak somewhat? Set this in front. For this cause we also place in front of our epistles the Name of the Lord. Wheresoever the Name of God is, all is

auspicious. For if the names of Consuls make writings sure, much more does the Name of Christ. Or he means this; after God say ye and do everything, do not introduce the Angels besides. Do you eat? Give thanks to God both before and afterwards. Do you sleep? Give thanks to God both before and afterwards. Launchest thou into the forum? Do the same—nothing worldly, nothing of this life. Do all in the Name of the Lord, and all shall be prospered to you. Whereonsoever the Name is placed, there all things are auspicious. If it casts out devils, if it drives away diseases, much more does it render business easy.

And what is to *"do in word or in deed"*? Either requesting or performing anything whatever. Hear how in the Name of God Abraham sent his servant; David in the Name of God slew Goliath. Marvelous is His Name and great. Again, Jacob sending his sons says, *"My God give you favor in the sight of the man."* [Genesis 43:14] For he that does this has for his ally, God, without whom he dared do nothing. As honored then by being called upon, He will in turn honor by making their business easy. Invoke the Son, give thanks to the Father. For when the Son is invoked, the Father is invoked, and when He is thanked, the Son has been thanked.

These things let us learn, not as far as words only, but to fulfill them also by works. Nothing is equal to this Name, marvelous is it everywhere. *"Your Name,"* he says, *"is ointment poured forth."* [Canticles 1:3] He that has uttered it is straightway filled with fragrance. *"No man,"* it is said, *"can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."* [1 Corinthians 12:3] So great things does this Name Work. If you have said, In the Name of Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, with faith, you have accomplished everything. See, how great things you have done! You have created a man, and wrought all the rest (that comes) of Baptism! So, when used in commanding diseases, terrible is The Name. Therefore the devil introduced those of the Angels,

envying us the honor. Such incantations are for the demons. Even if it be Angel, even if it be Archangel, even if it be Cherubim, allow it not; for neither will these Powers accept such addresses, but will even toss them away from them, when they have beheld their Master dishonored. *"I have honored you,"* He says, *"and have said, Call upon Me";* and do you dishonor Him? If you chant this incantation with faith, you will drive away both diseases and demons, and even if you have failed to drive away the disease, this is not from lack of power, but because it is expedient it should be so. *"According to Your greatness,"* he says, *"so also is Your praise."* [Psalm 48:10] By this Name has the world been converted, the tyranny dissolved, the devil trampled on, the heavens opened. We have been regenerated by this Name. This if we have, we beam forth; This makes both martyrs and confessors; This let us hold fast as a great gift, that we may live in glory, and be well-pleasing to God, and be counted worthy of the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 10 on Colossians

[Colossians 3:18-25]

" Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged. Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord you shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ. For he that does wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he has done: and there is no respect of persons with God. [Colossians 4:1] Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

Why does he not give these commands everywhere, and in all the Epistles, but only here, and in that to the Ephesians, and that to Timothy, and that to Titus? Because probably there were dissensions in these cities; or probably they were correct in other respects, so that it was expedient they should hear about these things. Rather, however, what he says to these, he says to all. Now in these things also this Epistle bears great resemblance to that to the Ephesians, either because it was not fitting to write about these things to men now at peace, who needed to be instructed in high doctrines as yet lacking to them, or because that for persons who had been comforted under trials, it were superfluous to hear on these subjects. So that I conjecture, that in this place the Church was now well-grounded, and that these things are said as in finishing.

Ver. 18. *"Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord."*

That is, be subject for God's sake, because this adorns you, he says, not them. For I mean not that subjection which is due to a master, nor yet that alone which is of nature, but that for God's sake.

Ver. 19. *"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."*

See how again he has exhorted to reciprocity. As in the other case he enjoins fear and love, so also does he here. For it is possible for one who loves even, to be bitter. What he says then is this. Fight not; for nothing is more bitter than this fighting, when it takes place on the part of the husband toward the wife. For the fightings which happen between beloved persons, these are bitter; and he shows that it arises from great bitterness, when, says he, any one is at variance with his own member. To love therefore is the husband's part, to yield pertains to the other side. If then each one contributes his own part, all stands firm. From being loved, the wife too becomes loving; and from her being submissive, the husband becomes yielding. And see how in nature also it has been so ordered, that the one should love, the other obey. For when the party governing loves the governed, then everything stands fast. Love from the governed is not so requisite, as from the governing towards the governed; for from the other obedience is due. For that the woman has beauty, and the man desire, shows nothing else than that for the sake of love it has been made so. Do not therefore, because your wife is subject to you, act the despot; nor because your husband loves you, be thou puffed up. Let neither the husband's love elate the wife, nor the wife's subjection puff up the husband. For this cause has He subjected her to you, that she may be loved the more. For this cause He has made you to be loved, O wife, that you may easily bear your subjection. Fear not in being a subject; for subjection to one that loves you

has no hardship. Fear not in loving, for you have her yielding. In no other way then could a bond have been. You have then your authority of necessity, proceeding from nature; maintain also the bond that proceeds from love, for this allows the weaker to be enduring.

Ver. 20. *"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord."*

Again he has put that, *"in the Lord,"* at once laying down the laws of obedience, and shaming them, and casting them down. For this, says he, is well-pleasing to the Lord. See how he would have us do all not from nature only, but, prior to this, from what is pleasing to God, that we may also have reward.

Ver. 21. *"Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged."*

Lo! Again here also is subjection and love. And he said not, *"Love your children,"* for it had been superfluous, seeing that nature itself constrains to this; but what needed correction he corrected; that the love should in this case also be the more vehement, because that the obedience is greater. For it nowhere lays down as an exemplification the relation of husband and wife; but what? Hear the prophet saying, *"Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pitied them that fear Him"* [Psalm 103:13, Septuagint] And again Christ says, *"What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?"* [Matthew 7:9]

"Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged."

He has set down what he knew had the greatest power to seize upon them; and while commanding them he has spoken more like a friend; and nowhere does he mention God, for he would overcome parents, and bow

their tender affections. That is, *"Make them not more contentious, there are occasions when you ought even to give way."*

Next he comes to the third kind of authority.

There is here also a certain love, but that no more proceeding from nature, as above, but from habit, and from the authority itself, and the works done. Seeing then that in this case the sphere of love is narrowed, while that of obedience is amplified, he dwells upon this, wishing to give to these from their obedience, what the first have from nature. So that what he discourses with the servants alone is not for their masters' sakes, but for their own also, that they may make themselves the objects of tender affection to their masters. But he sets not this forth openly; for so he would doubtless have made them supine.

Ver. 22. *"Servants,"* he says, *"obey in all things your masters according to the flesh."*

And see how always he sets down the names, *"wives, children, servants,"* being at once a just claim upon their obedience. But that none might be pained, he added, *"to your masters according to the flesh."* Your better part, the soul, is free, he says; your service is for a season. It therefore do thou subject, that your service be no more of constraint. *"Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers."* Make, he says, your service which is by the law, to be from the fear of Christ. For if when your master sees you not, you do your duty and what is for his honor, it is manifest that you do it because of the sleepless Eye. *"Not with eye-service,"* he says, *"as men-pleasers";* thus implying, *"it is you who will have to sustain the damage."* For hear the prophet saying, *"God has scattered the bones of the men-pleasers."* [Psalm 53:6, Septuagint] See then how he spares them, and brings them to order. *"But in singleness of heart,"* he says, *"fearing God."* For that is not singleness, but hypocrisy, to hold one thing, and act another; to appear one

when the master is present, another when he is absent. Therefore he said not simply, "*in singleness of heart*," but, "*fearing God*." For this is to fear God, when, though none be seeing, we do not anything that is evil; but if we do, we fear not God, but men. Do you see how he brings them to order?

Ver. 23. "*Whatsoever you do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men*."

He desires to have them freed not only from hypocrisy, but also from slothfulness. He has made them instead of slaves free, when they need not the superintendence of their master; for the expression "*heartily*" means this, "*with good will*," not with a slavish necessity, but with freedom, and of choice. And what is the reward?

Ver. 24. "*Knowing*," he says, "*that from the Lord you shall receive the recompense of your inheritance: for you serve the Lord Christ*."

For from Him also it is evident that you shall receive the reward. And that you serve the Lord is plain from this.

Ver. 25. "*For he that does wrong*," he says, "*shall receive again for the wrong that he has done*."

Here he confirms his former statements. For that his words may not appear to be those of flattery, "*he shall receive*," he says, "*the wrong he has done*," that is, he shall suffer punishment also, "*for there is no respect of persons*." For what if you are a servant? It is no shame to you. And truly he might have said this to the masters, as he did in the Epistle to the Ephesians. [Ephesians 6:9] But here he seems to me to be alluding to the Grecian masters. For, what if he is a Greek and thou a Christian? Not the persons but the actions are examined, so that even in this case you ought to serve with good will, and heartily.

Chap. iv. 1. "*Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal*."

What is "*just*"? What is "*equal*"? To place them in plenty of everything, and not allow them to stand in need of others, but to recompense them for their labors. For, because I have said that they have their reward from God, do not thou therefore deprive them of it. And in another place he says, "*forbearing threatening*" [Ephesians 6:9], wishing to make them more gentle; for those were perfect men; that is, "*with what measure you mete, it shall be measured unto you.*" [Matthew 7:2] And the words, "*there is no respect of persons,*" are spoken with a view to these, but they are assigned to the others, in order that these may receive them. For when we have said to one person what is applicable to another, we have not corrected him so much, as the one who is in fault. "*You also,*" along with them, he says. He has here made the service common, for he says, "*knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*"

Ver. 2. "*Continue in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving.*"

For, since continuing in prayers frequently makes persons listless, therefore he says, "*watching,*" that is, sober, not wandering. For the devil knows, he knows, how great a good prayer is; therefore he presses heavily. And Paul also knows how careless many are when they pray, wherefore he says, "*continue*" in prayer, as of somewhat laborious, "*watching therein with thanksgiving.*" For let this, he says, be your work, to give thanks in your prayers both for the seen and the unseen, and for His benefits to the willing and unwilling, and for the kingdom, and for hell, and for tribulation, and for refreshment. For thus is the custom of the Saints to pray, and to give thanks for the common benefits of all.

I know a certain holy man who prays thus. He used to say nothing before these words, but thus, "*We give You thanks for all Your benefits bestowed upon us the unworthy, from the first day until the present, for what we know, and what we know not, for the seen, for the unseen, for those in*

deed, those in word, those with our wills, those against our wills, for all that have been bestowed upon the unworthy, even us; for tribulations, for refreshments, for hell, for punishment, for the kingdom of heaven. We beseech You to keep our soul holy, having a pure conscience; an end worthy of your lovingkindness. You that loved us so as to give Your Only-Begotten for us, grant us to become worthy of Your love; give us wisdom in Your word, and in Your fear. Only-Begotten Christ, inspire the strength that is from You. Thou that gavest The Only-Begotten for us, and hast sent Your Holy Spirit for the remission of our sins, if in anything we have wilfully or unwillingly transgressed, pardon, and impute it not. Remember all that call upon Your Name in truth; remember all that wish us well, or the contrary, for we are all men." Then having added the Prayer of the Faithful, he there ended; having made that prayer, as a certain crowning part, and a binding together for all. For many benefits does God bestow upon us even against our wills; many also, yea more, without our knowledge even. For when we pray for one thing, and He does to us the reverse, it is plain that He does us good even when we know it not.

Ver. 3. *"Withal praying for us also."* See his lowlymindedness; he sets himself after them.

"That God may open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ." He means an entrance, and boldness in speaking. Wonderful! The great athlete said not *"that I may be freed from my bonds,"* but being in bonds he exhorted others; and exhorted them for a great object, that himself might get boldness in speaking. Both the two are great, both the quality of the person, and of the thing. Wonderful! How great is the dignity! *"The mystery,"* he says, *"of Christ."* He shows that nothing was more dearly desired by him than this, to speak. *"For which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."* [Colossians 4:4] He means with

much boldness of speech, and withholding nothing. His bonds display, not obscure him. With much boldness he means. Tell me, are you in bonds, and do you exhort others? Yea, my bonds give me the greater boldness; but I pray for God's furtherance, for I have heard the voice of Christ saying, *"When they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what you shall speak."* [Matthew 10:19] And see, how he has expressed himself in metaphor, *"that God may open to us a door for the word"*; (see, how unassuming he is; even in his bonds, how he expresses himself;) that is, that He would soften their hearts. Still he said not so; but, *"that He would give us boldness"*; out of lowlymindedness he thus spoke, and that which he had, he asks to receive.

He shows in this Epistle, why Christ came not in those times, in that he calls the former things *"shadow, but the body,"* says he, *"is of Christ."* So that it was necessary they should be formed to habits under the shadow. At the same time also he exhibits the greatest proof of the love he bears to them; *"in order that you,"* he says, *"may hear, for that reason, 'I am in bonds.'"* Again he sets before us those bonds of his; which I so greatly love, which rouse up my heart, and always draw me into longing to see Paul bound, and in his bonds writing, and preaching, and baptizing, and catechizing. In his bonds he was referred to on behalf of the Churches everywhere; in his bonds he built up incalculably. Then was he rather at large. For hear him saying, *"So that most of the brethren being confident through my bonds are more abundantly bold to speak the word without fear."* [Philippians 1:14] And again he makes the same avowal of himself, saying, *"For when I am weak, then am I strong."* [2 Corinthians 12:10] Wherefore he said also, *"But the word of God is not bound."* [2 Timothy 2:9] He was bound with malefactors, with prisoners, with murderers; he, the teacher of the world, he that had ascended into the third heaven, that had heard the unspeakable words, was bound. [2 Corinthians 12:4] But then was

his course the swifter. He that was bound, was now loosed; he that was unbound, was bound. For he indeed was doing what he would; while the other prevented him not, nor accomplished his own purpose.

What are you about, O senseless one? Do you think he is a fleshly runner? Does he strive in our race-course? His course of life is in heaven; him that runs in heaven, things on earth cannot bind nor hold. Do you see not this sun? Enclose his beams with fetters! stay him from his course! You can not. Then neither can you Paul! Yea, much less this one than that, for this enjoys more of Providence than that, seeing he bears to us light, not such as that is, but the true.

Where now are they who are unwilling to suffer anything for Christ? But why do I say "*suffer*," seeing that they are unwilling even to give up their wealth? In time past Paul also used to bind, and cast into prison; but since he has become Christ's servant, he glories no more of doing, but of suffering. And this, moreover, is marvelous in the Preaching, when it is thus raised up and increased by the sufferers themselves, and not by the persecutors. Where has any seen such contests as this? He that suffers ill, conquers; he that does ill, is worsted. Brighter is this man than the other. Through bonds the Preaching entered. "*I am not ashamed*" [Romans 1:16], yea, I glory even, he says, in preaching The Crucified. For consider, I pray: the whole world left those who were at large, and went over to those that are bound; turning away from the imprisoners, it honors those laden with chains; hating the crucifiers, it worships the Crucified.

Not the only marvel is it that the preachers were fishermen, that they were ignorant; but that there were also other hindrances, hindrances too by nature; still the increase was all the more abundant. Not only was their ignorance no hindrance; but even it itself caused the Preaching to be manifested. For hear Luke saying, "*And perceiving that they were*

unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled." [Acts 4:13] Not only were bonds no hindrance, but even of itself this made them more confident. Not so bold were the disciples when Paul was at large, as when he was bound. For he says, they *"are more abundantly bold to speak the word"* of God *"without fear."* [Philippians 1:14] Where are they that will gainsay the divinity of the Preaching? Was not their ignorance enough to procure them to be condemned? Would it not then in this case too, affright them? For you know that by these two passions the many are possessed, vainglory and cowardice. Suppose their ignorance suffered them not to feel ashamed, still the dangers must have put them in fear.

But, says one, they wrought miracles. You do believe then that they wrought miracles. But did they not work miracles? This is a greater miracle than to work them, if men were drawn to them without miracles. Socrates too among the Greeks was put in bonds. What then? Did not his disciples straightway flee to Megara? Assuredly, why not? They admitted his arguments about immortality. But see here. Paul was put in bonds, and his disciples waxed the more confident, with reason, for they saw that the Preaching was not hindered. For, can you put the tongue in bonds? Hereby chiefly it runs. For as, except thou have bound the feet of a runner, you have not prevented him from running; so, except thou have bound the tongue of an evangelist, you have not hindered him from running. And as the former, if you have bound his loins, runs on the rather, and is supported, so too the latter preaches the rather, and with greater boldness.

A prisoner is in fear, when there is nothing beyond bonds: but one that despises death, how should he be bound? They did the same as if they had put in bonds the shadow of Paul, and had gagged its mouth. For it was a fighting with shadows; for he was both more tenderly regretted by his friends, and more revered by his enemies, as bearing the prize for

courage in his bonds. And a crown binds the head; but it disgraces it not, yea rather, it makes it brilliant. Against their wills they crowned him with his chain. For, tell me, was it possible he could fear iron, who braved the adamantine gates of death? Come we, beloved, to emulate these bonds. As many of you women as deck yourselves with trinkets of gold, long ye for the bonds of Paul. Not so glitters the collar round your necks, as the grace of these iron bonds gleamed about his soul! If any longs for those, let him hate these. For what communion has softness with courage; tricking out of the body with philosophy? Those bonds Angels reverence, these they even make a mock of; those bonds are wont to draw up from earth to heaven; these bonds draw down to earth from heaven. For in truth these are bonds, not those; those are ornament, these are bonds; these, along with the body, afflict the soul also; those, along with the body, adorn as well the soul.

Would you be convinced that those are ornament? Tell me which would more have won the notice of the spectators? thou or Paul? And why do I say, "*thou*"? The queen herself who is all bedecked with gold would not have attracted the spectators so much; but if it had chanced that both Paul in his bonds and the queen had entered the Church at the same time, all would have removed their eyes from her to him; and with good reason. For to see a man of a nature greater than human, and having nought of man, but an angel upon earth, is more admirable than to see a woman decked with finery. For such indeed one may see both in theaters, and in pageants, and at baths, and many places; but whoso sees a man with bonds upon him, and deeming himself to have the greatest of ornaments, and not giving way under his bonds, does not behold a spectacle of earth, but one worthy of the heavens. The soul that is in that way attired looks about—who has seen? Who not seen?— is filled with pride, is possessed with anxious thoughts, is bound with countless other passions: but he that has these bonds on him, is

without pride: his soul exults, is freed from every anxious care, is joyous, has its gaze on heaven, is clad with wings. If any one were to give me the choice of seeing Paul either stooping out of heaven, and uttering his voice, or out of the prison, I would choose the prison. For they of heaven visit him when he is in the prison. The bonds of Paul were the bond of the Preaching, that chain of his was its foundation. Long we for those bonds!

And how, some one says, may this be? If we break up and dash in pieces these. No good results to us from these bonds, but even harm. These will show us as prisoners There; but the bonds of Paul will loose those bonds; she that is bound with these here, with those deathless bonds shall she also be bound There, both hands and feet; she that has been bound with Paul's, shall have them in that day as it were an ornament about her. Free both yourself from your bonds, and the poor man from his hunger. Why do you rivet fast the chains of your sins? Some one says, How? When you wear gold while another is perishing, when thou, to get you vainglory, takest so much gold, while another hast not even what to eat, have you not wedged fast your sins? Put Christ about you, and not gold; where Mammon is, there Christ is not, where Christ is, there Mammon is not. Would you not put on the King of all Himself? If one had offered you the purple, and the diadem, would you not have taken them before all the gold in the world? I give you not the regal ornaments, but I offer you to put on the King Himself. And how can one put Christ on, does any say? Hear Paul saying, *"As many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ."* [Galatians 3:27] Hear the Apostolical precept, *"Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof."* [Romans 13:14] Thus does one put on Christ, if one provide not for the flesh unto its lusts. If you have put on Christ, even the demons will fear you; but if gold, even men will laugh you to scorn: if you have put on Christ, men also will reverence you.

Would you appear fair and comely? Be content with the Creator's fashioning. Why do you overlay these bits of gold, as if about to put to rights God's creation? Would you appear comely? Clothe you in alms; clothe you in benevolence; clothe you in modesty, humbleness. These are all more precious than gold; these make even the beautiful yet more comely; these make even the ill formed to be well formed. For when any one looks upon a countenance with good will, he gives his judgment from love; but an evil woman, even though she be beautiful, none can call beautiful; for the mind being confounded pronounces not its sentence aright.

That Egyptian woman of old was adorned; Joseph too was adorned; which of them was the more beautiful? I say not when she was in the palace, and he in the prison. He was naked, but clothed in the garments of chastity; she was clothed, but more unseemly than if she had been naked; for she had not modesty. When you have excessively adorned you, O woman, then you have become more unseemly than a naked one; for you have stripped you of your fair adorning. Eve also was naked; but when she had clothed herself, then was she more unseemly, for when she was naked indeed, she was adorned with the glory of God; but when she had clothed herself with the garment of sin, then was she unseemly. And thou, when arraying yourself in the garment of studied finery, dost then appear more unseemly. For that costliness avails not to make any appear beautiful, but that it is possible even for one dressed out to be even more unseemly than if naked, tell me now; if you had ever put on the dresses of a piper or a flute-player, would it not have been unseemliness? And yet those dresses are of gold; but for this very reason it were unseemliness, because they are of gold. For the costliness suits well with people on the stage, tragedians, players, mimes, dancers, fighters with wild beasts; but to a woman that is a

believer, there are given other robes from God, the Only-Begotten Son of God Himself. *"For,"* he says, *"as many as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ."* [Galatians 3:27] Tell me, if one had given you kingly apparel, and you had taken a beggar's dress, and put this on above it, would you not, besides the unseemliness, have also been punished for it? You have put on the Lord of Heaven, and of the Angels, and are you still busied about earth?

I have spoken thus, because love of ornament is of itself a great evil, even were no other gendered by it, and it were possible to hold it without peril, (for it incites to vainglory and to pride,) but now many other evils are gendered by finery, evil suspicions, unseasonable expenses, evil speakings, occasions of rapacity. For why do you adorn yourself? Tell me. Is it that you may please your husband? Then do it at home. But here the reverse is the case. For if you would please your own husband, please not others; but if you please others, you will not be able to please your own. So that you should put away all your ornaments, when you go to the forum or proceedest to the church. Besides, please not your husband by those means which harlots use, but by those rather which wives that are free employ. For wherein, tell me, does a wife differ from a harlot? In that the one regards one thing only, namely, that by the beauty of her person she may attract to herself him whom she loves; while the other both rules the house, and shares in the children, and in all other things.

Have you a little daughter? Look to it lest she inherit the mischief, for they are wont to form their manners according to their nurture, and to imitate their mothers' behavior. Be a pattern to your daughter of modesty, deck yourself with that adorning, and see that thou despise the other; for that is in truth an ornament, the other a disfigurement. Enough has been said. Now God that made the world, and has given to us the ornament of the soul, adorn us, and clothe us with His own glory, that all shining brightly in

good works, and living unto His glory, we may send up glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, etc.

Homily 11 on Colossians

[Colossians 4:5, 6]

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

What Christ said to His disciples, that does Paul also now advise. And what did Christ say? *"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."* [Matthew 10:16] That is, be upon your guard, giving them no handle against you. For therefore it is added, *"towards them that are without,"* in order that we may know that against our own members we have no need of so much caution as against those without. For where brethren are, there are both many allowances and kindnesses. There is indeed need of caution even here; but much more without, for it is not the same to be among enemies and foes, and among friends.

Then because he had alarmed them, see how again he encourages them; *"Redeeming,"* he says, *"the time"*: that is, the present time is short. Now this he said, not wishing them to be crafty, nor hypocrites, (for this is not a part of wisdom, but of senselessness,) but what? In matters wherein they harm you not, he means, give them no handle; as he says also, when writing to the Romans, *"Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, honor to whom honor."* [Romans 13:7] On account of the Preaching alone have thou war, he says, let this war have none other origin. For though they were to become our foes for other causes besides, yet neither shall we have a reward, and they will become worse, and will seem to have just complaints against us. For instance, if we pay not

the tribute, if we render not the honors that are due, if we be not lowly. Do you see not Paul, how submissive he is, where he was not likely to harm the Preaching. For hear him saying to Agrippa, *"I think myself happy, because I shall answer for myself this day before you, especially because I know you to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews."* [Acts 26:2-3] But had he thought it his duty to insult the ruler, he would have spoiled everything. And hear too those of blessed Peter's company, how gently they answer the Jews, saying, *"we must obey God rather than men."* [Acts 5:29] And yet men who had renounced their own lives, might both have insulted, and have done anything whatever; but for this object they had renounced their lives, not that they might win vainglory, (for that way had been vainglorious,) but that they might preach and speak all things with boldness. That other course marks want of moderation.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt"; that is, that this graciousness may not lapse into indifferentism. For it is possible to be simply agreeable, it is possible also to be so with due seemliness. *"That ye may know how ye ought to answer each one."* So that one ought not to discourse alike to all, Greeks, I mean, and Brethren. By no means, for this were the very extreme of senselessness.

Ver. 7. *"All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord."*

Admirable! How great is the wisdom of Paul! Observe, he does not put everything into his Epistles, but only things necessary and urgent. In the first place, being desirous of not drawing them out to a length; and secondly, to make his messenger more respected, by his having also somewhat to relate; thirdly, showing his own affection towards him; for he would not else have entrusted these communications to him. Then, there were things which ought not to be declared in writing. *"The beloved*

brother," he says. If beloved, he knew all, and he concealed nothing from him. *"And faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord."* If *"faithful,"* he will speak no falsehood; if *"a fellow-servant,"* he has shared his trials, so that he has brought together from all sides the grounds of trustworthiness.

Ver. 8. *"Whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose."*

Here he shows his great love, seeing that for this purpose he sent him, and this was the cause of his journey; and so when writing to the Thessalonians, he said, *"Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone, and sent Timothy our brother."* [1 Thessalonians 3:1-2] And to the Ephesians he sends this very same person, and for the very same cause, *"That he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts."* [Ephesians 6:21-22] See what he says, not *"that you might know my estate,"* but *"that I might know yours."* So in no place does he mention what is his own. He shows that they were in trials too, by the expression, *"comfort your hearts."*

Ver. 9. *"With Onesimus, the beloved and faithful brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that are done here."*

Onesimus is the one about whom, writing to Philemon, he said, *"Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in your behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the Gospel: but without your mind I would do nothing."* [Philemon 1-3, 14] And he adds too the praise of their city, that they might not only not be ashamed, but even pride themselves on him. *"Who is one of you,"* he says. *"They shall make known unto you all things that are done here."*

Ver. 10. *"Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner salutes you."*

Nothing can surpass this praise. This is he that was brought up from Jerusalem with him. This man has said a greater thing than the prophets; for they call themselves *"strangers and foreigners,"* but this one calls himself

even a prisoner. Just like a prisoner of war he was dragged up and down, and lay at every one's will to suffer evil of them, yea rather worse even than prisoners. For those indeed their enemies, after taking them, treat with much attention, having a care for them as their own property: but Paul, as though an enemy and a foe, all men dragged up and down, beating him, scourging, insulting, and maligning. This was a consolation to those also (to whom he wrote), when their master even is in such circumstances.

"And Mark, the cousin of Barnabas"; even this man he has praised still from his relationship, for Barnabas was a great man; *"touching whom you received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him."* Why? Would they not have received him? Yes, but he means, with much attention; and this shows the man to be great. Whence they received these commandments, he does not say.

Ver. 11. *"And Jesus which is called Justus."*

This man was probably a Corinthian. Next, he bestows a common praise on all, having already spoken that of each one in particular; *"who are of the circumcision: these only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me."* After having said, *"fellow-prisoner";* in order that he may not therewith depress the soul of his hearers, see how by this expression he rouses them up. *"Fellow-workers,"* he says, *"unto the kingdom of God."* So that being partakers of the trials, they become partakers of the kingdom. *"Who have been a comfort to me."* He shows them to be great persons, seeing that to Paul they have been a comfort.

But let us see the wisdom of Paul. *"Walk in wisdom,"* he says, *"towards them that are without, redeeming the time."* [Colossians 4:5] That is, the time is not yours, but theirs. Do not then wish to have your own way, but redeem the time. And he said not simply, *"Buy,"* but *"redeem,"* making it

yours after another manner. For it were the part of excessive madness, to invent occasions of war and enmity. For over and above the undergoing of superfluous and profitless dangers, there is this additional harm, that the Greeks will not come over to us. For when you are among the brethren, reason is you should be bold; but when without, you ought not to be so.

Do you see how everywhere he speaks of those without, the Greeks? Wherefore also when writing to Timothy, he said, *"Moreover, he must have good testimony from them that are without."* [1 Timothy 3:7] And again, *"For what have I to do with judging them that are without."* [1 Corinthians 5:12] *"Walk in wisdom,"* he says, *"toward them that are without."* For *"without,"* they are, even though they live in the same world with us, seeing they are without the kingdom, and the paternal mansion. And he comforts them withal, by calling the others *"without,"* as he said above, *"Your life is hid with Christ in God."* [Colossians 3:3]

Then, he says, seek ye glory, then honors, then all those other things, but not so now, but give them up to those without. Next, lest you think that he is speaking of money, he adds, *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how ye ought to answer each one."* That it may not be full of hypocrisy, for this is not *"grace,"* nor *"a seasoning with salt."* For instance, if it be needful to pay court to any one without incurring danger, refuse not [to do so]; if the occasion require that thou discourse civilly, think not the doing so flattery, do everything that pertains to honor, so that piety be not injured. Do you see not how Daniel pays court to an impious man? Do you see not the three children, how wisely they bore themselves, showing both courage, and boldness in speaking, and yet nothing rash nor galling, for so it had not been boldness, but vainglory. *"That ye may know,"* he says, *"how ye ought to answer every man."* For the ruler ought to be answered in one way, the ruled in another,

the rich in one way, the poor in another. Wherefore? Because the souls of those who are rich, and in authority, are weaker, more inflammable, more fluctuating, so that towards them, one should use condescension; those of the poor, and the ruled, firmer and more intelligent, so that to these one should use greater boldness of speech; looking to one thing, their edification. Not that because one is rich, another poor, the former is to be honored more, the latter less, but because of his weakness, let the former be supported, the latter not so: for instance, when there is no cause for it, do not call the Greek *"polluted,"* nor be insulting; but if you be asked concerning his doctrine, answer that it is polluted, and impious; but when none asks you, nor forces you to speak, it becomes you not causelessly to challenge to you his enmity. For what need is there to prepare for yourself gratuitous hostilities? Again, if you are instructing any one; speak on the subject at present before you, otherwise be silent. If the speech be *"seasoned with salt,"* should it fall into a soul that is of loose texture, it will brace up its slackness; into one that is harsh, it will smooth its ruggedness. Let it be gracious, and so neither hard, nor yet weak, but let it have both sternness and pleasantness therewith. For if one be immoderately stern, he does more harm than good; and if he be immoderately complaisant, he gives more pain than pleasure, so that everywhere there ought to be moderation. Be not downcast, and sour visaged, for this is offensive; nor yet be wholly relaxed, for this is open to contempt and treading under foot; but, like the bee, culling the virtue of each, of the one its cheerfulness, of the other its gravity, keep clear of the fault. For if a physician deals not with all bodies alike, much more ought not a teacher. And yet better will the body bear unsuitable medicines, than the soul language; for instance, a Greek comes to you, and becomes your friend; discourse not at all with him on

this subject, until he have become a close friend, and after he has become so, do it gradually.

See, when Paul also had come to Athens, how he discoursed with them. He said not, "*O polluted, and all-polluted*"; but what? "*You men of Athens, in all things I perceive that you are somewhat superstitious.*" [Acts 17:22] Again, when to insult was needful, he refused not; but with great vehemency he said to Elymas, "*O full of all guile and all villainy, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness.*" For as to have insulted those had been senselessness, so not to have insulted this one had been softness. Again, are you brought unto a ruler on a matter of business, see that you render him the honors that are his due.

Ver. 9. "*They shall make known unto you,*" he says, "*all things that are done here.*" Why did you not come with them, says one? But what is, "*They shall make known unto you all things*"? My bonds, that is, and all the other things that detain me. I then, who pray to see them, who also send others, should not myself have remained behind, had not some great necessity detained me. And yet this is not the language of accusations— yes, of vehement accusation. For the assuring them that he had both fallen into trials, and was bearing them nobly, is the part of one who was confirming the fact, and lifting up again their souls.

Ver. 9. "*With Onesimus,*" he says, "*the beloved, and faithful brother.*"

Paul calls a slave, brother: with reason; seeing that he styles himself the servant of the faithful. [2 Corinthians 4:5] Bring we down all of us our pride, tread we under foot our boastfulness. Paul names himself a slave, he that is worth the world, and ten thousands of heavens; and do you entertain high thoughts? He that seizes all things for spoil as he will, he that has the first place in the kingdom of heaven, he that was crowned, he that ascended

into the third heaven, calls servants, "*brethren*," and "*fellow-servants*."
Where is your madness? Where is your arrogance?

So trustworthy was Onesimus become, as to be entrusted even with such things as these.

Ver. 10. "*And Mark*," he says, "*the cousin of Barnabas, touching whom you received commandments, receive him*." Perhaps they had received commandments from Barnabas.

Ver. 11. "*Who are of the circumcision*." He represses the swelling pride of the Jews, and inspires the souls of these, [the Colossians,] because few of them were of the circumcision, the greater number of the Gentiles.

"*Men that have been*," he says, "*a comfort unto me*." He shows himself to be set in the midst of great trials. So that neither is this a small thing. When we comfort the Saints by presence, by words, by assiduous attendance, when we suffer adversity together with them, (for he says, "*as bound with those in bonds*"; Hebrews 13:3) when we make their sufferings ours, we shall also be partakers in their crowns. Have you not been dragged to the stadium? Have you not entered into the lists? It is another that strips himself, another that wrestles; but if you be so minded, you too shall be a sharer. Anoint him, become his favorer and partisan, from without the lists shout loudly for him, stir up his strength, refresh his spirit. It follows that the same things should be done in all other cases. For Paul stood not in need, but in order to stimulate them he said these things. Thou therefore in the case of all others, stop the mouths of those who would abuse such an one, procure favorers for him, receive him as he comes forth with great attention, so shall you be a sharer in his crowns, so, in his glory; and if you do no other thing, but only hast pleasure in what is done, even thus you share in no common degree, for you have contributed love, the sum of all good things.

For if they that weep seem to share in the grief of those in sorrow, and gratify them mightily, and remove the excess of their woe, much more do they also that rejoice with others, make their pleasure greater. For how great an evil it is not to have companions in sorrow, hear the Prophet saying, *"And I looked for one to lament with me, but there was none."* Wherefore Paul also says, *"Rejoice with them that rejoice; and weep with them that weep."* [Romans 12:15] Increase their pleasure. If you see your brother in good esteem, say not, *"the esteem is his, why should I rejoice."* These words are not those of a brother, but of an enemy. If you be so minded, it is not his, but yours. You have the power of making it greater, if you be not downcast, but pleased, if you be cheerful, if joyous. And that it is so, is evident from this; the envious envy not those only who are in good esteem, but those as well who rejoice at their good esteem, so conscious are they that these also are interested in that good esteem; and these are they who do glory most in it. For the other even blushes when praised exceedingly; but these with great pleasure pride themselves upon it. See ye not in the case of athletes, how the one is crowned, the other is not crowned; but the grief and the joy is among the favorers and disfavorers, these are they that leap, they that caper?

See how great a thing is the not envying. The toil is another's, the pleasure is yours; another wears the crown, and you caper, you are gay. For tell me, seeing it is another that has conquered, why do you leap? But they also know well, that what has been done is common. Therefore they do not accuse this man indeed, but they try to beat down the victory; and you hear them saying such words as these, *"(There) I expunged you,"* and, *"I beat you down."* Although the deed was another's, still the praise is yours. But if in things without, not to envy, but to make another's good one's own, is so great a good, much more in the victory of the devil over us he breathes the

more furiously, evidently because we are more pleased. Wicked though he is, and bitter, he well knows that this pleasure is great. Would you pain him? Be glad and rejoice. Would you gladden him? Be sad-visaged. The pain he has from your brother's victory, you soothe by your sadness; you stand with him, severed from your brother, you work greater mischief than he. For it is not the same for one that is an enemy to do the deeds of an enemy, and for a friend to stand with an enemy; such an one is more detestable than an enemy. If your brother has gained good reputation either by speaking, or by brilliant or successful achievement, become a sharer in his reputation, show that he is a member of yours.

"And how?" says one, *"for the reputation is not mine."* Never speak so. Compress your lips. If you had been near me, you that speakest on that wise, I would have even put my hand over your lips: lest the enemy should hear you. Oftentimes we have enmities with one another, and we discover them not to our enemies; do you then discover yours to the devil? Say not so, think not so; but the very reverse: *"he is one of my members, the glory passes on to the body."* *"How then is it,"* says one, *"that those without are not so minded?"* Because of your fault: when they see you counting his pleasure not your own, they too count it not yours: were they to see you appropriating it, they dared not do so, but you would become equally illustrious with him. You have not gained reputation by speaking; but by sharing in his joy you have gained more renown than he. For if love be a great thing, and the sum of all, you have received the crown this gives; he, that for oratory, you, that for exceeding love; he displayed force of words, but thou by deeds hast cast down envy, hast trodden under foot the evil eye. So that in reason you ought rather to be crowned than he, your contest is the more brilliant; you have not only trodden under foot envy, but you have even done somewhat else. He has one crown only, but thou two, and those

both brighter than his one. What are these? One, that which you won against envy, another, which you are encircled with by love. For the sharing in his joy is a proof not only of your being free from envy, but also of being rooted in love. Him oftentimes some human passion sorely disquiets, vainglory for instance; but you are free from every passion, for it is not of vainglory that you rejoice at another's good. Hath he righted up the Church, tell me? Has he increased the congregation? Praise him; again you have a twofold crown; you have struck down envy; you have enwreathed you with love. Yea, I implore and beseech you. Will you hear of a third crown even? Him, men below applaud, you, the Angels above. For it is not the same thing, to make a display of eloquence, and to rule the passions. This praise is for a season, that for ever; this, of men, that, of God; this man is crowned openly; but you are crowned in secret, where your Father sees. If it were possible to have peeled off the body and seen the soul of each, I would have shown you that this is more dignified than the other, more resplendent.

Tread we under foot the goads of envy, we advantage ourselves, beloved, ourselves shall we enwreath with the crown. He that envies another fights with God, not with him; for when he sees him to have grace, and is grieved, and wishes the Church pulled down, he fights not with him, but with God. For tell me, if one should adorn a king's daughter, and by his adorning and gracing her, gain for himself renown; and another person should wish her to be ill attired, and him to be unable to adorn her; against whom would he have been plotting mischief? Against the other? Or against her and her father? So too now, you that enviest, fightest with the Church, you war with God. For, since with the good repute of your brother is interwoven also the Church's profit, need is, that if the one be undone, the other shall be undone also. So that, in this regard also, you do a deed of Satan, seeing you plot mischief against the body of Christ. Are you pained

at this man? Wrongly, when he has in nothing wronged you; yea, much rather, you are pained at Christ. Wherein has He wronged you, that you will not suffer His body to be decked with beauty? That you will not suffer His bride to be adorned? Consider, I pray you, the punishment, how sore. Thou gladdenest your enemies; and him too himself, the man in good esteem, whom through your envy you wish to grieve, thou dost the rather gladden; thou dost by your envy the rather show that he is in good esteem, for otherwise you would not have envied him. Thou showest the rather that you are in punishment.

I am ashamed indeed to exhort you from such motives, but seeing our weakness is so great, let us be instructed even from these, and free ourselves from this destructive passion. Grievest thou that he is in good esteem? Then why do you swell that esteem by envying? Wishest thou to punish him? Why then do you show that you are pained? Why punish yourself before him, whom you would not have well esteemed? Thereafter double will be his pleasure, and your punishment; not only because you prove him to be great; but because you beget in him yet another pleasure, by punishing yourself; and again, at what you are pained, he is pleased, while you envy. See how we deal ourselves heavy blows without perceiving it! He is an enemy. And yet, why an enemy? What wrong has he done? Still, however, by this we make our enemy the more illustrious, and thereby punish ourselves the more. And herein again we punish ourselves, if we have discovered that he knows it. For perhaps he is not pleased, but we thinking him to be so, are again pained on that account. Cease then your envying. Why do you inflict wounds upon yourself?

Think we of these things, beloved; of those two crowns for them that envy not; of those praises from men, of those from God; of the evils that come of envying; and so shall we be able to quell the brute, and to be in

good esteem before God, and to obtain the same things with those who are of good esteem. For perhaps we shall obtain them, and if we obtain them not, it will be for our advantage; still, even so, we shall be able, if we have lived to the glory of God, to obtain the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 12 on Colossians

[Colossians 4:12, 13]

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, salutes you, always striving for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness, that he has much zeal for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis."

In the commencement of this Epistle also, he commended this man for his love; for even to praise is a sign of love; thus in the beginning he said, *"Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit."* [Colossians 1:8] To pray for one is also a sign of love, and causes love again. He commends him moreover in order to open a door to his teachings, for reverendness in the teacher is the disciples' advantage; and so again is his saying, *"one of you,"* in order that they might pride themselves upon the man, as producing such men. And he says, *"always striving for you in prayers."* He said not simply *"praying,"* but *"striving,"* trembling and fearing. *"For I bear him witness,"* he says, *"that he has much zeal for you."* A trustworthy witness. *"That he has,"* he says, *"much zeal for you,"* that is, that he loves you exceedingly; and burns with passionate affection for you. *"And them in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis."* He commends him to those also. But whence were they to know this? They would assuredly have heard; however, they would also learn it when the Epistle was read. For he said, *"Cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans."* *"That ye may stand perfect,"* he says. At once he both accuses them, and without offensiveness gives them advice and counsel. For it is possible both to be perfect, and withal not to stand, as if one were to know all, and still be wavering; it is possible also not to be perfect, and yet to stand, as if one

were to know a part, and stand [not] firmly. But this man prays for both: *"That ye may stand perfect,"* he says. See how again he has reminded them of what he said about the Angels, and about life. *"And fully assured,"* he says, *"in all the will of God."* It is not enough, simply to do His will. He that is *"filled,"* suffers not any other will to be within him, for if so, he is not wholly filled. *"For I bear him witness,"* he says, *"that he has much zeal."* Both *"zeal,"* and *"great";* both are intensitive. As he says himself, when writing to the Corinthians, *"For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy."* [2 Corinthians 11:2]

Ver. 14. *"Luke, the beloved physician, salutes you."* This is the Evangelist. It is not to lower this man that he places him after, but to raise the other, viz. Epaphroditus. It is probable that there were others called by this name. *"And Demas,"* he says. After saying, *"Luke, the physician, salutes you,"* he added, *"the beloved."* And no small praise is this, but even great exceedingly, to be beloved of Paul.

Ver. 15. *"Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church that is in their house."*

See how he cements, and knits them together with one another, not by salutation only, but also by interchanging his Epistles. Then again he pays a compliment by addressing him individually. And this he does not without a reason, but in order to lead the others also to emulate his zeal. For it is not a small thing not to be numbered with the rest. Mark further how he shows the man to be great, seeing his house was a church.

Ver. 14. *"And when this Epistle has been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans."* I suppose there are some of the things therein written, which it was needful that those also should hear. And they would have the greater advantage of recognizing their own errors in the charges brought against others.

"And that you also read the Epistle from Laodicea." Some say that this is not Paul's to them, but theirs to Paul, for he said not that to the Laodiceans, but that written *"from Laodicea."*

Ver. 17. *"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it."* Wherefore does he not write to him? Perhaps he needed it not, but only a bare reminding, so as to be more diligent.

Ver. 18. *"The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand."* This is a proof of their sincerity and affection; that they both looked at his handwriting, and that with emotion. *"Remember my bonds."* Wonderful! How great the consolation! For this is enough to cheer them on to all things, and make them bear themselves more nobly in their trials; but he made them not only the braver, but also the more nearly interested. *"Grace be with you. Amen."*

It is great praise, and greater than all the rest, his saying of Epaphras, *"who is [one] of you, a servant of Christ."* And he calls him a minister for them, like as he terms himself also a minister of the Church, as when he says, *"Whereof I Paul was made a minister."* [Colossians 1:23] To the same dignity he advances this man; and above he calls him a *"fellow-servant"* [Colossians 1:7], and here, *"a servant."* *"Who is of you,"* he says, as if speaking to a mother, and saying, *"who is of your womb."* But this praise might have gendered envy; therefore he commends him not from these things only, but also from what had regard to themselves; and so he does away with envy, both in the former place, and here. *"Always,"* he says, *"striving for you,"* not now only, while with us, to make a display; nor yet only while with you, to make a display before you. By saying, *"striving,"* he has showed his great earnestness. Then, that he might not seem to be flattering them, he added, *"that he has much zeal for you, and for them in*

Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis." And the words, *"that you may stand perfect,"* are not words of flattery, but of a reverend teacher. Both *"fully assured"* he says, *"and perfect."* The one he granted them, the other he said was lacking. And he said not, *"that you be not shaken,"* but, *"that you may stand."* Their being saluted, however, by many, is refreshing to them, seeing that not only their friends from among themselves; but others also, remember them.

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord." His chief aim is to subject them to him entirely. For they could no more have complaint against him for rebuking them, when they themselves had taken it all upon them; for it is not reasonable to talk to the disciples about the teacher. But to stop their mouths, he writes thus to them; *"Say to Archippus,"* he says, *"Take heed."* This word is everywhere used to alarm; as when he says, *"Take heed of dogs."* [Philippians 3:2] *"Take heed lest there shall be any one that makes spoil of you."* [Colossians 2:8] *"Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak."* [1 Corinthians 8:9] And he always so expresses himself when he would terrify. *"Take heed,"* he says, *"to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it."* He does not even allow him the power of choosing, as he says himself, *"For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward: but if not of my own will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me."* [1 Corinthians 9:17] *"That thou fulfill it,"* continually using diligence. *"Which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it."* Again, the word *"in"* means *"through the Lord."* He gave it you, says he, not we. He subjects them also to him, when he shows that they had been committed to his hands by God.

"Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen." He has released their terror. For although their teacher be in bonds, yet *"grace"* releases him.

This too is of grace, the granting him to be put in bonds. For hear Luke saying, The Apostles returned *"from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name."* [Acts 5:41] For both to suffer shame, and to be put in bonds, is indeed to be *"counted worthy."* For, if he that has one whom he loves, deems it gain to suffer anything for his sake, much rather then is it so to suffer for the sake of Christ. Repine we not then at our tribulations for Christ's sake, but let us also remember Paul's bonds, and be this our incitement. For instance: do you exhort any to give to the poor for Christ's sake? Remind them of Paul's bonds, and bemoan your misery and theirs, seeing that he indeed gave up even his body to bonds for His sake, but you will not give a portion even of your food. Are you lifted up because of your good deeds? Remember Paul's bonds, that you have suffered nought of that kind, and you will be lifted up no more. Covetest thou any of the things that are your neighbor's? Remember Paul's bonds, and you will see how unreasonable it is, that while he was in perils, you should be in delights. Again, is your heart set upon self-indulgence? Picture to your mind Paul's prison-house; you are his disciple, his fellow-soldier. How is it reasonable, that your fellow-soldier should be in bonds, and thou in luxury? Are you in affliction? Do you deem yourself forsaken? Hear Paul's bonds, and you will see, that to be in affliction is no proof of being forsaken. Would you wear silken robes? Remember Paul's bonds; and these things will appear to you more worthless than the filth-bespattered rags of her that sits apart. Would you array you with golden trinkets? Picture to your mind Paul's bonds, and these things will seem to you no better than a withered bulrush. Would you tire your hair, and be beautiful to see? Think of Paul's squalidness within that prison-house, and you will burn for that beauty, and deem this the extreme of ugliness, and wilt groan bitterly through longing for those bonds. Would

you daub you with pastes and pigments, and such like things? Think of his tears: a three-years space, night and day, he ceased not to weep. [Acts 20:31] With this adorning deck your cheek; these tears do make it bright. I say not, that you weep for others, (I wish indeed it could be even so, but this is too high for you,) but for your own sins I advise you to do this. Have you ordered your slave to be put in bonds, and were you angry, and exasperated? Remember Paul's bonds, and you will straightway stay your anger; remember that we are of the bound, not the binders, of the bruised in heart, not the bruisers. Have you lost self-control, and shouted loud in laughter? Think of his lamentations, and you will groan; such tears will show you brighter far. Do you see any persons rioting and dancing? Remember his tears. What fountain has gushed forth so great streams as those eyes did tears? "*Remember my tears*" [Acts 20:31], he says, as here "*bonds*." And with reason he spoke thus to them, when he sent for them from Ephesus to Miletus. For he was then speaking to teachers. He demands of those therefore, that they should sympathize also, but of these that they should only encounter dangers.

What fountain will you compare to these tears? That in Paradise, which waters the whole earth? But you will have mentioned nothing like it. For this fount of tears watered souls, not earth. If one were to show us Paul bathed in tears, and groaning, would not this be better far to see, than countless choirs gayly crowned? I am not now speaking of you; but, if one, having pulled away from the theater and the stage some wanton fellow, burning and drunken with carnal love, were to show him a young virgin in the very flower of her age, surpassing her fellows, both in other respects, and in her face more than the rest of her person, having an eye, tender and soft, that gently rests, and gently rolls, moist, mild, calmly smiling, and arrayed in much modesty and much grace, fringed with dark lashes both

under and over, having an eyeball, so to speak, alive, a forehead radiant; underneath, again, a cheek shaded to exact redness, lying smooth as marble, and even; and then any one should show me Paul weeping; leaving that maiden, I would have eagerly sprung away to the sight of him; for from his eyes there beamed spiritual beauty. For that other transports the souls of youths, it scorches and inflames them; but this, on the contrary, subdues them. This makes the eyes of the soul more beauteous, it curbs the belly: it fills with the love of wisdom, with much sympathy: and it is able to soften even a soul of adamant. With these tears the Church is watered, with these souls are planted; yea, though there be fire sensible and substantial, yet can these tears quench it; these tears quench the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Remember we then these tears of his, and we shall laugh to scorn all present things. These tears did Christ pronounce blessed, saying, *"Blessed are they that mourn, and blessed are they that weep, for they shall laugh."* [Matthew 5:4; Luke 6:21] Such tears did Isaiah too, and Jeremiah weep; and the former said, *"Leave me alone, I will weep bitterly"* [Isaiah 22:4, Septuagint]; and the latter, *"Who will give my head water, and my eyes fountains of tears?"* [Jeremiah 9:1]; as though the natural fount were not enough.

Nothing is sweeter than these tears; sweeter are they than any laughter. They that mourn, know how great consolation it possesses. Let us not think this a thing to be deprecated, but one to be even exceedingly prayed for; not that others may sin, but that, when they sin, we may be heart-broken for them. Remember we these tears, these bonds. Surely too upon those bonds tears descended; but the death of the perishing, of those that had bound him in them, suffered him not to taste the pleasure of the bonds. For in their behalf he grieved, being a disciple of Him that bewept the priests of the Jews; not because they were going to crucify Him, but because they were

themselves perishing. And He does not this Himself alone, but He thus exhorts others also, saying, "*Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me.*" [Luke 23:28] These eyes saw Paradise, saw the third heaven: but I count not them so blessed because of this sight, as because of those tears, through which they saw Christ. Blessed, indeed, was that sight; for he himself even glories in it, saying, "*Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?*" [1 Corinthians 9:1]; but more blessed so to weep.

In that sight many have been partakers, and those who have not so been, Christ the rather calls blessed, saying, "*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*" [John 20:29]; but unto this not many have attained. For if to stay here for Christ's sake were more needful than to depart to Him [Philippians 1:23-24], for the sake of the salvation of others; surely then to groan for others' sakes, is more needful even than to see Him. For if for His sake to be in hell, is rather to be desired, than to be with Him; and to be separated from Him for His sake more to be desired than to be with Him, (for this is what he said, "*For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ*" [Romans 9:3], much more is weeping for His sake. "*I ceased not,*" he says, "*to admonish everyone with tears.*" [Acts 20:31] Wherefore? Not fearing the dangers; no; but as if one sitting by a sick man's side, and not knowing what would be the end, should weep for affection, fearing lest he should lose his life; so too did he; when he saw any one diseased, and could not prevail by rebuke, he thenceforward wept. So did Christ also, that happily they might reverence His tears: thus, one sinned, He rebuked him; the rebuked spat upon Him, and sprang aloof; He wept, that haply He might win him even so.

Remember we these tears: thus let us bring up our daughters, thus our sons; weeping when we see them in evil. As many women as wish to be loved, let them remember Paul's tears, and groan: as many of you as are

counted blest, as many as are in bridal chambers, as many as are in pleasure, remember these; as many as are in mourning, exchange tears for tears. He mourned not for the dead; but for those that were perishing while alive. Shall I tell of other tears? Timothy also wept; for he was this man's disciple; wherefore also when writing to him he said, *"Remembering your tears, that I may be filled with joy."* [2 Timothy 1:4] Many weep even from pleasure. So it is also a matter of pleasure, and that of the utmost intensity. So the tears are not painful: yea, the tears that flow from such sorrow are even better far than those due to worldly pleasure. Hear the Prophet saying, *"The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping, he has heard the voice of my supplication."* [Psalm 6:8] For where is the tear not useful? In prayers? In exhortations? We get them an ill name, by using them not to what they are given us for. When we entreat a sinning brother, we ought to weep, grieving and groaning; when we exhort any one, and he gives us no heed, but goes on perishing, we ought to weep. These are the tears of heavenly wisdom. When however one is in poverty, or bodily disease, or dead, not so; for these are not things worthy of tears.

As then we gain an ill name for laughter also, when we use it out of season; so too do we for tears, by having recourse to them unseasonably. For the virtue of each thing then discovers itself when it is brought to its own fitting work, but when to one that is alien, it does no longer so. For instance, wine is given for cheerfulness, not drunkenness, bread for nourishment, sexual intercourse for the procreation of children. As then these things have gained an ill name, so also have tears. Be there a law laid down, that they be used in prayers and exhortations only, and see how desirable a thing they will become. Nothing does so wipe out sins, as tears. Tears show even this bodily countenance beautiful; for they win the spectator to pity, they make it respected in our eyes. Nothing is sweeter than

tearful eyes. For this is the noblest member we have, and the most beautiful, and the soul's own. And therefore we are so bowed therewith, as though we saw the soul itself lamenting.

I have not spoken these things without a reason; but in order that you may cease your attendance at weddings, at dancings, at Satanical performances. For see what the devil has invented. Since nature itself has withheld women from the stage, and the disgraceful things enacted there, he has introduced into the women's apartment the furniture of the theater, I mean, wanton men and harlots. This pestilence the custom of marriages has introduced, or rather, not of marriages, far be it, but of our own silliness. What is it you do, O man? Do you not know what you are at? Thou marriest a wife for chastity, and procreation of children; what then mean these harlots? That there may be, one answers, greater gladness. And yet is not this rather madness? Thou insultest your bride, you insult the women that are invited. For if they are delighted with such proceedings, the thing is an insult. If to see harlots acting indecorously confers any honor, wherefore do you not drag your bride also there, that she too may see? It is quite indecent and disgraceful to introduce into one's house lewd fellows and dancers, and all that Satanic pomp.

"Remember," he says, *"my bonds."* Marriage is a bond, a bond ordained of God, a harlot is a severing and a dissolving. It is permitted you to embellish marriage with other things, such as full tables, and apparel. I do not cut off these things, lest I should seem to be clownish to an extreme; and yet Rebecca was content with her veil only [Genesis 24:65]; still I do not cut them off. It is permitted you to embellish and set off marriage with apparel, with the presence of reverend men and reverend women. Why do you introduce those mockeries? why those monsters? Tell us what it is you hear from them? What? Do you blush to tell? Do you blush, and yet force

them to do it? If it is honorable, wherefore do you not do it yourself as well? But if disgraceful, wherefore do you compel another? Everything should be full of chasteness, of gravity, of orderliness; but I see the reverse, people frisking like camels and mules. For the virgin, her chamber is the only befitting place. "*But,*" says one, "*she is poor.*" Because she is poor, she ought to be modest also; let her have her character in the place of a fortune. Has she no dowry to give with herself? Then why do you make her otherwise contemptible through her life and manners? I praise the custom, that virgins attend to do honor to their fellow; matrons attend to do honor to her who is made one of their order. Rightly has this been ordered. For these are two companies, one of virgins, the other of the married; the one are giving her up, the other receiving her. The bride is between them, neither virgin, nor wife, for she is coming forth from those, and entering into the fellowship of these. But those harlots, what mean they? They ought to hide their faces when marriage is celebrated; they ought to be dug into the earth, (for harlotry is the corruption of marriage,) but we introduce them at our marriages. And, when you are engaged in any work, you count it ill-omened to speak even a syllable of what is adverse to it; for instance, when you sow, when you draw off the wine from your vats, you would not, even if asked, utter a syllable about vinegar; but here, where the object is chasteness, introduce ye the vinegar? For such is an harlot. When you are preparing sweet ointment, you suffer nought ill-scented to be near. Marriage is a sweet ointment. Why then do you introduce the foul stench of the dunghill into the preparation of your ointment? What do you say? Shall the virgin dance, and yet feel no shame before her fellow? For she ought to have more gravity than the other; she has at least come forth from the [nurse's] arm, and not from the palæstra. For the virgin ought not to appear publicly at all at a marriage.

Do you see not how in kings' houses, the honored are within, about the king, the unhonored without? Do thou too be within about the bride. But remain in the house in chasteness, expose not your virginity. Either company is standing by, the one to show of what sort she is whom they are giving up, the other in order that they may guard her. Why do you disgrace the virgin estate? For if you are such as this, the same will the bridegroom suspect her to be. If you wish to have men in love with you, this is the part of saleswomen, green-grocers, and handicrafts-people. Is not this a shame? To act unseemly is a shame even though it be a king's daughter. For does her poverty stand in the way? Or her course of life? Even if a virgin be a slave, let her abide in modesty. *"For in Christ Jesus there can be neither bond nor free."* [Galatians 3:28]

What? Is marriage a theater? It is a mystery and a type of a mighty thing; and even if you reverence not it, reverence that whose type it is. *"This mystery,"* says he, *"is great, but I speak in regard of Christ and of the Church."* [Ephesians 5:32] It is a type of the Church, and of Christ, and do you introduce harlots at it? If then, says one, neither virgins dance, nor the married, who is to dance? No one, for what need is there of dancing? In the Grecian mysteries there are dancings, but in ours, silence and decency, modesty, and bashfulness. A great mystery is being celebrated: forth with the harlots! Forth with the profane! How is it a mystery? They come together, and the two make one. Wherefore is it that at his entrance indeed, there was no dancing, no cymbals, but great silence, great stillness; but when they come together, making not a lifeless image, nor yet the image of anything upon earth, but of God Himself, and after his likeness, you introduce so great an uproar, and disturbest those that are there, and putteth the soul to shame, and confoundest it? They come, about to be made one body. See again a mystery of love! If the two become not one, so long as

they continue two, they make not many, but when they have come into oneness, they then make many. What do we learn from this? That great is the power of union. The wise counsel of God at the beginning divided the one into two; and being desirous of showing that even after division it remains still one, He suffered not that the one should be of itself enough for procreation. For he is not one who is not yet [united,] but the half of one; and it is evident from this, that he begets no offspring, as was the case also beforetime. Do you see the mystery of marriage? He made of one, one; and again, having made these two, one, He so makes one, so that now also man is produced of one. For man and wife are not two men, but one Man. And this may be confirmed from many sources; for instance, from James, from Mary the Mother of Christ, from the words, "*He made them male and female.*" [Genesis 1:27] If he be the head, and she the body, how are they two? Therefore the one holds the rank of a disciple, the other of a teacher, the one of a ruler, the other of a subject. Moreover, from the very fashioning of her body, one may see that they are one, for she was made from his side, and they are, as it were, two halves.

For this cause He also calls her a help, to show that they are one [Genesis 2:18]; for this cause He honors their cohabitation beyond both father and mother, to show that they are one. [Genesis 2:24] And in like manner a father rejoices both when son and daughter marry, as though the body were hastening to join a member of its own; and though so great a charge and expenditure of money is incurred still he cannot bear with indifference to see her unmarried. For as though her own flesh itself were severed from her, each one separately is imperfect for the procreation of children, each one is imperfect as regards the constitution of this present life. Wherefore also the Prophet says, "*the residue of your spirit.*" [Malachi 2:15, Septuagint] And how become they one flesh? As if you should take

away the purest part of gold, and mingle it with other gold; so in truth here also the woman as it were receiving the richest part fused by pleasure, nourishes it and cherishes it, and withal contributing her own share, restores it back a Man. And the child is a sort of bridge, so that the three become one flesh, the child connecting, on either side, each to other. For like as two cities, which a river divides throughout, become one, if a bridge connect them on both sides, so is it in this case; and yet more, when the very bridge in this case is formed of the substance of each. As the body and the head are one body; for they are divided by the neck; but not divided more than connected, for it, lying between them brings together each with the other. And it is the same as if a chorus that had been severed should, by taking one part of itself from this quarter, and the other again from the right, make one; or as these when come into close rank, and extending hands, become one; for the hands extended admit not of their being two. Therefore to wit He said with accuracy of expression, not "*they shall be one flesh*" but joined together "*into one flesh*" [Genesis 2:2, Septuagint], namely, that of the child. What then? When there is no child, will they not be two? Nay, for their coming together has this effect, it diffuses and commingles the bodies of both. And as one who has cast ointment into oil, has made the whole one; so in truth is it also here.

I know that many are ashamed at what is said, and the cause of this is what I spoke of, your own lasciviousness, and unchasteness. The fact of marriages being thus performed, thus depraved, has gained the thing an ill name: for "*marriage is honorable, and the bed undefiled.*" [Hebrews 13:4] Why are you ashamed of the honorable, why do you blush at the undefiled? This is for heretics, this is for such as introduce harlots there. For this cause I am desirous of having it thoroughly purified, so as to bring it back again to its proper nobleness, so as to stop the mouths of the heretics. The gift of

God is insulted, the root of our generation; for about that root there is much dung and filth. This then let us cleanse away by our discourse. Endure then a little while, for he that holds filth must endure the stench. I wish to show you that you ought not to be ashamed at these things, but at those which you do; but thou, passing by all shame at those, art ashamed at these; surely then you condemn God who has thus decreed.

Shall I tell how marriage is also a mystery of the Church? As Christ came into the Church, and she was made of him, and he united with her in a spiritual intercourse, "*for*," says one, "*I have espoused you to one husband, a pure virgin.*" [2 Corinthians 11:2] And that we are of Him, he says, of His members, "*and of His flesh.*" Thinking then on all these things, let us not cast shame upon so great a mystery. Marriage is a type of the presence of Christ, and are you drunken at it? Tell me; if you saw an image of the king, would you dishonor it? By no means.

Now the practices at marriages seem to be a matter of indifference, but they are the causes of great mischiefs. All is full of lawlessness. "*Filthiness, and foolish talking, and jesting, let it not proceed,*" says he, "*out of your mouth.*" [Ephesians 5:4; 4:29] Now all these things are filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting; and not these simply, but with aggravation, for the thing has become an art, and there are great praises for those that pursue it. Sins have become an art! We pursue them not in any chance way, but with earnestness, with science, and thenceforth the devil takes the command of his own array. For where drunkenness is, there is unchasteness: where filthy talking, there the devil is at hand bringing in his own contributions; with such an entertainment, tell me, do you celebrate the mystery of Christ? And do you invite the devil?

I dare say you consider me offensive. For this too is a property of extreme pervertedness, that even one that rebukes you incurs your ridicule

as one that is austere. Hear ye not Paul, saying, *"Whatsoever ye do, whether you eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"*? [1 Corinthians 10:31] But ye do all to ill report and dishonor. Hear ye not the Prophet, saying, *"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling?"* [Psalm 2:11] But you are wholly without restraint. Is it not possible both to enjoy pleasure, and to do so with safety? Are you desirous of hearing beautiful songs? Best of all indeed, you ought not; nevertheless, I condescend if you will have it so: do not hear those Satanic ones, but the spiritual. Are you desirous of seeing choirs of dancers? Behold the choir of Angels. And how is it possible, says one, to see them? If you drive away all these things, even Christ will come to such a marriage, and Christ being present, the choir of Angels is present also. If you will, He will even now work miracles as He did then; He will make even now the water, wine [John 2]; and what is much more wonderful, He will convert this unstable and dissolving pleasure, this cold desire, and change it into the spiritual. This is to make of water, wine. Where pipers are, by no means there is Christ; but even if He should have entered, He first casts these forth, and then He works His wonders. What can be more disagreeable than this Satanic pomp? Where everything is inarticulate, everything without significancy; and if there be anything articulate, again all is shameful, all is noisome.

Nothing is more pleasurable than virtue, nothing sweeter than orderliness, nothing more amiable than gravity. Let any celebrate such a marriage as I speak of; and he shall find the pleasure; but what sort of marriages these are, take heed. First seek a husband for the virgin, who will be truly a husband, and a protector; as though thou were intending to place a head upon a body; as though about to give not a slave, but a daughter into his hands. Seek not money, nor splendor of family, nor greatness of country; all these things are superfluous; but piety of soul, gentleness, the true

understanding, the fear of God, if you wish your darling to live with pleasure. For if you seek a wealthier husband, not only will you not benefit her, but you will even harm her, by making her a slave instead of free. For the pleasure she will reap from her golden trinkets will not be so great as will be the annoyance that comes of her slavery. I pray you, seek not these things, but most of all, one of equal condition; if however this cannot be, rather one poorer than in better circumstances; if at least thou be desirous not of selling your daughter to a master, but of giving her to a husband. When you have thoroughly investigated the virtue of the man, and art about to give her to him, beseech Christ to be present: for He will not be ashamed to be so; it is the mystery of His presence. Yea rather beseech Him even in the first instance, to grant her such a suitor. Be not worse than the servant of Abraham, who, when sent on a pilgrimage so important, saw whither he ought to have recourse; wherefore also he obtained everything. When you are taking anxious pains, and seeking a husband for her, pray; say unto God, *"whomsoever You will do Thou provide:"* into His hands commit the matter; and He, honored in this way by you, will requite you with honor.

Two things indeed it is necessary to do; to commit the thing into His hands, and to seek such an orderly person as He Himself approves.

When then you make a marriage, go not round from house to house borrowing mirrors and dresses; for the matter is not one of display, nor do you lead your daughter to a pageant; but decking out your house with what is in it, invite your neighbors, and friends, and kindred. As many as you know to be of a good character, those invite, and bid them be content with what there is. Let no one from the orchestra be present, for such expense is superfluous, and unbecoming. Before all the rest, invite Christ. Do you know whereby you will invite Him? Whosoever, says He, *"has done it to one of these least, has done it to Me."* [Matthew 25:40] And think it not an

annoying thing to invite the poor for Christ's sake; to invite harlots is an annoyance. For to invite the poor is a means of wealth, the other of ruin. Adorn the bride not with these ornaments that are made of gold, but with gentleness and modesty, and the customary robes; in place of all golden ornament and braiding, arraying her in blushes, and shamefacedness, and the not desiring such things. Let there be no uproar, no confusion; let the bridegroom be called, let him receive the virgin. The dinners and suppers, let them not be full of drunkenness, but of abundance and pleasure. See how many good things will result, whenever we see such marriages as those; but from the marriages that are now celebrated, (if at least one ought to call them marriages and not pageants,) how many are the evils! The banquet hall is no sooner broken up, than straightway comes care and fear, lest anything that is borrowed should have been lost, and there succeeds to the pleasure melancholy intolerable. But this distress belongs to the mother-in-law,— nay, rather not even is the bride herself free; all that follows at least belongs to the bride herself. For to see all broken up, is a ground for sadness, to see the house desolate.

There is Christ, here is Satan; there is cheerfulness, here anxious care; there pleasure, here pain; there expense, here nothing of the kind; there indecency, here modesty; there envy, here no envy; there drunkenness, here soberness, here health, here temperance. Bearing in mind all these things, let us stay the evil at this point, that we may please God, and be counted worthy to obtain the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 1:1-3]

" Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you, and peace. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father."

[Wherefore] then, when writing to the Ephesians, and having Timothy with him, did he not include him with himself (in his salutation), known as he was to them and admired, for he says, *"You know the proof of him, that as a child serves the father, so he served with me in the Gospel"* [Philippians 2:22]; and again, *"I have no man like-minded who will care truly for your state"* [Philippians 2:20]; but here he does associate him with himself? It seems to me, that he was about to send him immediately, and it was superfluous for him to write, who would overtake the letter. For he says, *"Him therefore I hope to send immediately."* [Philippians 2:23] But here it was not so; but he had just returned to him, so that he naturally joined in the letter. For he says, *"Now when Timothy came from you unto us."* [1 Thessalonians 3:6] But why does he place Silvanus before him, though he testifies to his numberless good qualities, and prefers him above all? Perhaps Timothy wished and requested him to do so from his great humility; for when he saw his teacher so humble-minded, as to associate his disciple with himself, he would much the more have desired this, and eagerly sought it. For he says,

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the Church of the Thessalonians." Here he gives himself no title— not *"an Apostle,"* not *"a Servant"*; I suppose, because the men were newly instructed, and had not yet had any experience of him, he does not apply the title; and it was as yet the beginning of his preaching to them.

"To the Church of the Thessalonians," he says. And well. For it is probable there were few, and they not yet formed into a body; on this account he consoles them with the name of the Church. For where much time had passed, and the congregation of the Church was large, he does not apply this term. But because the name of the Church is for the most part a name of multitude, and of a system now compacted, on this account he calls them by that name.

"In God the Father," he says, *"and the Lord Jesus Christ."* *"Unto the Church of the Thessalonians,"* he says, *"which is in God."* Behold again the expression, *"in,"* applied both to the Father and to the Son. For there were many assemblies, both Jewish and Grecian; but he says, *"to the (Church) that is in God."* It is a great dignity, and to which there is nothing equal, that it is *"in God."* God grant therefore that this Church may be so addressed! But I fear that it is far from that appellation. For if any one were the servant of sin, he cannot be said to be *"in God."* If any one walks not according to God, he cannot be said to be *"in God."*

"Grace be unto you, and peace." Do you perceive that the very commencement of his Epistle is with encomiums? *"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers."* For to give thanks to God for them is the act of one testifying to their great advancement, when they are not only praised themselves, but God also is thanked for them, as Himself having done it all. He teaches them also to be moderate, all but saying, that it is all of the power of God. That he gives

thanks for them, therefore, is on account of their good conduct, but that he remembers them in his prayers, proceeds from his love towards them. Then as he often does, he says that he not only remembers them in his prayers, but apart from his prayers. *"Remembering without ceasing,"* he says, *"your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father."* What is remembering without ceasing? Either remembering before God and the Father, or remembering your labor of love that is before God and the Father, or simply, *"Remembering you without ceasing."* Then again, that you may not think that this *"remembering you without ceasing"* is said simply, he has added, *"before our God and Father."* And because no one among men was praising their actions, no one giving them any reward, he says this, *"You labor before God."* What is *"the work of faith"*? That nothing has turned aside your steadfastness. For this is the work of faith. If you believe, suffer all things; if you do not suffer, thou do not believe. For are not the things promised such, that he who believes would choose to suffer even ten thousand deaths? The kingdom of heaven is set before him, and immortality, and eternal life. He therefore who believes will suffer all things. Faith then is shown through his works. Justly might one have said, not merely did you believe, but through your works you manifested it, through your steadfastness, through your zeal.

And your labor *"of love."* Why? What labor is it to love? Merely to love is no labor at all. But to love genuinely is great labor. For tell me, when a thousand things are stirred up that would draw us from love, and we hold out against them all, is it not labor? For what did not these men suffer, that they might not revolt from their love? Did not they that warred against the Preaching go to Paul's host, and not having found him, drag Jason before the rulers of the city? [Acts 17:5-6] Tell me, is this a slight labor, when the

seed had not yet taken root, to endure so great a storm, so many trials? And they demanded security of him. And having given security, he says, Jason sent away Paul. Is this a small thing, tell me? Did not Jason expose himself to danger for him? And this he calls a labor of love, because they were thus bound to him.

And observe: first he mentions their good actions, then his own, that he may not seem to boast, nor yet to love them by anticipation. *"And patience,"* he says. For that persecution was not confined to one time, but was continual, and they warred not only with Paul, the teacher, but with his disciples also. For if they were thus affected towards those who wrought miracles, those venerable men; what think you were their feelings towards those who dwelt among them, their fellow citizens, who had all of a sudden revolted from them? Wherefore this also he testifies of them, saying, *"For you became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa."*

"And of hope," he says, *"in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father."* For all these things proceed from faith and hope, so that what happened to them showed not their fortitude only, but that they believed with full assurance in the rewards laid up for them. For on this account God permitted that persecutions should arise immediately, that no one might say, that the Preaching was established lightly or by flattery, and that their fervor might be shown, and that it was not human persuasion, but the power of God, that persuaded the souls of the believers, so that they were prepared even for ten thousand deaths, which would not have been the case, if the Preaching had not immediately been deeply fixed and remained unshaken.

Ver. 4, 5. *"Knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election, how that our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; even as you know what manner of men we showed ourselves among you for your sake."*

Knowing what? How *"we showed ourselves among you"*? Here he also touches upon his own good actions, but covertly. For he wishes first to enlarge upon their praises, and what he says is something of this sort. I knew that you were men of great and noble sort, that you were of the Elect. For this reason we also endure all things for your sake. For this, *"what manner of men we showed ourselves among you,"* is the expression of one showing that with much zeal and much vehemence we were ready to give up our lives for your sake; and for this thanks are due not to us, but to you, because you were elect. On this account also he says elsewhere, *"And these things I endure for the Elect's sake."* [2 Timothy 2:10] For what would not one endure for the sake of God's beloved ones? And having spoken of his own part, he all but says, For if you were both beloved and elect, we suffer all things with reason. For not only did his praise of them confirm them, but his reminding them that they too themselves had displayed a fortitude corresponding to their zeal: he says,

Ver. 6. *"And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."*

Strange! What an encomium is here! The disciples have suddenly become teachers! They not only heard the word, but they quickly arrived at the same height with Paul. But this is nothing; for see how he exalts them, saying, *"You became imitators of the Lord."* How? *"Having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."* Not merely with affliction, but with much affliction. And this we may learn from the Acts of the Apostles, how they raised a persecution against them. [Acts 17:5-8] And they troubled all the rulers of the city, and they instigated the city against them. And it is not enough to say, you were afflicted indeed, and believed, and that grieving, but even rejoicing. Which also the Apostles did: *"Rejoicing,"* it is said, *"that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for*

the Name." [Acts 5:41] For it is this that is admirable. Although neither is that a slight matter, in any way to bear afflictions. But this now was the part of men surpassing human nature, and having, as it were, a body incapable of suffering.

But how were they imitators of the Lord? Because He also endured many sufferings, but rejoiced. For He came to this willingly. For our sakes He emptied Himself. He was about to be spit upon, to be beaten and crucified, and He so rejoiced in suffering these things, that He said to the Father, "*Glorify Me.*" [John 17:1-5]

"With joy of the Holy Ghost," he says. That no one may say, how do you speak of "*affliction*"? How "*of joy*"? How can both meet in one? He has added, "*with joy of the Holy Ghost.*" The affliction is in things bodily, and the joy in things spiritual. How? The things which happened to them were grievous, but not so the things which sprang out of them, for the Spirit does not allow it. So that it is possible both for him who suffers, not to rejoice, when one suffers for his sins; and being beaten to take pleasure, when one suffers for Christ's sake. For such is the joy of the Spirit. In return for the things which appear to be grievous, it brings out delight. They have afflicted you, he says, and persecuted you, but the Spirit did not forsake you, even in those circumstances. As the Three Children in the fire were refreshed with dew, so also were you refreshed in afflictions. But as there it was not of the nature of the fire to sprinkle dew, but of the "*whistling wind,*" so also here it was not of the nature of affliction to produce joy, but of the suffering for Christ's sake, and of the Spirit bedewing them, and in the furnace of temptation setting them at ease. Not merely with joy, he says, but "*with much joy.*" For this is of the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 7. "*So that you became ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.*"

And yet it was later that he went to them. But ye so shone, he says, that you became teachers of those who received (the word) before you. And this is like the Apostle. For he did not say, so that you became ensamples in regard to believing, but you became an ensample to those who already believed; how one ought to believe in God, you taught, who from the very beginning entered into your conflict.

"And in Achaia," he says; that is, in Greece.

Do you see how great a thing is zeal? That it does not require time, nor delay, nor procrastination, but it is sufficient only to venture one's self, and all is fulfilled. Thus then though coming in later to the Preaching, they became teachers of those who were before them.

Moral . Let no one therefore despair, even though he has lost much time, and has done nothing. It is possible for him even in a little while to do so much, as he never has done in all his former time. For if he who before did not believe, shone so much at the beginning, how much more those who have already believed! Let no one, again, upon this consideration be remiss, because he perceives that it is possible in a short time to recover everything. For the future is uncertain, and the Day of the Lord is a thief, setting upon us suddenly when we are sleeping. But if we do not sleep, it will not set upon us as a thief, nor carry us off unprepared. For if we watch and be sober, it will not set upon us as a thief, but as a royal messenger, summoning us to the good things prepared for us. But if we sleep, it comes upon us as a thief. Let no one therefore sleep, nor be inactive in virtue, for that is sleep. Do you not know how, when we sleep, our goods are not in safety, how easy they are to be plotted against? But when we are awake, there needs not so much guarding. When we sleep, even with much guarding we often perish. There are doors, and bolts, and guards, and outer guards, and the thief has come upon us.

Why then do I say this? Because, if we wake we shall not need the help of others; but if we sleep, the help of others will profit us nothing, but even with this we perish. It is a good thing to enjoy the prayer of the Saints, but it is when we ourselves also are on the alert. And what need, you say, have I of another's prayer, if I am on the alert myself. And in truth, do not place yourself in a situation to need it; I do not wish that you should; but we are always in need of it, if we think rightly. Paul did not say, what need have I of prayer? And yet those who prayed were not worthy of him, or rather not equal to him; and you say, what need have I of prayer? Peter did not say, What need have I of prayer, for *"prayer,"* it says, *"was made earnestly of the Church unto God for him."* [Acts 12:5] And you say, What need have I of prayer? On this account you need it, because you think that you have no need. Yea, though thou become as Paul, you have need of prayer. Do not exalt yourself, lest you be humbled.

But, as I said, if we be active also ourselves, the prayers for us avail too. Hear Paul saying, *"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your supplication, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."* [Philippians 1:19] And again, *"That for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf."* [2 Corinthians 1:11] And you say, what need have I of prayer? But if we be idle, no one will be able to profit us. What did Jeremiah profit the Jews? Did he not thrice draw near to God, and the third time hear, *"Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer, for I will not hear you"*? [Jeremiah 7:16] What did Samuel profit Saul? Did he not mourn for him even to his last day, and not merely pray for him only? What did he profit the Israelites? Did he not say, *"God forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for you"*? [1 Samuel 12:23] Did they not all perish? Do prayers then, you say, profit nothing? They profit even greatly: but it is when we also do

something. For prayers indeed coöperate and assist, but a man coöperates with one that is operating, and assists one that is himself also working. But if you remain idle, you will receive no great benefit.

For if prayers had power to bring us to the kingdom while we do nothing, why do not all the Greeks become Christians? Do we not pray for all the world? Did not Paul also do this? Do we not intreat that all may be converted? Why do not the wicked become good without contributing anything of themselves? Prayers, then, profit greatly, when we also contribute our own parts.

Would you learn how much prayers have profited? Consider, I pray, Cornelius, Tabitha. [Acts 10:3 and 9:36] Hear also Jacob saying to Laban, *"Except the Fear of my father had been with me, surely you had now sent me away empty."* [Genesis 31:42] Hear also God again, saying, *"I will defend this city for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake."* [2 Kings 9:34] But when? In the time of Hezekiah, who was righteous. Since if prayers availed even for the extremely wicked, why did not God say this also when Nebuchadnezzar came, and why did He give up the city? Because wickedness availed more. Again, Samuel himself also prayed for the Israelites, and prevailed. But when? When they also pleased God, then they put their enemies to flight. And what need, you say, of prayer from another, when I myself please God? Never, O man, say this. There is need, aye, and need of much prayer. For hear God saying concerning the friends of Job; *"And he shall pray for you, and your sin shall be forgiven you."* [Job 42:8] Because they had sinned indeed, but not a great sin. But this just man, who then saved his friends by prayer, in the season of the Jews was not able to save the Jews who were perishing. And that you may learn this, hear God saying through the prophet; *"If Noah, Daniel, and Job stood, they shall not deliver their sons and their daughters."* [Ezekiel 14:14-16] Because

wickedness prevailed. And again, *"Though Moses and Samuel stood."*
[Jeremiah 15:1]

And see how this is said to the two Prophets, because both prayed for them, and did not prevail. For Ezekiel says, *"Ah Lord, do you blot out the residue of Israel?"* [Ezekiel 9:8] Then showing that He does this justly, He shows him their sins; and showing that not through despising him does He refuse to accept his supplication for them, he says, Even these things are enough even to persuade you, that not despising you, but on account of their many sins, I do not accept your supplication. Nevertheless He adds, *"Though. Noah, Job, and Daniel stood."* [From Ezekiel 14] And with good reason does He the rather say this to him, because it is he who suffered so many things. Thou badest me, he says, eat upon dung, and I ate upon it. Thou badest me, and I shaved my head. Thou badest me, and I lay upon one side. Thou badest me go out through a hole in the wall, bearing a burden, and I went out. Thou tookest away my wife, and badest me not mourn, and I did not mourn, but bore it with fortitude. [Ezekiel 24:18] Ten thousand other things have I wrought for their sake: I entreat for them, and dost Thou not comply? Not from despising you, says he, do I do this, but though Noah, Job, and Daniel were there, and were entreating for sons and daughters, I would not comply.

And again to Jeremiah, who suffered less from the commandments of God, but more from their wickedness, what does He say? *"Do you see not what these do?"* [Jeremiah 7:17] *"Yea,"* he says, *"they do so— but do Thou do it for my sake."* On this account He says to him, *"Though Moses and Samuel stood."* Their first lawgiver, who often delivered them from dangers, who had said, *"If now you forgive their sins, forgive it; but if not, blot me out also."* [Exodus 32:32, Septuagint] If therefore he were now alive, and spoke thus, he would not have prevailed—nor would Samuel,

again, who himself also delivered them, and who from his earliest youth was admired. For to the former indeed I said, that I conversed with him as a friend with a friend, and not by dark sayings. And of the latter I said, that in his first youth I was revealed to him, and that on his account, being prevailed upon, I opened the prophecy that had been shut up. For *"the word of the Lord,"* it is said, *"was precious in those days; there was no open vision."* [1 Samuel 3:1] If these men, therefore, stood before Me, they would profit nothing. And of Noah He says, *"Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations."* [Genesis 6:9] And concerning Job, He was *"blameless, just, true, fearing God."* [Job 1:1, Septuagint] And concerning Daniel, whom they even thought a God; and they will not deliver, says he, their sons and daughters. Knowing these things, therefore, let us neither despise the prayers of the Saints, nor throw everything upon them: that we may not, on the one hand, be indolent and live carelessly; nor on the other deprive ourselves of a great advantage. But let us both beseech them to pray and lift up the hand for us, and let us adhere to virtue; that we may be able to obtain the blessings promised to those who love Him by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 2 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 1:8-10]

"For from you has sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivers us from the wrath to come."

As a sweet-smelling ointment keeps not its fragrance shut up in itself, but diffuses it afar, and scenting the air with its perfume, so conveys it also to the senses of the neighbors; so too illustrious and admirable men do not shut up their virtue within themselves, but by their good report benefit many, and render them better. Which also then happened. Wherefore he said, *"So that you became ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia."* *"For from you,"* he says, *"has sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth."* You have filled, therefore, all your neighbors with instruction, and the world with wonder. For this is meant by the expression, *"in every place."* And he has not said, your faith is noised abroad, but *"has sounded out"*; as every place near is filled with the sound of a loud trumpet, so the report of your manfulness is loud, and sounding even like that, is sufficient to fill the world, and to fall with equal sound upon all that are round about. For great actions are more loudly celebrated there, where they have taken place; afar off indeed they are celebrated, but not so much.

But in your case it was not so, but the sound of good report was spread abroad in every part of the earth. And whence know we, says one, that the words were not hyperbolic? For this nation of the Macedonians, before the coming of Christ, was renowned, and celebrated everywhere more than the Romans. And the Romans were admired on this account, that they took them captive. For the actions of the Macedonian king exceeded all report, who, setting out from a little city indeed, yet subdued the world. Wherefore also the Prophet saw him, a winged leopard, showing his swiftness, his vehemence, his fiery nature, his suddenly in a manner flying over the whole world with the trophies of his victory. And they say, that hearing from a certain philosopher, that there were infinite worlds, he groaned bitterly, that when they were numberless, he had not conquered even one. So high-minded was he, and high-souled, and celebrated everywhere. And with the fame of the king the glory of the nation also kept pace. For he was called "*Alexander, the Macedonian.*" So that what took place there was also naturally much talked of. For nothing can be concealed that relates to the illustrious. The Macedonians then were not inferior to the Romans.

And this has also arisen from their vehemence. For as if he were speaking of something living, he introduces the word "*gone forth*"; so vehement and energetic was their faith. "*So that we need not to speak anything,*" says he, "*for they themselves report concerning us what entering in we had unto you.*" They do not wait to hear from us, but those who were not present, and have not seen, anticipate those who were present, and have seen your good deeds. So manifest were they everywhere made by report. We shall not therefore need, by relating your actions, to bring them to equal zeal. For the things which they ought to have heard from, us, these they themselves talk of, anticipating us. And yet in the case of such there is frequently envy, but the exceeding greatness of the thing conquered even

this, and they are the heralds of your conflicts. And though left behind, not even so are they silenced, but they are beforehand with us. And being such, it is not possible for them to disbelieve our report.

What means, *"What manner of entering in we had unto you"*? That it was full of dangers, and numberless deaths, but that none of these things troubled you. But as if nothing had happened, so you adhered to us; as if you had suffered no evil, but had enjoyed infinite good, so you received us after these things. For this was the second entering. They went to Berœa, they were persecuted, and when they came after this they so received them, as though they had been honored by these also, so that they even laid down their lives for them. The expression, *"What manner of entering in we had,"* is complicated, and contains an encomium both of them and of themselves. But he himself has turned this to their advantage. *"And how,"* he says, *"ye turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God"*; that is, that you did it readily, that you did it with much eagerness, that it did not require much labor to make you. *"In order to serve,"* says he, *"a living and true God."*

Here also he introduced an exhortation, which is the part of one who would make his discourse less offensive. *"And to wait,"* he says, *"for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivers us from the wrath to come."* *"And to wait,"* he says, *"for His Son from heaven"*; Him that was crucified, Him that was buried; to wait for Him from heaven. And how *"from heaven"*? *"Whom He raised from the dead."* You see all things at the same time; both the Resurrection, and the Ascension, and the second Coming, the Judgment, the retribution of the just, the punishment of the wicked. *"Jesus,"* he says, *"which delivers us from the wrath to come."* This is at once comfort, and exhortation, and encouragement. For if He raised Him from the dead, and He is in heaven,

and thence will come, (and you believed in Him; for if you had not believed in Him, you would not have suffered so much), this of itself is sufficient comfort. These shall suffer punishment, which he says in his second epistle, and you will have no small consolation.

And to "*wait*," he says, "*for His Son from heaven*." The terrible things are in hand, but the good things are in the future, when Christ shall come from heaven. See how much hope is required, in that He who was crucified has been raised, that He has been taken up into heaven, that He will come to judge the quick and the dead.

Chap. 2:1, 2. "*For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it has not been found vain: but having suffered before, and been shamefully entreated, as you know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God in much conflict*."

Great indeed were your actions also, but yet neither did we have recourse to human speech. But what he says above, that also he repeats here, that from both sides is shown what was the nature of the Preaching, from the miracles, and from the resolution of the preachers, and from the zeal and fervor of those who received it. "*For yourselves*," he says, "*know our entering in unto you, that it has not been found vain*," that is, that it was not according to man, nor of any common kind. For being fresh from great dangers, and deaths, and stripes, we immediately fell into dangers. "*But*," he says, "*having suffered before, and been shamefully entreated; as you know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God*." Do you see how again he refers the whole to God? "*To speak unto you*," says he, "*the Gospel of God in much conflict*." It is not possible to say, that there indeed we were in danger, but here we are not; yourselves also know, how great was the danger, with how much contention we were among you. Which also he says in his Epistle to

the Corinthians; *"And I was with you in weakness,"* and in labor, *"and in fear, and in much trembling."* [1 Corinthians 2:3]

Ver. 3, 4. *"For our exhortation is not of error nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but even as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God which proves our hearts."*

Do you see that, as I said, from their perseverance he makes a proof that the Preaching is divine? For, if it were not so, if it were a deceit, we should not have endured so many dangers, which allowed us not even to take breath. You were in tribulation, we were in tribulation. What then was it? Unless somewhat of things future had excited us, unless we had been persuaded that there is a good hope, we should not have been filled with the more alacrity by suffering. For who would have chosen for the sake of what we have here to endure so many sufferings, and to live a life of anxiety, and full of dangers? For whom would they persuade? For are not these things of themselves enough to trouble the disciples, when they see their teachers in dangers? But this was not your case.

"For our exhortation," that is, our teaching, *"is not of error."* The matter, he says, is not guile nor deceit, that we should give it up. It is not for things abominable, as the tricks of jugglers and sorcerers. *"And of uncleanness,"* says he, *"nor in guile,"* nor for any insurrection, like what Theudas did. *"But even as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God."* Do you see, that it is not vainglory? *"But God,"* he says, *"which proves our hearts."* We do nothing for the sake of pleasing men, he says. For on whose account should we do these things? Then having praised them, he says, Not as wishing to please men, nor seeking the honors that are from men, he adds, *"But as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel."*

Unless He had seen that we were free from every worldly consideration, He would not have chosen us. As therefore He approved us, such we remain, as having been *"approved of God."* Whence did he approve us, and entrust us with the Gospel? We appeared to God approved, so we remain. It is a proof of our virtue, that we are entrusted with the Gospel; if there had been anything bad in us, God would not have approved us. But the expression that He approved us, does not here imply search. But what we do upon proving, that he does without proving. That is, as he found us proof, and trusted us, so we speak; as it is reasonable that those should, who are approved and entrusted to be worthy of the Gospel, so we speak, *"not as pleasing men,"* that is, not on your account do we do all these things. Because previously he had praised them, that he might not bring his speech under suspicion, he says,

Ver. 5, 6. *"For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness; nor seeking glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when we might have been burdensome, as Apostles of Christ."*

For *"neither at any time,"* he says, *"were we found using words of flattery";* that is, we did not flatter, which is the part of deceivers, who wish to get possession and to domineer. No one can say that we flattered in order to rule, nor that we had recourse to it for the sake of wealth. Of this, which was manifest, he afterwards calls them to be witnesses. *"Whether we flattered,"* he says, *"ye know."* But as to what was uncertain, namely, whether it were in the way of covetousness, he calls God to witness. *"Nor seeking glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when we might have been burdensome, as Apostles of Christ;"* that is, not seeking after honors either, nor boasting ourselves, nor requiring attendance of guards. And yet even if we had done this, we should have done nothing out of

character. For if persons sent forth by kings are nevertheless in honor, much more might we be. And he has not said, that "*we were dishonored*," nor that "*we did not enjoy honors*," which would have been to reproach them, but "*we did not seek them*." We therefore, who, when we might have sought them, sought them not, even when the preaching required it, how should we do anything for the sake of glory? And yet even if we had sought them, not even in that case would there have been any blame. For it is fit that those men who are sent forth from God, as ambassadors now coming from heaven, should enjoy great honor.

But with an excess of forbearance we do none of these things, that we may stop the mouths of the adversaries. And it cannot be said, that to you we act thus, but not so others. For thus also he said in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "*For you bear with a man if he brings you into bondage, if he devours you, if he takes you captive, if he exalts himself, if he smites you on the face.*" [2 Corinthians 11:20] And again, "*His bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.*" [2 Corinthians 10:10] And again, "*Forgive me this wrong.*" [2 Corinthians 12:13] He shows there also that he was exceeding humble from his suffering so many things. But here he also says concerning money, "*when we might have been burdensome, as Apostles of Christ.*"

Ver. 7, 8. "*But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherishes her own children: even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you had become very dear to us.*"

"*But we were gentle*," he says; we exhibited nothing that was offensive or troublesome, nothing displeasing, or boastful. And the expression "*in the midst of you*," is as if one should say, we were as one of you, not taking the higher lot. "*As when a nurse cherishes her own children.*" So ought the

teacher to be. Does the nurse flatter that she may obtain glory? Does she ask money of her little children? Is she offensive or burdensome to them? Are they not more indulgent to them than mothers? Here he shows his affection. *"Even so, being affectionately desirous of you,"* he says, we are so bound to you, he says, and we not only take nothing of you, but if it be necessary even to impart to you our souls, we should not have refused. Tell me, then, is this of a human view? And who is so foolish as to say this? *"We were well pleased to impart to you,"* he says, *"not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls."* So that this is greater than the other. And what is the gain? For from the Gospel is gain, but to give our souls, is with respect to difficulty a greater thing than that. For merely to preach is not the same thing as to give the soul. For that indeed is more precious, but the latter is a matter of more difficulty. We were willing, he says, if it were possible, even to spend our souls upon you. And this we should have been willing to do; for if we had not been willing, we should not have endured the necessity. Since then he praised, and does praise, on this account he says, that, not seeking money, nor flattering you, nor desiring glory, do we do this. For observe; they had contended much, and so ought to be praised and admired even extraordinarily, that they might be more firm; the praise was suspicious. On this account he says all these things, by way of repelling the suspicion. And he also mentions the dangers. And again, that he may not be thought to speak of the dangers on this account, as if laboring for them, and claiming to be honored by them, therefore again, as he had to mention the dangers, he added, *"Because you had become very dear to us";* we would willingly have given our souls for you, because we were vehemently attached to you. The Gospel indeed we proclaim, because God commanded it; but so much do we love you, that, if it were possible, we would have given even our souls.

He who loves, ought so to love, that if he were asked even for his soul, and it were possible, he would not refuse it. I do not say *"if he were asked,"* but so that he would even run to present him with the gift. For nothing, nothing can be sweeter than such love; nothing will fall out there that is grievous. Truly *"a faithful friend is the medicine of life."* [Sirach 6:16] Truly *"a faithful friend is a strong defense."* [Sirach 6:14] For what will not a genuine friend perform? What pleasure will he not afford? What benefit? What security? Though you should name infinite treasures, none of them is comparable to a genuine friend. And first let us speak of the great delight of friendship itself. A friend rejoices at seeing his friend, and expands with joy. He is knit to him with an union of soul that affords unspeakable pleasure. And if he only calls him to remembrance, he is roused in mind, and transported.

I speak of genuine friends, men of one soul, who would even die for each other, who love fervently. Do not, thinking of those who barely love, who are table-companions, mere nominal friends, suppose that my discourse is refuted. If any one has a friend such as I speak of, he will acknowledge the truth of my words. He, though he sees his friend every day, is not satiated. For him he prays for the same things as for himself. I know one, who calling upon holy men in behalf of his friend, besought them to pray first for him, and then for himself. So dear a thing is a good friend, that times and places are loved on his account. For as bodies that are luminous spread their radiance to the neighboring places, so also friends leave a grace of their own in the places to which they have come. And oftentimes in the absence of friends, as we have stood on those places, we have wept, and remembering the days which we passed together, have sighed. It is not possible to represent by speech, how great a pleasure the intercourse with friends affords. But those only know, who have experience.

From a friend we may both ask a favor, and receive one without suspicion. When they enjoin anything upon us, then we feel indebted to them; but when they are slow to do this, then we are sorrowful. We have nothing which is not theirs. Often despising all things here, on their account we are not willing to depart hence; and they are more longed for by us than the light.

For, in good truth, a friend is more to be longed for than the light; I speak of a genuine one. And wonder not: for it were better for us that the sun should be extinguished, than that we should be deprived of friends; better to live in darkness, than to be without friends. And I will tell you why. Because many who see the sun are in darkness, but they can never be even in tribulation, who abound in friends. I speak of spiritual friends, who prefer nothing to friendship. Such was Paul, who would willingly have given his own soul, even though not asked, nay would have plunged into hell for them. With so ardent a disposition ought we to love.

I wish to give you an example of friendship. Friends, that is, friends according to Christ, surpass fathers and sons. For tell me not of friends of the present day, since this good thing also has past away with others. But consider, in the time of the Apostles, I speak not of the chief men, but of the believers themselves generally; *"all,"* he says, *"were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that anything of the things which he possessed was his own...and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need."* [Acts 4:32-35] There were then no such words as *"mine"* and *"yours."* This is friendship, that a man should not consider his goods his own, but his neighbor's, that his possessions belong to another; that he should be as careful of his friend's soul, as of his own; and the friend likewise.

And where is it possible, somebody says, that such an one should be found? Because we have not the will; for it is possible. If it were not possible, neither would Christ have commanded it; he would not have discoursed so much concerning love. A great thing is friendship, and how great, no one can learn, and no discourse represent, but experience itself. It is this that has caused the heresies. This makes the Greeks to be Greeks. He who loves does not wish to command, nor to rule, but is rather obliged when he is ruled and commanded. He wishes rather to bestow a favor than to receive one, for he loves, and is so affected, as not having satisfied his desire. He is not so much gratified when good is done to him, as when he is doing good. For he wishes to oblige, rather than to be indebted to him; or rather he wishes both to be beholden to him, and to have him his debtor. And he wishes both to bestow favors, and not to seem to bestow them, but himself to be the debtor. I think that perhaps many of you do not understand what has been said. He wishes to be the first in bestowing benefits, and not to seem to be the first, but to be returning a kindness. Which God also has done in the case of men. He purposed to give His own Son for us; but that He might not seem to bestow a favor, but to be indebted to us, He commanded Abraham to offer his son, that while doing a great kindness, He might seem to do nothing great.

For when indeed there is no love, we both upbraid men with our kindnesses and we exaggerate little ones; but when there is love, we both conceal them and wish to make the great appear small, that we may not seem to have our friend for a debtor, but ourselves to be debtors to him, in having him our debtor. I know that the greater part do not understand what is said, and the cause is, that I am speaking of a thing which now dwells in heaven. As therefore if I were speaking of any plant growing in India, of which no one had ever had any experience, no speech would avail to

represent it, though I should utter ten thousand words: so also now whatever things I say, I say in vain, for no one will be able to understand me. This is a plant that is planted in heaven, having for its branches not heavy-clustered pearls, but a virtuous life, much more acceptable than they. What pleasure would you speak of, the foul and the honorable? But that of friendship excels them all, though you should speak of the sweetness of honey. For that satiates, but a friend never does, so long as he is a friend; nay, the desire of him rather increases, and such pleasure never admits of satiety. And a friend is sweeter than the present life. Many therefore after the death of their friends have not wished to live any longer. With a friend one would bear even banishment; but without a friend would not choose to inhabit even his own country. With a friend even poverty is tolerable, but without him both health and riches are intolerable. He has another self: I am straitened, because I cannot instance by an example. For I should in that case make it appear that what has been said is much less than it ought to be.

And these things indeed are so here. But from God the reward of friendship is so great, that it cannot be expressed. He gives a reward, that we may love one another, the thing for which we owe a reward. *"Pray,"* He says, *"and receive a reward,"* for that for which we owe a reward, because we ask for good things. *"For that which you ask,"* He says, *"receive a reward. Fast, and receive a reward. Be virtuous, and receive a reward,"* though you rather owe a reward. But as fathers, when they have made their children virtuous, then further give them a reward; for they are debtors, because they have afforded them a pleasure; so also God acts. *"Receive a reward,"* He says, *"if you be virtuous, for you delight your Father, and for this I owe you a reward. But if you be evil, not so: for you provoke Him that begot you."* Let us not then provoke God, but let us delight Him, that we

may obtain the kingdom of Heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be the glory and the strength, world without end. Amen.

Homily 3 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 2:9-12]

"For you remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe: as you know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."

The teacher ought to do nothing with a feeling of being burdened, that tends to the salvation of his disciples. For if the blessed Jacob was buffeted night and day in keeping his flocks, much more ought he, to whom the care of souls is entrusted, to endure all toils, though the work be laborious and mean, looking only to one thing, the salvation of his disciples, and the glory thence arising to God. See then, Paul, a man that was a Preacher, an Apostle of the world, and raised to so great honor, worked with his hands that he might not be burdensome to his disciples.

"For you remember," he says, *"my brethren, our labor and travail."* He had said previously, *"we might have been burdensome as the Apostles of Christ,"* as he also says in the Epistle to the Corinthians, *"Do you not know that they which minister about sacred things eat of the things of the Temple? Even so also did Christ ordain that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel."* [1 Corinthians 9:13-14] But I, he says, would not, but I labored; and he did not merely work, but with much diligence. Observe then what he says; *"For you remember,"* he has not said, the benefits

received from me, but, *"our labor and travail: for working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God."* And to the Corinthians he said a different thing, *"I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you."* [2 Corinthians 11:8] And yet even there he worked, but of this he made no mention, but urged what was more striking, as if he had said, I was maintained by others when ministering to you. But here it is not so. But what? *"Working night and day."* And there indeed he says, *"And when I was present with you, and was in want, I was not a burden on any man,"* and, *"I took wages that I might minister unto you."* [2 Corinthians 11:8-9] And here he shows that the men were in poverty, but there it was not so.

On this account he frequently addresses them as witnesses. For *"you are witnesses,"* he says, *"and God also";* God was worthy to be believed, but this other was that which most fully assured them. For that indeed was uncertain to those who were ignorant of it; but this was without doubt to all. For do not enquire whether it was Paul who said these things. Much beyond what was necessary he gives them assurance. Wherefore he says, *"You are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe."* It was proper to praise them again. On this account he sets these things before them, which were sufficient to persuade them. For he that stood there in want, and did not receive anything, would much more not receive anything now. *"How holily,"* says he, *"and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe."*

"As ye know how we exhorted and comforted each one of you, as a father does his own children." Above having spoken of his behavior here he speaks of his love, which was more than what belonged to his rule over them. And what is said marks his freedom from pride. *"As a father his own*

children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." When he says, *"and testifying,"* then he makes mention of *"fathers";* although we testified, it was not violently, but like fathers. *"Each one of you."* Strange! In so great a multitude to omit no one, neither small nor great, neither rich nor poor. *"Exhorting"* you, he says; to bear. *"And comforting and testifying."* *"Exhorting,"* therefore they did not seek glory; and *"testifying,"* therefore they did not flatter. *"That ye should walk worthily of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."* Observe again, how, in relating, he both teaches and comforts. For if He has called them unto His kingdom, if He called them unto glory, they ought to endure all things. We *"entreat"* you, not that you should grant us any favor, but that you should gain the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 13. *"And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that when you received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works in you that believe."*

It cannot be said, he says, that we indeed do all things unblamably, but you on the other hand have done things unworthy of our course of life. For in hearing us, you gave such heed as if not hearing men, but as if God Himself were exhorting you. Whence is this manifest? Because as he shows from his own temptations and their testimony, and the way in which he acted, that he did not preach with flattery or vainglory; so from their trials, he shows also that they rightly received the word. For whence, he says, unless ye had heard as if God were speaking, did ye endure such perils? And observe his dignity.

Ver. 14, 15, 16. *"For you, brethren, became imitators of the Churches of God, which are in Judæa in Christ Jesus: for you also suffered the same*

things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews; who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always: but the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost."

"For you," he says, *"became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa."* This is a great consolation. It is no wonder, he says, that they should do these things to you, inasmuch as they have done it also to their own countrymen. And this too is no little proof that the Preaching is true, that even Jews were able to endure all things. *"For you also,"* he says, *"have suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews."* There is something more in his saying, *"as they also did in Judæa"*; it shows that everywhere they rejoiced, as having nobly contended. He says therefore, *"that you also suffered the same things."* And again, what wonder is it, if to you also, when even to the Lord they dared do such things?

Do you see how he introduces this as containing great consolation? And constantly he adverts to it; and upon a close examination one may find it in nearly all his Epistles, how variously, upon all occasions of temptation, he brings forward Christ. Observe accordingly, that here also, when accusing the Jews, he puts them in mind of the Lord, and of the sufferings of the Lord; so well does he know that this is a matter of the greatest consolation.

"Who both killed the Lord," he says— but, perhaps, they did not know Him—assuredly they did know Him. What then? Did they not slay and stone their own prophets, whose books even they carry about with them? And they did not do this for the sake of truth. There is therefore not only a consolation under the temptations, but they are reminded not to think that

(the Jews) did it for the truth's sake, and be troubled on that account. *"And drove out us,"* he says. And we also, he says, have suffered numberless evils. *"And please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they may be saved."* *"Contrary to all men,"* he says. How? Because if we ought to speak to the world, and they forbid us, they are the common enemies of the world. They have slain Christ and the prophets, they insult God, they are the common enemies of the world, they banish us, when coming for their salvation. What wonder if they have done such things also to you, when they have done them even in Judæa?

"Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved." It is a mark of envy therefore to hinder the salvation of all. *"To fill up their sins always. But the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost."* What is *"to the uttermost"*? These things are no longer like the former. There is here no return back, no limit. But the wrath is near at hand. Whence is this manifest? From that which Christ foretold. For not only is it a consolation to have partakers in our afflictions, but to hear also that our persecutors are to be punished. And if the delay is a grievance, let it be a consolation that they will never lift up their heads again; or rather he has cut short the delay, by saying, *"THE wrath,"* showing that it was long ago due, and predetermined, and predicted.

Ver. 17. *"But we, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire."*

He has not said *"separated,"* but what was much more. He had spoken above of flattery, showing that he did not flatter, that he did not seek glory. He speaks here concerning love. Because he had said above, *"as a father his children," "as a nurse,"* here he uses another expression, *"being made orphans,"* which is said of children who have lost their fathers. And yet

they were made orphans. "No"— he says— *"but we. For if any one should examine our longing, even as little children without a protector, having sustained an untimely bereavement, long for their parents, not only from the feelings of nature itself, but also on account of their deserted state, so truly do we too feel."* From this also he shows his own despondency on account of their separation. And this we cannot say, he says, that we have waited a long period, but *"for a short time,"* and that *"in presence, not in heart."* For we always have you in our mind. See how great is his love! Although having them always in his heart, he sought also their presence face to face. Tell me not of your superlative philosophy! This is truly fervent love; both to see, and to hear, and speak; and this may be of much advantage. *"We endeavored the more exceedingly."* What is *"more exceedingly"*? He either means to say, *"we are vehemently attached to you,"* or, *"as was likely, being bereaved for a season, we endeavored to see your face."* Observe the blessed Paul. When of himself he cannot satisfy his longing, he does it through others, as when he sends Timothy to the Philippians, and the same person again to the Corinthians, holding intercourse with them through others, when he cannot of himself. For in loving them, he was like some mad person, not to be restrained, nor to command himself in his affection.

Ver. 18. *"Wherefore we would fain have come unto you."*

Which is the part of love; yet here he mentions no other necessity but *"that we might see you."* *"I Paul once and again, and Satan hindered us."*

What do you say? Does Satan hinder? Yes, truly, for this was not the work of God. For in the Epistle to the Romans, he says this, that God hindered him [from Romans 15:22]; and elsewhere Luke says, that *"the Spirit"* hindered them from going into Asia. [Acts 16:7] And in the Epistle to the Corinthians he says, that it is the work of the Spirit, but here only of Satan. But what hindrance of Satan is he speaking of? Some unexpected

and violent temptations: for a plot, it says, being formed against him by the Jews, he was detained three months in Greece. But it is another thing to remain for the sake of the dispensation, and willingly. For there he says, *"Wherefore having no more place in these parts"* [Romans 15:23], and, *"To spare you I forbore to come unto Corinth."* [2 Corinthians 1:23] But here nothing of this sort. But what? That *"Satan hindered"* him. *"Even I Paul,"* he says, *"both once and again."* Observe, how ambitious he is, and what a display he makes, in his willingness to show that he loved them most of all. *"I Paul,"* he says, instead of Although no others. For they indeed were only willing, but I even attempted it.

Ver. 19. *"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus at His coming?"*

Are the Macedonians, tell me, your hope, O blessed Paul? Not these alone, he says. Therefore he has added, *"Are you not also?"* For *"what,"* he says, *"is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying"?* Observe then the words, which are those of women, inflamed with tenderness, talking to their little children. *"And crown of glorying,"* he says. For the name of *"crown"* was not sufficient to express the splendor, but also *"of glorying."* Of what fiery warmth is this! Never could either mother, or father, yea if they even met together, and commingled their love, have shown their own affection to be equivalent to that of Paul. *"My joy and crown,"* he says, that is, I rejoice in you more than in a crown. For consider how great a thing it is, that an entire Church should be present, planted and rooted by Paul. Who would not rejoice in such a multitude of children, and in the goodness of those children? So that this also is not flattery. For he has not said *"ye,"* but *"ye also"* together with the others.

Ver. 20. *"For you are our glory and our joy."*

Chap. 3:1, 2. *"Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone."* Instead of saying, *"we chose."* *"And sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister and our fellow-worker in the Gospel of Christ."*

And this he says, not as extolling Timothy, but honoring them, that he sent them the fellow-worker, and minister of the Gospel. As if he had said, Having withdrawn him from his labors we have sent to you the minister of God, and our fellow-laborer in the Gospel of Christ.

"To establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith."

Ver. 3. *"That no man be moved by these afflictions."*

What then does he say here? Because the temptations of the teachers trouble their disciples, and he had then fallen into many temptations, as also he himself says, that *"Satan hindered us,"* always saying this; *"both once,"* he says, *"and again I would have come to you,"* and was not able, which was a proof of great violence. And it was reasonable that this should trouble them, for they are not so much troubled at their own temptations, as at those of their teachers; as neither is the soldier so much troubled at his own trials, as when he sees his general wounded. *"To establish you,"* he says; not that they were at all deficient in faith, nor that they required to learn anything.

"And to comfort you concerning your faith; that no man be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed."

Ver. 4. *"For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and you know."*

You ought not, he says, to be troubled, for nothing strange, nothing contrary to expectation is happening; which was sufficient to raise them up. For do you see that on this account also Christ foretold to His disciples? For hear Him saying, *"Now I have told you before it came to pass, that when it has come to pass ye may believe."* [John 14:29] For greatly indeed, greatly

does it tend to the comfort of others, to have heard from their teachers what is to happen. For as he that is sick, if he hear from his physician that this or that is taking place, is not much troubled; but if anything happen unexpectedly, as if he too were at a loss, and the disorder was beyond his art, he is afflicted and troubled; so also is it here. Which Paul foreknowing, foretold to them, "*we are about to be afflicted,*" "*as it came to pass, and you know.*" He not only says that this came to pass, but that he foretold many things, and they happened. "*Hereunto we are appointed.*" So that not only ye ought not to be troubled and disturbed about the past, but not even about the future, if any such thing should happen, "*for hereunto we are appointed.*"

Moral . Let us hear, who have ears to hear. The Christian is appointed hereunto. For concerning all the faithful is this said, "*Hereunto we are appointed.*" And we, as if we were appointed for ease, think it strange if we suffer anything; and yet what reason have we for thinking anything strange? For no season of affliction or temptation has overtaken us, but what is common to man. It is a fit season for us to say to you, "*You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin*" [Hebrews 12:4]. Or rather, this is not seasonable for us to say to you— but what? You have not yet despised riches. For to them indeed these words were said with reason, when they had lost all their own possessions, but this is said to those who retain theirs. Who has been robbed of his riches for Christ's sake? Who has been beaten? Who has been insulted? Even in words, I mean. What have you to boast of? What confidence have you to say anything? So many things Christ suffered for us when we were enemies. What can we show that we have suffered for Him? Nothing that we have suffered indeed, but infinite good things that we have received from Him. Whence shall we have confidence in that Day? Do you not know, that the soldier too, when he can show numberless wounds

and scars, will then be able to shine in the presence of the king? But if he has no good action to show, though he may have done no harm, he will take rank among the least.

But, you say, it is not the season of war. But if it was, tell me, who would contend? Who would attack? Who would break through the phalanx? Perhaps no one. For when I see that you do not despise riches for the sake of Christ, how shall I believe that you will despise blows? Tell me, do you bear manfully those who insult you, and do you bless them? You do not—but you disobey. What is attended with no danger, you do not; and will you endure blows, in which there is much pain and suffering? Do you not know that it is proper in peace to keep up the exercises of war? Do you not see these soldiers, who though no war disturbs them, but it is profound peace, brightening up their arms, and going forth with the teachers who teach them tactics, into the broad and level plains, I may say, every day, keep up with the greatest strictness the exercises of war? Of our spiritual soldiers, who has done this? No one. For this reason we become in war weak and ignoble, and easily led captive by any.

But what stupidity is this, not to think the present a season of war, when Paul is crying out, *"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"* [2 Timothy 3:12]; and Christ says, *"In the world you shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33] And again the blessed Paul with a loud voice cries out, saying, *"Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood,"* and again, *"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth."* [Ephesians 6:12-14] Why do you arm us, tell me, when it is not war? Why do you give us trouble to no purpose? You put breastplates on the soldiers, when it is allowed them to rest and revive. But he would have said, Certainly, however, though it were not war, it would be right to attend to the concerns of war. For he who in peace considers the business of battle, will

be formidable in the season of battle; but he who is without experience in the things of war, will be more troubled even in peace. Why so? Because he will weep for the things which he possesses, and not being able to fight for them, will be in anguish. For the possessions of the cowardly and inexperienced and ignoble in war, are the property of all who are brave and warlike. So that on this account first I arm you. But then also the whole time of our life is the season of war. How and in what respect? The devil is ever at hand. Hear what it says, *"As a roaring lion, he walks about, seeking whom he may devour."* [1 Peter 5:8] Numberless bodily affections assail us, which it is necessary to enumerate, that we may not vainly deceive ourselves. For tell me, what does not war against us? Riches, beauty, pleasure, power, authority, envy, glory, pride? For not only does our own glory war against us, forbidding us to descend to humility; but the glory of others also, leading us to envy and ill-nature. But what do their opposites, poverty, dishonor, the being despised, rejected, the having no power? These things indeed are in us. But from men proceed wickedness, plots, deceits, slanders, assaults innumerable. In like manner on the part of the demons, *"principalities, powers, the world rulers of this darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness."* Some of us are rejoicing, others grieving, both are deviations from the right course. But health and sickness (war against us). From what quarter will not man be falling into sin? Would you that I should tell you from the beginning, commencing even immediately from Adam? What took captive the first created? Pleasure, and eating, and the love of dominion. What the son who came next after him? Grudging and envy. What those in the time of Noah? Fleshly pleasures, and the evils issuing from them. What his son? Insolence and irreverence. What the Sodomites? Insolence, wantonness; and fullness of bread. But often even poverty has this effect. On this account a certain wise man said, *"Give me neither poverty nor*

riches." [Proverbs 30:8] However it is neither poverty nor riches, but the will that cannot use either of them. *"Acknowledge,"* he says, *"that you pass through the midst of snares."* [Sirach 9:13]

The blessed Paul has admirably said, *"Hereunto we are appointed."* He has not said merely, that we are tempted, but that *"hereunto we are appointed,"* as if he had said, For this were we born. This is our business, this our life, and do you seek rest? The executioner does not stand over us, lacerating our sides, and compelling us to sacrifice; but the desire of riches, and of possessing more, is instant, tearing out our eyes. No soldier has kindled a pile, nor placed us on a gridiron, but more than this, the flames of the flesh set fire on our souls. No king is present promising numberless bounties, and putting us out of countenance. But there is present a rage for glory, tickling us worse than he. A great war, truly, exceedingly great, if we would watch.

And the present season too has its crowns. Hear Paul saying, *"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me...and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing."* [2 Timothy 4:8] When you have lost a beloved and only son, whom thou were bringing up in much wealth, displaying good hopes, himself being the only one to succeed to your inheritance; do not complain, but give thanks to God, and glorify Him who has taken him, and in this respect you will not be worse than Abraham. For as he gave him to God, when he commanded it, so you have not complained, when He has taken him. Have you fallen into a severe sickness, and do many come, constraining you, some with charms, some with amulets, and others with other things, to remedy the evil? And have you borne it firmly and unflinchingly from the fear of God, and would you have chosen to suffer all things rather than submit to do any of those idolatrous practices? This

brings to you the crown of martyrdom. Doubt it not. And how and by what means, I will tell you. For as such an one bears firmly the pains of torture, so as not to worship the image, so thou also bearest the sufferings of your disease, so as to want nothing of those remedies which the other offers, nor to do the things which he prescribes. *"But those pains are more violent"*—yes, but these are of longer duration, so that it is the same in the end; nay often these are more violent too. For tell me, when fever is raging and burning within, and you reject the charm that others recommend to you, have you not bound on you the crown of martyrdom?

Again, has any one lost money? Many advise you to have recourse to diviners; but thou, from fear of God, because it is forbidden, chooseth rather not to receive your money than to disobey God— you have a reward equal to him who has given it to the poor, if having lost, you give thanks, and when able to have recourse to diviners, you bear not to receive, rather than so to receive it. For as he from the fear of God has given all to the needy, so thou also from fear of God, when they have plundered you, hast not recovered it.

We are the masters of injuring or not injuring ourselves. And if you will, let us make the whole matter plain in the case of theft itself. The thief has cut through the wall, he has rushed into the chamber, he has carried off costly golden vessels, and precious stones, in short, he has cleared your whole treasure, and has not been taken. The fact is grievous, and it seems to be a loss; still as yet it is not so but it depends on you to make it either a loss or a gain. And how, do you say, can this be a gain? I will endeavor to show you how, if you are willing, it will be a great gain, but if unwilling, the loss will be severer than that which has taken place. For as in the case of artificers, when material is before them, he who is skilled in his art uses it to good purpose, but he that is unskillful spoils it, and makes it a loss to him,

so also in these matters. How then will it be a gain? If you give thanks to God, if you do not wail bitterly, if you utter the words of Job, *"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Naked came I out of my mother's womb, naked shall I also go away."* [Job 1:21, Septuagint]

"What?" do you say, *"the Lord has taken away? The thief has taken away, and how can you say, the Lord has taken away?"* Wonder not, for even Job, of things which the devil took away, said, *These the Lord has taken away? And shall not thou say of what the thief took, The Lord has taken away? Tell me, whom do you admire? Him who has bestowed all his goods upon the poor, or Job for these words? Is he, who did not then give, inferior to him, who has given alms? For say not, "I feel no thankfulness. The matter was not done with my consent, or knowledge, or will. The robber took it. What will be my reward?"* Neither did these things happen with Job's knowledge or will. For how could it be? Nevertheless, he wrestled.

And it is in your power to receive as great a reward, as if you had cast it away willingly. And perhaps we admire this man more, who thankfully suffers wrongs, than him who gives spontaneously. And why? Because the latter indeed is fed with praises, and supported by conscience, and has good hopes; and having before borne manfully the privation of his goods, he then cast them away; but the former, while yet bound to them, was forcibly deprived of them. And it is not the same thing, having first been induced to part with riches, in that way to bestow them, as it is while yet longing to be deprived of them. If you will say these words, you will receive many times as much, and even more than Job. For he received twice as much here, but to you Christ has promised a hundred fold. From the fear of God, you have not blasphemed? You have not had recourse to diviners? Suffering wrong, you have been thankful? You are like one who despises wealth, for you

could not do this, had you not first despised it. And it is not the same thing in a long time to practice the contempt of riches, and all at once to bear a loss that has happened. Thus the loss becomes gain, and you will not be injured, but even benefited by the devil.

But how does the loss also become grievous? When you lose your soul! Tell me, the thief has deprived you of your possessions: will you deprive yourself of salvation? Wherefore, grieving at the evils which you have suffered from others, do you plunge yourself into more evils? He perhaps has involved you in poverty: but thou perversely injurest yourself in things that are fatal. He has deprived you of things that are without you, and that hereafter would spring away from you even against your will. But you deprive yourself of the eternal riches. The devil has grieved you by taking away your wealth; do thou also grieve him, and do not delight him. If you have recourse to diviners, you delight him. If you render thanks to God, you give him his death-blow.

And see what happens. You will not still find it, if you go to the diviners, for it is not in their power to know; and even if by any chance they have told you, thou both lovest your own soul besides, and you will be derided by your brethren, and again wilt lose it wretchedly. For the demon, knowing that you can not bear your loss, but for the sake of these things deniest even your God, again gives you wealth, that he may have an opportunity of deceiving you again, and making you fall away. And if the diviners should tell you, wonder not. The demon is without body: he is everywhere going about. It is he who arms the robbers themselves. For these things do not take place without the demon. If therefore he arms them, he knows also where it is deposited. He is not ignorant of his own ministers. And this is not wonderful. If he sees you grieving at the loss, he adds yet another to it. If he sees you laughing at it, and despising it, he will desist

from this course. For as we deal to our enemies those things by which we grieve them, but if we see that they do not grieve, we henceforth desist, as being unable to plague them; so does the devil also.

What do you say? Do you not see those who sail on the sea, how, when a storm arises, they regard not their wealth, but even throw overboard their substance? *"O man, what do you say? Are you coöperating with the storm and the shipwreck? Before the wave has taken away your wealth, do you do it with your own hands? Why, before the shipwreck, do you wreck yourself?"* But indeed a rustic inexperienced in the trials of the sea might say this. But the naval man, and one who truly knows what are the causes of calm, and what of storm, will even laugh at him who talks thus. For I throw it overboard, he says, that there may be no whelming sea. So he who is experienced in the events and trials of life, when he sees the storm impending, and the spirits of evil wishing to cause shipwreck, throws overboard even the remainder of his wealth. Have you been plundered? Do alms, and you lighten the ship. Have robbers ravaged you? Give what remains to Christ. So you will console your poverty from your former loss. Lighten the ship, do not hold fast what remains, lest the vessel fill with water. They, to preserve their bodies, throw their goods overboard, and wait not for the assailing wave to overturn the vessel. And will you not stay the shipwreck, that you may save souls?

Make the trial, I beseech you— if you disbelieve, make the trial, and you will see the glory of God. When anything grievous has happened, immediately give alms; render thanks that it has happened, and you will see how much joy will come upon you. For spiritual gain, though it be small, is so great as to throw into the shade all bodily loss. As long as you have to give to Christ, you are rich. Tell me, if when you were robbed, the king coming to you held out his hand, begging to receive something from you,

would you not then think yourself richer than all, if the king not even after so great poverty was ashamed of you? Be not carried away with your wealth, only overcome yourself, and you will overcome the assault of the devil. It is in your power to acquire great gain.

Let us despise wealth, that we may not despise the soul. But how can any one despise it? Do you not see in the case of beautiful bodies, and the lovers of them, how as long as they are in their sight the fire is kindled, the flame rises bright; but when any one has removed them afar off, all is extinguished, all is lulled to sleep; so also in the case of wealth, let no one provide gold, nor precious stones, nor necklaces; when seen, they ensnare the eyes. But if you would be rich like the ancients, be rich not in gold, but in necessary things, that you may bestow on others from that which you have ready. Be not fond of ornament. Such wealth is both easy to be plotted against by robbers, and a thing that brings us cares. Not vessels of gold and silver, but let there be stores of bread and wine and oil, not that being sold again they may procure money, but that they may be supplied to those who need. If we withdraw ourselves from those superfluities, we shall obtain the heavenly goods; which God grant that we may all obtain, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 4 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 3:5-8]

"For this cause I also, when I could no longer forbear, sent that I might know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor should be in vain. But when Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought us glad tidings of your faith and love, and that you have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you; for this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith: for now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord."

A question lies before us today, which is much disputed, and which is gathered from many sources. But what is this question? *"For this cause,"* he says, *"when I could no longer forbear, I sent Timothy that I might know your faith."* What do you say? He, who knew so many things, who heard unutterable words, who ascended even to the third heaven, does not he know, even when he is in Athens? And yet the distance is not great, nor has he been long parted from them. For he says, *"Being bereaved of you for a short season."* He does not know the affairs of the Thessalonians, but is compelled to send Timothy to know their faith, *"lest,"* he says, *"the tempter had tempted you, and our labors should be in vain."*

What then is one to say? That the Saints knew not all things. And this one might learn from many instances, both of the early ones, and of those who came after them, as Elisha knew not concerning the woman [2 Kings 4:27]; as Elijah said to God, *"I only am left, and they seek my life."* Wherefore he heard from God, *"I have left me seven thousand men."* [1 Kings 19:10 and 18] Samuel again, when he was sent to anoint David; *"The*

Lord said to him, Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for God sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart." [1 Samuel 16:7]

And this comes to pass out of great care on God's part. How, and in what way? For the sake both of the Saints themselves, and of those who believe in them. For as He permits that there should be persecutions, so He permits that they should also be ignorant of many things, that they may be kept humble. On this account also Paul said, *"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted over much."* [2 Corinthians 12:7] And again, lest others also should have great imaginations concerning them. For if they thought they were gods from their miracles, much more if they had continued always knowing all things. And this again he also says: *"Lest any man should account of me above that which he sees me to be, or hears from me."* [2 Corinthians 12:6] And again hear Peter, when he healed the lame man, saying, *"Why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk."* [Acts 3:12] And if even when they were saying and doing these things, and from these few and small miracles, evil imaginations were thus engendered, much more would they have been from great ones.

But for another reason too these things were allowed. For that no one might be able to say it was as being other than men that they performed those excellent actions, and so all should become supine, he shows their infirmity, that from their folly he might cut off every pretext of shamelessness. For this reason he is ignorant, for this reason also, after having purposed, he frequently does not come, that they might perceive there were many things he knew not. Great advantage then came of this. For if there were some yet saying, *"This man is that power of God which is*

called Great" [Acts 8:10], and some, that it is this person, or that; unless these things had been so, what would they not have thought?

But here, however, there seems to be a censure on them. But quite otherwise, it even shows their admirable conduct, and proves the excess of their temptations. How? Attend. For if you first sayest "*that we are appointed thereunto,*" and "*let no man be moved,*" why again do you send Timothy, fearing that something might happen which you would not wish. This indeed he does from his great love. For those who love suspect even what is safe, from their exceeding warmth. But this is caused by their great temptations. For I said indeed that we are appointed thereunto, but the excess of the temptations alarmed me. Wherefore he has not said, I send him as condemning you, but "*when I could no longer forbear,*" which is rather an expression of love.

What means, "*Lest by any means the tempter had tempted you*"? Do you see that to be shaken in afflictions proceeds from the devil, and from his seduction? For when he cannot shake us ourselves, he takes another way, and shakes the weaker sort through our means, which argues exceeding infirmity, and such as admits of no excuse; as he did in the case of Job, having stirred up his wife, "*Speak some word against the Lord,*" she says, "*and die.*" [Job 2:9, Septuagint] See how he tempted her.

But wherefore has he not said, "*shaken,*" but "*tempted*"? Because, he says, I only suspected so much, as that you had been tempted. For he does not call his temptation a wavering. For he who admits his attack is shaken. Strange! How great is the affection of Paul! He did not regard afflictions, nor plots against him. For I think that he then remained there, as Luke says, that "*he abode in Greece three months, when the Jews laid a plot against him.*" [Acts 20:3]

His concern therefore was not for his own dangers, but for his disciples. Do you see how he surpassed every natural parent? For we in our afflictions and dangers lose the remembrance of all. But he so feared and trembled for his children, that he sent to them Timothy, whom alone he had for his consolation, his companion and fellow-laborer, and him too in the very midst of dangers.

"And our labor," he says, *"should be in vain."* Wherefore! For even if they were turned aside, it was not through your fault, not through your negligence. But nevertheless, though this were the case, I think, from my great love of the brethren, that my labor had been rendered vain.

"Lest by any means the tempter had tempted you." But he tempts, not knowing whether he shall overthrow. Does he then, even though he knows not, yet assail us, and do we, who know that we shall completely overcome him, not watch? But that he does attack us, though he knows not, he showed in the case of Job. For that evil demon said to God, *"Have You not made a hedge about his things within, and his things without? Take away his goods, and surely he will bless You to Your face."* [Job 1:10-11, Septuagint] He makes trial; if he sees anything weak, he makes an attack, if strong, he desists. *"And our labor,"* he says, *"be in vain."* Let us all hear, how Paul labored. He does not say work, but *"labor"*; he does not say, and you be lost, but *"our labor."* So that even if anything had happened, it would be happening with some reason. But that it did not happen was a great wonder. These things indeed we expected, he says, but the contrary happened. For not only did we receive from you no addition to our affliction but even consolation.

"But when Timothy came even now unto us, and brought us glad tidings of your faith and love." *"Brought us glad tidings,"* he says. Do you see the excessive joy of Paul? He does not say, brought us word, but

"brought us glad tidings." So great a good did he think their steadfastness and love. For it was necessary, the one remaining firm, that the other also must be steadfast. And he rejoiced in their love, because it was a sign of their faith. *"And that you have,"* he says, *"good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you."* That is, with praises. Not when we were present, nor when we were working miracles, but even now, when we are far off, and are scourged, and are suffering numberless evils, *"you have good remembrance of us."* Hear how disciples are admired, who have good remembrance of their teachers, how they are called blessed. Let us imitate these. For we benefit ourselves, not those who are loved by us. *"Longing to see us,"* he says, *"as we also to see you."* And this too cheered them; for to him who loves, to perceive that the beloved person knows that he is beloved, is a great comfort and consolation.

"For this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith. For now we live if you stand fast in the Lord." What is comparable to Paul, who thought the salvation of his neighbors was his own, being so affected towards all, as really towards members? Who now would be able to break forth into such speech? Or rather, who will ever be able to have such a thought? He did not require them to be thankful to him for the trials which he suffered for them, but he was thankful to them that they were not moved on account of his trials. As if he had said, that to you rather than to us was injury done by those trials; you were tempted rather than we, you who suffered nothing, rather than we who suffered. Because, he says, Timothy brought us these good tidings, we feel nothing of our sorrows, but were comforted in all our affliction; not in this affliction only. For nothing besides can touch a good teacher, as long as the affairs of his disciples go on to his mind. Through you, he says, we were comforted; you confirmed us. And yet the reverse was the case. For that

when suffering they did not yield, but stood manfully, was sufficient to confirm the disciples. But he reverses the whole matter, and turns the encomium over to them. You have anointed us, he says, you have caused us to breathe again; you have not suffered us to feel our trials. And he has not said, we breathe again, nor we are comforted, but what? *"Now we live,"* showing that he thinks nothing is either trial or death, but their stumbling, whereas their advancement was even life. How else could any one have set forth either the sorrow for the weakness of one's disciples, or the joy? He has not said we rejoice, but *"we live,"* the life to come.

So that without this we do not even think it life to live. So ought teachers to be affected, so disciples; and there will be nothing at any time amiss. Then further softening the expression, see what he says,

Ver. 9, 10. *"For what thanksgiving can we render again unto God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith?"*

Not only, he says, are you the causes of life to us, but also of much joy, and so much that we cannot worthily give thanks to God. Your good behavior, he says, we consider to be the gift of God. Such kindnesses have you shown to us, that we think it to be of God; yea, rather, and it is of God. For such a disposition of mind comes not of a human soul or carefulness.

"Night and day," he says, *"praying exceedingly."* This too is a sign of joy. For as any husbandman, hearing concerning his land that has been tilled by himself, that it is burdened with ears of grain, longs with his own eyes to see so pleasant a sight, so Paul to see Macedonia. *"Praying exceedingly."* Observe the excess; *"that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith."*

Here there is a great question. For if now you live, because they stand fast, and Timothy brought you *"glad tidings of their faith and love,"* and you are full of so much joy as not to be able worthily to give thanks to God, how do you say here that there are deficiencies in their faith? Were those then the words of flattery? By no means, far be it. For previously he testified that they endured many conflicts, and were no worse affected than the Churches in Judæa. What then is it? They had not enjoyed the full benefit of his teaching, nor learned all that it behooved them to learn. And this he shows toward the end. Perhaps there had been questionings among them concerning the Resurrection, and there were many who troubled them, not by temptations, nor by dangers, but by acting the part of teachers. This is what he says is lacking in their faith, and for this reason, he has so explained himself, and has not said, that you should be confirmed, where indeed he feared concerning the faith itself, *"I have sent,"* he says, *"Timothy 'to confirm you,'"* but here, *"to perfect that which is lacking,"* which is rather a matter of teaching than of confirming. As also he says elsewhere, *"that you may be perfected unto every good work."* [From 1 Corinthians 1:10, or 2 Timothy 3:17] Now the perfected thing is one in which there is some little deficiency: for it is that which is brought to perfection.

Ver. 11, 12. *"Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you: and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you."*

This is a proof of excessive love, that he not only prays for them by himself, but even in his Epistles inserts his prayer This argues a fervent soul, and one truly not to be restrained. This is a proof of the prayers made there also, and at the same time also an excuse, as showing that it was not voluntarily, nor from indolence, that they did not go to them. As if he had

said, May God Himself cut short the temptations that everywhere distract us, so that we may come directly to you. *"And the Lord make you to increase and abound."* Do you see the unrestrainable madness of love that is shown by his words? *"Make you to increase and abound,"* instead of cause you to grow. As if one should say, that with a kind of superabundance he desires to be loved by them. *"Even as we do also toward you,"* he says. Our part is already done, we pray that yours may be done. Do you see how he wishes love to be extended, not only toward one another, but everywhere? For this truly is the nature of godly love, that it embraces all. If you love indeed such an one, but do not love such an one, it is human love. But such is not ours. *"Even as we do also toward you."*

Ver. 13. *"To the end He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."*

He shows that love produces advantage to themselves, not to those who are loved. I wish, he says, that this love may abound, that there may be no blemish. He does not say to establish you, but your hearts. *"For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts."* [Matthew 15:19] For it is possible, without doing anything, to be a bad man; as for example, to have envy, unbelief, deceit, to rejoice at evils, not to be loving, to hold perverted doctrines, all these things are of the heart; and to be pure of these things is holiness. For indeed chastity is properly by preëminence called holiness, since fornication and adultery is also uncleanness. But universally all sin is uncleanness, and every virtue is purity. For, *"Blessed,"* it is said, *"are the pure in heart."* [Matthew 5:8] By *"the pure"* He means those who are in every way pure.

For other things also know how to pollute the soul, and no less. For that wickedness defiles the soul, hear the prophet, saying, *"O Jerusalem,*

wash your heart from wickedness." [Jeremiah 4:14] And again, *"Wash you, make you clean, put away the wickednesses from your souls."* [Isaiah 1:16, Septuagint] He did not say *"fornications,"* so that not only fornication, but other things also defile the soul.

"To establish your hearts," he says, *"unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."* Therefore Christ will then be a Judge, but not before Him (only), but also before the Father we shall stand to be judged. Or does he mean this, to be unblamable before God, as he always says, *"in the sight of God,"* for this is sincere virtue— not in the sight of men?

It is love then that makes them unblamable. For it does make men really unblamable. And once when I was discoursing of this to a certain one, and saying, that love makes men unblamable, and that love to our neighbor does not suffer any entrance of transgression, and in my discourse going over, and pursuing all the rest— some one of my acquaintance interposing himself said, What then of fornication, is it not possible both to love, and to commit fornication? And it is indeed from love that this springs. Covetousness indeed, and adultery, and envy, and hostile designs, and everything of this sort can, from love of one's neighbor, be stopped; but how fornication? He said. I therefore told him, that even this can love stop. For if a man should love a woman that commits fornication, he will endeavor both to draw her off from other men, and not himself also to add to her sin. So that to commit fornication with a woman is the part of one exceedingly hating her with whom he commits the fornication, but one who truly loved her would withdraw her from that abominable practice. And there is not, there is not any sin, which the power of love, like fire, cannot consume. For it is easier for a vile faggot to resist a great pile of fire, than for the nature of sin to resist the power of love.

This then let us plant in our own souls, that we may stand with all the Saints. For they all pleased God by their love to their neighbor. Whence was Abel slain, and did not slay? From his vehement love to his brother, he could not even admit such a thought. Whence was the destructive pest of envy received by Cain? For I will no longer call him the brother of Abel! Because the foundations of love had not been firmly fixed in him. Whence did the sons of Noah obtain a good report? Was it not because they vehemently loved their father, and did not endure to see his exposure? And whence was the other cursed? Was it not from not loving him? And whence did Abraham obtain a good report? Was it not from love in doing what he did concerning his nephew? What he did as to his supplication for the Sodomites? For strongly, strongly, were the Saints affected with love and with sympathy.

For consider, I pray; Paul, he that was bold in the face of fire, hard as adamant, firm and unshaken, on every side compact, riveted in the fear of God, and inflexible; for, *"who (said he) shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword"*? [Romans 8:35] he that was bold in the face of all these things, and of earth and sea, he that laughed to scorn the adamantine gates of death, whom nothing ever withstood—he, when he saw the tears of some whom he loved, was so broken and crushed—the adamantine man—that he did not even conceal his feelings, but said straightway, *"What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?"* [Acts 21:13] What do you say, tell me? Had a tear the power to crush that soul of adamant? Yea, he says, for I hold out against all things except love. This prevails over me, and subdues me. This is the mind of God. An abyss of water did not crush him, and a few tears crushed him. *"What do ye, weeping and crushing my heart?"* For great is the force of love. Do you not see him

again weeping? Why do you weep? Tell me. *"By the space of three years,"* he says, *"I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears."* [Acts 20:31] From his great love he feared, lest some plague should be introduced among them. And again, *"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears."* [2 Corinthians 2:4]

And what did Joseph? Tell me, that firm one, who stood up against so great a tyranny, who appears so noble against so great a flame of love, who so out-battled and overcame the madness of his mistress. For what was there not then to charm him? A beautiful person, the pride of rank, the costliness of garments, the fragrance of perfumes, (for all these things know how to soften the soul,) words more soft than all the rest! For you know that she who loves, and so vehemently, nothing so humble but she will bring herself to say it, taking upon her the attitude of a suppliant. For so broken was this woman, though wearing gold, and being of royal dignity, that she threw herself at the knees perhaps of the captive boy, and perhaps even intreated him weeping and clasping his knees, and had recourse to this not once, and a second time, but oftentimes. Then he might see her eye shining most brilliantly. For it is probable that she not simply but with excessive nicety would set off her beauty; as wishing by many nets to catch the lamb of Christ. Add here I pray also many magic charms. Yet nevertheless this inflexible, this firm man, of rocky hardness, when he saw his brothers who had bartered him away, who had thrown him into a pit, who had sold him, who had even wished to murder him, who were the causes both of the prison and the honor, when he heard from them how they had worked upon their father, (for, we said, it says, that one was devoured by a wild beast [Genesis 37:20], and [64:28]) he was broken, softened, crushed, *"And he wept,"* it says, and not being able to bear his feelings, he went in, and composed himself [Genesis 43:30], that is, wiped away his tears.

What is this? Do you weep, O Joseph? And yet the present circumstances are deserving not of tears, but of anger, and wrath, and indignation, and great revenge and retribution. You have your enemies in your hands, those fratricides; you can satiate your wrath. And yet neither would this be injustice. For thou dost not yourself begin the unjust acts, but defendest yourself against those who have done the wrong. For look not to your dignity. This was not of their contrivance, but of God, who shed His favor upon you. Why do you weep? But he would have said, far be it that I, who in all things have obtained a good report, should by this remembrance of wrongs overturn them all. It is truly a season for tears. I am not more brutish than beasts. They pour out a libation to nature, whatever harm they suffer. I weep, he says, that they ever treated me thus.

This man let us also imitate. Let us mourn and weep for those who have injured us. Let us not be angry with them. For truly they are worthy of tears, for the punishment and condemnation to which they make themselves liable. I know, how you now weep, how you rejoice, both admiring Paul, and amazed at Joseph, and pronouncing them blessed. But if any one has an enemy, let him now take him into recollection, let him bring him to his mind, that while his heart is yet warm with the remembrance of the Saints, he may be enabled to dissolve the stubbornness of wrath, and to soften what is harsh and callous. I know, that after your departure hence, after that I have ceased speaking, if anything of warmth and fervor should remain, it will not be so great, as it now is while you are hearing me. If therefore any one, if any one has become cold, let him dissolve the frost. For the remembrance of injuries is truly frost and ice. But let us invoke the Sun of Righteousness, let us entreat Him to send His beams upon us, and there will no longer be thick ice, but water to drink.

If the fire of the Sun of Righteousness has touched our souls, it will leave nothing frozen, nothing hard, nothing burning, nothing unfruitful. It will bring out all things ripe, all things sweet, all things abounding with much pleasure. If we love one another, that beam also will come. Allow me, I beseech you, to say these things with earnestness. Cause me to hear, that by these words we have produced some effect; that some one has gone and thrown both his arms about his enemy, has embraced him, has twined himself around him, has warmly kissed him, has wept. And though the other be a wild beast, a stone, or whatever he be, he will be made gentle by such affectionate kindness. For on what account is he your enemy? Hath he insulted you? Yet he has not injured you at all. But do you for the sake of money suffer your brother to be at enmity with you? Do not so, I beseech you. Let us do away all. It is our season. Let us use it to good purpose. Let us cut asunder the cords of our sins. Before we go away to judgment, let us not ourselves judge one another. *"Let not the sun"* (it is said) *"go down upon your wrath."* [Ephesians 4:26] Let no one put it off. These puttings off produce delays. If you have deferred it today, you blush the more, and if you add tomorrow, the shame is greater, and if a third day, yet worse. Let us not then put ourselves to shame, but let us forgive, that we may be forgiven. And if we be forgiven, we shall obtain all blessings, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 5 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 4:1-3]

"Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as you received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye abound more and more. For you know what charge we gave you through the Lord Jesus Christ. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

When he has met what was pressing, and what was upon his hands, and is about henceforth to enter upon things that are perpetual, and which they ought continually to hear, he adds this expression, *"finally,"* that is, always and forever. *"We beseech and exhort you in the Lord."* Strange! He does not even speak of himself as of sufficient credit to exhort. And yet who was so worthy of credit? But he takes Christ along with him. We exhort you, he says, by God. Which also he said to the Corinthians, *"God entreats (exhorts) you through us."* [2 Corinthians 5:20] *"That as you received of us."* This *"received"* is not of words only, but of actions also, viz. *"how ye ought to walk,"* and he means thereby the whole conduct of life. *"And to please God, that you abound more and more."* That is, that by more abounding ye do not stop at the limit of the commandments, but that you even go beyond them. For this it is, that *"ye abound more and more."* In what preceded he accepts the marvel of their firm faith, but here he regulates their life. For this is proficiency, even to go beyond the commandments and the statutes. For no longer from the constraint of a teacher, but from their own voluntary choice, is all this performed. For as the earth ought not to bear only what is thrown upon it, so too ought the soul not to stop at those things which have been inculcated, but to go beyond them. Do you see that he has properly said *"to go beyond"*? For

virtue is divided into these two things, to decline from evil, and to do good. For the withdrawal from evil is not sufficient for the arrival at virtue, but it is a kind of path, and a beginning leading thereto; still we have need of great alacrity. The things therefore to be avoided he tells them in the order of commandment. And justly. For these things indeed being done bring punishment, but not being done, yet bring no praise. The acts of virtue however, such as to give away our goods, and such like, are not of the order of commandment, he says. But what? *"He that is able to receive, let him receive."* [Matthew 19:12] It is profitable, therefore, that as he with much fear and trembling had given these commandments to them, he also by these letters reminds them of that his care. Wherefore he does not repeat them, but reminds them of them.

"For you know," he says, *"what charge we gave you through our Lord Jesus Christ. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."* And observe how he nowhere so vehemently glances at any other thing, as at this. As elsewhere also he writes to this effect; *"Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord."* [Hebrews 12:14] And why do you wonder, if he everywhere writes to his disciples upon this subject, when even in his Epistle to Timothy he has said, *"Keep yourself pure."* [1 Timothy 5:22] Also in his second Epistle to the Corinthians he has said, *"In much patience, in fastings, by pureness."* [2 Corinthians 6:5-6] And one may find this in many places, both in this Epistle to the Romans, and everywhere, and in all his Epistles. For in truth this is an evil pernicious to all. And as a swine full charged with mire, wherever he enters, fills all places with his ill odor, and chokes the senses with dung, so too does fornication; it is an evil not easy to be washed away. But when some even who have wives practice this, how excessive is the outrage! *"For this,"* he says, *"is the will of God, even your sanctification,*

that you abstain from all fornication." For there are many forms of disorderly conduct. The pleasures of wantonness are of many kinds and various, it were not tolerable to mention them. But having said *"from all fornication,"* he leaves it to those who know them.

Ver. 4, 5. *"That each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God."*

He says, *"That each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel."* It is, then, a matter to be learned, and that diligently, not to be wanton. But we possess our vessel, when it is pure; when it is impure, sin possesses it. And reasonably. For it does not do the things which we wish, but what sin commands. *"Not in the passion of lust,"* he says. Here he shows also the manner, according to which one ought to be temperate; that we should cut off the passions of lust. For luxury, and wealth, and idleness, and sloth, and ease, and all such things, lead us on to irregular lust. *"Even as the Gentiles,"* he says, *"which know not God."* For such are they who do not expect that they shall suffer punishment.

Ver. 6. *"That no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter."*

He has well said, *"that no man transgress."* To each man God has assigned a wife, he has set bounds to nature, that intercourse with one only: therefore intercourse with another is transgression, and the taking of more than belongs to one, and robbery; or rather it is more cruel than any robbery; for we grieve not so much, when our riches are carried off, as when marriage is invaded. Do you call him brother, and wrongest him, and that in things which are unlawful? Here he speaks concerning adultery, but above also concerning *"all fornication."* For since he was about to say, *"That no man transgress and wrong his brother,"* Do not think, he says, that I say this only in the case of brethren; you must not have the wives of others

at all, nor even women that have no husbands, and that are common. You must abstain from *"all fornication"*; *"Because,"* he says, *"the Lord is an avenger in all these things."* He exhorted them first, he shamed them, saying, *"even as the Gentiles."* Then from reasonings he showed the impropriety of defrauding a brother. Afterwards he adds the principal thing; *"Because,"* he says, *"the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and testified."* For we do not these things without being punished, neither do we enjoy so much pleasure, as we undergo punishment.

Ver. 7. *"For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification."*

Because he had said *"his brother,"* and had also added, that God is the avenger, showing that even if an unbeliever has suffered this, he who has done it shall suffer punishment, he says, it is not as avenging him that He punishes you, but because you have insulted Himself. He Himself called you, you have insulted Him who called you. On this account, he has added,

Ver. 8. *"Therefore he that rejects, rejects not man, but God, who gives His Holy Spirit unto you."*

So that even if you should defile the Empress, he says, or even your own handmaid, that has a husband, the crime is the same. Why? Because He avenges not the persons that are injured, but Himself. For you are equally defiled, you have equally insulted God; for both the one and the other is adultery, as both the one and the other is marriage. And though you should not commit adultery, but fornication, though the harlot has no husband, yet nevertheless God avenges, for He avenges Himself. For thou dost this act, not despising the man, so much as God. And it is manifest from this, that you do it concealing it from man, but you pretend that God does not see you. For tell me, if one who was thought worthy of the purple, and of infinite honor from the king (Emperor), and was commanded to live

suitably to the honor, should go and defile himself with any woman; whom has he insulted? Her, or the king who gave him all? She indeed is insulted too, but not equally.

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us guard against this sin. For as we punish women, when, being married to us, they give themselves to others, so also are we punished, though not by the Roman laws, yet by God. For this also is adultery. For not only is adultery committed in doing so by her who is married to another, but by him also, who is yoked to a wife. Attend carefully to what I say. For although what is said is offensive to many, it is necessary to be said, to set the matter right for the future. Not only is this adultery, when we defile a woman who is married to a man; but if we ourselves being married to a woman defile one who is free and disengaged, the matter is adultery. For what, if she with whom the adultery is committed is not bound? Yet are you bound. You have transgressed the law. You have injured your own flesh. For tell me, wherefore do you punish your wife, if she commit fornication with a man who is loosed, and has not a wife? Because it is adultery. Why? Yet he who defiled her has not a wife, but she is bound to a husband. Well then, thou also art bound to a wife; so that in like manner your offense also is adultery. For it is said, *"Every one that puts away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, makes her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away, commits adultery."* [Matthew 5:32] If he who marries her who is divorced commits adultery, he who, with a wife of his own, defiles himself also with that other— it is manifest to every one. But perhaps to you who are men, enough has been said on this subject. For concerning them that are such, Christ says, *"Their worm will not die and the fire will not be quenched."* [Mark 9:44] But for the sake of the young it is necessary to speak to you, not to the young themselves so much, but to you. For these things are suitable not to them

only, but also to you. And how? I will now tell you. He who has not learned to commit fornication, will neither know how to commit adultery. But he who wallows among harlots, will quickly also arrive at the other, and will defile himself, if not with the married, yet with those who are disengaged.

What then do I advise, so as to extirpate the roots? So many of you as have young sons, and are bringing them up to a worldly life, quickly draw them under the yoke of marriage. For since while he is yet young desires trouble him, for the time before marriage, by admonitions, threats, fears, promises, and numberless other methods restrain them. But at the season of marriage, let no one defer it. Behold, I speak the words of a match-maker, that you should let your sons marry. But I am not ashamed to speak thus, since not even Paul was ashamed to say, "*Defraud ye not one the other*" [1 Corinthians 7:5], which seems more shameful than what I have said; yet he was not ashamed. For he did not pay heed to words, but to the acts that were set right by words. When your son is grown up, before he enters upon warfare, or any other course of life, consider of his marriage. And if he sees that you will soon take a bride for him, and that the time intervening will be short, he will be able to endure the flame patiently. But if he perceives that you are remiss and slow, and waitest until he shall acquire a large income, and then you will contract a marriage for him, despairing at the length of the time, he will readily fall into fornication. But alas! The root of evils here also is the love of money. For since no one cares how far his son shall be sober and modest, but all are mad for gold, for this reason no one makes this a matter of concern. Wherefore I exhort you first to regulate well their souls. If he find his bride chaste, and know that body alone, then will both his desire be vehement, and his fear of God the greater, and the marriage truly honorable, receiving bodies pure and undefiled; and the offspring will be full-charged with blessing, and the bride and bridegroom will comply

with one another, for both being inexperienced in the manners of others, they will submit to one another. But one that begins when younger to wax wanton, and to have experience of the ways of harlots, for the first and second evening will praise his own wife; but after that he will soon fall back into that wantonness, seeking that dissolute and disorderly laughter, the words that are full of base import, the dissolute deportment, and all the other indecency, which it is not tolerable that we should mention. But a woman of free estate would not endure to make such exhibitions, nor to tarnish herself. For she was espoused to her husband to be his partner in life, and for the procreation of children, not for the purposes of indecency and laughter; that she might keep the house, and instruct him also to be grave, not that she might supply to him the fuel of fornication.

But the gestures of a harlot seem to you agreeable. I know it. For the Scripture says, *"The lips of a strange woman drop honey."* [Proverbs 5:3] For on this account I take all this trouble, that you may have no experience of that honey, for it straightway turns into gall. And this also the Scripture says, *"Who for a season is smooth to your throat, but afterwards you shall find her more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword."* [Proverbs 5:3-4, Septuagint] What do you say? Bear with me speaking somewhat impure, if I may say so— and expressing myself as one shameless and unblushing. For I do not submit to this willingly, but on account of those who are shameless in their actions, I am compelled to speak this sort of words. And many such we see even in the Scriptures. For even Ezekiel, reproaching Jerusalem, utters many such things, and is not ashamed. And justly. For he did not say them from his own inclination, but from his concern. For although the words seem to be indecent, yet his aim is not indecent, but even highly becoming one who wishes to banish uncleanness from the soul. For if the shameless soul does not hear the very

words, it is not affected. For a physician wishing to remove a putrid sore, first thrusts his fingers into the wound, and if he does not first defile his healing hands, he will not be able to cure it. So it is with me. Unless I first defile my mouth, that heals your passions, I shall not be able to heal you. But rather neither is my mouth defiled, nor his hands. Why then? Because the uncleanness is not that of nature, nor from our own body, as neither in that case from his hands, but from what is another's. But if where the body is another's, he does not refuse to dip his own hands, tell me, shall we refuse, where it is our own body? For you are our body, sickly indeed and impure, but ours nevertheless.

What then is this which I say, and for which I have made so long a digression? A garment indeed which your slave wears, you would not choose ever to wear, being disgusted on account of its filth, but you would rather go naked than make use of it. But a body that is unclean and filthy, and which is used not only by your slave, but by numberless others, that will you abuse, and not be disgusted? Are you ashamed at hearing this? But be ashamed of the actions, not of the words. And I pass over all other things, the rudeness, and the corruption of their manners, the servility and illiberality of the rest of their life. Tell me, should you and your servant go to the same woman? And I wish it were only your servant, and not, it may be, the executioner! And yet you could not bear to take the executioner by the hand; but her who has been made one body with him you kiss and embrace, and do not shudder, nor fear! Are, you not ashamed? Are you not abashed? Are you not pierced with anguish?

I said indeed to your fathers, that they ought early to lead you to marriage: but nevertheless neither are you without liability to punishment. For if there were not other young men also, more numerous than you, living in chastity, both formerly, and now, there would perhaps be some excuse for

you. But if there are, how can you say, that we were not able to restrain the flame of lust? For they, who have been able, are your accusers, in that they are partakers of the same nature. Hear Paul saying, *"Follow after peace...and the sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord."* [Hebrews 12:14] Is not this threat sufficient to terrify you? Do you see others continuing altogether in chastity, and in gravity passing their lives; and cannot you command yourself even so long as the period of youth? Do you see others ten thousand times overcoming pleasure, and cannot you once refrain? With your leave, I will tell you the cause. For youth is not the cause, since then all young men would be dissolute. But we thrust ourselves into the fire. For when you go up to the theater, and sit feasting your eyes with the naked limbs of women, for the time indeed you are delighted, but afterwards, you have nourished thence a mighty fever. When you see women exhibited as it were in the form of their bodies and spectacles and songs containing nothing else but irregular loves: such a woman, it is said, loved such a man, and not obtaining him, hanged herself; and unlawful loves having mothers for their object; when you receive these things by hearing also, and through women, and through figures, yea, and even through old men, (for many there put masks upon their faces, and play the parts of women,) tell me, how will you be able to continue chaste afterwards, these narratives, these spectacles, these songs occupying your soul, and dreams of this sort henceforth succeeding. For it is the nature of the soul for the most part to raise visions of such things, as it wishes for and desires in the daytime. Therefore when you there both see base actions, and hear baser words, and receive indeed the wounds but do not apply the remedies, how will not the sore naturally be increased? How will not the disease become more intense; and in a much greater degree than in our bodies? For if we were willing, our will admits of correction more easily

than our bodies. For there indeed drugs, and physicians, and time are required, but here it is sufficient having but the will, to become both good and bad. So that you have rather admitted the disorder. When therefore we gather to us indeed the things that injure, but pay no regard to the things that benefit, how can there ever be any health?

On this account Paul said, *"even as the Gentiles who knew not God."* Let us be ashamed, let us be afraid, if the Gentiles, that know not God, are often chaste. Let us turn for shame, when we are worse than they. It is easy to achieve chastity, if we will, if we withdraw ourselves from those things that are injurious, since it is not even easy to avoid fornication, if we will not. For what is more easy than to walk in the market-place? But from the excess of laziness it has become difficult, not only in the case of women, but sometimes even in that of men. What is more easy than to sleep? But we have made even this difficult. Many however of the rich toss themselves through a whole night, from their not waiting for the need of sleep, and then sleeping. And in short nothing is difficult, when men are willing; as nothing is easy, when they are unwilling; for we are masters of all these things. On this account the Scripture says, *"If you be willing and hear me."* [Isaiah 1:19, Septuagint] And again, *"If you be unwilling, and hear not."* [Isaiah 1:20] So that all depends upon being willing or unwilling. On this account we both are punished and are praised. But may it be ours, being of those who are praised, to obtain the promised blessings, by the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 6 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10]

"But concerning love of the brethren we have no need to write unto you: for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed you do it toward all the brethren, and those which are in all Macedonia."

Why then having discoursed with them earnestly concerning chastity, and being about to discourse about the duty of working, and about the not sorrowing for the departed, does he introduce that which was the principal of all good things, love, as if he were passing it over, saying, *"We have no need to write to you"*? This also is from his great wisdom, and belongs to spiritual instruction. For here he shows two things. First, that the thing is so necessary, as not to require instruction. For things that are very important are manifest to all. And secondly, by saying this he makes them more ashamed than if he had admonished them. For he who thinks that they have behaved aright, and therefore does not admonish them, even if they had not behaved aright, would the sooner lead them to it. And observe, he does not speak of love towards all, but of that towards the brethren. *"We have no need to write unto you."* He ought then to have been silent, and to say nothing, if there was no need. But now by saying there is no need, he has done a greater thing, than if he had said it.

"For you yourselves are taught of God." And see with how high a praise he has made God their Teacher in this matter. You need not, he says, to learn from man. Which also the prophet says, *"and they shall all be taught of God."* [Isaiah 54:13] *"For you yourselves,"* he says, *"are taught of God to love one another. For indeed ye do it toward all the brethren, and those which are in all Macedonia";* and toward all the others, he means.

These words are very encouraging to make them do so. And I do not merely say, that you are taught of God, but I know it from the things which you do. And in this respect he bore many testimonies to them.

"But we exhort you, brethren, that you abound more and more, and study;" that is, increase and study.

Ver. 11, 12. *"To be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you: that you may walk honestly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing."*

He shows of how many evils idleness is the cause, and of how many benefits industry. And this he makes manifest from things which happen among us, as he often does, and that wisely. For by these things the majority are led on more than by spiritual things. For it is a mark of love to our neighbors not to receive from them, but to impart to them. And observe. Being about to exhort and admonish, he places in the middle their good conduct, both that they may recover even from the preceding admonition, and from the threat, when he said, *"He therefore that rejects, rejects not man, but God,"* and that they may not be restive at this. And this is the effect of working, that one does not receive of others, nor live idly, but by working imparts to others. For it is said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* [Acts 20:35] *"And to work,"* he says, *"with your hands."* Where are those, who look out for work that is spiritual? Do you see how he takes from them every excuse, saying, *"with your hands"*? But does one practice fasting with his hands? Or watchings all night? Or lyings on the ground? This no one can say. But he is speaking of spiritual work. For it is truly spiritual, that one should by working impart to others, and there is nothing equal to this. *"That ye may walk,"* he says, *"becomingly."* Do you see whence he touches them? He has not said, that you may not be shamed by begging. But he has indeed insinuated the same, yet he puts it in a milder

way, so as both to strike and not to do this severely. For if those who are among us are offended at these things, much more those who are without, finding numberless accusations and handles, when they see a man who is in good health and able to support himself, begging and asking help of others. Wherefore also they call us Christ-mongers. On this account, he means, *"the name of God is blasphemed."* [Romans 2:24] But none of these things has he stated; but that which was able to touch them most nearly, the disgracefulness of the thing.

Ver. 13. *"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep; that you sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope."*

These two things, poverty and despondency, distressed them most, which also pertain to all men. See therefore how he remedies them. But their poverty arose from their goods being taken from them. But if he commands those, whose goods had been taken from them for Christ's sake, to support themselves by working, much more than others. For that they were taken away is manifest from his saying, You became partakers with the churches of God. How partakers with them? *"And ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions."* [Hebrews 10:34]

Here he proceeds now to start his discourse concerning the Resurrection. And why? Had he not discoursed with them upon that point? Yes, but here he glances at some further mystery. What then is this? *"That we that are alive,"* he says, *"that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep."* The discourse then of the Resurrection was sufficient to comfort him that was grieving. But that which is now said is sufficient also to make the Resurrection eminently worthy of credit. But first let us speak of what precedes, *"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep; that you*

sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope." See how here also he treats them mildly. He does not say, "*Are ye so without understanding?*" as he said to the Corinthians, "*foolish*"? That, knowing there is a resurrection, you so sorrow, as those who do not believe; but he speaks very mildly, showing respect to their other virtues. And he has not said "*concerning the dead*," but "*them that are asleep*," even at the beginning suggesting consolation to them. "*That ye sorrow not*," he says, "*even as the rest, which have no hope.*" Therefore to afflict yourselves for the departed is to act like those who have no hope. And they justly. For a soul that knows nothing of the Resurrection, but thinks that this death is death, naturally afflicts itself, and bewails and mourns intolerably as for lost ones. But you, who expectest a resurrection, on what account do you lament? To lament then is the part of those who have no hope.

Hear this, you women, as many of you as are fond of wailing, as many as at times of mourning take the sorrow impatiently, that you act the part of heathens. But if to grieve for the departed is the part of heathens, then tell me whose part it is to beat one's self, and tear the cheeks? On what account do you lament, if you believe that he will rise again, that he has not perished, that the matter is but a slumber and a sleep? You say, On account of his society, his protection, his care of our affairs, and all his other services. When therefore you lose a child at an untimely age, who is not yet able to do anything, on what account do you lament? Why do you seek to recall him? He was displaying, you say, good hopes, and I was expecting that he would be my supporter. On this account I miss my husband, on this account my son, on this account I wail and lament, not disbelieving the Resurrection, but being left destitute of support, and having lost my protector, my companion, who shared with me in all things— my comforter. On this account I mourn. I know that he will rise again, but I cannot bear

the intermediate separation. A multitude of troubles rushes in upon me. I am exposed to all who are willing to injure me. Those of my servants who formerly feared me now despise me, and trample upon me. If any one has been benefited, he has forgotten the benefit he received from him; if any one was ill-treated by the departed, to return the grudge against him, he lets loose his anger upon me. These things do not suffer me to bear my widowhood. It is for these things that I afflict myself, for these things I bewail.

How then shall we comfort such? What shall we say? How shall we banish their sorrow? In the first place I shall endeavor to convict them, that their wailing proceeds not from these things they say, but from an unreasonable passion. For if you mourn for these things, you ought always to mourn the departed. But if when a year has passed away, you forget him as if he had never been, you do not bewail the departed nor his protection. But you cannot endure the separation, nor the breaking off of your society? And what can they say, who even enter into second marriages? Sure enough! It is the former husbands that they long for. But let us not direct our discourse to them, but to those who preserve a kind affection towards the departed. Why do you lament your child? Why your husband? The former, because I had not enjoyed him, you say; the latter, because I expected that I should have enjoyed him longer. And this very thing, what want of faith does it argue, to suppose that your husband or your son constitutes your safety, and not God! How do you not think to provoke Him? For often on this account He takes them away, that you may not be so bound to them, so that it may withdraw your hopes from them. For God is jealous, and wills to be loved by us most of all things: and that, because He loves us exceedingly. For you know that this is the custom of those who love to distraction. They are excessively jealous, and would choose rather to

throw away their life, than to be surpassed in esteem by any of their rival lovers. On this account also God has taken him because of these words.

For, tell me, on what account were there not in old times widowhoods, and untimely orphanhoods? Wherefore did He permit Abraham and Isaac to live a long time? Because even when he was living he preferred God before him. He said indeed, slay; and he slew him. Why did he bring Sarah to so great an age? Because, even while she was living, he listened to God rather than to her. For this reason God said to him, "*Hear Sarah your wife.*" [From Genesis 21:12] No one then either from love to husband or wife, or on account of the protection of a child, provoked God to anger. But now because we are declining downwards, and have exceedingly fallen off, we men love our wives more than God, and we women honor our husbands more than God. It is on this account that He draws us even against our will to the love of Himself. Love not your husband more than God, and you shall not ever experience widowhood. Or rather, even if it should happen, you shall not have the feeling of it. Why? Because you have an immortal Protector who loves you better. If you love God more, mourn not: for He who is more beloved is immortal, and does not suffer you to feel the loss of him who is less beloved. This I will make manifest to you by an example. Tell me, if you have a husband, complying with you in all things, one that is respected, and that makes you honorable everywhere, and not to be despised, one respected among all, intelligent and wise, and loving you, thou being esteemed happy on his account, and in conjunction with him should you also bring forth a child, and then before it has arrived at the age of maturity, that child should depart; will you then feel the affliction? By no means. For he that is more beloved makes it disappear. And now if you love God more than your husband, assuredly He will not soon take him away. But even if He should take him, you will not be sensible of the affliction.

For this reason the blessed Job felt no severe suffering, when he heard of the death of his children all at once, because he loved God more than them. And while He whom he loved was living, those things would not be able to afflict him.

What do you say, O woman? Your husband or your son was your protector? But does not your God spare you? Who gave you your very husband? Was it not He? And who made you? Was it not He? He surely who brought you out of nothing into being, and breathed into you a soul, and put in you a mind, and vouchsafed to favor you with the knowledge of Himself, and for your sake spared not His only-begotten Son, does not He spare you? And does your fellow-servant spare you? What wrath is due to these words! What of this kind have you had from your husband? You can not say anything. For if he has even done you any kindness, it was after he had received kindness, you having previously begun. But in the case of God no one can say any such thing. For it is not as having received any favors from us that God benefits us, but being incapable of want, from His goodness alone He does good to mankind. He has promised you a kingdom, He has given immortal life, glory, brotherhood, adoption. He has made you fellow-heir with His Only-Begotten. And do you after so great benefits remember your husband? What has he bestowed of this kind? He has made His sun to shine, He has given rain, He sustains you with yearly nourishment. Woe to us for our great ingratitude!

For this reason He takes your husband, that you may not seek him. But do you still cling to him though departed, and forsakest God, when it was your duty to give thanks, to cast it all upon Him? For what is it that you have received from your husband? The pains of childbirth, and labors, and insults and reproaches often, and chidings, and bursts of anger. Are not these the things that come from husbands? But there are, you say, other

things too that are good. Of what sort then are these? Did he set off your beauty with costly garments? Did he put gold ornaments about your face? Did he make you respected by all? But if you will, you shall adorn yourself with a much better ornament than the departed. For gravity makes its possessor much more admirable than golden ornaments. This King also has garments, not of this sort, but much better. With those, if you will, invest yourself. Of what sort then are they? There is a clothing which has fringes of gold; if you will, array the soul. But did he make you not to be despised by men? And what is there great in that? Your widowhood suffers you not to be despised by the demons. Then you ruled over your servants, if at least you at all ruled over them. But now, instead of your servants, you have mastery over unbodied powers, principalities, authorities, the ruler of this world. And thou dost not mention the troubles, in which you shared with him, sometimes the fear of magistrates, sometimes the preference given to neighbors. From all these things you are now delivered, from dread and fear. But are you solicitous who will support the children that are left you? The *"Father of the fatherless."* For tell me, who gave them? Do you not hear Christ in the Gospels saying, *"Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?"* [Matthew 6:25]

Do you see, that your lamentation is not from loss of his society, but from want of faith. But the children of a father that is dead are not equally illustrious. Wherefore? They have God for their Father, and are they not illustrious? How many can I show you brought up by widows, who have become famous, how many who have been under their fathers, and have been undone! For if you bring them up from their first youth, as they ought to be brought up, they will enjoy an advantage much greater than a father's protection. For that it is the business of widows— I speak of the bringing up of children— hear Paul saying, *"If she has brought up children"* [1 Timothy

5:10]; and again, *"She shall be saved through the child-bearing,"* (he has not said through her husband,) if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety. [1 Timothy 2:15] Instill into them the fear of God from their first youth, and He will protect them better than any father; this will be a wall not to be broken. For when there is a guard seated within, we have no need of contrivances without: but where he is not, all our outward contrivances are vain.

This will be to them wealth and glory too and ornament. This will make them illustrious, not upon earth, but even in heaven. For do not look to those who are begirt with the golden girdles, nor those who are borne on horses, nor those who shine in kings' palaces on account of their fathers, nor those who have footmen and tutors. For these things perhaps cause widows to bewail over their orphans, thinking that this my son also, if his father at least were living, would have enjoyed so much happiness; but now he is in a state of depression and dishonor, and worthy of no consideration. Think not of these things, O woman, but open to you in thought the gates of heaven, consider the palace there, behold the King who is there seated. Consider if those who are upon the earth can be more illustrious than your son there— and then groan. But if some are of good repute on earth, this is not worth any consideration. It is allowed him, if you will, to be a soldier in heaven, to enlist him in the ranks of that army. For those who are enlisted there are not borne on horses, but in the clouds. They walk not upon earth, but are caught up into heaven. They have not slaves to go before them, but the Angels themselves. They stand not in the presence of a mortal king, but of Him who is immortal, the King of kings and Lord of lords. They have not a leathern girdle about their loins, but that glory which is unspeakable, and they are more splendid than kings, or whoever have been most illustrious. For in those royal courts not wealth is required, nor noble birth,

nothing else than virtue alone; and where that is present, nothing is wanting to their obtaining the chief place.

Nothing is painful to us, if we are willing to cultivate wisdom. Look up to heaven, and see how much more splendid it is than the roofs of palaces. And if the pavement of the palaces above is so much more grand than those below, that the one may be considered as dirt in comparison with the other; if any one should be thought worthy to see those palaces perfectly, what blessedness will not be his!

"But she," he says, *"that is a widow indeed, and desolate, has her hope set on God."* [1 Timothy 5:5] To whom is this said? To those who have no children, because they are more highly approved, and have a greater opportunity of pleasing God, because all their chains are loosened to them. There is no one to hold them fast, no one to compel them to drag their chains after them. You are separated from your husband, but art united to God. You have not a fellow-servant for your associate, but you have your Lord. When you pray, tell me, do you not converse with God? When you read, hear Him conversing with you. And what does He say to you? Much kinder words than your husband. For though indeed your husband should flatter you, the honor is not great, for he is your fellow-servant. But when the Lord flatters the slave, then is the courtship great. How then does He court us? Hear by what means he does it. *"Come,"* He says, *"unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* [Matthew 11:28] And again through the Prophet He calls, saying, *"Will a woman forget to have compassion on the offspring of her womb? But even if a woman should forget, yet will I not forget you, says the Lord."* [Isaiah 49:15, Septuagint] Of how great a love are these words? And again, *"Turn unto Me"* [Isaiah 45:22]; and again elsewhere, *"Turn unto Me, and you shall be saved."* [Isaiah 43:22] And if one was willing to select too from the

Canticles, taking them in the more mystical way, he will hear Him conversing and saying to every soul that is fitted for Him, "*My fair one, my dove.*" [Canticles 2:10] What is sweeter than these words? Do you see the conversation of God with men? But what? Tell me, do you not see how many children of those blessed women are gone, and are in their tombs; how many have suffered more severely, and with their husbands have lost also their children? To these things let us attend; let us be anxious about these things, and nothing will be grievous to us, but we shall continue passing all our time in spiritual joy; and we shall enjoy the eternal blessings, of which may we all be partakers, by the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 7 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 4:13]

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep; that you sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope."

There are many things which from ignorance alone cause us sorrow, so that if we come to understand them well, we banish our grief. This therefore Paul also showing, says, *"I would not have you ignorant, that you sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope."* Is it on this account you would not have them ignorant? But wherefore do you not speak of the punishment that is laid up? Ignorant, says he, of the doctrine of the Resurrection. But why? This is manifest from the other, and is admitted. But meanwhile, together with that, there will also be this not inconsiderable gain. For since they did not disbelieve the Resurrection, but nevertheless bewailed, on this account he speaks. And he discourses indeed with those who disbelieve the Resurrection in one way, but with these in another. For it is manifest that they knew, who were enquiring about the *"times and seasons."* [1 Thessalonians 5:1]

Ver. 14. *"For if we believe,"* he says, *"that Jesus died and rose again,"* and lived, *"even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."*

Where are they who deny the Flesh? For if He did not assume Flesh, neither did He die. If He did not die, neither did He rise again. How then does he exhort us from these things to faith? Was he not then according to them a trifler and a deceiver? For if to die proceeds from sin, and Christ did not sin, how does he now encourage us? And now, concerning whom does he say, O men, for whom do ye mourn? For whom do ye sorrow? For

sinner, or simply for those who die? And why does he say, *"Even as the rest, which have no hope"*? For whom do the rest mourn? So that to them all these things are vapid. *"The firstborn from the dead"* [Colossians 1:18], he says, the first-fruits. Therefore there must also be others left. And see how here he introduces nothing from reasonings, because they were docile. For in writing to the Corinthians, he started many things also from reasonings, and then he added, *"You fool, that which you sow is not quickened."* [1 Corinthians 15:36] For this is more authoritative, but it is when he converses with the believer. But with him who is without, what authority would this have? *"Even so,"* he says, *"them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."* Again, *"fallen asleep"*: he nowhere says, the dead. But with respect to Christ, his words are, *"He died,"* because there followed mention of the Resurrection, but here *"them that are fallen asleep."* How *"through Jesus"*? Either that they fell asleep through Jesus, or that through Jesus will He bring them. The phrase *"that fell asleep through Jesus"* means the faithful. Here the heretics say, that he is speaking of the baptized. What place then is there for *"even so"*? For Jesus did not fall asleep through Baptism. But on what account does he say, *"them that are fallen asleep"*? So that he is discoursing not of a general Resurrection, but of a partial one. Them that are fallen asleep through Jesus, he says, and thus he speaks in many places.

Ver. 15. *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep."*

Speaking concerning the faithful, and them *"which are fallen asleep in Christ"* [1 Corinthians 15:18]; and again, *"the dead shall rise in Christ."* Since his discourse is not concerning the Resurrection only, but both concerning the Resurrection and concerning the honor in glory; all then

shall partake of a Resurrection, he says, but not all shall be in glory, only those in Christ. Since therefore he wishes to comfort them, he comforts them not with this only, but also with the abundant honor, and with its speedy arrival, since they knew that. For in proof that he wishes to comfort them with the honor, as he goes on, he says, *"And we shall be ever with the Lord"*: and *"we shall be caught up in the clouds."*

But how do the faithful fall asleep in Jesus? It means having Christ within themselves. But the expression, *"He shall bring with Him,"* shows that they are brought from many places. *"This."* Something strange he was about to tell them. On this account he also adds what makes it worthy of credit; *"From the word of the Lord,"* he says, that is, we speak not of ourselves, but having learned from Christ, *"That we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep."* Which also he says in his Epistle to the Corinthians; *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."* [1 Corinthians 15:52] Here he gives a credibility to the Resurrection by the manner also [in which it will occur].

For because the matter seems to be difficult he says that as it is easy for the living to be taken up, so also for the departed. But in saying *"we,"* he does not speak of himself, for he was not about to remain until the Resurrection, but he speaks of the faithful. On this account he has added, *"We that are left unto the coming of the Lord shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep."* As if he had said, Think not that there is any difficulty. It is God that does it. They who are then alive shall not anticipate those who are dissolved, who are rotted, who have been dead ten thousand years. But as it is easy to bring those who are entire, so is it also those who are dissolved.

But there are some who disbelieve the matter, because they know not God. For, tell me, which is the more easy, to bring one into being out of

nothing, or to raise up again him that was dissolved? But what say they? A certain one suffered shipwreck and was drowned in the sea, and having fallen many fishes caught him, and each of the fish devoured some member. Then of these very fishes, one was caught in this gulf, and one in that, and this was eaten by one man, and that by another, while having in it the devoured pieces of flesh. And again, those who ate the fishes, that had eaten up the man, died in different places, and were themselves perhaps devoured by wild beasts. And— when there has been so great a confusion and dispersion— how shall the man rise again? Who shall gather up the dust? But wherefore do you say this, O man, and weavest strings of trifles, and makest it a matter of perplexity? For tell me, if the man had not fallen into the sea, if the fish had not eaten him, nor the fish again been devoured by numberless men— but he had been preserved with care in a coffin, and neither worms nor anything else had disturbed him, how shall that which is dissolved rise again? How shall the dust and ashes be again conglutinated? Whence shall there be any more its bloom for the body? But is not this a difficulty?

If indeed they be Greeks who raise these doubts, we shall have numberless things to say to them. What then? For there are among them those who convey souls into plants, and shrubs, and dogs. Tell me, which is more easy, to resume one's own body, or that of another? Others again say that they are consumed by fire, and that there is a resurrection of garments and of shoes, and they are not ridiculed. Others say atoms. With them, however, we have no argument at all; but to the faithful, (if we ought to call them faithful who raise questions,) we will still say what the Apostle has said, that all life springs from corruption, all plants, all seeds. Do you see not the fig tree, what a trunk it has, what stems, how many leaves, and branches, stalks, and roots, occupying so much ground and embosomed

therein. This then, such and so great as it is, springs from the grain which was thrown into the ground and itself first corrupted. And if it be not rotted and dissolved, there will be none of these things. Tell me, whence does this happen? And the vine too, which is so fair both to see and to partake of, springs from that which is vile in appearance. And what, tell me, is not the water that descends from above one thing? How is it changed into so many things? For this is more wonderful than the Resurrection. For there indeed the same seed and the same plant is the subject, and there is a great affinity. But here tell me how, having one quality and one nature, it turns into so many things? In the vine it becomes wine, and not only wine, but leaves and sap. For not only is the cluster of grapes, but the rest of the vine nourished by it. Again, in the olive (it becomes) oil, and the other so numerous things. And what is wonderful, here it is moist, there dry, here sweet there sour, here astringent, elsewhere bitter. Tell me how it turns into so many things? Show me the reason! But you cannot.

And in the case of yourself, tell me, for this comes nearer, this seed, that is deposited, how is it fashioned and molded into so many things? How into eyes? How into ears? How into hands? How into heart? Are there not in the body ten thousand differences of figures, of sizes, of qualities, of positions, of powers, of proportions? Nerves and veins and flesh and bones and membranes, and arteries and joints and cartilages, and as many more things beside these, as the sons of the physicians precisely specify, which compose our nature— and these come from that one seed! Does not this then seem to you much more difficult than those things? How is the moist and soft congealed into the dry and cold, that is, bone? How into the warm and moist, which are united in the blood? How into the cold and soft, the nerve? How into the cold and moist, the artery? Tell me, whence are these things? Are you not quite at a loss about these things? Do you not see every

day a resurrection and a death taking place in the periods of our life? Whither is our youth gone? Whence is our age come? How is it that he who is grown old cannot indeed make himself young, but begets another, a very young child, and what he cannot give to himself, that he bestows upon another?

This also we may see in trees and in animals. And yet that which gives to another ought first to bestow upon itself. But this is what human reasoning demands. But when God creates, let all things give way. If these things are so difficult, nay, so excessively difficult, I am reminded of those mad persons, who are curious about the incorporeal Generation of the Son. Things that take place every day, that are within the grasp of our hands, and that have been enquired into ten thousand times, no one has yet been able to discover; tell me, then, how is it they are curious about that secret and ineffable Generation? Is not the mind of such men wearied in treading that void? Has it not been whirled into ten thousand giddinesses? Is it not dumfounded? And yet not even so are they instructed. When they are able to say nothing about grapes and figs, they are curious about God! For tell me, how is that grape-stone resolved into leaves and stems? How before this were they not in it, nor seen in it? But it is not the grape-stone, you say, but all is from the earth. Then how is it that without this the earth bears nothing of itself? But let us not be void of understanding. What takes place is neither from the earth, nor from the grape-stone, but from Him who is Lord both of the earth and of its seeds. For this reason He has caused the same thing to be made both without them, and with them. In the first place, showing His own power, when he said, "*Let the earth bring forth the herb of grass.*" [From Genesis 1:11] And secondly, besides showing His power, instructing us also to be laborious and industrious.

Why then have these things been said by us? Not idly, but that we may believe also in the Resurrection, and that, when we again wish to apprehend something by our reasonings, but do not find it, we may not be angry and take offense, but discreetly withdrawing and checking our reasoning, we may take refuge in the power and skillfulness of God. Knowing these things therefore, let us put a curb upon our reasonings. Let us not transgress our bounds, nor the measures that have been assigned to our knowledge. For, *"If any man,"* he says, *"thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know."* [1 Corinthians 8:2]

I speak not concerning God, he says, but concerning everything. For what? Would you learn about the earth? What do you know? Tell me. How great is its measure? What is its size? What is its manner of position? What is its essence? What is its place? Where does it stand, and upon what? None of these things can you tell? But that it is cold, and dry, and black, this you can tell—and nothing farther. Again, concerning the sea? But there you will be reduced to the same uncertainty, not knowing where it begins, and where it ends, and upon what it is borne, what supports the bottom of it, and what sort of place there is for it, and whether after it there is a continent, or it ends in water and air. And what do you know of the things that are in it? But what? Let me pass over the elements. Would you have us select the smallest of plants? The unfruitful grass, a thing which we all know, tell me, how it is brought forth? Is not the material of it water, and earth, and dung? What is it that makes it appear so beautiful, and have such an admirable color? Whence does that beauty so fade away? This is not the work of water, or of earth. Do you see that there is everywhere need of faith? How does the earth bring forth, how does it travail? Tell me. But you can tell me none of these things.

Be instructed, O man, in things that are here below, and be not curious nor overmeddling about heaven. And would it were heaven, and not the Lord of heaven! Do you not know the earth from which you were brought forth, in which you were nourished, which thou inhabitest, on which you walk, without which you can not even breathe; and are you curious about things so far removed? Truly "*man is vanity*." [Psalm 39:5, and 144:5] And if any one should bid you descend into the deep, and trace out things at the bottom of the sea, you would not tolerate the command. But, when no one compels you, you are willing of yourself to fathom the unsearchable abyss? Do not so, I beseech you. But let us sail upwards, not floating, for we shall soon be weary, and sink; but using the divine Scriptures, as some vessel, let us unfurl the sails of faith. If we sail in them, then the Word of God will be present with us as our Pilot. But if we float upon human reasonings, it will not be so. For to whom of those who float, is a Pilot present? So that the danger is twofold, in that there is no vessel, and that the Pilot is absent. For if even the boat without a pilot is unsafe, when both are wanting, what hope is there of safety? Let us not then throw ourselves into manifest danger, but let us go upon a safe vessel, having fastened ourselves by the sacred anchor. For thus we shall sail into the tranquil haven, with much merchandise, and at the same time with great safety, and we shall obtain the blessings laid up for them that love Him, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and always and world without end. Amen.

Homily 8 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 4:15-17]

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The Prophets indeed, wishing to show the credibility of the things said by them, before all other things say this, *"The vision which Isaiah saw"* [Isaiah 1:1]; and again, *"The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah"* [Jeremiah 1:1, Septuagint]; and again, *"Thus says the Lord"*; with many such expressions. And many of them even saw God sitting, as far as it was possible for them to see Him. But Paul not having seen Him sitting, but having Christ speaking in himself, instead of Thus says the Lord, said, *"Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?"* [2 Corinthians 13:3] And again, *"Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ."* For the *"Apostle"* speaks the things of Him who sent him; showing that nothing is of himself. And again, *"I think that I also have the Spirit of God."* [1 Corinthians 7:40] All those things therefore he spoke by the Spirit, but this, which he now says, he heard even expressly from God. As also that which he had said discoursing to the Elders of Ephesus, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive,"* he heard among things not recorded. [Acts 20:35]

Let us then see what he now also says. *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of*

the Lord, shall in nowise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the last trump." For then, he says, *"The powers of the heavens shall be shaken."* [Matthew 24:29] But wherefore with the trumpet? For we see this on Mount Sinai too, and Angels there also. But what means the voice of the Archangel? As he said in the parable of the Virgins, Arise! *"The Bridegroom comes."* [From Matthew 25:6] Either it means this, or that as in the case of a king, so also shall it then be, Angels ministering at the Resurrection. For He says, let the dead rise, and the work is done, the Angels not having power to do this, but His word. As if upon a king's commanding and saying it, those who were shut up should go forth, and the servants should lead them out, yet they do this not from their own power, but from that Voice. This also Christ says in another place: *"He shall send forth his Angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."* [Matthew 24:31] And everywhere you see the Angels running to and fro. The Archangel therefore I think is he, who is set over those who are sent forth, and who shouts thus: *"Make all men ready, for the Judge is at hand."* And what is *"at the last trumpet"*? Here he implies that there are many trumpets, and that at the last the Judge descends. *"And the dead,"* he says, *"in Christ shall rise first. Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

Ver. 18. *"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

If He is about to descend, on what account shall we be caught up? For the sake of honor. For when a king drives into a city, those who are in honor go out to meet him; but the condemned await the judge within. And upon the coming of an affectionate father, his children indeed, and those who are

worthy to be his children, are taken out in a chariot, that they may see and kiss him; but those of the domestics who have offended remain within. We are carried upon the chariot of our Father. For He received Him up in the clouds, and *"we shall be caught up in the clouds."* [Acts 1:9] Do you see how great is the honor? And as He descends, we go forth to meet Him, and, what is more blessed than all, so we shall be with Him.

"Who shall speak of the mightinesses of the Lord, and make all His praises to be heard?" [Psalm 106:2, Septuagint] How many blessings has He vouchsafed to the human race! Those who are dead are raised first, and thus the meeting takes place together. Abel who died before all shall then meet Him together with those who are alive. So that they in this respect will have no advantage, but he who is corrupted, and has been so many years in the earth, shall meet Him with them, and so all the others. For if they awaited us, that we might be crowned, as elsewhere he says in an Epistle, *"God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect"* [Hebrews 11:40], much more shall we also await them; or rather, they indeed awaited, but we not at all. For the Resurrection takes place *"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."*

But as to the saying, that they are gathered together; they arise indeed everywhere, but are gathered together by the Angels. The former therefore is the work of the power of God commanding the earth to give up its deposit, and there is no one who ministers in it, as He then called Lazarus, *"Lazarus, come forth"* [John 11:43]; but the gathering is the work of ministers. But if Angels gather them together, and run to and fro, how are they caught up here? They are caught up after the descent, after that they are gathered together.

For this is also done without any one being aware. For when they see the earth agitated, the dust mingling, the bodies rising perchance on every

side, no one ministering to this, but the "*shout*" being sufficient, the whole earth filled (for consider how great a thing it is that all the men from Adam unto His coming shall then stand with wives and children)—when they see so great a tumult upon the earth—then they shall know. As therefore in the Dispensation that was in the Flesh, they had foreseen nothing of it, so also will it then be.

When these things then are done, then also will be the voice of the Archangel shouting and commanding the Angels, and the trumpets, or rather the sound of the trumpet. What trembling then, what fear will possess those that remain upon the earth. For one woman is caught up and another is left behind, and one man is taken, and another is passed over. [Matthew 24:40-41; Luke 17:34-35] What will be the state of their souls, when they see some indeed taken up, but themselves left behind? Will not these things be able to shake their souls more terribly than any hell? Let us represent then in word that this is now present. For if sudden death, or earthquakes in cities, and threatenings thus terrify our souls; when we see the earth breaking up, and crowded with all these, when we hear the trumpets, and the voice of the Archangel louder than any trumpet, when we perceive the heaven shriveled up, and God the King of all himself coming near— what then will be our souls? Let us shudder, I beseech you, and be frightened as if these things were now taking place. Let us not comfort ourselves by the delay. For when it must certainly happen, the delay profits us nothing.

How great will then be the fear and trembling! Have you ever seen men led away to death? What do you think is the state of their souls, as they are going on the way to the gate? Is it not worse than many deaths? What would they not choose both to do and to suffer, so that they might be delivered from that cloud of darkness? I have heard many say, who have been recalled by the mercy of the king (Emperor), after having been led

away, that they did not even see men as men, their souls being so troubled, so horror-struck, and beside themselves. If then the death of the body thus frightens us, when eternal death approaches, what will be our feelings? And why do I speak of those who are led away? A crowd then stands around, the greater part not even knowing them. If any one looked into their souls, no one is so cruel, no one so hard-hearted, no one so firm, as not to have his soul dejected, and relaxed with fear and despair. And if when others are taken off by this death, which differs nothing from sleep, those who are not concerned in it are thus affected; when we ourselves fall into greater evils, what then will be our state? It is not, believe me, it is not possible to represent the suffering by words.

Nay, you say, but God is full of love to man, and none of these things will happen! Then it is written in vain! No, you say, but only as a threat, that we may become wise! If then we are not wise, but continue evil, will He not, tell me, inflict the punishment? Will He not then recompense the good either with rewards? Yes, you say, for that is becoming to Him, to do good even beyond desert. So that those things indeed are true and will certainly be, while the punishments will not be at all, but are only for the purpose of a threat, and of terror! By what means I shall persuade you, I know not. If I say, that *"the worm will not die, and the fire will not be quenched"* [Mark 9:44]; if I say, that *"they shall go away into everlasting fire"* [Matthew 25:41-46]; if I set before you the rich man already suffering punishment, you will say that it is all a matter of threatening. Whence then shall I persuade you? For this is a Satanic reasoning, indulging you with a favor that will not profit, and causing you to be slothful.

How then can we banish it? Whatever things we say from Scripture, you will say, are for the purpose of threatening. But with respect to future things this indeed might be said, but not so concerning things that have

happened, and have had an end. You have heard of the deluge. And were those things also said by way of threat? Did they not actually happen? Those men too said many such things, and for a hundred years while the ark was building, and the wood was being wrought, and the righteous man was calling aloud, there was no one who believed. But because they did not believe the threat in words, they suffered the punishment in very deed. And this will be our fate too, if we shall not have believed. On this account it is that He compares His coming with the days of Noah, because as some disbelieved in that deluge, so will they in the deluge of hell. Were these things a threat? Were they not a fact? Then will not He, who then brought punishment upon them so suddenly, much more inflict it now also? For the things that are committed now are not less than the offenses of that time. How?— because then, it says, "*the sons of God went in unto the daughters of men*" [Genesis 6:4], and those mixtures were the great offense. But now there is no form of wickedness, which is unattempted. Do you then believe that the deluge took place? Or does it seem to you a fable? And yet even the mountains where the ark rested, bear witness; I speak of those in Armenia.

But, even superabundantly, I will turn my discourse to another thing more evident than that. Has any one of you ever traveled in Palestine? For I will no longer mention report, but facts, and yet the other were clearer than facts. For whatever things the Scripture says, are more to be trusted than things we see. Has any one of you then ever traveled in Palestine? I suppose so. What then? Bear witness then for me, you who have seen the places, to those who have not been there. For above Ascalon and Gaza up to the very end of the river Jordan there is a country wide and fruitful— or rather there was— for it is not now. This then is that which was as a garden. For it is said, "*Lot beheld all the plain of Jordan— and it was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord.*" [Genesis 13:10] This, therefore,

that was so flourishing, and that rivaled all countries, which for thrivingness exceeded the Paradise of God, is now more desolate than any wilderness. And there stand trees, indeed, and they bear fruit. But the fruit is a monument of the wrath of God. For there stand pomegranates, I speak both of the tree and the fruit, having a very fine appearance, and to the ignorant man holding out great hopes. But if they are taken into the hand, being broken open they display no fruit indeed, but much dust and ashes stored up within. Such also is the whole land. If you find a stone, you will find it full of ashes. And why do I speak of stone and wood and earth, where the air and water partake of the calamity? For as when a body is burnt and consumed, the shape remains, and the outline in the appearance of the fire, and the bulk and the proportion, but the power is no more, so truly there you may see earth, which yet has nothing of earth about it, but all ashes; trees and fruit, but nothing of trees and fruit about them; air and water, but nothing of water nor of air about them, for even these are turned to ashes. And yet how could air ever have been burnt, or water, while it remained water? For wood and stones indeed it is possible to burn, but air and water it is altogether impossible. Impossible to us, but possible to Him who did these things. Therefore the air is nothing else than a furnace, the water is a furnace. All things are unfruitful, all unproductive, all for vengeance; images of wrath that has gone before, and proofs of that which is to come.

Are these too but threatening words? Are these but the sound of words? For to me indeed the former things were not incredible, but things not seen were equally credible with things that were seen. But even to the unbeliever these are sufficient to produce faith. If any one disbelieves hell, let him consider Sodom, let him reflect upon Gomorrha, the vengeance that has been inflicted, and which yet remains. This is a proof of the eternity of punishment. Are these things grievous? And is it not grievous, when you

say that there is no hell, but that God has merely threatened it? When you slack the hands of the people? It is thou who disbelievest that compellest me to say these things; it is thou that hast drawn me out into these words. If you believed the words of Christ I should not be compelled to bring forward facts to induce belief. But since you have evaded them, you shall be persuaded henceforth, whether willing or unwilling. For what have you to say concerning Sodom? Would you wish also to know the cause, for which these things were then done? It was one sin, a grievous and accursed one certainly, yet but one. The men of that time had a passion for boys, and on that account they suffered this punishment. But now ten thousand sins equal and even more grievous than these are committed. Then He who for one sin poured forth so much anger, and neither regarded the supplication of Abraham, nor yet Lot who dwelt among them, the man who from honor to His servants offered his own daughters to insult, will He spare, when there are so many sins? These things truly are ridiculous, trifling, delusion, and diabolical deceit!

Do you wish that I should also bring forward another? You have certainly heard of Pharaoh, king of the Egyptians; you know therefore the punishment also which he suffered, how even with his whole host, chariots and horses and all, he was engulfed in the Erythræan sea. Would you hear also other examples? He perhaps was an impious man, or rather not perhaps, but certainly he was an impious man. Would you see those also punished, who were of the number of believers, and who held fast to God, but were not of upright life? Hear Paul saying, *"Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us murmur, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, and perished by the serpents."* [1 Corinthians 10:8-10] And if

fornication, and if murmuring had such power, what will not be the effect of our sins?

And if you dost not now pay the penalty, do not wonder. For they knew not of a hell, therefore they were visited with punishments following close at their heels. But you, whatever sins thou commit, though you should escape present penalty, wilt pay for it all There. Did he so punish those who were nearly in the state of children, and who did not sin so greatly— and will He spare us? It would not be reasonable. For if we commit the same sins with them, we shall deserve a greater punishment than they did. Wherefore? Because we have enjoyed more grace. But when our offenses are numerous, and more heinous than theirs, what vengeance shall we not undergo? They— and let no one think I say it as admiring them, or excusing them; far be it: for when God punishes, he who passes a contrary sentence, does it at the suggestion of the devil; I say this therefore, not praising them nor excusing them, but showing our wickedness— they therefore, although they murmured, were, however, traveling a wilderness road: but we murmur though we have a country, and are in our own houses. They, although they committed fornication, yet it was just after they came out of the evils of Egypt, and had hardly heard of such a law. But we do it, having previously received from our forefathers the doctrine of salvation, so that we are deserving of greater punishment.

Would you hear also of other things? What were their sufferings in Palestine, famines, pestilences, wars, captivities, under the Babylonians, and under the Assyrians, and their miseries from the Macedonians, and those under Hadrian and Vespasian? I have something that I wish, beloved, to relate to you; nay, do not run away! Or rather I will tell you another thing before it. There was once a famine, it says, and the king was walking upon the wall; then a woman came to him and uttered these words: "*O king, this*

woman said to me, *Let us roast your son today, and eat him— tomorrow mine. And we roasted and ate, and now she does not give me hers.*" [From 2 Kings 6:28] What can be more dreadful than this calamity? Again, in another place the Prophet says, *"The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children."* [Lamentations 4:10] The Jews then suffered such punishment, and shall we not much rather suffer?

Would you also hear other calamities of theirs? Read over Josephus, and you will learn that whole tragedy, if perchance we may persuade you from these things, that there is a hell. For consider, if they were punished, why are we not punished? Or how is it reasonable that we are not now punished, who sin more grievously than they? Is it not manifest that it is, because the punishment is kept in store for us? And, if you please, I will tell you in the person of every individual how they were punished. Cain murdered his brother. A horrible sin indeed, who can deny it? But he suffered punishment; and a heavy one, equivalent to ten thousand deaths, for he would rather have died ten thousand times. For hear him saying, *"If Thou castest me out from the land, and I shall be hidden from Your face, then it will happen that every one who finds me will slay me."* [Genesis 4:14, Septuagint] Tell me then, do not many even now do the same things that he did? For when you slay not your brother according to the flesh, but your spiritual brother, do you not do the same? For what, though not by the sword? Yet by some other means; when being able to relieve his hunger, you neglect him. What then? Has no one now envied his brother? Has no one plunged him into dangers? But here they have not suffered punishment, yet they will suffer it. Then he, who never heard the written laws, nor the prophets, nor saw great miracles suffered such great vengeance; and shall he who has done the same things in another way, and was not rendered wise

by so many examples, shall he go unpunished? Where then is the justice of God, and where His goodness?

Again, a certain one for having gathered sticks on the Sabbath was stoned, and yet this was a small commandment, and less weighty than circumcision. He then who gathered sticks on the Sabbath was stoned; but those who often commit ten thousand things contrary to the Law have gone off unpunished! If then there be not a hell, where is His justice, where His impartiality, that respects not persons? And yet He lays to their charge many such things, that they did not observe the Sabbath.

Again, another, Charmi, having stolen a devoted thing, was stoned with all his family. What then? Has no one from that time committed sacrilege? Saul, again, having spared contrary to the command of God, suffered so great punishment. Has no one from that time spared? Would indeed that it were so! Have we not, worse than wild beasts, devoured one another contrary to the command of God, and yet no one has fallen in war? Again, the sons of Eli, because they ate before the incense was offered, suffered the most severe punishment together with their father. Has no father then been neglectful with respect to his children? And are there no wicked sons? But no one has suffered punishment. Where will they suffer it then, if there be no hell?

Again, numberless instances one might enumerate. What? Ananias and Sapphira were immediately punished, because they stole part of what they had offered. Has no one then since that time been guilty of this? How was it then that they did not suffer the same punishment?

Do we then persuade you that there is a hell, or do you need more examples? Therefore we will proceed also to things that are unwritten, such as now take place in life. For it is necessary that this idea should be gathered by us from every quarter, that we may not, by vainly gratifying

ourselves, do ourselves harm. Do you not see many visited by calamities, maimed in their bodies, suffering infinite troubles, but others in good repute? For what reason do some suffer punishment for murders, and others not? Hear Paul saying, "*Some men's sins are evident,...and some men they follow after.*" [1 Timothy 5:24] How many murderers have escaped! How many violators of the tombs! But let these things pass. How many do you not see visited with the severest punishment? Some have been delivered to a long disease, others to continued tortures, and others to numberless other ills. When therefore you see one who has been guilty of the same things as they, or even much worse— and yet not suffering punishment, will you not suspect, even against your will, that there is a hell? Reckon those here who before you have been severely punished, consider that God is no respecter of persons, and that though you have done numberless wickednesses, you have suffered no such thing, and you will have the idea of hell. For God has so implanted that idea within us, that no one can ever be ignorant of it. For poets and philosophers and fabulists, and in short all men, have philosophized concerning the retribution that is there, and have said that the greater number are punished in Hades. And if those things are fables, yet what we have received are not so.

I say not these things as wishing to frighten you, nor to lay a burden on your souls, but to make them wise, and render them easier. I could wish also myself that there were no punishment— yes, myself most of all men. And why so? Because while each of you fears for his own soul, I have to answer for this office also in which I preside over you. So that most of all it is impossible for me to escape. But it cannot be that there is not punishment and a hell. What can I do? Where then, they say, is the kindness of God to men? In many places. But on this subject I will rather discourse at some other season, that we may not confuse the discourses concerning hell. In the

meantime let not that slip, which we have gained. For it is no small advantage to be persuaded concerning hell. For the recollection of such discourses, like some bitter medicine, will be able to clear off every vice, if it be constantly settled in your mind. Let us therefore use it, that having a pure heart, we may so be thought worthy to see those things, which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man. Which may we all obtain by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 9 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2]

"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that anything be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."

Nothing, as it seems, is so curious, and so fondly prone to pry into things obscure and concealed, as the nature of men. And this is wont to happen to it, when the mind is unsettled and in an imperfect state. For the simpler sort of children never cease teasing their nurses, and tutors, and parents, with their frequent questions, in which there is nothing else but *"when will this be?"* and *"when that?"* And this comes to pass also from living in indulgence, and having nothing to do. Many things therefore our mind is in haste to learn already and to comprehend, but especially concerning the period of the consummation; and what wonder if we are thus affected, for those holy men, themselves, were most of all affected in the same way? And before the Passion, the Apostles come and say to Christ, *"Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?"* [Matthew 24:23] And after the Passion and the Resurrection from the dead, they said to Him, Tell us, *"dost Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"* [From Acts 1:6] And they asked Him nothing sooner than this.

But it was not so afterwards, when they had been vouchsafed the Holy Ghost. Not only do they not themselves inquire, nor complain of this ignorance, but they repress those who labor under this unseasonable curiosity. Hear for instance what the blessed Paul now says, *"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that*

anything be written unto you." Why has he not said that no one knows? Why has he not said, that it is not revealed, instead of saying, "*You have no need that anything be written unto you*"? Because in that case he would have grieved them more, but by speaking thus he comforted them. For by the expression, "*You have no need,*" as if it were both superfluous, and inexpedient, he suffers them not to enquire.

For tell me, what would be the advantage? Let us suppose that the end would be after twenty or thirty or a hundred years, what is this to us? Is not the end of his own life the consummation to every individual? Why are you curious, and travailest about the general end? But the case is the same with us in this, as in other things. For as in other things, leaving our own private concerns, we are anxious about things in general, saying, Such an one is a fornicator, such an one an adulterer, that man has robbed, another has been injurious; but no one takes account of what is his own, but each thinks of anything rather than his own private concerns; so here also, each omitting to take thought about his own end, we are anxious to hear about the general dissolution. Now what concern is that of yours? For if you make your own a good end, you will suffer no harm from the other; be it far off, or be it near. This is nothing to us.

For this reason Christ did not tell it, because it was not expedient. How, you say, was it not expedient? He who also concealed it knows wherefore it was not expedient. For hear Him saying to His Apostles, "*It is not for you to know times, or seasons, which the Father has set within His own authority.*" [Acts 1:7] Why are you curious? Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and his fellows, heard this said, as if they were seeking things too great for them to know. True, you say; but it were possible to stop the mouths of the Greeks in this way. How? Tell me. Because they say, that this world is a god; if we knew the period of its dissolution, we should have

stopped their mouths. Why, is this what will stop their mouths, to know when it will be destroyed, or to know that it will be destroyed? Tell them this, that it will have an end. If they do not believe this, neither will they believe the other.

Hear Paul saying, *"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."* Not the general day only, but that of every individual. For the one resembles the other, is also akin to it. For what the one does collectively, that the other does partially. For the period of consummation took its beginning from Adam, and then is the end of the consummation; since even now one would not err in calling it a consummation. For when ten thousand die every day, and all await That Day, and no one is raised before it, is it not the work of That Day? And if you would know on what account it is concealed, and why it so comes as a thief in the night, I will tell you how I think I can well account for it. No one would have ever cultivated virtue during his whole life; but knowing his last day, and, after having committed numberless sins, then having come to the Laver, he would so have departed. For if now, when the fear arising from its uncertainty shakes the souls of all, still all, having spent their whole former life in wickedness, at their last breath give themselves up to Baptism,— if they had fully persuaded themselves concerning this matter, who would ever have cultivated virtue? If many have departed without Illumination, and not even this fear has taught them, while living, to cultivate the things that are pleasing to God; if this fear also had been removed, who would ever have been sober, or who gentle? There is not one! And another thing again. The fear of death and the love of life restrain many. But if each one knew that tomorrow he would certainly die, there is nothing he would refuse to attempt before that day, but he would murder

whomsoever he wished, and would retrieve himself by taking vengeance on his enemies, and would perpetrate ten thousand crimes.

For a wicked man, who despairs of his life here, pays no regard even to him who is invested with the purple. He therefore who was persuaded that he must at all events die would both be revenged upon his enemy, and after having first satisfied his own soul, so would meet his end. Let me mention also a third thing. Those who are fond of life, and vehemently attached to the things of this world, would be ruined by despair and grief. For if any of the young knew that before he reached old age, he should meet his end, as the most sluggish of wild beasts, when they are taken, become still more sluggish from expecting their end, so would he also be affected. Besides, not even the men that are courageous would have had their reward. For if they knew that after three years they must certainly die, and before that time it was not possible, what reward would they have gained for daring in the face of dangers? For any one might say to them, Because you are confident of the three years of life, for this reason you throw yourselves into dangers, knowing that it is not possible for you to pass away. For he, that expects from each danger that he may come by his death, and knows that he shall live indeed, if he does not expose himself to peril, but shall die if he attempts such and such actions, he gives the greatest proof of his zeal, and of his contempt for the present life. And this I will make plain to you by an example. Tell me, if the patriarch Abraham, foreknowing that he should not have to sacrifice his son, had brought him to the place, would he then have had any reward? And what if Paul, foreknowing that he should not die, had despised dangers, in what respect would he have been admirable? For so even the most sluggish would rush into the fire, if he could find any one he could trust to ensure his safety. But not such were the Three Children. For hear them saying, *"O king, there is a God in heaven, who will deliver us*

out of your hands, and out of this furnace; and if not, be it known to you that we do not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up." [Daniel 3:17, Septuagint]

You see how many advantages there are, and yet there are more than these that arise from not knowing the time of our end. Meanwhile it is sufficient to learn these. On this account He so comes as a thief in the night; that we may not abandon ourselves to wickedness, nor to sloth; that He may not take from us our reward. *"For yourselves know perfectly,"* he says. Why then are you curious, if you are persuaded? But that the future is uncertain, learn from what Christ has said. For that on this account He said it, hear what he says, *"Watch therefore: for you know not at what hour" the thief "comes."* [Matthew 24:42] On this account also Paul said,

Ver. 3. *"When they are saying peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in nowise escape."*

Here he has glanced at something which he has also said in his second Epistle. For since they indeed were in affliction, but they that warred on them at ease and in luxury, and then while he comforted them in their present sufferings by this mention of the Resurrection, the others insulted them with arguments taken from their forefathers, and said, When will it happen?— which the Prophets also said, *"Woe unto them that say, Let him make speed, let God hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel come, that we may know it!"* [Isaiah 5:19]; and again *"Woe unto them that desire the day of the Lord."* [Amos 5:18] He means this day; for he does not speak simply of persons who desire it, but of those who desire it because they disbelieve it: and *"the day of the Lord,"* he says, *"is darkness, and not light"*— see then how Paul consoles them, as

if he had said, Let them not account their being in a prosperous state, a proof that the Judgment is not coming. For so it is that it will come.

But it may be worth while to ask, If Antichrist comes, and Elias comes, how is it *"when they say Peace and safety,"* that then a sudden destruction comes upon them? For these things do not permit the day to come upon them unawares, being signs of its coming. But he does not mean this to be the time of Antichrist, and the whole day, because that will be a sign of the coming of Christ, but Himself will not have a sign, but will come suddenly and unexpectedly. For travail, indeed, you say, does not come upon the pregnant woman unexpectedly: for she knows that after nine months the birth will take place. And yet it is very uncertain. For some bring forth at the seventh month, and others at the ninth. And at any rate the day and the hour is uncertain. With respect to this therefore, Paul speaks thus. And the image is exact. For there are not many sure signs of travail; many indeed have brought forth in the high roads, or when out of their houses and abroad, not foreseeing it. And he has not only glanced here at the uncertainty, but also at the bitterness of the pain. For as she while sporting, laughing, not looking for anything at all, being suddenly seized with unspeakable pains, is pierced through with the pangs of labor— so will it be with those souls, when the Day comes upon them.

"And they shall in nowise escape." As he was saying just now.

Ver. 4. *"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."*

Here he speaks of a life that is dark and impure. For it is just as corrupt and wicked men do all things as in the night, escaping the notice of all, and inclosing themselves in darkness. For tell me, does not the adulterer watch for the evening, and the thief for the night? Does not the violator of the tombs carry on all his trade in the night? What then? Does it not overtake

them as a thief? Does it not come upon them also uncertainly, but do they know it beforehand? How then does he say, *"You have no need that anything be written unto you"*? He speaks here not with respect to the uncertainty, but with respect to the calamity, that is, it will not come as an evil to them. For it will come uncertainly indeed even to them, but it will involve them in no trouble. *"That that Day,"* he says, *"may not overtake you as a thief."* For in the case of those who are watching and who are in the light, if there should be any entry of a robber, it can do them no harm: so also it is with those who live well. But those who are sleeping he will strip of everything, and go off; that is, those who are trusting in the things of this life.

Ver. 5. *"For you are all,"* he says, *"sons of light, and sons of the day."*

And how is it possible to be *"sons of the day"*? Just as it is said, *"sons of destruction"* and *"sons of hell."* Wherefore Christ also said to the Pharisees, *"Woe unto you—for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he has become so, you make him a son of hell."*

[Matthew 23:15] And again Paul said, *"For which things' sake comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."* [Colossians 3:6] That is, those who do the works of hell and the works of disobedience. So also sons of God are those who do things pleasing to God; so also sons of day and sons of light, those who do the works of light. *"And we are not of the night nor of darkness."*

Ver. 6, 7, 8. *"So then let us not sleep, as do also the rest, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, since we are of the day, be sober."*

Here he shows, that to be in the day depends on ourselves. For here indeed, in the case of the present day and night, it does not depend on

ourselves. But night comes even against our will, and sleep overtakes us when we do not wish it. But with respect to that night and that sleep, it is not so, but it is in our power always to have it day, it is in our power always to watch. For to shut the eyes of the soul, and to bring on the sleep of wickedness, is not of nature, but of our own choice. *"But let us watch,"* he says, *"and be sober."* For it is possible to sleep while awake, by doing nothing good. Wherefore he has added, *"and be sober."* For even by day, if any one watches, but is not sober, he will fall into numberless dangers, so that sobriety is the intensity of watchfulness. *"They that sleep,"* he says, *"sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."* The drunkenness he here speaks of is not that from wine only, but that also which comes of all vices. For riches and the desire of wealth is a drunkenness of the soul, and so carnal lust; and every sin you can name is a drunkenness of the soul. On what account then has he called vice sleep? Because in the first place the vicious man is inactive with respect to virtue: again, because he sees everything as a vision, he views nothing in its true light, but is full of dreams, and oftentimes of unreasonable actions: and if he sees anything good, he has no firmness, no fixedness. Such is the present life. It is full of dreams, and of phantasy. Riches are a dream, and glory, and everything of that sort. He who sleeps sees not things that are and have a real subsistence, but things that are not he fancies as things that are. Such is vice, and the life that is passed in vice. It sees not things that are, that is, spiritual, heavenly, abiding things, but things that are fleeting and fly away, and that soon recede from us.

But it is not sufficient to watch and be sober, we must also be armed. For if a man watch and is sober, but has not arms, the robbers soon dispatch him. When therefore we ought both to watch, and to be sober, and to be armed, and we are unarmed and naked and asleep, who will hinder him

from thrusting home his sword? Wherefore showing this also, that we have need of arms, he has added:

Ver. 8. *"Putting on the breastplate of faith and love: and for a helmet the hope of salvation."*

"Of faith and love," he says. Here he glances at life and doctrine. He has shown what it is to watch and be sober, to have *"the breastplate of faith and love."* Not a common faith, he says, but as nothing can soon pierce through a breastplate, but it is a safe wall to the breast—so do thou also, he says, surround your soul with faith and love, and none of the fiery darts of the devil can ever be fixed in it. For where the power of the soul is preoccupied with the armor of love, all the devices of those who plot against it are vain and ineffectual. For neither wickedness, nor hatred, nor envy, nor flattery, nor hypocrisy, nor any other thing will be able to penetrate such a soul. He has not simply said *"love,"* but he has bid them put it on as a strong breastplate. *"And for a helmet the hope of salvation."* For as the helmet guards the vital part in us, surrounding the head and covering it on every side, so also this hope does not suffer the reason to falter, but sets it upright as the head, not permitting anything from without to fall upon it. And while nothing falls on it, neither does it slip of itself. For it is not possible that one who is fortified with such arms as these, should ever fall. For *"now abides faith, hope, love."* [1 Corinthians 13:13] Then having said, Put on, and array yourselves, he himself provides the armor, whence faith, hope, and love may be produced, and may become strong.

Ver. 9. *"For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us."*

Thus God has not inclined to this, that He might destroy us, but that He might save us. And whence is it manifest that this is His will? He has given His own Son for us. So does He desire that we should be saved, that

He has given His Son, and not merely given, but given Him to death. From these considerations hope is produced. For do not despair of yourself, O man, in going to God, who has not spared even His Son for you. Faint not at present evils. He who gave His Only-Begotten, that He might save you and deliver you from hell, what will He spare henceforth for your salvation? So that you ought to hope for all things kind. For neither should we fear, if we were going to a judge who was about to judge us, and who had shown so much love for us, as to have sacrificed his son. Let us hope therefore for kind and great things, for we have received the principal thing; let us believe, for we have seen an example; let us love, for it is the extreme of madness for one not to love who has been so treated.

Ver. 10, 11. *"That, whether we wake or sleep,"* he says, *"we should live together with Him. Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do."*

And again, *"whether we wake or sleep"*; by sleep there he means one thing, and here another. For here, *"whether we sleep"* signifies the death of the body; that is, fear not dangers; though we should die, we shall live. Do not despair because you are in danger. You have a strong security. He would not have given His Son if He had not been inflamed by vehement love for us. So that, though you should die, you will live; for He Himself also died. Therefore whether we die, or whether we live, we shall live with Him. This is a matter of indifference: it is no concern of mine, whether I live or die; for we shall live with Him. Let us therefore do everything for that life: looking to that, let us do all our works. Vice, O beloved, is darkness, it is death, it is night; we see nothing that we ought, we do nothing that becomes us. As the dead are unsightly and of evil odor, so also the souls of those who are vicious are full of much impurity. Their eyes are closed, their mouth is stopped, they remain without motion in the bed of vice; or rather

more wretched than those who are naturally dead. For they truly are dead to both, but these are insensible indeed to virtue, but alive to vice. If one should strike a dead man, he perceives it not, he revenges it not, but is like a dry stick. So also his soul is truly dry, having lost its life; it receives daily numberless wounds, and has no feeling of any, but lies insensible to everything.

One would not err in comparing such men to those who are mad, or drunk, or delirious. All these things belong to vice, and it is worse than all these. He that is mad is much allowed for by those who see him, for his disease is not from choice, but from nature alone; but how shall he be pardoned, who lives in vice? Whence then is vice? Whence are the majority bad? Tell me, whence have diseases their evil nature? Whence is frenzy? Whence is lethargy? Is it not from carelessness? If physical disorders have their origin in choice, much more those which are voluntary. Whence is drunkenness? Is it not from intemperance of soul? Is not frenzy from excess of fever? And is not fever from the elements too abundant in us? And is not this superabundance of elements from our carelessness? For when either from deficiency or excess we carry any of the things within us beyond the bounds of moderation, we kindle that fire. Again, if when the fire is kindled, we continue to neglect it, we make a conflagration for ourselves, which we are not able to extinguish. So is it also with vice. When we do not restrain it at its beginning, nor cut it off, we cannot afterwards reach to the end of it, but it becomes too great for our power. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us do everything that we may never become drowsy. Do you not see that when sentinels have only given way a little to sleep, they derive no advantage from their long watch, for by that little they have ruined the whole, having given perfect security to him who is prepared to steal. For as we do not see thieves in the same way that they see us, so also the devil

most of all is ever instant, and lying in wait, and grinding his teeth. Let us not then slumber. Let us not say, on this side there is nothing, on that side nothing; we are often plundered from a quarter whence we did not expect it. So it is with vice; we perish from a quarter whence we did not expect it. Let us look carefully round upon all things, let us not be drunken, and we shall not sleep. Let us not be luxurious, and we shall not slumber. Let us not be mad for external things, and we shall continue in sobriety. Let us discipline ourselves on every side. And as men who walk upon a tight rope cannot be off their guard ever so little, for that little causes great mischief: for the man losing his balance is at once precipitated down and perishes; so neither is it possible for us to be off our guard. We walk upon a narrow road intercepted by precipices on either side, not admitting of two feet at the same time. Do you see not how much carefulness is necessary? Do you see not how those who travel on such roads guard not only their feet, but their eyes also? For if he should choose to gaze on one side, though his foot stand firm, his eye becoming dizzy from the depth, plunges the whole body down. But he must take heed to himself and to his steps; wherefore he says, "*neither to the right hand, nor to the left.*" [Proverbs 4:27] Great is the depth of vice, high the precipices, much darkness below. Let us take heed to the narrow way, let us walk with fear and trembling. No one, who is traveling such a road, is dissolved in laughter nor heavy with drunkenness, but travels such a road with sobriety and fasting. No one traveling such a road carries with him any superfluities; for he would be contented even lightly equipped to be able to escape. No one entangles his own feet, but leaves them disengaged, and free to move.

But we, chaining ourselves down with numberless cares, and carrying with us the numberless burdens of this life, staring about, and loosely rambling, how do we expect to travel in that narrow road? He has not

merely said that "*narrow is the way*" [Matthew 7:14], but with wonder, "*how narrow is the way*," that is, exceedingly narrow. And this we also do in things that are quite objects of wonder. And "*straitened*," he says, "*is the way which leads unto life*." And he has well said it. For when we are bound to give an account of our thoughts, and words, and actions, and all things, truly it is narrow. But we ourselves make it more narrow, spreading out and widening ourselves, and shuffling out our feet. For the narrow way is difficult to every one, but especially to him who is incumbered with fat, as he who makes himself lean will not perceive its narrowness. So that he who has practiced himself in being pinched, will not be discouraged at its pressure.

Let not any one therefore expect that he shall see heaven with ease. For it cannot be. Let no one hope to travel the narrow road with luxury, for it is impossible. Let no one traveling in the broad way hope for life. When therefore you see such and such an one luxuriating in baths, in a sumptuous table, or in other matters having troops of attendants; think not yourself unhappy, as not partaking of these things, but lament for him, that he is traveling the way to destruction. For what is the advantage of this way, when it ends in tribulation? And what is the injury of that straitness, when it leads to rest? Tell me, if any one invited to a palace should walk through narrow ways painful and precipitous, and another led to death should be dragged through the midst of the market-place, which shall we call happy? Which shall we commiserate? Him, shall we not, who walks through the broad road? So also now, let us think happy, not those who are luxurious, but those who are not luxurious. These are hastening to heaven, those to hell.

And perhaps indeed many of them will even laugh at the things that are said by us. But I most of all lament and bewail them on this account,

that they do not even know what they ought to laugh at, and for what they ought especially to mourn, but they confound and disturb and disorder everything. On this account I bewail them. What do you say, O man, when you are to rise again, and to give an account of your actions, and to undergo the last sentence, do you pay no regard indeed to these, but give thought to gratifying your belly, and being drunken? And do you laugh at these things? But I bewail you, knowing the evils that await you, the punishment that is about to overtake you. And this I most especially bewail, that you dost laugh! Mourn with me, bewail with me your own evils. Tell me, if one of your friends perishes, do you not turn from those who laugh at his end, and think them enemies, but love those who weep and sympathize with you? Then indeed if the dead body of your wife were laid out, you turn from him that laughs: but when your soul is done to death, do you turn from him that weeps, and laugh yourself? Do you see how the devil has disposed us to be enemies and adversaries to ourselves? For once let us be sober, let us open our eyes, let us watch, let us lay hold on eternal life, let us shake off this long sleep. There is a Judgment, there is a Punishment, there is a Resurrection, there is an Inquisition into what we have done! The Lord comes in the clouds "*Before Him,*" he says, "*a fire will be kindled, and round about Him a mighty tempest*" [Psalm 50:3, Septuagint] A river of fire rolls before him, the undying worm, unquenchable fire, outer darkness, gnashing of teeth. Although you should be angry with me ten thousand times for mentioning these things, I shall not cease from mentioning them. For if the prophets, though stoned, did not keep silence, much more ought we to bear with enmities, and not to discourse to you with a view to please, that we may not, for having deceived you, be ourselves cut in sunder. There is punishment, deathless, unallayed, and no one to stand up for us. "*Who will pity,*" he says, "*the charmer that is bitten by a serpent?*" [Sirach 12:13]

When we pity not our own selves, tell me, who will pity us? If you see a man piercing himself with a sword, will you be able to spare his life? By no means. Much more, when having it in our power to do well we do not do well, who will spare us? No one! Let us pity ourselves. When we pray to God, saying, "*Lord, have mercy upon me,*" let us say it to ourselves, and have mercy upon ourselves. We are the arbiters of God's having mercy upon us. This grace He has bestowed upon us. If we do things worthy of mercy, worthy of His loving-kindness towards us, God will have mercy upon us. But if we have not mercy on ourselves, who will spare us? Have mercy on your neighbor, and you shall find mercy of God Himself. How many every day come to you, saying, "*Have pity on me,*" and thou dost not turn towards them; how many naked, how many maimed, and we do not bend toward them, but dismiss their supplications. How then do you claim to obtain mercy, when you yourself dost nothing worthy of mercy? Let us become compassionate, let us become pitiful, that so we may be well-pleasing to God, and obtain the good things promised to those that love Him, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 10 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13]

"But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves."

It must needs happen that a ruler should have many occasions of enmities. As physicians are compelled to give much trouble to the sick, preparing for them both diet and medicines that are not pleasant indeed, but attended with benefit; and as fathers are often annoying to their children: so also are teachers, and much more. For the physician, though he be odious to the sick man, yet has the relations and friends on good terms with him, nay, and often the sick man himself. And a father also, both from the force of nature and from external laws, exercises his dominion over his son with great ease; and if he should chastise and chide his son against his will, there is no one to prevent him, nor will the son himself be able to raise a look against him. But in the case of the Priest there is a great difficulty. For in the first place, he ought to be ruling people willing to obey, and thankful to him for his rule; but it is not possible that this should soon come to pass. For he who is convicted and reprov'd, be he what he may, is sure to cease from being thankful, and to become an enemy. In like manner he will act who is advised, and he who is admonished and he who is exhorted. If therefore I should say, empty out wealth on the needy, I say what is offensive and burdensome. If I say, chastise your anger, quench your wrath, check your inordinate desire, cut off a small portion of your luxury, all is burdensome and offensive. And if I should punish one who is slothful, or should remove

him from the Church, or exclude him from the public prayers, he grieves, not because he is deprived of these things, but because of the public disgrace. For this is an aggravation of the evil, that, being interdicted from spiritual things, we grieve not on account of our deprivation of these great blessings, but because of our disgrace in the sight of others. We do not shudder at, do not dread, the thing itself.

For this reason Paul from one end to the other discourses largely concerning these persons. And Christ indeed has subjected them with so strict a necessity, that He says, *"The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat. All things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works."* [Matthew 23:2-3] And again, when He healed the leper, He said, *"Go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them."* [Matthew 8:4] And yet You say, *"You make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves."* [Matthew 23:15] For this reason I said, answers He, *"Do not the things which they do."* Therefore he has shut out all excuse from him that is under rule. In his Epistle to Timothy also this Apostle said, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor."* [1 Timothy 5:17] And in his Epistle to the Hebrews also he said, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them."* [Hebrews 13:17] And here again, *"But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord."* For since he had said, *"build each other up,"* lest they should think that he raised them to the rank of teachers, he has added, See, however, that I gave leave to you also to edify one another, for it is not possible for a teacher to say everything. *"Them that labor among you,"* he says, *"and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you."* And how, he says, is it not absurd? If a man stand up for you before a man, you do anything, you confess yourself much indebted; but he stands up for you before God, and

thou dost not own the favor. And how does he stand up for me? You say, Because he prays for you, because he ministers to you the spiritual gift that is by Baptism, he visits, he advises and admonishes you, he comes at midnight if you call for him; he is nothing else than the constant subject of your mouth, and he bears your injurious speeches. What necessity had he? Has he done well or ill? Thou indeed hast a wife, and livest luxuriously, and choosest a life of commerce. But from this the Priest has hindered himself by his occupation; his life is no other than to be employed about the Church. *"And to esteem them,"* he says, *"exceeding highly in love for their work's sake; be at peace with them."* Do you see how well he is aware that unpleasant feelings arise? He does not merely say *"love,"* but *"very highly,"* as children love their fathers. For through them you were begotten by that eternal generation: through them you have obtained the kingdom: through their hands all things are done, through them the gates of heaven are opened to you. Let no one raise divisions, let no one be contentious. He who loves Christ, whatever the Priest may be, will love him, because through him he has obtained the awful Mysteries. Tell me, if wishing to see a palace resplendent with much gold, and radiant with the brightness of precious stones, you could find him who had the key, and he being called upon immediately opened it, and admitted you within, would you not prefer him above all men? Would you not love him as dearly as your eyes? Would you not kiss him? This man has opened heaven to you, and thou dost not kiss him, nor pay him court. If you have a wife, do you not love him above all, who procured her for you? So if you love Christ, if you love the kingdom of heaven, acknowledge through whom you obtained it. On this account he says, *"for their work's sake, be at peace with them."*

Ver. 14. *"And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward*

all."

Here he addresses those who have rule. Admonish, he says, *"the disorderly,"* not of imperiousness, he says, nor of self-will rebuke them, but with admonition. *"Encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all."* For he who is rebuked with harshness, despairing of himself, becomes more bold in contempt. On this account it is necessary by admonition to render the medicine sweet. But who are the disorderly? All those who do what is contrary to the will of God. For this order of the Church is more harmonious than the order of an army; so that the reviler is disorderly, the drunkard is disorderly, and the covetous, and all who sin; for they walk not orderly in their rank, but out of the line, wherefore also they are overthrown. But there is also another kind of evils, not such as this indeed, but itself also a vice, little mindedness. For this is destructive equally with sloth. He who cannot bear an insult is feeble-minded. He who cannot endure trial is feeble-minded. This is he who is sown upon the rock. There is also another sort, that of weakness. *"Support the weak,"* he says; now weakness occurs in regard to faith. But observe how he does not permit them to be despised. And elsewhere also in his Epistles he says, *"Them that are weak in the faith receive ye."* [Romans 14:1] For in our bodies too we do not suffer the weak member to perish. *"Be longsuffering toward all,"* he says. Even toward the disorderly? Yes, certainly. For there is no medicine equal to this, especially for the teacher, none so suitable to those who are under rule. It can quite shame and put out of countenance him that is fiercer and more shameless than all men.

Ver. 15. *"See that none render unto any one evil for evil."*

If we ought not to render evil for evil, much less evil for good; much less, when evil has not been previously done, to render evil, Such an one, you say, is a bad man, and has aggrieved me, and done me much injury. Do

you wish to revenge yourself upon him? Do not retaliate. Leave him unpunished. Well, is this the stopping-place? By no means;

"But always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all."

This is the higher philosophy, not only not to requite evil with evil, but to render good for evil. For this is truly revenge that brings harm to him and advantage to yourself, or rather great advantage even to him, if he will. And that you may not think that this is said with respect to the faithful, therefore he has said, *"both one toward another and toward all."*

Ver. 16. *"Rejoice always."*

This is said with respect to the temptations that bring in affliction. Hear ye, as many as have fallen into poverty, or into distressing circumstances. For from these joy is engendered. For when we possess such a soul that we take revenge on no one, but do good to all, whence, tell me, will the sting of grief be able to enter into us? For he who so rejoices in suffering evil, as to requite even with benefits him that has done him evil, whence can he afterwards suffer grief? And how, you say, is this possible? It is possible, if we will. Then also he shows the way.

Ver. 17, 18. *"Pray without ceasing; In every thing giving thanks: for this is the will of God."*

Always to give thanks, this is a mark of a philosophic soul. Have you suffered any evil? But if you will, it is no evil. Give thanks to God, and the evil is changed into good. Say thou also as Job said, *"Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* [Job 1:21] For tell me, what such great thing have you suffered? Has disease befallen you? Yet it is nothing strange. For our body is mortal, and liable to suffer. Has a want of possessions overtaken you? But these also are things to be acquired, and again to be lost, and that abide here. But is it plots and false accusations of enemies? But it is not we that

are injured by these, but they who are the authors of them. *"For the soul,"* he says, *"that sins, itself shall also die."* [Ezekiel 18:4] And he has not sinned who suffers the evil, but he who has done the evil.

Upon him therefore that is dead you ought not to take revenge, but to pray for him that you may deliver him from death. Do you not see how the bee dies upon the sting? By that animal God instructs us not to grieve our neighbors. For we ourselves receive death first. For by striking them perhaps we have pained them for a little time, but we ourselves shall not live any longer, even as that animal will not. And yet the Scripture commends it, saying that it is a worker, whose work kings and private men make use of for their health. [Sirach 11:3] But this does not preserve it from dying, but it must needs perish. And if its other excellence does not deliver it when it does injury, much less will it us.

For indeed it is the part of the fiercest beasts, when no one has injured you, to begin the injury, or rather not even of beasts. For they, if you permit them to feed in the wilderness, and dost not by straitening them reduce them to necessity, will never harm you, nor come near you, nor bite you, but will go their own way.

But you being a rational man, honored with so much rule and honor and glory, do not even imitate the beasts in your conduct to your fellow-creature, but you injure your brother, and devour him. And how will you be able to excuse yourself? Do you not hear Paul saying, *"Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Nay, but you yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."* [1 Corinthians 6:7-8] Do you see that suffering wrong consists in doing wrong, but that to suffer wrongfully is to receive a benefit? For tell me, if any one were to revile his rulers, if he were to insult those in power, whom does he injure? Himself, or them? Clearly himself. Then he who insults a ruler insults not him, but himself— and he

that insults a Christian does he not through him insult Christ? By no means, you say. What do you say? He that casts a stone at the images of the king (Emperor), at whom does he cast a stone? Is it not at himself? Then does he who casts a stone at the image of an earthly king, cast a stone at himself, and does not he who insults the image of God (for man is the image of God) injure himself?

How long shall we love riches? For I shall not cease exclaiming against them: for they are the cause of everything. How long do we not get our fill of this insatiable desire? What is the good of gold? I am astonished at the thing! There is some enchantment in the business, that gold and silver should be so highly valued among us. For our own souls indeed we have no regard, but those lifeless images engross much attention. Whence is it that this disease has invaded the world? Who shall be able to effect its destruction? What reason can cut off this evil beast, and destroy it with utter destruction? The desire is deep sown in the minds of men, even of those who seem to be religious. Let us be put to shame by the commands of the Gospel. Words only lie there in Scripture, they are nowhere shown by works.

And what is the specious plea of the many? I have children, one says, and I am afraid lest I myself be reduced to the extremity of hunger and want, lest I should stand in need of others. I am ashamed to beg. For that reason therefore do you cause others to beg? I cannot, you say, endure hunger. For that reason do you expose others to hunger? Do you know what a dreadful thing it is to beg, how dreadful to be perishing by hunger? Spare also your brethren! Are you ashamed, tell me, to be hungry, and are you not ashamed to rob? Are you afraid to perish by hunger, and not afraid to destroy others? And yet to be hungry is neither a disgrace nor a crime; but

to cast others into such a state brings not only disgrace, but extreme punishment.

All these are pretenses, words, trifles. For that it is not on account of your children that you act thus, they testify who indeed have no children, nor will have, but who yet toil and harass themselves, and are busy in acquiring wealth, as much as if they had innumerable children to leave it to. It is not the care for his children that makes a man covetous, but a disease of the soul. On this account many even who have not children are mad about riches, and others living with a great number of children even despise what they have. They will accuse you in that Day. For if the necessities of children compelled men to accumulate riches, they also must necessarily have the same longing, the same lust. And if they have not, it is not from the number of children that we are thus mad, but from the love of money. And who are they, you say, who having children, yet despise riches? Many, and in many places. And if you will allow me, I will speak also of instances among the ancients.

Had not Jacob twelve children? Did he not lead the life of a hireling? Was he not wronged by his kinsman? And did he not often disappoint him? And did his number of children ever compel him to have recourse to any dishonest counsel? What was the case with Abraham? With Isaac, had he not also many other children? What then? Did he not possess all he had for the benefit of strangers? Do you see, how he not only did not do wrong, but even gave up his possessions, not only doing good, but choosing to be wronged by his nephew? For to endure being robbed for the sake of God is a much greater thing than to do good. Why? Because the one is the fruit of the soul and of free choice, whence also it is easily performed: but the other is injurious treatment and violence. And a man will more easily throw away ten thousand talents voluntarily, and will not think that he has suffered any

harm, than he will bear meekly being robbed of three pence against his will. So that this rather is philosophy of soul. And this, we see, happened in the case of Abraham. "*For Lot,*" it is said, "*beheld all the plain; and it was well watered as the garden of God, and he chose it.*" [Genesis 13:10-11] And Abraham said nothing against it. Do you see, that he not only did not wrong him, but he was even wronged by him? Why, O man, do you accuse your own children? God did not give us children for this end, that we should seize the possessions of others. Take care, lest in saying this thou provoke God. For if you say that your children are the causes of your grasping and your avarice, I fear lest you be deprived of them, as injuring and ensnaring you. God has given you children that they may support your old age, that they may learn virtue from you.

For God on this account has willed that mankind should thus be held together, providing for two most important objects: on the one hand, appointing fathers to be teachers, and on the other, implanting great love. For if men were merely to come into being, no one would have any relation towards any other. For if now, when there are the relations of fathers, and children, and grandchildren, many do not regard many, much more would it then be the case. On this account God has given you children. Do not therefore accuse the children.

But if they who have children have no excuse, what can they say for themselves, who having no children wear themselves out about the acquisition of riches? But they have a saying for themselves, which is destitute of all excuse. And what is this? That, instead of children we may have, they say, may have our riches as a memorial. This is truly ridiculous. Instead of children, one says, my house becomes the immortal memorial of my glory. Not of your glory, O man, will it be the memorial, but of your covetousness. Do you not see how many now as they pass the magnificent

houses say one to another, What frauds, what robberies such an one committed, that he might build this house, and now he has become dust and ashes, and his house has passed into the inheritance of others! It is not of your glory then that you leave a memorial, but of your covetousness. And your body indeed is concealed in the earth, but thou dost not permit the memorial of your covetousness to be concealed, as it might have been by length of time, but causest it to be turned up and disinterred through your house. For as long as this stands, bearing your name, and called such an one's, certainly the mouths of all too must needs be opened against you. Do you see that it is better to have nothing than to sustain such an accusation?

And these things indeed here. But what shall we do There? Tell me, having so much at our disposal here, if we have imparted to no one of our possessions, or at least very little; how shall we put off our dishonest gains? For he that wishes to put off covetous gain, does not give a little out of a great deal, but many times more than he has robbed, and he ceases from robbing. Hear what Zacchæus says, "*And for as many things as I have taken wrongfully, I restore fourfold.*" [Luke 19:8] But you, taking wrongfully ten thousand talents, if you give a few drachmas, thinkest you have restored the whole, and art affected as if you had given more. And even this grudgingly. Why? Because you ought both to have restored these, and to have added other out of your own private possessions. For as the thief is not excused when he gives back only what he has stolen, but often he has added even his life; and often he compounds upon restoring many times as much: so also should the covetous man. For the covetous man also is a thief and a robber, far worse than the other, by how much he is also more tyrannical. He indeed by being concealed, and by making his attack in the night, cuts off much of the audacity of the attempt, as if he were ashamed, and feared to sin. But the other having no sense of shame, with open face in the middle

of the market-place steals the property of all, being at once a thief and a tyrant. He does not break through walls, nor extinguish the lamp, nor open a chest, nor tear off seals. But what? He does things more insolent than these, in the sight of those who are injured he carries things out by the door, he with confidence opens everything, he compels them to expose all their possessions themselves. Such is the excess of his violence. This man is more wicked than those, inasmuch as he is more shameless and tyrannical. For he that has suffered by fraud is indeed grieved, but he has no small consolation, that he who injured him was afraid of him. But he who together with the injury he suffers is also despised, will not be able to endure the violence. For the ridicule is greater. Tell me, if one committed adultery with a woman in secret, and another committed it in the sight of her husband, who grieved him the most, and was most apt to wound him. For he indeed, together with the wrong he has done, treated him also with contempt. But the former, if he did nothing else, showed at least that he feared him whom he injured. So also in the case of money. He that takes it secretly, does him honor in this respect, that he does it secretly; but he who robs publicly and openly, together with the loss adds also the shame.

Let us therefore, both poor and rich, cease from taking the property of others. For my present discourse is not only to the rich, but to the poor also. For they too rob those who are poorer than themselves. And artisans who are better off, and more powerful, outsell the poorer and more distressed, tradesmen outsell tradesmen, and so all who are engaged in the market-place. So that I wish from every side to take away injustice. For the injury consists not in the measure of the things plundered and stolen, but in the purpose of him that steals. And that these are more thieves and defrauders, who do not despise little gains, I know and remember that I have before told you, if you also remember it. But let us not be over exact. Let them be

equally bad with the rich. Let us instruct our mind not to covet greater things, not to aim at more than we have. And in heavenly things let our desire of more never be satiated, but let each be ever coveting more. But upon earth let every one be for what is needful and sufficient, and seek nothing more, that so he may be able to obtain the real goods, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, strength, honor, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 11 on First Thessalonians

[1 Thessalonians 5:19-22]

"Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. But prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil."

A thick mist, a darkness and cloud is spread over all the earth. And, showing this, the Apostle said, *"For we were once darkness."* [Ephesians 5:8] And again, *"You, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."* Since therefore there is, so to speak, a moonless night, and we walk in that night, God has given us a bright lamp, having kindled in our souls the grace of the Holy Spirit. But some who have received this light have rendered it more bright and shining, as, for instance, Paul and Peter, and all those Saints; while others have even extinguished it, as the five virgins, as those who have *"made shipwreck concerning the faith,"* as the fornicator of Corinth, as the Galatians who were perverted.

On this account Paul says, *"Quench not the Spirit,"* that is, the gift of grace, for it is his custom so to call the gift of the Spirit. But this an impure life extinguishes. For as any one, who has sprinkled both water and dust upon the light of our lamp, extinguishes it, and if he does not this, but only takes out the oil— so it is also with the gift of grace. For if you have cast over it earthly things, and the cares of fluctuating matters, you have quenched the Spirit. And if you have done none of these things, but a temptation coming from some other quarter has vehemently assailed it, as some wind, and if the light be not strong, and it has not much oil, or you have not closed the opening, or have not shut the door, all is undone. But what is the opening? As in the lamp, so is it also in us: it is the eye and the ear. Suffer not a violent blast of wickedness to fall upon these, since it

would extinguish the lamp, but close them up with the fear of God. The mouth is the door. Shut it, and fasten it, that it may both give light, and repel the attack from without. For instance, has any one insulted and reviled you? Do you shut the mouth; for if you open it, you add force to the wind. Do you not see in houses, when two doors stand directly opposite, and there is a strong wind, if you shut one, and there is no opposite draught, the wind has no power, but the greater part of its force is abated? So also now, there are two doors, your mouth, and his who insults and affronts you; if you shut your mouth, and dost not allow a draught on the other side, you have quenched the whole blast; but if you open it, it will not be restrained. Let us not therefore quench it.

And the flame is often liable to be extinguished even when no temptation assails it. When the oil fails, when we do not alms, the Spirit is quenched. For it came to you as an alms from God. Then He sees this fruit not existing in you, and he abides not with an unmerciful soul. But the Spirit being quenched, you know what follows, as many of you as have walked on a road in a moonless night. And if it is difficult to walk by night in a road from land to land, how is it safe in the road that leads from earth to heaven? Do you not know how many demons there are in the intervening space, how many wild beasts, how many spirits of wickedness? If indeed we have that light, they will be able to do us no hurt; but if we extinguish it, they soon take us captive, they soon rob us of everything. Since even robbers first extinguish the lamp, and so plunder us. For they indeed see in this darkness, since they do the works of darkness: but we are unaccustomed to that light. Let us not then extinguish it. All evil doing extinguishes that light, whether reviling, or insolence, or whatever you can mention. For as in the case of fire, everything that is foreign to its nature is destructive of it, but that kindles it which is congenial to it; whatever is dry,

whatever is warm, whatever is fiery, kindles the flame of the Spirit. Let us not therefore overlay it with anything cold or damp; for these things are destructive of it.

But there is also another explanation. There were among them many indeed who prophesied truly, but some prophesied falsely. This also he says in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that on this account He gave *"the discernings of spirits."* [1 Corinthians 12:10] For the devil, of his vile craft, wished through this gift of grace to subvert everything pertaining to the Church. For since both the demon and the Spirit prophesied concerning the future, the one indeed uttering falsehood, and the other truth, and it was not possible from any quarter to receive a proof of one or the other, but each spoke without being called to account, as Jeremiah and Ezekiel had done, but when the time came they were convicted, He gave also the *"discernings of spirits."* Since therefore then also among the Thessalonians many were prophesying, glancing at whom he says, *"Neither by word, nor by epistle, as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present"* [2 Thessalonians 2:2], he says this here. That is, do not, because there are false prophets among you, on their account prohibit also these, and turn away from them; *"quench" them "not,"* that is, *"despise not prophesyings."*

Do you see that this is what he means by, *"Prove all things"*? Because he had said, *"Despise not prophesyings,"* lest they should think that he opened the pulpit to all, he says, *"Prove all things,"* that is, such as are really prophecies; *"and hold fast that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil"*; not from this or that, but from all; that you may by proof distinguish both the true things and the false, and abstain from the latter, and hold fast the former. For thus both the hatred of the one will be vehement and the love of the other arises, when we do all things not carelessly, nor without examination, but with careful investigation.

Ver. 23. *"And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Observe the affection of the Teacher. After the admonition he adds a prayer; not only that, but even introduces it in his letter. For we need both counsel and prayer. For this reason we also first giving you counsel, then offer prayers for you. And this the Initiated know. But Paul indeed did this with good reason, having great confidence towards God, whereas we are confounded with shame, and have no freedom of speech. But because we were appointed to this we do it, being unworthy even to stand in His presence, and to hold the place of the lowest disciples. But because grace works even through the unworthy, not for our own sakes but for theirs who are about to be benefited, we contribute our parts.

"Sanctify you wholly," he says, and may *"your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* What does he here call the spirit? The gift of grace. For if we depart hence having our lamps bright, we shall enter into the bridechamber. But if they are quenched, it will not be so. For this reason he says *"your spirit."* For if that remains pure, the other remains also. *"And soul and body,"* he says. For neither the one nor the other then admits anything evil.

Ver. 24. *"Faithful is He that calls you, who will also do it."*

Observe his humility. For, because he had prayed, Think not, he says, that this happens from my prayers, but from the purpose, with which He called you. For if He called you to salvation, and He is true, He will certainly save you, in that He wills it.

Ver. 25. *"Brethren, pray for us also."*

Strange! What humility is here! But he indeed said this for the sake of humility, but we, not from humility, but for the sake of great benefit, and

wishing to gain some great profit from you, say, *"Pray for us also."* For although you do not receive any great or wonderful benefit from us, do it nevertheless for the sake of the honor and the title itself. Some one has had children, and even if they had not been benefited by him, nevertheless, because he has been their father, he perhaps sets this before them, saying, *"For one day I have not been called father by you."* On this account we too say, *"Pray for us also."* I am not merely saying this, but really desiring your prayers. For if I have become responsible for this presidency over you all, and shall have to render an account, much more ought I to have the benefit of your prayers. On your account my responsibilities are greater, therefore the help also from you should be greater.

Ver. 26. *"Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss."*

Oh! What fervor! Oh! What mad passion is here! Because being absent he could not greet them with the kiss, he greets them through others, as when we say, Kiss him for me. So also do ye yourselves retain the fire of love. For it does not admit of distances, but even through long intervening ways it extends itself, and is everywhere present.

Ver. 27. *"I adjure you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren."*

And this command is rather from love, and not so much in the way of teaching; that with them also, he means, I may be conversing.

Ver. 28. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."*

And he does not merely command, but adjures them, and this from a fervent mind, that even though they should despise him, for the sake of the adjuration they may practice what is commanded. For men had a great dread of that appeal, but now that too is trampled under foot. And often when a slave is scourged, and adjures by God and His Christ, and says, *"So may you die a Christian,"* yet no one gives heed, no one regards it; but if he

adjures him by his own son, immediately, though unwilling, and grinding his teeth, he gives up his anger. Again, another being dragged and led away through the middle of the market-place, in the presence both of Jews and Greeks, adjures him that leads him away with the most fearful adjurations, and no one regards it. What will not the Greeks say, when one of the faithful adjures a faithful man and a Christian, and no regard is paid to it, but we even despise him.

Will you allow me to tell you a certain story which I myself have heard? For I do not say it of my own invention, but having heard it from a person worthy of credit. There was a certain maid-servant united to a wicked man, a vile run-away slave; she, when her husband having committed many faults was about to be sold by her mistress; (for the offenses were too great for pardon, and the woman was a widow, and was not able to punish him who was the plague of her house, and therefore resolved to sell him; then considering that it was an unholy thing to separate the husband from the wife, the mistress, although the girl was useful, to avoid separating her from him, made up her mind to sell her also with him;) then the girl seeing herself in these straits, came to a venerable person who was intimate with her mistress, and who also told it to me, and clasping her knees, and with a thousand lamentations, besought her to entreat her mistress in her behalf; and having wasted many words, at last she added this also, as thereby especially to persuade her, laying on her a most awful adjuration, and the adjuration was this, "*So may thou see Christ at the Day of Judgment, as you neglect not my petition.*" And having so said, she departed. And she who had been entreated, upon the intrusion of some worldly care, such as happens in families, forgot the matter. Then suddenly late in the afternoon, the most awful adjuration came into her mind, and she felt great compunction, and she went and with great earnestness asked, and

obtained her request. And that very night she suddenly saw the heavens opened, and Christ Himself. But she saw Him, as far as it was possible for a woman to see Him. Because she at all regarded the adjuration, because she was afraid, she was thought worthy of this vision.

And these things I have said, that we may not despise adjurations, especially when any entreat us for things that are good, as for alms, and for works of mercy. But now poor men, who have lost their feet, sit and see you hastening by, and when they cannot follow you with their feet, they expect to detain you, as with a kind of hook, by the fear of an adjuration, and stretching out their hands, they adjure you to give them only one or two pennies. But you hasten by, though adjured by your Lord. And if he adjure you by the eyes either of your husband, who is gone abroad, or of your son, or your daughter, immediately you yield, your mind is transported, you are warmed; but if he adjure you by your Lord, you hasten by. And I have known many women who, hearing indeed the name of Christ, have hastened by; but being commended for their beauty by those who came to them, have been melted and softened, and have stretched out their hand.

Yea thus they have reduced suffering and wretched beggars to this, even to deal in making sport! For when they do not touch their souls by uttering vehement and bitter words, they have recourse to this way by which they delight them exceedingly. And our great wickedness compels him that is in calamity or is straitened by hunger, to utter encomiums upon the beauty of those who pity him. And I wish this were all. But there is even another form worse than this. It compels the poor to be jugglers, and buffoons, and filthy jesters. For when he fastens on his fingers cups and bowls and cans, and plays on them as cymbals, and having a pipe, whistles on it those base and amorous melodies, and sings them at the top of his voice; and then many stand round, and some give him a piece of bread,

some a penny, and others something else, and they detain him long, and both men and women are delighted; what is more grievous than this? Are not these things deserving of much groaning? They are indeed trifling, and are considered trifling, but they engender great sins in our character. For when any obscene and sweet melody is uttered, it softens the mind, and corrupts the very soul itself. And the poor man indeed who calls upon God, and invokes a thousand blessings upon us, is not vouchsafed a word from you; but he who instead of these things introduces sportive sallies, is admired.

And what has now come into my mind to say to you, that I will utter. And what is this? When you are involved in poverty and sickness, if from no other quarter, at least from those who beg, who wander through the narrow streets, learn to give thanks to the Lord. For they, spending their whole life in begging, do not blaspheme, are not angry, nor impatient, but make the whole narrative of their beggary in thanksgiving, magnifying God, and calling Him merciful. He indeed that is perishing with hunger, calls Him merciful, but you who are living in plenty, if you cannot get the possessions of all, call Him cruel. How much better is he! How will he condemn us! God has sent the poor through the world, as common teachers in our calamities, and consolation under them. Have you suffered anything contrary to your wishes? Yet nothing like what that poor man suffers. You have lost an eye, but he both his. You have long labored under disease, but he has one that is incurable. You have lost your children, but he even the health of his own body. You have suffered a great loss, but you are not yet reduced to supplicate from others. Give thanks to God. You see them in the furnace of poverty, and begging indeed from all, but receiving from few. When you are weary of praying, and dost not receive, consider how often you have heard a poor man calling upon you, and hast not listened to him,

and he has not been angry nor insulted you. And yet thou indeed actest thus from cruelty; but God from mercy even declines to hear. If therefore thou, yourself from cruelty not hearing your fellow-servant, expectest not to be found fault with, do you find fault with the Lord, who out of mercy does not hear His servant? Do you see how great the inequality, how great the injustice?

Let us consider these things constantly, those who are below us, those who are under greater calamities, and so we shall be able to be thankful to God. Life abounds with many such instances. And he who is sober, and willing to attend, gains no small instruction from the houses of prayer. For on this account the poor sit before the vestibule both in the churches and in the chapels of the Martyrs, that we may receive great benefit from the spectacle of these things. For consider, that when we enter into earthly palaces, we can see nothing of this kind; but men that are dignified and famous, and wealthy and intelligent, are everywhere hastening to and fro. But into the real palaces, I mean the Church, and the oratories of the Martyrs, enter the demoniacs, the maimed, the poor, the aged, the blind, and those whose limbs are distorted. And wherefore? That you may be instructed by the spectacle of these things; in the first place that if you have entered drawing after you any pride from without, having looked upon these, and laid aside your arrogance, and become contrite in heart, so you may go in, and hear the things that are said; for it is not possible that he who prays with an arrogant mind should be heard. That when you see an aged man, you may not be elated at your youth, for these old men were once young. That when you boast highly of your warfare, or your kingly power, you may consider that from these are sprung those who have become illustrious in kings' courts. That, when you presume upon your bodily health, taking heed to these, you may abate your lofty spirit. For the

healthy man who continually enters here will not be highminded on account of his bodily health; and the sick man will receive no slight consolation.

But they do not sit here only on this account, but that they may also make you compassionate, and you may be inclined to pity; that you may admire the lovingkindness of God; for if God is not ashamed of them, but has set them in His vestibules, much less be thou ashamed; that you may not be highminded on account of palaces upon earth. Be not ashamed, when called upon by a poor man; and if he should draw near, if he should catch your knees, shake him not off. For these are certain admirable dogs of the Royal Courts. For I do not call them dogs as dishonoring them— far be it— but even highly commending them. They guard the King's court. Therefore feed them. For the honor passes on to the King. There all is pride—I speak of the palaces on earth— here all is humility. You learn especially from the very vestibules that human beings are nothing. From the very persons who sit before them, you are taught that God delights not in riches. For their sitting and assembling there is all but an admonition, sending forth a clear voice regarding the nature of all men, and saying that human things are nothing, that they are shadow and smoke. If riches were a good, God would not have seated the poor before His own vestibule. And if He admits rich people also, wonder not for He admits them not on this account, that they may continue rich, but that they may be delivered from their encumbrance. For hear what Christ says to them, *"You cannot serve God and Mammon"* [Matthew 6:24]; and again, *"It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven"*; and again, *"It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven."* [Matthew 19:23-24] On this account He receives the rich, that they may hear these words, that they may long for the eternal riches, that they may covet things in heaven. And why do you wonder that He does not disdain to

seat such at His vestibules? For He does not disdain to call them to His spiritual Table, and make them partakers of that Feast. But the maimed and the lame, the old man that is clothed in rags and filth, and has catarrh, comes to partake of that Table with the young and the beautiful, and with him even who is clothed in purple, and whose head is encircled with a diadem— and is thought worthy of the spiritual Feast, and both enjoy the same benefits, and there is no difference.

Does then Christ not disdain to call them to His Table with the king (Emperor)— for both are called together— and you perhaps disdain even to be seen giving to the poor, or even conversing with them? Fie upon your haughtiness and pride! See that we suffer not the same with the rich man formerly. He disdained even to look upon Lazarus, and did not allow him to share his roof or shelter, but he was without, cast away at his gate, nor was he even vouchsafed a word from him. But see how, when fallen into straits, and in want of his help, he failed to obtain it. For if we are ashamed of those of whom Christ is not ashamed, we are ashamed of Christ, being ashamed of His friends. Let your table be filled with the maimed and the lame. Through them Christ comes, not through the rich. Perhaps you laugh at hearing this; therefore, that you may not think it is my word, hear Christ Himself speaking, that you may not laugh, but shudder: *"When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends nor your brethren, nor your kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid you again, and a recompense be made you. But when you make a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the halt, the blind; and you shall be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense you: for you shall be recompensed in the Resurrection of the just."* [Luke 14:12-14] And greater is your glory even here, if you love that. For from the former class of guests arise envy, and malice, and slanders, and revilings, and much fear lest anything

unbecoming should occur. And you stand like a servant before his master, if those who are invited are your superiors, fearing their criticism and their lips. But in the case of these there is nothing of this sort, but whatever you bring them, they receive all with pleasure; and ample is the applause, brighter the glory, higher the admiration. All they that hear do not so much applaud the former, as the latter. But if you disbelieve, you who are rich, make the trial, you who invite generals and governors. Invite the poor, and fill your table from them, and see if you are not applauded by all, if you are not loved by all, if all do not hold you as a father. For of those feasts there is no advantage, but for these heaven is in store, and the good things of heaven— of which may we all be partakers, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on Second Thessalonians

Argument

Having said in his former Epistle that *"we pray night and day to see you, and that we could not forbear, but were left in Athens alone,"* and that *"I sent Timothy"* [from 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10], by all these expressions he shows the desire which he had to come among them. When therefore he had perhaps not had time to go, and to perfect what was lacking in their faith, on this account he adds a second Epistle, filling up by his writings what was wanting of his presence. For that he did not depart, we may conjecture from hence: for he says in this Epistle, *"We beseech you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* [2 Thessalonians 2:1] For in his first Epistle he said, *"Concerning the times and the seasons you have no need that anything be written unto you."* [1 Thessalonians 5:1] So that if he had gone, there would have been no need of his writing. But since the question was deferred, on this account he adds this Epistle, as in his Epistle to Timothy he says, *"They subvert the faith of some, saying that the Resurrection is already past"* [from 2 Timothy 2:18]; that the faithful henceforth hoping for nothing great or splendid, might faint under their sufferings.

For since that hope supported them, and did not allow them to yield to the present evils, the devil wishing to cut it off, as being a kind of anchor, when he was not able to persuade them that the things to come were false, went to work another way, and having suborned certain pestilential men, endeavored to deceive those who believed into a persuasion that those great and splendid things had received their fulfillment. Accordingly these men then said that the Resurrection was already past. But now they said that the Judgment and the coming of Christ were at hand, that they might involve

even Christ in a falsehood, and having pointed out to them that there is hereafter no retribution, nor judgment-seat, nor punishment and vengeance for those who had done them evil, they might both render these more bold, and those more dispirited. And, what was worse than all, some attempted merely to report words as if they were said by Paul, but others even to forge Epistles as written by him. On this account, cutting off all access for them, he says, *"Be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us."* [2 Thessalonians 2:2] *"Neither by spirit,"* he says, glancing at the false prophets. Whence then shall we know them, he says? For this very reason, he added, *"The salutation of me Paul with my own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."* [2 Thessalonians 3:17-18] He does not here mean, that this is the token—for it is probable that others also imitated this—but that I write the salutation with my own hand, as is the custom also now among us. For by the subscription the writings of those who send letters are made known. But he comforts them, as being excessively pinched by their troubles; both praising them from their present state, and encouraging them from a prospect of the futurity, and from the punishment, and from the recompense of good things prepared for them; and he more clearly enlarges upon the topic, not indeed revealing the time itself, but showing the sign of the time, namely, Antichrist. For a weak soul is then most fully assured, not when it merely hears, but when it learns something more particular.

And Christ too bestowed great care upon this point, and being seated on the Mount, He with great particularity discoursed to His disciples upon the Consummation. And wherefore? That there might be no room for those who introduce Antichrists and false Christs. And He Himself also gives many signs, one indeed, and that the most important, saying, when *"the*

Gospel shall be preached to all nations" [from Matthew 24:14], and another also, that they should not be deceived with respect to His coming. *"As the lightning"* [Matthew 24:27], He says, shall He come; not concealed in any corner, but shining everywhere. It requires no one to point it out, so splendid will it be, even as the lightning needs no one to point it out. And He has spoken in a certain place also concerning Antichrist, when He said, *"I have come in My Father's name, and you receive Me not: if another shall come in His own name, Him you will receive."* [John 5:43] And He said that those unspeakable calamities one after another were a sign of it, and that Elias must come.

The Thessalonians indeed were then perplexed, but their perplexity has been profitable to us. For not to them only, but to us also are these things useful, that we may be delivered from childish fables and from old women's fooleries. And have you not often heard, when you were children, persons talking much even about the name of Antichrist, and about his bending the knee? For the devil scatters these things in our minds, while yet tender, that the doctrine may grow up with us, and that he may be able to deceive us. Paul therefore, in speaking of Antichrist, would not have passed over these things if they had been profitable. Let us not therefore enquire into these things. For he will not come so bending his knees, but *"exalting himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God."* [2 Thessalonians 2:4] For as the devil fell by pride, so he who is wrought upon by him is anointed unto pride.

Wherefore, I beseech you, let us all be earnest to be far removed from this affection, that we may not fall into his condemnation, that we may not subject ourselves to the same punishment, that we may not partake of the vengeance. *"Not a novice,"* he says, *"lest being puffed up he fall into the*

condemnation of the devil." [1 Timothy 3:6] He who is puffed up therefore, suffers the same punishment with the devil. *"For the beginning of pride is not to know the Lord."* [Sirach 10:12-13] Pride is the beginning of sin, the first impulse and movement toward evil. Perhaps indeed it is both the root and the foundation. For *"the beginning"* means either the first impulse towards evil, or the grounding. As if one should say, the beginning of chastity is to abstain from the sight of an improper object, that is the first impulse. But if we should say, the beginning of chastity is fasting, that is the foundation and establishment. So also pride is the beginning of sin. For every sin begins from it, and is maintained by it. For that, whatever good things we do, this vice suffers them not to remain and not fall away, but is as a certain root not letting them abide unshaken, is manifest from hence: see what things the Pharisee did, but they profited him nothing. For he did not extirpate the root, but it corrupted all his performances, because the root remained. From pride springs contempt of the poor, desire of riches, the love of power, the longing for much glory. Such an one is prompt to revenge an insult. For he who is proud cannot bear to be insulted even by his superiors, much less by his inferiors. But he who cannot bear to be insulted cannot bear either to suffer any ill. See how pride is the beginning of sin.

But how is it the beginning of pride, not to know the Lord? Justly. For he who knows God as he ought to know Him, he who knows that the Son of God humbled Himself so much, is not lifted up. But he who knows not these things, is lifted up. For pride anoints him unto arrogance. For tell me, whence is it that they who make war upon the Church say that they know God? Is it not from arrogance? See into what a precipice it plunges them, not to know the Lord! For if God loves a contrite spirit [Psalm 51:17, etc], He on the other hand *"resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble."* [1

Peter 5:5] There is therefore no evil like pride. It renders a man a demon, insolent, blasphemous, perjured, and makes him desirous of deaths and murders. The proud man always lives in troubles, is always angry, always unhappy. There is nothing which can satiate his passion. If he should see the king stooping down to him, and prostrating himself, he is not satisfied, but is the more inflamed. For as the lovers of money, the more they receive, want so much the more, so also the proud, the more honor they enjoy, the more they desire. For their passion is increased; for a passion it is, and a passion knows not limit, but then stops when it has slain its possessor. Do you not see that drunkards are always thirsty? For it is a passion, not the desire of nature, but some perverted disease. Do you not see how those who are affected with bulimy, as it is called, are always hungry? For it is a passion, as the children of the physicians say, already exceeding the bounds of nature. The busy-bodies, and the over-curious, whatever they have learned, do not stop. For it is a passion, and has no limit. [Sirach 23:17] Again, they who delight in fornication, they too cannot desist. "*To a fornicator,*" it is said, "*all bread is sweet.*" He will not cease, till he is devoured. For it is a passion.

But they are indeed passions, not however incurable, but admitting of cure, and much more than bodily affections. For if we will, we can extinguish them. How then can a man extinguish pride? By knowing God. For if it arises from not knowing God, if we know Him, all pride is banished. Think of Hell. Think of those who are much better than yourself. Think of your sins. Think for how many things you deserve punishment from God. If you think of these, you will soon bring down your proud mind, you will soon bend it. But can you not do these things? Are you too weak? Consider things present, human nature itself, the nothingness of man! When you see a dead body carried through the market-place, orphan children

following it, a widow beating her breast, servants bewailing, friends looking dejected, reflect upon the nothingness of things present, and that they differ not from a shadow, or a dream.

Does this not suit you? Think of those who are very rich, who perish anyhow in war; look round on the houses, that belonged to the great and illustrious, and are now leveled to the ground. Consider how mighty they were, and now not even a memorial of them is left. For, if you will, every day you may find examples of these things—the successions of rulers—the confiscations of rich men's goods. *"Many tyrants have sat upon the ground — and he who was never thought on, has worn a diadem."* [Sirach 11:15] Do not these things happen every day? Do not our affairs resemble a kind of wheel? Read, if you will, both our own (books), and those without: for they also abound in such examples. If you despise ours, and this from pride; if you admire the works of philosophers, go even to them. They will instruct you, relating ancient calamities, as will poets, and orators, and sophists, and all historians. From every side, if you will, you may find examples.

But if you will none of these things, reflect upon our very nature, of what it consists, and wherein it ends. Consider, when you sleep, of what worth are you? Will not even a little beast be able to destroy you? For often a little animal falling from the roof has deprived many persons of sight, or has been the cause of some other danger. But what? Are you not less than all beasts? But what do you say? That you excel in reason? But behold, you have not reason: for pride is a sign of the want of reason. And for what, tell me, are you high-minded after all? Is it upon the good constitution of your body? But the prize of victory here is with the irrational creatures; this is possessed also by robbers and murderers, and violators of the tombs. But are you proud of your understanding? It is no proof of understanding to be proud. By this then first you deprive yourself of becoming intelligent. Let

us bring down our high thoughts. Let us be moderate, and lowly, and gentle. For such even Christ has pronounced blessed above all, saying, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*" [Matthew 5:3] And again, He cried, saying, "*Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*" [Matthew 11:29] For this reason He washed the feet of His disciples, affording us an example of humility. From all these things let us gain profit, that we may be able to obtain the blessings promised to those who love Him, by the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 2 on Second Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:1-2

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

The greater part of men do and devise all things with a view to ingratiate themselves with rulers, and with those who are greater than themselves; and they account it a great thing, and think themselves happy, if they can obtain that object. But if to obtain favor with men is so great an advantage, how great must it be to find favor with God? On this account he always thus prefaces his Epistle, and invokes this upon them, knowing that if this be granted, there will be nothing afterwards grievous, but whatever troubles there may be, all will be done away. And that you may learn this, Joseph was a slave a young man, inexperienced, unformed, and suddenly the direction of a house was committed to his hands, and he had to render an account to an Egyptian master. And you know how prone to anger and unforgiving that people is, and when authority and power is added, their rage is greater, being inflamed by power. And this too is manifest from what he did afterwards. For when the mistress made accusation, he bore with it. And yet it was not the part of those who held the garment, but of him who was stripped, to have suffered violence. For he ought to have said, If he had heard that you raised your voice, as you say, he would have fled, and if he had been guilty, he would not have waited for the coming of his master. But nevertheless he took nothing of this sort into consideration, but unreasonably giving way altogether to anger, he cast him into prison. So thoughtless a person was he. And yet even from other things he might have

conjectured the good disposition and the intelligence of the man. But nevertheless, because he was very unreasonable, he never considered any such thing. He therefore who had to do with such a harsh master, and who was entrusted with the administration of his whole house, being a stranger, and solitary, and inexperienced; when God shed abundant grace upon him, passed through all, as if his temptations had not even existed, both the false accusation of his mistress, and the danger of death, and the prison, and at last came to the royal throne.

This blessed man therefore saw how great is the grace of God, and on this account he invokes it upon them. And another thing also he effects, wishing to render them well-disposed to the remaining part of the Epistle; that, though he should reprove and rebuke them, they might not break away from him. For this reason he reminds them before all things of the grace of God, mollifying their hearts, that, even if there be affliction, being reminded of the grace by which they were saved from the greater evil, they may not despair at the less, but may thence derive consolation. As also elsewhere in an Epistle he has said, *"For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life."* [Romans 5:10]

"Grace to you and peace," he says, *"from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Ver. 3. *"We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet."*

Again a sign of great humility. For he led them to reflect and consider, that if for our good actions others do not admire us first, but God, much more also ought we. And in other respects too he raises up their spirits, because they suffer such things as are not worthy of tears and lamentations,

but of thanksgiving to God. But if Paul is thankful for the good of others, what will they suffer, who not only are not thankful, but even pine at it.

"For that your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another abounds."

And how, you say, can faith increase? That is when we suffer something dreadful for it. It is a great thing for it to be established, and not to be carried away by reasonings. But when the winds assail us, when the rains burst upon us, when a violent storm is raised on every side, and the waves succeed each other— then that we are not shaken, is a proof of no less than this, that it grows, and grows exceedingly, and becomes loftier. For as in the case of the flood all the stony and lower parts are soon hidden, but as many things as are above, it reaches not them, so also the faith that has become lofty, is not drawn downwards. For this reason he does not say *"your faith grows;"* but *"grows exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another abounds."* Do you see how this contributes for the ease of affliction, to be in close guard together, and to adhere to one another? From this also arose much consolation. The love and faith, therefore, that is weak, afflictions shake, but that which is strong they render stronger. For a soul that is in grief, when it is weak, can add nothing to itself; but that which is strong does it then most. And observe their love. They did not love one indeed, and not love another, but it was equal on the part of all. For this he has intimated, by saying, *"of each one of you all toward one another."* For it was equally poised, as that of one body. Since even now we find love existing among many, but this love becoming the cause of division. For when we are knit together in parties of two or three, and the two indeed, or three or four, are closely bound to one another, but draw themselves off from the rest, because they can have recourse to these, and in all things confide in these; this is the division of love— not love. For

tell me, if the eye should bestow upon the hand the foresight which it has for the whole body, and withdrawing itself from the other members, should attend to that alone, would it not injure the whole? Assuredly. So also if we confine to one or two the love which ought to be extended to the whole Church of God, we injure both ourselves and them, and the whole. For these things are not of love, but of division; schisms, and distracting rents. Since even if I separate and take a member from the whole man, the part separated indeed is united in itself, is continuous, all compacted together, yet even so it is a separation, since it is not united to the rest of the body.

For what advantage is it, that you love a certain person exceedingly? It is a human love. But if it is not a human love, but you love for God's sake, then love all. For so God has commanded to love even our enemies. And if He has commanded to love our enemies, how much more those who have never aggrieved us? But, do you say, I love, but not in that way. Rather, you do not love at all. For when you accuse, when you envy, when you lay snares, how do you love? *"But,"* do you say, *"I do none of these things."* But when a man is ill spoken of, and you do not shut the mouth of the speaker, dost not disbelieve his sayings, dost not check him, of what love is this the sign? *"And the love,"* he says, *"of each one of you all toward one another abounds."*

Ver. 4. *"So that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God."*

Indeed in the first Epistle he says, that all the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia resounded, having heard of their faith. *"So that we need not,"* he says, *"to speak anything. For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you."* [1 Thessalonians 1:8] But here he says, *"so that we glory."* What then is it that is said? There he says that they need not instruction from him, but here he has not said that we teach them, but *"we glory,"* and are proud of you. If therefore we both give thanks to

God for you, and glory among men, much more ought you to do so for your own good deeds. For if your good actions are worthy of boasting from others, how are they worthy of lamentation from you? It is impossible to say. *"So that we ourselves,"* he says, *"glory in you in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith."*

Here he shows that much time had elapsed. For patience is shown by much time, not in two or three days. And he does not merely say patience. It is the part of patience indeed properly not yet to enjoy the promised blessings. But here he speaks of a greater patience. And of what sort is that? That which is shown in persecutions. *"For your patience,"* he says, *"and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which you endure."* For they were living with enemies who were continually endeavoring on every side to injure them, and they were manifesting a patience firm and immovable. Let all those blush who for the sake of the patronage of men pass over to other doctrines. For while it was yet the beginning of the preaching, poor men who lived by their daily earnings took upon themselves enmities from rulers and the first men of the state, when there was nowhere king or governor who was a believer; and submitted to irreconcilable war, and not even so were unsettled.

Ver. 5. *"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God."*

See how he gathers comfort for them. He had said, We give thanks to God, he had said, We glory among men: these things indeed are honorable. But that which he most seeks for, who is in suffering, is, deliverance from evils, and vengeance upon those who are evil entreating them. For when the soul is weak, it most seeks for these things, for the philosophic soul does not even seek these things. Why then does he say, *"a token of the righteous Judgment of God"*? Here he has glanced at the retribution on either side, both of those who do the ill, and of those who suffer it, as if he had said,

that the justice of God may be shown when He crowns you indeed, but punishes them. At the same time also he comforts them, showing that from their own labors and toils they are crowned, and according to the proportion of righteousness. But he puts their part first. For although a person even vehemently desires revenge, yet he first longs for reward. For this reason he says,

"That ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer."

This then does not come to pass from the circumstance that those who injure them are more powerful than they, but because it is so that they must enter into the kingdom. *"For through many tribulations,"* he says, *"we must enter into the kingdom of God."* [Acts 14:22]

Ver. 6, 7. *"If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that are afflicted rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the Angels of His power."*

The phrase *"If so be that"* here is put for *"because,"* which we also use, in speaking of things that are quite evident and not to be denied; instead of saying, *"Because it is exceedingly righteous."* *"If so be,"* he says, *"that it is a righteous thing"* with God to punish these, he will certainly punish them. As if he had said, *"If God cares for human affairs," "If God takes thought."* And he does not put it of his own opinion, but among things confessedly true; as if one said, *"If God hates the wicked,"* that he may compel them to grant that He does hate them. For such sentences are above all indisputable, inasmuch as they also themselves know that it is just. For if this is just with men, much more with God.

"To recompense," he says, *"affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that are afflicted rest."* What then? Is the retribution equal? By no means, but see by what follows how he shows that it is more severe, and the

"rest" much greater. Behold also another consolation, in that they have their partners in the afflictions, as partners also in the retribution. He joins them in their crowns with those who had performed infinitely more and greater works. Then he adds also the period, and by the description leads their minds upward, all but opening heaven already by his word, and setting it before their eyes; and he places around Him the angelic host, both from the place and from the attendants amplifying the image, so that they may be refreshed a little. *"And to you that are afflicted rest with us,"* he says, *"at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the Angels of his power."*

Ver. 8. *"In flaming fire rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus."*

If they that have not obeyed the Gospel suffer vengeance, what will not they suffer who besides their disobedience also afflict you? And see his intelligence; he says not here those who afflict you, but those *"who obey not."* So that although not on your account, yet on His own it is necessary to punish them. This then is said in order to full assurance, that it is altogether necessary for them to be punished: but what was said before, was said that they also might be honored, because they suffer these things on your account. The one causes them to believe concerning the punishment; the other to be pleased, because for the sake of what has been done to them they suffer these things.

All this was said to them, but it applies also to us. When therefore we are in affliction, let us consider these things. Let us not rejoice at the punishment of others as being avenged, but as ourselves escaping from such punishment and vengeance. For what advantage is it to us when others are punished? Let us not, I beseech you, have such souls. Let us be invited to virtue by the prospect of the kingdom. For he indeed who is exceedingly virtuous is induced neither by fear nor by the prospect of the kingdom, but

for Christ's sake alone, as was the case with Paul. Let us, however, even thus consider the blessings of the kingdom, the miseries of hell, and thus regulate and school ourselves; let us in this way bring ourselves to the things that are to be practiced. When you see anything good and great in the present life, think of the kingdom, and you will consider it as nothing. When you see anything terrible, think of hell, and you will deride it. When you are possessed by carnal desire, think of the fire, think also of the pleasure of sin itself, that it is nothing worth, that it has not even pleasure in it. For if the fear of the laws that are enacted here has so great power as to withdraw us from wicked actions, how much more should the remembrance of things future, the vengeance that is immortal, the punishment that is everlasting? If the fear of an earthly king withdraws us from so many evils, how much more the fear of the King Eternal?

Whence then can we constantly have this fear? If we continually hearken to the Scriptures. For if the sight only of a dead body so depresses the mind, how much more must hell and the fire unquenchable, how much more the worm that never dies. If we always think of hell, we shall not soon fall into it. For this reason God has threatened punishment; if it was not attended with great advantage to think of it, God would not have threatened it. But because the remembrance of it is able to work great good, for this reason He has put into our souls the terror of it, as a wholesome medicine. Let us not then overlook the great advantage arising from it, but let us continually advert to it, at our dinners, at our suppers. For conversation about pleasant things profits the soul nothing, but renders it more languid, while that about things painful and melancholy cuts off all that is relaxed and dissolute in it, and converts it, and braces it when unnerved. He who converses of theaters and actors does not benefit the soul, but inflames it more, and renders it more careless. He who concerns himself and is busy in

other men's matters, often even involves it in dangers by this curiosity. But he who converses about hell incurs no dangers, and renders it more sober.

But do you fear the offensiveness of such words? Have you then, if you are silent, extinguished hell? Or if you speak of it, have you kindled it? Whether you speak of it or not, the fire boils forth. Let it be continually spoken of, that you may never fall into it. It is not possible that a soul anxious about hell should readily sin. For hear the most excellent advice, "*Remember,*" it says, "*your latter end*" [Sirach 28:6], and you will not sin for ever. A soul that is fearful of giving account cannot but be slow to transgression. For fear being vigorous in the soul does not permit anything worldly to exist in it. For if discourse raised concerning hell so humbles and brings it low, does not the reflection constantly dwelling upon the soul purify it more than any fire?

Let us not remember the kingdom so much as hell. For fear has more power than the promise. And I know that many would despise ten thousand blessings, if they were rid of the punishment, inasmuch as it is even now sufficient for me to escape vengeance, and not to be punished. No one of those who have hell before their eyes will fall into hell. No one of those who despise hell will escape hell. For as among us those who fear the judgment-seats will not be apprehended by them, but those who despise them are chiefly those who fall under them, so it is also in this case. If the Ninevites had not feared destruction, they would have been overthrown, but because they feared, they were not overthrown. If in the time of Noah they had feared the deluge, they would not have been drowned. And if the Sodomites had feared they would not have been consumed by fire. It is a great evil to despise a threat. He who despises threatening will soon experience its reality in the execution of it. Nothing is so profitable as to converse concerning hell. It renders our souls purer than any silver. For hear

the prophet saying, "*Your judgments are always before me.*" [From Psalm 17:22, Septuagint] For although it pains the hearer, it benefits him very much.

For such indeed are all things that profit. For medicines too, and food, at first annoy the sick, and then do him good. And if we cannot bear the severity of words, it is manifest that we shall not be able to bear affliction in very deed. If no one endures a discourse concerning hell, it is evident, that if persecution came on, no one would ever stand firm against fire, against sword. Let us exercise our ears not to be over soft and tender: for from this we shall come to endure even the things themselves. If we be habituated to hear of dreadful things, we shall be habituated also to endure dreadful things. But if we be so relaxed as not to endure even words, when shall we stand against things? Do you see how the blessed Paul despises all things here, and dangers one after another, as not even temptations? Wherefore? Because he had been in the practice of despising hell, for the sake of what was God's will. He thought even the experience of hell to be nothing for the sake of the love of Christ; while we do not even endure a discourse concerning it for our own advantage. Now therefore having heard a little, go your ways; but I beseech you if there is any love in you, constantly to revert to discourses concerning these things. They can do you no harm, even if they should not benefit, but assuredly they will benefit you too. For according to our discourses, the soul is qualified. For evil communications, he says, "*corrupt good manners.*" Therefore also good communications improve it; therefore also fearful discourses make it sober. For the soul is a sort of wax. For if you apply cold discourses, you harden and make it callous; but if fiery ones, you melt it; and having melted it, you form it to what you will, and engrave the royal image upon it. Let us therefore stop up

our ears to discourses that are vain. It is no little evil; for from it arise all evils.

If our mind had been practiced to apply to divine discourses, it would not apply to others; and not applying to others, neither would it betake itself to evil actions. For words are the road to works. First we think, then we speak, then we act. Many men, even when before sober, have often from disgraceful words gone on to disgraceful actions. For our soul is neither good nor evil by nature, but becomes both the one and the other from choice. As therefore the sail carries the ship wherever the wind may blow, or rather as the rudder moves the ship, if the wind be favorable, so also thought will sail without danger, if good words from a favorable quarter waft it. But if the contrary, often they will even overwhelm the reason. For what winds are to ships, that discourses are to souls. Wherever you will, you may move and turn it. For this reason one exhorting says, "*Let your whole discourse be in the law of the Most High.*" [Sirach 20:20] Wherefore, I exhort you, when we receive children from the nurse, let us not accustom them to old wives' stories, but let them learn from their first youth that there is a Judgment, that there is a punishment; let it be instilled in their minds. This fear being rooted in them produces great good effects. For a soul that has learned from its first youth to be subdued by this expectation, will not soon shake off this fear. But like a horse obedient to the bridle, having the thought of hell seated upon it, walking orderly, it will both speak and utter things profitable; and neither youth nor riches, nor an orphan state, nor any other thing, will be able to injure it, having its reason so firm and able to hold out against everything.

By these discourses let us regulate as well ourselves as our wives too, our servants, our children, our friends, and, if possible, our enemies. For with these discourses we are able to cut off the greater part of our sins, and

it is better to dwell upon things grievous than upon things agreeable, and it is manifest from hence. For, tell me, if you should go into a house where a marriage is celebrated, for a season you are delighted at the spectacle, but afterwards having gone away, you pine with grief that you have not so much. But if you enter the house of mourners, even though they are very rich, when you go away you will be rather refreshed. For there you have not conceived envy, but comfort and consolation in your poverty. You have seen by facts, that riches are no good, poverty no evil, but they are things indifferent. So also now, if you talk about luxury, you the more vex your soul, that is not able perhaps to be luxurious. But if you are speaking against luxury, and introduce discourse concerning hell, the thing will cheer you, and beget much pleasure. For when you consider that luxury will not be able to defend us at all against that fire, you will not seek after it; but if you reflect that it is wont to kindle it even more, you will not only not seek, but will turn from it and reject it.

Let us not avoid discourses concerning hell, that we may avoid hell. Let us not banish the remembrance of punishment, that we may escape punishment. If the rich man had reflected upon that fire, he would not have sinned; but because he never was mindful of it, therefore he fell into it. Tell me, O man, being about to stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ, do you speak of all things rather than of that? And when you have a matter before a judge, often only relating to words, neither day nor night, at no time or season do you talk of anything else, but always of that business, and when you are about to give an account of your whole life, and to submit to a trial, can you not bear even with others reminding you of that Judgment? For this reason therefore all things are ruined and undone, because when we are about to stand before a human tribunal concerning matters of this life, we move everything, we solicit all men, we are constantly anxious about it, we

do everything for the sake of it: but when we are about, after no long time, to come before the Judgment-seat of Christ, we do nothing either by ourselves, or by others; we do not entreat the Judge. And yet He grants to us a long season of forbearance, and does not snatch us away in the midst of our sins, but permits us to put them off, and that Goodness and Lovingkindness leaves nothing undone of all that belongs to Himself. But all is of no avail; on this account the punishment will be the heavier. But God forbid it should be so! Wherefore, I beseech you, let us even if but now become watchful. Let us keep hell before our eyes. Let us consider that inexorable Account, that, thinking of those things, we may both avoid vice, and choose virtue, and may be able to obtain the blessings promised to those who love Him, by the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 3 on Second Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:9-10

"Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His might, when He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed."

There are many men, who form good hopes not by abstaining from their sins, but by thinking that hell is not so terrible as it is said to be, but milder than what is threatened, and temporary, not eternal; and about this they philosophize much. But I could show from many reasons, and conclude from the very expressions concerning hell, that it is not only not milder, but much more terrible than is threatened. But I do not now intend to discourse concerning these things. For the fear even from bare words is sufficient, though we do not fully unfold their meaning. But that it is not temporary, hear Paul now saying, concerning those who know not God, and who do not believe in the Gospel, that *"they shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction."* How then is that temporary which is everlasting? *"From the face of the Lord,"* he says. What is this? He here wishes to say how easily it might be. For since they were then much puffed up, there is no need, he says, of much trouble; it is enough that God comes and is seen, and all are involved in punishment and vengeance. His coming only to some indeed will be Light, but to others vengeance.

"And from the glory of His might," he says, *"when He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed."*

Is God glorified? Yea, he says, in all the Saints. How? For when they that puff so greatly see those who were scourged by them, who were despised, who were derided, even those now near to Him, it is His glory, or

rather it is their glory, both theirs and His; His indeed, because He did not forsake them; theirs, because they were thought worthy of so great honor. For as it is His riches, that there are faithful men, so also it is His glory that there are those who are to enjoy His blessings. It is the glory of Him that is good, to have those to whom He may impart His beneficence. *"And to be marveled at,"* he says, *"in all them that believed,"* that is, *"through them that believed."* See here again, *"in"* is used for *"through."* For through them He is shown to be admirable, when He brings to so much splendor those who were pitiable and wretched, and who had suffered unnumbered ills, and had believed. His power is shown then; because although they seem to be deserted here, yet nevertheless they there enjoy great glory; then especially is shown all the glory and the power of God. How?

"Because our testimony unto you was believed in that day."

Ver. 11. *"To which end also we pray always for you."*

That is, when those are brought into public view, who have suffered unnumbered ills, deigned to make them apostatize from the faith, and yet have not yielded, but have believed, God is glorified. Then is shown the glory of these men also. *"Judge none blessed,"* it says, *"before his death."* [Sirach 11:28] On this account he says, in that day will be shown those who believed. *"To which end also we pray,"* he says, *"always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power."*

"That He may count you," he says, *"worthy of calling";* for they were not called. Therefore he has added, *"and fulfill every desire of goodness."* Since he also who was clothed in filthy garments, was called, but did not abide in his calling, but for this reason was the more rejected. *"Of the calling,"* namely that to the bride-chamber. Since the five virgins also were called. *"Arise"* it says, *"the bridegroom comes."* [From Matthew 25:6] And

they prepared themselves, but did not enter in. But he speaks of that other calling. Showing therefore what calling he is speaking of, he has added, *"And fulfill every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power."* This is the calling, he says, that we seek. See how gently he takes them down. For that they may not be rendered vain by the excess of commendation, as if they had done great deeds, and may not become slothful, he shows that something still is wanting to them, so long as they are in this life. Which also he said in his Epistle to the Hebrews. *"You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."* [Hebrews 12:4] *"Unto all wellpleasing,"* he says, that is, His gratification, persuasion, full assurance. That is, that the persuasion of God may be fulfilled, that nothing may be wanting to you, that you may be so, as He wills. *"And every work of faith,"* he says, *"with power."* What is this? The patient endurance of persecutions, that we may not faint, he says.

Ver. 12. *"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

He spoke there of glory, he speaks of it also here. He said, that they are glorified, so that they might even boast. He said, what was much more, that they also glorify God. He said, that they will receive that glory. But here too he means; For the Master being glorified, the servants also are glorified. For those who glorify their Master, are much more glorified themselves, both by that very thing, and apart from it. For tribulation for the sake of Christ is glory, and that thing he everywhere calls glory. And by how much the more we suffer anything dishonorable, so much the more illustrious we become. Then again showing that this also itself is of God, he says, *"according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ"*; that is, this grace He Himself has given us, that He may be glorified in us, and that He may glorify us in

Him. How is He glorified in us? Because we prefer nothing before Him. How are we glorified in Him? Because we have received power from Him, so that we do not at all yield to the evils that are brought upon us. For when temptation happens, at the same time God is glorified, and we too. For they glorify Him, because He has so nerved us; they admire us, because we have rendered ourselves worthy. And all these things are done by the grace of God.

Chap. 2:1, 2. *"Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him; to the end that you be not quickly shaken from your mind."*

When the Resurrection will be, he has not said, but that it will not be now, he has said. *"And our gathering together unto Him."* This also is no little matter. See how the exhortation also is again accompanied with commendation and encouragement, in that He and all the Saints will certainly appear with us. Here he is discoursing concerning the resurrection and our gathering together. For these things will happen at the same time. He raises up their minds. *"That ye be not quickly shaken,"* he says, *"nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present."*

Here he seems to me to intimate that certain persons went about having forged an Epistle, as if from Paul, and showing this, said that the Day of the Lord is at hand, that thence they might lead many into error. Therefore that they might not be deceived, Paul gives security by the things he writes, and says, *"be not troubled, either by spirit or by word"*: and this is the meaning of what he says: Though any one having the spirit of prophecy should say this, believe it not. For when I was with you I told you these things, so that you ought not to change your persuasion from the things which you were taught. Or thus, *"by spirit"*: so he calls the false

prophet, speaking what they spoke by an unclean spirit. For these men, willing the more to be believed, not only endeavored to deceive by persuasive words, (for this he shows, saying, "*or by word,*") but they also showed a forged letter, as from Paul, declaring the same thing. Wherefore pointing out this also, he has added, "*or by letter as from us.*" Having therefore secured them on every side, he thus sets forth his own doctrine, and says:

Ver. 3, 4. "*Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.*"

Here he discourses concerning the Antichrist, and reveals great mysteries. What is "*the falling away*?" He calls him Apostasy, as being about to destroy many, and make them fall away. So that if it were possible, He says, the very Elect should be offended. [From Matthew 24:24] And he calls him "*the man of sin.*" For he shall do numberless mischiefs, and shall cause others to do them. But he calls him "*the son of perdition,*" because he is also to be destroyed. But who is he? Is it then Satan? By no means; but some man, that admits his fully working in him. For he is a man. "*And exalts himself against all that is called God or is worshipped.*" For he will not introduce idolatry, but will be a kind of opponent to God; he will abolish all the gods, and will order men to worship him instead of God, and he will be seated in the temple of God, not that in Jerusalem only, but also in every Church. "*Setting himself forth,*" he says; he does not say, saying it, but endeavoring to show it. For he will perform great works, and will show wonderful signs.

Ver. 5. *"Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"*

Do you see that it is necessary continually to say the same things, and to enlarge upon them in the same words? For behold, they heard him saying these things when present, and again they had need to be reminded of them. For as when they had heard concerning afflictions, *"For verily,"* he says, *"when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction"* [1 Thessalonians 3:4]; they nevertheless forgot it, and he confirms them again by letters; so also having heard concerning the Coming of Christ, they again needed letters to compose them. He therefore reminds them, showing that he speaks of nothing strange, but what he had always said.

For as in the case of husbandmen, the seeds are indeed cast into the earth once for all, yet do not constantly remain, but require much preparation withal, and if they do not break up the earth, and cover over the seeds sown, they sow for the birds that gather grain; so we also, unless by constant remembrance we cover over what has been sown, have but cast it all into the air. For both the devil carries it away, and our sloth destroys it, and the sun dries it up, and the rain washes it away, and the thorns choke it: so that it is not sufficient after once sowing it to depart, but there is need of much assiduity, driving off the birds, rooting up the thorns, filling up the stony ground with much earth, checking, and fencing off, and taking away everything injurious. But in the case of the earth all depends upon the husbandman, for it is a lifeless subject, and prepared only to be passive. But in the spiritual soil it is quite otherwise. All is not the teachers' part, but half at least, if not more, that of the disciples. It is our part indeed to cast the seed, but yours to do the things spoken for your recollection, by your works to show the fruits, to pull up the thorns by the roots.

For wealth truly is a thorn, bearing no fruit, both uncomely to the sight, and unpleasant for use, injuring those that meddle with it, not only not itself bearing fruit, but even hindering that which was shooting forth. Such is wealth. It not only does not bear eternal fruit but it even hinders those who wish to gain it. Thorns are the food of irrational camels; they are devoured and consumed by fire, being useful for nothing. Such also is wealth, useful for nothing, but to kindle the furnace, to light up The Day that burns as an oven, to nourish passions void of reason, revenge and anger. For such is also the camel that feeds on thorns. For it is said by those who are acquainted with such things, that there is no animal so implacable, so sulky and revengeful, as a camel. Such is wealth. It nourishes the unreasonable passions of the soul but it pierces and wounds the rational, as is the case with thorns. This plant is hard and rough, and grows up of itself.

Let us see how it grows up, that we may root it out. It grows in places that are precipitous, stony and dry, where there is no moisture. When therefore anyone is rough and precipitous, that is unmerciful, the thorn grows in him. But when the sons of husbandmen wish to root them up, they do it not with iron. How then? Having set fire to it, they in that way extract all the bad quality of the land. For since it is not enough to cut away the upper part, while the root remains below, nor even to extirpate the root, (for it remains in the earth from its bad quality, and, as when some pestilence has assailed the body, there are still left the remains of it,) the fire from above, drawing up all that moisture of the thorns, like some poison, extracts it by means of the heat from the bowels of the earth. For as the cupping glass placed upon the part draws all the disorder to itself, so also the fire draws off all the base quality that was in the thorns, and makes the land pure.

On what account then do I say these things? Because it behooves you to purge off all affection for riches. With us also there is a fire that draws this bad quality from the soul; I mean that of the Spirit. This if we let work on them, we shall be able not only to dry up the thorns, but also the humor from them, since if they be deeply fixed, all is rendered vain. For mark, has a rich man entered here, or also a rich woman? She does not regard how she shall hear the oracles of God, but how she shall make a show, how she shall sit with pomp, how with much glory, how she shall surpass all other women in the costliness of her garments, and render herself more dignified both by her dress, and look, and gait. And all her care and concern is, Did such a woman see me? Did she admire me? Is my beauty handsomely set off? So that her garments may not rot, nor be rent; and about this is all her care. In like manner also the rich man enters, meaning to exhibit himself to the poor man, and to strike him with awe by the garments which are about him, and by the number of his slaves, who also stand round, driving off the crowd. But he from his great pride does not condescend even to do this but considers it a work so unworthy of a gentleman, that although excessively puffed up, he cannot bear to do it, but commits it to his slaves. For to do this requires truly servile and impudent manners. Then when he is seated, the cares of his house immediately intrude themselves, distracting him on every side. The pride that possesses his soul overflows. He thinks that he does a favor both to us, and to the people, and perhaps even to God, because he has entered into the house of God. But he who is thus inflamed, how shall he ever be cured?

Tell me then, if any one should go to the shop of a physician, and not ask a favor of the physician, but think that he was doing him a favor, and declining to request a medicine for his wound, should concern himself about his garments; would he go away having received any benefit? I think

not indeed. But, with your leave, I will tell you the cause of all these things. They think when they enter in here, that they enter into our presence, they think that what they hear they hear from us. They do not lay to heart, they do not consider, that they are entering into the presence of God, that it is He who addresses them. For when the Reader standing up says, "*Thus says the Lord,*" and the Deacon stands and imposes silence on all, he does not say this as doing honor to the Reader, but to Him who speaks to all through him. If they knew that it was God who through His prophet speaks these things, they would cast away all their pride. For if when rulers are addressing them, they do not allow their minds to wander, much less would they, when God is speaking. We are ministers, beloved. We speak not our own things, but the things of God, letters coming from heaven are every day read.

Tell me then, I beseech you, if now, when we are all present some one entered, having a golden girdle, and drawing himself up, and with an air of consequence said that he was sent by the king that is on the earth, and that he brought letters to the whole city concerning matters of importance; would you not then be all turned towards him? Would you not, without any command from a deacon, observe a profound silence? Truly I think so. For I have often heard letters from kings read here. Then if any one comes from a king, you all attend; and does a Prophet come from God, and speak from heaven, and no one attend? Or do you not believe that these things are messages from God? These are letters sent from God; therefore let us enter with becoming reverence into the Churches, and let us hearken with fear to the things here said.

What do I come in for, you say, if I do not hear some one discoursing? This is the ruin and destruction of all. For what need of a person to discourse? This necessity arises from our sloth. Wherefore any necessity for

a homily? All things are clear and open that are in the divine Scriptures; the necessary things are all plain. But because you are hearers for pleasure's sake, for that reason also you seek these things. For tell me, with what pomp of words did Paul speak? And yet he converted the world. Or with what the unlettered Peter? But I know not, you say, the things that are contained in the Scriptures. Why? For are they spoken in Hebrew? Are they in Latin, or in foreign tongues? Are they not in Greek? But they are expressed obscurely, you say: What is it that is obscure? Tell me. Are there not histories? For (of course) you know the plain parts, in that you enquire about the obscure. There are numberless histories in the Scriptures. Tell me one of these. But you cannot. These things are an excuse, and mere words. Every day, you say, one hears the same things. Tell me, then, do you not hear the same things in the theaters? Do you not see the same things in the race-course? Are not all things the same? Is it not always the same sun that rises? Is it not the same food that we use? I should like to ask you, since you say that you every day hear the same things; tell me, from what Prophet was the passage that was read? From what Apostle, or what Epistle? But you cannot tell me—you seem to hear strange things. When therefore you wish to be slothful, you say that they are the same things. But when you are questioned, you are in the case of one who never heard them. If they are the same, you ought to know them. But you are ignorant of them.

This state of things is worthy of lamentation— of lamentation and complaint: for the coiner coins but in vain. For this you ought more especially to attend, because they are the same things, because we give you no labor, nor speak things that are strange or variable. What then, since you say, that those are the same things, but our discourses are not the same things, but we always speak things that are new to you, do you pay heed to these? By no means. But if we say, Why do you not retain even these? *"We*

hear them but once," you say, *"and how can we retain them?"* If we say, Why do ye not attend to those other things? *"The same things,"* you say, *"are always said"*— and every way these are words of sloth and excuse. But they will not always serve, but there will be a time when we shall lament in vain and without effect. Which may God forbid, and grant that having repented here, and attending with understanding and godly fear to the things spoken, we may both be urged on to the due performance of good works, and may amend our own lives with all diligence, that we may be able to obtain the blessings promised to those who love Him, by the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 4 on Second Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 2:6-9

"And now ye know that which restrains, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness does already work: only there is one that restrains now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming: even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan."

One may naturally enquire, what is that which withholds, and after that would know, why Paul expresses it so obscurely. What then is it that withholds, that is, hinders him from being revealed? Some indeed say, the grace of the Spirit, but others the Roman empire, to whom I most of all accede. Wherefore? Because if he meant to say the Spirit, he would not have spoken obscurely, but plainly, that even now the grace of the Spirit, that is the gifts, withhold him. And otherwise he ought now to have come, if he was about to come when the gifts ceased; for they have long since ceased. But because he said this of the Roman empire, he naturally glanced at it, and speaks covertly and darkly. For he did not wish to bring upon himself superfluous enmities, and useless dangers. For if he had said that after a little while the Roman empire would be dissolved, they would immediately have even overwhelmed him, as a pestilent person, and all the faithful, as living and warring to this end. And he did not say that it will be quickly, although he is always saying it— but what? *"that he may be revealed in his own season,"* he says,

"For the mystery of lawlessness does already work." He speaks here of Nero, as if he were the type of Antichrist. For he too wished to be thought a

god. And he has well said, *"the mystery"*; that is, it works not openly, as the other, nor without shame. For if there was found a man before that time, he means, who was not much behind Antichrist in wickedness, what wonder, if there shall now be one? But he did not also wish to point him out plainly: and this not from cowardice, but instructing us not to bring upon ourselves unnecessary enmities, when there is nothing to call for it. So indeed he also says here. *"Only there is one that restrains now, until he be taken out of the way,"* that is, when the Roman empire is taken out of the way, then he shall come. And naturally. For as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly exalt himself, but when that is dissolved, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government both of man and of God. For as the kingdoms before this were destroyed, for example, that of the Medes by the Babylonians, that of the Babylonians by the Persians, that of the Persians by the Macedonians, that of the Macedonians by the Romans: so will this also be by the Antichrist, and he by Christ, and it will no longer withhold. And these things Daniel delivered to us with great clearness.

"And then," he says, *"shall be revealed the lawless one."* And what after this? The consolation is at hand. *"Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming, even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan."*

For as fire merely coming on even before its arrival makes torpid and consumes the little animals that are afar off; so also Christ, by His commandment only, and Coming. It is enough for Him to be present, and all these things are destroyed. He will put a stop to the deceit, by only appearing. Then who is this, whose coming is after the working of Satan, *"With all display all power,"* but nothing true, but for deceit. *"And lying wonder,"* he says, that is, false, or leading to falsehood.

Ver. 10. *"And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing."*

Why then, you say, did God permit this to be? And what dispensation is this? And what is the advantage of his coming, if it takes place for the ruin of our race? Fear not, beloved, but hear Him saying, *"In them that are perishing,"* he has strength, who, even if he had not come, would not have believed. What then is the advantage? That these very men who are perishing will be put to silence. How? Because both if he had come, and if he had not come, they would not have believed in Christ; He comes therefore to convict them. For that they may not have occasion to say, that since Christ said that He was God—although He nowhere said this openly—but since those who came after proclaimed it, we have not believed. Because we have heard that there is One God from whom are all things, therefore we have not believed. This their pretext then Antichrist will take away. For when he comes, and comes commanding nothing good, but all things unlawful, and is yet believed from false signs alone, he will stop their mouths. For if you believe not in Christ, much more ought you not to believe in Antichrist. For the former said that He was sent from the Father, but the latter the contrary. For this reason Christ said, *"I have come in My Father's name, and you receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name. him you will receive."* [John 5:43] But we have seen signs, you say. But many and great signs were also wrought in the case of Christ; much more therefore ought ye to have believed in Him. And yet many things were predicted concerning this one, that he is the lawless one, that he is the son of perdition, that his coming is after the working of Satan. But the contrary concerning the other, that He is the Saviour, that He brings with Him unnumbered blessings.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. *"For because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; for this cause God will send them a working of error; that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*

"That they might be judged." He does not say, that they might be punished; for even before this they were about to be punished; but *"that they might be condemned,"* that is, at the dreadful Seat of Judgment, in order that they might be without excuse. *"Who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."* He calls Christ, *"the Love of the Truth."* *"For because,"* says he, *"they received not the love of the truth."* For He was both, and came for the sake of both, both as loving men, and on behalf of things that were true.

"But had pleasure," he says, *"in unrighteousness."* For he came to the destruction of men and to injure them. For what will he not then work? He will change and confound all things, both by his commandments, and by the fear of him. He will be terrible in every way, from his power, from his cruelty, from his unlawful commandments.

But fear not. *"In those that perish"* he will have his strength. For Elijah too will then come to give confidence to the faithful, and this Christ says; *"Elijah comes, and shall restore all things."* [Matthew 17:11] Therefore it is said, *"In the spirit and power of Elijah."* [Luke 1:17] For he neither wrought signs nor wonders, as Elijah did. For *"John,"* it is said, *"did no miracle, but all things which John spoke of this Man were true."* How then was it *"in the spirit and power of Elijah"*? That is, he will take upon him the same ministry. As the one was the forerunner of His first Coming, so will the other be of His second and glorious Coming, and for this he is reserved. Let us not therefore fear. He has calmed the minds of the hearers. He causes

them no longer to think present things dreadful but worthy of thankfulness. Wherefore he has added,

Ver. 13. *"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."*

How unto salvation? By sanctifying you through the Spirit. For these are the things that are the efficient causes of our salvation. It is nowhere of works, nowhere of righteous deeds, but through belief of the truth. Here again, "in" is used for "through." *"And through sanctification of the Spirit,"* he says,

Ver. 14. *"Whereunto He called you through our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

This too is no little thing, if Christ considers our salvation His glory. For it is the glory of the Friend of man that they that are saved should be many. Great then is our Lord, if the Holy Spirit so desires our salvation. Why did he not say faith first? Because even after sanctification we have yet need of much faith, that we may not be shaken. Do you see how He shows that nothing is of themselves, but all of God?

Ver. 15. *"So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word, or by Epistle of ours."*

Hence it is manifest, that they did not deliver all things by Epistle, but many things also unwritten, and in like manner both the one and the other are worthy of credit. Therefore let us think the tradition of the Church also worthy of credit. It is a tradition, seek no farther. Here he shows that there were many who were shaken.

Ver. 16, 17. *"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, which loved us, and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish them in every good work and word."*

Again a prayer after an admonition. For this is truly to benefit. *"Which loved us,"* he says, *"and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace."* Where now are those who lessen the Son, because He is named in the grace of the Laver after the Father? For, lo, here it is the contrary. *"Which loved us,"* he says, *"and gave us eternal comfort."* Of what sort then is this? Even the hope of things future. Do you see how by the method of prayer he stirs up their mind, giving them the unspeakable care of God for pledges and signs. *"Comfort your heart,"* he says, *"in every good work and word,"* that is, through every good work and word. For this is the comfort of Christians, to do something good and pleasing to God. See how he brings down their spirit. *"Which gave us comfort,"* he says, *"and good hope through grace."* At the same time he makes them also full of good hopes with respect to future things. For if He has given so many things by grace, much more things future. I indeed, he says, have spoken, but the whole is of God. *"Stablish";* confirm you, that you be not shaken, nor turned aside. For this is both His work and ours, so that it is in the way both of doctrines, and of actions. For this is comfort, to be established. For when any one is not turned aside, he bears all things, whatever may happen to him, with much longsuffering; whereas if his mind be shaken, he will no longer perform any good or noble action, but like one whose hands are paralyzed, so also his soul is shaken, when it is not fully persuaded that it is advancing to some good end.

Chap. iii. 1. *"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as also it is with you."*

He indeed had prayed for them, that they might be established; and now he asks of them, entreating them to pray for him, not that he may not incur danger, for to this he was appointed, but that *"the word of the Lord*

may run and be glorified, even as also it is with you." And the request is accompanied with commendation. *"Even as also it is with you."*

Ver. 2. *"And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for all have not faith."*

This is the manner of one showing also his dangers as to which especially he besought them. *"From unreasonable and evil men,"* he says, *"for all have not faith."* Thus he is speaking of those who contradict the Preaching, who oppose and contend against the doctrines. For this he has intimated by saying, *"For all men have not faith."* And here he seems to me not to glance at dangers, but at the men who contradicted and hindered his word, as did Alexander the copper-smith. For he says, *"he greatly withstood our words."* [2 Timothy 4:15] That is, there are some to whom it is given. As if he were speaking of a paternal inheritance, that *"it is not for all to serve in the Palace."* And at the same time he also excites them, as already having such ground of confidence as to be able both to deliver their Teacher from dangers, and to facilitate his preaching.

Therefore we also say the same things. Let no one condemn us of arrogance, nor from an excessive humility deprive us of so great an assistance. For neither do we speak from the same motive from which Paul spoke. For he indeed said these things from a wish to comfort his disciples; but we to reap some great and good fruit. And we are very confident, if you all be willing with one mind to stretch forth your hands to God in behalf of our littleness, that you will succeed in all things. Thus let us make war with our enemies with prayers and supplications. For if thus the ancients made war with men in arms, much more ought we so to make war with men without arms. So Hezekiah triumphed over the Assyrian king, so Moses over Amalek, so Samuel over the men of Ascalon, so Israel over the thirty-two kings. If where there was need of arms, and of battle array, and of

fighting, they, leaving their arms. had recourse to prayer; here where the matter has to be accomplished by prayers alone, does it not much more behoove us to pray?

But there, you say, the rulers entreated for the people, but you request the people to entreat for the ruler. I also know it. For those under rule at that time were wretched and mean persons. Wherefore they were saved by the claims and the virtue of their commander alone; but now, when the grace of God has prevailed, and we shall find among those who are ruled many or rather the greater part excelling their ruler in a great degree; do not deprive us of this succor, raise up our hands that they may not be faint, open our mouth for us, that it may not be closed. Entreat God— for this cause entreat Him. It is in our behalf indeed that it is done, but it is wholly for your sakes. For we are appointed for your advantage, and for your interests we are concerned. Entreat every one of you, both privately and publicly. Mark Paul saying, *"That for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf"* [2 Corinthians 1:11]; that is, that He may give grace to many. If in the case of men, the people coming forward ask a pardon for persons condemned and led away to execution, and the king from regard to the multitude revokes the sentence, much more will God be influenced by regard to you, not by your multitude but your virtue.

For violent is the enemy we have. For each of you indeed anxiously thinks of his own interests, but we the concerns of all together. We stand in the part of the battle that is pressed on. The devil is more violently armed against us. For in wars too, he that is on the opposite side endeavors before all others to overthrow the general. For this reason all his fellow-combatants hasten there. For this reason there is much tumult, every one endeavoring to rescue him; they surround him with their shields, wishing to

preserve his person. Hear what all the people say to David. (I say not this, as comparing myself to David, I am not so mad, but because I wish to show the affection of the people for their ruler.) *"You shall go no more out with us to battle,"* they say, *"that you quench not the lamp of Israel."* [2 Samuel 21:17] See how anxious they were to spare the old man. I am greatly in need of your prayers. Let no one, as I have said, from an excessive humility deprive me of this alliance and succor. If our part be well approved, your own also will be more honorable. If our teaching flow abundantly, the riches will redound to you. Hear the prophet saying, *"Do the shepherds feed themselves?"* [From Ezekiel 34:2, Septuagint]

Do you observe Paul constantly seeking these prayers? Do you hear that thus Peter was delivered from prison, when fervent prayer was made for him? [Acts 12:5] I verily believe that your prayer will have great effect, offered with so great unanimity. Do you not think that it is a matter much too great for my littleness to draw near to God, and entreat Him for so numerous a people? For if I have not confidence to pray for myself, much less for others. For it belongs to men of high estimation, to beseech God to be merciful to others; it is for those who have rendered Him favorable to themselves. But he who is himself an offender, how shall he entreat for another? But nevertheless, because I embrace you with a father's heart, because love dares everything, not only in the Church, but in the house also, I make my prayer above all other things for your health both in soul and in body. For there is no other people, before his own. For if Job rising up immediately made so many offerings for his children in the flesh, how much more ought we to do this for our spiritual children?

Why do I say these things? Because if we who are so far removed from the greatness of the work, offer supplications and prayers for you, much more is it just that you should do it. For that one should entreat for

many, is exceedingly bold, and requires much confidence: but that many having met together should offer supplication for one, is nothing burdensome. For every one does this not trusting to his own virtue, but to the multitude, and to their unanimity, to which God everywhere has much respect. For He says, *"where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."* [Matthew 20:18] If where two or three are gathered together, He is in the midst, much more is He among you. For that which a man praying by himself is not able to receive, that he shall receive praying with a multitude. Why? Because although his own virtue has not, yet the common consent has much power.

"Where two or three," it is said, *"are gathered together."* Why did you say, *"Two"*? For if there be one in Your Name, why are You not there? Because I wish all to be together, and not to be separated. Let us therefore close up together; let us bind one another together in love, let no one separate us. If any one accuses, or is offended, let him not retain it in his mind, whether against his neighbor, or against us. This favor I ask of you, to come to us, and bring the accusation, and receive our defense. *"Reprove him,"* it says, *"lest haply he has not said it. Reprove him, lest haply he has not done it"* [Sirach 19:14-15]; and if he has done it, that he add not thereto. For we have either defended ourselves, or being condemned have asked pardon, and henceforth endeavor not to fall into the same faults. This is expedient both for you and for us. For you indeed having accused us perhaps without reason, when you have learned the truth of the matter, will stand corrected, and we have offended unawares and are corrected. For you indeed it is not expedient. For punishment is appointed for those who utter any idle word. But we put off accusations, whether false or true. The false, by showing that they are false; the true, by not again doing the same things. For it must needs happen that he who has the care of so many things should

be ignorant, and through ignorance commit errors. For if every one of you having a house, and presiding over wife and children, and slaves, one more and another fewer, among souls that are so easily numbered, is nevertheless compelled to commit many errors involuntarily, or from ignorance, or when wishing to set something right; much more must it be so with us who preside over so many people.

And may God still multiply you and bless you, the little with the great! For although the care becomes greater from the increase of numbers, we do not cease praying that this our care may be increased, and that this number may be added to, and be many times as great and without limit. For fathers, although often harassed by the number of their children, nevertheless do not wish to lose any one. All things are equal between us and you, even the very chief of our blessings. I do not partake of the holy Table with greater abundance, and you with less, but both equally participate of the same. And if I take it first, it is no great privilege, since even among children, the elder first extends his hand to the feast, but nevertheless no advantage is gained thereby. But with us all things are equal. The saving life that sustains our souls is given with equal honor to both. I do not indeed partake of one Lamb and you of another, but we partake of the same. We both have the same Baptism. We have been vouchsafed the same Spirit. We are both hastening to the same kingdom. We are alike brethren of Christ, we have all things in common.

Where then is my advantage? In cares, in labors, in anxieties, in grieving for you. But nothing is sweeter than this grief, since even a mother grieving for her child is delighted with her grief, she thinks carefully of those whom she has brought forth, she is delighted at her cares. And yet care in itself is bitter, but when it is for children, at least it has in it much pleasure. Many of you have I begotten, but after this are my pangs. For in

the case of mothers in the flesh the pangs are first, and then the birth. But here the pangs last till the latest breath, lest there should be anywhere some abortion even after the birth. And I indeed have a further longing; for although perchance another has begotten you, yet I nevertheless am harassed with cares. For we do not of ourselves beget you, but it is all of the grace of God. But if we both through the Spirit beget, he will not err who calls those begotten by me, his children, and those begotten by him, mine. All these things then consider, and stretch forth your hand, that you may be our boast and we yours, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God grant that we may all see with confidence, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 5 on Second Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 3:3-5

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and guard you from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you that you both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ."

Neither ought we, having committed everything to the prayers of the Saints, to be idle ourselves, and run into wickedness, and to lay hold of nothing; nor again when working good to despise that succor. For great indeed are the things which prayer for us can effect, but it is when we ourselves also work. For this reason Paul also, praying for them, and again giving them assurance from the promise, says, *"But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and guard you from the evil one."* For if He has chosen you to salvation, He does not deceive you, nor suffer you utterly to perish. But that he may not by these means lead them to sloth, and lest they thinking the whole to be of God should themselves sleep, see how he also demands coöperation from them, saying, *"And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that you both do and will do the things which we command you."* "The Lord" indeed, he says, *"is faithful,"* and having promised to save will certainly save; but as He promised. And how did He promise? If we be willing, and hear Him; not simply (hearing), nor like stocks and stones, being inactive.

And he has well introduced the words, *"We have confidence in the Lord,"* that is, we trust to His lovingkindness. Again he brings them down, making everything depend thereupon. For if he had said, We have confidence in you, the commendation indeed was great, but it would not

have taught them to make all things dependent upon God. And if he had said, We have confidence in the Lord, that He will preserve you, and had not added *"as touching you,"* and, *"that you do and will do the things which we command you,"* he would have made them more slothful, by casting everything upon the power of God. For it becomes us indeed to cast everything upon Him, yet working also ourselves, embarked in the labors and the conflicts. And he shows that even if our virtue alone were sufficient to save, yet nevertheless it ought to be persevering, and to abide with us until we come to our latest breath.

"But the Lord," he says, *"direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patience of Christ."*

Again he commends them, and prays, showing his concern for them. For when he is about to enter upon reproof, he previously smooths down their minds, by saying, *"I am confident that you will hear,"* and by requesting prayers from them, and by again invoking upon them infinite blessings.

"But the Lord," he says, *"direct your hearts into the love of God."* For there are many things that turn us aside from love, and there are many paths that draw us away from thence. In the first place the path of Mammon, laying, as it were, certain shameless hands upon our soul, and tenaciously holding it in its grasp, draws and drags us thence even against our will. Then vainglory and often afflictions and temptations, turn us aside. For this reason we need, as a certain wind, the assistance of God, that our sail may be impelled, as by some strong wind, to the love of God. For tell me not, *"I love Him, even more than myself."* These are words. Show it to me by your works, if you love Him more than yourself. Love Him more than money, and then I shall believe that you love Him even more than yourself. But you who despisest not riches for the sake of God, how will you despise

yourself? But why do I say riches? Thou who despisest not covetousness, which you ought to do even without the commandments of God, how will you despise yourself?

"And into the patience of Christ," he says. What is *"into the patience"*? That we should endure even as He endured, or that we should do those things, or that with patience also we should wait for Him, that is, that we should be prepared. For since He has promised many things, and Himself is coming to judge the quick and the dead, let us wait for Him, and let us be patient. But wherever he speaks of patience, he of course implies affliction. For this is to love God; to endure, and not to be troubled.

Ver. 6. *"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which they received of us."*

That is, it is not we that say these things, but Christ, for that is the meaning of *"in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"*; equivalent to *"through Christ."* Showing the fearfulness of the message, he says, through Christ. Christ therefore commanded us in no case to be idle. *"That ye withdraw yourselves,"* he says, *"from every brother."* Tell me not of the rich, tell me not of the poor, tell me not of the holy. This is disorder. *"That walks,"* he says, that is, lives. *"And not after the tradition which they received from me."* Tradition, he says, which is through works. And this he always calls properly tradition.

Ver. 7, 8. *"For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand."*

And yet even if they had eaten, it would not have been for nought. *"For the laborer,"* he says, *"is worthy of his hire."* [Luke 10:7]

"But in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you. Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you that you should imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat."

See how in the former Epistle indeed he discourses somewhat more mildly concerning these things; as when he says, *"We beseech you, brethren,— that you would abound more and more— and that you study"* [1 Thessalonians 4:1-11]— and nowhere does he say, *"we command,"* nor *"in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ,"* which was fearful and implied danger, but that *"ye abound,"* he says, and *"study,"* which are the words of one exhorting to virtue; *"that you may walk honestly"* (becomingly), he says. [1 Thessalonians 4:12] But here is nothing of this kind, but *"if any one will not work,"* says he, *"neither let him eat."* For if Paul, not being under a necessity, and having a right to be idle, and having undertaken so great a work, did nevertheless work, and not merely work, but *"night and day,"* so that he was able even to assist others—much more ought others to do this.

Ver. 11. *"For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies."*

This indeed he says here; but there, in the first Epistle, he says, *"that you may walk honestly towards them that are without."* On what account? Perhaps there was as yet no such thing. For upon another occasion also admonishing, he says, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* [Acts 20:35] But the expression, *"walk honestly"* has no reference to disorder; wherefore he added, *"that you may have need of nothing."* [1 Thessalonians 4:12] And here he sets down another necessity, for thus doing what was honorable and good towards all. (For as he proceeds, he says, *"be not weary in well doing."*) For certainly he that is idle and yet able to work must needs be a busybody. But alms are given to those only who are not able to support

themselves by the work of their own hands, or who teach, and are wholly occupied in the business of teaching. *"For you shall not muzzle the ox,"* he says, *"when he treads out the grain."* [Deuteronomy 25:4] *"And the laborer is worthy of his hire."* [1 Timothy 5:18, and Luke 10:7] So that neither is he idle, but receives the reward of work and great work too. But to pray and fast, being idle, is not the work of the hands. For the work that he is here speaking of is the work of the hands. And that you may not suspect any such thing, he has added,

"That work not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Because he had touched them severely, wishing to render his discourse more mild, he adds, *"through the Lord,"* again what is authoritative and fearful.

"That with quietness," he says, *"they work, and eat their own bread."*

For why has he not said, But if they are not disorderly let them be maintained by you; but requires both, that they be quiet, and that they work? *"That they may eat their own bread,"* says he, not that of another.

Ver. 13. *"But you, brethren, be not weary in well doing."*

See how immediately the fatherly heart was overcome. He was not able to carry out his reproof farther, but again pitied them. And see with what discretion! He has not said, But pardon them, until they are amended; but what? *"But you, be not weary in well doing."* Withdraw yourselves, he says, from them, and reprove them; do not, however, suffer them to perish with hunger. What then, he says, if having abundance from us, he should remain idle? In that case, he says, I have spoken of a mild remedy, that you withdraw yourselves from him, that is, do not partake with him in free conversation; show that you are angry. This is no little matter. For such is the reproof that is given to a brother, if we wish really to amend him. We

are not ignorant of the methods of reproof. For tell me, if you had a brother in the flesh, would you then overlook him pining with hunger? Truly I think not; but perhaps you would even correct him.

Ver. 14. *"And if any man obeys not our word by this Epistle."*

He has not said, He that disobeys, disobeys me, but *"note that man."* This is no slight chastisement. *"Have no company with him."* Then again he says, *"that he may be ashamed."* And he does not permit them to proceed farther. For as he had said, *"if any does not work neither let him eat"* fearing lest they should perish by hunger, he has added, *"But in doing good, be not weary."* Thus having said, *"Withdraw yourselves, and have no company with him,"* then fearing lest this very thing might cut him off from the brotherhood— for he who gives himself up to despair will quickly be lost if he is not admitted to freedom of conversation— he has added,

Ver. 15. *"Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."*

By this he shows that he has assigned a heavy punishment against him, in depriving him of freedom of conversation.

For if to be a receiver even with many others is worthy of disgrace, when they even reprove while they offer it, and withdraw themselves, how great is the reproach, quite sufficient to sting the soul. For if only giving rather tardily, and with murmuring, they inflame the receivers— for tell me not of impudent beggars, but of the faithful— if they were to reprove while they give, what would they not do? To what punishment would it not be equal? We do not do so, but as if we had been greatly injured, we so insult and turn away from those who beg of us. Thou dost not give, but why do you also grieve him? *"Admonish them,"* he says, *"as brethren,"* do not insult them as enemies. He who admonishes his brother, does it not publicly. He does not make an open show of the insult, but he does it privately and with

much address, and grieving, as hurt, and weeping and lamenting. Let us bestow therefore with the disposition of a brother, let us admonish with the good will of a brother, not as if we grieved at giving, but as if we grieved for his transgressing the commandment. Since what is the advantage? For if, even after giving, you insult, you destroy the pleasure of giving. But when you do not give and yet insult, what wrong do you not do to that wretched and unfortunate man? He came to you, to receive pity from you, but he goes away having received a deadly blow, and weeps the more. For when by reason of his poverty he is compelled to beg, and is insulted on account of his begging, think how great will be the punishment of those who insult him. "*He that dishonors the poor,*" it says, "*provokes his Maker.*" [Proverbs 14:12-31, Septuagint] For tell me, did He suffer him to be poor for your sake, that you might be able to heal yourself— and do you insult him who for your sake is poor? What obstinacy is this! What an act of ingratitude is it! "*Admonish him as a brother,*" he says, and after having given, he orders you to admonish him. But if even without giving we insult him, what excuse shall we have?

Ver. 16. "*Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in all ways.*"

See how, when he mentions the things that are to be done, he sets his mark upon them by prayer, adding prayer and supplication, like certain marks set upon things that are laid up. "*Give you peace,*" he says, "*at all times, in all ways.*" For since it was likely that contentions would arise from these things, those men becoming exasperated, and the others not supplying such persons so readily as formerly, he with good reason now offered this prayer for them, saying, "*Give you peace at all times.*" For this is what is sought, that they may ever have it. "*In every way,*" says he. What is, "*in every*"? So that they may have no occasion of contention from any quarter.

For everywhere peace is a good thing, even towards those who are without. For hear him elsewhere saying, *"If it be possible, as much as in you lies, be at peace with all men."* [Romans 12:18] For nothing is so conducive to the right performance of the things which we wish, as to be peaceable and undisturbed, and to be free from all hatred, and to have no enemy.

"The Lord be with you all."

Ver. 17, 18. *"The salutation of me Paul with my own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."*

This he says that he writes in every Epistle, that no one may be able to counterfeit them, his subscription being subjoined as a great token. And he calls the prayer a salutation, showing that everything they then did was spiritual; even when it was proper to offer salutation, the thing was attended with advantage; and it was prayer, not merely a symbol of friendship. With this he began, and with it he ended, guarding with strong walls what he had said elsewhere, and laying safe foundations, he brought it also to a safe end. *"Grace be unto you and peace,"* he says; and again, *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."* This the Lord also promised, saying to His disciples, *"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* [Matthew 28:20] But this takes place when we are willing. For He will not be altogether with us, if we place ourselves at a distance. *"I will be with you,"* He says, *"always."* Let us not therefore drive away grace. He tells us to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. This was then a great evil, to be separated from the whole body of the brethren. By this indeed he punishes all, as elsewhere in his Epistle to the Corinthians he said, *"With such a one no, not to eat."* [1 Corinthians 5:11] But now the majority do not think this a great evil. But all things are confounded and corrupted. With adulterers, with fornicators, with covetous persons, we mix freely, and as a

matter of course. If we ought to withdraw ourselves from one who was only supported in idleness, how much more from the others. And that you may know how fearful a thing it was to be separated from the company of the brethren, and what advantage it produces to those who receive reproof with a right mind, hear how that man, who was puffed up with sin, who had proceeded to the extreme of wickedness, who had committed such fornication as is not named even among the heathens, who was insensible of his wound— for this is the excess of perversion— he after all, though such an one, was so bent down and humbled that Paul said, *"Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many. Wherefore confirm your love toward him."* [2 Corinthians 2:6-8] For as a member separated from the rest of the body, so was he at that time.

But the cause, and that from which this was then so terrible, was, because even the being with them was thought by them a great blessing. For like men who inhabit one house, and are under one father, and partake of one table, so did they then dwell in every Church. How great an evil therefore was it to fall from so great love! But now it is not even thought to be a great evil, because neither is it considered any great thing when we are united with one another. What was then in the order of punishment, this, on account of the great coldness of love, now takes place even apart from punishment, and we withdraw from one another causelessly, and from coldness. For it is the cause of all evils that there is no love. This has dissolved all ties, and has disfigured all that was venerable and splendid in the Church, in which we ought to have gloried.

Great is the confidence of the Teacher, when from his own good actions he is entitled to reprove his disciples. Wherefore also Paul said, *"For yourselves know how you ought to imitate us."* [2 Thessalonians 3:7] And he ought to be a Teacher more of life than of the word. And let no one

think that this is said from a spirit of boasting. For it was as reduced to necessity that he spoke it, and with a view to general advantage. *"For we behaved not ourselves,"* he says, *"disorderly among you."* From this do you not see his humility, in that he calls it, *"for nought,"* and *"disorderly behavior"*? *"We did not behave ourselves disorderly among you,"* he says, *"neither did we eat any man's bread for nought."* Here he shows that perhaps also they were poor; and tell me not, that they were poor. For he is discoursing concerning the poor, and those who obtained their necessary subsistence from no other source than from the work of their hands. For he has not said, that they may have it from their fathers, but that by working they should eat their own bread. For if I, he says, a herald of the word of doctrine, was afraid to burden you, much more he who does you no service. For this is truly a burden. And it is a burden too, when one does not give with much alacrity; but this is not what he hints at, but as if they were not able to do it easily. For why do you not work? For God has given you hands for this purpose, not that you should receive from others, but that you should impart to others.

But *"the Lord,"* he says, *"be with you."* This prayer also we may offer for ourselves, if we do the things of the Lord. For hear Christ saying to His disciples, *"Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* [Matthew 28:19-20] If you do these things, assuredly. For that the promise is not made to them only, but to those also who walk in their steps, is manifest from His saying *"to the end of the world."*

What then does He say to those who are not teachers? Each of you, if he will, is a teacher, although not of another, yet of himself. Teach yourself

first. If you teach to observe all things whatsoever He commanded, even by this means you will have many emulating you. For as a lamp, when it is shining, is able to light ten thousand others, but being extinguished will not give light even to itself, nor can it lighten other lamps; so also in the case of a pure life, if the light that is in us be shining, we shall make both disciples and teachers numberless, being set before them as a pattern to copy. For neither will the words proceeding from me be able so to benefit the hearers, as your life. For let a man, tell me, be dear to God, and shining in virtue, and having a wife; (for it is possible for a man having a wife and children and servants and friends to please God;) will he not be able much more than I to benefit them all? For me they will hear once or twice in a month, or not even once, and even though they have kept what they have heard as far as the threshold of the Church, they presently let it drop away from them: but seeing the life of that man constantly, they receive great advantage. For when being insulted he insults not again, does he not almost instill and engrave upon the soul of the insulter the reverence of his meekness? And though he does not immediately confess the benefit, being ashamed from anger, or put to confusion, yet nevertheless he immediately is made sensible of it. And it is impossible for a man that is insolent, though he be a very beast, to associate with one who is patient of evil, without going away much benefited. For although we do not what is good, we however all praise it and admire it. Again, the wife, if she see her husband gentle, being always with him receives great advantage, and the child also. It is therefore in the power of every one to be a teacher. For he says, *"Build each other up, even as also you do."* [1 Thessalonians 5:11] For tell me, has any loss befallen the family? The wife is disturbed, as being weaker, and more extravagant, and fond of ornament; the man if he be a philosopher, and a derider of loss, both consoles her, and persuades her to bear it with fortitude. Tell me, then,

will he not benefit her much more than our words? For it is easy to talk, but to act, when we are reduced to the necessity, is in every way difficult. On this account human nature is wont rather to be regulated by deeds. And such is the superiority of virtue, that even a slave often benefits a whole family together with the master.

For not in vain, nor without reason, does Paul constantly command them to practice virtue, and to be obedient to their master, not so much regarding the service of their masters, as that the word of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed. But when it is not blasphemed, it will soon also be admired. And I know of many families, that they have greatly benefited by the virtue of their slaves. But if a servant placed under authority can improve his master, much more can the master his servants. Divide then with me, I beseech you, this ministry. I address all generally, do you each individual privately and let each charge himself with the salvation of his neighbors. For that it becomes one to preside over those of his household in these matters, hear where Paul sends women for instruction; *"And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home"* [1 Corinthians 14:35]; and he does not lead them to the Teacher. For as in the schools of learning, there are teachers even among the disciples, so also in the Church. For he wishes the Teacher not to be troubled by all. Wherefore? Because then there will be great advantages, not only that the labor will be light to the Teacher, but that each of the disciples also, having taken pains, is soon able to become a teacher, making this his concern.

For see how great a service the wife contributes. She keeps the house, and takes care of all things in the house, she presides over her handmaids, she clothes them with her own hands, she causes you to be called the father of children, she delivers you from brothels, she aids you to live chastely, she puts a stop to the strong desire of nature. And do thou also benefit her.

How? In spiritual things stretch forth your hand. Whatever useful things you have heard, these, like the swallows, bearing off in your mouth, carry away and place them in the mouth of the mother and the young ones. For how is it not absurd, in other things to think yourself worthy of the preeminence, and to occupy the place of the head, but in teaching to quit your station. The ruler ought not to excel the ruled in honors, so much as in virtues. For this is the duty of a ruler, for the other is the part of the ruled, but this is the achievement of the ruler himself. If you enjoy much honor, it is nothing to you, for you received it from others. If you shine in much virtue, this is all your own.

You are the head of the woman, let then the head regulate the rest of the body. Do you not see that it is not so much above the rest of the body in situation, as in forethought, directing like a steersman the whole of it? For in the head are the eyes both of the body, and of the soul. Hence flows to them both the faculty of seeing, and the power of directing. And the rest of the body is appointed for service, but this is set to command. All the senses have thence their origin and their source. Thence are sent forth the organs of speech, the power of seeing, and of smelling, and all touch. For thence is derived the root of the nerves and of the bones. Do you see not that it is superior in forethought more than in honor? So let us rule the women; let us surpass them, not by seeking greater honor from them, but by their being more benefited by us.

I have shown that they afford us no little benefit, but if we are willing to make them a return in spiritual things, we surpass them. For it is not possible in bodily things to offer an equivalent. For what? Do you contribute much wealth? But it is she who preserves it, and this care of hers is an equivalent, and thus there is need of her, because many, who had great possessions, have lost all because they had not one to take care of them. But

as for the children, you both communicate, and the benefit from each is equal. She indeed in these things rather has the more laborious service, always bearing the offspring, and being afflicted with the pains of childbirth; so that in spiritual things only will you be able to surpass her.

Let us not therefore regard how we shall have wealth, but how we shall present with confidence to God the souls with which we are entrusted. For by regulating them we shall also most highly benefit ourselves. For he who teaches another, although he does nothing else, yet in speaking is affected with compunction, when he sees himself responsible for those things, on account of which he reproves others. Since therefore we benefit both ourselves and them, and through them the household, and this is preëminently pleasing to God; let us not be weary of taking care both of our own souls and of those who minister to us, that for all we may receive a recompense, and with much riches may arrive at the holy City our mother, the Jerusalem that is above, from which God grant that we may never fall, but that having shone in the most excellent course of life, we may be thought worthy with much confidence to see our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily on First Timothy

1. Timothy too was one of the disciples of the Apostle Paul. To the extraordinary qualities of this youth testimony is borne by Luke, who informs us, that he was *"well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium."* [Acts 16:2] He became at once a disciple and a teacher, and gave this singular instance of his prudence, that hearing Paul preach without insisting upon circumcision, and understanding that he had formerly withstood Peter upon that point, he chose not only not to preach against it, but to submit to that rite. For Paul, it is said, *"took and circumcised him"* [Acts 16:3], though he was of adult age, and so trusted him with his whole economy.

The affection of Paul for him is a sufficient evidence of his character. For he elsewhere says of him, *"You know the proof of him, that as a son with a father, he has served with me in the Gospel."* [Philippians 2:22] And to the Corinthians again he writes: *"I have sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord."* [1 Corinthians 4:17] And again: *"Let no man despise him, for he works the work of the Lord, as I also do."* [1 Corinthians 16:10-11] And to the Hebrews he writes, *"Know that our brother Timothy is set at liberty."* [Hebrews 13:23] Indeed his love for him is everywhere apparent, and the miracles that are now wrought still attest his claims.

2. If it should be asked why he addresses Epistles to Titus and Timothy alone, though Silas was approved, as also was Luke, for he writes, *"Only Luke is with me"* [2 Timothy 4:11], and Clement was one of his associates, of whom he says, *"with Clement and other my fellow-laborers"* [Philippians 4:3], for what reason then does he write only to Titus and Timothy? It is

because he had already committed the care of churches to these, and certain marked places had been assigned to them, but the others were in attendance upon him. For so preëminent in virtue was Timothy, that his youth was no impediment to his promotion; therefore he writes, "*Let no man despise your youth*" [1 Timothy 4:12, and 5:2]; and again, "*The younger women as sisters.*" For where there is virtue, all other things are superfluous, and there can be no impediment. Therefore when the Apostle discourses of Bishops, among the many things he requires of them, he makes no particular mention of age. And if he speaks of a Bishop "*being the husband of one wife,*" and "*having his children in subjection*" [1 Timothy 3:2-4], this is not said, as if it were necessary he should have a wife and children; but that if any should happen from a secular life to be advanced to that office, they might be such as knew how to preside over their household and children, and all others committed to them. For if a man were both secular and deficient in these points, how should he be entrusted with the care of the Church?

3. But why, you will say, does he address an Epistle to a disciple already appointed to the office of a Teacher? Ought he not to have been made perfect for his office, before he was sent? Yes; but the instruction which he needed was not that which was suited to a disciple, but that which was proper for a Teacher. You will perceive him therefore through the whole Epistle adapting his instructions to a Teacher. Thus at the very beginning he does not say, "*Do not attend to those who teach otherwise,*" but, "*Charge them that they teach no other doctrine.*" [1 Timothy 1:3]

Homily 1 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 1:1, 2

"Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." [The R.V. omits [κυρίου] and translates: Christ Jesus our hope, [τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν] .]

1. Great and admirable is the dignity of an Apostle, and we find Paul constantly setting forth the causes of it, not as if he took the honor to himself, but as entrusted with it, and being under the necessity of so doing. For when he speaks of himself as *"called,"* and that *"by the will of God,"* and again elsewhere, *"a necessity is laid upon me"* [1 Corinthians 9:16], and when he says, *"for this I was separated,"* by these expressions all idea of arrogance and ambition is removed. For as he deserves the severest blame, who intrudes into an office which is not given him of God, so he who refuses, and shrinks from it when offered to him, incurs blame of another kind, that of rebellion and disobedience. Therefore Paul, in the beginning of this Epistle, thus expresses himself, *"Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God."* He does not say here, *"Paul called,"* but *"by commandment."* He begins in this manner, that Timothy may not feel any human infirmity from supposing that Paul addresses him on the same terms as his disciples. But where is this commandment given? We read in the Acts of the Apostles: *"The Spirit said, Separate me Paul and Barnabas."* [Acts 13:2] And everywhere in his writings Paul adds the name of Apostle, to instruct his hearers not to consider the doctrines he delivered as proceeding from man. For an Apostle can say nothing of his own, and by calling

himself an Apostle, he at once refers his hearers to Him that sent him. In all his Epistles therefore he begins by assuming this title, thus giving authority to his words, as here he says, *"Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ according to the commandment of God our Saviour."* Now it does not appear that the Father anywhere commanded him. It is everywhere Christ who addresses him. Thus, *"He said unto me, Depart, for I will send you far hence unto the Gentiles"* [Acts 22:21]; and again, *"You must be brought before Cæsar."* [Acts 27:24] But whatever the Son commands, this he considers to be the commandment of the Father, as those of the Spirit are the commandments of the Son. For he was sent by the Spirit, he was separated by the Spirit, and this he says was the commandment of God. What then? Does it derogate from the power of the Son, that His Apostle was sent forth by the commandment of the Father? By no means. For observe, how he represents the power as common to both. For having said, *"according to the commandment of God our Saviour"*; he adds, *"and Lord Jesus Christ, our hope."* And observe, with what propriety he applies the titles. And indeed, the Psalmist applies this to the Father, saying, *"The hope of all the ends of the earth."* [Psalm 64:5] And again, the blessed Paul in another place writes, *"For therefore we both labor, and suffer reproach, because we have hope in the living God."* The teacher must suffer dangers even more than the disciple. For I will smite the shepherd, (he says,) *"and the sheep shall be scattered abroad."* [Zechariah 13:7] Therefore the devil rages with greater violence against teachers, because by their destruction the flock also is scattered. For by slaying the sheep, he has lessened the flock, but when he has made away with the shepherd, he has ruined the whole flock, so that he rather assaults him, as working greater mischief by a less effort; and in one soul effecting the ruin of all. For this reason Paul, at the beginning, elevates and encourages the soul of Timothy, by saying, We have God for

our Saviour and Christ for our hope. We suffer much, but our hopes are great; we are exposed to snares and perils, but to save us we have not man but God. Our Saviour is not weak, for He is God, and whatever be our dangers they will not overcome us; nor is our hope made ashamed, for it is Christ. For in two ways we are enabled to bear up against dangers, when we are either speedily delivered from them, or supposed by good hopes under them.

But Paul never calls himself the Apostle of the Father, but always of Christ. Because he makes everything common to both. The Gospel itself he calls *"the Gospel of God."* And whatever we suffer here, he implies, things present are as nothing.

"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith."

This too is encouraging. For if he evinced such faith as to be called peculiarly Paul's *"own"* son, he might be confident also with respect to the future. For it is the part of faith not to be cast down or disturbed, though circumstances occur that seem contrary to the promises. But observe he says, *"my son,"* and even *"my own son,"* and yet he is not of the same substance. But what? Was he of irrational kind? *"Well,"* says one, *"he was not of Paul, so this does not imply 'being of' another."* What then? Was he of another substance? Neither was it so, for after saying *"my own son,"* he adds, *"in the faith,"* to show that he was really *"his own son,"* and truly from him. There was no difference. The likeness he bore to him was in respect to his faith, as in human births there is a likeness in respect of substance. The son is like the father in human beings, but with respect to God the proximity is greater. For here a father and a son, though of the same substance, differ in many particulars, as in color, figure, understanding, age, bent of mind, endowments of soul and body, and in many other things they may be like or unlike, but there is no such dissimilarity in the divine Essence. *"By*

commandment." This is a stronger expression than "*called*", as we learn from other passages. As he here calls Timothy "*my own son*," in like manner he says to the Corinthians, "*in Christ Jesus I have begotten you*," i.e. in faith; but he adds the word "*own*," to show his particular likeness to himself, as well as his own love and great affection for him. Notice again the "*in*" applied to the faith. "*My own son*," he says, "*in the faith*." See what an honorable distinction, in that he calls him not only his "*son*," but his "*own*" son.

Ver. 2. "*Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

Why is mercy mentioned here, and not in the other Epistles? This is a further mark of his affection. Upon his son he invokes greater blessings, with the anxious apprehension of a parent. For such was his anxiety, that he gives directions to Timothy, which he has done in no other case, to attend to his bodily health; where he says, "*Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities*" [1 Timothy 5:23] Teachers indeed stand more in need of mercy.

"*From God our Father*," he says, "*and Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

Here too is consolation. For if God is our Father, He cares for us as sons, as Christ says, "*What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?*" [Matthew 7:9]

Ver. 3. "*As I besought you to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia.*"

Observe the gentleness of the expression, more like that of a servant than of a master. For he does not say "*I commanded*," or "*bade*" or even "*exhorted*," but "*I besought you*." But this tone is not for all: only meek and virtuous disciples are to be treated thus. The corrupt and insincere are to be dealt with in a different manner, as Paul himself elsewhere directs, "*Rebuke*

them with all authority" [Titus 2:15]; and here he says "*charge*," not "*beseech*," but "*charge some that they teach no other doctrine*." What means this? That Paul's Epistle which he sent them was not sufficient? Nay, it was sufficient; but men are apt sometimes to slight Epistles, or perhaps this may have been before the Epistles were written. He had himself passed some time in that city. There was the temple of Diana, and there he had been exposed to those great sufferings. For after the assembly in the Theater had been dissolved, and he had called to him and exhorted the disciples, he found it necessary to sail away, though afterwards he returned to them. It were worth enquiry, whether he stationed Timothy there at that time. For he says, that "*you might charge some that they teach no other doctrine*": he does not mention the persons by name, that he might not, by the openness of his rebuke, render them more shameless. There were in that city certain false Apostles of the Jews, who wished to oblige the faithful to observe the Jewish law, a fault he is everywhere noticing in his Epistles; and this they did not from motives of conscience, so much as from vainglory, and a wish to have disciples, from jealousy of the blessed Paul, and a spirit of opposition to him. This is meant by "*teaching another doctrine*."

Ver. 4. "*Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies*."

By "*fables*" he does not mean the law; far from it; but inventions and forgeries and counterfeit doctrines. For, it seems, the Jews wasted their whole discourse on these unprofitable points. They numbered up their fathers and grandfathers, that they might have the reputation of historical knowledge and research. "*That you might charge some*," he says, "*that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies*." Why does he call them "*endless*"? It is because they had no end, or none of any use, or none easy for us to apprehend. Mark how he disapproves of questioning. For where faith exists, there is no need of

question. Where there is no room for curiosity, questions are superfluous. Questioning is the subversion of faith. For he that seeks has not yet found. He who questions cannot believe. Therefore it is his advice that we should not be occupied with questions, since if we question, it is not faith; for faith sets reasoning at rest. But why then does Christ say, *"Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you"* [Matthew 7:7]; and, *"Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life"*? [John 5:39] The seeking there is meant of prayer and vehement desire, and He bids *"search the Scriptures,"* not to introduce the labors of questioning, but to end them, that we may ascertain and settle their true meaning, not that we may be ever questioning, but that we may have done with it. And he justly said, *"Charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than the dispensation of God in faith."* Justly has he said, *"the dispensation of God."* For great are the blessings which God is willing to dispense; but the greatness of them is not conceived by reasoning. This must then be the work of faith, which is the best medicine of our souls. This questioning therefore is opposed to the dispensation of God. For what is dispensed by faith? To receive His mercies and become better men; to doubt and dispute of nothing; but to repose in confidence. For what *"ministers questions"* displaces faith and that which faith has wrought and built. Christ has said that we must be saved by faith; this these teachers questioned and even denied. For since the announcement was present, but the issue of it future, faith was required. But they bring preoccupied by legal observances threw impediments in the way of faith. He seems also here to glance at the Greeks, where he speaks of *"fables and genealogies,"* for they enumerated their Gods.

Moral. Let us not then give heed to questions. For we were called Faithful, that we might unhesitatingly believe what is delivered to us, and

entertain no doubt. For if the things asserted were human, we ought to examine them; but since they are of God, they are only to be revered and believed. If we believe not, how shall we be persuaded of the existence of a God? For how do you know that there is a God, when you call Him to account? The knowledge of God is best shown by believing in Him without proofs and demonstrations. Even the Greeks know this; for they believed their Gods telling them, says one, even without proof; and what?— That they were the offspring of the Gods. But why do I speak of the Gods? In the case of the man, a deceiver and sorcerer, (I speak of Pythagoras,) they acted in like manner, for of him it was said, He said it. And over their temples was an image of Silence, and her finger on her mouth, compressing her lips, and significantly exhorting all that passed by to be silent. And were their doctrines so sacred, and are ours less so? And even to be ridiculed? What extreme madness is this! The tenets of the Greeks indeed are rightly questioned. For they were of that nature, being but disputes, conflicts of reasonings, and doubts, and conclusions. But ours are far from all these. For human wisdom invented theirs, but ours were taught by the grace of the Spirit. Their doctrines are madness and folly, ours are true wisdom. In their case there is neither teacher nor scholar; but all alike are disputants. Here whether teacher or scholar, each is to learn of him from whom he ought to learn, and not to doubt, but obey; not to dispute, but believe. For all the ancients obtained a good report through faith, and without this everything is subverted. And why do I speak of it in heavenly things? We shall find upon examination that earthly things depend upon it no less. For without this there would be no trade nor contracts, nor anything of the sort. And if it be so necessary here in things that are false, how much more in those.

This then let us pursue, to this let us adhere, so shall we banish from our souls all destructive doctrines, such, for instance, as relate to nativity

and fate. If you believe that there is a resurrection and a judgment, you will be able to expel from your mind all those false opinions. Believe that there is a just God, and you will not believe that there can be an unjust nativity. Believe that there is a God, and a Providence, and you will not believe that there can be a nativity, that holds all things together. Believe that there is a place of punishment, and a Kingdom, and you will not believe in a nativity that takes away our free agency, and subjects us to necessity and force. Neither sow, nor plant, nor go to war, nor engage in any work whatever! For whether you will or not, things will proceed according to the course of nativity! What need have we more of Prayer? And why should you deserve to be a Christian, if there be this nativity? For you will not then be responsible. And whence proceed the arts of life? Are these too from nativity? Yes, you say, and it is fated to one to become wise with labor. But can you show me one who has learned an art without labor? You cannot. It is not then from nativity but from labor that he derives his skill.

But why does a man who is corrupt and wicked become rich, without inheriting it from his father, while another, amidst infinite labors, remains poor? For such are the questions they raise, always arguing upon wealth and poverty, and never taking the case of vice and virtue. Now in this question talk not of that, but show me a man who has become bad, while he was striving to be good; or one that, without striving, has become good. For if Fate has any power, its power should be shown in the most important things; in vice and virtue, not in poverty and riches. Again you ask, why is one man sickly and another healthy? Why is one honored, another disgraced? Why does every thing succeed well with this man, while another meets with nothing but failure and impediments? Lay aside the notion of nativity, and you will know. Believe firmly that there is a God and a Providence, and all these things will be cleared up. *"But I cannot,"* you say,

"conceive that there is a Providence, when there is such disorder. Can I believe that the good God gives wealth to the fornicator, the corrupt and dishonest man, and not to the virtuous? How can I believe this? For there must be facts to ground belief." Well then, do these cases proceed from a nativity that was just, or unjust? *"Unjust,"* you say. Who then made it? *"Not God,"* you say, *"it was unbegotten."* But how can the unbegotten produce these things? For they are contradictions. *"These things are not then in any wise the works of God."* Shall we then enquire who made the earth, the sea, the heavens, the seasons? *"Nativity,"* you answer. Did nativity then produce in things inanimate such order and harmony, but in us, for whom these things were made, so much disorder? As if one, in building a house, should be careful to make it magnificent, but bestow not a thought upon his household. But who preserves the succession of the seasons? Who established the regular laws of nature? Who appointed the courses of day and night? These things are superior to any such nativity. *"But these,"* you say, *"came to be of themselves."* And yet how can such a well-ordered system spring up of itself?

"But whence," you say, *"come the rich, the healthy, the renowned, and how are some made rich by covetousness, some by inheritance, some by violence? And why does God suffer the wicked to be prosperous?"* We answer, Because the retribution, according to the desert of each, does not take place here, but is reserved for hereafter. Show me any such thing taking place Then! *"Well,"* say you, *"give me here, and I do not look for hereafter."* But it is because you seek here, that you receive not. For if when earthly enjoyment is not within your reach, you seek present things so eagerly as to prefer them to future, what would you do if you were in possession of unmixed pleasure? God therefore shows you that these things are nothing, and indifferent; for if they were not indifferent, He would not

bestow them on such men. You will own that it is a matter of indifference whether one be tall or short, black or white; so is it whether one be rich or poor. For, tell me, are not things necessary bestowed on all equally, as the capacity for virtue, the distribution of spiritual gifts? If you understood aright the mercies of God, you would not complain of wanting worldly things, while you enjoyed these best gifts equally with others; and knowing that equal distribution you would not desire superiority in the rest. As if a servant enjoying from his master's bounty food, clothing, and lodging, and all other necessities equally with his fellow-servants, should pride himself upon having longer nails, or more hair upon his head; so it is for a Christian to be elated on account of those things, which he enjoys only for a time. For this reason it is, that God withdraws those things from us, to extinguish this madness, and transfer our affections from them to heaven. But nevertheless we do not learn wisdom. As if a child possessing a toy, should prefer it to things necessary, and his father, to lead him against his will to what was better for him, should deprive him of his toy; so God takes these things from us, that He may lead us to heaven. If you ask then why He permits the wicked to be rich, it is because they are not high in His esteem. And if the righteous too are rich, it is rather that He allows it to be, than that He makes them so. Now these things we say superficially, as to men not knowing the Scriptures. But our discourses would be unnecessary if you would believe and take heed to the divine word, for that would teach you all things. And that you may understand that neither riches, nor health, nor glory, are anything, I can show you many, who, when they might gain wealth, do not seek wealth; when they might enjoy health, mortify their bodies; when they might rise to glory, make it their aim to be despised. But there is no good man, who ever studied to be bad. Let us therefore desist from seeking things below, and let us seek heavenly things; for so we shall be able to attain

them, and we shall enjoy eternal delights, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ. To Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now, and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 1:5-7

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

Nothing is so injurious to mankind as to undervalue friendship ; and not to cultivate it with the greatest care; as nothing, on the other hand, is so beneficial, as to pursue it to the utmost of our power. This Christ has shown, where He says, *"If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father"* [Matthew 18:19]; and again, *"Because iniquity shall abound, love shall wax cold."* [Matthew 24:12] It is this that has been the occasion of all heresies. For men, because they loved not their brethren, have envied those who were in high repute, and from envying, they have become eager for power, and from a love of power have introduced heresies. On this account Paul having said, *"that you might charge some that they teach no other doctrine,"* now shows that the manner in which this may be effected is by charity. As therefore when he says, *"Christ is the end of the Law"* [Romans 10:4], that is, its fulfillment, and this is connected with the former, so this commandment is implied in love. The end of medicine is health, but where there is health, there is no need to make much ado; so where there is love, there is no need of much commanding. But what sort of love does he speak of? That which is sincere, which is not merely in words but which flows from the disposition, from sentiment, and sympathy. *"From a pure heart,"* he says, either with respect to a right conversation, or sincere affection. For an

impure life too produces divisions. *"For every one that does evil, hates the light."* [John 3:20] There is indeed a friendship even among the wicked. Robbers and murderers may love one another, but this is not *"from a good conscience,"* not *"from a pure"* but from an impure *"heart,"* not from *"faith unfeigned,"* but from that which is false and hypocritical. For faith points out the truth, and a sincere faith produces love, which he who truly believes in God cannot endure to lay aside.

Ver. 6. *"From which some having swerved have turned aside to vain jangling."*

He has well said, *"swerved,"* for it requires skill, to shoot straight and not beside the mark, to have the direction of the Spirit. For there are many things to turn us aside from the right course, and we should look but to one object.

Ver. 7. *"Desiring to be teachers of the law."*

Here we see another cause of evil, the love of power. Wherefore Christ said, *"Be not called Rabbi"* [Matthew 23:8]; and the Apostle again, *"For neither do they keep the law, but that they may glory in your flesh."* [Galatians 6:13] They desire preëminence, he means, and on that account disregard truth.

"Understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

Here he censures them, because they know not the end and aim of the Law, nor the period for which it was to have authority. But if it was from ignorance, why is it called a sin? Because it was incurred not only from their desiring to be teachers of the law, but from their not retaining love. Nay, and their very ignorance arose from these causes. For when the soul abandons itself to carnal things, the clearness of its vision is dimmed, and falling from love it drops into contentiousness, and the eye of the mind is

blinded. For he that is possessed by any desire for these temporal things, intoxicated, as he is, with passion, cannot be an impartial judge of truth.

"Not knowing whereof they affirm."

For it is probable that they spoke of the law, and enlarged on its purifications and other bodily rites. The Apostle then forbearing to censure these, as either nothing, or at best a shadow and figure of spiritual things, proceeds in a more engaging way to praise the law, calling the Decalogue here the law, and by means of it discarding the rest. For if even these precepts punish transgressors, and become useless to us, much more the others.

Ver. 8, 9. *"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully. Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man."*

The law, he seems to say, is good, and again, not good. What then? If one use it not lawfully, is it not good? Nay even so it is good. But what he means is this; if any one fulfills it in his actions; for that is to *"use it lawfully"* as here intended. But when they expound it in their words, and neglect it in their deeds, that is using it unlawfully. For such an one uses it, but not to his own profit. And another way may be named besides. What is it? That the law, if you use it aright, sends you to Christ. For since its aim is to justify man, and it fails to effect this, it remits us to Him who can do so. Another way again of using the law lawfully, is when we keep it, but as a thing superfluous. And how as a thing superfluous? As the bridle is properly used, not by the prancing horse that champs it, but by that which wears it only for the sake of appearance, so he uses the law lawfully, who governs himself, though not as constrained by the letter of it. He uses the law lawfully who is conscious that he does not need it, for he who is already so virtuous that he fulfills it not from fear of it, but from a principle of virtue, uses it lawfully and safely: that is, if one so use it, not as being in

fear of it, but having before his eyes rather the condemnation of conscience than the punishment hereafter. Moreover he calls him a righteous man, who has attained unto virtue. He therefore uses the law lawfully, who does not require to be instructed by it. For as points in reading are set before children; but he who does what they direct, without their aid, from other knowledge, shows more skill, and is a better reader; so he who is above the law, is not under the schooling of the law. For he keeps it in a much higher degree, who fulfills it not from fear, but from a virtuous inclination; since he that fears punishment does not fulfill it in the same manner as he that aims at reward. He that is under the law does it not as he that is above the law. For to live above the law is to use it lawfully. He uses it lawfully, and keeps it, who achieves things beyond the law, and who does not need its instructions. For the law, for the most part, is prohibition of evil; now this alone does not make a man righteous, but the performance of good actions besides. Hence those, who abstain from evil like slaves, do not come up to the mark of the law. For it was appointed for the punishment of transgression. Such men indeed use it, but it is to dread its punishment. It is said, *"Will you not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good"* [Romans 13:3]: which implies, that the law threatens punishment only to the wicked. But of what use is the law to him whose actions deserve a crown? As the surgeon is of use only to him who has some hurt, and not to the sound and healthy man. *"But for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners."* He calls the Jews *"lawless and disobedient"* too. *"The law (he says) works wrath,"* that is, to the evil doers. But what to him who is deserving of reward? *"By the law is the knowledge of sin."* [Romans 3:20] What then with respect to the righteous? *"the law is not made,"* he says, *"for a righteous man."* Wherefore? Because he is exempted from its punishment, and he waits not to learn from it what is his duty, since he has the grace of

the Spirit within to direct him. For the law was given that men might be chastened by fear of its threatenings. But the tractable horse needs not the curb, nor the man that can dispense with instruction the schoolmaster.

"But for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers." Thus he does not stop at the mention of sins in general, nor of these only, but goes over the several kinds of sin, to shame men, as it were, of being under the direction of the law; and having thus particularized some, he adds a reference to those omitted, though what he had enumerated were sufficient to withdraw men. Of whom then does he say these things? Of the Jews, for they were *"murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers"*: they were *"profane and unholy,"* for these too he means when he says, *"ungodly and sinners,"* and being such, the law was necessarily given to them. For did they not repeatedly worship idols? Did they not stone Moses? Were not their hands imbrued in the blood of their kindred? Do not the prophets constantly accuse them of these things? But to those who are instructed by a heavenly philosophy, these commandments are superfluous. *"For murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine";* for all the things which he had mentioned were the passions of a corrupted soul, and contrary, therefore, to sound doctrine.

Ver. 11. *"According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."*

Thus the Law is still necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel, yet to those who obey it is unnecessary. And he calls the Gospel *"glorious."* There were some who were ashamed of its persecutions, and of the

sufferings of Christ, and so for the sake of these, as well as for others, he has called it *"the glorious Gospel,"* thus showing that the sufferings of Christ are our glory. And perhaps he glances too at the future. For if our present state is exposed to shame and reproach, it will not be so hereafter; and it is to things future, and not to things present, that the Gospel belongs. Why then did the Angel say, *"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born a Saviour"*? [Luke 2:10] Because He was born to be their Saviour, though His miracles did not commence from His birth. *"According to the Gospel,"* he says, *"of the blessed God."* The glory he means is either that of the service of God, or, in that if present things are filled with its glory, yet much more will things future be so; when *"His enemies shall be put under His feet"* [1 Corinthians 15:25], when there shall be nothing opposed, when the just shall behold all those blessed things, which *"eye has not seen, nor ear heard, and which has not entered into the heart of man."* [1 Corinthians 2:9] *"For I will"* says our Saviour, *"that they also may be with Me, where I am, that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me."* [John 17:24]

Moral. Let us then learn who these are, and let us esteem them blessed, considering what felicities they will then enjoy, of what light and glory they will then participate. The glory of this world is worthless and not enduring, or if it abides, it abides but till death, and after that is wholly extinguished. For *"his glory,"* it says, *"shall not descend after him."* [Psalm 49:17] And with many it lasts not even to the end of life. But no such thing is to be thought of in that glory; it abides, and will have no end. For such are the things of God, enduring, and above all change or end. For the glory of that state is not from without, but from within. I mean, it consists not in a multitude of servant, or of chariot, nor in costly garments. Independently of these things, the man himself is clothed with glory. Here, without these

things, the man appears naked. In the baths, we see the illustrious, the undistinguished, and the base, alike bare. Often have the great been exposed to danger in public, being left on some occasion by their servants. But in that world men carry their glory about with them, and the Saints, like the Angels, wherever they appear, have their glory in themselves. Yea rather as the sun needs no vestures, and requires no foreign aid, but wherever he appears, his glory at once shines forth; so shall it then be.

Let us then pursue that glory, than which nothing is more venerable; and leave the glory of the world, as beyond anything worthless. "*Boast not of your clothing and raiment.*" [Sirach 11:4] This was the advice given of old to the simple. Indeed the dancer, the harlot, the player, are arrayed in a gayer and more costly robe than you. And besides, this boasting were of that, which if but moths attack, they can rob you of its enjoyment. Do you see what an unstable thing it is, this glory of the present life? Thou primest yourself upon that which insects make and destroy. For Indian insects, it is said, spin those fine threads of which your robes are made. But rather seek a clothing woven from things above, an admirable and radiant vesture, raiment of real gold; of gold not dug by malefactors' hands out of the mine, but the produce of virtue. Let us clothe ourselves with a robe not the manufacture of poor men or slaves, but wrought by our Lord Himself. But your garments, you say, are in-wrought with gold! And what is that to you? He that wrought it, not he that wears it, is the object of admiration, for there it is really due. It is not the frame on which the garment is stretched at the fuller's, but the maker of it, that is admired. Yet the block wears it, and has it bound on itself. And as that wears it, but not for use, even so do some of these women, for the benefit of the garment, to air it, they say, that it may not be moth-eaten! Is it not then the extreme of folly to be solicitous about a thing so worthless, to do anything whatever, to risk your salvation for it, to

make a mock at Hell, to set God at defiance, to overlook Christ hungering? Talk not of the precious spices of India, Arabia, and Persia, the moist and the dry, the perfumes and ointments, so costly and so useless. Why, O woman, do you lavish perfumes upon a body full of impurity within? Why spend on what is offensive, as if one should waste perfumes upon dirt, or distill balms upon a brick. There is, if you desire it, a precious ointment and a fragrance, with which you might anoint your soul; not brought from Arabia, or Ethiopia, nor from Persia, but from heaven itself; purchased not by gold, but by a virtuous will, and by faith unfeigned. Buy this perfume, the odor of which is able to fill the world. It was of this the Apostles savored. *"For we are (he says) a sweet savor, to some of death, to others of life."* [2 Corinthians 2:15-16] And what means this? That it is as they say, that the swine is suffocated by perfumes! But this spiritual fragrance scented not only the bodies but the garments of the Apostles; and Paul's garments were so impregnated with it, that they cast out devils. What balmy leaf, what cassia, what myrrh so sweet or so efficacious as this perfume? For if it put devils to flight, what could it not effect? With this ointment let us furnish ourselves. And the grace of the Spirit will provide it through almsgiving. Of these we shall savor, when we go into the other world. And as here, he that is perfumed with sweet odors draws upon himself the notice of all, and whether at the bath, or the assembly, or any other concourse of men, all follow him, and observe him; so, in that world, when souls come in that are fragrant with this spiritual savor, all arise and make room. And even here devils and all vices are afraid to approach it, and cannot endure it, for it chokes them. Let us then not bear about us that perfume which is a mark of effeminacy, but this, which is a mark of manhood, which is truly admirable, which fills us with a holy confidence. This is a spice which is not the produce of the earth, but springs from virtue, which withers not, but blooms

for ever. This is it that renders those who possess it honorable. With this we are anointed at our Baptism, then we savor sweetly of it; but it must be by our care afterwards that we retain the savor. Of old the Priests were anointed with ointment, as an emblem of the virtue, the fragrance of which a Priest should diffuse around him.

But nothing is more offensive than the savor of sin, which made the Psalmist say, *"My wounds stink and are corrupt."* [Psalm 38:5] For sin is more foul than putrefaction itself. What, for instance, is more offensive than fornication? And if this is not perceived at the time of its commission, yet, after it is committed, its offensive nature, the impurity contracted in it, and the curse, and the abomination of it is perceived. So it is with all sin. Before it is committed it has something of pleasure, but after its commission, the pleasure ceases and fades away, and pain and shame succeed. But with righteousness it is the reverse. At the beginning it is attended with toil, but in the end with pleasure and repose. But even here, as in the one case the pleasure of sin is no pleasure, because of the expectation of disgrace and punishment, so in the other the toil is not felt as toil, by reason of the hope of reward. And what is the pleasure of drunkenness? The poor gratification of drinking, and hardly that. For when insensibility follows, and the man sees nothing that is before him, and is in a worse state than a madman, what enjoyment remains? Nay, one might well say there is no pleasure in fornication itself. For when passion has deprived the soul of its judgment, can there be any real delights? As well might we say that the itch is a pleasure! I should call that true pleasure, when the soul is not affected by passion, not agitated nor overpowered by the body. For what pleasure can it be to grind the teeth, to distort the eyes, to be irritated and inflamed beyond decency? But so far is it from being pleasant, that men hasten to escape from it, and when it is over are in pain. But if it were pleasure, they would

wish not to escape from it, but to continue it. It has therefore only the name of pleasure.

But not such are the pleasures enjoyed by us; they are truly delightful, they do not agitate nor inflame. They leave the soul free, and cheer and expand it. Such was the pleasure of Paul when he said, *"In this I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice"*; and again, *"Rejoice in the Lord always."*

[Philippians 1:18, and 4:4] For sinful pleasure is attended with shame and condemnation; it is indulged in secret, and is attended with infinite uneasiness. But from all these the true pleasure is exempt. This then let us pursue, that we may attain those good things to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, etc.

Homily 3 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 1:12-14

" And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry [R.V.: to his service, [εἰς διακονίαν]]; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

The advantages arising from humility are generally acknowledged, and yet it is a thing not easily to be met with. There is affectation of humble talking enough and to spare, but humbleness of mind is nowhere to be found. This quality was so cultivated by the blessed Paul, that he is ever looking out for inducements to be humble. They who are conscious to themselves of great merits must struggle much with themselves if they would be humble. And he too was one likely to be under violent temptations, his own good conscience swelling him up like a gathering humor. Observe therefore his method in this place. *"I was entrusted,"* he had said, *"with the glorious Gospel of God, of which they who still adhere to the law have no right to partake; for it is now opposed to the Gospel, and their difference is such, that those who are actuated by the one, are as yet unworthy to partake of the other; as we should say, that those who require punishments, and chains, have no right to be admitted into the train of philosophers."* Being filled therefore with high thoughts, and having used magnificent expressions, he at once depresses himself, and engages others also to do the like. Having said therefore that *"the Gospel was committed to his trust"*; lest this should seem to be said from pride, he checks himself at

once, adding by way of correction, *"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."* Thus everywhere, we see, he conceals his own merit, and ascribes everything to God, yet so far only, as not to take away free will. For the unbeliever might perhaps say, If everything is of God, and we contribute nothing of ourselves, while He turns us, as if we were mere wood and stone, from wickedness to the love of wisdom, why then did He make Paul such as he was, and not Judas? To remove this objection, mark the prudence of his expression, *"Which was committed,"* he says, *"to my trust."* This was his own excellence and merit, but not wholly his own; for he says, *"I thank Christ Jesus, who enabled me."* This is God's part: then his own again, *"Because He counted me faithful."* Surely because he would be serviceable of his own part.

Ver. 13. *"Putting me into his service, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."*

Thus we see him acknowledge both his own part and that of God, and while he ascribes the greater part to the providence of God, he extenuates his own, yet so far only, as we said before, as was consistent with free will. And what is this, *"Who enabled me"*? I will tell you. He had so heavy a burden to sustain, that he needed much aid from above. For think what it was to be exposed to daily insults, and mockeries, and snares, and dangers, scoffs, and reproaches, and deaths; and not to faint, or slip, or turn backward, but though assaulted every day with darts innumerable, to bear up manfully, and remain firm and imperturbable. This was the effect of no human power, and yet not of Divine influence alone, but of his own resolution also. For that Christ chose him with a foreknowledge of what he would be, is plain from the testimony He bore to him before the

commencement of his preaching. *"He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings."* [Acts 9:15] For as those who bear the royal standard in war require both strength and address, that they may not let it fall into the hands of the enemy; so those who sustain the name of Christ, not only in war but in peace, need a mighty strength, to preserve it uninjured from the attacks of accusers. Great indeed is the strength required to bear the name of Christ, and to sustain it well, and bear the Cross. For he who in action, or word, or thought, does anything unworthy of Christ, does not sustain His name, and has not Christ dwelling in him. For he that sustains that name bears it in triumph, not in the concourse of men, but through the very heavens, while all angels stand in awe, and attend upon him, and admire him.

"I thank the Lord, who has enabled me." Observe how he thanks God even for that which was his own part. For he acknowledges it as a favor from Him that he was *"a chosen vessel."* For this, O blessed Paul, was your own part. *"For God is no respecter of persons."* But I thank Him that he *"thought me worthy of this ministry."* For this is a proof that He esteemed me faithful. The steward in a house is not only thankful to his master that he is trusted, but considers it as a sign that he holds him more faithful than others: so it is here. Then observe how he magnifies the mercy and loving-kindness of God, in describing his former life, *"who was formerly,"* he says, *"a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious."* And when he speaks of the still unbelieving Jews, he rather extenuates their guilt. *"For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."* [Romans 10:2] But of himself he says, *"Who was a blasphemer and a persecutor."* Observe his lowering of himself! So free was he from self-love, so full of humility, that he is not satisfied to call himself a persecutor and a blasphemer, but he aggravates his guilt, showing that it did not stop

with himself, that it was not enough that he was a blasphemer, but in the madness of his blasphemy he persecuted those who were willing to be godly.

"But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

Why then did other Jews not obtain mercy? Because what they did, they did not ignorantly, but willfully, well knowing what they did. For this we have the testimony of the Evangelist. *"Many of the Jews believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."* [John 12:42-43] And Christ again said to them, *"How can you believe, who receive honor one of another"* [John 5:44]? And the parents of the blind man *"said these things for fear of the Jews, lest they should be put out of the synagogue."* [John 9:22] Nay the Jews themselves said, *"Perceive how we avail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him."* [John 12:19] Thus their love of power was everywhere in their way. When they admitted that no one can forgive sins but God only, and Christ immediately did that very thing, which they had confessed to be a sign of divinity, this could not be a case of ignorance. But where was Paul then? Perhaps one should say he was sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, and took no part with the multitude who conspired against Jesus: for Gamaliel does not appear to have been an ambitious man. Then how is it that afterwards Paul was found joining with the multitude? He saw the doctrine growing, and on the point of prevailing, and being generally embraced. For in the lifetime of Christ, the disciples consorted with Him, and afterwards with their teachers, but when they were completely separated, Paul did not act as the other Jews did, from the love of power, but from zeal. For what was the motive of his journey to Damascus? He thought the doctrine pernicious, and was afraid that the preaching of it would spread everywhere. But with the Jews it was no concern for the

multitude, but the love of power, that influenced their actions. Hence they say, *"The Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."* [John 11:48] What fear was this that agitated them, but that of man? But it is worthy of enquiry, how one so skillful in the law as Paul could be ignorant? For it is he who says, *"which He had promised before by His holy prophets."* [Romans 4:2] How is it then that you know not, you who are zealous of the law of their fathers, who were brought up at the feet of Gamaliel? Yet they who spent their days on lakes and rivers, and the very publicans, have embraced the Gospel, while you that study the law are persecuting it! It is for this he condemns himself, saying, *"I am not meet to be called an Apostle."* [1 Corinthians 9:9] It is for this he confesses his ignorance, which was produced by unbelief. For this cause, he says, that he obtained *"mercy."* What then does he mean when he says, *"He counted me faithful"*? He would give up no right of his Master's: even his own part he ascribed to Him, and assumed nothing to himself, nor claimed for his own the glory which was due to God. Hence in another place we find him exclaiming, *"Sirs, why do ye these things to us? We also are men of like passions with you."* [Acts 14:15] So again, *"He counted me faithful."* And again, *"I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* [1 Corinthians 15:10] And again, *"It is He that works in us both to will and to do."* [Philippians 2:13] Thus in acknowledging that he *"obtained mercy,"* he owns that he deserved punishment, since mercy is for such. And again in another place he says of the Jews, *"Blindness in part is happened to Israel."* [Romans 11:25]

Ver. 14. *"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."*

This is added, lest hearing that he obtained mercy, we should understand by it only, that being deserving of punishment, as a persecutor

and blasphemer, nevertheless he was not punished. But mercy was not confined to this, that punishment was not inflicted; many other great favors are implied by it. For not only has God released us from the impending punishment, but He has made us "*righteous*" too, and "*sons*," and "*brethren*," and "*heirs*," and "*joint-heirs*." Therefore it is he says, that "*grace was exceeding abundant*." For the gifts bestowed were beyond mercy, since they are not such as would come of mercy only, but of affection and excessive love. Having thus enlarged upon the love of God which, not content with showing mercy to a blasphemer and persecutor, conferred upon him other blessings in abundance, he has guarded against that error of the unbelievers which takes away free will, by adding, "*with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*." Thus much only, he says, did we contribute. We have believed that He is able to save us.

Moral. Let us then love God through Christ. What means "*through Christ*"? That it is He, and not the Law, who has enabled us to do this. Observe what blessings we owe to Christ, and what to the Law. And he says not merely that grace has abounded, but "*abounded exceedingly*," in bringing at once to the adoption those who deserved infinite punishment.

And observe again that "*in*" is used for "*through*." For not only faith is necessary, but love. Since there are many still who believe that Christ is God, who yet love Him not, nor act like those who love Him. For how is it when they prefer everything to Him, money, nativity, fate, augury, divinations, omens? When we live in defiance of Him, pray, where is our love? Has any one a warm and affectionate friend? Let him love Christ but equally. So, if no more, let him love Him who gave His Son for us His enemies, who had no merits of our own. Merits did I say? Who had committed numberless sins, who had dared Him beyond all daring, and without cause! Yet He, after numberless instances of goodness and care, did

not even then cast us off. At the very time when we did Him the greatest wrong, then did He give His Son for us. And still we, after so great benefits, after being made His friends, and counted worthy through Him of all blessings, have not loved Him as our friend! What hope then can be ours? You shudder perhaps at the word, but I would that you shuddered at the fact! What? How shall it appear that we do not love God even as our friends, you say? I will endeavor to show you— and would that my words were groundless, and to no purpose! But I am afraid they are borne out by facts. For consider: friends, that are truly friends, will often suffer loss for those they love. But for Christ, no one will suffer loss, or even be content with his present state. For a friend we can readily submit to insults, and undertake quarrels; but for Christ, no one can endure enmity: and the saying is, *"Be loved for nothing— but be not hated for nothing."*

None of us would fail to relieve a friend who was hungering, but when Christ comes to us from day to day, and asks no great matter, but only bread, we do not even regard him, yea though we are nauseously over full, and swollen with gluttony: though our breath betrays the wine of yesterday, and we live in luxury, and waste our substance on harlots and parasites and flatterers, and even on monsters, idiots, and dwarfs; for men convert the natural defects of such into matter for amusement. Again, friends, that are truly such, we do not envy, nor are mortified at their success, yet we feel this toward (the minister of) Christ, and our friendship for men is seen to be more powerful than the fear of God, for the envious and the insincere plainly respect men more than God. And how is this? God sees the heart, yet man does not forbear to practice deceit in His sight; yet if the same man were detected in deceit by men, he thinks himself undone, and blushes for shame. And why speak of this? If a friend be in distress, we visit him, and should fear to be condemned, if we deferred it for a little time. But we do

not visit Christ, though He die again and again in prison; nay, if we have friends among the faithful, we visit them, not because they are Christians, but because they are our friends. Thus we do nothing from the fear or the love of God, but some things from friendship, some from custom. When we see a friend depart on travel, we weep and are troubled, and if we see his death, we bewail him, though we know that we shall not be long separated, that he will be restored to us at the Resurrection. But though Christ departs from us, or rather we reject Him daily, we do not grieve, nor think it strange, to injure, to offend, to provoke Him by doing what is displeasing to Him; and the fearful thing is not that we do not treat Him as a friend; for I will show that we even treat Him as an enemy. How, do you ask? Because *"the carnal mind is enmity against God,"* as Paul has said, and this we always carry about us. And we persecute Christ, when He advances toward us, and comes to our very doors. For wicked actions in effect do this, and every day we subject him to insults by our covetousness and our rapacity. And does any one by preaching His word, and benefiting His Church, obtain a good reputation? Then he is the object of envy, because he does the work of God. And we think that we envy him, but our envy passes on to Christ. We affect to wish the benefit to come not from others, but from ourselves. But this cannot be for Christ's sake, but for our own: otherwise, it would be a matter of indifference, whether the good were done by others or ourselves. If a physician found himself unable to cure his son, who was threatened with blindness, would he reject the aid of another, who was able to effect the cure? Far from it! *"Let my son be restored,"* he would almost say to him, *"whether it is to be by you or by me."* And why? Because he would not consider himself, but what was beneficial to his son. So, were our regard *"to Christ,"* it would lead us to say, *"Let good be done, whether by ourselves or by any other."* As Paul said, *"Whether in pretense or in truth*

Christ is preached." [Philippians 1:18]. In the same spirit Moses answered, when some would have excited his displeasure against Eldad and Modad, because they prophesied, "*Do you envy for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!*" [Numbers 11:29] These jealous feelings proceed from vainglory; and are they not those of opponents and enemies? Does any one speak ill of you? Love him! It is impossible, you say. Nay, if you will, it is quite possible. For if you love him only who speaks well of you, what thanks have you? It is not for the Lord's sake, but for the sake of the man's kind speech that you do it. Has any one injured you? Do him good! For in benefiting him who has benefited you there is little merit. Have you been deeply wronged and suffered loss? Make a point of requiting it with the contrary. Yes, I entreat you. Let this be the way we do our own part. Let us cease from hating and injuring our enemies. He commands us "*to love our enemies*" [Matthew 5:44]: but we persecute Him while He loves us. God forbid! We all say in words, but not so in deeds. So darkened are our minds by sin, that we tolerate in our actions what in words we think intolerable. Let us desist then from things that are injurious and ruinous to our salvation, that we may obtain those blessings which as His friends we may obtain. For Christ says, "*I will that where I am, there My disciples may be also, that they may behold My glory*" [John 17:24], which may we all attain, through the grace and love of Jesus Christ.

Homily 4 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 1:15, 16

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in Him to life everlasting."

The favors of God so far exceed human hope and expectation, that often they are not believed. For God has bestowed upon us such things as the mind of man never looked for, never thought of. It is for this reason that the Apostles spend much discourse in securing a belief of the gifts that are granted us of God. For as men, upon receiving some great good, ask themselves if it is not a dream, as not believing it; so it is with respect to the gifts of God. What then was it that was thought incredible? That those who were enemies, and sinners, neither justified by the law, nor by works, should immediately through faith alone be advanced to the highest favor. Upon this head accordingly Paul has discoursed at length in his Epistle to the Romans, and here again at length. *"This is a faithful saying,"* he says, *"and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*

As the Jews were chiefly attracted by this, he persuades them not to give heed to the law, since they could not attain salvation by it without faith. Against this he contends; for it seemed to them incredible, that a man who had mis-spent all his former life in vain and wicked actions, should afterwards be saved by his faith alone. On this account he says, *"It is a saying to be believed."* But some not only disbelieved but even objected, as

the Greeks do now. *"Let us then do evil, that good may come."* This was the consequence they drew in derision of our faith, from his words, *"Where sin abounded grace did much more abound."* [Romans 3:8, and 5:20] So when we discourse to them of Hell they say, How can this be worthy of God? When man has found his servant offending, he forgives it, and thinks him worthy of pardon and does God punish eternally? And when we speak of the Laver, and of the remission of sins through it, this too they say is unworthy of God, that he who has committed offenses without number should have his sins remitted. What perverseness of mind is this, what a spirit of contention does it manifest! Surely if forgiveness is an evil, punishment is a good; but if punishment is an evil, remission of it is a good. I speak according to their notions, for according to ours, both are good. This I shall show at another time, for the present would not suffice for a matter so deep, and which requires to be elaborately argued. I must lay it before your Charity at a fitting season. At present let us proceed with our proposed subject. *"This is a faithful saying,"* he says. But why is it to be believed?

This appears both from what precedes and from what follows. Observe how he prepares us for this assertion, and how he then dwells upon it. For he has previously declared that He showed mercy to me *"a blasphemer and a persecutor"*; this was in the way of preparation. And not only did He show mercy, but *"He accounted me faithful."* So far should we be, he means, from disbelieving that He showed mercy. For no one, who should see a prisoner admitted into a palace, could doubt whether he obtained mercy. And this was visibly the situation of Paul, for he makes himself the example. Nor is he ashamed to call himself a sinner, but rather delights in it, as he thus can best demonstrate the miracle of God's regard for him, and that He had thought him worthy of such extraordinary kindness.

But how is it, that he here calls himself a sinner, nay, the chief of sinners, whereas he elsewhere asserts that he was "*touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless*"? [Philippians 3:6] Because with respect to the righteousness which God has wrought, the justification which is really sought, even those who are righteous in the law are sinners, "*for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" [Romans 3:23] Therefore he does not say righteousness simply, but "*the righteousness which is in the law.*" As a man that has acquired wealth, with respect to himself appears rich, but upon a comparison with the treasures of kings is very poor and the chief of the poor; so it is in this case. Compared with Angels, even righteous men are sinners; and if Paul, who wrought the righteousness that is in the law, was the chief of sinners, what other man can be called righteous? For he says not this to condemn his own life as impure, let not this be imagined; but comparing his own legal righteousness with the righteousness of God, he shows it to be nothing worth, and not only so, but he proves those who possess it to be sinners.

Ver. 16. "*Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in Him to life everlasting.*"

See how he further humbles and depreciates himself, by naming a fresh and less creditable reason. For that he obtained mercy on account of his ignorance, does not so much imply that he who obtained mercy was a sinner, or under deep condemnation; but to say that he obtained mercy in order that no sinner hereafter might despair of finding mercy, but that each might feel sure of obtaining the like favor, this is an excess of humiliation, such that even in calling himself the chief of sinners, "*a blasphemer and a persecutor, and one not meet to be called an Apostle,*" he had said nothing like it. This will appear by an example. Suppose a populous city, all whose

inhabitants were wicked, some more so, and some less, but all deserving of condemnation; and let one among that multitude be more deserving of punishment than all the rest, and guilty of every kind of wickedness. If it were declared that the king was willing to pardon all, it would not be so readily believed, as if they were to see this most wicked wretch actually pardoned. There could then be no longer any doubt. This is what Paul says, that God, willing to give men full assurance that He pardons all their transgressions, chose, as the object of His mercy, him who was more a sinner than any; for when I obtained mercy, he argues, there could be no doubt of others: as familiarly speaking we might say, *"If God pardons such an one, he will never punish anybody"*; and thus he shows that he himself, though unworthy of pardon, for the sake of others' salvation, first obtained that pardon. Therefore, he says, since I am saved, let no one doubt of salvation. And observe the humility of this blessed man; he says not, *"that in me he might show forth"* His *"longsuffering,"* but *"all longsuffering"*; as if he had said, greater longsuffering He could not show in any case than in mine, nor find a sinner that so required all His pardon, all His longsuffering; not a part only, like those who are only partially sinners, but *"all"* His longsuffering.

"For a pattern to those who should hereafter believe." This is said for comfort, for encouragement. But because he had spoken highly of the Son, and of the great love which He has manifested, lest he should be thought to exclude the Father from this, he ascribes the glory to Him also.

Ver. 17. *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

For these things, then, we glorify not the Son only, but the Father. Here let us argue with the heretics. Speaking of the Father, he says, *"To the only God."* Is the Son then not God? *"The only immortal."* Is the Son then not

immortal? Or does He not possess that Himself, which hereafter He will give to us? Yes, they say, He is God and immortal, but not such as the Father. What then? Is He of inferior essence, and therefore of inferior immortality? What then is a greater and a less immortality? For immortality is nothing else than the not being subject to destruction. For there is a greater and a less glory; but immortality does not admit of being greater or less: as neither is there a greater and a less health. For a thing must either be destructible, or altogether indestructible. Are we men then immortal even as He? God forbid! Surely not! Why? Because He has it by nature, but we adventitiously. Why then do you make the difference? Because the Father, he says, is made such as He is by no other: but the Son is what He is, from the Father. This we also confess, not denying that the Son is generated from the Father incorruptibly. And we glorify the Father, he means, for having generated the Son, such as He is. Thus you see the Father is most glorified, when the Son has done great things. For the glory of the Son is referred again to Him. And since He generated Him omnipotent and such as He is in Himself, it is not more the glory of the Son than of the Father, that He is self-sufficient, and self-maintained, and free from infirmity. It has been said of the Son, "*By whom He made the worlds.*" [Hebrews 1:2] Now there is a distinction observed among us between creation and workmanship. For one works and toils and executes, another rules; and why? Because he that executes is the inferior. But it is not so there; nor is the sovereignty with One, the workmanship with the Other. For when we hear, "*By whom He made the worlds,*" we do not exclude the Father from creation. Nor when we say, "*To the King immortal,*" do we deny dominion to the Son. For these are common to the One and the Other, and each belongs to Both. The Father created, in that He begot the creating Son; the Son rules, as being Lord of all things created. For He does not work for hire, nor in obedience to others,

as workmen do among us, but from His own goodness and love for mankind. But has the Son ever been seen? No one can affirm this. What means then, *"To the King immortal, invisible, the only wise God"*? Or when it is said, *"There is no other name whereby we must be saved"*: and again, *"There is salvation in no other"*? [Acts 4:12]

"To Him be honor and glory forever. Amen."

Now honor and glory are not mere words; and since He has honored us not by words only, but by what He has done for us, so let us honor Him by works and deeds. Yet this honor touches us, while that reaches not Him, for He needs not the honor that comes from us, we do need that which is from Him.

In honoring Him, therefore, we do honor to ourselves. He who opens his eyes to gaze on the light of the sun, receives delight himself, as he admires the beauty of the star, but does no favor to that luminary, nor increases its splendor, for it continues what it was; much more is this true with respect to God. He who admires and honors God does so to his own salvation, and highest benefit; and how? Because he follows after virtue, and is honored by Him. For *"them that honor Me,"* He says, *"I will honor."* [1 Samuel 4:30] How then is He honored, if He enjoys no advantage from our honor? Just as He is said to hunger and thirst. For He assumes everything that is ours, that He may in anywise attract us to Him. He is said to receive honors, and even insults, that we may be afraid. But with all this we are not attracted towards Him!

Moral. Let us then *"glorify God,"* and bear God both *"in our body and in our spirit."* [1 Corinthians 6:20] And how is one to glorify Him in the body? Says one, and how in the spirit? The soul is here called the spirit to distinguish it from the body. But how may we glorify Him in the body and in the spirit? He glorifies Him in the body, who does not commit adultery or

fornication, who avoids gluttony and drunkenness, who does not affect a showy exterior, who makes such provision for himself as is sufficient for health only: and so the woman, who does not perfume nor paint her person, but is satisfied to be such as God made her, and adds no device of her own. For why do you add your own embellishments to the work which God made? Is not His workmanship sufficient for you? Or do you endeavor to add grace to it, as if forsooth you were the better artist? It is not for yourself, but to attract crowds of lovers, that you thus adornest your person, and insultest your Creator. And do not say, *"What can I do? It is no wish of my own, but I must do it for my husband. I cannot win his love except I consent to this."* God made you beautiful, that He might be admired even in your beauty, and not that He might be insulted. Do not therefore make Him so ill a return, but requite Him with modesty and chastity. God made you beautiful, that He might increase the trials of your modesty. For it is much harder for one that is lovely to be modest, than for one who has no such attractions, for which to be courted. Why does the Scripture tell us, that *"Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored"* [Genesis 39:6], but that we might the more admire his modesty coupled with beauty? Has God made you beautiful? Why do you make yourself otherwise? For as though one should overlay a golden statue with a daubing of mire, so it is with those women that use paints. Thou besmearest yourself with red and white earth! But the homely, you say, may fairly have recourse to this. And why? To hide their ugliness? It is a vain attempt. For when was the natural appearance improved upon by that which is studied and artificial? And why should you be troubled at your want of beauty, since it is no reproach? For hear the saying of the Wise Man, *"Commend not a man for his beauty, neither abhor a man for his outward appearance."* [Sirach 11:2] Let God be rather admired, the best Artificer, and not man, who has no merit in being

made such as he is. What are the advantages, tell me, of beauty? None. It exposes its possessor to greater trials, mishaps, perils, and suspicions. She that wants it escapes suspicion; she that possesses it, except she practice a great and extraordinary reserve, incurs an evil report, and what is worse than all, the suspicion of her husband, who takes less pleasure in beholding her beauty, than he suffers pain from jealousy. And her beauty fades in his sight from familiarity, while she suffers in her character from the imputation of weakness, dissipation, and wantonness, and her very soul becomes degraded and full of haughtiness. To these evils personal beauty is exposed. But she who has not this attraction, escapes unmolested. The dogs do not assail her; she is like a lamb, reposing in a secure pasture, where no wolf intrudes to harass her, because the shepherd is at hand to protect her.

The real superiority is, not that one is fair, and the other homely, but it is a superiority that one, even if she is not fair, is unchaste, and the other is not wicked. Tell me wherein is the perfection of eyes? Is it in their being soft, and rolling, and round, and dark, or in their clearness and quicksightedness. Is it the perfection of a lamp to be elegantly formed, and finely turned, or to shine brightly, and to enlighten the whole house? We cannot say it is not this, for the other is indifferent, and this the real object. Accordingly we often say to the maid whose charge it is, "*You have made a bad lamp of it.*" So entirely is it the use of a lamp to give light. So it matters not what is the appearance of the eye, while it performs its office with full efficiency. We call the eye bad, which is dim or disordered, and which, when open, does not see. For that is bad, which does not perform its proper office— and this is the fault of eyes. And for a nose, tell me, when is it a good one? When it is straight, and polished on either side, and finely proportioned? Or when it is quick to receive odors, and transmit them to the brain? Any one can answer this.

Come now, let us illustrate this by an example— as of grippers, I mean the instruments so called; we say those are well-made, which are able to take up and hold things, not those which are only handsomely and elegantly shaped. So those are good teeth which are fit for the service of dividing and chewing our food, not those which are beautifully set. And applying the same reasoning to other parts of the body, we shall call those members beautiful, which are sound, and perform their proper functions aright. So we think any instrument, or plant, or animal good, not because of its form or color, but because it answers its purpose. And he is thought a good servant, who is useful and ready for our service, not one who is comely but dissolute. I trust you now understand how it is in your power to be beautiful.

And since the greatest and most important benefits are equally enjoyed by all, we are under no disadvantage. Whether we are beautiful or not, we alike behold this universe, the sun, the moon, and the stars; we breathe the same air, we partake alike of water, and the fruits of the earth. And if we may say what will sound strange, the homely are more healthy than the beautiful. For these, to preserve their beauty, engage in no labor, but give themselves up to indolence and delicate living, by which their bodily energies are impaired; while the others, having no such care, spend all their attention simply and entirely on active pursuits.

Let us then "*glorify God, and take and bear Him in our body.*" [1 Corinthians 6:20] Let us not affect a beautiful appearance; that care is vain and unprofitable. Let us not teach our husbands to admire the mere outward form; for if such be your adornment, his very habit of viewing your face will make him easy to be captivated by a harlot. But if you teach him to love good manners, and modesty, he will not be ready to wander, for he will see no attractions in a harlot, in whom those qualities are not found, but the

reverse. Neither teach him to be captivated by laughter, nor by a loose dress, lest you prepare a poison against yourself. Accustom him to delight in modesty, and this you will do, if your attire be modest. But if you have a flaunting air, an unsteady manner, how can you address him in a serious strain? And who will not hold you in contempt and derision?

But how is it possible to glorify God in our spirit? By practicing virtue, by adorning the soul. For such embellishment is not forbidden. Thus we glorify God, when we are good in every respect, and we shall be glorified by Him in a much higher degree in that great day. For *"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."* [Romans 8:18] Of which that we may all be partakers, God grant, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily 5 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 1:18, 19

"This charge I commit unto you, son [my child, [τέκνον]] Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on you, that you by them might [may] war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away have made shipwreck concerning the faith."

The office of a Teacher and that of a Priest is of great dignity, and to bring forward one that is worthy requires a divine election. So it was of old, and so it is now, when we make a choice without human passion, not looking to any temporal consideration, swayed neither by friendship, nor enmity. For though we be not partakers of so great a measure of the Spirit as they, yet a good purpose is sufficient to draw unto us the election of God. For the Apostles, when they elected Matthias, had not yet received the Holy Spirit, but having committed the matter to prayer, they chose him into the number of the Apostles. For they looked not to human friendships. And so now too it ought to be with us. But we have advanced to the extreme of negligence; and even what is clearly evident, we let pass. Now when we overlook what is manifest, how will God reveal to us what is unseen? As it is said, *"If you have not been faithful in that which is little, who will commit to you that which is great and true?"* [Luke 16:11] But then, when nothing human was done, the appointment of Priests too was by prophecy. What is *"by prophecy"*? By the Holy Spirit. For prophecy is not only the telling of things future, but also of the present. It was by prophecy that Saul was discovered *"hidden among the stuff."* [1 Samuel 10:22] For God reveals things to the righteous. So it was said by prophecy, *"Separate me Barnabas and Saul."* [Acts 13:2] In this way Timothy also was chosen, concerning

whom he speaks of prophecies in the plural; that, perhaps, upon which he *"took and circumcised him,"* and when he ordained him, as he himself says in his Epistle to him, *"Neglect not the gift that is in you."* [1 Timothy 4:14] Therefore to elevate him, and prepare him to be sober and watchful, he reminds him by whom he was chosen and ordained, as if he had said, *"God has chosen you. He gave you your commission, you were not made by human vote. Do not therefore abuse or bring into disgrace the appointment of God."* When again he speaks of a charge, which implies something burdensome, he adds, *"This charge I commit to you, son Timothy."* He charges him as his son, his own son, not so much with arbitrary or despotic authority as like a father, he says, *"my son Timothy."* The *"committing,"* however, implies that it is to be diligently kept, and that it is not our own. For we did not obtain it for ourselves, but God conferred it upon us; and not it only, but also *"faith and a good conscience."* What He has given us then, let us keep. For if He had not come, the faith had not been to be found, nor that pure life which we learn by education. As if he had said, *"It is not I that charge you, but He who chose you,"* and this is meant by *"the prophecies that went before on you."* Listen to them, obey them.

And say; what do you charge? *"That by them you should war a good warfare."* They chose you, that then for which they chose you do thou, *"war a good warfare."* He named *"a good warfare,"* since there is a bad warfare, of which he says, *"As you have yielded your members instruments to uncleanness and to iniquity."* [Romans 6:19] Those men serve under a tyrant, but you serve under a King. And why calls he it a warfare? To show how mighty a contest is to be maintained by all, but especially by a Teacher; that we require strong arms, and sobriety, and awakenedness, and continual vigilance: that we must prepare ourselves for blood and conflicts, must be in battle array, and have nothing relaxed. *"That you should war in*

them," he says. For as in an army all do not serve in the same capacity, but in their different stations; so also in the Church one has the office of a Teacher, another that of a disciple, another that of a private man. But you are in this. And, because this is not sufficient he adds,

Ver. 19. *"Holding faith, and a good conscience."*

For he that would be a Teacher must first teach himself. For as he who has not first been a good soldier, will never be a general, so it is with the Teacher; wherefore he says elsewhere, *"Lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away."* [1 Corinthians 9:27] *"Holding faith,"* he says, *"and a good conscience,"* that so you may preside over others. When we hear this, let us not disdain the exhortations of our superiors, though we be Teachers. For if Timothy, to whom all of us together are not worthy to be compared, receives commands and is instructed, and that being himself in the Teacher's office, much more should we. *"Which some having put away, have made shipwreck concerning the faith."* And this follows naturally. For when the life is corrupt, it engenders a doctrine congenial to it, and from this circumstance many are seen to fall into a gulf of evil, and to turn aside into Heathenism. For that they may not be tormented with the fear of futurity, they endeavor to persuade their souls, that what we preach is false. And some turn aside from the faith, who seek out everything by reasoning; for reasoning produces shipwreck, while faith is as a safe ship.

They then who turn aside from the faith must suffer shipwreck; and this he shows by an example.

Ver. 20. *"Of whom are Hymenæus and Alexander."*

And from them he would instruct us. You see how even from those times there have been seducing Teachers, curious enquirers, and men holding off from the faith, and searching out by their own reasonings. As

the shipwrecked man is naked and destitute of all things, so is he that falls away from the faith without resource, he knows not where to stand or where to stay himself, nor has he the advantage of a good life so as to gain anything from that quarter. For when the head is disordered, what avails the rest of the body? And if faith without a good life is unavailing, much more is the converse true. If God despises His own for our sakes, much more ought we to despise our own for His sake. For so it is, where any one falls away from the faith, he has no steadiness, he swims this way and that, till at last he is lost in the deep.

"Whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme!" Thus it is blasphemy to search into divine things by our own reasonings. For what have human reasonings in common with them? But how does Satan instruct them not to blaspheme? Can he instruct others, who has not yet taught himself, but is a blasphemer still? It is not that *"he should instruct,"* but *that they should be instructed.* It is not he that does it, though such is the result. As elsewhere he says in the case of the fornicator: *"To deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh."* Not that he may save the body, but *"that the spirit may be saved."* [1 Corinthians 5:5] Therefore it is spoken impersonally. How then is this effected? As executioners, though themselves laden with numberless crimes, are made the correctors of others; so it is here with the evil spirit. But why did you not punish them yourself, as you did that Bar-Jesus, and as Peter did Ananias, instead of delivering them to Satan? It was not that they might be punished, but that they might be instructed. For that he had the power appears from other passages, *"What will you? Shall I come unto you with a rod?"* [1 Corinthians 4:21] And again, *"Lest I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord has given me to edification, and not to destruction."* [2 Corinthians 13:10] Why did he then call upon Satan to

punish them? That the disgrace might be greater, as the severity and the punishment was more striking. Or rather, they themselves chastised those who did not yet believe, but those who turned aside, they delivered to Satan. Why then did Peter punish Ananias? Because while he was tempting the Holy Ghost, he was still an unbeliever. That the unbelieving therefore might learn that they could not escape, they themselves inflicted punishment upon them; but those who had learned this, yet afterwards turned aside, they delivered to Satan; showing that they were sustained not by their own power, but by their care for them; and as many as were lifted up into arrogance were delivered to him. For as kings with their own hands slay their enemies, but deliver their subjects to executioners for punishment, so it is in this case. And these acts were done to show the authority committed to the Apostles. Nor was it a slight power, to be able thus to subject the devil to their commands. For this shows that he served and obeyed them even against his will, and this was no little proof of the power of grace. And listen how he delivered them: *"When you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan."* [1 Corinthians 5:4] He was then immediately expelled from the common assembly, he was separated from the fold, he became deserted and destitute; he was delivered to the wolf. For as the cloud designated the camp of the Hebrews, so the Spirit distinguished the Church. If any one therefore was without, he was consumed, and it was by the judgment of the Apostles that he was cast out of the pale. So also the Lord delivered Judas to Satan. For immediately *"after the sop Satan entered into him."* [John 13:27] Or this may be said; that those whom they wished to amend, they did not themselves punish, but reserved their punishments for those who were incorrigible. Or otherwise, that they were the more

dreaded for delivering them up to others. Job also was delivered to Satan, but not for his sins, but for fuller proof of his worth.

Many such instances still occur. For since the Priests cannot know who are sinners, and unworthy partakers of the holy Mysteries, God often in this way delivers them to Satan. For when diseases, and attacks, and sorrows, and calamities, and the like occur, it is on this account that they are inflicted. This is shown by Paul. *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."* [1 Corinthians 11:30] But how? Says one, when we approach but once a year! But this is indeed the evil, that you determine the worthiness of your approach, not by the purity of your minds, but by the interval of time. You think it a proper caution not to communicate often; not considering that you are seared by partaking unworthily, though only once, but to receive worthily, though often, is salutary. It is not presumptuous to receive often, but to receive unworthily, though but once in a whole life. But we are so miserably foolish, that, though we commit numberless offenses in the course of a year, we are not anxious to be absolved from them, but are satisfied, that we do not often make bold impudently to insult the Body of Christ, not remembering that those who crucified Christ, crucified Him but once. Is the offense then the less, because committed but once? Judas betrayed his Master but once. What then, did that exempt him from punishment? Why indeed is time to be considered in this matter? Let our time of coming be when our conscience is pure. The Mystery at Easter is not of more efficacy than that which is now celebrated. It is one and the same. There is the same grace of the Spirit, it is always a Passover. You who are initiated know this. On the Preparation, on the Sabbath, on the Lord's day, and on the day of Martyrs, it is the same Sacrifice that is performed. *"For as often,"* he says, *"as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death."* [1 Corinthians 11:26] No

time is limited for the performance of this Sacrifice, why then is it then called the Paschal feast? Because Christ suffered for us then. Let not the time, therefore, make any difference in your approach. There is at all times the same power, the same dignity, the same grace, one and the same body; nor is one celebration of it more or less holy than another. And this you know, who see upon these occasions nothing new, save these worldly veils, and a more splendid attendance. The only thing that these days have more is that from them commenced the day of our salvation when Christ was sacrificed. But with respect to these mysteries, those days have no further preëminence.

When you approach to take bodily food, you wash your hands and your mouth, but when you draw near to this spiritual food, you do not cleanse your soul, but approach full of uncleanness. But you say, Are not the forty days' fastings sufficient to cleanse the huge heap of our sins? But of what use is it, tell me? If wishing to store up some precious ointment, you should make clean a place to receive it, and a little after having laid it up, should throw dung upon it, would not the fine odor vanish? This takes place with us too. We make ourselves to the best of our power worthy to approach; then we defile ourselves again! What then is the good of it? This we say even of those who are able in those forty days to wash themselves clean.

Let us then, I beseech you, not neglect our salvation, that our labor may not be in vain. For he who turns from his sins, and goes and commits the same again, is *"like a dog that returns to his vomit."* [Proverbs 26:11] But if we act as we ought, and take heed to our ways, we shall be thought worthy of those high rewards, which that we may all obtain, God grant through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 6 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 2:1-4

"I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." [R.V.: who wills that all men should be saved, etc.]

The Priest is the common father, as it were, of all the world; it is proper therefore that he should care for all, even as God, Whom he serves. For this reason he says, *"I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men."* From this, two advantages result. First, hatred towards those who are without is done away; for no one can feel hatred towards those for whom he prays: and they again are made better by the prayers that are offered for them, and by losing their ferocious disposition towards us. For nothing is so apt to draw men under teaching, as to love, and be loved. Think what it was for those who persecuted, scourged, banished, and slaughtered the Christians, to hear that those whom they treated so barbarously offered fervent prayers to God for them. Observe how he wishes a Christian to be superior to all ill-treatment. As a father who was struck on the face by a little child which he was carrying, would not lose anything of his affection for it; so we ought not to abate in our good will towards those who are without, even when we are stricken by them. What is *"first of all"*? It means in the daily Service; and the initiated know how this is done every day both in the evening and the morning, how we offer prayers for the whole world, for kings and all

that are in authority. But some one perhaps will say, he meant not for all men, but for all the faithful. How then does he speak of kings? For kings were not then worshipers of God, for there was a long succession of ungodly princes. And that he might not seem to flatter them, he says first, *"for all men,"* then *"for kings";* for if he had only mentioned kings, that might have been suspected. And then since the soul of some Christians might be slow at hearing this, and reject the exhortation, if at the celebration of the holy Mysteries it was necessary to offer prayers for a heathen king, he shows them the advantage of it, thus at least to reconcile them to the advice, *"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life";* as much as to say, Their safety is a security to us; as also in his Epistle to the Romans, he exhorts them to obey their rulers, *"not for wrath but for conscience' sake."* [Romans 13:5] For God has appointed government for the public good. When therefore they make war for this end, and stand on guard for our security, were it not unreasonable that we should not offer prayers for their safety in wars and dangers? It is not therefore flattery, but agreeable to the rules of justice. For if they were not preserved, and prospered in their wars, our affairs must necessarily be involved in confusion and trouble; and if they were cut off, we must either serve ourselves, or be scattered up and down as fugitives. For they are a sort of bulwarks thrown up before us, within which those who are inclosed are in peace and safety.

He says, *"supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks."* For we must give thanks to God for the good that befalls others, as that He makes the sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and sends His rain both upon the just and the unjust. Observe how he would unite and bind us together, not only by prayer but by thanksgiving. For he who is urged to thank God for his neighbor's good, is also bound to love him, and be kindly disposed towards him. And if we must give thanks for our neighbor's good,

much more for what happens to ourselves, and for what is unknown, and even for things against our will, and such as appear grievous to us, since God dispenses all things for our good.

Moral. Let every prayer of ours, then, be accompanied with thanksgiving. And if we are commanded to pray for our neighbors, not only for the faithful, but for the unbelieving also, consider how wrong it is to pray against your brethren. What? Has He commanded you to pray for your enemies, and do you pray against your brother? But your prayer is not against him, but against yourself. For you provoke God by uttering those impious words, "*Show him the same!*" "*So do to him!*" "*Smite him!*" "*Recompense him!*" Far be such words from the disciple of Christ, who should be meek and mild. From the mouth that has been vouchsafed such holy Mysteries, let nothing bitter proceed. Let not the tongue that has touched the Lord's Body utter anything offensive, let it be kept pure, let not curses be borne upon it. For if "*revilers shall not inherit the kingdom of God*" [1 Corinthians 6:10], much less those who curse. For he that curses must be injurious; and injuriousness and prayer are at variance with each other, cursing and praying are far apart, accusation and prayer are wide asunder. Do you propitiate God with prayer, and then utter imprecations? If you forgive not, you will not be forgiven. [Matthew 6:15] But instead of forgiving, you beseech God not to forgive; what excessive wickedness in this! If the unforgiving is not forgiven, he that prays his Lord not to forgive, how shall he be forgiven? The harm is to yourself, not him. For though your prayers were on the point of being heard for yourself, they would never be accepted in such a case, as offered with a polluted mouth. For surely the mouth that curses is polluted with all that is offensive and unclean.

When you ought to tremble for your own sins, to wrestle earnestly for the pardon of them, you come to move God against your brother— do you

not fear, nor think of what concerns yourself? Do you not see what you are doing? Imitate even the conduct of children at school. If they see their own class within giving account of their lessons, and all beaten for their idleness, and one by one severely examined and chastised with blows, they are frightened to death, and if one of their companions strikes them, and that severely, they cannot have while to be angry, nor complain to their master; so is their soul possessed with fear. They only look to one thing, that they may go in and come out without stripes, and their thoughts are on that time. And when they come out, whether beaten or not, the blows they have received from their playmates never enter their minds for the delight. And you, when you stand anxiously concerned for your own sins, how can you but shudder at making mention of others' faults? How can you implore pardon of God? For your own case is made worse on the terms of your imprecations against another, and you forbid Him to make allowance for your own faults. Might He not say, *"If you would have Me so severe in exacting offenses against you, how can you expect Me to pardon your offenses against Me?"* Let us learn at last to be Christians! If we know not how to pray, which is a very simple and easy thing, what else shall we know? Let us learn to pray like Christians. Those are the prayers of Gentiles, the supplications of Jews. The Christian's are the reverse, for the forgiveness and forgetting of offenses against us. *"Being reviled,"* it is said, *"we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat."* [1 Corinthians 4:12-13] Hear Stephen saying, *"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."* [Acts 6:60] Instead of praying against them, he prayed for them. You, instead of praying for them, utter imprecations against them. You then are wicked in the degree that he was excellent. Whom do we admire, tell me; those for whom he prayed, or him who prayed for them? Him certainly! And if we, much more than God. Would you have your enemy stricken?

pray for him: yet not with such intention, not to strike him. That will indeed be the effect, but let it not be your object. That blessed martyr suffered all unjustly, yet he prayed for them: we suffer many things justly from our enemies. And if he who suffered unjustly dared not forbear to pray for his enemies, what punishment do we deserve, who suffer justly, and yet do not pray for them, nay, pray against them? You think indeed that you are inflicting a blow upon another, but in truth you are thrusting the sword against yourself. You allow not the Judge to be lenient to your own offenses, by this way of urging Him to anger against others. For, "*with what measure you mete,*" He says, "*it shall be measured to you again; and with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged.*" [Matthew 7:2] Let us therefore be disposed to pardon, that God may be so disposed towards us.

These things I wish you not only to hear, but to observe. For now the memory retains only the words, and perhaps hardly those. And after we are separated, if any one who was not present were to ask you, what had been our discourse, some could not tell: others would know merely the subject we had spoken of, and answer that there had been a Homily upon the subject of forgiving injuries, and praying for our enemies, but would omit all that had been said, as they could not remember: others remember a little, but still somewhat. If therefore you gain nothing by what you hear, I entreat you not even to attend at the discourse. For of what use is it? The condemnation is greater, the punishment more severe, if after so many exhortations, we continue in the same course. For this reason God has given us a definite form of prayer, that we might ask for nothing human, nothing worldly. And you that are faithful know what you ought to pray for, how the whole Prayer is common. But one says, "*It is not commanded there to pray for unbelievers.*" This you would not say, if you understood the force, the depth, the hidden treasure of that Prayer. Only unfold it, and you find this

also comprised within it. For it is implied, when one says in prayer, "*Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.*" Now, because in heaven there is no unbeliever nor offender; if therefore it was for the faithful alone, there would be no reason in that expression. If the faithful were to do the will of God and the unbelievers not to do it, His will were not done in earth as it is in heaven. But it means; As there is none wicked in heaven, so let there be none on earth; but draw all men to the fear of You, make all men angels, even those who hate us, and are our enemies. Do you not see how God is daily blasphemed and mocked by believers and unbelievers, both in word and in deed? What then? Has He for this extinguished the sun? Or stayed the course of the moon? Has He crushed the heavens and uprooted the earth? Has He dried up the sea? Has He shut up the fountains of waters? Or confounded the air? Nay, on the contrary, He makes His sun to rise, His rain to descend, gives the fruits of the earth in their seasons, and thus supplies yearly nourishment to the blasphemers, to the insensible, to the polluted, to persecutors; not for one day or two, but for their whole life. Imitate Him then, emulate Him as far as human powers admit. Can you not make the sun arise? Abstain from evil speaking. Can you not send rain? Forbear reviling. Can you not give food? Refrain from insolence. Such gifts from you are sufficient. The goodness of God to His enemies is shown by His works. Do thou so at least by words: pray for your enemies, so will you be like your Father who is in heaven. How many times have we discoursed upon this subject! nor shall we cease to discourse; only let something come of it. It is not that we are drowsy, and weary of speaking; only do not you that hear be annoyed. Now a person seems to be annoyed, when he will not do what one says. For he who practices, loves often to hear the same thing, and is not annoyed by it; for it is his own commendation. But annoyance arises simply from not doing what is prescribed. Hence the speaker is troublesome. If a

man practices almsgiving, and hears another speak of almsgiving, he is not wearied, but pleased, for he hears his own good actions recommended and proclaimed. So that when we are displeased at hearing a discourse upon the forgiveness of injuries, it is because we have no interest in forbearance, it is not practiced by us; for if we had the reality, we should not be pained at its being named. If therefore you would not have us wearisome or annoying, practice as we preach, exhibit in your actions the subject of our discourses. For we shall never cease discoursing upon these things till your conduct is agreeable to them. And this we do more especially from our concern and affection for you. For the trumpeter must sound his trumpet, though no one should go out to war; he must fulfill his part. We do it, not as wishing to bring heavier condemnation upon you, but to avert it from ourselves. And besides this, love for you constrains us, for it would tear and torture our hearts if that should befall you, which God avert! It is not any costly process that we recommend to you: it does not require the spoiling of goods, nor a long and toilsome journey. It is only to will. It is a word, it is a purpose of the mind. Let us only set a guard on our tongues, a door and a bar upon our lips, that we may utter nothing offensive to God. It is for our own advantage, not for theirs for whom we pray, to act thus. For let us ever consider, that he who blesses his enemy, blesses himself, he who curses his enemy, curses himself, and he who prays for his enemy, prays not for him, but for himself. If we thus act, we shall be able to reduce to practice this excellent virtue, and so to obtain the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily 7 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 2:2-4

"That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who wills that all men should be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

If in order to put an end to public wars, and tumults, and battles, the Priest is exhorted to offer prayers for kings and governors, much more ought private individuals to do it. For there are three very grievous kinds of war. The one is public, when our soldiers are attacked by foreign armies: The second is, when even in time of peace, we are at war with one another: The third is, when the individual is at war with himself, which is the worst of all. For foreign war will not be able to hurt us greatly. What, I pray, though it slaughters and cuts us off? It injures not the soul. Neither will the second have power to harm us against our will; for though others be at war with us, we may be peaceable ourselves. For so says the Prophet, *"For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer"* [Psalm 109:4]; and again, *"I was at peace with them that hate peace"*; and, *"I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war."* [Psalm 120:6-7, Septuagint] But from the third, we cannot escape without danger. For when the body is at variance with the soul, and raises up evil desires, and arms against it sensual pleasures, or the bad passions of anger, and envy; we cannot attain the promised blessings, till this war is brought to an end; whoever does not still this tumult, must fall pierced by wounds that will bring that death that is in hell. We have daily need therefore of care and great anxiety, that this war may not be stirred up within us, or that, if stirred up, it may not last, but be

quelled and laid asleep. For what advantage is it, that the world enjoys profound peace, if you are at war with yourself? This then is the peace we should keep. If we have it, nothing from without will be able to harm us. And to this end the public peace contributes no little: whence it is said, *"That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life."* But if any one is disturbed when there is quiet, he is a miserable creature. Do you see that He speaks of this peace which I call the third kind? Therefore when he has said, *"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life,"* he does not stop there, but adds *"in all godliness and honesty."* But we cannot live in godliness and honesty, unless that peace be established. For when curious reasonings disturb our faith, what peace is there? Or when spirits of uncleanness, what peace is there?

For that we may not suppose that he speaks of that sort of life which all men live, when he says, *"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life,"* he adds, *"in all godliness and honesty,"* since a quiet and peaceable life may be led by heathens, and profligates, and voluptuous and wanton persons may be found living such a life. That this cannot be meant, is plain, from what he adds, *"in all godliness and honesty."* Such a life is exposed to snares, and conflicts, and the soul is daily wounded by the tumults of its own thoughts. But what sort of life he really means is plain from the sequel, and plain too, in that he speaks not simply of godliness, but adds, of *"all godliness."* For in saying this he seems to insist on a godliness not only of doctrine, but such as is supported by life, for in both surely must godliness be required. For of what advantage is it to be godly as to doctrine, but ungodly in life? And that it is very possible to be ungodly in life, hear this same blessed Apostle saying elsewhere, *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] And again, *"He has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."* [1 Timothy 5:8] And, *"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater"* [1

Corinthians 5:11], such a man honors not God. And, *"He that hates his brother, knows not God."* [1 John 2:9] Such are the various ways of ungodliness. Therefore he says, *"All godliness and good order."* For not only is the fornicator not honest, but the covetous man may be called disorderly and intemperate. For avarice is a lust no less than the bodily appetites, which he who does not chastise, is called dissolute. For men are called dissolute from not restraining their desires, so that the passionate, the envious, the covetous, the deceitful, and every one that lives in sin, may be called dissolute, disorderly, and licentious.

Ver. 3. *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."*

What is said to be *"acceptable"*? The praying for all men. This God accepts, this He wills.

Ver. 4. *"Who wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."*

Imitate God! If He wills that all men should be saved, there is reason why one should pray for all, if He has willed that all should be saved, be thou willing also; and if you wish it, pray for it, for wishes lead to prayers. Observe how from every quarter He urges this upon the soul, to pray for the Heathen, showing how great advantage springs from it; *"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life"*; and what is much more than this, that it is pleasing to God, and thus men become like Him, in that they will the same that He does. This is enough to shame a very brute. Fear not therefore to pray for the Gentiles, for God Himself wills it; but fear only to pray against any, for that He wills not. And if you pray for the Heathens, you ought of course to pray for Heretics also, for we are to pray for all men, and not to persecute. And this is good also for another reason, as we are partakers of

the same nature, and God commands and accepts benevolence and affection towards one another.

But if the Lord Himself wills to give, you say, what need of my prayer? It is of great benefit both to them and to yourself. It draws them to love, and it inclines you to humanity. It has the power of attracting others to the faith; (for many men have fallen away from God, from contentiousness towards one another;) and this is what he now calls the salvation of God, *"who will have all men to be saved"*; without this all other is nothing great, a mere nominal salvation, and only in words. *"And to come to the knowledge of the truth."* The truth: what truth? Faith in Him. And indeed he had previously said, *"Charge some that they teach no other doctrine."* But that no one may consider such as enemies, and on that account raise troubles against them; he says that *"He wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth"*; and having said this, he adds,

Ver. 5. *"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men."*

He had before said, *"to come to the knowledge of the truth,"* implying that the world is not in the truth. Now he says, *"that there is one God,"* that is, not as some say, many, and that He has sent His Son as Mediator, thus giving proof that He will have all men to be saved. But is not the Son God? Most truly He is; why then does he say, *"One God"*? In contradistinction to the idols; not to the Son. For he is discoursing about truth and error. Now a mediator ought to have communion with both parties, between whom he is to mediate. For this is the property of a mediator, to be in close communion with each of those whose mediator he is. For he would be no longer a mediator, if he were connected with one but separated from the other. If therefore He partakes not of the nature of the Father, He is not a Mediator, but is separated. For as He is partaker of the nature of men, because He

came to men, so is He partaker of the nature of God, because He came from God. Because He was to mediate between two natures, He must approximate to the two natures; for as the place situated between two others is joined to each place, so must that between natures be joined to either nature. As therefore He became Man, so was He also God. A man could not have become a mediator, because he must also plead with God. God could not have been mediator, since those could not receive Him, toward whom He should have mediated. And as elsewhere he says, *"There is one God the Father,...and one Lord Jesus Christ"* [1 Corinthians 8:6]; so also here *"One"* God, and *"One"* Mediator; he does not say two; for he would not have that number wrested to Polytheism, of which he was speaking. So he wrote *"One"* and *"One."* You see how accurate are the expressions of Scripture! For though one and one are two, we are not to say this, though reason suggests it. And here you say not one and one are two, and yet you say what reason does not suggest. *"If He begot He also suffered."* *"For there is one God,"* he says, *"and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."*

Ver. 6. *"Who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time."*

Was Christ then a ransom for the Heathen? Undoubtedly Christ died even for Heathen; and you cannot bear to pray for them. Why then, you ask, did they not believe? Because they would not: but His part was done. His suffering was a *"Testimony,"* he says; for He came, it is meant, *"to bear witness to the truth"* of the Father, and was slain. Thus not only the Father bore witness to Him, but He to the Father. *"For I came,"* He says, *"in my Father's name."* [John 5:43] And again, *"No man has seen God at any time."* [John 1:18] And again, *"That they might know You, the only true God."* [John 17:3] And, *"God is a Spirit,"* [John 4:24] And He bore witness even to the death. But this, *"in due time,"* means, In the fittest time.

Ver. 7. *"Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an Apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not:) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."*

Since therefore Christ suffered for the Gentiles, and I was separated to be a *"teacher of the Gentiles,"* why do you refuse to pray for them? He fully shows his own credibility, by saying that he was *"ordained"* [Acts 13:2], that is, separated, for this purpose, the other Apostles being backward in teaching the Gentiles; he adds, *"in faith and verity,"* to show that in that faith there was no deceit. Here is observable the extension of grace. For the Jews had no prayers for the Gentiles; but now grace is extended to them: and when he says that he was separated to be a Teacher of the Gentiles, he intimates that grace was now shed over every part of the world.

"He gave himself a ransom," he says, how then was He delivered up by the Father? Because it was of His goodness. And what means *"ransom"*? God was about to punish them, but He forbore to do it. They were about to perish, but in their stead He gave His own Son, and sent us as heralds to proclaim the Cross. These things are sufficient to attract all, and to demonstrate the love of Christ. *Moral.* So truly, so inexpressibly great are the benefits which God has bestowed upon us. He sacrificed Himself for His enemies, who hated and rejected Him. What no one would do for friends, for brethren, for children, that the Lord has done for His servants; a Lord not Himself such an one as His servants, but God for men; for men not deserving. For had they been deserving, had they done His pleasure, it would have been less wonderful; but that He died for such ungrateful, such obstinate creatures, this it is which strikes every mind with amazement. For what men would not do for their fellow-men, that has God done for us! Yet after such a display of love towards us, we hold back, and are not in earnest in our love of Christ. He has sacrificed Himself for us; for Him we make no

sacrifice. We neglect Him when He wants necessary food; sick and naked we visit Him not. What do we not deserve, what wrath, what punishment, what hell? Were there no other inducement, it should be sufficient to prevail with every one that He condescended to make human sufferings His own, to say I hunger, I thirst.

O the tyranny of wealth! Or rather the wickedness of those who are its willing slaves! For it has no great power of itself, but through our weakness and servility: it is we that are mean and groveling, that are carnal and without understanding. For what power has money? It is mute and insensible. If the devil, that wicked spirit, that crafty confounder of all things, has no power, what power has money? When you look upon silver, fancy it is tin! Cannot you? Then hold it for what it really is; for earth it is. But if you cannot reason thus, consider that we too shall perish, that many of those who have possessed it have gained scarce any advantage by it, that thousands who gloried in it are now dust and ashes. That they are suffering extreme punishment, and far more beggarly than they that fed from glass and earthenware; that those who once reclined on ivory couches, are poorer now than those who are lying on the dunghill. But it delights the eyes! How many other things delight them more! The flowers, the pure sky, the firmament, the bright sun, are far more grateful to the eye. For it has much of rust, whence some have asserted that it was black, which appears from the images that turn black. But there is no blackness in the sun, the heaven, the stars. Much greater delight is there in these brilliants than in its color. It is not therefore its brilliancy that makes it please, but covetousness and iniquity; these, and not money, give the pleasure. Cast these from your soul, and what appeared so precious will seem to you more worthless than clay. Those who are in a fever long for mud when they see it, as if it were spring water; but those in sound health seldom wish even for water. Cast off this

morbid longing, and you will see things as they are. And to prove that I do not speak falsely, know, that I can point out many who have done so. Quench this flame, and you will see that these things are of less worth than flowers.

Is gold good? Yes, it is good for almsgiving, for the relief of the poor; it is good, not for unprofitable use, to be hoarded up or buried in the earth, to be worn on the hands or the feet or the head. It was discovered for this end, that with it we should loose the captives, not form it into a chain for the image of God. Use your gold for this, to loose him that is bound, not to chain her that is free. Tell me, why do you value above all things what is of so little worth? Is it the less a chain, because it is of gold? Does the material make any difference? whether it be gold or iron, it is still a chain; nay the gold is the heavier. What then makes it light, but vainglory, and the pleasure of being seen to wear a chain, of which you ought rather to be ashamed? To make this evident, fasten it, and place the wearer in a wilderness or where there is no one to see, and the chain will at once be felt heavy, and thought burdensome.

Beloved, let us fear, lest we be doomed to hear those terrible words, *"Bind him hand and foot."* [Matthew 22:13] And why, O woman, do you now do so to yourself? No prisoner has both his hands and his feet bound. Why do you bind your head too? For you are not content with hands and feet, but bindest your head and your neck with many chains. I pass over the care that comes of these things, the fear, the alarm, the strife occasioned by them with your husband if ever he wants them, the death it is to people when they lose any of them. Can you call this a pleasure? To gratify the eyes of others, do you subject yourself to chains, and cares, and perils, and uneasiness, and daily quarrels? This is deserving of every censure and condemnation. Nay, I entreat you, let us not do thus, let us burst every

"bond of iniquity" [Acts 8:23]; let us break our bread to the hungry, and let us do all other things, which may ensure to us confidence before God, that we may obtain the blessings promised through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 8 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 2:8-10

"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works."

"When you pray," says Christ, *"you shall not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father, which is in secret; and your Father, which sees in secret, shall reward you openly."* [Matthew 6:5-6] What then says Paul? *"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."* This is not contrary to the other, God forbid, but quite in harmony with it. But how, and in what way? We must first consider what means, *"enter into your closet,"* and why Christ commands this, if we are to pray in every place? Or whether we may not pray in the church, nor in any other part of the house, but the closet? What then means that saying? Christ is recommending us to avoid ostentation, when He bids us offer our prayers not only privately, but secretly. For, when He says, *"Let not your left hand know what your right hand does"* [Matthew 6:3], it is not the hands that He considers, but He is bidding them use the utmost caution against ostentation: and He is doing the like here; He did not limit prayer to one place, but required one thing alone, the absence of vainglory. The object of Paul is to distinguish the Christian from the Jewish prayers,

therefore observe what he says: *"In every place lifting up holy hands,"* which was not permitted the Jews, for they were not allowed to approach God, to sacrifice and perform their services, elsewhere, but assembling from all parts of the world in one place, they were bound to perform all their worship in the temple. In opposition to this he introduces his precept, and freeing them from this necessity, he says in effect, Our ways are not like the Jewish; for as Christ commanded us to pray for all men because He died for all men, and I preach these things for all men, so it is good to *"pray everywhere."* Henceforth the consideration is not of the place but of the manner of the prayer; *"pray everywhere,"* but *"everywhere lift up holy hands."* That is the thing required. And what is *"holy"*? Pure. And what is pure? Not washed with water, but free from covetousness, murder, rapacity, violence, *"without wrath and doubting."* What means this? Who is angry when he prays? It means, without bearing malice. Let the mind of him that prays be pure, freed from all passion. Let no one approach God in enmity, or in an unamiable temper, or with *"doubting."* What is *"without doubting"*? Let us hear. It implies that we should have no misgiving but that we shall be heard. For it is said, *"whatever you ask believing you shall receive."* [Matthew 21:22] And again, *"when you stand praying forgive, if you have anything against any one."* [Mark 11:25] This is to pray without wrath and doubting. But how can I believe that I shall obtain my request? By asking nothing opposed to that which He is ready to grant, nothing unworthy of the great King, nothing worldly, but all spiritual blessings; if you approach Him *"without wrath,"* having pure hands, *"holy hands"*: hands employed in almsgiving are holy. Approach Him thus, and you will certainly obtain your request. *"For if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"* [Matthew 7:11] By doubting he means misgiving. In

like manner he says, I will that women approach God without wrath and doubting, lifting up holy hands: that they should not follow their own desires, nor be covetous or rapacious. For what if a woman does not rob or steal herself, but does it through means of her husband? Paul however requires something more of women, that they adorn themselves *"in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair or gold or pearls or costly array; But (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works."* But what is this *"modest apparel"*? Such attire as covers them completely, and decently, not with superfluous ornaments, for the one is becoming, the other is not.

Moral. What? Do you approach God to pray, with broidered hair and ornaments of gold? Are you come to a dance? To a marriage? To a gay procession? There such a broidery, such costly garments, had been seasonable, here not one of them is wanted. You have come to pray, to supplicate for pardon of your sins, to plead for your offenses, beseeching the Lord, and hoping to render Him propitious to you. Why do you adorn yourself? This is not the dress of a suppliant. How can you groan? How can you weep? How pray with fervency, when thus attired? Should thou weep, your tears will be the ridicule of the beholders. She that weeps ought not to be wearing gold. It were but acting, and hypocrisy. For is it not acting to pour forth tears from a soul so overgrown with extravagance and ambition? Away with such hypocrisy! God is not mocked! This is the attire of actors and dancers, that live upon the stage. Nothing of this sort becomes a modest woman, who should be adorned *"with shamefacedness and sobriety."*

Imitate not therefore the courtesans. For by such a dress they allure their many lovers; and hence many have incurred a disgraceful suspicion, and, instead of gaining any advantage from their ornaments, have injured many by bearing this character. For as the adulteress, though she may have

a character for modesty, derives no benefit from that character, in the Day, when He who judges the secrets of men shall make all things manifest; so the modest woman, if she contrive by this dress to pass for an adulteress, will lose the advantage of her chastity. For many have suffered harm by this opinion. *"What can I do,"* you say, *"if another suspects me?"* But you give the occasion by your dress, your looks, your gestures. It is for this reason that Paul discourses much of dress and much of modesty. And if he would remove those things which are only the indications of wealth, as gold, and pearls, and costly array; how much more those things which imply studied ornament, as painting, coloring the eyes, a mincing gait, the affected voice, a languishing and wanton look; the exquisite care in putting on the cloak and bodice, the nicely wrought girdle, and the closely-fitted shoes? For he glances at all these things, in speaking of *"modest apparel"* and *"shamefacedness."* For such things are shameless and indecent.

Bear with me, I beseech you, for it is not my aim by this plain reproof to wound or pain you, but to remove from my flock all that is unbecoming to them. But if these prohibitions are addressed to those who have husbands, who are rich, and live luxuriously; much more to those who have professed virginity. But what virgin, you say, wears gold, or brodered hair? Yet there may be such a studied nicety in a simple dress, as that these are nothing to it. You may study appearance in a common garment more than those who wear gold. For when a very dark colored robe is drawn closely round the breast with the girdle (as dancers on the stage are attired), with such nicety that it may neither spread into breadth nor shrink into scantiness, but be between both; and when the bosom is set off with many folds, is not this more alluring than any silken robes? And when the shoe, shining through its blackness, ends in a sharp point, and imitates the elegance of painting, so that even the breadth of the sole is scarce visible—

or when, though you do not indeed paint the face, you spend much time and pains on washing it, and spread a veil across the forehead, whiter than the face itself— and above that put on a hood, of which the blackness may set off the white by contrast— is there not in all this the vanity of dress? What can one say to the perpetual rolling of the eyes? To the putting on of the stomacher; so artfully as sometimes to conceal, sometimes to disclose, the fastening? For this too they sometimes expose, so as to show the exquisiteness of the cincture, winding the hood entirely round the head. Then like the players, they wear gloves so closely fitted, that they seem to grow upon the hands: and we might speak of their walk, and other artifices more alluring than any ornament of gold. Let us fear, beloved, lest we also hear what the Prophet said to the Hebrew women who were so studious of outward ornament; *"Instead of a girdle, you shall be girded with a halter, instead of well-set hair, baldness."* [Isaiah 3:24, Septuagint] These things and many others, invented only to be seen and to attract beholders, are more alluring than golden ornaments. These are no trifling faults, but displeasing to God, and enough to mar all the self-denial of virginity.

You have Christ for your Bridegroom, O virgin, why do you seek to attract human lovers? He will judge you as an adulteress. Why do you not wear the ornament that is pleasing to Him; modesty, chastity, orderliness, and sober apparel? This is meretricious, and disgraceful. We can no longer distinguish harlots and virgins, to such indecency have they advanced. A virgin's dress should not be studied, but plain, and without labor; but now they have many artifices to make their dress conspicuous. O woman, cease from this folly. Transfer this care to your soul, to the inward adorning. For the outward ornament that invests you, suffers not that within to become beautiful. He that is concerned for that which is without, despises that which is within, even as he that is unconcerned about the exterior, bestows

all his care upon the interior. Say not, *"Alas! I wear a threadbare garment, mean shoes, a worthless veil; what is there of ornament in these?"* Do not deceive yourself. It is impossible, as I said, to study appearance more by these than by costlier dresses; especially when they are close-fitted to the body, fashioned to an immodest show, and of shining neatness. You excuse yourself to me, but what can you say to God, who knows the heart and the spirit with which you do these things? *"It is not done for fornication!"* Perhaps not, but for admiration; and do you not blush for shame to be admired for such things? But you say, *"It is but chance I am so dressed, and for no motive of this kind."* God knows what you say to me: is it to me you must give account? Nay, it is to Him who is present at your actions, and will one day inquire into them, to whom all things are naked and open. It is on this account that we now urge these things, that we may not let you be amenable to those severe judgments. Let us fear, therefore, lest He reprove you in the words of the Prophet to the Jewish women. *"They come to be seen of me wantoning and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet."* [Isaiah 3:16]

You have taken upon you a great contest, where wrestling, not ornament is required; where the battle awaits you, not sloth and ease. Observe the combatants and wrestlers in the games. Do they concern themselves about their walk or their dress? No, but scorning all these, and throwing about them a garment dripping with oil, they look only to one thing, to wound, and not be wounded. The devil stands grinding his teeth, watching to destroy you every way, and you remain unconcerned, or concerned only about this satanic ornament. I say nothing about the voice, though much affectation is shown in this also, nor about perfumes, and other such luxuries. It is for these things we are ridiculed by the women of the world. The respect for virginity is lost. No one honors a virgin as she

ought to be honored. They have given occasion to their own dishonor. Ought not they to be looked up to in the Church of God, as women coming from heaven? But now they are despised, and deservedly, though not those among them who are discreet. But when one who has a husband and children, and presides over a household, sees you, who ought to be crucified to the world, more devoted to the world than herself, will she not ridicule and despise you? See what care! What pains! In your humble dress, you exceed her who wears the costliest ornament, and art more studious of appearance than she who is arrayed in gold. What is becoming to you you seek not; that which misbecomes you you pursue, when you ought to be occupied in good works. On this account virgins are less honored than women of the world. For they do not perform works worthy of their virgin profession. This is not said to all; or rather it is said to all; to those who are in fault, that they may learn modesty; to those who are free from blame, that they may teach modesty to others. But beware lest this rebuke be verified in deed. For we have not said these things that we may grieve, but that we may correct you, that we may glory in you. And may we all do those things which are acceptable to God, and live to His glory, that we may obtain the blessings promised by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 9 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 2:11-15

"Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in [through the] child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

Great modesty and great propriety does the blessed Paul require of women, and that not only with respect to their dress and appearance: he proceeds even to regulate their speech. And what says he? *"Let the woman learn in silence"*; that is, let her not speak at all in the church; which rule he has also given in his Epistle to the Corinthians, where he says, *"It is a shame for women to speak in the church"* [1 Corinthians 14:35]; and the reason is, that the law has made them subject to men. And again elsewhere, *"And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home."* [1 Corinthians 14:35] Then indeed the women, from such teaching, kept silence; but now there is apt to be great noise among them, much clamor and talking, and nowhere so much as in this place. They may all be seen here talking more than in the market, or at the bath. For, as if they came hither for recreation, they are all engaged in conversing upon unprofitable subjects. Thus all is confusion, and they seem not to understand, that unless they are quiet, they cannot learn anything that is useful. For when our discourse strains against the talking, and no one minds what is said, what good can it do to them? To such a degree should women be silent, that they are not allowed to speak not only about worldly matters, but not even about

spiritual things, in the church. This is order, this is modesty, this will adorn her more than any garments. Thus clothed, she will be able to offer her prayers in the manner most becoming.

"But I suffer not a woman to teach." *"I do not suffer,"* he says. What place has this command here? The fittest. He was speaking of quietness, of propriety, of modesty, so having said that he wished them not to speak in the church, to cut off all occasion of conversation, he says, let them not teach, but occupy the station of learners. For thus they will show submission by their silence. For the sex is naturally somewhat talkative: and for this reason he restrains them on all sides. *"For Adam,"* says he, *"was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."*

If it be asked, what has this to do with women of the present day? It shows that the male sex enjoyed the higher honor. Man was first formed; and elsewhere he shows their superiority. *"Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man."* [1 Corinthians 11:9] Why then does he say this? He wishes the man to have the preeminence in every way; both for the reason given above, he means, let him have precedence, and on account of what occurred afterwards. For the woman taught the man once, and made him guilty of disobedience, and wrought our ruin. Therefore because she made a bad use of her power over the man, or rather her equality with him, God made her subject to her husband. *"Your desire shall be to your husband?"* [Genesis 3:16] This had not been said to her before.

But how was Adam not deceived? If he was not deceived, he did not then transgress? Attend carefully. The woman said, *"The serpent beguiled me."* But the man did not say, The woman deceived me, but, *"she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."* Now it is not the same thing to be deceived by a fellow-creature, one of the same kind, as by an inferior and subordinate

animal. This is truly to be deceived. Compared therefore with the woman, he is spoken of as *"not deceived."* For she was beguiled by an inferior and subject, he by an equal. Again, it is not said of the man, that he *"saw the tree was good for food,"* but of the woman, and that she *"did eat, and gave it to her husband"*: so that he transgressed, not captivated by appetite, but merely from the persuasion of his wife. The woman taught once, and ruined all. On this account therefore he says, let her not teach. But what is it to other women, that she suffered this? It certainly concerns them; for the sex is weak and fickle, and he is speaking of the sex collectively. For he says not Eve, but *"the woman,"* which is the common name of the whole sex, not her proper name. Was then the whole sex included in the transgression for her fault? As he said of Adam, *"After the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come"* [Romans 5:14]; so here the female sex transgressed, and not the male. Shall not women then be saved? Yes, by means of children. For it is not of Eve that he says, *"If they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."* What faith? What charity? What holiness with sobriety? It is as if he had said, *"You women, be not cast down, because your sex has incurred blame. God has granted you another opportunity of salvation, by the bringing up of children, so that you are saved, not only by yourselves, but by others."* See how many questions are involved in this matter. *"The woman,"* he says, *"being deceived was in the transgression."* What woman? Eve. Shall she then be saved by child-bearing? He does not say that, but, the race of women shall be saved. Was not it then involved in transgression? Yes, it was, still Eve transgressed, but the whole sex shall be saved, notwithstanding, *"by childbearing."* And why not by their own personal virtue? For has she excluded others from this salvation? And what will be the case with virgins, with the barren, with widows who have lost their

husbands, before they had children? will they perish? Is there no hope for them? Yet virgins are held in the highest estimation. What then does he mean to say?

Some interpret his meaning thus. As what happened to the first woman occasioned the subjection of the whole sex, (for since Eve was formed second and made subject, he says, let the rest of the sex be in subjection,) so because she transgressed, the rest of the sex are also in transgression. But this is not fair reasoning; for at the creation all was the gift of God, but in this case, it is the consequence of the woman's sin. But this is the amount of what he says. As all men died through one, because that one sinned, so the whole female race transgressed, because the woman was in the transgression. Let her not however grieve. God has given her no small consolation, that of childbearing. And if it be said that this is of nature, so is that also of nature; for not only that which is of nature has been granted, but also the bringing up of children. *"If they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety"*; that is, if after childbearing, they keep them in charity and purity. By these means they will have no small reward on their account, because they have trained up wrestlers for the service of Christ. By holiness he means good life, modesty, and sobriety.

Chap. iii. ver. 1. *"This is a faithful saying."*

This relates to the present subject, not to what follows, respecting the office of a Bishop. For as it was doubted, he affirms it to be a true saying, that fathers may be benefited by the virtue of their children, and mothers also, when they have brought them up well. But what if she be herself addicted to wickedness and vice? Will she then be benefited by the bringing up of children? Is it not probable that she will bring them up to be like herself? It is not therefore of any woman, but of the virtuous woman, that it is said she shall receive a great recompense for this also.

Moral. Hear this, you fathers and mothers, that your bringing up of children shall not lose its reward. This also he says, as he proceeds, "*Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children.*" [1 Timothy 5:10] Among other commendations he reckons this one, for it is no light praise to devote to God those children which are given them of God. For if the basis, the foundation which they lay be good, great will be their reward; as great, if they neglect it, will be their punishment. It was on account of his children that Eli perished. For he ought to have admonished them, and indeed he did admonish them, but not as he ought; but from his unwillingness to give them pain he destroyed both himself and them. Hear this, you fathers, bring your children up with great care "*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" [Ephesians 6:4] Youth is wild, and requires many governors, teachers, directors, attendants, and tutors; and after all these, it is a happiness if it be restrained. For as a horse not broken in, or a wild beast untamed, such is youth. But if from the beginning, from the earliest age, we fix it in good rules, much pains will not be required afterwards; for good habits formed will be to them as a law. Let us not suffer them to do anything which is agreeable, but injurious; nor let us indulge them, as forsooth but children. Especially let us train them in chastity, for there is the very bane of youth. For this many struggles, much attention will be necessary. Let us take wives for them early, so that their brides may receive their bodies pure and unpolluted, so their loves will be more ardent. He that is chaste before marriage, much more will he be chaste after it; and he that practiced fornication before, will practice it after marriage. "*All bread,*" it is said, "*is sweet to the fornicator.*" [Sirach 23:17] Garlands are wont to be worn on the heads of bridegrooms, as a symbol of victory, betokening that they approach the marriage bed unconquered by pleasure. But if captivated

by pleasure he has given himself up to harlots, why does he wear the garland, since he has been subdued?

Let us admonish them of these things. Let us employ sometimes advice, sometimes warnings, sometimes threatening. In children we have a great charge committed to us. Let us bestow great care upon them, and do everything that the Evil One may not rob us of them. But now our practice is the very reverse of this. We take all care indeed to have our farm in good order, and to commit it to a faithful manager, we look out for it an ass-driver, and muleteer, and bailiff, and a clever accomptant. But we do not look out for what is much more important, for a person to whom we may commit our son as the guardian of his morals, though this is a possession much more valuable than all others. It is for him indeed that we take such care of our estate. We take care of our possessions for our children, but of the children themselves we take no care at all. What an absurdity is this! Form the soul of your son aright, and all the rest will be added hereafter. If that is not good, he will derive no advantage from his wealth, and if it is formed to goodness he will suffer no harm from poverty. Would you leave him rich? Teach him to be good: for so he will be able to acquire wealth, or if not, he will not fare worse than they who possess it. But if he be wicked, though you leave him boundless wealth, you leave him no one to take care of it, and you render him worse than those who are reduced to extreme poverty. For poverty is better than riches for those children who are not well-disposed. For it retains them in some degree of virtue even against their will. Whereas money does not suffer those who would be sober to continue so, it leads them away, ruins them, and plunges them into infinite dangers.

Mothers, be specially careful to regulate your daughters well; for the management of them is easy. Be watchful over them, that they may be

keepers at home. Above all, instruct them to be pious, modest, despisers of wealth, indifferent to ornament. In this way dispose of them in marriage. For if you form them in this way, you will save not only them, but the husband who is destined to marry them, and not the husband only, but the children, not the children only, but the grandchildren. For the root being made good, good branches will shoot forth, and still become better, and for all these you will receive a reward. Let us do all things therefore, as benefiting not only one soul, but many through that one. For they ought to go from their father's house to marriage, as combatants from the school of exercise, furnished with all necessary knowledge, and to be as leaven able to transform the whole lump to its own virtue. And let your sons be so modest, as to be distinguished for their steadiness and sobriety, that they may receive great praise both from God and men. Let them learn to govern their appetites, to avoid extravagance, to be good economists, affectionate, and submissive to rule. For so they will be able to secure a good reward to their parents, so all things will be done to the glory of God, and to our salvation, through Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 10 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 3:1-4

"If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desires a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity."

As now proceeding to discourse of the Episcopal office, he sets out with showing what sort of a person a Bishop ought to be. And here he does not do it as in the course of his exhortation to Timothy, but addresses all, and instructs others through him. And what says he? *"If a man desire the office of a Bishop,"* I do not blame him, for it is a work of protection. If any one has this desire, so that he does not covet the dominion and authority, but wishes to protect the Church, I blame him not. *"For he desires a good work."* Even Moses desired the office, though not the power, and his desire exposed him to that taunt, *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?"* [Acts 7:27; Exodus 2:14] If any one, then, desire it in this way, let him desire it. For theiscopate is so called from having the oversight of all.

"A Bishop then," he says, *"must be blameless, the husband of one wife."* This he does not lay down as a rule, as if he must not be without one, but as prohibiting his having more than one. For even the Jews were allowed to contract second marriages, and even to have two wives at one time. For *"marriage is honorable,"* [Hebrews 13:4] Some however say, that this is said that he should be the husband of one wife. *"Blameless."* Every virtue is implied in this word; so that if any one be conscious to himself of

any sins, he does not well to desire an office for which his own actions have disqualified him. For such an one ought to be ruled, and not to rule others. For he who bears rule should be brighter than any luminary; his life should be unspotted, so that all should look up to him, and make his life the model of their own. But in employing this exhortation, he had no common object in view. For he too was about to appoint Bishops, (which also he exhorts Titus to do in his Epistle to him,) and as it was probable that many would desire that office, therefore he urges these admonitions. "*Vigilant*," he says, that is, circumspect, having a thousand eyes about him, quicksighted, not having the eyes of his mind dimmed. For many things occur which permit not a man to see clearly, to see things as they are. For care and troubles, and a load of business on all sides press upon him. He must therefore be vigilant, not only over his own concerns, but over those of others. He must be well awake, he must be fervent in spirit, and, as it were, breathe fire; he must labor and attend upon his duty by day and by night, even more than a general upon his army; he must be careful and concerned for all. "*Sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality*." Because these qualities are possessed by most of those who are under their rule, (for in these respects they ought to be equal to those who rule over them,) he, to show what is peculiar to the Bishops, adds, "*apt to teach*." For this is not required of him that is ruled, but is most essential to him who has this rule committed to him.

"*Not given to wine*": here he does not so much mean intemperate, as insolent and impudent. "*No striker*": this too does not mean a striker with the hands. What means then "*no striker*"? Because there are some who unseasonably smite the consciences of their brethren, it seems to be said with reference to them. "*Not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient: not a brawler, not covetous; one that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity*." If then "*he who is married cares for*

the things of the world" [1 Corinthians 7:33], and a Bishop ought not to care for the things of the world, why does he say the husband of one wife? Some indeed think that he says this with reference to one who remains free from a wife. But if otherwise, he that has a wife may be as though he had none. [1 Corinthians 7:29] For that liberty was then properly granted, as suited to the nature of the circumstances then existing. And it is very possible, if a man will, so to regulate his conduct. For as riches make it difficult to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, yet rich men have often entered in, so it is with marriage. But why does he say, speaking of a Bishop, that he should be "*not given to wine, hospitable,*" when he should name greater things? Why said he not that he should be an Angel, not subject to human passions? Where are those great qualities of which Christ speaks, which even those under their rule ought to possess? To be crucified to the world, to be always ready to lay down their lives, as Christ said. "*The good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep*" [John 10:11]; and again, "*He that takes not his cross and follows after me, is not worthy of me.*" [Matthew 10:38] But "*not given to wine,*" he says; a good prospect indeed, if such are the things of which a Bishop is to be admonished! Why has he not said that he ought to be already raised above the world? But do you demand less of the Bishop, than even of those in the world? For to these he says, "*Mortify your members which are upon the earth*" [Colossians 3:5], and "*He that is dead, is freed from sin.*" [Romans 6:7] "*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh*"; and Christ again says, "*Whosoever forsakes not all that he has, he is not worthy of Me.*" [Luke 15:33] Why are not these things required by Paul? Plainly because few could be found of such a character, and there was need of many Bishops, that one might preside in every city.

But because the Churches were to be exposed to attacks, he requires not that superior and highly exalted virtue, but a moderate degree of it; for

to be sober, of good behavior, and temperate, were qualities common to many. *"Having his children in subjection with all gravity."* This is necessary, that an example might be exhibited in his own house. For who would believe that he who had not his own son in subjection, would keep a stranger under command? *"One that rules well his own house."* Even those who are without say this, that he who is a good manager of a house will be a good statesman. For the Church is, as it were, a small household, and as in a house there are children and wife and domestics, and the man has rule over them all; just so in the Church there are women, children, servants. And if he that presides in the Church has partners in his power, so has the man a partner, that is, his wife. Ought the Church to provide for her widows and virgins? So there are in a family servants, and daughters, to be provided for. And, in fact, it is easier to rule the house; therefore he asks, *"if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?"*

Ver. 6. *"Not a novice."* He does not say, not a young man, but not a new convert. For he had said, *"I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."* [1 Corinthians 3:6] Wishing them to point out such an one, he used this word. For, otherwise, what hindered him from saying, *"Not a young man"*? For if youth only was an objection, why did he himself appoint Timothy, a young man? (and this he proves by saying to him, *"Let no man despise your youth."*) [1 Timothy 4:12] Because he was aware of his great virtue, and his great strictness of life. Knowing which he writes, *"From a child you have learned the holy Scriptures."* [2 Timothy 3:15] And that he practiced intense fasting is proved by the words, *"Use a little wine for your frequent infirmities"*; which he wrote to him among other things, as, if he had not known of such good works of his, he would not have written, nor given any such charge to his disciple. But as there were many

then who came over from the Heathen, and were baptized, he says, "*Do not immediately advance to a station of dignity a novice, that is, one of these new converts.*" For, if before he had well been a disciple, he should at once be made a Teacher, he would be lifted up into insolence. If before he had learned to be under rule, he should be appointed one of the rulers, he would be puffed up: therefore he adds, "*Lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil,*" that is, into the same condemnation which Satan incurred by his pride.

Ver. 7. "*Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*"

This is rightly said, as he was certain to be reproached by them, and for the same reason perhaps he said, "*the husband of one wife,*" though elsewhere he says, "*I would that all men were even as I myself!*" [1 Corinthians 7:7], that is, practicing continency. That he may not therefore confine them within too narrow a limit, by requiring an over-strict conversation, he is satisfied to prescribe moderate virtue. For it was necessary to appoint one to preside in every city, as he writes to Titus, "*That you should ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed you.*" [Titus 1:5] But what if he should have a good report, and fair reputation, and not be worthy of it? In the first place this would not easily happen. It is much for good men to obtain a good report among their enemies. But, in fact, he has not left this to stand by itself; a good report "*also,*" he says, that is, besides other qualities. What then, if they should speak evil of him without a cause from envy, especially as they were Heathens? This was not to be expected. For even they will reverence a man of blameless life. Why then does he say, speaking of himself, "*Through evil report and good report*"? [2 Corinthians 6:6] Because it was not his life that they assailed, but his preaching. Therefore he says, "*through evil report.*" They were slandered as deceivers

and impostors, on account of their preaching, and this because they could not attack their moral characters and lives. For why did no one say of the Apostles, that they were fornicators, unclean, or covetous persons, but that they were deceivers, which relates to their preaching only? Must it not be that their lives were irreproachable? It is manifest.

Therefore so let us too live, and no enemy, no unbeliever, will be able to speak evil of us. For he whose life is virtuous, is revered even by them. For truth stops the mouths even of enemies.

But how does he *"fall into a snare"*? By falling often into the same sins, as those who are without. For if he be such a character, the evil one soon lays another snare for him, and they soon effect his destruction. But if he should have a good report from his enemies, much more will he have it from his friends. For that it is not likely that he, whose life is blameless, should be ill-reported of, we may infer from the words of Christ; *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."* [440 v. 16] But what if one be falsely accused, and from peculiar circumstances be slandered? Well this is a possible case; but even such an one ought not to be promoted. For the result is much to be feared. Therefore it is said he should have *"a good report,"* for your good works are to shine. As therefore no one will say that the sun is dark, not even the blind, (for he will be ashamed to oppose the opinion of all,) so him that is of remarkable goodness no one will blame. And though, on account of his doctrines, the Heathen will often slander him, yet they will not attack his virtuous life, but will join with others in admiring and revering it.

Moral. Let us then so live, that the name of God be not blasphemed. Let us not, on the one hand, look to human reputation; nor on the other, subject ourselves to an evil report, but on both sides let us observe

moderation; as he says, *"Among whom you shine as lights in the world."* [Philippians 2:15] For on this account He left us here, that we may be as luminaries. that we may be appointed Teachers of others, that we may be as leaven; that we may converse as angels among men, as men with children, as spiritual with natural men, that they may profit by us, that we may be as seed, and may bring forth much fruit. There were no need of words, if we so shone forth in our lives, there were no need of Teachers, did we but exhibit works. There would be no Heathen, if we were such Christians as we ought to be. If we kept the commandments of Christ, if we suffered injury, if we allowed advantage to be taken of us, if being reviled we blessed, if being ill-treated we did good [1 Corinthians 4:12]; if this were the general practice among us, no one would be so brutal as not to become a convert to godliness. And to show this; Paul was but one man, yet how many did he draw after him? If we were all such as he, how many worlds might we not have drawn to us? Behold, Christians are more numerous than Heathens. And in other arts, one man can teach a hundred boys together; but here, where there are many more teachers, and many more than the learners, no one is brought over. For those who are taught, look to the virtue of their teachers: and when they see us manifesting the same desires, pursuing the same objects, power and honor, how can they admire Christianity? They see our lives open to reproach, our souls worldly. We admire wealth equally with them, and even more. We have the same horror of death, the same dread of poverty, the same impatience of disease, we are equally fond of glory and of rule. We harass ourselves to death from our love of money, and serve the time. How then can they believe? From miracles? But these are no longer wrought. From our conversation? It has become corrupt. From charity? Not a trace of it is anywhere to be seen.

Therefore we shall have to give an account not only of our own sins, but of the injury done by them to others.

Let us then return to a sound mind; let us watch, and show forth a heavenly conversation upon earth. Let us say, *"Our conversation is in heaven"* [Philippians 3:20], and let us upon earth maintain the contest. There have been great men, it may be said, among us, but *"how,"* says the Greek, *"shall I believe it? For I do not see anything like it in your conduct. If this is to be said, we too have had our philosophers, men admirable for their lives."* *"But show me another Paul, or a John: you cannot."* Would he not then laugh at us for reasoning in this manner? Would he not continue to sit still in ignorance, seeing that the wisdom we profess is in words, not in works? For now for a single halfpenny you are ready to slay or be slain! For a handful of earth you raise lawsuit after lawsuit! For the death of a child you turn all upside down: I omit other things that might make us weep; your auguries, your omens, your superstitious observances, your casting of nativities, your signs, your amulets, your divinations, your incantations, your magic arts. These are crying sins, enough to provoke the anger of God; that after He has sent His own Son, you should venture on such things as these.

What then can we do but weep? For hardly is a small portion of the world in the way of salvation, and they who are perishing hear it, and rejoice that they are not destined to suffer alone, but in company with numbers. But what cause is this for joy? That very joy will subject them to punishment. For do not think that it is there as here, that to have companions in suffering affords consolation. And whence is this manifest? I will make it clear. Suppose that a man were commanded to be burnt, and that he saw his own son burning with him, and that the smell of his scorched flesh rose to his nostrils; would it not be of itself death to him? No

doubt. And I will tell you how it is. If those who are not suffering, yet seeing those things are benumbed and faint with terror, much more will they be so affected, who are themselves sufferers. Wonder not at this. Hear a certain wise one saying, "*Are you become weak as we? Are you become like us?*" [Isaiah 14:10] For human nature is disposed to sympathy, and the affections of others move us to pity. Will then a father seeing His son in the same condemnation, or a husband his wife, or a man his fellow-man, receive consolation, and not rather an aggravation of his sufferings? Are not we in such case the more overcome? But there, you say, there are no such feelings. I know there are not; but there are others much more wretched. For there will be wailing inconsolable, all witnessing each other's torments. Do they who are furnishing derive comfort in their distress from the participation of others? It is no consolation surely to see a son, a father, a wife, or grandchildren, suffering the same punishment. If one sees friends in such a case, is it any comfort? None! None! It rather adds to the intensity of our own sufferings! Besides, there are evils, which by reason of their severity cannot be mitigated by being common. If two men were together thrown into the fire, would they comfort one another? Tell me; if we have ever been attacked by a violent fever, have we not found that all consolation has failed us? For there are calamities, so overwhelming as to leave no room for comfort in the soul. When a wife has lost her husband, is it a lessening of her grief to number up the many who have suffered the like loss? Let us not therefore be supported by any such hope, rather let us find our sole consolation in repenting of our sins, in pursuing the good path that leads to Heaven, that we may obtain the kingdom of Heaven, by the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 11 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 3:8-10

"Likewise must the Deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given much to wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved: then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless."

"Likewise the Deacons." That is, they should have the same qualities as Bishops. And what are these same? To be blameless, sober, hospitable, patient, not brawlers, not covetous. And that he means this when he says *"likewise,"* is evident from what he says in addition, *"grave, not doubletongued"*; that is, not hollow or deceitful. For nothing so debases a man as deceit, nothing is so pernicious in the Church as insincerity. *"Not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."* Thus he explains what he means by *"blameless."* And here he requires, though in other words, that he be *"not a novice,"* where he says, *"Let these also first be proved,"* where the conjunction *"also"* is added, as connecting this with what had been said before of Bishops, for nothing intervenes between. And there is the same reason for the *"not a novice"* in that case. For would it not be absurd, that when a newly purchased slave is not entrusted with anything in a house, till he has by long trial given proofs of his character, yet that one should enter into the Church of God from a state of heathenism, and be at once placed in a station of preeminence?

Ver. 11. *"Even so must the women be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."*

Some have thought that this is said of women generally, but it is not so, for why should he introduce anything about women to interfere with his subject? He is speaking of those who hold the rank of Deaconesses.

Ver. 12. *"Let the Deacons be husbands of one wife."*

This must be understood therefore to relate to Deaconesses. For that order is necessary and useful and honorable in the Church. Observe how he requires the same virtue from the Deacons, as from the Bishops, for though they were not of equal rank, they must equally be blameless; equally pure.

"Ruling their children and their own houses well."

Ver. 13. *"For they that have used the office of a Deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and much boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."*

Everywhere they are required to rule their children well, that others may not be scandalized by their misconduct.

"They that use the office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree," that is, advancement, *"and much boldness in the faith of Jesus Christ";* as if he would say, that those who have been found vigilant in the lower degree will soon ascend to the higher.

Ver. 14, 15. *"These things write I unto you, hoping to come unto you shortly. But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

That he may not plunge Timothy into dejection by giving him orders about such matters, he says, I write thus not as though I were not coming, but I will indeed come, still in case I should be delayed, that you may not be distressed. And this he writes to him to prevent his being dejected, but to others in order to rouse them to greater earnestness. For his presence, though only promised, would have great effect. Nor let it seem strange that,

though foreseeing everything through the Spirit, he was yet ignorant of this, and only says, I hope to come, but if I tarry, which implies uncertainty. For since he was led by the Spirit, and did not act from his own inclination, he was naturally uncertain about this matter.

"That you may know," he says, *"how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."* Not like that Jewish house. For it is this that maintains the faith and the preaching of the Word. For the truth is the pillar and the ground of the Church.

Ver. 16. *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God [He who] was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit."*

Here he speaks of the Dispensation in our behalf. Tell me not of the bells, nor of the holy of holies, nor of the high priest. The Church is the pillar of the world. Consider this mystery, and you may be struck with awe: for it is indeed *"a great mystery,"* and *"a mystery of godliness,"* and that *"without controversy"* or question, for it is beyond all doubt. Since in his directions to the Priests he had required nothing like what is found in Leviticus he refers the whole matter to Another, saying, *"God was manifest in the flesh."* The Creator was seen incarnate. *"He was justified in the Spirit."* As it is said, *"Wisdom is justified of her children,"* or because He practiced no guile, as the Prophet says, *"Because he had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth."* [Isaiah 53:9; 1 Peter 2:22] *"Seen of Angels."* So that Angels together with us saw the Son of God, not having before seen Him. Great, truly great, was this mystery! *"Preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world."* He was heard of and believed in through all parts of the world, as the Prophet foreshowed, saying, *"Their sound is gone out into all the world."* [Psalm 19:4] Think not that these things are mere words, for they are not, but full of hidden realities.

"Received up into glory." He ascended upon clouds. "This Jesus," it is said, "Who is taken up from you, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven." [Acts 1:11]

The discretion of the blessed Paul is observable. When he would exhort the Deacons to avoid excess in wine, he does not say, *"Be not drunken,"* but *"not"* even *"given to much wine."* A proper caution; for if those who served in the Temple did not taste wine at all, much more should not these. For wine produces disorder of mind, and where it does not cause drunkenness, it destroys the energies and relaxes the firmness of the soul.

The dispensation in our behalf he calls a *"mystery,"* and well may it be so called, since it is not manifest to all, nay, it was not manifest to the Angels, for how could it, when it was *"made known by the Church"*? [Ephesians 3:10] Therefore he says, *"without controversy great is the mystery."* Great indeed was it. For God became Man, and Man became God. A Man was seen without sin! A Man was received up, was preached in the world! Together with us the Angels saw Him. This is indeed a mystery! Let us not then expose this mystery. Let us not lay it forth everywhere, but let us live in a manner worthy of the mystery. They to whom a mystery is entrusted are great persons. We account it a mark of favor, if a king entrusts a secret to us. But God has committed His mystery to us, yet are we ungrateful to our Benefactor, as if we had not received the greatest benefits. Our insensibility to such a kindness should strike us with horror. And how is that a mystery which all know? In the first place all do not know it, and before then too they knew it not, but now it is made manifest.

Moral. In keeping this mystery, then, let us be faithful to our trust. So great a mystery has He entrusted to us, and we do not trust Him even with our money, though He has bid us lay up our wealth with Him, where none can take it away, neither can moth nor thief waste it. And He promises to

pay us a hundred-fold, yet we obey Him not. Yet here if we entrust any with a deposit, we receive nothing back in addition, but are thankful if that is restored which we deposited. If a thief steals it there, He says, set that to My account; I say not to you, a thief has taken it, or moth devoured it. He repays a hundred-fold here, and eternal life is superadded hereafter, yet do we not lay up our treasure there! *"But,"* you say, *"He repays slowly."* Well this too is a proof of the greatness of His gift, that He does not repay here in this mortal life; or rather He does repay even here a hundred-fold. For did not Paul leave here his tools, Peter his rod and hook, and Matthew his seat of custom? And was not the whole world opened to them more than to kings? Were not all things laid at their feet? Were they not appointed rulers, and lords? Did not men commit their lives into their hands? suspend themselves wholly upon their counsel, and enlist in their service? And do we not see many similar occurrences even now? Many men of poor and humble means, who did but handle the spade, and had hardly a sufficiency of necessary food, having but the character of monks, have been celebrated above all men, and honored of kings.

Are these things inconsiderable? Well, consider that these are but additions, the principal sum is stored up for the life to come. Despise riches, if you would have riches. If you would be truly rich, become poor. For such are the paradoxes of God. He would not have you rich from your own care, but from His grace. Leave these things to Me, He says; make spiritual things your concern, that you may know My power. Flee from that yoke of slavery, which riches impose. As long as you cleave to them, you are poor. When you despise them, you are doubly rich, in that such things shall flow in upon you from every side, and in that you shall want none of those things, which the multitude want. For not to possess much, but to need little, is to be rich indeed. The king, so long as he wants anything, differs

not from the poor man. For this is poverty, to stand in need of others; and by this argument the king is poor, in so far as he stands in need of his subjects. But he that is crucified, to the world is not so; he wants for nothing; for his hands are sufficient for his subsistence, as Paul said, *"These hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me."* [Acts 20:34] These are his words who says, *"As having nothing, yet possessing all things."* [2 Corinthians 6:20] This is he who was thought a God by the inhabitants of Lystra. If you would obtain worldly things, seek Heaven; if you would enjoy things here, despise them. For, *"Seek first the kingdom of God,"* He says, *"and all these things shall be added unto you."* [Matthew 6:33]

Why do you admire these trifles? Why long for things of no real worth? How long is one poor? how long a beggar? Raise your eyes to heaven, think of the riches there, and smile at gold; think of how little use it is; that the enjoyment of it lasts but for the present life, and that compared with eternity, the present life is as a grain of sand, or as a drop of water to the boundless ocean. This wealth is not a possession, it is not property, it is a loan for use. For when you die, willingly or unwillingly, all that you have goes to others, and they again give it up to others, and they again to others. For we are all sojourners; and the tenant of the house is more truly perchance the owner of it, for the owner dies, and the tenant lives, and still enjoys the house. And if the latter hires it, the other might be said to hire it too: for he built it, and was at pains with it, and fitted it up. Property, in fact, is but a word: we are all owners in fact but of other men's possessions. Those things only are our own, which we have sent before us to the other world. Our goods here are not our own; we have only a life interest in them; or rather they fail us during our lives. Only the virtues of the soul are properly our own, as almsgiving and charity. Worldly goods, even by those

without, were called external things, because they are without us. But let us make them internal. For we cannot take our wealth with us, when we depart hence, but we can take our charities. But let us rather send them before us, that they may prepare for us an abode in the eternal mansions. [Luke 16:9]

Goods are named from use, not from lordship, and are not our own, and possessions are not a property but a loan. For how many masters has every estate had, and how many will it have! There is a sensible proverb, (and popular proverbs, when they contain any wisdom, are not to be despised,) *"O field, how many men's have you been, and how many men's will you be?"* This we should say to our houses and all our goods. Virtue alone is able to depart with us, and to accompany us to the world above. Let us then give up and extinguish that love of wealth, that we may kindle in us an affection for heavenly things. These two affections cannot possess one soul. For it is said, *"Either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other."* [Matthew 6:24] Do you see a man with a long train of attendants, clearing a way along the streets, clothed in silken garments, riding aloft, and stiffening his neck? Be not overawed, but smile. As we laugh when we see children playing at kings, so laugh at his state, for it is no better than theirs, nor indeed so pleasant, for there is not the same innocence and simplicity as with children. With them it is laughter and pleasure, here is a man made ridiculous and contemptible.

Glorify God, Who has kept you free from this theatrical ostentation. For, if you will, humble as your station is, you may be higher than he who is exalted in his chariot. And why? Because, though his body is a little raised from the earth, his soul is fixed upon it, for *"My strength,"* he says, *"cleaves to my flesh"* [Psalm 102:6], but thou in your spirit walkest in heaven. What though he has many attendants clearing his way? Is he more honored by this than his horse? And what an absurdity is it, to drive men

before one to clear the way for a beast to pass! Then what sort of honor is it to bestride a horse? An honor shared by his slaves. Yet some are so vain of this, that they have it led after them even though they do not want it. What greater folly can there be? To wish to be distinguished by their horses, by the costliness of their garments, by their retinue! What can be more contemptible than glory which consists in horses, and servants? Are you virtuous? Use not such distinctions. Have ornaments in yourself. Be not indebted for your glory to the presence of others. To such honor the most wicked, corrupt, and base of men may attain; all indeed who are rich. Actors and dancers may ride on horseback with a servant running before them, yet are they but actors and dancers still. Their horses and attendants procure them no respect. For when the graces of the soul are wanting to such persons, the addition of these external things is superfluous and vain. And as when a wall is weak, or a body disordered, whatever you put upon it, it still remains unsound and decayed; so in this case; the soul continues the same, and receives no advantage from things without, not though the man wear a thousand ornaments of gold. Let us not therefore be anxious for such things. Let us withdraw ourselves from temporal things, and pursue greater, even spiritual distinctions, which will render us truly objects of veneration, that we also may obtain the blessings of futurity, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 12 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 4:1-3

"Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

As those who adhere to the faith are fixed on a safe anchor, so those who fall from the faith can nowhere rest; but after many wanderings to and fro, they are borne at last into the very gulf of perdition. And this he had shown before, saying, that some had *"already made shipwreck concerning the faith,"* and now he says, *"Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits."* This is said of the Manichæans, the Encratites, and the Marcionites, and the whole of their tribe, that they should hereafter depart from the faith. Do you see that this departure from the faith is the cause of all the evils that follow!

But what is *"expressly"*? Plainly, clearly, and beyond doubt. Marvel not, he says, if some having departed from the faith still adhere to Judaism. There will be a time, when even those who have partaken of the faith will fall into a worse error, not only with respect to meats, but to marriages, and other such things, introducing the most pernicious notions. This refers not to the Jews, (for *"the latter times,"* and a *"departure from the faith,"* is not applicable to them;) but to the Manichees, and the founders of these sects. And he calls them very justly, *"seducing spirits,"* since it was by these they

were actuated in speaking such things. *"Speaking lies in hypocrisy."* This implies that they utter not these falsehoods through ignorance and unknowingly, but as acting a part, knowing the truth, but *"having their conscience seared,"* that is, being men of evil lives.

But why does he speak only of these heretics? Christ had before said, *"Offenses must need come"* [Matthew 18:7], and he had predicted the same in his parable of the sower, and of the springing up of the tares. But here admire with me the prophetic gift of Paul, who, before the times in which they were to appear, specifies the time itself. As if he had said, Do not wonder, if, at the commencement of the faith, some endeavor to bring in these pernicious doctrines; since, after it has been established for a length of time, many shall depart from the faith. *"Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats."* Why then has he mentioned no other heresies? Though not particularized, they are implied by the expressions of *"seducing spirits and doctrines of demons."* But he did not wish to instill these things into the minds of men before the time; but that which had already commenced, the case of meats, he specifies. *"Which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."* Why did he not say, by the unbelievers too? How by the unbelievers, when they exclude themselves from them by their own rules? But is not luxury forbidden? Certainly it is. But why? If good things are created to be received. Because He created bread, and yet too much is forbidden; and wine also, and yet excess is forbidden; and we are not commanded to avoid dainties as if they were unclean in themselves, but as they corrupt the soul by excess.

Ver. 4. *"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."*

If it be the creature of God, it is good. For *"all things,"* it is said, *"were very good."* [Genesis 1:31] By speaking thus of things eatable, he by anticipation impugns the heresy of those who introduce an uncreated matter, and assert that these things proceed from it. But if it is good, why is it *"sanctified by the word of God and prayers"*? For it must be unclean, if it is to be sanctified? Not so, here he is speaking to those who thought that some of these things were common; therefore he lays down two positions: first, that no creature of God is unclean: secondly, that if it had become so, you have a remedy, seal it, give thanks, and glorify God, and all the uncleanness passes away. Can we then so cleanse that which is offered to an idol? If you know not that it was so offered. But if, knowing this, you partake of it, you will be unclean; not because it was offered to an idol, but because contrary to an express command, you thereby communicate with devils. So that it is not unclean by nature, but becomes so through your wilful disobedience. What then, is not swine's flesh unclean? By no means, when it is received with thanksgiving, and with the seal; nor is anything else. It is your unthankful disposition to God that is unclean.

Ver. 6. *"If you put the brethren in remembrance of these things, you shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto you have attained."*

What are the things here meant? The same which he had before mentioned, that *"great is the mystery"*; that to abstain from meats is the doctrine of devils, that they are *"cleansed by the word of God and prayer."*

Ver. 7. *"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself rather unto godliness."*

"Putting them in remembrance," he says; here you observe no authority; but all is condescension: he does not say *"commanding"* or *"enjoining,"* but reminding them: that is, suggest these things as matter of

advice, and so enter into discourses with them concerning the faith, "*being nourished up*," he says, meaning to imply constancy in application to these things.

For as we set before us day by day this bodily nourishment, so he means, let us be continually receiving discourses concerning the faith, and ever be nourished with them. What is this, "*being nourished up*"? Ruminating upon them; attending ever to the same things, and practicing ever the same, for it is no common nourishment that they supply.

"*But refuse profane and old wives' fables.*" By these are meant Jewish traditions, and he calls them "*fables*," either because of their falsehood or their unseasonableness. For what is seasonable is useful, but what is unseasonable is not only useless but injurious. Suppose a man of adult age to be suckled by a nurse, would he not be ridiculous, because it is unseasonable? "*Profane and old wives' fables*," he calls them, partly because of their obsolescence, and partly because they are impediments to faith. For to bring souls under fear, that are raised above these things, is an impious commandment. "*Exercise yourself unto godliness.*" That is, unto a pure faith and a moral life; for this is godliness. So then we need "*exercise.*"

Ver. 8. "*For bodily exercise profits little.*" This has by some been referred to fasting; but away with such a notion! For that is not a bodily but a spiritual exercise. If it were bodily it would nourish the body, whereas it wastes and makes it lean, so that it is not bodily. Hence he is not speaking of the discipline of the body. What we need, therefore, is the exercise of the soul. For the exercise of the body has no profit, but may benefit the body a little, but the exercise of godliness yields fruit and advantage both here and hereafter.

"*This is a faithful saying*," that is, it is true that godliness is profitable both here and hereafter. Observe how everywhere he brings in this, he

needs no demonstration, but simply declares it, for he was addressing Timothy.

So then even here, we have good hopes? For he who is conscious to himself of no evil, and who has been fruitful in good, rejoices even here: as the wicked man on the other hand is punished here as well as hereafter. He lives in perpetual fear, he can look no one in the face with confidence, he is pale, trembling, and full of anxiety. Is it not so with the fraudulent, and with thieves, who have no satisfaction even in what they possess? Is not the life of murderers and adulterers most wretched, who look upon the sun itself with suspicion? Is this to be called life? No; rather a horrid death!

Ver. 10. *"For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe."*

This in effect is to say, wherefore do we mortify ourselves, unless we expect future blessings? Have we endured so many evils, submitted to so many reproaches, suffered such insults and calumnies, and such numerous calamities in vain? For if we did not trust in the living God, on what account did we submit to these things? But if God is here the Saviour of the unbelieving, much more is He of the faithful hereafter. What salvation does he speak of? That to come? *"Who is the Saviour,"* he says, *"of all men, specially of them that believe."* At present he is speaking of that which is here. But how is He the Saviour of the faithful? Had he not been so, they must long since have been destroyed, for all men have made war upon them. He calls him here to endure perils, that having God for his Saviour he may not faint nor need any aid from others, but willingly and with fortitude endure all things. Even those who eagerly grasp at worldly advantages, supported by the hope of gain, cheerfully undertake laborious enterprises.

It is then the last time. For *"in the latter times,"* he says, *"some shall depart from the faith."* *"Forbidding to marry."* And do not we forbid to marry? God forbid. We do not forbid those who wish to marry, but those who do not wish to marry, we exhort to virginity. It is one thing to forbid, and another to leave one to his own free choice. He that forbids, does it once for all, but he who recommends virginity as a higher state, does not forbid marriage, because he prefers virginity.

"Forbidding to marry," he says, *"and commanding to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."* It is well said, *"who know the truth."* The former things then were a type. For nothing is unclean by nature, but it becomes so through the conscience of him that partakes of it. And what was the object of the prohibition of so many meats? To restrain excessive luxury. But had it been said, *"eat not for the sake of luxury,"* it would not have been borne. They were therefore shut up under the necessity of the law, that they might abstain from the stronger principle of fear. The fish was not forbidden, though it was manifestly more unclean than the swine. But they might have learned how pernicious luxury was from that saying of Moses, *"Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked."* [Deuteronomy 32:15] Another cause of these prohibitions might be, that being straitened for other food, they might be reduced to slaughter sheep and oxen; he therefore restrained them from other things, on account of Apis and the calf, which was an abomination, ungrateful, polluted, and profane.

"Put them in remembrance of these things, meditate upon these things," for by the expression, *"nourished up in the words of faith and sound doctrine,"* is implied that he should not only recommend these things to others, but himself practice them. For he says, *"Nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto you have attained. But*

refuse profane and old wives' fables." Why does he not say, abstain from them, but "*refuse*"? He thus intimates that they should be utterly rejected. His meaning is, that he should not enter into any disputation with the teachers of them, but recommend to his own people the things prescribed above. For nothing is to be gained by contending with perverse men, unless where it might have an injurious effect, if we were supposed from weakness to decline arguing with them.

"But exercise yourself unto godliness," that is, unto a pure life, and the most virtuous conversation. He that exercises himself, even when it is not the season of contest, acts always as if he were contending, practices abstinence, endures all toils, is always anxious, endures much labor.

"Exercise yourself," he says, *"unto godliness; for bodily exercise profits little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."* And why, says one, does he mention this bodily exercise? To show by comparison the superiority of the other, in that the former is of no solid advantage, though it is attended with many toils, while the latter has a lasting and abundant good. As when he bids women *"adorn themselves, not with broidered hair, or gold, or costly array: but which becomes women possessing godliness; with good works."*
[1 Timothy 2:9-10]

Moral. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance. For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach." Did Paul then suffer reproach, and are you impatient? Did Paul labor, and would you live luxuriously? But had he lived luxuriously, he would never have attained such great blessings. For if worldly goods, which are uncertain and perishable, are never gained by men without labor and pains, much less are spiritual. Well, says one, but some inherit them. Yet even when inherited they are not guarded and preserved without labor, and care, and trouble, no less than those have that

have gained them. And I need not say that many who have toiled and endured hardships have been disappointed at the very entrance of the harbor, and an adverse wind has caused the wreck of their hopes, when they were upon the point of possession. But with us there is nothing like this. For it is God who promised, and that "*hope makes not ashamed.*" [Romans 5:5] You who are conversant with worldly affairs, do you not know how many men, after infinite toils, have not enjoyed the fruit of their labors, either being previously cut off by death, or overtaken by misfortune, or assailed by disease, or ruined by false accusers, or some other cause, which amidst the variety of human casualties, has forced them to go with empty hands?

But do you not see the lucky men, says one, who with little labor acquire the good things of life? What good things? Money, houses, so many acres of land, trains of servants, heaps of gold and silver? Can you call these good things, and not hide your head for shame? A man called to the pursuit of heavenly wisdom, and gaping after worldly things, and calling them "*goods,*" which are of no value! If these things are good, then the possessors of them must be called good. For is not he good, who is the possessor of what is good? But when the possessors of these things are guilty of fraud and rapine, shall we call them good? For if wealth is a good, but is increased by grasping, the more it is increased, the more will its possessor be considered to be good. Is the grasping man then good? But if wealth is good, and increases by grasping, the more a man grasps, the better he must be. Is not this plainly a contradiction? But suppose the wealth is not gained wrongfully. And how is this possible? So destructive a passion is avarice, that to grow rich without injustice is impossible. This Christ declared, saying, "*Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness.*" [Luke 16:19] But what if he succeeded to his father's inheritance? Then he received what had been gathered by injustice. For it

was not from Adam that his ancestor inherited riches, but, of the many that were before him, some one must probably have unjustly taken and enjoyed the goods of others. What then? He says, did Abraham hold unrighteous wealth; and Job, that blameless, righteous, and faithful man, who "*feared God and eschewed evil*"? Theirs was a wealth that consisted not in gold and silver, nor in houses, but in cattle. Besides this, he was enriched by God. And the author of that book, relating what happened to that blessed man, mentions the loss of his camels, his mares and asses, but does not speak of treasures of gold or silver being taken away. The riches of Abraham too were his domestics. What then? Did he not buy them? No, for to this very point the Scripture says, that the three hundred and eighteen were born in his house. [Genesis 19:14] He had also sheep and oxen. Whence then did he send gold to Rebekah? [Genesis 24:22; 12:16] From the gifts which he received from Egypt without violence or wrong.

Tell me, then, whence are you rich? From whom did you receive it, and from whom he who transmitted it to you? From his father and his grandfather. But can you, ascending through many generations, show the acquisition just? It cannot be. The root and origin of it must have been injustice. Why? Because God in the beginning made not one man rich, and another poor. Nor did He afterwards take and show to one treasures of gold, and deny to the other the right of searching for it: but He left the earth free to all alike. Why then, if it is common, have you so many acres of land, while your neighbor has not a portion of it? It was transmitted to me by my father. And by whom to him? By his forefathers. But you must go back and find the original owner. Jacob had wealth, but it was earned as the hire of his labors.

But I will not urge this argument too closely. Let your riches be justly gained, and without rapine. For you are not responsible for the covetous

acts of your father. Your wealth may be derived from rapine; but you were not the plunderer. Or granting that he did not obtain it by robbery, that his gold was cast up somewhere out of the earth. What then? Is wealth therefore good? By no means. At the same time it is not bad, he says, if its possessor be not covetous; it is not bad, if it be distributed to the poor, otherwise it is bad, it is ensnaring. *"But if he does not evil, though he does no good, it is not bad,"* he argues. True. But is not this an evil, that you alone should have the Lord's property, that you alone should enjoy what is common? Is not *"the earth God's, and the fullness thereof"*? If then our possessions belong to one common Lord, they belong also to our fellow-servants. The possessions of one Lord are all common. Do we not see this the settled rule in great houses? To all is given an equal portion of provisions, for it proceeds from the treasures of their Lord. And the house of the master is opened to all. The king's possessions are all common, as cities, market-places, and public walks. We all share them equally.

Mark the wise dispensation of God. That He might put mankind to shame, He has made certain things common, as the sun, air, earth, and water, the heaven, the sea, the light, the stars; whose benefits are dispensed equally to all as brethren. We are all formed with the same eyes, the same body, the same soul, the same structure in all respects, all things from the earth, all men from one man, and all in the same habitation. But these are not enough to shame us. Other things then (as we have said) He has made common, as baths, cities, market-places, walks. And observe, that concerning things that are common there is no contention, but all is peaceable. But when one attempts to possess himself of anything, to make it his own, then contention is introduced, as if nature herself were indignant, that when God brings us together in every way, we are eager to divide and separate ourselves by appropriating things, and by using those cold words

"mine and yours." Then there is contention and uneasiness. But where this is not, no strife or contention is bred. This state therefore is rather our inheritance, and more agreeable to nature. Why is it, that there is never a dispute about a market-place? Is it not because it is common to all? But about a house, and about property, men are always disputing. Things necessary are set before us in common; but even in the least things we do not observe a community. Yet those greater things He has opened freely to all, that we might thence be instructed to have these inferior things in common. Yet for all this, we are not instructed.

But as I said, how can he, who is rich, be a good man? When he distributes his riches, he is good, so that he is good when he has ceased to have it, when he gives it to others; but while he keeps it himself, he is not good. How then is that a good which being retained renders men evil, being parted with makes them good? Not therefore to have wealth, but to have it not, makes one appear to be good. Wealth therefore is not a good. But if, when you can receive it, you receive it not, again you are good.

If then we are good, when having it, we distribute it to others; or when offered to us we refuse it, and if we are not good, when we receive or gain it, how can it be a good thing in itself? Call it not therefore a good. You possess it not, because you think it a good, because you are anxious to possess it. Cleanse your mind, and rectify your judgment, and then you will be good. Learn what are really goods. What are they? Virtue and benevolence. These and not that, are truly good. According to this rule, the more charitable you are, the more good you will be considered. But if you are rich, you are no longer good. Let us therefore become thus good, that we may be really good, and may obtain the good things to come in Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 13 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 4:11-14

"These things command and teach. Let no man despise your youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in you, which was given you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

In some cases it is necessary to command, in others to teach; if therefore you command in those cases where teaching is required, you will become ridiculous. Again, if you teach where you ought to command, you are exposed to the same reproach. For instance, it is not proper to teach a man not to be wicked, but to command; to forbid it with all authority. Not to profess Judaism, should be a command, but teaching is required, when you would lead men to part with their possessions, to profess virginity, or when you would discourse of faith. Therefore Paul mentions both: *"Command and teach."* When a man uses amulets, or does anything of that kind, knowing it to be wrong, he requires only a command; but he who does it ignorantly, is to be taught his error. *"Let no one despise your youth."*

Observe that it becomes a priest to command and to speak authoritatively, and not always to teach. But because, from a common prejudice, youth is apt to be despised, therefore he says, *"Let no man despise your youth."* For a teacher ought not to be exposed to contempt. But if he is not to be despised, what room is there for meekness and moderation? Indeed the contempt that he falls into personally he ought to bear; for teaching is commended by longsuffering. But not so, where others are concerned; for this is not meekness, but coldness. If a man revenge

insults, and ill language, and injuries offered to himself, you justly blame him. But where the salvation of others is concerned, command, and interpose with authority. This is not a case for moderation, but for authority, lest the public good suffer. He enjoins one or the other as the case may require. Let no one despise you on account of your youth. For as long as your life is a counterpoise, you will not be despised for your youth, but even the more admired: therefore he proceeds to say,

"But be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity." In all things showing yourself an example of good works: that is, be yourself a pattern of a Christian life, as a model set before others, as a living law, as a rule and standard of good living, for such ought a teacher to be. *"In word,"* that he may speak with facility, *"in conversation, in charity, in faith, in"* true *"purity, in temperance."*

"Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

Even Timothy is commanded to apply to reading. Let us then be instructed not to neglect the study of the sacred writings. Again, observe, he says, *"Till I come."* Mark how he consoles him, for being as it were an orphan, when separated from him, it was natural that he should require such comfort. *"Till I come,"* he says, give attendance to reading the divine writings, to exhortation of one another, to teaching of all.

"Neglect not the gift that is in you, which was given you by prophecy."

Here he calls teaching prophecy.

"With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." He speaks not here of Presbyters, but of Bishops. For Presbyters cannot be supposed to have ordained a Bishop.

Ver. 15. *"Meditate upon these things; give yourself wholly to them."*

Observe how often he gives him counsel concerning the same things, thus showing that a teacher ought above all things to be attentive to these

points.

Ver. 16. *"Take heed,"* he says, *"unto yourself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them."* That is, take heed to yourself, and teach others also.

"For in so doing you shall both save yourself and them that hear you."

It is well said, *"You shall save yourself."* For he that is *"nourished up in the words of sound doctrine,"* first receives the benefit of it himself. From admonishing others, he is touched with compunction himself. For these things are not said to Timothy only, but to all. And if such advice is addressed to him, who raised the dead, what shall be said to us? Christ also shows the duty of teachers, when He says, *"The kingdom of heaven is like an householder, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old."* [Matthew 13:52] And the blessed Paul gives the same advice, that *"we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."* [Romans 15:4] This he practiced above all men, being brought up in the law of his fathers, at the feet of Gamaliel, whence he would afterwards naturally apply to reading: for he who exhorted others would himself first follow the advice he gave. Hence we find him continually appealing to the testimony of the prophets, and searching into their writings. Paul then applies to reading, for it is no slight advantage that is to be reaped from the Scriptures. But we are indolent, and we hear with carelessness and indifference. What punishment do we not deserve!

"That your profiting may appear," he says, *"to all."*

Thus he would have him appear great and admirable in this respect also, showing that this was still necessary for him, for he wished that his *"profiting should appear"* not only in his life, but in the word of doctrine.

Chap. v. ver. 1. *"Rebuke not an elder."*

Is he now speaking of the order? I think not, but of any elderly man. What then if he should need correction? Do not rebuke him, but address

him as you would a father offending.

Ver. 1. *"The elder women as mothers, the younger men as brethren; the younger women as sisters, with all purity."*

Rebuke is in its own nature offensive, particularly when it is addressed to an old man, and when it proceeds from a young man too, there is a threefold show of forwardness. By the manner and the mildness of it, therefore, he would soften it. For it is possible to reprove without offense, if one will only make a point of this: it requires great discretion, but it may be done.

"The younger men as brethren." Why does he recommend this too here? With a view to the high spirit natural to young men, whence it is proper to soften reproof to them also with moderation.

"The younger women as sisters"; he adds, *"with all purity."* Tell me not, he means, of merely avoiding sinful intercourse with them. There should not be even a suspicion. For since intimacy with young women is always suspicious, and yet a Bishop cannot always avoid it, he shows by adding these words, that *"all purity"* is required in such intimacy. But does Paul give this advice to Timothy? Yes, he says, for I am speaking to the world through him. But if Timothy was thus advised, let others consider what sort of conduct is required of them, that they should give no ground for suspicion, no shadow of pretext, to those who wish to calumniate.

Ver. 3. *"Honor widows, that are widows indeed."*

Why does he say nothing of virginity, nor command us to honor virgins? Perhaps there were not yet any professing that state, or they might have fallen from it. *"For some,"* he says, *"are already turned aside after Satan."* [1 Timothy 5:15] For a woman may have lost her husband, and yet not be truly a widow. As in order to be a virgin, it is not enough to be a stranger to marriage, but many other things are necessary, as blamelessness

and perseverance; so the loss of a husband does not constitute a widow, but patience, with chastity and separation from all men. Such widows he justly bids us honor, or rather support. For they need support, being left desolate, and having no husband to stand up for them. Their state appears to the multitude despicable and inauspicious. Therefore he wishes them to receive the greater honor from the Priest, and the more so, because they are worthy of it.

Ver. 4. *"But if any widow have children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents."*

Observe the discretion of Paul; how often he urges men from human considerations. For he does not here lay down any great and lofty motive, but one that is easy to be understood: *"to requite their parents."* How? For bringing them up and educating them. As if he should say, You have received from them great care. They are departed. You can not requite them. For thou did not bring them forth, nor nourish them. Requite them in their descendants, repay the debt through the children. *"Let them learn first to show piety at home."* Here he more simply exhorts them to acts of kindness; then to excite them the more, he adds,

"For that is good and acceptable before God." And as he had spoken of those *"who are widows indeed,"* he declares who is indeed a widow.

Ver. 5. *"Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusts in God, and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."*

She who being a widow has not made choice of a worldly life, is a widow indeed; she who trusts in God as she ought, and continues instant in prayer night and day, is a widow indeed. Not that she, who has children, is not a widow indeed. For he commends her who brings up children as she ought. But if any one has not children, he means, she is desolate, and her he

consoles, saying, that she is most truly a widow, who has lost not only the consolation of a husband, but that arising from children, yet she has God in the place of all. She is not the worse for not having children, but He fills up her need with consolation, in that she is without children. What he says amounts to this. Grieve not, when it is said that a widow ought to bring up children, as if, because you have no children your worth were on that account inferior. You are a widow indeed, whereas she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

But since many who have children choose the state of widowhood, not to cut off the occasions of a worldly life, but rather to enhance them, that they may do what they will with the greater license, and indulge the more freely in worldly lusts: therefore he says, *"She that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* Ought not a widow then to live in pleasure? Surely not. If then when nature and age is weak, a life of pleasure is not allowable, but leads to death, eternal death; what have men to say, who live a life of pleasure? But he says with reason, *"She that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* But that you may see this, let us now see what is the state of the dead, and what of the living, and in which shall we place such an one? The living perform the works of life, of that future life, which is truly life. And Christ has declared what are the works of that future life, with which we ought always to be occupied. *"Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and you gave me meat. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink."* [Matthew 25:34-35] The living differ from the dead, not only in that they behold the sun, and breathe the air, but in that they are doing some good. For if this be wanting, the living are not better than the dead. That you may learn this, hear how it is possible that even the dead should live. For it is said, *"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* [Matthew 22:32] But this again you say is a riddle.

Let us therefore solve them both. A man who lives in pleasure, is dead while he lives. For he lives only to his belly. In his other senses he lives not. He sees not what he ought to see, he hears not what he ought to hear, he speaks not what he ought to speak. Nor does he perform the actions of the living. But as he who is stretched upon a bed, with his eyes closed, and his eyelids fast, perceives nothing that is passing; so it is with this man, or rather not so, but worse. For the one is equally insensible to things good and evil, but the latter is sensible to things evil only, but as insensible as the former to things good. Thus he is dead. For nothing relating to the life to come moves or affects him. For intemperance, taking him into her own bosom, as into some dark and dismal cavern, full of all uncleanness, causes him to dwell altogether in darkness, like the dead. For when all his time is spent between feasting and drunkenness, is he not dead, and buried in darkness? Even in the morning when he seems to be sober, he is not sober in reality, since he has not yet rid and cleansed himself of yesterday's excess and is still longing for a repetition, and in that his evening and noon he passes in revels, and all the night, and most of the morning in deep sleep.

Is he then to be numbered with the living? Who can describe that storm that comes of luxury, that assails his soul and body? For as a sky continually clouded admits not the sunbeams to shine through it, so the fumes of luxury and wine enveloping his brain, as if it were some rock, and casting over it a thick mist, suffer not reason to exert itself, but overspread the drunken man with profound darkness. With him who is thus affected, how great must be the storm within, how violent the tumult. As when a flood of water has risen, and has surmounted the entrances of the workshops, we see all the inmates in confusion, and using tubs and pitchers and sponges, and many other contrivances to bale it out, that it may not both undermine the building, and spoil all that is contained in it: so it is

when luxury overwhelms the soul; its reasonings within are disturbed. What is already collected, cannot be discharged, and by the introduction of more, a violent storm is raised. For look not at the cheerful and merry countenance, but examine the interior, and you will see it full of deep dejection. If it were possible to bring the soul into view, and to behold it with our bodily eyes, that of the luxurious would seem depressed, mournful, miserable, and wasted with leanness; for the more the body grows sleek and gross, the more lean and weakly is the soul; and the more one is pampered, the more is the other hampered. As, when the pupil of the eye has the external coats over it too thick, it cannot put forth the power of vision, and look out, because the light is excluded by the thick covering, and darkness often ensues; so when the body is constantly full fed, the soul must be invested with grossness. But the dead rot, and are corrupted, you say; and an unwholesome moisture distills from them. So in her "*that lives in pleasure,*" may be seen rheums, and phlegm, catarrh, hiccough, vomitings, eructations, and the like, which, as too unseemly, I forbear to name. For such is the dominion of luxury, that it makes one endure things, which we do not even think proper to mention.

But you still ask, how is the body dissolved while it yet eats and drinks? Surely this is no sign of human life, since creatures without reason too eat and drink. Where the soul lies dead, what do eating and drinking avail? The dead body, that is invested with a flowery garment, is not benefited by it, and when a blooming body invests a dead soul, the soul is not benefited. For when its whole discourse is of cooks, and caterers, and confectioners, and it utters nothing pious, is it not dead? For let us consider what is man? The Heathens say that he is a rational animal, mortal, capable of intelligence and knowledge. But let us not take our definition from them, but whence? From the sacred writings. Where then has the Scripture given a

definition of man? Hear its words. *"There was a man perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil."* [Job 1:2] This was indeed a man! Again, another says, *"Man is great, and the merciful man is precious."* [Proverbs 20:6, Septuagint] Those who answer not to this description, though they partake of mind, and are never so capable of knowledge, the Scripture refuses to acknowledge them as men, but calls them dogs, and horses, and serpents, and foxes, and wolves, and if there be any animals more contemptible. If such then is man, he that lives in pleasure is not a man; for how can he be, who never thinks of anything that he ought? Luxury and sobriety cannot exist together: they are destructive of one another. Even the Heathens say,

"A heavy paunch bears not a subtle mind."

Such as these the Scripture calls men without souls. *"My Spirit (it is said) shall not always abide in these men, because they are flesh."* [Genesis 6:3, Septuagint] Yet they had a soul, but because it was dead in them, He calls them flesh. For as in the case of the virtuous, though they have a body, we say, *"he is all soul, he is all spirit,"* so the reverse is said of those who are otherwise. So Paul also said of those, who did not fulfill the works of the flesh, *"You are not in the flesh."* [Romans 8:9] Thus those who live in luxury are not in the soul or in the spirit.

Moral. *"She that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* Hear this, you women, that pass your time in revels and intemperance, and who neglect the poor, pining and perishing with hunger, while you are destroying yourself with continual luxury. Thus you are the causes of two deaths, of those who are dying of want, and of your own, both through ill measure. But if out of your fullness you tempered their want, you would save two lives. Why do you thus gorge your own body with excess, and

waste that of the poor with want; why pamper this above measure, and stint that too beyond measure? Consider what comes of food, into what it is changed. Are you not disgusted at its being named? Why then be eager for such accumulations? The increase of luxury is but the multiplication of dung! For nature has her limits, and what is beyond these is not nourishment, but injury, and the increase of ordure. Nourish the body, but do not destroy it. Food is called nourishment, to show that its design is not to injure the body, but to nourish it. For this reason perhaps food passes into excrement, that we may not be lovers of luxury. For if it were not so, if it were not useless and injurious to the body, we should not cease from devouring one another. If the belly received as much as it pleased, digested it, and conveyed it to the body, we should see wars and battles innumerable. Even now when part of our food passes into ordure, part into blood, part into spurious and useless phlegm, we are nevertheless so addicted to luxury, that we spend perhaps whole estates on a meal. What should we not do, if this were not the end of luxury? The more luxuriously we live, the more noisome are the odors with which we are filled. The body is like a swollen bottle, running out every way. The eructations are such as to pain the head of a bystander. From the heat of fermentation within, vapors are sent forth, as from a furnace, if bystanders are pained, what, think you, is the brain within continually suffering, assailed by these fumes? To say nothing of the channels of the heated and obstructed blood, of those reservoirs, the liver and the spleen, and of the canals by which the fæces are discharged. The drains in our streets we take care to keep unobstructed. We cleanse our sewers with poles and drags, that they may not be stopped, or overflow, but the canals of our bodies we do not keep clear, but obstruct and choke them up, and when the filth rises to the very throne of the king, I mean the brain, we do not regard it, treating it not like a worthy king, but like an unclean

brute. God has purposely removed to a distance those unclean members, that we might not receive offense from them. But we suffer it not to be so, and spoil all by our excess. And other evils might be mentioned. To obstruct the sewers is to breed a pestilence; but if a stench from without is pestilential, that which is pent up within the body, and cannot find a vent, what disorders must it not produce both to body and soul? Some have strangely complained, wondering why God has ordained that we should bear a load of ordure with us. But they themselves increase the load. God designed thus to detach us from luxury, and to persuade us not to attach ourselves to worldly things. But you are not thus to be persuaded to cease from gluttony, but though it is but as far as the throat, and as long as the hour of eating, nay not even so long, that the pleasure abides, you continue in your indulgence. Is it not true that as soon as it has passed the palate and the throat, the pleasure ceases? For the sense of it is in the taste, and after that is gratified, a nausea succeeds, the stomach not digesting the food, or not without much difficulty. Justly then is it said, that *"she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* For the luxurious soul is unable to hear or to see anything. It becomes weak, ignoble, unmanly, illiberal, cowardly, full of impudence, servility, ignorance, rage, violence, and all kinds of evil, and destitute of the opposite virtues. Therefore he says,

Ver. 7. *"These things give in charge, that they may be blameless."*

He does not leave it to their choice. Command them, he says, not to be luxurious, assuming it to be confessedly an evil, as not holding it lawful or admissible for the luxurious to partake of the Holy Mysteries. *"These things command,"* he says, *"that they may be blameless."* Thus you see it is reckoned among sins. For if it were a matter of choice, though it were left undone, we might still be blameless. Therefore in obedience to Paul, let us command the luxurious widow not to have place in the list of widows. For

if a soldier, who frequents the bath, the theater, the busy scenes of life, is judged to desert his duty, much more the widows. Let us then not seek our rest here, that we may find it hereafter. Let us not live in pleasure here, that we may hereafter enjoy true pleasure, true delight, which brings no evil with it, but infinite good. Of which God grant that we may all be partakers, in Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 14 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 5:8

"But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Many consider that their own virtue is sufficient for their salvation, and if they duly regulate their own life, that nothing further is wanting to save them. But in this they greatly err, which is proved by the example of him who buried his one talent, for he brought it back not diminished but entire, and just as it had been delivered to him. It is shown also by the blessed Paul, who says here, *"If any one provide not for his own."* The provision of which he speaks is universal, and relates to the soul as well as the body, since both are to be provided for.

"If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house," that is, those who are nearly related to him, *"he is worse than an infidel."* And so says Isaiah, the chief of the Prophets, *"You shall not overlook your kinsmen of your own seed."* [Isaiah 58:7, Septuagint] For if a man deserts those who are united by ties of kindred and affinity, how shall he be affectionate towards others? Will it not have the appearance of vainglory, when benefiting others he slights his own relations, and does not provide for them? And what will be said, if instructing others, he neglects his own, though he has greater facilities; and a higher obligation to benefit them? Will it not be said, These Christians are affectionate indeed, who neglect their own relatives? *"He is worse than an infidel."* Wherefore? Because the latter, if he benefits not aliens, does not neglect his near kindred. What is meant is this: The law of God and of nature is violated by him who provides not for his own family. But if he who provides not for

them has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel, where shall he be ranked who has injured his relatives? With whom shall he be placed? But how has he denied the faith? Even as it is said, *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] What has God, in whom they believe, commanded? *"Hide not yourself from your own flesh."* [Isaiah 58:7] How does he then believe who thus denies God? Let those consider this, who to spare their wealth neglect their kindred. It was the design of God, in uniting us by the ties of kindred, to afford us many opportunities of doing good to one another. When therefore you neglect a duty which infidels perform, have you not denied the faith? For it is not faith merely to profess belief, but to do works worthy of faith. And it is possible in each particular to believe and not to believe. For since he had spoken of luxury and self-indulgence, he says that it is not for this only that such a woman is punished, because she is luxurious, but because her luxury compels her to neglect her household. This he says with reason; for she that lives to the belly, perishes hereby also, as *"having denied the faith."* But how is she worse than an infidel? Because it is not the same thing to neglect our kindred, as to neglect a stranger. How should it be? But the fault is greater here, to desert one known than one who is unknown to us, a friend than one who is not a friend.

Ver. 9, 10. *"Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man. Well reported of for good works."*

He had said, *"Let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents."* He had also said, *"She that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* He had said, *"If she provides not for her own she is worse than an infidel."* Having mentioned the qualities which not to have would render a woman unworthy to be reckoned among the widows, he now mentions

what she ought to have besides. What then? Are we to receive her for her years? What merit is there in that? It is not her own doing that she is threescore years old. Therefore he does not speak of her age merely, as, if she has even reached those years, she may not yet, he says, without good works, be reckoned among the number. But why then is he particular about the age? He afterwards assigns a cause not originating with himself, but with the widows themselves. Meanwhile let us hear what follows. *"Well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children."* Truly, it is no unimportant work to bring up children; but bringing them up is not merely taking care of them; they must be brought up well; as he said before, *"If they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness."* [1 Timothy 2:15] Observe how constantly he sets kindnesses to our own relatives before those to strangers. First he says, *"If she have brought up children,"* then, *"If she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the Saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."* But what if she be poor? Not even in that case is she debarred from bringing up children, lodging strangers, relieving the afflicted. She is not more destitute than the widow who gave the two mites. Poor though she be, she has an house, she does not lodge in the open air. *"If,"* he says, *"she have washed the Saints' feet."* This is not a costly work. *"If she have diligently followed every good work."* What precept does he give here? He exhorts them to contribute bodily service, for women are peculiarly fitted for such attendance, for making the bed of the sick, and composing them to rest.

Strange! What strictness does he require of widows; almost as much as of the Bishop himself. For he says, *"If she have diligently followed every good work."* This is as though he meant that, if she could not of herself perform it, she shared and cooperated in it. When he cuts off luxury, he would have her provident, a good economist, and at the same time

continually persevering in prayer. Such was Anna. Such strictness does he require of widows. Greater even than of virgins, from whom he yet requires much strictness, and eminent virtue. For when he speaks of "*that which is comely,*" and "*that she may attend upon the Lord without distraction*" [1 Corinthians 7:35], he gives, in a manner, a summary of all virtue. You see that it is not merely the not contracting a second marriage that is enough to make a widow, many other things are necessary. But why does he discourage second marriages? Is the thing condemned? By no means. That is heretical. Only he would have her henceforth occupied in spiritual things, transferring all her care to virtue. For marriage is not an impure state, but one of much occupation. He speaks of their having leisure, not of their being more pure by remaining unmarried. For marriage certainly implies much secular engagement. If you abstain from marriage that you may have leisure for the service of God, and yet do not so employ that leisure, it is of no advantage to you, (if you do not use your leisure,) to perform all services to strangers, and to the Saints. If you do not thus, you abstain from marriage not for any good end, but as though you condemned the state. So the virgin, who is not truly crucified to the world, by declining marriage, appears to condemn it as accursed and impure.

Observe, the hospitality here spoken of is not merely a friendly reception, but one given with zeal and alacrity, with readiness, and going about it as if one were receiving Christ Himself. The widows should perform these services themselves, not commit them to their handmaids. For Christ said, "*If I your Master and Lord have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet.*" [John 13:14] And though a woman may be very rich, and of the highest rank, vain of her birth and noble family, there is not the same distance between her and others, as between God and the disciples. If you receive the stranger as Christ, be not ashamed,

but rather glory: but if you receive him not as Christ, receive him not at all. *"He that receives you,"* He said, *"receives Me."* [Matthew 10:40] If you do not so receive him, you have no reward. Abraham was receiving men that passed as travelers, as he thought, and he did not leave to his servants to make the preparations for their entertainment, but took the greater part of the service upon himself, and commanded his wife to mix the flour, though he had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house, of whom there must have been many maidservants; but he wished that himself and his wife should have the reward, not of the cost only, but of the service. Thus ought we ever to exercise hospitality by our own personal exertions, that we may be sanctified, and our hands be blessed. And if you give to the poor, disdain not yourself to give it, for it is not to the poor that it is given, but to Christ; and who is so wretched, as to disdain to stretch out his own hand to Christ?

This is hospitality, this is truly to do it for God's sake. But if you give orders with pride, though you bid him take the first place, it is not hospitality, it is not done for God's sake. The stranger requires much attendance, much encouragement, and with all this it is difficult for him not to feel abashed; for so delicate is his position, that while he receives the favor, he is ashamed. That shame we ought to remove by the most attentive service, and to show by words and actions, that we do not think we are conferring a favor, but receiving one, that we are obliging less than we are obliged. So much does good will multiply the kindness. For as he who considers himself a loser, and thinks that he is doing a favor, destroys all the merit of it; so he who looks upon himself as receiving a kindness, increases the reward. *"For God loves a cheerful giver."* [2 Corinthians 9:7] So that you are rather indebted to the poor man for receiving your kindness. For if there were no poor, the greater part of your sins would not be removed.

They are the healers of your wounds, their hands are medicinal to you. The physician, extending his hand to apply a remedy, does not exercise the healing art more than the poor man, who stretches out his hand to receive your alms, and thus becomes a cure for your ills. You give your money, and with it your sins pass away. Such were the Priests of old, of whom it was said, *"They eat up the sin of My people."* [Hosea 4:8] Thus you receive more than you give, you are benefited more than you benefit. You lend to God, not to men. You increase your wealth, rather than diminish it. But if you do not lessen it by giving, then it is indeed diminished!

"If she have received strangers, if she have washed the Saints' feet." But who are these? The distressed saints, not any saints whatever. For there may be saints, who are much waited on by every one. Do not visit these, who are in the enjoyment of plenty, but those who are in tribulation, who are unknown, or known to few. He who has *"done it unto the least of these,"* He says, *"has done it unto Me."* [Matthew 25:40]

Moral. Give not your alms to those who preside in the Church to distribute. Bestow it yourself, that you may have the reward not of giving merely, but of kind service. Give with your own hands. Cast into the furrow yourself. Here it is not required to handle the plow, to yoke the ox, to wait the season, nor to break up the earth, or to contend with the frost. No such trouble is required here, where you sow for heaven, where there is no frost nor winter nor any such thing. You sow in souls, where no one takes away what is sown, but it is firmly retained with all care and diligence. Cast the seed yourself, why deprive yourself of your reward. There is great reward in dispensing even what belongs to others. There is a reward not only for giving, but for dispensing well the things that are given. Why will you not have this reward? For that there is a reward for this, hear how we read that the Apostles appointed Stephen to the ministry of the widows. [Acts 6:5-7]

Be thou the dispenser of your own gifts. Your own benevolence and the fear of God appoint you to that ministry. Thus vainglory is excluded. This refreshes the soul, this sanctifies the hands, this pulls down pride. This teaches you philosophy, this inflames your zeal, this makes you to receive blessings. Your head, as you depart, receives all the blessings of the widows.

Be more earnest in your prayers. Inquire diligently for holy men, men that are truly such, who, in the retirement of the desert, cannot beg, but are wholly devoted to God. Take a long journey to visit them, and give with your own hand. For you may profit much in your own person, if you give. Do you see their tents, their lodging? Do you see the desert? Do you see the solitude? Often when you have gone to bestow money, you give your whole soul. You are detained, and hast become his fellow-captive, and hast been alike estranged from the world.

It is of great benefit even to see the poor. *"It is better,"* he says, *"to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting."* [Ecclesiastes 7:2] By the latter the soul is inflamed. For if you can imitate the luxury, then you are encouraged to self-indulgence, and if you can not, you are grieved. In the house of mourning there is nothing of this kind. If you can not afford to be luxurious, you are not pained; and if you can, you are restrained. Monasteries are indeed houses of mourning. There is sackcloth and ashes, there is solitude, there is no laughter, no pressure of worldly business. There is fasting, and lying upon the ground; there is no impure savor of rich food, no blood shed, no tumult, no disturbance, or crowding. There is a serene harbor. They are as lights shining from a lofty place to mariners afar off. They are stationed at the port, drawing all men to their own calm, and preserving from shipwreck those who gaze on them, and not letting those walk in darkness who look there. Go to them, and make friends with them,

embrace their holy feet, more honorable to touch than the heads of others. If some clasp the feet of statues, because they bear but a likeness of the king, will you not clasp his feet who has Christ within him, and be saved? The Saints' feet are holy, though they are poor men, but not even the head of the profane is honorable. Such efficacy is there in the feet of the Saints, that when they shake off the dust of their feet, they inflict punishment. When a saint is among us, let us not be ashamed of anything that belongs to him. And all are saints, who unite a holy life with a right faith and though they do not work miracles nor cast out devils, still they are saints.

Go then to their tabernacles. To go to the monastery of a holy man is to pass, as it were, from earth to heaven. You see not there what is seen in a private house. That company is free from all impurity. There is silence and profound quiet. The words "*mine and yours*" are not in use among them. And if you remain there a whole day or even two, the more pleasure you will enjoy. There, as soon as it is day, or rather before day, the cock crows, and you see it not as you may see it in a house, the servants snoring, the doors shut, all sleeping like the dead, while the muleteer without is ringing his bells. There is nothing of all this. All, immediately shaking off sleep, reverently rise when their President calls them, and forming themselves into a holy choir, they stand, and lifting up their hands all at once sing the sacred hymns. For they are not like us, who require many hours to shake off sleep from our heavy heads. We indeed, as soon as we are waked, sit some time stretching our limbs, go as nature calls, then proceed to wash our face and our hands; afterwards we take our shoes and clothes, and a deal of time is spent.

It is not so there. No one calls for his servant, for each waits upon himself: neither does he require many clothes, nor need to shake off sleep. For as soon as he opens his eyes, he is like one who has been long awake in

collectedness. For when the heart is not stifled within by excess of food, it soon recovers itself, and is immediately wakeful. The hands are always pure; for his sleep is composed and regular. No one among them is found snoring or breathing hard, or tossing about in sleep, or with his body exposed; but they lie in sleep as decently as those who are awake, and all this is the effect of the orderly state of their souls. These are truly saints and angels among men. And marvel not when you hear these things. For their great fear of God suffers them not to go down into the depths of sleep, and to drown their minds, but it falls lightly upon them, merely affording them rest. And as their sleep is, such are their dreams, not full of wild fancies and monstrous visions.

But, as I said, at the crowing of the cock their President comes, and gently touching the sleeper with his foot, rouses them all. For there are none sleeping naked. Then as soon as they have arisen they stand up, and sing the prophetic hymns with much harmony, and well composed tunes. And neither harp nor pipe nor other musical instrument utters such sweet melodies, as you hear from the singing of these saints in their deep and quiet solitudes. And the songs themselves too are suitable, and full of the love of God. *"In the night,"* they say, *"lift up your hands unto God. With my soul have I desired You in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek You early,"* [Isaiah 26:9] And the Psalms of David, that cause fountains of tears to flow. For when he sings, *"I am weary with my groaning, all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears"* [Psalm 6:6]: and, again, *"I have eaten ashes like bread."* [Psalm 102:9] *"What is man that you are mindful of him?"* [Psalm 8:4] *"Man is like to vanity, his days are as a shadow that passes away."* [Psalm 144:4] *"Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased"* [Psalm 49:16]; and, *"Who makes men to be of one mind in a house"* [Psalm 68:6]: and, *"Seven*

times a day do I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments" [Psalm 119:164]: and, *"At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto You, because of Your righteous judgments"* [Psalm 119:62]: and, *"God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave"* [Psalm 49:15]: and, *"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me"* [Psalm 23:4]: and, *"I will not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day, nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday"* [Psalm 91:5-6]: and, *"We are counted as sheep for the slaughter"* [Psalm 43:22]: he expresses their ardent love to God. And again, when they sing with the Angels, (for Angels too are singing then,) *"Praise the Lord from the Heavens."* [Psalm 148:1] And we meanwhile are snoring, or scratching our heads, or lying supine meditating endless deceits. Think what it was for them to spend the whole night in this employment.

And when the day is coming on, they take rest again; for when we begin our works, they have a season of rest. But each of us, when it is day, calls upon his neighbor, takes account of his outgoings, then goes into the forum; trembling he appears before the magistrate, and dreads a reckoning. Another visits the stage, another goes about his own business. But these holy men, having performed their morning prayers and hymns, proceed to the reading of the Scriptures. There are some too that have learned to write out books, each having his own apartment assigned to him, where he lives in perpetual quiet; no one is trifling, not one speaks a word. Then at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and in the evening, they perform their devotions, having divided the day into four parts, and at the conclusion of each they honor God with psalms and hymns, and while others are dining, laughing, and sporting, and bursting with gluttony, they are occupied with their hymns. For they have no time for the table nor for these things of

sense. After their meal they again pursue the same course, having previously given themselves a while to sleep. The men of the world sleep during the day: but these watch during the night. Truly children of light are they! And while the former, having slept away the greater part of the day, go forth oppressed with heaviness, these are still collected, remaining without food till the evening, and occupied in hymns. Other men, when evening overtakes them, hasten to the baths, and different recreations, but these, being relieved from their labors, then betake themselves to their table, not calling up a multitude of servants, nor throwing the house into bustle and confusion, nor setting before them high-seasoned dishes, and rich-steaming viands, but some only partaking of bread and salt, to which others add oil, while the weakly have also herbs and pulse. Then after sitting a short time, or rather after concluding all with hymns, they each go to rest upon a bed made for repose only and not for luxury. There is no dread of magistrates, no lordly arrogance, no terror of slaves, no disturbance of women or children, no multitudes of chests, or superfluous laying by of garments, no gold or silver, no guards and sentinels, no storehouse. Nothing of all these, but all there is full of prayer, of hymns, and of a spiritual savor. Nothing carnal is there. They fear no attacks of robbers, having nothing of which they can be deprived, no wealth, but a soul and body, of which if they are robbed, it is not a loss but a gain. For it is said, *"To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* [Philippians 1:21] They have freed themselves from all bonds. Truly, *"The voice of gladness is in the tabernacles of the righteous."* [Psalm 118:15]

There is no such thing to be heard there as wailing and lamentation. Their roof is free from that melancholy and those cries. Deaths happen there indeed, for their bodies are not immortal, but they know not death, as death. The departed are accompanied to the grave with hymns. This they call a

procession, not a burial; and when it is reported that any one is dead, great is their cheerfulness, great their pleasure; or rather not one of them can bear to say that one is dead, but that he is perfected. Then there is thanksgiving, and great glory, and joy, every one praying that such may be his own end, that so his own combat may terminate, and he may rest from his labor and struggles, and may see Christ. And if any is sick, instead of tears and lamentations they have recourse to prayers. Often not the care of physicians, but faith alone relieves the sick. And if a physician be necessary, then too there is the greatest firmness and philosophy. There is no wife tearing her hair, nor children bewailing their orphan state before the time, nor slaves entreating the dying man to give them an assurance that they shall be committed to good hands. Escaping from all these, the soul looks but to one thing at its last breath, that it may depart in favor with God. And if disease occurs, the causes of it are matter of glory rather than of reproach, as in other cases. For it proceeds not from gluttony nor fullness of the head, but from intense watchfulness and fasting, or the like causes; and hence it is easily removed, for it is sufficient for its removal to abate the severity of these exercises.

Tell me then, you will say, whether any one could wash the Saints' feet in the Church? Whether such are to be found among us? Yes: undoubtedly they are such. Let us not, however, when the life of these saints is described despise those that are in the Churches. There are many such often among us, though they are in secret. Nor let us despise them, because they go from house to house, or go into the forum, or stand forth in public. God has even commanded such services, saying, "*Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*" [Isaiah 1:17] Many are the ways of being virtuous, as there are many varieties of jewels, though all are called jewels; one is bright and round on all sides, another has some different beauty. And how is this? As

coral has, by a kind of art, its line extended, and its angles shaped off, and another color more delicious than white, and the prasius above every green, another has the rich color of blood, another an azure surpassing the sea, another is more brilliant than the purple, and thus rivaling in their varieties all the colors of flowers or of the sun. Yet all are called jewels. So it is with the Saints. Some discipline themselves, some the Churches. Paul therefore has well said, *"If she have washed the Saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted."* For he speaks thus, that he may excite us all to imitation. Let us hasten then to perform such actions, that we may be able hereafter to boast that we have washed the Saints' feet. For if we ought to wash their feet, much more ought we to give them our money with our own hands, and at the same time study to be concealed. *"Let not your left hand know,"* He says, *"what your right hand does."* [Matthew 6:3]

Why do you take so many witnesses? Let not your servant know it, nor, if possible, your wife. Many are the impediments of the deceitful one. Often she who never before interfered, will impede such works, either from vainglory, or some other motive. Even Abraham, who had an admirable wife, when he was about to offer up his son, concealed it from her, though he knew not what was to happen, but was fully persuaded that he must slaughter his son. What then, would any one that was but an ordinary man have said? Would it not be, *"Who is this that perpetrates such acts?"* Would he not have accused him of cruelty and brutality? His wife was not even allowed to see her son, to receive his last words, to witness his dying struggles. But he led him away like a captive. That just man though not of any such thing, inebriated as he was with zeal, so that he looked only how to fulfill that which was commanded. No servant, no wife was present, nay, he himself knew not what would be the issue. But intent upon offering up a pure victim, he would not defile it with tears, or with any opposition. Mark

too with what gentleness Isaac asks, *"Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"*: and what was the father's answer? *"My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."* [Genesis 22:7-8] In this he uttered a prophecy that God would provide Himself a burnt offering in His Son, and it also came true at the time. But why did he conceal it from him who was to be sacrificed? Because he feared lest he should be astounded, lest he should prove unworthy. With such care and prudence did he act throughout this affair! Well then has the Scripture said, *"Let not your left hand know what your right hand does."* If we have one dear to us as one of our own members, let us not be anxious to show to him our charitable works, unless it be necessary. For many evils may arise from it. A man is excited to vainglory, and impediments are often raised. For this reason let us conceal it, if possible, from our own selves, that we may attain the blessings promised, through the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 15 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 5:11-15

"But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; having condemnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan."

Paul having discoursed much concerning widows, and having settled the age at which they were to be admitted, saying, *"Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old,"* and having described the qualifications of a widow, *"If she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the Saints' feet,"* proceeds now to say, *"But the younger widows refuse."* But concerning virgins, though the case of their falling is a much more gross one, he has said nothing of this kind, and rightly. For they had enrolled themselves on higher views, and the work with them proceeded from a greater elevation of mind. Therefore the receiving of strangers, and the washing of the Saints' feet, he has represented by *"attending upon the Lord without distraction"* [1 Corinthians 7:34-35], and by saying, *"The unmarried cares for the things that belong to the Lord."* [1 Corinthians 7:34-35] And if he has not limited a particular age for them, it is most likely because that point is settled by what he has said in this case. But indeed, as I said, the choice of virginity proceeded from a higher purpose. Besides, in this case there had been falls, and thus they had

given occasion for his rule, but nothing of that kind had occurred among the virgins. For that some had already fallen away is plain, in that he says, *"When they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry"*; and again, *"For some have already turned aside after Satan."*

"The younger widows refuse, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry"; that is, when they have become scornful and luxurious. For as in the case of a just man, we might say, *"Let her depart, for she has become another's."* He shows therefore that though they chose widowhood, it was not the choice of their judgment. So then a widow, by the state of widowhood, is espoused to Christ. For He has said, *"I am the defender of the widows and the father of the orphans."* [Psalm 68:5] He shows that they do not choose widowhood as they ought, but wax wanton: however he bears with them. Elsewhere indeed he says, *"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."* [2 Corinthians 11:2] After having given their names to Him, *"they will marry,"* he says, *"having condemnation, because they have cast off their first faith."* By faith he means, fidelity to their covenant. As if he had said, They have been false to Christ, they have dishonored Him, and transgressed His covenant. *"And withal they learn to be idle."*

Thus he commands not only men, but women also, to work. For idleness is the teacher of every sin. And not only are they exposed to this condemnation, but to other sins. If therefore it is unbecoming for a married woman *"to go from house to house,"* much more is it for a virgin. *"And not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, guide the house."*

What then happens, when the care for the husband is withdrawn, and the care to please God does not constrain them? They naturally become

idlers, tattlers, and busybodies. For he who does not attend to his own concerns will be meddling with those of others, even as he who minds his own business will take no account of and have no care about the affairs of another. And nothing is so unbecoming to a woman, as to busy herself in the concerns of others, and it is no less unbecoming to a man. This is a great sign of impudence and forwardness.

"I will therefore," he says, (since they themselves wish it,) "that the younger widows marry, bear children, guide the house."

This course is at least preferable to the other. They ought indeed to be concerned for the things of God, they ought to preserve their faith. But since they do not this, it is better to avoid a worse course. God is not dishonored by their marrying again, and they do not fall into those practices, which have been censured. From such a widowhood, no good could arise, but good may come out of this marriage. Hence the women will be able to correct that indolence and vanity of mind.

But why, since some have fallen away, does he not say that much care is to be taken of them, that they may not fall into the error he has mentioned? Why has he commanded them to marry? Because marriage is not forbidden, and it is a safeguard to them. Wherefore he adds, that they *"give none occasion,"* or handle, *"to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan."* Such widows as these then he would have refused, not meaning that there should be no younger widows, but that there should be no adulteresses, that none should be idle, busy-bodies, speaking things that they ought not, that no occasion should be given to the adversary. Had nothing of this kind taken place, he would not have forbidden them.

Ver. 16. *"If any man or woman that believes have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged, that it may relieve them*

that are widows indeed."

Observe how again he speaks of those as "*widows indeed*," who are left destitute, and have no resource from any other quarter. It was better to have it so. For thus two great objects were attained. Those had an opportunity of doing good, while these were honorably maintained, and the Church not burdened. And he has well said, "*If any believer*." For it is not fit that believing women should be maintained by unbelievers, lest they should seem to stand in need of them. And observe how persuasively he speaks; he has not said, "*let them maintain them expensively*," but "*let them relieve them*." "*That the Church*," he says, "*may relieve them that are widows indeed*." She therefore has the reward of this help also, for she that helps the Church, helps not her only, but those widows too whom the Church is thus enabled to maintain more bountifully. "*I will therefore that the younger widows*"—do what? Live in luxury and pleasure? By no means; but—"*marry, bear children, guide the house*." That he may not be supposed to encourage them to live luxuriously, he adds, that they give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. They ought indeed to have been superior to the things of this world, but since they are not, let them abide in them at least upright.

Ver. 17, 18. "*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward.*"

The "*honor*" of which he here speaks is attention to them, and the supply of their necessities, as is shown by his adding, "*You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain*" [Deuteronomy 25:4]; and, "*The laborer is worthy of his reward*." [Luke 10:7] So when he says, "*Honor widows*," he means, "*support*" them in all that is necessary. Thus he says, "*That it may*

relieve those that are widows indeed"; and again, *"Honor widows that are widows indeed,"* that is, who are in poverty, for the greater their poverty, the more truly are they widows. He alleges the Law, he alleges the words of Christ, both agreeing herein. For the Law says, *"You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain."* See how he would have the teacher labor! For there is not, indeed there is not, any other labor such as his. But this is from the Law. But how does he quote from Christ? *"The laborer is worthy of his reward."* Let us not then look only to the reward, but to the terms of the commandment. *"The laborer,"* he says, *"is worthy of his reward."* So that if any one lives in sloth and luxury, he is unworthy of it. Unless he is as the ox treading out the grain, and bearing the yoke, in spite of heat and thorns, and ceases not till he has carried the grain into the granary, he is not worthy. Therefore to teachers should be granted a supply of their necessities without grudging, that they may not faint nor be discouraged, nor by attention to inferior things deprive themselves of greater; that they may labor for spiritual things, paying no regard to worldly things. It was thus with the Levites; they had no worldly concerns, because the laity took care to provide for them, and their revenues were appointed by the law, as tythes, offerings of gold, first-fruits, vows, and many other things. And the law properly assigned these things to them, as seeking things present. But I shall say no more than that those who preside ought to have food and raiment, that they may not be distracted by care for these things. But what is double support? Double that of the widows, or of the deacons, or simply, liberal support. Let us not then think only of the double maintenance granted them, but of what is added, *"Those who rule well."* And what is it to rule well? Let us hear Christ, Who says, *"The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep."* [John 10:11] Thus to rule well is, from our concern for them, never to spare ourselves.

"Especially those who labor in the word and doctrine." Where then are those who say that there is no occasion for the word and doctrine? Whereas he says to Timothy, *"Meditate upon these things; give yourself wholly to them";* and, *"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; for in doing this you shall save both yourself, and them that hear you."* [1

Timothy 4:15-16] These are the men whom he wishes to be honored most of all, and he adds the reason, for they sustain great labor. For when one is neither watchful, nor diligent, but merely sits in his stall easy and unconcerned, while another wears himself out with anxiety and exertion, especially if he is ignorant of profane literature, ought not the latter to be honored above all others, who more than others gives himself up to such labors? For he is exposed to numberless tongues. One censures him, another praises him, a third mocks him, another finds fault with his memory and his composition, and it requires great strength of mind to endure all this. It is an important point, and contributes much to the edification of the Church, that the rulers of it should be apt to teach. If this be wanting, many things in the Church go to ruin. Therefore in addition to the qualifications of hospitality, moderation, and a blameless life, he enumerates this also, saying, *"Apt to teach."* For why else indeed is he called a teacher? Some say that he may teach philosophy by the example of his life, so that all else is superfluous, and there is no need of verbal instruction in order to proficiency. But why then does Paul say, *"especially they who labor in the word and doctrine"*? For when doctrines are concerned, what life will answer the purpose? And of what word is he speaking? Not of pompous language, nor of discourse set off with external decorations, but that which possesses the mighty power of the Spirit, and abounds with wisdom and understanding. It needs not set phrases, but thoughts to give it utterance, not skill in composition, but power of mind.

Ver. 19. *"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."*

May we then receive an accusation against a younger man, or against any one at all without witnesses? Ought we not in all cases to come to our judgments with the greatest exactness? What then does he mean? Do not so, he means, with any, but especially in the case of an elder. For he speaks of an elder not with respect to office, but to age, since the young more easily fall into sin than their elders. And it is manifest from hence that the Church, and even the whole people of Asia, had been now entrusted to Timothy, which is the reason why he discourses with him concerning elders.

Ver. 20. *"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."*

Do not, he says, hastily cut them off, but carefully enquire into all the circumstances, and when you have thoroughly informed yourself, then proceed against the offender with rigor, that others may take warning. For as it is wrong to condemn hastily and rashly, so not to punish manifest offenses is to open the way to others, and embolden them to offend.

"Rebuke," he says, to show that it is not to be done lightly, but with severity. For thus others will be deterred. How is it then that Christ says, *"Go and tell him his fault between him and you alone, if one sin against you."* [Matthew 18:15] But Christ Himself permits him to be censured in the Church. What then? Is it not a greater scandal, that one should be rebuked before all? How so? For it is a much greater scandal, that the offense should be known, and not the punishment. For as when sinners go unpunished, many commit crimes; so when they are punished, many are made better. God Himself acted in this manner. He brought forth Pharaoh, and punished him openly. And Nebuchadnezzar too, and many others, both cities and individuals, we see visited with punishment. Paul therefore would have all stand in awe of their Bishop, and sets him over all.

And because many judgments are formed upon suspicion, there ought, he says, to be witnesses, and men to convict the offender according to the ancient law. *"At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every matter be established. Against an elder receive not an accusation."* [Deuteronomy 19:15] He does not say, *"do not condemn,"* but *"receive not an accusation,"* bring him not to judgment at all. But what if the two witnesses are false? This rarely happens, and it may be discovered upon examination on the trial. For since offenses are committed in secret, we ought to be satisfied with two witnesses, and this is sufficient proof of investigation.

But what if the offenses be notorious, and yet there are no witnesses, only a strong suspicion? It has been said above that he ought *"to have a good report of them which are without."* [1 Timothy 3:7]

Let us therefore love God with fear. The law indeed is not made for a righteous man; but since the greater part are virtuous from constraint rather than from choice, the principle of fear is of great advantage to them in eradicating their desires. Let us therefore listen to the threatenings of hell fire, that we may be benefited by the wholesome fear of it. For if God, intending to cast sinners into it, had not previously threatened them with it, many would have plunged into it. For, if with this terror agitating our souls, some sin as readily as if there were no such thing in existence, what enormities should we not have committed, if it had not been declared and threatened? So that, as I have ever said, the threatenings of hell show the care of God for us no less than the promises of heaven. For the threat coöperates with the promise, and drives men into the kingdom by means of terror. Let us not think it a matter of cruelty, but of pity and mercy; of God's concern and love for us. If in the days of Jonah the destruction of Nineveh had not been threatened, that destruction had not been averted. Nineveh would not have stood but for the threat, *"Nineveh shall be overthrown."*

[Jonah 3:4] And if hell had not been threatened, we should all have fallen into hell. If the fire had not been denounced, no one would have escaped the fire. God declares that He will do that which He desires not to do, that He may do that which He desires to do. He wills not the death of a sinner, and therefore He threatens the sinner with death, that He may not have to inflict death. And not only has He spoken the word, but He has exhibited the thing itself, that we may escape it. And lest it should be supposed to be a mere threat, He has manifested the reality of it by what He has already done on earth. Do you not see in the flood a symbol of hell, in that rain of all-destroying water an image of the all-devouring fire? *"For as it was in the days of Noah,"* He says, *"they were marrying and giving in marriage"* [Matthew 24:38], so is it even now. It was then predicted long before it took place, and it is now predicted four hundred years or more beforehand: but no one heeds it. It is looked upon as a mere fable, as a matter of derision; no one fears it, no one weeps or beats his breast at the thought of it. The stream of fire is boiling up, the flame is kindled, and we are laughing, taking our pleasure, and sinning without fear. No one even bears in mind That Day. No one considers that present things are passing away, and that they are but temporal, though events are every day crying out and uttering a fearful voice. The untimely deaths, the changes that take place in our lives, our own infirmities and diseases, fail to instruct us. And not only in our own bodies are these changes visible, but in the elements themselves. Every day in our different ages we experience a kind of death, and in every case instability is the characteristic of things we see. Neither winter, nor summer, nor spring, nor autumn, is permanent; all are running, flying, and flowing past. Why should I speak of fading flowers, of dignities, of kings that are today, and tomorrow cease to be, of rich men, of magnificent houses, of night and day, of the sun and the moon? For the moon wanes, and the sun is

sometimes eclipsed, and often darkened with clouds? Of things visible, in short, is there anything that endures for ever? Nothing! No, nor anything in us but the soul, and that we neglect. Of things subject to change we take abundant care, as if they were permanent: but that which is to endure for ever we neglect, as if it were soon to pass away. Some one is enabled to perform mighty actions, but they shall last till tomorrow, and then he perishes, as we see in the instances of those who have had yet greater power, and are now to be seen no more. Life is a dream, and a scene; and as on the stage when the scene is shifted the various pageants disappear, and as dreams flit away when the sunbeams rise, so here when the end comes, whether the universal or that of each one, all is dissolved and vanishes away. The tree that you have planted remains, and the house that you have built, it too stands on. But the planter and the builder go away, and perish. Yet these things happen without our regarding it, and we live on in luxury and pleasure, and are ever furnishing ourselves with such things, as if we were immortal.

Hear what Solomon says, who knew the present world by actual experience. *"I built me houses, I planted me vineyards, I made me gardens, and orchards and pools of water. I gathered me also silver and gold. I gat myself men-singers, and women-singers, and flocks, and herds."*

[Ecclesiastes 2:4-5] There was no one who lived in greater luxury, or higher glory. There was no one so wise or so powerful, no one who saw all things so succeeding to his heart's desire. What then? He had no enjoyment from all these things. What after all does he say of it himself? *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* [Ecclesiastes 12:8] Vanity not simply but superlatively. Let us believe him, and lay hold on that in which there is no vanity, in which there is truth; and what is based upon a solid rock, where there is no old age, nor decline, but all things bloom and flourish, without decay, or waxing old, or

approaching dissolution. Let us, I beseech you, love God with genuine affection, not from fear of hell, but from desire of the kingdom. For what is comparable to seeing Christ? Surely nothing! What to the enjoyment of those good things? Surely nothing! Well may there be nothing; for *"eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."* [1 Corinthians 2:9] Let us be anxious to obtain those things, and let us despise all these. Are we not continually complaining that human life is nothing? Why are you solicitous for what is nothing? Why do you sustain such toils, for what is nothing? You see splendid houses, does the sight of them delude you? Look up to heaven. Raise your view from pillars of stone to that beautiful fabric, compared with which the others are as the works of ants and pismires. Learn philosophy from that spectacle, ascend to heavenly things, and look thence upon our splendid buildings, and see that they are nothing, the mere toys of little children. Do you see not how much finer, how much lighter, how much purer, how much more translucent, is the air the higher you ascend? There have they that do alms their mansions and their tabernacles. These that are here are dissolved at the resurrection, or rather before the resurrection destroyed by the stroke of time. Nay often in their most flourishing state and period an earthquake overthrows, or fire entirely ruins them. For not only the bodies of men, but their very buildings are liable to untimely deaths. Nay, sometimes things decayed by time stand firm under the shock of an earthquake, while glittering edifices, firmly fixed, and newly constructed, are struck but by lightning and perish. And this, I believe, is the interposition of God, that we may not take pride in our buildings.

Would you again have another ground for cheerfulness? Go to the public buildings, in which you share equally with others. For the most

magnificent private houses, after all, are less splendid than the public edifices. There you may remain, as long as you please. They belong to you as much as to others, since they are common to you with others; they are common, and not private. But those, you say, delight you not. They delight you not, partly because you are familiar with them, and partly from your covetousness. So the pleasantness is not in the beauty, but in the appropriating! So the pleasure is in greediness, and in the wish to make every man's goods your own! How long are we to be nailed to these things? How long are we to be fastened to the earth, and grovel, like worms, in the dirt? God has given us a body of earth, that we might carry it with us up to heaven, not that we should draw our soul down with it to earth. Earthy it is, but if we please, it may be heavenly. See how highly God has honored us, in committing to us so excellent a frame. I made heaven and earth, He says, and to you I give the power of creation. Make your earth heaven. For it is in your power. *"I am He that makes and transforms all things"* [Amos 5:8, Septuagint], says God of Himself. And He has given to men a similar power; as a painter, being an affectionate father, teaches his own art to his son. I formed your body beautiful, he says, but I give you the power of forming something better. Make your soul beautiful. I said, *"Let the earth bring forth grass, and every fruitful tree."* [Genesis 1:11] Do thou also say, Let this earth bring forth its proper fruit, and what you will to produce will be produced. *"I make the summer and the cloud. I create the lightning and the wind."* [Amos 4:13; Psalm 74:17] I formed the dragon, that is, the devil, to make sport with him. [Psalm 104:26] Nor have I grudged you the like power. You, if you will, canst sport with him, and bind him as you would a sparrow. I make the sun to rise upon the evil and the good: do thou imitate Me, by imparting of that is yours to the good and the evil. When mocked I bear with it, and do good to those who mock Me: imitate Me, as you can. I

do good, not to be requited; imitate Me, and do good, not to be repaid. I have lighted luminaries in the heavens. Do thou light others brighter than these, for you can, by enlightening those that are in error. For to know Me is a greater benefit than to behold the sun. You can not create a man, but you can make him just and acceptable to God. I formed his substance, do thou beautify his will. See how I love you, and have given you the power in the greater things.

Beloved, see how we are honored! Yet some are so unreasonable and so ungrateful as to say, "*Why are we endowed with free will?*" But how in all the particulars which we have mentioned could we have imitated God, if there had been no free will? I rule Angels, He says, and so do you, through Him who is the First-fruits. [1 Corinthians 15:23] I sit on a royal throne, and you are seated with Me in Him who is the First-fruits. As it is said, "*He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*" [Ephesians 2:6] Through Him who is the First-fruits, Cherubim and Seraphim adore you, with all the heavenly host, principalities and powers, thrones and dominions. Disparage not your body, to which such high honors appertain, that the unbodied Powers tremble at it.

But what shall I say? It is not in this way only that I have shown My love to you, but by what I have suffered. For you I was spit upon, I was scourged. I emptied myself of glory, I left My Father and came to you, who dost hate Me, and turn from Me, and art loath to hear My Name. I pursued you, I ran after you, that I might overtake you. I united and joined you to myself, "*eat Me, drink Me,*" I said. Above I hold you, and below I embrace you. Is it not enough for you that I have your First-fruits above? Does not this satisfy your affection? I descended below: I not only am mingled with you, I am entwined in you. I am masticated, broken into minute particles, that the interspersion, and commixture, and union may be more complete.

Things united remain yet in their own limits, but I am interwoven with you. I would have no more any division between us. I will that we both be one.

Therefore knowing these things and remembering His abundant care for us, let us do all things which may prove us not unworthy of His great gift, which God grant that we may all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 16 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 5:21-23

"I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that you observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep yourself pure. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities."

Having spoken of Bishops and Deacons, of men, and women, of widows and elders, and of all others, and having shown how great was the authority of a Bishop, now he was speaking of judgment, he has added, *"I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that you observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."* Thus fearfully he charges him. For though Timothy was his beloved son, he did not therefore stand in awe of him. For as he was not ashamed to say of himself, *"Lest by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away"* [1 Corinthians 9:27]; much less would he be afraid or ashamed in the case of Timothy. He called the Father and the Son to witness. But wherefore the elect Angels? From great moderation, as Moses said, *"I call heaven and earth to witness"* [Deuteronomy 4:26]; and again, *"Hear ye, O mountains, and strong foundations of the earth."* [Micah 6:2] He calls the Father and the Son to witness what he has said, making his appeal to Them against that future Day, that if anything should be done that ought not to be done, he was clear from the guilt of it.

"That thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." That is, that you deal impartially and equally

between those who are upon trial and are to be judged by you, that no one may pre-occupy your mind, or gain you over to his side beforehand.

But who are the elect Angels? It is because there are some not elect. As Jacob calls to witness God and the heap [Genesis 31:45], so we often take at once superior and inferior persons to witness; so great a thing is testimony. As if he had said, I call to witness God and His Son and His servants, that I have charged you: so before them I charge you. He impresses Timothy with fear; after which he adds, what was most vital, and bears most on the maintenance of the Church, the matter of Ordinations. "*Lay hands,*" he says, "*suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins.*" What is "*suddenly*"? Not upon a first, nor a second, nor a third trial, but after frequent and strict examination and circumspection. For it is an affair of no common peril. For you will be responsible for the sins committed by him, as well his past as his future sins, because you have delegated to him this power. For if you overlook the past unduly, you are answerable for the future also, as being the cause of them, by placing him in that station, and of the past too, for not leaving him to mourn over them, and to be in compunction. For as you are a partaker of his good actions, so are you of his sins.

"Keep yourself pure." This he says with reference to chastity.

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your often infirmities." If one who had practiced fasting to such an extent, and used only water, so long that he had brought on "*infirmities*" and "*frequent infirmities,*" is thus commanded to be chaste, and does not refuse the admonition, much less ought we to be offended when we receive an admonition from any one. But why did not Paul restore strength to his stomach? Not because he could not—for he whose garment had raised the dead was clearly able to do this too—but because he had a design of

importance in withholding such aid. What then was his purpose? That even now, if we see great and virtuous men afflicted with infirmities, we may not be offended, for this was a profitable visitation. If indeed to Paul himself a "*messenger of Satan*" was sent that he should not be "*exalted above measure*" [2 Corinthians 12:11], much more might it be so with Timothy. For the miracles he wrought were enough to have rendered him arrogant. For this reason he is left to be subject to the rules of medicine, that he may be humbled, and others may not be offended, but may learn that they who performed such excellent actions were men of the same nature as themselves. In other respects also Timothy seems to have been subject to disease, which is implied by that expression, "*Your often infirmities*," as well of other parts as of the stomach. He does not however allow him to indulge freely in wine, but as much as was for health and not for luxury.

Ver. 24. "*Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after.*"

In speaking of ordination, he had said, "*Be not partaker of other men's sins.*" But what, he might say, if I be ignorant of them? Why, "*some men's sins are open beforehand, going before them to judgment, and some they follow after.*" Some men's, he means, are manifest, because they, go before, while others' are unknown, because they follow after.

Ver. 25. "*Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.*"

Chap. vi. ver. 1. "*Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honor, that the Name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed.*"

Let them count them "*worthy of all honor*," he says; for do not suppose, because you are a believer, that you are therefore a free man: since your freedom is to serve the more faithfully. For if the unbeliever sees

slaves conducting themselves insolently on account of their faith, he will blaspheme, as if the Doctrine produced insubordination. But when he sees them obedient, he will be more inclined to believe, and will the rather attend to our words. But God, and the Gospel we preach, will be blasphemed, if they are disobedient. But what if their own master be an unbeliever? Even in that case they ought to submit, for God's Name's sake.

Ver. 2. *"And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit."*

As though he had said, If you are thought worthy of so great a benefit, as to have your masters for your brethren, on this account you ought more especially to submit.

"Going before to judgment." This he had said, implying that of evil actions here some are concealed, and some are not; but there neither the good nor the bad can be concealed. And what is that going before to judgment? When one commits offenses that already condemn him, or when he is incorrigible, and when one thinks to set him right and cannot succeed. What then? What is the use of mentioning this? Because if here any escape detection, they will not hereafter. There all things are laid open; and this is the greatest consolation to those who do well.

Then because he had said, *"Do nothing by partiality,"* as if under the necessity of interpreting it, he adds, *"As many servants as are under the yoke."* But you will say, What has a Bishop to do with this? Much surely, for it is his office to exhort and to teach these too. And here he makes excellent regulations with respect to them. For we see him everywhere commanding the servants rather than their masters, showing them the ways of submission, and treating them with great regard. He exhorts them therefore to submit with great meekness. But the masters he recommends to

forbear the use of terror. *"Forbearing threatening"* [Ephesians 6:9], he says. And why does he thus command? In the case of unbelievers, naturally, because it would have been unreasonable to address those who would pay no heed to him; but where believers were concerned, what was his reason? Because masters contribute greater benefits to their servants, than servants to their masters. For the former furnish the money to purchase for them sufficient food and clothing; and bestow much care upon them in other respects, so that the masters pay them the larger service, which is here intimated, when he says, *"they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit."* They suffer much toil and trouble for your repose, ought they not in return to receive much honor from their servants?

Moral. But if he exhorts servants to render such implicit obedience, consider what ought to be our disposition towards our Master, who brought us into existence out of nothing, and who feeds and clothes us. If in no other way then, let us render Him service at least as our servants render it to us. Do not they order their whole lives to afford rest to their masters, and is it not their work and their life to take care of their concerns? Are they not all day long engaged in their masters' work, and only a small portion of the evening in their own? But we, on the contrary, are ever engaged in our own affairs, in our Master's hardly at all, and that too, though He needs not our services, as masters need those of their servants, but those very acts redound to our own benefit. In their case the master is benefited by the ministry of the servant, but in ours the ministry of the servant profits not the Master, but is beneficial on the other hand to the servant. As the Psalmist says, *"My goods are nothing unto You."* [Psalm 16:2] For say, what advantage is it to God, that I am just, or what injury, that I am unjust? Is not His nature incorruptible, incapable of injury, superior to all suffering?

Servants having nothing of their own, all is their masters', however rich they may be. But we have many things of our own.

And it is not merely so great honor, that we enjoy from the King of the universe. What master ever gave his own son for his servant? No one, but all would rather choose to give their servants for their sons. Here on the contrary, *"He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all,"* for His enemies who hated Him. Servants, though very hard service is exacted of them, are not impatient; at least, not the well-disposed. But how many times do we utter discontent? The master promises to his servants nothing like what God promises to us; but what? Freedom here, which is often worse than bondage; for it is often embittered by famine beyond slavery itself. Yet this is their greatest boon. But with God there is nothing temporal, nothing mortal; but what? Would you learn? Listen then, He says, *"Henceforth I call you not servants. You are my friends."* [John 15:13-14]

Beloved, let us be ashamed, let us fear. Let us only serve our Master, as our servants serve us. Rather not even the smallest portion of service do we render! Necessity makes them philosophers. They have only food and lodging; but we, possessing much and expecting more, insult our Benefactor with our luxury. If from nothing else, from them at least let us learn the rules of philosophy. The Scripture is wont to send men not even to servants, but to irrational creatures, as when it bids us imitate the bee and the ant. But I advise you but to imitate servants: only so much as they do from fear of their masters, let us do from the fear of God; for I cannot find that you do even this. They receive many insults from fear of us, and endure them in silence with the patience of philosophers. Justly or unjustly they are exposed to our violence, and they do not resist, but entreat us, though often they have done nothing wrong. They are contented to receive no more and often less than they need; with straw for their bed, and only bread for their

food, they do not complain or murmur at their hard living, but through fear of us are restrained from impatience. When they are entrusted with money, they restore it all. For I am not speaking of the worthless, but of the moderately good. If we threaten them, they are at once awed.

Is not this philosophy? For say not they are under necessity, when you too are under a necessity in the fear of hell. And yet do you not learn wisdom, nor render to God as much honor, as you receive from your servants. Of your servants each has the apartment assigned to him by your rules, and he does not invade that of his neighbor, nor do any injury from a desire of more than he has. This forbearance the fear of their master enforces among domestics, and seldom will you see a servant robbing or injuring a fellow-servant. But among free men it is quite the reverse. We bite and devour one another. We fear not our Master: we rob and plunder our fellow-servants, we strike them in His very sight. This the servant will not do; if he strikes, it is not when his master sees him; if he reviles, it is not when his master hears him. But we dare do anything, though God sees and hears it all.

The fear of their master is ever before their eyes, the fear of our Master never before ours. Hence the subversion of all order, hence all is confusion and destruction. And we never take into consideration the offenses we have committed, but if our servants do amiss, we call them to a rigorous account for everything, even to the least misdemeanor. I say not this to make servants remiss, but to chide our supineness, to rouse us from our sloth, that we may serve our God with as much zeal as servants do their master; our Maker, as faithfully as our fellow-creatures serve us, from whom they have received no such gift. For they too are free by nature. To them also it was said, "*Let them have dominion over the fishes.*" [Genesis 1:26] For this slavery is not from nature: it is the result of some particular cause, or

circumstances. Yet, notwithstanding, they pay us great honor; and we with great strictness exact services from them, while to God we hardly render the smallest portion, though the advantage of it would redound to ourselves. For the more zealously we serve God, the greater gainers we shall be. Let us not then deprive ourselves of such important benefits. For God is self-sufficient, and wants nothing; the recompense and the advantage reverts altogether to us. Let us therefore, I beseech you, be so affected, as serving not God but ourselves, and with fear and trembling let us serve Him, that we may obtain the promised blessings, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 17 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 6:2-7

"These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw yourself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

A teacher has need not only of authority, but of gentleness, and not only of gentleness, but of authority. And all these the blessed Paul teaches, at one time saying, *"These things command and teach"* [1 Timothy 4:11]; at another, *"These things teach and exhort."* For if physicians entreat the sick, not for the benefit of their own health, but that they may relieve their sickness, and restore their prostrate strength, much more ought we to observe this method, of entreating those whom we teach. For the blessed Paul does not refuse to be their servant: *"We preach not ourselves,"* he says; *"but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake"* [2 Corinthians 4:5]; and again, *"All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos."* [1 Corinthians 3:12] And in this service he serves with alacrity, for it is not slavery, but superior to freedom. For He says, *"Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin."* [John 8:34]

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is

according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing." Presumption therefore arises not from knowledge, but from "*knowing nothing.*" For he that knows the doctrines of godliness is also the most disposed to moderation. He who knows sound words, is not unsound. For what inflammation is in the body, that pride is in the soul. And as we do not in the first case say that the inflamed part is sound, so neither do we here consider the arrogant. It is possible then to be knowing, and yet to know nothing. For he that knows not what he ought to know, knows nothing. And that pride arises from knowing nothing is manifest from hence. Christ "*made Himself of no reputation*" [Philippians 2:7], he therefore who knows this will not be high-minded. Man has nothing except from God, therefore he will not be high-minded. "*For what have you that thou did not receive?*" [1 Corinthians 4:7] He washed the feet of His disciples, how can he who knows this be setting himself up? Therefore He says, "*When you have done all, say we are unprofitable servants.*" [Luke 17:10] The publican was accepted only from his humility, the Pharisee perished by his boastfulness. He who is puffed up knows none of these things. Again, Christ Himself says, "*If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you smite me?*" [John 18:23]

"Doting about questions." To question then is to dote. "*And strifes of words*"; this is justly said. For when the soul is fevered with reasonings, and stormy, then it questions, but when it is in a sound state, it does not question, but receives the faith. But from questionings and strifes of words nothing can be discovered. For when the things which faith only promises are received by an inquisitive spirit, it neither demonstrates them, nor suffers us to understand them. If one should close his eyes, he would not be able to find anything he sought: or if, again with his eyes open, he should bury himself, and exclude the sun, he would be unable to find anything,

thus seeking. So without faith nothing can be discerned, but contentions must needs arise. *"Whereof come railings, evil surmisings"*; that is, erroneous opinions and doctrines arising from questionings. For when we begin to question, then we surmise concerning God things that we ought not.

"Perverse disputings," that is, leisure or conversation, or he may mean intercommunication, and that as infected sheep by contact communicate disease to the sound, so do these bad men.

"Destitute of the truth, thinking that gain is godliness." Observe what evils are produced by strifes of words. The love of gain, ignorance, and pride; for pride is engendered by ignorance.

"From such withdraw yourself." He does not say, engage and contend with them, but *"withdraw yourself,"* turn away from them; as elsewhere he says, *"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."* [Titus 3:10] He shows that they do not so much err from ignorance, as they owe their ignorance to their indolence. Those who are contentious for the sake of money you will never persuade. They are only to be persuaded, so long as you give, and even so you will never satisfy their desires. For it is said, *"The covetous man's eye is not satisfied with a portion."* [Sirach 14:9] From such then, as being incorrigible, it is right to turn away. And if he who had much obligation to fight for the truth, is advised not to engage in contention with such men, much more should we avoid it, who are in the situation of disciples.

Having said, *"They think that godliness is a means of gain,"* he adds: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain,"* not when it possesses wealth, but when it has it not. For that he may not despond on account of his poverty, he encourages and revives his spirit. They think, he says, that godliness is a means of gain, and so it is; only not in their way, but in a

much higher. Then having demolished theirs he extols the other. For that worldly gain is nothing, is manifest, because it is left behind, and does not attend us, or go along with us at our departure. Whence is this plain?

Because we had nothing when we came into this world, therefore we shall have nothing when we depart from it. For nature came naked into the world, and naked she will go out of it. Therefore we want no superfluities; if we brought nothing with us, and shall take nothing away with us.

Ver. 8. *"And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."*

Such things, and so much ought we to eat, as will suffice to nourish us, and such things should we put on, as will cover us, and clothe our nakedness, and nothing more; and a common garment will answer this purpose. Then he urges them from the consideration of things here, saying,

Ver. 9. *"But they that will be rich";* not those that are rich, but those who wish to be. For a man may have money and make a good use of it, not overvaluing it, but bestowing it upon the poor. Such therefore he does not blame, but the covetous.

"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

He has justly said, *"they drown men,"* since they cannot be raised from that depth. *"In destruction and perdition."*

Ver. 10. *"For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."*

Two things he mentions, and that which to them might seem the more weighty he places last, their *"many sorrows."* And to learn how true this is, the only way is to sojourn with the rich, to see how many are their sorrows, how bitter their complaints.

Ver. 11. *"But you, O man of God."*

This is a title of great dignity. For we are all men of God, but the righteous peculiarly so, not by right of creation only, but by that of appropriation. If then you are a "*man of God*," seek not superfluous things, which lead you not to God, but

"Flee these things, and follow after righteousness." Both expressions are emphatic; he does not say turn from one, and approach the other, but *"flee these things, pursue righteousness,"* so as not to be covetous.

"Godliness," that is, soundness in doctrines.

"Faith," which is opposed to questionings.

"Love," patience, meekness.

Ver. 12. *"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."* Lo, there is your reward, *"whereunto you are also called, and hast professed a good profession,"* in hope of eternal life, *"before many witnesses."*

That is, do not put that confidence to shame. Why do you labor to no profit? But what is the *"temptation and snare,"* which he says, those that would be rich fall into? It causes them to err from the faith, it involves them in dangers, it renders them less intrepid. *"Foolish desires,"* he says. And is it not a foolish desire, when men like to keep idiots and dwarfs, not from benevolent motives, but for their pleasure, when they have receptacles for fishes in their halls, when they bring up wild beasts, when they give their time to dogs, and dress up horses, and are as fond of them as of their children? All these things are foolish and superfluous, nowise necessary, nowise useful.

"Foolish and hurtful lusts!" What are hurtful lusts? When men live unlawfully, when they desire what is their neighbor's, when they do their utmost in luxury, when they long for drunkenness, when they desire the murder and destruction of others. From these desires many have aimed at tyranny, and perished. Surely to labor with such views is both foolish and

hurtful. And well has he said, *"They have erred from the faith."*

Covetousness attracting their eyes to herself, and gradually stealing away their minds, suffers them not to see their way. For as one walking on the straight road, with his mind intent on something else, proceeds on his way indeed, but, often without knowing it, passes by the very city to which he was hastening, his feet plying on at random and to no purpose: such like a thing is covetousness. *"They have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* Do you see what he means by that word *"pierced"*? What he means to express by the allusion is this. Desires are thorns, and as when one touches thorns, he gores his hand, and gets him wounds, so he that falls into these lusts will be wounded by them, and pierce his soul with griefs. And what cares and troubles attend those who are thus pierced, it is not possible to express. Therefore he says, *"Flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."* For meekness springs from love.

Ver. 12. *"Fight the good fight."*

Here he commends his boldness and manliness, that before all he confidently *"made profession,"* and he reminds him of his early instruction.

"Lay hold on eternal life."

There is need not only of profession, but of patience also to persevere in that profession, and of vehement contention, and of numberless toils, that you be not overthrown. For many are the stumbling-blocks, and impediments, therefore the way is *"strait and narrow."* [Matthew 7:14] It is necessary therefore to be self-collected, and well girt on every side. All around appear pleasures attracting the eyes of the soul. Those of beauty, of wealth, of luxury, of indolence, of glory, of revenge, of power, of dominion, and these are all fair and lovely in appearance, and able to captivate those who are unsteady, and who do not love the truth. For truth has but a severe

and uninviting countenance. And why? Because the pleasures that she promises are all future, whereas the others hold out present honors and delights, and repose; though all are false and counterfeit. To these therefore adhere gross, effeminate, unmanly minds, indisposed to the toils of virtue. As in the games of the heathens, he who does not earnestly covet the crown, may from the first give himself up to revellings and drunkenness, and so do in fact the cowardly and unmanly combatants, while those who look steadfastly to the crown sustain blows without number. For they are supported and roused to action by the hope of future reward.

Moral. Let us then flee from this root of all evils, and we shall escape them all. "*The love of money,*" he says, "*is the root;*" thus says Paul, or rather Christ by Paul, and let us see how this is. The actual experience of the world testifies it. For what evil is not caused by wealth, or rather not by wealth, but by the wicked will of those who know not how to use it? For it is possible to use wealth in well doing, and even through means of it to inherit the kingdom. But now what was given us for the relief of the poor, to make amends for our past sins, to win a good report, and to please God, this we employ against the poor and wretched, or rather against our own souls, and to the high displeasure of God. For as for the other, a man robs him of his wealth, and reduces him to poverty, but himself to death; and him he causes to pine in penury here, but himself in that eternal punishment. Are they equal sufferers, think you?

What evils then does it not cause! What fraudulent practices, what robberies! What miseries, enmities, contentions, battles! Does it not stretch forth its hand even to the dead, nay, to fathers, and brethren? Do not they who are possessed by this passion violate the laws of nature, and the commandments of God? In short everything? Is it not this that renders our courts of justice necessary? Take away therefore the love of money, and you

put an end to war, to battle, to enmity, to strife and contention. Such men ought therefore to be banished from the world, as wolves and pests. For as opposing and violent winds, sweeping over a calm sea, stir it up from its foundations, and mingle the sands of the deep with the waves above, so the lovers of wealth confound and unsettle everything. The covetous man never knows a friend: a friend, did I say? He knows not God Himself, driven mad, as he is, by the passion of avarice. Do you not see the Titans going forth sword in hand? This is a representation of madness. But the lovers of money do not counterfeit, they are really mad, and beside themselves; and if you could lay bare their souls, you would find them armed in this way not with one or two swords, but with thousands, acknowledging no one, but turning their rage against all; flying and snarling at all, slaughtering not dogs, but the souls of men, and uttering blasphemies against heaven itself. By these men all things are subverted, and ruined by their madness after wealth.

For whom indeed, whom I should accuse, I know not! It is a plague that so seizes all, some more, some less, but all in a degree. Like a fire catching a wood, that desolates and destroys all around, this passion has laid waste the world. Kings, magistrates, private persons, the poor, women, men, children, are all alike affected by it. As if a gross darkness had overspread the earth, no one is in his sober senses. Yet we hear, both in public and private, many declamations against covetousness, but no one is mended by them.

What then is to be done? How shall we extinguish this flame? For though it has risen up to heaven itself, it is to be extinguished. We have only to be willing, and we shall be able to master the conflagration. For as by our will it has got head, so it may be brought under by our will. Did not our own choice cause it, and will not the same choice avail to extinguish it?

Only let us be willing. But how shall that willingness be engendered? If we consider the vanity and the unprofitableness of wealth, that it cannot depart hence with us, that even here it forsakes us, and that while it remains behind, it inflicts upon us wounds that depart along with us. If we see that there are riches There, compared to which the wealth of this world is more despicable than dung. If we consider that it is attended with numberless dangers, with pleasure that is temporary, pleasure mingled with sorrow. If we contemplate aright the true riches of eternal life, we shall be able to despise worldly wealth. If we remember that it profits nothing either to glory, or health, or any other thing; but on the contrary drowns men in destruction and perdition. If you consider that here you are rich, and hast many under you, but that when you depart hence, you will go naked and solitary. If we often represent these things to ourselves, and listen to them from others, there will perhaps be a return to a sound mind, and a deliverance from this dreadful punishment.

Is a pearl beautiful? Yet consider, it is but sea water, and was once cast away in the bosom of the deep. Are gold and silver beautiful? Yet they were and are but dust and ashes. Are silken vestments beautiful? Yet they are nothing but the spinning of worms. This beauty is but in opinion, in human prejudice, not in the nature of the things. For that which possesses beauty from nature, need not any to point it out. If you see a coin of brass that is but gilded over, you admire it at first, fancying that it is gold; but when the cheat is shown to you by one who understands it, your wonder vanishes with the deceit. The beauty therefore was not in the nature of the thing. Neither is it in silver; you may admire tin for silver, as you admired brass for gold, and you need some one to inform you what you should admire. Thus our eyes are not sufficient to discern the difference. It is not so with flowers, which are much more beautiful. If you see a rose, you need no one

to inform you, you can of yourself distinguish an anemone, and a violet, or a lily, and every other flower. It is nothing therefore but prejudice. And to show, that this destructive passion is but a prejudice; tell me, if the Emperor were pleased to ordain that silver should be of more value than gold, would you not transfer your love and admiration to the former? Thus we are everywhere under the influence of covetousness and opinion. And that it is so, and that a thing is valued for its rarity, and not for its nature, appears hence. The fruits that are held cheap among us are in high esteem among the Cappadocians, and among the Serians even more valuable than the most precious among us, from which country these garments are brought; and many such instances might be given in Arabia and India, where spices are produced, and where precious stones are found. Such preference therefore is nothing but prejudice, and human opinion. We act not from judgment, but at random, and as accident determines. But let us recover from this intoxication, let us fix our view upon that which is truly beautiful, beautiful in its own nature, upon godliness and righteousness; that we may obtain the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 18 on First Timothy

1 Timothy 6:13-16

"I give you charge in the sight of God, Who quickens all things, and before Christ Jesus, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times He shall show, Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man has seen, nor can see; to Whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

Again he calls God to witness, as he had done a little before, at once to increase his disciple's awe, and to secure his safety, and to show that these were not human commandments, that receiving the commandment as from the Lord Himself, and ever bearing in mind the Witness before Whom he heard it, he may have it more fearfully impressed upon his mind.

"I charge you," he says, *"before God, Who quickens all things."*

Here is at once consolation in the dangers which awaited him, and a remembrance of the resurrection awakened in him.

"And before Jesus Christ, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession."

The exhortation again is derived from the example of his Master, and what he means is this; as He had done, so ought you to do, for for this cause He *"witnessed"* [1 Peter 2:21], that we might tread in His steps.

"A good confession." What he does in his Epistle to the Hebrews,—*"Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set*

down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds" [Hebrews 12:2-3]—that he now does to his disciple Timothy. As if he had said, Fear not death, since you are the servant of God, Who can give life to all things.

But to what *"good confession"* does he allude? To that which He made when Pilate asked, *"Are you a King?"* *"To this end,"* He said, *"was I born."* And again, *"I came, that I might bear witness to the Truth. Behold, these have heard Me."* [John 18:37] He may mean this, or that when asked, *"Are you the Son of God?"* He answered, *"You say, that I am (the Son of God)."* [Luke 22:70] And many other testimonies and confessions did He make.

Ver. 14. *"That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

That is, till your end, your departure hence, though he does not so express it, but that he may the more arouse him, says, *"till His appearing."* But what is *"to keep the commandment without spot"*? To contract no defilement, either of doctrine or of life.

Ver. 15. *"Which in His times He shall show, Who is the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."*

Of whom are these things said? Of the Father, or of the Son? Of the Son, undoubtedly: and it is said for the consolation of Timothy, that he may not fear nor stand in awe of the kings of the earth.

"In His times," that is, the due and fitting times, that he may not be impatient, because it has not yet come. And whence is it manifest, that He will show it? Because He is the Potentate, the *"only Potentate."* He then will show it, Who is *"blessed,"* nay blessedness itself; and this is said, to show that in that appearing there is nothing painful or uneasy.

But he says, *"only,"* either in contradistinction to men, or because He was unoriginated, or as we sometimes speak of a man whom we wish to extol.

"Who only has immortality." What then? Has not the Son immortality? Is He not immortality itself? How should not He, who is of the same substance with the Father, have immortality?

"Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." Is He then Himself one Light, and is there another in which He dwells? Is He then circumscribed by place? Think not of it. By this expression is represented the Incomprehensibleness of the Divine Nature. Thus he speaks of God, in the best way he is able. Observe, how when the tongue would utter something great, it fails in power.

"Whom no man has seen nor can see." As, indeed, no one has seen the Son, nor can see Him.

"To whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." Thus properly, and much to the purpose, has he spoken of God. For as he had called Him to witness, he speaks much of that Witness, that his disciple may be in the greater awe. In these terms he ascribes glory to Him, and this is all we can do, or say. We must not enquire too curiously, who He is. If power everlasting is His, fear not. Yea though now it take not place, to Him is honor, to Him is power evermore.

Ver. 17. *"Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded."*

He has well said, *"rich in this world."* For there are others rich in the future world. And this advice he gives, knowing that nothing so generally produces pride and arrogance as wealth. To abate this, therefore, he immediately adds, *"Nor trust in uncertain riches";* since that was the source of pride; inasmuch as he who hopes in God, is not elated. Why do you place

your hopes upon what is instantly transferable? For such is wealth! And why do you hope on that of which you can not be confident? But you say, how can they avoid being high-minded? By considering the instability and uncertainty of riches, and that hope in God is infinitely more valuable; God being the Author of wealth itself.

Ver. 17. *"But in the living God,"* he says, *"who gives us richly all things to enjoy."*

This *"all things richly"* is justly spoken, in reference to the changes of the year, to air, light, water, and other gifts. For how richly and ungrudgingly are all these bestowed! If you seek riches, seek those that are stable and enduring, and which are the fruit of good works. He shows that this is his meaning by what follows.

Ver. 18. *"That they do good,"* he says, *"that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."*

The first phrase refers to wealth, the second to charity. For to be willing to communicate, implies that they are sociable and kind.

Ver. 19. *"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come."*

There nothing is uncertain, for the foundation being firm, there is no instability, all is firm, fixed, immovable, fast, and enduring.

Ver. 19. *"That they may lay hold,"* he says, *"on eternal life."*

For the doing of good works can secure the enjoyment of eternal life.

Ver. 20. *"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to your trust."*

Let it not suffer diminution. It is not your own. You are entrusted with the property of another, do not lessen it.

Ver. 20. *"Avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."*

Well did he thus call it. For where there is not faith, there is not knowledge; when anything springs from our reasonings, it is not knowledge. Or perhaps he says this, because some then assumed the name of Gnostics, as knowing more than others.

Ver. 21. *"Which some professing have erred concerning the faith."*

You see how again he commands Timothy not even to meet them. *"Avoiding opposition."* There are therefore oppositions to which we ought not to vouchsafe an answer, because they turn men from faith, and do not suffer one to be firmly established or fixed in it. Let us not then pursue this science, but adhere to faith, that unshaken rock. For neither floods nor winds assailing will be able to harm us, since we stand on the rock immovable. Thus even in this life, if we choose Him, Who is truly the foundation, we stand, and no harm assails us. For what can hurt him who has chosen the riches, the honor, the glory, the pleasure of the life to come? They are all firm, in them there is no variableness; all things here subject to reverse, and are for ever changing. For what would you have? glory? The Psalmist says, *"His glory shall not descend after him."* [Psalm 49:17] And often it abides not with him while he lives. But it is not so with virtue, all things which pertain to her are permanent. Here, he who obtains glory from his office, upon another succeeding to his office, becomes a private man and inglorious. The rich man is reduced to poverty by the attack of robbers, or the snares of sycophants and knaves. It is not so with Christians. The temperate man, if he take heed to himself, will not be robbed of his virtue. He who rules himself, cannot become a common man and a subject.

And that this rule is superior to any other, will appear upon examination. For of what advantage, tell me, is it to reign over nations of our fellow-men, and to be the slaves of our own passions? Or what are we the worse for having no one under our rule, if we are superior to the tyranny

of the passions? That indeed is Freedom, that is Rule, that is Royalty and Sovereignty. The contrary is slavery, though a man be invested with countless diadems. For when a multitude of masters sway him from within, the love of money, the love of pleasure, and anger, and other passions, what avails his diadem? The tyranny of those passions is more severe, when not even his crown has power to deliver him from their subjection. As if one who had been a king should be reduced to slavery by barbarians, and they wishing to show their power the more absolutely, should not strip him of his purple robe and his diadem, but oblige him to work in them, and to perform all menial offices, to draw water, and to cook their food, that his disgrace and their honor might be the more apparent: so do our passions domineer over us more barbarously than any barbarians. For he that despises them can despise the barbarians too; but he that submits to them, will suffer more severely than from barbarians. The barbarian, when his power prevails, may afflict the body, but these passions torture the soul, and lacerate it all over. When the barbarian has prevailed, he delivers one to temporal death, but these to that which is to come. So that he alone is the free man, who has his freedom in himself; and he who submits to these unreasonable passions, is the slave.

No master, however inhuman, imposes such severe and inhuman commands. They say to him, in effect, *"Disgrace your soul without end or object—offend your God—be deaf to the claims of nature; though it be your father or your mother, be not ashamed to set yourself against them."* Such are the commands of avarice. *"Sacrifice to me, she says, not calves, but men."* The prophet indeed says, *"Sacrifice men, for the calves have failed."* [Hosea 13:2, Septuagint] But avarice says, *"Sacrifice men, though there are yet calves. Sacrifice those who have never injured you, yea slay them, though they have been your benefactors."* Or again, *"Be at war, and go*

about as the common enemy of all, of nature herself, and of God. Heap up gold, not that you may enjoy it, but that you may keep it, and work greater torture to yourself." For it is not possible that the lover of money should be able to enjoy it, since he fears lest his gold should be diminished, lest his hoards should fail. *"Be watchful,"* it says, *"be suspicious of every one, even domestics and friends. Have an eye to the goods of other men. Though you see the poor man perishing with hunger, give him nothing; but strip him, if it be possible, even of his skin. Break your oaths, lie, swear. Be an accuser, a false informer. Refuse not, if it be necessary, to rush into fire, to submit to a thousand deaths, to perish with hunger, to struggle with disease."* Does not avarice impose these laws? *"Be offensive and impudent, shameless and bold, villainous and wicked, ungrateful, unfeeling, unfriendly, faithless, devoid of affection, a parricide, a beast rather than a man. Surpass the serpent in bitterness, the wolf in rapacity. Exceed in brutality even the beast, nay should it be necessary to proceed even to the malignity of the devil, refuse not. Be a stranger to your benefactor."*

Does not avarice say all this, and is it not listened to? God on the contrary says, Be a friend to all, be gentle, beloved by all, give offense causelessly to no one. *"Honor your father and your mother."* Win an honorable reputation. Be not a man, but an angel. Utter nothing immodest, nothing false, nor even think of it. Relieve the poor. Bring not trouble on yourself, by ravaging others. Be not bold nor insolent. God says this, but no one hearkens. Is not hell then justly threatened, and the fire, and the worm that dies not? How long are we thus to thrust ourselves down the precipice? How long are we to walk upon thorns, and pierce ourselves with nails, and be grateful for it? We subject ourselves to cruel tyrants, and refuse the gentle Master, who imposes nothing grievous, nor barbarous, nor burdensome, nor unprofitable, but all things such as are useful, and

valuable, and beneficial. Let us then arouse ourselves, and be self-collected, and gather our forces. Let us love God as we ought, that we may obtain the blessings promised to those that love Him, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father, etc.

Homily 1 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 1:1, 2]

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Jesus Christ, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

What is the reason of his writing this second Epistle to Timothy? He had said, *"I hope to come unto you shortly"* [1 Timothy 3:14], and as this had not taken place, instead of coming to him, he consoles him by a letter, when he was grieving perhaps for his absence, and oppressed by the cares of the government, which he had now taken in hand. For even great men, when they are placed at the helm, and are charged with the direction of the Church, feel the strangeness of their position, and are overwhelmed, as it were, by the waves of business. This was particularly the case when the Gospel was first preached, when the ground was everywhere unturned, and all was opposition and hostility. There were, besides, heresies commencing from the Jewish teachers, as he has shown in his former Epistle. Nor does he only comfort him by letters, he invites him to come to him: *"Do your diligence,"* he says, *"to come shortly unto me,"* and, *"when you come, bring with you the books, but especially the parchments."* [2 Timothy 4:9-13] And he seems to have written this Epistle when his end was approaching. For he says, *"I am now ready to be offered up";* and again, *"At my first answer no man stood with me."* [2 Timothy 4:6-16] To set all this right, he both offers consolation from his own trials, and also says,

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus."

Thus at the very commencement he raises up his mind. Tell me not, he says, of the dangers here. These obtain for us eternal life, where there is no peril, where grief and mourning flee away. For He has not made us Apostles only that we might encounter dangers, but that we might even suffer and die. And as it would not be a consolation to recount to him his own troubles, but rather an increase of his grief, he begins immediately with offering comfort, saying, *"According to the promise of life which is in Jesus Christ."* But if it is a *"promise,"* seek it not here. For, *"hope that is seen is not hope."* [Romans 8:24]

Ver. 2. *"To Timothy, my dearly beloved son."*

Not merely his *"son,"* but, *"dearly beloved"*; since it is possible for sons not to be beloved. Not such, he means, are you; I call you not merely a son, but a *"dearly beloved son."* As he calls the Galatians his children, but at the same time complains of them; *"My little children,"* he says, *"of whom I travail in birth again."* [Galatians 4:19] And he bears particular testimony to his virtue by calling him *"beloved."* For where love does not arise from nature, it must arise from the merit of the object. Those who are born of us, are loved not only on account of their virtue, but from the force of nature; but when those who are of the faith are beloved, it is on account of nothing but their merit, for what else can it be? And this especially in the case of Paul, who never acted from partiality. And further, he shows by calling him his *"beloved son,"* that it was not because he was offended with him, or despised him, or condemned him; that he did not come to him.

Ver. 2. *"Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord."*

These things which he before prayed for, he again invokes upon him. And observe how, at the very beginning, he excuses himself for not having come to him, nor seen him. For his words, *"Till I come,"* and, *"Hoping to*

come to you shortly," had led Timothy to expect his coming soon. For this he excuses himself, but he does not immediately mention the cause of his not coming, lest he should grieve him mightily. For he was detained in prison by the emperor. But when at the end of the Epistle he invited him to come to him, then he informed him of it. He does not at the outset plunge him into sorrow, but encourages the hope that he shall see him. *"Greatly desiring to see you,"* and *"Do your diligence to come unto me shortly."* [2 Timothy 1:4, and 4:9] Immediately therefore he raises him up, and proceeds to praise him.

Ver. 3, 4. *"I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of you in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I might be filled with joy."*

"I thank God," he says, *'that I remember you,'* so much do I love you." This is a mark of excessive love, when a man glories in his affection from loving so much. *"I thank God,"* he says, *"Whom I serve":* and how? *"With a pure conscience,"* for he had not violated his conscience. And here he speaks of his blameless life, for he everywhere calls his life his conscience. Or because I never gave up any good that I purposed, for any human cause, not even when I was a persecutor. Wherefore he says, *"I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief"* [1 Timothy 1:13]; all but saying, *"Do not suspect that it was done of wickedness."* He properly commends his own disposition, that his love may appear sincere. For what he says is in fact, *"I am not false, I do not think one thing and profess another."* So in the book of Acts we read he was compelled to praise himself. For when they slandered him as a seditious man and an innovator, he said in his own defense, *"Ananias said to me, The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see that Just One, and should hear the voice*

of His mouth. For you shall be His witness unto all men of what you have seen and heard." [Acts 22:14-15] In the same manner here, that he may not, as if he had been forgetful, have the character of one void of friendship and conscience, he justly praises himself, saying, that *"without ceasing I have remembrance of you,"* and not simply that, but *"in my prayers."* That is, it is the business of my prayers, that which I constantly continue to perform. For this he shows by saying, *"For this I besought God day and night, desiring to see you."* Mark his fervent desire, the intensity of his love. And again, his humility, how he apologizes to his disciples, and then he shows that it was not on light or vain grounds; and this he had shown us before, but again gives proof of it. *"Being mindful of your tears."* It was natural for Timothy, when parting from him, to mourn and weep, more than a child torn away from the milk and from the breast of its mother. *"That I may be filled with joy; greatly desiring to see you."* I would not willingly have deprived myself of so great a pleasure, though I had been of an unfeeling and brutal nature, for those tears coming to my remembrance would have been enough to soften me. But such is not my character. I am one of those who serve God purely; so that many strong motives urged me to come to you. So then he wept. And he mentions another cause, and that of a consolatory kind.

Ver. 5. *"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in you."*

This is another commendation, that Timothy came not of Gentiles, nor of unbelievers, but of a family that served Christ from the first. [Acts 16:1-3]

"Which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice."

For Timothy, it says, *"was the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed."* How a Jewess? How believing? Because she was not of the Gentiles, *"but on account of his father, who was a Greek, and of the*

Jews that were in those quarters, he took and circumcised him." Thus, as these mixtures of Jews and Gentiles took place, the Law began gradually to be dissolved. And mark in how many ways he shows that he did not despise him. *"I serve God,"* he says, *"I have a true conscience"* for my part, and you have your *"tears,"* and not your tears only, but for *"your faith,"* because you are a laborer for the Truth, because there is no deceit in you. As therefore you show yourself worthy of love, being so affectionate, so genuine a disciple of Christ; and as I am not one of those who are devoid of affection, but of those who earnestly pursue the Truth; what hindered me from coming to you?

"And I am persuaded that in you also."

From the beginning, he means, you have had this excellency. You received from your forefathers the faith unfeigned. For the praises of our ancestors, when we share in them, redound also to us. Otherwise they avail nothing, but rather condemn us; wherefore he has said, *"I am persuaded that in you also."* It is not a conjecture, he means, it is my persuasion; I am fully assured of it. If therefore from no human motive you have embraced it, nothing will be able to shake your faith.

Ver. 6. *"Wherefore I put you in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands."*

You see how greatly dispirited and dejected he considers him to be. He almost says, *"Think not that I despise you, but be assured that I do not condemn you, nor have I forgotten you. Consider, at any rate, your mother and your grandmother. It is because I know that you have unfeigned faith that I put you in remembrance."* For it requires much zeal to stir up the gift of God. As fire requires fuel, so grace requires our alacrity, that it may be ever fervent. *"I put you in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, that is in you by the putting on of my hands,"* that is, the grace of the Spirit,

which you have received, for presiding over the Church, for the working of miracles, and for every service. For this grace it is in our power to kindle or to extinguish; wherefore he elsewhere says, "*Quench not the Spirit.*" [1 Thessalonians 5:19] For by sloth and carelessness it is quenched, and by watchfulness and diligence it is kept alive. For it is in you indeed, but do thou render it more vehement, that is, fill it with confidence, with joy and delight. Stand manfully.

Ver. 7. "*For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*"

That is, we did not receive the Spirit, that we should shrink from exertion, but that we may speak with boldness. For to many He gives a spirit of fear, as we read in the wars of the Kings. "*A spirit of fear fell upon them.*" [Exodus 15:16?] That is, he infused terror into them. But to you He has given, on the contrary, a spirit of power, and of love toward Himself. This, then, is of grace, and yet not merely of grace, but when we have first performed our own parts. For the Spirit that makes us cry, "*Abba, Father,*" inspires us with love both towards Him, and towards our neighbor, that we may love one another. For love arises from power, and from not fearing. For nothing is so apt to dissolve love as fear, and a suspicion of treachery.

"*For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*": he calls a healthy state of the soul a sound mind, or it may mean sobriety of mind, or else a sobering of the mind, that we may be sober-minded, and that if any evil befall us, it may sober us, and cut off superfluities.

Moral. Let us then not be distressed at the evils that happen to us. This is sobriety of mind. "*In the season of temptation,*" he says, "*make not haste.*" [Sirach 2:2] Many have their several griefs at home, and we share in each other's sorrows, though not in their sources. For one is unhappy on

account of his wife, another on account of his child, or his domestic, another of his friend, another of his enemy, another of his neighbor, another from some loss. And various are the causes of sorrow, so that we can find no one free from trouble and unhappiness of some kind or other, but some have greater sorrows and some less. Let us not therefore be impatient, nor think ourselves only to be unhappy.

For there is no such thing in this mortal life as being exempt from sorrow. If not today, yet tomorrow; if not tomorrow, yet some later day trouble comes. For as one cannot sail, I mean, over a long sea, and not feel disquietude, so it is not possible to pass through this life, without experience of sorrow, yea though you name a rich man; for in that he is rich, he has many occasions of inordinate desires, yea, though the king himself, since he too is ruled by many, and cannot do all that he would. Many favors he grants contrary to his wishes, and more than all men is obliged to do what he would not. How so? Because he has many about him who wish to receive his gifts. And just think how great is his chagrin, when he is desirous to effect something, but is unable, either from fear or suspicion, or hindered by enemies or by friends. Often when he has succeeded in achieving some end, he loses all the pleasure of it, from many becoming at enmity with him. Again, do you think that they are free from grief, who live a life of ease? It is impossible. As a man cannot escape death, so neither can he escape sorrow. How many troubles must they endure, which we cannot express in words, and which they only can know by experience! How many have prayed a thousand times to die, in the midst of their wealth and luxury! For luxury by no means puts men out of the reach of grief: it is rather the very thing to produce sorrows, diseases, and uneasiness, often when there is no real ground for it. For when such is the habit of the soul, it is apt to grieve even without a cause. Physicians say that

from a weak state of the stomach arise sorrows without any occasion; and does not the like happen to ourselves, to feel uneasy, without knowing any cause for it? In short, we can find no one who is exempted from sorrow. And if he has less occasion for grief than ourselves, yet he thinks otherwise, for he feels his own sorrows, more than those of other men. As they who suffer pain in any part of their bodies, think that their sufferings exceed their neighbor's. He that has a disease of the eye, thinks there is nothing so painful, and he that has a disorder in the stomach, considers that the sorest of diseases, and each thinks that the heaviest of sufferings, with which he is himself afflicted. So it is with sorrow, each thinks his own present grief the most severe. For of this he judges by his own experience. He that is childless considers nothing so sad as to be without children; he that is poor, and has many children, complains of the extreme evils of a large family. He who has but one, looks upon this as the greatest misery, because that one, being set too much store by, and never corrected, becomes willful, and brings grief upon his father. He who has a beautiful wife, thinks nothing so bad as having a beautiful wife, because it is the occasion of jealousy and intrigue. He who has an ugly one, thinks nothing worse than having a plain wife, because it is constantly disagreeable. The private man thinks nothing more mean, more useless, than his mode of life. The soldier declares that nothing is more toilsome, more perilous, than warfare; that it would be better to live on bread and water than endure such hardships. He that is in power thinks there can be no greater burden than to attend to the necessities of others. He that is subject to that power, thinks nothing more servile than living at the beck of others. The married man considers nothing worse than a wife, and the cares of marriage. The unmarried declares there is nothing so wretched as being unmarried, and wanting the repose of a home. The merchant thinks the husbandman happy in his security. The husbandman

thinks the merchant so in his wealth. In short, all mankind are somehow hard to please, and discontented and impatient. When condemning the whole race, he says, "*Man is a thing of nought*" [Psalm 144:4], implying that the whole kind is a wretched unhappy creature. How many long for old age! How many think youth a happy time! Thus each different period has its unhappiness. When we find ourselves censured on account of our youth, we say, why are we not old? And when our heads are hoary, we ask whither has our youth flown? Numberless, in short, are the occasions of sorrow. There is one path only by which this unevenness can be escaped. It is the path of virtue. Yet that too has its sorrows, only they are sorrows not unprofitable, but productive of gain and advantage. For if any one has sinned, he washes away his sin by the compunction that comes of his sorrow. Or, if he has grieved in sympathizing with a fallen brother, this is not without its recompense. For sympathy with those that are in misery gives us great confidence towards God.

Hear therefore what philosophy is taught by the example of Job in holy Scripture! Hear also what Paul says: "*Weep with them that weep*"; and again, "*Condescend to men of low estate.*" [Romans 12:15-16] For, by the communication of sorrow, the extreme burden of it is lightened. For as in the case of a heavy load, he that bears part of the weight relieves him who was bearing it alone, so it is in all other things.

But now, when any one of our relatives dies, there are many who sit by and console us. Nay, we often raise up even an ass that has fallen; but when the souls of our brethren are falling, we overlook them and pass by, as if they were of less value than an ass. And if we see any one entering into a tavern indecently; nay, if we see him drunk, or guilty of any other unseemly action, we do not restrain him, we rather join him in it. Whence Paul has said: "*They not only do these things, but have pleasure in them that do*

them." [Romans 1:32] The greater part even form associations for the purposes of drunkenness. But do thou, O man, form associations to restrain the madness of inebriety. Such friendly doings are beneficial to those who are in bonds or in affliction. Something of this kind Paul enjoined to the Corinthians, alluding to which he says, "*That there be no gatherings when I come.*" [1 Corinthians 16:2] But now everything is done with a view to luxury, reveling, and pleasure. We have a common seat, a common table, we have wine in common, and common expenses, but we have no community of alms. Such were the friendly doings in the time of the Apostles; they brought all their goods into the common stock. Now I do not require you to bestow all, but some part. "*Let each lay by him in store on the first day of the week, as God has prospered him,*" and lay it down as a tribute for the seven days. In this way give alms, whether more or less. "*For you shall not appear before the Lord empty.*" [Exodus 23:15] This was said to the Jews, how much more then to us. For this cause the poor stand before the doors, that no one may enter empty, but each may do alms at his entrance. You enter to implore mercy. First show mercy. He that comes later owes the more. For when we have been first, he that is second pays down more. Make God your debtor, and then offer your prayers. Lend to Him, and then ask a return, and you shall receive it with usury. God wills this, and does not retract. If you ask with alms, He holds himself obliged. If you ask with alms, you lend and receive interest. Yes, I beseech you! It is not for stretching out your hands you shall be heard! stretch forth your hands, not to heaven, but to the poor. If you stretch forth your hand to the hands of the poor, you have reached the very summit of heaven. For He who sits there receives your alms. But if you lift them up without a gift, you gain nothing. If the king, arrayed in purple, should come to you and ask an alms, would you not readily give all that you have? But now when you are entreated

through the poor, not by an earthly but a heavenly King, do you stand regardless, and defer your gift? What punishment then do you not deserve? For the being heard depends not upon the lifting up of your hands, nor on the multitude of your words, but upon your works. For hear the prophet, *"When you" spread "forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you: yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear."* [Isaiah 1:15] For he ought to be silent, who needs mercy, and not even to look up to heaven; he that has confidence may say much. But what says the Scripture, *"Judge for the fatherless, plead for the widow, learn to do good."* [Isaiah 1:17] In this way we shall be heard, though we lift not up our hands, nor utter a word, nor make request. In these things then let us be zealous, that we may obtain the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 2 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 1:8-10]

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God; Who has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

There is nothing worse than that man should measure and judge of divine things by human reasonings. For thus he will fall from that rock a vast distance, and be deprived of the light. For if he who wishes with human eyes to apprehend the rays of the sun will not only not apprehend them, but, besides this failure, will sustain great injury; so, but in a higher degree, is he in a way to suffer this, and abusing the gift of God, who would by human reasonings gaze intently on that Light. Observe accordingly how Marcion, and Manes, and Valentinus, and others who introduced their heresies and pernicious doctrines into the Church of God, measuring divine things by human reasonings, became ashamed of the Divine economy. Yet it was not a subject for shame, but rather for glorying; I speak of the Cross of Christ. For there is not so great a sign of the love of God for mankind, not heaven, nor sea, nor earth, nor the creation of all things out of nothing, nor all else beside, as the Cross. Hence it is the boast of Paul, *"God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* [Galatians 6:14] But natural men, and those who attribute to God no more than to human beings, stumble, and become ashamed. Wherefore Paul from the first exhorts his disciple, and through him all others, in these words: *"Be not*

thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord," that is, *"Be not ashamed, that you preach One that was crucified, but rather glory in it."* For in themselves death and imprisonment and chains are matters of shame and reproach. But when the cause is added before us, and the mystery viewed aright, they will appear full of dignity, and matter for boasting. For it was that death which saved the world, when it was perishing. That death connected earth with heaven, that death destroyed the power of the devil, and made men angels, and sons of God: that death raised our nature to the kingly throne. Those chains were the conversion of many. *"Be not"* therefore *"ashamed,"* he says, *"of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel";* that is, though you should suffer the same things, be not thou ashamed. For that this is implied appears from what he said above; *"God has given us a spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind";* and by what follows, *"Be thou partaker of the sufferings of the Gospel":* not merely be not ashamed of them, but be not ashamed even to experience them.

And he does not say, *"Do not fear,"* but, the more to encourage him, *"be not ashamed,"* as if there were no further danger, if he could overcome the shame. For shame is only then oppressive, when one is overcome by it. Be not therefore ashamed, if I, who raised the dead, who wrought miracles, who traversed the world, am now a prisoner. For I am imprisoned, not as a malefactor, but for the sake of Him who was crucified. If my Lord was not ashamed of the Cross, neither am I of chains. And with great propriety, when he exhorts him not to be ashamed, he reminds him of the Cross. If you are not ashamed of the Cross, he means, neither be thou of chains; if our Lord and Master endured the Cross, much more should we chains. For he who is ashamed of what He endured, is ashamed of Him that was crucified. Now it is not on my own account that I bear these chains;

therefore do not give way to human feelings, but bear your part in these sufferings. *"Be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel."* He says not this, as if the Gospel could suffer injury, but to excite his disciple to suffer for it.

"According to the power of God; Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

More especially because it was a hard thing to say, *"Be partakers of afflictions,"* he again consoles him. Reckon that you sustain these things, not by your own power, but by the power of God. For it is your part to choose and to be zealous, but God's to alleviate sufferings and bid them cease. He then shows him the proofs of His power. Consider how you were saved, how you were called. As he elsewhere says, *"According to His power that works in us."* [Ephesians 3:20] So much was it a greater exercise of power to persuade the world to believe, than to make the Heavens. But how was he *"called with a holy calling"*? This means, He made them saints, who were sinners and enemies. *"And this not of ourselves, it was the gift of God."* If then He is mighty in calling us, and good, in that He has done it of grace and not of debt, we ought not to fear. For He Who, when we should have perished, saved us, though enemies, by grace, will He not much more cooperate with us, when He sees us working? *"Not according to our own works,"* he says, *"but according to his own purpose and grace,"* that is, no one compelling, no one counseling Him, but of His own purpose, from the impulse of His own goodness, He saved us; for this is the meaning of *"according to His own purpose."* *"Which was given us before the world began."* That is, it was determined without beginning that these things should be done in Christ Jesus. This is no light consideration, that from the

first He willed it. It was not an after-thought. How then is not the Son eternal? For He also willed it from the beginning.

Ver. 10. *"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel."*

You see the power, you see the gift bestowed not by works, but through the Gospel. These are objects of hope: for both were wrought in His Body. And how will they be wrought in ours? *"By the Gospel."*

Ver. 11. *"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."*

Why does he so constantly repeat this, and call himself a teacher of the Gentiles? Because he wishes to persuade them that they also ought to draw close to the Gentiles. Be not therefore dismayed at my sufferings. The sinews of death are unstrung. It is not as a malefactor that I suffer, but because I am *"a teacher of the Gentiles."* At the same time he makes his discourse worthy of credit.

Ver. 12. *"For the which cause I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."*

"I am not ashamed," he says. For are chains, are sufferings, a matter for shame? Be not then ashamed! You see how he illustrates his teaching by his works. *"These things,"* he says, *"I suffer"*: I am cast into prison, I am banished; *"For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against That Day."* What is *"that which is committed"*? The faith, the preaching of the Gospel. He, who committed this to him, he says, will preserve it unimpaired. I suffer everything, that I may not be despoiled of this treasure, and I am not ashamed at these things, so long as it is preserved uninjured. Or he calls the

Faithful the charge which God committed to him, or which he committed to God. For he says, *"Now I commit you to the Lord."* [Acts 20:32] That is, these things will not be unprofitable to me. And in Timothy is seen the fruit of the charge thus *"committed."* You see that he is insensible to sufferings, from the hope that he entertains of his disciples.

Moral. Such ought a Teacher to be, so to regard his disciples, to think them everything. *"Now we live,"* he says, *"if you stand fast in the Lord."* And again, *"What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ?"* [1 Thessalonians 3:8, and 2:19] You see his anxiety in this matter, his regard for the good of his disciples, not less than for his own. For teachers ought to surpass natural parents, to be more zealous than they. And it becomes their children to be kindly affectioned towards them. For he says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] For say, is he subject to so dangerous a responsibility, and are you not willing to obey him, and that too, for your own benefit? For though his own state should be good, yet as long as you are in a bad condition his anxiety continues, he has a double account to render. And consider what it is to be responsible and anxious for each of those who are under his rule. What honor would you have reckoned equal, what service, in requital of such dangers? You can not offer an equivalent. For you have not yet devoted your soul for him, but he lays down his life for you, and if he lays it not down here, when the occasion requires it, he loses it There. But you are not willing to submit even in words. This is the prime cause of all these evils, that the authority of rulers is neglected, that there is no reverence, no fear. He says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."* But now all is turned upside down and confounded. And this I say not for the sake of the rulers; (for what benefit

will they have of the honor they receive from us, except so far as we are rendered obedient;) but I say it for your advantage. For with respect to the future, they will not be benefited by the honor done them, but receive the greater condemnation, neither will they be injured as to the future by ill treatment, but will have the more excuse. But all this I desire to be done for your own sakes. For when rulers are honored by their people, this too is reckoned against them; as in the case of Eli it is said, *"Did I not choose him out of his father's house?"* [1 Samuel 2:27] But when they are insulted, as in the instance of Samuel, God said, *"They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me."* [1 Samuel 8:7] Therefore insult is their gain, honor their burden. What I say, therefore, is for your sakes, not for theirs. He that honors the Priest, will honor God also; and he who has learned to despise the Priest, will in process of time insult God. *"He that receives you,"* He says, *"receives Me."* [Matthew 10:40] *"Hold my priests in honor"* [Sirach 7:31?], He says. The Jews learned to despise God, because they despised Moses, and would have stoned him. For when a man is piously disposed towards the Priest, he is much more so towards God. And even if the Priest be wicked, God seeing that you respect him, though unworthy of honor, through reverence to Him, will Himself reward you. For if *"he that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward"* [Matthew 10:41]; then he who honors and submits and gives way to the Priest shall certainly be rewarded. For if in the case of hospitality, when you know not the guest, you receive so high a recompense, much more will you be requited, if you obey him whom He requires you to obey. *"The Scribes and Pharisees,"* He says, *"sit in Moses' seat; all therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not do after their works."* [Matthew 23:2-3] Do you not know what the Priest is? He is an Angel of the Lord. Are they his own words that he speaks? If you despise him, you

despise not him, but God that ordained him. But how does it appear, you ask, that he is ordained of God? Nay, if you suppose it otherwise, your hope is rendered vain. For if God works nothing through his means, thou neither hast any Laver, nor art partaker of the Mysteries, nor of the benefit of Blessings; you are therefore not a Christian. What then, you say, does God ordain all, even the unworthy? God indeed does not ordain all, but He works through all, though they be themselves unworthy, that the people may be saved. For if He spoke, for the sake of the people, by an ass, and by Balaam, a most wicked man, much more will He speak by the mouth of the Priest. What indeed will not God do or say for our salvation? By whom does He not act? For if He wrought through Judas and those other that *"prophesied,"* to whom He will say, *"I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of iniquity"* [Matthew 7:22-23]; and if others *"cast out devils"* [Psalm 6:8]; will He not much more work through the Priests? Since if we were to make inquisition into the lives of our rulers, we should then become the ordainers of our own teachers, and all would be confusion; the feet would be uppermost, the head below. Hear Paul saying, *"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment."* [1 Corinthians 4:3] And again, *"Why do you judge your brother?"* [Romans 14:10] For if we may not judge our brother, much less our teacher. If God commands this indeed, you do well, and sinnest if you do it not; but if the contrary, dare not do it, nor attempt to go beyond the lines that are marked out. After Aaron had made the golden calf, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram raised an insurrection against him. And did they not perish? Let each attend to his own department. For if he teach perverted doctrine, though he be an Angel, obey him not; but if he teach the truth, take heed not to his life, but to his words. You have Paul to instruct you in what is right both by words and works. But you say, *"He gives not to the poor, he does not govern well."*

Whence do you know this? Blame not, before you are informed. Be afraid of the great account. Many judgments are formed upon mere opinion. Imitate your Lord, who said, *"I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, and if not, I will know."* [Genesis 18:21] But if you have enquired, and informed yourself, and seen; yet await the Judge, and usurp not the office of Christ. To Him it belongs, and not to you, to make this inquisition. You are an inferior servant, not a master. You are a sheep, be not curious concerning the shepherd, lest you have to give account of your accusations against him. But you say, How does he teach me that which he does not practice himself? It is not he that speaks to you. If it be he whom you obey, you have no reward. It is Christ that thus admonishes you. And what do I say? You ought not to obey even Paul, if he speaks of himself, or anything human, but the Apostle, that has Christ speaking in him. Let not us judge one another's conduct, but each his own. Examine your own life.

But you say, *"He ought to be better than I."* Wherefore? *"Because he is a Priest."* And is he not superior to you in his labors, his dangers, his anxious conflicts and troubles? But if he is not better, ought thou therefore to destroy yourself? These are the words of arrogance. For how is he not better than yourself? He steals, you say, and commits sacrilege! How do you know this? Why do you cast yourself down a precipice? If you should hear it said that such an one has a purple robe, though you knew it to be true, and couldst convict him, you decline to do it, and pretend ignorance, not being willing to run into unnecessary danger. But in this case you are so far from being backward, that even without cause you expose yourself to the danger. Nor think you are not responsible for these words. Hear what Christ says, *"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."* [Matthew 12:36] And do you think yourself

better than another, and do you not groan, and beat your breast, and bow down your head, and imitate the Publican?

And then you destroy yourself, though thou be better. Be silent, that you cease not to be better. If you speak of it, you have done away the merit; if you think it, I do not say so; if you dost not think it, you have added much. For if a notorious sinner, when he confessed, "*went home justified*," he who is a sinner in a less degree, and is conscious of it, how will he not be rewarded? Examine your own life. Thou dost not steal; but you are rapacious, and overbearing, and guilty of many other such things. I say not this to defend theft; God forbid! Deeply lament if there is any one really guilty of it, but I do not believe it. How great an evil is sacrilege, it is impossible to say. But I spare you. For I would not that our virtue should be rendered vain by accusing others. What was worse than the Publican? For it is true that he was a publican, and guilty of many offenses, yet because the Pharisee only said, "*I am not as this publican*," he destroyed all his merit. I am not, you say, like this sacrilegious Priest. And dost not thou make all in vain?

This I am compelled to say, and to enlarge upon in my discourse, not so much because I am concerned for them, but because I fear for you, lest you should render your virtue vain by this boasting of yourselves, and condemnation of others. For hear the exhortation of Paul, "*Let every one prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*" [Galatians 6:4]

If you had a wound, tell me, and should go to a physician, would you stay him from salving and dressing your own wound, and be curious to enquire whether the physician had a wound, or not? And if he had, would you mind it? Or because he had it, would you forbear dressing your own, and say, A physician ought to be in sound health, and since he is not so, I

shall let my wound go uncured? For will it be any palliation for him that is under rule, that his Priest is wicked? By no means. He will suffer the destined punishment, and you too will meet with that which is your due. For the Teacher now only fills a place. For *"it is written, They shall all be taught of God."* [John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13] *"Neither shall they say, Know the Lord. For all shall know Me from the least to the greatest."* [Jeremiah 31:34] Why then, you will say, does he preside? Why is he set over us? I beseech you, let us not speak ill of our teachers, nor call them to so strict an account, lest we bring evil upon ourselves. Let us examine ourselves, and we shall not speak ill of others. Let us reverence that day, on which he enlightened us. He who has a father, whatever faults he has, conceals them all. For it is said, *"Glory not in the dishonor of your father; for your father's dishonor is no glory unto you. And if his understanding fail, have patience with him."* [Sirach 3:10-12] And if this be said of our natural fathers, much more of our spiritual fathers. Reverence him, in that he every day ministers to you, causes the Scriptures to be read, sets the house in order for you, watches for you, prays for you, stands imploring God on your behalf, offers supplications for you, for you is all his worship. Reverence all this, think of this, and approach him with pious respect. Say not, he is wicked. What of that? He that is not wicked, does he of himself bestow upon you these great benefits? By no means. Everything works according to your faith. Not even the righteous man can benefit you, if you are unfaithful, nor the unrighteous harm you, if you are faithful. God, when He would save His people, wrought for the ark by Oxen. [1 Samuel 6:12] Is it the good life or the virtue of the Priest that confers so much on you? The gifts which God bestows are not such as to be effects of the virtue of the Priest. All is of grace. His part is but to open his mouth, while God works all: the Priest only performs a symbol. Consider how wide was the distance between John

and Jesus. Hear John saying, *"I have need to be baptized by You"* [Matthew 3:14], and, *"Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."* [John 1:27] Yet notwithstanding this difference, the Spirit descended. Which John had not. For *"of His fullness,"* it is said, *"we all have received."* [John 1:16] Yet nevertheless, It descended not till He was baptized. But neither was it John who caused It to descend. Why then is this done? That you may learn that the Priest performs a symbol. No man differs so widely from another man, as John from Jesus, and yet with him the Spirit descended, that we may learn, that it is God who works all, that all is God's doing. I am about to say what may appear strange, but be not astonished nor startled at it. The Offering is the same, whether a common man, or Paul or Peter offer it. It is the same which Christ gave to His disciples, and which the Priests now minister. This is nowise inferior to that, because it is not men that sanctify even this, but the Same who sanctified the one sanctifies the other also. For as the words which God spoke are the same which the Priest now utters, so is the Offering the same, and the Baptism, that which He gave. Thus the whole is of faith. The Spirit immediately fell upon Cornelius, because he had previously fulfilled his part, and contributed his faith. And this is His Body, as well as that. And he who thinks the one inferior to the other, knows not that Christ even now is present, even now operates. Knowing therefore these things, which we have not said without reason, but that we may conform your minds in what is right, and render you more secure for the future, keep carefully in mind what has been spoken. For if we are always hearers, and never doers, we shall reap no advantage from what is said. Let us therefore attend diligently to the things spoken. Let us imprint them upon our minds. Let us have them ever engraved upon our consciences, and let us continually ascribe glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Homily 3 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 1:13-18]

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which you have heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto you keep by the Holy Ghost Which dwells in us. This you know, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, you know very well."

Not by letters alone did Paul instruct his disciple in his duty, but before by words also which he shows, both in many other passages, as where he says, *"whether by word or our Epistle"* [2 Thessalonians 2:15], and especially here. Let us not therefore suppose that anything relating to doctrine was spoken imperfectly. For many things he delivered to him without writing. Of these therefore he reminds him, when he says, *"Hold fast the form of sound words, which you have heard of me."* After the manner of artists, I have impressed on you the image of virtue, fixing in your soul a sort of rule, and model, and outline of all things pleasing to God. These things then hold fast, and whether you are meditating any matter of faith or love, or of a sound mind, form from hence your ideas of them. It will not be necessary to have recourse to others for examples, when all has been deposited within yourself.

"That good thing which was committed unto you keep,"— how?— *"by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us."* For it is not in the power of a human

soul, when instructed with things so great, to be sufficient for the keeping of them. And why? Because there are many robbers, and thick darkness, and the devil still at hand to plot against us; and we know not what is the hour, what the occasion for him to set upon us. How then, he means, shall we be sufficient for the keeping of them? *"By the Holy Ghost"*; that is if we have the Spirit with us, if we do not expel grace, He will stand by us. For, *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain."* [Psalm 127:1] This is our wall, this our castle, this our refuge. If therefore It dwells in us, and is Itself our guard, what need of the commandment? That we may hold It fast, may keep It, and not banish It by our evil deeds.

Then he describes his trials and temptations, not to depress his disciple, but to elevate him, that if he should ever fall into the same, he may not think it strange, when he looks back and remembers what things happened to his Teacher. What then says he? Since it was probable that Timothy might be apprehended, and be deserted, and be relieved by no friendly attention, or influence, or assistance, but be abandoned even by his friends and the faithful themselves, hear what he says, *"This you know, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me."* It seems that there were then in Rome many persons from the regions of Asia. *"But no one stood by me,"* he says, no one acknowledged me, all were alienated. And observe the philosophy of his soul. He only mentions their conduct, he does not curse them, but he praises him that showed kindness to him, and invokes a thousand blessings upon him, without any curse on them. *"Of whom is Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain. But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out diligently and found me."* Observe how he everywhere speaks of the shame, and not of the danger, lest

Timothy should be alarmed. And yet it was a thing that was full of peril. For he gave offense to Nero by making friends with one of his prisoners. But when he was in Rome, he says, he not only did not shun intercourse with me, but *"sought me out very diligently, and found me."*

"The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, you know very well."

Such ought the faithful to be. Neither fear, nor threats, nor disgrace, should deter them from assisting one another, standing by them and succoring them as in war. For they do not so much benefit those who are in danger, as themselves, by the service they render to them, making themselves partakers of the crowns due to them. For example, is any one of those who are devoted to God visited with affliction and distress, and maintaining the conflict with great fortitude; while you are not yet brought to this conflict? It is in your power if you will, without entering into the course, to be a sharer of the crowns reserved for him, by standing by him, preparing his mind, and animating and exciting him. Hence it is that Paul elsewhere says, *"You have done well that you did communicate with my affliction. For even in Thessalonica you sent once and again unto my necessity."* [Philippians 4:14-16] And how could they that were far off share in the affliction of him that was not with them? How? He says, *"you sent once and again unto my necessities."* Again he says, speaking of Epaphroditus, *"Because he was near unto death, not regarding his life, that he might supply your lack of service toward me."* [Philippians 2:30] For as in the service of kings, not only those who fight the battle, but those who guard the baggage, share in the honor; and not merely so, but frequently even have an equal portion of the spoils, though they have not imbrued their hands in blood, nor stood in array, nor even seen the ranks of the enemy; so

it is in these conflicts. For he who relieves the combatant, when wasted with hunger, who stands by him, encouraging him by words, and rendering him every service, he is not inferior to the combatant.

For do not suppose Paul the combatant, that irresistible and invincible one, but some one of the many, who, if he had not received much consolation and encouragement, would not perhaps have stood, would not have contended. So those who are out of the contest may perchance be the cause of victory to him, who is engaged in it, and may be partakers of the crowns reserved for the victor. And what wonder, if he who communicates to the living is thought worthy of the same rewards with those who contend, since it is possible to communicate after death even with the departed, with those who are asleep, who are already crowned, who want for nothing. For hear Paul saying, *"Partaking in the memories of the Saints."* And how may this be done? When you admire a man, when you do any of those acts for which he was crowned, you are evidently a sharer in his labors, and in his crowns.

"The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." He had compassion on me, he says, he shall therefore have the like return in that terrible Day, when we shall have need of much mercy. *"The Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord."* Are there two Lords then? By no means. But *"to us there is one Lord Christ Jesus, and one God."* [1 Corinthians 8:6] Here those who are infected with the heresy of Marcion assail this expression; but let them learn that this mode of speech is not uncommon in Scripture; as when it is said, *"The Lord said unto my Lord"* [Psalm 110:1]; and again, *"I said unto the Lord, You are my Lord"* [Psalm 16:2]; and, *"The Lord rained fire from the Lord."* [Genesis 19:24] This indicates that the Persons are of the same substance, not that there is a distinction of nature. For we are not to understand that there are two

substances differing from each other, but two Persons, each being of the same substance.

Observe too, that he says, "*The Lord grant him mercy.*" For as he himself had obtained mercy from Onesiphorus, so he wished him to obtain the same from God. Moral. And if Onesiphorus, who exposed himself to danger, is saved by mercy, much more are we also saved by the same. For terrible indeed, terrible is that account, and such as needs great love for mankind, that we may not hear that awful sentence, "*Depart from me...I never knew you, you that work iniquity*" [Matthew 7:23]; or that fearful word, "*Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*" [Matthew 25:40]: that we may not hear, "*Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed*" [Luke 16:16]: that we may not hear that voice full of horror, "*Take him away, and cast him into outer darkness*": that we may not hear those words full of terror, "*Thou wicked and slothful servant.*" [Matthew 22:13 and 25:26] For awful truly and terrible is that tribunal. And yet God is gracious and merciful. He is called a God "*of mercies and a God of comfort*" [2 Corinthians 1:3]; good as none else is good, and kind, and gentle, and full of pity, Who "*wills not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live.*" [Ezekiel 18:24; 33:11] Whence then, whence is that Day so full of agony and anguish? A stream of fire is rolling before His face. The books of our deeds are opened. The day itself is burning as an oven, the angels are flying around, and many furnaces are prepared. How then is He good and merciful, and full of lovingkindness to man? Even herein is He merciful, and He shows in these things the greatness of His lovingkindness. For He holds forth to us these terrors, that being constrained by them, we may be awakened to the desire of the kingdom.

And observe how, besides commending Onesiphorus, he specifies his kindness, "*he oft refreshed me*"; like a wearied wrestler overcome by heat,

he refreshed and strengthened him in his tribulations. And in how many things he ministered to me at Ephesus, you know very well. Not only at Ephesus, but here also he refreshed me. For such ought to be the conduct of one on the watch and awakened to good actions, not to work once, or twice, or thrice, but through the whole of life. For as our body is not fed once for all, and so provided with sustenance for a whole life, but needs also daily food, so in this too, godliness requires to be supported every day by good works. For we ourselves have need of great mercy. It is on account of our sins that God, the Friend of man, does all these things, not that He needs them Himself, but He does all for us. For therefore it is that He has revealed them all, and made them known to us, and not merely told us of them, but given us assurance of them by what He has done. Though He was worthy of credit upon His word only, that no one may think it is said hyperbolically, or in the way of threatening merely, we have further assurance by His works. How? By the punishments which He has inflicted both publicly and privately. And that you may learn by the very examples, at one time he punished Pharaoh, at another time He brought a flood of water upon the earth, and that utter destruction, and again at another time a flood of fire: and even now we see in many instances the wicked suffering vengeance, and punishments, which things are figures of Hell.

For lest we should slumber and be slothful, and forget His word, He awakens our minds by deeds; showing us, even here, courts of justice, judgment seats, and trials. Is there then among men so great a regard for justice, and does God, whose ordinance even these things are, make no account of it? Is this credible? In a house, in a market-place, there is a court of justice. The master daily sits in judgment upon his slaves, calls them to account for their offenses, punishes some and pardons others. In the country, the husbandman and his wife are daily at law. In a ship, the master

is judge, and in a camp the general over his soldiers, and everywhere one may see judicial proceedings. In trades, the master judges the learner. In short all, publicly and privately, are judges to one another. In nothing is the consideration of justice overlooked, and all in every place give account of their actions. And is the inquisition for justice here thus spread through cities, through houses, and among individuals; and is there no regard for what is justice there, where *"the right hand of God is full of righteousness"* [Psalm 48:10], and *"His righteousness is as the mountains of God"*? [Psalm 36:6]

How is it then that God, *"the righteous Judge, strong and patient"* [Psalm 7:11, Septuagint], bears thus with men, and does not exact punishment? Here you have the cause, He is longsuffering, and thereby would lead you to repentance. But if you continue in sin, thou *"after your hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto yourself wrath."* [Romans 2:5] If then He is just, He repays according to desert, and does not overlook those who suffer wrongfully, but avenges them. For this is the part of one who is just. If He is powerful, He requites after death, and at the Resurrection: for this belongs to him who is powerful. And if because He is longsuffering He bears with men, let us not be disturbed, nor ask, why He does not prosecute vengeance here? For if this were done, the whole human race before this would have been swept away, if every day He should call us to account for our transgressions, since there is not, there is not indeed, a single day pure from sin, but in something greater or less we offend; so that we should not one of us have arrived at our twentieth year, but for His great long-suffering, and His goodness, that grants us a longer space for repentance, that we may put off our past transgressions.

Let each therefore, with an upright conscience, entering into a review of what he has done, and bringing his whole life before him, consider,

whether he is not deserving of chastisements and punishments without number? And when he is indignant that some one, who has been guilty of many bad actions, escapes with impunity; let him consider his own faults, and his indignation will cease. For those crimes appear great, because they are in great and notorious matters; but if he will enquire into his own, he will perhaps find them more numerous. For to rob and to defraud is the same thing, whether it be done for gold or silver; since both proceed from the same mind. He that will steal a little would not refuse to steal much, if it fell in his way; and that it does not, is not his own choice, but an accidental circumstance. A poor man, who robs a poorer, would not hesitate to rob the rich if he could. His forbearance arises from weakness, and not from choice. Such an one, you say, is a ruler; and takes away the property of those who are under his rule. And say, dost not thou steal? For tell me not that he steals talents, and you as many pence. In giving alms, some cast in gold, while the widow threw in two mites, yet she contributed not less than they. Wherefore? Because the intention is considered, and not the amount of the gift. And then, in the case of alms, you will have God judge thus, and wouldest, because of your poverty, receive no less a reward for giving two mites than he who lays down many talents of gold? And is not the same rule applicable to wrongful dealings? How is this consistent? As she who contributed two mites was considered equal to the greatest givers, because of her good intention, so thou, who stealest two mites, art as culpable as those mightier robbers. Nay, if I may give utterance to something strange, you are a worse robber than they. For a man would be equally an adulterer, whether he committed the sin with the wife of a king, or of a poor man, or of a slave: since the offense is not judged by the quality of the persons, but by the wickedness of his will who commits it; so is it likewise in this case. Nay, I should call him who committed the sin with an inferior perhaps more

guilty, than him who intrigued with the queen herself. For in this case, wealth, and beauty, and other attractions might be pleaded, none of which exist in the other. Therefore the other is the worse adulterer. Again, he seems to me a more determined drunkard, who commits that excess with bad wine; so he is a worse defrauder, who does not despise small thefts; for he who commits great robberies, would perhaps not stoop to petty thefts, whereas he who steals little things would never forbear greater, therefore he is the greater thief of the two. For how should he despise gold, who does not despise silver? So that when we accuse our rulers, let us recount our own faults, and we shall find ourselves more given to wrong and robbery than they; unless we judge of right and wrong rather by the act, than by the intention of the mind, as we ought to judge. If one should be convicted of having stolen the goods of a poor man, another those of a rich man, will they not both be punished alike? Is not a man equally a murderer, whether he murder a poor and deformed, or a rich and handsome, man? When therefore we say that such an one has seized upon another person's land, let us reflect upon our own faults, and then we shall not condemn other men, but we shall admire the longsuffering of God. We shall not be indignant that judgment does not fall upon them, but we shall be more slow to commit wickedness ourselves. For when we perceive ourselves liable to the same punishment, we shall no longer feel such discontent, and shall desist from offenses, and shall obtain the good things to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father, etc.

Homily 4 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 2:1-7]

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give you understanding in all things."

The young sailor at sea is inspired with great confidence, if the Master of the ship has been preserved in a shipwreck. For he will not consider that it is from his inexperience that he is exposed to the storm, but from the nature of things; and this has no little effect upon his mind. In war also the Captain, who sees his General wounded and recovered again, is much encouraged. And thus it produces some consolation to the faithful, that the Apostle should have been exposed to great sufferings, and not rendered weak by the utmost of them. And had it not been so, he would not have related his sufferings. For when Timothy heard, that he who possessed so great powers, who had conquered the whole world, is a prisoner, and afflicted, yet is not impatient, nor discontented upon the desertion of his friends; he, if ever exposed to the same sufferings himself, would not consider that it proceeded from human weakness, nor from the circumstance of his being a disciple, and inferior to Paul, since his teacher too suffered the like, but that all this happened from the natural course of

things. For Paul himself did this, and related what had befallen him, that he might strengthen Timothy, and renew his courage. And he shows that it was for this reason he mentioned his trials and afflictions, in that he has added, *"You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."* What do you say? You have shaken us with terrors, you have told us that you are in chains, in afflictions, that all have forsaken you, and, as if you had said you had not suffered anything, nor been abandoned by any, you add. *"Thou therefore, my son, be strong"*?— And justly too. For these things were to your strengthening more than to his. For if I, Paul, endure these things, much more ought thou to bear them. If the master, much more the disciple. And this exhortation he introduces with much affection, calling him *"son,"* and not only so, but *"my son."* If you are a son, he means, imitate your father. If you are a son, be strong in consideration of the things which I have said, or rather be strong, not merely from what I have told you, but *"of God."* *"Be strong,"* he says, *"in the grace that is in Christ Jesus";* that is, *"through the grace of Christ."* That is, stand firmly. You know the battle. For elsewhere he says, *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood."* [Ephesians 6:12] And this he says not to depress but to excite them. Be sober therefore, he means, and watch, have the grace of the Lord coöperating with you, and aiding you in your contest, contribute your own part with much alacrity and resolution. *"And the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men";* to *"faithful"* men, not to questioners nor to reasoners, to *"faithful."* How faithful? Such as betray not the Gospel they should preach. *"The things which you have heard,"* not which you have searched out. For *"faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* [Romans 10:17] But wherefore, *"among many witnesses"*? As if he had said: You have not heard in secret, nor apart, but in the presence of many, with all openness of speech. Nor does he say, Tell,

but "*commit*," as a treasure committed is deposited in safety. Again he alarms his disciple, both from things above and things below. But he says not only "*commit to faithful men*"; for of what advantage is it that one is faithful, if he is not able to convey his doctrine to others? When he does not indeed betray the faith; but does not render others faithful? The teacher therefore ought to have two qualities, to be both faithful, and apt to teach; wherefore he says, "*who shall be able to teach others also.*"

"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Oh, how great a dignity is this, to be a soldier of Jesus Christ! Observe the kings on earth, how great an honor it is esteemed to serve under them. If therefore the soldier of the king ought to endure hardness, not to endure hardness is not the part of any soldier. So that it behooves you not to complain, if you endure hardness, for that is the part of a soldier; but to complain, if you do not endure hardness.

"No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully."

These things are said indeed to Timothy, but through him they are addressed to every teacher and disciple. Let no one therefore of those who hold the office of a Bishop disdain to hear these things, but let him be ashamed not to do them. "*If any one strive for masteries,*" he says, "*he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*" What is meant by "*lawfully*"? It is not enough that he enters into the lists, that he is anointed, and even engages, unless he comply with all the laws of the exercise, with respect to diet, to temperance and sobriety, and all the rules of the wrestling school, unless, in short, he go through all that is befitting for a wrestler, he is not crowned. And observe the wisdom of Paul. He mentions wrestlers and soldiers, the one to prepare him for slaughter and blood, the other with

reference to endurance, that he might bear everything with fortitude, and be ever in exercise.

"The husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruits."

He had first spoken from his own example as a teacher. He now speaks from those that are more common, as wrestlers and soldiers, and in their case he sets before him the rewards. First, that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier; secondly, that he may be crowned; now he proposes a third example that more particularly suits himself. For the instance of the soldier and the wrestler corresponds to those who are under rule, but that of the husbandman to the Teacher. (Strive) not as a soldier or a wrestler only, but as a husbandman too. The husbandman takes care not of himself alone, but of the fruits of the earth. That is, no little reward of his labors is enjoyed by the husbandman.

Here he both shows, that to God nothing is wanting, and that there is a reward for Teaching, which he shows by a common instance. As the husbandman, he says, does not labor without profit, but enjoys before others the fruits of his own toils, so is it fit that the teacher should do: either he means this, or he is speaking of the honor to be paid to teachers, but this is less consistent. For why does he not say the husbandman simply, but him *"that labors"*? Not only that works, but that is worn with toil? And here with reference to the delay of reward, that no one may be impatient, he says, you reap the fruit already, or there is a reward in the labor itself. When therefore he has set before him the examples of soldiers, of wrestlers, and husbandmen, and all figuratively, *"No one,"* he says, *"is crowned except he strive lawfully."* And having observed that *"the husbandman who labors must first be partaker of the fruits,"* he adds,

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things."

It is on this account that he has spoken these things in proverb and parable. Then again to show his affectionate disposition, he ceases not to pray for him, as fearing for his own son, and he says,

Ver. 8, 9. *"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel. Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds."*

On what account is this mentioned? It is directed chiefly against the heretics, at the same time to encourage Timothy, by showing the advantage of sufferings, since Christ, our Master, Himself overcame death by suffering. Remember this, he says, and you will have sufficient comfort. *"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead."* For upon that point many had already begun to subvert the dispensation, being ashamed at the immensity of God's love to mankind. For of such a nature are the benefits which God has conferred upon us, that men were ashamed to ascribe them to God, and could not believe He had so far condescended. *"According to my Gospel."* Thus he everywhere speaks in his Epistles, saying *"according to my Gospel,"* either because they were bound to believe him, or because there were some who preached *"another Gospel."* [Galatians 1:6]

"Wherein I suffer trouble," he says, *"as an evil-doer, even unto bonds."* Again he introduces consolation and encouragement from himself, and he prepares his hearer's mind with these two things; first, that he should know him to endure hardness; and, secondly, that he did not so but for a useful purpose, for in this case he will gain, in the other will even suffer harm. For what advantage is it, that you can show that a Teacher has exposed himself to hardship, but not for any useful purpose? But if it is for any benefit, if for the profit of those who are taught, then it is worthy of admiration.

"But the word of God is not bound." That is, if we were soldiers of this world, and waged an earthly warfare, the chains that confine our hands would avail. But now God has made us such that nothing can subdue us. For our hands are bound, but not our tongue, since nothing can bind the tongue but cowardice and unbelief alone; and where these are not, though you fasten chains upon us, the preaching of the Gospel is not bound. If indeed you bind a husbandman, you prevent his sowing, for he sows with his hand: but if you bind a Teacher, you hinder not the word, for it is sown with his tongue, not with his hand. Our word therefore is not subjected to bonds. For though we are bound, that is free, and runs its course. How? Because though bound, behold, we preach. This is for the encouragement of those that are free. For if we that are bound preach, much more does it behoove you that are loose to do so. You have heard that I suffer these things, as an evil-doer. Be not dejected. For it is a great wonder, that being bound I do the work of those that are free, that being bound I overcome all, that being bound I prevail over those that bound me. For it is the word of God, not ours. Human chains cannot bind the word of God. *"These things I suffer on account of the elect."*

Ver. 10. *"Therefore I endure all things,"* he says, *"for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."*

Behold another incentive. I endure these things, he says, not for myself, but for the salvation of others. It was in my power to have lived free from danger; to have suffered none of these things, if I had consulted my own interest. On what account then do I suffer these things? For the good of others, that others may obtain eternal life. What then do you promise yourself? He has not said, simply on account of these particular persons; but *"for the elect's sake."* If God has chosen them, it becomes us to suffer

everything for their sakes. *"That they also may obtain salvation."* By saying, *"they also,"* he means, as well as we. For God has chosen us also; and as God suffered for our sakes, so should we suffer for their sakes. Thus it is a matter of retribution, not of favor. On the part of God it was grace, for He having received no previous benefit, has done us good: but on our parts it is retribution, we having previously received benefits from God, suffer for these, for whom we suffer, in order *"that they may obtain salvation."* What do you say? What salvation? Are you who wast not the author of salvation to yourself, but wast destroying yourself, are you the author of salvation to others? Surely not, and therefore he adds, *"salvation that is in Christ Jesus";* that which is truly salvation, *"with eternal glory."* Present things are afflictive, but they are but on earth. Present things are ignominious, but they are temporary. They are full of bitterness and pain; but they last only today and tomorrow.

Such is not the nature of the good things, they are eternal, they are in heaven. That is true glory, this is dishonor.

Moral. For observe, I pray, beloved, that is not glory which is on earth, the true glory is in heaven. But if any one would be glorified, let him be dishonored. If he would obtain rest, let him suffer affliction. If any one would be forever illustrious, would enjoy pleasure, let him despise temporal things. And that dishonor is glory, and glory dishonor, let us now set before us to the best of our power, that we may see what is real glory. It is not possible to be glorified upon earth; if you would be glorified, it must be through dishonor. And let us prove this in the examples of two persons, Nero and Paul. The one had the glory of this world, the other the dishonor. How? The first was a tyrant, had obtained great success, had raised many trophies, had wealth ever flowing in, numerous armies everywhere; he had the greater part of the world and the imperial city subject to his sway, the

whole senate crouching to him, and his palace too was advancing with splendid show. When he must be armed, he went forth arrayed in gold and precious stones. When he was to sit still in peace, he sat clothed in robes of purple. He was surrounded by numerous guards and attendants. He was called Lord of land and sea, Emperor, Augustus, Cæsar, King, and other such high-sounding names as implied flattery and courtship; and nothing was wanting that might tend to glory. Even wise men and potentates and sovereigns trembled at him. For beside all this, he was said to be a cruel and violent man. He even wished to be thought a god, and he despised both all the idols, and the very God Who is over all. He was worshipped as a god. What greater glory than this? Or rather what greater dishonor? For—I know not how—my tongue is carried away by the force of truth, and passes sentence before judgment. Meanwhile let us examine the matter according to the opinion of the multitude, and of unbelievers, and the estimation of flattery.

What is greater in the common estimation of glory than to be reputed a god? It is indeed a great disgrace that any human being should be so mad, but for the present let us consider the matter according to the opinion of the multitude. Nothing then was wanting to him, that contributes to human glory, but he was worshipped by all as a god. Now in opposition to him, let us consider Paul. He was a Cilician, and the difference between Rome and Cilicia, all know. He was a tent-maker, a poor man, unskilled in the wisdom of those without, knowing only the Hebrew tongue, a language despised by all, especially by the Italians. For they do not so much despise the barbarian, the Greek, or any other tongue as the Syriac, and this has affinity with the Hebrew. Nor wonder at this, for if they despised the Greek, which is so admirable and beautiful, much more the Hebrew. He was a man that often lived in hunger, often went to bed without food, a man that was naked,

and had not clothes to put on; *"in cold, and nakedness,"* as he says of himself. [1 Corinthians 11:27] Nor was this all; but he was cast into prison at the command of Nero himself, and confined with robbers, with impostors, with grave-breakers, with murderers, and he was, as he himself says, scourged as a malefactor. Who then is the more illustrious? The name of the one the greater part have never heard of. The other is daily celebrated by Greeks, and Barbarians, and Scythians, and those who inhabit the extremities of the earth.

But let us not yet consider what is the case now, but even at that time who was the more illustrious, who the more glorious, he that was in chains, and dragged bound from prison, or he that was clothed in a purple robe, and walked forth from a palace? The prisoner certainly. For the other, who had armies at his command, and sat arrayed in purple, was not able to do what he would. But the prisoner, that was like a malefactor, and in mean attire, could do everything with more authority. How? The one said, *"Do not disseminate the word of God."* The other said, *"I cannot forbear; 'the word of God is not bound.'"* Thus the Cilician, the prisoner, the poor tent-maker, who lived in hunger, despised the Roman, rich as he was, and emperor, and ruling over all, who enriched so many thousands; and with all his armies he availed nothing. Who then was illustrious? Who venerable? He that in chains was a conqueror, or he that in a purple robe was conquered? He that standing below, smote, or he that sitting above, was smitten? He that commanded and was despised, or he who was commanded and made no account of the commands? He who being alone was victorious, or he who with numerous armies was defeated? The king therefore so came off, that his prisoner triumphed over him. Tell me then on whose side you would be? For do not look to what comes afterwards, but to what was then their state. Would you be on the side of Nero, or of Paul? I speak not according to the

estimate of faith, for that is manifest; but according to the estimate of glory, and reverence, and preëminence. Any man of right understanding would say, on the side of Paul. For if to conquer is more illustrious than to be conquered, he is more glorious. And this is not yet much, that he conquered, but that being in so mean a state he conquered one in so exalted a condition. For I say, and will not cease to repeat it, though bound with a chain, yet he smote him that was invested with a diadem.

Such is the power of Christ. The chain surpassed the kingly crown, and this apparel was shown more brilliant than that. Clothed in filthy rags, as the inhabitant of a prison, he turned all eyes upon the chains that hung on him, rather than on the purple robe. He stood on earth bound down and stooping low, and all left the tyrant mounted on a golden chariot to gaze on him. And well they might. For it was customary to see a king with white horses, but it was a strange and unwonted sight to behold a prisoner conversing with a king with as much confidence as a king would converse with a pitiful and wretched slave. The surrounding multitude were all slaves of the king, yet they admired not their lord, but him who was superior to their lord. And he before whom all feared and trembled, was trampled upon by one solitary man. See then how great was the brightness of these very chains!

And what need to mention what followed after these things? The tomb of the one is nowhere to be seen; but the other lies in the royal city itself, in greater splendor than any king, even there where he conquered, where he raised his trophy. If mention is made of the one, it is with reproach, even among his kindred, for he is said to have been profligate. But the memory of the other is everywhere accompanied with a good report, not among us only, but among his enemies. For when truth shines forth, it puts to shame even one's enemies, and if they admire him not for his faith, yet they admire

him for his boldness and his manly freedom. The one is proclaimed by all mouths, as one that is crowned, the other is loaded with reproaches and accusations. Which then is the real splendor?

And yet I am but praising the lion for his talons, when I ought to be speaking of his real honors. And what are these? Those in the heavens. How will he come in a shining vesture with the King of Heaven! How will Nero stand then, mournful and dejected! And if what I say seems to you incredible and ridiculous, you are ridiculous for deriding that which is no subject for laughter. For if you disbelieve the future, be convinced from what is past. The season for being crowned is not yet come, and yet how great honor has the combatant gained! What honor then will he not obtain, when the Distributor of the prizes shall come! He was among foreigners, "*a stranger and a sojourner*" [Hebrews 11:13], and thus is he admired: what good will he not enjoy, when he is among his own? Now "*our life is hid with Christ in God*" [Colossians 3:3]; yet he who is dead works more and is more honored than the living. When that our life shall come, what will he not participate? What will he not attain?

On this account God made him enjoy these honors, not because he wanted them. For if when in the body he despised popular glory, much more will he despise it now that he is delivered from the body. Nor only on this account has He caused him to enjoy honor, but that those who disbelieve the future may be convinced from the present. I say that when the Resurrection shall be, Paul will come with the King of Heaven, and will enjoy infinite blessings. But the unbeliever will not be convinced. Let him believe then from the present. The tent-maker is more illustrious, more honored than the king. No emperor of Rome ever enjoyed so great honor. The emperor is cast out, and lies, no one knows where. The tent-maker occupies the midst of the city, as if he were a king, and living. From these

things believe, even with respect to the future. If he enjoys so great honor here, where he was persecuted and banished, what will he not be when he shall come hereafter? If when he was a tent-maker, he was so illustrious, what will he be when he shall come rivaling the beams of the sun? If in so much meanness he overcame such magnificence, to whom, at his coming, will he not be superior? Can we avoid the conclusion? Who is not moved by the fact, that a tent-maker became more honorable than the most honored of kings? If here things happen so beyond the course of nature, much more will it be so hereafter. If you will not believe the future, O man, believe the present. If you will not believe invisible things, believe things that are seen: or rather believe things which are seen, for so you will believe things which are invisible. But if you will not, we may fitly say with the Apostle, "*We are pure from your blood*" [Acts 20:26]: for we have testified to you of all things, and have left out nothing that we should have said. Blame yourselves therefore, and to yourselves will you impute the punishment of Hell. But let us, my beloved children, be imitators of Paul, not in his faith only, but in his life, that we may attain to heavenly glory, and trample upon that glory that is here. Let not any things present attract us. Let us despise visible things, that we may obtain heavenly things, or rather may through these obtain the others, but let it be our aim preeminently to obtain those, of which God grant that we may be all accounted worthy, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 5 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 2:11-14]

"It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us: if we believe not, yet He abides faithful: He cannot deny Himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers."

Many of the weaker sort of men give up the effort of faith, and do not endure the deferring of their hope. They seek things present, and form from these their judgment of the future. When therefore their lot here was death, torments, and chains, and yet he says, they shall come to eternal life, they would not have believed, but would have said, *"What do you say? When I live, I die; and when I die, I live? You promise nothing on earth, and do you give it in heaven? Little things you do not bestow; and do you offer great things?"* That none therefore may argue thus, he places beyond doubt the proof of these things, laying it down beforehand already, and giving certain signs. For, *"remember,"* he says, *"that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead";* that is, rose again after death. And now showing the same thing he says, *"It is a faithful saying,"* that he who has attained a heavenly life, will attain eternal life also. Whence is it *"faithful"*? Because, he says, *"If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him."* For say, shall we partake with Him in things laborious and painful; and shall we not in things beneficial? But not even a man would act thus, nor, if one had chosen to suffer affliction and death with him, would he refuse to him a share in his rest, if he had attained it. But how are we *"dead with Him"*? This death he means

both of that in the Laver, and that in sufferings. For he says, "*Bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus*" [2 Corinthians 4:10]; and, "*We are buried with Him by baptism into death*" [Romans 6:4]; and, "*Our old man is crucified with Him*"; and, "*We have been planted together in the likeness of His death.*" [Romans 6:5-6] But he also speaks here of death by trials: and that more especially, for he was also suffering trials when he wrote it. And this is what he says, "*If we have suffered death on His account, shall we not live on His account? This is not to be doubted. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him,*" not absolutely, we shall reign, but "*if we suffer,*" showing that it is not enough to die once, (the blessed man himself died daily,) but there was need of much patient endurance; and especially Timothy had need of it. For tell me not, he says, of your first sufferings, but that you continue to suffer.

Then on the other side he exhorts him, not from the good, but from the evil. For if wicked men were to partake of the same things, this would be no consolation. And if having endured they were to reign with Him, but not having endured were not indeed to reign with Him, but were to suffer no worse evil, though this were terrible, yet it would not be enough to affect most men with concern. Wherefore he speaks of something more dreadful still. If we deny Him, He will also deny us. So then there is a retribution not of good things only, but of the contrary. And consider what it is probable that he will suffer, who is denied in that kingdom. "*Whosoever shall deny Me, him will I also deny.*" [Matthew 10:33] And the retribution is not equal, though it seems so expressed. For we who deny Him are men, but He who denies us is God; and how great is the distance between God and man, it is needless to say.

Besides, we injure ourselves; Him we cannot injure. And to show this, he has added, "*If we believe not, He abides faithful: He cannot deny*

Himself": that is, if we believe not that He rose again, He is not injured by it. He is faithful and unshaken, whether we say so or not. If then He is not at all injured by our denying Him, it is for nothing else than for our benefit that He desires our confession. For He abides the same, whether we deny Him or not. He cannot deny Himself, that is, His own Being. We may say that He is not; though such is not the fact. It is not in His nature, it is not possible for Him not to be, that is, to go into nonentity. His subsistence always abides, always is. Let us not therefore be so affected, as if we could gratify or could injure Him. But lest any one should think that Timothy needed this advice, he has added,

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." It is an overawing thing to call God to witness what we say, for if no one would dare to set at nought the testimony of man when appealed to, much less when the appeal is to God. If any one, for instance, entering into a contract, or making his will, chooses to call witnesses worthy of credit, would any transfer the things to those who are not included? Surely not. And even if he wishes it, yet fearing the credibility of the witnesses, he avoids it. What is *"charging them before the Lord"*? He calls God to witness both what was said, and what was done.

"That they strive not about words to no profit;" and not merely so, but *"to the subverting of the hearers."* Not only is there no gain from it, but much harm. *"Of these things then put them in remembrance,"* and if they despise you, God will judge them. But why does he admonish them not to strive about words? He knows that it is a dainty thing, and that the human soul is ever prone to contend and to dispute about words. To guard against this, he has not only charged them *"not to strive about words,"* but to render his discourse more alarming, he adds, *"to the subverting of the hearers."*

Ver. 15. *"Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

Everywhere this *"not being ashamed"*! And why is he ever so careful to guard him against shame? Because it was natural for many to be ashamed both of Paul himself, as being a tent-maker, and of the preaching, since its teachers perished. For Christ had been crucified, himself was about to be beheaded, Peter was crucified with his head downwards, and these things they suffered from audacious and despicable men. Because such men were in power, he says, *"Be not ashamed"*; that is, fear not to do anything tending to godliness, though it be necessary to submit to slavery or any other suffering. For how does any one become approved? By being *"a workman that needs not to be ashamed."* As the workman is not ashamed of any work, so neither should he be ashamed who labors in the Gospel. He should submit to anything.

"Rightly dividing the word of truth."

This he has well said. For many distort it, and pervert it in every way, and many additions are made to it. He has not said directing it, but *"rightly dividing,"* that is, cut away what is spurious, with much vehemence assail it, and extirpate it. With the sword of the Spirit cut off from your preaching, as from a thong, whatever is superfluous and foreign to it.

Ver. 16. *"And shun profane novelties of speech."*

For they will not stop there. For when anything new has been introduced, it is ever producing innovations, and the error of him who has once left the safe harbor is infinite, and never stops.

"For they will increase unto more ungodliness," he says,

Ver. 17. *"And their word will eat as does a canker."*

It is an evil not to be restrained, not curable by any medicine, it destroys the whole frame. He shows that novelty of doctrine is a disease,

and worse than a disease. And here he implies that they are incorrigible, and that they erred not weakly but willfully.

"Of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus,"

Ver. 18. *"Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some."*

He has well said, *"They will increase unto more ungodliness."* For it appears indeed to be a solitary evil, but see what evils spring out of it. For if the Resurrection is already past, not only do we suffer loss in being deprived of that great glory, but because judgment is taken away, and retribution also. For if the Resurrection is past, retribution also is past. The good therefore have reaped persecutions and afflictions, and the wicked have not been punished, nay verily, they live in great pleasure. It were better to say that there is no resurrection, than that it is already past.

"And overthrow," he says, *"the faith of some."*

"Of some," not of all. For if there is no resurrection, faith is subverted. Our preaching is vain, nor is Christ risen; and if He is not risen, neither was He born, nor has He ascended into heaven. Observe how this error, while it seems to oppose the doctrine of the Resurrection, draws after it many other evils. What then, says one, ought we to do nothing for those who are subverted?

Ver. 19. *"Nevertheless,"* he says, *"the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are His. And, Let every one that names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."*

He shows that even before they were subverted, they were not firm. For otherwise, they would not have been overthrown at the first attack, as Adam was firm before the commandment. For those who are fixed not only are not harmed through deceivers, but are even admired.

And he calls it "*sure*," and a "*foundation*"; so ought we to adhere to the faith; "*having this seal, The Lord knows them that are His.*" What is this? He has taken it from Deuteronomy; that is, Firm souls stand fixed and immovable. But whence are they manifest? From having these characters inscribed upon their actions, from their being known by God, and not perishing with the world, and from their departing from iniquity.

"Let every one," he says, "that names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

These are the distinguishing marks of the foundation. As a foundation is shown to be firm, and as letters are inscribed upon a stone that the letters may be significant. But these letters are shown by works, "*Having*," he says, "*this seal*" fixed thereon, "*Let every one that names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.*" Thus if any one is unrighteous, he is not of the foundation. So that this too is of the seal, not to do iniquity.

Moral. Let us not therefore put off from us the royal seal and token, that we may not be of those who are not sealed, that we may not be unsound, that we may be firmly grounded, that we may be of the foundation, and not carried to and fro. This marks them that are of God, that they depart from iniquity. For how can any one be of God Who is just, if he does iniquity, if by his works he opposes Him, if he insults Him by his misdeeds? Again we are speaking against injustice, and again we have many that are hostile to us. For this affection, like a tyrant, has seized upon the souls of all, and, what is worse, not by necessity nor violence, but by persuasion and gentle insinuation, and they are grateful for their slavery. And this is indeed the misery; for if they were held by constraint and not by love, they would soon depart. And whence is it, that a thing which is most bitter, appears to be sweet? Whence is it that righteousness, which is a most sweet thing, becomes bitter? It is the fault of our senses. Thus some have

thought honey bitter, and have taken with pleasure other things that were noxious. And the cause is not in the nature of things, but in the perverseness of the sufferers. The judging faculty of the soul is disordered. Just as a balance, if its beam be unsteady, moves round, and does not show accurately the weight of things placed in it; so the soul, if it has not the beam of its own thoughts fixed, and firmly riveted to the law of God, being carried round and drawn down, will not be able to judge aright of actions.

For if any one will examine carefully, he will perceive the great bitterness of injustice, not to those who suffer it, but to those who practice it, and to these more than to the others. And let us not speak of things future, but for the present of things here. Hath it not battles, judgments, condemnation, ill will, abuse? What is more bitter than these? Hath it not enmities, and wars, and accusations? What is more bitter than these? Hath it not conscience continually scourging and gnawing us? If it were possible, I could wish to draw out from the body the soul of the unrighteous man, and you would see it pale and trembling, ashamed, hiding its head, anxiously fearful, and self-condemned. For should we sink down into the very depths of wickedness, the judging faculty of the mind is not destroyed, but remains unbribed. And no one pursues injustice thinking it to be good, but he invents excuses, and has recourse to every artifice of words to shift off the accusation. But he cannot get it off his conscience. Here indeed the speciousness of words, the corruption of rulers, and multitudes of flatterers, is often able to throw justice into the shade, but within, the conscience has nothing of this sort, there are no flatterers there, no wealth to corrupt the judge. For the faculty of judging is naturally implanted in us by God, and what comes from God cannot be so corrupted. But uneasy slumbers, thick-coming fancies, and the frequent recollections of guilt, destroy our repose. Has any one, for instance, unjustly deprived another of his house? Not only

is he that is robbed rendered unhappy, but the man who robbed him. If he is persuaded of a future judgment, (if indeed any one is so persuaded,) he groans exceedingly, and is in misery. But if he believes not in futurity, yet he blushes for shame; or rather there is no man, whether Greek, Jew, or heretic, who is not afraid of a judgment to come.

And although he is not a philosopher with respect to futurity; yet he fears and trembles at what may befall him here, lest he may have some retribution in his property, his children, his family, or his life. For many such visitations God inflicts. For since the doctrine of the Resurrection is not sufficient to bring all men to reason, He affords even here many proofs of His righteous judgment, and exhibits them to the world. One who has gained wrongfully is without children, another falls in war, another is maimed in his body, another loses his son. He considers these things, on these his imagination dwells, and he lives in continual fear.

Know you not what the unrighteous suffer? Is there no bitterness in these things? And were there nothing of this sort, do not all condemn him, and hate and abhor him, and think him less rational than a beast, even those who are themselves unrighteous? For if they condemn themselves, much more do they condemn another, calling him rapacious, fraudulent, a pestilent fellow. What pleasure then can he enjoy? He has only the heavier care and anxiety to preserve his gains, and the being more anxious and troubled. For the more wealth any one gets about him, the more painful watchfulness does he store up for himself. Then what are the curses of those whom he has wronged, their pleadings against him? And what, if sickness should befall him? For it is impossible for one, who has fallen into sickness, however atheistically he may be inclined, not to be anxious about these things, not to be thoughtful, when he is unable to do anything. For as long as we are here, the soul enjoying itself, does not tolerate painful thoughts:

but when it is about to take its flight from the body, then a greater fear constrains it, as entering into the very portals of judgment. Even robbers, while they are in prison, live without fear, but when they are brought to the very curtain of the court, they sink with terror. For when the fear of death is urgent, like a fire consuming all things besides, it obliges the soul to philosophize, and to take thought for futurity. The desire of wealth, the love of gain, and of bodily pleasures, no longer possesses it. These things passing away like clouds, leave the judging faculty clear, and grief entering in softens the hard heart. For nothing is so opposite to philosophy, as a life of pleasure; nor, on the other hand, is anything so favorable to philosophy as affliction. Consider what the covetous man will then be. For, *"an hour of affliction,"* it is said, *"makes a man forget much pleasure."* [Sirach 2:27] What will then be his state, when he considers those whom he has robbed, and injured, and defrauded, when he sees others reaping the fruits of his grasping, and himself going to pay the penalty? For it cannot, indeed it cannot be, that when fallen into sickness he should not reflect upon these things. For often the soul of itself is distracted with agony and terror. What a bitterness is this, tell me! And with every sickness these things must be endured. And what will he not suffer when he sees others punished or put to death?

These things await him here. And as to what he must undergo hereafter, it is not possible to say what punishment, what vengeance, what torments, what racks are reserved for him There. These things we declare. *"He that has ears to hear, let him hear."* [Luke 8:8] We are for ever discoursing of these things, not willingly, but of necessity. For we could wish there were no obligation to mention such things at all. But since it must be, we would at least, by a little medicine, deliver you from your disease, and restore you to health. But while you remain in this sickness, it

would show a mean and weak spirit, not to say cruelty and inhumanity, to desist from the healing treatment. For if when physicians despair of our bodies, we beseech them not to neglect us, not to cease to our last breath applying whatever is in their power, shall we not much more exhort ourselves? For perhaps when we have come to the very gates of Hell, the vestibule of wickedness itself, it may be possible to recover, to renew our strength, to lay hold on eternal life! How many, who have heard ten times and remained insensible, have afterwards at one hearing been converted! Or rather, not at one hearing; for though they seemed insensible at the ten discourses, yet they gained something, and afterwards showed all at once abundant fruit. For as a tree may receive ten strokes, and not fall; then afterwards be brought down all at once by a single blow: yet it is not done by that one blow, but by the ten which made that last successful. And this is known to him who sees the root, though he who takes his view of the trunk above knows it not. So it is in this case. And thus often, when physicians have applied many remedies, no benefit is perceived; but afterwards some one comes in and effects an entire cure. Yet it is not the work of him alone, but of these who have already reduced the disorder. So that, if now we do not bring forth the fruits of hearing the word, yet hereafter we shall. For that we shall bring them forth, I am fully persuaded. For it is not, indeed it is not possible that such eager desire, such a love of hearing, should fail of its effect. God forbid! But may we all, having become worthy of the admonitions of Christ, obtain the everlasting blessings, etc.

Homily 6 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 2:20, 21]

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Many men are still even now perplexed to account for the fact, that the wicked are suffered to remain, and are not yet destroyed. Now doubtless various reasons may be assigned for this, as, that they may be converted, or that by their punishment they may be made an example to the multitude. But Paul here mentions a similar case. For he says,

"In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth." Showing by this, that as in a great house it is likely there should be a great difference of vessels, so here also, in the whole world, for he speaks not of the Church only, but of the world at large. For think not, I pray, that he means it of the Church; for there he would not have any vessels of wood or of earth, but all of gold or silver where is the body of Christ, where is that *"pure virgin, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."* [Ephesians 5:27] And this is what he means to say: Let it not disturb you that there are corrupt and wicked men. For in a great house there are such vessels. But what then? They do not receive the same honor. But some are to honor and some to dishonor. *"Nay,"* says one, *"in a house they may be of some use, but not at all in the world."* Though God employs them not for such honorable service, he makes use of them for other purposes. For instance, the vainglorious man builds much, so does the covetous man, the

merchant, the tradesman, the magistrate; there are certain works in the world suited to these. But the golden vessel is not of such a nature. It is employed about the royal table. He does not say however that wickedness is a necessary thing, (for how should it be?) but that the wicked also have their work. For if all were of gold or of silver, there would be no need of the viler sort. For instance, if all were hardy, there would be no need of houses; if all were free from luxury, there would be no need of dainties. If all were careful only for necessities, there would be no need of splendid building.

"If therefore a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified." Do you see that it is not of nature, nor of the necessity of matter, to be a vessel of gold or of earth, but of our own choice? For otherwise the earthen could not become gold, nor could the golden descend to the vileness of the other. But in this case there is much change, and alteration of state. Paul was an earthen vessel, and became a golden one. Judas was a golden vessel, and became an earthen one. The earthen vessels, therefore, are such from uncleanness. The fornicator and the covetous man become earthen vessels. *"But how then does he say elsewhere, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels,' so that he does not despise but honor the earthen vessel, speaking of it as the recipient of the treasure?"* There he shows the nature itself, and not the form of the material. For he means to say that our body is an earthen vessel. For as earthenware is nothing else but baked clay, so is our body nothing but clay consolidated by the heat of the soul; for that it is earthen, is evident. For as such a vessel is often by falling broken and dashed to pieces, so our body falls and is dissolved by death. For how do our bones differs from a potsherd, hard and dry as they are? Or our flesh from clay, being, like it, composed of water? But, as I said, how is it that he does not speak contemptuously of it? Because there he is discoursing of its nature, here of our choice. *"If a man,"* he says,

"purge himself from these," not merely "cleanse," but "cleanse out," that is, cleanse himself perfectly, "he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use." The others therefore are useless for any good purpose, though some use is made of them. *"And prepared unto every good work."* Even though he do it not, he is fit for it, and has a capacity for it. We ought therefore to be prepared for everything, even for death, for martyrdom, for a life of virginity, or for all these.

Ver. 22. *"Flee also youthful lusts."*

Not only the lust of fornication, but every inordinate desire is a youthful lust. Let the aged learn that they ought not to do the deeds of the youthful. If one be given to insolence, or a lover of power, of riches, of bodily pleasures, it is a youthful lust, and foolish. These things must proceed from a heart not yet established, from a mind not deeply grounded, but in a wavering state. What then does he advise in order that none may be captivated by these things? *"Flee youthful"* imaginations, but

"Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

He calls virtue in general, *"righteousness"*: godliness of life, *"faith, meekness, charity."*

What is meant by *"those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart"*? It is as if he said, Rejoice not in those who only call upon the Lord; but those who call upon Him sincerely and unfeignedly, who have nothing of deceit about them, who approach Him in peace, who are not contentious. With these associate yourself. But with others be not easy, but only as far as lies in you, be peaceable.

Ver. 23. *"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes."*

Do you see how he everywhere draws him off from questions; not that he was not able to overthrow them; for he was well able. For had he not been able he would have said, Be diligent, that you may be able to refute them; as when he says, *"Give attendance to reading, for by so doing you shall both save yourself and them that hear you."* [1 Timothy 4:13-16] But he knew that it was useless to enter at all into these disputes, that there will be no end of it, save contentions, enmities, insults, and reproaches. These *"questions"* therefore *"avoid"*; so that there are other questions, some relating to the Scriptures, some to other things.

Ver. 24. *"And the servant of the Lord must not strive."*

Not even in questions ought he to strive, for the servant of the Lord must keep far from strife, since God is the God of peace, and what should the servant of the God of peace have to do with strife?

"But be gentle unto all men."

How is it then he says, *"Rebuke with all authority"* [Titus 2:15]; and again, *"Let no man despise your youth"* [1 Timothy 4:12]: and again, *"Rebuke them sharply"*? [Titus 1:13] Because this is consistent with meekness. For a strong rebuke, if it be given with gentleness, is most likely to wound deeply: for it is possible, indeed it is, to touch more effectually by gentleness, than one overawes by boldness.

"Apt to teach"; that is, those who are willing to be taught. For *"a man that is an heretic,"* he says, *"after the first and second admonition reject."* [Titus 3:10] *"Patient."* He has well added this, for it is a quality which a teacher above all things ought to possess. All things are vain without it. And if fishermen do not despair, though often they cast their nets for a whole day without catching anything, much more should not we. For see what is the result. From constant teaching, it often happens that the plow of the word, descending to the depth of the soul, roots out the evil passion that troubled

it. For he that hears often will at length be affected. A man cannot go on hearing continually without some effect being produced. Sometimes therefore, when he was on the point of being persuaded, he is lost by our becoming weary. For the same thing occurs, as if an unskillful husbandman should in the first year dig about the vine he had planted, and seeking to reap some fruit in the second year, and again in the third, and gathering nothing, should after three years despair, and in the fourth year, when he was about to receive the recompense of his labors, abandon his vine. And having said, "*Patient*," he is not satisfied, but goes on to say,

Ver. 25. "*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.*"

For he that teaches must be especially careful to do it with meekness. For a soul that wishes to learn cannot gain any useful instruction from harshness and contention. For when it would apply, being thus thrown into perplexity, it will learn nothing. He who would gain any useful knowledge ought above all things to be well disposed towards his teacher, and if this be not previously attained, nothing that is requisite or useful can be accomplished. And no one can be well disposed towards him who is violent and overbearing. How is it then that he says, "*A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject*"? He speaks there of one incorrigible, of one whom he knows to be diseased beyond the possibility of cure.

"If God perhaps will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

Ver. 26. "*And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.*"

What he says amounts to this. Perhaps there will be a reformation. Perhaps! For it is uncertain. So that we ought to withdraw only from those, of whom we can show plainly, and concerning whom we are fully

persuaded, that whatever be done, they will not be reformed. *"In meekness,"* he says. In this temper, you see, we ought to address ourselves to those who are willing to learn, and never cease from conversing with them till we have come to the demonstration.

"Who are taken captive by him at his will." It is truly said, *"Who are taken captive,"* for meanwhile they float in error. Observe here how he teaches to be humble-minded. He has not said, if perhaps you should be able, but, *"if perhaps God should grant them a recovery"*; if anything be done, therefore, all is of the Lord. Thou plantest, you water but He sows and makes it produce fruit. Let us not therefore be so affected, as if we ourselves wrought the persuasion, even if we should persuade any one. *"Taken captive by him,"* he says, *"to His will."* This no one will say relates to doctrine, but to life. For *"His will"* is that we live rightly. But some are in the snare of the devil by reason of their life, we ought not therefore to be weary even with respect to these.

"If perhaps," he says, *"they may recover, that are taken captive, unto His will."* Now *"If perhaps,"* implies much longsuffering. For not to do the will of God is a snare of the devil.

For as a sparrow, though it be not wholly enclosed, but only caught by the foot, is still under the power of him who set the snare; so though we be not wholly subverted, both in faith and life, but in life only, we are under the power of the devil. For *"Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven"*; and again, *"I know you not; depart from me, you that work iniquity."* [Matthew 7:21-23] You see there is no advantage from our faith, when our Lord knows us not: and to the virgins he says the same, *"I know you not."* [Matthew 25:12] What then is the benefit of virginity, or of many labors, when the Lord knows us not? And in many places we find men not blamed for their faith, but punished for their

evil life only; as elsewhere, not reprov'd for evil lives, but perishing for their pravity of doctrine. For these things hold together. You see that when we do not the will of God, we are under the snare of the devil. And often not only from a bad life, but from one defect, we enter into Hell, where there are not good qualities to counterbalance it, since the virgins were not accused of fornication or adultery, nor of envy or ill-will, nor of drunkenness, nor of unsound faith, but of a failure of oil, that is, they failed in almsgiving, for that is the oil meant. And those who were pronounced accursed in the words, *"Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire,"* were not accused of any such crimes, but because they had not fed Christ.

Moral. Do you see that a failure in almsgiving is enough to cast a man into hell fire? For where will he avail who does not give alms? Do you fast every day? So also did those virgins, but it availed them nothing. Do you pray? What of that? prayer without almsgiving is unfruitful, without that all things are unclean and unprofitable. The better part of virtue is destroyed. *"He that loves not his brother,"* it is said, *"knows not God."* [1 John 4:8] And how do you love him, when you do not even impart to him of these poor worthless things? Tell me, therefore, do you observe chastity? On what account? From fear of punishment? By no means. It is of a natural endowment that you observe it, since if you were chaste from fear of punishment, and did violence to nature in submitting to so severe a rule, much more ought thou to do alms. For to govern the desire of wealth, and of bodily pleasures, is not the same thing. The latter is much more difficult to restrain. And wherefore? Because the pleasure is natural, and the desire of it is innate and of natural growth in the body. It is not so with riches. Herein we are able to resemble God, in showing mercy and pity. When therefore we have not this quality, we are devoid of all good. He has not said, *"you shall be like your Father, if you fast,"* nor *"if you be virgins,"* nor

"if you pray," has He said, *"you shall be like your Father,"* for none of these things can be applied to God, nor are they His acts. But what? *"Be merciful, as your Father in Heaven is merciful."* [Luke 6:36] This is the work of God. If therefore you have not this, what have you? He says: *"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."* [Hosea 6:6] God made Heaven, and earth, and sea. Great works these, and worthy of His wisdom! But by none of these has He so powerfully attracted human nature to Himself, as by mercy and the love of mankind. For that indeed is the work of power and wisdom and goodness. But it is far more so that He became a servant. Do we not for this more especially admire Him? Are we not for this still more amazed at Him? Nothing attracts God to us so much as mercy. And the prophets from beginning to end discourse upon this subject. But I speak not of mercy that is accompanied with covetousness. That is not mercy. For it is not the root of the thorn but of the olive that produces the oil ; so it is not the root of covetousness, of iniquity, or of rapine, that produces mercy. Do not put a slander on almsgiving. Do not cause it to be evil spoken of by all. If you commit robbery for this, that you may give alms, nothing is more wicked than your almsgiving. For when it is produced by rapine, it is not almsgiving, it is inhumanity, it is cruelty, it is an insult to God. If Cain so offended, by offering inferior gifts of his own, shall he not offend, who offers the goods of another? An offering is nothing else but a sacrifice, a purification, not a pollution. And thou who darest not to pray with unclean hands, do you offer the dirt and filth of robbery, and think you do nothing wrong? Thou sufferest not your hands to be full of dirt and filth, but having first cleansed these, you offer. Yet that filth is no charge against you, while the other deserves reproach and blame. Let it not therefore be our consideration, how we may offer prayers and oblations with clean hands, but how the things offered may be pure. If one, after having washed a vessel

clean, should fill it with unclean gifts, would it not be ridiculous mockery? Let the hands be clean; and they will be so, if we wash them not with water only, but first with righteousness. This is the purifier of the hands. But if they be full of unrighteousness, though they be washed a thousand times, it avails nothing. *"Wash you, make you clean"* [Isaiah 1:16], He says, but does He add, *"Go to the baths, the lakes, the rivers"*? No; but what? *"Put away the evil of your doings from your souls."* This is to be clean. This it is to be cleansed from defilement. This is real purity. The other is of little use; but this bestows upon us confidence towards God. The one may be obtained by adulterers, thieves, murderers, by worthless, and dissolute, and effeminate persons, and especially the latter. For they are ever careful of the cleanliness of their bodies, and scented with perfumes, cleansing their sepulcher. For their body is but a sepulcher, since the soul is dead within it. This cleanness therefore may be theirs, but not that which is inward.

To wash the body is no great matter. That is a Jewish purification, senseless and unprofitable, where purity within is wanting. Suppose one to labor under a putrefying sore, or consuming ulcer; let him wash his body ever so much, it is of no advantage. And if the putrefaction of the body receives no benefit from cleansing and disguising the outward appearance; when the soul is infected with rottenness, what is gained by the purity of the body? Nothing! Our prayers ought to be pure, and pure they cannot be, if they are sent forth from a corrupt soul, and nothing so corrupts the soul as avarice and rapine. But there are some who after committing numberless sins during the day, wash themselves in the evening and enter the churches, holding up their hands with much confidence, as if by the washing of the bath they had put off all their guilt. And if this were the case, it would be a vast advantage to use the bath daily! I would not myself cease to frequent the baths, if it made us pure, and cleansed us from our sins! But these things

are trifling and ridiculous, the toys of children. It is not the filth of the body, but the impurity of the soul, to which God is averse. For He says, "*Blessed are the pure*"— does He say in body? No— "*in heart: for they shall see God.*" [Matthew 5:8] And what says the Prophet: "*Create in me a clean heart, O God.*" [Psalm 51:10] And again, "*Wash my heart from wickedness.*" [Jeremiah 4:14]

It is of great use to be in the habit of doing good actions. See how trifling and unprofitable these washings are. But when the soul is prepossessed by a habit, it does not depart from it, nor does it venture to draw near in prayer, till it has fulfilled these ceremonies. For instance, we have brought ourselves to a habit of washing and praying, and without washing we do not think it right to pray. And we do not willingly pray with unwashed hands, as if we should offend God, and violate our conscience. Now if this trifling custom has so great power over us, and is observed every day; if we had brought ourselves to a habit of almsgiving, and had determined so constantly to observe it, as never to enter a house of prayer with empty hands, the point would be gained. For great is the power of habit both in good things and in evil, and when this carries us on, there will be little trouble. Many are in the habit of crossing themselves continually, and they need no one to remind them of it, but often when the mind is wandering after other things, the hand is involuntarily drawn by custom, as by some living teacher, to make the sign. Some have brought themselves into a habit of not swearing at all, and therefore neither willingly nor unwillingly do they ever do it. Let us then bring ourselves into such a habit of almsgiving.

What labors were it worth to us to discover such a remedy. For say, were there not the relief of almsgiving, while we still by our numberless sins rendered ourselves liable to Divine vengeance, should we not have

lamented sadly? Should we not have said, O that it were possible by our wealth to wash away our sins, and we would have parted with it all! O that by our riches we could put away the wrath of God, then we would not spare our substance? For if we do this in sickness, and at the point of death we say, *"If it were possible to buy off death, such an one would give all his possessions"*; much more in this matter. For see how great is the love of God for man. He has granted us power to buy off not temporal but eternal death. Do not purchase, He says, this short life, but that life that is everlasting. It is that I sell you, not the other: I do not mock you. Did you gain the present life, you had gained nothing. I know the worth of that which I offer you. The bargainers and traffickers in worldly goods do not act thus. They, when they can impose on whom they will, give a little to receive a great deal. It is not so with God. He gives the greater by far for the less.

Tell me, if you were to go to a merchant, and he were to set before you two stones, one of little worth, and the other very precious, and sure to fetch a large amount of wealth; if he allowed you for the price of the cheap one to carry off the more costly, should you complain of him? No! You would rather admire his liberality. So now, two lives are set before us, the one temporal, the other eternal. These God offers us for sale, but He would sell us the latter rather than the former. Why do we complain, like silly children, that we receive the more precious? Is it possible then to purchase life for money? Yes, when what we bestow is our own, and not the property of another; when we do not practice an imposture. But, you say, henceforth the goods are mine. They are not yours after rapine. They are still your neighbor's, though thou were a thousand times the master of them. For if you should receive a deposit, it would not be your own even for the short season that the depositor was traveling, though it might be laid up with you.

If therefore that is not ours, which we received with the consent and thanks of those who deposited it, even for the short period that we retain it, much less is that ours, which we plundered against the will of its owner. He is the master of it, however long you may withhold it. But Virtue is really our own; as for money, even our own is not strictly ours, much less that of others. Today it is ours, tomorrow it belongs to another. What is of virtue is our own possession. This does not suffer loss, like other things, but is entirely possessed by all who have it. This therefore let us acquire, and let us despise riches, that we may be able to attain those real goods, of which God grant that we may be thought worthy to partake, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 7 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 3:1-7]

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away. For of this sort are they, which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with various lusts and pleasures, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

He had said in the former Epistle, that *"the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith"* [1 Timothy 4:1-2]; and elsewhere in this Epistle he foretells that something of this kind will afterwards happen; and here again he does the same thing: *"This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come."* And this he pronounces not only from the future, but from the past; *"As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses."* And again from reasoning; *"In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver."* But why does he do this? In order that Timothy may not be troubled, nor any one of us, when there are evil men. If there were such in the time of Moses, and will be hereafter, it is no wonder that there are such in our times.

"In the last days perilous times shall come," he says, that is, exceeding bad times. How shall times be perilous? He says it not blaming the days, nor the times, but the men of those times. For thus it is customary with us to

speak of good times or evil times, from the events that happen in them, caused by men. Immediately he sets down the root and fountain, whence these and all other evils spring, that is, overweeningness. He that is seized with this passion is careless even of his own interests. For when a man overlooks the concerns of his neighbor, and is careless of them, how should he regard his own? For as he that looks to his neighbor's affairs will in them order his own to advantage, so he that looks down upon his neighbor's concerns will neglect his own. For if we are members one of another, the welfare of our neighbor is not his concern only, but that of the whole body, and the injury of our neighbor is not confined to him, but distracts with pains all else as well. If we are a building, whatever part is weakened, it affects the whole, while that which is solid gives strength and support to the rest. So also in the Church, if you have slighted your neighbor, you have injured yourself. How? In that one of your own members has suffered no small hurt. And if he, who does not impart of his possessions, goes into Hell, much more will he be condemned, who sees a neighbor suffering severer evils, and does not stretch out his hand, since in this case the loss is more grievous.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves." He that loves himself may be said not to love himself, but he that loves his brother, loves himself in the truest sense. From self-love springs covetousness. For the wretched niggardly temper of self-love contracts that love which should be widely extended, and diffused on every side. *"Covetous."* From covetousness springs boastfulness, from boastfulness pride, from pride blasphemy, from blasphemy defiance and disobedience. For he who exalts himself against men, will easily do it against God. Thus sins are produced. Often they ascend from below. He that is pious towards men, is still more pious towards God. He who is meek to his fellow-servants, is more meek to his

Master. He that despises his fellow-servants, will end with despising God Himself. Moral . Let us not then despise one another, for that is an evil training which teaches us to despise God. And indeed to despise one another is in effect to despise God, Who commanded us to show all regard to one another. And this may be otherwise manifested by an example. Cain despised his brother, and so, immediately after, he despised God. How despised Him? Mark his insolent answer to God; *"Am I my brother's keeper?"* [Genesis 4:9] Again, Esau despised his brother, and he too despised God. Wherefore God said, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* [Romans 9:13; Malachi 1:2-3] Hence Paul says, *"Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau."* [Hebrews 12:16] The brethren of Joseph despised him, and they also despised God. The Israelites despised Moses, and they also despised God. So too the sons of Eli despised the people, and they too despised God. Would you see it also from the contrary? Abraham, who was tender of his brother's son, was obedient to God, as is manifest in his conduct with respect to his son Isaac, and in all his other virtues. Again, Abel was meek to his brother, and he also was pious towards God. Let us not therefore despise one another, lest we learn also to despise God. Let us honor one another, that we may learn also to honor God. He that is insolent with respect to men, will also be insolent with respect to God. But when covetousness and selfishness and insolence meet together, what is wanting to complete destruction? Everything is corrupted, and a foul flood of sins bursts in. *"Unthankful,"* he says. For how can the covetous man be thankful? To whom will he feel gratitude? To no one. He considers all men his enemies, and desires the goods of all. Though you spend your whole substance upon him, he will feel no gratitude. He is angry that you have not more, that you might bestow it upon him. And if you made him master of the whole world, he would still be unthankful, and

think that he had received nothing. This desire is insatiable. It is the craving of disease; and such is the nature of the cravings of disease.

He who has a fever can never be satisfied, but with constant desire of drinking, is never filled, but suffers a continual thirst; so he who is mad after wealth never knows the fulfillment of his desire; whatever is bestowed upon him, he is still unsatisfied, and will therefore never be thankful. For he will feel no gratitude to him, who does not give him as much as he wishes, and this no one can ever do. And as there is no limit to his wishes, he will feel no gratitude. Thus no one is so unthankful as the covetous, so insensible as the lover of money. He is the enemy of all the world. He is indignant that there are men. He would have all one vast desert, that he might have the property of all. And many wild imaginations does he form.

"O that there were an earthquake," he says, "in the city, that all the rest being swallowed up, I might be left alone, to have, if possible, the possessions of all! O that a pestilence would come and destroy everything but gold! O that there might be a submersion, or an eruption of the sea!"

Such are his imaginations. He prays for nothing good, but for earthquakes, and thunderbolts, for wars, and plagues, and the like. Well, tell me now, thou wretched man, more servile than any slave, if all things were gold, would you not be destroyed by your gold, and perish with hunger? If the world were swallowed up by an earthquake, you also would perish by your fatal desire. For if there were no other men than yourself, the necessities of life would fail you. For suppose that the other inhabitants of the earth were destroyed at once, and that their gold and silver came of its own accord to you. (For such men fancy to themselves absurdities, and impossibilities.) But if their gold and silver, their vests of silk and cloth of gold, came into your hands, what would it profit you? Death would only the more certainly overtake you, when there were none to prepare bread or till the earth for

you; wild beasts would prowl around, and the devil agitate your soul with fear. Many devils indeed now possess it, but then they would lead you to desperation, and plunge you at once into destruction. But you say, *"I would wish there should be tilling of the land and men to prepare food."* Then they would consume somewhat. *"But I would not have them consume anything."* So insatiable is this desire! For what can be more ridiculous than this? Do you see the impossibility of the thing? He wishes to have many to minister to him, yet he grudges them their share of food, because it diminishes his substance! What then? Would you then have men of stone? This is all a mockery; and waves, and tempest, and huge billows, and violent agitation, and storm, overwhelm the soul. It is ever hungry, ever thirsty. Shall we not pity and mourn for him? Of bodily diseases this is thought a most painful one, and it is called by physicians bulimy, when a man being filled, is yet always hungry. And is not the same disorder in the soul more lamentable? For avarice is the morbid hunger of the soul, which is always filling, never satisfied, but still craving. If it were necessary to drink hellebore, or submit to anything a thousand times worse, would it not be worth our while to undertake it readily, that we might be delivered from this passion? There is no abundance of riches that can fill the belly of greediness. And shall we not be ashamed, that men can be thus transported with the love of money, while we show not any proportion of such earnestness in love to God, and honor Him not as bullion is honored? For money men will undergo watchings, and journeyings and continual perils, and hatred, and hostility, and, in short, everything. But we do not venture to utter a mere word for God, nor incur an enmity, but if we are required to assist any of those who are persecuted, we abandon the injured person, withdrawing ourselves from the hatred of the powerful, and the danger it involves. And though God has given us power that we might succor him, yet we suffer him to perish, from

our unwillingness to incur men's hatred and displeasure. And this many profess to justify, saying, "*Be loved for nothing, but be not hated for nothing.*" But is this to be hated for nothing? Or what is better than such hatred? For to be hated on account of God is better than to be loved on His account: for when we are loved for God's sake, we are debtors for the honor, but when we are hated for His sake, He is our debtor to reward us. The lovers of wealth know no limit to their love, be it never so great; but we, if we have done ever so little, think that we have fulfilled everything. We love not God as much, no, not by many times over so much, as they love gold. Their inordinate rage for gold is a heavy accusation against them. It is our condemnation that we are not so beside ourselves for God; that we do not bestow upon the Lord of all as much love as they bestow upon mere earth, for gold from the mine is no better.

Let us then behold their madness, and be ashamed of ourselves. For what though we are not inflamed with the love of gold, while we are not earnest in our prayers to God? For in their case men despise wife, children, substance, and their own safety, and that when they are not certain that they shall increase their substance. For often, in the very midst of their hopes, they lose at once their life and their labor. But we, though we know that, if we love Him as we ought to love Him, we shall obtain our desire, yet love Him not, but are altogether cold in our love both to our neighbor and to God; cold in our love to God, because cold in our love to our neighbor. For it is not, indeed it is not possible that a man, who is a stranger to the feeling of love, should have any generosity or manly spirit, since the foundation of all that is good is no other than love. "*On this,*" it is said, "*hang all the law and the prophets.*" [Matthew 22:40] For as fire set to a forest is wont to clear away everything, so the fire of love, wherever it is received, consumes and makes way through everything that is hurtful to the divine harvest, and

renders the soil pure and fit for the reception of the seed. Where there is love, all evils are removed. There is no love of money, the root of evil, there is no self-love : there is no boasting; for why should one boast over his friend? Nothing makes a man so humble as love. We perform the offices of servants to our friends, and are not ashamed; we are even thankful for the opportunity of serving them. We spare not our property, and often not our persons; for dangers too are encountered at times for him that is loved. No envy, no calumny is there, where there is genuine love. We not only do not slander our friends, but we stop the mouth of slanderers. All is gentleness and mildness. Not a trace of strife and contention appears. Everything breathes peace. For "*Love,*" it is said, "*is this fulfilling of the law.*" [Romans 13:10] There is nothing offensive with it. How so? Because where love exists, all the sins of covetousness, rapine, envy, slander, arrogance, perjury, and falsehood are done away. For men perjure themselves, in order to rob, but no one would rob him whom he loved, but would rather give him his own possessions. For we are more obliged than if we received from him. You know this, all you that have friends, friends, I mean, in reality, not in name only, but whoever loves as men ought to love, whoever is really linked to another. And let those who are ignorant of it learn from those who know.

I will now cite you from the Scriptures a wonderful instance of friendship. Jonathan, the son of Saul, loved David, and his soul was so knit to him, that David in mourning over him says, "*Your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. You were wounded unto death.*" [2 Samuel 1:25-26] What then? Did he envy David? Not at all, though he had great reason. How? Because, by the events he perceived that the kingdom would pass from himself to him, yet he felt nothing of the kind. He did not say, "*This is he that is depriving me of my paternal kingdom,*" but he

avored his obtaining the sovereignty; and he spared not his father for the sake of his friend. Yet let not any one think him a parricide, for he did not injure his father, but restrained his unjust attempts. He rather spared than injured him. He did not permit him to proceed to an unjust murder. He was many times willing even to die for his friend, and far from accusing him, he restrained even his father's accusation. Instead of envying, he joined in obtaining the kingdom for him. Why do I speak of wealth? He even sacrificed his own life for him. For the sake of his friend, he did not even stand in awe of his father, since his father entertained unjust designs, but his conscience was free from all such. Thus justice was conjoined with friendship.

Such then was Jonathan. Let us now consider David. He had no opportunity of returning the recompense, for his benefactor was taken away before the reign of David, and slain before he whom he had served came to his kingdom. What then? As far as it was allowed him and left in his power, let us see how that righteous man manifested his friendship. *"Very pleasant,"* he says, *"have you been to me, Jonathan; you were wounded unto death."* [2 Samuel 1:25, Septuagint] Is this all? This indeed was no slight tribute, but he also frequently rescued from danger his son and his grandson, in remembrance of the kindness of the father, and he continued to support and protect his children, as he would have done those of his own son. Such friendship I would wish all to entertain both towards the living and the dead.

Let women listen to this (for it is on their account especially that I refer to the departed) who enter into a second marriage, and defile the bed of their deceased husband, though they have loved him. Not that I forbid a second marriage, or pronounce it a proof of wantonness, for Paul does not allow me, stopping my mouth by saying to women, *"If she marry she has*

not sinned." [1 Corinthians 7:28-40] Yet let us attend to what follows, *"But she is happier if she so abide."* This state is much better than the other. Wherefore? For many reasons. For if it is better not to marry at all than to marry, much more in this case. *"But some, you say, could not endure widowhood, and have fallen into many misfortunes."* Yes; because they know not what widowhood is. For it is not widowhood to be exempt from a second marriage, as neither is it virginity to be altogether unmarried. For as *"that which is comely,"* and *"that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction,"* is the mark of the one state, so it is the mark of the other to be desolate, to *"continue in supplications and prayers,"* to renounce luxury and pleasure. For *"she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* [1 Timothy 5:6] If remaining a widow, you would have the same pomp, the same show, the same attire, as you had while your husband was living, it were better for you to marry. For it is not the union that is objectionable, but the multitude of cares that attend it. But that which is not wrong, thou dost not: but that which is not indifferent, which is liable to blame, in that you involve yourself. On this account *"some have turned aside after Satan,"* because they have not been able to live properly as widows.

Would you know what a widow is, and what a widow's dignity, hear Paul's account of it. *"If she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the Saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."* [1 Timothy 5:10] But when after the death of your husband, you are arrayed in the same pomp of wealth, no wonder if you can not support widowhood. Transfer this wealth, therefore, to heaven, and you will find the burden of widowhood tolerable. But, you say, what if I have children to succeed to their father's inheritance? Instruct them also to despise riches. Transfer your own possessions, reserving for them just a sufficiency. Teach them too to be

superior to riches. But what if besides my silver and gold, I am surrounded by a crowd of slaves, oppressed by a multitude of affairs, how shall I be equal to the care of all these things, when deprived of the support of my husband? This is but an excuse, a pretense, as appears from many causes. For if you do not deserve wealth, nor seek to increase your present possessions, your burden will be light. To get riches is much more laborious than to take care of them. If therefore you cut off this one thing, accumulating, and suppliest the needy out of your substance, God will hold over you His protecting hand. And if you say this from a real desire to preserve the inheritance of your fatherless children, and art not, under this pretense, possessed with covetousness; He who searches the heart knows how to secure their riches, even He who commanded you to bring up children.

For it is not possible, indeed it is not, that a house established by almsgiving should suffer any calamity. If it should be unfortunate for a time, in the end it will prosper. This will be more than spear and shield to all the household. Hear what the devil says concerning Job. *"Have you not made an hedge about him and about his house, and about all that he has on every side?"* [Job 1:10] Wherefore? Hear Job himself saying, *"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the orphans."* [Job 29:15] As he who does not turn aside from the calamities of others, will not suffer even in his own misfortunes, because he has learned to sympathize; so he who will not bear the griefs of sympathy, will learn all sorrow in his own person. And, as in the case of a bodily disease, if, when the foot is mortified, the hand does not sympathize by cleansing the wound, washing away the discharge, and applying a plaster, it will suffer the like disease of its own; so she who will not minister to another when she is not herself afflicted, will have to bear sufferings of her own. For the evil spreading

from the other part will reach to this also, and the question will not be of ministering to the other, but of its own cure and relief. So it is here also. He that will not relieve others, will be a sufferer himself. *"You have hedged him in,"* says Satan, *"within and without,"* and I dare not attack him! But he suffered afflictions, you say. True. But those afflictions were the occasion of great good. His substance was doubled, his reward increased, his righteousness enlarged, his crown was splendid, his prize glorious. Both his spiritual and temporal blessings were augmented. He lost his children, but he received, not these restored, but others in their room, and those too he had safe for the Resurrection. Had they been restored, the number would have been diminished, but now having given others in their stead, He will present them also at the Resurrection. All these things happened to him, because of his openhandedness in almsgiving. Let us then do likewise, that we may obtain the same rewards by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Homily 8 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 3:1-4]

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

If any now takes offense at the existence of heretics, let him remember that it was so from the beginning, the devil always setting up error by the side of truth. God from the beginning promised good, the devil came too with a promise. God planted Paradise, the devil deceived, saying, *"You shall be as gods."* [Genesis 3:5] For as he could show nothing in actions, he made the more promises in words. Such is the character of deceivers. After this were Cain and Abel, then the sons of Seth and the daughters of men; afterwards Ham and Japhet, Abraham and Pharaoh, Jacob and Esau; and so it is even to the end, Moses and the magicians, the Prophets and the false prophets, the Apostles and the false apostles, Christ and Antichrist. Thus it was then, both before and at that time. Then there was Theudas, then Simon, then were the Apostles, then too this party of Hermogenes and Philetus. In short, there was no time when falsehood was not set up in opposition to truth. Let us not therefore be distressed. That it would be so, was foretold from the beginning. Therefore he says, *"Know that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection."* The unthankful then is unholy, and this

is natural, for what will he be to others, who is not grateful to his benefactor? The unthankful man is a truce-breaker, he is without natural affection.

"False accusers," that is, slanderers. For those who are conscious that they have no good in themselves, while they commit many sins and offenses, find consolation in defaming the characters of others.

"Incontinent," with respect both to their tongue and their appetite, and everything else.

"Fierce," hence their inhumanity and cruelty, when any one is covetous, selfish, ungrateful, licentious.

"Despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady." "Traitors," betrayers of friendship; *"heady,"* having no steadiness; *"high-minded,"* filled with arrogance. *"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."*

Ver. 5. *"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."*

In the Epistle to the Romans, he says somewhat on this wise, *"Having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law"* [Romans 2:20], where he speaks in commendation of it: but here he speaks of this sin as an evil beyond all other defects. And why is this? Because he does not use the words in the same signification. For an image is often taken to signify a likeness; but sometimes a thing without life, and worthless. Thus he says himself in his Epistle to the Corinthians, *"A man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God."* [1 Corinthians 11:7] But the Prophet says, *"Man walks in an image."* [Psalm 39:9, Septuagint] And the Scripture sometimes takes a lion to represent royalty, as, *"He couched as a lion, and as a lion's cub, who shall raise him up?"* [Genesis 49:9, Septuagint] And sometimes to signify rapacity, as, *"a ravening and a roaring lion."* [Psalm 22:13] And we ourselves do the same. For as things are compounded and varied in themselves, they are fitly adduced for

various images and examples. As when we would express our admiration of a beautiful woman, we say, she is like a picture; and when we admire a painting, we say that it speaks, that it breathes. But we do not mean to express the same thing, but in one case to mark likeness, in the other beauty. So here with respect to form, in the one passage, it means a model, or representation, a doctrine, or pattern of godliness; in the other, something that is lifeless, a mere appearance, show, and hypocrisy. Faith therefore, without works, is fitly called a mere form without the power. For as a fair and florid body, when it has no strength, is like a painted figure, so is a right faith apart from works. For let us suppose any one to be "*covetous, a traitor, heady,*" and yet to believe aright; of what advantage is it, if he wants all the qualities becoming a Christian, if he does not the works that characterize godliness, but outdoes the Greeks in impiety, when he is a mischief to those with whom he associates, causes God to be blasphemed, and the doctrine to be slandered by his evil deeds?

"From such turn away," he says. But how is this, if men are to be so "*in the latter times*"? There were probably then such, in some degree at least, though not to the same excess. But, in truth, through him he warns all to turn away from such characters.

Ver. 6. *"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with various lust."*

Ver. 7. *"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

Do you see them employing the artifice of that old deceiver, the weapons which the devil used against Adam? *"Entering into houses,"* he says. Observe how he shows their impudence by this expression, their dishonorable ways, their deceitfulness. *"Leading captive silly women,"* so that he who is easy to be deceived is a "*silly woman,*" and nothing like a

man: for to be deceived is the part of silly women. *"Laden with sins."* See whence arises their persuasion, from their sins, from their being conscious to themselves of nothing good! And with great propriety has he said *"laden."* For this expression marks the multitude of their sins, and their state of disorder and confusion; *"led away with various lusts."* He does not accuse nature, for it is not women simply, but such women as these, that he blames. And why *"various lusts"*? By that are implied their various faults, their luxury, their disorderly conduct, their wantonness. *"Divers lust,"* he says, that is, of glory, of wealth, of pleasure, of self-will, of honor: and perchance other vile desires are implied.

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." He does not say thus to excuse, but to threaten them severely; for their understanding was callous, because they had weighed themselves down with lusts and sins.

Ver. 8. *"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth."*

Who are these? The magicians in the time of Moses. But how is it their names are nowhere else introduced? Either they were handed down by tradition, or it is probable that Paul knew them by inspiration.

"Men of corrupt minds," he says, *"reprobate concerning the faith."*

Ver. 9. *"But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifested unto all men, as theirs also was."*

"They shall proceed no further"; how then does he say elsewhere, *"They will increase unto more ungodliness"*? [2 Timothy 2:16] He there means, that beginning to innovate and to deceive, they will not pause in their error, but will always invent new deceits and corrupt doctrines, for error is never stationary. But here he says, that they shall not be able to deceive, nor carry men away with them, for however at first they may seem

to impose upon them, they will soon and easily be detected. For that he is speaking to this effect appears from what follows. *"For their folly shall be manifest unto all."* Whence? Every way— *"as theirs also was."* For if errors flourish at first, they do not continue to the end, for so it is with things that are not fair by nature, but fair in appearance; they flourish for a time, and then are detected, and come to nought. But not such are our doctrines, and of these you are a witness, for in our doctrines there is no deceit, for who would choose to die for a deceit?

Ver. 10. *"But you have fully known my doctrine."* Wherefore be strong; for thou were not merely present, but followed closely. Here he seems to imply that the period had been long, in that he says, *"You have followed up my doctrine"*; this refers to his discourse. *"Manner of life"*; this to his conduct. *"Purpose"*; this to his zeal, and the firmness of his soul. I did not say these things, he says, and not do them; nor was I a philosopher in words only. *"Faith, longsuffering."* He means, how none of these things troubled me. *"Charity,"* which those men had not; *"patience,"* nor yet this. Towards the heretics, he means, I show much longsuffering; *"patience,"* that under persecution.

Ver. 11. *"Persecutions, afflictions."*

There are two things that disquiet a teacher, the number of heretics, and men's wanting fortitude to endure sufferings. And yet he has said much about these, that such always have been, and always will be, and no age will be free from them, and that they will not be able to injure us, and that in the world there are vessels of gold and of silver. You see how he proceeds to discourse about his afflictions, *"which came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra."*

Why has he selected these instances out of many? Because the rest was known to Timothy, and these perhaps were new events, and he does not

mention the former ones, for he is not enumerating them particularly, for he is not actuated by ambition or vainglory, but he recounts them for the consolation of his disciple, not from ostentation. And here he speaks of Antioch in Pisidia, and Lystra, whence Timothy himself was. *"What persecutions I endured."* There was twofold matter of consolation, that I displayed a generous zeal, and that I was not forsaken. It cannot be said, that God abandoned me, but He rendered my crown more radiant.

"What persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me."

Ver. 12. *"Yea, and all those that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."*

But why, he says, should I speak only of myself? Each one that will live godly will be persecuted. Here he calls afflictions and sorrows, *"persecutions,"* for it is not possible that a man pursuing the course of virtue should not be exposed to grief, tribulation, and temptations. For how can he escape it who is treading in the strait and narrow way, and who has heard, that *"in the world you shall have tribulation"*? [John 16:33] If Job in his time said, *"The life of man upon earth is a state of trial"* [Job 7:1, Septuagint]; how much more was it so in those days?

Ver. 13. *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."*

Let none of these things, he says, disturb you, if they are in prosperity, and thou in trials. Such is the nature of the case. From my own instance you may learn that it is impossible for man, in his warfare with the wicked, not to be exposed to tribulation. One cannot be in combat and live luxuriously, one cannot be wrestling and feasting. Let none therefore of those who are contending seek for ease or joyous living. Again, the present state is contest, warfare, tribulation, straits, and trials, and the very scene of

conflicts. The season for rest is not now, this is the time for toil and labor. No one who has just stripped and anointed himself thinks of ease. If you think of ease, why did you strip, or prepare to fight? *"But do I not maintain the fight?"* you say. What, when you do not conquer your desires, nor resist the evil bias of nature?

Ver. 14. *"But continue thou in the things that you have learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them; And that from a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through the faith which in Christ Jesus."*

What is this? As the prophet David exhorted, saying, *"Be not thou envious against the workers of iniquity"* [Psalm 37:1], so Paul exhorts, *"Continue thou in the things which you have learned,"* and not simply learned, but *"hast been assured of,"* that is, hast believed. And what have I believed? That this is the Life. And if you see things happening contrary to your belief, be not troubled. The same happened to Abraham, yet he was not affected at it. He had heard, *"In Isaac shall your seed be called"* [Genesis 21:12]; and he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac, yet he was not troubled nor dismayed. Let no one be offended because of the wicked. This the Scripture taught from the beginning.

What then, if the good be in prosperity, and the wicked be punished? The one is likely to happen, the other not so. For the wicked will possibly be punished, but the good cannot always be rejoicing. No one was equal to Paul, yet he passed all his life in afflictions, in tears and groanings night and day. *"For the space of three years,"* he says, *"I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."* [Acts 20:31] And again: *"That which comes upon me daily."* [1 Corinthians 11:28] He did not rejoice today, and grieve tomorrow, but he ceased not daily to grieve. How then does he say, *"Evil men shall wax worse and worse"*? He has not said, they shall find rest, but

"they shall wax worse and worse." Their progress is for the worse. He has not said, they shall be in prosperity. But if they are punished, they are punished that you may not suppose their sins are unavenged. For since we are not deterred from wickedness by the fear of hell, in very tenderness He rouses us from our insensibility, and awakens us. If no wicked man was ever punished, no one would believe that God presides over human affairs. If all were punished, no one would expect a future resurrection, since all had received their due here. On this account He both punishes, and forbears to punish. On this account the righteous suffer tribulation here, because they are sojourners, and strangers, and are in a foreign country. The just therefore endure these things for the purpose of trial. For hear what God said to Job: *"Do you think that I have warned you otherwise, than that you might appear just?"* [Job 40:3, Septuagint] But sinners when they endure any affliction suffer but the punishment of their sins. Under all circumstances, therefore, whether afflictive or otherwise, let us give thanks to God. For both are beneficial. He does nothing in hatred or enmity to us, but all things from care and consideration for us.

"Knowing that from a child you have known the sacred writings." The holy Scriptures he calls *"sacred writings."* In these you were nurtured, so that through them your faith ought to be firm and unshaken. For the root was laid deep, and nourished by length of time, nor will anything subvert it.

And speaking of the holy Scriptures, he has added, *"Which are able to make you wise,"* that is, they will not suffer you to have any foolish feeling, such as most men have. For he who knows the Scriptures as he ought, is not offended at anything that happens; he endures all things manfully, referring them partly to faith, and to the incomprehensible nature of the divine dispensation, and partly knowing reasons for them, and finding examples in the Scriptures. Since it is a great sign of knowledge not to be curious about

everything, nor to wish to know all things. And if you will allow me, I will explain myself by an example. Let us suppose a river, or rather rivers (I ask no allowance, I only speak of what rivers really are,) all are not of the same depth. Some have a shallow bed, others one deep enough to drown one unacquainted with it. In one part there are whirlpools, and not in another. It is good therefore to forbear to make trial of all, and it is no small proof of knowledge not to wish to sound all the depths: whereas he that would venture on every part of the river, is really most ignorant of the peculiar nature of rivers, and will often be in danger of perishing, from venturing into the deeper parts with the same boldness with which he crossed the shallows. So it is in the things of God. He that will know all things, and ventures to intrude into everything, he it is that is most ignorant what God is. And of rivers indeed, the greater part is safe, and the depths and whirlpools few, but with respect to the things of God, the greater part is hidden, and it is not possible to trace out His works. Why then are you bent on drowning yourself in those depths?

Know this, however, that God dispenses all things, that He provides for all, that we are free agents, that some things He works, and some things He permits; that He wills nothing evil to be done; that all things are not done by His will, but some by ours also; all evil things by ours alone, all good things by our will conjointly with His influence; and that nothing is without His knowledge. Therefore He works all things. Thou then knowing this canst reckon what things are good, what are evil, and what are indifferent. Thus virtue is good, vice is evil; but riches and poverty, life and death, are things indifferent. If you know this, you will know thereby, that the righteous are afflicted that they may be crowned, the wicked, that they may receive the punishment of their sins. But all sinners are not punished here, lest the generality should disbelieve the Resurrection; nor all the

righteous afflicted, lest men should think that vice, and not virtue, is approved. These are the rules and limits. Bring what you will to the test of these, and you will not be perplexed with doubt. For as there is among calculators the number of six thousand, to which all things can be reduced, and everything can be divided and multiplied in the scale of six thousand, and this is known to all who are acquainted with arithmetic; so he who knows those rules, which I will briefly recapitulate, will never be offended. And what are these? That virtue is a good, vice an evil; that diseases, poverty, ill-treatment, false accusations, and the like, are things indifferent; that the righteous are afflicted here, or if ever they are in prosperity, it is that virtue may not appear odious; that the wicked enjoy pleasure now that hereafter they may be punished, or if they are sometimes visited, it is that vice may not seem to be approved, nor their actions to go unpunished; that all are not punished, lest there should be a disbelief of the time of resurrection; that even of the good, some who have done bad actions are quit of them here; and of the wicked, some have good ones, and are rewarded for them here, that their wickedness may be punished hereafter [Matthew 6:5]; that the works of God are for the most part incomprehensible, and that the difference between us and Him is greater than can be expressed. If we reason on these grounds, nothing will be able to trouble or perplex us. If we listen to the Scriptures continually, we shall find many such examples.

"Which are able," he says, "to make you wise unto salvation."

For the Scriptures suggest to us what is to be done, and what is not to be done. For hear this blessed one elsewhere saying, *"You are confident that you yourself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes."* [Romans 2:19-20] You see that the Law is the light of them which are in darkness; and if that which

shows the letter, the letter which kills, is light, what then is the Spirit which quickens? If the Old Covenant is light, what is the New, which contains so many, and so great revelations? Where the difference is as great, as if any one should open heaven to those who only know the earth, and make all things there visible. There we learn concerning hell, heaven, and judgment. Let us not believe in things irrational. They are nothing but imposture.

"What," you say, *"when what they foretell comes to pass?"* It is because you believe it, if it does come to pass. The impostor has taken you captive. Your life is in his power, he manages you as he will. If a captain of robbers should have under his power and disposal the son of a king, who had fled to him, preferring the desert, and his lawless company, would he be able to pronounce whether he would live or die? Assuredly he would, not because he knows the future, but because he is the disposer of his life or death, the youth having put himself in his power. For according to his own pleasure, he may either kill him, or spare his life, as he has become subject to him, and it is equally at his disposal to say whether you shall be rich or poor. The greater part of the world have delivered themselves up into the hands of the devil.

And furthermore, it contributes much to favor the pretenses of these deceivers, that a man has accustomed himself to believe in them. For no one takes notice of their failures, but their lucky conjectures are observed. But if these men have any power of prognosticating, bring them to me, a believer. I say not this, as magnifying myself, (for it is no great honor to be superior to these things,) and indeed I am deep-laden with sins; but with respect to these matters, I will not be humble-minded; by the grace of God I despise them all. Bring me this pretender to magic; let him, if he has any power of prognosticating, tell me what will happen to me tomorrow. But he will not tell me. For I am under the power of the King, and he has no claim to my

allegiance or submission. I am far from his holes and caverns. I war under the king. *"But some one committed theft,"* you say, *"and this man discovered it."* This is not always true, certainly, but for the most part absurdities and falsehoods. For they know nothing. If indeed they know anything, they ought rather to speak of their own concerns, how the numerous offerings to their idols have been stolen, how so much of their gold has been melted. Why have they not informed their Priests? Even for the sake of money, they have not been able to give information when their idol-temples have been burnt, and many have perished with them. Why do they not provide for their own safety? But it is altogether a matter of chance, if they have predicted anything. With us there are prophets, and they do not fail. They do not speak truth in one instance and falsehood in another, but always declare the truth; for this is the privilege of foreknowledge.

Cease, then, from this madness, I beseech you, if at least you believe in Christ; and if you believe not, why do you expose yourselves? Why do you deceive? *"How long will you halt on both your hips?"* [1 Kings 18:21, Septuagint] Why do you go to them? Why enquire of them? The instant you go to them, the instant you enquire, you put yourself in slavery to them. For you enquire, as if you believed. *"No,"* you say, *"I do not enquire, as believing, but making trial of them."* But to make trial, whether they speak the truth, is the part not of one who believes that they are false, but of one who still doubts. Wherefore then do you enquire what will happen? For if they answered, *"This will happen, but do so and so, and you will escape it";* even in that case you ought by no means to be an idolater; yet your madness were not so great. But if they foretell future events, he that listens to them will gain nothing more than unavailing sorrow. The event does not happen, but he suffers the uneasiness, and torments, himself.

If it were for our good, God would not have grudged us this foreknowledge. He who has revealed to us things in heaven, would not have envied us. For, *"All things,"* He says, *"that I have heard of the Father I have made known unto you";* and, *"I call you not servants, but friends. You are my friends."* [John 15:15] Why then did He not make these things known unto us? Because He would not have us concerned about them. And as a proof that He does not envy us this knowledge, such things were revealed to the ancients, because they were babes, even about an ass, and the like. But to us, because He would not have us concerned about such things, He has not cared to reveal them. But what do we learn? Things which they never knew, for little indeed were all those things of old. But what we are taught is this, that we shall rise again, that we shall be immortal, and incorruptible, that our life shall have no end, that all things will pass away, that we shall be caught up in the clouds, that the wicked shall suffer punishment, and numberless other things, and in all these there is no falsehood. Is it not better to know these than to hear that the ass that was lost is found? Lo, you have gotten your ass! Lo, you have found him! What is your gain? Will he not soon be lost again some other way? For if he leave you not, at least you will lose him in your death. But the things which I have mentioned, if we will but hold them fast, we shall retain perpetually. These therefore let us pursue. To these stable and enduring goods let us attach ourselves. Let us not give heed to soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and jugglers, but to God who knows all things certainly, whose knowledge is universal. Thus we shall know all that it befits us to know, and shall obtain all good things, through the grace and lovingkindness, etc.

Homily 9 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 3:16, 17]

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

[R.V.: Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable, etc.]

Having offered much exhortation and consolation from other sources, he adds that which is more perfect, derived from the Scriptures; and he is reasonably full in offering consolation, because he has a great and sad thing to say. For if Elisha, who was with his master to his last breath, when he saw him departing as it were in death, rent his garments for grief, what think you must this disciple suffer, so loving and so beloved, upon hearing that his master was about to die, and that he could not enjoy his company when he was near his death, which is above all things apt to be distressing? For we are less grateful for the past time, when we have been deprived of the more recent intercourse of those who are departed. For this reason when he had previously offered much consolation, he then discourses concerning his own death: and this in no ordinary way, but in words adapted to comfort him and fill him with joy; so as to have it considered as a sacrifice rather than a death; a migration, as in fact it was, and a removal to a better state. *"For I am now ready to be offered up"* [2 Timothy 4:6], he says. For this reason he writes: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."* All what Scripture? All that sacred writing, he means, of which I was speaking. This is said of what he was discoursing of; about which he said, *"From a child you have known the holy Scriptures."* All

such, then, *"is given by inspiration of God"*; therefore, he means, do not doubt; and it is *"profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*

"For doctrine." For thence we shall know, whether we ought to learn or to be ignorant of anything. And thence we may disprove what is false, thence we may be corrected and brought to a right mind, may be comforted and consoled, and if anything is deficient, we may have it added to us.

"That the man of God may be perfect." For this is the exhortation of the Scripture given, that the man of God may be rendered perfect by it; without this therefore he cannot be perfect. You have the Scriptures, he says, in place of me. If you would learn anything, you may learn it from them. And if he thus wrote to Timothy, who was filled with the Spirit, how much more to us!

"Thoroughly furnished unto all good works"; not merely taking part in them, he means, but *"thoroughly furnished."*

Chap. iv. 1. *"I charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead."*

He either means the wicked and the just, or the departed and those that are still living; for many will be left alive. In the former Epistle he raised his fears, saying, *"I give you charge in the sight of God, Who quickens all things"* [1 Timothy 6:13]: but here he sets before him what is more dreadful, *"Who shall judge the quick and the dead,"* that is, Who shall call them to account *"at His appearing and His kingdom."* When shall He judge? At His appearing with glory, and in His kingdom. Either he says this to show that He will not come in the way that He now has come, or, *"I call to witness His coming, and His kingdom."* He calls Him to witness, showing

that he had reminded Him of that appearing. Then teaching him how he ought to preach the word, he adds,

Ver. 2. *"Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."*

What means *"in season, out of season"*? That is, have not any limited season: let it always be your season, not only in peace and security, and when sitting in the Church. Whether thou be in danger, in prison, in chains, or going to your death, at that very time reprove. Withhold not rebuke, for reproof is then most seasonable, when your rebuke will be most successful, when the reality is proved. *"Exhort,"* he says. After the manner of physicians, having shown the wound, he gives the incision, he applies the plaster. For if you omit either of these, the other becomes useless. If you rebuke without convicting, you will seem to be rash, and no one will tolerate it, but after the matter is proved, he will submit to rebuke: before, he will be headstrong. And if you convict and rebuke, but vehemently, and do not apply exhortation, all your labor will be lost. For conviction is intolerable in itself if consolation be not mingled with it. As if incision, though salutary in itself, have not plenty of lenitives to assuage the pain, the patient cannot endure cutting and hacking, so it is in this matter.

"With all longsuffering and doctrine." For he that reproves is required to be longsuffering, that he may not believe hastily, and rebuke needs consolation, that it may be received as it ought. And why to *"longsuffering"* does he add *"doctrine"*? *"Not as in anger, not as in hatred, not as insulting over him, not as having caught an enemy. Far be these things from you."* But how? As loving as sympathizing with him, as more distressed than himself at his grief, as melted at his sufferings? *"With all longsuffering and doctrine."* No ordinary teaching is implied.

Ver. 3. *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."*

Before they grow stiffnecked, preoccupy them all. For this reason he says, *"in season, out of season"*; do everything, so as to have willing disciples.

"But after their own lusts," he says, *"shall they heap to themselves teachers."*

Nothing can be more expressive than these words. For by saying *"they shall heap to themselves,"* he shows the indiscriminate multitude of the teachers, as also by their being elected by their disciples. *"They shall heap to themselves teachers,"* he says, *"having itching ears."* Seeking for such as speak to gratify and delight their hearers.

Ver. 4. *"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables."*

This he foretells, not as willing to throw him into despair, but to prepare him to bear it firmly, when it shall happen. As Christ also did in saying, *"They will deliver you up, and they will scourge you, and bring you before the synagogues, for My name's sake."* [Matthew 10:17] And this blessed man elsewhere says, *"For I know this, that after my departures shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."* [511 xx. 29] But this he said that they might watch, and duly use the present opportunity.

Ver. 5. *"But watch thou in all things, endure affliction."*

It was for this therefore, that he foretold these things; as Christ also toward the end predicted that there should be *"false Christs and false prophets"*; so he too, when he was about to depart, spoke of these things. *"But watch thou in all things, endure affliction"*; that is, labor, preoccupy

their minds before this pestilence assails them; secure the safety of the sheep before the wolves enter in, everywhere endure hardship.

"Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry." Thus it was the work of an evangelist that he should endure hardship, both in himself, and from those without; *"make full proof of"* that is, fulfill *"your ministry."* And behold another necessity for his enduring affliction,

Ver. 6. *"For I am now ready to be poured out, and the time of my departure is at hand."*

He has not said of my sacrifice; but, what is much more, *"of my being poured out."* For the whole of the sacrifice was not offered to God, but the whole of the drink-offering was.

Ver. 7. *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."*

Often, when I have taken the Apostle into my hands, and have considered this passage, I have been at a loss to understand why Paul here speaks so loftily: *"I have fought the good fight."* But now by the grace of God I seem to have found it out. For what purpose then does he speak thus? He is desirous to console the despondency of his disciple, and therefore bids him be of good cheer, since he was going to his crown, having finished all his work, and obtained a glorious end. You ought to rejoice, he says, not to grieve. And why? Because, *"I have fought the good fight."* As a father whose son was sitting by him, bewailing his orphan state, might console him, saying, Weep not, my son; we have lived a good life, we have arrived at old age, and now we leave you. Our life has been irreproachable, we depart with glory, and you may be held in admiration for our actions. Our king is much indebted to us. As if he had said, We have raised trophies, we have conquered enemies, and this not boastfully. God forbid; but to raise up his dejected son, and to encourage him by his praises to bear firmly what

had happened, to entertain good hopes, and not to think it a matter grievous to be borne. For sad, sad indeed is separation; and hear Paul himself, saying, "*We being bereaved of you for a short time, in presence, not in heart.*" [1 Thessalonians 2:17] If he then felt so much at being separated from his disciples, what do you think were the feelings of Timothy? If on parting from him while living he wept, so that Paul says, "*Being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy.*" [2 Timothy 1:4], how much more at his death? These things then he wrote to console him. Indeed the whole Epistle is full of consolation, and is a sort of Testament. "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*" "*A good fight,*" he says, therefore do thou engage in it. But is that a good fight, where there are imprisonment, chains, and death? Yea, he says for it is fought in the cause of Christ, and great crowns are won in it. "*The good fight*"! There is no worthier than this contest. This crown is without end. This is not of olive leaves. It has not a human umpire. It has not men for spectators. The theater is crowded with Angels. There men labor many days, and suffer hardships, and for one hour they receive the crown, and immediately all the pleasure passes away. But here far otherwise, it continues for ever in brightness, glory, and honor. Henceforth we ought to rejoice. For I am entering on my rest, I am leaving the race. You have heard that "*it is better to depart and to be with Christ.*"

I have finished "*the course.*" For it behooves us both to contend and to run; to contend, by enduring afflictions firmly, and to run, not vainly, but to some good end. It is truly a good fight, not only delighting, but benefiting the spectator: and the race does not end in nothing. It is not a mere display of strength and of rivalry. It draws all up to heaven. This race is brighter than the sun's, yea, this which Paul ran upon earth, than that which he runs in heaven. And how had he "*finished his course*"? He traversed the whole

world, beginning from Galilee and Arabia, and advancing to the extremities of the each, so that, as he says, *"From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."* [Romans 15:19] He passed over the earth like a bird, or rather more swiftly than a bird: for a bird only flies over it, but he, having the wing of the Spirit, made his way through numberless impediments, dangers, deaths, and calamities, so that he was even fleetier than a bird. Had he been a mere bird, he might have alighted and been taken, but being upborne by the Spirit he soared above all snares, as a bird with a wing of fire.

"I have kept the faith," he says. There were many things that would have robbed him of it, not only human friendships, but menaces, and death, and countless other perils: but he stood firm against all. How? By being sober and watchful. This might have sufficed for the consolation of his disciples, but he further adds the rewards. And what are these?

Ver. 8. *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."*

Here again he calls virtue in general righteousness. You should not grieve that I shall depart, to be invested with that crown which will by Christ be placed upon my head. But if I continued here, truly your might rather grieve, and fear lest I should fail and perish.

Ver. 8. *"Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all that love His appearing."*

Here also he raises his mind. If *"to all,"* much more to Timothy. But he did not say, *"and to you,"* but *"to all";* meaning, if to all, much more to him.

Moral. But how, it may be asked, is one to *"love the appearing"* ([τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν]) of Christ? By rejoicing at His coming; and he who rejoices at His coming, will perform works worthy of His joy; he will throw away his substance if need be, and even his life, so that he may obtain future blessings, that he may be thought worthy to behold that second coming in a

fitting state, in confidence, in brightness and glory. This is to *"love His appearing."* He who loves His appearing will do everything to ensure, before His general coming, a particular coming to himself. And how, you will say, is this possible? Hear from Christ, who says, *"If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father and I will come unto him, and make Our abode with him."* [John 14:23] And think how great a privilege it is that He who will appear to all generally, should promise to come to us in particular: for He says, *"We will come and make Our abode with him."* If any man *"love His appearing,"* he will do everything to invite Him to himself, and to hold Him, that the light may shine upon him. Let there be nothing unworthy of His coming, and He will soon take up His abode with us.

And it is called His *"Epiphany,"* because He will appear above, and shine forth from on high. Let us therefore *"seek those things that are above,"* and we shall soon draw down those beams upon us. None of those who grovel below, and bury themselves in this lower earth, will be able to view the light of that Sun. None of those who defile themselves with worldly things will be able to behold that Sun of righteousness. He shines on none of those who are so occupied. Recover yourself a little, recover yourself from that depth, from the waves of a worldly life, if you would see the Sun, and enjoy His appearing. Then you will see Him with great confidence. Be even now a philosopher. Let not a spirit of perverseness possess you, lest He smite you severely, and bring you low. Let not your heart be hardened; nor darkened, lest you be shipwrecked there. Let there be no self-deceit. For the rocks beneath the sea cause the most fatal shipwrecks. Nourish no wild beasts, I mean evil passions, worse than wild beasts. Confide not in things ever flowing, that you may be able to stand firmly. None can stand upon water, but upon a rock all find a secure footing.

Worldly things are as water, as a torrent, that passes away. "*The waters*," he says, "*have come in unto my soul*." [Psalm 69:1] Spiritual things are as a rock. For he says, "*You have set my feet upon a rock*." [Psalm 40:2] Worldly things are as mire and clay; let us extricate ourselves from them. For so we shall be able to attain to the appearing of Christ. Whatever may befall us, let us endure. It is a sufficient consolation in all circumstances that we suffer for Christ. This divine incantation let us repeat, and it will charm away the pain of every wound.

And how can we suffer for Christ, you ask? If one accuse you falsely in any case, not on account of Christ, yet if you bear it patiently, if you give thanks, if you pray for him, all this you do for Christ. But if you curse him, if you utter discontent, if you attempt to revenge it, though you should not be able, it is not for Christ's sake; you suffer loss, and art deprived of your reward on account of your intention. For it rests with us either to profit, or to be injured, by afflictions. It depends not upon the nature of the affliction, but upon the disposition of our own minds. As, for instance, great were the sufferings of Job, yet he suffered with thankfulness; and he was justified, not because he suffered, but because in suffering he endured it thankfully. Another under the same sufferings, yet not the same, for none ever suffered like Job— but under lighter sufferings, exclaims, is impatient, curses the whole world, and complains against God. He is condemned and sentenced, not because he suffered, but because he blasphemed; and he blasphemed, not from any necessity arising from his afflictions, since if necessity arising from events were the cause, Job too must have blasphemed; but since he, who suffered more severely, did no such thing, it did not come to pass from this cause, but from the man's weakness of purpose. We want therefore strength of soul, and nothing will then appear grievous, but if our soul is weak, we find a grievance in everything.

According to our dispositions, all things become tolerable or intolerable. Let us strengthen our resolution, and we shall bear all things easily. The tree whose roots are fixed deep in the earth is not shaken by the utmost violence of the storm, but if it be set lightly in the surface of the ground, a slight gust of wind will tear it up from the roots. So it is with us; if our flesh be nailed down by the fear of God, nothing will be able to shake us; but if we merely intend well, a little shock will subvert and destroy us. Wherefore, I exhort, let us bear all with much cheerfulness, imitating the Prophet, who says, *"My soul cleaves to You"*; observe, he says not, draws near, but *"cleaves to You"*; and again, *"My soul thirsts for You."* [Psalm 62:3] He said not merely *"longs,"* that he might by such words express the vehemence of his desire; and again, *"Fix my flesh in Your fear."* [Psalm 118:120, Septuagint] For he wishes us so to cleave and be united to Him, that we may never be separated from Him. If thus we hold by God, if thus we rivet our thoughts upon Him, if we thirst with the love of Him, all that we desire will be ours, and we shall obtain the good things to come, in Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever. Amen.

Homily 10 on Second Timothy

[2 Timothy 4:9-13]

"Do your diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when you come, bring with you, and the books, but especially the parchments."

It is worth while to enquire why he calls Timothy to him, inasmuch as he was entrusted with a Church, and a whole nation. It was not from arrogance. For Paul was ready to come to him; for we find him saying, *"But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God."* [1 Timothy 3:15] But he was withholden by a strong necessity. He was no longer master of his own movements. He was in prison, and had been confined by Nero, and was all but on the point of death. That this might not happen before he saw his disciple, he therefore sends for him, desiring to see him before he dies, and perhaps to deliver much in charge to him. Wherefore he says, *"Hasten to come to me before the winter."*

"For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." He does not say, *"That I may see you before I depart this life,"* which would have grieved him, but *"because I am alone,"* he says, *"and have no one to help or support me."*

"For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed to Thessalonica"; that is, having loved his own ease and security

from danger, he has chosen rather to live luxuriously at home, than to suffer hardships with me, and share my present danger. He has blamed him alone, not for the sake of blaming him, but to confirm us, that we may not be effeminate in declining toils and dangers, for this is, *"having loved this present world."* At the same time he wishes to draw his disciple to him.

"Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia."

These he does not censure. For Titus was one of the most admirable men, so that to him he entrusted the affairs of the island, no small island, I mean, but that great one of Crete.

"Only Luke is with me." For he adhered to him inseparably. It was he who wrote the Gospel, and the General Acts; he was devoted to labors, and to learning, and a man of fortitude; of him Paul writes, *"whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches."* [2 Corinthians 8:18]

"Take Mark, and bring him with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

It is not for his own relief, but for the ministry of the Gospel that he wanted him. For though imprisoned, he did not cease to preach. So it was on the same account he sent for Timothy, not for his own, but for the Gospel's sake, that his death might occasion no disturbance to the faithful, when many of his own disciples were present to prevent tumults, and to console those who would scarce have endurance to bear up at his death. For it is probable that the believers at Rome were men of consequence.

"And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when you come bring with you, and the books, but especially the parchments."

The word here translated *"cloak"* may mean a garment, or, as some say, a bag, in which the books were contained. But what had he to do with books, who was about to depart and go to God? He needed them much, that

he might deposit them in the hands of the faithful, who would retain them in place of his own teaching. All the faithful, then, would suffer a great blow, but particularly those who were present at his death, and then enjoyed his society. But the cloak he requires, that he might not be obliged to receive one from another. For we see him making a great point of avoiding this; and elsewhere, when he was addressing those from Ephesus, he says, *"You know that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to those that were with me"* [Acts 20:34-35]; and again, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

Ver. 14. *"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works."*

Here he again makes mention of his trial, not wishing merely to censure and accuse the man, but to prepare his disciple for the conflicts, that he might bear them firmly. Though they be mean and contemptible persons, and without honor, who cause these trials, they ought all, he says, to be borne with fortitude. For he who suffers wrong from any great personage, receives no little distinction from the superiority of him who does the wrong. But he who is injured by a vile and abject person, suffers the greater annoyance. *"He did me much evil,"* he says, that is, he persecuted me in various ways. But these things will not go unpunished! For the Lord will reward him according to his works. As he said above: *"What persecutions I endured, but out of them all the Lord delivered me."* [2 Timothy 3:11] So also here he consoles his disciples by a double consideration, that he himself had suffered wrong, and that the other would be rewarded for his evil deeds. Not that the Saints rejoice in the punishment of their persecutors, but that the cause of the Gospel required it, and the weaker would derive consolation from it.

Ver. 15. *"Of whom also beware; for he has greatly withstood our words."*

That is, he is hostile to us, and opposes us. He has not said, Revenge, punish, expel him, although by the grace given him he might have so done, but he does no such thing; nor does he arm Timothy against him, but only commands him to avoid him, leaving vengeance to God, and for the consolation of the weaker he has said that He will reward him, which is a prophecy rather than an imprecation. And that he says these things to prepare the mind of his disciple, is manifest also from what follows. But see how he mentions other of his trials.

Ver. 16. *"At my first answer,"* he says, *"no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."*

Do you see how he spares his friends, notwithstanding it was a grievous thing they had done? For it is not the same thing to be despised by aliens, as by our own friends. Do you see his intense dejection? It cannot be said, that I was assailed by those without, but had comfort in the attention and support of my friends; for these also betrayed me. *"All men,"* he says, *"forsook me."* And this was no light offense. For if he that in war abandons one who is exposed to danger, and shrinks from meeting the hands of his enemies, is justly smitten by his friends, as having utterly betrayed their cause, much more in the case of the Gospel. But what *"first answer,"* does he speak of? He had stood before Nero, and had escaped. But afterwards, because he had converted his cup-bearer, he was beheaded. And here again is encouragement for his disciple in what follows.

Ver. 17. *"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me."*

Though deserted by man, God does not permit him to suffer any harm. He strengthened me, he says, that is, He gave me boldness in speaking. He

suffered me not to sink.

"That by me the preaching might be fully known."

That is, might be fulfilled. Observe his great humility. He does not say He strengthened me as deserving of His gift, but that *"the preaching,"* with which I was entrusted, *"might be fully known."* As if any one should wear a purple robe and a diadem, and to that circumstance should owe his safety.

"And that all the Gentiles might hear."

What is this? That the luster of the Gospel, and the care of His Providence for me, might be known to all.

"And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

Ver. 18. *"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work."*

See how near he had been to death. He had fallen into the very jaws of the lion. For he calls Nero a lion from his ferocity, and the violent and daring character of his government. *"The Lord delivered me,"* he says, *"and will deliver."* But if he says, *"He will deliver me,"* why does he say, *"I am ready to be offered"*? Attend to the expression, *"He delivered me,"* he says, *"from the lion's mouth";* and again, *"He will deliver me,"* not from the lion's mouth, but *"from every evil work."* For then He delivered me from the danger; but now that enough has been done for the Gospel, He will yet again deliver me from every sin, that is, He will not suffer me to depart with condemnation. For that he should be able to *"resist unto blood striving against sin"* [Hebrews 12:4], and not yield, is a deliverance from another lion, even the devil, so that this preservation is greater than the former when he seems to be given up.

"And will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

This then is salvation, when we shine forth there. But what means, *"He will preserve me unto His kingdom"*? He will deliver me from all blame,

and preserve me there. For this is to be preserved unto His kingdom, to die here on account of it. For *"He that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."* [John 12:25]

"To whom be glory." Lo, here is a doxology to the Son.

Ver. 19. *"Salute Priscilla and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus."*

For he was then in Rome, of whom he said *"The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day."* [2 Timothy 1:18] By this naming of him, he makes those of his household also more zealous in such good actions.

"Salute Priscilla and Aquila." These are they of whom he makes continual mention, with whom too he had lodged, and who had taken Apollos to them. He names the woman first, as being I suppose more zealous, and more faithful, for she had then received Apollos; or it might be done indifferently. And it was to them no slight consolation to be thus saluted. It conveyed a demonstration of esteem and love, and a participation in much grace. For the bare salutation of that holy and blessed man was sufficient to fill with grace him who received it.

Ver. 20. *"Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick."*

This Trophimus and Tychicus, we know from the book of the Acts, sailed away with him from Judea, and were everywhere his companions, perhaps as being more zealous than the rest.

"Trophimus I have left at Miletum sick." Why then did you not heal him, instead of leaving him? The Apostles could not do everything, or they did not dispense miraculous gifts upon all occasions, lest more should be ascribed to them than was right. The same thing is observable of those blessed and righteous men, who were before them, as in the case of Moses,

whose voice was weak. Why was not this defect removed? Nay, he was often afflicted with grief and dejection, and he was not admitted into the Land of Promise.

For many things were permitted by God, that the weakness of human nature might be manifested. And if with these defects the insensible Jews could ask, Where is Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt [Exodus 32:1]? How would they not have been affected towards him if he had brought them also into the Land of Promise? If he had not been suffered to be overpowered by the fear of Pharaoh, would they not have thought him a God? We see that the people of Lystra were thus affected in the case of Paul and Barnabas, thinking them to be Gods, when they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, "*Sirs, why do you do these things? We also are men of like passions with you.*" [Acts 14:14-15] Peter, again, when he had healed the man lame from his birth, when all were amazed at the miracle, answered and said, "*You men of Israel, why do you marvel at this, or why do you seek so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk*"? [Acts 3:12] Hear also the blessed Paul, saying, "*There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, lest I should be exalted above measure.*" [2 Corinthians 12:7] But this, you say, was an expression of humility. Far from it. The thorn was not sent him that he might be humble, nor does he say this only out of humility. There are other causes besides to be assigned for it. Observe therefore how God, accounting for it, says, "*My grace is sufficient for you*"; not "*that you may not be exalted above measure,*" but what? "*For my strength is made perfect in weakness.*" Two ends therefore were answered at once: what was doing was made clearly manifest, and the whole was ascribed to God. For this cause he has said elsewhere, "*We carry this treasure in earthen vessels*" [2 Corinthians 4:7]; that is, in bodies weak and liable to suffering. Why? "*That*

the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." If our bodies were not subject to infirmity, all would be ascribed to them. And elsewhere we see him grieving at the infirmity of Epaphroditus, concerning whom he writes, *"He was sick near unto death, but God had mercy on him."*

[Philippians 2:27] And many other instances there are of his ignorance of events, which was profitable both for him and his disciples.

"Trophimus I have left at Miletum sick." Miletus was near Ephesus. Did this happen then when he sailed to Judea, or upon some other occasion? For after he had been in Rome, he returned to Spain, but whether he came thence again into these parts, we know not. We see him however deserted by all. *"For Demas,"* he says, *"has forsaken me. Crescens is departed into Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Erastus abode at Corinth. Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick."*

Ver. 21. *"Do your diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, and Pudens and Linus, and Claudia."*

This Linus, some say, was second Bishop of the Church of Rome after Peter. *"And Claudia."* You see how zealous for the faith the women were, how ardent! Such was Priscilla and this Claudia, already crucified, already prepared for the battle! But why, when there were so many faithful, does he mention only these women? Manifestly because they in purpose had already withdrawn from worldly affairs, and were illustrious above other. For a woman, as such, meets not with any impediments. It is the work of divine grace, that this sex should be impeded only in the affairs of this life, or rather not even in them. For a woman undertakes no small share of the whole administration, being the keeper of the house. And without her not even political affairs could be properly conducted. For if their domestic concerns were in a state of confusion and disorder, those who are engaged in public affairs would be kept at home, and political business would be ill

managed. So that neither in those matters, as neither in spiritual, is she inferior. For she is able, if so inclined, to endure a thousand deaths. Accordingly many women have suffered martyrdom. She is able to practice chastity even more than men, no such strong flame disturbing her; and to show forth modesty and gravity, and *"holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord"* [Hebrews 12:14]; and contempt of wealth, if she will, and in short all other virtues.

"Do your diligence to come before winter." See how he urges him, yet he does not say anything to grieve him. He does not say, *"Before I die,"* lest he should afflict him; but, *"Before winter,"* that thou be not detained.

"Eubulus," he says, *"greet you, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren."* He does not mention the rest by name. Do you see that those were the most zealous?

Ver. 22. *"The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."*

There can be no better prayer than this. Grieve not for my departure. The Lord will be with you. And he says, not *"with you,"* but *"with your spirit."* Thus there is a twofold assistance, the grace of the Spirit, and God helping it. And otherwise God will not be with us, if we have not spiritual grace. For if we be deserted by grace, how shall He be with us?

"Grace be with us. Amen."

Thus he prays for himself too, that they may always be well-pleasing to Him, that they may have grace together with the spiritual gift, for where this is, nothing will be grievous. For as he who beholds the king, and is in favor with him, is sensible of no uneasiness; so though our friends forsake us, though we be overtaken by calamity, we shall feel no distress, if that grace be with us and fortify us.

Moral . But how shall we draw down grace upon us? By doing what is pleasing to God, and obeying Him in all things. In great houses do we not

see those domestics in favor, who do not regard their own interest, but with all zeal and alacrity promote their masters', and who not from the compulsion of the master, but from their own affection and good disposition, order all things well. When they are always before their eyes, when they are engaged in the house, when they are not occupied in any private concerns, nor caring for their own, but rather consider their masters' concerns as their own. For he who makes what is his own his master's, does not really give up his own to his master, but makes his interest his own; he commands even as himself in his affairs, and rules equally with him. He is often as much feared by the domestics, and whatever he says his master says too, and he is henceforth dreaded by all his enemies.

And if he who in worldly concerns prefers his masters interests to his own, does not really neglect his own interest, but rather advance it the more; much more is this the case in spiritual matters. Despise your own concerns, and you will receive those of God. This He Himself wills. Despise each, and seize upon the kingdom of heaven. Dwell there, not here. Be formidable there, not here. If you are formidable there you will be formidable not to men, but to demons, and even to the devil himself. But if your dependence is on worldly wealth, you will be contemptible to them, and often to men too. Whatever be your riches, you will be rich in servile things. But if you despise these, you will be radiant in the house of the King.

Such were the Apostles, despising a servile house and worldly wealth! And see how they commanded in the affairs of their Master. "*Let one,*" they said, "*be delivered from disease, another from the possession of devils: bind this man, and loose that.*" This was done by them on earth, but it was fulfilled as in Heaven. For, "*whatever you shall bind on earth,*" said He, "*shall be bound in Heaven.*" [Matthew 18:18] And greater power than His

own did He give them. And that I lie not, appears from His own words. *"He that believes in Me, greater works shall he do than these which I do."* [John 14:12] Why so? Because this honor is reflected upon the Master. As in our own affairs, if the servant has great power, the master is the more admired, for if the servant is so powerful, much more is he who commands him. But if any man, neglecting his master's service thinks only of his wife, his son, or his servant, and seeks to be rich, and to lay up treasure there, by stealing and robbing his master of his possessions, he is presently ruined, and his wealth perishes with him.

Wherefore having these examples, I beseech you, let us not regard our possessions, that we may regard ourselves: nay, let us despise them, that we may obtain them. If we despise them, He will take care of them; if we take care of them, God will despise them. Let us labor in the concerns of God, not in our own, or rather really in our own, for His are our own. I speak not of heaven, nor of earth, nor of the things of this world: these are unworthy of Him. And they belong alike to the faithful and the unbelievers. What then do I speak of as His? His glory and His kingdom. These are His, and ours for His sake. How? *"If we be dead with Him,"* He says, *"we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."* [2 Timothy 2:11] We have become *"joint heirs,"* and are called His *"brethren."* Why do we sink below, when He is drawing us upward towards Himself? How long shall we be poor, and beggarly? Heaven is set before us; and do we linger on earth? Is His kingdom opened to us, and do we choose such poverty as is here? Is life immortal offered us, and do we spend ourselves for lands, for wood and stones? Be truly rich. I would wish you to be so. Be covetous and rapacious, I blame you not for it. Here it is a fault not to be covetous, here it is blameworthy not to be grasping. What then is this? *"The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."* [Matthew 11:12]

There be thou violent! Be grasping! It is not diminished by being seized upon. For neither is virtue divided, nor piety lessened, nor the kingdom of Heaven. Virtue is increased when you seize upon it, while temporal goods are lessened when they are seized upon. And this appears from hence: Let there be ten thousand men in a city; if all seize on virtue, it is multiplied, for they become righteous in ten thousand things. If no one seizes upon it, it is diminished, for it is nowhere to be found.

You see then that good things are multiplied on being possessed by many, but earthly goods are rather diminished by seizing. Let us not therefore sit down content with poverty, but let us choose riches. God is then rich, when those who enjoy His kingdom are many. *"For He is rich,"* it is said, *"unto all that call upon Him."* [Romans 10:12] Increase then His substance; and you will increase it by taking possession of it, by being covetous of it, by violently seizing it. And truly there is need of violence. Wherefore? Because there are so many impediments, as wives and children, cares and worldly business; besides those demons, and him who is the ruler of them, the devil. There is need then of violence, there is need of fortitude. He who takes by violence is exposed to toils. How? He endures all things, he contends against necessities. How? He almost attempts impossibilities. If such are those who take by violence, and we shrink from attempting even what is possible, how shall we ever win? Or when shall we enjoy the things for which we strive? *"The violent,"* it is said, *"take"* the kingdom of heaven *"by force."* Violence and rapacity are needed. For it is not simply set before us, and ready to our hands. He who seizes by violence, is ever sober and watchful, he is anxious and thoughtful, that he may make his seizure at a seasonable time. Do you not see that in war he who is about to make a seizure keeps watch and is under arms the whole night? If then they who aim at seizing upon worldly goods, watch and are armed all the night long,

should we, who wish to seize upon spiritual things, sleep and snore in the day, and continue always naked and unarmed? For he who is engaged in sin is unarmed; as he who practices righteousness is armed. We do not fortify ourselves with almsgiving. We do not prepare for ourselves lamps that are burning, we do not fence ourselves in spiritual armor. We do not learn the way that leads there. We are not sober and watchful, and therefore we can seize no spoil.

If a man wishes to make an attempt on a kingdom, does he not set death before him in a thousand shapes? Is he not armed at all points, does he not practice the art of war, does he not do everything with this view, and so rush on to the attack? But we do not act thus. We wish to take the spoil while we are sleeping, and therefore we come off with empty hands. Do you not see plunderers, how they flee, how rapidly they move? How they force their way through everything? And there is need of expedition here. The devil is in pursuit of you. He orders those before to detain you. But if you are strong, if you are watchful, you will spurn one, and thrust aside another, and escape from all, as a bird. Yea, if you depart hence, if you escape from the market and the tumult, I mean this life, and arrive at those higher regions beyond these, in the world to come. For there, as in a solitude, there is no tumult, no one to disturb, or to stay your course.

Have you seized? Yet a little exertion is needed after the seizure, that what you have seized may not be taken from you. If we run on, if we look to none of those things that are set before our eyes, if we consider nothing but how we may escape from those who would hinder us, we shall be able to retain with all security what we have seized. Have you seized on chastity? Tarry not; flee beyond the reach of the devil. If he sees that he cannot overtake you, he will cease to pursue; as we, when we can no longer see those who have robbed us, despair of the pursuit, and do not pursue, nor

call on others to stop thief, but suffer them to escape. So do thou run vigorously at the beginning, and when you are beyond the reach of the devil, he will not afterwards attack you, but you will be in safety, securely enjoying those unspeakable blessings, which God grant that we may all obtain through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, and worship, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 1 on Titus

[Titus 1:1-4]

"Paul, a servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But has in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; To Titus, my own son after the common faith; Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Titus was an approved one of the companions of Paul; otherwise, he would not have committed to him the charge of that whole island, nor would he have commanded him to supply what was deficient, as he says, *"That you should set in order the things that are wanting."* [Titus 1:5] He would not have given him jurisdiction over so many Bishops, if he had not placed great confidence in him. They say that he also was a young man, because he calls him his son, though this does not prove it. I think that there is mention made of him in the Acts. Perhaps he was a Corinthian, unless there was some other of the same name. And he summons Zenas, and orders Apollos to be sent to him, never Titus. [Titus 3:13] For he also attests their superior virtue and courage in the presence of the Emperor.

Some time seems to have since elapsed, and Paul, when he wrote this Epistle, appears to have been at liberty. For he says nothing about his trials, but dwells continually upon the grace of God, as being a sufficient encouragement to believers to persevere in virtue. For to learn what they had deserved, and to what state they had been transferred, and that by grace,

and what had been vouchsafed them, was no little encouragement. He takes aim also against the Jews, and if he censures the whole nation, we need not wonder, for he does the same in the case of the Galatians, saying, "*O foolish Galatians.*" [Galatians 3:1] And this does not proceed from a censorious temper, but from affection. For if it were done for his own sake, one might fairly blame him; but if from the fervor of his zeal for the Gospel, it was not done reproachfully. Christ too, on many occasions, reproached the Scribes and Pharisees, not on his own account, but because they were the ruin of all the rest.

And he writes a short Epistle, with good reason, and this is a proof of the virtue of Titus, that he did not require many words, but a short remembrance. But this Epistle seems to have been written before that to Timothy, for that he wrote as near his end and in prison, but here, as free and at liberty. For his saying, "*I have determined to winter at Nicopolis*" [Titus 3:12], is a proof that he was not yet in bonds, as when he wrote to Timothy.

Ver. 1. "*Paul, a servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect.*"

You observe how he uses these expressions indifferently, sometimes calling himself the "*servant of God,*" and sometimes the "*servant of Christ,*" thus making no difference between the Father and the Son.

"According to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness. In hope of eternal life."

"According to the faith of God's elect." It is because you have believed, or rather because you were entrusted? I think he meant, that he was entrusted with God's elect, that is, not for any achievements of mine, nor from my toils and labors, did I receive this dignity. It was wholly the effect of His goodness who entrusted me. Yet that the grace may not seem without

reason, (for still the whole was not of Him, for why did He not entrust it to others?) he therefore adds, "*And the acknowledging of the truth that is after godliness.*" For it was for this acknowledgment that I was entrusted, or rather it was of His grace that this too was entrusted to me, for He was the author of this also. Whence Christ Himself said, "*You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.*" [John 15:16] And elsewhere this same blessed one writes, "*I shall know, even as also I am known.*" [1 Corinthians 13:12] And again, "*If I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*" [Philippians 3:12] First we are apprehended, and afterwards we know: first we are known, and then we apprehend: first we were called, and then we obeyed. But in saying, "*according to the faith of the elect,*" all is reckoned to them, because on their account I am an Apostle, not for my worthiness, but "*for the elect's sake.*" As he elsewhere says, "*All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos.*" [1 Corinthians 3:21]

"*And the acknowledging the truth that is after godliness.*" For there is a truth in other things, that is not according to godliness; for knowledge in matters of agriculture, knowledge of the arts, is true knowledge; but this truth is after godliness. Or this, "*according to faith,*" means that they believed, as the other elect believed, and acknowledged the truth. This acknowledging then is from faith, and not from reasonings.

"*In hope of eternal life.*" He spoke of the present life, which is in the grace of God, and he also speaks of the future, and sets before us the rewards that follow the mercies which God has bestowed upon us. For He is willing to crown us because we have believed, and have been delivered from error. Observe how the introduction is full of the mercies of God, and this whole Epistle is especially of the same character, thus exciting the holy man himself, and his disciples also, to greater exertions. For nothing profits us so much as constantly to remember the mercies of God, whether public

or private. And if our hearts are warmed when we receive the favors of our friends, or hear some kind word or deed of theirs, much more shall we be zealous in His service when we see into what dangers we had fallen, and that God has delivered us from them all.

"And the acknowledging of the truth." This he says with reference to the type. For that was an *"acknowledging"* and a *"godliness,"* yet not of the Truth, yet neither was it falsehood, it was godliness, but it was in type and figure. And he has well said, *"In hope of eternal life."* For the former was in hope of the present life. For it is said, *"he that does these things shall live in them."* [Romans 10:5] You see how at the beginning he sets forth the difference of grace. They are not the elect, but we. For if they were once called the elect, yet are they no longer called so.

Ver. 2. *"Which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."*

That is, not now upon a change of mind, but from the beginning it was so foreordained. This he often asserts, as when he says, *"Separated unto the Gospel of God."* [Romans 1:1] And again, *"Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate."* [Romans 8:29] Thus showing our high origin, in that He did not love us now first, but from the beginning: and it is no little matter to be loved of old, and from the beginning.

"Which God, that cannot lie, promised." If He *"cannot lie,"* what He has promised will assuredly be fulfilled. If He *"cannot lie,"* we ought not to doubt it, though it be after death. *"Which God, that cannot lie,"* he says, *"promised before the world began";* by this also, *"before the world began,"* he shows that it is worthy of our belief. It is not because the Jews have not come in, that these things are promised. It had been so planned from the first. Hear therefore what he says,

"But has in His own times manifested."

Wherefore then was the delay? From His concern for men, and that it might be done at a seasonable time. *"It is time for You, Lord, to work"* [Psalm 119:125], says the Prophet. For by *"His own times"* is meant the suitable times, the due, the fitting.

Ver. 3. *"But has in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me."*

That is, the preaching is committed unto me. For this included everything, the Gospel, and things present, and things future, life, and godliness, and faith, and all things at once. *"Through preaching,"* that is, openly and with all boldness, for this is the meaning of *"preaching."* For as a herald proclaims in the theater in the presence of all, so also we preach, adding nothing, but declaring the things which we have heard. For the excellence of a herald consists in proclaiming to all what has really happened, not in adding or taking away anything. If therefore it is necessary to preach, it is necessary to do it with boldness of speech. Otherwise, it is not preaching. On this account Christ did not say, Tell it *"upon the housetops,"* but *"preach upon the housetops"* [Matthew 10:27]; showing both by the place and by the manner what was to be done.

"Which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour."

The expressions, *"committed unto me,"* and *"according to the commandment,"* show the matter to be worthy of credit, so that no one should think it discreditable, nor be hesitating about it, or discontented. If then it is a commandment, it is not at my disposal. I fulfill what is commanded. For of things to be done, some are in our power, others are not. For what He commands, that is not in our power, what He permits, is left to our choice. For instance, *"Whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."* [Matthew 5:22] This is a

commandment. And again, *"If you bring your gift to the altar, and there rememberest that your brother has anything against you, leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."* [Matthew 5:23-24] This also is a command. But when He says, *"If you will be perfect, go and sell all that you have"* [Matthew 19:21]: and, *"He that is able to receive it, let him receive it"* [Matthew 19:12]: this is not a command, for He makes His hearer the disposer of the matter, and leaves him the choice, whether he will do it or not. For these things we may either do or not do. But commandments are not left to our choice, we must either perform them, or be punished for not doing so. This is implied when he says, *"Necessity is laid upon me; yea woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."* [1 Corinthians 9:16] This I will state more plainly, that it may be manifest to all. For instance, He that is entrusted with the government of the Church, and honored with the office of a Bishop, if he does not declare to the people what they ought to do, will have to answer for it. But the layman is under no such obligation. On this account Paul also says, *"According to the commandment of God our Saviour,"* I do this. And see how the epithets fit in to what I have said. For having said above, *"God who cannot lie,"* here he says, *"According to the commandment of God our Saviour."* If then He is our Saviour, and He commanded these things with a view that we should be saved, it is not from a love of command. It is a matter of faith, and the commandment of God our Saviour.

"To Titus my own son," that is, my true son. For it is possible for men not to be true sons, as he of whom he says, *"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, with such an one no not to eat."* [1 Corinthians 5:11] Here is a son, but not a true son. A son indeed he is, because he has once received the

grace, and has been regenerated: but he is not a true son, because he is unworthy of his Father, and a deserter to the usurped sovereignty of another. For in children by nature, the true and the spurious are determined by the father that begot, and the mother who bore them. But it is not so in this case, but it depends on the disposition. For one who was a true son may become spurious, and a spurious son may become a true one. For it is not the force of nature, but the power of choice, on which it depends, whence it is subject to frequent changes. Onesimus was a true son, but he was again not true, for he became "*unprofitable*"; then he again became a true son, so as to be called by the Apostle his "*own bowels*." [Philemon 12]

Ver. 4. "*To Titus, my own son after the common faith.*"

What is "*after the common faith*"? After he had called him his own son, and assumed the dignity of a father, hear how it is that he lessens and lowers that honor. He adds, "*After the common faith*"; that is, with respect to the faith I have no advantage over you; for it is common, and both thou and I were born by it. Whence then does he call him his son? Either only wishing to express his affection for him, or his priority in the Gospel, or to show that Titus had been enlightened by him. On this account he calls the faithful both children and brethren; brethren, because they were born by the same faith; children, because it was by his hands. By mentioning the common faith, therefore, he intimates their brotherhood.

Ver. 4. "*Grace and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.*"

Because he had called him his son, he adds, "*from God the Father,*" to elevate his mind by showing whose son he was, and by not only naming the common faith, but by adding "*our Father,*" he implies that he has this honor equally with himself. Moral . Observe also how he offers the same prayers for the Teacher, as for the disciples and the multitude. For indeed he needs

such prayers as much, or rather more than they, by how much he has greater enmities to encounter, and is more exposed to the necessity of offending God. For the higher is the dignity, the greater are the dangers of the priestly office. For one good act in his episcopal office is sufficient to raise him to heaven and one error to sink him to hell itself. For, to pass over all other cases of daily occurrence, if he happens, either from friendship or any other cause, to have advanced an unworthy person to a Bishopric, and have committed to him the rule of a great city, see to how great a flame he renders himself obnoxious. For not only will he have to account for the souls that are lost, for they are lost through the man's irreligion, but for all that is done amiss by the other. For he that is irreligious in a private station will be much more so when he is raised to power. It is much indeed, if a pious man continue such after his elevation to rule. For he is then more strongly assailed by vainglory, and the love of wealth, and self-will, when office gives him the power; and by offenses, insults, and reproaches, and numberless other evils. If therefore any one be irreligious, he will become more so when raised to office; and he who appoints such a ruler will be answerable for all the offenses committed by him, and for the whole people. But if it is said of him who gives offense to one soul, *"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea"* [Matthew 18:6]; what will he have to suffer who offends so many souls, whole cities and populations, and multitudes of families, men, women, children, citizens, and husbandmen, the inhabitants of the city itself, and of all places subject to it? To say thrice as much more is to say nothing, so severe is the vengeance and the punishment to which he will be obnoxious. So that a Bishop especially needs the grace and peace of God. For if without these he governs the people, all is ruined and lost, for want of those helms. And though he be skilled in the art of steering, he will

sink the vessel and those that sail in it, if he has not these helms, *"the grace and peace of God."*

Hence I am struck with astonishment at those who desire so great a burden. Wretched and unhappy man, do you see what it is you desire? If you are by yourself, unknown and undistinguished, though you commit ten thousand faults, you have only one soul for which to give an account, and for it alone will you be answerable. But when you are raised to this office, consider for how many persons you are obnoxious to punishment. Hear what Paul says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] But do you desire honor and power? But what pleasure is there in this honor? I confess, I see not. For to be a ruler indeed is not possible, since it depends upon those under your rule to obey or not. And to any one who considers the matter closely; it will appear that a Bishop does not so much come to rule, as to serve a multitude of masters, who are of opposite desires and sentiments. For what one commends, another blames; what this man censures, that admires. To whom therefore shall he listen, with whom shall he comply? It is impossible! And the slave that is bought with money complains if his master's commands are contrary to each other. But should you grieve, when so many masters give the contrary orders, you are condemned even for this, and all mouths are opened against you. Tell me then, is this honor, is this rule, is this power?

One who holds the Episcopal office has required a contribution of money. He who is unwilling to contribute not only withholds it, but that he may not seem to withhold it from indifference, he accuses his Bishop. He is a thief, he says, a robber, he engulfs the goods of the poor, he devours the rights of the needy. Cease your calumnies! How long will you say these things? Will you not contribute? No one compels you, there is no constraint.

Why do you revile him who counsels and advises you? Is any one reduced to need, and he from inability, or some other hindrance, has not lent a hand? No allowance is made for him, the reproaches in this case are worse than in the other. This then is government! And he cannot avenge himself. For they are his own bowels, and as though the bowels be swollen, and though they give pain to the head and the rest of the body, we venture not on revenge, we cannot take a sword and pierce them; so if one of those under our rule be of such sort, and create trouble and disorder by these accusations, we dare not avenge ourselves, for this would be far from the disposition of a father, but we must endure the grief till he becomes sound and well.

The slave bought with money has an appointed work, which when he has performed, he is afterwards his own master. But the Bishop is distracted on every side and is expected to do many things that are beyond his power. If he knows not how to speak, there is great murmuring; and if he can speak, then he is accused of bring vainglorious. If he cannot raise the dead, he is of no worth, they say: such an one is pious, but this man is not. If he eats a moderate meal, for this he is accused, he ought to be strangled, they say. If he is seen at the bath, he is much censured. In short, he ought not to look upon the sun! If he does the same things that I do, if he bathes, eats and drinks, and wears the same clothing, and has the care of a house and servants, on what account is he set over me? But he has domestics to minister to him, and an ass to ride upon, why then is he set over me? But say, ought he then to have no one to wait upon him? Ought he himself to light his own fire, to draw water, to cleave wood, to go to market? How great a degradation would this be! Even the holy Apostles would not that any ministers of the word should attend upon the tables of the widows, but they considered it a business unworthy of them: and would you degrade them to the offices of your own domestics? Why dost not thou, who

commandest these things, come and perform these services? Tell me, does not he minister to you a better service than yours, which is bodily? Why do you not send your domestic to wait upon him? Christ washed the feet of His disciples; is it a great thing for you to give this service to your Teacher? But you are not willing to render it yourself, and you grudge it to him. Ought he then to draw his livelihood from heaven? But God wills not so.

But you say, "*Had the Apostles free men to serve them?*" Would you then hear how the Apostles lived? They made long journeys, and free men and honorable women laid down their lives and souls for their relief. But hear this blessed Apostle thus exhorting; "*Hold such in reputation*" [Philippians 2:29-30]: and again, "*Because for the work of Christ he was near unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.*" See what he says! But you have not a word to throw away upon your spiritual father, much less will you submit to any danger in his behalf. But you say, "*He ought not to frequent the bath.*" And where is this forbidden? There is nothing honorable in being unclean.

These are not the things we find blamed or applauded at all. For the qualities which a Bishop is required to possess are different, as to be blameless, sober, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach. These the Apostle requires, and these we ought to look for in a ruler of the Church, but nothing further. You are not more strict than Paul, or rather more strict than the Spirit. If he be a striker, or violent, or cruel, and unmerciful, accuse him. These things are unworthy of a Bishop. If he be luxurious, this also is censurable. But if he takes care of his body that he may minister to you, if he attends to his health that he may be useful, ought he for this to be accused? Do you not know that bodily infirmity no less than infirmity of soul injures both us and the Church? Why, otherwise, does Paul attend to this matter, in writing to Timothy, "*Use a little wine for your stomach's*

sake, and your often infirmities"? [1 Timothy 5:23] For if we could practice virtue with the soul alone, we need not take care of the body. And why then were we born at all? But if this has contributed a great share, is it not the extreme of folly to neglect it?

For suppose a man honored with the Bishopric, and entrusted with a public charge of the Church, and let him in other respects be virtuous, and have every quality, which a priest ought to possess, yet let him be always confined to his bed by reason of great infirmity, what service will he be able to render? Upon what mission can he go? What visitation can he undertake? Whom can he rebuke or admonish? These things I say, that you may learn not causelessly to accuse him, but rather may receive him favorably; as also that if any one desire rule in the Church, seeing the shower of abuse that attends it, he may quench that desire. Great indeed is the danger of such a station, and it requires *"the grace and peace of God."* Which that we may have abundantly, do you pray for us, and we for you, that practicing virtue aright we may so obtain the blessings promised, through Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 2 on Titus

[Titus 1:5, 6]

"For this cause left I you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed you: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly."

The whole life of men in ancient times was one of action and contention; ours on the contrary is a life of indolence. They knew that they were brought into the world for this purpose, that they might labor according to the will of Him who brought them into it; but we, as if we had been placed here but to eat and drink, and lead a life of pleasure, we pay no regard to spiritual things. I speak not only of the Apostles, but of those that followed them. You see them accordingly traversing all places, and pursuing this as their only business, living altogether as in a foreign land, as those who had no city upon earth. Hear therefore what the blessed Apostle says,

"For this cause left I you in Crete."

As if the whole world had been one house, they divided it among themselves, administering its affairs everywhere, each taking care of his several portion of it.

"For this cause left I you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are [R.V. were] wanting."

He does not command this in an imperious manner; *"that you should set in order,"* he says. Here we see a soul free from all envy, seeking everywhere the advantage of his disciples, not curiously solicitous, whether the good was done by himself or by another. For where there was a case of

danger and great difficulty, he in his own person set it in order. But those things which were rather attended with honor and praise he committed to his disciple, as the ordination of Bishops, and such other things as required some farther arrangement, or, so to speak, to be brought to greater perfection. What do you say? Does he farther set in order your work? And do you not think it a disgrace bringing shame upon you? By no means; for I look only to the common good, and whether it be done by me, or by another, it makes no difference to me. Thus it becomes him to be affected who presides in the Church, not to seek his own honor, but the common good.

"And ordain elders in every city," here he is speaking of Bishops, as we have before said, *"as I had appointed you. If any is blameless."* *"In every city,"* he says, for he did not wish the whole island to be entrusted to one, but that each should have his own charge and care, for thus he would have less labor himself, and those under his rule would receive greater attention, if the Teacher had not to go about to the presidency of many Churches, but was left to be occupied with one only, and to bring that into order.

Ver. 6. *"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly."*

Why does he bring forward such an one? To stop the mouths of those heretics, who condemned marriage, showing that it is not an unholy thing in itself, but so far honorable, that a married man might ascend the holy throne; and at the same reproving the wanton, and not permitting their admission into this high office who contracted a second marriage. For he who retains no kind regard for her who is departed, how shall he be a good president? And what accusation would he not incur? For you all know, that though it is not forbidden by the laws to enter into a second marriage, yet it

is a thing liable to many ill constructions. Wishing therefore a ruler to give no handle for reproach to those under his rule, he on this account says, "*If any be blameless,*" that is, if his life be free from reproach, if he has given occasion to no one to assail his character. Hear what Christ says, "*If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!*" [Matthew 6:23]

"Having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly."

We should observe what care he bestows upon children. For he who cannot be the instructor of his own children, how should he be the Teacher of others? If he cannot keep in order those whom he has had with him from the beginning, whom he has brought up, and over whom he had power both by the laws, and by nature, how will he be able to benefit those without? For if the incompetency of the father had not been great, he would not have allowed those to become bad whom from the first he had under his power. For it is not possible, indeed it is not, that one should turn out ill who is brought up with much care, and has received great attention. Sins are not so prevalent by nature, as to overcome so much previous care. But if, occupied in the pursuit of wealth, he has made his children a secondary concern, and not bestowed much care upon them, even so he is unworthy. For if when nature prompted, he was so void of affection or so senseless, that he thought more of his wealth than of his children, how should he be raised to the Episcopal throne, and so great rule? For if he was unable to restrain them it is a great proof of his weakness; and if he was unconcerned, his want of affection is much to be blamed. He then that neglects his own children, how shall he take care of other men's? And he has not only said, "*not riotous,*" but not even "*accused of riot.*" There must not be an ill report, or such an opinion of them.

Ver. 7. *"For a Bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker."*

For a ruler without, as he rules by law and compulsion, perhaps does not consult the wishes of those under his rule. But he who ought to rule men with their own consent, and who will be thankful for his rule, if he so conduct himself as to do everything of his own will, and share counsels with no one, makes his presidency tyrannical rather than popular. For he must be *"blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry."* For how shall he instruct others to rule that passion, who has not taught himself? For power leads on to many temptations, it makes a man more harsh and difficult to please, even him that was very mild, surrounding him with so many occasions of anger. If he have not previously practiced himself in this virtue, he will grow harsh, and will injure and destroy much that is under his rule.

"Not given to wine, no striker." Here he is speaking of the insolent man. For he should do all things by admonition or rebuke, and not by insolence. What necessity, tell me, for insult? He ought to terrify, to alarm, to penetrate the soul with the threat of hell. But he that is insulted becomes more impudent, and rather despises him that insults him. Nothing produces contempt more than insult; it disgraces the insolent person, and prevents his being respected, as he ought to be. Their discourse ought to be delivered with much caution. In reproving sins they should bear in mind the future judgment, but keep clear of all insolence. Yet if any prevent them from doing their duty, they must prosecute the matter with all authority. *"Not a striker,"* he says. The teacher is the physician of souls. But the physician does not strike, but heals and restores him that has stricken him. *"Not given to filthy lucre."*

Ver. 8. *"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate."*

Ver. 9. *"Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught."*

You see what intensity of virtue he required. *"Not given to filthy lucre,"* that is, showing great contempt for money. *"A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy";* he means, giving away all his substance to them that need. *"Temperate";* he speaks not here of one who fasts, but of one who commands his passions, his tongue, his hands, his eyes. For this is temperance, to be drawn aside by no passion.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught." By *"faithful"* is here meant *"true,"* or that which was delivered through faith, not requiring reasonings, or questionings.

"Holding fast," that is, having care of it, making it his business. What then, if he be ignorant of the learning that is without? For this cause, he says, *"the faithful word, according to teaching."*

"That he may be able both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers."

So that there is need not of pomp of words, but of strong minds, of skill in the Scriptures and of powerful thoughts. Do you not see that Paul put to flight the whole world, that he was more powerful than Plato and all the rest? But it was by miracles, you say. Not by miracles only, for if you peruse the Acts of the Apostles, you will find him often prevailing by his teaching previously to his miracles.

"That he may be able by sound doctrine to exhort," that is, to retain his own people, and to overthrow the adversaries. *"And to convince the gainsayers."* For if this is not done, all is lost. He who knows not how to combat the adversaries, and to *"bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,"* and to beat down reasonings, he who knows not what he ought to teach with regard to right doctrine, far from him be the

Teacher's throne. For the other qualities may be found in those under his rule, such as to be *"blameless, to have his children in subjection, to be hospitable, just, holy."* But that which characterizes the Teacher is this, to be able to instruct in the word, to which no regard is now paid.

Ver. 10. *"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision;"*

Ver. 11. *"Whose mouths must be stopped."*

Do you see how he shows that they are such? From their not wishing to be ruled, but to rule. For he has glanced at this. When therefore you can not persuade them, do not give them charges, but stop their mouths, for the benefit of others. But of what advantage will this be, if they will not obey, or are unruly? Why then should he stop their mouths? In order that others may be benefited by it.

"Who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake."

For if he has undertaken the office of a Teacher, and is not able to combat these enemies, and to stop their mouths who are so shameless, he will become in each case the cause of their destruction who perish. And if some one has thus advised, *"Seek not to be a judge, unless you can take away iniquity"* [Sirach 7:6]; much more may we say here, *"Seek not to be a Teacher, if you are unequal to the dignity of the office; but though dragged to it, decline it."* Do you see that the love of power, the love of filthy lucre, is the cause of these evils? *"Teaching things which they ought not,"* he says, *"for filthy lucre's sake."*

Moral . For there is nothing which is not spoiled by these passions. But as when violent winds, falling on a calm sea, turn it up from its foundation, and mingle the sand with the waves, so these passions assailing the soul turn all upside down, and dim the clearness of the mental sight, but

especially does the mad desire of glory. For a contempt for money any one may easily attain, but to despise the honor that proceeds from the multitude, requires a great effort, a philosophic temper, a certain angelic soul that reaches to the very summit of heaven. For there is no passion so tyrannical, so universally prevalent, in a greater or less degree indeed, but still everywhere. How then shall we subdue it, if not wholly, yet in some little part? By looking up to heaven, by setting God before our eyes, by entertaining thoughts superior to earthly things. Imagine, when you desire glory, that you have already attained it, and mark the end, and you will find it to be nothing. Consider with what loss it is attended, of how many and how great blessings it will deprive you. For you will undergo the toils and danger, yet be deprived of the fruits and rewards of them. Consider that the majority are bad, and despise their opinion. In the case of each individual, consider what the man is, and you will see how ridiculous a thing is glory, that it is rather to be called shame.

And after this, lift up your thoughts to the theater above. When in doing any good you consider that it ought to be displayed to men, and you seek for some spectators of the action, and art in travail to be seen, reflect that God beholds you, and all that desire will be extinguished. Retire from the earth, and look to that theater that is in Heaven. If men should praise you, yet hereafter they will blame you, will envy you, will assail your character; or if they do not, yet their praise will not benefit you. It is not so with God. He delights in praising our virtuous deeds. Have you spoken well, and obtained applause? What have you gained? For if those who applauded you were benefited, changed in their minds, become better men, and had desisted from their evil deeds, then might thou indeed rejoice, not at the praises bestowed, but at the wonderful change for the better. But if they continue their praises, and loud plaudits, but gain no good by what

they applaud, you ought rather to grieve: for these things turn to their judgment and condemnation. But you obtain glory for your piety. If you are truly pious, and conscious of no guilt, you should rejoice, not because thou are reputed pious, but because you are so. But if, without being so, you desire the good opinion of the multitude, consider that they will not be your judges at the last day, but He who knows perfectly the things that are hid. And if while conscious of guilt, you are supposed by all to be pure, instead of rejoicing, you should grieve and mourn bitterly, keeping constantly in view that Day, in which all things will be revealed, in which the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light.

Do you enjoy honor? Reject it, knowing that it renders you a debtor. Does no one honor you? You ought to rejoice at it. For God will not lay to your charge this, among other things, that you have enjoyed honor. Do you see not that God upbraids Israel with this among other things, by his prophet, *"I took of your sons for Prophets, and of your young men for sanctification"*? [Amos 2:11, Septuagint] You will therefore gain this advantage at least, that you will not aggravate your punishment. For he who is not honored in the present life, who is despised, and held in no consideration, but is insulted and scorned, gains this at least, if nothing else, that he has not to answer for being honored by his fellow-servants. And on many other accounts he gains by it. He is brought down and humbled, nor if he would, can he be high-minded, if he takes the more heed to himself. But he, who enjoys more honor, besides being responsible for great debts, is lifted up into arrogance and vainglory, and becomes the slave of men; and as this tyranny increases, he is compelled to do many things which he would not.

Knowing therefore that it is better to want glory, than to possess it, let us not seek for honors, but evade them when they are offered, let us cast

them from us, let us extinguish that desire. This we have said at once to the rulers of the church, and to those under their rule. For a soul desirous of honor, and of being glorified, shall not see the kingdom of heaven. This is not my own saying. I speak not my own words, but those of the Spirit of God. He shall not see it, though he practice virtue. For he says, "*They have their reward.*" [Matthew 6:5] He then, who has no reward to receive, how shall he see the kingdom of heaven? I forbid you not to desire glory, but I would wish it to be the true glory, that which proceeds from God. "*Whose praise,*" it is said, "*is not of men, but of God.*" [Romans 2:29] Let us be pious in secret, not cumbered with parade, and show, and hypocrisy. Let us cast away the sheep's clothing, and rather let us become sheep. Nothing is more worthless than the glory of men. Should thou see a company of little children, mere sucklings, would you desire glory from them? Be thus affected towards all men with respect to glory.

It is for this reason called vainglory. Do you see the masks worn by stage-players? How beautiful and splendid they are, fashioned to the extreme height of elegance. Can you show me any such real countenance? By no means. What then? Did you ever fall in love with them? No. Wherefore? Because they are empty, imitating beauty, but not being really beautiful. Thus human glory is empty, and an imitation of glory: it is not true glory. That beauty only which is natural, which is within, is lasting: that which is put on externally often conceals deformity, conceals it from men until the evening. But when the theater breaks up, and the masks are taken off, each appears what he really is.

Let us therefore pursue truth, and not be as if we were on the stage and acting a part. For of what advantage is it, tell me, to be gazed at by a multitude? It is vainglory, and nothing else. For return to your house, and solitude, and immediately all is gone. You have gone to the market-place,

you have turned upon you the eyes of all present. What have you gained? Nothing. It vanished, and passed away like dissolving smoke. Do we then love things thus unsubstantial? How unreasonable is this! What madness! To one thing only let us look, to the never seek the praise of men; but if it falls to us, we shall despise, deride, and reject it. We shall be affected as those who desire gold, but receive clay. Let not any one praise you, for it profits nothing; and if he blame you, it harms you not. But with God praise and blame are attended with real gain and loss, while all is vain that proceeds from men. And herein we are made like God, that He needs not glory from men. *"I receive not,"* said Christ, *"honor from men."* [John 5:41] Is this then a light thing, tell me? When you are unwilling to despise glory, say, *"By despising it, I shall resemble God,"* and immediately you will despise it. But it is impossible that the slave of glory should not be a slave to all, more servile than slaves in reality. For we do not impose upon our slaves such tasks, as glory exacts from her captives. Base and shameful are the things she makes them say, and do, and suffer, and when she sees them obedient, she is the more urgent in her commands.

Let us fly then, I entreat you, let us fly from this slavery. But how shall we be able? If we think seriously of what is in this world, if we observe that things present are a dream, a shadow, and nothing better; we shall easily overcome this desire, and neither in little nor in great things shall be led captive by it. But if in little things we do not despise it, we shall easily be overcome by it in the most important. Let us therefore remove far from us the sources of it, and these are, folly, and meanness of mind, so that, if we assume a lofty spirit, we shall be able to look beyond honor from the multitude, and to extend our views to heaven, and obtain the good things there. Of which God grant that we may all be partakers, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, etc.

Homily 3 on Titus

[Titus 1:12-14]

"One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

There are several questions here. First, who it was that said this? Secondly, why Paul quoted it? Thirdly, why he brings forward a testimony that is not correct? Let us then offer a seasonable solution of these, having premised some other things. For when Paul was discoursing to the Athenians, in the course of his harangue he quoted these words, *"To the Unknown God"*: and again, *"For we also are His offspring, as certain also of your own poets have said."* [Acts 17:23-28] It was Epimenides who said this, himself a Cretan, and whence he was move moved to say it is necessary to mention. It is this. The Cretans have a tomb of Jupiter, with this inscription. *"Here lies Zan, whom they call Jove."* On account of this inscription, then, the poet ridiculing the Cretans as liars, as he proceeds, introduces, to increase the ridicule, this passage.

For even a tomb, O King, of you

They made, who never died, but aye shall be.

If then this testimony is true, observe what a difficulty! For if the poet is true who said that they spoke falsely, in asserting that Jupiter could die, as the Apostle says, it is a fearful thing! Attend, beloved, with much exactness. The poet said that the Cretans were liars for saying that Jupiter was dead. The Apostle confirmed his testimony: so, according to the

Apostle, Jupiter is immortal: for he says, "*this witness is true*"! What shall we say then? Or rather how shall we solve this? The Apostle has not said this, but simply and plainly applied this testimony to their habit of falsehood. Else why has he not added, "*For even a tomb, O king, of you, they made*"? So that the Apostle has not said this, but only that one had well said, "*The Cretians are always liars.*" But it is not only from hence that we are confident that Jupiter is not a God. From many other arguments we are able to prove this, and not from the testimony of the Cretans. Besides, he has not said, that in this they were liars. Nay and it is more probable that they were deceived as to this point too. For they believed in other gods, on which account the Apostle calls them liars.

And as to the question, why does he cite the testimonies of the Greeks? It is because we put them most to confusion when we bring our testimonies and accusations from their own writers, when we make those their accusers, who are admired among themselves. For this reason he elsewhere quotes those words, "*To the Unknown God.*" For the Athenians, as they did not receive all their gods from the beginning, but from time to time admitted some other, as those from the Hyperboreans, the worship of Pan, and the greater and the lesser mysteries, so these same, conjecturing that besides these there might be some other God, of whom they were ignorant, that they might be duly devout to him also, erected to him an altar, with this inscription, "*To the Unknown God,*" thereby almost implying, "*if there might be some God unknown to them.*" He therefore said to them, Him whom you have by anticipation acknowledged, I declare to you. But those words, "*We also are His offspring,*" are quoted from Aratus, who having previously said, "*Earth's paths are full of Jove, the sea is full*"— adds, "*For we too are His offspring,*" in which I conceive he shows that we are sprung from God. How then does Paul wrest what is said of Jupiter to the God of

the universe? He has not transferred to God what belongs to Jupiter. But what is applicable to God, and was neither justly nor properly applied to Jupiter, this he restores to God, since the name of God belongs to Him alone, and is not lawfully bestowed upon idols.

And from what writers should he address them? From the Prophets? They would not have believed them. Since with the Jews too he does not argue from the Gospels, but from the Prophets. For this reason he says, *"Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, to them that are without law, as without law, to those that are under the Law, as under the Law."* [1 Corinthians 9:20-21] Thus does God too, as in the case of the wise men, He does not conduct them by an Angel, nor a Prophet, nor an Apostle, nor an Evangelist, but how? By a star. For as their art made them conversant with these, He made use of such means to guide them. So in the case of the oxen, that drew the ark. *"If it goes up by the way of his own coast, then He has done us this great evil"* [1 Samuel 6:9], as their prophets suggested. Do these prophets then speak the truth? No; but he refutes and confounds them out of their own mouths. Again, in the case of the witch, because Saul believed in her, he caused him to hear through her what was about to befall him. Why then did Paul stop the mouth of the spirit, that said, *"These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation"*? [Acts 16:17] And why did Christ hinder the devils from speaking of Him? In this case there was reason, since the miracles were going on. For here it was not a star that proclaimed Him, but He Himself; and the demons again were not worshipped ; for it was not an image that spoke, that it should be forbidden. He also suffered Balaam to bless, and did not restrain him. Thus He everywhere condescends.

And what wonder? For He permitted opinions erroneous, and unworthy of Himself, to prevail, as that He was a body formerly, and that

He was visible. In opposition to which He says, *"God is a Spirit."* [John 4:24] Again, that He delighted in sacrifices, which is far from His nature. And He utters words at variance with His declarations of Himself, and many such things. For He nowhere considers His own dignity, but always what will be profitable to us. And if a father considers not his own dignity, but talks lispingly with his children, and calls their meat and drink not by their Greek names, but by some childish and barbarous words, much more does God. Even in reproof He condescends, as when He speaks by the prophet, *"Hath a nation changed their gods?"* [Jeremiah 2:11], and in every part of Scripture there are instances of His condescension both in words and actions.

Ver. 13. *"Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."*

This he says, because their disposition was froward, deceitful, and dissolute. They have these numberless bad qualities; and because they are prone to lying, deceiving, gluttonous, and slothful, severe reproof is necessary. For such characters will not be managed by mildness, *"therefore rebuke them."* He speaks not here of Gentiles, but of his own people. *"Sharply."* Give them, he says, a stroke that cuts deep. For one method is not to be employed with all, but they are to be differently dealt with, according to their various characters and dispositions. He does not here have recourse to exhortation. For as he who treats with harshness the meek and ingenuous, may destroy them; so he who flatters one that requires severity, causes him to perish, and does not suffer him to be reclaimed.

"That they may be sound in the faith."

This then is soundness, to introduce nothing spurious, nor foreign. But if they who are scrupulous about meats are not sound, but are sick and weak; for, *"Them that are weak,"* he says, *"receive, but not to doubtful*

disputations" [Romans 14:1]; what can be said of those who observe the same fasts, (with the Jews,) who keep the sabbaths, who frequent the places that are consecrated by them? I speak of that at Daphne, of that which is called the cave of Matrona, and of that plain in Cilicia, which is called Saturn's. How are these sound? With them a heavier stroke is necessary. Why then does he not do the same with the Romans? Because their dispositions were different, they were of a nobler character.

Ver. 14. *"Not giving heed,"* he says, *"to Jewish fables."*

The Jewish tenets were fables in two ways, because they were imitations, and because the thing was past its season, for such things become fables at last. For when a thing ought not to be done, and being done, is injurious, it is a fable even as it is useless. As then those ought not to be regarded, so neither ought these. For this is not being sound. For if you believe the Faith, why do you add other things, as if the faith were not sufficient to justify? Why do you enslave yourself by subjection to the Law? Have you no confidence in what you believe? This is a mark of an unsound and unbelieving mind. For one who is faithful does not doubt, but such an one evidently doubts.

Ver. 15. *"Unto the pure,"* he says, *"all things are pure."*

You see that this is said to a particular purpose.

"But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure."

Things then are not clean or unclean from their own nature, but from the disposition of him who partakes of them.

"But even their mind and conscience is defiled."

Ver. 16. *"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate."*

The swine therefore is clean. Why then was it forbidden as unclean? It was not unclean by nature; for, *"all things are pure."* Nothing is more unclean than a fish, inasmuch as it even feeds upon human flesh. But it was permitted and considered clean. Nothing is more unclean than a bird, for it eats worms; or than a stag, which is said to have its name from eating serpents. Yet all these were eaten. Why then was the swine forbidden, and many other things? Not because they were unclean, but to check excessive luxury. But had this been said, they would not have been persuaded; they were restrained therefore by the fear of uncleanness. For tell me, if we enquire nicely into these things, what is more unclean than wine; or than water, with which they mostly purified themselves? They touched not the dead, and yet they were cleansed by the dead, for the victim was dead, and with that they were cleansed. This therefore was a doctrine for children. In the composition of wine, does not dung form a part? For as the vine draws moisture from the earth, so does it from the dung that is thrown upon it. In short, if we wish to be very nice, everything is unclean, otherwise if we please not to be nice, nothing is unclean. Yet all things are pure. God made nothing unclean, for nothing is unclean, except sin only. For that reaches to the soul, and defiles it. Other uncleanness is human prejudice.

"But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

For how can there be anything unclean among the pure? But he that has a weak soul makes everything unclean, and if there be set abroad a scrupulous enquiry into what is clean or unclean, he will touch nothing. For even these things are not clean, I speak of fish, and other things, according to their notions; (for *"their mind and conscience,"* he says, *"is defiled,"*) but all are impure. Yet Paul says not so; he turns the whole matter upon themselves. For nothing is unclean, he says, but themselves, their mind and

their conscience; and nothing is more unclean than these; but an evil will is unclean.

"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Chap. ii. ver. 1. *"But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine."*

This then is uncleanness. They are themselves unclean. But be not thou silent on that account. Do your part, although they may not receive you. Advise and counsel them, though they may not be persuaded. Here he censures them more severely. For they who are mad imagine that nothing stands still, yet this arises not from the objects that are seen, but from the eyes that see. Because they are unsteady and giddy, they think that the earth turns round with them, which yet turns not, but stands firm. The derangement is of their own state, not from any affection of the element. So it is here, when the soul is unclean, it thinks all things unclean. Therefore scrupulous observances are no mark of purity, but it is the part of purity to be bold in all things. For he that is pure by nature ventures upon all things, they that are defiled, upon nothing. This we may say against Marcion. Do you see that it is a mark of purity to be superior to all defilement, to touch nothing implies impurity. This holds even with respect to God. That He assumed flesh is a proof of purity; if through fear He had not taken it, there would have been defilement. He who eats not things that seem unclean, is himself unclean and weak, he who eats, is neither. Let us not call such pure, they are the unclean. He is pure, who dares to feed upon all things. All this caution we ought to exercise towards the things that defile the soul. For that is uncleanness, that is defilement. None of these things is so. Those who have a vitiated palate think what is set before them is unclean, but this is the

effect of their disorder. It becomes us therefore to understand the nature of things pure, and things unclean.

Moral . What then is unclean? Sin, malice, covetousness, wickedness. As it is written: *"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings."* [Isaiah 1:16] *"Create in me a clean heart, O God."* [Psalm 51:10] *"Depart, depart, go out from thence, touch no unclean thing."* [Isaiah 52:52] These observances were emblems of purifications. *"Touch not a dead body,"* it is said. For sin is such, it is dead and offensive. *"The leper is unclean."* For sin is a leprosy, various and multiform. And that they had this meaning, appears from what follows. For if the leprosy is general, and overspreads the whole body, he is clean; if it is partial, he is unclean. Thus you see that what is various and changeable is the unclean thing. He again whose seed passes from him is unclean, consider one that is so in soul, casting away his seed. He who is uncircumcised is unclean. These things are not allegorical but typical, for he who does not cut off the wickedness of his heart is the unclean person. He who works on the Sabbath is to be stoned, that is, he who is not at all times devoted to God, shall perish. You see how many varieties of uncleanness there are. The woman in child-bed is unclean. Yet God made child-birth, and the seed of copulation. Why then is the woman unclean, unless something further was intimated? And what was this? He intended to produce piety in the soul, and to deter it from fornication. For if she is unclean who has borne a child, much more she who has committed fornication. If to approach his own wife is not altogether pure, much less to have intercourse with the wife of another. He who attends a funeral is unclean, much more he who has mixed in war and slaughter. And many kinds of uncleanness would be found, if it were necessary to recount them all. But these things are not now required of us. But all is transferred to the soul.

For bodily things are nearer to us, from these therefore he introduced instruction. But it is not so now. For we ought not to be confined to figures, and shadows, but to adhere to the truth, and to uphold it: sin is the unclean thing. From that let us flee, from that let us abstain. *"If you come near it, it will bite you."* [Sirach 21:2] Nothing is more unclean than covetousness. Whence is this manifest? From the facts themselves. For what does it not defile? The hands, the soul, the very house where the ill-gotten treasure is laid up. But the Jews consider this as nothing. And yet Moses carried off the bones of Joseph. Samson drank from the jawbone of an ass, and ate honey from the lion, and Elijah was nourished by ravens, and by a widow woman. And tell me, if we were to be precise about these things, what can be more unclean than our books, which are made of the skins of animals? The fornicator, then, is not the only one that is unclean, but others more than he, as the adulterer. But both the one and the other are unclean, not on account of the intercourse, (for according to that reasoning a man cohabiting with his own wife would be unclean,) but because of the wickedness of the act, and the injury done to his neighbor in his nearest interests. Do you see that it is wickedness that is unclean? He who had two wives was not unclean, and David who had many wives was not unclean. But when he had one unlawfully, he became unclean. Why? Because he had injured and defrauded his neighbor. And the fornicator is not unclean on account of the intercourse, but on account of the manner of it, because it injures the woman, and they injure one another, making the woman common, and subverting the laws of nature. For she ought to be the wife of one man, since it is said, *"Male and female created He them."* [Genesis 1:27] And, *"they two shall be one flesh."* Not *"those many,"* but *"they two shall be one flesh."* Here then is injustice, and therefore the act is wicked. Again, when anger exceeds due measure, it makes a man unclean, not in itself, but

because of its excess. Since it is not said, "*He that is angry,*" merely, but "*angry without a cause.*" Thus every way to desire overmuch is unclean, for it proceeds from a greedy and irrational disposition. Let us therefore be sober, I beseech you, let us be pure, in that which is real purity, that we may be thought worthy to see God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 4 on Titus

[Titus 2:2-5]

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becomes holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

There are some failings which age has, that youth has not. Some indeed it has in common with youth, but in addition it has a slowness, a timidity, a forgetfulness, an insensibility, and an irritability. For this reason he exhorts old men concerning these matters, *"to be vigilant."* For there are many things which at this period make men otherwise than vigilant, especially what I mentioned, their general insensibility, and the difficulty of stirring or exciting them. Wherefore he also adds, *"grave, temperate."* Here he means prudent. For temperance is named from the well-tempered mind. For there are, indeed there are, among the old, some who rave and are beside themselves, some from wine, and some from sorrow. For old age makes them narrowminded.

"Sound in faith, in charity [love], in patience."

He has well added *"in patience,"* for this quality more especially befits old men.

Ver. 3. *"The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becomes holiness."*

That is, that in their very dress and carriage they exhibit modesty.

"Not false accusers, not given to much wine."

For this was particularly the vice of women and of old age. For from their natural coldness at that period of life arises the desire of wine, therefore he directs his exhortation to that point, to cut off all occasion of drunkenness, wishing them to be far removed from that vice, and to escape the ridicule that attends it. For the fumes mount more easily from beneath, and the membranes (of the brain) receive the mischief from their being impaired by age, and this especially causes intoxication. Yet wine is necessary at this age, because of its weakness, but much is not required. Nor do young women require much, though for a different reason, because it kindles the flame of lust.

"Teachers of good things."

And yet you forbid a woman to teach; how do you command it here, when elsewhere you say, *"I suffer not a woman to teach"*? [1 Timothy 2:12] But mark what he has added, *"Nor to usurp authority over the man."* For at the beginning it was permitted to men to teach both men and women. But to women it is allowed to instruct by discourse at home. But they are nowhere permitted to preside, nor to extend their speech to great length, wherefore he adds, *"Nor to usurp authority over the man."*

Ver. 4. *"That they may teach the young women to be sober."*

Observe how he binds the people together, how he subjects the younger women to the elder. For he is not speaking there of daughters, but merely in respect of age. Let each of the elder women, he means, teach any one that is younger to be sober.

"To love their husbands."

This is the chief point of all that is good in a household, *"A man and his wife that agree together."* [Sirach 25:1] For where this exists, there will be nothing that is unpleasant. For where the head is in harmony with the

body, and there is no disagreement between them, how shall not all the other members be at peace? For when the rulers are at peace, who is there to divide and break up concord? As on the other hand, where these are ill disposed to each other, there will be no good order in the house. This then is a point of the highest importance, and of more consequence than wealth, or rank, or power, or anything else. Nor has he said merely to be at peace, but *"to love their husbands."* For where love is, no discord will find admittance, far from it, other advantages too spring up.

"To love their children." This is well added, since she who loves the root, will much more love the fruit.

"To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good." All these spring from love. They become *"good, and keepers at home,"* from affection to their husbands.

"Obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

She who despises her husband, neglects also her house; but from love springs great soberness, and all contention is done away. And if he be a Heathen, he will soon be persuaded; and if he be a Christian, he will become a better man. Do you see the condescension of Paul? He who in everything would withdraw us from worldly concerns, here bestows his consideration upon domestic affairs. For when these are well conducted, there will be room for spiritual things, but otherwise, they too will be marred. For she who keeps at home will be also sober, she that keeps at home will be also a prudent manager, she will have no inclination for luxury, unseasonable expenses, and other such things.

"That the word of God," he says, *"be not blasphemed."*

See how his first concern is for the preaching of the word, not for worldly things; for when he writes to Timothy, he says, *"that we may lead a*

quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" [1 Timothy 2:2]; and here, *"that the word of God,"* and the doctrine, *"be not blasphemed."* For if it should happen that a believing woman, married to an unbeliever, should not be virtuous, the blasphemy is usually carried on to God; but if she be of good character, the Gospel obtains glory from her, and from her virtuous actions. Let those women hearken who are united to wicked men or unbelievers; let them hear, and learn to lead them to godliness by their own example. For if you gain nothing else, and do not attract your husband to embrace right doctrines, yet you have stopped his mouth, and dost not allow him to blaspheme Christianity; and this is no mean thing, but great indeed, that the doctrine should be admired through our conversation.

Ver. 6. *"Young men likewise exhort to be soberminded."*

See how he everywhere recommends the observance of decorum. For he has committed to women the greater part in the instruction of women, having appointed the elder to teach the younger. But the whole instruction of men he assigns to Titus himself. For nothing is so difficult for that age as to overcome unlawful pleasures. For neither the love of wealth, nor the desire of glory, or any other thing so much solicits the young, as fleshly lust. Therefore passing over other things, he directs his admonition to that vital point. Not however that he would have other things neglected; for what says he?

Ver. 7. *"In all things showing yourself a pattern of good works."*

Let the elder women, he says, teach the younger, but do you yourself exhort young men to be soberminded. And let the luster of your life be a common school of instruction, a pattern of virtue to all, publicly exhibited, like some original model, containing in itself all beauties, affording examples whence those who are willing may easily imprint upon themselves any of its excellences.

Ver. 7, 8. *"In [your] doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."*

By *"him that is of the contrary part,"* he means the devil, and every one who ministers to him. For when the life is illustrious, and the discourse corresponds to it, being meek and gentle, and affording no handle to the adversaries, it is of unspeakable advantage. Of great use then is the ministry of the word, not any common word, but that which is approved, and cannot be condemned, affording no pretext to those who are willing to censure it.

Ver. 9. *"Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things."*

Do you see what he has previously said, *"that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."* He therefore is deserving of condemnation, who under pretense of continence separates wives from their husbands, and he who under any other pretext takes away servants from their masters. This is not *"speech that cannot be condemned,"* but it gives great handle to the unbelieving, and opens the mouths of all against us.

"Not answering again."

Ver. 10. *"Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."*

Thus he has well said in another place, *"Doing service as to the Lord, and not to men."* For if you serve your master with good will, yet the occasion of this service proceeds from your fear, and he who with so great fear renders Him service, shall receive the greater reward. For if he restrain not his hand, or his unruly tongue, how shall the Gentile admire the doctrine that is among us? But if they see their slave, who has been taught the philosophy of Christ, displaying more self-command than their own

philosophers, and serving with all meekness and good will, he will in every way admire the power of the Gospel. For the Greeks judge not of doctrines by the doctrine itself, but they make the life and conduct the test of the doctrines. Let women therefore and servants be their instructors by their conversation. For both among themselves, and everywhere, it is admitted that the race of servants is passionate, not open to impression, intractable, and not very apt to receive instruction in virtue, not from their nature, God forbid, but from their ill breeding, and the neglect of their masters. For those who rule them care about nothing but their own service; or if they do sometimes attend to their morals, they do it only to spare themselves the trouble that would be caused them by their fornication, their thefts, or their drunkenness, and being thus neglected and having no one to concern himself about them, they naturally sink into the very depths of wickedness. For if under the direction of a father and mother, a guardian, a master, and teacher, with suitable companions, with the honor of a free condition, and many other advantages, it is difficult to escape intimacies with the wicked, what can we expect from those who are destitute of all these, and are mixed up with the wicked, and associate fearlessly with whomsoever they will, no one troubling herself about their friendships? What sort of persons do we suppose they will be? On this account it is difficult for any servant to be good, especially when they have not the benefit of instruction either from those without or from ourselves. They do not converse with free men of orderly conduct, who have a great regard for their reputation. For all these reasons it is a difficult and surprising thing that there should ever be a good servant.

When therefore it is seen that the power of religion, imposing a restraint upon a class naturally so self-willed, has rendered them singularly well behaved and gentle, their masters, however unreasonable they may be,

will form a high opinion of our doctrines. For it is manifest, that having previously instilled in their souls a fear of the Resurrection, of the Judgment, and of all those things which we are taught by our philosophy to expect after death, they have been able to resist wickedness, having in their souls a settled principle to counterbalance the pleasures of sin. So that it is not by chance or without reason, that Paul shows so much consideration for this class of men: since the more wicked they are, the more admirable is the power of that preaching which reforms them. For we then most admire a physician, when he restores to a healthy and sane state one who was despaired of, whom nothing benefited, who was unable to command his unreasonable desires, and wallowed in them. And observe what he most requires of them; the qualities which contribute most to their masters' ease.

"Not answering again, not purloining"; that is, to show all good will in matters entrusted to them, to be particularly faithful in their masters' concerns, and obedient to their commands.

Moral. Do not therefore think that I enlarge upon this subject without a purpose. For the rest of my discourse will be addressed to servants. Look not to this, my good friend, that you serve a man, but that your service is to God, that you adorn the Gospel. Then you will undertake everything in obedience to your master, bearing with him, though impatient, and angry without a cause. Consider that you are not gratifying him, but fulfilling the commandment of God; then you will easily submit to anything. And what I have said before, I repeat here, that when our spiritual state is right, the things of this life will follow. For a servant, so tractable and so well disposed, will not only be accepted by God, and made partaker of those glorious crowns, but his master himself, whom he serves so well, even though he be brutish and stone-hearted, inhuman and ferocious, will

commend and admire him, and will honor him above all the rest, and will set him over their heads, though he be a Gentile.

And that servants are required to be thus disposed towards a Gentile master, I will show you by an example. Joseph, who was of a different religion from the Egyptian, was sold to the chief cook. What then did he? When he saw the young man was virtuous, he did not consider the difference of their religion, but loved and favored and admired him, and committed the others to his superintendence, and knew nothing of the affairs of his own house because of him. Thus he was a second master, and even more of a master than his lord, for he knew more of his master's affairs than his master himself. And even afterwards, as it seems to me, when he believed the unjust accusation framed against him by his wife, yet from his former regard for him, retaining a respect for that just man, he satisfied his resentment with imprisonment. For if he had not greatly revered and esteemed him from his former conduct, he would have thrust his sword through his body, and dispatched him at once. *"For jealousy is the rage of a man; therefore he will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content, though you give many gifts."* [Proverbs 6:34-35] And if such is the jealousy of men in general, much more violent must it have been with him, an Egyptian and barbarian, and injured as he thought by one whom he had honored. For you all know that injuries do not affect us in the same way from all persons, but that those grieve us most bitterly and deeply which proceed from those who were well-affected toward us, who had trusted us and whom we had trusted, and who had received many kindnesses from us. He did not consider with himself, nor say, What! Have I taken a servant into my house, shared with him my substance, made him free, and even greater than myself, and is this the return that he makes me? He did not say this, so much was his mind prepossessed by his previous respect for him.

And what wonder if he enjoyed so much honor in the house, when we see what great regard he obtained even in a prison. You know how practiced in cruelty are the dispositions of those who have the custody of prisons. They profit by the misfortune of others, and harass those whom others support in their afflictions, making a gain of them that is truly deplorable, with a more than brutal cruelty. For they take advantage of those wretched circumstances which ought to excite their pity. And we may further observe, that they do not treat in the same manner all their prisoners; for those who are confined upon accusation only, and who are injuriously treated, they perhaps pity, but they punish with numberless inflictions those who are imprisoned for shameful and atrocious crimes. So that the keeper of the prison not only from the manner of such men might have been expected to be inhuman, but from the cause for which he was imprisoned. For who would not have been incensed against a young man, who having been raised to so great honor, was charged with requiting such favors by a base attempt upon the master's wife. Would not the keeper, considering these things, the honor to which he had been raised, and the crime for which he was imprisoned, would he not have treated him with more than brutal cruelty? But he was raised above all these things by his hope in God. For the virtue of the soul can mollify even wild beasts. And by the same meekness which had gained his master, he captivated also the keeper of the prison. Thus Joseph was again a ruler, he ruled in the prison as he had ruled in the house. For since he was destined to reign, it was fit that he should learn to be governed, and while he was governed he became a governor, and presided in the house.

For if Paul requires this of one who is promoted to a Church, saying, *"If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?"* [1 Timothy 3:5], it was fit that he who was to be a

governor, should first be an excellent ruler of the house. He presided over the prison, not as over a prison, but as if it had been a house. For he alleviated the calamities of all, and took charge of those who were imprisoned as if they had been his own members, not only taking an interest in their misfortunes and consoling them, but if he saw any one absorbed in thought, he went to him and enquired the cause, and could not bear even to see any one dejected, or be easy till he had relieved his dejection. Such love as this, many a one has not shown even to his own children. And to these things may be traced the beginning of his good fortune. For our part must go before, and then the blessing of God will follow.

For that he did show this care and concern we learn from the story. He saw, it is said, two eunuchs who had been cast into prison by Pharaoh, his chief butler and chief baker, and he said, *"Wherefore do you look so sadly today?"* [Genesis 40:7] And not from this question only, but from the conduct of these men, we may discern his merit. For, though they were the officers of the king, they did not despise him, nor in their despair did they reject his services, but they laid open to him all their secret, as to a brother who could sympathize with them.

And all this has been said by me to prove, that though the virtuous man be in slavery, in captivity, in prison; though he be in the depth of the earth, nothing will be able to overcome him. This I have said to servants, that they may learn that though they have masters that are very brutes, as this Egyptian, or ferocious as the keeper of the prison, they may gain their regard, and though they be heathen as they were, or whatever they be, they may soon win them to gentleness. For nothing is more engaging than good manners, nothing more agreeable and delightful than meekness, gentleness, and obedience. A person of this character is suitable to all. Such an one is not ashamed of slavery, he does not avoid the poor, the sick, and the infirm.

For virtue is superior, and prevails over everything. And if it has such power in slaves, how much more in those who are free? This then let us practice, whether bond or free, men or women. Thus we shall be loved both by God and men; and not only by virtuous men, but by the wicked; nay by them more especially, for they more especially honor and respect virtue. For as those who are under rule stand most in awe of the meek, so do the vicious most revere the virtuous, knowing from what they themselves have fallen. Since such then is the fruit of virtue, this let us pursue, and attain. If we adhere to this, nothing will be formidable, but all things easy and manageable. And though we pass through the fire and through the water, all things yield to virtue, even death itself. Let us then be zealous in the pursuit of it, that we may attain the good things to come, in Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, etc.

Homily 5 on Titus

[Titus 2:11-14]

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared unto all men, Teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Having demanded from servants so great virtue, for it is great virtue to adorn the doctrine of our God and Saviour in all things, and charged them to give no occasion of offense to their masters, even in common matters, he adds the just cause, why servants should be such: *"For the grace of God, that brings salvation, has appeared."* Those who have God for their Teacher, may well be such as I have described, seeing their numberless sins have been forgiven to them. For you know that in addition to other considerations, this in no common degree awes and humbles the soul, that when it had innumerable sins to answer for, it received not punishment, but obtained pardon, and infinite favors. For if one, whose servant had committed many offenses, instead of scourging him with thongs, should grant him a pardon for all those, but should require an account of his future conduct, and bid him beware of falling into the same faults again, and should bestow high favors upon him, who do you think would not be overcome at hearing of such kindness? But do not think that grace stops at the pardon of former sins— it secures us against them in future, for this also is of grace. Since if He were never to punish those who still do amiss, this would not be so much grace, as encouragement to evil and wickedness.

"For the grace of God," he says, *"has appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world; looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."* See, how together with the rewards he places the virtue. And this is of grace, to deliver us from worldly things, and to lead us to Heaven. He speaks here of two appearings; for there are two; the first of grace, the second of retribution and justice.

"That denying ungodliness," he says, *"and worldly lusts."*

See here the foundation of all virtue. He has not said *"avoiding,"* but *"denying."* Denying implies the greatest distance, the greatest hatred and aversion. With as much resolution and zeal as they turned from idols, with so much let them turn from vice itself, and worldly lusts. For these too are idols, that is, worldly lusts, and covetousness, and this he names idolatry. Whatever things are useful for the present life are worldly lusts, whatever things perish with the present life are worldly lusts. Let us then have nothing to do with these. Christ came, *"that we should deny ungodliness."* Ungodliness relates to doctrines, worldly lusts to a wicked life.

"And should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world."

Do you see, what I always affirm, that it is not sobriety only to abstain from fornication, but that we must be free from other passions. So then he who loves wealth is not sober. For as the fornicator loves women, so the other loves money, and even more inordinately, for he is not impelled by so strong a passion. And he is certainly a more powerless charioteer who cannot manage a gentle horse, than he who cannot restrain a wild and unruly one. What then? Says he, is the love of wealth weaker than the love of women? This is manifest from many reasons. In the first place, lust springs from the necessity of nature, and what arises from this necessity

must be difficult to restrain, since it is implanted in our nature. Secondly, because the ancients had no regard for wealth, but for women they had great regard, in respect of their chastity. And no one blamed him who cohabited with his wife according to law, even to old age, but all blamed him who hoarded money. And many of the Heathen philosophers despised money, but none of them were indifferent to women, so that this passion is more imperious than the other. But since we are addressing the Church, let us not take our examples from the Heathens, but from the Scriptures. This then the blessed Paul places almost in the rank of a command. *"Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."* [1 Timothy 6:8] But concerning women he says, *"Defraud not one the other, except it be with consent"—* and *"come together again."* [1 Corinthians 7:5] And you see him often laying down rules for a lawful intercourse, and he permits the enjoyment of this desire, and allows of a second marriage, and bestows much consideration upon the matter, and never punishes on account of it. But he everywhere condemns him that is fond of money. Concerning wealth also Christ often commanded that we should avoid the corruption of it, but He says nothing about abstaining from a wife. For hear what He says concerning money; *"Whosoever forsakes not all that he has"* [Luke 14:33]; but he nowhere says, *"Whosoever forsakes not his wife"*; for he knew how imperious that passion is. And the blessed Paul says, *"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled"* [Hebrews 13:4]; but he has nowhere said that the care of riches is honorable, but the reverse. Thus he says to Timothy, *"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts."* [1 Timothy 6:9] He says not, they that will be covetous, but, they that will be rich.

And that you may learn from the common notions the true state of this matter, it must be set before you generally. If a man were once for all

deprived of money, he would no longer be tormented with the desire of it, for nothing so much causes the desire of wealth, as the possession of it. But it is not so with respect to lust, but many who have been made eunuchs have not been freed from the flame that burned within them, for the desire resides in other organs, being seated inwardly in our nature. To what purpose then is this said? Because the covetous is more intemperate than the fornicator, inasmuch as the former gives way to a weaker passion. Indeed it proceeds less from passion than from baseness of mind. But lust is natural, so that if a man does not approach a woman, nature performs her part and operation. But there is nothing of this sort in the case of avarice.

"That we should live godly in this present world."

And what is this hope? What the reward of our labors?

"Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing."

For nothing is more blessed and more desirable than that appearing. Words are not able to represent it, the blessings thereof surpass our understanding.

"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour."

Where are those who say that the Son is inferior to the Father?

"Our great God and Saviour." He who saved us when we were enemies. What will He not do then when He has us approved?

"The great God." When he says great with respect to God, he says it not comparatively but absolutely, after Whom no one is great, since it is relative. For if it is relative, He is great by comparison, not great by nature. But now He is incomparably great.

Ver. 14. *"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people."*

"Peculiar": that is, selected from the rest, and having nothing in common with them.

"Zealous of good works."

Do you see that our part is necessary, not merely works, but *"zealous"*; we should with all alacrity, with a becoming earnestness, go forward in virtue. For when we were weighed down with evils, and incurably diseased, it was of His lovingkindness that we were delivered. But what follows after this is our part as well as His.

Ver. 15. *"These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority."*

"These things speak and exhort." Do you see how he charges Timothy? *"Reprove, rebuke, exhort."* But here, *"Rebuke with all authority."* For the manners of this people were more stubborn, wherefore he orders them to be rebuked more roughly, and with all authority. For there are some sins, which ought to be prevented by command. We may with persuasion advise men to despise riches, to be meek, and the like. But the adulterer, the fornicator, the defrauder, ought to be brought to a better course by command. And those who are addicted to augury and divination, and the like, should be corrected *"with all authority."* Observe how he would have him insist on these things with independence, and with entire freedom.

"Let no man despise you." But

Chap. iii. 1. *"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers."*

What then? Even when men do evil, may we not revile them? Nay, but *"to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man."* Hear the exhortation, *"To speak evil of no man."* Our lips should be pure from reviling. For if our reproaches are true, it is not for us to utter them, but for

the Judge to enquire into the matter. *"For why,"* he says, *"do you judge your brother?"* [Romans 14:10] But if they are not true, how great the fire. Hear what the thief says to his fellow-thief. *"For we are also in the same condemnation."* [Luke 23:40] We are running the same hazard. If you revile others, you will soon fall into the same sins. Therefore the blessed Paul admonishes us: *"Let him that stands, take heed lest he fall."* [1 Corinthians 10:12]

"To be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

Unto Greeks and Jews, to the wicked and the evil. For when he says, *"Let him that stands take heed lest he fall,"* he wakens their fears from the future; but here, on the contrary, he exhorts them from the consideration of the past, and the same in what follows;

Ver. 3. *"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish."*

Thus also he does in his Epistle to the Galatians, where he says, *"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."* [Galatians 4:4] Therefore he says, Revile no one, for such also you were yourself.

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another."

Therefore we ought to be thus to all, to be gently disposed. For he who was formerly in such a state, and has been delivered from it, ought not to reproach others, but to pray, to be thankful to Him who has granted both to him and them deliverance from such evils. Let no one boast; for all have sinned. If then, doing well yourself, you are inclined to revile others, consider your own former life, and the uncertainty of the future, and restrain your anger. For if you have lived virtuously from your earliest youth, yet nevertheless you may have many sins; and if you have not, as

you think, consider that this is not the effect of your virtue, but of the grace of God. For if He had not called your forefathers, you would have been disobedient. See here how he mentions every sort of wickedness. How many things has not God dispensed by the Prophets and all other means? Have we heard?

"For we," he says, "were once deceived."

Ver. 4. *"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." How? "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."*

Strange! How were we drowned in wickedness, so that we could not be purified, but needed a new birth? For this is implied by *"Regeneration."* For as when a house is in a ruinous state no one places props under it, nor makes any addition to the old building, but pulls it down to its foundations, and rebuilds it anew; so in our case, God has not repaired us, but has made us anew. For this is *"the renewing of the Holy Ghost."* He has made us new men. How? *"By His Spirit"*; and to show this further, he adds,

Ver. 6. *"Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."*

Thus we need the Spirit abundantly.

"That being justified by His grace"— again by grace and not by debt— *"we may be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."*

At the same time there is an incitement to humility, and a hope for the future. For if when we were so abandoned, as to require to be born again, to be saved by grace, to have no good in us, if then He saved us, much more will He save us in the world to come.

For nothing was worse than the brutality of mankind before the coming of Christ. They were all affected towards each other as if enemies

and at war. Fathers slew their own sons, and mothers were mad against their children. There was no order settled, no natural, no written law; everything was subverted. There were adulteries continually, and murders, and things if possible worse than murders, and thefts; indeed we are told by one of the heathen, that this practice was esteemed a point of virtue. And naturally, since they worshipped a god of such character. Their oracles frequently required them to put such and such men to death. Let me tell you one of the stories of that time. One Androgeus, the son of Minos, coming to Athens, obtained a victory in wrestling, for which he was punished and put to death. Apollo therefore, remedying one evil by another, ordered twice seven youths to be executed on his account. What could be more savage than this tyrannical command? And it was executed too. A man undertook to atone the mad rage of the demon, and slew these young men, because the deceit of the oracle prevailed with them. But afterwards, when the young men resisted and stood upon their defense, it was no longer done. If now it had been just, it ought not to have been prevented, but if unjust, as undoubtedly it was, it ought not to have been commanded at all. Then they worshipped boxers and wrestlers. They waged constant wars in perpetual succession, city by city, village by village, house by house. They were addicted to the love of boys, and one of their wise men made a law that Pædrasty, as well as anointing for wrestling, should not be allowed to slaves, as if it was an honorable thing; and they had houses for this purpose, in which it was openly practiced. And if all that was done among them was related, it would be seen that they openly outraged nature, and there was none to restrain them. Then their dramas were replete with adultery, lewdness, and corruption of every sort. In their indecent nocturnal assemblies, women were admitted to the spectacle. There was seen the abomination of a virgin sitting in the theater during the night, amidst a drunken multitude of young

men madly reveling. The very festival was the darkness, and the abominable deeds practiced by them. On this account he says, "*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures.*" One man loved his stepmother, a woman her step-son, and in consequence hung herself. For as to their passion for boys, whom they called their "*Pædica*," it is not fit to be named. And would you see a son married to his mother? This too happened among them, and what is horrible, though it was done in ignorance, the god whom they worshipped did not prevent it, but permitted this outrage to nature to be committed, and that though she was a person of distinction. And if those, who, if for no other reason, yet for the sake of their reputation with the multitude, might have been expected to adhere to virtue; if they rushed thus headlong into vice, what is it likely was the conduct of the greater part, who lived in obscurity? What is more diversified than this pleasure? The wife of a certain one fell in love with another man, and with the help of her adulterer, slew her husband upon his return. The greater part of you probably know the story. The son of the murdered man killed the adulterer, and after him his mother, then he himself became mad, and was haunted by furies. After this the madman himself slew another man, and took his wife. What can be worse than such calamities as these? But I mention these instances taken from the Heathens, with this view, that I may convince the Gentiles, what evils then prevailed in the world. But we may show the same from our own writings. For it is said, "*They sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils.*" [Psalm 106:37] Again, the Sodomites were destroyed for no other cause than their unnatural appetites. Soon after the coming of Christ, did not a king's daughter dance at a banquet in the presence of drunken men, and did she not ask as the reward of her dancing the murder and the head of a Prophet? "*Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?*" [Psalm 6:2]

"Hateful," he says, *"and hating one another."* For it must necessarily happen, when we let loose every pleasure on the soul, that there should be much hatred. For where love is, with virtue, no man overreaches another in any matter. Mark also what Paul says, *"Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you."* [1 Corinthians 6:9-10] Do you see how every species of wickedness prevailed? It was a state of gross darkness, and the corruption of all that was right. For if those who had the advantage of prophecies, and who saw so many evils inflicted upon their enemies, and even upon themselves, nevertheless did not restrain themselves, but committed numberless foolish crimes, what would be the case with others? One of their lawgivers ordered that virgins should wrestle naked in the presence of men. Many blessings on you! That you cannot endure the mention of it; but their philosophers were not ashamed of the actual practice. Another, the chief of their philosophers, approves of their going out to the war, and of their being common, as if he were a pimp and pander to their lusts.

"Living in malice and envy."

For if those who professed philosophy among them made such laws, what shall we say of those who were not philosophers? If such were the maxims of those who wore a long beard, and assumed the grave cloak, what can be said of others? Woman was not made for this, O man, to be prostituted as common. O you subverters of all decency, who use men, as if they were women, and lead out women to war, as if they were men! This is the work of the devil, to subvert and confound all things, to overleap the boundaries that have been appointed from the beginning, and remove those which God has set to nature. For God assigned to woman the care of the

house only, to man the conduct of public affairs. But you reduce the head to the feet, and raise the feet to the head. You suffer women to bear arms, and are not ashamed. But why do I mention these things? They introduce on the stage a woman that murders her own children, nor are they ashamed to stuff the ears of men with such abominable stories.

Ver. 4. *"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."*

What means, *"according to the hope"*? That, as we have hoped, so we shall enjoy eternal life, or because you are even already heirs.

"This is a faithful saying."

Because he had been speaking of things future and not of the present, therefore he adds, that it is worthy of credit. These things are true, he says, and this is manifest from what has gone before. For He who has delivered us from such a state of iniquity, and from so many evils, will assuredly impart to us the good things to come, if we abide in grace. For all proceeds from the same kind concern.

Moral. Let us then give thanks to God, and not revile them; nor accuse them, but rather let us beseech them, pray for them, counsel and advise them, though they should insult and spurn us. For such is the nature of those who are diseased. But those who are concerned for the health of such persons do all things and bear all things, though it may not avail, that they may not have themselves to accuse of negligence. Do you not know that often, when a physician despairs of a sick man, some relative standing by addresses him, *"Bestow further attendance, leave nothing undone, that I*

may not have to accuse myself, that I may incur no blame, no self-reproach." Do you not see the great care that near kinsmen take of their relations, how much they do for them, both entreating the physicians to cure them, and sitting perseveringly beside them? Let us at least imitate them. And yet there is no comparison between the objects of our concern. For if any one had a son diseased in his body, he could not refuse to take a long journey to free him from his disease. But when the soul is in a bad state, no one concerns himself about it, but we all are indolent, all careless, all negligent, and overlook our wives, our children, and ourselves, when attacked by this dangerous disease. But when it is too late, we become sensible of it. Consider how disgraceful and absurd it is to say afterwards, *"we never looked for it, we never expected that this would be the event."* And it is no less dangerous than disgraceful. For if in the present life it is the part of foolish men to make no provision for the future, much more must it be so with respect to the next life, when we hear many counseling us, and informing us what is to be done, and what not to be done. Let us then hold fast that hope. Let us be careful of our salvation, let us in all things call upon God, that He may stretch forth His hand to us. How long will you be slothful? How long negligent? How long shall we be careless of ourselves and of our fellow-servants? He has shed richly upon us the grace of His Spirit. Let us therefore consider how great is the grace he has bestowed upon us, and let us show as great earnestness ourselves, or, since this is not possible, some, although it be less. For if after this grace we are insensible, the heavier will be our punishment. *"For if I,"* He says, *"had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."* [John 15:22] But God forbid that this should be said of us, and grant that we may all be thought worthy of the blessings promised to those who have loved Him, in Jesus Christ our Lord, etc.

Homily 6 on Titus

[Titus 3:8-11]

"These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject. Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself."

Having spoken of the love of God to man, of His ineffable regard for us, of what we were and what He has done for us, he has added, *"These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works"*; that is, Discourse of these things, and from a consideration of them exhort to almsgiving. For what has been said will not only apply to humility, to the not being puffed up, and not reviling others, but to every other virtue. So also in arguing with the Corinthians, he says, *"You know that our Lord being rich became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."* [2 Corinthians 8:9] Having considered the care and exceeding love of God for man, he thence exhorts them to almsgiving, and that not in a common and slight manner, but *"that they may be careful,"* he says, *"to maintain good works,"* that is, both to succor the injured, not only by money, but by patronage and protection, and to defend the widows and orphans, and to afford a refuge to all that are afflicted. For this is to maintain good works. For these things, he says, are good and profitable unto men. *"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are*

unprofitable and vain." What do these "*genealogies*" mean? For in his Epistle to Timothy he mentions "*fables and endless genealogies.*" [1 Timothy 1:4] [Perhaps both here and there glancing at the Jews, who, priding themselves on having Abraham for their forefather, neglected their own part. On this account he calls them both "*foolish and unprofitable*"; for it is the part of folly to confide in things unprofitable.] "*Contentions,*" he means, with heretics, in which he would not have us labor to no purpose, where nothing is to be gained, for they end in nothing. For when a man is perverted and predetermined not to change his mind, whatever may happen, why should you labor in vain, sowing upon a rock, when you should spend your honorable toil upon your own people, in discoursing with them upon almsgiving and every other virtue? How then does he elsewhere say, "*If God perhaps will give them repentance*" [2 Timothy 2:25]; but here, "*A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sins, being condemned of himself*"? In the former passage he speaks of the correction of those of whom he had hope, and who had simply made opposition. But when he is known and manifest to all, why do you contend in vain? Why do you beat the air? What means, "*being condemned of himself*"? Because he cannot say that no one has told him, no one admonished him; since therefore after admonition he continues the same, he is self-condemned.

Ver. 12. "*When I shall send Artemas unto you, or Tychicus; be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis.*" What do you say? After having appointed him to preside over Crete, do you again summon him to yourself? It was not to withdraw him from that occupation, but to discipline him the more for it. For that he does not call him to attend upon him, as if he took him everywhere with him as his follower, appears from what he adds:

"For I have determined there to winter."

Now Nicopolis is a city of Thrace.

Ver. 14. *"Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them."*

These were not of the number to whom Churches had been entrusted, but of the number of his companions. But Apollos was the more vehement, being *"an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures."* [Acts 18:24] But if Zenas was a lawyer, you say, he ought not to have been supported by others. But by a lawyer here is meant one versed in the laws of the Jews. And he seems to say, supply their wants abundantly, that nothing may be lacking to them.

Ver. 14, 15. *"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. All that are with me salute you. Greet them that love us in the faith."*

That is, either those that love Paul himself, or those men that are faithful.

"Grace be with you all. Amen."

How then do you command him to stop the mouths of gainsayers, if he must pass them by when they are doing everything to their own destruction? He means that he should not do it principally for their advantage, for being once perverted in their minds, they would not profit by it. But if they injured others, it behooved him to withstand and contend with them; and manfully await them, but if you are reduced to necessity, seeing them destroying others, be not silent, but stop their mouths, from regard to those whom they would destroy. It is not indeed possible for a zealous man of upright life to abstain from contention, but so do as I have said. For the evil arises from idleness and a vain philosophy, that one should be occupied about words only. For it is a great injury to be uttering a superfluity of words, when one ought to be teaching, or praying, or giving thanks. For it is

not right to be sparing of our money but not sparing of our words; we ought rather to spare words than our money, and not to give ourselves up to all sorts of persons.

What means, *"that they be careful to maintain good works"*? That they wait not for those who are in want to come to them, but that they seek out those who need their assistance. Thus the considerate man shows his concern, and with great zeal will he perform this duty. For in doing good actions, it is not those who receive the kindness that are benefited, so much as those who do it that make gain and profit, for it gives them confidence towards God. But in the other case, there is no end of contention: therefore he calls the heretic incorrigible. For as to neglect those for whom there is a hope of conversion is the part of slothfulness, so to bestow pains upon those who are diseased past remedy is the extreme of folly and madness; for we render them more bold.

"And let ours," he says, *"learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."* You observe that he is more anxious for them than for those who are to receive their kindnesses. For they might probably have been brought on their way by many others, but I am concerned, he says, for our own friends. For what advantage would it be to them, if others should dig up treasures, and maintain their teachers? This would be no benefit to them, for they remained unfruitful. Could not Christ then, Who with five loaves fed five thousand men, and with seven loaves fed four thousand, could not He have supported Himself and His disciples?

Moral. For what reason then was He maintained by women? For women, it is said, followed Him, and ministered unto Him. [Mark 15:41] It was to teach us from the first that He is concerned for those who do good. Could not Paul, who supported others by his own hands, have maintained himself without assistance from others? But you see him receiving and

requesting aid. And hear the reason for it. *"Not because I desire a gift,"* he says, *"but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."* [Philippians 4:17] And at the beginning too, when men sold all their possessions and laid them at the Apostles' feet, the Apostles, do you see, were more concerned for them than for those who received their alms. For if their concern had only been that the poor might by any means be relieved, they would not have judged so severely of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, when they kept back their money. Nor would Paul have charged men to give *"not grudgingly nor of necessity."* [2 Corinthians 9:7] What do you say, Paul? Do you discourage giving to the poor? No, he answers; but I consider not their advantage only, but the good of those who give. Do you see, that when the prophet gave that excellent counsel to Nebuchadnezzar, he did not merely consider the poor. For he does not content himself with saying, Give to the poor; but what? *"Break off your sins by almsdeeds, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor."* [Daniel 4:27] Part with your wealth, not that others may be fed, but that you may escape punishment. And Christ again says, *"Go and sell that you have, and give to the poor...and come and follow Me."* [Matthew 19:21] Do you see that the commandment was given that he might be induced to follow Him? For as riches are an impediment, therefore he commands them to be given to the poor, instructing the soul to be pitiful and merciful, to despise wealth, and to flee from covetousness. For he who has learned to give to him that needs, will in time learn not to receive from those who have to give. This makes men like God. Yet virginity, and fasting, and lying on the ground, are more difficult than this, but nothing is so strong and powerful to extinguish the fire of our sins as almsgiving. It is greater than all other virtues. It places the lovers of it by the side of the King Himself, and justly. For the effect of virginity, of fasting, of lying on the ground, is confined to those who

practice them, and no other is saved thereby. But almsgiving extends to all, and embraces the members of Christ, and actions that extend their effects to many are far greater than those which are confined to one.

For almsgiving is the mother of love, of that love, which is the characteristic of Christianity, which is greater than all miracles, by which the disciples of Christ are manifested. It is the medicine of our sins, the cleansing of the filth of our souls, the ladder fixed to heaven; it binds together the body of Christ. Would you learn how excellent a thing it is? In the time of the Apostles, men selling their possessions brought them to them, and they were distributed. For it is said, "*Distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.*" [Acts 4:35] For tell me how, setting aside the future, and not now considering the kingdom that is to come, let us see who in the present life are the gainers, those who received, or those who gave. The former murmured and quarreled with each other. The latter had one soul. "*They were of one heart, and of one soul,*" it is said, "*and grace was upon them all.*" [Acts 4:32] And they lived in great simplicity. Do you see that they were gainers even by thus giving? Tell me now, with whom would you wish to be numbered, with those who gave away their possessions, and had nothing, or with those who received even the goods of others?

See the fruit of almsgiving, the separations and hindrances were removed, and immediately their souls were knit together. "*They were all of one heart and of one soul.*" So that even setting aside almsgiving, the parting with riches is attended with gain. And these things I have said, that those who have not succeeded to an inheritance from their forefathers may not be cast down, as if they had less than those who are wealthy. For if they please they have more. For they will more readily incline to almsgiving, like the widow, and they will have no occasion for enmity towards their

neighbor, and they will enjoy freedom in every respect. Such an one cannot be threatened with the confiscation of his goods, and he is superior to all wrongs. As those who fly unincumbered with clothes are not easily caught, but they who are incumbered with many garments and a long train are soon overtaken, so it is with the rich man and the poor. The one, though he be taken, will easily make his escape, while the other, though he be not detained, is incumbered by cords of his own, by numberless cares, distresses, passions, provocations, all which overwhelm the soul, and not these alone, but many other things which riches draw after them. It is much more difficult for a rich man to be moderate and to live frugally, than for the poor, more difficult for him to be free from passion. Then he, you say, will have the greater reward.— By no means.— What, not if he overcomes greater difficulties?— But these difficulties were of his own seeking. For we are not commanded to become rich, but the reverse. But he prepares for himself so many stumbling-blocks and impediments.

Others not only divest themselves of riches, but macerate their bodies, as travelers in the narrow way. Instead of doing this, you heat more intensely the furnace of your passions, and gettest more about you. Go therefore into the broad way, for it is that which receives such as you. But the narrow way is for those who are afflicted and straitened, who bear along with them nothing but those burdens, which they can carry through it, as almsgiving, love for mankind, goodness, and meekness. These if you bear, you will easily find entrance, but if you take with you arrogance, a soul inflamed with passions, and that load of thorns, wealth, there is need of wide room for you to pass, nor will you well be able to enter into the crowd without striking others, and coming down upon them on your way. In this case a wide distance from others is required. But he who carries gold and silver, I mean the achievements of virtue, does not cause his neighbors to

flee from him, but brings men nearer to him, even to link themselves with him. But if riches in themselves are thorns, what must covetousness be? Why do you take that away with you? Is it to make the flame greater by adding fuel to that fire? Is not the fire of hell sufficient? Consider how the Three Children overcame the furnace. Imagine that to be hell. With tribulation were they plunged into it, bound and fettered; but within they found large room; not so they that stood around without.

Something of this kind even now will be experienced, if we will manfully resist the trials that encompass us. If we have hope in God, we shall be in security, and have ample room, and those who bring us into these straits shall perish. For it is written, "*Whoso digs a pit shall fall therein.*" [Sirach 26:27] Though they bind our hands and our feet, the affliction will have power to set us loose. For observe this miracle. Those whom men had bound, the fire set free. As if certain persons were delivered up to the servants of their friends, and the servants, from regard to the friendship of their master, instead of injuring them, should treat them with much respect; so the fire, when as it knew that the Three Children were the friends of its Lord, burst their fetters, set them free, and let them go, and became to them as a pavement, and was trodden under their feet. And justly, since they had been cast into it for the glory of God. Let us, as many of us as are afflicted, hold fast these examples.

But behold, they were delivered from their affliction, you say, and we are not. True, they were delivered, and justly; since they did not enter into that furnace expecting deliverance, but as if to die outright. For hear what they say: "*There is a God in Heaven, Who will deliver us. But if not, be it known unto you, O King, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up.*" [Daniel 3:17-18] But we, as if bargaining on the chastisements of the Lord, even fix a time, saying, "*If He*

does not show mercy till this time." Therefore it is that we are not delivered. Surely Abraham did not leave his home expecting again to receive his son, but as prepared to sacrifice him; and it was contrary to his expectation that he received him again safe. And thou, when you fall into tribulation, be not in haste to be delivered, prepare your mind for all endurance, and speedily you shall be delivered from your affliction. For God brings it upon you for this end, that He may chasten you. When therefore from the first we learn to bear it patiently, and do not sink into despair, He presently relieves us, as having effected the whole matter.

I should like to tell you an instructive story, which has much of profit in it. What then is it? Once, when a persecution arose, and a severe war was raging against the Church, two men were apprehended. The one was ready to suffer anything whatever; the other was prepared to submit with firmness to be beheaded, but with fear and trembling shrunk from other tortures. Observe then the dispensation towards these men. When the judge was seated, he ordered the one who was ready to endure anything, to be beheaded. The other he caused to be hung up and tortured, and that not once or twice, but from city to city. Now why was this permitted? That he might recover through torments that quality of mind which he had neglected, that he might shake off all cowardice, and be no longer afraid to endure anything. Joseph too, when he was urgent to escape from prison, was left to remain there. For hear him saying, *"Indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews; but do thou make mention of me to the king."* [Genesis 40:14-15] And for this he was suffered to remain, that he might learn not to place hope or confidence in men, but to cast all upon God. Knowing these things therefore let us give thanks to God, and let us do all things that are expedient for us, that we may obtain the good things to come, through Jesus

Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father be glory, with the Holy Ghost,
now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Argument

First, it is necessary to state the argument of the Epistle, then also the matters that are questioned respecting it. What then is the argument?

Philemon was a man of admirable and noble character. That he was an admirable man is evident from the fact, that his whole household was of believers, and of such believers as even to be called a Church: therefore he says in this Epistle, "*And to the Church that is in your house.*" [Philemon 2] He bears witness also to his great obedience, and that "*the bowels of the Saints are refreshed in him.*" [Philemon 7] And he himself in this Epistle commanded him to prepare him a lodging. [Philemon 22] It seems to me therefore that his house was altogether a lodging for the Saints. This excellent man, then, had a certain slave named Onesimus. This Onesimus, having stolen something from his master, had run away. For that he had stolen, hear what he says: "*If he has wronged you, or owes you anything, I will repay you.*" (v. 18, 19.) Coming therefore to Paul at Rome, and having found him in prison, and having enjoyed the benefit of his teaching, he there also received Baptism. For that he obtained there the gift of Baptism is manifest from his saying, "*Whom I have begotten in my bonds.*" [Philemon 10] Paul therefore writes, recommending him to his master, that on every account he should forgive him, and receive him as one now regenerate.

But because some say, that it was superfluous that this Epistle should be annexed, since he is making a request about a small matter in behalf of one man, let them learn who make these objections, that they are themselves deserving of very many censures. For it was not only proper that these small Epistles, in behalf of things so necessary, should have been

inscribed, but I wish that it were possible to meet with one who could deliver to us the history of the Apostles, not only all they wrote and spoke of, but of the rest of their conversation, even what they ate, and when they ate, when they walked, and where they sat, what they did every day, in what parts they were, into what house they entered, and where they lodged — to relate everything with minute exactness, so replete with advantage is all that was done by them. But the greater part, not knowing the benefit that would result thence, proceed to censure it.

For if only seeing those places where they sat or where they were imprisoned, mere lifeless spots, we often transport our minds there, and imagine their virtue, and are excited by it, and become more zealous, much more would this be the case, if we heard their words and their other actions. But concerning a friend a man enquires, where he lives, what he is doing, whither he is going: and say, should we not make these enquiries about these the general instructors of the world? For when a man leads a spiritual life, the habit, the walk, the words and the actions of such an one, in short, all that relates to him, profits the hearers, and nothing is a hindrance or impediment.

But it is useful for you to learn that this Epistle was sent upon necessary matters. Observe therefore how many things are rectified thereby. We have this one thing first, that in all things it becomes one to be earnest. For if Paul bestows so much concern upon a runaway, a thief, and a robber, and does not refuse nor is ashamed to send him back with such commendations; much more does it become us not to be negligent in such matters. Secondly, that we ought not to abandon the race of slaves, even if they have proceeded to extreme wickedness. For if a thief and a runaway become so virtuous that Paul was willing to make him a companion, and says in this Epistle, *"that in your stead he might have ministered unto me"*

[Philemon 13], much more ought we not to abandon the free. Thirdly, that we ought not to withdraw slaves from the service of their masters. For if Paul, who had such confidence in Philemon, was unwilling to detain Onesimus, so useful and serviceable to minister to himself, without the consent of his master, much less ought we so to act. For if the servant is so excellent, he ought by all means to continue in that service, and to acknowledge the authority of his master, that he may be the occasion of benefit to all in that house. Why do you take the candle from the candlestick to place it in the bushel?

I wish it were possible to bring into the cities those (servants) who are without. *"What,"* say you, *"if he also should become corrupt."* And why should he, I beseech you? Because he has come into the city? But consider, that being without he will be much more corrupt. For he who is corrupt being within, will be much more so being without. For here he will be delivered from necessary care, his master taking that care upon himself; but there the concern about those things will draw him off perhaps even from things more necessary, and more spiritual. On this account the blessed Paul, when giving them the best counsel, said, *"Are you called, being a servant? Care not for it: but if even you may be made free, use it rather"* [1 Corinthians 7:21]; that is, abide in slavery. But what is more important than all, that the word of God be not blasphemed, as he himself says in one of his Epistles. *"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed."* [1 Timothy 6:1] For the Gentiles also will say, that even one who is a slave can be well pleasing to God. But now many are reduced to the necessity of blasphemy, and of saying Christianity has been introduced into life for the subversion of everything, masters having their servants taken from them, and it is a matter of violence.

Let me also say one other thing. He teaches us not to be ashamed of our domestics, if they are virtuous. For if Paul, the most admirable of men, speaks thus much in favor of this one, much more should we speak favorably of ours. There being then so many good effects— and yet we have not mentioned all— does any one think it superfluous that this Epistle was inserted? And would not this be extreme folly? Let us then, I beseech you, apply to the Epistle written by the Apostle. For having gained already so many advantages from it, we shall gain more from the text.

Homily 1 on Philemon

Philemon i. 1-3

"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer, And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the Church in your house: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

These things are said to a master in behalf of a servant. Immediately at the outset, he has pulled down his spirit, and not suffered him to be ashamed, he has quenched his anger; calling himself a prisoner, he strikes him with compunction, and makes him collect himself, and makes it appear that present things are nothing. For if a chain for Christ's sake is not a shame but a boast, much more is slavery not to be considered a reproach. And this he says, not exalting himself, but for a good purpose doing this, showing thence that he was worthy of credit; and this he does not for his own sake, but that he may more readily obtain the favor. As if he had said, *"It is on your account that I am invested with this chain."* As he also has said elsewhere, there indeed showing his concern, but here his trustworthiness.

Nothing is greater than this boast, to be called *"the stigmatized of Christ."* *"For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."* [Galatians 6:17]

"The prisoner of the Lord." For he had been bound on His account. Who would not be struck with awe, who would not be humbled when he hears of the chains of Christ? Who would not be ready to give up even his own life, much less one domestic?

"And Timothy our brother."

He joins another also with himself, that he, being entreated by many, may the more readily yield and grant the favor.

"Unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer."

If "*beloved*," then his confidence is not boldness nor forwardness, but a proof of much affection. If a "*fellow-laborer*," then not only may he be instructed in such a matter, but he ought to acknowledge it as a favor. For he is gratifying himself, he is building up the same work. So that apart from any request, he says, you have another necessity for granting the favor. For if he is profitable to the Gospel, and you are anxious to promote the Gospel, then ought you not to be entreated, but to entreat.

Ver. 2. *"And to our beloved Apphia."*

It seems to me that she was his partner in life. Observe the humility of Paul; he both joins Timothy with him in his request, and asks not only the husband, but the wife also, and some one else, perhaps a friend.

"And Archippus," he says, *"our fellow-soldier."*

Not wishing to effect such things by command, and not taking it ill, if he did not immediately comply with his request; but he begs them to do what a stranger might have done to aid his request. For not only the being requested by many, but the petition being urged to many, contributes to its being granted. And on this account he says, *"And Archippus our fellow-soldier."* If you are a fellow-soldier, you ought also to take a concern in these things. But this is the Archippus, about whom he says in his Epistle to the Colossians, *"Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it."* [Colossians 4:17] It seems to me too, that he, whom he joins with him in this request, was also one of the Clergy. And he calls him his fellow-soldier, that he may by all means cooperate with him.

"And to the Church in your house."

Here he has not omitted even the slaves. For he knew that often even the words of slaves have power to overthrow their master; and more especially when his request was in behalf of a slave. And perhaps it was they particularly who exasperated him. He does not suffer them therefore to fall into envy, having honored them by including them in a salutation with their masters. And neither does he allow the master to take offense. For if he had made mention of them by name, perhaps he would have been angry. And if he had not mentioned them at all, he might have been displeased. Observe therefore how prudently he has found a way by his manner of mentioning them, both to honor them by his mention of them, and not to wound him. For the name of the "*Church*" does not suffer masters to be angry, even though they are reckoned together with their servants. For the Church knows not the distinction of master and servant. By good actions and by sins she defines the one and the other. If then it is a Church, be not displeased that your slave is saluted with you. "*For in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free.*" [Galatians 3:28]

"Grace to you, and peace."

By mentioning "*grace*," he brings his own sins to his remembrance. Consider, he says, how great things God has pardoned in you, how by grace you are saved. Imitate your Lord. And he prays for "*peace*" to him; and naturally: for it comes then when we imitate Him, then grace abides. Since even that servant who was unmerciful to his fellow-servants, until he demanded the hundred pence, had the grace of his master abiding on him. But when he made that demand, it was taken from him, and he was delivered to the tormentors.

Moral. Considering these things, then, let us also be merciful and forgiving towards those who have trespassed against us. The offenses against us here are a hundred pence, but those from us against God are ten

thousand talents. But you know that offenses are also judged by the quality of the persons: for instance, he who has insulted a private person has done wrong, but not so much as he who has insulted a magistrate, and he who has offended a greater magistrate offends in a higher degree, and he who offends an inferior one in a lower degree; but he who insults the king offends much more. The injury indeed is the same, but it becomes greater by the excellence of the person. And if he who insults a king receives intolerable punishment, on account of the superiority of the person; for how many talents will he be answerable who insults God? So that even if we should commit the same offenses against God, that we do against men, even so it is not an equal thing: but as great as is the difference between God and men, so great is that between the offenses against Him and them.

But now I find also that the offenses exceed, not only in that they become great by the eminence of the person, but by their very nature. And it is a horrible saying that I am about to utter, and truly awful, but it is necessary to be said, that it may even so shake our minds and strike them with terror, showing that we fear men much more than God, and we honor men much more than God. For consider, he that commits adultery knows that God sees him, yet he disregards Him; but if a man see him, he restrains his lust. Does not such a one not only honor men above God, not only insult God, but, which is even much more dreadful, while he fears them, despise Him? For if he sees them, he restrains the flame of lust, but rather what flame? It is not a flame, but a willfulness. For if indeed it was not lawful to have intercourse with a woman, the matter perhaps would be a flame, but now it is insult and wantonness. For if he should see men, he desists from his mad passion, but for the longsuffering of God he has less regard. Again, another who steals, is conscious that he is committing robbery, and endeavors to deceive men, and defends himself against those who accuse

him, and clothes his apology with a fair show; but though he cannot thus prevail with God, he does not regard Him, nor stand in awe of Him, nor honor Him. And if the king indeed commands us to abstain from other men's goods, or even to give away our own, all readily contribute, but when God commands not to rob, not to gather other men's goods, we do not forbear.

Do you see then that we honor men more than God? It is a sad and grievous saying, a heavy charge. But show that it is grievous; flee from the fact! But if you fear not the fact, how can I believe you when you say, We fear your words, you lay a burden on us! It is you that by the deed lay a burden on yourselves, and not our words. And if I but name the words of which you do the deeds, you are offended. And is not this absurd?

May the thing spoken by me prove false! I would rather myself in That Day bear the imputation of ill language, as having vainly and causelessly reproached you, than see you accused of such things.

But not only do you honor men more than God, but you compel others to do so likewise. Many have thus compelled their domestics and slaves. Some have drawn them into marriage against their will, and others have forced them to minister to disgraceful services, to infamous love, to acts of rapine, and fraud, and violence: so that the accusation is twofold, and neither can they obtain pardon upon the plea of necessity. For if you yourself do wrong things unwillingly, and on account of the command of the ruler, not even so is it by any means a sufficient excuse: but the offense becomes heavier, when you compel them also to fall into the same sins. For what pardon can there be any more for such an one?

These things I have said, not from a wish to condemn you, but to show in how many things we are debtors to God. For if by honoring men even equally with God, we insult God, how much more, when we honor men

above Him? But if those offenses that are committed against men are shown to be much greater against God; how much more when the actual offense is greater and more grievous in its own quality.

Let any one examine himself, and he will see that he does everything on account of men. Exceedingly blessed we should be, if we did as many things for the sake of God, as we do for the sake of men, and of the opinion of men, and for the dread or the respect of men. If then we have so many things to answer for, we ought with all alacrity to forgive those who injure us, who defraud us, and not to bear malice. For there is a way to the forgiveness of our sins that needs no labors, nor expense of wealth, nor any other things, but merely our own choice. We have no need to set out upon our travels, nor go beyond the boundaries of our country, nor submit to dangers and toils, but only to will.

What excuse, tell me, shall we have in things that appear difficult, when we do not do even a light thing, attended too with so much gain and so much benefit, and no trouble? Can you not despise wealth? Can you not spend your substance on the needy? Can you not will anything that is good? Can you not forgive him that has injured you? For if you had not so many things to answer for, and God had only commanded you to forgive, ought you not to do it? But now having so many things to answer for, do you not forgive? And that too, knowing that you are required to do it on account of things which you have from Him? If indeed we go to our debtor, he knowing it, receives us courteously, and shows us honor, and pays us every attention in a liberal way; and that though he is not paying off his debt, but because he wishes to render us merciful in our demand of payment: and thou, who owest so much to God, and art commanded to forgive that you may receive in return, dost not thou forgive? And wherefore not, I beseech you? Woe is me! How much of goodness do we receive, and what

wickedness do we show in return! What sleepiness! What indolence! How easy a thing is virtue, attended too with much advantage; and how laborious a thing is vice! But we, flying from that which is so light, pursue that which is heavier than lead.

Here there is no need of bodily strength, nor of wealth, nor possessions, nor of power, nor of friendship, nor of any other thing; but it is sufficient only to will, and all is accomplished. Hath some one grieved you, and insulted you, and mocked you? But consider, how often you have done such things to others, and even to the Lord Himself; and forbear, and forgive him it. Consider that you say, "*Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.*" [Matthew 6:13] Consider, that if you dost not forgive, you will not be able to say this with confidence: but if you forgive, you demand the matter as a debt, not by reason of the nature of the thing, but on account of the lovingkindness of Him that has granted it. And wherein is it equal, that one who forgives his fellow-servants should receive remission of the sins committed against the Lord? But nevertheless we do receive such great lovingkindness, because He is rich in mercy and pity.

And that I may show that even without these things, and without the remission, you are a gainer by forgiving, consider how many friends such a person has, how the praises of such an one are everywhere sounded by men who go about saying, "*This is a good man, he is easily reconciled, he knows not to bear malice, he is no sooner stricken than he is healed.*" When such an one falls into any misfortune, who will not pity him? When he has offended, who will not pardon him? When he asks a favor of others, who will not grant it to him? Who will not be willing to be the friend and servant of so good a soul? Yea, I entreat you, let us do all things for Him, not to our friends, not to our relations only, but even to our domestics. For He says,

"Forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven."

[Ephesians 6:9]

If we forgive our neighbors their trespasses, ours will be forgiven to us, if we bestow alms, if we be humble. For this also takes away sins. For if the publican, only for saying, *"God be merciful to me a sinner"* [Luke 18:13], went down justified, much more we also, if we be humble and contrite, shall be able to obtain abundant lovingkindness. If we confess our own sins and condemn ourselves, we shall be cleansed from the most of our defilement. For there are many ways that purify. Let us therefore in every way war against the devil. I have said nothing difficult, nothing burdensome. Forgive him that has injured you, have pity on the needy, humble your soul, and though thou be a grievous sinner, you will be able to obtain the kingdom, by these means purging off your sins themselves, and wiping off their stain. And God grant that we all, having purified ourselves here by confession from all the filth of our sins, may there obtain the blessings promised in Christ Jesus our Lord, etc.

Homily 2 on Philemon

Philemon i. 4-6

"I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, Hearing of your love and faith, which you have towards the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints. That the communication of your faith may become effectual by the acknowledging [in the knowledge] of every good thing which is in us, in Christ Jesus."

He does not immediately at the commencement ask the favor, but having first admired the man, and having praised him for his good actions, and having shown no small proof of his love, that he always made mention of him in his prayers, and having said that many are refreshed by him, and that he is obedient and complying in all things; then he puts it last of all, by this particularly putting him to the blush. For if others obtain the things which they ask, much more Paul. If coming before others, he was worthy to obtain, much more when he comes after others, and asks a thing not pertaining to himself, but in behalf of another. Then, that he may not seem to have written on this account only, and that no one may say, *"If it were not for Onesimus you would not have written,"* see how he assigns other causes also of his Epistle. In the first place manifesting his love, then also desiring that a lodging may be prepared for him.

"Hearing," he says, *"of your love."*

This is wonderful, and much greater than if being present he had seen it when he was present. For it is plain that from its being excessive it had become manifest, and had reached even to Paul. And yet the distance between Rome and Phrygia was not small. For he seems to have been there from the mention of Archippus. For the Colossians were of Phrygia, writing

to whom he said, *"When this Epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea."* [Colossians 4:16] And this is a city of Phrygia.

I pray, he says, *"that the communication of your faith may become effectual in the knowledge of every good thing which is in Christ Jesus."* Do you see him first giving, before he receives, and before he asks a favor himself bestowing a much greater one of his own? *"That the communication of your faith,"* he says, *"may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus";* that is, that you may attain all virtue, that nothing may be deficient. For so faith becomes effectual, when it is accompanied with works. For *"without works faith is dead."* [James 2:26] And he has not said, *"Your faith,"* but *"the communication of your faith,"* connecting it with himself, and showing that it is one body, and by this particularly making him ashamed to refuse. If you are a partaker, he says, with respect to the faith, you ought to communicate also with respect to other things.

Ver. 7. *"For we have [I had] great joy and consolation in your love, because the bowels [hearts] of the Saints are refreshed by you, brother."*

Nothing so shames us into giving, as to bring forward the kindnesses bestowed on others, and particularly when a man is more entitled to respect than they. And he has not said, *"If you do it to others, much more to me";* but he has insinuated the same thing, though he has contrived to do it in another and a more gracious manner.

"I had joy," that is, you have given me confidence from the things which you have done to others. *"And consolation,"* that is, we are not only gratified, but we are also comforted. For they are members of us. If then there ought to be such an agreement, that in the refreshing of any others who are in affliction, though we obtain nothing, we should be delighted on

their account, as if it were one body that was benefited; much more if you shall refresh us also. And he has not said, *"Because you yield, and compliest,"* but even more vehemently and emphatically, *"because the bowels of the Saints,"* as if it were for a darling child fondly loved by its parents, so that this love and affection shows that he also is exceedingly beloved by them.

Ver. 8. *"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin you that which is convenient [befitting]."*

Observe how cautious he is, lest any of the things which were spoken even from exceeding love should so strike the hearer, as that he should be hurt. For this reason before he says, *"to enjoin you,"* since it was offensive, although, as spoken out of love, it was more proper to soothe him, yet nevertheless from an excess of delicacy, he as it were corrects it by saying, *"Having confidence,"* by which he implies that Philemon was a great man, that is *"You have given confidence to us."* And not only that, but adding the expression *"in Christ,"* by which he shows that it was not that he was more illustrious in the world, not that he was more powerful, but it was on account of his faith in Christ—then he also adds, *"to enjoin you,"* and not that only, but *"that which is convenient,"* that is, a reasonable action. And see out of how many things he brings proof for this. You do good to others, he says, and to me, and for Christ's sake, and that the thing is reasonable, and that love gives, wherefore also he adds,

Ver. 9. *"Yet for love's sake, I rather beseech you."*

As if he had said, I know indeed that I can effect it by commanding with much authority, from things which have already taken place. But because I am very solicitous about this matter, *"I beseech you."* He shows both these things at once; that he has confidence in him, for he commands

him; and that he is exceedingly concerned about the matter, wherefore he beseeches him.

"Being such an one," he says, *"as Paul the aged."* Strange! How many things are here to shame him into compliance! Paul, from the quality of his person, from his age, because he was old, and from what was more just than all, because he was also *"a prisoner of Jesus Christ."*

For who would not receive with open arms a combatant who had been crowned? Who seeing him bound for Christ's sake, would not have granted him ten thousand favors? By so many considerations having previously soothed his mind, he has not immediately introduced the name, but defers making so great a request. For you know what are the minds of masters towards slaves that have run away; and particularly when they have done this with robbery, even if they have good masters, how their anger is increased. This anger then having taken all these pains to soothe, and having first persuaded him readily to serve him in anything whatever, and having prepared his soul to all obedience, then he introduces his request, and says, *"I beseech you,"* and with the addition of praises, *"for my son whom I have begotten in my bonds."*

Again the chains are mentioned to shame him into compliance, and then the name. For he has not only extinguished his anger, but has caused him to be delighted. For I would not have called him my son, he says, if he were not especially profitable. What I called Timothy, that I call him also. And repeatedly showing his affection, he urges him by the very period of his new birth, *"I have begotten him in my bonds,"* he says, so that on this account also he was worthy to obtain much honor, because he was begotten in his very conflicts, in his trials in the cause of Christ.

"Onesimus,"

Ver. 11. *"Which in time past was to you unprofitable."*

See how great is his prudence, how he confesses the man's faults, and thereby extinguishes his anger. I know, he says, that he was unprofitable.

"But now" he will be "profitable to you and to me."

He has not said he will be useful to you, lest he should contradict it, but he has introduced his own person, that his hopes may seem worthy of credit, *"But now,"* he says, *"profitable to you and to me."* For if he was profitable to Paul, who required so great strictness, much more would he be so to his master.

Ver. 12. *"Whom I have sent again to you."*

By this also he has quenched his anger, by delivering him up. For masters are then most enraged, when they are entreated for the absent, so that by this very act he mollified him the more.

Ver. 12. *"Thou therefore receive him, that is my own bowels."*

And again he has not given the bare name, but uses with it a word that might move him, which is more affectionate than son. He has said, *"son,"* he has said, *"I have begotten"* him, so that it was probable he would love him much, because he begot him in his trials. For it is manifest that we are most inflamed with affection for those children, who have been born to us in dangers which we have escaped, as when the Scripture says, *"Woe, Barochabel!"* and again when Rachel names Benjamin, *"the son of my sorrow."* [Genesis 35:18]

"Thou therefore," he says, *"receive him, that is my own bowels."* He shows the greatness of his affection. He has not said, Take him back, he has not said, Be not angry, but *"receive him";* that is, he is worthy not only of pardon, but of honor. Why? Because he has become the son of Paul.

Ver. 13. *"Whom I would have retained with me, that in your stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel."*

Do you see after how much previous preparation, he has at length brought him honorably before his master, and observe with how much wisdom he has done this. See for how much he makes him answerable, and how much he honors the other. You have found, he says, a way by which you may through him repay your service to me. Here he shows that he has considered his advantage more than that of his slave, and that he respects him exceedingly.

Ver. 14. *"But without your mind,"* he says, *"would I do nothing; that your benefit should not be, as it were, of necessity, but willingly."*

This particularly flatters the person asked, when the thing being profitable in itself, it is brought out with his concurrence. For two good effects are produced thence, the one person gains, and the other is rendered more secure. And he has not said, That it should not be of necessity, but *"as it were of necessity."* For I knew, he says, that not having learned it, but coming to know it at once, you would not have been angry, but nevertheless out of an excess of consideration, that it should *"not be as it were of necessity."*

Ver. 15, 16. *"For perhaps he was therefore parted from you for a season that you should have him for ever; no longer as a bond-servant."*

He has well said, *"perhaps,"* that the master may yield. For since the flight arose from perverseness, and a corrupt mind, and not from such intention, he has said, *"perhaps."* And he has not said, therefore he fled, but, therefore he was *"separated,"* by a more fair sounding expression softening him the more. And he has not said, He separated himself, but, *"he was separated."* For it was not his own arrangement that he should depart either for this purpose or for that. Which also Joseph says, in making excuse for his brethren, *"For God did send me hither"* [Genesis 45:5], that is, He made use of their wickedness for a good end. *"Therefore,"* he says, *"he was*

parted for a season." Thus he contracts the time, acknowledges the offense, and turns it all to a providence. *"That you should receive him,"* he says, *"for ever,"* not for the present season only, but even for the future, that you might always have him, no longer a slave, but more honorable than a slave. For you will have a slave abiding with you, more well-disposed than a brother, so that you have gained both in time, and in the quality of your slave. For hereafter he will not run away. *"That you should receive him,"* he says, *"for ever,"* that is, have him again.

"No longer as a bond-servant, but more than a bond-servant, a brother beloved, especially to me."

You have lost a slave for a short time, but you will find a brother for ever, not only your brother, but mine also. Here also there is much virtue. But if he is my brother, you also will not be ashamed of him. By calling him his son, he has shown his natural affection; and by calling him his brother, his great good will for him, and his equality in honor.

Moral. These things are not written without an object, but that we masters may not despair of our servants, nor press too hard on them, but may learn to pardon the offenses of such servants, that we may not be always severe, that we may not from their servitude be ashamed to make them partakers with us in all things when they are good. For if Paul was not ashamed to call one *"his son, his own bowels, his brother, his beloved,"* surely we ought not to be ashamed. And why do I say Paul? The Master of Paul is not ashamed to call our servants His own brethren; and are we ashamed? See how He honors us; He calls our servants His own brethren, friends, and fellow-heirs. See to what He has descended! What therefore having done, shall we have accomplished our whole duty? We shall never in any wise do it; but to whatever degree of humility we have come, the greater part of it is still left behind. For consider, whatever you doest, you

do to a fellow-servant, but your Master has done it to your servants. Hear and shudder! Never be elated at your humility!

Perhaps you laugh at the expression, as if humility could puff up. But be not surprised at it, it puffs up, when it is not genuine. How, and in what manner? When it is practiced to gain the favor of men, and not of God, that we may be praised, and be high-minded. For this also is diabolical. For as many are vainglorious on account of their not being vainglorious, so are they elated on account of their humbling themselves, by reason of their being high-minded. For instance, a brother has come, or even a servant you have received him, you have washed his feet; immediately you think highly of yourself. I have done, you say, what no other has done. I have achieved humility. How then may any one continue in humility? If he remembers the command of Christ, which says, *"When you shall have done all things, say, We are unprofitable servants."* [Luke 17:10] And again the Teacher of the world, saying, *"I count not myself to have apprehended."* [Philippians 3:13] He who has persuaded himself that he has done no great thing, however many things he may have done, he alone can be humble-minded, he who thinks that he has not reached perfection.

Many are elated on account of their humility; but let not us be so affected. Have you done any act of humility? Be not proud of it, otherwise all the merit of it is lost. Such was the Pharisee, he was puffed up because he gave his tythes to the poor, and he lost all the merit of it. [Luke 18:12] But not so the publican. Hear Paul again saying, *"I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified."* [1 Corinthians 4:4] Do you see that he does not exalt himself, but by every means abases and humbles himself, and that too when he had arrived at the very summit. And the Three Children were in the fire, and in the midst of the furnace, and what said they? *"We have sinned and committed iniquity with our fathers."* [Song of Songs 5:6, in the

Septuagint; Daniel 3:29-30; 5:16] This it is to have a contrite heart; on this account they could say, *"Nevertheless in a contrite heart and a humble spirit let us be accepted."* Thus even after they had fallen into the furnace they were exceedingly humbled, even more so than they were before. For when they saw the miracle that was wrought, thinking themselves unworthy of that deliverance, they were brought lower in humility. For when we are persuaded that we have received great benefits beyond our desert, then we are particularly grieved. And yet what benefit had they received beyond their desert? They had given themselves up to the furnace; they had been taken captive for the sins of others; for they were still young; and they murmured not, nor were indignant, nor did they say, What good is it to us that we serve God, or what advantage have we in worshiping Him? This man is impious, and has become our lord. We are punished with the idolatrous by an idolatrous king. We have been led into captivity. We are deprived of our country, our freedom, all our paternal goods, we have become prisoners and slaves, we are enslaved to a barbarous king. None of these things did they say. But what? *"We have sinned and committed iniquity."* And not for themselves but for others they offer prayers. Because, say they, *"You have delivered us to a hateful and a wicked king."* Again, Daniel, being a second time cast into the pit, said, *"For God has remembered me."* Wherefore should He not remember you, O Daniel, when you glorified Him before the king, saying, *"Not for any wisdom that I have"*? [Daniel 2:30] But when you were cast into the den of lions, because thou did not obey that most wicked decree, wherefore should He not remember you? For this very reason surely should He. Were you not cast into it on His account? *"Yea truly,"* he says, *"but I am a debtor for many things."* And if he said such things after having displayed so great virtue, what should we say after this? But hear what David says, *"If He thus say, I*

have no delight in you, behold here am I, let Him do to me as seems good unto Him." [2 Samuel 15:26] And yet he had an infinite number of good things to speak of. And Eli also says, *"It is the Lord: let Him do what seems Him good."* [1 Samuel 3:18]

This is the part of well-disposed servants, not only in His mercies, but in His corrections, and in punishments wholly to submit to Him. For how is it not absurd, if we bear with masters beating their servants, knowing that they will spare them, because they are their own; and yet suppose that God in punishing will not spare? This also Paul has intimated, saying, *"Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."* [Romans 14:8] A man, we say, wishes not his property to be diminished, he knows how he punishes, he is punishing his own servants. But surely no one of us spares more than He Who brought us into being out of nothing, Who makes the sun to rise, Who causes rain; Who breathed our life into us, Who gave His own Son for us.

But as I said before, and on which account I have said all that I have said, let us be humble-minded as we ought, let us be moderate as we ought. Let it not be to us an occasion of being puffed up. Are you humble, and humbler than all men? Be not high-minded on that account, neither reproach others, lest you lose your boast. For this very cause you are humble, that you may be delivered from the madness of pride; if therefore through your humility you fall into that madness, it were better for you not to be humble. For hear Paul saying, *"Sin works death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."*

[Romans 7:13] When it enters into your thought to admire yourself because you are humble, consider your Master, to what He descended, and you will no longer admire yourself, nor praise yourself, but wilt deride yourself as having done nothing. Consider yourself altogether to be a debtor. Whatever you have done, remember that parable, *"Which of you having a*

servant...will say unto him, when he has come in, Sit down to meat?...I say unto you, Nay...but stay and serve me." [From Luke 17:7-8] Do we return thanks to our servants, for waiting upon us? By no means. Yet God is thankful to us, who serve not Him, but do that which is expedient for ourselves.

But let not us be so affected, as if He owed us thanks, that He may owe us the more, but as if we were discharging a debt. For the matter truly is a debt, and all that we do is of debt. For if when we purchase slaves with our money, we wish them to live altogether for us, and whatever they have to have it for ourselves, how much more must it be so with Him, who brought us out of nothing into being, who after this bought us with His precious Blood, who paid down such a price for us as no one would endure to pay for his own son, who shed His own Blood for us? If therefore we had ten thousand souls, and should lay them all down for Him, should we make Him an equal return? By no means. And why? Because He did this, owing us nothing, but the whole was a matter of grace. But we henceforth are debtors: and being God Himself, He became a servant, and not being subject to death, subjected Himself to death in the flesh. We, if we do not lay down our lives for Him, by the law of nature must certainly lay them down, and a little later shall be separated from it, however unwillingly. So also in the case of riches, if we do not bestow them for His sake, we shall render them up from necessity at our end. So it is also with humility. Although we are not humble for His sake, we shall be made humble by tribulations, by calamities, by over-ruling powers. Do you see therefore how great is the grace! He has not said, *"What great things do the Martyrs do? Although they die not for Me, they certainly will die."* But He owns Himself much indebted to them, because they voluntarily resign that which in the course of nature they were about to resign shortly against their will.

He has not said, *"What great thing do they, who give away their riches? Even against their will they will have to surrender them."* But He owns Himself much indebted to them too, and is not ashamed to confess before all that He, the Master, is nourished by His slaves.

For this also is the glory of a Master, to have grateful slaves. And this is the glory of a Master, that He should thus love His slaves. And this is the glory of a Master, to claim for His own what is theirs. And this is the glory of a Master, not to be ashamed to confess them before all. Let us therefore be stricken with awe at this so great love of Christ. Let us be inflamed with this love-potion. Though a man be low and mean, yet if we hear that he loves us, we are above all things warmed with love towards him, and honor him exceedingly. And do we then love? And when our Master loves us so much, we are not excited? Let us not, I beseech you, let us not be so indifferent with regard to the salvation of our souls, but let us love Him according to our power, and let us spend all upon His love, our life, our riches, our glory, everything, with delight, with joy, with alacrity, not as rendering anything to Him, but to ourselves. For such is the law of those who love. They think that they are receiving favors, when they are suffering wrong for the sake of their beloved. Therefore let us be so affected towards our Lord, that we also may partake of the good things to come in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Homily 3 on Philemon

Philemon i. 17-19

"If you count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, put that to mine account; I Paul write it with my own hand, I will repay it: that I say not to you how you owe unto me even your own self besides."

No procedure is so apt to gain a hearing, as not to ask for everything at once. For see after how many praises, after how much preparation he has introduced this great matter. After having said that he is *"my son,"* that he is a partaker of the Gospel, that he is *"my bowels,"* that you receive him back *"as a brother,"* and *"hold him as a brother,"* then he has added *"as myself."* And Paul was not ashamed to do this. For he who was not ashamed to be called the servant of the faithful, but confesses that he was such, much more would he not refuse this. But what he says is to this effect. If you are of the same mind with me, if you run upon the same terms, if you consider me a friend, receive him as myself.

"If he has wronged you at all." See where and when he has introduced the mention of the injury; last, after having said so many things in his behalf. For since the loss of money is particularly apt to annoy men, that he might not accuse him of this, (for it was most likely that it was spent,) then he brings in this, and says, *"If he has wronged you."* He does not say, If he has stolen anything; but what? *"If he has wronged you."* At the same time he both confessed the offense, and not as if it were the offense of a servant, but of a friend against a friend, making use of the expression of *"wrong"* rather than of theft.

"Put that to mine account," he says, that is, reckon the debt to me, *"I will repay it."* Then also with that spiritual pleasantry,

"I Paul write it with my own hand." At once movingly and pleasantly; if when Paul did not refuse to execute a bond for him, he should refuse to receive him! This would both shame Philemon into compliance, and bring Onesimus out of trouble. *"I write it,"* he says, *"with my own hand."* Nothing is more affectionate than these *"bowels,"* nothing more earnest, nothing more zealous. See what great concern he bestows in behalf of one man. *"Albeit I do not say to you how you owe unto me even your own self besides."* Then that it might not appear insulting to him, whom he requests, if he had not the confidence to ask and obtain in behalf of a theft, he in some measure relieves this, saying, *"That I say not unto you how you owe to me even your own self besides."* Not only your own things, but yourself also. And this proceeded from love, and was according to the rule of friendship, and was a proof of his great confidence. See how he everywhere provides for both, that he may ask with great security, and that this may not seem a sign of too little confidence in him.

Ver. 20. *"Yea, brother."*

What is, *"Yea, brother"*? Receive him, he says. For this we must understand though unexpressed. For dismissing all pleasantry, he again pursues his former considerations, that is, serious ones. And yet even these are serious. For the things that proceed from Saints are of themselves serious, even when they are pleasantry.

"Yea, brother, let me have joy of you in the Lord, refresh my heart in Christ."

That is, you grant the favor to the Lord, not to me. *"My heart,"* that is, toward yourself.

Ver. 21. *"Having confidence in your obedience, I write unto you."*

What stone would not these things have softened? What wild beast would not these things have rendered mild, and prepared to receive him heartily? After having borne witness to him by so many great testimonies of his goodness, he is not ashamed again to excuse himself. He says, Not barely requesting it, nor as commanding it, nor arbitrarily, but *"having confidence in your obedience I wrote unto you."* What he had said at the beginning, *"having confidence,"* that he also says here in the sealing up of his letter.

"Knowing that you will also do more than I say."

At the same time in saying this he excited him. For he would have been ashamed, though for nothing else, if having such credit with him as this, that he would do more than he said—he should not do so much.

Ver. 22. *"But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you."*

This also was the part of one who was exceedingly confident—or rather this too was in behalf of Onesimus, that not being indifferent, but knowing that he upon his return would know the things relating to him, they might lay aside all remembrance of the wrong, and might the rather grant the favor. For great was the influence and the honor of Paul residing among them, of Paul in his age, of Paul after imprisonment. Again, it is a proof of their love that he says that they pray; and to attribute to them so much as that they pray for *"him."* For although I be now in danger, yet nevertheless you will see me if you pray for it.

Ver. 23. *"Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, salutes you."*

He was sent by the Colossians, so that from this it appears that Philemon was also at Colossæ. And he calls him his *"fellow-prisoner,"* showing that he also was in much tribulation, so that if not on his own account, yet on account of the other, it was right that he should be heard.

For he that is in tribulation, and overlooks himself, and is concerned for others, deserves to be heard.

And he puts him to shame from another consideration, if his countryman is a fellow-prisoner with Paul and suffers affliction with him, and he himself does not grant him a favor in behalf of his own servant. And he has added, *"my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus,"* instead of on account of Christ.

Ver. 24. *"Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers."*

Why then does he put Luke last? And yet he elsewhere says, *"Only Luke is with me"* [2 Timothy 4:11], and *"Demas,"* he says, was one of those who *"forsook him, having loved the present world."* [2 Timothy 4:10] All these things, although they are mentioned elsewhere, yet nevertheless ought not to be passed over here without enquiry, nor ought we merely to hear them as things of course. But how comes he to say that he who forsook him salutes them? For *"Erastus,"* he says, *"abode at Corinth."* [2 Timothy 4:20] He adds Epaphras, both as known to them, and being of their country. And Mark, as being himself also an admirable man. Why then does he number Demas with these? Perhaps it was after this that he became more remiss, when he saw the dangers multiplied. But Luke being last became first. And from these indeed he salutes him, urging him the more to obedience, and calls them his fellow-laborers, and in this way shames him into granting the request.

Ver. 25. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."*

Moral. He has closed his Epistle with a prayer. And indeed prayer is a great good, salutary, and preservative of our souls. But it is great when we do things worthy of it, and do not render ourselves unworthy. And thou too, therefore, when you go to the priest, and he shall say to you, *"The Lord will*

have mercy on you, my son," do not confide in the word only, but add also works. Do acts worthy of mercy, God will bless you, my son, if indeed you do things worthy of blessing. He will bless you, if you show mercy to your neighbor. For the things which we wish to obtain from God, of those we ought first to impart to our neighbors. But if we deprive our neighbors of them, how can we wish to obtain them? "Blessed," He says, "are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." [Matthew 5:7] For if men show mercy to such, much more will God, but to the unmerciful by no means. "For he shall have judgment without mercy to him that has showed no mercy." [James 2:13]

An excellent thing is mercy! Why then have you not done it to another? Do you wish to be pardoned, when you offend, why then do you not yourself pardon him who has offended you? But you come to God, asking of Him the kingdom of heaven, and you yourself do not give money when it is begged of you. For this cause we do not obtain mercy, because we do not show mercy. But why? You say. Is not this also a part of mercy, to show mercy to the unmerciful? Nay! For he that treated with the greatest kindness the hard-hearted cruel man, that had done numberless ills to his neighbor, how should he be merciful? What then, say you? Hath not the Laver saved us, who had committed infinite evils? It has delivered us from them, not that we should commit them again, but that we may not commit them. For *"how shall we,"* it is said, *"that are dead to sin, live any longer therein"?* [Romans 6:2]

"What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law? God forbid." [Romans 6:15] For this cause God has delivered you from those sins that you might no more run back to that dishonor. Since even physicians relieve their feverish patients from their heat, not that they may abuse their health to their injury and disorder, (since it would be better to be

sick, if one was about to use his health only that he might confine himself again to his bed,) but having learned the evils that arise from sickness, they may no longer fall into the same, that they may the more securely preserve their health, that they may do everything that conduces to its preservation.

How then? You say: what is the lovingkindness of God, if He is not about to save the bad? For oftentimes I hear many talking in this way, that He is the Friend of man, and will by all means save all. That we may not therefore vainly deceive ourselves, (for I remember that I made a promise of this kind to you,) come let us today move this argument. I lately discoursed with you about Hell, and I deferred my argument upon the lovingkindness of God. It is proper therefore today to resume it. That there will, then, be a hell, we have, as I think, sufficiently proved, bringing forward the deluge, and former evils, and arguing that it is not possible that He who performed these things should leave the men of the present age unpunished. For if thus He chastised those who sinned before the Law, He will not let those go unpunished who after grace have committed greater wickedness. It has been questioned therefore how is He good? How merciful to man, if at least He punishes? And we have deferred the argument, that we might not overwhelm your ears with a multitude of words.

Come, today let us discharge the debt, and show how good is God, even in punishing. For this discourse would be suitable for us in opposition to the heretics. Let us therefore pay earnest heed to it. God, standing in no need of anything from us, yet created us. For that He stood in need of us, is manifest from His having made us after a long time. For He might have made us long ago, if He had needed us. For if He Himself was, even without us, and we were made in later times, He made us, not needing us.

He made the Heaven, the earth, the sea, all things that exist, for our sake. Tell me, are not these marks of goodness? And many things one might mention. But to cut short the matter, *"He makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] Is not this a mark of goodness? No, you say. For I said once in conversing with a Marcionite, Are not these things a mark of goodness? And he answered, If He did not call men to account for their sins, it were a mark of goodness. But if He calls them to account, it is not goodness. That man, however, is not now present. But come, let us repeat what was then said, and more beside. For I, out of my superfluity, show that if He did not call men to account, He would not be good; but because He does call them to account, therefore He is good.

For, say, if He did not call us to account, would human life then have endured? Should we not then have fallen into the state of beasts? For if when there is this fear impending over us, and the giving account, and judgments, we have gone beyond fishes in devouring one another, we have thrown wolves and lions into the shade in ravaging one another's possessions; if He did not call us to account, and we were persuaded of this, with how great tumult and confusion would life be filled? What would be the fabled labyrinth after this, compared with the perplexities of the world? Would you not see numberless indecencies and disorders? For who then would have respected his father any more? Or who would have spared his mother? Who would have left unattempted any pleasure, any wickedness? And that the matter is so, I will endeavor to show you from one house only. How? You who raise these questions and who have servants; if I could make it manifest to these, that if they should destroy the family of their masters, if they should insult their persons, if they should plunder everything, if they should turn things upside down, if they should treat them

as enemies, they would not threaten them, nor correct them, nor punish them, nor even grieve them with a word, would this be any proof of goodness? I maintain that this is the extreme of cruelty, not only because the wife and children are betrayed by this unreasonable kindness, but because the slaves themselves are destroyed before them. For they will be drunkards, wanton, dissolute, and more irrational than any beasts. Is this, tell me, a proof of goodness, to trample upon the noble nature of the soul, and to destroy both themselves and others beside? Do you see that to call men to account is a proof of great goodness? But why do I speak of slaves, who more readily fall into these sins? But let a man have sons, and let him permit them to do everything they will, and let him not punish them; will they not be worse than anything? Tell me. In the case of men then, it is a mark of goodness to punish, and of cruelty not to punish, and is it not so in the case of God? So that because He is good, therefore He has prepared a hell.

And do you wish that I should speak of another instance of God's goodness? It is not only this, but that He does not suffer the good to become bad. For if they were destined to meet with the same things, they would all be bad. But now this also does not a little console the good. For hear the Prophet, saying, *"The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance upon the ungodly, he shall wash his hands in the blood of the sinner."* [Psalm 58:10] Not rejoicing on account of it, God forbid! But fearing lest he should suffer the same things, he will render his own life more pure. This then is a mark of His great care. Yes, you say, but He ought only to threaten, and not to punish also. But if He does punish, and still you say it is a matter of threat, and on that account become more slothful, if it were really but a threat, would you not become more supine? If the Ninevites had known it was a matter of threat, they would not have repented. But because they

repented, they cause the threat to stop at words only. Do you wish it to be a threat only? You have the disposal of that matter. Become a better man, and it stops only at the threat. But if, which be far from you! Thou despises the threat, you will come to the experience of it. The men before the flood, if they had feared the threat, would not have experienced the execution of it. And we, if we fear the threat, shall not expose ourselves to experience the reality. God forbid we should. And may the merciful God grant that we all henceforth, having been brought to sound mind, may obtain those unspeakable blessings. Of which may we all be thought worthy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, and honor, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 1 on Galatians

Verse 1-3

"Paul, an Apostle, (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

The exordium is full of a vehement and lofty spirit, and not the exordium only, but also, so to speak, the whole Epistle. For always to address one's disciples with mildness, even when they need severity is not the part of a teacher but it would be the part of a corrupter and enemy. Wherefore our Lord too, though He generally spoke gently to His disciples, here and there uses sterner language, and at one time pronounces a blessing, at another a rebuke. Thus, having said to Peter, *"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona,"* [Matthew 16:17] and having promised to lay the foundation of the Church upon his confession, shortly afterwards He says, *"Get behind Me, Satan: you are a stumbling block unto Me."* [Matthew 16:23] Again, on another occasion, *"Are you also even yet without understanding?"* [Matthew 15:16] And what awe He inspired them with appears from John's saying, that, when they beheld Him conversing with the Samaritan woman, though they reminded Him to take food, no one ventured to say, *"What seekest Thou, or why do you speak with her?"* [John 4:27] Thus taught, and walking in the steps of his Master, Paul has varied his discourse according to the need of his disciples, at one time using knife and cautery, at another, applying mild remedies. To the Corinthians he says, *"What will you? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in a spirit of meekness?"* [1 Corinthians 6:21] but to the Galatians, *"O foolish Galatians."* [Galatians

3:1] And not once only, but a second time, also he has employed this reproof, and towards the conclusion he says with a reproachful allusion to them, "*Let no man trouble me;*" [Galatians 6:17] but he soothes them again with the words, "*My little children, of whom I am again in travail:*" [Galatians 4:19] and so in many other instances.

Now that this Epistle breathes an indignant spirit, is obvious to every one even on the first perusal; but I must explain the cause of his anger against the disciples. Slight and unimportant it could not be, or he would not have used such vehemence. For to be exasperated by common matters is the part of the little- minded, morose, and peevish; just as it is that of the more redolent and sluggish to lose heart in weighty ones. Such a one was not Paul. What then was the offense which roused him? It was grave and momentous, one which was estranging them all from Christ, as he himself says further on, "*Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing;*" [Galatians 5:2] and again, "*You who would be justified by the Law, you are fallen away from Grace.*" [Galatians 5:4] What then is this? For it must be explained more clearly. Some of the Jews who believed, being held down by the prepossessions of Judaism, and at the same time intoxicated by vain-glory, and desirous of obtaining for themselves the dignity of teachers, came to the Galatians, and taught them that the observance of circumcision, sabbaths, and new-moons, was necessary, and that Paul in abolishing these things was not to be borne. For, said they, Peter and James and John, the chiefs of the Apostles and the companions of Christ, forbade them not. Now in fact they did not forbid these things, but this was not by way of delivering positive doctrine, but in condescension to the weakness of the Jewish believers, which condescension Paul had no need of when preaching to the Gentiles; but when he was in Judæa, he employed it himself also. But these deceivers, by

withholding the causes both of Paul's condescension and that of his brethren, misled the simpler ones, saying that he was not to be tolerated, for he appeared but yesterday, while Peter and his colleagues were from the first—that he was a disciple of the Apostles, but they of Christ—that he was single, but they were many, and pillars of the Church. They accused him too of acting a part; saying, that this very man who forbids circumcision observes the rite elsewhere, and preaches one way to you and another way to others.

Since Paul then saw the whole Galatian people in a state of excitement, a flame kindled against their Church, and the edifice shaken and tottering to its fall, filled with the mixed feelings of just anger and despondency, (which he has expressed in the words, *"I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice,"* [Galatians 4:20]) he writes the Epistle as an answer to these charges. This is his aim from the very commencement, for the underminers of his reputation had said, The others were disciples of Christ but this man of the *"Apostles."* Wherefore he begins thus, *"Paul, an Apostle not from men, neither through man."* For, these deceivers, as I was saying before, had said that this man was the last of all the Apostles and was taught by them, for Peter, James, and John, were both first called, and held a primacy among the disciples, and had also received their doctrines from Christ Himself; and that it was therefore fitting to obey them rather than this man; and that they forbade not circumcision nor the observance of the Law. By this and similar language and by depreciating Paul, and exalting the honor of the other Apostles, though not spoken for the sake of praising them, but of deceiving the Galatians, they induced them to adhere unseasonably to the Law. Hence the propriety of his commencement. As they disparaged his doctrine, saying it came from men, while that of Peter came from Christ, he immediately addresses himself to this point, declaring

himself an apostle *"not from men, neither through man."* It was Ananias who baptized him, but it was not he who delivered him from the way of error and initiated him into the faith; but Christ Himself sent from on high that wondrous voice, whereby He inclosed him in his net. For Peter and his brother, and John and his brother, He called when walking by the seaside, [Matthew 4:18] but Paul after His ascension into heaven. [Acts 9:3-4] And just as these did not require a second call, but straightway left their nets and all that they had, and followed Him, so this man at his first vocation pressed vigorously forward, waging, as soon as he was baptized, an implacable war with the Jews. In this respect he chiefly excelled the other Apostles, as he says, *"I labored more abundantly than they all;"* [1 Corinthians 15:10] at present, however, he makes no such claim, but is content to be placed on a level with them. Indeed his great object was, not to establish any superiority for himself, but, to overthrow the foundation of their error. The not being *"from men"* has reference to all alike for the Gospel's root and origin is divine, but the not being *"through man"* is peculiar to the Apostles; for He called them not by men's agency, but by His own.

But why does he not speak of his vocation rather than his apostolate, and say, *"Paul"* called *"not by man?"* Because here lay the whole question; for they said that the office of a teacher had been committed to him by men, namely by the Apostles, whom therefore it behooved him to obey. But that it was not entrusted to him by men, Luke declares in the words, *"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul."* [Acts 13:2]

From this passage it is manifest that the power of the Son and Spirit is one, for being commissioned by the Spirit, he says that he was commissioned by Christ. This appears in another place, from his ascription of the things of God to the Spirit, in the words which he addresses to the

elders at Miletus: *"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost has made you bishops."* [Acts 20:28] Yet in another Epistle he says, *"And God has set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers."* [1 Corinthians 12:28] Thus he ascribes indifferently the things of the Spirit to God, and the things of God to the Spirit. Here too he stops the mouths of heretics, by the words *"through Jesus Christ and God the Father;"* for, inasmuch as they said this term *"through"* was applied to the Son as importing inferiority, see what he does. He ascribes it to the Father, thus teaching us not to prescribe laws to the ineffable Nature, nor define the degrees of Godhead which belong to the Father and Son. For to the words *"through Jesus Christ"* he has added, *"and God the Father;"* for if at the mention of the Father alone he had introduced the phrase *"through whom,"* they might have argued sophistically that it was peculiarly applicable to the Father, in that the acts of the Son were to be referred to Him. But he leaves no opening for this cavil, by mentioning at once both the Son and the Father, and making his language apply to both. This he does, not as referring the acts of the Son to the Father, but to show that the expression implies no distinction of Essence. Further, what can now be said by those, who have gathered a notion of inferiority from the Baptismal formula,— from our being baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? For if the Son be inferior because He is named after the Father, what will they say seeing that, in the passage before us, the Apostle beginning from Christ proceeds to mention the Father?— but let us not even utter such a blasphemy, let us not swerve from the truth in our contention with them; rather let us preserve, even if they rave ten thousand times, the due measures of reverence. Since then it would be the height of madness and impiety to argue that the Son was greater than the Father

because Christ was first named, so we dare not hold that the Son is inferior to the Father, because He is placed after Him in the Baptismal formula.

"Who raised Him from the dead."

Wherefore is it, O Paul, that, wishing to bring these Judaizers to the faith, you introduce none of those great and illustrious topics which occur in your Epistle to the Philippians, as, *"Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,"* [Philippians 2:6] or which you afterwards declared in that to the Hebrews, *"the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of His substance;"* [Hebrews 1:3] or again, what in the opening of his Gospel the son of thunder sounded forth, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;"* [John 1:1.] or what Jesus Himself oftentimes declared to the Jews, *"that His power and authority was equal to the Father's?"* [John 5:19-27, etc.] Do you omit all these, and make mention of the economy of His Incarnation only, bringing forward His cross and dying? *"Yes,"* would Paul answer. For had this discourse been addressed to those who had unworthy conceptions of Christ, it would have been well to mention those things; but, inasmuch as the disturbance comes from persons who fear to incur punishment should they abandon the Law, he therefore mentions that whereby all need of the Law is excluded, I mean the benefit conferred on all through the Cross and the Resurrection. To have said that *"in the beginning was the Word,"* and that *"He was in the form of God, and made Himself equal with God,"* and the like, would have declared the divinity of the Word, but would have contributed nothing to the matter in hand. Whereas it was highly pertinent thereto to add, *"Who raised Him from the dead,"* for our chiefest benefit was thus brought to remembrance, and men in general are less interested by discourses concerning the majesty of God, than by those which set forth the

benefits which come to mankind. Wherefore, omitting the former topic, he discourses of the benefits which had been conferred on us.

But here the heretics insultingly exclaim, "*Lo, the Father raises the Son!*" For when once infected, they are wilfully deaf to all sublimer doctrines; and taking by itself and insisting on what is of a less exalted nature, and expressed in less exalted terms, either on account of the Son's humanity, or in honor of the Father, or for some other temporary purpose, they outrage, I will not say the Scripture, but themselves. I would fain ask such persons, why they say this? Do they hope to prove the Son weak and powerless to raise *one* body? Nay, verily, faith in Him enabled the very shadows of those who believed in Him to effect the resurrection of the dead. [Acts 5:15] Then believers in Him, though mortal, yet by the very shadows of their earthly bodies, and by the garments which had touched these bodies, could raise the dead, but He could not raise Himself? Is not this manifest madness, a great stretch of folly? Have you not heard His saying, "*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up?*" [John 2:19] and again, "*I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again?*" [John 10:18] Wherefore then is the Father said to have raised Him up, as also to have done other things which the Son Himself did? It is in honor of the Father, and in compassion to the weakness of the hearers.

"And all the brethren which are with me."

Why is it that he has on no other occasion in sending an epistle added this phrase? For either he puts his own name only or that of two or three others, but here has mentioned the whole number and so has mentioned no one by name.

On what account then does he this?

They made the slanderous charge that he was singular in his preaching, and desired to introduce novelty in Christian teaching. Wishing therefore to

remove their suspicion, and to show he had many to support him in his doctrine, he has associated with himself *"the brethren,"* to show that what he wrote he wrote with their accord.

"Unto the Churches of Galatia."

Thus it appears, that the flame of error had spread over not one or two cities merely, but the whole Galatian people. Consider too the grave indignation contained in the phrase, *"unto the Churches of Galatia:"* he does not say, *"to the beloved"* or *"to the sanctified,"* and this omission of all names of affection or respect, and this speaking of them as a society merely, without the addition *"Churches of God,"* for it is simply *"Churches of Galatia,"* is strongly expressive of deep concern and sorrow. Here at the outset, as well as elsewhere, he attacks their irregularities, and therefore gives them the name of *"Churches,"* in order to shame them, and reduce them to unity. For persons split into many parties cannot properly claim this appellation, for the name of *"Church"* is a name of harmony and concord.

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

This he always mentions as indispensable, and in this Epistle to the Galatians especially; for since they were in danger of falling from grace he prays that they may recover it again, and since they had come to be at war with God, he beseeches God to restore them to the same peace.

"God the Father."

Here again is a plain confutation of the heretics, who say that John in the opening of his Gospel, where he says *"the Word was God,"* used the word [Θεὸς] without the article, to imply an inferiority in the Son's Godhead; and that Paul, where he says that the Son was *"in the form of God,"* did not mean the Father, because the word [Θεὸς] is without the article. For what can they say here, where Paul says, [ὁ] [πρὸ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς],

and not [ὁ] [πρὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ]? And it is in no indulgent mood towards them that he calls God, "*Father*," but by way of severe rebuke, and suggestion of the source whence they became sons, for the honor was vouchsafed to them not through the Law, but through the washing of regeneration. Thus everywhere, even in his exordium, he scatters traces of the goodness of God, and we may conceive him speaking thus: O you who were lately slaves, enemies and aliens, what right have you suddenly acquired to call God your Father? It was not the Law which conferred upon you this relationship; why do you therefore desert Him who brought you so near to God, and return to your tutor?

But the Name of the Son, as well as that of the Father, had been sufficient to declare to them these blessings. This will appear, if we consider the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ with attention; for it is said, "*you shall call His Name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins*;" [Matthew 1:21] and the appellation of "*Christ*" calls to mind the unction of the Spirit.

Ver. 4. "*Who gave himself for our sins.*"

Thus it appears, that the ministry which He undertook was free and uncompelled; that He was delivered up by Himself, not by another. Let not therefore the words of John, "*that the Father gave His only-begotten Son*" [John 3:16] for us, lead you to derogate from the dignity of the Only-begotten, or to infer therefrom that He is only human. For the Father is said to have given Him, not as implying that the Son's ministry was a servile one, but to teach us that it seemed good to the Father, as Paul too has shown in the immediate context: "*according to the will of our God, and Father.*" He says not "*by the command*," but "*according to the will*," for inasmuch as there is an unity of will in the Father and the Son, that which the Son wills, the Father wills also.

"For our sins," says the Apostle; we had pierced ourselves with ten thousand evils, and had deserved the gravest punishment; and the Law not only did not deliver us, but it even condemned us, making sin more manifest, without the power to release us from it, or to stay the anger of God. But the Son of God made this impossibility possible for he remitted our sins, He restored us from enmity to the condition of friends, He freely bestowed on us numberless other blessings.

Ver. 4. *"That He might deliver us out of this present evil world."*

Another class of heretics seize upon these words of Paul, and pervert his testimony to an accusation of the present life. Lo, say they, he has called this present world evil, and pray tell me what does *"world"* [age] [αἰών] mean but time measured by days and seasons? Is then the distinction of days and the course of the sun evil? No one would assert this even if he be carried away to the extreme of unreasonableness. *"But"* they say, *"it is not the 'time,' but the present 'life,' which he has called evil."* Now the words themselves do not in fact say this; but the heretics do not rest in the words, and frame their charge from them, but propose to themselves a new mode of interpretation. At least therefore they must allow us to produce our interpretation, and the rather in that it is both pious and rational. We assert then that evil cannot be the cause of good, yet that the present life is productive of a thousand prizes and rewards. And so the blessed Paul himself extols it abundantly in the words, *"But if to live in the flesh, if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wont not;"* [Philippians 1:22] and then placing before himself the alternative of living upon earth, and departing and being with Christ, he decides for the former. But were this life evil, he would not have thus spoken of it, nor could any one, however strenuous his endeavor, draw it aside into the service of virtue. For no one would ever use evil for good, fornication for chastity, envy for

benevolence. And so, when he says, that "*the mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be,*" [Romans 8:7] he means that vice, as such, cannot become virtue; and the expression, "*evil world,*" must be understood to mean evil actions, and a depraved moral principle. Again, Christ came not to put us to death and deliver us from the present life in that sense, but to leave us in the world, and prepare us for a worthy participation of our heavenly abode. Wherefore He says to the Father, "*And these are in the world, and I come to You; I pray not that You should take them from the world, but that You should keep them from the evil,*" [John 17:11-15] i.e., from sin. Further, those who will not allow this, but insist that the present life is evil, should not blame those who destroy themselves; for as he who withdraws himself from evil is not blamed, but deemed worthy of a crown, so he who by a violent death, by hanging or otherwise, puts an end to his life, ought not to be condemned. Whereas God punishes such men more than murderers, and we all regard them with horror, and justly; for if it is base to destroy others, much more is it to destroy one's self. Moreover, if this life be evil, murderers would deserve a crown, as rescuing us from evil. Besides this, they are caught by their own words, for in that they place the sun in the first, and the moon in the second rank of their deities, and worship them as the givers of many goods, their statements are contradictory. For the use of these and the other heavenly bodies, is none other than to contribute to our present life, which they say is evil, by nourishing and giving light to the bodies of men and animals and bringing plants to maturity. How is it then that the constitution of this "*evil life*" is so ministered to by those, who according to you are gods? Gods indeed they are not, far from it, but works of God created for our use; nor is this world evil. And if you tell me of murderers, of adulterers, of tomb-robbers, these things have nothing to do with the present life, for these offenses proceed

not from that life which we live in the flesh, but from a depraved will. For, if they were necessarily connected with this life, as embraced in one lot with it, no man would be free or pure from them, for no man can escape the characteristic accidents of humanity, such as, to eat and drink, to sleep and grow, to hunger and thirst, to be born and die, and the like; no man can ever become superior to these, neither sinner nor just man, king nor peasant, We all are subject to the necessity of nature. And so if vice were an essential element of this life, no one could avoid it, any more than the things just mentioned. And let me not be told that good men are rare, for natural necessity is insuperable by all, so that as long as one virtuous man shall be found, my argument will in no way be invalidated. Miserable, wretched man! What is it you say? Is this life evil, wherein we have learned to know God, and meditate on things to come, and have become angels instead of men, and take part in the choirs of the heavenly powers? What other proof do we need of an evil and depraved mind?

"Why then," they say, *"does Paul call the present life evil?"* In calling the present world [age] evil, he has accommodated himself to our usage, who are wont to say, *"I have had a bad day,"* thereby complaining not of the time itself, but of actions or circumstances. And so Paul in complaining of evil principles of action has used these customary forms of speech; and he shows that Christ has both delivered us from our offenses, and secured us for the future. The first he has declared in the words, *"Who gave Himself for our sins;"* and by adding, *"that He might deliver us out of this present evil world,"* he has pronounced our future safety. For neither of these did the Law avail, but grace was sufficient for both.

Ver. 4. *"According to the will of our God and Father."*

Since they were terrified by their notion that by deserting that old Law and adhering to the new, they should disobey God, who gave the Law, he

corrects their error, and says, that this seemed good to the Father also: and not simply "*the Father*," but "*our Father*," which he does in order to affect them by showing that Christ has made His Father our Father.

Ver. 5. "*To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"

This too is new and unusual, for we never find the word, "*Amen*" placed at the beginning of an Epistle, but a good way on; here, however he has it in his beginning, to show that what he had already said contained a sufficient charge against the Galatians, and that his argument was complete, for a manifest offense does not require an elaborate crimination. Having spoken of the Cross, and Resurrection, of redemption from sin and security for the future, of the purpose of the Father, and the will of the Son, of grace and peace and His whole gift, he concludes with an ascription of praise.

Another reason for it is the exceeding astonishment into which he was thrown by the magnitude of the gift, the superabundance of the grace, the consideration who we were, and what God had wrought, and that at once and in a single moment of time. Unable to express this in words, he breaks out into a doxology, sending up for the whole world an eulogium, not indeed worthy of the subject, but such as was possible to him. Hence too he proceeds to use more vehement language; as if greatly kindled by a sense of the Divine benefits, for having said, "*To whom be the glory for ever and ever, Amen*," he commences with a more severe reproof.

Ver. 6. "*I marvel that you are so quickly removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ, unto a different Gospel.*"

Like the Jews who persecuted Christ, they imagined their observance of the Law was acceptable to the Father, and he therefore shows that in doing this they displeased not only Christ, but the Father also, for that they fell away thereby not from Christ only, but from the Father also. As the old covenant was given not by the Father only, but also by the Son, so the

covenant of grace proceeded from the Father as well as the Son, and Their every act is common: *"All things whatsoever the Father has are Mine."* [John 15:16] By saying that they had fallen off from the Father, he brings a twofold charge against them, of an apostasy, and of an immediate apostasy. The opposite extreme a late apostasy, is also blameworthy, but he who falls away at the first onset, and in the very skirmishing, displays an example of the most extreme cowardice, of which very thing he accuses them also saying: *"How is this that your seducers need not even time for their designs, but the first approaches suffice for your overthrow and capture? And what excuse can you have? If this is a crime among friends, and he who deserts old and useful associates is to be condemned, consider what punishment he is obnoxious to who revolts from God that called him."* He says, *"I marvel,"* not only by way of reproof, that after such bounty, such a remission of their sins, such overflowing kindness, they had deserted to the yoke of servitude, but also in order to show, that the opinion he had had of them was a favorable and exalted one. For, had he ranked them among ordinary and easily deceived persons, he would not have felt surprise. *"But since you,"* he says, *"are of the noble sort and have suffered, much, I do marvel."* Surely this was enough to recover and lead them back to their first expressions. He alludes to it also in the middle of the Epistle, *"Did you suffer so many things in vain? If it be indeed in vain."* [Galatians 3:4] *"You are removing;"* he says not, *"you are removed,"* that is, *"I will not believe or suppose that your seduction is complete;"* this is the language of one about to recover them, which further on he expresses yet more clearly in the words, *"I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord that you will be none otherwise minded."* [Galatians 5:10]

"From Him that called you in the grace of Christ."

The calling is from the Father, but the cause of it is the Son. He it is who has brought about reconciliation and bestowed it as a gift, for we were not saved by works in righteousness: or I should rather say that these blessings proceed from Both; as He says, *"Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine."* [John 17:10] He says not *"you are removing from the Gospel"* but *"from God who called you,"* a more frightful expression, and more likely to affect them. Their seducers did not act abruptly but gradually, and while they removed them from the faith in fact, left names unchanged. It is the policy of Satan not to set his snares in open view; had they urged them to fall away from Christ, they would have been shunned as deceivers and corrupters, but suffering them so far to continue in the faith, and putting upon their error the name of the Gospel, without fear they undermined the building employing the terms which they used as a sort of curtain to conceal the destroyers themselves. As therefore they gave the name of Gospel to this their imposture, he contends against the very name, and boldly says, *"unto a different Gospel,"*—

Ver. 7. *"Which is not another Gospel."*

And justly, for there is not another. Nevertheless the Marcionites are misled by this phrase, as diseased persons are injured even by healthy food, for they have seized upon it, and exclaim, *"So Paul himself has declared there is no other Gospel."* For they do not allow all the Evangelists, but one only, and him mutilated and confused according to their pleasure. Their explanation of the words, *"according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,"* [Romans 16:25] is sufficiently ridiculous; nevertheless, for the sake of those who are easily seduced, it is necessary to refute it. We assert, therefore, that, although a thousand Gospels were written, if the contents of all were the same, they would still be one, and their unity no wise infringed by the number of writers. So, on the other hand, if there were

one writer only, but he were to contradict himself, the unity of the things written would be destroyed. For the oneness of a work depends not on the number of its authors, but on the agreement or contradictoriness of its contents. Whence it is clear that the four Gospels are one Gospel; for, as the four say the same thing, its oneness is preserved by the harmony of the contents, and not impaired by the difference of persons. And Paul is not now speaking of the number but of the discrepancy of the things spoken. With justice might they lay hold of this expression, if the Gospels of Matthew and Luke differed in the signification of their contents, and in their doctrinal accuracy; but as they are one and the same, let them cease being senseless and pretending to be ignorant of these things which are plain to the very children.

Ver. 7. *"Only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ."*

That is to say, you will not recognize another Gospel, so long as your mind is sane, so long as your vision remains healthy, and free from distorted and imaginary phantoms. For as the disordered eye mistakes the object presented to it, so does the mind when made turbid by the confusion of evil thoughts. Thus the madman confounds objects; but this insanity is more dangerous than a physical malady, for it works injury not in the regions of sense, but of the mind; it creates confusion not in the organ of bodily vision, but in the eye of the understanding.

"And would pervert the Gospel of Christ." They had, in fact, only introduced one or two commandments, circumcision and the observance of days, but he says that the Gospel was subverted, in order to show that a slight adulteration vitiates the whole. For as he who but partially pares away the image on a royal coin renders the whole spurious, so he who swerves ever so little from the pure faith, soon proceeds from this to graver errors,

and becomes entirely corrupted. Where then are those who charge us with being contentious in separating from heretics, and say that there is no real difference between us except what arises from our ambition? Let them hear Paul's assertion, that those who had but slightly innovated, subverted the Gospel. Not to say that the Son of God is a created Being, is a small matter. Know you not that even under the elder covenant, a man who gathered sticks on the sabbath, and transgressed a single commandment, and that not a great one, was punished with death? [Numbers 15:32-36] and that Uzzah, who supported the Ark when on the point of being overturned, was struck suddenly dead, because he had intruded upon an office which did not pertain to him? [2 Samuel 6:6-7] Wherefore if to transgress the sabbath, and to touch the falling Ark, drew down the wrath of God so signally as to deprive the offender of even a momentary respite, shall he who corrupts unutterably awful doctrines find excuse and pardon? Assuredly not. A want of zeal in small matters is the cause of all our calamities; and because slight errors escape fitting correction, greater ones creep in. As in the body, a neglect of wounds generates fever, mortification, and death; so in the soul, slight evils overlooked open the door to graver ones. It is accounted a trivial fault that one man should neglect fasting; that another, who is established in the pure faith, dissembling on account of circumstances, should surrender his bold profession of it, neither is this anything great or dreadful; that a third should be irritated, and threaten to depart from the true faith, is excused on the plea of passion and resentment. Thus a thousand similar errors are daily introduced into the Church, and we have become a laughing-stock to Jews and Greeks, seeing that the Church is divided into a thousand parties. But if a proper rebuke had at first been given to those who attempted slight perversions, and a deflection from the divine oracles, such a pestilence would not have been generated, nor such a storm have seized

upon the Churches. You will now understand why Paul calls circumcision a subversion of the Gospel. There are many among us now, who fast on the same day as the Jews, and keep the sabbaths in the same manner; and we endure it nobly or rather ignobly and basely. And why do I speak of Jews seeing that many Gentile customs are observed by some among us; omens, auguries, presages, distinctions of days, a curious attention to the circumstances of their children's birth, and, as soon as they are born, tablets with impious inscriptions are placed upon their unhappy heads, thereby teaching them from the first to lay aside virtuous endeavors, and drawing part of them at least under the false domination of fate. But if Christ in no way profits those that are circumcised, what shall faith hereafter avail to the salvation of those who have introduced such corruptions? Although circumcision was given by God, yet Paul used every effort to abolish it, because its unseasonable observance was injurious to the Gospel. If then he was so earnest against the undue maintenance of Jewish customs, what excuse can we have for not abrogating Gentile ones? Hence our affairs are now in confusion and trouble, hence have our learners being filled with pride, reversed the order of things throwing every thing into confusion, and their discipline having been neglected by us their governors, they spurn our reproof however gentle. And yet if their superiors were even more worthless and full of numberless evils, it would not be right for the disciple to disobey. It is said of the Jewish doctors, that as they sat in Moses' seat, their disciples were bound to obey them, though their works were so evil, that the Lord forbid His disciples to imitate them. What excuse therefore is there for those who insult and trample on men, rulers of the Church, and living, by the grace of God, holy lives? If it be unlawful for us to judge each other, much more is it to judge our teachers.

Ver. 8, 9. *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema."*

See the Apostle's wisdom; to obviate the objection that he was prompted by vainglory to applaud his own doctrine, he includes himself also in his anathema; and as they betook themselves to authority, that of James and John, he mentions angels also saying, *"Tell me not of James and John; if one of the most exalted angels of heaven corrupt the Gospel, let him be anathema."* The phrase *"of heaven"* is purposely added, because priests are also called angels. *"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger [angel] of the Lord of hosts."* [Malachi 2:7] Lest therefore it should be thought that priests are here meant, by the term *"angels,"* he points out the celestial intelligences by the addition, *"from heaven."* And he says not, if they preach a contrary Gospel, or subvert the whole of the true one, let them be anathema; but, if they even slightly vary, or incidentally disturb, my doctrine. *"As we have said before, so say I now again."* That his words might not seem to be spoken in anger, or with exaggeration, or with recklessness he now repeats them. Sentiments may perhaps change, when an expression has been called forth by anger, but to repeat it a second time proves that it is spoken advisedly, and was previously approved by the judgment. When Abraham was requested to send Lazarus, he replied, *"They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them: if they hear them not, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead."* [Luke 16:31] And Christ introduces Abraham thus speaking, to show that He would have the Scriptures accounted more worthy of credence, even than one raised from the dead: Paul too, (and when I say Paul, I mean Christ, who directed his mind,) prefers them before an angel come down from heaven. And justly,

for the angels, though mighty, are but servants and ministers, but the Scriptures were all written and sent, not by servants, but by God the Lord of all. He says, if "*any man*" preach another Gospel to you than that which we have preached—not "*if this or that man*:" and herein appears his prudence, and care of giving offense, for what needed there still any mention of names, when he had used such extensive terms as to embrace all, both in heaven and earth? In that he anathemized evangelists and angels, he included every dignity, and his mention of himself included every intimacy and affinity. "*Tell me not,*" he exclaims, "*that my fellow apostles and colleagues have so spoken; I spare not myself if I preach such doctrine.*" And he says this not as condemning the Apostles for swerving from the message they were commissioned to deliver; far from it, (for he says, whether we or they thus preach;) but to show, that in the discussion of truth the dignity of persons is not to be considered.

Ver. 10. "*For am I now persuading men: or God?*" or am I seeking to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

Granting, says he, that I might deceive you by these doctrines, could I deceive God, who knows my yet unuttered thoughts, and to please whom is my unceasing endeavor? See here the Apostolical spirit, the Evangelical loftiness! So too he writes to the Corinthians, "*For we are not again commending ourselves unto you, but speak as giving you occasion of glorying;*" [2 Corinthians 5:12] and again, "*But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.*" [1 Corinthians 4:3] For since he is compelled to justify himself to his disciples, being their teacher, he submits to it; but he is grieved at it, not on account of chagrin, far from it, but on account of the instability of the minds of those led away and on account of not being fully trusted by them. Wherefore Paul now speaks, as it were, thus:— Is my account to be rendered to you? Shall I be

judged by men? My account is to God, and all my acts are with a view to that inquisition, nor am I so miserably abandoned as to pervert my doctrine, seeing that I am to justify what I preach before the Lord of all.

He thus expressed himself, as much with a view of withstanding their opinions, as in self-defence; for it becomes disciples to obey, not to judge, their master. But now, says he, that the order is reversed, and you sit as judges, know that I am but little concerned to defend myself before you; all, I do for God's sake, and in order that I may answer to Him concerning my doctrine. He who wishes to persuade men, is led to act tortuously and insincerely, and to employ deceit and falsehood, in order to engage the assent of his hearers. But he who addresses himself to God, and desires to please Him, needs simplicity and purity of mind, for God cannot be deceived. Whence it is plain that I have thus written to you not from the love of rule, or to gain disciples, or to receive honor at your hands. My endeavor has been to please God, not man. Were it otherwise, I should still consort with the Jews, still persecute the Church, I who have cast off my country altogether, my companions, my friends, my kindred, and all my reputation, and taken in exchange for these, persecution, enmity, strife, and daily-impending death, have given a signal proof that I speak not from love of human applause. This he says, being about to narrate his former life, and sudden conversion, and to demonstrate clearly that it was sincere. And that they might not be elevated by a notion that he did this by way of self-vindication to them, he premises, *"For do I now persuade men?"* He well knew how, on a fitting occasion, to correct his disciples, in a grave and lofty tone: assuredly he had other sources whence to demonstrate the truth of his preaching—by signs and miracles, by dangers, by prisons, by daily deaths, by hunger and thirst, by nakedness, and the like. Now however that he is speaking not of false apostles, but of the true, who had shared these very

perils, he employs another method. For when his discourse was pointed towards false apostles, he institutes a comparison by bringing forward his endurance of danger, saying, *"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft."* [2 Corinthians 11:23] But now he speaks of his former manner of life and says,

Ver. 11, 12. *"For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ."*

You observe how sedulously he affirms that he was taught of Christ, who Himself, without human intervention, condescended to reveal to him all knowledge. And if he were asked for his proof that God Himself thus immediately revealed to him these ineffable mysteries, he would instance his former manner of life, arguing that his conversion would not have been so sudden, had it not been by Divine revelation. For when men have been vehement and eager on the contrary side, their conviction, if it is effected by human means, requires much time and ingenuity. It is clear therefore that he, whose conversion is sudden, and who has been sobered in the very height of his madness, must have been vouchsafed a Divine revelation and teaching, and so have at once arrived at complete sanity. On this account he is obliged to relate his former life, and to call the Galatians as witnesses of past events. That the Only-Begotten Son of God had Himself from heaven vouchsafed to call me, says he, you who were not present, could not know, but that I was a persecutor you do know. For my violence even reached your ears, and the distance between Palestine and Galatia is so great, that the report would not have extended there, had not my acts exceeded all bounds and endurance. Wherefore he says,

Ver. 13. *"For you have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and made havoc of it."*

Observe how he shrinks not from aggravating each point; not saying simply that he *"persecuted"* but *"beyond measure,"* and not only *"persecuted"* but *"made havoc of it,"* which signifies an attempt to extinguish, to pull down, to destroy, to annihilate, the Church.

Ver. 14. *"And I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of my own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."*

To obviate the notion that his persecution arose from passion, vain-glory, or enmity, he shows that he was actuated by zeal, not indeed *"according to knowledge,"* [Romans 10:2] still by a zealous admiration of the traditions of his fathers. This is his argument; — if my efforts against the Church sprung not from human motives, but from religious though mistaken zeal, why should I be actuated by vain-glory, now that I am contending for the Church, and have embraced the truth? If it was not this motive, but a godly zeal, which possessed me when I was in error, much more now that I have come to know the truth, ought I to be free from such a suspicion. As soon as I passed over to the doctrines of the Church I shook off my Jewish prejudices, manifesting on that side a zeal still more ardent; and this is a proof that my conversion is sincere, and that the zeal which possesses me is from above. What other inducement could I have to make such a change, and to barter honor for contempt, repose for peril, security for distress? None surely but the love of truth.

Ver. 15, 16. *"But when it was the good pleasure of God, Who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, to*

reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

Here his object is to show, that it was by some secret providence that he was left for a time to himself. For if he was set apart from his mother's womb to be an Apostle and to be called to that ministry, yet was not actually called till that juncture, which summons he instantly obeyed, it is evident that God had some hidden reason for this delay. What this purpose was, you are perhaps eager to learn from me, and primarily, why he was not called with the twelve. But in order not to protract this discourse by digressing from that which is more pressing, I must entreat your love not to require all things from me, but to search for it by yourselves, and to beg of God to reveal it to you. Moreover I partly discussed this subject when I discoursed before you on the change of his name from Saul to Paul; which, if you have forgotten, you will fully gather from a perusal of that volume. At present let us pursue the thread of our discourse, and consider the proof he now adduces that no natural event had befallen him—that God Himself had providentially ordered the occurrence.

"And called me through His grace."

God indeed says that He called him on account of his excellent capacity, as He said to Ananias, *"for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings,"* [Acts 9:15] that is to say, capable of service, and the accomplishment of great deeds. God gives this as the reason for his call. But he himself everywhere ascribes it to grace, and to God's inexpressible mercy, as in the words, *"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy,"* not that I was sufficient or even serviceable, but *"that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all His long-suffering, for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe in Him unto eternal life."* [1 Timothy 1:16] Behold his overflowing humility; I obtained mercy, says

he, that no one might despair, when the worst of men had shared His bounty. For this is the force of the words, *"that He might show forth all His long-suffering for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe in Him."*

"To reveal His Son in me."

Christ says in another place, *"No one knows who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills to reveal Him."* [Luke 10:22] You observe that the Father reveals the Son, and the Son the Father; so it is as to Their glory, the Son glorifies the Father, and the Father the Son; *"glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,"* and, *"as I have glorified You."* [John 17:1-4] But why does he say, *"to reveal His Son in me,"* and not *"to me?"* it is to signify, that he had not only been instructed in the faith by words, but that he was richly endowed with the Spirit—that the revelation had enlightened his whole soul, and that he had Christ speaking within him.

"That I might preach Him among the Gentiles." For not only his faith, but his election to the Apostolic office proceeded from God. The object, says he, of His thus specially revealing Himself to me, was not only that I might myself behold Him, but that I might also manifest Him to others. And he says not merely, *"others,"* but, *"that I might preach Him among the Gentiles,"* thus touching beforehand on that great ground of his defence which lay in the respective characters of the disciples; for it was necessary to preach differently to the Jews and to the heathen.

"Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

Here he alludes to the Apostles, naming them after their physical nature; however, that he may have meant to include all mankind, I shall not deny.

Ver. 17. *"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me."*

These words weighed by themselves seem to breath an arrogant spirit, and to be foreign to the Apostolic temper. For to give one's suffrage for one's self, and to admit no man to share one's counsel, is a sign of folly. It is said, *"Do you see a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him;"* [Proverbs 26:12] and, *"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"* [Isaiah 5:21] and Paul himself in another place, *"Be not wise in your own conceits."* [Romans 12:16] Surely one who had been thus taught, and had thus admonished others, would not fall into such an error, even were he an ordinary man; much less then Paul himself. Nevertheless, as I said, this expression nakedly considered may easily prove a snare and offense to many hearers. But if the cause of it is subjoined, all will applaud and admire the speaker. This then let us do; for it is not the right course to weigh the mere words, nor examine the language by itself, as many errors will be the consequence, but to attend to the intention of the writer. And unless we pursue this method in our own discourses, and examine into the mind of the speaker, we shall make many enemies, and every thing will be thrown into disorder. Nor is this confined to words, but the same result will follow, if this rule is not observed in actions. For surgeons often cut and break certain of the bones; so do robbers; yet it would be miserable indeed not to be able to distinguish one from the other. Again, homicides and martyrs, when tortured, suffer the same pangs, yet is the difference between them great. Unless we attend to this rule, we shall not be able to discriminate in these matters; but shall call Elijah and Samuel and Phineas homicides, and Abraham a son-slayer; that is, if we go about to scrutinize the bare facts, without taking into account the intention of the agents. Let us then inquire

into the intention of Paul in thus writing, let us consider his scope, and general deportment towards the Apostles, that we may arrive at his present meaning. Neither formerly, nor in this case, did he speak with a view of disparaging the Apostles or of extolling himself, (how so? When he included himself under his anathema?) but always in order to guard the integrity of the Gospel. Since the troublers of the Church said that they ought to obey the Apostles who suffered these observances, and not Paul who forbade them, and hence the Judaizing heresy had gradually crept in, it was necessary for him manfully to resist them, from a desire of repressing the arrogance of those who improperly exalted themselves, and not of speaking ill of the Apostles. And therefore he says, *"I conferred not with flesh and blood;"* for it would have been extremely absurd for one who had been taught by God, afterwards to refer himself to men. For it is right that he who learns from men should in turn take men as his counsellors. But he to whom that divine and blessed voice had been vouchsafed, and who had been fully instructed by Him that possesses all the treasures of wisdom, wherefore should he afterwards confer with men? It were meet that he should teach, not be taught by them. Therefore he thus spoke, not arrogantly, but to exhibit the dignity of his own commission. *"Neither went I up,"* says he, *"to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me."* Because they were continually repeating that the Apostles were before him, and were called before him, he says, *"I went not up to them."* Had it been needful for him to communicate with them, He, who revealed to him his commission, would have given him this injunction. Is it true, however, that he did not go up there? nay, he went up, and not merely so, but in order to learn somewhat of them. When a question arose on our present subject in the city of Antioch, in the Church which had from the beginning shown so much zeal, and it was discussed whether the Gentile believers ought to be

circumcised, or were under no necessity to undergo the rite, this very Paul himself and Silas went up. How is it then that he says, I went not up, nor conferred? First, because he went not up of his own accord, but was sent by others; next, because he came not to learn, but to bring others over. For he was from the first of that opinion, which the Apostles subsequently ratified, that circumcision was unnecessary. But when these persons deemed him unworthy of credit and applied to those at Jerusalem he went up not to be farther instructed, but to convince the gain-sayers that those at Jerusalem agreed with him. Thus he perceived from the first the fitting line of conduct, and needed no teacher, but, primarily and before any discussion, maintained without wavering what the Apostles, after much discussion, [Acts 15:2-7] subsequently ratified. This Luke shows by his own account, that Paul argued much at length with them on this subject before he went to Jerusalem. But since the brethren chose to be informed on this subject, by those at Jerusalem, he went up on their own account, not on his own. And his expression, "*I went not up,*" signifies that he neither went at the outset of his teaching, nor for the purpose of being instructed. Both are implied by the phrase, "*Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.*" He says not, "*I conferred,*" merely, but, "*immediately;*" and his subsequent journey was not to gain any additional instruction.

Ver. 17. "*But I went away into Arabia.*"

Behold a fervent soul! He longed to occupy regions not yet tilled, but lying in a wild state. Had he remained with the Apostles, as he had nothing to learn, his preaching would have been straitened, for it behooved them to spread the word every where. Thus this blessed man, fervent in spirit, straightway undertook to teach wild barbarians, choosing a life full of battle and labor. Having said, "*I went into Arabia,*" he adds, "*and again I returned unto Damascus.*" Here observe his humility; he speaks not of his successes,

nor of whom or of how many he instructed. Yet such was his zeal immediately on his baptism, that he confounded the Jews, and so exasperated them, that they and the Greeks lay in wait for him with a view to kill him. This would not have been the case, had he not greatly added to the numbers of the faithful; since they were vanquished in doctrine, they had recourse to murder, which was a manifest sign of Paul's superiority. But Christ suffered him not to be put to death, preserving him for his mission. Of these successes, however, he says nothing, and so in all his discourses, his motive is not ambition, nor to be honored more highly than the Apostles, nor because he is mortified at being lightly esteemed, but it is a fear lest any detriment should accrue to his mission. For he calls himself, *"one born out of due time,"* and, *"the first of sinners,"* and *"the last of the Apostles,"* and, *"not meet to be called an Apostle."* And this he said, who had labored more than all of them; which is real humility; for he who, conscious of no excellence, speaks humbly of himself, is candid but not humble; but to say so after such trophies, is to be practised in self-control.

Ver. 17. *"And again I returned unto Damascus."*

But what great things did he not probably achieve in this city? For he tells us that the governor under Aretas the king set guards about the whole of it, hoping to entrap this blessed man. Which is a proof of the strongest kind that he was violently persecuted by the Jews. Here, however, he says nothing of this, but mentioning his arrival and departure is silent concerning the events which there occurred, nor would he have mentioned them in the place I have referred to, [2 Corinthians 11:32] had not circumstances required their narration.

Ver. 18. *"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas."*

What can be more lowly than such a soul? After such successes, wanting nothing of Peter, not even his assent, but being of equal dignity with him, (for at present I will say no more,) he comes to him as his elder and superior. And the only object of this journey was to visit Peter; thus he pays due respect to the Apostles, and esteems himself not only not their better but not their equal. Which is plain from this journey, for Paul was induced to visit Peter by the same feeling from which many of our brethren sojourn with holy men: or rather by a humbler feeling for they do so for their own benefit, but this blessed man, not for his own instruction or correction, but merely for the sake of beholding and honoring Peter by his presence. He says, "*to visit Peter*;" he does not say to see, ([i] [δεῖν],) but to visit and survey, ([i] [στορῆσαι],) a word which those, who seek to become acquainted with great and splendid cities, apply to themselves. Worthy of such trouble did he consider the very sight of Peter; and this appears from the Acts of the Apostles also. [Acts 21:17-18 etc.] For on his arrival at Jerusalem, on another occasion, after having converted many Gentiles, and, with labors far surpassing the rest, reformed and brought to Christ Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Cilicia, and all nations in that quarter of the world, he first addresses himself with great humility to James, as to his elder and superior. Next he submits to his counsel, and that counsel contrary to this Epistle. "*You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; therefore shave your head, and purify yourself.*" [Acts 21:20 ff.] Accordingly he shaved his head, and observed all the Jewish ceremonies; for where the Gospel was not affected, he was the humblest of all men. But where by such humility he saw any injured, he gave up that undue exercise of it, for that was no longer to be humble but to outrage and destroy the disciples.

Ver. 18. "*And tarried with him fifteen days.*"

To take a journey on account of him was a mark of respect; but to remain so many days, of friendship and the most earnest affection.

Ver. 19. *"But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother."*

See what great friends he was with Peter especially; on his account he left his home, and with him he tarried. This I frequently repeat, and desire you to remember, that no one, when he hears what this Apostle seems to have spoken against Peter, may conceive a suspicion of him. He premises this, that when he says, *"I resisted Peter,"* no one may suppose that these words imply enmity and contention; for he honored and loved his person more than all and took this journey for his sake only, not for any of the others. *"But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James."* *"I saw him merely, I did not learn from him,"* he means. But observe how honorably he mentions him, he says not *"James"* merely, but adds this illustrious title, so free is he from all envy. Had he only wished to point out whom he meant, he might have shown this by another appellation, and called him the son of Cleophas, as the Evangelist does. But as he considered that he had a share in the august titles of the Apostles, he exalts himself by honoring James; and this he does by calling him *"the Lord's brother,"* although he was not by birth His brother, but only so reputed. Yet this did not deter him from giving the title; and in many other instances he displays towards all the Apostles that noble disposition, which beseemed him.

Ver. 20. *"Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."*

Observe throughout the transparent humility of this holy soul; his earnestness in his own vindication is as great as if he had to render an account of his deeds, and was pleading for his life in a court of justice.

Ver. 21. *"Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia."*

After his interview with Peter, he resumes his preaching and the task which lay before him, avoiding Judæa, both because of his mission being to the Gentiles, and of his unwillingness to *"build upon another man's foundation."* Wherefore there was not even a chance meeting, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 22, 23. *"And I was still unknown by face unto the Churches of Judæa; but they only heard say, he that once persecuted us now preaches the faith of which he once made havoc."*

What modesty in thus again mentioning the facts of his persecuting and laying waste the Church, and in thus making infamous his former life, while he passes over the illustrious deeds he was about to achieve! He might have told, had he wished it, all his successes, but he mentions none of these and stepping with one word over a vast expanse, he says merely, *"I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;"* and, *"they had heard, that he, which once persecuted us, now preaches the faith of which he once made havoc."* The purpose of the words, *"I was unknown to the Churches of Judæa,"* is to show, that so far from preaching to them the necessity of circumcision, he was not known to them even by sight.

Ver. 24. *"And they glorified God in me."* See here again how accurately he observes the rule of his humility; he says not, they admired me, they applauded or were astonished at me, but ascribes all to Divine grace by the words, *"they glorified God in me."*

Homily 2 on Galatians

Verse 1-2

" Then after the space of fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation."

His first journey was owing to his desire to visit Peter, his second, he says, arose from a revelation of the Spirit.

Ver. 2. *"And I laid before them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain."*

What is this, O Paul! Thou who neither at the beginning nor after three years wouldest confer with the Apostles, do you now confer with them, after fourteen years are past, lest you should be running in vain? Better would it have been to have done so at first, than after so many years; and why did you run at all, if not satisfied that thou were not running in vain? Who would be so senseless as to preach for so many years, without being sure that his preaching was true? And what enhances the difficulty is, that he says he went up by revelation; this difficulty, however, will afford a solution of the former one. Had he gone up of his own accord, it would have been most unreasonable, nor is it possible that this blessed soul should have fallen into such folly; for it is himself who says, *"I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air."* [1 Corinthians 9:26] If therefore he runs, *"not uncertainly,"* how can he say, *"lest I should be running, or had run, in vain?"* It is evident from this, that if he had gone up without a revelation, he would have committed an act of folly. But the actual case involved no such absurdity; who shall dare to still harbor this suspicion, when it was the grace of the Spirit which drew him? On this

account he added the words "*by revelation,*" lest, before the question was solved, he should be condemned of folly; well knowing that it was no human occurrence, but a deep Divine Providence concerning the present and future. What then is the reason of this journey of his? As when he went up before from Antioch to Jerusalem, it was not for his own sake, (for he saw clearly that his duty was simply to obey the doctrines of Christ,) but from a desire to reconcile the contentious; so now his object was the complete satisfaction of his accusers, not any wish of his own to learn that he had not run in vain. They conceived that Peter and John, of whom they thought more highly than of Paul, differed from him in that he omitted circumcision in his preaching, while the former allowed it, and they believed that in this he acted unlawfully, and was running in vain. I went up, says he, and communicated unto them my Gospel, not that I might learn anything myself, (as appears more clearly further on,) but that I might convince these suspicious persons that I do not run in vain. The Spirit foreseeing this contention had provided that he should go up and make this communication.

Wherefore he says that he went up by revelation, and, taking Barnabas and Titus as witnesses of his preaching, communicated to them the Gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, that is, with the omission of circumcision. "*But privately before them who were of repute.*" What means "*privately?*" Rather, he who wishes to reform doctrines held in common, proposes them, not privately, but before all in common; but Paul did this privately, for his object was, not to learn or reform any thing, but to cut off the grounds of those who would fain deceive. All at Jerusalem were offended, if the law was transgressed, or the use of circumcision forbidden; as James says, "*You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are informed of you, that you*

teach to forsake the law." [Acts 21:20, et seq] Since then they were offended he did not condescend to come forward publicly and declare what his preaching was, but he conferred privately with those who were of reputation before Barnabas and Titus, that they might credibly testify to his accusers, that the Apostles found no discrepancy in his preaching, but confirmed it. The expression, *"those that were of repute,"* ([τοῖς δοκοῦσιν]) does not impugn the reality of their greatness; for he says of himself, *"And I also seem ([δοκῶ]) to have the Spirit of God,"* thereby not denying the fact, but stating it modestly. And here the phrase implies his own assent to the common opinion.

Ver. 3. *"But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised."*

What means, *"being a Greek?"* Of Greek extraction, and not circumcised; for not only did I so preach but Titus so acted, nor did the Apostles compel him to be circumcised. A plain proof this that the Apostles did not condemn Paul's doctrine or his practice. Nay more, even the urgent representations of the adverse party, who were aware of these facts, did not oblige the Apostles to enjoin circumcision, as appears by his own words—

Ver. 4. *"And that because of the false brethren, privily brought in."*

Here arises a very important question, Who were these false brethren? If the Apostles permitted circumcision at Jerusalem, why are those who enjoined it, in accordance with the Apostolic sentence, to be called false brethren? First; because there is a difference between commanding an act to be done, and allowing it after it is done. He who enjoins an act, does it with zeal as necessary, and of primary importance; but he who, without himself commanding it, allows another to do it who wishes yields not from a sense of its being necessary but in order to subserve some purpose. We have a similar instance, in Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, in his command to

husbands and wives to come together again. To which, that he might not be thought to be legislating for them, he subjoins, "*But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment.*" [1 Corinthians 7:5] For this was not a judgment authoritatively given but an indulgence to their incontinence; as he says, "*for your incontinency.*" Would you know Paul's sentence in this matter? Hear his words, "*I would that all men were even as I myself,*" [1 Corinthians 7:7] in continence. And so here, the Apostles made this concession, not as vindicating the law, but as condescending to the infirmities of Judaism. Had they been vindicating the law, they would not have preached to the Jews in one way, and to the Gentiles in another. Had the observance been necessary for unbelievers, then indeed it would plainly have likewise been necessary for all the faithful. But by their decision not to harass the Gentiles on this point, they showed that they permitted it by way of condescension to the Jews. Whereas the purpose of the false brethren was to cast them out of grace, and reduce them under the yoke of slavery again. This is the first difference, and a very wide one. The second is, that the Apostles so acted in Judæa, where the Law was in force, but the false brethren, every where, for all the Galatians were influenced by them. Whence it appears that their intention was, not to build up, but entirely to pull down the Gospel, and that the thing was permitted by the Apostles on one ground and zealously practiced by the false brethren on another.

Ver. 4. "*Who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.*"

He points out their hostility by calling them spies; for the sole object of a spy is to obtain for himself facilities of devastation and destruction, by becoming acquainted with his adversary's position. And this is what those did, who wished to bring the disciples back to their old servitude. Hence too appears how very contrary their purpose was to that of the Apostles; the

latter made concessions that they might gradually extricate them from their servitude, but the former plotted to subject them to one more severe. Therefore they looked round and observed accurately and made themselves busybodies to find out who were uncircumcised; as Paul says, "*they came in privily to spy out our liberty,*" thus pointing out their machinations not only by the term "*spies,*" but by this expression of a furtive entrance and creeping in.

Ver. 5. "*To whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour.*"

Observe the force and emphasis of the phrase; he says not, "*by argument,*" but, "*by subjection,*" for their object was not to teach good doctrine, but to subjugate and enslave them. Wherefore, says he, we yielded to the Apostles, but not to these.

Ver. 5. "*That the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.*"

That we may confirm, says he, by our deeds what we have already declared by words—namely, that the "*old things are passed away, behold they have become new;*" and that "*if any man is in Christ he is a new creature;*" [2 Corinthians 5:17] and that "*if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing.*" [Galatians 5:2] In maintaining this truth we gave place not even for an hour. Then, as he was directly met by the conduct of the Apostles, and the reason of their enjoining the rite would probably be asked, he proceeds to solve this objection. This he does with great skill, for he does not give the actual reason, which was, that the Apostles acted by way of condescension and in the use of a scheme, ([οἰκονομία]) as it were; for otherwise his hearers would have been injured. For those, who are to derive benefit from a scheme should be unacquainted with the design of it; all will be undone, if this appears. Wherefore, he who is to take part in it should know the drift of it; those who are to benefit by it should not. To

make my meaning more evident, I will take an example from our present subject. The blessed Paul himself, who meant to abrogate circumcision, when he was about to send Timothy to teach the Jews, first circumcised him and so sent him. This he did, that his hearers might the more readily receive him; he began by circumcising, that in the end he might abolish it. But this reason he imparted to Timothy only, and told it not to the disciples. Had they known that the very purpose of his circumcision was the abolition of the rite, they would never have listened to his preaching, and the whole benefit would have been lost. But now their ignorance was of the greatest use to them, for their idea that his conduct proceeded from a regard to the Law, led them to receive both him and his doctrine with kindness and courtesy, and having gradually received him, and become instructed, they abandoned their old customs. Now this would not have happened had they known his reasons from the first; for they would have turned away from him, and being turned away would not have given him a hearing, and not hearing, would have continued in their former error. To prevent this, he did not disclose his reasons; here too he does not explain the occasion of the scheme, ([οἰκονομία],) but shapes his discourse differently; thus:

Ver. 6. *"But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it makes no matter to me, God accepts no man's person.)"*

Here he not only does not defend the Apostles, but even presses hard upon those holy men, for the benefit of the weak. His meaning is this: although they permit circumcision, they shall render an account to God, for God will not accept their persons, because they are great and in station. But he does not speak so plainly, but with caution. He says not, if they vitiate their doctrine, and swerve from the appointed rule of their preaching, they shall be judged with the utmost rigor, and suffer punishment; but he alludes to them more reverently, in the words, *"of those who were reputed to be*

somewhat, whatsoever they were." He says not, *"whatsoever they 'are,'"* but *"were,"* showing that they too had thenceforth ceased so to preach, the doctrine having extended itself universally. The phrase, *"whatsoever they were,"* implies, that if they so preached they should render account, for they had to justify themselves before God, not before men. This he said, not as doubtful or ignorant of the rectitude of their procedure, but (as I said before) from a sense of the expediency of so forming his discourse. Then, that he may not seem to take the opposite side and to accuse them, and so create a suspicion of their disagreement, he straightway subjoins this correction: *"for those who were reputed to be somewhat, in conference imparted nothing to me."* This is his meaning; What you may say, I know not; this I know well, that the Apostles did not oppose me, but our sentiments conspired and accorded. This appears from his expression, *"they gave me the right hand of fellowship;"* but he does not say this at present, but only that they neither informed or corrected him on any point, nor added to his knowledge.

Ver. 6. *"For those who were reputed to be somewhat, imparted nothing to me:"*

That is to say, when told of my proceedings, they added nothing, they corrected nothing, and though aware that the object of my journey was to communicate with them, that I had come by revelation of the Spirit, and that I had Titus with me who was uncircumcised, they neither circumcised him, nor imparted to me any additional knowledge.

Ver. 7. *"But contrariwise."*

Some hold his meaning to be, not only that the Apostles did not instruct him, but that they were instructed by him. But I would not say this, for what could they, each of whom was himself perfectly instructed, have learned from him? He does not therefore intend this by the expression,

"contrariwise," but that so far were they from blaming, that they praised him: for praise is the contrary of blame. Some would probably here reply: Why did not the Apostles, if they praised your procedure, as the proper consequence abolish circumcision? Now to assert that they did abolish it Paul considered much too bold, and inconsistent with his own admission. On the other hand, to admit that they had sanctioned circumcision, would necessarily expose him to another objection. For it would be said, if the Apostles praised your preaching, yet sanctioned circumcision, they were inconsistent with themselves. What then is the solution? Is he to say that they acted thus out of condescension to Judaism? To say this would have shaken the very foundation of the economy. Wherefore he leaves the subject in suspense and uncertainty, by the words, *"but of those who were reputed to be somewhat; it makes no matter to me."* Which is in effect to say, I accuse not, nor traduce those holy men; they know what it is they have done; to God must they render their account. What I am desirous to prove is, that they neither reversed nor corrected my procedure, nor added to it as in their opinion defective, but gave it their approbation and assent; and to this Titus and Barnabas bear witness. Then he adds,

Ver. 7. *"When they saw that I had been entrusted with the Gospel of the Uncircumcision even as Peter with the Gospel of the Circumcision,"*—

The Circumcision and Uncircumcision; meaning, not the things themselves, but the nations known by these distinctions; wherefore he adds,

Ver. 8. *"For He that wrought for Peter unto the Apostleship of the Circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles."*

He calls the Gentiles the Uncircumcision and the Jews the Circumcision, and declares his own rank to be equal to that of the Apostles; and, by comparing himself with their Leader not with the others, he shows that the dignity of each was the same. After he had established the proof of

their unanimity, he takes courage, and proceeds confidently in his argument, not stopping at the Apostles, but advances to Christ Himself, and to the grace which He had conferred upon him, and calls the Apostles as his witnesses, saying,

Ver. 9. *"And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship."*

He says not when they *"heard,"* but when they *"perceived,"* that is, were assured by the facts themselves, *"they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship."* Observe how he gradually proves that his doctrine was ratified both by Christ and by the Apostles. For grace would neither have been implanted, nor been operative in him, had not his preaching been approved by Christ. Where it was for the purpose of comparison with himself, he mentioned Peter alone; here, when he calls them as witnesses, he names the three together, *"Cephas, James, John,"* and with an encomium, *"who were reputed to be pillars."* Here again the expression *"who were reputed"* does not impugn the reality of the fact, but adopts the estimate of others, and implies that these great and distinguished men, whose fame was universal, bore witness that his preaching was ratified by Christ, that they were practically informed and convinced by experience concerning it. *"Therefore they gave the right hands of fellowship"* to me, and not to me only, but also to Barnabas, *"that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the Circumcision."* Here indeed is exceeding prudence as well as an incontrovertible proof of their concord. For it shows that his and their doctrine was interchangeable, and that both approved the same thing, that they should so preach to the Jews, and he to the Gentiles. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 9. *"That we should go unto the Gentiles and they unto the Circumcision."*

Observe that here also he means by *"the Circumcision,"* not the rite, but the Jews; whenever he speaks of the rite, and wishes to contrast it, he adds the word *"uncircumcision;"* as when he says, *"For circumcision indeed profits, if you be a doer of the law; but if you be a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision."* [Romans 2:25] And again, *"Neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision."* But when it is to the Jews and not to the deed that he gives this name, and wishes to signify the nation, he opposes to it not uncircumcision in its literal sense, but the Gentiles. For the Jews are the contradistinction to the Gentiles, the Circumcision to the Uncircumcision. Thus when he says above, *"For He that wrought for Peter into the Apostleship of the Circumcision, wrought for me also unto the Gentiles;"* and again, *"We unto the Gentiles and they unto the Circumcision,"* he means not the rite itself, but the Jewish nation, thus distinguishing them from the Gentiles.

Ver. 10. *"Only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do."*

This is his meaning: In our preaching we divided the world between us, I took the Gentiles and they the Jews, according to the Divine decree; but to the sustenance of the poor among the Jews I also contributed my share, which, had there been any dissension between us, they would not have accepted. Next, who were these poor persons? Many of the believing Jews in Palestine had been deprived of all their goods, and scattered over the world, as he mentions in the Epistle to the Hebrews, *"For you took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions;"* and in writing to the Thessalonians, [1 Thessalonians 2:14] he extols their fortitude, *"You became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa,...for you also*

suffered the same thing of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews." And he shows throughout that those Greeks who believed were not under persecution from the rest, such as the believing Jews were suffering from their own kindred, for there is no nation of a temper so cruel.

Wherefore he exercises much zeal, as appears in the Epistles to the Romans [Romans 15:25-27] and Corinthians [1 Corinthians 16:1-3] that these persons should meet with much attention; and Paul not only collects money for them, but himself conveys it, as he says, *"But now I go unto Jerusalem ministering unto the saints,"* [Romans 15:25] for they were without the necessities of life. And he here shows that in this instance having resolved to assist them, he had undertaken and would not abandon it.

Having by these means declared the unanimity and harmony between the Apostles and himself, he is obliged to proceed to mention his debate with Peter at Antioch.

Ver. 11, 12. *"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision."*

Many, on a superficial reading of this part of the Epistle, suppose that Paul accused Peter of hypocrisy. But this is not so, indeed it is not, far from it; we shall discover great wisdom, both of Paul and Peter, concealed herein for the benefit of their hearers. But first a word must be said about Peter's freedom in speech, and how it was ever his way to outstrip the other disciples. Indeed it was upon one such occasion that he gained his name from the unbending and impregnable character of his faith. For when all were interrogated in common, he stepped before the others and answered, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* [Matthew 16:16] This was when the keys of heaven were committed to him. So too, he appears to have

been the only speaker on the Mount; [Matthew 17:4] and when Christ spoke of His crucifixion, and the others kept silence, he said, "*Be it far from You.*" [Matthew 16:22] These words evince, if not a cautious temper, at least a fervent love; and in all instances we find him more vehement than the others, and rushing forward into danger. So when Christ was seen on the beach, and the others were pushing the boat in, he was too impatient to wait for its coming to land. [John 21:7] And after the Resurrection, when the Jews were murderous and maddened, and sought to tear the Apostles in pieces, he first dared to come forward, and to declare, that the Crucified was taken up into heaven. [Acts 2:14, 36] It is a greater thing to open a closed door, and to commence an action, than to be free-spoken afterwards. How could he ever dissemble who had exposed his life to such a populace? He who when scourged and bound would not bate a jot of his courage, and this at the beginning of his mission, and in the heart of the chief city where there was so much danger—how could he, long afterwards in Antioch, where no danger was at hand, and his character had received lustre from the testimony of his actions, feel any apprehension of the believing Jews? How could he, I say, who at the very first and in their chief city feared not the Jews while Jews, after a long time and in a foreign city, fear those of them who had been converted? Paul therefore does not speak this against Peter, but with the same meaning in which he said, "*for they who were reputed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it makes no matter to me.*" But to remove any doubt on this point, we must unfold the reason of these expressions.

The Apostles, as I said before, permitted circumcision at Jerusalem, an abrupt severance from the law not being practicable; but when they come to Antioch, they no longer continued this observance, but lived indiscriminately with the believing Gentiles which thing Peter also was at

that time doing. But when some came from Jerusalem who had heard the doctrine he delivered there, he no longer did so fearing to perplex them, but he changed his course, with two objects secretly in view, both to avoid offending those Jews, and to give Paul a reasonable pretext for rebuking him. For had he, having allowed circumcision when preaching at Jerusalem, changed his course at Antioch, his conduct would have appeared to those Jews to proceed from fear of Paul, and his disciples would have condemned his excess of pliancy. And this would have created no small offense; but in Paul, who was well acquainted with all the facts, his withdrawal would have raised no such suspicion, as knowing the intention with which he acted. Wherefore Paul rebukes, and Peter submits, that when the master is blamed, yet keeps silence, the disciples may more readily come over. Without this occurrence Paul's exhortation would have had little effect, but the occasion hereby afforded of delivering a severe reproof, impressed Peter's disciples with a more lively fear. Had Peter disputed Paul's sentence, he might justly have been blamed as upsetting the plan, but now that the one reproves and the other keeps silence, the Jewish party are filled with serious alarm; and this is why he used Peter so severely. Observe too Paul's careful choice of expressions, whereby he points out to the discerning, that he uses them in pursuance of the plan, ([οἰκονομίας]) and not from anger.

His words are, "*When Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned;*" that is, not by me but by others; had he himself condemned him, he would not have shrunk from saying so. And the words, "*I resisted him to the face,*" imply a scheme for had their discussion been real, they would not have rebuked each other in the presence of the disciples, for it would have been a great stumblingblock to them. But now this apparent contest was much to their advantage; as Paul had yielded to the Apostles at Jerusalem, so in turn they yield to him at Antioch. The cause

of censure is this, *"For before that certain came from James,"* who was the teacher at Jerusalem, *"he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the Circumcision:"* his cause of fear was not his own danger, (for if he feared not in the beginning, much less would he do so then,) but their defection. As Paul himself says to the Galatians, *"I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain:"* [Galatians 4:11] and again, *"I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve,...so your minds should be corrupted."* [2 Corinthians 11:3] Thus the fear of death they knew not, but the fear lest their disciples should perish, agitated their inmost soul.

Ver. 13. *"Insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation."*

Be not surprised at his giving this proceeding the name of dissimulation, for he is unwilling, as I said before, to disclose the true state of the case, in order to the correction of his disciples. On account of their vehement attachment to the Law, he calls the present proceeding *"dissimulation,"* and severely rebukes it, in order effectually to eradicate their prejudice. And Peter too, hearing this joins in the feint, as if he had erred, that they might be corrected by means of the rebuke administered to him. Had Paul reproved these Jews, they would have spurned at it with indignation, for they held him in slight esteem; but now, when they saw their Teacher silent under rebuke, they were unable to despise or resist Paul's sentence.

Ver. 14. *"But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel."*

Neither let this phrase disturb you, for in using it he does not condemn Peter, but so expresses himself for the benefit of those who were to be reformed by the reproof of Peter.

Ver. 14. *"I said unto Cephas before them all."*

Observe his mode of correcting the others; he speaks *"before them all,"* that the hearers might be alarmed thereby. And this is what he says—

Ver. 14. *"If you, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"*

But it was the Jews and not the Gentiles who were carried away together with Peter; why then does Paul impute what was not done, instead of directing his remarks, not against the Gentiles, but against the dissembling Jews? And why does he accuse Peter alone, when the rest also dissembled together with him? Let us consider the terms of his charge; *"If you, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"* for in fact Peter alone had withdrawn himself. His object then is to remove suspicion from his rebuke; had he blamed Peter for observing the Law, the Jews would have censured him for his boldness towards their Teacher. But now arraigning him in behalf of his own peculiar disciples, I mean the Gentiles, he facilitates thereby the reception of what he has to say which he also does by abstaining from reproof of the others, and addressing it all to the Apostle. *"If you,"* he says, *"being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews;"* which almost amounts to an explicit exhortation to imitate their Teacher, who, himself a Jew, lived after the manner of the Gentiles. This however he says not, for they could not have received such advice, but under color of reproving him in behalf of the Gentiles, he discloses Peter's real sentiments. On the other hand, if he had said, Wherefore do you compel these Jews to Judaize? His language would have been too severe. But now he effects their correction by appearing to espouse the part, not of the Jewish, but of the Gentile, disciples; for rebukes, which are moderately severe, secure the readiest reception. And none of the Gentiles could object

to Paul that he took up the defense of the Jews. The whole difficulty was removed by Peter's submitting in silence to the imputation of dissimulation, in order that he might deliver the Jews from its reality. At first Paul directs his argument to the character which Peter wore, *"If you, being a Jew:"* but he generalizes as he goes on, and includes himself in the phrase,

Ver. 15. *"We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles."*

These words are hortatory, but are couched in the form of a reproof, on account of those Jews. So elsewhere, under cover of one meaning he conveys another; as where he says in his Epistle to the Romans, *"But now I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints."* [Romans 15:25] Here his object was not simply to inform them of the motive of his journey to Jerusalem, but to excite them to emulation in the giving of alms. Had he merely wished to explain his motive, it would have sufficed to say, *"I go to ministering unto the saints;"* but now observe what he says in addition; *"For it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. Yea, it has been their good pleasure and their debtors they are."* And again, *"For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them, also to minister unto them in carnal things."* [Romans 15:26-27]

Observe how he represses the high thoughts of the Jews; preparing for one thing by means of another, and his language is authoritative. *"We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles."* The phrase, *"Jews by nature,"* implies that we, who are not proselytes, but educated from early youth in the Law, have relinquished our habitual mode of life, and be taken ourselves to the faith which is in Christ.

Ver. 16. *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, save through faith, in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus."*

Observe here too how cautiously he expresses himself; he does not say that they had abandoned the Law as evil, but as weak. If the law cannot confer righteousness, it follows that circumcision is superfluous; and so far he now proves; but he proceeds to show that it is not only superfluous but dangerous. It deserves special notice, how at the outset he says that a man is not justified by the works of the Law; but as he proceeds he speaks more strongly;

Ver. 17. *"But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners is Christ a minister of sin?"*

If faith in Him, says he, avail not for our justification, but it be necessary again to embrace the Law, and if, having forsaken the Law for Christ's sake, we are not justified but condemned for such abandonment,—then shall we find Him, for whose sake we forsook the Law and went over to faith the author of our condemnation. Observe how, he has resolved the matter to a necessary absurdity. And mark how earnestly and strongly he argues. For if, he says, it behooved us not to abandon the Law, and we have so abandoned it for Christ's sake, we shall be judged. Wherefore do you urge this upon Peter, who is more intimately acquainted with it than any one? Hath not God declared to him, that an uncircumcised man ought not to be judged by circumcision; and did he not in his discussion with the Jews rest his bold opposition upon the vision which he saw? Did he not send from Jerusalem unequivocal decrees upon this subject? Paul's object is not therefore to correct Peter, but his animadversion required to be addressed to him, though it was pointed at the disciples; and not only at the Galatians, but also at others who labor under the same error with them. For though few are now circumcised, yet, by fasting and observing the sabbath with the Jews, they equally exclude themselves from grace. If Christ avails not to those who are only circumcised, much more is peril to be feared where

fasting and sabbatizing are observed, and thus two commandments of the Law are kept in the place of one. And this is aggravated by a consideration of time: for they so acted at first while the city and temple and other institutions yet existed; but these who with the punishment of the Jews, and the destruction of the city before their eyes, observe more precepts of the Law than the others did, what apology can they find for such observance, at the very time when the Jews themselves, in spite of their strong desire, cannot keep it? You have put on Christ, you have become a member of the Lord, and been enrolled in the heavenly city, and do you still grovel in the Law? How is it possible for you to obtain the kingdom? Listen to Paul's words, that the observance of the Law overthrows the Gospel, and learn, if you will, how this comes to pass, and tremble, and shun this pitfall.

Wherefore do you keep the sabbath, and fast with the Jews? Is it that you fear the Law and abandonment of its letter? But you would not entertain this fear, did you not disparage faith as weak, and by itself powerless to save. A fear to omit the sabbath plainly shows that you fear the Law as still in force; and if the Law is needful, it is so as a whole, not in part, nor in one commandment only; and if as a whole, the righteousness which is by faith is little by little shut out. If you keep the sabbath, why not also be circumcised? And if circumcised, why not also offer sacrifices? If the Law is to be observed, it must be observed as a whole, or not at all. If omitting one part makes you fear condemnation, this fear attaches equally to all the parts. If a transgression of the whole is not punishable, much less is the transgression of a part; on the other hand, if the latter be punishable, much more is the former. But if we are bound to keep the whole, we are bound to disobey Christ, or by obedience to Him become transgressors of the Law. If it ought to be kept, those who keep it not are transgressors, and Christ will be found to be the cause of this transgression, for He annulled the Law as

regards these things Himself, and bid others annul it. Do you not understand what these Judaizers are compassing? They would make Christ, who is to us the Author of righteousness, the Author of sin, as Paul says, *"Therefore Christ is the minister of sin."* Having thus reduced the proposition to an absurdity, he had nothing further to do by way of overthrowing it, but was satisfied with the simple protestation,

Ver. 17. *"God forbid:"* for shamelessness and irreverence need not be met by processes of reasoning, but a mere protest is enough.

Ver. 18. *"For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor."*

Observe the Apostle's discernment; his opponents endeavored to show, that he who kept not the Law was a transgressor, but he retorts the argument upon them, and shows that he who did keep the Law was a transgressor, not merely of faith, but of the Law itself. *"I build up again the things which I destroyed,"* that is, the Law; he means as follows: the Law has confessedly ceased, and we have abandoned it, and betaken ourselves to the salvation which comes of faith. But if we make a point of setting it up again, we become by that very act transgressors, striving to keep what God has annulled. Next he shows how it has been annulled.

Ver. 19. *"For I through the Law died unto the Law."*

This may be viewed in two ways; it is either the law of grace which he speaks of, for he is wont to call this a law, as in the words, *"For the law of the Spirit of life made me free:"* [Romans 8:2] or it is the old Law, of which he says, that by the Law itself he has become dead to the Law. That is to say, the Law itself has taught me no longer to obey itself, and therefore if I do so, I shall be transgressing even its teaching. How, in what way has it so taught? Moses says, speaking of Christ, *"The Lord God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you of your brethren, like me; unto Him*

shall you hearken." [Deuteronomy 18:15] Therefore they who do not obey Him, transgress the Law. Again, the expression, *"I through the Law died unto the Law,"* may be understood in another sense: the Law commands all its precepts to be performed, and punishes the transgressor; therefore we are all dead to it, for no man has fulfilled it. Here observe, how guardedly he assails it; he says not, *"the Law is dead to me;"* but, *"I am dead to the Law;"* the meaning of which is, that, as it is impossible for a dead corpse to obey the commands of the Law, so also is it for me who have perished by its curse, for by its word am I slain. Let it not therefore lay commands on the dead, dead by its own act, dead not in body only, but in soul, which has involved the death of the body. This he shows in what follows:

Ver. 19, 20. *"That I might live unto God, I have been crucified with Christ."*

Having said, *"I am dead,"* lest it should be objected, how then do you live? He adds the cause of his living, and shows that when alive the Law slew him, but that when dead Christ through death restored him to life. He shows the wonder to be twofold; that by Christ both the dead was begotten into life, and that by means of death. He here means the immortal life, for this is the meaning of the words, *"That I might live unto God I am crucified with Christ."* How, it is asked, can a man now living and breathing have been crucified? That Christ has been crucified is manifest, but how can you have been crucified, and yet live? He explains it thus;

Ver. 20. *"Yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me."*

In these words, *"I am crucified with Christ,"* he alludes to Baptism and in the words *"nevertheless I live, yet not I,"* our subsequent manner of life whereby our members are mortified. By saying *"Christ lives in me,"* he means nothing is done by me, which Christ disapproves; for as by death he signifies not what is commonly understood, but a death to sin; so by life, he

signifies a delivery from sin. For a man cannot live to God, otherwise than by dying to sin; and as Christ suffered bodily death, so does Paul a death to sin. "*Mortify*," says he, "*your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion;*" [Colossians 3:5], and again, "*our old man was crucified,*" [Romans 6:6] which took place in the Bath. After which, if you remain dead to sin, you live to God, but if you let it live again, you are the ruin of your new life. This however did not Paul, but continued wholly dead; if then, he says, I live to God a life other than that in the Law, and am dead to the Law, I cannot possibly keep any part of the Law. Consider how perfect was his walk, and you will be transported with admiration of this blessed soul. He says not, "*I live*," but, "*Christ lives in me;*" who is bold enough to utter such words? Paul indeed, who had harnessed himself to Christ's yoke, and cast away all worldly things, and was paying universal obedience to His will, says not, "*I live to Christ*," but what is far higher, "*Christ lives in me.*" As sin, when it has the mastery, is itself the vital principle, and leads the soul whither it will, so, when it is slain and the will of Christ obeyed, this life is no longer earthly, but Christ lives, that is, works, has mastery within us. His saying, "*I am crucified with Him*" "*I no longer live*," but "*am dead*," seeming incredible to many, he adds,

Ver. 20. "*And that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God.*"

The foregoing, says he, relates to our spiritual life, but this life of sense too, if considered, will be found owing to my faith in Christ. For as regards the former Dispensation and Law, I had incurred the severest punishment, and had long ago perished, "*for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" [Romans 3:23] And we, who lay under sentence, have been liberated by Christ, for all of us are dead, if not in fact, at least by sentence;

and He has delivered us from the expected blow. When the Law had accused, and God condemned us, Christ came, and by giving Himself up to death, rescued us all from death. So that *"the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith."* Had not this been, nothing could have averted a destruction as general as that which took place at the flood, but His advent arrested the wrath of God, and caused us to live by faith. That such is his meaning appears from what follows. After saying, that *"the life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith,"* he adds,

Ver. 20. *"In the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."*

How is this, O Paul! Why do you appropriate a general benefit, and make your own what was done for the whole world's sake? For he says not, *"Who loved us,"* but, *"Who loved me."* And besides the Evangelist says, *"God so loved the world;"* [John 3:16] and Paul himself, *"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up,"* not for Paul only, but, *"for us all;"* [Romans 8:32] and again, *"that He might purify unto himself a people for his own possession,"* [Titus 2:14] But considering the desperate condition of human nature, and the ineffably tender solicitude of Christ, in what He delivered us from, and what He freely gave us, and kindled by the yearning of affection towards Him, he thus expresses himself. Thus the Prophets often appropriate to themselves Him who is God of all, as in the words, *"O God, you are my God, early will I seek You."* [Psalm 63:1] Moreover, this language teaches that each individual justly owes as a great debt of gratitude to Christ, as if He had come for his sake alone, for He would not have grudged this His condescension though but for one, so that the measure of His love to each is as great as to the whole world. Truly the Sacrifice was offered for all mankind, and was sufficient to save all, but those who enjoy the blessing are the believing only. Nevertheless it did not

deter Him from His so great condescension, that not all would come; but He acted after the pattern of the supper in the Gospel, which He prepared for all, [Luke 14:16] yet when the guests came not, instead of withdrawing the viands, He called in others. So too He did not despise that sheep, though one only, which had strayed from the ninety and nine. [Matthew 18:12] This too in like manner St. Paul intimates, when he says, speaking about the Jews, *"For what if some were without faith, shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? God forbid: yea let God be found true, but every man a liar."* [Romans 3:3-4] When He so loved you as to give Himself up to bring you who wast without hope to a life so great and blessed, can you, thus gifted, have recourse to things gone by? His reasoning being completed, he concludes with a vehement asseveration, saying,

Ver. 21. *"I do not make void the grace of God."*

Let those, who even now Judaize and adhere to the Law, listen to this, for it applies to them.

Ver. 21. *"For if righteousness is through the Law, then Christ died for naught."*

What can be more heinous than this sin? what more fit to put one to shame than these words? Christ's death is a plain proof of the inability of the Law to justify us; and if it does justify, then is His death superfluous. Yet how could it be reasonable to say that has been done heedlessly and in vain which is so awful, so surpassing human reason, a mystery so ineffable, with which Patriarchs travailed, which Prophets foretold, which Angels gazed on with consternation, which all men confess as the summit of the Divine tenderness? Reflecting how utterly out of place it would be if they should say that so great and high a deed had been done superfluously, (for

this is what their conduct came to,) he even uses violent language against them, as we find in the words which follow.

Homily 3 on Galatians

Verse 1

"O foolish Galatians who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth, crucified?"

Here he passes to another subject; in the former chapters he had shown himself not to be an Apostle of men, nor by men, nor in want of Apostolic instruction. Now, having established his authority as a teacher, he proceeds to discourse more confidently, and draws a comparison between faith and the Law. At the outset he said, *"I marvel that you are so quickly removing;"* [Galatians 1:6] but here, *"O foolish Galatians;"* then, his indignation was in its birth, but now, after his refutation of the charges against himself, and his proofs, it bursts forth. Let not his calling them *"foolish"* surprise you; for it is not a transgression of Christ's command not to call one's brother a fool, but rather a strict observance of it. For it is not said simply, *"Whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool,"* [Matthew 5:22] but, whosoever shall do so, *"without a cause."* And who more fittingly than they could so be called, who after so great events, adhered to past things, as if nothing else had ever happened? If on this account Paul is to be called a *"reviler,"* Peter may likewise, on account of Annanias and Sapphira, be called a homicide; but as it would be wildness to do so in that case, much more in this. Moreover it is to be considered, that this vehemence is not used at the beginning, but after these evidences and proofs, which, rather than Paul himself, might now be held to administer the rebuke. For after he had shown that they rejected the faith, and made the death of Christ to be without a purpose, he introduces his reproof, which, even as it is, is less severe than they merited. Observe too how soon he stays his arm; for he adds not, Who has seduced you? Who

has perverted you? Who has been sophistical with you? But, *"Who has cast an envious eye on you?"* thus tempering his reprimand with somewhat of praise. For it implies that their previous course had excited jealousy, and that the present occurrence arose from the malignity of a demon, whose breath had blasted their prosperous estate.

And when you hear of jealousy in this place, and in the Gospel, of an evil eye, which means the same, you must not suppose that the glance of the eye has any natural power to injure those who look upon it. For the eye, that is, the organ itself, cannot be evil; but Christ in that place means jealousy by the term. To behold, simply, is the function of the eye, but to behold in an evil manner belongs to a mind depraved within. As through this sense the knowledge of visible objects enters the soul, and as jealousy is for the most part generated by wealth, and wealth and sovereignty and pomp are perceived by the eye, therefore he calls the eye evil; not as beholding merely, but as beholding enviously from some moral depravity. Therefore by the words, *"Who has looked enviously on you,"* he implies that the persons in question acted, not from concern, not to supply defects, but to mutilate what existed. For envy, far from supplying what is wanting, subtracts from what is complete, and vitiates the whole. And he speaks thus, not as if envy had any power of itself, but meaning, that the teachers of these doctrines did so from envious motives.

Ver. 1. *"Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth, crucified."*

Yet was He not crucified in Galatia, but at Jerusalem. His reason for saying, *"among you,"* is to declare the power of faith to see events which are at a distance. He says not, *"crucified,"* but, *"openly set forth crucified,"* signifying that by the eye of faith they saw more distinctly than some who were present as spectators. For many of the latter received no benefit, but

the former, who were not eye-witnesses, yet saw it by faith more clearly. These words convey both praise and blame; praise, for their implicit acceptance of the truth; blame, because Him whom they had seen, for their sakes, stripped naked, transfixed, nailed to the cross, spit upon, mocked, fed with vinegar, upbraided by thieves, pierced with a spear; (for all this is implied in the words, "*openly set forth, crucified,*") Him had they left, and betaken themselves to the Law, unshamed by any of those sufferings. Here observe how Paul, leaving all mention of heaven, earth, and sea, every where preaches the power of Christ, bearing about as he did, and holding up His cross: for this is the sum of the Divine love toward us.

Ver. 2. "*This only would I learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?*"

As you do not attend, says he, to long discourses, nor are willing to contemplate the magnitude of this Economy, I am desirous, (seeing your extreme ignorance,) to convince you by concise arguments and a summary method of proof. Before, he had convinced them by what he said to Peter; now, he encounters them entirely with arguments, drawn not from what had occurred elsewhere, but from what had happened among themselves. And his persuasives and proofs are adduced, not merely from what was given them in common with others, but from what was especially conferred on themselves. Therefore he says, "*This only would I learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith.*" You have received, he says, the Holy Spirit, you have done many mighty works, you have effected miracles in raising the dead, in cleansing lepers, in prophesying, in speaking with tongues,— did the Law confer this great power upon you? Was it not rather Faith, seeing that, before, you could do no such things? Is it not then the height of madness for these who have

received such benefits from Faith, to abandon it, and desert back to the Law which can offer you nothing of the same kind?

Ver. 3. *"Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now perfected in the flesh?"*

Here again he seasonably interposes a rebuke; time, he says, should have brought improvement; but, so far from advancing, you have even retrograded. Those who start from small beginnings make progress to higher things; you, who began with the high, have relapsed to the low. Even had your outset been carnal, your advance should have been spiritual, but now, after starting from things spiritual, you have ended your journey in that which is carnal; for to work miracles is spiritual, but to be circumcised is carnal. And after miracles you have passed to circumcision, after having apprehended the truth you have fallen back to types, after gazing on the sun you seek a candle, after having strong meat you run for milk. He says, *"made perfect,"* which means not *"initiated"* merely, but *"sacrificed,"* signifying that their teachers took and slew them like animals, while they resigned themselves to suffer what those teachers pleased. As if some captain, or distinguished man, after a thousand victories and trophies, were to subject himself to infamy as a deserter, and offer his body to be branded at the will of others.

Ver. 4. *"Did you suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain."*

This remark is far more piercing than the former, for the remembrance of their miracles would not be so powerful as the exhibition of their contests and endurance of sufferings for Christ's sake. All that you have endured, says he, these men would strip you of, and would rob you of your crown. Then, lest he should dismay and unnerve, he proceeds not to a formal judgment, but subjoins, *"if it be indeed in vain;"* if you have but a mind to shake off drowsiness and recover yourselves, he says, it is not in vain.

Where then be those who would cut off repentance ? Here were men who had received the Spirit, worked miracles, become confessors, encountered a thousand perils and persecutions for Christ's sake, and after so many achievements had fallen from grace; nevertheless he says, if you have the purpose, you may recover yourselves.

Ver. 5. *"He therefore that supplies to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"*

Have you been vouchsafed, he says, so great a gift, and achieved such wonders, because you observed the Law, or because you adhered to Faith? Plainly on account of Faith. Seeing that they played this argument to and fro, that apart from the Law, Faith had no force, he proves the contrary, viz., that if the Commandments be added, Faith no longer avails; for Faith then has efficacy when things from the Law are not added to it. *"You who would be justified by the Law, you are fallen away from grace:"* [Galatians 5:4] This he says later, when his language has grown bolder, employing the vantage-ground by that time gained; meanwhile while gaining it, he argues from their past experience. For it was when you obeyed Faith, he says, not the Law, that you received the Spirit and wrought miracles.

And here, as the Law was the subject of discussion, he moots another special point of controversy, and very opportunely and with much cogency introduces a notice of Abraham.

Ver. 6. *"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness."*

Even the miracles done by themselves, he says, declare the power of Faith, but I shall attempt if you will suffer me to draw my proofs from ancient narratives also. Then, as they made great account of the Patriarch, he brings his example forward, and shows that he too was justified by Faith.

And if he who was before grace, was justified by Faith, although plentiful in works, much more we. For what loss was it to him, not being under the Law? None, for his faith sufficed unto righteousness. The Law did not then exist, he says, neither does it now exist, any more than then. In disproving the need of the Law, he introduces one who was justified before the Law, lest an objection should also be made to him; for as then it was not yet given, so now, having been given, it was abrogated. And as they made much of their descent from Abraham, and feared lest, abandoning the Law, they should be considered strangers to his kin; Paul removes this fear by turning their argument against themselves, and proves that faith is especially concerned in connecting them with Abraham. He draws out this argument more at length in the Epistle to the Romans; however he urges it also here in, the words,

Ver. 7. *"Know therefore, that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham."*

Which he proves by ancient testimony thus:

Ver. 8. *"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all the nations be blessed."*

If then those were Abraham's sons, not, who were related to him by blood, but who follow his faith, for this is the meaning of the words, *"In you all the nations,"* it is plain that the heathen are brought into kindred with him.

Hereby too is proved another important point. It perplexed them that the Law was the older, and Faith afterwards. Now he removes this notion by showing that Faith was anterior to the Law; as is evident from Abraham's case, who was justified before the giving of the Law. He shows too that late events fell out according to prophecy; *"The Scripture,"* says he, *"foreseeing*

that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham." Attend to this point. He Himself who gave the Law, had decreed, before He gave it, that the heathen should be justified by Faith. And he says not *"revealed,"* but, *"preached the Gospel,"* to signify that the patriarch was in joy at this method of justification, and in great desire for its accomplishment.

Further, they were possessed with another apprehension; it was written, *"Cursed is every one that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them."* [Deuteronomy 27:26] And this he removes, with great skill and prudence, turning their argument against themselves, and showing that those who relinquish the Law are not only not cursed, but blessed; and they who keep it, not only not blessed but cursed. They said that he who kept not the Law was cursed, but he proves that he who kept it was cursed, and he who kept it not, blessed. Again, they said that he who adhered to Faith alone was cursed, but he shows that he who adhered to Faith alone, is blessed. And how does he prove all this? For it is no common thing which we have promised; wherefore it is necessary to give close attention to what follows. He had already shown this, by referring to the words spoken to the Patriarch, *"In you shall all nations be blessed,"* [Genesis 12:4] at a time, that is, when Faith existed, not the Law; so he adds by way of conclusion,

Ver. 9. *"So then they which be of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham."*

Then, that they might not turn round, and object that, true it was Abraham was justified by Faith, for the Law was not then given, but what instance would be found of Faith justifying after the delivery of the Law? He addresses himself to this, and proves more than they required: namely,

not only that Faith was justifying, but that the Law brought its adherents under a curse. To be sure of this, listen to the very words of the Apostle.

Ver. 10. *"For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse."*

This is what he lays down, before proving it; and what is the proof? It is from the Law itself:—

Ver. 10, 11. *"For it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. Now that no man is justified by the Law is evident."*

For all have sinned, and are under the curse. However he does not say this yet, lest he should seem to lay it down of himself, but here again establishes his point by a text which concisely states both points; that no man has fulfilled the Law, (wherefore they are under the curse,) and, that Faith justifies. What then is the text? It is in the book of the prophet Habakkuk, *"The just shall live by faith,"* [Habakkuk 2:4] which not only establishes the righteousness that is of Faith, but also that there is no salvation through the Law. As no one, he says, kept the Law, but all were under the curse, on account of transgression, an easy way was provided, that from Faith, which is in itself a strong proof that no man can be justified by the Law. For the prophet says not, *"The just shall live by the Law,"* but, *"by faith:"*

Ver. 12. *"And the Law is not of faith; but He that does them shall live in them."*

For the Law requires not only Faith but works also, but grace saves and justifies by Faith. [Ephesians 2:8]

You see how he proves that they are under the curse who cleave to the Law, because it is impossible to fulfill it; next, how comes Faith to have this justifying power? For to this doctrine he already stood pledged, and now

maintains it with great force of argument. The Law being too weak to lead man to righteousness, an effectual remedy was provided in Faith, which is the means of rendering that possible which was *"impossible by the Law."* [Romans 8:3] Now as the Scripture says, *"the just shall live by faith,"* thus repudiating salvation by the Law, and moreover as Abraham was justified by Faith, it is evident that its efficacy is very great. And it is also clear, that he who abides not by the Law is cursed, and that he who keeps to Faith is just. But, you may ask me, how I prove that this curse is not still of force? Abraham lived before the Law, but we, who once were subject to the yoke of bondage, have made ourselves liable to the curse; and who shall release us therefrom? Observe his ready answer to this; his former remark was sufficient; for, if a man be once justified, and has died to the Law and embraced a novel life, how can such a one be subject to the curse? However, this is not enough for him, so he begins with a fresh argument, as follows:—

Ver. 13. *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree."*

In reality, the people were subject to another curse, which says, *"Cursed is every one that continues not in the things that are written in the book of the Law."* [Deuteronomy 27:26] To this curse, I say, people were subject, for no man had continued in, or was a keeper of, the whole Law; but Christ exchanged this curse for the other, *"Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree."* As then both he who hanged on a tree, and he who transgresses the Law, is cursed, and as it was necessary for him who is about to relieve from a curse himself to be free from it, but to receive another instead of it, therefore Christ took upon Him such another, and thereby relieved us from the curse. It was like an innocent man's undertaking to die for another sentenced to death, and so rescuing him from

punishment. For Christ took upon Him not the curse of transgression, but the other curse, in order to remove that of others. For, *"He had done no violence neither was any deceit in His mouth."* [Isaiah 53:9; 1 Peter 2:22] And as by dying He rescued from death those who were dying, so by taking upon Himself the curse, He delivered them from it.

Ver. 14. *"That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham."*

How on the Gentiles? It is said, *"In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:"* [Genesis 22:18; 26:4] that is to say, in Christ. If this were said of the Jews, how would it be reasonable that they who were themselves subject to the curse, on account of transgression, should become the authors of a blessing to others? An accursed person cannot impart to others that blessing of which he is himself deprived. Plainly then it all refers to Christ who was the Seed of Abraham, and through whom the Gentiles are blessed. And thus the promise of the Spirit is added, as Paul himself declares, *"that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."* As the grace of the Spirit could not possibly descend on the graceless and offending, they are first blessed the curse having been removed; then being justified by faith, they draw unto themselves the grace of the Spirit. Thus the Cross removed the curse, Faith brought in righteousness, righteousness drew on the grace of the Spirit.

Ver. 15. *"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it has been confirmed, no one makes it void or adds thereto."*

"To speak after the manner of men" means to use human examples. Having founded his argument on the Scriptures, on the miracles wrought among themselves, on the sufferings of Christ, and on the Patriarch, he proceeds to common usages; and this he does invariably, in order to sweeten his discourse, and render it more acceptable and intelligible to the

duller sort. Thus he argues with the Corinthians, *"Who feeds a flock, and eats not of the milk of the flock? Who plants a vineyard, and eats not the fruit thereof?"* [1 Corinthians 9:7] and again with the Hebrews, *"For a testament is of force where there has been death; for does it ever avail while he that made it lives?"* [Hebrews 9:17] One may find him dwelling with pleasure on such arguments. In the Old Testament God does the same thing in many instances, as, *"Can a woman forget her sucking child?"* [Isaiah 49:15] and again, *"Shall the clay say to him that fashions it, What do you make?"* [Isaiah 45:9] and in Hosea, He represents a husband set at nought by his wife. [Hosea 2:5 ff] This use of human examples frequently occurs in types also, as when the prophet takes the girdle, [Jeremiah 13:1-9] and goes down to the potter's house [Jeremiah 18:1-6] The meaning of the present example is, that Faith is more ancient than the Law, which is later and only temporary, and delivered in order to pave the way for Faith. Hence he says, *"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men;"* above he had called them *"foolish,"* now he calls them *"brethren,"* at once chiding and encouraging them. *"Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it has been confirmed."* If a man, says he, makes a covenant, does any one dare to come afterwards and overturn it, or subjoin anything to it? For this is the meaning of *"or adds thereto."* Much less then when God makes a covenant; and with whom did God make a covenant?

Ver. 16, 17, 18. *"Now to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to your seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, A covenant, confirmed before hand by God the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, does not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance is of the Law, it is no more of promise: but God has granted it to Abraham by promise."*

Thus God made a covenant with Abraham, promising that in his seed the blessing should come upon the heathen; and this blessing the Law cannot turn aside. As this example was not in all respects appropriate to the matter in hand, he introduces it thus, *"I speak after the manner of men,"* that nothing might be deduced from it derogatory to the majesty of God. But let us go to the bottom of this illustration. It was promised Abraham that by his seed the heathen should be blessed; and his seed according to the flesh is Christ; four hundred and thirty years after came the Law; now, if the Law bestows the blessings even life and righteousness, that promise is annulled. And so while no one annuls a man's covenant, the covenant of God after four hundred and thirty years is annulled; for if not that covenant but another instead of it bestows what is promised, then is it set aside, which is most unreasonable.

Ver. 19. *"What then is the Law? It was added because of transgressions."*

This remark again is not superfluous; observe too how he glances round at every thing, as if he had an hundred eyes. Having exalted Faith, and proved its elder claims, that the Law may not be considered superfluous, he sets right this side of the doctrine also, and proves that the Law was not given without a view, but altogether profitably. *"Because of transgressions;"* that is to say, that the Jews might not be let live carelessly, and plunge into the depth of wickedness, but that the Law might be placed upon them as a bridle, guiding, regulating, and checking them from transgressing, if not all, at least some of the commandments. Not slight then was the advantage of the Law; but for how long?

Ver. 19. *"Till the seed should come to whom the promise has been made."*

This is said of Christ; if then it was given until His advent, why do you protract it beyond its natural period?

Ver. 19. *"And it was ordained through Angels by the hand of a Mediator."*

He either calls the priests Angels, or he declares that the Angels themselves ministered to the delivery of the Law. By Mediator here he means Christ, and shows that He was before it, and Himself the Giver of it.

Ver. 20. *"Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."*

What can the heretics say to this? For as, according to them, the expression *"the Only True God"* excludes the Son from being true God, so here the phrase *"God is One,"* excludes Him from being God in any sense. But if, although the Father is called *"One God,"* the Son is nevertheless God, it is very plain that though the Father is called *"Very God,"* the Son is very God likewise. Now a mediator, says he, is between two parties; of whom then is Christ the Mediator? Plainly of God and of men. Observe, he says, that Christ also gave the Law; what therefore it was His to give, it is His to annul.

Ver. 21. *"Is the Law then against the promises of God?"*

For if the blessing is given in the seed of Abraham, but the Law brings in the curse, it must be contrary to the promises. This objection he meets, first, by a protest, in the words,

Ver. 21. *"God forbid:"*

And next he brings his proof;

Ver. 21. *"For if there had been a law given which could make alive verily righteousness would have been of the Law."*

His meaning is as follows; If we had our hope of life in the Law, and our salvation depended on it, the objection might be valid. But if it save you, by means of Faith, though it brings you under the curse, you suffer

nothing from it, gain no harm, in that Faith comes and sets all right. Had the promise been by the Law, you had reasonably feared lest, separating from the Law, you should separate from righteousness, but if it was given in order to shut up all, that is, to convince all and expose their individual sins, far from excluding you from the promises, it now aids you in obtaining them. This is shown by the words,

Ver. 22. *"Howbeit the scripture has shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."*

As the Jews were not even conscious of their own sins, and in consequence did not even desire remission; the Law was given to probe their wounds, that they might long for a physician. And the word "*shut up*" means "*convinced*" and conviction held them in fear. You see then it is not only not against, but was given for the promises. Had it arrogated to itself the work and the authority, the objection would stand; but if its drift is something else, and it acted for that, how is it against the promises of God? Had the Law not been given, all would have been wrecked upon wickedness, and there would have been no Jews to listen to Christ; but now being given, it has effected two things; it has schooled its followers in a certain degree of virtue, and has pressed on them the knowledge of their own sins. And this especially made them more zealous to seek the Son, for those who disbelieved, disbelieved from having no sense of their own sins, as Paul shows; *"For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."* [Romans 10:3]

Ver. 23. *"But before faith came, we were kept inward under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."*

Here he clearly puts forward what I have stated: for the expressions "*we were kept*" and "*shut up*," signify nothing else than the security given

by the commandments of the Law; which like a fortress fenced them round with fear and a life conformable to itself, and so preserved them unto Faith.

Ver. 24. *"So that the Law has been our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*

Now the Tutor is not opposed to the Preceptor, but cooperates with him, ridding the youth from all vice, and having all leisure to fit him for receiving instructions from his Preceptor. But when the youth's habits are formed, then the Tutor leaves him, as Paul says.

Ver. 25, 26. *"But now that faith has come which leads to perfect manhood we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."*

The Law then, as it was our tutor, and we were kept shut up under it, is not the adversary but the fellow-worker of grace; but if when grace has come, it continues to hold us down, it becomes an adversary; for if it confines those who ought to go forward to grace, then it is the destruction of our salvation. If a candle which gave light by night, kept us, when it became day, from the sun, it would not only not benefit, it would injure us; and so does the Law, if it stands between us and greater benefits. Those then are the greatest traducers of the Law, who still keep it, just as the tutor makes a youth ridiculous, by retaining him with himself, when time calls for his departure. Hence Paul says, *"But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."* We are then no longer under a tutor, *"for you are all sons of God."* Wonderful! see how mighty is the power of Faith, and how he unfolds as he proceeds! Before, he showed that it made them sons of the Patriarch, *"Know therefore,"* says he, *"that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham;"* now he proves that they are sons of God also, *"For you are all,"* says he, *"sons of God through faith, which is in Christ Jesus;"*

by Faith, not by the Law. Then, when he has said this great and wonderful thing, he names also the mode of their adoption,

Ver. 27. *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ."*

Why does he not say, *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have been born of God?"* for this was what directly went to prove that they were sons—because he states it in a much more awful point of view; If Christ be the Son of God, and you have put on Him, thou who hast the Son within you, and art fashioned after His pattern, hast been brought into one kindred and nature with Him.

Ver. 28. *"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for you all are one in Christ Jesus."*

See what an insatiable soul! For having said, *"We are all made children of God through Faith,"* he does not stop there, but tries to find something more exact, which may serve to convey a still closer oneness with Christ. Having said, *"you have put on Christ,"* even this does not suffice Him, but by way of penetrating more deeply into this union, he comments on it thus: *"You are all One in Christ Jesus,"* that is, you have all one form and one mould, even Christ's. What can be more awful than these words! He that was a Greek, or Jew, or bond-man yesterday, carries about with him the form, not of an Angel or Archangel, but of the Lord of all, yea displays in his own person the Christ.

Ver. 29. *"And if you are Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise."*

Here, you observe, he proves what he had before stated concerning the seed of Abraham—that to him and to his seed the promises were given.

Homily 4 on Galatians

Verse 1-3

"But I say, that so long as the heir is a child, he differs nothing from a bond-servant, though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards, until the term appointed of the father. So we also when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world."

The word "*child*" in this place denotes not age but understanding; meaning that God had from the beginning designed for us these gifts, but, as we yet continued childish, He let us be under the elements of the world, that is, new moons and sabbaths, for these days are regulated by the course of sun and moon. If then also now they bring you under law they do nothing else but lead you backward now in the time of your perfect age and maturity. And see what is the consequence of observing days; the Lord, the Master of the house, the Sovereign Ruler, is thereby reduced to the rank of a servant.

Ver. 4, 5. *"But when the fullness of the time came God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, under the Law that he might redeem them which were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*

Here he states two objects and effects of the Incarnation, deliverance from evil and supply of good, things which none could compass but Christ. They are these; deliverance from the curse of the Law, and promotion to sonship. Fitly does he say, that we might "*receive*," "*[be paid,]*" implying that it was due; for the promise was of old time made for these objects to Abraham, as the Apostle has himself shown at great length. And how does it appear that we have become sons? He has told us one mode, in that we

have put on Christ who is the Son; and now he mentions another, in that we have received the Spirit of adoption.

Ver. 6, 7. *"And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that you are no longer a bond-servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God."*

Had not we been first made sons, we could not have called Him Father. If then grace has made us freemen instead of slaves, men instead of children, heirs and sons instead of aliens, is it not utter absurdity and stupidity to desert this grace, and to turn away backwards?

Ver. 8, 9. *"Howbeit at that time not knowing God, you were bondage to them which by nature are no gods. But now, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments whereunto you desire to be in bondage over again."*

Here turning to the Gentile believers he says that it is an idolatry, this rigid observance of days, and now incurs a severe punishment. To enforce this, and inspire them with a deeper anxiety, he calls the elements *"not by nature Gods."* And his meaning is—Then indeed, as being benighted and bewildered, you lay grovelling upon the earth, but now that you have known God or rather are known of Him, how great and bitter will be the chastisement you draw upon you, if, after such a treatment, you relapse into the same disease. It was not by your own pains that you found out God, but while you continued in error, He drew you to Himself. He says *"weak and beggarly rudiments,"* in that they avail nothing towards the good things held out to us.

Ver. 10. *"You observe days, and months, and seasons, and years."*

Hence is plain that their teachers were preaching to them not only circumcision, but also the feast-days and new-moons.

Ver. 11. *"I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain."*

Observe the tender compassion of the Apostle; they were shaken and he trembles and fears. And hence he has put it so as thoroughly to shame them, *"I have bestowed labor upon you,"* saying, as it were, make not vain the labors which have cost me sweat and pain. By saying *"I fear,"* and subjoining the word *"lest,"* he both inspires alarm, and encourages good hope. He says not *"I have labored in vain,"* but *"lest,"* which is as much as to say, the wreck has not happened, but I see the storm big with it; so I am in fear, yet not in despair; you have the power to set all right, and to return into your former calm. Then, as it were stretching out a hand to them thus tempest-tost, he brings himself into the midst, saying,

Ver. 12. *"I beseech you, brethren, be as I am; for I am as you are."*

This is addressed to his Jewish disciples, and he brings his own example forward, to induce them thereby to abandon their old customs. Though you had none other for a pattern, he says, to look at me only would have sufficed for such a change, and for your taking courage. Therefore gaze on me; I too was once in your state of mind, especially so; I had a burning zeal for the Law; yet afterwards I feared not to abandon the Law, to withdraw from that rule of life. And this you know full well how obstinately I clung hold of Judaism, and how with yet greater force I let it go. He does well to place this last in order: for most men, though they are given a thousand reasons, and those just ones, are more readily influenced by that which is like their own case, and more firmly hold to that which they see done by others.

Ver. 12. *"You did me no wrong."*

Observe how he again addresses them by a title of honor, which was a reminder moreover of the doctrine of grace. Having chid them seriously,

and brought things together from all quarters, and shown their violations of the Law, and hit them on many sides, he gives in and conciliates them speaking more tenderly. For as to do nothing but conciliate causes negligence, so to be constantly talked at with sharpness sours a man; so that it is proper to observe due proportion everywhere. See then how he excuses to them what he has said, and shows that it proceeded not simply because he did not like them, but from anxiety. After giving them a deep cut, he pours in this encouragement like oil; and, showing that his words were not words of hate or enmity, he reminds them of the love which they had evinced toward him, mixing his self-vindication with praises. Therefore he says, *"you did me no wrong."*

Ver. 13, 14. *"But you know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you the first time. And that which was a temptation in my flesh you despised not, nor rejected."*

Not to have injured one is indeed no great thing, for no man whatever would choose to hurt wantonly and without object to annoy another who had never injured him. But for you, not only have you not injured me, but you have shown me great and inexpressible kindness, and it is impossible that one who has been treated with such attention should speak thus from any malevolent motive. My language then cannot be caused by ill-will; it follows, that it proceeds from affection and solicitude. *"You did me no wrong; you know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you."* What can be gentler than this holy soul, what sweeter, or more affectionate! And the words he had already used, arose not from an unreasoning anger, nor from a passionate emotion, but from much solicitude. And why do I say, you have not injured me? Rather have you evinced a great and sincere regard for me. For *"you know,"* he says, *"that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you; and that*

which was a temptation to you in my flesh you despised not, nor rejected."

What does he mean? While I preached to you, I was driven about, I was scourged, I suffered a thousand deaths, yet you thought no scorn of me; for this is meant by *"that which was a temptation to you in my flesh you despised not, nor rejected."* Observe his spiritual skill; in the midst of his self-vindication, he again appeals to their feelings by showing what he had suffered for their sakes. This however, says he, did not at all offend you, nor did you reject me on account of my sufferings and persecutions; or, as he now calls them, his infirmity and temptation.

Ver. 14. *"But you received me as an Angel of God."*

Was it not then absurd in them to receive him as an Angel of God, when he was persecuted and driven about, and then not to receive him when pressing on them what was fitting?

Ver. 15, 16. *"Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? For I bear you witness, that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me. So then am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"*

Here he shows perplexity and amazement, and desires to learn of themselves the reason of their change. Who, says he, has deceived you, and caused a difference in your disposition towards me? Are you not the same who attended and ministered to me, counting me more precious than your own eyes? What then has happened? Whence this dislike? Whence this suspicion? Is it because I have told you the truth? You ought on this very account to pay me increased honor and attention; instead of which *"I have become your enemy, because I tell you the truth,"*— for I can find no other reason but this. Observe too what humbleness of mind appears in his defence of himself; he proves not by his conduct to them, but by theirs to him that his language could not possibly have proceeded from unkind

feeling. For he says not; How is it supposable that one, who has been scourged and driven about, and ill-treated a thousand things for your sakes, should now have schemes against you? But he argues from what they had reason to boast of, saying, How can one who has been honored by you, and received as an Angel, repay you by conduct the very opposite?

Ver. 17. *"They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out that you may seek them."*

It is a wholesome emulation which leads to an imitation of virtue, but an evil one, which seduces from virtue him who is in the right path. And this is the object of those persons, who would deprive you of perfect knowledge, and impart to you that which is mutilated and spurious, and this for no other purpose than that they may occupy the rank of teachers, and degrade you, who now stand higher than themselves, to the position of disciples. For this is the meaning of the words *"that you may seek them."* But I, says he, desire the reverse, that you may become a model for them, and a pattern of a higher perfection: a thing which actually happened when I was present with you. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 18. *"But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you."*

Here he hints that his absence had been the cause of this, and that the true blessing was for disciples to hold right opinions not only in the presence but also in the absence of their master. But as they had not arrived at this point of perfection, he makes every effort to place them there.

Ver. 19. *"My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you."*

Observe his perplexity and perturbation, *"Brethren, I beseech you:"* *"My little children, of whom I am again in travail:"* He resembles a mother trembling for her children. *"Until Christ be formed in you."* Behold his

paternal tenderness, behold this despondency worthy of an Apostle. Observe what a wail he utters, far more piercing than of a woman in travail —You have defaced the likeness, you have destroyed the kinship, you have changed the form, you need another regeneration and refashioning; nevertheless I call you children, abortions and monsters though you be. However, he does not express himself in this way, but spares them, unwilling to strike, and to inflict wound upon wound. Wise physicians do not cure those who have fallen into a long sickness all at once, but little by little, lest they should faint and die. And so is it with this blessed man; for these pangs were more severe in proportion as the force of his affection was stronger. And the offense was of no trivial kind. And as I have ever said and ever will say, even a slight fault mars the appearance and distorts the figure of the whole.

Ver. 20. *"Yea, I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice."*

Observe his warmth, his inability to refrain himself, and to conceal these his feelings; such is the nature of love; nor is he satisfied with words, but desires to be present with them, and so, as he says, to change his voice, that is, to change to lamentation, to shed tears, to turn every thing into mourning. For he could not by letter show his tears or cries of grief, and therefore he ardently desires to be present with them.

Ver. 20. *"For I am perplexed about you."* I know not, says he, what to say, or what to think. How is it, that you who by dangers, which you endured for the faith's sake, and by miracles, which you performed through faith, had ascended to the highest heaven, should suddenly be brought to such a depth of degradation as to be drawn aside to circumcision or sabbaths, and should rely wholly upon Judaizers? Hence in the beginning he says, *"I marvel that you are so quickly removing,"* and here, *"I am*

perplexed about you," as if he said, What am I to speak? What am I to utter? What am I to think? I am bitterly perplexed. And so he must needs weep, as the prophets do when in perplexity; for not only admonition but mourning also is a form in which solicitous attention is often manifested. And what he said in his speech to those at Miletus, *"By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one...with tears,"* he says here also, *"and to change my voice."* [Acts 20:31] When we find ourselves overcome by perplexity and helplessness which come contrary to expectation, we are driven to tears; and so Paul admonished them sharply, and endeavored to shame them, then in turn soothed them, and lastly he wept. And this weeping is not only a reproof but a blandishment; it does not exasperate like reproof, nor relax like indulgent treatment, but is a mixed remedy, and of great efficacy in the way of exhortation. Having thus softened and powerfully engaged their hearts by his tears, he again advances to the contest, and lays down a larger proposition, proving that the Law itself was opposed to its being kept. Before, he produced the example of Abraham, but now (what is more cogent) he brings forward the Law itself enjoining them not to keep itself, but to leave off. So that, says he, you must abandon the Law, if you would obey it, for this is its own wish: this however he does not say expressly, but enforces it in another mode, mixing up with it an account of facts.

Ver. 21. *"Tell me,"* he says, *"you that desire to be under the Law, do you not hear the Law?"*

He says rightly, *"you that desire,"* for the matter was not one of a proper and orderly succession of things but of their own unseasonable contentiousness. It is the Book of Creation which he here calls the Law, which name he often gives to the whole Old Testament.

Ver. 22. *"For it is written, [Genesis 15:16] that Abraham had two sons, one by the hand-maid and the other by the freewoman."*

He returns again to Abraham, not in the way of repetition, but, inasmuch as the Patriarch's fame was great among the Jews, to show that the types had their origin from thence, and that present events were pictured aforetime in him. Having previously shown that the Galatians were sons of Abraham, now, in that the Patriarch's sons were not of equal dignity, one being by a bondwoman, the other by a free-woman, he shows that they were not only his sons, but sons in the same sense as he that was freeborn and noble. Such is the power of Faith.

Ver. 23. *"Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise."*

What is the meaning of *"after the flesh?"* Having said that Faith united us to Abraham, and it having seemed incredible to his hearers, that those who were not begotten by Abraham should be called his sons, he proves that this paradox had actually happened long ago; for that Isaac, born not according to the order of nature, nor the law of marriage, nor the power of the flesh, was yet truly his own son. He was the issue of bodies that were dead, and of a womb that was dead; his conception was not by the flesh, nor his birth by the seed, for the womb was dead both through age and barrenness, but the Word of God fashioned Him. Not so in the case of the bondman; He came by virtue of the laws of nature, and after the manner of marriage. Nevertheless, he that was not according to the flesh was more honorable than he that was born after the flesh. Therefore let it not disturb you that you are not born after the flesh; for from the very reason that you are not so born, are you most of all Abraham's kindred. The being born after the flesh renders one not more honorable, but less so, for a birth not after the flesh is more marvellous and more spiritual. And this is plain from the

case of those who were born of old time; Ishmael, for instance, who was born according to the flesh, was not only a bondman, but was cast out of his father's house; but Isaac, who was born according to the promise, being a true son and free, was lord of all.

Ver. 24. *"Which things contain an allegory."*

Contrary to usage, he calls a type an allegory; his meaning is as follows; this history not only declares that which appears on the face of it, but announces somewhat farther, whence it is called an allegory. And what has it announced? No less than all the things now present.

Ver. 24. *"For these women,"* he says, *"are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar."*

"These:" who? The mothers of those children, Sarah and Hagar; and what are they? Two covenants, two laws. As the names of the women were given in the history, he abides by this designation of the two races, showing how much follows from the very names. How from the names?

Ver. 25. *"Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia:"*

The bond-woman was called Hagar, and *"Hagar"* is the word for Mount Sinai in the language of that country. So that it is necessary that all who are born of the Old Covenant should be bondmen, for that mountain where the Old Covenant was delivered has a name in common with the bondwoman. And it includes Jerusalem, for this is the meaning of,

Ver. 25. *"And answers to Jerusalem that now is."*

That is, it borders on, and is contiguous to it.

Ver. 25. *"For she is in bondage with her children."*

What follows from hence? Not only that she was in bondage and brought forth bondmen, but that this Covenant is so too, whereof the bondwoman was a type. For Jerusalem is adjacent to the mountain of the

same name with the bondwoman, and in this mountain the Covenant was delivered. Now where is the type of Sarah?

Ver. 26. *"But Jerusalem that is above is free."*

Those therefore, who are born of her are not bondmen. Thus the type of the Jerusalem below was Hagar, as is plain from the mountain being so called; but of that which is above is the Church. Nevertheless he is not content with these types, but adds the testimony of Isaiah to what he has spoken. Having said that Jerusalem which is above *"is our Mother,"* and having given that name to the Church, he cites the suffrage of the Prophet in his favor,

Ver. 27. *"Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry, you that travailest not, for more are the children of the desolate than of her which has the husband."* [Isaiah 54:1]

Who is this who before was *"barren,"* and *"desolate?"* Clearly it is the Church of the Gentiles, that was before deprived of the knowledge of God? Who, *"she which has the husband?"* plainly the Synagogue. Yet the barren woman surpassed her in the number of her children, for the other embraces one nation, but the children of the Church have filled the country of the Greeks and of the Barbarians, the earth and sea, the whole habitable world. Observe how Sarah by acts, and the Prophet by words, have described the events about to befall us. Observe too, that he whom Isaiah called barren, Paul has proved to have many children, which also happened typically in the case of Sarah. For she too, although barren, became the mother of a numerous progeny. This however does not suffice Paul, but he carefully follows out the mode whereby the barren woman became a mother, that in this particular likewise the type might harmonize with the truth. Wherefore he adds

Ver. 28. *"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise."*

It is not merely that the Church was barren like Sarah, or became a mother of many children like her, but she bore them in the way Sarah did. As it was not nature but the promise of God which rendered Sarah a mother, [for the word of God which said, *"At the time appointed I will return unto you, and Sarah shall have a son,"* [Genesis 18:14] this entered into the womb and formed the babe,] so also in our regeneration it is not nature, but the Words of God spoken by the Priest, (the faithful know them,) which in the Bath of water as in a sort of womb, form and regenerate him who is baptized.

Wherefore if we are sons of the barren woman, then are we free. But what kind of freedom, it might be objected, is this, when the Jews seize and scourge the believers, and those who have this pretence of liberty are persecuted? For these things then occurred, in the persecution of the faithful. Neither let this disturb you, he replies, this also is anticipated in the type, for Isaac, who was free, was persecuted by Ishmael the bondman. Wherefore he adds,

Ver. 29, 30. *"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Howbeit what says the Scripture? [Genesis 21:10] Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman."*

What! Does all this consolation consist in showing that freemen are persecuted by bond-men? By no means, he says, I do not stop here, listen to what follows, and then, if you be not pusillanimous under persecution, you will be sufficiently comforted. And what is it that follows? *"Cast out the son of the handmaid, for he shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman."* Behold the reward of tyranny for a season, and of recklessness out of season! The son is cast out of his father's house, and becomes, together with his mother, an exile and a wanderer. And consider too the

wisdom of the remark; for he says not that he was cast forth merely because he persecuted, but that he should not be heir. For this punishment was not exacted from him on account of his temporary persecution, (for that would have been of little moment, and nothing to the point,) but he was not suffered to participate in the inheritance provided for the son. And this proves that, putting the persecution aside, this very thing had been typified from the beginning, and did not originate in the persecution, but in the purpose of God. Nor does he say, "*the son of Abraham shall not be heir,*" but, "*the son of the handmaid,*" distinguishing him by his inferior descent. Now Sarah was barren, and so is the Gentile Church; observe how the type is preserved in every particular, as the former, through all the by-gone years, conceived not, and in extreme old age became a mother, so the latter, when the fullness of time has come, brings forth. And this the prophets have proclaimed, saying, "*Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, you that travailest not; for more are the children of the desolate than of her which has the husband.*" And hereby they intend the Church; for she knew not God, but as soon as she knew Him, she surpassed the fruitful synagogue.

Ver. 31. "*Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid but of the freewoman.*"

He turns and discusses this on all sides, desiring to prove that what had taken place was no novelty, but had been before typified many ages ago. How then can it be otherwise than absurd for those who had been set apart so long and who had obtained freedom, willingly to subject themselves to the yoke of bondage?

Next he states another inducement to them to abide in his doctrine.

Homily 5 on Galatians

Verse 1

" With freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast therefore . "

Have you wrought your own deliverance, that you run back again to the dominion you were under before? It is Another who has redeemed you, it is Another who has paid the ransom for you. Observe in how many ways he leads them away from the error of Judaism; by showing, first, that it was the extreme of folly for those, who had become free instead of slaves, to desire to become slaves instead of free; secondly, that they would be convicted of neglect and ingratitude to their Benefactor, in despising Him who had delivered, and loving him who had enslaved them; thirdly, that it was impossible. For Another having once for all redeemed all of us from it, the Law ceases to have any sway. By the word, *"stand fast,"* he indicates their vacillation.

Ver. 1. *"And be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."*

By the word *"yoke"* he signifies to them the burdensomeness of such a course, and by the word *"again"* he points out their utter senselessness. Had you never experienced this burden, you would not have deserved so severe a censure, but for you who by trial have learned how irksome this yoke is, again to subject yourself to it, is justly unpardonable.

Ver. 2. *"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing."*

Lo, what a threat! reasonably then did he anathematize even angels. How then shall Christ profit them nothing? For he has not supported this by argument, but only declared it, the credence due to his authority, compensating, as it were, for all subsequent proof. Wherefore he sets out by

saying, "*Behold, I Paul say unto you,*" which is the expression of one who has confidence in what he asserts. We will subjoin what we can ourselves as to how Christ shall profit nothing them who are circumcised.

He that is circumcised is circumcised for fear of the Law, and he who fears the Law, distrusts the power of grace, and he who distrusts can receive no benefit from that which is distrusted. Or again thus, he that is circumcised makes the Law of force; but thus considering it to be of force and yet transgressing it in the greater part while keeping it in the lesser, he puts himself again under the curse. But how can he be saved who submits himself to the curse, and repels the liberty which is of Faith? If one may say what seems a paradox, such an one believes neither Christ nor the Law, but stands between them, desiring to benefit both by one and the other, whereas he will reap fruit from neither. Having said that Christ shall profit them nothing, he lays down the proof of it shortly and sententiously, thus:

Ver. 3. "*Yea, I testify again to every man that receives circumcision that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.*"

That you may not suppose that this is spoken from ill-will, I say not to you alone, he says, but to every one who receives circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law. The parts of the Law are linked one to the other. As he who from being free has enrolled himself as a slave, no longer does what he pleases, but is bound by all the laws of slavery, so in the case of the Law, if you take upon you a small portion of it, and submit to the yoke, you draw down upon yourself its whole domination. And so it is in a worldly inheritance: he who touches no part of it, is free from all matters which are consequent on the heirship to the deceased, but if he takes a small portion, though not the whole, yet by that part he has rendered himself liable for every thing. And this occurs in the Law, not only in the way I have mentioned, but in another also, for Legal observances are linked

together. For example; Circumcision has sacrifice connected with it, and the observance of days; sacrifice again has the observance both of day and of place; place has the details of endless purifications; purifications involve a perfect swarm of manifold observances. For it is unlawful for the unclean to sacrifice, to enter the holy shrines, to do any other such act. Thus the Law introduces many things even by the one commandment. If then you are circumcised, but not on the eighth day, or on the eighth day, but no sacrifice is offered, or a sacrifice is offered, but not in the prescribed place, or in the prescribed place, but not the accustomed objects, or if the accustomed objects, but thou be unclean, or if clean yet not purified by proper rules, every thing is frustrated. Wherefore he says, *"that he is a debtor to the whole Law."* Fulfil not a part, but the whole, if the Law is of force; but if it be not of force, not even a part.

Ver. 4. *"You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the Law; you are fallen away from grace."*

Having established his point, he at length declares their danger of the severest punishment. When a man recurs to the Law, which cannot save him, and falls from grace, what remains but an inexorable retribution, the Law being powerless, and grace rejecting him?

Thus having aggravated their alarm, and disquieted their mind, and shown them all the shipwreck they were about to suffer, he opens to them the haven of grace which was near at hand. This is ever his wont, and he shows that in this quarter salvation is easy and secure, subjoining the words,

Ver. 5. *"For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness."*

We need none of those legal observances, he says; faith suffices to obtain for us the Spirit, and by Him righteousness, and many and great benefits.

Ver. 6. *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love."*

Observe the great boldness with which he now encounters them; Let him that has put on Christ, he says, no longer be careful about such matters. Having before said that Circumcision was hurtful, how is it that he now considers it indifferent? It is indifferent as to those who had it previously to the Faith, but not as to those who are circumcised after the Faith was given. Observe too the view in which he places it, by setting it by the side of Uncircumcision; it is Faith that makes the difference. As in the selection of wrestlers, whether they be hook-nosed or flat-nosed, black or white, is of no importance in their trial, it is only necessary to seek that they be strong and skilful; so all these bodily accidents do not injure one who is to be enrolled under the New Covenant, nor does their presence assist him.

What is the meaning of *"working through love?"* Here he gives them a hard blow, by showing that this error had crept in because the love of Christ had not been rooted within them. For to believe is not all that is required, but also to abide in love. It is as if he had said, Had you loved Christ as you ought, you would not have deserted to bondage, nor abandoned Him who redeemed you, nor treated with contumely Him who gave you freedom. Here he also hints at those who have plotted against them, implying that they would not have dared to do so, had they felt affection towards them. He wishes too by these words to correct their course of life.

Ver. 7. *"You were running well; who did hinder you?"*

This is not an interrogation, but an expression of doubt and sorrow. How has such a course been cut short? Who has been able to do this? You who were superior to all and in the rank of teachers, have not even continued in the position of disciples. What has happened? Who could do

this? These are rather the words of one who is exclaiming and lamenting, as he said before, *"Who did bewitch you?"* [Galatians 3:1]

Ver. 8. *"This persuasion came not of him that calls you."*

He who called you, called you not to such fluctuations, he did not lay down a Law, that you should judaize. Then, that no one might object, *"Why do you thus magnify and aggravate the matter by your words; one commandment only of the Law have we kept, and yet you make this great outcry?"* hear how he terrifies them, not by things present but future in these words:

Ver. 9. *"A little leaven leavens the whole lump."*

And thus this slight error, he says, if not corrected, will have power (as the leaven has with the lump) to lead you into complete Judaism.

Ver. 10. *"I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded."*

He does not say, *"you are not minded,"* but, *"you will not be minded;"* that is, you will be set right. And how does he know this? He says not *"I know,"* but *"I trust in God, and invoking His aid in order to your correction, I am in hopes;"* and he says, not merely, *"I have confidence in the Lord,"* but, *"I have confidence towards you in the Lord."* Every where he connects complaint with his praises; here it is as if he had said, I know my disciples, I know your readiness to be set right. I have good hopes, partly because of the Lord who suffers nothing, however trivial, to perish, partly because of you who are quickly to recover yourselves. At the same time he exhorts them to use diligence on their own parts, it not being possible to obtain aid from God, if our own efforts are not contributed.

Ver. 10. *"But he that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be."*

Not only by words of encouragement, but by uttering a curse or a prophecy against their teachers, he applies to them an incentive. And observe that he never mentions the name of these plotters, that they might not become more shameless. His meaning is as follows. Not because "*you will be none otherwise minded,*" are the authors of your seduction relieved from punishment. They shall be punished; for it is not proper that the good conduct of the one should become an encouragement to the evil disposition of the other. This is said that they might not make a second attempt upon others. And he says not merely, "*he that troubles,*" but, "*whosoever he be,*" in the way of aggravation.

Ver. 11. "*But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?*"

Observe how clearly he exonerates himself from the charge, that in every place he judaized and played the hypocrite in his preaching. Of this he calls them as witnesses; for you know, he says, that my command to abandon the Law was made the pretext for persecuting me. If I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? For this is the only charge which they of the Jewish descent have to bring against me. Had I permitted them to receive the Faith, still retaining the customs of their fathers, neither believers nor unbelievers would have laid snares for me, seeing that none of their own usages were disturbed. What then! Did he not preach circumcision? Did he not circumcise Timothy? Truly he did. How then can he say, "*I preach it not?*" Here observe his accuracy; he says not, "*I do not perform circumcision,*" but, "*I preach it not,*" that is, I do not bid men so to believe. Do not therefore consider it any confirmation of your doctrine, for though I circumcised, I did not preach circumcision.

Ver. 11. "*Then has the stumbling block of the cross been done away.*"

That is, if this which you assert be true, the obstacle, the hindrance, is removed; for not even the Cross was so great an offense to the Jews, as the doctrine that their father's customs ought not to be obeyed. When they brought Stephen before the council, they said not that this man adores the Crucified, but that he speaks "*against this holy place and the Law.*" [Acts 6:13] And it was of this they accused Jesus, that He broke the Law. Wherefore Paul says, If Circumcision be conceded, the strife you are involved in is appeased; hereafter no enmity to the Cross and our preaching remains. But why do they bring this charge against us, while waiting day after day to murder us? It is because I brought an uncircumcised man into the Temple [Acts 21:29] that they fell upon me. Am I then, he says, so senseless, after giving up the point of Circumcision, vainly and idly to expose myself to such injuries, and to place such a stumbling-block before the Cross? For you observe, that they attack us for nothing with such vehemence as about Circumcision. Am I then so senseless as to suffer affliction for nothing at all, and to give offense to others? He calls it the offense of the Cross, because it was enjoined by the doctrine of the Cross; and it was this which principally offended the Jews, and hindered their reception of the Cross, namely, the command to abandon the usages of their fathers.

Ver. 12. "*I would that they which unsettle you, would even cut themselves off.*"

Observe how bitterly he speaks here against their deceivers. At the outset he directed his charge against those who were deceived, and called them foolish, once and again. Now, having sufficiently corrected and instructed them, he turns to their deceivers. And you should remark his wisdom in the manner in which he admonishes and chastens the former as his own children, and as capable of receiving correction, but their deceivers

he cuts off, as aliens and incurably depraved. And this he does, partly, when he says, "*he shall bear his judgment whosoever he be;*" partly when he utters the imprecation against them, "*I would that they which unsettle you would even cut themselves off.*" And he says well "*that unsettle you.*" For they had compelled them to abandon their own fatherland, their liberty, and their heavenly kindred, and to seek an alien and foreign one; they had cast them out of Jerusalem which is above and free, and compelled them to wander forth as captives and emigrants. On this account he curses them; and his meaning is as follows, For them I have no concern, "*A man that is heretical after the first and second admonition refuse.*" [Titus 3:10] If they will, let them not only be circumcised, but mutilated. Where then are those who dare to mutilate themselves ; seeing that they draw down the Apostolic curse, and accuse the workmanship of God, and take part with the Manichees? For the latter call the body a treacherous thing, and from the evil principle; and the former by their acts give countenance to these wretched doctrines, cutting off the member as being hostile and treacherous. Ought they not much rather to put out the eyes, for it is through the eyes that desire enters the soul? But in truth neither the eye nor any other part of us is to blame, but the depraved will only. But if you will not allow this, why do you not mutilate the tongue for blasphemy, the hands for rapine, the feet for their evil courses, in short, the whole body? For the ear enchanted by the sound of a flute has often enervated the soul; and the perception of a sweet perfume by the nostrils has bewitched the mind, and made it frantic for pleasure. Yet this would be extreme wickedness and satanic madness. The evil spirit, ever delighting in slaughter, has seduced them to crush the instrument, as if its Maker had erred, whereas it was only necessary to correct the unruly passion of the soul. How then does it happen, one may say, that when the body is pampered, lust is inflamed? Observe here too that

it is the sin of the soul, for to pamper the flesh is not an act of the flesh but of the soul, for if the soul choose to mortify it, it would possess absolute power over it. But what you do is just the same as if one seeing a man lighting a fire, and heaping on fuel, and setting fire to a house, were to blame the fire, instead of him who kindled it, because it had caught this heap of fuel, and risen to a great height. Yet the blame would attach not to the fire but to the one who kindled it; for it was given for the purpose of dressing food, affording light, and other like ministries, not for burning houses. In like manner desire is implanted for the rearing of families and the ensuring of life, not for adultery, or fornication, or lasciviousness; that a man may become a father, not an adulterer; a lawful husband, not a seducer; leaving heirs after him, not doing damage to another man's. For adultery arises not from nature, but from wantonness against nature, which prescribes the use not the misuse. These remarks I have not made at random, but as a prelude to a dispute, as skirmishing against those who assert that the workmanship of God is evil, and who neglecting the sloth of the soul, madly inveigh against the body, and traduce our flesh, whereof Paul afterwards discourses, accusing not the flesh, but devilish thoughts.

Ver. 13. *"For you, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh."*

Henceforward he appears to digress into a moral discourse, but in a new manner, which does not occur in any other of his Epistles. For all of them are divided into two parts, and in the first he discusses doctrine, in the last the rule of life, but here, after having entered upon the moral discourse, he again unites with it the doctrinal part. For this passage has reference to doctrine in the controversy with the Manichees. What is the meaning of, *"Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh?"* Christ has delivered us, he says, from the yoke of bondage, He has left us free to act as we will,

not that we may use our liberty for evil, but that we may have ground for receiving a higher reward, advancing to a higher philosophy. Lest any one should suspect, from his calling the Law over and over again a yoke of bondage, and a bringing on of the curse, that his object in enjoining an abandonment of the Law, was that one might live lawlessly, he corrects this notion, and states his object to be, not that our course of life might be lawless, but that our philosophy might surpass the Law. For the bonds of the Law are broken, and I say this not that our standard may be lowered, but that it may be exalted. For both he who commits fornication, and he who leads a virgin life, pass the bounds of the Law, but not in the same direction; the one is led away to the worse, the other is elevated to the better; the one transgresses the Law, the other transcends it. Thus Paul says that Christ has removed the yoke from you, not that you may prance and kick, but that though without the yoke you may proceed at a well-measured pace. And next he shows the mode whereby this may be readily effected; and what is this mode? He says,

Ver. 13. *"But through love be servants one to another."*

Here again he hints that strife and party-spirit, love of rule and presumptuousness, had been the causes of their error, for the desire of rule is the mother of heresies. By saying, *"Be servants one to another,"* he shows that the evil had arisen from this presumptuous and arrogant spirit, and therefore he applies a corresponding remedy. As your divisions arose from your desire to domineer over each other, *"serve one another;"* thus will you be reconciled again. However, he does not openly express their fault, but he openly tells them its corrective, that through this they may become aware of that; as if one were not to tell an immodest person of his immodesty, but were continually to exhort him to chastity. He that loves his neighbor as he ought, declines not to be servant to him more humbly than any servant. As

fire, brought into contact with wax, easily softens it, so does the warmth of love dissolve all arrogance and presumption more powerfully than fire.

Wherefore he says not, "*love one another*," merely, but, "*be servants one to another*," thus signifying the intensity of the affection. When the yoke of the Law was taken off them that they might not caper off and away another was laid on, that of love, stronger than the former, yet far lighter and pleasanter; and, to point out the way to obey it, he adds;

Ver. 14. "*For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"

Seeing that they made so much of the Law, he says, "*If you wish to fulfill it, do not be circumcised, for it is fulfilled not in circumcision but in love.*" Observe how he cannot forget his grief, but constantly touches upon what troubled him, even when launched into his moral discourse.

Ver. 15. "*But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another.*"

That he may not distress them, he does not assert this, though he knew it was the case, but mentions it ambiguously. For he does not say, "*Inasmuch as you bite one another*," nor again does he assert, in the clause following, that they shall be consumed by each other; but "*take heed that you be not consumed one of another*," and this is the language of apprehension and warning, not of condemnation. And the words which he uses are expressly significant; he says not merely, "*you bite*," which one might do in a passion, but also "*you devour*," which implies a bearing of malice. To bite is to satisfy the feeling of anger, but to devour is a proof of the most savage ferocity. The biting and devouring he speaks of are not bodily, but of a much more cruel kind; for it is not such an injury to taste the flesh of man, as to fix one's fangs in his soul. In proportion as the soul is more precious than the body, is damage to it more serious. "*Take heed that*

you be not consumed one of another." For those who commit injury and lay plots, do so in order to destroy others; therefore he says, Take heed that this evil fall not on your own heads. For strife and dissensions are the ruin and destruction as well of those who admit as of those who introduce them, and eats out every thing worse than a moth does.

Ver. 16. *"But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

Here he points out another path which makes duty easy, and secures what had been said, a path whereby love is generated, and which is fenced in by love. For nothing, nothing I say, renders us so susceptible of love, as to be spiritual, and nothing is such an inducement to the Spirit to abide in us, as the strength of love. Therefore he says, *"Walk by the Spirit and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh:"* having spoken of the cause of the disease, he likewise mentions the remedy which confers health. And what is this, what is the destruction of the evils we have spoken of, but the life in the Spirit? Hence he says, *"Walk by the Spirit and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

Ver. 17. *"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary the one to the other: that you may not do the things that you would."*

Here some make the charge that the Apostle has divided man into two parts, and that he states the essence of which he is compounded to be conflicting with itself, and that the body has a contest with the soul. But this is not so, most certainly; for by *"the flesh,"* he does not mean the body; if he did, what would be the sense of the clause immediately following, *"for it lusts,"* he says, *"against the Spirit?"* yet the body moves not, but is moved, is not an agent, but is acted upon. How then does it lust, for lust belongs to the soul not to the body, for in another place it is said, *"My soul longs,"*

[Psalm 84:2] and, "*Whatsoever your soul desires, I will even do it for you,*" [1 Samuel 20:4] and, "*Walk not according to the desires of your heart,*" and, "*So pants my soul.*" [Psalm 42:1] Wherefore then does Paul say, "*the flesh lusts against the Spirit?*" he is wont to call the flesh, not the natural body but the depraved will, as where he says, "*But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,*" [Romans 8:8-9] and again, "*They that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" What then? Is the flesh to be destroyed? Was not he who thus spoke clothed with flesh? Such doctrines are not of the flesh, but from the Devil, for "*he was a murderer from the beginning.*" [John 8:44] What then is his meaning? It is the earthly mind, slothful and careless, that he here calls the flesh, and this is not an accusation of the body, but a charge against the slothful soul. The flesh is an instrument, and no one feels aversion and hatred to an instrument, but to him who abuses it. For it is not the iron instrument but the murderer, whom we hate and punish. But it may be said that the very calling of the faults of the soul by the name of the flesh is in itself an accusation of the body. And I admit that the flesh is inferior to the soul, yet it too is good, for that which is inferior to what is good may itself be good, but evil is not inferior to good, but opposed to it. Now if you are able to prove to me that evil originates from the body, you are at liberty to accuse it; but if your endeavor is to turn its name into a charge against it, you ought to accuse the soul likewise. For he that is deprived of the truth is called "*the natural man.*" [1 Corinthians 2:14] and the race of demons "*the spirits of wickedness.*" [Ephesians 6:12]

Again, the Scripture is wont to give the name of the Flesh to the Mysteries of the Eucharist, and to the whole Church, calling them the Body of Christ. [Colossians 1:24] Nay, to induce you to give the name of blessings to the things of which the flesh is the medium, you have only to imagine the extinction of the senses, and you will find the soul deprived of

all discernment, and ignorant of what it before knew. For if the power of God is since *"the creation of the world clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made,"* [Romans 1:20] how could we see them without eyes? And if *"faith comes of hearing,"* [Romans 10:17] how shall we hear without ears? And preaching depends on making circuits wherein the tongue and feet are employed. *"For how shall they preach, except they be sent?"* [Romans 10:15] In the same way writing is performed by means of the hands. Do you not see that the ministry of the flesh produces for us a thousand benefits? In his expression, *"the flesh lusts against the Spirit,"* he means two mental states. For these are opposed to each other, namely virtue and vice, not the soul and the body. Were the two latter so opposed they would be destructive of one another, as fire of water, and darkness of light. But if the soul cares for the body, and takes great forethought on its account, and suffers a thousand things in order not to leave it, and resists being separated from it, and if the body too ministers to the soul, and conveys to it much knowledge, and is adapted to its operations, how can they be contrary, and conflicting with each other? For my part, I perceive by their acts that they are not only not contrary but closely accordant and attached one to another. It is not therefore of these that he speaks as opposed to each other, but he refers to the contest of bad and good principles. [cf. Romans 7:23] To will and not to will belongs to the soul; wherefore he says, *"these are contrary the one to the other,"* that you may not suffer the soul to proceed in its evil desires. For he speaks this like a Master and Teacher in a threatening way.

Ver. 18. *"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."*

If it be asked in what way are these two connected, I answer, closely and plainly; for he that has the Spirit as he ought, quenches thereby every evil desire, and he that is released from these needs no help from the Law,

but is exalted far above its precepts. He who is never angry, what need has he to hear the command, You shall not kill? He who never casts unchaste looks, what need has he of the admonition, You shall not commit adultery? Who would discourse about the fruits of wickedness with him who had plucked up the root itself? For anger is the root of murder, and of adultery the inquisitive gazing into faces. Hence he says, *"If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law;"* wherein he appears to me to have pronounced a high and striking eulogy of the Law, if, at least, the Law stood, according to its power, in the place of the Spirit before the Spirit's coming upon us. But we are not on that account obliged to continue apart with our schoolmaster. Then we were justly subject to the Law, that by fear we might chasten our lusts, the Spirit not being manifested; but now that grace is given, which not only commands us to abstain from them, but both quenches them, and leads us to a higher rule of life, what more need is there of the Law? He who has attained an exalted excellence from an inner impulse, has no occasion for a schoolmaster, nor does any one, if he is a philosopher, require a grammarian. Why then do you so degrade yourselves, as now to listen to the Law, having previously given yourselves to the Spirit?

Ver. 19, 20, 21. *"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wrath, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I forewarn you even as I did forewarn you, that they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."*

Answer me now, you that accusest your own flesh, and supposest that this is said of it as of an enemy and adversary. Let it be allowed that adultery and fornication proceed, as you assert, from the flesh; yet hatred,

variance, emulations, strife, heresies, and witchcraft, these arise merely from a depraved moral choice. And so it is with the others also, for how can they belong to the flesh? You observe that he is not here speaking of the flesh, but of earthly thoughts, which trail upon the ground. Wherefore also he alarms them by saying, that *"they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."* If these things belonged to nature and not to a bad moral choice, his expression, *"they practice,"* is inappropriate, it should be, *"they suffer."* And why should they be cast out of the kingdom, for rewards and punishments relate not to what proceeds from nature but from choice?

Ver. 22. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."*

He says not, *"the work of the Spirit,"* but, *"the fruit of the Spirit."* Is the soul, however, superfluous? The flesh and the Spirit are mentioned, but where is the soul? Is he discoursing of beings without a soul? For if the things of the flesh be evil, and those of the Spirit good, the soul must be superfluous. By no means, for the mastery of the passions belongs to her, and concerns her; and being placed amid vice and virtue, if she has used the body fitly, she has wrought it to be spiritual, but if she separate from the Spirit and give herself up to evil desires, she makes herself more earthly. You observe throughout that his discourse does not relate to the substance of the flesh, but to the moral choice, which is or is not vicious. And why does he say, *"the fruit of the Spirit?"* it is because evil works originate in ourselves alone, and therefore he calls them *"works,"* but good works require not only our diligence but God's loving kindness. He places first the root of these good things, and then proceeds to recount them, in these words, *"Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."* For who would lay any command on him who has all things within himself, and who has love

for the finished mistress of philosophy? As horses, who are docile and do every thing of their own accord, need not the lash, so neither does the soul, which by the Spirit has attained to excellence, need the admonitions of the Law. Here too he completely and strikingly casts out the Law, not as bad, but as inferior to the philosophy given by the Spirit.

Ver. 24. *"And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof."*

That they might not object, *"And who is such a man as this?"* he points out by their works those who have attained to this perfection, here again giving the name of the *"flesh"* to evil actions. He does not mean that they had destroyed their flesh, otherwise how were they going to live? For that which is crucified is dead and inoperative, but he indicates the perfect rule of life. For the desires, although they are troublesome, rage in vain. Since then such is the power of the Spirit, let us live therein and be content therewith, as he adds himself,

Ver. 25. *"If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk,"*

— being governed by His laws. For this is the force of the words *"let us walk,"* that is, let us be content with the power of the Spirit, and seek no help from the Law. Then, signifying that those who would fain have introduced circumcision were actuated by ambitious motives, he says,

Ver. 26. *"Let us not be vainglorious,"* which is the cause of all evils, *"provoking one another"* to contentions and strife, *"envying one another,"* for from vainglory comes envy and from envy all these countless evils.

Homily 6 on Galatians

Verse 1

"Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass."

[Forasmuch] as under cover of a rebuke they gratified their private feelings, and professing to do so for faults which had been committed, were advancing their own ambition, he says, *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken."* He said not if a man commit but if he be *"overtaken"* that is, if he be carried away.

"You which are spiritual restore such a one,"

He says not *"chastise"* nor *"judge,"* but *"set right."* Nor does he stop here, but in order to show that it behooved them to be very gentle towards those who had lost their footing, he subjoins,

"In a spirit of meekness."

He says not, *"in meekness,"* but, *"in a spirit of meekness,"* signifying thereby that this is acceptable to the Spirit, and that to be able to administer correction with mildness is a spiritual gift. Then, to prevent the one being unduly exalted by having to correct the other, puts him under the same fear, saying,

"Looking to yourself, lest you also be tempted."

For as rich men convey contributions to the indigent, that in case they should be themselves involved in poverty they may receive the same bounty, so ought we also to do. And therefore he states this cogent reason, in these words, *"looking to yourself, lest you also be tempted."* He apologizes for the offender, first, by saying *"if you be overtaken;"* next, by employing a term indicative of great infirmity ; lastly, by the words *"lest*

you also be tempted," thus arraigning the malice of the devil rather than the remissness of the soul.

Ver. 2. *"Bear one another's burdens."*

It being impossible for man to be without failings, he exhorts them not to scrutinize severely the offenses of others, but even to bear their failings, that their own may in turn be borne by others. As, in the building of a house, all the stones hold not the same position, but one is fitted for a corner but not for the foundations, another for the foundations, and not for the corner so too is it in the body of the Church. The same thing holds in the frame of our own flesh; notwithstanding which, the one member bears with the other, and we do not require every thing from each, but what each contributes in common constitutes both the body and the building.

Ver. 2. *"And so fulfil the law of Christ."*

He says not *"fulfil,"* but, *"complete ;"* that is, make it up all of you in common, by the things wherein you bear with one another. For example, this man is irascible, you are dull-tempered; bear therefore with his vehemence that he in turn may bear with your sluggishness; and thus neither will he transgress, being supported by you, nor will you offend in the points where your defects lie, because of your brother's forbearing with you. So do you by reaching forth a hand one to another when about to fall, fulfil the Law in common, each completing what is wanting in his neighbor by his own endurance. But if you do not thus, but each of you will investigate the faults of his neighbor, nothing will ever be performed by you as it ought. For as in the case of the body, if one were to exact the same function from every member of it, the body could never consist, so must there be great strife among brethren if we were to require all things from all.

Ver. 3. *"For if a man thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."*

Here again he reflects on their arrogance. He that thinks himself to be something is nothing, and exhibits at the outset a proof of his worthlessness by such a disposition.

Ver. 4. *"But let each man prove his own work."*

Here he shows that we ought to be scrutinizers of our lives, and this not lightly, but carefully to weigh our actions; as for example, if you have performed a good deed, consider whether it was not from vain glory, or through necessity, or malevolence, or with hypocrisy, or from some other human motive. For as gold appears to be bright before it is placed in the furnace, but when committed to the fire, is closely proved, and all that is spurious is separated from what is genuine, so too our works, if closely examined, will be distinctly made manifest, and we shall perceive that we have exposed ourselves to much censure.

Ver. 4. *"And then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone and not of his neighbor."*

This he says, not as laying down a rule, but in the way of concession; and his meaning is this, — Boasting is senseless, but if you will boast, boast not against your neighbor, as the Pharisee did. For he that is so instructed will speedily give up boasting altogether; and therefore he concedes a part that he may gradually extirpate the whole. He that is wont to boast with reference to himself only, and not against others, will soon reform this failing also. For he that does not consider himself better than others, for this is the meaning of *"not in regard of his neighbor,"* but becomes elated by examining himself by himself, will afterwards cease to be so. And that you may be sure this is what he desires to establish, observe how he checks him by fear, saying above, *"let every man prove his own work,"* and adding here,

Ver. 5. *"For each man shall bear his own burden."*

He appears to state a reason prohibitory of boasting against another; but at the same time he corrects the boaster, to that he may no more entertain high thoughts of himself by bringing to his remembrance his own errors, and pressing upon his conscience the idea of a burden, and of being heavily laden.

Ver. 6. *"But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things."*

Here he proceeds to discourse concerning Teachers, to the effect that they ought to be tended with great assiduity by their disciples. Now what is the reason that Christ so commanded? For this law, *"that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel,"* [1 Corinthians 9:14] is laid down in the New Testament; and likewise in the Old, [Numbers 31:47; 35:1-8] many revenues accrued to the Levites from the people; what is the reason, I say, that He so ordained? Was it not for the sake of laying a foundation beforehand of lowliness and love? For inasmuch as the dignity of a teacher oftentimes elates him who possesses it, He, in order to repress his spirit, has imposed on him the necessity of requiring aid at the hands of his disciples. And to these in turn he has given means of cultivating kindly feelings, by training them, through the kindness required of them to their Teacher, in gentleness towards others also. By this means no slight affection is generated on both sides. Were not the cause of this what I have stated it to be, why should He, who fed the dull-minded Jews with manna, have reduced the Apostles to the necessity of asking for aid? Is it not manifest He aimed at the great benefits of humility and love, and that those who were under teaching might not be ashamed of Teachers who were in appearance despicable? To ask for aid bears the semblance of disgrace, but it ceased to be so, when their Teachers with all boldness urged their claim, so that their disciples derived from hence no small benefit, taught hereby to despise all

appearances. Wherefore he says, *"But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things,"* that is, let him show to him all generosity; this he implies by the words, *"in all good things."* Let the disciple, says he, keep nothing to himself, but have every thing in common, for what he receives is better than what he gives—as much better as heavenly are better than earthly things. This he expresses in another place, *"If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?"* [1 Corinthians 9:11] Wherefore he gives the procedure the name of a *"communication,"* showing that an interchange takes place. Hereby too love is greatly fostered and confirmed. If the teacher asks merely for competency, he does not by receiving it derogate from his own dignity. For this is praiseworthy, so assiduously to apply to the Word, as to require the aid of others, and to be in manifold poverty, and to be regardless of all the means of subsistence. But if he exceed the due measure, he injures his dignity, not by mere receiving, but by receiving too much. Then, lest the vice of the Teacher should render the disciple more remiss in this matter, and he should frequently pass him by, though poor, on account of his conduct, he proceeds to say,

Ver. 9. *"And let us not be weary in well doing."*

And here he points out the difference between ambition of this kind, and in temporal affairs, by saying, *"Be not deceived ; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he that sows unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life."* As in the case of seeds, one who sows pulse cannot reap grain, for what is sown and what is reaped must both be of one kind, so is it in actions, he that plants in the flesh, wantonness, drunkenness, or inordinate desire, shall reap the fruits of these things. And what are these fruits? Punishment, retribution, shame, derision,

destruction. For of sumptuous tables and viands the end is no other than destruction; for they both perish themselves, and destroy the body too. But the fruit of the Spirit is of a nature not similar but contrary in all respects to these. For consider; have you sown almsgiving? The treasures of heaven and eternal glory await you: have you sown temperance? honor and reward, and the applause of Angels, and a crown from the Judge await you.

Ver. 9, 10. *"And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. So then as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, especially toward them that are of the household of faith."*

Lest any one should suppose that their Teachers were to be cared for and supported, but that others might be neglected, he makes his discourse general, and opens the door of this charitable zeal to all; nay, he carries it to such a height, as to command us to show mercy both to Jews and Greeks, in the proper gradation indeed, but still to show mercy. And what is this gradation? It consists in bestowing greater care upon the faithful. His endeavor here is the same as in his other Epistles; he discourses not merely of showing mercy, but of doing it with zeal and perseverance, for the expressions of *"sowing"* and of *"not fainting"* imply this. Then, having exacted a great work, he places its reward close at hand, and makes mention of a new and wondrous harvest. Among husbandmen, not only the sower but also the reaper endures much labor, having to struggle with drought and dust and grievous toil, but in this case none of these exist, as he shows by the words, *"for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."* By this means he stimulates and draws them on; and he also urges and presses them forward by another motive, saying, *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good."* As it is not always in our power to sow, so neither is it to show mercy; for when we have been carried hence, though we may desire it a

thousand times, we shall be able to effect nothing more. To this argument of ours the Ten Virgins [Matthew 25:1 ff.] bear witness, who although they wished it a thousand times, yet were shut out from the bridegroom, because they brought with them no bountiful charity. And so does the rich man who neglected Lazarus [Luke 16:19] for he, being destitute of this succor, although he wept and made many entreaties, won no compassion from the Patriarch, or any one else, but continued destitute of all forgiveness, and tormented with perpetual fire. Therefore he says, *"as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men,"* hereby especially also setting them free from the narrow-mindedness of the Jews. For the whole of their benevolence was confined to their own race, but the rule of life which Grace gives invites both land and sea to the board of charity, only it shows a greater care for its own household.

Ver. 11, 12. *"See with how large letters I have written unto you with my own hand. As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised."*

Observe what grief possesses his blessed soul. As those who are oppressed with some sorrow, who have lost one of their own kindred, and suffered an unexpected calamity, rest neither by night nor day, because their grief besieges their soul, so the blessed Paul, after a short moral discourse, returns again to that former subject which chiefly disturbed his mind, saying as follows: *"see with how large letters I have written unto you with my own hand."* By this he signifies that he had written the whole letter himself, which was a proof of great sincerity. In his other Epistles he himself only dictated, another wrote, as is plain from the Epistle to the Romans, for at its close it is said, *"I Tertius, who write the Epistle, salute you,"* [Romans 16:22] but in this instance he wrote the whole himself. And this he did by necessity, not from affection merely, but in order to remove

an injurious suspicion. Being charged with acts wherein he had no part, and being reported to preach Circumcision yet to pretend to preach it not, he was compelled to write the Epistle with his own hand, thus laying up beforehand a written testimony. By the expression "*what sized,*" he appears to me to signify, not the magnitude, but, the misshapen appearance of the letters, as if he had said, "*Although not well skilled in writing, I have been compelled to write with my own hand to stop the mouth of these traducers.*"

Ver. 12, 13. "*As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the Law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.*"

Here he shows that they suffered this, not willingly but of necessity, and affords them an opportunity of retreat, almost speaking in their defence, and exhorting them to abandon their teachers with all speed. What is the meaning of "*to make a fair show in the flesh?*" it means, to be esteemed by men. As they were reviled by the Jews for deserting the customs of their fathers, they desire, says he, to injure you, that they may not have this charged against them, but vindicate themselves by means of your flesh. His object here is to show that they did not so act from respect to God; it is as if he said, This procedure is not founded in piety, all this is done through human ambition; in order that the unbelievers may be gratified by the mutilation of the faithful, they choose to offend God that they may please men; for this is the meaning of, "*to make a fair show in the flesh.*" Then, as a proof that for another reason too they are unpardonable, he again convinces them that, not only in order to please others, but for their own vain glory, they had enjoined this. Wherefore he adds, "*that they may glory in your flesh,*" as if they had disciples, and were teachers. And what is the

proof of this? *"For not even they themselves,"* he says, *"keep the Law;"* even if they did keep it, they would incur grave censure, but now their very purpose is corrupt.

Ver. 14. *"But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Truly this symbol is thought despicable; but it is so in the world's reckoning, and among men; in Heaven and among the faithful it is the highest glory. Poverty too is despicable, but it is our boast; and to be cheaply thought of by the public is a matter of laughter to them, but we are elated by it. So too is the Cross our boast. He does not say, *"I boast not,"* nor, *"I will not boast,"* but, *"Far be it from me that I should,"* as if he abominated it as absurd, and invoked the aid of God in order to his success therein. And what is the boast of the Cross? That Christ for my sake took on Him the form of a slave, and bore His sufferings for me the slave, the enemy, the unfeeling one; yea He so loved me as to give Himself up to a curse for me. What can be comparable to this! If servants who only receive praise from their masters, to whom they are akin by nature, are elated thereby, how must we not boast when the Master who is very God is not ashamed of the Cross which was endured for us. Let us then not be ashamed of His unspeakable tenderness; He was not ashamed of being crucified for your sake, and will you be ashamed to confess His infinite solicitude? It is as if a prisoner who had not been ashamed of his King, should, after that King had come to the prison and himself loosed the chains, become ashamed of him on that account. Yet this would be the height of madness, for this very fact would be a special ground for boasting.

Ver. 14. *"Through which the world has been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."*

What he here calls the world is not the heaven nor the earth, but the affairs of life, the praise of men, retinues, glory, wealth, and all such things as have a show of splendor. To me these things are dead. Such an one it behooves a Christian to be, and always to use this language. Nor was he content with the former putting to death, but added another, saying, *"and I unto the world,"* thus implying a double putting to death, and saying, They are dead to me, and I to them, neither can they captivate and overcome me, for they are dead once for all, nor can I desire them, for I too am dead to them. Nothing can be more blessed than this putting to death, for it is the foundation of the blessed life.

Ver. 15, 16. *"For neither is circumcision any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."*

Observe the power of the Cross, to what a pitch it has raised him! not only has it put to death for him all mundane affairs, but has set him far above the Old Dispensation. What can be comparable to this power? For the Cross has persuaded him, who was willing to be slain and to slay others for the sake of circumcision, to leave it on a level with uncircumcision, and to seek for things strange and marvellous and above the heavens. This our rule of life he calls *"a new creature,"* both on account of what is past, and of what is to come; of what is past, because our soul, which had grown old with the oldness of sin, has been all at once renewed by baptism, as if it had been created again. Wherefore we require a new and heavenly rule of life. And of things to come, because both the heaven and the earth, and all the creation, shall with our bodies be translated into incorruption. Tell me not then, he says, of circumcision, which now avails nothing; (for how shall it appear, when all things have undergone such a change?) but seek the new things of grace. For they who pursue these things shall enjoy peace and

amity, and may properly be called by the name of *"Israel."* While they who hold contrary sentiments, although they be descended from him (Israel) and bear his appellation, have yet fallen away from all these things, both the relationship and the name itself. But it is in their power to be true Israelites, who keep this rule, who desist from the old ways, and follow after grace.

Ver. 17. *"From henceforth let no man trouble me."*

This he says not as though he were wearied or overpowered; he who chose to do and suffer all for his disciples' sake; he who said, *"Be instant in season, out of season;"* [2 Timothy 4:2] he who said, *"If perhaps God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil;"* [2 Timothy 2:25-26] how shall he now become relaxed and fall back? Wherefore does he say this? It is to gird up their slothful mind, and to impress them with deeper fear, and to ratify the laws enacted by himself, and to restrain their perpetual fluctuations.

Ver. 17. *"For I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus."*

He says not, *"I have,"* but, *"I bear,"* like a man priding himself on trophies and royal ensigns. Although on a second thought it seems a disgrace, yet does this man vaunt of his wounds, and like military standard-bearers, so does he exult in bearing about these wounds. And why does he say this? *"More clearly by those wounds than by any argument, than by any language, do I vindicate myself,"* says he. For these wounds utter a voice louder than a trumpet against my opponents, and against those who say that I play the hypocrite in my teaching, and speak what may please men. For no one who saw a soldier retiring from the battle bathed in blood and with a thousand wounds, would dare to accuse him of cowardice and treachery, seeing that he bears on his body the proofs of his valor, and so ought you, he says, to judge of me. And if any one desire to hear my defence, and to learn my sentiments, let him consider my wounds, which afford a stronger

proof than these words and letters. At the outset of his Epistle he evinced his sincerity by the suddenness of his conversion, at its close he proves it by the perils which attended his conversion. That it might not be objected that he had changed his course with upright intentions, but that he had not continued in the same purpose, he produces his trials, his dangers, his stripes as witnesses that he had so continued.

Then having clearly justified himself in every particular, and proved that he had spoken nothing from anger or malevolence, but had preserved his affection towards them unimpaired, he again establishes this same point by concluding his discourse with a prayer teeming with a thousand blessings, in these words;

Ver. 18. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen."*

By this last word he has sealed all that preceded it. He says not merely, *"with you,"* as elsewhere, but, *"with your spirit,"* thus withdrawing them from carnal things, and displaying throughout the beneficence of God, and reminding them of the grace which they enjoyed, whereby he was able to recall them from all their judaizing errors. For to have received the Spirit came not of the poverty of the Law, but of the righteousness which is by Faith, and to preserve it when obtained came not from Circumcision but from Grace. On this account he concluded his exhortation with a prayer, reminding them of grace and the Spirit, and at the same time addressing them as brethren, and supplicating God that they might continue to enjoy these blessings, thus providing for them a twofold security. For both prayer and teaching, tended to the same thing and together became to them as a double wall. For teaching, reminding them of what benefits they enjoyed, the rather kept them in the doctrine of the Church; and prayer, invoking grace, and exhorting to an enduring constancy, permitted not the Spirit to

depart from them. And He abiding in them, all the error of such doctrines as they held was shaken off like dust.

Homily 1 on the Gospel of John

(Preface)

1. They that are spectators of the heathen games, when they have learned that a distinguished athlete and winner of crowns has come from any quarter, run all together to view his wrestling, and all his skill and strength; and you may see the whole theater of many ten thousands, all there straining their eyes both of body and mind, that nothing of what is done may escape them. So again these same persons, if any admirable musician come among them, leave all that they had in hand, which often is necessary and pressing business, and mount the steps, and sit listening very attentively to the words and the accompaniments, and criticising the agreement of the two. This is what the many do.

Again; those who are skilled in rhetoric do just the same with respect to the sophists, for they too have their theaters, and their audience, and clappings of hands, and noise, and closest criticism of what is said.

And if in the case of rhetoricians, musicians, and athletes, people sit in the one case to look on, in the other to see at once and to listen with such earnest attention; what zeal, what earnestness ought you in reason to display, when it is no musician or debater who now comes forward to a trial of skill, but when a man is speaking from heaven, and utters a voice plainer than thunder? For he has pervaded the whole earth with the sound; and occupied and filled it, not by the loudness of the cry, but by moving his tongue with the grace of God.

And what is wonderful, this sound, great as it is, is neither a harsh nor an unpleasant one, but sweeter and more delightful than all harmony of

music, and with more skill to soothe; and besides all this, most holy, and most awful, and full of mysteries so great, and bringing with it goods so great, that if men were exactly and with ready mind to receive and keep them, they could no longer be mere men nor remain upon the earth, but would take their stand above all the things of this life, and having adapted themselves to the condition of angels, would dwell on earth just as if it were heaven.

2. For the son of thunder, the beloved of Christ, the pillar of the Churches throughout the world, who holds the keys of heaven, who drank the cup of Christ, and was baptized with His baptism, who lay upon his Master's bosom with much confidence, this man comes forward to us now; not as an actor of a play, not hiding his head with a mask, (for he has another sort of words to speak,) nor mounting a platform, nor striking the stage with his foot, nor dressed out with apparel of gold, but he enters wearing a robe of inconceivable beauty. For he will appear before us having *"put on Christ"* [Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:27], having his beautiful *"feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace"* [Ephesians 6:15]; wearing a girdle not about his waist, but about his loins, not made of scarlet leather nor daubed outside with gold, but woven and composed of truth itself. Now will he appear before us, not acting a part, (for with him there is nothing counterfeit, nor fiction, nor fable,) but with unmasked head he proclaims to us the truth unmasked; not making the audience believe him other than he is by carriage, by look, by voice, needing for the delivery of his message no instruments of music, as harp, lyre, or any other the like, for he effects all with his tongue, uttering a voice which is sweeter and more profitable than that of any harper or any music. All heaven is his stage; his theater, the habitable world; his audience, all angels; and of men as many as are angels already, or desire to become so, for none but these can hear that

harmony aright, and show it forth by their works; all the rest, like little children who hear, but what they hear understand not, from their anxiety about sweetmeats and childish playthings; so they too, being in mirth and luxury, and living only for wealth and power and sensuality, hear sometimes what is said, it is true, but show forth nothing great or noble in their actions through fastening themselves for good to the clay of the brickmaking. By this Apostle stand the powers from above, marveling at the beauty of his soul, and his understanding, and the bloom of that virtue by which he drew unto him Christ Himself, and obtained the grace of the Spirit. For he has made ready his soul, as some well-fashioned and jeweled lyre with strings of gold, and yielded it for the utterance of something great and sublime to the Spirit.

3. Seeing then it is no longer the fisherman the son of Zebedee, but He who knows *"the deep things of God"* [1 Corinthians 2:10], the Holy Spirit I mean, that strikes this lyre, let us hearken accordingly. For he will say nothing to us as a man, but what he says, he will say from the depths of the Spirit, from those secret things which before they came to pass the very Angels knew not; since they too have learned by the voice of John with us, and by us, the things which we know. And this has another Apostle declared, saying, *"To the intent that unto the principalities and powers might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."* [Ephesians 3:10] If then principalities, and powers, and Cherubim, and Seraphim, learned these things by the Church, it is very clear that they were exceedingly earnest in listening to this teaching; and even in this we have been not a little honored, that the Angels learned things which before they knew not with us; I do not at present speak of their learning by us also. Let us then show much silence and orderly behavior; not today only, nor during the day on which we are hearers, but during all our life, since it is at all

times good to hear Him. For if we long to know what is going on in the palace, what, for instance, the king has said, what he has done, what counsel he is taking concerning his subjects, though in truth these things are for the most part nothing to us; much more is it desirable to hear what God has said, especially when all concerns us. And all this will this man tell us exactly, as being a friend of the King Himself, or rather, as having Him speaking within himself, and from Him hearing all things which He hears from the Father. *"I have called you friends,"* He says, *"for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you."* [John 15:15]

4. As then we should all run together if we saw one from above bend down *"on a sudden"* from the height of heaven, promising to describe exactly all things there, even so let us be disposed now. It is from thence that this Man speaks to us; He is not of this world, as Christ Himself declares, *"You are not of the world"* [John 15:19], and He has speaking within him the Comforter, the Omnipresent, who knows the things of God as exactly as the soul of man knows what belongs to herself, the Spirit of holiness, the righteous Spirit, the guiding Spirit, which leads men by the hand to heaven, which gives them other eyes, fitting them to see things to come as though present, and giving them even in the flesh to look into things heavenly. To Him then let us yield ourselves during all our life in much tranquillity. Let none dull, none sleepy, none sordid, enter here and tarry; but let us remove ourselves to heaven, for there He speaks these things to those who are citizens there. And if we tarry on earth, we shall gain nothing great from thence. For the words of John are nothing to those who do not desire to be freed from this swinish life, just as the things of this world to him are nothing. The thunder amazes our souls, having sound without significance; but this man's voice troubles none of the faithful, yea, rather releases them from trouble and confusion; it amazes the devils only,

and those who are their slaves. Therefore that we may know how it amazes them, let us preserve deep silence, both external and mental, but especially the latter; for what advantage is it that the mouth be hushed, if the soul is disturbed and full of tossing? I look for that calm which is of the mind, of the soul, since it is the hearing of the soul which I require. Let then no desire of riches trouble us, no lust of glory, no tyranny of anger, nor the crowd of other passions besides these; for it is not possible for the ear, except it be cleansed, to perceive as it ought the sublimity of the things spoken; nor rightly to understand the awful and unutterable nature of these mysteries, and all other virtue which is in these divine oracles. If a man cannot learn well a melody on pipe or harp, unless he in every way strain his attention; how shall one, who sits as a listener to sounds mystical, be able to hear with a careless soul?

5. Wherefore Christ Himself exhorted, saying, *"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine."* [Matthew 7:6] He called these words *"pearls,"* though in truth they be much more precious than they, because we have no substance more precious than that. For this reason too He is wont often to compare their sweetness to honey, not that so much only is the measure of their sweetness, but because among us there is nothing sweeter. Now, to show that they very exceedingly surpass the nature of precious stones, and the sweetness of any honey, hear the prophet speaking concerning them, and declaring this superiority; *"More to be desired are they,"* he says *"than gold and much precious stone; sweeter are they also than honey and the honeycomb."* [Psalm 19:10] But to those (only) who are in health; wherefore he has added, *"For your servant keeps them."* And again in another place calling them sweet he has added, *"to my throat."* For he says, *"How sweet are your words unto my throat."* [Psalm 119:103] And again he insists on the superiority, saying, *"Above honey and*

the honeycomb to my mouth." For he was in very sound health. And let not us either come near to these while we are sick, but when we have healed our soul, so receive the food that is offered us.

It is for this reason that, after so long a preface, I have not yet attempted to fathom these expressions (of St. John), in order that every one having laid aside all manner of infirmity, as though he were entering into heaven itself, so may enter here pure, and freed from wrath and carefulness and anxiety of this life, of all other passions. For it is not otherwise possible for a man to gain from hence anything great, except he have first so cleansed anew his soul. And let no one say that the time to the coming communion is short, for it is possible, not only in five days, but in one moment, to change the whole course of life. Tell me what is worse than a robber and a murderer, is not this the extremest kind of wickedness? Yet such an one arrived straight at the summit of excellence, and passed into Paradise itself, not needing days, nor half a day, but one little moment. So that a man may change suddenly, and become gold instead of clay. For since what belongs to virtue and to vice is not by nature, the change is easy, as being independent of any necessity. *"If you be willing and obedient,"* He says, *"you shall eat the good of the land."* [Isaiah 1:19] Do you see that there needs the will only? will— not the common wishing of the multitude — but earnest will. For I know that all are wishing to fly up to heaven even now; but it is necessary to show forth the wish by works. The merchant too wishes to get rich; but he does not allow his wish to stop with the thought of it; no, he fits out a ship, and gets together sailors, and engages a pilot, and furnishes the vessel with all other stores, and borrows money, and crosses the sea, and goes away into a strange land, and endures many dangers, and all the rest which they know who sail the sea. So too must we show our will; for we also sail a voyage, not from land to land, but from earth to

heaven. Let us then so order our reason, that it be serviceable to steer our upward course, and our sailors that they be obedient to it, and let our vessel be stout, that it be not swamped amidst the reverses and despondencies of this life, nor be lifted up by the blasts of vainglory, but be a fast and easy vessel. If so we order our ship, and so our pilot and our crew, we shall sail with a fair wind, and we shall draw down to ourselves the Son of God, the true Pilot, who will not leave our bark to be engulfed, but, though ten thousand winds may blow, will rebuke the winds and the sea, and instead of raging waves, make a great calm.

6. Having therefore ordered yourselves, so come to our next assembly, if at least it be at all an object of desire to you to hear somewhat to your advantage, and lay up what is said in your souls. But let not one of you be the *"wayside,"* none the *"stony ground,"* none the *"full of thorns."* [Matthew 13:4-7] Let us make ourselves fallow lands. For so shall we (the preachers) put in the seed with gladness, when we see the land clean, but if stony or rough, pardon us if we like not to labor in vain. For if we shall leave off sowing and begin to cut up thorns, surely to cast seed into ground unwrought were extreme folly.

It is not meet that he who has the advantage of such hearing be partaker of the table of devils. *"For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness?"* [2 Corinthians 6:14] You stand listening to John, and learning the things of the Spirit by him; and do you after this depart to listen to harlots speaking vile things, and acting viler, and to effeminate cuffing one another? How will you be able to be fairly cleansed, if you wallow in such mire? Why need I reckon in detail all the indecency that is there? All there is laughter, all is shame, all disgrace, revilings and mockings, all abandonment, all destruction. See, I forewarn and charge you all. Let none of those who enjoy the blessings of this table destroy his own soul by those

pernicious spectacles. All that is said and done there is a pageant of Satan. But you who have been initiated know what manner of covenants you made with us, or rather you made with Christ when He guided you into His mysteries, what you spoke to Him, what speech you had with Him concerning Satan's pageant; how with Satan and his angels you renounced this also, and promised that you would not so much as cast a glance that way. There is then no slight ground for fear, lest, by becoming careless of such promises, one should render himself unworthy of these mysteries.

7. Do you see not how in king's palaces it is not those who have offended, but those who have been honorably distinguished, that are called to share special favor, and are numbered among the king's friends. A messenger has come to us from heaven, sent by God Himself, to speak with us on certain necessary matters, and you leave hearing His will, and the message He sends to you, and sit listening to stage-players. What thunderings, what bolts from heaven, does not this conduct deserve! For as it is not meet to partake of the table of devils, so neither is it of the listening to devils; nor to be present with filthy raiment at that glorious Table, loaded with so many good things, which God Himself has provided. Such is its power, that it can raise us at once to heaven, if only we approach it with a sober mind. For it is not possible that he who is continually under the influence of the words of God, can remain in this present low condition, but he needs must presently take wing, and fly away to the land which is above, and light on the infinite treasures of good things; which may it be that we all attain to, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to the Father and the All-holy Spirit, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on the Gospel of John

John 1:1

"In the beginning was the Word."

Were John about to converse with us, and to say to us words of his own, we needs must describe his family, his country, and his education. But since it is not he, but God by him, that speaks to mankind, it seems to me superfluous and distracting to enquire into these matters. And yet even thus it is not superfluous, but even very necessary. For when you have learned who he was, and from whence, who his parents, and what his character, and then hear his voice and all his heavenly wisdom, then you shall know right well that these (doctrines) belong not to him, but to the Divine power stirring his soul.

From what country then was he? From no country; but from a poor village, and from a land little esteemed, and producing no good thing. For the Scribes speak evil of Galilee, saying, *"Search and look, for out of Galilee arises no prophet."* [John 7:52] And *"the Israelite indeed"* speaks ill of it, saying, *"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* And being of this land, he was not even of any remarkable place in it, but of one not even distinguished by name. Of this he was, and his father a poor fisherman, so poor that he took his sons to the same employment. Now you all know that no workman will choose to bring up his son to succeed him in his trade, unless poverty press him very hard, especially where the trade is a mean one. But nothing can be poorer, meaner, no, nor more ignorant, than fishermen. Yet even among them there are some greater, some less; and even there our Apostle occupied the lower rank, for he did not take his prey

from the sea, but passed his time on a certain little lake. And as he was engaged by it with his father and his brother James, and they mending their broken nets, a thing which of itself marked extreme poverty, so Christ called him.

As for worldly instruction, we may learn from these facts that he had none at all of it. Besides, Luke testifies this when he writes not only that he was ignorant, but that he was absolutely unlettered. [Acts 4:13] As was likely. For one who was so poor, never coming into the public assemblies, nor falling in with men of respectability, but as it were nailed to his fishing, or even if he ever did meet any one, conversing with fishmongers and cooks, how, I say, was he likely to be in a state better than that of the irrational animals? How could he help imitating the very dumbness of his fishes?

2. This fisherman then, whose business was about lakes, and nets, and fish; this native of Bethsaida of Galilee; this son of a poor fisherman, yes, and poor to the last degree; this man ignorant, and to the last degree of ignorance too, who never learned letters either before or after he accompanied Christ; let us see what he utters, and on what matters he converses with us. Is it of things in the field? Is it of things in rivers? On the trade in fish? For these things, perhaps, one expects to hear from a fisherman. But fear not; we shall hear nought of these; but we shall hear of things in heaven, and what no one ever learned before this man. For, as might be expected of one who speaks from the very treasures of the Spirit, he has come bringing to us sublime doctrines, and the best way of life and wisdom, [as though just arrived from the very heavens; yea, rather such as it was not likely that all even there should know, as I said before.] Do these things belong to a fisherman? Tell me. Do they belong to a rhetorician at all? To a sophist or philosopher? To every one trained in the wisdom of the

Gentiles? By no means. The human soul is simply unable thus to philosophize on that pure and blessed nature; on the powers that come next to it; on immortality and endless life; on the nature of mortal bodies which shall hereafter be immortal; on punishment and the judgment to come; on the enquiries that shall be as to deeds and words, as to thoughts and imaginations. It cannot tell what is man, what the world; what is man indeed, and what he who seems to be man, but is not; what is the nature of virtue, what of vice.

3. Some of these things indeed the disciples of Plato and Pythagoras enquired into. Of the other philosophers we need make no mention at all; they have all on this point been so excessively ridiculous; and those who have been among them in greater esteem than the rest, and who have been considered the leading men in this science, are so more than the others; and they have composed and written somewhat on the subject of polity and doctrines, and in all have been more shamefully ridiculous than children. For they have spent their whole life in making women common to all, in overthrowing the very order of life, in doing away the honor of marriage, and in making other the like ridiculous laws. As for doctrines on the soul, there is nothing excessively shameful that they have left unsaid; asserting that the souls of men become flies, and gnats, and bushes, and that God Himself is a soul; with some other the like indecencies.

And not this alone in them is worthy of blame, but so is also their ever-shifting current of words; for since they assert everything on uncertain and fallacious arguments, they are like men carried here and there in Euripus, and never remain in the same place.

Not so this fisherman; for all he says is infallible; and standing as it were upon a rock, he never shifts his ground. For since he has been thought worthy to be in the most secret places, and has the Lord of all speaking

within him, he is subject to nothing that is human. But they, like persons who are not held worthy even in a dream to set foot in the king's palace, but who pass their time in the forum with other men, guessing from their own imagination at what they cannot see, have erred a great error, and, like blind or drunken men in their wandering, have dashed against each other; and not only against each other, but against themselves, by continually changing their opinion, and that ever on the same matters.

4. But this unlettered man, the ignorant, the native of Bethsaida, the son of Zebedee, (though the Greeks mock ten thousand times at the rusticity of the names, I shall not the less speak them with the greater boldness.) For the more barbarous his nation seems to them, and the more he seems removed from Grecian discipline, so much the brighter does what we have with us appear. For when a barbarian and an untaught person utters things which no man on earth ever knew, and does not only utter, (though if this were the only thing it were a great marvel,) but besides this, affords another and a stronger proof that what he says is divinely inspired, namely, the convincing all his hearers through all time; who will not wonder at the power that dwells in him? Since this is, as I said, the strongest proof that he lays down no laws of his own. This barbarian then, with his writing of the Gospel, has occupied all the habitable world. With his body he has taken possession of the center of Asia, where of old philosophized all of the Grecian party, shining forth in the midst of his foes, dispersing their darkness, and breaking down the stronghold of devils: but in soul he has retired to that place which is fit for one who has done such things.

5. And as for the writings of the Greeks, they are all put out and vanished, but this man's shine brighter day by day. For from the time that he (was) and the other fishermen, since then the (doctrines) of Pythagoras and of Plato, which seemed before to prevail, have ceased to be spoken of, and

most men do not know them even by name. Yet Plato was, they say, the invited companion of kings, had many friends, and sailed to Sicily. And Pythagoras occupied Magna Græcia, and practiced there ten thousand kinds of sorcery. For to converse with oxen, (which they say he did,) was nothing else but a piece of sorcery. As is most clear from this. He that so conversed with brutes did not in anything benefit the race of men, but even did them the greatest wrong. Yet surely, the nature of men was better adapted for the reasoning of philosophy; still he did, as they say, converse with eagles and oxen, using sorceries. For he did not make their irrational nature rational, (this was impossible to man,) but by his magic tricks he deceived the foolish. And neglecting to teach men anything useful, he taught that they might as well eat the heads of those who begot them, as beans. And he persuaded those who associated with him, that the soul of their teacher had actually been at one time a bush, at another a girl, at another a fish.

Are not these things with good cause extinct, and vanished utterly? With good cause, and reasonably. But not so the words of him who was ignorant and unlettered; for Syrians, and Egyptians, and Indians, and Persians, and Ethiopians, and ten thousand other nations, translating into their own tongues the doctrines introduced by him, barbarians though they be, have learned to philosophize. I did not therefore idly say that all the world has become his theater. For he did not leave those of his own kind, and waste his labor on the irrational creatures, (an act of excessive vainglory and extreme folly,) but being clear of this as well as of other passions, he was earnest on one point only, that all the world might learn somewhat of the things which might profit it, and be able to translate it from earth to heaven.

For this reason too, he did not hide his teaching in mist and darkness, as they did who threw obscurity of speech, like a kind of veil, around the

mischiefs laid up within. But this man's doctrines are clearer than the sunbeams, wherefore they have been unfolded to all men throughout the world. For he did not teach as Pythagoras did, commanding those who came to him to be silent for five years, or to sit like senseless stones; neither did he invent fables defining the universe to consist of numbers; but casting away all this devilish trash and mischief, he diffused such simplicity through his words, that all he said was plain, not only to wise men, but also to women and youths. For he was persuaded that the words were true and profitable to all that should hearken to them. And all time after him is his witness; since he has drawn to him all the world, and has freed our life when we have listened to these words from all monstrous display of wisdom; wherefore we who hear them would prefer rather to give up our lives, than the doctrines by him delivered to us.

6. From this then, and from every other circumstance, it is plain, that nothing of this man's is human, but divine and heavenly are the lessons which come to us by this divine soul. For we shall observe not sounding sentences, nor magnificent diction, nor excessive and useless order and arrangement of words and sentences, (these things are far from all true wisdom,) but strength invincible and divine, and irresistible force of right doctrines, and a rich supply of unnumbered good things. For their over-care about expression was so excessive, so worthy of mere sophists, or rather not even of sophists, but of silly striplings, that even their own chief philosopher introduces his own master as greatly ashamed of this art, and as saying to the judges, that what they hear from him shall be spoken plainly and without premeditation, not tricked out rhetorically nor ornamented with (fine) sentences and words; since, says he, it cannot surely be becoming, O men, that one at my age should come before you like a lad inventing speeches. And observe the extreme absurdity of the thing; what he has

described his master avoiding as disgraceful, unworthy of philosophy and work for laids, this above all he himself has cultivated. So entirely were they given up to mere love of distinction.

And as, if you uncover those sepulchers which are whitened without you will find them full of corruption, and stench, and rotten bones; so too the doctrines of the philosopher, if you strip them of their flowery diction, you will see to be full of much abomination, especially when he philosophizes on the soul, which he both honors and speaks ill of without measure. And this is the snare of the devil, never to keep due proportion, but by excess on either hand to lead aside those who are entangled by it into evil speaking. At one time he says, that the soul is of the substance of God; at another, after having exalted it thus immoderately and impiously, he exceeds again in a different way, and treats it with insult, making it pass into swine and asses, and other animals of yet less esteem than these.

But enough of this; or rather even this is out of measure. For if it were possible to learn anything profitable from these things, we must have been longer occupied with them; but if it be only to observe their indecency and absurdity, more than requisite has been said by us already. We will therefore leave their fables, and attach ourselves to our own doctrines, which have been brought to us from above by the tongue of this fisherman, and which have nothing human in them.

7. Let us then bring forward the words, having reminded you now, as I exhorted you at the first, earnestly to attend to what is said. What then does this Evangelist say immediately on his outset?

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." [John 1:1] Do you see the great boldness and power of the words, how he speaks nothing doubting nor conjecturing, but declaring all things plainly? For this is the teacher's part, not to waver in anything he says, since if he who is to

be a guide to the rest require another person who shall be able to establish him with certainty, he would be rightly ranked not among teachers, but among disciples.

But if any one say, "*What can be the reason that he has neglected the first cause, and spoken to us at once concerning the second?*" we shall decline to speak of "*first*" and "*second*," for the Divinity is above number, and the succession of times. Wherefore we decline these expressions; but we confess that the Father is from none, and that the Son is begotten of the Father. Yes, it may be said, but why then does he leave the Father, and speak concerning the Son? Why? Because the former was manifest to all, if not as Father, at least as God; but the Only-Begotten was not known; and therefore with reason did he immediately from the very beginning hasten to implant the knowledge of Him in those who knew Him not.

Besides, he has not been silent as to the Father in his writings on these points. And observe, I beg of you, his spiritual wisdom. He knows that men most honor the eldest of beings which was before all, and account this to be God. Wherefore from this point first he makes his beginning, and as he advances, declares that God is, and does not like Plato assert, sometimes that He is intellect, sometimes that He is soul; for these things are far removed from that divine and unmixed Nature which has nothing common with us, but is separated from any fellowship with created things, I mean as to substance, though not as to relation.

And for this reason he calls Him "*The Word*." For since he is about to teach that this "*Word*" is the only-begotten Son of God, in order that no one may imagine that His generation is passible, by giving Him the appellation of "*The Word*," he anticipates and removes beforehand the evil suspicion, showing that the Son is from the Father, and that without His suffering (change).

8. Do you see then that as I said, he has not been silent as to the Father in his words concerning the Son? And if these instances are not sufficiently to explain the whole matter, marvel not, for our argument is God, whom it is impossible to describe, or to imagine worthily; hence this man nowhere assigns the name of His essence, (for it is not possible to say what God is, as to essence,) but everywhere he declares Him to us by His workings. For this "*Word*" one may see shortly after called "*Light*," and the "*Light*" in turn named "*Life*."

Although not for this reason only did he so name Him; this was the first reason, and the second was because He was about to declare to us the things of the Father. For "*all things*," He says, "*that I have heard from my Father, I have made known unto you*." [John 15:15] He calls Him both "*Light*" and "*Life*," for He has freely given to us the light which proceeds from knowledge, and the life which follows it. In short, one name is not sufficient, nor two, nor three, nor more, to teach us what belongs to God. But we must be content to be able even by means of many to apprehend, though but obscurely, His attributes.

And he has not called Him simply "*Word*," but with the addition of the article, distinguishing Him from the rest in this way also. Do you see then that I said not without cause that this Evangelist speaks to us from heaven? Only see from the very beginning whither he has drawn up the soul, having given it wings, and has carried up with him the mind of his hearers. For having set it higher than all the things of sense, than earth, than sea, than heaven, he leads it by the hand above the very angels, above cherubim and seraphim, above thrones and principalities and powers; in a word, persuades it to journey beyond all created things.

9. What then? When he has brought us to such a height as this, is he in truth able to stop us there? By no means; but just as one by transporting into

the midst of the sea a person who was standing on the beach, and looking on cities, and beaches, and havens, removes him indeed from the former objects, yet does not stay his sight anywhere, but brings him to a view without bound; so this Evangelist, having brought us above all creation, and escorted us towards the eternal periods which lie beyond it, leaves the sight suspended, not allowing it to arrive at any limit upwards, as indeed there is none.

For the intellect, having ascended to "*the beginning*," enquires what "*beginning*"; and then finding the "*was*" always outstripping its imagination, has no point at which to stay its thought; but looking intently onwards, and being unable to cease at any point, it becomes wearied out, and turns back to things below. For this "*was in the beginning*," is nothing else than expressive of ever being and being infinitely.

Do you see true philosophy and divine doctrines? Not like those of the Greeks, who assign times, and say that some indeed of the gods are younger, some elder. There is nothing of this with us. For if God Is, as certainly He Is, then nothing was before Him. If He is Creator of all things, He must be first; if Master and Lord of all, then all, both creatures and ages, are after Him.

10. I had desired to enter the lists yet on other difficulties, but perhaps our minds are wearied out; when therefore I have advised you on those points which are useful to us for the hearing, both of what has been said, and of what is yet to be said, I again will hold my peace. What then are these points? I know that many have become confused by reason of the length of what has been spoken. Now this takes place when the soul is heavy laden with many burdens of this life. For as the eye when it is clear and transparent is keen-sighted also, and will not easily be tired in making out even the minutest bodies; but when from some bad humor from the

head having poured into it, or some smoke-like fumes having ascended to it from beneath, a kind of thick cloud is formed before the ball, this does not allow it clearly to perceive even any larger object; so is naturally the case with the soul. For when it is purified, and has no passion to disturb it, it looks steadfastly to the fit objects of its regard; but when, darkened by many passions, it loses its proper excellence, then it is not easily able to be sufficient for any high thing, but soon is wearied, and falls back; and turning aside to sleep and sloth, lets pass things that concern it with a view to excellence and the life thence arising, instead of receiving them with much readiness.

And that you may not suffer this, (I shall not cease continually thus to warn you,) strengthen your minds, that you may not hear what the faithful among the Hebrews heard from Paul. For to them he said that he had "*many things to say, and hard to be uttered*" [Hebrews 5:11]; not as though they were by nature such, but because, says he, "*you are dull of hearing.*" For it is the nature of the weak and infirm man to be confused even by few words as by many, and what is clear and easy he thinks hard to be comprehended. Let not any here be such an one, but having chased from him all worldly care, so let him hear these doctrines.

For when the desire of money possesses the hearer, the desire of hearing cannot possess him as well; since the soul, being one, cannot suffice for many desires; but one of the two is injured by the other, and, from division, becomes weaker as its rival prevails, and expends all upon itself.

And this is wont to happen in the case of children. When a man has only one, he loves that one exceedingly. But when he has become father of many, then also his dispositions of affection being divided become weaker.

If this happens where there is the absolute rule and power of nature, and the objects beloved are akin one with another, what can we say as to

that desire and disposition which is according to deliberate choice; especially where these desires lie directly opposed to each other; for the love of wealth is a thing opposed to the love of this kind of hearing. We enter heaven when we enter here; not in place, I mean, but in disposition; for it is possible for one who is on earth to stand in heaven, and to have vision of the things that are there, and to hear the words from thence.

11. Let none then introduce the things of earth into heaven; let no one standing here be careful about what is at his house. For he ought to bear with him, and to preserve both at home and in his business, what he gains from this place, not to allow it to be loaded with the burdens of house and market. Our reason for entering in to the chair of instruction is, that thence we may cleanse ourselves from the filth of the outer world; but if we are likely even in this little space to be injured by things said or done without, it is better for us not to enter at all. Let no one then in the assembly be thinking about domestic matters, but let him at home be stirring with what he heard in the assembly. Let these things be more precious to us than any. These concern the soul, but those the body; or rather what is said here concerns both body and soul. Wherefore let these things be our leading business, and all others but occasional employments; for these belong both to the future and the present life, but the rest neither to the one nor the other, unless they be managed according to the law laid down for these. Since from these it is impossible to learn not only what we shall hereafter be, and how we shall then live, but how we shall rightly direct this present life also.

For this house is a spiritual surgery, that whatever wounds we may have received without, here we may heal, not that we may gather fresh ones to take with us hence. Yet if we do not give heed to the Spirit speaking to us, we shall not only fail to clear ourselves of our former hurts, but shall get others in addition.

Let us then with much earnestness attend to the book as it is being unfolded to us; since if we learn exactly its first principles and fundamental doctrines, we shall not afterwards require much close study, but after laboring a little at the beginning, shall be able, as Paul says, to instruct others also. [Romans 15:14] For this Apostle is very sublime, abounding in many doctrines, and on these he dwells more than on other matters.

Let us not then be careless hearers. And this is the reason why we set them forth to you little by little, so that all may be easily intelligible to you, and may not escape your memory. Let us fear then lest we come under the condemnation of that word which says, *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin."* [John 15:22] For what shall we be profited more than those who have not heard, if even after hearing we go our way home bearing nothing with us, but only wondering at what has been said.

Allow us then to sow in good ground; allow us, that you may draw us the more to you. If any man has thorns, let him cast the fire of the Spirit among them. If any has a hard and stubborn heart, let him by employing the same fire make it soft and yielding. If any by the wayside is trodden down by all kind of thoughts, let him enter into more sheltered places, and not lie exposed for those that will to invade for plunder: that so we may see your cornfields waving with grain. Besides, if we exercise such care as this over ourselves, and apply ourselves industriously to this spiritual hearing, if not at once yet by degrees, we shall surely be freed from all the cares of life.

Let us therefore take heed that it be not said of us, that our ears are those of a deaf adder. [Psalm 58:4] For tell me, in what does a hearer of this kind differ from a beast? And how could he be otherwise than more irrational than any irrational animal, who does not attend when God is speaking? And if to be well-pleasing to God is really to be a man, what else but a beast can he be who will not even hear how he may succeed in this?

Consider then what a misfortune it would be for us to fall down of our own accord from (the nature of) men to (that of) beasts, when Christ is willing of men to make us equal to angels. For to serve the belly, to be possessed by the desire of riches, to be given to anger, to bite, to kick, become not men, but beasts. Nay, even the beasts have each, as one may say, one single passion, and that by nature. But man, when he has cast away the dominion of reason, and torn himself from the commonwealth of God's devising, gives himself up to all the passions, is no longer merely a beast, but a kind of many-formed motley monster; nor has he even the excuse from nature, for all his wickedness proceeds from deliberate choice and determination.

May we never have cause to suspect this of the Church of Christ. Indeed, we are concerning you persuaded of better things, and such as belong to salvation; but the more we are so persuaded, the more careful we will be not to desist from words of caution. In order that having mounted to the summit of excellencies, we may obtain the promised goods. Which may it come to pass that we all attain to, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 3 on the Gospel of John

John 1:1

"In the beginning was the Word."

1. On the subject of attention in hearkening it is superfluous to exhort you any more, so quickly have you shown by your actions the effects of my advice. For your manner of running together, your attentive postures, the thrusting one another in your eagerness to get the inner places, where my voice may more clearly be heard by you, your unwillingness to retire from the press until this spiritual assembly be dissolved, the clapping of hands, the murmurs of applause; in a word, all things of this kind may be considered proofs of the fervor of your souls, and of your desire to hear. So that on this point it is superfluous to exhort you. One thing, however, it is necessary for us to bid and entreat, that you continue to have the same zeal, and manifest it not here only, but that also when you are at home, you converse man with wife, and father with son, concerning these matters. And say somewhat of yourselves, and require somewhat in return from them; and so all contribute to this excellent banquet.

For let no one tell me that our children ought not to be occupied with these things; they ought not only to be occupied with them, but to be zealous about them only. And although on account of your infirmity I do not assert this, nor take them away from their worldly learning, just as I do not draw you either from your civil business; yet of these seven days I claim that you dedicate one to the common Lord of us all. For is it not a strange thing that we should bid our domestics slave for us all their time, and ourselves apportion not even a little of our leisure to God; and this too

when all our service adds nothing to Him, (for the Godhead is incapable of want,) but turns out to our own advantage? And yet when you take your children into the theaters, you allege neither their mathematical lessons, nor anything of the kind; but if it be required to gain or collect anything spiritual, you call the matter a waste of time. And how shall you not anger God, if you find leisure and assign a season for everything else, and yet think it a troublesome and unseasonable thing for your children to take in hand what relates to Him?

Do not so, brethren, do not so. It is this very age that most of all needs the hearing these things; for from its tenderness it readily stores up what is said; and what children hear is impressed as a seal on the wax of their minds. Besides, it is then that their life begins to incline to vice or virtue; and if from the very gates and portals one lead them away from iniquity, and guide them by the hand to the best road, he will fix them for the time to come in a sort of habit and nature, and they will not, even if they be willing, easily change for the worse, since this force of custom draws them to the performance of good actions. So that we shall see them become more worthy of respect than those who have grown old, and they will be more useful in civil matters, displaying in youth the qualities of the aged.

For, as I before said, it cannot be that they who enjoy the hearing of such things as these, and who are in the company of such an Apostle, should depart without receiving some great and remarkable advantage, be it man, woman, or youth, that partakes of this table. If we train by words the animals which we have, and so tame them, how much more shall we effect this with men by this spiritual teaching, when there is a wide difference between the remedy in each case, and the subject healed as well. For neither is there so much fierceness in us as in the brutes, since theirs is from nature, ours from choice; nor is the power of the words the same, for the power of

the first is that of the human intellect, the power of the second is that of the might and grace of the Spirit. Let then the man who despairs of himself consider the tame animals, and he shall no longer be thus affected; let him come continually to this house of healing, let him hear at all times the laws of the Spirit, and on retiring home let him write down in his mind the things which he has heard; so shall his hopes be good and his confidence great, as he feels his progress by experience. For when the devil sees the law of God written in the soul, and the heart become tablets to write it on, he will not approach any more. Since wherever the king's writing is, not engraved on a pillar of brass, but stamped by the Holy Ghost on a mind loving God, and bright with abundant grace, that (evil one) will not be able even to look at it, but from afar will turn his back upon us. For nothing is so terrible to him and to the thoughts which are suggested by him as a mind careful about Divine matters, and a soul which ever hangs over this fountain. Such an one can nothing present annoy, even though it be displeasing; nothing puff up or make proud, even though it be favorable; but amidst all this storm and surge it will even enjoy a great calm.

2. For confusion arises within us, not from the nature of circumstances, but from the infirmity of our minds; for if we were thus affected by reason of what befalls us, then, (as we all sail the same sea, and it is impossible to escape waves and spray,) all men must needs be troubled; but if there are some who stand beyond the influence of the storm and the raging sea, then it is clear that it is not circumstances which make the storm, but the condition of our own mind. If therefore we so order the mind that it may bear all things contentedly, we shall have no storm nor even a ripple, but always a clear calm.

After professing that I should say nothing on these points, I know not how I have been carried away into such a length of exhortation. Pardon my

prolixity; for I fear, yes, I greatly fear lest this zeal of ours should ever become weaker. Did I feel confident respecting it, I would not now have said to you anything on these matters, since it is sufficient to make all things easy to you. But it is time in what follows to proceed to the matters proposed for consideration today; that you may not come weary to the contest. For we have contests against the enemies of the truth, against those who use every artifice to destroy the honor of the Son of God, or rather their own. This remains for ever as it now is, nothing lessened by the blaspheming tongue, but they, by seeking eagerly to pull down Him whom they say they worship, fill their faces with shame and their souls with punishment.

What then do they say when we assert what we have asserted? *"That the words, 'in the beginning was the Word,' do not denote eternity absolutely, for that this same expression was used also concerning heaven and earth."* What enormous shamelessness and irreverence! I speak to you concerning God, and do you bring the earth into the argument, and men who are of the earth? At this rate, since Christ is called Son of God, and God, Man who is called Son of God must be God also. For, *"I have said, You are Gods, and all of you are children of the Most High."* [Psalm 82:6] Will you contend with the Only-Begotten concerning Sonship, and assert that in that respect He enjoys nothing more than thou? *"By no means,"* is the reply. And yet you do this even though thou say not so in words. *"How?"* Because you say that thou by grace art partaker of the adoption, and He in like manner. For by saying that He is not Son by nature, thou only makest him to be so by grace.

However, let us see the proofs which they produce to us. *"In the beginning,"* it is said, *"God made the Heaven and the earth, and the earth was invisible and unformed."* [Genesis 1:2] And, *"There 'was' a man of*

Ramathaim Zophim." [1 Samuel 1:1] These are what they think strong arguments, and they are strong; but it is to prove the correctness of the doctrines asserted by us, while they are utterly powerless to establish their blasphemy. For tell me, what has the word "*was*" in common with the word "*made*"? What has God in common with man? Why do you mix what may not be mixed? Why confound things which are distinct, why bring low what is above? In that place it is not the expression "*was*" only which denotes eternity, but that One "*was in the beginning.*" And that other, "*The Word was*"; for as the word "*being*," when used concerning man, only distinguishes present time, but when concerning God, denotes eternity, so "*was*," when used respecting our nature, signifies to us past time, and that too limited, but when respecting God it declares eternity. It would have been enough then when one had heard the words "*earth*" and "*man*," to imagine nothing more concerning them than what one may fitly think of a nature that came into being, for that which came to be, be it what it may, has come to be either in time, or the age before time was, but the Son of God is above not only times, but all ages which were before, for He is the Creator and Maker of them, as the Apostle says, "*by whom also He made the ages.*" Now the Maker necessarily is, before the thing made. Yet since some are so senseless, as even after this to have higher notions concerning creatures than is their due, by the expression "*He made*," and by that other, "*there was a man*," he lays hold beforehand of the mind of his hearer, and cuts up all shamelessness by the roots. For all that has been made, both heaven and earth, has been made in time, and has its beginning in time, and none of them is without beginning, as having been made: so that when you hear that "*he made the earth*," and that "*there was a man*," you are trifling to no purpose, and weaving a tissue of useless folly.

For I can mention even another thing by way of going further. What is it? It is, that if it had been said of the earth, "*In the beginning was the earth,*" and of man, "*In the beginning was the man,*" we must not even then have imagined any greater things concerning them than what we have now determined. For the terms "*earth*" and "*man*" as they are presupposed, whatever may be said concerning them, do not allow the mind to imagine to itself anything greater concerning them than what we know at present. Just as "*the Word,*" although but little be said of It, does not allow us to think (respecting It) anything low or poor. Since in proceeding he says of the earth, "*The earth was invisible and unformed.*" For having said that "*He made*" it, and having settled its proper limit, he afterwards declares fearlessly what follows, as knowing that there is no one so silly as to suppose that it is without beginning and uncreated, since the word "*earth,*" and that other "*made,*" are enough to convince even a very simple person that it is not eternal nor increate, but one of those things created in time.

3. Besides, the expression "*was,*" applied to the earth and to man, is not indicative of absolute existence. But in the case of a man (it denotes) his being of a certain place, in that of the earth its being in a certain way. For he has not said absolutely "*the earth was,*" and then held his peace, but has taught how it was even after its creation, as that it was "*invisible and unformed,*" as yet covered by the waters and in confusion. So in the case of Elkanah he does not merely say that "*there was a man,*" but adds also whence he was, "*of Armathaim Zophim.*" But in the case of "*the Word,*" it is not so. I am ashamed to try these cases, one against the other, for if we find fault with those who do so in the case of men, when there is a great difference in the virtue of those who are so tried, though in truth their substance be one; where the difference both of nature and of everything else is so infinite, is it not the extremest madness to raise such questions? But

may He who is blasphemed by them be merciful to us. For it was not we who invented the necessity of such discussions, but they who war against their own salvation laid it on us.

What then do I say? That this first "*was,*" applied to "*the Word,*" is only indicative of His eternal Being, (for "*In the beginning,*" he says, "*was the Word,*") and that the second "*was,*" ("*and the Word was with God,*") denotes His relative Being. For since to be eternal and without beginning is most peculiar to God, this he puts first; and then, lest any one hearing that He was "*in the beginning,*" should assert, that He was "*unbegotten*" also, he immediately remedies this by saying, before he declares what He was, that He was "*with God.*" And he has prevented any one from supposing, that this "*Word*" is simply such a one as is either uttered or conceived, by the addition, as I beforesaid, of the article, as well as by this second expression. For he does not say, was "*in God,*" but was "*with God*": declaring to us His eternity as to person. Then, as he advances, he has more clearly revealed it, by adding, that this "*Word*" also "*was God.*"

"*But yet created,*" it may be said. What then hindered him from saying, that "*In the beginning God made the Word*"? At least Moses speaking of the earth says, not that "*in the beginning was the earth,*" but that "*He made it,*" and then it was. What now hindered John from saying in like manner, that "*In the beginning God made the Word*"? For if Moses feared lest any one should assert that the earth was uncreated, much more ought John to have feared this respecting the Son, if He was indeed created. The world being visible, by this very circumstance proclaims its Maker, ("*the heavens,*" says the Psalmist, "*declare the glory of God*" [Psalm 19:1]), but the Son is invisible, and is greatly, infinitely, higher than all creation. If now, in the one instance, where we needed neither argument nor teaching to know that the world is created, yet the prophet sets down this fact clearly and before

all others; much more should John have declared the same concerning the Son, if He had really been created.

"Yes," it may be said, *"but Peter has asserted this clearly and openly."* Where and when? *"When speaking to the Jews he said, that 'God has made Him both Lord and Christ.'"* [Acts 2:36] Why do you not add what follows, *"That same Jesus whom you have crucified"*? Or do you not know that of the words, part relate to His unmixed Nature, part to His Incarnation? But if this be not the case, and you will absolutely understand all as referring to the Godhead, then you will make the Godhead capable of suffering; but if not capable of suffering, then not created. For if blood had flowed from that divine and ineffable Nature, and if that Nature, and not the flesh, had been torn and cut by the nails upon the cross, on this supposition your quibbling would have had reason; but if not even the devil himself could utter such a blasphemy, why do you feign to be ignorant with ignorance so unpardonable, and such as not the evil spirits themselves could pretend? Besides the expressions *"Lord"* and *"Christ"* belong not to His Essence, but to His dignity; for the one refers to His Power, the other to his having been anointed. What then would you say concerning the Son of God? For if he were even, as you assert, created, this argument could not have place. For He was not first created and afterwards God chose Him, nor does He hold a kingdom which could be thrown aside, but one which belongs by nature to His Essence; since, when asked if He were a King, He answers, *"To this end was I born."* [John 18:37] But Peter speaks as concerning one chosen, because his argument wholly refers to the Dispensation.

4. And why do you wonder if Peter says this? For Paul, reasoning with the Athenians, calls Him *"Man"* only, saying, *"By that Man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance to all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead."* [Acts 17:31] He speaks nothing concerning *"the form*

of God" [Philippians 2:6], nor that He was "*equal to Him*," nor that He was the "*brightness of His glory*." [Hebrews 1:3] And with reason. The time for words like these was not yet come; but it would have contented him that they should in the meanwhile admit that He was Man, and that He rose again from the dead. Christ Himself acted in the same manner, from whom Paul having learned, used this reserve. For He did not at once reveal to us His Divinity, but was at first held to be a Prophet and a good man; but afterwards His real nature was shown by His works and words. On this account Peter too at first used this method, (for this was the first sermon that he made to the Jews;) and because they were not yet able clearly to understand anything respecting His Godhead, he dwelt on the arguments relating to His Incarnation; that their ears being exercised in these, might open a way to the rest of his teaching. And if any one will go through all the sermon from the beginning, he will find what I say very observable, for he (Peter) calls Him "*Man*," and dwells on the accounts of His Passion, His Resurrection, and His generation according to the flesh. Paul too when he says, "*Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh*" [Romans 1:3], only teaches us that the word "*made*" is taken with a view to His Incarnation, as we allow. But the son of thunder is now speaking to us concerning His Ineffable and Eternal Existence, and therefore he leaves the word "*made*" and puts "*was*"; yet if He were created, this point he needs must most especially have determined. For if Paul feared that some foolish persons might suppose that He shall be greater than the Father, and have Him who begot Him made subject to Him, (for this is the reason why the Apostle in sending to the Corinthians writes, "*But when He says, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him*," yet who could possibly imagine that the Father, even in common with all things, will be subject to the Son?) if, I say, he

nevertheless feared these foolish imaginations, and says, "*He is excepted that did put all things under Him;*" much more if the Son of God were indeed created, ought John to have feared lest any one should suppose Him uncreated, and to have taught on this point before any other.

But now, since He was Begotten, with good reason neither John nor any other, whether apostle or prophet, has asserted that He was created. Neither had it been so would the Only-Begotten Himself have let it pass unmentioned. For He who spoke of Himself so humbly from condescension would certainly not have been silent on this matter. And I think it not unreasonable to suppose, that He would be more likely to have the higher Nature, and say nothing of it, than not having it to pass by this omission, and fail to make known that He had it not. For in the first case there was a good excuse for silence, namely, His desire to teach mankind humility by being silent as to the greatness of His attributes; but in the second case you can find no just excuse for silence. For why should He who declined many of His real attributes have been, if He were created, silent as to His having been made? He who, in order to teach humility, often uttered expressions of lowliness, such as did not properly belong to Him, much more if He had been indeed created, would not have failed to speak of this. Do you not see Him, in order that none may imagine Him not to have been begotten, doing and saying everything to show that He was so, uttering words unworthy both of His dignity and His essence, and descending to the humble character of a Prophet? For the expression, "*As I hear, I judge*" [John 5:30]; and that other, "*He has told Me what I should say, and what I should speak*" [John 12:49], and the like, belong merely to a prophet. If now, from His desire to remove this suspicion, He did not disdain to utter words thus lowly, much more if He were created would He have said many like words, that none might suppose Him to be uncreated; as, "*Think not that I am*

begotten of the Father; I am created, not begotten, nor do I share His essence." But as it is, He does the very contrary, and utters words which compel men, even against their will and desire, to admit the opposite opinion. As, *"I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"* [John 14:11]; and, *"Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me, has seen the Father."* [John 14:9] And, *"That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."* [John 5:23] *"As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."* [John 5:21] *"My Father works hitherto, and I work."* [John 5:17] *"As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father."* [John 10:15] *"I and My Father are One."* [John 10:30] And everywhere by putting the *"as,"* and the *"so,"* and the *"being with the Father,"* He declares His undeviating likeness to Him. His power in Himself He manifests by these, as well as by many other words; as when He says, *"Peace, be still."* [Mark 4:39] *"I will, be thou clean."* [Matthew 8:3] *"Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge you, come out of him."* [Mark 9:25] And again, *"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, You shall not kill; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger."* [Matthew 5:21-22] And all the other laws which He gave, and wonders which He worked, are sufficient to show His power, or rather, I should say, a very small part of them is enough to bring over and convince any, except the utterly insensate.

5. But vainglory is a thing powerful to blind even to very evident truths the minds of those ensnared by it, and to persuade them to dispute against what is allowed by others; nay, it instigates some who know and are persuaded of the truth to pretended ignorance and opposition. As took place in the case of the Jews, for they did not through ignorance deny the Son of God, but that they might obtain honor from the multitude; *"they believed,"*

says the Evangelist, but were afraid, *"lest they should be put out of the synagogue."* [John 12:40] And so they gave up their salvation to others. For it cannot be that he who is so zealous a slave to the glory of this present world can obtain the glory which is from God. Wherefore He rebuked them, saying, *"How can you believe, which receive honor of men, and seek not the honor which comes from God?"* [John 5:44] This passion is a sort of deep intoxication, and makes him who is subdued by it hard to recover. And having detached the souls of its captives from heavenly things, it nails them to earth, and lets them not look up to the true light, but persuades them ever to wallow in the mire, giving them masters so powerful, that they have the rule over them without needing to use commands. For the man who is sick of this disease, does of his own accord, and without bidding, all that he thinks will be agreeable to his masters. On their account he clothes himself in rich apparel, and beautifies his face, taking these pains not for himself but for others; and he leads about a train of followers through the marketplace, that others may admire him, and all that he does he goes through, merely out of obsequiousness to the rest of the world. Can any state of mind be more wretched than this? That others may admire him, he is ever being precipitated to ruin.

Would you learn what a tyrannous sway it exercises? Why surely, the words of Christ are sufficient to show it all. But yet listen to these further remarks. If you will ask any of those men who mingle in state affairs and incur great expenses, why they lavish so much gold, and what their so vast expenditure means; you will hear from them, that it is for nothing else but to gratify the people. If again you ask what the people may be; they will say, that it is a thing full of confusion and turbulent, made up for the most part of folly, tossed blindly to and fro like the waves of the sea, and often composed of varying and adverse opinions. Must not the man who has such

a master be more pitiable than any one? And yet strange though it be, it is not so strange that worldly men should be eager about these things; but that those who say that they have started away from the world should be sick of this same disease, or rather of one more grievous still, this is the strangest thing of all. For with the first the loss extends only to money, but in the last case the danger reaches to the soul. For when men alter a right faith for reputation's sake, and dishonor God that they may be in high repute themselves, tell me, what excess of stupidity and madness must there not be in what they do? Other passions, even if they are very hurtful, at least bring some pleasure with them, though it be but for a time and fleeting; those who love money, or wine, or women, have, with their hurt, a pleasure, though a brief one. But those who are taken captives by this passion, live a life continually embittered and stripped of enjoyment, for they do not obtain what they earnestly desire, glory, I mean, from the many. They think they enjoy it, but do not really, because the thing they aim at is not glory at all. And therefore their state of mind is not called glory, but a something void of glory, vaingloriousness, so have all the ancients named it, and with good reason; inasmuch as it is quite empty, and contains nothing bright or glorious within it, but as players' masks seem to be bright and lovely, but are hollow within, (for which cause, though they be more beautiful than natural faces, yet they never draw any to love them,) even so, or rather yet more wretchedly, has the applause of the multitude tricked out for us this passion, dangerous as an antagonist, and cruel as a master. Its countenance alone is bright, but within it is no more like the mask's mere emptiness, but crammed with dishonor, and full of savage tyranny. Whence then, it may be asked, has this passion, so unreasonable, so devoid of pleasure, its birth? Whence else but from a low, mean soul? It cannot be that one who is captivated by love of applause should imagine readily anything great or

noble; he needs must be base, mean, dishonorable, little. He who does nothing for virtue's sake, but to please men worthy of no consideration, and who ever makes account of their mistaken and erring opinions, how can he be worth anything? Consider; if any one should ask him, What do you think of the many? He clearly would say, "*that they are thoughtless, and not to be regarded.*" Then if any one again should ask him, "*Would you choose to be like them?*" I do not suppose he could possibly desire to be like them. Must it not then be excessively ridiculous to seek the good opinion of those whom you never would choose to resemble?

6. Do you say that they are many and a sort of collective body? This is the very reason why you ought most to despise them. If when taken singly they are contemptible, still more will this be the case when they are many; for when they are assembled together, their individual folly is increased by numbers, and becomes greater. So that a man might possibly take a single one of them and set him right, but could not do so with them when together, because then their folly becomes intense, and they are led like sheep, and follow in every direction the opinions of one another. Tell me, will you seek to obtain this vulgar glory? Do not, I beg and entreat you. It turns everything upside down; it is the mother of avarice, of slander, of false witness, of treacheries; it arms and exasperates those who have received no injury against those who have inflicted none. He who has fallen into this disease neither knows friendship nor remembers old companionship, and knows not how to respect any one at all; he has cast away from his soul all goodness, and is at war with every one, unstable, without natural affection.

Again, the passion of anger, tyrannical though it be and hard to bear, still is not wont always to disturb, but only when it has persons that excite it; but that of vainglory is ever active, and there is no time, as one may say, when it can cease, since reason neither hinders nor restrains it, but it is

always with us not only persuading us to sin, but snatching from our hands anything which we may chance to do aright, or sometimes not allowing us to do right at all. If Paul calls covetousness idolatry, what ought we to name that which is mother, and root, and source of it, I mean, vainglory? We cannot possibly find any term such as its wickedness deserves. Beloved, let us now return to our senses; let us put off this filthy garment, let us rend and cut it off from us, let us at some time or other become free with true freedom, and be sensible of the nobility which has been given to us by God; let us despise vulgar applause. For nothing is so ridiculous and disgraceful as this passion, nothing so full of shame and dishonor. One may in many ways see, that to love honor, is dishonor; and that true honor consists in neglecting honor, in making no account of it, but in saying and doing everything according to what seems good to God. In this way we shall be able to receive a reward from Him who sees exactly all our doings, if we are content to have Him only for a spectator. What need we other eyes, when He who shall confer the prize is ever beholding our actions? Is it not a strange thing that, whatever a servant does, he should do to please his master, should seek nothing more than his master's observation, desire not to attract other eyes (though they be great men who are looking on) to his conduct, but aim at one thing only, that his master may observe him; while we who have a Lord so great, seek other spectators who can nothing profit, but rather hurt us by their observation, and make all our labor vain? Not so, I beseech you. Let us call Him to applaud and view our actions from whom we shall receive our rewards. Let us have nothing to do with human eyes. For if we should even desire to attain this honor, we shall then attain to it, when we seek that which comes from God alone. For, He says, "*Them that honor Me, I will honor.*" [1 Samuel 2:30] And even as we are best supplied with riches when we despise them, and seek only the wealth which comes

from God ("*Seek*," he says, "*the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you*" [Matthew 6:33]); so it is in the case of honor. When the granting either of riches or honor is no longer attended with danger to us, then God gives them freely; and it is then unattended with danger, when they have not the rule or power over us, do not command us as slaves, but belong to us as masters and free men. For the reason that He wishes us not to love them is, that we may not be ruled by them; and if we succeed in this respect, He gives us them with great liberality. Tell me, what is brighter than Paul, when he says, "*We seek not honor of men, neither of you, nor yet of others.*" [1 Thessalonians 2:6] What then is richer than him who has nothing, and yet possesses all things? For as I said, when we are not mastered by them, then we shall master them, then we shall receive them. If then we desire to obtain honor, let us shun honor, so shall we be enabled after accomplishing the laws of God to obtain both the good things which are here, and those which are promised, by the grace of Christ, with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 4 on the Gospel of John

John 1:1

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God."

1. When children are just brought to their learning, their teachers do not give them many tasks in succession, nor do they set them once for all, but they often repeat to them the same short ones, so that what is said may be easily implanted in their minds, and they may not be vexed at the first onset with the quantity, and with finding it hard to remember, and become less active in picking up what is given them, a kind of sluggishness arising from the difficulty. And I, who wish to effect the same with you, and to render your labor easy, take little by little the food which lies on this Divine table, and instill it into your souls. On this account I shall handle again the same words, not so as to say again the same things, but to set before you only what yet remains. Come, then, let us again apply our discourse to the introduction.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." Why, when all the other Evangelists had begun with the Dispensation ; (for Matthew says, *"The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David"*; and Luke too relates to us in the beginning of his Gospel the events relating to Mary; and in like manner Mark dwells on the same narratives, from that point detailing to us the history of the Baptist;) why, when they began with these matters, did John briefly and in a later place hint at them, saying, *"the Word was made flesh"* [John 1:14]; and, passing by everything else, His conception, His birth, His bringing up, His growth, at once discourse to us concerning His Eternal Generation?

I will now tell you what the reason of this is. Because the other Evangelists had dwelt most on the accounts of His coming in the flesh, there was fear lest some, being of grovelling minds, might for this reason rest in these doctrines alone, as indeed was the case with Paul of Samosata. In order, therefore, to lead away from this fondness for earth those who were like to fall into it, and to draw them up towards heaven, with good reason he commences his narrative from above, and from the eternal subsistence. For while Matthew enters upon his relation from Herod the king, Luke from Tiberius Cæsar, Mark from the Baptism of John, this Apostle, leaving alone all these things, ascends beyond all time or age. Thither darting forward the imagination of his hearers to the "*was in the beginning,*" not allowing it to stay at any point, nor setting any limit, as they did in Herod, and Tiberius, and John.

And what we may mention besides as especially deserving our admiration is, that John, though he gave himself up to the higher doctrine, yet did not neglect the Dispensation; nor were the others, though intent upon the relation of this, silent as to the subsistence before the ages. With good cause; for One Spirit It was that moved the souls of all; and therefore they have shown great unanimity in their narrative. But you, beloved, when you have heard of "*The Word,*" do not endure those who say, that He is a work; nor those even who think, that He is simply a word. For many are the words of God which angels execute, but of those words none is God; they all are prophecies or commands, (for in Scripture it is usual to call the laws of God His commands, and prophecies, words; wherefore in speaking of the angels, he says, "*Mighty in strength, fulfilling His word*") [Psalm 103:20], but this Word is a Being with subsistence, proceeding without affection from the Father Himself. For this, as I before said, he has shown by the term "*Word.*" As therefore the expression, "*In the beginning was the Word,*"

shows His Eternity, so *"was in the beginning with God,"* has declared to us His Co-eternity. For that you may not, when you hear *"In the beginning was the Word,"* suppose Him to be Eternal, and yet imagine the life of the Father to differ from His by some interval and longer duration, and so assign a beginning to the Only-Begotten, he adds, *"was in the beginning with God";* so eternally even as the Father Himself, for the Father was never without the Word, but He was always God with God, yet Each in His proper Person.

How then, one says, does John assert, that He was in the world, if He was with God? Because He was both with God and in the world also. For neither Father nor Son are limited in any way. Since, if *"there is no end of His greatness"* [Psalm 145:3], and if *"of His wisdom there is no number"* [Psalm 147:5], it is clear that there cannot be any beginning in time to His Essence. You have heard, that *"In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth"* [Genesis 1:1]; what do you understand from this *"beginning"*? Clearly, that they were created before all visible things. So, respecting the Only-Begotten, when you hear that He was *"in the beginning,"* conceive of him as before all intelligible things, and before the ages.

But if any one say, *"How can it be that He is a Son, and yet not younger than the Father? Since that which proceeds from something else needs must be later than that from which it proceeds";* we will say that, properly speaking, these are human reasonings; that he who questions on this matter will question on others yet more improper; and that to such we ought not even to give ear. For our speech is now concerning God, not concerning the nature of men, which is subject to the sequence and necessary conclusions of these reasonings. Still, for the assurance of the weaker sort, we will speak even to these points.

2. Tell me, then, does the radiance of the sun proceed from the substance itself of the sun, or from some other source? Any one not

deprived of his very senses needs must confess, that it proceeds from the substance itself. Yet, although the radiance proceeds from the sun itself, we cannot say that it is later in point of time than the substance of that body, since the sun has never appeared without its rays. Now if in the case of these visible and sensible bodies there has been shown to be something which proceeds from something else, and yet is not after that from whence it proceeds; why are you incredulous in the case of the invisible and ineffable Nature? This same thing there takes place, but in a manner suitable to That Substance. For it is for this reason that Paul too calls Him "*Brightness*" [Hebrews 1:3]; setting forth thereby His being from Him and His Co-eternity. Again, tell me, were not all the ages, and every interval created by Him? Any man not deprived of his senses must necessarily confess this. There is no interval therefore between the Son and the Father; and if there be none, then He is not after, but Co-eternal with Him. For "*before*" and "*after*" are notions implying time, since, without age or time, no man could possibly imagine these words; but God is above times and ages.

But if in any case you say that you have found a beginning to the Son, see whether by the same reason and argument you are not compelled to reduce the Father also to a beginning, earlier indeed, but still a beginning. For when you have assigned to the Son a limit and beginning of existence, do you not proceed upwards from that point, and say, that the Father was before it? Clearly you do. Tell me then, what is the extent of the Father's prior subsistence? For whether you say that the interval is little, or whether you say it is great, you equally have brought the Father to a beginning. For it is clear, that it is by measuring the space that you say whether it is little or great; yet it would not be possible to measure it, unless there were a beginning on either side; so that as far as you are concerned you have given

the Father a beginning, and henceforth, according to your argument, not even the Father will be without beginning. See you that the word spoken by the Saviour is true, and the saying everywhere discovers its force? And what is that word? It is *"He that honors not the Son, honors not the Father."* [John 5:23]

And I know indeed that what now has been said cannot by many be comprehended, and therefore it is that in many places we avoid agitating questions of human reasonings, because the rest of the people cannot follow such arguments, and if they could, still they have nothing firm or sure in them. *"For the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices are but uncertain."* [Wisdom 9:14] Still I should like to ask our objectors, what means that which is said by the Prophet, *"Before Me there was no God formed, nor is there any after Me"*? [Isaiah 43:10] For if the Son is younger than the Father, how, says He, *"Nor is there any after me"*? Will you take away the being of the Only-Begotten Himself? You either must dare this, or admit one Godhead with distinct Persons of the Father and Son.

Finally, how could the expression, *"All things were made by Him,"* be true? For if there is an age older than He, how can that which was before Him have been made by Him? Do you see to what daring the argument has carried them, when once the truth has been unsettled? Why did not the Evangelist say, that He was made from things that were not, as Paul declares of all things, when he says, *"Who calls those things which be not as though they were"*; but says, *"Was in the beginning"*? [Romans 4:17] This is contrary to that; and with good reason. For God neither is made, nor has anything older; these are words of the Greeks. Tell me this too: Would you not say, that the Creator beyond all comparison excels His works? Yet since that which is from things that were not is similar to them, where is the superiority not admitting of comparison? And what mean the expressions,

"I am the first and I am the last" [Isaiah 44:6]; and, *"before Me was no other God formed"*? [Isaiah 43:10] For if the Son be not of the same Essence, there is another God; and if He be not Co-eternal, He is after Him; and if He did not proceed from His Essence, clear it is that He was made. But if they assert, that these things were said to distinguish Him from idols, why do they not allow that it is to distinguish Him from idols that he says, *"the Only True God"*? [John 17:3] Besides, if this was said to distinguish Him from idols, how would you interpret the whole sentence? *"After Me,"* He says, *"is no other God."* In saying this, He does not exclude the Son, but that *"After Me there is no idol God,"* not that *"there is no Son."* Allowed, says he; what then? And the expression, *"Before Me was no other God formed,"* will you so understand, as that no idol God indeed was formed before Him, but yet a Son was formed before Him? What evil spirit would assert this? I do not suppose that even Satan himself would do so.

Moreover, if He be not Co-eternal with the Father, how can you say that His Life is infinite? For if it have a beginning from before, although it be endless, yet it is not infinite; for the infinite must be infinite in both directions. As Paul also declared, when he said, *"Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life"* [Hebrews 7:3]; by this expression showing that He is both without beginning and without end. For as the one has no limit, so neither has the other. In one direction there is no end, in the other no beginning.

3. And how again, since He is *"Life,"* was there ever when He was not? For all must allow, that Life both is always, and is without beginning and without end, if It be indeed Life, as indeed It is. For if there be when It is not, how can It be the life of others, when It even Itself is not?

"How then," says one, *"does John lay down a beginning by saying, 'In the beginning was'?"* Tell me, have you attended to the *"In the beginning,"*

and to the "was," and do you not understand the expression, "*the Word was*"? What! When the Prophet says, "*From everlasting and to everlasting You are*" [Psalm 90:2], does he say this to assign Him limits? No, but to declare His Eternity. Consider now that the case is the same in this place. He did not use the expression as assigning limits, since he did not say, "*had a beginning*," but "*was in the beginning*"; by the word "*was*" carrying you forward to the idea that the Son is without beginning. "*Yet observe*," says he, "*the Father is named with the addition of the article, but the Son without it.*" What then, when the Apostle says, "*The Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*" [Titus 2:13]; and again, "*Who is above all, God*"? [Romans 9:5] It is true that here he has mentioned the Son, without the article; but he does the same with the Father also, at least in his Epistle to the Philippians [Philippians 2:6], he says, "*Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*"; and again to the Romans, "*Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*" [Romans 1:7] Besides, it was superfluous for it to be attached in that place, when close above it was continually attached to "*the Word.*" For as in speaking concerning the Father, he says, "*God is a Spirit*" [John 4:24], and we do not, because the article is not joined to "*Spirit*," yet deny the Spiritual Nature of God; so here, although the article is not annexed to the Son, the Son is not on that account a less God. Why so? Because in saying "*God*," and again "*God*," he does not reveal to us any difference in this Godhead, but the contrary; for having before said, "*and the Word was God*"; that no one might suppose the Godhead of the Son to be inferior, he immediately adds the characteristics of genuine Godhead, including Eternity, (for "*He was*," says he, "*in the beginning with God*,") and attributing to Him the office of Creator. For "*by Him were all things made, and without Him was not anything made that was made*"; which His Father also everywhere by the

Prophets declares to be especially characteristic of His own Essence. And the Prophets are continually busy on this kind of demonstration, not only of itself, but when they contend against the honor shown to idols; "*Let the gods perish,*" says one "*who have not made heaven and earth*" [Jeremiah 10:11]; and again, "*I have stretched out the heaven with My hand*" [Isaiah 44:24]; and it is as declaring it to be indicative of Divinity, that He everywhere puts it. And the Evangelist himself was not satisfied with these words, but calls Him "*Life*" too and "*Light.*" If now He was ever with the Father, if He Himself created all things, if He brought all things into existence, and keeps together all things, (for, this he meant by "*Life,*") if He enlightens all things, who so senseless as to say, that the Evangelist desired to teach an inferiority of Divinity by those very expressions, by which, rather than by any others, it is possible to express its equality and not differing? Let us not then confound the creation with the Creator, lest we too hear it said of us, that "*they served the creature rather than the Creator*" [Romans 1:25]; for although it be asserted that this is said of the heavens, still in speaking of the heavens he positively says, that we must not serve the creature, for it is a heathenish thing.

4. Let us therefore not lay ourselves under this curse. For this the Son of God came, that He might rid us from this service; for this He took the form of a slave, that He might free us from this slavery; for this He was spit upon, for this He was buffeted, for this He endured the shameful death. Let us not, I entreat you, make all these things of none effect, let us not go back to our former unrighteousness, or rather to unrighteousness much more grievous; for to serve the creature is not the same thing as to bring down the Creator, as far at least as in us lies, to the meanness of the creature. For He continues being such as He is; as says the Psalmist, "*You are the same, and Your years shall not fail.*" [Psalm 102:27] Let us then glorify Him as we

have received from our fathers, let us glorify Him both by our faith and by our works; for sound doctrines avail us nothing to salvation, if our life is corrupt. Let us then order it according to what is well-pleasing to God, setting ourselves far from all filthiness, unrighteousness, and covetousness, as strangers and foreigners and aliens to the things here on earth. If any have much wealth and possessions, let him so use them as one who is a sojourner, and who, whether he will or not, shall shortly pass from them. If one be injured by another, let him not be angry forever, nay rather not even for a time. For the Apostle has not allowed us more than a single day for the venting of anger.

"Let not," says he, *"the sun go down upon your wrath"* [Ephesians 4:26]; and with reason; for it is matter for contentment that even in so short a time nothing unpleasant take place; but if night also overtake us, what has happened becomes more grievous, because the fire of our wrath is increased ten thousand times by memory, and we at our leisure enquire into it more bitterly. Before therefore we obtain this pernicious leisure and kindle a hotter fire, he bids us arrest beforehand and quench the mischief. For the passion of wrath is fierce, fiercer than any flame; and so we need much haste to prevent the flame, and not allow it to blaze up high, for so this disease becomes a cause of many evils. It has overturned whole houses, it has dissolved old companionships, and has worked tragedies not to be remedied in a short moment of time. *"For,"* says one, *"the sway of his fury shall be his destruction."* [Sirach 1:22] Let us not then leave such a wild beast unbridled, but put upon him a muzzle in all ways strong, the fear of the judgment to come. Whenever a friend grieves you, or one of your own family exasperates you, think of the sins you have committed against God, and that by kindness towards him you make that judgment more lenient to

yourself, ("*Forgive,*" says He, "*and you shall be forgiven*") [Luke 6:37], and your passion shall quickly skulk away.

And besides, consider this, whether there has been a time when thou were being carried away into ferocity, and controlled yourself, and another time when you have been dragged along by the passion. Compare the two seasons, and you shall gain thence great improvement. For tell me, when did you praise yourself? Was it when you were worsted, or when you had the mastery? Do we not in the first case vehemently blame ourselves, and feel ashamed. even when none reproves us, and do not many feelings of repentance come over us, both for what we have said and done; but when we gain the mastery, then are we not proud, and exult as conquerors? For victory in the case of anger is, not the requiting evil with the like, (that is utter defeat,) but the bearing meekly to be ill treated and ill spoken of. To get the better is not to inflict but to suffer evil. Therefore when angry do not say, "*certainly I will retaliate,*" "*certainly I will be revenged*"; do not persist in saying to those who exhort you to gain a victory, "*I will not endure that the man mock me, and escape clear.*" He will never mock you, except when you avenge yourself; or if he even should mock you he will do so as a fool. Seek not when you conquer honor from fools, but consider that sufficient which comes from men of understanding. Nay, why do I set before you a small and mean body of spectators, when I make it up of men? Look up straight to God: He will praise you, and the man who is approved by Him must not seek honor from mortals. Mortal honor often arises from flattery or hatred of others, and brings no profit; but the decision of God is free from this inequality, and brings great advantage to the man whom He approves. This praise then let us follow after.

Will you learn what an evil is anger? Stand by while others are quarreling in the forum. In yourself you cannot easily see the disgrace of

the thing, because your reason is darkened and drunken; but when you are clear from the passion, and while your judgment is sound, view your own case in others. Observe, I pray you, the crowds collecting round, and the angry men like maniacs acting shamefully in the midst. For when the passion boils up within the breast, and becomes excited and savage, the mouth breathes fire, the eyes emit fire, all the face becomes swollen, the hands are extended disorderly, the feet dance ridiculously, and they spring at those who restrain them, and differ nothing from madmen in their insensibility to all these things; nay, differ not from wild asses, kicking and biting. Truly a passionate man is not a graceful one.

And then, when after this exceedingly ridiculous conduct, they return home and come to themselves, they have the greater pain, and much fear, thinking who were present when they were angry. For like raving men, they did not then know the standers by, but when they have returned to their right mind, then they consider, were they friends? Were they foes and enemies that looked on? And they fear alike about both; the first because they will condemn them and give them more shame; the others because they will rejoice at it. And if they have even exchanged blows, then their fear is the more pressing; for instance, lest anything very grievous happen to the sufferer; a fever follow and bring on death, or a troublesome swelling rise and place him in danger of the worst. And, "*what need*" (say they) "*had I of fighting, and violence, and quarreling? Perish such things.*" And then they curse the ill-fated business which caused them to begin, and the more foolish lay on "*wicked spirits,*" and "*an evil hour,*" the blame of what has been done; but these things are not from an evil hour, (for there is no such thing as an evil hour,) nor from a wicked spirit, but from the wickedness of those captured by the passion; they draw the spirits to them, and bring upon themselves all things terrible. "*But the heart swells,*" says one, "*and is stung*

by insults." I know it; and that is the reason why I admire those who master this dreadful wild beast; yet it is possible if we will, to beat off the passion. For why when our rulers insult us do we not feel it? It is because fear counterbalances the passion, and frightens us from it, and does not allow it to spring up at all. And why too do our servants, though insulted by us in ten thousand ways, bear all in silence? Because they too have the same restraint laid upon them. And think thou not merely of the fear of God, but that it is even God Himself who then insults you, who bids you be silent, and then you will bear all things meekly, and say to the aggressor, How can I be angry with you? There is another that restrains both my hand and my tongue; and the saying will be a suggestion of sound wisdom, both to yourself and to him. Even now we bear unbearable things on account of men, and often say to those who have insulted us, "*Such an one insulted me, not you.*" Shall we not use the same caution in the case of God? How else can we hope for pardon? Let us say to our soul, "*It is God who holds our hands, who now insults us; let us not be restive, let not God be less honored by us than men.*" Did you shudder at the word? I wish you would shudder not at the word only, but at the deed. For God has commanded us when buffeted not only to endure it, but even to offer ourselves to suffer something worse; and we withstand Him with such vehemence, that we not only refuse to offer ourselves to suffer evil, but even avenge ourselves, nay often are the first to act on the offensive, and think we are disgraced if we do not the same in return. Yes, and the mischief is, that when utterly worsted we think ourselves conquerors, and when lying undermost and receiving ten thousand blows from the devil, then we imagine that we are mastering him. Let us then, I exhort you, understand what is the nature of this victory, and this kind of nature let us follow after. To suffer evil is to get the crown. If then we wish to be proclaimed victors by God, let us not in

these contests observe the laws of heathen games, but those of God, and learn to bear all things with longsuffering; for so we may get the better of our antagonists, and obtain both present and promised goods, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 5 on the Gospel of John

John 1:3

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

1. Moses in the beginning of the history and writings of the Old Testament speaks to us of the objects of sense, and enumerates them to us at length. For, *"In the beginning,"* he says, *"God made the heaven and the earth,"* and then he adds, that light was created, and a second heaven and the stars, the various kinds of living creatures, and, that we may not delay by going through particulars, everything else. But this Evangelist, cutting all short, includes both these things and the things which are above these in a single sentence; with reason, because they were known to his hearers, and because he is hastening to a greater subject, and has instituted all his treatise, that he might speak not of the works but of the Creator, and Him who produced them all. And therefore Moses, though he has selected the smaller portion of the creation, (for he has spoken nothing to us concerning the invisible powers,) dwells on these things; while John, as hastening to ascend to the Creator Himself, runs by both these things, and those on which Moses was silent, having comprised them in one little saying, *"All things were made by Him."* And that you may not think that he merely speaks of all the things mentioned by Moses, he adds, that *"without Him was not anything made that was made."* That is to say, that of created things, not one, whether it be visible or intelligible was brought into being without the power of the Son.

For we will not put the full stop after "*not anything*," as the heretics do. They, because they wish to make the Spirit created, say, "*What was made, in Him was Life*"; yet so what is said becomes unintelligible. First, it was not the time here to make mention of the Spirit, and if he desired to do so, why did he state it so indistinctly? For how is it clear that this saying relates to the Spirit? Besides, we shall find by this argument, not that the Spirit, but that the Son Himself, is created by Himself. But rouse yourselves, that what is said may not escape you; and come, let us read for a while after their fashion, for so its absurdity will be clearer to us. "*What was made, in Him was Life*." They say that the Spirit is called "*Life*." But this "*Life*" is found to be also "*Light*," for he adds, "*And the Life was the Light of men*." [John 1:4] Therefore, according to them the "*Light of men*" here means the Spirit. Well, but when he goes on to say, that "*There was a man sent from God, to bear witness of that Light*" [vers. 6, 7], they needs must assert, that this too is spoken of the Spirit; for whom he above called "*Word*," Him as he proceeds he calls "*God*," and "*Life*," and "*Light*." This "*Word*" he says was "*Life*," and this "*Life*" was "*Light*." If now this Word was Life, and if this Word and this Life became flesh, then the Life, that is to say, the Word, "*was made flesh, and we beheld*" Its "*glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father*." If then they say that the Spirit is here called "*Life*," consider what strange consequences will follow. It will be the Spirit, not the Son, that was made flesh; the Spirit will be the Only-Begotten Son.

And those who read the passage so will fall, if not into this, yet in avoiding this into another most strange conclusion. If they allow that the words are spoken of the Son, and yet do not stop or read as we do, then they will assert that the Son is created by Himself. Since, if "*the Word was Life*," and "*what was made in Him was Life*"; according to this reading He is

created in Himself and through Himself. Then after some words between, he has added, *"And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father."* [John 1:14] See, the Holy Spirit is found, according to the reading of those who assert these things, to be also an only-begotten Son, for it is concerning Him that all this declaration is uttered by him. See when the word has swerved from the truth, whither it is perverted, and what strange consequences it produces!

What then, says one, is not the Spirit *"Light"*? It is Light: but in this place there is no mention of the Spirit. Since even God (the Father) is called *"Spirit,"* that is to say, incorporeal, yet God (the Father) is not absolutely meant wherever *"Spirit"* is mentioned. And why do you wonder if we say this of the Father? We could not even say of the Comforter, that wherever *"Spirit"* (is mentioned), the Comforter is absolutely meant, and yet this is His most distinctive name; still not always where Spirit (is mentioned) is the Comforter (meant). Thus Christ is called *"the power of God"* [1 Corinthians 1:24], and *"the wisdom of God"*; yet not always where *"the power"* and *"the wisdom of God"* are mentioned is Christ meant; so in this passage, although the Spirit does give *"Light,"* yet the Evangelist is not now speaking of the Spirit.

When we have shut them out from these strange opinions, they who take all manner of pains to withstand the truth, say, (still clinging to the same reading,) *"Whatever came into existence by him was life, because,"* says one, *"whatever came into existence was life."* What then do you say of the punishment of the men of Sodom, and the flood, and hell fire, and ten thousand like things? *"But,"* says one, *"we are speaking of the material creation."* Well, these too belong entirely to the material creation. But that we may out of our abundance refute their argument, we will ask them, *"Is wood, life,"* tell me? *"Is stone, life?"* these things that are lifeless and

motionless? Nay, is man absolutely life? Who would say so? He is not pure life, but is capable of receiving life.

2. See here again, an absurdity; by the same succession of consequences we will bring the argument to such a point, that even hence you may learn their folly. In this way they assert things by no means befitting of the Spirit. Being driven from their other ground, they apply those things to men, which they before thought to be spoken worthily of the Spirit. However, let us examine the reading itself this way also. The creature is now called "*life*," therefore, the same is "*light*," and John came to witness concerning it. Why then is not he also "*light*"? He says that "*he was not that light*" [John 1:8], and yet he belonged to created things? How then is he not "*light*"? How was he "*in the world, and the world was made by him*"? [John 1:10] Was the creature in the creature, and was the creature made by the creature? But how did "*the world know him not*"? How did the creature not know the creature? "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.*" [John 1:12] But enough of laughter. For the rest I leave it to you to attack these monstrous reasonings, that we may not seem to have chosen to raise a laugh for its own sake, and waste the time without cause. For if these things are neither said of the Spirit, (and it has been shown that they are not,) nor of anything created, and yet they still hold to the same reading, that stranger conclusion than any which we before mentioned, will follow, that the Son was made by Himself. For if the Son is the true Light, and this Light was Life, and this Life was made in Him, this must needs be the result according to their own reading. Let us then relinquish this reading, and come to the recognized reading and explanation.

And what is that? It is to make the sentence end at "*was made*," and to begin the next sentence with, "*In Him was Life.*" What (the Evangelist) says

is this, *"Without Him was not anything made that was made"*; whatever created thing was made, says he, was not made without Him. See you how by this short addition he has rectified all the besetting difficulties; for the saying, that *"without Him was not anything made,"* and then the adding, *"which was made,"* includes things cognizable by the intellect, but excludes the Spirit. For after he had said that *"all things were made by Him,"* and *"without Him was not anything made,"* he needed this addition, lest some one should say, *"If all things were made by Him, then the Spirit also was made."* "I," he replies, *"asserted that whatever was made was made by Him, even though it be invisible, or incorporeal, or in the heavens. For this reason, I did not say absolutely, 'all things,' but 'whatever was made,' that is, 'created things,' but the Spirit is uncreated."*

Do you see the precision of his teaching? He has alluded to the creation of material things, (for concerning these Moses had taught before him,) and after bringing us to advance from thence to higher things, I mean the immaterial and the invisible, he excepts the Holy Spirit from all creation. And so Paul, inspired by the same grace, said, *"For by Him were all things created."* [Colossians 1:16] Observe too here again the same exactness. For the same Spirit moved this soul also. That no one should except any created things from the works of God because of their being invisible, nor yet should confound the Comforter with them, after running through the objects of sense which are known to all, he enumerates also things in the heavens, saying, *"Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers"*; for the expression *"whether"* subjoined to each, shows to us nothing else but this, that *"by Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made."*

But if you think that the expression *"by"* is a mark of inferiority, (as making Christ an instrument,) hear him say, *"You, Lord, in the beginning,*

hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands." [Psalm 102:25] He says of the Son what is said of the Father in His character of Creator; which he would not have said, unless he had deemed of Him as of a Creator, and yet not subservient to any. And if the expression *"by Him"* is here used, it is put for no other reason but to prevent any one from supposing the Son to be Unbegotten. For that in respect of the title of Creator He is nothing inferior to the Father; hear from Himself, where He says, *"As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."* [John 5:21] If now in the Old Testament it is said of the Son, *"You, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth,"* His title of Creator is plain. But if you say that the Prophet spoke this of the Father, and that Paul attributed to the Son what was said of the Father, even so the conclusion is the same. For Paul would not have decided that the same expression suited the Son, unless he had been very confident that between Father and Son there was an equality of honor; since it would have been an act of extremest rashness to refer what suited an incomparable Nature to a nature inferior to, and falling short of it. But the Son is not inferior to, nor falls short of, the Essence of the Father; and therefore Paul has not only dared to use these expressions concerning Him, but also others like them. For the expression *"from Whom,"* which you decide to belong properly to the Father alone, he uses also concerning the Son, when he says, *"from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God."* [Colossians 2:19]

3. And he is not content with this only, he stops your mouths in another way also, by applying to the Father the expression *"by whom,"* which you say is a mark of inferiority. For he says, *"God is faithful, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son"* [1 Corinthians 1:9]:

and again, *"By His will"* [1 Corinthians 1:1, etc.]; and in another place, *"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things."* [Romans 11:26]

Neither is the expression *"from whom,"* assigned to the Son only, but also to the Spirit; for the angel said to Joseph, *"Fear not to take unto you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."*

[Matthew 1:20] As also the Prophet does not deem it improper to apply to the Father the expression *"in whom,"* which belongs to the Spirit, when he says, *"In God we shall do valiantly."* [Psalm 60:12] And Paul, *"Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey, in the will of God, to come unto you."* [Romans 1:10] And again he uses it of Christ, saying, *"In Christ Jesus."* [Romans 6:11, 23, etc.] In short, we may often and continually find these expressions interchanged; now this would not have taken place, had not the same Essence been in every instance their subject. And that you may not imagine that the words, *"All things were made by Him,"* are in this case used concerning His miracles, (for the other Evangelists have discoursed concerning these;) he farther goes on to say, *"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him";* (but not the Spirit, for This is not of the number of created things, but of those above all creation.)

Let us now attend to what follows. John having spoken of the work of creation, that *"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made,"* goes on to speak concerning His Providence, where he says, *"In Him was Life."* That no one may doubt how so many and so great things were *"made by Him,"* he adds, that *"In Him was Life."* For as with the fountain which is the mother of the great deeps, however much you take away you nothing lessen the fountain; so with the energy of the Only-Begotten, however much you believe has been produced and made by it, it has become no whit the less. Or, to use a more familiar

example, I will instance that of light, which the Apostle himself added immediately, saying, "*And the Life was the Light.*" As then light, however many myriads it may enlighten, suffers no diminution of its own brightness; so also God, before commencing His work and after completing it, remains alike indefectible, nothing diminished, nor wearied by the greatness of the creation. Nay, if need were that ten thousand, or even an infinite number of such worlds be created, He remains the same, sufficient for them all not merely to produce, but also to control them after their creation. For the word "*Life*" here refers not merely to the act of creation, but also to the providence (engaged) about the permanence of the things created; it also lays down beforehand the doctrine of the resurrection, and is the beginning of these marvelous good tidings. Since when "*life*" has come to be with us, the power of death is dissolved; and when "*light*" has shone upon us, there is no longer darkness, but life ever abides within us, and death cannot overcome it. So that what is asserted of the Father might be asserted absolutely of Him (Christ) also, that "*In Him we live and move and have our being.*" [Colossians 1:16-17] As Paul has shown when he says, "*By Him were all things created,*" and "*by Him all things consist*"; for which reason He has been called also "*Root*" and "*Foundation.*"

But when you hear that "*In Him was Life,*" do not imagine Him a compound Being, since farther on he says of the Father also, "*As the Father has Life in Himself, so has He given to the Son also to have Life*" [John 5:26]; now as you would not on account of this expression say that the Father is compounded, so neither can you say so of the Son. Thus in another place he says, that "*God is Light*" [1 John 1:5], and elsewhere (it is said), that He "*dwells in light unapproachable*" [1 Timothy 6:16]; yet these expressions are used not that we may suppose a compounded nature, but that little by little we may be led up to the highest doctrines. For since one

of the multitude could not easily have understood how His life was Life Impersonate, he first used that humbler expression, and afterwards leads them (thus) trained to the higher doctrine. For He who had said that *"He has given Him (the Son) to have life"* [John 5:26]; the Same says in another place, *"I am the Life"* [John 14:6]; and in another, *"I am the Light."* [John 8:12] And what, tell me, is the nature of this *"light"*? This kind (of light) is the object not of the senses, but of the intellect, enlightening the soul herself. And since Christ should hereafter say, that *"None can come unto Me except the Father draw him"* [John 6:44]; the Apostle has in this place anticipated an objection, and declared that it is He (the Son) who *"gives light"* [John 1:9]; that although you hear a saying like this concerning the Father, you may not say that it belongs to the Father only, but also to the Son. For, *"All things,"* He says, *"which the Father has are Mine."* [John 16:15]

First then, the Evangelist has instructed us respecting the creation, after that he tells us of the goods relating to the soul which He supplied to us by His coming; and these he has darkly described in one sentence, when he says, *"And the Life was the Light of men."* [John 1:4] He does not say, *"was the light of the Jews,"* but universally *"of men"*: nor did the Jews only, but the Greeks also, come to this knowledge, and this light was a common proffer made to all. *"Why did he not add 'Angels,' but said, 'of men?'"* Because at present his discourse is of the nature of men, and to them he came bearing glad tidings of good things.

"And the light shines in darkness." [John 1:5] He calls death and error, *"darkness."* For the light which is the object of our senses does not shine in darkness, but apart from it; but the preaching of Christ has shone forth in the midst of prevailing error, and made it to disappear. And He by enduring death has so overcome death, that He has recovered those already held by it.

Since then neither death overcame it, nor error, since it is bright everywhere, and shines by its proper strength, therefore he says,

"And the darkness comprehended it not." For it cannot be overcome, and will not dwell in souls which wish not to be enlightened.

4. But let it not trouble you that It took not all, for not by necessity and force, but by will and consent does God bring us to Himself. Therefore do not thou shut your doors against this light, and you shall enjoy great happiness. But this light comes by faith, and when it has come, it lights abundantly him that has received it; and if you display a pure life (meet) for it, remains indwelling within continually. *"For,"* He says, *"He that loves Me, will keep My commandments; and I and My Father will come unto him, and make Our abode with him."* [John 14:23; slightly varied] As then one cannot rightly enjoy the sunlight, unless he opens his eyes; so neither can one largely share this splendor, unless he have expanded the eye of the soul, and rendered it in every way keen of sight.

But how is this effected? Then when we have cleansed the soul from all the passions. For sin is darkness, and a deep darkness; as is clear, because men do it unconsciously and secretly. For, *"every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light."* [John 3:20] And, *"It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."* [Ephesians 5:12] For, as in darkness a man knows neither friend nor foe, but cannot perceive any of the properties of objects; so too is it in sin. For he who desires to get more gain, makes no difference between friend and enemy; and the envious regards with hostile eyes the man with whom he is very intimate; and the plotter is at mortal quarrel with all alike. In short, as to distinguishing the nature of objects, he who commits sin is no better than men who are drunk or mad. And as in the night, wood, lead, iron, silver, gold, precious stones, seem to us all alike on account of the absence of the

light which shows their distinctions; so he who leads an impure life knows neither the excellence of temperance nor the beauty of philosophy. For in darkness, as I said before, even precious stones if they be displayed do not show their luster, not by reason of their own nature, but because of the want of discernment in the beholders. Nor is this the only evil which happens to us who are in sin, but this also, that we live in constant fear: and as men walking in a moonless night tremble, though none be by to frighten them; so those who work iniquity cannot have confidence, though there be none to accuse them; but they are afraid of everything, and are suspicious, being pricked by their conscience: all to them is full of fear and distress, they look about them at everything, are terrified at everything. Let us then flee a life so painful, especially since after this painfulness shall follow death; a deathless death, for of the punishment in that place there will be no end; and in this life they (who sin) are no better than madmen, in that they are dreaming of things that have no existence. They think they are rich when they are not rich, that they enjoy when they are not enjoying, nor do they properly perceive the cheat until they are freed from the madness and have shaken off the sleep. Wherefore Paul exhorts all to be sober, and to watch; and Christ also commands the same. For he who is sober and awake, although he be captured by sin, quickly beats it off; while he who sleeps and is beside himself, perceives not how he is held prisoner of it.

Let us then not sleep. This is not the season of night, but of day. Let us therefore *"walk honestly as in the day"* [Romans 13:13]; and nothing is more indecent than sin. In point of indecency it is not so bad to go about naked as in sin and wrong doing. That is not so great matter of blame, since it might even be caused by poverty; but nothing has more shame and less honor than the sinner. Let us think of those who come to the justice-hall on some account of extortion, or overreaching; how base and ridiculous they

appear to all by their utter shamelessness, their lies, and audacity. But we are such pitiable and wretched beings, that we cannot bear ourselves to put on a garment awkwardly or awry; nay, if we see another person in this state, we set him right; and yet though we and all our neighbors are walking on our heads, we do not even perceive it. For what, say, can be more shameful than a man who goes in to a harlot? What more contemptible than an insolent, a foul-tongued or an envious man? Whence then is it that these things do not seem so disgraceful as to walk naked? Merely from habit. To go naked no one has ever willingly endured; but all men are continually venturing on the others without any fear. Yet if one came into an assembly of angels, among whom nothing of the sort has ever taken place, there he would clearly see the great ridicule (of such conduct). And why do I say an assembly of angels? Even in the very palaces among us, should one introduce a harlot and enjoy her, or be oppressed by excess of wine, or commit any other like indecency, he would suffer extreme punishment. But if it be intolerable that men should dare such things in palaces, much more when the King is everywhere present, and observes what is done, shall we if we dare them undergo severest chastisement. Wherefore let us, I exhort you, show forth in our life much gentleness, much purity, for we have a King who beholds all our actions continually. In order then that this light may ever richly enlighten us, let us gladly accept these bright beams, for so shall we enjoy both the good things present and those to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, and with whom, to the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on the Gospel of John

John 1:6

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John."

1. Having in the introduction spoken to us things of urgent importance concerning God the Word, (the Evangelist) proceeding on his road, and in order, afterwards comes to the herald of the Word, his namesake John. And now that you hear that he was *"sent from God,"* do not for the future imagine that any of the words spoken by him are mere man's words; for all that he utters is not his own, but is of Him who sent him. Wherefore he is called *"messenger"* [Malachi 3:1], for the excellence of a messenger is, that he say nothing of his own. But the expression *"was,"* in this place is not significative of his coming into existence, but refers to his office of messenger; for *"there was' a man sent from God,"* is used instead of *"a man 'was sent' from God."*

How then do some say, that the expression, *"being in the form of God"* [Philippians 2:6] is not used of His invariable likeness to the Father, because no article is added? For observe, that the article is nowhere added here. Are these words then not spoken of the Father? What then shall we say to the prophet who says, that, *"Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way"* [Malachi 3:1, as found in Mark 1:2]? For the expressions *"My"* and *"Your"* declare two Persons.

John 1:7

"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of that Light."

What is this, perhaps one may say, the servant bear witness to his Master? When then you see Him not only witnessed to by His servant, but even coming to him, and with Jews baptized by him, will you not be still more astonished and perplexed? Yet you ought not to be troubled nor confused, but amazed at such unspeakable goodness. Though if any still continue bewildered and confused, He will say to such an one what He said to John, *"Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness"* [Matthew 3:15]; and, if any be still further troubled, again He will say to him too what he said to the Jews, *"But I receive not testimony from man."* [John 5:34] If now he needs not this witness, why was John sent from God? Not as though He required his testimony— this were extremest blasphemy. Why then? John himself informs us, when he says,

"That all men through him might believe."

And Christ also, after having said that *"I receive not testimony from man"* [John 5:34], in order that He may not seem to the foolish to clash with Himself, by declaring at one time *"There is another that bears witness of Me and I know that his witness is true"* [John 5:32] (for He pointed to John;) and at another, *"I receive not testimony from man"* [John 5:34]; He immediately adds the solution of the doubt, *"But these things I say"* for your own sake, *"that you might be saved."* As though He had said, that *"I am God, and the really-Begotten Son of God, and am of that Simple and Blessed Essence, I need none to witness to Me; and even though none would do so, yet am not I by this anything diminished in My Essence; but because I care for the salvation of the many, I have descended to such*

humility as to commit the witness of Me to a man." For by reason of the groveling nature and infirmity of the Jews, the faith in Him would in this way be more easily received, and more palatable. As then He clothed Himself with flesh, that he might not, by encountering men with the unveiled Godhead, destroy them all; so He sent forth a man for His herald, that those who heard might at the hearing of a kindred voice approach more readily. For (to prove) that He had no need of that (herald's) testimony, it would have sufficed that He should only have shown Himself who He was in His unveiled Essence, and have confounded them all. But this He did not for the reason I have before mentioned. He would have annihilated all, since none could have endured the encounter of that unapproachable light. Wherefore, as I said, He put on flesh, and entrusted the witness (of Himself) to one of our fellow-servants, since He arranged all for the salvation of men, looking not only to His own honor, but also to what might be readily received by, and be profitable to, His hearers. Which He glanced at when He said, *"These things I say" for your sake, "that you might be saved."* [John 5:34] And the Evangelist using the same language as his Master, after saying, *"to bear witness of that Light,"* adds,

"That all men through Him might believe." All but saying, Think not that the reason why John the Baptist came to bear witness, was that he might add anything to the trustworthiness of his Master. No; (He came,) that by his means beings of his own class might believe. For it is clear from what follows, that he used this expression in his anxiety to remove this suspicion beforehand, since he adds,

John 1:8

"He was not that Light."

Now if he did not introduce this as setting himself against this suspicion, then the expression is absolutely superfluous, and tautology rather than elucidation of his teaching. For why, after having said that he *"was sent to bear witness of that Light,"* does he again say, *"He was not that Light"*? (He says it,) not loosely or without reason; but, because, for the most part, among ourselves, the person witnessing is held to be greater, and generally more trustworthy than the person witnessed of; therefore, that none might suspect this in the case of John, at once from the very beginning he removes this evil suspicion, and having torn it up by the roots, shows who this is that bears witness, and who is He who is witnessed of, and what an interval there is between the witnessed of, and the bearer of witness. And after having done this, and shown His incomparable superiority, he afterwards proceeds fearlessly to the narrative which remains; and after carefully removing whatever strange (ideas) might secretly harbor in the minds of the simpler sort, so instills into all easily and without impediment the word of doctrine in its proper order.

Let us pray then, that henceforth with the revelation of these thoughts and rightness of doctrine, we may have also a pure life and bright conversation, since these things profit nothing unless good works be present with us. For though we have all faith and all knowledge of the Scriptures, yet if we be naked and destitute of the protection derived from (holy) living, there is nothing to hinder us from being hurried into the fire of hell, and burning for ever in the unquenchable flame. For as they who have done good shall rise to life everlasting, so they who have dared the contrary shall

rise to everlasting punishment, which never has an end. Let us then manifest all eagerness not to mar the gain which accrues to us from a right faith by the vileness of our actions, but becoming well-pleasing to Him by these also, boldly to look on Christ. No happiness can be equal to this. And may it come to pass, that we all having obtained what has been mentioned, may do all to the glory of God; to whom, with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 7 on the Gospel of John

John 1:9

"That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world."

1. The reason, O children greatly beloved, why we entertain you portion by portion with the thoughts taken from the Scriptures, and do not at once pour all forth to you, is, that the retaining what is successively set before you may be easy. For even in building, one who before the first stones are settled lays on others, constructs a rotten wall altogether, and easily thrown down: while one who waits that the mortar may first get hard, and so adds what remains little by little, finishes the whole house firmly, and makes it strong, not one to last for a short time, or easily to fall to pieces. These builders we imitate, and in like manner build up your souls. For we fear lest, while the first foundation is but newly laid, the addition of the succeeding speculations may do harm to the former, through the insufficiency of the intellect to contain them all at once.

What now is it that has been read to us today?

"That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." For since above in speaking of John he said, that he came *"to bear witness of that Light"*; and that he was sent in these our days; lest any one at hearing this should, on account of the recent coming of the witness, conceive some like suspicion concerning Him, who is witnessed of, he has carried up the imagination, and transported it to that existence which is before all beginning, which has neither end nor commencement.

"And how is it possible," says one, "that being a Son, He should possess this (nature)?" We are speaking of God, and do you ask how? And do you not fear nor shudder? Yet should any one ask you, *"How should our souls and bodies have endless life in the world to come?"* you will laugh at the question, on the ground that it does not belong to the intellect of man to search into such questions, but that he ought only to believe, and not to be over-curious on the subject mentioned, since he has a sufficient proof of the saying, in the power of Him who spoke it. And if we say, that He, who created our souls and bodies, and who incomparably excels all created things, is without beginning, will you require us to say *"How?"* Who could assert this to be the act of a well-ordered soul, or of sound reason? You have heard that *"That was the true Light"*: why are you vainly and rashly striving to overshoot by force of reasoning this Life which is unlimited? You cannot do it. Why seek what may not be sought? Why be curious about what is incomprehensible? Why search what is unsearchable? Gaze upon the very source of the sunbeams. You cannot; yet you are neither vexed nor impatient at your weakness; how then have you become so daring and headlong in greater matters? The son of thunder, John who sounds the spiritual trumpet, when he had heard from the Spirit the was, enquired no farther. And are you, who share not in his grace, but speak from your own wretched reasonings, ambitious to exceed the measure of his knowledge? Then for this very reason you will never be able even to reach to the measure of his knowledge. For this is the craft of the devil: he leads away those who obey him from the limits assigned by God, as though to things much greater: but when, having enticed us by these hopes, he has cast us out of the grace of God, he not only gives nothing more, (how can he, devil as he is?) but does not even allow us to return again to our former situation, where we dwelt safely and surely, but leads us about in all directions

wandering and not having any standing ground. So he caused the first created man to be banished from the abode of Paradise. Having puffed him up with the expectation of greater knowledge and honor, he expelled him from what he already possessed in security. For he not only did not become like a god as (the devil) promised him, but even fell beneath the dominion of death; having not only gained no further advantage by eating of the tree, but having lost no small portion of the knowledge which he possessed, through hope of greater knowledge. For the sense of shame, and the desire to hide himself because of his nakedness, then came upon him, who before the cheat was superior to all such shame; and this very seeing himself to be naked, and the need for the future of the covering of garments, and many other infirmities, became thenceforth natural to him. That this be not our case, let us obey God, continue in His commandments, and not be busy about anything beyond them, that we may not be cast out from the good things already given us. Thus they have fared (of whom we speak). For seeking to find a beginning of the Life which has no beginning, they lost what they might have retained. They found not what they sought, (this is impossible,) and they fell away from the true faith concerning the Only-Begotten.

Let us not then remove the eternal bounds which our fathers set, but let us ever yield to the laws of the Spirit; and when we hear that "*That was the true Light,*" let us seek to discover nothing more. For it is not possible to pass beyond this saying. Had His generation been like that of a man, needs must there have been an interval between the begetter and the begotten; but since it is in a manner ineffable and becoming God, give up the "*before*" and the "*after*," for these are the names of points in time, but the Son is the Creator even of all ages.

2. "Then," says one, "*He is not Father, but brother.*" What need, pray? If we had asserted that the Father and the Son were from a different root, you might have then spoken this well. But, if we flee this impiety, and say the Father, besides being without beginning, is Unbegotten also, while the Son, though without beginning, is Begotten of the Father, what kind of need that as a consequence of this idea, that unholy assertion should be introduced? None at all. For He is an Effulgence: but an effulgence is included in the idea of the nature whose effulgence it is. For this reason Paul has called Him so, that you may imagine no interval between the Father and the Son. [Hebrews 1:3] This expression therefore is declaratory of the point; but the following part of the proof quoted, corrects an erroneous opinion which might beset simple men. For, says the Apostle, do not, because you have heard that he is an Effulgence, suppose that He is deprived of His proper person; this is impious, and belongs to the madness of the Sabellians, and of Marcellus' followers. We say not so, but that He is also in His proper Person. And for this reason, after having called Him "*Effulgence*," Paul has added that He is "*the express image of His Person*" [Hebrews 1:3], in order to make evident His proper Personality, and that He belongs to the same Essence of which He is also the express image. For, as I before said, it is not sufficient by a single expression to set before men the doctrines concerning God, but it is desirable that we bring many together, and choose from each what is suitable. So shall we be able to attain to a worthy telling of His glory, worthy, I mean, as regards our power; for if any should deem himself able to speak words suitable to His essential worthiness, and be ambitious to do so, saying, that he knows God as God knows Himself, he it is who is most ignorant of God.

Knowing therefore this, let us continue steadfastly to hold what "*they have delivered unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and*

ministers of the word." [Luke 1:2] And let us not be curious beyond: for two evils will attend those who are sick of this disease, (curiosity,) the wearying themselves in vain by seeking what it is impossible to find, and the provoking God by their endeavors to overturn the bounds set by Him. Now what anger this excites, it needs not that you who know should learn from us. Abstaining therefore from their madness, let us tremble at His words, that He may continually build us up. For, *"upon whom shall I look"* [Isaiah 66:2, Septuagint], says He, *"but upon the lowly, and quiet, and who fears my words?"* Let us then leave this pernicious curiosity, and bruise our hearts, let us mourn for our sins as Christ commanded, let us be pricked at heart for our transgressions, let us reckon up exactly all the wicked deeds, which in time past we have dared, and let us earnestly strive to wipe them off in all kinds of ways.

Now to this end God has opened to us many ways. For, *"Tell you first,"* says He, *"your sins, that you may be justified"* [Isaiah 43:26] ; and again, *"I said, I have declared mine iniquity unto You, and You have taken away the unrighteousness of my heart"* [Psalm 32:5, Septuagint]; since a continual accusation and remembrance of sins contributes not a little to lessen their magnitude. But there is another more prevailing way than this; to bear malice against none of those who have offended against us, to forgive their trespasses to all those who have trespassed against us. Will you learn a third? Hear Daniel, saying, *"Redeem your sins by almsdeeds, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor."* [Daniel 4:27, Septuagint] And there is another besides this; constancy in prayer, and persevering attendance on the intercessions made with God. In like manner fasting brings to us some, and that not small comfort and release from sins committed, provided it be attended with kindness to others, and quenches the vehemence of the wrath of God. [1 Timothy 2:1] For *"water will quench*

a blazing fire, and by almsdeeds sins are purged away." [Sirach 3:30, Septuagint]

Let us then travel along all these ways; for if we give ourselves wholly to these employments, if on them we spend our time, not only shall we wash off our bygone transgressions, but shall gain very great profit for the future. For we shall not allow the devil to assault us with leisure either for slothful living, or for pernicious curiosity, since by these among other means, and in consequence of these, he leads us to foolish questions and hurtful disputations, from seeing us at leisure, and idle, and taking no forethought for excellency of living. But let us block up this approach against him, let us watch, let us be sober, that having in this short time toiled a little, we may obtain eternal goods in endless ages, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 8 on the Gospel of John

John 1:9

"That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world."

1. Nothing hinders us from handling today also the same words, since before we were prevented by the setting forth of doctrines, from considering all that was read. Where now are those who deny that He is true God? For here He is called *"the true Light"* [John 14:6], and elsewhere very *"Truth"* and very *"Life."* That saying we will discuss more clearly when we come to the place; but at present we must for a while be speaking to your Charity of that other matter.

If He *"lights every man that comes into the world,"* how is it that so many continue unenlightened? For not all have known the majesty of Christ. How then does He *"light every man"*? He lights all as far as in Him lies. But if some, wilfully closing the eyes of their mind, would not receive the rays of that Light, their darkness arises not from the nature of the Light, but from their own wickedness, who willfully deprive themselves of the gift. For the grace is shed forth upon all, turning itself back neither from Jew, nor Greek, nor Barbarian, nor Scythian, nor free, nor bond, nor male, nor female, nor old, nor young, but admitting all alike, and inviting with an equal regard. And those who are not willing to enjoy this gift, ought in justice to impute their blindness to themselves; for if when the gate is opened to all, and there is none to hinder, any being willfully evil remain without, they perish through none other, but only through their own wickedness.

John 1:10

"He was in the world."

But not as of equal duration with the world. Away with the thought. Wherefore he adds, *"And the world was made by Him"*; thus leading you up again to the eternal existence of the Only-Begotten. For he who has heard that this universe is His work, though he be very dull, though he be a hater, though he be an enemy of the glory of God, will certainly, willing or unwilling, be forced to confess that the maker is before his works. Whence wonder always comes over me at the madness of Paul of Samosata, who dared to look in the face so manifest a truth, and voluntarily threw himself down the precipice. For he erred not ignorantly but with full knowledge, being in the same case as the Jews. For as they, looking to men, gave up sound faith, knowing that he was the only-begotten Son of God, but not confessing Him, because of their rulers, lest they should be cast out of the synagogue; so it is said that he, to gratify a certain woman, sold his own salvation. A powerful thing, powerful indeed, is the tyranny of vainglory; it is able to make blind the eyes even of the wise, except they be sober; for if the taking of gifts can effect this, much more will the yet more violent feeling of this passion. Wherefore Jesus said to the Jews, *"How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?"* [John 5:44]

"And the world knew Him not." By *"the world"* he here means the multitude, which is corrupt, and closely attached to earthly things, the common turbulent, silly people. For the friends and favorites of God all knew Him, even before His coming in the flesh. Concerning the Patriarch Christ Himself speaks by name, *"that your father Abraham rejoiced to see*

My day, and he saw it, and was glad." [John 8:56] And concerning David, confuting the Jews He said, *"How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on My right hand."* [Matthew 22:43; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42] And in many places, disputing with them, He mentions Moses; and the Apostle (mentions) the rest of the prophets; for Peter declares, that all the prophets from Samuel knew Him, and proclaimed beforehand His coming afar off, when he says, *"All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."* [Acts 3:24] But Jacob and his father, as well as his grandfather, He both appeared to and talked with, and promised that He would give them many and great blessings, which also He brought to pass.

"How then," says one, *"did He say Himself, 'Many prophets have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them'?"* [Luke 10:24] *Did they then not share in the knowledge of Him?"* Surely they did; and I will endeavor to make this plain from this very saying, by which some think that they are deprived of it. *"For many,"* He says, *"have desired to see the things which you see."* So that they knew that He would come [to men] from heaven, and would live and teach as He lived and taught; for had they not known, they could have not desired, since no one can conceive desire for things of which he has no idea; therefore they knew the Son of Man, and that He would come among men. What then are the things which they did not hear? What those which they did not know? The things which you now see and hear. For if they did hear His voice and did see Him, it was not in the Flesh, not among men; nor when He was living so familiarly, and conversing so frankly with them. And indeed He to show this said not simply, *"to see" "Me":* but what? *"the things which you see";* nor *"to hear"*

"Me": but what? *"the things which you hear."* So that if they did not behold His coming in the Flesh, still they knew that it would be, and they desired it, and believed on Him without having seen Him in the Flesh.

When therefore the Greeks bring charges such as these against us, and say; *"What then did Christ in former time, that He did not look upon the race of men? And for what possible reason did He come at last to assist in our salvation, after neglecting us so long?"* we will reply, that before this He was in the world, and took thought for His works, and was known to all who were worthy. But if you should say, that, because all did not then know Him, because He was only known by those noble and excellent persons, therefore He was not acknowledged; at this rate you will not allow that He is worshipped even now, since even now all men do not know Him. But as at present no one, because of those who do not know Him, would refuse credit to those who do, so as regards former times, we must not doubt that He was known to many, or rather to all of those noble and admirable persons.

2. And if any one say, *"Why did not all men give heed to Him? Nor all worship Him, but the just only?"* I also will ask, why even now do not all men know him? But why do I speak of Christ, when not all men knew His Father then, or know Him now? For some say, that all things are borne along by chance, while others commit the providence of the universe to devils. Others invent another God besides Him, and some blasphemously assert, that His is an opposing power, and think that His laws are the laws of a wicked dæmon. What then? Shall we say that He is not God because there are some who say so? And shall we confess Him to be evil? For there are some who even so blaspheme Him. Away with such mental wandering, such utter insanity. If we should delineate doctrines according to the judgment of madmen, there is nothing to hinder us from being mad

ourselves with most grievous madness. No one will assert, looking to those who have weak vision, that the sun is injurious to the eyes, but he will say that it is fitted to give light, drawing his judgments from persons in health. And no one will call honey bitter, because it seems so to the sense of the sick. And will any, from the imaginations of men diseased (in mind) decide that God either is not, or is evil; or that He sometimes indeed exerts His Providence, sometimes does not so at all? Who can say that such men are of sound mind, or deny that they are beside themselves, delirious, utterly mad?

"The world," he says, *"knew Him not";* but they of whom the world was not worthy knew Him. And having spoken of those who knew Him not, he in a short time puts the cause of their ignorance; for he does not absolutely say, that no one knew Him, but that *"the world knew him not";* that is, those persons who are as it were nailed to the world alone, and who mind the things of the world. For so Christ was wont to call them; as when He says, *"O Holy Father, the world has not known You."* [Luke 17:25] The world then was ignorant, not only of Him, but also of His Father, as we have said; for nothing so darkens the mind as to be closely attached to present things.

Knowing therefore this, remove yourselves from the world, and tear yourselves as much as possible from carnal things, for the loss which comes to you from these lies not in common matters, but in what is the chief of goods. For it is not possible for the man who clings strongly to the things of the present life really to lay hold on those in heaven, but he who is earnest about the one must needs lose the other. *"You cannot,"* He says, *"serve God and Mammon"* [Matthew 6:24], for you must hold to the one and hate the other. And this too the very experience of the things proclaims aloud. Those, for instance, who deride the lust of money, are especially the persons who love God as they ought, just as those who respect that sovereignty (of

Mammon), are the men who above all others have the slackest love for Him. For the soul when made captive once for all by covetousness, will not easily or readily refuse doing or saying any of the things which anger God, as being the slave of another master, and one who gives all his commands in direct opposition to God. Return then at length to your sober senses, and rouse yourselves, and calling to mind whose servants we are, let us love His kingdom only; let us weep, let us wail for the times past in which we were servants of Mammon; let us cast off once for all his yoke so intolerable, so heavy, and continue to bear the light and easy yoke of Christ. For He lays no such commands upon us as Mammon does. Mammon bids us be enemies to all men, but Christ, on the contrary, to embrace and to love all. The one having nailed us to the clay and the brickmaking, (for gold is this,) allows us not even at night to take breath a little; the other releases us from this excessive and insensate care, and bids us gather treasures in heaven, not by injustice towards others, but by our own righteousness. The one after our many toils and sufferings is not able to assist us when we are punished in that place and suffer because of his laws, nay, he increases the flame; the other, though He command us to give but a cup of cold water, never allows us to lose our reward and recompense even for this, but repays us with great abundance. How then is it not extremest folly to slight a rule so mild, so full of all good things, and to serve a thankless, ungrateful tyrant, and one who neither in this world nor in the world to come is able to help those who obey and give heed to him. Nor is this the only dreadful thing, nor is this only the penalty, that he does not defend them when they are being punished; but that besides this, he, as I before said, surrounds those who obey him with ten thousand evils. For of those who are punished in that place, one may see that the greater part are punished for this cause, that they were slaves to money, that they loved gold, and would not assist those who

needed. That we be not in this case, let us scatter, let us give to the poor, let us deliver our souls from hurtful cares in this world, and from the vengeance, which because of these things is appointed for us in that place. Let us store up righteousness in the heavens. Instead of riches upon earth, let us collect treasures impregnable, treasures which can accompany us on our journey to heaven, which can assist us in our peril, and make the Judge propitious at that hour. Whom may we all have gracious unto us, both now and at that day, and enjoy with much confidence the good things prepared in the heavens for those who love Him as they ought, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 9 on the Gospel of John

John 1:11

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

1. If you remember our former reflections, we shall the more zealously proceed with the building up of what remains, as doing so for great gain. For so will our discourse be more intelligible to you who remember what has been already said, and we shall not need much labor, because you are able through your great love of learning to see more clearly into what remains. The man who is always losing what is given to him will always need a teacher, and will never know anything; but he who retains what he has received, and so receives in addition what remains, will quickly be a teacher instead of a learner, and useful not only to himself, but to all others also; as, conjecturing from their great readiness to hear, I anticipate that this assembly will specially be. Come then, let us lay up in your souls, as in a safe treasury, the Lord's money, and unfold, as far as the grace of the Spirit may afford us power, the words this day set before us.

He (St. John) had said, speaking of the old times, that *"the world knew him not"* [John 1:10]; afterwards he comes down in his narrative to the times of the proclamation (of the Gospel), and says, *"He came to His own, and His own received Him not,"* now calling the Jews *"His own,"* as His peculiar people, or perhaps even all mankind, as created by Him. And as above, when perplexed at the folly of the many, and ashamed of our common nature, he said that *"the world by Him was made,"* and having been made, did not recognize its Maker; so here again, being troubled beyond bearing at the stupidity of the Jews and the many, he sets forth the

charge in a yet more striking manner, saying, that *"His own received Him not,"* and that too when *"He came to them."* And not only he, but the prophets also, wondering, said the very same, as did afterwards Paul, amazed at the very same things. Thus did the prophets cry aloud in the person of Christ, saying, *"A people whom I have not known, have served Me; as soon as they heard Me, they obeyed Me; the strange children have dealt falsely with Me. The strange children have waxed aged, and have halted from their paths."* [Psalm 18:43-45, Septuagint] And again, *"They to whom it had not been told concerning Him, shall see, and they which had not heard, shall understand."* And, *"I was found of them that sought Me not"* [Isaiah 52:15]; *"I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me."* [Isaiah 45:1, as quoted in Romans 10:20] And Paul, in his Epistles to the Romans, has said, *"What then? Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for: but the election has obtained it."* [Romans 11:7] And again; *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained unto righteousness: but Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness."* [Romans 9:30]

For it is a thing indeed worthy of our amazement, how they who were nurtured in (knowledge of) the prophetic books, who heard Moses every day telling them ten thousand things concerning the coming of the Christ, and the other prophets afterwards, who moreover themselves beheld Christ Himself daily working miracles among them, giving up His time to them alone, neither as yet allowing His disciples to depart into the way of the Gentiles, or to enter into a city of Samaritans, nor doing so Himself, but everywhere declaring that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel [Matthew 10:5]: how, (I say), while they saw the signs, and heard the Prophets, and had Christ Himself continually putting them in remembrance,

they yet made themselves once for all so blind and dull, as by none of these things to be brought to faith in Christ. [Matthew 15:24] While they of the Gentiles, who had enjoyed none of these things, who had never heard the oracles of God, not, as one may say, so much as in a dream, but ever ranging among the fables of madmen, (for heathen philosophy is this,) having ever in their hands the sillinesses of their poets, nailed to stocks and stones, and neither in doctrines nor in conversation possessing anything good or sound. (For their way of life was more impure and more accursed than their doctrine. As was likely; for when they saw their gods delighting in all wickedness, worshipped by shameful words, and more shameful deeds, reckoning this festivity and praise, and moreover honored by foul murders, and child-slaughters, how should not they emulate these things?) Still, fallen as they were as low as the very depth of wickedness, on a sudden, as by the agency of some machine, they have appeared to us shining from on high, and from the very summit of heaven.

How then and whence came it to pass? Hear Paul telling you. For that blessed person searching exactly into these things, ceased not until he had found the cause, and had declared it to all others. What then is it? And whence came such blindness upon the Jews? Hear him who was entrusted with this stewardship declare. What then does he say in resolving this doubt of the many? [1 Corinthians 9:17] *"For they,"* says he, *"being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."* [Romans 10:3] Wherefore they have suffered this. And again, explaining the same matter in other terms, he says, *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained unto righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness."*

Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone." [Romans 9:30-32] His meaning is this: *"These men's unbelief has been the cause of their misfortunes, and their haughtiness was parent of their unbelief."* For when having before enjoyed greater privileges than the heathen, through having received the law, through knowing God, and the rest which Paul enumerates, they after the coming of Christ saw the heathen and themselves called on equal terms through faith, and after faith received one of the circumcision in nothing preferred to the Gentile, they came to envy and were stung by their haughtiness, and could not endure the unspeakable and exceeding lovingkindness of the Lord. So this has happened to them from nothing else but pride, and wickedness, and unkindness.

2. For in what, O most foolish of men, are you injured by the care bestowed on others? How are your blessings made less through having others to share the same? But of a truth wickedness is blind, and cannot readily perceive anything that it ought. Being therefore stung by the prospect of having others to share the same confidence, they thrust a sword against themselves, and cast themselves out from the lovingkindness of God. And with good reason. For He says, *"Friend, I do you no wrong, I will give to 'these also' even as unto you."* [Matthew 20:14] Or rather, these Jews are not deserving even of these words. For the man in the parable if he was discontented, could yet speak of the labors and weariness, the heat and sweat, of a whole day. But what could these men have to tell? Nothing like this, but slothfulness and profligacy and ten thousand evil things of which all the prophets continued ever to accuse them, and by which they like the Gentiles had offended against God. And Paul declaring this says, *"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by His grace."*

[Romans 10:12; Romans 3:22-24] And on this head he treats profitably and very wisely throughout that Epistle. But in a former part of it he proves that they are worthy of still greater punishment. *"For as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law"* [Romans 2:12]; that is to say, more severely, as having for their accuser the law as well as nature. And not for this only, but for that they have been the cause that God is blasphemed among the Gentiles: *"My Name,"* He says, *"is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you."* [Romans 2:24; Isaiah 52:5]

Since now this it was that stung them most, (for the thing appeared incredible even to those of the circumcision who believed, and therefore they brought it as a charge against Peter, when he had come up to them from Cesarea, that he *"went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them"* [Acts 11:3]; and after that they had learned the dispensation of God, even so still they wondered how *"on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost"* [Acts 10:45]: showing by their astonishment that they could never have expected so incredible a thing,) since then he knew that this touched them nearest, see how he has emptied their pride and relaxed their highly swelling insolence. For after having discoursed on the case of the heathen, and shown that they had not from any quarter any excuse, or hope of salvation, and after having definitely charged them both with the perversion of their doctrines and the uncleanness of their lives, he shifts his argument to the Jews; and after recounting all the expressions of the Prophet, in which he had said that they were polluted, treacherous, hypocritical persons, and had *"altogether become unprofitable,"* that there was *"none"* among them *"that seeks after God,"* that they had *"all gone out of the way"* [Romans 3:12], and the like, he adds, *"Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."*

[Romans 3:19] *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*

[Romans 3:23]

Why then exaltest you yourself, O Jew? Why are you high minded? For your mouth also is stopped, your boldness also is taken away, you also with all the world have become guilty, and, like others, are placed in need of being justified freely. You ought surely even if you had stood upright and had had great boldness with God, not even so to have envied those who should be pitied and saved through His lovingkindness. This is the extreme of wickedness, to pine at the blessings of others; especially when this was to be effected without any loss of yours. If indeed the salvation of others had been prejudicial to your advantages, your grieving might have been reasonable; though not even then would it have been so to one who had learned true wisdom. But if your reward is not increased by the punishment of another, nor diminished by his welfare, why do you bewail yourself because that other is freely saved? As I said, you ought not, even were thou (one) of the approved, to be pained at the salvation which comes to the Gentiles through grace. But when you, who are guilty before your Lord of the same things as they, and have yourself offended, are displeased at the good of others, and think great things, as if you alone ought to be partaker of the grace, you are guilty not only of envy and insolence, but of extreme folly, and may be liable to all the severest torments; for you have planted within yourself the root of all evils, pride.

Wherefore a wise man has said, *"Pride is the beginning of sin"* [Sirach 10:13]: that is, its root, its source, its mother. By this the first created was banished from that happy abode: by this the devil who deceived him had fallen from that height of dignity; from which that accursed one, knowing that the nature of the sin was sufficient to cast down even from heaven itself, came this way when he labored to bring down Adam from such high

honor. For having puffed him up with the promise that he should be as a God, so he broke him down, and cast him down into the very gulfs of hell. Because nothing so alienates men from the lovingkindness of God, and gives them over to the fire of the pit, as the tyranny of pride. For when this is present with us, our whole life becomes impure, even though we fulfill temperance, chastity, fasting, prayer, almsgiving, anything. For, *"Every one,"* says the wise man, *"that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."* [Proverbs 16:5] Let us then restrain this swelling of the soul, let us cut up by the roots this lump of pride, if at least we would wish to be clean, and to escape the punishment appointed for the devil. For that the proud must fall under the same punishment as that (wicked) one, hear Paul declare; *"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the judgment, and the snare of the devil."* What is *"the judgment"*? He means, into the same *"condemnation,"* the same punishment. How then does he say, that a man may avoid this dreadful thing? By reflecting upon his own nature, upon the number of his sins, upon the greatness of the torments in that place, upon the transitory nature of the things which seem bright in this world, differing in nothing from grass, and more fading than the flowers of spring. If we continually stir within ourselves these considerations, and keep in mind those who have walked most upright, the devil, though he strive ten thousand ways, will not be able to lift us up, nor even to trip us at all. May the God who is the God of the humble, the good and merciful God, grant both to you and me a broken and humbled heart, so shall we be enabled easily to order the rest aright, to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 10 on the Gospel of John

John 1:11

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

1. Beloved, God being loving towards man and beneficent, does and contrives all things in order that we may shine in virtue, and as desiring that we be well approved by Him. And to this end He draws no one by force or compulsion: but by persuasion and benefits He draws all that will, and wins them to Himself. Wherefore when He came, some received Him, and others received Him not. For He will have no unwilling, no forced domestic, but all of their own will and choice, and grateful to Him for their service. Men, as needing the ministry of servants, keep many in that state even against their will, by the law of ownership; but God, being without wants, and not standing in need of anything of ours, but doing all only for our salvation makes us absolute in this matter, and therefore lays neither force nor compulsion on any of those who are unwilling. For He looks only to our advantage: and to be drawn unwilling to a service like this is the same as not serving at all.

"Why then," says one, *"does He punish those who will not listen to Him, and why has He threatened hell to those who endure not His commands?"* Because, being Good exceedingly, He cares even for those who obey Him not, and withdraws not from them who start back and flee from Him. But when we had rejected the first way of His beneficence, and had refused to come by the path of persuasion and kind treatment, then He brought in upon us the other way, that of correction and punishments; most bitter indeed, but still necessary, when the former is disregarded. Now

lawgivers also appoint many and grievous penalties against offenders, and yet we feel no aversion to them for this; we even honor them the more on account of the punishments they have enacted, and because though not needing a single thing that we have, and often not knowing who they should be that should enjoy the help afforded by their written laws, they still took care for the good ordering of our lives, rewarding those who live virtuously, and checking by punishments the intemperate, and those who would mar the repose of others. And if we admire and love these men, ought we not much more to marvel at and love God on account of His so great care? For the difference between their and His forethought regarding us is infinite. Unspeakable of a truth are the riches of the goodness of God, and passing all excess. Consider; *"He came to His own,"* not for His personal need, (for, as I said, the Divinity is without wants,) but to do good unto His own people. Yet not even so did His own receive Him, when He came to His own for their advantage, but repelled Him, and not this only, but they even cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him. Yet not for this even did He shut them out from repentance, but granted them, if they had been willing, after such wickedness as this, to wash off all their transgressions by faith in Him, and to be made equal to those who had done no such thing, but are His special friends. And that I say not this at random, or for persuasion's sake, all the history of the blessed Paul loudly declares. For when he, who after the Cross persecuted Christ, and had stoned His martyr Stephen by those many hands, repented, and condemned his former sins, and ran to Him whom he had persecuted, He immediately enrolled him among His friends, and the chiefest of them, having appointed him a herald and teacher of all the world, who had been *"a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious."* [1 Timothy 1:13] Even as he rejoicing at the lovingkindness of God, has proclaimed aloud, and has not been ashamed, but having recorded

in his writings, as on a pillar, the deeds formerly dared by him, has exhibited them to all; thinking it better that his former life should be placarded in sight of all, so that the greatness of the free gift of God might appear, than that he should obscure His ineffable and indescribable lovingkindness by hesitating to parade before all men his own error. Wherefore continually he treats of his persecution, his plottings, his wars against the Church, at one time saying, *"I am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God"* [1 Corinthians 15:9]; at another, *"Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."* [1 Timothy 1:15] And again, *"You have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it."* [Galatians 1:13]

2. For making as it were a kind of return to Christ for His longsuffering towards him, by showing who it was, what a hater and enemy that He saved, he declared with much openness the warfare which at the first with all zeal he warred against Christ; and with this he holds forth good hopes to those who despaired of their condition. For he says, that Christ accepted him, in order that in him first He *"might show forth all longsuffering"* [1 Timothy 1:16], and the abundant riches of His goodness, *"for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe in Him to life everlasting."* Because the things which they had dared were too great for any pardon which the Evangelist declaring, said,

"He came to His own, and His own received Him not." Whence came He, who fills all things, and who is everywhere present? What place did He empty of His presence, who holds and grasps all things in His hand? He exchanged not one place for another; how should He? But by His coming down to us He effected this. For since, though being in the world, He did not seem to be there, because He was not yet known, but afterwards

manifested Himself by deigning to take upon Him our flesh, he (St. John) calls this manifestation and descent "*a coming*." One might wonder at the disciple who is not ashamed of the dishonor of his Teacher, but even records the insolence which was used towards Him: yet this is no small proof of his truth-loving disposition. And besides, he who feels shame should feel it for those who have offered an insult, not for the person outraged. Indeed He by this very thing shone the brighter, as taking, even after the insult, so much care for those who had offered it; while they appeared ungrateful and accursed in the eyes of all men, for having rejected Him who came to bring them so great goods, as hateful to them, and an enemy. And not only in this were they hurt, but also in not obtaining what they obtained who received Him. What did these obtain?

John 1:12

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

"Why then, O blessed one, do you not also tell us the punishment of them who received Him not? You have said that they were 'His own,' and that when 'He came to His own, they received Him not'; but what they shall suffer for this, what punishment they shall undergo, you have not gone on to add. Yet so you would the more have terrified them, and have softened the hardness of their insanity by threatening. Wherefore then have you been silent?" "And what other punishment," he would say, "can be greater than this, that when power is offered them to become sons of God, they do not become so, but willingly deprive themselves of such nobility and honor as this?" Although their punishment shall not even stop at this point, that they gain no good, but moreover the unquenchable fire shall receive them, as in going on he has more plainly revealed. But for the present he speaks of the unutterable goods of those who received Him, and sets these words in brief before us, saying, *"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God."* Whether bond or free, whether Greeks or barbarians or Scythians, unlearned or learned, female or male, children or old men, in honor or dishonor, rich or poor, rulers or private persons, all, He says, are deemed worthy the same privilege; for faith and the grace of the Spirit, removing the inequality caused by worldly things, has moulded all to one fashion, and stamped them with one impress, the King's. What can equal this lovingkindness? A king, who is framed of the same clay with us, does not deign to enrol among the royal host his fellow-servants, who share the same nature with himself, and in character often are better than he, if they chance to be slaves; but the Only-Begotten Son of God did not disdain to

reckon among the company of His children both publicans, sorcerers, and slaves, nay, men of less repute and greater poverty than these, maimed in body, and suffering from ten thousand ills. Such is the power of faith in Him, such the excess of His grace. And as the element of fire, when it meets with ore from the mine, straightway of earth makes it gold, even so and much more Baptism makes those who are washed to be of gold instead of clay; the Spirit at that time falling like fire into our souls, burning up the *"image of the earthy"* [1 Corinthians 15:49], and producing *"the image of the heavenly,"* fresh coined, bright and glittering, as from the furnace-mould.

Why then did he say not that *"He made them sons of God,"* but that *"He gave them power to become sons of God"*? To show that we need much zeal to keep the image of sonship impressed on us at Baptism, all through without spot or soil ; and at the same time to show that no one shall be able to take this power from us, unless we are the first to deprive ourselves of it. For if among men, those who have received the absolute control of any matters have nearly as much power as those who gave them the charge; much more shall we, who have obtained such honor from God, be, if we do nothing unworthy of this power, stronger than all; because He who put this honor in our hands is greater and better than all. At the same time too he wishes to show, that not even does grace come upon man irrespectively, but upon those who desire and take pains for it. For it lies in the power of these to become (His) children since if they do not themselves first make the choice, the gift does not come upon them, nor have any effect.

3. Having therefore everywhere excluded compulsion and pointing to (man's) voluntary choice and free power, he has said the same now. For even in these mystical blessings, it is, on the one hand, God's part, to give the grace, on the other, man's to supply faith; and in after time there needs

for what remains much earnestness. In order to preserve our purity, it is not sufficient for us merely to have been baptized and to have believed, but we must if we will continually enjoy this brightness, display a life worthy of it. This then is God's work in us. To have been born the mystical Birth, and to have been cleansed from all our former sins, comes from Baptism; but to remain for the future pure, never again after this to admit any stain belongs to our own power and diligence. And this is the reason why he reminds us of the manner of the birth, and by comparison with fleshly pangs shows its excellence, when he says,

John 1:13

"Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."

This he has done, in order that, considering the vileness, and lowness of the first birth, which is *"of blood,"* and *"the will of the flesh,"* and perceiving the highness and nobleness of the second, which is by grace, we may form from thence some great opinion of it, and one worthy of the gift of Him who has begotten us, and for the future exhibit much earnestness.

For there is no small fear, lest, having sometime defiled that beautiful robe by our after sloth and transgressions, we be cast out from the inner room and bridal chamber, like the five foolish virgins, or him who had not on a wedding garment. [Matthew 25; Matthew 22] He too was one of the guests, for he had been invited; but because, after the invitation and so great an honor, he behaved with insolence towards Him who had invited him, hear what punishment he suffers, how pitiable, fit subject for many tears. For when he comes to partake of that splendid table, not only is he forbidden the least, but bound hand and foot alike, is carried into outer darkness, to undergo eternal and endless wailing and gnashing of teeth. Therefore, beloved, let not us either expect that faith is sufficient to us for salvation; for if we do not show forth a pure life, but come clothed with garments unworthy of this blessed calling, nothing hinders us from suffering the same as that wretched one. It is strange that He, who is God and King, is not ashamed of men who are vile, beggars, and of no repute, but brings even them of the cross ways to that table; while we manifest so much insensibility, as not even to be made better by so great an honor, but even after the call remain in our old wickedness, insolently abusing the unspeakable lovingkindness of Him who has called us. For it was not for

this that He called us to the spiritual and awful communion of His mysteries, that we should enter with our former wickedness; but that, putting off our filthiness, we should change our raiment to such as becomes those who are entertained in palaces. But if we will not act worthily of that calling this no longer rests with Him who has honored us, but with ourselves; it is not He that casts us out from that admirable company of guests, but we cast out ourselves.

He has done all His part. He has made the marriage, He has provided the table, He has sent men to call us, has received us when we came, and honored us with all other honor; but we, when we have offered insult to Him, to the company, and to the wedding, by our filthy garments, that is, our impure actions, are then with good cause cast out. It is to honor the marriage and the guests, that He drives off those bold and shameless persons; for were He to suffer those clothed in such a garment, He would seem to be offering insult to the rest. But may it never be that one, either of us or of other, find this of Him who has called us! For to this end have all these things been written before they come to pass, that we, being sobered by the threats of the Scriptures, may not suffer this disgrace and punishment to go on to the deed, but stop it at the word only, and each with bright apparel come to that call; which may it come to pass that we all enjoy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 11 on the Gospel of John

John 1:14

"And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us."

1. I desire to ask one favor of you all, before I touch on the words of the Gospel; do not you refuse my request, for I ask nothing heavy or burdensome, nor, if granted, will it be useful only to me who receive, but also to you who grant it, and perhaps far more so to you. What then is it that I require of you? That each of you take in hand that section of the Gospels which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, or even on the Sabbath, and before the day arrive, that he sit down at home and read it through, and often carefully consider its contents, and examine all its parts well, what is clear, what obscure, what seems to make for the adversaries, but does not really so; and when you have tried, in a word every point, so go to hear it read. For from zeal like this will be no small gain both to you and to us. We shall not need much labor to render clear the meaning of what is said, because your minds will be already made familiar with the sense of the words, and you will become keener and more clear-sighted not for hearing only, nor for learning, but also for the teaching of others. Since, in the way that now most of those who come hither hear, compelled to take in the meaning of all at once, both the words, and the remarks we make upon them, they will not, though we should go on doing this for a whole year, reap any great gain. How can they, when they have leisure for what is said as a bywork, and only in this place, and for this short time? If any lay the fault on business, and cares, and constant occupation in public and private matters, in the first place, this is no slight charge in itself, that they are

surrounded with such a multitude of business, are so continually nailed to the things of this life, that they cannot find even a little leisure for what is more needful than all. Besides, that this is a mere pretext and excuse, their meetings with friends would prove against them, their loitering in the theaters, and the parties they make to see horse races, at which they often spend whole days, yet never in that case does one of them complain of the pressure of business. For trifles then you can without making any excuses, always find abundant leisure; but when you ought to attend to the things of God, do these seem to you so utterly superfluous and mean, that you think you need not assign even a little leisure to them? How do men of such disposition deserve to breathe or to look upon this sun?

There is another most foolish excuse of these sluggards; that they have not the books in their possession. Now as to the rich, it is ludicrous that we should take our aim at this excuse; but because I imagine that many of the poorer sort continually use it, I would gladly ask, if every one of them does not have all the instruments of the trade which he works at, full and complete, though infinite poverty stand in his way? Is it not then a strange thing, in that case to throw no blame on poverty, but to use every means that there be no obstacle from any quarter, but, when we might gain such great advantage, to lament our want of leisure and our poverty?

Besides, even if any should be so poor, it is in their power, by means of the continual reading of the holy Scriptures which takes place here, to be ignorant of nothing contained in them. Or if this seems to you impossible, it seems so with reason; for many do not come with fervent zeal to hearken to what is said, but having done this one thing for form's sake on our account, immediately return home. Or if any should stay, they are no better disposed than those who have retired, since they are only present here with us in body. But that we may not overload you with accusations, and spend all the

time in finding fault, let us proceed to the words of the Gospel, for it is time to direct the remainder of our discourse to what is set before us. Rouse yourselves therefore, that nothing of what is said escape you.

"And the Word was made Flesh," he says, *"and dwelt among us."*

Having declared that they who received Him were *"born of God,"* and had become *"sons of God,"* he adds the cause and reason of this unspeakable honor. It is that *"the Word became Flesh,"* that the Master took on Him the form of a servant. For He became Son of man, who was God's own Son, in order that He might make the sons of men to be children of God. For the high when it associates with the low touches not at all its own honor, while it raises up the other from its excessive lowness; and even thus it was with the Lord. He in nothing diminished His own Nature by this condescension, but raised us, who had always sat in disgrace and darkness, to glory unspeakable. Thus it may be, a king, conversing with interest and kindness with a poor mean man, does not at all shame himself, yet makes the other observed by all and illustrious. Now if in the case of the adventitious dignity of men, intercourse with the humbler person in nothing injures the more honorable, much less can it do so in the case of that simple and blessed Essence which has nothing adventitious, or subject to growth or decay, but has all good things immovable, and fixed for ever. So that when you hear that *"the Word became Flesh,"* be not disturbed nor cast down. For that Essence did not change to flesh, (it is impiety to imagine this,) but continuing what it is, It so took upon It the form of a servant.

2. Wherefore then does he use the expression, *"was made"*? To stop the mouths of the heretics. For since there are some who say that all the circumstances of the Dispensation were an appearance, a piece of acting, an allegory, at once to remove beforehand their blasphemy, he has put *"was made"*; desiring to show thereby not a change of substance, (away with the

thought,) but the assumption of very flesh. For as when (Paul) says, "*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,*" he does not mean that His essence removing from Its proper glory took upon It the being of an accursed thing, (this not even devils could imagine, nor even the very foolish, nor those deprived of their natural understanding, such impiety as well as madness does it contain,) as (St. Paul) does not say this, but that He, taking upon Himself the curse pronounced against us, leaves us no more under the curse; so also here he (St. John) says that He "*was made Flesh,*" not by changing His Essence to flesh, but by taking flesh to Himself, His Essence remained untouched.

If they say that being God, He is Omnipotent, so that He could lower Himself to the substance of flesh, we will reply to them, that He is Omnipotent as long as He continues to be God. But if He admit of change, change for the worse, how could He be God? For change is far from that simple Nature. Wherefore the Prophet says, "*They all shall wax old as does a garment, and as a vesture shall Thou roll them up, and they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years shall not fail.*" [Psalm 102:27, Septuagint] For that Essence is superior to all change. There is nothing better than He, to which He might advance and reach. Better do I say? No, nor equal to, nor the least approaching Him. It remains, therefore, that if He change, He must admit a change for the worse; and this would not be God. But let the blasphemy return upon the heads of those who utter it. Nay, to show that he uses the expression, "*was made*" only that you should not suppose a mere appearance, hear from what follows how he clears the argument, and overthrows that wicked suggestion. For what does he add? "*And dwelt among us.*" All but saying, "*Imagine nothing improper from the word 'was made'; I spoke not of any change of that unchangeable Nature, but of Its dwelling and inhabiting. But that which dwells cannot be the same*

with that in which it dwells, but different; one thing dwells in a different thing, otherwise it would not be dwelling; for nothing can inhabit itself. I mean, different as to essence; for by an Union and Conjoining God the Word and the Flesh are One, not by any confusion or obliteration of substances, but by a certain union ineffable, and past understanding. Ask not how ; for It was made, so as He knows."

What then was the tabernacle in which He dwelt? Hear the Prophet say; *"I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen."* [Amos 9:11] It was fallen indeed, our nature had fallen an incurable fall, and needed only that mighty Hand. There was no possibility of raising it again, had not He who fashioned it at first stretched forth to it His Hand, and stamped it anew with His Image, by the regeneration of water and the Spirit. And observe I pray you, the awful and ineffable nature of the mystery. He inhabits this tabernacle for ever, for He clothed Himself with our flesh, not as again to leave it, but always to have it with Him. Had not this been the case, He would not have deemed it worthy of the royal throne, nor would He while wearing it have been worshipped by all the host of heaven, angels, archangels, thrones, principalities, dominions, powers. What word, what thought can represent such great honor done to our race, so truly marvelous and awful? What angel, what archangel? Not one in any place, whether in heaven, or upon earth. For such are the mighty works of God, so great and marvelous are His benefits, that a right description of them exceeds not only the tongue of men, but even the power of angels.

Wherefore we will for a while close our discourse, and be silent; only delivering to you this charge, that you repay this our so great Benefactor by a return which again shall bring round to us all profit. The return is, that we look with all carefulness to the state of our souls. For this too is the work of His lovingkindness, that He who stands in no need of anything of ours says

that He is repaid when we take care of our own souls. It is therefore an act of extremist folly, and one deserving ten thousand chastisements, if we, when such honor has been lavished upon us, will not even contribute what we can, and that too when profit comes round to us again by these means, and ten thousand blessings are laid before us on these conditions. For all these things let us return glory to our merciful God, not by words only, but much more by works that we may obtain the good things hereafter, which may it be that we all attain to, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 12 on the Gospel of John

John 1:14

"And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

1. Perhaps we seemed to you the other day needlessly hard upon you and burdensome, using too sharp language, and extending too far our reproaches against the sluggishness of the many. Now if we had done this merely from a desire to vex you, each of you would with cause have been angry; but if, looking to your advantage, we neglected in our speech what might gratify you, if you will not give us credit for our forethought, you should at least pardon us on account of such tender love. For in truth we greatly fear, lest, if we are taking pains, and you are not willing to manifest the same diligence in listening your future reckoning may be the more severe. Wherefore we are compelled continually to arouse and waken you, that nothing of what is said may escape you. For so you will be enabled to live for the present with much confidence, and to exhibit it at that Day before the judgment-seat of Christ. Since then we have lately sufficiently touched you, let us today at the outset enter on the expressions themselves.

"We beheld," he says, *"His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father."*

Having declared that we were made *"sons of God,"* and having shown in what manner, namely, by the *"Word"* having been *"made Flesh,"* he again mentions another advantage which we gain from this same circumstance. What is it? *"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father";* which we could not have beheld, had it not been shown to us, by

means of a body like to our own. For if the men of old time could not even bear to look upon the glorified countenance of Moses, who partook of the same nature with us, if that just man needed a veil which might shade over the purity of his glory, and show to them the face of their prophet mild and gentle; how could we creatures of clay and earth have endured the unveiled Godhead, which is unapproachable even by the powers above? Wherefore He tabernacled among us, that we might be able with much fearlessness to approach Him, speak to, and converse with Him.

But what means "*the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father*"? Since many of the Prophets too were glorified, as this Moses himself, Elijah, and Elisha, the one encircled by the fiery chariot [2 Kings 6:17], the other taken up by it; and after them, Daniel and the Three Children, and the many others who showed forth wonders ; and angels who have appeared among men, and partly disclosed to beholders the flashing light of their proper nature; and since not angels only, but even the Cherubim were seen by the Prophet in great glory, and the Seraphim also: the Evangelist leading us away from all these, and removing our thoughts from created things, and from the brightness of our fellow-servants, sets us at the very summit of good. For, "*not of prophet,*" says he, "*nor angel, nor archangel, nor of the higher power, nor of any other created nature,*" if other there be, but of the Master Himself, the King Himself, the true Only-Begotten Son Himself, of the Very Lord of all, did we "*behold the glory.*"

For the expression "*as,*" does not in this place belong to similarity or comparison, but to confirmation and unquestionable definition; as though he said, "*We beheld glory, such as it was becoming, and likely that He should possess, who is the Only-Begotten and true Son of God, the King of all.*" The habit (of so speaking) is general, for I shall not refuse to strengthen my argument even from common custom, since it is not now my

object to speak with any reference to beauty of words, or elegance of composition, but only for your advantage; and therefore there is nothing to prevent my establishing my argument by the instance of a common practice. What then is the habit of most persons? Often when any have seen a king richly decked, and glittering on all sides with precious stones, and are afterwards describing to others the beauty, the ornaments, the splendor, they enumerate as much as they can, the glowing tint of the purple robe, the size of the jewels, the whiteness of the mules, the gold about the yoke, the soft and shining couch. But when after enumerating these things, and other things besides these, they cannot, say what they will, give a full idea of the splendor, they immediately bring in: *"But why say much about it; once for all, he was like a king;"* not desiring by the expression *"like,"* to show that he, of whom they say this, resembles a king, but that he is a real king. Just so now the Evangelist has put the word as, desiring to represent the transcendent nature and incomparable excellence of His glory.

For indeed all others, both angels and archangels and prophets, did everything as under command; but He with the authority which becomes a King and Master; at which even the multitudes wondered, that He taught as *"one having authority."* [Matthew 7:29] Even angels, as I said, have appeared with great glory upon the earth; as in the case of Daniel, of David, of Moses, but they did all as servants who have a Master. But He as Lord and Ruler of all, and this when He appeared in poor and humble form; but even so creation recognized her Lord. Now the star from heaven which called the wise men to worship Him, the vast throng pouring everywhere of angels attending the Lord, and hymning His praise, and besides them, many other heralds sprang up on a sudden, and all, as they met, declared to one another the glad tidings of this ineffable mystery; the angels to the shepherds; the shepherds to those of the city; Gabriel to Mary and

Elisabeth; Anna and Simeon to those who came to the Temple. Nor were men and women only lifted up with pleasure, but the very infant who had not yet come forth to light, I mean the citizen of the wilderness, the namesake of this Evangelist, leaped while yet in his mother's womb, and all were soaring with hopes for the future. This too immediately after the Birth. But when He had manifested Himself still farther, other wonders, yet greater than the first, were seen. For it was no more star, or sky, no more angels, or archangels, not Gabriel, or Michael, but the Father Himself from heaven above, who proclaimed Him, and with the Father the Comforter, flying down at the uttering of the Voice and resting on Him. Truly therefore did he say, *"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father."*

2. Yet he says it not only on account of these things, but also on account of what followed them; for no longer do shepherds only, and widow women, and aged men, declare to us the good tidings, but the very voice of the things themselves, sounding clearer than any trumpet, and so loudly, that the sound was straightway heard even in this land. *"For,"* says one, *"his fame went into all Syria"* [Matthew 4:24]; and He revealed Himself to all, and all things everywhere exclaimed, that the King of Heaven had come. Evil spirits everywhere fled and started away from Him, Satan covered his face and retired, death at that time retreated before Him, and afterwards disappeared altogether; every kind of infirmity was loosed, the graves let free the dead, the devils those whom they had maddened, and diseases the sick. And one might see things strange and wonderful, such as with good cause the prophets desired to see, and saw not. One might see eyes fashioned [John 9:6-7], (might see) Him showing to all in short space and on the more noble portion of the body, that admirable thing which all would have desired to see, how God formed Adam from the earth; palsied

and distorted limbs fastened and adapted to each other, dead hands moving, palsied feet leaping amain, ears that were stopped re-opened, and the tongue sounding aloud which before was tied by speechlessness. For having taken in hand the common nature of men, as some excellent workman might take a house decayed by time, He filled up what was broken off, banded together its crevices and shaken portions, and raised up again what was entirely fallen down.

And what should one say of the fashioning of the soul, so much more admirable than that of the body? The health of our bodies is a great thing, but that of our souls is as much greater as the soul is better than the body. And not on this account only, but because our bodily nature follows withersoever the Creator will lead it, and there is nothing to resist, but the soul being its own mistress, and possessing power over its acts, does not in all things obey God, unless it will to do so. For God will not make it beautiful and excellent, if it be reluctant and in a manner constrained by force, for this is not virtue at all; but He must persuade it to become so of its own will and choice. And so this cure is more difficult than the other; yet even this succeeded, and every kind of wickedness was banished. And as He re-ordered the bodies which He cured, not to health only, but to the highest vigor, so did He not merely deliver the souls from extremist wickedness, but brought them to the very summit of excellence. A publican became an Apostle, and a persecutor, blasphemer, and injurious, appeared as herald to the world, and the Magi became teachers of the Jews, and a thief was declared a citizen of Paradise, and a harlot shone forth by the greatness of her faith, and of the two women, of Canaan and Samaria, the latter who was another harlot, undertook to preach the Gospel to her countrymen, and having enclosed a whole city in her net, so brought them to Christ; while the former by faith and perseverance, procured the

expulsion of an evil spirit from her daughter's soul; and many others much worse than these were straightway numbered in the rank of disciples, and at once all the infirmities of their bodies and diseases of their souls were transformed, and they were fashioned anew to health and exactest virtue. And of these, not two or three men, not five, or ten, or twenty, or an hundred only, but entire cities and nations, were very easily remodeled. Why should one speak of the wisdom of the commands, the excellency of the heavenly laws, the good ordering of the angelic polity? For such a life has He proposed to us, such laws appointed for us, such a polity established, that those who put these things into practice, immediately become angels and like to God, as far as is in our power, even though they may have been worse than all men.

3. The Evangelist therefore having brought together all these things, the marvels in our bodies, in our souls, in the elements (of our faith), the commandments, those gifts ineffable and higher than the heavens, the laws, the polity, the persuasion, the future promises, His sufferings, uttered that voice so wonderful and full of exalted doctrine, saying, "*We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*" For we admire Him not only on account of the miracles, but also by reason of the sufferings; as that He was nailed upon the Cross, that He was scourged, that He was buffeted, that He was spit upon, that He received blows on the cheek from those to whom He had done good. For even of those very things which seem to be shameful, it is proper to repeat the same expression, since He Himself called that action "*glory.*" For what then took place was (proof) not only of kindness and love, but also of unspeakable power. At that time death was abolished, the curse was loosed, devils were shamed and led in triumph and made a show of, and the handwriting of our sins was nailed to the Cross. And then, since these wonders were doing

invisibly, others took place visibly, showing that He was of a truth the Only-Begotten Son of God, the Lord of all creation. For while yet that blessed Body hung upon the tree, the sun turned away his rays, the whole earth was troubled and became dark, the graves were opened, the ground quaked, and an innumerable multitude of dead leaped forth, and went into the city. And while the stones of His tomb were fastened upon the vault, and the seals yet upon them, the Dead arose, the Crucified, the nail-pierced One, and having filled His eleven disciples with His mighty power, He sent them to men throughout all the world, to be the common healers of all their kind, to correct their way of living, to spread through every part of the earth the knowledge of their heavenly doctrines, to break down the tyranny of devils, to teach those great and ineffable blessings, to bring to us the glad tidings of the soul's immortality, and the eternal life of the body, and rewards which are beyond conception, and shall never have an end. These things then, and yet more than these, the blessed Evangelist having in mind, things which though he knew, he was not able to write, because the world could not have contained them (for if all things *"should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written"* [John 21:25]), reflecting therefore on all these, he cries out, *"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."*

It behooves therefore those who have been deemed worthy to see and to hear such things, and who have enjoyed so great a gift, to display also a life worthy of the doctrines, that they may enjoy also the good things which are (laid up) there. For our Lord Jesus Christ came, not only that we might behold His glory here, but also that which shall be. For therefore He says, *"I will that these also be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory."* [John 17:24] Now if the glory here was so bright and splendid, what can

one say of that (which shall be)? For it shall appear not on this corruptible earth, nor while we are in perishable bodies, but in a creation which is imperishable, and waxes not old, and with such brightness as it is not possible even to represent in words. O blessed, thrice blessed, yea many times so, they who are deemed worthy to be beholders of that glory! It is concerning this that the prophet says, *"Let the unrighteous be taken away, that he behold not the glory of the Lord."* [Isaiah 26:10, Septuagint] God grant that not one of us be taken away nor excluded ever from beholding it. For if we shall not hereafter enjoy it, then it is time to say of ourselves, *"Good were it for" us, "if" we "had never been born."* For why do we live and breathe? What are we, if we fail of that spectacle, if no one grant us then to behold our Lord? If those who see not the light of the sun endure a life more bitter than any death, what is it likely that they who are deprived of that light must suffer? For in the one case the loss is confined to this one privation; but in the other it does not rest here, (though if this were the only thing to be dreaded, even then the degrees of punishment would not be equal, but one would be as much severer than the other, as that sun is incomparably superior to this,) but now we must look also for other vengeance; for he who beholds not that light must not only be led into darkness, but must be burned continually, and waste away, and gnash his teeth, and suffer ten thousand other dreadful things. Let us then not permit ourselves by making this brief time a time of carelessness and remissness, to fall into everlasting punishment, but let us watch and be sober, let us do all things, and make it all our business to attain to that felicity, and to keep far from that river of fire, which rushes with a loud roaring before the terrible judgment seat. For he who has once been cast in there, must remain for ever; there is no one to deliver him from his punishment, not father, not mother, not brother. And this the prophets themselves declared aloud; one

saying, "*Brother delivers not brother. Shall man deliver?*" [Psalm 49:7, Septuagint] And Ezekiel has declared somewhat more than this, saying, "*Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters.*" [Ezekiel 14:16] For one defense only, that through works, is there, and he who is deprived of that cannot be saved by any other means. Revolving these things, then, and reflecting upon them continually, let us cleanse our life and make it lustrous, that we may see the Lord with boldness, and obtain the promised good things; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 13 on the Gospel of John

John 1:15

"John bears witness of Him, and cries, saying, This is He of whom I spoke, saying, He that comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me."

1. Do we then run and labor in vain? Are we sowing upon the rocks? Does the seed fall upon the rocks? Does the seed fall without our knowing it by the wayside, and among thorns? I am greatly troubled and fear, lest our husbandry be unprofitable; not as though I shall be a loser as well as you, touching the reward of this labor. For it is not with those who teach as it is with husbandmen. Oftentimes the husbandman after his year's toil, his hard work and sweat, if the earth produce no suitable return for his pains, will be able to find comfort for his labors from none else, but returns ashamed and downcast from his barn to his dwelling, his wife and children, unable to require of any man a reward for his lengthened toil. But in our case there is nothing like this. For even though the soil which we cultivate bring forth no fruit, if we have shown all industry, the Lord of it and of us will not suffer us to depart with disappointed hopes, but will give us a recompense; for, says St. Paul, *"Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor"* [1 Corinthians 3:8], not according to the event of things. And that it is so, hearken: *"And You,"* he says, *"Son of man, testify unto this people, if they will hear, and if they will understand."* [Ezekiel 2:5, not from Septuagint] And Ezekiel says, *"If the watchman give warning what it behooves to flee from, and what to choose, he has delivered his own soul, although there be none that will take heed."* [Ezekiel 3:18, and 33:9; not

quoted from Septuagint] Yet although we have this strong consolation, and are confident of the recompense that shall be made us, still when we see that the work in you does not go forward, our state is not better than the state of those husbandmen who lament and mourn, who hide their faces and are ashamed. This is the sympathy of a teacher, this is the natural care of a father. For Moses too, when it was in his power to have been delivered from the ingratitude of the Jews, and to have laid the more glorious foundation of another and far greater people, ("*Let Me alone,*" said God, "*that I may consume them, and make of you a nation mightier than this*" [Exodus 32:10]) because he was a holy man, the servant of God, and a friend very true and generous, he did not endure even to hearken to this word, but chose rather to perish with those who had been once allotted to him, than without them to be saved and be in greater honor. Such ought he to be who has the charge of souls. For it is a strange thing that any one who has weak children, will not be called the father of any others than those who are sprung from him, but that he who has had disciples placed in his hands should be continually changing one flock for another, that we should be catching at the charge now of these, then of those, then again of others, having no real affection for any one. May we never have cause to suspect this of you. We trust that you abound more in faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in love to one another and towards all men. And this we say as desiring that your zeal may be increased, and the excellence of your conversation farther advanced. For it is thus that you will be able to bring your understandings down to the very depth of the words set before us, if no film of wickedness darken the eyes of your intellect, and disturb its clear-sightedness and acuteness.

What then is it which is set before us today? "*John bore witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spoke, He that comes after*

me is preferred before me, for He was before me." The Evangelist is very full in making frequent mention of John, and often bearing about his testimony. And this he does not without a reason, but very wisely; for all the Jews held the man in great admiration, (even Josephus imputes the war to his death; and shows, that, on his account, what once was the mother city, is now no city at all, and continues the words of his encomium to great length,) and therefore desiring by his means to make the Jews ashamed, he continually reminds them of the testimony of the forerunner. The other Evangelists make mention of the older prophets, and at each successive thing that took place respecting Him refer the hearer to them. Thus when the Child is born, they say, *"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esias the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son"* [Matthew 1:22; Isaiah 7:14]; and when He is plotted against and sought for everywhere so diligently, that even tender infancy is slaughtered by Herod, they bring in Jeremy, saying, *"In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children"* [Matthew 2:18; Jeremiah 31:15]; and again, when He comes up out of Egypt, they mention Hosea, saying, *"Out of Egypt have I called My Son"* [Matthew 2:15; Hosea 11:1]; and this they do everywhere. But John providing testimony more clear and fresh, and uttering a voice more glorious than the other, brings continually forward not those only who had departed and were dead, but one also who was alive and present, who pointed Him out and baptized Him, him he continually introduces, not desiring to gain credit for the master through the servant, but condescending to the infirmity of his hearers. For as unless He had taken the form of a servant, He would not have been easily received, so had He not by the voice of a servant prepared the ears of his fellow-

servants, the many (at any rate) of the Jews would not have received the Word.

2. But besides this, there was another great and wonderful provision. For because to speak any great words concerning himself, makes a man's witness to be suspected, and is often an obstacle to many hearers, another comes to testify of Him. And besides this the many are in a manner wont to run more readily to a voice which is more familiar and natural to them, as recognizing it more than other voices; and therefore the voice from heaven was uttered once or twice, but that of John oftentimes and continually. For those of the people who had surmounted the infirmity of their nature, and had been released from all the things of sense, could hear the Voice from heaven, and had no great need of that of man, but in all things obeyed that other, and were led by it; but they who yet moved below, and were wrapt in many veils, needed that meaner (voice). In the same way John, because he had snipped himself in every way of the things of sense, needed no other instructors, but was taught from heaven. *"He that sent me,"* says he, *"to baptize with water; the Same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit"* of God *"descending, the same is He."* [John 1:33] But the Jews who still were children, and could not as yet reach to that height, had a man for their teacher, a man who did not speak to them words of his own, but brought them a message from above.

What then says he? He *"bears witness concerning Him, and cries, saying"* What means that word *"cries"*? Boldly, he means, and freely, without any reserve, he proclaims. What does he proclaim? To what does he *"bear witness,"* and *"cry"*? *"This is He of whom I said, He that comes after me is preferred before me; for He was before me."* The testimony is dark, and contains besides much that is lowly. For he does not say, *"This is the Son of God, the Only-begotten, the true Son "*; but what? *"He that comes*

after me, is preferred before me; for He was before me." As the mother birds do not teach their young all at once how to fly, nor finish their teaching in a single day, but at first lead them forth so as to be just outside the nest, then after first allowing them to rest, set them again to flying, and on the next day continue a flight much farther, and so gently, little by little, bring them to the proper height; just so the blessed John did not immediately bring the Jews to high things, but taught them for a while to fly up a little above the earth saying, that Christ was greater than he. And yet this, even this was for the time no small thing, to have been able to persuade the hearers that one who had not yet appeared nor worked any wonders was greater than a man, (John, I mean,) so marvelous, so famous, to whom all ran, and whom they thought to be an angel. For a while therefore he labored to establish this in the minds of his hearers, that He to whom testimony was borne was greater than he who bore it; He that came after, than he that came before, He who had not yet appeared, than he that was manifest and famous. And observe how prudently he introduces his testimony; for he does not only point Him out when He has appeared, but even before He appears, proclaims Him. For the expression, "*This is He of whom I spoke,*" is the expression of one declaring this. As also Matthew says, that when all came to him, he said, "*I indeed baptize you with water, but He that comes after me is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.*" Wherefore then even before His appearance did he this? In order that when He appeared, the testimony might readily be received, the minds of the hearers being already prepossessed by what was said concerning Him, and the mean external appearance not vitiating it. For if without having heard anything at all concerning Him they had seen the Lord, and as they beheld Him had at the same time received the testimony of John's words, so wonderful and great, the meanness of His appearance would have

straightway been an objection to the grandeur of the expressions. For Christ took on Him an appearance so mean and ordinary, that even Samaritan women, and harlots, and publicans, had confidence boldly to approach and converse with Him. As therefore, I said, if they had at once heard these words and seen Himself, they might perhaps have mocked at the testimony of John; but now because even before Christ appeared, they had often heard and had been accustomed to what was said concerning Him, they were affected in the opposite way, not rejecting the instruction of the words by reason of the appearance of Him who was witnessed of, but from their belief of what had been already told them, esteeming Him even more glorious.

The phrase, *"that comes after,"* means, *"that"* preaches *"after me,"* not *"that"* was born *"after me."* And this Matthew glances at when he says, *"after me comes a man,"* not speaking of His birth from Mary, but of His coming to preach (the Gospel), for had he been speaking of the birth, he would not have said, *"comes,"* but *"has come"*; since He was born when John spoke this. What then means *"is before me"*? Is more glorious, more honorable. *"Do not,"* he says, *"because I came preaching first from this, suppose that I am greater than He; I am much inferior, so much inferior that I am not worthy to be counted in the rank of a servant."* This is the sense of *"is before me,"* which Matthew showing in a different manner, says, *"The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose."* [Luke 3:16] Again, that the phrase, *"is before me,"* does not refer to His coming into Being, is plain from the sequel; for had he meant to say this, what follows, *"for He was before me,"* would be superfluous. For who so dull and foolish as not to know that He who *"was born before"* him *"was before"* him? Or if the words refer to His subsistence before the ages, what is said is nothing else than that *"He who comes after me came into being before me."* Besides,

such a thing as this is unintelligible, and the cause is thrown in needlessly; for he ought to have said the contrary, if he had wished to declare this, *"that He who comes after me was before me, since also He was born before me."* For one might with reason assign this, (the *"being born before"*) as the cause of *"being before,"* but not the *"being before,"* as the cause of *"being born."* While what we assert is very reasonable. Since you all at least know this, that they are always things uncertain not things evident, that require their causes to be assigned. Now if the argument related to the production of substance, it could not have been uncertain that he who *"was born"* first must needs *"be"* first; but because he is speaking concerning honor, he with reason explains what seems to be a difficulty. For many might well enquire, whence and on what pretext He who came after, became before, that is, appeared with great honor; in reply to this question therefore, he immediately assigns the reason; and the reason is, His Being first. He does not say, that *"by some kind of advancement he cast me who has been first behind him, and so became before me,"* but that *"he was before me,"* even though he arrives after me.

But how, says one, if the Evangelist refers to His manifestation to men, and to the glory which was to attend Him from them, does he speak of what was not yet accomplished, as having already taken place? For he does not say, *"shall be,"* but *"was."* Because this is a custom among the prophets of old, to speak of the future as of the past. Thus Isaiah speaking of His slaughter does not say, *"He shall be led (which would have denoted futurity) as a sheep to the slaughter";* but *"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter"* [Isaiah 53:7]; yet He was not yet Incarnate, but the Prophet speaks of what should be as if it had come to pass. So David, pointing to the Crucifixion, said not, *"They shall pierce My hands and My feet,"* but *"They pierced My hands and My feet, and parted My garments among them, and cast lots*

upon My vesture" [Psalm 22:16-18]; and discoursing of the traitor as yet unborn, he says, "He which did eat of My bread, has lifted up his heel against Me" [Psalm 41:9]; and of the circumstances of the Crucifixion, "They gave Me gall for meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." [Psalm 69:21]

4. Do you desire that we adduce more examples, or do these suffice? For my part, I think they do; for if we have not dug over the ground in all its extent, we have at least dug down to its bottom; and this last kind of work is not less laborious than the former; and we fear lest by straining your attention immoderately we cause you to fall back.

Let us then give to our discourse a becoming conclusion. And what conclusion is becoming? A suitable giving of glory to God; and that is suitable which is given, not by words only, but much more by actions. For He says, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:16] Now nothing is more full of light than a most excellent conversation. As one of the wise men has said, *"The paths of the just shine like the light"* [Proverbs 4:18, Septuagint]; and they shine not for them alone who kindle the flame by their works, and are guides in the way of righteousness, but also for those who are their neighbors. Let us then pour oil into these lamps, that the flame become higher, that rich light appear. For not only has this oil great strength now, but even when sacrifices were at their height, it was far more acceptable than they could be. *"I will have mercy,"* He says, *"and not sacrifice."* [Matthew 12:7; Hosea 6:6] And with good reason; for that is a lifeless altar, this a living; and all that is laid on that altar becomes the food of fire, and ends in dust, and it is poured forth as ashes, and the smoke of it is dissolved into the substance of the air; but here there is nothing like this, the fruits which it bears are different. As the words of Paul declare; for in

describing the treasures of kindness to the poor laid up by the Corinthians, he writes, *"For the administration of this service not only supplies the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God."* [2 Corinthians 9:12] And again; *"Whiles they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; and by their prayer for you, which long after you."* Do you behold it resolving itself into thanksgiving and praise of God, and continual prayers of those who have been benefited, and more fervent charity? Let us then sacrifice, beloved, let us sacrifice every day upon these altars. For this sacrifice is greater than prayer and fasting, and many things beside, if only it come from honest gain, and honest toils, and be pure from all covetousness, and rapine, and violence. For God accepts such offerings as these, but the others He turns away from and hates; He will not be honored out of other men's calamities, such sacrifice is unclean and profane, and would rather anger God than appease Him. So that we must use all carefulness, that we do not, in the place of service, insult Him whom we would honor. For if Cain for making a second-rate offering, having done no other wrong, suffered extreme punishment, how shall not we when we offer anything gained by rapine and covetousness, suffer yet more severely. It is for this that God has shown to us the pattern of this commandment, that we might have mercy, not be severe to our fellow-servants; but he who takes what belongs to one and gives it to another, has not shown mercy, but inflicted hurt, and done an extreme injustice. As then a stone cannot yield oil, so neither can cruelty produce humanity; for alms when it has such a root as this is alms no longer. Therefore I exhort that we look not to this only, that we give to those that need, but also that we give not from other men's plunder. *"When one prays, and another curses, whose voice will the Lord hear?"* [Sirach 34:24] If we guide ourselves thus strictly, we shall be

able by the grace of God to obtain much lovingkindness and mercy and pardon for what we have done amiss during all this long time, and to escape the river of fire; from which may it come to pass that we be all delivered, and ascend to the Kingdom of Heaven, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 14 on the Gospel of John

John 1:16

"And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

1. I said the other day, that John, to resolve the doubts of those who should question with themselves how the Lord, though He came after to the preaching, became before and more glorious than he, added, *"for He was before me."* And this is indeed one reason. But not content with this, he adds again a second, which now he declares. What is it? *"And of his fullness,"* says he, *"have all we received, and grace for grace."* With these again he mentions another. What is this? That

John 1:17

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

And what means that, says he, *"Of His fullness have all we received"*? For to this we must for a while direct our discourse. He possesses not, says he, the gift by participation, but is Himself the very Fountain and very Root of all good, very Life, and very Light, and very Truth, not retaining within Himself the riches of His good things, but overflowing with them unto all others, and after the overflowing remaining full, in nothing diminished by supplying others, but streaming ever forth, and imparting to others a share of these blessings, He remains in sameness of perfection. What I possess is by participation, (for I received it from another) and is a small portion of the whole, as it were a poor rain-drop compared with the untold abyss or the boundless sea; or rather not even can this instance fully express what we attempt to say, for if you take a drop from the sea, you have lessened the sea itself, though the diminution be imperceptible. But of that Fountain we cannot say this; how much soever a man draw, It continues undiminished. We therefore must needs proceed to another instance, a weak one also, and not able to establish what we seek, but which guides us better than the former one to the thought now proposed to us.

Let us suppose that there is a fountain of fire; that from that fountain ten thousand lamps are kindled, twice as many, thrice as many, oftentimes as many; does not the fire remain at the same degree of fullness even after its imparting of its virtue to such members? It is plain to every man that it does. Now if in the case of bodies which are made up of parts, and are diminished by abstraction, one has been found of such a nature, that after supplying to others something from itself it sustains no loss, much more

will this take place with that incorporeal and uncompounded Power. If in the instance given, that which is communicated is substance and body, is divided yet does not suffer division, when our discourse is concerning an energy, and an energy too of an incorporeal substance, it is much more probable that this will undergo nothing of the sort. And therefore John said, *"Of His fullness have all we received,"* and joins his own testimony to that of the Baptist; for the expression, *"Of his fullness have we all received,"* belongs not to the forerunner but to the disciple; and its meaning is something like this: *"Think not,"* he says, *"that we, who long time companied with Him, and partook of His food and table, bear witness through favor,"* since even John, who did not even know Him before, who had never even been with Him, but merely saw Him in company with others when he was baptizing cried out, *"He was before me,"* having from that source received all; and all we the twelve, the three hundred, the three thousand, the five thousand, the many myriads of Jews, all the fullness of the faithful who then were, and now are, and hereafter shall be, have *"received of His fullness."* What have we received? *"grace for grace,"* says he. What grace, for what? For the old, the new. For there was a righteousness, and again a righteousness, (*"Touching the righteousness which is in the law,"* says Paul *"blameless."*) [Philippians 3:6] There was a faith, there is a faith. (*"From faith to faith."*) [Romans 1:17] There was an adoption, there is an adoption. (*"To whom pertains the adoption."*) [Romans 9:4] There was a glory, there is a glory. (*"For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remains is glorious."*) [2 Corinthians 3:11] There was a law, and there is a law. (*"For the law of the Spirit of life has made me free."*) [Romans 8:2] There was a service, and there is a service. (*"To whom pertains the service"* [Romans 9:4] and again: *"Serving God in the Spirit."*) [Philippians 3:3] There was a covenant, and there is a

covenant. (*"I will make with you a new covenant, not according to the covenant which I made with your fathers."*) [Jeremiah 31:31] There was a sanctification, and there is a sanctification: there was a baptism, and there is a Baptism: there was a sacrifice, and there is a Sacrifice: there was a temple, and there is a temple: there was a circumcision, and there is a circumcision; and so too there was a *"grace,"* and there is a *"grace."* But the words in the first case are used as types, in the second as realities, preserving a sameness of sound, though not of sense. So in patterns and figures, the shape of a man scratched with white lines upon a black ground is called a man as well as that which has received the correct coloring; and in the case of statues, the figure whether formed of gold or of plaster, is alike called a statue, though in the one case as a model, in the other as a reality.

2. Do not then, because the same words are used, suppose that the things are identical, nor yet diverse either; for in that they were models they did not differ from the truth; but in that they merely preserved the outline, they were less than the truth. What is the difference in all these instances? Will you that we take in hand and proceed to examine one or two of the cases mentioned? Thus the rest will be plain to you; and we shall see that the first were lessons for children, the last for high-minded full-grown men; that the first laws were made as for mortals, the latter as for angels.

Whence then shall we begin? From the sonship itself? What then is the distinction between the first and second? The first is the honor of a name, in the second the thing goes with it. Of the first the Prophet says, *"I have said, You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High"* [Psalm 82:6]; but of the latter, that they *"were born of God."* How, and in what way? By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. For they, even after they had received the title of sons, retained the spirit of slavery,

(for while they remained slaves they were honored with this appellation,) but we being made free, received the honor, not in name, but in deed. And this Paul has declared and said, *"For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."* [Romans 8:15] For having been born again, and, as one may say, thoroughly remade, we so are called *"sons."* And if one consider the character of the holiness, what the first was and what the second, he will find there also great difference. They when they did not worship idols, nor commit fornication or adultery, were called by this name; but we become holy, not by refraining from these vices merely, but by acquiring things greater. And this gift we obtain first by means of the coming upon us of the Holy Ghost; and next, by a rule of life far more comprehensive than that of the Jews. To prove that these words are not mere boasting hear what He says to them, *"You shall not use divination, nor make purification of your children, for you are a holy people."* So that holiness with them consisted in being free from the customs of idolatry; but it is not so with us. *"That she may be holy,"* says Paul, *"in body and spirit."* [1 Corinthians 7:34] *"Follow peace, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"* [Hebrews 12:14]: and, *"Perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* [2 Corinthians 7:1] For the word *"holy"* has not force to give the same meaning in every case to which it is applied; since God is called *"Holy,"* though not as we are. What, for instance, does the Prophet say, when he heard that cry raised by the flying Seraphim? *"Woe is me! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"* [Isaiah 6:5]; though he was holy and clean; but if we be compared with the holiness which is above, we are unclean. Angels are holy, Archangels are holy, the Cherubim and Seraphim themselves are holy, but of this holiness again there is a double difference; that is, in relation to us,

and to the higher powers. We might proceed to all the other points, but then the discussion would become too long, and its extent too great. We will therefore desist from proceeding farther, and leave it to you to take in hand the rest, for it is in your power at home to put these things together, and examine their difference, and in the same way to go over what remains.

"Give," says one, "a starting place to the wise, and he becomes wiser."

[Proverbs 9:9, Septuagint] The beginning is from us, but the end will be from you. We must now resume the connection.

After having said, *"Of His fullness have all we received,"* he adds, *"and grace for grace."* For by grace the Jews were saved: *"I chose you,"* says God, *"not because you were many in number, but because of your fathers."* [Deuteronomy 7:7, Septuagint] If now they were chosen by God not for their own good deeds, it is manifest that by grace they obtained this honor. And we too all are saved by grace, but not in like manner; not for the same objects, but for objects much greater and higher. The grace then that is with us is not like theirs. For not only was pardon of sins given to us, (since this we have in common with them, for all have sinned,) but righteousness also, and sanctification, and sonship, and the gift of the Spirit far more glorious and more abundant. By this grace we have become the beloved of God, no longer as servants, but as sons and friends. Wherefore he says, *"grace for grace."* Since even the things of the law were of grace, and the very fact of man being created from nothing, (for we did not receive this as a recompense for past good deeds, how could we, when we even were not? But from God who is ever the first to bestow His benefits,) and not only that we were created from nothing, but that when created, we straightway learned what we must and what we must not do, and that we received this law in our very nature, and that our Creator entrusted to us the impartial rule of conscience, these I say, are proofs of the greatest grace and

unspeakable lovingkindness. And the recovery of this law after it had become corrupt, by means of the written (Law), this too was the work of grace. For what might have been expected to follow was, that they who falsified the law once given should suffer correction and punishments; but what actually took place was not this, but, on the contrary, an amending of our nature, and pardon, not of debt, but given through mercy and grace. For to show that it was of grace and mercy, hear what David says; *"The Lord executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed; He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel"* [Psalm 103:6-7]: and again; *"Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will He give laws to them that are in the way."* [Psalm 25:8]

3. Therefore that men received the law was of pity, mercies, and grace; and for this reason he says, *"Grace for grace."* But striving yet more fervently to (express) the greatness of the gifts, he goes on to say,

Ver. 17 . *"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."*

Do you see how gently, by a single word and little by little, both John the Baptist and John the Disciple lead up their hearers to the highest knowledge, having first exercised them in humbler things? The former having compared to himself Him who is incomparably superior to all, thus afterwards shows His superiority, by saying, *"has become before me,"* and then adding the words, *"was before me"*: while the latter has done much more than he, though too little for the worthiness of the Only-Begotten, for he makes the comparison, not with John, but with one revered by the Jews more than John, with Moses. *"For the law,"* says he, *"was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."*

Observe his wisdom. He makes enquiry not concerning the person, but the things; for these being proved, it was probable that even the senseless

would of necessity receive from them a much higher judgment and notion respecting Christ. For when facts bear witness, which cannot be suspected of doing so either from favor to any, or from malice, they afford a means of judging which cannot be doubted even by the senseless; for they remain to open view just as their actors may have arranged them, and therefore their evidence is the least liable to suspicion of any. And see how he makes the comparison easy even to the weaker sort; for he does not prove the superiority by argument, but points out the difference by the bare words, opposing "*grace and truth*" to "*law*," and "*came*" to "*was given*." Between each of these there is a great difference; for one, "*was given*," belongs to something ministered, when one has received from another, and given to whom he was commanded to give; but the other, "*grace and truth came*," befits a king forgiving all offenses, with authority, and himself furnishing the gift. Wherefore He said, "*Your sins be forgiven you*" [Matthew 9:2]; and again, "*But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins (He says to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house.*" [Matthew 5:6]

Seest thou how "*grace*" comes by Him? Look also to "*truth*." His "*grace*" the instance just mentioned, and what happened in the case of the thief, and the gift of Baptism, and the grace of the Spirit given by Him declare, and many other things. But His "*truth*" we shall more clearly know, if we understand the types. For the types like patterns anticipated and sketched beforehand the dispensations which should be accomplished under the new covenant, and Christ came and fulfilled them. Let us now consider the types in few words, for we cannot at the present time go through all that relates to them; but when you have learned some points from those (instances) which I shall set before you, you will know the others also.

Will you then that we begin with the Passion itself? What then says the type? *"Take a lamb for an house, and kill it, and do as he commanded and ordained."* [Exodus 12:3] But it is not so with Christ. He does not command this to be done, but Himself becomes It, by offering Himself a Sacrifice and Oblation to His Father.

4. See how the type was *"given by Moses,"* but the *"Truth came by Jesus Christ."* [Exodus 17:12]

Again, when the Amalekites warred in Mount Sinai, the hands of Moses were supported, being stayed up by Aaron and Hur standing on either side of him [Exodus 17:12]; but when Christ came, He of Himself stretched forth His Hands upon the Cross. Have you observed how the type *"was given,"* but *"the Truth came"*?

Again, the Law said, *"Cursed is every one that continues not in all things that are written in this book."* [Deuteronomy 27:26, Septuagint] But what says grace? *"Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* [Matthew 11:28]; and Paul, *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."* [Galatians 3:13]

Since then we have enjoyed such *"grace"* and *"truth,"* I exhort you that we be not more slothful by reason of the greatness of the gift; for the greater the honor of which we have been deemed worthy, the greater our debt of excellence; for one who has received but small benefits, even though he makes but small returns, does not deserve the same condemnation; but he who has been raised to the highest summit of honor, and yet manifests groveling and mean dispositions, will be worthy of much greater punishment. May I never have to suspect this of you. For we trust in the Lord that you have winged your souls for heaven, that you have removed from earth, that being in the world you handle not the things of the world; yet though so persuaded, we do not cease thus continually to exhort you. In

the games of the heathen, they whom all the spectators encourage are not those who have fallen and lie supine, but those who are exerting themselves and running still; of the others, (since they would be doing what would be of no use, and would not be able to raise up by their encouragements men once for all severed from victory,) they cease to take any notice. But in this case some good may be expected, not only of you who are sober, but even of those who have fallen, if they would but be converted. Wherefore we use every means, exhorting, reproof, encouraging, praising, in order that we may bring about your salvation. Be not then offended by our continual admonishing concerning the Christian conversation, for the words are not the words of one accusing you of sloth, but of one who has very excellent hopes respecting you. And not to you alone, but to ourselves who speak them, are these words said, yea, and shall be said, for we too need the same teaching; so though they be spoken by us, yet nothing hinders their being spoken to us, (for the Word, when it finds a man in fault, amends him, when clear and free, sets him as far off from it as possible,) and we ourselves are not pure from transgressions. The course of healing is the same for all, the medicines are set forth for all, only the application is not the same, but is made according to the choice of those who use the medicines; for one who will handle the remedy as he ought, gains some benefit from the application, while he who does not place it upon the wound, makes the evil greater, and brings it to the most painful end. Let us then not fret when we are being healed, but much rather rejoice, even though the system of discipline bring bitter pains, for hereafter it will show to us fruit sweeter than any. Let us then do all to this end, that we may depart to that world, cleared of the wounds and strokes which the teeth of sin make in the soul, so that having become worthy to behold the countenance of Christ, we may be delivered in that day, not to the avenging and cruel powers, but to those

who are able to bring us to that inheritance of the heavens which is prepared for them that love Him; to which may it come to pass that we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 15 on the Gospel of John

John 1:18

"No man has seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

1. God will not have us listen to the words and sentences contained in the Scriptures carelessly, but with much attention. This is why the blessed David has prefixed in many places to his Psalms the title *"for understanding,"* and has said, *"Open Thou my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law."* [Psalm 32:42, etc.; Psalm 119:18] And after him his son again shows that we ought to *"seek out wisdom as silver, and to make merchandise of her rather than of gold."* [Proverbs 2:4 and 3:14 [partially quoted]; John 5:39] And the Lord when He exhorts the Jews to *"search the Scriptures,"* the more urges us to the enquiry, for He would not thus have spoken if it were possible to comprehend them immediately at the first reading. No one would ever search for what is obvious and at hand, but for that which is wrapt in shadow, and which must be found after much enquiry; and so to arouse us to the search He calls them *"hidden treasure."* [Proverbs 2:4; Matthew 13:44] These words are said to us that we may not apply ourselves to the words of the Scriptures carelessly or in a chance way, but with great exactness. For if any one listen to what is said in them without enquiring into the meaning, and receive all so as it is spoken, according to the letter, he will suppose many unseemly things of God, will admit of Him that He is a man, that He is made of brass, is wrathful, is furious, and many opinions yet worse than these. But if he fully learn the sense that lies beneath, he will be freed from all this unseemliness.

[Revelation 1:15] The very text which now lies before us says, that God has a bosom, a thing proper to bodily substances, yet no one is so insane as to imagine, that He who is without body is a body. In order then that we may properly interpret the entire passage according to its spiritual meaning, let us search it through from its beginning.

"No man has seen God at any time." By what connection of thought does the Apostle come to say this? After showing the exceeding greatness of the gifts of Christ, and the infinite difference between them and those ministered by Moses, he would add the reasonable cause of the difference. Moses, as being a servant, was minister of lower things, but Christ being Lord and King, and the King's Son, brought to us things far greater, being ever with the Father, and beholding Him continually; wherefore He says, *"No man has seen God at any time."* What then shall we answer to the most mighty of voice, Esaias, when he says, *"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up"* [Isaiah 6:1]; and to John himself testifying of Him, that *"he said these things when he had seen His glory"*? [John 12:41] What also to Ezekiel? For he too beheld Him sitting above the Cherubim. [Ezekiel 1 and 10] What to Daniel? For he too says, *"The Ancient of days did sit"* [Daniel 7:9] What to Moses himself, saying, *"Show me Your Glory, that I may see You so as to know You."* [Exodus 33:13, partly from Septuagint] And Jacob took his name from this very thing, being called *"Israel"*; for Israel is *"one that sees God."* And others have seen him. How then says John, *"No man has seen God at any time"*? It is to declare, that all these were instances of (His) condescension, not the vision of the Essence itself unveiled. For had they seen the very Nature, they would not have beheld It under different forms, since that is simple, without form, or parts, or bounding lines. It sits not, nor stands, nor walks: these things belong all to bodies. But how He Is, He only knows. And this He has declared by a

certain prophet, saying, *"I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes by the hands of the prophets"* [Hosea 12:10], that is, *"I have condescended, I have not appeared as I really was."* For since His Son was about to appear in very flesh, He prepared them from old time to behold the substance of God, as far as it was possible for them to see It; but what God really is, not only have not the prophets seen, but not even angels nor archangels. If you ask them, you shall not hear them answering anything concerning His Essence, but sending up, *"Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, good will towards men."* [Luke 2:14] If you desire to learn something from Cherubim or Seraphim, you shall hear the mystic song of His Holiness, and that *"heaven and earth are full of His glory."* [Isaiah 6:3] If you enquire of the higher powers, you shall but find that their one work is the praise of God. *"Praise Him,"* says David, *"all His hosts."* [Psalm 148:2] But the Son only Beholds Him, and the Holy Ghost. How can any created nature even see the Uncreated? If we are absolutely unable clearly to discern any incorporeal power whatsoever, even though created, as has been often proved in the case of angels, much less can we discern the Essence which is incorporeal and uncreated. Wherefore Paul says, *"Whom no man has seen, nor can see."* [1 Timothy 6:16] Does then this special attribute belong to the Father only, not to the Son? Away with the thought. It belongs also to the Son; and to show that it does so, hear Paul declaring this point, and saying, that He *"is the Image of the invisible God."* [Colossians 1:15] Now if He be the Image of the Invisible, He must be invisible Himself, for otherwise He would not be an *"image."* And wonder not that Paul says in another place, *"God was manifested in the Flesh"* [1 Timothy 3:16]; because the manifestation took place by means of the flesh, not according to (His) Essence. Besides, Paul shows that He is invisible, not only to men, but also

to the powers above, for after saying, "*was manifested in the Flesh*," he adds, "*was seen of angels*."

2. So that even to angels He then became visible, when He put on the Flesh; but before that time they did not so behold Him, because even to them His Essence was invisible.

"How then," asks some one, "*did Christ say, 'Despise not one of these little ones, for I tell you, that their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven'*? [Matthew 18:10] Hath then God a face, and is He bounded by the heavens?" Who so mad as to assert this? What then is the meaning of the words? As when He says, "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*" [Matthew 5:8], He means that intellectual vision which is possible to us, and the having God in the thoughts; so in the case of angels, we must understand that by reason of their pure and sleepless nature they do nothing else, but always image to themselves God. And therefore Christ says, that "*No man knows the Father, save the Son*." [Matthew 10:27] What then, are we all in ignorance? God forbid; but none knows Him as the Son knows Him. As then many have seen Him in the mode of vision permitted to them, but no one has beheld His Essence, so many of us know God, but what His substance can be none knows, save only He that was begotten of Him. For by "*knowledge*" He here means an exact idea and comprehension, such as the Father has of the Son. "*As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father*." [John 10:15]

Observe, therefore, with what fullness the Evangelist speaks; for having said that "*no man has seen God at any time*," he does not go on to say, "*that the Son who has seen, has declared Him*," but adds something beyond "*seeing*" by the words, "*Who is in the bosom of the Father*"; because, "*to dwell in the bosom*" is far more than "*to see*." For he that merely "*sees*" has not an in every way exact knowledge of the object, but he

that *"dwells in the bosom"* can be ignorant of nothing. Now lest when you hear that *"none knows the Father, save the Son,"* you should assert that although He knows the Father more than all, yet He knows not how great He is, the Evangelist says that He dwells in the bosom of the Father; and Christ Himself declares, that He knows Him as much as the Father knows the Son. Ask therefore the gainsayer, *"Tell me, does the Father know the Son?"* And if he be not mad, he will certainly answer *"Yes."* Then ask again; *"Does He see and know Him with exact vision and knowledge? Does He know clearly what He Is?"* He will certainly confess this also. From this next collect the exact comprehension the Son has of the Father. For He says, *"As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father"* [John 10:15]; and in another place, *"Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is of God."* [John 6:46] Wherefore, as I said, the Evangelist mentions *"the bosom,"* to show all this to us by that one word; that great is the affinity and nearness of the Essence, that the knowledge is nowise different, that the power is equal. For the Father would not have in His bosom one of another essence, nor would He have dared, had He been one among many servants, to live in the bosom of his Lord, for this belongs only to a true Son, to one who has much confidence towards His Father, and who is in nothing inferior to Him.

Would you learn also His eternity? Hear what Moses says concerning the Father. When he asked what he was commanded to answer should the Jews enquire of him, *"Who it was that had sent him,"* he heard these words: *"Say, I AM has sent me."* [Exodus 3:14] Now the expression *"I AM,"* is significative of Being ever, and Being without beginning, of Being really and absolutely. And this also the expression, *"Was in the beginning,"* declares, being indicative of Being ever; so that John uses this word to show that the Son Is from everlasting to everlasting in the bosom of the

Father. For that you may not from the sameness of name, suppose that He is some one of those who are made sons by grace, first, the article is added, distinguishing Him from those by grace. But if this does not content you, if you still look earthwards, hear a name more absolute than this, *"Only-Begotten."* If even after this you still look below, *"I will not refuse,"* says he, (St. John,) *"to apply to God a term belonging to man, I mean the word 'bosom,' only suspect nothing degrading."* Do you see the lovingkindness and carefulness of the Lord? God applies to Himself unworthy expressions, that even so you may see through them, and have some great and lofty thought of Him; and do you tarry below? For tell me, wherefore is that gross and carnal word *"bosom"* employed in this place? Is it that we may suppose God to be a body? Away, he by no means says so. Why then is it spoken? For if by it neither the genuineness of the Son is established, nor that God is not a body, the word, because it serves no purpose, is superfluously thrown in. Why then is it spoken? For I shall not desist from asking you this question. Is it not very plain, that it is for no other reason but that by it we might understand the genuineness of the Only-Begotten, and His Co-eternity with the Father?

3. *"He has declared Him,"* says John. What has he declared? That *"no man has seen God at any time"*? That *"God is one"*? But this all the other prophets testify, and Moses continually exclaims, *"The Lord your God is one Lord"* [Deuteronomy 6:4]; and Esaias, *"Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."* [Isaiah 43:10] What more then have we learned from *"the Son which is in the bosom of the Father"*? What from *"the Only-Begotten"*? In the first place, these very words were uttered by His working; in the next place, we have received a teaching that is far clearer, and learned that *"God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"* [John 4:24]; and again, that it is

impossible to see God; *"that no man knows" Him, "save the Son"* [Matthew 11:27]; that He is the Father of the true and Only-Begotten; and all other things that are told us of Him. But the word *"has declared"* shows the plainer and clearer teaching which He gave not to the Jews only but to all the world, and established. To the prophets not even all the Jews gave heed, but to the Only-Begotten Son of God all the world yielded and obeyed. So the *"declaration"* in this place shows the greater clearness of His teaching, and therefore also He is called *"Word,"* and *"Angel of great Counsel."*

Since then we have been vouchsafed a larger and more perfect teaching, God having no longer spoken by the prophets, but *"having in these last days spoken to us by His Son"* [Hebrews 1:1], let us show forth a conversation far higher than theirs, and suitable to the honor bestowed on us. Strange would it be that He should have so far lowered Himself, as to choose to speak to us no longer by His servants, but by His own mouth, and yet we should show forth nothing more than those of old. They had Moses for their teacher, we, Moses' Lord. Let us then exhibit a heavenly wisdom worthy of this honor, and let us have nothing to do with earth. It was for this that He brought His teaching from heaven above, that He might remove our thoughts there, that we might be imitators of our Teacher according to our power. But how may we become imitators of Christ? By acting in everything for the common good, and not merely seeking our own. *"For even Christ,"* says Paul, *"pleased not Himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached You fell on Me."* [Romans 15:3; Psalm 69:9] Let no one therefore seek his own. In truth, a man (really) seeks his own good when he looks to that of his neighbor. What is their good is ours; we are one body, and parts and limbs one of another. Let us not then be as though we were rent asunder. Let no one say, *"such a person is no friend of mine, nor relation, nor neighbor, I have nought to do with him, how shall I*

approach, how address him?" Though he be neither relation nor friend, yet he is a man, who shares the same nature with you, owns the same Lord, is your fellow-servant, and fellow-sojourner, for he is born in the same world. And if besides he partakes of the same faith, behold he has also become a member of you: for what friendship could work such union, as the relationship of faith? And our intimacy one with another must not be such nearness only as friends ought to show to friends, but such as is between limb and limb, because no man can possibly discover any intimacy greater than this sort of friendship and fellowship. As then you cannot say, *"Whence arises my intimacy and connection with this limb?"* (that would be ridiculous;) so neither can you say so in the case of your brother. *"We are all baptized into one body"* [1 Corinthians 12:13], says Paul. *"Wherefore into one body?"* That we be not rent asunder, but preserve the just proportions of that one body by our intercourse and friendship one with another.

Let us not then despise one another, lest we be neglectful of ourselves. *"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it."* [Ephesians 5:29] And therefore God has given to us but one habitation, this earth, has distributed all things equally, has lighted one sun for us all, has spread above us one roof, the sky, made one table, the earth, bear food for us. And another table has He given far better than this, yet that too is one, (those who share our mysteries understand my words,) one manner of birth He has bestowed on all, the spiritual, we all have one country, that in the heavens, of the same cup drink we all. He has not bestowed on the rich man a gift more abundant and more honorable, and on the poor one more mean and small, but He has called all alike. He has given carnal things with equal regard to all, and spiritual in like manner. Whence then proceeds the great inequality of conditions in life? From the avarice and pride of the wealthy.

But let not, brethren, let not this any longer be; and when matters of universal interest and more pressing necessity bring us together, let us not be divided by things earthly and insignificant: I mean, by wealth and poverty, by bodily relationship, by enmity and friendship; for all these things are a shadow, nay less substantial than a shadow, to those who possess the bond of charity from above. Let us then preserve this unbroken, and none of those evil spirits will be able to enter in, who cause division in so perfect union; to which may we all attain by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 16 on the Gospel of John

John 1:19

"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you?"

1. A dreadful thing is envy, beloved, a dreadful thing and a pernicious, to the enviers, not to the envied. For it harms and wastes them first, like some mortal venom deeply seated in their souls; and if by chance it injure its objects, the harm it does is small and trifling, and such as brings greater gain than loss. Indeed not in the case of envy only, but in every other, it is not he that has suffered, but he that has done the wrong, who receives injury. For had not this been so, Paul would not have enjoined the disciples rather to endure wrong than to inflict it, when he says, *"Why do you not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"* [1 Corinthians 6:7] Well he knew, that destruction ever follows, not the injured party, but the injuring. All this I have said, by reason of the envy of the Jews. Because those who had flocked from the cities to John, and had condemned their own sins, and caused themselves to be baptized, repenting as it were after Baptism, send to ask him, *"Who are you?"* Of a truth they were the offspring of vipers, serpents, and even worse if possible than this. O evil and adulterous and perverse generation, after having been baptized, do you then become vainly curious, and question about the Baptist? What folly can be greater than this of yours? How was it that you came forth? That you confessed your sins, that you ran to the Baptist? How was it that you asked him what you must do? When in all this you were acting unreasonably, since you knew not the principle and

purpose of his coming. Yet of this the blessed John said nothing, nor does he charge or reproach them with it, but answers them with all gentleness.

It is worth while to learn why he did thus. It was, that their wickedness might be manifest and plain to all men. Often did John testify of Christ to the Jews, and when he baptized them he continually made mention of Him to his company, and said, *"I indeed baptize you with water, but there comes One after me who is mightier than I; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."* [Matthew 3:11] With regard to him they were affected by a human feeling; for, tremblingly attentive to the opinion of the world, and looking to *"the outward appearance"* [2 Corinthians 10:7], they deemed it an unworthy thing that he should be subject to Christ. Since there were many things that pointed out John for an illustrious person. In the first place, his distinguished and noble descent; for he was the son of a chief priest. Then his conversation, his austere mode of life, his contempt of all human things; for despising dress and table, and house and food itself, he had passed his former time in the desert. In the case of Christ all was the contrary of this. His family was mean, (as they often objected to Him, saying, *"Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren James and Joses?"*) [Matthew 13:55]; and that which was supposed to be His country was held in such evil repute, that even Nathanael said, *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* [John 1:46] His mode of living was ordinary, and His garments not better than those of the many. For He was not girt with a leathern girdle, nor was His raiment of hair, nor did He eat honey and locusts. But He fared like all others, and was present at the feasts of wicked men and publicans, that He might draw them to Him. Which thing the Jews not understanding reproached Him with, as He also says Himself, *"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a gluttonous man and a*

winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." [Matthew 11:19] When then John continually sent them from himself to Jesus, who seemed to them a meaner person, being ashamed and vexed at this, and wishing rather to have him for their teacher, they did not dare to say so plainly, but send to him, thinking by their flattery to induce him to confess that he was the Christ. They do not therefore send to him mean men, as in the case of Christ, for when they wished to lay hold on Him, they sent servants, and then Herodians, and the like, but in this instance, "*priests and Levites,*" and not merely "*priests,*" but those "*from Jerusalem,*" that is, the more honorable; for the Evangelist did not notice this without a cause. And they send to ask, "*Who are you?*" Yet the manner of his birth was well known to all, so that all said, "*What manner of child shall this be?*" [Luke 1:66]; and the report had gone forth into all the hill country. And afterwards when he came to Jordan, all the cities were set on the wing, and came to him from Jerusalem, and from all Judæa, to be baptized. Why then do they now ask? Not because they did not know him, (how could that be, when he had been made manifest in so many ways?) but because they wished to bring him to do that which I have mentioned.

2. Hear then how this blessed person answered to the intention with which they asked the question, not to the question itself. When they said, "*Who are you?*" he did not at once give them what would have been the direct answer, "*I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.*" But what did he? He removed the suspicion they had formed; for, says the Evangelist, being asked, "*Who are you?*"

John 1:20

"He confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ."

Observe the wisdom of the Evangelist. He mentions this for the third time, to set forth the excellency of the Baptist, and their wickedness and folly. And Luke also says, that when the multitudes supposed him to be the Christ, he again removes their suspicion. This is the part of an honest servant, not only not to take to himself his master's honor, but also to reject it when given to him by the many. But the multitudes arrived at this supposition from simplicity and ignorance; these questioned him from an ill intention, which I have mentioned, expecting, as I said, to draw him over to their purpose by their flattery. Had they not expected this, they would not have proceeded immediately to another question, but would have been angry with him for having given them an answer foreign to their enquiry, and would have said, *"Why, did we suppose that? Did we come to ask you that?"* But now as taken and detected in the fact, they proceed to another question, and say,

John 1:21

"What then? Are you Elias? And he says, I am not."

For they expected that Elias also would come, as Christ declares; for when His disciples enquired, *"How then do the scribes say that Elias must first come?"* [Matthew 17:10] He replied, *"Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things."* Then they ask, *"Are you that prophet? And he answered, No."* [Matthew 17:10] Yet surely he was a prophet. Wherefore then does he deny it? Because again he looks to the intention of his questioners. For they expected that some special prophet should come, because Moses said, *"The Lord your God will raise up unto you a Prophet of your brethren like me, unto Him shall you harken."* [Deuteronomy 18:15] Now this was Christ. Wherefore they do not say, *"Are you a prophet?"* meaning thereby one of the ordinary prophets; but the expression, *"Are you the prophet?"* with the addition of the article, means, *"Are you that Prophet who was foretold by Moses?"* and therefore he denied not that he was a prophet, but that he was *"that Prophet."*

John 1:22

"Then said they unto him, Who are you? That we may give an answer to them that sent us. What do you say of yourself?"

Observe them pressing him more vehemently, urging him, repeating their questions, and not desisting; while he first kindly removes false opinions concerning himself, and then sets before them one which is true. For, says he,

John 1:23

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

When he had spoken some high and lofty words concerning Christ, as if (replying) to their opinion, he immediately betook himself to the Prophet to draw from thence confirmation of his assertion.

John 1:24-25

"And [says the Evangelist] they who were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why do you baptize then, if you be not that Christ, neither Elias, neither that Prophet?"

Do you see not without reason I said that they wished to bring him to this? And the reason why they did not at first say so was, lest they should be detected by all men. And then when he said, *"I am not the Christ,"* they, being desirous to conceal what they were plotting within, go on to *"Elias,"* and *"that Prophet."* But when he said that he was not one of these either, after that, in their perplexity, they cast aside the mask, and without any disguise show clearly their treacherous intention, saying, *"Why do you baptize then, if you be not that Christ?"* And then again, wishing to throw some obscurity over the thing, they add the others also, *"Elias,"* and *"that Prophet."* For when they were not able to trip him by their flattery, they thought that by an accusation they could compel him to say the thing that was not.

What folly, what insolence, what ill-timed officiousness! You were sent to learn who and whence he might be, not to lay down laws for him also. This too was the conduct of men who would compel him to confess himself to be the Christ. Still not even now is he angry, nor does he, as might have been expected, say to them anything of this sort, *"Do you give orders and make laws for me?"* but again shows great gentleness towards them.

John 1:26-27

"I baptize with water: but there stands one among you, whom you know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

3. What could the Jews have left to say to this? For even from this the accusation against them cannot be evaded, the decision against them admits not of pardon, they have given sentence against themselves. How? In what way? They deemed John worthy of credit, and so truthful, that they might believe him not only when he testified of others, but also when he spoke concerning himself. For had they not been so disposed, they would not have sent to learn from him what related to himself. Because you know that the only persons whom we believe, especially when speaking of themselves, are those whom we suppose to be more veracious than any others. And it is not this alone which closes their mouths, but also the disposition with which they had approached him; for they came forth to him at first with great eagerness, even though afterwards they altered. Both which things Christ declared, when He said, *"He was a burning (and a shining) light, and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."* Moreover, his answer made him yet more worthy of credit. For (Christ) says, *"He that seeks not his own glory, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."* Now this man sought it not, but refers the Jews to another. And those who were sent were of the most trustworthy among them, and of the highest rank, so that they could have in no way any refuge or excuse, for the unbelief which they exhibited towards Christ. Wherefore did you not receive the things spoken concerning Him by John? You sent men who held the first rank among you, you enquired by them, you heard what the Baptist answered, they manifested all possible officiousness, sought into every point, named all the

persons you suspected him to be; and yet most publicly and plainly he confessed that he was neither "*Christ*," nor "*Elias*" nor "*that Prophet*." Nor did he stop even there, but also informed them who he was, and spoke of the nature of his own baptism, that it was but a slight and mean thing, nothing more than some water, and told of the superiority of the Baptism given by Christ; he also cited Esaias the prophet, testifying of old very long ago, and calling Christ "*Lord*" [Isaiah 40:3], but giving him the names of "*minister and servant*." What after this ought they to have done? Ought they not to have believed on Him who was witnessed of, to have worshipped Him, to have confessed Him to be God? For the character and heavenly wisdom of the witness showed that his testimony proceeded, not from flattery, but from truth; which is plain also from this, that no man prefers his neighbor to himself, nor, when he may lawfully give honor to himself, will yield it up to another, especially when it is so great as that of which we speak. So that John would not have renounced this testimony (as belonging) to Christ, had He not been God. For though he might have rejected it for himself as being too great for his own nature, yet he would not have assigned it to another nature that was beneath it.

"But there stands One among you, whom you know not." Reasonable it was that Christ should mingle among the people as one of the many, because everywhere He taught men not to be puffed up and boastful. And in this place by "*knowledge*" the Baptist means a perfect acquaintance with Him, who and whence He was. And immediately next to this he puts, "*Who comes after me*"; all but saying, "*Think not that all is contained in my baptism, for had that been perfect, Another would not have arisen after me to offer you a different One, but this of mine is a preparation and a clearing the way for that other. Mine is but a shadow and image, but One must come who shall add to this the reality. So that His very coming 'after me'*

especially declares His dignity: for had the first been perfect, no place would have been required for a second." *"Is before me,"* is more honorable, brighter. And then, lest they should imagine that His superiority was found by comparison, desiring to establish His incomparableness, he says, *"Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose"*; that is, who is not simply *"before me,"* but before me in such a way, that I am not worthy to be numbered among the meanest of His servants. For to loose the shoe is the office of humblest service.

Now if John was not worthy to *"unloose the latchet"* [Matthew 11:11], John, than whom *"among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater,"* where shall we rank ourselves? If he who was equal to, or rather greater than, all the world, (for says Paul, *"the world was not worthy"* of them [Hebrews 11:38] declares himself not worthy to be reckoned even among the meanest of those who should minister unto Him, what shall we say, who are full of ten thousand sins, and are as far from the excellence of John, as earth from heaven.

4. He then says that he himself is not *"worthy so much as to unloose the latchet of His shoe"*; while the enemies of the truth are mad with such a madness, as to assert that they are worthy to know Him even as He knows Himself. What is worse than such insanity, what more frenzied than such arrogance? Well has a wise man said, *"The beginning of pride is not to know the Lord."*

The devil would not have been brought down and become a devil, not being a devil before, had he not been sick of this disease. This it was that cast him out from that confidence, this sent him to the pit of fire, this was the cause of all his woes. For it is enough of itself to destroy every excellence of the soul, whether it find almsgiving, or prayer, or fasting, or anything. For, says the Evangelist, *"That which is highly esteemed among*

men is impure before the Lord." [Luke 16:15 — not quoted exactly]

Therefore it is not only fornication or adultery that are wont to defile those who practice them, but pride also, and that far more than those vices. Why? Because fornication though it is an unpardonable sin, yet a man may plead the desire; but pride cannot possibly find any cause or pretext of any sort whatever by which to obtain so much as a shadow of excuse; it is nothing but a distortion and most grievous disease of the soul, produced from no other source but folly. For there is nothing more foolish than a proud man, though he be surrounded with wealth, though he possess much of the wisdom of this world, though he be set in royal place, though he bear about with all things that among men appear desirable.

For if the man who is proud of things really good is wretched and miserable, and loses the reward of all those things, must not he who is exalted by things that are nought, and puffs himself up because of a shadow or the flower of the grass, (for such is this world's glory,) be more ridiculous than any, when he does just as some poor needy man might do, pining all his time with hunger, yet if ever he should chance one night to see a dream of good fortune, filled with conceit because of it?

O wretched and miserable! When your soul is perishing by a most grievous disease, when you are poor with utter poverty, are you high-minded because you have such and such a number of talents of gold? Because you have a multitude of slaves and cattle? Yet these are not yours; and if you dost not believe my words, learn from the experience of those who have gone before you. And if you are so drunken, that you can not be instructed even from what has befallen others, wait a little, and you shall know by what befalls yourself that these things avail you nothing, when gasping for life, and master not of a single hour, not even of a little moment, you shall unwillingly leave them to those who are about you, and these

perhaps those whom you would not. For many have not been permitted even to give directions concerning them, but have departed suddenly, desiring to enjoy them, but not permitted, dragged from them, and forced to yield them up to others, giving place by compulsion to those to whom they would not. That this be not our case, let us, while we are yet in strength and health, send forward our riches hence to our own city, for thus only and in no other way shall we be able to enjoy them; so shall we lay them up in a place inviolate and safe. For there is nothing, there is nothing there that can take them from us; no death, no attested wills, no successors to inheritances, no false informations, no plottings against us, but he who has departed hence bearing away great wealth with him may enjoy it there for ever. Who then is so wretched as not to desire to revel in riches which are his own throughout? Let us then transfer our wealth, and remove it there. We shall not need for such a removal asses, or camels, or carriages, or ships, (God has relieved even us from this difficulty,) but we only want the poor, the lame, the crippled, the infirm. These are entrusted with this transfer, these convey our riches to heaven, these introduce the masters of such wealth as this to the inheritance of goods everlasting. Which may it be that we all attain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 17 on the Gospel of John

John 1:28-29

"These things were done in Bethany beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he sees Jesus coming unto him, and says, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world."

1. A great virtue is boldness and freedom of speech, and the making all things second in importance to the confessing of Christ; so great and admirable, that the Only-begotten Son of God proclaims such an one in the presence of the Father. [Luke 12:8] Yet the recompense is more than just, for you confess upon earth, He in heaven, thou in the presence of men, He before the Father and all the angels.

Such an one was John, who regarded not the multitude, nor opinion, nor anything else belonging to men, but trod all this beneath his feet, and proclaimed to all with becoming freedom the things respecting Christ. And therefore the Evangelist marks the very place, to show the boldness of the loud-voiced herald. For it was not in a house, not in a corner, not in the wilderness, but in the midst of the multitude, after that he had occupied Jordan, when all that were baptized by him were present, (for the Jews came upon him as he was baptizing,) there it was that he proclaimed aloud that wonderful confession concerning Christ, full of those sublime and great and mysterious doctrines, and that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe. Wherefore he says, *"These things were done in Bethany,"* or, as all the more correct copies have it, *"in Bethabara."* For Bethany was not *"beyond Jordan,"* nor bordering on the wilderness, but somewhere near to Jerusalem.

He marks the places also for another reason. Since he was not about to relate matters of old date, but such as had come to pass but a little time before, he makes those who were present and had beheld, witnesses of his words, and supplies proof from the places themselves. For confident that nothing was added by himself to what was said, but that he simply and with truth described things as they were, he draws a testimony from the places, which, as I said, would be no common demonstration of his veracity.

"The next day he sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world."

The Evangelists distributed the periods among them; and Matthew having cut short his notice of the time before John the Baptist was bound, hastens to that which follows, while the Evangelist John not only does not cut short this period, but dwells most on it. Matthew, after the return of Jesus from the wilderness, saying nothing of the intermediate circumstances, as what John spoke, and what the Jews sent and said, and having cut short all the rest, passes immediately to the prison. *"For,"* says he, *"Jesus having heard"* that John was betrayed, *"departed thence."*

[Matthew 14:13] But John does not so. He is silent as to the journey into the wilderness, as having been described by Matthew; but he relates what followed the descent from the mountain, and after having gone through many circumstances, adds, *"For John was not yet cast into prison."* [John 3:24]

And wherefore, says one, does Jesus now come to him? Why does he come not merely once, but this second time also? For Matthew says that His coming was necessary on account of Baptism: since Jesus adds, that *"thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness."* [Matthew 3:15] But John says that He came again after Baptism, and declares it in this place, for, *"I saw,"* says he, *"the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and It abode upon Him."*

Wherefore then did He come to John? For He came not casually, but went expressly to him. *"John,"* says the Evangelist, *"sees Jesus coming unto him."* Then wherefore comes He? In order that since John had baptized Him with many (others), no one might suppose that He had hastened to John for the same reason as the rest to confess sins, and to wash in the river unto repentance. For this He comes, to give John an opportunity of setting this opinion right again, for by saying, *"Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world,"* he removes the whole suspicion. For very plain it is that One so pure as to be able to wash away the sins of others, does not come to confess sins, but to give opportunity to that marvelous herald to impress what he had said more definitely on those who had heard his former words, and to add others besides. The word *"Behold"* is used, because many had been seeking Him by reason of what had been said, and for a long time. For this cause, pointing Him out when present, he said, *"Behold,"* this is He so long sought, this is *"the Lamb."* He calls Him *"Lamb,"* to remind the Jews of the prophecy of Isaiah, and of the shadow under the law of Moses, that he may the better lead them from the type to the reality. That Lamb of Moses took not at once away the sin of any one; but this took away the sin of all the world; for when it was in danger of perishing, He quickly delivered it from the wrath of God.

John 1:30

"This is He of whom I said, He that comes after me is preferred before me."

2. Do you see here also how he interprets the word *"before"*? For having called Him *"Lamb,"* and that He *"takes away the sin of the world,"* then he says that *"He is preferred before me, for He was before me";* declaring that this is the *"before,"* the taking upon Him the sins of the world, *"and the baptizing with the Holy Ghost."* *"For my coming had no farther object than to proclaim the common Benefactor of the world, and to afford the baptism of water; but His was to cleanse all men, and to give them the power of the Comforter."* *"He is preferred before me,"* that is to say, has appeared brighter than I, because *"He was before me."* Let those who have admitted the madness of Paul of Samosata be ashamed when they withstand so manifest a truth.

John 1:31

"And I knew Him not."

Here he renders his testimony free from suspicion, by showing that it was not from human friendship, but had been caused by divine revelation.

"I knew Him not," he says. How then couldst thou be a trustworthy witness? How shall you teach others, while you yourself art ignorant? He did not say *"I know Him not,"* but, *"I knew Him not";* so that in this way he would be shown most trustworthy; for why should he have shown favor to one of whom he was ignorant?

"But that He should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."

He then did not need baptism, nor had that laver any other object than to prepare for all others a way to faith on Christ. For he did not say, *"that I might cleanse those who are baptized,"* or, *"that I might deliver them from their sins,"* but, *"that He should be made manifest unto Israel."* *"And why, tell me, could he not without baptism have preached and brought the multitudes to Him?"* But in this way it would not have been by any means easy. For they would not so all have run together, if the preaching had been without the baptism; they would not by the comparison have learned His superiority. For the multitude came together not to hear his words, but for what? To be *"baptized, confessing their sins."* But when they came, they were taught the matters concerning Christ, and the difference of His baptism. Yet even this of John was of greater dignity than the Jewish, and therefore all ran to it; yet even so it was imperfect.

"How then did you know Him?" "By the descent of the Spirit," he says. But again, lest any one should suppose that he was in need of the Spirit as

we are, hear how he removes the suspicion, by showing that the descent of the Spirit was only to declare Christ. For having said, "*And I knew Him not,*" he adds, "*But He that sent me to baptize with water the Same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost.*" [John 1:33]

Do you see that this was the work of the Spirit, to point out Christ? The testimony of John was indeed not to be suspected, but wishing to make it yet more credible, he leads it up to God and the Holy Spirit. For when John had testified to a thing so great and wonderful, so fit to astonish all his hearers, that He alone took on Him the sins of all the world, and that the greatness of the gift sufficed for so great a ransom, afterwards he proves this assertion. And the proof is that He is the Son of God, and that He needed not baptism, and that the object of the descent of the Spirit was only to make Him known. For it was not in the power of John to give the Spirit, as those who were baptized by him show when they say, "*We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*" [Acts 19:2] In truth, Christ needed not baptism, neither his nor any other; but rather baptism needed the power of Christ. For that which was wanting was the crowning blessing of all, that he who was baptized should be deemed worthy of the Spirit; this free gift then of the Spirit He added when He came.

John 1:32-34

"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from the heaven like a dove, and It abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the Same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

He puts the *"I knew Him not"* repeatedly. On what account, and wherefore? He was His kinsman according to the flesh. *"Behold,"* says the angel, *"your cousin Elisabeth, she also has received a son."* [Luke 1:36] That therefore he might not seem to favor Him because of the relationship, he repeats the *"I knew Him not."* And this happened with good reason; for he had passed all his time in the wilderness away from his father's house.

How then, if he knew Him not before the descent of the Spirit, and if he then for the first time recognized Him, did he forbid Him before baptism, saying, *"I have need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?"* [Matthew 3:14], since this was a proof that he knew Him very well. Yet he knew Him not before or for a long time, and with good cause; for the marvels which took place when He was a child, as the circumstances of the Magi and others the like, had happened long before, while John himself was very young, and since much time had elapsed in the interval, He was naturally unknown to all. For had He been known, John would not have said, *"That He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing."*

3. Hence it remains clear to us, that the miracles which they say belong to Christ's childhood, are false, and the inventions of certain who bring them into notice. For if He had begun from His early age to work wonders, neither could John have been ignorant of Him, nor would the multitude have needed a teacher to make Him known. But now he says, that for this

he has come, *"that He might be made manifest to Israel"*; and for this reason he said again, *"I have need to be baptized by You."* Afterwards, as having gained more exact knowledge of Him, he proclaimed Him to the multitude, saying, *"This is He of whom I said, After me comes a Man which is preferred before me."* For *"He who sent me to baptize with water,"* and sent me for this end, *"that He should be made manifest to Israel,"* Himself revealed Him even before the descent of the Spirit. Wherefore even before He came, John said, *"One comes after me who is preferred before me."* He knew Him not before he came to Jordan and baptized all men, but when He was about to be baptized, then he knew Him; and this from the Father revealing Him to the Prophet, and the Spirit showing Him when He was being baptized to the Jews, for whose sake indeed the descent of the Spirit took place. For that the witness of John might not be despised who said, that *"He was before me,"* and that *"He baptizes with the Spirit,"* and that *"He judges the world,"* the Father utters a Voice proclaiming the Son, and the Spirit descends, directing that Voice to the Head of Jesus. For since one was baptizing, the other receiving baptism, the Spirit comes to correct the idea which some of those present might form, that the words were spoken of John. So that when he says, *"I knew Him not,"* he speaks of former time, not that near to His baptism. Otherwise how could he have forbidden Him, saying, *"I have need to be baptized by You"*? How could he have said such words concerning Him?

"But," says one, *"how then did not the Jews believe? For it was not John only that saw the Spirit in the likeness of a dove."* It was, because, even if they did see, such things require not only the eyes of the body, but more than these, the vision of the understanding, to prevent men from supposing the whole to be a vain illusion. For if when they saw Him working wonders, touching with His own hands the sick and the dead, and

so bringing them back to life and health, they were so drunk with malice as to declare the contrary of what they saw; how could they shake off their unbelief by the descent of the Spirit only? And some say, that they did not all see it, but only John and those of them who were better disposed.

Because even though it were possible with fleshly eyes to see the Spirit descending as in the likeness of a dove, still not for this was it absolutely necessary that the circumstance should be visible to all. For Zacharias saw many things in a sensible form, as did Daniel and Ezekiel, and had none to share in what they saw; Moses also saw many things such as none other has seen; nor did all the disciples enjoy the view of the Transfiguration on the mount, nor did they all alike behold Him at the time of the Resurrection. And this Luke plainly shows, when he says, that He showed Himself *"to witnesses chosen before of God."* [Acts 10:41]

"And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

Where did he *"bear record that this is the Son of God?"* he called Him indeed *"Lamb,"* and said that He should *"baptize with the Spirit,"* but nowhere did he say of Him, *"Son of God."* But the other Evangelists do not write that He said anything after the baptism, but having been silent as to the time intervening, they mention the miracles of Christ which were done after John's captivity, whence we may reasonably conjecture that these and many others are omitted. And this our Evangelist himself has declared, at the end of his narrative. For they were so far from inventing anything great concerning Him, that the things which seem to bring reproach, these they have all with one voice and with all exactness set down, and you will not find one of them omitting one of such circumstances; but of the miracles, part some have left for the others to relate, part all have passed over in silence.

I say not this without cause, but to answer the shamelessness of the heathen. For this is a sufficient proof of their truth-loving disposition, and that they say nothing for favor. And thus as well as in other ways you may arm yourselves for trial of argument with them. But take heed. Strange were it that the physician, or the shoemaker, or the weaver, in short all artists, should be able each to contend correctly for his own art, but that one calling himself Christian should not be able to give a reason for his own faith; yet those things if overlooked bring only loss to men's property, these if neglected destroy our very souls. Yet such is our wretched disposition, that we give all our care to the former, and the things which are necessary, and which are the groundwork of our salvation, as though of little worth, we despise.

4. That it is which prevents the heathen from quickly deriding his own error. For when they, though established in a lie, use every means to conceal the shamefulness of their opinions, while we, the servants of the truth, cannot even open our mouths, how can they help condemning the great weakness of our doctrine? How can they help suspecting our religion to be fraud and folly? How shall they not blaspheme Christ as a deceiver, and a cheat, who used the folly of the many to further his fraud? And we are to blame for this blasphemy, because we will not be wakeful in arguments for godliness, but deem these things superfluous, and care only for the things of earth. He who admires a dancer or a charioteer, or one who contends with beasts, uses every exertion and contrivance not to come off worst in any disputes concerning him, and they string together long panegyrics, as they compose their defense against those who find fault with them, and cast sneers without number at their opponents: but when arguments for Christianity are proposed, they all hang their heads, and scratch themselves, and gape, and retire at length the objects of contempt.

Must not this deserve excessive wrath, when Christ is shown to be less honorable in your estimation than a dancer? Since you have contrived ten thousand defenses for the things they have done, though more disgraceful than any, but of the miracles of Christ, though they have drawn to Him the world, you cannot bear even to think or care at all. We believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the Resurrection of bodies, and in Life everlasting. If now any heathen say, *"What is this Father, what this Son, what this Holy Ghost? How do you who say that there are three Gods, charge us with having many Gods?"* What will you say? What will you answer? How will you repel the attack of these arguments? But what if when you are silent, the unbeliever should again propose this other question, and ask, *"What in a word is resurrection? Shall we rise again in this body? Or in another, different from this? If in this, what need that it be dissolved?"* What will you answer? And what, if he say, *"Why did Christ come now and not in old time? Has it seemed good to Him now to care for men, and did He despise us during all the years that are past?"* Or if he ask other questions besides, more than these? For I must not propose many questions, and be silent as to the answers to them, lest, in so doing, I harm the simpler among you. What has been already said is sufficient to shake off your slumbers. Well then, if they ask these questions, and you absolutely cannot even listen to the words, shall we, tell me, suffer trifling punishment only, when we have been the cause of such error to those who sit in darkness? I wished, if you had sufficient leisure, to bring before you all the book of a certain impure heathen philosopher written against us, and that of another of earlier date, that so at least I might have roused you, and led you away from your exceeding slothfulness. For if they were wakeful that they might say these things against us, what pardon can we deserve, if we do not even know how to repel the attacks made upon us? For what purpose have

we been brought forward? Do you not hear the Apostle say, "*Be ready to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you*"? [1 Peter 3:15] And Paul exhorts in like manner, saying, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.*" [Colossians 3:16] What do they who are more slothful than drones reply to this? "*Blessed is every simple soul,*" and, "*he that walks simply walks surely.*" [Proverbs 10:8] For this is the cause of all sorts of evil, that the many do not know how to apply rightly even the testimony of the Scriptures. Thus in this place, the writer does not mean (by "*simple*") the man who is foolish, or who knows nothing, but him who is free from wickedness, who is no evil-doer, who is wise. If it were not so, it would have been useless to say, "*Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*" [Matthew 10:16] But why should I name these things, when the discourse comes in quite out of place? For besides the things already mentioned, other matters are not right with us, those, I mean, which concern our life and conversation. We are in every way wretched and ridiculous, ever ready to find fault with each other, but slow to correct in ourselves things for which we blame and accuse our neighbor. Wherefore I exhort you, that now at least we attend to ourselves, and stop not at the finding fault, (this is not enough to appease God;) but that we show forth a change in every way most excellent, in order that having lived here to the glory of God, we may enjoy the glory to come; which may it come to pass that we will all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 18 on the Gospel of John

John 1:35-37

"Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he says, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."

1. The nature of man is somehow a thing slothful, and easily declining to perdition, not by reason of the constitution of the nature itself, but by reason of that sloth which is of deliberate choice. Wherefore it needs much reminding. And for this cause Paul, writing to the Philippians, said, *"To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe."* [Philippians 3:1]

The earth when it has once received the seed, straightway gives forth its fruits, and needs not a second sowing; but with our souls it is not so, and one must be content, after having sown many times, and manifested much carefulness, to be able once to receive fruit. For in the first place, what is said settles in the mind with difficulty, because the ground is very hard, and entangled with thorns innumerable, and there are many which lay plots, and carry away the seed; afterwards, when it has been fixed and has taken root, it still needs the same attention, that it may come to maturity, and having done so may remain uninjured, and take no harm from any. For in the case of seeds, when the ear is fully formed and has gained its proper strength, it easily despises rust, and drought, and every other thing; but it is not so with doctrines; in their case after all the work has been fully done, one storm and flood often comes on, and either by the attack of unpleasant circumstances,

or by the plots of men skilled to deceive, or by various other temptations brought against them, brings them to ruin.

I have not said this without cause, but that when you hear John repeating the same words, you may not condemn him for vain talking; nor deem him impertinent or wearisome. He desired to have been heard by once speaking, but because not many gave heed to what was spoken from the first, by reason of deep sleep, he again rouses them by this second call. Now observe; he had said, *"He that comes after me, is preferred before me"*; and that *"I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe"*; and that *"He baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and with fire"*; and that he *"saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and it abode upon Him,"* and he *"bare record that this is the Son of God."* No one gave heed, nor asked, nor said, *"Why do you say these things? In whose behalf? For what reason?"* Again he had said, *"Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world"*; yet not even so did he touch their insensibility. Therefore, after this he is compelled to repeat the same words again, as if softening by tillage some hard and stubborn soil, and by his word as by a plow, disturbing the mind which had hardened into clods, so as to put in the seed deep. For this reason he does not make his discourse a long one either; because he desired one thing only, to bring them over and join them to Christ. He knew that as soon as they had received this saying, and had been persuaded, they would not afterwards need one to bear witness unto Him. As also it came to pass. For, if the Samaritans could say to the woman after hearing Him, *"Now we believe, not because of your saying, for we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world,"* the disciples would be much more quickly subdued, as was the case. For when they had come and heard Him but one evening, they returned no more to John, but were so nailed to Him, that they took upon them the ministry of John, and themselves proclaimed Him. For,

says the Evangelist, *"He finds his own brother Simon, and says unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ."* And observe, I pray you, this, how, when he said, *"He that comes after me is preferred before me"*; and that, *"I am not worthy to unloose the lachet of His shoe"*; he caught no one, but when he spoke of the Dispensation, and lowered his discourse to a humbler tone, then the disciples followed Him.

And we may remark this, not only in the instance of the disciples, but that the many are not so much attracted when some great and sublime thing is said concerning God, as when some act of graciousness and lovingkindness, something pertaining to the salvation of the hearers, is spoken of. They heard that *"He takes away the sin of the world,"* and straightway they ran to Him. For, said they, *"if it is possible to wash away the charges that lie against us, why do we delay? Here is One who will deliver us without labor of ours. Is it not extreme folly to put off accepting the Gift?"* Let those hear who are Catechumens, and are putting off their salvation to their latest breath.

"Again," says the Evangelist, *"John stood, and says, Behold, the Lamb of God."* Christ utters no word, His messenger says all. So it is with a bridegroom. He says not for a while anything to the bride, but is there in silence, while some show him to the bride, and others give her into his hands; she merely appears, and he departs not having taken her himself, but when he has received her from another who gives her to him. And when he has received her thus given, he so disposes her, that she no more remembers those who betrothed her. So it was with Christ. He came to join to Himself the Church; He said nothing, but merely came. It was His friend, John, who put into His the bride's right hand, when by his discourses he gave into His hand the souls of men. He having received them, afterwards so disposed them, that they departed no more to John who had committed them to Him.

2. And here we may remark, not this only, but something besides. As at a marriage the maiden goes not to the bridegroom, but he hastens to her, though he be a king's son, and though he be about to espouse some poor and abject person, or even a servant, so it was here. Man's nature did not go up, but contemptible and poor as it was, He came to it, and when the marriage had taken place, He suffered it no longer to tarry here, but having taken it to Himself, transported it to the house of His Father.

"Why then does not John take his disciples apart, and converse with them on these matters, and so deliver them over to Christ, instead of saying publicly to them in common with all the people, 'Behold the Lamb of God?'" That it may not seem to be a matter of arrangement; for had they gone away from him to Christ after having been privately admonished by him, and as though to do him a favor, they would perhaps soon have started away again; but now, having taken upon them the following Him, from teaching which had been general, they afterwards remained His firm disciples, as not having followed Him in order to gratify the teacher, but as looking purely to their own advantage.

The Prophets and Apostles then all preached Him absent; the Prophets before His coming according to the flesh, the Apostles after He was taken up; John alone proclaimed Him present. Wherefore he calls himself the *"friend of the Bridegroom"* [John 3:29], since he alone was present at the marriage, he it was that did and accomplished all, he made a beginning of the work. And *"looking upon Jesus walking, he says, Behold the Lamb of God."* Not by voice alone, but with his eyes also he bore witness to, and expressed his admiration of, Christ, rejoicing and glorying. Nor does he for awhile address any word of exhortation to his followers, but only shows wonder and astonishment at Him who was present, and declares to all the Gift which He came to give, and the manner of purification. For *"the Lamb"*

declares both these things. And he said not, "*Who shall take,*" or "*Who has taken*"; but, "*Who takes away the sins of the world*"; because this He ever does. He took them not then only when He suffered, but from that time even to the present does He take them away, not being repeatedly crucified, (for He offered One Sacrifice for sins,) but by that One continually purging them. As then The Word shows us His pre-eminence, and The Son His superiority in comparison with others, so "*The Lamb, The Christ, that Prophet, the True Light, the Good Shepherd,*" and whatever other names are applied to Him with the addition of the article, mark a great difference. For there were many "*Lambs,*" and "*Prophets,*" and "*Christs,*" and "*sons,*" but from all these John separates Him by a wide interval. And this he secured not by the article only, but by the addition of "*Only-Begotten*"; for He had nothing in common with the creation.

If it seems to any unseasonable that these things should be spoken at "*the tenth hour*" (that was the time of day, for he says, "*It was about the tenth hour*"— [John 1:39], such an one seems to me to be much mistaken. In the case indeed of the many, and those who serve the flesh, the season after feasting is not very suitable for any matters of pressing moment, because their hearts are burdened with meats: but here was a man who did not even partake of common food, and who at evening was as sober as we are at morning, (or rather much more so; for often the remains of our evening food that are left within us, fill our souls with imaginations, but he loaded his vessel with none of these things;) he with good reason spoke late in the evening of these matters. Besides, he was tarrying in the wilderness by Jordan, where all came to his baptism with great fear, and caring little at that time for the things of this life; as also they continued with Christ three days, and had nothing to eat. [Matthew 15:32] For this is the part of a zealous herald and a careful husbandman, not to desist before he see that

the planted seed has got a firm hold. *"Why then did he not go about all the parts of Judæa preaching Christ, rather than stand by the river waiting for Him to come, that he might point Him out when He came?"* Because he wished that this should be effected by His works; his own object being in the mean time only to make Him known, and to persuade some to hear of eternal life. But to Him he leaves the greater testimony, that of works, as also He says, *"I receive not testimony of men. The works which My Father has given Me, the same bear witness of Me."* [c. v. 34, 36] Observe how much more effectual this was; for when he had thrown in a little spark, at once the blaze rose on high. For they who before had not even given heed to his words, afterwards say, *"All things which John spoke were true."* [John 10:41]

3. Besides, if he had gone about saying these things, what was being done would have seemed to be done from some human motive, and the preaching to be full of suspicion.

"And the two disciples heard him, and followed Jesus."

Yet John had other disciples, but they not only did not *"follow Jesus,"* but were even jealously disposed towards him. *"Rabbi,"* says one, *"He that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you bore witness, behold, the same baptizes, and all men come unto him."* [John 3:26] And again they appear bringing a charge against him; *"Why do we fast, but your disciples fast not?"* [Matthew 9:14] But those who were better than the rest had no such feeling, but heard, and at once followed; followed, not as despising their teacher, but as being most fully persuaded by him, and producing the strongest proof that they acted thus from a right judgment of his reasonings. For they did not do so by his advice, that might have appeared suspicious; but when he merely foretold what was to come to pass, that *"He should baptize with the Holy Ghost, [and with fire,]"* they followed. They did not

then desert their teacher, but rather desired to learn what Christ brought with Him more than John. And observe zeal combined with modesty. They did not at once approach and question Jesus on necessary and most important matters, nor were they desirous to converse with Him publicly, while all were present, at once and in an off-hand manner, but privately; for they knew that the words of their teacher proceeded not from humility, but from truth.

John 1:40

"One of the two who heard, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother."

Wherefore then has he not made known the name of the other also? Some say, because it was the writer himself that followed; others, not so, but that he was not one of the distinguished disciples; it behooved not therefore to say more than was necessary. For what would it have advantaged us to learn his name, when the writer does not mention the names even of the seventy-two? St. Paul also did the same. *"We have sent,"* says he, *"with him the brother,"* (who has often in many things been forward,) *"whose praise is in the Gospel."* [2 Corinthians 8:18] Moreover, he mentions Andrew for another reason. What is this? It is, that when you are informed that Simon having in company with him heard, *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"* [Matthew 4:19], was not perplexed at so strange a promise, you may learn that his brother had already laid down within him the beginnings of the faith.

John 1:38

"Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and says unto them, What do you seek?"

Hence we are taught, that God does not prevent our wills by His gifts, but that when we begin, when we provide the being willing, then He gives us many opportunities of salvation. *"What do you seek?"* How is this? He who knows the hearts of men, who dwells in our thoughts, does He ask? He does; not that He may be informed; how could that be? But that by the question He may make them more familiar, and impart to them greater boldness, and show them that they are worthy to hear Him; for it was probable that they would blush and be afraid, as being unknown to him, and as having heard such accounts of Him from the testimony of their teacher. Therefore to remove all this, their shame and their fear, he questions them, and would not let them come all the way to the house in silence. Yet the event would have been the same had He not questioned them; they would have remained by following Him, and walking in His steps would have reached His dwelling. Why then did He ask? To effect that which I said, to calm their minds, yet disturbed with shame and anxiety, and to give them confidence.

Nor was it by their following only that they showed their earnest desire, but by their question also: for when they had not as yet learned or even heard anything from Him, they call Him, *"Master"*; thrusting themselves as it were among His disciples, and declaring what was the cause of their following, that they might hear somewhat profitable. Observe their wisdom also. They did not say, *"Teach us of Your doctrines, or some other thing that we need to know"*; but what? *"Where dwellest Thou?"* Because, as I before said, they wished in quiet to say somewhat to Him, and

to hear somewhat from Him, and to learn. Therefore they did not defer the matter, nor say, "*We will come tomorrow by all means, and hear you speak in public*"; but showed the great eagerness they had to hear Him, by not being turned back even by the hour, for the sun was already near its setting, ("*it was,*" says John, "*about the tenth hour.*") And therefore Christ does not tell them the marks of His abode, nor its situation, but rather induces them to follow Him by showing them that He had accepted them. For this reason He did not say anything of this kind to them, "*It is an unseasonable time now for you to enter into the house, tomorrow you shall hear if you have any wish, return home now*"; but converses with them as with friends, and those who had long been with Him.

How then says He in another place, "*But the Son of Man has not where to lay His head*" [Luke 9:58], while here He says, "*Come and see*" [John 1:39] where I abide? Because the expression "*has not where to lay His head,*" signifies that He had no dwelling place of His own, not that He did not abide in a house. And this too is the meaning of the comparison. The Evangelist has mentioned that "*they abode with Him that day,*" but has not added wherefore, because the reason was plain; for from no other motive did they follow Christ, and He draw them to Him, but only that they might have instruction; and this they enjoyed so abundantly and eagerly even in a single night, that they both proceeded straightway to the capture of others.

4. Let us then also learn hence to consider all things secondary to the hearing the word of God, and to deem no season unseasonable, and, though a man may even have to go into another person's house, and being a person unknown to make himself known to great men, though it be late in the day, or at any time whatever, never to neglect this traffic. Let food and baths and dinners and the other things of this life have their appointed time; but let the teaching of heavenly philosophy have no separate time, let every season

belong to it. For Paul says, *"In season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort"* [2 Timothy 4:2]; and the Prophet too says, *"In His law will he meditate day and night"* [Psalm 1:3]; and Moses commanded the Jews to do this always. For the things of this life, baths, I mean, and dinners, even if they are necessary, yet being continually repeated, render the body feeble; but the teaching of the soul the more it is prolonged, the stronger it renders the soul which receives it. But now we portion out all our time for trifles and unprofitable silly talking, and we sit together idly during the morning and afternoon, midday and evening besides, and we have appointed places for this; but hearing the divine doctrines twice or thrice in the week we become sick, and thoroughly sated. What is the reason? We are in a bad state of soul; its faculty of desiring and reaching after these things we have relaxed altogether. And therefore it is not strong enough to have an appetite for spiritual food. And this among others is a great proof of weakness, not to hunger nor thirst, but to be disinclined to both. Now if this, when it takes place in our bodies, is a sure sign of grievous disease, and productive of weakness, much more is it so in the soul.

"How then," says one, *"shall we be able to renew it, thus fallen and relaxed, to strength? What doing, what saying?"* By applying ourselves to the divine words of the prophets, of the Apostles, of the Gospels, and all the others; then we shall know that it is far better to feed on these than on impure food, for so we must term our unseasonable idle talking and assemblies. For which is best, tell me, to converse on things relating to the market, or things in the law courts, or in the camp, or on things in heaven, and on what shall be after our departure hence? Which is best, to talk about our neighbor and our neighbor's affairs, to busy ourselves in what belongs to other people, or to enquire into the things of angels, and into matters which concern ourselves? For a neighbor's affairs are not yours at all; but

heavenly things are yours. *"But,"* says some one, *"a man may by once speaking finish these subjects altogether."* Why do you not think this in matters on which you converse uselessly and idly, why though you waste your lives on this have you never exhausted the subject? And I have not yet named what is far more vile than this. These are the things about which the better sort converse one with the other; but the more indifferent and careless carry about in their talk players and dancers and charioteers, defiling men's ears, corrupting their souls, and driving their nature into mad excesses by these narratives, and by means of this discourse introducing every kind of wickedness into their own imagination. For as soon as the tongue has uttered the name of the dancer, immediately the soul has figured to itself his looks, his hair, his delicate clothing, and himself more effeminate than all. Another again fans the flame in another way, by introducing some harlot into the conversation, with her words, and attitudes, and glances, her languishing looks and twisted locks, the smoothness of her cheeks, and her painted eyelids. Were you not somewhat affected when I gave this description? Yet be not ashamed, nor blush, for the very necessity of nature requires this, and so disposes the soul according as the tendency of what is said may be. But if, when it is I that speak, you, standing in the church, and at a distance from these things, were somewhat affected at the hearing, consider how it is likely that they are disposed, who sit in the theater itself, who are totally free from dread, who are absent from this venerable and awful assembly, who both see and hear those things with much shamelessness. *"And why then,"* perhaps one of those who heed not may say, *"if the necessity of nature so disposes the soul, do you let go that, and blame us?"* Because, to be softened when one hears these things, is nature's work; but to hear them is not a fault of nature, but of deliberate choice. For so he who meddles with fire must needs be injured, so wills the weakness of

our nature; yet nature does not therefore draw us to the fire and to the injury thence arising; this can be only from deliberate perversity. I beseech you, therefore, to remove and correct this fault, that you may not of your own accord cast yourself down the precipice, nor thrust yourselves into the pits of wickedness, nor run of yourselves to the blaze, lest we place ourselves in jeopardy of the fire prepared for the devil. May it come to pass, that we all being delivered both from this fire and from that, may go to the very bosom of Abraham, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 19 on the Gospel of John

John 1:41-42

"He first finds his own brother Simon, and says unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus."

1. When God in the beginning made man, He did not suffer him to be alone, but gave him woman for a helpmate, and made them to dwell together, knowing that great advantage would result from this companionship. What though the woman did not rightly employ this benefit? Still if any one make himself fully acquainted with the nature of the matter, he will see, that to the wise great advantage arises from this dwelling together; not in the cause of wife or husband only, but if brothers do this, they also shall enjoy the benefit. Wherefore the Prophet has said, *"What is good, what is pleasant, but that brethren should dwell together?"* [Psalm 133:1, Septuagint] And Paul exhorted not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together. [Hebrews 10:25] In this it is that we differ from beasts, for this we have built cities, and markets, and houses, that we may be united one with another, not in the place of our dwelling only, but by the bond of love. For since our nature came imperfect from Him who made it, and is not self-sufficient, God, for our advantage, ordained that the want hence existing should be corrected by the assistance arising from mutual intercourse; so that what was lacking in one should be supplied by another, and the defective nature thus be rendered self-sufficient; as, for instance, that though made mortal, it should by succession for a long time maintain immortality. I might have gone into this argument at greater length, to show

what advantages arise to those who come together from genuine and pure intercourse with each other: but there is another thing which presses now, that on account of which we have made these remarks.

Andrew, after having tarried with Jesus and learned what He did, kept not the treasure to himself, but hastens and runs quickly to his brother, to impart to him of the good things which he had received. But wherefore has not John said on what matters Christ conversed with them? Whence is it clear that it was for this that they "*abode with Him*"? It was proved by us the other day; but we may learn it from what has been read today as well. Observe what Andrew says to his brother; "*We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*" You see how, as far as he had learned in a short time, he showed the wisdom of the teacher who persuaded them, and their own zeal, who cared for these things long ago, and from the beginning. For this word, "*we have found,*" is the expression of a soul which travails for His presence, and looks for His coming from above, and is made overjoyed when the looked-for thing has happened, and hastens to impart to others the good tidings. This is the part of brotherly affection, of natural friendship, of a sincere disposition, to be eager to stretch out the hand to each other in spiritual things. Hear him besides speak with the addition of the article; for he does not say "*Messias,*" but "*the Messias*"; thus they were expecting some one Christ, having nothing in common with the others. And behold, I beg of you, the mind of Peter obedient and tractable from the very beginning; he ran to Him without any delay; "*He brought him,*" says St. John, "*to Jesus.*" Yet let no one blame his easy temper if he received the word without much questioning, because it is probable that his brother had told him these things more exactly and at length; but the Evangelists from their care for conciseness constantly cut many things short. Besides, it is not said absolutely that "*he believed,*" but

that *"he brought him to Jesus,"* to give him up for the future to Him, so that from Him he might learn all; for the other disciple also was with him, and contributed to this. And if John the Baptist, when he had said that He was *"the Lamb,"* and that He *"baptized with the Spirit,"* gave them over to learn the clearer doctrine concerning this thing from Him, much more would Andrew have done this, not deeming him self sufficient to declare the whole, but drawing him to the very fount of light with so much zeal and joy, that the other neither deferred nor delayed at all.

John 1:42

"And when Jesus beheld him, He said, 'You are Simon, the son of Jonas; you shall be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone.'"

2. He begins from this time forth to reveal the things belonging to His Divinity, and to open It out little by little by predictions. So He did in the case of Nathaniel and the Samaritan woman. For prophecies bring men over not less than miracles; and are free from the appearance of boasting. Miracles may possibly be slandered among foolish men, [*"He casts out devils,"* said they, *"by Beelzebub"* Matthew 12:24], but nothing of the kind has ever been said of prophecy. Now in the case of Nathaniel and Simon He used this method of teaching, but with Andrew and Philip He did not so. Why was this? Because those (two) had the testimony of John, no small preparation, and Philip received a credible evidence of faith, when he saw those who had been present.

"You are Simon, the son of Jonas." By the present, the future is guaranteed; for it is clear that He who named Peter's father foreknew the future also. And the prediction is attended with praise; but the object was not to flatter, but to foretell something future. Hear at least in the case of the Samaritan woman, how He utters a prediction with severe reproofs; *"You have had,"* he says, *"five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not your husband."* [John 4:18] So also His Father makes great account of prophecy, when He sets Himself against the honor paid to idols: *"Let them declare to you,"* says He, *"what shall come upon you"* [Isaiah 47:13]; and again, *"I have declared, and have saved, and there was no foreign God among you"* [Isaiah 43:12, Septuagint]; and He brings this forward through all prophecy. Because prophecy is especially the work of God, which devils cannot even imitate, though they strive exceedingly. For in the case of miracles there

may be delusion; but exactly to foretell the future belongs to that pure Nature alone. Or if devils ever have done so, it was by deceiving the simpler sort; whence their oracles are always easily detected.

But Peter makes no reply to these words; as yet he knew nothing clearly, but still was learning. And observe, that not even the prediction is fully set forth; for Jesus did not say, *"I will change your name to Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,"* but, *"You shall be called Cephas."* The former speech would have expressed too great authority and power; for Christ does not immediately nor at first declare all His power, but speaks for a while in a humbler tone; and so, when He had given the proof of His Divinity, He puts it more authoritatively, saying, *"Blessed are you, Simon, because My Father has revealed it to you";* and again, *"You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church."* [Matthew 16:17-18] Him therefore He so named, and James and his brother He called *"sons of thunder."* [Mark 3:17] Why then does He this? To show that it was He who gave the old covenant, that it was He who altered names, who called Abram *"Abraham,"* and Sarai *"Sarah,"* and Jacob *"Israel."* To many he assigned names even from their birth, as to Isaac, and Samson, and to those in Isaiah and Hosea [Isaiah 8:3; Hosea 1:4-9]; but to others He gave them after they had been named by their parents, as to those we have mentioned, and to Joshua the son of Nun. It was also a custom of the Ancients to give names from things, which in fact Leah also has done; and this takes place not without cause, but in order that men may have the appellation to remind them of the goodness of God, that a perpetual memory of the prophecy conveyed by the names may sound in the ears of those who receive it. Thus too He named John early, because they whose virtue was to shine forth from their early youth, from that time received their names; while to those who were to become great at a later period, the title also was given later.

3. But then they received each a different name, we now have all one name, that which is greater than any, being called "*Christians*," and "*sons of God*," and (His) "*friends*," and (His) "*Body*." For the very term itself is able more than all those others to rouse us, and make us more zealous for the practice of virtue. Let us not then act unworthily of the honor belonging to the title, considering the excess of our dignity, we who are called Christ's; for so Paul has named us. Let us bear in mind and respect the grandeur of the appellation. [1 Corinthians 3:23] For if one who is said to be descended from some famous general, or one otherwise distinguished, is proud to be called this or that man's son, and deems the name a great honor, and strives in every way so as not to affix, by remissness of his own, reproach to him after whom he is called; shall not we who are called after the name, not of a general, nor any of the princes upon earth, nor Angel, nor Archangel, nor Seraphim, but of the King of these Himself, shall not we freely give even our very life, so as not to insult Him who has honored us? Do you not know what honor the royal bands of shield-bearers and spearmen that are about the king enjoy? So let us who have been deemed worthy to be near Him, and much closer, and as much nearer than those just named, as the body is closer to the head than they, let us, I say, use every means to be imitators of Christ.

What then says Christ? "*The foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay His head.*" [Luke 9:58] Now if I demand this of you, it will seem perhaps to most of you grievous and burdensome; because therefore of your infirmity I speak not of such perfection, but desire you not to be nailed to riches; and as I, because of the infirmity of the many, retire somewhat from (demanding) the excess of virtue, I desire that you do so and much more on the side of vice. I blame not those who have houses, and lands, and wealth, and servants, but wish

them to possess these things in a safe and becoming way. And what is "*a becoming way*"? As masters, not as slaves; so that they rule them, be not ruled by them; that they use, not abuse them. This is why they are called, "*things to be used*," that we may employ them on necessary services, not hoard them up; this is a domestic's office, that a master's; it is for the slave to keep them, but for the lord and one who has great authority to expend. You did not receive your wealth to bury, but to distribute. Had God desired riches to be hoarded, He would not have given them to men, but would have let them remain as they were in the earth; but because He wishes them to be spent, therefore He has permitted us to have them, that we may impart them to each other. And if we keep them to ourselves, we are no longer masters of them. But if you wish to make them greater and therefore keep them shut up, even in this case the best plan of all is to scatter and distribute them in all directions; because there can be no revenue without an outlay, no wealth without expenditure. One may see that it is so even in worldly matters. So it is with the merchant, so with the husbandman, who put forth the one his wealth, the other his seed; the one sails the sea to disperse his wares, the other labors all the year putting in and tending his seed. But here there is no need of any one of these things, neither to equip a vessel, nor to yoke oxen, nor to plough land, nor to be anxious about uncertain weather, nor to dread a fall of hail; here are neither waves nor rocks; this voyage and this sowing needs one thing only, that we cast forth our possessions; all the rest will that Husbandman do, of whom Christ says, "*My Father is the Husbandman*." [John 15:1] Is it not then absurd to be sluggish and slothful where we may gain all without labor, and where there are many toils and many troubles and cares, and after all, an uncertain hope, there to display all eagerness? Let us not, I beseech you, let us not be to such a degree senseless about our own salvation, but let us leave the more troublesome

task, and run to that which is most easy and more profitable, that we may obtain also the good things that are to come; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy and quickening Spirit be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 20 on the Gospel of John

John 1:43-44

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee and finds Philip, and says unto him, Follow Me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter."

1. *"To every careful thinker there is a gain"* [Proverbs 14:23, Septuagint], says the proverb; and Christ implied more than this, when He said, *"He that seeks finds."* [Matthew 7:8] Wherefore it does not occur to me any more to wonder how Philip followed Christ. Andrew was persuaded when he had heard from John, and Peter the same from Andrew, but Philip not having learned anything from any but Christ who said to him only this, *"Follow Me,"* straightway obeyed, and went not back, but even became a preacher to others. For he ran to Nathanael and said to him, *"We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write."* Do you see what a thoughtful mind he had, how assiduously he meditated on the writings of Moses, and expected the Advent? For the expression, *"we have found,"* belongs always to those who are in some way seeking. *"The day following Jesus went forth into Galilee."* Before any had joined Him, He called no one; and He acted thus not without cause, but according to his own wisdom and intelligence. For if, when no one came to Him spontaneously, He had Himself drawn them, they might perhaps have started away; but now, having chosen this of themselves, they afterwards remained firm. He calls Philip, one who was better acquainted with Him; for he, as having been born and bred in Galilee, knew Him more than others. Having then taken the disciples, He next goes to the capture of the

others, and draws to Him Philip and Nathanael. Now in the case of Nathanael this was not so wonderful, because the fame of Jesus had gone forth into all Syria. [Matthew 4:24] But the wonderful thing was respecting Peter and James and Philip, that they believed, not only before the miracles, but that they did so being of Galilee, out of which *"arises no prophet,"* nor *"can any good thing come";* for the Galilæans were somehow of a more boorish and dull disposition than others; but even in this Christ displayed forth His power, by selecting from a land which bore no fruit His choicest disciples. It is then probable that Philip having seen Peter and Andrew, and having heard what John had said, followed; and it is probable also that the voice of Christ wrought in him somewhat; for He knew those who would be serviceable. But all these points the Evangelist cuts short. That Christ should come, he knew; that this was Christ, he knew not, and this I say that he heard either from Peter or John. But John mentions his village also, that you may learn that *"God has chosen the weak things of the world."* [1 Corinthians 1:27]

John 1:45

"Philip finds Nathanael, and says unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

He says this, to make his preaching credible, which it must be if it rests on Moses and the Prophets besides, and by this to abash his hearer. For since Nathanael was an exact man, and one who viewed all things with truth, as Christ also testified and the event showed, Philip with reason refers him to Moses and the Prophets, that so he might receive Him who was preached. And he not troubled though he called Him *"the son of Joseph"*; for still he was supposed to be his son. *"And whence, O Philip, is it plain that this is He? What proof do you mention to us? For it is not enough merely to assert this. What sign have you seen, what miracle? Not without danger is it to believe without cause in such matters. What proof then have you?"* *"The same as Andrew,"* he replies; for he though unable to produce the wealth which he had found, or to describe his treasure in words, when he had discovered it, led his brother to it. So too did Philip. How this is the Christ, and how the prophets proclaimed Him beforehand, he said not; but he draws him to Jesus, as knowing that he would not afterwards fall off, if he should once taste His words and teaching.

John 1:46-47

"And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip says unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and says of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

He praises and approves the man, because he had said, *"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* and yet he ought to have been blamed. Surely not; for the words are not those of an unbeliever, nor deserving blame, but praise. *"How so, and in what way?"* Because Nathanael had considered the writings of the Prophets more than Philip. For he had heard from the Scriptures, that Christ must come from Bethlehem, and from the village in which David was. This belief at least prevailed among the Jews, and the Prophet had proclaimed it of old, saying, *"And thou, Bethlehem, art by no means the least among the princes of Judah, for out of you shall come a Governor, that shall feed My people Israel."* [Matthew 2:6; Micah 5:2] And so when he heard that He was *"from Nazareth,"* he was confounded, and doubted, not finding the announcement of Philip to agree with the prediction of the Prophet.

But observe his wisdom and candor even in his doubting. He did not at once say, *"Philip, you deceive me, and speakest falsely, I believe you not, I will not come; I have learned from the prophets that Christ must come from Bethlehem, you say, 'from Nazareth'; therefore this is not that Christ."* He said nothing like this; but what does he? He goes to Him himself; showing, by not admitting that Christ was *"of Nazareth,"* his accuracy respecting the Scriptures, and a character not easily deceived; and by not rejecting him who brought the tidings, the great desire which he felt for the coming of

Christ. For he thought within himself that Philip was probably mistaken about the place.

2. And observe, I pray you, his manner of declining, how gentle he has made it, and in the form of a question. For he said not, "*Galilee produces no good*"; but how said he? "*Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*" Philip also was very prudent; for he is not as one perplexed, angry, and annoyed, but perseveres, wishing to bring over the man, and manifesting to us from the first of his preaching the firmness which becomes an Apostle. Wherefore also Christ says, "*Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*" So that there is such a person as a false Israelite; but this is not such an one; for his judgment, Christ says, is impartial, he speaks nothing from favor, or from ill-feeling. Yet the Jews, when they were asked where Christ should be born, replied, "*In Bethlehem*" [Matthew 2:5], and produced the evidence, saying, "*And thou, Bethlehem, art by no means the least among the princes of Judah.*" [Micah 5:2] Before they had seen Him they bore this witness, but when they saw Him in their malice they concealed the testimony, saying, "*But as for this fellow, we know not whence He is.*" [John 9:29] Nathanael did not so, but continued to retain the opinion which he had from the beginning, that He was not "*of Nazareth.*"

How then do the prophets call Him a Nazarene? From His being brought up and abiding there. And He omits to say, "*I am not 'of Nazareth,' as Philip has told you, but of Bethlehem,*" that He may not at once make the account seem questionable; and besides this, because, even if He had gained belief, He would not have given sufficient proof that He was the Christ. For what hindered Him without being Christ, from being of Bethlehem, like the others who were born there? This then He omits; but He does that which has most power to bring him over, for He shows that He was present when they were conversing. For when Nathanael had said,

John 1:48

"Whence know Thou me? . . . Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig-tree, I saw you."

Observe a man firm and steady. When Christ had said, *"Behold an Israelite indeed,"* he was not made vain by this approbation, he ran not after this open praise, but continues seeking and searching more exactly, and desires to learn something certain. He still enquired as of a man, but Jesus answered as God. For He said, *"I have known you from the first,"* (him and the candor of his character, this He knew not as a man, from having closely followed him, but as God from the first,) *"and but now I saw you by the fig-tree";* when there was no one present there but only Philip and Nathanael who said all these things in private. It is mentioned, that having seen him afar off, He said, *"Behold an Israelite indeed";* to show, that before Philip came near, Christ spoke these words, that the testimony might not be suspected. For this reason also He named the time, the place, and the tree; because if He had only said, *"Before Philip came to you, I saw you,"* He might have been suspected of having sent him, and of saying nothing wonderful; but now, by mentioning both the place where he was when addressed by Philip, and the name of the tree, and the time of the conversation, He showed that His foreknowledge was unquestionable.

And He did not merely show to him His foreknowledge, but instructed him also in another way. For He brought him to a recollection of what they then had said; as, *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* And it was most especially on this account that Nathanael received Him, because when he had uttered these words, He did not condemn, but praised and approved him. Therefore he was assured that this was indeed the Christ, both from His foreknowledge, and from His having exactly searched out his

sentiments, which was the act of One who would show that He knew what was in his mind; and besides, from His not having blamed, but rather praised him when he had seemed to speak against Himself. He said then, that Philip had "*called*" him; but what Philip had said to him or he to Philip, He omitted, leaving it to his own conscience, and not desiring farther to rebuke him.

3. Was it then only "*before Philip called him*" that He "*saw*" him? Did He not see him before this with His sleepless eye? He saw him, and none could gainsay it; but this is what it was needful to say at the time. And what did Nathanael? When he had received an unquestionable proof of His foreknowledge, he hastened to confess Him, showing by his previous delay his caution, and his fairness by his assent afterwards. For, said the Evangelist,

John 1:49

"He answered and says unto Him, Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel:"

Do you see how his soul is filled at once with exceeding joy, and embraces Jesus with words? *"You are,"* says he, *"that expected, that sought-for One."* Do you see how he is amazed, how he marvels? How he leaps and dances with delight?

So ought we also to rejoice, who have been thought worthy to know the Son of God; to rejoice, not in thought alone, but to show it also by our actions. And what must they do who rejoice? Obey Him who has been made known to them; and they who obey, must do whatever He wills. For if we are going to do what angers Him, how shall we show that we rejoice? Do you not see in our houses when a man entertains one whom he loves, how gladly he exerts himself, running about in every direction, and though it be needful to spend all that he has, sparing nothing so that he please his visitor? But if one who invites should not attend to his guest, and not do such things as would procure him ease, though he should say ten thousand times that he rejoices at his coming, he could never be believed by him. And justly; for this should be shown by actions. Let us then, since Christ has come to us, show that we rejoice, and do nothing that may anger him; let us garnish the abode to which He has come, for this they do who rejoice; let us set before Him the meal which He desires to eat, for this they do who hold festival. And what is this meal? He says Himself; *"My meat is, that I may do the will of Him that sent me."* [John 4:34] When He is hungry, let us feed Him; when He is thirsty, let us give Him drink: though thou give Him but a cup of cold water, He receives it; for He loves you, and to one who loves, the offerings of the beloved, though they be small, appear great. Only

be not thou slothful; though you cast in but two farthings, He refuses them not, but receives them as great riches. For since He is without wants, and receives these offerings, not because He needs them, it is reasonable that all distinction should be not in the quantity of the gifts, but the intention of the giver. Only show that you love Him who has come, that for His sake you are giving all diligence, that you rejoice at His coming. See how He is disposed toward you. He came for you, He laid down His life for you, and after all this He does not refuse even to entreat you. "*We are ambassadors,*" says Paul, "*for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.*" [2 Corinthians 5:20] "*And who is so mad,*" says some one, "*as not to love his own Master?*" I say so too, and I know that not one of us would deny this in words or intention; but one who is beloved desires love to be shown, not by words only, but by deeds also. For to say that we love, and not to act like lovers, is ridiculous, not only before God, but even in the sight of men. Since then to confess Him in word only, while in deeds we oppose Him, is not only unprofitable, but also hurtful to us; let us, I entreat you, also make confession by our works; that we also may obtain a confession from Him in that day, when before His Father He shall confess those who are worthy in Christ Jesus our Lord, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 21 on the Gospel of John

John 1:49-50

"Nathanael answered and says unto Him, Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel. Jesus answered, and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig-tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these."

1. Beloved, we need much care, much watchfulness, to be able to look into the depth of the Divine Scriptures. For it is not possible to discover their meaning in a careless way, or while we are asleep, but there needs close search, and there needs earnest prayer, that we may be enabled to see some little way into the secrets of the divine oracles. Today, for instance, here is no trifling question proposed to us, but one which requires much zeal and enquiry. For when Nathanael said, *"You are the Son of God,"* Christ replies, *"Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig-tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these."*

Now what is the question arising from this passage? It is this. Peter, when after so many miracles and such high doctrine he confessed that, *"You are the Son of God"* [Matthew 16:16], is called *"blessed,"* as having received the revelation from the Father; while Nathanael, though he said the very same thing before seeing or hearing either miracles or doctrine, had no such word addressed to him, but as though he had not said so much as he ought to have said, is brought to things greater still. What can be the reason of this? It is, that Peter and Nathanael both spoke the same words, but not both with the same intention. Peter confessed Him to be *"The Son of God"* but as being Very God; Nathanael, as being mere man. And whence does this appear? From what he said after these words; for after, *"You are the Son*

of God," he adds, *"You are the King of Israel."* But the Son of God is not *"King of Israel"* only, but of all the world.

And what I say is clear, not from this only, but also from what follows. For Christ added nothing more to Peter, but as though his faith were perfect, said, that upon this confession of his He would build the Church; but in the other case He did nothing like this, but the contrary. For as though some large, and that the better, part were wanting to his confession He added what follows. For what says He?

John 1:51

"Verily, verily I say unto you, Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Do you see how He leads him up little by little from the earth, and causes him no longer to imagine Him a man merely? For One to whom Angels minister, and on whom Angels ascend and descend, how could He be man? For this reason He said, *"You shall see greater things than these."* And in proof of this, He introduces the ministry of Angels. And what He means is something of this kind: *"Does this, O Nathanael, seem to you a great matter, and have you for this confessed me to be King of Israel? What then will you say, when you see the Angels ascending and descending upon Me?"* Persuading him by these words to own Him Lord also of the Angels. For on Him as on the King's own Son, the royal ministers ascended and descended, once at the season of the Crucifixion, again at the time of the Resurrection and the Ascension, and before this also, when they *"came and ministered unto Him"* [Matthew 4:11], when they proclaimed the glad tidings of His birth, and cried, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace"* [Luke 2:14], when they came to Mary, when they came to Joseph.

And He does now what He has done in many instances; He utters two predictions, gives present proof of the one, and confirms that which has to be accomplished by that which is so already. For of His sayings some had been proved, such as, *"Before Philip called you, under the fig-tree I saw you"*; others had yet to come to pass, and had partly done so, namely, the descending and ascending of the Angels, at the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension; and this He renders credible by His words even before the event. For one who had known His power by what had gone

before, and heard from Him of things to come, would more readily receive this prediction too.

What then does Nathanael? To this he makes no reply. And therefore at this point Christ stopped His discourse with him, allowing him to consider in private what had been said; and not choosing to pour forth all at once, having cast seed into fertile ground, He then leaves it to shoot at leisure. And this He has shown in another place, where He says, *"The kingdom of heaven is like to a man that sows good seed, but while he slept, his enemy comes, and sows tares among the wheat."*

John 2:1-2

"On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. And Jesus was called to the marriage. And the mother of Jesus was there, and His brethren."

I said before that He was best known in Galilee; therefore they invite Him to the marriage, and He comes; for He looked not to His own honor, but to our benefit. He who disdained not to *"take upon Him the form of a servant"* [Philippians 2:7], would much less disdain to be present at the marriage of servants; He who sat down *"with publicans and sinners"* [Matthew 9:13], would much less refuse to sit down with those present at the marriage. Assuredly they who invited Him had not formed a proper judgment of Him, nor did they invite Him as some great one, but merely as an ordinary acquaintance; and this the Evangelist has hinted at, when he says, *"The mother of Jesus was there, and His brethren."* Just as they invited her and His brethren, they invited Jesus.

John 2:3

"And when they wanted wine, His mother says unto Him, They have no wine."

Here it is worth while to enquire whence it came into His mother's mind to imagine anything great of her Son; for He had as yet done no miracle, since the Evangelist says, *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee."* [John 2:11]

2. Now if any say that this is not a sufficient proof that it was the *"beginning of His miracles,"* because there is added simply *"in Cana of Galilee,"* as allowing it to have been the first done there, but not altogether and absolutely the first, for He probably might have done others elsewhere, we will make answer to him of that which we have said before. And of what kind? The words of John (the Baptist); *"And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come, baptizing with water."* Now if He had wrought miracles in early age, the Israelites would not have needed another to declare Him. For He who came among men, and by His miracles was so made known, not to those only in Judæa, but also to those in Syria and beyond, and who did this in three years only, or rather who did not need even these three years to manifest Himself [Matthew 4:24], for immediately and from the first His fame went abroad everywhere; He, I say, who in a short time so shone forth by the multitude of His miracles, that His name was well known to all, was much less likely, if while a child He had from an early age wrought miracles, to escape notice so long. For what was done would have seemed stranger as done by a boy, and there would have been time for twice or thrice as many, and much more. But in fact He did nothing while He was a child, save only that one thing to which Luke has testified [Luke 2:46], that at the age of twelve

years He sat hearing the doctors, and was thought admirable for His questioning. Besides, it was in accordance with likelihood and reason that He did not begin His signs at once from an early age; for they would have deemed the thing a delusion. For if when He was of full age many suspected this, much more, if while quite young He had wrought miracles, would they have hurried Him sooner and before the proper time to the Cross, in the venom of their malice; and the very facts of the Dispensation would have been discredited.

"How then," asks some one, *"came it into the mind of His mother to imagine anything great of Him?"* He was now beginning to reveal Himself, and was plainly discovered by the witness of John, and by what He had said to His disciples. And before all this, the Conception itself and all its attending circumstances had inspired her with a very great opinion of the Child; *"for,"* said Luke, *"she heard all the sayings concerning the Child, and kept them in her heart."* *"Why then,"* says one, *"did not she speak this before?"* Because, as I said, it was now at last that He was beginning to manifest Himself. Before this time He lived as one of the many, and therefore His mother had not confidence to say any such thing to Him; but when she heard that John had come on His account, and that he had borne such witness to Him as he did, and that He had disciples, after that she took confidence, and called Him, and said, when they wanted wine, *"They have no wine."* For she desired both to do them a favor, and through her Son to render herself more conspicuous; perhaps too she had some human feelings, like His brethren, when they said, *"Show yourself to the world"* [John 17:4], desiring to gain credit from His miracles. Therefore He answered somewhat vehemently, saying,

John 2:4

"Woman, what have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come."

To prove that He greatly respected His mother, hear Luke relate how He was *"subject to"* His parents [Luke 2:51], and our own Evangelist declare how He had forethought for her at the very season of the Crucifixion. For where parents cause no impediment or hindrance in things belonging to God, it is our bounden duty to give way to them, and there is great danger in not doing so; but when they require anything unseasonably, and cause hindrance in any spiritual matter, it is unsafe to obey. And therefore He answered thus in this place, and again elsewhere, *"Who is My mother, and who are My brethren?"* [Matthew 12:48], because they did not yet think rightly of Him; and she, because she had borne Him, claimed, according to the custom of other mothers, to direct Him in all things, when she ought to have revered and worshipped Him. This then was the reason why He answered as He did on that occasion. For consider what a thing it was, that when all the people high and low were standing round Him, when the multitude was intent on hearing Him, and His doctrine had begun to be set forth, she should come into the midst and take Him away from the work of exhortation, and converse with Him apart, and not even endure to come within, but draw Him outside merely to herself. This is why He said, *"Who is My mother and My brethren?"* Not to insult her who had borne Him, (away with the thought!) but to procure her the greatest benefit, and not to let her think meanly of Him. For if He cared for others, and used every means to implant in them a becoming opinion of Himself, much more would He do so in the case of His mother. And since it was probable that if these words had been addressed to her by her Son, she would not readily

have chosen even then to be convinced, but would in all cases have claimed the superiority as being His mother, therefore He replied as He did to them who spoke to Him; otherwise He could not have led up her thoughts from His present lowliness to His future exaltation, had she expected that she should always be honored by Him as by a son, and not that He should come as her Master.

3. It was then from this motive that He said in this place, "*Woman, what have I to do with you?*" and also for another reason not less pressing. What was that? It was, that His miracles might not be suspected. The request ought to have come from those who needed, not from His mother. And why so? Because what is done at the request of one's friends, great though it be, often causes offense to the spectators; but when they make the request who have the need, the miracle is free from suspicion, the praise unmixed, the benefit great. So if some excellent physician should enter a house where there were many sick, and be spoken to by none of the patients or their relations, but be directed only by his own mother, he would be suspected and disliked by the sufferers, nor would any of the patients or their attendants deem him able to exhibit anything great or remarkable. And so this was a reason why He rebuked her on that occasion, saying, "*Woman, what have I to do with you?*" instructing her for the future not to do the like; because, though He was careful to honor His mother, yet He cared much more for the salvation of her soul, and for the doing good to the many, for which He took upon Him the flesh.

These then were the words, not of one speaking rudely to his mother, but belonging to a wise dispensation, which brought her into a right frame of mind, and provided that the miracles should be attended with that honor which was meet. And setting other things aside, this very appearance which these words have of having been spoken chidingly, is amply enough to

show that He held her in high honor, for by His displeasure He showed that He revered her greatly; in what manner, we will say in the next discourse. Think of this then, and when you hear a certain woman saying, *"Blessed is the womb that bare You, and the paps which You have sucked,"* and Him answering, *"rather blessed are they that do the will of my Father"* [Luke 11:27], suppose that those other words also were said with the same intention. For the answer was not that of one rejecting his mother, but of One who would show that her having borne Him would have nothing availed her, had she not been very good and faithful. Now if, setting aside the excellence of her soul, it profited Mary nothing that the Christ was born of her, much less will it be able to avail us to have a father or a brother, or a child of virtuous and noble disposition, if we ourselves be far removed from his virtue. *"A brother,"* says David, *"does not redeem, shall man redeem?"* [Psalm 49:7, Septuagint] We must place our hopes of salvation in nothing else, but only in our own righteous deeds (done) after the grace of God. For if this by itself could have availed, it would have availed the Jews, (for Christ was their kinsman according to the flesh,) it would have availed the town in which He was born, it would have availed His brethren. But as long as His brethren cared not for themselves, the honor of their kindred availed them nothing, but they were condemned with the rest of the world, and then only were approved, when they shone by their own virtue; and the city fell, and was burnt, having gained nothing from this; and His kinsmen according to the flesh were slaughtered and perished very miserably, having gained nothing towards being saved from their relationship to Him, because they had not the defense of virtue. The Apostles, on the contrary, appeared greater than any, because they followed the true and excellent way of gaining relationship with Him, that by obedience. And from this we learn that we have always need of faith, and a life shining and bright, since this

alone will have power to save us. For though His relations were for a long time everywhere held in honor, being called the Lord's kinsmen, yet now we do not even know their names, while the lives and names of the Apostles are everywhere celebrated.

Let us then not be proud of nobleness of birth according to the flesh, but though we have ten thousand famous ancestors, let us use diligence ourselves to go beyond their excellences, knowing that we shall gain nothing from the diligence of others to help us in the judgment that is to come; nay, this will be the more grievous condemnation, that though born of righteous parents and having an example at home, we do not, even thus, imitate our teachers. And this I say now, because I see many heathens, when we lead them to the faith and exhort them to become Christians, flying to their kinsmen and ancestors and house, and saying, "*All my relations and friends and companions are faithful Christians.*" What is that to you, thou wretched and miserable? This very thing will be especially your ruin, that you did not respect the number of those around you, and run to the truth. Others again who are believers but live a careless life, when exhorted to virtue make the very same defense, and say, "*my father and my grandfather and my great-grandfather were very pious and good men.*" But this will assuredly most condemn you, that being descended from such men, you have acted unworthily of the root from whence you are sprung. For hear what the Prophet says to the Jews, "*Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept (sheep)*" [Hosea 12:12]; and again Christ, "*Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad.*" [John 8:56] And everywhere they bring forward to them the righteous acts of their fathers, not only to praise them, but also to make the charge against their descendants more heavy. Knowing then this, let us use every means that we may be saved by our own works, lest having deceived ourselves by vain

trusting on others, we learn that we have been deceived when the knowledge of it will profit us nothing. *"In the grave,"* says David, *"who shall give you thanks?"* [Psalm 6:5] Let us then repent here, that we may obtain the everlasting goods, which may God grant we all do, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 22 on the Gospel of John

John 2:4

"Woman, what have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come."

1. In preaching the word there is some toil, and this Paul declares when he says, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."* [1 Timothy 5:17] Yet it is in your power to make this labor light or heavy; for if you reject our words, or if without actually rejecting them you do not show them forth in your works, our toil will be heavy, because we labor uselessly and in vain: while if you heed them and give proof of it by your works, we shall not even feel the toil, because the fruit produced by our labor will not suffer the greatness of that labor to appear. So that if you would rouse our zeal, and not quench or weaken it, show us, I beseech you, your fruit, that we may behold the fields waving with grain, and being supported by hopes of an abundant crop, and reckoning up your riches, may not be slothful in carrying on this good traffic.

It is no slight question which is proposed to us also today. For first, when the mother of Jesus says, *"They have no wine,"* Christ replies, *"Woman, what have I to do with you? Mine, hour is not yet come."* And then, having thus spoken, He did as His mother had said; an action which needs enquiry no less than the words. Let us then, after calling upon Him who wrought the miracle, proceed to the explanation.

The words are not used in this place only, but in others also; for the same Evangelist says, *"They could not lay hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come"* [John 8:20]; and again, *"No man laid hands on Him,*

because His hour was not yet come" [John 7:30]; and again, *"The hour has come, glorify Your Son."* [John 17:1] What then do the words mean? I have brought together more instances, that I may give one explanation of all. And what is that explanation? Christ did not say, *"Mine hour is not yet come,"* as being subject to the necessity of seasons, or the observance of an *"hour"*; how can He be so, who is Maker of seasons, and Creator of the times and the ages? To what else then did He allude? He desires to show this; that He works all things at their convenient season, not doing all at once; because a kind of confusion and disorder would have ensued, if, instead of working all at their proper seasons, He had mixed all together, His Birth, His Resurrection, and His coming to Judgment. Observe this; creation was to be, yet not all at once; man and woman were to be created, yet not even these together; mankind were to be condemned to death, and there was to be a resurrection, yet the interval between the two was to be great; the law was to be given, but not grace with it, each was to be dispensed at its proper time. Now Christ was not subject to the necessity of seasons, but rather settled their order, since He is their Creator; and therefore He says in this place, *"Mine hour is not yet come."* And His meaning is, that as yet He was not manifest to the many, nor had He even His whole company of disciples; Andrew followed Him, and next to him Philip, but no one else. And moreover, none of these, not even His mother nor His brethren, knew Him as they ought; for after His many miracles, the Evangelist says of His brethren, *"For neither did His brethren believe in Him."* [John 7:5] And those at the wedding did not know Him either, for in their need they would certainly have come to and entreated Him. Therefore He says, *"Mine hour is not yet come";* that is, *"I am not yet known to the company, nor are they even aware that the wine has failed; let them first be sensible of this. I ought not to have been told it from you; you are My*

mother, and renderest the miracle suspicious. They who wanted the wine should have come and besought Me, not that I need this, but that they might with an entire assent accept the miracle. For one who knows that he is in need, is very grateful when he obtains assistance; but one who has not a sense of his need, will never have a plain and clear sense of the benefit."

Why then after He had said, "*Mine hour is not yet come,*" and given her a denial, did He what His mother desired? Chiefly it was, that they who opposed Him, and thought that He was subject to the "*hour,*" might have sufficient proof that He was subject to no hour; for had He been so, how could He, before the proper "*hour*" had come, have done what He did? And in the next place, He did it to honor His mother, that He might not seem entirely to contradict and shame her that bare Him in the presence of so many; and also, that He might not be thought to want power, for she brought the servants to Him.

Besides, even while saying to the Canaanitish woman, "*It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to give it unto dogs*" [Matthew 15:26], He still gave the bread, as considering her perseverance; and though after his first reply, He said, "*I am not sent save unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,*" yet even after saying this, He healed the woman's daughter. Hence we learn, that although we be unworthy, we often by perseverance make ourselves worthy to receive. And for this reason His mother remained by, and openly brought to Him the servants, that the request might be made by a greater number; and therefore she added,

John 2:5

"Whatsoever He says unto you, do it."

For she knew that His refusal proceeded not from want of power, but from humility, and that He might not seem without cause to hurry to the miracle; and therefore she brought the servants.

John 2:6-7

"And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water; and they filled them up to the brim."

It is not without a reason that the Evangelist says, *"After the manner of the purifying of the Jews,"* but in order that none of the unbelievers might suspect that lees having been left in the vessels, and water having been poured upon and mixed with them, a very weak wine had been made. Therefore he says, *"after the manner of the purifying of the Jews,"* to show that those vessels were never receptacles for wine. For because Palestine is a country with but little water, and brooks and fountains were not everywhere to be found, they always used to fill waterpots with water, so that they might not have to hasten to the rivers if at any time they were defiled, but might have the means of purification at hand.

"And why was it, that He did not the miracle before they filled them, which would have been more marvelous by far? For it is one thing to change given matter to a different quality, and another to create matter out of nothing." The latter would indeed have been more wonderful, but would not have seemed so credible to the many. And therefore He often purposely lessens the greatness of His miracles, that it may be the more readily received.

"But why," says one, *"did not He Himself produce the water which He afterwards showed to be wine, instead of bidding the servants bring it?"* For the very same reason; and also, that He might have those who drew it out to witness that what had been effected was no delusion since if any had been inclined to be shameless, those who ministered might have said to them, *"We drew the water, we filled the vessels."* And besides what we have

mentioned, He thus overthrows those doctrines which spring up against the Church. For since there are some who say that the Creator of the world is another, and that the things which are seen are not His works, but those of a certain other opposing god, to curb these men's madness He does most of His miracles on matter found at hand. Because, had the creator of these been opposed to Him, He would not have used what was another's to set forth His own power. But now to show that it is He who transmutes water in the vine plants, and who converts the rain by its passage through the root into wine, He effected that in a moment at the wedding which in the plant is long in doing. When they had filled the waterpots, He said,

John 2:8-10

"Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast; and they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and says unto him, Every man at the beginning does set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worst; but you have kept the good wine until now."

Here again some mock, saying, *"this was an assembly of drunken men, the sense of the judges was spoilt, and not able to taste what was made, or to decide on what was done, so that they did not know whether what was made was water or wine: for that they were drunk,"* it is alleged, *"the ruler himself has shown by what he said."* Now this is most ridiculous, yet even this suspicion the Evangelist has removed. For he does not say that the guests gave their opinion on the matter, but *"the ruler of the feast,"* who was sober, and had not as yet tasted anything. For of course you are aware, that those who are entrusted with the management of such banquets are the most sober, as having this one business, to dispose all things in order and regularity; and therefore the Lord called such a man's sober senses to testify to what was done. For He did not say, *"Pour forth to them that sit at meat,"* but, *"Bear unto the governor of the feast."*

"And when the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom." "And why did he not call the servants? For so the miracle would have been revealed." Because Jesus had not Himself revealed what had been done, but desired that the power of His miracles should be known gently, little by little. And suppose that it had then been mentioned, the servants who related it would never have been believed, but would have been thought mad to bear such testimony to one

who at that time seemed to the many a mere man; and although they knew the certainty of the thing by experience, (for they were not likely to disbelieve their own hands,) yet they were not sufficient to convince others. And so He did not reveal it to all, but to him who was best able to understand what was done, reserving the clearer knowledge of it for a future time; since after the manifestation of other miracles this also would be credible. Thus when he was about to heal the nobleman's son, the Evangelist has shown that it had already become more clearly known; for it was chiefly because the nobleman had become acquainted with the miracle that he called upon Him, as John incidentally shows when he says, "*Jesus came into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine.*" [John 4:46] And not wine simply, but the best.

3. For such are the miraculous works of Christ, they are far more perfect and better than the operations of nature. This is seen also in other instances; when He restored any infirm member of the body, He made it better than the sound.

That it was wine then, and the best of wine, that had been made, not the servants only, but the bridegroom and the ruler of the feast would testify; and that it was made by Christ, those who drew the water; so that although the miracle were not then revealed, yet it could not in the end be passed in silence, so many and constraining testimonies had He provided for the future. That He had made the water wine, He had the servants for witnesses; that the wine was good that had been made, the ruler of the feast and the bridegroom.

It might be expected that the bridegroom would reply to this, (the ruler's speech,) and say something, but the Evangelist, hastening to more pressing matters, has only touched upon this miracle, and passed on. For what we needed to learn was, that Christ made the water wine, and that

good wine; but what the bridegroom said to the governor he did not think it necessary to add. And many miracles, at first somewhat obscure, have in process of time become more plain, when reported more exactly by those who knew them from the beginning.

At that time, then, Jesus made of water wine, and both then and now He ceases not to change our weak and unstable wills. For there are, yes, there are men who in nothing differ from water, so cold, and weak, and unsettled. But let us bring those of such disposition to the Lord, that He may change their will to the quality of wine, so that they be no longer washy, but have body, and be the cause of gladness in themselves and others. But who can these cold ones be? They are those who give their minds to the fleeting things of this present life, who despise not this world's luxury, who are lovers of glory and dominion: for all these things are flowing waters, never stable, but ever rushing violently down the steep. The rich today is poor tomorrow, he who one day appears with herald, and girdle, and chariot, and numerous attendants, is often on the next the inhabitant of a dungeon, having unwillingly quitted all that show to make room for another. Again, the gluttonous and dissipated man, when he has filled himself to bursting, cannot retain even for a single day the supply conveyed by his delicacies, but when that is dispersed, in order to renew it he is obliged to put in more, differing in nothing from a torrent. For as in the torrent when the first body of water is gone, others in turn succeed; so in gluttony, when one repast is removed, we again require another. And such is the nature and the lot of earthly things, never to be stable, but to be always pouring and hurrying by; but in the case of luxury, it is not merely the flowing and hastening by; but many other things that trouble us. By the violence of its course it wears away the strength of the body, and strips the soul of its manliness, and the strongest currents of rivers do not so easily eat

away their banks and make them sink down, as do luxury and wantonness sweep away all the bulwarks of our health; and if you enter a physician's house and ask him, you will find that almost all the causes of diseases arise from this. For frugality and a plain table is the mother of health, and therefore physicians have thus named it; for they have called the not being satisfied "*health*," (because not to be satisfied with food is health,) and they have spoken of sparing diet as the "*mother of health*." Now if the condition of want is the mother of health, it is clear that fullness is the mother of sickness and debility, and produces attacks which are beyond the skill even of physicians. For gout in the feet, apoplexy, dimness of sight, pains in the hands, tremors, paralytic attacks, jaundice, lingering and inflammatory fevers, and other diseases many more than these, (for we have not time to go over them all,) are the natural offspring, not of abstinence and moderate diet, but of gluttony and repletion. And if you will look to the diseases of the soul that arise from them, you will see that feelings of coveting, sloth, melancholy, dullness, impurity, and folly of all kinds, have their origin here. For after such banquets the souls of the luxurious become no better than asses, being torn to pieces by such wild beasts as these (passions). Shall I say also how many pains and displeasures they have who wait upon luxury? I could not enumerate them all, but by a single principal point I will make the whole clear. At a table such as I speak of, that is, a sumptuous one, men never eat with pleasure; for abstinence is the mother of pleasure as well as health, while repletion is the source and root not only of diseases, but of displeasure. For where there is satiety there desire cannot be, and where there is no desire, how can there be pleasure? And therefore we should find that the poor are not only of better understanding and healthier than the rich, but also that they enjoy a greater degree of pleasure. Let us, when we reflect on this, flee drunkenness and luxury, not that of the table alone, but

all other which is found in the things of this life, and let us take in exchange for it the pleasure arising from spiritual things, and, as the Prophet says, delight ourselves in the Lord; *"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart"* [Psalm 37:4]; that so that we may enjoy the good things both here and hereafter, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, world without end. Amen.

Homily 23 on the Gospel of John

John 2:11

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee."

1. Frequent and fierce is the devil in his attacks, on all sides besieging our salvation; we therefore must watch and be sober, and everywhere fortify ourselves against his assault, for if he but gain some slight vantage ground, he goes on to make for himself a broad passage, and by degrees introduces all his forces. If then we have any care at all for our salvation, let us not allow him to make his approaches even in trifles, that thus we may check him beforehand in important matters; for it would be the extreme of folly, if, while he displays such eagerness to destroy our souls, we should not bring even an equal amount in defense of our own salvation.

I say not this without a cause, but because I fear lest that wolf be even now standing unseen by us in the midst of the fold, and some sheep become a prey to him, being led astray from the flock and from hearkening by its own carelessness and his craft. Were the wounds sensible, or did the body receive the blows, there would be no difficulty in discerning his plots; but since the soul is invisible, and since that it is which receives the wounds, we need great watchfulness that each may prove himself; for none knows the things of a man as the spirit of a man that is in him. [1 Corinthians 2:11] The word is spoken indeed to all, and is offered as a general remedy to those who need it, but it is the business of every individual hearer to take what is suited to his complaint. I know not who are sick, I know not who are well. And therefore I use every sort of argument, and introduce remedies suited to all maladies, at one time condemning covetousness, after

that touching on luxury, and again on impurity, then composing something in praise of and exhortation to charity, and each of the other virtues in their turn. For I fear lest when my arguments are employed on any one subject, I may without knowing it be treating you for one disease while you are ill of others. So that if this congregation were but one person, I should not have judged it so absolutely necessary to make my discourse varied; but since in such a multitude there are probably also many maladies, I not unreasonably diversify my teaching, since my discourse will be sure to attain its object when it is made to embrace you all. For this cause also Scripture is something multiform, and speaks on ten thousand matters, because it addresses itself to the nature of mankind in common, and in such a multitude all the passions of the soul must needs be; though all be not in each. Let us then cleanse ourselves of these, and so listen to the divine oracles, and with contrite heart hear what has been this day read to us.

And what is that? *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee."* I told you the other day, that there are some who say that this is not the beginning. *"For what,"* says one, *"if 'Cana of Galilee' be added? This shows that this was 'the beginning' He made 'in Cana.'"* But on these points I would not venture to assert anything exactly. I before have shown that He began His miracles after His Baptism, and wrought no miracle before it; but whether of the miracles done after His Baptism, this or some other was the first, it seems to me unnecessary to assert positively.

"And manifested forth His glory."

"How?" asks one, *"and in what way? For only the servants, the ruler of the feast, and the bridegroom, not the greater number of those present, gave heed to what was done."* How then did he *"manifest forth His glory"*? He manifested it at least for His own part, and if all present hear not of the miracle at the time, they would hear of it afterwards, for unto the present

time it is celebrated, and has not been unnoticed. That all did not know it on the same day is clear from what follows, for after having said that He *"manifested forth His glory,"* the Evangelist adds,

"And His disciples believed on Him."

His disciples, who even before this regarded Him with wonder. Do you see that it was especially necessary to work the miracles at times when men were present of honest minds, and who would carefully give heed to what was done? For these would more readily believe, and attend more exactly to the circumstances. *"And how could He have become known without miracles?"* Because His doctrine and prophetic powers were sufficient to cause wonder in the souls of His hearers, so that they took heed to what He did with a right disposition, their minds being already well affected towards Him. And therefore in many other places the Evangelists say, that He did no miracle on account of the perversity of the men who dwelt there. [Matthew 12:38; ch. 13:58, etc.]

John 2:12

"After this He went down to Capernaum, He, and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples; and they continued there not many days."

Wherefore comes He with *"His mother to Capernaum"*? For He has done no miracle there, and the inhabitants of that city were not of those who were rightminded towards Him, but of the utterly corrupt. And this Christ declared when He said, *"And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell."* [Luke 10:15] Wherefore then goes He? I think it was, because He intended a little after to go up to Jerusalem, that He then went to Capernaum, to avoid leading about everywhere with Him, His mother and His brethren. And so, having departed and tarried a little while to honor His mother, He again commences His miracles after restoring to her home her who had borne Him. Therefore the Evangelist says, After *"not many days,"*

John 2:13

"He went up to Jerusalem."

He received baptism then a few days before the passover. But on going up to Jerusalem, what did He, a deed full of high authority; for He cast out of the Temple those dealers and money changers, and those who sold doves, and oxen, and sheep, and who passed their time there for this purpose.

2. Another Evangelist writes, that as He cast them out, He said, Make not my Father's house *"a den of thieves,"* but this one,

John 2:16

"(Make not My Father's house) an house of merchandise."

They do not in this contradict each other, but show that he did this a second time, and that both these expressions were not used on the same occasion, but that He acted thus once at the beginning of His ministry, and again when He had come to the very time of His Passion. Therefore, (on the latter occasion,) employing more strong expressions, He spoke of it as (being made) *"a den of thieves,"* but here at the commencement of His miracles He does not so, but uses a more gentle rebuke; from which it is probable that this took place a second time.

"And wherefore," says one, *"did Christ do this same, and use such severity against these men, a thing which He is nowhere else seen to do, even when insulted and reviled, and called by them 'Samaritan' and 'demoniac'? For He was not even satisfied with words only, but took a scourge, and so cast them out."* Yes, but it was when others were receiving benefit, that the Jews accused and raged against Him; when it was probable that they would have been made savage by His rebukes, they showed no such disposition towards Him, for they neither accused nor reviled Him. What say they?

John 2:18

"What sign showest Thou unto us, seeing that You do these things?"

Do you see their excessive malice, and how the benefits done to others incensed them more (than reproofs)?

At one time then He said, that the Temple was made by them *"a den of thieves,"* showing that what they sold was gotten by theft, and rapine, and covetousness, and that they were rich through other men's calamities; at another, *"a house of merchandise,"* pointing to their shameless traffickings. *"But wherefore did He this?"* Since he was about to heal on the Sabbath day, and to do many such things which were thought by them transgressions of the Law, in order that He might not seem to do this as though He had come to be some rival God and opponent of His Father, He takes occasion hence to correct any such suspicion of theirs. For One who had exhibited so much zeal for the House was not likely to oppose Him who was Lord of the House, and who was worshipped in it. No doubt even the former years during which He lived according to the Law, were sufficient to show His reverence for the Legislator, and that He came not to give contrary laws; yet since it was likely that those years were forgotten through lapse of time, as not having been known to all because He was brought up in a poor and mean dwelling, He afterwards does this in the presence of all, (for many were present because the feast was near at hand,) and at great risk. For he did not merely *"cast them out,"* but also *"overturned the tables,"* and *"poured out the money,"* giving them by this to understand, that He who threw Himself into danger for the good order of the House could never despise his Master. Had He acted as He did from hypocrisy, He should only have advised them; but to place Himself in danger was very daring. For it

was no light thing to offer Himself to the anger of so many market-folk, to excite against Himself a most brutal mob of petty dealers by His reproaches and His blows, this was not the action of a pretender, but of one choosing to suffer everything for the order of the House.

And therefore not by His actions only, but by His words, He shows his agreement with the Father; for He says not *"the Holy House,"* but *"My Father's House."* See, He even calls Him, *"Father,"* and they are not angry; they thought He spoke in a general way: but when He went on and spoke more plainly, so as to set before them the idea of His Equality, then they become angry.

And what say they? *"What sign showest Thou unto us, seeing that You do these things?"* Alas for their utter madness! Was there need of a sign before they could cease their evil doings, and free the house of God from such dishonor? And was it not the greatest sign of His Excellence that He had gotten such zeal for that House? In fact, the well-disposed were distinguished by this very thing, for *"They,"* His disciples, it says,

John 2:17

"Remembered that it is written, The zeal of your house has eaten me up."

But the Jews did not remember the Prophecy, and said, *"What sign showest Thou unto us?"* [Psalm 69:9], both grieving that their shameful traffic was cut off, and expecting by these means to stop Him, and also desiring to challenge Him to a miracle, and to find fault with what He was doing. Wherefore He will not give them a sign; and before, when they came and asked Him, He made them the same answer, *"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."* [Matthew 16:4] Only then the answer was clear, now it is more ambiguous. This He does on account of their extreme insensibility; for He who prevented them without their asking, and gave them signs, would never when they asked have turned away from them, had He not seen that their minds were wicked and false, and their intention treacherous. Think how full of wickedness the question itself was at the outset. When they ought to have applauded Him for His earnestness and zeal, when they ought to have been astonished that He cared so greatly for the House, they reproach Him, saying, that it was lawful to traffic, and unlawful for any to stop their traffic, except he should show them a sign. What says Christ?

John 2:19

"Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Many such sayings He utters which were not intelligible to His immediate hearers, but which were to be so to those that should come after. And wherefore does He this? In order that when the accomplishment of His prediction should have come to pass, He might be seen to have foreknown from the beginning what was to follow; which indeed was the case with this prophecy. For, says the Evangelist,

John 2:22

"When He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."

But at the time when this was spoken, the Jews were perplexed as to what it might mean, and cast about to discover, saying,

John 2:20

"Forty and six years was this Temple in building, and will you rear it up in three days?"

"Forty and six years," they said, referring to the latter building, for the former was finished in twenty years' time. [Ezra 6:15]

3. Wherefore then did He not resolve the difficulty and say, *"I speak not of that Temple, but of My flesh"*? Why does the Evangelist, writing the Gospel at a later period, interpret the saying, and Jesus keep silence at the time? Why did He so keep silence? Because they would not have received His word; for if not even the disciples were able to understand the saying, much less were the multitudes. *"When,"* says the Evangelist, *"He was risen from the dead, then they remembered, and believed the Scripture and His word."* There were two things that hindered them for the time, one the fact of the Resurrection, the other, the greater question whether He was God that dwelt within; of both which things He spoke darkly when He said, *"Destroy this Temple, and I will rear it up in three days."* And this St. Paul declares to be no small proof of His Godhead, when he writes, *"Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead."* [Romans 1:4]

But why does He both there, and here, and everywhere, give this for a sign, at one time saying, *"When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know that I Am"* [John 8:28]; at another, *"There shall no sign be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonas"* [Matthew 12:39]; and again in this place, *"In three days I will raise it up"*? Because what especially showed that He was not a mere man, was His being able to set up a trophy of victory over death, and so quickly to abolish His long enduring tyranny, and conclude that difficult war. Wherefore He says, *"Then you shall know."*

"Then." When? When after My Resurrection I shall draw (all) the world to Me, then you shall know that I did these things as God, and Very Son of God, avenging the insult offered to My Father.

Why then, instead of saying, 'What need is there of *"signs"* to check evil deeds?' did He promise that He would give them a sign? Because by so doing He would have the more exasperated them; but in this way He rather astonished them. Still they made no answer to this, for He seemed to them to say what was incredible, so that they did not stay even to question Him upon it, but passed it by as impossible. Yet had they been wise, though it seemed to them at the time incredible, still when He wrought His many miracles they would then have come and questioned Him, would then have intreated that the difficulty might be resolved to them; but because they were foolish, they gave no heed at all to part of what was said, and part they heard with evil frame of mind. And therefore Christ spoke to them in an enigmatical way.

The question still remains, *"How was it that the disciples did not know that He must rise from the dead?"* It was, because they had not been vouchsafed the gift of the Spirit; and therefore, though they constantly heard His discourses concerning the Resurrection, they understood them not, but reasoned with themselves what this might be. For very strange and paradoxical was the assertion that one could raise himself, and would raise himself in such wise. And so Peter was rebuked, when, knowing nothing about the Resurrection, he said, *"Be it far from You."* [Matthew 16:22] And Christ did not reveal it clearly to them before the event, that they might not be offended at the very outset, being led to distrust His words on account of the great improbability of the thing, and because they did not yet clearly know Him, who He was. For no one could help believing what was proclaimed aloud by facts, while some would probably disbelieve what was

told to them in words. Therefore He at first allowed the meaning of His words to be concealed; but when by their experience He had verified His sayings, He after that gave them understanding of His words, and such gifts of the Spirit that they received them all at once. *"He,"* says Jesus, *"shall bring all things to your remembrance."* [John 14:26] For they who in a single night cast off all respect for Him, and fled from and denied that they even knew Him, would scarcely have remembered what He had done and said during the whole time, unless they had enjoyed much grace of the Spirit.

"But," says one, *"if they were to hear from the Spirit, why needed they to accompany Christ when they would not retain His words?"* Be cause the Spirit taught them not, but called to their mind what Christ had said before; and it contributes not a little to the glory of Christ, that they were referred to the remembrance of the words He had spoken to them. At the first then it was of the gift of God that the grace of the Spirit lighted upon them so largely and abundantly; but after that, it was of their own virtue that they retained the Gift. For they displayed a shining life, and much wisdom, and great labors, and despised this present life, and thought nothing of earthly things, but were above them all; and like a sort of light-winged eagle, soaring high by their works; reached to heaven itself, and by these possessed the unspeakable grace of the Spirit.

Let us then imitate them, and not quench our lamps, but keep them bright by alms-doing, for so is the light of this fire preserved. Let us collect the oil into our vessels while we are here, for we cannot buy it when we have departed to that other place, nor can we procure it elsewhere, save only at the hands of the poor. Let us therefore collect it thence very abundantly, if, at least, we desire to enter in with the Bridegroom. But if we do not this, we must remain without the bridechamber, for it is impossible,

it is impossible, though we perform ten thousand other good deeds, to enter the portals of the Kingdom without alms-doing. Let us then show forth this very abundantly, that we may enjoy those ineffable blessings; which may it come to pass that we all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 24 on the Gospel of John

John 2:23

"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast, many believed on Him."

1. Of the men of that time some clung to their error, others laid hold on the truth, while of these last, some having retained it for a little while again fell off from it. Alluding to these, Christ compared them to seeds not deeply sown, but having their roots upon the surface of the earth; and He said that they should quickly perish. And these the Evangelist has here pointed out to us, saying,

"When He was in Jerusalem, at the Passover, in the feast, many believed on Him, when they saw the miracles which He did."

John 2:24

"But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them."

For they were the more perfect among His disciples, who came to Him not only because of His miracles, but through His teaching also. The grosser sort the miracles attracted, but the better reasoners His prophecies and doctrines; and so they who were taken by His teaching were more steadfast than those attracted by His miracles. And Christ also called them *"blessed,"* saying, *"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."* [John 20:29] But that these here mentioned were not real disciples, the following passage shows, for it says, *"Jesus did not commit Himself unto them."* Wherefore? *"Because He knew all things,"*

John 2:25

"And needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man."

The meaning is of this kind. *"He who dwells in men's hearts, and enters into their thoughts, took no heed of outward words; and knowing well that their warmth was but for a season, He placed not confidence in them as in perfect disciples, nor committed all His doctrines to them as though they had already become firm believers."* Now, to know what is in the heart of men belongs to God alone, *"who has fashioned hearts one by one"* [Psalm 33:15, Septuagint], for, says Solomon, *"You, even Thou only, know the hearts"* [1 Kings 8:39]; He therefore needed not witnesses to learn the thoughts of His own creatures, and so He felt no confidence in them because of their mere, temporary belief. Men, who know neither the present nor the future, often tell and entrust all without any reserve to persons who approach them deceitfully and who shortly will fall off from them; but Christ did not so, for well He knew all their secret thoughts.

And many such now there are, who have indeed the name of faith, but are unstable, and easily led away; wherefore neither now does Christ commit Himself to them, but conceals from them many things; and just as we do not place confidence in mere acquaintances but in real friends, so also does Christ. Hear what He says to His disciples, *"Henceforth I call you not servants, you are My friends."* [c. xv. 14, 15] Whence is this and why? *"Because all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."* And therefore He gave no signs to the Jews who asked for them, because they asked tempting Him. Indeed the asking for signs is a practice of tempters both then and now; for even now there are some that seek them and say, *"Why do not miracles take place also at this present time?"* If you

are faithful, as you ought to be, and lovest Christ as you ought to love Him, you have no need of signs, they are given to the unbelievers. "*How then,*" asks one, "*were they not given to the Jews?*" Given they certainly were; and if there were times when though they asked they did not receive them, it was because they asked them not that they might be delivered from their unbelief, but in order the more to confirm their wickedness.

John 3:1-2

"And there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus. The same came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a Teacher come from God: for no man can do the miracles that You do, unless God is with him.'"

This man appears also in the middle of the Gospel, making defense for Christ; for he says, *"Our law judges no man before it hear him"* [John 7:51]; and the Jews in anger replied to him, *"Search and look, for out of Galilee arises no prophet."* Again after the crucifixion he bestowed great care upon the burial of the Lord's body: *"There came also,"* says the Evangelist, *"Nicodemus, which came to the Lord by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight."* [John 19:39] And even now he was disposed towards Christ, but not as he ought, nor with proper sentiments respecting Him, for he was as yet entangled in Jewish infirmity. Wherefore he came by night, because he feared to do so by day. Yet not for this did the merciful God reject or rebuke him, or deprive him of His instruction, but even with much kindness conversed with him and disclosed to him very exalted doctrines, enigmatically indeed, but nevertheless He disclosed them. For far more deserving of pardon was he than those who acted thus through wickedness. They are entirely without excuse; but he, though he was liable to condemnation, yet was not so to an equal degree. *"How then does the Evangelist say nothing of the kind concerning him?"* He has said in another place, that *"of the rulers also many believed on Him, but because of the Jews they did not confess (Him), lest they should be put out of the synagogue"* [John 12:42]; but here he has implied the whole by mentioning his coming *"by night."* What then says Nicodemus?

"Rabbi, we know that You are a Teacher come from God: for no man can do the miracles that You do, except God be with him."

2. Nicodemus yet lingers below, has yet human thoughts concerning Him, and speaks of Him as of a Prophet, imagining nothing great from His miracles. *"We know,"* he says, *"that You are a Teacher come from God."* *"Why then do you come by night and secretly, to Him that speaks the things of God, to Him who comes from God? Why do you not converse with Him openly?"* But Jesus said nothing like this to him, nor did He rebuke him; for, says the Prophet, *"A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench; He shall not strive nor cry"* [Isaiah 42:2-3; as quoted Matthew 12:19-20]: and again He says Himself, *"I came not to condemn the world, but to save the world."* [John 12:47]

"No man can do these miracles, except God be with him."

Still here Nicodemus speaks like the heretics, in saying, that He has a power working within Him, and has need of the aid of others to do as He did. What then says Christ? Observe His exceeding condescension. He refrained for a while from saying, *"I need not the help of others, but do all things with power, for I am the Very Son of God, and have the same power as My Father,"* because this would have been too hard for His hearer; for I say now what I am always saying, that what Christ desired was, not so much for a while to reveal His own Dignity, as to persuade men that He did nothing contrary to His Father. And therefore in many places he appears in words confined by limits, but in His actions He does not so. For when He works a miracle, He does all with power, saying, *"I will, be thou clean."* [Matthew 8:3] *"Talitha, arise."* [Mark 5:41; not verbally quoted] *"Stretch forth your hand."* [Mark 3:5] *"Your sins be forgiven you."* [Matthew 9:2] *"Peace, be still."* [Mark 4:39] *"Take up your bed, and go unto your house."* [Matthew 9:6] *"Thou foul spirit, I say unto you, come out of him."* [Mark

9:25; not verbally quoted] *"Be it unto you even as you will."* [Matthew 15:28] *"If any one say (anything) unto you, you shall say, The Lord has need of him."* [Mark 11:3] *"This day shall you be with Me in Paradise."* [Luke 23:43] *"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, You shall not kill; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment."* [Matthew 5:21-22] *"Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men."* [Mark 1:17] And everywhere we observe that His authority is great; for in His actions no one could find fault with what was done. How was it possible? Had His words not come to pass, nor been accomplished as He commanded, any one might have said that they were the commands of a madman; but since they did come to pass, the reality of their accomplishment stopped men's mouths even against their will. But with regard to His discourses, they might often in their insolence charge Him with madness. Wherefore now in the case of Nicodemus, He utters nothing openly, but by dark sayings leads him up from his low thoughts, teaching him, that He has sufficient power in Himself to show forth miracles; for that His Father begot Him Perfect and All-sufficient, and without any imperfection.

But let us see how He effects this. Nicodemus says, *"Rabbi, we know that You are a Teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles that You do, except God be with him."* He thought he had said something great when he had spoken thus of Christ. What then says Christ? To show that he had not yet set foot even on the threshold of right knowledge, nor stood in the porch, but was yet wandering somewhere without the palace, both he and whoever else should say the like, and that he had not so much as glanced towards true knowledge when he held such an opinion of the Only-Begotten, what says He?

John 3:3

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

That is, *"Unless you are born again and receive the right doctrines, you are wandering somewhere outside, and are far from the Kingdom of heaven."* But He does not speak so plainly as this. In order to make the saying less hard to bear, He does not plainly direct it at him, but speaks indefinitely, *"Unless a man be born again"*: all but saying, *"both you and any other, who may have such opinions concerning Me, are somewhere outside the Kingdom."* Had He not spoken from a desire to establish this, His answer would have been suitable to what had been said. Now the Jews, if these words had been addressed to them, would have derided Him and departed; but Nicodemus shows here also his desire of instruction. And this is why in many places Christ speaks obscurely, because He wishes to rouse His hearers to ask questions, and to render them more attentive. For that which is said plainly often escapes the hearer, but what is obscure renders him more active and zealous. Now what He says, is something like this: *"If you are not born again, if you partake not of the Spirit which is by the washing of Regeneration, you can not have a right opinion of Me, for the opinion which you have is not spiritual, but carnal."* [Titus 3:5] But He did not speak thus, as refusing to confound one who had brought such as he had, and who had spoken to the best of his ability; and He leads him unsuspectedly up to greater knowledge, saying, *"Unless a man be born again."* The word *"again,"* in this place, some understand to mean *"from heaven,"* others, *"from the beginning."* *"It is impossible,"* says Christ, *"for one not so born to see the Kingdom of God"*; in this pointing to Himself,

and declaring that there is another beside the natural sight, and that we have need of other eyes to behold Christ. Having heard this . . .

John 3:4

"Nicodemus says, How can a man be born when he is old?"

Callest thou Him *"Master,"* do you say that He is *"come from God,"* and yet do you not receive His words, but usest to your Teacher a manner of speaking which expresses much perplexity? For the *"How,"* is the doubting question of those who have no strong belief, but who are yet of the earth. Therefore Sarah laughed when she had said, *"How?"* And many others having asked this question, have fallen from the faith.

3. And thus heretics continue in their heresy, because they frequently make this enquiry, saying, some of them, *"How was He begotten?"* others, *"How was He made flesh?"* and subjecting that Infinite Essence to the weakness of their own reasonings. Knowing which, we ought to avoid this unseasonable curiosity, for they who search into these matters shall, without learning the *"How,"* fall away from the right faith. On this account Nicodemus, being in doubt, enquires the manner in which this can be, (for he understood that the words spoken referred to himself,) is confused, and dizzy, and in perplexity, having come as to a man, and hearing more than man's words, and such as no one ever yet had heard; and for a while he rouses himself at the sublimity of the sayings, but yet is in darkness, and unstable, borne about in every direction, and continually falling away from the faith. And therefore he perseveres in proving the impossibility, so as to provoke Him to clearer teaching.

"Can a man," he says, *"enter into his mother's womb, and be born?"*

Do you see how when one commits spiritual things to his own reasonings, he speaks ridiculously, seems to be trifling, or to be drunken, when he pries into what has been said beyond what seems good to God, and

admits not the submission of faith? Nicodemus heard of the spiritual Birth, yet perceived it not as spiritual, but dragged down the words to the lowness of the flesh, and made a doctrine so great and high depend upon physical consequence. And so he invents frivolities, and ridiculous difficulties. Wherefore Paul said, "*The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit.*" [1 Corinthians 2:14] Yet even in this he preserved his reverence for Christ, for he did not mock at what had been said, but, deeming it impossible, held his peace. There were two difficulties; a Birth of this kind, and the Kingdom; for neither had the name of the Kingdom ever been heard among the Jews, nor of a Birth like this. But he stops for a while at the first, which most astonished his mind.

Let us then, knowing this, not enquire into things relating to God by reasoning, nor bring heavenly matters under the rule of earthly consequences, nor subject them to the necessity of nature; but let us think of all reverently, believing as the Scriptures have said; for the busy and curious person gains nothing, and besides not finding what he seeks, shall suffer extreme punishment. You have heard, that (the Father) begot (the Son): believe what you have heard; but do ask not, "*How,*" and so take away the Generation; to do so would be extreme folly. For if this man, because, on hearing of a Generation, not that ineffable Generation, but this which is by grace, he conceived nothing great concerning it, but human and earthly thoughts, was therefore darkened and in doubt, what punishment must they deserve, who are busy and curious about that most awful Generation, which transcends all reason and intellect? For nothing causes such dizziness as human reasoning, all whose words are of earth, and which cannot endure to be enlightened from above. Earthly reasonings are full of mud, and therefore need we streams from heaven, that when the mud has settled, the clearer portion may rise and mingle with the heavenly lessons; and this

comes to pass, when we present an honest soul and an upright life. For certainly it is possible for the intellect to be darkened, not only by unseasonable curiosity, but also by corrupt manners; wherefore Paul has said to the Corinthians, *"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able, for you are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal?"* [1 Corinthians 3:2] And also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in many places, one may see Paul asserting that this is the cause of evil doctrines; for that the soul possessed by passions cannot behold anything great or noble, but as if darkened by a sort of film suffers most grievous dimsightedness.

Let us then cleanse ourselves, let us kindle the light of knowledge, let us not sow among thorns. What the thorns are, you know, though we tell you not; for often you have heard Christ call the cares of this present life, and the deceitfulness of riches, by this name. [Matthew 13:22] And with reason. For as thorns are unfruitful, so are these things; as thorns tear those that handle them, so do these passions; as thorns are readily caught by the fire, and hateful by the husbandman, so too are the things of the world; as in thorns, wild beasts, and snakes, and scorpions hide themselves, so do they in the deceitfulness of riches. But let us kindle the fire of the Spirit, that we may consume the thorns, and drive away the beasts, and make the field clear for the husbandman; and after cleansing it, let us water it with the streams of the Spirit, let us plant the fruitful olive, that most kindly of trees, the evergreen, the light-giving, the nutritious, the wholesome. All these qualities has almsgiving, which is, as it were, a seal on those that possess it. This plant not even death when it comes causes to wither, but ever it stands enlightening the mind, feeding the sinews of the soul, and rendering its strength mightier. And if we constantly possess it, we shall be able with

confidence to behold the Bridegroom, and to enter into the bridal chamber; to which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 25 on the Gospel of John

John 3:5

"Verily I say unto you, Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

1. Little children who go daily to their teachers receive their lessons, and repeat them, and never cease from this kind of acquisition, but sometimes employ nights as well as days, and this they are compelled to do for perishable and transient things. Now we do not ask of you who have come to age such toil as you require of your children; for not every day, but two days only in the week do we exhort you to hearken to our words, and only for a short portion of the day, that your task may be an easy one. For the same reason also we divide to you in small portions what is written in Scripture, that you may be able easily to receive and lay them up in the storehouses of your minds, and take such pains to remember them all, as to be able exactly to repeat them to others yourselves, unless any one be sleepy, and dull, and more idle than a little child.

Let us now attend to the sequel of what has been before said. When Nicodemus fell into error and wrested the words of Christ to the earthly birth, and said that it was not possible for an old man to be born again, observe how Christ in answer more clearly reveals the manner of the Birth, which even thus had difficulty for the carnal enquirer, yet still was able to raise the hearer from his low opinion of it. What says He? *"Verily I say unto you, Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."* What He declares is this: *"You say that it is impossible, I say that it is so absolutely possible as to be necessary, and*

that it is not even possible otherwise to be saved." For necessary things God has made exceedingly easy also. The earthly birth which is according to the flesh, is of the dust, and therefore heaven is walled against it, for what has earth in common with heaven? But that other, which is of the Spirit, easily unfolds to us the arches above. Hear, you as many as are unilluminated, shudder, groan, fearful is the threat, fearful the sentence. *"It is not (possible),"* He says, *"for one not born of water and the Spirit, to enter into the Kingdom of heaven";* because he wears the raiment of death, of cursing, of perdition, he has not yet received his Lord's token, he is a stranger and an alien, he has not the royal watchword. *"Except,"* He says, *"a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven."*

Yet even thus Nicodemus did not understand. Nothing is worse than to commit spiritual things to argument; it was this that would not suffer him to suppose anything sublime and great. This is why we are called faithful, that having left the weakness of human reasonings below, we may ascend to the height of faith, and commit most of our blessings to her teaching; and if Nicodemus had done this, the thing would not have been thought by him impossible. What then does Christ? To lead him away from his groveling imagination, and to show that He speaks not of the earthly birth, He says, *"Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven."* This He spoke, willing to draw him to the faith by the terror of the threat, and to persuade him not to deem the thing impossible, and taking pains to move him from his imagination as to the carnal birth. *"I mean,"* says He, *"another Birth, O Nicodemus. Why do you draw down the saying to earth? Why do you subject the matter to the necessity of nature? This Birth is too high for such pangs as these; it has nothing in common with you; it is indeed called 'birth,' but in name only has it anything in common, in reality it is different. Remove yourself from that which is*

common and familiar; a different kind of childbirth bring I into the world; in another manner will I have men to be generated: I have come to bring a new manner of Creation. I formed (man) of earth and water; but that which was formed was unprofitable, the vessel was wrenched awry; I will no more form them of earth and water, but 'of water' and 'of the Spirit.'"

And if any one asks, "*How of water?*" I also will ask, How of earth? How was the clay separated into different parts? How was the material uniform, (it was earth only,) and the things made from it, various and of every kind? Whence are the bones, and sinews, and arteries, and veins? Whence the membranes, and vessels of the organs, the cartilages, the tissues, the liver, spleen, and heart? Whence the skin, and blood, and mucus, and bile? Whence so great powers, whence such varied colors? These belong not to earth or clay. How does the earth, when it receives the seeds, cause them to shoot, while the flesh receiving them wastes them? How does the earth nourish what is put into it, while the flesh is nourished by these things, and does not nourish them? The earth, for instance, receives water, and makes it wine; the flesh often receives wine, and changes it into water. Whence then is it clear that these things are formed of earth, when the nature of the earth is, according to what has been said, contrary to that of the body? I cannot discover by reasoning, I accept it by faith only. If then things which take place daily, and which we handle, require faith, much more do those which are more mysterious and more spiritual than these. For as the earth, which is soulless and motionless, was empowered by the will of God, and such wonders were worked in it; much more when the Spirit is present with the water, do all those things so strange and transcending reason, easily take place.

2. Do not then disbelieve these things, because you see them not; thou dost not see your soul, and yet you believe that you have a soul, and that it

is a something different besides the body.

But Christ led him not in by this example, but by another; the instance of the soul, though it is incorporeal, He did not adduce for that reason, because His hearer's disposition was as yet too dull. He sets before him another, which has no connection with the density of solid bodies, yet does not reach so high as to the incorporeal natures; that is, the movement of wind. He begins at first with water, which is lighter than earth, but denser than air. And as in the beginning earth was the subject material, but the whole was of Him who molded it; so also now water is the subject material, and the whole is of the grace of the Spirit: then, "*man became a living soul*," [Genesis 2:7]; now he becomes "*a quickening Spirit*." But great is the difference between the two. Soul affords not life to any other than him in whom it is; Spirit not only lives, but affords life to others also. Thus, for instance, the Apostles even raised the dead. Then, man was formed last, when the creation had been accomplished; now, on the contrary, the new man is formed before the new creation; he is born first, and then the world is fashioned anew. [1 Corinthians 15:45] And as in the beginning He formed him entire, so He creates him entire now. Then He said, "*Let us make for him a help*" [Genesis 2:18, Septuagint], but here He said nothing of the kind. What other help shall he need, who has received the gift of the Spirit? What further need of assistance has he, who belongs to the Body of Christ? Then He made man in the image of God, now He has united him with God Himself; then He bade him rule over the fishes and beasts, now He has exalted our first-fruits above the heavens; then He gave him a garden for his abode, now He has opened heaven to us; then man was formed on the sixth day, when the world was almost finished; but now on the first, at the very beginning, at the time when light was made before.

From all which it is plain, that the things accomplished belonged to another and a better life, and to a condition having no end.

The first creation then, that of Adam, was from earth; the next, that of the woman, from his rib; the next, that of Abel, from seed; yet we cannot arrive at the comprehension of any one of these, nor prove the circumstances by argument, though they are of a most earthly nature; how then shall we be able to give account of the unseen generation by Baptism, which is far more exalted than these, or to require arguments for that strange and marvelous Birth? Since even Angels stand by while that Generation takes place, but they could not tell the manner of that marvelous working, they stand by only, not performing anything, but beholding what takes place. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, works all. Let us then believe the declaration of God; that is more trustworthy than actual seeing. The sight often is in error, it is impossible that God's Word should fail; let us then believe it; that which called the things that were not into existence may well be trusted when it speaks of their nature. What then says it? That what is effected is a Generation . If any ask, "*How,*" stop his mouth with the declaration of God, which is the strongest and a plain proof. If any enquire, "*Why is water included?*" let us also in return ask, "*Wherefore was earth employed at the beginning in the creation of man?*" for that it was possible for God to make man without earth, is quite plain to every one. Be not then over-curious.

That the need of water is absolute and indispensable, you may learn in this way. On one occasion, when the Spirit had flown down before the water was applied, the Apostle did not stay at this point, but, as though the water were necessary and not superfluous, observe what he says; "*Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*" [Acts 10:47]

What then is the use of the water? This too I will tell you hereafter, when I reveal to you the hidden mystery. There are also other points of mystical teaching connected with the matter, but for the present I will mention to you one out of many. What is this one? In Baptism are fulfilled the pledges of our covenant with God; burial and death, resurrection and life; and these take place all at once. For when we immerse our heads in the water, the old man is buried as in a tomb below, and wholly sunk forever; then as we raise them again, the new man rises in its stead. As it is easy for us to dip and to lift our heads again, so it is easy for God to bury the old man, and to show forth the new. And this is done thrice, that you may learn that the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost fulfills all this. To show that what we say is no conjecture, hear Paul saying, *"We are buried with Him by Baptism into death"*: and again, *"Our old man is crucified with Him"*: and again, *"We have been planted together in the likeness of His death."* [Romans 6:4-6] And not only is Baptism called a *"cross,"* but the *"cross"* is called *"Baptism."* *"With the Baptism,"* says Christ, *"that I am baptized withal shall you be baptized"* [Mark 10:39]: and, *"I have a Baptism to be baptized with"* [Luke 12:50] (which you know not); for as we easily dip and lift our heads again, so He also easily died and rose again when He willed or rather much more easily, though He tarried the three days for the dispensation of a certain mystery.

3. Let us then who have been deemed worthy of such mysteries show forth a life worthy of the Gift, that is, a most excellent conversation; and do ye who have not yet been deemed worthy, do all things that you may be so, that we may be one body, that we may be brethren. For as long as we are divided in this respect, though a man be father, or son, or brother, or anything else, he is no true kinsman, as being cut off from that relationship which is from above. What advantages it to be bound by the ties of earthly

family, if we are not joined by those of the spiritual? What profits nearness of kin on earth, if we are to be strangers in heaven? For the Catechumen is a stranger to the Faithful. He has not the same Head, he has not the same Father, he has not the same City, nor Food, nor Raiment, nor Table, nor House, but all are different; all are on earth to the former, to the latter all are in heaven. One has Christ for his King; the other, sin and the devil; the food of one is Christ, of the other, that meat which decays and perishes; one has worms' work for his raiment, the other the Lord of angels; heaven is the city of one, earth of the other. Since then we have nothing in common, in what, tell me, shall we hold communion? Did we remove the same pangs, did we come forth from the same womb? This has nothing to do with that most perfect relationship. Let us then give diligence that we may become citizens of the city which is above. How long do we tarry over the border, when we ought to reclaim our ancient country? We risk no common danger; for if it should come to pass, (which God forbid!) that through the sudden arrival of death we depart hence uninitiated, though we have ten thousand virtues, our portion will be no other than hell, and the venomous worm, and fire unquenchable, and bonds indissoluble. But God grant that none of those who hear these words experience that punishment! And this will be, if having been deemed worthy of the sacred mysteries, we build upon that foundation gold, and silver, and precious stones; for so after our departure hence we shall be able to appear in that place rich, when we leave not our riches here, but transport them to inviolable treasuries by the hands of the poor, when we lend to Christ. Many are our debts there, not of money, but of sins; let us then lend Him our riches, that we may receive pardon for our sins; for He it is that judges. Let us not neglect Him here when He hungers, that He may ever feed us there. Here let us clothe Him, that He leave us not bare of the safety which is from Him. If here we give Him drink, we shall

not with the rich man say, "*Send Lazarus, that with the tip of his finger he may drop water on my broiling tongue.*" If here we receive Him into our house, there He will prepare many mansions for us; if we go to Him in prison, He too will free us from our bonds; if we take Him in when He is a stranger, He will not suffer us to be strangers to the Kingdom of heaven, but will give us a portion in the City which is above; if we visit Him when He is sick, He also will quickly deliver us from our infirmities.

Let us then, as receiving great things though we give but little, still give the little that we may gain the great. While it is yet time, let us sow, that we may reap. When the winter overtakes us, when the sea is no longer navigable, we are no longer masters of this traffic. But when shall the winter be? When that great and manifest Day is at hand. Then we shall cease to sail this great and broad sea, for such the present life resembles. Now is the time of sowing, then of harvest and of gain. If a man puts not in his seed at seed time and sows in harvest, besides that he effects nothing, he will be ridiculous. But if the present is seed time, it follows that it is a time not for gathering together, but for scattering; let us then scatter, that we may gather in, and not seek to gather in now, lest we lose our harvest; for, as I said, this season summons us to sow, and spend, and lay out, not to collect and lay by. Let us not then give up the opportunity, but let us put in abundant seed, and spare none of our stores, that we may receive them again with abundant recompense, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on the Gospel of John

John 3:6

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

1. Great mysteries are they, of which the Only-begotten Son of God has counted us worthy; great, and such as we were not worthy of, but such as it was meet for Him to give. For if one reckon our desert, we were not only unworthy of the gift, but also liable to punishment and vengeance; but He, because He looked not to this, not only delivered us from punishment, but freely gave us a life much more bright than the first, introduced us into another world, made us another creature; *"If any man be in Christ,"* says Paul, *"he is a new creature."* [2 Corinthians 5:17] What kind of *"new creature"*? Hear Christ Himself declare; *"Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."* Paradise was entrusted to us, and we were shown unworthy to dwell even there, yet He has exalted us to heaven. In the first things we were found unfaithful, and He has committed to us greater; we could not refrain from a single tree, and He has provided for us the delights above; we kept not our place in Paradise, and He has opened to us the doors of heaven. Well said Paul, *"O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"* [Romans 11:33] There is no longer a mother, or pangs, or sleep, or coming together, and embracings of bodies; henceforth all the fabric of our nature is framed above, of the Holy Ghost and water. The water is employed, being made the Birth to him who is born; what the womb is to the embryo, the water is to the believer; for in the water he is fashioned and formed. At first

it was said, *"Let the waters bring forth the creeping things that have life"* [Genesis 1:20, Septuagint]; but from the time that the Lord entered the streams of Jordan, the water no longer gives forth the *"creeping thing that has life,"* but reasonable and Spirit-bearing souls; and what has been said of the sun, that he is *"as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber"* [Psalm 18:6], we may now rather say of the faithful, for they send forth rays far brighter than he. That which is fashioned in the womb requires time, not so that in water, but all is done in a single moment. Here our life is perishable, and takes its origin from the decay of other bodies; that which is to be born comes slowly, (for such is the nature of bodies, they acquire perfection by time,) but it is not so with spiritual things. And why? Because the things made are formed perfect from the beginning.

When Nicodemus still hearing these things was troubled, see how Christ partly opens to him the secret of this mystery, and makes that clear which was for a while obscure to him. *"That which is born,"* says He, *"of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* He leads him away from all the things of sense, and suffers him not vainly to pry into the mysteries revealed with his fleshly eyes; *"We speak not,"* says He, *"of flesh, but of Spirit, O Nicodemus,"* (by this word He directs him heavenward for a while,) *"seek then nothing relating to things of sense; never can the Spirit appear to those eyes, think not that the Spirit brings forth the flesh."* *"How then,"* perhaps one may ask, *"was the Flesh of the Lord brought forth?"* Not of the Spirit only, but of flesh; as Paul declares, when he says, *"Made of a woman, made under the Law"* [Galatians 4:4]; for the Spirit fashioned Him not indeed out of nothing, (for what need was there then of a womb?) but from the flesh of a Virgin. How, I cannot explain unto you; yet it was done, that no one might suppose that what was born is alien to our nature. For if even when this has taken place there are some who disbelieve in such a

birth, into what impiety would they not have fallen had He not partaken of the Virgin's flesh.

"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Do you see the dignity of the Spirit? It appears performing the work of God; for above he said of some, that, *"they were begotten of God,"* [John 1:13,] here He says, that the Spirit begets them.

"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." His meaning is of this kind; *"He that is born of the Spirit is spiritual."* For the Birth which He speaks of here is not that according to essence, but according to honor and grace. Now if the Son is so born also, in what shall He be superior to men so born? And how is He, Only-begotten? For I too am born of God, though not of His Essence, and if He also is not of His Essence, how in this respect does He differ from us? Nay, He will then be found to be inferior to the Spirit; for birth of this kind is by the grace of the Spirit. Needs He then the help of the Spirit that He may continue a Son? And in what do these differ from Jewish doctrines?

Christ then having said, *"He that is born of the Spirit is spirit,"* when He saw him again confused, leads His discourse to an example from sense, saying,

John 3:7-8

"Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born again. The wind blows where it lists."

For by saying, *"Marvel not,"* He indicates the confusion of his soul, and leads him to something lighter than body. He had already led him away from fleshly things, by saying, *"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit";* but when Nicodemus knew not what *"that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* meant, He next carries him to another figure, not bringing him to the density of bodies, nor yet speaking of things purely incorporeal, (for had he heard he could not have received this,) but having found a something between what is and what is not body, namely, the motion of the wind, He brings him to that next. And He says of it,

"You hear the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it comes, and whither it goes."

Though He says, *"it blows where it lists,"* He says it not as if the wind had any power of choice, but declaring that its natural motion cannot be hindered, and is with power. For Scripture knows how to speak thus of things without life, as when it says, *"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly."* [Romans 8:20] The expression therefore, *"blows where it lists,"* is that of one who would show that it cannot be restrained, that it is spread abroad everywhere, and that none can hinder its passing hither and there, but that it goes abroad with great might, and none is able to turn aside its violence.

2. *"And you hear its voice,"* (that is, its rustle, its noise,) *"but canst not tell whence it comes, and whither it goes; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."*

Here is the conclusion of the whole matter. *"If,"* says He, *"you know not how to explain the motion nor the path of this wind which you perceive by hearing and touch, why are you over-anxious about the working of the Divine Spirit, when you understand not that of the wind, though you hear its voice?"* The expression, *"blows where it lists,"* is also used to establish the power of the Comforter; for if none can hold the wind, but it moves where it lists, much less will the laws of nature, or limits of bodily generation, or anything of the like kind, be able to restrain the operations of the Spirit.

That the expression, *"you hear its voice,"* is used respecting the wind, is clear from this circumstance; He would not, when conversing with an unbeliever and one unacquainted with the operation of the Spirit, have said, *"You hear its voice."* As then the wind is not visible, although it utters a sound, so neither is the birth of that which is spiritual visible to our bodily eyes; yet the wind is a body, although a very subtle one; for whatever is the object of sense is body. If then you do not complain because you cannot see this body, and do not on this account disbelieve, why do you, when you hear of *"the Spirit,"* hesitate and demand such exact accounts, although you act not so in the case of a body? What then does Nicodemus? Still he continues in his low Jewish opinion, and that too when so clear an example has been mentioned to him. Wherefore when he again says doubtingly,

John 3:9-10

"How can these things be?" Christ now speaks to him more chidingly; *"Are you a master in Israel, and know not these things?"*

Observe how He nowhere accuses the man of wickedness, but only of weakness and simplicity. *"And what,"* one may ask, *"has this birth in common with Jewish matters?"* Tell me rather what has it that is not in common with them? For the first-created man, and the woman formed from his side, and the barren women, and the things accomplished by water, I mean what relates to the fountain on which Elisha made the iron tool to swim, to the Red Sea which the Jews passed over, to the pool which the Angel troubled, to Naaman the Syrian who was cleansed in Jordan, all these proclaimed beforehand, as by a figure, the Birth and the purification which were to be. And the words of the Prophet allude to the manner of this Birth, as, *"It shall be announced unto the Lord a generation which comes, and they shall announce His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, whom the Lord has made"* [Psalm 22:30; 30:31, Septuagint]; and, *"Your youth shall be renewed as an eagle's"* [Psalm 103:5, Septuagint]; and, *"Shine, O Jerusalem; behold, Your King comes!"* [Isaiah 60:1; Zechariah 9:9]; and, *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven."* [Psalm 32:1, Septuagint] Isaac also was a type of this Birth. For tell me, Nicodemus, how was he born? Was it according to the law of nature? By no means; the mode of his generation was midway between this of which we speak and the natural; the natural, because he was begotten by cohabitation; the other, because he was begotten not of blood, (but by the will of God.) I shall show that these figures proclaimed beforehand not only this birth, but also that from the Virgin. For, because no one would easily have believed that a virgin could bear a child, barren women first did so, then such as were not

only barren, but aged also. That a woman should be made from a rib was indeed far more wonderful than that the barren should conceive; but because that was of early and old time, another figure, new and fresh, was given, that of the barren women; to prepare the way for belief in the Virgin's travail. To remind him then of these things, Jesus said, "*Are you a master in Israel, and know not these things?*"

John 3:11

"We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen, and none receives Our witness."

This He added, making His words credible by another argument, and condescending in His speech to the other's infirmity.

3. And what is this that He says, *"We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen"*? Because with us the sight is the most trustworthy of the senses, and if we desire to gain a person's belief, we speak thus, that we saw it with our eyes, not that we know it by hearsay; Christ therefore speaks to him rather after the manner of men, gaining belief for His words by this means also. And that this is so, and that He desires to establish nothing else, and refers not to sensual vision, is clear from this; after saying, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,"* He adds, *"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."* Now this (of the Spirit) was not yet born; how then says He, *"what we have seen"*? Is it not plain that He speaks of a knowledge not otherwise than exact?

"And none receives our witness." The expression *"we know,"* He uses then either concerning Himself and His Father, or concerning Himself alone; and *"no man receives,"* is the expression not of one displeased, but of one who declares a fact: for He said not, *"What can be more senseless than you who receive not what is so exactly declared by us?"* but displaying all gentleness, both by His works and His words, He uttered nothing like this; mildly and kindly He foretold what should come to pass, so guiding us too to all gentleness, and teaching us when we converse with any and do not persuade them, not to be annoyed or made savage; for it is impossible for one out of temper to accomplish his purpose, he must make him to whom

he speaks still more incredulous. Wherefore we must abstain from anger, and make our words in every way credible by avoiding not only wrath, but also loud speaking for loud speaking is the fuel of passion.

Let us then bind the horse, that we may subdue the rider; let us clip the wings of our wrath, so the evil shall no more rise to a height. A keen passion is anger, keen, and skillful to steal our souls; therefore we must on all sides guard against its entrance. It were strange that we should be able to tame wild beasts, and yet should neglect our own savage minds. Wrath is a fierce fire, it devours all things; it harms the body, it destroys the soul, it makes a man deformed and ugly to look upon; and if it were possible for an angry person to be visible to himself at the time of his anger, he would need no other admonition, for nothing is more displeasing than an angry countenance. Anger is a kind of drunkenness, or rather it is more grievous than drunkenness, and more pitiable than (possession of) a dæmon. But if we be careful not to be loud in speech, we shall find this the best path to sobriety of conduct. And therefore Paul would take away clamor as well as anger, when he says, "*Let all anger and clamor be put away from you.*"

[Ephesians 4:31] Let us then obey this teacher of all wisdom, and when we are angry with our servants, let us consider our own trespasses, and be ashamed at their forbearance. For when you are insolent, and your servant bears your insults in silence, when you act unseemly, he like a wise man, take this instead of any other warning. Though he is your servant, he is still a man, has an immortal soul, and has been honored with the same gifts as you by your common Lord. And if he who is our equal in more important and more spiritual things, on account of some poor and trifling human superiority so meekly bears our injuries, what pardon can we deserve, what excuse can we make, who cannot, or rather will not, be as wise through fear of God, as he is through fear of us? Considering then all these things, and

calling to mind our own transgressions, and the common nature of man, let us be careful at all times to speak gently, that being humble in heart we may find rest for our souls, both that which now is, and that which is to come; which may we all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 27 on the Gospel of John

John 3:12-13

"If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man has ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven."

1. What I have often said I shall now repeat, and shall not cease to say. What is that? It is that Jesus, when about to touch on sublime doctrines, often contains Himself by reason of the infirmity of His hearers, and dwells not for a continuance on subjects worthy of His greatness, but rather on those which partake of condescension. For the sublime and great, being but once uttered, is sufficient to establish that character, as far as we are able to hear it; but unless more lowly sayings, and such as are near to the comprehension of the hearers, were continually uttered, the more sublime would not readily take hold on a groveling listener. And therefore of the sayings of Christ more are lowly than sublime. But yet that this again may not work another mischief, by detaining the disciple here below, He does not merely set before men His inferior sayings without first telling them why He utters them; as, in fact, He has done in this place. For when He had said what He did concerning Baptism, and the Generation by grace which takes place on earth, being desirous to admit them to that His own mysterious and incomprehensible Generation, He holds it in suspense for a while, and admits them not, and then tells them His reason for not admitting them. What is that? It is, the dullness and infirmity of His hearers. And referring to this He added the words, *"If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"* so

that wherever He says anything ordinary and humble, we must attribute this to the infirmity of His audience.

The expression "*earthly things*," some say is here used of the wind; that is, "*If I have given you an example from earthly things, and you did not even so believe, how shall you be able to learn sublimer things?*" And wonder not if He here call Baptism an "*earthly*" thing, for He calls it so, either from its being performed on earth, or so naming it in comparison with that His own most awful Generation. For though this Generation of ours is heavenly, yet compared with that true Generation which is from the Substance of the Father, it is earthly.

He does not say, "*You have not understood*," but, "*You have not believed*"; for when a man is ill disposed towards those things which it is possible to apprehend by the intellect, and will not readily receive them, he may justly be charged with want of understanding; but when he receives not things which cannot be apprehended by reasoning, but only by faith, the charge against him is no longer want of understanding, but unbelief. Leading him therefore away from enquiring by reasonings into what had been said, He touches him more severely by charging him with want of faith. If now we must receive our own Generation by faith, what do they deserve who are busy with their reasonings about that of the Only-Begotten?

But perhaps some may ask, "*And if the hearers were not to believe these sayings, wherefore were they uttered?*" Because though "*they*" believed not, those who came after would believe and profit by them. Touching him therefore very severely, Christ goes on to show that He knows not these things only, but others also, far more and greater than these. And this He declared by what follows, when He said, "*And no man*

has ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven."

"And what manner of sequel is this?" asks one. The very closest, and entirely in unison with what has gone before. For since Nicodemus had said, *"We know that You are a teacher come from God,"* on this very point He sets him right, all but saying, *"Think Me not a teacher in such manner as were the many of the prophets who were of earth, for I have come from heaven (but) now. None of the prophets has ascended up there, but I dwell there."* Do you see how even that which appears very exalted is utterly unworthy of his greatness? For not in heaven only is He, but everywhere, and He fills all things; but yet He speaks according to the infirmity of His hearer, desiring to lead him up little by little. And in this place He called not the flesh *"Son of Man,"* but He now named, so to speak, His entire Self from the inferior substance; indeed this is His wont, to call His whole Person often from His Divinity, and often from His humanity.

John 3:14

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

This again seems to depend upon what has gone before, and this too has a very close connection with it. For after having spoken of the very great benefaction that had come to man by Baptism, He proceeds to mention another benefaction, which was the cause of this, and not inferior to it; namely, that by the Cross. As also Paul arguing with the Corinthians sets down these benefits together, when he says, *"Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?"* for these two things most of all declare His unspeakable love, that He both suffered for His enemies, and that having died for His enemies, He freely gave to them by Baptism entire remission of their sins.

2. But wherefore did He not say plainly, *"I am about to be crucified,"* instead of referring His hearers to the ancient type? First, that you may learn that old things are akin to new, and that the one are not alien to the other; next, that you may know that He came not unwillingly to His Passion; and again, besides these reasons, that you may learn that no harm arises to Him from the Fact, and that to many there springs from it salvation. For, that none may say, *"And how is it possible that they who believe in one crucified should be saved, when he himself is holden of death?"* He leads us to the ancient story. Now if the Jews, by looking to the brazen image of a serpent, escaped death, much rather will they who believe in the Crucified, with good reason enjoy a far greater benefit. For this takes place, not through the weakness of the Crucified, or because the Jews are stronger than He, but because *"God loved the world,"* therefore is His living Temple fastened to the Cross.

John 3:15

"That whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Do you see the cause of the Crucifixion, and the salvation which is by it? Do you see the relationship of the type to the reality? There the Jews escaped death, but the temporal, here believers the eternal; there the hanging serpent healed the bites of serpents, here the Crucified Jesus cured the wounds inflicted by the spiritual dragon; there he who looked with his bodily eyes was healed, here he who beholds with the eyes of his understanding put off all his sins; there that which hung was brass fashioned into the likeness of a serpent, here it was the Lord's Body, built by the Spirit; there a serpent bit and a serpent healed, here death destroyed and a Death saved. But the snake which destroyed had venom, that which saved was free from venom; and so again was it here, for the death which slew us had sin with it, as the serpent had venom; but the Lord's Death was free from all sin, as the brazen serpent from venom. For, says Peter, *"He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."* [1 Peter 2:22] And this is what Paul also declares, *"And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* [Colossians 2:16] For as some noble champion by lifting on high and dashing down his antagonist, renders his victory more glorious, so Christ, in the sight of all the world, cast down the adverse powers, and having healed those who were smitten in the wilderness, delivered them from all venomous beasts that vexed them, by being hung upon the Cross. Yet He did not say, *"must hang,"* but, *"must be lifted up"* [Acts 28:4]; for He used this which seemed the milder term, on account of His hearer, and because it was proper to the type.

John 3:16

"God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What He says, is of this kind: Marvel not that I am to be lifted up that you may be saved, for this seems good to the Father, and He has so loved you as to give His Son for slaves, and ungrateful slaves. Yet a man would not do this even for a friend, nor readily even for a righteous man; as Paul has declared when he said, *"Scarcely for a righteous man will one die."*

[Romans 5:7] Now he spoke at greater length, as speaking to believers, but here Christ speaks concisely, because His discourse was directed to Nicodemus, but still in a more significant manner, for each word had much significance. For by the expression, *"so loved,"* and that other, *"God the world,"* He shows the great strength of His love. Large and infinite was the interval between the two. He, the immortal, who is without beginning, the Infinite Majesty, they but dust and ashes, full of ten thousand sins, who, ungrateful, have at all times offended Him; and these He *"loved."* Again, the words which He added after these are alike significant, when He says, that *"He gave His Only-begotten Son,"* not a servant, not an Angel, not an Archangel. And yet no one would show such anxiety for his own child, as God did for His ungrateful servants.

His Passion then He sets before him not very openly, but rather darkly; but the advantage of the Passion He adds in a clearer manner, saying, *"That every one that believes in Him. should not perish, but have everlasting life."* For when He had said, *"must be lifted up,"* and alluded to death, lest the hearer should be made downcast by these words, forming some mere human opinions concerning Him, and supposing that His death was a ceasing to be, observe how He sets this right, by saying, that He that was

given was "*The Son of God*," and the cause of life, of everlasting life. He who procured life for others by death, would not Himself be continually in death; for if they who believed on the Crucified perish not, much less does He perish who is crucified. He who takes away the destitution of others much more is He free from it; He who gives life to others, much more to Himself does He well forth life. Do you see that everywhere there is need of faith? For He calls the Cross the fountain of life; which reason cannot easily allow, as the heathens now by their mocking testify. But faith which goes beyond the weakness of reasoning, may easily receive and retain it. And whence did God "*so love the world*"? From no other source but only from his goodness.

3. Let us now be abashed at His love, let us be ashamed at the excess of His lovingkindness, since He for our sakes spared not His Only-begotten Son, yet we spare our wealth to our own injury; He for us gave His Own Son, but we for Him do not so much as despise money, nor even for ourselves. And how can these things deserve pardon? If we see a man submitting to sufferings and death for us, we set him before all others, count him among our chief friends, place in his hands all that is ours, and deem it rather his than ours, and even so do not think that we give him the return that he deserves. But towards Christ we do not preserve even this degree of right feeling. He laid down His life for us, and poured forth His precious Blood for our sakes, who were neither well-disposed nor good, while we do not pour out even our money for our own sakes, and neglect Him who died for us, when He is naked and a stranger; and who shall deliver us from the punishment that is to come? For suppose that it were not God that punishes, but that we punished ourselves; should we not give our vote against ourselves? Should we not sentence ourselves to the very fire of hell, for allowing Him who laid down His life for us, to pine with hunger? But why

speaking I of money? Had we ten thousand lives, ought we not to lay them all down for Him? And yet not even so could we do what His benefits deserve. For he who confers a benefit in the first instance, gives evident proof of his kindness, but he who has received one, whatever return he makes, he repays as a debt, and does not bestow as a favor; especially when he who did the first good turn was benefiting his enemies. And he who repays both bestows his gifts on a benefactor, and himself reaps their fruit besides. But not even this induces us; more foolish are we than any, putting golden necklaces about our servants and mules and horses, and neglecting our Lord who goes about naked, and passes from door to door, and ever stands at our outlets, and stretches forth His hands to us, but often regarding Him with un pitying eye; yet these very things He undergoes for our sake. Gladly does He hunger that you may be fed; naked does He go that He may provide for you the materials for a garment of incorruption, yet not even so do you give up any of your own. Some of your garments are moth-eaten, others are a load to your coffers, and a needless trouble to their possessors, while He who gave you these and all else that you possess goes naked.

But perhaps you do not lay them by in your coffers, but wear them and make yourself fine with them. And what gain you by this? Is it that the street people may see you? What then? They will not admire you who wearest such apparel, but the man who supplies garments to the needy; so if you desire to be admired, by clothing others, you will the rather get infinite applause. Then too God as well as man shall praise you; now none can praise, but all will grudge at you, seeing you with a body well arrayed, but having a neglected soul. So harlots have adornment, and their clothes are often more than usually expensive and splendid; but the adornment of the soul is with those only who live in virtue.

These things I say continually, and I will not cease to say them, not so much because I care for the poor, as because I care for your souls. For they will have some comfort, if not from you, yet from some other quarter; or even if they be not comforted, but perish by hunger, the harm to them will be no great matter. What did poverty and wasting by hunger injure Lazarus! But none can rescue you from hell, if you obtain not the help of the poor; we shall say to you what was said to the rich man, who was continually broiling, yet gained no comfort. God grant that none ever hear those words, but that all may go into the bosom of Abraham; by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 28 on the Gospel of John

John 3:17

"For God sent not His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world."

1. Many of the more careless sort of persons, using the lovingkindness of God to increase the magnitude of their sins and the excess of their disregard, speak in this way, *"There is no hell, there is no future punishment, God forgives us all sins."* To stop whose mouths a wise man says, *"Say not, His mercy is great, He will be pacified for the multitude of my sins; for mercy and wrath come from Him, and His indignation rests upon sinners"* [Sirach 5:6]: and again, *"As His mercy is great, so is His correction also."* [Sirach 16:12] *"Where then,"* says one, *"is His lovingkindness, if we shall receive for our sins according to our deserts?"* That we shall indeed receive *"according to our deserts,"* hear both the Prophet and Paul declare; one says, *"You shall render to every man according to his work"* [Psalm 62:12, Septuagint]; the other, *"Who will render to every man according to his work."* [Romans 2:6] And yet we may see that even so the lovingkindness of God is great; in dividing our existence into two periods, the present life and that which is to come, and making the first to be an appointment of trial, the second a place of crowning, even in this He has shown great lovingkindness.

"How and in what way?" Because when we had committed many and grievous sins, and had not ceased from youth to extreme old age to defile our souls with ten thousand evil deeds, for none of these sins did He demand from us a reckoning, but granted us remission of them by the washing of Regeneration, and freely gave us Righteousness and

Sanctification. *"What then,"* says one, *"if a man who from his earliest age has been deemed worthy of the mysteries, after this commits ten thousand sins?"* Such an one deserves a severer punishment. For we do not pay the same penalties for the same sins, if we do wrong after Initiation. And this Paul declares, saying, *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, do you suppose, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* [Hebrews 10:28-29] Such an one then is worthy of severer punishment. Yet even for him God has opened doors of repentance, and has granted him many means for the washing away his transgressions, if he will. Think then what proofs of lovingkindness these are; by Grace to remit sins, and not to punish him who after grace has sinned and deserves punishment, but to give him a season and appointed space for his clearing. For all these reasons Christ said to Nicodemus, *"God sent not His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world."*

For there are two Advents of Christ, that which has been, and that which is to be; and the two are not for the same purpose; the first came to pass not that He might search into our actions, but that He might remit; the object of the second will be not to remit, but to enquire. Therefore of the first He says, *"I came not to condemn the world, but to save the world"* [John 3:17]; but of the second, *"When the Son shall have come in the glory of His Father, He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left."* [Matthew 25:31, 46] And they shall go, these into life; and these into eternal punishment. Yet His former coming was for judgment, according to the rule of justice. Why? Because before His coming there was a law of nature, and the prophets, and moreover a written Law, and

doctrine, and ten thousand promises, and manifestations of signs, and chastisements, and vengeance, and many other things which might have set men right, and it followed that for all these things He would demand account; but, because He is merciful, He for a while pardons instead of making enquiry. For had He done so, all would at once have been hurried to perdition. For "*all,*" it says, "*have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" [Romans 3:23] Do you see the unspeakable excess of His lovingkindness?

John 3:18

"He that believes in the Son, is not judged; but he that believes not, is judged already."

Yet if He *"came not to judge the world,"* how is *"he that believes not judged already,"* if the time of *"judgment"* has not yet arrived? He either means this, that the very fact of disbelieving without repentance is a punishment, (for to be without the light, contains in itself a very severe punishment,) or he announces beforehand what shall be. For as the murderer, though he be not as yet condemned by the decision of the judge, is still condemned by the nature of the thing, so is it with the unbeliever. Since Adam also died on the day that he ate of the tree; for so ran the decree, *"In the day that you eat of the tree, you shall die"* [Genesis 2:17, Septuagint]; yet he lived. How then *"died"* he? By the decree; by the very nature of the thing; for he who has rendered himself liable to punishment, is under its penalty, and if for a while not actually so, yet he is by the sentence.

Lest any one on hearing, *"I came not to judge the world,"* should imagine that he might sin unpunished, and should so become more careless, Christ stops such disregard by saying, *"is judged already"*; and because the *"judgment"* was future and not yet at hand, He brings near the dread of vengeance, and describes the punishment as already come. And this is itself a mark of great lovingkindness, that He not only gives His Son, but even delays the time of judgment, that they who have sinned, and they who believe not, may have power to wash away their transgressions.

"He that believes in the Son, is not judged." He that *"believes,"* not he that is over-curious: he that *"believes,"* not the busybody. But what if his life be unclean, and his deeds evil? It is of such as these especially that Paul

declares, that they are not true believers at all: *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] But here Christ says, that such an one is not *"judged"* in this one particular; for his works indeed he shall suffer a severer punishment, but having believed once, he is not chastised for unbelief.

2. Do you see how having commenced His discourse with fearful things, He has concluded it again with the very same? For at first He says, *"Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God"*: and here again, *"He that believes not on the Son, is judged already."* *"Think not,"* He says, *"that the delay advantages at all the guilty, except he repent, for he that has not believed, shall be in no better state than those who are already condemned and under punishment."*

John 3:19

"And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."

What He says, is of this kind: *"they are punished, because they would not leave the darkness, and hasten to the light."* And hence He goes on to deprive them of all excuse for the future: *"Had I come,"* says He, *"to punish and to exact account of their deeds, they might have been able to say, 'this is why we started away from you,' but now I have come to free them from darkness, and to bring them to the light; who then could pity one who will not come from darkness unto light? When they have no charge to bring against us, but have received ten thousand benefits, they start away from us."* And this charge He has brought in another place, where He says, *"They hated Me without a cause"* [John 15:25]: and again, *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin."* [John 15:22] For he who in the absence of light sits in darkness, may perchance receive pardon; but one who after it has come abides by the darkness, produces against himself a certain proof of a perverse and contentious disposition. Next, because His assertion would seem incredible to most, (for none would prefer *"darkness to light,"*) He adds the cause of such a feeling in them. What is that?

John 3:19-20

"Because their deeds were evil. For every one that does evil, hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Yet he came not to judge or to enquire, but to pardon and remit transgressions, and to grant salvation through faith. How then fled they? Had He come and sat in His Judgment seat, what He said might have seemed reasonable; for he that is conscious to himself of evil deeds, is wont to fly his judge. But, on the contrary, they who have transgressed even run to one who is pardoning. If therefore He came to pardon, those would naturally most hasten to Him who were conscious to themselves of many transgressions; and indeed this was the case with many, for even publicans and sinners sat at meat with Jesus. What then is this which He says? He says this of those who choose always to remain in wickedness. He indeed came, that He might forgive men's former sins, and secure them against those to come; but since there are some so relaxed, so powerless for the toils of virtue, that they desire to abide by wickedness till their latest breath, and never cease from it, He speaks in this place reflecting upon these. *"For since,"* He says, *"the profession of Christianity requires besides right doctrine a sound conversation also, they fear to come over to us, because they like not to show forth a righteous life. Him that lives in heathenism none would blame, because with gods such as he has, and with rites as foul and ridiculous as his gods, he shows forth actions that suit his doctrines; but those who belong to the True God, if they live a careless life, have all men to call them to account, and to accuse them. So greatly do even its enemies admire the truth."* Observe, then, how exactly He lays down what He says. His expression is, not *"He that has done evil comes not to the light,"* but *"he that does it always, he that desires always to roll himself in*

the mire of sin, he will not subject himself to My laws, but chooses to stay without, and to commit fornication without fear, and to do all other forbidden things. For if he comes to Me, he becomes manifest as a thief in the light, and therefore he avoids My dominion." For instance, even now one may hear many heathen say, *"that they cannot come to our faith, because they cannot leave off drunkenness and fornication, and the like disorders."*

"Well," says some one, *"but are there no Christians that do evil, and heathens that live discreetly?"* That there are Christians who do evil, I know; but whether there are heathens who live a righteous life, I do not yet know assuredly. For do not speak to me of those who by nature are good and orderly, (this is not virtue,) but tell me of the man who can endure the exceeding violence of his passions and (yet) be temperate. You cannot. For if the promise of a Kingdom, and the threat of hell, and so much other provision, can scarcely keep men in virtue, they will hardly go after virtue who believe in none of these things. Or, if any pretend to do so, they do it for show; and he who does so for show, will not, when he may escape observation, refrain from indulging his evil desires. However, that we may not seem to any to be contentious, let us grant that there are right livers among the heathen; for neither does this go against my argument, since I spoke of that which occurs in general, not of what happens rarely.

And observe how in another way He deprives them of all excuse, when He says that, *"the light came into the world."* *"Did they seek it themselves,"* He says, *"did they toil, did they labor to find it? The light itself came to them, and not even so would they hasten to it."* And if there be some Christians who live wickedly, I would argue that He does not say this of those who have been Christians from the beginning, and who have inherited true religion from their forefathers, (although even these for the most part

have been shaken from right doctrine by their evil life,) yet still I think that He does not now speak concerning these, but concerning the heathen and the Jews who ought to have come to the right faith. For He shows that no man living in error would choose to come to the truth unless he before had planned for himself a righteous life, and that none would remain in unbelief unless he had previously chosen always to be wicked.

Do not tell me that a man is temperate, and does not rob; these things by themselves are not virtue. For what advantages it, if a man has these things, and yet is the slave of vainglory, and remains in his error, from fear of the company of his friends? This is not right living. The slave of a reputation is no less a sinner than the fornicator; nay, he works more and more grievous deeds than he. But tell me of any one that is free from all passions and from all iniquity, and who remains among the heathen. You can not do so; for even those among them who have boasted great things, and who have, as they say, mastered avarice or gluttony, have been, most of all men, the slaves of reputation, and this is the cause of all evils. Thus it is that the Jews also have continued Jews; for which cause Christ rebuked them and said, *"How can you believe, which receive honor from men?"* [John 5:44]

"And why, pray, did He not speak on these matters with Nathanael, to whom He testified of the truth, nor extend His discourse to any length?" Because even he came not with such zeal as did Nicodemus. For Nicodemus made this his work, and the season which others used for rest he made a season for hearing; but Nathanael came at the instance of another. Yet not even him did Jesus entirely pass by, for to him He says, *"Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."* [John 1:51] But to Nicodemus He spoke not so, but conversed with him on the Dispensation and on eternal life,

addressing each differently and suitably to the condition of his will. It was sufficient for Nathanael, because he knew the writings of the prophets, and was not so timid either, to hear only thus far; but because Nicodemus was as yet possessed by fear, Christ did not indeed clearly reveal to him the whole, but shook his mind so as to cast out fear by fear, declaring that he who did not believe was being judged, and that unbelief proceeded from an evil conscience. For since he made great account of honor from men, more than he did of the punishment; (*"Many,"* says the Evangelist, *"of the rulers believed on Him, but because of the Jews they did not confess"* [John 12:42]) on this point Christ touches him, saying, *"It cannot be that he who believes not on Me disbelieves for any other cause save that he lives an unclean life."* Farther on He says, *"I am the Light"* [John 8:12], but here, *"the Light came into the world"*; for at the beginning He spoke somewhat darkly, but afterwards more clearly. Yet even so the man was kept back by regard for the opinion of the many, and therefore could not endure to speak boldly as he ought.

Fly we then vainglory, for this is a passion more tyrannical than any. Hence spring covetousness and love of wealth, hence hatred and wars and strifes; for he that desires more than he has, will never be able to stop, and he desires from no other cause, but only from his love of vainglory. For tell me, why do so many encircle themselves with multitudes of eunuchs, and herds of slaves, and much show? Not because they need it, but that they may make those who meet them witnesses of this unseasonable display. If then we cut this off, we shall slay together with the head the other members also of wickedness, and there will be nothing to hinder us from dwelling on earth as though it were heaven. Nor does this vice merely thrust its captives into wickedness, but is even co-existent with their virtues, and when it is unable entirely to cast us out of these, it still causes us much damage in the

very exercise of them, forcing us to undergo the toil, and depriving us of the fruit. For he that with an eye to this, fasts, and prays, and shows mercy, has his reward. What can be more pitiable than a loss like this, that it should befall man to bewail himself uselessly and in vain, and to become an object of ridicule, and to lose the glory from above? Since he that aims at both cannot obtain both. It is indeed possible to obtain both, when we desire not both, but one only, that from heaven; but he cannot obtain both, who longs for both. Wherefore if we wish to attain to glory, let us flee from human glory, and desire that only which comes from God; so shall we obtain both the one and the other; which may we all enjoy, through the grace and loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 29 on the Gospel of John

John 3:22

"And He came and His disciples into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them (and baptized)."

1. Nothing can be clearer or mightier than the truth, just as nothing is weaker than falsehood, though it be shaded by ten thousand veils. For even so it is easily detected, it easily melts away. But truth stands forth unveiled for all that will behold her beauty; she seeks no concealment, dreads no danger, trembles at no plots, desires not glory from the many, is accountable to no mortal thing, but stands above them all, is the object of ten thousand secret plots, yet remains unconquerable, and guards as in a sure fortress these who fly to her by her own exceeding might, who avoids secret lurking places, and sets what is hers before all men. And this Christ conversing with Pilate declared, when He said, *"I ever taught openly, and in secret have I said nothing."* [John 18:20] As He spoke then, so He acted now, for, *"After this,"* says the Evangelist, *"He went forth and His disciples into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them and baptized."* At the feasts He went up to the City to set forth in the midst of them His doctrines, and the help of His miracles; but after the feasts were over, He often went to Jordan, because many ran together there. For He ever chose the most crowded places, not from any love of show or vainglory, but because He desired to afford His help to the greatest number.

Yet the Evangelist farther on says, that *"Jesus baptized not, but His disciples"*; whence it is clear that this is his meaning here also. And why did Jesus not baptize? The Baptist had said before, *"He shall baptize you with*

the Holy Spirit and with fire." Now he had not yet given the Spirit, and it was therefore with good cause that he did not baptize. But His disciples did so, because they desired to bring many to the saving doctrine.

And why, when the disciples of Jesus were baptizing, did not John cease to do so? Why did he continue to baptize, and that even until he was led to prison?

Ver. 23 . 'John also was baptizing in Ænon'; and to add,

Ver. 24 . 'John was not yet cast into prison,'

For to say these things was to declare that until that time he did not cease to baptize. But wherefore did he baptize until then? For he would have made the disciples of Jesus seem more reverend had he desisted when they began. Why then did he baptize? It was that he might not excite his disciples to even stronger rivalry, and make them more contentious still. For if, although he ten thousand times proclaimed Christ, yielded to Him the chief place, and made himself so much inferior, he still could not persuade them to run to Him; he would, had he added this also, have made them yet more hostile. On this account it was that Christ began to preach more constantly when John was removed. And moreover, I think that the death of John was allowed, and that it happened very quickly, in order that the whole attention of the multitude might be shifted to Christ, and that they might no longer be divided in their opinions concerning the two.

Besides, even while he was baptizing, he did not cease continually to exhort them, and to show them the high and awful nature of Jesus. For He baptized them, and told them no other thing than that they must believe in Him that came after him. Now how would a man who acted thus by desisting have made the disciples of Christ seem worthy of reverence? On the contrary, he would have been thought to do so through envy and passion. But to continue preaching gave a stronger proof; for he desired not

glory for himself, but sent on his hearers to Christ, and wrought with Him not less, but rather much more than Christ's own disciples, because his testimony was unsuspected and he was by all men far more highly esteemed than they. And this the Evangelist implies, when he says, *"all Judæa and the country around about Jordan went out to him and were baptized."* [Matthew 3:5] Even when the disciples were baptizing, yet many did not cease to run to him.

If any one should enquire, *"And in what was the baptism of the disciples better than that of John?"* we will reply, *"in nothing"*; both were alike without the gift of the Spirit, both parties alike had one reason for baptizing, and that was, to lead the baptized to Christ. For in order that they might not be always running about to bring together those that should believe, as in Simon's case his brother did, and Philip to Nathanael, they instituted baptism, in order by it to bring all men to them easily, and to prepare a way for the faith which was to be. But that the baptisms had no superiority one over the other, is shown by what follows. What is that?

John 3:25

"There arose a question (between some) of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying."

For the disciples of John being ever jealously disposed towards Christ's disciples and Christ Himself, when they saw them baptizing, began to reason with those who were baptized, as though their baptism was in a manner superior to that of Christ's disciples; and taking one of the baptized, they tried to persuade him of this; but persuaded him not. Hear how the Evangelist has given us to understand that it was they who attacked him, not he who set on foot the question. He does not say, that *"a certain Jew questioned with them,"* but that, *"there arose a questioning from the disciples of John with a certain Jew, concerning purification."*

2. And observe, I pray you, the Evangelist's inoffensiveness. He does not speak in the way of invective, but as far as he is able softens the charge, merely saying, that *"a question arose"*; whereas the sequel (which he has also set down in an inoffensive manner) makes it plain that what was said was said from jealousy.

John 3:26

"They came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you bore witness, behold the same baptizes, and all men come to Him."

That is, *"He whom you baptized"*; for this they imply when they say, *"to whom you bore witness,"* as though they had said, *"He whom you pointed out as illustrious, and make remarkable, dares to do the same as thou."* Yet they do not say, *"He whom you baptized"* baptizes; (for then they would have been obliged to make mention of the Voice that came down from heaven, and of the descent of the Spirit;) but what say they? *"He that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you bore witness";* that is, *"He who held the rank of a disciple, who was nothing more than we, this man has separated himself, and baptizes."* For they thought to make him jealous, not only by this, but by asserting that their own reputation was now diminishing. *"All,"* say they, *"come to Him."* Whence it is evident, that they did not get the better of the Jew with whom they disputed; but they spoke these words because they were imperfect in disposition, and were not yet clear from a feeling of rivalry. What then does John? He did not rebuke them severely, fearing lest they should separate themselves again from him, and work some other mischief. What are his words?

John 3:27

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from above."

Marvel not, if he speak of Christ in a lowly strain; it was impossible to teach all at once, and from the very beginning, men so pre-occupied by passion. But he desires to strike them for a while with awe and terror, and to show them that they warred against none other than God Himself, when they warred against Christ. And here he secretly establishes that truth, which Gamaliel asserted, *"You cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."* [Acts 5:39] For to say, *"None can receive anything, except it be given him from heaven,"* was nothing else than declaring that they were attempting impossibilities, and so would be found to fight against God. *"Well, but did not Theudas and his followers 'receive' from themselves?"* They did, but they straightway were scattered and destroyed, not so what belonged to Christ.

By this also he gently consoles them, showing them that it was not a man, but God, who surpassed them in honor; and that therefore they must not wonder if what belonged to Him was glorious, and if *"all men came unto Him"*: for that this was the nature of divine things, and that it was God who brought them to pass, because no man ever yet had power to do such deeds. All human things are easily seen through, and rotten, and quickly melt away and perish; these were not such, therefore not human. Observe too how when they said, *"to whom you bore witness,"* he turned against themselves that which they thought they had put forward to lower Christ, and silences them after showing that Jesus' glory came not from his testimony; *"A man cannot,"* he says, *"receive anything of himself, except it be given him from heaven."* *"If you hold at all to my testimony, and believe*

it to be true, know that by that testimony you ought to prefer not me to Him, but Him to me. For what was it that I testified? I call you yourselves to witness."

John 3:28

"You yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him."

"If then you hold to my testimony, (and you even now produce it when you say, 'to whom you bore witness,') He is not only not diminished by receiving my witness, but rather is increased by it; besides, the testimony was not mine, but God's. So that if I seem to you to be trustworthy, I said this among other things, that 'I am sent before Him.'" Do you see how he shows little by little that this Voice was divine? For what he says is of this kind: "I am a servant, and say the words of Him that sent me, not flattering Christ through human favor, but serving His Father who sent me. I gave not the testimony as a gift, but what I was sent to speak, I spoke. Do not then because of this suppose that I am great, for it shows that He is great. He is Lord of all things." This he goes on to declare, and says,

John 3:29

"He that has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom which stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice."

"But how does he who said, 'whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose,' now call himself His 'friend'?" It is not to exalt himself, nor boastingly, that he says this, but from desire to show that he too most forwards this, (i.e. the exaltation of Christ,) and that these things come to pass not against his will or to his grief, but that he desires and is eager for them, and that it was with a special view to them that all his actions had been performed; and this he has very wisely shown by the term *"friend."* For on occasions like marriages, the servants of the bridegroom are not so glad and joyful as his *"friends."* It was not from any desire to prove equality of honor, (away with the thought,) but only excess of pleasure, and moreover from condescension to their weakness that he calls himself *"friend."* For his service he before declared by saying, *"I am sent before Him."* On this account, and because they thought that he was vexed at what had taken place, he called himself the *"friend of the Bridegroom,"* to show that he was not only not vexed, but that he even greatly rejoiced. *"For,"* says he, *"I came to effect this, and am so far from grieving at what has been done, that had it not come to pass, I should then have been greatly grieved. Had the bride not come to the Bridegroom, then I should have been grieved, but not now, since my task has been accomplished. When His servants are advancing, we are they who gain the honor; for that which we desired has come to pass, and the bride knows the Bridegroom, and you are witnesses of it when you say, 'All men come unto Him.' This I earnestly desired, I did*

all to this end; and now when I see that it has come to pass, I am glad, and rejoice, and leap for joy."

3. But what means, *"He which stands and hears Him rejoices greatly, because of the Bridegroom's voice"*? He transfers the expression from the parable to the subject in hand; for after mentioning the bridegroom and the bride, he shows how the bride is brought home, that is, by a *"Voice"* and teaching. For thus the Church is wedded to God; and therefore Paul says, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* [Romans 10:17] *"At this 'Voice,'"* says he, *"I rejoice."* And not without a cause does he put *"who stands,"* but to show that his office had ceased, that he had given over to Him *"the Bride,"* and must for the future stand and hear Him; that he was a servant and minister; that his good hope and his joy was now accomplished. Therefore he says,

"This my joy therefore is fulfilled."

That is to say, *"The work is finished which was to be done by me, for the future I can do nothing more."* Then, to prevent increase of jealous feeling, not then only, but for the future, he tells them also of what should come to pass, confirming this too by what he had already said and done. Therefore he continues,

John 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

That is to say, *"What is mine has now come to a stand, and has henceforth ceased, but what is His increases; for that which you fear shall not be now only, but much more as it advances. And it is this especially which shows what is mine the brighter; for this end I came, and I rejoice that what is His has made so great progress, and that those things have come to pass on account of which all that I did was done."* Do you see how gently and very wisely he softened down their passion, quenched their envy, showed them that they were undertaking impossibilities, a method by which wickedness is best checked? For this purpose it was ordained, that these things should take place while John was yet alive and baptizing, in order that his disciples might have him as a witness of the superiority of Christ, and that if they should not believe, they might be without excuse. For John came not to say these words of his own accord, nor in answer to other enquirers, but they asked the question themselves, and heard the answer. For if he had spoken of himself, their belief would not have been equal to the self-condemning judgment which they received when they heard him answer to their question; just as the Jews also, in that they sent to him from their homes, heard what they did, and yet would not believe, by this especially deprived themselves of excuse.

What then are we taught by this? That a mad desire of glory is the cause of all evils; this led them to jealousy, and when they had ceased for a little, this roused them to it again. Wherefore they come to Jesus, and say, *"Why do your disciples fast not?"* [Matthew 9:14] Let us then, beloved, avoid this passion; for if we avoid this we shall escape hell. For this vice

specially kindles the fire of hell, and everywhere extends its role, and tyrannically occupies every age and every rank. This has turned churches upside down, this is mischievous in state matters, has subverted houses, and cities, and peoples, and nations. Why do you marvel? It has even gone forth into the desert, and manifested even there its great power. For men who have bidden an entire farewell to riches and all the show of the world, who converse with no one, who have gained the mastery over the more imperious desires after the flesh, these very men, made captives by vainglory, have often lost all. By reason of this passion, one who had labored much went away worse off than one who had not labored at all, but on the contrary had committed ten thousand sins; the Pharisee than the Publican. However, to condemn the passion is easy enough, (all agree in doing that,) but the question is, how to get the better of it. How can we do this? By setting honor against honor. For as we despise the riches of earth when we look to the other riches, as we condemn this life when we think of that far better than this, so we shall be enabled to spit on this world's glory, when we know of another far more august than it, which is glory indeed. One is a thing vain and empty, has the name without the reality; but that other, which is from heaven, is true, and has to give its praise Angels, and Archangels, and the Lord of Archangels, or rather I should say that it has men as well. Now if you look to that theater, learnest what crowns are there, transportest yourself into the applauses which come thence, never will earthly things be able to hold you, nor when they come will you deem them great, nor when they are away seek after them. For even in earthly palaces none of the guards who stand around the king, neglecting to please him that wears the diadem and sits upon the throne, troubles himself about the voices of daws, or the noise of flies and gnats flying and buzzing about him; and good report from men is no better than these. Knowing then the

worthlessness of human things, let us collect our all into treasures that cannot be spoiled, let us seek that glory which is abiding and immovable; which may we all attain, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, and with whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 30 on the Gospel of John

John 3:31

"He that comes from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth."

1. A dreadful thing is the love of glory, dreadful and full of many evils; it is a thorn hard to be extracted, a wild beast untamable and many headed, arming itself against those that feed it; for as the worm eats through the wood from which it is born, as rust wastes the iron whence it comes forth, and moths the fleeces, so vainglory destroys the soul which nourishes it; and therefore we need great diligence to remove the passion. Observe here how long a charm John uses over the disciples affected by it, and can scarcely pacify them. For he softens them with other words besides those already mentioned. And what are these others? *"He that comes from above,"* he says, *"is above all; he that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaks of the earth."* Since you make much ado with my testimony, and in this way say that I am more worthy of credit than He, you needs must know this, that it is impossible for One who comes from heaven to have His credit strengthened by one that inhabites earth.

And what means *"above all,"* what is the expression intended to show to us? That Christ has need of nothing, but is Himself sufficient for Himself, and incomparably greater than all; of himself John speaks as being *"of the earth, and speaking of the earth."* Not that he spoke of his own mind, but as Christ said, *"If I have told you of earthly things and you believe not,"* so calling Baptism, not because it was an *"earthly thing,"* but because He compared it when He spoke with His own Ineffable Generation,

so here John said that he spoke "*of earth*," comparing his own with Christ's teaching. For the "*speaking of earth*" means nothing else than this, "*My things are little and low and poor compared with His, and such as it was probable that an earthly nature would receive. In Him 'are hid all the treasures of wisdom.'*" [Colossians 2:5] That he speaks not of human reasonings is plain from this. "*He that is of the earth*," says he, "*is earthly*." Yet not all in him was earthly, but the higher parts were heavenly, for he had a soul, and was partaker of a Spirit which was not of earth. How then says he that he is "*earthly*"? Do you see not that he means only, "*I am small and of no esteem, going on the ground and born in the earth; but Christ came to us from above*." Having by all these means quenched their passion, he afterwards speaks more openly of Christ; for before this it was useless to utter words which could never have gained a place in the understanding of his hearers: but when he has pulled up the thorns, he then boldly casts in the seed, saying,

John 3:31-32

"He that comes from above is above all. And what He has heard He speaks, and what He has seen He testifies; and no man receives His testimony."

Having uttered something great and sublime concerning Him, he again brings down his discourse to a humbler strain. For the expression, *"what He has heard and seen,"* is suited rather to a mere man. What He knew He knew not from having learned it by sight, or from having heard it, but He included the whole in His Nature, having come forth perfect from the Bosom of His Father, and needing none to teach Him. For, *"As the Father,"* He says, *"knows Me, even so know I the Father."* [John 10:15] What then means, *"He speaks that He has heard, and testifies that He has seen"*? Since by these senses we gain correct knowledge of everything, and are deemed worthy of credit when we teach on matters which our eyes have embraced and our ears have taken in, as not in such cases inventing or speaking falsehoods, John desiring here to establish this point, said, *"What He has heard and seen"*: that is, *"nothing that comes from Him is false, but all is true."* Thus we when we are making curious enquiry into anything, often ask, *"Did you hear it?" "Did you see it?"* And if this be proved, the testimony is indubitable, and so when Christ Himself says, *"As I hear, I judge"* [John 5:30]; and, *"What I have heard from My Father, that I speak"* [John 15:15]; and, *"We speak that We have seen"* [John 3:11]; and whatsoever other sayings He utters of the kind, are uttered not that we might imagine that He says what He does being taught of any, (it were extreme folly to think this,) but in order that nothing of what is said may be suspected by the shameless Jews. For because they had not yet a right opinion concerning Him, He continually betakes Himself to His Father, and hence makes His sayings credible.

2. And why do you wonder if He betake Himself to the Father, when He often resorts to the Prophets and the Scriptures? As when He says, *"They are they that testify of Me."* [John 5:39] Shall we then say that He is inferior to the Prophets, because He draws testimonies from them? Away with the thought. It is because of the infirmity of His hearers that He so orders His discourse, and says that He spoke what He spoke having heard it from the Father, not because He needed a teacher, but that they might believe that nothing that He said was false. John's meaning is of this kind: *"I desire to hear what He says, for He comes from above, bringing thence those tidings which none but life knows rightly; for 'what He has seen and heard,' is the expression of one who declares this."*

"And no man receives His testimony." Yet He had disciples, and many besides gave heed to His words. How then says John, *"No man"*? He says *"no man,"* instead of *"few men,"* for had he meant *"no man at all,"* how could he have added,

John 3:33

"He that has received His testimony, has set to his seal that God is true."

Here he touches his own disciples, as not being likely for a time to be firm believers. And that they did not even after this believe in Him, is clear from what is said afterwards; for John even when dwelling in prison sent them thence to Christ, that he might the more bind them to Him. Yet even then they scarcely believed, to which Christ alluded when He said, *"And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me."* [Matthew 11:6] And therefore now he said, *"And no man receives His testimony,"* to make sure his own disciples; all but saying, *"Do not, because for a time few shall believe in Him, therefore deem that His words are false; for, 'He speaks that He has seen.'"* Moreover he says this to touch also the insensibility of the Jews. A charge which the Evangelist at commencing brought against them, saying, *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."* For this is no reproach against Him, but an accusation of those who received Him not. [John 1:11]

"He that has received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true." Here he terrifies them also by showing that he who believes not on Him, disbelieves not Him alone, but the Father also; wherefore he adds:

John 3:34

"He whom God has sent speaks the words of God."

Since then He speaks His words, he that believes and he that believes not, believes or believes not God. *"Hath set to His seal,"* that is, *"has declared."* Then, to increase their dread, he says, *"that God is true;"* thus showing, that no man could disbelieve Christ without making God who sent Him guilty of a falsehood. Because, since He says nothing save what is from the Father, but all that He says is His, he that hears not Him, hears not Him that sent Him. See how by these words again he strikes them with fear. As yet they thought it no great thing not to hearken to Christ; and therefore he held so great a danger above the heads of the unbelievers, that they might learn that they hearken not to God Himself, who hearken not to Christ. Then he proceeds with the discourse, descending to the measure of their infirmity, and saying,

"For God gives not the Spirit by measure."

Again, as I said, he brings down his discourse to lower ground, varying it and making it suitable to be received by those who heard it then; otherwise he could not have raised them and increased their fear. For had he spoken anything great and sublime concerning Jesus Himself, they would not have believed, but might even have despised Him. Therefore he leads up all to the Father, speaking for a while of Christ as of a man. But what is it that he says, *"God gives not the Spirit by measure"*? He would show that we all have received the operation of the Spirit, by measure, (for in this place he means by *"Spirit"* the operation of the Spirit, for this it is that is divided,) but that Christ has all Its operation unmeasured and entire. Now if His operations be unmeasured, much more His Essence. Do you see too that

the Spirit is Infinite? How then can He who has received all the operation of the Spirit, who knows the things of God, who says, "*We speak that We have heard, and testify that We have seen*" [John 3:11], be rightly suspected? He says nothing which is not "*of God,*" or which is not of "*the Spirit.*" And for a while he utters nothing concerning God the Word, but makes all his doctrine credible by (reference to) the Father and the Spirit. For that there is a God they knew, and that there is a Spirit they knew, (even though they held not a right opinion concerning Him,) but that there is a Son, they knew not. It is for this reason that he ever has recourse to the Father and the Spirit, thence confirming his words. For if any one should take no account of this reason, and examine his language by itself, it would fall very far short of the Dignity of Christ. Christ was not therefore worthy of their faith, because He had the operation of the Spirit, (for He needs not aid from thence,) but is Himself Self-sufficient; only for a while the Baptist speaks to the understanding of the simpler sort, desiring to raise them up by degrees from their low notions.

And this I say, that we may not carelessly pass by what is contained in the Scriptures, but may fully consider the object of the speaker, and the infirmity of the hearers, and many other points in them. For teachers do not say all as they themselves would wish, but generally as the state of their weak (hearers) requires. Wherefore Paul says, "*I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; I have fed you with milk, and not with meat.*" [1 Corinthians 3:1-2] He means, "*I desired indeed to speak unto you as unto spiritual, but could not*"; not because he was unable, but because they were not able so to hear. So too John desired to teach some great things to the disciples, but they could not yet bear to receive them, and therefore he dwells for the most part on that which is lowlier.

It behooves us therefore to explore all carefully. For the words of the Scriptures are our spiritual weapons; but if we know not how to fit those weapons and to arm our scholars rightly, they keep indeed their proper power, but cannot help those who receive them. For let us suppose there to be a strong corselet, and helm, and shield, and spear; and let one take this armor and put the corselet upon his feet, the helmet over his eyes instead of on his head, let him not put the shield before his breast, but perversely tie it to his legs: will he be able to gain any advantage from the armor? will he not rather be harmed? It is plain to any one that he will. Yet not on account of the weakness of the weapons, but on account of the unskillfulness of the man who knows not how to use them well. So with the Scriptures, if we confound their order; they will even so retain their proper force, yet will do us no good. Although I am always telling you this both in private and in public, I effect nothing, but see you all your time nailed to the things of this life, and not so much as dreaming of spiritual matters. Therefore our lives are careless, and we who strive for truth have but little power, and have become a laughing stock to Greeks and Jews and Heretics. Had you been careless in other matters, and exhibited in this place the same indifference as elsewhere, not even so could your doings have been defended; but now in matters of this life, every one of you, artisan and politician alike, is keener than a sword, while in necessary and spiritual things we are duller than any; making by-work business, and not deeming that which we ought to have esteemed more pressing than any business, to be by-work even. Do you not know that the Scriptures were written not for the first of mankind alone, but for our sakes also? Do you not hear Paul say, that *"they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope"*? [1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4] I know that I speak in vain, yet will I

not cease to speak, for thus I shall clear myself before God, though there be none to hear me. He that speaks to them that give heed has this at least to cheer his speech, the persuasion of his hearers; but he that speaks continually and is not listened to, and yet ceases not to speak, may be worthy of greater honor than the other, because he fulfills the will of God, even though none give heed unto him, to the best of his power. Still, though our reward will be greater owing to your disobedience, we rather desire that it be diminished, and that your salvation be advanced, thinking that your being well approved of is a great reward. And we now say this not to make our discourse painful and burdensome to you, but to show to you the grief which we feel by reason of your indifference. God grant that we may be all of us delivered from this, that we may cling to spiritual zeal and obtain the blessings of heaven, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 31 on the Gospel of John

John 3:35-36

"The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He that believes in the Son has everlasting life, and he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him."

1. Great is shown to be in all things the gain of humility. Thus it is that we have brought arts to perfection, not by learning them all at once from our teachers; it is thus that we have built cities, putting them together slowly, little by little; it is thus that we maintain our life. And marvel not if the thing has so much power in matters pertaining to this life, when in spiritual things one may find that great is the power of this wisdom. For so the Jews were enabled to be delivered from their idolatry, being led on gently and little by little, and hearing from the first nothing sublime concerning either doctrine or life. So after the coming of Christ, when it was the time for higher doctrines, the Apostles brought over all men without at first uttering anything sublime. And so Christ appears to have spoken to most at the beginning, and so John did now, speaking of Him as of some wonderful man, and darkly introducing high matter.

For instance, when commencing he spoke thus: *"A man cannot receive anything of himself"* [John 3:27]: then after adding a high expression, and saying, *"He that comes from heaven is above all,"* he again brings down his discourse to what is lowly, and besides many other things says this, that *"God gives not the Spirit by measure."* Then he proceeds to say, *"The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand."* And after that, knowing that great is the force of punishment, and that the many are

not so much led by the promise of good things as by the threat of the terrible, he concludes his discourse with these words; "*He that believes in the Son has everlasting life; but he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.*" Here again he refers the account of punishment to the Father, for he says not "*the wrath of the Son,*" (yet He is the Judge,) but sets over them the Father, desiring so the more to terrify them.

"Is it then enough," says one, "*to believe in the Son, that one may have eternal life?*" By no means. And hear Christ Himself declaring this, and saying, "*Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*" [Matthew 7:21]; and the blasphemy against the Spirit is enough of itself to cast a man into hell. But why speak I of a portion of doctrine? Though a man believe rightly on the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, yet if he lead not a right life, his faith will avail nothing towards his salvation. Therefore when He says, "*This is life eternal, that they may know You the only true God*" [John 17:3], let us not suppose that the (knowledge) spoken of is sufficient for our salvation; we need besides this a most exact life and conversation. Since though he has said here, "*He that believes in the Son has eternal life,*" and in the same place something even stronger, (for he weaves his discourse not of blessings only, but of their contraries also, speaking thus: "*He that believes not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him*";) yet not even from this do we assert that faith alone is sufficient to salvation. And the directions for living given in many places of the Gospels show this. Therefore he did not say, "*This by itself is eternal life,*" nor, "*He that does but believe in the Son has eternal life,*" but by both expressions he declared this, that the thing does contain life, yet that if a right conversation follow not, there will follow a heavy punishment. And he did not say, "*awaits him,*" but, "*abides on him,*" that is,

"shall never remove from him." For that you may not think that the *"shall not see life,"* is a temporary death, but may believe that the punishment is continual, he has put this expression to show that it rests upon him continually. And this he has done, by these very words forcing them on to Christ. Therefore he gave not the admonition to them in particular, but made it universal, the manner which best might bring them over. For he did not say, *"if you believe,"* and, *"if you believe not,"* but made his speech general, so that his words might be free from suspicion. And this he has done yet more strongly than Christ. For Christ says, *"He that believes not is condemned already,"* but John says, *"shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."* With good cause; for it was a different thing for a man to speak of himself and for another to speak of him. They would have thought that Christ spoke often of these things from self-love, and that he was a boaster; but John was clear from all suspicion. And if at a later time, Christ also used stronger expressions, it was when they had begun to conceive an exalted opinion of Him.

John 4:1-3

"When therefore Jesus knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not but His disciples,) He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee."

He indeed baptized not, but they who carried the news, desiring to excite their hearers to envy, so reported. *"Wherefore then 'departed' He?"* Not from fear, but to take away their malice, and to soften their envy. He was indeed able to restrain them when they came against Him, but this He would not do continually, that the Dispensation of the Flesh might not be disbelieved. For had He often been seized and escaped, this would have been suspected by many; therefore for the most part, He rather orders matters after the manner of a man. And as He desired it to be believed that He was God, so also that, being God, He bore the flesh; therefore even after the Resurrection, He said to the disciple, *"Handle Me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones"* [Luke 24:39]; therefore also He rebuked Peter when he said, *"Be it far from You, this shall not be unto you."* [Matthew 16:22] So much was this matter an object of care to Him.

2. For this is no small part of the doctrines of the Church; it is the chief point of the salvation wrought for us; by which all has been brought to pass, and has had success, for it was thus that the bonds of death were loosed, sin taken away, and the curse abolished, and ten thousand blessings introduced into our life. And therefore He especially desired that the Dispensation should be believed, as having been the root and fountain of innumerable goods to us.

Yet while acting thus in regard of His Humanity, He did not allow His Divinity to be overcast. And so, after His departure He again employed the same language as before. For He went not away into Galilee simply, but in

order to effect certain important matters, those among the Samaritans; nor did He dispense these matters simply, but with the wisdom that belonged to Him, and so as not to leave to the Jews any pretense even of a shameless excuse for themselves. And to this the Evangelist points when he says,

John 4:4

"And He must needs go through Samaria."

Showing that He made this the by-work of the journey. Which also the Apostles did; for just as they, when persecuted by the Jews, came to the Gentiles; so also Christ, when the Jews drove Him out, then took the Samaritans in hand, as He did also in the case of the Syrophenician woman. And this was done that all defense might be cut away from the Jews, and that they might not be able to say, *"He left us, and went to the uncircumcised."* And therefore the disciples excusing themselves said, *"It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken unto you; but seeing ye judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."* [Acts 13:46] And He says again Himself, *"I am not come but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"* [Matthew 15:24]; and again, *"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to give it to dogs."* But when they drove Him away, they opened a door to the Gentiles. Yet not so did He come to the Gentiles expressly, but in passing. In passing then,

John 4:5-6

"He comes to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there."

Why is the Evangelist exact about the place? It is, that when you hear the woman say, *"Jacob our father gave us this well,"* you may not think it strange. For this was the place where Levi and Simeon, being angry because of Dinah, wrought that cruel slaughter. And it may be worth while to relate from what sources the Samaritans were made up; since all this country is called Samaria. Whence then did they receive their name? The mountain was called *"Somor"* from its owner [1 Kings 16:24]: as also Esaias says, *"and the head of Ephraim is Somoron"* [Isaiah 7:9, Septuagint], but the inhabitants were termed not *"Samaritans"* but *"Israelites."* But as time went on, they offended God, and in the reign of Pekah, Tiglath-Pileser came up, and took many cities, and set upon Elah, and having slain him, gave the kingdom to Hoshea. [2 Kings 15:29] Against him Shalmaneser came and took other cities, and made them subject and tributary. [2 Kings 17:3] At first he yielded, but afterwards he revolted from the Assyrian rule, and betook himself to the alliance of the Ethiopians. The Assyrian learned this, and having made war upon them and destroyed their cities, he no longer allowed the nation to remain there, because he had such suspicions that they would revolt. [2 Kings 17:4] But he carried them to Babylon and to the Medes, and having brought thence nations from various places, planted them in Samaria, that his dominion for the future might be sure, his own people occupying the place. After this, God, desiring to show that He had not given up the Jews through weakness, but because of the sins of those who were given up, sent lions against the foreigners, who ravaged all their nation. These things were reported to the king, and he sent a priest to

deliver to them the laws of God. Still not even so did they desist wholly from their impiety, but only by halves. But as time went on, they in turn abandoned their idols, and worshipped God. And when things were in this state, the Jews having returned, ever after entertained a jealous feeling towards them as strangers and enemies, and called them from the name of the mountain, "*Samaritans*." From this cause also there was no little rivalry between them. The Samaritans did not use all the Scriptures, but received the writings of Moses only, and made but little account of those of the Prophets. Yet they were eager to thrust themselves into the noble Jewish stock, and prided themselves upon Abraham, and called him their forefather, as being of Chaldæa; and Jacob also they called their father, as being his descendant. But the Jews abominated them as well as all (other nations). Wherefore they reproached Christ with this, saying, "*You are a Samaritan, and hast a devil*." [John 8:48] And for this reason in the parable of the man that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, Christ makes the man who showed pity upon him to have been "*a Samaritan*" [Luke 10:33], one who by them was deemed mean, contemptible, and abominable. And in the case of the ten lepers, He calls one a "*stranger*" on this account, (for "*he was a Samaritan*,") and He gave His charge to the disciples in these words, "*Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not*." [Matthew 10:5]

3. Nor was it merely to describe the place that the Evangelist has reminded us of Jacob, but to show that the rejection of the Jews had happened long ago. For during the time of their forefathers these Jews possessed the land, and not the Samaritans; and the very possessions which not being theirs, their forefathers had gotten, they being theirs, had lost by their sloth and transgressions. So little is the advantage of excellent ancestors, if their descendants be not like them. Moreover, the foreigners

when they had only made trial of the lions, straightway returned to the right worship of the Jews, while they, after enduring such inflictions, were not even so brought to a sound mind.

To this place Christ now came, ever rejecting a sedentary and soft life, and exhibiting one laborious and active. He uses no beast to carry Him, but walks so much on a stretch, as even to be wearied with His journeying. And this He ever teaches, that a man should work for himself, go without superfluities, and not have many wants. Nay, so desirous is He that we should be alienated from superfluities, that He abridges many even of necessary things. Wherefore He said, *"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head."*

[Matthew 8:20] Therefore He spent most of His time in the mountains, and in the deserts, not by day only, but also by night. And this David declared when he said, *"He shall drink of the brook in the way"* [Psalm 110:7]: by this showing His frugal way of life. This too the Evangelist shows in this place.

John 4:6-8

"Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus by the well; and it was about the sixth hour. There comes a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus says unto her, Give Me to drink. For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy meat."

Hence we learn His activity in journeying, His carelessness about food, and how He treated it as a matter of minor importance. And so the disciples were taught to use the like disposition themselves; for they took with them no provisions for the road. And this another Evangelist declares, saying, that when He spoke to them concerning *"the leaven of the Pharisees"* [Matthew 16:6], they thought that it was because they carried no bread; and when he introduces them plucking the ears of grain, and eating [Matthew 12:1], and when he says that Jesus came to the fig-tree by reason of hunger [Matthew 21:18], it is for nothing else but only to instruct us by all these to despise the belly, and not to deem that its service is anxiously to be attended to. Observe them, for instance, in this place neither bringing anything with them, nor because they brought not anything, caring for this at the very beginning and early part of the day, but buying food at the time when all other people were taking their meal. Not like us, who the instant we rise from our beds attend to this before anything else, calling cooks and butlers, and giving our directions with all earnestness, applying ourselves afterwards to other matters, preferring temporal things to spiritual, valuing those things as necessary which we ought to have deemed of less importance. Therefore all things are in confusion. We ought, on the contrary, making much account of all spiritual things, after having accomplished these, then to apply ourselves to the others.

And in this place it is not His laboriousness alone that is shown, but also His freedom from pride; not merely by His being tired, nor by His sitting by the way-side, but by His having been left alone, and His disciples having been separated from Him. And yet it was in His power, if He had willed it, either not to have sent them all away, or when they departed to have had other ministers. But He would not; for so He accustomed His disciples to tread all pride beneath their feet.

"And what marvel," says one, *"if they were moderate in their wishes, since they were fishermen and tentmakers?"* Yes! Fishermen and tentmakers they were; but they had in a moment mounted even to the height of heaven, and had become more honorable than all earthly kings, being deemed worthy to become the companions of the Lord of the world, and to follow Him whom all beheld with awe. And ye know this too, that those men especially who are of humble origin, whenever they gain distinction, are the more easily lifted up to folly, because they are quite ignorant how to bear their sudden honor. Restraining them therefore in their present humblemindedness, He taught them always to be moderate, and never to require any to wait upon them.

"He therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus at the well"

Do you see that His sitting was because of weariness? Because of the heat? Because of his waiting for His disciples? He knew, indeed, what should take place among the Samaritans, but it was not for this that He came principally; yet, though He came not for this, it behooved not to reject the woman who came to Him, when she manifested such a desire to learn. The Jews, when He was even coming to them, drove Him away; they of the

Gentiles, when He was proceeding in another direction, drew Him to them. They envied, these believed on Him. They were angry with, these revered and worshipped Him. What then? Was He to overlook the salvation of so many, to send away such noble zeal? This would have been unworthy of His lovingkindness. Therefore He ordered all the matter in hand with the Wisdom which became Him. He sat resting His body and cooling It by the fountain; for it was the very middle of the day, as the Evangelist has declared, when he says, *"It was about the sixth hour."*

He sat *"thus."* What means *"thus"*? Not upon a throne, not upon a cushion, but simply, and as He was, upon the ground.

"There comes a woman of Samaria to draw water"

4. Observe how he declares that the woman came forth for another purpose, in every way silencing the shameless gainsaying of the Jews, that none might say that He acted in opposition to His own command, bidding (His disciples) not to enter into any city of the Samaritans, yet conversing with Samaritans. [Matthew 10:5] And therefore the Evangelist has put,

"For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy meat"

Bringing in many reasons for His conversation with her. What does the woman? When she heard, *"Give Me to drink,"* she very wisely makes the speech of Christ an occasion for a question, and says,

John 4:9

"How is it that thou, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a Samaritan? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

And whence did she suppose Him to be a Jew? From His dress, perhaps, and from His dialect. Observe, I pray you, how considerate the woman was. If there was need of caution, Jesus needed it, not she. For she does not say, *"The Samaritans have no dealings with the Jews,"* but, *"The Jews do not admit the Samaritans."* Yet still, although free herself from blame, when she supposed that another was falling into it she would not even so hold her peace, but corrected, as she thought, what was done unlawfully. Perhaps some one may ask how it was that Jesus asked drink of her, when the law did not permit it. If it be answered that it was because He knew beforehand that she would not give it, then for this very reason He ought not to have asked. What then can we say? That the rejecting such observances as these was now a matter of indifference to Him; for He who induced others to do them away, would much more Himself pass them by. *"Not that which goes in,"* says He, *"defiles a man, but that which goes out."* [Matthew 15:11] And this conversation with the woman would be no slight charge against the Jews. For often did He draw them to Himself, both by words and deeds, but they would not attend; while observe how she is detained by a simple request. For He did not as yet enter on the prosecution of this business, nor the way, yet if any came to Him He did not prevent them. And to the disciples also He said thus, *"Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."* He did not say, *"And when they come to you, reject them";* that would have been very unworthy of His lovingkindness. And therefore He answered the woman, and said,

John 4:10

"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water."

First, He shows that she is worthy to hear and not to be overlooked, and then He reveals Himself. For she, as soon as she had learned who He was, would straightway hearken and attend to Him; which none can say of the Jews, for they, when they had learned, asked nothing of Him, nor did they desire to be informed on any profitable matter, but insulted and drove Him away. But when the woman had heard these words, observe how gently she answers:

John 4:11

"Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then have you that living water?"

Already He has raised her from her low opinion of Him, and from deeming that He is a common man. For not without a reason does she here call Him, *"Lord"*; but assigning to Him high honor. That she spoke these words to honor Him, is plain from what is said afterwards, since she did not laugh nor mock, but doubted for a while. And wonder not if she did not at once perceive all, for neither did Nicodemus. What says he? *"How can these things be?"* and again, *"How can a man be born when he is old?"* and again, *"Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"* But this woman more reverently: *"Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then have you that living water?"* Christ said one thing, and she imagined another, hearing nothing beyond the words, and as yet unable to form any lofty thought. Yet, had she spoken hastily, she might have said, *"If you had had that living water, you would not have asked of me, but wouldest rather have provided for yourself. You are but a boaster."* But she said nothing like this; she answers with much gentleness, both at first and afterwards. For at first she says, *"How is it that thou, being a Jew, ask drink of me?"* she says not, as though speaking to an alien and an enemy, *"Far be it from me to give to you, who art a foe and a stranger to our nation."* And afterwards again, when she heard Him utter great words, a thing at which enemies are most annoyed, she did not mock nor deride ; but what says she?

John 4:12

"Are you greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?"

Observe how she thrusts herself into the noble stock of the Jews. For what she says is somewhat of this kind: *"Jacob used this water, and had nothing better to give us."* And this she said showing that from the first answer (of Christ) she had conceived a great and sublime thought; for by the words, *"he drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle,"* she implies nothing else, than that she had a notion of a better Water, but that she never found it, nor clearly knew it. More clearly to explain what she means to say, the sense of her words is this: *"You can not assert that Jacob gave us this well, and used another himself; for he and his children drank of this one, which they would not have done if they had had another and a better. Now of the water of this well it is not in your power to give me, and you can not have another and a better, unless thou dost confess that you are greater than Jacob. Whence then have you that water which you promise that you will give us?"* The Jews did not converse with Him thus mildly, and yet He spoke to them on the same subject, making mention of the like water, but they profited nothing; and when He made mention of Abraham, they even attempted to stone Him. Not so does this woman approach Him; but with much gentleness, in the midst of the heat, at noon, she with much patience says and hears all, and does not so much as think of what the Jews most probably would have asserted, that *"This fellow is mad, and beside himself: he has tied me to this fount and well, giving me nothing, but using big words"*; no, she endures and perseveres until she has found what she seeks.

5. If now a woman of Samaria is so earnest to learn something profitable, if she abides by Christ though not as yet knowing Him, what pardon shall we obtain, who both knowing Him, and being not by a well, nor in a desert place, nor at noon-day, nor beneath the scorching sunbeams, but at morning-tide, and beneath a roof like this, enjoying shade and comfort, yet cannot endure to hear anything that is said, but are wearied by it. Not such was that woman; so occupied was she by Jesus' words, that she even called others to hear them. The Jews, on the contrary, not only did not call, but even hindered and impeded those who desired to come to Him, saying, *"See, have any of the rulers believed on him? But this people, which knows not the Law, are cursed."* Let us then imitate this woman of Samaria; let us commune with Christ. For even now He stands in the midst of us, speaking to us by the Prophets and Disciples; let us hear and obey. How long shall we live uselessly and in vain? Because, not to do what is well-pleasing to God is to live uselessly, or rather not merely uselessly, but to our own hurt; for when we have spent the time which has been given us on no good purpose, we shall depart this life to suffer severest punishment for our unseasonable extravagance. For it can never be that a man who has received money to trade with, and then has eaten it up, shall have it required at his hands by the man who entrusted it to him; and that one who has spent such a life as ours to no purpose shall escape punishment. It was not for this that God brought us into this present life, and breathed into us a soul, that we should make use of the present time only, but that we should do all our business with a regard to the life which is to come. Things irrational only are useful for the present life; but we have an immortal soul, that we may use every means to prepare ourselves for that other life. For if one enquire the use of horses and asses and oxen, and other such-like animals, we shall tell him that it is nothing else but only to minister to the present life; but this

cannot be said of us; our best condition is that which follows on our departure hence; and we must do all that we may shine there, that we may join the choir of Angels, and stand before the King continually, through endless ages. And therefore the soul is immortal, and the body shall be immortal too, that we may enjoy the never-ending blessings. But if, when heavenly things are proffered you, you remain nailed to earth, consider what an insult is offered to your Benefactor, when He holds forth to you things above, and thou, making no great account of them choosest earth instead. And therefore, as despised by you, He has threatened you with hell; that you may learn hence of what great blessings you deprive yourself. God grant that none make trial of that punishment, but that having been well-pleasing to Christ, we may obtain everlasting blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 32 on the Gospel of John

John 4:13-14

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting Life."

1. Scripture calls the grace of the Spirit sometimes *"Fire,"* sometimes *"Water,"* showing that these names are not descriptive of its essence, but of its operation; for the Spirit, being Invisible and Simple, cannot be made up of different substances. Now the one John declares, speaking thus, *"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire"* [Matthew 3:11]: the other, Christ, *"Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."* [John 7:38] *"But this,"* says John, *"spoke He of the Spirit, which they should receive."* So also conversing with the woman, He calls the Spirit water; for, *"Whosoever shall drink of the water which I shall give him, shall never thirst."* So also He calls the Spirit by the name of *"fire,"* alluding to the rousing and warming property of grace, and its power of destroying transgressions; but by that of *"water,"* to declare the cleansing wrought by it, and the great refreshment which it affords to those minds which receive it. And with good reason; for it makes the willing soul like some garden thick with all manner of trees fruitful and ever-flourishing, allowing it neither to feel despondency nor the plots of Satan, and quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

And observe, I pray you, the wisdom of Christ, how gently He leads on the woman; for He did not say at first, *"If you knew who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink,"* but when He had given her an occasion of calling

Him "*a Jew*," and brought her beneath the charge of having done so, repelling the accusation He says, "*If you knew who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked of Him*"; and having compelled her by His great promises to make mention of the Patriarch, He thus allows the woman to look through, and then when she objects, "*Are you greater than our father Jacob?*" He says not, "*Yea, I am greater*," (for He would have seemed but to boast, since the proof did not as yet appear,) but by what He says He effects this. For He said not simply, "*I will give you water*," but having first set that given by Jacob aside, He exalts that given by Himself, desiring to show from the nature of the things given, how great is the interval and difference between the persons of the givers, and His own superiority to the Patriarch. "*If*," says He, "*you admire Jacob because he gave you this water, what will you say if I give you Water far better than this? You have yourself been first to confess that I am greater than Jacob, by arguing against Me, and asking, 'Are you greater than Jacob, that you promise to give me better water?' If you receive that Water, certainly you will confess that I am greater.*" Do you see the upright judgment of the woman, giving her decision from facts, both as to the Patriarch, and as to Christ? The Jews acted not thus; when they even saw Him casting out devils, they not only did not call Him greater than the Patriarch but even said that He had a devil. Not so the woman, she draws her opinion whence Christ would have her, from the demonstration afforded by His works. For by these He justifies Himself, saying, "*If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, if you believe not Me, believe the works.*" [c. x. 37, 38] And thus the woman is brought over to the faith.

Wherefore also He, having heard, "*Are you greater than our father Jacob*," leaves Jacob, and speaks concerning the water, saying, "*Whosoever shall drink of this water, shall thirst again*"; and He makes His comparison,

not by depreciating one, but by showing the excellence of the other; for He says not, that "*this water is naught,*" nor "*that it is inferior and contemptible,*" but what even nature testifies that He says: "*Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the Water which I shall give him, shall never thirst.*" The woman before this had heard of "*living Water*" [John 4:10], but had not known its meaning. Since because that water is called "*living*" which is perennial and bubbles up unceasingly from uninterrupted springs, she thought that this was the water meant. Wherefore He points out this more clearly by speaking thus, and establishing by a comparison the superiority (of the water which He would give). What then says He? "*Whosoever shall drink of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.*" This and what was said next especially showed the superiority, for material water possesses none of these qualities. And what is it that follows? "*It shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" For as one that has a well within him could never be seized by thirst, so neither can he that has this Water.

The woman straightway believed, showing herself much wiser than Nicodemus, and not only wiser, but more manly. For he when he heard ten thousand such things neither invited any others to this hearing, nor himself spoke forth openly; but she exhibited the actions of an Apostle, preaching the Gospel to all, and calling them to Jesus, and drawing a whole city forth to Him. Nicodemus when he had heard said, "*How can these things be?*" And when Christ set before him a clear illustration, that of "*the wind,*" he did not even so receive the Word. But the woman not so; at first she doubted, but afterwards receiving the Word not by any regular demonstration, but in the form of an assertion, she straightway hastened to embrace it. For when Christ said, "*It shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting Life,*" immediately the woman says,

John 4:15

"Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

Do you see how little by little she is led up to the highest doctrines? First she thought Him some Jew who was transgressing the Law; then when He had repelled that accusation, (for it was necessary that the person who was to teach her such things should not be suspected,) having heard of *"living water,"* she supposed that this was spoken of material water; afterwards, having learned that the words were spiritual, she believed that the water could remove the necessity caused by thirst, but knew not yet what this could be; she still doubted, deeming it indeed to be above material things, but not being exactly informed. But here having gained a clearer insight, but not yet fully perceiving the whole, (for she says, *"Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw,"*) she for the time prefers Him to Jacob. *"For"* (says she) *"I need not this well if I receive from you that water."* Do you see how she sets Him before the Patriarch? This is the act of a fairly-judging soul. She had shown how great an opinion she had of Jacob, she saw One better than he, and was not held back by her prepossession. Thus this woman was neither of an easy temper, (she did not carelessly receive what was said, how can she have done so when she enquired with so great exactness?) nor yet disobedient, nor disputatious, and this she showed by her petition. Yet to the Jews once He said, *"Whosoever shall eat of My flesh shall never hunger, and he that believes in Me shall never thirst"* [John 6:35]; but they not only did not believe, but were offended at Him. The woman had no such feeling, she remains and petitions. To the Jews He said, *"He that believes in Me shall never thirst";* not so to the woman, but more grossly, *"He that drinks of this Water shall*

never thirst." For the promise referred to spiritual and unseen things.

Wherefore having raised her mind by His promises, He still lingers among expressions relating to sense, because she could not as yet comprehend the exact expression of spiritual things. Since had He said, "*If you believe in Me you shall not thirst,*" she would not have understood His saying, not knowing who it could be that spoke to her, nor concerning what kind of thirst He spoke. Wherefore then did He not this in the case of the Jews? Because they had seen many signs, while she had seen no sign, but heard these words first. For which reason He afterwards reveals His power by prophecy, and does not directly introduce His reproof, but what says He?

John 4:16-19

"Go, call your husband, and come there. The woman answered and said I have no husband. Jesus says unto her, You have well said, I have no husband: for you have had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not your husband: in that you said truly. The woman says unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a Prophet."

2. O how great the wisdom of the woman! How meekly does she receive the reproof! *"How should she not,"* says some one? Tell me, why should she? Did He not often reprove the Jews also, and with greater reproofs than these? (for it is not the same to bring forward the hidden thoughts of the heart, as to make manifest a thing that was done in secret; the first are known to God alone, and none other knows them but he who has them in his heart; the second, all who were sharers in it know;) but still when reproved did not bear it patiently. When He said, *"Why do you seek to kill me?"* [John 7:19], they not only did not admire as the woman did but even mocked at and insulted Him; yet they had a demonstration from other miracles, she had only heard this speech. Still they not only did not admire, but even insulted Him, saying, *"You have a demon, who seeks to kill you?"* While she not only does not insult but admires, and is astonished at Him, and supposes Him to be a Prophet. Yet truly this rebuke touched the woman more than the other touched them; for her fault was hers alone, theirs was a general one; and we are not so much stung by what is general as by what is particular. Besides they thought they should be gaining a great object if they could slay Christ, but that which the woman had done was allowed by all to be wicked; yet was she not indignant, but was astonished and wondered. And Christ did this very same thing in the case of Nathanael. He did not at first introduce the prophecy, nor say, *"I saw you under the fig-tree,"* but

when Nathanael said, "*Whence do you know me?*" then He introduced this. For He desired to take the beginnings of His signs and prophecies from the very persons who came near to Him, so that they might be more attached by what was done, and He might escape the suspicion of vainglory. Now this He does here also; for to have charged her first of all that, "*You have no husband,*" would have seemed burdensome and superfluous, but to take the reason (for speaking) from herself, and then to set right all these points, was very consistent, and softened the disposition of the hearer.

"*And what kind of connection,*" says some one, "*is there in the saying, 'Go, call your husband'?*" The discourse was concerning a gift and grace surpassing mortal nature: the woman was urgent in seeking to receive it. Christ says, "*Call your husband,*" showing that he also must share in these things; but she, eager to receive (the gift), and concealing the shamefulness of the circumstances, and supposing that she was conversing with a man, said, "*I have no husband.*" Christ having heard this, now seasonably introduces His reproof, mentioning accurately both points; for He enumerated all her former husbands, and reproved her for him whom she now would hide. What then did the woman? She was not annoyed, nor did she leave Him and fly, nor deem the thing an insult, but rather admired Him, and persevered the more. "*I perceive,*" says she, "*that You are a Prophet.*" Observe her prudence; she did not straightway run to Him, but still considers Him, and marvels at Him. For, "*I perceive,*" means, "*Thou appearest to me to be a Prophet.*" Then when she suspected this, she asks Him nothing concerning this life, not concerning bodily health, or possessions, or wealth, but at once concerning doctrines. For what says she?

John 4:20

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," (meaning Abraham and his family, for there they say that he led up his son,) "and how say ye that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship?"

3. Do you see how much more elevated in mind she has become? She who was anxious that she might not be troubled for thirst, now questions concerning doctrines. What then does Christ? He does not resolve the question, (for to answer simply to men's words was not His care, for it was needless,) but leads the woman on to the greater height, and does not converse with her on these matters, until she has confessed that He was a Prophet, so that afterwards she might hear His Word with abundant belief; for having been persuaded of this, she could no longer doubt concerning what should be said to her.

Let us now after this be ashamed, and blush. A woman who had had five husbands, and who was of Samaria, was so eager concerning doctrines, that neither the time of day, nor her having come for another purpose, nor anything else, led her away from enquiring on such matters; but we not only do not enquire concerning doctrines, but towards them all our dispositions are careless and indifferent. Therefore everything is neglected. For which of you when in his house takes some Christian book in hand and goes over its contents, and searches the Scriptures? None can say that he does so, but with most we shall find draughts and dice, but books nowhere, except among a few. And even these few have the same dispositions as the many; for they tie up their books, and keep them always put away in cases, and all their care is for the fineness of the parchments, and the beauty of the letters, not for reading them. For they have not bought them to obtain advantage and benefit from them, but take pains about such matters to show their

wealth and pride. Such is the excess of vainglory. I do not hear any one glory that he knows the contents, but that he has a book written in letters of gold. And what gain, tell me, is this? The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. For this kind of possession, the keeping the commandments merely in letter, belongs to Jewish ambition; but to us the Law was not so given at all, but in the fleshy tables of our hearts. And this I say, not to prevent you from procuring Bibles, on the contrary, I exhort and earnestly pray that you do this, but I desire that from those books you convey the letters and sense into your understanding, that so it may be purified when it receives the meaning of the writing. For if the devil will not dare to approach a house where a Gospel is lying, much less will any evil spirit, or any sinful nature, ever touch or enter a soul which bears about with it such sentiments as it contains. Sanctify then your soul, sanctify your body, by having these ever in your heart, and on your tongue. For if foul speech defiles and invites devils, it is clear that spiritual reading sanctifies and draws down the grace of the Spirit. The Scriptures are divine charms, let us then apply to ourselves and to the passions of our souls the remedies to be derived from them. For if we understand what it is that is read, we shall hear it with much readiness. I am always saying this, and will not cease to say it. Is it not strange that those who sit by the market can tell the names, and families, and cities of charioteers, and dancers, and the kinds of power possessed by each, and can give exact account of the good or bad qualities of the very horses, but that those who come hither should know nothing of what is done here, but should be ignorant of the number even of the sacred Books? If you pursue those worldly things for pleasure, I will show you that here is greater pleasure. Which is sweeter, tell me, which more marvelous, to see a man wrestling with a man, or a man buffering

with a devil, a body closing with an incorporeal power, and him who is of your race victorious? These wrestlings let us look on, these, which also it is seemly and profitable to imitate, and which imitating, we may be crowned; but not those in which emulation brings shame to him who imitates them. If you behold the one kind of contest, you behold it with devils; the other, with Angels and Archangels, and the Lord of Archangels. Say now, if you were allowed to sit with governors and kings, and to see and enjoy the spectacle, would you not deem it to be a very great honor? And here when you are a spectator in company with the King of Angels, when you see the devil grasped by the middle of the back, striving much to have the better, but powerless, do you not run and pursue after such a sight as this? *"And how can this be?"* says some one. If you keep the Bible in your hands; for in it you shall see the lists, and the long races, and his grasps, and the skill of the righteous one. For by beholding these things you shall learn also how to wrestle so yourself, and shall escape clear of devils; the performances of the heathen are assemblies of devils, not theaters of men. Wherefore I exhort you to abstain from these Satanic assemblies; for if it is not lawful to enter into an idol's house, much less to Satan's festival. I shall not cease to say these things and weary you, until I see some change; for to say these things, as says Paul, *"to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe."* [Philippians 3:1] Be not then offended at my exhortation. If any one ought to be offended, it is I who often speak and am not heard, not you who are always hearing and always disobeying. God grant that you be not always liable to this charge, but that freed from this shame you be deemed worthy to enjoy the spiritual spectacle, and the glory which is to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 33 on the Gospel of John

John 4:21-22

"Jesus says unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes, when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews."

1. Everywhere, beloved, we have need of faith, faith the mother of blessings, the medicine of salvation; and without this it is impossible to possess any one of the great doctrines. Without this, men are like to those who attempt to cross the open sea without a ship, who for a little way hold out by swimming, using both hands and feet, but when they have advanced farther, are quickly swamped by the waves: in like manner they who use their own reasonings, before they have learned anything, suffer shipwreck; as also Paul says, *"Who concerning faith have made shipwreck."* [1 Timothy 1:19] That this be not our case, let us hold fast the sacred anchor by which Christ brings over the Samaritan woman now. For when she had said, *"How say ye that Jerusalem is the place in which men ought to worship?"* Christ replied, *"Believe Me, woman, that the hour comes, when you shall neither in Jerusalem, nor yet in this mountain, worship the Father."* An exceedingly great doctrine He revealed to her, and one which He did not mention either to Nicodemus or Nathanael. She was eager to prove her own privileges more honorable than those of the Jews; and this she subtly argued from the Fathers, but Christ met not this question. For it was for the time distracting to speak on the matter, and to show why the Fathers worshipped in the mountain, and why the Jews at Jerusalem. Wherefore on this point He was silent, and having taken away from both places priority in dignity, rouses

her soul by showing that neither Jews nor Samaritans possessed anything great in comparison with that which was to be given; and then He introduces the difference. Yet even thus He declared that the Jews were more honorable, not preferring place to place, but giving them the precedence because of their intention. As though He had said, *"About the 'place' of worship you have no need henceforth to dispute, but in the 'manner' the Jews have an advantage over you Samaritans, for 'ye,' He says, 'worship ye know not what; we know what we worship.'"*

How then did the Samaritans *"know not"* what they worshipped? Because they thought that God was local and partial; so at least they served Him, and so they sent to the Persians, and reported that *"the God of this place is angry with us"* devils, joining things which ought not to be joined. The Jews, on the contrary, were free from this supposition, at least the greater part of them, and knew that He was God of the world. Therefore He says, *"You worship ye know not what; we know what we worship."* Do not wonder that He numbers Himself among Jews, for He speaks to the woman's opinion of Him as though He were a Jewish Prophet, and therefore He puts, *"we worship."* For that He is of the objects of worship is clear to every one, because to worship belongs to the creature, but to be worshipped to the Lord of the creature. But for a time He speaks as a Jew; and the expression *"we"* in this place means *"we Jews."* Having then exalted what was Jewish, He next makes Himself credible, and persuades the woman to give the greater heed to His words, by rendering His discourse above suspicion, and showing that He does not exalt what belongs to them by reason of relationship to those of His own tribe. For it is clear, that one who had made these declarations concerning the place on which the Jews most prided themselves, and thought that they were superior to all, and who had taken away their high claims, would not after this speak to get favor of any,

but with truth and prophetic power. When therefore He had for a while removed her from such reasonings, saying, "*Woman, believe Me,*" and what follows, then He adds, "*for salvation is of the Jews.*" What He says is of this kind: neither, that blessings to the world came from them, (for to know God and condemn idols had its beginning from them, and with you the very act of worship, although ye do it not rightly, yet received its origin from them,) or else, He speaks of His own Coming. Or rather, one would not be wrong in calling both these things "*salvation*" which He said was "*of the Jews*"; which Paul implied when he said, "*Of whom is Christ according to the flesh, who is God over all.*" [Romans 9:5] Do you see how He commends the old Covenant, and shows that it is the root of blessings, and that He is throughout not opposed to the Law, since He makes the groundwork of all good things to come from the Jews?

John 4:23

"But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father."

"We, O woman," He says, "excel you in the manner of our worship, but even this shall henceforth have an end. Not the places only, but even the manner of serving God shall be changed. And this change is at your very doors. 'For the hour comes, and now is.'"

2. For since what the Prophets said they said long before the event, to show that here it is not so, He says, *"And now is."* Think not, He says, that this is a prophecy of such a kind as shall be accomplished after a long time, the fulfillment is already at hand and at your very doors, *"when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."* In saying *"true,"* He excludes Jews as well as Samaritans; for although the Jews be better than the Samaritans, yet are they far inferior to those that shall come, as inferior as is the type to the reality. But He speaks of the Church, that she is the *"true"* worship, and such as is meet for God.

"For the Father seeks such to worship Him."

If then He in times past sought such as these, He allowed to those others their way of worship, not willingly, but from condescension, and for this reason, that He might bring them in also. Who then are *"the true worshipers"*? Those who confine not their service by place, and who serve God in spirit; as Paul says, *"Whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son"*: and again, *"I beseech you that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service."* [Romans 1:9 and 12:1]

John 4:24

"God is a Spirit"

But when He says this, He declares nothing else than His incorporeal Nature. Now the service of that which is incorporeal must needs be of the same character, and must be offered by that in us which is incorporeal, to wit, the soul, and purity of mind. Wherefore He says, *"they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth."* For because both Samaritans and Jews were careless about the soul, but took great pains about the body, cleansing it in various ways, it is not, He says, by purity of body, but by that which is incorporeal in us, namely the mind, that the incorporeal One is served. Sacrifice then not sheep and calves, but dedicate yourself to the Lord; make yourself a holocaust, this is to offer a living sacrifice. You must worship *"in truth"* ; as former things were types, such as circumcision, and whole burnt offerings, and victims, and incense, they now no longer exist, but all is *"truth."* For a man must now circumcise not his flesh, but his evil thoughts, and crucify himself, and remove and slay his unreasonable desires. The woman was made dizzy by His discourse, and fainted in at the sublimity of what He said, and, in her trouble, hear what she says:

John 4:25-26

"I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He has come, He will tell us all things. Jesus says unto her, I am that speak unto you."

And whence came the Samaritans to expect the coming of Christ, seeing that they received Moses only? From the writings of Moses themselves. For even in the beginning He revealed the Son. *"Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness"* [Genesis 1:26], was said to the Son. It was He who talked with Abraham in the tent. [Genesis 18] And Jacob prophesying concerning Him said, *"A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until He come for whom it is reserved, and He is the expectation of nations."* [Genesis 49:10] And Moses himself says, *"The Lord your God will raise up unto you a Prophet of your brethren like me, unto Him shall you hearken."* [Deuteronomy 18:15] And the circumstances attending the serpent, and the rod of Moses, and Isaac, and the sheep, and many other things they who chose might select as proclaiming His coming.

"And why, pray," says one, *"did not Christ lead on the woman by these means? Why did He instance the serpent to Nicodemus, and mention prophecy to Nathanael, but to her say nothing of the kind? For what reason, and why?"* Because they were men, and were versed in these things, she a poor ignorant woman unpracticed in the Scriptures. Wherefore He does not speak to her from them, but draws her on by the *"water"* and by prophecy, and brings her to make mention of Christ and then reveals Himself; which had He at first told the woman when she had not questioned Him, He would have seemed to her to trifle and talk idly, while as it is by bringing her little by little to mention Him, at a fitting time He revealed Himself. To the Jews, who continually said, *"How long dost Thou make us to doubt? Tell us if You are the Christ"* [John 10:24], to them He gave no clear answer, but to this

woman He said plainly, that He is . For the woman was more fair-minded than the Jews; they did not enquire to learn, but always to mock at Him, for had they desired to learn, the teaching which was by His words, and by the Scriptures, and by His miracles would have been sufficient. The woman, on the contrary, said what she said from an impartial judgment and a simple mind, as is plain from what she did afterwards; for she both heard and believed, and netted others also, and in every circumstance we may observe the carefulness and faith of the woman.

John 4:27

"And upon this came His disciples," (very seasonably did they come when the teaching was finished,) *"and marveled that He talked with the woman, yet no man said, What seekest Thou? Or, Why talkest Thou with her?"*

3. At what did they marvel? At His want of pride and exceeding humility, that looked upon as He was, He endured with such lowliness of heart to talk with a woman poor, and a Samaritan. Still in their amazement they did not ask Him the reason, so well were they taught to keep the station of disciples, so much did they fear and reverence Him. For although they did not as yet hold the right opinion concerning Him, still they gave heed unto Him as to some marvelous one, and paid Him much respect. Yet they frequently are seen to act confidently; as when John lay upon His bosom, when they came to Him and said, *"Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?"* [Matthew 18:1], when the sons of Zebedee entreated Him to set one of them on His right hand, and the other on His left. Why then did they not here question Him? Because since all those instances related to themselves, they had need to enquire into them, while what here took place was of no such great importance to them. And indeed John did that a long time after towards the very end, when He enjoyed greater confidence, and was bold in the love of Christ; for he it was, he says, *"whom Jesus loved."* What could equal such blessedness?

But, beloved, let us not stop at this, the calling the Apostle blessed, but let us do all things that we also may be of the blessed, let us imitate the Evangelist, and see what it was that caused such great love. What then was it? He left his father, his ship, and his net, and followed Jesus. Yet this he did in common with his brother, and Peter, and Andrew, and the rest of the Apostles. What then was the special thing which caused this great love?

Shall we discover it? He says nothing of this kind about himself, but only that he was beloved; as to the righteous acts for which he was beloved he has modestly been silent. That Jesus loved him with a special love was clear to every one; yet John does not appear conversing with or questioning Jesus privately, as Peter often did, and Philip, and Judas, and Thomas, except only when he desired to show kindness and compliance to his fellow Apostle; for when the chief of the Apostles by beckoning constrained him, then he asked. For these two had great love each for the other. Thus, for instance, they are seen going up together into the Temple and speaking in common to the people. Yet Peter in many places is moved, and speaks more warmly than John. And at the end he hears Christ say, "*Peter, do you love Me more than these?*" [John 21:15] Now it is clear that he who loved "*more than these*" was also beloved. But this in his case was shown by loving Jesus, in the case of the other by being beloved by Jesus.

What then was it which caused this special love? To my thinking, it was that the man displayed great gentleness and meekness, for which reason he does not appear in many places speaking openly. And how great a thing this is, is plain also from the case of Moses. It was this which made him such and so great as he was. There is nothing equal to lowliness of mind. For which cause Jesus with this began the Beatitudes, and when about to lay as it were the foundation and base of a mighty building, He placed first lowliness of mind. Without this a man cannot possibly be saved; though he fast, though he pray, though he give alms, if it be with a proud spirit, these things are abominable, if humility be not there; while if it be, all these things are amiable and lovely, and are done with safety. Let us then be modest, beloved, let us be modest; success is easy, if we be sober-minded. For after all what is it, O man, that excites you to pride? Do you see not the poverty of your nature? The unsteadiness of your will? Consider your end,

consider the multitude of your sins. But perhaps because you do many righteous deeds you are proud. By that very pride you shall undo them all. Wherefore it behooves not so much him that has sinned as him that does righteousness to take pains to be humble. Why so? Because the sinner is constrained by conscience, while the other, except he be very sober, soon caught up as by a blast of wind is lifted on high, and made to vanish like the Pharisee. Do you give to the poor? What you give is not yours, but your Master's, common to you and your fellow-servants. For which cause you ought especially to be humbled, in the calamities of those who are your kindred foreseeing your own, and taking knowledge of your own nature in their cases. We ourselves perhaps are sprung from such ancestors; and if wealth has shifted to you, it is probable that it will leave you again. And after all, what is wealth? A vain shadow, dissolving smoke, a flower of the grass, or rather something meaner than a flower. Why then are you high-minded over grass? Does not wealth fall to thieves, and effeminates, and harlots, and tomb-breakers? Does this puff you up, that you have such as these to share in your possession? Or do you desire honor? Towards gaining honor nothing is more serviceable than almsgiving. For the honors arising from wealth and power are compulsory, and attended with hatred, but these others are from the free will and real feeling of the honorers; and therefore those who pay them can never give them. Now if men show such reverence for the merciful, and invoke all blessings upon them, consider what return, what recompense they shall receive from the merciful God. Let us then seek this wealth which endures forever, and never deserts us, that, becoming great here and glorious there, we may obtain everlasting blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 34 on the Gospel of John

John 4:28-29

"The woman then left her water pot, and went her way into the city, and says to the men, Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

1. We require much fervor and uproused zeal, for without these it is impossible to obtain the blessings promised to us. And to show this, Christ at one time says, *"Except a man take up his cross and follow Me, he is not worthy of Me"* [Matthew 10:38]; at another, *"I have come to send fire upon the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?"* [Luke 12:49]; by both these desiring to represent to us a disciple full of heat and fire, and prepared for every danger. Such an one was this woman. For so kindled was she by His words, that she left her water pot and the purpose for which she came, ran into the city, and drew all the people to Jesus. *"Come,"* she says, *"see a Man which told me all things that ever I did."*

Observe her zeal and wisdom. She came to draw water, and when she had lighted upon the true Well, she after that despised the material one; teaching us even by this trifling instance when we are listening to spiritual matters to overlook the things of this life, and make no account of them. For what the Apostles did, that, after her ability, did this woman also. They when they were called, left their nets; she of her own accord, without the command of any, leaves her water pot, and winged by joy performs the office of Evangelists. And she calls not one or two, as did Andrew and Philip, but having aroused a whole city and people, so brought them to Him.

Observe too how prudently she speaks; she said not, "*Come and see the Christ,*" but with the same condescension by which Christ had netted her she draws the men to Him; "*Come,*" she says, "*see a Man who told me all that ever I did.*" She was not ashamed to say that He "*told me all that ever I did.*" Yet she might have spoken otherwise, "*Come, see one that prophesies*"; but when the soul is inflamed with holy fire, it looks then to nothing earthly, neither to glory nor to shame, but belongs to one thing alone, the flame which occupies it.

"*Is not this the Christ?*" Observe again here the great wisdom of the woman; she neither declared the fact plainly, nor was she silent, for she desired not to bring them in by her own assertion, but to make them to share in this opinion by hearing Him; which rendered her words more readily acceptable to them. Yet He had not told all her life to her, only from what had been said she was persuaded (that He was informed) as to the rest. Nor did she say, "*Come, believe,*" but, "*Come, see*"; a gentler expression than the other, and one which more attracted them. Do you see the wisdom of the woman? She knew, she knew certainly that having but tasted that Well, they would be affected in the same manner as herself. Yet any one of the grosser sort would have concealed the reproof which Jesus had given; but she parades her own life, and brings it forward before all men, so as to attract and capture all.

John 4:31

"In the mean time His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, eat. . ."

"Asked," here is "*besought*," in their native language; for seeing Him wearied with the journey, and the oppressive heat, they entreated Him; for their request concerning food proceeded not from hastiness, but from loving affection for their Teacher? What then says Christ?

John 4:32-33

"I have meat to eat that you know not of. Therefore, said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him anything to eat?"

Why now do you wonder that the woman when she heard of "*water*," still imagined mere water to be meant, when even the disciples are in the same case, and as yet suppose nothing spiritual, but are perplexed? Though they still show their accustomed modesty and reverence toward their Master, conversing one with the other, but not daring to put any question to Him. And this they do in other places, desiring to ask Him, but not asking. What then says Christ?

John 4:34

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

He here calls the salvation of men "*meat*," showing what an earnest desire He has of providing for us; for as we long for food, so He that we may be saved. And hear how in all places He reveals not all off-hand, but first throws the hearer into perplexity, in order that having begun to seek the meaning of what has been said, and then being perplexed and in difficulty, he may when what he sought appears, receive it the more readily, and be made more attentive to listening. For wherefore said He not at once, "*My meat is to do the will of My Father?*" (though not even this would have been clear, yet clearer than the other.) But what says He? "*I have meat to eat that you know not of*"; for He desires, as I said, first to make them more attentive through their uncertainty, and by dark sayings like these to accustom them to listen to His words. But what is "*the will of the Father*"? He next speaks of this, and explains.

John 4:35

"Say ye not, that there are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields, for they are white already to harvest."

2. Behold, He again by familiar words leads them up to the consideration of greater matters; for when He spoke of *"meat,"* He signified nothing else than the salvation of the men who should come to Him; and again, the *"field"* and the *"harvest"* signify the very same thing, the multitude of souls prepared for the reception of the preaching; and the *"eyes"* of which He speaks are those both of the mind and of the body; (for they now beheld the crowd of Samaritans advancing;) and the readiness of their will He calls, *"fields already white."* For as the ears of grain, when they have become white, and are ready for reaping, so these, He says, are prepared and fitted for salvation.

And wherefore instead of calling them *"fields"* and *"harvest,"* did He not plainly say, that *"the men were coming to believe and were ready to receive the Word, having been instructed by the Prophets; and now bringing forth fruit"*? What mean these figures used by Him? For this He does not here only, but through all the Gospel; and the Prophets also employ the same method, saying many things in a metaphorical manner. What then may be the cause of this? For the grace of the Spirit did not ordain it to be so without a reason, but why and wherefore? On two accounts; one, that the discourse may be more vivid, and bring what is said more clearly before our eyes. For the mind when it has laid hold on a familiar image of the matters in hand, is more aroused, and beholding them as it were in a picture, is occupied by them to a greater degree. This is one reason; the other is, that the statement may be sweetened, and that the memory of what is said may

be more lasting. For assertion does not subdue and bring in an ordinary hearer so much as narration by objects, and the representation of experience. Which one may here see most wisely effected by the parable.

John 4:36

"And he that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal."

For the fruit of an earthly harvest profits not to life eternal, but to this which is for a time; but the spiritual fruit to that which has neither age nor death. Do you see that the expressions are of sense, but the thoughts spiritual, and that by the very words themselves He divides things earthly from heavenly? For when in discoursing of water He made this the peculiar property of the heavenly Water, that *"he who drinks it shall never thirst,"* so He does here also when He says, *"that this fruit is gathered unto eternal life."*

"That both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together."

Who is *"he that sows"*? Who *"he that reaps"*? The Prophets are they that sowed but they reaped not, but the Apostles. *"Yet not on this account are they deprived of the pleasure and recompense of their labors, but they rejoice and are glad with us, although they reap not with us. For harvest is not such work as sowing. I therefore have kept you for that in which the toil is less and the pleasure greater, and not for sowing because in that there is much hardship and toil. In harvest the return is large, the labor not so great; nay there is much facility."* By these arguments He here desires to prove, that *"the wish of the Prophets is, that all men should come to Me."* This also the Law was engaged in effecting; and for this they sowed, that they might produce this fruit. He shows moreover that He sent them also, and that there was a very intimate connection between the New Covenant and the Old, and all this He effects at once by this parable. He makes mention also of a proverbial expression generally circulated.

John 4:37

"Herein is that saying true, One sows and another reaps."

These words the many used whenever one party had supplied toil and another had reaped the fruits; and He says, *"that the proverb is in this instance especially true, for the Prophets labored, and you reap the fruits of their labors."* He said not *"the rewards,"* (for neither did their great labor go unrewarded,) but *"the fruits."* This also Daniel did, for he too makes mention of a proverb, *"Wickedness proceeds from the wicked"*; and David in his lamenting makes mention of a similar proverb. Therefore He said beforehand, *"that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together."* For since He was about to declare, that *"one has sowed and another reaps,"* lest any one should deem that the Prophets were deprived of their reward, He asserts something strange and paradoxical, such as never chances in sensual things, but is peculiar to spiritual only. For in things of sense, if it chance that one sow and another reap, they do not *"rejoice together,"* but those who sowed are sad, as having labored for others, and those who reap alone rejoice. But here it is not so, but those who reap not what they sowed rejoice alike with those who reap; whence it is clear that they too share the reward.

John 4:38

"I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labors; other men labored, and you are entered into their labors."

By this He the more encourages them; for when it seemed a very hard matter to go through all the world and preach the Gospel, He shows them that it is even most easy. The very difficult work was that other, which required great labor, the putting in the seed, and introducing the uninitiated soul to the knowledge of God. But wherefore utters He these sayings? It is that when He sends them to preach they may not be confounded, as though sent on a difficult task. *"For that of the Prophets,"* He says, *"was the more difficult, and the fact witnesses to My word, that you have come to what is easy; because as in harvest time the fruits are collected with ease, and in one moment the floor is filled with sheaves, which await not the revolutions of the seasons, and winter, and spring, and rain, so it is now. The facts proclaim it aloud."* While He was in the midst of saying these things, the Samaritans came forth, and the fruit was at once gathered together. On this account He said, *"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white."* Thus He spoke, and the fact was clear, and the words seen (true) by the event. For says St. John,

John 4:39

"Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did."

They perceived that the woman would not from favor have admired One who had rebuked her sins, nor to gratify another have paraded her own course of life.

3. Let us then also imitate this woman, and in the case of our own sins not be ashamed of men, but fear, as is meet, God who now beholds what is done, and who hereafter punishes those who do not now repent. At present we do the opposite of this, for we fear not Him who shall judge us, but shudder at those who do not in anything hurt us, and tremble at the shame which comes from them. Therefore in the very thing which we fear, in this do we incur punishment. For he who now regards only the reproach of men, but when God sees is not ashamed to do anything unseemly, and who will not repent and be converted, in that day will be made an example, not only before one or two, but in the sight of the whole world. For that a vast assembly is seated there to behold righteous actions as well as those which are not such, let the parable of the sheep and the goats teach you, as also the blessed Paul when He says, *"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad"* [2 Corinthians 5:10], and again, *"Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness."* [1 Corinthians 4:5] Have you done or imagined any evil thing, and do you hide it from man? Yet from God you hide it not. But for this thou cares nothing; the eyes of men, these are your fear. Think then that you will not be able to escape the sight even of men in that day ; for all things as in a picture shall then be set before our very eyes, so that each shall be self-

condemned. This is clear even from the instance of Dives, for the poor man whom he had neglected, Lazarus I mean, he saw standing before his eyes, and the finger which he had often loathed, he intreats may become a comfort to him then. I exhort you therefore, that although no one see what we do, yet that each of us enter into his own conscience, and set reason for his judge, and bring forward his transgressions, and if he desire them not to be exposed to public view then in that fearful day, let him now heal his wounds, let him apply to them the medicines of repentance. For it is in the power, yea, it is in the power of one full of ten thousand wounds to go hence whole. For "*if you forgive,*" He says, "*your sins are forgiven unto you.*" [Matthew 6:14, not verbally quoted] For as sins buried in Baptism appear no more, so these also shall disappear, if we be willing to repent. And repentance is the not doing the same again; for he that again puts his hand to the same, is like the dog that returns to his own vomit, and like him in the proverb who cards wool into the fire, and draws water into a cask full of holes. It behooves therefore to depart both in action and in thought from what we have dared to do, and having departed, to apply to the wounds the remedies which are the contraries of our sins. For instance: have you been grasping and covetous? Abstain from rapine, and apply almsgiving to the wound. Have you been a fornicator? Abstain from fornication, and apply chastity to the wound. Have you spoken ill of your brother, and injured him? Cease finding fault, and apply kindness. Let us thus act with respect to each point in which we have offended, and let us not carelessly pass by our sins, for there awaits us hereafter, there awaits us a season of account. Wherefore also Paul said, "*The Lord is at hand: be careful for nothing.*" [Philippians 4:5-6] But we perhaps must add the contrary of this, "*The Lord is at hand, be careful.*" For they might well hear, "*Be careful for nothing,*" living as they did in affliction, and labors, and trials; but they who live by

rapine, or in luxury, and who shall give a grievous reckoning, would in reason hear not this, but that other, *"The Lord is at hand, be careful."* Since no long time now remains until the consummation, but the world is hastening to its end; this the wars declare, this the afflictions, this the earthquakes, this the love which has waxed cold. For as the body when in its last gasp and near to death, draws to itself ten thousand sufferings; and as when a house is about to fall, many portions are wont to fall beforehand from the roof and walls; so is the end of the world near and at the very doors, and therefore ten thousand woes are everywhere scattered abroad. If the Lord was then *"at hand,"* much more is He now *"at hand."* If three hundred years ago, when those words were used, Paul called that season *"the fullness of time,"* much more would he have called the present so. But perhaps for this very reason some disbelieve, yet they ought on this account to believe the more. For whence do you know, O man, that the end is not *"at hand,"* and the words shortly to be accomplished? For as we speak of the end of the year not as being the last day, but also the last month, though it has thirty days; so if of so many years I call even four hundred years *"the end,"* I shall not be wrong; and so at that time Paul spoke of the end by anticipation. Let us then set ourselves in order, let us delight in the fear of God; for if we live here without fear of Him, His coming will surprise us suddenly, when we are neither careful, nor looking for Him. As Christ declared when He said, *"For as in the days of Noah, and as in the days of Lot, so shall it be at the end of this world."* [Matthew 24:37, not verbally quoted] This also Paul declared when he said, *"For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child."* [1 Thessalonians 5:3] What means, *"as travail upon a woman with child"*? Often have pregnant women when sporting, or at their meals, or in the bath or market-place, and foreseeing nothing of what was

coming, been seized in a moment by their pains. Now since our case is like theirs, let us ever be prepared, for we shall not always hear these things, we shall not always have power to do them. *"In the grave"* says David, *"who shall give You thanks?"* [Psalm 6:5] Let us then repent here, that so we may find God merciful unto us in the day that is to come, and be enabled to enjoy abundant forgiveness; which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 35 on the Gospel of John

John 4:40-43

"So when the Samaritans had come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of His own Word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Now after two days He departed thence, and went into Galilee."

Nothing is worse than envy and malice, nothing more mischievous than vainglory; it is wont to mar ten thousand good things. So the Jews, who excelled the Samaritans in knowledge, and had been always familiar with the Prophets, were shown from this cause inferior to them. For these believed even on the testimony of the woman, and without having seen any sign, came forth beseeching Christ to tarry with them; but the Jews, when they had beheld His wonders, not only did not detain Him among them, but even drove Him away, and used every means to cast Him forth from their land, although His very Coming had been for their sake. The Jews expelled Him, but these even entreated Him to tarry with them. Was it not then rather fitting, tell me, that He should receive those who asked and besought Him, than that He should wait upon those who plotted against and repulsed Him, while to those who loved and desired to retain Him He gave not Himself? Surely this would not have been worthy of His tender care; He therefore both accepted them, and tarried with them two days. They desired to keep Him among them continually, (for this the Evangelist has shown by saying, that *"they besought Him that He would tarry with them,"*) but this He endured not, but stayed with them only two days; and in these many more

believed on Him. Yet there was no likelihood that these would have believed, since they had seen no sign, and had hostile feelings towards the Jews; but still, inasmuch as they gave in sincerity their judgment on His words, this stood not in their way, but they received a notion which surmounted their hindrances, and vied with each other to reverence Him the more. For, says the Evangelist, *"they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of your saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."* The scholars overshot their instructress. With good reason might they condemn the Jews, both by their believing on, and their receiving Him. The Jews, for whose sake He had contrived the whole scheme, continually were for stoning Him, but these, when He was not even intending to come to them, drew Him to themselves. And they, even with signs, remain uncorrected; these, without signs, manifested great faith respecting Him, and glory in this very thing that they believe without them; while the others ceased not asking for signs and tempting Him.

Such need is there everywhere of an honest soul; and if truth lay hold on such an one, she easily masters it; or if she masters it not, this is owing not to any weakness of truth, but to want of candor in the soul itself. Since the sun too, when he encounters clear eyes, easily enlightens them; if he enlightens them not, it is the fault of their infirmity, not of his weakness.

Hear then what these say; *"We know that this is of a truth the Christ, the Saviour of the world."* Do you see how they at once understood that He should draw the world to Him, that He came to order aright our common salvation, that He intended not to confine His care to the Jews, but to sow His Word everywhere? The Jews did not so, but going about to establish their own righteousness, submitted not themselves to the righteousness of God; while these confess that all are deserving of punishment, declaring

with the Apostle, that *"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace."* [Romans 3:23-24] For by saying that He was *"the Saviour of the world,"* they showed that it was of a lost world, and He not simply a Saviour, but one of the very mightiest. For many had come to *"save,"* both Prophets and Angels ; but this, says one, is the True Saviour, who affords the true salvation, not that which is but for a time. This proceeded from pure faith. And in both ways are they admirable; because they believed, and because they did so without signs, (whom Christ also calls *"blessed,"* saying, *"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed,"*) [John 20:29,] and because they did so sincerely. Though they had heard the woman say doubtfully, *"Is not this the Christ?"* they did not also say, *"we too suspect,"* or, *"we think,"* but, *"we know,"* and not merely, *"we know,"* but, *"we know that this is of a truth the Saviour of the world."* They acknowledged Christ not as one of the many, but as the *"Saviour"* indeed. Yet whom had they seen saved? They had but heard His words, and yet they spoke as they would have spoken had they beheld many and great marvels. And why do not the Evangelists tell us these words, and that He discoursed admirably? That you may learn that they pass by many important matters, and yet have declared the whole to us by the event. For He persuaded an entire people and a whole city by His words. When His hearers are not persuaded, then the writers are constrained to mention what was said, lest any one from the insensibility of the hearers should give a judgment against Him who addressed them.

"Now after two days He departed thence and went into Galilee."

John 4:44

"For Jesus Himself testified that a Prophet has no honor in his own country."

Wherefore is this added? Because He departed not unto Capernaum, but into Galilee, and thence to Cana. For that you may not enquire why He tarried not with His own people, but tarried with the Samaritans, the Evangelist puts the cause, saying that they gave no heed unto Him; on this account He went not there, that their condemnation might not be the greater. For I suppose that in this place He speaks of Capernaum as *"His country."* Now, to show that there He received no honor, hear Him say, *"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell."* [Matthew 11:23] He calls it *"His own country,"* because there He set forth the Word of the Dispensation, and more especially dwelt upon it. *"What then,"* says some one, *"do we not see many admired among their kindred?"* In the first place such judgments must not be formed from rare instances; and again, if some have been honored in their own, they would have been much more honored in a strange country, for familiarity is wont to make men easily despised.

John 4:45

"Then when He had come into Galilee, the Galilæans received Him, having seen all the things that He did at Jerusalem at the feast, for they also came unto the feast."

Do you see that these men so ill spoken of are found most to come to Him? For one said, *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* [John 1:46], and another, *"Search and look, for out of Galilee arises no prophet."* [John 7:52] These things they said insulting Him, because He was supposed by the many to be of Nazareth, and they also reproached Him with being a Samaritan; *"You are a Samaritan,"* said one, *"and hast a devil."* [John 8:48] Yet behold, both Samaritans and Galilæans believe, to the shame of the Jews, and Samaritans are found better than Galilæans, for the first received Him through the words of the woman, the second when they had seen the miracles which He did.

John 4:46

"So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine."

The Evangelist reminds the hearer of the miracle to exalt the praise of the Samaritans. The men of Cana received Him by reason of the miracles which He had done in Jerusalem and in that place; but not so the Samaritans, they received Him through His teaching alone.

That He came then *"to Cana,"* the Evangelist has said, but he has not added the cause why He came. Into Galilee He had come because of the envy of the Jews; but wherefore to Cana? At first He came, being invited to a marriage; but wherefore now? Methinks to confirm by His presence the faith which had been implanted by His miracle, and to draw them to Him the more by coming to them self-invited, by leaving His own country, and by preferring them.

"And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum."

John 4:47

"When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto Him and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son."

This person certainly was of royal race, or possessed some dignity from his office, to which the title "*noble*" was attached. Some indeed think that this is the man mentioned by Matthew [Matthew 8:5], but he is shown to be a different person, not only from his dignity, but also from his faith. That other, even when Christ was willing to go to him, entreats Him to tarry; this one, when He had made no such offer, draws Him to his house. The one says, "*I am not worthy that You should come under my roof*"; but this other even urges Him, saying, "*Come down ere my son die.*" In that instance He came down from the mountain, and entered into Capernaum; but here, as He came from Samaria, and went not into Capernaum but into Cana, this person met Him. The servant of the other was possessed by the palsy, this one's son by a fever.

"And he came and besought Him that He would heal his son: for he was at the point of death." What says Christ?

John 4:48

"Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe."

Yet the very coming and beseeching Him was a mark of faith. And besides, after this the Evangelist witnesses to him, declaring that when Jesus said, *"Go, your son lives,"* he believed His word, and went. What then is that which He says here? Either He uses the words as approving of the Samaritans because they believed without signs; or, to touch Capernaum which was thought to be His own city, and of which this person was. Moreover, another man in Luke, who says, *"Lord, I believe,"* said besides, *"help my unbelief."* And so if this ruler also believed, yet he believed not entirely or soundly, as is clear from his enquiring *"at what hour the fever left him,"* since he desired to know whether it did so of its own accord, or at the bidding of Christ. When therefore he knew that it was *"yesterday at the seventh hour,"* then *"himself believed and his whole house."*

Do you see that he believed when his servants, not when Christ spoke? Therefore He rebukes the state of mind with which he had come to Him, and spoken as he did, (thus too He the more drew him on to belief,) because that before the miracle he had not believed strongly. That he came and entreated was nothing wonderful, for parents in their great affection are also wont to resort not only to physicians in whom they have confidence, but also to talk with those in whom they have no confidence, desiring to omit nothing whatever. Indeed, that he came without any strong purpose appears from this, that when Christ had come into Galilee, then he saw Him, whereas if he had firmly believed in Him, he would not, when his child was on the point of death, have hesitated to go into Judæa. Or if he was afraid, this is not to be endured either.

Observe how the very words show the weakness of the man; when he ought, after Christ had rebuked his state of mind, to have imagined something great concerning Him, even if he did not so before, listen how he drags along the ground.

John 4:49

"Sir, come down ere my child die."

As though He could not raise him after death, as though He knew not what state the child was in. It is for this that Christ rebukes him and touches his conscience, to show that His miracles were wrought principally for the sake of the soul. For here He heals the father, sick in mind, no less than the son, in order to persuade us to give heed to Him, not by reason of His miracles, but of His teaching. For miracles are not for the faithful, but for the unbelieving and the grosser sort.

3. At that time then, owing to his emotion, the nobleman gave no great heed to the words, or to those only which related to his son, yet he would afterwards recollect what had been said, and draw from thence the greatest advantage. As indeed was the case.

But what can be the reason why in the case of the centurion He by a free offer undertook to come, while here though invited, He goes not? Because in the former case faith had been perfected, and therefore He undertook to go, that we might learn the rightmindedness of the man; but here the nobleman was imperfect. When therefore he continually urged Him, saying, *"Come down,"* and knew not yet clearly that even when absent He could heal, He shows that even this was possible unto Him in order that this man might gain from Jesus not going, that knowledge which the centurion had of himself. And so when He says, *"Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe,"* His meaning is, *"You have not yet the right faith, but still feel towards Me as towards a Prophet."* Therefore to reveal Himself and to show that he ought to have believed even without miracles, He said what He said also to Philip, *"Believest thou that the Father is in Me*

and I in the Father? Or if not, believe Me for the very works' sake." [c. xiv.
10, 11]

John 4:51-53

"And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Your son lives. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Your son lives; and himself believed, and his whole house."

Do you see how evident the miracle was? Not simply nor in a common way was the child freed from danger, but all at once, so that what took place was seen to be the consequence not of nature, but the working of Christ. For when he had reached the very gates of death, as his father showed by saying, *"Come down ere my child die"*; he was all at once freed from the disease. A fact which roused the servants also, for they perhaps came to meet their master, not only to bring him the good news, but also deeming that the coming of Jesus was now superfluous, (for they knew that their master had gone there,) and so they met him even in the way. The man released from his fear, thenceforth escaped into faith, being desirous to show that what had been done was the result of his journey, and thenceforth he is ambitious of appearing not to have exerted himself to no purpose; so he ascertained all things exactly, and *"himself believed and his whole house."* For the evidence was after this unquestionable. For they who had not been present nor had heard Christ speak nor known the time, when they had heard from their master that such and such was the time, had incontrovertible demonstration of His power. Wherefore they also believed.

What now are we taught by these things? Not to wait for miracles, nor to seek pledges of the Power of God. I see many persons even now become more pious, when during the sufferings of a child or the sickness of a wife they enjoy any comfort, yet they ought even if they obtain it not, to persist

just the same in giving thanks, in glorifying God. Because it is the part of right-minded servants, and of those who feel such affection and love as they ought for their Master, not only when pardoned, but also when scourged, to run to Him. For these also are effects of the tender care of God; *"Whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges,"* it says, *"every son whom He receives."* [Hebrews 12:6] When therefore a man serves Him only in the season of ease, he gives proofs of no great love, and loves not Christ purely. And why speak I of health, or abundant riches, or poverty, or disease? Should thou hear of the fiery pit or of any other dreadful thing, not even so must thou cease from speaking good of your Master, but suffer and do all things because of your love for Him. For this is the part of right-minded servants and of an unswerving soul; and he who is disposed after this sort will easily endure the present, and obtain good things to come, and enjoy much confidence in the presence of God; which may it be that we all obtain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 36 on the Gospel of John

John 4:54-5:1

"This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He had come out of Judæa into Galilee. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

1. As in gold mines one skillful in what relates to them would not endure to overlook even the smallest vein as producing much wealth, so in the holy Scriptures it is impossible without loss to pass by one jot or one tittle, we must search into all. For they all are uttered by the Holy Spirit, and nothing useless is written in them.

Consider, for instance, what the Evangelist in this place says, *"This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He had come out of Judæa into Galilee."* Even the word *"second"* he has added not without cause, but to exalt yet more the praise of the Samaritans, by showing that even when a second miracle had been wrought, they who beheld it had not yet reached as high as those who had not seen one.

"After this there was a feast of the Jews." What *"feast"*? Methinks that of Pentecost. *"And Jesus went up to Jerusalem."* Continually at the feasts He frequents the City, partly that He might appear to feast with them, partly that He might attract the multitude that was free from guile; for during these days especially, the more simply disposed ran together more than at other times.

John 5:2-3

"Now there is at Jerusalem a sheep pool, called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of halt, blind, withered, waiting for the moving of the water."

What manner of cure is this? What mystery does it signify to us? For these things are not written carelessly, or without a purpose, but as by a figure and type they show in outline things to come, in order that what was exceedingly strange might not by coming unexpectedly harm among the many the power of faith. What then is it that they show in outline? A Baptism was about to be given, possessing much power, and the greatest of gifts, a Baptism purging all sins, and making men alive instead of dead. These things then are foreshown as in a picture by the pool, and by many other circumstances. And first is given a water which purges the stains of our bodies, and those defilements which are not, but seem to be, as those from touching the dead, those from leprosy, and other similar causes; under the old covenant one may see many things done by water on this account. However, let us now proceed to the matter in hand.

First then, as I before said, He causes defilements of our bodies, and afterwards infirmities of different kinds, to be done away by water. Because God, desiring to bring us nearer to faith in baptism, no longer heals defilements only, but diseases also. For those figures which came nearer [in time] to the reality, both as regarded Baptism, and the Passion, and the rest, were plainer than the more ancient; and as the guards near the person of the prince are more splendid than those before, so was it with the types. And *"an Angel came down and troubled the water,"* and endued it with a healing power, that the Jews might learn that much more could the Lord of Angels heal the diseases of the soul. Yet as here it was not simply the nature of the

water that healed, (for then this would have always taken place,) but water joined to the operation of the Angel; so in our case, it is not merely the water that works, but when it has received the grace of the Spirit, then it puts away all our sins. Around this pool *"lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water"*; but then infirmity was a hindrance to him who desired to be healed, now each has power to approach, for now it is not an Angel that troubles, it is the Lord of Angels who works all. The sick man cannot now say, *"I have no man"*; he cannot say, *"While I am coming another steps down before me"*; though the whole world should come, the grace is not spent, the power is not exhausted, but remains equally great as it was before. Just as the sun's beams give light every day, yet are not exhausted, nor is their light made less by giving so abundant a supply; so, and much more, the power of the Spirit is in no way lessened by the numbers of those who enjoy it. And this miracle was done in order that men, learning that it is possible by water to heal the diseases of the body, and being exercised in this for a long time, might more easily believe that it can also heal the diseases of the soul.

But why did Jesus, leaving the rest, come to one who was of thirty-eight years standing? And why did He ask him, *"Will you be made whole?"* Not that He might learn, that was needless; but that He might show the man's perseverance, and that we might know that it was on this account that He left the others and came to him. What then says he? *"Yea Lord,"* he says, but *"I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steps down before me."*

It was that we might learn these circumstances that Jesus asked, *"Will you be made whole?"* and said not, *"Will you that I heal you?"* (for as yet the man had formed no exalted notions concerning Him,) but *"Will you be made whole?"* Astonishing was the perseverance of the paralytic, he was of

thirty and eight years standing, and each year hoping to be freed from his disease, he continued in attendance, and withdrew not. Had he not been very persevering, would not the future, if not the past, have been sufficient to lead him from the spot? Consider, I pray you, how watchful it was likely that the other sick men there would be since the time when the water was troubled was uncertain. The lame and halt indeed might observe it, but how did the blind see? Perhaps they learned it from the clamor which arose.

2. Let us be ashamed then, beloved, let us be ashamed, and groan over our excessive sloth. *"Thirty and eight years"* had that man been waiting without obtaining what he desired, and withdrew not. And he had failed not through any carelessness of his own, but through being oppressed and suffering violence from others, and not even thus did he grow dull; while we if we have persisted for ten days to pray for anything and have not obtained it, are too slothful afterwards to employ the same zeal. And on men we wait for so long a time, warring and enduring hardships and performing servile ministrations, and often at last failing in our expectation, but on our Master, from whom we are sure to obtain a recompense greater than our labors, (for, says the Apostle, *"Hope makes not ashamed"* [Romans 5:5]) on Him we endure not to wait with becoming diligence. What chastisement does this deserve! For even though we could receive nothing from Him, ought we not to deem the very conversing with Him continually the cause of ten thousand blessings? *"But continual prayer is a laborious thing."* And what that belongs to virtue is not laborious? *"In truth,"* says some one, *"this very point is full of great difficulty, that pleasure is annexed to vice, and labor to virtue."* And many, I think, make this a question. What then can be the reason? God gave us at the beginning a life free from care and exempt from labor. We used not the gift aright, but were perverted by doing nothing, and were banished from Paradise. On which account He

made our life for the future one of toil, assigning as it were His reasons for this to mankind, and saying, *"I allowed you at the beginning to lead a life of enjoyment, but you were rendered worse by liberty, wherefore I commanded that henceforth labor and sweat be laid upon you."* And when even this labor did not restrain us, He next gave us a law containing many commandments, imposing it on us like bits and curbs placed upon an unruly horse to restrain his prancings, just as horse breakers do. This is why life is laborious, because not to labor is wont to be our ruin. For our nature cannot bear to be doing nothing, but easily turns aside to wickedness. Let us suppose that the man who is temperate, and he who rightly performs the other virtues, has no need of labor, but that they do all things in their sleep, still how should we have employed our ease? Would it not have been for pride and boastfulness? *"But wherefore,"* says some one, *"has great pleasure been attached to vice, great labor and toil to virtue?"* Why, what thanks would you have had, and for what would you have received a reward, if the matter had not been one of difficulty? Even now I can show you many who naturally hate intercourse with women, and avoid conversation with them as impure; shall we then call these chaste, shall we crown these, tell me, and proclaim them victors? By no means. Chastity is self-restraint, and the mastering pleasures which fight, just as in war the trophies are most honorable when the contest is violent, not when no one raises a hand against us. Many are by their very nature passionless; shall we call these good tempered? Not at all. And so the Lord after naming three manners of the eunuch state, leaves two of them uncrowned, and admits one into the kingdom of heaven. [Matthew 19:12] *"But what need,"* says one, *"was there of wickedness?"* I say this too. *"What is it then which made wickedness to be?"* What but our willful negligence? *"But,"* says one, *"there ought to be only good men."* Well, what is proper to the good man? Is it to

watch and be sober, or to sleep and snore? *"And why,"* says one, *"seemed it not good that a man should act rightly without laboring?"* You speak words which become the cattle or gluttons, or who make their belly their god. For to prove that these are the words of folly, answer me this. Suppose there were a king and a general, and while the king was asleep or drunk, the general should endure hardship and erect a trophy, whose would you count the victory to be? Who would enjoy the pleasure of what was done? Do you see that the soul is more especially disposed towards those things for which she has labored? And therefore God has joined labors to virtue, wishing to make us attached to her. For this cause we admire virtue, even although we act not rightly ourselves, while we condemn vice even though it be very pleasant. And if you say, *"Why do we not admire those who are good by nature more than those who are so by choice?"* we reply, Because it is just to prefer him that labors to him that labors not. For why is it that we labor? It is because thou did not bear with moderation the not laboring. Nay more, if one enquire exactly, in other ways also sloth is wont to undo us, and to cause us much trouble. Let us, if you will, shut a man up, only feeding and pampering him, not allowing him to walk nor conducting him forth to work, but let him enjoy table and bed, and be in luxury continually; what could be more wretched than such a life? *"But,"* says one, *"to work is one thing, to labor is another."* Yea, but it was in man's power then to work without labor. *"And is this,"* says he, *"possible?"* Yea, it is possible; God even desired it, but you endured it not. Therefore He placed you to work in the garden, marking out employment, but joining with it no labor. For had man labored at the beginning, God would not afterwards have put labor by way of punishment. For it is possible to work and not to be wearied, as do the angels. To prove that they work, hear what David says; *"You that excel in strength, you that do His word."* [Psalm 103:20, Septuagint] Want of

strength causes much labor now, but then it was not so. For *"he that has entered into His rest, has ceased,"* says one, *"from his works, as God from His"* [Hebrews 4:10]: not meaning here idleness, but the ceasing from labor. For God works even now, as Christ says, *"My Father works hitherto, and I work."* [John 5:17] Wherefore I exhort you that, laying aside all carelessness, you be zealous for virtue. For the pleasure of wickedness is short, but the pain lasting; of virtue, on the contrary, the joy grows not old, the labor is but for a season. Virtue even before the crowns are distributed animates her workman, and feeds him with hopes; vice even before the time of vengeance punishes him who works for her, wringing and terrifying his conscience, and making it apt to imagine all (evils). Are not these things worse than any labors, than any toils? And if these things were not so, if there were pleasure, what could be more worthless than that pleasure? For as soon as it appears it flies away, withering and escaping before it has been grasped, whether you speak of the pleasure of beauty, or that of luxury, or that of wealth, for they cease not daily to decay. But when there is besides (for this pleasure) punishment and vengeance, what can be more miserable than those who go after it? Knowing then this, let us endure all for virtue, so shall we enjoy true pleasure, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 37 on the Gospel of John

John 5:6-7

"Jesus says unto him, Will you be made whole? The impotent man answered Him, Yea, Sir, but I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool."

1. Great is the profit of the divine Scriptures, and all-sufficient is the aid which comes from them. And Paul declared this when he said, *"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written aforetime for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world have come, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."* [Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11] For the divine oracles are a treasury of all manner of medicines, so that whether it be needful to quench pride, to lull desire to sleep, to tread under foot the love of money, to despise pain, to inspire confidence, to gain patience, from them one may find abundant resource. For what man of those who struggle with long poverty or who are nailed to a grievous disease, will not, when he reads the passage before us, receive much comfort? Since this man who had been paralytic for thirty and eight years, and who saw each year others delivered, and himself bound by his disease, not even so fell back and despaired, though in truth not merely despondency for the past, but also hopelessness for the future, was sufficient to over-strain him. Hear now what he says, and learn the greatness of his sufferings. For when Christ had said, *"Will you be made whole?"* *"Yea, Lord,"* he says, *"but I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool."* What can be more pitiable than these words? What more sad than these circumstances? Do you see a heart

crushed through long sickness? Do you see all violence subdued? He uttered no blasphemous word, nor such as we hear the many use in reverses, he cursed not his day, he was not angry at the question, nor did he say, *"Have You come to make a mock and a jest of us, that Thou asks whether I desire to be made whole?"* but replied gently, and with great mildness, *"Yea, Lord"*; yet he knew not who it was that asked him, nor that He would heal him, but still he mildly relates all the circumstances and asks nothing further, as though he were speaking to a physician, and desired merely to tell the story of his sufferings. Perhaps he hoped that Christ might be so far useful to him as to put him into the water, and desired to attract Him by these words. What then says Jesus?

John 5:8

"Rise, take up your bed, and walk."

Now some suppose that this is the man in Matthew who was *"lying on a bed"* [Matthew 9:2]; but it is not so, as is clear in many ways. First, from his wanting persons to stand forward for him. That man had many to care for and to carry him, this man not a single one; wherefore he said, *"I have no man."* Secondly, from the manner of answering; the other uttered no word, but this man relates his whole case. Thirdly, from the season and the time; this man was healed at a feast, and on the Sabbath, that other on a different day. The places too were different; one was cured in a house, the other by the pool. The manner also of the cure was altered; there Christ said, *"Your sins be forgiven you,"* but here He braced the body first, and then cared for the soul. In that case there was remission of sins, (for He says, *"Your sins be forgiven you,"*) but in this, warning and threats to strengthen the man for the future; *"Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you."* [John 5:14] The charges also of the Jews are different; here they object to Jesus, His working on the Sabbath, there they charge Him with blasphemy.

Consider now, I pray you, the exceeding wisdom of God. He raised not up the man at once, but first makes him familiar by questioning, making way for the coming faith; nor does He only raise, but bids him *"take up his bed,"* so as to confirm the miracle that had been wrought, and that none might suppose what was done to be illusion or a piece of acting. For he would not, unless his limbs had been firmly and thoroughly compacted, have been able to carry his bed. And this Christ often does, effectually silencing those who would fain be insolent. So in the case of the loaves, that

no one might assert that the men had been merely satisfied, and that what was done was an illusion, He caused that there should be many relics of the loaves. So to the leper that was cleansed He said, "*Go, show yourself to the priest*" [Matthew 8:4]; at once providing most certain proof of the cleansing, and stopping the shameless mouths of those who asserted that He was legislating in opposition to God. This also He did in like manner in the case of the wine; for He did not merely show it to them, but also caused it to be borne to the governor of the feast, in order that one who knew nothing of what had been done, by his confession might bear to Him unsuspected testimony; wherefore the Evangelist says, that the ruler of the feast "*knew not whence it was,*" thus showing the impartiality of his testimony. And in another place, when He raised the dead, He said, "*Give ye him to eat*"; supplying this proof of a real resurrection, and by these means persuading even the foolish that He was no deceiver, no dealer in illusions, but that He had come for the salvation of the common nature of mankind.

2. But why did not Jesus require faith of this man, as He did in the case of others, saying, "*Believest thou that I am able to do this?*" It was because the man did not yet clearly know who He was; and it is not before, but after the working of miracles that He is seen so doing. For persons who had beheld His power exerted on others would reasonably have this said to them, while of those who had not yet learned who He was, but who were to know afterwards by means of signs, it is after the miracles that faith is required. And therefore Matthew does not introduce Christ as having said this at the beginning of His miracles, but when He had healed many, to the two blind men only.

Observe however in this way the faith of the paralytic. When he had heard, "*Take up your bed and walk,*" he did not mock, nor say, "*What can this mean? An Angel comes down and troubles the water, and heals only*

one, and do You, a man, by a bare command and word hope to be able to do greater things than Angels? This is mere vanity, boasting, mockery." But he neither said nor imagined anything like this, but at once he heard and arose, and becoming whole, was not disobedient to Him that gave the command; for immediately he was made whole, and *"took up his bed, and walked."* What followed was even far more admirable. That he believed at first, when no one troubled him, was not so marvelous, but that afterwards, when the Jews were full of madness and pressed upon him on all sides, accusing and besieging him and saying, *"It is not lawful for you to take up your bed,"* that then he gave no heed to their madness, but most boldly in the midst of the assembly proclaimed his Benefactor and silenced their shameless tongues, this, I say, was an act of great courage. For when the Jews arose against him, and said in a reproachful and insolent manner to him ("It is not lawful . . ."): . . .):

John 5:10-11

"It is the Sabbath day, it is not lawful for you to carry your bed . . . He that made me whole, the Same said unto me, Take up your bed, and walk."

Hear what he says ("He that made me whole . . ."), all but saying, *"You are silly and mad who bid me not to take Him for my Teacher who has delivered me from a long and grievous malady, and not to obey whatever He may command."* Had he chosen to act in an unfair manner, he might have spoke differently, as thus, *"I do not this of my own will, but at the bidding of another; if this be a matter of blame, blame him who gave the order, and I will set down the bed."* And he might have concealed the cure, for he well knew that they were vexed not so much at the breaking of the Sabbath, as at the curing of his infirmity. Yet he neither concealed this, nor said that, nor asked for pardon, but with loud voice confessed and proclaimed the benefit. Thus did the paralytic; but consider how unfairly they acted. For they said not, *"Who is it that has made you whole?"* on this point they were silent, but kept on bringing forward the seeming transgression.

John 5:12-13

"What man is that which said unto you, Take up your bed and walk? And he that was healed knew not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place."

And why did Jesus conceal Himself? First, that while He was absent, the testimony of the man might be unsuspected, for he who now felt himself whole was a credible witness of the benefit. And in the next place, that He might not cause the fury of the Jews to be yet more inflamed, for the very sight of one whom they envy is wont to kindle not a small spark in malicious persons. On this account He retired, and left the deed by itself to plead its cause among them, that He might not say anything in person respecting Himself, but that they might do so who had been healed, and with them also the accusers. Even these last for a while testify to the miracle, for they said not, *"Wherefore have you commanded these things to be done on the Sabbath day?"* but, *"Wherefore doest thou these things on the Sabbath day?"* not being displeased at the transgression, but envious at the restoration of the paralytic. Yet in respect of human labor, what the paralytic did was rather a work, for the other was a saying and a word. Here then He commands another to break the Sabbath, but elsewhere He does the same Himself, mixing clay and anointing a man's eyes [John 9]; yet He does these things not transgressing, but going beyond the Law. And on this we shall hereafter speak. For He does not, when accused by the Jews respecting the Sabbath, always defend Himself in the same terms, and this we must carefully observe.

3. But let us consider awhile how great an evil is envy, how it disables the eyes of the soul to the endangering his salvation who is possessed by it. For as madmen often thrust their swords against their own bodies, so also

malicious persons looking only to one thing, the injury of him they envy, care not for their own salvation. Men like these are worse than wild beasts; they when wanting food, or having first been provoked by us, arm themselves against us; but these men when they have received kindness, have often repaid their benefactors as though they had wronged them. Worse than wild beasts are they, like the devils, or perhaps worse than even those; for they against us indeed have unceasing hostility, but do not plot against those of their own nature, (and so by this Jesus silenced the Jews when they said that He cast out devils by Beelzebub,) but these men neither respect their common nature, nor spare their own selves. For before they vex those whom they envy they vex their own souls, filling them with all manner of trouble and despondency, fruitlessly and in vain. For wherefore do you grieve, O man, at the prosperity of your neighbor? We ought to grieve at the ills we suffer, not because we see others in good repute. Wherefore this sin is stripped of all excuse. The fornicator may allege his lust, the thief his poverty, the man-slayer his passion, frigid excuses and unreasonable, still they have these to allege. But what reason, tell me, will you name? None other at all, but that of intense wickedness. If we are commanded to love our enemies, what punishment shall we suffer if we hate our very friends? And if he who loves those that love him will be in no better a state than the heathen, what excuse, what palliation shall he have who injures those that have done him no wrong? Hear Paul, what he says, *"Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing"* [1 Corinthians 13:3]; now it is clear to every one that where envy and malice are, there charity is not. This feeling is worse than fornication and adultery, for these go no farther than him who does them, but the tyranny of envy has overturned entire Churches, and has destroyed the whole world. Envy is the mother of murder. Through this Cain slew Abel

his brother; through this Esau (would have slain) Jacob, and his brethren Joseph, through this the devil all mankind. Thou indeed now killest not, but thou dost many things worse than murder, desiring that your brother may act unseemly, laying snares for him on all sides, paralyzing his labors on the side of virtue, grieving that he pleases the Master of the world. Yet you war not with your brother, but with Him whom he serves, Him you insult when you prefer your glory to His. And what is in truth worst of all, is that this sin seems to be an unimportant one, while in fact it is more grievous than any other; for though you show mercy and watchest and fastest, you are more accursed than any if you envy your brother. As is clear from this circumstance also. A man of the Corinthians was once guilty of adultery, yet he was charged with his sin and soon restored to righteousness; Cain envied Abel; but he was not healed, and although God Himself continually charmed the wound, he became more pained and wave-tossed, and was hurried on to murder. Thus this passion is worse than that other, and does not easily permit itself to be cured except we give heed. Let us then by all means tear it up by the roots, considering this, that as we offend God when we waste with envy at other men's blessings, so when we rejoice with them we are well pleasing to Him, and render ourselves partakers of the good things laid up for the righteous. Therefore Paul exhorts us to *"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep"* [Romans 12:15], that on either hand we may reap great profit.

Considering then that even when we labor not, by rejoicing with him that labors, we become sharers of his crown, let us cast aside all envy, and implant charity in our souls, that by applauding those of our brethren who are well pleasing unto God, we may obtain both present and future good things, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by

whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 38 on the Gospel of John

John 5:14

"Afterward Jesus finds him in the Temple, and said unto him, Behold, you are made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you."

1. A fearful thing is sin, fearful, and the ruin of the soul, and the mischief oftentimes through its excess has overflowed and attacked men's bodies also. For since for the most part when the soul is diseased we feel no pain, but if the body receive though but a little hurt, we use every exertion to free it from its infirmity, because we are sensible of the infirmity, therefore God oftentimes punishes the body for the transgressions of the soul, so that by means of the scourging of the inferior part, the better part also may receive some healing. Thus too among the Corinthians Paul restored the adulterer, checking the disease of the soul by the destruction of the flesh, and having applied the knife to the body, so repressed the evil [1 Corinthians 5:5]; like some excellent physician employing external cautery for dropsy or spleen, when they refuse to yield to internal remedies. This also Christ did in the case of the paralytic; as He showed when He said, *"Behold, you are made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you."*

Now what do we learn from this? First, that his disease had been produced by his sins; secondly, that the accounts of hell fire are to be believed; thirdly, that the punishment is long, nay endless. Where now are those who say, *"I murdered in an hour, I committed adultery in a little moment of time, and am I eternally punished?"* For behold this man had not sinned for so many years as he suffered, for he had spent a whole lifetime in

the length of his punishment; and sins are not judged by time, but by the nature of the transgressions. Besides this, we may see another thing, that though we have suffered severely for former sins, if we afterwards fall into the same, we shall suffer much more severely. And with good reason; for he who is not made better even by punishment, is afterwards led as insensible and a despiser to still heavier chastisement. The fault should of itself be sufficient to check and to render more sober the man who once has slipped, but when not even the addition of punishment effects this, he naturally requires more bitter torments. Now if even in this world when after punishment we fall into the same sins, we are chastised yet more severely than before, ought we not when after sinning we have not been punished at all, to be then very exceedingly afraid and to tremble, as being about to endure something irreparable? *"And wherefore,"* says some one, *"are not all thus punished? For we see many bad men well in body, vigorous, and enjoying great prosperity."* But let us not be confident, let us mourn for them in this case most of all, since their having suffered nothing here, helps them on to a severer vengeance hereafter. As Paul declares when he says, *"But now that we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world"* [1 Corinthians 11:32]; for the punishments here are for warning, there for vengeance.

"What then," says one, *"do all diseases proceed from sin?"* Not all, but most of them; and some proceed from different kinds of loose living, since gluttony, intemperance, and sloth, produce such like sufferings. But the one rule we have to observe, is to bear every stroke thankfully; for they are sent because of our sins, as in the Kings we see one attacked by gout [1 Kings 15:23]; they are sent also to make us approved, as the Lord says to Job, *"Do you think that I have spoken to you, save that you might appear righteous?"* [Job 60:8, Septuagint]

But why is it that in the case of these paralytics Christ brings forward their sins? For He says also to him in Matthew who lay on a bed, *"Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you"* [Matthew 9:2]: and to this man, *"Behold, you are made whole; sin no more."* I know that some slander this paralytic, asserting that he was an accuser of Christ, and that therefore this speech was addressed to him; what then shall we say of the other in Matthew, who heard nearly the same words? For Christ says to him also, *"Your sins be forgiven you."* Whence it is clear, that neither was this man thus addressed on the account which they allege. And this we may see more clearly from what follows; for, says the Evangelist, *"Afterward Jesus finds him in the Temple,"* which is an indication of his great piety; for he departed not into the market places and walks, nor gave himself up to luxury and ease, but remained in the Temple, although about to sustain so violent an attack and to be harassed by all there. Yet none of these things persuaded him to depart from the Temple. Moreover Christ having found him, even after he had conversed with the Jews, implied nothing of the kind. For had He desired to charge him with this, He would have said to him, *"Are you again attempting the same sins as before, are you not made better by your cure?"* Yet He said nothing of the kind, but merely secures him for the future.

2. Why then, when He had cured the halt and maimed, did He not in any instance make mention of the like? Methinks that the diseases of these (the paralytic) arose from acts of sin, those of the others from natural infirmity. Or if this be not so, then by means of these men, and by the words spoken to them, He has spoken to the rest also. For since this disease is more grievous than any other, by the greater He corrects also the less. And as when He had healed a certain other He charged him to give glory to God, addressing this exhortation not to him only but through him to all, so He

addresses to these, and by these to all the rest of mankind, that exhortation and advice which was given to them by word of mouth. Besides this we may also say, that Jesus perceived great endurance in his soul, and addressed the exhortation to him as to one who was able to receive His command, keeping him to health both by the benefit, and by the fear of future ills.

And observe the absence of boasting. He said not, *"Behold, I have made you whole,"* but, *"You are made whole; sin no more."* And again, not, *"lest I punish you,"* but, *"lest a worse thing come unto you";* putting both expressions not personally, and showing that the cure was rather of grace than of merit. For He declared not to him that he was delivered after suffering the deserved amount of punishment, but that through lovingkindness he was made whole. Had this not been the case, He would have said, *"Behold, you have suffered a sufficient punishment for your sins, be steadfast for the future."* But now He spoke not so, but how? *"Behold, you are made whole; sin no more."* Let us continually repeat these words to ourselves, and if after having been chastised we have been delivered, let each say to himself, *"Behold, you are made whole; sin no more."* But if we suffer not punishment though continuing in the same courses, let us use for our charm that word of the Apostle, *"The goodness of God leads [us] to repentance, but after [our] hardness and impenitent heart, [we] treasure up unto [ourselves] wrath."* [Romans 2:4-5]

And not only by strengthening the sick man's body, but also in another way, did He afford him a strong proof of His Divinity; for by saying, *"Sin no more,"* He showed that He knew all the transgressions that had formerly been committed by him; and by this He would gain his belief as to the future.

John 5:15

"The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus that had made him whole."

Again observe him continuing in the same right feeling. He says not, *"This is he who said, Take up your bed,"* but when they continually advanced this seeming charge, he continually puts forward the defense, again declaring his Healer, and seeking to attract and attach others to Him. For he was not so unfeeling as after such a benefit and charge to betray his Benefactor, and to speak as he did with an evil intention. Had he been a wild beast, had he been something unlike a man and of stone, the benefit and the fear would have been enough to restrain him, since, having the threat lodged within, he would have dreaded lest he should suffer *"a worse thing,"* having already received the greatest pledges of the power of his Physician. Besides, had he wished to slander Him, he would have said nothing about his own cure, but would have mentioned and urged against Him the breach of the Sabbath. But this is not the case, surely it is not; the words are words of great boldness and candor; he proclaims his Benefactor no less than the blind man did. For what said he? *"He made clay, and anointed my eyes"* [John 9:6]; and so this man of whom we now speak, *"It is Jesus who made me whole."*

John 5:16

"Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day."

What then says Christ?

John 5:17

"My Father works hitherto, and I work."

When there was need to make excuse for the Disciples, He brought forward David their fellow-servant, saying, *"Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered?"* [Matthew 12:2] But when excuse was to be made for Himself, He betook Himself to the Father, showing in two ways His Equality, by calling God His Father peculiarly, and by doing the same things which He did. *"And wherefore did He not mention what took place at Jericho?"* Because He wished to raise them up from earth that they might no longer attend to Him as to a man, but as to God, and as to one who ought to legislate: since had He not been The Very Son and of the same Essence, the defense would have been worse than the charge. For if a viceroy who had altered a royal law should, when charged with so doing, excuse himself in this manner, and say, *"Yea, for the king also has annulled laws,"* he would not be able to escape, but would thus increase the weight of the charge. But in this instance, since the dignity is equal, the defense is made perfect on most secure grounds. *"From the charges,"* says He, *"from which you absolve God, absolve Me also."* And therefore He said first, *"My Father,"* that He might persuade them even against their will to allow to Him the same, through reverence of His clearly asserted Sonship.

If any one say, *"And how does the Father 'work,' who ceased on the seventh day from all His works?"* let him learn the manner in which He *"works."* What then is the manner of His working? He cares for, He holds together all that has been made. Therefore when you behold the sun rising and the moon running in her path, the lakes, and fountains, and rivers, and rains, the course of nature in the seeds and in our own bodies and those of

irrational beings, and all the rest by means of which this universe is made up, then learn the ceaseless working of the Father. *"For He makes His sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] And again; *"If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the fire "* [Matthew 6:30]; and speaking of the birds He said, *"Your Heavenly Father feeds them."*

3. In that place then He did all on the Sabbath day by words only, and added nothing more, but refuted their charges by what was done in the Temple and from their own practice. But here where He commanded a work to be done, the taking up a bed, (a thing of no great importance as regarded the miracle, though by it He showed one point, a manifest violation of the Sabbath,) He leads up His discourse to something greater, desiring the more to awe them by reference to the dignity of the Father, and to lead them up to higher thought. Therefore when His discourse is concerning the Sabbath, He makes not His defense as man only, or as God only, but sometimes in one way, sometimes in the other; because He desired to persuade them both of the condescension of the Dispensation, and the Dignity of His Godhead. Therefore He now defends Himself as God, since had He always conversed with them merely as a man, they would have continued in the same low condition. Wherefore that this may not be, He brings forward the Father. Yet the creation itself *"works"* on the Sabbath, (for the sun runs, rivers flow, fountains bubble, women bear,) but that you may learn that He is not of creation, He said not, *"Yea, I work, for creation works,"* but, *"Yea, I work, for My Father works."*

John 5:18

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

And this he asserted not by words merely, but by deeds, for not in speech alone, but also yet oftener by actions He declared it. Why so? Because they might object to His words and charge Him with arrogance, but when they saw the truth of His actions proved by results, and His power proclaimed by works, after that they could say nothing against Him.

But they who will not receive these words in a right mind assert, that *"Christ made not Himself equal to God, but that the Jews suspected this."* Come then let us go over what has been said from the beginning. Tell me, did the Jews persecute Him, or did they not? It is clear to every one that they did. Did they persecute Him for this or for something else? It is again allowed that it was for this. Did He then break the Sabbath, or did He not? Against the fact that He did, no one can have anything to say. Did He call God His Father, or did He not call Him so? This too is true. Then the rest also follows by the same consequence; for as to call God His Father, to break the Sabbath, and to be persecuted by the Jews for the former and more especially for the latter reason, belonged not to a false imagination, but to actual fact, so to make Himself equal to God was a declaration of the same meaning.

And this one may see more clearly from what He had before said, for *"My Father works, and I work,"* is the expression of One declaring Himself equal to God. For in these words He has marked no difference. He said not, *"He works, and I minister,"* but, *"As He works, so work I";* and has declared absolute Equality. But if He had not wished to establish this, and the Jews

had supposed so without reason, He would not have allowed their minds to be deceived, but would have corrected this. Besides, the Evangelist would not have been silent on the subject, but would have plainly said that the Jews supposed so, but that Jesus did not make Himself equal to God. As in another place he does this very thing, when he perceives that something was said in one way, and understood in another; as, *"Destroy this Temple,"* said Christ, *"and in three days I will raise It up"* [John 2:19]; speaking of His Flesh. But the Jews, not understanding this, and supposing that the words were spoken of the Jewish Temple, said, *"Forty and six years was this temple in building, and will You rear it up in three days?"* Since then He said one thing, and they imagined another, (for He spoke of His Flesh, and they thought that the words were spoken of their Temple,) the Evangelist remarking on this, or rather correcting their imagination, goes on to say, *"But He spoke of the Temple of His Body."* So that here also, if Christ had not made Himself equal with God, had not wished to establish this, and yet the Jews had imagined that He did, the writer would here also have corrected their supposition, and would have said, *"The Jews thought that He made Himself equal to God, but indeed He spoke not of equality."* And this is done not in this place only, nor by this Evangelist only, but again elsewhere another Evangelist is seen to do the same. For when Christ warned His disciples, saying, *"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees"* [Matthew 16:6], and they reasoned among themselves, saying, *"It is because we have taken no bread,"* and He spoke of one thing, calling their doctrine *"leaven,"* but the disciples imagined another, supposing that the words were said of bread; it is not now the Evangelist who sets them right, but Christ Himself, speaking thus, *"How is it that you do not understand, that I spoke not to you concerning bread?"* But here there is nothing of the kind.

"But," says some one, to remove this very thought Christ has added,

John 5:19

"The Son can do nothing of Himself."

Man! He does the contrary. He says this not to take away, but to confirm, His Equality. But attend carefully, for this is no common question. The expression *"of Himself"* is found in many places of Scripture, with reference both to Christ and to the Holy Ghost, and we must learn the force of the expression, that we may not fall into the greatest errors; for if one take it separately by itself in the way in which it is obvious to take it, consider how great an absurdity will follow. He said not that He could do some things of Himself and that others He could not, but universally,

4. *"The Son can do nothing of Himself."* I ask then my opponent, *"Can the Son do nothing of Himself, tell me?"* If he reply, *"that He can do nothing,"* we will say, that He has done of Himself the very greatest of all goods. As Paul cries aloud, saying, *"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant."* [Philippians 2:6-7] And again, Christ Himself in another place says, *"I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again":* and, *"No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself."* [John 10:18] Do you see that He has power over life and death, and that He wrought of Himself so mighty a Dispensation? And why speak I concerning Christ, when even we, than whom nothing can be meaner, do many things of ourselves? Of ourselves we choose vice, of ourselves we go after virtue, and if we do it not of ourselves, and not having power, we shall neither suffer hell if we do wrong, nor enjoy the Kingdom if we do right.

What then means, "*Can do nothing of Himself*"? That He can do nothing in opposition to the Father, nothing alien from, nothing strange to Him, which is especially the assertion of One declaring an Equality and entire agreement.

But wherefore said He not, that "*He does nothing contrary*," instead of, "*He cannot do*"? It was that from this again He might show the invariableness and exactness of the Equality, for the expression imputes not weakness to Him, but even shows His great power; since in another place Paul says of the Father, "*That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie*" [Hebrews 6:18]: and again, "*If we deny Him — He abides faithful*," for "*He cannot deny Himself*." [2 Timothy 2:12-13] And in truth this expression, "*impossible*," is not declaratory of weakness, but power, power unspeakable. For what He says is of this kind, that "*that Essence admits not such things as these*." For just as when we also say, "*it is impossible for God to do wrong*," we do not impute to Him any weakness, but confess in Him an unutterable power; so when He also says, "*I can of My own Self do nothing*" [John 5:30], His meaning is, that "*it is impossible, nature admits not, that I should do anything contrary to the Father*." And that you may learn that this is really what is said, let us, going over what follows, see whether Christ agrees with what is said by us, or among you. You say, that the expression does away with His Power and His proper Authority, and shows His might to be but weak; but I say, that this proves His Equality, His unvarying Likeness, (to the Father,) and the fact that all is done as it were by one Will and Power and Might. Let us then enquire of Christ Himself, and see by what He next says whether He interprets these words according to your supposition or according to ours. What then says He?

"For what things soever the Father does these also does the Son likewise."

Do you see how He has taken away your assertion by the root, and confirmed what is said by us? Since, if Christ does nothing of Himself, neither will the Father do anything of Himself, if so be that Christ does all things in like manner to Him. If this be not the case, another strange conclusion will follow. For He said not, that *"whatsoever things He saw the Father do, He did,"* but, *"except He see the Father doing anything, He does it not";* extending His words to all time; now He will, according to you, be continually learning the same things. Do you see how exalted is the idea, and that the very humility of the expression compels even the most shameless and unwilling to avoid groveling thoughts, and such as are unsuited to His dignity? For who so wretched and miserable as to assert, that the Son learns day by day what He must do? And how can that be true, *"You are the same, and Your years shall not fail"*? [Psalm 102:27], or that other, *"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made"* [John 1:3]; if the Father does certain things, and the Son sees and imitates Him? Do you see that from what was asserted above, and from what was said afterwards, proof is given of His independent Power? And if He brings forward some expressions in lowly manner, marvel not, for since they persecuted Him when they had heard His exalted sayings, and deemed Him to be an enemy of God, sinking a little in expression alone, He again leads His discourse up to the sublimer doctrines, then in turn to the lower, varying His teaching that it might be easy of acceptance even to the indisposed. Observe, after saying, *"My Father works, and I work"*; and after declaring Himself equal with God, He adds, *"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do."* Then again in a higher strain,

"What things soever the Father does, these also does the Son likewise."

Then in a lower,

John 5:20

"The Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these."

Do you see how great is the humility of this? And with reason; for what I said before, what I shall not cease to say, I will now repeat, that when He utters anything low or humbly, He puts it in excess, that the very poverty of the expression may persuade even the indisposed to receive the notions with pious understanding. Since, if it be not so, see how absurd a thing is asserted, making the trial from the words themselves. For when He says, *"And shall show Him greater works than these,"* He will be found not to have yet learned many things, which cannot be said even of the Apostles; for they when they had once received the grace of the Spirit, in a moment both knew and were able to do all things which it was needful that they should know and have power to do, while Christ will be found to have not yet learned many things which He needed to know. And what can be more absurd than this?

What then is His meaning? It was because He had strengthened the paralytic, and was about to raise the dead, that He thus spoke, all but saying, *"Wonder ye that I have strengthened the paralyzed? You shall see greater things than these."* But He spoke not thus, but proceeded somehow in a humbler strain, in order that He might soothe their madness. And that you may learn that *"shall show"* is not used absolutely, listen again to what follows.

John 5:21

"For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."

Yet *"can do nothing of Himself"* is opposed to *"whom He will"*: since if He quickens *"whom He will,"* He can do something *"of Himself,"* (for to *"will"* implies power,) but if He *"can do nothing of Himself,"* then He can not *"quicken whom He will."* For the expression, *"as the Father raises up,"* shows unvarying resemblance in Power, and *"whom He will,"* Equality of Authority. Do you see therefore that *"cannot do anything of Himself"* is the expression of One not taking away His (own) authority, but declaring the unvarying resemblance of His Power and Will (to those of the Father)? In this sense also understand the words, *"shall show to Him"*; for in another place He says, *"I will raise him up at the last Day."* [John 6:40] And again, to show that He does it not by receiving an inward power from above, He says, *"I am the Resurrection and the Life."* [John 11:25] Then that you may not assert that He raises what dead He will and quickens them, but that He does not other things in such manner, He anticipates and prevents every objection of the kind by saying, *"What things soever He does, these also does the Son likewise,"* thus declaring that He does all things which the Father does, and as the Father does them; whether you speak of the raising of the dead, or the fashioning of bodies, or the remission of sins, or any other matter whatever, He works in like manner to Him who begot Him.

5. But men careless of their salvation give heed to none of these things; so great an evil is it to be in love with precedence. This has been the mother of heresies, this has confirmed the impiety of the heathen. For God desired that His invisible things should be understood by the creation of this world [Romans 1:20], but they having left these and refused to come by this

mode of teaching, cut out for themselves another way, and so were cast out from the true. And the Jews believed not because they received honor from one another, and sought not the honor which is from God. But let us, beloved, avoid this disease exceedingly and with all earnestness; for though we have ten thousand good qualities, this plague of vainglory is sufficient to bring them all to nought. [John 5:44] If therefore we desire praise, let us seek the praise which is from God, for the praise of men of what kind soever it be, as soon as it has appeared has perished, or if it perish not, brings to us no profit, and often proceeds from a corrupt judgment. And what is there to be admired in the honor which is from men? Which young dancers enjoy, and abandoned women, and covetous and rapacious men? But he who is approved of God, is approved not with these, but with those holy men the Prophets and Apostles, who have shown forth an angelic life. If we feel any desire to lead multitudes about with us or be looked at by them, let us consider the matter apart by itself, and we shall find that it is utterly worthless. In fine, if you are fond of crowds, draw to yourself the host of angels, and become terrible to the devils, then shall you care nothing for mortal things, but shall tread all that is splendid underfoot as mire and clay; and shall clearly see that nothing so fits a soul for shame as the passion for glory; for it cannot, it cannot be, that the man who desires this should live the crucified life, as on the other hand it is not possible that the man who has trodden this underfoot should not tread down most other passions; for he who masters this will get the better of envy and covetousness, and all the grievous maladies. *"And how,"* says some one, *"shall we get the better of it?"* If we look to the other glory which is from heaven, and from which this kind strives to cast us out. For that heavenly glory both makes us honored here, and passes with us into the life which is to come, and delivers us from all fleshly slavery which we now most

miserably serve, giving up ourselves entirely to earth and the things of earth. For if you go into the forum, if you enter into a house, into the streets, into the soldiers' quarters, into inns, taverns, ships, islands, palaces, courts of justice, council chambers, you shall everywhere find anxiety for things present and belonging to this life, and each man laboring for these things, whether gone or coming, traveling or staying at home, voyaging, tilling lands, in the fields, in the cities, in a word, all. What hope then of salvation have we, when inhabiting God's earth we care not for the things of God, when bidden to be aliens from earthly things we are aliens from heaven and citizens of earth? What can be worse than this insensibility, when hearing each day of the Judgment and of the Kingdom, we imitate the men in the days of Noah, and those of Sodom, waiting to learn all by actual experience? Yet for this purpose were all those things written, that if any one believe not that which is to come, he may, from what has already been, get certain proof of what shall be. Considering therefore these things, both the past and the future, let us at least take breath a little from this hard slavery, and make some account of our souls also, that we may obtain both present and future blessings; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 39 on the Gospel of John

John 5:23-24

"For My Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

1. Beloved, we need great diligence in all things, for we shall render account of and undergo a strict enquiry both of words and works. Our interests stop not with what now is, but a certain other condition of life shall receive us after this, and we shall be brought before a fearful tribunal. *"For we must appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad."* [2 Corinthians 5:10] Let us ever bear in mind this tribunal, that we may thus be enabled at all times to continue in virtue; for as he who has cast out from his soul that day, rushes like a horse that has burst his bridle to precipices, (for *"his ways are always defiled"* [Psalm 10:5]) and then assigning the reason the Psalmist has added, *"He puts Your judgments far away out of his sight";*) so he that always retains this fear will walk soberly. *"Remember,"* says one, *"your last things, and you shall never do amiss."* [Sirach 7:40] For He who now has remitted our sins, will then sin in judgment; He who has died for our sake will then appear again to judge all mankind. *"Unto them that look for Him,"* says the Apostle, *"shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* [Hebrews 9:28] Wherefore in this place also He says, *"My Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son; even as they honor the Father."*

"Shall we then," says some one, "also call Him Father?" Away with the thought. He uses the word *"Son"* that we may honor Him still remaining a Son, as we honor the Father; but he who calls Him *"Father"* does not honor the Son as the Father, but has confounded the whole. Moreover as men are not so much brought to by being benefited as by being punished, on this account He has spoken thus terribly, that even fear may draw them to honor Him. And when He says *"all,"* His meaning is this, that He has power to punish and to honor, and does either as He will. The expression *"has given,"* is used that you may not suppose Him not to have been Begotten, and so think that there are two Fathers. For all that the Father is, this the Son is also, Begotten, and remaining a Son. And that you may learn that *"has given"* is the same as *"has begotten,"* hear this very thing declared by another place. *"As,"* says Christ, *"the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself."* [John 5:26] *"What then? Did he first beget and then give Him life? For he who gives, gives to something which is. Was He then begotten without life?"* Not even the devils could imagine this, for it is very foolish as well as impious. As then *"has given life"* is *"has begotten Him who is Life,"* so, *"has given judgment"* is *"has begotten Him who shall be Judge."*

That you may not when you hear that He has the Father for His cause imagine any difference of essence or inferiority of honor, He comes to judge you, by this proving His Equality. For He who has authority to punish and to honor whom He will, has the same Power with the Father. Since, if this be not the case, if having been begotten He afterwards received the honor, how came it that He was afterwards [thus] honored, by what mode of advancement reached He so far as to receive and be appointed to this dignity? Are ye not ashamed thus impudently to apply to that Pure Nature which admits of no addition these carnal and mean imaginations?

"Why then," says some one, "*does Christ so speak?*" That His words may be readily received, and to clear the way for sublime sayings; therefore He mixes these with those, and those with these. And observe how (He does it); for it is good to see this from the beginning. He said, "*My Father works, and I work*" [John 5:17, etc.]: declaring by this their Equality and Equal honor. But they "*sought to kill Him.*" What does He then? He lowers His form of speech indeed, and puts the same meaning when He says, "*The Son can do nothing of Himself.*" Then again He raises His discourse to high matters, saying, "*What things soever the Father does, these also does the Son likewise.*" Then He returns to what is lower, "*For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that Himself does; and He will show Him greater things than these.*" Then He rises higher, "*For as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will.*" After this again He joins the high and the low together, "*For neither does the Father judge any one, but has given all judgment to the Son*"; then rises again, "*That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.*" Do you see how He varies the discourse, weaving it both of high and low words and expressions, in order that it might be acceptable to the men of that time, and that those who should come after might receive no injury, gaining from the higher part a right opinion of the rest? For if this be not the case, if these sayings were not uttered through condescension, wherefore were the high expressions added? Because one who is entitled to utter great words concerning himself, has, when he says anything mean and low, this reasonable excuse, that he does it for some prudential purpose; but if one who ought to speak meanly of himself says anything great, on what account does he utter words which surpass his nature? This is not for any purpose at all, but an act of extreme impiety.

2. We are therefore able to assign a reason for the lowly expressions, a reason sufficient, and becoming to God, namely, His condescension, His teaching us to be moderate, and the salvation which is thus wrought for us. To declare which He said Himself in another place, *"These things I say that you might be saved."* For when He left His own witness, and betook Himself to that of John, (a thing unworthy of His greatness,) He puts the reason of such lowliness of language, and says, *"These things I say that you might be saved."* And ye who assert that He has not the same authority and power with Him who begot Him, what can you say when you hear Him utter words by which He declares His Authority and Power and Glory equal in respect of the Father? Wherefore, if He be as you assert very inferior, does He claim the same honor? Nor does He stop even here, but goes on to say,

"He that honors not the Son honors not the Father which has sent Him." Do you see how the honor of the Son is connected with that of the Father? *"What of that?"* says one. *"We see the same in the case of the Apostles; 'He,' says Christ, 'who receives you receives Me.'"* [Matthew 10:40] But in that place He speaks so, because He makes the concerns of His servants His own; here, because the Essence and the Glory is One (with that of the Father). Therefore it is not said of the Apostles *"that they may honor,"* but rightly He says, *"He that honors not the Son honors not the Father."* For where there are two kings, if one is insulted the other is insulted also, and especially when he that is insulted is a son. He is insulted even when one of his soldiers is maltreated; not in the same way as in this case, but as it were in the person of another, while here it is as it were in his own. Wherefore He beforehand said, *"That they should honor the Son even as they honor the Father,"* in order that when He should say, *"He that honors not the Son honors not the Father,"* you might understand that the

honor is the same. For He says not merely, "*he that honors not the Son,*" but "*he that honors Him not so as I have said*" "*honors not the Father.*"

"And how," says one, "*can he that sends and he that is sent be of the same essence?*" Again, you bring down the argument to carnal things, and perceivest not that all this has been said for no other purpose, but that we might know Him to be The Cause, and not fall into the error of Sabellius, and that in this manner the infirmity of the Jews might be healed, so that He might not be deemed an enemy of God; for they said, "*This man is not of God*" [John 9:16], "*This man has not come from God.*" Now to remove this suspicion, high sayings did not contribute so much as the lowly, and therefore continually and everywhere He said that He had been "*sent*"; not that you might suppose that expression to be any lessening of His greatness, but in order to stop their mouths. And for this cause also He constantly betakes Himself to the Father, interposing moreover mention of His own high Parentage. For had He said all in proportion to His dignity, the Jews would not have received His words, since because of a few such expressions, they persecuted and oftentimes stoned Him; and if looking wholly to them He had used none but low expressions, many in after times might have been harmed. Wherefore He mingles and blends His teaching, both by these lowly sayings stopping, as I said, the mouths of the Jews, and also by expressions suited to His dignity banishing from men of sense any mean notion of what He had said, and proving that such a notion did not in any wise apply to Him at all.

The expression "*having been sent*" denotes change of place— but God is everywhere present. Wherefore then says He that He was "*sent*"? He speaks in an earthly way, declaring His unanimity with the Father. At least He shapes His succeeding words with a desire to effect this.

John 5:24

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears My word, and believes in Him that sent Me, has everlasting life."

Do you see how continually He puts the same thing to cure that feeling of suspicion, both in this place and in what follows by fear and by promises of blessings removing their jealousy of Him, and then again condescending greatly in words? For He said not, *"he that hears My words, and believes in Me,"* since they would have certainly deemed that to be pride, and a superfluous pomp of words; because, if after a very long time, and ten thousand miracles, they suspected this when He spoke after this manner, much more would they have done so then. It was on this account that at that later period they said to Him, *"Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead, how sayest Thou, If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death?"* [John 8:52] In order therefore that they may not here also become furious, see what He says, *"He that hears My word, and believes in Him that sent Me, has everlasting life."* This had no small effect in making His discourse acceptable, when they learned that those who hear Him believe in the Father also; for after having received this with readiness, they would more easily receive the rest. So that the very speaking in a humble manner contributed and led the way to higher things; for after saying, *"has everlasting life,"* He adds,

"And comes not into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."

By these two things He makes His discourse acceptable; first, because it is the Father who is believed on, and then, because the believer enjoys many blessings. And the *"comes not into judgment"* means, *"is not punished,"* for He speaks not of death *"here,"* but of death eternal, as also of the other *"life"* which is deathless.

John 5:25

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour comes, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that have heard shall live."

Having said the words, He speaks also of the proof by deeds. For when He had said, *"As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will,"* that the thing may not seem to be mere boasting and pride, He affords proof by works, saying, *"The hour comes";* then, that you may not deem that the time is long, He adds, *"and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have heard shall live."* Do you see here His absolute and unutterable authority? For as it shall be in the Resurrection, even so, He says, it shall be *"now."* Then too when we hear His voice commanding us we are raised; for, says the Apostle, *"at the command of God the dead shall arise."* *"And whence,"* perhaps some one will ask, *"is it clear that the words are not mere boast?"* From what He has added, *"and now is";* because had His promises referred only to some future time, His discourse would have been suspected by them, but now He supplies them with a proof: *"While I,"* says He, *"am tarrying among you, this thing shall come to pass";* and He would not, had He not possessed the power, have promised for that time, lest through the promise He should incur the greater ridicule. Then too He adds an argument demonstrative of His assertions, saying,

John 5:26

"For as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself."

3. Do you see that this declares a perfect likeness save in one point, which is the One being a Father, and the Other a Son? For the expression *"has given,"* merely introduces this distinction, but declares that all the rest is equal and exactly alike. Whence it is clear that the Son does all things with as much authority and power as the Father, and that He is not empowered from some other source, for He *"has life"* so as the Father has. And on this account, what comes after is straightway added, that from this we may understand the other also. What is this then? It is,

John 5:27

"Hath given Him authority to execute judgment also."

And wherefore does He continually dwell upon *"resurrection"* and *"judgment"*? For He says, *"As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will"*: and again, *"the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son"*: and again, *"As the Father has life in Himself so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself"*; and again, *"They that have heard [the Voice of the Son of God] shall live"*; and here again, *"Hath given to Him authority to execute judgment."* Wherefore does He dwell on these things continually? I mean, on *"judgment,"* and *"life,"* and *"resurrection"*? It is because these subjects are able most of any to attract even the obstinate hearer. For the man who is persuaded that he shall both rise again and shall give account to Christ of his transgressions, even though he have seen no other sign, yet having admitted this, will surely run to Him to propitiate his Judge.

John 5:28

"That He is the Son of Man, marvel not at this."

Paul of Samosata renders it not so; but how? *"Hath given Him authority to execute judgment, 'because' He is the Son of Man."* Now the passage thus read is inconsequent, for He did not receive judgment *"because"* He was man, (since then what hindered all men from being judges,) but because He is the Son of that Ineffable Essence, therefore is He Judge. So we must read, *"That He is the Son of Man, marvel not at this."* For when what He said seemed to the hearers inconsistent, and they deemed Him nothing more than mere man, while His words were greater than suited man, yea, or even angel, and were proper to God only, to solve this objection He adds,

John 5:28-29

"Marvel not [that He is the Son of Man,] for the hour is coming in the which they that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall go forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

And wherefore said He not, *"Marvel not that He is the Son of Man, for He is also the Son of God,"* but rather mentioned the *"resurrection"*? He did indeed put this above, by saying, *"shall hear the Voice of the Son of God."* And if here He is silent on the matter, wonder not; for after mentioning a work which was proper to God, He then permits His hearers to collect from it that He was God, and the Son of God. For had this been continually asserted by Himself, it would at that time have offended them, but when proved by the argument of miracles, it rendered His doctrine less burdensome. So they who put together syllogisms, when having laid down their premises they have fairly proved the point in question, frequently do not draw the conclusion themselves, but to render their hearers more fairly disposed, and to make their victory more evident, cause the opponent himself to give the verdict, so that the by-standers may the rather agree with them when their opponents decide in their favor. When therefore He mentioned the resurrection of Lazarus, He spoke not of the Judgment (for it was not for this that Lazarus arose); but when He spoke generally He also added, that *"they that have done good shall go forth unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."* Thus also John led on his hearers by speaking of the Judgment, and that *"he that believes not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him"* [John 3:36]: so too Himself led on Nicodemus: *"He that believes in the Son,"* He said to him, *"is not judged, but he that believes not is judged*

already" [John 3:18]; and so here He mentions the Judgment-seat and the punishment which shall follow upon evil deeds. For because He had said above, "*He that hears My words and believes in Him that sent Me,*" "*is not judged,*" lest any one should imagine that this alone is sufficient for salvation, He adds also the result of man's life, declaring that "*they which have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment.*" Since then He had said that all the world should render account to Him, and that all at His Voice should rise again, a thing new and strange and even now disbelieved by many who seem to have believed, not to say by the Jews at that time, hear how He goes to prove it, again condescending to the infirmity of His hearers.

John 5:30

"I can of My own self do nothing; as I hear I judge, and My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him which sent Me."

Although He had but lately given no trifling proof of the Resurrection by bracing the paralytic; on which account also He had not spoken of the Resurrection before He had done what fell little short of resurrection. And the Judgment He hinted at after He had braced the body, by saying, *"Behold, you are made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you"*; yet still He proclaimed beforehand the resurrection of Lazarus and of the world. And when He had spoken of these two, that of Lazarus which should come to pass almost immediately, and that of the inhabited world which should be long after, He confirms the first by the paralytic and by the nearness of the time, saying, *"The hour comes and now is"*; the other by the raising of Lazarus, by what had already come to pass bringing before their sight what had not yet done so. And this we may observe Him do everywhere, putting (forth) two or three predictions, and always confirming the future by the past.

4. Yet after saying and doing so much, since they still were very weak He is not content, but by other expressions calms their disputatious temper, saying, *"I can of Myself do nothing; as I hear I judge, and My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him which sent Me."* For since He appeared to make some assertions strange and varying from those of the Prophets, (for they said that it is God who judges all the earth, that is, the human race; and this truth David everywhere loudly proclaimed, *"He shall judge the people in righteousness,"* and, *"God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient"* [Psalm 96:10, and Psalm 7:11, Septuagint]; as did all the Prophets and Moses; but Christ said, *"The Father judges no man,*

but has committed all judgment to the Son": an expression which was sufficient to perplex a Jew who heard it, and to make him in turn suspect Christ of being an enemy of God,) He here greatly condescends in His speech, and as far as their infirmity requires, in order to pluck up by the roots this pernicious opinion, and says, *"I can of Myself do nothing"*; that is, *"nothing strange, or unlike, or what the Father desires not will you see done or hear said by Me."* And having before declared that He was *"the Son of Man,"* and because they supposed Him to be a man at that time, so also He puts [His expressions] here. As then when He said above, *"We speak that we have heard, and testify that we have seen"*; and when John said, *"What He has seen He testifies, and no man receives His testimony"* [John 3:32]; both expressions are used respecting exact knowledge, not concerning hearing and seeing merely; so in this place when He speaks of *"hearing,"* He declares nothing else than that it is impossible for Him to desire anything, save what the Father desires. Still He said not so plainly, (for they would not as yet have at once received it on hearing it thus asserted;) and how? In a manner very condescending and befitting a mere man, *"As I hear I judge."* Again He uses these words in this place, not with reference to *"instruction,"* (for He said not, *"as I am taught,"* but *"as I hear"*;) nor as though He needed to listen, (for not only did He not require to be taught, but He needed not even to listen;) but it was to declare the Unanimity and Identity of [His and the Father's] decision, as though He had said, *"So I judge, as if it were the Father Himself that judged."* Then He adds, *"and I know that My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."* What sayest Thou? Have You a will different from that of the Father? Yet in another place He says, *"As I and Thou are One,"* (speaking of will and unanimity,) *"grant to these also that they may be one in Us"* [John 17:21; not verbally quoted]; that is, *"in faith*

concerning Us." Do you see that the words which seem most humble are those which conceal a high meaning? For what He implies is of this kind: not that the will of the Father is one, and His own another; but that, *"as one will in one mind, so is My own will and My Father's."*

And marvel not that He has asserted so close a conjunction; for with reference to the Spirit also Paul has used this illustration: *"What man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God."* Thus Christ's meaning is no other than this: *"I have not a will different and apart from that of the Father, but if He desires anything, then I also; if I, then He also. As therefore none could object to the Father judging, so neither may any to Me, for the sentence of Each is given from the same Mind."* And if He utters these words rather as a man, marvel not, seeing that they still deemed Him to be mere man. Therefore in passages like these it is necessary not merely to enquire into the meaning of the words, but also to take into account the suspicion of the hearers, and listen to what is said as being addressed to that suspicion. Otherwise many difficulties will follow. Consider for instance, He says, *"I seek not My own will"*: according to this then His will is different (from that of the Father), is imperfect, nay, not merely imperfect, but even unprofitable. *"For if it be saving, if it agree with that of the Father, why do You not seek it?"* Mortals might with reason say so because they have many wills contrary to what seems good to the Father, but Thou, wherefore sayest Thou this, who art in all things like the Father? For this none would say is the language even of a *"man"* made perfect and crucified. For if Paul so blended himself with the will of God as to say, *"I live, yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me"* [Galatians 2:20], how says the Lord of all, *"I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me,"* as though that will were different? What then is His meaning? He applies His discourse as

if the case were that of a mere man, and suits His language to the suspicion of His hearers. For when He had, by what had gone before, given proof of His sayings, speaking partly as God, partly as a mere man, He again as a man endeavors to establish the same, and says, *"My judgment is just."* And whence is this seen? *"Because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."* *"For as in the case of men, he that is free from selfishness cannot be justly charged with having given an unfair decision, so neither will you now be able to accuse Me. He that desires to establish his own, may perhaps by many be suspected of corrupting justice with this intent; but he that looks not to his own, what reason can he have for not deciding justly? Apply now this reasoning to My case. Had I said that I was not sent by the Father, had I not referred to Him the glory of what was done, some of you might perhaps have suspected that desiring to gain honor for Myself, I said the thing that is not; but if I impute and refer what is done to another, wherefore and whence can you have cause to suspect My words?"* Do you see how He confirmed His discourse, and asserted that *"His judgment was just"* by an argument which any common man might have used in defending himself? Do you see how what I have often said is clearly visible? What is that? It is that the exceeding humility of the expressions most persuades men of sense not to receive the words off hand and then fall down [into low thoughts], but rather to take pains that they reach to the height of their meaning; this humility too with much ease then raises up those who were once groveling on the ground.

Now bearing all this in mind, let us not, I exhort you, carelessly pass by Christ's words, but enquire closely into them all, everywhere considering the reason of what has been said; and let us not deem that ignorance and simplicity will be sufficient to excuse us, for He has bidden us not merely to be *"harmless,"* but *"wise."* [Matthew 10:16] Let us therefore practice

wisdom with simplicity, both as to doctrines and the right actions of our lives; let us judge ourselves here, that we be not condemned with the world hereafter; let us act towards our fellow-servants as we desire our Master to act towards us: for (we say), *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."* [Matthew 6:12] I know that the smitten soul endures not meekly, but if we consider that by so doing we do a kindness not to him who has grieved us but to ourselves, we shall soon let go the venom of our wrath; for he who forgave not the hundred pence to him who had transgressed against him, wronged not his fellow-servant but himself, by rendering himself liable for the ten thousand talents of which he had before received forgiveness. [Matthew 18:30-34] When therefore we forgive not others, we forgive not ourselves. And so let us not merely say to God, *"remember not our offenses"*; but let each also say to himself, *"let us not remember the offenses of our fellow-servants done against us."* For you first give judgment on your own sins, and God judges after; you propose the law concerning remission and punishment, you declare your decision on these matters, and therefore whether God shall or shall not remember, rests with you. For which cause Paul bids us *"forgive, if any One has cause of complaint against any"* [Colossians 3:13], and not simply forgive, but so that not even any remnants be left behind. Since Christ not only did not publish our transgressions, but did not put us the transgressors in mind of them, nor say, *"in such and such things have you offended,"* but remitted and blotted out the handwriting, not reckoning our offenses, as Paul has also declared. [Colossians 2:14] Let us too do this; let us wipe away all [trespasses against us] from our minds; and if any good thing has been done to us by him that has grieved us, let us only reckon that; but if anything grievous and hard to bear, let us cast it forth and blot it out, so that not even a vestige of it remain. And if no good has been done us by him, so much the

greater recompense and higher credit will be ours if we forgive. Others by watching, by making the earth their bed, by ten thousand hardships, wipe away their sins, but thou by an easier way, I mean by not remembering wrongs, may cause all your trespasses to disappear. Why then do you thrust the sword against yourself, as do mad and frantic men, and banishest yourself from the life which is to come, when you ought to use every means to attain unto it? For if this present life be so desirable, what can one say of that other from which pain, and grief, and mourning, have fled away? There it needs not to fear death, nor imagine any end to those good things. Blessed, thrice blessed, yea, and this many times over, are they who enjoy that blessed rest, while they are miserable, thrice miserable, yea, ten thousand times miserable, who have cast themselves forth from that blessedness. *"And what,"* says some one, *"is it that makes us to enjoy that life?"* Hear the Judge Himself conversing with a certain young man on this matter. When the young man said, *"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* [Matthew 19:16] Christ, after repeating to him the other commandments, ended with the love of his neighbor. Perhaps like that rich man some of my hearers will say, *"that we also have kept these, for we neither have robbed, nor killed, nor committed adultery"*; yet assuredly you will not be able to say this, that you have loved your neighbor as you ought to have loved him. For if a man has envied or spoken evil of another, if he has not helped him when injured, or not imparted to him of his substance, then neither has he loved him. Now Christ has commanded not only this, but something besides. What then is this? *"Sell,"* he says, *"that you have, and give to the poor; and come, follow Me"* [Matthew 19:21]: terming the imitating Him in our actions *"following"* Him. What learn we hence? First, that he who has not all these things cannot attain unto the chief places in *"that"* rest. For after the young man had said, *"All these things have I done,"* Christ, as

though some great thing were wanting to his being perfectly approved, replied, *"If you will be perfect, sell that you have, and give to the poor: and come, follow Me."* First then we may learn this; secondly, that Christ rebuked the man for his vain boast; for one who lived in such superfluity, and regarded not others living in poverty, how could he love his neighbor? So that neither in this matter did he speak truly. But let us do both the one and the other of these things; let us be eager to empty out our substance, and to purchase heaven. Since if for worldly honor men have often expended their whole possessions, an honor which was to stay here below, and even here not to stay by us long, (for many even much before their deaths have been stripped of their supremacy, and others because of it have often lost their lives, and yet, although aware of this, they expend all for its sake;) if now they do so much for this kind of honor, what can be more wretched than we if for the sake of that honor which abides and which cannot be taken from us we will not give up even a little, nor supply to others those things which in a short time while yet here we shall leave? What madness must it be, when it is in our power voluntarily to give to others, and so to take with us those things of which we shall even against our will be deprived, to refuse to do so? Yet if a man were being led to death, and it were proposed to him to give up all his goods and so go free, we should think a favor was conferred upon him; and shall we, who are being led on the way to the pit, shall we, when it is allowed us to give up half and be free, prefer to be punished, and uselessly to retain what is not ours even to the losing what is so? What excuse shall we have, what claim for pardon, who, when so easy a road has been cut for us unto life, rush down precipices, and travel along an unprofitable path, depriving ourselves of all things both here and hereafter, when we might enjoy both in security? If then we did not so before, let us at least stop now; and coming to

ourselves, let us rightly dispose of things present, that we may easily receive those which are to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 40 on the Gospel of John

John 5:31-32

"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true; there is another that bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which he witnesses of Me is true."

1. If any one unpracticed in the art undertake to work a mine, he will get no gold, but confounding all aimlessly and together, will undergo a labor unprofitable and pernicious: so also they who understand not the method of Holy Scripture, nor search out its peculiarities and laws, but go over all its points carelessly and in one manner, will mix the gold with earth, and never discover the treasure which is laid up in it. I say this now because the passage before us contains much gold, not indeed manifest to view, but covered over with much obscurity, and therefore by digging and purifying we must arrive at the legitimate sense. For who would not at once be troubled at hearing Christ say, *"If I testify of Myself, My witness is not true"*; inasmuch as He often appears to have testified of Himself? For instance, conversing with the Samaritan woman He said, *"I Am that speak unto you"*: and in like manner to the blind man, *"It is He that talks with you"* [John 9:37]; and rebuking the Jews, *"You say, you blaspheme, because I said I am the Son of God."* [John 10:36] And in many other places besides He does this. If now all these assertions be false, what hope of salvation shall we have? And where shall we find truth when Truth Itself declares, *"My witness is not true"*? Nor does this appear to be the only contradiction; there is another not less than this. He says farther on, *"Though I bear witness of Myself, yet My witness is true"* [John 8:14]; which then, tell me,

am I to receive, and which deem a falsehood? If we take them out thus [from the context] simply as they are said, without carefully considering the person to whom nor the cause for which they are said, nor any other like circumstances, they will both be falsehoods. For if His witness be "*not true*," then this assertion is not true either, not merely the second, but the first also. What then is the meaning? We need great watchfulness, or rather the grace of God, that we rest not in the mere words; for thus the heretics err, because they enquire not into the object of the speaker nor the disposition of the hearers. If we add not these and other points besides, as times and places and the opinions of the listeners, many absurd consequences will follow.

What then is the meaning? The Jews were about to object to Him, "*If you bear witness concerning yourself, your witness is not true*" [John 8:13]: therefore He spoke these words in anticipation; as though He had said, "*You will surely say to Me, we believe you not; for no one that witnesses of himself is readily held trustworthy among men.*" So that the "*is not true*" must not be read absolutely, but with reference to their suspicions, as though He had said, "*to you it is not true*"; and so He uttered the words not looking to His own dignity, but to their secret thoughts. When He says, "*My witness is not true*," He rebukes their opinion of Him, and the objection about to be urged by them against Him; but when He says, "*Though I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true*" [John 8:14], He declares the very nature of the thing itself, namely, that as God they ought to deem Him trustworthy even when speaking of Himself. For since He had spoken of the resurrection of the dead, and of the judgment, and that he that believes in Him is not judged, but comes unto life, and that He shall sit to require account of all men, and that He has the same Authority and Power with the Father; and since He was about again otherwise to prove these things, He

necessarily put their objection first. *"I told you,"* He says, *"that 'as the Father raises the dead and quickens them, so the Son quickens whom He will'; I told you that 'the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son'; I told you that men must 'honor the Son as they honor the Father'; I told you that 'he that honors not the Son honors not the Father'; I told you that 'he that hears My words and believes them shall not see death, but has passed from death unto life' [John 5:24; not exactly quoted]; that My voice shall raise the dead, some now, some hereafter; that I shall demand account from all men of their transgressions, that I shall judge righteously, and recompense those who have walked uprightly."* Now since all these were assertions, since the things asserted were important, and since no clear proof of them had as yet been afforded to the Jews but one rather indistinct, He puts their objection first when He is about to proceed to establish His assertions, speaking somewhat in this way if not in these very words: *"Perhaps you will say, you assert all this, but you are not a credible witness, since you testify of yourself."* First then checking their disputatious spirit by setting forth what they would say, and showing that He knew the secrets of their hearts, and giving this first proof of His power, after stating the objection He supplies other proofs clear and indisputable, producing three witnesses to what He said, namely, the works wrought by Him, the witness of the Father, and the preaching of John. And He puts first the less important witness of John. For after saying, *"There is another that bears witness of Me, and I know that his witness is true,"* He adds,

John 5:33

"You sent unto John, and he bore witness unto the truth."

Yet if Your witness be not true, how sayest Thou, *"I know that the testimony of John is true, and that he has borne witness to the truth"*? And do you see (O man) how clear it hence is, that the expression, *"My witness is not true,"* was addressed to their secret thoughts?

2. *"What then,"* says some one, *"if John bore witness partially."* That the Jews might not assert this, see how He removes this suspicion. For He said not, *"John testified of Me,"* but, *"You first sent to John, and you would not have sent had ye not deemed him trustworthy."* Nay, what is more, they had sent not to ask him about Christ, but about himself, and the man whom they deemed trustworthy in what related to himself they would much more deem so in what related to another. For it is, so to speak, the nature of us all not to give so much credit to those who speak of themselves as to those who speak of others; yet him they deemed so trustworthy as not to require even concerning himself any other testimony. For they who were sent said not, *"What do you say concerning Christ?"* but, *"Who are you? What do you say of yourself?"* So great admiration felt they for the man. Now to all this Christ made allusion by saying, *"You sent unto John."* And on this account the Evangelist has not merely related that they sent, but is exact as to the persons sent that they were Priests and of the Pharisees, not common or abject persons, nor such as might be corrupted or cheated, but men able to understand exactly what he said.

John 5:34

"But I receive not testimony from man."

"Why then have You brought forward that of John?" His testimony was not the *"testimony of man,"* for, says he, *"He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me."* [John 1:33] So that John's testimony was the testimony of God; for having learned from Him he said what he did. But that none should ask, *"Whence is it clear that he learned from God?"* and stop at this, He abundantly silences them by still addressing Himself to their thoughts. For neither was it likely that many would know these things; they had hitherto given heed unto John as to one who spoke of himself, and therefore Christ says, *"I receive not testimony from man."* And that the Jews might not ask, *"And if You were not about to receive the testimony of man, and by it to strengthen Yourself, why have You brought forward this man's testimony?"* see how He corrects this contradiction by what He adds. For after saying, *"I receive not testimony from man,"* He has added,

"But these things I say, that you may be saved."

What He says is of this kind; *"I, being God, needed not the witness of John which is man's witness, yet because ye gave more heed to him, believe him more trustworthy than any, ran to him as to a prophet, (for all the city was poured forth to Jordan,) and have not believed on Me, even when working miracles, therefore I remind you of that witness of his."*

John 5:35

"He was a burning and a shining light, and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."

That they may not reply, *"What if he did speak and we received him not,"* He shows that they did receive John's sayings: since they sent not common men, but priests and Pharisees and were willing to rejoice; so much did they admire the man, and at the same time had nothing to say against his words. But the *"for a season,"* is the expression of one noting their levity, and the fact that they soon started away from him.

John 5:36

"But I have greater witness than that of John."

"For had ye been willing to admit faith according to the (natural) consequence of the facts, I would have brought you over by My works more than he by his words. But since you will not, I bring you to John, not as needing his testimony, but because I do all 'that you may be saved.' For I have greater witness than that of John, namely, that from My works; yet I do not merely consider how I may be made acceptable to you by credible evidence, but how by that (of persons) known to and admired by you." Then glancing at them and saying that they rejoiced for a season in his (John's) light, He declared that their zeal was but temporary and uncertain.

He called John a torch, signifying that he had not light of himself, but by the grace of the Spirit; but the circumstance which caused the absolute distinction between Himself and John, namely, that He was the Sun of righteousness, this He put not yet; but merely hinting as yet at this He touched them sharply, by showing that from the same disposition which led them to despise John, neither could they believe in Christ. Since it was but for a season that they admired even the man whom they did admire, and who, had they not acted thus, would soon have led them by the hand to Jesus. Having then proved them altogether unworthy of forgiveness, He went on to say, *"I have greater witness than that of John."* *"What is that?"* It is that from His works.

"For the works," He says, *"which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me that the Father sent Me."*

By this He reminded them of the paralytic restored, and of many other things. The words perhaps one of them might have asserted were mere

boast, and said by reason of John's friendship towards Him, (though indeed it was not in their power to say even this of John, a man equal to the exact practice of wisdom, and on this account admired by them,) but the works could not even among the maddest of them admit this suspicion; therefore He added this second testimony, saying, *"The works which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me that the Father sent Me."*

3. In this place He also meets the accusation respecting the violation of the Sabbath. For since those persons argued, *"How can he be from God, seeing that he keeps not the Sabbath?"* [John 9:16], therefore He says, *"Which My Father has given unto Me."* Yet in truth, He acted with absolute power, but in order most abundantly to show that He does nothing contrary to the Father, therefore He has put the expression of much inferiority. Since why did He not say, *"The works which the Father has given Me testify that I am equal to the Father"*? For both of these truths were to be earned from the works, that He did nothing contrary, and that He was equal to Him who begot Him; a point which He is establishing elsewhere, where He says, *"If you believe not Me, believe the works: that you may know and believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me."* [John 10:38] In both respects, therefore, the works bore witness to Him, that He was equal to the Father, and that He did nothing contrary to Him. Why then said He not so, instead of leaving out the greater and putting forward this? Because to establish this was His first object. For although it was a far less thing to have it believed that He came from God, than to have it believed that God was equal with Him, (for that belonged to the Prophets also, but this never,) still He takes much pains as to the lesser point, as knowing that, this admitted, the other would afterwards be easily received. So that making no mention of the

more important portion of the testimony, He puts its lesser office, that by this they may receive the other also. Having effected this, He adds,

John 5:37

"And the Father Himself, which has sent Me, has borne witness of Me."

Where did He *"bear witness of"* Him? In Jordan: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* [Matthew 3:16]; hear Him. Yet even this needed proof. The testimony of John then was clear, for they themselves had sent to him, and could not deny it. The testimony from miracles was in like manner clear, for they had seen them wrought, and had heard from him who was healed, and had believed; whence also they drew their accusation. It therefore remained to give proof to the testimony of the Father. Next in order to effect this, He added,

"You have neither heard His voice at any time":

How then says Moses, *"The Lord spoke, and Moses answered"*? [Exodus 19:19]; and David, *"He had heard a tongue which he knew not"* [Psalm 81:5]; and Moses again, *"Is there any such people which has 'heard the voice of God?'"* [Deuteronomy 4:33]

"Nor seen His shape."

Yet Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, are said to have seen Him, and many others. What then is that which Christ says now? He guides them by degrees to a philosophical doctrine, showing that with God is neither voice nor shape, but that He is higher than such forms or sounds like these. For as when He says, *"You have not heard His voice,"* He does not mean that God does indeed utter a voice, but one which cannot be heard; so when He says, *"Nor seen His shape,"* He does not mean that God has a shape though one invisible, but that neither of these things belongs to God. And in order that they might not say, *"You are a boaster, God spoke to Moses only"*; (this at least they did say, *"We know that God spoke with Moses: as for this fellow,*

we know not whence He is" [John 9:29]) on this account He spoke as He did, to show that there is neither voice nor shape with God. "But why," He says, "name I these things? Not only have ye 'neither heard His voice nor seen His shape,' but it is not even in your power to assert that of which you most boast and of which you are all most fully assured, namely, that you have received and keep His commandments." Wherefore He adds,

John 5:38

"And you have not His word abiding in you."

That is, the ordinances, the commandments, the Law, and the Prophets. For even if God ordained these, still they are not with you, since you believe not on Me. Because, if the Scriptures everywhere say that it is necessary to give heed to Me, and yet ye believe not, it is quite clear that His word is removed from you. Wherefore again He adds,

"For whom He has sent, Him ye believe not."

Then that they may not argue, *"How, if we have not heard His voice, has He testified unto you?"* He says,

John 5:39

"Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Me."

Since by these the Father gave His testimony. He gave it indeed by Jordan also and in the mount, but Christ brings not forward those voices; perhaps by doing so He would have been disbelieved; for one of them, that in the mount, they did not hear, and the other they heard indeed, but heeded not. For this reason He refers them to the Scriptures, showing that from them comes the Father's testimony, having first removed the old grounds on which they used to boast, either as having seen God or as having heard His voice. For as it was likely that they would disbelieve His voice, and picture to themselves what took place on Sinai, after first correcting their suspicions on these points, and showing that what had been done was a condescension, He then refers them to the testimony of the Scriptures.

4. And from these too let us also, when we war against heretics, arm and fortify ourselves. For *"all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work"* [2 Timothy 3:16-17]; not that he may have some and not others, for such a man is not *"perfect."* For tell me what profit is it, if a man pray continually, but give not liberal alms? Or if he give liberal alms, but be covetous or violent? Or if he be not covetous nor violent, but (is liberal) to make a show before men, and to gain the praise of the beholders? Or if he give alms with exactness and according to God's pleasure, yet be lifted up by this very thing, and be highminded? Or if he be humble and constant in fasting, but covetous, greedy of gain, and nailed to earth, and one who introduces into his soul the mother of mischief? For the love of

money is the root of all evils. Let us then shudder at the action, let us flee the sin; this has made the world a waste, this has brought all things into confusion, this seduces us from the most blessed service of Christ. *"It is not possible,"* He says, *"to serve God and mammon."* For mammon gives commands contradictory to those of Christ. The one says, *"Give to them that need";* the other, *"Plunder the goods of the needy."* Christ says, *"Forgive them that wrong you";* the other, *"Prepare snares against those who do you no wrong."* Christ says, *"Be merciful and kind";* mammon says, *"Be savage and cruel, and count the tears of the poor as nothing";* to the intent that he may render the Judge stern to us in that day. For then all our actions shall come before our eyes, and those who have been injured and stripped by us, shutting us out from all excuse. Since if Lazarus, who received no wrong from Dives, but only did not enjoy any of his good things, stood forth at that time as a bitter accuser and allowed him not to obtain any pardon, what excuse, tell me, shall they have, who, besides giving no alms of their own substance, seize that of others, and overthrow orphans' houses? If they who have not fed Christ when He hungered have drawn such fire upon their heads, what consolation shall they enjoy who plunder what belongs not to them at all, who weave ten thousand law-suits, who unjustly grasp the property of all men? Let us then cast out this desire; and we shall cast it out if we think of those before us who did wrongfully, who were covetous and are gone. Do not others enjoy their wealth and labors while they lie in punishment, and vengeance, and intolerable woes? And how can this be anything but extreme folly, to weary and vex ourselves, that living we may strain ourselves with labor, and on our departure hence undergo intolerable punishments and vengeance, when we might have enjoyed ourselves here, (for nothing so much causes pleasure as the consciousness of almsgiving,) and departing to that place might have

been delivered from all our woes, and obtained ten thousand blessings? For as wickedness is wont to punish those who go after it, even before (they arrive at) the pit, so also virtue, even before the (gift of) the Kingdom, provides delights for those who here practice it, making them to live in company with good hopes and continual pleasure. Therefore that we may obtain this, both here and in the life to come, let us hold fast to good works, so shall we gain the future crown; to which may we all reach through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 41 on the Gospel of John

John 5:39-40

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me that you might have [eternal] life."

1. Beloved, let us make great account of spiritual things, and not think that it is sufficient for us to salvation to pursue them anyhow. For if in things of this life a man can gain no great profit if he conduct them in an indifferent and chance way, much more will this be the case in spiritual things, since these require yet greater attention. Wherefore Christ when He referred the Jews to the Scriptures, sent them not to a mere reading, but a careful and considerate search; for He said not, *"Read the Scriptures,"* but, *"Search the Scriptures."* Since the sayings relating to Him required great attention, (for they had been concealed from the beginning for the advantage of the men of that time,) He bids them now dig down with care that they might be able to discover what lay in the depth below. These sayings were not on the surface, nor were they cast forth to open view, but lay like some treasure hidden very deep. Now he that searches for hidden things, except he seek them with care and toil, will never find the object of his search. For which cause He said, *"Search the Scriptures, because in them ye think you have eternal life."* He said not, *"You have,"* but *"ye think,"* showing that they gained from them nothing great or high, expecting as they did to be saved by the mere reading, without the addition of faith. What He says therefore is of this kind: *"Do ye not admire the Scriptures, do ye not think that they are the causes of all life? By these I confirm My*

claims now, for they are they which testify of Me, yet ye will not come to Me that you may have eternal life." It was thus with good reason that He said, *"ye think,"* because they would not obey, but merely prided themselves on the bare reading. Then lest owing to His very tender care He should incur among them the suspicion of vainglory, and because He desired to be believed by them, should be deemed to be seeking His own; (for He reminded them of the words of John, and of the witness of God, and of His own works, and said all He could to draw them to Him, and promised them *"life"*;) since, I say, it was likely that many would suspect that He spoke these things from a desire of glory, hear what He says:

John 5:41

"I receive not honor from men."

That is, *"I need it not"*: *"My nature,"* He says, *"is not of such a kind as to need the honor which is from men, for if the sun can receive no addition from the light of a candle, much farther am I from needing the honor which is from men."* *"Why then,"* asks some one, *"do you say these things, if you need it not?"* *"That ye may be saved."* This He positively asserted above, and the same He implied here also, by saying, *"that you might have life."* Moreover, He puts another reason:

John 5:42

"But I know you that you have not the love of God in you."

For when under pretense of loving God they persecuted Him because He made Himself equal with God, and He knew that they would not believe Him, lest any one should ask, *"why do you speak these words?"* *"I speak them,"* He says, *"to convict you of this, that it is not for the love of God that you persecute Me, if it be so that He testifies to Me both by works and by the Scriptures. For as before this when you deemed Me an enemy of God ye drove Me away, so now, since I have declared these things, you ought to have hastened to Me, if you had really loved. God. But ye love Him not. And therefore have I spoken these words, to show that you are possessed with excessive pride, that you are vainly boasting and shading over your own enviousness."* And the same He proves not by these things only, but by those that should come to pass.

John 5:43

"I have come in My Father's name, and you receive Me not; if another shall come in his own name, him will you receive."

2. Do you see that He everywhere declares that He has been "*sent*," that judgment has been committed to Him by the Father, that He can do nothing of Himself, in order that He may cut off all excuse for their unfairness? But who is it that He here says shall come "*in his own name*"? He alludes here to Antichrist, and puts an incontrovertible proof of their unfairness. *"For if as loving God ye persecute Me, much more ought this to have taken place in the case of Antichrist. For he will neither say that he is sent by the Father, nor that he comes according to his will, but in everything contrariwise, seizing like a tyrant what belongs not to him, and asserting that he is the very God over all, as Paul says, 'Exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, showing himself that he is God.'* [2 Thessalonians 2:4] *This is to 'come in his own name.'* I do not so, but have come in the Name of My Father." That they received not One who said that He was sent of God, was a sufficient proof that they loved not God; but now from the contrary of this fact, from their being about to receive Antichrist, He shows their shamelessness. For when they received not One who asserts that He was sent by God, and are about to worship one who knows Him not, and who says that he is God over all, it is clear that their persecution proceeded from malice and from hating God. On this account He puts two reasons for His words; and first the kinder one, "*That ye may be saved*"; and, "*That ye may have life*": and when they would have mocked at Him, He puts the other which was more striking, showing that even although His hearers should not believe, yet that God was wont always to do His own works. Now Paul speaking concerning Antichrist said

prophetically, that *"God shall send them strong delusion—that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."* [2 Thessalonians 2:11-12] Christ said not, *"He shall come"*; but, *"if He come,"* from tenderness for His hearers; and because all their obstinacy was not yet complete. He was silent as to the reason of His coming; but Paul, for those who can understand, has particularly alluded to it. For it is he who takes away all excuse from them.

Christ then puts also the cause of their unbelief, saying . . .

John 5:44

"How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?"

Hence again He shows that they looked not to the things of God, but that under this pretense they desired to gratify private feeling, and were so far from doing this on account of His glory, that they preferred honor from men to that which comes from Him. How then were they likely to entertain such hostility towards Him for a kind of honor which they so despised, as to prefer to it the honor which comes from men?

Having told them that they had not the love of God, and having proved it by what was doing in His case, and by what should be in the case of Antichrist, and having demonstrated that they were deprived of all excuse, He next brings Moses to be their accuser, going on to say,

John 5:45-47

"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom you trust. For had ye believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe My words?"

What He says is of this kind: *"It is Moses who has been insulted more than I by your conduct towards Me, for you have disbelieved him rather than Me."* See how in every way He has cast them out from all excuse. *"You said that you loved God when you persecuted Me; I have shown that you did so from hatred of Him: ye say that I break the Sabbath and annul the Law; I have rid Me of this slander also: ye maintain that you believe in Moses by what ye dare to do against Me; I on the contrary show that this is most to disbelieve in Moses; for so far am I from opposing the Law, that he who shall accuse you is none other than the man who gave you the Law."* As then He said of the Scriptures, in which *"ye think you have eternal life,"* so of Moses also He says, *"in whom you trust"*; everywhere conquering them by their own weapons.

"And whence," says some one, *"is it clear that Moses will accuse us, and that you are not a boaster? What have you to do with Moses? You have broken the Sabbath which he ordained that we should keep; how then should he accuse us? And how does it appear that we shall believe in another who comes in his own name? All these assertions you make without evidence."* Now in truth all these points are proved above. *"For"* (Christ would reply) *"since it is acknowledged that I came from God, both by the works, by the voice of John, and by the testimony of the Father, it is evident that Moses will accuse the Jews."* For what says he? *"If a man come doing miracles and leading you to God, and truly foretelling things future, you*

must hearken unto him with all readiness." Now Christ had done all this. He wrought miracles in very truth, He drew all men to God, and (so that He) caused accomplishment to follow His predictions.

"But whence does it appear that they will believe another?" From their hating Christ, since they who turn aside from Him who comes according to the will of God will, it is quite plain, receive the enemy of God. And marvel not if He now puts forward Moses, although He said, *"I receive not witness from man,"* for He refers them not to Moses, but to the Scriptures of God. However, since the Scriptures terrified them less, He brings round His discourse to the very person (of Moses), setting over against them their Lawgiver as their accuser, thus rendering the terror more impressive; and each of their assertions He refutes. Observe: they said that they persecuted Him through love for God, He shows that they did so through hating God; they said that they held fast to Moses, He shows that they acted thus because they believed not Moses. For had they been zealous for the law, they ought to have received Him who fulfilled it; if they loved God they ought to have believed One who drew them to Him, if they believed Moses they ought to have done homage to One of whom Moses prophesied. *"But"* (says Christ) *"if Moses is disbelieved before My coming, it is nothing unlikely that I, who am heralded by him, should be driven away by you."* As then He had shown from their conduct towards Himself that they who admired John (really) despised him, so now He shows that they who thought that they believed Moses, believed him not, and turns back on their own head all that they thought to put forward in their own behalf. *"So far,"* He says, *"am I from drawing you away from the Law, that I call your Lawgiver himself to be your accuser."*

That the Scriptures testified of Him He declared, but where they testify He added not; desiring to inspire them with greater awe, and to prompt

them to search, and to reduce them to the necessity of questioning. For had He told them readily and without their questioning, they would have rejected the testimony; but now, if they gave any heed to His words, they needed first of all to ask, and learn from Him what that testimony was. On this account He deals the more largely in assertions and threats, not in proofs only, that even so He may bring them over by fear of what He says; but they even so were silent. Such a thing is wickedness; whatsoever a man say or do it is not stirred to move, but remains keeping its peculiar venom.

Wherefore we must cast out all wickedness from our souls, and never more contrive any deceit; for, says one, *"To the perverse God sends crooked paths"* [Proverbs 21:8, Septuagint]; and, *"The holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding."* [Wisdom 1:5] For nothing makes men so foolish as wickedness; since when a man is treacherous, unfair, ungrateful, (these are different forms of wickedness,) when without having been wronged he grieves another, when he weaves deceits, how shall he not exhibit an example of excessive folly? Again, nothing makes men so wise as virtue; it renders them thankful and fair-minded, merciful, mild, gentle, and candid; it is wont to be the mother of all other blessings. And what is more understanding than one so disposed? For virtue is the very spring and root of prudence, just as all wickedness has its beginning in folly. For, the insolent man and the angry become the prey of their respective passions from lack of wisdom; on which account the prophet said, *"There is no soundness in my flesh: my wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness"* [Psalm 38:3-4]: showing that all sin has its beginning in folly: and so the virtuous man who has the fear of God is more understanding than any; wherefore a wise man has said, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* [Proverbs 1:7] If then to fear God is to have wisdom, and the wicked man has not that fear,

he is deprived of that which is wisdom indeed—and deprived of that which is wisdom indeed, he is more foolish than any. And yet many admire the wicked as being able to do injustice and harm, not knowing that they ought to deem them wretched above all men, who thinking to injure others thrust the sword against themselves—an act of extremest folly, that a man should strike himself and not even know that he does so, but should think that he is injuring another while he is killing himself. Wherefore Paul, knowing that we slay ourselves when we smite others, says, *"Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"* [1 Corinthians 6:7] For the not suffering wrong consists in doing none, as also the not being ill-used in not using others ill; though this assertion may seem a riddle to the many, and to those who will not learn true wisdom. Knowing this, let us not call wretched or lament for those who suffer injury or insult, but for such who inflict these things; these are they who have been most injured, who have made God to be at war with them, and have opened the mouths of ten thousand accusers, who are getting an evil reputation in the present life, and drawing down on themselves severe punishment in the life to come. While those who have been wronged by them, and have nobly borne it all, have God favorable to them, and all to condone with, and praise, and entertain them. Such as these in the present life, shall enjoy an exceeding good report, as affording the strongest example of true wisdom, and in the life to come shall share the good things everlasting; to which may we all attain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 42 on the Gospel of John

John 6:1-4

"After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, into the parts of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw the miracles which He did on them that were diseased. And Jesus departed into a mountain, and there sat with His disciples. And the Passover of the Jews was near."

1. Beloved, let us not contend with violent men, but learn when the doing so brings no hurt to our virtue to give place to their evil counsels; for so all their hardihood is checked. As darts when they fall upon a firm, hard, and resisting substance, rebound with great violence on those who throw them, but when the violence of the cast has nothing to oppose it, it soon becomes weaker and ceases, so is it with insolent men; when we contend with them they become the fiercer, but when we yield and give ground, we easily abate all their madness. Wherefore the Lord when He knew that the Pharisees had heard *"that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,"* went into Galilee, to quench their envy, and to soften by His retirement the wrath which was likely to be engendered by these reports. And when He departed for the second time into Galilee, He comes not to the same places as before; for He went not to Cana, but to *"the other side of the sea,"* and great multitudes followed Him, beholding *"the miracles which He did."* What miracles? Why does he not mention them specifically? Because this Evangelist most of all was desirous of employing the greater part of his book on the discourses and sermons [of Christ]. Observe, for instance, how for a whole year, or rather how even now at the feast of the Passover, he has given us no more information on the head of miracles, than

merely that He healed the paralytic and the nobleman's son. Because he was not anxious to enumerate them all, (that would have been impossible,) but of many and great to record a few.

Ver. 2 . *"A great multitude followed Him beholding the miracles that He did."* What is here told marks not a very wise state of mind; for when they had enjoyed such teaching, they still were more attracted by the miracles, which was a sign of the grosser state. For *"miracles,"* It says, *"are not for believers, but for unbelievers."* The people described by Matthew acted not thus, but how? They all, he says *"were astonished at His doctrine, because He taught as one having authority."* [Matthew 7:28-29]

"And why does He occupy the mountain now, and sit there with His disciples?" Because of the miracle which was about to take place. And that the disciples alone went up with Him, was a charge against the multitude which followed Him not. Yet not for this only did He go up into the mountain, but to teach us ever to rest at intervals from the tumults and confusion of common life. For solitude is a thing meet for the study of wisdom. And often does He go up alone into a mountain, and spend the night there, and pray, to teach us that the man who will come most near to God must be free from all disturbance, and must seek times and places clear of confusion.

John 6:4

"And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near."

"How then," says some one, "does He not go up unto the feast, but, when all are pressing to Jerusalem, goes Himself into Galilee, and not Himself alone, but takes His disciples with Him, and proceeds thence to Capernaum?" Because henceforth He was quietly annulling the Law, taking occasion from the wickedness of the Jews.

John 6:5

"And as He lifted up His eyes, He beheld a great company."

This shows that He sat not at any time idly with the disciples, but perhaps carefully conversing with them, and making them attend and turn towards Him, a thing which peculiarly marks His tender care, and the humility and condescension of His demeanor towards them. For they sat with Him, perhaps looking at one another; then having lifted up His eyes, He beheld the multitudes coming unto Him. Now the other Evangelists say, that the disciples came and asked and besought Him that He would not send them away fasting, while St. John says, that the question was put to Philip by Christ. Both occurrences seem to me to be truly reported, but not to have taken place at the same time, the former account being prior to the other, so that the two are entirely different.

Wherefore then does He ask *"Philip"*? He knew which of His disciples needed most instruction; for this is he who afterwards said, *"Show us the Father, and it suffices us"* [John 14:8], and on this account Jesus was beforehand bringing him into a proper state. For had the miracle simply been done, the marvel would not have seemed so great, but now He beforehand constrains him to confess the existing want, that knowing the state of matters he might be the more exactly acquainted with the magnitude of the miracle about to take place. Wherefore He says . . .

John 6:5

"Whence shall we have so many loaves, that these may eat?"

So in the Old [Testament] He spoke to Moses, for He wrought not the sign until He had asked him, *"What is that in your hand?"* Because things coming to pass unexpectedly and all at once, are wont to throw us into forgetfulness of things previous, therefore He first involved him in a confession of present circumstances, that when the astonishment should have come upon him, he might be unable afterwards to drive away the remembrance of what he had confessed, and thus might learn by comparison the greatness of the miracle, which in fact takes place in this instance; for Philip being asked, replied,

John 6:7

"Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do."

2. What means, *"to prove him"*? Did not He know what would be said by him? We cannot assert that. What then is the meaning of the expression? We may discover it from the Old [Testament]. For there too it is said, *"And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Take your beloved son whom you love"* [Genesis 22:1-2]; yet it does not appear in that place either, that when He says this He waited to see the end of the trial, whether Abraham would obey or not, (how could He, who knows all things before they come into existence? but the words in both cases are spoken after the manner of men. For as when (the Psalmist) says that He *"searches the hearts of men,"* he means not a search of ignorance but of exact knowledge, just so when the Evangelist says that He proved (Philip), he means only that He knew exactly. And perhaps one might say another thing, that as He once made Abraham more approved, so also did He this man, bringing him by this question to an exact knowledge of the miracle. The Evangelist therefore, that you may not stop at the feebleness of the expression, and so form an improper opinion of what was said, adds, *"He Himself knew what He would do."*

Moreover we must observe this, that when there is any wrong suspicion, the writer straightway very carefully corrects it. As then in this place that the hearers might not form any such suspicion, he adds the corrective, saying, *"For He Himself knew what He would do"*: so also in that other place, when He says, that *"the Jews persecuted Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father,*

making Himself equal with God," had there not been the assertion of Christ Himself confirmed by His works, he would there also have subjoined this correction. For if even in words which Christ speaks the Evangelist is careful that none should have suspicions, much more in cases where others were speaking of Him would he have looked closely, had he perceived that an improper opinion prevailed concerning Him. But he did not so, for he knew that this was His meaning, and immovable decree. Therefore after saying, *"making Himself equal with God,"* he used not any such correction; for the matter spoken of was not an erroneous fancy of theirs, but His own assertion ratified by His works. Philip then having been questioned,

Ver. 8, 9 . *"Andrew, Simon's brother, said, There is a lad here, which has five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"*

Andrew is higher minded than Philip, yet had not he attained to everything. Yet I do not think that he spoke without an object, but as having heard of the miracles of the Prophets, and how Elisha wrought a sign with the loaves [2 Kings 4:43]; on this account he mounted to a certain height, but could not attain to the very top.

Let us learn then, we who give ourselves to luxury, what was the fare of those great and admirable men; and in quality and quantity let us behold and imitate the thriftiness of their table.

What follows also expresses great weakness. For after saying, *"has five barley loaves,"* he adds, *"but what are they among so many?"* He supposed that the Worker of the miracle would make less out of less, and more out of more. But this was not the case, for it was alike easy to Him to cause bread to spring forth from more and from less, since He needed no subject-matter. But in order that the creation might not seem foreign to His Wisdom, as

afterwards slanderers and those affected with the disease of Marcion said, He used the creation itself as a groundwork for His marvels.

When both the disciples had owned themselves at a loss, then He wrought the miracle; for thus they profited the more, having first confessed the difficulty of the matter, that when it should come to pass, they might understand the power of God. And because a miracle was about to be wrought, which had also been performed by the Prophets, although not in an equal degree, and because He would do it after first giving thanks, lest they should fall into any suspicion of weakness on His part, observe how by the very manner of His working He entirely raises their thoughts of it and shows them the difference (between Himself and others). For when the loaves had not yet appeared, that you may learn, that things that are not are to Him as though they were, (as Paul says, *"who calls the things that be not as though they were"* [Romans 4:17]) He commanded them as though the table were prepared and ready, straightway to sit down, rousing by this the minds of His disciples. And because they had profited by the questioning, they immediately obeyed, and were not confounded, nor said, *"How is this, why dost Thou bid us sit down, when there is nothing before us?"* The same men, who at first disbelieved so much as to say, *"Whence shall we buy bread?"* began so far to believe even before they saw the miracle, that they readily made the multitudes to sit down.

3. But why when He was about to restore the paralytic did He not pray, nor when He was raising the dead, or bridling the sea, while He does so here over the loaves? It was to show that when we begin our meals, we ought to give thanks unto God. Moreover, He does it especially in a lesser matter, that you may learn that He does it not as having any need; for were this the case, much more would He have done so in greater things; but when He did them by His own authority, it is clear that it was through

condescension that He acted as He did in the case of the lesser. Besides, a great multitude was present, and it was necessary that they should be persuaded that He had come according to the will of God. Wherefore, when He does miracles in the absence of witnesses, He exhibits nothing of the kind; but when He does them in the presence of many, in order to persuade them that He is no enemy of God, no adversary of Him who has begotten Him, He removes the suspicion by thanksgiving.

"And He gave to them that were set down, and they were filled."

Do you see how great is the interval between the servants and the Master? They having grace by measure, wrought their miracles accordingly, but God, who acts with free power, did all most abundantly.

Ver. 12 . *"And He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments which remain; — and they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets."*

This was not a superfluous show, but in order that the matter might not be deemed a mere illusion; and for this reason He creates from matter already subsisting. *"But why gave He not the bread to the multitudes to bear, but (only) to His disciples?"* Because He was most desirous to instruct these who were to be the teachers of the world. The multitude would not as yet reap any great fruit from the miracles, (at least they straightway forgot this one and asked for another,) while these would gain no common profit. And what took place was moreover no ordinary condemnation of Judas, who bore a basket. And that these things were done for their instruction is plain from what is said afterwards, when He reminded them, saying, *"Do ye not yet understand— how many baskets ye took up?"* [Matthew 16:9] And for the same reason it was that the baskets of fragments were equal in number to the disciples; afterwards, when they were instructed, they took not up so many, but only *"seven baskets."* [Matthew 15:37] And I marvel

not only at the quantity of loaves created, but besides the quantity, at the exactness of the surplus, that He caused the superabundance to be neither more nor less than just so much as He willed, foreseeing how much they would consume; a thing which marked unspeakable power. The fragments then confirmed the matter, showing both these points; that what had taken place was no illusion, and that these were from the loaves by which the people had been fed. As to the fishes, they at this time were produced from those already subsisting, but at a later period, after the Resurrection, they were not made from subsisting matter. *"Wherefore?"* That you may understand that even now He employed matter, not from necessity, nor as needing any base (to work upon), but to stop the mouths of heretics.

"And the multitudes said, that this is of a truth The Prophet."

Oh, excess of gluttony! He had done ten thousand things more admirable than this, but nowhere did they make this confession, save when they had been filled. Yet hence it is evident that they expected some remarkable prophet; for those others had said (to John), *"Are you that Prophet?"* while these say, *"This is that Prophet."*

Ver. 15 . *"When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain."*

Wonderful! How great is the tyranny of gluttony, how great the fickleness of men's minds! No longer do they vindicate the Law, no longer do they care for the violation of the Sabbath, no longer are they zealous for God; all such considerations are thrown aside, when their bellies have been filled; He was a prophet in their eyes, and they were about to choose Him for a king. But Christ flees. *"Wherefore?"* To teach us to despise worldly dignities, and to show us that He needed nothing on earth. For He who chose all things mean, both mother and house and city and nurture and attire would not afterwards be made illustrious by things on earth. The

things which (He had) from heaven were glorious and great, angels, a star, His Father loudly speaking, the Spirit testifying, and Prophets proclaiming Him from afar; those on earth were all mean, that thus His power might the more appear. He came also to teach us to despise the things of the world, and not be amazed or astonished by the splendors of this life, but to laugh them all to scorn, and to desire those which are to come. For he who admires things which are here, will not admire those in the heavens. Wherefore also He says to Pilate, *"My Kingdom is not of this world"* [John 18:36], that He may not afterwards appear to have employed mere human terror or dominion for the purpose of persuasion. Why then says the Prophet, *"Behold, your King comes unto you, meek, and sitting upon an ass"*? [Zechariah 9:9] He spoke of that Kingdom which is in the heavens, but not of this on earth; and on this account Christ says, *"I receive not honor from men."* [John 5:41]

Learn we then, beloved, to despise and not to desire the honor which is from men; for we have been honored with the greatest of honors, compared with which that other is verily insult, ridicule, and mockery. And as the riches of this world compared with the riches of that are poverty, as this life apart from that is deadness, (for *"let the dead bury their dead"* [Matthew 8:28]) so this honor compared with that is shame and ridicule. Let us then not pursue it. If they who confer it are of less account than a shadow or a dream, the honor itself much more so. *"The glory of man is as the flower of the grass"* [1 Peter 1:24]; and what is meaner than the flower of the grass? Were this glory everlasting, in what could it profit the soul? In nothing. Nay, it very greatly injures us by making us slaves, slaves in worse condition than those bought with money, slaves who obey not one master only, but two, three, ten thousand, all giving different commands. How much better is it to be a free man than a slave, to be free from the slavery of

men, and subject only to the dominion of God? In a word, if you will desire glory, desire it, but let it be the glory immortal, for that is exhibited on a more glorious stage, and brings greater profit. For the men here bid you be at charges to please them, but Christ, on the contrary, gives you an hundredfold for what you give Him, and adds moreover eternal life. Which of the two then is better, to be admired on earth, or in heaven? By man, or by God? To your loss, or to your gain? To wear a crown for a single day, or for endless ages? Give to him that needs, but give not to a dancer, lest you lose your money and destroy his soul. For you are the cause of his (coming to) perdition through unseasonable munificence. Since did those on the stage know that their employment would be unprofitable, they would have long ago ceased to practice it; but when they behold you applauding, crowding after them, spending and wasting your substance upon them, even if they have no desire to follow (their profession), they are kept to it by the desire of gain. If they knew that no one would praise what they do, they would soon desist from their labors, by reason of their unprofitableness; but when they see that the action is admired by many, the praise of others becomes a bait to them. Let us then desist from this unprofitable expense, let us learn upon whom and when we ought to spend. Let us not, I implore you, provoke God in both ways, gathering whence we ought not, and scattering where we ought not; for what anger does not your conduct deserve, when you pass by the poor and givest to a harlot? Would not the paying the hire of sin and the bestowing honor where it were meet to punish have been a charge against you, even had you paid out of your just earnings? But when you feed your uncleanness by stripping orphans and wronging widows, consider how great a fire is prepared for those who dare such things. Hear what Paul says, *"Who not only do these things, but also have pleasure in them that do them."* [Romans 1:32]

Perhaps we have touched you sharply, yet if we touch you not, there are actual punishments awaiting those who sin without amendment. What then avails it to gratify by words those who shall be punished by realities? Do you take pleasure at a dancer, do you praise and admire him? Then are you worse than he; his poverty affords him an excuse though not a reasonable one, but you are stripped even of this defense. If I ask him, "*Why have you left other arts and come to this accursed and impure one?*" he will reply, "*because I can with little labor gain great profits.*" But if I ask you why you admire one who spends his time in impurity, and lives to the mischief of many, you can not run to the same excuse, but must bow down your face and be ashamed and blush. Now if when called by us to give account, you would have nothing to reply, when that terrible and inexorable Judgment comes where we shall render account of thoughts and deeds and everything, how shall we stand? With what eyes shall we behold our Judge? What shall we say? What defense shall we make? What excuse reasonable or unreasonable shall we put forward? Shall we allege the expense? The gratification? The perdition of others whom by means of his art we ruin? We can have nothing to say, but must be punished with a punishment having no end, knowing no limit. That this come not to pass, let us henceforth guard all points, that having departed with a good hope, we may obtain the everlasting blessings; to which may we all attain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 43 on the Gospel of John

John 6:16-18

"And when even was now come, His disciples went down unto the sea and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come unto them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew."

1. Christ provides for the good of his disciples not only when He is present in the body, but also when far away; for having abundance of means and of skill, He effects one and the same end by contrary actions. Observe, for instance, what He has done here. He leaves His disciples, and goes up into a mountain; and they, when even had come, went down unto the sea. They waited for Him until evening, expecting that He would come unto them; but when even had come, they could no longer endure not to seek their Master; so great a love possessed them. They said not, *"It is now evening, and night has overtaken us, whither shall we depart? The place is dangerous, the time unsafe"*; but, goaded by their longing, they entered into the ship. For it is not without a cause that the Evangelist has declared the time also, but by it to show the warmth of their love.

Wherefore then does Christ let them go, and not show Himself? And again, wherefore does He show Himself walking alone upon the sea? By the first He teaches them how great (an evil) it is to be forsaken by Him, and makes their longing greater; by the second, again, He shows forth His power. For as in His teaching they heard not all in common with the multitude, so in the case of the miracles they saw them not all with the mass of people, since it was needful that they who were about to receive in charge the presidency of the world, should have somewhat more than the

rest. *"And what sort of miracles,"* says some one, *"saw they by themselves?"* The Transfiguration on the mount; this on the sea, and those after the Resurrection, which are many and important. And from these I conjecture that there were others also. They came to Capernaum without any certain information, but expecting to find Him there, or even in mid passage; this the Evangelist implies by saying that *"it was now dark, and Jesus was not yet come to them."*

"And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew." What did they? They were troubled, for there were many and various causes which forced them to be so. They were afraid by reason of the time for it was dark, of the storm for the sea had risen, of the place for they were not near land; but,

John 6:19

"Had rowed about five and twenty furlongs."

And, lastly, by reason of the strangeness of the thing, for,

"They see Him walking upon the sea." And when they were greatly troubled,

John 6:20

"He says unto them, It is I, be not afraid."

Wherefore then appears He? To show that it was He who would make the storm cease. For this the Evangelist has shown, saying,

John 6:21

"They were willing to receive Him, and immediately the ship was near the land."

He not only gave them a safe passage, but also one with a fair wind.

To the multitude He shows not Himself walking upon the sea, for the miracle was too great to suit their infirmity. Indeed, even by the disciples He was not seen long doing this, but He appeared, and at once retired. Now this seems to me to be a different miracle from that found in Matthew xiv .; and that it is different is clear from many reasons. For He works often the same miracles, in order to cause the beholders not merely to count them very strange, but also to receive them with great faith.

"It is I, be not afraid." As He spoke the word, He cast out fear from their souls. But at another time not so; wherefore Peter said, *"Lord, if it be Thou, bid me to come unto You."* [Matthew 14:28] Whence then was it that at that time they did not straightway admit this, but now were persuaded? It was because then the storm continued to toss the bark, but now at His voice the calm had come. Or if the reason be not this, it is that other which I have before mentioned, that oftentimes working the same miracles, He made the second to be readily received by means of the first. But wherefore went He not up into the ship? Because He would make the marvel greater, would more openly reveal to them His Godhead, and would show them, that when He before gave thanks, He did not so as needing aid, but in condescension to them. He allowed the storm to arise, that they might ever seek Him; He stilled the storm, that He might make known to them His power; He went not up into the ship, that He might make the marvel greater.

John 6:22

"And the people that were there saw that there was none other boat there save the one into which the disciples had entered, and that Jesus went not into the boat, but His disciples."

And why is John so exact? Why said he not that the multitudes having passed over on the next day departed? He desires to teach us something else, namely, that Jesus allowed the multitudes if not openly, at least in a secret manner, to suspect what had taken place. For, *"They saw,"* says he, *"that there was none other boat there but one, and that Jesus went not into it with His disciples."*

John 6:24

"And embarking in boats from Tiberias, they came to Capernaum seeking Jesus."

What else then could they suspect, save that He had arrived there crossing the sea on foot? For it was not possible to say that He had passed over in another ship. For *"there was one,"* says the Evangelist, *"into which His disciples entered."* Still when they came to Him after so great a wonder, they asked Him not how He crossed over, how He arrived there, nor sought to understand so great a sign. But what say they?

John 6:25

"Master, when did You come here?"

2. Unless any one affirm that the *"when"* is here used by them in the sense of *"how."* But it is worth while also to notice here the fickleness of their impulses For they who said, *"This is that Prophet"*; they who were anxious to *"take Him and make Him a king,"* now when they have found Him take no such counsel, but having cast out their astonishment, they no longer admire Him for His former deeds. They sought Him, desiring again to enjoy a table like the first.

The Jews under the guidance of Moses passed over the Red Sea, but that case is widely different from this. He did all with prayer and as a servant, but Christ with absolute power. There when the south wind blew, the water yielded so as to make them pass over on dry land, but here the miracle was greater. [Exodus 14:21] For the sea retaining its proper nature so bare its Lord upon its surface, thus testifying to the Scripture which says, *"Who walks upon the sea as upon a pavement."* [Job 9:8]

And with reason, when He was about to enter into stubborn and disobedient Capernaum, did He work the miracle of the loaves, as desiring not only by what took place within, but also by the miracles which were wrought without the city, to soften its disobedience. For was it not enough to soften even any stone, that such multitudes should come with great eagerness to that city? Yet they had no such feeling, but again desired food for the body; for which also they are reproached by Jesus.

Let us then, beloved, knowing these things, give thanks to God for things of sense, but much more for things spiritual; for such is His will, and it is on account of the latter that He gives the former, leading in, as it were,

by these the more imperfect sort, and giving them previous teaching, because they are yet gaping upon the world. But when such persons having received these worldly things, rest in them, then are they upbraided and rebuked. For in the case of him that had the palsy, Christ wished first to give that which was spiritual, but they that were present endured it not; for when He said, *"Your sins be forgiven you,"* they exclaimed, *"This man blasphemes."* [Matthew 9:2] Let us not, I entreat you, be so affected, but let us make more account of those (spiritual) things. Wherefore? Because when spiritual things are present with us, no harm arises from the absence of fleshly things; but when they are not, what hope, what comfort, shall then remain to us? Wherefore it is for these we ought always to call upon God, and entreat Him for them. And for such has Christ also taught us to pray; for if we unfold that Prayer, we shall find that there is nothing carnal in it, but all spiritual, and that even the small portion which seems to relate to sense, becomes by the manner spiritual. For to bid us ask no more than our *"successive,"* that is, our *"daily,"* bread, would mark a mind spiritual and truly wise. And consider what goes before that, *"Hallowed be Your Name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done as in heaven so on earth";* then, after naming that temporal (need), He quickly leaves it, and brings us again to the spiritual doctrine, saying, *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."* Nowhere has He put in the Prayer riches or glory or dominion, but all things contributing to the benefit of the soul; nothing earthly, but all things heavenly. If then we are bidden to refrain from the things of this present life, how could we help being wretched and miserable, asking from God those things which even having He bids us cast away, to free us from care about them, and for which He bids us take no pains. This is the *"using vain repetition";* and this is why we effect nothing by our prayers. *"How then,"* says some one, *"do the wicked grow rich, how the unjust and impure,*

plunderers and covetous?" Not by God's giving; (away with the thought!) but by plundering, and taking more than their due. *"And how does God allow them?"* As He allowed that rich man, reserving him for greater punishment. [Luke 16:25] Hear what (Abraham) says to him; *"Son, thou in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and you are tormented."* Therefore that we also come not to hear that voice, by living softly and idly, and gathering together for ourselves many sins, let us choose the true riches and right wisdom, that we may obtain the promised good things; to which may we all arrive, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 44 on the Gospel of John

John 6:26-27

"Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, You seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life."

1. The mild and gentle is not always useful, but there are times when the teacher needs sharper language. For if the disciple be dull and gross, then, in order to touch his dullness to the quick, we must rouse him with a goad. And this the Son of God has done in the present as well as in many other cases. For when the crowds had come and found Jesus, and were flattering Him, and saying, *"Master, when camest Thou hither?"* to show that He desires not honor from men, but looks to one thing only, their salvation, He answers them sharply, wishing to correct them not in this way only, but also by revealing and exposing their thoughts. For what says He? *"Verily, verily, I say unto you,"* (speaking positively and with a confirmation,) *"You seek Me, not because ye saw miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled."* He chides and reproves them by these words, yet does not so abruptly or violently, but very sparingly. For He says not, *"O you gluttons and belly-slaves, I have wrought so many wonders, and you never have either followed Me, or marveled at My doings";* but mildly and gently somewhat in this manner; *"You seek Me, not because ye saw miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled";* speaking not only of the past, but also of the present miracle. *"It was not,"* He says, *"the miracle of the loaves that astonished you, but the being filled."* And that He

said not this of them by conjecture they straightway showed, for on this account they came the second time, as being about to enjoy the same (food) as before. Wherefore they said, *"Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness."* Again they draw Him to (the subject of) carnal food, which was the chief accusation and charge against them. But He stops not at rebukes, but adds instruction also, saying, *"Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life."*

"Which the Son of Man gives unto you; for Him has God the Father sealed."

What He says, is of this kind: *"Make no account of this earthly, but of that spiritual food."* But since some of those who desire to live in doing nothing have abused this speech, as though Christ would entirely abolish working, it is seasonable to say somewhat to them. For they slander, so to speak, all Christianity, and cause it to be ridiculed on the score of idleness. First however, we must mention that saying of Paul. What says he?

"Remember the Lord, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." [Acts 20:35] Now how can it be possible for him to give who has not? How then says Jesus to Martha, *"You are careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part"*? [Luke 10:41-42]; and again, *"Take no thought for the morrow."* [Matthew 6:34] For it is necessary now to resolve all these questions, not only that we may check men if they would be idle, but also that the oracles of God may not appear to bring in what is contradictory.

Now Paul in another place says, *"But we beseech you, brethren, that you increase more and more, that you study to be quiet, and to do your own business; that you may walk honestly toward them that are without"* [1 Thessalonians 4:10-12]; and again, *"Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his own hands, that he may have to give"*

to him that needs." [Ephesians 4:28] Here the Apostle bids not simply "work," but to work so vigorously and laboriously, as to have thereby somewhat to give to others. And in another place the same says again; *"These hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me."* [Acts 20:34] And writing to the Corinthians he said, *"What is my reward then? Verily, that when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge."* [1 Corinthians 9:18] And when he was in that city, he abode with Aquila and Priscilla, *"and wrought, for by their occupation they were tentmakers."* [Acts 18:3]

These passages show a yet more decided opposition as to the letter; we must therefore now bring forward the solution. What then must be our reply? That to *"take no thought,"* does not mean *"not to work,"* but *"not to be nailed to the things of this life";* that is, to take no care for tomorrow's ease, but to deem that superfluous. For a man may do no work, and (yet) lay up treasure for the morrow; and a man may work, yet be careful for nothing; for carefulness and work are not the same thing; it is not as trusting to his work that a man works, but, *"that he may impart to him that needs."* And that too which was said to Martha refers not to works and working, but to this, that it is our duty to know the right season, and not to spend on carnal things the time proper for listening. Thus Christ spoke not the words as urging her to *"idleness,"* but to rivet her to listening. *"I came,"* says He, *"to teach you needful things, but you are anxious about a meal. Do you desire to receive Me, and to provide for Me a costly table? Provide another sort of entertainment, by giving me a ready hearing, and by imitating your sister's longing for instruction."* He said not this to forbid her hospitality, (away with the thought! How could that be?) but to show that she ought not in the season for listening be busy about other matters. For to say, *"Labor not for the meat that perishes,"* is not the expression of one implying that

we ought to be idle; (in fact, this most especially is *"meat that perishes,"* for idleness is wont to teach all wickedness;) but that we ought to work, and to impart. This is meat that never perishes; but if any be idle and gluttonous, and cares for luxury, that man works for *"the meat that perishes."* So too, if a man by his labor should feed Christ, and give Him drink, and clothe Him, who so senseless and mad as to say that such an one labors for the meat that perishes, when there is for this the promise of the kingdom that is to come, and of those good things? This meat endures forever. But at that time, since the multitudes made no account of filth, nor sought to learn who it was that did these things, and by what power, but desired one thing only, to fill their bellies without working; Christ with good reason called such food, *"meat that perishes."* *"I fed,"* He says, *"your bodies, that after this ye might seek that other food which endures, which nourishes the soul; but you again run after that which is earthy. Therefore ye do not understand that I lead you not to this imperfect food, but to that which gives not temporal but eternal life, which nourishes not the body but the soul."* Then when He had uttered such great words concerning Himself, and had said that He would give this food, in order that what was spoken might not stand in their way, to make His saying credible He attributes the supply to the Father. For after saying, *"Which the Son of Man shall give you";* He adds, *"Him has God the Father sealed,"* that is, *"has sent Him for this purpose, that He might bring the food to you."* The saying also admits of another interpretation; for in another place Christ says, *"He that hears My words, has set to his seal that God is true"* [John 3:33], that is, has *"showed forth undeniably."* Which indeed the expression seems to me to hint at even in this place, for *"the Father has sealed,"* is nothing else than *"has declared," "has revealed by His testimony."* He in fact declared Himself too, but since He was speaking to Jews, He brought forward the testimony of the Father.

2. Learn we then, beloved, to ask of God the things which it is meet for us to ask of Him. For those other things, those, I mean, which belong to this life, whichever way they may fall out, can do us no injury; for if we be rich, it is here only that we shall enjoy our luxury; and if we fall into poverty, we shall suffer nothing terrible. For neither the splendors nor the pains of the present life have much power in respect either of despondency or pleasure, they are contemptible, and slip away very swiftly. Wherefore they are called "*a way*," with reason, because they pass away, and by their very nature do not long endure, but the things which are to come endure eternally, both those of punishment and those of the Kingdom. Let us then in regard of these things use much diligence to avoid the first and to choose the last. For what is the advantage of this world's luxury? Today it is, and tomorrow it is not; today a bright flower, tomorrow scattered dust; today a burning fire, tomorrow smouldering ashes. But spiritual things are not so, they ever remain shining and blooming, and becoming brighter every day. That wealth never perishes, never departs, never ceases, never brings with it care or envy or blame, destroys not the body, corrupts not the soul, is without ill will, heaps not up malice; all which things attend on the other kind of wealth. That honor lifts not men into folly, does not make them puffed up, never ceases nor is dimmed. Again, the rest and delight of heaven endures continually, ever being immovable and immortal, one cannot find its end or limit. This life then let us desire, for if we do so we shall make no account of present things, but shall despise and mock at them all, and though one should bid us enter into kingly halls, we shall not while we have this hope choose to do so; yet nothing (earthly) seems more near to happiness than such a permission; but to those who are possessed by love of heaven, even this seems little and mean, and worthy of no account. Nothing which comes to an end is to be much desired; whatever ceases, and today is and

tomorrow is not, even though it be very great, yet seems to be very little and contemptible. Then let us not cling to fleeting things which slip away and depart, but to those which are enduring and immovable. To which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 45 on the Gospel of John

John 6:28-30

"Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent. They said therefore unto Him, What sign do you show then, that we may see and believe you? What do you work?"

1. There is nothing worse, nothing more shameful, than gluttony; it makes the mind gross, and the soul carnal; it blinds, and permits not to see clearly. Observe, for instance, how this is the case with the Jews; for because they were intent upon gluttony, entirely occupied with worldly things, and without any spiritual thoughts, though Christ leads them on by ten thousand sayings, sharp and at the same time forbearing, even thus they arise not, but continue groveling below. For consider; He said to them, *"You seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the bread, and were filled"*; He touched them by the reproof, He showed them what food they ought to seek, saying, *"Labor not for the meat that perishes"*; He set before them the prize, saying, *"but that which endures unto everlasting life"*; then provided a remedy for what might have been an objection, by declaring that He was sent from the Father.

What then did they? As though they had heard nothing, they said, *"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"* This they said, not that they might learn and do them, (as the sequel shows,) but to induce Him again to supply them with food, and desiring to persuade Him to satisfy them. What then says Christ? *"This is the work of God, that you*

believe in Him whom He has sent." On this they asked, "What sign do you show, that we may see and believe?"

John 6:31

"Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness."

Nothing more senseless, nothing more unreasonable, than these men! While the miracle was yet in their hands, as though none had been done, they spoke after this manner, *"What sign do you show?"* and having thus spoken, they do not even allow Him the right of choosing the sign, but think to force Him to exhibit none other than such a one as was wrought in the days of their fathers; wherefore they say, *"Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness,"* thinking by this to provoke Him to work such a miracle as might supply them with carnal nourishment. Else why did they mention none other of the miracles of old, though many took place in those times, both in Egypt and at the sea and in the wilderness, but only that of the manna? Was it not because they greatly desired that one by reason of the tyranny of their bellies? You who when you saw His miracle called him a Prophet, and attempted to make Him a king, how is that now, as though none had been wrought, you have become thankless and ill-minded, and ask for a sign, uttering words fit for parasites, or hungry dogs? Does the manna now seem wonderful to you? Your soul is not now parched up.

Mark too their hypocrisy. They said not, *"Moses did this sign, what doest thou?"* thinking it would annoy Him; but for a while they address Him with great reverence, through expectation of food. So they neither said, *"God did this, what doest thou?"* that they might not seem to make Him equal with God; nor did they bring forward Moses, that they might not seem to lower Him, but put the matter in an intermediate form, *"Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness."* He indeed might have replied, *"I, but now, have wrought greater wonders than did Moses, requiring no rod,*

having no need of prayer, but doing all of Myself; and, if you call to remembrance the manna, see, I have given you bread." But this was not the season for such speeches; and the one thing He earnestly desired was, to bring them to spiritual food. And observe His infinite wisdom and His manner of answering.

John 6:32

"Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven."

Why said He not, *"It was not Moses that gave it to you, but I"*; but puts God in the place of Moses, and Himself instead of manna? Because the infirmity of His hearers was great. As is seen from what follows. For not even when He had spoken thus did He secure their attention, although He said at first, *"You seek Me, not because ye saw the miracle, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled."* [John 6:26] Now because they sought these (carnal) things, He would have corrected them by His succeeding words, yet not even so did they desist. When He promised the Samaritan woman that He would give her *"the water,"* He made no mention of the Father. What says He? *"If you knew who it is that says unto you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked of Him, and He would have given unto you living water"* [John 4:10]; and again, *"The water which I shall give."* He refers her not to The Father. But here He makes mention of The Father, that you may understand how great was the faith of the Samaritan woman, and how great the infirmity of the Jews.

Was then the manna not from heaven? How then is it said to be from heaven? In the same manner as Scripture speaks of *"fowls of heaven"* [Psalm 8:8]; and again, *"The Lord thundered from heaven."* [Psalm 18:13] And He calls that other the *"true bread,"* not because the miracle of the manna was false, but because it was a type, and not the very truth. But in mentioning Moses, He does not compare Himself to him, for the Jews did not as yet prefer Him to Moses, of whom they still had a higher opinion. So that after saying, *"Moses gave not,"* He adds not that *"I give,"* but says that The Father, and not Moses, gives. They, when they heard this, replied,

"Give us this bread to eat"; for they yet thought that it was something material, they yet expected to gratify their appetites, and so hastily ran to Him. What does Christ? Leading them on little by little, He says,

John 6:33

"The bread of God is He which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world."

Not, says He, to Jews alone, but to all the *"world,"* not mere food, but *"life,"* another and an altered *"life."* He calls it *"life,"* because they all were dead in sins. Yet they still kept downward bent, saying,

John 6:34

"Give us this bread."

Then He, to rebuke them, because while they supposed that the food was material they ran to Him, but not when they learned that it was a spiritual kind, said,

John 6:35-36

"I am the bread of life; he that comes to Me shall never hunger, and he that believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, that you also have seen Me, and believe Me not."

2. Thus also John cries, saying beforehand, *"He speaks that He knows, and testifies that He has seen, and no man receives His testimony"* [John 3:32]; and again Christ Himself, *"We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen"* [John 3:11], *"and you believe not."* This He does to prevent them, and to show them that the matter does not trouble Him, that He desires not honor, that He is not ignorant of the secrets of their minds, nor of things present, nor of things to come.

"I am the bread of life." Now He proceeds to commit unto them mysteries. And first He discourses of His Godhead, saying, *"I am the bread of life."* For this is not spoken of His Body, (concerning that He says towards the end, *"And the bread which I shall give is My flesh,"*) but at present it refers to His Godhead. For That, through God the Word, is Bread, as this bread also, through the Spirit descending on it, is made Heavenly Bread. Here He uses not witnesses, as in His former address, for He had the miracle of the loaves to witness to Him, and the Jews themselves for a while pretending to believe Him; in the former case they opposed and accused Him. This is the reason why here He declares Himself. But they, since they expected to enjoy a carnal feast, were not disturbed until they gave up their hope. Yet not for that was Christ silent, but uttered many words of reproof. For they, who while they were eating called Him a Prophet, were here offended, and called Him the carpenter's son; not so while they ate the loaves, then they said, *"He is The Prophet,"* and desired to make Him a king. Now they seemed to be indignant at His

asserting that He *"came down from heaven,"* but in truth it was not this that caused their indignation, but the thought that they should not enjoy a material table. Had they been really indignant, they ought to have asked and enquired how He was the *"bread of life,"* how He had *"come down from heaven";* but now they do not this, but murmur. And that it was not this which offended them is plain from another circumstance. When He said, *"My Father gives you the bread,"* they exclaimed not, *"Beseech Him that He give";* but what? *"Give us that bread";* yet He said not, *"I give,"* but, *"My Father gives";* nevertheless, they, from desire of the food, thought Him worthy to be trusted to for its supply. Now how should they, who deemed Him worthy of their trust for giving, be afterward offended when they also heard that *"the Father gives"*? What is the reason? It is that when they heard that they were not to eat, they again disbelieved, and put forth by way of a cloak for their disbelief, that *"it was a high saying."* Wherefore He says, *"You have seen Me, and believe not"* [John 5:39]; alluding partly to His miracles, partly to the testimony from the Scriptures; *"For they,"* He says, *"are they which testify of Me"* [c. v. 43, 44]; and, *"I have come in My Father's Name, and you receive Me not";* and, *"How can you believe which receive honor of men?"*

John 6:37

"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and him that comes to Me I will in nowise cast out."

Observe how He does all things for the sake of them that are saved; therefore He added this, that He might not seem to be trifling and speaking these things to no purpose. But what is it that He says, *"All that the Father gives Me shall come unto Me"* [John 6:37], and *"I will raise it up in the last day"*? [John 6:40] Wherefore speaks He of the common resurrection, in which even the ungodly have a part, as though it were the peculiar gift of those who believe in Him? Because He speaks not simply of resurrection, but of a particular kind of resurrection. For having first said, *"I will not cast him out, I shall lose nothing of it,"* He then speaks of the resurrection. Since in the resurrection some are cast out, (*"Take him, and cast him into outer darkness,"* [Matthew 22:13]) and some are destroyed. (*"Rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*) [Matthew 10:28] And the expression, *"I give eternal life"* [John 10:28], declares this; for they *"that have done evil shall go forth to the resurrection of damnation, and they that have done good to the resurrection of life."* [John 5:29] This then, the resurrection to good things, is that which He here designed. But what means He by saying, *"All that the Father gives Me, shall come to Me"*? He touches their unbelief, showing that whosoever believes not on Him transgresses the will of the Father. And thus He says it not nakedly, but in a covert manner, and this He does everywhere, wishing to show that unbelievers are at variance with the Father, not with Him alone. For if this is His will, and if for this He came, that He might save man, those who believe not transgress His will. *"When therefore,"* He says, *"the Father guides any man, there is nothing that hinders him from coming unto Me";*

and in another place, *"No man can come unto Me, except the Father draw him."* [John 6:44] And Paul says, that He delivers them up unto the Father; *"When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."* [1 Corinthians 15:24] Now as the Father when He gives does so without first depriving Himself, so the Son when He delivers up does so without excluding Himself. He is said to deliver us up, because through Him we have access (to the Father).

3. And the *"by whom"* is also applied to the Father, as when the Apostle says, *"By whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son"* [1 Corinthians 1:9]: and, *"By the will of the Father."* And again; *"Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you."* [Matthew 16:17] What He here intimates is something of this kind, that *"faith in Me is no ordinary thing, but needs an impulse from above"*; and this He establishes throughout His discourse, showing that this faith requires a noble sort of soul, and one drawn on by God.

But perhaps some one will say, *"If all that the Father gives, and whomsoever He shall draw, comes unto You, if none can come unto You except it be given him from above, then those to whom the Father gives not are free from any blame or charges."* These are mere words and pretenses. For we require our own deliberate choice also, because whether we will be taught is a matter of choice, and also whether we will believe. And in this place, by the *"which the Father gives Me,"* He declares nothing else than that *"the believing on Me is no ordinary thing, nor one that comes of human reasonings, but needs a revelation from above, and a well-ordered soul to receive that revelation."* And the, *"He that comes to Me shall be saved,"* means that he shall be greatly cared for. *"For on account of these,"* He says, *"I came, and took upon Me the flesh, and entered into the form of a servant."* Then He adds;

John 6:38

"I came down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

What sayest Thou? Why, is Your will one, and His another? That none may suspect this, He explains it by what follows, saying;

John 6:40

"And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes in Him, may have everlasting life."

Is not then this Your will? And how sayest Thou, *"I have come to send fire upon the earth, and what have I desired to see, if that be already kindled"*? [Luke 12:49] For if Thou also desirest this, it is very clear that Your will and the Father's is one. In another place also He says, *"For as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."* [John 5:21] But what is the will of the Father? Is it not, that not so much as one of them should perish? This Thou wilt also. [Matthew 18:14] So that the will of the One differs not from the will of the Other. So in another place He is seen establishing yet more firmly His equality with the Father, saying, *"I and My Father 'will come, and will make Our abode with him.'"* [John 14:23] What He says then is this; *"I came not to do anything other than that which the Father wills, I have no will of My own different from that of the Father, for all that is the Father's is Mine, and all that is Mine is the Father's."* If now the things of the Father and the Son are in common, He says with reason, *"Not that I might do My own will."* But here He speaks not so, but reserves this for the end. For, as I have said, He conceals and veils for a while high matters, and desires to prove that had He even said, *"This is My will,"* they would have despised Him. He therefore says, that *"I co-operate with that Will,"* desiring thus to startle them more; as though He had said, *"What do you think? Do ye anger Me by your disbelief? Nay, you provoke My Father."* *"For this is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing."* [John 6:39] Here He shows that He needs not their service, that He came not for His own advantage, but for their salvation; and not to get honor from

them. Which indeed He declared in a former address, saying, *"I receive not honor from men"* [John 5:41]; and again, *"These things I say that you may be saved."* [John 5:34] Since He everywhere labors to persuade them that He came for their salvation. And He says, that He obtains honor to the Father, in order that He may not be suspected by them. And that it is for this reason He thus speaks, He has more clearly revealed by what follows. For He says, *"He that seeks his own will seeks his own glory; but He that seeks His glory that sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."* [John 7:18] *"And this is the will of the Father, that every one which sees the Son, and believes in Him, may have everlasting life."* [John 6:40]

"And I will raise him up at the last day." Why does He continually dwell upon the Resurrection? Is it that men may not judge of God's providence by present things alone; that if they enjoy not results here, they become not on that account desponding, but wait for the things that are to come, and that they may not, because their sins are not punished for the present, despise Him, but look for another life.

Now those men gained nothing, but let us take pains to gain by having the Resurrection continually sounded in our ears; and if we desire to be grasping, or to steal, or to do any wrong thing, let us straightway take into our thoughts that Day, let us picture to ourselves the Judgment-seat, for such reflections will check the evil impulse more strongly than any bit. Let us continually say to others, and to ourselves, *"There is a resurrection, and a fearful tribunal awaits us."* If we see any man insolent and puffed up with the good things of his world, let us make the same remark to him, and show him that all those things abide here: and if we observe another grieving and impatient, let us say the same to him, and point out to him that his sorrows shall have an end; if we see one careless and dissipated, let us say the same charm over him, and show that for his carelessness he must render account.

This saying is able more than any other remedy to heal our souls. For there is a Resurrection, and that Resurrection is at our doors, not afar off, nor at a distance. *"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."* [Hebrews 10:37] And again, *"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ"* [2 Corinthians 5:10]; that is, both bad and good, the one to be shamed in sight of all, the other in sight of all to be made more glorious. For as they who judge here punish the wicked and honor the good publicly, so too will it be there, that the one sort may have the greater shame, and the other more conspicuous glory. Let us picture these things to ourselves every day. If we are ever revolving them, no care for present things will be able to sting us. *"For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."* [2 Corinthians 4:18] Continually let us say to ourselves and to others, *"There is a Resurrection, and a Judgment, and a scrutiny of our actions"*; and let as many as deem that there is such a thing as fate repeat this, and they shall straightway be delivered from the rottenness of their malady; for if there is a Resurrection, and a Judgment, there is no fate, though they bring ten thousand arguments, and choke themselves to prove it. But I am ashamed to be teaching Christians concerning the Resurrection: for he that needs to learn that there is a Resurrection, and who has not firmly persuaded himself that the affairs of this world go not on by fate, and without design, and as chance will have them, can be no Christian. Wherefore, I exhort and beseech you, that we cleanse ourselves from all wickedness, and do all in our power to obtain pardon and excuse in that Day.

Perhaps some one will say, *"When will be the consummation? When will be the Resurrection? See how long a time has gone by, and nothing of the kind has come to pass?"* Yet it shall be, be sure. For those before the flood spoke after this manner, and mocked at Noah, but the flood came and

swept away all those unbelievers, but preserved him who believed. And the men of Lot's time expected not that stroke from God, until those lightnings and thunderbolts came down and destroyed them all utterly. Neither in the case of these men, nor of those who lived in the time of Noah, was there any preamble to what was about to happen, but when they were all living daintily, and drinking, and mad with wine, then came these intolerable calamities upon them. So also shall the Resurrection be; not with any preamble, but while we are in the midst of good times. Wherefore Paul says, *"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."* [1 Thessalonians 5:3] God has so ordered this, that we may be always struggling, and be not confident even in time of safety. What do you say? Do you not expect that there will be a Resurrection and a Judgment? The devils confess these, and are you shameless? *"Have You come,"* they say, *"to torment us before the time?"* [Matthew 8:29]; now they who say that there will be *"torment;"* are aware of the Judgment, and the reckoning, and the vengeance. Let us not then besides daring evil deeds, anger God by disbelieving the word of the Resurrection. For as in other things Christ has been our beginning, so also has He in this; wherefore He is called *"the first-born from the dead."* [Colossians 1:18] Now if there were no Resurrection, how could He be *"the first-born,"* when no one of *"the dead"* was to follow Him? If there were no Resurrection, how would the justice of God be preserved, when so many evil men prosper, and so many good men are afflicted and die in their affliction? Where shall each of these obtain his deserts, if so be that there is no Resurrection? No one of those who have lived aright disbelieves the Resurrection, but every day they pray and repeat that holy sentence, *"Your Kingdom come."* Who then are they that disbelieve the Resurrection? They who have unholy ways and an unclean

life: as the Prophet says, *"His ways are always polluted. Your judgments are far above out of his sight."* [Psalm 10:5] For a man cannot possibly live a pure life without believing in the Resurrection; since they who are conscious of no iniquity both speak of, and wish for, and believe in it, that they may receive their recompense. Let us not then anger Him, but hear Him when He says, *"Fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell"* [Matthew 10:28]; that by that fear we may become better, and being delivered from that perdition, may be deemed worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. Which may we all attain to, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and to the endless ages of eternity. Amen.

Homily 46 on the Gospel of John

John 6:41-42

"The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven; and they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, I came down from heaven?"

1. *" Whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame"*

[Philippians 3:19], said Paul of certain persons, writing to the Philippians.

Now that the Jews were of this character is clear, both from what has gone before, and from what they came and said to Christ. For when He gave them bread, and filled their bellies, they said that He was a Prophet, and sought to make Him a King: but when He taught them concerning spiritual food, concerning eternal life, when He led them away from objects of sense, and spoke to them of a resurrection, and raised their thoughts to higher matters, when most they ought to have admired, they murmur and start away. And yet, if He was that Prophet as they before asserted, declaring that he it was of whom Moses had said, *"A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like me, unto Him shall you hearken"*

[Deuteronomy 18:15]; they ought to have hearkened to Him when He said, *"I came down from heaven"*; yet they hearkened not, but murmured. They still revered Him, because the miracle of the loaves was recent, and therefore they did not openly gainsay Him, but by murmuring expressed their displeasure, that He did not give them the meal which they desired. And murmuring they said, *"Is not this the son of Joseph?"* Whence it is plain, that as yet they knew not of His strange and marvelous Generation. And so they still say that He is the son of Joseph, and are not rebuked; and

He says not to them, "*I am not the Son of Joseph*"; not because He was his son, but because they were not as yet able to hear of that marvelous Birth. And if they could not bear to hear in plain terms of His birth according to the flesh, much less could they hear of that ineffable Birth which is from above. If He revealed not that which was lower to them, much less would He commit to them the other. Although this greatly offended them, that He was born from a mean and common father, still He revealed not to them the truth, lest in removing one cause of offense He should create another. What then said He when they murmured?

John 6:44

"No man can come unto Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw Him."

The Manichæans spring upon these words, saying, *"that nothing lies in our own power"*; yet the expression shows that we are masters of our will. *"For if a man comes to Him,"* says some one, *"what need is there of drawing?"* But the words do not take away our free will, but show that we greatly need assistance. And He implies not an unwilling comer, but one enjoying much succor. Then He shows also the manner in which He draws; for that men may not, again, form any material idea of God, He adds,

John 6:46

"Not that any man has seen God, save He which is of God, He has seen the Father."

"How then," says some one, *"does the Father draw?"* This the Prophet explained of old, when he proclaimed beforehand, and said,

John 6:45

"They shall all be taught of God." [Isaiah 54:13]

Do you see the dignity of faith, and that not of men nor by man, but by God Himself they shall learn this? And to make this assertion credible, He referred them to their prophets. *"If then 'all shall be taught of God,' how is it that some shall not believe?"* Because the words are spoken of the greater number. Besides, the prophecy means not absolutely all, but all that have the will. For the teacher sits ready to impart what he has to all, and pouring forth his instruction unto all.

John 6:44

"And I will raise him up in the last day."

Not slight here is the authority of the Son, if so be that the Father leads, He raises up. He distinguishes not His working from that of the Father, (how could that be?) but shows equality of power. As, therefore, after saying in that other place, *"The Father which has sent Me bears witness of Me,"* He then, that they might not be over-curious about the utterance, referred them to the Scriptures; so here, that they may not entertain similar suspicions, He refers them to the Prophets, whom He continually and everywhere quotes, to show that He is not opposed to the Father.

"But what of those," says some one, *"who were before His time? Were not they taught of God? Why then the special application of the words here?"* Because of old they learned the things of God by the hands of men, but now by the Only-begotten Son of God, and by the Holy Ghost. Then He adds, *"Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is of God,"* using this expression here not with reference to the cause, but to the manner of being. Since had He spoken in the former sense, we are all *"of God."* And where then would be the special and distinct nature of the Son? *"But wherefore,"* says some one, *"did He not put this more clearly?"* Because of their weakness. For if when He said, *"I have come down from heaven,"* they were so offended, what would they have felt had He added this?

John 6:48

"The bread of life."

He calls Himself, *"the bread of life,"* because He maintains our life both which is and which is to be, and says, *"Whosoever shall eat of this bread shall live for ever."* By *"bread"* He means here either His saving doctrines and the faith which is in Him, or His own Body; for both nerve the soul. Yet in another place He said, *"If a man hear My saying, he shall never taste of death."* [John 8:51] And they were offended; here they had no such feeling perhaps, because they yet respected Him on account of the loaves which had been made.

2. And observe how He distinguishes between His bread and the manna, by causing them to hear the result of each kind of food. For to show that the manna afforded them no unusual advantage, He added,

John 6:49

"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead."

He then establishes a thing most likely to persuade them, that they were deemed worthy of greater things than their fathers, (meaning those marvelous men who lived in the time of Moses,) and so, after saying that they were dead who ate the manna, He adds,

Ver. 51 . *"He that eats of this bread, shall live for ever."*

Nor has He put *"in the wilderness"* without a cause, but to point out that the supply of manna was not extended to a long time, nor entered with them into the land of promise. But this *"bread"* was not of the same kind.

"And the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Here one might reasonably enquire, how this was a fit season for these words, which neither edified nor profited, but rather did mischief to those who had been edified; for *"from that time,"* says the Evangelist, *"many of His disciples went back,"* saying, *"This is a hard saying; who can hear it?"* [John 6:60]; since these things might have been entrusted to the disciples only, as Matthew has told us that He discoursed with them apart. [Mark 4:34; see Matthew 13:36] What then shall we say? What is the profit of the words? Great is the profit and necessity of them. Because they pressed upon Him, asking for bodily food, reminding Him of the food provided in the days of their forefathers, and speaking of the manna as a great thing, to show them that all those things were but type and shadow, but that the very reality of the matter was now present with them, He mentions spiritual food. *"But,"* says some one, *"he ought to have said, Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, but I have given you bread."* But the interval

between the two miracles was great, and the latter of them would have appeared inferior to the former, because the manna came down from heaven, but this, the miracle of the loaves, was wrought on earth. When therefore they sought food *"coming down from heaven,"* He continually told them, *"I came down from heaven."* And if any one enquire why He introduced the discourse on the Mysteries, we will reply, that this was a very fitting time for such discourses; for indistinctness in what is said always rouses the hearer, and renders him more attentive. They ought not then to have been offended, but rather to have asked and enquired. But now they went back. If they believed Him to be a Prophet, they ought to have believed His words, so that the offense was caused by their own folly, not by any difficulty in the words. And observe how little by little He led them up to Himself. Here He says that Himself gives, not the Father; *"The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

"But," says some one, *"this doctrine was strange to them and unusual."* And yet John at an earlier period alluded to it by calling Him *"Lamb."* [John 1:29] *"But for all that, they knew it not."* I know they did not; nay, neither did the disciples understand. For if as yet they had no clear knowledge of the Resurrection, and so knew not what, *"Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up"* [John 2:19], might mean, much more would they be ignorant of what is said here. For these words were less clear than those. Since that prophets had raised men from the dead, they knew, even if the Scriptures have not spoken so clearly on the subject, but not one of them ever asserted that any man had eaten flesh. Still they obeyed, and followed Him, and confessed that He had the words of eternal life. For this is a disciple's part, not to be over-curious about the assertions of his teacher, but to hear and obey him, and to wait the proper time for the solution of any difficulties. *"How then,"* says some one, *"was it that the*

contrary came to pass, and that these men 'went back'?" It was by reason of their folly. For when questioning concerning the *"how"* comes in, there comes in with it unbelief. So Nicodemus was perplexed, saying, *"How can a man enter into his mother's womb?"* So also these are confounded, saying,

Ver. 52 . *"How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"*

If you seek to know the *"how,"* why asked not you this in the matter of the loaves, how He extended five to so great a number? Because they then only thought of being satisfied, not of seeing the miracle. *"But,"* says some one, *"their experience then taught them."* Then by reason of that experience these words ought to have been readily received. For to this end He wrought beforehand that strange miracle, that taught by it they might no longer disbelieve what should be said by Him afterwards.

3. Those men then at that time reaped no fruit from what was said, but we have enjoyed the benefit in the very realities. Wherefore it is necessary to understand the marvel of the Mysteries, what it is, why it was given, and what is the profit of the action. We become one Body, and *"members of His flesh and of His bones."* [Ephesians 5:30] Let the initiated follow what I say. In order then that we may become this not by love only, but in very deed, let us be blended into that flesh. This is effected by the food which He has freely given us, desiring to show the love which He has for us. On this account He has mixed up Himself with us; He has kneaded up His body with ours, that we might be a certain One Thing, like a body joined to a head. For this belongs to them who love strongly; this, for instance, Job implied, speaking of his servants, by whom he was beloved so exceedingly, that they desired to cleave unto his flesh. For they said, to show the strong love which they felt, *"Who would give us to be satisfied with his flesh?"* [Job 31:31] Wherefore this also Christ has done, to lead us to a closer friendship, and to show His love for us; He has given to those who desire

Him not only to see Him, but even to touch, and eat Him, and fix their teeth in His flesh, and to embrace Him, and satisfy all their love. Let us then return from that table like lions breathing fire, having become terrible to the devil; thinking on our Head, and on the love which He has shown for us. Parents often entrust their offspring to others to feed; *"but I,"* says He, *"do not so, I feed you with My own flesh, desiring that you all be nobly born, and holding forth to you good hopes for the future. For He who gives out Himself to you here, much more will do so hereafter. I have willed to become your Brother; for your sake I shared in flesh and blood, and in turn I give out to you the flesh and the blood by which I became your kinsman."* This blood causes the image of our King to be fresh within us, produces beauty unspeakable, permits not the nobleness of our souls to waste away, watering it continually, and nourishing it. The blood derived from our food becomes not at once blood, but something else; while this does not so, but straightway waters our souls, and works in them some mighty power. This blood, if rightly taken, drives away devils, and keeps them afar off from us, while it calls to us Angels and the Lord of Angels. For wherever they see the Lord's blood, devils flee, and Angels run together. This blood poured forth washed clean all the world; many wise sayings did the blessed Paul utter concerning it in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This blood cleansed the secret place, and the Holy of Holies. And if the type of it had such great power in the temple of the Hebrews, and in the midst of Egypt, when smeared on the door-posts, much more the reality. This blood sanctified the golden altar; without it the high priest dared not enter into the secret place. This blood consecrated priests, this in types cleansed sins. But if it had such power in the types, if death so shuddered at the shadow, tell me how would it not have dreaded the very reality? This blood is the salvation of our souls, by this the soul is washed, by this is beautiful, by this is inflamed, this

causes our understanding to be more bright than fire, and our soul more beaming than gold; this blood was poured forth, and made heaven accessible.

4. Awful in truth are the Mysteries of the Church, awful in truth is the Altar. A fountain went up out of Paradise sending forth material rivers, from this table springs up a fountain which sends forth rivers spiritual. By the side of this fountain are planted not fruitless willows, but trees reaching even to heaven, bearing fruit ever timely and undecaying. If any be scorched with heat, let him come to the side of this fountain and cool his burning. For it quenches drought, and comforts all things that are burnt up, not by the sun, but by the fiery darts. For it has its beginning from above, and its source is there, whence also its water flows. Many are the streams of that fountain which the Comforter sends forth, and the Son is the Mediator, not holding mattock to clear the way, but opening our minds. This fountain is a fountain of light, spouting forth rays of truth. By it stand the Powers on high looking upon the beauty of its streams, because they more clearly perceive the power of the Things set forth, and the flashings unapproachable. For as when gold is being molten if one should (were it possible) dip in it his hand or his tongue, he would immediately render them golden; thus, but in much greater degree, does what here is set forth work upon the soul. Fiercer than fire the river boils up, yet burns not, but only baptizes that on which it lays hold. This blood was ever typified of old in the altars and sacrifices of righteous men, This is the price of the world, by This Christ purchased to Himself the Church, by This He has adorned Her all. For as a man buying servants gives gold for them, and again when he desires to deck them out does this also with gold; so Christ has purchased us with His blood, and adorned us with His blood. They who share this blood stand with Angels and Archangels and the Powers that are

above, clothed in Christ's own kingly robe, and having the armor of the Spirit. Nay, I have not as yet said any great thing: they are clothed with the King Himself.

Now as this is a great and wonderful thing, so if you approach it with pureness, you approach for salvation; but if with an evil conscience, for punishment and vengeance. *"For,"* It says, *"he that eats and drinks unworthily"* of the Lord, *"eats and drinks judgment to himself"* [1 Corinthians 11:29]; since if they who defile the kingly purple are punished equally with those who rend it, it is not unreasonable that they who receive the Body with unclean thoughts should suffer the same punishment as those who rent it with the nails. Observe at least how fearful a punishment Paul declares, when he says, *"He that despised Moses' law dies without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?"* [Hebrews 1:28] Take we then heed to ourselves, beloved, we who enjoy such blessings; and if we desire to utter any shameful word, or perceive ourselves hurried away by wrath or any like passion, let us consider of what things we have been deemed worthy, of how great a Spirit we have partaken, and this consideration shall be a sobering of our unreasonable passions. For how long shall we be nailed to present things? How long shall it be before we rouse ourselves? How long shall we neglect our own salvation? Let us bear in mind of what things Christ has deemed us worthy, let us give thanks, let us glorify Him, not by our faith alone, but also by our very works, that we may obtain the good things that are to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 47 on the Gospel of John

John 6:53-54

"Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have not eternal life in yourselves. Whoso eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has life in himself."

1. When we converse of spiritual things, let there be nothing secular in our souls, nothing earthy, let all such thoughts retire, and be banished, and let us be entirely given up to the hearing the divine oracles only. For if at the arrival of a king all confusion is driven away, much more when the Spirit speaks with us do we need great stillness, great awe. And worthy of awe is that which is said today. How it is so, hear. *"Verily I say unto you, Except a man eat My flesh, and drink My blood, he has not eternal life in him."* Since the Jews had before asserted that this was impossible, He shows not only that it is not impossible, but that it is absolutely necessary. Wherefore He adds, *"He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life."*

"And I will raise him up at the last day." For since He had said, *"He that eats of this bread shall not die for ever"* [John 6:50, not verbally quoted], and it was likely that this would stand in their way, (just as they before said, *"Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead; and how sayest Thou, that he shall not taste of death?"* [John 8:52, not verbally quoted]) He brings forward the Resurrection to solve the question, and to show that (the man who eats) shall not die at the last. He continually handles the subject of the Mysteries, showing the necessity of the action, and that it must by all means be done.

John 6:55

"For My flesh is true meat, and My blood is true drink."

What is that He says? He either desires to declare that this is the true meat which saves the soul, or to assure them concerning what had been said, that they might not suppose the words to be a mere enigma or parable, but might know that it is by all means needful to eat the Body. Then He says,

John 6:56

"He that eats My flesh, dwells in Me."

This He said, showing that such an one is blended with Him. Now what follows seems unconnected, unless we enquire into the sense; for, says some one, after saying, *"He that eats My flesh, dwells in Me,"* what kind of a consequence is it to add,

John 6:57

"As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father."

Yet the words harmonize perfectly. For since He continually spoke of *"eternal life,"* to prove this point He introduces the expression, *"dwells in Me";* for *"if he dwells in Me, and I live, it is plain that he will live also."* Then He says, *"As the living Father has sent Me."* This is an expression of comparison and resemblance, and its meaning is of this kind, *"I live in like manner as the Father lives."* And that you may not deem Him unbegotten, He immediately subjoins, *"by the Father,"* not by this to show that He needs, in order to live, any power working in Him, for He said before, to remove such a suspicion, *"As the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son also to have life in Himself";* now if He needs the working of another, it will be found that either the Father has not given Him so to have it, and so the assertion is false, or if He has so given it, then He will need no other one to support Him. What then means the, *"By the Father"?* He here merely hints at the cause, and what He says is of this kind: *"As the Father lives, so I live, and he that eats Me shall live by Me."* And the *"life"* of which He speaks is not life merely, but the excellent life; for that He spoke not simply of life, but of that glorious and ineffable life, is clear from this. For all men *"live,"* even unbelievers, and uninitiated, who eat not of that flesh. Do you see that the words relate not to this life, but to that other? And what He says is of this kind: *"He that eats My flesh, when he dies shall not perish nor suffer punishment";* He spoke not of the general resurrection, (for all alike rise again,) but concerning the special, the glorious Resurrection, that which has a reward.

John 6:58

"This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eats of this bread shall live for ever."

Continually does He handle the same point, so as to imprint it on the understanding of the hearers, (for the teaching on these points was a kind of final teaching,) and to confirm the doctrine of the Resurrection and of eternal life. Wherefore He mentions the Resurrection since He promises eternal life, showing that that life is not now, but after the Resurrection.

"And whence," says some one, *"are these things clear?"* From the Scriptures; to them He everywhere refers the Jews, bidding them learn these things from them. And by saying, *"Which gives life to the world,"* He incites them to jealousy, that from very vexation that others should enjoy the gift, they may not stay without. And continually He reminds them of the manna, showing the difference, (between it and His bread,) and guiding them to the faith; for if He was able to support their life for forty years without harvest, or grain, or other things in course; much more now will He be able to do so, as having come for greater ends. Moreover, if those things were but types, and yet men collected what came down without sweat or labor; much more shall this be the case, where the difference is great both in the never dying, and in the enjoying the true life. And rightly has He spoken often of *"life,"* since this is desired by men, and nothing is so pleasing to them as not to die. Since even under the old Covenant, this was the promise, length of life and many days, but now it is not length merely, but life having no end. He desires at the same time to show, that He now revokes the punishment caused by sin, annulling that sentence which condemns to death, and bringing in not life merely, but life eternal, contrariwise to the former things.

John 6:59

"These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum."

2. The place where most of His marvels had been done, so that He ought there especially to have been listened to. But wherefore taught He in the synagogue and in the Temple? As well because He desired to catch the greatest number of them, as because He desired to show that He was not opposed to the Father.

John 6:60

"But many of the disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying."

What means *"hard"*? Rough, laborious, troublesome. Yet He said nothing of this kind, for He spoke not of a mode of life, but of doctrines, continually handling the faith which is in Him. What then means, *"is a hard saying"*? Is it because it promises life and resurrection? Is it because He said that He came down from heaven? Or that it was impossible for one to be saved who ate not His flesh? Tell me, are these things *"hard"*? Who can assert that they are? What then means *"hard"*? It means, *"difficult to be received," "transcending their infirmity," "having much terror."* For they thought that He uttered words too high for His real character, and such as were above Himself. Therefore they said,

"Who can hear it?"

Perhaps making excuse for themselves, since they were about to start away.

John 6:61-62

"When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it," (for this is an attribute of His Godhead to bring secret things to light,) "He said unto them, Does this offend you? What and if you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"

This also He does in the case of Nathanael, saying, *"Because I said unto you, I saw you under the fig-tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these."* [John 1:50] And to Nicodemus, *"No man has ascended up to heaven but the Son of man which is in heaven."* [John 3:13] What then, does He add difficulties to difficulties? No, (that be far from Him,) but by the greatness of the doctrines, and the number of them, He desires to bring them over. For if one had said simply, *"I have come down from heaven,"* and added nothing more, he would have been the more likely to offend them; but He who said, *"My body is the life of the world";* He who said, *"As the living Father has sent Me, so I live by the Father";* and who said, *"I have come down from heaven,"* solves the difficulty. For the man who utters any one great thing concerning himself may perhaps be suspected of feigning, but he who connects together so many one after another removes all suspicion. All that He does and says is intended to lead them away from the thought, that Joseph was His father. And it was not with a wish to strengthen, but rather to do away that stumbling-block, that He said this. For whosoever deemed that He was Joseph's son could not receive His sayings, while one that was persuaded that He had come down from heaven, and would ascend there, might more easily give heed to His words: at the same time He brings forward also another explanation, saying,

John 6:63

"It is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing."

His meaning is, *"You must hear spiritually what relates to Me, for he who hears carnally is not profited, nor gathers any advantage."* It was carnal to question how He came down from heaven, to deem that He was the son of Joseph, to ask, *"How can he give us His flesh to eat?"* All this was carnal, when they ought to have understood the matter in a mystical and spiritual sense. *"But,"* says some one, *"how could they understand what the 'eating flesh' might mean?"* Then it was their duty to wait for the proper time and enquire, and not to abandon Him.

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

That is, they are divine and spiritual, have nothing carnal about them, are not subject to the laws of physical consequence, but are free from any such necessity, are even set above the laws appointed for this world, and have also another and a different meaning. Now as in this passage He said *"spirit,"* instead of *"spiritual,"* so when He speaks of *"flesh,"* He meant not *"carnal things,"* but *"carnally hearing,"* and alluding at the same time to them, because they ever desired carnal things when they ought to have desired spiritual. For if a man receives them carnally, he profits nothing.

"What then, is not His flesh, flesh?" Most certainly. *"How then says He, that the flesh profits nothing?"* He speaks not of His own flesh, (God forbid!) but of those who received His words in a carnal manner. But what is *"understanding carnally"*? It is looking merely to what is before our eyes, without imagining anything beyond. This is understanding carnally. But we must not judge thus by sight, but must look into all mysteries with the eyes within. This is seeing spiritually. He that eats not His flesh, and drinks not

His blood, has no life in him. How then does "*the flesh profit nothing*," if without it we cannot live? Do you see that the words, "*the flesh profits nothing*," are spoken not of His own flesh, but of carnal hearing?

John 6:64

"But there are some of you that believe not."

Again, according to His custom, He adds weight to His words, by foretelling what would come to pass, and by showing that He spoke thus not from desire of honor from them, but because He cared for them. And when He said *"some,"* He excepted the disciples. For at first He said, *"You have both seen Me, and believe not"* [John 6:36]; but here, *"There are some of you that believe not."*

For He *"knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him."*

John 6:65

"And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me except it were given unto Him from above from My Father."

3. Here the Evangelist intimates to us the voluntary character of the Dispensation, and His endurance of evil. Nor is the, *"from the beginning,"* put here without a cause, but that you may be aware of His foreknowledge from the first, and that before the words were uttered, and not after the men had murmured nor after they had been offended, He knew the traitor, but before, which was an attribute of Godhead. Then He added, *"Except it be given him from above from My Father"*; thus persuading them to deem God His Father, not Joseph, and showing them that it is no common thing to believe in Him. As though He had said, *"Unbelievers disturb Me not; trouble Me not, astonish Me not. I know of old before they were created, I know to whom the Father has given to believe;"* and do thou, when you hear that *"He has given,"* imagine not merely an arbitrary distribution, but that if any has rendered himself worthy to receive the gift, he has received it.

John 6:66

"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

Rightly has the Evangelist said, not that they *"departed,"* but that they *"went back"*; showing that they cut themselves off from any increase in virtue, and that by separating themselves they lost the faith which they had of old. But this was not the case with the twelve; wherefore He says to them,

John 6:67

"Will ye also go away?"

Again showing that He needs not their ministry and service, and proving to them that it was not for this that He led them about with Him. For how could He when He used such expressions even to them? But why did He not praise them? Why did He not approve them? Both because He preserved the dignity befitting a teacher, and also to show them that they ought rather to be attracted by this mode of dealing. For had He praised them, they might, supposing that they were doing Him a favor, have had some human feeling; but by showing them that He needed not their attendance, He kept them to Him the more. And observe with what prudence He spoke. He said not, *"Depart ye,"* (this would have been to thrust them from Him,) but asked them a question, *"Will ye also go away?"* the expression of one who would remove all force or compulsion, and who wished not that they should be attached to Him through any sense of shame, but with a sense of favor. By not openly accusing, but gently glancing at them, He shows what is the truly wise course under such circumstances. But we feel differently; with good reason, since we do everything holding fast our own honor, and therefore think that our estate is lowered by the departure of those who attend on us. But He neither flattered nor repulsed them, but asked them a question. Now this was not the act of one despising them, but of one wishing them not to be restrained by force and compulsion: for to remain on such terms is the same as to depart. What then says Peter?

John 6:68-69

"To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Do you see that it was not the words that caused offense, but the heedlessness, and sloth, and wrong-mindedness of the hearers? For even had He not spoken, they would have been offended, and would not have ceased to be ever anxious about bodily food, ever nailed to earth. Besides, the disciples heard at the same time with the others, yet they declared an opinion contrary to theirs, saying, *"To whom shall we go?"* An expression indicating much affection, for it shows that their Teacher was more precious to them than anything, than father or mother, or any possessions, and that if they withdrew from Him, they had not then whither to flee. Then lest it should seem that he had said, *"to whom shall we go?"* because there were none that would receive them, he straightway added, *"You have the words of eternal life."* For the Jews listened carnally, and with human reasonings, but the disciples spiritually, and committing all to faith. Wherefore Christ said, *"The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit";* that is, *"do not suppose that the teaching of My words is subject to the rule of material consequences, or to the necessity of created things. Things spiritual are not of this nature, nor endure to submit to the laws of earth."* This also Paul declares, saying, *"Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down;) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)"* [Romans 10:6-7]

"You have the words of eternal life." These men already admitted the Resurrection, and all the apportionment which shall be there. And observe the brotherly and affectionate man, how he makes answer for all the band. For he said not, *"I know,"* but, *"We know."* Or rather, observe how he goes to

the very words of his Teacher, not speaking as did the Jews. They said, *"This is the son of Joseph"*; but he said, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"*; and *"You have the words of eternal life"*; having perhaps heard Him say, *"He that believes in Me has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."* For he showed that he retained all that had been said, by recalling the very words. What then did Christ? He neither praised nor expressed admiration of Peter, though He had elsewhere done so; but what says He?

John 6:70

"Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

For since Peter said, *"We believe,"* Jesus excepts Judas from the band. In the other place Peter made no mention of the disciples; but when Christ said, *"Whom say ye that I am?"* he replied, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"* [Matthew 16:15]; but here, since he said, *"We believe,"* Christ with reason admits not Judas into that band. And this He did afar off, and long before the time, to check the wickedness of the traitor, knowing that He should avail nothing, yet doing His own part.

4. And remark His wisdom. He made not the traitor manifest, yet allowed him not to be hidden; that on the one hand he might not lose all shame, and become more contentious; and on the other, that he might not, thinking to be unperceived, work his wicked deed without fear. Therefore by degrees He brings plainer reproofs against him. First, He numbered him too among the others, when He said, *"There are some of you that believe not,"* (for that He counted the traitor the Evangelist has declared, saying, *"For He knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him;"*) but when he yet remained such, He brought against him a more severe rebuke, *"One of you is a devil,"* yet made the fear common to them all, wishing to conceal him. And here it is worth while to enquire, why the disciples at this time said nothing, but afterwards were afraid and doubted, looking one upon another, and asking, *"Lord, is it I?"* [Matthew 26:22], when Peter beckoned to John to find out the traitor, by enquiring of their Teacher which was he. What is the reason? Peter had not yet heard, *"Get behind me, Satan,"* wherefore he had no fear at all; but when he had been rebuked, and though he spoke through strong affection,

instead of being approved of, had even been called "*Satan*," he afterwards with reason feared when he heard, "*One of you shall betray Me.*" Besides, He says not even now, "*One of you shall betray Me,*" but, "*One of you is a devil*"; wherefore they understood not what was spoken, but thought that He was only reflecting upon their wickedness.

But wherefore said He, "*I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil*"? It was to show that His teaching was entirely free from flattery. For that they might not think that He would flatter them, because when all had left Him they alone remained, and confessed by Peter that He was the Christ, He leads them away from such a suspicion. And what He says is of this kind. "*Nothing abashes Me from rebuking the bad; think not that because you have remained I shall choose to flatter you, or that because you have followed Me I shall not rebuke the wicked. For neither does another circumstance abash Me, which is much more powerful than this to abash a teacher. For he that remains affords a proof of his affection, while one that has been chosen by a teacher, being rejected, attaches to him a character for folly among senseless persons. Still neither does this cause Me to refrain from My reproofs.*" This at least even now the heathen frigidly and senselessly urge against Christ. For God is not wont to make men good by compulsion and force, neither is His election and choice compulsory on those who are called, but persuasive. And that you may learn that the calling compels not, consider how many of these who have been called have come to perdition, so that it is clear that it lies in our own will also to be saved, or to perish.

5. Hearing therefore these things, learn we always to be sober and to watch. For if when he who was reckoned among that holy band, who had enjoyed so great a gift, who had wrought miracles, (for he too was with the others who were sent to raise the dead and to heal lepers,) if when he was

seized by the dreadful disease of covetousness, and betrayed his Master, neither the favors, nor the gifts, nor the being with Christ, nor the attendance on Him, nor the washing the feet, nor the sharing His table, nor the bearing the bag, availed him, if these things rather served to help on his punishment, let us also fear lest we ever through covetousness imitate Judas. Thou betrayest not Christ. But when you neglect the poor man wasting with hunger, or perishing with cold, that man draws upon you the same condemnation. When we partake of the Mysteries unworthily, we perish equally with the Christ-slayers. When we plunder, when we oppress those weaker than ourselves, we shall draw down upon us severest punishment. And with reason; for how long shall the love of things present so occupy us, superfluous as they are and unprofitable? Since wealth consists in superfluities, in which no advantage is. How long shall we be nailed to vanities? How long shall we not look through and away into heaven, not be sober, not be satiated with these fleeting things of earth, not learn by experience their worthlessness? Let us think of those who before us have been wealthy; are not all those things a dream? Are they not a shadow, a flower? Are they not a stream which flows by? A story and a tale? Such a man has been rich, and where now is his wealth? It has gone, has perished, but the sins done by reason of it stay by him, and the punishment which is because of the sins. Yea, surely if there were no punishment, if no kingdom were set before us, it were a duty to show regard for those of like descent and family, to respect those who have like feelings with ourselves. But now we feed dogs, and many of us wild asses, and bears, and different beasts, while we care not for a man perishing with hunger; and a thing alien to us is more valued than that which is of our kin, and our own family less honored than creatures which are not so, nor related to us.

Is it a fine thing to build one's self splendid houses, to have many servants, to lie and gaze at a gilded roof? Why then, assuredly, it is superfluous and unprofitable. For other buildings there are, far brighter and more majestic than these; on such we must gladden our eyes, for there is none to hinder us. Will you see the fairest of roofs? At eventide look upon the starred heaven. "*But,*" says some one, "*this roof is not mine.*" Yet in truth this is more yours than that other. For you it was made, and is common to you and to your brethren; the other is not yours, but theirs who after your death inherit it. The one may do you the greatest service, guiding you by its beauty to its Creator; the other the greatest harm, becoming your greatest accuser at the Day of Judgment, inasmuch as it is covered with gold, while Christ has not even needful raiment. Let us not, I entreat you, be subject to such folly, let us not pursue things which flee away, and flee those which endure; let us not betray our own salvation, but hold fast to our hope of what shall be hereafter; the aged, as certainly knowing that but a little space of life is left us; the young, as well persuaded that what is left is not much. For that day comes so as a thief in the night. Knowing this, let wives exhort their husbands, and husbands admonish their wives; let us teach youths and maidens, and all instruct one another, to care not for present things, but to desire those which are to come, that we may be able also to obtain them; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 48 on the Gospel of John

John 7:1-2

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand."

1. Nothing is worse than envy and malice; through these death entered into the world. For when the devil saw man honored, he endured not his prosperity, but used every means to destroy him. [Wisdom 2:24] And from the same root one may everywhere see this same fruit produced. Thus Abel was slain; thus David, with many other just men, was like to have been so; from this also the Jews became Christ-slayers. And declaring this the Evangelist said, *"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He had not power to walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill Him."* What do you say, O blessed John? Had not He *"power,"* who was able to do all that He would? He that said, *"Whom do you seek?"* [John 18:6] and cast them backward? He who was present, yet not seen [John 21:4], had not He *"power"*? How then afterwards did He come among them in the midst of the temple, in the midst of the feast, when there was an assembly, when they that longed for murder were present, and utter those sayings which enraged them yet the more? Yea, this at least men marveled at, saying, *"Is not this He, whom they seek to kill? And, lo, He speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto Him."* [Ver. 25, 26] What mean these riddles? Away with the word! The Evangelist spoke not so that he might be supposed to utter riddles, but to make it plain that He shows proofs both of His Godhead and His Manhood. For when he says, that *"He had not power,"* he speaks of Him as

a man, doing many things after the manner of men; but when he says, that He stood in the midst of them, and they seized Him not, he shows to us the power of the Godhead, (as man He fled, as God He appeared,) and in both cases he speaks truly. To be in the midst of those who were plotting against Him, and yet not be seized by them, showed His unrivaled and irresistible nature; to yield strengthened and authenticated the Dispensation, that neither Paul of Samosata, nor Marcion, nor those affected with their maladies, might have anything to say. By this then he stops all their mouths.

"After these things was the Jews' feast of tabernacles." The words, *"after these things,"* mean only, that the writer has here been concise, and has passed over a long interval of time, as is clear from this circumstance. When Christ sat on the mountain, he says, that it was the feast of the Passover; while here the writer mentions the *"feast of tabernacles,"* and during the five months has neither related or taught us anything else, except the miracle of the loaves, and the sermon made to those who ate them. Yet He ceased not to work miracles, and to converse, both in the day, and in the evening, and oftentimes at night; at least, it was thus that He presided over His disciples, as all the Evangelists tell us. Why then have they omitted that interval? Because it was impossible to recount everything fully, and moreover, because they were anxious to mention those points which were followed by any fault-finding or gainsaying of the Jews. There were many circumstances like those which here are omitted; for that He raised the dead, healed the sick, and was admired, they have frequently recorded; but when they have anything uncommon to tell, when they have to describe any charge seemingly put forth against Him, these things they set down; such as this now, that *"His brethren believed Him not."* For a circumstance like this brings with it no slight suspicion, and it is worth our while to admire their truth-loving disposition, how they are not ashamed to relate things which

seem to bring disgrace upon their Teacher, but have been even more anxious to report these than other matters. For instance, the writer having passed by many signs and wonders and sermons, has sprung at once to this.

John 7:3-5

For, says he, *"His brethren said unto Him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that Your disciples also may see the works that You do; for there is no man that does anything in secret, and he himself seeks to be known openly. Show yourself to the world. For neither did His brethren believe in Him."*

2. What unbelief, says some one, is here? They exhort Him to work miracles. It is great deed; for of unbelief come their words, and their insolence, and their unseasonable freedom of speech. For they thought, that owing to their relationship, it was lawful for them to address Him boldly. And their request seems forsooth to be that of friends, but the words were those of great maliciousness. For in this place they reproach Him with cowardice and vainglory: since to say, *"no man does anything in secret,"* is the expression of persons charging Him with cowardice, and suspecting the things done by Him as being not really done; and to add, that *"he seeks to be known,"* was to accuse Him of vainglory. But observe, I pray you, the power of Christ. Of those who said these things, one became first Bishop of Jerusalem, the blessed James, of whom Paul says, *"Other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother"*; and Judas also is said to have been a marvelous man. And yet these persons had been present also at Cana, when the wine was made, but as yet they profited nothing. Whence then had they so great unbelief? From their evil mind, and from envy; for superiority among kindred is wont somehow to be envied by such as are not alike exalted. But who are those that they call disciples here? The crowd that followed Him, not the twelve. What then says Christ? Observe how mildly He answered; He said not, *"Who are you that counsel and instruct Me thus?"* but,

John 7:6

"My time is not yet come."

He here seems to me to hint at something other than He expresses; perhaps in their envy they designed to deliver Him up to the Jews; and pointing out this to them, He says, *"My time is not yet come,"* that is, *"the time of the Cross and the Death, why then hasten ye to slay Me before the time?"*

"But your time is always ready."

As though He had said, *"Though you be ever with the Jews, they will not slay you who desire the same things with them; but Me they will straightway wish to kill. So that it is ever your time to be with them without danger, but My time is when the season of the Cross is at hand, when I must die."* For that this was His meaning, He showed by what followed.

John 7:7

"The world cannot hate you;" (how should it hate those who desire, and who run for the same objects as itself?) "but Me it hates, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

"That is, because I upbraid and rebuke it, therefore I am hated." From this let us learn to master our anger, and not to give way to unworthy passion, though they be mean men who give us counsel. For if Christ meekly bore with unbelievers counseling Him, when their counsel was improper and not from any good intention, what pardon shall we obtain, who being but dust and ashes, yet are annoyed with those who counsel us, and deem that we are unworthily treated, although the persons who do this may be but a little humbler than ourselves? Observe in this instance how He repels their accusation with all gentleness; for when they say, *"Show Yourself to the world,"* He replies, *"The world cannot hate you, but Me the world hates";* thus removing their accusation. *"So far,"* He says, *"am I from seeking honor from men, that I cease not to reprove them, and this when I know that by this course hatred is produced against and death prepared for Me."* *"And where,"* asks some one, *"did He rebuke men?"* When did He ever cease to do so? Did He not say, *"Think not that I will accuse you to the Father? There is one that accuses you, even Moses."* [John 5:45] And again; *"I know you, that you have not the love of God in you":* and *"How can you believe, who receive honor from men, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?"* Do you see how He has everywhere shown, that it was the open rebuke, not the violation of the Sabbath, which caused the hatred against Him?

And wherefore does He send them to the feast, saying,

John 7:8

"Go ye up to the feast: I go not up yet."

To show that He said these things not as needing them, or desiring to be flattered by them, but permitting them to do what pertained to Jews.

"How then," says some one, *"went He up after saying, 'I go not up'?"* He said not, once for all, *"I go not up,"* but, *"now,"* that is, *"not with you."*

"For My time is not yet fulfilled."

And yet He was about to be crucified at the coming Passover. *"How then went He not up also? For if He went not up because the time was not yet come, He ought not to have gone up at all."* But He went not up for this purpose, that He might suffer, but that He might instruct them. *"But wherefore secretly? Since He might by going openly both have been amidst them, and have restrained their unruly impulses as He often did."* It was because He would not do this continually. Since had He gone up openly, and again blinded them, He would have made His Godhead to shine through in a greater degree, which at present behooved not, but He rather concealed it. And since they thought that His remaining was from cowardice, He shows them the contrary, and that it was from confidence, and a dispensation, and that knowing beforehand the time when He should suffer, He would, when it should at length be at hand, be most desirous of going up to Jerusalem. And methinks by saying, *"Go ye up,"* He meant, *"Think not that I compel you to stay with Me against your will,"* and this addition of, *"My time is not yet fully come,"* is the expression of one declaring that miracles must be wrought and sermons spoken, so that greater multitudes might believe, and the disciples be made more steadfast by seeing the boldness and the sufferings of their Master.

3. Learn we then, from what has been said, His kindness and gentleness; *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart"* [Matthew 11:29]; and let us cast away all bitterness. If any exalt himself against us, let us be humble; if any be bold, let us wait upon him; if any bite and devour us with mocks and jests, let us not be overcome; lest in defending ourselves we destroy ourselves. For wrath is a wild beast, a wild beast keen and angry. Let us then repeat to ourselves soothing charms drawn from the holy Scripture, and say, *"You are earth and ashes."* *"Why is earth and ashes proud?"* [Sirach 10:9], and, *"The sway of his fury shall be his destruction"* [Sirach 1:22]; and, *"The wrathful man is not comely"* [Proverbs 11:25, Septuagint]; for there is nothing more shameful, nothing uglier than a visage inflamed with anger. As when you stir up mud there is an ill savor, so when a soul is disturbed by passion there is great indecency and unpleasantness. *"But,"* says some one, *"I endure not insult from mine enemies."* Wherefore? Tell me. If the charge be true, then you ought, even before the affront, to have been pricked at heart, and thank your enemy for his rebukes; if it be false, despise it. He has called you poor, laugh at him; he has called you base-born and foolish, then mourn for him; for *"He that says to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."* [Matthew 5:22] Whenever therefore one insults you, consider the punishment that he undergoes; then shall you not only not be angry, but shall even shed tears for him. For no man is angry with one in a fever or inflammation, but pities and weeps for all such; and such a thing is a soul that is angry. Nay, if even thou desire to avenge yourself, hold your peace, and you have dealt your enemy a mortal blow; while if you add reviling to reviling, you have kindled a fire. *"But,"* says some one, *"the bystanders accuse us of weakness if we hold our peace."* No, they will not condemn your weakness, but admire you for your wisdom. Moreover, if you are stung by insolence, you

become insolent; and being stung, compel men to think that what has been said of you is true. Wherefore, tell me, does a rich man laugh when he is called poor? Is it not because he is conscious that he is not poor? If therefore we will laugh at insults, we shall afford the strongest proof that we are not conscious of the faults alleged. Besides, how long are we to dread the accounts we render to men? How long are we to despise our common Lord, and be nailed to the flesh? *"For whereas there is among you strife, and envying, and divisions, are you not carnal?"* [1 Corinthians 3:3] Let us then become spiritual, and bridle this dreadful wild beast. Anger differs nothing from madness, it is a temporary devil, or rather it is a thing worse than having a devil; for one that has a devil may be excused, but the angry man deserves ten thousand punishments, voluntarily casting himself into the pit of destruction, and before the hell which is to come suffering punishment from this already, by bringing a certain restless turmoil and never silent storm of fury, through all the night and through all the day, upon the reasonings of his soul. Let us therefore, that we may deliver ourselves from the punishment here and the vengeance hereafter, cast out this passion, and show forth all meekness and gentleness, that we may find rest for our souls both here and in the Kingdom of Heaven. To which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 49 on the Gospel of John

John 7:9-10

"When He had said these words unto them, He abode still in Galilee. But when His brethren had gone up, then went He up also unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."

1. The things done by Christ after the manner of men, are not so done only to establish the Incarnation, but also to educate us for virtue. For had He done all as God, how could we have known, on falling in with such things as we wished not, what we must do? As, for instance, when He was in this very place, and the Jews would have killed Him, He came into the midst of them, and so appeased the tumult. Now had He done this continually, how should we, not being able to do so, and yet falling into the like case, have known in what way we ought to deal with the matter, whether to perish at once, or even to use some contrivance in order that the word might go forward? Since, therefore, we who have no power could not have understood what to do on coming into the midst of our foes, on this account we are taught this very thing by Him. For, says the Evangelist, Jesus, *"when He had said these words, abode in Galilee; but when His brethren had gone up, then went He up also unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."* The expression, *"when His brethren had gone up,"* is that of one showing that He chose not to go up with them. On which account He abode where He was, and manifested not Himself, although they in a manner urged Him to do so. But why did He, who ever spoke openly, do so now *"as it were in secret"*? The writer says not *"secretly,"* but, *"as it were in secret."* For thus, as I have said, He seemed to be instructing

us how to manage matters. And, apart from this, it was not the same to come among them when heated and restive, as to do so afterwards when the feast was ended.

John 7:11

"Then the Jews sought Him, and said, Where is He?"

Excellent truly the good deeds at their feasts! They are eager for murder, and wish to seize Him, even during the feast. At least, in another place they speak thus, *"Think ye that He will not come to the feast?"* [John 11:56]; and here they said, *"Where is He?"* Through their excessive hatred and enmity they would not even call Him by name. Great was their reverence towards the feast, great their caution. By occasion of the very feast they wished to entrap Him!

John 7:12

"And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him."

I think they were exasperated by the place where the miracle had been wrought, and were greatly infuriated and afraid, not so much from anger at what had gone before, as from fear lest He should again work something similar. But all fell out contrary to what they desired, and against their will they rendered Him conspicuous.

"And some said, He is a good man; others said, Nay, but He deceives the people."

Methinks the first of these opinions was that of the many, the other that of the rulers and priests. For to slander Him suited their malice and wickedness. *"He deceives,"* say they, *"the people."* How, tell me? Was it by seeming to work, not really working miracles? But experience witnesses the contrary.

John 7:13

"Howbeit no man spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews."

Do you see everywhere the ruling body corrupted, and the ruled sound indeed in judgment, but not having that proper courage which a multitude especially lacks?

John 7:14

"Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up and taught."

By the delay He made them more attentive; for they who had sought Him on the first days and said, *"Where is He?"* when they saw Him suddenly present, observe how they drew near, and were like to press upon Him as He was speaking, both those who said that He was a good man, and those who said that He was not such; the former so as to profit by and admire Him, the latter to lay hold on and detain Him. One party then said, *"He deceives the people,"* by reason of the teaching and the doctrines, not understanding His meaning; the other on account of the miracles said, *"He is a good man."* He therefore thus came among them when He had slackened their anger, so that they might hear His words at leisure, when passion no longer stopped their ears. What He taught, the Evangelist has not told us; that He taught marvelously, this only he says, and that He won and brought them over. Such was the power of His speech. And they who had said, *"He deceives the people,"* altered their opinion, *"and marveled."* Wherefore also they said,

John 7:15

"How knows this man letters, having never learned?"

Observe thou how the Evangelist shows here also their marveling to be full of wickedness? For he says not, that they admired the teaching, or that they received the words, but simply that they *"marveled."* That is, were thrown into a state of astonishment, and doubted, saying, *"Whence has this man these things"*? When they ought from this very difficulty to have known that there was nothing merely human in Him. But because they would not confess this, but stopped at wondering only, hear what He says.

John 7:16

"My doctrine is not Mine."

Again He answers to their secret thoughts, referring them to the Father, and so desiring to stop their mouths.

John 7:17

"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself."

What He says is this, *"Cast out from yourselves the malice and wrath and envy and hatred which has without cause been conceived against Me, then there is nothing to hinder you from knowing that My words are indeed the words of God. For at present these things cast a darkness over you, and destroy the light of right judgment, while if you remove them this shall no longer be your case."* Yet He spoke not (plainly) thus, (for so He would have confounded them exceedingly,) but implied it all by saying, *"He that does His will shall know of the doctrine, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of Myself"*; that is, *"whether I speak anything different and strange and contrary to God."* For, *"of Myself"* is always put with this meaning, that *"I say nothing except what seems good to Him, but all that the Father wills, I will also."*

"If any man do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

"What means, "If any man do His will?" "If any man be a lover of the life which is according to virtue, he shall know the power of the sayings."

"If any man will give heed to the prophecies, to see whether I speak according to them or not."

2. But how is the doctrine His and not His? For He said not, *"This doctrine is not Mine"*; but having first said, *"it is Mine,"* and having claimed it as His own, He then added, *"it is not Mine."* How then can the same thing be both *"His"* and not *"His"*? It is *"His,"* because He spoke it not as one who had been taught; and it is *"not His,"* because it was the doctrine of the Father. How then says He, *"All that is the Father's is Mine, and Mine His"*? [John 17:10] *"For if because the doctrine is the Father's, it is not yours,*

that other assertion is false, for according to that it ought to be yours." But the *"is not Mine,"* affords a strong proof that His doctrine and the Father's are one; as if He had said, *"It has nothing different, as though it were another's. For though My Person be different, yet so do I speak and do as not to be supposed to speak or do anything contrary to the Father, but rather the very same things that the Father says and does."* Then He adds another incontrovertible argument, bringing forward something merely human, and instructing them by things to which they were accustomed. And what is that?

John 7:18

"He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory."

That is, *"He that desires to establish any doctrine of his own, desires to do so only that he himself may enjoy the glory. Now if I desire not to enjoy glory, wherefore should I desire to establish any doctrine of My own? He that speaks of himself, that is, who speaks anything peculiar or different from others, speaks on this account, that he may establish his own glory; but if I seek the glory of Him that sent Me, wherefore should I choose to teach other things?"* Do you see that there was a cause wherefore He said there too that He *"did nothing of Himself"*? [c. v. 19, and 8:28] What was it? It was that they might believe that He desired not the honor of the many. Therefore when His words are lowly, *"I seek,"* He says, *"the glory of the Father,"* everywhere desiring to persuade them that He Himself loves not glory. Now there are many reasons for His using lowly words, as that He might not be deemed unbegotten, or opposed to God, His being clothed with flesh, the infirmity of His hearers, that He might teach men to be modest, and to speak no great thing of themselves: while for speaking lofty words one could only find one reason, the greatness of His Nature. And if when He said, *"Before Abraham was, I am"* [John 8:58], they were offended, what would have been their case if they had continually heard high expressions?

John 7:19

"Did not Moses give you the Law? And yet none of you keeps the Law? Why go ye about to kill Me?"

"And what connection," says some one, *"has this, or what has this to do with what was said before?"* The Jews brought against Him two accusations; one, that He broke the Sabbath; the other, that He called God His Father, making Himself equal with God. And that this was no imagination of theirs, but His own declared judgment, and that He spoke not as do the many, but in a special and peculiar sense, is clear from this circumstance. Many often called God their Father; as *"Have we not all one Father, has not one God created us?"* [Malachi 2:10], but not for that was the people equal to God, on which account the hearers were not offended. As then when the Jews said, *"This man is not from God,"* He often healed them, and made defense for the violation of the Sabbath; so now had the sense they assigned to His words been according to their imagination, not according to His intention, He would have corrected them, and said, *"Why suppose ye Me equal to God? I am not equal"*; yet He said nothing of the kind, but, on the contrary, declared by what followed, that He is equal. For, *"As the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, so also the Son"* [John 5:21]; and *"That all may honor the Son as they honor the Father"*; and *"The works which He does, the same does the Son likewise;"* all these go to establish His equality. Again, concerning the Law He says, *"Think not that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets."* [Matthew 5:17] Thus He knows how to remove evil suspicions which are in their minds; but in this place He not only does not remove, but even confirms their suspicion of His equality. On which account also, when they said in another place, *"You make yourself God,"* He did not remove their suspicion, but even

confirmed it, saying, *"That ye may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, He says to the sick of the palsy, Take up your bed, and walk."* [Matthew 9:6] This then He first aimed at, to make Himself equal with God, showing that He was not God's adversary, but that He said the same and taught the same with Him, and afterwards He sets Himself to the breach of the Sabbath, saying, *"Did not Moses give you the Law, and none of you keeps the Law?"* As though He had said, *"The Law says, You shall not kill; but you kill, and yet accuse Me as transgressing the Law."* But wherefore says He, *"None of you"*? Because they all sought to kill Him. *"And if,"* He says, *"I even have broken the Law, it was in saving a man, but you transgress it for evil. And if My action was even a transgression, yet it was in order to save, and I ought not to be judged by you who transgress in the greatest matters. For your conduct is a subverting of the whole Law."* Then also He presses it farther, although He had said many things to them before, but at that former time He spoke after a loftier manner, and more suitably to His own dignity, while now He speaks more humbly. Wherefore? Because He would not continually irritate them. At present their anger had become intense, and they went on to murder. And therefore He continues to check them in these two ways, by reproving their evil daring, and saying, *"Why go ye about to kill Me?"* and by modestly calling Himself, *"A Man that has told you the truth"* [John 8:40], and by showing that murderers in heart are not worthy to judge others. And observe both the humility of Christ's question, and the insolence of their answer.

John 7:20

"You have a devil; who goes about to kill you?"

3. The expression is one of wrath and anger, and of a soul made shameless by an unexpected reproof, and put to confusion before their time, as they thought. For just as a sort of robbers who sing over their plots, then when they desire to put him against whom they are plotting off his guard, effect their object by keeping silence, so also do these. But He, omitting to rebuke them for this, so as not to make them more shameless, again takes in hand His defense with respect to the Sabbath, reasoning with them from the Law. And observe how prudently. *"No wonder,"* He says, *"if you disobey Me, when you disobey the Law which you think ye obey, and which you hold to have been given you by Moses. It is therefore no new thing, if you give not heed to My words."* For because they said, *"God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow we know not whence he is"* [John 9:29], He shows that they were insulting Moses as well as Himself, for Moses gave them the Law, and they obeyed it not.

John 7:21

"I have done one work, and you all marvel."

Observe how He argues, where it is necessary to defend Himself, and make His defense a charge against them. For with respect to that which had been wrought, He introduces not the Person of the Father, but His own: *"I have done one work."* He would show, that not to have done it would have been to break the Law, and that there are many things more authoritative than the Law, and that *"Moses"* endured to receive a command against the Law, and more authoritative than the Law. For *"circumcision"* is more authoritative than the Sabbath, and yet circumcision is not of the Law, but of *"the fathers."* *"But I,"* He says, *"have done that which is more authoritative and better than circumcision."* Then He mentions not the command of the Law; for instance, that the Priests profane the Sabbath, as He had said already, but speaks more largely. The meaning of, *"You marvel"* [Matthew 12:5] is, *"You are confused," "are troubled."* For if the Law was to be lasting, circumcision would not have been more authoritative than it. And He said not, *"I have done a thing greater than circumcision,"* but abundantly refutes them by saying,

John 7:23

"If a man receive circumcision."

"Do you see that the Law is most established when a man breaks it? Do you see that the breaking of the Sabbath is the keeping of the Law? That if the Sabbath were not broken, the Law must needs have been broken? So that I also have established the Law." He said not, "You are angry with Me because I have wrought a thing which is greater than circumcision," but having merely mentioned what had been done, He left it to them to judge, whether entire health was not a more necessary thing than circumcision. "The Law," He says, "is broken, that a man may receive a sign which contributes nothing to health; are you vexed and indignant at its being broken, that one might be freed from so grievous a disease?"

John 7:24

"Judge not according to appearance."

What is, *"according to appearance"*? *"Do not, since Moses has the greatest honor among you, give your decision according to your estimation of persons, but according to the nature of things; for this is to judge rightly. Wherefore has no one of you reprov'd Moses? Wherefore has no one disobey'd him when he orders that the Sabbath be broken by a commandment introduced from without into the Law? He allows a commandment to be of more authority than his own Law; a commandment not introduced by the Law, but from without, which is especially wonderful; while you who are not lawgivers are beyond measure jealous for the Law, and defend it. Yet Moses, who orders that the Law be broken by a commandment which is not of the Law, is more worthy of confidence than you."* By saying then, (I have made) *"a whole man (healthy),"* He shows that circumcision also was *"partial"* health. And what was the health procured by circumcision? *"Every soul,"* It says, *"that is not circumcised, shall be utterly destroyed."* [Genesis 17:14] *"But I have raised up a man not partially afflicted, but wholly undone."* *"Judge not,"* therefore, *"according to appearance."*

Be we persuaded that this is said not merely to the men of that time, but to us also, that in nothing we pervert justice, but do all in its behalf; that whether a man be poor or rich, we give no heed to persons, but enquire into things. *"You shall not pity,"* It says, *"the poor in judgment."* [Exodus 23:3] What is meant? *"Be not broken down, nor bent,"* It says, *"if he that does the wrong be a poor man."* Now if you may not favor a poor man, much less a rich. And this I say not only to you who are judges, but to all men, that they

nowhere pervert justice, but preserve it everywhere pure. "*The Lord*," It says, "*loves righteousness*"; and, "*he that loves iniquity hates his own soul*." [Psalm 11:7, Septuagint] Let us not, I entreat, hate our own souls, nor love unrighteousness. For certainly its profit in the present world is little or nothing, and for the world to come it brings great damage. Or rather, I should say, that not even here can we enjoy it; for when we live softly, yet with an evil conscience, is not this vengeance and punishment? Let us then love righteousness, and never look aside from that law. For what fruit shall we gain from the present life, if we depart without having attained unto excellence? What there will help us? Will friendship, or relations, or this or that man's favor? What am I saying? This or that man's favor? Though we have Noah, Job, or Daniel for a father, this will avail us nothing if we be betrayed by our own works. One thing alone we need, that is, excellency of soul. This will be able to carry you safe through, and to deliver you from everlasting fire, this will escort you to the Kingdom of Heaven. To which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 50 on the Gospel of John

John 7:25-27

"Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is."

1. Nothing is placed in the Holy Scriptures without a reason, for they were uttered by the Holy Ghost, therefore let us enquire exactly into every point. For it is possible from one expression to find out the entire meaning (of a passage), as in the case before us. *"Many of them of Jerusalem said, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto him."* Now why is added, *"them of Jerusalem"*? The Evangelist by this shows, that they who had most enjoyed His mighty miracles were more pitiable than any; they who had beheld the greatest proof of His Godhead, and yet committed all to the judgment of their corrupt rulers. For was it not a great proof of it, that men furious and bent on murder, who went about and sought to kill Him, should be quiet of a sudden, when they had Him in their hands? Who could have effected this? Who thus quenched their absolute fury? Still after such proofs, observe the folly and the madness of the men. *"Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?"* See how they accuse themselves; *"whom,"* It says, *"they seek to kill, and yet they say nothing to him."* And not only do they say nothing to Him, but nothing even when He *"speaks boldly."* For one who spoke boldly and with all freedom would naturally have the more angered them; but they did nothing. *"Do they know indeed that this is the very Christ?"* *"What do you think? What opinion do you give?"* The contrary, It says. On which account

they said, *"We know this man whence he is."* What malice, what contradiction! They do not even follow the opinion of their rulers, but bring forward another, perverse, and worthy of their own folly; *"We know him whence he is."*

"But when Christ comes, no man knows whence He is." [Matthew 2:4]

"Yet your rulers when asked replied, that He should be born in Bethlehem." And others again said, *"God spoke unto Moses, but as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."* [John 9:29] *"We know whence he is,"* and *"we know not whence He is";* observe the words of drunken men. And again, *"Does Christ come out of Galilee?"* [John 7:41] Is He not of *"the town of Bethlehem"*? Do you see that theirs is the decision of madmen? *"We know,"* and, *"we know not"; "Christ comes from Bethlehem"; "When Christ comes, no man knows whence He is."* What can be plainer than this contradiction? For they only looked to one thing, which was, not to believe. What then is Christ's reply?

John 7:28

"You both know Me, and you know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom you know not."

2. And again, *"If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also."* [John 8:19] How then says He, that they both *"know Him,"* and *"whence He is,"* and then, *"that they neither know Him, nor the Father"*? He does not contradict, (away with the thought,) but is very consistent with Himself. For He speaks of a different kind of knowledge, when He says, *"ye know not"*; as when He says, *"The sons of Eli were wicked sons, they knew not the Lord"* [1 Samuel 2:12]; and again, *"Israel does not know Me."* [Isaiah 1:3] So also Paul says, *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] It is therefore possible, *"knowing," "not to know."* This then is what He says: *"If you know Me, you know that I am the Son of God."* For the *"whence I am"* does not here denote place. As is clear from what follows, *"I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom you know not,"* referring here to the ignorance shown by their works. [As Paul says, *"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him."*] For their fault came not merely of ignorance, but of wickedness, and an evil will; because even though they knew this, they chose to be ignorant. But what manner of connection is there here? How is it that He, reproving them, uses their own words? For when they say, *"We know this man whence he is,"* He adds, *"ye both know Me."* Was their expression, *"We know him not"*? Nay, they said, *"We know him."* But (observe), they by saying the, *"We know whence he is,"* declared nothing else than that He was *"of the earth,"* and that He was *"the carpenter's son"*; but He led them up to heaven, saying, *"You know whence I am,"* that is, not thence whence ye suppose, but from that place whence

He that sent Me (has sent Me). For to say, *"I am not come of Myself,"* intimates to them, that they knew that He was sent by the Father, though they did not disclose it. So that He rebukes them in a twofold manner; first, what they said in secret He published aloud, so as to put them to shame; after that He revealed also what was in their hearts. As though He had said, *"I am not one of the abjects, nor of those who come for nothing, but He 'that sent Me is true, whom you know not.'"* What means, *"He that sent Me is true"*? *"If He be true, He has sent Me for the truth; if He be true, it is probable that He who is sent is true also."* This also He proves in another way, vanquishing them with their own words. For whereas they had said, *"When Christ comes, no man knows whence He is,"* He proves from this that He Himself is the Christ. They used the words, *"No man knows,"* with reference to distinction of some definite locality; but from the same words He shows Himself to be the Christ, because He came from the Father; and everywhere He witnesses that He alone has the knowledge of the Father, saying, *"Not that any man has seen the Father, save He which is from the Father."* [John 6:46] And His words exasperated them; for to tell them, *"You know Him not,"* and to rebuke them because knowing they pretended to be ignorant, was sufficient to sting and annoy them.

John 7:30

"Then they sought to take Him, and no man laid his hand upon Him, because His hour was not yet come."

Do you see that they are invisibly restrained, and their anger bridled? But wherefore says It not, that He had restrained them invisibly, but, *"Because His hour was not yet come"*? The Evangelist was minded to speak more humanly and in a lowlier strain, so that Christ might be deemed to be also Man. For because Christ everywhere speaks of sublime matters, he therefore intersperses expressions of this kind. And when Christ says, *"I am from Him,"* He speaks not as a Prophet who learns, but as seeing Him, and being with Him.

John 7:29

"I know Him, for I am from Him, and He has sent Me."

Do you see how He continually seeks to prove the, *"I am not come of Myself,"* and, *"He that sent Me is true,"* striving not to be thought an enemy of God? And observe how great is the profit of the humility of His words; for, it says, after this many said,

John 7:31

"When Christ comes, will He do more miracles than these which this man has done?"

How many were the miracles? In truth, there were three, that of the wine, that of the paralytic, and that of the nobleman's son; and the Evangelist has related no more. From which circumstance it is plain, as I have often said, that the writers pass by most of them, and discourse to us of those alone on account of which the rulers ill-treated Him. *"Then they sought to take Him,"* and kill Him. Who *"sought"*? Not the multitude, who had no desire of rule, nor could be made captives by malice; but the priests. For they of the multitude said, *"When Christ comes, will He do more miracles?"* Yet neither was this sound faith, but, as it were, the idea of a promiscuous crowd; for to say, *"When He comes,"* was not the expression of men firmly persuaded that He was the Christ. We may either understand the words thus, or that they were uttered by the multitudes when they came together. *"Since,"* they may have said, *"our rulers are taking every pains to prove that this man is not the Christ, let us suppose that he is not the Christ; will the Christ be better than he?"* For, as I ever repeat, men of the grosser sort are led in not by doctrine, nor by preaching, but by miracles.

John 7:32

"The Pharisees heard the people murmuring, and sent servants to take Him."

Do you see that the violation of the Sabbath was a mere pretense? And that what most stung them was this murmuring? For here, though they had no fault to find with Him for anything said or done, they desired to take Him because of the multitude. They dared not do it themselves, suspecting danger, but sent their hired servants. Alas! For their tyranny and their madness, or rather, I should say, for their folly. After having often attempted themselves, and not prevailed, they committed the matter to servants, simply satisfying their anger. Yet He had spoken much at the pool [John 5], and they had done nothing of the kind; they sought indeed occasion, but they attempted not, while here they can endure it no longer, when the multitude is about to run to Him. What then says Christ?

John 7:33

"Yet a little while am I with you."

Having power to bow and terrify His hearers, He utters words full of humility. As though He had said, *"Why are you eager to persecute and kill Me? Wait a little while, and even though you should be eager to keep Me back, I shall not endure it."* That no one should (as they did) suppose that the, *"Yet a little while am I with you,"* denoted a common death, that no one might suppose this, or that He wrought nothing after death, He added,

John 7:34

"And where I am, there ye cannot come."

Now had He been about to continue in death, they might have gone to Him, for to that place we all depart. His words therefore bent the simpler portion of the multitude, terrified the bolder, made the more intelligent anxious to hear Him, since but little time was now left, and since it was not in their power always to enjoy this teaching. Nor did He merely say, *"I am here,"* but, *"I am with you,"* that is, *"Though you persecute, though ye drive Me away, yet for a little while I shall not cease dispensing what is for your good, saying and recommending the things that relate to your salvation."*

John 7:33

"And I go unto Him that sent Me."

This was enough to terrify and throw them into an agony. For that they should stand in need of Him, He declares also . . .

John 7:34

"You shall seek Me," He says, (not only *"you shall not forget Me,"* but you shall even *"seek Me,"*) *"and shall not find Me."*

3. And when did the Jews *"seek Him"*? Luke says that the women mourned over Him, and it is probable that many others, both at the time and when the city was taken, remembered Christ and His miracles, and sought His presence. [Luke 23:49] Now all this He added, desiring to attract them. For the facts that the time left was short, that He should after His departure be regretfully desired by them, and that they should not then be able to find Him, were all together sufficient to persuade them to come to Him. For had it not been that His presence should with regret be desired by them, He would not have seemed to them to be saying any great thing; if, again, it was about to be desired, and they able to find Him, neither so would this have disturbed them. Again, had He been about to stay with them a long time, so also they would have been remiss. But now He in every way compels and terrifies them. And the, *"I go to Him that sent Me,"* is the expression of one declaring that no harm will happen to Him from their plotting, and that His Passion was voluntary. Wherefore now He uttered two predictions, that after a little while He should depart, and that they should not come to Him; a thing which belonged not to human intelligence, the foretelling His own death. Hear for instance, David saying, *"Lord, make me to know mine end and the number of my days, what it is, that I may know what time I have."* [Psalm 39:4] There is no man at all that knows this; and by one the other is confirmed. And I think that He speaks this covertly to the servants, and directs His discourse to them, thus specially attracting them, by showing them that He knew the cause of their arrival. As though He had said, *"Wait a little, and I shall depart."*

John 7:35

"Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go?"

Yet they who had wished to be rid of Him, who did all in their power not to see Him, ought not to have asked this question, but to have said, *"we are glad of it, when will the departure take place?"* but they were somewhat affected at His words, and with foolish suspicion question one another, *"whither will he go?"*

"Will he go unto the dispersion of the Gentiles?"

What is, *"the dispersion of the Gentiles"*? The Jews gave this name to other nations, because they were everywhere scattered and mingled fearlessly with one another. And this reproach they themselves afterwards endured, for they too were a *"dispersion."* For of old all their nation was collected into one place, and you could not anywhere find a Jew, except in Palestine only; wherefore they called the Gentiles a *"dispersion,"* reproaching them, and boasting concerning themselves. What then means, *"Whither I go ye cannot come"*? For all nations at that time had intercourse with them, and there were Jews everywhere. He would not therefore, if He had meant the Gentiles, have said, *"Where ye cannot come."* After saying, *"Will he go to the dispersion of the Gentiles?"* they did not add, *"and ruin,"* but, *"and teach them."* To such a degree had they abated their anger, and believed His words; for they would not, had they not believed, have enquired among themselves what the saying was.

These words were spoken indeed to the Jews, but fear there is lest they be suited to us also, that *"where He is"* we *"cannot come"* on account of our life being full of sins. For concerning the disciples He says, *"I will that they also be with Me where I am"* [John 17:24], but concerning ourselves, I

dread lest the contrary be said, that, "*Where I am, you cannot come.*" For when we act contrary to the commandments, how can we go to that place? Even in the present life, if any soldier act unworthily towards his king, he will not be able to see the king, but being deprived of his authority will suffer the severest punishment; if therefore we steal, or covet, if we wrong or strike others, if we work not deeds of mercy, we shall not be able to go there, but shall suffer what happened to the virgins. For where He was, they were not able to enter in, but retired, their lamps having gone out, that is, grace having left them. For we can, if we will, increase the brightness of that flame which we received straightway by the grace of the Spirit; but if we will not do this, we shall lose it, and when that is quenched, there will be nothing else than darkness in our souls; since, as while a lamp is burning the light is strong, so when it is extinguished there is nothing but gloom. Wherefore the Apostle says, "*Quench not the Spirit.*" [1 Thessalonians 5:19] And It is quenched when It has not oil, when there is any violent gust of wind, when It is cramped and confined, (for so fire is quenched,) and It is cramped by worldly cares, and quenched by evil desires. In addition to the causes we have mentioned, nothing quenches It so much as inhumanity, cruelty, and rapine. For when, besides having no oil, we pour upon it cold water, (for covetousness is this, which chills with despondency the souls of those we wrong,) whence shall it be kindled again? We shall depart, therefore, carrying dust and ashes with us, and having much smoke to convict us of having had lamps and of having extinguished them; for where there is smoke, there needs must have been fire which has been quenched. May none of us ever hear that word, "*I know you not.*" [Matthew 25:12] And whence shall we hear that word, but from this, if ever we see a poor man, and are as though we saw him not? If we will not know Christ when He is an hungered, He too will not know us when we entreat His mercy.

And with justice; for how shall he who neglects the afflicted, and gives not of that which is his own, how shall he seek to receive of that which is not his own? Wherefore, I entreat you, let us do and contrive everything, so that oil fail not us, but that we may trim our lamps, and enter with the Bridegroom into the bride-chamber. To which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 51 on the Gospel of John

John 7:37-38

"In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

1. They who come to the divine preaching and give heed to the faith, must manifest the desire of thirsty men for water, and kindle in themselves a similar longing; so will they be able also very carefully to retain what is said. For as thirsty men, when they have taken a bowl, eagerly drain it and then desist, so too they who hear the divine oracles if they receive them thirsting, will never be weary until they have drunk them up. For to show that men ought ever to thirst and hunger, *"Blessed,"* It says, *"are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness"* [Matthew 5:6]; and here Christ says, *"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink."* What He says is of this kind, *"I draw no man to Me by necessity and constraint; but if any has great zeal, if any is inflamed with desire, him I call."*

But why has the Evangelist remarked that it was *"on the last day, that great day"*? For both the first day and the last were *"great,"* while the intermediate days they spent rather in enjoyment. Wherefore then says he, *"in the last day"*? Because on that day they were all collected together. For on the first day He came not, and told the reason to His brethren, nor yet on the second and third days says He anything of this kind, lest His words should come to nought, the hearers being about to run into indulgence. But on the last day when they were returning home He gives them supplies for their salvation, and cries aloud, partly by this showing to us His boldness,

and partly for the greatness of the multitude. And to show that He spoke not of material drink, He adds, *"He that believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."* By *"belly"* he here means the heart, as also in another place It says, *"And Your Law in the midst of my belly."* [Psalm 40:10; Theodotion] But where has the Scripture said, that *"rivers of living water shall flow from his belly"*? Nowhere. What then means, *"He that believes in Me, as the Scripture says"*? Here we must place a stop, so that the, *"rivers shall flow from his belly,"* may be an assertion of Christ. For because many said, *"This is the Christ"*; and, *"When the Christ comes will He do more miracles?"* He shows that it behooves to have a correct knowledge, and to be convinced not so much from the miracles as from the Scriptures. Many, in fact, who even saw Him working marvels received Him not as Christ, and were ready to say, *"Do not the Scriptures say that Christ comes of the seed of David?"* and on this they continually dwelt. He then, desiring to show that He did not shun the proof from the Scriptures, again refers them to the Scriptures. He had said before, *"Search the Scriptures"* [John 5:39]; and again, *"It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be taught of God"* [John 6:45]; and, *"Moses accuses you"* [John 5:45]; and here, *"As the Scripture has said, rivers shall flow from his belly,"* alluding to the largeness and abundance of grace. As in another place He says, *"A well of water springing up unto eternal life"* [John 4:14], that is to say, *"he shall possess much grace"*; and elsewhere He calls it, *"eternal life,"* but here, *"living water."* He calls that *"living"* which ever works; for the grace of the Spirit, when it has entered into the mind and has been established, springs up more than any fountain, fails not, becomes not empty, stays not. To signify therefore at once its unfailing supply and unlimited operation, He has called it *"a well"* and *"rivers,"* not one river but numberless; and in the former case He has represented its abundance by the

expression, "*springing*." And one may clearly perceive what is meant, if he will consider the wisdom of Stephen, the tongue of Peter, the vehemence of Paul, how nothing bare, nothing withstood them, not the anger of multitudes, not the risings up of tyrants, not the plots of devils, not daily deaths, but as rivers borne along with a great rushing sound, so they went on their way hurrying all things with them.

John 7:39

"But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe in Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given."

2. How then did the Prophets prophesy and work those ten thousand wonders? For the Apostles cast not out devils by the Spirit, but by power received from Him; as He says Himself, *"If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?"* [Matthew 12:27] And this He said, signifying that before the Crucifixion not all cast out devils by the Spirit, but that some did so by the power received from Him. So when He was about to send them, He said, *"Receive the Holy Ghost"* [John 20:22]; and again, *"The Holy Ghost came upon them"* [Acts 19:6], and then they wrought miracles. But when He was sending them, the Scripture said not, that *"He gave to them the Holy Ghost,"* but that He gave to them *"power,"* saying, *"Cleanse the lepers, cast out devils, raise the dead, freely you have received, freely give."* [Matthew 10:1-8] But in the case of the Prophets, all allow that the Gift was that of the Holy Spirit. But this Grace was stinted and departed and failed from off the earth, from the day in which it was said, *"Your house is left unto you desolate"* [Matthew 23:38]; and even before that day its dearth had begun, for there was no longer any prophet among them, nor did Grace visit their holy things. Since then the Holy Ghost had been withheld, but was for the future to be shed forth abundantly, and since the beginning of this imparting was after the Crucifixion, not only as to its abundance, but also as to the increased greatness of the gifts, (for the Gift was more marvelous, as when It says, *"You know not what Spirit you are of"* [Luke 9:55]; and again, *"For you have not received the Spirit of bondage, but the Spirit of adoption"* [Romans 8:15]; and the men of old possessed the Spirit themselves, but imparted It not to others, while the

Apostles filled tens of thousands with It,) since then, I say, they were to receive this Gift, but It was not yet given, for this cause he adds, "*The Holy Ghost was not yet.*" Since then the Lord spoke of this grace, the Evangelist has said, "*For the Holy Ghost was not yet,*" that is, "*was not yet given,*"

"Because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Calling the Cross, "*glory.*" For since we were enemies, and had sinned, and fallen short of the gift of God, and were haters of God, and since grace was a proof of our reconciliation, and since a gift is not given to those who are hated, but to friends and those who have been well-pleasing; it was therefore necessary that the Sacrifice should first be offered for us, that the enmity (against God) which was in our flesh should be done away, that we should become friends of God, and so receive the Gift. For if this was done with respect to the promise made to Abraham, much more with respect to grace. And this Paul has declared, saying, "*If they which are of the Law be heirs, faith is made void— because the Law works wrath.*" [Romans 4:14-15] What he says, is of this kind: God promised that He would give the earth to Abraham and to his seed: but his descendants were unworthy of the promise, and of their own deeds could not be well-pleasing unto God. On this account came in faith, an easy action, that it might draw grace unto it, and that the promise might not fail. And It says,

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure." [Romans 4:16] Wherefore it is by grace, since by their own labors they prevailed not.

But wherefore after saying, "*according to the Scriptures,*" did He not add the testimony? Because their mind was corrupt; for,

John 7:40-42

"Some said, This is the Prophet. Others said, He deceives the people; others said, Christ comes not from Galilee, but from the village of Bethlehem."

Others said, *"When Christ comes, no man knows whence He is"* [John 7:27]; and there was a difference of opinion, as might be expected in a confused multitude; for not attentively did they listen to His words, nor for the sake of learning. Wherefore He makes them no answer; yet they said, *"Does Christ come out of Galilee?"* And He had praised, as being *"an Israelite indeed,"* Nathanael, who had said in a more forcible and striking manner, *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* [John 1:46] But then these men, and they who said to Nicodemus, *"Search and look, for out of Galilee arises no prophet"* [John 7:52], said it not seeking to learn, but merely to overturn the opinion concerning Christ. Nathanael said this, being a lover of the truth, and knowing exactly all the ancient histories; but they looked only to one thing, and that was to remove the opinion that He was the Christ, on which account He revealed nothing to them. For they who even contradicted themselves, and said at one time, *"No man knows whence He comes,"* at another, *"From Bethlehem,"* would manifestly even if they had been informed have opposed Him. For be it that they knew not the place of His birth, that He was from Bethlehem, because of His dwelling in Nazareth, (yet this cannot be allowed, for He was not born there,) were they ignorant of His race also, that He was *"of the house and lineage of David"*? How then said they, *"Does not Christ come of the seed of David?"* [John 7:42] Because they wished to conceal even this fact by that question, saying all that they said with malicious intent. Why did they not come to Him and say, *"Since we admire you in other respects, and you bid us believe you according to the Scriptures, tell us how it is that the Scriptures say that*

Christ must come from Bethlehem, when you have come from Galilee?" But they said nothing of the kind, but all in malice. And to show that they spoke not enquiringly, nor as desiring to learn, the Evangelist straightway has added, that,

John 7:44

"Some of them would have taken Him, but no man laid his hand upon Him."

This, if nothing else, might have been sufficient to cause compunction in them, but they felt it not, as the Prophet says, *"They were cleft asunder, and were not pricked in heart."* [Psalm 35:15, Septuagint]

3. Such a thing is malice! It will give way to nothing, it looks to one thing only, and that is, to destroy the person against whom it plots. But what says the Scripture? *"Whoso digs a pit for his neighbor, shall fall into it himself."* [Proverbs 26:27] Which was the case then. For they desired to kill Him, to stop, as they thought, His preaching; the result was the opposite. For the preaching flourishes by the grace of Christ, while all that was theirs is quenched and perished; they have lost their country, their freedom, their security, their worship, they have been deprived of all their prosperity, and have become slaves and captives.

Knowing then this, let us never plot against others, aware that by so doing we whet the sword against ourselves, and inflict upon ourselves the deeper wound. Hath any one grieved you, and desires thou to avenge yourself on him? Avenge not yourself; so shall you be able to be avenged; but if you avenge yourself, you are not avenged. Think not that this is a riddle, but a true saying. *"How, and in what way?"* Because if you avenge not yourself on him, you make God his enemy; but if you avenge yourself, no longer so. *"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord."* [Romans 12:19] For if we have servants, and they having quarreled with each other, do not give place to us for judgment and for punishment, but take it upon themselves; though they come to us ten thousand times, we not only shall not avenge them, but shall even be angry with them, saying, *"Thou*

runaway, you flogging-post, you ought to have submitted all to us, but since you have prevented us and avenged yourself, trouble us no farther"; much more shall God, who has bidden us commit all unto Him, say this. For how can it be otherwise than absurd, when we demand from our servants so much minding of wisdom and obedience, but will not yield to our Master in those matters in which we desire our domestics to yield to us? This I say because of your readiness to inflict punishment one upon another. The truly wise man ought not to do this even, but to pardon and forgive offenses, though there were not that great reward proposed, the receiving in return forgiveness. For, tell me, if you condemn one who has sinned, wherefore do you sin yourself, and fall into the same fault? Hath he insulted? Insult not thou again, or you have insulted yourself. Hath he struck? Strike not thou again, for then there is no difference between you. Hath he vexed you? Vex him not again, for the profit is nothing, and you will in your turn be placed on an equality with those who have wronged you. Thus, if you bear with meekness and gentleness, you shall be able to reprove your enemy, to shame him, to weary him of being angry. No man cures evil with evil, but evil with good. These rules of wisdom give some of the heathen; now if there be such wisdom among the foolish heathen, let us be ashamed to show ourselves inferior to them. Many of them have been injured, and have borne it; many have been maliciously accused, and not defended themselves; have been plotted against, and have repaid by benefits. And there is no small fear lest some of them be found in their lives to be greater than we, and so render our punishment severer. For when we who have partaken of the Spirit, we who look for the Kingdom, who follow wisdom for the sake of heavenly things, who fear (not) hell, and are bidden to become angels, who enjoy the Mysteries; when we reach not to the virtue unto which they have attained, what pardon shall we have? If we must go beyond the Jews, (for,

"Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven"

[Matthew 5:20]) much more the heathen; if the Pharisees, much more the unbelievers. Since if when we go not beyond the righteousness of the Jews, the Kingdom is shut against us, how shall we be able to attain unto it when we prove ourselves worse than the heathen? Let us then cast out all bitterness, and wrath, and anger. To speak *"the same things, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe,"* [Philippians 3:1] For physicians also often use the same remedy, and we will not cease from sounding the same things in your ears, reminding, teaching, exhorting, for great is the tumult of worldly things, and it causes in us forgetfulness, and we have need of continual teaching. Let us then, in order that we meet not together in this place uselessly and in vain, exhibit the proof which is by works, that so we may obtain the good things to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 52 on the Gospel of John

John 7:45-46

"Then came the officers to the Chief Priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spoke like this Man."

1. There is nothing clearer, nothing simpler than the truth, if we deal not perversely; just as (on the other hand) if we deal perversely, nothing is more difficult. For behold, the Scribes and Pharisees, who seemed forsooth to be wiser than other men, being ever with Christ for the sake of plotting against Him, and beholding His miracles, and reading the Scriptures, were nothing profited, but were even harmed; while the officers, who could not claim one of these privileges, were subdued by one single sermon, and they who had gone forth to bind Him, came back bound themselves by wonder. We must not only marvel at their understanding, that they needed not signs, but were taken by the teaching alone; (for they said not, *"Never man wrought miracles thus,"* but, *"Never man spoke thus";*) we must not, I say, merely marvel at their understanding, but also at their boldness, that they spoke thus to those that had sent them, to the Pharisees, to His enemies, to men who were doing all with a view to gratify their enmity. *"The officers,"* says the Evangelist, *"came, and the Pharisees said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?"* To *"come"* was a far greater deed than to have remained, for in the latter case they would have been rid of the annoyance of these men, but now they become heralds of the wisdom of Christ, and manifested their boldness in greater degree. And they say not, *"We could not become of the multitude, for they gave heed unto Him as unto a prophet";* but what?

"Never man spoke as this Man." Yet they might have alleged that, but they show their right feeling. For theirs was the saying not only of men admiring Him, but blaming their masters, because they had sent them to bind Him whom it behooved rather to hear. Yet they had not heard a sermon either, but a short one; for when the long mind is impartial, there is no need of long arguments. Such a thing is truth. What then say the Pharisees? When they ought to have been pricked at the heart, they, on the contrary, retort a charge on the officers, saying,

John 7:47

"Are ye also deceived?"

They still speak them fair, and do not express themselves harshly, dreading lest the others should entirely separate themselves, yet nevertheless they give signs of anger, and speak sparingly. For when they ought to have asked what He spoke, and to have marveled at the words, they do not so, (knowing that they might have been captivated,) but reason with them from a very foolish argument;

John 7:48

"Wherefore, has none of the rulers believed on Him?"

Do you then make this a charge against Christ, tell me, and not against the unbelievers?

John 7:49

"But the people, which knows not the Law, are accursed."

Then is the charge against you the heavier, because the people believed, and you believed not. They acted like men that knew the Law; how then are they accursed? It is ye that are accursed, who keep not the Law, not they, who obey the Law. Neither was it right, on the evidence of unbelievers, to slander one in whom they believed not, for this is an unjust mode of acting. For you also believed not God, as Paul says; *"What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid."* [Romans 3:3-4] For the Prophets ever rebuked them, saying, *"Hear, you rulers of Sodom";* and, *"Your rulers are disobedient"* [Isaiah 1:10, 23]; and again, *"Is it not for you to know judgment?"* [Micah 3:1] And everywhere they attack them vehemently. What then? Shall one blame God for this? Away with the thought. This blame is theirs. And what other proof can a man bring of your not knowing the Law than your not obeying it? For when they had said, *"Hath any of the rulers believed on him?"* and, *"These who know not the Law,"* Nicodemus in fair consequence upbraids them, saying,

John 7:51

"Does our law judge any man before it hear him?"

He shows that they neither know the Law, nor do the Law; for if that Law commands to kill no man without first hearing him, and they before hearing were eager for this deed, they were transgressors of the Law. And because they said, *"None of the rulers has believed on him"* [John 7:50], therefore the Evangelist informs us that Nicodemus was *"one of them,"* to show that even rulers believed on Him; for although they showed not yet fitting boldness, still they were becoming attached to Christ. Observe how cautiously he rebukes them; he said not, *"You desire to kill him, and condemn the man for a deceiver without proof"*; but spoke in a milder way, hindering their excessive violence, and their inconsiderate and murderous disposition. Wherefore he turns his discourse to the Law, saying, *"Except it hear him carefully, and know what he does."* So that not a bare *"hearing,"* but *"careful hearing"* is required. For the meaning of, *"know what he does,"* is, *"what he intends," "on what account," "for what purpose," "whether for the subversion of the order of things and as an enemy."* Being therefore perplexed, because they had said, *"None of the rulers has believed on him,"* they addressed him, neither vehemently, nor yet with forbearance. For tell me, after he had said, *"The Law judges no man,"* how does it follow that they should say,

John 7:52

"Are you also of Galilee?"

2. When they ought to have shown that they had not sent to summon Him without judgment, or that it was not fitting to allow Him speech, they take the reply rather in a rough and angry manner.

"Search, and look: for out of Galilee has arisen no prophet."

Why, what had the man said? That Christ was a prophet? No; he said, that He ought not to be slain unjudged; but they replied insolently, and as to one who knew nothing of the Scriptures; as though one had said, *"Go, learn,"* for this is the meaning of, *"Search, and look."* What then did Christ? Since they were continually dwelling upon Galilee and *"The Prophet,"* to free all men from this erroneous suspicion, and to show that He was not one of the prophets, but the Master of the world, He said,

John 8:12

"I am the light of the world."

Not *"of Galilee,"* not of Palestine, nor of Judæa. What then say the Jews?

John 8:13

"You bear record of yourself, your record is not true."

Alas! For their folly, He continually referred them to the Scriptures, and now they say, *"You bear record of yourself."* What was the record He bare? *"I am the light of the world."* A great thing to say, great of a truth, but it did not greatly amaze them, because He did not now make Himself equal to the Father, nor assert that He was His Son, nor that He was God, but for a while calls Himself *"a light."* They indeed desired to disprove this also, and yet this was a much greater thing than to say,

"He that follows Me, shall not walk in darkness."

Using the words *"light"* and *"darkness"* in a spiritual sense, and meaning thereby *"abides not in error."* In this place He draws on Nicodemus, and brings him in as having spoken very boldly, and praises the servants who had also done so. For to *"cry aloud,"* is the act of one desirous to cause that they also should hear. At the same time He hints at these who were secretly contriving treacheries, being both in darkness and error, but that they should not prevail over the light. And He reminds Nicodemus of the words which He had uttered before, *"Every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."* [John 3:20] For since they had asserted that none of the rulers had believed on Him, therefore He says, that *"he that does evil comes not to the light,"* to show that their not having come proceeds not from the weakness of the light, but from their own perverse will.

"They answered and said unto Him, Do you bear witness to yourself?"

What then says He?

John 8:14

"Though I bear record of Myself, My record is true; for I know whence I come, and whither I go; but you cannot tell whence I come."

What He had before said, these men bring forward as if it had been specially asserted. What then does Christ? To refute this, and to show that He used those expressions as suitable to them and to their suspicions, who supposed Him to be a mere man, He says, *"Though I bear record of Myself, My record is true, for I know whence I come."* What is this? *"I am of God, am God, the Son of God, and God Himself is a faithful witness unto Himself, but you know Him not; ye willingly err, knowing ye pretend not to know, but say all that you say according to mere human imagination, choosing to understand nothing beyond what is seen."*

John 8:15

"You judge after the flesh."

As to live after the flesh is to live badly, so to judge after the flesh is to judge unjustly. *"But I judge no man."*

John 8:16

"And yet if I judge, My judgment is true."

What He says, is of this kind; *"You judge unjustly."* *"And if,"* says some one, *"we judge unjustly, why dost Thou not rebuke us? Why dost Thou not punish us? Why dost Thou not condemn us?"* *"Because,"* He says, *"I came not for this."* This is the meaning of, *"I judge no man; yet if I judge, My judgment is true."* *"For had I been willing to judge, you would have been among the condemned. And this I say, not judging you. Yet neither do I tell you that I say it, not judging you, as though I were not confident that had I judged you, I should have convicted you; since if I had judged you, I must justly have condemned you. But now the time of judgment is not yet."* He alluded also to the judgment to come, saying,

"I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me."

Here He hinted, that not He alone condemns them, but the Father also. Then He concealed this, by leading them to His own testimony.

John 8:17

"It is written in your Law, that the testimony of two men is true."

3. What would the heretics say here? (They would say,) *"How is he better than man, if we take what he has said simply? For this rule is laid down in the case of men, because no man by himself is trustworthy. But in the case of God, how can one endure such a mode of speaking? How then is the word 'two' used? Is it because they are two, or because being men they are therefore two? If it is because they are two, why did he not betake himself to John, and say, I bear witness of myself, and John bears witness of me? Wherefore not to the angels? Wherefore not to the prophets? For he might have found ten thousand other testimonies."* But he desires to show not this only that there are Two, but also that they are of the same Substance.

John 8:19

"Then said they unto Him, Who is your father? Jesus answered, You neither know Me, nor My Father."

Because while they knew they spoke as though they knew not, and as if trying Him, He does not even deem them worthy of an answer. Wherefore henceforth He speaks all more clearly and more boldly; drawing His testimony from signs, and from His teaching of them that followed Him, and by the Cross being near. For, *"I know,"* He says, *"whence I come."* This would not greatly affect them, but the adding, *"and whither I go,"* would rather terrify them, since He was not to remain in death. But why said He not, *"I know that I am God,"* instead of, *"I know whence I come"*? He ever mingles lowly words with sublime, and even these He veils. For after saying, *"I bear witness of Myself,"* and proving this, He descends to a humbler strain. As though He had said, *"I know from whom I am sent, and to whom I depart."* For so they could have had nothing to say against it, when they heard that He was sent from Him, and would depart to Him. *"I could not have spoken,"* He says, *"any falsehood, I who have come from thence, and depart there, to the true God. But ye know not God, and therefore judge according to the flesh. For if having heard so many sure signs and proofs ye still say, 'your witness is not true,' if you deem Moses worthy of credit, both as to what he speaks concerning others and what he speaks concerning himself, but Christ not so, this is to judge according to the flesh."* *"But I judge no man."* He says indeed also that *"the Father judges no man."* [John 5:22] How then does He here declare, that, *"If I judge, My judgment is just, for I am not alone"*? He again speaks in reply to their thoughts. *"The judgment which is Mine is the judgment of the Father. The Father, judging, would not judge otherwise than as I do, and I should*

not judge otherwise than as the Father." Wherefore did He mention the Father? Because they would not have thought that the Son was to be believed unless He received the witness of the Father. Besides, the saying does not even hold good. For in the case of men when two bear witness in a matter pertaining to another, then their witness is true, (this is for two to witness,) but if one should witness for himself, then they are no longer two. Do you see that He said this for nothing else but to show that He was of the same Substance, that He needed no other witness, and was in nothing inferior to the Father? Observe at least His independence ;

John 8:18

"I am One that bear witness of Myself; and the Father that sent Me bears witness of Me."

Had He been of inferior substance, He would not have put this. But now that you may not deem that the Father is included, to make up the number (of two), observe that His power has nothing different (from the Father's). A man bears witness when he is trustworthy of himself, not when he himself needs testimony, and that too in a matter pertaining to another; but in a matter of his own, where he needs the witness of another, he is not trustworthy. But in this case it is all contrary. For He though bearing witness in a matter of His own, and saying that witness is borne to Him by another, asserts that He is trustworthy, in every way manifesting His independence. For why, when He had said, *"I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me,"* and, *"The testimony of two men is true,"* did He not hold His peace, instead of adding, *"I am One that bear witness of Myself"*? It was evidently to show His independence. And He places Himself first; *"I am One that bear witness of Myself."* Here He shows His equality of honor, and that they were profited nothing by saying that they knew God the Father, while they knew not Him. And He says that the cause of this (ignorance) was that they were not willing to know Him. Therefore He tells them that it was not possible to know the Father without knowing Him, that even so He might draw them to the knowledge of Him. For since leaving Him they even sought to get the knowledge of the Father, He says, *"You cannot know the Father without Me."* [John 8:19] So that they who blaspheme the Son, blaspheme not the Son only, but Him that begot Him also.

4. This let us avoid, and glorify the Son. Had He not been of the same Nature, He would not have spoken thus. For had He merely taught, but been

of different Substance, a man might not have known Him, and yet have known the Father; and again, it would not have been that one who knew Him, would have altogether known the Father; for neither does one who knows a man know an Angel. *"Yes,"* replies some one, *"he that knows the creation, knows God."* By no means. Many, or rather I should say, all men know the creation, (for they see it,) but they know not God. Let us then glorify the Son of God, not with this glory (of words) only, but that also which is by works. For the first without the last is nothing. *"Behold,"* says St. Paul, *"you are called a Jew, and retest in the Law, and makest your boast of God— thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not yourself? Thou that makest your boast of the Law, through breaking of the Law do you dishonor God?"* [Romans 2:17-23] Beware lest we also who make boast of the rightness of our faith dishonor God by not manifesting a life agreeable to the faith, causing Him to be blasphemed. For He would have the Christian to be the teacher of the world, its leaven, its salt, its light. And what is that light? It is a life which shines, and has in it no dark thing. Light is not useful to itself, nor leaven, nor salt, but shows its usefulness towards others, and so we are required to do good, not to ourselves only, but to others. For salt, if it salt not, is not salt. Moreover another thing is evident, that if we be righteous, others shall certainly be so also; but as long as we are not righteous, we shall not be able to assist others. Let there be nothing foolish or silly among us; such are worldly matters, such are the cares of this life. Wherefore the virgins were called foolish, because they were busy about foolish, worldly matters, gathering things together here, but laying not up treasure where they ought. Fear there is lest this be our case, fear lest we too depart clothed with filthy garments, to that place where all have them bright and shining. For nothing is more filthy, nothing more impure, than sin. Wherefore the Prophet declaring its nature cried out,

"My wounds stink, and are corrupt." [Psalm 38:5] And if you will fully learn how ill-savored sin is, consider it after it has been done; when you are delivered from the desire, when the fire no longer troubles you, then shall you see what sin is. Consider anger, when you are calm; consider avarice, when thou dost not feel it. There is nothing more shameful, nothing more accursed, than rapine and avarice. This we continually say, desiring not to vex you, but to gain some great and wonderful advantage. For he who has not acted rightly after hearing once, may perhaps do so after hearing a second time; and he who has passed by the second time, may do right after the third. God grant that we, being delivered from all evil things, may have the sweet savor of Christ; for to Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost is glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 53 on the Gospel of John

John 8:20

"These words spoke Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the Temple; and no man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come."

1. Oh the folly of the Jews! seeking Him as they did before the Passover, and then having found Him in the midst of them, and having often attempted to take Him by their own or by others' hands without being able; they were not even so awed by His power, but set themselves to their wickedness, and desisted not. For it says, that they continually made the attempt; *"These words spoke He in the treasury, teaching in the Temple; and no man laid hands on Him."* He spoke in the Temple, and in the character of teacher, which was more adapted to rouse them, and He spoke those things because of which they were stung, and charged Him with making Himself equal to the Father. For *"the witness of two men is true,"* proves this. Yet still *"He spoke these words,"* It says, *"in the Temple,"* in the character of teacher, *"and no man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come";* that is, it was not yet the fitting time at which He would be crucified. So that even then the deed done was not of their power, but of His dispensation, for they had long desired, but had not been able, nor would they even then have been able, except He had consented.

John 8:21

"Then said Jesus unto them, I go My way, and you shall seek Me."

Why says He this continually? To shame and terrify their souls; for observe what fear this saying caused in them. Although they desired to kill Him that they might be rid of Him, they yet ask, "*whither He goes,*" such great things did they imagine from the matter. He desired also to show them another thing, that the deed would not be effected through their force; but He showed it to them in a figure beforehand, and already foretold the Resurrection by these words.

John 8:22

"Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself?"

What then does Christ? To remove their suspicion, and to show that such an act is sin, He says,

John 8:23

"You are from beneath."

What He says, is of this kind: It is no wonder that you imagine such things, you who are carnal men, and have no spiritual thoughts, but I shall not do anything of the kind, for,

"I am from above; you are of the world."

Here again He speaks of their worldly and carnal imaginations, whence it is clear that the, *"I am not of this world,"* does not mean that He had not taken upon Him flesh, but that He was far removed from their wickedness. For He even says, that His disciples were *"not of the world"* [John 15:19], yet they had flesh. As then Paul, when he says, *"You are not in the flesh"* [Romans 8:9], does not mean that they are incorporeal, so Christ when He says, that His disciples are *"not of the world,"* does nothing else than testify to their heavenly wisdom.

John 8:24

"I said therefore unto you that...if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins."

For if He came to take away the sin of the world, and if it is impossible for men to put that off in any other way except by the washing, it needs must be that he that believes not must depart hence, having the old man; since he that will not by faith slay and bury that old man, shall die in him, and shall go away to that place to suffer the punishment of His former sins. Wherefore He said, *"He that believes not is judged already"* [John 3:18]; not merely through his not believing, but because he de parts parts hence having his former sins upon him.

John 8:25

"Then said they unto Him, Who are you?"

Oh folly! After so long a time, such signs and teaching, they ask, *"Who are you?"* What then says Christ?

"The same that I told you from the beginning."

What He says, is of this kind; *"You are not worthy to hear My words at all, much less to learn who I am, for you say all that you do, tempting Me, and giving heed to none of My sayings. And all this I could now prove against you."* For this is the sense of,

John 8:26

"I have many things to say and to judge of you."

"I could not only prove you guilty, but also punish you; but He that sent Me, that is, the Father, wills not this. For I have come not to judge the world, but to save the world, since God sent not His Son to judge the world, He says, but to save the world. [John 3:17] If now He has sent Me for this, and He is true, with good cause I judge no one now. But these things I speak that are for your salvation, not what are for your condemnation." He speaks thus, lest they should deem that it was through weakness that on hearing so much from them He went not to extremities, or that He knew not their secret thoughts and scoffings.

John 8:27

"They understood not that He spoke to them of the Father."

Oh folly! He ceased not to speak concerning Him, and they knew Him not. Then when after working many signs, and teaching them, He drew them not to Himself, He next speaks to them of the Cross, saying,

John 8:28-29

"When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know that I Am, and that I speak not of Myself, and that He that sent Me is with Me. And the Father has not left Me alone."

2. He shows that He rightly said, *"the same that I said unto you from the beginning."* So little heed they gave to His words. *"When you have lifted up the Son of Man."* *"Do ye not expect that you then shall certainly rid yourselves of Me, and slay Me? But I tell you that then you shall most know that I Am, by reason of the miracles, the resurrection, and the destruction (of Jerusalem)."* For all these things were sufficient to manifest His power. He said not, *"Then you shall know who I am";* for, *"when you shall see,"* He says, *"that I suffer nothing from death, then you shall know that I Am, that is, the Christ, the Son of God, who govern all things, and am not opposed to Him."* For which cause He adds, *"and of Myself I speak nothing."* For you shall know both My power and My unanimity with the Father. Because the, *"of Myself I speak nothing,"* shows that His Substance differs not (from that of the Father), and that He utters nothing save that which is in the mind of the Father. *"For when you have been driven away from your place of worship, and it is not allowed you even to serve Him as hitherto, then you shall know that He does this to avenge Me, and because He is angry with those who would not hear Me."* As though He had said, *"Had I been an enemy and a stranger to God, He would not have stirred up such wrath against you."* This also Esaias declares, *"He shall give the wicked in return for His burial"* [Isaiah 53:9, Septuagint]; and David, *"Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath"* [Psalm 2:5]; and Christ Himself, *"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."* [Matthew 23:38] And His parables declare the same thing when He says, *"What shall the Lord of that vineyard do to*

those husbandmen? He shall miserably destroy those wicked men."

[Matthew 21:40-41] Do you see that everywhere He speaks thus, because He is not yet believed? But if He will destroy them, as He will, (for, *"Bring hither,"* It says, *"those which would not that I should reign over them, and slay them,"*) wherefore says He that the deed is not His, but His Father's? He addresses Himself to their weakness, and at the same time honors Him that begot Him. Wherefore He said not, *"I leave your house desolate,"* but, it *"is left"*; He has put it impersonally. But by saying, *"How often would I have gathered your children together— and you would not,"* and then adding, *"is left,"* He shows that He wrought the desolation. *"For since,"* He tells them, *"when you were benefited and healed of your infirmities, you would not know Me, you shall know by being punished who I am."*

"And the Father is with Me." That they may not deem the *"who sent Me"* to be a mark of inferiority, He says, *"is with Me"*; the first belongs to the Dispensation, the second to the Godhead.

"And He has not left Me alone," for I do always those things that please Him.

Again He has brought down His discourse to a humbler strain, continually setting Himself against that which they asserted, that He was not of God, and that He kept not the Sabbath. To this He replies, *"I do always those things that are pleasing unto Him"*; showing that it was pleasing unto Him even that the Sabbath should be broken. So, for instance, just before the Crucifixion He said, *"Think ye that I cannot call upon My Father?"* [Matthew 26:53] And yet by merely saying, *"Whom do you seek?"* [c. xviii. 4, 6] He cast them down backwards. Why then says He not, *"Think ye that I cannot destroy you,"* when He had proved this by deed? He condescends to their infirmity. For He took great pains to show that He did nothing contrary to the Father. Thus He speaks rather after the manner of a

man; and as *"He has not left Me alone,"* was spoken, so also was the, *"I do always those things that are pleasing unto Him."*

John 8:30

"As He spoke these words, many believed on Him."

When He brought down His speech to a lowly strain, many believed on Him. Do you still ask wherefore He speaks humbly? Yet the Evangelist clearly alluded to this when he said, *"As He spoke these things, many believed on Him."* By this all but proclaiming aloud to us, *"Oh hearer, be not confounded if you hear any lowly expression, for they who after such high teaching were not yet persuaded that He was of the Father, were with good reason made to hear humbler words, that they might believe."* And this is an excuse for those things which shall be spoken in a humble way. They believed then, yet not as they ought, but carelessly and as it were by chance, being pleased and refreshed by the humility of the words. For that they had not perfect faith the Evangelist shows by their speeches after this, in which they insult Him again. And that these are the very same persons he has declared by saying,

John 8:31

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word."

Showing that they had not yet received His doctrine, but only gave heed unto His words. Wherefore He speaks more sharply. Before He merely said, *"You shall seek Me"* [John 7:34], but now He adds what is more, *"You shall die in your sins."* [John 8:21] And He shows how; *"because ye cannot when you have come to that place afterwards entreat Me."*

"These things which I speak unto the world." By these words He showed that He was now going forth to the Gentiles. But because they still knew not that He spoke to them of the Father, He again speaks of Him, and the Evangelist has put the reason of the humility of the expressions.

3. If now we will thus search the Scriptures, exactly and not carelessly, we shall be able to attain unto our salvation; if we continually dwell upon them, we shall learn right doctrine and a perfect life. For although a man be very hard, and stubborn, and proud, and profit nothing at other times, yet at least he shall gain fruit from this time, and receive benefit, if not so great as to admit of his being sensible of it, still he shall receive it. For if a man who passes by an ointment-maker's shop, or sits in one, is impregnated with the perfume even against his will, much more is this the case with one who comes to church. For as idleness is born of idleness, so too from working is generated a ready mind. Although you are full of ten thousand sins, although you are impure, shun not the tarrying here. *"Wherefore,"* it may be said, *"when hearing I do not?"* It is no small profit to deem one's self wretched; this fear is not useless, this dread is not unseasonable. If only you groan that, *"hearing I do not,"* you will certainly come also to the doing at some time or other. For it cannot be that he who speaks with God, and hears

God speak, should not profit. We compose ourselves at once and wash our hands when we desire to take the Bible into them. Do you see even before the reading what reverence is here? And if we go on with exactness, we shall reap great advantage. For we should not, unless it served to place the soul in reverence, have washed our hands; and a woman if she be unveiled straightway puts on her veil, giving proof of internal reverence, and a man if he be covered bares his head. Do you see how the outward behavior proclaims the inward reverence? Then moreover he that sits to hear groans often, and condemns his present life.

Let us then, beloved, give heed to the Scriptures, and if no other part be so, let the Gospels at least be the subjects of our earnest care, let us keep them in our hands. For straightway when you have opened the Book you shall see the name of Christ there, and shall hear one say, *"The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise. When His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, she was found with Child of the Holy Ghost."* [Matthew 1:18] He that hears this will immediately desire virginity, will marvel at the Birth, will be freed from earthly things. It is not a little thing when you see the Virgin deemed worthy of the Spirit, and an Angel talking with her. And this upon the very surface; but if you persevere to go on unto the end, you shall loathe all that pertains to this life, shall mock at all worldly things. If you are rich, you shall think nothing of wealth, when you hear that she who was (the wife) of a carpenter, and of humble family, became the mother of your Lord. If you are poor you shall not be ashamed of your poverty, when you hear that the Creator of the world was not ashamed of the meanest dwelling. Considering this, thou wilt not rob, you will not covet, you will not take the goods of others, but wilt rather be a lover of poverty, and despise wealth. And if this be the case, you shall banish all evil. Again, when you see Him lying in a manger, you will not be anxious to put golden garments about

your child, or to cause your wife's couch to be inlaid with silver. And if you care not for these things, you will not do either the deeds of covetousness and rapine, which are caused by them. Many other things you may gain which I cannot separately enumerate, but they will know who have made the trial. Wherefore I exhort you both to obtain Bibles, and to retain together with the Bibles the sentiments they set forth, and to write them in your minds. The Jews because they gave no heed were commanded to suspend their books from their hands; but we place them not even in our hands but in our house, when we ought to stamp them on our heart. Thus cleansing our present life, we shall obtain the good things that are to come to which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 54 on the Gospel of John

John 8:31-32

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

1. Beloved, our condition needs much endurance; and endurance is produced when doctrines are deeply rooted. For as no wind is able by its assaults to tear up the oak, which sends down its root into the lower recesses of the earth, and is firmly clenched there; so too the soul which is nailed by the fear of God none will be able to overturn. Since to be nailed is more than to be rooted. Thus the Prophet prays, saying, *"Nail my flesh by Your fear"* [Psalm 119:120, Septuagint]; *"do Thou so fix and join me, as by a nail riveted into me."* For as men of this kind are hard to be captured, so the opposite sort are a ready prey, and are easily thrown down. As was the case of the Jews at that time; for after having heard and believed, they again turned out of the way. Christ therefore desiring to deepen their faith that it might not be merely superficial, digs into their souls by more striking words. For it was the part of believers to endure even reproofs, but they immediately were angry. But how does He this? He first tells them, *"If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed: and the truth shall make you free."* All but saying, *"I am about to make a deep incision, but be not ye moved"*; or rather by these expressions He allayed the pride of their imagination. *"Shall make you free"*: from what, tell me? From your sins. What then say those boasters?

John 8:33

"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man."

Immediately their imagination dropped, and this happened from their having been fluttered about worldly things. *"If you continue in My word,"* was the expression of One declaring what was in their heart, and knowing that they had indeed believed, but had not continued. And He promises a great thing, that they should become His disciples. For since some had gone away from Him before this, alluding to them He says, *"If you continue,"* because they also had heard and believed, and departed because they could not continue. *"For many of His disciples went back, and walked no more openly with Him."* [John 6:66]

"You shall know the truth," that is, *"shall know Me, for I am the truth. All the Jewish matters were types, but you shall know the truth from Me, and it shall free you from your sins."* As to those others He said, *"You shall die in your sins,"* so to these He says, *"shall make you free."* He said not, *"I will deliver you from bondage,"* this He allowed them to conjecture. What then said they?

"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man." And yet if they must needs have been vexed, it might have been expected that they would have been so at the former part of His speech, at His having said, *"You shall know the truth";* and that they would have replied, *"What! Do we not now know the truth? Is then the Law and our knowledge a lie?"* But they cared for none of these things, they are grieved at worldly things, and these were their notions of bondage. And certainly even now, there are many who feel shame at indifferent matters, and at this kind of bondage, but who feel none for the bondage of sin, and who would rather be called

servants to this latter kind of bondage ten thousand times, than once to the former. Such were these men, and they did not even know of any other bondage, and they say, *"Bondsmen do you call those who are of the race of Abraham, the nobly born, who therefore ought not to be called bondsmen? For, says one, we were never in bondage to any man."* Such are the boastings of the Jews. *"We are the seed of Abraham," "we are Israelites."* They never mention their own righteous deeds. Wherefore John cried out to them, saying, *"Think not to say that we have Abraham to our father."* [Matthew 3:9] And why did not Christ confute them, for they had often been in bondage to the Egyptians, Babylonians, and many others? Because His words were not to gain honor for Himself, but for their salvation, for their benefit, and toward this object He was pressing. For He might have spoken of the four hundred years, He might have spoken of the seventy, He might have spoken of the years of bondage during the time of the Judges, at one time twenty, at another two, at another seven; He might have said that they had never ceased being in bondage. But He desired not to show that they were slaves of men, but that they were slaves of sin, which is the most grievous slavery, from which God alone can deliver; for to forgive sins belongs to none other. And this too they allowed. Since then they confessed that this was the work of God, He brings them to this point, and says,

John 8:34

"Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin."

Showing that this is the freedom of which He speaks, the freedom from this service.

John 8:35

"The servant abides not in the house, but the Son abides forever."

Gently too from this He casts down the things of the Law, alluding to former times. For that they may not run back to them and say, *"We have the sacrifices which Moses commanded, they are able to deliver us,"* He adds these words, since otherwise what connection would the saying have? For *"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace"* [Romans 3:23-24], even the priests themselves. Wherefore Paul also says of the priest, that *"he ought as for the people so also for himself to offer for sins, for that he also is compassed about with infirmity."* [Hebrews 5:3] And this is signified by His saying, *"The servant abides not in the house."* Here also He shows His equal honor with the Father, and the difference between slave and free. For the parable has this meaning, that is, *"the servant has no power,"* this is the meaning of *"abides not."*

2. But why when speaking of sins does He mention a *"house"*? It is to show that as a master has power over his house, so He over all. And the, *"abides not,"* is this, *"has not power to grant favors, as not being master of the house";* but the Son is master of the house. For this is the, *"abides forever,"* by a metaphor drawn from human things. That they may not say, *"who are you?"* *"All is Mine, (He says,) for I am the Son, and dwell in My Father's house,"* calling by the name of *"house"* His power. As in another place He calls the Kingdom His Father's house, *"In My Father's house are many mansions."* [Hebrews 14:2] For since the discourse was of freedom and bondage, He with reason used this metaphor, telling them that they had no power to set free.

John 8:36

"If the Son therefore shall make you free."

Do you see the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and how He declares that He has the same power as the Father? *"If the Son make you free, no man afterwards gain-says, but you have firm freedom."* For *"it is God that justifies, who is He that condemns?"* [Romans 8:33-34] Here He shows that He Himself is pure from sin, and alludes to that freedom which reached only to a name; this even men give, but that God alone. And so he persuaded them not to be ashamed at this slavery, but at that of sin. And desiring to show that they were not slaves, except by repudiating that liberty, He the more shows them to be slaves by saying,

"You shall be free indeed."

This is the expression of one declaring that this freedom was not real. Then, that they might not say, *"We have no sin,"* (for it was probable that they would say so,) observe how He brings them beneath this imputation. For omitting to convict all their life, He brings forward that which they had in hand, which they yet desired to do, and says,

John 8:37

"I know that you are Abraham's seed but you seek to kill Me."

Gently and by little does He expel them from that relationship, teaching them not to be high-minded because of it. For as freedom and bondage depend on men's actions, so also does relationship. He said not directly, *"You are not the seed of Abraham, you the murderers of the righteous"*; but for a while He even goes along with them, and says, *"I know that you are Abraham's seed."* Yet this is not the matter in question, and during the remainder of this speech He uses greater vehemence. For we may for the most part observe, that when He is about to work any great thing, after He has wrought it, He uses greater boldness of speech, as though the testimony from His works shut men's mouths. *"But ye seek to kill Me."* *"What of that,"* says some one, *"if they sought to do so justly."* But this was not so either; wherefore also He puts the reason;

"Because My word has no place in you."

"How then was it," says some one, *"that they believed on Him?"* As I before said, they changed again. On which account He touched them sharply. *"If you boast the relationship of Abraham ye ought also to show forth his life."* And He said not, *"You do not contain my words,"* but, *"My word has no place in you,"* thus declaring the sublimity of His doctrines. Yet not for this ought they to have slain, but rather to have honored and waited on Him so as to learn. *"But what,"* says some one, *"if you speak these things of yourself?"* On this account He added,

John 8:38

"I speak that which I have seen with My Father, and you do that which you have heard from your father."

"As," He says, "I both by My words and by the truth declare the Father, so also do ye by your actions (declare yours). For I have not only the same Substance, but also the same Truth with the Father."

John 8:39-40

"They said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus says unto them, If you had Abraham to your father, you would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me."

He here repeatedly handles their murderous intention, and makes mention of Abraham. And this He does desiring to draw off their attention from this relationship, and to take away their excessive boasting, and also to persuade them no longer to rest their hopes of salvation in Abraham, nor in the relationship which is according to nature, but in that which is according to the will. For what hindered their coming to Christ was this, their deeming that relationship to be sufficient for them to salvation. But what is the *"truth"* of which He speaks? That He is equal with the Father. For it was on this account that the Jews sought to slay Him; and He says,

"You seek to kill Me because I have told you the truth, which I have heard of My Father."

To show that these things are not opposed to the Father, He again betakes Himself to Him. They say unto Him,

John 8:41

"We be not born of fornication, we have one Father, even God."

3. *"What do you say? You have God for your Father, and do ye blame Christ for asserting this?"* Do you see that He said that God was His Father in a special manner? When therefore He had cast them out of their relationship to Abraham, having nothing to reply, they dare a greater thing, and betake themselves to God. But from this honor also He expels them, saying,

John 8:42-44

"If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth: when he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own."

He had driven them out of their relationship to Abraham, and when they dared greater things, He then adds a blow, telling them that they not only are not Abraham's children, but that they are even children of the devil, and inflicting a wound which might counterbalance their shamelessness; nor does He leave it unsupported, but establishes it by proofs. *"For,"* He says, *"to murder belongs to the wickedness of the devil."* And He said not merely, *"ye do his works,"* but, *"ye do his lusts,"* showing that both he and they hold to murder, and that envy was the cause. For the devil destroyed Adam, not because he had any charge against him, but only from envy. To this also He alludes here.

"And abode not in the truth." That is, in the right life. For since they continually accused Him of not being from God, He tells them that this also is from thence. For the devil first was the father of a lie, when he said, *"In the day that you eat thereof your eyes shall be opened"* [Genesis 3:5], and he first used it. For men use a lie not as a thing proper, but alien to their nature, but he as proper.

John 8:45

"And because I tell you the truth, you believe Me not."

What kind of consequence is this? *"Having no charge against Me, you desire to kill Me. For because you are enemies of the truth, therefore ye persecute Me. Since had this not been the reason, you would have named your charge."* Wherefore He added,

John 8:46

"Which of you convinces Me of sin?"

Then they said, *"We be not born of fornication."* Yet in fact many of them were born of fornication, for they practiced unbefitting unions. Still He does not convict them of this, but sets Himself to the other point. For when He has proved them to be, not of God, but of the devil, by all these signs, (for to do murder is of the devil, and to lie is of the devil, both which you do,) then He shows that to love is the sign of being of God. *"Why do ye not understand My speech?"* Since they were always doubting, saying, *"What is it that he says, 'Whither I go ye cannot come'?"* therefore He tells them, *"You do not understand My speech," "because you have not the word of God. And this comes to you, because that your understanding is groveling, and because what is Mine is far too great for you."* But what if they could not understand? Not to be able here means not to be willing; for *"you have trained yourselves to be mean, to imagine nothing great."*

Because they said that they persecuted Him as being themselves zealous for God, on this account He everywhere strives to show that to persecute Him is the act of those who hate God, but that, on the contrary, to love Him is the act of those who know God.

"We have one Father, even God." On this ground they pride themselves, on their honor not their righteous deeds. *"Therefore your not believing is no proof that I am an enemy to God, but your unbelief is a sign that you do not know God. And the reason is, from your being willing to lie and to do the works of the devil. But this is the effect of meanness of soul; (as the Apostle says, 'For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are you not carnal?') [1 Corinthians 3:3] And why is it that you cannot ?*

Because you will to do the lusts of your father, you are eager, you are ambitious (to do them)." Do you see that "ye cannot" express a want of will? For "this did not Abraham." "What are his works? Gentleness, meekness, obedience. But ye set yourselves on the contrary part, being hard and cruel."

But how came it into their thoughts to betake themselves to God? He had shown them unworthy of Abraham; desiring therefore to escape this charge, they mounted higher. For when He reproached them with murder, they said this, making it, as it were, a kind of excuse for themselves that they were avenging God. Therefore He shows that this very thing is the act of men opposing God. And the, *"I came forth,"* shows that He was from thence. He says, *"I came forth,"* alluding to His arrival among us. But since they would probably say to Him, *"Thou speaks certain things strange and new,"* He tells them that He had come from God. *"And therefore with good reason ye hear them not, because you are of the devil. For on what account would ye kill Me? What charge have ye to bring against Me? If there be none, why do ye not believe Me?"* Thus then having proved them to be of the devil by their lying and their murder, He shows them also to be alien from Abraham and from God, both because they hated One who had done no wrong, and because they would not hear His word; and in every way He proves that He was not opposed to God, and that it was not on this account that they refused to believe, but because they were aliens from God. For when One who had done no sin, who said that He came from God and was sent of God, who spoke the truth, and so spoke it as to challenge all to the proof, after this was not believed, it is clear that He was not believed because of their being carnal. Since sins do use, yea they do use to debase a soul. Wherefore It says, *"Seeing you have become dull of hearing."*

[Hebrews 5:11] For when a man cannot despise earthly things, how shall he ever be wise concerning heavenly things?

4. Wherefore, I exhort you, use we every means that our life may be righteous, that our minds may be cleansed, so that no filthiness be a hindrance to us; kindle for yourselves the light of knowledge, and sow not among thorns. For how shall one who knows not that covetousness is an evil, ever know the greater good? How shall one who refrains not from these earthly things ever hold fast to those heavenly? It is good to take by violence, not the things that perish, but the Kingdom of heaven. "*The violent*," it says, "*take it by force*." [Matthew 11:12] It is then not possible to attain to it by sluggishness, but by zeal. But what means "*the violent*"? There is need of much violence, (for strait is the way,) there is need of a youthful soul and a noble. Plunderers desire to outstrip all other, they look to nothing, neither to conviction, nor accusation, nor punishment, but are given up to one thing only, the getting hold of what they desire to seize, and they run past all that are before them in the way. Seize we then the Kingdom of heaven, for here to seize is no fault but rather praise, and the fault is the not seizing. Here our wealth comes not from another's loss. Haste we then to seize it. Should passion disquiet us, should lust disquiet us, let us do violence to our nature, let us become more gentle, let us labor a little, that we may rest forever. Seize not thou gold, but seize that wealth which shows gold to be but mud. For tell me, if lead and gold were laid before you, which would you take? Is it not clear that you would take the gold? Do you then, where one who seizes is punished, prefer that which is the more valuable, but where one who seizes is honored, give up what is the more valuable? If there were punishment in both cases, would you not rather aim at this latter? But in this case there is nothing like punishment, but even blessedness. And, "*How*," says some one, "*may one seize it?*" Cast

away the things which you have already in your hands; for so long as you grasp them you will not be able to seize the other. For consider, I pray you, a man with his hands full of silver, will he be able, as long as he retains it, to seize on gold, unless he first cast away the silver, and be free? Because he that seizes a thing must be well-girt so as not to be detained. And even now there are adverse powers running down against us to rob us, but let us fly them, let us fly them, trailing after us nothing that may give a hold, let us cut asunder the cords, let us strip ourselves of the things of earth. What need of silken garments? How long shall we be unrolling this mockery? How long shall we be burying gold? I desired to cease from always saying these things, but you will not suffer me, continually supplying me with occasions and arguments. But now at least let us desist, that having instructed others by our lives, we may obtain the promised good things, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 55 on the Gospel of John

John 8:48-49

"Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that you are a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor My Father."

1. A shameless and a forward thing is wickedness, and when it ought to hide itself, then is it the fiercer. As was the case with the Jews. For when they ought to have been pricked by what was said, admiring the boldness and conclusiveness of the words, they even insult Him, calling Him a Samaritan, and saying that He had a devil, and they ask, *"Said we not well that you are a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"* Because when He utters anything sublime, this is thought among the very senseless to be madness. Yet nowhere before did the Evangelist say that they called Him *"a Samaritan"*; but from this expression it is probable that this had been often asserted by them.

"You have a devil," says some one. Who is it that has a devil? He that honors God, or he that insults Him that honors Him? What then says Christ, who is very meekness and gentleness? *"I have not a devil, but I honor Him that sent me."* Where there was need to instruct them, to pull down their excessive insolence, to teach them not to be proud because of Abraham, He was vehement; but when it was needful that He being insulted should bear it, He used much gentleness. When they said, *"We have God and Abraham for our Father,"* He touched them sharply; but when they called Him a demoniac, He spoke submissively, thus teaching us to avenge insults offered to God, but to overlook such as are offered to ourselves.

John 8:50

"I seek not My own glory."

"These things," He says, "I have spoken to show that it becomes not you, being murderers, to call God your Father; so that I have spoken them through honor for Him, and for His sake do I hear these reproaches, and for His sake do ye dishonor Me. Yet I care not for this insolence ; to Him, for whose sake I now hear these things, you owe an account of your words. For 'I seek not My own glory.' Wherefore I omit to punish you, and betake Myself to exhortation, and counsel you so to act, that you shall not only escape punishment, but also attain eternal life."

John 8:51

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death."

Here He speaks not of faith only, but of a pure life. Above He said, *"shall have everlasting life,"* but here, *"shall not see death."* [John 6:40] At the same time He hints to them that they could do nothing against Him, for if the man that should keep His saying should not die, much less should He Himself. At least they understood it so, and said to Him,

John 8:52

"Now we know that you have a devil; Abraham is dead, and the Prophets are dead."

That is, *"they who heard the word of God are dead, and shall they who have heard yours not die?"*

John 8:53

"Are you greater than our father Abraham?"

Alas for their vainglory! Again do they betake themselves to his relationship. Yet it would have been suitable to say, *"Are you greater than God? Or they who have heard you than Abraham?"* But they say not this, because they thought that He was even less than Abraham. At first, therefore, He showed that they were murderers, and so led them away from the relationship; but when they persevered, He contrived this in another way, showing that they labored uselessly. And concerning the *"death,"* He said nothing to them, neither did He reveal or tell them what kind of death He meant, but in the meantime He would have them believe, that He is greater than Abraham, that even by this He may put them to shame.

"Certainly," He says, *"were I a common man I ought not to die, having done no wrong; but when I speak the truth, and have no sin, am sent from God, and am greater than Abraham, are you not mad, do ye not labor in vain when you attempt to kill Me?"* What then is their reply? *"Now we know that you have a devil."* Not so spoke the woman of Samaria. She said not to Him, *"You have a devil";* but only, *"Are you greater than our father Jacob?"* [John 4:12] For these men were insolent and accursed, while she desired to learn; wherefore she doubted and answered with proper moderation, and called Him, *"Lord."* For one who promised far greater things, and who was worthy of credit, ought not to have been insulted, but even admired; yet these men said that He had a devil. Those expressions of the Samaritan woman were those of one in doubt; these were the words of men unbelieving and perverse. *"Are you greater than our father Abraham?"* so that this (which He had said) makes Him to be greater than Abraham.

"When therefore you have seen Him lifted up, you shall confess that He is greater." On this account He said, *"When you have lifted Me up, you shall know that I Am."* [John 8:28] And observe His wisdom. Having first rent them away from Abraham's kindred, He shows that He is greater than Abraham, that so He may be seen to be very exceedingly greater than the Prophets also. Indeed it was because they continually called Him a prophet that He said, *"My word has no place in you."* [John 8:37] In that other place He declared that He raises the dead, but here He says, *"He that believes shall never see death,"* which was a much greater thing than not to allow believers to be holden, by death. Wherefore the Jews were the more enraged. What then say they?

"Whom makest you yourself?"

And this too in an insulting manner. *"You are taking somewhat upon yourself,"* says one of them. To this then Christ replies;

John 8:54

"If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing."

2. What say the heretics here? That He heard the question, *"Are you greater than our father Abraham?"* and dared not to say to them, *"Yea, I am greater,"* but did so in a covert manner. What then? Is His honor *"nothing"*? With respect to them it is nothing. And as He said, *"My witness is not true"* [John 5:31], with reference to the opinion they would form of it, so also does He speak here.

"There is One that honors Me."

And wherefore said He not, *"The Father that sent Me,"* as He did before, but,

"Of whom you say that He is your God."

John 8:55

"Yet you have not known Him."

Because He desired to show that they not only knew not His Father, but that they knew not God.

"But I know Him."

"So that to say, 'I know Him,' is not a boast, while to say, 'I know Him not,' would be a falsehood; but you when you say that you know Him, lie; as then ye, when you say that you know Him, lie, so also should I, were I to say that I know Him not."

"If I honor Myself." Since they said, *"Whom makest you yourself?"* He replies, *"If I make (Myself anything,) My honor is nothing. As then I know Him exactly, so ye know Him not."* And as in the case of Abraham, He did not take away their whole assertion, but said, *"I know that you are Abraham's seed,"* so as to make the charge against them heavier; thus here He does not remove the whole, but what? *"Whom ye say."* By granting to them their boast of words, He increases the force of the accusation against them. How then do ye *"not know Him"*? *"Because ye insult One who says and does everything that He may be glorified, even when that One is sent from Him."* This assertion is unsupported by testimony, but what follows serves to establish it.

"And I keep His saying."

Here they might, if at least they had anything to say, have refuted Him, for it was the strongest proof of His having been sent by God.

John 8:56

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad."

Again, He shows that they were aliens from the race of Abraham, if they grieved at what he rejoiced in. *"My day,"* seems to me to mean the day of the Crucifixion, which Abraham foreshowed typically by the offering of the ram and of Isaac. What do they reply?

John 8:57

"You are not yet forty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

So that we conclude that Christ was nearly forty.

John 8:58-59

"Jesus says unto them, Before Abraham was, I Am. Then took they up stones to cast at Him."

Do you see how He proved Himself to be greater than Abraham? For the man who rejoiced to see His day, and made this an object of earnest desire, plainly did so because it was a day that should be for a benefit, and belonging to one greater than himself. Because they had said, *"The carpenter's son"* [Matthew 13:55], and imagined nothing more concerning Him, He leads them by degrees to an exalted notion of Him. Therefore when they heard the words, *"You know not God,"* they were not grieved; but when they heard, *"before Abraham was, I Am,"* as though the nobility of their descent were debased, they became furious, and would have stoned Him.

"He saw My day, and was glad." He shows, that not unwillingly He came to His Passion, since He praises him who was gladdened at the Cross. For this was the salvation of the world. But they cast stones at Him; so ready were they for murder, and they did this of their own accord, without enquiry.

But wherefore said He not, *"Before Abraham was, I was,"* instead of *"I Am"*? As the Father uses this expression, *"I Am,"* so also does Christ; for it signifies continuous Being, irrespective of all time. On which account the expression seemed to them to be blasphemous. Now if they could not bear the comparison with Abraham, although this was but a trifling one, had He continually made Himself equal to the Father, would they ever have ceased casting stones at Him?

After this, again He flees as a man, and conceals Himself, having laid before them sufficient instruction: and having accomplished His work, He

went forth from the Temple, and departed to heal the blind, proving by His actions that He is before Abraham. But perhaps some one will say, "*Why did He not paralyze their strength? So they would have believed.*" He healed the paralytic, yet they believed not; nay, He wrought ten thousand wonders; at the very Passion He cast them to the ground, and darkened their eyes, yet they believed not; and how would they have believed if He had paralyzed their strength? There is nothing worse than a soul hardened in desperation; though it see signs and wonders, it still perseveres in retaining the same shamelessness. Thus Pharaoh, who received ten thousand strokes, was sobered only while being punished, and continued of this character until the last day of his life, pursuing those whom he had let go. Wherefore Paul continually says, "*Lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*" [Hebrews 3:13] For as the callosities of the body, when formed, become dead, and possess no sensation; so the soul, when it is occupied by many passions, becomes dead to virtue; and apply what you will to it, it gets no perception of the matter, but whether you threaten punishment or anything else, continues insensible.

3. Wherefore I beseech you, while we have hopes of salvation, while we can turn, to use every means to do so. For men who have become past feeling, are after that in the blind state of despairing pilots, who give up their vessel to the wind, and themselves contribute no assistance. Thus the envious man looks to one thing only, that is, to satisfy his lust, and though he be like to be punished or even slain, still he is possessed solely by that passion; and in like manner the intemperate and avaricious. But if the sovereignty of the passions be so great, much greater is that of virtue; if for them we despise death, much more for this; if they (sinners) regard not their own lives, much less ought we to do so in the cause of our salvation. For what shall we have to say, if when they who perish are so active about their

own perdition, we for our own salvation manifest not even an equal activity, but ever continue wasting with envy? Nothing is worse than envy; to destroy another it destroys itself also. The eye of the envious wastes away in grief, he lives in a continual death, he deems all men, even those who have never wronged him, his enemies. He grieves that God is honored, he rejoices in what the devil rejoices in. Is any honored among men? This is not honor, envy him not. But is he honored by God? Strive and be thou like him. You will not? Why then do you destroy yourself too? Why do you cast away what you have? Can you not be like him, nor gain any good thing? Why then do you besides this take for yourself evil, when you ought to rejoice with him, that so even if you be not able to share his toils, you may profit by rejoicing with Him? For often even the will is able to effect great good. At least Ezekiel says, that the Moabites were punished because they rejoiced over the Israelites, and that certain others were saved because they mourned over the misfortunes of their neighbors. [Ezekiel 25:8] Now if there be any comfort for those who mourn over the woes of others, much more for those who rejoice at the honors of others. He charged the Moabites with having exulted over the Israelites, yet it was God that punished them; but not even when He punishes will He have us rejoice over those that are punished. For it is not His wish to punish them. Now if we must condole with those who are punished, much more must we avoid envying those who are honored. Thus, for example, Corah and Dathan perished with their company, making those whom they envied brighter, and giving themselves up to punishment. For a venomous beast is envy, an unclean beast, a deliberate vice which admits not of pardon, a wickedness stripped of excuse, the cause and mother of all evils. Wherefore let us pluck it up by the roots, that we may be freed from evil here, and may obtain blessings hereafter; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by

whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 56 on the Gospel of John

John 9:1-2

"And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"

1. *" And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth."* Being full of love for man, and caring for our salvation, and desiring to stop the mouths of the foolish, He omits nothing of His own part, though there be none to give heed. And the Prophet knowing this says, *"That You might be justified when You speak, and be clear when You are judged."* [Psalm 51:4] Wherefore here, when they would not receive His sublime sayings, but said that He had a devil, and attempted to kill Him, He went forth from the Temple, and healed the blind, mitigating their rage by His absence, and by working the miracle softening their hardness and cruelty, and establishing His assertions. And He works a miracle which was no common one, but one which took place then for the first time. *"Since the world began,"* says he who was healed, *"was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."* [John 9:32] Some have, perhaps, opened the eyes of the blind, but of one born blind never. And that on going out of the Temple, He proceeded intentionally to the work, is clear from this; it was He who saw the blind man, not the blind man who came to Him; and so earnestly did He look upon him, that even His disciples perceived it. From this, at least, they came to question Him; for when they saw Him earnestly regarding the man, they asked Him, saying, *"Who did sin, this man, or his parents?"* A mistaken question, for how could he sin

before he was born? And how, if his parents had sinned, would he have been punished? Whence then came they to put this question? Before, when He healed the paralytic, He said, "*Behold, you are made whole, sin no more.*" [John 5:14] They therefore, having understood that he was palsied on account of sin, said, "*Well, that other was palsied because of his sins; but concerning this man, what wouldst Thou say? Has he sinned? It is not possible to say so, for he is blind from his birth. Have his parents sinned? Neither can one say this, for the child suffers not punishment for the father.*" As therefore when we see a child evil entreated, we exclaim, "*What can one say of this? What has the child done?*" not as asking a question, but as being perplexed, so the disciples spoke here, not so much asking for information, as being in perplexity. What then says Christ?

John 9:3

"Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents."

This He says not as acquitting them of sins, for He says not simply, *"Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents,"* but adds, *"that he should have been born blind — but that the Son of God should be glorified in him."* *"For both this man has sinned and his parents, but his blindness proceeds not from that."* And this He said, not signifying that though this man indeed was not in such case, yet that others had been made blind from such a cause, the sins of their parents, since it cannot be that when one sins another should be punished. For if we allow this, we must also allow that he sinned before his birth. As therefore when He declared, *"neither has this man sinned,"* He said not that it is possible to sin from one's very birth, and be punished for it; so when He said, *"nor his parents,"* He said not that one may be punished for his parents' sake. This supposition He removes by the mouth of Ezekiel; *"As I live says the Lord, this proverb shall not be, that is used, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."* [Ezekiel 18:3] And Moses says, *"The father shall not die for the child, neither shall the child die for the father."* [Deuteronomy 24:16] And of a certain king Scripture says, that for this very reason he did not this thing, observing the law of Moses. But if any one argue, *"How then is it said, 'Who visits the sins of the parents upon the children unto the third and fourth generation'?"* [Deuteronomy 5:9]; we should make this answer, that the assertion is not universal, but that it is spoken with reference to certain who came out of Egypt. And its meaning is of this kind; *"Since these who have come out of Egypt, after signs and wonders, have become worse than their forefathers who saw none of these things, they shall suffer,"* It says,

"the same that those others suffered, since they have dared the same crimes." And that it was spoken of those men, any one who will give attention to the passage will more certainly know. Wherefore then was he born blind?

"That the glory of God should be made manifest," He says.

Lo, here again is another difficulty, if without this man's punishment, it was not possible that the glory of God should be shown. Certainly it is not said that it was impossible, for it was possible, but, *"that it might be manifested even in this man."* "What," says some one, *"did he suffer wrong for the glory of God?"* What wrong, tell me? For what if God had never willed to produce him at all? But I assert that he even received benefit from his blindness: since he recovered the sight of the eyes within. What were the Jews profited by their eyes? They incurred the heavier punishment, being blinded even while they saw. And what injury had this man by his blindness? For by means of it he recovered sight. As then the evils of the present life are not evils, so neither are the good things good; sin alone is an evil, but blindness is not an evil. And He who had brought this man from not being into being, had also power to leave him as he was.

2. But some say, that this conjunction is not at all expressive of cause, but relates to the consequence of the miracle; as when He says, *"For judgment I have come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind"* [John 9:39]; and yet it was not for this He came, that those who saw might be made blind. And again Paul, *"Because that which may be known of God is manifested in them, that they may be without excuse"* [Romans 1:19-20]; yet He showed it not unto them for this, that they might be deprived of excuse, but that they might obtain excuse. And again in another place, *"The Law entered, that the offense might abound"* [Romans 5:20]; yet it was not for this that it entered,

but that sin might be checked. Do you see everywhere that the conjunction relates to the consequence? For as some excellent architect may build part of a house, and leave the rest unfinished, so that to those who believe not he may prove, by means of that remnant, that he is author of the whole; so also God joins together and completes our body, as it were a house decayed, healing the withered hand, bracing the palsied limbs, straightening the lame, cleansing the lepers, raising up the sick, making sound the crippled, recalling the dead from death, opening the eyes that were closed, or adding them where before they were not; all which things, being blemishes arising from the infirmity of our nature, He by correcting showed His power.

But when He said, *"That the glory of God might be manifested,"* He spoke of Himself, not of the Father; His glory was already manifest. For since they had heard that God made man, taking the dust of the earth, so also Christ made clay. To have said, *"I am He who took the dust of the earth, and made man,"* would have seemed a hard thing to His hearers; but this when shown by actual working, no longer stood in their way. So that He by taking earth, and mixing it with spittle, showed forth His hidden glory; for no small glory was it that He should be deemed the Architect of the creation.

And after this the rest also followed; from the part, the whole was proved, since the belief of the greater also confirmed the less. For man is more honorable than any created thing, and of our members the most honorable is the eye. This is the cause that He fashioned the eyes, not in a common manner, but in the way that He did. For though that member be small in size, yet it is more necessary than any part of the body. And this Paul showed when he said, *"If the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"* [1 Corinthians 12:16] For all indeed that is in us is a manifestation of the wisdom of God, but

much more the eye; this it is that guides the whole body, this gives beauty to it all, this adorns the countenance, this is the light of all the limbs. What the sun is in the world, that the eye is in the body; quench the sun, and you destroy and confound all things; quench the eyes, and the feet, the hands, the soul, are useless. When these are disabled, even knowledge is gone, since by means of these we know God. *"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."* [Romans 1:20] Wherefore the eye is not only a light to the body, but beyond the body to the soul also. On which account it is established as in a royal fortress, obtaining the higher condition, and presiding over the other senses. This then Christ forms.

And that you may not deem that He needs matter when He works, and that you may learn that He had not need at all of clay, (for He who brought into being the greater existences when as yet they were not, would much more have made this without matter,) that I say you may learn that He did not this through necessity, but to show that He was the Creator at the beginning, when He had spread on the clay He says, *"Go, wash," "that you may know that I need not clay to create eyes, but that My glory may be manifested hereby."* For to show that He spoke of Himself when He said, *"That the glory of God may be manifested,"* He added,

John 9:4

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me."

That is, *"I must manifest Myself, and do the things which may show that I do the same things with the Father"*; not things *"similar,"* but, *"the same,"* an expression which marks greater unvaryingness, and which is used of those who do not differ ever so little. Who then after this will face Him, when he sees that He has the same power with the Father? For not only did He form or open eyes, but gave also the gift of sight, which is a proof that He also breathed in the soul. Since if that did not work, the eye, though perfected, could never see anything; so that He gave both the energy which is from the soul, and gave the member also possessing all things, both arteries and nerves and veins, and all things of which our body is composed.

"I must work while it is day."

What mean these words? To what conclusion do they lead? To an important one. For what He says is of this kind. *"While it is day, while men may believe in Me, while this life lasts, I must work."*

"The night comes," that is, futurity, *"when no man can work."*

He said not, *"when I cannot work,"* but, *"when no man can work"*: that is, when there is no longer faith, nor labors, nor repentance. For to show that He calls faith, a *"work,"* when they say unto Him, *"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"* [John 6:28], He replies, *"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."* How then can no man work this work in the future world? Because there faith is not, but all, willingly, or unwillingly, will submit. For lest any one should say that He acted as He did from desire of honor, He shows that He did all to spare them who had power to believe *"here"* only, but who could no longer

"there" gain any good thing. On this account, though the blind man came not to Him, He did what He did: for that the man was worthy to be healed, that had he seen he would have believed and come to Christ, that had he heard from any that He was present, he would not even so have been neglectful, is clear from what follows, from his courage, from his very faith. For it was likely that he would have considered with himself, and have said, *"What is this? He made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go, wash;' could he not have healed me, and then have sent me to Siloam? Often have I washed there with many others, and have gained no good; had he possessed any power, he would while present have healed me."* Just as Naaman spoke respecting Elisha; for he too being commanded to go wash in Jordan, believed not, and this too when there was such a fame abroad concerning Elisha. [2 Kings 5:11] But the blind man neither disbelieved, nor contradicted, nor reasoned with himself, *"What is this? Ought he to have put on clay? This is rather to blind one the more: who ever recovered sight so?"* But he used no such reasonings. Do you see his steadfast faith and zeal?

"The night comes." Next He shows, that even after the Crucifixion He would care for the ungodly, and bring many to Himself. For *"it is yet day."* But after that, He entirely cuts them off, and declaring this, He says,

John 9:5

"As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

3. As also He said to others, *"Believe while the light is with you."* [John 12:36] Wherefore then did Paul call this life *"night"* and that other *"day"*? Not opposing Christ, but saying the same thing, if not in words yet in sense; for he also says, *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand."* [Romans 13:12] The present time he calls *"night,"* because of those who sit in darkness, or because he compares it with that day which is to come, Christ calls the future *"night,"* because there sin has no power to work; but Paul calls the present life night, because they are in darkness who continue in wickedness and unbelief. Addressing himself then to the faithful he said, *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand,"* since they should enjoy that light; and he calls the old life night. *"Let us put away,"* he says, *"the works of darkness."* Do you see that he tells them that it is *"night"*? Wherefore he says, *"Let us walk honestly as in the day,"* that we may enjoy that light. For if this light be so good, consider what that will be; as much as the sunlight is brighter than the flame of a candle, so much and far more is that light better than this. And signifying this, Christ says, that *"the sun shall be darkened."* Because of the excess of that brightness, not even the sun shall be seen.

If now in order to have here well-lighted and airy houses, we expend immense sums, building and toiling, consider how we ought to spend our very bodies themselves, that glorious houses may be built for us in the heavens where is that Light ineffable. Here there are strifes and contentions about boundaries and walls, but there will be nothing of the kind there, no envy, no malice, no one will dispute with us about settling boundaries. This

dwelling too we assuredly needs must leave, but that abides with us forever; this must decay by time, and be exposed to innumerable injuries, but that must remain without growing old perpetually; this a poor man cannot build, but that other one may build with two mites, as did the widow. Wherefore I choke with grief, that when so many blessings are laid before us, we are slothful, and despise them; we use every exertion to have splendid houses here, but how to gain in heaven so much as a little resting-place, we care not, we think not. For tell me, where would you have your dwelling here? In the wilderness, or in one of the smaller cities? I think not; but in some of the most royal and grand cities, where the traffic is more, where the splendor is greater. But I will lead you into such a City, whose Builder and Maker is God; there I exhort you to found and build, at less cost [with less labor]. That house the hands of the poor build, and it is most truly *"building,"* just as the structures made here are the work of extreme folly. For if a man were to bring you into the land of Persia, to behold what is there and to return, and were then to bid you build houses there, would you not condemn him for excessive folly, as bidding you spend unseasonably? How then do you this very same thing upon the earth which you shall shortly leave? *"But I shall leave it to my children,"* says some one. Yet they too shall leave it soon after you; nay, often even before you; and their successors the same. And even here it is a subject of melancholy to you that you see not your heirs retain their possessions, but there you need apprehend nothing of the sort; the possession remains immovable, to you, to your children, and to their descendants, if they imitate the same goodness. That building Christ takes in hand, he who builds that needs not to appoint care-takers, nor be thoughtful, nor anxious; for when God has undertaken the work, what need of thought? He brings all things together, and raises the house. Nor is this the only thing wonderful, but also that He so builds it as

is pleasing to you, or rather even beyond what is pleasing, beyond what you desire, for He is the most excellent Artist, and cares greatly for your advantage. If you are poor, and desirest to build this house, it brings you no envy, produces against you no malice, for none of those who know how to envy behold it, but the Angels who know how to rejoice at your blessings; none will be able to encroach upon it, for none dwell near it of those who are diseased with such passions. For neighbors you have there the saints, Peter and Paul with their company, all the Prophets, the Martyrs, the multitude of Angels, of Archangels. For the sake then of all these things, let us empty our substance upon the poor, that we may obtain those tabernacles; which may we all obtain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 57 on the Gospel of John

John 9:6-7

"When Jesus had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."

1. Those who intend to gain any advantage from what they read, must not pass by even any small portion of the words; and on this account we are bidden to *"search"* the Scriptures, because most of the words, although at first sight easy, appear to have in their depth much hidden meaning. For observe of what sort is the present case. *"Having said these words,"* It says, *"He spat on the ground."* What words? *"That the glory of God should be made manifest,"* and that, *"I must work the works of Him that sent Me."* For not without a cause has the Evangelist mentioned to us His words, and added that, *"He spat,"* but to show that He confirmed His words by deeds. And why used He not water instead of spittle for the clay? He was about to send the man to Siloam: in order therefore that nothing might be ascribed to the fountain, but that you might learn that the power proceeding from His mouth, the same both formed and opened the man's eyes, He *"spat on the ground"*; this at least the Evangelist signified, when he said, *"And made clay of the spittle."* Then, that the successful issue might not seem to be of the earth, He bade him wash. But wherefore did He not this at once, instead of sending him to Siloam? That you may learn the faith of the blind man, and that the obstinacy of the Jews might be silenced: for it was probable that they would all see him as he departed, having the clay spread upon his eyes, since by the strangeness of the thing he would attract to himself all,

both those who did and those who did not know him, and they would observe him exactly. And because it is not easy to recognize a blind man who has recovered sight, He first makes by the length of way many to be witnesses, and by the strangeness of the spectacle exact observers, that being more attentive they may no longer be able to say, *"It is he: it is not he."* Moreover, by sending him to Siloam, He desires to prove that He is not estranged from the Law and the Old (Covenant), nor could it afterwards be feared that Siloam would receive the glory, since many who had often washed their eyes there gained no such benefit; for there also it was the power of Christ that wrought all. On which account the Evangelist adds for us the interpretation of the name; for having said, *"in Siloam,"* he adds, *"Which is, Sent."*

That you may learn that there also it was Christ who healed him. As Paul says, *"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."* [1 Corinthians 10:4] As then Christ was the spiritual Rock, so also was He the spiritual Siloam. To me also the sudden coming in of the water seems to hint an ineffable mystery. What is that? The unlooked for (nature) of His appearance, beyond all expectation.

But observe the mind of the blind man, obedient in everything. He said not, *"If it is really the clay or the spittle which gives me eyes, what need of Siloam? Or if there be need of Siloam, what need of the clay? Why did he anoint me? Why bid me wash?"* But he entertained no such thoughts, he held himself prepared for one thing only, to obey in all things Him who gave the command, and nothing that was done offended him. If any one ask, *"How then did he recover his sight, when he had removed the clay?"* he will hear no other answer from us than that we know not the manner. And what wonder if we know it not, since not even the Evangelist knew, nor the very man that was healed? What had been done he knew, but the manner of

doing it he could not comprehend. So when he was asked he said, that "*He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and do see*"; but how this took place he cannot tell them, though they ask ten thousand times.

John 9:8-9

"The neighbors therefore, and they which had seen him, that he was a beggar; said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he."

The strangeness of what had been brought to pass led them even to unbelief, though so much had been contrived that they might not disbelieve. They said, *"Is not this he that sat and begged?"* O the lovingkindness of God! Whither did He descend, when with great kindness He healed even beggars, and so silenced the Jews, because He deemed not the illustrious, nor the distinguished, nor the rulers, but men of no mark to be fit objects of the same Providence. For He came for the salvation of all.

And what happened in the case of the paralytic, happened also with this man, for neither did the one or the other know who it was that healed him. And this was caused by the retirement of Christ, for Jesus when He healed always retired, that all suspicion might be removed from the miracles. Since how could they who knew not who He was flatter Him, or join in contriving what had been done? Neither was this man one of those who went about, but of those who sat at the doors of the Temple. Now when all were doubting concerning him, what says he?

"I am he."

He was not ashamed of his former blindness, nor did he fear the wrath of the people, nor did he decline showing himself that he might proclaim his Benefactor.

John 9:10-11

"They said unto him, How were your eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus."

What do you say? Does *"a man"* work such deeds? As yet he knew nothing great concerning Him.

"A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes."

2. Observe how truthful he is. He says not whence He made it, for he speaks not of what he does not know; he saw not that He spat on the ground, but that He spread it on he knew from sense and touch.

"And said unto me, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."

This too his hearing witnessed to him. But how did he recognize His voice? From His conversation with the disciples. And saying all this, and having received the witness by the works, the manner (of the cure) he cannot tell. Now if faith is needed in matters which are felt and handled, much more in the case of things invisible.

John 9:12

"They said unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not."

They said, *"Where is he?"* having already murderous intentions against Him. But observe the modesty of Christ, how He continued not with those who were healed; because He neither desired to reap glory, nor to draw a multitude, nor to make a show of Himself. Observe too how truthfully the blind man makes all his answers. The Jews desired to find Christ to bring Him to the priests, but when they did not find Him, they brought the blind man to the Pharisees, as to those who would question him more severely. For which reason the Evangelist remarks, that it was *"the Sabbath"* [John 9:14], in order to point out their wicked thoughts, and the cause for which they sought Him, as though forsooth they had found a handle, and could disparage the miracle by means of what appeared to be a transgression of the Law. And this is clear from their saying immediately on seeing him nothing but, *"How opened he your eyes?"* Observe also the manner of their speech; they say not, *"How did you receive your sight?"* but, *"How opened he your eyes?"* thus affording him an excuse for slandering Jesus, because of His having worked. But he speaks to them shortly, as to men who had already heard; for without mentioning His name, or that *"He said unto me, Go, wash,"* he at once says,

John 9:15

"He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and do see."

Because the slander was now become great, and the Jews had said, *"Behold what work Jesus does on the Sabbath day, he anoints with clay!"* But observe, I pray you, how the blind man is not disturbed. When being questioned he spoke in the presence of those others without danger, it was no such great thing to tell the truth, but the wonder is, that now when he is placed in a situation of greater fear, he neither denies nor contradicts what he had said before. What then did the Pharisees, or rather what did the others also? They had brought him (to the Pharisees), as being about to deny; but, on the contrary, that befell them which they desired not, and they learned more exactly. And this they everywhere have to endure, in the case of miracles; but this point we will more clearly demonstrate in what follows. What said the Pharisees?

John 9:16

"Some said," (not all, but the more forward,) "This man is not of God, because he keeps not the Sabbath day; others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?"

Do you see that they were led up by the miracles? For hear what they say now, who before this had sent to bring Him. And if all did not so, (for being rulers through vainglory they fell into unbelief,) yet still the greater number even of the rulers believed on Him, but confessed Him not. Now the multitude was easily overlooked, as being of no great account in their synagogue, but the rulers being more conspicuous had the greater difficulty in speaking boldly, or some the love of rule restrained, others cowardice, and the fear of the many. Wherefore also He said, *"How can you believe who receive honor from men?"* [John 5:44] And these who were seeking to kill Him unjustly said that they were of God, but that He who healed the blind could not be of God, because He kept not the Sabbath; to which the others objected, that a sinner could not do such miracles. Those first maliciously keeping silence about what had taken place, brought forward the seeming transgression; for they said not, *"He heals on the Sabbath day,"* but, *"He keeps not the Sabbath."* These, on the other hand, replied weakly, for when they ought to have shown that the Sabbath was not broken, they rely only upon the miracles; and with reason, for they still thought that He was a man. If this had not been the case, they might besides have urged in His defense, that He was Lord of the Sabbath which Himself had made, but as yet they had not this opinion. Anyhow, none of them dared to say what he wished openly, or in the way of an assertion, but only in the way of doubt, some from not having boldness of speech, others through love of rule.

"There was therefore a division among them." This division first began among the people, then later among the rulers also, and some said, *"He is a good man"*; others, *"Nay, but he deceives the people."* [John 7:12] Do you see that the rulers were more void of understanding than the many, since they were divided later than they? And after they were divided, they did not exhibit any noble feeling, when they saw the Pharisees pressing upon them. Since had they been entirely separated from them, they would soon have known the truth. For it is possible to do well in separating. Wherefore also Himself has said, *"I have come not to bring peace upon the earth but a sword."* [Matthew 10:34] For there is an evil concord, and there is a good disagreement. Thus they who built the tower [Genesis 11:4], agreed together to their own hurt; and these same again were separated, though unwillingly, yet for their good. Thus also Corah and his company agreed together for evil, therefore they were separated for good; and Judas agreed with the Jews for evil. So division may be good, and agreement may be evil. Wherefore It says, *"If your eye offend you, smite it out, if your foot, cut it off."* [Matthew 5:29, and 18:8] Now if we must separate ourselves from an ill-joined limb, must we not much more from friends united to us for evil? So that agreement is not in all cases a good, just as division is not in all cases an evil.

3. These things I say, that we may shun wicked men, and follow the good; for if in the case of our limbs we cut off that which is rotten and incurable, fearing lest the rest of the body should catch the same disease, and if we do this not as having no care for that part, but rather as desiring to preserve the remainder, how much more must we do this in the case of those who consent with us for evil? If we can set them right without receiving injury ourselves, we ought to use every means to do so; but if they remain incorrigible and may injure us, it is necessary to cut them off and

cast them away. For so they will often be gainers rather (than losers). Wherefore also Paul exhorted, saying, "*And you shall put away from among yourselves that wicked person*"; and, "*that he that has done this deed may be put away from among you.*" [1 Corinthians 5:13] A dreadful thing, dreadful indeed, is the society of wicked men; not so quickly does the pestilence seize or the itch infect those that come in contact with such as are under the disease, as does the wickedness of evil men. For "*evil communications corrupt good manners.*" [1 Corinthians 15:33] And again the Prophet says, "*Come out from among them, and be ye separate.*" [Isaiah 52:11] Let no one then have a wicked man for his friend. For if when we have bad sons we publicly disclaim them, without regarding nature or its laws, or the constraint which it lays upon us, much more ought we to fly from our companions and acquaintances when they are wicked. Because even if we receive no injury from them, we shall anyhow not be able to escape ill report, for strangers search not into our lives, but judge us from our companions. This advice I address to young men and maidens. "*Providing,*" It says, "*things honest,*" not only in the sight of the Lord, but also "*in the sight of all men.*" [Romans 12:17] Let us then use every means that our neighbor be not offended. For a life, though it be very upright, if it offend others has lost all. But how is it possible for the life that is upright to offend? When the society of those that are not upright invests it with an evil reputation; for when, trusting in ourselves, we consort with bad men, even though we be not harmed, we offend others. These things I say to men and women and maidens, leaving it to their conscience to see exactly how many evils are produced from this source. Neither I, perhaps, nor any of the more perfect, suspect any ill; but the simpler brother is harmed by occasion of your perfection; and you ought to be careful also for his infirmity. And even if he receive no injury, yet the Greek is harmed. Now Paul bids us be

"without offense, both to Jews and Greeks, and to the Church of God." [1 Corinthians 10:32] (I think no evil of the virgin, for I love virginity, and *"love thinks no evil"* [1 Corinthians 13:5]; I am a great admirer of that state of life, and I cannot have so much as an unseemly thought about it.) How shall we persuade those that are without? For we must take forethought for them also. Let us then so order what relates to ourselves, that none of the unbelievers may be able even to find a just handle of accusation against us. For as they who show forth a right life glorify God, so they who do the contrary cause Him to be blasphemed. May no such persons be among us: but may our works so shine, that our Father which is in Heaven may be glorified, and that we may enjoy the honor which is from Him. To which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 58 on the Gospel of John

John 9:17-18

"They say unto the blind man again, What do you say of him, that he has opened your eyes? He said, He is a Prophet. The Jews then did not believe."

1. We must go over the Scriptures not in a chance way or carelessly, but with all exactness, that we be not entangled. Since even now in this place one might with show of reason question, how, when they had asserted, *"This man is not of God, because he keeps not the Sabbath,"* they now say to the man, *"What do you say of him, that he has opened your eyes?"* and not, *"What do you say of him, that he has broken the Sabbath?"* but put now that which was the ground of the defense, not that of the accusation. What then have we to reply? That these (who speak) are not the men who said, *"This man is not of God,"* but those who separated themselves from them, who also said, *"A man that is a sinner cannot do such miracles."* For desiring to silence their opponents the more, in order that they may not seem to be partisans of Christ, they bring forward the man who had received proof of His power, and question him. Observe now the wisdom of the poor man, he speaks more wisely than them all. First he says, *"He is a Prophet";* and shrank not from the judgment of the perverse Jews who spoke against Him and said, *"How can this man be of God, not keeping the Sabbath?"* but replied to them, *"He is a Prophet."*

"And they did not believe that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they had called his parents."

Observe in how many ways they attempt to obscure and take away the miracle. But this is the nature of truth, by the very means by which it seems

to be assailed by men, by these it becomes stronger, it shines by means of that by which it is obscured. For if these things had not taken place, the miracle might have been suspected by the many; but now, as if desiring to lay bare the truth, so do they use all means, and would not have acted otherwise, supposing they had done all in Christ's behalf. For they first attempted to cast Him down by occasion of this mode (of cure), saying, *"How opened he your eyes?"* that is, *"was it by some sorcery?"* In another place also, when they had no charge to bring against Him, they endeavored to insult the mode of the cure, saying, *"He does not cast out devils save by Beelzebub."* [Matthew 12:24] And here again, when they have nothing to say, they betake themselves to the time (of cure), saying, *"He breaks the Sabbath"*; and again, *"He is a sinner."* Yet He asked you, who would slay Him, and who were ready to lay hold of His actions, most plainly, saying, *"Which of you convinces Me of sin?"* [John 8:46]; and no man spoke, nor said *"Thou blasphemest because you make yourself without sin."* But if they had had it in their power to say so, they would not have held their peace. For they who because they heard that He was before Abraham would have stoned Him, and said that He was not of God, who boasted that they, murderers as they were, were of God, but who said that One who did such wonders, after that He had wrought a cure, was not of God, because He kept not the Sabbath, if they had had but a shadow of a charge against Him, would never have let it pass. And if they call Him a sinner because He seemed to break the Sabbath, this charge also is shown to be unsound, when those who are ranked with them condemn their great coldness and littleness of soul. Being therefore entangled on every side, they afterwards betake themselves to something else more shameless and impudent. What is that? They *"did not believe,"* It says, *"that he had been blind, and received his sight."* How then did they charge Christ with not keeping the Sabbath?

Plainly, as having believed. But why gave ye not heed to the great number of people? To the neighbors who knew him? As I said, falsehood everywhere defeats itself by the very means by which it seems to annoy the truth, and makes the truth to appear more bright. Which was now the case. For that no one might say that his neighbors and those who had seen him did not speak with precision, but guessed from a likeness, they bring forward his parents, by whom they succeeded against their will in proving that what had taken place was real, since the parents best of all knew their own child. When they could not terrify the man himself, but beheld him with all boldness proclaim his Benefactor, they thought to wound the miracle by means of his parents. Observe the malice of their questioning. For what says it? Having placed them in the midst so as to throw them into distress, they apply the questioning with great severity and anger,

John 9:19

"Is this your son?" (and they said not, "who once was blind," but) "of whom you say that he was born blind?"

As if they were acting deceitfully, and plotting on behalf of Christ. O you accursed, utterly accursed! What father would choose to invent such falsehoods against his child? For they almost say, *"Whom you have made out blind, and not only so, but have spread abroad the report everywhere."*

"How then does he now see?"

2. O folly! *"Yours,"* says one, *"is the trick and the contrivance."* For by these two things do they attempt to lead the parents to a denial; by using the words, *"Whom ye say,"* and, *"How then does he now see?"* Now when there were three questions asked, whether he was their son, whether he had been blind, and how he received his sight, the parents only acknowledged two of them, but do not add the third. And this came to pass for the sake of the truth, in order that none other save the man that was healed, who was also worthy of credit, should acknowledge this matter. And how would the parents have favored (Christ), when even of what they knew some part they spoke not through fear of the Jews? What say they?

John 9:20-21

"We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we know not, or who has opened his eyes we know not; he is of age, he shall speak for himself."

By making him to be worthy of credit, they begged off themselves;
"He is not a child, say they, nor incapable, but able to testify for himself."

John 9:22

"These words spoke they, because they feared the Jews."

Observe how the Evangelist again brings forward their opinion and thoughts. This I say, because of that speech which they before uttered, when they said, *"He makes Himself equal to God."* [John 5:18] For had that also been the opinion of the Jews but not the judgment of Christ, he would have added and said, that *"it was a Jewish opinion."* When therefore the parents referred them to him that had been healed, they called him again the second time, and did not say openly and shamelessly, *"Deny that Christ healed you,"* but would fain effect this under a pretense of piety.

John 9:24

"Give the glory to God."

For to have said to the parents, *"Deny that he is your son, and that he was born blind,"* would have seemed very ridiculous. And again, to have said this to himself would have been manifest shamelessness. Wherefore they say not so, but manage the matter in another way, saying, *"Give God the glory,"* that is, *"confess that this man has wrought nothing."*

"We know that this man is a sinner."

"Why then did ye not convict Him when He said, 'Which of you convinces Me of sin?' [John 8:46] Whence know ye that He is a sinner?" After that they had said, *"Give God the glory,"* and the man had made no reply, Christ meeting praised him, and did not rebuke him, nor say, *"Wherefore have you not given glory to God?"* But what said He? *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* [John 9:35], that you may learn that this is *"to give glory to God."* Now had He not been equal in honor to the Father, this would not have been giving glory; but since he that honors the Son honors the Father also, the blind is with good reason not rebuked. Now while they expected that the parents would contradict and deny the miracle, the Pharisees said nothing to the man himself, but when they saw that they profited nothing by this, they again return to him, saying, *"This man is a sinner."*

John 9:25

"He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

Surely the blind man was not terrified? That be far from him. How then does he who said, *"He is a Prophet"* [John 9:17], now say, *"Whether he be a sinner; I know not"*? He said so, not as being in such a state of mind, nor as having persuaded himself of this thing, but desiring to clear Him from their charges by the testimony of the fact, not by his own declaration, and to make the defense credible, when the testimony of the good deed done should decide the matter against them. Since if after many words when the blind man said, *"Except this were a righteous man he could not do such miracles"* [John 9:33], they were so enraged as to reply, *"You were altogether born in sin, and do you teach us?"* what would they not have said, if he had spoken so from the beginning; what would they not have done? *"Whether he be a sinner or not, I know not"*; as though he had said, *"I say nothing in this man's favor, I make no declaration at present, yet this I certainly know and would affirm, that if he were a sinner he could not have done such things."* Thus he kept himself free from suspicion, and his testimony uncorrupted, as not speaking from partiality, but as bearing witness according to the fact. When therefore they could neither upset nor remove what had been done, they again return to their former plan, making trifling enquiries about the manner of the cure, like men who search on every side about a prey which is before them, and cannot be hurt, hastening round now in one direction, now in another; and they recur to the man's former assertions, in order now to make them unsound by continual questions, and say,

John 9:26

"What did he do to you? How opened he your eyes?"

What was his reply? Having conquered and cast them down, he no longer speaks to them submissively. As long as the matter needed enquiry and arguments he spoke guardedly, while he supplied the proof; but when he had conquered and gained a splendid victory, he then takes courage, and tramples upon them. What says he?

John 9:27

"I have told you once, and you did not hear; wherefore would ye hear it again?"

Do you see the bold-speaking of a beggar towards Scribes and Pharisees? So strong is truth, so weak is falsehood. Truth, though she take hold but of ordinary men, makes them to appear glorious; the other, even though it be with the strong, shows them weak. What he says is of this kind: *"You give no heed to my words, therefore I will no longer speak or answer you continually, who question me to no purpose, and who do not desire to hear in order to learn, but that you may insult over my words."*

"Will ye also be His disciples?"

3. Now he has ranked himself among the band of disciples, for the *"will you also?"* is the expression of one who is declaring himself to be a disciple. Then he mocked and annoyed them abundantly. For since he knew that this struck them hard, he said it, wishing to upbraid them with exceeding severity; the act of a soul courageous, soaring on high and despising their madness, pointing out the greatness of this dignity, in which he was very confident, and showing that they insulted him who was a man worthy to be admired, but that he took not the insult to himself, but grasped as an honor what they offered as a reproach.

John 9:28

"You are his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples."

"But this cannot be. You are neither Moses' nor this Man's; for were ye Moses', you would become this Man's also." Wherefore Christ before said unto them, because they were continually betaking themselves to these speeches, *"Had ye believed Moses, you would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me."* [John 5:46]

John 9:29

"We know that God spoke unto Moses."

By whose word, whose report? *"That of our forefathers,"* says one. Is not He then more to be believed than your forefathers, who confirms by miracles that He came from God, and that He speaks things from above? They said not, *"We have heard that God spoke to Moses,"* but, *"We know."* Do ye affirm, O Jews, what you have by hearing, as knowing it, but deem what you have by sight as less certain than what you have by hearing? Yet the one ye saw not, but heard, the other ye did not hear, but saw. What then says the blind man?

John 9:30

"Why herein is a marvelous thing, that you know not whence He is, and He does such miracles."

"That a Man, who is not one of the distinguished or noble or illustrious among you, can do such things; so that it is in every way clear that He is God, needing no human aid."

John 9:31

"We know that God hears not sinners."

Since they had been the first to say, *"How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?"* [John 9:16], he now brings forward even their judgment, reminding them of their own words. *"This opinion,"* says he, *"is common to me and you. Stand fast now to it."* And observe, I pray you, his wisdom. He turns about the miracle in every way, because they could not do away with it, and from it he draws his inferences. Do you see that at first he said *"Whether he be a sinner or not, I know not"*? Not doubting (God forbid!) but knowing that He was not a sinner. At least now, when he had an opportunity, see how he defended Him. *"We know that God hears not sinners"*:

"But if any man be a worshiper of God, and does His will."

Here he not only has cleared Him from sin, but declares that He is very pleasing to God, and does all His will. For since they called themselves worshipers of God, he added, *"and does His will"*; *"since,"* says he, *"it is not sufficient to know God: men must also do His will."* Then he magnifies what had been done, saying,

John 9:32

"Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

"If now ye acknowledge that God hears not sinners, and this Person has wrought a miracle, and such a miracle as no man ever wrought, it is clear that He has surpassed all things in virtue, and that His power is greater than belongs to man." What then say they?

John 9:34

"You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?"

As long as they expected that he would deny Christ, they deemed him trustworthy, calling upon him once and a second time. If you deemed him not trustworthy, why did ye call and question him a second time? But when he spoke the truth, unabashed, then, when they ought most to have admired, they condemned him. But what is the, *"You were altogether born in sins"*? They here unsparingly reproach him with his very blindness, as though they had said, *"You are in sins from your earliest age;"* insinuating that on this account he was born blind; which was contrary to reason. On this point at least Christ comforting him said, *"For judgment I have come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind."* [John 9:39]

"You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?" Why, what had the man said? Did he set forth his private opinion? Did he not set forth a common judgment, saying, *"We know that God hears not sinners"*? Did he not produce your own words?

"And they cast him out."

Have you beheld the herald of the truth, how poverty was no hindrance to his true wisdom? Do you see what reproaches, what sufferings he bare from the beginning, and how by word and by deed he testified?

4. Now these things are recorded, that we too may imitate them. For if the blind man, the beggar, who had not even seen Him, straightway showed such boldness even before he was encouraged by Christ, standing opposed to a whole people, murderous, possessed, and raving, who desired by means of his voice to condemn Christ, if he neither yielded nor gave back, but

most boldly stopped their mouths, and chose rather to be cast out than to betray the truth; how much more ought we, who have lived so long in the faith, who have seen ten thousand marvels wrought by faith, who have received greater benefits than he, have recovered the sight of the eyes within, have beheld the ineffable Mysteries, and have been called to such honor, how ought we, I say, to exhibit all boldness of speech towards those who attempt to accuse, and who say anything against the Christians, and to stop their mouths, and not to acquiesce without an effort. And we shall be able to do this, if we are bold, and give heed to the Scriptures, and hear them not carelessly. For if one should come in here regularly, even though he read not at home, if he attends to what is said here, one year even is sufficient to make him well versed in them; because we do not today read one kind of Scriptures, and tomorrow another, but always and continually the same. Still such is the wretched disposition of the many, that after so much reading, they do not even know the names of the Books, and are not ashamed nor tremble at entering so carelessly into a place where they may hear God's word. Yet if a harper, or dancer, or stage-player call the city, they all run eagerly, and feel obliged to him for the call, and spend the half of an entire day in attending to him alone; but when God speaks to us by Prophets and Apostles, we yawn, we scratch ourselves, we are drowsy. And in summer, the heat seems too great, and we betake ourselves to the market place; and again, in winter, the rain and mire are a hindrance, and we sit at home; yet at horse races, though there is no roof over them to keep off the wet, the greater number, while heavy rains are falling, and the wind is dashing the water into their faces, stand like madmen, caring not for cold, and wet, and mud, and length of way, and nothing either keeps them at home, or prevents their going there. But here, where there are roofs over head, and where the warmth is admirable, they hold back instead of running

together; and this too, when the gain is that of their own souls. How is this tolerable, tell me? Thus it happens, that while we are more skilled than any in those matters, in things necessary we are more ignorant than children. If a man call you a charioteer, or a dancer, you say that you have been insulted, and use every means to wipe off the affront; but if he draw you to be a spectator of the action, you do not start away, and the art whose name you shun, you almost in every case pursue. But where you ought to have both the action and the name, both to be and to be called a Christian, you do not even know what kind of thing the action is. What can be worse than this folly? These things I have desired continually to say to you, but I fear lest I gain hatred in vain and unprofitably. For I perceive that not only the young are mad, but the old also; about whom I am especially ashamed, when I see a man venerable from his white hairs, disgracing those white hairs, and drawing a child after him. What is worse than this mockery? What more shameful than this conduct? The child is taught by the father to act unseemly.

5. Do the words sting? This is what I desire, that you should suffer the pain caused by the words, in order to be delivered from the disgrace caused by the actions. For there are some too far colder than these, who are not even ashamed at the things spoken of, nay, who even put together a long argument in defense of the action. If you ask them who was Amos or Obadiah, or what is the number of the Prophets or Apostles, they cannot even open their mouth but for horses and charioteers, they compose excuses more cleverly than sophists or rhetoricians, and after all this, they say, *"What is the harm? What is the loss?"* This is what I groan for, that you do not so much as know that the action is a loss, nor have a sense of its evils. God has given to you an appointed space of life for serving Him, and do you while you spend it vainly, and at random, and on nothing useful, still

ask, "*What loss is there?*" If you have spent a little money to no purpose, you call it a loss: when you spend whole days of yours upon the devil's pageants, do you think that you are doing nothing wrong? You ought to spend all your life in supplications and prayers, whereas you waste your life and substance heedlessly, and to your own hurt, on shouts, and uproar, and shameful words, and fighting, and unseasonable pleasure, and actions performed by trickery, and after all this you ask, "*What is the loss?*" not knowing you should be lavish of anything rather than time. Gold, if you shall have spent, you may get again; but if you lose time, you shall hardly recover that. Little is dealt out to us in this present life; if therefore we employ it not as we ought, what shall we say when we depart "*there*"? For tell me, if you had commanded one of your sons to learn some art, and then he had continually stayed at home, or even passed his time somewhere else, would not the teacher reject him? Would he not say to you, "*You have made an agreement with me, and appointed a time; if now your son will not spend this time with me but in other places, how shall I produce him to you as a scholar?*" Thus also we must speak. For God will say also to us, "*I gave you time to learn this art of piety, wherefore have ye foolishly and uselessly wasted that time? Why did ye neither go constantly to the teacher, nor give heed to his words?*" For to show that piety is an art, hear what the Prophet says, "*Come, you children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*" [Psalm 34:11] And again, "*Blessed is the man whom You instruct, Lord, and teachest him out of Your Law.*" [Psalm 94:12] When therefore you have spent this time in vain, what excuse will you have? "*And why,*" says some one, "*did He deal out to us but little time?*" O senselessness and ingratitude! That for which thou were most bounden to give thanks to Him, for that He has cut short your labors and abridged your toils, and made the rest long and everlasting, for this do you find fault, and art discontented?

But I know not how we have brought our discourse to this point, and have made it so long; we must therefore shorten it now. For this too is a part of our wretchedness, that here if the discourse be long, we all become careless, while there they begin at noon, and retire by torch and lamp light. However, that we be not always chiding, we now entreat and beseech you, grant this favor to us and to yourselves; and getting free from all other matters, to these let us rivet ourselves. So shall we gain from you joy and gladness, and honor on your account, and a recompense for these labors; while you will reap all the reward, because having been aforetime so madly riveted to the stage, you tore yourselves away, through fear of God, and by our exhortations, from that malady, and broke your bonds, and hastened unto God. Nor is it "*there*" alone that you shall receive your reward, but "*here*" also you shall enjoy pure pleasure. Such a thing is virtue; besides giving us crowns in heaven, even here it makes life pleasant to us. Let us then be persuaded by what has been said, that we may obtain the blessings both here and hereafter, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 59 on the Gospel of John

John 9:34-36

"And they cast him out. And Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Do you believe in the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe in Him?" And the rest.

1. They who for the sake of the truth and the confession of Christ suffer anything terrible and are insulted, these are especially honored. For as he who loses his possessions for His sake, the same it is who most finds them; as he who hates his own life, the same it is who most loves it; so too he who is insulted, is the same who is most honored. As fell out in the case of the blind man. The Jews cast him out from the Temple, and the Lord of the Temple found him; he was separated from that pestilent company, and met with the Fountain of salvation; he was dishonored by those who dishonored Christ, and was honored by the Lord of Angels. Such are the prizes of truth. And so we, if we leave our possessions in this world, find confidence in the next; if here we give to the afflicted, we shall have rest in heaven; if we be insulted for the sake of God, we are honored both here and there.

When they had cast him out from the Temple, Jesus found him. The Evangelist shows, that He came for the purpose of meeting him. And observe how He recompenses him, by that which is the chiefest of blessings. For He made Himself known to him who before knew Him not, and enrolled him into the company of His own disciples. Observe also how the Evangelist describes the exact circumstances; for when Christ had said, *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* the man replied, *"Lord, who is He?"*

For as yet he knew Him not, although he had been healed; because he was blind before he came to his Benefactor, and after the cure, he was being worried by those dogs. Therefore, like some judge at the games, He receives the champion who had toiled much and gained the crown. And what says He? *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* What is this, after so much arguing against the Jews, after so many words, He asks him, *"Do you believe?"* He spoke it not from ignorance, but desiring to make Himself known, and showing that He gently valued the man's faith. *"This great multitude,"* He says, *"has insulted Me, but of them I make no account; for one thing I care, that you should believe. For better is one who does the will of God, than ten thousand transgressors."* *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* As having both been present, and as approving what had been said by him, He asks this question; and first, He brought him to a state of longing for Himself. For He said not directly, *"Believe,"* but in the way of an enquiry. What then said the man? *"Lord, who is He, that I might believe in Him?"* The expression is that of a longing and enquiring soul. He knows not Him in whose defense he had spoken so much, that you may learn his love of truth. For he had not yet seen Him.

John 9:37

"Jesus says unto him, You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you."

He said not *"I am He,"* but as yet in an intermediate and reserved manner, *"You have both seen Him."* This was still uncertain; therefore He adds more clearly, *"It is He that talks with you."*

John 9:38

"He says, Lord, I believe; and he worshipped Him" (straightway).

He said not, *"I am He that healed you, that bade you, Go, wash in Siloam"*; but keeping silence on all these points, He says, *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* and then the man, showing his great earnestness, straightway worshipped; which few of those who were healed had done; as, for instance, the lepers, and some others; by this act declaring His divine power. For that no one might think that what had been said by him was a mere expression, he added also the deed. When he had worshipped, Christ said,

John 9:39

"For judgment I have come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind."

So also says Paul; *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of the faith of Jesus; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness."*

[Romans 9:30-31] By saying, *"For judgment I have come into this world,"*

He both made the man stronger respecting the faith, and aroused those who followed Him; for the Pharisees were following Him. And the, *"For judgment,"* He spoke with reference to a greater punishment; showing that they who had given sentence against Him, had received sentence against themselves; that they who had condemned Him as a sinner, were themselves the persons condemned. In this passage He speaks of two recoveries of sight, and two blindnesses; one sensible, the other spiritual.

John 9:40

"Some of them that followed Him, say unto Him, Are we also blind?"

As in another place they said, *"We were never servants to any man"*; and, *"We be not born of fornication"* [c. viii. 33, 41]; so now they gape on material things alone, and are ashamed of this kind of blindness. Then to show that it was better for them to be blind than seeing, He says,

John 9:41

"If you were blind, you should have no sin."

Since they deemed the calamity a matter to be ashamed of, He turns this back upon their own head, telling them, that *"this very thing would have rendered your punishment more tolerable"*; cutting away on every side their human thoughts, and leading them to a notion high and marvelous.

"But now ye say, We see."

As He says in that other place, *"Of whom you said that He was your God"* [John 8:54]; so too here, *"Now ye say that you see, but you see not."* He shows that what they deemed a great matter for praise, brought punishment upon them. He also comforted him who was blind from his birth, concerning his former maimed state, and then speaks concerning their blindness. For He directs His whole speech to this end, that they may not say, *"We did not refuse to come to you owing to our blindness, but we turn away and avoid you as a deceiver."*

2. And not without a cause has the Evangelist mentioned, that they of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and said, *"Are we blind also?"* but to remind you that these were the men who first withdrew from and then stoned Him, for they were persons who followed Him superficially, and who easily changed to the contrary opinion. How then does He prove that He is not a deceiver, but a Shepherd? By laying down the distinguishing marks both of the shepherd, and of him who is a deceiver and a spoiler, and from these affording them opportunity of searching into the truth of the matter. And first He shows who is a deceiver and a spoiler, calling him so from the Scriptures, and saying,

John 10:1

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

Observe the marks of a robber; first, that he does not enter openly; secondly, not according to the Scriptures, for this is the, *"not by the door."* Here also He refers to those who had been before, and to those who should be after Him, Antichrist and the false Christs, Judas and Theudas, and whatever others there have been of the same kind. And with good cause He calls the Scriptures *"a door,"* for they bring us to God, and open to us the knowledge of God, they make the sheep, they guard them, and suffer not the wolves to come in after them. For Scripture, like some sure door, bars the passage against the heretics, placing us in a state of safety as to all that we desire, and not allowing us to wander; and if we undo it not, we shall not easily be conquered by our foes. By it we can know all, both those who are, and those who are not, shepherds. But what is *"into the fold"*? It refers to the sheep, and the care of them. For he that uses not the Scriptures, but *"climbs up some other way,"* that is, who cuts out for himself another and an unusual way, *"the same is a thief."* Do you see from this too that Christ agrees with the Father, in that He brings forward the Scriptures? On which account also He said to the Jews, *"Search the Scriptures"* [John 5:39]; and brought forward Moses, and called him and all the Prophets witnesses, for *"all,"* says He, *"who hear the Prophets shall come to Me"*; and, *"Had ye believed Moses, you would have believed Me."* But here He has put the same thing metaphorically. And by saying, *"climbs up some other way,"* He alluded to the Scribes, because they taught for commandments the doctrines of men, and transgressed the Law [Matthew 15:9]; with which He reproached them, and said, *"None of you does the Law."* [John 7:19] Well

did He say, "*climbs up*," not "*enters in*," since to climb is the act of a thief intending to overleap a wall, and who does all with danger. Have you seen how He has sketched the robber? Now observe the character of the shepherd. What then is it?

John 10:2-4

"He that enters in by the door, the same is the shepherd of the sheep; to him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own by name. And when he has brought them out, he goes before them."

3. He has set down the marks of the shepherd, and of the evil doer; let us now see how He has fitted to them what follows. *"To him,"* He says, *"the doorkeeper opens"*; He continues in the metaphor to make the discourse more emphatic. But if you should be minded to examine the parable word by word, there is nothing to hinder you from supposing Moses to be the doorkeeper, for to him were entrusted the oracles of God. *"Whose voice the sheep hear, and he calls his own by name."* Because they everywhere said that He was a deceiver, and confirmed this by their own unbelief, saying, *"Which of the rulers has believed on him?"* [John 7:48] He shows that they ought not on account of the unbelief of those persons to call Him a spoiler and deceiver, but that they, because they gave no heed to Him were consequently even excluded from the rank of sheep. For if a shepherd's part is to enter through the usual door, and if He entered through this, all they who followed Him might be sheep, but they who rent themselves away, hurt not the reputation of the Shepherd, but cast themselves out from the kindred of the sheep. And if farther on He says that He is *"the door,"* we must not again be disturbed, for He also calls Himself *"Shepherd,"* and *"Sheep,"* and in different ways proclaims His dispensations. Thus, when He brings us to the Father, He calls Himself *"a Door,"* when He takes care of us, *"a Shepherd"*; and it is that you may not suppose, that to bring us to the Father is His only office, that He calls Himself a Shepherd. *"And the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep, and leads them out, and goes before them."* Shepherds indeed do the contrary, for they follow after them; but He

to show that He will lead all men to the truth, does differently; as also when He sent the sheep, He sent them, not out of the way of wolves, but "*in the midst of wolves.*" [Matthew 10:16] For far more wonderful is this manner of keeping sheep than ours. He seems to me also to allude to the blind man, for him too, having "*called,*" He "*led out*" from the midst of the Jews, and the man heard "*His voice,*" and "*knew*" it.

John 10:5

"And a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Certainly here He speaks of Theudas and Judas, (for *"all, as many as believed on them, were scattered"* [Acts v. 36], It says,) or of the false Christs who after that time should deceive. For lest any should say that He was one of these, He in many ways separates Himself from them. And the first difference He sets down is His teaching from the Scriptures; for He by means of these led men to Him, but the others did not from these draw men after them. The second is, the obedience of the sheep; for on Him they all believed, not only while He lived, but when He had died; the others they straightway left. With these we may mention a third difference, no trifling one. They did all as rebels, and to cause revolts, but He placed Himself so far from such suspicion, that when they would have made Him a king, He fled; and when they asked, *"Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar?"* He bade them pay it, and Himself gave the two drachm piece. [Matthew 17:27] Besides this, He indeed came for the saving of the sheep, *"That they might have life, and that they might have more abundantly"* [John 10:10], but the others deprived them even of this present life. They betrayed those who were entrusted to them and fled, but He withstood so nobly as even to give up His life. They unwillingly, and by compulsion, and desiring to escape, suffered what they suffered, but He willingly and by choice endured all.

John 10:6

"This parable spoke Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which He spoke unto them."

And wherefore spoke He obscurely? Because He would make them more attentive; when He had effected this, He removes the obscurity, saying,

John 10:9

"I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall go in and out, and find pasture."

As though He had said, *"shall be in safety and security,"* (but by *"pasture,"* He here means His nurturing and feeding the sheep, and His power and Lordship,) that is, *"shall remain within, and none shall thrust him out."* Which took place in the case of the Apostles, who came in and went out securely, as having become lords of all the world, and none was able to cast them out.

John 10:8

"All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them."

He does not here speak of the Prophets, (as the heretics assert,) for as many as believed on Christ did hear them also, and were persuaded by them; but of Theudas and Judas, and the other excitors of sedition. Besides, He says, *"the sheep did not hear them,"* as praising them; now nowhere is He seen to praise those who refused to hearken to the Prophets, but, on the contrary, to reproach and accuse them vehemently; whence it is evident that the, *"did not hear,"* refers to those leaders of sedition.

John 10:10

"The thief comes not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."

Which then took place when all (their followers) were slain and perished.

"But I have come that they might have life, and that they might have more."

And what is *"more"* than life, tell me? The kingdom of heaven. But He does not as yet say this, but dwells on the name of *"life,"* which was known to them.

John 10:11

"I am the good Shepherd."

Here He next speaks concerning the Passion, showing that this should be for the salvation of the world, and that He came to it not unwillingly. Then again He mentions the character of the shepherd and the hireling.

"For the shepherd lays down his life."

John 10:12

"But he that is an hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf comes and catches them."

Here He declares Himself to be Master even as the Father, if so be that He is the Shepherd, and the sheep are His. Do you see how He speaks in a more lofty tone in His parables, where the sense is concealed; and gives no open handle to the listeners? What then does this hireling? He *"sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and the wolf comes, and scatters them."* This those false teachers did, but He the contrary. For when He was taken, He said, *"Let these go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled"* [c. xviii. 8, 9], that not one of them was lost. Here also we may suspect a spiritual wolf to be intended; for neither did Christ allow him to go and seize the sheep. But he is not a wolf only, but a lion also. *"Because our adversary the devil,"* It says, *"walks about as a roaring lion."* [1 Peter 5:8] He is also a serpent, and a dragon; for, *"Tread ye on serpents and scorpions."* [Luke 10:19]

4. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us remain pasturing beneath this Shepherd; and we shall remain, if we obey Him, if we hear His voice, if we follow not a stranger. And what is His voice? *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the merciful."* [Matthew 5:3-8] If thus we do, we shall remain beneath the Shepherd, and the wolf will not be able to come in; or if he come against us, he will do so to his own hurt. For we have a Shepherd who so loves us, that He gave even His life for us. When therefore He is both powerful and loves us, what is there to hinder us from being saved? Nothing, unless we ourselves revolt from Him. And how can we revolt? Hear Him saying, *"You cannot serve two*

masters, God and mammon." [Matthew 6:24] If then we serve God, we shall not submit to the tyranny of mammon. And truly a bitterer thing than any tyranny is the desire of riches; for it brings no pleasure, but cares, and envyings, and plottings, and hatred, and false accusations, and ten thousand impediments to virtue, indolence, wantonness, greediness, drunkenness, which make even freemen slaves, nay, worse than slaves bought with money, slaves not to men, but even to the most grievous of the passions, and maladies of the soul. Such a one dares many things displeasing to God and men, dreading lest any should remove from him this dominion. O bitter slavery, and devilish tyranny! For this is the most grievous thing of all, that when entangled in such evils we are pleased and hug our chain, and dwelling in a prison house full of darkness, refuse to come forth to the light, but rivet evil upon ourselves, and rejoice in our malady. So that we cannot be freed, but are in a worse state than those that work the mines, enduring labors and affliction, but not enjoying the fruit. And what is in truth worse than all, if any one desire to free us from this bitter captivity, we do not suffer it, but are even vexed and displeased, being in this respect in no better case than madmen, or rather in a much more miserable state than any such, inasmuch as we are not even willing to be delivered from our madness. What? Was it for this, O man, that you were brought into the world? Was it for this that you were made a man, that you might work in these mines, and gather gold? Not for this did God create you in His Image, but that you might please Him, that you might obtain the things to come, that you might join the choir of Angels. Why now do you banish yourself from such a relationship, and thrust yourself into the extreme of dishonor and meanness? He who came by the same birth pangs with you, (the spiritual birth pangs I mean,) is perishing with hunger, and you are bursting with fullness: your brother goes about with naked body, but you provide

garments even for your garments, heaping up all this clothing for the worms. How much better would it have been to put them on the bodies of the poor; so would they have remained undestroyed, would have freed you from all care, and have won for you the life to come. If you will not have them to be moth-eaten, give them to the poor, these are they who know how to shake these garments well. The Body of Christ is more precious and more secure than the coffer, for not only does It keep the garments safe, not only does It preserve them unconsumed, but even renders them brighter. Oftentimes the coffer taken with the garments causes you the utmost loss, but this place of safety not even death can harm. With It we need neither doors nor bolts, nor wakeful servants, nor any other such security, for our possessions are free from all treacherous attacks, and are laid up under guard, as we may suppose things laid up in heaven would be; for to all wickedness that place is inaccessible. These things we cease not continually to say to you, and you hearing are not persuaded. The reason is, that we are of a soul which is mean, gaping upon the earth, groveling on the ground. Or rather, God forbid that I should condemn you all of wickedness, as though all were incurably diseased. For even if those who are drunk with riches stop their ears against my words, yet they who live in poverty will be able to look clearly to what I say. *"But what,"* says some one, *"has this to do with the poor? For they have no gold, or any such garments."* No, but they have bread and cold water, but they have two obols, and feet to visit the sick, but they have a tongue and speech to comfort the bedridden, but they have house and shelter to make the stranger their inmate. We demand not from the poor such and such a number of talents of gold, these we ask from the rich. But if a man be poor, and come to the doors of others, our Lord is not ashamed to receive even an obol, but will say that He has received more from the giver, than from those who cast in much. How many of those who

now stand here would desire to have been born at that time, when Christ went about the earth in the flesh, to have conversed and sat at meat with Him? Lo, this may be done now, we may invite Him more than then to a meal, and feast with Him, and that to greater profit. For of those who then feasted with Him many even perished, as Judas and others like him; but every one of those who invite Him to their houses now, and share with Him table and roof, shall enjoy a great blessing. *"Come," it says, "ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and you gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in; sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came unto Me."* [Matthew 25:34-36] That then we may hear these words, let us clothe the naked, let us bring in the stranger, feed the hungry, give the thirsty drink, let us visit the sick, and look upon him that is in prison, that we may have boldness and obtain remission of our sins, and share those good things which transcend both speech and thought. Which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the might forever. Amen.

Homily 60 on the Gospel of John

John 10:14-15

"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep."

1. A great matter, beloved, a great matter it is to preside over a Church: a matter needing wisdom and courage as great as that of which Christ speaks, that a man should lay down his life for the sheep, and never leave them deserted or naked; that he should stand against the wolf nobly. For in this the shepherd differs from the hireling; the one always looks to his own safety, caring not for the sheep; the other always seeks that of the sheep, neglecting his own. Having therefore mentioned the marks of a shepherd, Christ has put two kinds of spoilers; one, the thief who kills and steals; the other, one who does not these things, but who when they are done does not give heed nor hinder them. By the first, pointing to Theudas and those like him; by the second, exposing the teachers of the Jews, who neither cared for nor thought about the sheep entrusted to them. On which account Ezekiel of old rebuked them, and said, *"Woe, ye shepherds of Israel! Do the shepherds feed themselves? Do not the shepherds feed the sheep?"* [Ezekiel 34:2, Septuagint] But they did the contrary, which is the worst kind of wickedness, and the cause of all the rest. Wherefore It says, *"They have not turned back the strayed, nor sought the lost, nor bound up the broken, nor healed the sick, because they fed themselves and not the sheep."* [Ezekiel 34:4] As Paul also has declared in another passage, saying, *"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's"* [Philippians 2:21]; and

again, *"Let no man seek his own, but every man his neighbor's."* [1 Corinthians 10:24] From both Christ distinguishes Himself; from those who came to spoil, by saying, *"I have come that they might have life, and that they might have more abundantly"* [John 10:10]; and from those who cared not for the sheep being carried away by wolves, by never deserting them, but even laying down His life for them, that the sheep might not perish. For when they desired to kill Him, He neither altered His teaching, nor betrayed those who believed on Him, but stood firm, and chose to die. Wherefore He continually said, *"I am the good Shepherd."* Then because His words appeared to be unsupported by testimony, (for though the, *"I lay down My life,"* was not long after proved, yet the, *"that they might have life, and that they might have more abundantly,"* was to come to pass after their departure hence in the life to come,) what does He? He proves one from the other; by giving His mortal life (He proves) that He gives life immortal. As Paul also says, *"If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved."* [Romans 5:10] And again in another place, *"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"* [Romans 8:32]

But wherefore do they not now bring against Him the charge which they did before, when they said, *"You bear witness of yourself, your witness is not true?"* [John 8:13] Because He had often stopped their mouths, and because His boldness towards them had been increased by His miracles. Then because He said above *"And the sheep hear his voice, and follow him,"* lest any should say, *"What then is this to those who believe not?"* hear what He adds, *"And I know My sheep, and am known of Mine."* As Paul declared when he said, *"God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew"* [Romans 11:2]; and Moses, *"The Lord knew those that were His"*

[2 Timothy 2:19; comp. Numbers 16:5]; *"those,"* He says, *"I mean, whom He foreknew."* Then that you may not deem the measure of knowledge to be equal, hear how He sets the matter right by adding, *"I know My sheep, and am known of Mine."* But the knowledge is not equal. *"Where is it equal?"* In the case of the Father and Me, for there, *"As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father."* Had He not wished to prove this, why should He have added that expression? Because He often ranked Himself among the many, therefore, lest any one should deem that He knew as a man knows, He added, *"As the Father knows Me, even so know I the Father."* *"I know Him as exactly as He knows Me."* Wherefore He said, *"No man knows the Son save the Father, nor the Father save the Son"* [Luke 10:22], speaking of a distinct kind of knowledge, and such as no other can possess.

2. *"I lay down My life."* This He says continually, to show that He is no deceiver. So also the Apostle, when he desired to show that he was a genuine teacher, and was arguing against the false apostles, established his authority by his dangers and deaths, saying, *"In stripes above measure, in deaths oft."* [2 Corinthians 11:23] For to say, *"I am light,"* and *"I am life,"* seemed to the foolish to be a matter of pride; but to say, *"I am willing to die,"* admitted not any malice or envy. Wherefore they do not say to Him, *"You bear witness of yourself, your witness is not true,"* for the speech manifested very tender care for them, if indeed He was willing to give Himself for those who would have stoned Him. On this account also He seasonably introduces mention of the Gentiles;

John 10:16

"For other sheep also I have, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring."

Observe again, the word *"must,"* here used, does not express necessity, but is declaratory of something which will certainly come to pass. As though He had said, *"Why marvel ye if these shall follow Me, and if My sheep shall hear My voice? When you shall see others also following Me and hearing My voice, then shall you be astonished more."* And be not confounded when you hear Him say, *"which are not of this fold"*, for the difference relates to the Law only, as also Paul says, *"Neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision."*

"Them also must I bring." He shows that both these and those were scattered and mixed, and without shepherds, because the good Shepherd had not yet come. Then He proclaims beforehand their future union, that, *"They shall be one fold."*

Which same thing also Paul declared, saying, *"For to make in Himself of two one new man."* [Ephesians 2:15]

John 10:17

"Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again."

What could be more full of humanity than this saying, if so be that on our account our Lord shall be beloved, because He dies for us? What then? Tell me, was He not beloved during the time before this; did the Father now begin to love Him, and were we the causes of His love? Do you see how He used condescension? But what does He here desire to prove? Because they said that He was alien from the Father, and a deceiver, and had come to ruin and destroy He tells them, *"This if nothing else would persuade Me to love you, namely, your being so beloved by the Father, that I also am beloved by Him, because I die for you."* Besides this He desires also to prove that other point, that He came not to the action unwillingly, (for it unwillingly, how could what was done cause love?) and that this was especially known to the Father. And if He speaks as a man, marvel not, for we have often mentioned the cause of this, and to say again the same things is superfluous and unpleasant.

"I lay down My life, that I might take it again."

John 10:18

"No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

Because they often took counsel to kill Him, He tells them, *"Except I will, your labor is unavailing."* And by the first He proves the second, by the Death, the Resurrection. For this is the strange and wonderful thing. Since both took place in a new way, and beyond ordinary custom. But let us give heed exactly to what He says, *"I have power to lay down My life."* And who has not *"power to lay down his life"*? Since it is in the power of any that will, to kill himself. But He says it not so, but how? *"I have in such a way the power to lay it down, that no one can effect this against My will."* And this is a power not belonging to men; for we have no power to lay it down in any other way than by killing ourselves. And if we fall into the hands of men who plot against us, and have the power to kill us, we no longer are free to lay it down or not, but even against our will they take it from us. Now this was not the case with Christ, but even when others plotted against Him, He had power not to lay it down. Having therefore said that, *"No man takes it from Me,"* He adds, *"I have power to lay down My life,"* that is, *"I alone can decide as to laying it down,"* a thing which does not rest with us, for many others also are able to take it from us. Now this He said not at first, (since the assertion would not have seemed credible,) but when He had received the testimony of facts, and when, having often plotted against Him, they had been unable to lay hold on Him, (for He escaped from their hands ten thousand times,) He then says, *"No man takes it from me."* But if this be true, that other point follows, that He came to death voluntarily. And if this be true, the next point is also certain, that He can *"take it again"* when He will. For if the dying was a greater thing than

man could do, doubt no more about the other. Since the fact that He alone was able to let go His life, shows that He was able by the same power to take it again. Do you see how from the first He proved the second, and from His death showed that His Resurrection was indisputable?

"This commandment have I received of My Father."

What commandment was this? To die for the world. Did He then wait first to hear, and then choose, and had He need of learning it? Who that had sense would assert this? But before when He said, *"Therefore does My Father love Me,"* He showed that the first motion was voluntary, and removed all suspicion of opposition to the Father; so here when He says that He received a commandment from the Father, He declared nothing save that, *"this which I do seems good to Him,"* in order that when they should slay Him, they might not think that they had slain Him as one deserted and given up by the Father, nor reproach Him with such reproaches as they did, *"He saved others, himself he cannot save";* and, *"If you be the Son of God, come down from the cross"* [Matthew 27:42]; yet the very reason of His not coming down was, that He was the Son of God.

3. Then lest on hearing that, *"I have received a command from the Father,"* you should deem that the achievement does not belong to Him, He has said preventing the, *"The good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep";* showing by this that the sheep were His, and that all which took place was His achievement, and that He needed no command. For had He needed a commandment, how could He have said, *"I lay it down of Myself"*? For He that lays it down of Himself needs no commandment. He also assigns the cause for which He does this. And what is that? That He is the Shepherd, and the good Shepherd. Now the good Shepherd needs no one to arouse him to his duty; and if this be the case with man, much more is it so with God. Wherefore Paul said, that *"He emptied Himself."*

[Philippians 2:7] So the "*commandment*" put here means nothing else, but to show His unanimity with the Father; and if He speaks in so humble and human a way, the cause is the infirmity of His hearers.

John 10:19

"There was a division therefore among the Jews. And some said, He has a devil (and is mad). Others said, These are not the words of him that has a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

For because His words were greater than belonged to man, and not of common use, they said that He had a devil, calling Him so now for the fourth time. For they before had said, *"You have a devil, who seeks to kill you?"* [John 7:20]; and again, *"Said we not well that you are a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"* [John 8:48]; and here, *"He has a devil and is mad, why hear ye him?"* Or rather we should say, that He heard this not for the fourth time, but frequently. For to ask, *"Said we not well that you have a devil?"* is a sign that they had said so not twice or thrice, but many times. *"Others said, These are not the words of him that has a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"* For since they could not silence their opponents by words, they now brought proof from His works. *"Certainly neither are the words those of one that has a devil, yet if you are not persuaded by the words, be ye shamed by the works. For if they are not the acts of one that has a devil, and are greater than belong to man, it is quite clear that they proceed from some divine power."* Do you see the argument? That they were greater than belonged to man is plain, from the Jews saying, *"He has a devil"*; that He had not a devil, He showed by what He did.

What then did Christ? He answered nothing to these things. Before this He had replied, *"I have not a devil"*; but not so now; for since He had afforded proof by His actions, He afterwards held His peace. For neither were they worthy of an answer, who said that He was possessed of a devil, on account of those actions for which they ought to have admired and deemed Him to be God. And how were any farther refutations from Him

needed, when they opposed and refuted each other? Wherefore He was silent, and bore all mildly. And not for this reason alone, but also to teach us all meekness and long-suffering.

4. Let us now imitate Him. For not only did He now hold His peace, but even came among them again, and being questioned answered and showed the things relating to His foreknowledge; and though called "*demoniac*" and "*madman*," by men who had received from Him ten thousand benefits, and that not once or twice but many times, not only did He refrain from avenging Himself, but even ceased not to benefit them. To benefit, do I say? He laid down His life for them, and while being crucified spoke in their behalf to His Father. This then let us also imitate, for to be a disciple of Christ, is the being gentle and kind. But whence can this gentleness come to us? If we continually reckon up our sins, if we mourn, if we weep; for neither does a soul that dwells in the company of so much grief endure to be provoked or angered. Since wherever there is mourning, it is impossible that there should be anger; where grief is, all anger is out of the way; where there is brokenness of spirit, there is no provocation. For the mind, when scourged by sorrow, has not leisure to be roused, but will groan bitterly, and weep yet more bitterly. I know that many laugh on hearing these things, but I will not cease to lament for the laughers. For the present is a time for mourning, and wailings, and lamentations, since we do many sins both in word and deed, and hell awaits those who commit such transgressions, and the river boiling with a roaring stream of fire, and banishment from the Kingdom, which is the most grievous thing of all. When these things then are threatened, tell me, do you laugh and bear you proudly? And when your Lord is angered and threatening, do you stand careless, and do you not fear lest by this thou light for yourself the furnace to a blaze? Do you not hear what He cries out every day? "*You saw Me an*

hungered, and gave Me no meat; thirsty, and you gave Me no drink; depart ye into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels." [Matthew 25] And these things He threatened every day. *"But,"* says some one, *"I did give Him meat."* When, and for how many days? Ten or twenty? But He wills it not merely for so much time as this, but as much as you spend upon earth. For the virgins also had oil, yet not sufficient for their salvation; they too lighted their lamps, yet they were shut out from the bridechamber. And with reason, since the lamps had gone out before the coming of the Bridegroom. On this account we need much oil, and abundant lovingkindness. Hear at least what the Prophet says, *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy."* [Psalm 51:1] We therefore must so take pity upon our neighbor, according to His great mercy towards us. For such as we are towards our fellow-servants, such shall we find our Lord towards ourselves. And what kind of *"mercy"* is *"great"*? When we give not of our abundance, but of our deficiency. But if we give not even of our abundance, what hope shall there be for us? Whence shall we have deliverance from those woes? Where shall we be enabled to flee and to find salvation? For if the virgins after so many and so great toils found no comfort anywhere, who shall stand forth for us when we hear those fearful words of the Judge Himself, addressing and reproaching us, because *"I was an hungered, and you gave Me no meat; for inasmuch,"* It says, *"as you did it not unto one of the least of these, you did it not unto Me";* saying this not merely of His disciples, nor of those who have taken upon themselves the ascetic life, but of every faithful man. For such an one though he be a slave, or one of those that beg in the marketplace, yet if he believes in God, ought by right to enjoy all our good will. And if we neglect such an one when naked or hungry, we shall hear those words. With reason. For what difficult or grievous thing has He demanded of us? What that is not of the very lightest and easiest? He says not, *"I was*

sick, and you restored Me not," but, "and you visited Me not." He says not, *"I was in prison, and you delivered Me not," but, "and you came not unto Me."* In proportion therefore as the commands are easy, so is the punishment greater to them that disobey. For what is easier, tell me, than to walk forth and enter into a prison? And what more pleasant? For when you see some bound, others covered with filth, others with uncut hair and clothed in rags, others perishing with hunger, and running like dogs to your feet, others with deep ploughed sides, others now returning in chains from the market-place, who beg all day and do not collect even necessary sustenance, and yet at evening are required by those set over them to furnish that wicked and savage service; though thou be like any stone, you will certainly be rendered kinder; though you live a soft and dissipated life, you will certainly become wiser, when you observe the nature of human affairs in other men's misfortunes; for you will surely gain an idea of that fearful day, and of its varied punishments. Revolving and considering these things, you will certainly cast out both wrath and pleasure, and the love of worldly things, and wilt make your soul more calm than the calmest harbor; and you will reason concerning that Judgment seat, reflecting that if among men there is so much forethought, and order, and terror, and threatenings, much more will there be with God. *"For there is no power but from God."* [Romans 13:1] He therefore who permits rulers to order these things thus, will much more do the same Himself.

5. And certainly were there not this fear, all would be lost, when though such punishments hang over them, there are many who go over to the side of wickedness. These things if you wisely observe, you will be more ready-minded towards alms-doing, and wilt reap much pleasure, far greater than those who come down from the theater. For they when they remove from thence are inflamed and burn with desire. Having seen those

women hovering on the stage, and received from them ten thousand wounds, they will be in no better condition than a tossing sea, when the image of the faces, the gestures, the speeches, the walk, and all the rest, stand before their eyes and besiege their soul. But they who come forth from a prison will suffer nothing of this kind, but will enjoy great calm and tranquillity. For the compunction arising from the sight of the prisoners, quenches all that fire. And if a woman that is an harlot and a wanton meet a man coming forth from among the prisoners, she will work him no mischief. For becoming for the time to come, as it were, incapable of molding, he will thus not be taken by the nets of her countenance, because instead of that wanton countenance there will then be placed before his eyes the fear of the Judgment. On this account, he who had gone over every kind of luxury said, *"It is better to go into the house of mourning than into the house of mirth."* [Ecclesiastes 7:2] And so *"here"* you will show forth great wisdom, and *"there"* wilt hear those words which are worth ten thousand blessings. Let us then not neglect such a practice and occupation. For although we be not able to bring them food, nor to help them by giving money, yet shall we be able to comfort them by our words, and to raise up the drooping spirit, and to help them in many other ways by conversing with those who cast them into prison, and by making their keepers kinder, and we certainly shall effect either small or great good. But if you say that the men there are neither men of condition, nor good, nor gentle, but man-slayers, tomb-breakers, cut-purses, adulterers, intemperate, and full of many wickednesses, by this again you show to me a pressing reason for spending time there. For we are not commanded to take pity on the good and to punish the evil, but to manifest this lovingkindness to all men. *"Be,"* It says, *"like to My Father which is in heaven, for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."*

[Matthew 5:45] Do not then accuse other men's faults bitterly, nor be a severe judge, but mild and merciful. For we also, if we have not been adulterers, or tomb-breakers, or cut-purses, yet have we other transgressions which deserve infinite punishment. Perchance we have called our brother "*fool*," which prepares for us the pit; we have looked on women with unchastened eyes, which constitutes absolute adultery; and what is more grievous than all, we partake not worthily of the Mysteries, which makes us guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ. Let us then not be bitter enquirers into the conduct of others, but consider our own state, so shall we desist from this inhumanity and cruelty. Besides this, it may be said that we shall there find many good men, and often men worth as much as all the city. Since even that prison-house in which Joseph was had in it many evil men, yet that just man had the care of them all, and was, with the rest, concealed as to his real character; for he was worth as much as all the land of Egypt, yet still he dwelt in the prison-house, and no one knew him of those that were within it. Thus also even now it is likely that there are many good and virtuous men, though they be not visible to all men, and the care you take of such as these gives you a return for your exertions in favor of the whole. Or if there be none such, still even in this case great is your recompense; for your Lord conversed not with the just only, while He avoided the unclean, but received with kindness both the Canaanitish woman, and her of Samaria, the abominable and impure; another also who was a harlot, on whose account the Jews reproached Him, He both received and healed, and allowed His feet to be washed by the tears of the polluted one, teaching us to condescend to those that are in sin, for this most of all is kindness. What do you say? Do robbers and tomb-breakers dwell in the prison? And, tell me, are all they just men that dwell in the city? Nay, are there not many worse even than these, robbing with greater shamelessness? For the one

sort, if there be no other excuse for them, at least put before themselves the veil of solitude and darkness, and the doing these things clandestinely; but the others throw away the mask and go after their wickedness with uncovered head, being violent, grasping, and covetous. Hard it is to find a man pure from injustice.

6. If we do not take by violence gold, or such and such a number of acres of land, yet we bring about the same end by deceit and robbery in lesser matters, and where we are able to do so. For when in making contracts, or when we must buy or sell anything, we dispute and strive to pay less than the value, and use our utmost endeavors to have it so, is not the action robbery? Is it not theft and covetousness? Tell not me that you have not wrested away houses or slaves, for injustice is judged not by the measure of the things taken, but by the intention of those who commit the robbery. Since "*just*" and "*unjust*" have the same force in great and in little things; and I call cut-purses alike the man who cuts through a purse and takes the gold, and him who buying from any of the market people deducts something from the proper price; nor is he the only house-breaker who breaks through a wall and steals anything within, but that man also who corrupts justice, and takes anything from his neighbor.

Let us not then pass by our own faults, and become judges of other men's; nor let us, when it is time for lovingkindness, be searching out their wickedness; but considering what our own state was once, let us now be gentle and kind. What then was our state? Hear Paul say; "*For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, hateful, and hating one another*" [Titus 3:3]; and again, "*We were by nature children of wrath.*" [Ephesians 2:3] But God seeing us as it were confined in a prison-house, and bound with grievous chains, far more grievous than those of iron, was not ashamed of us, but came and entered

the prison, and, though we deserved ten thousand punishments, both brought us out from hence, and brought us to a kingdom, and made us more glorious than the heaven, that we also might do the same according to our power. For when He says to His disciples, *"If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you"* [John 13:14], He writes this law not merely for the washing the feet, but also in all the other acts which He manifested towards us. Is it a manslayer who inhabits the prison? Yet let not us be weary in doing Him good. Is it a tomb-breaker, or an adulterer? Let us pity not his wickedness, but his calamity. But often, as I before said, one will be found there worth ten thousand; and if you go continually to the prisoners, you shall not miss so great a prize. For as Abraham, by entertaining even common guests, once met with Angels, so shall we meet with great men too, if we make the action a business. And if I may make a strange assertion, he who entertains a great man is not so worthy of praise as he who receives the wretched and miserable. For the former has, in his own life, no slight occasion of being well treated, but the other, rejected and given up by all, has one only harbor, the pity of his benefactor; so that this most of all is pure kindness. He, moreover, who shows attention to an admired and illustrious man, does it often for ostentation among men, but he who tends the abject and despairing, does it only because of the command of God. Wherefore, if we make a feast, we are bidden to entertain the lame and halt, and if we do works of mercy, we are bidden to do them to the least and meanest. *"For,"* It says, *"inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Me."* [Matthew 25:45] Knowing, therefore, the treasure which is laid up in that place, let us enter continually, and make it our business, and turn there our eager feelings about theaters. If you have nothing to

contribute, contribute the comfort of your words. For God recompenses not only him that feeds, but him also who goes in. When you enter and arouses the trembling and fearful soul, exhorting, succoring, promising assistance, teaching it true wisdom, you shall thence reap no small reward. For if you should speak in such manner outside the prison, many will even laugh, being dissipated by their excessive luxury: but those who are in adversity, having their minds humbled, shall meekly attend to your words, and praise them, and become better men. Since even when Paul preached, the Jews often derided him, but the prisoners listened with much stillness. For nothing renders the soul so fit for heavenly wisdom as calamity and temptation, and the pressure of affliction. Considering all these things, and how much good we shall work both to those within the prison, and to ourselves, by being continually mixed up with them, let us there spend the time we used to spend in the market-place, and in unseasonable occupations, that we may both win them and gladden ourselves, and by causing God to be glorified, may obtain the everlasting blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 61 on the Gospel of John

John 10:22-24

"And it was at Jerusalem, the Feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long do you make us to doubt?"

1. Every virtue is a good thing, but most of all gentleness and meekness. This shows us men; this makes us to differ from wild beasts; this fits us to vie with Angels. Wherefore Christ continually expends many words about this virtue, bidding us be meek and gentle. Nor does He merely expend words about it, but also teaches it by His actions; at one time buffeted and bearing it, at another reproached and plotted against; yet again coming to those who plotted against Him. For those men who had called Him a demoniac, and a Samaritan and who had often desired to kill Him, and had cast stones at Him, the same surrounded and asked Him, *"Are you the Christ?"* Yet not even in this case did He reject them after so many and so great plots against Him, but answered them with great gentleness.

But it is necessary rather to enquire into the whole passage from the beginning.

"It was," It says, *"at Jerusalem, the Feast of the dedication, and it was winter."* This feast was a great and national one. For they celebrated with great zeal the day on which the Temple was rebuilt, on their return from their long captivity in Persia. At this feast Christ also was present, for henceforth He continually abode in Judæa, because the Passion was near. *"Then came the Jews round about Him, and said, How long do you make us to doubt?"*

"If you be the Christ, tell us plainly."

He did not reply, *"What enquire ye of Me? Often have ye called Me demoniac, madman, and Samaritan, and have deemed me an enemy of God, and a deceiver, and you said but now, You bear witness of yourself, your witness is not true; how is it then that you seek and desire to learn from Me, whose witness ye reject?"* But He said nothing of the kind, although He knew that the intention with which they made the enquiry was evil. For their surrounding Him and saying, *"How long do you make us to doubt?"* seemed to proceed from a certain longing and desire of learning, but the intention with which they asked the question was corrupt and deceitful. For since His works admitted not of their slander and insolence, while they might attack His sayings by finding out in them a sense other than that in which they were spoken, they continually proposed questions, desiring to silence Him by means of His sayings; and when they could find no fault with His works, they wished to find a handle in His words. Therefore they said, *"Tell us"*; yet He had often told them. For He said to the woman of Samaria, *"I Am that speak unto you"* [John 4:26]; and to the blind man, *"You have both seen Him, and it is He that talks with you."* [John 9:37] And He had told them also, if not in the same, at least in other words. And indeed, had they been wise, and had they desired to enquire aright, it remained for them to confess Him by words, since by works He had often proved the point in question. But now observe their perverse and disputations temper. When He addresses them, and instructs them by His words, they say, *"What sign do you show us?"* [John 6:30] But when He gives them proofs by His works, they say to Him, *"Are you the Christ? Tell us plainly"*; when the works cry aloud, they seek words, and when the words teach, then they betake themselves to works, ever setting themselves to the contrary. But that they enquired not for the sake of learning, the end

showed. For Him whom they deemed to be so worthy of credit, as to receive His witness of Himself, when He had spoken a few words they straightway stoned; so that their very surrounding and pressing upon Him was done with ill intent.

And the mode of questioning was full of much hatred. *"Tell us plainly, Are you the Christ?"* Yet He spoke all things openly, being ever present at their feasts, and in secret He said nothing; but they brought forward words of deceit, *"How long do you make us to doubt?"* in order that having drawn Him out, they might again find some handle against Him. For that in every case they questioned Him not in order to learn, but to find fault with His words, is clear, not from this passage only, but from many others also. Since when they came to Him and asked, *"Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?"* [Matthew 22:17], when they spoke about putting away a wife [Matthew 19:3], when they enquired about her who, they said, had had seven husbands [Matthew 22:23], they were convicted of bringing their questions to Him, not from desire of learning, but from an evil intention. But there He rebuked them, saying, *"Why do you tempt Me, you hypocrites?"* showing that He knew their secret thoughts, while here He said nothing of the kind; teaching us not always to rebuke those who plot against us, but to bear many things with meekness and gentleness.

Since then it was a sign of folly, when the works proclaimed Him aloud, to seek the witness of words, hear how He answers them, at once hinting to them that they made these enquiries superfluously, and not for the sake of learning, and at the same time showing that He uttered a voice plainer than that by words, namely, that by works.

John 10:25

"I told you often, and you believe not: the works that I do in My Father's Name, they are they that bear witness of Me."

2. A remark which the more tolerable among them continually made to one another; *"A man that is a sinner cannot do such miracles."* And again, *"A devil cannot open the eyes of the blind":* and, *"No man can do such miracles except God be with him."* [John 3:2] And beholding the miracles that He did, they said, *"Is not this the Christ?"* Others said, *"When Christ comes, will He do greater miracles than those which this Man has done?"* [John 7:31] And these very persons as many as then desired to believe in Him, saying, *"What sign do you show us, that we may see, and believe you?"* [John 6:30] When then they who had not been persuaded by such great works, pretended that they should be persuaded by a bare word, He rebukes their wickedness, saying, *"If you believe not My works, how will you believe My words? So that your questioning is superfluous."*

John 10:26

"But I told you, and you believe not, because you are not of My sheep."

"For I on My part have fulfilled all that it behooved a Shepherd to do, and if you follow Me not, it is not because I am not a Shepherd, but because you are not My sheep."

John 10:27-30

"For My sheep hear My voice, and follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life ; neither can any man pluck them out of My hand. The Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are One."

Observe how in renouncing He excites them to follow Him. *"You hear Me not,"* He says, *"for neither are you sheep, but they who follow, these are of the flock."* This He said, that they might strive to become sheep. Then by mentioning what they should obtain, He makes these men jealous, so as to rouse them, and cause them to desire such things.

"What then? Is it through the power of the Father that no man plucks them away, and have you no strength, but art too weak to guard them?" By no means. And in order that you may learn that the expression, *"The Father which gave them to Me,"* is used on their account, that they might not again call Him an enemy of God, therefore, after asserting that, *"No man plucks them out of My hand,"* He proceeds to show, that His hand and the Father's is One. Since had not this been so, it would have been natural for Him to say, *"The Father which gave them to Me is greater than all, and no man can pluck them out of My hand."* But He said not so, but, *"out of My Father's hand."* Then that you may not suppose that He indeed is weak, but that the sheep are in safety through the power of the Father, He adds, *"I and the Father are One."* As though He had said *"I did not assert that on account of the Father no man plucks them away, as though I were too weak to keep the sheep. For I and the Father are One."* Speaking here with reference to Power, for concerning this was all His discourse; and if the power be the same, it is clear that the Essence is also. And when the Jews used ten thousand means, plotting and casting men out of their synagogues, He tells

them that all their contrivances are useless and vain; *"For the sheep are in My Father's hand"*; as the Prophet says, *"Upon My hand I have pictured your walls."* [Isaiah 49:16] Then to show that the hand is One, He sometimes says that it is His own, sometimes the Father's. But when you hear the word *"hand,"* do not understand anything material, but the power, the authority. Again, if it was on this account that no one could pluck away the sheep, because the Father gave Him power, it would have been superfluous to say what follows, *"I and the Father are One."* Since were He inferior to Him, this would have been a very daring saying, for it declares nothing else than an equality of power; of which the Jews were conscious, and took up stones to cast at Him. [John 10:31] Yet not even so did He remove this opinion and suspicion; though if their suspicion were erroneous, He ought to have set them right, and to have said, *"Wherefore do ye these things? I spoke not thus to testify that my power and the Father's are equal"*; but now He does quite the contrary, and confirms their suspicion, and clenches it, and that too when they were exasperated. For He makes no excuse for what had been said, as though it had been said ill, but rebukes them for not entertaining a right opinion concerning Him. For when they said,

John 10:33-36

"For a good work we stone you not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou being a man makest yourself God"; hear His answer; "If the Scripture called them gods unto whom the word of God came, how say ye that I blaspheme, because I said, I am the Son of God?"

What He says is of this kind: *"If those who have received this honor by grace, are not found fault with for calling themselves gods, how can He who has this by nature deserve to be rebuked?"* Yet He spoke not so, but proved it at a later time, having first relaxed and yielded somewhat in His discourse, and said, *"Whom the Father has sanctified and sent."* And when He had softened their anger, He brings forward the plain assertion. For a while, that His speech might be received, He spoke in a humbler strain, but afterwards He raised it higher, saying,

John 10:37-38

"If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works."

Do you see how He proves what I said, that He is in nothing inferior to the Father, but in every way equal to Him? For since it was impossible to see His Essence, from the equality and sameness of the works He affords a proof of unvaryingness as to Power. And what, tell me, shall we believe?

3. *"That I am in the Father, and the Father in Me."*

"For I am nothing other than what the Father is, yet still Son; He nothing other than what I am, yet still Father. And if any man know Me, he knows the Father, and if he knows the Father, he has learned also the Son."

Now were the power inferior, then also what relates to the knowledge would be false, for it is not possible to become acquainted with one substance or power by means of another.

John 10:39-41

"Therefore they sought again to take Him, but He escaped out of their hands, and went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized. And many resorted unto Him, and said, John did no miracle, but all things that John spoke of this man were true."

When He has uttered anything great and sublime, He quickly retires, giving way to their anger, so that the passion may abate and cease through His absence. And thus He acted at that time. But wherefore does the Evangelist mention the place? That you may learn that He went there to remind them of the things there done and said by John, and of his testimony; at least when they came there, they straightway remembered John. Wherefore also they said, *"John indeed did no miracle,"* since how did it follow that they should add this, unless the place had brought the Baptist to their memory, and they had come to remember his testimony. And observe how they form incontrovertible syllogisms. *"John indeed did no miracle," "but this man does,"* says some one; *"hence therefore his superiority is shown. If therefore men believed him who did no miracles, much more must they believe this man."* Then, since it was John who bore the witness, lest his having done no miracle might seem to prove him unworthy of being a witness, they added, *"Yet if he did no miracle, still he spoke all things truly concerning this man";* no longer proving Christ to be trustworthy by means of John, but John to be so by what Christ had done.

John 10:42

"Many therefore believed on Him."

There were many things that attracted them. They remembered the words which John had spoken, calling Christ *"mightier than himself,"* and *"light,"* and *"life,"* and *"truth,"* and all the rest. They remembered the Voice which came down from heaven, and the Spirit which appeared in the shape of a dove, and pointed Him out to all; and with this they recollected the demonstration afforded by the miracles, looking to which they were for the future established. *"For,"* says some one, *"if it was right that we should believe John, much more ought we to believe this man; if him without miracles, much more this man, who besides the testimony of John, has also the proof from miracles."* Do you see how much the abiding in this place, and the being freed from the presence of evil men, profited them?

Wherefore Jesus continually leads and draws them away from the company of those persons; as also He seems to have done under the old Covenant, forming and ordering the Jews in all points, in the desert, at a distance from the Egyptians.

And this He now advises us also to do, bidding us avoid public places, and tumults, and disturbances, and pray peacefully in the chamber. For the vessel which is free from confusion, sails with a fair wind, and the soul which is separated from worldly matters rests in harbor. Wherefore women ought to have more true wisdom than men, because they are for the most part riveted to keeping at home. So, for instance, Jacob was a plain man, because he dwelt at home, and was free from the bustle of public life; for not without a cause has Scripture put this, when It says, *"dwelling in a house."* [Genesis 25:27] *"But,"* says some woman, *"even in a house there is*

great confusion." Yes, when you will have it so, and bringest about yourself a crowd of cares. For the man who spends his time in the midst of the market-places and courts of justice is overwhelmed, as if by waves, by external troubles; but the woman who sits in her house as in some school of true wisdom, and collects her thoughts within herself, will be enabled to apply herself to prayers, and readings, and other heavenly wisdom. And as they who dwell in deserts have none to disturb them, so she being continually within can enjoy a perpetual calm. Nor even if at any time she need to go forth, is there then any cause for confusion. For the necessary occasions for a woman to leave her house are, either for the purpose of coming hither, or when the body need to be cleansed in the bath; but for the most part she sits at home, and it is possible for her both to be herself truly wise, and receiving her husband when agitated to calm and compose him, to abate the excess and fierceness of his thoughts, and so to send him forth again, having put off all the mischiefs which he collected from the market-place, and carrying with him whatever good he learned at home. For nothing, nothing is more powerful than a pious and sensible woman to bring a man into proper order, and to mould his soul as she will. For he will not endure friends, or teachers, or rulers, as he will his partner advising and counseling him, since the advice carries even some pleasure with it, because she who gives the counsel is greatly loved. I could tell of many hard and disobedient men who have been softened in this way. For she who shares his table, his bed, and his embraces, his words and secrets, his comings in and goings out, and many other things, who is entirely given up and joined to him, as it is likely that a body would be joined to a head, if she happen to be discreet and well attuned, will go beyond and excel all others in the management of her husband.

4. Wherefore I exhort women to make this their employment, and to give fitting counsel. For as they have great power for good, so have they also for evil. A woman destroyed Absalom, a woman destroyed Amnon, a woman was like to have destroyed Job, a woman rescued Nabal from the slaughter. Women have preserved whole nations; for Deborah and Judith exhibited successes worthy of men; so also do ten thousand other women. Wherefore Paul says, *"For what do you know, O wife, whether you shall save your husband?"* [1 Corinthians 7:16] And in those times we see Persis and Mary and Priscilla taking part in the labors of the Apostles [Romans 16]; whom we also needs must imitate, and not by words only, but also by actions, bring into order him that dwells with us. But how shall we instruct him by our actions? When he sees that you are not evilly disposed, not fond of expense or ornament, not demanding extravagant supplies of money, but content with what you have, then will he endure you counseling him. But if you are wise in word, and in actions doest the contrary, he will condemn you for very foolish talking. But when together with words you afford him also instruction by your works, then will he admit you and obey you the more readily; as when you desire not gold, nor pearls, nor costly clothing, but instead of these, modesty, sobriety, kindness; when you exhibit these virtues on your part and requirest them on his. For if you must needs do somewhat to please your husband, you should adorn your soul, not adorn and so spoil your person. The gold which you put about you will not make you so lovely and desirable to him, as modesty and kindness towards himself, and a readiness to die for your partner; these things most subdue men. Indeed, that splendor of apparel even displeases him, as straitening his means, and causing him much expense and care; but those things which I have named will rivet a husband to a wife; for kindness and friendship and love cause no cares, give rise to no expense, but quite the contrary. That

outward adornment becomes palling by use, but that of the soul blooms day by day, and kindles a stronger flame. So that if you would please your husband, adorn your soul with modesty, piety, and management of the house. These things both subdue him more, and never cease. Age destroys not this adornment, sickness wastes it not. The adornment of the body length of time is wont to undo, sickness and many other things to waste, but what relates to the soul is above all this. That adornment causes envy, and kindles jealousy, but this is pure from disease, and free from all vainglory. Thus will matters at home be easier, and your income without trouble, when the gold is not laid on about your body or encircling your arms, but passes on to necessary uses, such as the feeding of servants, the necessary care of children, and other useful purposes. But if this be not the case, if the (wife's) face be covered with ornaments, while the (husband's) heart is pressed by anxiety, what profit, what kind of advantage is there? The one being grieved allows not the marvelous beauty of the other to be seen. For you know, you know that though a man see the most beautiful of all women, he cannot feel pleasure at the sight while his soul is sorrowful, because in order to feel pleasure a man must first rejoice and be glad. And when all his gold is heaped together to adorn a woman's body, while there is distress in his dwelling, her partner can have no pleasure. So that if we desire to be agreeable to our husbands, let us give them pleasure; and we shall give them pleasure, if we remove our ornaments and fineries. For all these things at the actual time of marriage appear to afford some delight, but this afterwards fades by time. Since if when the heaven is so beautiful, and the sun, to which you can not name any body that is equal, so bright, we admire them less from habitually seeing them, how shall we admire a body tricked out with gewgaws? These things I say, desiring that you should be adorned with that wholesome adornment which Paul enjoined; *"Not with gold, or*

pearls, or costly array; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works." [1 Timothy 2:9-10] But do you wish to please strangers, and to be praised by them? Then assuredly this is not the desire of a modest woman. However, if you wish it, by doing as I have said, you will have strangers also to love you much, and to praise your modesty. For the woman who adorns her person no virtuous and sober person will praise, but the intemperate and lascivious; nay, rather neither will these praise her, but will even speak vilely of her, having their eyes inflamed by the wantonness displayed about her; but the other all will approve, both the one sort and the other, because they receive no harm from her, but even instruction in heavenly wisdom. And great shall be her praise from men, and great her reward with God. After such adornment then let us strive, that we may live here without fear, and may obtain the blessings which are to come; which may we all obtain through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 62 on the Gospel of John

John 11:1-2

"Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, of the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment."

1. Many men, when they see any of those who are pleasing to God suffering anything terrible, as, for instance, having fallen into sickness, or poverty, and any other the like, are offended, not knowing that to those especially dear to God it belongs to endure these things; since Lazarus also was one of the friends of Christ, and was sick. This at least they who sent said, *"Behold, he whom You love is sick."* But let us consider the passage from the beginning. *"A certain man,"* It says, *"was sick, Lazarus of Bethany."* Not without a cause nor by chance has the writer mentioned whence Lazarus was, but for a reason which he will afterwards tell us. At present let us keep to the passage before us. He also for our advantage informs us who were Lazarus' sisters; and, moreover, what Mary had more (than the other), going on to say, *"It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment."* Here some doubting say, *"How did the Lord endure that a woman should do this?"* In the first place then it is necessary to understand, that this is not the harlot mentioned in Matthew [Matthew 26:7], or the one in Luke [Luke 7:37], but a different person; they were harlots full of many vices, but she was both grave and earnest; for she showed her earnestness about the entertainment of Christ. The Evangelist also means to show, that the sisters too loved Him, yet He allowed Lazarus to die. But why did they not, like the centurion and the nobleman, leave their sick brother, and come

to Christ, instead of sending? They were very confident in Christ, and had towards Him a strong familiar feeling. Besides, they were weak women, and oppressed with grief; for that they acted not in this way as thinking slightly of Him, they afterwards showed. It is then clear, that this Mary was not the harlot. "*But wherefore,*" says some one, "*did Christ admit that harlot?*" That He might put away her iniquity; that He might show His lovingkindness; that you might learn that there is no malady which prevails over His goodness. Look not therefore at this only, that He received her, but consider the other point also, how He changed her. But, (to return,) why does the Evangelist relate this history to us? Or rather, what does he desire to show us by saying,

John 11:5

"Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."

That we should never be discontented or vexed if any sickness happen to good men, and such as are dear to God.

John 11:3

"Behold, he whom you love is sick."

They desired to draw on Christ to pity, for they still gave heed to Him as to a man. This is plain from what they say, *"If you had been here, he had not died,"* and from their saying, not, *"Behold, Lazarus is sick,"* but *"Behold, he whom you love is sick."* What then said Christ?

John 11:4

"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

Observe how He again asserts that His glory and the Father's is One; for after saying *"of God,"* He has added, *"that the Son of God might be glorified."*

"This sickness is not unto death." Since He intended to tarry two days where He was, He for the present sends away the messengers with this answer. Wherefore we must admire Lazarus' sisters, that after hearing that the sickness was *"not unto death,"* and yet seeing him dead, they were not offended, although the event had been directly contrary. But even so they came to Him, and did not think that He had spoken falsely.

The expression *"that"* in this passage denotes not cause, but consequence; the sickness happened from other causes, but He used it for the glory of God.

John 11:6

"And having said this, He tarried two days."

Wherefore tarried He? That Lazarus might breathe his last, and be buried; that none might be able to assert that He restored him when not yet dead, saying that it was a lethargy, a fainting, a fit, but not death. On this account He tarried so long, that corruption began, and they said, *"He now stinks."*

John 11:7

"Then says He to his disciples, Let us go into Judea."

Why, when He never in other places told them beforehand where He was going, does He tell them here? They had been greatly terrified, and since they were in this way disposed, He forewarns them, that the suddenness might not trouble them. What then say the disciples?

John 11:8

"The Jews of late sought to stone You, and You are going there again?"

They therefore had feared for Him also, but for the more part rather for themselves; for they were not yet perfect. So Thomas, shaking with fear, said, *"Let us go, that we also may die with Him"* [John 11:16], because Thomas was weaker and more unbelieving than the rest. But see how Jesus encourages them by what He says.

John 11:9

"Are there not twelve hours of the day?"

He either says this, that *"he who is conscious to himself of no evil, shall suffer nothing dreadful; only he that does evil shall suffer, so that we need not fear, because we have done nothing worthy of death"*; or else that, *"he who 'sees the light of this world' is in safety; and if he that sees the light of this world is in safety, much more he that is with Me, if he separate not himself from Me."* Having encouraged them by these words, He adds, that the cause of their going there was pressing, and shows them that they were about to go not unto Jerusalem, but unto Bethany.

John 11:11-12

"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep."

That is, *"I go not for the same purpose as before, again to reason and contend with the Jews, but to awaken our friend."*

John 11:12

"Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well."

This they said not without a cause, but desiring to hinder the going there. *"Sayest Thou,"* asks one of them, *"that he sleeps? Then there is no urgent reason for going."* Yet on this account He had said, *"Our friend,"* to show that the going there was necessary. When therefore their disposition was somewhat reluctant, He said,

John 11:14

"He is dead."

2. The former word He spoke, desiring to prove that He loved not boasting; but since they understood not, He added, *"He is dead."*

John 11:15

"And I am glad for your sakes."

Why *"for your sakes"*? *"Because I have forewarned you of his death, not being there, and because when I shall raise him again, there will be no suspicion of deceit."* Do you see how the disciples were yet imperfect in their disposition, and knew not His power as they ought? And this was caused by interposing terrors, which troubled and disturbed their souls. When He said, *"He sleeps,"* He added, *"I go to awake him";* but when He said, *"He is dead,"* He added not, *"I go to raise him";* for He would not foretell in words what He was about to establish certainly by works, everywhere teaching us not to be vainglorious, and that we must not make promises without a cause. And if He did thus in the case of the centurion when summoned, (for He said, *"I will come and heal him,"* [Matthew 8:7]) it was to show the faith of the centurion that He said this. If any one ask, *"How did the disciples imagine sleep? How did they not understand that death was meant from His saying, 'I go to awake him?' for it was folly if they expected that He would go fifteen stadia to awake him";* we would reply, that they deemed this to be a dark saying, such as He often spoke to them.

Now they all feared the attacks of the Jews, but Thomas above the rest; wherefore also he said,

John 11:16

"Let us go, that we also may die with Him."

Some say that he desired himself to die; but it is not so; the expression is rather one of cowardice. Yet he was not rebuked, for Christ as yet supported his weakness, but afterwards he became stronger than all, and invincible. For the wonderful thing is this; that we see one who was so weak before the Crucifixion, become after the Crucifixion, and after having believed in the Resurrection, more zealous than any. So great was the power of Christ. The very man who dared not go in company with Christ to Bethany, the same while not seeing Christ ran well near through the inhabited world, and dwelt in the midst of nations that were full of murder, and desirous to kill him.

But if Bethany was *"fifteen furlongs off,"* which is two miles, how was Lazarus *"dead four days"*? Jesus tarried two days, on the day before those two one had come with the message, (on which same day Lazarus died,) then in the course of the fourth day He arrived. He waited to be summoned, and came not uninvited on this account, that no one might suspect what took place; nor did those women who were beloved by Him come themselves, but others were sent.

John 11:18

"Now Bethany was about fifteen furlongs off."

Not without cause does he mention this, but desires to inform us that it was near, and that it was probable on this account that many would be there. He therefore declaring this adds,

John 11:19

"Many of the Jews came to comfort them."

But how should they comfort women beloved of Christ, when they had agreed, that if any should confess Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue? It was either because of the grievous nature of the calamity, or that they respected them as of superior birth, or else these who came were not the wicked sort, many at least even of them believed. The Evangelist mentions these circumstances, to prove that Lazarus was really dead.

3. But why did not [Martha,] when she went to meet Christ, take her sister with her? She desired to meet with Him apart, and to tell Him what had taken place. But when He had brought her to good hopes, she went and called Mary, who met Him while her grief was yet at its height. Do you see how fervent her love was? This is the Mary of whom He said, *"Mary has chosen that good part."* [Luke 10:42] *"How then,"* says one, *"does Martha appear more zealous?"* She was not more zealous, but it was because the other had not yet been informed, since Martha was the weaker. For even when she had heard such things from Christ, she yet speaks in a groveling manner, *"By this time he stinks, for he has been dead four days."* [John 11:39] But Mary, though she had heard nothing, uttered nothing of the kind, but at once believing, says,

John 11:21

"Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died."

See how great is the heavenly wisdom of the women, although their understanding be weak. For when they saw Christ, they did not break out into mourning and wailing and loud crying, as we do when we see any of those we know coming in upon our grief; but straightway they reverence their Teacher. So then both these sisters believed in Christ, but not in a right way; for they did not yet certainly know either that He was God, or that He did these things by His own power and authority; on both which points He taught them. For they showed their ignorance of the former, by saying, *"If you had been here, our brother had not died"*; and of the latter, by saying,

John 11:22

"Whatsoever you will ask of God, He will give it you."

As though they spoke of some virtuous and approved mortal. But see what Christ says;

John 11:23

"Your brother shall rise again."

He thus far refutes the former saying, *"Whatsoever you will ask"*; for He said not, *"I ask,"* but what? *"Your brother shall rise again."* To have said, *"Woman, thou still lookest below, I need not the help of another, but do all of Myself,"* would have been grievous, and a stumblingblock in her way, but to say, *"He shall rise again,"* was the act of one who chose a middle mode of speech. And by means of that which follows, He alluded to the points I have mentioned; for when Martha says,

John 11:24

"I know that he shall rise again in the last day," to prove more clearly His authority, He replies,

John 11:25

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Showing that He needed no other to help Him, if so be that He Himself is the Life; since if He needed another, how could He be *"the Resurrection and the Life"*? Yet He did not plainly state this, but merely hinted it. But when she says again, *"Whatsoever you will ask,"* He replies,

"He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Showing that He is the Giver of good things, and that we must ask of Him.

John 11:26

"And whosoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die."

Observe how He leads her mind upward; for to raise Lazarus was not the only thing sought; it was necessary that both she and they who were with her should learn the Resurrection. Wherefore before the raising of the dead He teaches heavenly wisdom by words. But if He is *"the Resurrection,"* and *"the Life,"* He is not confined by place, but, present everywhere, knows how to heal. If therefore they had said, as did the centurion, *"Speak the word, and my servant shall be healed"* [Matthew 8:8], He would have done so; but since they summoned Him to them, and begged Him to come, He condescends in order to raise them from the humble opinion they had formed of Him, and comes to the place. Still while condescending, He showed that even when absent He had power to heal. On this account also He delayed, for the mercy would not have been apparent as soon as it was given, had there not been first an ill savor (from the corpse). But how did the woman know that there was to be a Resurrection? They had heard Christ say many things about the Resurrection, yet still she now desired to see Him. And observe how she still lingers below; for after hearing, *"I am the Resurrection and the Life,"* not even so did she say, *"Raise him,"* but,

John 11:27

"I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God."

What is Christ's reply? *"He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,"* (here speaking of this death which is common to all.)

"And whosoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die" [John 11:26], signifying that other death. *"Since then I am the Resurrection and the Life, be not thou troubled, though your brother be already dead, but believe, for this is not death."* For a while He comforted her on what had happened; and gave her glimpses of hope, by saying, *"He shall rise again,"* and, *"I am the Resurrection"*; and that having risen again, though he should again die, he shall suffer no harm, so that it needs not to fear this death. What He says is of this kind: *"Neither is this man dead, nor shall you die."* *"Believest thou this?"* She says, *"I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God."*

"Which should come into the world."

The woman seems to me not to understand the saying; she was conscious that it was some great thing, but did not perceive the whole meaning, so that when asked one thing, she answered another. Yet for a while at least she had this gain, that she moderated her grief; such was the power of the words of Christ. On this account Martha went forth first, and Mary followed. For their affection to their Teacher did not allow them strongly to feel their present sorrow; so that the minds of these women were truly wise as well as loving.

4. But in our days, among our other evils there is one malady very prevalent among our women; they make a great show in their dirges and wailings, baring their arms, tearing their hair, making furrows down their cheeks. And this they do, some from grief, others from ostentation and

rivalry, others from wantonness; and they bare their arms, and this too in the sight of men. Why doest thou, woman? Do you strip yourself in unseemly sort, tell me, thou who art a member of Christ, in the midst of the marketplace, when men are present there? Do you pluck your hair, and rend your garments, and wail loudly, and join the dance, and keep throughout a resemblance to Bacchanalian women, and do you not think that you are offending God? What madness is this? Will not the heathen laugh? Will they not deem our doctrines fables? They will say, *"There is no resurrection — the doctrines of the Christians are mockeries, trickery, and contrivance. For their women lament as though there were nothing after this world; they give no heed to the words engraven in their books; all those words are fictions, and these women show that they are so. Since had they believed that he who has died is not dead, but has removed to a better life, they would not have mourned him as no longer being, they would not have thus beaten themselves, they would not have uttered such words as these, full of unbelief, 'I shall never see you more, I shall never more regain you,' all their religion is a fable, and if the very chief of good things is thus wholly disbelieved by them, much more the other things which are revered among them."* The heathen are not so womanish, among them many have practiced heavenly wisdom; and a woman hearing that her child had fallen in battle, straightway asked, *"And in what state are the affairs of the city?"* Another truly wise, when being garlanded he heard that his son had fallen for his country, took off the garland, and asked which of the two; then when he had learned which it was, immediately put the garland on again. Many also gave their sons and their daughters for slaughter in honor of their evil deities; and Lacedæmonian women exhort their sons either to bring back their shield safe from war, or to be brought back dead upon it. Wherefore I am ashamed that the heathen show true wisdom in these matters, and we act

unseemly. Those who know nothing about the Resurrection act the part of those who know; and those who know, the part of those who know not. And oftentimes many do through shame of men what they do not for the sake of God. For women of the higher class neither tear their hair nor bare their arms; which very thing is a most heavy charge against them, not because they do not strip themselves, but because they act as they do not through piety, but that they may not be thought to disgrace themselves. Is their shame stronger than grief, and the fear of God not stronger? And must not this deserve severest censure? What the rich women do because of their riches, the poor ought to do through fear of God; but at present it is quite the contrary; the rich act wisely through vainglory, the poor through littleness of soul act unseemly. What is worse than this anomaly? We do all for men, all for the things of earth. And these people utter words full of madness and much ridicule. The Lord says indeed, "*Blessed are they that mourn*" [Matthew 5:4], speaking of those who mourn for their sins; and no one mourns that kind of mourning, nor cares for a lost soul; but this other we were not bidden to practice, and we practice it. "*What then?*" says some one, "*Is it possible being man not to weep?*" No, neither do I forbid weeping, but I forbid the beating yourselves, the weeping immoderately. I am neither brutal nor cruel. I know that our nature asks and seeks for its friends and daily companions; it cannot but be grieved. As also Christ showed, for He wept over Lazarus. So do thou; weep, but gently, but with decency, but with the fear of God. If so you weep, you do so not as disbelieving the Resurrection, but as not enduring the separation. Since even over those who are leaving us, and departing to foreign lands, we weep, yet we do this not as despairing.

5. And so do thou weep, as if you were sending one on his way to another land. These things I say, not as giving a rule of action, but as

condescending (to human infirmity). For if the dead man have been a sinner, and one who has in many things offended God, it behooves to weep (or rather not to weep only, since that is of no avail to him, but to do what one can to procure some comfort for him by almsgivings and offerings;) but it behooves also to rejoice at this, that his wickedness has been cut short. If he have been righteous, it again behooves to be glad, that what is his is now placed in security, free from the uncertainty of the future; if young, that he has been quickly delivered from the common evils of life; if old, that he has departed after taking to satiety that which is held desirable. But you, neglecting to consider these things, incitest your hand-maidens to act as mourners, as if forsooth thou were honoring the dead, when it is an act of extreme dishonor. For honor to the dead is not wailings and lamentings, but hymns and psalmodies and an excellent life. The good man when he departs, shall depart with angels, though no man be near his remains; but the corrupt, though he have a city to attend his funeral, shall be nothing profited. Will you honor him who is gone? Honor him in another way, by almsdeeds, by acts of beneficence and public service. What avail the many lamentations? And I have heard also another grievous thing, that many women attract lovers by their sad cries, acquiring by the fervor of their wailings a reputation for affection to their husbands. O devilish purpose! O Satanic invention! How long are we but dust and ashes, how long but blood and flesh? Look we up to heaven, take we thought of spiritual things. How shall we be able to rebuke the heathen, how to exhort them, when we do such things? How shall we dispute with them concerning the Resurrection? How about the rest of heavenly wisdom? How shall we ourselves live without fear? Knowest not thou that of grief comes death? For grief darkening the seeing part of the soul not only hinders it from perceiving anything that it ought, but also works it great mischief. In one

way then we offend God, and advantage neither ourselves nor him who is gone; in the other we please God, and gain honor among men. If we sink not down ourselves, He will soon remove the remains of our despondency; if we are discontented, He permits us to be given up to grief. If we are thankful, we shall not despond. *"But how,"* says some one, *"is it possible not to be grieved, when one has lost a son or daughter or wife?"* I say not, *"not to grieve,"* but *"not to do so immoderately."* For if we consider that God has taken away, and that the husband or son which we had was mortal, we shall soon receive comfort. To be discontented is the act of those who seek for something higher than their nature. You were born man, and mortal; why then do you grieve that what is natural has come to pass? Grieveest thou that you are nourished by eating? Seekest thou to live without this? Act thus also in the case of death, and being mortal seek not as yet for immortality. Once for all this thing has been appointed. Grieve not therefore, nor play the mourner, but submit to laws laid on all alike. Grieve for your sins; this is good mourning, this is highest wisdom. Let us then mourn for this cause continually, that we may obtain the joy which is there, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 63 on the Gospel of John

John 11:30-31

"Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met Him. The Jews then which were with her," and what follows.

1. A great good is philosophy; the philosophy, I mean, which is with us. For what the heathen have is words and fables only; nor have these fables anything truly wise in them; since everything among those men is done for the sake of reputation. A great good then is true wisdom, and even here returns to us a recompense. For he that despises wealth, from this at once reaps advantage, being delivered from cares which are superfluous and unprofitable; and he that tramples upon glory from this at once receives his reward, being the slave of none, but free with the real freedom; and he that desires heavenly things hence receives his recompense, regarding present things as nothing, and being easily superior to every grief. Behold, for example, how this woman by practicing true wisdom even here received her reward. For when all were sitting by her as she mourned and lamented, she did not wait that the Master should come to her, nor did she maintain what might have seemed her due, nor was she restrained by her sorrow, (for, in addition to the other wretchedness, mourning women have this malady, that they wish to be made much of on account of their case,) but she was not at all so affected; as soon as she heard, she quickly came to Him. *"Jesus was not yet come into the town."* He proceeded somewhat slowly, that He might not seem to fling Himself upon the miracle, but rather to be entreated by them. At least, it is either with an intention of implying this that the

Evangelist has said the, "*rises up quickly*," or else he shows that she ran so as to anticipate Christ's arrival. She came not alone, but drawing after her the Jews that were in the house. Very wisely did her sister call her secretly, so as not to disturb those who had come together, and not mention the cause either; for assuredly many would have gone back, but now as though she were going to weep, all followed her. By these means again it is proved that Lazarus was dead.

John 11:32

"And she fell at His feet."

She is more ardent than her sister. She regarded not the multitude, nor the suspicion which they had concerning Him, for there were many of His enemies, who said, *"Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?"* [John 11:37]; but cast out all mortal things in the presence of her Master, and was given up to one thing only, the honor of that Master. And what says she?

"Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died."

What does Christ? He converses not at all with her for the present, nor says to her what He said to her sister, (for a great multitude was by, and this was no fit time for such words,) He only acts measurably and condescends; and to prove His human nature, weeps in silence, and defers the miracle for the present. For since that miracle was a great one, and such as He seldom wrought, and since many were to believe by means of it, lest to work it without their presence should prove a stumbling-block to the multitude, and so they should gain nothing by its greatness, in order that He might not lose the quarry, He draws to Him many witnesses by His condescension, and shows proof of His human nature. He weeps, and is troubled; for grief is wont to stir up the feelings. Then rebuking those feelings, (for He *"groaned in spirit"* means, *"restrained His trouble,"*) He asked,

John 11:34

"Where have ye laid him?"

So that the question might not be attended with lamentation. But why does He ask? Because He desired not to cast Himself on (the miracle), but to learn all from them, to do all at their invitation, so as to free the miracle from any suspicion.

"They say unto Him, Come and see."

John 11:35

"Jesus wept."

Do you see that He had not as yet shown any sign of the raising, and goes not as if to raise Lazarus, but as if to weep? For the Jews show that He seemed to them to be going to bewail, not to raise him; at least they said,

John 11:36-37

"Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?"

Not even amid calamities did they relax their wickedness. Yet what He was about to do was a thing far more wonderful; for to drive away death when it has come and conquered, is far more than to stay it when coming on. They therefore slander Him by those very points through which they ought to have marveled at His power. They allow for the time that He opened the eyes of the blind, and when they ought to have admired Him on account of that miracle, they, by means of this latter case, cast a slur upon it, as though it had not even taken place. And not from this only are they shown to be all corrupt, but because when He had not yet come, nor exhibited any action, they prevent Him with their accusations without waiting the end of the matter. Do you see how corrupt was their judgment?

2. He comes then to the tomb; and again rebukes His feelings. Why does the Evangelist carefully in several places mention that *"He wept,"* and that, *"He groaned"*? That you may learn that He had of a truth put on our nature. For when this Evangelist is remarkable for uttering great things concerning Christ more than the others, in matters relating to the body, here he also speaks much more humbly than they. For instance, concerning His death he has said nothing of the kind; the other Evangelists declare that He was exceedingly sorrowful, that He was in an agony; but John, on the contrary, says, that He even cast the officers backwards. So that he has made up here what is omitted there, by mentioning His grief. When speaking of His death, Christ says, *"I have power to lay down My life"* [John 10:18], and then He utters no lowly word; therefore at the Passion

they attribute to Him much that is human, to show the reality of the Dispensation. And Matthew proves this by the Agony, the trouble, the trembling, and the sweat; but John by His sorrow. For had He not been of our nature, He would not once and again have been mastered by grief. What did Jesus? He made no defense with regard to their charges; for why should He silence by words those who were soon to be silenced by deeds? A means less annoying, and more adapted to shame them.

John 11:39

"He says, Take ye away the stone."

Why did not He when at a distance summon Lazarus, and place him before their eyes? Or rather, why did He not cause him to arise while the stone yet lay on the grave? For He who was able by His voice to move a corpse, and to show it again endowed with life, would much more by that same voice have been able to move a stone; He who empowered by His voice one bound and entangled in the grave-clothes to walk, would much more have been able to move a stone; why then did He not so? In order to make them witnesses of the miracle; that they might not say as they did in the case of the blind man, *"It is he," "It is not he."* For their hands and their coming to the tomb testified that it was indeed he. If they had not come, they might have deemed that they saw a vision, or one man in place of another. But now the coming to the place, the raising the stone, the charge given them to loose the dead man bound in grave-clothes from his bands; the fact that the friends who bore him from the tomb, knew from the grave-clothes that it was he; that his sisters were not left behind; that one of them said, *"He now stinks, for he has been dead four days"*; all these things, I say, were sufficient to silence the ill-disposed, as they were made witnesses of the miracle. On this account He bids them take away the stone from the tomb, to show that He raises the man. On this account also He asks, *"Where have ye laid him?"* that they who said, *"Come and see,"* and who conducted Him, might not be able to say that He had raised another person; that their voice and their hands might bear witness, (their voice by saying, *"Come and see,"* their hands by lifting the stone, and loosing the grave-clothes,) as well as their eyes and ears, (the one by hearing His voice, the other by seeing

Lazarus come forth,) and their smell also by perceiving the ill-odor, for Martha said, "*He now stinks, for he has been dead four days.*"

Therefore I said with good reason, that the woman did not at all understand Christ's words, "*Though he were dead, yet shall he live.*" At least observe, that she speaks as though the thing were impossible on account of the time which had intervened. For indeed it was a strange thing to raise a corpse which had been dead four days, and was corrupt. To the disciples Jesus said, "*That the Son of Man may be glorified,*" referring to Himself; but to the woman, "*You shall see the glory of God,*" speaking of the Father. Do you see that the weakness of the hearers is the cause of the difference of the words? He therefore reminds her of what He had spoken unto her, well near rebuking her, as being forgetful. Yet He did not wish at present to confound the spectators, wherefore He says,

John 11:40

"Said I not unto you, that if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?"

3. A great blessing truly is faith, great, and one which makes great those who hold it rightly with (good) living. By this men (are enabled) to do the things of God in His name. And well did Christ say, *"If you have faith you shall say unto this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove"* [Matthew 17:20]; and again, *"He that believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do."* [John 14:12] What means He by *"greater"*? Those which the disciples are seen after this to work. For even the shadow of Peter raised a dead man; and so the power of Christ was the more proclaimed. Since it was not so wonderful that He while alive should work miracles, as that when He was dead others should be enabled to work in His name greater than He wrought. This was an indisputable proof of the Resurrection; nor if (that Resurrection) had been seen by all, would it have been equally believed. For men might have said that it was an appearance, but one who saw that by His name alone greater miracles were wrought than when He conversed with men, could not disbelieve unless he were very senseless. A great blessing then is faith when it arises from glowing feelings, great love, and a fervent soul; it makes us truly wise, it hides our human meanness, and leaving reasonings beneath, it philosophizes about things in heaven; or rather what the wisdom of men cannot discover, it abundantly comprehends and succeeds in. Let us then cling to this, and not commit to reasonings what concerns ourselves. For tell me, why have not the Greeks been able to find out anything? Did they not know all the wisdom of the heathen? Why then could they not prevail against fishermen and tentmakers, and unlearned persons? Was it not

because the one committed all to argument, the others to faith? And so these last were victorious over Plato and Pythagoras, in short, over all that had gone astray; and they surpass those whose lives had been worn out in astrology and geometry, mathematics and arithmetic, and who had been thoroughly instructed in every sort of learning, and were as much superior to them as true and real philosophers are superior to those who are by nature foolish and out of their senses. For observe, these men asserted that the soul was immortal, or rather, they did not merely assert this, but persuaded others of it. The Greeks, on the contrary, did not at first know what manner of thing the soul was, and when they had found out, and had distinguished it from the body, they were again in the same case, the one asserting that it was incorporeal, the other that it was corporeal and was dissolved with the body. Concerning heaven again, the one said that it had life and was a god, but the fishermen both taught and persuaded that it was the work and device of God. Now that the Greeks should use reasonings is nothing wonderful, but that those who seem to be believers, that "*they*" should be found carnal, this is what may justly be lamented. And on this account they have gone astray, some saying that they know God as He knows Himself, a thing which not even any of those Greeks have dared to assert; others that God cannot beget without passion, not even allowing Him any superiority over men; others again, that a righteous life and exact conversation avail nothing. But it is not the time to refute these things now.

4. Yet that a right faith avails nothing if the life be corrupt, both Christ and Paul declare, having taken the more care for this latter part; Christ when He teaches, "*Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*" [Matthew 7:21]; and again, "*Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your Name? And I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you that work iniquity*"

[Matthew 22:23]; (for they who take not heed to themselves, easily slip away into wickedness, even though they have a right faith;) and Paul, when in his letter to the Hebrews he thus speaks and exhorts them; *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."*

[Hebrews 12:14] By *"holiness,"* meaning chastity, so that it behooved each to be content with his own wife, and not have to do with any other woman; for it is impossible that one not so contented should be saved; he must assuredly perish though he have ten thousand right actions, since with fornication it is impossible to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Or rather, this is henceforth not fornication but adultery; for as a woman who is bound to a man, if she come together with another man, then has committed adultery, so he that is bound to a woman, if he have another, has committed adultery. Such an one shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven, but shall fall into the pit. Hear what Christ says concerning these, *"Their worm shall not die, and the fire shall not be quenched."* [Mark 9:44] For he can have no pardon, who after (possessing) a wife, and the comfort of a wife, then acts shamelessly towards another woman; since this is henceforth wantonness. And if the many abstain even from their wives when it be a season of fast or prayer, how great a fire does he heap up for himself who is not even content with his wife, but mingles with another; and if it is not permitted one who has put away and cast out his own wife to mingle with another, (for this is adultery,) how great evil does he commit who, while his wife is in his house, brings in another. Let no one then allow this malady to dwell in his soul; let him tear it up by the root. He does not so much wrong his wife as himself. For so grievous and unpardonable is this offense, that if a woman separate herself from a husband which is an idolater without his consent, God punishes her; but if she separate herself from a fornicator, not so. Do you see how great an evil this is? *"If,"* It says, *"any faithful woman have a*

husband that believes not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." [1 Corinthians 7:13] Not so concerning a harlot; but what? *"If any man put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, he causes her to commit adultery."* [Matthew 5:32] For if the coming together makes one body, he who comes together with a harlot must needs become one body with her. How then shall the modest woman, being a member of Christ, receive such an one, or how shall she join to herself the member of an harlot. And observe the excess of the one (fornication) over the other (idolatry). The woman who dwells with an unbeliever is not impure; (*"for,"* It says, *"the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife"* [1 Corinthians 6:15]) not so with the harlot; but what? *"Shall I then make the members of Christ the members of an harlot?"* In the one case sanctification remains, and is not removed though the unbeliever dwells with his wife; but in the other case it departs. A dreadful, a dreadful thing is fornication, and an agent for everlasting punishment; and even in this world it brings with it ten thousand woes. The man so guilty is forced to lead a life of anxiety and toil; he is nothing better off than those who are under punishment, creeping into another man's house with fear and much trembling, suspecting all alike both slave and free. Wherefore I exhort you to be freed from this malady, and if you obey not, step not on the sacred threshold. Sheep that are covered with the scab, and full of disease, may not herd with those that are in health; we must drive them from the fold until they get rid of the malady. We have been made members of Christ; let us not, I entreat, become members of an harlot. This place is not a brothel but a church; if then you have the members of an harlot, stand not in the church, lest you insult the place. If there were no hell, if there were no punishment, yet, after those contracts, those marriage torches, the lawful bed, the procreation of children, the intercourse, how couldst thou bear to join yourself to another? How is it

that you are not ashamed nor blushest? Do you not know that they who after the death of their own wife, introduce another into their own house, are blamed by many? Yet this action has no penalty attached to it: but you bring in another while your wife is yet alive. What lustfulness is this! Learn what has been spoken concerning such men, *"Their worm,"* It says, *"shall not die, and the fire shall not be quenched."* [Mark 9:44] Shudder at the threat, dread the vengeance. The pleasure here is not so great as the punishment there, but may it not come to pass that any one (here) become liable to that punishment, but that exercising holiness they may see Christ, and obtain the promised good things, which may we all enjoy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 64 on the Gospel of John

John 11:41-42

"Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me; and I knew that You hear Me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it." And what follows.

1. What I have often said, I will now say, that Christ looks not so much to His own honor as to our salvation; not how He may utter some sublime saying, but how something able to draw us to Him. On which account His sublime and mighty sayings are few, and those also hidden, but the humble and lowly are many, and abound through His discourses. For since by these men were the rather brought over, in these He continues; and He does not on the one hand utter these universally, lest the men that should come after should receive damage, nor, on the other hand, does He entirely withhold those, lest the men of that time should be offended. Since they who have passed from lowmindedness unto perfection, will be able from even a single sublime doctrine to discern the whole, but those who were ever lowminded, unless they had often heard these lowly sayings, would not have come to Him at all. In fact, even after so many such sayings they do not remain firm, but even stone and persecute Him, and try to kill Him, and call Him blasphemer. And when He makes Himself equal with God, they say, *"This man blasphemes"* [Matthew 9:3]; and when He says, *"Your sins be forgiven you"* [John 10:20], they moreover call Him a demoniac. So when He says that the man who hears His words is stronger than death, or, *"I am in the Father and the Father in Me"* [John 8:51], they leave Him; and again, they are offended when He says that He came down from heaven. [c. vi. 33, 60]

If now they could not bear these sayings, though seldom uttered, scarcely, had His discourse been always sublime, had it been of this texture, would they have given heed to Him? When therefore He says, "*As the Father commanded Me, so I speak*" [John 14:31]; and, "*I am not come of Myself*" [John 7:28], then they believe. That they did believe then is clear, from the Evangelist signifying this besides, and saying, "*As He spoke these words, many believed on Him.*" [John 5:30] If then lowly speaking drew men to faith, and high speaking scared them away, must it not be a mark of extreme folly not to see at a glance how to reckon the sole reason of those lowly sayings, namely, that they were uttered because of the hearers. Since in another place when He had desired to say some high thing, He withheld it, adding this reason, and saying, "*Lest we should offend them, cast a hook into the sea.*" [Matthew 17:27] Which also He does here; for after saying, "*I know that You hear Me always,*" He adds, "*but because of the multitude which stands around I said it, that they might believe.*" Are these words ours? Is this a human conjecture? When then a man will not endure to be persuaded by what is written, that they were offended at sublime things, how, when he hears Christ saying that He spoke in a lowly manner that they might not be offended, how, after that, shall he suspect that the mean sayings belonged to His nature, not to His condescension? So in another place, when a voice came down from heaven, He said, "*This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes.*" [John 12:30] He who is exalted may be allowed to speak lowly things of himself, but it is not lawful for the humble to utter concerning himself anything grand or sublime. For the former arises from condescension, and has for its cause the weakness of the hearers; or rather (it has for its cause) the leading them to humblemindedness, and His being clothed in flesh, and the teaching the hearers to say nothing great concerning themselves, and His being deemed

an enemy of God, and not being believed to have come from God, His being suspected of breaking the Law, and the fact that the hearers looked on Him with an evil eye, and were ill disposed towards Him, because He said that He was equal to God. But that a lowly man should say any great thing of Himself, has no cause either reasonable or unreasonable; it can only be folly, impudence, and unpardonable boldness. Wherefore then does Christ speak humbly, being of that ineffable and great Substance? For the reasons mentioned, and that He might not be deemed unbegotten; for Paul seems to have feared some such thing as this; wherefore he says, *"Except Him who did put all things under Him."* [1 Corinthians 15:27] This it is impious even to think of. Since if being less than Him who begot Him, and of a different Substance, He had been deemed equal, would He not have used every means that this might not be thought? But now He does the contrary, saying, *"If I do not the works of Him that sent Me, believe Me not."* [John 10:37] Indeed His saying, that *"I am in the Father and the Father in Me"* [John 14:10], intimates to us the equality. It would have behooved, if He had been inferior, to refute this opinion with much vehemence, and not at all to have said, *"I am in the Father and the Father in me"* [John 10:30], or that, *"We are One,"* or that, *"He that has seen Me, has seen the Father."* [John 14:9] Thus also, when His discourse was concerning power, He said, *"I and the Father are One"*; and when His discourse was concerning authority, He said again, *"For as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He wilt"* [John 5:21]; which it would be impossible that He should do were He of a different substance; or even allowing that it were possible, yet it would not have behooved to say this, lest they should suspect that the substance was one and the same. Since if in order that they may not suppose Him to be an enemy of God, He often even utters words unsuited to Him, much more should He then have

done so; but now, His saying, *"That they should honor the Son even as they honor the Father"* [John 5:23]; His saying, *"The works which He does, I do also"* [John 5:19]; His saying that He is *"the Resurrection, and the Life, and the Light of the world"* [c. xi. 25; 100:viii. 12], are the expressions of One making Himself equal to Him who begot Him, and confirming the suspicion which they entertained. Do you see how He makes this speech and defense, to show that He broke not the Law, and that He not only does not remove, but even confirms the opinion of His equality with the Father? So also when they said, *"Thou blaspheme, because you make yourself God"* [John 10:33], from equality of works He established this thing.

2. And why say I that the Son did this, when the Father also who took not the flesh does the same thing? For He also endured that many lowly things should be said concerning Him for the salvation of the hearers. For the, *"Adam, where are you?"* [Genesis 3:9], and, *"That I may know whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it"* [Genesis 18:21]; and, *"Now I know that you fear God"* [Genesis 22:12]; and, *"If they will hear"* [Ezekiel 3:11]; and, *"If they will understand"* [Deuteronomy 5:29]; and, *"Who shall give the heart of this people to be so?"* and the expression, *"There is none like You among the gods, O Lord"* [Psalm 80:29]; these and many other like sentences in the Old Testament, if a man should pick them out, he will find to be unworthy of the dignity of God. In the case of Ahab it is said, *"Who shall entice Ahab for Me?"* [2 Chronicles 18:19] And the continually preferring Himself to the gods of the heathen in the way of comparison, all these things are unworthy of God. Yet in another way they are made worthy of Him, for He is so kind, that for our salvation He cares not for expressions which become His dignity. Indeed, the becoming man is unworthy of Him, and the taking the form of a servant, and the speaking humble words, and the being clothed in humble (garments), unworthy if one

looks to His dignity, but worthy if one consider the unspeakable riches of His lovingkindness. And there is another cause of the humility of His words. What is that? It is that they knew and confessed the Father, but Him they knew not. Wherefore He continually betakes Himself to the Father as being confessed by them, because He Himself was not as yet deemed worthy of credit; not on account of any inferiority of His own, but because of the folly and infirmity of the hearers. On this account He prays, and says, *"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."* For if He quickens whom He will, and quickens in like manner as does the Father, wherefore does He call upon Him?

But it is time now to go through the passage from the beginning. *"Then they took up the stone where the dead man lay. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I knew that You hear Me always, but because of the people that stand by I said it, that they might believe that You have sent Me."* Let us then ask the heretic, Did He receive an impulse from the prayer, and so raise the dead man? How then did He work other miracles without prayer? Saying, *"Thou evil spirit, I charge you, come out of him"* [Mark 9:25]; and, *"I will, be thou clean"* [Mark 1:41]; and, *"Arise, take up your bed"* [John 5:8]; and, *"Your sins be forgiven you"* [Matthew 9:2]; and to the sea, *"Peace, be still."* [Mark 4:39] In short, what has He more than the Apostles, if so be that He also works by prayer? Or rather I should say, that neither did they work all with prayer, but often they wrought without prayer, calling upon the Name of Jesus. Now, if His Name had such great power, how could He have needed prayer? Had He needed prayer, His Name would not have availed. When He wholly made man, what manner of prayer did He need? Was there not then great equality of honor? *"Let Us make,"* It says, *"man."* [Genesis 1:26] What could be greater sign of weakness, if He needed prayer? But let us see

what the prayer was; *"I thank You that You have heard Me."* Who now ever prayed in this manner? Before uttering any prayer, He says, *"I thank You,"* showing that He needed not prayer. *"And I knew that You hear Me always."* This He said not as though He Himself were powerless, but to show that His will and the Father's is one. But why did He assume the form of prayer? Hear, not me, but Himself, saying, *"For the sake of the people which stand by, that they may believe that You have sent Me."* He said not, "That they may believe that I am inferior, that I have need of an impulse from above, that without prayer I cannot do anything; but, *"That You have sent Me."* For all these things the prayer declares, if we take it simply. He said not, *"You have sent me weak, acknowledging servitude, and doing nothing of Myself";* but dismissing all these things, that you may have no such suspicions, He puts the real cause of the prayer, *"That they may not deem Me an enemy of God; that they may not say, He is not of God, that I may show them that the work has been done according to Your will."* All but saying, *"Had I been an enemy of God, what is done would not have succeeded,"* but the, *"You heard Me,"* is said in the case of friends and equals. *"And I knew that You hear Me always,"* that is, *"in order that My will be done I need no prayer, except to persuade men that to You and Me belongs one will."* *"Why then prayest Thou?"* For the sake of the weak and grosser sort.

John 11:43

"And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice."

Why said He not, *"In the name of My Father come forth"*? Or why said He not, *"Father, raise him up"*? Why did he omit all these expressions, and after assuming the attitude of one praying, show by His actions His independent authority? Because this also was a part of His wisdom, to show condescension by words, but by His deeds, power. For since they had nothing else to charge Him with except that He was not of God, and since in this way they deceived many, He on this account most abundantly proves this very point by what He says, and in the way that their infirmity required. For it was in His power by other means to show at once His agreement with the Father and His own dignity, but the multitude could not ascend so far. And He says,

John 11:43

"Lazarus, come forth."

3. This is that of which He spoke, *"The hour is coming, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."* [John 5:28] For, that you might not think that He received the power of working from another, He taught you this before, and gave proof by deeds, and said not, Arise, but, *"Come forth,"* conversing with the dead man as though living. What can be equal to this authority? And if He does it not by His own strength, what shall He have more than the Apostles, who say, *"Why look ye so earnestly on us as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"* [Acts 3:12] For if, not working by His own power, He did not add what the Apostles said concerning themselves, they will in a manner be more truly wise than He, because they refused the glory. And in another place, *"Why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions as you."* [Acts 14:15] The Apostles since they did nothing of themselves, spoke in this way to persuade men of this; but He when the like opinion was formed concerning Him, would He not have removed the suspicion, if at least He did not act by His own authority? Who would assert this? But in truth Christ does the contrary, when He says, *"Because of the people which stand by I said it, that they might believe";* so that had they believed, there would have been no need of prayer. Now if prayer were not beneath His dignity, why should He account them the cause of His praying? Why said He not, *"I do it in order that they may believe that I am not equal to You";* for He ought on account of the suspicion to have come to this point. When He was suspected of breaking the Law, He used the very expression, even when they had not said anything, *"Think not that I have come to destroy the*

Law" [Matthew 5:17]; but in this place He establishes their suspicion. In fact, what need was there at all of going such a round, and of using such dark sayings? It had been enough to say, "*I am not equal*," and to be rid of the matter. "*But what*," says some one, "*did He not say that, I do not My own will?*" Even this He did in a covert way, and one suited to their infirmity, and from the same cause through which the prayer was made. But what means "*That You have heard Me*"? It means, "*That there is nothing on My part opposed to You.*" As then the, "*That You have heard Me*," is not the saying of one declaring, that of Himself He had not the power, (for were this the case, it would be not only impotence but ignorance, if before praying He did not know that God would grant the prayer; and if He knew not, how was it that He said, "*I go that I may awake him*," instead of, "*I go to pray My Father to awake him?*") As then this expression is a sign, not of weakness, but of identity of will, so also is the, "*You hear Me always.*" We must then either say this, or else that it was addressed to their suspicions. If now He was neither ignorant nor weak, it is clear that He utters these lowly words, that you may be persuaded by their very excess, and may be compelled to confess, that they suit not His dignity, but are from condescension. What then say the enemies of truth? "*He spoke not those words, You have heard me*," says some one, "*to the infirmity of the hearers, but in order to show a superiority.*" Yet this was not to show a superiority, but to humble Himself greatly, and to show Himself as having nothing more than man. For to pray is not proper to God, nor to the sharer of the Throne. Do you see then that He came to this from no other cause than their unbelief? Observe at least that the action bears witness to His authority.

"*He called, and the dead man came forth wrapped.*" Then that the matter might not seem to be an appearance, (for his coming forth bound did not seem to be less marvelous than his resurrection,) Jesus commanded to

loose him, in order that having touched and having been near him, they might see that it was really he. And He says,

John 11:43

"Let him go."

Do you see His freedom from boastfulness? He does not lead him on, nor bid him go about with Him, lest He should seem to any to be showing him; so well knew He how to observe moderation.

When the sign had been wrought, some wondered, others went and told it to the Pharisees. What then did they? When they ought to have been astonished and to have admired Him, they took counsel to kill Him who had raised the dead. What folly! They thought to give up to death Him who had overcome death in the bodies of others.

John 11:47

"And they said, What do we? For this man does many miracles."

They still call Him "*man*," these who had received such proof of His divinity. "*What do we?*" They ought to have believed, and served, and bowed down to Him, and no longer to have deemed Him a man.

John 11:48

"If we let him thus alone, the Romans will come, and will take away both our nation and city."

What is it which they counsel to do? They wish to stir up the people, as though they themselves would be in danger on suspicion of establishing a kingdom. *"For if,"* says one of them, *"the Romans learn that this Man is leading the multitudes, they will suspect us, and will come and destroy our city."* Wherefore, tell me? Did He teach revolt? Did He not permit you to give tribute to Cæsar? Did not ye wish to make Him a king, and He fly from you? Did He not follow a mean and unpretending life, having neither house nor anything else of the kind? They therefore said this, not from any such expectation, but from malice. Yet it so fell out contrary to their expectation, and the Romans took their nation and city when they had slain Christ. For the things done by Him were beyond all suspicion. For He who healed the sick, and taught the most excellent way of life, and commanded men to obey their rulers, was not establishing but undoing a tyranny. *"But,"* says some one, *"we conjecture from former (impostors)."* But they taught revolt, He the contrary. Do you see that the words were but a pretense? For what action of the kind did He exhibit? Did He lead about with Him pompous guards? Had He a train of chariots? Did He not seek the deserts? But they, that they may not seem to be speaking from their own ill feeling, say that all the city is in danger, that the common good is being plotted against, and that they have to fear the worst. These were not the causes of your captivity, but things contrary to them; both of this last, and of the Babylonish, and of that under Antiochus which followed: it was not that there were worshipers among you, but that there were among you those who did unjustly, and excited God to wrath, this caused you to be given up into bondage. But such

a thing is envy, allowing men to see nothing which they ought to see, when it has once for all blinded the soul. Did He not teach men to be meek? Did He not bid them when smitten on the right cheek to turn the other also? Did He not bid them when injured to bear it? To show greater readiness to endure evil, than others have to inflict it? Are these, tell me, the signs of one establishing a tyranny, and not rather of one pulling a tyranny down?

4. But, as I said, a dreadful thing is malice, and full of hypocrisy; this has filled the world with ten thousand evils; through this malady the law courts are filled, from this comes the desire of fame and wealth, from this the love of rule, and insolence, through this the roads have wicked robbers and the sea pirates, from this proceed the murders through the world, through this our race is rent asunder, and whatever evil you may see, you will perceive to arise from this. This has even burst into the churches, this has caused ten thousand dreadful things from the beginning, this is the mother of avarice, this malady has turned all things upside down, and corrupted justice. For *"gifts,"* It says, *"blind the eyes of the wise, and as a muzzle on the mouth turn away reproofs."* [Sirach 20:29, Septuagint. and marg. of E.V.] This makes slaves of freemen, concerning this we talk every day, and no good comes of it, we become worse than wild beasts; we plunder orphans, strip widows, do wrong to the poor, join woe to woe. *"Alas! That the righteous has perished from the earth!"* [Micah 7:1-2] It is our part too henceforth to mourn, or rather we have need to say this every day. We profit nothing by our prayers, nothing by our advice and exhortation, it remains therefore that we weep. Thus did Christ; after having many times exhorted those in Jerusalem, when they profited nothing, He wept at their hardness. This also do the Prophets, and this let us do now. Henceforth is the season for mourning and tears and wailing; it is seasonable for us also to say now, *"Call for the mourning women, and send*

for the cunning women, that they may cry aloud" [Jeremiah 9:17]; perhaps thus we shall be able to cast out the malady of those who build splendid houses, of those who surround themselves with lands gotten by rapine. It is seasonable to mourn; but do ye take part with me in the mourning, you who have been stripped and injured, by your mournings bring down my tears. But while mourning we will mourn, not for ourselves but for them; they have not injured you, but they have destroyed themselves; for you have the Kingdom of heaven in return for the injustice done you, they hell in return for their gain. On this account it is better to be injured than to injure. Let us bewail them with a lamentation not of man's making, but that from the Holy Scriptures with which the Prophets also wailed. With Isaiah let us wail bitterly, and say, *"Woe, they that add house to house, that lay field to field, that they may take somewhat from their neighbor; will you dwell alone upon the earth? Great houses and fair, and there shall be no inhabitants in them."* [Isaiah 5:8-9]

Let us mourn with Nahum, and say with him, *"Woe to him that builds his house on high."* [Perhaps Jeremiah 22:13] Or rather let us mourn for them as Christ mourned for those of old. *"Woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation."* [Luke 6:24] Let us, I beseech you, not cease thus lamenting, and if it be not unseemly, let us even beat our breasts for the carelessness of our brethren. Let us not weep for him who is already dead, but let us weep for the rapacious man, the grasping, the covetous, the insatiable. Why should we mourn for the dead, in whose case it is impossible henceforth to effect anything? Let us mourn for these who are capable even of change. But while we are lamenting, perhaps they will laugh. Even this is a worthy cause for lamentation, that they laugh when they ought to mourn. For had they been at all affected by our sorrows, it would have behooved us to cease from sorrowing on account of their

promise of amendment; but since they are of an insensible disposition, let us continue to weep, not merely for the rich, but for the lovers of money, the greedy, the rapacious. Wealth is not an evil thing, (for we may use it rightly when we spend it upon those who have need,) but greediness is an evil, and it prepares deathless punishments. Let us then bewail them; perhaps there will be some amendment; or even if they who have fallen in do not escape, others at least will not fall into the danger, but will guard against it. May it come to pass that both they may be freed from their malady, and that none of us may ever fall into it, that we all may in common obtain the promised goods, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 65 on the Gospel of John

John 11:49-50

"And one of them, Caiaphas, being the High Priest that same year, said unto them, You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," etc.

1. *"The heathen are stuck fast in the destruction which they made; in the trap which they hid is their foot taken."* [Psalm 9:15, Septuagint] This has been the case with the Jews. They said that they would kill Jesus, lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation; and when they had killed Him, these things happened unto them, and when they had done that by doing which they thought to escape, they yet did not escape. He who was slain is in Heaven, and they who slew have for their portion hell. Yet they did not consider these things; but what? *"They desired,"* It says, *"from that day forth to kill Him"* [John 11:53], for they said, *"The Romans will come, and will take away our nation; and a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being High Priest that year, said,"* (being more shameless than the rest,) *"You know nothing."* What the others made matter of doubt, and put forth in the way of deliberation, this man cried aloud, shamelessly, openly, audaciously. For what says he? *"You know nothing, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die, and that the whole nation perish not."*

John 11:51

"And this spoke he not of himself, but being High Priest he prophesied."

Do you see how great is the force of the High Priest's authority? Or, since he had in any wise been deemed worthy of the High Priesthood, although unworthy thereof, he prophesied, not knowing what he said; and the grace merely made use of his mouth, but touched not his accursed heart. Indeed many others have foretold things to come, although unworthy to do so, as Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh, Balaam; and the reason of all is evident. But what he says is of this kind. *"You still sit quiet, you give heed but carelessly to this matter, and know not how to despise one man's safety for the sake of the community."* See how great is the power of the Spirit; from an evil imagination It was able to bring forth words full of marvelous prophecy. The Evangelist calls the Gentiles *"children of God,"* from what was about to be: as also Christ Himself says, *"Other sheep I have"* [John 10:16], so calling them from what should afterwards come to pass.

But what is, *"being High Priest that year"*? This matter as well as the rest had become corrupt; for from the time that offices became matters of purchase, they were no longer priests for the whole period of their lives, but for a year. Notwithstanding, even in this state of things the Spirit was still present. But when they lifted up their hands against Christ, then It left them, and removed to the Apostles. This the rending of the veil declared, and the voice of Christ which said, *"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."* [Matthew 23:38] And Josephus, who lived a short time after, says, that certain Angels who yet remained with them, (to see) if they would alter their ways, left them. While the vineyard stood, all things went on; but when they had slain the Heir, no longer so, but they perished. And God

having taken it from the Jews, as a glorious garment from an unprofitable son, gave it to right-minded servants of the Gentiles, leaving the others desolate and naked. It was, moreover, no small thing that even an enemy should prophesy this. This might draw over others also. For in respect of his will, matters fell out contrariwise, since, when He died, the faithful were on this account delivered from the punishment to come. What means, *"That He might gather together those near and those afar off"* [John 11:52]? He made them one Body. The dweller in Rome deems the Indians a member of himself. What is equal to this *"gathering together"*? And the Head of all is Christ.

John 11:53

"From that day forth the Jews took counsel to put Him to death."

And, in truth, had sought to do so before; for the Evangelist says, *"Therefore the Jews sought to kill Him"* [John 5:18]; and, *"Why do you seek to kill Me?"* [John 7:19] But then they only sought, now they ratified their determination, and treated the action as their business.

John 11:54

"But Jesus walked no more openly in Jewry."

2. Again He saves Himself in a human manner, and this He does continually. But I have mentioned the reason for which He often departed and withdrew. And at this time He dwelt in Ephratah, near the wilderness, and there He tarried with His disciples. How do you think that those disciples were confounded when they beheld Him saving Himself after the manner of a man? After this no man followed Him. For since the Feast was near, all were running to Jerusalem; but they, at a time when all others were rejoicing and holding solemn assembly, hide themselves, and are in danger. Yet still they tarried with Him. For they hid themselves in Galilee, at the time of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles; and after this again during the Feast, they only of all were with their Master in flight and concealment, manifesting their good will to Him. Hence Luke records that He said, *"I abode with you in temptations"*; and this He said, showing that they were strengthened by His influence.

John 11:55

"And many went up from the country to purify themselves."

John 11:57

"And the High Priests and Pharisees had commanded that they should lay hands on Him."

A marvelous purification, with a murderous will, with homicidal intentions, and bloodstained hands!

John 11:56

"And they said, Think ye that he will not come to the feast?"

By means of the Passover they plotted against Him, and made the time of feasting a time of murder, that is, He there would fall into their hands, because the season summoned Him. What impiety! When they needed greater carefulness, and to forgive those who had been taken for the worst offenses, then they attempted to ensnare One who had done no wrong. Yet by acting thus they had already not only profited nothing, but become ridiculous. For this end coming among them continually He escapes, and restrains them when they take counsel to kill Him, and makes them to be in perplexity, desiring to prick them by the display of His power; that when they took Him, they might know that what had been done was done, not by their power, but by His permission. For not even at that time could they take Him, and this though Bethany was near; and when they did take Him, He cast them backwards.

John 12:1-2

"Then six days before the Passover He came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, and feasted with them; and Martha served, but Lazarus sat at meat."

This was a proof of the genuineness of his resurrection, that after many days he both lived and ate. *"And Martha ministered"*; whence it is clear that the meal was in her house, for they received Jesus as loving and beloved. Some, however, say, that it took place in the house of another. Mary did not minister, for she was a disciple. Here again she acted in the more spiritual manner. For she did not minister as being invited, nor did she afford her services to all alike. But she directs the honor to Him alone, and approaches Him not as a man, but as a God. On this account she poured out the ointment, and wiped (His feet) with the hairs of her head, which was the action of one who did not entertain the same opinion concerning Him as did others; yet Judas rebuked her, under the pretense forsooth of carefulness. What then says Christ? *"She has done a good work for My burying."* But why did He not expose the disciple in the case of the woman, nor say to him what the Evangelist has declared, that on account of his own thieving he rebuked her? In His abundant longsuffering He wished to bring him to a better mind. For because He knew that he was a traitor, He from the beginning often rebuked him, saying, *"Not all believe,"* and, *"One of you is a devil."* [John 6:64] He showed them that He knew him to be a traitor, yet He did not openly rebuke him, but bare with him, desiring to recall him. How then says another Evangelist, that all the disciples used these words? [Matthew 26:70] All used them, and so did he, but the others not with like purpose. And if any one ask why He put the bag of the poor in the hands of a thief, and made him steward who was a lover of money, we would reply, that God knows the secret reason; but that, if we may say something by

conjecture, it was that He might cut off from him all excuse. For he could not say that he did this thing from love of money, (for he had in the bag sufficient to allay his desire,) but from excessive wickedness which Christ wished to restrain, using much condescension towards him. Wherefore He did not even rebuke him as stealing, although aware of it, stopping the way to his wicked desire, and taking from him all excuse. *"Let her alone,"* He says, *"for against the day of My burying has she done this."* Again, He makes mention of the traitor in speaking of His burial. But him the reproof reaches not, nor does the expression soften him, though sufficient to inspire him with pity: as if He had said, *"I am burdensome and troublesome, but wait a little while, and I shall depart."* This too he intended in saying,

John 12:8

"But Me you have not always."

But none of these things turned back that savage madman; yet in truth Jesus said and did far more than this, He washed his feet that night, made him a sharer in the table and the salt, a thing which is wont to restrain even the souls of robbers, and spoke other words, enough to melt a stone, and this, not long before, but on the very day, in order that not even time might cause it to be forgotten. But he stood out against all.

3. For a dreadful, a dreadful thing is the love of money, it disables both eyes and ears, and makes men worse to deal with than a wild beast, allowing a man to consider neither conscience, nor friendship, nor fellowship, nor the salvation of his own soul, but having withdrawn them at once from all these things, like some harsh mistress, it makes those captured by it its slaves. And the dreadful part of so bitter a slavery is, that it persuades them even to be grateful for it; and the more they become enslaved, the more does their pleasure increase; and in this way especially the malady becomes incurable, in this way the monster becomes hard to conquer. This made Gehazi a leper instead of a disciple and a prophet; this destroyed Ananias and her with him; this made Judas a traitor; this corrupted the rulers of the Jews, who received gifts, and became the partners of thieves. This has brought in ten thousand wars, filling the ways with blood, the cities with wailings and lamentations. This has made meals to become impure, and tables accursed, and has filled food with transgression; therefore has Paul called it *"idolatry"*: [Colossians 3:5], and not even so has he deterred men from it. And why calls he it *"idolatry"*? Many possess wealth, and dare not use it, but consecrate it, handing it down

untouched, not daring to touch it, as though it were some dedicated thing. And if at any time they are forced to do so, they feel as though they had done something unlawful. Besides, as the Greek carefully tends his graven image, so thou entrusts your gold to doors and bars; providing a chest instead of a shrine, and laying it up in silver vessels. But thou dost not bow down to it as he to the image? Yet you show all kind of attention to it.

Again, he would rather give up his eyes or his life than his graven image. So also would those who love gold. *"But,"* says one, *"I worship not the gold."* Neither does he, he says, worship the image, but the devil that dwells in it; and in like manner thou, though thou worship not the gold, yet you worship that devil who springs on your soul, from the sight of the gold and your lust for it. For more grievous than an evil spirit is the lust of money-loving, and many obey it more than others do idols. For these last in many things disobey, but in this case they yield everything, and whatever it tells them to do, they obey. What says it? *"Be at war with all,"* it says, *"at enmity with all, know not nature, despise God, sacrifice to me yourself,"* and in all they obey. To the graven images they sacrifice oxen and sheep, but avarice says, Sacrifice to me your own soul, and the man obeys. Do you see what kind of altars it has, what kind of sacrifices it receives? The covetous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, but not even so do they fear. [1 Corinthians 6:10] Yet this desire is weaker than all the others, it is not inborn, nor natural, (for then it would have been placed in us at the beginning;) but there was no gold at the beginning, and no man desired gold. But if you will, I will tell you whence the mischief entered. By each man's envying the one before him, men have increased the disease, and he who has gotten in advance provokes him who had no desire. For when men see splendid houses, and extensive lands, and troops of slaves, and silver vessels, and great heaps of apparel, they use every means to outdo them; so

that the first set of men are causes of the second, and these of those who come after. Now if they would be sober-minded, they would not be teachers (of evil) to others; yet neither have these any excuse. For others there are also who despise riches. "*And who,*" says one, "*despises them?*" For the terrible thing is, that, because wickedness is so general, this seems to have become impossible, and it is not even believed that one can act aright. Shall I then mention many both in cities and in the mountains? And what would it avail? You will not from their example become better. Besides, our discourse has not now this purpose, that you should empty yourselves of your substance: I would that you could do so; however, since the burden is too heavy for you, I constrain you not; only I advise you that you desire not what belongs to others, that you impart somewhat of your own. Many such we shall find, contented with what belongs to them, taking care of their own, and living on honest labor. Why do we not rival and imitate these? Let us think of those who have gone before us. Do not their possessions stand, preserving nothing but their name; such an one's bath, such an one's suburban seat and lodging? Do we not, when we behold them, straightway groan, when we consider what toil he endured, what rapine committed? And now he is nowhere seen, but others luxuriate in his possessions, men whom he never expected would do so, perhaps even his enemies, while he is suffering extremest punishment. These things await us also; for we shall certainly die, and shall certainly have to submit to the same end. How much wrath, tell me, how much expense, how many enmities these men incurred; and what the gain? Deathless punishment, and the having no consolation; and the being not only while alive, but when gone, accused by all? What? When we see the images of the many laid up in their houses, shall we not weep the more? Of a truth well said the Prophet, "*Verily, every man living disquiets himself in vain*" [Psalm 39:11, Septuagint]; for anxiety about such

things is indeed disquiet, disquiet and superfluous trouble. But it is not so in the everlasting mansions, not so in those tabernacles. Here one has labored, and another enjoys; but there each shall possess his own labors, and shall receive a manifold reward. Let us press forward to get that possession, there let us prepare for ourselves houses, that we may rest in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 66 on the Gospel of John

John 12:8

"Much people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there, and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead."

1. As wealth is wont to hurl into destruction those who are not heedful, so also is power; the first leads into covetousness, the second into pride. See, for instance, how the subject multitude of the Jews is sound, and their rulers corrupt; for that the first of these believed Christ, the Evangelists continually assert, saying, that *"many of the multitude believed on Him"* [John 7:31-48]; but they who were of the rulers, believed not. And they themselves say, not the multitude, *"Hath any of the rulers believed on Him?"* But what says one? *"The multitude who know not God are accursed"* [John 7:49]; the believers they call accursed, and themselves the slayers, wise. In this place also, having beheld the miracle, the many believed; but the rulers were not contented with their own evil deeds, they also attempted to kill Lazarus. Suppose they did attempt to slay Christ because He broke the Sabbath, because He made Himself equal to the Father, and because of the Romans whom you allege, yet what charge had they against Lazarus, that they sought to kill him? Is the having received a benefit a crime? Do you see how murderous is their will? Yet He had worked many miracles; but none exasperated them so much as this one, not the paralytic, not the blind. For this was more wonderful in its nature, and was wrought after many others, and it was a strange thing to see one, who had been dead four days, walking and speaking. An honorable action, in truth, for the feast, to

mix up the solemn assembly with murders. Besides, in the one case they thought to charge Him concerning the Sabbath, and so to draw away the multitudes; but here, since they had no fault to find with Him, they make the attempt on the man who had been healed. For here they could not even say that He was opposed to the Father, since the prayer stopped their mouths. Since then the charge which they continually brought against Him was removed, and the miracle was evident, they hasten to murder. So that they would have done the same in the case of the blind man, had it not been in their power to find fault respecting the Sabbath. Besides, that man was of no note, and they cast him out of the temple; but Lazarus was a person of distinction, as is clear, since many came to comfort his sisters; and the miracle was done in the sight of all, and most marvelously. On which account all ran to see. This then stung them, that while the feast was going on, all should leave it and go to Bethany. They set their hand therefore to kill him, and thought they were not daring anything, so murderous were they. On this account the Law at its commencement opens with this, "*You shall not kill*" [Exodus 20:13]; and the Prophet brings this charge against them, "*Their hands are full of blood.*" [Isaiah 1:15]

But how, after not walking openly in Jewry, and retiring into the wilderness, does He again enter openly? Having quenched their anger by retiring, He comes to them when they were stilled. Moreover, the multitude which went before and which followed after was sufficient to cast them into an agony; for no sign so much attracted the people as that of Lazarus. And another Evangelist says, that they strewed their garments under His feet [Matthew 21:8], and that "*the whole city was moved*" [Matthew 21:10]; with so great honor did He enter. And this He did, figuring one prophecy and fulfilling another; and the same act was the beginning of the one and the end of the other. For the, "*Rejoice, for your King comes unto you meek*"

[Zechariah 9:9], belonged to Him as fulfilling a prophecy, but the sitting upon an ass was the act of one prefiguring a future event, that He was about to have the impure race of the Gentiles subject to Him.

But how say the others, that He sent disciples, and said, "*Loose the ass and the colt*" [Matthew 21:2], while John says nothing of the kind, but that "*having found a young ass, He sat upon it*"? Because it is likely that both circumstances took place, and that He after the ass was loosed, while the disciples were bringing it, found (the colt), and sat upon it. And they took the small branches of palm trees and olives, and strewed their garments in the way, showing that they now had a higher opinion concerning Him than of a Prophet, and said,

John 12:13

"Hosannah, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."

Do you see that this most choked them, the persuasion which all men had that He was not an enemy of God? And this most divided the people, His saying that He came from the Father. But what means,

John 12:15

"Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion."

Because all their kings had for the most part been an unjust and covetous kind of men, and had given them over to their enemies, and had perverted the people, and made them subject to their foes; *"Be of good courage,"* It says, *"this is not such an one, but meek and gentle";* as is shown by the ass, for He entered not with an army in His train, but having an ass alone.

John 12:16

"But this the disciples knew not, that it was written of Him."

2. Do you see that they were ignorant on most points, because He did not reveal to them? For when He said, *"Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up"* [John 2:19], neither then did the disciples understand. And another Evangelist says, that *"the saying was hid from them"* [Luke 18:34], and they knew not that He should rise from the dead. Now this was with reason concealed from them, (wherefore another Evangelist says, that as they heard it from time to time, they grieved and were dejected, and this because they understood not the saying concerning the Resurrection,) it was with reason concealed, as being too high for them: but why was not the matter of the ass revealed to them? Because this was a great thing also. But observe the wisdom of the Evangelist, how he is not ashamed to parade their former ignorance. That it was written they knew, that it was written of Him they knew not. For it would have offended them if He being a King were about to suffer such things, and be so betrayed. Besides, they could not at once have taken in the knowledge of the Kingdom of which He spoke; for another Evangelist says, that they thought the words were spoken of a kingdom of this world. [Matthew 20:21]

John 12:17

"But the multitude bore witness that He had raised Lazarus."

For so many would not have been suddenly changed, unless they had believed in the miracle.

John 12:19

"The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him."

Now this seems to me to be said by those who felt rightly, but had not courage to speak boldly, and who then would restrain the others by pointing to the result, as though they were attempting impossibilities. Here again they call the multitude *"the world."* For Scripture is wont to call by the name *"world"* both the creation, and those who live in wickedness; the one, when It says, *"Who brings out His world by number"* [Isaiah 40:26]; the other when It says, *"The world hates not you, but Me it hates."* [John 7:7] And these things it is necessary to know exactly, that we may not through the signification of words afford a handle to the heretics.

John 12:20

"And there were certain of the Greeks that came up to worship at the Feast."

Being now near to become proselytes, they were at the Feast. When therefore the report concerning Him was imparted to them, they say,

John 12:21

"We would see Jesus."

Philip gives place to Andrew as being before him, and communicates the matter to him. But neither does he at once act with authority; for he had heard that saying, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles"* [Matthew 10:5]: therefore having communicated with the disciple, he refers the matter to his Master. For they both spoke to Him. But what says He?

John 12:23-24

"The hour has come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone."

What is, *"The hour has come"*? He had said, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles,"* (thus cutting away all excuse of ignorance from the Jews,) and had restrained the disciples. When therefore the Jews continued disobedient, and the others desired to come to Him, *"Now,"* says He, *"it is time to proceed to My Passion, since all things are fulfilled. For if we were to continue to wait for those who are disobedient and not admit these who even desire to come, this would be unbefitting our tender care."* Since then He was about to allow the disciples to go to the Gentiles after the Crucifixion, and beheld them springing on before, He said, *"It is time to proceed to the Cross."* For He would not allow them to go sooner, that it might be for a testimony unto them. Until that by their deeds the Jews rejected Him, until they crucified Him, He said not, *"Go and make disciples of all nations"* [Matthew 28:19], but, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles"* [Matthew 10:5], and, *"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"* [Matt 15:24], and, *"It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs."* [Matthew 15:26] But when they hated Him, and so hated as to kill Him, it was superfluous to persevere while they repulsed Him. For they refused Him, saying, *"We have no king but Cæsar."* [John 19:15] So that at length He left them, when they had left Him. Therefore He says, *"How often would I have gathered your children together, and you would not?"* [Matthew 23:37]

What is, *"Except a grain of grain fall into the ground and die"*? He speaks of the Cross, for that they might not be confounded at seeing, that

just when Greeks also came to Him, then He was slain, He says to them, *"This very thing specially causes them to come, and shall increase the preaching of Me."* Then since He could not so well persuade them by words, He goes about to prove this from actual experience, telling them that this is the case with grain; it bears the more fruit when it has died. *"Now,"* says He, *"if this be the case with seeds, much more with Me."* But the disciples understood not what was spoken. Wherefore the Evangelist continually puts this, as making excuse for their flight afterwards. This same argument Paul also has raised when speaking of the Resurrection.

3. What sort of excuse then will they have who disbelieve the Resurrection, when the action is practiced each day, in seeds, in plants, and in the case of our own generation? For first it is necessary that the seed die, and that then the generation take place. But, in short, when God does anything, reasonings are of no use; for how did He make us out of those things that were not? This I say to Christians, who assert that they believe the Scriptures; but I shall also say something else drawn from human reasonings. Of men some live in vice, others in virtue; and of those who live in vice, many have attained to extreme old age in prosperity, many of the virtuous after enduring the contrary. When then shall each receive his deserts? At what season? *"Yea,"* says some one, *"but there is no resurrection of the body."* They hear not Paul, saying, *"This corruptible must put on incorruption."* [1 Corinthians 15:53] He speaks not of the soul, for the soul is not corrupted; moreover, *"resurrection"* is said of that which fell, and that which fell was the body. But why will you have it that there is no resurrection of the body? Is it not possible with God? But this it were utter folly to say. Is it unseemly? Why is it unseemly, that the corruptible which shared the toil and death, should share also the crowns? For were it unseemly, it would not have been created at the beginning, Christ would not

have taken the flesh again. But to show that He took it again and raised it up, hear what He says: *"Reach hither your fingers"* [John 20:27]; and, *"Behold, a spirit has not bones and sinews."* [Luke 24:39] But why did He raise Lazarus again, if it would have been better to rise without a body? Why does He this, classing it as a miracle and a benefit? Why did He give nourishment at all? Be not therefore deceived by the heretics, beloved: for there is a Resurrection and there is a Judgment, but they deny these things, who desire not to give account of their actions. For this Resurrection must be such as was that of Christ, for He was the first fruits, the first born of the dead. But if the Resurrection is this, a purifying of the soul, a deliverance from sin, and if Christ sinned not, how did He rise again? And how have we been delivered from the curse, if so be that He also sinned? And now says He, *"The prince of this world comes, and had nothing in Me"*? [John 14:30] They are the words of One declaring His sinlessness. According to them therefore He either did not rise again; or that He might rise, He sinned before His Resurrection. But He both rose again, and did no sin. Therefore He rose in the Body, and these wicked doctrines are nothing else than the offspring of vainglory. Let us then fly this malady. For, It is says, *"evil communications corrupt good manners."* [1 Corinthians 15:33] These are not the doctrines of the Apostles; Marcion and Valentius have newly invented them. Let us then flee them, beloved, for a pure life profits nothing when doctrines are corrupt; as on the other hand neither do sound doctrines, if the life be corrupt. The heathen were the parents of these notions, and those heretics reared them, having received them from Gentile philosophers, asserting that matter is uncreated, and many such like things. As then they asserted that there could be no Artificer unless there were some uncreated subject matter, so also they disallowed the Resurrection. But let us not heed them, as knowing that the power of God is all sufficient.

Let us not heed them. To you I say this; for we will not decline the battle with them. But the man who is unarmed and naked, though he fall among the weak, though he be the stronger, will easily be vanquished. Had you given heed to the Scriptures, had you sharpened yourselves each day, I would not have advised you to flee the combat with them, but would have counseled you to grapple with them; for strong is truth. But since you know not how to use the Scriptures, I fear the struggle, lest they take you unarmed and cast you down. For there is nothing, there is nothing weaker than those who are bereft of the aid of the Spirit. If these heretics employ the wisdom of the Gentiles, we must not admire, but laugh at them, because they employ foolish teachers. For those men were not able to find out anything sound, either concerning God or the creation, and things which the widow among us is acquainted with, Pythagoras did not yet know, but said that the soul becomes a bush, or a fish, or a dog. To these, tell me, ought you to give heed? And how could it be reasonable to do so? They are great men in their district, grow beautiful curls, and are enfolded in cloaks; thus far goes their philosophy; but if you look within there is dust and ashes and nothing sound, but *"their throat is an open sepulcher"* [Psalm 5:9], having all things full of impurity and corruption, and all their doctrines (full) of worms. For instance, the first of them said that water was God, his successor fire, another one air, and they descended to things corporeal; ought we then, tell me, to admire these, who never even had the thought of the incorporeal God? And if they did ever gain it afterwards, it was after conversing in Egypt with our people. But, that we bring not upon you much confusion, let us here close our discourse. For should we begin to set before you their doctrine, and what they have said about God, what about matter, what about the soul, what about the body, much ridicule will follow. And they will not even require to be accused by us, for they have attacked each other; and he

who wrote against us the book concerning matter, made away with himself. Therefore that we may not vainly delay you, nor wind together a labyrinth of words, leaving these things we will bid you keep fast hold of the listening to the Holy Scriptures, and not fight with words to no purpose; as also Paul exhorts Timothy [2 Timothy 2:14], filled though he was with much wisdom, and possessing the power of miracles. Let us now obey him, and leaving trifling; let us hold fast to real works, I mean to brotherly-kindness and hospitality; and let us make much account of almsgiving, that we may obtain the promised good things, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for endless ages. Amen.

Homily 67 on the Gospel of John

John 12:25-26

"He that loves his life shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me."

1. Sweet is the present life, and full of much pleasure, yet not to all, but to those who are riveted to it. Since, if any one look to heaven and see the beauteous things there, he will soon despise this life, and make no account of it. Just as the beauty of an object is admired while none more beautiful is seen, but when a better appears, the former is despised. If then we would choose to look to that beauty, and observe the splendor of the kingdom there, we should soon free ourselves from our present chains; for a kind of chain it is, this sympathy with present things. And hear what Christ says to bring us in to this, *"He that loves his life shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal; if any man serve Me let him follow Me"*; and, *"Where I am, there is My servant also."* The words seem like a riddle, yet they are not so, but are full of much wisdom. But how shall *"he that loves his life, lose it"*? When he does its unseemly desires, when he gratifies it where he ought not. Wherefore one exhorts us, saying, *"Walk not in the desires of your soul"* [Sirach 18:30]; for so will you destroy it since it leads away from the path leading to virtue; just as, on the contrary, *"he that hates it in this world, shall save it."* But what means, *"He that hates it"*? He who yields not to it when it commands what is pernicious. And He said not, *"he that yields not to it,"* but, *"He that hates it"*; for as we cannot endure even to hear the voice of those we hate, nor to look upon them with pleasure, so from the soul also we must turn away

with vehemence, when it commands things contrary to what is pleasing to God. For since He was now about to say much to them concerning death, His own death, and saw that they were dejected and desponding, He spoke very strongly, saying, *"What say I? If you bear not valiantly My death? Nay, if you die not yourselves, you will gain nothing."* Observe also how He softens the discourse. It was a very grievous and sad thing to be told, that the man who loves life should die. And why speak I of old times, when even now we shall find many gladly enduring to suffer anything. in order to enjoy the present life, and this too when they are persuaded concerning things to come; who when they behold buildings, and works of art, and contrivances, weep, uttering the reflection, *"How many things man invents, and yet becomes dust! So great is the longing after this present life."* To undo these bonds then, Christ says, *"He that hates his soul in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal."* For that you may know that He spoke as exhorting them, and dissipating their fear, hear what comes next.

"If any man serve Me, let him follow Me."

Speaking of death, and requiring the following which is by works. For certainly he that serves must follow him who is served. And observe at what time He said these things to them; not when they were persecuted, but when they were confident; when they thought they were in safety on account of the honor and attention of the many, when they might rouse themselves and hear, *"Let him take up his cross, and follow Me"* [Matthew 16:24]; that is, *"Be ever,"* He says, *"prepared against dangers, against death, against your departure hence."* Then after He had spoken what was hard to bear, He puts also the prize. And of what kind was this? The following Him, and being where He is; showing that Resurrection shall succeed death. For, says He,

"Where I am, there is My servant also."

But where is Christ? In heaven. Let us therefore even before the Resurrection remove there in soul and mind.

"If any man serve Me, the Father shall love him."

Why said He not, *"I"*? Because they did not as yet hold a right opinion concerning Him, but held a higher opinion of the Father. For how could they imagine anything great concerning Him, who did not even know that He was to rise again? Wherefore He said to the sons of Zebedee, *"It is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by my Father"* [Mark 10:40], yet He it is that judges. But in this passage He also establishes His genuine sonship. For as the servants of His own Son, so will the Father receive them.

John 12:27

"Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour."

"But surely this is not the expression of one urging them to go even to death." Nay, it is that of one greatly so urging them. For lest they should say, that *"He being exempt from mortal pains easily philosophizes on death, and exhorts us being himself in no danger,"* He shows, that although feeling its agony, on account of its profitableness He declines it not. But these things belong to the Dispensation, not the Godhead. Wherefore He says, *"Now is My soul troubled"*; since if this be not the case, What connection has that which was spoken, and His saying, *"Father, save Me from this hour"*? And so troubled, that He even sought deliverance from death, if at least it were possible to escape. These were the infirmities of His human nature.

2. *"But,"* He says, *"I have not what to say, when asking for deliverance."*

"For for this cause came I unto this hour."

As though He had said, *"Though we be confounded, though we be troubled, let us not fly from death, since even now I though troubled do not speak of flying; for it behooves to bear what is coming on. I say not, Deliver Me from this hour,"* but what?

John 12:28

"Father, glorify Your Name."

"Although My trouble urges Me to say this, yet I say the opposite, 'Glorify Your Name,' that is, Lead Me henceforth to the Cross"; which greatly shows His humanity, and a nature unwilling to die, but clinging to the present life, proving that He was not exempt from human feelings. For as it is no blame to be hungry, or to sleep, so neither is it to desire the present life; and Christ indeed had a body pure from sin, yet not free from natural wants, for then it would not have been a body. By these words also He taught something else. Of what kind is that? That if ever we be in agony and dread, we even then start not back from that which is set before us; and by saying, *"Glorify Your Name"* He shows that He dies for the truth calling the action, *"glory to God."* And this fell out after the Crucifixion. The world was about to be converted, to acknowledge the Name of God, and to serve Him, not the Name of the Father only, but also that of the Son; yet still as to this He is silent.

"There came therefore a Voice from Heaven, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

When had He *"glorified it"*? By what had been done before; and *"I will glorify it again"* after the Cross. What then said Christ?

John 12:30

"This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes."

They thought that it thundered, or that an Angel spoke to Him. And how did they think this? Was not the voice clear and distinct? It was, but it quickly flew away from them as being of the grosser sort, carnal and slothful. And some of them caught the sound only, others knew that the voice was articulate, but what it meant, knew not. What says Christ? *"This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes."* Why said He this? He said it, setting Himself against what they continually asserted, that He was not of God. For He who was glorified by God, how was He not from that God whose name by Him was glorified? Indeed for this purpose the Voice came. Wherefore He says Himself, *"This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes," "not that I may learn by it anything of which I am ignorant, (for I know all that belongs to the Father,) but for your sakes."* For when they said, *"An Angel has spoken unto Him,"* or *"It has thundered,"* and gave not heed to Him, He says, *"it was for your sakes,"* that even so ye might be led to enquire what the words meant. But they, being excited, did not even so enquire, though they heard that the matter related to them. For to one who knew not wherefore it was uttered, the Voice naturally appeared indistinct. *"The Voice came for your sakes."* Do you see that these lowly circumstances take place on their account, not as though the Son needs help?

John 12:31

"Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast down."

What connection has this with, *"I have glorified, and will glorify"*? Much, and closely harmonizing. For when God says, *"I will glorify,"* He shows the manner of the glorifying. What is it? That one should be cast down. But what is, *"the judgment of this world"*? It is as though He said, *"there shall be a tribunal and a retribution."* How and in what way? *"He slew the first man, having found him guilty of sin, (for 'by sin death entered' [Romans 5:12]) but in Me this he found not. Why then did he spring upon Me and give Me over to death? Why did he put into the mind of Judas to destroy Me?"* (Tell me not that it was God's dispensation, for this belongs not to the devil, but His wisdom; for the present let the disposition of that evil one be enquired into.) *"How then is the world judged in Me?"* It shall be said, as if a court of justice were sitting, to Satan, *"Well, you have slain all men, because you found them guilty of sin. But why did you slay Christ? Is it not clear that you did it wrongfully?"* Therefore in Him the whole world shall be avenged. But, that this may be still more clear, I will make it plain by an example. Suppose there is some cruel tyrant, bringing ten thousand evils on all those who fall into his hands. If such a one engaging with a king, or a king's son, slay him unjustly, his death will have power to get revenge for the others also. Suppose there is one who demands payment of his debtors, that he beats them and casts them into prison; then from the same recklessness that he leads to the same dungeon one who owes him nothing: such a man shall suffer punishment for what he has done to the others. For that one shall destroy him.

3. So also it is in the case of the Son; for of those things which the devil has done against us, of these shall the penalty be required by means of what he has dared against Christ. And to show that He implies this, hear what He says; *"Now shall the prince of this world be cast down," "by My Death."*

John 12:32

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

That is, *"even those of the Gentiles."* And that no one may ask, *"How shall he be cast down, if he is stronger even than You are?"* He says, *"He is not stronger; how can he be stronger than One who draws others to Him?"* And He speaks not of the Resurrection, but of what is more than the Resurrection, *"I will draw all men to Myself."* For had He said, *"I shall rise again,"* it was not yet clear that they would believe; but by His saying, *"they shall believe,"* both are proved at once, both this, and also that He must rise again. For had He continued dead, and been a mere man, no one would have believed. *"I will draw all men to Myself."* [John 6:44] How then said He that the Father draws? Because when the Son draws, the Father draws also. He says, *"I will draw them,"* as though they were detained by a tyrant, and unable of themselves alone to approach Him, and to escape the hands of him who keeps hold of them. In another place He calls this *"spoiling; no man can spoil a strong man's goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then spoil his goods."* [Matthew 12:29] This He said to prove His strength, and what there He calls *"spoiling,"* He has here called *"drawing."*

Knowing then these things, let us rouse ourselves, let us glorify God, not by our faith alone, but also by our life, since otherwise it would not be glory, but blasphemy. For God is not so much blasphemed by an impure heathen, as by a corrupt Christian. Wherefore I entreat you to do all that God may be glorified; for, *"Woe,"* it says, *"to that servant by whom the Name of God is blasphemed,"* (and wherever there is a *"woe,"* every punishment and vengeance straightway follows,) *"but blessed is he by whom that Name is glorified."* Let us then not be as in darkness, but avoid

all sins, and especially those which tend to the hurt of others, since by these God is most blasphemed. What pardon shall we have, when, being commanded to give to others, we plunder the property of others? What shall be our hope of salvation? You are punished if you have not fed the hungry; but if you have even stripped one who was clothed, what sort of pardon shall you obtain? These things I will never desist from saying, for they who have not heard today perhaps will hear tomorrow, and they who take no heed tomorrow perhaps will be persuaded the next day; and even if any be so disposed as not to be persuaded, yet for us there will be no account to give of them at the Judgment. Our part we have fulfilled; may we never have cause to be ashamed of our words, nor you to hide your faces, but may all be able to stand with boldness before the judgment-seat of Christ, that we also may be able to rejoice over you, and to have some compensation of our own faults, in your being approved in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory for ever. Amen.

Homily 68 on the Gospel of John

John 12:34

"The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that Christ abides for ever; and how do you say, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

1. Deceit is a thing easily detected, and weak, though it be daubed outside with ten thousand colors. For as those who whitewash decayed walls, cannot by the plastering make them sound, so too those who lie are easily found out, as in fact was the case here with the Jews. For when Christ said to them, *"If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Me; We have heard,"* says one of them, *"out of the Law, that Christ remains forever; and how do you say, that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"* Even they then knew that Christ was some Immortal One, and had life without end. And therefore they also knew what He meant; for often in Scripture the Passion and the Resurrection are mentioned in the same place. Thus Isaiah puts them together, saying, *"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter"* [Isaiah 53:7], and all that follows. David also in the second Psalm, and in many other places, connects these two things. The Patriarch too after saying, *"He lay down, He couched as a lion,"* adds, *"And as a lion's cub, who shall raise Him up?"* [Genesis 49:9] He shows at once the Passion and the Resurrection. But these men when they thought to silence Him, and to show that He was not the Christ, confessed by this very circumstance that the Christ remains forever. And observe their evil dealing; they said not, *"We have heard that Christ neither suffers nor is crucified,"* but that *"He remains forever."* Yet even this which has been

mentioned, would have been no real objection, for the Passion was no hindrance to His Immortality. Hence we may see that they understood many of the doubtful points, and deliberately went wrong. For since He had before spoken about death, when they now heard in this place the, *"be lifted up,"* they guessed that death was referred to. Then they said, *"Who is this Son of Man?"* This too they did deceitfully. *"Think not, I pray,"* says one, *"that we say this concerning you, assert not that we oppose you through enmity, for, lo, we know not concerning whom you speak, and still we declare our opinion."* What then does Christ? To silence them, and to show that the Passion is no impediment to His enduring forever, He says,

John 12:35

"Yet a little while is the light with you."

Signifying that His death was a removal; for the light of the sun is not destroyed, but having retired for a while appears again.

"Walk while you have the light."

Of what season does He here speak? Of the whole present life, or of the time before the Crucifixion? I for my part think of both, for on account of His unspeakable lovingkindness, many even after the Crucifixion believed. And He speaks these things to urge them on to the faith, as He also did before, saying, *"Yet a little while I am with you."* [John 7:33]

"He that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes."

How many things, for instance, even now do the Jews, without knowing what they do, but walking as though they were in darkness? They think that they are going the right way, when they are taking the contrary; keeping the Sabbath, respecting the Law and the observances about meats, yet knowing not whither they walk. Wherefore He said,

John 12:36

"Walk in the light, that you may become children of the light."

That is, *"My children."* Yet in the beginning the Evangelist says, *"Were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God"* [John 1:13]; that is, of the Father; while here Himself is said to beget them; that you may understand that the operation of the Father and the Son is One. *"Jesus having spoken these things,"* departed from them, and did hide Himself.

Why does He now *"hide Himself"*? They took not up stones against Him, nor did they blaspheme Him in any such manner as before; why then did He hide Himself? Walking in men's hearts, He knew that their wrath was fierce, though they said nothing; He knew it boiling and murderous, and waited not till it issued into action, but hid Himself, to allay their ill-will. Observe how the Evangelist has alluded to this feeling; he has immediately added,

John 12:37

"Though He had done so many miracles, they believed not on Him."

2. What *"so many"*? So many as the Evangelist has omitted. And this is clear also from what follows. For when He had retired, and given in, and had come to them again, He speaks with them in a lowly manner, saying, *"He that believes in Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me."* [John 12:44] Observe what He does. He begins with humble and modest expressions, and betakes Himself to the Father; then again He raises His language, and when He sees that they are exasperated, He retires; then He comes to them again, and again begins with words of humility. And where has He done this? Nay, where has He not done it? See, for instance, what He says at the beginning, *"As I hear, I judge."* [John 5:30] Then in a loftier tone, *"As the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, so also the Son quickens whom He will"* [John 5:21]; again, *"I judge you not, there is another that judges."* Then again He retires. Then coming to Galilee, *"Labor not,"* He says, *"for the meat that perishes"* [John 6:27]; and after having said great things of Himself, that He came down from Heaven, that He gives eternal life, He again withdraws Himself. And He comes in the Feast of Tabernacles also, and does the same. And one may see Him continually thus varying His teaching, by His presence, by His absence, by lowly, by high discourses. Which He also did here. *"Though He had done so many miracles,"* it says, *"they believed not on Him."*

John 12:38

"That the saying of Esaias might be fulfilled which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"
And again,

John 12:39-41

"They could not believe," it says, "because that Esaias said, You shall hear with your ears, and not understand. These things he said, when he saw His glory, and spoke of Him."

Here again observe, that the *"because,"* and *"spoke,"* refer not to the cause of their unbelief, but to the event. For it was not *"because"* Isaiah spoke, that they believed not; but because they were not about to believe, that he spoke. Why then does not the Evangelist express it so, instead of making the unbelief proceed from the prophecy, not the prophecy from the unbelief? And farther on he puts this very thing more positively, saying, *"Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said."* He desires hence to establish by many proofs the unerring truth of Scripture, and that what Isaiah foretold fell not out otherwise, but as he said. For lest any one should say, *"Wherefore did Christ come? Knew he not that they would give no heed to him?"* he introduces the Prophets, who knew this also. But He came that they might have no excuse for their sin; for what things the Prophet foretold, he foretold as certainly to be; since if they were not certainly to be, he could not have foretold them; and they were certainly to be, because these men were incurable.

And if, *"they could not,"* is put, instead of, *"they would not,"* do not marvel, for He says also in another place, *"He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."* [Matthew 19:12] So in many places He is wont to term choice, power. Again, *"The world cannot hate you, but Me it hates."* [John 7:7] This one may even see observed in common conversation; as when a man says, *"I cannot love this or that person,"* calling the force of his will, power. And again, *"this or that person cannot be a good man."* And what says the Prophet? *"If the Ethiopian shall change his skin, or the leopard his*

spots, this people also shall be able to do good, having learned evil."

[Jeremiah 13:23, Septuagint] He says not that the doing of virtue is impossible to them, but that because they will not, therefore they cannot. And by what he says the Evangelist means, that it was impossible for the Prophet to lie; yet it was not on that account impossible that they should believe. For it was possible, even had they believed, that he should remain true; since he would not have prophesied these things if they had been about to believe. *"Why then,"* says some one, *"did he not say so?"* Because Scripture has certain idiomatic phrases of this kind, and it is needful to make allowance for its laws.

"The seethings he spoke when he saw His glory." Whose? The Father's. How then does John speak of the Son? And Paul of the Spirit? Not as confounding the Persons, but as showing that the Dignity is one, they say it. For that which is the Father's is the Son's also, and that which is the Son's is the Spirit's. Yet many things God spoke by Angels, and no one says, *"as the Angel spoke,"* but how? *"as God spoke."* Since what has been said by God through the ministry of Angels would be of God; yet not therefore is what is of God, of the Angels also. But in this place John says that the words are the Spirit's.

"And spoke of Him." What spoke he? *"I saw the Lord sitting upon a high throne"* [Isaiah 6:1], and what follows. Therefore he there calls *"glory,"* that vision, the smoke, the hearing unutterable Mysteries, the beholding the Seraphim, the lightning which leaped from the throne, against which those powers could not look. *"And spoke of Him."* What said he? That he heard a voice, saying, *"Whom shall I send? Who shall go? And I said, Here am I, send me. And He said, You shall hear with your ears, and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see, and not perceive."* [Isaiah 6:8-10] For,

John 12:40

"He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, lest they at any time should see with their eyes, and understand with their heart."

Here again is another question, but it is not so if we rightly consider it. For as the sun dazzles the eyes of the weak, not by reason of its proper nature, so it is with those who give not heed to the words of God. Thus, in the case of Pharaoh, He is said to have hardened his heart, and so it is with those who are at all contentious against the words of God. This is a peculiar mode of speech in Scripture, as also the, *"He gave them over unto a reprobate mind"* [Romans 1:28], and the, *"He divided them to the nations,"* that is, allowed, permitted them to go. For the writer does not here introduce God as Himself working these things, but shows that they took place through the wickedness of others. For, when we are abandoned by God, we are given up to the devil, and when so given up, we suffer ten thousand dreadful things. To terrify the hearer, therefore, the writer says, *"He hardened,"* and *"gave over."* For to show that He does not only not give us over, but does not even leave us, except we will it, hear what He says, *"Do not your iniquities separate between Me and you?"* [Isaiah 59:2, Septuagint]. And again, *"They that go far away from You shall perish."* [Psalm 73:27, Septuagint] And Hosea says, *"You have forgotten the law of your God, and I will also forget you"* [Hosea 4:6, Septuagint]; and He says Himself also in the Gospels, *"How often would I have gathered your children— and you would not."* [Luke 13:34] Esaias also again, *"I came, and there was no man; I called, and there was none to hearken."* [Isaiah 50:2, Septuagint] These things He says, showing that we begin the desertion, and become the causes of our perdition; for God not only desires not to leave or to punish us, but even when He punishes, does it

unwillingly; *"I will not,"* He says, *"the death of a sinner, so much as that he should turn and live."* [Ezekiel 18:32, Septuagint] Christ also mourns over the destruction of Jerusalem, as we also do over our friends.

3. Knowing this, let us do all so as not to remove from God, but let us hold fast to the care of our souls, and to the love towards each other; let us not tear our own members, (for this is the act of men insane and beside themselves,) but the more we see any ill disposed, the more let us be kind to them. Since we often see many persons suffering in their bodies from difficult or incurable maladies, and cease not to apply remedies. What is worse than gout in foot or hand? Are we therefore to cut off the limbs? Not at all, but we use every means that the sufferer may enjoy some comfort, since we cannot get rid of the disease. This also let us do in the case of our brethren, and, even though they be diseased incurably, let us continue to tend them, and let us bear one another's burdens. So shall we fulfill the law of Christ, and obtain the promised good things, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 69 on the Gospel of John

John 12:42-43

"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

1. It is necessary for us to avoid alike all the passions which corrupt the soul, but most especially those, which from themselves generate numerous sins. I mean such as the love of money. It is in truth of itself a dreadful malady, but it becomes much more grievous, because it is the root and mother of all mischiefs. Such also is vainglory. See, for instance, how these men were broken off from the faith through their love of honor.

"Many," it says, *"of the chief rulers also believed on Him, but because of the Jews they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue."* As He said also to them before, *"How can you believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?"* [John 5:44] So then they were not rulers, but slaves in the utmost slavery. However, this fear was afterwards done away, for nowhere during the time of the Apostles do we find them possessed by this feeling, since in their time both rulers and priests believed. The grace of the Spirit having come, made them all firmer than adamant. Since therefore this was what hindered them from believing at this time, hear what He says.

John 12:44

"He that believes in Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me."

As though He had said, *"Why fear ye to believe in Me? Faith passes to the Father through Me, as does also unbelief."* See how in every way He shows the unvaryingness of His Essence. He said not, He that believes *"Me,"* lest any should assert that He spoke concerning His words; this might have been said in the case of mere men, for he that believes the Apostles, believes not them, but God. But that you might learn that He speaks here of the belief on His Essence, He said not, *"He that believes My words,"* but, *"He that believes in Me."* *"And wherefore,"* says some one, *"has He nowhere said conversely, He that believes in the Father, believes not on the Father but on Me?"* Because they would have replied, *"Lo, we believe in the Father, but we believe not on you."* Their disposition was as yet too infirm. Anyhow, conversing with the disciples, He did speak thus: *"You believe in the Father, believe also on Me"* [John 14:1]; but seeing that these then were too weak to hear such words, He leads them in another way, showing that it is not possible to believe in the Father, without believing on Him. And that you may not deem that the words are spoken as of man, He adds,

John 12:45

"He that sees Me, sees Him that sent Me."

What then! Is God a body? By no means. The "*seeing*" of which He here speaks is that of the mind, thence showing the Consubstantiality. And what is, "*He that believes in Me*"? It is as though one should say, "*He that takes water from the river, takes it not from the river but from the fountain*"; or rather this image is too weak, when compared with the matter before us.

John 12:46

"I have come a light into the world."

For since the Father is called by this name everywhere both in the Old (Testament) and in the New, Christ uses the same name also; therefore Paul also calls Him, *"Brightness"* [Hebrews 1:3], having learned to do so from this source. And He shows here His close relationship with the Father, and that there is no separation between them, if so be that He says that faith on Him is not on Him, but passes on to the Father. And He called Himself *"light,"* because He delivers from error, and dissolves mental darkness.

John 12:47

"If any man hear not Me, and believe not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world."

2. For lest they should think, that for want of power He passed by the despisers, therefore spoke He the, *"I came not to judge the world."* Then, in order that they might not in this way be made more negligent, when they had learned that *"he that believes is saved, and he that disbelieves is punished,"* see how He has also set before them a fearful court of judgment, by going on to say,

John 12:48

"He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has One to judge him."

"If the Father judges no man, and you are not come to judge the world, who judges him?" "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him."

For since they said, *"He is not from God,"* He says this, that, *"they shall not then be able to say these things, but the words which I have spoken now, shall be in place of an accuser, convicting them, and cutting off all excuse."*

"And the word which I have spoken." What manner of word?

John 12:49

"For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak?"

Surely these things were said for their sakes, that they might have no pretense of excuse. Since if this were not the case, what shall He have more than Isaiah? For he too says the very same thing, *"The Lord God gives me the tongue of the learned, that I should know when I ought to speak a word."* [Isaiah 50:4, Septuagint] What more than Jeremiah? For he too when he was sent was inspired. [Jeremiah 1:9] What then Ezekiel? For he too, after eating the roll, so spoke. [Ezekiel 3:1] Otherwise also, they who were about to hear what He said shall be found to be causes of His knowledge. For if when He was sent, He then received commandment what He should say, you will then argue that before He was sent He knew not. And what more impious than these assertions? If (that is) one take the words of Christ in this sense, and understand not the cause of their lowliness? Yet Paul says, that both he and those who were made disciples knew *"what was that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"* [Romans 12:2], and did the Son not know until He had received commandment? How can this be reasonable? Do you see not that He brings His expressions to an excess of humility, that He may both draw those men over, and silence those who should come after. This is why He utters words befitting a mere man, that even so He may force us to fly the meanness of the sayings, as being conscious that the words belong not to His Nature, but are suited to the infirmity of the hearers.

John 12:50

"And I know that His commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak."

Do you see the humility of the words? For he that has received a commandment is not his own master. Yet He says, *"As the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will."* [John 5:21] Hath He then power to quicken whom He will, and to say what He will has He not power? What He intends then by the words is this; *"The action has not natural possibility, that He should speak one set of words, and I should utter another."* *"And I know that His commandment is life everlasting."* He said this to those that called Him a deceiver, and asserted that He had come to do hurt. But when He says, *"I judge not,"* He shows that He is not the cause of the perdition of these men. By this He all but plainly testifies, when about to remove from, and to be no more with, them, that *"I converse with you, speaking nothing as of Myself, but all as from the Father."* And for this cause He confined His discourse to them to humble expressions, that He might say, *"Even until the end did I utter this, My last word, to them."* What word was that? *"As the Father said unto Me, so I speak."* *"Had I been opposed to God I should have said the contrary, that I speak nothing of what is pleasing to God, so as to attract the honor to Myself, but now I have so referred all things to Him, as to call nothing My own. Why then do ye not believe Me when I say that 'I have received a commandment,' and when I so vehemently remove your evil suspicion respecting rivalry? For as it is impossible for those who have received a commandment to do or say anything but what their senders wish, as long as they fulfill the commandment, and do not forge anything; so neither is it possible for Me to say or do anything except as My Father wills. For what I*

do He does, because He is with Me, and 'the Father has not left Me alone.'" [John 8:29] Do you see how everywhere He shows Himself connected with Him who begot Him, and that there is no separation? For when He says, "*I am not come of Myself,*" He says it not, as depriving Himself of power, but as taking away all alienation or opposition. For if men are masters of themselves, much more the Only-begotten Son. And to show that this is true, hear what Paul says, "*He emptied Himself, and gave Himself for us.*" [Philippians 2:7] But, as I said, a terrible thing is vainglory, very terrible [Ephesians 5:2]; for this made these men not to believe, and others to believe ill, so that the things which were said for the sake of those men, through lovingkindness, they turned to impiety.

3. Let us then ever flee this monster: various and manifold it is, and everywhere sheds its peculiar venom, in wealth, in luxury, in beauty of person. Through this we everywhere go beyond needful use; through this arises extravagance in garments, and a great swarm of domestics; through this the needful use is every where despised, in our houses, our garments, our table; and extravagance prevails. Will you enjoy glory? Do almsdeeds, then shall Angels praise you, then shall God receive you. Now the admiration goes no farther than the goldsmiths and weavers, and thou departest without a crown, often seeing that you receive curses. But if you put not these things about your body, but expend them in feeding the poor, great will be the applause from all sides, great the praise. Then shall you have them, when you give them to others; when you keep them to yourself, then you have them not. For a house is a faithless treasury, but a sure treasury are the hands of the poor. Why do you adorn your body, while your soul is neglected, possessed by uncleanness? Why do you not bestow so much thought on your soul, as your body? You ought to bestow greater; but anyhow, beloved, we ought to bestow equal care upon it. For tell me, if any

one asked you which you would choose, that your body should be fresh and of good habit and surpassing in beauty, and wear mean raiment, or having the body deformed and full of diseases, to wear gold and finery; would you not much prefer to have beauty depending on the nature of your person, than on the raiment with which you are clothed? And will you choose this in the case of your body, but the contrary in the case of your soul; and, when you have that ugly and unsightly and black, do you think to gain anything from golden ornaments? What madness is this! Shift this adorning within, put these necklaces about your soul. The things that are put about your body help neither to its health nor to its beauty, for it will not make black white, nor what is ugly either beautiful or good looking. But if you put them about your soul, you shall soon make it white instead of black, instead of ugly and unsightly, you shall make it beautiful and well-favored. The words are not mine, but those of the Lord Himself, who says, "*Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow*" [Isaiah 1:18, Septuagint]; and, "*Give alms— and all things shall be clean unto you*" [Luke 11:41]; and by such a disposition you shall beautify not yourself only, but your husband. For they if they see you putting off these outward ornaments, will have no great need of expense, and not having it, they will abstain from all covetousness, and will be more inclined to give alms, and you too will be able boldly to give them fitting counsel. At present you are deprived of all such authority. For with what mouth will you speak of these things? With what eyes will you look your husbands in the face, asking money for alms, when you spend most upon the covering of your bodies? Then will you be able boldly to speak with your husband concerning almsgiving, when you lay aside your ornaments of gold. Even if you accomplish nothing, you have fulfilled all your part; but I should rather say, that it is impossible that the wife should not gain the husband, when she

speaks by the very actions. *"For what do you know, O woman, whether you shall save your husband?"* [1 Corinthians 7:16] As then now you shall give account both for yourself and for him, so if you put off all this vanity you shall have a double crown, wearing your crown and triumphing with your husband through those unalloyed ages, and enjoying the everlasting good things, which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 70 on the Gospel of John

John 13:1

"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

1. *"Be imitators of me,"* said Paul, *"as I also am of Christ."* [1 Corinthians 11:1] For on this account He took also flesh of our substance, that by means of it He might teach us virtue. For (*"God sending His own Son) in the likeness of sinful flesh,"* it says, *"and for sin condemned sin in the flesh."* [Romans 8:3] And Christ Himself says, *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."* [Matthew 11:29] And this He taught, not by words alone, but by actions also. For they called Him a Samaritan, and one that had a devil, and a deceiver, and cast stones at Him; and at one time the Pharisees sent servants to take Him, at another they sent plotters against Him; and they continued also insulting Him themselves, and that when they had no fault to find, but were even being continually benefited. Still after such conduct He ceases not to do well to them both by words and deeds. And, when a certain domestic smote Him on the face, He said, *"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why do you smite Me?"* [John 18:23] But this was to those who hated and plotted against Him. Let us see also what He does now towards the disciples, or rather what actions He now exhibits towards the traitor. The man whom most of all there was reason to hate, because being a disciple, having shared the table and the salt, having seen the miracles and been deemed worthy of such great things, he acted more grievously than any, not stoning indeed, nor insulting Him,

but betraying and giving Him up, observe in how friendly sort He receives this man, washing his feet; for even in this way He desired to restrain him from that wickedness. Yet it was in His power, had He willed it, to have withered him like the fig-tree, to have cut him in two as He rent the rocks, to have cleft him asunder like the veil; but He would not lead him away from his design by compulsion, but by choice. Wherefore He washed his feet; and not even by this was that wretched and miserable man shamed.

"Before the feast of the Passover," it says, *"Jesus knowing that His hour had come."* Not then *"knowing,"* but (it means) that He did what He did having *"known"* long ago. *"That He should depart."* Magnificently the Evangelist calls His death, *"departure."* *"Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end."* Do you see how when about to leave them He shows greater love? For the, *"having loved, He loved them unto the end,"* shows that he omitted nothing of the things which it was likely that one who earnestly loved would do. Why, then did He not this from the beginning? He works the greatest things last, so as to render more intense their attachment, and to lay up for them beforehand much comfort, against the terrible things that were about to fall on them. St. John calls them *"His own,"* in respect of personal attachment, since he calls others also *"His own,"* in respect of the work of creation; as when he says, *"His own received Him not."* [John 1:11] But what means, *"which were in the world"*? Because the dead also were *"His own,"* Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the men of that sort, but they were not in the world. Do you see that He is the God both of the Old and New (Testament)? But what means, *"He loved them unto the end"*? It stands for, *"He continued loving them unceasingly,"* and this the Evangelist mentions as a sure proof of great affection. Elsewhere indeed He spoke of another (proof), the laying down life for His friends; but that had not yet come to pass. And wherefore did He this thing *"now"*?

Because it was far more wonderful at a time when He appeared more glorious in the sight of all men. Besides, He left them no small consolation now that He was about to depart, for since they were going to be greatly grieved, He by these means introduces also comfort to the grief.

John 13:2

"And supper being ended, the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him."

This the Evangelist has said amazed, showing that Jesus washed the man who had already chosen to betray Him. This also proves his great wickedness, that not even the having shared the salt restrained him, (a thing which is most able to restrain wickedness;) not the fact that even up to the last day, his Master continued to bear with him.

John 13:3

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God, and went to God."

Here the Evangelist says, even wondering, that one so great, so very great, who came from God and went to Him, who rules over all, did this thing, and disdained not even so to undertake such an action. And by the *"giving over,"* methinks St. John means the salvation of the faithful. For when He says, *"All things are given over to Me of My Father"* [Matthew 11:27], He speaks of this kind of giving over; as also in another place He says, *"Yours they were, and You gave them Me"* [John 17:6]; and again, *"No man can come unto Me except the Father draw him"* [John 6:44]; and, *"Except it be given him from heaven."* [John 3:27] The Evangelist then either means this, or that Christ would be nothing lessened by this action, since He came from God, and went to God, and possessed all things. But when you hear of *"giving over,"* understand it in no human sense, for it shows how He honors the Father, and His unanimity with Him. For as the Father gives over to Him, so He to the Father. And this Paul declares, saying, *"When He shall have given over the kingdom to God, even the Father."* [1 Corinthians 15:24] But St. John has said it here in a more human sense, showing His great care for them, and declaring His unutterable love, that He now cared for them as for His own; teaching them the mother of all good, even humblemindedness, which He said was both the beginning and the end of virtue. And not without a reason is added the, *"He came from God and went to God"*: but that we may learn that He did what was worthy of One who came thence and went there, trampling down all pride.

John 13:4

"And having risen from supper, and laid aside His garments."

2. Observe how not by the washing only, but in another way also He exhibits humility. For it was not before reclining, but after they had all sat down, then He arose. In the next place, He does not merely wash them, but does so, putting off His garments. And He did not even stop here, but girded Himself with a towel. Nor was He satisfied with this, but Himself filled (the basin), and did not bid another fill it; He did all these things Himself, showing by all that we must do such things, when we are engaged in well doing, not merely for form's sake, but with all zeal. Now He seems to me to have washed the feet of the traitor first from its saying,

John 13:5

"He began to wash the disciples' feet," and adding,

John 13:6

"Then comes He to Simon Peter and Peter says unto Him, Lord, do You wash my feet?"

"With those hands," he says, *"with which You have opened eyes, and cleansed lepers, and raised the dead?"* For this (question) is very emphatic; wherefore He needed not to have said any more than the, *"Thou"*; for even of itself this would have sufficed to convey the whole. Some one might reasonably enquire, how none of the others forbade Him, but Peter only, which was a mark of no slight love and reverence. What then is the cause? He seems to me to have washed the traitor first, then to have come to Peter, and that the others were afterwards instructed from his case. That He washed some one other before him is clear from its saying, *"But when He came to Peter."* Yet the Evangelist is not a vehement accuser, for the *"began,"* is the expression of one implying this. And even if Peter were the first, yet it is probable that the traitor, being a forward person, had reclined even before the chief. For by another circumstance also his forwardness is shown, when He dips with his Master in the dish, and being convicted, feels no compunction; while Peter being rebuked but once on a former occasion, and for words which he spoke from loving affection, was so abashed, that being even distressed and trembling, he begged another to ask a question. But Judas, though continually convicted, felt not. [John 13:24] When therefore He came to Peter, he says unto Him, *"Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?"*

John 13:7

"He says unto him, What I do you know not now, but you shall know here after."

That is *"you shall know how great is the gain from this, the profit of the lesson, and how it is able to guide us into all humblemindedness."* What then does Peter? He still hinders Him, and says,

John 13:8

"You shall never wash my feet." "What doest thou, Peter? Rememberest thou not those former words? Did you not say, 'Be merciful to Yourself,' and heardest thou not in return, 'Get behind Me, Satan'? [Matthew 16:22] Are you not even so sobered, but are you yet vehement?" "Yea," he says, "for what is being done is a great matter, and full of amazement." Since then he did this from exceeding love, Christ in turn subdues him by the same; and as there He effected this by sharply rebuking him, and saying, "You are an offense unto Me," so here also by saying,

"If I wash you not, you have no part with Me." What then says that hot and burning one?

John 13:9

"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

Vehement in deprecation, he becomes yet more vehement in acquiescence; but both from love. For why said He not wherefore He did this, instead of adding a threat? Because Peter would not have been persuaded. For had He said, *"Suffer it, for by this I persuade you to be humbleminded,"* Peter would have promised it ten thousand times, in order that his Master might not do this thing. But now what says He? He speaks of that which Peter most feared and dreaded, the being separated from Him; for it is he who continually asks, *"Where are You going?"* [John 13:36] Wherefore also he said, *"I will give even my life for You."* [John 13:37] And if, after hearing, *"What I do you know not now, but you shall know hereafter,"* he still persisted, much more would he have done so had he learned (the meaning of the action). Therefore said He, *"but you shall know hereafter,"* as being aware, that should he learn it immediately he would still resist. And Peter said not, *"Tell me, that I may suffer You,"* but (which was much more vehement) he did not even endure to learn, but withstands Him, saying, *"You shall never wash my feet."* But as soon as He threatened, he straightway relaxed his tone. But what means, *"You shall know after this?"* *"After this?"* When? *"When in My Name you shall have cast out devils; when you shall have seen Me taken up into Heaven, when you shall have learned from the Spirit that I sit on His right hand, then shall you understand what is being done now."* What then says Christ? When Peter said, *"not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,"* He replies,

John 13:10-11

"He that is washed, needs not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and you are clean, but not all. For He knew who should betray Him."

"And if they are clean, why washes He their feet?" That we may learn to be modest. On which account He came not to any other part of the body, but to that which is considered more dishonorable than the rest. But what is, *"He that is washed"*? It is instead of, *"he that is clean."* Were they then clean, who had not yet been delivered from their sins, nor deemed worthy of the Spirit, since sin still had the mastery, the handwriting of the curse still remaining, the victim not having yet been offered? How then calls He them *"clean"*? That you may not deem them clean, as delivered from their sins, He adds, Behold, *"you are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you."* That is, *"In this way you are so far clean; you have received the light, you have been freed from Jewish error. For the Prophet also says, 'Wash you, make you clean, put away the wickedness from your souls' [Isaiah 1:16, Septuagint]; so that such a one is washed and is clean."* Since then these men had cast away all wickedness from their souls, and had companied with Him with a pure mind, therefore He says according to the word of the Prophet, *"he that is washed is clean already."* For in that place also It means not the *"washing"* of water, practiced by the Jews; but the cleansing of the conscience.

3. Be we then also clean; learn we to do well. But what is *"well"*? *"Judge for the fatherless, plead for the widow; and come, let us reason together, says the Lord."* [Isaiah 1:7] There is frequent mention in the Scriptures of widows and orphans, but we make no account of this. Yet consider how great is the reward. *"Though,"* it says, *"your sins be as scarlet, I will whiten them as snow; though they be red like crimson, I will*

whiten them as wool." For a widow is an unprotected being, therefore He takes much care for her. For they, when it is even in their power to contract a second marriage, endure the hardships of widowhood through fear of God. Let us then all, both men and women, stretch forth our hands to them, that we may never undergo the sorrows of widow-hood; or if we should have to undergo them, let us lay up a great store of kindness for ourselves. Not small is the power of the widow's tears, it is able to open heaven itself. Let us not then trample on them, nor make their calamity worse, but assist them by every means. If so we do, we shall put around ourselves much safety, both in the present life, and in that which is to come. For not here alone, but there also will they be our defenders, cutting away most of our sins by reason of our beneficence towards them, and causing us to stand boldly before the judgment-seat of Christ. Which may it come to pass that we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 71 on the Gospel of John

John 13:1

"And He took His garments, and having sat down again, said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?" And what follows.

1. A grievous thing, beloved, a grievous thing it is to come to the depths of wickedness; for then the soul becomes hard to be restored. Wherefore we should use every exertion not to be taken at all; since it is easier not to fall in, than having fallen to recover one's self. Observe, for instance, when Judas had thrown himself into sin, how great assistance he enjoyed, yet not even so was he raised. Christ said to him, *"One of you is a devil"* [John 6:71]; He said, *"Not all believe"* [John 6:65]; He said, *"I speak not of all,"* and, *"I know whom I have chosen"* [John 13:18]; and not one of these sayings does he feel. Now when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and sat down, He said, *"Know ye what I have done unto you?"* He no longer addresses Himself to Peter only, but to them all.

John 13:13

"You call Me Lord and Master, and you say well, for so I am."

"You call Me." He takes to Him their judgment, and then that the words may not be thought to be words of their kindness, He adds, *"for so I am."* By introducing a saying of theirs, He makes it not offensive, and by confirming it Himself when introduced from them, unsuspected. *"For so I am,"* He says. Do you see how when He converses with the disciples, He speaks revealing more what belongs unto Himself? As He says, *"Call no man master on earth, for One is your guide"* [Matthew 23:8-9], so also, *"And call no man father upon earth."* But the *"one"* and *"one"* is spoken not of the Father only, but of Himself also. For had He spoken excluding Himself, how says He, *"That ye may become the children of the light"*? And again, if He called the Father only, *"Master,"* how says He, *"For so I am"*; and again, *"For one is your Guide, even Christ"*? [John 12:26]

John 13:14-15

"If I then," He says, "your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

And yet it is not the same thing, for He is Lord and Master, but you are fellow-servants one of another. What means then the *"as"*? *"With the same zeal."* For on this account He takes instances from greater actions that we may, if so be, perform the less. Thus schoolmasters write the letters for children very beautifully, that they may come to imitate them though but in an inferior manner. Where now are they who spit on their fellow-servants? Where now they who demand honors? Christ washed the feet of the traitor, the sacrilegious, the thief, and that close to the time of the betrayal, and incurable as he was, made him a partaker of His table; and are you highminded, and do you draw up your eyebrows? *"Let us then wash one another's feet,"* says some one, *"then we must wash those of our domestics."* And what great thing if we do wash even those of our domestics? In our case *"slave"* and *"free"* is a difference of words; but there an actual reality. For by nature He was Lord and we servants, yet even this He refused not at this time to do. But now it is matter for contentment if we do not treat free men as bondmen, as slaves bought with money. And what shall we say in that day, if after receiving proofs of such forbearance, we ourselves do not imitate them at all, but take the contrary part, being in diametrical opposition, lifted up, and not discharging the debt? For God has made us debtors one to another, having first so done Himself, and has made us debtors of a less amount. For He was our Lord, but we do it, if we do it at all, to our fellow-servants, a thing which He Himself implied by saying, *"If I then your Lord and Master— so also do ye."* It would indeed naturally

have followed to say, *"How much more should ye servants,"* but He left this to the conscience of the hearers.

2. But why has He done this *"now"*? They were for the future to enjoy, some greater, some less honor. In order then that they may not exalt themselves one above the other, and say as they did before, *"Who is the greatest"* [Matthew 18:1], nor be angry one against the other, He takes down the high thoughts of them all, by saying, that *"although you may be very great, you ought to have no high thoughts towards your brother."* And He mentioned not the greater action, that *"if I have washed the feet of the traitor, what great matter if you one another's?"* but having exemplified this by deeds, He then left it to the judgment of the spectators. Therefore He said, *"Whosoever shall do and teach, the same shall be called great"* [Matthew 5:19]; for this is *"to teach"* a thing, actually to do it. What pride should not this remove? What kind of folly and insolence should it not annihilate! He who sits upon the Cherubim washed the feet of the traitor, and do you, O man, you that are earth and ashes and cinders and dust, do you exalt yourself, and are you highminded? And how great a hell would you not deserve? If then you desire a high state of mind, come, I will show you the way to it; for thou dost not even know what it is. The man then who gives heed to the present things as being great, is of a mean soul; so that there can neither be humility without greatness of soul, nor conceit except from littleness of soul. For as little children are eager for trifles, gaping upon balls and hoops and dice, but cannot even form an idea of important matters; so in this case, one who is truly wise, will deem present things as nothing, (so that he will neither choose to acquire them himself, nor to receive them from others;) but he who is not of such a character will be affected in a contrary way, intent upon cobwebs and shadows and dreams of things less substantial than these.

John 13:16-18

"Verily I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. I speak not of you all—but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me."

What He said before, this He says here also, to shame them; *"For if the servant is not greater than his master, nor he that is sent greater than him that sent him, and these things have been done by Me, much more ought they to be done by you."* Then, lest any one should say, *"Why now do You say these things? Do we not already know them?"* He adds this very thing, *"I speak not to you as not knowing, but that by your actions ye may show forth the things spoken of."* For *"to know,"* belongs to all; but *"to do,"* not to all. On this account He said, *"Blessed are you if you do them";* and on this account I continually and ever say the same to you, although ye know it, that I may set you on the work. Since even Jews *"know,"* but yet they are not *"blessed";* for they do not what they know.

"I speak not," He says, *"of you all."* O what forbearance! Not yet does He convict the traitor, but veils the matter, hence giving him room for repentance. He convicts and yet does not convict him when He says thus, *"He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me."* It seems to me that the, *"The servant is not greater than his lord,"* was uttered for this purpose also, that if any persons should at any time suffer harm either from domestics or from any of the meaner sort, they should not be offended; looking to the instance of Judas, who having enjoyed ten thousand good things, repaid his Benefactor with the contrary. On this account He added, *"He that eats bread with Me,"* and letting pass all the rest, He has put that which was most fitted to restrain and shame him; *"he who was fed by Me,"*

He says, *"and who shared My table."* And He spoke the words, to instruct them to benefit those who did evil to them, even though such persons should continue incurable.

But having said, *"I speak not of you all,"* in order not to attach fear to more than one, He at last separates the traitor, speaking thus; *"He that eats bread with Me."* For the, *"not of you all,"* does not direct the words to any single one, therefore He added, *"He that eats bread with Me";* showing to that wretched one that He was not seized in ignorance, but even with full knowledge; a thing which of itself was most of all fitted to restrain him. And He said not, *"betrays Me,"* but, *"has lifted up his heel against Me,"* desiring to represent the deceit, the treachery, the secrecy of the plot.

3. These things are written that we bear not malice towards those who injure us; but rebuke them and weep for them; for the fit subjects of weeping are not they who suffer, but they who do the wrong. The grasping man, the false accuser, and whoso works any other evil thing, do themselves the greatest injury, and us the greatest good, if we do not avenge ourselves. Such a case as this: some one has robbed you; have you given thanks for the injury, and glorified God? By that thanksgiving you have gained ten thousand rewards, just as he has gathered for himself fire unspeakable. But if any one say, *"How then, if I 'could' not defend myself against him who wronged me, being weaker?"* I would say this, that you could have put into action the being discontented, the being impatient, (for these things are in our power,) the praying against him, who grieved you, the uttering ten thousand curses against him, the speaking ill of him to every one. He therefore who has not done these things shall even be rewarded for not defending himself, since it is clear that even if he had had the power, he would not have done it. The injured man uses any weapon that comes to hand, when, being little of soul, he defends himself against one who has

injured him, by curses, by abuse, by plotting. Do thou then not only not do these things, but even pray for him; for if you do them not, but wilt even pray for him, you have become like God. For, "*pray,*" it says, "*for them, that despitefully use you—that you may be like your Father which is in Heaven.*" [Matthew 5:44-45] Do you see how we are the greatest gainers from the insolence of others? Nothing so delights God, as the not returning evil for evil? But what say I? Not returning evil for evil? Surely we are enjoined to return the opposite, benefits, prayers. Wherefore Christ also repaid him who was about to betray Him with everything opposite. He washed his feet, convicted him secretly, rebuked him sparingly, tended him, allowed him to share His table and His kiss, and not even by these was he made better; nevertheless (Christ) continued doing His own part.

But come, let us teach you even from the example of servants, and (to make the lesson stronger) those in the Old (Testament), that you may know that we have no ground of defense when we remember a wrong. Will you then that I tell you of Moses, or shall we go yet farther back? For the more ancient the instances that can be pointed out, the more are we surpassed. "*Why so?*" Because virtue was then more difficult. Those men had no written precepts, no patterns of living, but their nature fought, unarmed, by itself, and was forced to float in all directions unballasted. Wherefore also when praising Noah, God called him not simply perfect, but added, "*in his generation*" [Genesis 7:1]; signifying, "*at that time,*" when there were many hindrances, since many others shone after him, yet will he have nothing less than they; for in his own time he was perfect. Who then before Moses was patient? The blessed and noble Joseph, who having shone by his chastity, shone no less by his long suffering. He was sold when he had done no wrong, but was waiting on others, and serving, and performing all the duties of domestics. They brought against him an evil accusation, and he did not

defend himself, though he had his father on his side. Nay, he even went to carry food to them in the desert, and when he found them not, he did not despair or turn back, (yet he had an excuse for doing so had he chosen,) but remained near the wild beasts and those savage men, preserving the feeling of a true brother. Again, when he dwelt in the prison house, and was asked the cause, he spoke no evil of them, but only, "*I have done nothing,*" and, "*I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews*"; and after this again, when he was made lord, he nourished them, and delivered them from ten thousand dangers. If we be sober, the wickedness of our neighbor is not strong enough to cast us out of our own virtue. But those others were not like him; they both stripped him, and endeavored to kill him, and reproach him with his dream, though they had even received their meat from him, and planned to deprive him of life and of liberty. And they ate, and cared not for their brother lying naked in the pit. What could be worse than such brutality? Were they not worse than any number of murderers? And after this, having drawn him up, they gave him over to ten thousand deaths, selling him to barbarian and savage men, who were on their journey to barbarians. Yet he, when he became ruler, not only remitted them their punishment, but even acquitted them, as far at least as relating to himself, of their sin, calling what had been done a dispensation of God, not any wickedness of theirs; and the things which he did against them he did not as remembering evil, but in all these he dissembled, for his brother's sake. After this, when he saw them clinging to him, he straightway threw away the mask, and wept aloud, and embraced them, as though he had received the greatest benefits, he, who formerly was made away with by them, and he brought them all down into Egypt, and repaid them with ten thousand benefits. What excuse then shall we have, if after the Law, and after grace, and after the addition of so much heavenly wisdom, we do not even strive to rival him who lived

before grace and before the Law? Who shall deliver us from punishment? For there is nothing, there is nothing more grievous than the remembrance of injuries. And this the man has showed that owed ten thousand talents; from whom payment was at one time not demanded, at another time again demanded; not demanded, because of the lovingkindness of God; but demanded, because of his own wickedness, and because of his malice toward his fellow-servant. Knowing all which things, let us forgive our neighbors their trespasses, and repay them by deeds of an opposite kind, that we too may obtain mercy from God, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 72 on the Gospel of John

John 13:20

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receives whomsoever I send, receives Me: and He that receives Me, receives Him that sent Me."

1. Great is the recompense of care bestowed upon the servants of God, and of itself it yields to us its fruits. For, *"he that receives you,"* it says, *"receives Me, and he that receives Me, receives Him that sent Me."*

[Matthew 10:40] Now what can be equal to the receiving Christ and His Father? But what kind of connection has this with what was said before? What has it in common with that which He had said, *"If you do these things happy are you,"* to add, *"He that receives you"*? A close connection, and very harmonious. Observe how. When they were about to go forth and to suffer many dreadful things, He comforts them in two ways; one derived from Himself, the other derived from others. *"For if,"* He says, *"you are truly wise, ever keeping Me in mind, and bearing about all both what I said, and what I did, you will easily endure terrible things. And not in this way only, but also from your enjoying great attention from all men."* The first point He declared when He said, *"If you do these things happy are you"*; the second when He said, *"He that receives you receives Me."* For He opened the houses of all men to them, so that both from the sound wisdom of their manners, and the zeal of those who would tend them, they might have twofold comfort. Then when He had given these directions to them as to men about to run through all the world, reflecting that the traitor was deprived of both of these things, and would enjoy neither of them, neither patience in toils, nor the service of kind entertainers, He again was troubled.

And the Evangelist to signify this besides, and to show that it was on his account that He was troubled, adds,

John 13:21

"When Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me."

Again He brings fear on all by not mentioning (the traitor) by name.

John 13:22

"But they are in doubt"; although conscious to themselves of nothing evil; but they deemed the declaration of Christ more to be believed than their own thoughts. Wherefore they "looked one on another."

By laying the whole upon one, Jesus would have cut short their fear, but by adding, *"one of you,"* He troubled all. What then? The rest looked upon one another; but the ever fervent Peter *"beckons"* to John. Since he had been before rebuked, and when Christ desired to wash him would have hindered Him, and since he is everywhere found moved indeed by love, yet blamed; being on this account afraid, he neither kept quiet, nor did he speak, but wished to gain information by means of John. But it is a question worth asking, why when all were distressed, and trembling, when their leader was afraid, John like one at ease leans on Jesus' bosom, and not only leans, but even (lies) on His breast? Nor is this the only thing worthy of enquiry, but that also which follows. What is that? What he says of himself, *"Whom Jesus loved."* Why did no one else say this of himself? Yet the others were loved too. But he more than any. And if no other has said this about him, but he about himself, it is nothing wonderful. Paul too does the same, when occasion calls, saying thus, *"I knew a man fourteen years ago";* yet in fact he has gone through other no trifling praises of himself. Seems it to you a small thing that, when he had heard, *"Follow Me,"* he straightway left his nets, and his father, and followed; and that Christ took him alone with Peter into the mountain, [Matthew 17:1,] and another time again when He went into a house? [Luke 8:51] What high praise also has he himself passed on Peter without concealment, telling us that Christ said, *"Peter, do you love Me more than these?"* [Luke 21:15], and everywhere he shows him warm, and nobly disposed towards himself; for instance, when he said,

"Lord, and what shall this man do?" he spoke from great love. But why did no other say (this) concerning him? Because he would not himself have said it, unless he had come to this passage. For if after telling us that Peter beckoned to John to ask, he had added nothing more, he would have caused considerable doubt, and have compelled us to enquire into the reason. In order therefore himself to solve this difficulty, he says, *"He lay on the bosom of Jesus."* Do you think that you have learned a little thing when you have heard that *"he lay,"* and that their Master allowed such boldness to them? If you desire to know the cause of this, the action was of love; wherefore he says, *"Whom Jesus loved."* I suppose also that John does this for another reason, as wishing to show that he was exempt from the charge and so he speaks openly and is confident. Again, why did he use these words, not at any other point of time, but only when the chief of the Apostles beckoned? That you might not deem that Peter beckoned to him as being greater, he says that the thing took place because of the great love (which Jesus bore him). But why does he even lie on His bosom? They had not as yet formed any high surmises concerning Him; besides, in this way He calmed their despondency; for it is probable that at this time their faces were overclouded. If they were troubled in their souls, much more would they be so in their countenances. Soothing them therefore by word and by the question, He makes a way beforehand, and allows him to lean on His breast. Observe too his modesty; he mentions not his own name, but, *"whom He loved."* As also Paul, when he said, *"I knew a man about fourteen years ago."* Now for the first time Jesus convicted the traitor, but not even now by name; but how?

John 13:26

"He it is, to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it."

Even the manner (of the rebuke) was calculated to put him to shame. He respected not the table, though he shared the bread; be it so; but the receiving the sop from His own hand, whom would not that have won over? Yet him it won not.

John 13:27

"Then Satan entered into him."

Laughing at him for his shamelessness. As long as he belonged to the band of disciples he dared not spring upon him, but attacked him from without; but when Christ made him manifest and separated him, then he sprang upon him without fear. It was not fitting to keep within one of such a character, and who so long had remained incorrigible. Wherefore He henceforth cast him out, and then that other seized him when cut off, and he leaving them went forth by night.

"Jesus says unto him, Friend, that you do, do quickly."

John 13:28

"Now no man at the table knew with what intent He spoke this unto him."

3. Wonderful insensibility! How could it be that he was neither softened nor shamed; but rendered yet more shameless, *"went out."* The *"do quickly,"* is not the expression of one commanding, nor advising, but of one reproaching, and showing him that He desired to correct him, but that since he was incorrigible, He let him go. And this, the Evangelist says, *"no man of those that sat at the table knew."* Some one may perhaps find here a considerable difficulty, if, when the disciples had asked, *"Who is it?"* and He had answered, *"He to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it,"* they did not even so understand; unless indeed He spoke it secretly, so that no man should hear. For John on this very account, leaning by His breast, asked Him almost close to His ear, so that the traitor might not be made manifest; and Christ answered in like manner, so that not even then did He discover him. And though He spoke emphatically, *"Friend, that you do, do quickly,"* even so they understood not. But he spoke thus to show that the things were true which had been said by Him to the Jews concerning His death. For He had said to them, *"I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again":* and, *"No man takes it from Me."* [John 10:18] As long then as He would retain it, no man was able (to take it); but when He resigned it, then the action became easy. All this He implied when He said, *"That you do, do quickly."* Yet not even then did He expose him, for perhaps the others might have torn him in pieces, or Peter might have killed him. On this account *"no man at the table knew."* Not even John? Not even he: for he could not have expected that a disciple would arrive at such a pitch of wickedness. For since they were far from such iniquity themselves,

they could not suspect such things concerning others. As before He had told them, *"I speak not of you all"* [John 13:18], yet did not reveal the person; so here, they thought that it was said concerning some other matter.

"It was night," says the Evangelist, when he went out. *"Why tellest thou me the time?"* That you may learn his forwardness, that not even the time restrained him from his purpose. Yet not even did this make him quite manifest, for the others were at this time in confusion, occupied by fear and great distress, and they knew not the true reason of what had been said but supposed that He spoke thus, in order that Judas might give somewhat to the poor. For He cared greatly for the poor, teaching us also to bestow much diligence on this thing. But they thought this, not without a cause, but *"because he had the bag."* Yet no one appears to have brought money to Him; that the female disciples nourished Him of their substance, it has said, but this it has nowhere intimated. [Luke 8:3] But how did He who bade His disciples bear neither scrip, nor money, nor staff, Himself bear a bag to minister to the poor? That you may learn, that it behooves even him who is exceedingly needy and crucified, to be very careful on this point. For many things He did in the way of dispensation for our instruction. The disciples then thought that He said this, that Judas should give something to the poor; and not even this shamed him, His not being willing even to the last day to make him a public example. We too ought to do the like, and not parade the sins of our companions, though they be incurable. For even after this He gave a kiss to the man who came to betray Him, and endured, such an action as that was, and then proceeded to a thing of far greater daring, the Cross itself, to the death of shame, and there again He manifested His lovingkindness. And here He calls it *"glory,"* showing us that there is nothing so shameful and reproachful which makes not brighter him who

goes to it, if it be done according to the will of God. At least after the going forth of Judas to the betraying, He says,

John 13:31

"Now is the Son of Man glorified."

In this way rousing the dejected thoughts of the disciples, and persuading them not only not to despond, but even to rejoice. On this account He rebuked Peter at the first, because for one who has been in death to overcome death, is great glory. And this is what He said of Himself, *"When I am lifted up, then you shall know that I Am"* [John 8:28]; and again, *"Destroy this Temple"* [John 2:19]; and again, *"No sign shall be given unto you but the sign of Jonas."* [Matthew 12:39] For how can it be otherwise than great glory, the being able even after death to do greater things than before death? For in order that the Resurrection might be believed, the disciples did work greater things. But unless He had lived, and had been God, how could these men have wrought such things in His Name?

Ver. 32 . *"And God shall glorify Him."*

What is, *"And God shall glorify Him in Himself"*? It is *"by means of Himself, not by means of another."*

"And shall straightway glorify Him."

4. That is, *"simultaneously with the Cross."* *"For it will not be after much time,"* He says, *"nor will He wait for the distant season of the Resurrection, nor will He then show Him glorious, but straightway on the Cross itself His glories shall appear."* And so the sun was darkened, the rocks rent; the veil of the temple was parted asunder, many bodies of saints that slept arose, the tomb had its seals, the guards sat by, and while a stone lay over the Body the Body rose; forty days passed by, and the Gift of the Spirit came, and they all straightway preached Him. This is, *"shall glorify*

Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him"; not by Angels or Archangels, not by any other power, but by Himself. But how did He also glorify Him by Himself? By doing all for the glory of the Son. Yet the Son did all. Do you see that He refers to the Father the things done by Himself?

Ver. 33 . *"Little children, yet a little while I am with you— and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you."*

He now begins words of sorrow after the supper. For when Judas went forth it was no longer evening, but night. But since they were about to come shortly, it was necessary to set all things before the disciples, that they might have them in remembrance; or rather, the Spirit recalled all to their minds. For it is likely that they would forget many things, as hearing for the first time, and being about to undergo such temptations. Men who were weighed down to sleep, (as another Evangelist says, [Luke 22:45]) who were possessed by despondency, as Christ says Himself, *"Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your hearts"* [John 16:6], how could they retain all these things exactly? Why then were they spoken? It became no little gain to them with respect to their opinion of Christ, that in after times when reminded they certainly knew that they had long ago heard these things from Christ. But wherefore does He first cast down their souls, saying, *"Yet a little while I am with you"*? *"To the Jews indeed it was said with reason, but why do You place us in just the same class with those obstinate ones?"* He by no means did so. *"Why then said He, 'As I said to the Jews'?"* He reminded them that He did not now, because troubles were upon them, warn them of these things, but that He had foreknown them from the first, and that they were witnesses who had heard that He had said these things to the Jews. Wherefore He added also the word, *"little children,"* that when they heard, *"As I said to the Jews,"* they might not deem that the expression was used in like sense towards themselves. It was

not then to depress but to comfort them that He thus spoke, that their dangers might not, by coming upon them suddenly, trouble them to excess.

"Whither I go, you cannot come." He shows that His death is a removal, and a change for the better to a place which admits not corruptible bodies. This He says, both to excite their love towards Him, and to make it more fervent. You know that when we see any of our dearest friends departing from us, our affection is warmest, and the more so, when we see them going to a place to which it is not even possible for us to go. These things then He said, terrifying the Jews, but kindling longing in the disciples. *"Such is the place, that not only not they, but not even you, My best beloved, can come there."* Here He shows also His Own dignity.

"So now I say to you." Why *"now"*? *"In one way to them, to you in another way"*; that is, *"not with them."* But when did the Jews seek Him, when the disciples? The disciples, when they fled the Jews, when they suffered miseries unendurable and surpassing all description at the capture of their city, when the wrath of God was borne down upon them from every side. To the Jews therefore He spoke then, because of their unbelief, *"but to you now, that troubles might not come upon you unexpected."*

Ver. 34 . *"A new commandment I give unto you."*

For since it was likely that they would be troubled when they heard these things, as though they were about to be deserted, He comforts them, investing them with that which was the root of all blessings and a safeguard, love. As though He had said, *"Grieve ye at My departure? Nay, if you love one another, you shall be the stronger."* Why then said He not this? Because He said what profited them more than this.

Ver. 35 . *"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples."*

5. By this He at the same time showed that the company should never be extinguished, when He gave them a distinguishing token. This He said

when the traitor was cut off from them. But how calls He that a new commandment which is contained also in the Old (covenant)? He made it new Himself by the manner; therefore He added, *"As I have loved you."* *"I have not paid back to you a debt of good deeds first done by you, but Myself have begun,"* He says. *"And so ought you to benefit your dearest ones, though you owe them nothing";* and omitting to speak of the miracles which they should do, He makes their characteristic, love. And why? Because it is this which chiefly shows men holy; it is the foundation of all virtue; by this mostly we are all even saved. For *"this,"* He says, *"is to be a disciple; so shall all men praise you, when they see you imitating My Love."* What then? Do not miracles much more show this? By no means. For *"many will say, Lord, have we not in Your Name cast out devils?"* [Matthew 7:22] And again, when they rejoice that the devils obey them, He says, *"Rejoice not that the devils obey you, but that your names are written in heaven."* [Luke 10:20] And this indeed brought over the world, because that was before it; had not that been, neither would this have endured. This then straightway made them perfect, the having all one heart and one soul. But had they separated one from the other, all things would have been lost.

Now He spoke this not to them only, but to all who should believe in Him; since even now, there is nothing else that causes the heathen to stumble, except that there is no love. *"But,"* says some one, *"they also urge against us the absence of miracles."* But not in the same way. *"But where did the Apostles manifest their love?"* Do you see Peter and John inseparable from one another, and going up to the Temple? [Acts 3:1] Do you see Paul disposed in a like way towards them, and do you doubt? If they had gained the other blessings, much more had they the mother of them all. For this is a thing that springs from a virtuous soul; but where wickedness is, there the plant withers away. For *"when,"* it says, *"iniquity*

shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." [Matthew 24:12] And miracles do not so much attract the heathen as the mode of life; and nothing so much causes a right life as love. For those who wrought miracles they often even called deceivers; but they could have no hold upon a pure life. While then the message of the Gospel was not yet spread abroad, miracles were with good reason marveled at, but now men must get to be admired by their lives. For nothing so raises respect in the heathen as virtue, nothing so offends them as vice. And with good reason. When one of them sees the greedy man, the plunderer, exhorting others to do the contrary, when he sees the man who was commanded to love even his enemies, treating his very kindred like brutes, he will say that the words are folly. When he sees one trembling at death, how will he receive the accounts of immortality? When he sees us fond of rule, and slaves to the other passions, he will more firmly remain in his own doctrines, forming no high opinion of us. We, we are the cause of their remaining in their error. Their own doctrines they have long condemned, and in like manner they admire ours, but they are hindered by our mode of life. To follow wisdom in talk is easy, many among themselves have done this; but they require the proof by works. *"Then let them look to the ancients of our profession."* But about them they by no means believe; they enquire concerning those now living. For, *"show me,"* it says, *"your faith by your works"* [James 2:18]; but this is not the case; on the contrary, seeing us tear our neighbors worse than any wild beast, they call us the curse of the world. These things restrain the heathen, and suffer them not to come over to our side. So that we shall be punished for these also; not only for what we do amiss ourselves, but because the name of God is blasphemed. How long shall we be given up to wealth, and luxury, and the other passions? For the future let us leave them. Hear what the Prophet says of certain foolish ones, *"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."* [Isaiah

22:31] But in the present case we cannot even say this, so "*many*" gather round themselves what belongs to all. So chiding them also, the Prophet said, "*Will ye dwell alone upon the earth?*" [Isaiah 5:8] Wherefore I fear lest some grievous thing come to pass, and we draw down upon us heavy vengeance from God. And that this may not come to pass, let us be careful of all virtue, that we may obtain the future blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory now and forever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 73 on the Gospel of John

John 13:36

"Simon Peter said unto Him, Lord, where are you going? Jesus answered him, Whither I go you can not follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterwards."

1. A great thing is love, and stronger than fire itself, and it goes up to the very heaven; there is no hindrance which can restrain its tearing force. And so the most fervent Peter, when he hears, *"Whither I go ye cannot come,"* what says he? *"Lord, where are you going?"* and this he said, not so much from wish to learn, as from desire to follow. To say openly, *"I go,"* he dared not yet, but, *"Where are you going?"* Christ answered, not to his words, but to his thoughts. For that this was his wish, is clear from what Christ said, *"Whither I go you can not follow Me now."* Do you see that he longed for the following Him, and therefore asked the question? And when he heard, *"you shall follow Me afterwards,"* not even so did he restrain his longing, and, though he had gained good hopes, he is so eager as to say,

John 13:37

"Why cannot I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You."

When he had shaken off the dread of being the traitor, and was shown to be one of His own, he afterwards asked boldly himself, while the others held their peace. *"What do you say, Peter? He said, you can not,' and you say, 'I can'?* Therefore you shall know from this temptation that your love is nothing without the presence of the impulse from above." Whence it is clear that in care for him He allowed even that fall. He desired indeed to teach him even by the first words, but when he continued in his vehemence, He did not indeed throw or force him into the denial, but left him alone, that he might learn his own weakness. Christ had said that He must be betrayed; Peter replied, *"Be it far from You, Lord; this shall not happen unto You."* [Matthew 16:22] He was rebuked, but not instructed. On the contrary, when Christ desired to wash his feet, he said, *"You shall never wash my feet."* [John 13:8] Again, when he hears, *"You can not follow Me now,"* he says, *"Though all deny You, I will not deny You."* Since then it was likely that he would be lifted up to folly by his practice of contradiction, Jesus next teaches him not to oppose Him. This too Luke implies, when he tells us that Christ said, *"And I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not"* [Luke 22:32]; that is, *"that thou be not finally lost."* In every way teaching him humility, and proving that human nature by itself is nothing. But, since great love made him apt for contradiction, He now sobers him, that he might not in after times be subject to this, when he should have received the stewardship of the world, but remembering what he had suffered, might know himself. And look at the violence of his fall; it did not happen to him once or twice, but he was so beside himself, that in a short time thrice did

he utter the words of denial, that he might learn that he did not so love as he was loved. And yet, to one who had so fallen He says again, "*Lovest thou Me more than these?*" So that the denial was caused not by the cooling of his love, but from his having been stripped of aid from above. He accepts then Peter's love, but cuts off the spirit of contradiction engendered by it. "*For if you love, you ought to obey Him who is beloved. I said to you and to those with you, 'You can not'; why are you contentious? Do you know what a thing it is to contradict God? But since you will not learn in this way that it is impossible that what I say should not come to pass, you shall learn it in the denial.*" And yet this appeared to you to be much more incredible. For this thou did not even understand, but of that you had the knowledge in your heart. Yet still that came to pass which was not even expected.

"*I will lay down my life for You.*" For since he had heard, "*Greater love than this has, no man,*" he straightway sprang forward, insatiably eager and desirous to reach even to the highest pitch of virtue. But Christ, to show that it belonged to Himself alone to promise these things with authority, says,

John 13:38

"Before the cock crow."

That is, "*now*"; there was but a little interval. He spoke when it was late at night, and the first and second watch was past.

John 14:1

"Let not your heart be troubled."

This He says, because it was probable that when they heard they would be troubled. For if the leader of their band, one so entirely fervent, was told that before the cock crew he should thrice deny his Master, it was likely that they would expect to have to undergo some great reverse, sufficient to bend even souls of adamant. Since then it was probable that they considering these things would be astounded, see how He comforts them, saying, *"Let not your heart be troubled."* By this first word showing the power of His Godhead, because, what they had in their hearts He knew and brought to light.

"You believe in God, believe also in Me." That is, *"All dangers shall pass you by, for faith in Me and in My Father is more powerful than the things which come upon you, and will permit no evil thing to prevail against you."* Then He adds,

John 14:2

"In My Father's house are many mansions."

As He comforts Peter when bewildered by saying, *"but you shall follow afterwards,"* so also He gives this glimpse of hope to the others. For lest they should think that the promise was given to him alone, He says, *"In My Father's house are many mansions."*

"If it were not so I would have said to you, I go to prepare a place for you."

That is, *"The same place which receives Peter shall receive you."* For a great abundance of dwellings is there, and it may not be said that they need preparation. When He said, *"You cannot follow Me now,"* that they might not deem that they were finally cut off, He added,

John 14:3

"That where I am, there ye may be also."

"So earnest have I been concerning this matter, that I should already have been given up to it, had not preparation been made long ago for you."

Showing them that they ought to be very bold and confident. Then that He may not seem to speak as though enticing them, but that they may believe the thing to be so, He adds,

John 14:4

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."

Do you see that He gives them proof that these things were not said without a meaning? And He used these words, because He knew in Himself that their souls now desired to learn this. For Peter said what he said, not in order to learn, but that he might follow. But when Peter had been rebuked, and Christ had declared that to be possible which for the time seemed impossible, and when the apparent impossibility led him to desire to know the matter exactly, therefore He says to the others, *"And the way ye know."* For as when He has said, *"You shall deny Me,"* before any one spoke a word, searching into their hearts, He said, *"Be not troubled,"* so here also by saying *"You know,"* He disclosed the desire which was in their heart, and Himself gives them an excuse for questioning. Now the, *"Where are You going?"* Peter used from a very loving affection, Thomas from cowardice.

John 14:5

"Lord, we know not whither You go."

"The place," he says, *"we know not, and how shall we know the way leading there?"* And observe with what submissiveness he speaks; he says not, *"tell us the place,"* but, *"we know not whither You go"*; for all had long yearned to hear this. If the Jews questioned among themselves when they heard (of His departure), although desirous to be rid of Him, much more would those desire to learn, who wished never to be separated from Him. They feared therefore to ask Him, but yet they asked Him, from their great love and anxiety. What then says Christ?

John 14:6

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man comes unto the Father, but by Me."

"Why then, when He was asked by Peter, 'Where are You going,' did He not say directly, 'I go to the Father, but you cannot come now'? Why did He put in a circuit of so many words, placing together questions and answers? With good reason He told not this to the Jews; but why not to these?" He had indeed said both to these and to the Jews, that He came forth from God, and was going to God, now He says the same thing more clearly than before. Besides, to the Jews He spoke not so clearly; for had He said, *"You cannot come to the Father but by Me,"* they would straightway have deemed the matter mere boasting; but now by concealing this, He threw them into perplexity. *"But why,"* says some one, *"did He speak thus both to the disciples and to Peter?"* He knew his great forwardness, and that he would by reason of this the more press on and trouble Him; in order therefore to lead him away, He hides the matter. Having then succeeded in what He wished by the obscurity and by veiling His speech, He again discloses the matter. After saying, *"Where I am, no man can come,"* He adds, *"In My Father's house are many mansions";* and again, *"No man comes to the Father but by Me."* This He would not tell them at first, in order not to throw them into greater despondency, but, now that He has soothed them, He tells them. For by Peter's rebuke He cast out much of their despondency; and dreading lest they should be addressed in the same way, they were the more restrained. *"I am the Way."* This is the proof of the, *"No man comes to the Father but by Me";* and, *"the Truth, and the Life,"* of this, *"that these things shall surely be."* *"There is then no falsehood with Me, if I am 'the Truth'; if I am 'Life' also, not even death shall be able to*

hinder you from coming to Me. Besides; if I am 'the Way,' you will need none to lead you by the hand; if I am also 'the Truth,' My words are no falsehoods; if I am also 'Life,' though ye die you shall obtain what I have told you." Now His being "*the Way*," they both understood and allowed, but the rest they knew not. They did not indeed venture to say what they knew not. Still they gained great consolation from His being "*the Way*." "*If*," says He, "*I have sole authority to bring to the Father, you shall surely come there; for neither is it possible to come by any other way.*" But by saying before, "*No man can come to Me except the Father draw him*"; and again, "*If I be lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men unto Me*" [John 12:32]; and again, "*No man comes to the Father but by Me*" [John 14:6]; He shows Himself equal to Him who begot Him. But how after saying, "*Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know*," has He added,

John 14:7

"If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also; and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him"?

He does not contradict Himself; they knew Him indeed, but not so as they ought. God they knew, but the Father not yet. For afterwards, the Spirit having come upon them wrought in them all knowledge. What He says is of this kind. *"Had ye known My Essence and My Dignity, you would have known that of the Father also; and henceforth you shall know Him, and have seen Him,"* (the one belonging to the future, the other to the present,) that is, *"by Me."* By *"sight,"* He means knowledge by intellectual perception. For those who are seen we may see and not know; but those who are known we cannot know and not know. Wherefore He says, *"and you have seen Him";* just as it says, *"was seen also of Angels."* [1 Timothy 3:16] Yet the very Essence was not seen; yet it says that He *"was seen,"* that is, as far as it was possible for them to see. These words are used, that you may learn that the man who has seen Him knows Him who begot Him. But they beheld Him not in His unveiled Essence, but clothed with flesh. He is wont elsewhere to put *"sight"* for *"knowledge"*; as when He says, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* [Matthew 5:8] By *"pure,"* He means not those who are free from fornication only, but from all sins. For every sin brings filth upon the soul.

3. Let us then use every means to wipe off the filthiness. But first the font cleanses, afterwards other ways also, many and of all kinds. For God, being merciful, has even after this given to us various ways of reconciliation, of all which the first is that by alms-doing. *"By almsdeeds,"* it says, *"and deeds of faith sins are cleansed away."* [Sirach 3:30] By alms-doing I do not mean that which is maintained by injustice, for this is not

alms-doing, but savageness and inhumanity. What profits it to strip one man and clothe another? For we ought to begin the action with mercy, but this is inhumanity. If we give away everything that we have got from other people, it is no gain to us. And this Zacchæus shows, who on that occasion said, that he propitiated God by giving four times as much as he had taken. [Luke 19:8] But we, when we plunder unboundedly, and give but little, think that we make God propitious, whereas we do rather exasperate Him. For tell me, if you should drag a dead and rotten ass from the waysides and lanes, and bring it to the altar, would not all stone you as accursed and polluted? Well then, if I prove that a sacrifice procured by plunder is more polluted than this, what defense shall we obtain? Let us suppose that some article has been obtained by plunder, is it not of fouler scent than a dead ass? Would you learn how great is the rottenness of sin? Hear the Prophet saying, *"My wounds stank, and were corrupt."* [Psalm 38:5, Septuagint] And do you in words entreat God to forget your misdeeds, and do you by what you yourself do, robbing and grasping, and placing your sin upon the altar, cause Him to remember them continually? But now, this is not the only sin, but there is one more grievous than this, that you defile the souls of the saints. For the altar is but a stone, and is consecrated, but they ever bear with them Christ Himself; and do you dare to send there any of such impurity? *"No,"* says one, *"not the same money, but other."* Mockery this, and trifling. Do you not know, that if one drop of injustice fall on a great quantity of wealth, the whole is defiled? And just as a man by casting dung into a pure fountain makes it all unclean, so also in the case of riches, anything ill-gotten entering in makes them to be tainted with the ill savor from itself. Then we wash our hands when we enter into church, but our hearts not so. Why, do our hands send forth a voice? It is the soul that utters the words: to that God looks; cleanness of the body is of no use, while that

is defiled. What profits it, if you wipe clean your outward hands, while you have those within impure? For the terrible thing and that which subverts all good is this, that while we are fearful about trifles, we care not for important matters. To pray with unwashed hands is a matter indifferent; but to do it with an unwashed mind, this is the extreme of all evils. Hear what was said to the Jews who busied themselves about such outward impurities. *"Wash your heart from wickedness, how long shall there be in you thoughts of your labors?"* [Jeremiah 4:14] Let us also wash ourselves, not with mire, but with fair water, with alms-doing, not with covetousness. First get free from rapine, and then show forth almsdeeds. Let us *"decline from evil, and do good."* [Psalm 37:27] Stay your hands from covetousness, and so bring them to almsgiving. But if with the same hands we strip one set of persons, though we may not clothe the others with what has been taken from them, yet we shall not thus escape punishment. For that which is the groundwork of the propitiation is made the groundwork of all wickedness. Better not show mercy, than show it thus; since for Cain also it had been better not to have brought his offering at all. Now if he who brought too little angered God, when one gives what is another's, how shall not he anger Him? *"I commanded you,"* He will say, *"not to steal, and do you honor Me from that you have stolen? What do you think? That I am pleased with these things?"* Then shall He say to you, *"You thought wickedly that I am even such an one as yourself; I will rebuke you, and set before your face your sins."* [Psalm 50:21, Septuagint] But may it not come to pass that any one of us hear this voice, but having wrought pure almsdeeds, and having our lamps burning, so may we enter into the bride-chamber by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 74 on the Gospel of John

John 14:8-9

"Philip says unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus says unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me, has seen the Father."

1. The Prophet said to the Jews, *"You had the countenance of a harlot, thou were shameless towards all men."* [Jeremiah 3:3, Septuagint] Now it seems fitting to use this expression not only against that city, but against all who shamelessly set their faces against the truth. For when Philip said to Christ, *"Show us the Father,"* He replied, *"Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip?"* And yet there are some Who even after these words separate the Father from the Son. What proximity do you require closer than this? Indeed from this very saying some have fallen into the malady of Sabellius. But let us, leaving both these and those as involved in directly opposite error, consider the exact meaning of the words. *"Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip?"* He says. What then? Replies Philip, *"Are you the Father after whom I enquire?"* "No," He says. On this account He said not, *"have you not known Him,"* but, *"have you not known Me,"* declaring nothing else but this, that the Son is no other than what the Father is, yet continuing to be a Son. But how came Philip to ask this question? Christ had said, *"If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also"* [John 14:7], and He had often said the same to the Jews. Since then Peter and the Jews had often asked Him, *"Who is the Father?"* since Thomas had asked Him, and no one had learned anything clear, but His words were still not understood; Philip, in

order that He might not seem to be importunate and to trouble Him by asking in his turn after the Jews, *"Show us the Father,"* added, *"and it suffices us,"* *"we seek no more."* Yet Christ had said, *"If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also,"* and by Himself He declared the Father. But Philip reversed the order, and said, *"Show us the Father,"* as though knowing Christ exactly. But Christ endures him not, but puts him in the right way, persuading him to gain the knowledge of the Father through Himself, while Philip desired to see Him with these bodily eyes, having perhaps heard concerning the Prophets, that they *"saw God."* But those cases, Philip, were acts of condescension. Wherefore Christ said, *"No man has seen God at any time"* [John 1:18]; and again, *"Every man that has heard and has learned from God comes unto Me."* [John 6:45] *"You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape."* [John 5:37] And in the Old Testament, *"No man shall see My face, and live."* [Exodus 33:20] What says Christ? Very reprovably He says, *"Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known Me, Philip?"* He said not, *"have you not seen,"* but, *"have you not known Me."* *"Why,"* Philip might say, *"do I wish to learn concerning You? At present I seek to see Your Father, and You say unto me, have you not known Me?"* What connection then has this with the question? Surely a very close one; for if He is that which the Father is, yet continuing a Son, with reason He shows in Himself Him who begot Him. Then to distinguish the Persons He says, *"He that has seen Me has seen the Father,"* lest any one should assert that the same is Father, the same Son. For had He been the Father, He would not have said, *"He that has seen Me has seen Him."* Why then did He not reply, *"you ask things impossible, and not allowed to man; to Me alone is this possible"?* Because Philip had said, *"it suffices us,"* as though knowing Christ, He shows that he had not even seen Him. For assuredly he would have known the Father, had he been able

to know the Son. Wherefore He says, *"He that has seen Me, has seen the Father."* *"If any one has seen Me, he shall also behold Him."* What He says is of this kind: *"It is not possible to see either Me or Him."* For Philip sought the knowledge which is by sight, and since he thought that he had so seen Christ, he desired in like manner to see the Father; but Jesus shows him that he had not even seen Himself. And if any one here call knowledge, sight, I do not contradict him, for, *"he that has known Me,"* says Christ, *"has known the Father."* Yet He did not say this, but desiring to establish the Consubstantiality, declared, *"he that knows My Essence, knows that of the Father also."* *"And what is this?"* says some one; *"for he who is acquainted with creation knows also God."* Yet all are acquainted with creation, and have seen it, but all do not know God. Besides, let us consider what Philip seeks to see. Is it the wisdom of the Father? Is it His goodness? Not so, but the very whatever God is, the very Essence. To this therefore Christ answers, *"He that has seen Me."* Now he that has seen the creation, has not also seen the Essence of God. *"If any one has seen Me, he has seen the Father,"* He says. Now had He been of a different Essence, He would not have spoken thus. But to make use of a grosser argument, no man that knows not what gold is, can discern the substance of gold in silver. For one nature is not shown by another. Wherefore He rightly rebuked him, saying, *"Am I so long with you?"* Have you enjoyed such teaching, have you seen miracles wrought with authority, and all belonging to the Godhead, which the Father alone works, sins forgiven, secrets published, death retreating, a creation wrought from earth, and have you not known Me? Because He was clothed with flesh, therefore He said, *"Have you not known Me?"*

2. You have seen the Father; seek not to see more; for in Him you have seen Me. If you have seen Me, be not over-curious; for you have also in Me known Him.

John 14:10

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father?"

That is, *"I am seen in that Essence."*

"The words that I speak, I speak not of Myself,"

Do you see the exceeding nearness, and the proof of the one Essence?

"The Father that dwells in Me, He does the works."

How, beginning with words, does He come to works? For that which naturally followed was, that He should say, *"the Father speaks the words."* But He puts two things here, both concerning doctrine and miracles. Or it may have been because the words also were works. How then does He them? In another place He says, *"If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not."* [John 10:37] How then says He here that the Father does them? To show this same thing, that there is no interval between the Father and the Son. What He says is this: *"The Father would not act in one way, and I in another."* Indeed in another place both He and the Father work; *"My Father works hitherto, and I work"* [John 5:17]; showing in the first passage the unvaryingness of the works, in the second the identity. And if the obvious meaning of the words denotes humility, marvel not; for after having first said, *"Do you not believe?"* He then spoke thus, showing that He so modeled His words to bring him to the faith; for He walked in their hearts.

John 14:11

"Believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me."

"You ought not, when you hear of 'Father' and 'Son,' to seek anything else to the establishing of the relationship as to Essence, but if this is not sufficient to prove to you the Condignity and Consubstantiality, you may learn it even from the works." Had the, *"he that has seen Me, has seen My Father,"* been used with respect to works, He would not afterwards have said,

"Or else believe Me for the very works' sake." And then to show that He is not only able to do these things, but also other much greater than these, He puts them with excess. For He says not, *"I can do greater things than these,"* but, what was much more wonderful, *"I can give to others also to do greater things than these."*

John 14:12

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father."

That is, *"it now remains for you to work miracles, for I go away."* Then when He had accomplished what His argument intended, He says,

John 14:13

"Whatsoever you shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in Me."

Do you see again that it is He who does it? "I," says He, *"will do it"*; not, *"I will ask of the Father,"* but, *"that the Father may be glorified in Me."* In another place He said, *"God shall glorify Him in Himself"* [John 13:32], but here, *"He shall glorify the Father"*; for when the Son shall appear with great power, He who begot shall be glorified. But what is, *"in My Name"*? That which the Apostles said, *"In the Name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk."* [Acts 3:6] For all the miracles which they did He wrought in them, and *"the hand of the Lord was with them."* [Acts 11:21]

John 14:14

"I will do it," He says.

Do you see His authority? The things done by means of others Himself does; has He no power for the things done by Himself, except as being wrought in by the Father? And who could say this? But why does He put it second? To confirm His own words, and to show that the former sayings were of condescension. But the, *"I go to the Father,"* is this: *"I shall not perish, but remain in My own proper Dignity, and Am in Heaven."* All this He said, comforting them. For since it was likely that they, not yet understanding His discourses concerning the Resurrection, would imagine something dismal, He in other discourses promises that He will give them such things, soothing them in every way, and showing that He abides continually; and not only abides, but that He will even show forth greater power.

3. Let us then follow Him, and take up the Cross. For though persecution be not present, yet the season for another kind of death is with us. *"Mortify,"* it says, *"your members which are upon earth."* [Colossians 3:5] Let us then quench concupiscence, slay anger, abolish envy. This is a *"living sacrifice."* [Romans 12:1] This sacrifice ends not in ashes, is not dispersed in smoke, wants neither wood, nor fire, nor knife. For it has both fire and a knife, even the Holy Spirit. Using this knife, circumcise the superfluous and alien portion of your heart; open the closedness of your ears, for vices and evil desires are wont to stop the way against the entrance of the word. The desire of money, when it is set before one, permits not to hear the word concerning almsgiving; and malice when it is present raises a wall against the teaching concerning love; and some other malady falling on

in its turn, makes the soul yet more dull to all things. Let us then do away these wicked desires; it is enough to have willed, and all are quenched. For let us not, I entreat, look to this, that the love of wealth is a tyrannical thing, but that the tyranny is that of our own slackmindedness. Many indeed say that they do not even know what money is. For this desire is not a natural one; such as are natural were implanted in us from the first, from the beginning, but as for gold and silver, for a long time not even what it is was known. Whence then grew this desire? From vainglory and extreme slackmindedness. For of desires some are necessary, some natural, some neither the one nor the other. For example, those which if not gratified destroy the creature are both natural and necessary, as the desire of meat and drink and sleep; carnal desire is natural indeed but not necessary, for many have got the better of it, and have not died. But the desire of wealth is neither natural nor necessary, but superfluous; and if we choose we need not admit its beginning. At any rate, Christ speaking of virginity says, "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*" [Matthew 19:12] But concerning riches not so, but how? "*Except a man forsake all that he has, he is not worthy of Me.*" [Luke 14:33] What was easy He recommended, but what goes beyond the many He leaves to choice. Why then do we deprive ourselves of all excuse? The man who is made captive by some more tyrannical passion shall not suffer a heavy punishment, but he who is subdued by a weak one is deprived of all defense. For what shall we reply when He says, "*You saw Me hungry and fed Me not*"? [Matthew 25:42]; what excuse shall we have? We shall certainly plead poverty; yet we are not poorer than that widow, who by throwing in two mites overshot all the rest. For God requires not the quantity of the offering, but the measure of the mind; and that He does so, comes from His tender care. Let us then, admiring His lovingkindness, contribute what is in our power, that having

both in this life and in that which is to come obtained in abundance the lovingkindness of God, we may be able to enjoy the good things promised to us, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 75 on the Gospel of John

John 14:15-17

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him."

1. We need everywhere works and actions, not a mere show of words. For to say and to promise is easy for any one, but to act is not equally easy. Why have I made these remarks? Because there are many at this time who say that they fear and love God, but in their works show the contrary; but God requires that love which is shown by works. Wherefore He said to the disciples, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* For after He had told them, *"Whatsoever you shall ask, I will do it,"* that they might not deem the mere *"asking"* to be availing, He added, *"If you love Me," "then,"* He says, *"I will do it."* And since it was likely that they would be troubled when they heard that, *"I go to the Father,"* He tells them *"to be troubled now is not to love, to love is to obey My words. I have given you a commandment that you love one another, that you do so to each other as I have done to you; this is love, to obey these My words, and to yield to Him who is the object of your love."*

"And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter." Again His speech is one of condescension. For since it was probable, that they not yet knowing Him would eagerly seek His society, His discourse, His presence in the flesh, and would admit of no consolation when He was absent, what says He? *"I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter,"* that is, *"Another like Me."* Let those be ashamed who have the

disease of Sabellius, who hold not the fitting opinion concerning the Spirit. For the marvel of this discourse is this, that it has stricken down contradictory heresies with the same blow. For by saying "*another*," He shows the difference of Person, and by "*Paraclete*," the connection of Substance. But why said He, "*I will ask the Father*"? Because had He said, "*I will send Him*," they would not have so much believed and now the object is that He should be believed. For afterwards He declares that He Himself sends Him, saying, "*Receive the Holy Ghost*" [John 20:22]; but in this place He tells them that He asks the Father, so as to render His discourse credible to them. Since John says of Him, "*Of His fullness have all we received*" [John 1:16]; but what He had, how receives He from another? And again, "*He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*." [Luke 3:16] "*But what had He more than the Apostles, if He was about to ask It of His Father in order to give It to others, when they often even without prayer appear to have done thus?*" And how, if It is sent according to request from the Father, does It descend of Itself? And how is that which is everywhere present sent by Another, that which "*divides to every man severally as He will*" [1 Corinthians 12:11], and which says with authority, "*Separate Me Paul and Barnabas*"? [Acts 13:2] Those ministers were ministering unto God, yet still It called them authoritatively to Its own work; not that It called them to any different work, but in order to show Its power. "*What then*," says some one, "*is, 'I will ask the Father?'*" (He says it) to show the time of Its coming. For when He had cleansed them by the sacrifice, then the Holy Ghost lighted upon them. "*And why, while He was with them, came it not?*" Because the sacrifice was not yet offered. But when afterwards sin had been loosed, and they were being sent forth to dangers, and were stripping themselves for the contest, then need was that the Anointer should come. "*But why did not the Spirit come immediately*

after the Resurrection?" In order that being greatly desirous of It, they might receive It with great joy. For as long as Christ was with them, they were not in tribulation; but when He departed, being made defenseless and thrown into much fear, they would receive It with much readiness.

"He remains with you." This shows that even after death It departs not. But lest when they heard of the *"Paraclete,"* they should imagine a second Incarnation, and expect to see It with their eyes, He sets them right by saying, *"Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not."* *"He will not be with you as I have been, but will dwell in your very souls";* for this is the, *"shall be in you."* He calls it the *"Spirit of truth";* thus explaining the types in the Old Testament. *"That He may be with you."* What is, *"may be with you"*? That which He says Himself, that *"I am with you."* [Matthew 28:20] Besides, He also implies something else, that *"the case of the Spirit shall not be the same as Mine, He shall never leave you."* *"Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not."* *"Why, what is there belonging to the other Persons that is visible?"* Nothing; but He speaks here of knowledge; at least He adds, *"neither knows Him."* For He is wont, in the case of exact knowledge, to call it *"sight";* because sight is clearer than the other senses, by this He always represents exact knowledge. By *"world,"* He here speaks of *"the wicked,"* thus too comforting the disciples by giving to them a special gift. See in how many particulars He raised His discourse concerning It. He said, *"He is Another like Me";* He said, *"He will not leave you";* He said, *"Unto you alone He comes, as also did I";* He said, that *"He remains in you";* but not even so did He drive out their despondency. For they still sought Him and His society. To cure then this feeling, He says,

John 14:18

"I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you."

2. *"Fear not,"* He says, *"I said not that I would send you another Comforter, as though I were Myself withdrawing from you for ever; I said not that He remains with you, as though I should see you no more. For I also Myself will come to you, I will not leave you orphans."* Because when commencing He said, *"Little children,"* therefore He says also here, *"I will not leave you orphans."* At first then He told them, *"You shall come whither I go";* and, *"In My Father's house there are many mansions";* but here, since that time was long, He gives them the Spirit; and when, not knowing what it could be of which He spoke, they were not sufficiently comforted, *"I will not leave you orphans,"* He says; for this they chiefly required. But since the, *"I will come to you,"* was the saying of one declaring a *"presence,"* observe how in order that they might not again seek for the same kind of presence as before, He did not clearly tell them this thing, but hinted at it; for having said,

John 14:19

"Yet a little while, and the world sees Me not"; He added, "but you see Me."

As though He had said, *"I come indeed to you, but not in the same way as before, ever being with you day by day."* And lest they should say, *"How then did You say to the Jews, Henceforth you shall not see Me?"* He solves the contradiction by saying, *"to you alone";* for such also is the nature of the Spirit.

"Because I live, you shall live also."

For the Cross does not finally separate us, but only hides for a little moment; and by *"life"* He seems to me to mean not the present only, but the future also.

John 14:20

"At that day you shall know that am in the Father, and you in Me, and I in you."

With regard to the Father, these words refer to Essence; with regard to the disciples, to agreement of mind and help from God. *"And how, tell me, is this reasonable?"* says some one. And how, pray, is the contrary reasonable? For great and altogether boundless is the interval between Christ and the disciples. And if the same words are employed, marvel not; for the Scripture is often wont to use in different senses the same words, when applied to God and to men. Thus we are called *"gods,"* and *"sons of God,"* yet the word has not the same force when applied to us and to God. And the Son is called *"Image,"* and *"Glory";* so are we, but great is the interval between us. Again, *"You are Christ's, and Christ is God's"* [1 Corinthians 3:23], but not in like manner as Christ is God's are we Christ's. But what is it that He says? *"When I am arisen,"* He says, you shall know that I am not separated from the Father, but have the same power with Him, and that I am with you continually, when facts proclaim the aid which comes to you from Me, when your enemies are kept down, and you speak boldly, when dangers are removed from your path, when the preaching of the Gospel flourishes day by day, when all yield and give ground to the word of true religion. *"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."* [John 20:21] Do you see that here also the word has not the same force? For if we take it as though it had, the Apostles will differ in nothing from Christ. But why says He, *"Then you shall know"*? Because then they saw Him risen and conversing with them, then they learned the exact faith; for great was the power of the Spirit, which taught them all things.

John 14:21

"He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me."

It is not enough merely to have them, we need also an exact keeping of them. But why does He frequently say the same thing to them? As, *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments"* [John 14:15]; and, *"He that has My commandments and keeps them"*; and, *"If any one hears My word and keeps it, he it is that loves Me—he that hears not My words, loves Me not."* [John 14:24] I think that He alluded to their despondency; for since He had uttered many wise sayings to them concerning death, saying, *"He that hates his life in this world shall save it unto life eternal"* [John 12:25]; and, *"Unless a man take his cross and follow Me, he is not worthy of Me"* [Matthew 10:38]; and is about to say other things besides, rebuking them, He says, *"Think ye that you suffer sorrow from love? The not sorrowing would be a sign of love."* And because He wished all along to establish this, as He went on He summed up His discourse in this same point; *"If you loved Me,"* He says, *"ye would have rejoiced, because—I go to My Father"* [John 14:28], but now you are in this state through cowardice. To be thus disposed towards death is not for those who remember My commandments; for you ought to be crucified, if you truly loved Me, for My word exhorts you not to be afraid of those that kill the body. Those that are such both the Father loves and I. And I will manifest Myself unto him. Then says Judas,

John 14:22

"How is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us?"

Do you see that their soul was close pressed with fear? For he was confounded and troubled, and thought that as we see dead men in a dream, so He also would be seen. In order therefore that they might not imagine this, hear what He says.

John 14:23

"I and the Father will come unto him, and make Our abode with him."

All but saying, *"As the Father reveals Himself, so also do I."* And not in this way only He removed the suspicion, but also by saying, *"We will make Our abode with him,"* a thing which does not belong to dreams. But observe, I pray you, the disciple confounded, and not daring to say plainly what he desired to say. For he said not, *"Woe to us, that Thou diest, and will come to us as the dead come"*; he spoke not thus; but, *"How is it that You will show Yourself to us, and not unto the world?"* Jesus then says, that *"I accept you, because ye keep My commandments."* In order that they might not, when they should see Him afterwards, deem Him to be an apparition, therefore He says these things beforehand. And that they might not deem that He would appear to them so as I have said, He tells them also the reason, *"Because ye keep My commandments"*; He says that the Spirit also will appear in like manner. Now if after having companied with Him so long time, they cannot yet endure that Essence, or rather cannot even imagine It, what would have been their case had He appeared thus to them at the first? On this account also He ate with them, that the action might not seem to be an illusion. For if they thought this when they saw Him walking on the waters, although His wonted form was seen by them, and He was not far distant, what would they have imagined had they suddenly seen Him arisen whom they had seen taken and swathed? Wherefore He continually tells them that He will appear, and why He will appear, and how, that they may not suppose Him to be an apparition.

John 14:24

"He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me."

"So that he that hears not these sayings not only does not love Me, but neither does he love the Father." For if this is the sure proof of love, the hearing the commandments, and these are of the Father, he that hears them loves not the Son only, but the Father also. *"And how is the word 'yours' and 'not yours'?"* This means, *"I speak not without the Father, nor say anything of Myself contrary to what seems good to Him."*

John 14:25

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you."

Since these sayings were not clear, and since some they did not understand, and doubted about the greater number, in order that they might not be again confused, and say, *"What commands?"* He released them from all their perplexity, saying,

John 14:26

"The Comforter, whom the Father shall send in My Name, He shall teach you."

"Perhaps these things are not clear to you now, but 'He' is a clear teacher of them." And the, *"remains with you"* [John 14:17], is the expression of One implying that Himself will depart. Then that they may not be grieved, He says, that as long as He should remain with them and the Spirit should not come, they would be unable to comprehend anything great or sublime. And this He said to prepare them to bear nobly His departure, as that which was to be the cause of great blessings to them. He continually calls Him *"Comforter,"* because of the afflictions which then possessed them. And since even after hearing these things they were troubled, when they thought of the sorrows, the wars, His departure, see how He calms them again by saying,

John 14:27

"Peace I leave to you."

All but saying, *"What are you harmed by the trouble of the world, provided ye be at peace with Me? For this peace is not of the same kind as that. The one is external, is often mischievous and unprofitable, and is no advantage to those who possess it; but I give you peace of such a kind that you be at peace with one another, which thing renders you stronger."* And because He said again, *"I leave,"* which was the expression of One departing, and enough to confound them, therefore He again says,

"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Do you see that they were affected partly by loving affection, partly by fear?

John 14:28

"You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father; for My Father is greater than I."

4. And what joy would this bring to them? What consolation? What then mean the words? They did not yet know concerning the Resurrection, nor had they right opinion concerning Him; (for how could they, who did not even know that He would rise again?) but they thought that the Father was mighty. He says then, that *"If you are fearful for Me, as not able to defend Myself, and if you are not confident that I shall see you again after the Crucifixion, yet when you heard that I go to the Father, you ought then to have rejoiced because I go away to One that is greater, and able to undo all dangers."* *"You have heard how I said unto you."* Why has He put this? Because, He says, *"I am so firmly confident about the things which come to pass, that I even foretell them, so far am I from fearing."* This also is the meaning of what follows.

John 14:29

"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it has come to pass, you might believe that I Am."

As though He had said, *"You would not have known, had I not told you. And I should not have told you, had I not been confident."* Do you see that the speech is one of condescension? For when He says, *"Think ye that I cannot pray to the Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of Angels"* [Matthew 26:53], He speaks to the secret thoughts of the hearers; since no one, even in the height of madness, would say that He was not able to help Himself, but needed Angels; but because they thought of Him as a man, therefore He spoke of *"twelve legions of Angels."* Yet in truth He did but ask those who came to take Him a question, and cast them backwards. [John 18:6] (If any one say that the Father is greater, inasmuch as He is the cause of the Son, we will not contradict this. But this does not by any means make the Son to be of a different Essence.) But what He says, is of this kind: *"As long as I am here, it is natural that you should deem that I am in danger; but when I have gone 'there,' be confident that I am in safety; for Him none will be able to overcome."* All these words were addressed to the weakness of the disciples, for, *"I Myself am confident, and care not for death."* On this account, He said, *"I have told you these things before they come to pass"; "but since,"* He says, *"you are not yet able to receive the saying concerning them, I bring you comfort even from the Father, whom you entitle great."* Having thus consoled them, He again tells them sorrowful things,

John 14:30

"Hereafter I will not talk with you." Wherefore? "For the ruler of this world comes, and has nothing in Me."

By *"ruler of this world,"* He means the devil, calling wicked men also by the same name. For he rules not heaven and earth, since he would have been subverted, and cast down all things, but he rules over those who give themselves up to him. Wherefore He calls him, *"the ruler of the darkness of this world,"* in this place again calling evil deeds, *"darkness."* *"What then, does the devil slay You?"* By no means; *"he has nothing in Me."* *"How then do they kill You?"* Because I will it, and,

John 14:31

"That the world may know that I love the Father."

"For being not subject," He says, *"to death, nor a debtor to it, I endure it through My love to the Father."* This He says, that He may again rouse their souls, and that they may learn that not unwillingly but willingly He goes to this thing, and that He does it despising the devil. It was not enough for Him to have said, *"Yet a little while I am with you"* [John 7:33], but He continually handles this painful subject, (with good reason,) until He should make it acceptable to them, by weaving along with it pleasant things.

Wherefore at one time He says, *"I go, and I come again"*; and, *"That where I there ye may be also"*; and, *"You cannot follow Me now, but afterwards you shall follow Me"*; and, *"I go to the Father"*; and, *"The Father is greater than I"*; and, *"Before it come to pass, I have told you"*; and, *"I do not suffer these things from constraint, but from love for the Father."* So that they might consider, that the action could not be destructive nor hurtful, if at least He who greatly loved Him, and was greatly loved by Him, so willed. On this account, while intermingling these pleasant words, He continually uttered the painful ones also, practicing their minds. For both the, *"remains with you"* [John 16:7], and, *"My departure is expedient for you,"* were expressions of One giving comfort. For this reason He spoke by anticipation ten thousand sayings concerning the Spirit, the, *"Is in you,"* and, *"The world cannot receive,"* and, *"He shall bring all things to your remembrance,"* and, *"Spirit of truth,"* and, *"Holy Spirit,"* and, *"Comforter,"* and that *"It is expedient for you,"* in order that they might not despond, as though there would be none to stand before and help them. *"It is expedient,"* He says, showing that It would make them spiritual.

5. This at least, we see, was what took place. For they who now trembled and feared, after they had received the Spirit sprang into the midst of dangers, and stripped themselves for the contest against steel, and fire, and wild beasts, and seas, and every kind of punishment; and they, the unlettered and ignorant, discoursed so boldly as to astonish their hearers. For the Spirit made them men of iron instead of men of clay, gave them wings, and allowed them to be cast down by nothing human. For such is that grace; if it find despondency, it disperses it; if evil desires, it consumes them; if cowardice, it casts it out, and does not allow one who has partaken of it to be afterwards mere man, but as it were removing him to heaven itself, causes him to image to himself all that is there. [Acts 4:32, and 2:46] On this account no one said that any of the things that he possessed was his own, but they continued in prayer, in praise, and in singleness of heart. For this the Holy Spirit most requires, for *"the fruit of the Spirit is joy, peace—faith, meekness."* [Galatians 5:22-23] *"And yet spiritual persons often grieve,"* says some one. But that sorrow is sweeter than joy. Cain was sorrowful, but with the sorrow of the world; Paul was sorrowful, but with godly sorrow. Everything that is spiritual brings the greatest gain, just as everything that is worldly the utmost loss. Let us then draw to us the invincible aid of the Spirit, by keeping the commandments, and then we shall be nothing inferior to the Angels. For neither are they therefore of this character, because they are incorporeal, for were this the case, no incorporeal being would have become wicked, but the will is in every case the cause of all. Wherefore among incorporeal beings some have been found worse than men or things irrational, and among those having bodies some better than the incorporeal. All just men, for instance, whatever were their righteous deeds, did them while dwelling on earth, and having bodies. For they dwelt on earth as those who were pilgrims and strangers; but in

heaven, as citizens. Then say not thou either, *"I am clothed with flesh, I cannot get the mastery, nor undertake the toils which are for the sake of virtue."* Do not accuse the Creator. For if the wearing the flesh make virtue impossible, then the fault is not ours. But that it does not make it impossible, the band of saints has shown. A nature of flesh did not prevent Paul from becoming what he was, nor Peter from receiving the keys of heaven; and Enoch also, having worn flesh, was translated, and not found. So also Elias was caught up with the flesh. Abraham also with Isaac and his grandson shone brightly, having the flesh; and Joseph in the flesh struggled against that abandoned woman. But why speak I of the flesh? For though thou place a chain upon the flesh, no harm is done. *"Though I am bound,"* says Paul, yet *"the word of God is not bound."* [2 Timothy 2:9] And why speak I of bonds and chains? Add to these the prison, and bars, yet neither are these any hindrance to virtue; at least so Paul has instructed us. For the bond of the soul is not iron but cowardice, and the desire of wealth, and the ten thousand passions. These bind us, though our body be free. *"But,"* says some one, *"these have their origin from the body."* An excuse this, and a false pretense. For had they been produced from the body, all would have undergone them. For as we cannot escape weariness, and sleep, and hunger, and thirst, since they belong to our nature; so too these, if they were of the same kind, would not allow any one to be exempt from their tyranny; but since many escape them, it is clear that such things are the faults of a careless soul. Let us then put a stop to this, and not accuse the body, but subdue it to the soul, that having it under command, we may enjoy the everlasting good things, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 76 on the Gospel of John

John 14:31-15:1

"Arise, let us go hence. I am the true Vine, (you are the branches,) and My Father is the Husbandman."

1. 'Ignorance' makes the soul timid and unmanly, just as instruction in heavenly doctrines makes it great and sublime. For when it has enjoyed no care, it is in a manner timid, not by nature but by will. For when I see the man who once was brave, now become a coward, I say that this latter feeling no longer belongs to nature, for what is natural is immutable. Again, when I see those who but now were cowards all at once become daring, I pass the same judgment, and refer all to will. Since even the disciples were very fearful, before they had learned what they ought, and had been deemed worthy of the gift of the Spirit; yet afterwards they became bolder than lions. So Peter, who could not bear the threat of a damsel, was hung with his head downwards, and was scourged, and though he endured ten thousand dangers, would not be silent, but enduring what he endured as though it were a dream, in such a situation spoke boldly; but not so before the Crucifixion. Wherefore Christ said, *"Arise, let us go hence."* *"But why, tell me? Did he not know the hour at which Judas would come upon Him? Or perhaps He feared lest he should come and seize them, and lest the plotters should be upon him before he had furnished his most excellent teaching."* Away with the thought! These things are far from His dignity. *"If then He did not fear, why did He remove them, and then after finish ing His discourse lead them into a garden known to Judas? And even had Judas come, could He not have blinded their eyes, as He also did when the traitor*

was not present? Why did He remove them?" He allows the disciples a little breathing time. For it was likely that they, as being in a conspicuous place, would tremble and fear, both on the account of the time and the place, (for it was the depth of night,) and would not give heed to His words, but would be continually turning about, and imagining that they heard those who were to set upon them; and that more especially when their Master's speech made them expect evil. For, *"yet a little while,"* He says, *"and I am not with you,"* and, *"the ruler of this world comes."* Since now when they heard these and the like words they were troubled, as though they should certainly be taken immediately, He leads them to another place, in order that thinking themselves in safety, they might listen to Him without fear. For they were about to hear lofty doctrines. Therefore He says, *"Arise, let us go hence."* Then He adds, and says, *"I am the Vine, you are the branches."* What wills He to imply by the comparison? That the man who gives no heed to His words can have no life, and that the miracles about to take place, would be wrought by the power of Christ. *"My Father is the Husbandman."* *"How then? Does the Son need a power working within?"* Away with the thought! This example does not signify this. Observe with what exactness He goes through the comparison. He says not that the *"root"* enjoys the care of the Husbandman, but, *"the branches."* And the foot is brought in in this place for no other purpose, but that they may learn that they can work nothing without His power, and that they ought to be united with Him by faith as the branch with the vine.

John 15:2

"Every branch in Me that bears not fruit the Father takes away."

Here He alludes to the manner of life, showing that without works it is not possible to be in Him.

"And every branch that bears fruit, He purges it."

That is, *"causes it to enjoy great care."* Yet the root requires care rather than the branches, in being dug about, and cleared, yet about this He says nothing here, but all about the branches. Showing that He is sufficient to Himself, and that the disciples need much help from the Husbandman, although they be very excellent. Wherefore He says, *"that which bears fruit, He purges it."* The one branch, because it is fruitless, cannot even remain in the Vine, but for the other, because it bears fruit, He renders it more fruitful. This, some one might assert, was said with relation also to the persecutions then coming upon them. For the *"purges it,"* is *"prunes,"* which makes the branch bear better. Whence it is shown, that persecutions rather make men stronger. Then, lest they should ask concerning whom He said these things, and lest He should throw them back into anxiety, He says,

John 15:3

"Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

Do you see how He introduces Himself as tending the branches? *"I have cleansed you,"* He says; yet above He declares that the Father does this. But there is no separation between the Father and the Son. *"And now your part also must be performed."* Then to show that He did not this as needing their ministry, but for their advancement, He adds,

John 15:4

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can he who abides not in Me."

For that they might not be separated from Him by timidity, He fastens and glues to Himself their souls slackened through fear, and holds out to them good hopes for the future. For the root remains, but to be taken away, or to be left, belongs to the branches. Then having urged them on in both ways, by things pleasant and things painful, He requires first what is to be done on our side.

John 15:5

"He that abides in Me, and I in him."

Do you see that the Son contributes not less than the Father towards the care of the disciples? The Father purges, but He keeps them in Himself. The abiding in the root is that which makes the branches to be fruit-bearing. For that which is not purged, if it remain on the root, bears fruit, though perhaps not so much as it ought; but that which remains not, bears none at all. But still the *"purging"* also has been shown to belong to the Son, and the *"abiding in the root,"* to the Father, who also begot the Root. Do you see how all is common, both the *"purging,"* and the enjoying the virtue which is from the root?

2. Now it were a great penalty, the being able to do nothing, but He stays not the punishment at this point, but carries on His discourse farther.

John 15:6

"He is cast forth . . ."

No longer enjoying the benefit of the husbandman's hand. *"And is withered."* That is, if he had anything of the root, he loses it; if any grace, he is stripped of this, and is bereft of the help and life which proceed from it. And what the end? *"He is cast into the fire."* Not such he who abides with Him. Then He shows what it is to *"abide,"* and says,

John 15:7

"If My words abide in you."

Do you see that with reason I said above, that He seeks the proof by works? For when He had said, *"Whatsoever you shall ask I will do it"* [c. xiv. 14, 15], He added, *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* And here, *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you."*

"You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you."

This He said to show that they who plotted against Him should be burnt up, but that *"they"* should bear fruit. Then transferring the fear from them to the others, and showing that they should be invincible, He says,

John 15:8

"Herein is My Father glorified, that you be My disciples, and bear much fruit."

Hence He makes His discourse credible, for if the bearing fruit pertains to the glory of the Father, He will not neglect His own glory. *"And you shall be My disciples."* Do you see how he that bears fruit, he is the disciple? But what is, *"In this is the Father glorified"*? *"He rejoices when you abide in Me, when you bear fruit."*

John 15:9

"As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you."

Here at length He speaks in a more human manner, for this, as spoken to men, has its peculiar force. Since what a measure of love did He manifest, who chose to die, who counted worthy of such honor those who were His slaves, His haters, His open enemies, and led them up to the heavens! *"If then I love you, be bold; if it be the glory of My Father that you bear fruit, imagine nothing ill."* Then that He may not make them supine, observe how He braces them again,

"Continue ye in My love."

"For this you have the power to do." And how shall this be?

John 15:10

"If you keep My commandments, even as I have kept my Father's commandments."

Again, His discourse proceeds in a human way; for certainly the Lawgiver would not be subject to commandments. Do you see that here also, as I am always saying, this is declared because of the infirmity of the hearers? For He chiefly speaks to their suspicions, and by every means shows them that they are in safety, and that their enemies are being lost, and that all, whatever they have, they have from the Son, and that, if they show forth a pure life, none shall ever have the mastery over them. And observe that He discourses with them in a very authoritative manner, for He said not, *"abide in the love of My Father,"* but, *"in Mine"*; then, lest they should say, *"when You have set us at war with all men, Thou leavest us, and departest,"* He shows that He does not leave them, but is so joined to them if they will, as the branch in the vine. Then, lest from confidence they should become supine, He says not that the blessing cannot be removed if they are slack-minded. And in order not to refer the action to Himself, and so make them more apt to fall, He says, *"Herein is My Father glorified."* For everywhere He manifests His own and His Father's love towards them. Not the things of the Jews, then, were *"glory,"* but those which they were about to receive. And that they might not say, *"we have been driven from the possessions of our fathers, we have been deserted, we have become naked, and destitute of all things,"* "Look," He says, *"on Me. I am loved by the Father, yet still I suffer these things appointed. And so I am not now leaving you because I love you not. For if I am slain, and take not this for a proof of not being loved by the Father, neither ought ye to be troubled. For,*

if you continue in My love, these dangers shall not be able to do you any mischief on the score of love."

3. Since then love is a thing mighty and irresistible, not a bare word, let us manifest it by our actions. He reconciled us when we were His enemies, let us, now that we have become His friends, remain so. He led the way, let us at least follow; He loves us not for His own advantage, (for He needs nothing,) let us at least love Him for our profit; He loved us being His enemies, let us at least love Him being our friend. At present we do the contrary; for every day God is blasphemed through us, through our plunderings, through our covetousness. And perhaps one of you will say, *"Every day your discourse is about covetousness."* Would that I could speak about it every night too; would that I could do so, following you about in the market-place, and at your table; would that both wives, and friends, and children, and domestics, and tillers of the soil, and neighbors, and the very pavement and walls, could ever shout forth this word, that so we might perchance have relaxed a little. For this malady has seized upon all the world, and occupies the souls of all, and great is the tyranny of Mammon. We have been ransomed by Christ, and are the slaves of gold. We proclaim the sovereignty of the one, and obey the other. Whatever *"he"* commands we readily obey, and we have refused to know family, or friendship, or nature, or laws, or anything, for him. No one looks up to Heaven, no one thinks about things to come. But there will be a time, when there will be no profit even in these words. *"In the grave,"* it says, *"who shall confess to You?"* Gold is a desirable thing, and procures us much luxury, and makes us to be honored, but not in like manner as does Heaven. For from the wealthy man many even turn aside, and hate him, but him who lives virtuously they respect and honor. *"But"* says some one *"the poor man is derided, even though he be virtuous."* Not among men, but brutes. Wherefore he ought

not so much as to notice them. For if asses were to bray and daws chatter at us, while all wise men commended us, we should not, losing sight of this latter audience, have regard to clamors of the brutes; for like to daws, and worse than asses, are they who admire present things. Moreover, if an earthly king approve you, you make no account of the many, though they all deride you; but if the Lord of the universe praise you, do you seek the good words of beetles and gnats? For this is what these men are, compared with God, or rather not even this, but something viler, if there be anything such. How long do we wallow in the mire? How long do we set sluggards and belly-gods for our judges? They can prove dicers well, drunkards, those who live for the belly, but as for virtue and vice, they cannot imagine so much as a dream. If any one taunt you because you have not skill to draw the channels of the watercourses, you will not think it any terrible thing, but wilt even laugh at him who objects to you ignorance of this kind; and do you, when you desire to practice virtue, appoint as judges those who know nothing of it? On this account we never reach that art. We commit our case not to the practiced, but to the unlearned, and they judge not according to the rules of art, but according to their own ignorance. Wherefore, I exhort you, let us despise the many; or rather let us desire neither praises, nor possessions, nor wealth, nor deem poverty any evil. For poverty is to us a teacher of prudence, and endurance, and all true wisdom. Thus Lazarus lived in poverty, and received a crown; Jacob desired to get bread only; and Joseph was in the extreme of poverty, being not merely a slave, but also a prisoner; and on this account we admire him the more, and we do not so much praise him when he distributed the grain, as when he dwelt in the dungeon: not when he wore the diadem, but when the chain; not when he sat upon the throne, but when he was plotted against and sold. Considering then all these things, and the crowns twined for us after the conflicts, let us

admire not wealth, and honor, and luxury, and power, but poverty, and the chain, and bonds, and endurance in the cause of virtue. For the end of those things is full of troubles and confusion, and their lot is bound up with this present life; but the fruit of these, heaven, and the good things in the heavens, which neither eye has seen, nor ear heard; which may we all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Homily 77 on the Gospel of John

John 15:11-12

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you."

1. All things good then have their reward, when they arrive at their proper end, but if they be cut off midway, shipwreck ensues. And as a vessel of immense burden, if it reach not the harbor in time, but founder in the midst of the sea, gains nothing from the length of the voyage, but even makes the calamity greater, in proportion as it has endured more toils; so are those souls which fall back when near the end of their labors, and faint in the midst of the struggle. Wherefore Paul said, that glory, and honor, and peace, should meet those who ran their course with patient continuance in well-doing. A thing which Christ now effects in the case of the disciples. [Romans 2:7] For since He had accepted them, and they rejoiced in Him, and then the sudden coming of the Passion and His sad words were likely to cut short their pleasure; after having conversed with them sufficiently to soothe them, He adds, *"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be fulfilled"*; that is, *"that you might not be separated from Me, that you might not cut short your course. You were rejoicing in Me, and you were rejoicing exceedingly, but despondency has fallen upon you. This then I remove, that joy may come at the last, showing that your present circumstances are fit cause, not for pain, but for pleasure. I saw you offended; I despised you not; I said not, 'Why do ye not continue noble?' But I spoke to you words which brought comfort*

with them. And so I wish ever to keep you in the same love. You have heard concerning a kingdom, you rejoiced. In order therefore that your joy might be fulfilled, I have spoken these things unto you." But *"this is the commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."* Do you see that the love of God is intertwined with our own, and connected like a sort of chain? Wherefore it sometimes says that there are two commandments, sometimes only one. For it is not possible that the man who has taken hold on the first should not possess the second also. For at one time He said, *"On this the Law and the Prophets hang"* [Matthew 22:40]; and at another, *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."* [Matthew 7:12] And, *"Love is the fulfilling of the Law."* [Romans 13:10] Which He says also here; for if to abide proceeds from love, and love from the keeping of the commandments, and the commandment is that we love one another, then the abiding in God proceeds from love towards each other. And He does not simply speak of love, but declares also the manner, *"As I have loved you."* Again He shows, that His very departure was not of hatred but of love. *"So that I ought rather to be admired on this account, for I lay down My life for you."* Yet nowhere does He say this in these words, but in a former place, by sketching the best shepherd, and here by exhorting them, and by showing the greatness of His love, and Himself, who He is. But wherefore does He everywhere exalt love? Because this is the mark of the disciples, this the bond of virtue. On this account Paul says such great things of it, as being a genuine disciple of Christ, and having had experience of it.

John 15:14-15

"You are My friends —henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knows not what his lord does. You are My friends, for all things which I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."

How then says He, *"I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now"*? [John 16:12] By the *"all"* and the *"hearing"* He shows nothing else, but that He uttered nothing alien, but only what was of the Father. And since to speak of secrets appears to be the strongest proof of friendship, *"you have,"* He says, *"been deemed worthy even of this communion."* When however He says *"all,"* He means, *"whatever things it was fit that they should hear."* Then He puts also another sure proof of friendship, no common one. Of what sort was that?

John 15:16

"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."

That is, I ran upon your friendship. And He stayed not here, but,

"I set you," He says, (that is, *"I planted you,"*) *"that you should go,"*

(He still uses the metaphor of the vine,) that is, *"that you should extend yourselves"; "and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."*

"Now if your fruit remain, much more shall you. For I have not only loved you," He says, *"but have done you the greatest benefits, by extending your branches through all the world."* Do you see in how many ways He shows His love? By telling them things secret, by having in the first instance run to meet their friendship, by granting them the greatest blessings, by suffering for them what then He suffered. After this, He shows that He also remains continually with those who shall bring forth fruit; for it is needful to enjoy His aid, and so to bear fruit.

"That whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you."

Yet it is the part of the person asked to do the thing asked; but if the Father is asked, how is it that the Son does it? It is that you may learn that the Son is not inferior to the Father.

John 15:17

"These things I command you, that you love one another."

That is, *"It is not to upbraid, that I tell you that I lay down My life for you, or that I ran to meet you, but in order to lead you into friendship."*

Then, since the being persecuted and insulted by the many, was a grievous and intolerable thing, and enough to humble even a lofty soul, therefore, after having said ten thousand things first, Christ entered upon this matter. Having first smoothed their minds, He thus proceeds to these points, showing that these things too were for their exceeding advantage, as He had also shown that the others were. For as He had told them that they ought not to grieve, but rather to rejoice, *"because I go to the Father,"* (since He did this not as deserting but as greatly loving them,) so here also He shows that they ought to rejoice, not grieve. And observe how He effects this. He said not, *"I know that the action is grievous, but bear for My sake, since for My sake also ye suffer,"* for this reason was not yet sufficient to console them; wherefore letting this pass, He puts forward another. And what is that? It is that this thing would be a sure proof of their former virtue. *"And, on the contrary, you ought to grieve, not because you are hated now but if you were likely to be loved";* for this He implies by saying,

John 15:19

"If you were of the world, the world would love its own."

So that had ye been loved it would be very clear that you had shown forth signs of wickedness. Then, when by saying this first, He did not effect his purpose, He goes on again with the discourse.

John 15:20

"The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."

He showed that in this point they would be most His imitators. For while Christ was in the flesh, men had war with Him, but when He was translated, the battle came in the next place upon them. Then because owing to their fewness they were terrified at being about to encounter the attack of so great a multitude, He raises their souls by telling them that it was a special subject of joy that they were hated by them; *"For so you shall share My sufferings. You should not therefore be troubled, for you are not better than I,"* as I before told you, *"The servant is not greater than his lord."* Then there is also a third source of consolation, that the Father also is insulted together with them.

John 15:21

"But all these things will they do unto you for My Name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me."

That is, *"they insult Him also."* Besides this, depriving those others of excuse, and putting also another source of comfort, He says,

John 15:22

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin."

Showing that they shall do unjustly both what they do against Him and against them. *"Why then did You bring us into such calamities? Did You not foreknow the wars, the hatred?"* Therefore again He says,

John 15:23

"He that hates Me, hates My Father also."

From this also proclaiming beforehand no small punishment against them. For, since they continually pretended that they persecuted Him on account of the Father, to deprive them of this excuse He spoke these words.

"They have no excuse. I gave them the teaching which is by words, that by works I added, according to the Law of Moses, who bade all men obey one speaking and doing such things, when he should both lead to piety, and exhibit the greatest miracles." And He spoke not simply of *"signs,"* but,

John 15:24

"Which none other man did."

And of this they themselves are witnesses, speaking in this way; *"It was never so seen in Israel"* [Matthew 9:33]; and, *"Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind"* [John 9:32]; and the matter of Lazarus was of the same kind, and all the other acts the same, and the mode of wonder-working new, and all beyond thought. *"Why then,"* says one, *"do they persecute both You and us?"* *"Because you are not of the world. If you were of the world, the world would love its own."* [John 15:19] He first reminds them of the words which He spoke also to His own brethren [John 7:7]; but there he spoke more by way of a reflection, lest He should offend them, while here, on the contrary, He revealed all. *"And how is it clear that it is on this account that we are hated?"* *"From what was done to Me. For, tell Me, which of My words or deeds could they lay hold on, that they would not receive Me?"* Then since the thing would be astounding to us, He tells the cause; that is, their wickedness. And He stays not here either, but introduces the Prophet [Psalm 35:19; 69:4], showing him proclaiming before of old time, and saying, that,

John 15:25

"They hated Me without a cause."

3. Which Paul does also. For when many wondered how that the Jews believed not, he brings in Prophets foretelling it of old, and declaring the cause; that their wickedness and pride were the cause of their unbelief.

"Well then; if they kept not Your saying, neither will they keep ours; if they persecuted You, therefore they will persecute us also; if they saw signs, such as none other man wrought; if they heard words such as none other spoke, and profited nothing; if they hate Your Father and You with Him, wherefore," says one, *"have You sent us in among them? How after this shall we be worthy of belief? Which of our kindred will give-heed to us?"*

That they may not therefore be troubled by such thoughts, see what sort of comfort he adds.

John 15:26-27

"When the Comforter has come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me. And ye also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

"He shall be worthy of belief, for He is the Spirit of Truth." On this account He called It not *"Holy Spirit,"* but *"Spirit of Truth."* But the, *"proceeds from the Father,"* shows that He knows all things exactly, as Christ also says of Himself, that *"I know whence come and whither I go"* [John 8:14], speaking in that place also concerning truth. *"Whom will send."* Behold, it is no longer the Father alone, but the Son also who sends. *"And ye too,"* He says, *"have a right to be believed, who have been with Me, who have not heard from others."* Indeed, the Apostles confidently rely on this circumstance, saying, *"We who ate and drank with Him."* [Acts 10:41] And to show that this was not merely said to please, the Spirit bears witness to the words spoken. [Acts 10:44]

John 16:1

"These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended."

That is, *"when you see many disbelieve, and yourselves ill-treated."*

John 16:2

"They shall put you out of the synagogues."

(For *"the Jews had already agreed, that if any one should confess Christ, he should be put out of the synagogues"* [John 9:22])

"Yea, the time comes, that whosoever kills you will think that he does God service."

"They shall so seek after your murder, as of an action pious and pleasing to God." Then again He adds the consolation,

John 16:3

"And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor Me."

"It is sufficient for your comfort that you endure these things for My sake, and the Father's." Here He reminds them of the blessedness of which He spoke at the beginning, "Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." [Matthew 5:11-12]

John 16:4

"These things have I told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember them."

"So, judging from these words, deem the rest also trustworthy. For you will not be able to say, that I flatteringly told you only those things which would please you, nor that the words were words of deceit; for one who intended to deceive, would not have told you beforehand of matters likely to turn you away. I have therefore told you before, that these things might not fall upon you unexpectedly, and trouble you; and for another reason besides, that you might not say, that I did not foreknow that these things would be. Remember then that I have told you." And indeed the heathen always covered their persecutions of them by a pretense of their wickedness, driving them out as corrupters; but this did not trouble the disciples who had heard beforehand, and knew for what they suffered. The cause of what took place was sufficient to rouse their courage. Therefore He everywhere handles this, saying, *"they have not known Me"*; and, *"for My sake they shall do it"*; and, *"for My Name's sake, and for the Father's sake"*; and, *"I suffered first"*; and, *"from no just cause they dare these things."*

4. Let us too consider these things in our temptations, when we suffer anything from wicked men, *"looking to the Beginner and Finisher of our faith"* [Hebrews 12:2], and considering that it is by wicked men, and that it is for virtue's sake, and for His sake. For if we reflect on these things, all will be most easy and tolerable. Since if one suffering for those he loves is even proud of it, what feeling of things dreadful will he have who suffers for the sake of God? For if He, for our sake, calls that shameful thing, the Cross, *"glory"* [John 13:31], much more ought we to be thus disposed. And if we can so despise sufferings, much more shall we be able to despise

riches, and covetousness. We ought then, when about to endure anything unpleasant, to think not of the toils but of the crowns; for as merchants take into account not the seas only, but also the profits, so ought we to reckon on heaven and confidence towards God. And if the getting more seem a pleasant thing, think that Christ wills it not, and straightway it will appear displeasing. And if it be grievous to you to give to the poor, stay not your reckoning at the expense, but straightway transport your thoughts to the harvest which results from the sowing; and when it is hard to despise the love of a strange woman, think of the crown which comes after the struggle, and you shall easily bear the struggle. For if fear diverts a man from unseemly things, much more should the love of Christ. Difficult is virtue; but let us cast around her form the greatness of the promise of things to come. Indeed those who are virtuous, even apart from these promises, see her beautiful in herself, and on this account go after her, and work because it seems good to God, not for hire; and they think it a great thing to be sober-minded, not in order that they may not be punished, but because God has commanded it. But if any one is too weak for this, let him think of the prizes. So let us do in respect of alms-doing, let us pity our fellow-men, let us not, I entreat, neglect them when perishing with hunger. How can it be otherwise than an unseemly thing, that we should sit at the table laughing and enjoying ourselves, and when we hear others wailing as they pass through the street, should not even turn at their cries, but be angry with them, and call them "*cheat*"? "*What do you mean, man? Does any one plan a cheat for a single loaf of bread?*" "*Yes,*" says some one. Then in this case above all let him be pitied; in this case above all let him be delivered from his need. Or if you are not minded to give, do not insult either; if you will not save the wreck, do not thrust it into the gulf. For consider, when you push away the poor man who comes to you, who you will be when you call

upon God. *"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."* [Matthew 7:2] Consider how he departs, crushed, bowed down, lamenting; besides his poverty having received also the blow from your insolence. For if you count the begging a curse, think what a tempest it makes, begging to get nothing, but to go away insulted. How long shall we be like wild beasts, and know not nature itself through greediness? Many groan at these words; but I desire them not now, but always, to have this feeling of compassion. Think, I pray you, of that day when we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, when we shall beg for mercy, and Christ, bringing them forward, shall say, *"For the sake of a single loaf, of a single obol, so great a surge did ye raise in these souls!"* What shall we reply? What defense shall we make? To show that He will bring them forward, hear what He says; *"Inasmuch as you did it not to one of these, you did it not to Me."* [Matthew 25:45] They will no more say anything to us, but God on their behalf will upbraid us. Since the rich man saw Lazarus too, and Lazarus said nothing to him, but Abraham spoke for him; and thus it will be in the case of the poor who are now despised by us. We shall not see them stretching out their hands in pitiful state, but being in rest; and we shall take the state which was theirs (and would that it were that state only, and not one much more grievous) as a punishment. For neither did the rich man desire to be filled with crumbs *"there,"* but was scorched and tormented sharply, and was told, *"You in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things."* [Luke 16:25] Let us not then deem wealth any great thing; it will help us on our way to punishment, if we take not heed, just as, if we take heed, poverty also becomes to us an addition of enjoyment and rest. For we both put off our sins if we bear it with thankfulness, and gain great boldness before God.

5. Let us then not be ever seeking security here, in order that we may enjoy security there; but let us accept the labors which are in behalf of virtue, and cut off superfluities, and seek nothing more than we need, and spend all our substance on those who want. Since what excuse can we have, when God promises heaven to us, and we will not even give Him bread? When He indeed for you makes the sun to rise, and supplies all the ministry of the Creation, but thou dost not even give Him a garment, nor allow Him to share your roof? But why speak I of sun and moon? He has set His Body before you, He has given you His Precious Blood; and do you not even impart to Him of your cup? But have you done so for once? This is not mercy; as long as, having the means, you help not, you have not yet fulfilled the whole duty. Thus the virgins who had the lamps, had oil, but not in abundance. Why, you ought, even did you give from your own, not to be so miserly, but now when you give what is your Lord's, why do you count every little? Will ye that I tell you the cause of this inhumanity? When men get together their wealth through greediness, these same are slow to give alms; for one who has learned so to gain, knows not how to spend. For how can a man prepared for rapine adapt himself to its contrary? He who takes from others, how shall he be able to give up his own to another? A dog accustomed to feed on flesh cannot guard the flock; therefore the shepherds kill such. That this be not our fate, let us refrain from such feasting. For these men too feed on flesh, when they bring on death by hunger. Do you see not how God has allowed to us all things in common? If amid riches He has suffered men to be poor, it is for the consolation of the rich, that they may be able by showing mercy towards them to put off their sins. But thou even in this hast been cruel and inhuman; whence it is evident, that if you had received this same power in greater things, you would have committed ten thousand murders, and

wouldest have debarred men from light, and from life altogether. That this might not take place, necessity has cut short insatiableness in such matters.

If you are pained when you hear these things, much more I when I see them taking place. How long shall you be rich, and that man poor? Till evening, but no farther; for so short is life, and all things so near their end, and all things henceforth so stand at the door, that the whole must be deemed but a little hour. What need have you of bursting storehouses, of a multitude of domestics and house-keepers? Why have you not ten thousand proclaimers of your almsdoing? The storehouse utters no voice, yet will it bring upon you many robbers; but the storehouses of the poor will go up to God Himself, and will make your present life sweet, and put away all your sins, and you shall gain glory from God, and honor from men. Why then grudgest you yourself such good things? For you will not do so much good to the poor, as to yourself, when you benefit them. You will right their present state; but for yourself you will lay up beforehand the glory and confidence which shall be hereafter. And this may we all obtain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be the glory and the might for ever. Amen.

Homily 78 on the Gospel of John

John 16:4-6

"These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go My way to Him that sent Me; and none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart."

1. Great is the tyranny of despondency, and much courage do we need so as to stand manfully against the feeling, and after gathering from it what is useful, to let the superfluous go. It has somewhat useful; for when we ourselves or others sin, then only is it good to grieve; but when we fall into human vicissitudes, then despondency is useless. And now when it has overthrown the disciples who were not yet perfect, see how Christ raises them again by His rebuke. They who before this had asked Him ten thousand questions, (for Peter said, *"Where are You going?"* [c. xiii. 36]; and Thomas, *"We know not whither You go, and how can we know the way?"* [100:xiv. 5 and 8]; and Philip, *"Show us Your Father";*) these men, I say, now hearing, *"they will put you out of the synagogues,"* and *"will hate you,"* and *"whosoever kills you will think that he does God service,"* were so cast down as to be struck dumb, so that they spoke nothing to Him. This then He makes a reproach to them, and says, *"These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you; but now I go unto Him that sent Me, and none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart."* For a dreadful thing is immoderate sorrow, dreadful and effective of death.

Wherefore Paul said, *"Lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up by overmuch sorrow."* [2 Corinthians 2:7]

"And these things," says He, *"I told you not at the beginning."* Why did He not tell them at the beginning? That none might say that He spoke guessing from the ordinary course of events. And why did He enter on a matter of such unpleasantness? *"I knew these things,"* He says, *"from the beginning, and spoke not of them; not because I did not know them, but 'because I was with you.'"* And this again was spoken after a human manner, as though He had said, *"Because you were in safety, and it was in your power to question Me when you would, and all the storm blew upon Me, and it was superfluous to tell you these things at the beginning."* *"But did He not tell them this? Did He not call the twelve, and say unto them, 'You shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake,' and, 'they shall scourge you in the synagogues'? [Matthew 10:18]. How then says He, 'I told you not at the beginning'?"* Because He had proclaimed before the scourgings and bringing before princes, still not that their death should appear so desirable that the action should even be deemed a service to God. For this more than anything was suited to terrify them, that they were to be judged as impious and corrupters. This too may be said, that in that place He spoke of what they should suffer from the Gentiles, but here He has added in a stronger way the acts of the Jews also, and told them that it was at their doors.

"But now I go to Him that sent Me, and no man of you says, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart." It was no slight comfort to them to learn that He knew the excess of their despondency. For they were beside themselves from the anguish caused by their being left by Him, and from their awaiting the terrible things which were to come, since they knew not whether they

should be able to bear them manfully. *"Why then after this did He not tell them that they had been vouchsafed the Spirit?"* That you might learn that they were exceedingly virtuous. For if, when they had not yet been vouchsafed the Spirit, they started not back, though overwhelmed with sorrow, consider what sort of men they were likely to be after having enjoyed the grace. If they had heard this at that time, and so had endured, we should have attributed the whole to the Spirit, but now it is entirely the fruit of their own state of mind, it is a clear manifestation of their love for Christ, who applies a touchstone to their mind as yet defenseless.

John 16:7

"But I tell you the truth."

Observe how He consoles them again. *"I speak not,"* He says, *"to please you, and although you be grieved ten thousand fold, yet must ye hear what is for your good; it is indeed to your liking that I should be with you, but what is expedient for you is different. And it is the part of one caring for others, not to be over gentle with his friends in matters which concern their interests, or to lead them away from what is good for them."*

"For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come."

What here say those who hold not the fitting opinion concerning the Spirit? Is it *"expedient"* that the master depart, and the servant come? Do you see how great is the honor of the Spirit?

"But if I depart, I will send Him unto you." And what the gain?

John 16:8

"He, when He has come, will reprove the world."

That is, *"they shall not do these things unpunished if He come. For indeed, the things that have been already done, are sufficient to stop their mouths; but when these things are also done by Him, when doctrines are more perfect and miracles greater, much more shall they be condemned when they see such things done in My Name, which make the proof of the Resurrection more certain. For now they are able to say, 'this is the carpenter's son, whose father and mother we know'; but when they see the bands of death loosed, wickedness cast out, natural lameness straightened, devils expelled, abundant supply of the Spirit, and all this effected by My being called on, what will they say? The Father has borne witness of Me, and the Spirit will bear witness also."* Yet He bore witness at the beginning. Yea, and shall also do it now. But the, *"will convince,"*

John 16:9

"Of sin."

This means, *"will cut off all their excuses, and show that they have transgressed unpardonably."*

John 16:10

"Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you see Me no more."

That is, *"I have exhibited a blameless life, and this is the proof, that, 'I go to the Father.'"* For since they continually urged this against Him, that He was not from God, and therefore called Him a sinner and transgressor, He says, that the Spirit shall take from them this excuse also. *"For if My being deemed not to be from God, shows Me to be a transgressor, when the Spirit shall have shown that I have gone there, not merely for a season, but to abide there, (for the, 'You see Me no more,' is the expression of one declaring this,) what will they say then?"* Observe how by these two things, their evil suspicion is removed; since neither does working miracles belong to a sinner, (for a sinner cannot work them,) nor does the being with God continually belong to a sinner. *"So that you can no longer say, that 'this man is a sinner,' that 'this man is not from God.'"*

John 16:11

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

Here again He moots the argument concerning righteousness, that He had overthrown His opponent. Now had He been a sinner, He could not have overthrown him; a thing which not even any just man had been strong enough to do. *"But that he has been condemned through Me, they shall know who trample on him hereafter, and who clearly know My Resurrection, which is the mark of Him who condemns him. For he was not able to hold Me. And whereas they said that I had a devil, and that I was a deceiver, these things also shall hereafter appear to be false; for I could not have prevailed against him, had I been subject to sin; but now he is condemned and cast out."*

John 16:12

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now."

"Therefore it is expedient for you that I depart, if you then will bear them when I departed." "And what has come to pass? Is the Spirit greater than You, that now indeed we bear not, but It will fit us to bear? Is It working more powerful and more perfect?" "Not so; for He too shall speak My words." Wherefore He says,

John 16:13-15

"He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are Mine."

For since He had told them, that *"He shall teach you, and bring to your remembrance"* [John 14:26], and shall comfort you in your afflictions," (which He Himself did not,) and that *"it is expedient for you that I should depart"* [John 16:7], and that He should come, and, *"now you are not able to bear"* [John 16:12], but then ye shall be able," and, that *"He shall lead you into all truth"* [John 16:13]; lest hearing these things they should suppose the Spirit to be the greater, and so fall into an extreme opinion of impiety, therefore He says, *"He shall receive of Mine,"* that is, *"whatsoever things I have told you, He shall also tell you."* When He says, *"He shall speak nothing of Himself,"* He means, *"nothing contrary, nothing of His own opposed to My words."* As then in saying respecting Himself, *"I speak not of Myself"* [John 14:10], He means that He speaks nothing beside what the Father says, nothing of His own against Him, or differing from Him, so also with respect to the Spirit. But the, *"of Mine,"* means, *"of what I know," "of My own knowledge"; "for the knowledge of Me and of the Spirit is one."*

"And He will tell you things to come." He excited their minds, for the race of man is for nothing so greedy, as for learning the future. This, for instance, they continually asked Him, *"Where are you going?" "Which is the way?"* To free them therefore from this anxiety, He says, *"He shall foretell you all things, so that you shall not meet with them without warning."*

"He shall glorify Me." How? *"In My name He shall grant His inward workings."* For since at the coming of the Spirit they were about to do greater miracles, therefore, again introducing the Equality of Honor, He says, *"He shall glorify Me."*

What means He by, *"all truth"*? For this also He testifies of Him, that *"He shall guide us into all truth."* [John 16:13] Because He was clothed with the flesh, and because He would not seem to speak concerning Himself, and because they did not yet know clearly concerning the Resurrection, and were too imperfect, and also because of the Jews, that they might not think they were punishing Him as a transgressor; therefore He spoke no great thing continually, nor plainly drew them away from the Law. But when the disciples were cut off from them, and were for the future without; and when many were about to believe, and to be released from their sins; and when there were others who spoke of Him, He with good reason spoke not great things concerning Himself. *"So that it proceeded not from ignorance of Mine,"* He says, *"that I told you not what I should have told you, but from the infirmity of the hearers."* On this account having said, *"He shall lead you into all truth,"* He added, *"He shall not speak of Himself."* For to show that the Spirit needs not teaching, hear Paul saying, *"So also the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God."* [1 Corinthians 2:11] *"As then the spirit of man, not learning from another, knows; so also the Holy Spirit 'shall receive of Mine,'"* that is, *"shall speak in unison with what is Mine."*

"All things that the Father has are Mine." *"Since then those things are Mine, and He shall speak from the things of the Father, He shall speak from Mine."*

3. *"But why did not the Spirit come before He departed?"* Because the curse not having yet been taken away, sin not yet loosed, but all being yet

subject to vengeance, He could not come. *"It is necessary then,"* says He, *"that the enmity be put away, that we be reconciled to God, and then receive that Gift."* But why says He, *"I will send Him"*? [John 16:7] It means, *"I will prepare you beforehand to receive Him."* For, how can that which Is everywhere, be *"sent"*? Besides, He also shows the distinction of the Persons. On these two accounts He thus speaks; and also, since they were hardly to be drawn away from Himself, exhorting them to hold fast to the Spirit, and in order that they might cherish It. For He Himself was able to have wrought these things, but He concedes to the Spirit the working of miracles, on this account, that they might understand His dignity. For as the Father could have brought into being things which are, yet the Son did so, that we might understand His power, so also is it in this case. On this account He Himself was made Flesh, reserving the inward working for the Spirit, shutting up the mouths of those who take the argument of His ineffable love for an occasion of impiety. For when they say that the Son was made flesh because He was inferior to the Father, we will reply to them, *"what then will you say of the Spirit?"* He took not the flesh, and yet certainly on this account ye will not call Him greater than the Son, nor the Son inferior to Him. Therefore, in the case of baptism also the Trinity is included. The Father is able to effect the whole, as is the Son, and the Holy Ghost; yet, since concerning the Father no man doubts, but the doubt was concerning the Son, and the Holy Ghost, They are included in the rite, that by Their community in supplying those unspeakable blessings, we may also fully learn Their community in dignity. For that both the Son is able by Himself to do that which in the case of baptism He is able to do with the Father, and the Holy Ghost the same, hear these things said plainly. For to the Jews He said, *"That ye may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"* [Mark 2:10]; and again, *"That ye may become*

children of light" [John 12:36]: and, *"I give to them eternal life."* [John 10:28] Then after this, *"That they might have life, and might have it more abundantly."* [John 10:10] Now let us see the Spirit also performing the same thing. Where can we see it? *"But the manifestation of the Spirit,"* it says, *"is given to every man to profit withal"* [1 Corinthians 12:7; c. vi. 63]; He then that gives these things, much more remits sins. And again, *"It is the Spirit that quickens";* and, *"Shall quicken you by His Spirit which dwells in you"* [Romans 8:11]; and, *"The Spirit is Life because of righteousness"* [Romans 8:10]; and, *"If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."* [Galatians 5:18] *"For you have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption."* [Romans 8:15] All the wonders too which they then wrought, they wrought at the coming of the Spirit. And Paul writing to the Corinthians, said, *"But you have been washed, but you have been sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God."* [1 Corinthians 6:11] Since then they had heard many things of the Father, and had seen the Son work many things, but as yet knew nothing clearly of the Spirit, that Spirit does miracles, and brings in the perfect knowledge. But (as I said before) that He may not thence be supposed to be greater, on this account Christ says, *"Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come."* Since, if this be not so, how could it be otherwise than absurd, if He was about to hear then, and on account of those who were being made disciples? For according to you, He would not even then know, except on account of those who were about to hear. What could be more unlawful than this saying? Besides, what would He have to hear? Did He not speak all these things by the Prophets? For if He was about to teach concerning the dissolution of the Law, it had been spoken of: if concerning Christ, His

Divinity and the Dispensation, these had been spoken of also. What could He say more clearly after this?

"And shall show you things to come." Here most of all Christ shows His Dignity, for to foretell things to come is especially the property of God. Now if He also learn this from others, He will have nothing more than the Prophets, but here Christ declares a knowledge brought into exact accordance with God, that it is impossible that He should speak anything else. But the, *"shall receive of Mine,"* means, *"shall receive, either of the grace which came into My Flesh, or of the knowledge which I also have, not as needing it, nor as learning it from another, but because it is One and the same."* *"And wherefore spoke He thus, and not otherwise?"* Because they understand not yet the word concerning the Spirit, wherefore He provides for one thing only, that the Spirit should be believed and received by them, and that they should not be offended. For since He had said, *"One is your Teacher, even Christ"* [Matthew 23:10], that they might not deem that they should disobey Him in obeying the Spirit, He says, *"His teaching and Mine are One; of what I should have taught, of those things shall He also speak. Do not suppose His words are other than Mine, for those words are Mine, and confirm My opinion. For One is the will of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* Thus also He wills us to be, when He says, *"That they may be one, as You and I are One."* [John 17:11]

4. There is nothing equal to unanimity and concord; for so one is manifold. If two or ten are of one mind, the one is one no longer, but each one is multiplied tenfold, and you will find the one in the ten, and the ten in the one; and if they have an enemy, he who attacks the one, as having attacked the ten, is vanquished; for he is the mark not for one, but for ten opponents. Is one in want? No, he is not in want, for he is wealthy in his greater part, that is, in the nine; and the needy part, the lesser, is concealed

by the wealthy part, the greater. Each of these has twenty hands, twenty eyes, and as many feet. For he sees not with his own eyes alone, but with those of others; he walks not with his own feet alone, but with those of others; he works not with his own hands alone, but with theirs. He has ten souls, for not only does he take thought for himself, but those souls also for him. And if they be made a hundred, it will still be the same, and their power will be extended. Do you see the excess of love, how it makes the one both irresistible and manifold, how one can even be in many places, the same both in Persia and in Rome, and that what nature cannot do, love can? For one part of him will be here, and one there, or rather he will be wholly here and wholly there. If then he have a thousand or two thousand friends, consider again whither his power will extend. Do you see what an increase-giving thing is love? For the wonderful thing is this, its making one a thousand. Why then do we not acquire this power and place ourselves in safety? This is better than all power or riches, this is more than health, than light itself, it is the groundwork of good courage. How long do we set our love on one or two? Consider also the action in the contrary way. Suppose a man without a friend, a mark of the utmost folly, (for a fool will say, "*I have no friend,*") what sort of life will such a one lead? For though he be infinitely rich, in plenty and luxury, possessed of ten thousand good things, yet is he desolate and bare of all. But in the case of friends not so; though they be poor men, yet are they better provided than the wealthy; and the things which a man undertakes not to say for himself, a friend will say for him, and whatever gratifications he is not able to procure for himself, he will be enabled to obtain by means of another, and much more; and it will be to us the groundwork of all enjoyment and safety, since one who is guarded by so many spearmen cannot suffer harm. For the king's body guards are not equal in their strictness to these. The one perform their watch

through compulsion and fear, the others through kindness and love; and love is far mightier than fear. The king fears his own guards; the friend is more confident in them than in himself, and by reason of them fears none of those that plot against him. Let us then engage in this traffic; the poor man, that he may have consolation in his poverty; the rich, that he may possess his wealth in safety; the ruler, that he may rule with safety; the ruled, that he may have benevolent rulers. This is the source of kindness, this the groundwork of gentleness; since even among beasts, those are the most fierce and untamable which are not gregarious. For this cause we dwell in cities, and have public places, that we may converse with one another. This also Paul commanded, saying, *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"* [Hebrews 10:25]; for no evil is so great as solitariness, and the state which is without compact and intercourse. *"What then,"* says some one, *"of the solitaries, and of those who have occupied the summits of the mountains?"* That neither are they without friends; they have indeed fled from the turmoil of common life, but they have many of one soul with them, and closely bound together one to another; and they have retired that they might rightly accomplish this thing. For since the rivalry of business causes many disputes, therefore, removing from among men, they cultivate love with much exactness. *"But how,"* says some one, *"if a man be alone can he have ten thousand friends?"* I, for my part, desire, if it be possible, that men should know how to dwell one with another; but for the present let the properties of friendship remain unshaken. For it is not place which makes friends. They, for instance, have many who admire them; now these would not have admired had they not loved them. Again, they pray for all the world, which is the greatest proof of friendship. For this cause we salute one another at the Mysteries, that being many we may become one; and in the case of the uninitiated, we make our prayers common, supplicating for

the sick, and for the produce of the world, for land and sea. Do you see all the power of love? In the prayers, in the Mysteries, in the exhortations? This is that which causes all good things. If we hold carefully to this, we shall both rightly dispense things present, and also obtain the Kingdom; which may we all obtain through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 79 on the Gospel of John

John 16:16-17

"A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says?" [And what follows.]

1. Nothing is wont so to cast down the soul that is anguished and possessed by deep despondency, as when words which cause pain are continually dwelt upon. Why then did Christ, after saying, *"I go,"* and, *"Hereafter I will not speak with you,"* continually dwell on the same subject, saying, *"A little while, and you shall not see Me, because I go to Him that sent Me"*? When He had recovered them by His words concerning the Spirit, He again casts down their courage. Wherefore does He this? He tests their feelings, and renders them more proved, and well accustoms them by hearing sad things, manfully to bear separation from Him; for they who had practiced this when spoken of in words, were likely in actions also, easily to bear it afterwards. And if one enquire closely, this very thing is a consolation, the saying that, *"I go to the Father."* For it is the expression of One, who declares that He shall not perish, but that His end is a kind of translation. He adds too another consolation; for He says not merely, *"A little while, and you shall not see Me,"* but also, *"A little while, and you shall see Me"*; showing that He will both come to them again, and that their separation would be but for a little while, and His presence with them continual. This, however, they did not understand. Whence one may with reason wonder how, after having often heard these things, they doubt, as though they had heard nothing. How then is it that they did not understand?

It was either through grief, as I suppose, for that drove what was said from their understanding; or through the obscurity of the words. Because He seemed to them to set forth two contraries, which were not contrary. *"If,"* says one of them, *"we shall see You, where are You going? And if You go, how shall we see You?"* Therefore they say, *"We cannot tell what He says."* That He was about to depart, they knew; but they knew not that He would shortly come to them. On which account He rebukes them, because they did not understand His saying. For, desiring to instill in them the doctrine concerning His death, what says He?

John 16:20

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament"—which belonged to the Death and the Cross—"but the world shall rejoice."

Because by reason of their not desiring His death, they quickly ran into the belief that He would not die, and then when they heard that He would die, cast about, not knowing what that *"little"* meant, He says, *"You shall mourn and lament."*

"But your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Then having shown that after grief comes joy, and that grief genders joy, and that grief is short, but the pleasure endless, He passes to a common example; and what says He?

John 16:21

"A woman when she is in travail has sorrow."

And He has used a comparison which the Prophets also use continually, likening despondencies to the exceeding pains of childbirth. But what He says is of this kind: *"Travail pains shall lay hold on you, but the pang of childbirth is the cause of joy"*; both confirming His words relative to the Resurrection, and showing that the departing hence is like passing from the womb into the light of day. As though He had said, *"Marvel not that I bring you to your advantage through such sorrow, since even a mother to become a mother, passes in like manner through pain."* Here also He implies something mystical, that He has loosened the travail pangs of death, and caused a new man to be born of them. And He said not, that the pain shall pass away only, but, *"she does not even remember it,"* so great is the joy which succeeds; so also shall it be with the Saints. And yet the woman does not rejoice because *"a man has come into the world,"* but because a son has been born to her; since, had this been the case, nothing would have hindered the barren from rejoicing over another who bears. Why then spoke He thus? Because He introduced this example for this purpose only, to show that sorrow is for a season, but joy lasting: and to show that (death) is a translation unto life; and to show the great profit of their pangs. He said not, *"a child has been born,"* but, *"A man."* For to my mind He here alludes to His own Resurrection, and that He should be born not unto that death which bare the birth-pang, but unto the Kingdom. Therefore He said not, *"a child has been born unto her,"* but, *"A man has been born into the world."*

John 16:22-23

"And ye now therefore have sorrow—[but I will see you again, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy]." Then, to show that He shall die no more, He says, "And no man takes it from you. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing."

Again He proves nothing else by these words, but that He is from God. *"For then you shall for the time to come know all things."* But what is, *"You shall not ask Me"*? *"You shall need no intercessor, but it is sufficient that you call on My Name, and so gain all things."*

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall ask My Father in My Name."

He shows the power of His Name, if at least being neither seen nor called upon, but only named, He even makes us approved by the Father. But where has this taken place? Where they say, *"Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Your servants that with boldness they may speak Your word"* [Acts 4:29-31], *"and work miracles in Your Name."* *"And the place was shaken where they were."*

John 16:24

"Hitherto you have asked nothing."

2. Hence He shows it to be good that He should depart, if hitherto they had asked nothing, and if then they should receive all things whatsoever they should ask. *"For do not suppose, because I shall no longer be with you, that you are deserted; My Name shall give you greater boldness."* Since then the words which He had used had been veiled, He says,

John 16:25

"These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time comes when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs."

"There shall be a time when you shall know all things clearly." He speaks of the time of the Resurrection. *"Then,"*

"I shall tell you plainly of the Father."

(For He was with them, and talked with them forty days, being assembled with them, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God [Acts 1:3-4])— *"because now being in fear, you give no heed to My words; but then when you see Me risen again, and converse with Me, you will be able to learn all things plainly, for the Father Himself will love you, when your faith in Me has been made firm."*

John 16:26

"And I will not ask the Father."

"Your love for Me suffices to be your advocate."

John 16:27-28

"Because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father; and have come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father."

For since His discourse concerning the Resurrection, and together with this, the hearing that *"I came out from God, and there I go,"* gave them no common comfort, He continually handles these things. He gave a pledge, in the first place, that they were right in believing on Him; in the second, that they should be in safety. When therefore He said, *"A little while, and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me"* [John 16:17], they with reason did not understand Him. But now it is no longer so. What then is, *"You shall not ask Me"*? *"You shall not say, 'Show us the Father,' and, 'Where are You going?' for you shall know all knowledge, and the Father shall be disposed towards you even as I am."* It was this especially which made them breathe again, the learning that they should be the Father's friends wherefore they say,

John 16:30

"Now we know that You know all things."

Do you see that He made answer to what was secretly harboring in their minds?

"And needest not that any man should ask You."

That is, *"Before hearing, You know the things which made us stumble, and You have given us rest, since You have said, 'The Father loves you, because you have loved Me.'"* After so many and so great matters, they say, *"Now we know."* Do you see in what an imperfect state they were? Then, when, as though conferring a favor upon Him, they say, *"Now we know,"* He replies, *"You still require many other things to come to perfection; nothing is as yet achieved by you. You shall presently betray Me to My enemies, and such fear shall seize you, that you shall not even be able to retire one with another, yet from this I shall suffer nothing dreadful."* Do you see again how condescending His speech is? And indeed He makes this a charge against them, that they continually needed condescension. For when they say, *"Lo, now You speak plainly, and speakest no parable"* [John 16:29], *"and therefore we believe You,"* He shows them that now, when they believe, they do not yet believe, neither does He accept their words. This He says, referring them to another season. But the,

John 16:32

"The Father is with Me."

He has again put on their account; for this they everywhere wished to learn. Then, to show that He did not give them perfect knowledge by saying this, but in order that their reason might not rebel, (for it was probable that they might form some human ideas, and think that they should not enjoy any assistance from Him,) He says,

John 16:33

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace."

That is, *"that you should not cast Me from your thoughts, but receive Me."* Let no one, then, drag these words into a doctrine; they are spoken for our comfort and love. *"For not even when we suffer such things as I have mentioned shall your troubles stop there, but as long as you are in the world you shall have sorrow, not only now when I am betrayed, but also afterwards. But rouse your minds, for you shall suffer nothing terrible. When the master has gotten the better of his enemies, the disciples must not despond."* "And how," tell me, "have You 'conquered the world'?" I have told you already, that I have cast down its ruler, but you shall know hereafter, when all things yield and give place to you.

3. But it is permitted to us also to conquer, looking to the Author of our faith, and walking on that road which He cut for us. So neither shall death get the mastery of us. *"What then, shall we not die?"* says some one. Why, from this very thing it is clear that he shall not gain the mastery over us. The champion truly will then be glorious, not when he has not closed with his opponent, but when having closed he is not holden by him. We therefore are not mortal, because of our struggle with death, but immortal, because of our victory; then should we have been mortal, had we remained with him always. As then I should not call the longest-lived animals immortal, although they long remain free from death, so neither him who shall rise after death mortal, because he is dissolved by death. For, tell me, if a man blush a little, should we say that he was continually ruddy? Not so, for the action is not a habit. If one become pale, should we call him jaundiced? No, for the affection is but temporary. And so you would not

call him mortal, who has been for but a short time in the hands of death. Since in this way we may speak of those who sleep, for they are dead, so to say, and without action. But does death corrupt our bodies? What of that? It is not that they may remain in corruption, but that they be made better. Let us then conquer the world, let us run to immortality, let us follow our King, let us too set up a trophy, let us despise the world's pleasures. We need no toil to do so; let us transfer our souls to heaven, and all the world is conquered. If you desire it not, it is conquered; if you deride it, it is worsted. Strangers are we and sojourners, let us then not grieve at any of its painful things. For if, being sprung from a renowned country, and from illustrious ancestors, you had gone into some distant land, being known to no one, having with you neither servants nor wealth, and then some one had insulted you, you would not grieve as though you had suffered these things at home. For the knowing clearly that you were in a strange and foreign land, would persuade you to bear all easily, and to despise hunger, and thirst, and any suffering whatever. Consider this also now, that you are a stranger and a sojourner, and let nothing disturb you in this foreign land; for you have a City whose Artificer and Creator is God, and the sojourning itself is but for a short and little time. Let whoever will strike, insult, revile; we are in a strange land, and live but meanly; the dreadful thing would be, to suffer so in our own country, before our fellow citizens, then is the greatest unseemliness and loss. For if a man be where he had none that knows him, he endures all easily, because insult becomes more grievous from the intention of those who offer it. For instance, if a man insult the governor, knowing that he is governor, then the insult is bitter; but if he insult, supposing him to be a private man, he cannot even touch him who undergoes the insult. So let us reason also. For neither do our revilers know what we are, as, that we are citizens of heaven, registered for the country

which is above, fellow-choristers of the Cherubim. Let us not then grieve nor deem their insult to be insult; had they known, they would not have insulted us. Do they deem us poor and mean? Neither let us count this an insult. For tell me, if a traveler having got before his servants, were sitting a little space in the inn waiting for them, and then the innkeeper, or some travelers, should behave rudely to him, and revile him, would he not laugh at the other's ignorance? Would not their mistake rather give him pleasure? Would he not feel a satisfaction as though not he but some one else were insulted? Let us too behave thus. We too sit in an inn, waiting for our friends who travel the same road; when we are all collected, then they shall know whom they insult. These men then shall hang their heads; then they shall say, *"This is he whom we" fools "had in derision."* [Wisdom 5:3]

4. With these two things then let us comfort ourselves, that we are not insulted, for they know not who we are, and that, if we wish to obtain satisfaction, they shall hereafter give us a most bitter one. But God forbid that any should have a soul so cruel and inhuman. *"What then if we be insulted by our kinsmen? For this is the burdensome thing."* Nay, this is the light thing. *"Why, pray?"* Because we do not bear those whom we love when they insult us, in the same way as we bear those whom we do not know. For instance, in consoling those who have been injured, we often say, *"It is a brother who has injured you, bear it nobly; it is a father; it is an uncle."* But if the name of *"father"* and *"brother"* puts you to shame, much more if I name to you a relationship more intimate than these; for we are not only brethren one to another, but also members, and one body. Now if the name of brother shame you, much more that of member. Have you not heard that Gentile proverb, which says, that *"it behooves to keep friends with their defects"*? Have you not heard Paul say, *"Bear ye one another's burdens"*? Do you see not lovers? For I am compelled, since I cannot draw

an instance from you, to bring my discourse to that ground of argument. This also Paul does, thus saying, *"Furthermore we have had fathers in our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence."* [Hebrews 12:9] Or rather, that is more apt which he says to the Romans, *"As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness."* For this reason let us confidently keep hold of the illustration. Now do you not observe lovers, what miseries these suffer when inflamed with desire for harlots, cuffed, beaten, and laughed at, enduring a harlot, who turns away from and insults them in ten thousand ways; yet if they see but once anything sweet or gentle, all is well to do with them, all former things are gone, all goes on with a fair wind, be it poverty, be it sickness, be it anything else besides these. For they count their own life as miserable or blessed, according as they may have her whom they love disposed towards them. They know nothing of mortal honor or disgrace, but even if one insult, they bear all easily through the great pleasure and delight which they receive from her; and though she revile, though she spit in their face, they think, when they are enduring this, that they are being pelted with roses. And what wonder, if such are their feelings as to her person? For her very house they think to be more splendid than any, though it be but of mud, though it be falling down. But why speak I of walls? When they even see the places which they frequent in the evening, they are excited. Allow me now for what follows to speak the word of the Apostle. As he says, *"As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, so yield your members servants unto righteousness"*; so in like manner now I say, *"as we have loved these women, let us love one another, and we shall not think that we suffer anything terrible."* And why say I, *"one another"*? Let us so love God. Do ye shudder, when you hear that I require as much love in the case of God, as

we have shown towards a harlot? But I shudder that we do not show even thus much. And, if you will, let us go on with the argument, though what is said be very painful. The woman beloved promises her lovers nothing good, but dishonor, shame, and insolence. For this is what the waiting upon a harlot makes a man, ridiculous, shameful, dishonored. But God promises us heaven, and the good things which are in heaven; He has made us sons, and brethren of the Only-begotten, and has given you ten thousand things while living, and when you die, resurrection, and promises that He will give us such good things as it is not possible even to imagine, and makes us honored and revered. Again, that woman compels her lovers to spend all their substance for the pit and for destruction; but God bids us sow the heaven, and gives us an hundred-fold, and eternal life. Again, she uses her lover like a slave, giving commands more hardly than any tyrant; but God says, *"I no longer call you servants, but friends."* [John 15:15]

5. Have ye seen the excess both of the evils here and the blessings there ? What then comes next? For this woman's sake, many lie awake, and whatever she commands, readily obey; give up house, and father, and mother, and friends, and money, and patronage, and leave all that belongs to them in want and desolation; but for the sake of God, or rather for the sake of ourselves, we often do not choose to expend even the third portion of our substance, but we look on the hungry, we overlook him, and run past the naked, and do not even bestow a word upon him. But the lovers, if they see but a little servant girl of their mistress, and her a barbarian, they stand in the middle of the market-place, and talk with her, as if they were proud and glad to do so, unrolling an interminable round of words; and for her sake they count all their living as nothing, deem rulers and rule nothing, (they know it, all who have had experience of the malady,) and thank her more when she commands, than others when they serve. Is there not with good

reason a hell? Are there not with good reason ten thousand punishments? Let us then become sober, let us apply to the service of God as much, or half, or even the third part of what others supply to the harlot. Perhaps again ye shudder; for so do I myself. But I would not that you should shudder at words only, but at the actions; as it is, here indeed our hearts are made orderly, but we go forth and cast all away. What then is the gain? For there, if it be required to spend money, no one laments his poverty, but even borrows it to give, perchance, when smitten. But here, if we do but mention almsgiving, they pretend to us children, and wife, and house, and patronage, and ten thousand excuses. "*But,*" says some one, "*the pleasure is great there.*" This it is that I lament and mourn. What if I show that the pleasure here is greater? For there shame, and insult, and expense, cut away no little of the pleasure, and after these the quarreling and enmity; but here there is nothing of the kind. What is there, tell me, equal to this pleasure, to sit expecting heaven and the kingdom there, and the glory of the saints, and the life that is endless? "*But these things,*" says some one, "*are in expectation, the others in experience.*" What kind of experience? Will you that I tell you the pleasures which are here also by experience? Consider what freedom you enjoy, and how you fear and tremblest at no man when you live in company with virtue, neither enemy, nor plotter, nor informer, nor rival in credit or in love, nor envious person, nor poverty, nor sickness, nor any other human thing. But there, although ten thousand things be according to your mind, though riches flow in as from a fountain, yet the war with rivals, and the plots, and ambuscades, will make more miserable than any the life of him who wallows with those women. For when that abominable one is haughty, and insolent, you needs must kindle quarrel to flatter her. This therefore is more grievous than ten thousand deaths, more intolerable than any punishment. But here there is nothing of the kind. For "*the fruit,*" it

says, "*of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.*" [Galatians 5:22] Here is no quarreling, nor unseasonable pecuniary expense, nor disgrace and expense too; and if you give but a farthing, or a loaf, or a cup of cold water, He will be much beholden to you, and He does nothing to pain or grieve you, but all so as to make you glorious, and free you from all shame. What defense therefore shall we have, what pardon shall we gain, if, leaving these things, we give ourselves up to the contrary, and voluntarily cast ourselves into the furnace that burns with fire? Wherefore I exhort those who are sick of this malady, to recover themselves, and return to health, and not allow themselves to fall into despair. Since that son also was in a far more grievous state than this, yet when he returned to his father's house, he came to his former honor, and appeared more glorious than him who had ever been well-pleasing. Let us also imitate him, and returning to our Father, even though it be late, let us depart from that captivity, and transfer ourselves to freedom, that we may enjoy the Kingdom of heaven, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 80 on the Gospel of John

John 17:1

"These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and says, Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You."

1. *"He that has done and taught,"* it says, *"the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven."* And with much reason; for to show true wisdom in words, is easy, but the proof which is by works is the part of some noble and great one. Wherefore also Christ, speaking of the endurance of evil, puts Himself forth, bidding us take example from Him. On this account too, after this admonition, He betakes Himself to prayer, teaching us in our temptations to leave all things, and flee to God. For because He had said, *"In the world you shall have tribulation,"* and had shaken their souls, by the prayer He raises them again. As yet they gave heed unto Him as to a man; and for their sake He acts thus, just as He did in the case of Lazarus, and there tells the reason; *"Because of the people that stand by I said it, that they might believe that You have sent Me."* [John 11:42] *"Yea,"* says some one, *"this took place with good cause in the case of the Jews; but wherefore in that of the disciples?"* With good cause in the case of the disciples also. For they who, after all that had been said and done, said, *"Now we know that You know"* [John 16:30], most of all needed to be established. Besides, the Evangelist does not even call the action prayer; but what says he? *"He lifted up His eyes to heaven,"* and says rather that it was a discoursing with the Father. And if elsewhere he speaks of prayer, and at one time shows Him kneeling on His knees, at another lifting His eyes to

heaven, be not thou troubled; for by these means we are taught the earnestness which should be in our petitions, that standing we should look up, not with the eyes of the flesh only, but of the mind, and that we should bend our knees, bruising our own hearts. For Christ came not merely to manifest Himself, but also about to teach virtue ineffable. But it behooves the teacher to teach, not by words only, but also by actions. Let us hear then what He says in this place.

"Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You."

Again He shows us, that not unwilling He comes to the Cross. For how could He be unwilling, who prayed that this might come to pass, and called the action "*glory*," not only for Himself the Crucified, but also for the Father? Since this was the case, for not the Son only, but the Father also was glorified. For before the Crucifixion, not even the Jews knew Him; "*Israel*," it says, "*has not known Me*" [Isaiah 1:3]; but after the Crucifixion, all the world ran to Him. Then He speaks also of the manner of the glory, and how He will glorify Him.

John 17:2

"As You have given Him power over all flesh," "that nothing which You have given Him should perish."

For to be always doing good, is glory to God. But what is, *"As You have given Him power over all flesh"*? He now shows, that what belongs to the preaching is not confined to the Jews alone, but is extended to all the world, and lays down beforehand the first invitations to the Gentiles. And since He had said, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles"* [Matthew 10:5], and after this time is about to say, *"Go, and make disciples of all nations"* [Matthew 28:19], He shows that the Father also wills this. For this greatly offended the Jews, and the disciples too; nor indeed after this did they easily endure to lay hold on the Gentiles, until they received the teaching of the Spirit; because hence arose no small stumblingblock for the Jews.

Therefore, when Peter after such a manifestation of the Spirit came to Jerusalem, he could scarcely, by relating the vision of the sheet, escape the charges brought against him. But what is, *"You have given Him power over all flesh"*? I will ask the heretics, *"When did He receive this power? Was it before He formed them, or after?"* He himself says, that it was after that He had been crucified, and had risen again; at least then He said, *"All power is given unto Me"* [Matthew 28:18], and, *"Go ye and make disciples of all nations."* What then, had He not authority over His own works? Did He make them, and had He not authority over them after having made them? Yet He is seen doing all in times of old, punishing some as sinners, (for, *"Surely I will not hide,"* it says, *"from My servant Abraham, that which I am about to do"* [Genesis 18:17, Septuagint]) and honoring others as righteous. Had He then the power at that time, and now had He lost it, and did He again receive it? What devil could assert this? But if His power was the

same both then and now, (for, says He, *"as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will"* [John 5:21]) what is the meaning of the words? He was about to send them to the Gentiles; in order therefore that they might not think that this was an innovation, because He had said, *"I am not sent, save unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"* [Matthew 15:24], He shows that this seems good to the Father also. And if He says this with great meanness of circumstance, it is not wonderful. For so He edified both those at that time, and those who came afterwards; and as I have before said, He always by the excess of meanness firmly persuaded them that the words were those of condescension.

2. But what is, *"Of all flesh"*? For certainly not all believed. Yet, for His part, all believed; and if men gave no heed to His words, the fault was not in the teacher, but in those who received them not.

"That He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him."

If here also He speaks in a more human manner, wonder not. For He does so both on account of the reasons I have given, and to avoid the saying anything great concerning Himself; since this was a stumblingblock to the hearers because as yet they imagined nothing great concerning Him. John, for example, when He speaks in his own person, does not so, but leads up his language to greater sublimity, saying, *"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made"* [c. i. 3, 4, 9, 11]; and that He was *"Life"*; and that He was *"Light"*; and that *"He came to His own"*: he says not, that He would not have had power, had He not received it, but that He gave to others also *"power to become sons of God."* And Paul in like manner calls Him equal with God. But He Himself asks in a more human way, saying thus, *"That He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him."* [Philippians 2:6]

John 17:3

"And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

"The only true God," He says, by way of distinction from those which are not gods; for He was about to send them to the Gentiles. But if they will not allow this, but on account of this word *"only"* reject the Son from being true God, in this way as they proceed they reject Him from being God at all. For He also says, *"You seek not the glory which is from the only God."* [John 5:44] Well then; shall not the Son be God? But if the Son be God, and the Son of the Father who is called the Only God, it is clear that He also is true, and the Son of Him who is called the Only true God. Why, when Paul says, *"Or I only and Barnabas"* [1 Corinthians 9:6], does he exclude Barnabas? Not at all; for the *"only"* is put by way of distinction from others. And, if He be not true God, how is He *"Truth"*? For truth far surpasses what is true. What shall we call the not being a *"true"* man, tell me? Shall we not call it the not being a man at all? So if the Son is not true God, how is He God? And how makes He us gods and sons, if He is not true? But on these matters we have spoken more particularly in another place; wherefore let us apply ourselves to what follows.

John 17:4

"I have glorified You on the earth." Well said He, *"on the earth"*; for in heaven He had been already glorified, having His own natural glory, and being worshipped by the Angels. Christ then speaks not of that glory which is bound up with His Essence, (for that glory, though none glorify Him, He ever possesses in its fullness,) but of that which comes from the service of men. And so the, *"Glorify Me,"* is of this kind; and that you may understand that He speaks of this manner of glory, hear what follows.

"I have finished the work which You gave Me that I should do it."

And yet the action was still but beginning, or rather was not yet beginning. How then said He, *"I have finished"*? Either He means, that *"I have done all My part"*; or He speaks of the future, as having already come to pass; or, which one may say most of all, that all was already effected, because the root of blessings had been laid, which fruits would certainly and necessarily follow, and from His being present at and assisting in those things which should take place after these. On this account He says again in a condescending way, *"Which You gave Me."* For had He indeed waited to hear and learn, this would have fallen far short of His glory. For that He came to this of His own will, is clear from many passages. As when Paul says, that *"He so loved us, as to give Himself for us"* [Ephesians 5:2]; and, *"He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant"* [Philippians 2:7]; and, *"As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you."* [John 15:9]

John 17:5

"And now, O Father, glorify Me with Your Own Self, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

Where is that glory? For allowing that He was with reason unhonored among men, because of the covering which was put around Him; how seeks He to be glorified with the Father? What then says He here? The saying refers to the Dispensation; since His fleshly nature had not yet been glorified, not having as yet enjoyed incorruption, nor shared the kingly throne. Therefore He said not *"on earth,"* but *"with You."*

3. This glory we also shall enjoy according to our measure, if we be sober. Wherefore Paul says, *"If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."* [Romans 8:17] Ten thousand tears then do they merit, who through sluggishness and sleep plot against themselves when such glory is set before them; and, were there no hell, they would be more wretched than any, who, when it is in their power to reign and to be glorified with the Son of God, deprive themselves of so great blessings. Since if it were necessary to be cut in pieces, if to die ten thousand deaths, if to give up every day ten thousand lives and as many bodies, ought we not to submit to such things for such glory? But now we do not even despise money, which hereafter, though unwilling, we shall leave: we do not despise money, which brings about us ten thousand mischiefs, which remains here, which is not our own. For we are but stewards of that which is not our own, although we receive it from our fathers. But when there is hell besides, and the worm that dies not, and the fire that is not quenched, and the gnashing of teeth, how, tell me, shall we bear these things? How long will we refuse to see clearly, and spend our all on daily fightings, and contentions, and unprofitable talk, feeding, cultivating earth, fattening the

body and neglecting the soul, making no account of necessary things, but much care about things superfluous and unprofitable? And we build splendid tombs, and buy costly houses, and draw about with us herds of all kinds of servants, and devise different stewards, appointing managers of lands, of houses, of money, and managers of those managers; but as to our desolate soul, we care nothing for that. And what will be the limit to this? Is it not one belly that we fill, is it not one body that we clothe? What is this great bustle of business? Why and wherefore do we cut up and tear to pieces the one soul, which we have had assigned to us, in attending to the service of such things, contriving for ourselves a grievous slavery? For he who needs many things is the slave of many things, although he seem to be their master. Since the lord is the slave even of his domestics, and brings in another and a heavier mode of service; and in another way also he is their slave, not daring without them to enter the agora, nor the bath, nor the field, but they frequently go about in all directions without him. He who seems to be master, dares not, if his slaves be not present, to go forth from home, and if while unattended he do but put his head out of his house, he thinks that he is laughed at. Perhaps some laugh at us when we say this, yet on this very account they would be deserving of ten thousand tears. For to show that this is slavery, I would gladly ask you, would you wish to need some one to put the morsel to your mouth, and to apply the cup to your lips? Would you not deem such a service worthy of tears? What if you required continually supporters to enable you to walk, would you not think yourself pitiable, and in this respect more wretched than any? So then you ought to be disposed now. For it matters nothing whether one is so treated by irrational things, or by men.

Why, tell me, do not the Angels differ from us in this respect, that they do not want so many things as we do? Therefore the less we need, the more

we are on our way to them; the more we need, the more we sink down to this perishable life. And that you may learn that these things are so, ask those who have grown old which life they deem happiest, that when they were helplessly mastered, or now when they are masters of these things? We have mentioned these persons, because those who are intoxicated with youth, do not even know the excess of their slavery. For what of those in fever, do they call themselves happy when, thirsting much, they drink much and need more, or when, having recovered their health, they are free from the desire? Do you see that in every instance the needing much is pitiable, and far apart from true wisdom, and an aggravation of slavery and desire? Why then do we voluntarily increase to ourselves wretchedness? For, tell me, if it were possible to live uninjured without roof or walls, would you not prefer this; wherefore then do you increase the signs of your weakness? Do we not for this call Adam happy, that he needed nothing, no house, no clothes? *"Yes,"* says some one, *"but now we are in need of them."* Why then do we make our need greater? If many persons curtail many of the things actually needed, (servants, I mean, and houses, and money,) what excuse can we have if we overstep the need? The more you put about you, the more slavish do you become; for by whatever proportion you require more, in that proportion you have trenched upon your freedom. For absolute freedom is, to want nothing at all; the next is, to want little; and this the Angels and their imitators especially possess. But for men to succeed in this while tarrying in a mortal body, think how great praise this has. This also Paul said, when writing to the Corinthians, *"But I spare you,"* and, *"lest such should have trouble in the flesh."* [1 Corinthians 7:28] Riches are called *"usables,"* that we may *"use"* them rightly, and not keep and bury them; for this is not to possess them, but to be possessed by them. Since if we are going to make this our aim how to multiply them, not that we may

employ them rightly, the order is reversed, and they possess us, not we them. Let us then free ourselves from this grievous bondage, and at last become free. Why do we devise ten thousand different chains for ourselves? Is not the bond of nature enough for you, and the necessity of life, and the crowd of ten thousand affairs, but do you twine also other nets for yourself, and put them about your feet? And when will you lay hold on heaven, and be able to stand on that height? For a great thing, a great thing is it, that even having cut asunder all these cords, you should be able to lay hold on the city which is above. So many other hindrances are there; all which that we may conquer, let us keep to the mean estate [and having put away superfluities, let us keep to what is necessary.] Thus shall we lay hold on eternal life, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 81 on the Gospel of John

John 17:6

"I have manifested Your Name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world; Yours they were, and You gave them Me, and they have kept Your word."

1. *"'Messenger' of great counsel"* [Isaiah 9:6, Septuagint], the Son of God is called, because of the other things which He taught, and principally because He announced the Father to men, as also now He says, *"I have manifested Your Name unto the men."* For after having said, *"I have finished Your work,"* He next explains it in detail, telling what sort of work. Now the Name indeed was well known. For Esaias said, *"You shall swear by the true God."* [Isaiah 65:16]. But what I have often told you I tell you now, that though it was known, yet it was so only to Jews, and not to all of these: but now He speaks concerning the Gentiles. Nor does He declare this merely, but also that they knew Him as the Father. For it is not the same thing to learn that He is Creator, and that He has a Son. But He *"manifested His Name"* both by words and actions.

"Whom You gave Me out of the world." As He says above, *"No man comes unto Me except it be given him"* [John 6:65]; and, *"Except My Father draw him"* [John 6:64]; so here too, *"Whom you gave Me."* [John 14:6] Now He calls Himself *"the Way"*; whence it is clear that He establishes two things by what is said here, that He is not opposed to the Father, and that it is the Father's will to entrust them to the Son.

"Yours they were, and You gave them Me." Here He desires to teach that He is greatly loved by the Father. For that He needed not to receive

them, is clear from this, He made them, He cares for them continually. How then did He receive them? This, as I said before, shows His unanimity with the Father. Now if a man choose to enquire into the matter in a human manner, and as the words are spoken, they will no longer belong to the Father. For if when the Father had them, the Son had them not, it is evident that when He gave them to the Son, He withdrew from His dominion over them. And again, there is a yet more unseemly conclusion; for they will be found to have been imperfect while they yet were with the Father, but to have become perfect when they came to the Son. But it is mockery even to speak thus. What then does He declare by this? *"That it has seemed good to the Father also that they should believe in the Son."*

"And they have kept Your word."

John 17:7

"Now they have known that all things whatsoever You have given Me are of You."

How did they *"keep Your word"*? *"By believing in Me, and giving no heed to the Jews. For he that believes in Him, it says, 'has set to his seal that God is true.'"* [John 3:33] Some read, *"Now I know that all things whatsoever You have given Me are of You."* But this would have no reason; for how would the Son be ignorant of the things of the Father? No the words are spoken of the disciples. *"From the time,"* He says, *"that I told them these things, they have learned that all that You have given Me is from You; nothing is alien, nothing peculiar to Me, with You."* (For whatever is peculiar, puts most things in the condition of being alien. *"They therefore have known that all things, whatsoever I teach, are Your doctrines and teachings."* *"And whence have they learned it?"* From My words; for so have I taught them. And not only this have I taught them, but also that *"I came out from You."* For this He was anxious to prove through all the Gospel.

John 17:9

"I pray for them."

"What sayest Thou?" "Do You teach the Father, as though He were ignorant? Do You speak to Him as to a man who knows not?" "What then means this distinction?" Do you see that the prayer is for nothing else than that they may understand the love which He has towards them? For He who not only gives what He has of His own, but also calls on Another to do the same, shows greater love. What then is, *"I pray for them"*? *"Not for all the world,"* He says, but *"for them whom You have given Me."* He continually puts the *"hast given,"* that they might learn that this seems good to the Father. Then, because He had said continually, *"they are Yours,"* and, *"You gave them unto Me,"* to remove any evil suspicion, and lest any one should think that His authority was recent, and that He had but now received them, what says He?

John 17:10

"All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them."

Do you see the equality of honor? For lest on hearing, *"You have given them Me,"* you should deem that they were alienated from the authority of the Father, or before this from that of the Son, He removed both difficulties by speaking as He did. It was as though He said, *"Do not when you hear that 'You have given them to Me,' deem that they are alienated from the Father, for what is Mine is His; nor when you hear, 'Yours they were,' think that they were aliens from Me, for what is His is Mine."* So that the, *"You have given,"* is said only for condescension; for what the Father has is the Son's, and what the Son has is the Father's. But this cannot even be said of a son after the manner of man, but because They are upon a greater Equality of honor. For that what belongs to the less, belongs to the greater also, is clear to every one, but the reverse not so; but here He converts these terms, and the conversion declares Equality. And in another place, declaring this, He said, *"All things that the Father has are Mine,"* speaking of knowledge. And the *"hast given Me,"* and the like expressions, are to show that He did not come as an alien and draw them to Him, but received them as His own. Then He puts the cause and the proof, saying, *"And I am glorified in them,"* that is, either that *"I have power over them,"* or, that *"they shall glorify Me, believing in You and Me, and shall glorify Us alike."* But if He is not glorified equally in them, what is the Father's is no longer His. For no one is glorified in those over whom he has no authority. Yet how is He glorified equally? All die for Him equally as for the Father; they preach Him as they do the Father; and as they say that all things are done in His Name, so also in the Name of the Son.

John 17:11

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world."

That is, *"Although I appear no longer in the flesh, yet by these am I glorified."* But why does He say continuously, that, *"I am not in the world"*; and that, *"because I leave them I commit them to You"*; and that, *"when I was in the world I kept them"*? For if one should take these words in their simple sense, many absurdities will follow. For how could it be reasonable to say, that He is no longer in the world, and that when He departs He commits them to another? Since these are the words of a mere man parting from them forever. Do you see how He speaks for the most part like a man, and in a way adapted to their state of mind, because they thought that they had a greater degree of safety from His presence? Wherefore He says, *"While I was with them, I kept them."* [John 14:28] Yet He tells them, *"I come to you"*; and, *"I am with you till the end."* [Matthew 28:20] How then says He these words, as if about to be parted from them? He addresses Himself, as I said before, to their thoughts, that they may take breath a little when they hear Him speaking thus, and delivering them over to the care of the Father. For since, after hearing many exhortations from Him, they were not persuaded, He then holds converse with the Father, manifesting His affection for them. As though He had said, *"Since You call Me to Yourself, place these in safety; for I come to You."* *"What sayest Thou? Are You not able to keep them?"* *"Yea, I am able."* *"Wherefore then do You speak thus?"* *"That they may have My joy fulfilled"* [John 17:13]; that is, *"may not be confounded, as being imperfect."* And by these words He showed that He had spoken all these things so, to give them rest and joy. For the saying appears to be contradictory. *"Now I am no longer in the world, and these*

are in the world." This was what they were suspecting. For a while therefore He condescends to them, because had He said, "*I keep them,*" they would not have so well believed; wherefore He says, "*Holy Father, keep them through Your own Name*"; that is, "*by your help.*"

John 17:12

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your Name."

Again He speaks as a man and as a Prophet, since nowhere does He appear to have done anything by the Name of God.

"Those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

And in another place He says, *"Of all that You gave Me, I will surely lose nothing."* [John 6:39] Yet not only was he lost, but also many afterwards; how then says He, *"I will in nowise lose"*? *"For My part, I will not lose."* So in another place, declaring the matter was more clearly, He said, *"I will in nowise cast out."* [John 6:37] *"Not through fault of Mine, not because I either instigate or abandon them; but if they start away of themselves, I draw them not by necessity."*

John 17:13

"But now I come to you."

Do you see that the discourse is composed rather in a human manner? So that should any wish from these words to lower the Son, he will lower the Father also. Observe, in proof of this, how from the beginning He speaks partly as though informing and explaining to Him, partly as enjoining. Informing, as when He says, *"I pray not for the world"*; enjoining, as, *"I have kept them until now," "and none of them is lost"*; and, *"do Thou therefore now keep them,"* He says. And again, *"Yours they were, and You have given them unto Me"* and *"While I was in the world I kept them."* But the solution of all is, that the words were addressed to their infirmity.

But after having said that *"none of them was lost but the son of perdition,"* He added, *"that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* Of what Scripture does He speak? That which foretells many things concerning Him. Not that He perished on that account, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But we have before spoken at length on this point, that this is the peculiar manner of Scripture, which puts things which fall out in accordance with it, as though they were caused by it. And it is needful to enquire exactly into all, both the manner of the speaker, his argument, and the laws of Scripture, if at least we are minded not to draw wrong conclusions. For, *"Brethren, be not children in your minds."* [1 Corinthians 14:20]

3. This it is necessary to consider well, not only for the understanding the Scriptures, but also for earnestness in one's way of life. For so little children do not desire great things, but are wont to admire those which are

worth nothing; they are pleased at seeing chariots, and horses, and the muleteer, and wheels, all made out of earthenware; but if they see a king sitting upon a chariot, and a pair of white mules, and great magnificence, they do not even turn their heads. And they deck out as brides dolls made of the same material, but the actual brides, real and beautiful, they do not even notice; and this is their case in many other matters. Now this many men also undergo at this time; for when they hear of heavenly things, they do not even give heed to them, but toward all the things of clay they are as eager as children, and stupidly admire the wealth which is of earth, and honor the glory and luxury of the present life. Yet these are just as much toys as those; but the other are the causes of life, and glory, and repose. But as children deprived of their playthings cry, and do not know how even to desire the realities, so also are many of those who seem to be men. Wherefore it says, *"Be not children in your minds."* [1 Corinthians 14:20] Desirest thou riches, tell me, and do you not desire the wealth that lasts, but childish toys? If you should see a man admiring a leaden coin, and stooping to pick it up, you would pronounce his penury to be extreme; and do you, who collectest more worthless things than this, number yourself among the rich? How can this consist with reason? We will call him rich who despises all present things. For no one, no one will choose to laugh at these little things, silver and gold, and other things of show, unless he have the desire of greater things; just as the man would not despise the leaden coin, unless he possessed coins of gold. Do thou, therefore, when you see a man running by all worldly things, deem that he does so from no other motive than because he looks to a greater world. So the husbandman despises a few grains of wheat, when he expects a larger harvest. But if, when the hope is uncertain, we despise things which are, much more ought we to do so in a case where the expectation is sure. Wherefore I pray and beseech you not to bring loss

on yourselves, nor, keeping hold of mire, rob yourselves of the treasures which are above, bringing your vessel to port laden with straw and chaff. Let each say what he will concerning us, let him be angry at our continual admonitions, let him call us silly, tedious, tiresome, still we will not desist from exhorting you on these matters continually, and from continually repeating to you that of the Prophet, *"Break off your sins by almsgiving, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor" [Daniel 4:27], and bind them upon your neck.* Do not act in this way today, and desist tomorrow. For even this body has need of daily food; and so too has the soul, or rather that much more; and if it give not, it becomes weaker and more vile. Let us then not neglect it when it is perishing, choking. Many wounds it receives each day, by being lustful, angry, slothful, reviling, revengeful, envious. It is therefore necessary to prepare also remedies for it, and no small remedy is that of almsgiving, which can be placed on every wound. For, *"Give alms,"* it says, *"of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you."* [Luke 11:41] *"Alms,"* not covetousness, for that which proceeds from covetousness endures not, though thou give to those who need. For almsgiving is that which is free from all injustice, *"this"* makes all things clean. This is a thing better even than fasting, or lying on the ground; they may be more painful and laborious, but this more profitable. It enlightens the soul, makes it sleek, beautiful, and vigorous. Not so does the fruit of the olive hold up the athletes, as this oil recovers the combatants of piety. Let us then anoint our hands, that we may lift them up well against our adversary. He that practices showing mercy to him that needs, will soon cease from covetousness, he who continues in giving to the poor, will soon cease from anger, and will never even be high-minded. For as the physician continually tending wounded persons is easily sobered, beholding human nature in the calamities of others; so we, if we enter upon the work of

aiding the poor, shall easily become truly wise, and shall not admire riches, nor deem present things any great matter, but despise them all, and soaring aloft to heaven, shall easily obtain the eternal blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 82 on the Gospel of John

John 17:14

"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

1. When having become virtuous we are persecuted by the wicked, or when being desirous of virtue we are mocked at by them, let us not be distracted or angry. For this is the natural course of things, and everywhere virtue is wont to engender hatred from wicked men. For envying those who desire to live properly, and thinking to prepare an excuse for themselves if they can overthrow the credit of others, they hate them as having pursuits opposite to their own, and use every means to shame their way of life. But let not us grieve, for this is a mark of virtue. Wherefore Christ also says, *"If you were of the world, the world would love its own."* [John 15:19] And in another place again, *"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you."* [Luke 6:26] Wherefore also He says here, *"I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them."* Again He tells the reason for which they were worthy to obtain much care from the Father; *"For Your sake,"* He says, *"they have been hated, and for Your word's sake";* so that they would be entitled to all providential care.

John 17:15

"I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil."

Again He simplifies His language; again He renders it more clear; which is the act of one showing, by making entreaty for them with exactness, nothing else but this, that He has a very tender care for them. Yet He Himself had told them, that the Father would do all things whatsoever they should ask. How then does He here pray for them? As I said, for no other purpose than to show His love.

John 17:16

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

How then says He in another place, *"Which You gave Me out of the world; Yours they were"*? [John 17:6] There He speaks of their nature; here of wicked actions. And He puts together a long encomium of them; first, that *"they were not of the world"*; then, that *"the Father Himself had given them"*; and that *"they had kept His word;"* and that on this account *"they were hated."* And if He says, *"As I am not of the world,"* be not troubled; for the *"as"* is not here expressive of unvarying exactness. For as, when in the case of Him and the Father the *"as"* is used, a great Equality is signified, because of the Relationship in Nature; so when it is used of us and Him, the interval is great, because of the great and infinite interval between the respective natures. For if He *"did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"* [1 Peter 2:22], how could the Apostles be reckoned equal to Him? What is it then that He says, *"They are not of the world"*? *"They look to another world, they have nothing common with earth, but have become citizens of heaven."* And by these words He shows His love, when He commends them to the Father, and commits them to Him who begot Him. When He says, *"Keep them,"* He does not speak merely of delivering them from dangers, but also with regard to their continuance in the faith. Wherefore He adds,

John 17:17

"Sanctify them through Your truth." "Make them holy by the gift of the Spirit, and of right doctrines." As when He says, "You are clean through the word which I spoke unto you" [John 15:3], so now He says the same thing, "Instruct them, teach them the truth." "And yet He says that the Spirit does this. How then does He now ask it from the Father?" That you may again learn their equality of Honor. For right doctrines asserted concerning God sanctify the soul. And if He says that they are sanctified by the word, marvel not. And to show that He speaks of doctrines, He adds,

"Your word is truth."

That is, *"there is no falsehood in it, and all that is said in it must needs come to pass"*; and again, it signifies nothing typical or bodily. As also Paul says concerning the Church, that He has sanctified it by the Word. For the Word of God is wont also to cleanse. [Ephesians 5:26] Moreover, the, *"sanctify them,"* seems to me to signify something else, such as this, *"Set them apart for the Word and for preaching."* And this is made plain from what follows. For, He says,

John 17:17

"As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

As Paul also says, *"Having put in us the word of reconciliation."* [2 Corinthians 5:19] For the same end for which Christ came, for the same did these take possession of the world. In this place again the *"as"* is not put to signify resemblance in the case of Himself and the Apostles; for how was it possible for men to be sent otherwise? But it was His custom to speak of the future as having come to pass.

John 17:19

"And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified in the truth."

What is, *"I sanctify Myself"*? *"I offer to You a sacrifice."* Now all sacrifices are called *"holy,"* and those are specially called *"holy things,"* which are laid up for God. For whereas of old in type the sanctification was by the sheep, but now it is not in type, but by the truth itself, He therefore says, *"That they may be sanctified in Your truth."* *"For I both dedicate them to You, and make them an offering";* this He says, either because their Head was being made so, or because they also were sacrificed; for, *"Present,"* it says, *"your bodies a living sacrifice, holy"* [Romans 12:1]; and, *"We were counted as sheep for the slaughter."* [Psalm 43:22] And He makes them; without death, a sacrifice and offering; for that He alluded to His own sacrifice, when He said, *"I sanctify,"* is clear from what follows.

John 17:20

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe."

2. For since He was dying for them, and said, that *"For their sakes I sanctify Myself,"* lest any one should think that He did this for the Apostles only, He added, *"Neither pray I for these only, but for them also who believe in Me through their word."* By this again He revived their souls, showing that the disciples should be many. For because He made common what they possessed peculiarly, He comforts them by showing that they were being made the cause of the salvation of others.

After having thus spoken concerning their salvation, and their being sanctified by faith and the Sacrifice, He afterwards speaks of concord, and finally closes his discourse with this, having begun with it and ended in it. For at the beginning He says, *"A new commandment I give unto you"* [John 13:34]; and here,

John 17:21

"That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You."

Here again the *"as"* does not denote exact similarity in their case, (for it was not possible for them in so great a degree,) but only as far as was possible for men. Just as when He says *"Be merciful, as your Father."* [Luke 6:36]

But what is, *"In Us"*? In the faith which is on Us. Because nothing so offends all men as divisions, He provides that they should be one. *"What then,"* says some one, *"did He effect this?"* Certainly He effected it. For all who believe through the Apostles are one, though some from among them were torn away. Nor did this escape His knowledge, He even foretold it, and showed that it proceeded from men's slack-mindedness.

"That the world may believe that You have sent Me."

As He said in the beginning, *"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* And how should they hence believe? *"Because,"* He says, *"You are a God of peace."* If therefore they observe the same as those of whom they have learned, their hearers shall know the teacher by the disciples, but if they quarrel, men shall deny that they are the disciples of a God of peace, and will not allow that I, not being peaceable, have been sent from You. Do you see how, unto the end, He proves His unanimity with the Father?

John 17:22

"And the glory which You gave Me, I have given them."

That by miracles, that by doctrines, and, that they should be of one soul; for this is glory, that they should be one, and greater even than miracles. As men admire God because there is no strife or discord in That Nature, and this is His greatest glory, *"so too let these,"* He says, *"from this cause become glorious."* *"And how,"* says some one, *"does He ask the Father to give this to them, when He says that He Himself gives it?"*

Whether His discourse be concerning miracles, or unanimity, or peace, He is seen Himself to have given these things to them; whence it is clear that the petition is made for the sake of their comfort.

John 17:23

"I in them, and You in Me."

"How gave He the glory?" By being in them, and having the Father with Him, so as to weld them together. But in another place He speaks not so; He says not that the Father comes by Him, but, *"that He and the Father come, and take up their abode with him,"* "there" removing the suspicion of Sabellius, "here" that of Arius.

"That they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me." [John 14:23]

He says these latter words immediately after the other, to show that peace has more power to attract men than a miracle; for as it is the nature of strife to separate, so it is that of agreement to weld together.

"And I have loved them as You have loved Me."

Here again the "as" means, as far as it is possible for a man to be loved; and the sure proof of His love is His giving Himself for them. After having told them that they shall be in safety, that they shall not be overturned, that they shall be holy, that many shall believe through them, that they shall enjoy great glory, that not He alone loved them, but the Father also; He next tells them of what shall be after their sojourning here, concerning the prizes and crowns laid up for them.

John 17:24

"Father, I will that they also whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am."

"Then dost Thou gain by prayer, and dost Thou not yet possess that concerning which they enquired continually, saying, 'Where are You going?' What sayest Thou? How then did You say to them, 'You shall sit upon twelve thrones'? [Matthew 19:28] How did You promise other things more and greater?" Do you see that He says all in the way of condescension? Since how would He have said, *"You shall follow afterwards"*? [John 13:36] But He speaks thus with a view to a fuller conviction and demonstration of His love.

"That they may behold My glory which You have given Me."

This again is a sign of His being of one mind with the Father, of a higher character than those former, for He says, *"Before the foundation of the world,"* yet has it also a certain condescension; for, *"You have given Me,"* He says. Now if this be not the case, I would gladly ask the gainsayers a question. He that gives, gives to one subsisting; did the Father then, having first begotten the Son, afterwards give Him glory, having before allowed Him to be without glory? And how could this be reasonable? Seest that the *"He gave,"* is, *"He begot"*?

3. But why said He not, *"That they may share My glory,"* instead of, *"That they may be hold My glory"*? Here He implies, that all that rest is, the looking on the Son of God. This certainly it is which causes them to be glorified; as Paul says, *"With open face mirroring the glory of the Lord."* [2 Corinthians 3:18] For as they who look on the sunbeams, and enjoy a very clear atmosphere, draw their enjoyment from their sight, so then also, and in much greater degree, this will cause us pleasure. At the same time also He

shows, that what they should behold was not the body then seen, but some awful Substance.

John 17:25

"O righteous Father, the world has not known You."

What means this? What connection has it? He here shows that no man knows God, save those only who have come to know the Son. And what He says is of this kind: *"I wished all to be so, yet they have not known You, although they had no complaint against You."* For this is the meaning of, *"O righteous Father."* And here He seems to me to speak these words, as vexed that they would not know One so just and good. For since the Jews had said that they knew God, but that He knew Him not, at this He aims, saying, *"For You loved Me before the foundation of the world";* thus putting together a defense against the accusations of the Jews. For how could He who had received glory, who was loved before the foundation of the world, who desired to have them as witnesses of that glory, how could He be opposed to the Father? *"This then is not true which the Jews say, that they know You, and that I know You not; on the contrary, I know You, and they have not known You."*

"And these have known that You have sent Me."

Do you see that He alludes to those, who said that He was not from God, and all is finally summed up to meet this argument?

John 17:26

"And I have declared unto them Your Name, and will declare it."

"Yet you say that perfect knowledge is from the Spirit." "But the things of the Spirit are Mine."

"That the love wherewith You have loved Me may remain in them, and I in them."

"For if they learn who You are, then they shall know that I am not separated from You, but one of the greatly beloved, and a true Son, and closely knit to You. And those who are rightly persuaded of this, will keep both the faith which is on Me and perfect love; and while they love as they ought, I remain in them." Do you see how He has arrived at a good end, finishing off the discourse with love, the mother of all blessings?

4. Let us then believe and love God, that it may not be said of us, *"They profess that they know God, but in their works they deny Him."* [Titus 1:16] And again, *"He has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."* [1 Timothy 5:8] For when he helps his domestics and kinsmen and strangers, while thou dost not even succor those who are related to you by family, what will henceforth be your excuse, when God is blasphemed and insulted by reason of you? Consider what opportunities of doing good God has given to us. *"Have mercy on one,"* He says, *"as a kinsman, on another as a friend, on another as a neighbor, on another as a citizen, on another as a man."* And if none of these things hold you, but you break through all bonds, hear from Paul, that you are *"worse than an infidel"*; for he having heard nothing of almsgiving, or of heavenly things, has overshot you in love for man; but thou who art bidden to love your very enemies, lookest upon your friends as enemies, and art more careful of your money than of

their bodies. Yet the money by being spent will sustain no injury, but your brother if neglected will perish. What madness then to be careful of money, and careless about one's kindred? Whence has this craving for riches burst in upon us? Whence this inhumanity and cruelty? For if any one could, as though seated on the highest bench of a theater, look down upon all the world—or rather, if you will, let us for the present take in hand a single city—if then a man seated on an elevated spot could take in at a glance all the doings of the men there, consider what folly he would condemn, what tears he would weep, what laughter he would laugh, with what hatred he would hate; for we commit such actions as deserve both laughter, and the charge of folly, and tears, and hatred. One man keeps dogs to catch brute animals, himself sinking into brutality; another keeps oxen and asses to transport stones, but neglects men wasting with hunger; and spends gold without limit to make men of stone, but neglects real men, who are becoming like stones through their evil state. Another, collecting with great pains golden quarries, puts them about his walls, but when he beholds the naked bellies of the poor, is not moved. Some again contrive garments over their very garments, while their brother has not even wherewithal to cover his naked body. Again, one has swallowed up another in the law-courts; another has spent his money on women and parasites, another on stage-players and theatrical bands, another on splendid edifices, on purchases of fields and houses. Again, one man is counting interest, another interest of interest; another is putting together bands full of many deaths, and does not enjoy rest even at night, lying awake for others' harm. Then, when it is day, they run, one to his unjust gain, another to his wanton expense, others to public robbery. And great is the earnestness about things superfluous and forbidden, but of things necessary no account is taken; and they who decide questions of law have indeed the name of jurymen, but are really thieves

and murderers. And if one should enquire into law suits and wills, he would find there again ten thousand mischiefs, frauds, robberies, plots, and about these things is all time spent; but for spiritual things there is no care, and they all inconvenience the Church, for the sake of seeing only. But this is not what is required; we need works, and a pure mind. But if you spend all the day in grasping after riches, and then coming in sayest a few words, you have not only not propitiated God, but hast even angered Him more. Would you conciliate your Lord, exhibit works, make yourself acquainted with the mass of woes, look upon the naked, the hungry, the wronged; He has cut out for you ten thousand ways of showing love for men. Let us not then deceive ourselves by living aimlessly and to no purpose, nor presume, because we now are in health; but bearing in mind, that often when we have fallen into sickness, and have reached the extreme of debility, we have been dead with fear and the looking for things to come, let us expect to fall again into the same state, let us get again the same fear, and let us become better men; since what is done now deserves infinite condemnation. For those in the courts of justice are like lions and dogs; those in the public places like foxes; and those who lead a life of leisure, even they do not use their leisure as they ought, spending all their time on theaters and the mischiefs arising from them. And there is no one to reprove what is being done; but there are many who envy, and are vexed that they are not in the like condition, so that these in their turn are punished, though not actually doing wicked things. For they *"not only do these things, but also have pleasure in them that do them."* Because what belongs to their will is alike corrupt; whence it is plain, that the intention also will be punished. These things I say each day, and I will not cease to say them. For if any listen, it is gain; but if none give heed, you shall then hear these things, when it will avail you nothing, and you shall blame yourselves, and we shall be flee from fault. But may it

never come to pass that we should only have this excuse, but that you may be our boast before the judgment-seat of Christ, that together we may enjoy the blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 83 on the Gospel of John

John 18:1

"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples."

1. An awful thing is death, and very full of terror, but not to those who have learned the true wisdom which is above. For he that knows nothing certain concerning things to come, but deems it to be a certain dissolution and end of life, with reason shudders and is afraid, as though he were passing into non-existence. But we who, by the grace of God, have learned the hidden and secret things of His wisdom, and deem the action to be a departure to another place, should have no reason to tremble, but rather to rejoice and be glad, that leaving this perishable life we go to one far better and brighter, and which has no end. Which Christ teaching by His actions, goes to His Passion, not by constraint and necessity, but willingly. *"These things,"* it says, *"Jesus spoke, and departed 'beyond the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.'"*

John 18:2

"Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place; for Jesus oftentimes resorted there with His disciples."

He journeys at midnight, and crosses a river, and hastes to come to a place known to the traitor, lessening the labor to those who plotted against Him, and freeing them from all trouble; and shows to the disciples that He came willingly to the action, (a thing which was most of all sufficient to comfort them,) and places Himself in the garden as in a prison.

"These things spoke Jesus unto them." "What do you say? Surely He was speaking with the Father, surely He was praying. Why then do you not say that, 'having ceased from the prayer,' He came there?" Because it was not prayer, but a speech made on account of the disciples. *"And the disciples entered into the garden."* He had so freed them from fear that they no longer resisted, but entered with Him into the garden. But how came Judas there, or whence had he gained his information when he came? It is evident from this circumstance, that Jesus generally passed the night out of doors. For had He been in the habit of spending it at home, Judas would not have come to the desert, but to the house, expecting there to find Him asleep. And lest, hearing of a *"garden,"* you should think that Jesus hid Himself, it adds, that *"Judas knew the place";* and not simply so, but that He *"often resorted there with His disciples."* For oftentimes He was with them apart, conversing on necessary matters, and such as it was not permitted to others to hear. And He did this especially in mountains and gardens, seeking a place free from disturbance, that their attention might not be distracted from listening.

John 18:3

"Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the Chief Priests and Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, and torches, and weapons."

And these men had often at other times sent to seize Him, but had not been able; whence it is plain, that at this time He voluntarily surrendered Himself. And how did they persuade the band? They were soldiers, who had made it their practice to do anything for money.

John 18:4

"Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said, Whom do you seek?"

That is, He did not wait to learn this from their coming, but spoke and acted without confusion, as knowing all these things. *"But why come they with weapons, when about to seize Him?"* They feared His followers, and for this reason they came upon Him late at night. *"And He went forth, and said unto them, Whom do you seek?"*

John 18:5

"They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth."

Do you see His invincible power, how being in the midst of them He disabled their eyes? For that the darkness was not the cause of their not knowing Him, the Evangelist has shown, by saying, that they had torches also. And even had there been no torches, they ought at least to have known Him by His voice; or if they did not know it, how could Judas be ignorant, who had been so continually with Him? For he too stood with them, and knew Him no more than they, but with them fell backward. And Jesus did this to show, that not only they could not seize Him, but could not even see Him when in the midst, unless He gave permission.

John 18:7

"He says again, Whom do you seek?" What madness! His word threw them backward, yet not even so did they turn, when they had learned that His power was so great, but again set themselves to the same attempt. When therefore He had fulfilled all that was His, then He gave Himself up.

John 18:8

"He answered, I told you that I Am." ([John 18:5] "And Judas also which betrayed Him stood with them.")

See the forbearance of the Evangelist, how he does not insult over the traitor, but relates what took place, only desiring to prove one thing, that the whole took place with His own consent. Then, lest any one should say that He Himself brought them to this, by having placed Himself into their hands, and revealed Himself to them; after having shown to them all things which should have been sufficient to repulse them, when they persevered in their wickedness, and had no excuse, He put Himself in their hands, saying,

"If therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way."

Manifesting until the last hour His lovingkindness towards them. *"If,"* He says, *"ye want Me, have nothing to do with these, for, behold, I give Myself up."*

John 18:9

"That the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, Of those which You gave Me have I lost none."

By "loss" He does not here mean that which is of death, but that which is eternal; though the Evangelist in the present case includes the former also. And one might wonder why they did not seize them with Him, and cut them to pieces, especially when Peter had exasperated them by what he did to the servant. Who then restrained them? No other than that Power which cast them backward. And so the Evangelist, to show that it did not come to pass through their intention, but by the power and decree of Him whom they had seized, has added, *"That the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke,"* that *"not one, etc."* [John 17:12]

2. Peter, therefore, taking courage from His voice, and from what had already happened, arms himself against the assailants, *"And how,"* says some one, *"does he who was bidden not to have a scrip, not to have two coats, possess a sword?"* Methinks he had prepared it long before, as fearing this very thing which came to pass. But if you say, *"How does he, who was forbidden even to strike a blow with the hand, become a manslayer?"* He certainly had been commanded not to defend himself, but here he did not defend himself, but his Master. And besides, they were not as yet perfect or complete. But if you desire to see Peter endued with heavenly wisdom, you shall after this behold him wounded, and bearing it meekly, suffering ten thousand dreadful things, and not moved to anger. But Jesus here also works a miracle, both showing that we ought to do good to those who do evil to us, and revealing His own power. He therefore restored the servant's ear, and said to Peter, that *"All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword"* [Matthew 26:52]; and as He did in the case of the

basin, when He relaxed his vehemence by a threat, so also here. The Evangelist adds the name of the servant, because the thing done was very great, not only because He healed him, but because He healed one who had come against Him, and who shortly after would buffet Him, and because He stayed the war which was like to have been kindled from this circumstance against the disciples. For this cause the Evangelist has put the name, so that the men of that time might search and enquire diligently whether these things had really come to pass. And not without a cause does he mention the "*right ear*," but as I think desiring to show the impetuosity of the Apostle, that he almost aimed at the head itself. Yet Jesus not only restrains him by a threat, but also calms him by other words, saying,

John 18:11

"The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Showing, that what was done proceeded not from their power, but from His consent, and declaring that He was not one opposed to God but obedient to the Father even unto death.

John 18:12-13

"Then Jesus was taken; and they bound Him, and led Him away to Annas."

Why to Annas? In their pleasure they made a show of what had been done, as though forsooth they had set up a trophy.

"And he was father-in-law to Caiaphas."

John 18:14

"Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."

Why does the Evangelist again remind us of his prophecy? To show that these things were done for our salvation. And such is the exceeding force of truth, that even enemies proclaimed these things beforehand. For lest the listener, hearing of bonds, should be confounded, he reminds him of that prophecy, that the death of Jesus was the salvation of the world.

John 18:15

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple."

Who is that other disciple? It is the writer himself. *"And wherefore does he not name himself? When he lay on the bosom of Jesus, he with reason concealed his name; but now why does he this?"* For the same reason, for here too he mentions a great good deed, that when all had started away, he followed. Therefore he conceals himself, and puts Peter before him. He was obliged to mention himself, that you might understand that he narrates more exactly than the rest what took place in the hall, as having been himself within. But observe how he detracts from his own praise; for, lest any one should ask, *"How, when all had retreated, did this man enter in farther than Simon?"* he says, that he *"was known to the high priest."* So that no one should wonder that he followed, or cry him up for his manliness. But the wonder was that matter of Peter, that being in such fear, he came even as far as the hall, when the others had retreated. His coming there was caused by love, his not entering within by distress and fear. For the Evangelist has recorded these things, to clear a way for excusing his denial; with regard to himself, he does not set it down as any great matter that he was known to the high priest, but since he had said that he alone with Jesus went in, lest you should suppose that the action proceeded from any exalted feelings, he puts also the cause. And that Peter would have also entered had he been permitted, he shows by the sequel; for when he went out, and bade the damsel who kept the door bring in Peter, he straightway came in. But why did he not bring him in himself? He clung to Christ, and followed Him; on this account he bade the woman bring him in. What then says the woman?

John 18:17

"Are you not also one of this man's disciples? And he says, I am not."

What do you say, Peter? Did you not declare but now, *"If need be that I lay down my life for You, I will lay it down"*? What has happened then, that you can not even endure the questioning of a door-keeper? Is it a soldier who questions you? Is it one of those who seized Him? No, it is a mean and abject door-keeper, nor is the questioning of a rough kind. She says not, *"Are you a disciple of that cheat and corrupter,"* but, *"of that man,"* which was the expression rather of one pitying and relenting. But Peter could not bear any of these words. The, *"Are you not also,"* is said on this account, that John was within. So mildly did the woman speak. But he perceived none of this, nor took it into his mind, neither the first time, nor the second, nor the third, but when the cock crew; nor did this even bring him to his senses, till Jesus gave him the bitter look. And he stood warming himself with the servants of the high priest, but Christ was kept bound within. This we say not as accusing Peter, but showing the truth of what had been said by Christ.

John 18:19

"The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine."

3. O the wickedness! Though he had continually heard Him speaking in the temple and teaching openly, he now desires to be informed. For since they had no charge to bring, they enquired concerning His disciples, perhaps where they were, and why He had collected them, and with what intention, and on what terms. And this he said, as desiring to prove Him to be a seditious person and an innovator, since no one gave heed to Him, except them alone, as though His were some factory of wickedness. What then says Christ? To overthrow this, He says,

John 18:20

"I spoke openly to the world, (not to the disciples privately,) I taught openly in the temple."

"What then, said He nothing in secret?" He did, but not, as they thought, from fear, and to make conspiracies, but if at any time His sayings were too high for the hearing of the many.

John 18:21

"Why do you ask Me? Ask them which heard Me."

These are not the words of one speaking arrogantly, but of one confiding in the truth of what He had said. What therefore He said at the beginning, *"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true"* [John 5:31], this He now implies, desiring to render His testimony abundantly credible. For when Annas mentioned the disciples, what says He? *"Do you ask Me concerning Mine? Ask Mine enemies, ask those who have plotted against Me, who have bound Me; let them speak."* This is an unquestionable proof of truth, when one calls his enemies to be witnesses to what he says. What then does the high priest? When it would have been right thus to have made the enquiry, that person did not so.

John 18:22

"And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by smote Him with the palm of his hand."

What could be more audacious than this? Shudder, O heaven, be astounded, O earth, at the long-suffering of the Lord, and the senselessness of the servants! Yet what was it that He said? He said not, *"Why do you ask Me,"* as if refusing to speak, but wishing to remove every pretext for senseless behavior; and being upon this buffeted, though He was able to shake, to annihilate, or to remove all things, He does not any one of these, but speaks words able to relax any brutality.

John 18:23

"And He says, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil."

That is, *"If you can lay hold on My words, declare it; but if you can not, why do you strike Me?"* Do you see that the judgment-hall is full of tumult, and trouble, and passion, and confusion? The high priest asked deceitfully and treacherously, Christ answered in a straightforward manner, and as was meet. What then was next to be done? Either to refute, or to accept what He said. This however is not done, but a servant buffets Him. So far was this from being a court of justice, and the proceedings those of a conspiracy, and a deed of tyranny. Then not having even so made any farther discovery, they send Him bound to Caiaphas.

John 18:25

"And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself."

Wonderful, by what a lethargy that hot and furious one was possessed, when Jesus was being led away! After such things as had taken place, he does not move, but still warms himself, that you may learn how great is the weakness of our nature if God abandons. And, being questioned, he denies again.

John 18:26

Then says *"the kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, (grieving at what had taken place,) Did I not see you in the garden?"*

But neither did the garden bring him to remember what had taken place, nor the great affection which Jesus there had shown by those words, but all these from pressure of anxiety he banished from his mind. But why have the Evangelists with one accord written concerning him? Not as accusing the disciple, but as desiring to teach us, how great an evil it is not to commit all to God, but to trust to one's self. But do thou admire the tender care of his Master, who, though a prisoner and bound, took great forethought for His disciple, raising Peter up, when he was down, by His look, and launching him into a sea of tears.

[john 18:28] *"They lead Him therefore from Caiaphas to Pilate."*

This was done, in order that the number of His judges might show, even against their will, how fully tested was His truth. *"And it was early."* Before cock crow He was brought to Caiaphas, early in the morning to Pilate; whence the Evangelist shows, that being questioned by Caiaphas during an entire half of the night, He was in nothing proved guilty; wherefore Caiaphas sent Him on to Pilate. But leaving these things for the others to relate, John speaks of what follows next. And observe the ridiculous conduct of the Jews. They who had seized the innocent, and taken up arms, do not enter into the hall of judgment, *"lest they should be polluted."* And tell me, what kind of pollution was it to set foot in a judgment-hall, where wrong-doers suffer justice? They who paid tithes of mint and anise, did not think they were polluted when bent on killing unjustly, but thought that they polluted themselves by even treading in a court of justice. *"And why did they not kill Him, instead of bringing Him to*

Pilate?" In the first place, the greater part of their rule and authority had been cut away, when their affairs were placed under the power of the Romans; and besides, they feared lest they should afterwards be accused and punished by Him. *"But what is, 'That they might eat the Passover?' For He had done this on the first day of unleavened bread."* Either he calls the whole feast *"the Passover,"* or means, that they were then keeping the Passover, while He delivered it to His followers one day sooner, reserving His own Sacrifice for the Preparation-day, when also of old the Passover was celebrated. But they, though they had taken up arms, which was unlawful, and were shedding blood, are scrupulous about the place, and bring forth Pilate to them.

John 18:29

"And having gone out, he said, What accusation bring ye against this man?"

4. Do you see that he was free from fondness for rule and from malice? For seeing Jesus bound, and led by so many persons, he did not think that they had unquestionable proof of their accusation, but questions them, thinking it a strange thing that they should take for themselves the judgment, and then commit the punishment without any judgment to him. What then say they?

John 18:30

"If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto you."

O madness! For why do ye not mention His evil deeds, instead of concealing them? Why do ye not prove the evil? Do you see that they everywhere avoid a direct accusation, and that they can say nothing? That Annas questioned Him about His doctrine, and having heard Him, sent Him to Caiaphas; and he having in his turn questioned Him, and discovered, nothing, sent Him to Pilate. Pilate says, *"What accusation bring ye against this man?"* Nor here have they anything to say, but again employ certain conjectures. At which Pilate being perplexed says,

John 18:31-32

"Take ye him and judge him according to your law. They therefore said, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." But this they said, "that the saying of the Lord might be fulfilled, which He spoke, signifying by what death He should die."

"And how did the expression, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,' declare this?" Either the Evangelist means that He was about to be slain not by the Jews only, but by the Gentiles also, or that it was not lawful for them to crucify. But if they say, *"It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,"* they say it with reference to that season. For that they did slay men, and that they slew them in a different way, Stephen shows, being stoned. But they desired to crucify Him, that they might make a display of the manner of His death. Pilate, wishing to be freed from trouble, does not dismiss Him for a long trial, but,

John 18:33-34

"Having entered in, he asked Jesus, and said, Are you the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Do you say this thing of yourself, or did others tell it you of Me?"

Wherefore did Christ ask this? Because He desired to expose the evil intentions of the Jews. Pilate had heard this saying from many, and, since the accusers had nothing to say, in order that the enquiry might not be a long one, he desires to bring forward that which was continually reported. But when he said to them, *"Judge him according to your law,"* wishing to show that His offense was not a Jewish one, they replied, *"It is not lawful for us." "He has not sinned against our law, but the indictment is general."* Pilate then, having perceived this, says, as being (himself) likely to be endangered, *"Are you the King of the Jews?"* Then Jesus, not from ignorance, but from a desire that the Jews should be accused even by him, asked him, saying, *"Did others tell it you?"* On this point then declaring himself, Pilate replied,

John 18:35

"Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you unto me; what have you done?"

Here desiring to clear himself of the matter. Then because he had said, *"Are you the King?"* Jesus reproving him answers, *"This you have heard from the Jews. Why do you not make accurate enquiry? They have said that I am a malefactor; ask them what evil I have done. But this you do not, but art simply framing charges against Me."* "Jesus answered him, *Do you say this thing of yourself,*" or from others? Pilate then cannot at once say that he had heard it, but simply goes along with the people, saying, *"They have delivered you unto me."* "I must needs therefore ask you what you have done." What then says Christ?

John 18:36

"My Kingdom is not of this world."

He leads upwards Pilate who was not a very wicked man, nor after their fashion, and desires to show that He is not a mere man, but God and the Son of God. And what says He?

"If My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews."

He undoes that which Pilate for a while had feared, namely, the suspicion of seizing kingly power, *"Is then His kingdom not of this world also?"* Certainly it is. *"How then says He it 'is not'?"* Not because He does not rule here, but because He has his empire from above, and because it is not human, but far greater than this and more splendid. *"If then it be greater, how was He made captive by the other?"* By consenting, and giving Himself up. But He does not at present reveal this, but what says He? *"If I had been of this world, 'My servants would fight, that I should not be delivered.'"* Here He shows the weakness of kingship among us, that its strength lies in servants; but that which is above is sufficient for itself, needing nothing. From this the heretics taking occasion say, that He is different from the Creator. What then, when it says, *"He came to His own"*? [John 1:11] What, when Himself says, *"They are not of this world, as I am not of this world"*? [John 17:14] So also He says that His kingdom is not from hence, not depriving the world of His providence and superintendence, but showing, as I said, that His power was not human or perishable. What then said Pilate?

John 18:37

"Are you a king then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a King. To this end was I born."

If then He was born a king, all His other attributes are by Generation, and He has nothing which He received in addition. So that when you hear that, *"As the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son also to have life"* [John 5:26], deem of nothing else but His generation, and so of the rest.

"And for this cause came I, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

That is, *"that I should speak this very thing, and teach it, and persuade all men."*

5. But do thou, O man, when you hear these things, and see your Lord bound and led about, deem present things to be nought. For how can it be otherwise than strange, if Christ bore such things for your sake, and thou often canst not endure even words? He is spit upon, and do you deck yourself with garments and rings, and, if you gain not good report from all, think life unbearable? He is insulted, bears mockings, and scornful blows upon the cheek; and do you wish everywhere to be honored, and do you not bear the reproaching of Christ? Do you not hear Paul saying, *"Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ"*? [1 Corinthians 11:1] When therefore any one makes a jest of you, remember your Lord, that in mockery they bowed the knee before Him, and worried Him both by words and deeds, and treated Him with much irony; but He not only did not defend Himself, but even repaid them with the contraries, with mildness and gentleness. Him now let us emulate; so shall we be enabled even to be delivered from all insult. For it is not the insulter that gives effect to acts of insult, and makes them biting, but he who is little of soul, and is pained by them. If you

are not pained, you have not been insulted; for the suffering from injuries depends not on those who inflict, but on those who undergo them. Why do you grieve at all? If a man has insulted you unjustly, in this case surely you ought not to grieve at all, but to pity him; if justly, much more ought thou to keep quiet. For should any one address you, a poor man, as though thou were rich, the praise contained in his words is nothing to you, but his encomium is rather mockery; and so if one insulting you utter things that are untrue, the reproach is nothing to you either. But if conscience takes hold of what has been said, be not grieved at the words, but make correction in deeds. This I say with regard to what really are insults. For if one reproach you with poverty or low birth, laugh at him. These things are a reproach not to the hearer, but to the speaker, as not knowing true wisdom. *"But,"* says some one, *"when these things are said in the presence of many who are ignorant of the truth, the wound becomes unbearable."* Nay, it is most bearable, when you have an audience present of witnesses praising and applauding you, scoffing at and making a jest of him. For not he that defends himself, but he that says nothing, is applauded by sensible persons. And if none of those present be a sensible person, then laugh at him most of all, and delight yourself in the audience of heaven. For there all will praise and applaud and welcome you. For one Angel is as good as all the world. But why speak I of Angels, when the Lord Himself proclaims you? Let us exercise ourselves with these reasonings. For it is no loss to be silent when insulted, but it is, on the contrary, to defend one's self when insulted. Since were it a fault silently to bear what is said, Christ would never have told us, *"If one smite you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."* [Matthew 5:39] If then our enemy say what is not true, let us on this account even pity him, because he draws down upon him the punishment and vengeance of the accusers, being unworthy even to read the Scriptures. For to the sinner

God says, *"Why do you declare My statutes, and takest My covenant in your mouth? Thou sat and spoke against your brother."* [Psalm 50:16-20, Septuagint] And if he speak the truth, so also he is to be pitied; since even the Pharisee spoke the truth; yet he did no harm to him who heard him, but rather good, while he deprived himself of ten thousand blessings, enduring shipwreck by this accusation. So that either way it is he that suffers injury, not thou; but thou, if you are sober, wilt have double gain; both the propitiating God by your silence, and the becoming yet more discreet, the gaining an opportunity from what has been said to correct what has been done, and the despising mortal glory. For this is the source of our pain, that many gape upon the opinion of men. If we are minded to be thus truly wise, we shall know well that human things are nothing. Let us learn then, and having reckoned up our faults, let us accomplish their correction in time, and let us determine to correct one this month, another next month, and a third in that which follows. And so mounting as it were by steps, let us get to heaven by a Jacob's ladder. For the ladder seems to me to signify in a riddle by that vision the gradual ascent by means of virtue, by which it is possible for us to ascend from earth to heaven, not using material steps, but improvement and correction of manners. Let us then lay hold on this means of departure and ascent, that having obtained heaven, we may also enjoy all the blessings there, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 84 on the Gospel of John

John 18:37

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hears My Voice."

1. A marvelous thing is longsuffering; it places the soul as in a quiet harbor, fleeing it from tossings and evil spirits. And this everywhere Christ has taught us, but especially now, when He is judged, and dragged, and led about. For when He was brought to Annas, He answered with great gentleness, and, to the servant who smote Him, said what had power to bring down all his insolence; thence having gone to Caiaphas, then to Pilate, and having spent the whole night in these scenes, He all through exhibits His own mildness; and when they said that He was a malefactor, and were not able to prove it, He stood silent; but when He was questioned concerning the Kingdom, then He spoke to Pilate, instructing him, and leading him in to higher matters. But why was it that Pilate made the enquiry not in their presence, but apart, having gone into the judgment hall? He suspected something great respecting Him, and wished, without being troubled by the Jews, to learn all accurately. Then when he said, *"What have you done?"* on this point Jesus made no answer; but concerning that of which Pilate most desired to hear, namely, His Kingdom, He answered, saying, *"My Kingdom is not of this world."* That is, *"I am indeed a King, yet not such an one as you suspect, but far more glorious,"* declaring by these words and those which follow, that no evil had been done by Him. For one who says, *"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world,*

that I should bear witness unto the truth," shows, that no evil has been done by Him. Then when He says, *"Every one that is of the truth hears My voice,"* He draws him on by these means, and persuades him to become a listener to the words. *"For if,"* says He, *"any one is true, and desires these things, he will certainly hear Me."* And, in fact, He so took him by these short words, that he said,

John 18:38

"What is truth?"

But for the present he applies himself to what was pressing, for he knew that this question needed time, and desired to rescue Him from the violence of the Jews. Wherefore he went out, and what said he?

"I find no fault in him."

Consider how prudently he acted. He said not, *"Since he has sinned, and is deserving of death, forgive him on account of the Feast"*; but having first acquitted Him of all guilt, he asks them over and above, if they were not minded to dismiss Him as innocent, yet as guilty to forgive Him on account of the time. Wherefore he added,

John 18:39-40

"You have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover"; then in a persuasory way, "Will ye therefore that I release the king of the Jews? Then cried they all, Not this man, but Barabbas."

O accursed decision! They demand those like mannered with themselves, and let the guilty go; but bid him punish the innocent. For this was their custom from old time. But do thou all through observe the lovingkindness of the Lord in these circumstances. Pilate scourged Him perhaps desiring to exhaust and to soothe the fury of the Jews. For when he had not been able to deliver Him by his former measures, being anxious to stay the evil at this point, he scourged Him, and permitted to be done what was done, the robe and crown to be put on Him, so as to relax their anger. Wherefore also he led Him forth to them crowned [John 19:5], that, seeing the insult which had been done to Him, they might recover a little from their passion, and vomit their venom. *"And how would the soldiers have done this, had it not been the command of their ruler?"* To gratify the Jews. Since it was not by his command that they at first went in by night, but to please the Jews; they dared anything for money. But He, when so many and such things were done, yet stood silent, as He had done during the enquiry, and answered nothing. And do thou not merely hear these things, but keep them continually in your mind, and when you behold the King of the world and of all Angels, mocked of the soldiers, by words and by actions, and bearing all silently, do thou imitate Him by deeds yourself. For when Pilate had called Him the King of the Jews, and they now put about Him the apparel of mockery, then Pilate having led Him out, said,

John 19:4-5

"I find no fault against him. He therefore went forth, wearing the crown."

But not even so was their rage quenched, but they cried out,

John 19:6

"Crucify him, crucify him."

Then Pilate, seeing that all was done in vain, said,

"Take ye him, and crucify him."

Whence it is clear that he had permitted what had been done before, because of their madness.

"For I," he says, *"find no fault in him."*

2. See in how many ways the judge makes His defense, continually acquitting Him of the charges; but none of these things shamed the dogs from their purpose. For the, *"Take ye him and crucify him,"* is the expression of one clearing himself of the guilt, and thrusting them forward to an action not permitted to them. They therefore had brought Him, in order that the thing might be done by the decision of the governor; but the contrary fell out, that He was rather acquitted than condemned by the governor's decision. Then, because they were ashamed,

John 19:7

"We have," they said, "a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."

"How then when the judge said, 'Take ye him, and judge him according to your law,' did ye reply, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,' while here ye fly to the law? And consider the charge, 'He made himself the Son of God.' Tell me, is this a ground of accusation, that He who performed the deeds of the Son of God should call Himself the Son of God?" What then does Christ? While they held this dialogue one with the other, He held His peace, fulfilling that saying of the Prophet, that *"He opens not his mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away."* [Isaiah 53:7-8, Septuagint]

Then Pilate is alarmed when he hears from them, that He made Himself the Son of God, and dreads lest the assertion may possibly be true, and he should seem to transgress; but these men who had learned this, both by His deeds and words, did not shudder, but are putting Him to death for the very reasons for which they ought to have worshipped Him. On this account he no more asks Him, *"What have you done?"* but, shaken by fear, he begins the enquiry again, saying, *"Are you the Christ?"* But He answered not. For he who had heard, *"To this end was I born, and for this came I,"* and, *"My Kingdom is not of this world,"* he, when he ought to have opposed His enemies and delivered Him, did not so, but seconded the fury of the Jews. Then they being in every way silenced, make their cry issue in a political charge, saying, *"He that makes himself a king, speaks against Cæsar."* [John 19:12] Pilate ought therefore to have accurately enquired, whether He had aimed at sovereignty, and set His hand to expel Cæsar from the kingdom. But he makes not an exact enquiry, and therefore Christ

answered him nothing, because He knew that he asked all the questions idly. Besides, since His works bore witness to Him, He would not prevail by word, nor compose any defense, showing that He came voluntarily to this condition. When He was silent, Pilate says,

John 19:10

"Do you not know that I have power to crucify you?"

Do you see how he condemned himself beforehand; for, *"if the whole rests with you, why dost not thou let Him go, when you have found no fault in Him?"* When then Pilate had uttered the sentence against himself, then He says,

John 19:11

"He that delivered Me unto you has the greater sin."

Showing that he also was guilty of sin. Then, to pull down his pride and arrogance, He says,

"You would have no power except it were given you."

Showing that this did not come to pass merely in the common order of events, but that it was accomplished mystically. Then lest, when you hear, *"Except it were given you,"* you should deem that Pilate was exempt from all blame, on this account therefore He said, *"Therefore he that delivered Me unto you has the greater sin."* *"And yet if it was given, neither he nor they were liable to any charge."* *"Thou objectest idly; for the 'given' in this place means what is 'allowed'; as though He had said, 'He has permitted these things to be, yet not for that are you clear of the wickedness.'"* He awed Pilate by the words, and proffered a clear defense. On which account that person sought to release Him; but they again cried out, saying,

John 19:12

"If thou let this man go, you are not Cæsar's friend."

For when they profited nothing by bringing charges drawn from their own law, they wickedly betook themselves to external laws, saying,

"Every one that makes himself a king speaks against Cæsar."

And where has this Man appeared as a tyrant? Whence can you prove it? By the purple robe? By the diadem? By the dress? By the soldiers? Did not He ever walk unattended, save by His twelve disciples, following in every point a humble mode of living, both as to food, and clothing, and habitation? But O what shamelessness and ill-timed cowardice! For Pilate, deeming that he should now incur some danger were he to overlook these words, comes forth as though to enquire into the matter, (for the *"sitting down"* showed this,) but without making any enquiry, he gave Him up to them, thinking to shame them. For to prove that he did it for this purpose, hear what he says.

John 19:14-15

"Behold your king!" But when they said, *"Crucify him,"* he added again, *"Shall I crucify your king?"* But they cried out, *"We have no king but Cæsar."*

Of their own will they subjected themselves to punishment; therefore also God gave them up, because they were the first to cast themselves out from His providence and superintendence; and since with one voice they rejected His sovereignty, He allowed them to fall by their own suffrages. Still what had been said should have been sufficient to calm their passion, but they feared, lest, being let go, He should again draw the multitudes, and they did all they could to prevent this. For a dreadful thing is love of rule, dreadful and able to destroy the soul; it was on account of this that they had never heard Him. And yet Pilate, in consequence of a few words, desired to let Him go, but they pressed on, saying, *"Crucify him."* And why did they strive to kill Him in this manner? It was a shameful death. Fearing therefore lest there should afterwards be any remembrance of Him, they desired to bring Him to the accursed punishment, not knowing that truth is exalted by hindrances. To prove that they had this suspicion, listen to what they say; *"We have heard that that deceiver said, After three days I will rise again"* [Matthew 27:63]; on this account they made all this stir, turning things upside down, that they might ruin matters in after time. And the ill-ordered people, corrupted by their rulers, cried out continually, *"Crucify him!"*

3. But let us not merely read of these things, but bear them in our mind; the crown of thorns, the robe, the reed, the blows, the smiting on the cheek, the spittings, the irony. These things, if continually meditated on, are sufficient to take down all anger; and if we be mocked at, if we suffer injustice, let us still say, *"The servant is not greater than his Lord"* [John

13:16]; and let us bring forward the words of the Jews, which they uttered in their madness, saying, "*You are a Samaritan, and hast a devil*" [John 8:48]; and, "*He casts out devils by Beelzebub.*" [Luke 11:15] For on this account He bare all these things, in order that we might walk in His footsteps, and endure those mockings which disturb more than any other kind of reproach. Yet nevertheless He not only bare these things, but even used every means to save and deliver from the appointed punishment those who did them. For He sent the Apostles also for their salvation, at least you hear them saying, that, "*We know that through ignorance you did it*" [Acts 3:17]; and by these means drawing them to repentance. This let us also imitate; for nothing so much makes God propitious as the loving enemies, and doing good to those who despitefully use us. When a man insults you, look not to him, but to the devil who moves him, and against him empty all your wrath, but pity the man who is moved by him. For if lying is from the devil, to be angry without a cause is much more so. When you see one turning another into ridicule, consider that it is the devil who moves him, for mockings belong not to Christians. For he who has been bidden to mourn, and has heard, "*Woe, you that laugh*" [Luke 6:25], and who after this insults, and jests, and is excited, demands not reproach from us, but sorrow, since Christ also was troubled when He thought on Judas. All these things therefore let us practice in our actions, for if we act not rightly in these, we have come to no purpose and in vain into the world. Or rather we have come to our harm, for faith is not sufficient to bring men to the Kingdom, nay, it even has power in this way most to condemn those who exhibit an ill life; for He "*which knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*" [Luke 12:47]; and again, "*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.*" [John 15:22] What excuse then shall we have, who have been set within the palace, and deemed

worthy to stoop down and enter into the sanctuary, and have been made partakers of the releasing Mysteries, and who yet are worse than the Greeks, who have shared in none of these things? For if they for the sake of vainglory have shown so much true wisdom, much more ought we to go after all virtue, because it is pleasing to God. But at present we do not even despise wealth; while they have often been careless of their life, and in wars have given up their children to their madness about devils, and have despised nature for the sake of their devils, but we do not even despise money for the sake of Christ, nor anger on account of God's will, but are inflamed, and in no better state than the fevered. And just as they, when possessed by their malady, are all burning, so we, suffocated as by some fire, can stop at no point of desire, increasing both anger and avarice. On this account I am ashamed and astonished, when I behold among the Greeks men despising riches, but all mad among ourselves. For even if we could find some despising riches, we should find that they have been made captive by other vices, by passion or envy; and a hard thing it is to discover true wisdom without a blemish. But the reason is, that we are not earnest to get our remedies from the Scriptures, nor do we apply ourselves to those Scriptures with compunction, and sorrow, and groaning, but carelessly, if at any time we chance to be at leisure. Therefore when a great rush of worldly matters comes, it overwhelms all; and if there has been any profit, destroys it. For if a man have a wound, and after putting on a plaster, do not tie it tight, but allow it to fall off, and expose his sore to wet, and dust, and heat, and ten thousand other things able to irritate it, he will get no good; yet not by reason of the inefficacy of the remedies, but by reason of his own carelessness. And this also is wont to happen to us, when we attend but little to the divine oracles, but give ourselves up wholly and incessantly to things of this life; for thus all the seed is choked, and all is made unfruitful.

That this may not be the case, let us look carefully a little, let us look up to heaven, let us bend down to the tombs and coffins of the departed. For the same end awaits us, and the same necessity of departure will often come upon us before the evening. Prepare we then for this expedition; there is need of many supplies for the journey, for great is the heat there, and great the drought, and great the solitude. Henceforth there is no reposing at an inn, there is no buying anything, when one has not taken all from hence. Hear at least what the virgins say, "*Go to them that sell*" [Matthew 25:9]; but they who went found not. Hear what Abraham says, "*A gulf between us and you.*" [Luke 16:26] Hear what Ezekiel says concerning that day, that Noah, and Job, and Daniel shall in nowise deliver their sons. [Ezekiel 14:14] But may it never come to pass that we hear these words, but that having taken hence sufficient provision for our way to eternal life, we may behold with boldness our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, dominion, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 85 on the Gospel of John

John 19:16-18

"Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He, bearing His Cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, where they crucified Him."

1. Successes have terrible power to cast down or draw aside those who take not heed. Thus the Jews, who at first enjoyed the influence of God, sought the law of royalty from the Gentiles, and in the wilderness after the manna remembered the onions. In the same way here, refusing the Kingdom of Christ, they invited to themselves that of Cæsar. Wherefore God set a king over them, according to their own decision. When then Pilate heard these things, he delivered Him to be crucified. Utterly without reason. For when he ought to have enquired whether Christ had aimed at sovereign power, he pronounced the sentence through fear alone. Yet that this might not befall him, Christ said beforehand, *"My kingdom is not of this world"*; but he having given himself wholly up to present things, would practice no great amount of wisdom. And yet his wife's dream should have been sufficient to terrify him; but by none of these things was he made better, nor did he look to heaven, but delivered Him up. And now they laid the cross upon Him as a malefactor. For even the wood they abominated, and endured not even to touch it. This was also the case in the type; for Isaac bare the wood. But then the matter stopped at the will of his father, for it was the type; while here it proceeded to action, for it was the reality.

"And He came to the place of a skull." Some say that Adam died there, and there lies; and that Jesus in this place where death had reigned, there

also set up the trophy. For He went forth bearing the Cross as a trophy over the tyranny of death: and as conquerors do, so He bare upon His shoulders the symbol of victory. What matter if the Jews did these things with a different intent. They crucified Him too with thieves, in this also unintentionally fulfilling prophecy; for what they did for insult contributed to the truth, that you may learn how great is its power, since the Prophet had foretold of old, that "*He was numbered with the transgressors.*" [Isaiah 53:12] The devil therefore wished to cast a veil over what was done, but was unable; for the three were crucified, but Jesus alone was glorious, that you may learn, that His power effected all. Yet the miracles took place when the three had been nailed to the cross; but no one attributed anything of what was done to either of those others, but to Jesus only; so entirely was the plot of the devil rendered vain, and all returned upon his own head. For even of these two, one was saved. He therefore did not insult the glory of the Cross, but contributed to it not a little. For it was not a less matter than shaking the rocks, to change a thief upon the cross, and to bring him unto Paradise.

John 19:19

"And Pilate wrote a title."

At the same time requiting the Jews, and making a defense for Christ. For since they had given Him up as worthless, and attempted to confirm this sentence by making Him share the punishment of the robbers, in order that for the future it might be in no man's power to prefer evil charges against him, or to accuse him as a worthless and wicked person, to close moreover their mouths and the mouths of all who might desire to accuse Him, and to show that they had risen up against their own King, Pilate thus placed, as on a trophy, those letters, which utter a clear voice, and show forth His Victory, and proclaim His Kingdom, though not in its completeness. And this he made manifest not in a single tongue, but in three languages; for since it was likely that there would be a mixed multitude among the Jews on account of the Feast, in order that none might be ignorant of the defense, he publicly recorded the madness of the Jews, in all the languages. For they bore malice against Him even when crucified. *"Yet what did this harm you? Nothing. For if He was a mortal and weak, and was about to become extinct, why did you fear the letters asserting that He is the King of the Jews?"* And what do they ask? *"Say that 'he said.'* For now it is an assertion, and a general sentence, but if 'he said' be added, the charge is shown to be one arising from his own rashness and arrogance."
Still Pilate was not turned aside, but stood to his first decision. And it is no little thing that is dispensed even from this circumstance, but the whole matter. For since the wood of the cross was buried, because no one was careful to take it up, inasmuch as fear was pressing, and the believers were hurrying to other urgent matters; and since it was in after times to be sought

for, and it was likely that the three crosses would lie together, in order that the Lord's might not be unknown, it was made manifest to all, first by its lying in the middle, and then by the title. For those of the thieves had no titles.

2. The soldiers parted the garments, but not the coat. See the prophecies in every instance fulfilled by their wickednesses; for this also had been predicted of old; yet there were three crucified, but the matters of the prophecies were fulfilled in Him. For why did they not this in the case of the others, but in His case only? Consider too, I pray you, the exactness of the prophecy. For the Prophet says not only, that they "*parted*," but that they "*did not part*." The rest therefore they divided, the coat they divided not, but committed the matter to a decision by lot. And the, "*Woven from the top*" [John 19:23] is not put without a purpose; but some say that a figurative assertion is declared by it, that the Crucified was not simply man, but had also the Divinity from above. Others say that the Evangelist describes the very form of the coat. For since in Palestine they put together two strips of cloth and so weave their garments, John, to show that the coat was of this kind, says, "*Woven from the top*"; and to me he seems to say this, alluding to the poorness of the garments, and that as in all other things, so in dress also, He followed a simple fashion.

John 19:24

"These things the soldiers did."

But He on the Cross, commits His mother to the disciple, teaching us even to our last breath to show every care for our parents. When indeed she unseasonably troubled Him, He said, *"Woman, what have I to do with you?"* [John 2:4] And, *"Who is My mother?"* [Matthew 12:48] But here He shows much loving affection, and commits her to the disciple whom He loved. Again John conceals himself, in modesty; for had he desired to boast, he would have also put in the cause for which he was loved, since probably it was some great and wonderful one. But wherefore does He converse on nothing else with John, nor comfort him when desponding? Because it was no time for comforting by words; besides, it was no little thing for him to be honored with such honor, and to receive the reward of steadfastness. But do thou consider, I pray, how even on the cross He did everything without being troubled, speaking with the disciple concerning His mother, fulfilling prophecies, holding forth good hopes to the thief. Yet before He was crucified He appears sweating, agonized, fearing. What then can this mean? Nothing difficult, nothing doubtful. There indeed the weakness of nature had been shown, here was being shown the excess of Power. Besides, by these two things He teaches us, even if before things terrible we be troubled, not on that account to shrink from things terrible, but when we have embarked in the contest to deem all things possible and easy. Let us then not tremble at death. Our soul has by nature the love of life, but it lies with us either to loose the bands of nature, and make this desire weak; or else to tighten them, and make the desire more tyrannous. For as we have the desire of sexual intercourse, but when we practice true wisdom we

render the desire weak, so also it falls out in the case of life; and as God has annexed carnal desire to the generation of children, to maintain a succession among us, without however forbidding us from traveling the higher road of continence; so also He has implanted in us the love of life, forbidding us from destroying ourselves, but not hindering our despising the present life. And it behooves us, knowing this, to observe due measure, and neither to go at any time to death of our own accord, even though ten thousand terrible things possess us; nor yet when dragged to it, for the sake of what is pleasing to God, to shrink back from and fear it, but boldly to strip for it, preferring the future to the present life.

But the women stood by the Cross, and the weaker sex then appeared the manlier [John 19:25]; so entirely henceforth were all things transformed.

John 19:26-7

"Behold your son . . . behold your mother."

3. And He, having committed His mother to John, said, *"Behold your Son."* [John 19:26] O the honor! With what honor did He honor the disciple! When He Himself was now departing, He committed her to the disciple to take care of. For since it was likely that, being His mother, she would grieve, and require protection, He with reason entrusted her to the beloved. To him He says, *"Behold your mother."* [John 19:27] This He said, knitting them together in charity; which the disciple understanding, took her to his own home. *"But why made He no mention of any other woman, although another stood there?"* To teach us to pay more than ordinary respect to our mothers. For as when parents oppose us on spiritual matters, we must not even own them, so when they do not hinder us, we ought to pay them all becoming respect, and to prefer them before others, because they begot us, because they bred us up, because they bare for us ten thousand terrible things. And by these words He silences the shamelessness of Marcion; for if He were not born according to the flesh, nor had a mother, wherefore takes He such forethought for her alone?

John 19:28

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished."

That is, *"that nothing was wanting to the Dispensation."* For He was everywhere desirous to show, that this Death was of a new kind, if indeed the whole lay in the power of the Person dying, and death came not on the Body before He willed it; and He willed it after He had fulfilled all things. Therefore also He said, *"I have power to lay down My life; and I have power to take it again."* [John 10:18] Knowing therefore that all things were fulfilled, He says,

John 19:28

"I thirst."

Here again fulfilling a prophecy. But consider, I pray, the accursed nature of the bystanders. Though we have ten thousand enemies, and have suffered intolerable things at their hands, yet when we see them perishing, we relent; but they did not even so make peace with Him, nor were tamed by what they saw, but rather became more savage, and increased their irony; and having brought to Him vinegar on a sponge, as men bring it to the condemned, thus they gave Him to drink; since it is on this account that the hyssop is added.

John 19:30

"Having therefore received it, He says, It is finished."

Do you see how He does all things calmly, and with power? And what follows shows this. For when all had been completed,

"He bowed His head, (this had not been nailed,) and gave up the ghost."

That is, *"died."* Yet to expire does not come after the bowing the head; but here, on the contrary, it does. For He did not, when He had expired, bow His head, as happens with us, but when He had bent His head, then He expired. By all which things the Evangelist has shown, that He was Lord of all.

But the Jews, on the other hand, who swallowed the camel and strained at the gnat, having wrought so atrocious a deed, are very precise concerning the day.

John 19:31

"Because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross —they besought Pilate that their legs might be broken."

Do you see how strong a thing is truth? By means of the very things which are the objects of their zeal, prophecy is fulfilled, for by occasion of those things, this plain prediction, unconnected with them, receives its accomplishment. For the soldiers when they came, broke the legs of the others, but not those of Christ. Yet these to gratify the Jews pierced His side with a spear, and now insulted the dead body. O abominable and accursed purpose! Yet, beloved, be not thou confounded, be not thou desponding; for the things which these men did from a wicked will, fought on the side of the truth. Since there was a prophecy, saying, (from this circumstance, *"They shall look on Him whom they pierced."* [Ver. 37; Zechariah 12:10] And not this only, but the deed then dared was a demonstration of the faith, to those who should afterwards disbelieve; as to Thomas, and those like him. With this too an ineffable mystery was accomplished. For *"there came forth water and blood."* Not without a purpose, or by chance, did those founts come forth, but because by means of these two together the Church consists. And the initiated know it, being by water indeed regenerate, and nourished by the Blood and the Flesh. Hence the Mysteries take their beginning; that when you approach to that awful cup, you may so approach, as drinking from the very side.

John 19:35

"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true."

That is, *"I heard it not from others, but was myself present and saw it, and the testimony is true."* As may be supposed. For he relates an insult done; he relates not anything great and admirable, that you should suspect his narrative; but securing the mouths of heretics, and loudly proclaiming beforehand the Mysteries that should be, and beholding the treasure laid up in them, he is very exact concerning what took place. And that prophecy also is fulfilled,

John 19:36

"A bone of Him shall not be broken." [Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12]

For even if this was said with reference to the lamb of the Jews, still it was for the sake of the reality that the type preceded, and in Him the prophecy was more fully accomplished. On this account the Evangelist brought forward the Prophet. For since by continually producing himself as witness he would have seemed unworthy of credit, he brings Moses to help him, and says, that neither did this come to pass without a purpose, but was written before of old. And this is the meaning of the words, *"A bone of Him shall not be broken."* Again he confirms the Prophet's words by his own witness. *"These things,"* says he, *"I have told you, that you might learn that great is the connection of the type with the reality."* Do you see what pains he takes to make that believed which seemed to be matter of reproach, and bringing shame? For that the soldier should insult even the dead body, was far worse than being crucified. *"But still, even these things,"* he says, *"I have told, and told with much earnestness, 'that you might believe.' [John 19:35] Let none then be unbelieving, nor through shame injure our cause. For the things which appear to be most shameful, are the very venerable records of our good things."*

John 19:38

"After this came Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple."

Not one of the twelve, but perhaps one of the seventy. For now deeming that the anger of the Jews was quenched by the Cross, they approached without fear, and took charge of His funeral. Joseph therefore came and asked the favor from Pilate, which he granted; why should he not? Nicodemus also assists him, and furnishes a costly burial. For they were still disposed to think of Him as a mere man. And they brought those spices whose special nature is to preserve the body for a long time, and not to allow it quickly to yield to corruption, which was an act of men imagining nothing great respecting Him; but anyhow, they exhibited very loving affection. But how did no one of the twelve come, neither John, nor Peter, nor any other of the more distinguished disciples? Nor does the writer conceal this point. If any one say that it was from fear of the Jews, these men also were occupied by the same fear; for Joseph too was, it says, *"A secret (disciple) for fear of the Jews."* And not one can say that Joseph acted thus because he greatly despised them, but though himself afraid, still he came. But John who was present, and had seen Him expire, did nothing of the kind. It seems to me that Joseph was a man of high rank, (as is clear from the funeral,) and known to Pilate, on which account also he obtained the favor; and then he buried Him, not as a criminal, but magnificently, after the Jewish fashion, as some great and admirable one.

4. And because they were straitened by the time, (since the Death took place at the ninth hour, and it is probable, that what with going to Pilate and what with taking down the body, evening would come upon them when it was not lawful to work,) they laid Him in the tomb that was near. And it is

providentially ordered, that He should be placed in a new tomb, wherein no one had been placed before, that His Resurrection might not be deemed to be that of some other who lay there with Him; and that the disciples might be able easily to come and be spectators of what came to pass, because the place was near; and that not they alone should be witnesses of His burial, but His enemies also, for the placing seals on the tomb, and the sitting by of the soldiers to watch it, were the actions of men testifying to the burial. For Christ earnestly desired that this should be confessed, no less than the Resurrection. Wherefore also the disciples are very earnest about this, the showing that He died. For the Resurrection all succeeding time would confirm, but the Death, if at that time it had been partially concealed, or not made very manifest, was likely to harm the account of the Resurrection. Nor was it for these reasons only that He was laid near, but also that the story about the stealing might be proved false.

John 20:1

"The first day of the week" (that is, the Lord's day) "comes Mary Magdalene, very early in the morning, and sees the stone taken away from the sepulcher."

For He arose while both stone and seals lay over Him; but because it was necessary that others should be fully satisfied, the tomb was opened after the Resurrection, and thus what had come to pass was confirmed. This then was what moved Mary. For being entirely full of loving affection towards her Master, when the Sabbath was past, she could not bear to rest, but came very early in the morning, desiring to find some consolation from the place. But when she saw the place, and the stone taken away, she neither entered in nor stooped down, but ran to the disciples, in the greatness of her longing; for this was what she earnestly desired, she wished very speedily to learn what had become of the body. This was the meaning of her running, and her words declare it.

John 20:2

"They have taken away," she says, "my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

Do you see how she knew not as yet anything clearly concerning the Resurrection, but thought there had been a removal of the body, and tells all simply to the disciples? And the Evangelist has not deprived the woman of such a praise, nor thought it shame that they should have learned these things first from her who had passed the night in watching. Thus everywhere does the truth-loving nature of his disposition shine forth. When then she came and said these things, they hearing them, draw near with great eagerness to the sepulcher, and see the linen clothes lying, which was a sign of the Resurrection. For neither, if any persons had removed the body, would they before doing so have stripped it; nor if any had stolen it, would they have taken the trouble to remove the napkin, and roll it up, and lay it in a place by itself; but how? They would have taken the body as it was. On this account John tells us by anticipation that it was buried with much myrrh, which glues linen to the body not less firmly than lead; in order that when you hear that the napkins lay apart, you may not endure those who say that He was stolen. For a thief would not have been so foolish as to spend so much trouble on a superfluous matter. For why should he undo the clothes? And how could he have escaped detection if he had done so? Since he would probably have spent much time in so doing, and be found out by delaying and loitering. But why do the clothes lie apart, while the napkin was wrapped together by itself? That you may learn that it was not the action of men in confusion or haste, the placing some in one place, some in another, and the wrapping them together. From this they believed in the Resurrection. On this account Christ afterwards appeared to

them, when they were convinced by what they had seen. Observe too here again the absence of boastfulness in the Evangelist, how he witnesses to the exactness of Peter's search. For he himself having gotten before Peter, and having seen the linen clothes, enquired not farther, but withdrew; but that fervent one passing farther in, looked at everything carefully, and saw somewhat more, and then the other too was summoned to the sight. For he entering after Peter, saw the grave-clothes lying, and separate. Now to separate, and to place one thing by itself, and another, after rolling it up, by itself, was the act of some one doing things carefully, and not in a chance way, as if disturbed.

5. But do thou, when you hear that your Lord arose naked, cease from your madness about funerals; for what is the meaning of that superfluous and unprofitable expense, which brings much loss to the mourners, and no gain to the departed, or (if we must say that it brings anything) rather harm? For the costliness of burial has often caused the breaking open of tombs, and has caused him to be cast out naked and unburied, who had been buried with much care. But alas for vainglory! How great the tyranny which it exhibits even in sorrow! How great the folly! Many, that this may not happen, having cut in pieces those fine clothes, and filled them with many spices, so that they may be doubly useless to those who would insult the dead, then commit them to the earth. Are not these the acts of madmen? Of men beside themselves? To make a show of their ambition, and then to destroy it? *"Yea,"* says some one, *"it is in order that they may lie safely with the dead that we use all these contrivances."* Well then, if the robbers do not get them, will not the moths get them, and the worms? Or if the moths and worms get them not, will not time and the moisture of putrefaction destroy them? But let us suppose that neither tomb-breakers, nor moths, nor worms, nor time, nor anything else, destroy what lies in the tomb, but that the body

itself remains untouched until the Resurrection, and these things are preserved new and fresh and fine; what advantage is there from this to the departed, when the body is raised naked, while these remain here, and profit us nothing for those accounts which must be given? *"Wherefore then,"* says some one, *"was it done in the case of Christ?"* First of all, do not compare these with human matters, since the harlot poured even ointment upon His holy feet. But if we must speak on these things, we say, that they were done when the doers knew not the word of the Resurrection; therefore it says, *"As was the manner of the Jews."* For they who honored Christ were not of the twelve, but were those who did not honor Him greatly. The twelve honored Him not in this way, but by death and massacre and dangers for His sake. That other indeed was honor, but far inferior to this of which I have spoken. Besides, as I began by saying, we are now speaking of men, but at that time these things were done with relation to the Lord. And that you may learn that Christ made no account of these things, He said, *"You saw Me an hungered, and you fed Me; thirsty, and you gave Me drink; naked, and you clothed Me"* [Matthew 25:35]; but nowhere did He say, *"dead, and you buried Me."* And this I say not as taking away the custom of burial, (that be far from me,) but as cutting short its extravagance and unseasonable vanity. *"But,"* says some one, *"feeling and grief and sympathy for the departed persuade to this practice."* The practice does not proceed from sympathy for the departed, but from vainglory. Since if you desire to sympathize with the dead, I will show you another way of mourning, and will teach you to put on him garments which shall rise again with him, and make him glorious. For these garments are not consumed by worms, nor wasted by time, nor stolen by tomb-breakers. Of what sort then are these? The clothing of alms-doing; for this is a robe that shall rise again with him, because the seal of alms-doing is with him. With these garments shine they

who then hear, "*Hungering ye fed Me.*" These make men distinguished, these make them glorious, these place them in safety; but those used now are only something for moths to consume, and a table for worms. And this I say, not forbid ding to use funeral observance, but bidding you to do it with moderation, so as to cover the body, and not commit it naked to the earth. For if living He bids us have no more than enough to cover us, much more when dead; since the dead body has not so much need of garments as when it is living and breathing. For when alive, on account of the cold, and for decency's sake, we need the covering of garments, but when dead we require grave-clothes for none of these reasons, but that the body may not lie naked; and better than grave-clothes we have the earth, fairest of coverings, and more suited for the nature of such bodies as ours. If then where there are so many needs we must not search for anything superfluous, much more where there is no such necessity, is the ostentation unseasonable.

6. "*But the lookers-on will laugh,*" says some one. Most certainly if there be any laughter, we need not care much for one so exceedingly foolish; but at present there are many who rather admire and accept our true wisdom. For these are not the things which deserve laughter, but those which we do at present, weeping, and wailing, and burying ourselves with the departed; these things deserve ridicule and punishment. But to show true wisdom, both in these respects and in the modesty of the attire used, prepares crowns and praises for us, and all will applaud us, and will admire the power of Christ, and will say, "*Amazing! How great is the power of the Crucified One! He has persuaded those who are perishing and wasting, that death is not death; they therefore do not act as perishing men, but as men who send the dead before them to a distant and better dwelling-place. He has persuaded them that this corruptible and earthy body shall put on a*

garment more glorious than silk or cloth of gold, the garment of immortality; therefore they are not very anxious about their burial, but deem a virtuous life to be an admirable winding-sheet." These things they will say, if they see us showing true wisdom; but if they behold us bent down with grief, playing the woman, placing around troops of female mourners, they will laugh, and mock, and find fault in ten thousand ways, pulling to pieces our foolish expense, our vain labor. With these things we hear all finding fault; and very reasonably. For what excuse can we have, when we adorn a body, which is consumed by corruption and worms, and neglect Christ when thirsting, going about naked, and a stranger? Cease we then from this vain trouble. Let us perform the obsequies of the departed, as is good both for us and them, to the glory of God: let us do much alms for their sake, let us send with them the best provision for the way. For if the memory of admirable men, though dead, has protected the living, (for, "*I will defend,*" it says, "*this city for Mine Own sake, and for My servant David's sake*" [2 Kings 19:34]) much more will alms-doing effect this; for this has raised even the dead, as when the widows stood round showing what things Dorcas had made, while she was with them. [Acts 9:39] When therefore one is about to die, let the friend of that dying person prepare the obsequies, and persuade the departing one to leave somewhat to the needy. With these garments let him send him to the grave, leaving Christ his heir. For if they who write kings among their heirs, leave a safe portion to their relations, when one leaves Christ heir with his children, consider how great good he will draw down upon himself and all his. These are the right sort of funerals, these profit both those who remain and those who depart. If we be so buried, we shall be glorious at the Resurrection-time. But if caring for the body we neglect the soul, we then shall suffer many terrible things, and incur much ridicule. For neither is it a common unseemliness to depart

without being clothed with virtue, nor is the body, though cast out without a tomb, so disgraced, as a soul appearing bare of virtue in that day. This let us put on, this let us wrap around us; it is best to do so during all our lifetime; but if we have in this life been negligent, let us at least in our end be sober, and charge our relations to help us when we depart by alms-doing; that being thus assisted by each other, we may attain to much confidence, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 86 on the Gospel of John

John 20:10-11

"Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulcher, weeping."

1. Full of feeling somehow is the female sex, and more inclined to pity. I say this, lest you should wonder how it could be that Mary wept bitterly at the tomb, while Peter was in no way so affected. For, *"The disciples,"* it says, *"went away unto their own home";* but she stood shedding tears. Because hers was a feeble nature, and she as yet knew not accurately the account of the Resurrection; whereas they having seen the linen clothes and believed, departed to their own homes in astonishment. And wherefore went they not straightway to Galilee, as had been commanded them before the Passion? They waited for the others, perhaps, and besides they were yet at the height of their amazement. These then went their way: but she stood at the place, for, as I have said, even the sight of the tomb tended greatly to comfort her. At any rate, you see her, the more to ease her grief, stooping down, and desiring to behold the place where the body lay. And therefore she received no small reward for this her great zeal. For what the disciples saw not, this saw the woman first, Angels sitting, the one at the feet, the other at the head, in white; even the dress was full of much radiance and joy. Since the mind of the woman was not sufficiently elevated to accept the Resurrection from the proof of the napkins, something more takes place, she beholds something more; Angels sitting in shining garments, so as to raise her thus awhile from her passionate sorrow, and to comfort her. But they said nothing to her concerning the Resurrection, yet is she gently led

forward in this doctrine. She saw countenances bright and unusual; she saw shining garments, she heard a sympathizing voice. For what says (the Angel)?

John 20:13

"Woman, why do you weep?"

By all these circumstances, as though a door was being opened for her, she was led little by little to the knowledge of the Resurrection. And the manner of their sitting invited her to question them, for they showed that they knew what had taken place; on which account they did not sit together either, but apart from one another. For because it was not likely that she would dare at once to question them, both by questioning her, and by the manner of their sitting, they bring her to converse. What then says she? She speaks very warmly and affectionately;

"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

"What do you say? Do you not know yet anything concerning the Resurrection, but do you still form fancies about His being laid ?" Do you see how she had not yet received the sublime doctrine?

John 20:14

"And when she had thus said, she turned herself back."

And by what kind of consequence is it, that she having spoken to them, and not having yet heard anything from them, turned back? Methinks that while she was speaking, Christ suddenly appearing behind her, struck the Angels with awe; and that they having beheld their Ruler, showed immediately by their bearing, their look, their movements, that they saw the Lord; and this drew the woman's attention, and caused her to turn herself backwards. To them then He appeared on this wise, but not so to the woman, in order not at the first sight to terrify her, but in a meaner and ordinary form, as is clear from her supposing that He was the gardener. It was meet to lead one of so lowly a mind to high matters, not all at once, but gently. He therefore in turn asks her,

John 20:15

"Woman, why do you weep? Whom do you seek?"

This showed that He knew what she wished to ask, and led her to make answer. And the woman, understanding this, does not again mention the name of Jesus, but as though her questioner knew the subject of her enquiry replies,

"Sir, if you have borne him hence, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

Again she speaks of laying down, and taking away, and carrying, as though speaking of a corpse. But her meaning is this; *"If you have borne him hence for fear of the Jews, tell me, and I will take him."* Great is the kindness and loving affection of the woman, but as yet there is nothing lofty with her. Wherefore He now sets the matter before her, not by appearance, but by Voice. For as He was at one time known to the Jews, and at another time unperceived though present; so too in speaking, He, when He chose, then made Himself known; as also when He said to the Jews, *"Whom do you seek?"* they knew neither the Countenance nor the Voice until He chose. And this was the case here. And He named her name only, reproaching and blaming her that she entertained such fancies concerning One who lived. But how was it that,

John 20:16

"She turned herself, and says," if so be that He was speaking to her? It seems to me, that after having said, *"Where have ye laid him?"* she turned to the Angels to ask why they were astonished, and that then Christ, by calling her by name, turned her to Himself from them, and revealed Himself by His Voice; for when He called her *"Mary,"* then she knew Him; so that the recognition was not by His appearance, but by His Voice. And if any say, *"Whence is it clear that the Angels were awestruck, and that on this account the woman turned herself,"* they will in this place say, *"whence is it clear that she would have touched Him, and fallen at His feet?"* Now as this is clear from His saying, *"Touch Me not,"* so is the other clear from its saying, that she turned herself. But wherefore, said He,

John 20:17

"Touch Me not"?

2. Some assert, that she asked for spiritual grace, because she had heard Him when with the disciples say, *"If I go to the Father, 'I will ask Him, and He shall give you another Comforter.'"* [c. xiv. 3, 16] But how could she who was not present with the disciples have heard this? Besides, such an imagination is far from the meaning here. And how should she ask, when He had not yet gone to the Father? What then is the sense? Methinks that she wished still to converse with Him as before, and that in her joy she perceived nothing great in Him, although He had become far more excellent in the Flesh. To lead her therefore from this idea, and that she might speak to Him with much awe, (for neither with the disciples does He henceforth appear so familiar as before,) He raises her thoughts, that she should give more reverent heed to Him. To have said, *"Approach Me not as you did before, for matters are not in the same state, nor shall I henceforth be with you in the same way,"* would have been harsh and high-sounding; but the saying,

"I am not yet ascended to the Father," though not painful to hear, was the saying of One declaring the same thing. For by saying, *"I am not yet ascended,"* He shows that He hastes and presses there; and that it was not meet that One about to depart there, and no longer to converse with men, should be looked on with the same feelings as before. And the sequel shows that this is the case.

"Go and say unto the brethren, that I go unto My Father, and your Father, unto My God and your God."

Yet He was not about to do so immediately, but after forty days. How then says He this? With a desire to raise their minds, and to persuade them that He departs into the heavens. But the, *"To My Father and your Father, to My God, and your God,"* belongs to the Dispensation, since the *"ascending"* also belongs to His Flesh. For He speaks these words to one who had no high thoughts. *"Is then the Father His in one way, and ours in another?"* Assuredly then He is. For if He is God of the righteous in a manner different from that in which He is God of other men, much more in the case of the Son and us. For because He had said, *"Say to the brethren,"* in order that they might not imagine any equality from this, He showed the difference. He was about to sit on His Father's throne, but they to stand by. So that albeit in His Subsistence according to the Flesh He became our Brother, yet in Honor He greatly differed from us, it cannot even be told how much.

John 20:18

"She therefore departs, bearing these tidings to the disciples."

So great a good is perseverance and endurance. But how was it that they did not any more grieve when He was about to depart, nor speak as they had done before? At that time they were affected in such a way, as supposing that He was about to die; but now that He was risen again, what reason had they to grieve? Moreover, Mary reported His appearance and His words, which were enough to comfort them. Since then it was likely that the disciples on hearing these things would either not believe the woman, or, believing, would grieve that He had not deemed them worthy of the vision, though He promised to meet them in Galilee; in order that they might not by dwelling on this be unsettled, He let not a single day pass, but having brought them to a state of longing, by their knowledge that He was risen, and by what they heard from the woman, when they were thirsting to see Him, and were greatly afraid, (which thing itself especially made their yearning greater,) He then, when it was evening, presented Himself before them, and that very marvelously. And why did He appear in the *"evening"*? Because it was probable that they would then especially be very fearful. But the marvel was, why they did not suppose Him to be an apparition; for He entered, *"when the doors were shut,"* and suddenly. The chief cause was, that the woman beforehand had wrought great faith in them; besides, He showed His countenance to them clear and mild. He came not by day, in order that all might be collected together. For great was the amazement; for neither did He knock at the door but all at once stood in the midst, and showed His side and His hands. At the same time also by His Voice He smoothed their tossing thought, by saying,

John 20:19

"Peace be unto you."

That is, *"Be not troubled"*; at the same time reminding them of the word which He spoke to them before the Crucifixion, *"My peace I leave unto you"* [John 14:27]; and again, *"In me you have peace, but" "in the world you shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33]

John 20:20

"Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

Do you see the words issuing in deeds? For what He said before the Crucifixion, that *"I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you"* [John 16:22], this He now accomplished in deed; but all these things led them to a most exact faith. For since they had a truceless war with the Jews, He continually repeated the, *"Peace be unto you,"* giving them, to counterbalance the war, the consolation. And so this was the first word that He spoke to them after the Resurrection, (wherefore also Paul continually says, *"Grace be unto you and peace,"*) and to women He gives good tidings of joy, because that sex was in sorrow, and had received this as the first curse. Therefore He gives good tidings suitable respectively, to men, peace, because of their war; joy to women, because of their sorrow. Then having put away all painful things, He tells of the successes of the Cross, and these were the *"peace."* *"Since then all hindrances have been removed,"* He says, *"and I have made My victory glorious, and all has been achieved,"* (then He says afterwards,)

John 20:21

"As My Father has sent Me, so send I you."

"You have no difficulty, owing to what has already come to pass, and to the dignity of Me who send you." Here He lifts up their souls, and shows them their great cause of confidence, if so be that they were about to undertake His work. And no longer is an appeal made to the Father, but with authority He gives to them the power. For,

John 20:22-23

"He breathed on them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

As a king sending forth governors, gives power to cast into prison and to deliver from it, so in sending these forth, Christ invests them with the same power. But how says He, *"If I go not away, He will not come"* [John 16:7], and yet gives them the Spirit? Some say that He gave not the Spirit, but rendered them fit to receive It, by breathing on them. For if Daniel when he saw an Angel was afraid, what would not they have suffered when they received that unspeakable Gift, unless He had first made them learners? Wherefore He said not, *"You have received the Holy Ghost,"* but, *"Receive the Holy Ghost."* Yet one will not be wrong in asserting that they then also received some spiritual power and grace; not so as to raise the dead, or to work miracles, but so as to remit sins. For the gifts of the Spirit are of different kinds; wherefore He added, *"Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them,"* showing what kind of power He was giving. But in the other case, after forty days, they received the power of working miracles. Wherefore He says, *"You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa."* [Acts 1:8] And witnesses they became by means of miracles, for unspeakable is the grace of the Spirit and multiform the gift. But this comes to pass, that you may learn that the gift and the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is One. For things which appear to be peculiar to the Father, these are seen also to belong to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. *"How then,"* says some one, *"does none come to the Son, 'except the Father draw him'?"* [John 6:44] Why, this very thing is

shown to belong to the Son also. *"I,"* He says, *"am the Way: no man comes unto the Father but by Me."* [John 14:6] And observe that it belongs to the Spirit also; for *"No man can call Jesus Christ Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."* [1 Corinthians 12:3] Again, we see that the Apostles were given to the Church at one time by the Father, at another by the Son, at another by the Holy Ghost, and that the *"diversities of gifts"* [1 Corinthians 12:4] belong to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

4. Let us then do all we can to have the Holy Spirit with ourselves, and let us treat with much honor those into whose hands its operation has been committed. For great is the dignity of the priests. *"Whosoever sins,"* it says, *"ye remit, they are remitted unto them";* wherefore also Paul says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."* [Hebrews 13:17] And hold them very exceedingly in honor; for thou indeed carest about your own affairs, and if you order them well, you give no account for others, but the priest even if he rightly order his own life, if he have not an anxious care for yours, yea and that of all those around him, will depart with the wicked into hell; and often when not betrayed by his own conduct, he perishes by yours, if he have not rightly performed all his part. Knowing therefore the greatness of the danger, give them a large share of your goodwill; which Paul also implied when he said, *"For they watch for your souls,"* and not simply so, but, *"as they that shall give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] They ought therefore to receive great attention from you; but if you join with the rest in trampling upon them, then neither shall your affairs be in a good condition. For while the steersman continues in good courage, the crew also will be in safety; but if he be tired out by their reviling him and showing ill-will against him, he cannot watch equally well, or retain his skill, and without intending it, throws them into ten thousand mischiefs. And so too the priest, if he enjoy honor from you, will be able well to order

your affairs; but if you throw them into despondency, you weaken their hands, and render them, as well as yourselves, an easy prey to the waves, although they be very courageous. Consider what Christ says concerning the Jews. *"The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you to do, do ye."* [Matthew 23:2-3] Now we have not to say, *"the priests sit on Moses' seat,"* but *"on that of Christ";* for they have successively received His doctrine. Wherefore also Paul says, *"We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us."* [2 Corinthians 5:20] See ye not that in the case of Gentile rulers, all bow to them, and oftentimes even persons superior in family, in life, in intelligence, to those who judge them? Yet still because of him who has given them, they consider none of these things, but respect the decision of their governor, whosoever he be that receives the rule over them. Is there then such fear when man appoints, but when God appoints do we despise him who is appointed, and abuse him, and besmirch him with ten thousand reproaches, and though forbidden to judge our brethren, do we sharpen our tongue against our priests? And how can this deserve excuse, when we see not the beam in our own eye, but are bitterly over-curious about the mote in another's? Do you not know that by so judging you make your own judgment the harder? And this I say not as approving of those who exercise their priesthood unworthily, but as greatly pitying and weeping for them; yet do I not on this account allow that it is right that they should be judged by those over whom they are set. And although their life be very much spoken against, you, if you take heed to yourself, will not be harmed at all in respect of the things committed to them by God. For if He caused a voice to be uttered by an ass, and bestowed spiritual blessings by a diviner, working by the foolish mouth and impure tongue of Balaam, in behalf of the offending Jews, much more for the sake of you the right-minded will

He, though the priests be exceedingly vile, work all the things that are His, and will send the Holy Ghost. For neither does the pure draw down that Spirit by his own purity, but it is grace that works all. *"For all,"* it says, *"is for your sake, whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas."* [1 Corinthians 3:22-23] For the things which are placed in the hands of the priest it is with God alone to give; and however far human wisdom may reach, it will appear inferior to that grace. And this I say, not in order that we may order our own life carelessly, but that when some of those set over you are careless liver, you the ruled may not often heap up evil for yourselves. But why speak I of priests? Neither Angel nor Archangel can do anything with regard to what is given from God; but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, dispenses all, while the priest lends his tongue and affords his hand. For neither would it be just that through the wickedness of another, those who come in faith to the symbols of their salvation should be harmed. Knowing all these things, let us fear God, and hold His priests in honor, paying them all reverence; that both for our own good deeds, and the attention shown to them, we may receive a great return from God, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 87 on the Gospel of John

John 20:24-25

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said, Except I shall see in His hands —I will not believe."

1. As to believe carelessly and in a random way, comes of an over-easy temper; so to be beyond measure curious and meddlesome, marks a most gross understanding. On this account Thomas is held to blame. For he believed not the Apostles when they said, *"We have seen the Lord"*; not so much mistrusting them, as deeming the thing to be impossible, that is to say, the resurrection from the dead. Since he says not, *"I do not believe you,"* but, *"Except I put my hand— I do not believe."* But how was it, that when all were collected together, he alone was absent? Probably after the dispersion which had lately taken place, he had not returned even then. But do thou, when you see the unbelief of the disciple, consider the lovingkindness of the Lord, how for the sake of a single soul He showed Himself with His wounds, and comes in order to save even the one, though he was grosser than the rest; on which account indeed he sought proof from the grossest of the senses, and would not even trust his eyes. For he said not, *"Except I see,"* but, *"Except I handle,"* he says, lest what he saw might somehow be an apparition. Yet the disciples who told him these things, were at the time worthy of credit, and so was He that promised; yet, since he desired more, Christ did not deprive him even of this.

And why does He not appear to him straightway, instead of *"after eight days"*? [John 20:26] In order that being in the mean time continually

instructed by the disciples, and hearing the same thing, he might be inflamed to more eager desire, and be more ready to believe for the future. But whence knew he that His side had been opened? From having heard it from the disciples. How then did he believe partly, and partly not believe? Because this thing was very strange and wonderful. But observe, I pray you, the truthfulness of the disciples, how they hide no faults, either their own or others', but record them with great veracity.

Jesus again presents himself to them, and waits not to be requested by Thomas, nor to hear any such thing, but before he had spoken, Himself prevented him, and fulfilled his desire; showing that even when he spoke those words to the disciples, He was present. For He used the same words, and in a manner conveying a sharp rebuke, and instruction for the future. For having said,

John 20:26

"Reach hither your finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither your hand, and thrust it into My side"; He added,

"And be not faithless, but believing."

Do you see that his doubt proceeded from unbelief? But it was before he had received the Spirit; after that, it was no longer so, but, for the future, they were perfected.

And not in this way only did Jesus rebuke him, but also by what follows; for when he, being fully satisfied, breathed again, and cried aloud,

John 20:28

"My Lord, and my God," He says,

John 20:29

"Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

For this is of faith, to receive things not seen; since, *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* [Hebrews 11:1] And here He pronounces blessed not the disciples only, but those also who after them should believe. *"Yet,"* says some one, *"the disciples saw and believed."* Yes, but they sought nothing of the kind, but from the proof of the napkins, they straightway received the word concerning the Resurrection, and before they saw the body, exhibited all faith. When therefore any one in the present day say, *"I would that I had lived in those times, and had seen Christ working miracles,"* let them reflect, that, *"Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."*

It is worth enquiring, how an incorruptible body showed the prints of the nails, and was tangible by a mortal hand. But be not thou disturbed; what took place was a matter of condescension. For that which was so subtle and light as to enter in when the doors were shut, was free from all density ; but this marvel was shown, that the Resurrection might be believed, and that men might know that it was the Crucified One Himself, and that another rose not in His stead. On this account He arose bearing the signs of the Cross, and on this account He eats. At least the Apostles everywhere made this a sign of the Resurrection, saying, *"We, who ate and drank with Him."* [Acts 10:41] As therefore when we see Him walking on the waves before the Crucifixion, we do not say, that that body is of a different nature, but of our own; so after the Resurrection, when we see Him with the prints of the nails, we will no more say, that he is therefore corruptible. For He exhibited these appearances on account of the disciple.

John 20:30

"And many other signs truly did Jesus."

2. Since this Evangelist has mentioned fewer than the others, he tells us that neither have all the others mentioned them all, but as many as were sufficient to draw the hearers to belief. For, *"If,"* it says, *"they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books."* [John 21:25] Whence it is clear, that What they have mentioned they wrote not for display, but only for the sake of what was useful. For how could they who omitted the greater part, write these others for display? But why went they not through them all? Chiefly on account of their number; besides, they also considered, that he who believed not those they had mentioned, would not give heed to a greater number; while he who received these, would have no need of another in order to believe. And here too he seems to me to be for the time speaking of the miracles after the Resurrection. Wherefore He says,

"In the presence of His disciples."

For as before the Resurrection it was necessary that many should be done, in order that they might believe that He was the Son of God, so was it also after the Resurrection, in order that they might admit that He had arisen. For another reason also he has added, *"In the presence of His disciples,"* because He conversed with them alone after the Resurrection; wherefore also He said, *"The world sees Me no more."* [John 14:19] Then, in order that you may understand that what was done was done only for the sake of the disciples, he added,

John 20:31

"That believing ye might have life in His Name."

Speaking generally to mankind, and showing that not on Him who is believed on, but on ourselves, he bestows a very great favor. *"In His Name,"* that is, *"through Him"*; for He is the Life.

John 21:1

"After these things, Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias."

Do you see that He remains not with them continually, nor as before? He appeared, for instance, in the evening, and flew away; then after eight days again once, and again flew away; then after these things by the sea, and again with great terror. But what is the, "*showed*"? From this it is clear that He was not seen unless He condescended, because His body was henceforth incorruptible, and of unmixed purity. But wherefore has the writer mentioned the place? To show that he had now taken away the greater part of their fear, so that they now ventured forth from their dwelling, and went about everywhere. For they were no longer shut up at home, but had gone into Galilee, avoiding the danger from the Jews. Simon, therefore, comes to fish. For since neither was He with them continually, nor was the Spirit yet given, nor they at that time yet entrusted with anything, having nothing to do, they went after their trade.

John 21:2

"There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael," (he that was called by Philip,) "and the sons of Zebedee, and two others."

Having then nothing to do, they went to their fishing, and this same they did by night, because they were greatly afraid. This Luke also mentions; but this is not the same occasion, but a different one. And the other disciples followed, because they were henceforth bound to one another, and at the same time desired to see the fishing, and to bestow their leisure well. As they then were laboring and wearied, Jesus presents Himself before them, and does not at once reveal Himself, so that they enter into converse with Him. He therefore says to them,

John 21:5

"Have ye any meat ?"

For a time He speaks rather after a human manner, as if about to buy somewhat of them. But when they made signs that they had none, He bade them cast their nets to the right; and on casting they obtained a haul. But when they recognized Him, the disciples Peter and John again exhibited the peculiarities of their several tempers. The one was more fervent, the other more lofty; the one more keen, the other more clear-sighted. On this account John first recognized Jesus, Peter first came to Him. For no ordinary signs were they which had taken place. What were they? First, that so many fish were caught; then, that the net did not break; then, that before they landed, the coals had been found, and fish laid thereon, and bread. For He no longer made things out of matter already subsisting, as, through a certain dispensation, He did before the Crucifixion. When therefore Peter knew Him, he threw down all, both fish and nets, and girded himself. Do you see his respect and love? Yet they were only two hundred cubits off; but not even so could Peter wait to go to Him in the boat, but reached the shore by swimming. What then does Jesus?

John 21:12

"Come," He says, "dine." "And none of them dared ask Him."

For they no longer had the same boldness, nor were they so confident, nor did they now approach Him with speech, but with silence and great fear and reverence, sat down giving heed to Him.

"For they knew that it was the Lord."

And therefore they did not ask Him, *"Who are You?"* But seeing that His form was altered, and full of much awfulness, they were greatly amazed, and desired to ask somewhat concerning it; but fear, and their knowledge that He was not some other, but the Same, checked the enquiry, and they only ate what He created for them with a greater exertion of power than before. For here He no more looks to heaven, nor performs those human acts, showing that those also which He did were done by way of condescension. And to show that He remained not with them continually, nor in like manner as before, It says that,

John 21:14

"This was the third time that Jesus appeared to them, after that He arose from the dead."

And He bids them *"to bring of the fish,"* to show that what they saw was no appearance. But here indeed it says not that He ate with them, but Luke, in another place, says that He did; for *"He was eating together with them."* [Acts 1:4] But the, *"how,"* it is not ours to say; for these things came to pass in too strange a manner, not as though His nature now needed food, but from an act of condescension, in proof of the Resurrection.

3. Perhaps when you heard these things, you glowed, and called those happy who were then with Him, and those who shall be with Him at the day of the general Resurrection. Let us then use every exertion that we may see that admirable Face. For if when now we hear we so burn, and desire to have been in those days which He spent upon earth, and to have heard His Voice, and seen His face, and to have approached, and touched, and ministered unto Him; consider how great a thing it is to see Him no longer in a mortal body, nor doing human actions, but with a body guard of Angels, being ourselves also in a form of unmixed purity, and beholding Him, and enjoying the rest of that bliss which passes all language.

Wherefore, I entreat, let us use every means, so as not to miss such glory. For nothing is difficult if we be willing, nothing burdensome if we give heed. *"If we endure, we shall also reign with Him."* [2 Timothy 2:12] What then is, *"If we endure"*? If we bear tribulations, if persecutions, if we walk in the strait way. For the strait way is by its nature laborious, but by our will it is rendered light, from the hope of things to come. *"For our present light affliction works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are not*

seen." [2 Corinthians 4:17-18] Let us then transfer our eyes to heaven, and continually imagine *"those"* things, and behold them. For if we always spend our time with them, we shall not be moved to desire the pleasures of this world, nor find it hard to bear its sorrows; but we shall laugh at these and the like, and nothing will be able to enslave or lift us up, if only we direct our longing there, and look to that love. And why say I that we shall not grieve at present troubles? We shall henceforth not even appear to see them. Such a thing is strong desire. Those, for instance, who are not at present with us, but being absent are loved, we image every day. For mighty is the sovereignty of love, it alienates the soul from all things else, and chains to the desired object. If thus we love Christ, all things here will seem to be a shadow, an image, a dream. We too shall say, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress?"* [Romans 8:35] He said not, *"money, or wealth, or beauty,"* (these are very mean and contemptible,) but he has put the things which seem to be grievous, famines, persecutions, deaths. He then spat on these even, as being nought; but we for the sake of money separate ourselves from our life, and cut ourselves off from the light. And Paul indeed prefers *"neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature,"* to the love which is towards Him; but we, if we see a little portion of gold, are fired, and trample on His laws. And if these things are intolerable when spoken of, much more are they so when done. For the terrible thing is this, that we shudder to hear, but do not shudder to do: we swear readily, and perjure ourselves, and plunder, and exact usury, care nothing for sobriety, desist from exactness in prayer, transgress most of the commandments, and for the sake of money make no account of our own members. For he that loves wealth will work ten thousand mischiefs to his neighbor, and to himself as well. He will easily be angry with him, and revile him, and call

him fool, and swear and perjure himself, and does not even preserve the measures of the old law. For he that loves gold will not love his neighbor; yet we, for the Kingdom's sake, are bidden to love even our enemies. Now if by fulfilling the old commandments, we shall not be able to enter the Kingdom of heaven, unless our righteousness exceed and go beyond them, when we transgress even these, what excuse shall we obtain? He that loves money, not only will not love his enemies, but will even treat his friends as enemies.

4. But why speak I of friends? The lovers of money have often ignored nature itself. Such a one knows not kindred, remembers not companionship, reverences not age, has no friend, but will be ill-disposed towards all, and above all others to himself, not only by destroying his soul, but by racking himself with ten thousand cares, and toils, and sorrows. For he will endure foreign travels, hatreds, dangers, plots, anything whatever, only that he may have in his house the root of all evil, and may count much gold. What then can be more grievous than this disease? It is void of any luxury or pleasure, for the sake of which men often sin, it is void of honor or glory. For the lover of money suspects that he has tens of thousands, and really has many, who accuse, and envy, and slander, and plot against him. Those whom he has wronged hate him as having been ill-used; those who have not yet suffered, fearing least they may suffer, and sympathizing with those who have, manifest the same hostility; while the greater and more powerful, being stung and indignant on account of the humbler sort, and at the same time also envying him, are his enemies and haters. And why speak I of men? For when one has God also made his enemy, what hope shall there then be for him? What consolation? What comfort? He that loves riches will never be able to use them; he will be their slave and keeper, not their master. For, being ever anxious to make them more, he will never be willing

to spend them; but he will cut short himself, and be in poorer state than any poor man, as nowhere stopping in his desire. Yet riches are made not that we should keep, but that we should use them; but if we are going to bury them for others, what can be more miserable than we, who run about desiring to get together the possessions of all men, that we may shut them up within, and cut them off from common use? But there is another malady not less than this. Some men bury their money in the earth, others in their bellies, and in pleasure and drunkenness; together with injustice adding to themselves the punishment of wantonness. Some minister with their substance to parasites and flatterers, others to dice and harlots, others to different expenses of the same kind, cutting out for themselves ten thousand roads that lead to hell, but leaving the right and sanctioned road which leads to heaven. And yet it has not greater gain only, but greater pleasure than the things we have mentioned. For he who gives to harlots is ridiculous and shameful, and will have many quarrels, and brief pleasure; or rather, not even brief, because, give what he will to the women his mistresses, they will not thank him for it; for, *"The house of a stranger is a cask with holes."* [Proverbs 23:27, Septuagint] Besides, that sort of persons is impudent, and Solomon has compared their love to the grave; and then only do they stop, when they see their lover stripped of all. Or rather, such a woman does not stop even then, but tricks herself out the more, and tramples on him when he is down, and excites much laughter against him, and works him so much mischief, as it is not possible even to describe by words. Not such is the pleasure of the saved; for neither has any there a rival, but all rejoice and are glad, both they that receive blessings, and they that look on. No anger, no despondency, no shame, no disgrace, besiege the soul of such a one, but great is the gladness of his conscience, and great his hope of things to come; bright his glory, and great his distinction; and more than all is the favor and

safety which is from God, and not one precipice, nor suspicion, but a waveless harbor, and calm. Considering therefore all these things, and comparing pleasure with pleasure, let us choose the better, that we may obtain the good things to come, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 88 on the Gospel of John

John 21:15

"So when they had dined, Jesus says to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me more than these? He says unto Him, Yea, Lord, You know that I love You."

1. There are indeed many other things which are able to give us boldness towards God, and to show us bright and approved, but that which most of all brings good will from on high, is tender care for our neighbor. Which therefore Christ requires of Peter. For when their eating was ended, Jesus says to Simon Peter, *"Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me more than these? He says unto Him, Yea, Lord, You know that I love You."*

"He says unto him, Feed My sheep."

And why, having passed by the others, does He speak with Peter on these matters? He was the chosen one of the Apostles, the mouth of the disciples, the leader of the band; on this account also Paul went up upon a time to enquire of him rather than the others. And at the same time to show him that he must now be of good cheer, since the denial was done away, Jesus puts into his hands the chief authority among the brethren; and He brings not forward the denial, nor reproaches him with what had taken place, but says, *"If you love Me, preside over your brethren, and the warm love which you ever manifested, and in which you rejoiced, show thou now; and the life which you said you would lay down for Me, now give for My sheep."*

When then having been asked once and again, he called Him to witness who knows the secrets of the heart, and then was asked even a third

time, he was troubled, fearing a repetition of what had happened before,
(for then, having been strong in assertion, he was afterwards convicted,)
and therefore he again betakes himself to Him. For the saying,

John 21:17

"You know all things."

"You know all things," means, *"things present, and things to come."* Do you see how he had become better and more sober, being no more self-willed, or contradicting? For on this account he was troubled, *"lest perchance I think that I love, and love not, as before when I thought and affirmed much, yet I was convicted at last."* But Jesus asks him the third time, and the third time gives him the same injunction, to show at what a price He sets the care of His own sheep, and that this especially is a sign of love towards Him. And having spoken to him concerning the love towards Himself, He foretells to him the martyrdom which he should undergo, showing that He said not to Him what he said as distrusting, but as greatly trusting him; wishing besides to point out a proof of love towards Him, and to instruct us in what manner especially we ought to love Him. Wherefore He says,

John 21:18

"When you were young, you girded yourself, and walked whither you would, but when you are old, others shall gird you, and carry you whither you will not."

And yet this he did will, and desired; on which account also He has revealed it to him. For since Peter had continually said, *"I will lay down my life for You"* [John 13:37], and, *"Though I should die with You, yet will I not deny You"* [Matthew 26:35]: He has given him back his desire. What then is the, *"Whither you will not"*? He speaks of natural feeling, and the necessity of the flesh, and that the soul is unwillingly torn away from the body. So that even though the will were firm, yet still even then nature would be found in fault. For no one lays aside the body without feeling, God, as I said before, having suitably ordained this, that violent deaths might not be many. For if, as things are, the devil has been able to effect this, and has led ten thousand to precipices and pits; had not the soul felt such a desire for the body, the many would have rushed to this under any common discouragement. The, *"whither you will not,"* is then the expression of one signifying natural feeling.

But how after having said, *"When you were young,"* does He again say, *"When you are old"*? For this is the expression of one declaring that he was not then young; (nor was he; nor yet old, but a man of middle age.) Wherefore then did He recall to his memory his former life? Signifying, that this is the nature of what belongs to Him. In things of this life the young man is useful, the old useless; *"but in Mine,"* He says, *"not so; but when old age has come on, then is excellence brighter, then is manliness more illustrious, being nothing hindered by the time of life."* This He said not to terrify, but to rouse Him; for He knew his love, and that he long had

yearned for this blessing. At the same time He declares the kind of death. For since Peter ever desired to be in the dangers which were for His sake, *"Be of good cheer,"* He says, *"I will so satisfy your desire, that, what you suffered not when young, you must suffer when you are old."* Then the Evangelist, to rouse the hearer, has added,

John 21:19

"This spoke He, signifying by what death he should glorify God."

He said not, *"Should die,"* but, *"Should glorify God,"* that you may learn, that to suffer for Christ, is glory and honor to the sufferer.

"And when He had spoken this, He says, Follow Me."

Here again He alludes to his tender carefulness, and to his being very closely attached to Himself. And if any should say, *"How then did James receive the chair at Jerusalem?"* I would make this reply, that He appointed Peter teacher, not of the chair, but of the world.

John 21:20-21

"Then Peter turning about, sees the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned on His breast at supper; and says, Lord, and what shall this man do?"

2. Wherefore has he reminded us of that reclining? Not without cause or in a chance way, but to show us what boldness Peter had after the denial. For he who then did not dare to question Jesus, but committed the office to another, was even entrusted with the chief authority over the brethren, and not only does not commit to another what relates to himself, but himself now puts a question to his Master concerning another. John is silent, but Peter speaks. He shows also here the love which he bare towards him; for Peter greatly loved John, as is clear from what followed, and their close union is shown through the whole Gospel, and in the Acts. When therefore Christ had foretold great things to him, and committed the world to him, and spoke beforehand of his martyrdom, and testified that his love was greater than that of the others, desiring to have John also to share with him, he said, *"And what shall this man do?" "Shall he not come the same way with us?"* And as at that other time not being able himself to ask, he puts John forward, so now desiring to make him a return, and supposing that he would desire to ask about the matters pertaining to himself, but had not courage, he himself undertook the questioning. What then says Christ?

John 21:22

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you?"

Since he spoke from strong affection, and wishing not to be torn away from him, Christ, to show that however much he might love, he could not go beyond His love, says, *"If I will that he tarry— what is that to you?"* By these words teaching us not to be impatient, nor curious beyond what seems good to Him. For because Peter was ever hot, and springing forward to enquiries such as this, to cut short his warmth, and to teach him not to enquire farther, He says this.

John 21:23

"Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not that he shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you?"

"Do not thou on any account suppose," He says, "that I order your matters after a single rule." And this He did to withdraw them from their unseasonable sympathy for each other; for since they were about to receive the charge of the world, it was necessary that they should no longer be closely associated together; for assuredly this would have been a great loss to the world. Wherefore He says unto him, "You have had a work entrusted to you, look to it, accomplish it, labor and struggle. What if I will that he tarry here? Look thou to and care for your own matters." And observe, I pray you, here also the absence of pride in the Evangelist; for having mentioned the opinion of the disciples, he corrects it, as though they had not comprehended what Jesus meant. "Jesus said not," he tells us, "that 'he shall not die, but, If I will that he tarry.'"

John 21:24

"This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true."

Why is it, that then, when none of the others do so, he alone uses these words, and that for the second time, witnessing to himself? For it seems to be offensive to the hearers. What then is the cause? He is said to have been the last who came to writing, Christ having moved and roused him to the work; and on this account he continually sets forth his love, alluding to the cause by which he was impelled to write. Therefore also he continually makes mention of it, to make his record trustworthy, and to show, that, moved from thence, he came to this work. *"And I know,"* he says, *"that the things are true which he says. And if the many believe not, it is permitted them to believe from this."* *"From what?"* From that which is said next.

John 21:25

"There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

"Whence it is clear that I could not have written to court favor; for I who, when the miracles were so many, have not even related so many as the others have, but omitting most of them, have brought forward the plots of the Jews, the stonings, the hatred, the insults, the revilings, and have shown how they called Him a demoniac and a deceiver, certainly could not have acted to gain favor. For it behooved one who courted favor to do the contrary, to reject the reproachful, to set forth the glorious." Since then he wrote what he did from full assurance, he does not decline to produce his own testimony, challenging men separately to enquire into and scrutinize the circumstances. For it is a custom with us, when we think that we are speaking exactly true, never to refuse our testimony; and if we do this, much more would he who wrote by the Spirit. What then the other Apostles when they preached declared, he also says; *"We are witnesses of the things spoken, and the Spirit which He has given to them that obey Him."* [Acts 5:32] And besides, he was present at all, and did not desert Him even when being crucified, and had His mother entrusted to him; all which things are signs of his love for Him, and of his knowing all things exactly. And if he has said that so many miracles had taken place, marvel thou not, but, considering the ineffable power of the Doer, receive with faith what is spoken. For it was as easy for Him to do whatever He would, as it is for us to speak, or rather much easier; for it sufficed that He should will only, and all followed.

3. Let us then give exact heed to the words, and let us not cease to unfold and search them through, for it is from continual application that we get some advantage. So shall we be able to cleanse our life, so to cut up the thorns; for such a thing is sin and worldly care, fruitless and painful. And as the thorn whatever way it is held pricks the holder, so the things of this life, on whatever side they be laid hold of, give pain to him who hugs and cherishes them. Not such are spiritual things; they resemble a pearl, whichever way thou turn it, it delights the eyes. As thus. A man has done a deed of mercy; he not only is fed with hopes of the future, but also is cheered by the good things here, being everywhere full of confidence, and doing all with much boldness. He has got the better of an evil desire; even before obtaining the Kingdom, he has already received the fruit here, being praised and approved, before all others, by his own conscience. And every good work is of this nature; just as conscience also punishes wicked deeds here, even before the pit. For if, after sinning, you consider the future, you become afraid and tremblest, though no man punish you; if the present, you have many enemies, and livest in suspicion, and canst not henceforth even look in the face those who have wronged you, or rather, those who have not wronged you. For we do not in the case of those evil deeds reap so much pleasure, as we do despondency, when conscience cries out against us, men, without, condemn us, God is angered, the pit travailing to receive us, our thoughts not at rest. A heavy, a heavy and a burdensome thing is sin, harder to bear than any lead. He at least who has any sense of it will not be able to look up ever so little, though he be very dull. Thus, for instance, Ahab, though very impious, when he felt this, walked bending downwards, crushed and afflicted. On this account he clothed himself in sackcloth, and shed fountains of tears. [1 Kings 21:27] If we do this, and grieve as he did, we shall put off our faults as did Zacchæus, and we too shall obtain some

pardon. [Luke 19:9] For as in the case of tumors, and fistulous ulcers, if one stay not first the discharge which runs over and inflames the wound, how many soever remedies he applies, while the source of the evil is not stopped, he does all in vain; so too if we stay not our hand from covetousness, and check not that evil afflux of wealth, although we give alms, we do all to no purpose. For that which was healed by it, covetousness coming after is wont to overwhelm and spoil, and to make harder to heal than before. Let us then cease from rapine, and so do alms. But if we betake ourselves to precipices, how shall we be able to recover ourselves? for if one party (that is, alms-doing) were to pull at a falling man from above, while another was forcibly dragging him from below, the only result of such a struggle would be, that the man would be torn asunder. That we may not suffer this, nor, while covetousness weighs us down from below, alms-doing depart and leave us, let us lighten ourselves, and spread our wings, that having been perfected by the riddance of evil things, and the practice of good, we may obtain the goods everlasting, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homilies on Hebrews (Argument and Summary)

The blessed Paul, writing to the Romans, says, 'Inasmuch then as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them that are my flesh': and again, in another place, 'For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.' If therefore he were the Apostle of the Gentiles, (for also in the Acts, God said to him, 'Depart; for I will send you far hence unto the Gentiles,' what had he to do with the Hebrews? And why did he also write an Epistle to them?

And especially as besides, they were ill-disposed towards him, and this is to be seen from many places. For hear what James says to him, 'Thou see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe . . . and these all have been informed of you that you teach men to forsake the law.' And oftentimes he had many disputings concerning this.

Why therefore, one might ask, as he was so learned in the law (for he was instructed in the law at the feet of Gamaliel, and had great zeal in the matter, and was especially able to confound them in this respect)--why did not God send him to the Jews? Because on this very account they were more vehement in their enmity against him. 'For they will not endure you,' God says unto him; 'But depart far hence to the Gentiles, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me.' Whereupon he says, 'Yea, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on you; and when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I

also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.'

And this he says is a sign and proof of their not believing him. For thus it is: when a man goes away from any people, if he be one of the least and of those who are nothing worth, he does not much vex those from whom he went; but if he be among the distinguished and earnest partisans and those who care for these things, he exceedingly grieves and vexes them beyond measure, in that he especially overthrows their system with the multitude.

And besides this, there was something else. What now might this be? That they who were about Peter were also with Christ, and saw signs and wonders; but he [Paul] having had the benefit of none of these, but being with Jews, suddenly deserted and became one of them. This especially promoted our cause. For while they indeed, seemed to testify even from gratitude, and one might have said that they bore witness to those things in love for their Master; he, on the other hand, who testifies to the resurrection, this man was rather one who heard a voice only. For this cause you see them waging war passionately with him, and doing all things for this purpose, that they might slay him, and raising seditions

The unbelievers, then, were hostile to him for this reason; but why were the believers? Because in preaching to the Gentiles he was constrained to preach Christianity purely; and if haply even in Judaea he were found [doing so], he cared not. For Peter and they that were with him, because they preached in Jerusalem, when there was great fierceness, of necessity enjoined the observance of the law; but this man was quite at liberty. The [converts] too from the Gentiles were more than the Jews because they were without. And this enfeebled the law, and they had no such great reverence for it, although he preached all things purely. Doubtless in this matter they think to shame him by numbers, saying, 'Thou see, brother, how

many ten thousands of Jews there are which have come together.' On this account they hated him and turned away from him, because 'They are informed of you, he says, that you teach men to forsake the law.'

Why, then, not being a teacher of the Jews, does he send an Epistle to them? And where were those to whom he sent it? It seems to me in Jerusalem and Palestine. How then does he send them an Epistle? Just as he baptized, though he was not commanded to baptize. For, he says, 'I was not sent to baptize': not, however, that he was forbidden, but he does it as a subordinate matter. And how could he fail to write to those, for whom he was willing even to become accursed? Accordingly he said, 'Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.'

For as yet he was not arrested. Two years then he passed bound, in Rome; then he was set free; then, having gone into Spain, he saw Jews also in like manner; and then he returned to Rome, where also he was slain by Nero. The Epistle to Timothy then was later than this Epistle. For there he says, 'For I am now ready to be offered'; there also he says, 'In my first answer no man stood with me.' In many places they [the Hebrew Christians] had to contend with persecution, as also he says, writing to the Thessalonians, 'You became followers of the churches of Judaea': and writing to these very persons he says, 'You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods.' Do you see them contending? And if men had thus treated the Apostles, not only in Judaea, but also wherever they were among the Gentiles, what would they not have done to the believers? On this account, you see, he was very careful for them. For when he says, 'I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints'; and again, when he exhorts the Corinthians to beneficence, and says that the Macedonians had already made their contribution, and says, 'If it be meet that I go also,' --he means

this. And when he says, 'Only that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do,'--he declares this. And when he says, 'They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision,'--he declares this.

But this was not for the sake of the poor who were there, but that by this we might be partakers in the beneficence. For not as the preaching did we apportion the care for the poor to each other (we indeed to the Gentiles, but they to the circumcision). And everywhere you see him using great care for them: as was reasonable.

Among the other nations indeed, when there were both Jews and Greeks, such was not the case; but then, while they still seemed to have authority and independence and to order many things by their own laws, the government not being yet established nor brought perfectly under the Romans, they naturally exercised great tyranny. For if in other cities, as in Corinth, they beat the Ruler of the synagogue before the Deputy's judgment seat, and Gallio 'cared for none of these things,' but it was not so in Judaea. Thou see indeed, that while in other cities they bring them to the magistrates, and need help from them. and from the Gentiles, here they took no thought of this, but assemble a Sanhedrim themselves and slay whom they please. Thus in fact they put Stephen to death, thus they beat the Apostles, not taking them before rulers. Thus also they were about to put Paul to death, had not the chief captain thrown himself [upon them]. For this took place while the priests, while the temple, while the ritual, the sacrifices were yet standing. Look indeed at Paul himself being tried before the High Priest, and saying, 'I knew not that he was the High Priest,' and this in the presence of the Ruler. For they had then great power. Consider then what things they were likely to suffer who dwelt in Jerusalem and Judaea.

He then who prays to become accursed for those who were not yet believers, and who so ministers to the faithful, as to journey himself, if need be, and who everywhere took great care of them;--let us not wonder if he encourage and comfort them by letters also, and if he set them upright when tottering and fallen. For in a word, they were worn down and despairing on account of their manifold afflictions. And this he shows near the end, saying, 'Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees'; and again, 'Yet a little while, he that shall come will come, and will not tarry'; and again, 'If ye be without chastisement, . . . then are ye bastards and not sons.'

For since they were Jews and learned from the fathers that they must expect both their good and their evil immediately and must live accordingly, but then [when the Gospel came] the opposite was [taught]--their good things being in hope and after death, their evils in hand, though they had patiently endured much, it was likely that many would be fainthearted;--hereon he discourses.

But we will unfold these things at a fit opportunity. At present: he of necessity wrote to those for whom he cared so greatly. For while the reason why he was not sent to them is plain, yet he was not forbidden to write. And that they were becoming fainthearted he shows when he says, 'Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths' and again, 'God is not unrighteous to forget your work and love.' For the soul overtaken by many trials, was turned aside even from the faith. Therefore he exhorts them to 'Give heed to the things which they have heard, and that there should not be an evil heart of unbelief.' On this account also, in this Epistle, especially, he argues at length concerning faith, and after much [reasoning] shows at the end that to them [of old] also He promised good things in hand, and yet gave nothing.

And besides these things, he establishes two points that they might not think themselves forsaken: the one, that they should bear nobly whatever befalls them; the other, that they should look assuredly for their recompense. For truly He will not overlook those with Abel and the line of unrewarded righteous following him.

And he draws comfort in three ways: first, from the things which Christ suffered: as He Himself says, 'The servant is not greater than his Lord.' Next, from the good things laid up for the believers. Thirdly, from the evils; and this point he enforces not only from the things to come (which would be less persuasive), but also from the past and from what had befallen their fathers. Christ also does the same, at one time saying, 'The servant is not greater than his Lord'; and again, 'There are many mansions with the Father'; and He denounces innumerable woes on the unbelievers.

But he speaks much of both the New and the Old Covenant; for this was useful to him for the proof of the Resurrection. Lest they should disbelieve that [Christ] rose on account of the things which He suffered, he confirms it from the Prophets, and shows that not the Jewish, but ours are the sacred [institutions]. For the temple yet stood and the sacrificial rites; therefore he says, 'Let us go forth therefore without, bearing His reproach.' But this also was made an argument against him: 'If these things are a shadow, if these things are an image, how is it that they have not passed away or given place when the truth was manifested, but these things still flourish?' This also he quietly intimates shall happen, and that at a time close at hand.

Moreover, he makes it plain that they had been a long time in the faith and in afflictions, saying, 'When for the time ye ought to be teachers,' and, 'Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief,' and ye became 'Followers of them who through patience inherit the promises.'

Homily 1 on Hebrews

Hebrews 1:1-2

" God who at sundry times and in various manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, has at the end of the days spoken unto us by His Son whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

1. Truly, *"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*

[Romans 5:20] This at least the blessed Paul intimates here also, in the very beginning of his Epistle to the Hebrews. For since as it was likely that afflicted, worn out by evils, and judging of things thereby, they would think themselves worse off than all other men,— he shows that herein they had rather been made partakers of greater, even very exceeding, grace; arousing the hearer at the very opening of his discourse. Wherefore he says, *"God who at sundry times and in various manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the Prophets, has at the end of the days spoken unto us by His Son."*

Why did he [Paul] not oppose *"himself"* to *"the prophets"*? Certainly, he was much greater than they, inasmuch as a greater trust was committed to him. Yet he does not so. Why? First, to avoid speaking great things concerning himself. Secondly, because his hearers were not yet perfect. And thirdly, because he rather wished to exalt them, and to show that their superiority was great. As if he had said, What so great matter is it that He sent prophets to our fathers? For to us [He has sent] His own only-begotten Son Himself.

And well did he begin thus, "*At sundry times and in various manners,*" for he points out that not even the prophets themselves saw God; nevertheless, the Son saw Him. For the expressions, "*at sundry times and in various manners*" are the same as "*in different ways.*" "*For I*" (says He) "*have multiplied visions, and used similitudes by the ministry of the Prophets.*" [Hosea 12:10] Wherefore the excellency consists not in this alone, that to them indeed prophets were sent, but to us the Son; but that none of them saw God, but the Only-begotten Son saw Him. He does not indeed at once assert this, but by what he says afterwards he establishes it, when he speaks concerning His human nature; "*For to which of the Angels said He, You are My Son,*" [Hebrews 1:5], and, "*Sit on My right hand*"? [Hebrews 1:13]

And look on his great wisdom. First he shows the superiority from the prophets. Then having established this as acknowledged, he declares that to them indeed He spoke by the prophets, but to us by the Only-begotten. Then [He spoke] to them by Angels, and this again he establishes, with good reason (for angels also held converse with the Jews): yet even herein we have the superiority, inasmuch as the Master [spoke] to us, but to them servants, and prophets, fellow-servants.

2. Well also said he, "*at the end of the days,*" for by this he both stirs them up and encourages them desponding of the future. For as he says also in another place, "*The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing*" [Philippians 4:5-6], and again, "*For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*" [Romans 13:11]: so also here. What then is it which he says? That whoever is spent in the conflict, when he hears of the end thereof, recovers his breath a little, knowing that it is the end indeed of his labors, but the beginning of his rest.

"Hath in the end of the days spoken unto us in [His] Son." Behold again he uses the saying, *"in [His] Son,"* for *"through the Son,"* against those who assert that this phrase is proper to the Spirit. Do you see that the [word] *"in"* is *"through"*?

And the expression, *"In times past,"* and this, *"In the end of the days,"* shadows forth some other meaning:— that when a long time had intervened, when we were on the edge of punishment, when the Gifts had failed, when there was no expectation of deliverance, when we were expecting to have less than all— then we have had more.

And see how considerately he has spoken it. For he said not, *"Christ spoke"* (albeit it was He who did speak), but inasmuch as their souls were weak, and they were not yet able to hear the things concerning Christ, he says, *"God has spoken by Him."* What do you mean? did God speak through the Son? Yes. What then? Is it thus you show the superiority? For here you have but pointed out that both the New and the Old [Covenants] are of One and the same: and that this superiority is not great. Wherefore he henceforth follows on upon this argument, saying, *"He spoke unto us by [His] Son."*

(Note, how Paul makes common cause, and puts himself on a level with the disciples, saying, He spoke *"to us"*: and yet He did not speak to him, but to the Apostles, and through them to the many. But he lifts them [the Hebrews] up, and declares that He spoke also to them. And as yet he does not at all reflect on the Jews. For almost all to whom the prophets spoke, were a kind of evil and polluted persons. But as yet the discourse is not of these: but, hitherto of the gifts derived from God.)

"Whom He appointed," says he, *"heir of all."* What is *"whom He appointed heir of all"*? He speaks here of the flesh [the human nature]. As He also says in the second Psalm, *"Ask of Me, and I will give You the heathen for Your inheritance."* [Psalm 2:8] For no longer is *"Jacob the*

portion of the Lord" nor "Israel His inheritance" [Deuteronomy 32:9], but all men: that is to say, He has made Him Lord of all: which Peter also said in the Acts, "God has made Him both Lord and Christ." [Acts 2:36] But he has used the name "Heir," declaring two things: His proper sonship and His indefeasible sovereignty. "Heir of all," that is, of all the world.

3. Then again he brings back his discourse to its former point. *"By whom also He made the worlds [the ages]."* Where are those who say, There was [a time] when He was not?

Then, using degrees of ascent, he uttered that which is far greater than all this, saying,

Hebrews 1:3-4

"Who, (being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power,) when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the Angels as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

O! The wisdom of the Apostle! Or rather, not the wisdom of Paul, but the grace of the Spirit is the thing to wonder at. For surely he uttered not these things of his own mind, nor in that way did he find his wisdom. (For whence could it be? From the knife, and the skins, or the workshop?) But it was from the working of God. For his own understanding did not give birth to these thoughts, which was then so mean and slender as in nowise to surpass the baser sort; (for how could it, seeing it spent itself wholly on bargains and skins?) but the grace of the Spirit shows forth its strength by whomsoever it will.

For just as one, wishing to lead up a little child to some lofty place, reaching up even to the top of Heaven, does this gently and by degrees, leading him upwards by the steps from below—then when he has set him on high, and bidden him to gaze downwards, and sees him turning giddy and confused, and dizzy, taking hold of him, he leads him down to the lower stand, allowing him to take breath; then when he has recovered it, leads him up again, and again brings him down—just so did the blessed Paul likewise, both with the Hebrews and everywhere, having learned it from his Master. For even He also did so; sometimes He led His hearers up on high, and sometimes He brought them down, not allowing them to remain very long.

See him, then, even here— by how many steps he led them up, and placed them near the very summit of religion, and then or ever they grow giddy, and are seized with dizziness, how he leads them again lower down, and allowing them to take breath, says, "*He spoke unto us by [His] Son, "whom He appointed Heir of all things."* For the name of Son is so far common. For where a true [Son] it is understood of, He is above all: but however that may be, for the present he proves that He is from above.

And see how he says it: "*Whom He appointed,*" says he, "*heir of all things."* The phrase, "*He appointed Heir,*" is humble. Then he placed them on the higher step, adding, "*by whom also He made the worlds."* Then on a higher still, and after which there is no other, "*who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person."* Truly he has led them to unapproachable light, to the very brightness itself. And before they are blinded see how he gently leads them down again, saying, "*and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty."* He does not simply say, "*He sat down,*" but "*after the purifying, He sat down,*" for he has touched on the Incarnation, and his utterance is again lowly.

Then again having said a little by the way (for he says, "*on the right hand of the Majesty on high*"), [he turns] again to what is lowly; "*being made so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* Henceforward then he treats here of that which is according to the flesh, since the phrase "*being made better*" does not express His essence according to the Spirit, (for that was not "*made*" but "*begotten,*") but according to the flesh: for this was "*made.*" Nevertheless the discourse here is not about being called into existence. But just as John says, "*He that comes after me, is preferred before me*" [John 1:15-30], that is, higher in honor and esteem; so also here, "*being made so much better*

than the angels"— that is, higher in esteem and better and more glorious, *"by how much He has obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they."* Do you see that he is speaking of that which is according to the flesh? For this Name, God the Word ever had; He did not afterwards *"obtain it by inheritance"*; nor did He afterwards become *"better than the Angels, when He had purged our sins"*; but He was always *"better,"* and better without all comparison. For this is spoken of Him according to the flesh.

So truly it is our way also, when we talk of man, to speak things both high and low. Thus, when we say, *"Man is nothing," "Man is earth," "Man is ashes,"* we call the whole by the worse part. But when we say, *"Man is an immortal animal,"* and *"Man is rational, and of kin to those on high,"* we call again the whole by the better part. So also, in the case of Christ, sometimes Paul discourses from the less and sometimes from the better; wishing both to establish the economy, and also to teach about the incorruptible nature.

4. Since then *"He has purged our sins,"* let us continue pure; and let us receive no stain, but preserve the beauty which He has implanted in us, and His comeliness undefiled and pure, *"not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."* [Ephesians 5:27] Even little sins are *"a spot and a wrinkle,"* such a thing, I mean, as Reproach, Insult, Falsehood.

Nay, rather not even are these small, but on the contrary very great: yea so great as to deprive a man even of the kingdom of Heaven. How, and in what manner? *"He that calls his brother fool, is in danger"* (He says) *"of hellfire."* [Matthew 5:22] But if it be so with him who calls a man *"fool,"* which seems to be the slightest of all things, and rather mere children's talk; what sentence of punishment will not he incur, who calls him malignant and crafty and envious, and casts at him ten thousand other reproaches? What more fearful than this?

Now suffer, I beseech you, the word [of exhortation]. For if he that *"does"* [anything] to *"one of the least, does it to Him"* [Matthew 25:40], and he that *"does it not to one of the least does it not to Him"* [Matthew 25:45], how is it not the same also in the matter of good or evil speaking? He that reviles his brother, reviles God: and he that honors his brother, honors God. Let us train therefore our tongue to speak good words. For *"refrain,"* it is said, *"your tongue from evil."* [Psalm 34:13] For God gave it not that we should speak evil, that we should revile, that we should calumniate one another; but to sing hymns to God withal, to speak those things which *"give grace to the hearers"* [Ephesians 4:29], things for edification, things for profit.

Have you spoken evil of a man? What is your gain, entangling yourself in mischief together with him? For you have obtained the reputation of a slanderer. For there is not any, no not any evil, which stops at him that suffers it, but it includes the doer also. As for instance, the envious person seems indeed to plot against another, but himself first reaps the fruit of his sin, wasting and wearing himself away, and being hated of all men. The cheat deprives another of his money; yea and himself too of men's good will: and causes himself to be evil spoken of by all men. Now reputation is much better than money, for the one it is not easy to wash out, whereas it is easy to gain possession of the other. Or rather, the absence of the one does no hurt to him that wants it; but the absence of the other makes you reproached and ridiculed, and an object of enmity and warfare to all.

The passionate man again first punishes and tears himself in pieces, and then him with whom he is angry.

Just so the evil speaker disgraces first himself and then him who is evil-spoken of: or, it may be, even this has proved beyond his power, and while he departs with the credit of a foul and detestable kind of person, he

causes the other to be loved the more. For when a man hearing a bad name given him, does not requite the giver in the same kind, but praises and admires, he does not praise the other, but himself. For I before observed that, as calumnies against our neighbors first touch those who devise the mischief, so also good works done towards our neighbors, gladden first those who do them. The parent either of good, or evil, justly reaps the fruit of it first himself. And just as water, whether it be brackish or sweet, fills the vessels of those who resort to it, but lessens not the fountain which sends it forth; so surely also, both wickedness and virtue, from whatever person they proceed, prove either his joy or his ruin.

So far as to the things of this world; but what speech may recount the things of that world, either the goods or the evils? There is none. For as to the blessings, they surpass all thought, not speech only; for their opposites are expressed indeed in terms familiar to us. For fire, it is said, is there, and darkness, and bonds, and a worm that never dies. But this represents not only the things which are spoken of, but others more intolerable. And to convince you, consider at once this first: if it be fire, how is it also darkness? Do you see how that fire is more intolerable than this? For it has no light. If it be fire, how is it forever burning? Do you see how something more intolerable than this happens? For it is not quenched. Yea, therefore it is called unquenchable. Let us then consider how great a misery it must be, to be forever burning, and to be in darkness, and to utter unnumbered groanings, and to gnash the teeth, and not even to be heard. For if here any one of those ingeniously brought up, should he be cast into prison, speaks of the mere ill savor, and the being laid in darkness, and the being bound with murderers, as more intolerable than any death: think what it is when we are burning with the murderers of the whole world, neither seeing nor being seen, but in so vast a multitude thinking that we are alone. For the

darkness and gloom does not allow our distinguishing those who are near to us, but each will burn as if he were thus suffering alone. Moreover, if darkness of itself afflicts and terrifies our souls, how then will it be when together with the darkness there are likewise so great pains and burnings?

Wherefore I entreat you to be ever revolving these things with yourselves, and to submit to the pain of the words, that we may not undergo the punishment of the things. For assuredly, all these things shall be, and those whose doings have deserved those chambers of torture no man shall rescue, not father, nor mother, nor brother. *"For a brother redeems not,"* He says; *"shall a man redeem?"* [Psalm 49:7, Septuagint], though he have much confidence, though he have great power with God. For it is He Himself who rewards every one according to his works, and upon these depends our salvation or punishment.

Let us make then to ourselves *"friends of the mammon of unrighteousness"* [Luke 16:9], that is: Let us give alms; let us exhaust our possessions upon them, that so we may exhaust that fire: that we may quench it, that we may have boldness there. For there also it is not they who receive us, but our own work: for that it is not simply their being our friends which can save us, learn from what is added. For why did He not say, *"Make to yourselves friends, that they may receive you into their everlasting habitations,"* but added also the manner? For saying, *"of the mammon of unrighteousness,"* He points out that we must make friends of them by means of our possessions, showing that mere friendship will not protect us, unless we have good works, unless we spend righteously the wealth unrighteously gathered.

Moreover, this our discourse, of Almsgiving I mean, fits not only the rich, but also the needy. Yea even if there be any person who supports himself by begging, even for him is this word. For there is no one, so

poverty-stricken, however exceeding poor he may be, as not to be able to provide "*two mites.*" [Luke 21:2] It is therefore possible that a person giving a small sum from small means, should surpass those who have large possessions and give more; as that widow did. For not by the measure of what is given, but by the means and willingness of the givers is the extent of the alms-deed estimated. In all cases the will is needed, in all, a right disposition; in all, love towards God. If with this we do all things, though having little we give little, God will not turn away His face, but will receive it as great and admirable: for He regards the will, not the gifts: and if He see that to be great, He assigns His decrees and judges accordingly, and makes them partakers of His everlasting benefits.

Which may God grant us all to obtain, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on Hebrews

Hebrews 1:3

"Who being the brightness of His Glory and the express Image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins."

1. Everywhere indeed a reverential mind is requisite, but especially when we say or hear anything of God: Since neither can tongue speak nor thought hear anything suitable to our God. And why speak I of tongue or thought? For not even the understanding which far excels these, will be able to comprehend anything accurately, when we desire to utter anything concerning God. For if *"the peace of God surpasses all understanding"* [Philippians 4:7], and *"the things which are prepared for them that love Him have not entered into the heart of man"* [1 Corinthians 2:9]; much more He Himself, the God of peace, the Creator of all things, does by a wide measure exceed our reasoning. We ought therefore to receive all things with faith and reverence, and when our discourse fails through weakness, and is not able to set forth accurately the things which are spoken, then especially to glorify God, for that we have such a God, surpassing both our thought and our conception. For many of our conceptions about God, we are unable to express, as also many things we express, but have not strength to conceive of them. As for instance:— That God is everywhere, we know; but how, we no longer understand. That there is a certain incorporeal power the cause of all our good things, we know: but how it is, or what it is, we know not. Lo! We speak, and do not understand. I said, That He is everywhere, but I do not understand it. I said,

That He is without beginning, but I do not understand it. I said, That He begot from Himself, and again I know not how I shall understand it. And some things there are which we may not even speak— as for instance, thought conceives but cannot utter.

And to show you that even Paul is weak and does not put out his illustrations with exactness; and to make you tremble and refrain from searching too far, hear what he says, having called Him Son and named Him Creator, *"Who being the brightness of His Glory, and the express image of His person."*

This we must receive with reverence and clear of all incongruities. *"The brightness of His glory,"* says he. But observe in what reference he understands this, and so do thou receive it:— that He is of Him: without passion: that He is neither greater, nor less; since there are some, who derive certain strange things from the illustration. For, say they, *"the brightness"* is not substantial, but has its being in another. Now do not thou, O man, so receive it, neither be thou sick of the disease of Marcellus and Photinus. For he has a remedy for you close at hand, that you fall not into that imagination, nor does he leave you to be hurried down into that fatal malady. And what says he? *"And the express image of His person"* [or *"subsistence"*]: that is, just as He [the Father] is personally subsisting, being in need of nothing, so also the Son. For he says this here, showing the undeviating similitude and the peculiar image of the Prototype, that He [the Son] is in subsistence by Himself.

For he who said above, that *"by Him He made all things"* here assigns to Him absolute authority. For what does he add? *"And upholding all things by the word of His power"*; that we might hence infer not merely His being the express image of His Person, but also His governing all things with absolute authority.

See then, how he applies to the Son that which is proper to the Father. For on this account he did not say simply, "*and upholding all things*," nor did he say, "*by His power*," but, "*by the word of His power*." For much as just now we saw him gradually ascend and descend; so also now, as by steps, he goes up on high, then again descends, and says, "*by whom also He made the worlds*."

Behold how here also he goes on two paths, by the one leading us away from Sabellius, by the other from Arius, yea and on another, that He [Christ] should not be accounted un originated, which he does also throughout, nor yet alien from God. For if, even after so much, there are some who assert that He is alien, and assign to Him another father, and say that He is at variance with Him—had [Paul] not declared these things, what would they not have uttered?

How then does he this? When he is compelled to heal, then is he compelled also to utter lowly things: as for instance, "*He appointed Him*" (says he) "*heir of all things*," and "*by Him He made the worlds*." [Hebrews 1:2] But that He might not be in another way dishonored, he brings Him up again to absolute authority and declares Him to be of equal honor with the Father, yea, so equal, that many thought Him to be the Father.

And observe thou his great wisdom. First he lays down the former point and makes it sure accurately. And when this is shown, that He is the Son of God, and not alien from Him, he thereafter speaks out safely all the high sayings, as many as he will. Since any high speech concerning Him, led many into the notion just mentioned, he first sets down what is humiliating and then safely mounts up as high as he pleases. And having said, "*whom He appointed heir of all things*," and that "*by Him He made the worlds*," he then adds, "*and upholding all things by the word of His power*."

For He that by a word only governs all things, could not be in need of any one, for the producing all things.

2. And to prove this, mark how again going forward, and laying aside the *"by whom,"* he assigns to Him absolute power. For after he had effected what he wished by the use of it, thenceforward leaving it, what says he? *"Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands."* [*infra*, Hebrews 1:10] Nowhere is there the saying *"by whom,"* or that *"by Him He made the worlds."* What then? Were they not made by Him? Yes, but not, as you say or imaginest, *"as by an instrument"*: nor as though He would not have made them unless the Father had reached out a hand to Him. For as He *"judges no man"* [John 5:22], and is said to judge by the Son, in that He begot Him a judge; so also, to create by Him, in that He begot Him a Creator. And if the Father be the original cause of Him, in that He is Father, much more of the things which have been made by Him. When therefore he would show that He is of Him, he speaks of necessity lowly things. But when he would utter high things, Marcellus takes a handle, and Sabellius; avoiding however the excess of both, he holds a middle [way]. For neither does he dwell on the humiliation, lest Paul of Samosata should obtain a standing place, nor yet does he for ever abide in the high sayings; but shows on the contrary His abundant nearness, lest Sabellius rush in upon him. He names Him *"Son,"* and immediately Paul of Samosata comes on him, saying that He is a son, as the many are. But he gives him a fatal wound, calling Him *"Heir."* But yet, with Arius, he is shameless. For the saying, *"He appointed Him heir,"* they both hold: the former one saying, it comes of weakness; the other still presses objections, endeavoring to support himself by the clause which follows. For by saying, *"by whom also He made the worlds,"* he strikes backwards the impudent Samosatene: while Arius still seems to be strong. Nevertheless

see how he smites him likewise, saying again, "*who being the brightness of His glory.*" But behold! Sabellius again springs on us, with Marcellus, and Photinus: but on all these also he inflicts one blow, saying, "*and the express image of His person and upholding all things by the word of His power.*" Here again he wounds Marcion too; not very severely, but however he does wound him. For through the whole of this Epistle he is fighting against them.

But the very thing which he said, "*the brightness of the glory,*" hear also Christ Himself saying, "*I am the Light of the world.*" [John 8:12] Therefore he [the Apostle] uses the word "*brightness,*" showing that this was said in the sense of "*Light of Light.*" Nor is it this alone which he shows, but also that He has enlightened our souls; and He has Himself manifested the Father, and by "*the brightness*" he has indicated the nearness of the Being [of the Father and the Son]. Observe the subtlety of his expressions. He has taken one essence and subsistence to indicate two subsistences. Which he also does in regard to the knowledge of the Spirit ; for as he says that the knowledge of the Father is one with that of the Spirit, as being indeed one, and in nought varying from itself [1 Corinthians 2:10-12]: so also here he has taken hold of one certain [thing] whereby to express the subsistence of the Two.

And he adds that He is "*the express Image.*" For the "*express Image*" is something other than its Prototype: yet not Another in all respects, but as to having real subsistence. Since here also the term, "*express image,*" indicates there is no variation from that whereof it is the "*express image*": its similarity in all respects. When therefore he calls Him both Form, and express Image, what can they say? "*Yea,*" says he, "*man is also called an Image of God.*" What then! Is he so [an image of Him] as the Son is? No (says he) but because the term, image, does not show resemblance. And yet,

in that man is called an Image, it shows resemblance, as in man. For what God is in Heaven, that man is on earth, I mean as to dominion. And as he has power over all things on earth, so also has God power over all things which are in heaven and which are on earth. But otherwise, man is not called "*Express image*," he is not called Form: which phrase declares the substance, or rather both substance and similarity in substance. Therefore just as "*the form of a slave*" [Philippians 2:6-7] expresses no other thing than a man without variation [from human nature], so also "*the form of God*" expresses no other thing than God.

"*Who being*" (says he) "*the brightness of His glory.*" See what Paul is doing. Having said, "*Who being the brightness of His glory,*" he added again, "*He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty*": what names he has used, nowhere finding a name for the Substance. For neither "*the Majesty*," nor "*the Glory*" sets forth the Name, which he wishes to say, but is not able to find a name. For this is what I said at the beginning, that oftentimes we think something, and are not able to express [it]: since not even the word God is a name of substance, nor is it at all possible to find a name of that Substance.

And what marvel, if it be so in respect of God, since not even in respect of an Angel, could one find a name expressive of his substance? Perhaps too, neither in respect of the soul. For this name [soul] does not seem to me to be significative of the substance thereof, but of breathing. For one may see that the same [thing] is called both Soul and Heart and Mind: for, says he, "*Create in me a clean heart, O God*" [Psalm 51:10], and one may often see that it [the soul] is called spirit.

"*And upholding all things by the word of His power.*" Tell me, "*God said*" (it is written), "*Let there be light*" [Genesis 1:3]: "*the Father, says one, commanded, and the Son obeyed*"? But behold here He also [the Son] acts

by word. For (says he), "*And upholding all things*"— that is, governing; He holds together what would fall to pieces; For, to hold the world together, is no less than to make it, but even greater (if one must say a strange thing). For the one is to bring forward something out of things which are not: but the other, when things which have been made are about to fill back into non-existence, to hold and fasten them together, utterly at variance as they are with each other: this is indeed great and wonderful, and a certain proof of exceeding power.

Then showing the easiness, he said, "*upholding*": (he did not say, governing, from the figure of those who simply with their finger move anything, and cause it to go round.) Here he shows both the mass of the creation to be great, and that this greatness is nothing to Him. Then again he shows the freedom from the labor, saying, "*By the word of His power.*" Well said he, "*By the word.*" For since, with us, a word is accounted to be a bare thing, he shows that it is not bare with God. But, how "*He upholds by the word,*" he has not further added: for neither is it possible to know. Then he added concerning His majesty: for thus John also did: having said that "*He is God*" [John 1:1], he brought in the handiwork of the Creation. For the same thing which the one indirectly expressed, saying, "*In the beginning was the Word,*" and "*All things were made by Him*" [John 1:3], this did the other also openly declare by "*the Word,*" and by saying "*by whom also He made the worlds.*" For thus he shows Him to be both a Creator, and before all ages. What then? When the prophet says, concerning the Father, "*You are from everlasting and to everlasting*" [Psalm 90:2], and concerning the Son, that He is before all ages, and the maker of all things— what can they say? Nay rather, when the very thing which was spoken of the Father—"*He which was before the worlds,*"— this one may see spoken of the Son also? And that which one says, "*He was life*" [John 1:4], pointing out the

preservation of the creation, that Himself is the Life of all things—so also says this other, "*and upholding all things by the word of His power*": not as the Greeks who defraud Him, as much as in them lies, both of Creation itself, and of Providence, shutting up His power, to reach only as far as to the Moon.

"*By Himself*" (says he) "*having purged our sins.*" Having spoken concerning those marvelous and great matters, which are most above us, he proceeds to speak also afterwards concerning His care for men. For indeed the former expression, "*and upholding all things,*" also was universal: nevertheless this is far greater, for it also is universal: for, for His part, "*all*" men believed. As John also, having said, "*He was life,*" and so pointed out His providence, says again, and "*He was light.*"

"*By Himself,*" says he, "*having purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*" He here sets down two very great proofs of His care: first the "*purifying us from our sins,*" then the doing it "*by Himself.*" And in many places, you see him making very much of this—not only of our reconciliation with God, but also of this being accomplished through the Son. For the gift being truly great, was made even greater by the fact that it was through the Son.

For in saying, "*He sat on the right hand,*" and, "*having by Himself purged our sins,*"— though he had put us in mind of the Cross, he quickly added the mention of the resurrection and ascension. And see his unspeakable wisdom: he said not, "*He was commanded to sit down,*" but "*He sat down.*" Then again, lest you should think that He stands, he subjoins, "*For to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand.*"

"*He sat*" (says he) "*on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*" What is this "*on high*"? Does he enclose God in place? Away with such a thought!

But just as, when he says, "*on the right hand*," he did not describe Him as having figure, but showed His equal dignity with the Father; so, in saying "*on high*," he did not enclose Him there, but expressed the being higher than all things, and having ascended up above all things. That is, He attained even unto the very throne of the Father: as therefore the Father is on high, so also is He. For the "*sitting together*" implies nothing else than equal dignity. But if they say, that He said, "*Sit*," we may ask them, What then? Did He speak to Him standing? Moreover, he said not that He commanded, not that He enjoined, but that "*He said*": for no other reason, than that you might not think Him without origin and without cause. For that this is why he said it, is evident from the place of His sitting. For had he intended to signify inferiority, he would not have said, "*on the right hand*," but on the left hand.

Hebrews 1:4

"Being made," says he, *"so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* The *"being made,"* here, is instead of *"being shown forth,"* as one may say. Then also from what does he reason confidently? From the Name. Do you see that the name Son is wont to declare true relationship? And indeed if He were not a true Son (and *"true"* is nothing else than *"of Him"*), how does he reason confidently from this? For if He be Son only by grace, He not only is not *"more excellent than the angels,"* but is even less than they. How? Because righteous men too were called sons; and the name son, if it be not a genuine son, does not avail to show the *"excellency."* When too he would point out that there is a certain difference between creatures and their maker, hear what he says:

Hebrews 1:5

"For to which of the Angels said He at any time, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You. And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"? For these things indeed are spoken with reference also to the flesh: *"I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"*— while this, *"You are My Son, this day have I begotten You,"* expresses nothing else than *"from [the time] that God is."* For as He is said to be, from the time present (for this befits Him more than any other), so also the [word] *"Today"* seems to me to be spoken here with reference to the flesh. For when He has taken hold of it, thenceforth he speaks out all boldly. For indeed the flesh partakes of the high things, just as the Godhead of the lowly. For He who disdained not to become man, and did not decline the reality, how should He have declined the expressions?

Seeing then that we know these things, let us be ashamed of nothing, nor have any high thoughts. For if He Himself being God and Lord and Son of God, did not decline to take the form of a slave, much more ought we to do all things, though they be lowly. For tell me, O man, whence have you high thoughts? From things of this life? But these or ever they appear, run by. Or, from things spiritual? Nay, this is itself one spiritual excellency—to have no high thoughts.

Wherefore then do you cherish high thoughts? Because you go on aright? Hear Christ saying, *"When you have done all things, say, we are unprofitable servants, for we have done that which was our duty to do."* [Luke 17:10]

Or because of your wealth have you high thoughts? Do you not see those before you, how they departed naked and desolate? Did we not come

naked into life, and naked also shall depart? Who has high thoughts on having what is another's? For they who will use it to their own enjoyment alone, are deprived of it how ever unwillingly, often before death, and at death certainly. But (says one) while we live we use them as we will. First of all, one does not lightly see any man using what he has as he will. Next, if a man do even use things as he will, neither is this a great matter: for the present time is short compared with the ages without end. Are you high-minded, O man, because you are rich? On what account? For what cause? For this befalls also robbers, and thieves, and man-slayers, and effeminate, and whoremongers, and all sorts of wicked men. Wherefore then are you high-minded? Since if you have made meet use of it, you must not be high-minded, lest you profane the commandment: but if unmeet, by this indeed [it has come to pass that] you have become a slave of money, and goods, and art overcome by them. For tell me, if any man sick of a fever should drink much water, which for a short space indeed quenches his thirst, but afterwards kindles the flame, ought he to be high-minded? And what, if any man have many cares without cause, ought he therefore to be high-minded? Tell me, wherefore? Because you have many masters? Because you have ten thousand cares? Because many will flatter you? [Surely not.] For you are even their slave. And to prove that to you, hear plainly. The other affections which are within us, are in some cases useful. For instance, Anger is often useful. For (says he) *"unjust wrath shall not be innocent"* [Sirach 1:22]: wherefore it is possible for one to be justly in wrath. And again, *"He that is angry with his brother without cause, shall be in danger of hell."* [Matthew 5:22] Again for instance, emulation, desire, [are useful]: the one when it has reference to the procreation of children, the other when he directs his emulation to excellent things. As Paul also says, *"It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing"* and, *"Covet earnestly the best*

gifts." 1 Corinthians 12:31] Both therefore are useful: but an insolent spirit is in no case good, but is always unprofitable and hurtful.

However, if a man must be proud, [let it be] for poverty, not for wealth. Wherefore? Because he who can live upon a little, is far greater and better than he who cannot. For tell me, supposing certain persons called to the Imperial City, if some of them should need neither beasts, nor slaves, nor umbrellas, nor lodging-places, nor sandals, nor vessels, but it should suffice them to have bread, and to take water from the wells,— while others of them should say, *"unless ye give us conveyances, and a soft bed, we cannot come; unless also we have many followers, unless we may be allowed continually to rest ourselves, we cannot come, nor unless we have the use of beasts, unless too we may travel but a small portion of the day—and we have need of many other things also"*: whom should we admire? Those or these? Plainly, these who require nothing. So also here: some need many things for the journey through this life; others, nothing. So that it would be more fitting to be proud, for poverty if it were fitting at all.

"But the poor man," they say, *"is contemptible."* Not he, but those who despise him. For why do not I despise those who know not how to admire what they ought? Why, if a person be a painter, he will laugh to scorn all who jeer at him, so long as they are uninstructed; nor does he regard the things which they say, but is content with his own testimony. And shall we depend on the opinion of the many? Therefore, we are worthy of contempt when men despise us for our poverty, and we do not despise them nor call them miserable.

And I say not how many sins are produced by wealth, and how many good things by poverty. But rather, neither wealth nor poverty is excellent in itself, but through those who use it. The Christian shines out in poverty rather than in riches. How? He will be less arrogant, more sober-minded,

graver, more equitable, more considerate: but he that is in wealth, has many impediments to these things. Let us see then what the rich man does, or rather, he who uses his wealth amiss. Such an one practices rapine, fraud, violence. Men's unseemly loves, unholy unions, witchcrafts, poisonings, all their other horrors,— will you not find them produced by wealth? Do you see, that in poverty rather than in wealth the pursuit of virtue is less laborious? For do not, I beseech you, think that because rich men do not suffer punishment here, neither do they sin. Since if it were easy for a rich man to suffer punishment, you would surely have found the prisons filled with them. But among its other evils, wealth has this also, that he who possesses it, transgressing in evil with impunity, will never be stayed from doing so, but will receive wounds without remedies, and no man will put a bridle on him.

And if a man choose, he will find that poverty affords us more resources even for pleasure. How? Because it is freed from cares, hatred, fighting, contention, strife, from evils out of number.

Therefore let us not follow after wealth, nor be forever envying those who possess much. But let those of us who have wealth, use it aright; and those who have not, let us not grieve for this, but give thanks for all things unto God, because He enables us to receive with little labor the same reward with the rich, or even (if we will) a greater: and from small means we shall have great gains. For so he that brought the two talents, was admired and honored equally with him who brought the five. Now why? Because he was entrusted with [but] two talents, yet he accomplished all that in him lay, and brought in what was entrusted to him, doubled. Why then are we eager to have much entrusted to us, when we may by a little reap the same fruits, or even greater? When the labor indeed is less, but the reward much more? For more easily will a poor man part with his own, than

a rich man who has many and great possessions. What, know ye not, that the more things a man has, the more he sets his love upon? Therefore, lest this befall us, let us not seek after wealth, nor let us be impatient of poverty, nor make haste to be rich: and let those of us who have [riches] so use them as Paul commanded. [*"They that have," says he, "as though they had not, and they that use this world as not abusing it"* 1 Corinthians 7:29-31]: that we may obtain the good things promised. And may it be granted to us all to obtain them, by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now, and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 3 on Hebrews

Hebrews 1:6-8

"And again when He brings in the First-Begotten into the world, He says, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the Angels He says, Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He says, Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ calls His coming in the flesh an exodus [or going out]: as when He says, *"The sower went out to sow."* [Matthew 13:3] And again, *"I went out from the Father, and have come."* [John 16:28] And in many places one may see this. But Paul calls it an [eisodus or] coming in, saying, *"And when again He brings in the First-Begotten into the world,"* meaning by this Bringing in, His taking on Him flesh.

Now why has he so used the expression? The things signified [thereby] are manifest, and in what respect it is [thus] said. For Christ indeed calls it a Going out, justly; for we were out from God. For as in royal palaces, prisoners and those who have offended the king, stand without, and he who desires to reconcile them, does not bring them in, but himself going out discourses with them, until having made them meet for the king's presence, he may bring them in, so also Christ has done. Having gone out to us, that is, having taken flesh, and having discoursed to us of the King's matters, so He brought us in, having purged the sins, and made reconciliation. Therefore he calls it a Going out.

But Paul names it a Coming in, from the metaphor of those who come to an inheritance and receive any portion or possession. For the saying, *"and when again He brings in the First-Begotten into the world,"* means

this, *"when he puts the world into His hand."* For when He was made known, then also He obtained possession of the whole thereof, He says not these things concerning God The Word, but concerning that which is according to the flesh. For if according to John, *"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him"* [John 1:10]: how is He *"brought in,"* otherwise than in the flesh?

"And," says he, *"Let all the angels of God worship Him."* Whereas he is about to say something great and lofty, he prepares it beforehand, and makes it acceptable, in that he represents the Father as *"bringing in"* the Son. He had said above, that *"He spoke to us not by prophets but by His Son"*; that the Son is superior to angels; yea and he establishes this from the name [Son]. And here, in what follows, from another fact also. What then may this be? From worship. And he shows how much greater He is, as much as a Master is than a slave; just as any one introducing another into a house straightway commands those having the care thereof to do him reverence; [so] saying in regard to the Flesh, *"And let all the Angels of God worship Him."*

Is it then Angels only? No; for hear what follows: *"And of His Angels He says, Which makes His Angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire: but unto the Son, Your Throne, O God, is for ever and ever."* Behold, the greatest difference! That they are created, but He uncreated. While of His angels He says, who *"makes"*; wherefore of the Son did He not say *"Who makes"*? Although he might have expressed the difference as follows: *"Of His Angels He says, Who makes His Angels spirits, but of the Son, 'The Lord created Me': 'God has made Him Lord and Christ.'"* [Proverbs 8:22; Acts 2:36] But neither was the one spoken concerning the Son, nor the other concerning God The Word, but concerning the flesh. For when he desired to express the true difference, he no longer included angels only, but

the whole ministering power above. Do you see how he distinguishes, and with how great clearness, between creatures and Creator, ministers and Lord, the Heir and true Son, and slaves?

2. *"But unto the Son he says, Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever."* Behold a symbol of Kingly Office. *"A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom."* Behold again another symbol of Royalty.

Hebrews 1:9

Then again with respect to the flesh [Hebrews 1:9] *"You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even Your God, has anointed You."*

What is, *"Your God"*? Why, after that he has uttered a great word, he again qualifies it. Here he hits both Jews, and the followers of Paul of Samosata, and the Arians, and Marcellus, and Sabellius, and Marcion. How? The Jews, by his indicating two Persons, both God and Man; the other Jews, I mean the followers of Paul of Samosata, by thus discoursing concerning His eternal existence, and uncreated essence: for by way of distinction, against the word, *"He made,"* he put, *"Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever."* Against the Arians there is both this same again, and also that He is not a slave; but if a creature, He is a slave. And against Marcellus and the others, that these are two Persons, distinguished in reference to their subsistence. And against the Marcionites, that the Godhead is not anointed, but the Manhood.

Next he says, *"Above Your fellows."* But who are these His *"fellows"* other than men? That is Christ received *"not the Spirit by measure."* [John 3:34] Do you see how with the doctrine concerning His uncreated nature he always joins also that of the *"Economy"*? What can be clearer than this? Did you see how what is created and what is begotten are not the same? For otherwise he would not have made the distinction, nor in contrast to the word, *"He made"* [&c.], have added, *"But unto the Son He said, Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever."* Nor would he have called the name, *"Son, a more excellent Name,"* if it is a sign of the same thing. For what is the excellence? For if that which is created, and that which is begotten be

the same, and they [the Angels] were made, what is there [in Him] *"more excellent"*? Lo! Again [ὁ] [Θεός], *"God,"* with the Article.

Hebrews 1:10-12

3. And again he says [Hebrews 1:10-12]: *"You Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish, but You remain, and they shall all wax old as a garment, and as a vesture shall You fold them up, and they shall be changed: but You are the same and Your years shall not fail."*

Lest hearing the words, *"and when He brings in the First-Begotten into the world"*; you should think it as it were a Gift afterwards super-added to Him; above, he both corrected this beforehand, and again further corrects, saying, *"in the beginning"*: not now, but from the first. See again he strikes both Paul of Samosata and also Arius a mortal blow, applying to the Son the things which relate to the Father. And withal he has also intimated another thing by the way, greater even than this. For surely he has incidentally pointed out also the transfiguration of the world, saying, *"they shall wax old as a garment, and as a vesture You shall fold them up, and they shall be changed."* Which also he says in the Epistle to the Romans, that he shall transfigure the world. [See Romans 8:21] And showing the facility thereof, he adds, as if a man should fold up a garment so shall He both fold up and change it. But if He with so much ease works the transfiguration and the creation to what is better and more perfect, needed He another for the inferior creation? How far does your shamelessness go? At the same time too this is a very great consolation, to know that things will not be as they are, but they all shall receive change, and all shall be altered, but He Himself remains ever existing, and living without end: *"and Your years,"* he says, *"shall not fail."*

Hebrews 1:13

4. *"But to which of the Angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool?"* Behold, again he encourages them, inasmuch as their enemies were to be worsted, and their enemies are the same also with Christ's.

This again belongs to Sovereignty, to Equal Dignity, to Honor and not weakness, that the Father should be angry for the things done to the Son. This belongs to His great Love and honor towards the Son, as of a father towards a son. For He that is angry in His behalf how is He a stranger to Him? Which also he says in the second Psalm, *"He that dwells in heaven shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure."* [Psalm 2:4-5] And again He Himself says, *"Those that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither before Me, and slay them."* [Luke 19:27] For that they are His own words, hear also what He says in another place, *"How often would I have gathered your children together, and you would not! Behold, your house is left desolate."* [Luke 13:34-35] And again, *"The kingdom shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."* [Matthew 21:43] And again, *"He that falls upon that stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever It shall fall, It will grind him to powder."* [Matthew 21:44] And besides, He who is to be their Judge in that world, much more did He Himself repay them in this. So that the words *"Till I make your enemies your footstool"* are expressive of honor only towards the Son.

Hebrews 1:14

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" What marvel (says he) if they minister to the Son, when they minister even to our salvation? See how he lifts up their minds, and shows the great honor which God has for us, since He has assigned to Angels who are above us this ministration on our behalf. As if one should say, for this purpose (says he) He employs them; this is the office of Angels, to minister to God for our salvation. So that it is an angelical work, to do all for the salvation of the brethren: or rather it is the work of Christ Himself, for He indeed saves as Lord, but they as servants. And we, though servants are yet Angels' fellow-servants. Why do you gaze so earnestly on the Angels (says he)? They are servants of the Son of God, and are sent many ways for our sakes, and minister to our salvation. And so they are partners in service with us.

Consider how he ascribes no great difference to the kinds of creatures. And yet the space between angels and men is great; nevertheless he brings them down near to us, all but saying, For us they labor, for our sake they run to and fro: on us, as one might say, they wait. This is their ministry, for our sake to be sent every way.

And of these examples both the Old [Testament] is full, and the New. For when Angels bring glad tidings to the shepherds, or to Mary, or to Joseph; when they sit at the sepulcher, when they are sent to say to the disciples, *"You men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"* [Acts 1:11], when they release Peter out of the prison, when they discourse with Philip, consider how great the honor is; when God sends His Angels for ministers as to friends; when to Cornelius [an Angel] appears, when [an

Angel] brings forth all the apostles from the prison, and says, *"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people the words of this life"* [Acts 5:20]; and to Paul himself also an Angel appears. Do you see that they minister to us on God's behalf, and that they minister to us in the greatest matters?

Wherefore Paul says, *"All things are yours, whether life or death, or the world, or things present, or things to come."* [1 Corinthians 3:22]

Well then the Son also was sent, but not as a servant, nor as a minister, but as a Son, and Only-Begotten, and desiring the same things with the Father. Rather indeed, He was not *"sent"*: for He did not pass from place to place, but took on Him flesh: whereas these change their places, and leaving those in which they were before, so come to others in which they were not.

And by this again he incidentally encourages them, saying, What do you fear? Angels are ministering to us.

Hebrews 2:1

5. And having spoken concerning the Son, both what related to the Economy, and what related to the Creation, and to His sovereignty, and having shown His co-equal dignity, and that as absolute Master He rules not men only but also the powers above, he next exhorts them, having made out his argument, that we ought to give heed to the things which have been heard. [Hebrews 2:1] *"Wherefore we ought to give more earnest heed"* (says he) *"to the things which we have heard."* Why *"more earnest"*? Here he meant *"more earnest"* than to the Law: but he suppressed the actual expression of it, and yet makes it plain in the course of reasoning, not in the way of counsel, nor of exhortation. For so it was better.

Hebrews 2:2-3

"For if the word spoken by Angels" (says he) "was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken to us by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?"

Why ought we to *"give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard"*? Were not those former things of God, as well as these? Either then he means *"more earnest"* than [to] the Law, or *"very earnest"*; not making comparison, God forbid. For since, on account of the long space of time, they had a great opinion of the Old Covenant, but these things had been despised as yet new, he proves (more than his argument required) that we ought rather to give heed to these. How? By saying in effect, Both these and those are of God, but not in a like manner. And this he shows us afterwards: but for the present he treats it somewhat superficially, but afterwards more clearly, saying *"For if that first covenant had been faultless"* [Hebrews 8:7], and many other such things: *"for that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away."* [Hebrews 8:13] But as yet he ventures not to say any such thing in the beginning of his discourse, nor until he shall have first occupied and possessed his hearer by his fuller [arguments].

Why then ought we *"to give more earnest heed"*? *"Lest at any time,"* says he, *"we should let them slip"*— that is, lest at any time we should perish, lest we should fall away. And here he shows the grievousness of this falling away, in that it is a difficult thing for that which has fallen away to return again, inasmuch as it has happened through wilful negligence. And he took this form of speech from the Proverbs. For, says he, *"my son [take*

heed] lest you fall away" [Proverbs 3:21, Septuagint], showing both the easiness of the fall, and the grievousness of the ruin. That is, our disobedience is not without danger. And while by his mode of reasoning he shows that the chastisement is greater, yet again he leaves it in the form of a question, and not in the conclusion. For indeed this is to make one's discourse inoffensive, when one does not in every case of one's self infer the judgment, but leaves it in the power of the hearer himself to give sentence: and this would render them more open to conviction. And both the prophet Nathan does the same in the Old [Testament], and in Matthew Christ, saying, "*What will He do to the husbandmen*" [Matthew 21:40] of that vineyard? So compelling them to give sentence themselves: for this is the greatest victory.

Next, when he had said, "*For if the word which was spoken by Angels was steadfast*"— he did not add, much more that by Christ: but letting this pass, he said what is less, "*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*" And see how he makes the comparison. "*For if the word which was spoken by Angels,*" says he. There, "*by Angels,*" here, "*by the Lord*"— and there "*a word,*" but here, "*salvation.*"

Then lest any man should say, Your sayings, O Paul, are they Christ's? He proves their trustworthiness both from his having heard these things of Him, and from their being now spoken by God; since not merely a voice is wafted, as in the case of Moses, but signs are done, and facts bear witness.

6. But what is this, "*For if the word spoken by Angels was steadfast*"? For in the Epistle to the Galatians also he says to this effect, "*Being ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator.*" [Galatians 3:19] And again, "*You received a law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it.*" [Acts 7:53] And everywhere he says it was given by angels. Some indeed say that Moses is signified; but without reason. For here he says Angels in

the plural: and the Angels too which he here speaks of, are those in Heaven. What then is it? Either he means the Decalogue only (for there Moses spoke, and God answered him [Exodus 19:19])—or that angels were present, God disposing them in order—or that he speaks thus in regard of all things said and done in the old Covenant, as if Angels had part in them. But how is it said in another place, *"The Law was given by Moses"* [John 1:17], and here *"by Angels"*? For it is said, *"And God came down in thick darkness."* [Exodus 19:16-20]

"For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast." What is *"was steadfast"*? True, as one may say; and faithful in its proper season; and all the things which had been spoken came to pass. Either this is his meaning, or that they prevailed, and the threatenings were coming to be accomplished. Or by *"the word"* he means injunctions. For apart from the Law, Angels sent from God enjoined many things: for instance at Bochim, in the Judges, in [the history of] Samson. [Judges 2:1; 13:3] For this is the cause why he said not *"the Law"* but *"the word."* And he seems to me haply rather to mean this, viz., those things which are committed to the management of angels. What shall we say then? The angels who were entrusted with the charge of the nation were then present, and they themselves made the trumpets, and the other things, the fire, the thick darkness. [Exodus 19:16]

"And every transgression and disobedience," says he. Not this one and that one, but *"every"* one. Nothing, he says, remained unavenged, but *"received a just recompense of reward,"* instead of [saying] punishment. Why now spoke he thus? Such is the manner of Paul, not to make much account of his phrases, but indifferently to put down words of evil sound, even in matters of good meaning. As also in another place he says, *"Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."* [2

Corinthians 10:5] And again he has put *"the recompense"* for punishment, as here he calls punishment *"reward."* *"If it be a righteous thing,"* he says, *"with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest."* [2 Thessalonians 1:6-7] That is, justice was not violated, but God went forth against them, and caused the penalty to come round on the sinners, though not all their sins are made manifest, but only where the express ordinances were transgressed.

"How then shall we," he says, *"escape if we neglect so great salvation?"* Hereby he signified, that other salvation was no great thing. Well too did he add the *"So great."* For not from wars (he says) will He now rescue us, nor bestow on us the earth and the good things that are in the earth, but it will be the dissolution of death, the destruction of the devil, the kingdom of Heaven, everlasting life. For all these things he has briefly expressed, by saying, *"if we neglect so great salvation."*

7. Then he subjoins what makes this worthy of belief. *"Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord":* that is, had its beginning from the fountain itself. It was not a man who brought it over into the earth, nor any created power, but the Only-Begotten Himself.

"And was confirmed unto us by them that heard [Him]." What is *"confirmed"*? It was believed, or, it came to pass. For (he says) we have the earnest; that is, it has not been extinguished, it has not ceased, but it is strong and prevails. And the cause is, the Divine power works therein. It means they who heard from the Lord, themselves confirmed us. This is a great thing and trustworthy: which also Luke says in the beginning of his Gospel, *"As they delivered unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word."* [Luke 1:2]

Hebrews 2:4

How then was it confirmed? What if those that heard were forgers? Says some one. This objection then he overthrows, and shows that the grace was not human. If they had gone astray, God would not have borne witness to them; for he subjoined [Hebrews 2:4], *"God also bearing witness with them."* Both they indeed bear witness, and God bears witness too. How does He bear witness? Not by word or by voice, (though this also would have been worthy of belief): but how? *"By signs, and wonders, and various miracles."* (Well said he, *"various miracles,"* declaring the abundance of the gifts: which was not so in the former dispensation, neither so great signs and so various.) That is, we did not believe them simply, but through signs and wonders: wherefore we believe not them, but God Himself.

"And by gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will."

What then, if wizards also do signs, and the Jews said that He *"cast out devils through Beelzebub"*? [Luke 11:15] But they do not such kind of signs: therefore said he *"various miracles"*: for those others were not miracles, [or powers,] but weakness and fancy, and things altogether vain. Wherefore he said, *"by gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will."*

8. Here he seems to me to intimate something further. For it is not likely there were many there who had gifts, but that these had failed, upon their becoming more slothful. In order then that even in this he might comfort them, and not leave them to fall away, he referred all to the will of God. He knows (he says) what is expedient, and for whom, and apportions His grace accordingly. Which also he [Paul] does in the Epistle to the Corinthians, saying, *"God has set every one of us, as it pleased Him."* [1

Corinthians 12:18] And again, *"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."* [1 Corinthians 12:7]

"According to His will." He shows that the gift is according to the will of the Father. But oftentimes on account of their unclean and slothful life many have not received a gift, and sometimes also those whose life is good and pure have not received one. Why, I pray you? Lest they might be made haughty, that they might not be puffed up, that they might not grow more negligent, that they might not be more excited. For if even without a gift, the mere consciousness of a pure life be sufficient to lift a man up, much more when the grace is added also. Wherefore to the humble, to the simple, it was rather given, and especially to the simple: for it is said, *"in singleness and gladness of heart."* [Acts 2:46] Yea, and hereby also he rather urged them on, and if they were growing negligent gave them a spur. For the humble, and he who imagines no great things concerning himself, becomes more earnest when he has received a gift, in that he has obtained what is beyond his deserts, and thinks that he is not worthy thereof. But he who thinks he has done well, reckoning it to be his due, is puffed up. Wherefore God dispenses this profitably: which one may see taking place also in the Church: for one has the word of teaching, another has not power to open his mouth. Let not this man (he says) be grieved because of this. For *"the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."* [1 Corinthians 12:7] For if a man that is an householder knows to whom he should entrust anything, much more God, who understands the mind of men, *"who knows all things or ever they come into being."* One thing only is worthy of grief, Sin: there is nothing else.

Say not, Wherefore have I not riches? Or, If I had, I would give to the poor. You know not, if you had them, whether you would not the rather be covetous. For now indeed you say these things, but being put to the trial

you would be different. Since also when we are satisfied, we think that we are able to fast; but when we have gone without a little space, other thoughts come into us. Again, when we are out of the way of strong drink, we think ourselves able to master our appetite, but no longer so, when we are caught by it.

Say not, Wherefore had I not the gift of teaching? Or, If I had it, I should have edified innumerable souls. You know not, if you had it, whether it would not be to your condemnation—whether envy, whether sloth, would not have disposed you to hide your talent. Now, indeed, you are now free from all these, and though thou give not "*the portion of meat*" [Luke 12:42], you are not called to account: but then, you would have been responsible for many.

9. And besides, neither now are you without the gift. Show in the little, what you would have been, if you had had the other. "*For if*" (he says) "*you are not faithful in that which is little, how shall any one give you that which is great?*" [Luke 16:11] Give such proof as did the widow; she had two farthings, and she cast in all, whatsoever she possessed.

Do you seek riches? Prove that you think lightly of the few things, that I may trust you also concerning the many things. But if you dost not think lightly even of these, much less will you do so of the other.

Again, in speech, prove that you can use fitly exhortation and counsel. Have you not external eloquence? Have you not store of thoughts? But nevertheless you know these common things. You have a child, you have a neighbor, you have a friend, you have a brother, you have kinsmen. And though publicly before the Church, you are not able to draw out a long discourse, these you can exhort in private. Here, there is no need of rhetoric, nor of elaborate discourse: prove in these, that if you had skill of speech,

you would not have neglected it. But if in the small matter you are not in earnest, how shall I trust you concerning the great?

For, that every man can do this, hear what Paul says, how he charged even lay people; *"Edify,"* he says, *"one another, as also ye do."* [1 Thessalonians 5:11] And, *"Comfort one another with these words."* [1 Thessalonians 4:18] God knows how He should distribute to every man. Are you better than Moses? Hear how he shrinks from the hardship. *"Am I,"* says he, *"able to bear them? For You said to me, Bear them up, as a nursing-father would bear up the sucking-child."* [Numbers 11:12] What then did God? He took of his spirit and gave unto the others, showing that neither when he bare them was the gift his own, but of the Spirit. If you had had the gift, you would perchance have been lifted up, perchance would you have been turned out of the way. You know not yourself as God knows you. Let us not say, To what end is that? On what account is this? When God dispenses, let us not demand an account of Him: for this [is] of the uttermost impiety and folly. We are slaves, and slaves far apart from our Master, knowing not even the things which are before us.

10. Let us not then busy ourselves about the counsel of God, but whatsoever He has given, this let us guard, though it be small, though it be the lowest, and we shall be altogether approved. Or rather, none of the gifts of God is small: are you grieved because you have not the gift of teaching? Then tell me, which seems to you the greater, to have the gift of teaching, or the gift of driving away diseases? Doubtless the latter. But what? Tell me; does it not seem to you greater to give eyes to the blind than even to drive away diseases? But what? Tell me; does it not seem to you greater to raise the dead than to give eyes to the blind? What again, tell me; does it not seem to you greater to do this by shadows and napkins, than by a word? Tell me then, which would you? Raise the dead with shadows and napkins, or

have the gift of teaching? Doubtless you will say the former, to raise the dead with shadows and napkins. If then I should show to you, that there is another gift far greater than this, and that thou dost not receive it when it is in your power to receive it, are not you justly deprived of those others? And this gift not one or two, but all may have. I know that you open wide your mouths and are amazed, at being to hear that it is in your power to have a greater gift than raising the dead, and giving eyes to the blind, doing the same things which were done in the time of the Apostles. And it seems to you past belief.

What then is this gift? charity. Nay, believe me; for the word is not mine, but Christ's speaking by Paul. For what says he? *"Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."* [1 Corinthians 12:31] What is this, *"yet more excellent"*? What he means is this. The Corinthians were proud over their gifts, and those having tongues, the least gift, were puffed up against the rest. He says therefore, Do ye by all means desire gifts? I show unto you a way of gifts not merely excelling but far more excellent. Then he says, *"Though I speak with the tongues of Angels, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I have faith so as to remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."* [1 Corinthians 13:1-2]

Have you seen the gift? Covet earnestly this gift. This is greater than raising the dead. This is far better than all the rest. And that it is so, hear what Christ Himself says, discoursing with His disciples, *"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples."* [John 13:35] And showing how, He mentioned not the miracles, but what? *"If you have love one with another."* And again He says to the Father, *"Hereby shall they know that You have sent Me, if they be one."* [John 17:21] And He said to His disciples, *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another."* [John 13:34] Such an one therefore is more venerable and glorious than those who raise the

dead; with reason. For that indeed is wholly of God's grace, but this, of your own earnestness also. This is of one who is a Christian indeed: this shows the disciple of Christ, the crucified, the man that has nothing common with earth. Without this, not even martyrdom can profit.

And as a proof, see this plainly. The blessed Paul took two of the highest virtues, or rather three; namely, those which consist in miracles, in knowledge, in life. And without this the others, he said, are nothing. And I will say how these are nothing. *"Though I give my goods to feed the poor,"* he says, *"and have not charity, I am nothing."* [1 Corinthians 13:3] For it is possible not to be charitable even when one feeds the poor and exhausts one's means.

11. And indeed these things have been sufficiently declared by us, in the place concerning Charity: and there we refer the readers. Meanwhile, as I was saying, let us covet earnestly the Gift, let us love one another; and we shall need nothing else for the perfect acquisition of virtue, but all will be easy to us without toils and we shall do all perfectly with much diligence.

But see, even now, it is said, we love one another. For one man has two friends, and another three. But this is not to love for God's sake, but for the sake of being beloved. But to love for God's sake has not this as its principle of Love; but such an one will be disposed towards all men as towards brethren; loving those that are of the same faith as being true brothers; heretics and Heathen and Jews, brothers indeed by nature, but vile and unprofitable—pitying and wearing himself out and weeping for them. Herein we shall be like God if we love all men, even our enemies; not, if we work miracles. For we regard even God with admiration when He works wonders, yet much more, when He shows love towards man, when He is long-suffering. If then even in God this is worthy of much admiration, much more in men is it evident that this renders us admirable.

This then let us zealously seek after: and we shall be no way inferior to Paul and Peter and those who have raised innumerable dead, though we may not be able to drive away a fever. But without this [Love]; though we should work greater miracles even than the Apostles themselves, though we should expose ourselves to innumerable dangers for the faith: there will be to us no profit from any. And these things it is not I that say, but he, the very nourisher of Charity, knows these things. To him then let us be obedient; for thus we shall be able to attain to the good things promised, of which may we all be made partakers, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father with the Holy Ghost, be the glory, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 4 on Hebrews

Hebrews 2:5-7

"For unto Angels He has not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? You made him a little lower than the Angels."

1. I could have wished to know for certain whether any hear with fitting earnestness the things that are said, whether we are not casting the seeds by the wayside: for in that case I should have made my instructions with more cheerfulness. For we shall speak, though no one hear, for the fear which is laid on us by our Saviour. For, says He, testify to this people; even if they hear not, you shall yourself be guiltless. [See Ezekiel 3:19] If however I had been persuaded of your earnestness, I should have spoken not for fear only, but should have done it with pleasure also. For now indeed, even if no man hear, even if my work, so long as I fulfill my own part, brings no danger, still the labor is not altogether pleasant. For what profit is it, when though I be not blamed, yet no one is benefited? But if any would give heed we shall receive advantage not so much from avoiding punishment ourselves as from your progress.

How then shall I know this? Having taken notice of some of you, who are not very attentive, I shall question them privately, when I meet them. And if I find that they retain any of the things that have been spoken (I say not all, for this would not be very easy for you), but even if [they retain] a few things out of many, it is plain I should have no further doubts about the rest. And indeed we ought, without giving notice beforehand, to have

attacked you when off your guard. However it will suffice, if even in this way I should be able to attain my purpose. Nay rather, even as it is, I can attack you when you are off your guard. For that I *shall* question you, I have forewarned you; but *when* I shall question you I do not as yet make evident. For perhaps it may be today; perhaps tomorrow, perhaps after twenty or thirty days, perhaps after fewer, perhaps after more. Thus has God also made uncertain the day of our death. Nor has He allowed it be clear to us, whether it shall befall us today, or tomorrow, or after a whole year, or after many years; that through the uncertainty of the expectation we may through all time keep ourselves firm in virtue. And that we shall indeed depart, He has said—but when, He has not yet said. Thus too I have said that I shall question you, but I have not added when, wishing you always to be thoughtful.

And let no man say, I heard these things four or five weeks ago, or more, and I cannot retain them. For I wish the hearer so to retain them as to have his recollection perpetual and not apt to fade, nor yet that he should disown what is spoken. For I wish you to retain them, not, in order to tell them to me, but that you may have profit; and this is of most serious interest to me. Let no one then say this.

2. However, I must now begin with what follows in the epistle. What then is set before us to speak on today?

"For not to angels," he says, *"did He put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak."* Is he then discoursing concerning some other world? No, but concerning this. Therefore he added *"whereof we speak,"* that he might not allow the mind to wander away in search of some other. How then does he call it *"the world to come"*? Exactly as he also says in another place, *"Who is the figure of him that was to come,"* [Romans 5:14,] when he is speaking about Adam and Christ in the Epistle to the Romans;

calling Christ according to the flesh "*Him that was to come*" in respect of the times of Adam, (for [then] He was to come). So now also, since he had said, "*but when he brings in the First-Begotten into the world*": that you might not suppose that he is speaking of another world, it is made certain from many considerations and from his saying "*to come*." For the world was to come, but the Son of God always was. This world then which was about to come, He put in subjection not to Angels but to Christ. For that this is spoken with reference to the Son (he says) is evident: for surely no one would assert the other alternative, that it had reference to Angels.

Then he brings forward another testimony also and says, "*but one in a certain place testified, saying*." Wherefore did he not mention the name of the prophet, but hid it? Yea, and in other testimonies also he does this: as when he says, "*but when He brings in again the First-Begotten into the world, He says, And let all the Angels of God worship Him. And again, I will be to Him a Father. And of the Angels He says, Who makes His angels spirits. And, You, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth*" [c. i. 6, 5, 7, 10]:— so also here he says, "*but one in a certain place testified, saying*." And this very thing (I conceive) is the act of one that conceals himself, and shows that they were well skilled in the Scriptures; his not setting down him who uttered the testimony, but introducing it as familiar and obvious.

Hebrews 2:8

"What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? You made him a little lower than the angels: You crowned him with glory and honor." [Hebrews 2:8] "You have put all things in subjection under his feet."

Now although these things were spoken of human nature generally, they would nevertheless apply more properly to Christ according to the flesh. For this, *"You have put all things in subjection under his feet,"* belongs to Him rather than to us. For the Son of God visited us when we were nothing: and after having assumed our [nature], and united it to Himself, He became higher than all.

"For," he says, *"in that He has put all things in subjection under Him, He left nothing not put under Him: but now we see not yet all things put under Him."* What he means is this:— since he had said, *"Until I make Your enemies Your footstool"* [Hebrews 1:13]—and it was likely that they would still be grieved—then having inserted a few things after this parenthetically, he added this testimony in confirmation of the former. For that they might not say, How is it that He has put His enemies under His feet, when we have suffered so much? He sufficiently hinted at it in the former place indeed (for the word *"until"* showed, not what should take place immediately, but in course of time) but here he follows it up. For do not suppose (he says) that because they have not yet been made subject, they are not to be made subject: for that they must be made subject, is evident; for, on this account was the prophecy spoken. *"For,"* he says, *"in that He has put all things under Him, He left nothing not put under Him."* How then

is it that all things have not been put under Him? Because they are hereafter to be put under Him.

If then all things must be made subject to Him, but have not yet been made subject, do not grieve, nor trouble yourself. If indeed when the end had come, and all things were made subject, thou were still suffering these things, with reason would you repine: *"But now we see not yet all things put under Him."* The King has not yet clearly conquered. Why then are you troubled when suffering affliction? The preaching [of the Gospel] has not yet prevailed over all; it is not yet time that they should be altogether made subject.

Hebrews 2:9

3. Then again there is another consolation if indeed He who is hereafter to have all put in subjection under Him, has Himself also died and submitted to sufferings innumerable. [Hebrews 2:9] *"But,"* he says, *"we see Him who was made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, for the suffering of death"*— then the good things again—*"crowned with glory and honor."* Do you see, how all things apply to Him? For the [expression], *"a little,"* would rather suit Him, who was only three days in Hades, but not ourselves who are for a long time in corruption. Likewise also the [expression] *"with glory and honor"* will suit Him much more than us.

Again, he reminds them of the Cross, thereby effecting two things; both showing His care [for them] and persuading them to bear all things nobly, looking to the Master. For (he would say) if He who is worshipped of Angels, for your sake endured to have a little less than the Angels, much more ought thou who art inferior to the Angels, to bear all things for His sake. Then he shows that the Cross is *"glory and honor,"* as He Himself also always calls it, saying, *"That the Son of Man might be glorified"* [John 11:5]; and, *"the Son of Man is glorified."* [John 12:23] If then He calls the [sufferings] for His servants' sake *"glory,"* much more should you the [sufferings] for the Lord.

Do you see the fruit of the Cross, how great it is? fear not the matter: for it seems to you indeed to be dismal, but it brings forth good things innumerable. From these considerations he shows the benefit of trial. Then he says, *"That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."*

"That by the grace of God," he says. And He indeed because of the grace of God towards us suffered these things. *"He who spared not His Own*

Son," he says, "but delivered Him up for us all." [Romans 8:32] Why? He did not owe us this, but has done it of grace. And again in the Epistle to the Romans he says, *"Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace which is by one man Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many."* [Romans 5:15]

"That by the grace of God He should taste death for every man," not for the faithful only, but even for the whole world: for He indeed died for all; But what if all have not believed? He has fulfilled His own [part].

Moreover he said rightly *"taste death for every man,"* he did not say *"die."* For as if He really was tasting it, when He had spent a little time therein, He immediately arose.

By saying then *"for the suffering of death,"* he signified real death, and by saying *"superior to angels,"* he declared the resurrection. For as a physician though not needing to taste the food prepared for the sick man, yet in his care for him tastes first himself, that he may persuade the sick man with confidence to venture on the food, so since all men were afraid of death, in persuading them to take courage against death, He tasted it also Himself though He needed not. *"For,"* He says, *"the prince of this world comes and finds nothing in Me."* [John 14:30] So both the words *"by grace"* and *"should taste death for every man,"* establish this.

Hebrews 2:10

4. *"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."* He speaks here of the Father. Do you see how again he applies the [expression] *"by whom"* to Him? Which he would not have done, had it been [an expression] of inferiority, and only applicable to the Son. And what he says is this:— He has done what is worthy of His love towards mankind, in showing His First-born to be more glorious than all, and in setting Him forth as an example to the others, like some noble wrestler that surpasses the rest.

"The Captain of their salvation," that is, the Cause of their salvation. Do you see how great is the space between? Both He is a Son, and we are sons; but He saves, we are saved. Do you see how He both brings us together and then separates us; *"bringing,"* he says, *"many sons unto glory":* here he brings us together—*"the Captain of their salvation,"* again he separates.

"To make perfect through sufferings." Then sufferings are a perfecting, and a cause of salvation. Do you see that to suffer affliction is not the portion of those who are utterly forsaken; if indeed it was by this that God first honored His Son, by leading Him through sufferings? And truly His taking flesh to suffer what He did suffer, is a far greater thing than making the world, and bringing it out of things that are not. This indeed also is [a token] of His loving-kindness, but the other far more. And [the Apostle] himself also pointing out this very thing, says, *"That in the ages to come He might show forth the exceeding riches of His goodness, He both raised us*

up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." [Ephesians 2:7]

"For it became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." For (he means) it became Him who takes tender care, and brought all things into being, to give up the Son for the salvation of the rest, the One for the many. However he did not express himself thus, but, *"to make perfect through sufferings,"* showing the suffering for any one, not merely profits *"him,"* but he himself also becomes more glorious and more perfect. And this too he says in reference to the faithful, comforting them by the way: for Christ was glorified then when He suffered. But when I say, He was glorified, do not suppose that there was an accession of glory to Him: for that which is of nature He always had, and received nothing in addition.

Hebrews 2:11-12

5. *"For,"* he says, *"both He that sanctifies, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren."*

Behold again how he brings [them] together, honoring and comforting them, and making them brethren of Christ, in this respect that they are *"of one."* Then again guarding himself and showing that he is speaking of that which is according to the flesh, he introduces, *"For He who sanctifies,"* [i.e.] Christ, *"and they who are sanctified,"* ourselves. Do you see how great is the difference? He sanctifies, we are sanctified. And above he said, *"the Captain of their salvation. For there is one God, of whom are all things."* [1 Corinthians 8:6]

"For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Do you see how again he shows the superiority? For by saying, *"He is not ashamed,"* he shows that the whole comes not of the nature of the thing, but of the loving affection of Him who was *"not ashamed"* of anything, [yea] of His great humility. For though we be *"of one,"* yet He sanctifies and we are sanctified: and great is the difference. Moreover *"He"* is of the Father, as a true Son, that is, of His substance; *"we,"* as created, that is, brought out of things that are not, so that the difference is great. Wherefore he says, *"He is not ashamed to call them brethren"* [Hebrews 2:12], *"saying, I will declare Your name unto My brethren."* [Psalm 22:22] For when He clothed Himself with flesh, He clothed Himself also with the brotherhood, and at the same time came in the brotherhood.

Hebrews 2:13

This indeed he brings forward naturally. But this *"I will put my trust in Him"* [2 Samuel 22:3], what does it mean? For what follows this is also [introduced] naturally. *"Behold, I and the children which God has given Me."* [385 8:18] For as here He shows Himself a Father, so before, a Brother. *"I will declare Your name unto My brethren,"* He says.

And again he indicates the superiority and the great interval [between us], by what follows [Hebrews 2:14]: *"Since then the children,"* he says, *"are partakers of flesh and blood"* you see where he says the likeness is? In reference to the flesh), *"in like manner He also Himself took part of the same."* Let all the Heretics be ashamed, let those hide their faces who say that He came in appearance and not in reality. For he did not say, *"He took part of these"* only, and then say no more; although had he said thus, it would have been sufficient, but he asserted something more, adding *"in like manner,"* not in appearance, he means, or by an image (since in that case *"in like manner"* is not preserved) but in reality; showing the brotherhood.

Hebrews 2:14

6. Next he sets down also the cause of the economy. *"That through death,"* he says, *"He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*

Here he points out the wonder, that by what the devil prevailed, by that was he overcome, and the very thing which was his strong weapon against the world, [namely], Death, by this Christ smote him. In this he exhibits the greatness of the conqueror's power. Do you see how great good death has wrought?

Hebrews 2:15

"And should deliver them," he says, *"who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* Why (he means) do ye shudder? Why do you fear him that has been brought to nought? He is no longer terrible, but has been trodden under foot, has been utterly despised; he is vile and of no account. [2 Timothy 1:10]

But what is *"through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage"*? He either means this, that he who fears death is a slave, and submits to all things rather than die; or this, that all men were slaves of death and were held under his power, because he had not yet been done away; or that men lived in continual fear, ever expecting that they should die, and being afraid of death, could have no sense of pleasure, while this fear was present with them. For this he hinted at in saying, *"All their life-time."* He here shows that the afflicted, the harassed, the persecuted, those that are deprived of country and of substance and of all other things, spend their lives more sweetly and more freely than they of old time who were in luxury, who suffered no such afflictions, who were in continual prosperity, if indeed these *"all their life-time"* were under this fear and were slaves; while the others have been made free and laugh at that which they shudder at. For this is now as if, when one was being led away to a captivity leading to death, and in continual expectation of it, one should feed him up with abundant dainties (something such as this was Death of old); but now, as if some one taking away that fear together with the dainties, were to promise a contest, and propose a combat that should lead no longer to death, but to a kingdom. Of which number would you have wished to be— those who are fed up in the prison-house, while every day looking for their sentence, or

those who contend much and labor willingly, that they may crown themselves with the diadem of the kingdom? Do you see how he has raised up their soul, and made them elated? He shows too, that not death alone has been put an end to, but that thereby he also who is ever showing that war without truce against us, I mean the devil, has been brought to nought; since he that fears not death is out of reach of the devil's tyranny. For if *"skin for skin, yea all things a man would give for his life"* [Job 2:4]—when any one has determined to disregard even this, of what henceforward will he be the slave? He fears no one, he is in terror of no one, he is higher than all, and more free than all. For he that disregards his own life, much more [does he disregard] all other things. And when the devil finds a soul such as this, he can accomplish in it none of his works. For what? Tell me, shall he threaten the loss of property, and degradation, and banishment from one's country? But these are small matters to him who *"counts not even his life dear"* [Acts 20:24] unto him, according to the blessed Paul. You see that in casting out the tyranny of death, he also overthrew the strength of the devil. For he who has learned to study innumerable [truths] concerning the resurrection, how should he fear death? How should he shudder any more?

7. Therefore be ye not grieved, saying, why do we suffer such and such things? For so the victory becomes more glorious. And it would not have been glorious, unless by death He had destroyed death; but the most wonderful thing is that He conquered him by the very means by which he was strong, showing in every point the abundance of His means, and the excellence of His contrivances. Let us not then prove false to the gift bestowed on us. *"For we,"* he says, *"have received not a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* [Romans 8:15; 2 Timothy 1:7] Let us stand then nobly, laughing death to scorn.

But [I pause] for it comes over me to groan bitterly [at the thought of] whither Christ has raised us up, and whither we have brought ourselves down. For when I see the wailings in the public places, the groanings over those departing life, the howlings, the other unseemly behavior, believe me, I am ashamed before those heathen, and Jews, and heretics who see it, and before all who for this cause openly laugh us to scorn. For whatever I may afterwards say, I shall talk to no purpose, when philosophizing concerning the resurrection. Why? Because the heathen do not attend to what is said by me, but to what is done by you. For they will say at once, 'when will any of these [fellows] be able to despise death, when he is not able to see another dead?'

Beautiful things were spoken by Paul, beautiful and worthy of Heaven, and of the love of God to man. For what does he say? *"And He shall deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage."* But ye do not allow these things to be believed, fighting against them by your deeds. And yet many things exist for this very end, God building a stronghold against it, that He might destroy this same evil custom. For tell me, what mean the bright torches? Do we not send them before as athletes? And what [mean] the hymns? Do we not glorify God, and give thanks that at last He has crowned the departed one, that He has freed him from his labors, that taking away uncertainty, He has him with Himself? Are not the Hymns for this? Is not Psalmody for this? All these are the acts of those rejoicing. *"For,"* it is said, *"is any merry? Let him sing psalms."* [James 5:13] But to these things the heathen give no heed. For (one will say) do not tell me of him who is philosophical when out of the affliction, for this is nothing great or surprising—show me a man who in the very affliction itself is philosophical, and then I will believe the resurrection,

And indeed, that women engaged in the affairs of this life should act thus is no way surprising. And yet indeed this even is dreadful; for from them also is the same philosophy required. Wherefore also Paul says, "*But concerning them which are asleep, I would not have you ignorant, that you sorrow not even as the rest who have no hope.*" [1 Thessalonians 4:13] He wrote not this to solitaries, nor to perpetual virgins, but to women and men in the world. But however this is not so dreadful. But when any man or woman, professing to be crucified to the world, he tears his hair, and she shrieks violently— what can be more unseemly than this? Believe me when I say if things were done as they ought, such persons should be excluded for a long time from the thresholds of the Church. For those who are indeed worthy of being grieved for, are these who still fear and shudder at death, who have no faith in the resurrection.

'But I do not disbelieve the resurrection' (one says) 'but I long after his society.' Why then, tell me, when he goes from home, and that for a long absence, dost not thou do the same? 'Yea, but I do weep then also' (she says) 'and mourn as I long after him.' But that is the conduct of those that really long after their associates, this that of her who despairs of his return.

Think, what you sing on that occasion, "*Return unto your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.*" [Psalm 116:7] And again, "*I will fear no evil, for You are with me.*" [Psalm 23:4] And again, "*You are my refuge from the affliction which encompasses me.*" [Psalm 32:7] Think what these Psalms mean. But thou dost not give heed, but art drunk from grief.

Consider carefully the funeral lamentations of others that you may have a remedy in your own case. "*Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.*" Tell me, do you say that the Lord has dealt bountifully with you, and weepst? Is not this mere acting, is it not

hypocrisy? For if indeed thou really believest the things you say, your sorrow is superfluous: but if you are in sport and acting a part, and thinkest these things fables, why do you sing psalms? Why do you even endure the attendants? Why do you not drive away the singers? But this would be the act of madmen. And yet far more the other.

For the present, then, I advise you: but as time goes on, I shall treat the matter more seriously: for indeed I am greatly afraid that by this practice some grievous disease may make its way into the Church. The case of the wailings then we will hereafter correct. And meanwhile I charge and testify, both to rich and poor, both to women and men.

May God indeed grant that you all depart out of life unwailed, and according to the fitting rule fathers now grown old may be attended to their graves by sons, and mothers by daughters, and grand-children, and great grand-children, in a green old age, and that untimely death may in no case occur. May this then be, and this I pray, and I exhort the prelates and all of you to beseech God for each other, and to make this prayer in common. But if (which God forbid, and may it never happen) any bitter death should occur, bitter, I mean, not in its nature (for henceforth there is no bitter death, for it differs not at all from sleep), but bitter in regard of your disposition, if it should happen, and any should hire these mourning women, believe me when I say (I speak not without meaning but as I have resolved, let him who will, be angry), that person we will exclude from the Church for a long time, as we do the idolater. For if Paul calls "*the covetous man an idolater*" [Ephesians 5:5], much more him who brings in the practices of the idolaters over a believer.

For, tell me, for what cause do you invite presbyters, and the singers? Is it not to afford consolation? Is it not to honor the departed? Why then do you insult him? And why do you make him a public show? And why do

you make game as on a stage? We come, discoursing of the things concerning the resurrection, instructing all, even those who have not yet been smitten, by the honor shown to him, to bear it nobly if any such thing should happen and do you bring those who overthrow our [teachings] as much as in them lies? What can be worse than this ridicule and mockery? What more grievous than this inconsistency?

8. Be ashamed and show reverence: but if you will not, we cannot endure the bringing in upon the Church of practices so destructive. For, it is said, *"them that sin rebuke before all."* [1 Timothy 5:20] And as to those miserable and wretched women, we through you forbid them ever to introduce themselves into the funerals of the faithful, lest we should oblige them in good earnest to wail over their own evils, and teach them not to do these things in the ills of others, but rather to weep for their own misfortunes. For an affectionate father too, when he has a disorderly son, not only advises him not to draw near to the wicked, but puts them in fear also. Behold then, I advise you, and those women through you, that you do not invite such persons, and that they do not attend. And may God grant that my words may produce some effect, and that my threat may avail. But if (which God forbid) we should be disregarded, we have no choice henceforward but to put our threat into execution, chastising you by the laws of the Church, and those women as befits them.

Now if any man is obstinate and contemptuous, let him hear Christ saying even now, *"If any one trespass against you, go, tell him his fault between you and him alone"*; but if he will not be persuaded, *"take with you one or two."* But if even so he contradict, *"tell it to the Church, but if he shall also refuse to hear the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican."* [Matthew 18:15-17] Now if when a man trespasses against me, and will not be persuaded, [the Lord] commands me thus to turn away

from him, judge ye in what light I ought to hold him who trespasses against himself, and against God. For do not you yourselves condemn us when we come down so gently upon you?

If however any man disregard the bonds which we inflict, again let Christ instruct him, saying, *"Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* [Matthew 18:18] For though we ourselves be miserable and good for nothing and worthy to be despised, as indeed we are; yet are we not avenging ourselves nor warding off anger, but are caring for your salvation.

Be influenced by reverence, I beseech you, and respect. For if a man bear with a friend when he attacks him more vehemently than he ought, ascertaining his object, and that he does it with kind intention, and not out of insolence; much more [should he bear with] a teacher when rebuking him, and a teacher who does not himself say these things as of authority, nor as one in the position of a ruler, but in that of a kindly guardian. For we do not say these things as wishing to exhibit our authority, (for how could we, praying that we may never come to the trial of them?) but grieving and lamenting for you.

Forgive me then, and let no man disregard the bonds of the Church. For it is not man who binds, but Christ who has given unto us this authority, and makes men lords of this so great dignity. For we indeed wish to use this power for loosing; or rather, we wish to have no need even of that, for we wish that there should not be any bound among us— we are not so miserable and wretched [as that] even though some of us are extreme good-for-nothings. If however we be compelled [so to act], forgive us. For it is not of our own accord, nor wishing it, but rather out of sorrow for you that are bound that we put the chains around you. But if any man despise these

chains, the time of judgment will come, which shall teach him. And what comes after I do not wish to speak of, lest I should wound your minds. For in the first place indeed we do not wish to be brought into this necessity; but if we are so brought, we fulfill our own part, we cast around the chains. And if any man burst through them, I have done my part, and am henceforth free from blame, and you will have to give account to Him who commanded me to bind.

For neither, when a king is sitting in public, if any of the guard who stand beside him be commanded to bind one of the attendants, and to put the chains around [him], and he should not only thrust this man away, but also break the bonds in pieces, is it the guard who suffers the insult, and not much more the King who gave the order. For if He claim as His own, the things which are done to the faithful, much more will He feel as if Himself insulted when he is insulted who has been appointed to teach.

But God grant that none of those who are over this Church should be driven to the necessity of [inflicting] these bonds. For as it is a good thing not to sin, so is it profitable to endure reproof. Let us then endure the rebuke, and earnestly endeavor not to sin; and if we should sin let us bear the rebuke. For as it is an excellent thing not to be wounded, but, if this should happen, to apply the remedy to the wound, so also in this case.

But God forbid that any man should need such remedies as these. *"But we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."* [Hebrews 6:9] But we have discoursed more vehemently for the sake of greater security. For it is better that I should be suspected by you of being a harsh, and severe, and self-willed person, than that you should do things not approved of God. But we trust in God, that this reproof will not be unserviceable to you, but that you will be so changed, that these discourses may be devoted to encomiums on you and

to praises: that we may all be counted worthy to attain to those good things, which God has promised to them that love Him in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 5 on Hebrews

Hebrews 2:16-17

"For verily He takes not hold of Angels, but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like His brethren."

1. Paul wishing to show the great kindness of God towards man, and the Love which He had for the human race, after saying: *"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of blood and flesh, He also Himself likewise took part of the same"* [Hebrews 2:14]— follows up the subject in this passage. For do not regard lightly what is spoken, nor think this merely a slight [matter], His taking on Him our flesh. He granted not this to Angels; *"For verily He takes not hold of Angels, but of the seed of Abraham."* What is it that he says? He took not on Him an Angel's nature, but man's. But what is *"He takes hold of"*? He did not (he means) grasp that nature, which belongs to Angels, but ours. But why did he not say, *"He took on Him,"* but used this expression, *"He takes hold of"*? It is derived from the figure of persons pursuing those who turn away from them, and doing everything to overtake them as they flee, and to take hold of them as they are bounding away. For when human nature was fleeing from Him, and fleeing far away [for we *"were far off"*— Ephesians 2:13], He pursued after and overtook us. He showed that He has done this only out of kindness, and love, and tender care. As then when he says, *"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"* [Hebrews 1:14]— he shows His extreme interest in behalf of human nature, and that God makes great account of it, so also in this place he sets it forth much more by a

comparison, for he says, "*He takes not hold of angels.*" For in very deed it is a great and a wonderful thing, and full of amazement that our flesh should sit on high, and be adored by Angels and Archangels, by the Cherubim and the Seraphim. For myself having oftentimes thought upon this, I am amazed at it, and imagine to myself great things concerning the human race. For I see that the introductions are great and splendid, and that God has great zeal on behalf of our nature.

Moreover he said not "*of men (simply) He takes hold,*" but wishing to exalt them [the Hebrews] and to show that their race is great and honorable, he says, "*but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold.*"

"*Wherefore it behooved [Him] in all things to be made like His brethren.*" What is this, "*in all things*"? He was born (he means), was brought up, grew, suffered all things necessary, at last He died. This is, "*in all things to be made like His brethren.*" For after he had discoursed much concerning His majesty and the glory on high, he then begins concerning the dispensation. And consider with how great power [he does this]. How he represents Him as having great zeal "*to be made like us*": which was a sign of much care. For having said above, "*Inasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner took part of the same*"; in this place also he says, "*in all things to be made like His brethren.*" Which is all but saying, He that is so great, He that is "*the brightness of His glory,*" He that is "*the express image of His person,*" He that "*made the worlds,*" He that "*sits on the right hand of the Father,*" He was willing and earnest to become our brother in all things, and for this cause did He leave the angels and the other powers, and come down to us, and took hold of us, and wrought innumerable good things. He destroyed Death, He cast out the devil from his tyranny, He freed us from bondage: not by brotherhood alone did He honor us, but also in other ways beyond

number. For He was willing also to become our High Priest with the Father: for he adds,

2. *"That He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God."* For this cause (he means) He took on Him our flesh, only for Love to man, that He might have mercy upon us. For neither is there any other cause of the economy, but this alone. For He saw us, cast on the ground, perishing, tyrannized over by Death, and He had compassion on us. *"To make reconciliation,"* he says, *"for the sins of the people. That He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest."*

What is *"faithful"*? True, able. For the Son is a faithful High Priest, able to deliver from their sins those whose High Priest He is. In order then that He might offer a sacrifice able to purify us, for this cause He has become man.

Accordingly he added, *"in things pertaining to God,"*— that is, for the sake of things in relation to God. We had become altogether enemies to God, (he would say) condemned, degraded, there was none who should offer sacrifice for us. He saw us in this condition, and had compassion on us, not appointing a High Priest for us, but Himself becoming a High Priest. In what sense He was *"faithful,"* he added [viz.], *"to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."*

Hebrews 2:18

"For," he says, *"in that He has suffered Himself being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted."* This is altogether low and mean, and unworthy of God. *"For in that He has suffered Himself,"* he says. It is of Him who was made flesh that he here speaks, and it was said for the full assurance of the hearers, and on account of their weakness. That is (he would say) He went through the very experience of the things which we have suffered; *"now"* He is not ignorant of our sufferings; not only does He know them as God, but as man also He has known them, by the trial wherewith He was tried; He suffered much, He knows how to sympathize. And yet God is incapable of suffering: but he describes here what belongs to the Incarnation, as if he had said, Even the very flesh of Christ suffered many terrible things. He knows what tribulation is; He knows what temptation is, not less than we who have suffered, for He Himself also has suffered.

(What then is this, *"He is able to succor them that are tempted"*? It is as if one should say, He will stretch forth His hand with great eagerness, He will be sympathizing.)

3. Since they wished for something great, and to have an advantage over the [converts] from the Gentiles, he shows that they have an advantage in this while he did not hurt those from the Gentiles at all. In what respect now is this? Because of them is the salvation, because He took hold of them first, because from that race He assumed flesh. *"For,"* he says, *"He takes not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold."* Hereby he both gives honor to the Patriarch, and shows also what *"the seed of Abraham"* is. He reminds them of the promise made to him, saying, *"To you and to your*

seed will I give this land" [Genesis 13:15]; showing by the very least thing, the nearness [of the relationship] in that they were "*all of one.*" But that nearness was not great: [so] he comes back to this, and thenceforward dwells upon the dispensation which was after the flesh, and says, Even the mere willing to become man was a proof of great care and love; but now it is not this alone, but there are also the undying benefits which are bestowed on us through Him, for, he says, "*to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*"

Why said he not, of the world, instead of "*the people*"? For He bare away the sins of all. Because thus far his discourse was concerning them [the Hebrews]. Since the Angel also said to Joseph, "*You shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people.*" [Matthew 1:21] For this too ought to have taken place first, and for this purpose He came, to save them and then through them the rest, although the contrary came to pass. This also the Apostles said at the first, "*To you [God] having raised up His Son, sent [Him] to bless you*" [Acts 3:26]: and again, "*To you was the word of this Salvation sent.*" [Acts 13:26] Here he shows the noble birth of the Jews, in saying, "*to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*" For a while he speaks in this way. For that it is He who forgives the sins of all men, He declared both in the case of the paralytic, saying, "*Your sins are forgiven*" [Mark 2:5]; and also in that of Baptism: for He says to the disciples, "*Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" [Matthew 28:19]

4. But when Paul has once taken in hand the flesh, he proceeds to utter all the lowly things, without any fear: for see what he says next:

Hebrews 3:1-2

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed [or made] Him, as also Moses [was faithful] in all His house."

Being about to place Him before Moses in comparison, he led his discourse to the law of the high-priesthood; for they all had a high esteem for Moses: moreover, he is already beforehand casting down the seeds of the superiority. Therefore he begins from the flesh, and goes up to the Godhead, where there was no longer any comparison. He began from the flesh [from His Human nature], by assuming for a time the equality, and says, *"as also Moses in all His house"*: nor does he at first show His superiority lest the hearer should start away, and straightway stop his ears. For although they were believers, yet nevertheless they still had strong feeling of conscience as to Moses. *"Who was faithful,"* he says, *"to Him that made Him"*—made [Him] what? *"Apostle and High Priest."* He is not speaking at all in this place of His Essence, nor of His Godhead; but so far concerning human dignities.

"As also Moses in all His house," that is, either among the people, or in the temple. But here he uses the expression *"in His house,"* just as one might say, concerning those in the household; even as some guardian and steward of a household, so was Moses to the people. For that by *"house"* he means the people, he added, *"whose house we are"* [Hebrews 3:6]; that is, we are in His creation. Then [comes] the superiority.

Hebrews 3:3-4

"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses," (Again [he is speaking] of the Flesh), *"inasmuch as he who has built [the house] has more honor than the house";* [Moses] himself also (he means) was of the house. (Moreover he did not say, For this one was a servant, but the Other a master, but he covertly intimated it.) If the people were the house and he was of the people, then he certainly was of the household. For so also we are accustomed to say, such an one is of such an one's house. For here he is speaking of a house, not of the temple, for the temple was not constructed by God, but by men. But He that made him [is] God. Moses he means. And see how he covertly shows the superiority. *"Faithful,"* he says, *"in all His house,"* being himself also of the house, that is, of the people. The builder has more honor than the house, yet he did not say *"the artificer has more honor than his works,"* but *"he that has built the house, than the house."* [Hebrews 3:4] *"But He that built all things is God."* You see that he is speaking not about the temple but about the whole people.

Hebrews 3:5

"And Moses verily [was] faithful in all His house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken." See also another point of superiority, that [which is derived] from the Son and the servants. You see again that by the appellation of The Son, he intimates true relationship. [Hebrews 3:6] *"But Christ as a Son over His own house."* Perceivest thou how he separates the thing made and the maker, the servant and the son? Moreover He indeed enters into His Father's property as a master, but the other as a servant.

"Whose" [i.e.] God's "house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Here again he encourages them to press forward nobly, and not to fall: for we shall be the *"house"* of God (he says), as Moses was, *"if we hold fast our confidence and our rejoicing firm unto the end."* He however (he would say) that is distressed in his trials, and who falls, does not glory: he that is ashamed, he that hides himself, has no confidence, he that is perplexed does not glory.

And then he also commends them, saying, *"if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,"* implying that they had even made a beginning; but that there is need of the end, and not simply to stand, but to have their hope firm *"in full assurance of faith,"* without being shaken by their trials.

5. And be not astonished, that the [words] *"Himself being tempted"* [Hebrews 2:18] are spoken more after the manner of men. For if the Scripture says of the Father, who was not made flesh, *"The Lord looked down from heaven, and beheld all the sons of men"* [Psalm 14:2], that is, accurately acquainted Himself with all things; and again, *"I will go down,*

and see whether they do altogether according to the cry of them" [Genesis 18:21]; and again, *"God cannot endure the evil ways of men"* [Genesis 6:5?], the divine Scripture shows forth the greatness of His wrath: much more, who even suffered in the flesh, these things are said of Christ. For since many men consider experience the most reliable means of knowledge, he wishes to show that He that has suffered knows what human nature suffers.

"Whence holy brethren" (he says *"whence"* instead of *"for this cause"*), *"partakers of an heavenly calling"*— (seek nothing here, if you have been called yonder— yonder is the reward, yonder the recompense. What then?) *"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses [was faithful] in all His house."* (What is *"who was faithful to Him that appointed Him?"* it is, well disposed, protecting what belongs to Him, not allowing them to be lightly carried away, *"as also Moses in all His house"*) that is, know who your High Priest is, and what He is, and you will need no other consolation nor encouragement. Now he calls Him *"Apostle,"* on account of His having been *"sent,"* and *"high priest of our profession,"* that is of the Faith. This One also was entrusted with a people, as the other with the leadership of a people, but a greater one and upon higher grounds.

"For a testimony of those things which shall be spoken." What do you mean? Does God receive the witness of man? Yes, certainly. For if He call to witness heaven and earth and hills (saying by the prophet, *"Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken"* [Isaiah 1:2] — and *"Hear ye ravines, foundations of the earth, for the Lord has a controversy with His people"* [Micah 6:2]), much more men; that is, that they may be witnesses, when themselves [the Jews] shameless.

Hebrews 3:6

"But Christ as a Son." The one takes care of the property of others, but this One of His own. *"And the rejoicing of the hope."* Well said he *"of the hope."* For since the good things were all in hope, and yet we ought so *"to hold it fast,"* as even now to glory as for things which had already come to pass: for this cause he says, *"the rejoicing of the hope."*

And adds, *"let us hold it firm unto the end."* [Romans 8:24] For *"by hope we are saved";* if therefore *"we are saved by hope,"* and *"are waiting with patience"* [Romans 8:25], let us not be grieved at present things, nor seek now those that have been promised afterwards; *"For"* (he says) *"hope which is seen is not hope."* For since the good things are great, we cannot receive them here in this transitory life. With what object then did He even tell us of them beforehand, when He was not about to give them here? In order that by the promise He might refresh our souls, that by the engagement He might strengthen our zeal, that He might anoint [preparing us for our contests] and stir up our mind. For this cause then all these things were done.

6. Let us not then be troubled, let no man be troubled, when he sees the wicked prospering. The recompense is not here, either of wickedness or of virtue; and if in any instance there be either of wickedness or of virtue, yet is it not according to desert, but merely as it were a taste of the judgment, that they who believe not the resurrection may yet even by things that happen here be brought to their senses. When then we see a wicked man rich, let us not be cast down; when we see a good man suffering, let us not be troubled. For yonder are the crowns, yonder the punishments.

Yea and in another point of view, it is not possible either that a bad man should be altogether bad, but he may have some good things also: nor again that a good man should be altogether good, but he may also have some sins. When therefore the wicked man prospers, it is for evil on his own head, that having here received the reward of those few good things, he may hereafter be utterly punished yonder; for this cause does he receive his recompense in this life. And happy is he most of all who is punished here, that having put away all his sins, he may depart approved, and pure, and without having to be called to account. And this Paul teaches us when he says, *"For this cause many [are] weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."* [1 Corinthians 11:30] And again, *"I have delivered such an one to Satan."* [1 Corinthians 5:5] And the prophet says, *"for she has received of the Lord's hand her sins double"* [Isaiah 40:2]; and again David, *"Behold mine enemies that they are multiplied above the hairs of my head and [with] an unjust hatred have they hated me": "and forgive Thou all my sins."* [Psalm 25:19] And again another: *"O Lord, our God, give peace unto us; for You have rendered all things to us again."* [Isaiah 26:12]

These however are [the words] of one showing that good men receive here the punishments of their sins. But where are the wicked [mentioned] who receive their good things here, and there are utterly punished? Hear Abraham saying to the rich man, *"You received good things,"* and *"Lazarus evil things."* [Luke 16:25] What good things? For in this place by saying *"you receive,"* and not thou *"had taken,"* he shows that it was according to what was due to him that each was treated, and that the one was in prosperity, and the other in adversity. And he says, *"Therefore he is comforted"* here (for you see him pure from sins) *"and you are tormented."* Let us not then be perplexed when we see sinners well off here; but when

we ourselves are afflicted, let us rejoice. For this very thing is paying off the penalty of sins.

7. Let us not then seek relaxation: for Christ promised tribulation to His disciples and Paul says, "*All Who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*" [2 Timothy 3:12] No noble-spirited wrestler, when in the lists, seeks for baths, and a table full of food and wine. This is not for a wrestler, but for a sluggard. For the wrestler contends with dust, with oil, with the heat of the sun's ray, with much sweat, with pressure and constraint. This is the time for contest and for fighting, therefore also for being wounded, and for being bloody and in pain. Hear what the blessed Paul says, "*So fight I, not as one that beats the air.*" [1 Corinthians 9:26] Let us consider that our whole life is in combats, and then we shall never seek rest, we shall never feel it strange when we are afflicted: no more than a boxer feels it strange, when he combats. There is another season for repose. By tribulation we must be made perfect.

And even if there be no persecution, nor tribulation, yet there are other afflictions which befall us every day. And if we do not bear these, we should scarcely endure those. "*There has no temptation taken you,*" it is said, "*but such as is common to man.*" [1 Corinthians 10:13] Let us then pray indeed to God that we may not come into temptation; but if we come into it, let us bear it nobly. For that indeed is the part of prudent men, not to throw themselves upon dangers; but this of noble men and true philosophers. Let us not then lightly cast ourselves upon [dangers], for that is rashness; nor yet, if led into them, and called by circumstances let us give in, for that is cowardice. But if indeed the Gospel call us, let us not refuse; but in a simple case, when there is no reason, nor need, nor necessity which calls us in the fear of God, let us not rush in. For this is mere display, and useless ambition. But should any of those things which are injurious to

religion occur, then though it be necessary to endure ten thousand deaths, let us refuse nothing. Challenge not trials, when you find the things that concern godliness prosper as you desire. Why draw down needless dangers which bring no gain?

These things I say, because I wish you to observe the laws of Christ who commands us to "*pray that we enter not into temptation*" [Matthew 26:41], and commands us to "*take up the cross and follow*" Him. [Matthew 16:24] For these things are not contradictory, nay they are rather exceedingly in harmony. Do thou be so prepared as is a valiant soldier, be continually in your armor, sober, watchful, ever looking for the enemy: do not however breed wars, for this is not [the act] of a soldier but of a mover of sedition. But if on the other hand the trumpet of godliness call you, go forth immediately, and make no account of your life, and enter with great eagerness into the contests, break the phalanx of the adversaries, bruise the face of the devil, set up your trophy. If however godliness be in nowise harmed, and no one lay waste our doctrines (those I mean which relate to the soul), nor compel us to do anything displeasing to God, do not be officious.

The life of the Christian must be full of blood-sheddings; I say not in shedding that of others, but in readiness to shed one's own. Let us then pour out our own blood, when it is for Christ's sake, with as great readiness as one would pour out water (for the blood which flows about the body is water), and let us put off our flesh with as much good temper, as one even would a garment. And this shall we do, if we be not bound to riches, if not to houses, if not to affections, if we be detached from all things. For if they who live this life of [earthly] soldiers bid farewell to all things, and wherever war calls them there present themselves, and make journeys, and endure all things with ready mind; much more ought we, the soldiers of

Christ, so to have prepared ourselves, and to set ourselves firm against the war of the passions.

8. There is no persecution now, and God grant there may never be: but there is another war, that of the desire of money, of envy, of the passions. Paul, describing this war, says, "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood.*" [Ephesians 6:12] This war is ever at hand. Therefore he wishes us to stand ever armed. Because he wishes us to stand ever armed, he says, "*Stand, having girded yourselves about.*" [Ephesians 6:14] Which itself also belongs to the time present, and expresses that we ought ever to be armed. For great is the war through the tongue, great that through the eyes; this then we must keep down— great [too] is that of the lusts.

Therefore he begins at that point to arm the soldier of Christ: for "*stand,*" says he, "*having your loins girt about,*" and he added "*with truth.*" [Ephesians 6:14] Why "*with truth*"? Because lust is a mockery and a lie: wherefore the prophet says, "*My loins are filled with mockings.*" [Psalm 38:7] The thing is not pleasure, but a shadow of pleasure. "*Having your loins,*" he says, "*girt about with truth*"; that is, with true pleasure, with temperance, with orderly behavior. For this cause he gives this advice, knowing the unreasonableness of sin, and wishing that all our members should be hedged round; for "*unjust anger*" it is said, "*shall not be guiltless.*" [Sirach 1:22]

Moreover he wishes us to have around us a breastplate and a buckler. For desire is a wild beast which easily springs forth, and we shall have need of walls and fences innumerable, to overcome, and to restrain it. And for this cause God has built this part [of our body] especially with bones, as with a kind of stones, placing around it a support, so that [desire] might not at any time, having broken or cut through, easily injure the whole man. For it is a fire (it is said) and a great tempest, and no other part of the body

could endure this violence. And the sons of the physicians too say that for this cause the lungs have been spread under the heart, so that the heart being itself [put] into something soft and tender, by beating as it were into a sort of sponge, may continually be rested, and not [by striking] against the resisting and hard sternum, receive hurt through the violence of its beatings. We have need therefore of a strong breastplate, so as to keep this wild beast always quiet.

We have need also of an helmet; for since the reasoning faculty is there, and from this it is possible for us either to be saved, when what is right is done, or it is possible for us to be ruined— therefore he says, "*the helmet of salvation.*" [Ephesians 6:17] For the brain is indeed by nature tender, and therefore is covered above with the skull, as with a kind of shell. And it is to us the cause of all things both good and evil, knowing what is fitting, or what is not so. Yea and our feet too and our hands need armor, not these hands, nor these feet, but as before those of the soul— the former by being employed about what is right, the latter, that they may walk where they ought. Thus then let us thoroughly arm ourselves, and we shall be able to overcome our enemies, and to wreath ourselves with the crown in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 6 on Hebrews

Hebrews 3:7-11

" Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost says, Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart, and they have not known My ways. So I swore in My wrath they shall not enter into My rest. "

1. Paul, having treated of hope, and having said that *"We are His house, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end"* [Hebrews 3:6]; next shows that we ought to look forward with firmness, and he proves this from the Scriptures. But be attentive, because he has expressed this in a manner somewhat difficult and not readily to be comprehended. And therefore we must first make our own statements, and after we have briefly explained the whole argument, then make clear the words of the Epistle. For you will no longer need us, if you have understood the scope of the Apostle.

His discourse was concerning Hope, and that it behooves us to hope for the things to come, and that for those who have toiled here there will assuredly be some reward and fruit and refreshment. This then he shows from the prophet; and what says he? *"Wherefore as the Holy Ghost says, Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do always err in their heart,*

and they have not known My ways. So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest."

He says that there are "*three*" rests: one, that of the Sabbath, in which God rested from His works; the second, that of Palestine, into which when the Jews had entered they would be at rest from their hardships and labors; the third, that which is Rest indeed, the kingdom of Heaven; which those who obtain, do indeed rest from their labors and troubles. Of these three then he makes mention here.

And why did he mention the three, when he is treating of the one only? That he might show that the prophet is speaking concerning this one. For he did not speak (he says) concerning the first. For how could he, when that had taken place long before? Nor yet again concerning the second, that in Palestine. For how could he? For he says, "*They shall not enter into My rest.*" It remains therefore that it is this third.

2. But it is necessary also to unfold the history, to make the argument more clear. For when they had come forth out of Egypt, and had accomplished a long journey, and had received innumerable proofs of the power of God, both in Egypt, and in the Red Sea [cf. Acts 7:36], and in the wilderness, they determined to send spies to search out the nature of the land; and these went and returned, admiring indeed the country, and saying that it abounded in noble fruits, nevertheless it was a country of strong and invincible men: and the ungrateful and senseless Jews, when they ought to have called to mind the former blessings of God, and how when they were hemmed in the midst of the armies of so many Egyptians, He rescued them from their perils, and made them masters of their enemies' spoils; and again, in the wilderness He clave the rock, and bestowed on them abundance of waters, and gave them the manna, and the other wonderful things which He wrought; [when they ought, I say, to have remembered this,] and to have

trusted in God, they considered none of these things, but being struck with terror, just as if nothing had been done, they said, we wish to go back again into Egypt, *"for God has brought us out there"* (it is said) *"to slay us, with our children and wives."* [cf.] God therefore being angry that they had so quickly cast off the memory of what had been done, swore that generation, which had said these things, should not enter into the Rest; and they all perished in the wilderness. When David then, he says, speaking at a later period, and after these events, after that generation of men, said, *"Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts,"* that you may not suffer the same things which your forefathers did, and be deprived of the Rest; he evidently [said this] as of some [future] rest. For if they had received their Rest (he says) why does He again say to them, *"Today if you will hear His voice harden not your hearts,"* as your fathers did? What other rest then is there, except the kingdom of Heaven, of which the Sabbath was an image and type?

3. Next having set down the whole testimony (and this is, *"Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart, and they have not known My ways. So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest"*), he then adds:

Hebrews 3:12

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." For from hardness unbelief arises: and as in bodies, the parts that have become callous and hard do not yield to the hands of the physicians, so also souls that are hardened yield not to the word of God. For it is probable besides that some even disbelieved as though the things which had been done were not true.

Therefore he says, *"Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God."* For since the argument from the future is not so persuasive as from the past, he reminds them of the history, in which they had wanted faith. For if your fathers (he says) because they did not hope as they ought to have hoped, suffered these things, much more will you. Since to them also is this word addressed: for, *"Today"* (he says) is *"ever,"* so long as the world lasts.

Hebrews 3:13

4. Wherefore *"exhort ye one another daily, while it is called today."* That is, edify one another, raise yourselves up: lest the same things should befall you. *"Lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."* Do you see that sin produces unbelief? For as unbelief brings forth an evil life, so also a soul, *"when it has come into a depth of evils, becomes contemptuous"* [Proverbs 18:3], and having become contemptuous it endures not even to believe, in order thereby to free itself from fear. For *"they said"* (one says), *"The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard."* [Psalm 94:7] And again, *"Our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?"* [Psalm 12:4]; and again *"Wherefore has the wicked man provoked God to wrath?"* [Psalm 10:13]; and again, *"The fool has said in his heart, there is no God; they are corrupt and become abominable in their doings."* [Psalm 14:1] *"There is no fear of God before his eyes, for he was deceitful before Him, to find out his iniquity and to hate."* [Psalm 36:1-2] Yea and Christ also says this same thing, *"Every one that does evil, hates the light and comes not to the light."* [John 3:20]

Hebrews 3:14

Then he adds [Hebrews 3:14], *"For we have been made partakers of Christ."* What is this, *"We have been made partakers of Christ"*? We partake of Him (he means); we were made One, we and He— since He is the Head and we the body, *"fellow-heirs and of the same body; we are one body, of His flesh and of His bones."* [Ephesians 3:6; Romans 12:5; Ephesians 5:30]

"If we hold fast the beginning of our confidence [or, the principle of our subsistence] steadfast unto the end." What is *"the principle of our subsistence"*? The faith by which we stand, and have been brought into being and were made to exist, as one may say.

Hebrews 3:16-4:2

5. Then he adds [Hebrews 3:15], *"When it is said, Today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."* This is a transposition, *"when it is said, Today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts."* [It must be read thus:]

[Hebrews 4:1-2] *"Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it; for to us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them when it is said, Today if you hear His voice"* (for *"Today"* is *"at every time"*).

Then [he adds] *"but the word of hearing did not profit them, as they were not mixed by faith with them that heard."* How did it not profit? Then wishing to alarm them, he shows the same thing by what he says:

[Hebrews 3:16-19] *"For some when they had heard did provoke, howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses: And with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swear He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see, that they could not enter in because of unbelief."* After again repeating the testimony, he adds also the question, which makes the argument clear. For he said (he repeats), *"Today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."* Of whom does he speak (he says) [as] having been hardened? Of whom [as] not believing? Is it not of the Jews?

Now what he says is to this effect. They also heard, as we hear: but no profit came to them. Do not suppose then that by *"hearing"* what is proclaimed ye will be profited; seeing that they also heard, but derived no benefit because they did not believe.

Caleb then and Joshua, because they agreed not with those who did not believe, escaped the vengeance that was sent forth against them. And see how admirably he said, not, They did not agree, but, "*they were not mixed*"— that is, they stood apart, but not factiously when all the others had one and the same mind. Here it seems to me that a faction too is hinted at.

Hebrews 4:3-5

6. [Hebrews 4:3] For *"we who have believed,"* he says, *"do enter into rest."* From what this is evident, he adds: *"as He said, as I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."* This indeed, is not evidence that we shall enter in, but that they did not enter in. What then? Thus far he aims to show that as that rest does not hinder the speaking of another rest, so neither does this [exclude] that of Heaven. Up to this point then, he wishes to show that they [the Israelites] did not attain to the rest. For because he means this, he says [Hebrews 4:4-5], *"For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. And in this place again, if they shall enter into My rest."* You see how that does not hinder this from being a rest?

Hebrews 4:6-8

"Seeing therefore it remains" (he says) "that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: again he limits a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it has been said before." But what is it that he means? *"Seeing then"* (he means) that *"some must"* certainly *"enter in,"* and *"they did not enter in."* And that an entrance is proclaimed, and that *"some must enter in,"* let us hear from what this is clear. Because after so many years (he says) David again says: *"Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts"* [Hebrews 4:8], *"For if Joshua had given them rest he would not afterward have spoken of another day."* It is evident, that he says these things, as of persons who are to attain some recompense.

Hebrews 4:9

7. *"There remains therefore a rest for the people of God."* Whence [does this appear]? From the exhortation, *"Harden not your hearts"*: for if there were no rest, these exhortations would not have been given. Neither would they have been exhorted not to do the same things [with the Jews] lest they should suffer the same things, unless they were about to suffer the same. But how were they who were in possession of Palestine about to suffer the same things [i.e. exclusion from the rest] unless there were some other rest?

And well did he conclude the argument. For he said not rest but *"Sabbath-keeping"*; calling the kingdom *"Sabbath-keeping,"* by the appropriate name, and that which they rejoiced in and were attracted by. For as, on the Sabbath He commands to abstain from all evil things; and that those things only which relate to the Service of God should be done, which things the Priests were wont to accomplish, and whatsoever profits the soul, and nothing else; so also [will it be] then.

Hebrews 4:10

However it is not he who spoke thus, but what? [Hebrews 4:10], *"For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God [did] from His."* As God ceased from His works, he says, so he that has entered into His rest [has ceased]. For since his discourse to them was concerning rest, and they were desirous to hear when this would be, he concluded the argument with this.

8. And [he said] *"Today,"* that they might never be without hope. *"Exhort one another daily,"* he says, [*"while it is called today,"*] that is, even if a man have sinned, as long as it is *"Today,"* he has hope: let no man then despair so long as he lives. Above all things indeed, he says, *"let there not be an evil heart of unbelief."* [Hebrews 3:12] But even suppose there should be, let no man despair, but let him recover himself; for as long as we are in this world, the *"Today"* is in season. But here he means not unbelief only, but also murmurings: *"whose carcasses,"* he says, *"fell' in the wilderness."*

Then, lest any think that they will simply be deprived of rest only, he adds also the punishment, saying [Hebrews 4:12], *"For the Word of God is quick, and powerful; and sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow: and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* Here he is speaking of Hell and of punishment. *"It pierces"* (he says) into the secrets of our heart, and cuts asunder the soul. Here it is not the falling of carcasses nor, as there, the being deprived of a country, but of a heavenly kingdom; and being delivered to an everlasting hell, and to undying punishment and vengeance.

[Hebrews 3:13] *"But exhort one another."* Observe the gentleness and mildness [of the expression]: he said not *"Rebuke,"* but *"Exhort."* Thus we are required to bear ourselves towards those who are straightened by affliction. This he says also in writing to the Thessalonians, *"Warn them that are unruly"* [1 Thessalonians 5:14], but in speaking of the feeble-minded, not so, but what? *"Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men"*; that is, do not cease to hope; do not despair. For he that does not encourage one who is straightened by affliction, makes him more hardened.

9. *"Lest any of you,"* he says, *"be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."* He means either the deceit of the devil (for it is indeed a deceit, not to look for the things to come, to think that we are without responsibility, and that we shall not pay the penalty for our deeds here, neither will there be a resurrection); or in another sense insensibility [or] despairing is deceit. For to say, 'What is there left? I have sinned once for all, I have no hope of recovering myself,' is deceit.

Then he suggests hopes to them, saying [Hebrews 3:14], *"We are made partakers of Christ"*; All but saying, He that so loved us, He that counted us worthy of so great things, as to make us His Body, will not suffer us to perish. Let us consider (he says) of what we have been thought worthy: we and Christ are One: let us not then distrust Him. And again, he hints at that which had been said in another place, that *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."* [2 Timothy 2:12] For this is [implied in] *"We are made partakers,"* we partake of the same things whereof Christ also partakes.

He urges them on from the good things; *"for we are,"* he says, *"partakers of Christ."* Then, again, from gloomy ones [Hebrews 4:1], *"Let us fear, lest at any time a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."* For that is manifest and confessed.

[Hebrews 3:9] "*They proved Me,*" He says, "*and saw My works forty years.*" Do you see that it is not right to call God to account, but whether He defend [our cause] or not, to trust Him? For against those [of old] he now brings this charge, that "*they tempted God.*" For he that will have proof either of His power, or of His providence, or of His tender care, does not yet believe, either that He is powerful or kind to man. This he hints also in writing to these [Hebrews] who probably already wished, in their trials, to obtain experience and positive evidence of His power and His providential care for them. You see that in all cases the provocation and the angering arises from unbelief.

What then does he say? [Hebrews 4:9] "*There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.*" And see how he has summed up the whole argument. "*He swore,*" says he, to those former ones, "*that they should not enter into*" the "*rest,*" and they did not enter in. Then long after their time discoursing to the Jews, he says, "*Harden not your hearts,*" as your fathers, showing that there is another rest. For of Palestine we have not to speak: for they were already in possession of it. Nor can he be speaking of the seventh [day]; for surely he was not discoursing about that which had taken place long before. It follows therefore that he hints at some other, that which is rest indeed.

10. For that is indeed rest, where "*pain, sorrow and sighing are fled away*" [Isaiah 35:10]: where there are neither cares, nor labors, nor struggle, nor fear stunning and shaking the soul; but only that fear of God which is full of delight. There is not, "*In the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread,*" nor "*thorns and thistles*" [Genesis 3:19]; no longer, "*In sorrow you shall bring forth children, and to your husband shall be your desire and he shall rule over you.*" [Genesis 3:16] All is peace, joy, gladness, pleasure, goodness, gentleness. There is no jealousy, nor envy, no sickness, no death

whether of the body, or that of the soul. There is no darkness nor night; all [is] day, all light, all things are bright. It is not possible to be weary, it is not possible to be satiated: we shall always persevere in the desire of good things.

Would you that I should also give you some image of the condition there? It is impossible. But yet, so far as it is possible, I will try to give you some image. Let us look up into the heaven when without any intervening cloud it shows forth its crown [of stars]. Then when we have dwelt long on the beauty of its appearance, let us think that we too shall have a pavement, not indeed such [as this], but as much more beautiful as the gold is than the clay, and [let us think] on the higher roof which is again beyond; then on the Angels, the Archangels, the infinite multitude of unbodied powers, the very palace of God itself, the Throne of the Father.

But language is too weak (as I said) to set forth the whole. Experience is necessary, and the knowledge which [comes] by experience. Tell me, how was it (think you) with Adam in Paradise? This course of life is far better than that, as much as heaven [is better] than earth.

11. But however let us search after another image still. If it happened that he who now reigns was master of the whole world, and then was troubled neither by wars nor by cares, but was honored only and lived delicately; and had large tributes, and on every side gold flowed in to him, and he was looked up to, what feelings do you think he would have, if he saw that all the wars in all parts of the world had ceased? Something such as this will it be. But rather I have not even yet arrived at that image [which I seek]; therefore I must search after another too.

Consider then, I pray you: for as some royal child, so long as he is in the womb, has no sense of anything, but should it happen that he suddenly came forth from thence, and ascended the royal throne, not gradually, but

all at once received possession of all things; so is it as regards this [present] and that [future] state. Or, if some captive, having suffered innumerable evils, should be caught up at once to the royal throne.

But not even thus have I attained to the image exactly. For here indeed whatever good things a person may obtain, even should you say the kingdom itself, during the first day indeed his desires are in full vigor, and for the second too, and the third, but as time goes on, he continues indeed to have pleasure, but not so great. For whatever it be, it always ceases from familiarity with it. But yonder it not only does not diminish, but even increases. For consider how great a thing it is, that a soul after departing there, should no longer look for an end of those good things, nor yet change, but increase, and life that has no end, and life set free from all danger, and from all despondency and care, full of cheerfulness and blessings innumerable.

For if when we go out into a plain, and there see the soldiers' tents fixed with curtains, and the spears, and helmets, and bosses of the bucklers glittering, we are lifted up with wonder; but if we also chance to see the king himself running in the midst or even riding with golden armor, we think we have everything; what do you think [it will be] when you see the everlasting tabernacles of the saints pitched in heaven? (For it is said, "*They shall receive you into their everlasting tabernacles*" [Luke 16:9]) when you see each one of them beaming with light above the rays of the sun, not from brass and steel, but from that glory whose gleamings the eye of man cannot look upon? And this indeed with respect to the men. But what, if one were to speak of the thousands of Angels, of Archangels, of Cherubim, of Seraphim, of thrones, of dominions, of principalities, of powers, whose beauty is inimitable, passing all understanding?

But how far shall I go in pursuing what cannot be overtaken? *"For eye has not seen,"* it is said, *"nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."* [1 Corinthians 2:9] Therefore nothing is more pitiable than those who miss, nor anything more blessed than those who attain. Let us then be of the blessed, that we may attain to the everlasting good things that are in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 7 on Hebrews

Hebrews 4:11-13

"Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick [i.e. living] and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

1. Faith is indeed great and brings salvation, and without it, it is not possible ever to be saved. It suffices not however of itself to accomplish this, but there is need of a right conversation also. So that on this account Paul also exhorts those who had already been counted worthy of the mysteries; saying, *"Let us labor to enter into that rest."* *"Let us labor"* (he says), Faith not sufficing, the life also ought to be added thereto, and our earnestness to be great; for truly there is need of much earnestness too, in order to go up into Heaven. For if they who suffered so great distress in the Wilderness, were not counted worthy of [the promised] land, and were not able to attain [that] land, because they murmured and because they committed fornication: how shall we be counted worthy of Heaven, if we live carelessly and indolently? We then have need of much earnestness.

And observe, the punishment does not extend to this only, the not entering in (for he said not, *"Let us labor to enter into the rest,"* lest we fail of so great blessings), but he added what most of all arouses men. What then is this? *"Lest any man fall, after the same example of unbelief."* What

means this? It means that we should have our mind, our hope, our expectation, yonder, lest we should fail. For that [otherwise] we shall fail, the example shows, "*lest [&c.] after the same*," he says.

2. In the next place, lest hearing [the words] "*after the same [example]*," you should think that the punishment is the same, hear what he adds; "*For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" In these words he shows that He, the Word of God, wrought the former things also, and lives, and has not been quenched.

Do not then when hearing the Word, think of it lightly. For "*He is sharper*," he says, "*than a sword.*" Observe His condescension; and hence consider why the prophets also needed to speak of saber and bow and sword. "*If you turn not*," it is said, "*He will whet His sword, He has bent His bow and made it ready.*" [Psalm 7:12] For if now, after so long a time, and after their being perfected, He cannot smite down by the name of the Word alone, but needs these expressions in order to show the superiority [arising] from the comparison [of the Gospel with the law]: much more then [of old].

"*Piercing*," he says, "*even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.*" What is this? He hinted at something more fearful. Either that He divides the spirit from the soul, or that He pierces even through them disembodied, not as a sword through bodies only. Here he shows, that the soul also is punished, and that it thoroughly searches out the most inward things, piercing wholly through the whole man.

"*And is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight.*" In these words most of all he terrified them. For do not (he says) be confident if you still stand fast

in the Faith, but without full assurance. He judges the inner heart, for there He passes through, both punishing and searching out.

And why speak I of men? He says. For even if you speak of Angels, of Archangels, of the Cherubim, of the Seraphim, even of any "*creature*" whatsoever: all things are laid open to that Eye, all things are clear and manifest; there is nothing able to escape it; "*All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do.*"

But what is "*opened*" ? [It is] a metaphor from the skins which are drawn off from the victims. For as in that case, when a man has killed them, and has drawn aside the skin from the flesh, he lays open all the inward parts, and makes them manifest to our eyes; so also do all things lie open before God. And observe, I pray you, how he constantly needs bodily images; which arose from the weakness of the hearers. For that they were weak, he made plain, when he said that they were "*dull,*" and "*had need of milk, not of strong meat.*" "*All things are naked,*" he says, "*and opened unto the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do.*" [c. v. 11, 12]

3. But what is, "*after the same example of unbelief*"? As if one should say, why did they of old not see the land? They had received an earnest of the power of God; they ought to have believed, but yielding too much to fear and imagining nothing great concerning God, and being faint-hearted, — so they perished. And there is also something more to be said, as, that after they had accomplished the most part of the journey, when they were at the very doors, at the haven itself, they were sunk into the sea. This I fear (he says) for you also. This is [the meaning of] "*after the same example of unbelief.*"

For that these also [to whom he is writing] had suffered much, he afterwards testifies, saying, "*Call to mind the former days, in which after that you had been enlightened, you endured a great fight of afflictions.*"

[Hebrews 10:32] Let no man then be faint-hearted, nor fall down near the end through weariness. For there are, there are those who at the beginning engage in the fight with the full vigor of zeal; but a little after, not being willing to add to all, they lose all. Your forefathers (he says) are sufficient to instruct you not to fall into the same [sins], not to suffer the same things which they suffered. This is, *"After the same example of unbelief."* Let us not faint, he means (which he says also near the end [of the Epistle]. *"Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees"*): *"lest any man,"* he says, *"fall after the same example."* [Hebrews 12:12] For this is to fall indeed.

Then, lest when you hear, *"any man fall after the same example,"* you should conceive of the same death which they also underwent, see what he says: *"For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword."* For the Word falls upon the souls of these [men] more severely than any sword, causing grievous wounds; and inflicts fatal blows. And of these things he need not give the proof, nor establish them by argument, having a history so fearful. For (he would say) what kind of war destroyed them? What sort of sword? Did they not fall simply of themselves? For let us not be careless because we have not suffered the same things. While *"it is called Today,"* it is in our power to recover ourselves.

For lest on hearing the things that belong to the soul we should grow negligent, he adds also what concerns the body. For then it is as a king, when his officers are guilty of some great fault, first strips them (say) of their command, and after depriving them of their belt, and their rank, and their herald, then punishes them: so also in this case the sword of the Spirit works.

4. Next he discourses of the Son, "*with whom we have to do*," he says. What is "*with whom we have to do*"? To Him (he would say) we have to render account for the things we have done? Even so. How then [must we act] that we fall not, nor be faint-hearted?

These things indeed (he would say) are sufficient to instruct us. But we have also "*a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God*." Because he added [it], for this reason he went on, "*For we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*." Therefore he said above, "*In that He has suffered Himself being tempted, He is able to succor them which are tempted*." See then how here also he does the same. And what he says is to this effect: He went (he says) the road which we also [are going] now, or rather even a more rugged one. For He had experience of all human [sufferings].

Hebrews 4:14

He had said above *"There is no creature that is not manifest in His sight,"* intimating His Godhead; then, since he had touched on the flesh, he again discourses more condescendingly, saying [Hebrews 4:14], *"Having then a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens"*: and shows that His care is greater and that He protects them as His own, and would not have them fall away. For Moses indeed (he says) did not enter into the rest, while He [Christ] did enter in. And it is wonderful how he has nowhere stated the same, lest they might seem to find an excuse; he however implied it, but that he might not appear to bring an accusation against the man, he did not say it openly. For if, when none of these things had been said, they yet brought forward these [charges], saying, This man has spoken against Moses and against the law [see Acts 21:21, 28]; much more, if he had said, It is not Palestine but Heaven, would they have said stronger things than these.

5. But he attributes not all to the Priest, but requires also what is [to come] from us, I mean our profession. For *"having,"* he says, *"a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession"* [or *"confession"*]. What sort of profession does he mean? That there is a Resurrection, that there is a retribution: that there are good things innumerable; that Christ is God, that the Faith is right. These things let us profess, these things let us hold fast. For that they are true, is manifest from the fact, that the High Priest is within. We have not failed of [our hopes], let us confess; although the realities are not present, yet let us confess: if already they were present they were but a lie. So that this also is true, that [our good things] are deferred. For our High Priest also is Great.

Hebrews 4:15

"For we have not an High Priest, who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He is not (he means) ignorant of what concerns us, as many of the High Priests, who know not those in tribulations, nor that there is tribulation at any time. For in the case of men it is impossible that one should know the affliction of the afflicted who has not had experience, and gone through the actual sensations. Our High Priest endured all things. Therefore He endured first and then ascended, that He might be able to sympathize with us.

But was *"in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* Observe how both above he has used the word *"in like manner,"* and here *"after the likeness."* [Hebrews 2:14] That is, He was persecuted, was spit upon, was accused, was mocked at, was falsely informed against, was driven out, at last was crucified.

"After our likeness, without sin." In these words another thing also is suggested, that it is possible even for one in afflictions to go through them without sin. So that when he says also *"in the likeness of flesh"* [Romans 8:3], he means not that He took on Him [merely] *"the likeness of flesh,"* but *"flesh."* Why then did he say *"in the likeness"*? Because he was speaking about *"sinful flesh"*: for it was *"like"* our flesh, since in nature it was the same with us, but in sin no longer the same.

Hebrews 4:16

6. *"Let us come then boldly [with confidence] unto the throne of His grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

What *"throne of grace"* is he speaking of? That royal throne concerning which it is said, *"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on My right hand."* [Psalm 110:1]

What is *"let us come boldly"*? Because *"we have a sinless High Priest"* contending with the world. For, says He, *"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"* [John 16:33]; for, this is to suffer all things, and yet to be pure from sins. Although we (he means) are under sin, yet He is sinless.

How is it that we should *"approach boldly"*? Because *now* it is a throne of Grace, not a throne of Judgment. Therefore boldly, *"that we may obtain mercy,"* even such as we are seeking. For the affair is [one of] munificence, a royal largess.

"And may find grace to help in time of need [for help in due season]." He well said, *"for help in time of need."* If you approach now (he means) you will receive both grace and mercy, for you approach *"in due season"*; but if you approach *then*, no longer [will you receive it]. For *then* the approach is unseasonable, for it is not *"then a throne of Grace."* Till that time He sits granting pardon, but when the end [has come], then He rises up to judgment. For it is said, *"Arise, O God, judge the earth."* [Psalm 82:8] (*"Let us come boldly,"* or he says again having no *"evil conscience,"* that is, not being in doubt, for such an one cannot *"come with boldness."*) On this account it is said, *"I have heard you in an accepted time and in a day of salvation have I succored you."* [2 Corinthians 6:2] Since even *now* for those to find repentance who sin after baptism is of grace.

But lest when you hear of an High Priest, you should think that He stands, he immediately leads to the throne. But a Priest does not sit, but stands. Do you see that [for Him] to be made High Priest, is not of nature, but of grace and condescension, and humiliation?

This is it seasonable for us also now to say, "*Let us draw near*" asking "*boldly*": let us only bring Faith and He gives all things. Now is the time of the gift; let no man despair of himself. Then [will be] the time of despairing, when the bride-chamber is shut, when the King has come in to see the guests, when they who shall be accounted worthy thereof, shall have received as their portion the Patriarch's bosom: but now it is not as yet so. For still are the spectators assembled, still is the contest, still is the prize in suspense.

7. Let us then be earnest. For even Paul says, "*I so run not as uncertainly.*" [1 Corinthians 9:26] There is need of running, and of running vehemently. He that runs [a race] sees none of those that meet him; whether he be passing through meadows, or through dry places: he that runs looks not at the spectators, but at the prize. Whether they be rich or whether they be poor, whether one mock at him, or praise him, whether one insult, or cast stones at him, or plunder his house, whether he see children, or wife, or anything whatever. He is occupied in one thing alone, in running, in gaining the prize. He that runs, never stands still, since even if he slacken a little, he has lost the whole. He that runs, not only slackens nothing before the end, but then even especially strains his speed.

This have I spoken for those who say; In our younger days we used discipline, in our younger days we fasted, *now* we are grown old. *Now* most of all it behooves you to make your carefulness more intense. Do not count up to me the old things especially done well: be now youthful and vigorous. For he that runs this bodily race, when gray hairs have overtaken him,

probably is not able to run as he did before: for the whole contest depends on the body; but thou— wherefore do you lessen your speed? For in this race there is need of a soul, a soul thoroughly awakened: and the soul is rather strengthened in old age; then it is in its full vigor, then is it in its pride.

For as the body, so long as it is oppressed by fevers and by one sickness after another, even if it be strong, is exhausted, but when it is freed from this attack, it recovers its proper force, so also the soul in youth is feverish, and is chiefly possessed by the love of glory, and luxurious living, and sensual lusts, and many other imaginations; but old age, when it comes on, drives away all these passions, some through satiety, some through philosophy. For old age relaxes the powers of the body, and does not permit the soul to make use of them even if it wish, but repressing them as enemies of various kinds, it sets her in a place free from troubles and produces a great calm, and brings in a greater fear.

For if none else does, it is said, yet they who are grown old know, that they are drawing to their end, and that they certainly stand near to death. When therefore the desires of this life are withdrawing, and the expectation of the judgment-seat is coming on, softening the stubbornness of the soul, does it not become more attentive, if one be willing?

8. What then (you allege) when we see old men more intractable than young ones? Thou tellest me of an excess of wickedness. For in the case of madmen too, we see them going over precipices, when no man pushes them. When therefore, an old man has the diseases of the young, this is an excess of wickedness; besides not even in youth would such an one have an excuse: since he is not able to say, *"Remember not the sins of my youth, and my ignorances."* [Psalm 25:7] For he who in old age remains the same, shows that even in youth, he was what he was not from ignorance, nor from

inexperience, nor from the time of life, but from slothfulness. For that man may say, "*Remember not the sins of my youth, and mine ignorances,*" who does such things as become an old man, who changes in old age. But if even in age he continue the same unseemly courses, how can such an one be worthy of the name of an old man, who has no reverence even for the time of life? For he who says, "*Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my ignorances,*" utters this, as one doing right in his old age. Do not then, by the deeds of age, deprive yourself also of pardon for the sins of youth.

For how can what is done be otherwise than unreasonable, and beyond pardon? An old man sits in taverns. An old man hurries to horse-races— an old man goes up into theaters, running with the crowd like children. Truly it is a shame and a mockery, to be adorned outside with gray hairs, but within to have the mind of a child.

And indeed if a young man insult [him], he immediately puts forward his gray hairs. Reverence them first yourself; if however thou dost not reverence your own even when old, how can you demand of the young to reverence them? Thou dost not reverence the gray hairs, but puttest them to shame. God has honored you with whiteness of hairs: He has given you high dignity. Why do you betray the honor? How shall the young man reverence you, when you are more wanton than he? For the hoary head is then venerable, when it acts worthily of the gray head; but when it plays youth, it will be more ridiculous than the young. How then will you old men be able to give these exhortations to the young man when you are intoxicated by your disorderliness?

9. I say not these things as accusing the old, but the young. For in my judgment they who act thus even if they have come to their hundredth year, are young; just as the young if they be but little children, yet if they are sober-minded, are better than the old. And this doctrine is not my own, but

Scripture also recognizes the same distinction. *"For,"* it says, *"honorable age is not that which stands in length of time, and an unspotted life is old age."* [Wisdom 4:8-9]

For we honor the gray hair, not because we esteem the white color above the black, but because it is a proof of a virtuous life; and when we see them we conjecture therefrom the inward hoariness. But if men continue to do what is inconsistent with the hoary head, they will on that account become the more ridiculous. Since we also honor the Emperor, and the purple and the diadem, because they are symbols of his office. But if we should see him, with the purple, spitted on, trodden under foot by the guards, seized by the throat, cast into prison, torn to pieces, shall we then reverence the purple or the diadem, and not rather weep over the pomp itself? Claim not then to be honored for your hoary head, when you yourself wrongest it. For it ought indeed itself to receive satisfaction from you, because you bring disgrace on a form so noble and so honorable.

We say not these things against all [old persons], nor is our discourse against old age simply (I am not so mad as that), but against a youthful spirit bringing dishonor on old age. Nor is it concerning those who are grown old that we sorrowfully say these things, but concerning those who disgrace the hoary head.

For the old man is a king, if you will, and more royal than he who wears the purple, if he master his passions, and keep them under subjection, in the rank of guards. But if he be dragged about and thrust down from his throne, and become a slave of the love of money, and vainglory, and personal adornment, and luxuriousness, and drunkenness, anger, and sensual pleasures, and has his hair dressed out with oil, and shows an age insulted by his way of life, of what punishment would not such an one be worthy?

10. But may you not be such, O young men! For not even for you is there the excuse for sinning. Why so? Because it is possible to be old in youth: just as there are youths in old age, so also the reverse. For as in the one case the white hair saves no one, so in the other the black is no impediment. For if it is disgraceful for the old man to do these things of which I have spoken, much more than for the young man, yet still the young man is not freed from accusation. For a young man can have an excuse only, in case he is called to the management of affairs, when he is still inexperienced, when he needs time and practice; but no longer when it is necessary to display temperance and courage, nor yet when it is needful to keep his property.

For it sometimes happens that the young man is blamed more than the old. For the one needs much service, old age making him feeble: but the other being able, if he will, to provide for himself, what sort of excuse should he meet with, when he plunders more than the old, when he remembers injuries, when he is contemptuous, when he does not stand forward to protect others more than the old man, when he utters many things unseasonably, when he is insolent, when he reviles, when he is drunken?

And if in the [matter of] chastity he think that he cannot be impleaded, consider that here also he has many helps, if he will. For although desire trouble him more violently than it does the old, yet nevertheless there are many things which he can do more than an old man, and so charm that wild beast. What are these things? Labors, readings, watchings through the night, fastings.

11. What then are these things to us (one says) who are not monastics? Do you say this to me? Say it to Paul, when he says, "*Watching with all perseverance and supplication*" [Ephesians 6:18], when he says, "*Make not*

provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." [Romans 13:14] For surely he wrote not these things to solitaries only, but to all that are in cities. For ought the man who lives in the world to have any advantage over the solitary, save only the living with a wife? In this point he has allowance, but in others none, but it is his duty to do all things equally with the solitary.

Moreover the Beatitudes [pronounced] by Christ, were not addressed to solitaries only: since in that case the whole world would have perished, and we should be accusing God of cruelty. And if these beatitudes were spoken to solitaries only, and the secular person cannot fulfill them, yet He permitted marriage, then He has destroyed all men. For if it be not possible, with marriage, to perform the duties of solitaries, all things have perished and are destroyed, and the [functions] of virtue are shut up in a strait.

And, how can marriage be honorable, which so hinders us? What then? It is possible, yea very possible, even if we have wives, to pursue after virtue, if we will. How? If having *"wives,"* we *"be as though we had none,"* if we rejoice not over our *"possessions,"* if we *"use the world as not abusing it."* [1 Corinthians 7:29-31]

And if any persons have been hindered by marriage state, let them know that marriage is not the hindrance, but their purpose which made an ill use of marriage. Since it is not wine which makes drunkenness, but the evil purpose, and the using it beyond due measure. Use marriage with moderation, and you shall be first in the kingdom, and shall enjoy all good things, which may we all attain by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 8 on Hebrews

Hebrews 5:1-3

" For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity; and by reason hereof he ought, as for the people so also for himself to offer for sins."

1. The blessed Paul wishes to show in the next place that this covenant is far better than the old. This then he does by first laying down remote considerations. For inasmuch as there was nothing bodily or that made a show, no temple for instance, nor Holy of Holies, nor Priest with so great apparel, no legal observances, but all things higher and more perfect, and there was nothing of bodily things, but all was in things spiritual, and things spiritual did not attract the weak, as things bodily; he thoroughly sifts this whole matter.

And observe his wisdom: he makes his beginning from the priest first, and continually calls Him an High Priest, and from this first [point] shows the difference [of the two Dispensations]. On this account he first of all defines what a Priest is, and shows whether He has any things proper to a Priest, and whether there are any signs of priesthood. It was however an objection in his way that He [Christ] was not even well-born, nor was He of the sacerdotal tribe, nor a priest on earth. How then was He a Priest? Some one may say.

And just as in the Epistle to the Romans having taken up an argument of which they were not easily persuaded, that Faith effects that which the

labor of the Law could not, nor the sweat of the daily life, he betook himself to the Patriarch and referred the whole [question] to that time: so now here also he opens out the other path of the Priesthood, showing its superiority from the things which happened before. And as, in [the matter of] punishment, he brings before them not Hell alone, but also what happened to their fathers, so now here also, he first establishes this position from things present. For it were right indeed that earthly things should be proved from heavenly, but when the hearers are weak, the opposite course is taken.

2. Up to a certain point he lays down first the things which are common [to Christ and their High Priests], and then shows that He is superior. For comparative excellence arises thus, when in some respects there is community, in others superiority; otherwise it is no longer comparative.

"For every High Priest taken from among men," this is common to Christ; *"is ordained for men in things pertaining to God,"* and this also; *"that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for the people,"* and this too, [yet] not entirely: what follows however is no longer so: *"who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way,"* from this point forward is the superiority, *"inasmuch as himself also is encompassed with infirmity; and by reason hereof he ought as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins."*

Hebrews 5:4-5

Then also [there are] other [points]: He is made [Priest] (he says) by Another and does not of Himself intrude into [the office]. This too is common [Hebrews 5:4], *"And no man takes this honor to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron."*

Here again he conciliates them in another point, because He was sent from God: which Christ was wont to say throughout to the Jews. *"He that sent Me is greater than I,"* and, *"I came not of Myself."* [John 12:49; 14:28; 8:42]

He appears to me in these words also to hint at the priests of the Jews, as being no longer priests, [but] intruders and corrupters of the law of the priesthood; [Hebrews 5:5] *"So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest."*

How then was He appointed (one says)? For Aaron was many times appointed as by the Rod, and when the fire came down and destroyed those who wished to intrude into the priesthood. But in this instance, on the contrary, they [the Jewish Priests] not only suffered nothing, but even are in high esteem. Whence then [His appointment]? He shows it from the prophecy. He has nothing [to allege] perceptible by sense, nothing visible. For this cause he affirms it from prophecy, from things future; *"But He that said unto Him You are My Son, today have I begotten You."* What has this to do with the Son? Yea (he says) it is a preparation for His being appointed by God.

Hebrews 5:6

"As He says also in another place, You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedech." Unto whom now was this spoken?

Who is *"after the order of Melchisedech"*? No other [than He]. For they all were under the Law, they all kept sabbaths, they all were circumcised; one could not point out any other [than Him].

Hebrews 5:7-8

3. *"Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, to Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered."* Do you see that he sets forth nothing else than His care and the exceeding greatness of His love? For what means the [expression] *"with strong crying"*? The Gospel nowhere says this, nor that He wept when He prayed, nor yet that He uttered a cry. Do you see that it was a condescension? For he could not [merely] say that He prayed, but also *"with strong crying."*

Hebrews 5:9-10

"And was heard," (he says), "in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.", "And being made perfect He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him: called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedech."

Be it with *"crying,"* why also *"strong [crying] and tears"?*

"Having offered," (he says), "and having been heard in that He feared." What do you say? Let the Heretics be ashamed. The Son of God *"was heard in that He feared."* And what more could any man say concerning the prophets? And what sort of connection is there, in saying, *"He was heard in that He feared, though He were Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered"?* Would any man say these things concerning God? Why, who was ever so mad? And who, even if he were beside himself, would have uttered these things? *"Having been heard," (he says), "in that He feared, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."* What obedience? He that before this had been obedient even unto death, as a Son to His Father, how did He afterwards learn? Do you see that this is spoken concerning the Incarnation?

Tell me now, did He pray the Father that He might be saved from death? And was it for this cause that He was *"exceeding sorrowful, and said, If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me"?* [Matthew 26:38-39] Yet He nowhere prayed the Father concerning His resurrection, but on the contrary He openly declares, *"Destroy this temple and within three days I will raise it up."* [John 2:19] And, *"I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man takes it from Me, I lay it down of Myself."* [John 10:18] What then is it; why did He pray? (And again He

said, *"Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death. And they shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise again"* [Matthew 20:18-19], and said not, *"My Father shall raise Me up again."*) How then did He pray concerning this? But for whom did He pray? For those who believed on Him.

And what he means is this, 'He is readily listened to.' For since they had not yet the right opinion concerning Him, he said that He was heard. Just as He Himself also when consoling His disciples said, *"If you loved Me, you would rejoice, because I go to My Father"* [John 14:28], and *"My Father is greater than I."* But how did He not glorify Himself, He who *"made Himself of no reputation"* [Philippians 2:7], He who gave Himself up? For, it is said, *"He gave Himself" up "for our sins."* [See] And again, *"Who gave Himself a ransom for us all."* [1 Timothy 2:6] What is it then? You see that it is in reference to the flesh that lowly things are spoken concerning Himself: So also here, *"Although He were Son, He was heard in that He feared,"* it is said. He wishes to show, that the success was of Himself, rather than of God's favor. So great (he says) was His reverence, that even on account thereof God had respect unto Him.

"He learned," he says, to obey God. Here again he shows how great is the gain of sufferings. *"And having been made perfect,"* he says, *"He became the Author of salvation to them that obey Him."* (Cf. *supra*, pp. 384, 391.) But if He, being the Son, gained obedience from His sufferings, much more shall we. Do you see how many things he discourses about obedience, that they might be persuaded to it? For it seems to me that they would not be restrained. *"From the things,"* he says, *"which He suffered He"* continually *"learned"* to obey God . And being *"made perfect"* through

sufferings. This then is perfection, and by this means must we arrive at perfection. For not only was He Himself saved, but became to others also an abundant supply of salvation. For *"being made perfect He became the Author of salvation to them that obey Him."*

Hebrews 5:11-12

4. *"Being called,"* he says, *"of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedech":* [Hebrews 5:11] *"Of whom we have many things to say and hard to be uttered [or explained]."* When he was about to proceed to the difference of the Priesthood, he first reproves them, pointing out both that such great condescension was *"milk,"* and that it was because they were children that he dwelt longer on the lowly subject, relating to the flesh, and speaks [about Him] as about any righteous man. And see, he neither kept silence as to the doctrine altogether, nor did he utter it; that on the one hand, he might raise their thoughts, and persuade them to be perfect, and that they might not be deprived of the great doctrines; and on the other, that he might not overwhelm their minds.

"Of whom," he says, *"we have many things to say and hard to be explained, seeing you are dull of hearing."* Because they do not hear, the doctrine is *"hard to be explained."* For when one has to do with men who do not go along with him nor mind the things that are spoken, he cannot well explain the subject to them.

But perhaps some one of you that stand here, is puzzled, and thinks it a hard case, that owing to the Hebrews, he himself is hindered from hearing the more perfect doctrines. Nay rather, I think that perhaps here also except a few, there are many such [as they], so that this may be said concerning yourselves also: but for the sake of those few I will speak.

Did he then keep entire silence, or did he resume the subject again in what follows; and do the same as in the Epistle to the Romans? For there too, when he had first stopped the mouths of the gainsayers, and said, *"Nay but, O man, who are you that replest against God?"* [Romans 9:20], he

then subjoined the solution. And for my own part I think that he was not even altogether silent, and yet did not speak it out, in order to lead the hearers to a longing [for the knowledge]. For having mentioned [the subject], and said that certain great things were stored up in the doctrine, see how he frames his reproof in combination with panegyric.

For this is ever a part of Paul's wisdom, to mix painful things with kind ones. Which he also does in the Epistle to the Galatians, saying, "*You did run well; who did hinder you?*" [Galatians 5:7] And, "*Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain*" [Galatians 3:4], and, "*I have confidence in you in the Lord.*" [Galatians 5:10] Which he says also to these [Hebrews], "*But we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.*" [Hebrews 6:9] For these two things he effects, he does not overstrain them, nor suffer them to fall back; for if the examples of others are sufficient to arouse the hearer, and to lead him to emulation; when a man has himself for an example and is bidden to emulate himself, the possibility follows at the same time. He therefore shows this also, and does not suffer them to fall back as men utterly condemned, nor as being always evil, but [says] that they were once even good; [Hebrews 5:12] for "*when for the time ye ought to be teachers,*" he says. Here he shows that they had been believers a long while, and he shows also that they ought to instruct others.

5. At all events observe him continually travailing to introduce the discourse concerning the High Priest, and still putting it off. For hear how he began: "*Having a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens*" [Hebrews 4:14]; and omitting to say how He was great, he says again, "*For every High Priest taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God.*" [Hebrews 5:1] And again, "*So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest.*" [Hebrews 5:5] And again after saying,

"You are a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech" [Hebrews 5:6], he again puts off [the subject], saying, *"Who in the days of His Flesh offered prayers and supplications."* [Hebrews 5:7] When therefore he had been so many times repulsed, he says, as if excusing himself, The blame is with you. Alas! How great a difference! When they ought to be teaching others, they are not even simply learners, but the last of learners. [Hebrews 5:12], *"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, you have need again that some one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God."* Here he means the Human Nature [of Christ]. For as in external literature it is necessary to learn the elements first, so also here they were first taught concerning the human nature.

You see what is the cause of his uttering lowly things. So Paul did to the Athenians also, discoursing and saying, *"The times of this ignorance God winked at: but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead."* [Acts 17:30-31] Therefore, if he says anything lofty, he expresses it briefly, while the lowly statements are scattered about in many parts of the Epistle. And thus too he shows the lofty; since the very lowliness [of what is said] forbids the suspicion that these things relate to the Divine Nature. So here also the safe ground was kept.

But what produces this dullness? This he pointed out especially in the Epistle to the Corinthians, saying, *"For whereas there is among you envy and strife and divisions, are you not carnal?"* [1 Corinthians 3:3] But observe, I beseech you, his great wisdom, how he always deals according to the distempers before him. For there the weakness arose more from ignorance, or rather from sin; but here not from sins only, but also from

continual afflictions. Wherefore he also uses expressions calculated to show the difference, not saying, "*you have become carnal*," but "*dull*": in that case "*carnal*," but in this the pain is greater. For they [the Corinthians] indeed were not able to endure [his reproof], because they were carnal: but these were able. For in saying, "*Seeing you have become dull of hearing*" [Hebrews 5:11], he shows that formerly they were sound in health, and were strong, fervent in zeal, which he also afterwards testifies respecting them.

6. "*And have become such as have need of milk, not of strong meat.*" He always calls the lowly doctrine "*milk*," both in this place and in the other. "*When*," he says, for [i.e. "*because of*"] the time ye ought to be teachers: because of that very thing, namely the time, for which you ought especially to be strong, for this especially you have become backsliding. Now he calls it "*milk*," on account of its being suited to the more simple. But to the more perfect it is injurious, and the dwelling on these things is hurtful. So that it is not fitting that matters of the Law should be introduced now or the comparison made from them, [such as] that He was an High Priest, and offered sacrifice, and needed crying and supplication. Wherefore see how these things are unhealthful to "*us*"; but at that time they nourished them being by no means unhealthful to them.

So then the oracles of God are true nourishment. "*For I will give unto them*," he says, "*not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.*" [Amos 8:11]

"*I gave you milk to drink, and not meat*" [1 Corinthians 3:2]; He did not say, I fed you, showing that such [nourishment] as this is not food, but that [the case is] like that of little children who cannot be fed with bread. For such have not drink given them, but their food is to them instead of drink.

Moreover he did not say, "*you have need*," but "*you have become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat*." That is, you willed [it]; you have reduced yourselves to this, to this need.

Hebrews 5:13

"For every one that partakes of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe." What is *"the Word [doctrine] of righteousness"*? He seems to me here to hint at conduct also. That which Christ also said, *"Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees"* [Matthew 5:20], this he says likewise, *"unskilled in the word of righteousness,"* that is, he that is unskilled in the philosophy that is above, is unable to embrace a perfect and exact life. Or else by *"righteousness"* he here means Christ, and the high doctrine concerning Him.

That they then were *"become dull,"* he said; but from what cause, he did not add, leaving it to themselves to know it, and not wishing to make his discourse hard to bear. But in the case of the Galatians he both *"marveled"* [Galatians 1:6] and *"stood in doubt"* [], which tends much more to encourage, as [it is the language] of one who would never have expected that this should happen. For this is [what] the doubting [implies].

You see that there is another infancy, You see that there is another full age. Let us become of *"full age"* in this sense: It is in the power even of those who are children, and the young to come to that *"full age"*: for it is not of nature, but of virtue.

Hebrews 5:14

7. *"But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age [perfect], even them who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."* Those had not *"their senses exercised,"* nor did they *"know good and evil."* He is not speaking now concerning life [conduct], when he says *"to discern good and evil,"* for this is possible and easy for every man to know, but concerning doctrines that are wholesome and sublime, and those that are corrupted and low. The babe knows not how to distinguish bad and good food. Oftentimes at least it even puts dirt into its mouth, and takes what is hurtful; and it does all things without judgment; but not [so] the full grown man. Such [babes] are they who lightly listen to everything, and give up their ears indiscriminately: which seems to me to blame these [Hebrews] also, as being lightly *"carried about,"* and now giving themselves to these, now to those. Which he also hinted near the end [of the Epistle], saying, *"Be not carried aside by various and strange doctrines."* [Hebrews 13:9] This is the meaning of *"to discern good and evil."* *"For the mouth tastes meat, but the soul tries words."* [Job 34:3]

8. Let us then learn this lesson. Do not, when you hear that a man is not a Heathen nor a Jew, straightway believe him to be a Christian; but examine also into all the other points; for even Manichæans, and all the heresies, have put on this mask, in order thus to deceive the more simple. But if we *"have the senses"* of the soul *"exercised to discern both good and evil,"* we are able to discern such [teachers].

But how do our *"senses"* become *"exercised"*? By continual hearing; by experience of the Scriptures. For when we set forth the error of those [Heretics], and you hear today and tomorrow; and provest that it is not

right, you have learned the whole, you have known the whole: and even if you should not comprehend today, you will comprehend tomorrow.

"That have," he says, their *"senses exercised."* You see that it is needful to exercise our hearing by divine studies, so that they may not sound strangely. *"Exercised,"* says he, *"for discerning,"* that is, to be skilled.

One man says, that there is no Resurrection; and another looks for none of the things to come; another says there is a different God; another that He has His beginning from Mary. And see at once how they have all fallen away from want of moderation, some by excess, others by defect. As for instance, the first Heresy of all was that of Marcion; this introduced another different God, who has no existence. See the excess. After this that of Sabellius, saying that the Son and the Spirit and the Father are One. Next that of Marcellus and Photinus, setting forth the same things. Moreover that of Paul of Samosata, saying that He had His beginning from Mary. Afterwards that of the Manichæans; for this is the most modern of all. After these the heresy of Arius. And there are others too.

And on this account have we received the Faith, that we might not be compelled to attack innumerable heresies, and to deal with them, but whatever any man might have endeavored either to add or take away, that we might consider spurious. For as those who give the standards do not oblige [people] to busy themselves about measures innumerable, but bid them keep to what is given them; so also in the case of doctrines.

9. But no man is willing to give heed to the Scriptures. For if we did give heed, not only should we not be ourselves entangled by deceit, but we should also set others free who are deceived, and should draw them out of dangers. For the strong soldier is not only able to help himself, but also to protect his comrade, and to free him from the malice of the enemy. But as it is, some do not even know that there are any Scriptures. Yet the Holy Spirit

indeed made so many wise provisions in order that they might be safely kept.

And look at it from the first, that you may learn the unspeakable love of God. He inspired the blessed Moses; He engraved the tables, He detained him on the mount forty days; and again as many [more] to give the Law. And after this He sent prophets who suffered woes innumerable. War came on; they slew them all, they cut them to pieces, the books were burned. Again, He inspired another admirable man to publish them, Ezra I mean, and caused them to be put together from the remains. And after this He arranged that they should be translated by the seventy. They did translate them. Christ came, He receives them; the Apostles disperse them among men. Christ wrought signs and wonders.

What then after so great painstaking? The Apostles also wrote, even as Paul likewise said, *"they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come."* [1 Corinthians 10:11] And again Christ said, *"You do err not knowing the Scriptures"* [Matthew 22:29]: and again Paul said, *"That through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope."* [Romans 15:4] And again, *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable."* [2 Timothy 3:16] And *"let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."* [Colossians 3:16] And the prophet, *"he shall meditate in His Law day and night"* [Psalm 1:2], and again in another place, *"Let all your communication be in the law of the Most High."* [Sirach 9:15] And again, *"How sweet are Your words unto my throat."* (He said not to my hearing, but to my *"throat"*); *"more than honey and the honeycomb to my mouth."* [Psalm 119:103] And Moses says, *"You shall meditate in them continually, when you rise up, when you sit, when you lie down."* [Deuteronomy 6:7] *"Be in them"* [1 Timothy 4:15], says he. And innumerable things one might say concerning them. But notwithstanding, after so many things there are

some who do not even know that there are Scriptures at all. For this cause, believe me, nothing sound, nothing profitable comes from us.

10. Yet, if any one wished to learn military affairs, of necessity he must learn the military laws. And if any one sought to learn navigation or carpentry or anything else, of necessity he must learn the [principles] of the art. But in this case they will not do anything of the kind, although this is a science which needs much wakeful attention. For that it too is an art which needs teaching, hear the prophet saying, *"Come, you children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord."* [Psalm 34:11] It follows therefore certainly that the fear of God needs teaching. Then he says, *"What man is he that desires life?"* [Psalm 34:12] He means the life yonder; and again, *"Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile; de part from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it."* [Psalm 34:13-14]

Do you know indeed who said these things, a prophet or a historian, or an apostle, or an evangelist? For my own part I do not think you do, except a few. Yea and these themselves again, if we bring forward a testimony from some other place, will be in the same case as the rest of you. For see, I repeat the same statement expressed in other words. *"Wash ye, make you clean, put away your wickedness from your souls before My eyes, learn to do well, seek out judgment. Keep your tongue from evil, and do good: learn to do well."* [Isaiah 1:16-17] You see that virtue needs to be taught? For this one says, *"I will teach you the fear of the Lord,"* and the other, *"Learn to do well."*

Now then do you know where these words are? For myself I do not think you do, except a few. And yet every week these things are read to you twice or even three times: and the reader when he goes up [to the desk] first says whose the book is, [the book] of such a prophet, and then says what he says, so that it shall be more intelligible to you and you may not only know

the contents of the Book, but also the reason of the writings, and who spoke these things. But all in vain; all to no purpose. For your zeal is spent on things of this life, and of things spiritual no account is made. Therefore not even those matters turn out according to your wishes, but there also are many difficulties. For Christ says, "*Seek the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.*" [Matthew 6:33] These things He said, shall also be given in the way of addition: but we have inverted the order and seek the earth and the good things which are in the earth, as if those other [heavenly] things were to be given us in addition. Therefore we have neither the one nor the other. Let us then at last wake up and become coveters of the things which shall be hereafter; for so these also will follow. For it is not possible that he who seeks the things that relate to God, should not also attain human [blessings]. It is the declaration of the Truth itself which says this. Let us not then act otherwise, but let us hold fast to the counsel of Christ, lest we fail of all. But God is able to give you compunction and to make you better, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 9 on Hebrews

Hebrews 6:1-3

" Therefore leaving the principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God; of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands; and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permit."

1. You have heard how much Paul found fault with the Hebrews for wishing to be always learning about the same things. And with good reason: *"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, you have need again that some one teach you the elements of the first principles of the oracles of God."* [Hebrews 5:12]

I am afraid that this might fitly be said to you also, that *"when for the time ye ought to be teachers,"* ye do not maintain the rank of learners, but ever hearing the same things, and on the same subjects, you are in the same condition as if you heard no one. And if any man should question you, no one will be able to answer, except a very few who may soon be counted.

But this is no trifling loss. For oftentimes when the teacher wishes to go on further, and to touch on higher and more mysterious themes, the want of attention in those who are to be taught prevents.

For just as in the case of a grammar-master, if a boy though hearing continually the first elements does not master them, it will be necessary for him to be continually dinning the same things into the boy, and he will not leave off teaching, until the boy has been able to learn them accurately; for it is great folly to lead him on to other things, without having put the first

well into him; so too in the Church, if while we constantly say the same things you learn nothing more, we shall never cease saying the same things.

For if our preaching were a matter of display and ambition, it would have been right to jump from one subject to another and change about continually, taking no thought for you, but only for your applauses. But since we have not devoted our zeal to this, but our labors are all for your profit, we shall not cease discoursing to you on the same subjects, till you succeed in learning them. For I might have said much about Gentile superstition, and about the Manichæans, and about the Marcionists, and by the grace of God have given them heavy blows, but this sort of discourse is out of season. For to those who do not yet know accurately their own affairs, to those who have not yet learned that to be covetous is evil, who would utter such discourses as those, and lead them on to other subjects before the time?

We then shall not cease to say the same things, whether ye be persuaded or not. We fear however, that by continually saying the same things, if you hearken not, we may make the condemnation heavier for the disobedient.

I must not however say this in regard to you all; for I know many who are benefited by their coming here, who might with justice cry out against those others, as insidiously injuring them by their ignorance and inattention. But not even so will they be injured. For hearing the same things continually is useful even to those who know them, since by often hearing what we know we are more deeply affected. We know, for instance, that Humility is an excellent thing, and that Christ often discoursed about it; but when we listen to the words themselves and the reflections made upon them, we are yet more affected, even if we hear them ten thousand times.

2. It is then a fitting time for us also to say now to you, *"Wherefore leaving the beginning of the doctrine of Christ, let us go unto perfection."*

What is *"the beginning of the doctrine"*? He goes on to state it himself, saying, *"not laying again"* (these are his words) *"the foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."*

But if this be *"the Beginning,"* what else is our doctrine save to repent *"from dead works,"* and through the Spirit to receive *"the faith,"* in *"the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment"*? But what is *"the Beginning"*? *"The Beginning,"* he says, is nothing else than this, when there is not a strict life. For as it is necessary to instruct one who is entering on the study of grammar, in the Elements first, so also must the Christian know these things accurately, and have no doubt concerning them. And should he again have need of teaching, he has not yet the foundation. For one who is firmly grounded ought to be fixed and to stand steady, and not be moved about. But if one who has been catechised and baptized is going ten years afterwards to hear again about the Faith, and that we ought to *"believe"* in *"the resurrection of the dead,"* he does not yet have the foundation, he is again seeking after the beginning of the Christian religion. For that the Faith is the foundation, and the rest the building, hear him [the Apostle] saying; *"I have laid the foundation and another builds thereupon."* [1 Corinthians 3:10] *"If any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble."* [1 Corinthians 3:12]

"Not laying again" (he says) *"the foundation of repentance from dead works."*

3. But what is, *"let us go on unto perfection"*? Let us henceforth proceed (he means) even to the very roof, that is, let us have the best life.

For as in the case of the letters the Alpha involves the whole, and as the foundation, the whole building, so also does full assurance concerning the Faith involve purity of life. And without this it is not possible to be a Christian, as without foundations there can be no building; nor skill in literature without the letters. Still if one should be always going round about the letters, or if about the foundation, not about the building, he will never gain anything.

Do not however think that the Faith is depreciated by being called elementary: for it is indeed the whole power: for when he says, "*For every one that uses milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe*" [Hebrews 5:13], it is not this which he calls "*milk*." But to be still doubting about these things is [a sign] of a mind feeble, and needing many discourses. For these are the wholesome doctrines. For we call him "*a perfect man*" [i.e. "*of full age*"] who with the faith has a right life; but if any one have faith, yet does evil, and is in doubt concerning [the faith] itself, and brings disgrace on the doctrine, him we shall with reason call "*a babe*," in that he has gone back again to the beginning. So that even if we have been ten thousand years in the faith, yet are not firm in it, we are babes; when we show a life not in conformity with it; when we are still laying a foundation.

4. But besides [their way of] life he brings another charge also against these [Hebrews], as being shaken to and fro, and needing "*to lay a foundation of repentance from dead works*." For he who changes from one to another, giving up this, and choosing that, ought first to condemn this, and to be separated from the system, and then to pass to the other. But if he intends again to lay hold on the first, how shall he touch the second?

What then of the Law (he says)? We have condemned it, and again we run back to it. This is not a shifting about, for here also [under the Gospel]

we have a law. *"Do we then"* (he says) *"make void the law through faith? God forbid, yea we establish the Law."* [Romans 3:31] I was speaking concerning evil deeds. For he that intends to pursue virtue ought to condemn wickedness first, and then go in pursuit of it. For repentance cannot prove them clean. For this cause they were straightway baptized, that what they were unable to accomplish by themselves, this might be effected by the grace of Christ. Neither then does repentance suffice for purification, but men must first receive baptism. At all events, it was necessary to come to baptism, having condemned the sins thereby and given sentence against them.

But what is *"the doctrine of baptisms"*? Not as if there were many baptisms, but one only. Why then did he express it in the plural? Because he had said, *"not laying again a foundation of repentance."* For if he again baptized them and catechised them afresh, and having been baptized at the beginning they were again taught what things ought to be done and what ought not, they would remain perpetually incorrigible.

"And of laying on of hands." For thus did they receive the Spirit, *"when Paul had laid his hands on them"* [Acts 19:6], it is said.

"And of the resurrection of the dead." For this is both effected in baptism, and is affirmed in the confession.

"And of eternal judgment." But why does he say this? Because it was likely that, having already believed, they would either be shaken [from their faith], or would lead evil and slothful lives, he says, *"be wakeful."*

It is not open to them to say, If we live slothfully we will be baptized again, we will be catechised again, we will again receive the Spirit; even if now we fall from the faith, we shall be able again by being baptized, to wash away our sins, and to attain to the same state as before. You are deceived (he says) in supposing these things.

Hebrews 6:4-5

5. *"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to an open shame."*

And see how putting them to shame, and forbiddingly he begins. *"Impossible."* No longer (he says) expect that which is not possible; (For he said not, It is not seemly, or, It is not expedient, or, It is not lawful, but *"impossible,"* so as to cast [them] into despair), if you have once been altogether enlightened.

Hebrews 6:6

Then he adds, *"and have tasted of the heavenly gift. If you have tasted"* (he says) *"of the heavenly gift,"* that is, of forgiveness. *"And been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God"* (he is speaking here of the doctrine) *"and the powers of the world to come"* (what powers is he speaking of? Either the working of miracles, or *"the earnest of the Spirit"* [2 Corinthians 1:22]) *"and have fallen away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame."* *"Renew them,"* he says, *"unto repentance,"* that is, by repentance, for unto repentance is by repentance. What then, is repentance excluded? Not repentance, far from it! But the renewing again by the laver. For he did not say, *"impossible"* to be renewed *"unto repentance,"* and stop, but added how *"impossible, [by] crucifying afresh."*

To *"be renewed,"* that is, to be made new, for to make men new is [the work] of the laver only: for (it is said) *"your youth shall be renewed as the eagle's."* [Psalm 103:5] But it is [the work of] repentance, when those who have been made new, have afterwards become old through sins, to set them free from this old age, and to make them strong. To bring them to that former brightness however, is not possible; for there the whole was Grace.

6. *"Crucifying to themselves,"* he says, *"the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to an open shame."* What he means is this. Baptism is a Cross, and *"our old man was crucified with [Him]"* [Romans 6:6], for we were *"made conformable to the likeness of His death"* [Romans 6:5; Philippians 3:10], and again, *"we were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death."* [Romans 6:4] Wherefore, as it is not possible that Christ should be

crucified a second time, for that is to *"put Him to an open shame."* For *"if death shall no more have dominion over Him"* [Romans 6:9], if He rose again, by His resurrection becoming superior to death; if by death He wrestled with and overcame death, and then is crucified again, all those things become a fable and a mockery. He then that baptizes a second time, crucifies Him again.

But what is *"crucifying afresh"*? [It is] crucifying over again. For as Christ died on the cross, so do we in baptism, not as to the flesh, but as to sin. Behold two deaths. He died as to the flesh; in our case the old man was buried, and the new man arose, made conformable to the likeness of His death. If therefore it is necessary to be baptized [again], it is necessary that this same [Christ] should die again. For baptism is nothing else than the putting to death of the baptized, and his rising again.

And he well said, *"crucifying afresh unto themselves."* For he that does this, as having forgotten the former grace, and ordering his own life carelessly, acts in all respects as if there were another baptism. It behooves us therefore to take heed and to make ourselves safe.

7. What is, *"having tasted of the heavenly gift"*? It is, *"of the remission of sins"*: for this is of God alone to bestow, and the grace is a grace once for all. *"What then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Far from it!"* [Romans 6:1-2] But if we should be always going to be saved by grace we shall never be good. For where there is but one grace, and we are yet so indolent, should we then cease sinning if we knew that it is possible again to have our sins washed away? For my part I think not.

He here shows that the gifts are many: and to explain it, You were counted worthy (he says) of so great forgiveness; for he that was sitting in darkness, he that was at enmity, he that was at open war, that was alienated, that was hated of God, that was lost, he having been suddenly enlightened,

counted worthy of the Spirit, of the heavenly gift, of adoption as a son, of the kingdom of heaven, of those other good things, the unspeakable mysteries; and who does not even thus become better, but while indeed worthy of perdition, obtained salvation and honor, as if he had successfully accomplished great things; how could he be again baptized?

On two grounds then he said that the thing was impossible, and he put the stronger last: first, because he who has been deemed worthy of such [blessings], and who has betrayed all that was granted to him, is not worthy to be again renewed; neither is it possible that [Christ] should again be crucified afresh: for this is to *"put Him to an open shame."*

There is not then any second laver: there is not [indeed]. And if there is, there is also a third, and a fourth; for the former one is continually disannulled by the later, and this continually by another, and so on without end.

"And tasted," he says, *"the good word of God";* and he does not unfold it; *"and the powers of the world to come,"* for to live as Angels and to have no need of earthly things, to know that this is the means of our introduction to the enjoyment of the worlds to come; this may we learn through the Spirit, and enter into those sacred recesses.

What are *"the powers of the world to come"*? Life eternal, angelic conversation. Of these we have already received the earnest through our Faith from the Spirit. Tell me then, if after having been introduced into a palace, and entrusted with all things therein, you had then betrayed all, would you have been entrusted with them again?

8. What then (you say)? Is there no repentance? There is repentance, but there is no second baptism: but repentance there is, and it has great force, and is able to set free from the burden of his sins, if he will, even him that has been baptized much in sins, and to establish in safety him who is in

danger, even though he should have come unto the very depth of wickedness. And this is evident from many places. *"For,"* says one, *"does not he that falls rise again? Or he that turns away, does not he turn back to [God]?"* [Jeremiah 8:4] It is possible, if we will, that Christ should be formed in us again: for hear Paul saying, *"My little children of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you."* [Galatians 4:19] Only let us lay hold on repentance.

For behold the love of God to man! We ought on every ground to have been punished at the first; in that having received the natural law, and enjoyed innumerable blessings, we have not acknowledged our Master, and have lived an unclean life. Yet He not only has not punished us, but has even made us partakers of countless blessings, just as if we had accomplished great things. Again we fell away, and not even so does He punish us, but has given medicine of repentance, which is sufficient to put away and blot out all our sins; only if we knew the nature of the medicine, and how we ought to apply it.

What then is the medicine of Repentance and how is it made up? First, of the condemnation of our own sins; *"For"* (it is said) *"mine iniquity have I not hid"* [Psalm 32:5]; and again, *"I will confess against myself my lawlessness unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart."* And *"Declare thou at the first your sins, that you may be justified."* [Isaiah 43:26] And, *"The righteous man is an accuser of himself at the first speaking."* [Proverbs 18:17]

Secondly, of great humbleness of mind: For it is like a golden chain; if one have hold of the beginning, all will follow. Because if you confess your sin as one ought to confess, the soul is humbled. For conscience turning it on itself causes it to be subdued.

Other things too must be added to humbleness of mind if it be such as the blessed David knew, when he said, *"A broken and a contrite heart God will not despise."* [Psalm 51:17] For that which is broken does not rise up, does not strike, but is ready to be ill-treated and itself rises not up. Such is contrition of heart: though it be insulted, though it be evil entreated, it is quiet, and is not eager for vengeance.

And after humbleness of mind, there is need of intense prayers, of many tears, tears by day, and tears by night: for, he says, *"every night, will I wash my bed, I will water my couch with my tears. I am weary with my groaning."* [Psalm 6:6] And again, *"For I have eaten ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping."* [Psalm 102:9]

And after prayer thus intense, there is need of much almsgiving: for this it is which especially gives strength to the medicine of repentance. And as there is a medicine among the physicians' helps which receives many herbs, but one is the essential, so also in case of repentance this is the essential herb, yea, it may be everything. For hear what the Divine Scripture says, *"Give alms, and all things shall be clean."* [Luke 11:41] And again, *"By almsgiving and acts of faithfulness sins are purged away."* [Proverbs 16:6] And, *"Water will quench a flaming fire, and alms will do away with great sins."* [Sirach 3:30]

Next not being angry with any one, not bearing malice; the forgiving all their trespasses. For, it is said, *"Man retains wrath against man, and yet seeks healing from the Lord."* [Sirach 28:3] *"Forgive that you may be forgiven."* [Mark 11:25]

Also, the converting our brethren from their wandering. For, it is said, *"Go, and convert your brethren, that your sins may be forgiven you."* And from one's being in close relations with the priests, *"and if,"* it is said, *"a man has committed sins it shall be forgiven him."* [James 5:15] To stand

forward in defense of those who are wronged. Not to retain anger: to bear all things meekly.

9. Now then, before you learned that it is possible to have our sins washed away by means of repentance, were ye not in an agony, because there is no second laver, and were ye not in despair of yourselves? But now that we have learned by what means repentance and remission is brought to a successful issue, and that we shall be able entirely to escape, if we be willing to use it aright, what forgiveness can we possibly obtain, if we do not even enter on the thought of our sins? Since if this were done, all would be accomplished.

For as he who enters the door, is within; so he who reckons up his own evils will also certainly come to get them cured. But should he say, I am a sinner, without reckoning them up specifically, and saying, This and this sin have I committed, he will never leave off, confessing indeed continually, but never caring in earnest for amendment. For should he have laid down a beginning, all the rest will unquestionably follow too, if only in one point he have shown a beginning: for in every case the beginning and the preliminaries are difficult. This then let us lay as a foundation, and all will be smooth and easy.

Let us begin therefore, I entreat you, one with making his prayers intense: another with continual weeping: another with downcast countenance. For not even is this, which is so small, unprofitable: for "*I saw*" (it is said) "*that he was grieved and went downcast, and I healed his ways.*" [Isaiah 57:17-18]

But let us all humble our own souls by almsgiving and forgiving our neighbors their trespasses, by not remembering injuries, nor avenging ourselves. If we continually reflect on our sins, no external circumstances can make us elated: neither riches, nor power, nor authority, nor honor; nay,

even should we sit in the imperial chariot itself, we shall sigh bitterly: Since even the blessed David was a King, and yet he said, "*Every night I will wash my bed,*" [&c.] [Psalm 6:6]: and he was not at all hurt by the purple robe and the diadem: he was not puffed up; for he knew himself to be a man, and inasmuch as his heart had been made contrite, he went mourning.

10. For what are all things human? Ashes and dust, and as it were spray before the wind; a smoke and a shadow, and a leaf driven here and there; and a flower; a dream, and a tale, and a fable, wind and air vainly puffed out and wasting away; a feather that has no stay, a stream flowing by, or if there be anything of more nothingness than these.

For, tell me, what do you esteem great? What dignity do you think to be great? Is it that of the Consul? For the many think no greater dignity than that. He who is not Consul is not a whit inferior to him who is in so great splendor, who is so greatly admired. Both one and the other are of the same dignity; both of them alike, after a little while, are no more.

When was he made [Consul]? For how long a time? Tell me: for two days? Nay, this takes place even in dreams. But that is [only] a dream, you say. And what is this? For (tell me) what is by day, is it [therefore] not a dream? Why do we not rather call these things a dream? For as dreams when the day comes on are proved to be nothing: so these things also, when the night comes on, are proved to be nothing. For night and day have received each an equal portion of time, and have equally divided all duration. Therefore as in the day a person rejoices not in what happened at night, so neither in the night is it possible for him to reap the fruit of what is done in the day. You have been made Consul? So was I in the night; only I in the night, thou in the day. And what of this? Not even so have you any advantage over me, except haply its being said, Such an one is Consul, and the pleasure that springs from the words, gives him the advantage.

I mean something of this kind, for I will express it more plainly: if I say "*Such an one is Consul,*" and bestow on him the name, is it not gone as soon as it is spoken? So also are the things themselves; no sooner does the Consul appear, than he is no more. But let us suppose [that he is Consul] for a year, or two years, or three or four years. Where are they who were ten times Consul? Nowhere.

But Paul is not so. For he was, and also is living continually: he did not live one day, nor two, nor ten, and twenty, nor thirty; nor ten and twenty, nor yet thirty years— and die. Even the four hundredth year is now past, and still even yet is he illustrious, yea much more illustrious than when he was alive. And these things indeed [are] on earth; but the glory of the saints in heaven what word could set forth?

Wherefore I entreat you, let us seek this glory; let us pursue after it, that we may attain it. For this is the true glory. Let us henceforth stand aloof from the things of this life, that we may find grace and mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord: with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor and worship, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 10 on Hebrews

Hebrews 6:7-8

"For the Earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God. But if it bear thorns and briars it is rejected, and near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."

1. Let us hear the oracles of God with fear, with fear and much trembling. For (it is said) *"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling."* [Psalm 2:11] But if even our joy and our exultation ought to be *"with trembling,"* of what punishment are we not worthy, if we listen not with terror to what is said, when the things spoken, as now, are themselves fearful?

For having said that *"it is impossible for those who have fallen away"* to be baptized a second time, and to receive remission through the laver, and having pointed out the awfulness of the case, he goes on: *"for the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God. But if it bear thorns and thistles, it is rejected, and near unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."*

Let us then fear, beloved! This threat is not Paul's, these words are not of man: they are of the Holy Ghost, of Christ that speaks in him. Is there then any one that is clear from these thorns? And even if we were clear, not even so ought we to be confident, but to fear and tremble lest at any time thorns should spring up in us. But when we are *"thorns and thistles"* through and through, whence (tell me) are we confident? And are becoming

supine? What is it which makes us inert? If *"he that thinks he stands"* ought to fear *"lest he fall"*; for (he says) *"Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall"* [1 Corinthians 10:12]; he that falls, how anxious ought he to be that he may rise up again! If Paul fears, *"lest that by any means, when he had preached to others, he himself should be a castaway"* [1 Corinthians 9:27]; and he who had been so approved is afraid lest he should become disapproved: what pardon shall we have who are already disapproved, if we have no fear, but fulfill our Christianity as a custom, and for form's sake. Let us then fear, beloved: *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven."* [Romans 1:18] Let us fear, for it *"is revealed"* not *"against impiety"* only, but *"against all unrighteousness."* What is *"against all unrighteousness"*? [Against all] both small and great.

2. In this passage he intimates the lovingkindness of God towards man: and the teaching [of the Gospel] he calls *"rain"*: and what he said above, *"when for the time ye ought to be teachers"* [Hebrews 5:12], this he says here also. Indeed in many places the Scripture calls the teaching *"rain."* For (it says) *"I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it"* [Isaiah 5:6], speaking of *"the vineyard."* The same which in another place it calls *"a famine of bread, and a thirst of water."* [Amos 8:11] And again, *"The river of God is full of waters."* [Psalm 65:9]

"For land," he says, *"which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it."* Here he shows that they received and drank in the word, yea and often enjoyed this, and yet even so they were not profited. For if (he means) you had not been tilled, if you had enjoyed no rains, the evil would not have been so great. For (it is said) *"If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin."* [John 15:22] But if you have often drunk and received [nourishment], wherefore have you brought forth other things instead of

fruits? For (it is said) *"I waited that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth thorns."* [Isaiah 5:2]

You see that everywhere the Scripture calls sins *"thorns."* For David also says, *"I was turned into mourning when a thorn was fixed in me."* [Psalm 32:4, so Septuagint] For it does not simply come on us, but is fixed in; and even if but a little of it remain in, even if we take it not out entirely, that little of itself in like manner causes pain, as in the case of a thorn. And why do I say, 'that little of itself'? Even after it has been taken out, it leaves therein for a long time the pain of the wound. And much care and treatment is necessary, that we may be perfectly freed from it. For it is not enough merely to take away the sin, it is necessary also to heal the wounded place.

But I fear however lest the things said apply to us more than to others. *"For,"* he says, *"the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it."* We are ever drinking, ever hearing, but *"when the sun is risen"* [Matthew 13:6] we straightway lose our moisture, and therefore bring forth thorns. What then are the thorns? Let us hear Christ saying, that *"the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."* [Matthew 13:22]

3. *"For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it,"* he says, *"and brings forth meet herbs."* Because nothing is so meet as purity of life, nothing so suitable as the best life, nothing so meet as virtue.

"And brings forth" (says he) *"herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God."* Here he says that God is the cause of all things, giving the heathen a blow, who ascribed the production of fruits to the power of the earth. For (he says) it is not the hands of the husbandman which stir up the earth to bear fruits, but the command from God. Therefore he says, *"receives blessing from God."*

And see how in speaking of the thorns, he said not, "*bringing forth thorns*," nor did he use this word expressive of what is useful; but what? "*Bearing*" [literally "*putting out*"] "*thorns*," as if one should say, "*forcing out*," "*throwing out*."

"*Rejected*" (he says) "*and near unto cursing*." Oh! How great consolation in this word! For he said "*near unto cursing*," not "*a curse*." Now he that has not yet fallen into a curse, but has come to be near [thereto], may also come to be far off [therefrom].

And not by this only did he encourage them, but also by what follows. For he did not say "*rejected and near unto cursing*," "*which shall be burned*," but what? "*Whose end is to be burned*," if he continue [such] (he means) unto the end. So that, if we cut out and burn the thorns, we shall be able to enjoy those good things innumerable and to become approved, and to partake of blessing.

And with good reason did he call sin "*a thistle*," saying "*that which bears thorns and thistles*"; for on whatever side you lay hold on it, it wounds and stings, and it is unpleasant even to look at.

4. Having therefore sufficiently rebuked them, and alarmed and wounded them, he in turn heals them, so as not to cast them down too much, and make them supine. For he that strikes one that is "*dull*," makes him more dull. So then he neither flatters them throughout, lest he should make them supine, nor does he wound them throughout, but having inserted a little to wound them, he applies much to heal in what follows.

For what does he say? We speak not these things, as having condemned you, nor as thinking you to be full of thorns, but fearing lest this should come to pass. For it is better to terrify you by words, that you may not suffer by the realities. And this is specially of Paul's wisdom.

Hebrews 6:9

Moreover he did not say, We think, or, we conjecture, or, we expect, or, we hope, but what? [Hebrews 6:9] *"But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."* Which word he also used in writing to the Galatians: *"But I am persuaded of you in the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded."* [Galatians 5:10] For in that instance, inasmuch as they were greatly to be condemned, and he could not praise them from things present, he does it from things future (*"that you will be none otherwise minded,"* he says): he said not, you are, but *"ye will be none otherwise minded."* But here he encourages them from things present. *"We are persuaded better things of you, beloved, and things that accompany to salvation, though we thus speak."* And since he was not able to say so much from things present, he confirms his consolation from things past; and says,

Hebrews 6:10

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and the love, which you have showed toward His name, in that you have ministered unto the saints and do minister." O how did he here restore their spirit, and give them fresh strength, by reminding them of former things, and bringing them to the necessity of not supposing that God had forgotten. (For he cannot but sin who is not fully assured concerning his hope, and says that God is unrighteous. Accordingly he obliged them by all means to look forward to those future things. For one who despairs of present things, and has given up exerting himself, may be restored by [the prospect of] things future.) As he himself also said in writing to the Galatians, *"You did run well"* [Galatians 5:7]: and again, *"Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain."* [Galatians 3:4]

And as in this place he puts the praise with the reproof, saying, *"When for the time ye ought to be teachers"* [Hebrews 5:12], so also there, *"I marvel that you are so soon removed."* [Galatians 1:6] With the reproof is the praise. For respecting great things we marvel, when they fail. You see that praise is concealed under the accusation and the blame. Nor does he say this concerning himself only, but also concerning all. For he said not, I am persuaded, but *"we are persuaded better things of you,"* even good things (he means). He says this either in regard to matters of conduct, or to the recompense. In the next place, having said above, that it is *"rejected and near unto a curse,"* and that it *"shall be for burning,"* he says, we do not by any means speak this of you. *"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and love."* [Hebrews 6:10]

Hebrews 6:11-12

5. Why then did we say these things? *"But we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that you be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

"We desire," he says, and we do not therefore merely labor for, or even so far as words go, wish this. But what? *"We desire"* that you should hold fast to virtue, not as condemning your former conduct (he means), but fearing for the future. And he did not say, 'not as condemning your former conduct, but your present; for you have fainted, you have become too indolent'; but see how gently he indicated it, and did not wound them.

For what does he say? *"But we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence unto the end."* For this is the admirable part of Paul's wisdom, that he does not expressly show that they *"had"* given in, that they *"had"* become negligent. For when he says, *"We desire that every one of you"*— it is as if one should say, I wish you to be always in earnest; and such as you were before, such to be now also, and for the time to come. For this made his reproof more gentle and easy to be received.

And he did not say, *"I will,"* which would have been expressive of the authority of a teacher, but what is expressive of the affection of a father, and what is more than *"willing," "we desire."* All but saying, Pardon us, even if we say what is distasteful.

"We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of your hope unto the end." Hope (he means) carries us through: it recovers us again. Be not wearied out, do not despair, lest your hope be in

vain. For he that works good hopes also good, and never despairs of himself.

"That ye may not become dull." Still *"become"*; and yet he said above, *"seeing you have become dull of hearing."* [Hebrews 5:11] Observe however how he limited the dullness to the hearing. And here he hints the very same thing; instead of 'that you may not continue in it,' he says [this]. But again he leads on to that future time for which they were not yet responsible; saying in effect *"that you may not become too slothful"*: since for that which is not yet come we could not be responsible. For he who in regard to the present time is exhorted to be in earnest, as being remiss, will perhaps become even more slothful, but he who is exhorted with reference to the future, not so.

"We desire" (he says) *"that every one of you."* Great is his affection for them: he cares equally for great and small; moreover he knows all, and overlooks no one, but shows the same tender care for each, and equal value for all: from which cause also he the rather persuaded them to receive what was distasteful in his words.

"That ye be not slothful," he says. For as inactivity hurts the body, so also inactivity as to what is good renders the soul more supine and feeble.

6. *"But followers"* (he says) *"of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises."* And who they are, he tells afterwards. He said before, *"Imitate your own former well-doings."* Then, lest they should say, What? He leads them back to the Patriarch: bringing before them examples of well-doing indeed from their own history, but of the thought of being forsaken, from the Patriarch; that they might not suppose that they were disregarded and forsaken as worthy of no account, but might know that it is [the portion] of the very noblest men to make the journey of life through trials; and that God has thus dealt with great and admirable men.

Now we ought (he says) to bear all things with patience: for this also is believing: whereas if He say that He gives and thou immediately receive, how have you also believed? Since in that case this is no longer of your faith, but of Me, the Giver. But if I say that I give, and give after an hundred years, and you have not despaired; then have you accounted Me worthy to be believed, then you have the right opinion concerning Me. You see that oftentimes unbelief arises not from want of hope only, but also from faintheartedness, and want of patience, not from condemning him who made the promise.

"For God" (he says) "is not unrighteous to forget your love" and the zeal "which you have showed toward His Name, in that you have ministered unto the saints, and do minister." He testifies great things of them, not deeds only; but deeds done with alacrity, which he says also in another place, *"and not only so, but they gave themselves also to the Lord and to us."* [2 Corinthians 8:5]

"Which" (he says) "you have showed toward His Name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." See how again he soothes them, by adding *"and do minister."* Still even at this time (he says) you are ministering, and he raises them up by showing that they had done [what they did] not to them [the saints], but to God. *"Which you have showed"* (he says); and he said not *"unto the saints,"* but *"towards God,"* for this is *"toward His Name."* It is for His Name's sake (he means) that you have done all. He therefore who has the enjoyment from you of so great zeal and love, will never despise you nor forget you.

7. Hearing these things, let us, I beseech you, *"minister to the saints."* For every believer is a saint in that he is a believer. Though he be a person living in the world, he is a saint. *"For" (he says) "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband."* [1

Corinthians 7:14] See how the faith makes the saintship. If then we see even a secular person in misfortune, let us stretch out a hand [to him]. Let us not be zealous for those only who dwell in the mountains; they are indeed saints both in manner of life and in faith; these others however are saints by their faith, and many of them also in manner of life. Let us not, if we see a monk [cast] into prison, in that case go in; but if it be a secular person, refuse to go in. He also is a saint and a brother.

What then (you say) if he be unclean and polluted? Listen to Christ saying, "*Judge not that you be not judged.*" [Matthew 7:1] Do thou act for God's sake. Nay, what am I saying? Even if we see a heathen in misfortune, we ought to show kindness to him, and to every man without exception who is in misfortunes, and much more to a believer who is in the world. Listen to Paul, saying, "*Do good unto all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.*" [Galatians 6:10]

But I know not whence this [notion] has been introduced, or whence this custom has prevailed. For he that only seeks after the solitaires, and is willing to do good to them alone, and with regard to others on the contrary is over-curious in his enquiries, and says, 'unless he be worthy, unless he be righteous, unless he work miracles, I stretch out no hand'; [such an one] has taken away the greater part of charity, yea and in time he will in turn destroy the very thing itself. And yet that is charity, [which is shown] towards sinners, towards the guilty. For this is charity, not the pitying those who have done well, but those who have done wrong.

8. And that you may understand this, listen to the Parable: "*A certain man*" (it is said) "*went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves*" [Luke 10:30, etc.]; and when they had beaten him, they left him by the way-side, having badly bruised him. A certain Levite came, and when he saw him, he passed by; A priest came, and when he saw him, he

hastened past; a certain Samaritan came, and bestowed great care upon him. For he *"bound up his wounds"* [Luke 10:34], dropped oil on them, set him upon his ass, *"brought him to the inn, said to the host, Take care of him"* [Luke 10:35]; and (observe his great liberality), *"and I,"* he says, *"will give you whatsoever you shall expend."* Who then is his neighbor? *"He,"* it is said, *"that showed mercy on him. Go then also,"* He says, *"and do likewise."* [Luke 10:37] And see what a parable He spoke. He said not that a Jew did [so and so] to a Samaritan, but that a Samaritan showed all that liberality. Having then heard these things, let us not care only for *"those that are of the household of faith"* [Galatians 6:10], and neglect others. So then also thou, if you see any one in affliction, be not curious to enquire further. His being in affliction involves a just claim on your aid. For if when you see an ass choking you raise him up, and dost not curiously enquire whose he is, much more about a man one ought not to be over-curious in enquiring whose he is. He is God's, be he heathen or be he Jew; since even if he is an unbeliever, still he needs help. For if indeed it had been committed to you to enquire and to judge, you would have well said thus, but, as it is, his misfortune does not suffer you to search out these things. For if even about men in good health it is not right to be over-curious, nor to be a busybody in other men's matters, much less about those that are in affliction.

9. But on another view what [shall we say]? Did you see him in prosperity, in high esteem, that you should say that he is wicked and worthless? But if you see him in affliction, do not say that he is wicked. For when a man is in high credit, we fairly say these things; but when he is in calamity, and needs help, it is not right to say that he is wicked. For this is cruelty, inhumanity, and arrogance. Tell me what was ever more iniquitous than the Jews. But nevertheless while God punished them, and that justly, yea, very justly, yet He approved of those who had compassion on them,

and those who rejoiced over them He punished. [Amos 6:6] For *"they were not grieved,"* it is said, *"at the affliction of Joseph."*

And again it is said *"Redeem [Ransom] those who are ready to be slain: spare not."* [Proverbs 24:11] (He said not, enquire curiously, and learn who he is; and yet, for the most part, they who are led away to execution are wicked,) for this especially is charity. For he that does good to a friend, does it not altogether for God's sake: but he that [does good] to one unknown, this man acts purely for God's sake. *"Do not spare"* your money, even if it be necessary to spend all, yet give.

But we, when we see persons in extreme distress, bewailing themselves, suffering things more grievous than ten thousand deaths, and oftentimes unjustly, we [I say] are sparing of our money, and unsparing of our brethren; we are careful of lifeless things, but neglect the living soul. And yet Paul says, *"in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if perhaps God should give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him, at His will."* [2 Timothy 2:25-26] *"If perhaps,"* he says; you see of how great long-suffering the word is full.

Let us also imitate Him, and despair of no one. For the fishermen too, when they have cast many times [suppose it], have not succeeded; but afterwards having cast again, have gained all. So we also expect that you will all at once show to us ripe fruit. For the husbandman too, after he has sown, waits one day or two days, and is a long while in expectation: and all at once he sees the fruits springing up on every side. This we expect will take place in your case also by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and also to the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 11 on Hebrews

Hebrews 6:13-16

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife."

1. Having boldly reflected on the faults of the Hebrews, and sufficiently alarmed them, he consoles them, first, by praises, and secondly (which also is the stronger ground), by the [thought] that they would certainly attain the object of their hope. Moreover he draws his consolation, not from things future, but again from the past, which indeed would the rather persuade them. For as in the case of punishment, he alarms them rather by those [viz. things future], so also in the case of the prizes [set before them], he encourages them by these [viz. by things past], showing [herein] God's way of dealing. And that is, not to bring in what has been promised immediately, but after a long time. And this He does, both to present the greatest proof of His power, and also to lead us to Faith, that they who are living in tribulation without having received the promises, or the rewards, may not faint under their troubles.

And omitting all [the rest], though he had many whom he might have mentioned, he brought forward Abraham both on account of the dignity of his person, and because this had occurred in a special way in his case.

And yet at the end of the Epistle he says, that *"all these, having seen the promises afar off, and having embraced them, received them not, that*

they without us should not be made perfect." [Hebrews 11:13] *"For when God made promise to Abraham"* (he says) *"because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."* [c. xi. 39, 40] How then does he say at the end [of the Epistle] that *"he received not the promises,"* and here, that *"after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise"*? How did he not receive? How did he obtain? He is not speaking of the same things in this place and in the other, but makes the consolation twofold. God made promises to Abraham, and after a long space of time He gave the things [spoken of] in this place, but those others not yet.

"And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Do you see that the promise alone did not effect the whole, but the patient waiting as well? Here he alarms them, showing that oftentimes a promise is thwarted through faintheartedness. And this he had indeed shown through [the instance of] the [Jewish] people: for since they were faint-hearted, therefore they obtained not the promise. But now he shows the contrary by means of Abraham. Afterwards near the end [of the Epistle] he proves something more also: [viz.] that even though they had patiently endured, they did not obtain; and yet not even so are they grieved.

2. *"For men verily swear by the greater, and an Oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. But God because He could swear by no greater, swore by Himself."* Well, who then is He that swore unto Abraham? Is it not the Son? No, one says. Certainly indeed it was He: however, I shall not dispute [thereon]. So when He [the Son] swears the same oath, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you,"* is it not plain that it was because He could not swear by any greater? For as the Father swore, so also the Son swears by Himself, saying, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you."* He here reminds them also of the

oaths of Christ, which He was constantly uttering. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me shall never die."* [John 11:26]

What is, *"And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife"*? It is instead of, *"by this every doubtful question is solved"*: not this, or this, but every one.

Hebrews 6:17

God, however, ought to have been believed even without an oath:
[Hebrews 6:17] "*wherein*" (he says) God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it [lit. "*mediated*"] by an oath. In these words he comprehends also the believers, and therefore mentions this "*promise*" which was made to us in common [with them]. "*He mediated*" (he says) "*by an oath.*" Here again he says that the Son was mediator between men and God.

Hebrews 6:18

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible that God should lie." What are these two? The speaking and promising; and the adding an oath to the promise. For since among men that which is [confirmed] by an oath is thought more worthy of credit, on this account He added that also.

Do you see that He regards not His own dignity, but how He may persuade men, and endures to have unworthy things said concerning Himself. That is He wishes to impart full assurance. And in the case of Abraham indeed [the Apostle] shows that the whole was of God, not of his patient endurance, since He was even willing to add an oath, for He by whom men swear, by Him also God *"swore,"* that is *"by Himself."* They indeed as by one greater, but He not as by one greater. And yet He did it. For it is not the same thing for man to swear by himself, as for God. For man has no power over himself. You see then that this is said not more for Abraham than for ourselves: *"that we"* (he says) *"might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us."* Here too again, *"after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise."*

"Now" he means, and he did not say *"when He swore."* But what the oath is, he showed, by speaking of swearing by a greater. But since the race of men is hard of belief, He condescends to the same [things] with ourselves. As then for our sake He swears, although it be unworthy of Him that He should not be believed, so also did [the Apostle] make that other statement: *"He learned from the things which He suffered"* [Hebrews 5:8], because men think the going through experience more worthy of reliance.

What is "*the hope set before us*"? From these [past events] (he says) we conjecture the future. For if these came to pass after so long a time, so certainly the others will. So that the things which happened in regard to Abraham give us confidence also concerning the things to come.

Hebrews 6:19-20

3. *"Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."* He shows, that while we are still in the world, and not yet departed from [this] life, we are already among the promises. For through hope we are already in heaven. He said, *"Wait; for it shall surely be."* Afterwards giving them full assurance, he says, *"nay rather by hope."* And he said not, *"We are within,"* but 'It has entered within,' which was more true and more persuasive. For as the anchor, dropped from the vessel, does not allow it to be carried about, even if ten thousand winds agitate it, but being depended upon makes it steady, so also does hope.

And see how very suitable an image he has discovered: For he said not, Foundation; which was not suitable; but, *"Anchor."* For that which is on the tossing sea, and seems not to be very firmly fixed, stands on the water as upon land, and is shaken and yet is not shaken. For in regard to those who are very firm, and philosophic, Christ with good reason made that statement, saying, *"Whosoever has built his house on a rock."* [Matthew 7:24] But in respect of those who are giving way, and who ought to be carried through by hope, Paul has suitably set down this. For the surge and the great storm toss the boat; but hope suffers it not to be carried hither and there, although winds innumerable agitate it: so that, unless we had this [hope] we should long ago have been sunk. Nor is it only in things spiritual, but also in the affairs of this life, that one may find the power of hope great. Whatever it may be, in merchandise, in husbandry, in a military expedition, unless one sets this before him, he would not even touch the work. But he

said not simply "*Anchor*," but "*sure and steadfast*" [i.e.] not shaken. "*Which enters into that within the veil*"; instead of 'which reaches through even to heaven.'

4. Then after this he led on to Faith also, that there might not only be hope, but a very true [hope]. For after the oath he lays down another thing too, even proof by facts, because "*the forerunner is for us entered in, even Jesus* ." But a forerunner is a forerunner of some one, as John was of Christ.

Now he did not simply say, "*He is entered in*," but "*where He is entered in a forerunner for us*," as though we also ought to attain. For there is no great interval between the forerunner and those who follow: otherwise he would not be a forerunner; for the forerunner and those who follow ought to be in the same road, and to arrive after [each other].

"*Being made an High Priest forever after the order*," he says, "*of Melchisedec*." Here is also another consolation, if our High Priest is on high, and far better than those among the Jews, not in the kind [of Priesthood] only, but also in the place, and the tabernacle, and the covenant, and the person. And this also is spoken according to the flesh.

5. Those then, whose High Priest He is, ought to be greatly superior. And as great as the difference is between Aaron and Christ, so great should it be between us and the Jews. For see, we have our victim on high, our priest on high, our sacrifice on high: let us bring such sacrifices as can be offered on that altar, no longer sheep and oxen, no longer blood and fat. All these things have been done away; and there has been brought in their stead "*the reasonable service*." [Romans 12:1] But what is "*the reasonable service*"? The [offerings made] through the soul; those made through the spirit. ("*God*," it is said, "*is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*" [John 4:24]); things which have no need of a body, no need of instruments, nor of special places, whereof each one is

himself the Priest, such as, moderation, temperance, mercifulness, enduring ill-treatment, long-suffering, humbleness of mind.

These sacrifices one may see in the Old [Testament] also, shadowed out beforehand. *"Offer to God,"* it is said, *"a sacrifice of righteousness"* [Psalm 4:5]; *"Offer a sacrifice of praise"* [Psalm 50:14]; and, *"a sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me"* [Psalm 50:23], and, *"the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit"* [Psalm 51:17]; and *"what does the Lord require of you but"* to hearken to Him? [Micah 6:8] *"Burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure in: then I said, Lo I come to do Your will, O God!"* [Psalm 40:6-7], and again, *"To what purpose do ye bring the incense from Sheba?"* [Jeremiah 6:20] *"Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your viols."* [Amos 5:23] But instead of these *"I will have mercy and not sacrifice."* [Hosea 6:6] You see with what kind of *"sacrifices God is well pleased."* [Hebrews 13:16] You see also that already from the first the one class have given place, and these have come in their stead.

These therefore let us bring, for the other indeed are [the offerings] of wealth and of persons who have [possessions], but these of virtue: those from without, these from within: those any chance person even might perform; these only a few. And as much as a man is superior to a sheep, so much is this sacrifice superior to that; for here you offer your soul as a victim.

6. And other sacrifices also there are, which are indeed whole burnt-offerings, the bodies of the martyrs: there both soul and body [are offered]. These have a great savor of a sweet smell. Thou also art able, if you will, to bring such a sacrifice.

For what, if you dost not burn your body in the fire? Yet in a different fire you can, for instance, in that of voluntary poverty, in that of affliction.

For to have it in one's power to spend one's days in luxury and expense, and yet to take up a life of toil and bitterness, and to mortify the body, is not this a whole burnt-offering? Mortify your body, and crucify it, and you shall yourself also receive the crown of this martyrdom. For what in the other case the sword accomplishes, that in this case let a willing mind effect. Let not the love of wealth burn, or possess you, but let this unreasonable appetite itself be consumed and quenched by the fire of the Spirit; let it be cut in pieces by the sword of the Spirit.

This is an excellent sacrifice, needing no priest but him who brings it. This is an excellent sacrifice, performed indeed below but immediately taken up on high. Do we not wonder that of old time fire came down and consumed all? It is possible now also that fire may come down far more wonderful than that, and consume all the presented offerings: nay rather, not consume, but bear them up to heaven. For it does not reduce them to ashes, but offers them as gifts to God.

7. Such were the offerings of Cornelius. For (it is said) *"your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God."* [Acts 10:4] You see a most excellent union. Then are we heard, when we ourselves also hear the poor who come to us. *"He"* (it is said) *"that stops his ears that he may not hear the poor"* [Proverbs 21:13], his prayer God will not hearken to. *"Blessed is he that considers the poor and needy: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day."* [Psalm 40:1] But what day is evil except that one which is evil to sinners?

What is meant by *"he that considers"*? He that understands what it is to be a poor man, that has thoroughly learned his affliction. For he that has learned his affliction, will certainly and immediately have compassion on him. When you see a poor man, do not hurry by, but immediately reflect what you would have been, had you been he. What would you not have

wished that all should do for you? "*He that considers*" (he says). Reflect that he is a free-man like yourself, and shares the same noble birth with you, and possesses all things in common with you; and yet oftentimes he is not on a level even with your dogs. On the contrary, while they are satiated, he oftentimes lies, sleeps, hungry, and the free-man has become less honorable than your slaves.

But they perform needful services for you. What are these? Do they serve you well? Suppose then I show that this [poor man] too performs needful services for you far greater than they do. For he will stand by you in the Day of judgment, and will deliver you from the fire. What do all your slaves do like this? When Tabitha died, who raised her up? The slaves who stood around or the poor? But you are not even willing to put the free-man on an equality with your slaves. The frost is hard, and the poor man is cast out in rags, nearly dead, with his teeth chattering, both by his looks and his air fitted to move you: and thou passes by, warm and full of drink; and how do you expect that God should deliver you when in misfortune?

And oftentimes you say this too: 'If it had been myself, and I had found one that had done many wrong things, I would have forgiven him; and does not God forgive?' Say not this. Him that has done you no wrong, whom you are able to deliver, him you neglect. How shall He forgive you, who art sinning against Him? Is not this deserving of hell?

And how amazing! Oftentimes you adorn with vestments innumerable, of varied colors and wrought with gold, a dead body, insensible, no longer perceiving the honor; while that which is in pain, and lamenting, and tormented, and racked by hunger and frost, you neglect, and givest more to vainglory, than to the fear of God.

8. And would that it stopped here; but immediately accusations are brought against the applicant. For why does he not work (you say)? And

why is he to be maintained in idleness? But (tell me) is it by working that you have what you have, did you not receive it as an inheritance from your fathers? And even if you do work, is this a reason why you should reproach another? Do you not hear what Paul says? For after saying, *"He that works not, neither let him eat"* [2 Thessalonians 3:10], he says, *"But ye be not weary in well doing."* [2 Thessalonians 3:13]

But what say they? He is an impostor. What do you say, O man? Callest thou him an impostor, for the sake of a single loaf or of a garment? But (you say) he will sell it immediately. And do you manage all your affairs well? But what? Are all poor through idleness? Is no one so from shipwreck? None from lawsuits? None from being robbed? None from dangers? None from illness? None from any other difficulties? If however we hear any one bewailing such evils, and crying out aloud, and looking up naked toward heaven, and with long hair, and clad in rags, at once we call him, The impostor! The deceiver! The swindler! Are you not ashamed? Whom do you call impostor? Give nothing, and do not accuse the man.

But (you say) he has means, and pretends. This is a charge against yourself, not against him. He knows that he has to deal with the cruel, with wild beasts rather than with men, and that, even if he utter a pitiable story, he attracts no one's attention: and on this account he is forced to assume also a more miserable guise, that he may melt your soul. If we see a person coming to beg in a respectable dress, This is an impostor (you say), and he comes in this way that he may be supposed to be of good birth. If we see one in the contrary guise, him too we reproach. What then are they to do? O the cruelty, O the inhumanity!

And why (you say) do they expose their maimed limbs? Because of you. If we were compassionate, they would have no need of these artifices: if they persuaded us at the first application, they would not have contrived

these devices. Who is there so wretched, as to be willing to cry out so much, as to be willing to behave in an unseemly way, as to be willing to make public lamentations, with his wife destitute of clothing, with his children, to sprinkle ashes on [himself]. How much worse than poverty are these things? Yet on account of them not only are they not pitied, but are even accused by us.

9. Shall we then still be indignant, because when we pray to God, we are not heard? Shall we then still be vexed, because when we entreat we do not persuade? Do we not tremble for fear, my beloved?

But (you say) I have often given. But do you not always eat? And do you drive away your children often begging of you? O the shamelessness! Do you call a poor man shameless? And thou indeed art not shameless when plundering, but he is shameless when begging for bread! Considerest thou not how great are the necessities of the belly? Do you not do all things for this? Do you not for this neglect things spiritual? Is not heaven set before you and the kingdom of heaven? And thou fearing the tyranny of that [appetite] endurest all things, and thinkest lightly of that [kingdom]. This *is* shamelessness.

Do you see not old men maimed? But O what trifling! 'Such an one' (you say) 'lends out so many pieces of gold, and such an one so many, and yet begs.' You repeat the stories and trifles of children; for they too are always hearing such stories from their nurses. I am not persuaded of it. I do not believe this. Far from it. Does a man lend money, and beg when he has abundance? For what purpose, tell me? And what is more disgraceful than begging? It were better to die than to beg. Where does our inhumanity stop? What then? Do all lend money? Are all impostors? Is there no one really poor? "*Yea*" (you say) "*and many.*" Why then do you not assist those

persons, seeing you are a strict enquirer into their lives? This is an excuse and a pretense.

"Give to every one that asks of you, and from him that would borrow of you turn not thou away." [Matthew 5:42] Stretch out your hand, let it not be closed up. We have not been constituted examiners into men's lives, since so we should have compassion on no one. When you call upon God why do you say, Remember not my sins? So then, if that person even be a great sinner, make this allowance in his case also, and do not remember his sins. It is the season of kindness, not of strict enquiry; of mercy, not of account. He wishes to be maintained: if you are willing, give; but if not willing, send him away without raising doubts. Why are you wretched and miserable? Why do you not even yourself pity him, and also turnest away those who would? For when such an one hears from you, This [fellow] is a cheat; that a hypocrite; and the other lends out money; he neither gives to the one nor to the other; for he suspects all to be such. For you know that we easily suspect evil, but good, not [so easily].

10. Let us *"be merciful,"* not simply so, but *"as our heavenly Father is."* [Luke 6:36] He feeds even adulterers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and what shall I say? Those having every kind of wickedness. For in so large a world there must needs be many such. But nevertheless He feeds all; He clothes all. No one ever perished of hunger, unless one did so of his own choice. So let us be merciful. If one be in want and in necessity, help him.

But now we have come to such a degree of unreasonableness, as to act thus not only in regard to the poor who walk up and down the alleys, but even in the case of men that live in [religious] solitude. Such an one is an impostor, you say. Did I not say this at first, that if we give to all indiscriminately, we shall always be compassionate; but if we begin to make over-curious enquiries, we shall never be compassionate? What do

you mean? Is a man an impostor in order to get a loaf? If indeed he asks for talents of gold and silver, or costly clothes, or slaves, or anything else of this sort, one might with good reason call him a swindler. But if he ask none of these things, but only food and shelter, things which are suited to a philosophic life, tell me, is this the part of a swindler? Cease we from this unseasonable fondness for meddling, which is Satanic, which is destructive.

For indeed, if a man say that he is on the list of the Clergy, or calls himself a priest, then busy yourself [to enquire], make much ado: since in that case the communicating without enquiry is not without danger. For the danger is about matters of importance, for thou dost not give but receive. But if he want food, make no enquiry.

Enquire, if you will, how Abraham showed hospitality towards all who came to him. If he had been over-curious about those who fled to him for refuge, he would not have "*entertained angels*." [Hebrews 13:2] For perhaps not thinking them to be angels, he would have thrust them too away with the rest. But since he used to receive all, he received even angels.

What? Is it from the life of those that receive [your bounty] that God grants you your reward? Nay [it is] from your own purpose, from your abundant liberality; from your loving-kindness; from your goodness. Let this be [found], and you shall attain all good things, which may we all attain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 12 on Hebrews

Hebrews 7:1-3

"For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him: to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace, without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, abides a Priest continually."

1. Paul wishing to show the difference between the New and Old [Covenant], scatters it everywhere; and shoots from afar, and noises it abroad, and prepares beforehand. For at once even from the introduction, he laid down this saying, that *"to them indeed He spoke by prophets, but to us by the Son"* [c. i. 1, 2], and to them *"at sundry times and in various manners,"* but to us through the Son. Afterwards, having discoursed concerning the Son, who He was and what He had wrought, and given an exhortation to obey Him, lest we should suffer the same things as the Jews; and having said that He is *"High Priest after the order of Melchisedec"* [Hebrews 6:20], and having oftentimes wished to enter into [the subject of] this difference, and having used much preparatory management; and having rebuked them as weak, and again soothed and restored them to confidence; then at last he introduces the discussion on the difference [of the two dispensations] to ears in their full vigor. For he who is depressed in spirits would not be a ready hearer. And that you may understand this, hear the Scripture saying, *"They hearkened not to Moses for anguish of spirit."*

[Exodus 6:9] Therefore having first cleared away their despondency by many considerations, some fearful, some more gentle, he then from this point enters upon the discussion of the difference [of the dispensations].

2. And what does he say? *"For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God."* And, what is especially noteworthy, he shows the difference to be great by the Type itself. For as I said, he continually confirms the truth from the Type, from things past, on account of the weakness of the hearers. *"For"* (he says) *"this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all."* Having concisely set down the whole narrative, he looked at it mystically.

And first from the name. *"First"* (he says) *"being by interpretation King of righteousness"*: for Sedec means *"righteousness"*; and Melchi, *"King"*: Melchisedec, *"King of righteousness."* Do you see his exactness even in the names? But who is *"King of righteousness,"* save our Lord Jesus Christ? *"King of righteousness. And after that also King of Salem,"* from his city, *"that is, King of Peace,"* which again is [characteristic] of Christ. For He has made us righteous, and has *"made peace"* for *"things in Heaven and things on earth."* [Colossians 1:20] What man is *"King of Righteousness and of Peace"*? None, save only our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. He then adds another distinction, *"Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, abides a Priest continually."* Since then there lay in his way [as an objection] the [words] *"You are a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec,"* whereas he [Melchisedec] was dead, and was not *"Priest for ever,"* see how he explained it mystically.

'And who can say this concerning a man?' I do not assert this in fact (he says); the meaning is, we do not know when [or] what father he had, nor what mother, nor when he received his beginning, nor when he died. And what of this (one says)? For does it follow, because we do not know it, that he did not die, [or] had no parents? You say well: he both died and had parents. How then [was he] "*without father, without mother*"? How "*having neither beginning of days nor end of life*"? How? [Why] from its not being expressed. And what of this? That as this man is so, from his genealogy not being given, so is Christ from the very nature of the reality.

See the "*without beginning*"; see the "*without end*." As in case of this man, we know not either "*beginning of days*," or "*end of life*," because they have not been written; so we know [them] not in the case of Jesus, not because they have not been written, but because they do not exist. For that indeed is a type, and therefore [we say] 'because it is not written,' but this is the reality, and therefore [we say] 'because it does not exist.' For as in regard to the names also (for there "*King of Righteousness*" and "*of Peace*" are appellations, but here the reality) so these too are appellations in that case, in this the reality. How then has He a beginning? You see that the Son is "*without beginning*," not in respect of His not having a cause; (for this is impossible: for He has a Father, otherwise how is He Son?) but in respect of His "*not having beginning or end of life*."

"*But made like the Son of God*." Where is the likeness? That we know not of the one or of the other either the end or the beginning. Of the one because they are not written; of the other, because they do not exist. Here is the likeness. But if the likeness were to exist in all respects, there would no longer be type and reality; but both would be type. [Here] then just as in representations [by painting or drawing], there is somewhat that is like and somewhat that is unlike. By means of the lines indeed there is a likeness of

features, but when the colors are put on, then the difference is plainly shown, both the likeness and the unlikeness.

Hebrews 7:4

4. *"Now consider"* (says he) *"how great this man is to whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."* Up to this point he has been applying the type: henceforward he boldly shows him [Melchisedec] to be more glorious than the Jewish realities. But if he who bears a type of Christ is so much better not merely than the priests, but even than the forefather himself of the priests, what should one say of the reality? You see how super-abundantly he shows the superiority.

"Now consider" (he says) *"how great this man is to whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave a tenth out of the choice portions."* Spoils taken in battle are called *"choice portions."* And it cannot be said that he gave them to him as having a part in the war, because (he said) he met him *"returning from the slaughter of the kings,"* for he had staid at home (he means), yet [Abraham] gave him the first-fruits of his labors.

Hebrews 7:5-6

"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi who receive the office of Priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham."

So great (he would say) is the superiority of the priesthood, that they who from their ancestors are of the same dignity, and have the same forefather, are yet far better than the rest. At all events they *"receive tithes"* from them. When then one is found, who receives tithes from these very persons, are not they indeed in the rank of laymen, and he among the Priests?

And not only this; but neither was he of the same dignity with them, but of another race: so that he would not have given tithes to a stranger unless his dignity had been great. Astonishing! What has he accomplished? He has made quite clear a greater point than those relating to faith which he treated in the Epistle to the Romans. For there indeed he declares Abraham to be the forefather both of our polity and also of the Jewish. But here he is exceeding bold against him, and shows that the uncircumcised person is far superior. How then did he show that Levi paid tithes? Abraham (he says) paid them. 'And how does this concern us?' It especially concerns you: for you will not contend that the Levites are superior to Abraham. [Hebrews 7:6] *"But he whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham."*

Hebrews 7:7

And after that he did not simply pass on, but added, "*and blessed him that had the promises.*" Inasmuch as throughout, this was regarded with reverence, he shows that [Melchisedec] was to be revered more than Abraham, from the common judgment of all men. [Hebrews 7:7] "*And without all contradiction,*" he says, "*the less is blessed of the better,*" i.e. in the opinion of all men it is the inferior that is blessed by the superior. So then the type of Christ is superior even to "*him that had the promises.*"

Hebrews 7:8-10

[Hebrews 7:8] *"And here men that die receive tithes: but there he of whom it is testified that he lives."* But lest we should say, Tell us, why are you going so far back? He says, [Hebrews 7:9] *"And as I may so say"* (and he did well in softening it) *"Levi also who receives tithes payed tithes in Abraham."* How? [Hebrews 7:10] *"For he was yet in his loins when Melchisedec met him,"* i.e. Levi was in him, although he was not yet born. And he said not the Levites but Levi.

Have you seen the superiority? Have you seen how great is the interval between Abraham and Melchisedec, who bears the type of our High Priest? And he shows that the superiority had been caused by authority, not necessity. For the one paid the tithe, which indicates the priest: the other gave the blessing, which indicates the superior. This superiority passes on also to the descendants.

In a marvelous and triumphant way he cast out the Jewish [system]. On this account he said, *"You have become dull,"* [Hebrews 5:12], because he wished to lay these foundations, that they might not start away. Such is the wisdom of Paul, first preparing them well, he so leads them into what he wishes. For the human race is hard to persuade, and needs much attention, even more than plants. Since in that case there is [only] the nature of material bodies, and earth, which yields to the hands of the husbandmen: but in this there is will, which is liable to many alterations, and now prefers this, now that. For it quickly turns to evil.

5. Wherefore we ought always to *"guard"* ourselves, lest at any time we should fall asleep. For *"Lo"* (it is said) *"he that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep"* [Psalm 121:4], and *"Do not suffer your foot to be*

moved." [Psalm 121:3] He did not say, 'be not moved' but "*do not thou suffer,*" etc. The suffering depends then on ourselves, and not on any other. For if we will stand "*steadfast and unmoveable*" [1 Corinthians 15:58], we shall not be shaken.

What then? Does nothing depend on God? All indeed depends on God, but not so that our free-will is hindered. 'If then it depend on God,' (one says), 'why does He blame us?' On this account I said, 'so that our free-will is not hindered.' It depends then on us, and on Him. For we must first choose the good; and then He leads us to His own. He does not anticipate our choice, lest our free-will should be outraged. But when we have chosen, then great is the assistance he brings to us.

How is it then that Paul says, "*not of him that wills,*" if it depend on ourselves also "*nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.*" [Romans 9:16]

In the first place, he did not introduce it as his own opinion, but inferred it from what was before him and from what had been put forward [in the discussion]. For after saying, "*It is written, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion*" [Romans 9:15], he says, "*It follows then that it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.*" "*You will say then unto me, why does He yet find fault?*" [Romans 9:16-19]

And secondly the other explanation may be given, that he speaks of all as His, whose the greater part is. For it is ours to choose and to wish; but God's to complete and to bring to an end. Since therefore the greater part is of Him, he says all is of Him, speaking according to the custom of men.

For so we ourselves also do. I mean for instance: we see a house well built, and we say the whole is the Architect's [doing], and yet certainly it is not all his, but the workmen's also, and the owner's, who supplies the materials,

and many others', but nevertheless since he contributed the greatest share, we call the whole his. So then [it is] in this case also. Again, with respect to a number of people, where the many are, we say All are: where few, nobody. So also Paul says, *"not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy."*

And herein he establishes two great truths: one, that we should not be lifted up: even should you run (he would say), even should you be very earnest, do not consider that the well doing is your own. For if you obtain not the impulse that is from above, all is to no purpose. Nevertheless that you will attain that which thou earnestly strivest after is very evident; so long as you run, so long as you will.

He did not then assert this, that we run in vain, but that, if we think the whole to be our own, if we do not assign the greater part to God, we run in vain. For neither has God willed that the whole should be His, lest He should appear to be crowning us without cause: nor again our's, lest we should fall away to pride. For if when we have the smaller [share], we think much of ourselves, what should we do if the whole depended on us?

6. Indeed God has done away many things for the purpose of cutting away our boastfulness, and still there is the high hand. With how many afflictions has He encompassed us, so as to cut away our proud spirit! With how many wild beasts has He encircled us! For indeed when some say, 'why is this?' 'Of what use is this?' They utter these things against the will of God. He has placed you in the midst of so great fear, and yet not even so are you lowly-minded; but if you ever attain a little success, you reach to Heaven itself in pride.

For this cause [come] rapid changes and reverses; and yet not even so are we instructed. For this cause are there continual and untimely deaths, but are minded as if we were immortal, as if we should never die. We

plunder, we over-reach, as though we were never to give account. We build as if we were to abide here always. And not even the word of God daily sounded into our ears, nor the events themselves instruct us. Not a day, not an hour can be mentioned, in which we may not see continual funerals. But all in vain: and nothing reaches our hardness [of heart]: nor are we even able to become better by the calamities of others; or rather, we are not willing. When we ourselves only are afflicted, then we are subdued, and yet if God take off His hand, we again lift up our hand: no one considers what is proper for man, no one despises the things on earth; no one looks to Heaven. But as swine turn their heads downwards, stooping towards their belly, wallowing in the mire; so too the great body of mankind defile themselves with the most intolerable filth, without being conscious of it.

7. For better were it to be defiled with unclean mud than with sins; for he who is defiled with the one, washes it off in a little time, and becomes like one who had never from the first fallen into that slough; but he who has fallen into the deep pit of sin has contracted a defilement that is not cleansed by water, but needs long time, and strict repentance, and tears and lamentations, and more wailing, and that more fervent, than we show over the dearest friends. For this defilement attaches to us from without, wherefore we also speedily put it away; but the other is generated from within, wherefore also we wash it off with difficulty, and cleanse ourselves from it. *"For from the heart"* (it is said) *"proceed evil thoughts, fornications, adulteries, thefts, false witnesses."* [Matthew 15:19] Wherefore also the Prophet said, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God."* [Psalm 51:10] And another, *"Wash your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem."* [Jeremiah 4:14] (You see that it is both our [work] and God's.) And again, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* [Matthew 5:8]

Let us become clean to the utmost of our power. Let us wipe away our sins. And how to wipe them away, the prophet teaches, saying, *"Wash you, make you clean, put away your wickedness from your souls, before My eyes."* [Isaiah 1:16] What is *"before My eyes"*? Because some seem to be free from wickedness, but only to men, while to God they are manifest as being *"whited sepulchers."* Therefore He says, so put them away as I see. *"Learn to do well, seek judgment, do justice for the poor and lowly."* *"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: and though your sins be as scarlet, I will make you white as snow, and if they be as crimson, I will make you white as wool."* [Isaiah 1:17-18] You see that we must first cleanse ourselves, and then God cleanses us. For having said first, *"Wash you, make you clean,"* He then added *"I will make you white."*

Let no one then, [even] of those who have come to the extremest wickedness, despair of himself. For (He says) even if you have passed into the habit, yea and almost into the nature of wickedness itself, be not afraid. Therefore taking [the instance of] colors that are not superficial but almost of the substance of the materials, He said that He would bring them into the opposite state. For He did not simply say that He would *"wash"* us, but that He would *"make"* us *"white, as snow and as wool,"* in order to hold out good hopes before us. Great then is the power of repentance, at least if it makes us as snow, and whitens us as wool, even if sin have first got possession and dyed our souls.

Let us labor earnestly then to become clean; He has enjoined nothing burdensome. *"Judge the fatherless, and do justice for the widow."* [Isaiah 1:17] You see everywhere how great account God makes of mercy, and of standing forward in behalf of those that are wronged. These good deeds let us pursue after, and we shall be able also, by the grace of God, to attain to the blessings to come: which may we all be counted worthy of, in Christ

Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 13 on Hebrews

Hebrews 7:11-14

"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood; (for under it the people have received the law?) what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken, pertained to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priests."

1. *"If therefore"* (he says) *"perfection were by the Levitical priesthood."* Having spoken concerning Melchisedec, and shown how much superior he was to Abraham, and having set forth the great difference between them, he begins from this point forward to prove the wide difference as to the covenant itself, and how the one is imperfect and the other perfect. However he does not even yet enter on the matters themselves, but first contends on the ground of the priesthood, and the tabernacle. For these things would be more easily received by the unbelieving, when the proof was derived from things already allowed, and believed.

He had shown that Melchisedec was greatly superior both to Levi and to Abraham, being to them in the rank of the priests. Again he argues from a different point. What then is this? Why (he says) did he not say, *"after the order of Aaron"*? And observe, I pray you, the great superiority [of his argument]. For from the very circumstance which naturally excluded His

priesthood, viz. that He was not *"after the order of Aaron,"* from that he establishes Him, and excludes the others. For this is the very thing that I say (he declares); why has He *"not been made after the order of Aaron"*?

And the [saying] *"what further need"* has much emphasis. For if Christ had been *"after the order of Melchisedec"* according to the flesh, and then afterwards the law had been introduced, and all that pertained to Aaron, one might reasonably say that the latter as being more perfect, annulled the former, seeing that it had come in after it. But if Christ comes later, and takes a different type, as that of His priesthood, it is evident that it is because those were imperfect. For (he would say) let us suppose for argument's sake, that all has been fulfilled, and that there is nothing imperfect in the priesthood. *"What need"* was there in that case that He should be called *"after the order of Melchisedec and not after the order of Aaron"*? Why did He set aside Aaron, and introduce a different priesthood, that of Melchisedec? *"If then perfection,"* that is the perfection of the things themselves, of the doctrines, of life, *"had been by the Levitical priesthood."*

And observe how he goes forward on his path. He had said that [He was] *"after the order of Melchisedec,"* implying that the [priesthood] *"after the order of Melchisedec"* is superior: for [he was] far superior. Afterwards he shows this from the time also, in that He was after Aaron; evidently as being better.

2. And what is the meaning of what follows? *"For"* (he says) under [or *"upon"*] it the people have received the Law [or *"have been legislated for"*]. What is *"under it"* [&c.]? Orders itself by it; through it does all things. You cannot say that it was given to others, *"the people under it have received the law,"* that is, have used it, and did use it. You cannot say indeed that it was perfect, it did not govern the people; *"they have been legislated for upon it,"* that is, they used it.

What need was there then of another priesthood? *"For the priesthood being changed, there is of necessity a change of the law also."* But if there must be another priest, or rather another priesthood, there must needs be also another law. This is for those who say, What need was there of a new Covenant? For he could indeed have alleged a testimony from prophecy also. *"This is the covenant which I made with your fathers"* [&c.]. [Hebrews 8:10] But for the present he contends on the ground of the priesthood. And observe, how he says this from the first. He said, *"According to the order of Melchisedec."* By this he excluded the order of Aaron. For he would not have said *"After the order of Melchisedec,"* if the other had been better. If therefore another priesthood has been brought in, there must be also [another] Covenant; for neither is it possible that there should be a priest, without a covenant and laws and ordinances, nor that having received a different priesthood He should use the former [covenant].

In the next place, as to the ground of objection: *"How could He be a priest if He were not a Levite?"* Having overthrown this by what had been said above, he does not even think it worth answering, but introduces it in passing. I said (he means) that the priesthood was changed, therefore also the Covenant is. And it was changed not only in its character, or in its ordinances, but also in its tribe. For of necessity [it must be changed] in its tribe also. How? For the priesthood being changed [or *"transferred"*], from tribe to tribe, from the sacerdotal to the regal [tribe], that the same might be both regal and sacerdotal.

And observe the mystery. First it was royal, and then it has become sacerdotal: so therefore also in regard to Christ: for King indeed He always was, but has become Priest from the time that He assumed the Flesh, that He offered the sacrifice. You see the change, and the very things which were ground of objection these he introduces, as though the natural order of

things required them. *"For"* (he says) *"He of whom these things are spoken pertained to another tribe."* I myself also say it, I know that this tribe [of Judah] had nothing of priesthood. For there is a transferring.

3. Yea and I am showing another difference also (he would say): not only from the tribe, nor yet only from the Person, nor from the character [of the Priesthood], nor from the covenant, but also from the type itself. [Hebrews 7:16] Who was made [*"became"* so], not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. He became (he says) *"a priest not according to the law of a carnal commandment"*: for that law was in many respects unlawful.

What is, *"of a carnal commandment"*? Circumcise the flesh, it says; anoint the flesh; wash the flesh; purify the flesh; shave the flesh; bind upon the flesh; cherish the flesh; rest as to the flesh. And again its blessings, what are they? Long life for the flesh; milk and honey for the flesh; peace for the flesh; luxury for the flesh. From this law Aaron received the priesthood; Melchisedec however not so.

Hebrews 7:15-17

"And it is yet far more evident, if after the similitude of Melchisedec there arises another priest." What is evident? The interval between the two priesthoods, the difference; how much superior He is *"who was made not according to the law of a carnal commandment."* (Who? Melchisedec? Nay; but Christ.) *"But according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies, You are a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec";* that is, not for a time, nor having any limit, *"but according to the power of an endless life,"* that is, by means of power, by means of *"endless life."*

And yet this does not follow after, *"who was made not according to the law of a carnal commandment"*: for what would follow would be to say, *"but according to that of a spiritual one."* However by *"carnal,"* he implied temporary. As he says also in another place, carnal ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. [Hebrews 9:10]

"According to the power of life," that is, because He lives by His own power.

4. He had said, that there is also a change of law, and up to this point he has shown it; henceforward he enquires into the cause, that which above all gives full assurance to men's minds, [I mean] the knowing the cause thoroughly; and it leads us more to faith when we have learned also the cause, and the principle according to which [the thing] comes to pass.

Hebrews 7:18

"For there is verily" (he says) "a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." Here the Heretics press on. But listen attentively. He did not say *"for the evil,"* nor, *"for the viciousness,"* but *"for the weakness and unprofitableness [thereof],"* yea and in other places also he shows the weakness; as when he says *"In that it was weak through the flesh."* [Romans 8:3] [The law] itself then is not weak, but we.

Hebrews 7:19

"For the Law made nothing perfect." What is, *"make nothing perfect"*? Made no man perfect, being disobeyed. And besides, even if it had been listened to, it would not have made one perfect and virtuous. But as yet he does not say this here, but that it had no strength: and with good reason. For written precepts were there set down, Do this and Do not that, being enjoined only, and not giving power within. But *"the Hope"* is not such.

What is *"a disannulling"*? A casting out. A *"disannulling"* is a disannulling of things which are of force. So that he implied, that it [once] was of force, but henceforward was of no account, since it accomplished nothing. Was the Law then of no use? It was indeed of use; and of great use: but to make men perfect it was of no use. For in this respect he says, *"The Law made nothing perfect."* All were figures, all shadows; circumcision, sacrifice, sabbath. There fore they could not reach through the soul, wherefore they pass away and gradually withdraw. *"But the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw near unto God."*

Hebrews 7:20

5. [Hebrews 7:20] *"And forasmuch as not without the taking of an oath."* You see that the matter of the oath becomes necessary for him here. Accordingly for this reason he previously treated much [hereon], how that God swore; and swore for the sake of [our] fuller assurance.

"But the bringing in of a better hope." For that system also had a hope, but not such as this. For they hoped that, if they were well pleasing [to God], they should possess the land, that they should suffer nothing fearful. But in this [dispensation] we hope that, if we are well pleasing [to God], we shall possess not earth, but heaven; or rather (which is far better than this) we hope to stand near to God, to come unto the very throne of the Father, to minister unto Him with the Angels. And see how he introduces these things little by little. For above he says *"which enters into that within the veil"*, [Hebrews 6:19], but here, *"by which we draw near unto God."*

Hebrews 7:21-24

"And inasmuch as not without an oath." What is *"And inasmuch as not without an oath"*? That is, Behold another difference also. And these things were not merely promised (he says). *"For those priests were made without an oath,"* [Hebrews 7:21-22] *"but This with an oath, by Him that said unto Him, The Lord swore and will not repent, You are Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant."* He lays down two points of difference, that it has no end as the [covenant] of the Law had; and this he proves from [its being] Christ who exercises [the priesthood]; for he says *"according to the power of an endless life."* And he proves it also from the oath, because *"He swore,"* etc., and from the fact; for if the other was cast out, because it was weak, this stands firm, because it is powerful. He proves it also from the priest. How? Because He is One [only]; and there would not have been One [only], unless He had been immortal. For as there were many priests, because they were mortal, so [here is] The One, because He is immortal. *"By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant,"* inasmuch as He swore to Him that He should always be [Priest]; which He would not have done, if He were not living.

Hebrews 7:25

6. [Hebrews 7:25] *"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them."* You see that he says this in respect of that which is according to the flesh. For when He [appears] as Priest, then He also intercedes. Wherefore also when Paul says, *"who also makes intercession for us"* [Romans 8:34], he hints the same thing; the High Priest makes intercession. For He *"that raises the dead as He will, and quickens them,"* [John 5:21], and that *"even as the Father"* [does], how [is it that] when there is need to save, He *"makes intercession"*? [John 5:22] He that has *"all judgment,"* how [is it that] He *"makes intercession"*? He that *"sends His angels"* [Matthew 13:41-42], that they may *"cast"* some into *"the furnace,"* and save others, how [is it that] He *"makes intercession"*? Wherefore (he says) *"He is able also to save."* For this cause then He saves, because He dies not. Inasmuch as *"He ever lives,"* He has (he means) no successor: And if He have no successor, He is able to aid all men. For there [under the Law] indeed, the High Priest although he were worthy of admiration during the time in which he was [High Priest] (as Samuel for instance, and any other such), but, after this, no longer; for they were dead. But here it is not so, but *"He"* saves *"to the uttermost."*

What is *"to the uttermost"*? He hints at some mystery. Not here only (he says) but there also He saves them that *"come unto God by Him."* How does He save? *"In that He ever lives"* (he says) *"to make intercession for them."* You see the humiliation? You see the manhood? For he says not, that He obtained this, by making intercession once for all, but continually, and whenever it may be needful to intercede for them.

"To the uttermost." What is it? Not for a time only, but there also in the future life. 'Does He then always need to pray? Yet how can [this] be reasonable? Even righteous men have oftentimes accomplished all by one entreaty, and is He always praying? Why then is He throned with [the Father]?' You see that it is a condescension. The meaning is: Be not afraid, nor say, Yea, He loves us indeed, and He has confidence towards the Father, but He cannot live always. For He does live always.

Hebrews 7:26

7. *"For such an High Priest also became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from the sinners."* You see that the whole is said with reference to the manhood. (But when I say 'the manhood,' I mean [the manhood] having Godhead; not dividing [one from the other], but leaving [you] to suppose what is suitable.) Did you mark the difference of the High Priest? He has summed up what was said before, *"in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin."* [Hebrews 4:15] *"For"* (he says) *"such an High Priest also became us, who is holy, harmless."* *"Harmless"*: what is it? Without wickedness: that which another Prophet says: *"guile was not found in His mouth"* [Isaiah 53:9], that is, [He is] not crafty. Could any one say this concerning God? And is one not ashamed to say that God is not crafty, nor deceitful? Concerning Him, however, in respect of the Flesh, it might be reasonable [to say it]. *"Holy, undefiled."* This too would any one say concerning God? For has He a nature capable of defilement? *"Separate from sinners."*

Hebrews 7:27

8. Does then this alone show the difference, or does the sacrifice itself also? How? [Hebrews 7:27] *"He needs not"* (he says) *"daily, as the High Priest, to offer up sacrifices for his sins, for this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself."* *"This,"* what? Here what follows sounds a prelude concerning the exceeding greatness of the spiritual sacrifice and the interval [between them]. He has mentioned the point of the priest; he has mentioned that of the faith; he has mentioned that of the Covenant; not entirely indeed, still he has mentioned it. In this place what follows is a prelude concerning the sacrifice itself. Do not then, having heard that He is a priest, suppose that He is always executing the priest's office. For He executed it once, and thenceforward *"sat down."* [Hebrews 10:12] Lest thou suppose that He is standing on high, and is a minister, he shows that the matter is [part] of a dispensation [or economy]. For as He became a servant, so also [He became] a Priest and a Minister. But as after becoming a servant, He did not continue a servant, so also, having become a Minister, He did not continue a Minister. For it belongs not to a minister to sit, but to stand.

This then he hints at here, and also the greatness of the sacrifice, if being [but] one, and having been offered up once only, it affected that which all [the rest] were unable to do. But he does not yet [treat] of these points.

Hebrews 7:28

"For this He did," he says. *"This";* what? *"For"* (he says) *"it is of necessity that this [Man] have somewhat also to offer"* [Hebrews 8:3]; not for Himself; for how did He offer Himself? But for the people. What do you say? And is He able to do this? Yea (he says). *"For the Law makes men high priests, which have infirmity."* [Hebrews 7:28] And does He not need to offer for Himself? No, he says. For, that you may not suppose that the [words, *"this"*] *"He did once for all,"* are said respecting Himself also, hear what he says: *"For the law makes men high priests, which have infirmity."* On this account they both offer continually, and for themselves. He however who is mighty, He that has no sin, why should He offer for Himself, or oftentimes for others?

"But the word of the oath which was since the Law [makes] the Son who has been consecrated for evermore." *"Consecrated"*: what is that? Paul does not set down the common terms of contradistinction; for after saying *"having Infirmity,"* he did not say *"the Son"* who is mighty, but *"consecrated"*: i.e. mighty, as one might say. You see that the name Son is used in contradistinction to that of servant. And by *"infirmity"* he means either sin or death.

What is, *"for evermore"*? Not now only without sin but always. If then He is perfect, if He never sins, if He lives always, why shall He offer many sacrifices for us? But for the present he does not insist strongly on this point: but what he does strongly insist upon is, His not offering on His own behalf.

9. Since then we have such an High Priest, let us imitate Him: let us walk in His footsteps. There is no other sacrifice: one alone has cleansed us,

and after this, fire and hell. For indeed on this account he repeats it over and over, saying, "*one Priest*," "*one Sacrifice*," lest any one supposing that there are many [sacrifices] should sin without fear. Let us then, as many as have been counted worthy of The Seal, as many as have enjoyed The Sacrifice, as many as have partaken of the immortal Table, continue to guard our noble birth and our dignity for falling away is not without danger.

And as many as have not yet been counted worthy these [privileges], let not these either be confident on that account. For when a person goes on in sin, with the view of receiving holy baptism at the last gasp, oftentimes he will not obtain it. And, believe me, it is not to terrify you that I say what I am going to say. I have myself known many persons, to whom this has happened, who in expectation indeed of the enlightening sinned much, and on the day of their death went away empty. For God gave us baptism for this cause, that He might do away our sins, not that He might increase our sins. Whereas if any man have employed it as a security for sinning more, it becomes a cause of negligence. For if there had been no Washing, they would have lived more warily, as not having [the means of] forgiveness. You see that we are the ones who cause it to be said "*Let us do evil, that good may come.*" [Romans 3:8]

Wherefore, I exhort you also who are uninitiated, be sober. Let no man follow after virtue as an hireling, no man as a senseless person, no man as after a heavy and burdensome thing. Let us pursue it then with a ready mind, and with joy. For if there were no reward laid up, ought we not to be good? But however, at least with a reward, let us become good. And how is this anything else than a disgrace and a very great condemnation? Unless thou give me a reward (says one), I do not become self-controlled. Then am I bold to say something: you will never be self-controlled, no not even when you live with self-control, if you dost it for a reward. Thou esteemest

not virtue at all, if you do not love it. But on account of our great weakness, God was willing that for a time it should be practiced even for reward, yet not even so do we pursue it.

But let us suppose, if you will, that a man dies, after having done innumerable evil things, having also been counted worthy of baptism (which however I think does not readily happen), tell me, how will he depart there? Not indeed called to account for the deeds he had done, but yet without confidence; as is reasonable. For when after living a hundred years, he has no good work to show, but only that he has not sinned, or rather not even this, but that he was saved by grace only, and when he sees others crowned, in splendor, and highly approved: even if he fall not into hell, tell me, will he endure his despondency?

10. But to make the matter clear by an example, Suppose there are two soldiers, and that one of them steals, injures, overreaches, and that the other does none of these things, but acts the part of a brave man, does important things well, sets up trophies in war, stains his right hand with blood; then when the time arrives, suppose that (from the same rank in which the thief also was) he is at once conducted to the imperial throne and the purple; but suppose that the other remains there where he was, and merely of the royal kindness does not pay the penalty of his deeds, let him however be in the last place, and let him be stationed under the King. Tell me, will he be able to endure his despair when he sees him who was [ranked] with himself ascended even to the very highest dignities, and made thus glorious, and master of the world, while he himself still remains below, and has not even been freed from punishment with honor, but through the grace and kindness of the King? For even should the King forgive him, and release him from the charges against him, still he will live in shame; for surely not even will others admire him: since in such forgiveness, we admire not those who

receive the gifts, but those who bestow them. And as much as the gifts are greater, so much the more are they ashamed who receive them, when their transgressions are great.

With what eyes then will such an one be able to look on those who are in the King's courts, when they exhibit their sweatings out of number and their wounds, while he has nothing to show, but has his salvation itself of the mere loving-kindness of God? For as if one were to beg off a murderer, a thief, an adulterer, when he was going to be arrested, and were to command him to stay at the porch of the King's palace, he will not afterwards be able to look any man in the face, although he has been set free from punishment: so too surely is this man's case.

For do not, I beseech you, suppose that because it is called a palace, therefore all attain the same things. For if here in King.' courts there is the Prefect, and all who are about the King, and also those who are in very inferior stations, and occupy the place of what are called Decani (though the interval be so great between the Prefect and the Decanus) much more shall this be so in the royal court above.

And this I say not of myself. For Paul lays down another difference greater even than these. For (he says) as many differences as there are between the sun and the moon and the stars and the very smallest star, so many also between those in the kingdom [of Heaven]. And that the difference between the sun and the smallest star is far greater than that between the Decanus (as he is called) and the Prefect, is evident to all. For while the sun shines upon all the world at once, and makes it bright, and hides the moon and the stars, the other often does not appear, not even in the dark. For there are many of the stars which we do not see. When then we see others become suns, and we have the rank of the very smallest stars, which are not even visible, what comfort shall we have?

Let us not, I beseech you, let us not be so slothful, not so inert, let us not barter away the salvation of God for an easy life, but let us make merchandise of it, and increase it. For even if one be a Catechumen, still he knows Christ, still he understands the Faith, still he is a hearer of the divine oracles, still he is not far from the knowledge; he knows the will of his Lord. Wherefore does he procrastinate? Wherefore does he delay and postpone? Nothing is better than a good life whether here or there, whether in case of the Enlightened or of the Catechumens,

11. For tell me what burdensome command have we enjoined? Have a wife (it is said) and be chaste. Is this difficult? How? When many, not Christians only but heathens also, live chastely without a wife. That which the heathen surpasses for vainglory, thou dost not even keep for the fear of God.

Give (He says) to the poor out of what you have. Is this burdensome? But in this case also heathen condemn us who for vainglory only have emptied out their whole possessions.

Use not filthy communication. Is this difficult? For if it had not been enjoined, ought we not to have done right in this, to avoid appearing degraded? For that the contrary conduct is troublesome, I mean the using filthy communication, is manifest from the fact that the soul is ashamed and blushes if it have been led to say any such thing and would not unless perhaps it were drunk. For when sitting in a public place, even if you do it at home, why do you not do it there? Because of those that are present. Why do you not readily do the same thing before your wife? That you may not insult her. So then thou dost it not, lest you should insult your wife; and do you not blush at insulting God? For He is everywhere present, and hears all things.

Be not drunken, He says. For this very thing of itself, is it not a chastisement? He did not say, Put your body on the rack, but what? Do not give it free rein so as to take away the authority of the mind: on the contrary *"make not provision for the lusts thereof."* [Romans 13:14]

Do not (He says) seize by violence what is not your own; do not overreach; do not forswear yourself. What labors do these things require! What sweatings!

Speak evil of no man (He says) nor accuse falsely. The contrary indeed is a labor. For when you have spoken ill of another, immediately you are in danger, in suspicion, [saying] Did he of whom I spoke, hear? Whether he be great or small. For should he be a great man, immediately you will be indeed in danger; but if small, he will requite you with as much, or rather with what is far more grievous; for he will say evil of you in a greater degree. We are enjoined nothing difficult, nothing burdensome, if we have the will. And if we have not the will, even the easiest things will appear burdensome to us. What is easier than eating? But from great effeminacy many feel disgust even at this, and I hear many say, that it is weariness even to eat. None of these things is wearisome if you have but the will. For everything depends on the will after the grace from above. Let us will good things that we may attain also to the good things eternal, in Christ Jesus our Lord, whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on Hebrews

Hebrews 8:1-2

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an High Priest; who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens: a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."

1. Paul mixes the lowly things with the lofty, ever imitating his Master, so that the lowly become the path to the lofty, and through the former we are led to the latter, and when we are amid the great things we learn that these [lowly ones] were a condescension. This accordingly he does here also. After declaring that *"He offered up Himself,"* and showing Him to be a *"High Priest,"* what does he say? *"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High Priest who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the majesty."* And yet this is not [the office] of a Priest, but of Him whom the Priest should serve.

"A minister of the sanctuary," not simply a minister, but *"a minister of the sanctuary. And of the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man."* You see the condescension. Did he not a little before make a separation, saying: *"Are they not all ministering spirits?"* [Hebrews 1:14] and therefore (he says) it is not said to them, *"Sit on my right hand,"* [Hebrews 1:13] for He that sits is not a minister. How is it then that it is here said, *"a minister,"* and *"a minister of the Sanctuary"*? For he means here the Tabernacle.

See how he raised up the minds of the believing Jews. For as they would be apt to imagine that we have no such tabernacle [as they had], see

here (he says) is the Priest, Great, yea, much greater than the other, and who has offered a more wonderful sacrifice. But is not all this mere talk? Is it not a boast, and merely said to win over our minds? On this account he established it first from the oath, and afterwards also from "*the tabernacle*." For this difference too was manifest: but the Apostle thinks of another also, "*which*" (he says) the Lord pitched [or "*made firm*"] and not man. Where are they who say that the heaven whirls around? where are they who declare that it is spherical? For both of these notions are overthrown here.

"Now" (he says) "*of the things which we have spoken this is the sum*." By "*the sum*" is always meant what is most important. Again he brings down his discourse; having said what is lofty, henceforward he speaks fearlessly.

Hebrews 8:3-5

2. In the next place that you may understand that he used the word "*minister*" of the manhood, observe how he again indicates it: "*For*" [Hebrews 8:3] (he says) "*every high priest is ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.*"

Do not now, because you hear that He sits, suppose that His being called High Priest is mere idle talk. For the former, viz. His sitting, belongs to the dignity of the Godhead, but this to His great lovingkindness, and His tender care for us. On this account he repeatedly urges this very thing, and dwells more upon it: for he feared lest the other [truth] should overthrow it. Therefore he again brings down his discourse to this: since some were enquiring why He died. He was a Priest. But there is no Priest without a sacrifice. It is necessary then that He also should have a sacrifice.

And in another way; Having said that He is on high, he affirms and proves that He is a Priest from every consideration, from Melchisedec, from the oath, from offering sacrifice. From this he also frames another and necessary syllogism. "*For if*" (he says) "*He had been on earth, He would not be a Priest, seeing that there are priests who offer the gifts according to the Law.*" If then He is a Priest (as He really is), we must seek some other place for Him. "*For if He were*" indeed "*on earth, He should not be a priest.*" For how [could He be]? He offered no sacrifice, He ministered not in the Priest's office. And with good reason, for there were the priests. Moreover he shows, that it was impossible that [He] should be a priest upon earth. For how [could He be]? There was no rising up against [the appointed Priests], he means.

3. Here we must apply our minds attentively, and consider the Apostolic wisdom; for again he shows the difference of the Priesthood.

"Who" (he says) "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things."

What are the heavenly things he speaks of here? The spiritual things. For although they are done on earth, yet nevertheless they are worthy of the Heavens. For when our Lord Jesus Christ lies slain [as a sacrifice], when the Spirit is with us, when He who sits on the right hand of the Father is here, when sons are made by the Washing, when they are fellow citizens of those in Heaven, when we have a country, and a city, and citizenship there, when we are strangers to things here, how can all these be other than *"heavenly things"*? But what! Are not our Hymns heavenly? Do not we also who are below utter in concert with them the same things which the divine choirs of bodiless powers sing above? Is not the altar also heavenly? How? It has nothing carnal, all spiritual things become the offerings. The sacrifice does not disperse into ashes, or into smoke, or into steamy savor, it makes the things placed there bright and splendid. How again can the rites which we celebrate be other than heavenly? For when He says, *"Whose soever sins ye retain they are retained, whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted"* [John 20:23] when they have the keys of heaven, how can all be other than heavenly?

"Who" (he says) "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle, for see, says He, that you make all things according to the pattern showed to you in the mount." Inasmuch as our hearing is less ready of apprehension than our sight (for the things which we hear we do not in such wise lay up in our soul, as those which we see with our very eyes), He showed him all. Either then he means this by *"the example and shadow,"* or else he [speaks] of the Temple. For, he went on to say, *"See"* (His words

are), that *"thou make all things according to the pattern showed to you in the mount."* Was it then only what concerned the furniture of the temple that he saw, or was it also what related to the sacrifices, and all the rest? Nay, one would not be wrong in saying even this; for The Church is heavenly, and is nothing else than Heaven.

Hebrew 8:6

4. *"But now has He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant."* You see (he means) how much better is the one ministration than the other, if one be an example and type, and the other truth [reality]. But this did not profit the hearers, nor cheer them. Therefore he says what especially cheered them: *"Which was established upon better promises."* Having raised them up by speaking of the place, and the priest, and the sacrifice, he then sets forth also the wide difference of the covenant, having also said before that it was *"weak and unprofitable."* [See Hebrews 7:18]

And observe what safeguards he lays down, when intending to find fault with it. For in the former place after saying, *"according to the power of an endless life"* [Hebrews 7:16], he then said that *"there is a disannulling of the commandment going before"* [Hebrews 7:18]; and then after that, he set forth something great, saying, *"by which we draw near unto God."* [Hebrews 7:19] And in this place, after leading us up into Heaven, and showing that instead of the temple, we have Heaven, and that those things were types of ours, and having by these means exalted the Ministration [of the New Covenant], he then proceeds suitably to exalt the priesthood.

Hebrews 8:7-9

But (as I said) he sets down that which especially cheers them, in the words, *"Which was established upon better promises."* Whence does appear? In that this the one was cast out, and the other introduced in its place: for it is therefore of force because it is better. For as he says, *"If perfection were by" it, "what further need was there, that another priest should rise, after the order of Melchisedec?"* [Hebrews 7:11]; so also here he used the same syllogism, saying [Hebrews 8:7] *"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second";* that is, if it made men *"faultless."* For it is because he is speaking of this that he did not say, *"But finding fault with" it,* but [ver. 8, 9] *"But finding fault with them, He says, Behold, the days come, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt: because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord."*

Yea, verily. And whence does it appear that [the first Covenant] came to an end? He showed it indeed also from the Priest, but now he shows more clearly by express words that it has been cast out.

But how is it *"upon better promises"*? For how, tell me, can earth and heaven be equal? But do thou consider, how he speaks of promises there [in that other covenant] also, that you may not bring this charge against it. For there also, he says *"a better hope, by which we draw near unto God"* [Hebrews 7:19], showing that a Hope was *there* also; and in this place *"better promises,"* hinting that *there* also He had made promises.

But inasmuch as they were forever making objections, he says, *"Behold! The days come, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."* He is not speaking of any old Covenant: for, that they might not assert this, he determined the time also. Thus he did not say simply, *"according to the covenant which I made with their fathers,"* lest you should say [it was] the one made with Abraham, or that with Noah: but he declares what [covenant it was], *"not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers"* in the Exodus. Wherefore he added also, *"in the day that I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord."* You see that the evils begin first from ourselves (*"they"* themselves first, says he, continued not in [the *"covenant"*]) and the negligence is from ourselves, but the good things from Him; I mean the [acts] of bounty. He here introduces, as it were, an apology showing the cause why He forsakes them.

Hebrews 8:10

5. [Hebrews 8:10] *"For this," he says, "is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."* Thus He says this concerning the New [covenant] because His words are *"not according to the covenant which I covenanted."*

But what other difference is there beside this? Now if any person should say that *"the difference is not in this respect, but in respect to its being put into their hearts; He makes no mention of any difference of ordinances, but points out the mode of its being given: for no longer"* (he says) *"shall the covenant be in writings, but in hearts;"* let the Jew in that case show that this was ever carried into effect; but he could not, for it was made a second time in writings after the return from Babylon. But I show that the Apostles received nothing in writing, but received [it] in their hearts through the Holy Ghost. Wherefore also Christ said, *"When He comes, He will bring all things to your remembrance, and He shall teach you."* [John 14:26]

Hebrews 8:11-12

6. *"And they shall not teach" (he says) "every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* Behold also another sign. *"From the least even to the greatest of them" (he says) "they shall know Me, and they shall not say, Know the Lord."* When has this been fulfilled save now? For our [religion] is manifest: but theirs [i.e. the Jews'] was not manifest, but had been shut up in a corner.

[A covenant] is then said to be *"new,"* when it is different and shows some advantage over the old. *"Nay surely,"* says one, *"it is new also when part of it has been taken away, and part not. For instance, when an old house is ready to fall down, if a person leaving the whole, has patched up the foundation, straightway we say, he has made it new, when he has taken some parts away, and brought others into their place. For even the heaven also is thus called 'new,' when it is no longer 'of brass,' but gives rain; and the earth likewise is new when it is not unfruitful, not when it has been changed; and the house is likewise new, when portions of it have been taken away, and portions remain. And thus, he says, he has well termed it 'a New Covenant.'"*

If then I show that that covenant had become *"Old"* in this respect, that it yielded no fruit? And that you may know this exactly, read what Haggai says, what Zechariah, what the Messenger, when the return from the Captivity had not yet fully taken place; and what Esdras charges. How then did [the people] receive him? And how no man enquired of the Lord, inasmuch as they [the priests] themselves also transgressed, and knew it not

even themselves? Do you see how your [interpretation] is broken down, while I maintain my own: that this [covenant] must be called "New" in the proper sense of the word?

And besides, I do not concede that the words *"the heaven shall be new"* [Isaiah 65:17], were spoken concerning this. For why, when saying in Deuteronomy *"the heaven shall be of brass,"* did he not set down this in the contrasted passage, *"but if you hearken, it shall be new."*

And further on this account He says that He will give *"another Covenant, because they did not continue in the first."* This I show by what he says (*"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh,"* Romans 8:3; and again, *"Why do you tempt God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"* [Acts 15:10]) But *"they did not continue therein,"* he says.

Here he shows that [God] counts us worthy of greater and of spiritual [privileges]: for it is said *"their sound went out into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world."* [Psalm 19:5; Romans 10:18] That is [the meaning of] *"they shall not say each man to his neighbor, Know the Lord."* And again, *"the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as much water to cover the seas."* [Isaiah 11:9]

Hebrews 8:13

7. *"In calling it new"* (he says), *"He has made the first old: but that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away."* See what was hidden, how he has laid open the very mind of the prophet! He honored the law, and was not willing to call it *"old"* in express terms: but nevertheless, this he did call it. For if the former had been new, he would not have called this which came afterwards *"new"* also. So that by granting something more and different, he declares that *"it was waxen old."* Therefore it is done away and is perishing, and no longer exists.

Having taken boldness from the prophet, he attacks it more suitably, showing that our [dispensation] is now flourishing. That is, he showed that [the other] was old: then taking up the word *"old,"* and adding of himself another [circumstance], the [characteristic] of old age, he took up what was omitted by the others, and says *"ready to vanish away."*

The New then has not simply caused the old to cease, but because it had become aged, as it was not [any longer] useful. On this account he said, *"for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof"* [Hebrews 7:18], and, *"the law made nothing perfect"* [Hebrews 7:19]; and that *"if the first had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second."* [Hebrews 8:7] And *"faultless"*; that is, useful; not as though it [the old Covenant] was obnoxious to any charges, but as not being sufficient. He used a familiar form of speech. As if one should say, the house is not faultless, that is, it has some defect, it is decayed: the garment is not faultless, that is, it is coming to pieces. He does not therefore here speak of it as evil, but only as having some fault and deficiency.

8. So then we also are new, or rather we were made new, but now have become old; therefore we are *"near to vanishing away,"* and to destruction. Let us scrape off this old age. It is indeed no longer possible to do it by Washing, but by repentance it is possible here [in this life]. If there be in us anything old, let us cast it off; if any *"wrinkle,"* if any stain, if any *"spot,"* let us wash it away and become fair [Ephesians 5:27]: that *"the King may desire our beauty."* [Psalm 45:11]

It is possible even for him who has fallen into the extremest deformity to recover that beauty of which David says that the King shall desire your beauty. *"Hearken, O daughter, and consider; forget also your own people and your father's house: so shall the King greatly desire your beauty."* [Psalm 45:10-11] And yet forgetting does not produce beauty. Yea, beauty is of the soul. What sort of forgetting? That of sins. For he is speaking about the Church from among the Gentiles, exhorting her not to remember the things of her fathers, that is [of] those that sacrificed to idols; for from such was it gathered.

And he said not, *"Go not after them,"* but what is more, Do not admit them into your mind; which he says also in another place, *"I will not mention their names through my lips."* [Psalm 16:4] And again, *"That my mouth may not talk of the deeds of men."* [Psalm 17:3-4] As yet is this no great virtue; nay, rather, it is indeed great, but not such as this [which is here spoken of]. For what does he say there? He says not; *"Talk not of the things of men, neither speak of the things of your fathers";* but, neither remember them, nor admit them into your mind. You see to how great a distance he would have us keep away from wickedness. For he that remembers not [a matter] will not think of it, and he that does not think, will not speak of it: and he that does not speak of it, will not do it. Do you see from how many

paths he has walled us off? By what great intervals he has removed us, even to a very great [distance]?

9. Let us then also "*hearken and forget*" our own evils. I do not say our sins, for (He says) "*Remember first, and I will not remember.*" [Isaiah 43:26 Septuagint] I mean for instance, Let us no longer remember rapacity, but even restore the former [plunder]. This is to forget wickedness, and to cast out the thought of rapacity, and never at any time to admit it, but to wipe away also the things already done amiss.

Whence may the forgetfulness of wickedness come to us? From the remembrance of good things, from the remembrance of God. If we continually remember God, we cannot remember those things also. For (he says) "*When I remembered You upon my bed, I thought upon You in the morning dawn.*" [Psalm 63:6] We ought then to have God always in remembrance, but then especially, when thought is undisturbed, when by means of that remembrance [a man] is able to condemn himself, when he can retain [things] in memory. For in the daytime indeed, if we do remember, other cares and troubles entering in, drive the thought out again: but in the night it is possible to remember continually, when the soul is calm and at rest; when it is in the haven, and under a serene sky. "*The things which you say in your hearts be ye grieved for on your beds,*" he says. [Psalm 4:4, Septuagint] For it were indeed right to retain this remembrance through the day also. But inasmuch as you are always full of cares, and distracted amidst the things of this life, at least then remember God on your bed; at the morning dawn meditate upon Him.

If at the morning dawn we meditate on these things, we shall go forth to our business with much security. If we have first made God propitious by prayer and supplication, going forth thus we shall have no enemy. Or if you should, you will laugh him to scorn, having God propitious. There is war in

the market place; the affairs of every day are a fight, they are a tempest and a storm. We therefore need arms: and prayer is a great weapon. We need favorable winds; we need to learn everything, so as to go through the length of the day without shipwrecks and without wounds. For every single day the rocks are many, and oftentimes the boat strikes and is sunk. Therefore have we especially need of prayer early and by night.

10. Many of you have often beheld the Olympic games: and not only have beheld but have been zealous partisans and admirers of the combatants, one of this [combatant], one of that. You know then that both during the days of the contests, and during those nights, all night long the herald thinks of nothing else, has no other anxiety, than that the combatant should not disgrace himself when he goes forth. For those who sit by the trumpeter admonish him not to speak to any one, that he may not spend his breath and get laughed at. If therefore he who is about to strive before men, uses such forethought, much more will it befit us to be continually thoughtful, and careful, since our whole life is a contest. Let every night then be a vigil, and let us be careful that when we go out in the day we do not make ourselves ridiculous. And would it were only making ourselves ridiculous. But now the Judge of the contest is seated on the right hand of the Father, hearkening diligently that we utter not any false note, anything out of tune. For He is not the Judge of actions only, but of words also. Let us keep our vigil, beloved; we also have those that are eager for our success, if we will. Near each one of us Angels are sitting; and yet we snore through the whole night. And would it were only this. But many do even many licentious things, some indeed going to the very brothels, and others making their own houses places of whoredom by taking courtesans there. Yes most certainly. For is it not so? They care well for their contest. Others are drunken and speak amiss; others make an uproar. Others keep evil vigil

through the night weaving, and worse than those who sleep, schemes of deceit; others by calculating usury; others by bruising themselves with cares, and doing anything rather than what is suited to the contest.

Wherefore, I exhort you, let us lay aside all [other] things, and look to one only, how we may obtain the prize, [how we may] be crowned with the Chaplet; let us do all by which we shall be able to attain to the promised blessings. Which may we all attain in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father and also to the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 15 on Hebrews

Hebrews 9:1-5

"Then verily the first [covenant] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly Sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the Candlestick, and the Table, and the Show-bread, which is called the Sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer and the Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold: wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant: and over it the Cherubim of glory, shadowing the Mercy-seat: of which we cannot now speak particularly."

1. He has shown from the Priest, from the Priesthood, from the Covenant, that that [dispensation] was to have an end. From this point he shows it from the fashion of the tabernacle itself. How? This, he says, [was] the *"Holy"* and the *"Holy of Holies."* The holy place then is a symbol of the former period (for there all things are done by means of sacrifices); but the Holy of Holies of this that is now present.

And by the Holy of Holies he means Heaven; and by the veil, Heaven, and the Flesh *"enters into that within the veil"*: that is to say, *"through the veil of His flesh."* [*Supra*, 6:19; Hebrews 10:20]

And it were well to speak of this passage, taking it up from the beginning. What then does he say? *"Then verily the first had also"* (the first what? *"The Covenant"*). *"Ordinances of Divine service."* What are *"ordinances"*? symbols or rights. Then; as (he means) it has not now. He

shows that it had already given place, for (he says) it *had* at that time; so that now, although it stood, it is not.

"And the worldly Sanctuary." He calls it *"worldly,"* inasmuch as it was permitted to all to tread it, and in the same house the place was manifest where the priests stood, where the Jews, the Proselytes, the Grecians, the Nazarites. Since, therefore even Gentiles were permitted to tread it, he calls it *"worldly."* For surely the Jews were not *"the world."*

"For" (he says) *"there was a tabernacle made; the first, which is called holy, wherein was the Candlestick, and the Table, and the Show-bread."* These things are symbols of the world.

"And after the second veil" (There was then not one veil [only], but there was a veil without also) *"the tabernacle, which is called holy of holies."* Observe how everywhere he calls it a tabernacle in regard of [God's] encamping there.

"Which had" (he says) *"a golden Censer, and the ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold: wherein was the golden pot that held the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant."* All these things were venerable and conspicuous memorials of the Jewish obstinacy; *"and the tables of the covenant"* (for they broke them) *"And the manna"* (for they murmured; and therefore handing on the memory thereof to posterity, He commanded it to be laid up in a golden pot). *"And Aaron's rod that budded. And over it, the Cherubim of glory."* What is *"the Cherubim of glory"*? He either means *"the glorious,"* or those which are under God. *"Shadowing the mercy-seat."*

But in another point of view also he extols these things in his discourse, in order to show that those which come after them are greater. *"Of which"* (he says) *"we cannot now speak particularly."* In these words he hints that these were not merely what was seen, but were a sort of enigmas.

"Of which" (he says) "we cannot now speak particularly," perhaps because they needed a long discourse.

Hebrews 9:6

2. *"Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service [of God]."* That is, these things indeed were [there], but the Jews did not enjoy them: they saw them not. So that they were no more theirs than [ours] for whom they prophesied.

Hebrews 9:7

[Hebrews 9:7] *"But into the second the High Priest went alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people."* You see that the types were already laid down beforehand? For, lest they should say, *"how is there [but] one sacrifice?"* he shows that this was so from the beginning, since at least the more holy and the awful [sacrifice] was [but] one. And how did the High Priest offer once for all? Thus were they wont [to do] from the beginning, for then also (he says) *"the High Priest"* offered *"once for all."*

And well said he, *"not without blood."* (Not indeed without blood, yet not this blood, for the business was not so great.) He signifies that there shall be a sacrifice, not consumed by fire, but rather distinguished by blood. For inasmuch as he called the Cross a sacrifice, though it had neither fire, nor logs, nor was offered many times, but had been offered in blood once for all; he shows that the ancient sacrifice also was of this kind, was offered *"once for all"* in blood.

"Which he offers for himself;" again, *"for himself; and for the errors of the people."* He said not *"sins"*; but *"errors,"* that they might not be high-minded. For even if you have not sinned intentionally, yet unintentionally you have erred, and from this no man is pure.

And everywhere [he adds] the *"for himself,"* showing that Christ is much greater. For if He be separated from our sins, how did He *"offer for Himself"*? Why then did you say these things (one says)? Because this is [a mark] of One that is superior.

Hebrews 9:8

3. Thus far there is no speculation. But from this point he philosophizes and says, [Hebrews 9:8] *"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."* For this cause (he says) have these things been thus *"ordained,"* that we might learn that *"the Holy of Holies,"* that is, Heaven, is as yet inaccessible. Let us not then think (he says) that because we do not enter them, they have no existence: inasmuch as neither did we enter the Most Holy [place].

Hebrews 9:9

"Which" (he says) "was established as a figure for the time then present." What does he mean by *"the time present"*? That before the coming of Christ: For after the coming of Christ, it is no longer a time present: For how [could it be], having arrived, and being ended?

There is too something else which he indicates, when he says this, *"which [was] a figure for the time then present,"* that is, became the Type. *"In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience."* You see now what is [the meaning of] *"The Law made nothing perfect,"* [Hebrews 7:19,] and *"If that first [covenant] had been faultless."* [Hebrews 8:7] How? *"As pertaining to the conscience."* For the sacrifices did not put away the defilement from the soul, but still were concerned with the body: *"after the law of a carnal commandment."* [Hebrews 7:16] For certainly they could not put away adultery, nor murder, nor sacrilege. Do you see? You have eaten this, You have not eaten that, which are matters of indifference. *["Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and various washings."* *"You have drunk this,"* he says: and yet nothing has been ordained concerning drink, but he said this, treating them as trifles.

Hebrews 9:10

"And [in] various washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation." For this is the righteousness of the flesh. Here he depreciates the sacrifices, showing that they had no efficacy, and that they existed *"till the time of reformation,"* that is, they waited for the time that reforms all things.

Hebrews 9:11

4. *"But Christ having come an High Priest of good things that have come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands."* Here he means the flesh. And well did he say, *"greater and more perfect,"* since God The Word and all the power of The Spirit dwells therein; *"For God gives not the Spirit by measure [unto Him]."* [John 3:34] And *"more perfect,"* as being both unblamable, and setting right greater things.

"That is, not of this creation." See how [it was] *"greater."* For it would not have been *"of the Spirit"* [Matthew 1:20], if man had constructed it. Nor yet is it *"of this creation"*; that is, not of these created things, but spiritual, of the Holy Ghost.

Do you see how he calls the body tabernacle and veil and heaven. *"By a greater and more perfect tabernacle. Through the veil, that is, His flesh."* [Hebrews 10:20] And again, *"into that within the veil."* [Hebrews 6:19] And again, *"entering into the Holy of Holies, to appear before the face of God."* [Hebrews 9:24] Why then does he this? According as one thing or a different one is signified. I mean for instance, the Heaven is a veil, for as a veil it walls off the Holy of Holies; the flesh [is a veil] hiding the Godhead; and the tabernacle likewise holding the Godhead. Again, Heaven [is] a tabernacle: for the Priest is there within.

"But Christ" (he says) *"having come an High Priest"*: he did not say, *"become,"* but *"having come,"* that is, having come for this very purpose, not having been successor to another. He did not come first and then become [High Priest], but came and became at the same time. And he did not say *"having come an High Priest"* of things which are sacrificed, but *"of*

good things that have come," as if his discourse had not power to put the whole before us.

Hebrews 9:12

"Neither by the blood," he says, "of goats and calves" (All things are changed) "but by His own Blood" (he says) "He entered in once for all into the Holy Place." See thus he called Heaven. "Once for all" (he says) "He entered into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption." And this [expression] "having obtained," was [expressive] of things very difficult, and that are beyond expectation, how by one entering in, He "obtained everlasting redemption."

Hebrews 9:13-14

5. Next [comes] that which is calculated to persuade.

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Holy Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God."

For (he says) if *"the blood of bulls"* is able to purify the flesh, much rather shall the Blood of Christ wipe away the defilement of the soul. For that you may not suppose when you hear [the word] *"sanctifies,"* that it is some great thing, he marks out and shows the difference between each of these purifyings, and how the one of them is high and the other low. And says it is [so] with good reason, since that is *"the blood of bulls,"* and this *"the Blood of Christ."*

Nor was he content with the name, but he sets forth also the manner of the offering. *"Who"* (he says) *"through the Holy Spirit offered Himself without spot to God,"* that is, the victim was without blemish, pure from sins. For this is [the meaning of] *"through the Holy Spirit,"* not through fire, nor through any other things.

"Shall purge your conscience" (he says) *"from dead works."* And well said he *"from dead works"*; if any man touched a dead body, he was polluted; and here, if any man touch a *"dead work,"* he is defiled through his conscience. *"To serve"* (he says) *"the Living and true God."* Here he declares that it is not [possible] while one has *"dead works to serve the Living and true God,"* for they are both dead and false; and with good reason [he says this].

6. Let no man then enter in here with "*dead works*." For if it was not fit that one should enter in who had touched a dead body, much more one that has "*dead works*": for this is the most grievous pollution. And "*dead works*" are, all which have not life, which breathe forth an ill odor. For as a dead body is useful to none of the senses, but is even annoying to those who come near it, so sin also at once strikes the reasoning faculty, and does not allow the understanding itself to be calm, but disturbs and troubles it.

And it is said too that a plague at its very commencement corrupts the living bodies; such also is sin. It differs in nothing from a plague, not [indeed] corrupting the air first, and then the bodies, but darting at once into the soul. Do you see not how persons affected with the plague, are inflamed: how they writhe about, how they are full of an ill scent, how disfigured are their countenances: how wholly unclean they are? Such are they also that sin, though they see it not. For, tell me, is not he who is possessed by the desire of riches or carnal lust, worse than any one that is in a fever? Is he not more unclean than all these, when he does and submits to all shameless things?

7. For what is baser than a man who is in love with money? Whatever things women that are harlots or on the stage refuse not to do neither does he [refuse]. Rather it is likely that they would refuse [to do] a thing, rather than he. He even submits to do things fit for slaves, flattering those whom he ought not; again he is overbearing where he ought not to be, being inconsistent in every respect. He will sit by flattering wicked people, and oftentimes depraved old men, that are of much poorer and meaner condition than himself; and will be insolent and overbearing to others that are good and in all respects virtuous. You see in both respects the baseness, the shamelessness: he is both humble beyond measure, and boastful.

Harlots however stand in front of their house, and the charge against them is that they sell their body for money: yet, one may say, poverty and hunger compel them (although at the most this is no sufficient excuse: for they might gain a livelihood by work). But the covetous man stands, not before his house, but before the midst of the city, making over to the devil not his body but his soul; so that he [the devil] is in his company, and goes in unto him, as verily to a harlot: and having satisfied all his lusts departs; and all the city sees it, not two or three persons only.

And this again is the peculiarity of harlots, that they are his who gives the gold. Even if he be a slave or a gladiator, or any person whatever, yet if he offers their hire, they receive him. But the free, even should they be more noble than all, they do not accept without the money. These men also do the same. They turn away right thoughts when they bring no money; but they associate with the abominable, and actually with those that fight with wild beasts, for the sake of the gold, and associate with them shamelessly and destroy the beauty of the soul. For as those women are naturally of odious appearance and black, and awkward and gross, and formless and ill-shaped, and in all respects disgusting, such do the souls of these men become, not able to conceal their deformity by their outward paintings. For when the ill look is extreme, whatever they may devise, they cannot succeed in their feigning.

For that shamelessness makes harlots, hear the prophet saying, "*You were shameless towards all; you had a harlot's countenance.*" [Jeremiah 3:3] This may be said to the covetous also: "*You were shameless towards all,*" not towards these or those, but "*towards all.*" How? Such an one respects neither father, nor son, nor wife, nor friend, nor brother, nor benefactor, nor absolutely any one. And why do I say friend, and brother, and father? He respects not God Himself, but all [we believe] seems to him

a fable; and he laughs, intoxicated by his great lust, and not even admitting into his ears any of the things which might profit him.

But O! Their absurdity! And then what things they say! "*Woe to you, O Mammon, and to him that has you not.*" At this I am torn to pieces with indignation: for woe to those who say these things, though they say them in jest. For tell me, has not God uttered such a threat as this, saying, "*You cannot serve two masters*"? [Matthew 6:24] And do you set at nought the threat? Does not Paul say that it is Idolatry, and does he not call "*the covetous man an Idolater*"? [Ephesians 5:5]

8. And you stand laughing, raising a laugh after the manner of women of the world who are on the stage. This has overthrown, this has cast down everything. Our affairs, both our business and our politeness, are turned into laughing; there is nothing steady, nothing grave. I say not these things to men of the world only; but I know those whom I am hinting at. For the Church has been filled with laughter. Whatever clever thing one may say, immediately there is laughter among those present: and the marvelous thing is that many do not leave off laughing even during the very time of the prayer.

Everywhere the devil leads the dance, he has entered into all, is master of all. Christ is dishonored, is thrust aside; the Church is made no account of. Do ye not hear Paul saying, Let "*filthiness and foolish talking and jesting*" [Ephesians 5:4] be put away from you? He places "*jesting*" along with "*filthiness,*" and do you laugh? What is "*foolish talking*"? That which has nothing profitable. And do you, a solitary, laugh at all and relax your countenance? thou that art crucified? thou that art a mourner? Tell me, do you laugh? Where do you hear of Christ doing this? Nowhere: but that He was sad indeed oftentimes. For even when He looked on Jerusalem, He wept; and when He thought on the Traitor He was troubled; and when He

was about to raise Lazarus, He wept; and do you laugh? If he who grieves not over the sins of others deserves to be accused, of what consideration will he be worthy, who is without sorrow for his own sins, yea laughs at them? This is the season of grief and tribulation, of bruising and bringing matter [the body], of conflicts and sweatings, and do you laugh? Do you not see how Sarah was rebuked? Do you not hear Christ saying, "*Woe to them that laugh, for they shall weep*"? [Luke 6:25] Thou chantest these things every day, for, tell me, what do you say? "*I have laughed*?" By no means; but what? "*I labored in my groaning*." [Psalm 6:6]

But perchance there are some persons so dissolute and silly as even during this very rebuke to laugh, because forsooth we thus discourse about laughter. For indeed such is their derangement, such their madness, that it does not feel the rebuke.

The Priest of God is Standing, offering up the prayer of all: and are you laughing, having no fears? And while he is offering up the prayers in trembling for you, do you despise all? Do you not hear the Scripture saying, "*Woe, you despisers!*" [cf. Acts 13:41 from Habakkuk 1:5]; do you not shudder? Do you not humble yourself? Even when you enter a royal palace, you order yourself in dress, and look, and gait, and all other respects: and here where there is the true Palace, and things like those of heaven, do you laugh? You indeed, I know, see [them] not, but hear thou that there are angels present everywhere, and in the house of God especially they stand by the King, and all is filled by those incorporeal Powers.

This my discourse is addressed to women also, who in the presence of their husbands indeed do not dare readily to do this, and even if they do it, it is not at all times, but during a season of relaxation, but here they do it always. Tell me, O woman, do you cover your head and laugh, sitting in the Church? Did you come in here to make confession of sins, to fall down

before God, to entreat and to supplicate for the transgressions you have wretchedly committed, and do you do this with laughter? How then will you be able to propitiate Him?

9. But (one says) what harm is there in laughter? There is no harm in laughter; the harm is when it is beyond measure, and out of season. Laughter has been implanted in us, that when we see our friends after a long time, we may laugh; that when we see any persons downcast and fearful, we may relieve them by our smile; not that we should burst out violently and be always laughing. Laughter has been implanted in our soul, that the soul may sometimes be refreshed, not that it may be quite relaxed. For carnal desire also is implanted in us, and yet it is not by any means necessary that because it is implanted in us, therefore we should use it, or use it immoderately: but we should hold it in subjection, and not say, Because it is implanted in us, let us use it.

Serve God with tears, that you may be able to wash away your sins. I know that many mock us, saying, "*Tears directly.*" Therefore it is a time for tears. I know also that they are disgusted, who say, "*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.*" [1 Corinthians 15:32] "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 1:2] It is not I that say it, but he who had had the experience of all things says thus: "*I built for me houses, I planted vineyards, I made me pools of water, [I had] men servants and women servants.*" [Ecclesiastes 2:4-7] And what then after all these things? "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 12:8]

Let us mourn therefore, beloved, let us mourn in order that we may laugh indeed, that we may rejoice indeed in the time of unmixed joy. For with this joy [here] grief is altogether mingled: and never is it possible to find it pure. But that is simple and undeceiving joy: it has nothing treacherous, nor any admixture. In that joy let us delight ourselves; that let

us pursue after. And it is not possible to obtain this in any other way, than by choosing here not what is pleasant, but what is profitable, and being willing to be afflicted a little, and bearing all things with thanksgiving. For thus we shall be able to attain even to the Kingdom of Heaven, of which may we all be counted worthy, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father be glory, together with the Holy Ghost, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 16 on Hebrews

Hebrews 9:15-18

" And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives. Whereupon neither the first [testament] was dedicated without blood."

1. It was probable that many of those who were more weakly would especially distrust the promises of Christ because He had died. Paul accordingly out of a superabundance introduced this illustration, deriving it from common custom. Of what kind is it? He says, *"indeed, on this very account we ought to be of good courage."* On what account? Because testaments are established and obtain their force when those who have made them are not living, but dead. *"And for this cause,"* he says, *"He is the Mediator of the New Testament."* A Testament is made towards the last day, [the day] of death.

And a testament is of this character: It makes some heirs, and some disinherited. So in this case also: *"I will that where I am,"* Christ says, *"they also may be."* [John 17:24] And again of the disinherited, hear Him saying, *"I pray not for" all, "but for them that believe in Me through their word."* [John 17:20] Again, a testament has relation both to the testator, and to the legatees; so that they have some things to receive, and some to do. So also in this case. For after having made promises innumerable, He demands also

something from them, saying, "*a new commandment I give unto you.*" [John 13:34] Again, a testament ought to have witnesses. Hear Him again saying, "*I am one that bear witness of Myself, and He that sent Me bears witness of Me.*" [John 8:18] And again, "*He shall testify of Me*" [John 15:26], speaking of the Comforter. The twelve Apostles too He sent, saying, "*Bear ye witness before God.*"

2. "*And for this cause*" (he says) "*He is the Mediator of the New Testament.*" What is a "*Mediator*"? A mediator is not lord of the thing of which he is mediator, but the thing belongs to one person, and the mediator is another: as for instance, the mediator of a marriage is not the bridegroom, but one who aids him who is about to be married. So then also here: The Son became Mediator between the Father and us. The Father willed not to leave us this inheritance, but was angry against us, and was displeased [with us] as being estranged [from Him]; He accordingly became Mediator between us and Him, and prevailed with Him.

And what then? How did He become Mediator? He brought words from [Him] and brought [them to us], conveying over what came from the Father to us, and adding His own death thereto. We had offended: we ought to have died: He died for us and made us worthy of the Testament. By this is the Testament secure, in that henceforward it is not made for the unworthy. At the beginning indeed, He made His dispositions as a father for sons; but after we had become unworthy, there was no longer need of a testament, but of punishment.

Why then (he would say) do you think upon the law? For it placed us in a condition of so great sin, that we could never have been saved, if our Lord had not died for us; the law would not have had power, for it is weak.

3. And he established this no longer from common custom only, but also from what happened under the old [Testament]: which especially

influenced them. There was no one who died there: how then could that [Testament] be firm? In the same way (he says). How? For blood was there also, as there is blood here. And if it was not the blood of the Christ, do not be surprised; for it was a type. *"Whereupon,"* he says, *"neither was the first [Testament] dedicated without blood."*

What is *"was dedicated"*? Was confirmed, was ratified. The word *"whereupon"* means *"for this cause."* It was needful that the symbol of the Testament should be also that of death.

Hebrews 9:19-20

For why (tell me) is the book of the testament sprinkled? *"For"* (he says) *"when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament, which God has enjoined unto you."* Tell me then why is the book of the testament sprinkled, and also the people, except on account of the precious blood, figured from the first? Why *"with hyssop"*? It is close and retentive. And why the *"water"*? It shows forth also the cleansing by water. And why the *"wool"*? This also [was used], that the blood might be retained. In this place blood and water show forth the same thing, for baptism is His passion.

Hebrews 9:21-22

4. *"Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission."* Why the *"almost"*? Why did he qualify it? Because those [ordinances] were not a perfect purification, nor a perfect remission, but half-complete and in a very small degree. But in this case He says, *"This is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins."* [Matthew 26:28]

Where then is *"the book"*? He purified their minds. They themselves then were the books of the New Testament. But where are *"the vessels of the ministry"*? They are themselves. And where is *"the tabernacle"*? Again, they are; for *"I will dwell in them,"* He says, *"and walk in them."* [2 Corinthians 6:16]

5. But they were not sprinkled with *"scarlet wool,"* nor yet *"with hyssop."* Why was this? Because the cleansing was not bodily but spiritual, and the blood was spiritual. How? It flowed not from the body of irrational animals, but from the Body prepared by the Spirit. With this blood not Moses but Christ sprinkled us, through the word which was spoken; *"This is the blood of the New Testament, for the remission of sins."* This word, instead of hyssop, having been dipped in the blood, sprinkles all. And there indeed the body was cleansed outwardly, for the purifying was bodily; but here, since the purifying is spiritual, it enters into the soul, and cleanses it, not being simply sprinkled over, but gushing forth in our souls. The initiated understand what is said. And in their case indeed one sprinkled just the surface; but he who was sprinkled washed it off again; for surely he did not go about continually stained with blood. But in the case of the soul it is

not so, but the blood is mixed with its very substance, making it vigorous and pure, and leading it to the very unapproachable beauty.

6. Henceforward then he shows that His death is the cause not only of confirmation, but also of purification. For inasmuch as death was thought to be an odious thing, and especially that of the cross, he says that it purified, even a precious purification, and in regard to greater things. Therefore the sacrifices preceded, because of this blood. Therefore the lambs; everything was for this cause.

Hebrews 9:23

"It was therefore necessary that the Patterns" (he says) "of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

And how are they *"patterns of things in the heavens"*? And what does he mean now by *"the things in the heavens"*? Is it Heaven? Or is it the Angels? None of these, but what is ours. It follows then that our things are in Heaven, and heavenly things are ours, even though they be accomplished on earth; since although angels are on earth, yet they are called Heavenly. And the Cherubim appeared on earth, but yet are heavenly. And why do I say *"appeared"*? Nay rather they dwell on earth, as indeed in Paradise: but this is nothing; for they are heavenly. And, *"Our conversation is in Heaven"* [Philippians 3:20], and yet we live here.

"But these are the heavenly things," that is, the philosophy which exists among us; those who have been called thereto.

"With better sacrifices than these." What is *"better"* is better than something [else] that is good. Therefore *"the patterns also of things in the heavens"* have become good; for not even the patterns were evil: else the things whereof they are patterns would also have been evil.

7. If then we are heavenly, and have obtained such a sacrifice, let us fear. Let us no longer continue on the earth; for even now it is possible for him that wishes it, not to be on the earth. For to be and not to be on the earth is the effect of moral disposition and choice. For instance; God is said to be in Heaven. Wherefore? Not because He is confined by space, far from it, nor as having left the earth destitute of His presence, but by His relation to and intimacy with the Angels. If then we also are near to God, we are in

Heaven. For what care I about Heaven when I see the Lord of Heaven, when I myself have become a Heaven? "*For,*" He says, "*We will come,*" I and the Father, "*and will make our abode with him.*" [John 14:23]

Let us then make our soul a Heaven. The heaven is naturally bright; for not even in a storm does it become black, for it does not itself change its appearance, but the clouds run together and cover it. Heaven has the Sun; we also have the Sun of Righteousness. I said it is possible to become a Heaven; and I see that it is possible to become even better than Heaven. How? When we have the Lord of the Sun. Heaven is throughout pure and without spot; it changes not either in a storm or in the night. Neither let us then be so influenced either by tribulations or by "*the wiles of the devil*" [Ephesians 6:11], but let us continue spotless and pure. Heaven is high and far from the earth. Let us also effect this [as regards ourselves]; let us withdraw ourselves from the earth, and exalt ourselves to that height, and remove ourselves far from the earth. Heaven is higher than the rains and the storms, and is reached by none of them. This we also can do, if we will.

It does appear to be, but is not really so affected. Neither then let us be affected, even if we appear to be so. For as in a storm, most men know not the beauty of [heaven,] but think that it is changed, while philosophers know that it is not affected at all, so with regard to ourselves also in afflictions; most men think that we are changed with them, and that affliction has touched our very heart, but philosophers know that it has not touched us.

8. Let us then become heaven, let us mount up to that height, and so we shall see men differing nothing from ants. I do not speak of the poor only, nor the many, but even if there be a general there, even if the emperor be there, we shall not distinguish the emperor, nor the private person. We shall not know what is gold, or what is silver, or what is silken or purple

raiment: we shall see all things as if they were flies, if we be seated in that height. There is no tumult there, no disturbance, nor clamor.

And how is it possible (one says) for him who walks on the earth, to be raised up to that height? I do not tell it you in words, but I show you in fact those who have attained to that height. Who then are they?

I mean such as Paul, who being on earth, spent their lives in heaven. But why do I say *"in heaven"*? They were higher than the Heaven, yea than the other heaven, and mounted up to God Himself. For, *"who"* (he says) *"shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* [Romans 8:35] And again, *"while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."* [2 Corinthians 4:18] Do you see that he did not even see the things here? But to show you that he was higher than the heavens, hear him saying himself, *"For I am persuaded that neither death, or life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ."* [Romans 8:38-39]

Do you see how thought, hurrying past all things, made him higher not than this creation only, not than these heavens, but even [than any other also] if any other there were? Have you seen the elevation of his mind? Have you seen what the tent-maker became, because he had the will, he who had spent his whole life in the market-place?

9. For there is no hindrance, no not any, but that we may rise above all men, if we have the will. For if we are so successful in arts that are beyond the reach of the generality, much more in that which does not require so great labor.

For, tell me, what is more difficult than to walk along a tight rope, as if on level ground, and when walking on high to dress and undress, as if

sitting on a couch? Does not the performance seem to us to be so frightful, that we are not even willing to look at it, but are terrified and tremble at the very sight? And tell me, what is more difficult than to hold a pole upon your face, and when you have put up a child upon it, to perform innumerable feats and delight the spectators? And what is more difficult than to play at ball with swords? And tell me what is harder than thoroughly to search out the bottom of the sea? And one might mention innumerable other arts.

But easier than all these, if we have the will, is virtue, and the going up into Heaven. For here it is only necessary to have the will, and all [the rest] follows. For we may not say, I am unable, neither accuse the Creator. For if He made us unable, and then commands, it is an accusation against Himself.

10. How is it then (some one says) that many are not able? How is it then that many are not willing? For, if they be willing, all will be able. Therefore also Paul says, *"I would that all men were even as I myself"* [1 Corinthians 7:7], since he knew that all were able to be as himself. For he would not have said this, if it had been impossible. Do you wish to become [such]? Only lay hold on the beginning.

Tell me now, in the case of any arts, when we wish to attain them, are we content with wishing, or do we also engage with the things themselves? As for instance, one wishes to become a pilot; he does not say, I wish, and content himself with that, but he also puts his hand to the work. He wishes to become a merchant; he does not merely say, I wish, but he also puts his hand to the work. Again he wishes to travel abroad, and he does not say, I wish, but he puts his hand to the work. In everything then, wishing alone is not sufficient, but work must also be added; and when you wish to mount up to heaven, do you merely say, *"I wish"*?

How then (he says) did you say that willing is sufficient? [I meant] willing joined with deeds, the laying hold on the thing itself, the laboring. For we have God working with us, and acting with us. Only let us make our choice, only let us apply ourselves to the matter as to work, only let us think earnestly about it, only let us lay it to heart, and all follows. But if we sleep on, and as we snore expect to enter into heaven, how shall we be able to obtain the heavenly inheritance?

Let us therefore be willing, I exhort you, let us be willing. Why do we carry on all our traffic with reference to the present life, which tomorrow we shall leave? Let us choose then that Virtue which will suffice us through all eternity: wherein we shall be continually, and shall enjoy the everlasting good things; which may we all attain, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 17 on Hebrews

Hebrews 9:24-26

" For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest enters into the Holy Place every year with blood of others, for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world. But now, once, in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

1. The Jews greatly prided themselves on the temple and the tabernacle. Wherefore they said, *"The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord."* [Jeremiah 7:4] For nowhere else in the earth was such a temple constructed as this, either for costliness, or beauty, or anything else. For God who ordained it, commanded that it should be made with great magnificence, because they also were more attracted and urged on by material things. For it had bricks of gold in the walls; and any one who wishes may learn this in the second [book] of Kings, and in Ezekiel, and how many talents of gold were then expended.

But the second [temple] was a more glorious building, both on account of its beauty, and in all other respects. Nor was it revered for this reason only, but also from its being One. For they were wont to resort there from the uttermost parts of the earth, whether from Babylon or from Ethiopia. And Luke shows this when he says in the Acts: *"There were dwelling" there "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in*

Egypt and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene." [Acts 2:5-10] They then who lived in all parts of the world assembled there, and the fame of the temple was great.

What then does Paul do? What [he did] in regard to the sacrifices, that also he does here. For as there he set against [them] the death of Christ, so here also he sets the whole heaven against the temple.

2. And not by this alone did he point out the difference, but also by adding that The Priest is nearer to God: for he says, *"to appear in the presence of God."* So that he made the matter august, not only by the [consideration of] heaven, but also by [that of Christ's] entering in [there]. For not merely through symbols as here, but He sees God Himself there.

Do you see that condescension through the lowly things have been said throughout? Why do you then any longer wonder that He intercedes there, where He places Himself as a High Priest? *"Nor yet, that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest."*

"For Christ is not entered into the Holy Places made with hands" (he says) *"which are the figures of the True."* (These then are true; and those are figures, for the temple too has been so arranged, as the Heaven of Heavens.)

What do you say? He who is everywhere present, and who fills all things, does not He *"appear"* unless He enter into Heaven? You see that all these things pertain to the flesh.

"To appear," he says, *"in the presence of God for us."* What is *"for us"*? He went up (he means) with a sacrifice which had power to propitiate the Father. Wherefore (tell me)? Was He an enemy? The angels were enemies, He was not an enemy. For that the Angels were enemies, hear what he says, *"He made peace as to things on earth and things in Heaven."* [Colossians 1:20] So that He also *"entered into Heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us."* He *"now appears,"* but *"for us."*

3. *"Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest enters into the Holy place every year with blood of others."* Seest Thou how many are the differences? The *"often"* for the *"once"*; *"the blood of others,"* for *"His own."* Great is the distance. He is Himself then both victim and Priest and sacrifice. For if it had not been so, and it had been necessary to offer many sacrifices, He must have been many times crucified. *"For then,"* he says, *"He must often have suffered since the foundation of the world."*

In this place he has also veiled over something. *"But now once more in the end of the world."* Why *"at the end of the world"*? After the many sins. If therefore, it had taken place at the beginning, then no one would have believed; and He must not die a second time, all would have been useless. But since later, there were many transgressions, with reason He then appeared: which he expresses in another place also, *"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. But now once in the end of the world, has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."* [Romans 5:20]

Hebrews 9:27

4. [Hebrews 9:27] *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this, the Judgment."* He next says also why He died once [only]: because He became a ransom by one death. *"It had been appointed"* (he says) *"unto men once to die."* This then is [the meaning of] *"He died once,"* for all. (What then? Do we no longer die that death? We do indeed die, but we do not continue in it: which is not to die at all. For the tyranny of death, and death indeed, is when he who dies is never more allowed to return to life. But when after dying is living, and that a better life, this is not death, but sleep.) Since then death was to have possession of all, therefore He died that He might deliver us.

Hebrews 9:28

"So Christ was once offered." By whom offered? Evidently by Himself. Here he says that He is not Priest only, but Victim also, and what is sacrificed. On this account are [the words] *"was offered."* *"Was once offered"* (he says) *"to bear the sins of many."* Why *"of many,"* and not *"of all"*? Because not all believed. For He died indeed for all, that is His part: for that death was a counterbalance against the destruction of all men. But He did not bear the sins of all men, because they were not willing.

And what is [the meaning of] *"He bare the sins"*? Just as in the Oblation we bear up our sins and say, *"Whether we have sinned voluntarily or involuntarily, do Thou forgive,"* that is, we make mention of them first, and then ask for their forgiveness. So also was it done here. Where has Christ done this? Hear Himself saying, *"And for their sakes I sanctify Myself."* [John 17:19] Lo! He bore the sins. He took them from men, and bore them to the Father; not that He might determine anything against them [mankind], but that He might forgive them.

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear" (he says) *"the second time without sin unto salvation."* What is *"without sin"*? It is as much as to say, He sins not. For neither did He die as owing the debt of death, nor yet because of sin. But how *"shall He appear"*? To punish, you say. He did not however say this, but what was cheering; *"shall He appear unto them that look for Him, without sin unto salvation."* So that for the time to come they no longer need sacrifices to save themselves, but to do this by deeds.

Hebrews 10:1

5. [Hebrews 10:1] *"For" (he says) "the Law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things";* i.e. not the very reality. For as in painting, so long as one [only] draws the outlines, it is a sort of *"shadow"* but when one has added the bright paints and laid in the colors, then it becomes *"an image."* Something of this kind also was the Law.

"For" (he says) "the Law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things," i.e. of the sacrifice, of the remission: *"can never by those sacrifices with which they offered continually make the comers thereunto perfect."*

Hebrews 10:2-9

"For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshipers once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when He comes into the world, He says, Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body have You prepared Me. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo! I come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me, to do Your will, O God. Above when He said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and [offering] for sin You would not, neither had pleasure therein, which are offered by the Law, then He said, Lo! I come to do Your will, O God! He takes away the first that He may establish the second." [Hebrews 10:2-9]

You see again the superabundance [of his proofs]? This sacrifice (he says) is one; whereas the others were many: therefore they had no strength, because they were many. For, tell me, what need of many, if one had been sufficient? So that their being many, and offered "*continually*," proves that they [the worshipers] were never made clean. For as a medicine, when it is powerful and productive of health, and able to remove the disease entirely, effects all after one application; as, therefore, if being once applied it accomplishes the whole, it proves its own strength in being no more applied, and this is its business, to be no more applied; whereas if it is applied continually, this is a plain proof of its not having strength. For it is the excellence of a medicine to be applied once, and not often. So is it in this case also. Why forsooth are they continually cured with the "*same sacrifices*"? For if they were set free from all their sins, the sacrifices would

not have gone on being offered every day. For they had been appointed to be continually offered in behalf of the whole people, both in the evening and in the day. So that there was an arraignment of sins, and not a release from sins; an arraignment of weakness, not an exhibition of strength. For because the first had no strength, another also was offered: and since this effected nothing, again another; so that it was an evidence of sins. The "*offering*" indeed then, was an evidence of sins, the "*continually*," an evidence of weakness. But with regard to Christ, it was the contrary: He was "*once offered*." The types therefore contain the figure only, not the power; just as in images, the image has the figure of the man, not the power. So that the reality and the type have [somewhat] in common with one another. For the figure exists equally in both, but not the power. So too also is it in respect of Heaven and of the tabernacle, for the figure was equal: for there was the Holy of Holies, but the power and the other things were not the same.

What is, "*He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*"? What is this "*putting away*"? It is making contemptible. For sin has no longer any boldness; for it is made of no effect in that when it ought to have demanded punishment, it did not demand it: that is, it suffered violence: when it expected to destroy all men, then it was itself destroyed.

"*He has appeared by the sacrifice of Himself*" (he says), that is, "*He has appeared*," unto God, and drawn near [unto Him]. For do not [think] because the High Priest was wont to do this oftentimes in the year.... So that henceforward this is done in vain, although it is done; for what need is there of medicines where there are no wounds? On this account He ordained offerings "*continually*," because of their want of power, and that a remembrance of sins might be made.

6. What then? Do not we offer every day? We offer indeed, but making a remembrance of His death, and this [remembrance] is one and not many. How is it one, and not many? Inasmuch as that [Sacrifice] was once for all offered, [and] carried into the Holy of Holies. This is a figure of that [sacrifice] and this remembrance of that. For we always offer the same, not one sheep now and tomorrow another, but always the same thing: so that the sacrifice is one. And yet by this reasoning, since the offering is made in many places, are there many Christs? But Christ is one everywhere, being complete here and complete there also, one Body. As then while offered in many places, He is one body and not many bodies; so also [He is] one sacrifice. He is our High Priest, who offered the sacrifice that cleanses us. That we offer now also, which was then offered, which cannot be exhausted. This is done in remembrance of what was then done. For (says He) *"do this in remembrance of Me."* [Luke 22:19] It is not another sacrifice, as the High Priest, but we offer always the same, or rather we perform a remembrance of a Sacrifice.

7. But since I have mentioned this sacrifice, I wish to say a little in reference to you who have been initiated; little in quantity, but possessing great force and profit, for it is not our own, but the words of Divine Spirit . What then is it? Many partake of this sacrifice once in the whole year, others twice; others many times. Our word then is to all; not to those only who are here, but to those also who are settled in the desert. For they partake once in the year, and often indeed at intervals of two years.

What then? Which shall we approve? Those [who receive] once [in the year]? Those who [receive] many times? Those who [receive] few times? Neither those [who receive] once, nor those [who receive] often, nor those [who receive] seldom, but those [who come] with a pure conscience, from a pure heart, with an irreproachable life. Let such draw near continually; but

those who are not such, not even once. Why, you will ask? Because they receive to themselves judgment, yea and condemnation, and punishment, and vengeance. And do not wonder. For as food, nourishing by nature, if received by a person without appetite, ruins and corrupts all [the system], and becomes an occasion of disease, so surely is it also with respect to the awful mysteries. Do you feast at a spiritual table, a royal table, and again pollute your mouth with mire? Do you anoint yourself with sweet ointment, and again fill yourself with ill savors?

Tell me, I beseech you, when after a year you partake of the Communion, do you think that the Forty Days are sufficient for you for the purifying of the sins of all that time? And again, when a week has passed, do you give yourself up to the former things? Tell me now, if when you have been well for forty days after a long illness, you should again give yourself up to the food which caused the sickness, have you not lost your former labor too? For if natural things are changed, much more those which depend on choice. As for instance, by nature we see, and naturally we have healthy eyes; but oftentimes from a bad habit [of body] our power of vision is injured. If then natural things are changed, much more those of choice. Thou assignest forty days for the health of the soul, or perhaps not even forty, and do you expect to propitiate God? Tell me, are you in sport?

These things I say, not as forbidding you the one and annual coming, but as wishing you to draw near continually.

8. These things have been given to the holy. This the Deacon also proclaims when he calls on the holy; even by this call searching the faults of all. For as in a flock, where many sheep indeed are in good health, but many are full of the scab, it is needful that these should be separated from the healthy; so also in the Church: since some sheep are healthy, and some diseased, by this voice he separates the one from the other, the priest [I

mean] going round on all sides by this most awful cry, and calling and drawing on the holy. For it is not possible that a man should know the things of his neighbor, (for "*what man,*" he says, "*knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?*" [1 Corinthians 2:11]): he utters this voice after the whole sacrifice has been completed, that no person should come to the spiritual fountain carelessly and in a chance way. For in the case of the flock also (for nothing prevents us from again using the same example), the sickly ones we shut up within, and keep them in the dark, and give them different food, not permitting them to partake either of pure air, or of simple grass, or of the fountain without [the fold]. In this case then also this voice is instead of fetters.

You can not say, 'I did not know, I was not aware that danger attends the matter.' Nay surely Paul too especially testified this. But will you say, 'I never read it'? This is not an apology, but even an accusation. Do you come into the Church every day and yet art ignorant of this?

However, that you may not have even this excuse to offer, for this cause, with a loud voice, with an awful cry, like some herald lifting up his hand on high, standing aloft, conspicuous to all, and after that awful silence crying out aloud, he invites some, and some he forbids, not doing this with his hand, but with his tongue more distinctly than with his hand. For that voice, falling on our ears, just like a hand, thrusts away and casts out some, and introduces and presents others.

Tell me then, I beseech [you], in the Olympic games does not the herald stand, calling out with loud and uplifted voice, saying, "*Does any one accuse this man? Is he a slave? Is he a thief? Is he one of wicked manners?*" And yet, those contests for prizes are not of the soul nor yet of good morals, but of strength and the body. If then where there is exercise of bodies, much examination is made about character, how much rather here,

where the soul is alone the combatant. Our herald then even now stands, not holding each person by the head, and drawing him forward, but holding all together by the head within; he does not set against them other accusers, but themselves against themselves. For he says not, *"Does any one accuse this man?"* but what? *"If any man accuse himself."* For when he says, The Holy things for the holy, he means this: *"If any is not holy, let him not draw near."*

He does not simply say, *"free from sins,"* but, *"holy."* For it is not merely freedom from sins which makes a man holy, but also the presence of the Spirit, and the wealth of good works. I do not merely wish (he says) that you should be delivered from the mire, but also that you should be bright and beautiful. For if the Babylonian King, when he made choice of the youths from the captives, chose out those who were beautiful in form, and of fair countenance: much more is it needful that we, when we stand by the royal table, should be beautiful in form, [I mean] that of the soul, having adornment of gold, our robe pure, our shoes royal, the face of our soul well-formed, the golden ornament put around it, even the girdle of truth. Let such an one as this draw near, and touch the royal cups.

But if any man clothed in rags, filthy, squalid, wish to enter in to the royal table, consider how much he will suffer, the forty days not being sufficient to wash away the offenses which have been committed in all the time. For if hell is not sufficient, although it be eternal (for therefore also it *is* eternal), much more this short time. For we have not shown a strong repentance, but a weak.

9. Eunuchs especially ought to stand by the King: by eunuchs, I mean those who are clear in their mind, having no wrinkle nor spot, lofty in mind, having the eye of the soul gentle and quick-sighted, active and sharp, not sleepy nor supine; full of much freedom, and yet far from impudence and

overboldness, wakeful, healthful, neither very gloomy and downcast, nor yet dissolute and soft.

This eye we have it in our own power to create, and to make it quicksighted and beautiful. For when we direct it, not to the smoke nor to the dust (for such are all human things), but to the delicate breeze, to the light air, to things heavenly and high, and full of much calmness and purity, and of much delight, we shall speedily restore it, and shall invigorate it, as it luxuriates in such contemplation. Have you seen covetousness and great wealth? Do not thou lift up your eye thereto. The thing is mire, it is smoke, an evil vapor, darkness, and great distress and suffocating cares. Have you seen a man cultivating righteousness, content with his own, and having abundant space for recreation, having anxieties, not fixing his thoughts on things here? Set [your eye] there, and lift [it] up on high; and you will make it far the most beautiful, and more splendid, feasting it not with the flowers of the earth, but with those of virtue, with temperance, moderation, and all the rest. For nothing so troubles the eye as an evil conscience (*"My eye,"* it is said, *"was troubled by reason of anger"* [Psalm 6:7]); nothing so darkens it. Set it free from this injury, and you will make it vigorous and strong, ever nourished with good hopes.

And may we all make both it and also the other energies of the soul, such as Christ desires, that being made worthy of the Head who is set over us, we may depart there where He wishes. For He says, *"I will that where I am, they also may be with Me, that they may behold My glory."* [John 17:24] Which may we all enjoy in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 18 on Hebrews

Hebrews 10:8-13

" Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering, and burnt-offerings, and [offering] for sin, You would not, neither had pleasure [therein], which are offered by the Law, then said He, Lo! I come to do Your will, O God. He takes away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all. And every Priest stands daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this [man] after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool."

1. In what has gone before he had shown that the sacrifices were unavailing for perfect purification, and were a type, and greatly defective. Since then there was this objection to his argument, If they are types, how is it that, after the truth has come, they have not ceased, nor given place, but are still performed? He here accordingly labors at this very point, showing that they are no longer performed, even as a figure, for God does not accept them. And this again he shows not from the New [Testament], but from the prophets, bringing forward from times of old the strongest testimony, that it [the old system] comes to an end, and ceases, and that they do all in vain, *"always resisting the Holy Ghost."* [Acts 7:51]

And he shows over and above that they cease not now [only], but at the very coming of the Messiah, nay rather, even before His coming: and how it was that Christ did not abolish them at the last, but they were abolished first, and then He came; first they were made to cease, and then

He appeared. That they might not say, Even without this sacrifice, and by means of those, we could have been well pleasing unto God, He waited for these sacrifices to be convicted [of weakness], and then He appeared; for (He says) "*sacrifice and offering You would not.*" Hereby He took all away; and having spoken generally, He says also particularly, "*In burnt-offerings and [sacrifice] for sin You had no pleasure.*" But "*the offering*" was everything except the sacrifice. "*Then said I, Lo! I come.*" Of whom was this spoken? Of none other than the Christ.

Here he does not blame those who offer, showing that it is not because of their wickednesses that He does not accept them, as He says elsewhere, but because the thing itself has been convicted for the future and shown to have no strength, nor any suitableness to the times. What then has this to do with the "*sacrifices*" being offered "*oftentimes*"? Not only from their being "*oftentimes*" [offered] (he means) is it manifest that they are weak, and that they effected nothing; but also from God's not accepting them, as being unprofitable and useless. And in another place it is said, "*If You had desired sacrifice I would have given it.*" [Psalm 51:16] Therefore by this also he makes it plain that He does not desire it. Therefore sacrifices are not God's will, but the abolition of sacrifices. Wherefore they sacrifice contrary to His will.

What is "*To do Your will*"? To give up Myself, He means: This is the will of God. "*By which Will we are sanctified.*" Or he even means something still further, that the sacrifices do not make men clean, but the Will of God. Therefore to offer sacrifice is not the will of God.

2. And why do you wonder that it is not the will of God now, when it was not His will even from the beginning? For "*who,*" says He, "*has required this at your hands?*" [Isaiah 1:12]

How then did He Himself enjoin it? In condescension. For as Paul says, *"I would that all men were even as I myself"* [1 Corinthians 7:7], in respect of continence, and again says, *"I will that the younger women marry, bear children"* [1 Timothy 5:14]; and lays down two wills, yet the two are not his own, although he commands; but the one indeed is his own, and therefore he lays it down without reasons; while the other is not his own, though he wishes it, and therefore it is added with a reason. For having previously accused them, because *"they had waxed wanton against Christ"* [1 Timothy 5:11], he then says, *"I will that the younger women marry, bear children."* [1 Timothy 5:14] So in this place also it was not His leading will that the sacrifices should be offered. For, as He says, *"I wish not the death of the sinner, as that he should turn unto [Me] and live"* [Ezekiel 33:11]: and in another place He says that He not only wished, but even desired this: and yet these are contrary to each other: for intense wishing is desire. How then dost Thou *"not wish"*? How dost Thou in another place *"desire,"* which is a sign of vehement wishing? So is it in this case also.

"By the which will we are sanctified," he says. How sanctified? *"by the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all."*

3. *"And every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice."* (To stand therefore is a sign of ministering; accordingly to sit, is a sign of being ministered unto.)

Hebrews 10:14-15

"But this [man] after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." [Hebrews 10:14-15] "For by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." He had said that those [sacrifices] are not offered; he reasoned from what is written, [and] from what is not written; moreover also he put forward the prophetic word which says, "sacrifice and offering You would not." He had said that He had forgiven their sins.

Hebrews 10:16-18

Again this also He proves from the testimony of what is written, for *"the Holy Ghost"* (he says) *"is a witness to us: for after that He had said,"* [Hebrews 10:16-18] *"This is the covenant, that I will make with them, after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin."* So then He forgave their sins, when He gave the Covenant, and He gave the Covenant by sacrifice. If therefore He forgave the sins through the one sacrifice, there is no longer need of a second.

"He sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting." Why the delay? *"that His enemies be put under His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* But perhaps some one might say; Wherefore did He not put them under at once? For the sake of the faithful who should afterwards be brought forth and born. Whence then [does it appear] that they shall be put under? By the saying *"He sat down."* He called to mind again that testimony which says, *"until I put the enemies under His feet."* [See Hebrews 1:13] But His enemies are the Jews. Then since he had said, *"Till His enemies be put under His feet,"* and they [these enemies] were vehemently urgent, therefore he introduces all his discourse concerning faith after this. But who are the enemies? All unbelievers: the dæmons. And intimating the greatness of their subjection, he said not *"are subjected,"* but *"are put under His feet."*

4. Let us not therefore be of [the number of] His enemies. For not they alone are enemies, the unbelievers and Jews, but those also who are full of unclean living. *"For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not*

subject to the law of God, for neither can it be." [Romans 8:7] What then (you say)? This is not a ground of blame. Nay rather, it is very much a ground of blame. For the wicked man as long as he is wicked, cannot be subject [to God's law]; he can however change and become good.

Let us then cast out carnal minds. But what are carnal? Whatever makes the body flourish and do well, but injures the soul: as for instance, wealth, luxury, glory (all these things are of the flesh), carnal love. Let us not then love gain, but ever follow after poverty: for this is a great good.

But (you say) it makes one humble and of little account. [True:] for we have need of this, for it benefits us much. "*Poverty*" (it is said) "*humbles a man.*" [Proverbs 10:4, Septuagint] And again Christ [says], "*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*" [Matthew 5:3] Do you then grieve because you are upon a path leading to virtue? Do you not know that this gives us great confidence?

But, one says, "*the wisdom of the poor man is despised.*" [Ecclesiastes 9:16] And again another says, "*Give me neither riches nor poverty*" [Proverbs 30:8], and, "*Deliver me from the furnace of poverty.*" [See Isaiah 48:10] And again, if riches and poverty are from the Lord, how can either poverty or riches be an evil? Why then were these things said? They were said under the Old [Covenant], where there was much account made of wealth, where there was great contempt of poverty, where the one was a curse and the other a blessing. But now it is no longer so.

But will you hear the praises of poverty? Christ sought after it, and says, "*But the Son of Man has not where to lay His head.*" [Matthew 8:20] And again He said to His disciples, "*Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor two coats.*" [Matthew 10:9-10] And Paul in writing said, "*As having nothing and yet possessing all things.*" [2 Corinthians 6:10] And Peter said to him who was lame from his birth, "*Silver and gold have I none.*" [Acts 3:6] Yea and under the Old [Covenant] itself, where wealth was held in admiration,

who were the admired? Was not Elijah, who had nothing save the sheepskin? Was not Elisha? Was not John?

Let no man then be humiliated on account of his poverty: It is not poverty which humiliates, but wealth, which compels us to have need of many, and forces us to be under obligations to many?

And what could be poorer than Jacob (tell me), who said, *"If the Lord give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on"*? [Genesis 28:20] Were Elijah and John then wanting in boldness? Did not the one reprove Ahab, and the other Herod? The latter said, *"It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife."* [Mark 6:18] And Elias said to Ahab with boldness, *"It is not I that trouble Israel, but you and your father's house."* [1 Kings 18:18] You see that this especially produces boldness; poverty [I mean]? For while the rich man is a slave, being subject to loss, and in the power of every one wishing to do him hurt, he who has nothing, fears not confiscation, nor fine. So, if poverty had made men wanting in boldness Christ would not have sent His disciples with poverty to a work requiring great boldness. For the poor man is very strong, and has nothing wherefrom he may be wronged or evil entreated. But the rich man is assailable on every side: just in the same way as one would easily catch a man who was dragging many long ropes after him, whereas one could not readily lay hold on a naked man. So here also it falls out in the case of the rich man: slaves, gold, lands, affairs innumerable, innumerable cares, difficult circumstances, necessities, make him an easy prey to all.

5. Let no man then henceforth esteem poverty a cause of disgrace. For if virtue be there, all the wealth of the world is neither clay, nor even a mote in comparison of it. This then let us follow after, if we would enter into the kingdom of heaven. For, He says, *"Sell that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in Heaven."* [Matthew 19:21] And again, *"It is*

hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." [Matthew 19:23] Do you see that even if we have it not, we ought to draw it to us? So great a good is Poverty. For it guides us by the hand, as it were, on the path which leads to Heaven, it is an anointing for the combat, an exercise great and admirable, a tranquil haven.

But (you say) I have need of many [things], and am unwilling to receive a favor from any. Nevertheless, even in this respect the rich man is inferior to you; for thou perhaps ask the favor for your support, but he shamelessly [asks] for ten thousand things for covetousness' sake. So that it is the rich that are in need of many [persons], yea oftentimes those who are unworthy of them. For instance, they often stand in need of those who are in the rank of soldiers, or of slaves: but the poor man has no need even of the Emperor himself, and if he should need him, he is admired because he has brought himself down to this, when he might have been rich.

Let no man then accuse poverty as being the cause of innumerable evils, nor let him contradict Christ, who declared it to be the perfection of virtue, saying, *"If you will be perfect."* [Matthew 19:21] For this He both uttered in His words, and showed by His acts, and taught by His disciples. Let us therefore follow after poverty, it is the greatest good to the sober-minded.

Perhaps some of those who hear me, avoid it as a thing of ill omen. I do not doubt it. For this disease is great among most men, and such is the tyranny of wealth, that they cannot even as far as words endure the renunciation of it, but avoid it as of ill omen. Far be this from the Christian's soul: for nothing is richer than he who chooses poverty of his own accord, and with a ready mind.

6. How? I will tell you, and if you please, I will prove that he who chooses poverty of his own accord is richer even than the king himself. For

he indeed needs many [things], and is in anxiety, and fears lest the supplies for the army should fail him; but the other has enough of everything, and fears about nothing, and if he fears, it is not about so great matters. Who then, tell me, is the rich man? He who is daily asking, and earnestly laboring to gather much together, and fears lest at any time he should fall short, or he who gathers nothing together, and is in great abundance and has need of no one? For it is virtue and the fear of God, and not possessions which give confidence. For these even enslave. For it is said, *"Gifts and presents blind the eyes of the wise, and like a muzzle on the mouth turn away reproofs."* [Sirach 20:29]

Consider how the poor man Peter chastised the rich Ananias. Was not the one rich and the other poor? But behold the one speaking with authority and saying, *"Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much"* [Acts 5:8], and the other saying with submission, *"Yea, for so much."* And who (you say) will grant to me to be as Peter? It is open to you to be as Peter if you will; cast away what you have. *"Disperse, give to the poor"* [Psalm 112:9], follow Christ, and you shall be such as he. How? He (you say) wrought miracles. Is it this then, tell me, which made Peter an object of admiration, or the boldness which arose from his manner of life? Do you not hear Christ saying, *"Rejoice not because the devils are subject unto you; If you will be perfect [&c]."* [Luke 10:20] Hear what Peter says: *"Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give you."* [Acts 3:6] If any man have silver and gold, he has not those other gifts.

Why is it then, you say, that many have neither the one nor the other? Because they are not voluntarily poor: since they who are voluntarily poor have all good things. For although they do not raise up the dead nor the lame, yet, what is greater than all; they have confidence towards God. They will hear in that day that blessed voice, *"Come, you blessed of My Father,"*

(what can be better than this?) *"inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered and you gave Me meat: I was thirsty and you gave Me drink: I was a stranger and you took Me in: I was naked and you clothed Me: I was sick and in prison and you visited Me. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

[Matthew 25:34-36] Let us then flee from covetousness, that we may attain to the kingdom [of Heaven]. Let us feed the poor, that we may feed Christ: that we may become fellow-heirs with Him in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 19 on Hebrews

Hebrews 10:19-23

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, through the Veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering."

1. *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us."* Having shown the difference of the High Priest, and of the sacrifices, and of the tabernacle, and of the Covenant, and of the promise, and that the difference is great, since those are temporal, but these eternal, those *"near to vanishing away,"* these permanent, those powerless, these perfect, those figures, these reality, for (he says) *"not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an endless life."* [Hebrews 7:16] And *"You are a Priest for ever."* [Hebrews 5:6] Behold the continuance of the Priest. And concerning the Covenant, That (he says) is old (for *"that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away"* [Hebrews 8:13]), but this is new; and has remission of sins, while that [has] nothing of the kind: for (he says) *"the Law made nothing perfect."* [Hebrews 7:19] And again, *"sacrifice and offering You would not."* [Hebrews 10:5] That is made with hands, while this is *"not made with hands"* [Hebrews 9:11]: that *"has the blood of goats"* [Hebrews 9:12], this

of the Lord; that has the Priest *"standing,"* this *"sitting."* Since therefore all those are inferior and these greater, therefore he says, *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness."*

2. *"Boldness"*: from whence? As sins (he means) produce shame, so the having all things forgiven us, and being made fellow-heirs, and enjoying so great Love, [produces] boldness.

"For the entrance into the holiest." What does he mean here by *"entrance"*? Heaven, and the access to spiritual things.

"Which he has inaugurated," that is, which He prepared, and which He began; for the beginning of using is thenceforth called the inaugurating; which He prepared (he means) and by which He Himself passed.

"A new and living way." Here He expresses *"the full assurance of hope."* *"New,"* he says. He is anxious to show that we have all things greater; since now the gates of Heaven have been opened, which was not done even for Abraham. *"A new and living way,"* he says, for the first was a way of death, leading to Hades, but this of life. And yet he did not say, *"of life,"* but called it *"living,"* (the ordinances, that is,) that which abides.

"Through the veil" (he says) *"of His flesh."* For this flesh first cut that way, by this He inaugurated it [the way] by which He walked. And with good reason did he call [the flesh] *"a veil."* For when it was lifted up on high, then the things in heaven appeared.

"Let us draw near" (he says) *"with a true heart."* To what should we *"draw near"*? To the holy things, the faith, the spiritual service. *"With a true heart, in full assurance of faith,"* since nothing is seen; neither the priest henceforward, nor the sacrifice, nor the altar. And yet neither was that priest visible, but stood within, and they all without, the whole people. But here not only has this taken place, that the priest has entered into the holy of holies, but that we also enter in. Therefore he says, *"in full assurance of*

faith." For it is possible for the doubter to believe in one way, as there are even now many who say, that of some there is a resurrection and of others not. But this is not faith. *"In full assurance of faith"* (he says); for we ought to believe as concerning things that we see, nay, even much more; for *"here"* it is possible to be deceived in the things that are seen, but there not: *"here"* we trust to the senses, but there to the Spirit.

"Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." He shows that not faith only, but a virtuous life also is required, and the consciousness to ourselves of nothing evil. Since the holy of holies does not receive *"with full assurance"* those who are not thus disposed. For they are holy, and the holy of holies; but here no profane person enters. They were sprinkled as to the body, we as to the conscience, so that we may even now be sprinkled over with virtue itself. *"And having our body washed with pure water."* Here he speaks of the Washing, which no longer cleanses the bodies, but the soul.

"For He is faithful that promised." *"That promised"* what? That we are to depart there and enter into the kingdom. Be then in nothing over-curious, nor demand reasonings. Our [religion] needs faith.

Hebrews 10:24-25

3. *"And" (he says) "let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the day approaching." And again in other places, "The Lord is at hand; be careful for nothing." [Philippians 4:5-6] "For now is our salvation nearer: Henceforth the time is short." [Romans 13:11]*

What is, *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"*? [1 Corinthians 7:29] He knew that much strength arises from being together and assembling together. *"For where two or three" (it is said) "are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them"* [Matthew 18:20]; and again, *"That they may be One, as we"* also are [John 17:11]; and, *"They had all one heart and [one] soul."* [Acts 4:32] And not this only, but also because love is increased by the gathering [of ourselves] together; and love being increased, of necessity the things of God must follow also. *"And earnest prayer"* (it is said) was *"made by"* the people. [Acts 12:5] *"As the manner of some is."* Here he not only exhorted, but also blamed [them].

"And let us consider one another," he says, *"to provoke unto love and to good works."* He knew that this also arises from *"gathering together."* For as *"iron sharpens iron"* [Proverbs 17:17], so also association increases love. For if a stone rubbed against a stone sends forth fire, how much more soul mingled with soul! But not unto emulation (he says) but *"unto the sharpening of love."* What is *"unto the sharpening of love"*? Unto the loving and being loved more. *"And of good works"*; that so they might acquire zeal. For if doing has greater force for instruction than speaking, you also have in your number many teachers, who effect this by their deeds.

What is *"let us draw near with a true heart"*? That is, without hypocrisy; for *"woe be to a fearful heart, and faint hands"* [Sirach 2:12]: let there be (he means) no falsehood among us; let us not say one thing and think another; for this is falsehood; neither let us be fainthearted, for this is not [a mark] of a *"true heart."* Faintheartedness comes from not believing. But how shall this be? If we fully assure ourselves through faith.

"Having our hearts sprinkled": why did he not say *"having been purified"*? [Because] he wished to point out the difference of the sprinklings: the one he says is of God, the other our own. For the washing and sprinkling the conscience is of God; but *"the drawing near with"* truth and *"in full assurance of faith"* is our own. Then he also gives strength to their faith from the truth of Him that promised.

What is *"and having our bodies washed with pure water"*? With water which makes pure; or which has no blood.

Then he adds the perfect thing, love. *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,"* which some (he says) do, and divide the assemblies. For *"a brother helped by a brother is as a strong city."* [Proverbs 18:19, Septuagint]

"But let us consider one another to provoke unto love." What is, *"let us consider one another"*? For instance if any be virtuous, let us imitate him, let us look on him so as to love and to be loved. For from Love good works proceed. For the assembling is a great good: since it makes love more warm; and out of love all good things arise. For nothing is good which is not done through love.

4. This then let us *"confirm"* towards each other. *"For love is the fulfilling of the law."* [Romans 13:10] We have no need of labors or of sweatings if we love one another. It is a pathway leading of itself towards virtue. For as on the highway, if any man find the beginning, he is guided

by it, and has no need of one to take him by the hand; so is it also in regard to Love: only lay hold on the beginning, and at once you are guided and directed by it. "*Love works no ill to his neighbor*" [Romans 13:10]; "*thinks no evil.*" [1 Corinthians 13:5] Let each man consider with himself, how he is disposed toward himself. He does not envy himself; he wishes all good things for himself; he prefers himself before all; he is willing to do all things for himself. If then we were so disposed towards others also, all grievous things are brought to an end; there is no enmity; there is no covetousness: for who would choose to overreach himself? No man; but on the contrary we shall possess all things in common, and shall not cease assembling ourselves together. And if we do this, the remembrance of injuries would have no place: for who would choose to remember injuries against himself? Who would choose to be angry with himself? Do we not make allowances for ourselves most of all? If we were thus disposed towards our neighbors also, there will never be any remembrance of injuries.

And how is it possible (you say) that one should so love his neighbor as himself? If others had not done this, you might well think it impossible: but if they have done it, it is plain that from indolence it is not done by ourselves.

And besides, Christ enjoins nothing impossible, seeing that many have even gone beyond His commands. Who has done this? Paul, Peter, all the company of the Saints. Nay, indeed if I say that they loved their neighbors, I say no great matter: they so loved their enemies as no man would love those who were likeminded with himself. For who would choose for the sake of those likeminded, to go away into Hell. when he was about to depart unto a kingdom? No man. But Paul chose this for the sake of his enemies, for those who stoned him, those who scourged him. What pardon then will

there be for us, what excuse, if we shall not show towards our friends even the very smallest portion of that love which Paul showed towards his enemies?

And before him too, the blessed Moses was willing to be blotted out of God's book for the sake of his enemies who had stoned him. David also when he saw those who had stood up against him slain, says, *"I, the shepherd, have sinned, but these, what have they done?"* [See 2 Samuel 24:17] And when he had Saul in his hands, he would not slay him, but saved him; and this when he himself would be in danger. But if these things were done under the Old [Covenant] what excuse shall we have who live under the New, and do not attain even to the same measure with them? For if, *"unless our righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven"* [Matthew 5:20], how shall we enter in when we have even less than they?

5. *"Love your enemies,"* He says. [Matthew 5:44] Love thou therefore your enemy: for you are doing good not to him, but to yourself. How? You are becoming like God. He, if he be beloved of you, has no great gain, for he is beloved by a fellow-slave; but thou, if you love your fellow-slave, hast gained much, for you are becoming like God. Do you see that you are doing a kindness not to him but to yourself? For He appoints the prize not for him, but for you.

What then if he be evil (you say)? So much the greater is the reward. Even for his wickedness you ought to feel grateful to him: even should he be evil after receiving ten thousand kindnesses. For if he were not exceedingly evil, your reward would not have been exceedingly increased; so that the reason you assign, for not loving him, the saying that he is evil, is the very reason for loving him. Take away the contestant and you take away the opportunity for the crowns. Do you see not the athletes, how they

exercise when they have filled the bags with sand? But there is no need for you to practice this. Life is full of things that exercise you, and make you strong. Do you see not the trees too, the more they are shaken by the winds, so much the more do they become stronger and firmer? We then. if we be long-suffering, shall also become strong. For it is said, *"a man who is long-suffering abounds in wisdom, but he that is of a little soul is strongly foolish."* [Proverbs 14:29] Do you see how great is his commendation of the one, do you see how great his censure of the other? *"Strongly foolish,"* i.e. very [foolish]. Let us not then be faint-hearted one towards another: for this does not rise from enmity, but from having a small soul. As if the soul be strong, it will endure all things easily, and nothing will be able to sink it, but will lead it into tranquil havens. To which may we all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 20 on Hebrews

Hebrews 10:26-27

"For if we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

1. Trees which have been planted, and have had the advantage of all other care, and the hands and the labors of the cultivator, and yet yield no return for the labors, are pulled up by the roots, and handed over to the fire. So somewhat of this kind takes place also in the case of our Illumination.

For when Christ has planted us, and we have enjoyed the watering of the Spirit, and then show no fruit; fire, even that of Hell, awaits us, and flame unquenchable.

Paul therefore having exhorted them to love and to bringing forth the fruit of good works, and having urged them from the kindlier [considerations] (What are these? That we have an entrance into the holy of holies, *"the new way which He has inaugurated for us."* [Hebrews 10:20]), does the same again from the more gloomy ones, speaking thus. For having said, *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as you see the day approaching"* [Hebrews 10:25], this being sufficient for consolation, he added, *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth."* There is need, he means, of good works, yea, very great need, *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins."* You were cleansed; you were set free from the charges against you, you have become a son. If then thou return to

your former vomit, there awaits you on the other hand excommunication and fire and whatever such things there are. For there is no second sacrifice.

2. At this place we are again assailed by those who take away repentance, and by those who delay to come to baptism. The one saying, that it is not safe for them to come to baptism, since there is no second remission: And the other asserting that it is not safe to impart the mysteries to those who have sinned, if there is no second remission.

What shall we say then to them both? That he does not take away repentance, nor the propitiation through repentance, nor does he thrust away and cast down with despair the fallen. He is not thus an enemy of our salvation; but what? He takes away the second Washing. For he did not say, no more is there repentance, or no more is there remission, but "*no more*" is there a "*sacrifice*," that is, there is no more a second Cross. For this is what he means by sacrifice. "*For by one sacrifice*," he says, "*He has perfected forever them that are sanctified*" [Hebrews 10:14]; not like the Jewish [rites.]. For this reason he has treated so much throughout concerning the Sacrifice, that it is one, even one; not wishing to show this only, that herein it differed from the Jewish [rites], but also to make [men] more steadfast, so that they might no longer expect another sacrifice according to the Jewish law.

"*For*," says he, "*if we sin willfully*." See how he is disposed to pardon. He says, "*if we sin willfully*," so that there is pardon for those [who sin] not willfully. "*After the knowledge of the truth*": He either means, of Christ, or of all doctrines. "*There remains no more sacrifice for sins*," but what? "*A certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries*." By "*Adversaries*" he means not the unbelievers, but those also who do what is against virtue; or [else he means] that the same fire shall receive them of the household also, which [receives] "*the*

adversaries." Then expressing its devouring nature, he says, as if giving it life, *"fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."* For as a wild beast when irritated and very fierce and savage, would not rest till it could lay hold on some one and eat him up; so also that fire, like one goaded by indignation, whatever it can lay hold of does not let go, but devours and tears it to pieces.

3. Next he adds also the reason of the threat, that it is on good grounds, that it is just; for this contributes to confidence, when we show that it is just.

Hebrews 10:28

For, he says, [Hebrews 10:28] *"He that has despised Moses' law dies without mercy, under two or three witnesses."* "Without mercy," he says; so that there is no pardon, no pity there although the law is of Moses; for he ordained the most of it.

What is *"under two or three"*? If two or three bore witness, he means, they immediately suffered punishment.

Hebrews 10:29

If then under the Old [Covenant], when the law of Moses is set at nought, there is so great punishment, [Hebrews 10:29] *"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God and has counted the blood of the covenant an unholy [a common] thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"*

And how does a man *"tread under foot the Son of God"*? When partaking of Him in the mysteries (he would say) he has wrought sin, has he not trodden Him under foot? Has he not despised Him? For just as we make no account of those who are trodden under foot, so also, they who sin have made no account of Christ; and so they have sinned. You are become the Body of Christ, and givest you yourself to the devil, so that he treads you under foot.

"And accounted the blood a common thing," he says. What is *"common"*? It is *"unclean,"* or the having nothing beyond other things.

"And done despite unto the Spirit of grace." For he that accepts not a benefit, does despite to the benefactor. He made you a son: and you wish to become a slave. He came to dwell with you, and you bring in wicked imaginations to Him. Christ wished to stay with you: and you tread Him down by surfeiting, by drunkenness.

Let us listen, whoever partake of the mysteries unworthily: let us listen, whoever approach that Table unworthily. *"Give not"* (He says) *"that which is holy unto the dogs, lest in time they trample them under their feet"* [Matthew 7:6], that is, lest they despise, lest they repudiate [them]. Yet he did not say this, but what was more fearful than this. For he constrains their souls by what is fearful. For this also is adapted to convert, no less than

consolation. And at the same time he shows both the difference, and the chastisement, and sets forth the judgment upon them, as though it were an evident matter. *"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy?"* Here also he appears to me to hint at the mysteries.

Hebrews 10:30-31

4. Next he adds testimony, saying, [Hebrews 10:30-31] *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God."* "For" it is written: *"Vengeance [belongs] unto Me, I will recompense, says the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people."* "Let us fall," it is said, *"into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men."* [Sirach 2:18] But if you repent not, you shall *"fall into the hands of"* God: that is fearful: it is nothing, to *"fall into the hands of men."* When, he means, we see any man punished here, let us not be terrified at the things present, but shudder at the things to come. *"For according to His mercy, so is His wrath."* And, *"His indignation will rest upon sinners."* [Sirach 5:6]

At the same time too he hints at something else. For *"Vengeance [belongs] unto Me,"* he says, *"I will recompense."* This is said in regard to their enemies, who are doing evil, not to those who are suffering evil. Here he is consoling them too, all but saying, God abides for ever and lives, so that even if they receive not [their reward] now, they will receive it hereafter. They ought to groan, not we: for we indeed shall fall into their hands, but they into the hands of God. For neither is it the sufferer who suffers the ill, but he that does it; nor is it he who receives a benefit that is benefited, but the benefactor.

5. Knowing then these things, let us be patient as to suffering evil, forward as to kindnesses. And this will be, if we think lightly of wealth and honor. He that has stripped himself of those affections, is of all men most generous, and more wealthy even than he who wears the purple. Do you see not how many evils come through money? I do not say how many through covetousness, but merely by our attachment to these things. For instance, if

a man has lost his money, he leads a life more wretched than any death. Why do you grieve, O man? Why do you weep? Because God has delivered You from excessive watching? Because thou dost not sit trembling and fearful? Again, if any one chain you to a treasure, commanding you to sit there perpetually, and to keep watch for other people's goods, you are grieved, you are disgusted; and do you, after you have bound yourself with most grievous chains, grieve when you are delivered from the slavery? Truly sorrows and joys are [matters] of fancy. For we guard them as if we had another's.

Now my discourse is for the women. A woman often has a garment woven with gold, and this she shakes, wraps up in linen, keeps with care, trembles for it, and has no enjoyment of it. For either she dies, or she becomes a widow. Or, even if none of these things happen, yet from fear lest wearing it out by continual use, she should deprive herself of it, she deprives herself of it in another way, by sparing it. But she passes it on [you say] to another. But neither is this clear: and even if she should pass it on, the other again will also use it in the same way. And if any one will search their houses, he will find that the most costly garments and other choice things, are tended with special honor, as if they were living masters. For she does not use them habitually, but fears and trembles, driving away moths and the other things that are wont to eat them, and laying most of them in perfumes and spices, nor permitting all persons to be counted worthy of the sight of them, but oftentimes carefully putting them in order herself with her husband.

Tell me: did not Paul with reason call covetousness "*idolatry*"? [Colossians 3:5] For these show as great honor to their garments, their gold, as they to their idols.

6. How long shall we stir up the mire? How long shall we be fixed to the clay and the brickmaking? For as they toiled for the King of the Egyptians, so do we also toil for the devil, and are scourged with far more grievous stripes. For by how much the soul surpasses the body, by so much does anxiety the weals of scourging. We are scourged every day, we are full of fear, in anxiety, in trembling. But if we will groan, if we will look up to God, He sends to us, not Moses, nor Aaron, but His own Word, and compunction. When this [word] has come, and taken hold of our souls, He will free from the bitter slavery, He will bring us forth out of Egypt, from unprofitable and vain zeal, from slavery which brings no gain. For they indeed went forth after having at least received golden [ornaments], the wages for building, but we [receive] nothing: and would it were nothing. For indeed we also receive, not golden ornaments, but the evils of Egypt, sins and chastisements and punishments.

Let us then learn to be made use of, let us learn to be spitefully treated; this is the part of a Christian. Let us think lightly of golden raiment, let us think lightly of money, that we may not think lightly of our salvation. Let us think lightly of money and not think lightly of the soul. For this is chastised, this is punished: those things remain here, but the soul departs yonder. Why, tell me, do you cut yourself to pieces, without perceiving it?

7. These things I say to the overreaching. And it is well to say also to those who are overreached. Bear their overreachings generously; they are ruining themselves, not you. You indeed they defraud of your money, but they strip themselves of the good will and help of God. And he that is stripped of that, though he clothe himself with the whole wealth of the world, is of all men most poor: and so he who is the poorest of all, if he have this, is the wealthiest of all. For "*the Lord*" (it is said) "*is my shepherd, and I shall lack nothing.*" [Psalm 23:1]

Tell me now, if you had had a husband, a great and admirable man, who thoroughly loved you and cared for you, and then knew that he would live always, and not die before you, and would give you all things to enjoy in security, as your own: would you then have wished to possess anything? Even if you had been stripped of all, would you not have thought yourself the richer for this?

Why then do you grieve? Because you have no property? But consider that you have had the occasion of sin taken away. But is it because you had [property] and have been deprived of it? But you have acquired the good will of God. And how have I acquired it (you say)? He has said, *"Wherefore do ye not rather suffer wrong?"* [1 Corinthians 6:7] He has said, *"Blessed are they who bear all things with thankfulness."* Consider therefore how great good will you will enjoy, if you show forth those things by [your] works. For one thing only is required from us, *"in all things to give thanks"* to God, and [then] we have all things in abundance. I mean, for instance: have you lost ten thousand pounds of gold? Forthwith give thanks unto God, and you have acquired ten times ten thousand, by that word and thanksgiving.

8. For tell me when do you account Job blessed? When he had so many camels, and flocks, and herds, or when he uttered that saying: *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away"*? [Job 1:21] Therefore also the devil causes us losses, not that he may take away our goods only, for he knows that is nothing, but that through them he may compel us to utter some blasphemy. So in the case of the blessed Job too, he did not strive after this only, to make him poor, but also to make him a blasphemer. At any rate, when he had stripped him of every thing, observe what he says to him through his wife, *"Say some word against the Lord, and die."* [Job 2:9] And yet, O accursed one, you had stripped him of everything. 'But' (he says) 'this

is not what I was striving for; for I have not yet accomplished that for which I did all. I was striving to deprive him of God's help: for this cause I deprived him of his goods too. This is what I wish, that other is nothing. If this be not gained, he not only has not been injured at all, but has even been benefited.' You see that even that wicked demon knows how great is the loss in this matter?

And see him plotting the treachery through the wife. Hear this, you husbands, as many as have wives that are fond of money, and compel you to blaspheme God. Call Job to mind. But let us see, if it please you, his great moderation, how he silenced her. *"Wherefore"* (he says) *"have you spoken as one of the foolish women [speaks]?"* [Job 2:10] Of a truth *"evil communications corrupt good manners"* [1 Corinthians 15:33], at all times indeed, but particularly in calamities: then they who give evil advice have strength. For if the soul is even of itself prone to impatience, how much more, when there is also an adviser. Is it not thrust into a pit? A wife is a great good, as also a great evil. For because a wife is a great [good], observe from what point he [Satan] wishes to break through the strong wall. 'The depriving him of his property' (he says) 'did not take him; the loss has produced no great effect.' Therefore he says, 'If indeed he will curse you to your face.' [Job 2:5] You see whither he was aspiring.

If then we bear [losses] thankfully, we shall recover even these things; and if we should not recover them, our reward will be greater. For when he had wrestled nobly, then God restored to him these things also. When He had shown the devil, that it is not for these things that he serves Him, then He restored them also to him.

9. For such is He. When God sees that we are not riveted to things of this life, then He gives them to us. When He sees that we set a higher value on things spiritual, then He also bestows on us things carnal. But not first,

lest we should break away from things spiritual: and to spare us He does not give carnal things, to keep us away from them, even against our will.

Not so (you say) but if I receive [them], I am satisfied, and am the more thankful. It is false, O man, for then especially will you be thoughtless.

Why then (you say) does He give [them] to many? Whence is it clear, that He gives [them]? But who else, you say, gives? Their overreaching, their plundering. How then does He allow these things? As He also [allows] murders, thefts, and violence.

What then (you will say) as to those who receive by succession an inheritance from their fathers, being themselves full of evils innumerable? And what of this? How does God suffer them (you say) to enjoy these things? Surely just as He allows thieves, and murderers, and other evil doers. For it is not now the time of judgment, but of the best course of life.

And what I just now said, that I repeat, that they shall suffer greater punishment, who, when they have enjoyed all good things, do not even so become better. For all shall not be punished alike; but they who, even after His benefits, have continued evil, shall suffer a greater punishment, while they who after poverty [have done this] not so. And that this is true, hear what He says to David, *"Did I not give you all your master's goods?"* [2 Samuel 12:8] Whenever then you see a young man that has received a paternal inheritance without labor and continues wicked, be assured that his punishment is increased and the vengeance is made more intense. Let us not then emulate these; but if any man has succeeded to virtue, if any man has obtained spiritual wealth, [him let us emulate]. For (it is said) *"Woe to them that trust in their riches"* [cf. Psalm 49:6]: *"Blessed are they that fear the Lord."* [Psalm 128:1] To which of these, tell me, would you belong? Doubtless to those who are pronounced blessed. Therefore emulate these,

not the other, that you also may obtain the good things which are laid up for them. Which may we all obtain, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father be glory together with the Holy Ghost, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 21 on Hebrews

Hebrews 10:32-34

" But call to remembrance the former days, in which after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, while you were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly while ye became companions of them that were so used. For you had compassion on those who were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that you have for yourselves in heaven a better and an enduring substance."

1. The best Physicians after they have made a deep incision, and have increased the pains by the wound, soothing the afflicted part, and giving rest and refreshment to the disturbed soul, proceed not to make a second incision, but rather soothe that which has been made with gentle remedies, and such as are suited to remove the violence of the pain. This Paul also did after he had shaken their souls, and pierced them with the recollection of Hell, and convinced then, that he must certainly perish, who does despite to the grace of God, and after he had shown from the laws of Moses, that they also shall perish, and the more [fearfully], and confirm it by other testimonies, and had said, *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God"* [Hebrews 10:31]: then, lest the soul desponding through excessive fear, should be swallowed up with grief, he soothes them by commendations and exhortation, and gives them zeal derived from their own conduct. For, he says, *"call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye had been enlightened, you endured a great fight of afflictions."* Powerful is the exhortation from deeds [already done]: for he who begins a

work ought to go forward and add to it. As if he had said, when you were brought in [to the Church], when you were in the rank of learners, you displayed so great readiness, so great nobleness; but now it is no longer so. And he who encourages, does thus especially encourage them from their own example.

And he did not simply say, "*ye endured a fight*" but a "*great*" [fight]. Moreover he did not say "*temptations*" but "*fight*," which is an expression of commendation and of very great praise.

Then he also enumerates them particularly, amplifying his discourse, and multiplying his praise. How? "*Partly*" (he says) "*while you were made a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions*"; for reproach is a great thing, and calculated to pervert the soul, and to darken the judgment. For hear what the prophet says: "*While they daily say unto me, Where is your God?*" [Psalm 42:10] And again, "*If the enemy had reproached me, I would have borne it.*" [Psalm 55:12] For since the human race is exceedingly vainglorious, therefore it is easily overcome by this.

And he did not simply say "*by reproaches*," but that even with great intensity, being "*made a gazing-stock.*" For when a person is reproached alone, it is indeed painful, but far more so when in presence of all. For tell me how great the evil was when men who had left the meanness of Judaism, and gone over, as it were, to the best course of life, and despised the customs of their fathers, were ill treated by their own people, and had no help.

2. I cannot say (he says) that you suffered these things indeed and were grieved, but you even rejoiced exceedingly. And this he expressed by saying, "*Whilst ye became companions of them that were so used*," and he brings forward the Apostles themselves. Not only (he means) were ye not ashamed of your own sufferings, but you even shared with others who were

suffering the same things. This too is the language of one who is encouraging them. He said not, 'Bear my afflictions, share with me,' but respect your own.

"You had compassion on them that were in bonds." You see that he is speaking concerning himself and the rest who were in prison. Thus ye did not account *"bonds"* to be bonds: but as noble wrestlers so stood ye: for not only ye needed no consolation in your own [distresses], but even became a consolation to others.

And *"ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods."* O! What *"full assurance of faith"*! [Hebrews 10:22] Then he also sets forth the motive, not only consoling them for their struggles, but also that they might not be shaken from the Faith. When ye saw your property plundered (he means) ye endured; for already ye saw Him who is invisible, as visible: which was the effect of genuine faith, and you showed it forth by your deeds themselves.

Well then, the plundering was perhaps from the force of the plunderers, and no man could prevent it; so that as yet it is not clear, that you endured the plundering for the faith's sake. (Although this too is clear. For it was in your power if you chose, not to be plundered, by not believing.) But ye did what is far greater than this; the enduring such things even *"with joy"*; which was altogether , and worthy of those noble souls, who rejoiced when scourged. For, it says, *"they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name."* [Acts 5:41] But he that endures *"with joy,"* shows that he has some reward, and that the affair is no loss but a gain.

Moreover the expression *"ye took"* shows their willing endurance, because, he means, you chose and accepted.

"Knowing" (he says) *"that you have for yourselves in heaven a better and an enduring substance"*; instead of saying, firm, not perishing like this.

Hebrews 10:35

3. In the next place, having praised them, he says, [Hebrews 10:35] *"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has great recompense of reward."* What do you mean? He did not say, 'you have cast it away, and recover it': but, which tended more to strengthen them, *"you have it,"* he says. For to recover again that which has been cast away, requires more labor: but not to lose that which is held fast does not. But to the Galatians he says the very opposite: *"My children of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you"* [Galatians 4:19]; and with reason; for they were more supine, whence they needed a sharper word; but these were more faint-hearted, so that they rather needed what was more soothing.

"Cast not away therefore" (he says) *"your confidence,"* so that they were in great confidence towards God. *"Which has"* (he says) *"great recompense of reward."* *"And when shall we receive them (some one might say)? Behold! All things on our part have been done."* Therefore he anticipated them on their own supposition, saying in effect, If you know that you have in heaven a better substance, seek nothing here.

"For you have need of patience," not of any addition [to your labors], that you may continue in the same state, that you may not cast away what has been put into your hands. You need nothing else, but so to stand as you have stood, that when you come to the end, you may receive the promise.

Hebrews 10:36

[Hebrews 10:36] *"For" (he says) "you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise."* You have need of one thing only, to bear with the delay; not that you should fight again. You are at the very crown (he means); you have borne all the combats of bonds, of afflictions; your goods have been spoiled. What then? Henceforward you are standing to be crowned: endure this only, the delay of the crown. O the greatness of the consolation! It is as if one should speak to an athlete who had overthrown all, and had no antagonist, and then was to be crowned, and yet endured not that time, during which the president of the games comes, and places the crown [upon him]; and he impatient, should wish to go out, and escape as though he could not bear the thirst and the heat.

Hebrews 10:37

He then also hinting this, what does he say? [Hebrews 10:37] *"Yet a little while and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."* For lest they should say, And when will He come? He comforts them from the Scriptures. For thus also when he says in another place, *"Now is our salvation nearer"* [Romans 13:11], he comforts them because the remaining time is short. And this he says not of himself but from the Scriptures. But if from that time it was said, *"Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry,"* it is plain that now He is nearer. Wherefore also waiting is no small reward.

Hebrews 10:38

[Hebrews 10:38] *"Now the just" (he says) "shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him."* This is a great encouragement when one shows that they have succeeded in the whole matter and are losing it through a little indolence. [Hebrews 10:39] *"But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."*

Hebrews 11:1-2

4. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report."* O what an expression has he used, in saying, *"an evidence of things not seen."* For [we say] there is *"evidence,"* in the case of things that are very plain. Faith then is the seeing things not plain (he means), and brings what are not seen to the same full assurance with what are seen. So then neither is it possible to disbelieve in things which are seen, nor, on the other hand can there be faith unless a man be more fully assured with respect to things invisible, than he is with respect to things that are most clearly seen. For since the objects of hope seem to be unsubstantial, Faith gives them substantiality, or rather, does not give it, but is itself their substance. For instance, the Resurrection has not come, nor does it exist substantially, but hope makes it substantial in our soul. This is [the meaning of] *"the substance of things."*

If therefore it is an *"evidence of things not seen,"* why forsooth do you wish to see them, so as to fall away from faith, and from being just? Since *"the just shall live by faith,"* whereas ye, if you wish to see these things, are no longer faithful. You have labored (he says), you have struggled: I too allow this, nevertheless, wait; for this is Faith: do not seek the whole *"here."*

5. These things were indeed said to the Hebrews, but they are a general exhortation also to many of those who are here assembled. How and in what way? To the faint-hearted; to the mean-spirited. For when they see the wicked prospering, and themselves faring ill, they are troubled, they bear it impatiently: while they long for the chastisement, and the inflicting vengeance on others; while they wait for the rewards of their own sufferings. *"For yet a little time, and He that shall come will come."*

Let us then say this to the slothful: Doubtless there will be punishment; doubtless He will come, henceforth the events of the Resurrection are even at the doors.

Whence [does] that [appear] (you say)? I do not say, from the prophets; for neither do I now speak to Christians only; but even if a heathen be here, I am perfectly confident, and bring forward my proofs, and will instruct him. How (you say)?

Christ foretold many things. If those former things did not come to pass, then do not believe them; but if they all came to pass, why doubt concerning those that remain? And indeed, it were very unreasonable, nothing having come to pass, to believe the one, or when all has come to pass, to disbelieve the others.

But I will make the matter more plain by an example. Christ said, that Jerusalem should be taken, and should be so taken as no city ever was before, and that it should never be raised up: and in fact this prediction came to pass. He said, that there should be "*great tribulation*" [Matthew 24:21], and it came to pass. He said that a grain of mustard seed is sown, so should the preaching [of the Gospel] be extended: and every day we see this running over the world. He said, that they who left father or mother, or brethren, or sisters, should have both fathers and mothers; And this we see fulfilled by facts. He said, "*in the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*" [John 16:33], that is, no man shall get the better of you. And this we see by the events has come to pass. He said that "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church*" [Matthew 16:18], even though persecuted, and that no one shall quench the preaching [of the Gospel]: and the experience of events bears witness to this prediction also: and yet when He said these things, it was very hard to believe Him. Why? Because all these were words, and He had not as yet

given proof of the things spoken. So that they have now become far more credible. He said that *"when the Gospel should have been preached among all the nations, then the end shall come"* [Matthew 24:14]; lo! now you have arrived at the end: for the greater part of the world has been preached to, therefore the end is now at hand. Let us tremble, beloved.

6. But what, tell me? Are you anxious about the end? It indeed is itself near, but each man's life and death is nearer. For it is said, *"the days of our years are seventy years; but if [one be] in strength, fourscore years."* [Psalm 90:10] The day of judgment is near. Let us fear. *"A brother does not redeem; shall man redeem?"* [Psalm 49:7] There we shall repent much, *"but in death no man shall praise Him."* [Psalm 6:5] Wherefore he says, *"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving"* [Psalm 93:2], that is, his coming. For here [in this life] indeed, whatever we do has efficacy; but there, no longer. Tell me, if a man placed us for a little while in a flaming furnace, should we not submit to anything in order to escape, even were it necessary to part with our money, nay to undergo slavery? How many have fallen into grievous diseases, and would gladly give up all, to be delivered from them, if the choice were offered them? If in this world then, a disease of short duration so afflicts us, what shall we do yonder, when repentance will be of no avail?

7. Of how many evils are we now full, without being conscious of them? We bite one another, we devour one another, in wronging, accusing, calumniating, being vexed by the credit of our neighbors. [cf.]

And see the difficulty. When a man wishes to undermine the reputation of a neighbor, he says, 'Such an one said this of him; O God, forgive me, do not examine me strictly, I must give account of what I have heard.' Why then do you speak of it at all, if you do not believe it? Why do you speak of it? Why do you make it credible by much reporting? Why do you pass on

the story which is not true? Thou dost not believe it, and you entreat God not to call you to strict account? Do not say it then, but keep silence, and free yourself from all fear.

But I know not from whence this disease has fallen upon men. We have become tattlers, nothing remains in our mind. Hear the exhortation of a wise man who says, *"Have you heard a word? Let it die in you, be bold; it will not burst you."* [Sirach 19:10] And again, *"A fool hears a word, and travails, as a women in labor of a child."* [Sirach 19:11] We are ready to make accusations, prepared for condemning. Even if no other evil thing had been done by us, this were sufficient to ruin us, and to carry us away to Hell, this involves us in ten thousand evils. And that you may know this certainly, hear what the prophet says, *"Thou sat and spoke against your brother."* [Psalm 50:20]

But it is not I, you say, but the other [who told me]. Nay rather, it is yourself; for if *thou* had not spoken, another would not have heard: or even if he should hear it, yet *thou* wouldest not have been to blame for the sin. We ought to shade over and conceal the failings of neighbors, but you parade them under a cloak of zeal for goodness. Thou becomest, not an accuser, but a gossip, a trifler, a fool. O what cleverness! Without being aware of it, you bring disgrace upon yourself as well as on him.

And see what great evils which arise from this. You provoke the wrath of God. Do you not hear Paul saying about widows, *"they not only"* (these are his words) *"learn to be idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, wandering about from house to house, and speaking things which they ought not."* [1 Timothy 5:13] So that even when you believe the things which are said against your brother, you ought not even in that case to speak of them; much less, when thou dost not believe them.

But thou [forsooth] lookest to your own interest? Thou fearest to be called to account by God? Fear then, lest even for your tattling thou be called to account. For here, you can not say, 'O God, call me not to account for light talking': for the whole matter is light talking. Why did you publish it? Why did you increase the evil? This is sufficient to destroy us. On this account Christ said, "*Judge not, that you be not judged.*" [Matthew 7:1]

But we pay no regard to this, neither are we brought to our senses by what happened to the Pharisee. He said what was true, "*I am not as this Publican*" [Luke 18:11], he said it too in no man's hearing; yet was he condemned. If he were condemned when he said what was true, and uttered it in no man's hearing, what fearful [punishment] shall not they suffer, who like gossiping women, carry about everywhere lies which they do not even themselves believe? What shall they not endure?

8. Henceforward let us set "*a door and a bolt before the mouth.*" [Sirach 28:25] For innumerable evils have arisen from tattling; families have been ruined, friendships torn asunder, innumerable other miseries have happened. Busy not yourself, O man, about the affairs of your neighbor.

But you are talkative and hast a weakness. Talk of your own [faults] to God: thus the weakness will be no longer a weakness, but an advantage. Talk of your own [faults] to your friends, those who are thorough friends and righteous men, and in whom you have confidence, that so they may pray for your sins. If you speak of the [sins] of others, you are nowise profited, neither have you gained anything, but hast ruined yourself. If you confess your own [sins] to the Lord, you have great reward: for one says, "*I said, I will confess against myself mine iniquity to the Lord, and Thou forgavest the impiety of my heart.*" [Psalm 32:5]

Do you wish to judge? Judge your own [sins]. No one will accuse you, if you condemn yourself: but he will accuse if you do not condemn; he will

accuse you, unless thou convict yourself; will accuse you of insensibility. You have seen such an one angry, irritated, doing something else out of place? Think at once, even thou on your own [faults]: and thus you will not greatly condemn him, and wilt free yourself from the load of your past transgressions. If we thus regulate our own conduct, if we thus manage our own life, if we condemn ourselves, we shall probably not commit many sins, and we shall do many good things, being fair and moderate; and shall enjoy all the promises to them that love God: to which may all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world with end. Amen.

Homily 22 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:3-4

" Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks."

1. Faith needs a generous and vigorous soul, and one rising above all things of sense, and passing beyond the weakness of human reasonings. For it is not possible to become a believer, otherwise than by raising one's self above the common customs [of the world].

Inasmuch then as the souls of the Hebrews were thoroughly weakened, and though they had begun from faith, yet from circumstances, I mean sufferings, afflictions, they had afterwards become faint-hearted, and of little spirit, and were shaken from [their position], he encouraged them first indeed from these very things, saying, *"Call to remembrance the former days"* [Hebrews 10:32]; next from the Scripture saying, *"But the just shall live by faith"* [Hebrews 10:38]; afterwards from arguments, saying, *"But Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* [Hebrews 11:1] And now again from their forefathers, those great and admirable men, as much as saying; If where the good things were close at hand, all were saved by faith, much more are we.

For when a soul finds one that shares the same sufferings with itself, it is refreshed and recovers breath. This we may see both in the case of Faith, and in the case of affliction: *"that there may be comfort for you it is said*

through our mutual faith." [Romans 1:12] For mankind are very distrustful, and cannot place confidence in themselves, are fearful about whatever things they think they possess, and have great regard for the opinion of the many.

2. What then does Paul do? He encourages them by the fathers; and before that by the common notions [of mankind]. For tell me, he says, since Faith is calumniated as being a thing without demonstration and rather a matter of deceit, therefore he shows that the greatest things are attained through faith and not through reasonings. And how does he show this, tell me? It is manifest, he says, that God made the things which are, out of things which are not, things which appear, out of things which appear not, things which subsist, out of things which subsist not. But whence [is it shown] that He did this even "*by a Word*"? For reason suggests nothing of this kind; but on the contrary, that the things which appear are [formed] out of things which appear.

Therefore the philosophers expressly say that 'nothing comes out of things that are not' being "*sensual*" [Jude 19], and trusting nothing to Faith. And yet these same men, when they happen to say anything great and noble, are caught entrusting it to Faith. For instance, that "*God is without beginning, and unborn*"; for reason does not suggest this, but the contrary. And consider, I beseech you, their great folly. They say that God is without beginning; and yet this is far more wonderful than the [creation] out of things that are not. For to say, that He is without beginning, that He is unborn, neither begotten by Himself nor by another is more full of difficulties, than to say that God made the things which are, out of things which are not. For here there are many things uncertain: as, that some one made it, that what was made had a beginning, that, in a word, it was made. But in the other case, what? He is self-existing, unborn, He neither had

beginning nor time; tell me, do not these things require faith? But he did not assert this, which was far greater, but the lesser.

Whence [does it appear], he would say, that God made these things? Reason does not suggest it; no one was present when it was done. Whence is it shown? It is plainly the result of faith. *"Through faith we understand that the worlds were made."* Why *"through faith"*? Because *"the things that are seen were not made of things which do appear."* For this is Faith.

3. Having thus stated the general [principle], he afterwards tests it by individuals. For a man of note is equivalent to the world. This at all events he afterwards hinted. For when he had matched it against one or two hundred persons, and then saw the smallness of the number, he afterwards says, *"by whom the world was outweighed in worth."* [Hebrews 11:38]

And observe whom he puts first, him who was ill-treated, and that by a brother. It was their own affliction, *"For you also"* (he says) *"have suffered like things of your own countrymen."* [1 Thessalonians 2:14] And by a brother who had been nothing wronged, but who envied him on God's account; showing that they also are looked on with an evil eye and envied. He honored God, and died because he honored Him: and has not yet attained to a resurrection. But his readiness is manifest, and his part has been done, but God's part has not yet been carried out towards him.

And by a *"more excellent sacrifice"* in this place, he means that which is more honorable, more splendid, more necessary.

And we cannot say (he says) that it was not accepted. He did accept it, and said unto Cain, [*"Have you] not [sinned], if you rightly offer, but dost not rightly divide?"*] [Genesis 4:7, Septuagint] So then Abel both rightly offered, and rightly divided. Nevertheless for this, what recompense did he receive? He was slain by his brother's hand: and that sentence which his father endured on account of sin, this he first received who was upright.

And he suffered so much the more grievously because it was from a brother, and he was the first [to suffer].

And he did these things rightly looking to no man. For to whom could he look, when he so honored God? To his father and his mother? But they had outraged Him in return for His benefits. To his brother then? But he also had dishonored [God]. So that by himself he sought out what was good.

And he that is worthy of so great honor, what does he suffer? He is put to death. And how too was he otherwise "*testified of that he was righteous*"? It is said, that fire came down and consumed the sacrifices. For instead of ["*And the Lord*] *had respect to Abel and to his sacrifices*" [Genesis 4:4], the Syriac said, "*And He set them on fire.*" He therefore who both by word and deed bore witness to the righteous man and sees him slain for His sake, did not avenge him, but left him to suffer.

But your case is not such: for how could it be? You who have both prophets and examples, and encouragements innumerable, and signs and miracles accomplished? Hence that was faith indeed. For what miracles did he see, that he might believe he should have any recompense of good things? Did he not choose virtue from Faith alone?

What is, "*and by it he being dead yet speaks*"? That he might not cast them into great despondency, he shows that he has in part obtained a recompense. How? 'The influence coming from him is great, he means, "*and he yet speaks*"; that is, [Cain] slew him, but he did not with him slay his glory and memory. He is not dead; therefore neither shall you die. For by how much the more grievous a man's sufferings are, so much the greater is his glory.'

How does he "*yet speak*"? This is a sign both of his being alive, and of his being by all celebrated, admired, counted blessed. For he who

encourages others to be righteous, speaks. For no speech avails so much, as that man's suffering. As then heaven by its mere appearance speaks, so also does he by being had in remembrance. Not if he had made proclamation of himself, not if he had ten thousand tongues, and were alive, would he have been so admired as now. That is, these things do not take place with impunity, nor lightly, neither do they pass away.

Hebrews 11:5-6

4. *"By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him."* This man displayed greater faith than Abel. How (you ask)? Because, although he came after him, yet what befell [Abel] was sufficient to guide him back. How? God foreknew that [Abel] would be killed. For He said to Cain: *"You have sinned: do not add thereto."* Honored by him, He did not protect him. And yet neither did this throw him [Enoch] into indifference. He said not to himself, 'What need of toils and dangers? Abel honored God, yet He did not protect him. For what advantage had he that was departed, from the punishment of his brother? And what benefit could he reap therefrom? Let us allow that he suffers severe punishment: what is that to him who has been slain?' He neither said nor thought anything of this kind, but passing beyond all these things, he knew that if there is a God, certainly there is a Rewarder also: although as yet they knew nothing of a resurrection. But if they who as yet know nothing of a resurrection, and see contradictory things here, thus pleased [God], how much more should we? For they neither knew of a resurrection, nor had they any examples to look to. This same thing then made [Enoch] well-pleasing [to God], namely, that he received nothing. For he knew that [God] *"is a rewarder."* Whence [knew he this]? *"For He recompensed Abel,"* do you say? So that reason suggested other things, but faith the opposite of what was seen. Even then (he would say) if you see that you receive nothing here, be not troubled.

How was it *"by faith"* that *"Enoch was translated"*? Because his pleasing [God] was the cause of his translation, and faith [the cause] of his pleasing [Him]. For if he had not known that he should receive a reward,

how could he have pleased [Him]? *"But without faith it is impossible to please"* Him. How? If a man believe that there is a God and a retribution, he will have the reward. Whence then is the well-pleasing?

5. It is necessary to *"believe that He is,"* not 'what He is.' If *"that He is"* needs Faith, and not reasonings; it is impossible to comprehend by reasoning 'what He is.' If that *"He is a rewarder"* needs Faith and not reasonings, how is it possible by Reasoning to compass His essence? For what Reasoning can reach this? For some persons say that the things that exist are self-caused. Do you see that unless we have Faith in regard to all things, not only in regard to retribution, but also in regard to the very being of God, all is lost to us?

But many ask whither Enoch was translated, and why he was translated, and why he did not die, neither he nor Elijah, and, if they are still alive, how they live, and in what form. But to ask these things is superfluous. For that the one was translated, and that the other was taken up, the Scriptures have said; but where they are, and how they are, they have not added: For they say nothing more than is necessary. For this indeed took place, I mean his translation, immediately at the beginning, the human soul [thereby] receiving a hope of the destruction of death, and of the overthrow of the devil's tyranny, and that death will be done away; for he was translated, not dead, but *"that he should not see death."*

Therefore he added, he was translated alive, because he was well-pleasing [unto God]. For just as a Father when he has threatened his son, wishes indeed immediately after he has threatened, to relax his threat, but endures and continues resolute, that for a time he may chasten and correct him, allowing the threat to remain firm; so also God, to speak as it were after the manner of men, did not continue resolute, but immediately showed that death is done away. And first He allows death to happen, wishing to

terrify the father through the son: For wishing to show that the sentence is verily fixed, He subjected to this punishment not wicked men at once, but him even who was well-pleasing, I mean, the blessed Abel; and almost immediately after him, He translated Enoch. Moreover, He did not raise the former, lest they should immediately grow bold; but He translated the other being yet alive: having excited fear by Abel, but by this latter giving zeal to be well-pleasing unto Him. Wherefore they who say that all things are ruled and governed of themselves, and do not expect a reward, are not well-pleasing; as neither are the heathen. For *"He becomes a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him"* by works and by knowledge.

6. Since then we have *"a rewarder,"* let us do all things that we may not be deprived of the rewards of virtue. For indeed the neglecting such a recompense, the scorning such a reward, is worthy of many tears. For as to *"those who diligently seek Him,"* He is a rewarder, so to those who seek Him not, the contrary.

"Seek" (He says) *"and you shall find"* [Matthew 7:7]: but how can we find the Lord? Consider how gold is found; with much labor. [*"I sought the Lord]* *with my hands"* (it is said) *"by night before Him, and I was not deceived"* [Psalm 76:2], that is, just as we seek what is lost, so let us seek God. Do we not concentrate our mind thereon? Do we not enquire of every one? Do we not travel from home? Do we not promise money?

For instance, suppose that any among us has lost his son, what do we not do? What land, what sea do we not make the circuit of? Do we not reckon money, and houses, and everything else as secondary to the finding him? And should we find him, we cling to him, we hold him fast, we do not let him go. And when we are going to seek anything whatever, we busy ourselves in all ways to find what is sought. How much more ought we to do this in regard to God, as seeking what is indispensable; nay rather, not in

the same way, but much more! But since we are weak, at least seek God as you seek your money or your son. Will you not leave your home for Him? Have you never left your home for money? Do you not busy yourself in all ways? When you have found [it], are you not full of confidence?

7. "*Seek*" (He says) "*and you shall find.*" For things sought after need much care, especially in regard of God. For many are the hindrances, many the things that darken, many that impede our perception. For as the sun is manifest, and set forth publicly before all, and we have no need to seek it; but if on the other hand we bury ourselves and turn everything upside down, we need much labor to look at the sun; so truly here also, if we bury ourselves in the depth of evil desires, in the darkness of passions and of the affairs of this life, with difficulty do we look up, with difficulty do we raise our heads, with difficulty do we see clearly. He that is buried underground, in whatever degree he sees upwards, in that degree does he come towards the sun. Let us therefore shake off the earth, let us break through the mist which lies upon us. It is thick, and close, and does not allow us to see clearly.

And how, you say, is this cloud broken through? If we draw to ourselves the beams of "*the sun of righteousness.*" "*The lifting up of my hands*" (it is said) "*is an evening sacrifice.*" [Psalm 141:2] With our hands let us also lift up our mind: ye who have been initiated know what I mean, perhaps too ye recognize the expression, and see at a glance what I have hinted at. Let us raise up our thoughts on high.

I myself know many men almost suspended apart from the earth, and beyond measure stretching up their hands, and out of heart because it is not possible to be lifted into the air, and thus praying with earnestness. Thus I would have you always, and if not always, at least very often; and if not very often, at least now and then, at least in the morning, at least in the

evening prayers. For, tell me, can you not stretch forth the hands? Stretch forth the will, stretch forth as far as you will, yea even to heaven itself. Even should you wish to touch the very summit, even if you would ascend higher and walk thereon, it is open to you. For our mind is lighter, and higher than any winged creature. And when it receives grace from the Spirit, O! How swift is it! How quick is it! How does it compass all things! How does it never sink down or fall to the ground! These wings let us provide for ourselves: by means of them shall we be able to fly even across the tempestuous sea of this present life. The swiftest birds fly unhurt over mountains, and woods, and seas, and rocks, in a brief moment of time. Such also is the mind; when it is winged, when it is separated from the things of this life, nothing can lay hold of it, it is higher than all things, even than the fiery darts of the devil.

The devil is not so good a marksman, as to be able to reach this height; he sends forth his darts indeed, for he is void of all shame, yet he does not hit the mark; the dart returns to him without effect, and not without effect only, but it [falls] upon his own head. For what is sent forth by him must of necessity strike [something]. As then, that which has been shot out by men, either strikes the person against whom it is directed, or pierces bird, or fence, or garment, or wood, or the mere air, so does the dart of the devil also. It must of necessity strike; and if it strike not him that is shot at, it necessarily strikes him that shoots it. And we may learn from many instances, that when we are not hit, without doubt he is hit himself. For instance, he plotted against Job: he did not hit him, but was struck himself. He plotted against Paul, he did not hit him, but was struck himself. If we watch, we may see this happening everywhere. For even when he strikes, he is hit; much more then [when he does not hit].

8. Let us turn his weapons then against himself, and having armed and fortified ourselves with the shield of faith, let us keep guard with steadfastness, so as to be impregnable. Now the dart of the devil is evil concupiscence. Anger especially is a fire, a flame; it catches, destroys, consumes; let us quench it, by longsuffering, by forbearance. For as red-hot iron dipped into water, loses its fire, so an angry man filling in with a patient one does no harm to the patient man, but rather benefits him, and is himself more thoroughly subdued.

For nothing is equal to longsuffering. Such a man is never insulted; but as bodies of adamant are not wounded, so neither are such souls. For they are above the reach of the darts. The longsuffering man is high, and so high as not to receive a wound from the shot. When one is furious, laugh; but do not laugh openly, lest you irritate him: but laugh mentally on his account. For in the case of children, when they strike us passionately, as though forsooth they were avenging themselves, we laugh. If then thou laugh, there will be as great difference between you and him, as between a child and a man: but if you are furious you have made yourself a child. For the angry are more senseless than children. If one look at a furious child, does he not laugh at him? *"The poor-spirited"* (it is said) *"is mightily simple."* [Proverbs 14:29] The simple then is a child: and *"he who is longsuffering"* (it is said) *"is abundant in wisdom."* This *"abundant wisdom"* then let us follow after, that we may attain to the good things promised us in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 23 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:7

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by Faith."

1. *"By faith"* (he says) *"Noah being warned of God."* As the Son of God, speaking of His own coming, said, *"In the days of Noah they married and were given in marriage"* [Luke 17:26-27], therefore the Apostle also recalled to their mind an appropriate image. For the example of Enoch, was an example only of Faith; that of Noah, on the other hand, of unbelief also. And this is a complete consolation and exhortation, when not only believers are found approved, but also unbelievers suffer the opposite.

For what does he say? *"By faith being warned of God."* What is *"being warned of God"*? It is, *"It having been foretold to him."* But why is the expression *"divine communication"* [Luke 2:26] used? For in another place also it is said, *"and it was communicated to him by the Spirit,"* and again, *"and what says the divine communication?"* [Romans 11:4] Do you see the equal dignity of the Spirit? For as God reveals, so also does the Holy Spirit. But why did he speak thus? The prophecy is called *"a divine communication."*

"Of things not seen as yet," he says, that is of the rain.

"Moved with fear, prepared an ark." Reason indeed suggested nothing of this sort; For *"they were marrying and being given in marriage"*; the air was clear, there were no signs [of change]; but nevertheless he feared: *"By*

faith" (he says) "Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

How is it, *"By the which he condemned the world"*? He showed them to be worthy of punishment, since they were not brought to their senses even by the preparation.

"And he became" (he says) *"heir of the righteousness which is by Faith"*: that is, by his believing God he was shown to be righteous. For this is the [part] of a soul sincerely disposed towards Him and judging nothing more reliable than His words, just as Unbelief is the very contrary. Faith, it is manifest, works righteousness. For as we have been warned of God respecting Hell, so was he also: and yet at that time he was laughed at; he was reviled and ridiculed; but he regarded none of these things.

Hebrews 11:8-9

2. *"By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise."* ["By faith"]: for (tell me) whom did he see to emulate? He had for father a Gentile, and an idolater; he had heard no prophets; he knew not whither he was going. For as they of the Hebrews who believed, looked to these [patriarchs] as having enjoyed blessings innumerable, he shows that none of them obtained anything as yet; all are unrewarded; no one as yet received his reward. *"He"* escaped from his country and his home, and *"went out not knowing whither he went."*

And what marvel, if he himself [were so], when his seed also dwelt in this same way? For seeing the promise disproved (since He had said, *"To you will I give this land, and to your seed"* [Genesis 12:7; 13:15]), he saw his son dwelling there; and again his grandson saw himself dwelling in a land not his own; yet was he nowise troubled. For the affairs of Abraham happened as we might have expected, since the promise was to be accomplished afterwards in his family (although it is said even to himself, *"To you, and to your seed,"* not, *"to you through your seed,"* but *"to you and to your seed"*): still neither he, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, enjoyed the promise. For one of them served for hire, and the other was driven out: and he himself even was failing through fear: and while he took some things indeed in war, others, unless he had had the aid of God, would have been destroyed. On this account [the Apostle] says, *"with the heirs of the same promise"*; not himself alone, he means; but the heirs also.

Hebrews 11:13

3. *"These all died in faith,"* he says, *"not having obtained the promises."* At this place it is worth while to make two enquiries; how, after saying that [God] *"translated Enoch, and he was not found, so that he did not see death,"* does he say, *"These all died in Faith."* And again, after saying, *"they not having obtained the promises,"* he declares that Noah had received a reward, *"to the saving of his house,"* and that Enoch had been *"translated,"* and that Abel *"yet speaks,"* and that Abraham had gained a hold on the land, and yet he says, *"These all died in Faith, not having obtained the promises."* What then is [meant]?

It is necessary to solve the first [difficulty], and then the second. *"These all"* (he says) *"died in faith."* The word *"all"* is used here not because all had died, but because with that one exception *"all these had died,"* whom we know to be dead.

And the [statement] *"not having obtained the promises,"* is true: for surely the promise to Noah was not to be this [which is here spoken of]. But further, of what kind of *"promises"* is he speaking? For Isaac and Jacob received the promises of the land; but as to Noah and Abel and Enoch, what kind of promises did they receive? Either then he is speaking concerning these three; or if concerning those others also, the promise was not this, that Abel should be admired, nor that Enoch should be translated, nor that Noah should be preserved; but these things came to them for their virtue's sake, and were a sort of foretaste of things to come. For God from the beginning, knowing that the human race needs much condescension, bestows on us not only the things in the world to come, but also those here; as for instance, Christ said even to the disciples, *"Whosoever has left houses, or brethren,*

or sisters, or father, or mother, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." [Matthew 19:29] And again, *"Seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."* [Matthew 6:33] Do you see that these things are given by Him in the way of addition, that we might not faint? For as the athletes have the benefit of careful attention, even when engaged in the combat, but do not then enjoy entire ease, living under rules, yet afterwards they enjoy it entire: so God also does not grant us here to partake of *"entire"* ease. For even here He does give [some].

4. *"But having seen them afar off,"* he says, *"and embraced them."* Here he hints at something mystical: that they received beforehand all the things which have been spoken concerning things to come; concerning the resurrection, concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, concerning the other things, which Christ proclaimed when He came, for these are *"the promises"* of which he speaks. Either then he means this, or, that they did not indeed receive them, but died in confidence respecting them, and they were [thus] confident through Faith only.

"Having seen them afar off": four generations before; for after so many [generations], they went up out of Egypt.

"And embraced them," says he, and were glad. They were so persuaded of them as even to embrace [or *"salute"*] them, from the metaphor of persons on ship-board seeing from afar the longed-for cities: which, before they enter them, they take and occupy by words of greeting.

Hebrews 11:10

"For they looked" (he says) *"for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* Do you see that they received them in this sense, in their already accepting them and being confident respecting them. If then to be confident is to receive, it is in your power also to receive. For these, although they enjoyed not those [blessings], yet still saw them by their longing desire. Why now do these things happen? That we might be put to shame, in that they indeed, when things on earth were promised them, regarded them not, but sought the future *"city"*: whereas God again and again speaks to us of the city which is above, and yet we seek that which is here. He said to them, I will give you the things of the present [world]. But when He saw, or rather, when they showed themselves worthy of greater things, then He no longer suffers them to receive these, but those greater ones; wishing to show us that they are worthy of greater things, being unwilling to be bound to these. As if one should promise playthings to an intelligent child, not that he might receive them, but by way of exhibiting his philosophy, when he asks for things more important. For this is to show, that they held off from the land with so great earnestness, that they did not even accept what was given. Wherefore their posterity receive it on this account, for themselves were worthy of the land.

What is, *"the city which has foundations"*? For are not these [which are visible] *"foundations"*? In comparison of the other, they are not.

"Whose Builder and Maker is God." O! What an encomium on that city!

Hebrews 11:11

5. *"By faith also Sarah herself,"* he says. Here he began [speaking] in a way to put them to shame, in case, that is, they should show themselves more faint-hearted than a woman. But possibly some one might say, How *"by faith,"* when she laughed? Nay, while her laughter indeed was from unbelief, her fear [was] from Faith, for to say, *"I laughed not"* [Genesis 18:15], arose from Faith. From this then it appears that when unbelief had been cleared out, Faith came in its place.

"By faith also Sarah received strength to conceive seed even when she was past age." What is, *"to conceive seed"*? She who was become dead, who was barren, received power for the retaining of seed, for conception. For her imperfection was two-fold; first from her time of life for she was really old; secondly from nature, for she was barren.

Hebrews 11:12

"Wherefore even from one they" all "sprang, as the stars of the sky, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore." *"Wherefore"* (he says) *"even from one they" all "sprang."* Here he not only says that she bare [a child], but that she also became mother of so many as not even fruitful wombs [are mothers of]. *"As the stars,"* He says. How then is it that He often numbers them, although He said, *"As the stars of the heaven shall not be numbered, so neither shall your seed"*? [Genesis 15:5] He either means the excess, or else [speaks of] those who are continually being born. For is it possible, tell me, to number their forefathers of one family as, such an one son of such an one, and such an one son of such an one? But here such are the promises of God, so skillfully arranged are His undertakings.

6. But if the things which He promised as additional, are so admirable, so beyond expectation, so magnificent, what will those be, to which these are an addition, to which these are somewhat over and above? What then can be more blessed than they who attain them? What more wretched than those who miss them? For if a man when driven out from his native country, is pitied by all; and when he has lost an inheritance is considered by all as an object of compassion, with what tears ought he to be bewailed, who fails of Heaven, and of the good things there stored up? Or rather, he is not even to be wept for: for one is wept for, when he suffers something of which he is not himself the cause; but when of his own choice he has entangled himself in evil, he is not worthy of tears, but of wailings; or rather then of mourning; since even our Lord Jesus Christ mourned and wept for Jerusalem, impious as it was. Truly we are worthy of weepings innumerable, of wailings innumerable. If the whole world should receive a

voice, both stones, and wood, and trees, and wild beasts, and birds, and fishes, and in a word, the whole world, if receiving a voice it should bewail us who have failed of those good things, it would not bewail and lament enough. For what language, what intellect, can represent that blessedness and virtue, that pleasure, that glory, that happiness, that splendor? *"What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered into the heart of man"* [1 Corinthians 2:9], (he did not say, that they simply surpass [what we imagine]; but none has ever conceived) *"the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."* For of what kind are those good things likely to be, of which God is the Preparer and Establisher? For if immediately after He had made us, when we had not yet done anything, He freely bestowed so great [favours], Paradise, familiar intercourse with Himself, promised us immortality, a life happy and freed from cares; what will He not bestow on those who have labored and struggled so greatly, and endured on His behalf? For us He spared not His Only Begotten, for us when we were enemies He gave up His own Son to death; of what will He not count us worthy, having become His friends? What will He not impart to us, having reconciled us to Himself?

7. He both is abundantly and infinitely rich; and He desires and earnestly endeavors to obtain our friendship; we do not thus earnestly endeavor. What am I saying, 'do not earnestly endeavor'? We do not wish to obtain the good things as He wishes it. And what He has done shows that He wishes it more [than we]. For while, for our own sake, we with difficulty think lightly of a little gold: He, for our sake, gave even the Son who was His own. Let us make use of the love of God as we ought; let us reap the fruits of His friendship. For *"you are My friends"* (he says) *"if you do what I say to you."* [John 15:14] How wonderful! His enemies, who were at an infinite distance from Him, whom in all respects He excels by an

incomparable superiority, these He has made His friends and calls them friends. What then should not one choose to suffer for the sake of this friendship? For the friendship of men we often incur danger, but for that of God, we do not even give up money. Our [condition] does indeed call for mourning, for mourning and tears and wailings, and loud lamentation and beating of the breast. We have fallen from our hope, we are humbled from our high estate, we have shown ourselves unworthy of the honor of God; even after His benefits we have become unfeeling, and ungrateful. The devil has stripped us of all our good things. We who were counted worthy to be sons; we His brethren and fellow-heirs have come to differ nothing from His enemies that insult Him.

Henceforward, what consolation shall there be for us? He called us to Heaven, and we have thrust ourselves down to hell. *"Swearing and lying and stealing and adultery, are poured out upon the earth."* [Hosea 4:2] Some *"mingle blood upon blood"*; and others do deeds worse than blood-shedding. Many of those that are wronged, many of those that are defrauded prefer ten thousand deaths to the suffering such things: and except they had feared God, would even have killed themselves, being so murderously disposed against themselves. Are not these things then worse than blood-shedding?

8. *"Woe is me, my soul! For the godly man is perished from the earth, and there is none upright among men"* [Micah 7:1-2, Septuagint]; let us also now cry out, first about our own selves: but aid me in my lamentation.

Perhaps some are even disgusted and laugh. For this very cause ought we to make our lamentations the more intense, because we are so mad and beside ourselves, that we do not know that we are mad, but laugh at things for which we ought to groan. O man! *"There is wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men"* [Romans 1:18]; *"God*

will come manifestly: a fire will burn before Him, and round about Him will be a mighty tempest." [Psalm 50:3] *"A fire will burn before Him, and consume His enemies on every side."* [Psalm 97:3] *"The day of the Lord is as a burning oven."* [Malachi 4:1] And no man lays up these things in his mind, but these tremendous and fearful doctrines are more despised than fables, and are trodden under foot. He that hears—there is no one: while they who laugh and make sport are— all. What resource will there be for us? Whence shall we find safety? *"We are undone, we are utterly consumed"*, we have become the laughingstock of our enemies, and a mockery for the heathen and the Demons. Now is the devil greatly elated; he glories and is glad. The angels to whom we had been entrusted are all ashamed and in sadness: there is no man to convert [you]: all means have been used by us in vain, and we seem to you as idle talkers. It is seasonable even now to call on the heaven, because there is no man that hears; to take to witness the elements: *"Hear, O heaven! And give ear, O earth! For the Lord has spoken."* Isaiah 1:2]

Give a hand, stretch it forth, O you who have not yet been overwhelmed, to them who are undone through their drunkenness: ye that are whole to them that are sick, you that are sober-minded to them that are mad, that are giddily whirling round.

Let no man, I beseech you, prefer the favor of his friend to his salvation; and let violence and rebuke look to one thing only—his benefit. When one has been seized by a fever, even slaves lay hold of their Masters. For when that is pressing on him, throwing his mind into confusion, and a swarm of slaves are standing by, they recognize not the law of Master and Servant, in the calamity of the Master.

Let us collect ourselves, I exhort you: there are daily wars, submersions [of towns], destructions innumerable all around us, and on

every side the wrath of God is enclosing us as in a net. And we, as though we were well-pleasing to Him, are in security. We all make our hands ready for unjust gains, none for helping others: all for plundering, none for protecting: each one is in earnest as to how he shall increase his possessions; no one as to how he shall aid the needy: each one has much anxiety how he may add to his wealth; no one how he may save his own soul. One fear possesses all, lest (you say) we should become poor; no man is in anguish and trembling lest we should fall into hell. These things call for lamentations, these call for accusation, these call for reprobation.

9. But I do not wish to speak of these things, but I am constrained by my grief. Forgive me: I am forced by sorrow to utter many things, even those which I do not wish. I see that our wound is grievous, that our calamity is beyond comfort, that woes have overtaken us greater than the consolation. We are undone. *"O that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears"* [Jeremiah 9:1], that I might lament. Let us weep, beloved, let us weep, let us groan.

Possibly there may be some here who say, He talks to us of nothing but lamentation, nothing but tears. It was not my wish, believe me, it was not my wish, but rather to go through a course of commendations and praises: but now it is not the season for these. Beloved, it is not lamenting which is grievous, but the doing things which call for lamentations. Sorrow is not the thing to shrink from, but the committing things that call for sorrow. Do not thou be punished, and I will not mourn. Do not die, and I will not weep. If the body indeed lies dead, you call on all to grieve with you, and thinkest those without sympathy who do not mourn: And when the soul is perishing, do you tell us not to mourn?

But I cannot be a father, if I do not weep. I am a father full of affection. Hear how Paul exclaims, *"My little children, of whom I travail in*

birth again" [Galatians 4:19]: what mother in child-birth utters cries so bitter as he! Would that it were possible for you to see the very fire that is in my heart, and you would know, that I burn [with grief] more intense than any woman, or gift that suffers untimely widowhood. She does not so mourn over her husband, nor any father over his son, as I do over this multitude that is here with us.

I see no progress. Everything turns to calumnies and accusations. No man makes it his business to please God; but (he says) 'let us speak evil of such an one or such an one.' 'Such an one is unfit to be among the Clergy.' 'Such an one does not lead a respectable life.' When we ought to be grieving for our own evils, we judge others, whereas we ought not to do this, even when we are pure from sins. *"For who makes you to differ"* (he says) *"and what have you which thou did not receive? But if you have received it, why do you glory, as though you had not received it?"* [1 Corinthians 4:7] *"And thou, why do you judge your brother"* [Romans 14:10], being yourself full of innumerable evils? When you say, Such an one is a bad man, and a spendthrift, and vicious, think of yourself, and examine strictly your own [condition], and you will repent of what you have said. For there is no, no not any, such powerful stimulus to virtue, as the recollecting of our sins.

If we turn over these two things in our minds, we shall be enabled to attain the promised blessings, we shall be enabled to cleanse ourselves and wipe away [what is amiss]. Only let us take serious thought sometime; let us be anxious about the matter, beloved. Let us grieve here in reflection, that we may not grieve yonder in punishment, but may enjoy the everlasting blessings, where *"pain and sorrow and sighing are fled away"* [Isaiah 35:10], that we may attain to the good things which surpass man's understanding, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for to Him is glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 24 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:13-16

" These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city."

1. The first virtue, yea the whole of virtue, is to be a stranger to this world, and a sojourner, and to have nothing in common with things here, but to hang loose from them, as from things strange to us; As those blessed disciples did, of whom he says, *"They wandered about in sheepskins, and in goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented: of whom the world was not worthy."* [c. xi. 37, 38]

They called themselves therefore *"strangers"*; but Paul said somewhat much beyond this: for not merely did he call himself a stranger, but said that he was dead to the world, and that the world was dead to him. *"For the world"* (he says) *"has been crucified to me and I to the world."* [Galatians 6:14] But we, both citizens and quite alive, busy ourselves about everything here as citizens. And what righteous men were to the world, *"strangers"* and *"dead,"* that we are to Heaven. And what they were to Heaven, alive and acting as citizens, that we are to the world. Wherefore we are dead, because we have refused that which is truly life, and have chosen this which

is but for a time. Wherefore we have provoked God to wrath, because when the enjoyments of Heaven have been set before us, we are not willing to be separated from things on earth, but, like worms, we turn about from the earth to the earth, and again from this to that; and in short are not willing to look up even for a little while, nor to withdraw ourselves from human affairs, but as if drowned in torpor and sleep and drunkenness, we are stupefied with imaginations.

2. And as those who are under the power of sweet sleep lie on their bed not only during the night, but even when the morning has over-taken them, and bright day has come, and are not ashamed to indulge in pleasure, and to make the season of business and activity a time of slumber and indolence, so truly we also, when the day is drawing near, when the night is far spent, or rather the day; for "*work*" (it is said) "*while it is day*" [John 9:4]; when it is day we practice all that belongs to the night, sleeping, dreaming, indulging in luxurious fancies; and the eyes of our understanding are closed as well as those of our body; we speak amiss, we talk absurdly; even if a person inflict a deep wound upon us, if he carry off all our substance, if he set the very house on fire, we are not so much as conscious of it.

Or rather, we do not even wait for others to do this, but we do it ourselves, piercing and wounding ourselves every day, lying in unseemly fashion, and stripped bare of all credit, all honor, neither ourselves concealing our shameful deeds, nor permitting others to do so, but lying exposed to public shame, to the ridicule, the numberless jests of spectators and passers-by.

3. Do ye not suppose that the wicked themselves laugh at those who are of like characters to themselves, and condemn them? For since God has placed within us a tribunal which cannot be bribed nor ever utterly

destroyed, even though we come to the very lowest depth of vice; therefore even the wicked themselves give sentence against themselves, and if one call them that which they are, they are ashamed, they are angry, they say that it is an insult. Thus they condemn what they do, even if not by their deeds, yet by their words, by their conscience, nay rather even by their deeds. For when they carry on their practices out of sight and secretly, they give the strongest proof of the opinion they hold concerning the thing itself. For wickedness is so manifest, that all men are its accusers, even those who follow after it, while such is the quality of virtue, that it is admired even by those who do not emulate it. For even the fornicator will praise chastity, and the covetous will condemn injustice, and the passionate will admire patience, and blame quarrelsomeness, and the wanton [will blame] wantonness.

How then (you say) does he pursue these things? From excessive indolence, not because he judges it good; otherwise he would not have been ashamed of the thing itself, nor would he have denied it when another accused him. Nay many when caught, not enduring the shame, have even hanged themselves. So strong is the witness within us in behalf of what is good and becoming. Thus what is good is brighter than the sun, and the contrary more unsightly than anything.

4. The saints were "*strangers and sojourners*." How and in what way? And where does Abraham confess himself "*a stranger and a sojourner*"? Probably indeed he even himself confessed it: but David both confessed "*I am a stranger*" and what? "*As all my fathers were*." [Psalm 39:12] For they who dwell in tents, they who purchase even burial places for money, evidently were in some sense strangers, as they had not even where to bury their dead.

What then? Did they mean that they were "*strangers*" from the land that is in Palestine? By no means: but in respect of the whole world: and with reason; for they saw therein none of the things which they wished for, but everything foreign and strange. They indeed wished to practice virtue: but here there was much wickedness, and things were quite foreign to them. They had no friend, no familiar acquaintance, save only some few.

But how were they "*strangers*"? They had no care for things here. And this they showed not by words, but by their deeds. In what way?

He said to Abraham, "*Leave that which seems your country and come to one that is foreign*": And he did not cleave to his kindred, but gave it up as unconcernedly as if he were about to leave a foreign land. He said to him, "*Offer up your son,*" and he offered him up as if he had no son; as if he had divested himself of his nature, so he offered him up. The wealth which he had acquired was common to all passers-by, and this he accounted as nothing. He yielded the first places to others: he threw himself into dangers; he suffered troubles innumerable. He built no splendid houses, he enjoyed no luxuries, he had no care about dress, which all are things of this world; but lived in all respects as belonging to the City yonder; he showed hospitality, brotherly love, mercifulness, forbearance, contempt for wealth and for present glory, and for all else.

And his son too was such as himself: when he was driven away, when war was made on him, he yielded and gave way, as being in a foreign land. For foreigners, whatever they suffer, endure it, as not being in their own country. Even when his wife was taken from him, he endured this also as being in a strange land: and lived in all respects as one whose home was above, showing sobermindedness and a well-ordered life. For after he had begotten a son, he had no more commerce with his wife, and it was when

the flower of his youth had passed that he married her, showing that he did it not from passion, but in subservience to the promise of God.

And what did Jacob? Did he not seek bread only and raiment, which are asked for by those who are truly strangers; by those that have come to great poverty? When he was driven out, did he not as a stranger give place? Did he not serve for hire? Did he not suffer afflictions innumerable, everywhere, as a stranger?

5. And these things (he says) they said, "*seeking*" their "*own country*." Ah! How great is the difference! They indeed were in travail-pains each day, wishing to be released from this world, and to return to their country. But we, on the contrary, if a fever attack us, neglecting everything, weeping like little children, are frightened at death.

Not without reason we are thus affected. For since we do not live here like strangers, nor as if hastening to our country, but are like persons that are going away to punishment, therefore we grieve, because we have not used circumstances as we ought, but have turned order upside down. Hence we grieve when we ought to rejoice: hence we shudder, like murderers or robber chiefs, when they are going to be brought before the judgment-seat, and are thinking over all the things they have done, and therefore are fearful and trembling.

They, however, were not such, but pressed on. And Paul even groaned; "*And we*" (he says) "*that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.*" [2 Corinthians 5:4] Such were they who were with Abraham; "*strangers*," he says, they were in respect of the whole world, and "*they sought a country.*"

What sort of "*country*" was this? Was it that which they had left? By no means. For what hindered them if they wished, from returning again, and becoming citizens? But they sought that which is in Heaven? Thus they

desired their departure hence, and so they pleased God; for *"God was not ashamed to be called their God."*

6. Ah! How great a dignity! He vouch-safed *"to be called their God."* What do you say? He is called the God of the earth, and the God of Heaven, and have you set it down as a great thing that *"He is not ashamed to be called their God"*? Great and truly great this is, and a proof of exceeding blessedness. How? Because He is called God of earth and of heaven as also of the Gentiles: in that He created and formed them: but [God] of those holy men, not in this sense, but as some true friend.

And I will make it plain to you by an example; as in the case of [slaves] in large households, when any of those placed over the household are very highly esteemed, and manage everything themselves, and can use great freedom towards their masters, the Master is called after them, and one may find many so called. But what do I say? As we might say the God, not of the Gentiles but of the world, so we might say *"the God of Abraham."* But you do not know how great a dignity this is, because we do not attain to it. For as now He is called the Lord of all Christians, and yet the name goes beyond our deserts: consider the greatness if He were called the God of one [person]! He who is called the God of the whole world is *"not ashamed to be called"* the God of three men: and with good reason: for the saints would turn the scale, I do not say against the world but against ten thousand such. *"For one man who does the will of the Lord, is better than ten thousand transgressors."* [Sirach 16:3]

Now that they called themselves *"strangers"* in this sense is manifest. But supposing that they said they were *"strangers"* on account of the strange land, why did David also [call himself a stranger]? Was not he a king? Was not he a prophet? Did he not spend his life in his own country? Why then does he say, *"I am a stranger and a sojourner"*? [Psalm 39:12]

How are you a stranger? "*As*" (he says) "*all my fathers were.*" Do you see that they too were strangers? We have a country, he means, but not really our country. But how art you yourself a stranger? As to the earth. Therefore they also [were strangers] in respect of the earth: For "*as they were,*" he says, so also am I; and as he, so they too.

7. Let us even now become strangers; that God may "*not be ashamed of us to be called our God.*" For it is a shame to Him, when He is called the God of the wicked, and He also is ashamed of them; as He is glorified when He is [called the God] of the good and the kind, and of them that cultivate virtue. For if "*we*" decline to be called the masters of our wicked slaves, and give them up; and should any one come to us and say, 'such a one does innumerable bad things, he is your slave, is he not?' We immediately say, "*by no means,*" to get rid of the disgrace: for a slave has a close relation to his master, and the discredit passes from the one to the other. — But they were so illustrious, so full of confidence, that not only was He "*not ashamed to be called*" from them, but He even Himself says, "*I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*" [Exodus 3:6]

Let us also, my beloved, become "*strangers*"; that God may "*not be ashamed of us*"; that He may not be ashamed, and deliver us up to Hell. Such were they who said, "*Lord, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and in Your Name have done many wonderful works!*" [Matthew 7:22] But see what Christ says to them: "*I know you not:*" the very thing which masters would do, when wicked slaves run to them, wishing to be rid of the disgrace. "*I know you not,*" He says. How then dost Thou punish those whom You know not? I said, "*I know not,*" in a different sense: that is, "*I deny you, and renounce you.*" But God forbid that we should hear this fatal and terrible utterance. For if they who cast out demons and prophesied,

were denied, because their life was not suitable thereto; how much more we!

8. And how (you ask) is it possible that they should be denied, who have shown prophetic powers, and wrought miracles, and cast out demons? Is it probable they were afterwards changed, and became wicked; and therefore were nothing benefited, even by their former virtue. For not only ought we to have our beginnings splendid, but the end also more splendid still.

For tell me, does not the Orator take pains to make the end of his speech splendid, that he may retire with applause? Does not the public officer make the most splendid display at the close of his administration? The wrestler, if he do not make a more splendid display and conquer unto the end, and if after vanquishing all he be vanquished by the last, is not all unprofitable to him? Should the pilot have crossed the whole ocean, yet if he wreck his vessel at the port, has he not lost all his former labor? And what [of] the Physician? If, after he has freed the sick man from his disease, when he is on the point of discharging him cured, he should then destroy him, has he not destroyed everything? So too in respect of Virtue, as many as have not added an end suitable to the beginning, and in unison and harmony with it, are ruined, and undone. Such are they who have sprung forth from the starting place bright and exulting, and afterwards have become faint and feeble. Therefore they are both deprived of the prize, and are not acknowledged by their master.

Let us listen to these things, those of us who are in love of wealth: for this is the greatest iniquity. *"For the love of money is the root of all evil."* [1 Timothy 6:10] Let us listen, those of us who wish to make our present possessions greater, let us listen and sometime cease from our covetousness, that we may not hear the same things as they [will hear]. Let us listen to

them now, and be on our guard, that we may not hear them then. Let us listen now with fear, that we may not then listen with vengeance: "*Depart from Me*" (He says); "*I never knew you*" [Matthew 7:23], no not even then (He means) when you made a display of prophesyings, and were casting out demons.

It is probable that He also here hints at something else, that even then they were wicked; and from the beginning, grace wrought even by the unworthy. For if it wrought through Balaam, much more through the unworthy, for the sake of those who shall profit [by it].

But if even signs and wonders did not avail to deliver from punishment; much more, if a man happen to be in the priestly dignity: even if he reach the highest honor, even if grace work in him to ordination, even if unto all the other things, for the sake of those who need his leadership, he also shall hear, "*I never knew you,*" no, not even then when grace wrought in you.

9. O! How strict shall the search be there as to purity of life! How does that, of itself, suffice to introduce us into the kingdom? While the absence of it gives up the man [to destruction], though he have ten thousand miracles and signs to show. For nothing is so pleasing to God as an excellent course of life. "*If you love Me*" [John 14:15], He declares; He did not say, "*work miracles,*" but what? "*Keep My commandments.*" And again, "*I call you friends*" [John 15:14], not when you cast out demons, but "*if you keep My words.*" For those things come of the gift of God: but these after the gift of God, of our own diligence also. Let us strive to become friends of God, and not remain enemies to Him.

These things we are ever saying, these exhortations we are ever giving, both to ourselves and to you: but nothing more is gained. Wherefore also I am afraid. And I would have wished indeed to be silent, so as not to

increase your danger. For when a person often hears, and even so does not act, this is to provoke the Lord to anger. But I fear also myself that other danger, that of silence, if when I am appointed to the ministering of the word, I should hold my peace.

What shall we then do that we may be saved? Let us begin [the practice of] virtue, as we have opportunity: let us portion out the virtues to ourselves, as laborers do their husbandry; in this month let us master evil-speaking, injuriousness, unjust anger; and let us lay down a law for ourselves, and say, Today let us set this right. Again, in this month let us school ourselves in forbearance, and in another, in some other virtue: And when we have got into the habit of this virtue let us go to another, just as in the things we learn at school, guarding what is already gained, and acquiring others.

After this let us proceed to contempt for riches. First let us restrain our hands from grasping, and then let us give alms. Let us not simply confound everything, with the same hands both slaying and showing mercy forsooth. After this, let us go to some other virtue, and from that, to another.

"Filthiness and foolish talking and jesting, let it not be even named among you." [Ephesians 5:4] Let us be thus far in the right way.

There is no need of spending money, there is no need of labor, none of sweat, it is enough to have only the will, and all is done. There is no need to travel a long way, nor to cross a boundless ocean, but to be in earnest and of ready mind, and to put a bridle on the tongue. Unseasonable reproaches, anger, disorderly lusts, luxuriousness, expensiveness, let us cast off; and the desire of wealth also from our soul, perjury and habitual oaths.

If we thus cultivate ourselves, plucking out the former thorns, and casting in the heavenly seed, we shall be able to attain the good things promised. For the Husbandman will come and will lay us up in His Garner,

and we shall attain to all good things, which may we all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 25 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:17-19

"By faith [Abraham], when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall your seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

1. Great indeed was the faith of Abraham. For while in the case of Abel, and of Noah, and of Enoch, there was an opposition of reasonings only, and it was necessary to go beyond human reasonings; in this case it was necessary not only to go beyond human reasonings, but to manifest also something more. For what was of God seemed to be opposed to what was of God; and faith opposed faith, and command promise.

I mean this: He had said, *"Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and I will give you this land."* [Genesis 12:1-7] *"He gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on."* [Acts 7:5] Do you see how what was done was opposed to the promise? Again He said, *"In Isaac shall your seed be called"* [Genesis 21:12], and he believed: and again He says, Sacrifice to Me this one, who was to fill all the world from his seed. You see the opposition between the commands and the promise? He enjoined things that were in contradiction to the promises, and yet not even so did the righteous man stagger, nor say he had been deceived.

For you indeed, he means, could not say this, that He promised ease and gave tribulation. For in our case, the things which He promised, these also He performs. How so? *"In the world"* (He says), *"you shall have*

tribulation." [John 16:33] *"He that takes not his cross and follows Me, is not worthy of Me."* [Matthew 10:38] *"He that hates not his life shall not find it."* [John 12:25] And, *"He that forsakes not all that he has, and follows after Me, is not worthy of Me."* [Luke 14:27-33] And again, *"You shall be brought before rulers and kings for My sake."* [Matthew 10:18] And again, *"A man's foes shall be they of his own household."* [Matthew 10:36] But the things which pertain to rest are yonder.

But with regard to Abraham, it was different. He was enjoined to do what was opposed to the promises; and yet not even so was he troubled, nor did he stagger, nor think he had been deceived. But you endure nothing except what was promised, yet you are troubled.

2. He heard the opposite of the promises from Him who had made them; and yet he was not disturbed, but did them as if they had been in harmony [therewith]. For they were in harmony; being opposed indeed according to human calculations, but in harmony [when viewed] by Faith. And how this was, the Apostle himself has taught us, by saying, *"accounting that God was able to raise Him up, even from the dead."* By the same faith (he means) by which he believed that God gave what was not, and raised up the dead, by the same was he persuaded that He would also raise him up after he had been slain in sacrifice. For it was alike impossible (to human calculation, I mean) from a womb which was dead and grown old and already become useless for child-bearing to give a child, and to raise again one who had been slain. But his previous faith prepared the way for things to come.

And see; the good things came first, and the hard things afterwards, in his old age. But for you, on the contrary, (he says) the sad things are first, and the good things last. This for those who dare to say, 'He has promised us the good things after death; perhaps He has deceived us.' He shows that

"God is able to raise up even from the dead," and if God be able to raise from the dead, without all doubt He will pay all [that He has promised].

But if Abraham so many years before, believed *"that God is able to raise from the dead,"* much more ought we to believe it. You see (what I at first said) that death had not yet entered in and yet He drew them at once to the hope of the resurrection, and led them to such full assurance, that when bidden, they even slay their own sons, and readily offer up those from whom they expected to people the world.

And he shows another thing too, by saying, that *"God tempted Abraham."* [Genesis 22:1] What then? Did not God know that the man was noble and approved? Why then did He tempt him? Not that He might Himself learn, but that He might show to others, and make his fortitude manifest to all. And here also he shows the cause of trials, that they may not suppose they suffer these things as being forsaken [of God]. For in their case indeed, it was necessary that they should be tried, because there were many who persecuted or plotted against them: but in Abraham's case, what need was there to devise trials for him which did not exist? Now this trial, it is evident, was by His command. The others indeed happened by His allowance, but this even by His command. If then temptations make men approved in such wise that, even where there is no occasion, God exercises His own athletes; much more ought we to bear all things nobly.

And here he said emphatically, *"By faith, when he was tried, he offered up Isaac,"* for there was no other cause for his bringing the offering but that.

3. After this he pursues the same thought. No one (he says) could allege, that he had another son, and expected the promise to be fulfilled from him, and therefore confidently offered up this one. *"And"* (his words are) *"he offered up his only-begotten, who had received the promises."* Why do you say *"only-begotten"*? What then? Of whom was Ishmael sprung? I

mean "*only-begotten*" (he would say) so far as relates to the word of the promise. Therefore after saying, "*Only-begotten*," showing that he says it for this reason, he added, "*of whom it was said, In Isaac shall your seed be called*," that is, "*from*" him. Do you see how he admires what was done by the Patriarch? "*In Isaac shall your seed be called*," and that son he brought to be sacrificed.

Afterwards, that no one may suppose he does this in despair, and in consequence of this command had cast away that Faith, but may understand that this also was truly of faith, he says that he retained that faith also, although it seem to be at variance with this. But it was not at variance. For he did not measure the power of God by human reasonings, but committed all to faith. And hence he was not afraid to say, that God was "*able to raise him up, even from the dead*."

"*From whence also he received him in a figure*," that is in idea, by the ram, he means. How? The ram having been slain, he was saved: so that by means of the ram he received him again, having slain it in his stead. But these things were types: for here it is the Son of God who is slain.

And observe, I beseech you, how great is His lovingkindness. For inasmuch as a great favor was to be given to men, He, wishing to do this, not by favor, but as a debtor, arranges that a man should first give up his own son on account of God's command, in order that He Himself might seem to be doing nothing great in giving up His own Son, since a man had done this before Him; that He might be supposed to do it not of grace, but of debt. For we wish to do this kindness also to those whom we love, others, to appear first to have received some little thing from them, and so give them all: and we boast more of the receiving than of the giving; and we do not say, We gave him this, but, We received this from him.

"From whence also" (are his words) *"he received him in a figure,"* i.e. as in a riddle (for the ram was as it were a figure of Isaac) or, as in a type. For since the sacrifice had been completed, and Isaac slain in purpose, therefore He gave him to the Patriarch.

4. You see, that what I am constantly saying, is shown in this case also? When we have proved that our mind is made perfect, and have shown that we disregard earthly things, then earthly things also are given to us; but not before; lest being bound to them already, receiving them we should be bound still. Loose yourself from your slavery first (He says), and then receive, that you may receive no longer as a slave, but as a master. Despise riches, and you shall be rich. Despise glory, and you shall be glorious. Despise the avenging yourself on your enemies, and then shall you attain it. Despise repose, and then you shall receive it that in receiving you may receive not as a prisoner, nor as a slave, but as a freeman.

For as in the case of little children, when the child eagerly desires childish playthings, we hide them from him with much care, as a ball, for instance, and such like things, that he may not be hindered from necessary things; but when he thinks little of them, and no longer longs for them, we give them fearlessly, knowing that henceforth no harm can come to him from them, the desire no longer having strength enough to draw him away from things necessary; so God also, when He sees that we no longer eagerly desire the things of this world, thenceforward permits us to use them. For we possess them as freemen and men, not as children.

For [in proof] that if you despise the avenging yourself on your enemies, you will then attain it, hear what he says, *"If your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink,"* and he added, *"for in so doing, you shall heap coals of fire on his head."* [Romans 12:20] And again, that if you despise riches, you shall then obtain them, hear Christ saying, *"There is no*

man which has left father, or mother, or house, or brethren, who shall not receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." [Matthew 19:29]

And that if you despise glory, you shall then attain it, again hear Christ Himself saying, *"He that will be first among you, let him be your minister."* [Matthew 20:26] And again, *"For whosoever shall humble himself, he shall be exalted."* [Matthew 23:12]

What do you say? If I give drink to mine enemy, do I then punish him? If I give up my goods, do I then possess them? If I humble myself, shall I then be exalted? Yea, He says, for such is My power, to give contraries by means of contraries. I abound in resources and in contrivances: be not afraid. The 'Nature of things' follows My will: not I attend upon Nature. I do all things: I am not controlled by them: wherefore also I am able to change their form and order.

5. And why do you wonder if [it is so] in these instances? For you will find the same also in all others. If you injure, you are injured; if you are injured, then you are uninjured; if you punish, then you have not punished another, but hast punished yourself. For *"he that loves iniquity,"* it is said, *"hates his own soul."* [Psalm 11:5, Septuagint] Do you see that thou dost not injure, but art injured? Therefore also Paul says, *"Why do ye not rather take wrong?"* [1 Corinthians 6:7] Do you see that this is not to be wronged?

When you insult, then are you insulted. And most persons partly know this: as when they say one to another, *"Let us go away, do not disgrace yourself."* Why? Because the difference is great between you and him: for however much you insult him, he accounts it a credit. Let us consider this in all cases, and be above insults. I will tell you how.

Should we have a contest with him who wears the purple, let us consider that in insulting him, we insult ourselves, for we become worthy to be disgraced. Tell me, what do you mean? When you are a citizen of

Heaven, and hast the Philosophy that is above, do you disgrace yourself with him "*that minds earthly things*"? [Philippians 3:19] For though he be in possession of countless riches, though he be in power, he does not as yet know the good that is therein. Do not in insulting him, insult yourself. Spare yourself, not him. Honor yourself, not him. Is there not some Proverb such as this, He that honors; honors himself? With good reason: for he honors not the other, but himself. Hear what a certain wise man says, "*Do honor to your soul according to the dignity thereof.*" [Sirach 10:28] "*According to the dignity thereof,*" what is this? If he have defrauded (it means), do not thou defraud; if he has insulted, do not thou insult.

6. Tell me, I pray you, if some poor man has taken away clay thrown out of your yard, would you for this have summoned a court of justice? Surely not. Why? Lest you should disgrace yourself; lest all men should condemn you. The same also happens in this case. For the rich man is poor, and the more rich he is, the poorer is he in that which is indeed poverty. Gold is clay, cast out in the yard, not lying in your house, for your house is Heaven. For this, then, will you summon a Court of Justice, and will not the citizens on high condemn you? Will they not cast you out from their country, who art so mean, who art so shabby, as to choose to fight for a little clay? For if the world were yours, and then some one had taken it, ought thou to pay any attention to it?

Do you not know, that if you were to take the world ten times or an hundred times, or ten thousand times, and twice that, it is not to be compared with the least of the good things in Heaven? He then who admires the things here slights those yonder, since he judges these worthy of exertion, though so far inferior to the other. Nay, rather indeed he will not be able to admire those other. For how [can he], while he is passionately

excited towards these earthly things? Let us cut through the cords and entanglements: for this is what earthly things are.

How long shall we be stooping down? How long shall we plot one against another, like wild beasts; like fishes? Nay rather, the wild beasts do not plot against each other, but [against] animals of a different tribe. A bear for instance does not readily kill a bear, nor a serpent kill a serpent, having respect for the sameness of race. But you, with one of the same race, and having innumerable claims, as common origin, rational faculties, the knowledge of God, ten thousand other things, the force of nature, him who is your kinsman, and partaker of the same nature— him you kill, and involvest in evils innumerable. For what, if you dost not thrust your sword, nor plunge your right hand into his neck, other things more grievous than this you do, when you involve him in innumerable evils. For if you had done the other, you would have freed him from anxiety, but now you encompass him with hunger, with slavery, with feelings of discouragement, with many sins. These things I say, and shall not cease to say, not [as] preparing you to commit murder: nor as urging you to some crime short of that; but that you may not be confident, as if you were not to give account. *"For" (it says) "he that takes away a livelihood" [Sirach 34:22] and asks bread, it says.*

7. Let us at length keep our hands to ourselves, or rather, let us not keep them, but stretch them out honorably, not for grasping, but for almsgiving. Let us not have our hand unfruitful nor withered; for the hand which does not alms is withered; and that which is also grasping, is polluted and unclean.

Let no one eat with such hands; for this is an insult to those invited. For, tell me, if a man when he had made us lie down on tapestry and a soft couch and linen interwoven with gold, in a great and splendid house, and

had set by us a great multitude of attendants, and had prepared a tray of silver and gold, and filled it with many dainties of great cost and of all sorts, then urged us to eat, provided we would only endure his besmearing his hands with mire or with human ordure, and so sitting down to meat with us — would any man endure this infliction? Would he not rather have considered it an insult? Indeed I think he would, and would have gone straightway off. But now in fact, you see not hands filled with what is indeed filth, but even the very food, and yet thou dost not go off, nor flee, nor find fault. Nay, if he be a person in authority, thou even accountest it a grand affair, and destroyest your own soul, in eating such things. For covetousness is worse than any mire; for it pollutes, not the body but the soul, and makes it hard to be washed. Thou therefore, though you see him that sits at meat defiled with this filth both on his hands and his face, and his house filled with it, nay and his table also full of it (for dung, or if there be anything more unclean than that, it is not so unclean and polluted as those viands), do you feel as if forsooth thou were highly honored, and as if you were going to enjoy yourself?

And do you not fear Paul who allows us to go without restraint to the Tables of the heathen if we wish, but not even if we wish to those of the covetous? For, *"if any man who is called a Brother"* [1 Corinthians 5:11], he says, meaning here by Brother every one who is a believer simply, not him who leads a solitary life. For what is it which makes brotherhood? The Washing of regeneration; the being enabled to call God our Father. So that he that is a Monk, if he be a Catechumen, is not a Brother, but the believer though he be in the world, is a Brother. *"If any man,"* says he, *"that is called a Brother."* [1 Corinthians 5:11] For at that time there was not even a trace of any one leading a Monastic life, but this blessed [Apostle] addressed all his discourse to persons in the world. *"If any man,"* he says, *"that is called a*

Brother, be a fornicator, or covetous or a drunkard, with such an one, no not to eat." But not so with respect to the heathen: but "*If any of them that believe not,*" meaning the heathen, "*bid you and you be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you eat.*" [1 Corinthians 10:27]

8. "*If any man that is called Brother be*" (he says) "*a drunkard.*" Oh! What strictness! Yet we not only do not avoid drunkards, but even go to their houses, partaking of what they set before us.

Therefore all things are upside down, all things are in confusion, and overthrown, and ruined. For tell me, if any such person should invite you to a banquet, you who art accounted poor and mean, and then should hear you say, "*Inasmuch as the things set before me are [the fruit] of overreaching, I will not endure to defile my own soul,*" would he not be mortified? Would he not be confounded? Would he not be ashamed? This alone were sufficient to correct him, and to make him call himself wretched for his wealth, and admire you for your poverty, if he saw himself with so great earnestness despised by you.

But we "*are become*" (I know not why) "*servants of men*" [1 Corinthians 7:23], though Paul cries aloud throughout, "*Be not ye the servants of men.*" Whence then have we become "*servants of men*"? Because we first became servants of the belly, and of money, and of glory, and of all the rest; we gave up the liberty which Christ bestowed on us.

What then awaits him who has become a servant (tell me)? Hear Christ saying, "*The servant abides not in the house for ever.*" [John 8:35] You have a declaration complete in itself, that he never enters into the Kingdom; for this is what "*the House*" means. For, He says, "*in My Father's House are many mansions.*" [John 14:2] "*The servant*" then "*abides not in the House for ever.*" By a servant He means him who is "*the servant of sin.*" But he

that "*abides not in the House for ever,*" abides in Hell for ever, having no consolation from any quarter.

Nay, to this point of wickedness are matters come, that they even give alms out of these [ill-gotten gains], and many receive [them]. Therefore our boldness has broken down, and we are not able to rebuke any one. But however, henceforward at least, let us flee the mischief arising from this; and you who have rolled yourselves in this mire, cease from such defilement, and restrain your rage for such banquets, if even now we may by any means be able to have God propitious to us, and to attain to the good things which have been promised: which may we all obtain in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 26 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:20-22

"By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith, Jacob when he was a dying blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshipped leaning on the top of his staff. By faith, Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones."

1. *"Many prophets and righteous men"* (it is said) *"have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear and have not heard them."* [Matthew 13:17] Did then those righteous men know all the things to come? Yea, most certainly. For if because of the weakness of those who were not able to receive Him, the Son was not revealed,— He was with good reason revealed to those conspicuous in virtue. This Paul also says, that they knew *"the things to come,"* that is the resurrection of Christ.

Or he does not mean this: but that *"By faith, concerning things to come"* [means] not [concerning] the world to come, but *"concerning things to come"* in this world. For how [except by faith] could a man sojourning in a strange land, give such blessings?

But on the other hand he obtained the blessing, and yet did not receive it. You see that what I said with regard to Abraham, may be said also of Jacob, that they did not enjoy the blessing, but the blessings went to his posterity, while he himself obtained the *"things to come."* For we find that his brother rather enjoyed the blessing. For [Jacob] spent all his time in servitude and working as a hireling, and [amid] dangers, and plots, and

deceits, and fears; and when he was asked by Pharaoh, he says, "*Few and evil have my days been*" [Genesis 47:9]; while the other lived in independence and great security, and afterwards was an object of terror to [Jacob]. Where then did the blessings come to their accomplishment, save in the [world] to come?

Do you see that from the beginning the wicked have enjoyed things here, but the righteous the contrary? Not however all. For behold, Abraham was a righteous man, and he enjoyed things here as well, though with affliction and trials. For indeed wealth was all he had, seeing all else relating to him was full of affliction. For it is impossible that the righteous man should not be afflicted, though he be rich: for when he is willing to be overreached, to be wronged, to suffer all other things, he must be afflicted. So that although he enjoy wealth, [yet is it] not without grief. Why? You ask. Because he is in affliction and distress. But if at that time the righteous were in affliction, much more now.

"*By Faith,*" he says, "*Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*" (and yet Esau was the elder; but he puts Jacob first for his excellence). Do you see how great was his Faith? Whence did he promise to his sons so great blessings? Entirely from his having faith in God.

2. "*By Faith, Jacob when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph.*" Here we ought to set down the blessings entire, in order that both his faith and his prophesying may be made manifest. "*And worshipped leaning,*" he says, "*upon the top of his staff.*" Here, he means, he not only spoke, but was even so confident about the future things, as to show it also by his act. For inasmuch as another King was about to arise from Ephraim, therefore it is said, "*And he bowed himself upon the top of his staff.*" That is, even though he was now an old man, "*he bowed himself*" to Joseph, showing the obeisance of the whole people which was to be [directed] to

him. And this indeed had already taken place, when his brethren "*bowed down*" to him: but it was afterwards to come to pass through the ten tribes. Do you see how he foretold the things which were to be afterwards? Do you see how great faith they had? How they believed "*concerning the things to come*"?

For some of the things here, the things present, are examples of patience only, and of enduring ill-treatment, and of receiving nothing good; for instance, what is mentioned in the case of Abraham, in the case of Abel. But others are [examples] of Faith, as in the case of Noah, that there is a God, that there is a recompense. (For Faith in this place is manifold, both of there being a recompense, and of awaiting it, not under the same conditions, and of wrestling before the prizes.) And the things also which concern Joseph are of Faith only. Joseph heard that [God] had made a promise to Abraham, that He had engaged His word "*to you and to your seed will I give this land;*" and though in a strange land, and not yet seeing the engagement fulfilled, but never faltered even so, but so believed as even to "*speak of the Exodus, and to give commandment concerning his bones.*" He then not only believed himself, but led on the rest also to Faith: that having the Exodus always in mind (for he would not have "*given commandment concerning his bones,*" unless he had been fully assured [of this]), they might look for their return [to Canaan].

Wherefore, when some men say, 'See! Even righteous men had care about their sepulchers,' let us reply to them, that it was for his reason: for he knew that "*the earth is the Lord's and all that therein is.*" [Psalm 24:1] He could not indeed have been ignorant of this, who lived in so great philosophy, who spent his whole life in Egypt. And yet if he had wished, it was possible for him to return, and not to mourn or vex himself. But when

he had taken up his father there, why, did he enjoin them to carry up thence his own bones also? Evidently for this reason.

But what? Tell me, are not the bones of Moses himself laid in a strange land? And those of Aaron, of Daniel, of Jeremiah? And as to those of the Apostles we do not know where those of most of them are laid. For of Peter indeed, and Paul, and John, and Thomas, the sepulchers are well known; but those of the rest, being so many, have nowhere become known. Let us not therefore lament at all about this, nor be so little-minded. For wherever we may be buried, *"the earth is the Lord's and all that therein is."* [Psalm 24:1] Certainly what must take place, does take place: to mourn however, and lament, and bewail the departed, arises from littleness of mind.

Hebrews 11:23

3. [Hebrews 11:23] *"By faith, Moses when he was born, was hid three months of his parents."* Do you see that in this case they hoped for things on the earth after their death? And many things were fulfilled after their death. This is for some who say, 'After death those things were done for them, which they did not obtain while alive; nor did they believe [would be] after their death.'

Moreover Joseph did not say, He gave not the land to me in my lifetime, nor to my father, nor to my grandfather, whose excellence too ought to have been revered; and will He vouchsafe to these wretched people what He did not vouchsafe to them? He said nothing of all this, but by Faith he both conquered and went beyond all these things.

He has named Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, all illustrious and admirable men. Again he makes the encouragement greater, by bringing down the matter to ordinary persons. For that the admirable should feel thus, is nothing wonderful, and to appear inferior to them, is not so dreadful: but to show oneself inferior even to people without names, this is the dreadful thing. And he begins with the parents of Moses, obscure persons, who had nothing so great as their son [had]. Therefore also he goes on to increase the strangeness of what he says by enumerating even women that were harlots, and widows. For *"by Faith"* (he says) *"the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."* And he mentions the rewards not only of belief but also of unbelief; as in [the case of] Noah.

But at present we must speak of the parents of Moses. Pharaoh gave orders that all the male children should be destroyed, and none had escaped

the danger. Whence did these expect to save their child? From faith. What sort of Faith? "*They saw*" (he says) "*that he was a proper child.*" The very sight drew them on to Faith: thus from the beginning, yea from the very swaddling-clothes, great was the Grace that was poured out on that righteous man, this being not the work of nature. For observe, the child immediately on its birth appears fair and not disagreeable to the sight. Whose [work] was this? Not that of nature, but of the Grace of God, which also stirred up and strengthened that barbarian woman, the Egyptian, and took and drew her on.

And yet in truth Faith had not a sufficient foundation in their case. For what was it to believe from sight? But you (he would say) believe from facts and have many pledges of Faith. For "*the receiving with joyfulness the spoiling of their goods*" [Hebrews 10:34], and other such [things], were [evidences] of Faith and of Patience. But inasmuch as these [Hebrews] also had believed, and yet afterwards had become faint-hearted, he shows that the Faith of those [saints of old] also was long continued, as, for instance, that of Abraham, although the circumstances seemed to contend against it.

"*And*" (he says) "*they were not afraid of the king's commandment,*" although that was in operation, but this [their hope respecting their child] was simply a kind of bare expectation. And this indeed was [the act] of his parents; but Moses himself what did he contribute?

Hebrews 11:24-26

4. Next again an example appropriate to them, or rather greater than that. For, says he, [Hebrews 11:24-26] *"by faith Moses when he had come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."* As though he had said to them, 'No one of you has left a palace, yea a splendid palace, nor such treasures; nor, when he might have been a king's son, has he despised this, as Moses did.' And that he did not simply leave [these things], he expressed by saying, *"he refused,"* that is, he hated, he turned away. For when Heaven was set before him, it was superfluous to admire an Egyptian Palace.

And see how admirably Paul has put it. He did not say, 'Esteeming heaven, and the things in heaven,' 'greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,' but what? *"The reproach of Christ."* For the being reproached for the sake of Christ he accounted better than being thus at ease; and this itself by itself was reward.

"Choosing rather" (he says) *"to suffer affliction with the people of God."* For you indeed suffer on your own account, but he *"chose"* [to suffer] for others; and voluntarily threw himself into so many dangers, when it was in his power both to live religiously, and to enjoy good things.

"Than" (he says) *"to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."* He called unwillingness *"to suffer affliction with the"* rest *"sin"*: this, he says, [Moses] accounted to be *"sin."* If then he accounted it *"sin"* not to be ready to *"suffer*

affliction with" the rest, it follows that the suffering affliction must be a great good since he threw himself into it from the royal palace.

But this he did, seeing some great things before him. "*Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*" What is, "*the reproach of Christ*"? It is being reproached in such ways as you are, the reproach which Christ endured; Or that he endured for Christ's sake: for "*that rock was Christ*" [1 Corinthians 10:4]; the being reproached as you are.

But what is "*the reproach of Christ*"? That [because] we repudiate the [ways] of our fathers we are reproached; that we are evil-entreated when we have run to God. It was likely that he also was reproached, when it was said to him, "*Will you kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?*" [Exodus 2:14] This is "*the reproach of Christ*," to be ill-treated to the end, and to the last breath: as He Himself was reproached and heard, "*If Thou be the Son of God*" [Matthew 27:40], from those for whom He was crucified, from those who were of the same race. This is "*the reproach of Christ*" when a man is reproached by those of his own family, or by those whom he is benefiting. For [Moses] also suffered these things from the man who had been benefited [by him].

In these words he encouraged them, by showing that even Christ suffered these things, and Moses also, two illustrious persons. So that this is rather "*the reproach of Christ*" than of Moses inasmuch as He suffered these things from "*His own.*" [John 1:11] But neither did the one send forth lightnings, nor the Other feel any [anger], but He was reviled and endured all things, while they "*wagged their heads.*" [Matthew 27:39] Since therefore it was probable that they [the readers] also would hear such things, and would long for the Recompense, he says that even Christ and Moses had suffered the like. So then ease is [the portion] of sin; but to be

reproached, of Christ. For what then do you wish? "*The reproach of Christ,*" or ease?

Hebrews 11:27

5. [Hebrews 11:27] *"By faith he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is Invisible."* What do you say? That he did not fear? And yet the Scripture says, that when he heard, he *"was afraid"* [Exodus 2:14], and for this cause provided for safety by flight, and stole away, and secretly withdrew himself; and afterwards he was exceedingly afraid. Observe the expressions with care: he said, *"not fearing the wrath of the king,"* with reference to his even presenting himself again. For it would have been [the part] of one who was afraid, not to undertake again his championship, nor to have any hand in the matter. That he did however again undertake it, was [the part] of one who committed all to God: for he did not say, 'He is seeking me, and is busy [in the search], and I cannot bear again to engage in this matter.'

So that even flight was [an act of] faith. Why then did he not remain (you say)? That he might not cast himself into a foreseen danger. For this finally would have been tempting [God]: to leap into the midst of dangers, and say, 'Let us see whether God will save me.' And this the devil said to Christ, *"Cast Yourself down."* [Matthew 4:6] Do you see that it is a diabolical thing, to throw ourselves into danger without cause and for no purpose, and to try whether God will save us? For he [Moses] could no longer be their champion when they who were receiving benefits were so ungrateful. It would therefore have been a foolish and senseless thing to remain there. But all these things were done, because, *"he endured as seeing Him who is Invisible."*

6. If then we too always see God with our mind, if we always think in remembrance of Him, all things will appear endurable to us, all things

tolerable; we shall bear them all easily, we shall be above them all. For if a person seeing one whom he loves, or rather, remembering him is roused in spirit, and elevated in thought, and bears all things easily, while he delights in the remembrance; one who has in mind Him who has vouchsafed to love us in deed, and remembers Him, when will he either feel anything painful, or dread anything fearful or dangerous? When will he be of cowardly spirit? Never.

For all things appear to us difficult, because we do not have the remembrance of God as we ought; because we do not carry Him about always in our thoughts. For surely He might justly say to us, *"You have forgotten Me, I also will forget you."* And so the evil becomes twofold, both that we forget Him and He us. For these two things are involved in each other, yet are two. For great is the effect of God's remembrance, and great also of His being remembered by us. The result of the one is that we choose good things; of the other that we accomplish them, and bring them to their end. Therefore the prophet says, *"I will remember You from the land of Jordan, and from the little hill of Hermon."* [Psalm 42:6] The people which were in Babylon say this: being there, I will remember You.

7. Therefore let us also, as being in Babylon, [do the same]. For although we are not sitting among warlike foes, yet we are among enemies. For some [of them] indeed were sitting as captives, but others did not even feel their captivity, as Daniel, as the three children [cf. Psalm 137:1]; who even while they were in captivity became in that very country more glorious even than the king who had carried them captive. And he who had taken them captive does obeisance to the captives.

Do you see how great virtue is? When they were in actual captivity he waited on them as masters. He therefore was the captive, rather than they. It would not have been so marvelous if when they were in their native

country, he had come and done them reverence in their own land, or if they had been rulers there. But the marvelous thing is, that after he had bound them, and taken them captive, and had them in his own country, he was not ashamed to do them reverence in the sight of all, and to "*offer an oblation.*" [Daniel 2:46]

Do you see that the really splendid things are those which relate to God, whereas human things are a shadow? He knew not, it seems, that he was leading away masters for himself, and that he cast into the furnace those whom he was about to worship. But to them, these things were as a dream.

Let us fear God, beloved, let us fear [Him]: even should we be in captivity, we are more glorious than all men. Let the fear of God be present with us, and nothing will be grievous, even though thou speak of poverty, or of disease, or of captivity, or of slavery, or of any other grievous thing: Nay even these very things will themselves work together for us the other way. These men were captives, and the king worshipped them: Paul was a tent-maker, and they sacrificed to him as a God.

8. Here a question arises: Why, you ask, did the Apostles prevent the sacrifices, and rend their clothes, and divert them from their attempt, and say with earnest lamentation, "*What are you doing? We also are men of like passions with you*" [Acts 14:15]; whereas Daniel did nothing of this kind.

For that he also was humble, and referred [the] glory to God no less than they, is evident from many places. Especially indeed is it evident, from the very fact of his being beloved by God. For if he had appropriated to himself the honor belonging to God, He would not have suffered him to live, much less to be in honor. Secondly, because even with great openness he said, "*And as to me, O King, this secret has not been revealed to me through any wisdom that is in me.*" [Daniel 2:30] And again; he was in the

den for God's sake, and when the prophet brought him food, he says, "*For God has remembered me.*" [Daniel 14:38] Thus humble and contrite was he.

He was in the den for God's sake, and yet he counted himself unworthy of His remembrance, and of being heard. Yet we though daring [to commit] innumerable pollutions, and being of all men most polluted, if we be not heard at our first prayer, draw back. Truly, great is the distance between them and us, as great as between heaven and earth, or if there be any greater.

What do you say? After so many achievements, after the miracle which had been wrought in the den, do you account yourself so humble? Yea, he says; for what things soever we have done, "*we are unprofitable servants.*" [Luke 17:10] Thus by anticipation did he fulfill the evangelical precept, and accounted himself nothing. For "*God has remembered me,*" he said. His prayer again, of how great lowliness of mind it is full. And again the three children said thus, "*We have sinned, we have committed iniquity.*" [Daniel 4:6] And everywhere they show their humility.

And yet Daniel had occasions innumerable for being puffed up; but he knew that these also came to him on account of his *not* being puffed up, and he did not destroy his treasure. For among all men, and in the whole world he was celebrated, not only because the king cast himself on his face and offered sacrifice to him, and accounted him to be a God, who was himself honored as God in all parts of the world: for he ruled over the whole [earth]; (and this is evident from Jeremiah. "*Who puts on the earth,*" says he, "*as a garment.*" [See Jeremiah 43:12 and Psalm 104:2] And again, "*I have given it to Nebuchadnezzar My servant*" [Jeremiah 27:6], and again from what he [the King] says in his letter). And because he was held in admiration not only in the place where he was, but everywhere, and was greater than if the rest of the nations had been present and seen him; when even by letters [the

King] confessed his submission and the miracle. But yet again for his wisdom he was also held in admiration, for it is said, "*Are you wiser than Daniel?*" [Ezekiel 28:3] And after all these things he was thus humble, dying ten thousand times for the Lord's sake.

Why then, you ask, being so humble did he not repel either the adoration which was paid him by the king, or the offerings?

9. This I will not say, for it is sufficient for me simply to mention the question, and the rest I leave to you, that at least in this way I may stir up your thoughts. (This however I conjure you, to choose all things for the fear of God, having such examples; and because in truth we shall obtain the things here also, if we sincerely lay hold on the things which are to come.) For that he did not do this out of arrogance, is evident from his saying, "*Your gifts be to yourself.*" [Daniel 5:17]

For besides this also again is another question, how while in words he rejected it, in deed he received the honor, and wore the chain [of gold]. [Daniel 5:29]

Moreover while Herod on hearing the cry "*It is the voice of a god and not of a man,*" inasmuch as "*he gave not God the glory, burst in sunder, and all his bowels gushed out*" [Acts 12:22-23; see 1:18], this man received to himself even the honor belonging to God, not words only.

However it is necessary to say what this is. In that case [at Lystra] the men were falling into greater idolatry, but in this [of Daniel] not so. How? For his being thus accounted of, was an honor to God. Therefore he said in anticipation, "*And as to me, not through any wisdom that is in me.*" [Daniel 2:30] And besides he does not even appear to have accepted the offerings. For he [the king] said (as it is written) that they should offer sacrifice, but it did not appear that the act followed. But there [at Lystra] they carried it

even to sacrificing the bulls, and "*they called*" the one "*Jupiter and*" the other "*Mercurius.*" [Acts 14:12]

The chain [of gold] then he accepted, that he might make himself known; the offering however why does it not appear that he rejected it? For in the other case too they did not do it, but they attempted it, and the Apostles hindered them; wherefore here also he ought at once to have rejected [the adoration]. And there it was the entire people: here the King. Why he did not divert him [Daniel] expressed by anticipation, [viz.] that [the king] was not making an offering [to him] as to a God, to the overthrow of religious worship, but for the greater wonder. How so? It was on God's account that [Nebuchadnezzar] made the decree; wherefore [Daniel] did not mutilate the honor [offered]. But those others [at Lystra] did not act thus, but supposed them to be indeed gods. On this account they were repelled.

And here, after having done him reverence, he does these things: for he did not reverence him as a God, but as a wise man.

But it is not clear that he made the offering: and even if he did make it, yet not that it was with Daniel's acceptance.

And what [of this], that he called him "*Belteshazzar, the name of*" his own "*god*"? Thus [it seems] they accounted their gods to be nothing wonderful, when he called even the captive thus; he who commands all men to worship the image, manifold and of various colors, and who adores the dragon.

Moreover the Babylonians were much more foolish than those at Lystra. Wherefore it was not possible at once to lead them on to this. And many [more] things one might say: but thus far these suffice.

If therefore we wish to obtain all good things, let us seek the things of God. For as they who seek the things of this world fail both of them and of the others, so they who prefer the things of God, obtain both. Let us then

not seek these but those, that we may attain also to the good things
promised in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with
the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and for ever and world without
end. Amen.

Homily 27 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:28-31

" Through faith, he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea, as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about seven days. By faith, the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. "

1. Paul is wont to establish many things incidently, and is very full of thoughts. For such is the grace of The Spirit. He does not comprehend a few ideas in a multitude of words, but includes great and manifold thought in brevity of expressions. Observe at least how, in the midst of exhortation, and when discoursing about faith, of what a type and mystery he reminds us, whereof we have the reality. *"Through faith"* (he says) *"he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them."*

But what is *"the sprinkling of blood"*? A lamb was slain in every household, and the blood was smeared on the door-posts, and this was a means of warding off the Egyptian destruction. If then the blood of a lamb preserved the Jews unhurt in the midst of the Egyptians, and under so great a destruction, much more will the blood of Christ save us, who have had it sprinkled not on the door-posts, but in our souls. For even now also the Destroyer is going about in this depth of night: but let us be armed with that Sacrifice. (He calls the *"sprinkling"* anointing.) For God has brought us out from Egypt, from darkness, from idolatry.

Although what was done, was nothing, what was achieved was great. For what was done was blood; but what was achieved, was salvation, and the stopping, and preventing of destruction. The angel feared the blood; for he knew of what it was a Type; he shuddered, thinking on the Lord's death; therefore he did not touch the door-posts.

Moses said, Smear, and they smeared, and were confident. And you, having the Blood of the Lamb Himself, are you not confident?

2. *"By faith, they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land."* Again he compares one whole people with another, lest they should say, we cannot be as the saints.

"By faith" (he says) *"they passed through the Red Sea, as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned."* Here he leads them also to a recollection of the sufferings in Egypt.

How, *"by faith"*? Because they had hoped to pass through the sea, and therefore they prayed: or rather it was Moses who prayed. Do you see that everywhere Faith goes beyond human reasonings, and weakness and lowliness? Do you see that at the same time they both believed, and feared punishment, both in the blood on the doors, and in the Red Sea?

And he made it clear that it was [really] water, through those that fell into it, and were choked; that it was not a mere appearance: but as in the case of the lions those who were devoured proved the reality of the facts, and in the case of the fiery furnace, those who were burnt; so here also you see that the same things become to the one a cause of salvation and glory, and to the other of destruction.

So great a good is Faith. And when we fall into perplexity, then are we delivered, even though we come to death itself, even though our condition be desperate. For what else was left [for them]? They were unarmed, compassed about by the Egyptians and the sea; and they must either be

drowned if they fled, or fall into the hands of the Egyptians. But nevertheless [He] saved them from impossibilities. That which was spread under the one as land, overwhelmed the others as sea. In the former case it forgot its nature: in the latter it even armed itself against them. [cf. Wisdom 19:20]

3. *"By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days."* For assuredly the sound of trumpets is not able to throw down stones, though one blow for ten thousand years; but Faith can do all things.

Do you see that in all cases it is not by natural sequence, nor yet by any law of nature that it was changed, but all is done contrary to expectation? Accordingly in this case also all is done contrary to expectation. For inasmuch as he had said again and again, that we ought to trust to the future hopes, he introduced all this argument with reason, showing that not now [only], but even from the beginning all the miracles have been accomplished and achieved by means of it.

"By faith, the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, having received the spies with peace." It would then be disgraceful, if you should appear more faithless even than a harlot. Yet she [merely] heard what the men related, and immediately believed. Whereupon the end also followed; for when all perished, she alone was preserved. She did not say to herself, I shall be with my many friends. She did not say, Can I possibly be wiser than these judicious men who do not believe—and shall I believe? She said no such thing, but believed what had taken place, which it was likely that they would suffer.

Hebrews 11:32

4. [Hebrews 11:32] *"And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell."* After this he no longer puts down the names: but having ended with an harlot, and put them to shame by the quality of the person, he no longer enlarges on the histories, lest he should be thought tedious. However he does not set them aside, but runs over them, [doing] both very judiciously, avoiding satiety, and not spoiling the closeness of arrangement; he was neither altogether silent, nor did he speak so as to annoy; for he effects both points. For when a man is contending vehemently [in argument], if he persist in contending, he wearies out the hearer, annoying him when he is already persuaded, and gaining the reputation of vain ambitiousness. For he ought to accommodate himself to what is expedient.

"And what do I more say" (he says)? "For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, of David also and Samuel, and of the prophets."

Some find fault with Paul, because he puts Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah in these places. What do you say? After having introduced the harlot, shall he not introduce these? For do not tell me of the rest of their life, but only whether they did not believe and shine in Faith.

Hebrews 11:33

"And the prophets," he says, [Hebrews 11:33] *"who through faith subdued kingdoms."* You see that he does not here testify to their life as being illustrious; for this was not the point in question: but the enquiry thus far was about their faith. For tell me whether they did not accomplish all by faith?

"By faith," he says, *"they subdued kingdoms;"* those with Gideon. *"Wrought righteousness;"* who? The same. Plainly he means here, kindness.

I think it is of David that he says *"they obtained promises."* But of what sort were these? Those in which He said that his *"seed should sit upon"* his *"throne."* [Psalm 132:12]

Hebrews 11:34

"Stopped the mouths of lions," [Hebrews 11:34] "quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword." See how they were in death itself, Daniel encompassed by the lions, the three children abiding in the furnace, the Israelites, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, in various temptations; and yet not even so did they despair. For this is Faith; when things are turning out adversely, then we ought to believe that nothing adverse is done, but all things in due order.

"Escaped the edge of the sword." I think that he is again speaking of the three children.

"Out of weakness were made strong." Here he alludes to what took place at their return from Babylon. For *"out of weakness,"* is out of captivity. When the condition of the Jews had now become desperate, when they were no better than dead bones, who could have expected that they would return from Babylon, and not return only; but also *"wax valiant"* and *"turn to flight armies of aliens"*? 'But to us,' some one says, 'no such thing has happened.' But these are figures of *"the things to come."*

Hebrews 11:35

"Women received their dead raised to life again." [Hebrews 11:35] He here speaks of what occurred in regard to the prophets, Elisha, [and] Elijah; for they raised the dead.

5. [Hebrews 11:35] *"And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."* But we have not obtained a Resurrection. I am able however, he means, to show that they also were cut off, and did *"not accept [deliverance], that they might obtain a better resurrection."* For why, tell me, when it was open to them to live, did they not choose it? Were they not evidently looking for a better life? And they who had raised up others, themselves chose to die; in order *"to obtain a better resurrection,"* not such as the children of those women.

Here I think he alludes both to John and to James. For beheading is called *"torturing."* It was in their power still to behold the sun. It was in their power to abstain from reproving [sinners], and yet they chose to die; even they who had raised others chose to die themselves, *"that they might obtain a better resurrection."*

Hebrews 11:36

[Hebrews 11:36] *"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment."* He ends with these; with things that come nearer home. For these [ex amples] especially bring consolation, when the distress is from the same cause, since even if you mention something more extreme, yet unless it arise from the same cause, you have effected nothing. Therefore he concluded his discourse with this, mentioning *"bonds, imprisonments, scourges, stonings,"* alluding to the case of Stephen, also to that of Zacharias.

Wherefore he added, *"They were slain with the sword."* What do you say? Some *"escaped the edge of the sword,"* and some *"were slain by the sword."* [Hebrews 11:34] What is this? Which do you praise? Which do you admire? The latter or the former? Nay, he says: the former indeed, is appropriate to you, and the latter, because Faith was strong even unto death itself, and it is a type of things to come. For the wonderful qualities of Faith are two, that it both accomplishes great things, and suffers great things, and counts itself to suffer nothing.

And you can not say (he says) that these were sinners and worthless. For even if you put the whole world against them, I find that they weigh down the beam and are of greater value. What then were they to receive in this life? Here he raises up their thoughts, teaching them not to be riveted to things present, but to mind things greater than all that are in this present life, since the *"world is not worthy"* of them. What then do you wish to receive here? For it were an insult to you, should you receive your reward here.

6. Let us not then mind worldly things, nor seek our recompense here, nor be so beggarly. For if *"the" whole "world is not worthy of"* them, why do you seek after a part of it? And with good reason; for they are friends of God.

Now by *"the world"* does he mean here the people, or the creation itself? Both: for the Scripture is wont to use the word of both. If the whole creation, he would say, with the human beings that belong to it, were put in the balance, they yet would not be of equal value with these; and with reason. For as ten thousand measures of chaff and hay would not be of equal value to ten pearls, so neither they; for *"better is one that does the will of the Lord, than ten thousand transgressors"* [Sirach 16:3]; meaning by *"ten thousand"* not [merely] many, but an infinite multitude.

Consider of how great value is the righteous man. Joshua the son of Nun said, *"Let the sun stand still at Gibeon, the moon at the valley of Elom"* [Joshua 10:12], and it was so. Let then the whole world come, or rather two or three, or four, or ten, or twenty worlds, and let them say and do this; yet shall they not be able. But the friend of God commanded the creatures of his Friend, or rather he besought his Friend, and the servants yielded, and he below gave command to those above. Do you see that these things are for service fulfilling their appointed course?

This was greater than the [miracles] of Moses. Why (I ask)? Because it is not a like thing to command the sea and the heavenly [bodies]. For that indeed was also a great thing, yea very great, nevertheless it was not at all equal [to the other].

Why was this? The name of Joshua [Jesus], was a type. For this reason then, and because of the very name, the creation revered him. What then! Was no other person called Jesus? [Yes]; but this man was on this account so called in type; for he used to be called Hoshea. Therefore the

name was changed: for it was a prediction and a prophecy. He brought in the people into the promised land, as Jesus [does] into heaven; not the Law; since neither did Moses [bring them in], but remained without. The Law has not power to bring in, but grace. Do you see the types which have been before sketched out from the beginning? He laid his commands on the creation, or rather, on the chief part of the creation, on the very head itself as he stood below; that so when you see Jesus in the form of Man saying the same, you may not be disturbed, nor think it strange. He, even while Moses was living, turned back wars. Thus, even while the Law is living, He directs all things; but not openly.

7. But let us consider how great is the virtue of the saints. If *here* they work such things, if *here* they do such things, as the angels do, what then above? How great is the splendor they have?

Perhaps each of you might wish to be such as to be able to command the sun and moon. (At this point what would they say who assert that the heaven is a sphere? For why did he not [merely] say, "*Let the sun stand still,*" but added "*Let the sun stand still at the valley of Elom,*" that is, he will make the day longer? This was done also in the time of Hezekiah. The sun went back. This again is more wonderful than the other, to go the contrary way, not having yet gone round his course.)

We shall attain to greater things than these if we will. For what has Christ promised us? Not that we shall make the sun stand still, or the moon, nor that the sun shall retrace his steps, but what? "*I and the Father will come unto him,*" He says, "*and We will make our abode with him.*" [John 14:23] What need have I of the sun and the moon, and of these wonders, when the Lord of all Himself comes down and abides with me? I need these not. For what need I any of these things? He Himself shall be to me for Sun and for Light. For, tell me, if you had entered into a palace, which would

you choose, to be able to rearrange some of the things which have been fixed there, or so to make the king a familiar friend, as to persuade him to take up his abode with you? Much rather the latter than the former.

8. But what wonder is it, says some one, that what a man commands, Christ should also? But Christ (you say) needs not the Father, but acts of His own authority, you say. Well. Therefore first confess and say, that he needs not the Father, and acts of His own authority: and then I will ask you, whether His prayer is not in the way of condescension and arrangement (for surely Christ was not inferior to Joshua the son of Nun), and that He might teach us? For as when you hear a teacher lisping, and saying over the alphabet, thou dost not say that he is ignorant; and when he asks, Where is such a letter? You know that he does not ask in ignorance, but because he wishes to lead on the scholar; in like manner Christ also did not make His prayer as needing prayer, but desiring to lead you on, that you may continually apply yourself to prayer, that you may do it without ceasing, soberly, and with great watchfulness.

And by watching, I do not mean, merely the rising at night, but also the being sober in our prayers during the day. For such an one is called watchful. Since it is possible both in praying by night to be asleep, and in praying by day to be awake, when the soul is stretched out towards God, when it considers with whom it holds converse, to whom its words are addressed, when it has in mind that angels stand by with fear and trembling, while he approaches gaping and scratching himself.

9. Prayer is a mighty weapon if it be made with suitable mind. And that you may learn its strength, continued entreaty has overcome shamelessness, and injustice, and savage cruelty, and overbearing rashness. For He says, "*Hear what the unjust judge says.*" [Luke 18:6] Again it has overcome sloth also, and what friendship did not effect, this continued

entreaty did: and *"although he will not give him because he is his friend"* (He says), *"yet because of his importunity he will rise and give to him."* [Luke 11:8] And continued assiduity made her worthy who was unworthy. *"It is not meet"* (He says) *"to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs. Yea! Lord!"* she says, *"for even the dogs eat [the crumbs] from their master's table."* [Matthew 15:26-27] Let us apply ourselves to Prayer. It is a mighty weapon if it be offered with earnestness, if without vainglory, if with a sincere mind. It has turned back wars, it has benefited an entire nation though undeserving. *"I have heard their groaning"* (He says) *"and have come down to deliver them."* [Acts 7:34] It is itself a saving medicine, and has power to prevent sins, and to heal misdeeds. In this the desolate widow was assiduous. [1 Timothy 5:5]

If then we pray with humility, smiting our breast as the publican, if we utter what he did, if we say, *"Be merciful to me a sinner"* [Luke 18:13], we shall obtain all. For though we be not publicans, yet have we other sins not less than his.

For do not tell me, that you have gone wrong in some small matter [only], since the thing has the same nature. For as a man is equally called a homicide whether he has killed a child or a man, so also is he called overreaching whether he be overreaching in much or in little. Yea and to remember injuries too, is no small matter, but even a great sin. For it is said, *"the ways of those who remember injuries [tend] to death."* [Proverbs 12:28, Septuagint] And *"He that is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of hell,"* and he that *"calls his brother a fool"* [Matthew 5:22], and senseless, and numberless such things.

But we partake even of the tremendous mysteries unworthily, and we envy, and we revile. And some of us have even oftentimes been drunk. But each one of these things, even itself by itself, is enough to cast us out of the

kingdom, and when they even come all together, what comfort shall we have? We need much penitence, beloved, much prayer, much endurance, much perseverance, that we may be enabled to attain the good things which have been promised to us.

10. Let us then say, even we, "*Be merciful to me a sinner*," nay rather, let us not say it only, but let us also be thus minded; and should another call us so, let us not be angry. He heard the words, "*I am not as this Publican*" [Luke 18:11], and was not provoked thereby, but filled with compunction. He accepted the reproach, and he put away the reproach. The other spoke of the wound, and he sought the medicine. Let us say then, "*Be merciful to me a sinner*" [Luke 18:13]; but even if another should so call us, let us not be indignant.

But if we say ten thousand evil things of ourselves, and are vexed when we hear them from others, then there is no longer humility, nor confession, but ostentation and vainglory. Is it ostentation (you say) to call one's self a sinner? Yes; for we obtain the credit of humility, we are admired, we are commended; whereas if we say the contrary of ourselves, we are despised. So that we do this too for the sake of credit. But what is humility? It is when another reviles us, to bear it, to acknowledge our fault, to endure evil speakings. And yet even this would not be [a mark] of humility but of candor. But now we call ourselves sinners, unworthy, and ten thousand other such names, but if another apply one of them to us, we are vexed, we become savage. Do you see that this is not confession, nor even candor? You said of yourself that you are such an one: be not indignant if you hear it also said by others, and art reproved.

In this way your sins are made lighter for you, when others reproach you: for they lay a burden on themselves indeed, but you they lead onwards into philosophy. Hear what the blessed David says, when Shimei cursed

him, *"Let him alone"* (he says) *"the Lord has bidden him, that He might look on my humiliation"* (he says): *"And the Lord will requite me good for his cursing on this day."* [2 Samuel 16:11-12]

But thou while saying evil things of yourself, even in excess, if you hear not from others the commendations that are due to the most righteous, art enraged. Do you see that you are trifling with things that are no subjects for trifling? For we even repudiate praises in our desire for other praises, that we may obtain yet higher panegyrics, that we may be more admired. So that when we decline to accept commendations, we do it that we may augment them. And all things are done by us for credit, not for truth. Therefore all things are hollow, all impracticable. Wherefore I beseech you now at any rate to withdraw from this mother of evils, vainglory, and to live according to what is approved by God, that so you may attain to the good things to come, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father be glory, together with His Holy and good Spirit, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 28 on Hebrews

Hebrews 11:37-40

" They wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom this world was not worthy); wandering in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth."

1. At all times indeed, but especially then when I reflect upon the achievements of the saints, it comes over me to feel despondency concerning my own condition, because we have not even in dreams experienced the things among which those men spent their whole lives, not paying the penalty of sins, but always doing rightly and yet always afflicted.

For consider, I beseech you, Elijah, to whom our discourse has come round today, for he speaks of him in this passage, and in him his examples end: which [example] was appropriate to their case. And having spoken of what befell the Apostles, that *"they were slain with the sword, were stoned,"* he goes back again to Elijah, who suffered the same things with them. [See 2 Kings 1:8] For since it was probable that they would not as yet hold the Apostles in so great estimation, he brings his exhortation and consolation from him who had been taken up [into Heaven] and who was held in special admiration.

For *"they wandered about"* (he says) *"in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom this world was not worthy."*

They had not even raiment, he says, through the excess of affliction, no city, no house, no lodging-place; the same which Christ said, *"but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head."* [Matthew 8:20] Why do I say *"no lodging-place"*? No standing-place: for not even when they had gained

the wilderness, were they at rest. For he said not, They sat down in the wilderness, but even when they were there, they fled, and were driven thence, not out of the inhabited world only, but even out of that which was uninhabitable. And he reminds them of the places where they were set, and of things which there befell [them].

Then next, he says, they bring accusations against you for Christ's sake. What accusation had they against Elijah, when they drove him out, and persecuted him, and compelled him to struggle with famine? Which these [Hebrews] were then suffering. At least, the brethren, it is said, decided to send [relief] to those of the disciples who were afflicted. *"Every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea"* [Acts 11:29], which was [the case] of these also.

"Tormented" [or *"ill-treated"*], he says; that is, suffering distress, in journeyings, in dangers.

But *"They wandered about,"* what is this? *"Wandering,"* he says, *"in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth,"* like exiles and outcasts, as persons taken in the basest [of crimes], as those not worthy to see the sun, they found no refuge from the wilderness, but must always be flying, must be seeking hiding-places, must bury themselves alive in the earth, always be in terror.

2. What then is the reward of so great a change? What is the recompense?

They have not yet received it, but are still waiting; and after thus dying in so great tribulation, they have not yet received it. They gained their victory so many ages ago, and have not yet received [their reward]. And you who are yet in the conflict, are you vexed?

Do you also consider what a thing it is, and how great, that Abraham should be sitting, and the Apostle Paul, waiting till you have been perfected,

that then they may be able to receive their reward. For the Saviour has told them before that unless we also are present, He will not give it them. As an affectionate father might say to sons who were well approved, and had accomplished their work, that he would not give them to eat, unless their brethren came. And are you vexed, that you have not yet received the reward? What then shall Abel do, who was victor before all, and is sitting uncrowned? And what Noah? And what, they who lived in those [early] times: seeing that they wait for you and those after you?

Do you see that we have the advantage of them? For "*God*" (he says) "*has provided some better thing for us.*" In order that they might not seem to have the advantage of us from being crowned before us, He appointed one time of crowning for all; and he that gained the victory so many years before, receives his crown with you. Do you see His tender carefulness?

And he did not say, "*that they without us might not be crowned,*" but "*that they without us might not be made perfect*"; so that at that time they appear perfect also. They were before us as regards the conflicts, but are not before us as regards the crowns. He wronged not them, but He honored us. For they also wait for the brethren. For if we are "*all one body,*" the pleasure becomes greater to this body, when it is crowned altogether, and not part by part. For the righteous are also worthy of admiration in this, that they rejoice in the welfare of their brethren, as in their own. So that for themselves also, this is according to their wish, to be crowned along with their own members. To be glorified all together, is a great delight.

Hebrews 12:1

3. [Hebrews 12:1] *"Wherefore"* (he says) *"we also being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."* In many places the Scripture derives its consolation in evils from corresponding things. As when the prophet says, *"From burning heat, and from storm, and rain."* [Isaiah 4:6] This at least he says here also, that the memory of those holy men, reestablishes and recovers the soul which had been weighed down by woes, as a cloud does him who is burnt by the too hot rays [of the sun.]

And he did not say, *"lifted on high above us,"* but, *"compassing us about,"* which was more than the other; so that we are in greater security.

What sort of *"cloud"*? *"A load of witnesses."* With good reason he calls not those in the New [Testament] only, but those in the Old also, *"witnesses"* [or *"martyrs"*]. For they also were witnesses to the greatness of God, as for instance, the Three Children, those with Elijah, all the prophets.

"Laying aside all things." *"All"*: what? That is, slumber, indifference, mean reasonings, all human things.

"And the sin which does [so] easily beset us"; [εὐπερίστατον], that is either, *"which easily circumvents us,"* or *"what can easily be circumvented,"* but rather this latter. For it is easy, if we will, to overcome sin.

"Let us run with patience" (he says) *"the race that is set before us."* He did not say, Let us contend as boxers, nor, Let us wrestle, nor, Let us do battle: but, what was lightest of all, the [contest] of the foot-race, this has he brought forward. Nor yet did he say, Let us add to the length of the course; but, Let us continue patiently in this, let us not faint. *"Let us run"* (he says) *"the race that is set before us."*

4. In the next place as the sum and substance of his exhortation, which he puts both first and last, even Christ. [Hebrews 12:2] *"Looking"* (he says) *"unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith"*; The very thing which Christ Himself also continually said to His disciples, *"If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household?"* [Matthew 10:25] And again, *"The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord."* [Matthew 10:24]

Hebrews 12:2

"Looking" (he says), that is, that we may learn to run. For as in all arts and games, we impress the art upon our mind by looking to our masters, receiving certain rules through our sight, so here also, if we wish to run, and to learn to run well, let us look to Christ, even to Jesus *"the author and finisher of our faith."* What is this? He has put the Faith within us. For He said to His disciples, *"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you"* [John 15:16]; and Paul too says, *"But then shall I know, even as also I have been known."* [1 Corinthians 13:12] He put the Beginning into us, He will also put on the End.

"Who," he says, *"for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame."* That is, it was in His power not to suffer at all, if He so willed. For *"He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"* [1 Peter 2:22]; as He also says in the Gospels, *"The Prince of the world comes and has nothing in Me."* [John 14:30] It lay then in His power, if so He willed, not to come to the Cross. For, *"I have power,"* He says, *"to lay down My life; and I have power to take it again."* [John 10:18] If then He who was under no necessity of being crucified, was crucified for our sake, how much more is it right that we should endure all things nobly!

"Who for the joy that was set before Him" (he says) *"endured the cross, despising the shame."* But what is, *"Despising the shame"*? He chose, he means, that ignominious death. For suppose that He died. Why [should He] also [die] ignominiously? For no other reason, but to teach us to make no account of glory from men. Therefore though under no obligation He chose it, teaching us to be bold against it, and to set it at nought. Why did he say

not "*pain*," but "*shame*"? Because it was not with pain that He bore these things.

What then is the end? "*He is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" Do you see the prize which Paul also says in an epistle, "*Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name, that at the Name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow.*"

[Philippians 2:9-10] He speaks in respect to the flesh. Well then, even if there were no prize, the example would suffice to persuade us to accept all [such] things. But now prizes also are set before us, and these no common ones, but great and unspeakable.

5. Wherefore let us also, whenever we suffer anything of this kind, before the Apostles consider Christ. Why? His whole life was full of insults. For He continually heard Himself called mad, and a deceiver, and a sorcerer; and at one time the Jews said, "*Nay*," (it says) "*but He deceives the people.*" [John 7:12] And again, "*That deceiver said while He was yet alive, after three days I will rise again.*" [Matthew 27:63] As to sorcery too they calumniated Him, saying, "*He casts out the devils by Beelzebub.*" [Matthew 12:24] And that "*He is mad and has a devil.*" [John 10:20] "*Said we not well*" (it says) "*that He has a devil and is mad?*" [John 8:48]

And these things He heard from them, when doing them good, performing miracles, showing forth the works of God. For indeed, if He had been so spoken of, when He did nothing, it would not have been so wonderful: But [it is wonderful] that when He was teaching what pertained to Truth He was called "*a deceiver*," and when He cast out devils, was said to "*have a devil*," and when He was overthrowing all that was opposed [to God], was called a sorcerer. For these things they were continually alleging against Him.

And if you would know both the scoffs and the ironical jeerings, which they made against Him (what particularly wounds our souls), hear first those from His kindred. *"Is not this"* (it says) *"the carpenter's son, whose father and mother we know? Are not his brethren all with us?"* [Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 6:42] Also scoffing at Him from His country, they said He was *"of Nazareth."* And again, *"search,"* it says, *"and see, for out of Galilee has no prophet arisen."* [John 7:52] And He endured being so greatly calumniated. And again they said, *"Does not the Scripture say, that Christ comes from the town of Bethlehem?"* [John 7:42]

Would you see also the ironical jeerings they made? Coming, it says, to the very cross they worshipped Him; and they struck Him and buffeted Him, and said, *"Tell us who it is that smote You"* [Matthew 26:68]; and they brought vinegar to Him, and said, *"If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross."* [Matthew 27:40] And again, the servant of the High Priest struck Him with the palm of his hand; and He says, *"If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smites thou Me?"* [John 18:23] And in derision they put a robe about Him; and they spat in His face; and they were continually applying their tests, tempting Him.

Would you see also the accusations, some secret, some open, some from disciples? *"Will ye also go away?"* [John 6:67] He says. And that saying, *"You have a devil"* [John 8:48, 7:20], was uttered by those who already believed. Was He not continually a fugitive, sometimes in Galilee, and sometimes in Judea? Was not His trial great, even from the swaddling clothes? When He was yet a young child, did not His mother take Him and go down into Egypt? For all these reasons he says, *"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

To Him then let us look, also to the [sufferings] of His disciples, reading the [writings] of Paul, and hearing him say, *"In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments."* [2 Corinthians 6:4-5] And again, *"Even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place, and labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat."* [1 Corinthians 4:11-13] Has any one [of us] suffered the smallest part of these things? For, he says, [we are] *"As deceivers, as dishonored, as having nothing."* [2 Corinthians 6:8-10] And again, *"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in tribulations, in distress, in hunger."* [2 Corinthians 11:24-26] And that these things seem good to God, hear him saying, *"For this I besought the Lord thrice, and He said to me, My Grace is sufficient for you; for My strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:8-10] *"Wherefore,"* he says, *"I take pleasure in infirmities, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* Moreover, hear Christ Himself saying, *"In the world you shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33]

Hebrews 12:3

6. *"For consider,"* says he, *"Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."* For if the sufferings of those near us arouse us, what earnestness will not those of our Master give us! What will they not work in us!

And passing by all [else], he expressed the whole by the [word] *"Contradiction"*; and by adding *"such."* For the blows upon the cheek, the laughter, the insults, the reproaches, the mockeries, all these he indicated by *"contradiction."* And not these only, but also the things which befell Him during His whole life, of teaching.

For a great, a truly great consolation are both the sufferings of Christ, and those of the Apostles. For He so well knew that this is the better way of virtue, as even to go that way Himself, not having need thereof: He knew so well that tribulation is expedient for us, and that it becomes rather a foundation for repose. For hear Him saying, *"If a man take not his cross, and follow after Me, he is not worthy of Me."* [Matthew 10:38] If you are a disciple, He means, imitate the Master; for this is [to be] a disciple. But if while He went by [the path of] affliction, thou [goest] by that of ease, thou no longer treadest the same path, which He trod, but another. How then do you follow, when you follow not? How shall you be a disciple, not going after the Master? This Paul also says, *"We are weak, but you are strong; we are despised, but you are honored."* [1 Corinthians 4:10] How is it reasonable, he means, that we should be striving after opposite things, and yet that you should be disciples and we teachers?

7. Affliction then is a great thing, beloved, for it accomplishes two great things; It wipes out sins, and it makes men strong.

What then, you say, if it overthrow and destroy? Affliction does not do this, but our own slothfulness. How (you say)? If we are sober and watchful, if we beseech God that He would not *"suffer us to be tempted above that we are able"* [1 Corinthians 10:13], if we always hold fast to Him, we shall stand nobly, and set ourselves against our enemy. So long as we have Him for our helper, though temptations blow more violently than all the winds, they will be to us as chaff and a leaf borne lightly along. Hear Paul saying, *"In all these things"* (are his words) *"we are more than conquerors."* [Romans 8:37] And again, *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."* [Romans 8:18] And again, *"For the light affliction which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."* [2 Corinthians 4:17]

Consider what great dangers, shipwrecks, afflictions one upon another, and other such things, he calls *"light"*; and emulate this inflexible one, who wore this body simply and heedlessly. You are in poverty? But not in such as Paul, who was tried by hunger, and thirst, and nakedness. For he suffered this not for one day, but endured it continually. Whence does this appear? Hear himself saying, *"Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked."* [1 Corinthians 4:11] Oh! How great glory did he already have in preaching, when he was undergoing so great [afflictions]! Having now [reached] the twentieth year [thereof], at the time when he wrote this. For he says, *"I knew a man fourteen years ago, whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not."* [2 Corinthians 12:2] And again, *"After three years"* (he says) *"I went up to Jerusalem."* [Galatians 1:18] And again hear him saying, *"It were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void."* [1 Corinthians 9:15] And not only this, but again also in writing he said, *"We have become as the filth of the world."* [1

Corinthians 4:13] What is more difficult to endure than hunger? What than freezing cold? What than plottings made by brethren whom he afterwards calls "*false brethren*"? [2 Corinthians 11:26] Was he not called the pest of the world? An Impostor? A subverter? Was he not cut with scourging?

8. These things let us take into our mind, beloved, let us consider them, let us hold them in remembrance, and then we shall never faint, though we be wronged, though we be plundered, though we suffer innumerable evils. Let it be granted us to be approved in Heaven, and all things [are] endurable. Let it be granted us to fare well there, and things here are of no account. These things are a shadow, and a dream; whatever they may be, they are nothing either in nature or in duration, while those are hoped for and expected.

For what would you that we should compare with those fearful things? What with the unquenchable fire? With the never-dying worm? Which of the things here can you name in comparison with the "*gnashing of teeth*," with the "*chains*," and the "*outer darkness*," with the "*wrath*," the "*tribulation*," the "*anguish*"? But as to duration? Why, what are ten thousand years to ages boundless and without end? Not so much as a little drop to the boundless ocean.

But what about the good things? There, the superiority is still greater. "*Eye has not seen*," (it is said,) "*ear has not heard, neither have, entered into the heart of man*" [1 Corinthians 2:9], and these things again shall be during boundless ages. For the sake of these then were it not well to be cut [by scourging] times out of number, to be slain, to be burned, to undergo ten thousand deaths, to endure everything whatsoever that is dreadful both in word and deed? For even if it were possible for one to live when burning in the fire, ought one not to endure all for the sake of attaining to those good things promised?

9. But why do I trifle in saying these things to men who do not even choose to disregard riches, but hold fast to them as though they were immortal? And if they give a little out of much, think they have done all? This is not Almsgiving. For Almsgiving is that of the Widow who emptied out "*all her living.*" [Mark 12:44] But if you do not go on to contribute so much as the widow, yet at least contribute the whole of your superfluity: keep what is sufficient, not what is superfluous.

But there is no one who contributes even his superabundance. For so long as you have many servants, and garments of silk, these things are all superfluities. Nothing is indispensable or necessary, without which we are able to live; these things are superfluous, and are simply superadded. Let us then see, if you please, what we cannot live without. If we have only two servants, we can live. For whereas some live without servants, what excuse have we, if we are not content with two? We can also have a house built of brick of three rooms; and this were sufficient for us. For are there not some with children and wife who have but one room? Let there be also, if you will, two serving boys.

10. And how is it not a shame (you say) that a gentlewoman should walk out with [only] two servants? It is no shame, that a gentlewoman should walk abroad with two servants, but it is a shame that she should go forth with many. Perhaps you laugh when you hear this. Believe me it *is* a shame. Do you think it a great matter to go out with many servants, like dealers in sheep, or dealers in slaves? This is pride and vainglory, the other is philosophy and respectability. For a gentlewoman ought not to be known from the multitude of her attendants. For what virtue is it to have many slaves? This belongs not to the soul, and whatever is not of the soul does not show gentility. When she is content with a few things, then is she a gentlewoman indeed; but when she needs many, she is a servant and

inferior to slaves. Tell me, do not the angels go to and fro about the world alone, and need not any one to follow them? Are they then on this account inferior to us? They who need no [attendants] to us who need them? If then not needing an attendant at all, is angelic, who comes nearer to the angelic life, she who needs many [attendants], or she who [needs] few? Is not this a shame? For a shame it is to do anything out of place.

Tell me who attracts the attention of those who are in the public places, she who brings many in her train, or she who [brings but] few? And is not she who is alone, less conspicuous even than she who is attended by few? Do you see that this [first-named conduct] is a shame? Who attracts the attention of those in the public places, she who wears beautiful garments, or she who is dressed simply and artlessly? Again who attracts those in the public places, she who is borne on mules, and with trappings ornamented with gold, or she who walks out simply, and as it may be, with propriety? Or we do not even look at this latter, if we even see her; but the multitudes not only force their way to see the other, but also ask, Who is she, and Where from? And I do not say how great envy is hereby produced. What then (tell me), is it disgraceful to be looked at or not to be looked at? When is the shame greater, when all stare at her, or when no one [does]? When they inform themselves about her, or when they do not even care? Do you see that we do everything, not for modesty's sake but for vainglory?

However, since it is impossible to draw you away from that, I am content for the present that you should learn that this [conduct] is no disgrace. Sin alone is a disgrace, which no one thinks to be a disgrace. Sin alone is a disgrace, which no one thinks to be a disgrace, but everything rather than this.

11. Let your dress be such as is needful, not superfluous. However, that we may not shut you up too narrowly, this I assure you, that we have no

need of ornaments of gold, or of lace. And it is not I who say this. For that the words are not mine, hear the blessed Paul saying, and solemnly charging women *"to adorn themselves, not with plaitings [of the hair], or gold, or pearls, or costly apparel."* [1 Timothy 2:9] But with what kind, O Paul, would you tell us? For perhaps they will say, that only golden things are costly; and that silks are not costly. Tell us with what kind you would. *"But having food and raiment, let us therewith"* (he says) *"be content."* [1 Timothy 6:8] Let our garment be such as merely to cover us. For God has given them to us for this reason, that we may cover our nakedness; and this any sort of garment can do, though but of trifling cost. Perhaps ye laugh, who wear dresses of silk; for in truth one may well laugh, considering what Paul enjoined and what we practice!

But my discourse is not addressed to women only, but also to men. For the rest of the things which we have are all superfluous; only the poor possess no superfluities; and perhaps they too from necessity: since, if it had been in their power, even they would not have abstained [from them]. Nevertheless, *"whether in pretense or in truth"* [Philippians 1:18], so far they have no superfluities.

12. Let us then wear such clothes as are sufficient for our need. For what does much gold mean? To those on the stage these things are fitting, this apparel belongs to them, to harlots, to those who do everything to be looked at. Let her beautify herself, who is on the stage or the dancing platform. For she wishes to attract all to her. But a woman who professes godliness, let her not beautify herself thus, but in a different way. You have a means of beautifying yourself far better than that. You also have a theater: for that theater make yourself beautiful: clothe yourself with those ornaments. What is your theater? Heaven, the company of Angels. I speak not of Virgins only, but also of those in the world. All as many as believe in

Christ have that theater. Let us speak such things that we may please those spectators. Put on such garments that you may gratify them.

For tell me, if a harlot putting aside her golden ornaments, and her robes, and her laughter, and her witty and unchaste talk, clothe herself with a cheap garment, and having dressed herself simply come [on the stage], and utter religious words, and discourse of chastity, and say nothing indelicate, will not all rise up? Will not this theater be dispersed? Will they not cast her out, as one who does not know how to suit herself to the crowd, and speaks things foreign to that Satanic theater? So thou also, if you enter into the Theater of Heaven clad with her garments, the spectators will cast you out. For there, there is no need of these garments of gold, but of different ones. Of what kind? Of such as the prophet names, "*clothed in fringed work of gold, and in varied colors*" [Psalm 45:13], not so as to make the body white and glistening, but so as to beautify the soul. For the soul it is, which is contending and wrestling in that Theater. "*All the glory of the King's daughter is from within*" [Psalm 45:13], it says. With these do thou clothe yourself; for [so] thou both deliverest yourself from other evils innumerable, and your husband from anxiety and yourself from care.

For so you will be respected by your husband, when you need not many things. For every man is wont to be shy towards those who make requests of him; but when he sees that they have no need of him, then he lets down his pride, and converses with them as equals. When your husband sees that you have no need of him in anything, that you think lightly of the presents which come from him, then, even though he be very arrogant, he will respect you more, than if you were clad in golden ornaments; and you will no longer be his slave. For those of whom we stand in need, we are compelled to stoop to. But if we restrain ourselves we shall no longer be regarded as criminals, but he knows that we pay him obedience from the

fear of God, not for what is given by him. For now, when that he confers great favors on us, whatever honor he receives, he thinks he has not received all [that is due to him]: but then, though he obtain but a little, he will account it a favor he does not reproach, nor will he be himself compelled to overreach on your account.

13. For what is more unreasonable, than to provide golden ornaments, to be worn in baths, and in market places? However, in baths and in market places it is perhaps no wonder, but that a woman should come into Church so decked out is very ridiculous. For, for what possible reason does she come in here wearing golden ornaments, she who ought to come in that she may hear [the precept] *"that they adorn not themselves with gold, nor pearls, nor costly array"*? [1 Timothy 2:9] With what object then, O woman, do you come? Is it indeed to fight with Paul, and show that even if he repeat these things ten thousand times you regard them not? Or is it as wishing to put us your teachers to shame as discoursing on these subjects in vain? For tell me; if any heathen and unbeliever, after he has heard the passage read where the blessed Paul says these things, having a believing wife, sees that she makes much account of beautifying herself, and puts on ornaments of gold, that she may come into Church and hear Paul charging [the women] that they adorn themselves, neither with *"gold"* [1 Timothy 2:9], nor with *"pearls,"* nor with *"costly array,"* will he not indeed say to himself, when he sees her in her little room, putting on these things, and arranging them beautifully, *"Why is my wife staying within in her little room? Why is she so slow? Why is she putting on her golden ornaments? Where has she to go to? Into the Church? For what purpose? To hear? 'not with costly array';"* will he not smile, will he not burst out into laughter? will he not think our religion a mockery and a deceit? Wherefore, I beseech [you], let us leave golden ornaments to processions, to theaters, to signs on

the shops. But let not the image of God be decked out with these things: let the gentlewoman be adorned with gentility, and gentility is the absence of pride, and of boastful display.

Nay even if you wish to obtain glory from men, you will obtain it thus. For we shall not wonder so much that the wife of a rich man wears gold and silk (for this is the common practice of them all), as when she is dressed in a plain and simple garment made merely of wool. This all will admire, this they will applaud. For in that adorning indeed of ornaments of gold and of costly apparel, she has many to share with her. And if she surpass one, she is surpassed by another. Yea, even if she surpass all, she must yield the palm to the Empress herself. But in the other case, she outdoes all, even the Emperor's wife herself. For she alone in wealth, has chosen the [dress] of the poor. So that even if we desire glory, here too the glory is greater.

14. I say this not only to widows, and to the rich; for here the necessity of widowhood seems to cause this: but to those also who have a husband.

But, you say, I do not please my husband [if I dress plainly]. It is not your husband you wish to please, but the multitude of poor women; or rather not to please them, but to make them pine [with envy], and to give them pain, and make their poverty greater. How many blasphemies are uttered because of you! 'Let there be no poverty' (say they). 'God hates the poor.' 'God loves not those in poverty.' For that it is not your husband whom you wish to please, and for this reason you deck yourself out, you make plain to all by what you yourself doest. For as soon as you have passed over the threshold of your chamber, thou immediately puttest off all, both the robes, and the golden ornaments, and the pearls; and at home of all places thou dost not wear them.

But if you really wishest to please your husband, there are ways of pleasing him, by gentleness, by meekness, by propriety. For believe me, O

woman, even if your husband be infinitely debased, these are the things which will more effectually win him, gentleness, propriety, freedom from pride and expensiveness and extravagance. For even if you devise ten thousand such things, you will not restrain the profligate. And this they know who have had such husbands. For however you may beautify yourself, he being a profligate will go off to a courtesan; while [the husband] that is chaste and regular you will gain not by these means, but by the opposite: yea by these thou even causest him pain, clothing yourself with the reputation of a lover of the world. For what if your husband out of respect, and that as a sober-minded man, does not speak, yet inwardly he will condemn you, and will not conceal ill-will and jealousy. Will you not drive away all pleasure for the future, by exciting ill-will against yourself?

15. Possibly you are annoyed at hearing what is said, and are indignant, saying, 'He irritates husbands still more against their wives.' I say this, not to irritate your husbands, but I wish that these things should be done by you willingly, for your own sakes, not for theirs; not to free them from envy but to free you from the parade of this life.

Do you wish to appear beautiful? I also wish it, but with beauty which God seeks, which "*the King desires*." [Psalm 45:11] Whom would you have as a Lover? God or men? Should thou be beautiful with that beauty, God will "*desire your beauty*"; but if with the other apart from this, He will abominate you, and your lovers will be profligates. For no man who loves a married woman is good. Consider this even in regard to the adorning that is external. For the other adorning, I mean that of the soul, attracts God; but this again, profligates. Do you see that I care for you, that I am anxious for you, that you may be beautiful, really beautiful, splendid, really splendid, that instead of profligate men, you may have for your Lover God the Lord of all? And she who has Him for her Lover, to whom will she be like? She

has her place among the choirs of Angels. For if one who is beloved of a king is accounted happy above all, what will her dignity be who is beloved of God with much love? Though thou put the whole world [in the balance against it], there is nothing equivalent to that beauty.

This beauty then let us cultivate; with these embellishments let us adorn ourselves, that we may pass into the Heavens, into the spiritual chambers, into the nuptial chamber that is undefiled. For this beauty is liable to be destroyed by anything; and when it lasts well, and neither disease nor anxiety impair it (which is impossible), it does not last twenty years. But the other is ever blooming, ever in its prime. *There*, there is no change to fear; no old age coming brings a wrinkle, no undermining disease withers it; no desponding anxiety disfigures it; but it is far above all these things. But this [earthly beauty] takes flight before it appears, and if it appears it has not many admirers. For those of well-ordered minds do not admire it; and those who do admire it, admire with wantonness.

16. Let us not therefore cultivate this [beauty], but the other: let us have that, so that with bright torches we may pass into the bridal chamber. For not to virgins only has this been promised, but to virgin souls. For had it belonged merely to virgins, those five would not have been shut out. This then belongs to all who are virgins in soul, who are freed from worldly imaginations: for these imaginations corrupt our souls. If therefore we remain unpolluted, we shall depart there, and shall be accepted. *"For I have espoused you,"* he says, *"to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ."* [2 Corinthians 11:2] These things he said, not with reference to Virgins, but to the whole body of the entire Church. For the uncorrupt soul is a virgin, though she have a husband: she is a virgin as to that which is Virginitude indeed, that which is worthy of admiration. For this of the body is but the accompaniment and shadow of the other: while that is the True

Virginity. This let us cultivate, and so shall we be able with cheerful countenance to behold the Bridegroom, to enter in with bright torches, if the oil do not fail us, if by melting down our golden ornaments we procure such oil as makes our lamps bright. And this oil is lovingkindness.

If we impart what we have to others, if we make oil therefrom, then it will protect us, and we shall not say at that time, "*Give us oil, for our lamps are going out*" [Matthew 25:8], nor shall we beg of others, nor shall we be shut out when we are gone to them that sell, nor shall we hear that fearful and terrible voice, while we are knocking at the doors, "*I know you not.*" [Matthew 25:12] But He will acknowledge us, and we shall go in with the Bridegroom, and having entered into the spiritual Bride-chamber we shall enjoy good things innumerable.

For if here the bride-chamber is so bright, the rooms so splendid, that none is weary of observing them, much more there. Heaven is the chamber, and the bride-chamber better than Heaven; then we shall enter. But if the Bride-chamber is so beautiful, what will the Bridegroom be?

And why do I say, 'Let us put away our golden ornaments, and give to the needy'? For if you ought even to sell yourselves, if you ought to become slaves instead of free women, that so ye might be able to be with that Bridegroom, to enjoy that Beauty, [nay] merely to look on that Countenance, ought you not with ready mind to welcome all things? We look at and admire a king upon the earth, but when [we see] a king and a bridegroom both, much more ought we to welcome him with readiness. Truly these things are a shadow, while those are a reality. And a King and a Bridegroom in Heaven! To be counted worthy also to go before Him with torches, and to be near Him, and to be ever with Him, what ought we not to do? What should we not perform? What should we not endure? I entreat you, let us conceive some desire for those blessings, let us long for that

Bridegroom, let us be virgins as to the true Virginity. For the Lord seeks after the virginity of the soul. With this let us enter into Heaven, "*not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*" [Ephesians 5:27]; that we may attain also to the good things promised, of which may we all be partakers through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 29 on Hebrews

Hebrews 12:4-6

"You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loves, He chastens: and scourges every son whom He receives."

1. There are two kinds of consolation, apparently opposed to one another, but yet contributing great strength each to the other; both of which he has here put forward. The one is when we say that persons have suffered much: for the soul is refreshed, when it has many witnesses of its own sufferings, and this he introduced above, saying, *"Call to mind the former days, in which after ye had been illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions."* [Hebrews 10:32] The other is when we say, *"You have suffered no great thing."* The former, when [the soul] has been exhausted refreshes it, and makes it recover breath: the latter, when it has become indolent and supine, turns it again and pulls down pride. Thus that no pride may spring up in them from that testimony [to their sufferings], see what he does. *"You have not yet"* (he says) *"resisted unto blood, [striving] against sin."* And he did not at once go on with what follows, but after having shown them all those who had stood *"unto blood,"* and then brought in the glory of Christ, His sufferings, he afterwards easily pursued his discourse. This he says also in writing to the Corinthians, *"There has no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man"* [1 Corinthians 10:13], that is, small. For this is enough to arouse and set right the soul, when it considers that it has not

risen to the whole [trial], and encourages itself from what has already befallen it.

What he means is this: You have not yet submitted to death; your loss has extended to money, to reputation, to being driven from place to place. Christ however shed His blood for you, while you have not [done it] for yourselves. He contended for the Truth even unto death fighting for you; while you have not yet entered upon dangers that threaten death.

"And you have forgotten the exhortation." That is, And you have slackened your hands, you have become faint. *"You have not yet,"* he said, *"resisted unto blood, striving against sin."* Here he indicates that sin is both very vigorous, and is itself armed. For the [expression] *"You have resisted [stood firm against],"* is used with reference to those who stand firm.

2. *"Which"* (he says) *"speaks unto you as unto sons, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of Him."* He has drawn his encouragement from the facts themselves; over and above he adds also that which is drawn from arguments, from this testimony.

"Faint not" (he says) *"when you are rebuked of Him."* It follows that these things are of God. For this too is no small matter of consolation, when we learn that it is God's work that such things have power, He allowing [them]; even as also Paul says; *"He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for My strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] He it is who allows [them].

"For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." You can not say that any righteous man is without affliction: even if he appear to be so, yet we know not his other afflictions. So that of necessity every righteous man must pass through affliction. For it is a declaration of Christ, that the wide and broad way leads to destruction, but

the strait and narrow one to life. [Matthew 7:13-14] If then it is possible to enter into life by that means, and is not by any other, then all have entered in by the narrow [way], as many as have departed unto life.

Hebrews 12:7

"You endure chastisement" (he says); not for punishment, nor for vengeance, nor for suffering. See, from that from which they supposed they had been deserted [of God], from these he says they may be confident, that they have not been deserted. It is as if he had said, Because you have suffered so many evils, do you suppose that God has left you and hates you? If you did not suffer, then it were right to suppose this. For if *"He scourges every son whom He receives,"* he who is not scourged, perhaps is not a son. What then, you say, do not bad men suffer distress? They suffer indeed; how then? He did not say, Every one who is scourged is a son, but every son is scourged. For in all cases He scourges His son: what is wanted then is to show, whether any son is not scourged. But you would not be able to say: there are many wicked men also who are scourged, such as murderers, robbers, sorcerers, plunderers of tombs. These however are paying the penalty of their own wickedness, and are not scourged as sons, but punished as wicked: but you as sons.

Hebrews 12:8

3. Then again [he argues] from the general custom. Do you see how he brings up arguments from all quarters, from facts in the Scripture, from its words, from our own notions, from examples in ordinary life? [Hebrews 12:8] *"But if you be without chastisement"* [&c.]. Do you see that he said what I just mentioned, that it is not possible to be a son without being chastened? For as in families, fathers care not for bastards, though they learn nothing, though they be not distinguished, but fear for their legitimate sons lest they should be indolent, [so here.]. If then not to be chastised is [a mark] of bastards, we ought to rejoice at chastisement, if this be [a sign] of legitimacy. *"God deals with you as with sons"*; for this very cause.

Hebrews 12:9

"Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence." Again, [he reasons] from their own experiences, from what they themselves suffered. For as he says above, *"Call to mind the former days"* [Hebrews 10:32], so here also *"God"* (he says) *"deals with you as with sons,"* and you could not say, We cannot bear it: yea, *"as with sons"* tenderly beloved. For if they reverence their *"fathers of the flesh,"* how shall not you reverence your heavenly Father?

However the difference arises not from this alone, nor from the persons, but also from the cause itself, and from the fact. For it is not on the same grounds that He and they inflict chastisement: but they [did it] with a view to *"what seemed good to them,"* that is, fulfilling [their own] pleasure oftentimes, and not always looking to what was expedient. But here, that cannot be said. For He does this not for any interest of His own but for you, and for your benefit alone. They [did it] that you might be useful to themselves also, oftentimes without reason; but here there is nothing of this kind. Do you see that this also brings consolation? For we are most closely attached to those [earthly parents], when we see that not for any interests of their own they either command or advise us: but their earnestness is, wholly and solely, on our account. For this is genuine love, and love in reality, when we are beloved though we be of no use to him who loves us—not that he may receive, but that he may impart. He chastens, He does everything, He uses all diligence, that we may become capable of receiving His benefits.

Hebrews 12:10

"For they verily" (he says) "for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."
[Hebrews 12:10]

What is *"of his holiness"*? It is, of His purity, so as to become worthy of Him, according to our power. He earnestly desires that you may receive, and He does all that He may give you: do ye not earnestly endeavor that you may receive? *"I said unto the Lord"* (one says) *"You are my Lord, for of my good things You have no need."* [Psalm 16:2]

"Furthermore," he says, *"we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?"* (*"To the Father of spirits,"* whether of spiritual gifts, or of prayers, or of the incorporeal powers.) If we die thus, then *"we shall live. For they indeed for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure,"* for what seems [so] is not always profitable, but *"He for our profit."*

4. Therefore chastisement is *"profitable"*; therefore chastisement is a *"participation of holiness."* Yea and this greatly: for when it casts out sloth, and evil desire, and love of the things of this life, when it helps the soul, when it causes a light esteem of all things here (for affliction [does] this), is it not holy? Does it not draw down the grace of the Spirit?

Let us consider the righteous, from what cause they all shone brightly forth. Was it not from affliction? And, if you will, let us enumerate them from the first and from the very beginning: Abel, Noah himself; for it is not possible that he, being the only one in that so great multitude of the wicked, should not have been afflicted; for it is said, *"Noah being" alone "perfect in*

his generation, pleased God." [Genesis 6:9] For consider, I beseech you, if now, when we have innumerable persons whose virtue we may emulate, fathers, and children, and teachers, we are thus distressed, what must we suppose he suffered, alone among so many? But should I speak of the circumstances of that strange and wonderful rain? Or should I speak of Abraham, his wanderings one upon another, the carrying away of his wife, the dangers, the wars, the famines? Should I speak of Isaac, what fearful things he underwent, driven from every place, and laboring in vain, and toiling for others? Or of Jacob? For indeed to enumerate all his [afflictions] is not necessary, but it is reasonable to bring forward the testimony, which he himself [gave] when speaking with Pharaoh; *"Few and evil are my days, and they have not attained to the days of my fathers."* [Genesis 47:9] Or should I speak of Joseph himself? Or of Moses? Or of Joshua? Or of David? Or of Elijah? Or of Samuel? Or would you [that I speak] of all the prophets? Will you not find that all these were made illustrious from their afflictions? Tell me then, dost *thou* desire to become illustrious from ease and luxury? But you can not.

Or should I speak of the Apostles? Nay but they went beyond all. And Christ said this, *"In the world you shall have tribulation."* [John 16:33] And again, *"You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice."* [John 16:20] And, that *"Strait and narrow is the way that leads unto life."* [Matthew 7:14] The Lord of the way said, that it is *"narrow and strait"*; and do you seek the *"broad"* [way]? How is this not unreasonable? In consequence you will not arrive at life, going another [way], but at destruction, for you have chosen the [path] which leads there.

Would you that I bring before you those [that live] in luxury? Let us ascend from the last to the first. The rich man who is burning in the furnace; the Jews who live for the belly, *"whose god is their belly"* [Philippians

3:19], who were ever seeking ease in the wilderness, were destroyed; as also those in Sodom, on account of their gluttony; and those in the time of Noah, was it not because they chose this soft and dissolute life? For "*they luxuriated,*" it says, "*in fullness of bread.*" [Ezekiel 16:49] It speaks of those in Sodom. But if "*fullness of bread*" wrought so great evil, what should we say of other delicacies? Esau, was not he in ease? And what of those who being of "*the sons of God*" [Genesis 6:2], looked on women, and were borne down the precipice? And what of those who were maddened by inordinate lust? And all the kings of the nations, of the Babylonians, of the Egyptians, did they not perish miserably? Are they not in torment?

5. And as to things now, tell me, are they not the same? Hear Christ saying, "*They that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses*" [Matthew 11:8], but they who do not [wear] such things, are in Heaven. For the soft garment relaxes even the austere soul, breaks it and enervates it: yea, even if it meet with a body rough and hard, it speedily by such delicate treatment makes it soft and weak.

For, tell me, for what other reason do you suppose women are so weak? Is it from their sex only? By no means: but from their way of living, and their bringing up. For their avoiding exposure, their inactivity, their baths, their ointments, their multitude of perfumes, the delicate softness of their couches, makes them in the end such as they are.

And that you may understand, attend to what I say. Tell me; take from a garden a tree from those standing in the uncultivated part and beaten by the winds, and plant it in a moist and shady place, and you will find it very unworthy of that from which you originally took it. And that this is true, [appears from the fact that] women brought up in the country are stronger than citizens of towns: and they would overcome many such in wrestling. For when the body becomes more effeminate, of necessity the soul also

shares the mischief, since, for the most part, its energies are affected in accordance with the [body]. For in illness we are different persons owing to weakness, and when we become well, we are different again. For as in the case of a string when the tones are weak and relaxed, and not well arranged, the excellence of the art is also destroyed, being obliged to serve the ill condition of the strings: so in the case of the body also, the soul receives from it many hurts, many necessities. For when it needs much nursing, the other endures a bitter servitude.

6. Wherefore, I beseech you, let us make it strong by work, and not nurse it as an invalid. My discourse is not to men only but to women also. For why do you, O woman, continually enfeeble [your body] with luxury and exhaust it? Why do you ruin your strength with fat? This fat is flabbiness, not strength. Whereas, if you break off from these things, and manage yourself differently, then will your personal beauty also improve according to your wish, when strength and a good habit of body are there. If however thou beset it with ten thousand diseases, there will neither be bloom of complexion, nor good health; for you will always be in low spirits. And you know that as when the air is smiling it makes a beautiful house look splendid, so also cheerfulness of mind when added to a fair countenance, makes it better: but if [a woman] is in low spirits and in pain she becomes more ill-looking. But diseases and pains produce low spirits; and diseases are produced from the body too delicate through great luxury. So that even for this you will flee luxury, if you take my advice.

'But, you will say, luxury gives pleasure.' Yes, but not so great as the annoyances. And besides, the pleasure goes no further than the palate and the tongue. For when the table has been removed, and the food swallowed, you will be like one that has not partaken, or rather much worse, in that you bear thence oppression, and distension, and headache, and a sleep like

death, and often too, sleeplessness from repletion, and obstruction of the breathing, and eructation. And you would curse bitterly your belly, when you ought to curse your immoderate eating.

7. Let us not then fatten the body, but listen to Paul saying, "*Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof,*" [Romans 13:14] As if one should take food and throw it into a drain, so is he who throws it into the belly: or rather it is not so, but much worse. For in the one case he uses the drain without harm to himself: but in the other he generates innumerable diseases. For what nourishes is a sufficiency which also can be digested: but what is over and above our need, not only does not nourish, but even spoils the other. But no man sees these things, owing to some prejudice and unseasonable pleasure.

Do you wish to nourish the body? Take away what is superfluous; give what is sufficient, and as much as can be digested. Do not load it, lest you overwhelm it. A sufficiency is both nourishment and pleasure. For nothing is so productive of pleasure, as food well digested: nothing so [productive of] health: nothing [so productive of] acuteness of the faculties, nothing tends so much to keep away disease. For a sufficiency is both nourishment, and pleasure, and health; but excess is injury, and unpleasantness and disease. For what famine does, that also satiety does; or rather more grievous evils. For the former indeed within a few days carries a man off and sets him free; but the other eating into and putrefying the body, gives it over to long disease, and then to a most painful death. But *we*, while we account famine a thing greatly to be dreaded, yet run after satiety, which is more distressing than that.

Whence is this disease? Whence this madness? I do not say that we should waste ourselves away, but that we should eat as much food as also gives us pleasure, that is really pleasure, and can nourish the body, and

furnish it to us well ordered and adapted for the energies of the soul, well joined and fitted together. But when it comes to be water-logged by luxury, it cannot in the flood-wave, keep fast the bolts themselves, as one may say, and joints which hold the frame together. For the flood-wave coming in, the whole breaks up and scatters.

"Make not provision for the flesh" (he says) *"to fulfill the lusts thereof."* [Romans 13:14] He said well. For luxury is fuel for unreasonable lusts; though the luxurious should be the most philosophical of all men, of necessity he must be somewhat affected by wine, by eating, he must needs be relaxed, he must needs endure the greater flame. Hence [come] fornications, hence adulteries. For a hungry belly cannot generate lust, or rather not one which has used just enough. But that which generates unseemly lusts, is that which is relaxed by luxury. And as land which is very moist and a dung-hill which is wet through and retains much dampness, generates worms, while that which has been freed from such moistness bears abundant fruits, when it has nothing immoderate: even if it be not cultivated, it yields grass, and if it be cultivated, fruits: [so also do we].

Let us not then make our flesh useless, or unprofitable, or hurtful, but let us plant in it useful fruits, and fruit-bearing trees; let us not enfeeble them by luxury, for they too put forth worms instead of fruit when they have become rotten. So also implanted desire, if you moisten it above measure, generates unreasonable pleasures, yea the most exceedingly unreasonable. Let us then remove this pernicious evil, that we may be able to attain the good things promised us, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 30 on Hebrews

Hebrews 12:11-13

"No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees: and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed."

1. They who drink bitter medicines, first submit to some unpleasantness, and afterwards feel the benefit. For such is virtue, such is vice. In the latter there is first the pleasure, then the despondency: in the former first the despondency, and then the pleasure. But there is no equality; for it is not the same, to be first grieved and afterwards pleased, and to be first pleased and afterwards grieved. How so? Because in the latter case the expectation of coming despondency makes the present pleasure less: but in the former the expectation of coming pleasure cuts away the violence of present despondency; so that the result is that in the one instance we never have pleasure, in the latter we never have grief. And the difference does not lie in this only, but also in other ways. As how? That the duration is not equal, but far greater and more ample. And here too, it is still more so in things spiritual.

From this [consideration] then Paul undertakes to console them; and again takes up the common judgment of men, which no one is able to stand against, nor to contend with the common decision, when one says what is acknowledged by all.

You are suffering, he says. For such is chastisement; such is its beginning. For *"no chastening for the present seems to be joyous but grievous."* Well said he, *"seems not."* Chastisement he means is not grievous but *"seems"* so. *"All chastisement"*: not this and that, but *"all,"* both human and spiritual. Do you see that he argues from our common notions? *"Seems"* (he says) *"to be grievous,"* so that it is not [really so]. For what sort of grief brings forth joy? So neither does pleasure bring forth despondency.

"Nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them which have been exercised thereby." Not *"fruit"* but *"fruits,"* a great abundance.

"To them" (he says) *"which have been exercised thereby."* What is *"to them which have been exercised thereby"*? To them that have endured for a long while, and been patient. And he uses an auspicious expression. So then, chastisement is exercise, making the athlete strong, and invincible in combats, irresistible in wars.

If then *"all chastisement"* be such, this also will be such: so that we ought to look for good things, and for a sweet and peaceful end. And do not wonder if, being itself hard, it has sweet fruits; since in trees also the bark is almost destitute of all quality, and rough; but the fruits are sweet. But he took it from the common notion. If therefore we ought to look for such things, why do ye vex yourselves? Why, after you have endured the painful, do ye despond as to the good? The distasteful things which you had to endure, you endured: do not then despond as to the recompense.

He speaks as to runners, and boxers, and warriors. Do you see how he arms them, how he encourages them? *"Walk straight,"* he says. Here he speaks with reference to their thoughts; that is to say, not doubting. For if the chastisement be of love, if it begin from loving care, if it end with a

good result (and this he proves both by facts and by words, and by all considerations), why are you dispirited? For such are they who despair, who are not strengthened by the hope of the future. "*Walk straight*," he says, that your lameness may not be increased, but brought back to its former condition. For he that runs when he is lame, galls the sore place. Do you see that it is in our power to be thoroughly healed?

Hebrews 12:14

2. *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."* What he also said above, *"Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together"* [Hebrews 10:25], he hints at in this place also. For nothing so especially makes persons easily vanquished and subdued in temptations, as isolation. For, tell me, scatter a phalanx in war, and the enemy will need no trouble, but will take them prisoners, coming on them separately, and thereby the more helpless.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness" (he says). Therefore with the evil-doers as well? *"If it be possible,"* he says, *"as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men."* [Romans 12:18] For your part (he means) *"live peaceably,"* doing no harm to religion: but in whatever you are ill-treated, bear it nobly. For the bearing with evil is a great weapon in trials. Thus Christ also made His disciples strong by saying, *"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,"* [Matthew 10:16] What dost Thou say? Are we *"among wolves,"* and dost Thou bid us to be *"as sheep,"* and *"as doves"*? Yea, He says. For nothing so shames him that is doing us evil, as bearing nobly the things which are brought upon us: and not avenging ourselves either by word or by deed. This both makes us more philosophical ourselves and procures a greater reward, and also benefits them. But has such an one been insolent? Do thou bless [him]. See how much you will gain from this: you have quenched the evil, you have procured to yourself a reward, you have made him ashamed, and you have suffered nothing serious.

3. *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness."* What does he mean by *"holiness"*? Chaste, and orderly living in marriage. If any person is

unmarried (he says) let him remain pure, let him marry: or if he be married, let him not commit fornication, but let him live with his own wife: for this also is *"holiness."* How? Marriage is not *"holiness,"* but marriage preserves the holiness which [proceeds] from Faith, not permitting union with a harlot. For *"marriage is honorable"* [Hebrews 13:4], not holy. Marriage is pure: it does not however also give holiness, except by forbidding the defilement of that [holiness] which has been given by our Faith.

"Without which" (he says) *"no man shall see the Lord."* Which he also says in the [Epistle] to the Corinthians. *"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor covetous persons, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* [1 Corinthians 6:9-10] For how shall he who has become the body of a harlot, how shall he be able to be the body of Christ?

Hebrews 12:15

4. *"Looking diligently lest any man come short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: lest there be any fornicator or profane person."* Do you see how everywhere he puts the common salvation into the hands of each individual? *"Exhorting one another daily"* (he says) *"while it is called Today."* [Hebrews 3:13] Do not then cast all [the burden] on your teachers; do not [cast] all upon them who have the rule over you: ye also (he means) are able to edify one another. Which also he said in writing to the Thessalonians, *"Edify one another, even as also ye do."* [1 Thessalonians 5:11] And again, *"Comfort one another with these words."* [1 Thessalonians 4:18] This we also now exhort you.

5. If you be willing, you will have more success with each other than we can have. For you both are with one another for a longer time, and you know more than we of each other's affairs, and you are not ignorant of each other's failings, and you have more freedom of speech, and love, and intimacy; and these are no small [advantages] for teaching, but great and opportune introductions for it: ye will be more able than we both to reprove and to exhort. And not this only, but because I am but one, whereas you are many; and you will be able, however many, to be teachers. Wherefore I entreat you, do not *"neglect this gift."* [1 Timothy 4:14] Each one of you has a wife, has a friend, has a servant, has a neighbor; let him reprove him, let him exhort him.

For how is it not absurd, with regard to [bodily] nourishment, to make associations for messing together, and for drinking together, and to have a set day whereon to club with one another, as they say, and to make up by

the association what each person being alone by himself fails short of— as for instance, if it be necessary to go to a funeral, or to a dinner, or to assist a neighbor in any matter— and not to do this for the purpose of instruction in virtue? Yea, I entreat you, let no man neglect it. For great is the reward he receives from God. And that you may understand, he who was entrusted with the five talents is the teacher: and he with the one is the learner. If the learner should say, I am a learner, I run no risk, and should hide the reason, which he received of God, that common and simple [reason], and give no advice, should not speak plainly, should not rebuke, should not admonish, if he is able, but should bury [his talents] in the earth (for truly that heart is earth and ashes, which hides the gift of God): if then he hides it either from indolence, or from wickedness, it will be no defense to him to say, 'I had but one talent.' You had one talent. You ought then to have brought one besides, and to have doubled the talent. If you had brought one in addition, you would not have been blamed. For neither did He say to him who brought the two, Wherefore have you not brought five? But He accounted him of the same worth with him who brought the five. Why? Because he gained as much as he had. And, because he had received fewer than the one entrusted with the five, he was not on this account negligent, nor did he use the smallness [of his trust, as an excuse] for idleness. And you ought not to have looked to him who had the two; or rather, you ought to have looked to him, and as he having two imitated him who had five, so ought thou to have emulated him who had two. For if for him who has means and does not give, there is punishment, how shall there not be the greatest punishment for him who is able to exhort in any way, and does it not? In the former case the body is nourished, in the latter the soul; there you prevent temporal death, here eternal.

6. But I have no [skill of] speech, you say. But there is no need of [skill of] speech nor of eloquence. If you see a friend going into fornication, say to him, You are going after an evil thing; are you not ashamed? Do you not blush? This is wrong. 'Why, does he not know' (you say) 'that it is wrong?' Yes, but he is dragged on by lust. They that are sick also know that it is bad to drink cold water, nevertheless they need persons who shall hinder [them from it]. For he who is suffering, will not easily be able to help himself in his sickness. There is need therefore of you who art in health, for his cure. And if he be not persuaded by your words, watch for him as he goes away and hold him fast; perhaps he will be ashamed.

'And what advantage is it' (you say), 'when he does this for my sake, and because he has been held back by me?' Do not be too minute in your calculations. For a while, by whatever means, withdraw him from his evil practice; let him be accustomed not to go off to that pit, whether through you, or through any means whatever. When you have accustomed him not to go, then by taking him after he has gained breath a little you will be able to teach him that he ought to do this for God's sake, and not for man's. Do not wish to make all right at once, since you cannot: but do it gently and by degrees.

If you see him going off to drinking, or to parties where there is nothing but drunkenness, then also do the same; and again on the other hand intreat him, if he observe that you have any failing, to help you and set you right. For in this way, he will even of himself, bear reproof, when he sees both that you need reproofs as well, and that you help him, not as one that had done everything right, nor as a teacher, but as a friend and a brother. Say to him, I have done you a service, in reminding you of things expedient: do thou also, whatever failing you see me have, hold me back,

set me right. If you see me irritable, if avaricious, restrain me, bind me by exhortation.

This is friendship; thus *"brother aided by brother becomes a fortified city."* [Proverbs 18:19] For not eating and drinking makes friendship: such friendship even robbers have and murderers. But if we are friends, if we truly care for one another, let us in these respects help one another. This leads us to a profitable friendship: let us hinder those things which lead away to hell.

7. Therefore let not him that is reproved be indignant: for we are men and we have failings; neither let him who reproves do it as exulting over him and making a display, but privately, with gentleness. He that reproves has need of greater gentleness, that thus he may persuade [them] to bear the cutting. Do you not see surgeons, when they burn, when they cut, with how great gentleness they apply their treatment? Much more ought those who reprove others to act thus. For reproof is sharper even than fire and knife, and makes [men] start. On this account surgeons take great pains to make them bear the cutting quietly, and apply it as tenderly as possible, even giving in a little, then giving time to take breath.

So ought we also to offer reproofs, that the reproved may not start away. Even if therefore, it be necessary to be insulted, yea even to be struck, let us not decline it. For those also who are cut [by the surgeons] utter numberless cries against those who are cutting them; they however heed none of these things, but only the health of the patients. So indeed in this case also we ought to do all things that our reproof may be effectual, to bear all things, looking to the reward which is in store.

"Bear ye one another's burdens," says he, *"and so fulfill the law of Christ."* [Galatians 6:2] So then, both reproving and bearing with one another, shall we be able to fulfill edification. And thus will you make the

labor light for us, in all things taking a part with us, and stretching out a hand, and becoming sharers and partakers, both in one another's salvation, and each one in his own. Let us then endure patiently, both bearing "*one another's burdens,*" and reproving: that we may attain to the good things promised in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 31 on Hebrews

Hebrews 12:14-15

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord."

1. There are many things characteristic of Christianity: but more than all, and better than all, Love towards one another, and Peace. Therefore Christ also says, *"My peace I give unto you."* [John 14:27] And again, *"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* [John 13:35] Therefore Paul too says, *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness,"* that is, purity, *"without which no man shall see the Lord."*

"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God." As if they were traveling together on some long journey, in a large company, he says, Take heed that no man be left behind: I do not seek this only, that you should arrive yourselves, but also that you should look diligently after the others.

"Lest any man" (he says) *"fail of the grace of God."* (He means the good things to come, the faith of the gospel, the best course of life: for they all are of *"the Grace of God."*) Do not tell me, It is [but] one that perishes. Even for one Christ died. Have you no care for him *"for whom Christ died"*? [1 Corinthians 8:11]

"Looking diligently," he says, that is, searching carefully, considering, thoroughly ascertaining, as is done in the case of sick persons, and in all ways examining, thoroughly ascertaining. *"Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you."* [Deuteronomy 29:18] This is found in Deuteronomy; and he derived it from the metaphor of plants. *"Lest any root*

of bitterness," he says; which he said also in another place when he writes, *"A little leaven leavens the whole lump."* [1 Corinthians 5:6] Not for his sake alone do I wish this, he means, but also on account of the harm arising therefrom. That is to say, even if there be a root of this kind, do not suffer any shoot to come up, but let it be cut off, that it may not bear its proper fruits, that so it may not defile and pollute the others also. For, he says, *"Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you; and by it many be defiled."*

And with good reason did he call sin *"bitter"*: for truly nothing is more bitter than sin, and they know it, who after they have committed it pine away under their conscience, who endure much bitterness. For being exceedingly bitter, it perverts the reasoning faculty itself. Such is the nature of what is bitter: it is unprofitable.

And well said he, *"root of bitterness."* He said not, *"bitter,"* but *"of bitterness."* For it is possible that a bitter root might bear sweet fruits; but it is not possible that a root and fountain and foundation of bitterness, should ever bear sweet fruit; for all is bitter, it has nothing sweet, all are bitter, all unpleasant, all full of hatred and abomination.

"And by this" (he says) *"many be defiled."* That is, Cut off the lascivious persons.

Hebrews 12:16

2. *"Lest there be any fornicator: or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."*

And wherein was Esau a *"fornicator"*? He does not say that Esau was a fornicator. *"Lest there be any fornicator,"* he says, then, *"follow after holiness: lest there be any, as Esau, profane"*: that is, gluttonous, without self-control, worldly, selling away things spiritual.

"Who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright," who through his own slothfulness sold this honor which he had from God, and for a little pleasure, lost the greatest honor and glory. This was suitable to them. This [was the conduct] of an abominable, of an unclean person. So that not only is the fornicator unclean, but also the glutton, the slave of his belly. For he also is a slave of a different pleasure. He is forced to be overreaching, he is forced to be rapacious, to behave himself unseemly in ten thousand ways, being the slave of that passion, and oftentimes he blasphemes. So he accounted *"his birthright"* to be nothing worth. That is, providing for temporary refreshment, he went even to the [sacrifice of his] *"birthright."* So henceforth *"the birthright"* belongs to us, not to the Jews. And at the same time also this is added to their calamity, that the first has become last, and the second, first: the one, for courageous endurance; the other last for indolence.

Hebrews 12:17

3. *"For you know"* (he says) *"how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."* What now is this? Does he indeed exclude repentance? By no means. 'But how, you say, was it that *"he found no place of repentance"*?' For if he condemned himself, if he made a great wailing, why did he *"find no place of repentance"*? Because it was not really a case of repentance. For as the grief of Cain was not of repentance, and the murder proved it; so also in this case, his words were not those of repentance, and the murder afterwards proved it. For even he also in intention slew Jacob. For *"The days of mourning for my father,"* he said, *"are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob."* [Genesis 27:41] *"Tears"* had not power to give him *"repentance."* And [the Apostle] did not say *"by repentance"* simply, but even *"with tears, he found no place of repentance."* Why now? Because he did not repent as he ought, for this is repentance; he repented not as it behooved him.

For how is it that he [the Apostle] said this? How did he exhort them again after they had become *"sluggish"* [Hebrews 6:12]? How, when they had become *"lame"*? How, when they were *"paralyzed"* [Hebrews 12:13]? How, when they were *"relaxed"* [Hebrews 12:12]? For this is the beginning of a fall. He seems to me to hint at some fornicators among them, but not to wish at that time to correct them: but feigns ignorance that they might correct themselves. For it is right at first indeed to pretend ignorance: but afterwards, when they continue [in sin], then to add reproof also, that so they may not become shameless. Which Moses also did in the case of Zimri and the daughter of Cosbi.

"For he found" (he says) *"no place of repentance,"* he found not repentance; or that he sinned beyond repentance. There are then sins beyond repentance. His meaning is, Let us not fall by an incurable fall. So long as it is a matter of lameness, it is easy to become upright: but if we turn out of the way, what will be left? For it is to those who have not yet fallen that he thus discourses, striking them with terror, and says that it is not possible for him who is fallen to obtain consolation; but to those who have fallen, that they may not fall into despair, he says the contrary, speaking thus, *"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ he formed in you."* [Galatians 4:19] And again, *"Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, are fallen from Grace."* [Galatians 5:4] Lo! He testifies that they had fallen away. For he that stands, hearing that it is not possible to obtain pardon after having fallen, will be more zealous, and more cautious about his standing: if however thou use the same violence towards one also who is fallen, he will never rise again. For by what hope will he show forth the change?

But he not only wept (you say), but also *"sought earnestly."* He does not then exclude repentance; but makes them careful not to fall.

4. As many then as do not believe in Hell, let them call these things to mind: as many as think to sin without being punished, let them take account of these things. Why did Esau not obtain pardon? Because he repented not as he ought. Would you see perfect repentance? Hear of the repentance of Peter after his denial. For the Evangelist in relating to us the things concerning him, says, *"And he went out and wept bitterly."* [Matthew 26:75] Therefore even such a sin was forgiven him, because he repented as he ought. Although the Victim had not yet been offered, nor had The Sacrifice as yet been made, nor was sin as yet-taken away, it still had the rule and sovereignty.

And that you may learn, that this denial [arose] not so much from sloth, as from His being forsaken of God, who was teaching him to know the measures of man and not to contradict the sayings of the Master, nor to be more high-minded than the rest, but to know that nothing can be done without God, and that *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it"* [Psalm 127:1]: therefore also Christ said to him alone, *"Satan desired to sift you as wheat,"* and I allowed it not, *"that your faith may not fail."* [Luke 22:31-32] For since it was likely that he would be high-minded, being conscious to himself that he loved Christ more than they all, therefore *"he wept bitterly"*; and he did other things after his weeping, of the same character. For what did he do? After this he exposed himself to dangers innumerable, and by many means showed his manliness and courage.

Judas also repented, but in an evil way: for he hanged himself. Esau too repented; as I said; or rather, he did not even repent; for his tears were not [tears] of repentance, but rather of pride and wrath. And what followed proved this. The blessed David repented, thus saying, *"Every night will I wash my bed: I will water my couch with my tears."* [Psalm 6:6] And the sin which had been committed long ago, after so many years, after so many generations he bewailed, as if it had recently occurred.

5. For he who repents ought not to be angry, nor to be fierce, but to be contrite, as one condemned, as not having boldness, as one on whom sentence has been passed, as one who ought to be saved by mercy alone, as one who has shown himself ungrateful toward his Benefactor, as unthankful, as reprobate, as worthy of punishments innumerable. If he considers these things, he will not be angry, he will not be indignant, but will mourn, will weep, will groan, and lament night and day.

He that is penitent ought never to forget his sin, but on the one hand, to beseech God not to remember it; while on the other, he himself never

forgets it. If we remember it, God will forget it. Let us exact punishment from ourselves; let us accuse ourselves; thus shall we propitiate the Judge. For sin confessed becomes less, but not confessed worse. For if sin add to itself shamelessness and ingratitude, how will he who does not know that he sinned before be at all able to guard himself from falling again into the same [evils]?

Let us then not deny [our sins], I beseech you, nor be shameless, that we may not unwillingly pay the penalty. Cain heard God say, "*Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I know not; am I my brother's keeper?*" [Genesis 4:9] Do you see how this made his sin more grievous? But his father did not act thus. What then? When he heard, "*Adam, where are you?*" [Genesis 3:9], he said, "*I heard Your voice, and I was afraid, because I am naked, and I hid myself.*" [Genesis 3:10] It is a great good to acknowledge our sins, and to bear them in mind continually. Nothing so effectually cures a fault, as a continual remembrance of it. Nothing makes a man so slow to wickedness.

6. I know that conscience starts back, and endures not to be scourged by the remembrance of evil deeds; but hold tight your soul and place a muzzle on it. For like an ill-broken horse, so it bears impatiently [what is put upon it], and is unwilling to persuade itself that it has sinned: but all this is the work of Satan. But let us persuade it that it has sinned; let us persuade it that it has sinned, that it may also repent, in order that having repented it may escape torment. How do you think to obtain pardon for your sins, tell me, when you have not yet confessed them? Assuredly he is worthy of compassion and kindness who has sinned. But thou who hast not yet persuaded yourself [that you have sinned], how do you think to be pitied, when you are thus without shame for some things?

Let us persuade ourselves that we have sinned. Let us say it not with the tongue only, but also with the mind. Let us not call ourselves sinners, but also count over our sins, going over them each specifically. I do not say to you, Make a parade of yourself, nor accuse yourself before others: but be persuaded by the prophet when he says, "*Reveal your way unto the Lord.*" [Psalm 37:5] Confess these things before God. Confess before the Judge your sins with prayer; if not with tongue, yet in memory, and be worthy of mercy.

If you keep your sins continually in remembrance, you will never bear in mind the wrongs of your neighbor. I do not say, if you are persuaded that you are yourself a sinner; this does not avail so to humble the soul, as sins themselves [taken] by themselves, and examined specifically. You will have no remembrance of wrongs [done you], if you have these things continually in remembrance; you will feel no anger, you will not revile, you will have no high thoughts, you will not fall again into the same [sins], you will be more earnest towards good things.

7. Do you see how many excellent [effects] are produced from the remembrance of our sins? Let us then write them in our minds. I know that the soul does not endure a recollection which is so bitter: but let us constrain and force it. It is better that it should be gnawed with the remembrance now, than at that time with vengeance.

Now, if you remember them, and continually present them before God (see p. 448), and pray for them, you will speedily blot them out; but if you forget them now, you will then be reminded of them even against your will, when they are brought out publicly before the whole world, displayed before all, both friends and enemies, and Angels. For surely He did not say to David only, "*What you did secretly, I will make manifest to*" [2 Samuel 12:12] all, but even to us all. You were afraid of men (he said) and

respected them more than God; and God seeing you, you cared not, but were ashamed before men. For it says, *"the eyes of men, this is their fear."* Therefore you shall suffer punishment in that very point; for I will reprove you, setting your sins before the eyes of all. For that this is true, and that in that day the sins of us all are [to be] publicly displayed, unless we now do them away by continual remembrance, hear how cruelty and inhumanity are publicly exposed, *"I was an hungered"* (He says) *"and you gave Me no meat."* [Matthew 25:42] When are these things said? Is it in a corner? Is it in a secret place? By no means. When then? *"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory"* [Matthew 25:31-32], and *"all the nations"* are gathered together, when He has separated the one from the other, then will He speak in the audience of all, and will *"set"* them *"on His right hand"* and *"on"* His *"left"* [Matthew 25:33]: *"I was an hungered and you gave Me no meat."*

See again the five virgins also, hearing before all, *"I know you not."* [Matthew 25:12] For the five and five do not set forth the number of five only, but those virgins who are wicked and cruel and inhuman, and those who are not such. So also he that buried his one talent, heard before all, even of those who had brought the five and the two, *"You wicked and slothful servant."* [Matthew 25:26] But not by words alone, but by deeds also does He then convict them: even as the Evangelist also says, *"They shall look on Him whom they pierced."* [John 19:37] For the resurrection shall be of all at the same time, of sinners and of the righteous. At the same time shall He be present to all in the judgment.

8. Consider therefore who they are who shall then be in dismay, who in grief, who dragged away to the fire, while the others are crowned. *"Come"* (He says), *"ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* [Matthew 25:34] And

again, "*Depart from Me into the fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.*" [Matthew 25:41]

Let us not merely hear the words but write them also before our sight, and let us imagine Him to be now present and saying these things, and that we are led away to that fire. What heart shall we have? What consolation? And what, when we are cut asunder? And what when we are accused of rapacity? What excuse shall we have to utter? What specious argument? None: but of necessity bound, bending down, we must be dragged to the mouths of the furnace, to the river of fire, to the darkness, to then ever-dying punishments, and entreat no one. For it is not, it is not possible, He says, to pass across from this side to that: for "*there is a great gulf between us and you*" [Luke 16:26], and it is not possible even for those who wish it to go across, and stretch out a helping hand: but we must needs burn continually, no one aiding us, even should it be father or mother, or any whosoever, yea though he have much boldness toward God. For, it says, "*A brother does not redeem; shall man redeem?*" [Psalm 49:8]

Since then it is not possible to have one's hopes of salvation in another, but [it must be] in one's self after the lovingkindness of God, let us do all things, I entreat you, so that our conduct may be pure, and our course of life the best, and that it may not receive any stain even from the beginning. But if not, at all events, let us not sleep after the stain, but continue always washing away the pollution by repentance, by tears, by prayers, by works of mercy.

What then, you say, if I cannot do works of mercy? But you have "*a cup of cold water*" [Matthew 10:42], however poor you are. But you have "*two mites*" [Mark 12:42], in whatever poverty you are; but you have feet, so as to visit the sick, so as to enter into a prison; but you have a roof, so as

to receive strangers. For there is no pardon, no, none for him who does not do works of mercy.

These things we say to you continually, that we may effect if it be but a little by the continued repetition: these things we say, not caring so much for those who receive the benefits, as for yourselves. For you give to them indeed things here, but in return you receive heavenly things: which may we all obtain, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father be glory, together with the Holy Ghost, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 32 on Hebrews

Hebrews 12:18-24

" For you are not come unto a fire that might be touched and that burned, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.) But you have come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly, and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven; and to God the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect: and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant: and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."

1. Wonderful indeed were the things in the Temple, the Holy of Holies; and again awful were those things also that were done at Mount Sina, *"the fire, the darkness, the blackness, the tempest."* [cf. Deuteronomy 33:2] For, it says, *"God appeared in Sina,"* and long ago were these things celebrated. The New Covenant, however, was not given with any of these things, but has been given in simple discourse by God.

See then how he makes the comparison in these points also. And with good reason has he put them afterwards. For when he had persuaded them by innumerable [arguments], when he had also shown the difference

between each covenant, then afterwards, the one having been already condemned, he easily enters on these points also.

And what says he? *"For you are not come unto a fire that might be touched, and that burned, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more."*

These things, he means, are terrible; and so terrible that they could not even bear to hear them, that not even *"a beast"* dared to go up. (But things that come hereafter are not such. For what is Sina to Heaven? And what the *"fire which might be touched"* to God who cannot be touched? For *"God is a consuming fire."* [Hebrews 5:29]) For it is said, *"Let not God speak, but let Moses speak unto us. And so fearful was that which was commanded, Though even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake."* [Exodus 20:19] What wonder as respects the people? He himself who entered into *"the darkness where God was,"* says, *"I exceedingly fear and quake."* [Exodus 20:21]

2. *"But you have come unto Mount Sion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem: and to an innumerable company of angels and to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better [things] than that of Abel."*

Instead of *"Moses,"* Jesus. Instead of the people, *"myriads of angels."*

Of what *"first-born"* does he speak? Of the faithful.

"And to the spirits of just men made perfect." With these shall you be, he says.

"And to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better [things] than that of Abel." Did then the

[blood] *"of Abel"* speak? *"Yea,"* he says, *"and by it he being dead yet speaks."* [Hebrews 11:4] And again God says, *"The voice of your brother's blood cries unto Me."* [Genesis 4:10] Either this [meaning] or that; because it is still even now celebrated: but not in such way as that of Christ. For this has cleansed all men, and sends forth a voice more clear and more distinct, in proportion as it has greater testimony, namely that by facts.

Hebrews 12:25-29

"See that you refuse not Him that speaks. For if they escaped not, who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaks from heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth: but now has He promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

3. Fearful were those things, but these are far more admirable and glorious. For here there is not "*darkness*," nor "*blackness*," nor "*tempest*." It seems to me that by these words he hints at the obscurity of the Old [Testament], and the overshadowed and veiled character of the Law. And besides the Giver of the Law appears in fire terrible, and apt to punish those who transgress.

But what are "*the sounds of the trumpet*"? Probably it is as though some King were coming. This at all events will also be at the second coming. "*At the last trump*" [1 Corinthians 15:52] all must be raised. But it is the trumpet of His voice which effects this. At that time then all things were objects of sense, and sights, and sounds; now all are objects of understanding, and invisible.

And, it says, "*there was much smoke*." [See Exodus 19:18] For since God is said to be fire, and appeared thus in the bush, He indicates the fire even by the smoke. And what is "*the blackness and the darkness*"? He again expresses its fearfulness. Thus Isaiah also says; "*And the house was*

filled with smoke." [Isaiah 6:4] And what is the object of "*the tempest*"? The human race was careless. It was therefore needful that they should be aroused by these things. For no one was so dull as not to have had his thoughts raised up, when these things were done, and the Law ordained.

"Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice" [Exodus 19:19]: for it was necessary that the voice of God should be uttered. Inasmuch as He was about to promulgate His Law through Moses, therefore He makes him worthy of confidence. They saw him not, because of the thick darkness: they heard him not, because of the weakness of his voice. What then? *"God answered by a voice,"* addressing the multitude: yea and his name shall be called.

"They entreated" (he says) *"that the word should not be spoken to them any more."*

From the first therefore they were themselves the cause of God's being manifested through the Flesh. Let Moses speak with us, and *"Let not God speak with us."* [Exodus 20:9] They who make comparisons elevate the one side the more, that they may show the other to be far greater. In this respect also our [privileges] are more gentle and more admirable. For they are great in a twofold respect: because while they are glorious and greater, they are more accessible. This he says also in the Epistle to the Corinthians: *"with unveiled countenance"* [2 Corinthians 3:18], and, *"not as Moses put a veil over his face."* [2 Corinthians 3:13] They, he means, were not counted worthy of what we [are]. For of what were they thought worthy? They saw *"darkness, blackness";* they heard *"a voice."* But thou also hast heard a voice, not through darkness, but through flesh. You have not been disturbed, neither troubled, but you have stood and held discourse with the Mediator.

And in another way, by the *"darkness"* he shows the invisibleness. *"And darkness"* (it says) *"was under His feet."* [Psalm 18:9]

Then even Moses feared, but now no one.

As the people then stood below, so also do we. They were not below, but below Heaven. The Son is near to God, but not as Moses.

There was a wilderness, here a city.

4. *"And to an innumerable company of angels."* Here he shows the joy, the delight, in place of the *"blackness"* and *"darkness"* and *"tempest."*

"And to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all." They did not draw near, but stood afar off, even Moses: but *"you have come near."*

Here he makes them fear, by saying, *"And to God the Judge of all"*; not of the Jews alone, and the faithful, but even of the whole world.

"And to the spirits of just men made perfect." He means the souls of those who are approved.

"And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant: and to the blood of sprinkling," that is, of purification, *"which speaks better things than that of Abel."* And if the blood speaks, much more does He who, having been slain, lives. But what does it speak? *"The Spirit also"* (he says) *"speaks with groanings which cannot be uttered."* [Romans 8:26] How does He speak? Whenever He falls into a sincere mind, He raises it up and makes it speak.

5. *"See that you refuse not Him that speaks";* that is, that you reject [Him] not. *"For if they escaped not who refused Him that spoke on earth."* Whom does he mean? Moses, I suppose. But what he says is this: if they, having *"refused Him"* when He gave laws *"on earth, did not escape,"* how shall we refuse Him, when He gives laws from Heaven? He declares here not that He is another; far from it. He does not set forth One and Another, but He appears terrible, when uttering His Voice *"from Heaven."* It is He Himself then, both the one and the other: but the One is terrible. For he expresses not a difference of Persons but of the gift. Whence does this

appear? *"For if they escaped not,"* he says, *"who refused Him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaks from heaven."* What then? Is this one different from the other? How then does he say, *"whose voice then shook the earth"*? For it was the *"voice"* of Him who *"then"* gave the Law, which *"shook the earth. But now has He promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word Yet once more, signifies the removing of those things which are shaken, as of things that are made."* All things therefore will be taken away, and will be compacted anew for the better. For this is what he suggests here. Why then do you grieve when you suffer in a world that abides not; when you are afflicted in a world which will very shortly have passed away? If our rest were [to be] in the latter period of the world, then one ought to be afflicted in looking to the end.

"That" (he says) *"those which cannot be shaken may remain."* But of what sort are *"those things which cannot be shaken"*? The things to come.

6. Let us then do all for this, that we may attain that [rest], that we may enjoy those good things. Yea, I pray and beseech you, let us be earnest for this. No one builds in a city which is going to fall down. Tell me, I pray you, if any one said that after a year, this city would fall, but such a city not at all, would you have built in that which was about to fall? So I also now say this, Let us not build in this world; it will fall after a little, and all will be destroyed. But why do I say, It will fall? Before its fall we shall be destroyed, and suffer what is fearful; we shall be removed from them.

Why build we upon the sand? Let us build upon the rock: for whatsoever may happen, that building remains impregnable, nothing will be able to destroy it. With good reason. For to all such attacks that region is inaccessible, just as this is accessible. For earthquakes, and fires, and inroad

of enemies, take it away from us even while we are alive: and oftentimes destroy us with it.

And even in case it remains, disease speedily removes us, or if we stay, suffers us not to enjoy it fairly. For what pleasure [is there], where there are sicknesses, and false accusations, and envy, and intrigues? Or should there be none of these things, yet oftentimes if we have no children, we are disquieted, we are impatient, not having any to whom we may leave houses and all other things; and thenceforward we pine away as laboring for others. Yea oftentimes too the inheritance passes away to our enemies, not only after we are gone, but even while we live. What is more miserable then than to toil for enemies, and ourselves to be gathering sins together in order that they may have rest? And many are the instances of this that are seen in our cities. And yet [I say no more] lest I should grieve those who have been despoiled. For I could have mentioned some of them even by name, and have had many histories to tell, and many houses to show you, which have received for masters the enemies of those who labored for them: nay not houses only, but slaves also and the whole inheritance have oftentimes come round to enemies. For such are things human.

But in Heaven there is nothing of this to fear—lest after a man is dead, his enemy should come, and succeed to his inheritance. For there there is neither death nor enmity; the tabernacles of the saints are permanent abodes; and among those saints is exultation, joy, gladness. For "*the voice of rejoicing*" (it is said) is "*in the tabernacles of the righteous.*" [Psalm 118:15] They are eternal, having no end. They do not fall down through age, they do not change their owners, but stand continually in their best estate. With good reason. For there is nothing corruptible, nor perishable there, but all is immortal, and undefiled. On this building let us exhaust all our wealth. We have no need of carpenters nor of laborers. The hands of the

poor build such houses; the lame, the blind, the maimed, they build those houses. And wonder not, since they procure even a kingdom for us, and give us confidence towards God.

7. For mercifulness is as it were a most excellent art, and a protector of those who labor at it. For it is dear to God, and ever stands near Him readily asking favor for whomsoever it will, if only it be not wronged by us; And it is wronged, when we do it by extortion. (See p. 481.) So, if it be pure, it gives great confidence to those who offer it up. It intercedes even for those who have offended, so great is its power, even for those who have sinned. It breaks the chains, disperses the darkness, quenches the fire, kills the worm, drives away the gnashing of teeth. The gates of heaven open to it with great security: And as when a Queen is entering, no one of the guards stationed at the doors dares to inquire who she is, and whence, but all straightway receive her; so also indeed with mercifulness. For she is truly a queen indeed, making men like God. For, he says, *"you shall be merciful, as your Heavenly Father is merciful."* [Luke 6:36]

She is winged and buoyant, having golden pinions, with a flight which greatly delights the angels. There, it is said, are *"the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her back with the yellowness of gold."* [Psalm 68:13] As some dove golden and living, she flies, with gentle look, and mild eye. Nothing is better than that eye. The peacock is beautiful, but in comparison of her, is a jackdaw. So beautiful and worthy of admiration is this bird. She continually looks upwards; she is surrounded abundantly with God's glory: she is a virgin with golden wings, decked out, with a fair and mild countenance. She is winged, and buoyant, standing by the royal throne. When we are judged, she suddenly flies in, and shows herself, and rescues us from punishment, sheltering us with her own wings.

God would have her rather than sacrifices. Much does He discourse concerning her: so He loves her. *"He will relieve"* (it is said) *"the widow"* and *"the fatherless"* [Psalm 146:9] and the poor. God wishes to be called from her. *"The Lord is pitiful and merciful, long-suffering, and of great mercy"* [Psalm 145:8], and true. The mercy of God is over all the earth. She has saved the race of mankind [see Psalm 145:9]: For unless she had pitied us, all things would have perished. *"When we were enemies"* [see Romans 5:10], she *"reconciled"* us, she wrought innumerable blessings; she persuaded the Son of God to become a slave, and to empty Himself [of His glory]. [Philippians 2:7]

Let us earnestly emulate her by whom we have been saved; let us love her, let us prize her before wealth, and apart from wealth, let us have a merciful soul. Nothing is so characteristic of a Christian, as mercy. There is nothing which both unbelievers and all men so admire, as when we are merciful. For oftentimes we are ourselves also in need of this mercy, and say to God *"Have mercy upon us, after Your great goodness."* [Psalm 51:1] Let us begin first ourselves: or rather it is not we that begin first. For He has Himself already shown His mercy towards us: yet at least let us follow second. For if men have mercy on a merciful man, even if he has done innumerable wrongs, much more does God.

8. Hear the prophet saying, *"But I"* (his words are) *"am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of God."* [Psalm 52:8] Let us become such: let us become *"as an olive tree"*: let us be laden on every side with the commandments. For it is not enough to be as an olive tree, but also to be fruitful. For there are persons who in doing alms give little, [only once] in the course of the whole year, or in each week, or who give away a mere chance matter. These are indeed olive trees, but not fruitful ones, but even withered. For because they show compassion they are olive trees, but

because they do it not liberally, they are not fruitful olive trees. But let us be fruitful.

I have often said and I say now also: the greatness of the charity is not shown by the measure of what is given, but by the disposition of the giver. You know the case of the widow. It is well continually to bring this example [forward], that not even the poor man may despair of himself, when he looks on her who threw in the two mites. Some contributed even hair in the fitting up of the temple, and not even these were rejected. [Exodus 35:23] But if when they had gold, they had brought hair, they [would have been] accursed: but if, having this only, they brought it, they were accepted. For this cause Cain also was blamed, not because he offered worthless things, but because they were the most worthless he had. *"Accursed"* (it is said) *"is he which has a male, and sacrifices unto God a corrupt thing."* [Malachi 1:14] He did not speak absolutely, but, *"he that has"* (he says) and spares [it]. If then a man have nothing, he is freed from blame, or rather he has a reward. For what is of less value than two farthings, or more worthless than hair? What than a pint of meal? But nevertheless these were approved equally with the calves and the gold. For *"a man is accepted according to that he has, not according to that he has not."* [2 Corinthians 8:12] And, it says, *"according as your hand has, do good."* [Proverbs 3:27]

Wherefore, I entreat you, let us readily empty out what we have for the poor. Even if it be little we shall receive the same reward with them who have cast the most; or rather, more than those who cast in ten thousand talents. If we do these things we shall obtain the unspeakable treasures of God; if we not only hear, but practice also, if we do not praise [charity], but also show [it] by our deeds. Which may we all attain, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 33 on Hebrews

Hebrews 12:28-29

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace [or gratitude,] whereby we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

1. In another place he says the same, *"for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal"* [2 Corinthians 4:18]; and from this makes an exhortation with regard to the evils which we endure in this present life; and here he does this, and says, let us continue steadfast; *"let us have thankfulness,"* i.e., let us give thanks unto God. For not only we ought not to be discouraged at present things, but even to show the greatest gratitude to Him, for those to come.

"Whereby we serve God acceptably," that is to say, 'for thus is it possible to serve God acceptably,' by giving him thanks in all things. *"Do all things"* (he says) *"without murmurings and disputings."* [Philippians 2:14] For whatever work a man does with murmuring, he cuts away and loses his reward; as the Israelites— how great a penalty they paid for their murmurings. Wherefore he says, *"Neither murmur ye."* [1 Corinthians 10:10] It is not therefore possible to *"serve"* Him *"acceptably"* without a sense of gratitude to Him for all things, both for our trials, and the alleviations of them. That is, let us utter nothing hasty, nothing disrespectful, but let us humble ourselves that we may be reverential. For this is *"with reverence and godly fear."*

Hebrews 13:1-2

"Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful of hospitality, for hereby some have entertained angels unawares." See how he enjoins them to preserve what they had: he does not add other things. He did not say, *"Be loving as brethren,"* but, *"Let brotherly love continue."* And again, he did not say, *"Be hospitable,"* as if they were not, but, *"Be not forgetful of hospitality,"* for this was likely to happen owing to their afflictions.

Therefore (he says) *"some have entertained angels unawares."* Do you see how great was the honor, how great the gain!

What is *"unawares"*? They entertained them without knowing it. Therefore the reward also was great, because he entertained them, not knowing that they were Angels. For if he had known it, it would have been nothing wonderful. Some say that he here alludes to Lot also.

Hebrews 13:3-6

2. *"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body. Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Let your conversation be without covetousness: being content with such things as you have."*

See how large is his discourse concerning chastity. *"Follow peace,"* he said, *"and holiness; Lest there be any fornicator or profane person"* [Hebrews 12:14]; and again, *"Fornicators and adulterers God will judge."* [Hebrews 12:16] In every case, the prohibition is with a penalty. *"Follow peace with all men,"* he says, *"and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: But fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*

And having first set down *"Marriage is honorable in all men, and the bed undefiled,"* he shows that he rightly added what follows. For if marriage has been conceded, justly is the fornicator punished, justly does the adulterer suffer vengeance.

Here he strips for the heretics. He did not say again, Let no one be a fornicator; but having said it once for all, he then went on as with a general exhortation, and not as directing himself against them.

"Let your conversation be without covetousness," he says. He did not say, Possess nothing, but, *"Let your conversation be without covetousness":* that is, let it show forth the philosophical character of your mind. [And it will show it, if we do not seek superfluities, if we keep only to what is necessary.] For he says above also, *"And ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods."* [Hebrews 10:34] He gives these exhortations, that they might not be covetous.

"Being content" (he says) "with such things as you have." Then here also the consolation; [Hebrews 13:5] "For He" (he says) "has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you"; [Hebrews 13:6] "so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Again consolation in their trials.

Hebrews 13:7

3. *"Remember them which have the rule over you."* This he was laboring to say above: therefore *"Follow peace with all men."* [Hebrews 12:14] He gave this exhortation also to the Thessalonians, to *"hold them in honor exceedingly."* [1 Thessalonians 5:13]

"Remember" (he says) *"them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."* What kind of following is this? Truly the best: for he says, beholding their life, *"follow their faith."* For from a pure life [comes] faith.

Or else by *"faith,"* he means steadfastness. How so? Because they believe in the things to come. For they would not have shown forth a pure life, if they had questioned about the things to come, if they had doubted. So that here also he is applying a remedy to the same [evil].

Hebrews 13:8-9

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and for ever. Be not carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

In these words, *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and for ever,"* "yesterday" means all the time that is past: "today," the present: "for ever," the endless which is to come. That is to say: You have heard of an High Priest, but not an High Priest who fails. He is always the same. As though there were some who said, 'He is not, another will come,' he says this, that He who was *"yesterday and today,"* is *"the same also for ever."* For even now the Jews say, that another will come; and having deprived themselves of Him that is will fall into the hands of Antichrist.

"Be not carried about with various and strange doctrines." Not *"with strange doctrines"* only, but neither with *"various ones."*

"For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats which have not profited them that have been occupied therein." Here he gently hints at those who introduce the observance of *"meats."* For by Faith all things are pure. There is need then of Faith, not of *"meats."*

Hebrews 13:10

For [Hebrews 13:10] *"we have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle."* Not as the Jewish [ordinances], are those among us, as it is not lawful even for the High Priest to partake of them. So that since he had said, *"Do not observe,"* and this seemed to be [the language] of one who is throwing down his own building, he again turns it round. What, have not we then observances as well (he says)? [Yea we have], and we observe them very earnestly too, not sharing them even with the priests themselves.

Hebrews 13:11-13

4. *"For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered" (he says) "without the gate."* Do you see the type shining forth? *"For sin,"* he says, and *"suffered without the gate."* [Hebrews 13:13] *"Let us go forth therefore to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach,"* that is, suffering the same things; having communion with Him in His sufferings. He was crucified without as a condemned person: neither let us then be ashamed to *"go forth out"* [of the world].

Hebrews 13:14-15

"For we have here no continuing city" (he says) "but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name."

"By Him," as by an High Priest, according to the flesh. *"Giving thanks"* (he says) *"to His Name."* (See p. 514.) Let us utter nothing blasphemous, nothing hasty, nothing bold, nothing presumptuous, nothing desperate. This is *"with reverence and godly fear."* [Hebrews 12:28] For a soul in tribulations becomes desponding, and reckless. But let not us [be so]. See here he again says the same thing which he said before, *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,"* for so shall we be able to do all things with reverence. For oftentimes even out of respect for men, we refrain from doing many evil things.

Hebrews 13:16

"But to do good and to communicate forget not." I speak not [merely] with reference to the brethren present, but to those absent also. But if others have plundered your property, display your hospitality out of such things as you have. What excuse then shall we have henceforward, when they, even after the spoiling of their goods, were thus admonished?

5. And he did not say, *"Be not forgetful"* of the entertaining of strangers, but *"of hospitality"*: that is, do not merely entertain strangers, but [do it] with love for the strangers. Moreover he did not speak of the recompense that is future, and in store for us, lest he should make them more supine, but of that already given. For *"thereby some"* (he says) *"have entertained angels unawares."*

But let us see in what sense *"Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled."* Because (he means) it preserves the believer in chastity. Here he also alludes to the Jews, because they accounted the woman after childbirth polluted: and *"whosoever comes from the bed,"* it is said, *"is not clean."* Those things are not polluted which arise from nature, O ungrateful and senseless Jew, but those which arise from choice. For if *"marriage is honorable"* and pure, why forsooth do you think that one is even polluted by it?

"Let your conversation" (he says) *"be without covetousness"*: since many after having exhausted their property, afterwards wish to recover it again under the guise of alms, therefore he says, *"Let your conversation be without covetousness"*; that is, that we should be [desirous only] of what is necessary and indispensable. What then (you say) if we should not have a supply even of these? This is not possible; indeed it is not. *"For He has*

said," and He does not lie, *"I will never leave you, nor forsake you. So that we boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."* You have the promise from Himself: do not doubt henceforward. He has promised; make no question. But this, *"I will never leave you,"* he says not concerning money only, but concerning all other things also. *"The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me";* with good reason.

This then also let us say in all temptations; let us laugh at human things, so long as we have God favorable to us. For as, when He is our enemy, it is no gain, though all men should be our friends, so when He is our friend, though all men together war against us, there is no harm. *"I will not fear what man shall do unto me."*

6. *"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God."* In this place I think that he is speaking about assistance also. For this is [implied in the words] *"who have spoken unto you the word of God."*

"Whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation." What is, *"considering"*? Continually revolving, examining it by yourselves, reasoning, investigating accurately, testing it as you choose. *"The end of their conversation,"* that is, their conversation to the end: for *"their conversation"* had a good end.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and for ever." Do not think that then indeed He wrought wonders, but now works no wonders. He is the same. This is, *"remember them that have the rule over you."*

"Be not carried about with various and strange doctrines." *"Strange,"* that is, different from those ye heard from us; [*"Divers"*] that is, of all sorts: for they have no stability, but are different [one from another]. For especially manifold is the doctrine of meats.

"For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats." These are the *"various,"* these the *"strange"* [doctrines]: especially as Christ has said, *"not that which enters into the mouth defiles the man, but that which comes out."* [Matthew 15:11] And observe that he does not make bold to say this openly, but as it were by a hint. *"For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats."*

Faith is all. If that establishes [it], the heart stands in security. It follows that Faith establishes: consequently reasonings shake. For Faith is contrary to reasoning.

"Which" (he says) *"have not profited them that have been occupied therein."* For what is the gain from the observance [of them], tell me. Does it not rather destroy? Does it not make such an one to be under sin? If it be necessary to observe [them], we must guard ourselves.

"Which" (he says) *"have not profited them that have been occupied therein."* That is, who have always diligently kept them.

There is one observance, abstaining from sin. For what profit is it, when some are so polluted, as not to be able to partake of the sacrifices? So that it did not save them at all; although they were zealous about the observances. But because they had not faith, even thus they profited nothing.

7. In the next place he takes away the sacrifice from the type, and directs his discourse to the prototype, saying, *"The bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest, are burned without the camp."* Then those things were a type of these and thus Christ, suffering *"without,"* fulfilled all.

Here he makes it plain too that He suffered voluntarily, showing that those things were not accidental, but even the [Divine] arrangement itself was of a suffering *"without."* [He suffered] without, but His Blood was

borne up into Heaven. You see then that we partake of Blood which has been carried into the Holy Place, the True Holy Place; of the Sacrifice of which the Priest alone had the privilege. We therefore partake of the Truth [the Reality]. If then we partake not of "*reproach*" [only] but of sanctification, the "*reproach*" is the cause of the sanctification. For as He was reproached, so also are we. If we go forth "*without*" therefore, we have fellowship with Him.

But what is, "*Let us go forth to Him*"? Let us have fellowship with Him in His sufferings; let us bear His reproach. For He did not simply bid us dwell "*outside the gate*," but as He was reproached as a condemned person, so also we.

And "*by Him let us offer a sacrifice to God*." Of what kind of sacrifice does he speak? "*The fruit of lips giving thanks to His Name*." They [the Jews] brought sheep, and calves, and gave them to the Priest: let "*us*" bring none of these things, but thanksgiving. This "*fruit*" let "*our lips*" put forth.

"*For with such sacrifices God is well pleased*." Let us give such a sacrifice to Him, that He may offer [it] to The Father. For in no other way it is offered except through the Son, or rather also through a contrite mind. All these things [are said] for the weak. For that the thanks belong to the Son is evident: since otherwise, how is the honor equal? "*That all men*" (He says) "*should honor the Son even as they honor the Father*." [John 5:23] Wherein is the honor equal? "*The fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name*."

8. Let us bear all things thankfully, be it poverty, be it disease, be it anything else whatever: for He alone knows the things expedient for us. "*For we know not what we should pray for as we ought*." [Romans 8:26] We then who do not know even how to ask for what is fitting, unless we have received of the Spirit, let us take care to offer up thanksgiving for all things, and let us bear all things nobly. Are we in poverty? Let us give

thanks. Are we in sickness? Let us give thanks. Are we falsely accused? Let us give thanks: when we suffer affliction, let us give thanks.

This brings us near to God: then we even have God for our debtor. But when we are in prosperity, it is we who are debtors and liable to be called to account. For when we are in prosperity, we are debtors to God: and oftentimes these things bring a judgment upon us, while those are for a payment of sins. Those [afflictions] draw down mercy, they draw down kindness: while these on the other hand lift up even to an insane pride, and lead also to slothfulness, and dispose a man to fancy great things concerning himself; they puff up. Therefore the prophet also said, *"It is good for me, Lord, that You have afflicted me; that I may learn Your statutes."* [Psalm 119:71] When Hezekiah had received blessings and been freed from calamities, his heart was lifted up on high; when he fell sick, then was he humbled, then he became near to God. *"When He slew them,"* it says, *"then they sought Him diligently, and turned, and were early in coming to God."* [Psalm 78:34] And again, *"When the beloved waxed gross and fat, then he kicked."* [Deuteronomy 32:15] For *"the Lord is known when He executes judgments."* [Psalm 9:16]

9. Affliction is a great good. *"Narrow is the way"* [Matthew 7:14], so that affliction thrusts us into the narrow [way]. He who is not pressed by affliction cannot enter. For he who afflicts himself in the narrow [way], is he who also enjoys ease; but he that spreads himself out, does not enter in, and suffers from being so to say wedged in. See how Paul enters into this narrow way. He *"keeps under"* his *"body"* [1 Corinthians 9:27], so as to be able to enter. Therefore, in all his afflictions, he continued giving thanks unto God. Have you lost your property? This has lightened you of the most of your wideness. Have you fallen from glory? This is another sort of wideness. Have you been falsely accused? Have the things said against you,

of which you are nowise conscious to yourself been believed? *"Rejoice and leap for joy."* For *"blessed are you"* (He says) *"when men reproach you, and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:11-12]

Why do you marvel, if you are grieved, and wish to be set free from temptations? Paul wished to be set free, and oftentimes entreated God, and did not obtain. For the *"thrice for this I besought the Lord,"* is oftentimes; *"and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:8-9] By *"weakness,"* he here means *"afflictions."* What then? When he heard this he received it thankfully, and says, *"Wherefore I take pleasure in infirmities"* [2 Corinthians 12:10]; that is, I am pleased, I rest in my afflictions. For all things then let us give thanks, both for comfort, and for affliction. Let us not murmur: let us not be unthankful. *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, naked also shall I depart."* [Job 1:21] You did not come forth glorious, do not seek glory. You were brought into life naked, not of money alone, but also of glory, and of honorable name.

Consider how great evils have oftentimes arisen from wealth. For *"It is easier"* (it is said) *"for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 19:24] Do you see to how many good things wealth is a hindrance, and do you seek to be rich? Do you not rejoice that the hindrance has been overthrown? So narrow is the way which leads into the Kingdom. So broad is wealth, and full of bulk and swelling out. Therefore He says, *"Sell that you have"* [Matthew 19:21], that that way may receive you. Why do you yearn after wealth? For this cause He took it away from you, that He might free you from slavery. For true fathers also, when a son is corrupted by some mistress, and having given him much exhortation they do not persuade him

to part from her, send the mistress into banishment. Such also is abundance of wealth. Because the Lord cares for us, and delivers us from the harm [which arises] therefrom, He takes away wealth from us.

Let us not then think poverty an evil: sin is the only evil. For neither is wealth a good thing by itself: to be well-pleasing to God is the only good. Poverty then let us seek, this let us pursue: so shall we lay hold on heaven, so shall we attain to the other good things. Which may we all attain by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father together with the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Homily 34 on Hebrews

Hebrews 13:17

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves. For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for this is unprofitable for you."

1. Anarchy is an evil, and the occasion of many calamities, and the source of disorder and confusion. For as, if you take away the leader from a chorus, the chorus will not be in tune and in order; and if from a phalanx of an army thou remove the commander, the evolutions will no longer be made in time and order, and if from a ship thou take away the helmsman, you will sink the vessel; so too if from a flock thou remove the shepherd, you have overthrown and destroyed all.

Anarchy then is an evil, and a cause of ruin. But no less an evil also is the disobedience to rulers. For it comes again to the same. For a people not obeying a ruler, is like one which has none; and perhaps even worse. For in the former case they have at least an excuse for disorder, but no longer in the latter, but are punished.

But perhaps some one will say, there is also a third evil, when the ruler is bad. I myself too know it, and no small evil it is, but even a far worse evil than anarchy. For it is better to be led by no one, than to be led by one who is evil. For the former indeed are oftentimes saved, and oftentimes are in peril, but the latter will be altogether in peril, being led into the pit [of destruction].

How then does Paul say, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves"*? Having said above, *"whose faith follow, considering*

the end of their conversation" [Hebrews ver. 7], he then said, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."*

What then (you say), when he is wicked should we obey?

Wicked? In what sense? If indeed in regard to Faith, flee and avoid him; not only if he be a man, but even if he be an angel come down from Heaven; but if in regard to life, be not over-curious. And this instance I do not allege from my own mind, but from the Divine Scripture. For hear Christ saying, *"The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat."* [Matthew 23:2] Having previously spoken many fearful things concerning them, He then says, *"They sit on Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they tell you observe, do; but do not ye after their works."* [Matthew 23:2-3] They have (He means) the dignity of office, but are of unclean life. Do thou however attend, not to their life, but to their words. For as regards their characters, no one would be harmed [thereby]. How is this? Both because their characters are manifest to all, and also because though he were ten thousand times as wicked, he will never teach what is wicked. But as respects Faith, [the evil] is not manifest to all, and the wicked [ruler] will not shrink from teaching it.

Moreover, *"Judge not that you be not judged"* [Matthew 7:1] concerns life, not faith: surely what follows makes this plain. For *"why"* (He says) *"do you behold the mote that is in your brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in your own eye?"* [Matthew 7:3]

"All things therefore" (He says) *"which they bid you observe, do ye"* (now to *"do"* belongs to works not to Faith) *"but do not ye after their works."* Do you see that [the discourse] is not concerning doctrines, but concerning life and works?

2. Paul however previously commended them, and then says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for*

your souls, as they that shall give account."

Let those who rule also hear, and not only those who are under their rule; that as the subjects ought to be obedient, so also the rulers ought to be watchful and sober. What do you say? He watches; he imperils his own head; he is subject to the punishments of your sins, and for your sake is amenable to what is so fearful, and are you slothful, and affectedly indifferent, and at ease? Therefore he says, *"That they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this is unprofitable for you."*

Do you see that the despised ruler ought not to avenge himself, but his great revenge is to weep and lament? For neither is it possible for the physician, despised by his patient, to avenge himself, but to weep and lament. But if [the ruler] lament (he means), God inflicts vengeance on you. For if when we lament for our own sins we draw God to us, shall we not much rather [do this], when we lament for the arrogance and scornfulness of others? Do you see that he does not suffer him to be led on to reproaches? Do you see how great is his philosophy? He ought to lament who is despised, is trodden under foot, is spit upon.

Be not confident because he does not avenge himself on you, for lamenting is worse than any revenge. For when of himself he profits nothing by lamenting, he calls on the Lord: and as in the case of a teacher and nurse, when the child does not listen to him, one is called in who will treat him more severely, so also in this case.

3. Oh! How great the danger! What should one say to those wretched men, who throw themselves upon so great an abyss of punishments? You have to give account of all over whom you rule, women and children and men; into so great a fire do you put your head. I marvel if any of the rulers can be saved, when in the face of such a threat, and of the present

indifference, I see some still even running on, and casting themselves upon so great a burden of authority.

For if they who are dragged by force have no refuge or defense, if they discharge duty ill and are negligent; since even Aaron was dragged by force, and yet was imperiled; and Moses again was imperiled, although he had oftentimes declined; and Saul having been entrusted with another kind of rule, after he had declined it, was in peril, because he managed it amiss; how much more they who take so great pains to obtain it, and cast themselves upon it? Such an one much more deprives himself of all excuse. For men ought to fear and to tremble, both because of conscience, and because of the burden of the office; and neither when dragged to it should they once for all decline, nor, when not dragged cast themselves upon it, but should even flee, foreseeing the greatness of the dignity; and when they have been seized, they ought again to show their godly fear. Let there be nothing out of measure. If you have perceived it beforehand, retire; convince yourself that you are unworthy of the office. Again, if you have been seized, in like manner be thou reverential, always showing rightmindedness.

Hebrews 13:18

4. *"Pray for us" (he says); "for we trust we have a good conscience among all, willing to live honestly."*

You see that he used these apologies, as writing to persons grieved with him, as to those who turned away, who were disposed as towards a transgressor, not enduring even to hear his name? Inasmuch then as he asked from those who hated him what all others ask from those who love them [their prayers for him], therefore he here introduces this; saying, *"We trust that we have a good conscience."* For do not tell me of accusations; our conscience, he says, in nothing hurts us; nor are we conscious to ourselves that we have plotted against you. *"For we trust,"* he says, *"that we have a good conscience among all,"* not among the Gentiles only, but also among you. We have done nothing with deceitfulness, nothing with hypocrisy: for it was probable that these [calumnies] were reported respecting him. *"For they have been informed concerning you"* (it is said) *"that you teach apostasy."* [Acts 21:21] Not as an enemy, he means, nor as an adversary I write these things, but as a friend. And this he shows also by what follows.

Hebrews 13:19

"But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner." His thus praying was [the act] of one who loved them greatly, and that not simply, but with all earnestness, that so, he says, I may come to you speedily. The earnest desire to come to them is [the mark] of one conscious to himself of nothing [wrong], also the entreating them to pray for him.

Therefore having first asked their prayers, he then himself also prays for all good things on them.

Hebrews 13:20-21

"Now the God of peace," he says (be ye not therefore at variance one with another), "that brought again from the earth the Shepherd of the sheep" [Hebrews 13:20] (this is said concerning the resurrection) "the Great [Shepherd]" (another addition: here again he confirms to them even to the end, his discourse concerning the Resurrection) "through the blood of the everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ," [Hebrews 13:21] "make you perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight."

Again he bears high testimony to them. For that is made *"perfect"* which having a beginning is afterwards completed. And he prays for them which is the act of one who yearns for them. And while in the other Epistles, he prays in the prefaces, here he does it at the end. *"Working in you,"* he says, *"that which is well-pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

Hebrews 13:22-23

5. *"And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation, for indeed I have written a letter unto you in few words."* Do you see that what he wrote to no one [else], he writes to them? For (he means) I do not even trouble you with long discourse.

I suppose that they were not at all unfavorably disposed towards Timothy: wherefore he also put him forward. For [Hebrews 13:23] *"know ye,"* he says, *"that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you."* *"Set at liberty,"* he says; from whence? I suppose he had been cast into prison: or if not this, that he was sent away from Athens. For this also is mentioned in the Acts.

Hebrews 13:24-25

"Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen."

6. Seest thou how he shows that virtue is born neither wholly from God, nor yet from ourselves alone? First by saying, *"make you perfect in every good work"*; You have virtue indeed, he means, but need to be made complete. What is *"good work and word"*? So as to have both life and doctrines right. *"According to His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight."*

"In His sight," he says. For this is the highest virtue, to do that which is well-pleasing in the sight of God, as the Prophet also says, *"And according to the cleanness of my hands in His eye-sight."* [Psalm 18:24]

And having written thus much, he said this was little, in comparison with what he was going to say. As he says also in another place, *"As I wrote to you in few words: whereby when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ."* [Ephesians 3:3-4]

And observe his wisdom. He says not, *"I beseech you, suffer the word of"* admonition, but *"the word of exhortation,"* that is, of consolation, of encouragement. No one, he means, can be wearied at the length of what has been said (Did this then make them turn away from him? By no means: he does not indeed wish to express this): that is, even if you be of little spirit, for it is the peculiarity of such persons not to endure a long discourse.

"Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom if he come shortly I will see you." This is enough to persuade them to submit themselves, if he is ready to come with his disciple.

"Salute them that have the rule over you, and all the saints." See how he honored them, since he wrote to them instead of to those [their rulers].

"They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen." Which was for them all in common.

But how does *"Grace"* come to be *"with"* us? If we do not do despite to the benefit, if we do not become indolent in regard to the Gift. And what is *"the grace"*? Remission of sins, Cleansing: this is *"with"* us. For who (he means) can keep the Grace despitefully, and not destroy it? For instance; He freely forgave you your sins. How then shall the *"Grace be with"* you, whether it be the good favor or the effectual working of the Spirit? If you draw it to you by good deeds. For the cause of all good things is this, the continual abiding with us of the *"grace"* of the Spirit. For this guides us to all [good things], just as when it flies away from us, it ruins us, and leaves us desolate.

7. Let us not then drive it from us. For on ourselves depends, both its remaining, and its departing. For the one results, when we mind heavenly things; the other, when [we mind] the things of this life. *"Which the world"* (He says) *"cannot receive because it sees Him not, neither knows Him."* [John 14:17] Do you see that a worldly soul cannot have Him? We need great earnestness that so there He may be held fast by us, so as to direct all our affairs, and do them in security, and in much peace.

For as a ship sailing with favorable winds is neither to be hindered nor sunk, so long as it enjoys a prosperous and steady breeze, but also causes great admiration according to the march of its progress both to the mariners, and to the passengers, giving rest to the one, and not forcing them to toil on at their oars, and setting the others free from all fear, and giving them the most delightful view of her course; so too a soul strengthened by the Divine Spirit, is far above all the billows of this life, and more strongly than the

ship, cuts the way bearing on to Heaven, since it is not sent along by wind, but has all the pure sails filled by the Paraclete Himself: and He casts out of our minds all that is slackened and relaxed.

For as the wind if it fall upon a slackened sail, would have no effect; so neither does the Spirit endure to continue in a slack soul; but there is need of much tension, of much vehemence, so that our mind may be on fire, and our conduct under all circumstances on the stretch, and braced up. For instance when we pray, we ought to do it with much intentness, stretching forth the soul toward Heaven, not with cords, but with great earnestness. Again when we do works of mercy, we have need of intentness, lest by any means, thought for our household, and care for children, and anxiety about wife, and fear of poverty entering in, should slacken our sail. For if we put it on the stretch on all sides by the hope of the things to come, it receives well the energy of the Spirit; and none of those perishable and wretched things will fall upon it, yea, and if any of them should fall, it does it no harm, but is quickly thrown back by the tightness, and is shaken off and fails down.

Therefore we have need of much intentness. For we too are sailing over a great and wide sea, full of many monsters, and of many rocks, and bringing forth for us many storms, and from the midst of serene weather raising up a most violent tempest. It is necessary then if we would sail with ease, and without danger, to stretch the sails, that is, our determination: for this is sufficient for us. For Abraham also, when he had stretched forth his affections towards God and set before Him his fixed resolution, what else had he need of? Nothing: but *"he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."* [Genesis 15:6] But Faith [comes] of a sincere will. He offered up his son, and though he did not slay him, he received a

recompense as if he had slain him, and though the work was not done the reward was given.

Let our sails then be in good order, not grown old (for everything "*that is decayed and waxen old is near to vanishing away*") [Hebrews 8:13], not worn into holes, that so they may bear the energy of the Spirit . "*For the natural man,*" it is said, "*receives not the things of the Spirit.*" [1 Corinthians 2:14] For as the webs of spiders could not receive a blast of wind, so neither will the soul devoted to this life, nor the natural man ever be able to receive the grace of the Spirit: for our reasonings differ nothing from them, preserving a connection in appearance only but destitute of all power.

8. Our condition, however, is not such, if we are watchful: but whatever may fall upon [the Christian], he bears all, and is above all, stronger than any whirlpool. For suppose there be a spiritual man, and that innumerable calamities befall him, yet is he overcome by none of them. And what do I say? Let poverty come upon him, disease, insults, revilings, mockings, stripes, every sort of infliction, every sort of mocking, and slanders, and insults: yet, as though he were outside the world, and set free from the feelings of the body, so will he laugh all to scorn.

And that my words are not mere boasting, I think many [such] exist even now; for instance, of those who have embraced the life of the desert. This however, you say, is nothing wonderful. But I say that of those also who live in cities, there are such men unsuspected. If you wish however, I shall be able to exhibit some among those of old. And that you may learn, consider Paul, I pray you. What is there fearful that he did not suffer, and that he did not submit to? But he bore all nobly. Let us imitate him, for so shall we be able to land in the tranquil havens with much merchandise.

Let us then stretch our mind towards Heaven, let us be held fast by that desire, let us clothe ourselves with spiritual fire, let us gird ourselves with its flame. No man who bears flame fears those who meet him; be it wild beast, be it man, be it snares innumerable, so long as he is armed with fire, all things stand out of his way, all things retire. The flame is intolerable, the fire cannot be endured, it consumes all.

With this fire let us clothe ourselves, offering up glory to our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, honor, now and ever and world without end. Amen.

Thanks be to God.

Homily 2 on the Statues

Spoken in Antioch in the Old Church, as it was called, while he was a presbyter, on the subject of the calamity that had befallen the city in consequence of the tumult connected with the overthrow of the Statues of the Emperor Theodosius, the Great and Pious. And on the saying of the Apostle, "Charge them that are rich that they be not high-minded," 1 Timothy 6:17 . And against covetousness.

1. What shall I say, or what shall I speak of? The present season is one for tears, and not for words; for lamentation, not for discourse; for prayer, not for preaching. Such is the magnitude of the deeds daringly done; so incurable is the wound, so deep the blow, even beyond the power of all treatment, and craving assistance from above. Thus it was that Job, when he had lost all, sat himself down upon a dunghill; and his friends heard of it, and came, and seeing him, while yet afar off, they rent their garments, and sprinkled themselves with ashes, and made great lamentation. [Job 2:8, 12] The same thing now ought all the cities around to do, to come to our city and to lament with all sympathy what has befallen us. He then sat down on his dunghill; she is now seated in the midst of a great snare. For even as the devil then leaped violently the flocks, and herds, and all the substance of the just man, so now has he raged against this whole city. But then, as well as now, God permitted it; then, indeed, that he might make the just man more illustrious by the greatness of his trials; and now, that he may make us more sober-minded by the extremity of this tribulation. Allow me to mourn over our present state. We have been silent seven days, even as the friends of Job were. [Job 2:13] Allow me to open my mouth today, and to bewail this common calamity.

2. Who, beloved, has bewitched us? Who has envied us? Whence has all this change come over us? Nothing was more dignified than our city! Now, never was anything more pitiable! The populace so well ordered and quiet, yea, even like a tractable and well tamed steed, always submissive to the hands of its rulers, has now so suddenly started off with us, as to have wrought such evils, as one can hardly dare to mention.

I mourn now and lament, not for the greatness of that wrath which is to be expected, but for the extravagance of the frenzy which has been manifested! For although the Emperor should not be provoked, or in anger, although he were neither to punish, nor take vengeance; how, I pray, are we to bear the shame of all that has been done? I find the word of instruction broken off by lamentation; scarcely am I able to open my mouth, to part my lips, to move my tongue, or to utter a syllable! So, even like a curb, the weight of grief checks my tongue, and keeps back what I would say.

3. Aforetime there was nothing happier than our city; nothing more melancholy than it is now become. As bees buzzing around their hive, so before this the inhabitants every day flitted about the forum, and all pronounced us happy in being so numerous. But behold now, this hive has become solitary! For even as smoke does those bees, so fear has driven away our swarms; and what the prophet says, bewailing Jerusalem, we may fitly say now, *"Our city has become 'like a terebinth that has lost its leaves, and as a garden that has no water.'"* [Isaiah 1:30] For in like manner as a garden when its irrigation fails, exhibits the trees stripped of their leaves, and bare of their fruits, so has it now fared with our city. For the help from above having forsaken her, she stands desolate stripped of almost all her inhabitants.

4. Nothing is sweeter than one's own country; but now, it has come to pass that nothing is more bitter! All flee from the place which brought them

forth, as from a snare. They desert it as they would a dungeon; they leap out of it, as from a fire. And just as when a house is seized upon by the flames, not only those who dwell therein, but all who are near, take their flight from it with the utmost haste, eager to save but their bare bodies; even so now too, when the wrath of the Emperor is expected to come as a fire from above, every one presses to go forth in time, and to save the bare body, before the fire in its progress reaches them. And now our calamity has become an enigma; a flight without enemies; an expulsion of inhabitants without a battle; a captivity without capture! We have not seen the fire of barbarians, nor beheld the face of enemies: and yet we experience the sufferings of captives. All men now hear of our calamities; for receiving our exiles, they learn from them the stroke which has fallen upon our city.

5. Yet I am not ashamed, nor blush at this. Let all men learn the sufferings of the city, that, sympathizing with their mother, they may lift up their united voice to God from the whole earth; and with one consent entreat the King of heaven for their universal nurse and parent. Lately our city was shaken; but now the very souls of the inhabitants totter! Then the foundations of the houses shook, but now the very foundations of every heart quiver; and we all see death daily before our eyes! We live in constant terror, and endure the penalty of Cain; a more pitiable one than that of those who were the former inmates of the prison; undergoing as we now do a new and strange kind of siege, far more terrible than the ordinary kind. For they who suffer this from enemies, are only shut up within the walls; but even the forum has become impassable to us, and every one is pent up within the walls of his own house! And as it is not safe for those who are besieged to go beyond the walls, while the enemy without is encamped around; so neither, to many of those who inhabit this city, is it safe to go out of doors, or to appear openly; on account of those who are everywhere hunting for

the innocent as well as the guilty; and seizing them even in the midst of the forum, and dragging them to the court of justice, without ceremony, and just as chance directs. For this reason, free-men sit in doors shackled up with their domestics; anxiously and minutely enquiring of those to whom they may safely put the question, *"Who has been seized today; who carried off; or punished? How was it? And in what manner?"* They live a life more wretched than any kind of death; being compelled daily to mourn the calamities of others; while they tremble for their own safety, and are in no better case than the dead; inasmuch as they are already dead with fear.

6. But if any one who is devoid of this fear and anguish, chooses to enter the forum, he is presently driven back to his own dwelling, by the cheerless spectacle; finding hardly perchance one or two people, and those hanging their heads and creeping about with downcast looks, where but a few days before the multitude swept along more incessantly than the streams of rivers. Yet all these have now been driven away from us! And, as when many trees in a thick wood of oak are cut down in all directions, the spectacle becomes a melancholy one, even like that of a head with many patches of baldness; even so the city itself, its inhabitants being diminished and but few appearing here and there, is now become dreary, and sheds a heavy mist of sorrow over those who witness it. And not the ground only, but the very nature of the air, and even the circle of the sun's beams, seem now to me to look mournful, and to shine more dimly; not that the elements change their nature, but that our eyes being confused by the cloud of sadness, are unable to receive the light of the rays clearly, or with the same relish. This is what the prophet of old bewailed, when he said, *"The sun shall go down at noon, and the day shall be darkened."* [Amos 8:9] And this he said, not as though the Day Star should be eclipsed, or the day should disappear, but because those who are in sorrow, are not able to

perceive the light even of noon day on account of the darkness of their anguish; which indeed has been the case now. And wherever any one looks abroad, whether upon the ground or upon the walls; whether upon the columns of the city, or upon his neighbours, he seems to see night and deep gloom; so full is all of melancholy! There is a silence big with horror, and loneliness everywhere; and that dear hum of the multitude is stifled; and even as though all had gone beneath the earth, so speechlessness has now taken possession of the city; and all men seem like stones, and being oppressed by the calamity like a gag on their tongues; they maintain the profoundest silence, yea, such a silence as if enemies had come on them, and had consumed them all at once by fire and sword!

7. Now is it a fit season to say, *"Call for the mourning women, that they may come, and for the cunning women, and let them take up a wailing. Let your eyes run down with water, and your eyelids gush out with tears."* [Jeremiah 9:17-18] You hills take up wailing, and you mountains lamentation! Let us call the whole creation into sympathy with our evils. So great a city, and the head of those which lie under the eastern sky, is in danger of being torn away from the midst of the civilized world! She that had so many children, has now suddenly become childless, and there is no one who shall come to her aid! For he who has been insulted has not an equal in dignity upon earth; for he is a monarch; the summit and head of all here below! On this account then let us take refuge in the King that is above. Him let us call in to our aid. If we may not obtain the favour of heaven, there is no consolation left for what has befallen us!

8. Here I could wish to end this discourse; for the minds of those who are in anguish are indisposed to extend their discourses to a great length. And as when some dense cloud has formed, and flying under the solar rays, returns back to him all his splendour again, so indeed does the cloud of

sadness, when it stands before our souls, refuse to admit an easy passage for the word, but chokes it and restrains it forcibly within. And this is the case not only with those who speak, but with those who hear; for as it does not suffer the word to burst forth freely from the soul of the speaker, so neither does it suffer it to sink into the mind of those who listen, with its natural power. Therefore also the Jews of old time, while slaving at the mud and bricks, had not the heart to listen to Moses, while he repeatedly told them great things respecting their future deliverance; despondency making their minds inaccessible to the address, and shutting up their sense of hearing. I could have wished then, as to myself, to have put an end here to my discourse; but thinking that it is not only the nature of a cloud to intercept the forward passage of the sun's rays, but that often just the opposite happens to the cloud; since the sun continually falling upon it with much warmth, wears it away, and frequently breaks through the midst of it; and shining forth all at once, meets cheerfully the gaze of the beholders. This also I myself expect to do this day; and the word being continually associated with your minds, and dwelling in them, I hope to burst the cloud of sadness, and to shine through your understandings again, with the customary instruction!

9. But afford me your attention! Lend me your ears awhile! Shake off this despondency! Let us return to our former custom; and as we have been used always to meet here with gladness, so let us also do now, casting all upon God. And this will contribute towards our actual deliverance from calamity. For should the Lord see that His words are listened to carefully; and that our love of divine wisdom stands the trial of the difficulty of these times, He will quickly take us up again, and will make out of the present tempest a calm and happy change. For this too is a thing in which it behooves the Christian to differ from the unbelievers, the bearing all things

nobly; and through hope of the future, soaring above the attack of human evils. The believer has his stand on the Rock; for this reason he cannot be overthrown by the dashing of the billows. For should the waves of temptation rise, they cannot reach to his feet. He stands too lofty for any such assault. Let us not then sink down, beloved! We do not care so much for our own safety, as God who made us. There is not so much solicitude on our part, lest we suffer any dreadful misfortune, as with Him who bestowed upon us a soul, and then gave us so many good things beside. Let us mount on the wings of these hopes, and hear the things about to be spoken with our accustomed readiness.

10. I made a prolonged discourse lately unto you beloved, and yet I saw all following it up, and no one turning back in the middle of the course. I return thanks to you for that readiness, and have received the reward of my labours. But there was another reward, besides that attention, which I asked of you at that time; perchance you know and recollect it. And what was the reward? That you should punish and chastise the blasphemers that were in the city; that you should restrain those who are violent and insolent against God! I do not think that I then spoke these things of myself; but that God, foreseeing what was coming, injected these words into my mind; for if we had punished those who dared to do such things, that which has now happened would never have happened. How much better would it have been, if necessity so required, to run into danger; yea, to suffer in castigating and correcting such persons (which would have brought us a martyr's crown), than now to fear, to tremble, and to expect death, from the insubordination of such persons! Behold, the crime was that of a few, but the blame comes on all! Behold, through these, we are all now placed in fear, and are ourselves suffering the punishment of what these men dared to do! But if we had taken them in time, and cast them out of the city, and

chastised them, and corrected the sick member, we should not have been subjected to our present terror. I know that the manners of this city have been of a noble character from old times; but that certain strangers, and men of mixed race—accursed and pernicious characters—hopeless of their own safety, have perpetrated what has been perpetrated. For this very reason I was always lifting up my voice, and unceasingly bearing my testimony, saying, Let us punish the madness of those blasphemers—let us control their spirit, and provide for their salvation—yea, though it be necessary to die in doing it, the deed would yet bring us great gain: let us not overlook the insult done to our common Lord; overlooking such things will bring forth some great evil to our city!

11. These things I foretold, and they have now actually taken place—and we are paying the penalty of that listlessness! You overlooked the insult that was done unto God!— Behold, he has permitted the Emperor to be insulted, and peril to the utmost to hang over all, in order that we might pay by this fear the penalty of that listlessness; was it then vainly, and to no purpose I foretold these things, and assiduously urged your Charity? But nevertheless, nothing was done. Let it, however, be done now; and being chastened by our present calamity, let us now restrain the disorderly madness of these men. Let us shut up their mouths, even as we close up pestiferous fountains; and let us turn them to a contrary course, and the evils which have taken hold of the city shall undoubtedly be stayed. The Church is not a theatre, that we should listen for amusement. With profit ought we to depart hence, and some fresh and great gain should we acquire ere we leave this place. For it is but vainly and irrationally we meet together, if we have been but captivated for a time, and return home empty, and void of all improvement from the things spoken.

12. What need have I of these plaudits, these cheers and tumultuous signs of approval? The praise I seek, is that you show forth all I have said in your works. Then am I an enviable and happy man, not when you approve, but when you perform with all readiness, whatsoever ye hear from me? Let every one then correct his neighbour, for *"edify ye one another,"* [1 Thessalonians 5:11] it is said, and if we do not this, the crimes of each one will bring some general and intolerable damage to the city. Behold, while we are unconscious of any part in this transaction, we are no less affrighted than those who were daringly engaged in it! We are dreading lest the wrath of the Emperor should descend upon all; and it is not sufficient for us to say in defence, *"I was not present; I was not an accomplice, nor a participator in these acts."* *"For this reason,"* he may reply, *"you shall be punished, and pay the extreme penalty, because thou were not present; and did not check, nor restrain the rioters, and did not run any risk for the honour of the Emperor! Had you no part in these audacious deeds? I commend this, and take it well. But thou did not check these things when being done. This is a cause of accusation!"* Such words as these, we shall also hear from God, if we silently suffer the continuance of the injuries and insults committed against Him. For he also who had buried his talent in the earth, was called to account, not for crimes done by himself, for he had given back the whole of that which was entrusted to him, but because he had not increased it; because he had not instructed others; because he had not deposited it in the hands of the bankers; that is, he had not admonished, or counselled, or rebuked, or amended those unruly sinners who were his neighbours. On this account he was sent away without reprieve to those intolerable punishments! But I fully trust that though ye did not before, you will now at least perform this work of correction, and not overlook insult committed against God. For the events which have taken place are

sufficient, even if no one had given any warning, to convince men ever so disposed to be insensible, that they must exert themselves for their own safety.

13. But it is now time that we should proceed to lay out before you the customary table from St. Paul, by handling the subject of this day's reading, and placing it in view for you all. What then was the text read today?

"Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded."

[1 Timothy 6:17] When he says, *"the rich in this world,"* he makes it manifest, that there are others who are rich, that is, in the world to come: such as was that Lazarus, poor as to the present life, but rich as to the future; not in gold and silver, and such like perishable and transitory store of wealth; but in those unutterable good things *"which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man."* [1 Corinthians 2:9] For this is true wealth and opulence, when there is good unmixed, and not subject to any change. Not such was the case of that rich man who despised him, but he became the poorest of mankind. Afterwards at least when he sought to obtain but a drop of water, he did not get possession even of that, to such extreme poverty was he come. For this reason he calls them rich *"in the present world,"* to teach you that along with the present life, worldly wealth is annihilated. It goes no further, neither does it change its place with its migrating possessors, but it often leaves them before their end; which therefore he shows by saying, *"Neither trust in uncertain riches;"* for nothing is so faithless as wealth; of which I have often said, and will not cease to say, that it is a runaway, thankless servant, having no fidelity; and should you throw over him ten thousand chains, he will make off dragging his chains after him. Frequently, indeed, have those who possessed him shut him up with bars and doors, placing their slaves round about for guards. But he has over-persuaded these very servants, and has fled away together with

his guards; dragging his keepers after him like a chain, so little security was there in this custody. What then can be more faithless than this? What more wretched than men devoted to it? When men endeavour with all eagerness to collect so frail and fleeting a thing, they do not hear what the prophet says: *"Woe unto them who trust in their power, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches."* Tell me why is this woe pronounced?— *"He heaps up treasure,"* says he, *"and knows not for whom he will gather it,"* — forasmuch as the labor is certain, but the enjoyment uncertain. Very often you toil and endure trouble for enemies. The inheritance of your wealth after your decease, coming as it does, in many instances, to those who have injured you, and plotted against you in a thousand ways, has assigned you the sins for your part, but the enjoyment to others!

14. But here, it is worthy of enquiry, for what reason he does not say, *"Charge those who are rich in the present world, not to be rich; charge them to become poor; charge them to get rid of what they have;"* but, *"charge them, not to be high-minded."* For he knew that the root and foundation of riches is pride; and that if any man understood how to be unassuming, he would not make much ado about the matter. Tell me, indeed, for what reason you lead about so many servants, parasites, and flatterers, and all the other forms of pomp? Not for necessity, but only for pride; to the end that by these you may seem more dignified than other men! Besides, he knew that wealth is not forbidden if it be used for that which is necessary. For as I observed, wine is not a bad thing, but drunkenness is so. A covetous man is one thing, and a rich man is another thing. The covetous man is not rich; he is in want of many things, and while he needs many things, he can never be rich. The covetous man is a keeper, not a master, of wealth; a slave, not a lord. For he would sooner give any one a portion of his flesh, than his buried gold. And as though he were

ordered and compelled of some one to touch nothing of these hidden treasures, so with all earnestness he watches and keeps them, abstaining from his own, as if it were another's. And certainly, they are not his own. For what he can neither determine to bestow upon others, nor to distribute to the necessitous, although he may sustain infinite punishments, how can he possibly account his own? How does he hold possession of those things, of which he has neither the free use, nor enjoyment? But besides this—Paul is not accustomed to enjoin everything on every man, but accommodates himself to the weakness of his hearers, even, indeed, as Christ also did. For when that rich man came to him, and asked him concerning Life, he did not say at once, "*Go, sell that you have,*" [Matthew 19:16] but omitting this, he spoke to him of other commandments. Nor afterwards, when he challenged Him and said, "*What lack I yet?*" did He simply say, "*Sell what you have;*" but, "*If you will be perfect, go and sell that you have.*" [Matthew 19:21] "*I lay it down for your determination. I give you full power to choose. I do not lay upon you any necessity.*" For this reason also, Paul spoke nothing to the rich concerning poverty, but concerning humility; as well because of the weakness of his hearers, as because he perfectly knew, that could he bring them to exercise moderation, and to be free from pride, he should also quickly free them from eagerness about being rich.

15. And further, after giving this admonition, "*not to be high-minded,*" he also taught the manner in which they would be able to avoid being so. And how was it? That they should consider the nature of wealth, how uncertain and faithless it is! Therefore he goes on to say, "*Neither trust in uncertain riches.*" The rich man is not one who is in possession of much, but one who gives much. Abraham was rich, but he was not covetous; for he turned not his thoughts to the house of this man, nor prayed into the wealth of that man; but going forth he looked around wherever there

chanced to be a stranger, or a poor man, in order that he might succour poverty, and hospitably entertain the traveller. He covered not his roof with gold, but fixing his tent near the oak, he was contented with the shadow of its leaves. Yet so illustrious was his lodging, that angels were not ashamed to tarry with him; for they sought not splendour of abode, but virtue of soul. This man then let us imitate, beloved, and bestow what we have upon the needy. That lodging was rudely prepared, but it was more illustrious than the halls of kings. No king has ever entertained angels; but he, dwelling under that oak, and having but pitched a tent, was thought worthy of that honour: not receiving the honour on account of the meanness of his dwelling, but enjoying that benefit on account of the magnificence of his soul, and the wealth therein deposited.

16. Let us too, then, adorn not our houses, but our souls in preference to the house. For is it not disgraceful to clothe our walls with marble, vainly and to no end, and to neglect Christ going about naked? What does your house profit you, O man! For will you take it with you when you depart? This you can not take with you, when you depart. But your soul, when you depart, you shall assuredly take with you! Behold now this great danger has overtaken us! Let your houses stand by you! Let them deliver you from the threatened peril! But they cannot! And ye yourselves are witnesses, who are leaving them solitary, and hurrying forth to the wilderness; fearing them as you would do snares and nets! Let riches now lend assistance! But it is no time for them to do so! If then the power of riches is found wanting before the wrath of man, much rather will this be the case, before the divine and inexorable tribunal! If it is but a man that is provoked and offended, and even now gold is of no avail, much more will the power of money be utterly impotent then, when God is angry, who has no need of wealth! We build houses that we may have a habitation; not that we may make an ambitious

display. What is beyond our wants, is superfluous and useless. Put on a sandal which is larger than your foot! You will not endure it; for it is a hindrance to the step. Thus also a house larger than necessity requires, is an impediment to your progress towards heaven. Do you wish to build large and splendid houses? I forbid it not; but let it be not upon the earth! Build yourself tabernacles in heaven, and such that you may be able to receive others; — tabernacles which never fall to pieces. Why are you mad about fleeting things; and things that must be left here? Nothing is more slippery than wealth. Today it is for you; tomorrow it is against you. It arms the eyes of the envious everywhere. It is a hostile comrade, a domestic enemy; and you are witnesses of this, who possess it, and are in every way burying and concealing it from view; as even now too our very wealth makes the danger more insupportable to us! You see indeed the poor ready for action, disengaged, and prepared for all things; but the wealthy in great perplexity, and wandering about, seeking where they may bury their gold, or seeking with whom they may deposit it! Why, O man, do you seek your fellow slaves? Christ stands ready to receive, and to keep your deposits for you; and not to keep only, but also to augment them, and to pay them back with much interest. Out of His hand no man can forcibly take them away. And He not only keeps the deposit, but for this very thing He also frees you from your perils. For among men, they who receive treasures in trust think that they have done us a favour, in keeping that of which they took charge; but with Christ it is the contrary; for He does not say that He has conferred, but that He has received a favour, when He receives your deposited treasures; and for the guardianship which He exercises over your wealth, He does not demand a recompense of you, but gives you a recompense!

17. What defence then can we claim, or what excuse, when we pass by Him who is able to keep, and who is thankful for the trust giving in return

great and unspeakable rewards, and in place of this guardianship commit our treasures to men who have not the power to keep them, and who think they grant us a favour, and pay us back at last only that which was given them. You are a stranger and a pilgrim with respect to the things here! You have a country which is your own in the heavens! There transfer all—that before the actual enjoyment, you may enjoy the recompense here. He who is nourished with good hopes, and is confident respecting things to come, has here already tasted of the kingdom! For nothing ordinarily so repairs the soul, and makes a man better, as a good hope of things to come; so that if you transfer your wealth there, you may then provide for your soul with suitable leisure. For they who spend all their endeavours upon the decoration of their dwelling, rich as they are in outward things, are careless of that which is within, letting their soul abide desolate and squalid, and full of cobwebs. But if they would be indifferent to exterior things, and earnestly expend all their attention upon the mind, adorning this at all points; then the soul of such men would be a resting place for Christ. And having Christ for its inhabitant, what could ever be more blessed? Would you be rich? Have God for your friend, and you shall be richer than all men!— Would you be rich? Be not high-minded!— This rule is suitable not only to things future, but to things present. For there is no such object of envy, as a man of wealth; but when pride is super-added, a two-fold precipice is formed; the war becomes fiercer on all sides. But if you know how to exercise moderation, you undermine the tyranny of envy by your humility; and you possess whatever you do possess with safety. For such is the nature of virtue, that it not only profits us, as it respects futurity, but it also here bestows a present reward.

18. Let us not then be high-minded in reference to riches, or indeed to any other thing; for if even in spiritual things the man who is high-minded

is fallen, and undone, much more so as to carnal things. Let us be mindful of our nature. Let us recollect our sins. Let us understand what we are; and this will provide a sufficient groundwork for complete humility. Tell me not, *"I have laid up the revenues of this or that number of years; myriads of talents of gold; gains that are increasing every day."* Say as much as you will, you say all in vain, and to no purpose. Very often in one hour, yea, in one short moment, just as the light dust, when the wind rushes down upon it from above, are all these things swept out of the house by a blast. Our life is full of such examples, and the Scriptures abound with lessons of this sort. He who is rich today, is poor tomorrow. Wherefore, I have often smiled, when reading wills that said, let such a man have the ownership of these fields, or of this house, and another the use thereof. For we all have the use, but no man has the ownership. For although riches may remain with us all our lifetime, undergoing no change, we must transfer them in the end, whether we will or no, into the hands of others; having enjoyed only the use of them, and departing to another life naked and destitute of this ownership! Whence it is plain, that they only have the ownership of property, who have despised its use, and derided its enjoyment. For the man that has cast his substance away from him, and bestowed it on the poor, he uses it as he ought; and takes with him the ownership of these things when he departs, not being stripped of the possession even in death, but at that time receiving all back again; yea, and much more than these things, at that day of judgment, when he most needs their protection, and when we shall all have to render up an account of the deeds we have done. So that if any one wishes to have the possession of his riches, and the use and the ownership entire, let him disencumber himself from them all; since, truly, he who does not this must at all events be separated from them at death; and frequently

before his death will lose them, in the midst of dangers and innumerable ills.

19. And this is not the only disaster, that the change comes suddenly; but that the rich man comes unpractised to the endurance of poverty. But not so the poor man; for he confides not in gold and silver, which are lifeless matter, but in *"God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy."* So that the rich man stands in more uncertainty than the poor man, experiencing, as he does, frequent and diversified changes. What is the sense of this? *"Who gives to us all things richly to enjoy."* [1 Timothy 6:17] God gives all those things with liberality, which are more necessary than riches; such, for example, as the air, the water, the fire, the sun; all things of this kind. The rich man is not able to say that he enjoys more of the sunbeams than the poor man; he is not able to say that he breathes more plenteous air: but all these are offered alike to all. And wherefore, one may say, is it the greater and more necessary blessings, and those which maintain our life, that God has made common; but the smaller and less valuable (I speak of money) are not thus common. Why is this? In order that our life might be disciplined, and that we might have training ground for virtue. For if these necessities were not common, perhaps they who are rich, practising their usual covetousness, would strangle those who were poor. For if they do this for the sake of money, much rather would they do so for the things referred to. Again, if money was also an universal possession, and were offered in the same manner to all, the occasion for almsgiving, and the opportunity for benevolence, would be taken away.

20. That we may live then securely, the sources of our existence have been made common. On the other hand, to the end that we may have an opportunity of gaining crowns and good report, property has not been made common; in order that hating covetousness, and following after

righteousness, and freely bestowing our goods upon the poor, we may by this method obtain a certain kind of relief for our sins. God has made you rich, why makest you yourself poor? He has made you rich that you may assist the needy; that you may have release of your own sins, by liberality to others. He has given you money, not that you may shut it up for your destruction, but that you may pour it forth for your salvation. For this reason also He has made the possession of riches uncertain and unstable, that by this means he might slack the intensity of your madness concerning it. For if its possessors, even now while they can have no confidence in regard to it, but behold a multitude of snares produced from this quarter, are so inflamed with the desire of these things; if the elements of security and stability were added to wealth, whom would they have spared? From whom would they have refrained? From what widows? From what orphans? From what poor?

21. Wherefore let us not consider riches to be a great good; for the great good is, not to possess money, but to possess the fear of God and all manner of piety. Behold, now if there were any righteous man here, having great boldness toward God, notwithstanding he might be the poorest of mortals, he would be sufficient to liberate us from present evils! For he only needed to spread forth his hands towards heaven, and to call upon God, and this cloud would pass away! But now gold is treasured up in abundance; and yet it is more useless than mere clay for the purpose of deliverance from the impending calamities! Nor is it only in a peril of this kind; but should disease or death, or any such evil befall us, the impotency of wealth is fully proved, since it is at a loss, and has no consolation of its own to offer us amidst these events.

22. There is one thing in which wealth seems to have an advantage over poverty, viz. that it lives in a state of daily luxury, and is supplied with

an abundance of pleasure in its banquets. This however may also be seen exemplified at the table of the poor; and these enjoy there a pleasure superior to that of the rich. And marvel not at this, nor think what I say a paradox; for I will make the matter clear to you from the evidence of facts. You know of course, and you all confess that in feasts it is not the nature of the viands, but the disposition of those who feast upon them, which usually causes the pleasure; for instance, when any one comes to the table hungry, the food will taste sweeter than any delicacy, or condiment, or a thousand exquisite preparations for the palate, although it may be the most common article of diet. But he who without tarrying for necessity, or first waiting till he is hungry, (as the custom is with the wealthy), when he comes to the table, notwithstanding he finds the most refined dainties spread before him, has no sensation of pleasure, his appetite not being previously excited. And that you may learn that this is the actual state of the case, besides that you are all witnesses to it, let us hear the Scripture telling us the same truth; *"The full soul,"* it is said, *"loaths the honey comb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."* [Proverbs 27:7] Yet what can be sweeter than honey, and the honey comb? Still he says it is not sweet to the man that is not hungry. And what can be more disagreeable than bitter things? And yet to those who are poverty stricken they are sweet. But that the poor come to the meal with need and hunger, and that the rich do not wait for this is manifest, I suppose, to every one. Hence they do not reap the fruit of a genuine and unmixed pleasure. Nor is it only in the article of food, but any one may perceive that the same thing occurs with respect to drinks; and as in the one case hunger is the cause of pleasure, far more than the quality of the viands, so also in the other, thirst usually makes the draught sweetest, although what is drunk is only water. And this is that which the prophet intimated, when he said, *"He satisfied them with honey out of the rock."* But

we do not read in any part of Scripture that Moses brought honey out of the rock, but throughout the history we read of rivers, and waters, and cool streams. What then is it that was meant? For the Scripture by no means speaks falsely. Inasmuch, then, as they were thirsty and wearied with drought, and found these streams of water so cooling, in order to show the pleasure of such a draught, he calls the water honey, not as though its nature were changed into honey, but because the condition of the drinkers made these streams sweeter than honey. You see how the condition of the thirsty is wont to make the draught sweet? Yea oftentimes have many of the poor, when wearied, and distressed, and parched with thirst, partaken of such streams even with such pleasure as I have said. But the rich, while drinking wine that is sweet, and has the fragrance of flowers, and every perfection that wine can have, experience no such enjoyment.

23. The same thing happens as every one may perceive with regard to sleep. For not a soft couch, nor a bedstead overlaid with silver, nor the quietness that exists throughout the house, nor anything else of this kind, are so generally wont to make sleep sweet and pleasant, as labour and fatigue, and the need of sleep, and drowsiness when one lies down. And to this particular the experience of facts, nay, before actual experience, the assertion of the Scriptures bears witness. For Solomon, who had passed his life in luxury, when he wished to make this matter evident, said, "*The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much?*"

[Ecclesiastes 5:12] Why does he add, "*whether he eat little or much?*" Both these things usually bring sleeplessness, viz. indigence, and excess of food; the one drying up the body, stiffening the eyelids and not suffering them to be closed; the other straitening and oppressing the breath, and inducing many pains. But at the same time so powerful a persuasive is labour, that though both these things should befall him, the servant is able to sleep. For

since throughout the whole day, they are running about everywhere, ministering to their masters, being knocked about and hard pressed, and having but little time to take breath, they receive a sufficient recompense for their toils and labours in the pleasure of sleeping. And thus it has happened through the goodness of God toward man, that these pleasures are not to be purchased with gold and silver, but with labour, with hard toil, with necessity, and every kind of discipline. Not so the rich. On the contrary, while lying on their beds, they are frequently without sleep through the whole night; and though they devise many schemes, they do not obtain such pleasure. But the poor man when released from his daily labours, having his limbs completely tired, falls almost before he can lie down into a slumber that is sound, and sweet, and genuine, enjoying this reward, which is not a small one, of his fair day's toils. Since therefore the poor man sleeps, and drinks, and eats with more pleasure than the rich man, what further value is left to riches, now deprived of the one advantage they seemed to have over poverty? For this reason also, from the beginning, God tied the man to labour, not for the purpose of punishing or chastising, but for amendment and education. When Adam lived an unlabourious life, he fell from Paradise, but when the Apostle laboured abundantly, and toiled hard, and said, *"In labour and travail, working night and day,"* [1 Thessalonians 2:9] then he was taken up into Paradise, and ascended to the third heaven!

24. Let us not then despise labour; let us not despise work; for before the kingdom of Heaven, we receive the greatest recompense from thence, deriving pleasure from that circumstance; and not pleasure only, but what is greater than pleasure, the purest health. For in addition to their want of relish, many diseases also attack the rich; but the poor are freed from the hands of physicians; and if at times they do fall into a sickness, they recover

themselves quickly, being far removed from all effeminacy, and having robust constitutions. Poverty, to those who bear it wisely, is a great possession, a treasure that cannot be taken away; the stoutest of staves; a way of gain that cannot be thwarted; a lodging that is safe from snares. The poor man, it may be objected, is oppressed. But then the rich man is still more subject to adverse designs. The poor man is looked down upon and insulted. But the rich man is the subject of envy. The poor man is not so easily assailed as the rich man, offering, as the latter does on every side, countless handles to the devil, and to his secret foes; and being the servant of all, on account of the great extent of his business. Standing in need of many things, he is compelled to flatter many persons, and to minister to them with much servility. But the poor man, if he knows how to be spiritually wise, is not assailable even by the devil himself. Job therefore, strong as he was before this, when he lost all, became still more powerful, and bore away an illustrious victory from the devil!

25. But besides this, the poor man cannot possibly be injured, if he knows how to be spiritually wise. Now what I said of pleasure, that it consisted not in a costly provision of meats, but in the disposition of those who eat, this also I say respecting an insult; that the insult is either created or destroyed, not by the intention of those who insult, but by the disposition of those who bear it. For example. Some one has insulted you with much language, fit or unfit to repeat. If you shall laugh at the insults, if you take not the words to heart, if you show yourself superior to the blow, you are not insulted. And just as if we possessed an adamantine body, we should not be hurt, were we even attacked on all sides by a thousand darts, for darts beget wounds not from the hand of him who hurls them, but from the bodies of those who receive them, so too in this case, insults are constituted real and dishonourable ones, not from the folly of those who offer them, but

from the weakness of the insulted. For if we know how to be truly wise, we are incapable of being insulted, or of suffering any serious evils. Some one it may be has offered you an insult, but you have not felt it? You have not been pained. Then you are not insulted, but hast given rather than received a blow! For when the insulting person perceives that his blow did not reach the soul of those who were reviled, he is himself the more severely fretted; and while those who are reproached remain silent, the insulting blow is turned backwards, and recoils of its own accord upon him who aimed it.

26. In all things then, beloved, let us be spiritually wise, and poverty will be able to do us no harm, but will benefit us exceedingly, and render us more illustrious and wealthy than the richest. For tell me who was poorer than Elias? Yet for this reason he surpassed all the wealthy, in that he was so poor, and this very poverty of his was his own choice from an opulence of mind. For since he accounted the wealth of all riches to be beneath his magnanimity, and not worthy of his spiritual wisdom, therefore he welcomed this kind of poverty; so that if he had considered present things as of much worth, he would not have possessed only a mantle. But so did he condemn the vanity of the life that now is, and regard all gold as clay cast into the street, that he possessed himself of nothing more than that covering. Therefore the king had need of the poor man, and he who had so much gold hung upon the words of him who had nothing more than a sheepskin. Thus was the sheepskin more splendid than the purple, and the cave of the just man than the halls of kings. Therefore also when he went up to heaven, he left nothing to his disciple save the sheepskin. *"By the help of this,"* said he, *"I have wrestled with the devil, and taking this, be thou armed against him!"* For indigence is a powerful weapon, an unassailable retreat, an unshaken fortress! Elisha received the sheepskin as the greatest inheritance; for it was truly such; a more precious one than all gold. And thenceforth

that Elias was a twofold person; an Elias above and an Elias below! I know ye account that just person blessed, and you would each desire to be that person. What then if I show you that all among us, who are initiated, have received something far greater than he did? For Elias left a sheepskin to his disciple, but the Son of God ascending left to us His own flesh! Elias indeed, cast off his mantle, before he went up; but Christ left it behind for our sakes; and yet retained it when He ascended. Let us not then be cast down. Let us not lament, nor fear the difficulty of the times, for He who did not refuse to pour out His blood for all, and has suffered us to partake of His flesh and of His blood again, what will He refuse to do for our safety? Confident then in these hopes, let us beseech Him continually; let us be earnest in prayers and supplications; and let us with all strictness give our attention to every other virtue; that so we may escape the danger that now threatens, and obtain the good things to come; which God grant we may all be worthy of, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom, and with Whom be glory to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 3 on the Statues

On the departure of Flavian, Bishop of Antioch, who had gone on an embassy to the Emperor Theodosius, on behalf of the city. Of the dignity of the Priesthood. What is true fasting. Slander worse than devouring the human body. And finally of those who had been put to death on account of the sedition; and against those who complained that many innocent persons were apprehended.

1. When I look on that throne, deserted and bereft of our teacher, I rejoice and weep at the same time. I weep, because I see not our father with us! But I rejoice that he has set out on a journey for our preservation; that he is gone to snatch so great a multitude from the wrath of the Emperor! Here is both an ornament to you, and a crown to him! An ornament to you, that such a father has been allotted to you; a crown to him, because he is so affectionate towards his children, and has confirmed by actual deeds what Christ said. For having learned that *"the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep,"* [John 10:11] he took his departure; venturing his own life for us all, notwithstanding there were many things to hinder his absence, and enforce his stay. And first, his time of life, extended as it is to the utmost limits of old age; next, his bodily infirmity, and the season of the year, as well as the necessity for his presence at the holy festival; and besides these reasons, his only sister even now at her last breath! He has disregarded, however, the ties of kindred, of old age, of infirmity, and the severity of the season, and the toils of the journey; and preferring you and your safety above all things, he has broken through all these restraints. And, even as a youth, the aged man is now hastening along, borne upon the wings of zeal! For if Christ (says he) gave Himself for us, what excuse or

pardon should we deserve, having undertaken the charge of so numerous a people, if we were not ready to do and to suffer anything for the security of those committed into our hands. For if (continues he) the patriarch Jacob, when in charge of flocks, and feeding brute sheep, and having to give account to man, passed sleepless nights, and bore heat and cold, and all the inclemency of the elements, to the end that not one of those animals might perish, much less does it become us, who preside over those, who are not irrational, but spiritual sheep; who are about to give an account of this charge, not to man, but to God, to be slack in any respect, or shrink from anything which might benefit the flock. Besides, in proportion as the latter flock is superior to the former; men to brutes, and God to men; so it behooves us to manifest a greater and more intense anxiety and diligence. He knows well that his concern is now, not for one city only, but for the whole of the East. For our city is the head and mother of all that lie towards the East. For this reason he would encounter every danger, and nothing would avail to detain him here.

2. On this account I trust that there may be a good hope; for God will not disdain to look upon such earnestness and zeal, nor will He suffer his servant to return without success. I know that when he has barely seen our pious Emperor, and been seen by him, he will be able at once by his very countenance to allay his wrath. For not only the words of the saints, but their very countenances are full of grace. And he is a person too endowed with abundant wisdom; and being well skilled in the divine laws, he will say to him as Moses said to God, *"Yet now, if you will forgive their sin—and if not, slay me together with them."* [Exodus 32:31-32] For such are the bowels of the saints, that they think death with their children sweeter than life without them. He will also make the special season his advocate and shelter himself behind the sacred festival of the Passover; and will remind

the Emperor of the season when Christ remitted the sins of the whole world. He will exhort him to imitate his Lord. He will also remind him of that parable of the ten thousand talents, and the hundred pence. I know the boldness of our father, that he will not hesitate to alarm him from the parable, and to say, *"Take heed lest you also hear it said in that day, 'O thou wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you desire me; you ought also to forgive your fellow-servants!' [Matthew 18:32-33] Thou dost to yourself a greater benefit than them, since by pardoning these few offenses you gain an amnesty for greater."* To this address he will add that prayer, which those who initiated him into the sacred mystery taught him to offer up, and say, *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."*

3. He will moreover inform him, that the offense was not common to the whole city, but the deed of certain strangers and adventurers, men that act upon no deliberate plan, but with every sort of audacity and lawlessness; and that it would not be just for the disorderly conduct of a few to extirpate so great a city, and to punish those who had done no wrong; and that even though all had been transgressors, they had paid a sufficient punishment, being consumed by fear so many days, and expecting every day to be put to death, and being exiles and fugitives; thus living more wretchedly than condemned criminals, carrying their life in their hands, and having no confidence of escape! *"Let this punishment (he will say) suffice. Carry not your resentment further! Make the Judge above merciful to yourself, by humanity towards your fellow-servants! Think of the greatness of the city, and that the question now is not concerning one, or two, or three, or ten souls, but of a vast multitude too numerous to be reckoned up! It is a question which affects the capital of the whole world. This is the city in which Christians were first called by that name. Honor Christ. Reverence the city which first proclaimed that name, so lovely and sweet to all! This*

city has been the tabernacle of Apostles; the dwelling place of the just! And now this is the first and only instance of insurrection against its rulers; and all past time will bear favourable witness to the manners of the city. For had the people been continually given to sedition, it might have been necessary to make an example of such iniquity; but if this has happened only once in all time, it is plain that the offense has not arisen from the habit of the city, but that it was the transgression of those who had in an evil hour by mere random chance arrived there."

4. These things and more than these the priest will say with still greater boldness; and the Emperor will listen to them; and one is humane, and the other is faithful; so that on both sides we entertain favourable hopes. But much more do we rely upon the mercy of God, than upon the fidelity of our Teacher and the humanity of the Emperor. For while the Emperor is supplicated, and the priest is supplicating, He Himself will interpose, softening the heart of the Emperor, and exciting the tongue of the priest; facilitating his utterance—preparing the mind of the other to receive what is said and with much indulgence, to accede to the petitions. For our city is dearer to Christ than all others both because of the virtue of our ancestors, and of your own. And as Peter was the first among the apostles to preach Christ, so as I said before, this city was the first of cities that adorned itself by assuming the Christian appellation, as a sort of admirable diadem. But if where only ten just men were found, God promised to save all who dwelt therein, why should we not expect a favourable issue, and become assured of all our lives, when there are not only ten, twenty, or twice so many only, but far more; who are serving God with all strictness.

5. I have heard many saying, "*The threats of a king are like the wrath of a lion;*" [Proverbs 19:12] being full of dejection and lamentation. What then should we say to such? That He who said, "*The wolves and the lambs*

shall feed together; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox," [Isaiah 11:6-7] will be able to convert the lion into a mild lamb. Let us therefore supplicate Him; let us send an embassy to Him; and He will doubtless allay the Emperor's wrath, and deliver us from the impending distress. Our Father has gone there on this embassy. Let us go on embassy from hence to the Majesty of heaven! Let us assist him by prayers! The community of the Church can do much, if with a sorrowful soul, and with a contrite spirit, we offer up our prayers! It is unnecessary to cross the ocean, or to undertake a long journey. Let every man and woman among us, whether meeting together at church, or remaining at home, call upon God with much earnestness, and He will doubtless accede to these petitions.

Whence does this appear evident? Because He is exceedingly desirous, that we should always take refuge in Him, and in everything make our requests unto Him; and do nothing and speak nothing without Him. For men, when we trouble them repeatedly concerning our affairs, become slothful and evasive, and conduct themselves unpleasantly towards us; but with God it is quite the reverse. Not when we apply to him continually respecting our affairs, but when we fail to do so, then is he especially displeased. Hear at least what He reproves the Jews for, when He says, *"You have taken counsel, but not of Me, and made treaties, but not by My Spirit."* [Isaiah 30:1] For this is the custom of those who love; they desire that all the concerns of their beloved should be accomplished by means of themselves; and that they should neither do anything, nor say anything, without them. On this account did God not only on that occasion, but again elsewhere, uttering a reproof, speak the same language. *"They have reigned, but not by Me; they have ruled, and they made it not known to Me."*

[Hosea 8:4] Let us not then be slow to take refuge in Him continually; and whatever be the evil, it will in any case find its appropriate solution.

6. Does a man affright you? Hasten to the Lord above, and you will suffer no evil. Thus the ancients had release from their calamities; and not men only, but also women. There was a certain Hebrew woman, Esther was her name. This Esther rescued the whole people of the Jews, when they were about to be delivered over to destruction, by this very method. For when the Persian king gave orders that all the Jews should be utterly destroyed, and there was no one who was able to stand in the way of his wrath—this woman having divested herself of the splendid robe, and clothed herself with sackcloth and being besprinkled with ashes, supplicated the merciful God to go in with her to the king; and offering up her prayer to Him, these were the words she uttered, *"O Lord, make my words acceptable, and put eloquent speech in my mouth."* Let this be the prayer which we offer to God for our Teacher. For if a woman, supplicating on behalf of the Jews, prevailed to allay the wrath of a barbarian, much rather will our Teacher, entreating on behalf of so great a city, and in conjunction with so great a Church, be able to persuade this most mild and merciful Emperor. For if he has received authority to loose sins committed against God, much more will he be able to take away and blot out those which have been committed against a man. He is also himself a ruler and a ruler of more dignity than the other. For the sacred laws take and place under his hands even the royal head. And when there is need of any good thing from above, the Emperor is accustomed to fly to the priest: but not the priest to the Emperor. He too has his breast-plate, that of righteousness. He too has his girdle, that of truth, and sandals of much greater dignity, those of the Gospel of peace. He too has a sword, not of iron, but of the Spirit; he too has a crown resting on his head. This panoply is the more splendid. The

weapons are grander, the license of speech greater, and mightier the strength. So that from the weight of his authority, and from his own greatness of soul; and more than all the rest, from the hope which he has in God, he will address the Emperor with much freedom and much discretion.

7. Let us not then despair of our safety, but let us pray; let us make invocation; let us supplicate; let us go on embassy to the King that is above with many tears! We have this fast too as an ally, and as an assistant in this good intercession. Therefore, as when the winter is over and the summer is appearing, the sailor draws his vessel to the deep; and the soldier burnishes his arms, and makes ready his steed for the battle; and the husbandman sharpens his sickle; and the traveller boldly undertakes a long journey, and the wrestler strips and bares himself for the contest. So too, when the fast makes its appearance, like a kind of spiritual summer, let us as soldiers burnish our weapons; and as husbandmen let us sharpen our sickle; and as sailors let us order our thoughts against the waves of extravagant desires; and as travellers let us set out on the journey towards heaven; and as wrestlers let us strip for the contest. For the believer is at once a husbandman, and a sailor, and a soldier, a wrestler, and a traveller. Hence St. Paul says, *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers. Put on therefore the whole armour of God."* [Ephesians 6:12] Have you observed the wrestler? Have you observed the soldier? If you are a wrestler, it is necessary for you to engage in the conflict naked. If a soldier, it behooves you to stand in the battle line armed at all points. How then are both these things possible, to be naked, and yet not naked; to be clothed, and yet not clothed! How? I will tell you. Divest yourself of worldly business, and you have become a wrestler. Put on the spiritual armour, and you have become a soldier. Strip yourself of worldly cares, for the season is one of wrestling. Clothe yourself with the spiritual

armour, for we have a heavy warfare to wage with demons. Therefore also it is needful we should be naked, so as to offer nothing that the devil may take hold of, while he is wrestling with us; and to be fully armed at all points, so as on no side to receive a deadly blow. Cultivate your soul. Cut away the thorns. Sow the word of godliness. Propagate and nurse with much care the fair plants of divine wisdom, and you have become a husbandman. And Paul will say to you, "*The husbandman that labours must be first partaker of the fruits.*" He too himself practised this art. Therefore writing to the Corinthians, he said, "*I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*" [1 Corinthians 3:6] Sharpen your sickle, which you have blunted through gluttony— sharpen it by fasting. Lay hold of the pathway which leads towards heaven; rugged and narrow as it is, lay hold of it, and journey on. And how may thou be able to do these things? By subduing your body, and bringing it into subjection. For when the way grows narrow, the corpulence that comes of gluttony is a great hindrance. Keep down the waves of inordinate desires. Repel the tempest of evil thoughts. Preserve the bark; display much skill, and you have become a pilot. But we shall have the fast for a groundwork and instructor in all these things.

8. I speak not, indeed, of such a fast as most persons keep, but of real fasting; not merely an abstinence from meats; but from sins too. For the nature of a fast is such, that it does not suffice to deliver those who practise it, unless it be done according to a suitable law. "*For the wrestler,*" it is said, "*is not crowned unless he strive lawfully.*" [2 Timothy 2:5] To the end then, that when we have gone through the labour of fasting, we forfeit not the crown of fasting, we should understand how, and after what manner, it is necessary to conduct this business; since that Pharisee also fasted, [Luke 18:12] but afterwards went down empty, and destitute of the fruit of

fasting. The Publican fasted not; and yet he was accepted in preference to him who had fasted; in order that you may learn that fasting is unprofitable, except all other duties follow with it. The Ninevites fasted, and won the favour of God. [Jonah 3:10] The Jews, fasted too, and profited nothing, nay, they departed with blame. Since then the danger in fasting is so great to those who do not know how they ought to fast, we should learn the laws of this exercise, in order that we may not "*run uncertainly*," nor "*beat the air*," nor while we are fighting contend with a shadow. Fasting is a medicine; but a medicine, though it be never so profitable, becomes frequently useless owing to the unskilfulness of him who employs it. For it is necessary to know, moreover, the time when it should be applied, and the requisite quantity of it; and the temperament of body that admits it; and the nature of the country, and the season of the year; and the corresponding diet; as well as various other particulars; any of which, if one overlooks, he will mar all the rest that have been named. Now if, when the body needs healing, such exactness is required on our part, much more ought we, when our care is about the soul, and we seek to heal the distempers of the mind, to look, and to search into every particular with the utmost accuracy.

9. Let us see then how the Ninevites fasted, and how they were delivered from that wrath— "*Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything*," [Jonah 3:7] says (the prophet). What do you say? Tell me— must even the irrational things fast, and the horses and the mules be covered with sackcloth? "*Even so*," he replies. For as when, at the decease of some rich man, the relatives clothe not only the men servants and maid servants, but the horses also with sackcloth, and give orders that they should follow the procession to the sepulchre, led by their grooms; thus signifying the greatness of the calamity, and inviting all to pity; thus also, indeed, when that city was about to be destroyed, even the irrational nature was

enveloped in sackcloth, and subjected to the yoke of fasting. *"It is not possible,"* says he, *"that irrational creatures should learn the wrath of God by means of reason; let them be taught by means of fasting, that this stroke is of divine infliction. For if the city should be overturned, not only would it be one common sepulchre for us, the dwellers therein, but for these likewise. Inasmuch then as these would participate in the punishment, let them also do so in the fast."* But there was yet another thing which they aimed at in this act, which the prophets also are wont to do. For these, when they see some dreadful chastisement proceeding from heaven, and those who are to be punished without anything to say for themselves—laden with shame—unworthy of the least pardon or excuse:— not knowing what to do, nor from whence they may procure an advocacy for the condemned, they have recourse to the things irrational; and describing their death in tragical fashion, they make intercession by them, putting forward as a plea their pitiable and mournful destruction. When therefore, aforetime, famine had seized upon the Jews, and a great drought oppressed their country, and all things were being consumed, one of the prophets spoke thus, *"The young heifers leaped in their stalls; the herds of oxen wept, because there was no pasture; all the cattle of the field looked upward to You, because the streams of waters were dried up."* [Joel 1:17] Another prophet bewailing the evils of drought again speaks to this effect: *"The hinds calved in the fields and forsook it, because there was no grass. The wild asses stood in the forests; they snuffed up the wind like a dragon; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass."* [Jeremiah 14:5] Moreover, you have heard Joel saying today, *"Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet;— the infants that suck the breast."* For what reason, I ask, does he call so immature an age to supplication? Is it not plainly for the very same reason? For since all who have arrived at the age of manhood, have

inflamed and provoked God's wrath, let the age, says he, which is devoid of transgressions supplicate Him who is provoked.

10. But, as I said before, we may see what it was that dissolved such inexorable wrath. Was it, forsooth, fasting only and sackcloth? We say not so; but the change of their whole life. Whence does this appear? From the very language of the prophet. For he who has discoursed of the wrath of God, and of their fasting, himself too, when speaking of the reconciliation, and teaching us the cause of the reconciliation, speaks to this effect; "*And God saw their works.*" [Jonah 3:10] What kind of works? That they had fasted? That they had put on sackcloth? Nothing of the sort: but passing all these points in silence, he adds, "*That they turned every one from their evil ways, and the Lord repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them.*" Do you see, that fasting did not rescue from this danger, but it was the change of life, which rendered God propitious and kind to these barbarians?

11. I have said these things, not that we may disparage fasting, but that we may honour fasting; for the honour of fasting consists not in abstinence from food, but in withdrawing from sinful practices; since he who limits his fasting only to an abstinence from meats, is one who especially disparages it. Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works! Is it said by what kind of works? If you see a poor man, take pity on him! If you see an enemy, be reconciled to him! If you see a friend gaining honour, envy him not! If you see a handsome woman, pass her by! For let not the mouth only fast, but also the eye, and the ear, and the feet, and the hands, and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being pure from rapine and avarice. Let the feet fast, by ceasing from running to the unlawful spectacles. Let the eyes fast, being taught never to fix themselves rudely upon handsome countenances, or to busy themselves with strange beauties. For looking is

the food of the eyes, but if this be such as is unlawful or forbidden, it mars the fast; and upsets the whole safety of the soul; but if it be lawful and safe, it adorns fasting. For it would be among things the most absurd to abstain from lawful food because of the fast, but with the eyes to touch even what is forbidden. Do you not eat flesh? Feed not upon lasciviousness by means of the eyes. Let the ear fast also. The fasting of the ear consists in refusing to receive evil speakings and calumnies. *"You shall not receive a false report,"* it says.

12. Let the mouth too fast from disgraceful speeches and railing. For what does it profit if we abstain from birds and fishes; and yet bite and devour our brethren? The evil speaker eats the flesh of his brother, and bites the body of his neighbour. Because of this Paul utters the fearful saying, *"If you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another."* [Galatians 5:15] You have not fixed your teeth in the flesh, but you have fixed the slander in the soul, and inflicted the wound of evil suspicion; you have harmed, in a thousand ways, yourself and him, and many others, for in slandering a neighbour you have made him who listens to the slander worse; for should he be a wicked man, he becomes more careless when he finds a partner in his wickedness; and should he be a just man, he is lifted to arrogance, and puffed up; being led on by the sin of others to imagine great things concerning himself. Besides, you have struck at the common welfare of the Church; for all those who hear not only accuse the supposed sinner, but the reproach is fastened on the Christian community; neither do you hear the unbelievers saying, *"Such a person is a fornicator, or a libertine;"* but instead of the individual who has sinned, they accuse all Christians. In addition to this, you have caused the glory of God to be blasphemed; for as His Name is glorified when we have good report, so when we sin, it is blasphemed and insulted!

13. A fourth reason is, that you have disgraced him who is ill reported; and hast thus rendered him more shameless than he was, by placing him in a state of enmity and hostility. Fifthly, you have made yourself liable to chastisement and vengeance; by involving yourself in matters which in no way concerned you. For let not any one tell me in reply, *"Then I am an evil speaker when I speak falsely, but if I speak what is true, I cease to be so."* Although it be with truth you speak evil, this also is a crime. For that Pharisee spoke evil of the Publican with truth; but nevertheless this availed him not. For was not the latter, I ask, a publican and a sinner? It is manifest to every one that he was a publican. But at the same time inasmuch as the Pharisee spoke ill of him, he departed from the temple with the loss of every advantage. Do you wish to correct a brother? Weep; pray unto God; taking him apart, admonish, counsel, entreat him! So also Paul did, *"Lest,"* says he, *"when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."* [2 Corinthians 12:21] Show your charity towards the sinner. Persuade him that it is from care and anxiety for his welfare, and not from a wish to expose him, that you put him in mind of his sin. Take hold of his feet; embrace him; be not ashamed, if you truly desirest to cure him. Physicians too do things of this sort, oftentimes, when their patients are hard to please; by embraces and entreaties they at length persuade them to take a salutary medicine. Thus also do thou. Show the wound to the priest; that is the part of one who cares for him, and provides for him, and is anxious on his behalf.

14. But not only do I now admonish the evil speakers; but those besides, who hear others ill spoken of, I exhort to stop up their ears, and to imitate the prophet who says, *"Whoso privily slanders his neighbour, him*

will I punish." Say to your neighbour, *"Have you any one to praise or highly to commend? I open my ears, to receive the fragrant oil; but if you have any evil to say, I block up the entrance to your words—for I am not to admit dung and dirt. What profit does it afford me to learn that such a one is a bad man? The greatest injury indeed results from this, and the worst loss!"* Say to him, *"Let us be anxious about our own faults; how we may render up an account of our own transgressions; and exhibit this sort of curiosity and meddlesome activity respecting our own lives. What excuse or pardon shall we find; while we never even take into consideration our own affairs, but thus inquisitively pry into those of others!"* And as it is mean and extremely disgraceful to peer into a house, and to observe what is within as one passes, so also to make inquisition into another man's life is the last degree of illiberality. But what is yet more ridiculous is, that those who lead this sort of life, and are neglectful of their own affairs, when they have mentioned any of these secret matters, beseech and adjure him who has heard it, not to mention it more to any other person; thus making it plain that they have done an action which deserves censure. For if you beseech him to tell this to no other person, much more did it not become you to tell these things first to him. The matter was safe while in your possession; now, after betraying it, you are grown anxious for its safety. If you are desirous that it be not carried abroad to another, do not yourself tell it. But when you have betrayed the custody of the matter to another, you do what is superfluous and useless, in charging him, and putting him on oath for the safety of what has been spoken.

15. *"But it is sweet to slander."* Nay, it is sweet not to speak evil. For he that has spoken evil is henceforth contentious; he is suspicious and he fears, repents, and gnaws his own tongue. Being timorous and trembling, lest at any time, what he said should be carried to others, and bring great

peril, and useless and needless enmity, on the sayer. But he who keeps the matter to himself, will spend his days in safety, with much pleasantness. *"You have heard a word,"* we read, *"let it die with you; and be bold; it will not burst you."* [Sirach 19:10] What is the meaning of this? *"let it die with you?"* Extinguish it; bury it; neither permit it to go forth, nor even to move at all; but, as the best course, be careful not to tolerate others in the practice of evil speaking. And should you perchance, at any time receive an impression from it, bury it, destroy what has been uttered, deliver it over to oblivion; in order that you may become like those who have not heard it; and spend the present life with much peace and security. Should the slanderers learn that we abhor them more than those do whom they accuse, they themselves will henceforth abandon this evil habit, and correct the sin; and will afterwards applaud, and proclaim us as those who were their saviours and benefactors. For, as to speak well, and to applaud, is the beginning of friendship, so to speak ill and to calumniate, has been the beginning and foundation of enmity, and hatred, and a thousand quarrels. From nothing else have our own affairs been more neglected, than from the habit of prying into and meddling with the concerns of others; for it is not possible for one who is given to evil speaking, and busying himself with other men's lives, ever to look after his own life. His whole study being expended upon meddling with other men's matters, all those which belong to himself must of necessity be left at hazard and neglected. For it is well if one who spends all his leisure on the anxious consideration of his own sins, and the judgment of them, can make any progress. But when you are always busy about other men's matters, when will you pay any heed to your own evils?

16. Let us flee then, beloved, let us flee slander! knowing that it is the very gulph of Satan, and the place where he lurks with his snares. For in

order that we may be careless of our own state, and may thus render our account heavier, the devil leads us into this custom. But more than this it is not only a very serious matter, that we shall hereafter have to give account of what we have spoken, but that we shall make our own offenses the heavier by these means; depriving ourselves of all excuse. For he who scans with bitterness the conduct of others, can never obtain pardon for the sins committed by himself. For God will determine the sentence, not only from the nature of our transgressions, but from the judgment which you have passed upon others. Therefore He gave the admonition, "*Judge not, that you be not judged.*" [Matthew 7:1] For the sin, of whatever kind, will not there appear any more such as it was when committed, but will receive a great and unpardonable addition from the judgment passed by you upon your fellow servants. For as he who is humane, and merciful, and forgiving, cuts away the greater mass of his sins, so he who is bitter, and cruel, and implacable, greatly increases the magnitude of his own offenses. Let us then expel from our mouth all slander, knowing that if we do not abstain from it, though we might feed upon ashes, this austerity would avail us nothing. "*For not that which enters into, but that which comes out of the mouth defiles the man.*" [Matthew 15:17-18] If any one were to stir up a cesspool, when you were passing, say, would you not reproach and rate the man who did it? This then also do with respect to the slanderer. For the stirred cesspool does not so grossly offend the sense of those who smell that ill savour, as the stirring up other men's sins, and the exposure of an impure life, offends and disturbs the soul of those who hear of it. Therefore let us abstain from evil speaking, from foul language, from blasphemy; and let us not speak ill of our neighbour, nor of God!

17. For many of our evil speakers have run into such madness, as to lift up their own tongue from their fellow servants against their Master. But

how great an evil this is, you may learn from the affairs in which we are now involved. A man is insulted, and, lo! We are all fearing and trembling, both those who were guilty of the insult, and those who are conscious of nothing of the kind! But God is insulted every day! Why do I say every day?— every hour rather, by the rich, by the poor, by those who are at ease, by the afflicted, by those who calumniate, and those who are calumniated, and yet no one ever hears a word of this! Therefore He has permitted our fellow servant to be insulted, in order that from the danger which has happened through this insult, you may learn the benignity of the Lord! And notwithstanding that this is our first and only offense, we do not on that account expect to gain an excuse, or pardon. But we provoke God every day, and we show no signs of returning to Him, and yet He endures it with all long-suffering! Do you see then how great the benignity of the Lord is? Yet, in this present outrage, those who had done amiss were taken and thrust into prison, and paid the penalty; nevertheless we are still in fear, for he who has been insulted has not as yet heard what has taken place, nor pronounced sentence, and we are all trembling. But God every day hears of the insults offered Him, and no one heeds it, although God is thus merciful and loving toward man. With Him it suffices only to acknowledge the sin, and so to cancel the accusation. But with man it is altogether the reverse. When those who have sinned confess, then they are punished the more; which indeed has happened in the present instance. And some have perished by the sword, some by fire; some given to wild beasts, and not men only, but children. And neither this immaturity of age, nor the tumult of the people, nor the circumstance that they were infuriated by demons when they perpetrated these deeds; nor that the exaction was thought to be intolerable; nor poverty, nor having offended in company with all; nor promising that they would never hereafter dare to repeat such deeds; nor

anything else, could at all rescue them; but they were led away to the pit, without reprieve; armed soldiers conducting and guarding them on either side, lest any one should carry off the criminals; while mothers also followed afar off, seeing their children beheaded, but not daring to bewail their calamity; for terror conquered grief, and fear overcame nature! And just as when men beholding from the land those who are shipwrecked, are deeply distressed, but are not able to approach and to rescue the drowning, so too here, the mothers restrained through fear of the soldiers, as it were by so many waves, not only dared not go near to their children, and rescue them from condemnation, but were afraid even to shed tears?

18. Assuredly ye gather from thence the mercy of God, how unspeakable, how boundless, how transcending all description! Here indeed the person who has been insulted is of the same nature; and only once in all his lifetime has experienced this; and then it was not done to his face; nor while he was present to see or hear it; and nevertheless, none of those who perpetrated these deeds obtained pardon. But with regard to God nothing of the kind can be said; for the interval between man and God, is so great, as no language can at all express; and throughout every day He is insulted, although present, and seeing and hearing it: and yet He sends not forth the lightning, nor commands the sea to overflow the land, and submerge all men; nor does He bid the earth to cleave asunder and swallow up all the contumelious; but He forbears, and suffers long, and still offers to pardon those who have insulted Him, if they only repent and promise to do these things no more! Truly now is the season to proclaim, *"Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all His praise?"* How many men have not only cast down, but also trodden under foot the images of God! For when you throttle a debtor, when you strip him, when you drag him away, you trample under foot God's image. Hear for a certainty Paul

saying, that *"a man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God."* [1 Corinthians 11:7] And again, hear God Himself saying, *"Let us make man in Our Image, after Our likeness."* [Genesis 1:26] But if you say that man is not of the same substance as God—what matters that? For neither was the brazen statue of the same substance as the Emperor; yet nevertheless, they who defied it paid the penalty. Thus also with regard to mankind, if men are not of the same substance as God, (as indeed they are not), still they have been called His image; and it were fitting they should receive honour on account of the appellation. But thou for the sake of a little gold dost trample them under foot, dost throttle them, and drag them away; and hast not to this day in any wise paid the penalty!

19. May there be then speedily some favourable and propitious change! This certainly I foretell and testify, that although this cloud should pass away, and we yet remain in the same condition of listlessness, we shall again have to suffer much heavier evils than those we are now dreading; for I do not so much fear the wrath of the Emperor, as your own listlessness. Surely it is not sufficient by way of apology that we supplicate two or three days, but it is necessary that we should make a change in our whole life, and that while abstaining from wickedness we should persevere continually in virtue. For as those who are sickly, unless they keep up a constant regimen, would find no advantage by their observing a two or three days' discipline; so those who are in sin, if they do not exercise sobriety at all times, will find no benefit in two or three days' amendment. For as it is said, that he who is washed, and is again afterwards polluted with the mire, has gained nothing; so he who has repented for three days, and has again returned to his former state, has accomplished nothing. Let us not therefore, now act as we have always done hitherto. For many times, when we have

been surprised by earthquakes, as well as famine and drought, after becoming more sober and gentle for three or four days, we did but return again to the former course. For this cause our present troubles have happened. But if we have not done so before; yet, now at least let us all persevere in the same piety; let us preserve the same meekness, that we may not again need another stroke. Was not God able to have prevented what has taken place? He did, however, permit it, that He might make those who despised Him more sober-minded, through dread of a fellow-servant!

20. But let not any one say that many of the guilty escaped, and that many of the innocent incurred punishment. For I hear of numerous persons who frequently say this; not only in the case of the present sedition, but also in many other circumstances of this nature. What then should I reply to those who make such observations? Why, that if he who was captured was innocent of the present sedition, he had wrought some other transgression before this still more grievous, for which, not having afterwards repented, he has paid the penalty at the present time. For thus is the custom of God to deal with us. When we sin, He does not straightway visit the transgression, but lets it pass, giving us space for repentance, in order that we may be amended and converted. But if, because we have not paid the penalty, we suppose that the offense too is blotted out, and make light of it; then somewhere, where we think not of it, we are sure afterwards to be punished. And this takes place in order that, when we sin and are not punished, we may not be free from fear, unless we amend, knowing that we shall certainly fall into punishment where we do not expect it. So that if you sin, beloved, and art not punished, do not grow presumptuous, but for this very cause be the more alarmed, knowing that it is an easy matter with God to recompense again when he pleases. For this reason then he has not punished you, that you might receive space for repentance. Let us not therefore say,

that such a person while innocent incurred punishment; and another while guilty escaped, for he who incurred it, being guiltless, as I observed, paid the punishment of other transgressions; and he who now escapes it, if he repents not, will be captured in another snare. If our minds are thus disposed, we shall never forget our own sins, but, always fearful and trembling lest we should have to pay the penalty, we shall readily recollect them. For nothing is so apt to bring sin to remembrance as punishment and chastisement. And this is shown by Joseph's brethren. For when they had sold the just man, and thirteen years had passed away, suspecting they had fallen into punishment, and fearing for their lives, they remembered their sin, and said one to another, "*We are verily guilty concerning our brother Joseph.*" [Genesis 42:21] Do you see, how fear brought their guilt to recollection? And yet when they were sinning they perceived it not, but when they were fearful of being punished, then they remembered it? Knowing, therefore, all these things, let us make a change and amendment of our lives; and let us think of religion and virtue, before we think of deliverance from the impending distress.

21. And in the meanwhile I desire to fix three precepts in your mind, to the end that you may accomplish me these during the fast,— viz. to speak ill of no one; to hold no one for an enemy; and to expel from the mouth altogether the evil custom of oaths. And as when we hear that some money tax is imposed, each one going within, and calling his wife and children and servants, considers and consults with them how he may pay this tribute, so also let us do with respect to these spiritual precepts. Let every one when he has returned home call together his wife and children, and let him say, that a spiritual tribute was imposed this day: a tribute by which there will be some deliverance and removal of these evils; a tribute which does not make those who pay it poor, but richer; that is to say, to have no enemy, to speak evil of

no man, and to swear not at all. Let us consider; let us think; let us resolve how we may fulfill these precepts. Let us exert every endeavour. Let us admonish each other. Let us correct each other, that we may not go to the other world as debtors, and then, needing to borrow of others, suffer the fate of the foolish virgins, and fall from immortal salvation. If we thus set our lives in order, I warrant you and promise, that from this there will be deliverance from the present calamity, and a removal of these dreadful ills; and what is greater than all, there will be the enjoyment of the good things to come. For it were fitting that I should commit to you the whole body of virtue; but I think it the best method of correction, to take the laws by parts, and reduce them to practice, and then to proceed to others. For as in a given field, the husbandman, digging it all up piecemeal, gradually comes to the end of his task; so we too if we make this rule for ourselves, in any wise to reduce to a correct practice these three precepts during the present Lent, and to commit them to the safe custody of good habit, we shall proceed with greater ease to the rest; and by this means arriving at the summit of spiritual wisdom, we shall both reap the fruit of a favourable hope in the present life; and in the life to come we shall stand before Christ with great confidence, and enjoy those unspeakable blessings; which, God grant, we may all be found worthy of, through the grace and loving kindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom be glory to the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 4 on the Statues

An exhortation to the people respecting fortitude and patience, from the examples of Job and the Three Children in Babylon. The Homily concludes with an address on the subject of abstaining from oaths.

1. Blessed be God! Who has comforted your sorrowing souls, and stayed your agitated spirits! For that you have received no small consolation is evident by the desire and readiness to listen which you are now showing. For it is impossible that a soul in anguish, and oppressed with the cloud of despondency, should have power to hear with readiness anything that is spoken. But I see you are attending to us with much good will, and with an intense earnestness; and that you have shaken off gloomy thoughts, and put aside the sense of present distress, in your affectionate desire of listening. For this cause, I thank God heartily together with you, that the calamity has not overmatched your philosophy; nor fear relaxed your vigour; nor tribulation quenched your alacrity; nor danger dried up your zeal: nor the fear of men overcome the desire for God; nor the difficulty of the times overthrown your earnestness; nay, so far from overthrowing, it has strengthened it; so far from slackening, it has given it more intensity; so far from quenching, has kindled it the more. The forum is indeed empty, but the church is filled; the former supplies material for melancholy, the latter is an occasion of joy and spiritual gladness! When therefore, beloved, you betake yourself to the forum, and the sight of the solitude calls forth a groan, fly back to your Mother, and straightway she will console you with the multitude of her offspring and will show you the chorus of the Brethren complete, and will drive away all your despondency! For in the city we are

as earnestly longing to see human beings, as those who inhabit the deserts; but when we take refuge in the church, we are straitened for room by the multitude. And as when the sea is in uproar, and rendered furious by the violent tempest, fear compels all to fly for refuge from without into the harbour; so also now, the waves of the forum, and the tempest of the city, drives together every one from all sides into the church, and by the bond of love knits the members close to one another.

2. Let us then give thanks to God even for these things, that we have reaped so much fruit from the tribulation; that we have received so great an advantage from the trial. If there were no trial, there would be no crown; if there were no wrestlings, there would be no prize; if there were no lists marked out, there would be no honours; if there were no tribulation, there would be no rest; if there were no winter, there would be no summer. And this may be observed, not only among men, but even with the very seeds; for if, in that case, we expect the ear of grain to spring and flourish, there must be much rain, much gathering of the clouds, and much frost; and the time of sowing is also a rainy season. Since therefore the winter, a winter not of the elements, but of souls, has now set in, let us too sow in this winter that we may reap in the summer; let us sow tears, that we may reap gladness. This is not my word, it is a prophetic promise, *"They who sow in tears, shall reap in joy."* The rain which comes down, does not so make the seeds to sprout and grow, as the shower of falling tears makes the seed of godliness to spring up and flourish. This it is that cleanses the soul; waters the mind, and causes the growing germ of doctrine to push rapidly forwards. For this reason also, it is needful to plough up a deep furrow. This the Prophet signified when he spoke thus, *"Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."* [Jeremiah 4:3] Therefore, as when he who has set the plough on the field, turns up the earth from below, preparing

beforehand a safe lodgment for the seeds, in order that they may not lie dispersed over the surface, but may be hidden in the very womb of the earth, and deposit their roots in safety: so also it is our business to act; and making use of the plough of tribulation to break up the depth of the heart. For another Prophet admonishes of this, when he says, "*Rend your hearts and not your garments.*" [Joel 2:13] Let us then rend our hearts, that if any evil plant, any treacherous thought be present in us, we may tear it up by the roots, and provide a pure soil for the seeds of godliness. For if we do not now break up the fallow ground; if we do not now sow; if we do not now water it with tears, while it is a time of tribulation and fasting, when shall we ever be brought to compunction? Will it be when we are at ease, and in luxury? But this is impossible. For ease and luxury generally lead to indolence, just as tribulation leads back again to diligence; and restores to itself the mind that had wandered abroad, and been dreaming after a multitude of objects.

3. Let us not then grieve on account of this despondency, but even give thanks to God, for great is the gain that comes of tribulation. The husbandman, when he has sown the seed he had gathered with so much labour, prays that a shower may come; and the ignorant man, looking on, will be surprised at all that takes place; and perhaps say to himself, "*what can this man be doing? He is scattering what he has collected; and not only scattering, but he is also mixing it up in the earth with much industry, so that it will be no easy matter for him to collect these together again; and besides mixing them with the earth, he is moreover desiring a heavy rain, so that all he has cast therein will rot, and become mire.*" Such a person is also terrified when he observes the thunders bursting through the clouds, and the lightnings striking downwards. But not so the farmer. He is glad and rejoices while beholding the heavy rain. For he does not regard what is

present, but awaits the future. He does not attend to the thunderings, but is reckoning the number of his sheaves. He thinks not of the decaying seed, but of the flourishing ears of grain; not of the tedious rain, but of the delightful dust of the threshing floor. Thus indeed, also, should we regard, not our present tribulation, nor the pain of it, but the benefit that may arise from it—the fruit that it will bring forth. Let us wait for the sheaves of the threshing floor; for if we be sober, we shall be able to collect much fruit from the present time, and to fill the granaries of our minds. If we be sober, we shall not only be far from taking any harm from this trouble, but we shall also reap innumerable benefits. But should we be slothful, even tranquillity will destroy us! Either of these things is injurious to him who takes no heed; but they both profit him who lives with strictness. And even as gold if it be covered with water, still shows its own proper beauty, and although it should fall into the furnace, would again come forth brighter than before; but on the other hand, should clay or grass be mixed with water, the one dissolves and the other corrupts; and should they fall into the fire, the one is parched and the other is burnt up; so also in truth it is with the just man and the sinner! For should the former enjoy repose, he remains illustrious, even as gold is when immersed in water; and though he falls into trial, he becomes the more illustrious, like gold when subjected to the test of fire; but the sinner, if he obtains rest, is enervated and corrupted like the grass and the clay, when they come in contact with water; and should he undergo trial, he is burnt up and destroyed, in the same way as the grass and the clay are by the action of fire!

4. Let us not then be out of heart for the present evils; for if you have any sins remaining, they will disappear, and easily be burnt up by the tribulation; but if you possess virtue, you will become thereby more illustrious and distinguished; for if you are continually vigilant and sober,

you will be superior to all injury. For it is not the nature of the trials, but the listlessness of those who are tried, that is apt to cause their overthrow. So that if you desire to rejoice, and to enjoy ease and pleasure, seek neither for pleasure nor ease, but seek for a soul full of patience, and one that is able to manifest fortitude; since if you have not this, not only will trial put you to shame, but repose will destroy and overthrow you yet more signally. For to prove that it is not the attack of evils, but the listlessness of the mind which subverts our salvation, hear what Christ says: *"Whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock."* And again: *"Every one who hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it."* [Matthew 7:24-27] Do you perceive that it was not the attack of these trials that produced the overthrow, but the folly of the builders? For there was rain there, and there was rain here; there were floods there, and there were floods here; here the beating of winds, and there again the same. The one man built a house, and the other built a house. The building was the same; the trials were the same; but the end was not the same; because there was not the same foundation. For the folly of the builder, not the nature of the trials, caused the fall of the building; otherwise the house that was founded upon the rock should have fallen, whereas nothing of that kind befell it. But do not suppose that these things were spoken merely of a house; for the discourse relates to a soul, giving proof by its works that it hears the divine word, or rejects it. Thus Job built up his soul. The rain descended—for the fire fell from heaven and devoured all his flocks; the

floods came—the frequent—the constant—the successive messengers of his calamities, telling him of the destruction of his herds— of his camels— of his children. The winds blew—the bitter words of his wife:— "*Curse God,*" she said, "*and die.*" [Job 2:9] Yet the house fell not: the soul was not supplanted: the just man did not blaspheme; but even gave thanks thus, saying, "*The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. As it pleased the Lord, so is it come to pass.*" [Job 1:21] Do you see that not the nature of the trials, but the negligence of the indolent, is wont to cause the overthrow? Since tribulation makes the strong man stronger. Who says this? It is the man who lived in tribulation, the blessed Paul; he speaks thus: "*Tribulation works patience, and patience probation, and probation hope.*" [Romans 5:3-4] And even as the violence of the wind, when it rushes upon strong trees, and sways them in all directions, does not root them up, but renders them still firmer and stronger by these attacks; so the soul that is holy, and lives in a religious state, is not supplanted by the inroads of trial and tribulation, but stimulated thereby to more patience; even as the blessed Job, whom they made more illustrious and honourable.

5. At the present time then, a man is angry with us, a man of like passions, and of like soul, and we are afraid: but in the case of Job it was an evil and malignant demon who was angry; nay, he was not simply angry, but set in motion all sorts of machinations, and brought forward every stratagem; and yet even with all he could not conquer the fortitude of the just man. But here is a man, who is at one time angry, at another time is reconciled; and we are nevertheless dead with fear. On that occasion it was a devil that waged war, who is never reconciled to human nature, but has engaged in a war without treaty, and a battle without truce against our race; yet nevertheless, the just man laughed his darts to scorn. What apology then, or what pardon can be ours, if we cannot sustain a human trial; we

who are taught such spiritual wisdom under grace; when this man before grace, and before the Old Testament, endured this most grievous war so nobly! These things, beloved, we should therefore always discourse of with one another; and by words of this kind encourage ourselves. For you are witnesses, and your conscience is a witness how much gain we have already received from this trial! The dissolute man has now become sober; the bold man meek; the slothful man active. They who never at any time saw a church, but constantly spent their time at the theatre, now remain in the church the whole day long. Tell me then, do you grieve on this account, that God has made you earnest through fear; that He has led you by tribulation to a sense of your own safety? But is your conscience pained? Yea, is your mind pierced every day as with a dart, expecting death, and the greatest wrath? Nevertheless, from thence too we shall gain a great advance toward virtue, if our piety is made more earnest by means of the distress. For God is able to free you from all these evils this day. But not until He sees that you are purified; not until He sees that a conversion has taken place, and a repentance firm and unshaken, will He entirely remove the tribulation. The goldsmith, until he perceives the gold well refined, will not draw it out from the furnace; and even so God will not take away this cloud before He has thoroughly amended us. For He Himself who has permitted this trial, knows the time for removing it. So it is also with one who plays the harp; he neither overstrains the string, lest he break it, nor relaxes it too much, lest he mar the consonance of its harmony. Thus does God act. He neither places our souls in a state of constant repose, nor of lengthened tribulation; making use of both these at His discretion; for he neither suffers us to enjoy continual repose, lest we should grow listless, nor on the other hand does he permit us to be in constant tribulation, lest we sink under it, and become desperate.

6. Let us then leave to Him the time for the removal of our evils; let *us* only pray; let *us* live in piety: for this is our work, to turn to virtue; but to set us free from these evils is God's work! For indeed He is more desirous to quench this fire than thou who art tried by it: but He is waiting for your salvation. As tribulation then came of rest, so also after tribulation, rest must be expected. For neither is it always winter, nor always summer; neither are there always waves, nor always a calm; neither always night, nor always day. Thus tribulation is not perpetual, but there will be also repose; only in our tribulation, let us give thanks to God always. For the three youths were cast into the furnace, and did not even for this forget their piety; neither did the flames affright them, but more earnestly than men sitting in a chamber, and suffering nothing to alarm them, did they, while encircled by the fire, send up to heaven those sacred prayers — therefore the fire became a wall unto them, and the flame a robe; and the furnace was a fountain; and whereas it received them bound, it restored them free. It received bodies that were mortal, but abstained from them as if they had been immortal! It knew their nature, yet it revered their piety! The tyrant bound their feet, and their feet bound the operation of the fire! O marvellous thing! The flame loosed those who were bound, and was itself afterwards bound by those who had been in bonds; for the piety of the youths changed the nature of things; or rather it did not change the nature, but, what was far more wonderful, it stayed the operation of them, even while their nature remained. For it did not quench the fire, but though burning, made it powerless. And it was truly marvellous and unaccountable, that this not only happened with respect to the bodies of these saints, but also with respect to their garments, and their shoes. And as it was in the case of the Apostles, the garments of Paul expelled diseases and demons, [Acts 19:12] and the shadow of Peter [Acts 5:15] put death to flight; so

indeed also in this case, the shoes of these youths extinguished the power of the fire.

7. I know not how I should speak, for the wonder surpasses all description! The force of the fire was both quenched and not quenched: for while it came in contact with the bodies of these saints, it was quenched; but when it was needful to burst their bonds, it was not quenched; wherefore it broke their bonds, but touched not their ancles. [Daniel 3:25] Do you see how very near it was? Yet the fire was not deceived, and dared not penetrate within the bonds. The tyrant bound, and the flame set loose; that you might learn at once the fierceness of the barbarian, and the submissiveness of the element. For what reason did he bind, when he was about to cast into the fire? In order that the miracle might be the greater; that the sign might be the more unaccountable; that you may not suppose that the things seen were an optical delusion. For if that fire had been no fire, it would not have consumed the bands; and what is much more, it would not have seized upon the soldiers who were placed without the furnace; but as the case was, it showed its power upon those without; but towards those within, its submissiveness. But observe, I pray, in everything, how the devil by the very same means with which he fights with the servants of God, pulls down his own power; not intentionally, but because the wisdom and abundant contrivance of God turns all his weapons and devices upon his own head; which assuredly happened on that occasion. For the devil at that time inspiring the tyrant, neither suffered the heads of the saints to be cut off with the sword, nor that they should be delivered to wild beasts, nor punished in any such manner; but that they should be thrown into the fire; to the end that not even any relics of these saints should remain, their bodies being altogether consumed, and their ashes being mingled with the ashes of the fagots. But God accordingly employed this

very circumstance for the taking away of impiety. And how? I will tell you. Fire is accounted by the Persians to be a god; and the barbarians, who inhabit that country even now honour it with much worship. God, therefore, being desirous to pull up by the roots the material of impiety, permitted the punishment to take this form, in order that He might give the victory to His servants before the eyes of all these fire-worshippers; persuading them by the plain fact, that the gods of the Gentiles are in dread not of God only, but even of the servants of God.

8. Consider, moreover, how the crown of this victory was woven by the adversaries, and the enemies themselves were made witnesses of this trophy. For "*Nebuchadnezzar*," it says, "*sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image, and they were all gathered together.*" [Daniel 3:2] The enemy prepares the theatre, and he himself collects together the spectators, and prepares the lists; a theatre too, not of chance persons, or of some private individuals, but of all those who were honourable and in authority, to the end that their testimony may be worthy of credit with the multitude. They had come summoned for one thing; but they all departed having beheld another thing. They came in order to worship the image; and they departed, having derided the image, and struck with wonder at the power of God, through the signs which had taken place with respect to these young men. And observe, where the field for this display was spread out. No city, nor select enclosure furnished room for this theatre of the whole world, but smooth and naked plains. For in the plain of Dura, outside the city, he set up the image, and the herald came and cried, "*To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psalter, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the golden image;*" (for a

fall indeed it was to worship the idol) *"and whoso falls not down, and worships, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."* [Daniel 3:4, 6] Do you see how difficult these struggles are made; how irresistible the snare; and how deep the gulph, and a precipice on either hand? But be not afraid. In whatever degree the enemy increases his machinations, so much the more does he display the courage of the young men. For this reason is there this symphony of so many musicians; for this reason the burning furnace; in order that both pleasure, and fear, may besiege the souls of those present. Is there any one of harsh and unyielding character among them? *"Let the melody of every kind of music,"* says he, *"enchant and soften him."* But is he superior to this artifice, *"let the sight of the flame affright and astound him."* Thus was fear as well as pleasure present; the one entering to assault the soul by the ears, the other by the eyes. But the noble character of these youths was not by any such means to be conquered; but even as, when they fell into the fire, they mastered the flames, even so they derided all desire and all fear. For it was for them the devil had prepared all these things beforehand. For he had no doubts of his own subjects, but was exceedingly confident that no one would resist the royal mandate. But when all fell down, and were subdued, then the youths alone are led into the midst; in order that from this too the conquest may become the more illustrious, they alone conquering and being proclaimed victors among so vast a multitude. For this would not have been so surprising if they had acted courageously at the first, when as yet no one had been overthrown. But the greatest, and most astonishing fact was, that the multitude of those who fell down, neither affrighted, nor enfeebled them. They did not say to themselves any such things as many are oftentimes wont to say; *"If we were the first, and the only persons to worship the image, this would have been a sin: but if we do this with so many myriads,*

who will not make allowance? Who will not think us worthy of defence?" nothing of that sort did they say or think, when they beheld the prostrate forms of so many tyrants. Consider thou also with me the wickedness of those who were their accusers, and how maliciously and bitterly they brought the accusation! *"There are,"* say they, *"certain Jews whom you have set up over the works of the province of Babylon."* They did not merely make mention of the nation, but they also bring to mind their honourable condition, that they may inflame the wrath of the king; almost as if they had said, *"These slaves, these captives, who are without a city, you have made rulers over us. But they show contempt for such honour, and treat insolently him who has given them this honour!"* Therefore they say this; *"The Jews whom you have set over the works of the province of Babylon, obey not your decree, nor serve your gods."* [Daniel 3:12] The accusation becomes their greatest praise; and the crimes imputed, their encomium; a testimony indeed that is indubitable, since their enemies bring it forward. What then does the king? He commands that they should be brought into the midst, so that he may affright them in every way. But nothing dismayed them, neither the wrath of the king, nor their being left alone in the midst of so many, nor the sight of the fire, nor the sound of the trumpet, nor the whole multitude looking fire at them; for deriding all these things, as if they were about to be cast into a cool fountain of water, they entered the furnace uttering that blessed sentence, *"We will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up."* [Daniel 3:18]

9. I have not referred to this history without reason, but that you may learn that whether it be the wrath of a king, or the violence of soldiers, or the envy of enemies, or captivity, or destitution, or fire, or furnace, or ten thousand terrors, nothing will avail to put to shame or terrify a righteous man. For if where the king was godless the youths were not dismayed at the

tyrant's wrath, how much more ought we to be confident, having an emperor who is humane and merciful, and to express thankfulness to God for this tribulation, knowing from what has now been said, that tribulations render men more illustrious both in the presence of God and of man, if they know how to bear them with fortitude! For indeed if these had not been made slaves, we should not have known their freedom! If they had not been captives, we should not have learned their nobility of soul! If they had not been exiles from their country below, we should not have known the excellency of their citizenship above! If the earthly king had not been angry with them, we should not have known the favour with which they were regarded by the heavenly King!

10. Thou too then, if you have Him for your Friend, be not despairing, although you fall into the furnace: and in like manner if He be angry, think not you are safe though thou be in Paradise. For Adam indeed was in Paradise, yet, when he had provoked God, Paradise profited him nothing. These youths were in the furnace; yet, since they were approved, the furnace injured them not at all. Adam was in Paradise, but when he was supine, he was supplanted! Job sat down on the dunghill, yet, since he was vigilant he prevailed! Yet how much better was Paradise than a dunghill! still the excellency of the place benefitted in no degree the inhabitant; forasmuch as he had betrayed himself; as likewise indeed the vileness of the place did to one no injury, who was fortified on every side with virtue. As to ourselves then, let us fortify our souls; for if the loss of wealth should threaten us, or even death, and yet no one can rob us of our religion, we are the happiest of men, Christ commended this when he said, "*Be wise as serpents.*" [Matthew 10:16] For just as he exposes the whole body in order that he may save the head, so also do thou. Although it should be necessary to expose wealth, or the body, or the present life, or all things, for the

purpose of preserving your religion; be not cast down! For if you depart hence in possession of that, God will restore to you all things with more abundant splendour, and will raise again your body with greater glory; and instead of riches, there will be the good things that surpass all power of description. Did not Job sit naked on a dunghill, sustaining a life more grievous than ten thousand deaths? Yet since he did not cast away his piety, all his former things came back to him in greater abundance, soundness and beauty of body; his full band of children; his possessions; and what was greater than all, the splendid crown of his patience. For as it happens with trees, should any one pluck away the fruit and the leaves together; should he even cut off all the branches letting the root only remain; the tree will rise again entire, with greater beauty, so indeed is it also with us. If the root of piety remain, although wealth be taken away, although the body destroyed, all things again revert to us with greater glory than before. Casting away therefore all anxiety and superfluous care, let us return to ourselves; and let us adorn the body and the soul with the ornament of virtue; converting our bodily members into instruments of righteousness and not instruments of sin.

11. And first of all, let us discipline our tongue to be the minister of the grace of the Spirit, expelling from the mouth all virulence and malignity, and the practice of using disgraceful words. For it is in our power to make each one of our members an instrument of wickedness, or of righteousness. Hear then how men make the tongue an instrument, some of sin, others of righteousness! *"Their tongue is a sharp sword."* But another speaks thus of his own tongue: *"My tongue is the pen of a ready writer."* The former wrought destruction; the latter wrote the divine law. Thus was one a sword, the other a pen, not according to its own nature, but according to the choice of those who employed it. For the nature of this tongue and of that was the

same, but the operation was not the same. And again, as to the mouth likewise, we may see this same thing. For these had a mouth full of filth and of wickedness, therefore against such it is said by way of accusation, *"Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;"* not such was his, but *"My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding."* Again, there were others who had their hands full of iniquity, and accusing these he said, *"Iniquities are in their hands, and their right hand is filled with gifts."* But he himself had hands practised in nothing but in being stretched out towards heaven. Therefore he said of these too, *"The lifting up of my hands (let it be) an evening sacrifice."* The same may also be perceived with reference to the heart; for their heart indeed was foolish, but this man's was true; hence he speaks of them thus, *"Their heart is vain;"* but of his own, *"My heart is inditing of a good matter."* And as to the ear, one may see that the case is the same; for some have a sense of hearing like that of beasts, which is not to be charmed or moved to pity; and reproaching such the Psalmist says, *"They are like the deaf adder, that stops her ears."* But his ear was the receptacle of the divine words, and this he again makes manifest, when he says, *"I will incline mine ear to a parable, I will open my dark speech upon the harp."*

12. Knowing these things then, let us fortify ourselves with virtue on all sides, and thus we shall avert the wrath of God, and let us make the members of the body instruments of righteousness; and let us discipline eyes, and mouth, and hands, and feet, and heart, and tongue, and the whole body, to be employed only in the service of virtue. And let us remember those three precepts, of which I discoursed to your Charity, exhorting you to consider no one as an enemy, nor to speak evil of any one of those who have aggrieved you; and to expel from your mouth the evil custom of oaths. And with respect to the two former precepts, we will discourse to you on

another occasion; but we shall speak to you during the whole of the present week respecting oaths; thus beginning with the easier precept. For it is no labour at all to overcome the habit of swearing, if we would but apply a little endeavour, by reminding each other; by advising; by observing; and by requiring those who thus forget themselves, to render an account, and to pay the penalty. For what advantage shall we gain by abstinence from meats, if we do not also expel the evil habits of the soul? Lo, we have spent the whole of this day fasting; and in the evening we shall spread a table, not such as we did on yester-eve, but one of an altered and more solemn kind. Can any one of us then say that he has changed his life too this day; that he has altered his ill custom, as well as his food? Truly, I suppose not! Of what advantage then is our fasting? Wherefore I exhort, and I will not cease to exhort, that undertaking each precept separately, you should spend two or three days in the attainment of it; and just as there are some who rival one another in fasting, and show a marvellous emulation in it; (some indeed who spend two whole days without food; and others who, rejecting from their tables not only the use of wine, and of oil, but of every dish, and taking only bread and water, persevere in this practice during the whole of Lent); so, indeed, let us also contend mutually with one another in abolishing the frequency of oaths. For this is more useful than any fasting; this is more profitable than any austerity. And this same care which we display in abstaining from food, let us exhibit with respect to abstinence from oaths; since we shall be chargeable with the reproach of extreme folly, while we regard not things that are forbidden, and expend all our care upon things indifferent; for to eat is not forbidden, but to swear is forbidden; we, however, abstaining from those things that are permitted, daringly venture upon those things that are forbidden! On this account I beseech your Charity to make some change, and to let the beginning of it be visible from

this day. For if we spend the whole of the present fast with such zeal, having in this week attained the practice of not swearing at all; and in the following having extinguished wrath; and in that which succeeds it, having pulled up evil-speaking by the roots; and after that, having amended what yet remains; thus going forward in our course, we shall come little by little to the very summit of virtue; and we shall escape the present danger; and shall make God propitious; and the multitude will come back again to our city; and we shall teach the fugitives that we are to place our hopes of safety neither in security of place, nor in flight and retirement; but in piety of soul, and in virtue of manners. And thus shall we obtain the good things of this and of the future life; which, God grant! We may all be found worthy of, by the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 5 on the Statues

The exhortation of the last Homily is continued in this. The people are exhorted to bear with fortitude the impending wrath of the Emperor. The cases of Job and the Ninevites are referred to as examples. It is shown that men ought not to fear death, but sin. What it is to die miserably is explained; and the Homily concludes with an earnest dissuasive against the use of oaths.

1. The discourse concerning the three young men, and the Babylonian furnace, did, as it would seem, yesterday give no small comfort to your Charity; and still more the example in the case of Job, and that dunghill more to be venerated than any kingly throne. For from seeing a royal throne no advantage results to the spectators, but only a temporary pleasure, which has no profit; but from the sight of Job's dunghill, one may derive every kind of benefit, yea, much divine wisdom and consolation, in order to patience. Therefore to this day many undertake a long pilgrimage, even across the sea, hastening from the extremities of the earth, as far as Arabia, that they may see that dunghill; and having beheld it, may kiss the land, which contained the wrestling-ground of such a victor, and received the blood that was more precious than all gold! For the purple shines not so brilliantly, as did that body when dyed not in another's blood, but in its own! Even those very wounds were more precious than all manner of jewels! For the nature of pearls is of no help to our life; nor do they satisfy any necessary want on the part of those who have them. But those wounds are a consolation for all sadness; and that you may learn this to be the truth, suppose any one were to lose a beloved and only son. Show him ten thousand pearls, and you will not console his grief, or lighten his anguish;

but recall to his mind the wounds of Job, and you would easily be able to minister comfort by speaking thus: *"Why do you sorrow, O man? You have lost one son; but that blessed man, after he had been bereaved of the whole family of his children, both received a plague in his own flesh, and sat down naked upon the dunghill, streaming with gore from every part, and his flesh gradually wasting away; even he who was just, and true, so devout a man, who stained from every evil deed, and had even God for a witness to his virtue."* By speaking thus you would extinguish all the sufferer's sadness, and remove all his distress. Thus the wounds of the just man become more useful than pearls!

2. Figure to yourselves then this wrestler; and imagine that you see that dunghill, and himself sitting in the midst of it! That golden statue! set with gems! I know not how to express it: for I am unable to find any material so precious as to compare it with that body stained with blood! So far above every substance, however costly, was the nature of that flesh, beyond all comparison more precious, and those wounds more splendid than the sun's beams; for these illumine the eyes of the body; but those enlighten the eyes of the mind! Those struck the devil with utter blindness! Therefore it was, that after that blow, he started back and appeared no more. And do thou, O beloved, learn thence too what advantage there is in tribulation! For when the just man was rich, and enjoyed ease, he had the means of accusing him. However falsely, yet still he had it in his power to say, *"Does Job serve you for nought?"* But after he had stripped him and made him poor, he dared not even open his mouth any more. When he was wealthy, he prepared to wrestle with him, and threatened to overthrow him; but when he had made him poor, and taken away all he had, and thrown him into the deepest distress, then he started back. When indeed his body was sound, he lifted up his hands against him, but when he had battered his flesh, then he fled—

defeated! Do you see how to the vigilant, poverty is much better and more beneficial than riches; and infirmity and sickness, than health; and trial, than tranquillity; inasmuch as it makes the combatants more illustrious and vigorous?

3. Who has seen or heard of such an astonishing contest? The fighters in worldly contests, when they have battered the heads of their adversaries, are then victorious, and are crowned! But this adversary, when he had battered the body of the just man, perforating it with ulcers of every kind, and had reduced him to great weakness, was then conquered, and drew back. Even when he had pierced his ribs in every direction, he was no gainer thereby; for he spoiled him not of his hidden treasure, but he made him more conspicuous to us; and through that piercing he gave to all the privilege to look into his interior, and to discern completely the whole of his wealth! When he expected to prevail, then he withdrew with much ignominy, and never again uttered a syllable! What is the matter, O devil? For what cause do you withdraw? Was not everything done that you chose? Have you not taken away his flocks, his herds, his droves of horses and of mules? Have you not also destroyed his troop of children? And battered his flesh to pieces. For what reason do you withdraw? *"Because,"* says he, *"every thing I chose has come to pass, and yet that which I most desired should come to pass, and for which I did all those things, is not come to pass; he has not blasphemed! For it was in order to this, continues he, that I was doing all those things; and as this is not come to pass, I am no gainer by having deprived him of his wealth; or by the destruction of his children; or by the plague inflicted upon his body; but the reverse of what I purposed has come to pass; I have made my enemy more illustrious; I have added lustre to his reputation."* Perceivest thou, O beloved, how great was the reward of tribulation? His body was fair and sound before, but it became

more venerable, when pierced through and through by these wounds! And thus wool, fair as it is before the dyeing, when it becomes purple, takes an indescribable beauty, and an additional grace. But if he had not stripped him, we should not have known the good condition of the victor; if he had not pierced the body with ulcers, the rays within would not have shone forth. If he had not made him sit down upon a dunghill, we should not have known his wealth. For a king sitting on a throne is not so illustrious, as this man was notable and conspicuous, while sitting upon his dunghill! For after the royal throne, comes death; but after that dunghill, the kingdom of heaven!

4. Collecting then all these reasons, let us raise ourselves from the dejection which oppresses us. For I have laid these histories before you, not that you may applaud what is spoken, but that you may imitate the virtue and the patience of such noble men; that you may learn from the very facts, that there is nothing of human ills to be dreaded, save sin only; neither poverty, nor disease, nor insult, nor malicious treatment, nor ignominy, nor death, which is accounted the worst of all evils. To those who love spiritual wisdom, such things are only the names of calamities; names which have no substantial reality. But the true calamity consists in offending God, and in doing anything which is displeasing to Him. For tell me, what is there in death which is terrible? Is it because it transports you more quickly to the peaceful haven, and to that life which is free from tumult? Although man should not put you to death, will not the very law of nature, at length stealing upon you, separate the body from the soul; and if this event which we fear does not happen now, it will happen shortly.

5. I speak thus, not anticipating any dread or melancholy event: God forbid! But because I am ashamed for those who are afraid of death. Tell me, while expecting such good things as *"eye has not seen, nor ear heard,*

nor have entered the heart of man," do you demur about this enjoyment, and art negligent and slothful; and not only slothful, but fearful and trembling? And is it not shameful that you are distressed on account of death, whereas Paul groaned on account of the present life, and writing to the Romans said, *"The creation groans together, and ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit do groan."* [Romans 8:22-23] And he spoke thus, not as condemning the things present, but longing for the things to come. *"I have tasted,"* says he, *"of the grace, and I do not willingly put up with the delay. I have the first fruits of the Spirit, and I press on towards the whole. I have ascended to the third heaven; I have seen that glory which is unutterable; I have beheld the shining palaces; I have learned what joys I am deprived of, while I linger here, and therefore do I groan."* For suppose any one had conducted you into princely halls, and shown you the gold everywhere glittering on the walls, and all the rest of the glorious show; if from thence he had led you back afterward to a poor man's hut, and promised that in a short time he would bring you back to those palaces, and would there give you a perpetual mansion; tell me, would you not indeed languish with desire, and feel impatient, even at these few days? Thus think then of heaven, and of earth, and groan with Paul, not because of death, but because of the present life!

6. But grant me, says one, to be like Paul, and I shall never be afraid of death. Why, what is it that forbids you, O man, to become like Paul? Was he not a poor man? Was he not a tent maker? Was he not a man of humble position? For if he had been rich and high born, the poor, when called upon to imitate his zeal, would have had their poverty to plead; but now you can say nothing of this sort. For this man was one who exercised a manual art, and supported himself too by his daily labours. And thou, indeed, from the first hast inherited true religion from your fathers; and from your earliest

age hast been nourished in the study of the sacred writings; but he was "*a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,*" [1 Timothy 1:13] and ravaged the Church! Nevertheless, he so changed all at once, as to surpass all in the vehemence of his zeal, and he cries out, saying, "*Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ.*" [1 Corinthians 11:6] He imitated the Lord; and will not thou who hast been educated in piety from the first, imitate a fellow-servant; one who by conversion was brought to the faith at a later period of life? Do you not know, that they who are in sins are dead while they live; and that they who live in righteousness, although they be dead, yet they live? [1 Timothy 5:6] And this is not my word. It is the declaration of Christ speaking to Martha, "*He that believes in me though he were dead yet shall he live.*" [John 11:5] Is our doctrine, indeed, a fable? If you are a Christian, believe in Christ; if you believe in Christ, show me your faith by your works. [James 2:18] But how may thou show this? By your contempt of death: for in this we differ from the unbelievers. They may well fear death; since they have no hope of a resurrection. But you, who art travelling toward better things, and hast the opportunity of meditating on the hope of the future; what excuse have you, if while assured of a resurrection, thou are yet at the same time as fearful of death, as those who believe not the resurrection?

7. But I have no fear of death, says one, nor of the act of dying, but of a miserable death, of being beheaded. Did John then, I ask, die miserably? For he was beheaded. Or did Stephen die miserably? For he was stoned; and all the martyrs have thus died wretchedly, according to this objection: since some have ended their lives by fire; and others by the sword; and some cast into the ocean; others down a precipice; and others into the jaws of wild beasts, have so come by their death. To die basely, O man, is not to come to one's end by a violent death, but to die in sin! Hear, at least, the

prophet moralising on this very matter, and saying, "*The death of sinners is evil.*" He does not say that a violent death is evil; but what then? "*The death of sinners is evil.*" And justly so; for after the departure from this life, there is an intolerable punishment; undying vengeance, the envenomed worm; the fire unquenchable, the outer darkness, the chains indissoluble; the gnashing of teeth, the tribulation, and the anguish, and the eternal justice.

8. Since therefore such evils await sinners, what advantage can it be to them, though they should end their days at home, and in their bed? Even so, on the other hand, it can do no harm to the righteous to lay down the present life through sword, or steel, or fire, when they are to depart to the good things that are immortal. Truly "*the death of sinners is evil.*" Such a death was that of the rich man, who despised Lazarus. He, when he had terminated his life by a natural end, at home and on his bed, and with his relatives about him, experienced after his departure to the other world a fiery torment; nor was he able to obtain there even a little comfort, out of all the pleasure he had enjoyed in the present life! But not so was it with Lazarus; for when lying upon the pavement, while the dogs came and licked his sores, he had suffered a violent death (for what could be more painful than hunger?), but on his departing hence he enjoyed eternal blessings, luxuriating in the bosom of Abraham! In what respect, then, did it injure him that he died a violent death? Or what did it profit the rich man, that he died not with violence?

9. But, says some one, "*We have no fear of dying by violence, but of dying unjustly; and of being punished in a similar way with the guilty—we who have had nothing to do with the crimes of which we are suspected.*" What do you say, tell me? Are you afraid of dying unjustly, and would you wish to die justly. But who is there so wretched and miserable, that when he had the alternative of dying unjustly, would rather depart by an act of

justice? For if it be necessary to fear death, it is necessary to fear it when it comes upon us justly; since he indeed who dies unjustly, is by this very means made a partaker with all the saints. For many of those who were approved and distinguished by God, have been subjected to an unjust end; and first of all Abel. For it was not that he had sinned against his brother, or done Cain any harm; but inasmuch as he had honoured God, therefore was he slaughtered. But God permitted it. Was it, think you, because He loved him, or because He hated him? Most clearly, because He loved him, and wished to make his crown the brighter, by that most unjust murder. Do you see then, that it becomes us not to be afraid of dying by violence; nor yet of dying unjustly; but of dying in a state of sin? Abel died unjustly. Cain lived, groaning and trembling! Which then, I would ask, was the more blessed of the two; he who went to rest in righteousness, or he who lived in sin; he who died unjustly, or he who was justly punished? Would you have me declare unto your Charity, whence it is that we are afraid of death? The love of the kingdom has not penetrated us, nor the desire of things to come inflamed us: otherwise we should despise all present things, even as the blessed Paul did. Add to this, on the other hand, that we do not stand in awe of hell; therefore death is terrible. We are not sensible of the unsufferable nature of the punishment there; therefore, instead of sin, we fear death; since if the fear of the one held possession of our souls, the fear of the other would not be able to enter.

10. And this I will endeavour to make manifest, not from anything of a remote nature, but from what is at our own doors; and from the events which have happened among us in these days. For when the Emperor's letter came, ordering that tribute to be imposed which was thought to be so intolerable, all were in a tumult; all quarrelled with it; thought it a sore grievance, resented it; and when they met one another said, "*Our life is not*

worth living, the city is undone—no one will be able to stand under this heavy burden;" and they were distressed as if placed in the extremest danger. After this, when the rebellion was actually perpetrated, and certain vile, yea, thoroughly vile persons, trampling under foot the laws, threw down the statues, and involved all in the utmost peril; and now that we are in fear for our very lives, through the indignation of the Emperor, this loss of money no longer stings us. But instead of such complaints, I hear from all a language of a different kind. *"Let the Emperor take our substance, we will gladly be deprived of our fields and possessions, if any one will but ensure us safety for the bare body."* As therefore, before the fear of death pressed upon us, the loss of our wealth tormented us; and after these lawless outrages had been perpetrated, the fear of death succeeding, expelled the grief for that loss; so if the fear of hell had held possession of our souls, the fear of death would not have possessed them. But even as it is with the body, when two kinds of pain seize upon us, the more powerful usually overshadows the weaker one, so also would it now happen; if the dread of future punishment remained in the soul, that would overshadow all human fear. So that if any one endeavours always to have the remembrance of hell, he will deride every kind of death; and this will not only deliver him from the present distress, but will even rescue him from the flame to come. For he who is always afraid of hell, will never fall into the fire of hell; being made sober by this continual fear!

11. Permit me, that I now say to you at a fitting time, *"Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children."*

[1 Corinthians 14:20] For this is a childish terror of ours, if we fear death, but are not fearful of sin. Little children too are afraid of masks, but fear not the fire. On the contrary, if they are carried by accident near a lighted candle, they stretch out the hand without any concern towards the candle

and the flame; yet a mask which is so utterly contemptible terrifies them; whereas they have no dread of fire, which is really a thing to be afraid of. Just so we too have a fear of death, which is a mask that might well be despised; but have no fear of sin, which is truly dreadful; and, even as fire, devours the conscience! And this is wont to happen not on account of the nature of the things, but by reason of our own folly; so that if we were once to consider what death is, we should at no time be afraid of it. What then, I pray you, is death? Just what it is to put off a garment. For the body is about the soul as a garment; and after laying this aside for a short time by means of death, we shall resume it again with the more splendour. What is death at most? It is a journey for a season; a sleep longer than usual! So that if you fear death, you should also fear sleep! If for those who are dying you are pained, grieve for those too who are eating and drinking, for as this is natural, so is that! Let not natural things sadden you; rather let things which arise from an evil choice make you sorrowful. Sorrow not for the dying man; but sorrow for him who is living in sin!

12. Would you have me mention another reason on account of which we fear death? We do not live with strictness, nor keep a clear conscience; for if this were the case nothing would alarm us, neither death, nor famine, nor the loss of wealth, nor anything else of this kind. For he who lives virtuously, cannot be injured by any of these things, or be deprived of his inward pleasure. For being supported by favourable hopes, nothing will be able to throw him into dejection. What is there that any one can possibly effect, by which he can cause the noble-minded man to become sorrowful? Take away his riches? He has yet wealth that is in the heavens! Cast him out of his country? He will take his journey to that city which is above! Load him with fetters? He has still his conscience free, and is insensible to the external chain! Put his body to death? Yet he shall rise again! And as he

who fights with a shadow, and beaten the air, will be unable to hit any one; so he who is at war with the just man, is but striking at a shadow, and wasting his own strength, without being able to inflict any injury upon him. Grant me then to be sure of the kingdom of heaven; and, if you wish, slay me this day. I shall be thankful to you for the slaughter; forasmuch as you send me quickly to the possession of those good things! *"This, however,"* says some one, *"is what we especially lament, that hindered as we are by the multitude of our sins, we shall not attain to that kingdom."* Such being the case then, leave off lamenting death, and lament your sins, in order that you may be freed from them! Grief, indeed, has had its existence, not that we should sorrow for the loss of wealth, nor for death, nor for anything else of that kind, but that we may employ it for the taking away of our sins. And I will make the truth of this evident by an example. Healing medicines have been made for those diseases only which they are able to remove; not for those which are in no respect assisted by them. For instance (for I wish to make the matter still plainer), the medicine which is able to benefit a malady of the eyes only, and no other disease, one might justly say was made only for the sake of the eyes; not for the stomach, nor for the hands, nor any other member. Let us then transfer this argument to the subject of grief; and we shall find, that in none of those things which happen to us, is it of any advantage, except to correct sin; whence it is apparent that it has had its existence only for the destruction of this. Let us now take a survey of each of those evils which befall us, and let us apply despondency as a remedy, and see what sort of advantage results from it.

13. Some one is mulcted in property: he becomes sad, but this does not make good his loss. Some one has lost a son: he grieves, but he cannot raise the dead, nor benefit the departed. Some one has been scourged, beaten, and insulted; he becomes sorrowful. This does not recall the insult. Some one

falls into sickness, and a most grievous disease; he is dejected. This does not remove his disease, but only makes it the more grievous. Do you see that in none of these cases does sadness answer any useful purpose?

Suppose that any one has sinned, and is sad. He blots out the sin; he gets free from the transgression. How is this shown? By the declaration of the Lord; for, speaking of a certain one who had sinned, He said, *"Because of his iniquity I made him sad for a while; and I saw that he was grieved, and he went on heavily; and I healed his ways."* Therefore also Paul says, *"Godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation not to be repented of."*

[2 Corinthians 7:10] Since then what I have said clearly shows, that neither the loss of riches, nor insult, nor abuse, nor stripes, nor sickness, nor death, nor any other thing of that kind can possibly be relieved by the interference of grief, but sin only can it blot out and do away, it is evident that this is the only reason why it has its existence. Let us therefore no more grieve for the loss of wealth, but let us grieve only when we commit sin. For great in this case is the gain that comes of sorrow. Are you amerced? Be not dejected, for thus you will not be at all benefited. Have you sinned? Then be sorry: for it is profitable; and consider the skill and wisdom of God. Sin has brought forth for us these two things, sorrow and death. For *"in the day you eat,"* He says, *"you shall surely die;"* and to the woman, *"In sorrow you shall bring forth children."* [Genesis 2:17] And by both of these things he took away sin, and provided that the mother should be destroyed by her offspring. For that death as well as grief takes away sin, is evident, in the first place, from the case of the martyrs; and it is plain too from what Paul says to those who had sinned, speaking on this wise, *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."* Inasmuch, he observes, as you have sinned, you die, so that you are freed from sin by death.

Therefore he goes on to say, *"For if we would judge ourselves, we should*

not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." [1 Corinthians 11:31-32] And even as the worm is brought forth from the wood, and devours the wood; and a moth consumes the wool, from whence it originates; so grief and death were born of sin, and devour sin.

14. Let us not then fear death, but let us only fear sin, and grieve on account of this. And these things I speak, not anticipating any thing fearful, God forbid! But wishing you when alarmed to be always thus affected, and to fulfil the law of Christ in very deed. For "*he,*" says Christ, "*that takes not his cross, and follows after Me, is not worthy of Me.*" [Matthew 10:38] This He said, not that we should bear the wood upon our shoulders, but that we should always have death before our eyes. Even so as Paul, that is, died daily, and laughed at death, and despised the present life. For indeed you are a soldier, and standest continually at arms; but a soldier who is afraid of death, will never perform a noble action. Thus then neither will a Christian man, if fearful of dangers, perform anything great or admirable; nay, besides this, he will be apt to be easily vanquished. But not so is it with the man who is bold and lofty minded. He remains impregnable and unconquerable. As then the Three Children, when they feared not the fire, escaped from the fire, so also we, if we fear not death, shall entirely escape from death. They feared not the fire (for it is no crime to be burnt), but they feared sin, for it is a crime to commit impiety. Let us also imitate these and all such, and let us not be afraid of dangers, and then we shall pass safely through them.

15. As for me, "*I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet,*" [Amos 7:14] yet I understand clearly thus much of the future, and I proclaim, both loudly and distinctly, that if we become changed, and bestow some care upon our souls, and desist from iniquity, nothing will be

unpleasant or painful. And this I plainly know from the love of God toward man, as well as from those things which He has done for men, and cities, and nations, and whole populations. For He threatened the city of Nineveh, and said, *"There are yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."*

[Jonah iii] What then, I ask, Was Nineveh overthrown? Was the city destroyed? Nay, quite the contrary; it both arose, and became still more distinguished; and long as is the time which has elapsed, it has not effaced its glory, but we all still celebrate and admire it even to this day. For from that time it has been a sort of excellent haven for all who have sinned, not suffering them to sink into desperation, but calling all to repentance; and by what it did, and by what it obtained of God's favour, persuading men never to despair of their salvation, but exhibiting the best life they can, and setting before them a good hope, to be confident of the issue as destined in any wise to be favourable. For who would not be stirred up on hearing of such an example, even if he were the laziest of mortals?

16. For God even preferred that His own prediction should fall to the ground, so that the city should not fall. Or rather, the prophecy did not even so fall to the ground. For if indeed while the men continued in the same wickedness, the sentence had not taken effect, some one perhaps might have brought a charge against what was uttered. But if when they had changed, and desisted from their iniquity, God also desisted from His wrath, who shall be able any longer to find fault with the prophecy, or to convict the things spoken of falsehood. The same law indeed which God had laid down from the beginning, publishing it to all men by the prophet, was on that occasion strictly observed. What then is this law? *"I shall speak a sentence,"* says He, *"concerning a nation or a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; and it shall be, that if they repent of their evil, I will also repent of the wrath which I said I would do unto them."*

[Jeremiah 18:7-8] Guarding then this law, he saved those who were converted and released from His wrath those who desisted from their wickedness. He knew the virtue of the barbarians; therefore He hastened the prophet there. Thus was the city agitated at the time, when it heard the prophet's voice, but instead of being injured it was benefited by fear. For that fear was the cause of its safety. The threatening effected the deliverance from the peril. The sentence of overthrow put a stop to the overthrow. O strange and astonishing event! The sentence threatening death, brought forth life! The sentence after it was published became cancelled; the very opposite to that which takes place among temporal judges! For in their case the proclamation of the sentence causes it to become valid, is fully to ratify it; but on the contrary, with God, the publication of the sentence, caused it to be cancelled. For if it had not been published, the offenders would not have heard; and if they had not heard, they would not have repented, and if they had not repented, they would not have warded off the punishment, nor would they have obtained that astonishing deliverance. For how is it less than astonishing, when the judge declares sentence, and the condemned discharge the sentence by their repentance! They, indeed, did not flee from the city as we are now doing, but remaining in it they caused it to stand. It was a snare, and they made it a fortification! It was a gulph, and a precipice, and they turned it into a tower of safety! They had heard that the buildings would fall, and yet they fled not from the buildings, but they fled from their sins. They did not depart each from his house as we do now, but each departed from his evil way; for, said they, *"why should we think the walls have brought forth the wrath? We are the causes of the wound; we then should provide the medicine."* Therefore they trusted for safety, not to a change of habitations, but of habits.

17. Thus did the barbarians! And are we not ashamed, and ought we not to hide our faces, while instead of changing our habits, as they did, we change only our habitations; privily removing our goods, and doing the deeds of men that are drunken? Our Master is angry with us; and we, neglecting to appease His wrath, carry about our household stuff from place to place, and run hither and there, seeking where we may deposit our substance; while we ought rather to seek where we may deposit our soul in safety; or rather, it behooves us not to seek, but to entrust its safety to virtue and uprightness of life. For when we were angry and displeased with a servant, if he, instead of defending himself against our displeasure, went down to his apartment, and collecting together his clothes, and binding up together all his movables, meditated a flight, we could not tamely put up with this contempt. Let us then desist from this unseasonable endeavour, and let us each say to God, *"Whither shall I go from Your Spirit, and whither shall I flee from Your presence?"* Let us imitate the spiritual wisdom of the barbarians. They repented even on uncertain grounds! For the sentence had no such clause, *"If you turn and repent, I will set up the city;"* but simply, *"Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."* [Jonah 3:9] What then said they? *"Who knows whether God will repent of the evil He said He would do unto us?"* Who knows? They know not the end of the event, and yet they do not neglect repentance! They are unacquainted with God's method of showing mercy, and yet they change upon the strength of uncertainties! For neither was it in their power to look at other Ninevites who had repented and been saved; nor had they read prophets; nor had they heard patriarchs; nor had they enjoyed counsel, or partaken of admonition; nor had they persuaded themselves that they should certainly propitiate God by repentance. For the threatening did not imply this: but they were doubtful, and hesitating concerning it; and yet they

repented with all diligence. What reason then shall we have to urge, when those, who had no ground for confidence as to the issue, are seen to have exhibited so great a change; but thou who hast ground of confidence in the mercy of God, and who hast frequently received many pledges of His care, and hast heard prophets, and apostles, and hast been instructed by actual events; hast yet no emulation to reach the same measure of virtue as these did! Great assuredly was their virtue! But greater by far was the mercy of God! And this may be seen from the very greatness of the threat. For this reason God did not add to the declaration, "*But if you repent. I will spare:*" in order that by setting forth a sentence without limitation, He might increase the fear and having increased the fear, He might constrain them more speedily to repentance.

18. The prophet is indeed ashamed, foreseeing what the issue would be, and conjecturing that what he had prophesied, would remain unaccomplished; God however is not ashamed, but is desirous of one thing only, viz. the salvation of men, and corrects His own servant. For when he had entered the ship, He straightway there raised a boisterous sea; in order that you might know that where sin is, there is a tempest; where there is disobedience, there is the swelling of the waves. The city was shaken because of the sins of the Ninevites; and the ship was shaken because of the disobedience of the prophet. The sailors therefore threw Jonah in the deep, and the ship was preserved. Let us then drown our sins, and our city will assuredly be safe! Flight will certainly be no advantage to us; for it did not profit him; on the contrary, it did him injury. He fled from the land indeed, but he fled not from the wrath of God; he fled from the land, but he brought the tempest after him on the sea; and so far was he from obtaining any benefit by his flight, that he plunged those also who received him into the extremest peril. And while he sat sailing in the ship, although the sailors,

the pilots, and all the necessary apparatus of the ship were there present, he was placed in the utmost danger. After, however, having been thrown out into the deep, and having put away his sin by means of the punishment, he had been conveyed into that unstable vessel, I mean, the whale's belly, he enjoyed great security. This was for the purpose of teaching you, that as no ship can be of any use to him who is living in sin, so him who has put away his sin, the sea cannot drown, nor monsters destroy. Of a truth, the waves received, but they did not suffocate him. The whale received him, but did not destroy him; but both the animal and the element gave back to God unhurt that, with which they were entrusted; and by all these things the prophet was taught to be humane and merciful; and not to be more cruel than wild beasts, or thoughtless sailors, or unruly waves. For even the sailors did not immediately at first give him up, but after much compulsion; and the sea and the monster guarded him with great kindness; all these things being under God's direction.

19. Therefore he came back again; he preached; he threatened; he persuaded; he preserved; he affrighted; he amended; he established; by one, and that the first preaching! Many days he needed not, nor continued counsel; but speaking these simple words only, he brought all to repentance! On this account God did not lead him directly from the ship into the city; but the sailors committed him to the sea; the sea to the whale; the whale to God; God to the Ninevites; and by this long circuit he brought back the fugitive, that he might instruct all, that it is impossible to fly from the hands of God; that wherever any one may roam, dragging his sin after him, he will have to undergo a thousand evils; and though no mortal were present, yet on every side the whole creation will rise up against him with the utmost vehemence! Let us not then provide for our safety by flight, but by a change of the moral character. Is it for remaining in the city that God is

angry with you, that you should fly? It is because you have sinned, that He is indignant. Lay aside therefore the sin, and where the cause of your wound lies, thence remove the fountain of the evil. For the physicians too give us directions to cure contraries by contraries. Is fever, for instance, produced by a full diet? They subject the disease to the regimen of abstinence. Does any one fall sick from sadness? They say that mirth is the suitable medicine for it. Thus also it befits us to act with respect to diseases of the soul. Hath listlessness excited the wrath? Let us shake this off by zeal, and let us manifest in our conduct a great change. We have the fast, a very great auxiliary and ally in our warfare; and besides the fast, we have the impending distress, and the fear of danger. Now then, in season, let us be at work on the soul; for we shall easily be able to persuade it to whatever we choose; since he who is alarmed and trembling, and set free from all luxury, and who lives in terror, is able to practise moral wisdom without difficulty, and to receive the seeds of virtue with much alacrity.

20. Let us therefore persuade it to make this first change for the better, by the avoidance of oaths; for although I spoke to you yesterday, and the day before, on this same subject; yet neither today, nor tomorrow, nor the day after, will I desist giving my counsel on this subject. And why do I say tomorrow and the day following? Until I see that you are amended, I will not abstain from doing so. If those, indeed, who transgress this law, are not ashamed, far less should we who bid them not transgress it, feel this frequency of the admonition to be a matter worthy of shame. For to be continually reminding men of the same topics is not the fault of the speaker, but of the hearers, needing as they do perpetual instruction, upon simple and easily-observed precepts. What indeed is easier than not to swear? It is only a good work of habit. It is neither labour of the body, nor expenditure of wealth. Are you desirous to learn how it is possible to get the better of

this infirmity, how it is possible to be set free from this evil habit? I will tell you of a particular method by which if pursued you will certainly master it. If you see either yourself or any other person, whether it be one of your servants, or of your children, or your wife, ensnared in this vice; when you have continually reminded them of it, and they are not amended, order them to retire to rest supperless; and impose this sentence upon yourself, as well as upon them, a sentence which will bring with it no injury, but a gain. For such is the nature of spiritual acts; they bring profit and a speedy reformation. The tongue when constantly punished, when straitened by thirst. and pained by hunger, receives a sufficient admonition, even while no one is its monitor; and though we were the most stupid of mortals, yet when we are thus reminded by the greatness of the punishment during a whole day, we shall need no other counsel and exhortation.

21. You have applauded what I have spoken. But still show me your applause too by deeds. Else what is the advantage of our meeting here? Suppose a child were to go to school every day, yet if he learned nothing the more for it, would the excuse satisfy us that he every day went there? Should we not esteem it the greatest fault, that going there daily, he did it to no purpose. Let us consider this with ourselves, and let us say to ourselves, For so long a time have we met together at church, having the benefit of a most solemn Communion, which has in it much profit; and should we return back again just as we came, with none of our defects corrected, of what advantage is our coming here? For most actions are done, not for themselves, but for the effects which follow through their means; as, for example, the sower does not sow for the mere sake of sowing, but in order that he may reap too; since if this were not to follow, the sowing would be a loss, the seeds rotting without any kind of advantage. The merchant does not take a voyage merely for sailing's sake, but that he may increase his

substance by going abroad; since, if this be not attained beside, extreme mischief will result, and the voyage of merchants were but for loss. Let us indeed consider this in relation to ourselves. We also meet together in the church, not for the mere purpose of spending time here, but in order that we may return having gained a great and spiritual benefit. Should we then depart empty, and without having received any advantage, this our diligence becomes our condemnation! In order that this may not occur, and extreme mischief result, on departing from this place, let friends practise with one another; fathers with children; and masters with servants; and train yourselves to perform the task assigned you; so that when you come back again, and hear us giving you counsel on the same subjects, you may not be put to shame by an accusing conscience, but may rejoice and be glad, while ye perceive that you have accomplished the greatest part of the admonition.

22. Let us not moralize on these things here only. For this temporary admonition does not suffice to extirpate the whole evil; but at home also, let the husband hear of these things from the wife, and the wife from the husband. And let there be a kind of rivalry among all in endeavouring to gain precedence in the fulfilment of this law; and let him who is in advance, and has amended his conduct, reproach him who is still loitering behind; to the end that he may stir him up the more by these gibes. He who is deficient, and has not yet amended his conduct, let him look at him who has outstripped him, and strive with emulation to come up with him quickly. If we take advice on these points, and are anxiously concerned about them, our other affairs will speedily be well adjusted. Be thou solicitous about God's business, and he will take care of yours! And do not say to me, *"What if any one should impose upon us the necessity of taking oaths? What if he should not believe us?"* For assuredly, where a law is transgressed, it is improper to make mention of necessity; forasmuch as there is but one

necessity which cannot be dispensed with, viz. that of not offending God! This, however, I say further; cut off in the meantime superfluous oaths, those that are taken uselessly, and without any necessity; those to your own family, those to your friends, those to your servants; and should you take away these, you will have no further need of me for the others. For the very mouth that has been well disciplined to dread and to avoid the frequent oath, should any one constrain it a thousand times, would never consent to relapse again into the same habit. On the contrary, as now, with much labor and vast importunity, by alarming, threatening, exhorting, and counselling, we have scarcely been able to bring it over to a different habit, so in that case, although any one were to impose ever so great necessity, he could not possibly persuade to a transgression of this law. And as a person would never choose to take a particular poison, however urgent the necessity might be, so neither would he to utter an oath!

23. Should this amendment then take place, it will be an encouragement and inducement to the attainment of the remaining parts of virtue. For he who has not accomplished anything at all becomes listless, and quickly falls; but he who is conscious with himself that he has fulfilled at least one precept, coming by this to have a good hope, will go on with greater alacrity towards the rest; so that, after he has reached one, he will presently come to another; and will not halt until he has attained the crown of all. For if with regard to wealth, the more any one obtains of it, the more he desires, much rather may this be seen with reference to spiritual attainments. Therefore I hasten, and am urgent that this work may take its commencement, and that the foundation of virtue may be laid in your souls. We pray and beseech, that you will remember these words, not only at the present time, but also at home, and in the market, and wheresoever ye pass your time. Oh! That it were possible for me familiarly to converse with

you! then this long harangue of mine would have been unnecessary. But now since this may not be, instead of me, remember my words: and while you are sitting at table, suppose me to enter, and to be standing beside you, and dinning into you the things I now say to you in this place. And wheresoever there may be any discourse concerning me among you, above all things remember this precept, and render me this recompense for my love toward you. If I see that you have fulfilled it, I have received my full return, and have obtained a sufficient recompense for my labours. In order then that you may both render us the more active, and that yourselves too may be in the enjoyment of a good hope; and may provide for the accomplishment of the remaining precepts with greater facility; treasure up this precept in your souls with much care, and you will then understand the benefit of this admonition. And since a vestment broidered with gold is a beautiful and conspicuous object, but seems much more so to us when it is worn upon our own person; thus also the precepts of God are beautiful when being praised, but appear far more lovely when they are rightly practised. For now indeed ye commend what is spoken during a brief moment of time, but if you reduce it to practice, you will alike commend both yourselves and us all day long, and all your lives long. And this is not the grand point, that we shall praise one another; but that God will accept us; and not only accept us, but will also reward us with those gifts that are great and unspeakable! Of which may we all be deemed worthy, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom, and with whom, to the Father together with the Holy Ghost, be glory, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 6 on the Statues

This Homily is intended to show that the fear of Magistrates is beneficial. It also contains an account of what occurred, during their journey, to those who were conveying the tidings of the sedition to the Emperor. The case of Jonah is further cited in illustration. The exhortation on the fear of death is here continued; and it is shown, that he who suffers unjustly, and yet gives thanks to God, by whose permission it happens, is as one suffering for God's sake. Examples are again adduced from the history of the Three Children, and the Babylonian furnace. The Homily concludes with an address on the necessity of abstaining from oaths.

1. We have spent many days addressing words of comfort to your Charity. We would not, however, on that account lay the subject aside; but as long as the sore of despondency remains, we will apply to it the medicine of consolation. For if in the case of bodily wounds, physicians do not give over their fomentations, until they perceive that the pain has subsided; much less ought this to be done in regard to the soul. Despondency is a sore of the soul; and we must therefore foment it continually with soothing words. For not so naturally is warm water efficacious to soften a hard tumour of the flesh, as words of comfort are powerful to allay the swelling passions of the soul. Here, there is no need of the sponge as with physician, but instead of this we employ the tongue. No need of fire here, that we may warm the water; but instead of fire, we make use of the grace of the Spirit. Suffer us then to do so today. For if we were not to comfort you, where else could ye obtain consolation? The judges affright; the priests therefore must console! The rulers threaten; therefore must the Church give comfort! Thus

it happens with respect to little children. The teachers frighten them, and send them away weeping to their mothers; but the mothers receiving them back to their own bosoms, keep them there, embrace them, and kiss them, while they wipe away their tears, and relieve their sorrowing spirits; persuading them by what they say, that it is profitable for them to fear their teachers. Since therefore the rulers also make you afraid, and render you anxious, the Church, which is the common mother of us all, opening her bosom, and cradling us in her arms, administers daily consolation; telling us that the fear of rulers is profitable, and profitable too the consolation that comes from hence. For the fear of the former does not permit us to be relaxed by listlessness, but the consolation of the latter does not allow us to sink under the weight of sadness; and by both these means God provides for our safety. He Himself has armed magistrates with power; that they may strike terror into the licentious; and has ordained His priests that they may administer consolation to those that are in sorrow.

2. And both these things are taught us by the Scripture, and by actual experience of recent events. For if, while there are magistrates and soldiers living under arms, the madness of a few individuals, a motley crew of adventurers, has kindled such a fire among us, in so short a moment of time, and raised such a tempest, and made us all to stand in fear of shipwreck, suppose the fear of magistrates to be wholly taken away? To what lengths would they not have gone in their madness? Would they not have overthrown the city from its foundations, turning all things upside down, and have taken our very lives? If you were to abolish the public tribunals, you would abolish all order from our life. And even as if you deprive the ship of its pilot, you sink the vessel; or as, if you remove the general from the army, you place the soldiers bound in the hands of the enemy; so if you deprive the city of its rulers, we must lead a life less rational than that of the

brutes, biting and devouring one another; the rich man, the poorer; the stronger man, the weaker; and the bolder man, him who is more gentle. But now by the grace of God none of these things happen. For they who live in a state of piety, require no correction on the part of the magistrates; for *"the law is not made for a righteous man,"* [1 Timothy 1:9] says one. But the more numerous being viciously inclined, if they had no fear of these hanging over them, would fill the cities with innumerable evils; which Paul knowing, observed, *"There is no power, but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God."* [Romans 13:1] For what the tie-beams are in houses, that rulers are in cities; and in the same manner as if you were to take away the former, the walls, being disunited, would fall in upon one another of their own accord; so were you to deprive the world of magistrates, and of the fear that comes of them, houses at once, and cities, and nations, would fall on one another in unrestrained confusion, there being no one to repress, or repel, or persuade them to be peaceful, by the fear of punishment!

3. Let us not then be grieved, beloved, by the fear of our rulers, but let us give thanks to God that He has removed our listlessness, and rendered us more diligent. For tell me, what harm has arisen from this concern and anxiety? Is it that we have become more grave, and gentle; more diligent, and attentive? That we see no one intoxicated, and singing lascivious airs? Or is it that there are continual supplications, and prayers, and tears? That unseasonable laughter, and impure words, and all dissoluteness is banished; and that the city is now in all respects, like the pattern of a modest and virtuous woman? Do you grieve, I ask, for any of these reasons? For these things, assuredly, it were right to rejoice, and to be thankful to God, that by the terror of a few days He has put an end to such stupidity!

"Very true," says some one, *"if our danger did not go beyond fear, we should have reaped a sufficient benefit; but we are now in dread lest the*

mischief should proceed much farther, and we should be all placed in the extremest peril."

Nevertheless, I say, fear not. Paul comforts you, saying, *"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."* [1 Corinthians 10:13] He indeed Himself has said, *"I will never leave you, nor forsake you."* For had He resolved to punish us in deed, and in actual endurance, He would not have given us over to terror during so many days. For when He would not punish, He affrights; since if He were intending to punish, fear would be superfluous, and threatening superfluous. But now, we have sustained a life more grievous than countless deaths; fearing and trembling during so many days, and being suspicious of our very shadows; and paying the punishment of Cain; and in the midst of our sleep, starting up, through constant agony of mind. So that if we have kindled God's wrath, we have appeased Him in the endurance of such a punishment. For if we have not paid the satisfaction due to our sins, yet it has been enough to satisfy the mercy of God.

4. But not this, but many other grounds for confidence ought we to have. For God has already given us not a few pledges for favourable hopes. And first of all, those who carried the evil tidings departing hence with the speed of wings, supposing they should long ere this have reached the camp, are yet delayed in the midst of their journey. So many hindrances and impediments have arisen; and they have left their horses, and are now proceeding in vehicles; whence their arrival must of necessity be retarded. For since God here stirred up our priest, and common father, and persuaded him to go forth, and undertake this embassy, he detained the messengers for a while, when they were but half way on their road, lest arriving before him they might kindle the fire, and make our teacher's efforts to mend matters

useless, when the royal ears had become inflamed. For that this hindrance on the road, was not without God's interposition is evident from this. Men who had been familiar with such journeys all their lives, and whose constant business it was to ride on horseback, now broke down through the fatigue of this very riding; so that what has now happened is the reverse of what took place in the case of Jonah. For God hastened him when unwilling, to go on his mission. But these, who were desirous to go, He hindered. O strange and wonderful event! He wished not to preach of an overthrow; and God forced him to go against his will. These men with much haste set forward to be the bearers of a message of overthrow, and against their will again He has hindered them! For what reason think you? Why, because in this case the haste was an injury; but in the other case, haste brought gain. On this account, He hastened him forward by means of the whale; and detained these by means of their horses. Do you see the wisdom of God? Through the very means by which each party hoped to accomplish their object, through these each received an hindrance. Jonah expected to escape by the ship, and the ship became his chain. These couriers, by means of their horses, expected the more quickly to see the Emperor; and the horses became the obstacles; or rather, neither the horses in one case, nor the ship in the other, but the Providence of God everywhere directing all things according to its own wisdom!

5. Consider also His care over us, and how He both affrighted and consoled us. For after permitting them to set out on the very day when all these outrages were committed, as if they would report all that had taken place to the Emperor; He alarmed us all at their sudden departure. But when they had gone, and two or three days had elapsed, and we thought the journey of our Priest would now be useless, as he would arrive when it was too late, He delivered us from this fear, and comforted us by detaining

them, as I observed, midway; and by providing persons coming to us from thence by the same road, to announce to us all the difficulties they had met with on their journey, that we might thus take a little breath, as indeed we did, and were relieved of a great part of our anxiety. Having heard of this, we adored God who had done it, who has even now more tenderly than any father disposed all things for us, delaying by some invisible power those evil messengers, and all but saying to them, *"Why do ye hasten? Why do ye press on, when you are going to overwhelm so great a city? For are you the bearers of a good message to the Emperor? Wait there till I have made ready my servant, as an excellent physician, to come up with you and anticipate you in your course."* But if there was so much of providential care in the first breaking out of this wound of iniquity, much more shall we obtain a greater freedom from anxiety, after conversion, after repentance, after so much fear, after tears and prayers. For Jonah was very properly constrained, in order that he might be forcibly brought to repentance; but you have already given striking evidences of repentance, and conversion. Therefore, it is necessary that you should receive consolation, instead of a threatening messenger. For this reason also has He sent our common father hence, notwithstanding the many things to hinder it. But if He had not been tender of our safety, He would not have persuaded him to this, but would have hindered him, however disposed he might be to undertake the journey.

6. There is a third reason by which I may possibly persuade you to have confidence; I mean, the present sacred season, which almost all, even unbelievers, respect; but to which this our divinely-favoured Emperor has shown such reverence and honour, as to surpass all the Emperors who have reigned with a regard for religion before him. As a proof of this, by sending a letter on these days in honour of the feast, he liberated nearly all those who were lodged in prison; and this letter our Priest when he arrives will

read to him; and remind him of his own laws, and will say to him, *"Do thou exhort yourself, and remember your own deeds! You have an example for your philanthropy at home! You chose to forbear from executing a justifiable slaughter, and will you endure to perpetrate one that is unjust. Reverencing the feast, you discharged those who had been convicted and condemned; and will you, I ask, condemn the innocent, and those who have not committed any violence, and this when the sacred season is present? That be far from you, O Emperor! Thou, speaking by this Epistle to all the cities, said, 'Would it were possible for me to raise even the dead.'* This philanthropy and these words we now stand in need of. To conquer enemies, does not render kings so illustrious, as to conquer wrath and anger; for in the former case, the success is due to arms and soldiers; but here the trophy is simply your own, and you have no one to divide with you the glory of your moral wisdom. You have overcome barbarian war, overcome also Imperial wrath! Let all unbelievers learn that the fear of Christ is able to bridle every kind of authority. Glorify your Lord by forgiving the trespasses of your fellow-servants; that He also may glorify you the more; that at the Day of Judgment, He may bend on you an Eye merciful and serene, being mindful of this your lovingkindness!" This, and much more, he will say, and will assuredly rescue us from the Emperor's wrath. And not only will this fast be of the greatest assistance to us in influencing the Emperor in our favour, but also towards enduring what befalls us with fortitude; for we reap no small consolation from this season. For our very meeting together daily as we do, and having the benefit of hearing the divine Scriptures; and beholding each other; and weeping with each other; and praying, and receiving Benedictions, and so departing home, takes off the chief part of our distress.

7. Let us, therefore, not despond, nor give ourselves up by reason of our distress; but let us wait, expecting a favourable issue; and let us give heed to the things that are now about to be spoken. For it is my purpose to discourse to you again to day respecting contempt for death. I said to you, yesterday, that we are afraid of death, not because he is really formidable; but because the love of the kingdom has not kindled us, nor the fear of hell laid hold of us; and because besides this we have not a good conscience. Are you desirous that I should speak of a fourth reason for this unseasonable distress, one which is not less, and truer than the rest? We do not live with the austerity that becomes Christians. On the contrary, we love to follow this voluptuous and dissolute and indolent life; therefore also it is but natural that we cleave to present things; since if we spent this life in fastings, vigils, and poverty of diet, cutting off all our extravagant desires; setting a restraint upon our pleasures; undergoing the toils of virtue; keeping the body under like Paul, and bringing it into subjection; not *"making provision for the lusts of the flesh;"* and pursuing the strait and narrow way, we should soon be earnestly desirous of future things, and eager to be delivered from our present labours. And to prove that what I say is not untrue, ascend to the tops of the mountains, and observe the monks who are there; some in sackcloth; some in bonds; some in fastings; some shut up in darkness. You will then perceive, that all these are earnestly desiring death, and calling it rest. For even as the pugilist is eager to leave the stadium, in order that he may be freed from wounds; and the wrestler longs for the theatre to break up, that he may be released from his toils; so also he who by the aid of virtue leads a life of austerity, and mortification, earnestly longs for death in order that he may be freed from his present labours, and may be able to have full assurance in regard to the crowns laid up in store, by arriving in the still harbour, and migrating to the place where

there is no further apprehension of shipwreck. Therefore, also, has God provided for us a life that is naturally laborious and troublesome; to the end that being here urged by tribulation, we may conceive an eager longing for future blessings; for if now, while there are so many sorrows, and dangers, and fears, and anxieties, surrounding us on all sides, we thus cling to the present life; when should we ever be desirous of the life to come, if our present existence were altogether void of grief and misery?

8. Thus also God acted towards the Jews. For wishing to infuse into them a desire of returning (to Canaan), and to persuade them to hate Egypt, He permitted them to be distressed by working in clay, and brick-making, that being oppressed by that weight of toil and affliction, they might cry unto God respecting their return. For if, indeed when they departed after these things had happened, they did again remember Egypt, with their hard slavery, and were urgent to turn back to that former tyranny; what if they had received no such treatment from these barbarians? When would they have ever wished to leave that strange land? To the end, therefore, that we may not be too closely attached to the earth, and grow wretched while gaping after present things, and become unmindful of futurity, God has made our lives here full of labour. Let us not then cherish the love of the present life beyond what is necessary. For what does it profit us? Or what is the advantage of being closely rivetted to the desire of this present state? Are you willing to learn in what respect this life is advantageous? It is so, inasmuch as it is the ground-work and starting point of the life to come; the wrestling-school and the arena for crowns of victory hereafter! so that if it does not provide these for us, it is worse than a thousand deaths. For if we do not wish to live so as to please God, it is better to die. For what is the gain? What have we the more? Do we not every day see the same sun, and the same moon, the same winter, the same summer, the same course of

things? *"The thing that has been, shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done."* [Ecclesiastes 1:9] Let us not then at once pronounce those happy, who are alive, and bewail the dead, but let us weep for those who are in their sins, whether they be dead or alive. And on the other hand, let us call those happy in whatsoever condition they be, who are in a state of righteousness. You, forsooth, fearest and lamentest *"one"* death; but Paul, who was dying daily, [1 Corinthians 15:31] was so far from shedding a tear on that account, that he rejoiced and exulted!

9. *"O that I did endure the peril for God,"* says some one, *"then I should have no anxiety!"* But do not even now sink into despondency; for not only indeed is he well approved, who suffers in the cause of God: but he who is suffering any thing unjustly: and bearing it nobly, and giving thanks to God who permits it, is not inferior to him who sustains these trials for God's sake. The blessed Job is a proof of this, who received so many intolerable wounds through the devil's plotting against him uselessly, vainly, and without cause. Yet, nevertheless, because he bore them courageously, and gave thanks to God who permitted them, he was invested with a perfect crown. Be not sad then on account of death; for it is natural to die: but grieve for sin; because it is a fault of the will. But if you grieve for the dead, mourn also for those who are born into the world; for as the one thing is of nature, so is the other too of nature. Should any one, therefore, threaten you with death, say to him, *"I am instructed by Christ not to 'fear them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.'"* [Matthew 10:28] Or should he threaten you with the confiscation of your goods, say to him, *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."* *"And though thou take me not, death will come and take me; and though thou slay me not, yet the law of nature will presently interfere and bring the end."*

Therefore we should fear none of these things which are brought on us by the order of nature, but those which are engendered by our own evil will; for these bring forth our penalty. But let us continually consider this, that as regards the events which come upon us unexpectedly we shall not mend them by grieving, and so we shall cease to grieve.

10. And moreover we should think of this again, that if we suffer any evil unjustly, during the present life, we discharge a multitude of sins. Therefore it is a great advantage to have out the chastisement of our sins here, and not there; for the rich man received no evil here, and therefore he was scorched in the flames there; and that this was the reason why he did not enjoy any consolation, hear in proof what Abraham says, *"Son, you have received your good things; therefore you are tormented."* But that to the good things bestowed on Lazarus, not only his virtue, but his having here suffered a thousand ills, contributed, learn also from the patriarch's words. For having said to the rich man, *"You have received your good things,"* he goes on to say, *"and Lazarus evil things, and for this reason he is comforted."* [Luke 16:25] For as they who live virtuously, and are afflicted, receive a double reward from God, so he who lives in wickedness, and fares sumptuously, shall have a double punishment. Again, I declare this not for the purpose of accusing those who have taken flight, for it is said, *"Add not more trouble to a heart that is vexed;"* [Sirach 4:3] nor do I say it because I wish to rebuke; (for the sick man stands in need of consolation); but for the purpose of endeavouring to promote an amendment. Let us not entrust our safety to flight, but flee from sins, and depart from our evil way. If we escape from these things, although we be in the midst of ten thousand soldiers; not one of them will be able to smite us; but not flying from these, though we ascend to the very summit of the mountains, we shall there find innumerable enemies! Let us again call to

mind those three children, who were in the midst of the furnace, yet suffered no evil, and those who cast them into it, how they that sat around were all consumed. What is more wonderful than this? The fire freed those it held possession of, and violently seized those whom it did not hold, to teach you, that not the habitation, but the habit of life, brings safety or punishment. Those within the furnace escaped, but those without were consumed. To each alike were the same bodies, but not the same dispositions. For this reason neither were the effects on them the same; for hay, although it lie without the flame, is quickly kindled; but gold, although it remain within, becomes the more resplendent!

11. Where now are those who said, *"Let the Emperor take all, and grant us our bodies free?"* Let such go and learn what is a free body. It is not immunity from punishment that makes the body free, but perseverance in a life of righteousness. The bodies of these youths, for instance, were free, though they were given over to the furnace, because they had before put off the slavery of sin. For this alone is liberty; and not an immunity from punishment, or from suffering anything fearful. But having heard of the furnace, call thou to mind the *"rivers of fire,"* which there shall be in that fearful day. For as on the above occasion, the fire seized upon some, but revered others, so also shall it be with those rivers. If any one should then have hay, wood, stubble, he increases the fire; but if he has gold and silver, he becomes the brighter. Let us therefore get together this kind of material, and let us bear the present state of things nobly; knowing that this tribulation will both bring us deliverance from that punishment if we understand how to practise true wisdom, and will also make us better here; and not only us, but often those too, who throw us into trouble, if we be vigilant; so abundant is the force of this spiritual wisdom; which was the case then even with the tyrant. For when he knew that they had suffered no

harm, hear how he changed his language. *"You servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither."* [Daniel 3:26] Did not you say, a little before *"Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"*

[Daniel 3:15] What has happened? Whence this change? Thou saw those without destroyed, and do you call on those within? Whence has it come to pass that you are grown wise in such matters. You see how great a change took place in the monarch! Whilst he had not yet exercised his power over them, he blasphemed, but as soon as he had cast them into fire, he began to show moral wisdom. For this reason also God permitted all to take place, whatsoever the tyrant wished, in order that He might make it manifest, that none will be able to injure those who are kept by Him. And what He did towards Job, He performed here. For on that occasion also, He permitted the devil to manifest all his power; and not till he had exhausted all his darts, and no further mode of plotting against him remained, was the combatant led out of the field, that the victory might be brilliant and indubitable. So here too He did the very same thing. He willed to overthrow their city, and God stayed him not: he willed to carry them away captive, and He hindered him not: he willed to bind them, and He permitted; to cast them into the furnace, and He allowed it: to heat the flame beyond its measure, and this too He suffered; and when there was nothing further left for the tyrant to do, and he had exhausted all his strength, then God manifested His own power, and the patience of the youths. Do you see how God permitted these tribulations even to the end, that He might show the assailants the spiritual wisdom of those whom they assailed, as well as His own providence. Both of which circumstances also that man then discerned, and cried out, *"You servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither."*

12. But consider thou with me the magnanimity of the youths; for they neither sprang out before the call, lest some should suppose they feared the fire; nor when they were called did they remain within, lest any one should think that they were ambitious and contentious. *"As soon,"* say they, *"as you have learned whose servants we are, as soon as you have acknowledged our Lord, we come forth to be heralds to all who are present of the power of God."* Or rather, not only they themselves, but even the enemy with his own voice, yea, both orally, and by his epistle, proclaimed to all men both the constancy of the combatants, and the strength of Him who presided over the contest. And even as the heralds, when they proclaim the names of the victorious combatants in the midst of the theatre, mention also the cities to which they belong; *"such an one, of such a city!"* So he too, instead of their city, proclaimed their Lord, by saying, *"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither."* What has come to pass, that you call them the servants of God? Were they not your servants? *"Yea,"* says he, *"but they have overthrown my sovereignty; they have trampled under foot my pride. They have shown by deeds, that He is their true Lord. If they were the servants of men, the fire would not have feared them; the flame would not have made way for them; for the creation knows nothing of reverencing or honoring the servants of men."* Therefore again he says, *"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego."*

13. Contemplate with me also, how first he proclaims the Arbiter of the contest. *"Blessed be God, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants."* [Daniel 3:28] This of the power of God. He speaks also of the virtue of the combatants. *"Because they trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not worship any god except their own God."* Could anything equal the virtue of this? Before this, when they said, *"We will not serve your gods,"* he was inflamed

more fiercely than the very furnace; but now, when by their deeds they had taught him this, he was so far from being indignant, that he praised and admired them, for not having obeyed him! So good a thing is virtue, that it has even its enemies themselves to applaud and admire it! These had fought and conquered, but the vanquished party gave thanks, that the sight of the fire had not terrified them, but that the hope in their Lord had comforted them. And He names the God of the whole world after the three youths, not at all circumscribing His sovereignty, but inasmuch as these three youths were equivalent to the whole world. For this reason he both applauds those who had despised him, and passing by so many governors, kings, and princes, those who had obeyed him, he stands in admiration of the three captives and slaves, who derided his tyranny! For they did these things, not for the sake of contention, but for the love of wisdom; not of defiance, but of devotion; not as being puffed up with pride, but fired with zeal. For great indeed is the blessing of a hope in God; which then also the barbarian learned, and making it manifest that it was from that source they had escaped the impending peril, he exclaimed aloud: "*Because they trusted in Him!*" [Daniel 3:28]

14. But I say all this now, and select all the histories that contain trials and tribulations, and the wrath of kings, and their evil designs, in order that we may fear nothing, save only offending God. For then also was there a furnace burning; yet they derided it, but feared sin. For they knew that if they were consumed in the fire, they should suffer nothing that was to be dreaded; but that if they were guilty of impiety, they should undergo the extremes of misery. It is the greatest punishment to commit sin, though we may remain unpunished; as on the other hand, it is the greatest honour and repose to live virtuously, though we may be punished. For sins separate us from God; as He Himself speaks; "*Have not your sins separated between*

you and Me?" But punishments lead us back to God. As one says, *"Give peace; for You have recompensed us for all things."* Suppose any one has a wound; which is the most deserving of fear, gangrene, or the surgeon's knife? The steel, or the devouring progress of the ulcer? Sin is a gangrene, punishment is the surgeon's knife. As then, he who has a gangrene, although he is not lanced, has to sustain the malady, and is then in the worse condition, when he is not lanced; so also the sinner, though he be not punished, is the most wretched of men; and is then especially wretched, when he has no punishment, and is suffering no distress. And as those who have a disease of the spleen, or a dropsy, when they enjoy a plentiful table, and cool drinks, and a variety of delicacies, and condiments, are then especially in a most pitiable state, increasing as they do their disease by luxury; but should they rigorously subject themselves to hunger and thirst, according to medical laws, they might have some hope of recovery; so also those who live in iniquity, if they are punished, may have favourable hopes; but if, together with their wickedness, they enjoy security and luxury, they become more wretched than those who cram their bellies, though they are in a state of dropsy; and so much the more, as the soul is better than the body. If then you see any who are in the same sins, and some of them struggling continually with hunger, and a thousand ills; while others are drinking their fill, and living sumptuously, and gormandizing; think those the better off, who endure sufferings. For not only is the flame of voluptuousness cut off by these misfortunes, but they also depart to the future Judgment, and that dread tribunal, with no small relief; and go hence, having discharged here the penalty of the greater part of their sins by the ills they have suffered.

15. But enough of consolation. It is time for us now, at last, to proceed to the exhortation on the subject of avoiding oaths, and to remove that

seeming palliation on behalf of those who swear, which is but futile, and useless. For when we bring an accusation against them, they allege the case of others who do the very same thing; and they say, "*such and such persons swear.*" Let us then say to these, Nevertheless; such a man does not swear: and God will give His judgment concerning you, from those who do good works; for sinners do not profit sinners by fellowship in transgressions; but they who perform what is right condemn sinners. For they who gave not Christ food, or drink, were many; but they rendered no aid to each other. [Matthew 25:35] Similar also was the case of the five virgins, who found no pardon from companionship, [Matthew 25:10] but being condemned by a comparison with those who had acted wisely, both these and the former were alike punished.

16. Dismissing then this argument of frigid self-deception, let us not look at the case of those who fall, but at those who fashion their conduct rightly; and let us endeavour to carry along with us a memento of the present fast when it is over. And as it often happens when we have purchased a vestment, or a slave, or a precious vase, we recall again the time when we did so, and say to each other, "*That slave I purchased at such a festival; that garment I bought at such a time;*" so, in like manner, if we now reduce to practice this law, we shall say, I reformed the practice of swearing during that Lent; for till then I was a swearer; but from barely hearing an admonition, I have abstained from the sin.

But "*the custom,*" it may be objected, "*is a hard thing to be reformed.*" I know it is; and therefore am urgent to throw you into another custom, which is good and profitable. For when you say, it is difficult for me to abstain from what is habitual; for that very reason, I say, you should make haste to abstain, knowing for certain, that if you once make another custom for yourself of not swearing, you will want no labour afterwards. Which is

the more difficult thing; not to swear, or to remain the whole day without food; and to shrivel up on water-drinking, and meagre diet? It is evident that the latter surpasses the former; yet, notwithstanding, custom has made this matter so possible and easy of execution, that when the fast comes round, although any one should exhort a thousand times, or as frequently constrain and compel one to partake of wine, or taste of any other of those things which are forbidden during fasts, yet a man would prefer to suffer anything, rather than touch the prohibited article of food; and that not for want of relish for the table, nevertheless, we bear it all with fortitude, from the habit of our conscience. And the case will be the same in regard to oaths; and just as if now, any one were to impose ever so great necessity, you would remain immovable, holding fast the habit; so also in that case, if any one should urge you ten thousand times, you would not depart from your custom.

18. When you go home, therefore, discourse of all these things with those who are in your house; and as many persons often do, when they come back from a meadow, having plucked there a rose, or a violet, or some flower of that kind, they return twisting it about with their fingers; and as some, again, when they quit the gardens to go home, take with them branches of trees, with their fruit upon them; and as others, moreover, from sumptuous feasts, carry away leavings of the entertainment for their dependents; so indeed do thou, departing from hence, take an exhortation home to your wife, your children, and all your household. For this admonition is more profitable than the meadow, the garden, or the banquetting table. These roses never wither; these fruits never drop off; these dainties never corrupt. The former yield a temporary delight; but the latter a lasting advantage, not only after this reformation has taken place, but in the very act of reforming. For think what a good practice this would

be, having dismissed all other matters public or private, to discourse [Deuteronomy 6:7] only of the divine laws continually, at the table, in the forum, and in your other meetings. Would we give our attention to these things, we should say nothing of a dangerous or injurious nature, nor should we sin unwittingly. Giving our leisure to discourse respecting these things, we should be able to withdraw our soul even from this despondency that hangs over us, instead of looking with so much anxiety as we do, while we say one to another, *"Hath the Emperor heard what has happened? Is he incensed? What sentence has he pronounced? Hath any one petitioned him? What? Will he himself endure to destroy utterly a city so great and populous?"* Casting these and all such cares upon God, let us be anxious only as to what He has commanded! Thus shall we rid ourselves of all these sorrows; and although ten only among us should succeed, the ten would quickly become twenty; the twenty fifty; the fifty a hundred; the hundred a thousand; the thousand all the city. And just as when ten lamps are lighted, one may easily fill the whole house with light, so also with respect to right actions; should only ten act rightly, we shall light up a general flame throughout the city, to shine forth, and to procure us safety. For not so naturally does the fire, when it falls upon a forest, kindle the neighbouring trees successively, as will the emulation for virtue, when it seizes upon a few minds, be mighty in its progress to diffuse itself through the whole community.

19. Give me cause, then, to exult over you both in the present life, and at that future Day, when those to whom talents have been entrusted, shall be summoned! Your good reputation is a sufficient reward for my labours; and if I see you living in piety, I have all I wish. Do, then, what yesterday I recommended, and today will repeat, and will not cease to say it. Fix a penalty for those who swear; a penalty which is a gain, and not a loss; and

prepare yourselves henceforth so as you may give us a proof of success. For I shall endeavour to hold a long conversation with each of you, when this assembly is dismissed; in order that in the continuance of discourse I may discover the persons who have been acting rightly, and those who have not. And if I find any one still swearing, I shall make him manifest to all who are amended, that by reproof, rebuking, and correcting, we may quickly deliver him from this evil habit. For better it is that he should amend through being reproached here, than that he should be put to shame, and punished, in the presence of the whole assembled universe, on that Day, when our sins shall be revealed to the eyes of all men! But God forbid that any in this fair assembly should appear there suffering such things! But by the prayers of the holy fathers, correcting all our offenses, and having shown forth the abundant fruit of virtue, may we depart hence with much confidence, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom, and with whom, be glory to the Father together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 7 on the Statues

Recapitulation of former exhortations. Sin brought death and grief into the world, and they tend to its cure. Grief serviceable only for the destruction of sin. Remarks upon the passage, Genesis 1:1 . "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It is argued that God's forethought for man in the work of creation affords grounds of comfort; and that mercy is shown even in chastisement, as in the saying, "Adam, where are you?" Concluding admonition on the avoidance of oaths.

1. Yesterday, I discoursed unto your Charity in many words, and upon many subjects; and if out of this variety, it be not possible for you to retain all, I wish more particularly to recall to memory the observation, that God has implanted the affection grief in our natures for no other reason but because of sin, and He has made this evident from actual experience. For while we are grieved and distressed through the loss of wealth; or by reason of sickness, and death, and the other evils that befall us, we not only reap no consolation from our sorrow, but we also increase the force of these calamities. But if we are in pain and sorrow for our sins, we diminish the weight of sin; we make that little which is great; and very often we blot it all out entirely. You should continually remember this, I repeat, in order that you may mourn for sin only, and for nothing besides; and the additional fact, that sin, though it brought death and sadness into our life, is again destroyed by both these; which I have recently made evident. Therefore, let us fear nothing so much as sin and transgression. Let us not fear punishment, and then we shall escape punishment. Even as the Three Children were not afraid of the furnace, and so escaped from the furnace. Such indeed it becomes the servants of God to be. For if those who were

brought up under the Old dispensation, when death was not yet slain, nor his "*brazen gates broken down*," nor his "*iron bars smitten in sunder*;" so nobly encountered their end, how destitute of all defence or excuse shall we be, if, after having had the benefit of such great grace, we attain not even to the same measure of virtue as they did, now when death is only a name, devoid of reality. For death is nothing more than a sleep, a journey, a migration, a rest, a tranquil haven; an escape from trouble, and a freedom from the cares of this present life!

2. But here let us dismiss the subject of consolation; it is the fifth day we are engaged in speaking words of comfort to your Charity, and we might now seem to be troublesome. For what has been already said is sufficient for those who give heed; but to those who are pusillanimous it will be no gain, even though we were to add to what we have said. It is now time to direct our teaching to the exposition of the Scriptures. For as, if we had said nothing in reference to the present calamity, one might have condemned us for cruelty, and a want of humanity; so, were we always discoursing of this, we might justly be condemned for pusillanimity. Commending then your hearts to God, who is able to speak into your minds, and to expel all grief from within, let us now take up our accustomed manner of instruction; and that especially since every exposition of Scripture is matter of comfort and relief. So that, although we may seem to be desisting from the topic of consolation, we shall again light upon the same subject by means of Scriptural exposition. For that all Scripture furnishes consolation to those who give attention to it, I will make manifest to you from its own evidence. For I shall not go about among the Scripture narratives to search out certain arguments consolatory; but in order that I may make the proof of the matter which I have undertaken plainer, we will take in hand the book which has to day been read to us; and bringing forward, if you will, the introduction and

commencement of it, which may especially seem to present no trace of consolation, but to be altogether foreign to topics of comfort, I will make that which I affirm evident.

3. What then is this introduction? *"In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth, and the earth was invisible, and unformed, and darkness was upon the face of the abyss."* Do these words seem to some of you incapable of affording consolation under distress? Is it not an historical narrative, and an instruction about the creation?

Would you then that I show the consolation that is hidden in this saying? Arouse yourselves then, and attend with earnestness to the things which are about to be spoken. For when you hear that God made the heaven, the earth, the sea, the air, the waters, the multitude of stars, the two great lights, the plants, the quadrupeds, the swimming and the flying animals, and all things without exception which you see, for you, and for your safety and honour; do you not straightway take comfort and receive this as the strongest proof of the love of God, when you think that He produced such a world as this, so fair, so vast and wonderful, for such a puny being as yourself! When therefore you hear that, *"In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth,"* run not hastily over the declaration; but traverse in your mind the breadth of the earth; and reflect how He has spread out so sumptuous and exquisite a table for us, and provided us with such abundant gladness. And this is, indeed, the most marvellous thing, that He gave us not such a world as this in payment for services done; or as a recompense for good works; but at the very time He formed us, He honoured our race with this kingdom. For He said, *"Let us make man after our image, and after our likeness."* [Genesis 1:26] What is the sense of this, *"after our image, and after our likeness?"* The image of government is that which is meant; and as there is no one in heaven superior to God, so let

there be none upon earth superior to man. This then is one, and the first respect, in which He did him honour; by making him after His own image; and secondly, by providing us with this principality, not as a payment for services, but making it entirely the gift of His own love toward man; and thirdly, in that He conferred it upon us as a thing of nature. For of governments there are some natural, and others which are elective;— natural as of the lion over the quadrupeds, or as that of the eagle over the birds; elective, as that of an Emperor over us; for he does not reign over his fellow-servants by any natural authority. Therefore it is that he oftentimes loses his sovereignty. For such are things which are not naturally inherent; they readily admit of change and transposition. But not so with the lion; he rules by nature over the quadrupeds, as the eagle does over birds. The character of sovereignty is, therefore, constantly allotted to his race; and no lion has ever been seen deprived of it. Such a kind of sovereignty God bestowed upon us from the beginning, and set us over all things. And not only in this respect did He confer honour upon our nature, but also, by the very eminence of the spot in which we were placed, fixing upon Paradise as our choice dwelling, and bestowing the gift of reason, and an immortal soul.

4. But I would not speak of these things: for I say that such was the abundance of God's care, that we may know His goodness, and His love towards man, not only from the way in which He has honoured, but also from the way in which He has punished us. And this, I especially exhort you to consider with attention, that God is alike good, not only while He is treating us with honour and beneficence, but also while He is punishing and chastising. And whether we should have to carry on our contest and combat against the heathen, or against the heretics, respecting the lovingkindness and goodness of God, we shall make His goodness evident, not only from the cases in which He bestows honour, but also from the cases in which He

inflicts punishment. For if He is good only while honouring us, and not good while punishing us, He were but half good. But this is not the case. God forbid! Among men this may probably happen, when they inflict punishments in anger and passion; but God being free from passion, whether He exercise kindness, or whether He punish, He is alike good. Nor less does the threat of hell serve to show His goodness, than the promise of the kingdom. [Galatians 3:24] But how? I answer. If He had not threatened hell, if He had not prepared punishment, there are not many who would have attained the kingdom. For the promise of good things does not so strongly induce the multitude to virtue; as does the threat of evil things compel by fear, and arouse them to the care of the soul. So that, although hell be the opposite of the kingdom of heaven, yet each has respect to the same end—the salvation of men; the one alluring to itself, the other driving them towards its opposite, and by the operation of fear correcting those who are carelessly disposed.

5. I do not enlarge upon this subject without reason; but because there are many who often, when famines, and droughts, and wars take place, or when the wrath of an Emperor overtakes them, or when any other unexpected events of this kind happen, deceive the simpler class by saying, that these things are unworthy of the Providence of God.

I am therefore compelled to dwell on this part of my discourse, that we may not be beguiled by words, but that we may plainly perceive, that whether He brings upon us a famine, or a war, or any calamity, whatsoever, He does it out of His exceeding great care and kindness. For even those fathers, who especially love their offspring, will forbid them the table, and inflict stripes, and punish them by disgrace, and in endless other ways of this kind correct their children when they are disorderly; yet are they nevertheless fathers, not only while doing them honour, but when acting

thus; yea, they are preeminently fathers when they act thus. [Hebrews 12:9] But if men, who are frequently carried away beyond what is meet by the force of angry feelings, are yet held to punish those whom they love, not from cruelty and inhumanity, but from a kind care and regard; much rather is it proper to be thus minded concerning God; who in the exceeding abundance of His goodness, far transcends every degree of paternal fondness. And that you may not suppose that what I say is a mere conjecture, let us, I pray you, direct our discourse to the Scripture itself. When man, then, had been deceived and beguiled by the wicked demon, let us observe how God treated him, after his committing so great a sin. Did He then altogether destroy him? Yet the reason of the thing in justice demanded this, that one who had displayed nothing that was good, but, after enjoying so much favour, had waxed wanton even from the very first, should be made away with, and utterly destroyed; yet God acted not so; neither did He regard with disgust and aversion him who had been so ungrateful towards his Benefactor, but He comes to him as a physician comes to a sick man.

6. Do not, O beloved, pass over unthinkingly, what has just been said! But consider what an act it was, not to send an angel, or archangel, or any other of his fellow-servants, but that the Lord Himself should have descended to him who had fallen from the right way, and should have raised him when thus cast down; and should have approached him, One to one, as a friend comes to a friend when he is unfortunate, and is plunged in great distress! For that He acted thus out of His great kindness, the very words too which He spoke to him evidently show His ineffable affection. And why do I say, *all* the words? The first utterance signifies at once His tenderness. For He said not, what it was probable a person treated so contemptuously would say, "*O wicked, yea most wicked man! When you had enjoyed so great favour from Me, and had been honoured with such a*

sovereignty, being exalted above all the creatures upon the earth for no merit of your own; and having received in actual deeds the pledges of My care, and a true manifestation of My Providence, did you esteem a wicked and pestiferous demon, the enemy of your salvation, to be worthy of more credit than your Lord and Benefactor? What proof did he give of regard for you, like that which I have done? Did I not make for you the heaven, the earth, the sea, the sun, the moon, and all the stars? For truly none of the angels needed this work of creation; but for you, and for your recreation, I made so great and excellent a world; and did you esteem mere words alone, a false engagement, and a promise full of deceit, as more worthy to be believed than the kindness and providence that was manifested by deeds; that you gave yourself over to him, and trampled My laws under foot!"

These words, and more of this kind, one who had been treated contemptuously would probably say. But God acted not so; but quite in the contrary manner. For by His first word He at once raised him up from his dejection, and gave the fearful and trembling man confidence, by being the first Himself to call him, or rather, not by merely calling him first, but by addressing him by his own familiar appellation, and saying, "*Adam, where are you?*" Thus He showed His tenderness, and the great regard He had for him. For you must all know, that this is a mark of intimate friendship. And thus those who call upon the dead are wont to do, continually repeating their names. And so, on the other hand, those who entertain hatred and enmity against any, cannot bear to mention the very names of those who have aggrieved them. Saul, for instance, though he had sustained no injury from David, but had wronged him exceedingly, since he abhorred and hated him, could not endure to mention his proper name; but when all were seated together, not seeing David to be present, what said he? He said not, "*Where is David?* But, "*Where is the son of Jesse?*" [1 Kings 20:27] calling him by

his father's name. And again, the Jews did the same with respect to Christ, for since they abhorred and hated Him, they did not say, "*Where is Christ?*" but, "*Where is that man?*" [John 7:11]

7. But God, willing to show even by this that sin had not quenched His tenderness, nor disobedience taken away His favor toward him, and that He still exercised His Providence and care for the fallen one, said, "*Adam, where are you?*" not being ignorant of the place where he was, but because the mouth of those who have sinned is closed up; sin turning the tongue backward, and conscience taking hold of it; so that such persons remain speechless, held fast in silence as by a kind of chain. And God wishing therefore to invite him to freedom of utterance, and to give him confidence, and to lead him to make an apology for his offenses, in order that he might obtain some forgiveness, was Himself the first to call; cutting off much of Adam's distress by the familiar appellation, and dispelling his fear, and opening by this address the mouth that was shut. Hence also it was that he said, "*Adam, where are you?*" "*I left you,*" says he, "*in one situation, and I find you in another. I left you in confidence and glory; and I now find you in disgrace and silence!*" And observe the care of God in this instance. He called not Eve;— He called not the serpent—but him who had sinned in the lightest degree of all, he brings first to the tribunal, in order that beginning from him who was able to find some degree of excuse, He might pass a more merciful sentence, even against her who had sinned the most. And judges, indeed, do not deign to make inquiry in their own person of their fellow-servants, and those who are partakers of a common nature with them, but putting forward some one of their attendants to intervene, they instruct him to convey their own questions to the criminal; and through him they say and hear whatever they wish, when they examine the offenders. But God had no need of a go-between in dealing with man; but Himself in

His own person at once judges and consoles him. And not only this is wonderful, but also that he corrects the crimes that had been committed. For judges in general, when they find thieves and grave-robbers, do not consider how they may make them better, but how they may make them pay the penalty of the offenses committed. But God, quite on the contrary, when He finds a sinner, considers not how He may make him pay the penalty, but how He may amend him, and make him better, and invincible for the future. So that God is at the same time a Judge, a Physician, and a Teacher; for as a Judge He examines, and as a Physician He amends, and as a Teacher He instructs those who have sinned, directing them unto all spiritual wisdom.

8. But if one short and simple speech thus demonstrates the care of God, what if we should read through this whole judgment, and unfold its entire records? Do you see how all Scripture is consolation and comfort? But of these records we will speak at a befitting season; before that, however, it is necessary to state at what time this Book was given; for these things were not written in the beginning, nor at once when Adam was made, but many generations afterwards; and it were worth while to enquire for what reason this delay took place, and why at length they were given to the Jews only, and not to all men; and why written in the Hebrew tongue; and why in the wilderness of Sinai? For the Apostle does not mention the place merely in a cursory manner; but shows that in that circumstance too there was a great subject of contemplation for us, when he says to us: *"For these are two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage."* [Galatians 4:24]

9. Other things too besides these it were to our purpose to enquire into. But I see that the time does not permit us to launch our discourse upon so wide a sea; wherefore prudently reserving these to a fit season, we would again address you on the subject of abstinence from oaths; and we would

entreat your Charity to use much diligence respecting this matter. For what is it but an absurdity, that not even a servant dares to call his master by name, nor to mention him unceremoniously, and casually, but that he should everywhere bandy about the name of the Lord of Angels familiarly with much irreverence! And if it be necessary to take the book of the Gospel, you receive it with hands that have been first washed; and fearfully and tremblingly, with much reverence and devotion; and do you unceremoniously bandy about upon your tongue the Lord of the Gospel? Do you desire to learn how the Powers above pronounce that Name; with what awe, with what terror, with what wonder? *"I saw the Lord,"* says the prophet, *"sitting upon a throne, high, and lifted up; around Him stood the Seraphim; and one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; the whole earth is full of His glory!"* [Isaiah 6:3] Perceivest thou, with what dread, with what awe, they pronounce that Name, while glorifying and praising Him? But you, in your prayers and supplications, callest upon Him with much listlessness; when it would become you to be full of awe, and to be watchful and sober! But in oaths, where it is wholly unsuitable that this wonderful Name should be introduced, there you make a long string of various forms of imprecation! What pardon then, or what excuse shall we have, howsoever we may plead this *"custom"*? It is said, that a certain heathen orator, by a kind of foolish habit, was continually moving his right shoulder as he went along. He conquered this habit, however, by fastening sharp knives on each side over his shoulders, so that the fear of being cut controlled the member in its unseasonable movement by fear of the wound! Do thou too, then, act thus with regard to your tongue, and instead of the knife, suspend over it the fear of God's chastisement, and you will assuredly get the better! For it seems

impossible, utterly impossible, that those should ever be overcome, who are solicitous and earnest about this, and really make it their business.

10. You applaud what is now said, but when you have amended, you will applaud in a greater degree not only us, but also yourselves; and you will hear with more pleasure what is spoken; and you will call upon God with a pure conscience, who is so sparing of you, O man! That He says, *"Neither shall you swear by your head."* [Matthew 5:36] But thou so despisest Him as to swear even by His glory. *"But what shall I do,"* says one, *"with those who impose necessity on me?"* What kind of necessity can there be, O man? Let all men understand that you will choose to suffer anything rather than transgress the law of God; and they will abstain from compelling you. For as a proof that it is not an oath which renders a man worthy of credit, but the testimony of his life, the uprightness of his conversation, and his good reputation, many have often split their throats with swearing, and yet have been able to convince no one; whereas others by a mere expression of assent, have been esteemed more deserving of belief than they who swore never so much. Knowing, therefore, all these things, and placing before our eyes the punishment that is in store for those who swear, as well as for those who swear falsely, let us abstain from this evil custom, that advancing from hence to the correction of what remains, we may enjoy the blessedness of the life to come, which God grant that we may all be found worthy to obtain, by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom to the Father with the Holy Ghost be glory, and power, and honour, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 8 on the Statues

An exhortation to virtue— and particularly upon the passage, "*God was walking in Paradise in the cool of the day:*"— and again on the subject of abstaining from oaths.

You have lately heard, how all Scripture brings consolation and comfort, although it be an historical narrative. For instance, "*In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth,*" [Genesis 1:1] was an historical declaration; but it was shown in our discourse, that this sentence was one pregnant with comfort; as, for example, that God made us a twofold table, by spreading out the sea and the land at the same time; by kindling above the twofold lights, the sun and moon; by determining the twofold seasons of their course, the day and night, the one for labour, and the other for rest. For the night ministers to us no less benefit than the day. But as I said with reference to trees, those which are barren, rival in their utility those which bear fruit; since we are thus not necessitated to touch those trees which are pleasant for food, for the purposes of building. The wild and untamed animals are also subservient to our need, in no less a degree than the tame animals; by driving us together, through the fear of them, into cities; making us more cautious, and binding us to one another; and by exercising the strength of some, and freeing others from their sicknesses; for the physicians concoct many medicines out of these; and by reminding us of our ancient sin. For when I hear it said, "*The fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon all the wild beasts of the earth:*" [Genesis 9:2] and then observe, that this honour was afterwards curtailed, I am reminded of sin, which has dissipated the fear of us, and undermined our authority. Thus I become a better and a wiser man, while I learn the

harm that sin has occasioned us. As then, what I said was, that the things alluded to, and others of a similar kind, which God, who is the Maker, knows of, contribute not a little to our present life; so now also I say, that the night no less than the day brings along with it its advantage, being a rest from labours, and a medicine for disease. Often, indeed, physicians, though exerting themselves in many ways, and preparing an endless variety of remedies, are not able to deliver the man who is labouring under infirmity. But sleep coming upon him of its own accord has entirely removed the disease, and freed them from an infinite deal of trouble. Night, again, is not only a medicine for bodily labours, but also for mental diseases, in giving rest to anguished souls. Ofttimes it happens that some one has lost a son; and comforters without number have been of no avail to withdraw him from tears and groans. But on the approach of night, conquered by the despotic power of sleep, he has closed his eyelids in slumber, and received some small relief from the miseries of the day time.

2. And now, I pray you, let us proceed to the subject which has given rise to these observations. For well I know, that you are all eagerly awaiting this matter; and that each one of you is in pain till he learn on what account this Book was not given from the beginning. But even now I do not see that the time is fit for a discourse on this subject. And why so? Because the week has nearly arrived at its close with us, and I fear to touch upon a subject, the exposition of which I should presently afterwards be obliged to cut short. For the subject requires of us several days in succession, and a continuous effort of memory: wherefore we must again defer it. But take it not amiss! We will assuredly pay you the debt with interest; for thus it is expedient both for you, and for us who are to discharge it. Meanwhile, however, let us now speak on that subject which we left out yesterday. And what was it we left out yesterday? *"God was walking,"* it says, *"in Paradise*

in the cool of the day." [Genesis 3:8] What is here meant, I ask? "*God was walking!*" God was not walking; for how should He do this who is everywhere present and fills all things? But He caused a perception of this sort in Adam, in order that he might collect himself; that he might not be careless; that in flying and in hiding himself, he might present beforehand some portion of the excuse, even before any words had passed. For even as those who are about to be led to the tribunal, to sustain the charges respecting the crimes they have committed, present themselves before those who are to try them with a squalid, begrimed, sad, and subdued visage, in order that from their appearance, they may incline them to loving-kindness, mercy, and forgiveness, so also did it happen in the case of Adam. For it was necessary that he should be led to this Tribunal in a subdued state. Therefore God took him beforehand, and humbled him. But that some one was walking there, he perceived; but whence came he to suppose that God was walking there? Such is the habitual custom of those who have committed sin. They are suspicious of all things; they tremble at shadows; they are in terror at every sound, and they imagine that every one is approaching them in a hostile manner. Often therefore the guilty, when they observe people running on another business, suppose that they have come against them; and when others are conversing one with another on quite a different subject, they that are conscious of sin suppose they are conversing about them.

3. For such is the nature of sin, that it betrays while no one finds fault; it condemns while no one accuses; it makes the sinner a timid being; one that trembles at a sound; even as righteousness has the contrary effect. Hear, at least, how the Scripture describes this cowardice of the former, and this boldness of the latter. "*The wicked flee when no man pursues.*"

[Proverbs 28:1] How does he flee when no man pursues? He has that within

which drives him on— an accuser in his conscience; and this he carries about everywhere; and just as it would be impossible to flee from himself, so neither can he escape the persecutor within; but wherever he goes, he is scourged, and has an incurable wound! But not such is the righteous man. Of what nature then is he? Hear: "*The righteous is bold as a lion!*" Such a man was Elias. He saw, for instance, the king coming towards him, and when he said, "*Why is it that you pervert Israel?*" he answered, "*I pervert not Israel, but you and your father's house.*" [1 Kings 18:17-18] Truly, the just man is bold as a lion; for he stood up against the king just as a lion does against some vile cur. Although the one had the purple, the other had the sheepskin, which was the more venerable garment of the two; for that purple brought forth the grievous famine; but this sheepskin effected a liberation from that calamity! It divided the Jordan! It made Elisha a two-fold Elias! O how great is the virtue of the Saints! Not only their words; not only their bodies, but even their very garments are always esteemed venerable by the whole creation. The sheepskin of this man divided the Jordan! The sandals of the Three Children trampled down the fire! The word of Elisha changed the waters, so that it made them to bear the iron on their surface! The rod of Moses divided the Red Sea and cleft the rock! The garments of Paul expelled diseases! The shadow of Peter put death to flight! The ashes of the holy Martyrs drive away demons! For this reason they do all things with authority, even as Elias did. For he looked not on the diadem, nor the outward pomp of the king, but he looked on the soul clad in rags, squalid, begrimed, and in a more wretched condition than that of any criminal; and seeing him the captive and slave of his passions, he despised his power. For he seemed to see a king but in a scene, and not a real one. For what was the advantage of outward abundance, when the poverty within was so great? And what harm could outward poverty do, when there

was such a treasure of wealth within? Such a lion also was the blessed Paul; for when he had entered into the prison, and only raised his voice, he shook all the foundations; he gnawed in pieces the fetters, employing not his teeth, but words; on which account it were fitting to call such men not merely lions, but something more than lions; for a lion oftentimes, after he has fallen into a net, is taken; but the Saints when they are bound, become still more powerful; just as this blessed man did then in the prison, having loosed the prisoners, shaken the walls, and bound the keeper, and overcome him by the word of godliness. The lion utters his voice, and puts all the wild beasts to flight. The Saint utters his voice, and drives away the demons on every side! The weapons of the lion are a hairy mane, pointed claws, and sharp teeth. The weapons of the righteous man are spiritual wisdom, temperance, patience, contempt of all present things. Whoever has these weapons shall not only be able to deride wicked men, but even the adverse powers themselves.

4. Study then, O man, the life according to God, and no one shall conquer you at any time; and although you may be accounted the most insignificant of men, you shall be more powerful than all. On the other hand, if you are indifferent about virtue of soul, though thou were the most powerful of men, you will easily be worsted by all that assail you. And the examples already quoted proved this. But if you are desirous, I will also endeavour to teach you by actual facts the unconquerableness of the righteous, and the vulnerable condition of sinners. Hear then how the prophet intimates both these particulars. "*The ungodly,*" says he, "*are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind scatters away from the face of the earth.*" For even as chaff lies exposed to the gusts of wind, and is easily caught up and swept along, so is also the sinner driven about by every temptation; for while he is at war with himself, and bears the warfare about

with him, what hope of safety does he possess; betrayed as he is at home, and carrying with him that conscience, which is a constant enemy? Such, however, is not the nature of the righteous man. But what manner of man is he? Hear the same prophet, saying, *"They that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion."* What means then, *"As Mount Zion?"* *"He shall not be shaken,"* says he, *"for ever."* For whatever engines you bring up, whatever darts you hurl, desiring to overturn a mountain, you will never be able to prevail; for how can you? You will break in pieces all your engines, and exhaust your own strength. Such also is the righteous man. Whatever blows he may receive, he suffers no evil therefrom; but destroys the power of those who take counsel against him, and not of men only, but of demons. You have heard often what engines the Devil brought up against Job; but not only did he fail to overthrow that mountain, but drew back exhausted, his darts broken to pieces, and his engines rendered useless, by that assault!

5. Knowing these things, let us take heed to our life; and let us not be earnest as to the goods that perish; neither as to the glory that goes out; nor as to that body which grows old; nor as to that beauty which is fading; nor as to that pleasure which is fleeting; but let us expend all our care about the soul; and let us provide for the welfare of this in every way. For to cure the body, when diseased, is not an easy matter to every one; but to cure a sick soul is easy to all; and the sickness of the body requires medicines, as well as money, for its healing; but the healing of the soul is a thing that is easy to procure, and devoid of expense. And the nature of the flesh is with much labour delivered from those wounds which are troublesome; for very often the knife must be applied, and medicines that are bitter; but with respect to the soul there is nothing of this kind. It suffices only to exercise the will, and the desire, and all things are accomplished. And this has been the work of God's providence. For inasmuch as from bodily sickness no great injury

could arise, (for though we were not diseased, yet death would in any case come, and destroy and dissolve the body); but everything depends upon the health of our souls; this being by far the more precious and necessary, He has made the medicining of it easy, and void of expense or pain. What excuse therefore, or what pardon shall we obtain, if when the body is sick, and money must be expended on its behalf, and physicians called in, and much anguish endured, we make this so much a matter of our care (though what might result from that sickness could be no great injury to us), and yet treat the soul with neglect? And this, when we are neither called upon to pay down money; nor to give others any trouble; nor to sustain any sufferings; but without any of all these things, by only choosing and willing, have it in our power to accomplish the entire amendment of it; and knowing assuredly that if we fail to do this, we shall sustain the extreme sentence, and punishments, and penalties, which are inexorable! For tell me, if any one promised to teach you the healing art in a short space of time, without money or labour, would you not think him a benefactor? Would you not submit both to do and to suffer all things, whatsoever he who promised these things commanded? Behold, now, it is permitted you without labour to find a medicine for wounds, not of the body, but of the soul, and to restore it to a state of health, without any suffering! Let us not be indifferent to the matter! For pray what is the pain of laying aside anger against one who has aggrieved you? It is a pain, indeed, to remember injuries, and not to be reconciled! What labour is it to pray, and to ask for a thousand good things from God, who is ready to give? What labour is it, not to speak evil of any one? What difficulty is there in being delivered from envy and ill-will? What trouble is it to love one's neighbour? What suffering is it not to utter shameful words, nor to revile, nor to insult another? What fatigue is it not to swear? For again I return to this same admonition. The labour of

swearing is indeed exceedingly great. Oftentimes, while under the influence of anger or wrath, we have sworn, perhaps, that we would never be reconciled to those who have injured us. Yet afterwards, when our wrath was quenched, and our anger allayed, desiring to be reconciled, and restrained by the obligation of these oaths, we have suffered the same anguish, as if we were in a snare, and held fast by indissoluble bonds. Of which fact the Devil being aware, and understanding clearly that anger is a fire; that it is easily extinguished, and that when it is extinguished, then reconciliation and love follows; wishing this fire to remain unquenched, he often binds us by an oath; so that although the anger should cease, the obligation of the oath remaining may keep up the fire within us; and that one of these two things may take place, either that being reconciled we are forsworn, or that not being reconciled we subject ourselves to the penalties of cherishing malice.

6. Knowing these things then, let us avoid oaths; and let our mouth continually practise the saying, *"Believe me;"* and this will be to us a foundation for all pious behaviour; for the tongue, when it has been disciplined to use this one expression, is ashamed, and would blush to utter words that are disgraceful and ugly; and should it at any time be drawn away by habit, it will be checked again, by having many accusers. For when any one observes him who is not a swearer giving utterance to foul words, he will take his advantage over him, and ridicule, and exclaim tauntingly, *"You who sayest in all affairs, 'Believe me,' and venturest not to utter an oath, do you disgrace your tongue with these shameful expressions?"* So that being forcibly urged by those who are with us, even if unwilling, we shall return again to a pious behaviour. *"But what,"* says one, *"if it be necessary to take an oath?"* Where there is a transgression of the law, there is no such thing as necessity. *"Is it possible then,"* it is replied, *"not to swear*

at all?" What do you say? Hath God commanded, and do you dare to ask if it be possible for His law to be kept? Why, truly it is a thing impossible that His law should not be kept; and I am desirous to persuade you from present circumstances of this; that so far from its being impossible not to swear, it is impossible to swear. For behold, the inhabitants of the city were commanded to bring in a payment of gold, such as it might have seemed beyond the power of many to do; yet the greater part of the sum has been collected; and you may hear the tax gatherers saying, *"Why delay, man? Why put us off from day to day? It is not possible to avoid it. It is the law of the Emperor, which admits of no delay."* What do you say, I ask? The Emperor has commanded you to bring in your money, and it is impossible not to bring it in! God has commanded you to avoid oaths! And how do you say, it is impossible to avoid them!

7. I am now for the sixth day admonishing you in respect of this precept. Henceforth, I am desirous to take leave of you, meaning to abstain from the subject, that you may be on your guard. There will no longer be any excuse or allowance for you; for of right, indeed, if nothing had been said on this matter, it ought to have been amended of yourselves, for it is not a thing of an intricate nature, or that requires great preparation. But since you have enjoyed the advantage of so much admonition and counsel, what excuse will you have to offer, when you stand accused before that dread tribunal, and are required to give account of this transgression. It is impossible to invent any excuse; but of necessity you must either go hence amended, or, if you have not amended, be punished, and abide the extremest penalty! Thinking, therefore, upon all these things, and departing hence with much anxiety about them, exhort ye one another, that the things spoken of during so many days may be kept with all watchfulness in your minds, so that while we are silent, you instructing, edifying, exhorting one

another, may exhibit great improvement; and having fulfilled all the other precepts, may enjoy eternal crowns; which God grant we may all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom be glory, to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 9 on the Statues

Commendation of those who had laid aside the practice of swearing. It is shown that no one need scruple about hearing the divine oracles in the Church after a meal. Answer to the question, Why it was so long before the Holy Scriptures were given? Comment on the passage, "*The heavens declare the glory of God*," with a description of the natural world. And finally, an admonition against swearing.

1. It was but lately that I spoke to you as I do now to you again! And O that I could be always with you—yea, rather am I always with you, though not by bodily presence, yet by the power of love! For I have no other life but you, and the care of your salvation. As the husbandman has no other anxiety, but about his seeds and his harvests; and the pilot about the waves and the harbours; so the preacher is anxious with respect to his auditors and their progress, even as I am at the present time! Wherefore I bear you all upon my mind, not only here, but also at home. For if the multitude be great, and the measure of my heart be narrow, yet love is wide; and "*you are not straitened in us*." I will not add what follows next, for neither are we straitened with you. Whence is this apparent? Because I have met with many who have said, "*We have performed the precept, by making rules for each other, defining penalties for those who swear, and enforcing punishment upon those who transgress this law*." A punishment which is indeed well becoming you, and which is a sign of the greatest charity. For I am not ashamed of making myself busy in these matters, since this love of interference does not proceed from idle curiosity but from tender care. For if it be no reproach to the physician to make enquiry concerning the patient, neither is it any fault in us to be ever asking about your salvation; since thus

being informed what has been accomplished, and what has been left undone, we shall be able to apply the further remedies with the requisite knowledge. These things we have ascertained by enquiry; and we give thanks to God that we have not sown our seed upon rocks, nor dropped it amidst thorns; and that we have neither needed much time, nor long delay, in order that we might reap the harvest. On this account I have you continually upon my heart. On this account I do not feel the labours of teaching, being eased of the burden by the profit of the hearer. This reward is, indeed, sufficient to recruit our strength, to give us wings, to elevate us, and to persuade us to undergo the utmost toil on your behalf.

2. Since therefore you have manifested much generosity of feeling, suffer us to discharge the further debt of which we gave a promise the other day; although indeed I see not all present who were here when I made the promise. What, I would ask, can be the cause of this? What has repelled them from our table? He that has partaken of a bodily meal, it would seem, has thought it an indignity after receiving material food, to come to the hearing of the divine oracles. But not rightly do they think thus. For if this were improper, Christ would not have gone through His large and long discourses after that mystic supper; and if this had been unsuitable, He would not, when He had fed the multitude in the desert, have communicated His discourses to them after that meal. For (if one must say something startling on this point), the hearing of the divine oracles at that time is especially profitable. For when you have made up your mind that after eating and drinking you must repair also to the assembly, you will assuredly be careful, though perchance with reluctance, of the duty of sobriety; and wilt neither be led away at any time into excess of wine, or gluttony. For the thought, and the expectation of entering the church, schools you to partake of food and drink with becoming decency; lest, after

you have entered there, and joined your brethren, you should appear ridiculous to all present, by smelling of wine, and unmannerly eructation. These things I now speak not to you who are now present, but to the absent; that they may learn them through your means. For it is not having eaten that hinders one's hearing, but listlessness. But while deeming it to be a condemnation not to fast, you then add another fault, which is far greater and heavier, in not being a partaker of this sacred food; and having nourished the body, you consume the soul with famine. Yet what kind of apology have you for doing this? For in the matter of fasting you have, perhaps, bodily weakness to plead, but what have you to say with respect to hearing? For surely weakness of body is no impediment to your partaking of the divine oracles! If I had said, "*Let no one who has breakfasted mix with us;*" "*let no one who has eaten be a hearer,*" you would have had some kind of excuse; but now, when we would fain drag, entice, and beseech you to come, what apology can you have for turning away from us? The unfit hearer is not he that has eaten and drunk; but he who gives no heed to what is said, who yawns, and is slack in attention, having his body here, but his mind wandering elsewhere, and such a one, though he may be fasting, is an unprofitable hearer. On the other hand, the man who is in earnest, who is watchful and keeps his mind in a state of attention, though he may have eaten and drunk, will be our most suitable hearer of all. For this rule, indeed, very properly prevails with relation to the secular tribunals and councils. Inasmuch as they know not how to be spiritually wise, therefore they eat not to nourishment, but to bursting; and they drink often to excess. For this reason, as they render themselves unfit for the management of their affairs, they shut up the court-houses and council-chambers in the evening and at midday. But here there is nothing of this sort—God forbid! But he who has eaten will rival him who fasts, as far as regards sobriety of soul;

for he eats and drinks, not so as to distend the stomach, or to darken the reason, but in such a way as to recruit the strength of the body when it has become weakened.

3. But enough of this admonition. It is time now to deal with our subject; although our mind holds back and shrinks from giving this instruction, on account of those who are not come. And just as an affectionate mother when she is about to spread out her table, grieves and laments when all her children are not there, thus also do I now suffer; and when I think of the absence of our brethren, I am reluctant to discharge my debt. But you have it in your power to rid me of this tardiness. For if you promise me that you will convey to them an exact report of all I say, we shall readily pay you down the whole; for thus the instructions, charitably afforded on your part, will make up to them for their absence; and you will hear me the more attentively, knowing that you must necessarily give an account of these things to others. In order then that our subject may be made the clearer, let us take it up and repeat it from the beginning. We were enquiring, then, the other day, On what account the Scriptures were delivered after so many years. For this Book was delivered neither in the time of Adam, nor of Noah, nor of Abraham, but in that of Moses. And I hear many who say, that if the Book was profitable, it ought to have been delivered from the very beginning; but if it was useless, it ought not to have been delivered afterwards. But this is an obsolete argument; for it is not quite true that anything which is profitable ought to have been delivered from the beginning, nor if anything was delivered from the beginning, is it quite necessary that the same should continue afterwards. For example; Milk is useful, yet it is not always given; but it is given to us only when we are children; and solid food is useful; but no one ever gives it us in the beginning of our life, but when we have passed out of the age of childhood.

Again, the summer season is useful; but it does not show itself constantly; and the winter season is advantageous; yet this too makes room for others. What then? Do they say that the Scriptures are not useful? I reply; they are most useful and most necessary. And if so useful, for what reason then, say they, were they not delivered to us from the beginning? It was because God was desirous of instructing the nature of man, not by letters, but by things. But what does the expression "*by things*" signify? By means of the Creation itself.

4. Observe then, how the Apostle, alighting upon this same topic, and directing himself to those very Greeks who said, that they had not from the beginning learned the knowledge of God from the Scriptures, frames his answer. Having said that, "*the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*" [Romans 1:18] when he saw that he was met by an objection; and that many would still enquire, from whence the Gentiles knew the truth of God, he goes on to add, "*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them.*" But how is it manifest in them? How were they able to know God, and who has showed? Declare this. "*God,*" says he, "*has showed it unto them.*" In what manner? By the sending of what kind of prophet? What evangelist? What kind of teacher? If the holy Scriptures were not yet given. "*The invisible things of Him,*" says he, "*from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal Power and Godhead.*" [Romans 1:20] But what he means is just this, He has placed His Creation in the midst, before the eyes of all men; in order that they may guess at the Creator from His works; which, indeed, another writer has referred to; "*For from the greatness and beauty of the creatures, proportionably the Maker of them is seen.*" [Wisdom 13:5] Do you see the greatness? Marvel at the power of

Him that made it! Do you see the beauty? Be astonished at the wisdom which adorned it! This it was which the prophet signified when he said, *"The heavens declare the glory of God."* How then, tell me, do they declare it? Voice they have none; mouth they possess not; no tongue is theirs! How then do they declare? By means of the spectacle itself. For when you see the beauty, the breadth, the height, the position, the form, the stability thereof during so long a period; hearing as it were a voice, and being instructed by the spectacle, you adore Him who created a body so fair and strange! The heavens may be silent, but the sight of them emits a voice, that is louder than a trumpet's sound; instructing us not by the ear, but through the medium of the eyes; for the latter is a sense which is more sure and more distinct than the former.

5. For if God had given instruction by means of books, and of letters, he who knew letters would have learned what was written; but the illiterate man would have gone away without receiving any benefit from this source, unless some one else had introduced him to it; and the wealthy man would have purchased the Bible, but the poor man would not have been able to obtain it. Again, he who knew the language that was expressed by the letters, might have known what was therein contained; but the Scythian, and the Barbarian, and the Indian, and the Egyptian, and all those who were excluded from that language, would have gone away without receiving any instruction. This however cannot be said with respect to the heavens; but the Scythian, and Barbarian, and Indian, and Egyptian, and every man that walks upon the earth, shall hear this voice; for not by means of the ears, but through the sight, it reaches our understanding. And of the things that are seen, there is one uniform perception; and there is no difference, as is the case with respect to languages. Upon this volume the unlearned, as well as the wise man, shall be alike able to look; the poor man as well as the rich

man; and wherever any one may chance to come, there looking upwards towards the heavens, he will receive a sufficient lesson from the view of them: and the prophet himself intimated and indicated this fact, that the creation utters this voice so as to be intelligible to barbarians, and to Greeks, and to all mankind without exception, when he spoke on this wise; *"There is no speech, nor language, where there voice is not heard."* What he means is to this effect, that there is no nation or tongue which is unable to understand this language; but that such is their utterance, that it may be heard of all mankind. And that not merely of the heavens, but of the day and night. But how of the day and night? The heavens, indeed, by their beauty and magnitude, and by all the rest, astonish the beholder, and transport him to an admiration of the Creator; but as to the day and night, what can these show us of the same kind? Nothing certainly of the same kind, but other things which are not inferior to them; as for example; the harmony, and the order which they so accurately observe. For when you consider how they distribute between them the whole year, and mutually divide the length of the whole space, even as if it were by a beam and scales, you will be astonished at Him who has ordered them! For just as certain sisters dividing their father's inheritance among themselves with much affection, and not insulting one another in the smallest degree, even so too the day and the night distribute the year with such an equality of parts, with the utmost accuracy; and keep to their own boundaries, and never push one another aside. Never has the day been long in winter; and in like manner never has the night been long in summer, while so many generations have passed away; but during so great an interval and length of time one has not defrauded the other even in the smallest degree; not of half an hour's space, no, nor of the twinkling of an eye!

6. Therefore also the Psalmist, struck with astonishment at the equality of this distribution, exclaimed, "*Night unto night shows knowledge.*" If you know how to meditate wisely on these matters, you will admire the Being who fixed these immoveable boundaries even from the beginning. Let the avaricious hear these things; and those who are coveting the wealth of others; and let them imitate the equality of the day and night. Let those who are puffed up and high-minded also hear; and those who are unwilling to concede the first places to others! The day gives place to the night, and does not invade the territory of others! But you, while always enjoying honour, can you not bear to share it with your brethren? Consider also with me the wisdom of the Lawgiver. In winter He has ordered that the night should be long; when the germs are tender, and require more coolness; and are unable to sustain the hotter rays of the sun; but when they are somewhat grown, the day again increases with them, and becomes then the longest, when the fruit has now attained ripeness. And this is a beneficial arrangement not only for seeds, but for our bodies. For since during winter, the sailor, and the pilot, and the traveller, and the soldier, and the farmer, sit down for the most part at home, fettered by the frost; and the season is one of idleness; God has appointed that the greater part of this time should be consumed in night, in order that the length of the day might not be superfluous, when men were unable to do anything. Who can describe the perfect order of the seasons; and how these, like some virgins dancing in a circle, succeed one another with the happiest harmony; and how those who are in the middle cease not to pass over to the opposite ones with a gradual and noiseless transition? Therefore, neither are we overtaken by the summer immediately after winter; nor by the winter immediately after the summer; but mid-way the spring is interposed; that while we gently and gradually take up one season after the other, we may have our bodies hardened to encounter the summer

heat without uneasiness. For since sudden changes to opposite extremes are productive of the worst injury and disease, God has contrived that after winter we should take up the spring, and after the spring the summer; and after the summer the autumn; and thus transport us to winter, so that these changes from seasons which are opposite, should come upon us harmlessly and by degrees, through the aid of intermediate ones. Who then is so wretched and pitiable, that beholding the heavens; and beholding sea, and land; and beholding this exact adjustment of the seasons, and the unfailing order of day and night, he can think that these things happen of their own accord, instead of adoring Him who has arranged them all with a corresponding wisdom!

7. But I have yet somewhat more to say on this head. For not only, indeed, does the magnitude and beauty of the creation, but also the very manner of it, display a God who is the artificer of the universe. For since we were not present at the beginning, while he was engaged in the work of forming and creating all things; nor had we been present, could we have known how they came into being, the power that disposed them being invisible; He has made the mode of this creation to become our best teacher, by compounding all things in a manner which transcends the course of nature. Perhaps what I have said, is not sufficiently clear. Therefore it is necessary that I should again repeat it in a clearer manner. All men, then, must admit that it is the course of nature for water to be supported on the earth, and not the earth on the waters. For the earth being a certain dense, hard, unyielding, and solid substance, is easily able to support the nature of water; but the water, which is fluid, and rare, and soft, and diffusive, and giving way to all it meets with, must be unable to support any solid body, though it were of the lightest kind. Often indeed when a small pebble fails upon it, it yields, and makes way, and sends it down to the bottom. When

therefore you behold not a small pebble, but the whole earth borne upon the waters, and not submerged, admire the power of Him who wrought these marvellous things in a supernatural manner! And whence does this appear, that the earth is borne upon the waters? The prophet declares this when he says, *"He has founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods."* And again: *"To him who has founded the earth upon the waters."* What do you say? The water is not able to support a small pebble on its surface, and yet bears up the earth, great as it is; and mountains, and hills, and cities, and plants, and men, and brutes; and it is not submerged! What do I say? Is not submerged? How comes it to pass, that since the water has been in close contact with it below, during so long a period, it has not been dissolved, and the whole of it become mud? For the substance of wood, when soaked in water but a little time, is rotted and dissolved; and why do I say of wood? What can be firmer than iron? Yet often this is softened, when it remains a long time in water; and well it may. For it derives its substance from the earth. Therefore many run-away servants, when they make their escape, dragging their shackles and chains along with them, go to brooks of water, and thrust their shackled feet therein, and after making the iron softer by this means, they easily break it by striking it with a stone. Iron, forsooth, is softened, and wood is rotted, and stones are worn away by the nature of water; yet so great a mass as the earth has remained such a length of time lying upon the waters, without being either submerged, or dissolved, and destroyed!

8. And who is there that must not feel astonished and amazed at these things; and confidently pronounce that they are not the works of nature, but of that Providence which is above nature? Therefore one speaks thus: *"Who hangs the earth upon nothing."* [Job 26:7] And another observes, *"In His hands are the corners of the earth."* And again: *"He has laid the foundation*

of it upon the seas." And these declarations, though they seem contrary to one another, have yet an entire agreement. For he that said, *"He has laid the foundation of it upon the seas,"* meant the same thing as he did who declared, *"He has hung it upon nothing."* For its standing upon the waters is just the same thing as hanging upon nothing. Where then is it suspended and placed? Hear the same one saying, *"In His hands are the corners of the earth."* Not that God has hands, but that you may know that His power it is, providing for all things which holds together and supports the body of the earth! But if you believe not what I now say, believe what you behold, for even in another element it is possible to find this admirable workmanship. For it is the nature of fire to tend upwards, and to be always mounting aloft; and although you force and constrain it never so much, it cannot submit to have its course directed downwards. For often, when we are carrying a lighted torch, although we incline its head downwards, we cannot compel the force of the flame to direct itself to the ground; but still it turns upward, and passes from below toward that which is above. But with respect to the sun, God has made it quite the contrary. For He has turned his beams toward the earth, and made his light to direct itself downward, all but saying to him by the very shape (of the heavens), *"Look downward.— Shine upon men, for thou were made for them!"* The light, indeed, of a candle cannot be made to submit to this; but this star, great and marvellous as it is, bends downward, and looks toward the earth, which is contrary to the nature of fire; owing to the power of Him who has commanded it. Would you have me speak of another thing of the like kind? Waters embrace the back of the visible heaven on all parts; and yet they neither flow down, nor are moved out of their place, although the nature of water is not of this kind. For it easily runs together into what is concave; but when the body is of a convex form, it glides away on all sides; and not even a small portion is capable of

standing upon such a figure. But, lo! This wonder is found to exist in the heavens; and the prophet, again, to intimate this very circumstance, observes, "*Praise the Lord, you waters that are above the heavens.*" Besides, the water has not quenched the sun; nor has the sun, which has gone on his way beneath for so long a time, dried up the water that lies above.

9. Do you desire that we should lead you down again to the earth, and point out the marvel? Do you see not this sea abounding with waves, and fierce winds; yet this sea, spacious, and large, and furious as it is, is walled in with a feeble sand! Mark also the wisdom of God, He permitted it not to be at rest, nor tranquil, lest you should suppose its good order to be of mere natural regulation; but remaining within its limits, it lifts up its voice, and is in tumult, and roars aloud, and raises its waves to a prodigious height. But when it comes to the shores, and beholds the sand, it breaks up, and returns back again within itself; teaching you, by both these things, that it is not the work of nature that it remains within its boundaries, but the work of Him whose power restrains it! For this cause accordingly He has made the wall feeble; and has not encompassed these shores with wood, or stone, or mountains, lest you should impute the regulation of the elements to such things. And, therefore, God Himself, upbraiding the Jews with this very circumstance, said, "*Fear ye not Me, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea that it cannot pass it.*" [Jeremiah 5:22] But the marvellous thing is not this only, that He has made a great and admirable world; and that He has compacted it in a way above the usual course of nature; but that He has also constituted it out of opposite things; such as hot and cold, dry and moist, fire and water, earth and air, and that these contrary elements, of which this whole universe consists, though continually at strife one with another, are not consumed of one another. The fire has not overrun and

burnt up all things; the water has not overflowed and drowned the whole earth. With respect to our bodies, however, these effects really take place; and upon the increase of the bile, fever is generated; and the whole animal frame sustains an injury; and when there is a superabundance of phlegm, many diseases are produced which destroy the animal. But in the case of the universe, nothing of this kind happens; but each thing remains held as it were by a kind of bridle and band; preserving, by the will of the Creator, its own boundaries; and their strife becomes a source of peace to the whole. Are not these things evident even to a blind man? And are not even the simple easily able to comprehend, that they were made, and are upheld, by some Providence? For who is so silly and senseless, that beholding such a mass of substances, such beauty, such combination, the continual strife of such vast elements, their opposition, and yet durability, would not reason with himself and say, If there were not some Providence to uphold the mass of these bodies, not permitting the universe to fall to pieces, it could not remain; it could not have been lasting. So perfect is the order of the seasons, such the harmony of the day and night, so many the kinds of brute animals, and plants, and seeds, and herbs, that preserve their course, and yet, to the present day, none has ever fallen into decay or sudden dissolution.

10. We might continue to speak not only of these things, but also of many others, which are even more profound; and might moralise even upon the Creation itself; but reserving these subjects for the morrow, let us earnestly endeavour to retain what has been said, and to convey it to the rest. I know indeed, that the abstruseness of these speculations has seemed strange to your ears; but if we be a little vigilant, and accustom ourselves to them, we shall easily be able to teach others. Meanwhile, it is necessary farther to say this to your Charity. Even as God has given us glory by means of this great creation, so let us also glorify Him by a pure conversation!

"The heavens declare the glory of God," though only seen; and we therefore should declare God's glory not only in speaking, but in silence, and in astonishing all men by the brightness of our life. For He says, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* [Matthew 5:16] For when an unbeliever beholds you, who art a believer, subdued, modest, and orderly in manners, he will wonder and say, *"Truly great is the God of the Christians! What manner of men has He formed? What, and from what has He made them? Hath He turned them from men into angels? If any one treats them contemptuously, they revile not! If any one beats them, they are not enraged! If any one does them an injury, they pray for him who has put them in pain! They have no enemy! They know nothing of cherishing malice! They are guiltless of vain babbling! They have not learned to utter a falsehood! They cannot endure a false oath, or rather, they swear not at all, but would prefer to have their tongue cut out, rather than to let an oath proceed out of their mouth!"* Such are the things which we should give them cause to say of us; and we should exterminate our evil habit of oaths, and pay at least as much honour to God, as we do to our more valuable garments. For how truly absurd is it, that when we have one garment better than the rest, we do not suffer ourselves to be continually wearing it; and yet everywhere we draggle about the name of God without concern, or ceremony! Let us not, I earnestly pray and beseech you, let us not thus despise our own salvation; but the care which we have used respecting this precept from the beginning, let us carry on even to the end. For I thus continually exhort you on the subject of oaths, not as though condemning you of listlessness, but inasmuch as I have seen that you are for the most part reformed, I press you, and am urgent, that the whole work should be finished off, and come to its perfection. Even so act the spectators of public

games. They excite those who are near the prize, with the more vehemence. Let us, then, by no means become weary; for we have nearly reached the completion of this amendment; and the difficulty was at the beginning. But now that the greater part of the evil habit has been cut away, and less remains to correct, no labour is necessary, but we only need a moderate degree of watchfulness, and diligence for some short time, in order that we ourselves being amended, may also become instructors to others; and that we may behold the Holy Passover with much confidence, and that with much pleasure we may reap a double or treble measure of the customary gladness of the festival. For not so much does it delight us to be delivered from the toil and fatigue of fasting, as to meet that holy season with an illustrious and well-earned crown; a crown indeed that is never to fade!

11. But in order that the amendment may take place the more quickly, do this which I tell you. Inscribe upon the wall of your house, and upon the wall of your heart, that "*flying sickle*;" and think that it is flying forth on occasion of the curse, and constantly remember it. And if you observe another person swearing, restrain, forbid, and be careful for him, and be careful for your own domestics. For if we would look to this, that we might not merely correct ourselves, but also bring others to the same point, we shall ourselves quickly arrive at the goal; since while we undertake to instruct others, we shall be ashamed and blush, should we in our own case seem to leave those things unperformed, which we enjoin upon them. There is no need to say more; for much has been already spoken on these matters; and these things are now said only by way of remembrance. But may God, who is more sparing of our souls than we are, make us perfect in this, and every good work; that so having completed the whole fruit of righteousness, we may be found worthy of the kingdom of heaven, through the grace and

lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom,
to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 10 on the Statues

**Commendation of those who came to hear after taking a meal.—
Observations on the physiology of the natural world; and against those
who deify the creation; and on the duty of not swearing.**

1. I joy, and rejoice with you all, that you have actually put in practice that admonition of ours, which we lately made with respect to those who were absent, for the reason that they were not fasting. For I think that many of those who have dined are today present; and go to fill up this goodly assemblage; and that this is the fact, I conjecture from the more brilliant spectacle that I see around me, and the greater concourse of hearers. Not in vain, it seems, did I lately spend so many words on their account, appealing to your Charity, to draw them to their Mother; and to persuade them that it is lawful, even after bodily nourishment, to partake also of that which is spiritual. And in which case, beloved, I ask, did ye act for the better; at the time of the last assembly when after your meal ye turned to your slumbers; or now, when after the meal you have presented yourselves at the hearing of the divine laws? Was it best when you loitered about in the forum, and took part in meetings which were no wise profitable; or now, when you stand with your own brethren, and hear the prophetic oracles? It is no disgrace, beloved, to have eaten, but after eating to remain at home, and so to be deprived of this sacred banquet. For while you remain at home, you will be more slothful and supine; but coming here you will shake off all slumber and listlessness; and laying aside not only listlessness, but also all sadness, you will be more at ease, and in better heart in all the events that may happen.

2. What need then is there to say more? Stand only near the man who fasts, and you will straightway partake of his good odour; for fasting is a spiritual perfume; and through the eyes, the tongue, and every part, it manifests the good disposition of the soul. I have said this, not for the purpose of condemning those who have dined, but that I may show the advantage of fasting. I do not, however, call mere abstinence from meats, fasting; but even before this, abstinence from sin; since he who, after he has taken a meal, has come hither with suitable sobriety, is not very far behind the man who fasts; even as he who continues fasting, if he does not give earnest and diligent heed to what is spoken, will derive no great benefit from his fast. He who eats, and yet takes a part in the sacred assembly with suitable earnestness, is in much better case than he who eats not at all, and remains absent. This abstinence will by no means be able to benefit us as much as the participation in spiritual instruction conveys to us benefit and advantage. Where indeed, besides, will you hear the things upon which you meditate here? Were you to go to the bench of justice? Quarrels and contentions are there! Or into the council-chamber? There is anxious thought about political matters! Or to your home? Solitude on the subject of your private affairs afflicts you in every direction! Or were thou to go to the conferences and debates of the forum? Every thing there is earthly and corruptible! For all the words that pass among those assembled there, are concerning merchandize, or taxes, or the sumptuous table, or the sale of lands, or other contracts, or wills, or inheritances, or some other things of that kind. And should you enter even into the royal halls, there again you would hear in the same way all discoursing of wealth, or power, or of the glory which is held in honour here, but of nothing that is spiritual. But here on the contrary everything relates to heaven, and heavenly things; to our soul, to our life, the purpose for which we were born, and why we spend an

allotted time upon earth, and on what terms we migrate from hence, and into what condition we shall enter after these things, and why our body is of clay, what also is the nature of death, what, in short, the present life is, and what the future. The discourses that are here made by us contain nothing at all of an earthly kind, but are all in reference to spiritual things. Thus, then, it is that we shall have made great provision for our salvation, and shall depart hence with a good hope.

3. Since, therefore, we did not scatter the seed in vain, but you hunted out all who were absent, as I exhorted you; suffer us now to return you a recompense; and having reminded you of a few things that were said before, to repay you again what remains. What then were those matters that were before treated of? We were enquiring how, and in what manner, before the giving of the Scriptures, God ordered His dispensation toward us; and we said, that by means of the creation He instructed our race, stretching out the heavens, and there openly unfolding a vast volume, useful alike to the simple and the wise, to the poor and to the rich, to Scythians and to barbarians, and to all in general who dwell upon the earth; a volume which is much larger than the multitude of those instructed by it. We discoursed also at length concerning the night, and the day, and the order of these, as well as of the harmony which is strictly preserved by them; and much was said respecting the measured dance of the seasons of the year, and of their equality. For just as the day defrauds not the night even of half an hour throughout the whole year, so also do these distribute all the days among themselves equally. But, as I said before, not only does the greatness and beauty of the creation show forth the Divine Architect, but the very manner likewise in which it is compacted together, and the method of operation, transcending as it does, the ordinary course of nature. For it would have been in accordance with nature for water to be borne upon the earth; but

now we see, on the contrary, that the earth is supported by the waters. It would have been in accordance with nature that fire should tend upwards; but now on the contrary we see the beams of the sun directed towards the earth; and the waters to be above the heavens, yet not falling away; and the sun running below them, yet not quenched by the waters, nor dispelling their moisture. Besides these things we said that this whole universe consists of four elements, these being adverse to and at strife with one another; yet one does not consume the other, although they are mutually destructive. Whence it is evident that some invisible power bridles them, and the will of God becomes their bond.

4. Today, I wish to dwell a little more on this subject. Arouse yourselves, however, and give earnest heed unto us! And that the wonder may appear more clearly, I will draw the lesson concerning these things from our own bodies. This body of ours, so short, and small, consists of four elements; viz. of what is warm, that is, of blood; of what is dry, that is, of yellow bile; of what is moist, that is, of phlegm; of what is cold, that is, of black bile. And let no one think this subject foreign to that which we have in hand. *"For He that is spiritual judges all things; yet He Himself is judged of no man."* [1 Corinthians 2:15] Thus also Paul touched upon principles of agriculture, while discoursing to us of the Resurrection; and said, *"Thou fool; that which you sow is not quickened, except it die."* [1 Corinthians 15:38] But if that blessed man brought forward questions of agriculture, neither should any one blame us if we handle matters pertaining to medical science. For our discourse is now respecting the Creation of God; and this ground-work of ideas will be necessary for our purpose. As, therefore, I said before, this body of ours consists of four elements; and if either revolts against the whole, death is the result of this revolt. As for instance, by a superabundance *"of bile"* fever is produced; and should this

proceed beyond a certain measure, it effects a rapid dissolution. Again, when there is an excess of the cold element, paralyses, agues, apoplexies, and an infinite number of other maladies are generated. And every form of disease is the effect of an excess of these elements; when either of them overpassing its own bounds, acts the part of a tyrant against the rest, and mars the symmetry of the whole. Interrogate then him who says, that all things are spontaneous and self-produced. If this little and diminutive body, having the advantage of medicines, and of medical skill, and of a soul within which regulates it, and of much moral wisdom, as well as innumerable other helps, be not always able to continue in a state of order, but often perishes, and is destroyed, when some disturbance takes place within it; how could a world like this, containing substances of such vast bulk and compounded of those same elements, remain during so long a time without any disturbance, unless it enjoyed the advantage of a manifold providence? Neither would it be reasonable to suppose that this body, which has the benefit of superintendence both without and within, should scarcely be sufficient for its own preservation; and that a world such as this is, enjoying no such superintendence, should during so many years suffer nothing of that sort which our body suffers. For how, I ask, is it that not one of these elements has gone beyond its own boundaries, nor swallowed up all the rest? Who has brought them together from the beginning? Who has bound? Who has bridled? Who has held them together during so long a period? For if the body of the world were simple and uniform, what I speak of would not have been so impossible. But when there has been such a strife between the elements, even from the beginning; who so senseless as to think that these things would have come together, and remained together when united, without One to effect this conjunction? For if we who are evil-affected towards one another not by nature, but by will, cannot come

spontaneously to an agreement as long as we remain at variance, and hold ourselves ungraciously towards one another; if we have yet need of some one else to bring us into a state of conjunction; and after this conjunction further to clench us, and persuade us to abide by our reconciliation, and not again to be at variance; how could the elements, which neither partake of sense nor reason, and which are naturally adverse, and inimical to each other, have come together, and agreed and remained with one another, if there were not some ineffable Power which effected this conjunction; and after this conjunction, always restrained them by the same bond?

5. Do you not perceive how this body wastes away, withers, and perishes after the secession of the soul, and each of the elements thereof returns to its own appointed place? This very same thing, indeed, would also happen to the world, if the Power which always governs it had left it devoid of Its own providence. For if a ship does not hold together without a pilot, but soon founders, how could the world have held together so long a time if there was no one governing its course? And that I may not enlarge, suppose the world to be a ship; the earth to be placed below as the keel; the sky to be the sail; men to be the passengers; the subjacent abyss, the sea. How is it then that during so long a time, no shipwreck has taken place? Now let a ship go one day without a pilot and crew, [Acts 27:30-31] and you will see it straightway foundering! But the world, though subsisting now five thousand years, and many more, has suffered nothing of the kind. But why do I talk of a ship? Suppose one has pitched a small hut in the vineyards; and when the fruit is gathered, leaves it vacant; it stands, however, scarce two or three days, but soon goes to pieces, and tumbles down! Could not a hut, forsooth, stand without superintendence? How then could the workmanship of a world, so fair and marvellous; the laws of the night and day; the interchanging dances of the seasons; the course of nature

chequered and varied as it is in every way throughout the earth, the sea, the sky; in plants, and in animals that fly, swim, walk, creep; and in the race of men, far more dignified than any of these, continue yet unbroken, during so long a period, without some kind of providence? But in addition to what has been said, follow me while I enumerate the meadows, the gardens, the various tribes of flowers; all sorts of herbs, and their uses; their odours, forms, disposition, yea, but their very names; the trees which are fruitful, and which are barren; the nature of metals—and of animals,— in the sea, or on the land; of those that swim, and those that traverse the air; the mountains, the forests, the groves; the meadow below, and the meadow above; for there is a meadow on the earth, and a meadow too in the sky; the various flowers of the stars; the rose below, and the rainbow above! Would you have me point out also the meadow of birds? Consider the variegated body of the peacock, surpassing every dye, and the fowls of purple plumage. Contemplate with me the beauty of the sky; how it has been preserved so long without being dimmed; and remains as bright and clear as if it had been only fabricated today; moreover, the power of the earth, how its womb has not become effete by bringing forth during so long a time! Contemplate with me the fountains; how they burst forth and fail not, since the time they were begotten, to flow forth continually throughout the day and night! Contemplate with me the sea, receiving so many rivers, yet never exceeding its measure! But how long shall we pursue things unattainable! It is fit, indeed, that over every one of these which has been spoken of, we should say, *"O Lord, how have You magnified Your works; in wisdom have You made them all."*

6. But what is the sapient argument of the unbelievers, when we go over all these particulars with them; the magnitude, the beauty of the creation, the prodigality, the munificence everywhere displayed? This very

thing, say they, is the worst fault, that God has made the world so beautiful and so vast. For if He had not made it beautiful and vast, we should not have made a god of it; but now being struck with its grandeur, and marvelling at its beauty, we have thought it to be a deity. But such an argument is good for nothing. For that neither the magnitude, nor beauty of the world is the cause of this impiety, but their own want of understanding, is what we are prepared to show, proved by the case of ourselves, who have never been so affected. Why then have "we" not made a deity of it? Do we not see it with the same eyes as themselves? Do we not enjoy the same advantage from the creation with themselves? Do we not possess the same soul? Have we not the same body? Do we not tread the same earth? How comes it that this beauty and magnitude has not persuaded us to think the same as they do? But this will be evident not from this proof only, but from another besides. For as a proof that it is not for its beauty they have made a deity of it, but by reason of their own folly, why do they adore the ape, the crocodile, the dog, and the vilest of animals? Truly, *"they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* [Romans 1:21-22]

7. Nevertheless, we will not frame our answer from these things only, but will also say something yet further. For God, foreseeing these things of old, destroyed, in His wisdom, this plea of theirs. On this account He made the world not only wonderful and vast, but also corruptible and perishable; and placed therein many evidences of its weakness; and what He did with respect to the Apostles, He did with respect to the whole world. What then did He with respect to the Apostles? Since they used to perform many great and astonishing signs and wonders, He suffered them constantly to be scourged, to be expelled, to inhabit the dungeon, to encounter bodily infirmities, to be in continual tribulations, lest the greatness of their

miracles should make them to be accounted as gods among mankind. Therefore when He had bestowed so great favour upon them, He suffered their bodies to be mortal, and in many cases obnoxious to disease; and did not remove their infirmity, that He might give full proof of their nature. And this is not merely my assertion, but that of Paul himself, who says, *"For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he sees me to be, or that he hears of me."* [2 Corinthians 12:6] And again, *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels."* [2 Corinthians 4:7] But what is meant by *"earthen vessels?"* In this body, he means, which is mortal and perishable. For just as the earthen vessel is formed from clay and fire, so also the body of these saints being clay, and receiving the energy of the spiritual fire, becomes an earthen vessel. But for what reason was it thus constituted, and so great a treasure, and such a plentitude of graces entrusted to a mortal and corruptible body? *"That the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* For when you see the Apostles raising the dead, yet themselves sick, and unable to remove their own infirmities, you may clearly perceive, that the resurrection of the dead man was not effected by the power of him who raised him, but by the energy of the Spirit. For in proof, that they were frequently sick, hear what Paul says respecting Timothy, *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities."* And again, of another he says, *"But Trophimus I have left at Miletus sick."* [2 Timothy 4:20] And writing to the Philippians, he said, *"Epaphroditus was sick near unto death."* [Philippians 2:25] For if, when this was the case, they accounted them to be gods, and prepared to do sacrifice unto them, saying, *"The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men;"* [Acts 14:11] had such infirmities not existed, to what extent of impiety might not men have proceeded, when they beheld their miracles? As then in

this case, because of the greatness of these signs, He suffered their nature to remain in a state of infirmity, and permitted those repeated trials, in order that they might not be thought to be gods, thus likewise He did with respect to the creation, a thing nearly parallel to this. For He fashioned it beautiful and vast; but on the other hand corruptible.

8. And both of these points the Scriptures teach, for one in treating of the beauty of the heavens thus speaks; *"The heavens declare the glory of God."* And again, *"Who has placed the sky as a vault, and spread it out as a tent over the earth."* [Isaiah 40:22] And again, *"Who holds the circle of heaven."* But another writer, showing that although the world be great and fair, it is yet corruptible, thus speaks; *"You, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish, but You remain, and they all shall wax old as does a garment, and as a vesture shall Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed."* And again, David says of the sun, that *"he is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a giant to run his course."* Do you see how he places before you the beauty of this star, and its greatness? For even as a bridegroom when he appears from some stately chamber, so the sun sends forth his rays under the East; and adorning the heaven as it were with a saffron-coloured veil, and making the clouds like roses, and running unimpeded all the day; he meets no obstacle to interrupt his course. Beholdest thou, then, his beauty? Beholdest thou his greatness? Look also at the proof of his weakness! For a certain wise man, to make this plain, said, *"What is brighter than the sun, yet the light thereof suffers eclipse."* [Sirach 17:31] Nor is it only from this circumstance that his infirmity is to be perceived, but also in the concourse of the clouds. Often, at least, when a cloud passes underneath him, though emitting his beams, and endeavouring to pierce through it, he has not strength to do so; the cloud being too dense,

and not suffering him to penetrate through it. *"He nourishes the seeds, however,"* replies some one— Yes— still he does not nourish them by himself, but requires the assistance of the earth, and of the dew, and of the rains, and of the winds, and the right distribution of the seasons. And unless all these things concur, the sun's aid is but superfluous. But this would not seem to be like a deity, to stand in need of the assistance of others, for that which he wishes to do; for it is a special attribute of God to want nothing; He Himself at least did not in this manner bring forth the seeds from the ground; He only commanded, and they all shot forth. And again, that you may learn that it is not the nature of the elements, but His command which effects all things; He both brought into being these very elements which before were not; and without the need of any aid, He brought down the manna for the Jews. For it is said, *"He gave them bread from heaven."* But why do I say, that in order to the perfection of fruits, the sun requires the aid of other elements for their sustenance; when he himself requires the assistance of many things for his sustenance, and would not himself be sufficient for himself. For in order that he may proceed on his way, he needs the heaven as a kind of pavement spread out underneath him; and that he may shine, he needs the clearness and rarity of the air; since if even this become unusually dense, he is not able to show his light; and, on the other hand, he requires coolness and moisture, lest his rays should be intolerable to all, and burn up everything. When, therefore, other elements overrule him, and correct his weakness (overrule as for example, clouds, and walls, and certain other bodies that intercept his light:— or correct his excess, as the dews, and fountains, and cool air), how can such a one be a Deity? For God must be independent, and not stand in need of assistance, be the source of all good things to all, and be hindered by nothing; even as Paul, as well as the prophet Isaiah, says of God; the latter thus making Him speak in His

own Person, *"I fill heaven and earth, says the Lord."* [Jeremiah 23:24] And again, *"Am I a God near at hand, and not a God afar off?"* [Jeremiah 23:23] And again, David says, *"I have said unto the Lord, You are my Lord, for You have no need of my good things."* But Paul, demonstrating this independence of help, and showing that both these things especially belong to God; to stand in need of nothing, and of Himself to supply all things to all; speaks on this wise, *"God that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, Himself needs not any thing, giving to all life and all things."*

9. It would indeed be easy for us to take a survey of the other elements, the heaven, the air, the earth, the sea, and to show the imbecility of these, and how each requires the assistance of his neighbour, and without this assistance, is lost and destroyed. For as it regards the earth, if the fountains fail it, and the moisture infused from the sea and the rivers, it quickly perishes by being parched. The remaining elements too stand in need of one another, the air of the sun, as well as the sun of the air. But not to protract this discourse; in what has been said, having given a sufficient supply of reasons to start from for those who are willing to receive them, we shall be content. For if the sun, which is the most surprising part of the whole creation, has been proved to be so feeble and needy, how much more the other parts of the universe? What then I have advanced (offering these things for the consideration of the studious), I will myself again show you in discourse from the Scriptures; and prove, that not only the sun, but also the whole universe is thus corruptible. For since the elements are mutually destructive, and when much cold intervenes, it chastens the force of the sun's rays; and on the other hand, the heat prevailing, consumes the cold; and since the elements are both the causes and subjects of contrary qualities, and dispositions, in one another; it is very evident that these

things offer a proof of great corruptibility; and of the fact, that all these things which are visible, are a corporeal substance.

10. But since this subject is too lofty for our simplicity, permit me now to lead you to the sweet fountain of the Scriptures, that we may refresh your ears. For we will not discourse to you of the heaven and the earth separately, but will exhibit the Apostle declaring this very thing to us concerning the whole creation, in these plain terms, that the whole creation is now in bondage to corruption; and why it is thus in bondage, and at what time it shall be delivered from it, and unto what condition it shall be translated. For after he had said, *"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;"* he goes on to add; *"For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who has subjected the same in hope."* [Romans 8:21] But what he intends is to this effect; *"The creature,"* he says, *"was made corruptible;"* for this is implied in the expression, *"being made subject to vanity."* For it was made corruptible by the command of God. But God so commanded it for the sake of our race; for since it was to nurture a corruptible man, it was necessary itself should also be of the same character; for of course corruptible bodies were not to dwell in an incorruptible creation. But, nevertheless, he tells us, it will not remain so. *"The creature also itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption;"* and afterwards, for the purpose of showing when this event shall take place, and through whom, he adds, *"Into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."* For when we are raised, his meaning is, and assume incorruptible bodies; then also this body of the heaven, the earth, and the whole creation, shall be incorruptible, and imperishable. When, therefore, you behold the sun arising, admire the Creator; when you behold him

hiding himself and disappearing, learn the weakness of his nature, that you may not adore him as a Deity! For God has not only implanted in the nature of the elements this proof of their weakness, but has also bidden His servants, that were but men, command them; so that although you should not know their servitude from their aspect, you may learn, from those who have commanded them, that they are all your fellow-servants. Therefore it was, that Joshua, the son of Nave, said, *"Let the sun stand still in Gibeon, and the moon over against the valley of Ajalon."* And again the prophet Isaiah made the sun to retrace his steps, under the reign of Hezekiah; and Moses gave orders to the air, and the sea, the earth, and the rocks. Elisha changed the nature of the waters; the Three Children triumphed over the fire. You see how God has provided for us on either hand; leading us by the beauty of the elements to the knowledge of His divinity; and, by their feebleness, not permitting us to lapse into the worship of them.

11. For the sake of all these things then, let us glorify Him, our Guardian; not only by words, but also by deeds; and let us show forth an excellent conversation, not only in general, but in particular with regard to abstinence from oaths. For not every sin brings the same penalty; but those which are easiest to be amended, bring upon us the greatest punishment: which indeed Solomon intimated, when he said, *"It is not wonderful if any one be taken stealing; for he steals that he may satisfy his soul that is hungry; but the adulterer, by the lack of understanding, destroys his own soul."* But what he means is to this effect. The thief is a grievous offender, but not so grievous a one as the adulterer: for the former, though it be a sorry reason for his conduct, yet at the same time has to plead the necessity arising from indigence; but the latter, when no necessity compels him, by his mere madness rushes into the gulph of iniquity. This also may be said

with regard to those who swear. For they have not any pretext to allege, but merely their contempt.

12. I know, indeed, that I may seem to be too tedious and burdensome; and that I may be thought to give annoyance by continuing this admonition. But nevertheless, I do not desist, in order that you may even be shamed by my shamelessness to abstain from the custom of oaths. For if that unmerciful and cruel judge, paying respect to the importunity of the widow, changed his custom, much more will you do this; and especially when he who is exhorting you, does it not for himself, but for your salvation. Or rather, indeed, I cannot deny that I do this for myself; for I consider your benefit as my own success. But I could wish that you, even as I labour, and weary myself for your safety, would in like manner make your own souls a matter of anxiety to yourselves; and then assuredly this work of reformation would be perfected. And what need is there to multiply words? For if there were no hell, neither punishment for the contumacious, nor reward for the obedient; and I had come to you, and asked this in the way of a favour, would ye not have consented? Would ye not have granted my petition, when I asked so trifling a favour? But when it is God who asks this favour, and for the sake of yourselves, who are to grant it, and not for Himself, Who is to receive it; who is there so ungracious, who is there so miserable and wretched, that he will not grant this favour to God, when He asks it; and especially when he himself who grants it, is in future to enjoy the benefit of it? Considering these things then, repeat over to yourselves, when you depart hence, all that has been said; and correct in every way those who take no heed to it; to the end that we may receive the recompense of other men's good actions, as well as our own, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom, and with Whom be glory to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 11 on the Statues

Thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the evils expected owing to the sedition; and recollection of the events which took place at the time. Also against those who find fault with the structure of the human body, and in general concerning the creation of man; and, in conclusion, on success in avoiding oaths.

1. When I think of the past tempest, and of the present calm, I cease not saying, *"Blessed be God, who makes all things, and changes them; who has brought light out of darkness; who leads to the gates of hell, and brings back; who chastises, but kills not."* And this I desire you too to repeat constantly, and never to desist. For if He has benefitted us by deeds, what pardon shall we deserve, if we do not requite Him even by words. Therefore, I exhort that we never cease to give Him thanks; since if we are grateful for the former benefits, it is plain that we shall enjoy others also, which are greater. Let us say, then, continually, Blessed be God, who has permitted us to spread before you in security the accustomed table, while He has also granted you to hear our word with assurance of safety! Blessed be God, that we no longer run hither flying from the danger without, but only from desire to hear; that we no longer meet one another with agony, trembling, and anxious thoughts; but with much confidence, having shaken off all our fear. Our condition, indeed, on former days was nothing better than that of those who are tossed up and down in the midst of the deep; and expecting shipwreck every hour. We were scared all day long by innumerable rumours, and disturbed and agitated on every side; and were every day busy and curious to know who had come from the court? what news he had brought? And whether what was reported was true or false?

Our nights too we passed without sleep, and while we looked upon the city, we wept over it, as if it were on the eve of its destruction.

2. For this cause yourselves too kept silence on those former days, because the whole city was empty, and all had migrated to the deserts, and because those who were left behind were overshadowed by the cloud of despondency. For the soul when once it is filled with despondency, is not apt to hear anything that may be said. For this cause, when the friends of Job came, and saw that tragedy of his house, and the just man sitting down upon the dunghill, and covered with sores, they rent their garments, and groaned and sat down by him in silence; making it manifest that nothing is so suitable to the afflicted at first, as quiet and silence. For the calamity was too great for consolation. Therefore also the Jews, while they were in bondage to work in clay and the brick-making, when they saw Moses come to them, were not able to give heed to his words, by reason of their failure of spirit, and their affliction. And what marvel is it that faint-hearted men have felt this, when we find that the Disciples also fell into the same infirmity. For after that mystic Supper, when Christ took them apart and discoursed with them, the disciples at first asked Him more than once, *"Where are You going?"* But when He had told them what evils they should in a little while afterwards encounter, the wars, and the persecutions, and the universal enmity, the stripes, the prisons, the tribunals, the appearance before magistrates; then, their souls oppressed as by a heavy burden with the dread of the things He had spoken, and with the sadness of these approaching events, remained henceforth in a state of stupor. Christ, therefore, perceiving their consternation, reproved it by saying, *"I go to My Father, and no one among you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your hearts."* For this reason also we were silent for some time past, awaiting the present

opportunity. For if a person who is about to ask a favour of any one, though the request be a reasonable one, waits a fitting occasion to propose it, that he may find him who is to grant the petition in a mild and well-disposed frame of mind; and that receiving assistance from the favourable opportunity, he may obtain the benefit; how much rather is it necessary that the speaker should seek a fit season, so that he may address his discourse to an auditor well affected, and free from all care and despondency; which accordingly we have done.

3. Inasmuch, then, as you have now shaken off despondency, we are desirous to recall you to the recollection of former matters; so that our discourse may be rendered the clearer to you. For what we said of the creation, that God not only made it beautiful, and wonderful, and vast, but also weak and corruptible; and moreover that He has established various proofs of this; ordering both these circumstances for our advantage; leading us on by its beauty to admiration of Him who framed it: and by its weakness leading us away from the worship of the creature; this we may see, take place also in the case of the body. For with respect to this too there are many among the enemies to the truth, as well as among those who belong to our own ranks, who make it a subject of enquiry, why it was created corruptible and frail? Many also of the Greeks and heretics affirm, that it was not even created by God. For they declare it to be unworthy of God's creative art, and enlarge upon its impurities, its sweat, its tears, its labours, and sufferings, and all the other incidents of the body. But, for my part, when such things are talked of, I would first make this reply. Tell me not of man, fallen, degraded and condemned. But if you would learn what manner of body God formed us with at the first, let us go to Paradise, and survey the Man that was created at the beginning. For that body was not thus corruptible and mortal; but like as some statue of gold just brought

from the furnace, that shines splendidly, so that frame was free from all corruption. Labour did not trouble it, nor sweat deface it. Cares did not conspire against it; nor sorrows besiege it; nor was there any other affection of that kind to distress it. But when man did not bear his felicity with moderation, but threw contempt upon his Benefactor, and thought a deceiving demon more worthy of credit than God who cared for him, and who had raised him to honour, and when he expected to become himself a god, and conceived thoughts above his proper dignity, then—then indeed it was that God, to humble him by decisive acts, made him mortal, as well as corruptible; and fettered him with such varied necessities; not from hatred or aversion, but in care for him, and to repress at the very outset that evil and destructive pride; and instead of permitting it to proceed any further, He admonished Him by actual experience, that he was mortal and corruptible; thus to convince him that he must never again think or dream of such things as he had done. For the devil's suggestion, was, *"You shall be as gods."* [Genesis 3:5] Desiring then utterly to eradicate this idea, God made the body subject to much suffering and disease; to instruct him by its very nature that he must never again entertain such a thought. And that this is true, is really most evident from what befell him; for after such an expectation, he was condemned to this punishment. Consider also with me the wisdom of God in this matter. He did not allow him to be the first to die, but permitted his son to suffer this death; in order that seeing before his eyes the body corrupting and decaying, he might receive a striking lesson of wisdom from that spectacle; and learn what had come to pass, and be duly chastened before he departed hence.

4. Really then, as I said, this point is apparent from what has already taken place; but it will be made no less clear from what yet remains to be stated. For if while we are fettered with such necessities of the body; and

while it is the lot of all men to die, to suffer corruption, to moulder in the sight of all, and to dissolve into dust, so that the Gentile philosophers made one and the same comprehensive definition of the human race (for when asked what man was, they answered, he is an animal, rational and mortal); if, forsooth, while all admitted this, there were some who dared in the opinion of the multitude to immortalize themselves; and notwithstanding that the very sense of sight bore witness to their mortality, were ambitious to be called gods, and were honoured as such; to what a length of impiety would not many men have proceeded, if death had not gone on teaching all men the mortality and corruptibility of our nature? Hear, for instance, what the prophet says of a barbarian king, when seized with this frenzy. *"I will exalt,"* says he, *"my throne above the stars of heaven; and I will be like the Most High."* [Isaiah 14:13-14] Afterwards, deriding him, and speaking of his death, he says, *"Corruption is under you, and the worm is your covering;"* [Isaiah 14:11] but his meaning is, *"Do you dare, O man, whom such an end is awaiting, to entertain such imaginations?"* Again, of another, I mean the king of the Tyrians, when he conceived the like aims, and was ambitious to be considered as a God, he says, *"You are not a God, but a man, and they that pierce you shall say so."* [Ezekiel 28:9] Thus God, in making this body of ours as it is, has from the beginning utterly taken away all occasion of idolatry.

5. But why do you marvel if this has happened in respect to the body, when even with respect to the soul it is plain, that a similar thing has taken place. For God made it not mortal, but permitted it to be immortal; He constituted it however subject to forgetfulness, to ignorance, to sadness, and to care; and this, lest regarding its own nobility of birth, it might take up a conceit too high for its proper dignity. For if, even while the case stands thus, some have dared to aver, that it is of the Divine essence; to what a

pitch of frenzy would they not have reached, if it had been devoid of these imperfections? What, however, I affirmed respecting the creation, I affirm also respecting the body, that both these things alike excite my admiration of God; that He has made it corruptible; and that in its very corruptibility, He has manifested His own power and wisdom. For that He could have made it of some better material, He has evidenced from the celestial and the solar substance. For He that made those such as they are, could have made this also like them, had He thought proper to do so. But the cause of its imperfection is what I before adverted to. This circumstance by no means lowers the admiration due to the Creator's workmanship, but rather increases it; for the meanness of the substance, manifests the resource and adaptiveness of His art; since He has introduced such a harmony of parts in clay and ashes, and senses so various and manifold and capable of such spiritual wisdom.

6. In proportion, therefore, as you find fault with the meanness of the substance, be so much the more astonished at the greatness of the art displayed. For this reason also, I do not so much admire the statuary who forms a beautiful figure out of gold, as him who, by the resources of art, is able, even in crumbling clay, to exhibit a marvellous and inimitable mould of beauty. In the former case, the material gives some aid to the artist, but in the latter, there is a naked display of his art. Would you learn then, how great the wisdom of the Creator is, consider what it is that is made out of clay? What else is there but brick and tile? Nevertheless, God, the Supreme Artist, from the same material of which only the brick and tile is formed, has been able to make an eye so beautiful, as to astonish all who behold it, and to implant in it such power, that it can at once survey the high aerial expanse, and by the aid of a small pupil embrace the mountains, forests, hills, the ocean, yea, the heaven, by so small a thing! Tell me not then of

tears and rheums, for these things are the fruit of your sin; but consider its beauty, and visual power; and how it is that while it ranges over such an expanse of air, it experiences no weariness or distress! The feet indeed become tired and weakened even after going but a small distance; but the eye, in traversing a space so lofty and so wide, is not sensible of any infirmity. For since this is the most necessary to us of all our members, He has not suffered it to be oppressed with fatigue; in order that the service it renders us might be free and unfettered.

7. But rather, I should say, what language is fully adequate to set forth the whole excellency of this member? And why do I speak of the pupil and the visual faculty? For if you were to investigate that which seems the meanest of all the members, I mean the eyelashes, you would behold even in these the manifold wisdom of God the Creator! For as it is with respect to the ears of grain; the beards, standing forth as a sort of spears, repel the birds, and do not suffer them to settle upon the fruits, and to break the stalk, which is too tender to bear them; so also is it with regard to the eyes. The hairs of the eyelids are ranged in front, and answer the purpose of beards and spears; keeping dust and light substances at a distance from the eyes, and any thing that might incommode the sight; and not permitting the eyelids to be annoyed. Another instance of wisdom, no less remarkable, is to be observed in eyebrows. Who can help being struck by their position? For they do not project to an immoderate degree, so as to obscure the sight; nor do they retire farther back than is fitting; but in the same manner as the eaves of a house, they stand out above, receiving the perspiration as it descends from the forehead, and not permitting it to annoy the eyes. For this purpose too there is a growth of hair upon them, which serves by its roughness to stay what descends from above, and affords the exact protection that is needed, and contributes also much appearance of beauty

to the eyes. Nor is this the only matter of wonder! There is another thing also which is equally so. How is it, I ask, that the hairs of the head increase, and are cut off; but those of the eyebrows, not so? For not even this has happened undesignedly, or by chance, but in order that they might not darken the sight too much by becoming very long; an inconvenience from which those suffer who have arrived at extreme old age.

8. And who could possibly trace out all the wisdom which is manifested by means of the brain! For, in the first place, He made it soft, since it serves as a fountain to all the senses. Next, in order that it might not suffer injury owing to its peculiar nature, He fortified it on every side with bones. Further; that it might not suffer from friction, by the hardness of the bones, He interposed a middle membrane: and not only a single one, but also a second; the former being spread out on the under side of the skull, but the latter enveloping the upper substance of the brain, and the first being the harder of the two. And this was done, both for the cause that has been mentioned, and in order that the brain might not be the first to receive the blows inflicted upon the head; but that these membranes first encountering them, might free it from all injury, and preserve it unwounded. Moreover, that the bone which covers the brain is not a single and continuous one, but has many sutures on every side, is a circumstance which contributes much to its security. For a ventilation of the vapours that surround it may easily take place outward through these sutures, so as to prevent it from being suffocated; and if a blow should be inflicted upon it, on any particular point, the damage does not extend to the whole. For if the bone had been one and continuous, the stroke even when it fell upon one part, only, would have injured the whole; but now, by its being divided into many parts, this can never happen. For if one part should chance to be wounded, only the bone that is situated near that part receives injury, but all the rest remain unhurt;

the continuity of the stroke being intercepted by the division of the bones, and being unable to extend itself to the adjacent parts. By reason of this God has constructed a covering for the brain of many bones; and just as when one builds a house, he lays on a roof, and tiles upon the upper part, so God has placed these bones above upon the head, and has provided that the hairs should shoot forth, and serve as a kind of cap for it.

9. The very same thing also He has done with regard to the heart. For inasmuch as the heart has preeminence over all the members in our body, and that the supreme power over our whole life is entrusted to it, and death happens when it receives but a slight blow; He has fenced it about on every side with stiff and hard bones, surrounding it by the protection of the breast-bone before, and the blade-bones behind. And what He did with respect to the membranes of the brain, He has done in this instance also. For in order that it might not be rubbed and pained in striking against the hard bones which encompass it, in the throbbing and quick pulsation to which it is subject in anger and similar affections, He both interposed many membranes there, and placed the lungs by the side of it to act the part of a soft bed to these pulsations, so that the heart may break its force on these without sustaining injury or distress.

But why do I speak of the heart, and of the brain, when if any one will investigate even the very nails, he will see the manifold wisdom of God displayed in these; as well by their form, as by their substance and position. I might also have mentioned why our fingers are not all equal, and many other particulars besides; but to those who are inclined to attend, the wisdom of God Who created us, will be sufficiently clear from what has been said. Wherefore, leaving this department to be investigated with diligence by those who are desirous of the task, I shall turn myself to another objection.

10. There are many forsooth, who, besides what has been already referred to, bring forward this objection. If man be the king of the brutes, why have many animals an advantage over him in strength, agility, and fleetness? For the horse is swifter, the ox is more enduring, the eagle is lighter, and the lion stronger, than man. What then have we to reply to this argument? Thus much; that from that circumstance we may especially discern the wisdom of God and the honour which He has put upon us. A horse, it is true, is swifter than man, but for making dispatch on a journey, the man is better fitted than the horse. For a horse, though the very swiftest and strongest that may be, can scarcely travel two hundred stadia in a day; but a man, harnessing a number of horses in succession, will be able to accomplish a distance of two thousand stadia. Thus, the advantage which swiftness affords to the horse, intelligence and art afford to the man in a much greater excess. The man, it is true, has not feet so strong as the other, but then he has those of the other which serve him as well as his own. For not one of the brutes has ever been able to subjugate another to his own use; but man has the range of them all; and by that variety of skill which is given him of God, makes each of the animals subservient to the employment best suited to him. For if the feet of men had been as strong as those of horses, they would have been useless for other purposes, for difficult ground, for the summits of mountains, for climbing trees; for the hoof is usually an impediment to treading in such places. So that although the feet of men are softer than theirs, they are still adapted to more various uses, and are not the worse for their want of strength, while they have the power of the horse ministering to their aid, and at the same time they have the advantage over him in variety of tread. Again, the eagle has his light pinion; but I have reason and art, by which I am enabled to bring down and master all the winged animals. But if you would see my pinion too, I have one much

lighter than he; one which can soar, not merely ten or twenty stadia, or even as high as heaven, but above heaven itself, and above the heaven of heavens; even to *"where Christ sits at the right hand of God!"*

11. Again, the irrational animals have their weapons in their own body; thus, the ox has his horns; the wild boar his tusks; the lion his claws. But God has not furnished the nature of my body with weapons, but has made these to be extraneous to it, for the purpose of showing that man is a gentle animal; and that I have not always occasion to use my weapons, for from time to time I lay these aside, and from time to time resume them. In order then that I might be free and unfettered in this matter, not being at all times compelled to carry my weapons, He has made these to be separate from my nature. For it is not only in our possessing a rational nature that we surpass the brutes, but we also excel them in body. For God has made this to correspond with the soul's nobility, and fitted to execute its commands. He has not, indeed, made the body such as it is, without reason; but such as it ought to be, as having to minister to a rational soul; so that if it were not such as it is, the operations of the soul would be greatly impeded: and this is manifest from diseases. For if this nice adjustment of the body be diverted from its proper condition in ever so small a degree, many of the soul's energies are impeded; as, for instance, if the brain should become too hot, or too cold. So that from the body it is easy to see much of the Divine Providence, not only because He made it at first better than it is at present; nor because even now He has changed it for a useful purpose, but also because He will raise it again to much greater glory.

12. But, if you are desirous to learn in a different way what wisdom God has shown respecting the body, I will mention that by which Paul seems most especially to be constantly struck. But what is this? That He has made the members to excel one another, though not in the same things?

Some He has appointed to surpass the rest in beauty, and some in strength. Thus, the eye is beautiful, but the feet are stronger. The head is honourable, but it cannot say to the feet, *"I have no need of you."* [1 Corinthians 12:21] And this may be seen too with regard to irrational animals; and the same in all the relations of life. The king, for instance, has need of his subjects, and the subjects of the king; just as the head has need of the feet. And again, as to brutes; some are more powerful than the rest; and some more beautiful. Some there are that delight us; some that nourish; and some that clothe us. Thus the peacock delights; and fowls and swine nourish; sheep and goats provide us clothing; and the ox and ass share our labours. There are also others which provide us with none of these, but which call our powers into active exercise. Thus the wild animals increase the strength of the hunters; and instruct our race by the fear which they inspire, and render us more cautious; and for medical purposes, they supply no small contributions from their bodies. So that if any one say to you, *"How are you a lord of the brutes, while afraid of the lion?"* Answer him, *"Things were not ordered in this manner at the beginning, when I was in favour with God, when I dwelt in Paradise. But when I had offended my Master, I fell under the power of those who were my servants! Yet not even now entirely; since I possess an art by which I overcome the wild animals."* So also it happens in great houses; the sons, while they are yet under age, are afraid of many of the servants; but when they have done amiss, their dread is greatly heightened. And this we may say also of serpents, and scorpions, and vipers; that they are formidable to us by reason of sin.

13. And not only as it regards our body, and the various states of life, is this diversity observable; nor is it confined to brutes; but it may be seen also in trees; and the meanest of them may be observed to have an excellence above those which are greater; so that all things are not alike in

all, that all may be necessary to us; and that we may perceive the manifold wisdom of the Lord. Do not then lay blame on God on account of the body's corruptibleness, but for this the rather do Him homage, and admire Him for His wisdom and His tender care; His wisdom, that in so corruptible a body He has been able to display such harmony; His tender care that for the benefit of the soul He has made it corruptible, that He might repress her vanity, and subdue her pride! Why then did He not make it thus from the beginning, asks some one? It was, I reply, to justify Himself before you by these very works; and as much as to say by the result itself, I called you to greater honour, but you constituted yourself unworthy of the gift, banishing yourself from Paradise! Nevertheless, I will not even now despise you, but I will correct your sin, and bring you back to heaven. Therefore for your own sake, I have permitted you so long to decay and suffer corruption, that in the fullness of time the discipline of your humility might be established; and that you might never more resume your former conceit.

14. For all these things then let us give thanks to God who loves man; and for His tender care over us, render Him a recompense, that will also be profitable to ourselves; and as regards the commandment which I so frequently discourse of to you, let us use our utmost diligence! For I will not desist from the exhortation until you are amended: seeing that what we aim at is not that we may address you seldom or frequently, but that we may continue speaking till we have persuaded you. To the Jews when God said by the prophet, *"If you fast for strife and debate, to what purpose do ye fast for me?"* [Isaiah 58:4-5] And by us He says to you, If you fast unto oaths and perjuries, to what purpose do ye fast? For how shall we behold the sacred Passover? How shall we receive the holy Sacrifice? How shall we be partakers of those wonderful mysteries by means of the same tongue with which we have trampled upon God's law, the same tongue with which we

have contaminated the soul? For if no one would dare to receive the royal purple with filthy hands, how shall we receive the Lord's Body with a tongue that has become polluted! For the oath is of the wicked one, but the Sacrifice is of the Lord. *"What communion then has light with darkness, and what concord has Christ with Belial?"* [1 Corinthians 6:14-15]

15. That you are desirous, indeed, to be rid of this impiety, I know well; but since each man may not be able easily to accomplish this by himself, let us enter into fraternities and partnerships in this matter; and as the poor do in their feasts, when each one alone would not be able to furnish a complete banquet; when they all meet together, they each bring their contribution to the feast; so also let us act. Inasmuch as we are of ourselves too listless, let us make partnerships with each other, and pledge ourselves to contribute counsel, and admonition, and exhortation, and rebuke and reminiscence, and threatening; in order that from the diligence of each we may all be amended. For seeing that we observe the affairs of our neighbour more sharply than we do our own, let us be watchful of the safety of others, and commit the guardianship of ourselves to them; and let us engage in this pious rivalry, to the end that thus becoming superior to such an evil habit, we may come with boldness to this holy feast; and be partakers of the holy Sacrifice, with a favourable hope and a good conscience; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, be glory to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 12 on the Statues

Thanksgiving to God for the pardon granted to the offenders against the Emperor. Physical discourse on the Creation. Proof that God, in creating man, implanted in him a natural law. Duty of avoiding oaths with the utmost diligence.

1. Yesterday I said *"Blessed be God!"* and today again I say the very same thing. For although the evils we dreaded have passed away, we should not suffer the memory of them to disappear; not indeed that we may grieve, but that we may give thanks. For if the memory of these terrors abide with us, we shall never be overtaken by the actual experience of such terrors. For what need have we of the experience, while our memory acts the part of a monitor? Seeing then that God has not permitted us to be overwhelmed in the flood of those troubles when upon us, let us not permit ourselves to become careless when these are passed away. Then, when we were sad, He consoled us, let us give thanks to Him now that we are joyful. In our agony He comforted us, and did not forsake us; therefore let us not betray ourselves in prosperity by declining into sloth. *"Forget not,"* says one, *"the time of famine in the day of plenty."* [Sirach 18:25] Therefore let us be mindful of the time of temptation in the day of relief; and with respect to our sins let us also act in the same manner. If you have sinned, and God has pardoned your sin, receive your pardon, and give thanks; but be not forgetful of the sin; not that you should fret yourself with the thought of it, but that you may school your soul, not to grow wanton, and relapse again into the same snares.

2. Thus also Paul did; for having said, *"He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,"* he goes on to add, *"who was before a blasphemer, a*

persecutor, and injurious." [1 Timothy 1:12-13] *"Let the life of the servant,"* says he, *"be openly exposed, so that the lovingkindness of the Master be apparent. For although I have received the remission of sins, I do not reject the memory of those sins."* And this not only manifested the lovingkindness of the Lord, but made the man himself the more illustrious. For when you have learned who he was before, then you will be the more astonished at him; and when you see out of what he came to be what he was, then you will commend him the more; and if you have greatly sinned, yet upon being changed you will conceive favourable hopes from this instance. For in addition to what has been said, such an example comforts those who are in despair, and causes them again to stand erect. The same thing also will be the case with regard to our city; for all the events that have happened serve to show your virtue, who by means of repentance have prevailed to ward off such wrath, while at the same time they proclaim the lovingkindness of God, who has removed the cloud that was so threatening, in consequence of a small change of conduct, and so raises up again all those who are sunk in despair, when they learn, from our case, that he who looks upward for the Divine help, is not to be overwhelmed, though innumerable waves should encompass him on all sides.

3. For who has seen, who has ever heard of sufferings such as were ours? We were every day in expectation that our city would be overturned from its foundations together with its inhabitants. But when the Devil was hoping to sink the vessel, then God produced a perfect calm. Let us not then be unmindful of the greatness of these terrors, in order that we may remember the magnitude of the benefits received from God. He who knows not the nature of the disease will not understand the physician's art. Let us tell these things also to our children; and transmit them to the remotest generations, that all may learn how the Devil had endeavoured to destroy

the very foundation of the city; and how God was able visibly to raise it up again, when it was fallen and prostrate; and did not permit even the least injury to befall it, but took away the fear; and dispelled with much speed the peril it had been placed in. For even through the past week we were all expecting that our substance would be confiscated; and that soldiers would have been let loose upon us; and we were dreaming of a thousand other horrors. But lo! All these things have passed away, even like a cloud or a flitting shadow; and we have been punished only in the expectation of what is dreadful; or rather we have not been punished, but we have been disciplined, and have become better; God having softened the heart of the Emperor. Let us then always and every day say, "*Blessed be God!*" and with greater zeal let us give heed to our assembling, and let us hasten to the church, from whence we have reaped this benefit. For you know whither ye fled at the first; whither ye flocked together; and from what quarter our safety came. Let us then hold fast by this sacred anchor; and as in the season of danger it did not betray us, so now let us not leave it in the season of relief; but let us await with exact attention the stated assemblies and prayers; and let us every day give a hearing to the divine oracles. And the leisure which we spent in busily running about after those who came from the court, while we were labouring under anxiety in respect to the evils that threatened us; this let us consume wholly in hearing the divine laws, instead of unseasonable and senseless pastimes; lest we should again reduce ourselves to the necessity of that sort of occupation.

4. On the three foregoing days, then, we have investigated one method of acquiring the knowledge of God, and have brought it to a conclusion; explaining how "*the heavens declare the glory of God;*" and what the meaning of that is, which is said by Paul; viz. "*That the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by*

the things that are made." [Romans 1:20] And we showed how from the creation of the world, and how by heaven, and earth, the sea, the Creator is glorified. But today, after briefly philosophising on that same subject, we will proceed to another topic. For He not only made it, but provided also that when it was made, it should carry on its operations; not permitting it to be all immoveable, nor commanding it to be all in a state of motion. The heaven, for instance, has remained immoveable, according as the prophet says, *"He placed the heaven as a vault, and stretched it out as a tent over the earth."* [Isaiah 40:42] But, on the other hand, the sun with the rest of the stars, runs on his course through every day. And again, the earth is fixed, but the waters are continually in motion; and not the waters only, but the clouds, and the frequent and successive showers, which return at their proper season. The nature of the clouds is one, but the things which are produced out of them are different. For the rain, indeed, becomes wine in the grape, but oil in the olive. And in other plants is changed into their juices; and the womb of the earth is one, and yet bears different fruits. The heat, too, of the sun-beams is one, but it ripens all things differently; bringing some to maturity more slowly, and others more quickly. Who then but must feel astonishment and admiration at these things?

5. Nay, this is not the only wonder, that He has formed it with this great variety and diversity; but farther, that He has spread it before all in common; the rich and the poor, sinners as well as the righteous. Even as Christ also declared: *"He makes His sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sends His rain upon the just and unjust."* [Matthew 5:45] Moreover, when He stocked the world with various animals, and implanted various dispositions in the creatures, He commanded us to imitate some of these, and to avoid others. For example; the ant is industrious, and performs a laborious task. By giving heed then, you will receive the strongest

admonition from this animal not to indulge in sloth, nor to shun labour and toil. Therefore also the Scripture has sent the sluggard to the ant, saying, *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard, emulate his ways, and be wiser than he."* [Proverbs 6:6] Are you unwilling, he means, to learn from the Scriptures, that it is good to labour, and that he who will not work, neither ought he to eat? [2 Thessalonians 3:10] learn it from the irrationals! This also we do in our families, when those who are older, and who are considered superior, have done amiss, we bid them to attend to thoughtful children. We say, *"Mark such an one, who is less than you, how earnest and watchful he is."* Do thou then likewise receive from this animal the best exhortation to industry; and marvel at your Lord, not only because He has made heaven and the sun, but because He has also made the ant. For although the animal be small, it affords much proof of the greatness of God's wisdom. Consider then how prudent the ant is, and consider how God has implanted in so small a body, such an unceasing desire of working! But while from this animal you learn industry; take from the bee at once a lesson of neatness, industry, and social concord! For it is not more for herself than for us, that the bee labours, and toils every day; which is indeed a thing especially proper for a Christian; not to seek his own things, but the things of others. As then she traverses all the meadows that she may prepare a banquet for another, so also, O man, do thou likewise; and if you have accumulated wealth, expend it upon others; if you have the faculty of teaching, do not bury the talent, but bring it out publicly for the sake of those who need it! Or if you have any other advantage, become useful to those who require the benefit of your labours! Do you see not that for this reason, especially, the bee is more honoured than the other animals; not because she labours, but because she labours for others? For the spider also labours, and toils, and spreads out his fine textures over the walls, surpassing the utmost skill of

woman; but the creature is without estimation, since his work is in no way profitable to us; such are they that labour and toil, but for themselves! Imitate too the simplicity of the dove! Imitate the ass in his love to his master, and the ox also! Imitate the birds in their freedom from anxiety! For great, great indeed is the advantage that may be gained from irrational creatures for the correction of manners.

6. From these animals Christ also instructs us, when He says, *"Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."* [Matthew 10:16] And again; *"Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them."* [Matthew 6:26] The prophet also, to shame the ungrateful Jews, thus speaks; *"The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know me."* [Isaiah 1:3] And again; *"The turtle and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming, but my people knows not the judgment of the Lord his God."* [Jeremiah 8:7] From these animals, and such as these, learn to achieve virtue, and be instructed to avoid wickedness by the contrary ones. For as the bee follows good, so the asp is destructive. Therefore shun wickedness, lest you hear it said, *"The poison of asps is under their lips."* Again, the dog is devoid of shame. Hate, therefore, this kind of wickedness. The fox also is crafty, and fraudulent. Emulate not this vice; but as the bee, in flying over the meadows, does not choose every sort of flower; but selecting that which is useful, leaves the rest; so also do thou; and while surveying the whole race of irrational animals, if any thing profitable may be drawn from these, accept it; the advantages which they have naturally, make it your business to practise of your own free choice. For in this respect also you have been honoured of God; that what they have as natural advantages He has permitted you to achieve of your own free choice, in order that you may also receive a reward. For good works with them spring not from free will,

and reason, but from nature only. In other words, the bee makes honey, not because it has learned this by reason and reflection, but because it is instructed by nature. Because if the work had not been natural, and allotted to the race, some of them assuredly would have been unskilled in their art; whereas from the time that the world was first made, even to the present day, no one has observed bees resting from labour, and not making honey. For such natural characteristics are common to the whole race. But those things which depend on our free choice are not common; for labour is necessary that they may be accomplished.

7. Take then all the best things, and clothe yourself with them; for you are indeed king of the irrationals; but kings, if there be any thing excellent possessed by their subjects, be it gold or silver, or precious stones, or sumptuous vestments, usually possess the same in greater abundance. From the creation also, learn to admire your Lord! And if any of the things you see exceed your comprehension, and you are not able to find the reason thereof, yet for this glorify the Creator, that the wisdom of these works surpasses your understanding. Say not, wherefore is this? Or, to what end? For everything is useful, even if we know not the reason of it. As therefore, if you go into a surgery, and see many instruments lying before you, you wonder at the variety of the implements though ignorant of their use; so also act with respect to the creation. Although you see many of the animals, and of the herbs, and plants, and other things, of which you know not the use, admire the variety of these; and feel astonishment for this reason at the perfect workmanship of God; that He has neither made all things manifest to you, nor permitted all things to be unknown. For He has not permitted all things to be unknown, lest you should say, that the things that exist are not of providence. He has not permitted all things to be known to you, lest the greatness of your knowledge should excite you to pride. Thus at least it was

that the evil demon precipitated the first man headlong and by means of the hope of greater knowledge, deprived him of that he already possessed. Therefore also, a certain wise man exhorts, saying, *"Seek not out the things that are too hard for you; neither search the things that are too deep for you. But what is commanded you, think thereupon with reverence; for the greater part of His works are done in secret."* And again; *"More things are showed unto you than men understand."* But this he speaks for the purpose of consoling the man who is sad and vexed, because he does not know all things; for even those things he observes, which you are permitted to know, greatly surpass your understanding; for you could not have found them by yourself, but you have been taught them of God. Wherefore be content with the wealth given you, and do not seek more; but for what you have received give thanks; and do not be angry on account of those things which you have not received. And, for what you know, give glory, and do not stumble at those things of which you are ignorant. For God has made both alike profitably; and has revealed some things, but hidden others, providing for your safety.

8. One mode, then, of knowing God, is that by the creation, which I have spoken of, and which might occupy many days. For in order that we might go over the formation of man only with exactness, (and I speak of exactness such as is possible to us, not of real exactness; since many as are the reasons we have already given for the works of creation, many more of these there are, ineffable, which God who made them knows, for of course we do not know them all); in order then, I say, that we might take an exact survey of the whole modelling of man; and that we might discover the skill there is in every member; and examine the distribution and situation of the sinews, the veins, and the arteries, and the moulding of every other part; not even a whole year would suffice for such a disquisition.

9. For this reason, here dismissing this subject; and having given to the laborious and studious an opportunity, by what has been said, of going over likewise the other parts of Creation; we shall now direct our discourse to another point which is itself also demonstrative of God's providence. What then is this second point? It is, that when God formed man, he implanted within him from the beginning a natural law. And what then was this natural law? He gave utterance to conscience within us; and made the knowledge of good things, and of those which are the contrary, to be self-taught. For we have no need to learn that fornication is an evil thing, and that chastity is a good thing, but we know this from the first. And that you may learn that we know this from the first, the Lawgiver, when He afterwards gave laws, and said, "*You shall not kill,*" [Exodus 20:13] did not add, "*since murder is an evil thing,*" but simply said, "*You shall not kill;*" for He merely prohibited the sin, without teaching. How was it then when He said, "*You shall not kill,*" that He did not add, "*because murder is a wicked thing.*" The reason was, that conscience had taught this beforehand; and He speaks thus, as to those who know and understand the point. Wherefore when He speaks to us of another commandment, not known to us by the dictate of consciences He not only prohibits, but adds the reason. When, for instance, He gave commandment respecting the Sabbath; "*On the seventh day you shall do no work;*" He subjoined also the reason for this cessation. What was this? "*Because on the seventh day God rested from all His works which He had begun to make.*" [Exodus 20:10] And again; "*Because thou were a servant in the land of Egypt.*" [Deuteronomy 21:18] For what purpose then I ask did He add a reason respecting the Sabbath, but did no such thing in regard to murder? Because this commandment was not one of the leading ones. It was not one of those which were accurately defined of our conscience, but a kind of partial and temporary one; and for

this reason it was abolished afterwards. But those which are necessary and uphold our life, are the following; *"You shall not kill; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal."* On this account then He adds no reason in this case, nor enters into any instruction on the matter, but is content with the bare prohibition.

10. And not only from thence, but from another consideration also, I will endeavour to show you how man was self-taught with respect to the knowledge of virtue. Adam sinned the first sin; and after the sin straightway hid himself; but if he had not known he had been doing something wrong, why did he hide himself? For then there were neither letters, nor law, nor Moses. Whence then does he recognise the sin, and hide himself? Yet not only does he so hide himself, but when called to account, he endeavours to lay the blame on another, saying, *"The woman, whom You gave me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."* And that woman again transfers the accusation to another, viz. the serpent. Observe also the wisdom of God; for when Adam said, *"I heard Your voice, and I was afraid, for I was naked, and I hid myself,"* God does not at once convict him of what he had done, nor say, *"Why have you eaten of the tree?"* But how? *"Who told you,"* He asks, *"that you were naked, unless you have eaten of that Tree of which alone I commanded you not to eat?"* He did not keep silence, nor did He openly convict him. He did not keep silence, that He might call him forth to the confession of his crime. He did not convict him openly, lest the whole might come from Himself, and the man should so be deprived of that pardon which is granted us from confession. Therefore he did not declare openly the cause from whence this knowledge sprung, but he carried on the discourse in the form of interrogation, leaving the man himself to come to the confession.

11. Again, in the case of Cain and Abel, the same proceeding is observable. For, in the first place, they set apart the fruits of their own labours to God. For we would show not from his sin only, but also from his virtue, that man was capable of knowing both these things. Wherefore that man knew sin to be an evil thing, Adam manifested; and that he knew that virtue was a good thing, Abel again made evident. For without having learned it from any one, without having heard any law promulgated respecting the first fruits, but having been taught from within, and from his conscience, he presented that sacrifice. On this account I do not carry the argument down to a later period; but I bring it to bear upon the time of these earlier men, when there were as yet no letters, as yet no law, nor as yet prophets and judges; but Adam only existed with his children; in order that you may learn, that the knowledge of good and evil had been previously implanted in their natures. For from whence did Abel learn that to offer sacrifice was a good thing; that it was good to honour God, and in all things to give thanks? *"Why then?"* replies some one, *"did not Cain bring his offering?"* This man also did offer sacrifice, but not in like manner. And from thence again the knowledge of conscience is apparent. For when, envying him who had been honoured, he deliberated upon murder, he conceals his crafty determination. And what says he; *"Come, let us go forth into the field."* The outward guise was one thing, the pretence of love; the thought another, the purpose of fratricide. But if he had not known the design to be a wicked one, why did he conceal it? And again, after the murder had been perpetrated, being asked of God, *"Where is Abel your brother?"* he answers, *"I know not; Am I my brother's keeper?"* Wherefore does he deny the crime? Is it not evidently because he exceedingly condemns himself. For as his father had hid himself, so also this man denies

his guilt, and after his conviction, again says, *"My crime is too great to obtain pardon."*

12. But it may be objected, that the Gentile allows nothing of this sort. Come then, let us discuss this point, and as we have done with respect to the creation, having carried on the warfare against these objectors not only by the help of the Scriptures, but of reason, so also let us now do with respect to conscience. For Paul too, when he was engaged in controversy with such persons, entered upon this head. What then is it that they urge? They say, that there is no self-evident law seated in our consciences; and that God has not implanted this in our nature. But if so, whence is it, I ask, that legislators have written those laws which are among them concerning marriages, concerning murders, concerning wills, concerning trusts, concerning abstinence from encroachments on one another, and a thousand other things. For the men now living may perchance have learned them from their elders; and they from those who were before them, and these again from those beyond? But from whom did those learn who were the originators and first enactors of laws among them? Is it not evident that it was from conscience? For they cannot say, that they held communication with Moses; or that they heard the prophets. How could it be so when they were Gentiles? But it is evident that from the very law which God placed in man when He formed him from the beginning, laws were laid down, and arts discovered, and all other things. For the arts too were thus established, their originators having come to the knowledge of them in a self-taught manner.

13. So also came there to be courts of justice, and so were penalties defined, as Paul accordingly observes. For since many of the Gentiles were ready to controvert this, and to say, *"How will God judge mankind who lived before Moses? He did not send a lawgiver; He did not introduce a*

law; He commissioned no prophet, nor apostle, nor evangelist; how then can He call these to account?" Since Paul therefore wished to prove that they possessed a self taught law; and that they knew clearly what they ought to do; hear how he speaks; *"For when the Gentiles who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts."* [Romans 2:14-15] But how without letters? *"Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."* [Romans 2:16] And again; *"As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law."* [Romans 2:12] What means, *"They shall perish without law?"* The law not accusing them, but their thoughts, and their conscience; for if they had not a law of conscience, it were not necessary that they should perish through having done amiss. For how should it be so if they sinned without a law? But when he says, *"without a law,"* he does not assert that they had no law, but that they had no written law, though they had the law of nature. And again; *"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."* [Romans 2:10]

14. But these things he spoke in reference to the early times, before the coming of Christ; and the Gentile he names here is not an idolater, but one who worshipped God only; unfettered by the necessity of Judaical observances, (I mean Sabbaths, and circumcision, and various purifications,) yet exhibiting all manner of wisdom and piety. And again, discoursing of such a worshipper, he observes, *"Wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."* [Romans 2:9] Again he here calls by the

name of Greek one who was free from the observance of Judaic customs. If, then, he had not heard the law, nor conversed with the Jews, how could there be wrath, indignation and tribulation against him for working evil? The reason is, that he possessed a conscience inwardly admonishing him, and teaching him, and instructing him in all things. Whence is this manifest? From the way in which he punished others when they did amiss; from the way in which he laid down laws; from the way in which he set up the tribunals of justice. With the view of making this more plain, Paul spoke of those who were living in wickedness. *"Who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them."* [Romans 1:32] *"But from whence,"* says some one, *"did they know, that it is the will of God, that those who live in iniquity should be punished with death?"* From whence? Why, from the way in which they judged others who sinned. For if you deem not murder to be a wicked thing, when you have gotten a murderer at your bar, you should not punish him. So if you deem it not an evil thing to commit adultery, when the adulterer has fallen into your hands, release him from punishment! But if you record laws, and prescribest punishments, and art a severe judge of the sins of others; what defence can you make, in matters wherein you yourself doest amiss, by saying that you are ignorant what things ought to be done? For suppose that thou and another person have alike been guilty of adultery. On what account do you punish him, and deem yourself worthy of forgiveness? Since if you did not know adultery to be wickedness, it were not right to punish it in another. But if you punish, and thinkest to escape the punishment yourself, how is it agreeable to reason that the same offenses should not pay the same penalty?

15. This indeed is the very thing which Paul rebukes, when he says, *"And do you think this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and*

doest the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God?" [Romans 2:3] It is not, it cannot be possible; for from the very sentence, he means, which you pronounce upon another, from this sentence God will then judge you. For surely you are not just, and God unjust! But if you overlook not another suffering wrong, how shall God overlook? And if you correct the sins of others, how will not God correct you? And though He may not bring the punishment upon you instantly, be not confident on that account, but fear the more. So also Paul bade you, saying, *"Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"* [Romans 2:4] For therefore, says he, does he bear with you, not that you may become worse, but that you may repent. But if you will not, this longsuffering becomes a cause of your greater punishment; continuing, as you do, impenitent. This, however, is the very thing he means, when he says, *"But after your hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who will render to every man according to his deeds."* [Romans 2:5-6] Since, therefore, He renders to every man according to his works; for this reason He both implanted within us a natural law, and afterwards gave us a written one, in order that He might demand an account of sins, and that He might crown those who act rightly. Let us then order our conduct with the utmost care, and as those who have soon to encounter a fearful tribunal; knowing that we shall enjoy no pardon, if after a natural as well as written law, and so much teaching and continual admonition, we neglect our own salvation.

16. I desire then to address you again on the subject of oaths; but I feel ashamed. For to me, indeed, it is not wearisome both by day and by night to repeat the same things to you. But I am afraid, lest, having followed you up so many days, I should seem to condemn you of great listlessness, that you

should require continual admonition respecting so easy a matter. And I am not only ashamed, but also in fear for you! For frequent instruction to those who give heed, is salutary and profitable; but to those who are listless, it is injurious, and exceedingly perilous; for the oftener any one hears, the greater punishment does he draw upon himself, if he does not practise what is told him. With this accordingly God reproached the Jews, speaking thus: *"I have sent my prophets, rising up early, and sending them; and even then ye did not hearken."* [Jeremiah 29:9] We therefore do this of our great care for you. But we fear, lest, on that tremendous Day, this admonition and counsel should rise up against you all. For when the point to be attained is easy, and he whose office it is continually to admonish, desists not from his task, what defence shall we have to offer? Or what argument will save us from punishment? Tell me, if a sum of money chance to be due to you, do you not always, when you meet the debtor, remind him of the loan? Do thou too act thus; and let every one suppose that his neighbour owes him money, viz., the fulfilling of this precept; and upon meeting him, let him put him in mind of the payment, knowing that no small danger lies at our door, while we are unmindful of our brethren. For this cause I too cease not to make mention of these things. For I fear, lest by any means I should hear it said on that day, *"O wicked and slothful servant, you ought to have put my money to the exchangers."* [Matthew 25:26-27] Behold, however, I have laid it down, not once, or twice, but oftentimes. It is left then for you to discharge the usury of it. Now the usury of hearing is the manifestation of it by deeds, for the deposit is the Lord's. Therefore let us not negligently receive that with which we are entrusted; but let us keep it with diligence, that we may restore it with much interest on That Day. For unless thou bring others to the performance of the same good works, you shall hear that voice, which he who buried the talent heard. But God forbid it should be

this! But may you hear that different voice which Christ uttered, saying to him who had made profit, *"Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things."*

[Matthew 25:21]

17. And this voice we shall hear, if we show the same earnestness as he did. And we shall show this earnestness, if we do this which I say. When you depart, while what you have heard is yet warm within you, exhort one another! And just as you each salute at parting, so let every one go from hence with an admonition, and say to his neighbour, *"Observe and remember that thou keep the commandment;"* and thus shall we assuredly get the mastery. For when friends also dismiss one with such counsel; and on one's return home, one's wife again admonishes one to the same effect; and our word keeps its hold on you when alone; we shall soon shake off this evil habit. I know, indeed, that you marvel why I am so earnest respecting this precept. But discharge the duty enjoined, and then I will tell you. Meanwhile, this I say; that this precept is a divine law; and it is not safe to transgress it. But if I shall see it rightly performed, I will speak of another reason, which is not less than this, that you may learn that it is with justice I make so much ado about this law. But it is now time to conclude this address in a prayer. Wherefore, let us all say in common, *"O God, Who wilt not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live; grant that we, having discharged this and every other precept, may be found worthy so to stand at the tribunal of Your Christ, that having enjoyed great boldness, we may attain the kingdom to Your glory. For to You belongs glory, together with Your only begotten Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and ever, and world without end."* Amen.

Homily 13 on the Statues

A further thanksgiving to God for the change in the late melancholy aspect of affairs. Reminiscence of those who were dragged away, and punished because of the sedition. Exposition on the subject of the creation of man, and of his having received a natural law. Of the complete accomplishment of abstinence from oaths.

1. With the same introduction and prelude that I began yesterday and the day before, I shall begin today. Now again I will say, "*Blessed be God!*" What a day did we see last Wednesday! and what in the present! On that day how heavy was the gloom! How bright the calm of the present! That was the day when that fearful tribunal was set in the city, and shook the hearts of all, and made the day to seem no better than night; not because the beams of the sun were extinguished, but because that despondency and fear darkened your eyes. Wherefore, that we may reap the more pleasure, I wish to relate a few of the circumstances which then occurred; for I perceive that a narrative of these things will be serviceable to you, and to all who shall come afterwards. Besides, to those who have been delivered from shipwreck, it is sweet to remember the waves, and the tempest, and the winds, when they have come into port. And to those who have fallen into sickness, it is an agreeable thing, when the sickness is over, to talk over with others the fevers by which they were nearly brought to the grave. When terrors have passed away, there is a pleasure in relating those terrors; the soul no longer fearing them, but deriving therefrom more cheerfulness. The remembrance of past evils always makes the present prosperity to appear more strikingly.

2. When the greater portion of the city had taken refuge from the fear and danger of that occasion, in secret places, in deserts, and in hollows; terror besetting them in all directions; and the houses were empty of women, and the forum of men, and scarce two or three appeared walking together across it, and even these going about as if they had been animated corpses: at this period, I proceeded to the tribunal of justice, for the purpose of seeing the end of these transactions; and there, beholding the fragments of the city collected together, I marvelled most of all at this, that although a multitude was around the doors, there was the profoundest silence, as though there had been no man there, all looking upon one another; not one daring to enquire of his neighbour, nor to hear anything from him; for each regarded his neighbour with suspicion; since many already, having been dragged away, beyond all expectation, from the midst of the forum, were now confined within. Thus we all alike looked up to heaven, and stretched out our hands in silence, expecting help from above, and beseeching God to stand by those who were brought to judgment, to soften the hearts of the judges, and to make their sentence a merciful one. And just as when some persons on land, beholding others suffering shipwreck, cannot indeed go near to them, and reach out the hand, and relieve their distress, being kept back from them by the waves; yet away on the shore, with outstretched hands and tears, they supplicate God that He may help the drowning; so there in like manner, did all silently and mentally call upon God, pleading for those at the tribunal, as for men surrounded by the waves, that He would stretch out His hand, and not suffer the vessel to be overwhelmed, nor the judgment of those under trial to end in an utter wreck. Such was the state of things in front of the doors; but when I entered within the court, other sights I saw which were still more awful; soldiers armed with swords and clubs, and strictly keeping the peace for the judges within. For since all the

relatives of those under trial, whether wives, or mothers, or daughters, or fathers, stood before the doors of the seat of justice; in order that if any one happened to be led away to execution, yet no one inflamed at the sight of the calamity might raise any tumult or disturbance; the soldiers drove them all afar off; thus preoccupying their mind with fear.

3. One sight there was, more pitiable than all; a mother, and a sister of a certain person, who was among those under trial within, sat at the very vestibule of the court of justice, rolling themselves on the pavement, and becoming a common spectacle to all the bystanders; veiling their faces, and showing no sense of shame, but that which the urgency of the calamity permitted. No maid servant, nor neighbour, nor female friend, nor any other relative accompanied them. But hemmed in by a crowd of soldiers, alone, and meanly clad, and grovelling on the ground, about the very doors, they were in more pitiable case than those who were undergoing judgment within, and hearing as they did the voice of the executioners, the strokes of the scourge, the wailing of those who were being scourged, the fearful threats of the judges, they themselves endured, at every scourging, sharper pains than those who were beaten. For since, in the confessions of others, there was a danger of accusations being proved, if they heard any one scourged that he might mention those who were guilty, and uttering cries, they, looking up to heaven, besought God to give the sufferer some strength of endurance, lest the safety of their own relations should be betrayed by the weakness of others, while incapable of sustaining the sharp anguish of the strokes. And again, the same thing occurred as in the case of men who are struggling with a tempest. For just as when they perceive the violence of a wave lifting up its head from afar, and gradually increasing, and ready to overwhelm the vessel, they are almost dead with terror, before it comes near the ship; so also was it with these. If at any time they heard voices, and

cries that reached them, they saw a thousand deaths before their eyes, being in terror, lest those who were urged to bear witness, giving way to their torments, should name some one of those who were their own relatives. And thus, one saw tortures both within and without. Those within the executioners were tormenting; these women, the despotic force of nature, and the sympathy of the affections. There was lamentation within, and without! Inside, on the part of those who were found guilty, and outside on the part of their relatives. Yea, rather not these only, but their very judges inwardly lamented, and suffered more severely than all the rest; being compelled to take part in so bitter a tragedy.

4. As for me, while I sat and beheld all this, how matrons and virgins, wont to live in seclusion, were now made a common spectacle to all; and how those who were accustomed to lie on a soft couch, had now the pavement for their bed; and how they who had enjoyed so constant an attendance of female servants and eunuchs, and every sort of outward distinction, were now bereft of all these things; and grovelling at the feet of every one, beseeching him to lend help by any means in his power to those who were undergoing examination, and that there might be a kind of general contribution of mercy from all; I exclaimed, in those words of Solomon, "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*" [Ecclesiastes 1:2] For I saw both this and another oracle fulfilled in every deed, which says, "*All the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls away.*" [Isaiah 42:6-7] For then indeed, wealth, and nobility, and notoriety, and the patronage of friends, and kinship and all worldly things, were found worthless; the sin, and transgression of the law which had taken place, having put all these succours to flight. And just as the mother of young birds, when the nestlings have been carried away, coming and finding her nest empty, is unable to rescue her captive brood; but by hovering around

the hands of the fowler, in this way displays her grief; even so did these women then do, when their children were snatched away from their dwellings, and shut up within, as it were in a net, or a trap. They could not indeed come in and deliver the prisoners, but they manifested their anguish by wallowing on the ground near the very doors; by lamentation and groans; and by endeavouring to approach as near as possible to those who had captured them. These things then beholding, I cast in my mind That Dread Tribunal; and I said within myself, If now, when men are the judges, neither mother, nor sister, nor father, nor any other person, though guiltless of the deeds which have been perpetrated, can avail to rescue the criminals; who will stand by us when we are judged at the dread Tribunal of Christ? Who will dare to raise his voice? Who will be able to rescue those who shall be led away to those unbearable punishments. Notwithstanding they were the first men of the city who were then brought to trial, and the very chief of the nobility, yet they would have been glad if it could be granted them to lose all their possessions, yea, if need were, their liberty itself, so that they might continue to enjoy this present life.

5. But to proceed. The day now hastening to its close, and late evening arriving, and the final sentence of the court being expected, all were in still greater agony, and besought God that He would grant some delay and respite; and incline the soul of the judges to refer the facts that had been investigated to the decision of the Emperor; since perchance some advantage might arise from this reference. Moreover, by the people general supplications were sent up to the Merciful God; imploring that He would save the remnants of the city; and not suffer it entirely to be razed from its foundations. Nor could one see any one joining in this cry but with tears. Nevertheless, none of these things then moved the judges within, although

they heard. One thing only they considered, that there might be a rigid enquiry into the deeds that had been perpetrated.

6. At last having loaded the culprits with chains, and bound them with iron, they sent them away to the prison through the midst of the forum. Men that had kept their studs of horses, who had been presidents of the games, who could reckon up a thousand different offices of distinction which they had held, had their goods confiscated, and seals might be seen placed upon all their doors. Their wives also being ejected from their parents' home, each had literally to play the part of Job's wife. For they went "*wandering from house to house and from place to place, seeking a lodging.*" And this it was not easy for them to find, every one fearing and trembling to receive, or to render assistance in any way to the relatives of those who were under impeachment. Nevertheless, though such events had happened, the sufferers were patient under all; since they were not deprived of the present life. And neither the loss of wealth, nor dishonour, nor so much public exposure, nor any other matter of that nature, caused them vexation. For the greatness of the calamity, and the circumstance of their having expected still worse things, when they suffered these, had prepared the soul for the exercise of a wise fortitude. And now they learned, how simple a thing is virtue for us, how easy and expeditious of performance, and that from our neglect only it seems to be laborious. They who before this time could not bear the loss of a little money with meekness, now they were subject to a greater fear, although they had lost all their substance, felt as if they had found a treasure, because they had not lost their lives. So that if the sense of a future hell took possession of us, and we thought of those intolerable punishments, we should not grieve, even though for the sake of the law of God we were to give both our substance, and our bodies and lives too, knowing that we should gain greater things; deliverance from the terrors that are hereafter.

7. Perchance the tragedy of all I have told you, has greatly softened your hearts. Do not however take it amiss. For since I am about to venture upon some more subtle thoughts and require a more sensitive state of mind on your part, I have done this intentionally, in order that by the terror of the description your minds might have shaken off all listlessness, and withdrawn themselves from all worldly cares, and might with the more readiness convey the force of the things about to be spoken into the depths of your soul.

Sufficiently indeed, then, our discourse of late evinced to you, that a natural law of good and evil is seated within us. But that our proof of it may be more abundantly evident, we will again today apply ourselves strenuously to the same subject of discourse. For that God from the beginning, when He formed man, made him capable of discriminating both these, all men make evident. Hence when we sin, we are all ashamed at the presence of our inferiors; and oftentimes a master, on his way to the house of a harlot, if he then perceives any one of his more respectable servants, turns back, reddening with shame, from this untoward path. Again, when others reproach us, fixing on us the names of particular vices, we call it an insult; and if we are aggrieved, we drag those who have done the wrong to the public tribunal. Thus we can understand what vice is and what virtue is. Wherefore Christ, for the purpose of declaring this, and showing that He was not introducing a strange law, or one which surpassed our nature, but that which He had of old deposited beforehand in our conscience, after pronouncing those numerous Beatitudes, thus speaks; *"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."* [Matthew 7:12] *"Many words,"* says He, are not necessary, nor laws of great length, nor a diversity of instruction. Let your own will be the law. Do you wish to receive kindness? Be kind to another. Do you wish to receive

mercy? Show mercy to your neighbour. Do you wish to be applauded? Applaud another. Do you wish to be beloved? Exercise love. Do you wish to enjoy the first rank? First concede that place to another. Become yourself the judge, yourself the lawgiver of your own life. And again; "*Do not to another what you hate.*" [Tobit 4:16] By the latter precept, he would induce to a departure from iniquity; by the former, to the exercise of virtue. "*Do not thou to another,*" he says, "*what you hate.*" Do you hate to be insulted? Do not insult another. Do you hate to be envied? Envy not another. Do you hate to be deceived? Do not deceive another. And, in a word, in all things, if we hold fast these two precepts, we shall not need any other instruction. For the knowledge of virtue He has implanted in our nature; but the practice of it and the correction He has entrusted to our moral choice.

8. Perhaps what is thus said, is obscure; wherefore I will again endeavour to make it more plain. In order to know that it is a good thing to exercise temperance, we need no words, nor instruction; for we ourselves have the knowledge of it in our nature, and there is no necessity for labour or fatigue in going about and enquiring whether temperance is good and profitable; but we all acknowledge this with one consent, and no man is in doubt as to this virtue. So also we account adultery to be an evil thing, and neither is there here any need of trouble or learning, that the wickedness of this sin may be known; but we are all self-taught in such judgments; and we applaud virtue, though we do not follow it; as, on the other hand, we hate vice, though we practise it. And this has been an exceeding good work of God; that He has made our conscience, and our power of choice already, and before the action, claim kindred with virtue, and be at enmity with wickedness.

9. As I said then, the knowledge of each of these things resides within the conscience of all men, and we require no teacher to instruct us in these

things; but the regulation of our conduct is left to our choice, and earnestness, and efforts. And why was this? But because if He had made everything to be of nature, we should have departed uncrowned and destitute of reward; and even as the brutes, who receive no reward nor praise for those advantages which they have naturally, so neither should we enjoy any of these things; for natural advantages are not the praise and commendation of those who have them, but of the Giver. For this reason, then, He did not commit all to nature; and again, He did not suffer our will to undertake the whole burden of knowledge, and of right regulation; lest it should despair at the labour of virtue. But conscience suggests to it what ought to be done; and it contributes its own exertions for the accomplishment. That it is a good thing to be temperate, we all understand without difficulty; for the knowledge is of nature: but we should not be able without difficulty, without bridling lust, and employing much exertion, to practise the rule of temperance; for this does not come to us by nature as the knowledge does, but requires also a willing mind and earnestness. And not only in this respect has He made the burden lighter for us, but also in another way again, by letting even some good dispositions exist naturally within us. For we are all naturally disposed to feel indignation along with those who are contemptuously treated, (whence it arises that we become the enemies of those who are insolent, though we ourselves may have suffered no part of the grievance,) and to sympathize in the pleasure of those who enjoy assistance and protection; and we are overcome by the calamities of others, as well as by mutual tenderness. For although calamitous events may seem to induce a certain pusillanimity, we entertain nevertheless a common fondness for each other. And to this effect a certain wise man speaks significantly; *"Every animal loves his like, and man his neighbour."* [Ecclesiastes 13:19]

10. But God has provided many other instructors for us besides conscience; viz., fathers for children, masters for servants, husbands for wives, teachers for pupils, law-givers and judges for those who are to be governed, and friends for friends. And frequently too we gain no less from enemies than friends; for when the former reproach us with our offenses, they stir us up, even against our will, to the amendment of them. So many teachers has He set over us, in order that the discovery of what is profitable, and the regulation of our conduct, might be easy to us, the multitude of those things which urge us on toward it not permitting us to fall away from what is expedient for us. For although we should despise parents, yet while we fear magistrates, we shall in any case be more submissive than otherwise. And though we may set them at nought when we sin, we can never escape the rebuke of conscience: and if we dishonour and repel this, yet while fearing the opinion of the many, we shall be the better for it. And though we are destitute of shame with regard to this, the fear of the laws will press on us so as to restrain us, however reluctantly.

11. Thus fathers and teachers take the young in hand, and bring them into order; and lawgivers and magistrates, those who are grown up. And servants, as being more inclined to listlessness, in addition to what has been previously mentioned, have their masters to constrain them to temperance; and wives have their husbands. And many are the walls which environ our race on all sides, lest it should too easily slide away, and fall into wickedness. Beside all these too; sicknesses and calamities instruct us. For poverty restrains, and losses sober us, and danger subdues us, and there are many other things of this sort. Does neither father, nor teacher, nor prince, nor lawgiver, nor judge make you fear? Does no friend move you to shame, nor enemy sting you? Does no master chastise? Does no husband instruct? Does no conscience correct you? Still, when bodily sickness comes, it often

sets all right; and a loss has made the audacious man to become gentle. And what is more than this, heavy misfortunes, which befall not only ourselves but others too, are often of great advantage to us; and we who ourselves suffered nothing, yet beholding others enduring punishment, have been no less sobered by it than they.

12. And with respect to right deeds, any one may see that this happens; for as when the bad are punished others become better, so whenever the good achieve any thing right, many are urged onward to a similar zeal: a thing which has also taken place with respect to the avoiding of oaths. For many persons, observing that others had laid aside the evil practice of oaths, took a pattern from their diligence, and got the better of the sin; wherefore we are the more disposed to touch again on the subject of this admonition. For let no one tell me that "*many*" have accomplished this; this is not what is desired, but that "*all*" should do so; and until I see this I cannot take breath. That Shepherd had a hundred sheep, and yet when one of them had wandered away, he took no account of the safety of the ninety and nine, until he found the one that was lost, and restored it again to the flock.

[Matthew 18:12-13] Do you see not that this also happens with respect to the body; for if by striking against any obstacle, we have only turned back a nail, the whole body sympathizes with the member. Say not this; that only a certain few have failed; but consider this point, that these few being unreformed, will corrupt many others. Although there was but one who had committed fornication among the Corinthians, yet Paul so groaned as if the whole city were lost. And very reasonably, for he knew that if that member were not chastened, the disease progressing onward would at length attack all the rest. I saw, but lately, in the court of justice, those distinguished men bound and conducted through the forum; and while some were wondering at this extraordinary degradation, others said there was nothing to wonder

at; for that, where there is matter of treason, rank must go for nothing. Is it not then much more true that rank must be of no avail where is impiety?

13. Thinking therefore of these things, let us arouse ourselves; for if you bring not your own endeavours to the task, every thing on our part is to no purpose. And why so? Because it is not with the office of teaching, as it is with other arts. For the silversmith, when he has fabricated a vessel of any kind, and laid it aside, will find it on the morrow just as he left it. And the worker in brass, and the stone-cutter, and every other artificer, will each again take his own work in hand, whatever it is, just in the state he quitted it. But it is not so with us, but altogether the reverse; for we have not lifeless vessels to forge, but reasonable souls. Therefore we do not find you such as we leave you, but when we have taken you, and with manifold labour moulded, reformed you and increased your ardour on your departing from this place, the urgency of business, besetting you on every side, again perverts you, and causes us increased difficulty. Therefore, I supplicate and beseech you to put your own hand to the work; and when you depart hence, to show the same earnest regard for your own safety, that I have here shown for your amendment.

14. Oh! That it were possible that I could perform good works as your substitute, and that you could receive the rewards of those works! Then I would not give you so much trouble. But how can I do this? The thing is impossible; for to every man will He render according to his own works. Wherefore as a mother, when she beholds her son in a fever, while she witnesses his sufferings from choking and inflammation, frequently bewails him, and says to him, *"O my son, would that I could sustain your fever, and draw off its flame upon myself!"* so now I say, Oh! That by labouring as your substitute, I could do good works for you all! But no, this is not to be done. But of his own doings must each man give the account, and one

cannot see one person suffer punishment in the room of another. For this reason I am pained and mourn, that on That Day, when you are called to judgment, I shall not be able to assist you, since, to say the truth, no such confidence of speech with God belongs to me. But even if I had much confidence, I am not holier than Moses, or more righteous than Samuel; of whom it is said, that though they had attained to so great virtue, they could not in any way avail to assist the Jews; inasmuch as that people had given themselves over to excessive negligence. [Jeremiah 15:1] Since, then, from our own works we shall be punished or saved; let us endeavour, I beseech you, in conjunction with all the other precepts, to fulfill this one; that, finally departing this life with a favourable hope, we may obtain those good things which are promised, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 14 on the Statues

After the whole people had been freed from all distress, and had become assured of safety, certain persons again disturbed the city by fabricating false reports, and were convicted. Wherefore this Homily refers to that subject; and also to the admonition concerning oaths; for which reason also, the history of Jonathan, and Saul, and that of Jephthah, is brought forward; and it is shown how many perjuries result from one oath.

1. Not a little did the devil yesterday disturb our city; but God also has not a little comforted us again; so that each one of us may seasonably take up that prophetic saying, *"In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, your comforts have refreshed my soul."* And not only in consoling, but even in permitting us to be troubled, God has manifested His tender care towards us. For today I shall repeat what I have never ceased to say, that not only our deliverance from evils, but also the permission of them arises from the benevolence of God. For when He sees us falling away into listlessness, and starting off from communion with Him, and making no account of spiritual things, He leaves us for a while; that thus brought to soberness, we may return to Him the more earnestly. And what marvel is it, if He does this towards us, listless as we are; since even Paul declares that with regard to himself and his disciples, this was the cause of their trials? For inditing his second Epistle to the Corinthians, he speaks thus: *"We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves."* [2 Corinthians 1:8-9] As though he would say, *"Dangers so great hung over*

us, that we gave up ourselves for lost; and no longer hoped that any favourable change would take place, but were altogether in expectation of death." For such is the sense of that clause, *"We had the sentence of death in ourselves."* But nevertheless, after such a state of desperation, God dispelled the tempest, and removed the cloud, and snatched us from the very gates of death. And afterwards, for the purpose of showing that his being permitted to fall into this danger also was the result of much tender care for him, he mentions the advantage which resulted from the temptations, which was, that he might continually look to Him, and be neither high-minded, nor confident. Therefore having said this, *"We had the sentence of death in ourselves;"* [2 Corinthians 1:9] he adds also the reason; *"That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which quickens the dead."* For it is in the nature of trials to arouse us when we are dozing, or falling down, and to stir us up, and make us more religious. When, therefore, O beloved! You see a trial at one time extinguished, and at another time kindled again, be not cast down! Do not despond, but retain a favourable hope, reasoning thus with yourself, that God does not deliver us into the hands of our enemies either because He hates or abandons us, but because He is desirous to make us more in earnest, and more intimate with Himself.

2. Let us not then be desponding; nor let us despair of a change for the better; but let us hope that speedily there will be a calm; and, in short, casting the issue of all the tumults which beset us upon God, let us again handle the customary points; and again bring forward our usual topic of instruction. For I am desirous to discourse to you further concerning the same subject, to the end that we may radically extirpate from your souls the wicked practice of oaths. Wherefore it is necessary for me again to have recourse to the same entreaty that I made before. For lately I besought you,

that each one taking the head of John, just cut off, and the warm blood yet dripping from it, you would thus go home, and think that you saw it before your eyes, while it emitted a voice, and said, "*Abhor my murderer, the oath!*" What a rebuke did not effect, this an oath effected; what a tyrant's wrath was insufficient for, this the necessity of keeping an oath brought about! And when the tyrant was publicly rebuked in the hearing of all, he bore the censure nobly; but when he had thrown himself into the fatal necessity caused by oaths, then he cut off that blessed head. This same thing, therefore, I entreat; and cease not entreating, that wherever we go, we go bearing this head; and that we show it to all, crying aloud, as it does, and denouncing oaths. For although we were never so listless and remiss, yet beholding the eyes of that head fearfully glaring upon us, and threatening us if we swear, we should be more powerfully kept in check by this terror, than by any curb; and be easily able to restrain and avert the tongue from its inclination toward oaths.

3. There is not only this great evil in an oath, that it punishes those who are guilty of it, both when violated, and when kept; a thing we do not see take place with any other sin; but there is another equally great evil attending it. And what is that? Why that oftentimes it is utterly impossible even for those who are desirous, and even make a point of it, to keep their oath. For, in the first place, he who is continually swearing, whether willingly or unwillingly; knowingly or unknowingly; in jest or in earnest; being frequently carried away by anger and by many other things, will most surely become perjured. And no one can gainsay this; so evident and generally allowed is the fact, that the man who swears frequently, must also be a perjurer. Secondly, I affirm, that although he were not carried away by passion, and did not become the victim of perjury unwillingly and unwittingly, yet by the very nature of the case he will assuredly be

necessitated both consciously and voluntarily to perjure himself. Thus, oftentimes when we are dining at home, and one of the servants happens to do amiss, the wife swears that he shall be flogged, and then the husband swears the contrary, resisting, and not permitting it. In this case, whatever they may do, perjury must in any case be the result; for however much they may wish and endeavour to keep their oaths, it is no longer possible; but whatever happens, one or other of these will be ensnared in perjury; or rather both in any case.

4. And how, I will explain; for this is the paradox. He who has sworn that he would flog the man-servant or maid-servant, yet has afterwards been prohibited from this, has perjured himself, not having done what he has sworn to do: and also, he has involved in the crime of perjury the party forbidding and hindering the oath from being kept. For not only they who take a false oath, but they who impose that necessity on others, are liable to the same accusation. And not merely in houses, but also in the forum we may see that this takes place; and especially in fights, when those who box with one another swear things that are contrary. One swears that he will beat, the other that he will not be beaten. One swears that he will carry off the cloak, the other that he will not suffer this. One that he will exact the money, the other that he will not pay it. And many other such contradictory things, those who are contentious take an oath to do. So also in shops, and in schools, it may generally be observed that the same thing occurs. Thus the workman has often sworn that he will not suffer his apprentice to eat or drink, before he has finished all his assigned task. And so also the pedagogue has often acted towards a youth; and a mistress towards her maid-servant; and when the evening has overtaken them, and the work has remained unfinished, it is necessary either that those who have not executed their task should perish with hunger, or that those who have sworn should

altogether forswear themselves. For that malignant demon, who is always lying in wait against our blessings, being present and hearing the obligation of the oaths, impels those who are answerable to indifference; or works some other difficulty; so that the task being unperformed, blows, insults, and perjuries, and a thousand other evils, may take place. And just as when children drag with all their might a long and rotten cord in directions opposite to each other; if the cord snaps in the middle, they all fall flat upon their backs, and some strike their heads, and some another part of the body; so also they who each engage with an oath to perform things that are contrary, when the oath is broken by the necessity of the case, both parties fall into the same gulf of perjury: these by actually perjuring themselves, and those by affording the occasion of perjury to the others.

5. That this also may be rendered evident, not only from what happens every day in private houses, and the places of public concourse, but from the Scriptures themselves, I will relate to you a piece of ancient history, which bears upon what has been said. Once, when the Jews had been invaded by their enemies, and Jonathan (now he was the son of Saul) had slaughtered some, and put the rest to flight; Saul, his father, being desirous to rouse the army more effectually against the remainder; and in order that they might not desist until he had subjugated them all, did that which was altogether opposite to what he desired, by swearing that no one should eat any food until evening, and until vengeance was taken of his enemies. What, I ask, could have been more senseless than this? For when it was needful that he should have refreshed those who were fatigued and exhausted, and have sent them forth with renewed vigour against their enemies, he treated them far worse than he had done their enemies, by the constraint of an oath, which delivered them over to excessive hunger. Dangerous, indeed, it is for any one to swear in a matter pertaining to

himself; for we are forcibly impelled to do many things by the urgency of circumstances. But much more dangerous is it by the obligation of one's own oath, to bind the determination of others; and especially where any one swears, not concerning one, or two, or three, but an unlimited multitude, which Saul then inconsiderately did, without thinking that it was probable that, in so vast a number, one at least might transgress the oath; or that soldiers, and soldiers too on campaign, are very far removed from moral wisdom, and know nothing of ruling the belly; more especially when their fatigue is great. He, however, overlooking all these points, as if he were merely taking an oath about a single servant, whom he was easily able to restrain, counted equally on his whole army. In consequence of this he opened such a door for the devil, that in a short time he framed, not two, three, or four, but many more perjuries out of this oath. For as when we do not swear at all, we close the whole entrance against him, so if we utter but a single oath, we afford him great liberty for constructing endless perjuries. And just as those who twist skeins, if they have one to hold the end, work the whole string with nicety, but if there is no one to do this, cannot even undertake the commencement of it; in the same manner too the devil, when about to twist the skein of our sins, if he could not get the beginning from our tongues, would not be able to undertake the work; but should we only make a commencement, while we hold the oath on our tongue, as it were a hand, then with full liberty he manifests his malignant art in the rest of the work, constructing and weaving from a single oath a thousand perjuries.

6. And this was just what he did now in the case of Saul. Observe, however, what a snare is immediately framed for this oath: *"The army passed through a wood, that contained a nest of bees, and the nest was in front of the people, and the people came upon the nest, and went along talking."* Do you see what a pit-fall was here? A table ready spread, that the

easiness of access, the sweetness of the food, and the hope of concealment, might entice them to a transgression of the oath. For hunger at once, and fatigue, and the hour, (for "*all the land*," it is said, "*was dining*)," then urged them to the transgression. Moreover, the sight of the combs invited them from without to relax the strain on their resolution. For the sweetness, as well as the present readiness of the table, and the difficulty of detecting the stealth, were sufficient to ensnare their utmost wisdom. If it had been flesh, which needed boiling or roasting, their minds would not have been so much bewitched; since while they were delaying in the cookery of these, and engaged in preparing them for food, they might expect to be discovered. But now there was nothing of this kind; there was honey only, for which no such labour was required, and for which the dipping of the tip of the finger sufficed to partake of the table, and that with secrecy. Nevertheless, these persons restrained their appetite, and did not say within themselves, "*What does it concern us? Hath any one of us sworn this? He may pay the penalty of his inconsiderate oath, for why did he swear?*" Nothing of this sort did they think; but religiously passed on; and though there were so many enticements, they behaved themselves wisely. "*The people went on talking.*" What is the meaning of this word "*talking?*" Why, that for the purpose of soothing their pain with words, they held discourse with one another.

7. What then, did nothing more come of this, when all the people had acted so wisely? Was the oath, forsooth, observed? Not even so was it observed. On the contrary, it was violated! How, and in what way? You shall hear immediately, in order that you may also thoroughly discern the whole art of the devil. For Jonathan, not having heard his father take the oath, "*put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in the honeycomb, and his eyes saw clearly.*" [1 Samuel 14:27] Observe, who it was whom he impelled to break the oath; not one of the soldiers, but the

very son of him who had sworn it. For he did not only desire to effect perjury, but was also plotting the slaughter of a son, and making provision for it beforehand; and was in haste to divide nature against her own self. and what he had done aforetime in the case of Jephthah, that he hoped now again to accomplish. For he likewise, when he had promised that the first thing that met him, after a victorious battle, he would sacrifice, fell into the snare of child-murder; for his daughter first meeting him, he sacrificed her and God did not forbid it. And I know, indeed, that many of the unbelievers impugn us of cruelty and inhumanity on account of this sacrifice; but I should say, that the concession in the case of this sacrifice was a striking example of providence and clemency; and that it was in care for our race that He did not prevent that sacrifice. For if after that vow and promise He had forbidden the sacrifice, many also who were subsequent to Jephthah, in the expectation that God would not receive their vows, would have increased the number of such vows, and proceeding on their way would have fallen into child-murder. But now, by suffering this vow to be actually fulfilled, He put a stop to all such cases in future. And to show that this is true, after Jephthah's daughter had been slain, in order that the calamity might be always remembered, and that her fate might not be consigned to oblivion, it became a law among the Jews, that the virgins assembling at the same season should bewail during forty days the sacrifice which had taken place; in order that renewing the memory of it by lamentation, they should make all men wiser for the future; and that they might learn that it was not after the mind of God that this should be done, for in that case He would not have permitted the virgins to bewail and lament her. And that what I have said is not conjectural, the event demonstrated; for after this sacrifice, no one vowed such a vow unto God. Therefore also He did not indeed forbid this; but what He had expressly enjoined in the case of Isaac, that He

directly prohibited; [Genesis 22:12] plainly showing through both cases, that He does not delight in such sacrifices.

8. But the malignant demon was labouring hard now again to produce such a tragedy. Therefore he impelled Jonathan to the trespass. For if any one of the soldiers had transgressed the law, it seemed to him no great evil that would have been done; but now being insatiate of human ills, and never able to get his fill of our calamities, he thought it would be no grand exploit if he effected only a simple murder. And if he could not also pollute the king's right hand with the murder of his child, he considered that he had achieved no great matter. And why do I speak of child-murder? For he, the wicked one, thought that by this means he should compass a slaughter even more accursed than that. For if he had sinned wittingly, and been sacrificed, this would only have been child-murder; but now sinning ignorantly, (for he had not heard of the oath), if he had been slain, he would have made the anguish of his father double; for he would have had both to sacrifice a son, and a son who had done no wrong. But now to proceed with the rest of the history; *"When he had eaten,"* it is said, *"His eyes saw clearly."* And here it condemns the king of great folly; showing that hunger had almost blinded the whole army, and diffused much darkness over their eyes. Afterwards some one of the soldiers, perceiving the action, says, *"Your father swore an oath upon all the people, saying, cursed be the man who eats any food today. And the people were faint. And Jonathan said, My father has made away with the land."* What does he mean by the word, *"made away with?"* Why, that he had ruined, or destroyed them all. Hence, when the oath was transgressed, all kept silence, and no one dared to bring forth the criminal; and this became afterwards no small matter of blame, for not only are those who break an oath, but those also who are privy to it and conceal it, partakers of the crime.

9. But let us see what follows; *"And Saul said, Let us go down after the strangers, and spoil them. And the priest said, Let us draw near hither unto God."* [1 Samuel 14:36] For in old times God led forth the people to battle; and without His consent no one dared to engage in the fight, and war was with them a matter of religion. For not from weakness of body, but from their sins they were conquered, whenever they were conquered; and not by might and courage, but by favour from above they prevailed, whenever they did prevail. Victory and defeat were also to them a means of training, and a school of virtue. And not to them only, but to their adversaries; for this was made evident to them too, that the fate of battle with the Jews was decided not by the nature of their arms, but by the life and good works of the warriors. The Midianites at least perceiving this, and knowing that people to be invincible, and that to have attacked them with arms and engines of war would have been fruitless, and that it was only possible to conquer them by sin, having decked out handsome virgins, and set them in the array, excited the soldiers to lasciviousness, endeavouring by means of fornication to deprive them of God's assistance; which accordingly happened. For when they had fallen into sin, they became an easy prey to all; and those whom weapons, and horses, and soldiers, and so many engines availed not to capture, sin by its nature delivered over bound to their enemies. Shields, and spears, and darts were all alike found useless; but beauty of visage and wantonness of soul overpowered these brave men.

10. Therefore one gives this admonition; *"Observe not the beauty of a strange woman, and meet not a woman addicted to fornication. [Ecclesiastes 9:8, 3] For honey distils from the lips of an harlot, which at the time may seem smooth to your throat, but afterward you will find it more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword."* [Proverbs 5:3-4] For the harlot knows not how to love, but only to ensnare; her kiss has poison,

and her mouth a pernicious drug. And if this does not immediately appear, it is the more necessary to avoid her on that account, because she veils that destruction, and keeps that death concealed, and suffers it not to become manifest at the first. So that if any one pursues pleasure, and a life full of gladness, let him avoid the society of fornicating women, for they fill the minds of their lovers with a thousand conflicts and tumults, setting in motion against them continual strifes and contentions, by means of their words, and all their actions. And just as it is with those who are the most virulent enemies, so the object of their actions and schemes is to plunge their lovers into shame and poverty, and the worst extremities. And in the same manner as hunters, when they have spread out their nets, endeavour to drive there the wild animals, in order that they may put them to death, so also is it with these women. When they have spread out on every side the wings of lasciviousness by means of the eyes, and dress, and language, they afterwards drive in their lovers, and bind them; nor do they give over until they have drunk up their blood, insulting them at last, and mocking their folly, and pouring over them a flood of ridicule. And indeed such a man is no longer worthy of compassion but deserves to be derided and jeered, since he is found more irrational than a woman, and a harlot besides.

Therefore the Wise Man gives this word of exhortation again, "*Drink waters from your own cistern, and from the fountain of your own well.*"

[Proverbs 5:15] And again; "*Let the hind of your friendship, and the foal of your favours, consort with you.*" These things he speaks of a wife associated with her husband by the law of marriage. Why do you leave her who is a helpmate, to run to one who is a plotter against you? Why do you turn away from her who is the partner of your living, and court her who would subvert your life? The one is your member and body, the other is a sharp sword.

Therefore, beloved, flee fornication; both for its present evils, and for its future punishment.

11. Perchance we may seem to have fallen aside from the subject; but to say thus much, is no departure from it. For we do not wish to read you histories merely for their own sake, but that you may correct each of the passions which trouble you: therefore also we make these frequent appeals, preparing our discourse for you in all varieties of style; since it is probable that in so large an assembly, there is a great variety of distempers; and our task is to cure not one only, but many different wounds; and therefore it is necessary that the medicine of instruction should be various. Let us however return there from whence we made this digression: *"And the Priest said, Let us draw near unto God. And Saul asked counsel of God. Shall I go down after the strangers? Will You deliver them into my hands? But on that day the Lord answered him not."* Observe the benignity and mildness of God who loves man. For He did not launch a thunderbolt, nor shake the earth; but what friends do to friends, when treated contemptuously, this the Lord did towards the servant. He only received him silently, speaking by His silence, and by it giving utterance to all His wrath. This Saul understood, and said, as it is recorded, *"Bring near hither all the tribes of the people, and know and see in whom this sin has been this day. For as the Lord lives, Who has saved Israel, though the answer be against Jonathan my son, he shall surely die."* [1 Samuel 14:38] Do you see his rashness? Perceiving that his first oath had been transgressed, he does not even then learn self-control, but adds again a second. Consider also the malignity of the devil. For since he was aware that frequently the son when discovered, and publicly arraigned, is able by the very sight at once to make the father relent, and might soften the king's wrath, he anticipated his sentence by the obligation of a second oath; holding him by a kind of double bond, and not

permitting him to be the master of his own determination, but forcing him on every side to that iniquitous murder. And even while the offender was not yet produced, he has passed judgment, and while ignorant of the criminal, he gave sentence. The father became the executioner; and before the enquiry declared his verdict of condemnation! What could be more irrational than this proceeding?

12. Saul then having made this declaration, the people were more afraid than before, and all were in a state of great trembling and terror. But the devil rejoiced, at having rendered them all thus anxious. There was no one, we are told, of all the people, who answered. *"And Saul said, You will be in bondage, and I, and Jonathan my son, will be in bondage."* But what he means is to this effect; *"You are aiming at nothing else, than to deliver yourselves to your enemies, and to become slaves instead of free men; while you provoke God against you, in not delivering up the guilty person."*

Observe also another contradiction produced by the oath. It had been fitting, if he wished to find the author of this guilt, to have made no such threat, nor to have bound himself to vengeance by an oath; that becoming less afraid, they might more readily bring the offender to light. But under the influence of anger, and great madness, and his former unreasonableness, he again does that which is directly contrary to what he desires. What need is there to enlarge? He commits the matter to a decision by lot; and the lot falls upon Saul, and Jonathan; *"And Saul said, Cast ye the lot between me and Jonathan; and they cast the lot, and Jonathan was taken. And Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me, what have you done? And Jonathan told him, saying, I only tasted a little honey on the top of the rod which is in my hand, and, lo! I must die."* Who is there that these words would not have moved and turned to pity? Consider what a tempest Saul then sustained, his bowels being torn with anguish, and the most profound precipice appearing on

either hand! But nevertheless he did not learn self-control, for what does he say? *"God do so to me, and more also; for you shall surely die this day."*

[1 Samuel 14:44] Behold again the third oath, and not simply the third, but one with a very narrow limit as to time; for he does not merely say, *"You shall die;"* but, *"this day."* For the devil was hurrying, hurrying him on, constraining him and driving him to this impious murder. Wherefore he did not suffer him to assign any future day for the sentence, lest there should be any correction of the evil by delay. And the people said to Saul, *"God do so to us, and more also, if he shall be put to death, who has wrought this great salvation in Israel. As the Lord lives, there shall not an hair of his head fall to the ground; because he has wrought a merciful thing from God today."* [1 Samuel 14:45] Behold how, in the second place, the people also swore, and swore contrary to the king.

13. Now recollect, I pray, the cord pulled by the children, and breaking, and throwing on their backs those who pull it. Saul swore not once or twice, but several times. The people swore what was contrary, and strained in the opposite direction. Of necessity then it followed, that the oath must in any wise be broken through. For it were impossible that all these should keep their oaths. And now tell me not of the event of this transaction; but consider how many evils were springing from it; and how the devil from thence was preparing the tragedy and usurpation of Absalom. For if the king had chosen to resist, and to proceed to the execution of his oath, the people would have been in array against him; and a grievous rebellion would have been set on foot. And again, if the son consulting his own safety had chosen to throw himself into the hands of the army, he would straightway have become a parricide. Do you see not, that rebellion, as well as child-murder, and parricide, and battle, and civil war, and slaughter, and blood, and dead bodies without number, are the

consequences of one oath. For if war had perchance broken out, Saul might have been slain, and Jonathan perchance too, and many of the soldiers would have been cut to pieces; and after all the keeping of the oath would not have been forwarded. So that it is not for you to consider that these events did not occur, but to mark this point, that it was the nature of the case to necessitate the occurrence of such things. However, the people prevailed. Come then, let us reckon up the perjuries that were the consequence. The oath of Saul was first broken by his son; and again a second and a third, concerning the slaying of his son, by Saul himself. And the people seemed to have kept their oath. Yet if any one closely examines the matter, they too all became liable to the charge of perjury. For they compelled the father of Jonathan to perjure himself, by not surrendering the son to the father. Do you see how many persons one oath made obnoxious to perjury, willingly and unwillingly; how many evils it wrought, how many deaths it caused?

14. Now in the commencement of this discourse I promised to show that perjury would in any case result from opposite oaths; but truly the course of the history has proved more than I was establishing. It has exhibited not one, two, or three individuals, but a whole people, and not one, two, or three oaths, but many more transgressed. I might also make mention of another instance, and show from that, how one oath caused a still greater and more grievous calamity. For one oath entailed upon all the Jews the capture of their cities, as well as of their wives and children; the ravages of fire, the invasion of barbarians, the pollution of sacred things, and ten thousand other evils yet more distressing. But I perceive that the discourse is running to a great length. Therefore, dismissing here the narration of this history, I beseech you, together with the beheading of John, to tell one another also of the murder of Jonathan, and the general destruction of a whole people (which did not indeed take place, but which

was involved in the obligation of the oaths); and both at home, and in public, and with your wives, and friends, and with neighbours, and with all men in general, to make an earnest business of this matter, and not to think it a sufficient apology that we can plead custom.

15. For that this excuse is a mere pretext, and that the fault arises not from custom but from listlessness, I will endeavour to convince you from what has already occurred. The Emperor has shut up the baths of the city, and has given orders that no one shall bathe; and no one has dared to transgress the law, nor to find fault with what has taken place, nor to allege custom. But even though in weak health perchance, men and women, and children and old men; and many women but recently eased from the pangs of childbirth; though all requiring this as a necessary medicine; bear with the injunction, willingly or unwillingly; and neither plead infirmity of body, nor the tyranny of custom, nor that they are punished, whereas others were the offenders, nor any other thing of this kind, but contentedly put up with this punishment, because they were in expectation of greater evils; and pray daily that the wrath of the Emperor may go no further. Do you see that where there is fear, the bond of custom is easily relaxed, although it be of exceedingly long standing, and great necessity? To be denied the use of the bath is certainly a grievous matter. For although we be never so philosophic, the nature of the body proves incapable of deriving any benefit for its own health, from the philosophy of the soul. But as to abstinence from swearing, this is exceedingly easy, and brings no injury at all; none to the body, none to the mind; but, on the contrary, great gain, much safety, and abundant wealth. How then is it any thing but absurd, to submit to the greatest hardships, when an Emperor enjoins it; but when God commands nothing grievous nor difficult, but what is very tolerable and easy, to despise or to deride it, and to advance custom as an excuse? Let us not, I

entreat, so far despise our own safety, but let us fear God as we fear man. I know that you shudder at hearing this, but what deserves to be shuddered at is that you do not pay even so much respect to God; and that while ye diligently observe the Emperor's decrees, you trample under foot those which are divine, and which have come down from heaven; and consider diligence concerning these a secondary object. For what apology will there be left for us, and what pardon, if after so much admonition we persist in the same practices. For I began this admonition at the very commencement of the calamity which has taken hold of the city, and that is now on the point of coming to an end; but we have not as yet thoroughly put in practice even one precept. How then can we ask a removal of the evils which still beset us, when we have not been able to perform a single precept? How can we expect a change for the better? How shall we pray? With what tongue shall we call upon God? For if we perform the law, we shall enjoy much pleasure, when the Emperor is reconciled to the city. But if we remain in the transgression, shame and reproach will be ours on every hand, inasmuch as when God has freed us from the danger we have continued in the same listlessness.

16. Oh! That it were possible for me to undress the souls of those who swear frequently, and to expose to view the wounds and the bruises which they receive daily from oaths! We should then need neither admonition nor counsel; for the sight of these wounds would avail more powerfully than all that could be said, to withdraw from their wickedness even those who are most addicted to this wicked practice. Nevertheless, if it be not possible to spread before the eyes the shameful state of their soul, it may be possible to expose it to the thoughts, and to display it in its rottenness and corruption. For as it says, *"As a servant that is continually beaten will not be clear of a bruise, so he that swears and names God continually will not be purified of*

his sin." [Sirach 23:10] It is impossible, utterly impossible, that the mouth which is practised in swearing, should not frequently commit perjury.

Therefore, I beseech you all, by laying aside this dreadful and wicked habit, to win another crown. And since it is every where sung of our city, that first of all the cities of the world, she bound on her brow the name of Christians, so let all have to say, that Antioch alone, of all the cities throughout the world, has expelled all oaths from her own borders. Yea, rather, should this be done, she will not be herself crowned alone, but will also carry others along with her to the same pitch of zeal. And as the name of Christians having had its origin here, has as it were from a kind of fountain overflowed all the world, even so this good work, having taken its root and starting-point from hence, will make all men that inhabit the earth your disciples; so that a double and treble reward may arise to you, at once on account of your own good works, and of the instruction afforded to others. This will be to you the brightest of diadems! This will make your city a mother city, not on earth, but in the heavens! This will stand by us at That Day, and bring us the crown of righteousness; which God grant that we may all obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 15 on the Statues

Again on the calamity of the city of Antioch. That fear is every way profitable. That sorrow is more useful than laughter. And upon the saying, "Remember that you walk in the midst of snares." And that it is worse to exact an oath, than to commit murder.

1. Today, and on the former Sabbath, it had behooved us to enter on the subject of fasting; nor let any one suppose that what I said was unseasonable. For on the days of the fast, counsel and admonition on that subject are indeed not at all necessary; the very presence of these days exciting even those who are the most remiss to the effort of fasting. But since many men, both when about to enter upon the fast, as if the belly were on the point of being delivered over to a sort of lengthened seige, lay in beforehand a stock of gluttony and drunkenness; and again, on being set at liberty, going forth as from a long famine and a grievous prison, run to the table with unseemly greediness, just as if they were striving to undo again the advantage gained through the fast, by an excess of gluttony; it might have been needful, that then as well as now, we should agitate the subject of temperance. Nevertheless, we have neither lately said any thing of that kind, neither shall we now speak upon it. For the fear of the impending calamity suffices, instead of the strongest admonition and counsel, to sober the soul of every one. For who is there so miserable and degraded, as to be drunken in such a tempest? Who is there so insensible, when the city is thus agitated, and such a shipwreck is threatened, as not to become abstemious and watchful, and more thoroughly reformed by this distress than by any other sort of admonition and counsel? For discourse will not be able to effect as much as fear does. And this very thing it is now possible to show

from the events which have taken place. How many words then did we spend before this in exhorting many that were listless, and counselling them to abstain from the theatres, and the impurities of these places! And still they did not abstain; but always on this day they flocked together to the unlawful spectacles of the dancers; and they held their diabolical assembly in opposition to the full congregation of God's Church; so that their vehement shouts, borne in the air from that place, resounded against the psalms which we were singing here. But behold, now while we were keeping silence, and saying nothing on the subject, they of themselves have shut up their orchestra; and the Hippodrome has been left deserted! Before this, many of our own people used to hasten to them; but now they are all fled hither from thence to the church, and all alike join in praising our God!

2. Do you see what advantage has come of fear? If fear were not a good thing, fathers would not have set tutors over their children; nor lawgivers magistrates for cities. What can be more grievous than hell? Yet nothing is more profitable than the fear of it; for the fear of hell will bring us the crown of the kingdom. Where fear is, there is no envy; where fear is, the love of money does not disturb; where fear is, wrath is quenched, evil concupiscence is repressed, and every unreasonable passion is exterminated. And even as in a house, where there is always a soldier under arms, no robber, nor house-breaker, nor any such evil doer will dare to make his appearance; so also while fear holds possession of our minds, none of the base passions will readily attack us, but all fly off and are banished, being driven away in every direction by the despotic power of fear. And not only this advantage do we gain from fear, but also another which is far greater. For not only, indeed, does it expel our evil passions, but it also introduces every kind of virtue with great facility. Where fear exists, there is zeal in almsgiving, and intensity of prayer, and tears warm

and frequent, and groans fraught with compunction. For nothing so swallows up sin, and makes virtue to increase and flourish, as a perpetual state of dread. Therefore it is impossible for him who does not live in fear to act aright; as, on the other hand, it is impossible that the man who lives in fear can go wrong.

3. Let us not then grieve, beloved, let us not despond on account of the present tribulation, but let us admire the well-devised plan of God's wisdom. For by these very means through which the devil hoped to overturn our city, has God restored and corrected it. The devil animated certain lawless men to treat the very statues of the Emperor contemptuously, in order that the very foundations of the city might be razed. But God employed this same circumstance for our greater correction; driving out all sloth by the dread of the expected wrath: and the thing has turned out directly opposite to what the devil wished, by the means which he had himself prepared. For our city is being purified every day; and the lanes and crossings, and places of public concourse, are freed from lascivious and voluptuous songs; and turn where we will there are supplications, and thanksgivings, and tears, instead of rude laughter; there are words of sound wisdom instead of obscene language, and our whole city has become a Church, the workshops being closed, and all being engaged throughout the day in these general prayers; and calling upon God in one united voice with much earnestness. What preaching, what admonition, what counsel, what length of time had ever availed to accomplish these things?

4. For this then let us be thankful, and let us not be petulant or discontented; for that fear is a good thing, what we have said has made manifest. But hear Solomon thus uttering a lesson of wisdom concerning it; Solomon, who was nourished in every luxury, and enjoyed much security.

What then does he say? *"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of laughter."* What do you say, I ask? Is it better to go where there is weeping, lamentation, and groans, and anguish, and so much sadness, than where there is the dance, the cymbals, and laughter, and luxury, and full eating and drinking? Yes, verily, he replies. And tell me why is it so, and for what reason? Because, at the former place, insolence is bred, at the latter, sobriety. And when a person goes to the banquet of one more opulent, he will no longer behold his own house with the same pleasure, but he comes back to his wife in a discontented mood; and in discontent he partakes of his own table; and is peevish towards his own servants, and his own children, and every body in his house; perceiving his own poverty the more forcibly by the wealth of others. And this is not the only evil; but that he also often envies him who has invited him to the feast, and returns home having received no benefit at all. But with regard to the house of mourning, nothing of this sort can be said. On the contrary, much spiritual wisdom is to be gained there, as well as sobriety. For when once a person has passed the threshold of a house which contains a corpse, and has seen the departed one lying speechless, and the wife tearing her hair, mangling her cheeks, and wounding her arms, he is subdued; his countenance becomes sad; and every one of those who sit down together can say to his neighbour but this, *"We are nothing, and our wickedness is inexpressible!"* What can be more full of wisdom than these words, when we both acknowledge the insignificance of our nature, and accuse our own wickedness, and account present things as nothing? Giving utterance, though in different words, to that very sentiment of Solomon— that sentiment which is so marvellous and pregnant with Divine wisdom— *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* [Ecclesiastes 1:2] He who enters the house of mourning, weeps immediately for the departed, even though he be an enemy. Do you see how

much better that house is than the other? For there, though he be a friend, he envies; but here, though he be an enemy, he weeps. This is a thing which God requires of us above all, that we should not insult over those who have occasioned us grief. And not only may we gather these advantages, but others also which are not less than these. For each one is also put in mind of his own sins, and of the fearful Tribunal; of the great Account, and of the Judgment; and although he may have been suffering a thousand evils from others, and have a cause for sadness at home, he will receive and take back with him the medicine for all these things. For reflecting that he himself, and all those who swell with pride, will in a little while suffer the same thing; and that all present things, whether pleasant or painful, are transitory; he thus returns to his house, disburdened of all sadness and envy, with a light and buoyant heart; and hence he will hereafter be more meek, and gentle, and benignant to all; as well as more wise; the fear of things to come having made its way into his soul, and consumed all the thorns.

6. All this Solomon perceived when he said, *"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of drinking."* [Ecclesiastes 7:3] From the one grows listlessness, from the other an earnest anxiety. From the one, contempt; from the other, fear; a fear which conducts us to the practice of every virtue. If fear were not a good thing, Christ would not have expended such long and frequent discourses on the subject of punishment, and vengeance to come. Fear is nothing less than a wall, and a defence, and an impregnable tower. For indeed we stand in need of much defence, seeing that there are many ambushments on every side. Even as this same Solomon again says admonishingly, *"Perceive that you go in the midst of snares, and that you walk on the battlements of cities."* [Sirach 9:13] Oh with how many good things is this saying pregnant! Yea, not less than the former! Let us then, write it, each of us, upon our minds, and carry it about ever in our

memories, and we shall not easily commit sin. Let us write it there, having first learned it with the utmost exactness. For he does not say, "*Observe*" that you go in the midst of snares; but, "*Perceive!*" And for what reason did he say, "*Discern?*" He tells us that the snare is concealed; for this is indeed a snare, when the destruction does not appear openly, and the injury is not manifest, which lies hidden on all sides. Therefore he says, "*Perceive!*" Thou needest much reflection and diligent scrutiny. For even as boys conceal traps with earth, so the devil covers up our sins with the pleasures of this life.

7. But "*perceive;*" scrutinizing diligently; and if any kind of gain falls in your way, look not only at the gain, but inspect it carefully, lest somewhere death and sin lurk within the gain; and should you perceive this, fly from it. Again, when some delight or pleasure may chance to present itself, look not only at the pleasure; but lest somewhere in the depth of the pleasure some iniquity should lie enveloped, search closely, and if you discover it, hasten away! And should any one counsel, or flatter, or cajole, or promise honours, or any other such thing whatever, let us make the closest investigation; and look at the matter on all sides, lest something pernicious, something perilous, should perchance befall us through this advice, or honour, or attention, and we run upon it hastily and unwittingly. For if there were only one or two snares, the precaution would be easy. But now, hear how Solomon speaks when he wishes to set forth the multitude of these; "*Perceive that you go in the midst of snares;*" he does not say, that you "*go by*" snares, but "*in the midst*" of snares. On either side are the pitfalls; on either side the deceits. One goes into the forum; one sees an enemy; one is inflamed by the bare sight of him! One sees a friend honoured; one is envious! One sees a poor man; one despises and takes no notice of him! One sees a rich man; one envies him! One sees some one

injuriously treated; one recoils in disgust! One sees some one acting injuriously; one is indignant! One sees a handsome woman, and is caught! Do you see, beloved, how many snares there are? Therefore it is said, *"Remember that you go in the midst of snares."* There are snares in the house, snares at the table, and snares in social intercourse. Very often a person unwittingly, in the confidence of friendship, gives utterance to some particular of those matters which ought not to be repeated again, and so great a peril is brought about, that the whole family is thereby ruined!

8. On every side then let us search closely into these matters. Often has a wife, often have children, often have friends, often have neighbours, proved a snare to the unheeding! And why, it is asked, are there so many snares? That we may not fly low, but seek the things that are above. For just as birds, as long as they cleave the upper air, are not easily caught; so also thou, as long as you look to things above, will not be easily captured, whether by a snare, or by any other device. The devil is a fowler. Soar, then, too high for his arrows. The man who has mounted aloft will no longer admire any thing in the affairs of this life. But as when we have ascended to the top of the mountains, the city and its walls seem to us to be but small, and the men appear to us to be going along upon the earth like ants; so when you have ascended to the heights of spiritual wisdom, nothing upon the earth will be able to fascinate you; but every thing, yea even riches, and glory, and honour, and whatever else there be of that kind, will appear insignificant when you regard heavenly things. According to Paul all the glories of the present life appeared trifling, and more unprofitable than dead things. Hence his exclamation, *"The world is crucified unto me."* [Galatians 6:14] Hence also his admonition, *"Set your affections on things above."* [Colossians 3:2] Above? What kinds of things do you speak of pray? Where the sun is, where the moon is? Nay, says he. But where then?

Where angels are? Where archangels? Where the cherubim? Where the seraphim are? Nay, says he. But where then? *"Where Christ sits at the right hand of God."*

9. Let us obey then, and let us think of this continually, that even as to the bird caught in the snare, wings are of no service, but he beats them about vainly, and to no purpose; so also to you there is no utility in your reasonings, when once you are powerfully captivated by wicked lust, but struggle as much as you may, you are captured! For this reason wings are given to birds; that they may avoid snares. For this reason men have the power of thinking; that they may avoid sin. What pardon then, or what excuse will be ours, when we become more senseless than the brutes? For the bird which has once been captured by the snare, yet afterwards escaped, and the deer which has fallen into the net, but has broken through it, are hard to be captured again with the like; since experience becomes a teacher of caution to every one. But we, though often snared in the same nets, fall into the same again; and though honoured with reason, we do not imitate the forethought and care of the irrational animals! Hence how often do we, from beholding a woman, suffer a thousand evils; returning home, and entertaining an inordinate desire, and experiencing anguish for many days; yet, nevertheless, we are not made discreet; but when we have scarcely cured one wound, we again fall into the same mischief, and are caught by the same means; and for the sake of the brief pleasure of a glance, we sustain a kind of lengthened and continual torment. But if we learn constantly to repeat to ourselves this saying, we shall be kept from all these grievous evils.

10. The beauty of woman is the greatest snare. Or rather, not the beauty of woman, but unchastened gazing! For we should not accuse the objects, but ourselves, and our own carelessness. Nor should we say, Let

there be no women, but Let there be no adulteries. We should not say, Let there be no beauty, but Let there be no fornication. We should not say, Let there be no belly, but let there be no gluttony; for the belly makes not the gluttony, but our negligence. We should not say, that it is because of eating and drinking that all these evils exist; for it is not because of this, but because of our carelessness and insatiableness. Thus the devil neither ate nor drank, and yet he fell! Paul ate and drank, and ascended up to heaven! How many do I hear say, Let there be no poverty! Therefore let us stop the mouths of those who murmur at such things. For it is blasphemy to utter such complaints. To such then, let us say, Let there be no meanness of spirit. For poverty brings innumerable good things into our state of life, and without poverty riches would be unprofitable. Hence we should accuse neither the one nor the other of these; for poverty and riches are both alike weapons which will tend to virtue, if we are willing. As then the courageous soldier, whichever weapon he takes, displays his own virtue, so the unmanly and cowardly one is encumbered by either. And that you may learn that this is true, remember, I pray, the case of Job; who became both rich, and likewise poor, and handled both these weapons alike, and conquered in both. When he was rich, he said, *"My door was open to every comer."* [Job 31:32] But when he had become poor, *"The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. As it seemed good unto the Lord, so has it come to pass."* When he was rich, he showed much hospitality; when he was poor, much patience. And thou, then—are you rich? Display much bountifulness! Have you become poor? Show much endurance and patience! For neither is wealth an evil, nor poverty in itself; but these things, either of them, become so according to the free choice of those who make use of them. Let us school ourselves then to entertain no such opinions on these subjects; nor let us accuse the works of God, but the wicked choice of men. Riches are

not able to profit the little-minded: nor is poverty able ever to injure the magnanimous.

11. Let us then discern the snares, and walk far off from them! Let us discern the precipices, and not even approach them! This will be the foundation of our greatest safety not only to avoid things sinful, but those things which seem indeed to be indifferent, and yet are apt to make us stumble towards sin. For example; to laugh, to speak jocosely, does not seem an acknowledged sin, but it leads to acknowledged sin. Thus laughter often gives birth to foul discourse, and foul discourse to actions still more foul. Often from words and laughter proceed railing and insult; and from railing and insult, blows and wounds; and from blows and wounds, slaughter and murder. If, then, you would take good counsel for yourself, avoid not merely foul words, and foul deeds, or blows, and wounds, and murders, but unseasonable laughter, itself, and the very language of banter; since these things have proved the root of subsequent evils. Therefore Paul says, *"Let no foolish talking nor jesting proceed out of your mouth."* For although this seems to be a small thing in itself, it becomes, however, the cause of much mischief to us. Again, to live in luxury does not seem to be a manifest and admitted crime; but then it brings forth in us great evils—drunkenness, violence, extortion, and rapine. For the prodigal and sumptuous liver, bestowing extravagant service upon the belly, is often compelled to steal, and to seize the property of others, and to use extortion and violence. If, then, you avoid luxurious living, you remove the foundation of extortion, and rapine, and drunkenness, and a thousand other evils; cutting away the root of iniquity from its extremity. Hence Paul says, that *"she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives."* [1 Timothy 5:6] Again, to go to the theatres, or to survey the horse-race, or to play at dice, does not seem, to most men, to be an admitted crime; but it introduces into

our life an infinite host of miseries. For spending time in the theatres produces fornication, intemperance, and every kind of impurity. The spectacle of the horse-race also brings about fightings, railings, blows, insults, and lasting enmities. And a passion for dice-playing has often caused blasphemies, injuries, anger, reproaches, and a thousand other things more fearful still.

12. Therefore, let us not only avoid sins, but those things too which seem to be indifferent, yet by degrees lead us into these misdeeds. He, indeed, who walks by the side of a precipice, even though he may not fall over, trembles; and very often he is overset by this same trembling, and falls to the bottom. So also he who does not avoid sins from afar, but walks near them, will live in fear, and will often fall into them. Besides, he who eagerly looks at strange beauties, although he may not commit adultery, has in so doing entertained lust; and has become already an adulterer according to the declaration of Christ; [Matthew 5:28] and often by this very lust he is carried on to the actual sin. Let us then withdraw ourselves far from sins. Do you wish to live soberly? Avoid not only adultery, but also the licentious glance! Do you wish to be far removed from foul words? Avoid not only foul words, but also inordinate laughter, and every kind of lust. Do you wish to keep far from committing murders? Avoid railing too. Do you wish to keep aloof from drunkenness? Avoid luxury and sumptuous tables, and pluck up the vice by the roots.

13. The licentiousness of the tongue is a great snare, and needs a strong bridle. Therefore also some one says. *"His own lips are a powerful snare to a man, and he is snared by the words of his own mouth."* [Proverbs 6:2] Above all the other members, then, let us control this; let us bridle it; and let us expel from the mouth railings, and contumelies, and foul and slanderous language, and the evil habit of oaths. For again our

discourse has brought us to the same exhortation. But I had arranged with your charity, yesterday, that I would say no more concerning this precept, forasmuch as enough has been said upon it on all the foregoing days. But what is to become of me? I cannot bear to desist from this counsel, until I see that you have put it in practice; since Paul also, when he says to the Galatians, *"Henceforth let no man trouble me,"* [Galatians 6:17] appears again to have met and addressed them. Such are the paternal bowels; although they say they will depart, yet they depart not, until they see that their sons are chastened. Have ye heard today what the prophet speaks to us concerning oaths; *"I lifted up my eyes, and I saw,"* says he, *"and, behold, a flying sickle, the length thereof twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits; and he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see a flying sickle, twenty cubits in length, and ten cubits in breadth. It shall also enter into the house,"* says he, *"of every one that swears in my name, and shall remain in the midst, and shall pull down the stones and the wood."* What, forsooth, is this which is here spoken? And for what reason is it in the form of a *"sickle,"* and that a *"flying sickle,"* that vengeance is seen to pursue the swearers? In order that you may see that the judgment is inevitable, and the punishment not to be eluded. For from a flying sword some one might perchance be able to escape, but from a sickle, falling upon the neck, and acting in the place of a cord, no one can escape. And when wings too are added, what further hope is there of safety? But on what account does it pull down the stones and the wood of the swearer's house? In order that the ruin may be a correction to all. For since it is necessary that the earth must hide the swearer when dead; the very sight of his ruined house, now become a heap, will be an admonition to all who pass by and observe it, not to venture on the like, lest they suffer the like; and it will be a lasting witness against the sin of the departed. The sword is not so piercing as the nature of an

oath! The sabre is not so destructive as the stroke of an oath! The swearer, although he seems to live, is already dead, and has received the fatal blow. And as the man who has received the halter, before he has gone out of the city and come to the pit, and seen the executioner standing over him, is dead from the time he passed the doors of the hall of justice: so also the swearer.

14. All this let us consider, and let us not put our brethren on oath. What do you, O man? At the sacred table you exact an oath, and where Christ lies slain, there you slay your own brother. Robbers, indeed, murder on the highways; but you slay the son in the presence of the mother: committing a murder more accursed than Cain himself; for he slew his brother in solitude and only with present death; but you slay your brother in the midst of the church, and that with the deathless death that is to come! For think you that the church was made for this purpose, that we might swear? Yea, for this it was made, that we might pray! Is the Table placed there, that we may make adjurations? It is placed there to this end, that we may loose sins, not that we may bind them. But you, if you heed nothing else, reverence at least that book, which you reach forth in putting the oath; and open the Gospel, which you take in hand when you bid swear; and when thou hear what Christ there declares concerning oaths, shudder and desist! What then does He there say concerning oaths? *"But I say unto you, Swear not at all."* [Matthew 5:34] And do you convert the Law which forbids swearing into an oath. Oh, what contempt! Oh, what outrage! For you do just the same thing as if any one should bid the lawgiver, who prohibits murder, become himself a party to the murder. Not so much do I lament and weep, when I hear that some persons are slain upon the highway, as I groan, and shed tears, and am horrified, when I see any one coming near this Table, placing his hands upon it, and touching the Gospels,

and swearing! Are you in doubt, I ask, concerning money, and would you slay a soul? What do you gain to match the injury you do to your own soul, and to your neighbour? If you believe that the man is true, do not impose the obligation of the oath; but if you know him to be a liar, do not force him to commit perjury. *"But that I may have a full assurance:"* says one. Verily, when you have not sworn him, then you will receive a good and full assurance.

15. For now, when you have returned home, you will be continually the prey of conscience, while reasoning thus with yourself; *"Was it to no purpose, then, that I put him upon his oath? Was he not really perjured? Have I not become the cause of the sin?"* But if you dost not put him upon his oath, you will receive much consolation on returning home, rendering thanks to God, and saying, *"Blessed be God, that I restrained myself, and did not compel him to swear vainly, and to no purpose. Away with gold! Perish the money!"* for that which specially gives us assurance is, that we did not transgress the law, nor compel another to do it. Consider, for Whose sake thou did not put any one on his oath; and this will suffice you for refreshment and consolation. Often, indeed, when a fight takes place, we bear being insulted with fortitude, and we say to the insulter, *"What shall I do with you? Such an one hinders me, who is your patron; he keeps back my hands."* And this is sufficient to console us. So when you are about to put any one on his oath, restrain yourself; and stop; and say to him who is about to swear, *"What shall I do with you? God has forbidden me to put any one on oath. He now holds me back."* This suffices both for the honour of the Lawgiver, and for your safety, and for keeping him in fear who is ready to swear. For when he sees that we are thus afraid to put others on oath, much more will he himself be afraid to swear rashly. Would you say thus, your return to your own home would be with much fullness of assurance.

Hear God, therefore, in His Commandments, that He may Himself hear you in your prayers! This word shall be written in heaven, and shall stand by you on the Day of Judgment, and shall discharge many sins.

16. This also let us consider not only with respect to an oath, but to every thing. And when we are about to do any good action for God's sake, and it is found to bring loss with it, let us look not merely at the loss connected with the matter, but at the gain which we shall reap by doing it for God. That is to say, Hath any one insulted you? Bear it nobly! And you will do so, if you think not of the insult merely, but of the dignity of Him who commands you to bear it, and you bear it meekly. Have you given an alms? Think not of the outlay, but of the produce which arises from the outlay. Have you been mulcted of money? Give thanks, and regard not only the pain which is the result of the loss, but the gain which comes of thanksgiving. If we thus regulate ourselves, none of those heavy events which may befall us will give us pain; but from those things which may seem to be grievous, we shall be even gainers, and loss will be sweeter and more desired than wealth, pain than pleasure, and mirth and insult than honour. Thus all things adverse will turn to our gain. And here we shall enjoy much tranquillity, and there we shall attain the kingdom of heaven; which God grant that we may all be deemed worthy to obtain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom, to the Father with the Holy Spirit, be glory, dominion, and honour, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 16 on the Statues

This Homily was delivered on the occasion of the Prefect entering the Church, for the purpose of pacifying the minds of the people, in consequence of a rumour of an intended sack having been announced to him, when all were meditating flight. It treats also on the subject of avoiding oaths, and on the words of the Apostle, "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

1. I commend the Prefect's consideration, that seeing the city agitated, and every one purposing a flight, he has come here and afforded you consolation, and has led you to entertain favourable hopes. But for you I blushed, and was ashamed, that after these long and frequent discourses ye should have needed consolation from without. I longed that the earth would open and swallow me up, when I heard him discoursing with you, alternately administering comfort, or blaming such ill-timed and senseless cowardice. For it was not becoming, that you should be instructed by him; but you ought yourselves to be teachers to all the unbelievers. Paul did not permit even going to law before the unbelievers; [1 Corinthians 6:1] but thou, after so much admonition of our Fathers, hast needed teachers from without; and certain vagabonds and miscreants have again unsettled this great city, and set it upon flight. With what eyes shall we hereafter look upon the unbelievers, we who were so timid and cowardly? With what tongue shall we speak to them, and persuade them to exercise courage as to approaching evils, when we became through this alarm more timid than any hare? *"But what could we do,"* says some one, *"we are but men!"* This is indeed the very reason why we ought not to be terrified, because we are men, and not brutes. For these are scared by all manner of sounds and

noises; because they have not reasoning power, which is adequate to dispel fear. But thou who hast been honoured with the gift of speech and reason, how is it that you sink to their ignoble condition? Hath some one entered the city, and announced the march of soldiers against it? Be not terrified, but leaving him, bend the knee: call upon your Lord: groan bitterly, and He will keep off the dreaded event.

2. You had heard indeed a false report of the march, and were in danger of being severed from the present life. But that blessed Job, when the messengers came one after another, and he had heard them announcing their dreadful news, and adding thereto the insupportable destruction of his children, neither cried nor groaned, but turned to prayer, and gave thanks to the Lord. Him do thou too imitate; and when any comer announces that soldiers have encircled the city, and are about to plunder its wealth, flee to your Lord and say, *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; as it seems good to the Lord, so is it done. Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* The experience of the actual events did not terrify him; yet the mere report frightens you. And how are we to be accounted of, who when we are commanded boldly to encounter death itself, are thus affrighted by a false rumour! The man who is bewildered constructs fear which is unreal; and trouble which is not visible; but he who abides in a settled and tranquil condition of soul, breaks in pieces even that which is real. Do you see not pilots; when the sea is raging, and the clouds are rushing together, and the thunders are bursting forth, and all on board are in confusion, they seat themselves at the helm without tumult or disturbance; giving earnest heed to their own art, and considering how they may ward off the effects of the approaching storm. Be these your example; and laying hold of the sacred anchor, the hope that is in God, remain unshaken and immoveable.

"Whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be

likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it." [Matthew 7:26-27] Do you see that it is the character of folly to fall down headlong, and to be overthrown? Or rather, we were not only reduced to the condition of that foolish man, but our fall was still more wretched. For the house of that man fell down after the rivers and rains had descended, and the winds had beaten upon it; but we, when there were no winds striking, nor floods invading, nor blasts assaulting, before the experience of disaster, were overturned by a mere rumour, and dropped at once all the philosophy we were meditating.

3. What think you are now my thoughts? How should I conceal—yea, bury myself? How must I blush with shame? If I had not been forcibly urged by our Fathers, I would not have arisen, I would not have spoken, while my mind was darkened with sadness because of your pusillanimity. But neither now have I been able to recover myself; since anger and sorrow have laid such seige to my soul. For who would not feel provoked and indignant, that after so much teaching ye should need the instructions of Gentiles, that you might be comforted and persuaded to bear in a manly way the present alarm. Pray ye therefore that free utterance may be given us in opening our mouth; and that we may be able to shake off this sadness, and to hold up again a little; for indeed this shame on account of your pusillanimity has greatly depressed our spirits.

4. Lately, I addressed to your Charity many things concerning the snares lying on all sides of us; and concerning fear and sadness, sorrow and pleasure; and also concerning the sickle that flies down upon the houses of swearers. Now, out of all these many matters, I would have you especially to remember what I said respecting the "*winged sickle*," and its settling in the swearer's house; and pulling down the stones and the wood, and

consuming the whole mass. And withal, take heed to this; that it is the extreme of folly to swear by taking the Gospels, and to turn the very Law which forbids swearing into an oath; and that it is better to suffer loss of property than to impose an oath on our neighbours; since this is a great honour to be done to God. For when you say to God, *"For your sake I have not put such a one, who has robbed and injured me, on his oath,"* God will pay you back a great recompense on account of this honour, both here and hereafter. Say these things to others, and observe them also yourselves. I know that in this place we become more reverent, and lay aside every evil habit. But what is to be aimed at is, not that we be lovers of wisdom here only, but that when we depart, we may take this reverence out with us, where we especially need it. For those who carry water do not merely have their vessels full when near the fountain, and empty them when they reach home, but there they put them away with special caution, that they may not be overturned, and their labours rendered useless. Let us all imitate these persons; and when we come home, let us strictly retain what has been spoken; since if you here have gotten full, but return home empty, having the vessels of your understandings destitute of what you have heard, there will be no advantage from your replenishment here. Show me not the wrestler in the place of exercise, but of actual contest; and religion not at the season of hearing, but at the season of practice.

5. Thou applaudest what is said now. When you are required to swear, then remember all these things. If you quickly accomplish this law, we will advance our teaching to other and greater things. Lo! This is the second year that I am discoursing to your Charity; and I have not yet been able to explain a hundred lines of the Scriptures. And the reason is, that you need to learn of us what ye might reduce to practice at home, and of yourselves; and thus the greater part of our exhortation is consumed on ethical

discourse. But this ought not to have been so; the regulation of manners you ought to have learned at home, and of yourselves; but the sense of the Scriptures, and the speculations upon them, you might commit to us. If, however, it were necessary that you should hear such things of us, there was no need of more than one day: for what there is to be said is of no diversified or difficult character, or such as requires any elaboration. For when God declares His sentence, subtle arguments are unseasonable. God has said, "*You shall not swear.*" Do not then demand of me the reasons of this. It is a royal law. He who established it, knows the reason of the law. If it had not been profitable, He would not have forbidden it. Kings bring in laws, and not all perchance profitable; for they are men, and cannot be competent to discover what is useful, like God. Nevertheless, we obey them. Whether we marry, or make wills, or are about to purchase servants, or houses, or fields, or to do any other act, we do these things not according to our own mind, but according to the laws which they ordain; and we are not entirely at liberty to dispose of the things which concern ourselves according to our own minds; but in many cases we are subject to their will; and should we do any thing that is contrary to their judgment, it becomes invalid and useless. So then tell me, are we to pay so much respect to the laws of men, and trample under foot the law of God? What defence, or what pardon can such conduct be worthy of? He has said, "*You shall not swear.*" In order that you may do and speak all things with safety, do not in practice lay down a law contrary to His.

6. But enough of these matters. Let us now proceed to lay before you one sentence of those which have been read today, and thus end this discourse. "*Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ,*" says he, "*and Timothy the brother.*" Great is the designation of Paul: no title of principality and power, but he speaks of bonds and chains! Truly great indeed! Although many

other things made him illustrious; his being caught up into the third heaven, his being transported to Paradise, his hearing unutterable words; yet he sets down none of these, but mentions the chain instead of all, for this made him more conspicuous and illustrious than these. And why so? Because the one were the free gifts of the Lord's lovingkindness; and the other the marks of the constancy and patience of the servant. But it is customary with those who love, to glory more in the things which they suffer for those who are beloved, than in the benefits they receive from them. A king is not so proud of his diadem, as Paul gloried in his chains. And very justly. For a diadem affords but an ornament to the crowned head; but the chain is a much greater ornament as well as a security. The kingly crown often betrays the head it encircles, and allures innumerable traitors, and invites them to the lust of empire. And in battles this ornament is so dangerous, that it must be hidden and laid aside. Hence kings in battle, change the outward dress, and so mingle in the crowd of combatants; so much betrayal does there result from the crown; but the chain will bring nothing of this kind upon those who have it, but altogether the contrary; since if there be a war, and an engagement with demons, and the hostile powers; the man who is thus encompassed, by holding forth his chain, repels their assaults. And many of the secular magistrates not only bear the name of office while they are in authority, but when they have given up their authority. Such a one is called an ex-consul, such a one an ex-prætor. But he, instead of all such titles, says, "*Paul the prisoner.*" And very rightly. For those magisterial offices are no complete evidences of virtue in respect to the soul; for they are to be purchased by money, and obtained by the solicitations of friends; but this distinction that is obtained by bonds is a proof of the soul's love of wisdom, and the strongest sign of a longing for Christ. And the former are soon gone, but this distinction has none to succeed to it. Behold at least from that

time to the present day how long a time has passed, and yet the name of this Prisoner has become increasingly illustrious. As to all the consuls, whoever they were, of former times, they are passed into silence; and not even their names are known to the generality of mankind. But the name of this Prisoner, the blessed Paul, is still great here, great in the land of the barbarians, great also among the Scythians and Indians; and were you to go even to the very bounds of the habitable world, you would hear of this appellation, and wherever any one could come, he would perceive that the name of Paul was borne in the mouths of all men. And what marvel is it, if it be so by land and sea, when even in the heavens the name of Paul is great; with angels and archangels and the powers above, and with the King of these, even God! *"But what were the chains,"* says some one, *"that brought glory to him who was thus fettered? Were they not formed of iron?"* Of iron, indeed, they were formed; but they contained the grace of the Spirit, abundantly flourishing in them; since he wore them for Christ's sake. Oh, wonder! The servants were bound, the Master was crucified, and yet the preaching of the Gospel every day increases! And through the means by which it was supposed that it would be extinguished, by these very means it was kindled; and the Cross and bonds, which were thought to be an abomination, these are now become the symbols of salvation; and that iron was to us more precious than all gold, not by its intrinsic nature, but for this cause and ground!

7. But here I see an enquiry arising out of this point; and if you give me your attention, I will both state the question exactly, and will add the solution. What then is the subject of enquiry? This same Paul once having come before Festus, while discoursing to him, and defending himself concerning the charges which the Jews had alleged against him, and telling how he had seen Jesus, how he had heard that blessed voice; how he had

been struck with blindness and recovered sight, and had fallen down and risen up again; how he had come a captive into Damascus, bound without chains; after speaking likewise of the Law and of the Prophets, and showing that they had foretold all these things, he captured the judge, and almost persuaded him to come over to himself. For such are the souls of holy men: when they have fallen into dangers, they do not consider how they may be delivered from dangers, but strive every way how they may capture their persecutors. Just so did it then happen. He came in to defend himself, and he departed taking the judge with him! And to this the judge bore witness, saying, *"Almost you persuade me to be a Christian."* [Acts 26:28] And this ought to have happened today; and this Prefect, on coming among you, ought to have admired your magnanimity, your fortitude, your perfect tranquillity; and to have gone away, taking with him a lesson from your good order, admiring your assembly, praising your congress, and learning from the actual fact, how great a difference there is between Gentiles and Christians!

8. But as I was saying:— When Paul had caught him, and he said, *"Almost you persuade me to be a Christian,"* Paul answered thus, *"I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."* [Acts 26:29] What do you say, O Paul? When you write to the Ephesians, you say, *"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called."* [Ephesians 4:1] And when you speak to Timothy, *"Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds."* [2 Timothy 2:9] And again, when to Philemon, thus; *"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ."* [Philippians 1:1] And again, when debating with the Jews, you say, *"For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."* [Acts 28:20] And writing to the Philippians, you say, *"Many of the brethren in the Lord,*

waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." [Philippians 1:14] Every where you bear about the chain, everywhere you put forward your bonds, and boastest in the thing. But when you come to the tribunal, you betray your philosophy, where it were right to have spoken the most boldly, and sayest to the judge, *"I would to God that you might become a Christian 'without' these bonds!"* Yet surely if the bonds were good, and so good, that they could be the means of making others to grow bold in the cause of true religion; (for this very thing you declared before, when you said, *"Many of the brethren, waxing confident by my bonds, did speak the word without fear"*); for what reason do you not glory in this thing in the presence of the judge, but doest even the reverse?

9. Does not what I say appear a question? The solution of it, however, I will bring forward at once. For Paul acted thus, not from distress or fear, but from an abundance of wisdom and spiritual understanding. And how this was, I proceed to explain. He was addressing a Gentile, and an unbeliever, who knew nothing of our matters. Hence he was unwilling to introduce him by way of disagreeable things, but as he said, *"I became to them that are without law, as without law;"* [1 Corinthians 9:21] so he acted in the present instance. His meaning is, If the Gentile hear of bonds and tribulations, he will straightway be taking flight; since he knows not the power of bonds. First, let him become a believer; let him taste of the word preached, and then he will even of himself hasten towards these bonds. I have heard the Lord saying, *"No man puts a piece of new cloth into an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up takes from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old wine-skins; else the wine-skins burst."* The soul of this man is an old garment: an old wine-skin. It is not renewed by the faith, nor renovated by the grace of the Spirit. It is yet weak and earthly. It affects the things of this life. It flutters eagerly after worldly

show. It loves a glory that is present. Should he hear at once, even from the first, that if he becomes a Christian he will become immediately a prisoner, and will be encompassed with a chain; feeling ashamed and indignant, he will recoil from the word preached. Therefore, says he, *"Except these bonds."* [Acts 26:28] Not as deprecating the bonds themselves, God forbid! But condescending to the other's infirmity; for he himself loved and welcomed his bonds, even as a woman fond of ornament does her jewels of gold. Whence is this apparent? *"I rejoice,"* says he, *"in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh."* [Colossians 1:24] And again; *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but to suffer for His sake."* [Philippians 1:29] And again; *"And not only so, but we also glory in tribulations."* [Romans 5:3] Wherefore, if he rejoices and glories in this, and calls it a gift of grace, it is manifest that when he was addressing the judge, he spoke to him as he did, for the reason assigned. Moreover, also in a different passage, when he happened to find a necessity for glorying, he shows the very same by saying, *"Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities.....in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* [2 Corinthians 12:9-10] And again; *"If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities."* [2 Corinthians 11:30] And elsewhere, comparing himself with others, and exhibiting to us his superiority in the comparison, he thus speaks; *"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool), I am more."* [2 Corinthians 11:23] And wishing to show this superiority, he did not say that he had raised the dead, nor that he had expelled demons, nor that he had cleansed lepers, nor that he had done any other thing of the sort, but that he had suffered those innumerable hardships. Hence when he said, I am more, he presently cites the multitude of his trials; *"In stripes, above*

measure, in deaths oft, in prisons more frequent.....of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;" and all the rest. Thus Paul everywhere glories in tribulations; and prides himself upon this circumstance exceedingly. And very justly. For this it is which especially shows the power of Christ, viz. that the Apostles conquered by such means; by bonds, by tribulations, by scourgings, and the worst of ills.

10. For these two things Christ had announced, tribulation and remission, labours and crowns, toils and rewards, things pleasant and sad. Nevertheless, to the present life he assigns the sorrowful things; but for the life to come, he has stored up those which are pleasant; at once showing that He did not mean to deceive men, and wishing by this arrangement to diminish the burden of human woes. For the imposter first holds out the things which are pleasant, and afterwards brings forward those which are disagreeable. Thus for example:— Kidnappers, when they intend to steal and carry off little children, do not promise them blows and stripes, or any other thing of that kind, but offer them cakes, and sweetmeats, and such like, by which the age of childhood is usually gratified; in order that, enticed by these things, they may sell their liberty, and may fall into the utmost peril. Moreover, bird-catchers, and fishermen, thus entice the prey which they pursue, offering first their usual food, and such as is agreeable to them, and by this means concealing the snare. So that this is especially the work of imposters, first to hold out things which are agreeable, but afterwards to introduce the things which are disagreeable. But the case is altogether the reverse with those who are really careful and provident for others. Fathers at least act quite in a contrary manner to kidnappers. When they send their children to school, they set masters over them, threaten them with stripes, and encompass them with fear on all sides. But when they have

thus spent the first portion of their lives, and their habits are formed, they then put them in possession of honour, and power, and luxury, and all the wealth that is theirs.

11. And thus God has acted. After the manner of provident fathers, and not after that of kidnappers, He has first involved us in things that are grievous; handing us over to present tribulation, as it were to schoolmasters and teachers; in order that being chastened and sobered by these things, after showing forth all patience, and learning all right discipline, we may afterwards, when formed into due habits, inherit the kingdom of heaven. He first prepares and fits us for the management of the wealth He is to give, and then puts us into the actual possession of riches. For if He had not acted thus, the giving of riches would have been no boon, but a punishment and a vengeance. For even as a son that is senseless and prodigal, when he has succeeded to a paternal inheritance, is precipitated headlong by this very thing, having none of the practical wisdom requisite for the economy of wealth; but if he be intelligent, and gentle, and sober, and moderate, managing his paternal estate as is befitting, he becomes by this means more illustrious and distinguished: so must it also necessarily happen in our case. When we have acquired spiritual understanding, when we have all attained to "*perfect manhood*," and the measure of full stature; then He puts us in possession of all that He has promised: but now as little children He chastens us, together with consolation and soothing. And this is not the only advantage of receiving the tribulation beforehand, but there is also another, not less than this. For the man who first of all lives luxuriously, and then has to expect punishment after his luxurious living, has not even a sense of his present luxury, merely by reason of the expectation of impending woes; but he who is first in a sorrowful state, if he is anticipating the enjoyment of good things afterwards, overlooks present difficulties, in the hope of the

good things which are to come. Not only, then, on account of our security, but also for our pleasure and consolation has He ordained that the things which are grievous should be first; in order that being lightened with the hope of futurity, we should be rendered insensible to what is present. And this Paul would show and make plain, when he said, *"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."* [2 Corinthians 4:17-18] He calls tribulation light, not because of the intrinsic nature of things that are grievous, but because of the expectation of good things to come. For even as the merchant is indifferent to the labour that attends navigation, being buoyed up with the hope of a cargo; and as the boxer bravely sustains the blows on his head, looking to the crown beyond; so also indeed do we, earnestly gazing towards heaven, and the good things that are in the heavens, whatever evils come on us, sustain them all with fortitude, being nerved with the good hope of the things to come.

12. Therefore let us go home, taking with us this saying; for though it be simple and short, it nevertheless contains much of the doctrine of spiritual wisdom. He who is in a state of grief and tribulation, has a sufficient consolation; he who lives in luxury and abundance, has that which may greatly sober him. For when as you sit at the table you are reminded of this saying, you will speedily shrink from drunkenness and gluttony; learning through this sentence, how needful it is for us to be striving; and you will say with yourself, *"Paul lived in bonds and in dungeons, but I in drunkenness and at a luxurious table! What pardon then shall I obtain?"* This also is a fit saying for women; since those who are fond of ornament, and expensive dresses, and bind themselves about with gold on every side, when they remember this chain, will hate, I feel assured,

and abominate that adorning of themselves; and will hasten to such bonds as these. For those ornaments have often been the cause of manifold evils, and introduced a thousand quarrels into a family, and have bred envy, and jealousy, and hatred. But these loosed the sins of the wide world, affrighted demons, and drove away the devil. With these, while tarrying in prison, he persuaded the jailor; with these he attracted Agrippa himself; with these he procured many disciples. Therefore he said, *"Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound."* [2 Timothy 2:9] For just as it is not possible to bind a sunbeam, or to shut it up within the house, so neither the preaching of the word; and what was much more, the teacher was bound, and yet the word flew abroad; he inhabited the prison, and yet his doctrine rapidly winged its way every where throughout the world!

Knowing these things then, let us not be depressed, when adverse affairs meet us, but then let us be more strong, then more powerful; *"for tribulation works patience."* [Romans 5:3] Let us not grieve for the calamities which befall us, but let us in all things give thanks unto God!

13. We have completed the second week of the fast, but this we should not consider; for going through the fast does not consist in merely going through the time, but in going through it with amendment of manners. Let us consider this; whether we have become more diligent; whether we have corrected any of our defects; whether we have washed away our sins? It is common for every one to ask in Lent, how many weeks each has fasted; and some may be heard saying that they have fasted two, others three, and others that they have fasted the whole of the weeks. But what advantage is it, if we have gone through the fast devoid of good works? If another says, *"I have fasted the whole of Lent,"* do thou say, *"I had an enemy, but I was reconciled; I had a custom of evil-speaking, but I put a stop to it; I had a*

custom of swearing, but I have broken through this evil practice." It is of no advantage to merchants, to have gone over a great extent of ocean, but to have sailed with a freight and much merchandise. The fast will profit us nothing, if we pass through it as a mere matter of course, without any result. If we practise a mere abstinence from meats, when the forty days are past, the fast is over too. But if we abstain from sins, this still remains, even when the fast has gone by, and will be from this time a continual advantage to us; and will here render us no small recompense, before we attain unto the kingdom of heaven. For as he who is living in iniquity, even before hell, has punishment, being stung by his conscience; so the man who is rich in good works, even before the kingdom, will have the benefit of exceeding joy, in that he is nourished with blessed hopes.

14. Therefore Christ says, *"I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you."* [John 16:22] A brief saying, but one that has in it much consolation. What then is this, *"your joy no man takes?"* if you have money, many are able to take away the joy that comes of your wealth; as, for instance, a thief, by digging through the wall; a servant by carrying off what was entrusted to him; an emperor by confiscation; and the envious man by contumely. Should you possess power, there are many who are able to deprive you of the joy of it. For when the conditions of office are at an end, the conditions of pleasure will also be ended. And in the exercise of office itself too, there are many accidents occurring, which by bringing difficulty and care, strike at the root of your satisfaction. If you have bodily strength, the assaults of disease put a stop to joy from that source. If you have beauty and bloom, the approach of old age withers it, and takes away that joy. Or if you enjoy a sumptuous table, when evening comes on the joy of the banquet is at an end; for every thing belonging to this life is liable to damage, and is unable to afford us a

lasting pleasure; but piety and the virtue of the soul is altogether the reverse of this. If you have done an alms, no one is able to take away this good work. Though an army, or kings, or myriads of calumniators and conspirators, were to beset you on all sides, they could not take away the possession, once deposited in heaven; but the joy thereof continually abides; for it is said, *"He has dispersed, he has given to the poor, his righteousness endures for ever."* And very justly; for in the storehouses of heaven it is laid up, where no thief breaks in, nor robber seizes, nor moth devours. If you pour out continued and fervent prayers, no man will be able to spoil you of the fruit of them; for this fruit too is rooted in the heavens; it is out of the way of all injury, and remains beyond mortal reach. If when evil-treated you have done a kind action; if you have borne with patience to hear yourself evil spoken of; if you have returned blessings for reproaches; these are good works that abide continually, and the joy of them no man takes away; but as often as you remember these, you are glad and rejoicest, and reap large fruits of pleasure. So also, indeed, if we succeed in avoiding oaths; and persuade our tongue to abstain from this pernicious practice, the good work will be finished in a short time, but the delight arising from it will be continuous and unfailing.

15. And now, it is time that you should be teachers and guides of others; that friends should undertake to instruct and lead on their neighbours; servants their fellow-servants; and youths those of their own age. What if any one had promised you a single piece of gold for every man who was reformed, would you not then have used every exertion, and been all day long sitting by them, persuading and exhorting. Yet now God promises you not one piece of gold, nor ten, or twenty, or a hundred, or a thousand; no, nor the whole earth, for your labours, but He gives you that which is greater than all the world, the kingdom of heaven; and not only

this, but also another thing besides it. And what kind of thing is that? *"He who takes forth the precious from the vile,"* says He, *"shall be as my mouth."* [Jeremiah 15:19] What can be equal to this in point of honour or security? What kind of excuse or pardon can be left to those, who after so great a promise neglect their neighbour's safety? Now if you see a blind man falling into a pit, you stretch forth a hand, and think it a disgraceful thing to overlook one who is about to perish? But daily beholding all your brethren precipitated into the wicked custom of oaths, do you not dare even to utter a word? You have spoken once, perhaps, and he has not heard. Speak therefore twice, and thrice, and as often as it may be, till you have persuaded him. Every day God is addressing us, and we do not hear; and yet He does not leave off speaking. Do thou, therefore, imitate this tender care towards your neighbour. For this reason it is that we are placed with one another; that we inhabit cities, and that we meet together in churches, in order that we may bear one another's burdens, that we may correct one another's sins. And in the same manner as persons inhabiting the same shop, carry on a separate traffic, yet put all afterwards into the common fund, so also let us act. Whatever advantages each man is able to confer upon his neighbour, let him not grudge, nor shrink from doing it, but let there be some such kind of spiritual commerce, and reciprocity; in order that having deposited every thing in the common store, and obtained great riches, and procured a large treasure, we may be all together partakers of the kingdom of heaven; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom and with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, both now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 17 on the Statues

Of the Commissioners (Hellebichus Commander of the Troops, and Cæsarius Master of the Offices) sent by the Emperor Theodosius for the inquisition of the offenders, on account of the overturning of the Statues.

1. Most opportunely have we all this day sung together, "*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only does wondrous things.*" For marvellous, and beyond all expectation, are the things which have happened? A whole city, and so great a population, when just about to be overwhelmed— to sink under the waves, and to be utterly and instantly destroyed— He has entirely rescued from shipwreck in a single moment of time! Let us give thanks then, not only that God has calmed the tempest, but that He suffered it to take place; not only that He rescued us from shipwreck, but that He allowed us to fall into such distress; and such an extreme peril to hang over us. Thus also Paul bids us "*in every thing give thanks.*"

[1 Thessalonians 5:18] But when he says, "*In every thing give thanks,*" he means not only in our deliverance from evils, but also at the time when we suffer those evils. "*For all things work together for good to them that love God.*" [Romans 8:28] Let us be thankful to Him for this deliverance from trials; and let us never forget them. Let us devote ourselves to prayer, to continual supplications, and to much piety.

2. When the sad conflagration of these calamities was first kindled, I said, that it was a season not for doctrine, but for prayer. The very same thing I now repeat, when the fire has been extinguished— that it is now especially, and more than before, a time for prayer; that now is the season especially for tears and compunction, for an anxious soul, for much diligence, and for much caution. For at that time the very nature of our

tribulation restrained us, however unwillingly, and disposed us to sobriety; and led us to become more religious; but now when the bridle is removed, and the cloud has passed away, there is fear lest we should fall back again into sloth, or become relaxed by this respite; and lest one should have reason to say of us too, *"When He slew them, then they sought Him, and returned, and enquired early after God."* Wherefore also Moses admonished the Jews, saying, *"When you shall have eaten, and drunk, and art full, remember the Lord your God."* [Deuteronomy 6:11-12] The goodness of your disposition will now be rendered manifest, if you continue in the practice of the same piety. For at that time, many imputed your earnestness to fear, and the approach of calamity; but now, it will be purely your own achievement, if you still persevere in maintaining this earnestness. Since with a boy too, as long as he is guided by some tutor whom he fears, if he lives with sobriety and meekness, there is nothing to admire, for all persons ascribe the sobriety of the stripling to his fear of the tutor. But when he remains in the same seemly behaviour, after the restraint from that quarter is done away with, all persons give him credit too for the sobriety that was seen in his earlier age. Thus also let us act; let us continue in the same state of godly fear, in order that for our former diligence too we may gain much praise from God.

3. We had expected innumerable woes; that our property would be plundered, that the houses would have been burnt together with their inmates, that the city would have been plucked up from the midst of the world, that its very fragments would have been utterly destroyed, and that its soil would have been placed under the plough! But, lo! All these things existed only in expectation, and did not come into operation. And this is not the only wonder, that God has removed so great a danger, but that He has also greatly blessed us, and adorned our city; and by this trial and calamity

has made us more approved! But how, I will state. When those who were sent by the Emperor erected that fearful tribunal for making inquisition into the events which had taken place, and summoned every one to give account of the deeds which they had perpetrated, and various anticipations of death pervaded the minds of all, then the monks who dwelt on the mountain-tops showed their own true philosophy. For although they had been shut up so many years in their cells, yet at no one's entreaty, by no one's counsel, when they beheld such a cloud overhanging the city, they left their caves and huts, and flocked together in every direction, as if they had been so many angels arriving from heaven. Then might one see the city likened to heaven, while these saints appeared everywhere; by their mere aspect consoling the mourners, and leading them to an utter disregard of the calamity. For who on beholding these would not deride death, would not despise life. And not only was this wonderful, but that when they drew near to the magistrates themselves, they spoke to them with boldness on behalf of the accused, and were all ready to shed their blood, and to lay down their heads, so that they might snatch the captured from the terrible events which they expected. They also declared that they would not depart until the judges should spare the population of the city, or send them themselves together with the accused to the Emperor. *"He,"* said they, *"who rules over our portion of the world is a godly man, a believer, one who lives in the practice of piety. We therefore shall assuredly reconcile him. We will not give you leave, nor permit you to embrue the sword, or take off a head. But if you do not desist, we also are quite resolved to die with them. We confess that the crimes committed are very heinous; but the iniquity of those deeds does not surpass the humanity of the Emperor."* One of them is also reported to have uttered another saying, full of wisdom, to this effect: *"The Statues which have been thrown down are again set up, and have resumed their proper appearance;*

and the mischief was speedily rectified; but if you put to death the image of God, how will you be again able to revoke the deed! Or how to reanimate those who are deprived of life, and to restore their souls to their bodies?"

Many things too they said to them of the Judgment.

4. Who could but be astonished? Who could but admire the moral wisdom of these men? When the mother of one of the accused, uncovering her head, and exposing her grey hairs, laid hold of the horse of the judge by the bridle, and running beside him through the forum, thus entered with him the place of justice, we were all struck with astonishment, we all admired that exceeding tenderness and magnanimity. Ought we not, then, to have been much more impressed with wonder at the conduct of these men? For if she had even died for her son, it would have been nothing strange, since great is the tyranny of nature, and irresistible is the obligation arising from the maternal pangs! But these men so loved those whom they had not begotten, whom they had not brought up, yea rather, whom they had never seen, whom they had not heard of, whom they had never met, whom they knew only from their calamity, that if they had possessed a thousand lives, they would have chosen to deliver them all up for their safety. Tell me not that they were not slaughtered, that they did not pour forth their blood, but that they used as much boldness with their judges as it was likely that no other men would do, but such as had already renounced their own lives; and that with this sentiment they ran from the mountains to the tribunal. For, indeed, if they had not before prepared themselves against every sort of slaughter, they would not have been able to speak thus freely to the judges, or to have manifested such magnanimity. For they remained all day long sitting before the doors of the place of justice, being prepared to snatch from the hands of the executioners those who were about to be led off to punishment!

5. Where now are those who are clad in threadbare cloaks, and display a long beard, and carry staves in the right hand; the philosophers of the world, who are more abject in disposition than the dogs under the table; and do every thing for the sake of the belly? All these men then forsook the city, they all hastened away, and hid themselves in caves! But they only, who truly by works manifest the love of wisdom, appeared as fearlessly in the forum, as if no evil had overtaken the city. And the inhabitants of the city fled away to the mountains and to the deserts, but the citizens of the desert hastened into the city; demonstrating by deeds what, on the preceding days, I have not desisted from saying, that the very furnace will not be able to harm the man who leads a virtuous life. Such a thing is philosophy of soul, rising superior to all things, and to all prosperous or adverse events; for neither is it enfeebled by the former, nor beaten down and debased by the latter, but abides on the same level through the whole course of things, showing its own native force and power! Who, indeed, was not convicted of weakness by the difficulty of the present crisis? Those who had held the first offices in our city, who were in places of power, who were surrounded with immense wealth, and who were in high favour with the Emperor, leaving their houses utterly deserted, all consulted their own safety, and all friendship and kindred were found worthless, and those whom they formerly knew, at this season of calamity, they desired not to know, and prayed to be unknown of them! But the monks, poor as they were, having nothing more than a mean garment, who had lived in the coarsest manner, who seemed formerly to be nobodies, men habituated to mountains and forests; as if they had been so many lions, with a great and lofty soul, while all were fearing and quaking, stood forth and relieved the danger, and that, not in the course of many days, but in a brief moment of time! And as distinguished warriors without coming into close conflict with their

adversaries, but merely by making their appearance in the ranks, and shouting, put the foe to rout, so also these in one day descended, and said their say, and removed the calamity, and returned to their own tabernacles. So great is the moral wisdom that was brought among men by Christ.

6. And why do I speak of the rich, and of those in authority? When those very persons who had been invested with power to judge the criminals; who acted with the highest authority, were entreated by these selfsame monks to grant a sentence of pardon, they said, they had no power over the result; for that it was unsafe and dangerous, not only to insult the Emperor, but even to dismiss those who had insulted him, when taken, without punishment. But these men were too powerful for any one to resist; and besieging them by magnanimity and perseverance, they induced these officers by their importunity to exercise a power which they had not received from the Emperor; and even succeeded in persuading the judges, when men had been manifestly convicted of the guilt, not to declare the sentence of condemnation, but to defer the final result to the decision of the Emperor; and they promised certainly to persuade him to grant a pardon to those who had transgressed against him; and they were about to set out on a journey to him. But the judges, reverencing the moral wisdom of these men, and being struck with their loftiness of spirit, did not permit them to undertake this long journey, but promised that if they should only receive their words in writing, they would themselves depart and successfully importune the Emperor to dismiss all anger (which, indeed, we are now expecting that he will). For when sentence should have been given, they, on being admitted into court, uttered words of the highest wisdom, and besought the Emperor by letters to show mercy; and they reminded him of the Judgment, and said that they would lay down their own heads, if his mercy was not granted. And the judges took down these words in writing,

and departed. This, more than the brightest crown, will adorn our city. And what has here taken place, the Emperor will now hear; yea, the great City will hear, and the whole world will hear, that the monks who dwell at the city of Antioch, are men who have displayed an apostolic boldness; and now when their letters are read at court, all men will admire their magnanimity; all men will call our city blessed; and we shall shake off our evil reputation; and it will be known every where, that what has happened was not the work of the inhabitants of the city, but of strangers and corrupt-minded men; and that this testimony of the monks will be a sufficient evidence of the character of the city.

7. Therefore, beloved, let us not be distressed, but let us entertain favourable hopes; for if their boldness toward men has been able to prevent such a danger, then what will not their boldness toward God effect? These things also let us tell the Greeks, when they dare to dispute with us respecting their philosophers! From hence it is manifest that their stories of former days are false, but that the things of old reported among us are true; that is, the things concerning John, and Paul, and Peter, and all the rest. For inasmuch as these monks have succeeded to the piety of those men, they have consequently exhibited their boldness. Inasmuch as they were brought up in the same laws, they have consequently imitated their virtues. So that we stand in no need of writings for the purpose of showing the virtues, while the very facts cry aloud, and the masters are shown forth by the scholars. We have no need of disputation to display the trifling of the Greeks, and the little-mindedness of their philosophers, while their deeds now loudly proclaim, as they did aforetime, that all with them is a fable, a stage-play, a piece of acting.

8. And the same magnanimity was displayed by the priests too, as well as the monks, and they shared among them the charge of our safety. One of

them, indeed, proceeded to court, esteeming all things as secondary to the love of you; and being himself ready, if he could not persuade the Emperor, to lay down his own life. And these, who remained here, have displayed the same virtues as the monks themselves; and holding fast the judges with their own hands, they would not let them enter into the court, before they gave a promise respecting the result of the trial. And when they saw them making signs of refusal, they again exerted themselves with much boldness; and as soon as they saw that they did consent, embracing their feet and knees, and kissing their hands, they gave an exceeding proof of either virtue, of liberty and meekness. For that theirs was not the boldness of presumption, they plainly signified by their kissing the knees, and embracing the feet of the judges. Again, in proof that this was not flattery, nor a kind of fawning servility, nor the fruit of a slavish spirit, their former acts attested their boldness. And these are not the only good results we have reaped from the trial, but also an abundance of sobriety and meekness; and our city has become all at once a monastery. Not thus would any one have adorned it, had he erected golden statues in the forum, as it has now been adorned and distinguished, in producing those beautiful images of virtue, and displaying its true riches!

9. But it may be that the things which the Emperor has decreed are painful. No! not even these are really burdensome, but have brought much advantage with them. For what is there, I ask, which is oppressive in any of them? That the Emperor has shut up the Orchestra, that he has forbidden the Hippodrome, that he has closed and stopped up these fountains of iniquity. May they never again be opened! From thence did the roots of wickedness shoot forth to the injury of the city! From thence sprung those who blast its character; men who sell their voices to the dancers, and who for the sake of three obols prostitute their salvation to them, turning all things upside

down! Are you distressed, O beloved! For these things? Truly it were fitting that for these you should be glad, and rejoice, and express your thanks to the Emperor, since his castigation has proved a correction, his punishment a discipline, his wrath a means of instruction! But that the Baths are shut up? Neither is this an intolerable hardship, that those who lead a soft, effeminate, and dissolute life, should be brought back, though unwillingly, to the love of true wisdom.

10. But is it complained of, that the Emperor has taken away the dignity of the city, and has no more permitted it to be called a metropolis? But what was he to do? Could he praise what had been done, and acknowledge it as a favour? Then who would not have blamed him, for not showing even the outward form of indignation? Do you see not that fathers do many things of a similar nature towards their children? They turn away from them, and forbid them the table. This also has the Emperor done by imposing such punishments as have nothing in them hurtful, but carry with them much correction. Think what we expected, and what has taken place, and then we shall especially discern the favour of God! Do you grieve that the dignity of the city is taken away? Learn what the dignity of a city is; and then you will know clearly, that if the inhabitants do not betray it, no one else will be able to take away the dignity of a city! Not the fact that it is a metropolis; nor that it contains large and beautiful buildings; nor that it has many columns, and spacious porticoes and walks, nor that it is named in proclamations before other cities, but the virtue and piety of its inhabitants; this is a city's dignity, and ornament, and defence; since if these things are not found in it, it is the most insignificant in the world, though it may enjoy unlimited honour from Emperors! Do you wish to learn the dignity of your city? Do you wish to know its ancestry? I will tell it exactly; not only that you may know, but that you may also emulate. What then is after all the

dignity of this city of ours? *"It came to pass, that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch."* [Acts 11:26] This dignity, none of the cities throughout the world possesses, not even the city of Romulus herself! For this it can look the whole world in the face; on account of that love toward Christ, that boldness and virtue. Do you wish farther to hear of a different dignity and commendation belonging to this city? A grievous famine was once approaching, and the inhabitants of Antioch determined, as far as each person had the means, to send relief to the Saints dwelling at Jerusalem. [Acts 11:28-29] Behold a second dignity, charity in a time of famine! The season did not make them niggardly, nor the expectation of the calamity backward in helping; but when all are apt to be scraping up what is not their own, then they distributed their own, not merely to those who were near, but also to those who were living afar off! Do you see here the faith towards God, and the love towards their neighbour? Would you learn another dignity of this city? Certain men came down from Judæa to Antioch, defiling the doctrine preached, and introducing Jewish observances. The men of Antioch did not bear this novelty in silence. They did not hold their peace, but having come together, and made an assembly, they sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, and caused the Apostles to provide that pure doctrines, cleared from all Jewish imperfection, might be distributed throughout all parts of the world! This is the dignity of the city! This is its precedence! This makes it a metropolis, not in the earth, but in heaven; forasmuch as that all other honours are corruptible, and fleeting, and perish with the present life, and often come to their end before the close of it, as they have done in the present instance! To me, a city that has not pious citizens is meaner than any village, and more ignoble than any cave.

11. And why do I speak of a city? For that you may exactly understand that virtue alone is the ornament of the inhabitants, I will not speak to you

of a city, but I will endeavour to demonstrate this by bringing forward what is more venerable than any city—the Temple of God which was in Jerusalem. For this was the Temple in which were sacrifices and prayers and services; where was the Holy of Holies, and the Cherubim, the Covenant, and the golden pot; the great symbols of God's providence towards that people; where oracles from heaven were constantly being received, where prophets became inspired, where the fashioning was not the work of human art, but proceeded from the wisdom of God, where the walls were on every side resplendent with much gold, and where, in surpassing excellence, costliness of material and perfection of art met together, and demonstrated that there was no other temple like this upon earth! Yea rather, not only the perfection of art, but also the wisdom of God assisted in that building. For Solomon had learned all, not intuitively and from himself, but from God; and having received the design of it from the heavens, he then marked it out and erected it. Nevertheless, this Temple, thus beautiful and marvellous and sacred, when those who used it were corrupted, was so dishonoured, despised, and profaned, that even before the captivity it was called "*a den of robbers, a cave of hyænas*;" [Jeremiah 7:11] and afterwards it was delivered over to hands that were barbarous, polluted, and profane!

12. Would you learn the same truth respecting cities? What could be more illustrious than the cities of Sodom? For the houses and the buildings were splendid, and so were their walls; and the country was fat and fertile, and "*like the Paradise of God*." [Genesis 13:10] But the tent of Abraham was mean and small, and had no fortification. Yet when a foreign war took place, the strangers broke down and took the walled cities, and departed, carrying away their inhabitants captives. Abraham, however, the citizen of the desert, they could not resist when he attacked them! And so it was likely to be. For he had true piety: a power much greater than numbers and the

defence of walls. If you are a Christian, no earthly city is yours. Of our City *"the Builder and Maker is God."* [Hebrews 11:10] Though we may gain possession of the whole world, we are withal but strangers and sojourners in it all! We are enrolled in heaven: our citizenship is there! Let us not, after the manner of little children, despise things that are great, and admire those which are little! Not our city's greatness, but virtue of soul is our ornament and defence. If you suppose dignity to belong to a city, think how many persons must partake in this dignity, who are whoremongers, effeminate, depraved and full of ten thousand evil things, and at last despise such honour! But that City above is not of this kind; for it is impossible that he can be a partaker of it, who has not exhibited every virtue.

13. Let us not therefore be senseless; but then let us grieve when any one deprives us of our dignity of soul, when we commit sin, when we have offended the common Lord of all; since as regards the things that have now befallen us, so far are they from injuring the city, that if we are watchful, they will greatly benefit us. For even already our city seems to be like a decorous, noble, sober-minded matron. Fear has made her gentler and more dignified, and has delivered her from those miscreants who were concerned in the late audacious deeds. Let us therefore not give way to womanish lamentations. For I have heard many about the forum saying, *"Alas! For you, Antioch! What has befallen you! How are you dishonoured!"* Truly when I heard, I smiled at the puerile mind which could give vent to these words! Such words were not becoming now; but when you see men dancing, drunken, singing, blaspheming, swearing, perjuring themselves, and lying, then apply such a saying as this: *"Alas! For you, O city, what has befallen you!"* But if you see the forum containing a few meek, modest, and temperate persons, then pronounce the city, *"Blessed!"* For the fewness will never be able to injure it in any respect, if there be virtue withal; as on the

other hand, numbers will never profit it at all, while iniquity is there. "If," says the prophet, "*the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved;*" that is to say, "*Multitude will never prevail with Me.*" So also Christ spoke. He called cities wretched; not because of their littleness, nor because they were not of metropolitan rank. And Jerusalem itself again, He calls wretched for the very same reason, speaking thus; "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; thou that killest the prophets, and stone them which are sent unto you!*" [Matthew 23:37] For what advantage, I ask, does a multitude bring, if their system of living be vicious? Nay, on the contrary, even injury results from it. What else, indeed, has wrought the evils which have lately sprung up? Was it not the sloth, the recklessness, and the depravity of the inhabitants? Did the dignity of the city, did the magnificence of its architecture, or the circumstance that it was a metropolis, do it any service? If with the king who is on earth, nothing could protect it when it had done thus amiss, but all these privileges are taken away; much more with the Lord of angels will its dignity fail to protect it? For at that Day, it will nought avail us, that we have dwelt in a metropolis, that has many spacious porticoes, and other dignities of this kind! And why do I say, at That Day? For as regards the present life, what can it benefit you that this your city is a metropolis? Pray, has any one restored a distressed family by means of this? Or received any revenue from this dignity? Or dispelled sadness? Or got rid of any bodily infirmity? Or put away a vice of the soul? Beloved! let us not trifle, nor regard the opinions of the multitude, but understand what is indeed the dignity of a city; what it is that makes a city truly a metropolis?

14. I say all this, though I expect that the city will again regain even this outward distinction, and appear in its own proper place of precedence. For the Emperor is both philanthropic and godly. But I am desirous that if it

should be restored, you may not think too much of this; nor be boastful of it; nor place the honour of our city to that account. When you wish to pronounce an encomium on the city, tell me not of the suburb of Daphne, nor of the height and multitude of its cypresses, nor of its fountains of waters, nor of the great population who inhabit the city, nor of the great freedom with which its market-place is frequented even to midnight, nor of the abundance of its wares! All these are things of the outward sense, and remain only as long as the present life. But if you are able to mention virtue, meekness, almsgiving, nocturnal vigils, prayers, sobriety, true wisdom of soul; commend the city for these things! To those who inhabit the desert, the presence of these things makes it more illustrious than any city; and again the vilest of all places, should these things not be found with its citizens. Let us make this estimate not in the case of cities only, but also of men. And if you see a big man, who has been brought into good condition, tall, and surpassing others in length of limb, do not admire him, until you have ascertained what the man's soul is. Not from the outward comeliness, but from the beauty that appertains to the soul, should we pronounce any persons blessed! David was little, and short of stature; nevertheless, one so short and little, and bare of all arms, brought down at one blow so large an army, and that tower of flesh; and this without hurling spear, or letting fly arrow, or unsheathing sword, but doing all with a small pebble! For this reason a certain one exhorts, saying, *"Commend not a man for his beauty, neither abhor a man for his outward appearance. The bee is little among such as fly, but her fruit is the chief of sweet things."* [Sirach 11:2-3]

15. Thus also let us speak both of a city, and of men, and utter such wisdom one to another, and be continually thankful to God, as well for present as for past mercies; and call upon Him in common with all our might, that those who now dwell in prison may be discharged, and that

those who are about to be sent into exile may return back again. They too are our members. With us they have buffeted the waves, with us they have withstood the storm! Let us, then, beseech the merciful God, that with us they may enjoy the calm! Let no one say, *"What farther concerns me? I am freed from danger; such an one may perish; such another may be destroyed!"* Let us not provoke God by this indifference; but lament, as if we ourselves were in the same peril. So let us supplicate God with intense earnestness, fulfilling that saying of Paul, *"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. [Hebrews 13:3] Weeping also with them that weep; condescending to men of low estate."* [Romans 12:15-16] This will also be of the greatest advantage to ourselves; for nothing uses so much to delight God, as that we should be very ready to mourn for our own members. Him therefore let us supplicate in common, both for things present, and for things to come; in order that He may deliver us from punishment hereafter. For the things present, whatever they are, are endurable, and have an end; but the torments there are immortal, and interminable! And while we are consoled, let us also ourselves endeavour to fall no more into such sins, knowing that hereafter we shall enjoy no pardon! Let us, then, all in common prostrate ourselves before God; and both while we are here, and when we are at home, let us say, *"You, O Lord, art righteous in all things which You have done towards us; for You have brought upon us by a just judgment whatever You have brought."* [Nehemiah 9:33] If *"our sins rise up against us, undertake for us, for your Name's sake;"* [Jeremiah 14:7] and do not permit us any more to experience such grievous troubles. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Yours is the kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 18 on the Statues

The former subject of the Sedition continued; also of fasting; and upon the Apostolic saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always."

1. I have observed many persons rejoicing, and saying one to another, *"We have conquered; we have prevailed; the half of the fast is spent."* But I exhort such persons not to rejoice on this account, that the half of the fast is gone, but to consider whether the half of their sins be gone; and if so, then to exult. For this is a fit subject of gratification. This is what is to be sought after, and for which all things are done, that we may correct our defects; and that we may not quit the fast the same persons as we entered upon it, but in a cleansed state; and that having laid aside all that belongs to evil habits, we may thus keep the sacred feast, since if the case be otherwise, we shall be so far from obtaining any advantage, that the completion of the fast will be the greatest injury to us. Let us, therefore, not rejoice that we have gone through the length of the fast, for this is nothing great; but let us rejoice, if we have got through it with fresh attainments, so that when this is over, the fruit of it may shine forth. For the gain of winter is more especially manifested after the season is gone by. Then, the flourishing grain, and the trees teeming with leaves and fruit, proclaim, by their appearance, the benefit that has accrued to them from the winter! Let the same thing also take place with us. For during the winter, we have enjoyed various and frequent showers, having been during the fast partakers of a continued course of instruction, and have received spiritual seeds, and cut away the thorns of luxury.

2. Wherefore let us persevere, retaining with all diligence what we have heard; that when the fast is over, the fruit of the fast may abound, and

that by the good things we gathered from the fast, we may remember the fast itself. If thus we fashion ourselves, we shall, when the fast returns, welcome it again with pleasure. For I see many who are so feeble-minded, that at the present season they are anxious about the following Lent; and I have heard many saying, that after their liberation from the fast, they are insensible to any pleasure from this remission, on account of their anxiety about the coming year. What can be more feeble-minded than this? I ask; and what is the cause of this? It is, that when the fast is arrived, we do not take pains that the concerns of the soul may be well ordered, but we limit the fast solely to an abstinence from food. Since, were we to reap the full benefit of it in a reformation of conduct, we should wish the fast to come round every day, receiving in very deed an experience of its good effects; and we should never cast away the desire of it, or be dejected and anxious while expecting it.

3. For there is nothing whatever that will be able to afflict one who is well ordered in mind, and careful about his own soul; but he will enjoy a pure and continued pleasure. And that this is true you have today heard from Paul, who exhorts us, saying, *"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice."* [Philippians 4:4] I know indeed that to many this saying seems impossible. *"For how is it possible,"* says some one, *"that he who is but a man, can continually rejoice? To rejoice is no hard matter, but to rejoice continually, this seems to me to be impossible."* For many are the causes of sadness, which surround us on all sides. A man has lost either a son, or a wife, or a beloved friend, more necessary to him than all kindred; or he has to sustain the loss of wealth; or he has fallen into sickness; or he has to bear some other change of fortune; or to grieve for contemptuous treatment which he did not deserve; or famine, or pestilence, or some intolerable exaction, or circumstances in his family trouble him—nay, there

is no saying how many circumstances of a public or private nature are accustomed to occasion us grief. How then, he may say, is it possible to *"rejoice always?"* Yea, O man! It is possible; and if it were not so, Paul would not have given the exhortation; nor would a man endowed with spiritual wisdom have offered such counsel; and for this reason I have constantly said to you, and will not cease to say, that what ye could nowhere have learned from any other, that wisdom ye may here meditate. For mankind are universally desirous of pleasure, and of rejoicing; and for this, they do all, say all, and undertake all things. Therefore it is, that the merchant goes on a voyage, in order that he may amass wealth; and he amasses wealth, to the end that he may rejoice over what he has treasured up. The soldier also for this reason exercises his warfare, and the husbandman his husbandry; for this each man plies his art. Those also who love dominion, love it for this end, that they may obtain glory; and they desire to obtain glory, that they may rejoice; and any one may perceive that each of our undertakings is directed to this point, and that every man looking to this makes haste to go towards it through a variety of means.

4. For as I said, all love gladness, but all are not able to attain it, since they know not the way which leads to it; but many suppose that the source of it is in being rich. But if this were its source, no one possessed of wealth would ever be sad. But in fact many of the rich think life not worth living, and would infinitely prefer death when they experience any hardship; and of all men these are the most liable to excessive sadness. For you should not look to their tables, or their flatterers, and parasites, but to the trouble that comes of such things, the insults, the calumnies, the dangers, and the distresses, and what is far worse, that they meet these reverses unpractised, and know not how to take them philosophically, or to bear with fortitude what befalls them; whence it happens that calamities do not appear to them

such as they are in their own nature, but even things which are really light come to seem intolerable; whereas, with regard to the poor, the contrary takes place; things that are irremediable seem easy to be borne, since they are familiar with many such. For it is not so much the nature of the events as the disposition of the sufferers, that makes the evils which come upon us seem great or small. And that I may not go a long way off for examples of both these facts, I will speak to you of what has lately befallen ourselves. Behold then how all the poor escaped, and the populace are delivered from the danger, and enjoy an entire freedom! But those who manage the affairs of the city, the men who keep their studs of horses, and preside over the public games, and such as have borne other public charges, they are now the inmates of the prison, and fear the worst; and they alone pay the penalty of the deeds that have been perpetrated by all, and are in a state of constant terror; and they are now the most wretched of men, not because of the greatness of the danger, but on account of the luxury in which hitherto they have lived! Many, at least when exhorted by us, and counselled to sustain these adverse affairs with fortitude, said this, *"We never practised any thing of the kind, and do not know how to exercise such philosophy; this is why we need so much consolation."*

5. Others again suppose, that to enjoy good health is the source of pleasure. But it is not so. For many of those who enjoy good health have a thousand times wished themselves dead, not being able to bear the insults inflicted on them. Others again affirm, that to enjoy glory, and to have attained to power, and to administer the highest offices, and to be flattered by multitudes, is productive of continual gladness. But neither is this the case. And why do I speak of other offices of power? For although we were to mount up in thought to royalty itself, and to him who lives in that station, we should find it encompassed with a diversity of troubles, and having so

many necessary causes the more of sadness, in proportion as it is surrounded with a greater weight of affairs. And what need is there to speak of wars, and battles, and the insurrections of barbarians? Oftentimes he has reason to fear those by whom he is surrounded at home. For many of those monarchs who have escaped from the hands of their enemies, have not escaped the conspiracies of their own body-guards. And kings have of necessity as many causes of sadness as there are waves on the ocean. But if monarchy is unable to render life devoid of grief, then what else can possibly achieve this? Nothing, indeed, of this life; but this saying of Paul alone, brief and simple as it is, will of itself open to us this treasure.

6. For many words are not needed, nor a long round of argument, but if we only consider his expression, we shall find the way that leads to it. He does not simply say, "*Rejoice always*;" but he adds the cause of the continual pleasure, saying, "*Rejoice in the Lord always*." He who rejoices "*in the Lord*," can not be deprived of the pleasure by any thing that may happen. For all other things in which we rejoice are mutable and changeable, and subject to variation. And not only does this grievous circumstance attend them, but moreover while they remain they do not afford us a pleasure sufficient to repel and veil the sadness that comes upon us from other quarters. But the fear of God contains both these requisites. It is steadfast and immoveable, and sheds so much gladness that we can admit no sense of other evils. For the man who fears God as he ought, and trusts in Him, gathers from the very root of pleasure, and has possession of the whole fountain of cheerfulness. And as a spark falling upon a wide ocean quickly disappears, so whatever events happen to the man who fears God, these, falling as it were upon an immense ocean of joy, are quenched and destroyed! This indeed is most to be wondered at, that while things which minister sadness are present, the man should remain joyful. For if there was

nothing to produce grief, it would be no great matter to him that he was able continually to rejoice. But that at a time when he is urged to sadness by the pressure of many things, he is superior to all these, and is blithe in the midst of sorrow, this is truly a matter for astonishment! And as no one would have wondered that the three Children were not burnt, if they had remained far off from the furnace of Babylon! (for the circumstance that astonished all was, that having been so long in such close contact with the fire, they left it more free from hurt than those who had not been in contact with it); so also we are able to say of the saints, that if no temptation had fastened itself upon them, we should not have wondered at their continual rejoicing. But the point worthy of admiration, and that which surpasses human nature, is this, that being encircled on all sides with innumerable waves, their condition is easier than that of those who enjoy an entire calm!

7. From what has been said, it is evident that among those who are outside the church it is impossible to find any situation in life, encircled with continual gladness from the things without. But that the believer cannot possibly be deprived of the enjoyment of a continued pleasure is what I will now proceed to prove, to the end that you may not only learn, but also emulate this painless condition of life. For suppose a man having nothing for which to condemn himself, but cherishing a good conscience, and yearning after the future state, and the fulfilment of those good hopes; what, I ask, will be able to throw such a person into sadness? Does not death seem the most insupportable of all things? Yet the expectation of this is so far from grieving him, that it makes him the more joyful; for he knows that the arrival of death is a release from labour, and a speeding toward the crowns and rewards laid up for those who have contended in the race of piety and virtue. But is it the untimely end of his children? Nay, he will also bear this nobly, and will take up the words of Job, "*The Lord gave, the Lord*

has taken away; as it seemed good unto the Lord, so is it come to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever." [Job 1:21] But if death and loss of children cannot grieve, much less can the loss of money, or dishonour, or reproaches, or false accusations, at any time affect a soul so great and noble; no, nor anguish of body, since the Apostles were scourged, yet they were not made sad. This, indeed, was a great thing; but what is much more, instead of being made sad, they considered their very scourgings, as a ground of additional pleasure. *"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ."* [Acts 5:41] Did any person insult and revile such a one? Well, he was taught by Christ to rejoice in these revilings. *"Rejoice,"* says He, *"and be exceeding glad, when they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; for great is your reward in heaven."*

[Matthew 5:11-12] But suppose a man has fallen into disease? Well, he has heard another admonishing, and saying, *"In disease and poverty trust thou in Him; for as gold is tried in the fire, so are acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation."* [Sirach 2:4-5] Since, therefore, neither death, nor loss of money, nor bodily disease, nor dishonour, nor reproach, nor any other thing of that nature, will be able to grieve him, but makes him even the more joyful, what foundation for sadness will he have at any time?

8. *"What then,"* says some one, used not the Saint to be in sadness? Do you not hear Paul saying, *"I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart?"* [Romans 9:2] This, indeed, is the thing to wonder at, that sorrow brought a gain, and a pleasure that resulted from the gain; for as the scourge did not procure them anguish, but gladness; so also again the sorrow procured them those great crowns. And this is the paradox; that not only the sadness of the world, but also its joy, contains extreme loss; but in the case of spiritual things, it is exactly the reverse; and not the joy only, but

the sadness too contains a rich treasure of good things! But how, I proceed to explain. In the world, a person often rejoices, on beholding an enemy in trouble; and by this joy he draws on himself a great punishment. Again, another person mourns, on seeing a brother fall; and because of this sadness he will procure for himself much favour with God. Do you see how godly sorrow is better and more profitable than the joy of the world? Thus also Paul sorrowed for sinners, and for those who disbelieved in God; and this sorrow was the means of laying up a great reward for him. But that I may make what I say more clear, and that you may know that although what I assert is very strange, it is nevertheless true, viz. that grief is often capable of refreshing distressed souls, and of rendering a burdened conscience light: consider how often women, when they have lost their most beloved children, break their hearts, and perish, if they are forbidden to mourn, and to shed tears. But if they do all which those who are sad, are wont to do, they are relieved, and receive consolation. And what wonder that this should be the case with women, when you may even see a prophet affected in a similar manner? Therefore he was continually saying, *"Allow me—I will weep bitterly—labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people."* [Isaiah 22:4] So that, oftentimes, sadness is the bearer of consolation; and if it is so with regard to this world. much more with regard to spiritual things. Therefore he says, *"Godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of."* [2 Corinthians 7:10] This indeed seems to be obscure; but what he says is to this effect: *"If you grieve over wealth, you are nothing profited. If for sickness, you have gained nothing, but hast increased your affliction."*

9. And I have heard many, after such experience, blame themselves, and say, What advantage is it that I have grieved? I have not recovered my money, and I have injured myself. But if you have grieved on account of

sin, you have blotted it out, and hast reaped the greatest pleasure. If you have grieved for your brethren who have fallen, you have both encouraged and comforted yourself, and hast also restored them; and even if you were not to profit them, you have an abundant recompense. And that you may learn that this grieving for those who have fallen, though we should not at all benefit them, still brings us a large reward, hear what Ezekiel says; or rather, what God Himself speaks through him. For when He had sent certain messengers to overturn the city, and to consume all the dwellings with sword and fire, along with their inhabitants, He thus charges one of them: *"Set a mark upon the forehead of the men that groan, and are in anguish."* And after charging the others, and saying, *"Begin ye from mine holy ones,"* He goes on to add, *"But upon whomsoever the sign is, touch them not."* [Ezekiel 9:4] For what reason, tell me? Because although they avail nothing, they nevertheless lament the things which are done, and deplore them. And again, He accuses others, saying, That in their luxury, and gluttony, and enjoyment of great security, when they beheld the Jews carried away into captivity, they did not grieve, nor partake of their sadness. And hear what He says, reproaching them: *"They suffered nothing in the affliction of Joseph:"* [Amos 6:6] meaning by Joseph the whole people. And again: *"The inhabitants of Ænan went not forth to bewail the house next unto them."* For although they are justly punished, God wills that we should condole with them, and not rejoice or insult. *"For if I that punish,"* says He, *do not this rejoicingly; nor take pleasure in their punishment; for "I do not at all will the death of the sinner;"* [Ezekiel 18:32] it is right that you should imitate your Lord; and should mourn for this very thing, that the sinner has provided matter and occasion for a just punishment. So that if any one entertains a godly sorrow, he will thence reap a great advantage.

10. Since therefore those who are scourged are more blessed than the scourgers, and those in tribulation among us than those who are free from it outside the Christian pale; and those who are sad are more blessed than those in pleasure; what further source of tribulation shall we have? On this account we should call no man happy, save him only who lives according to God. These only the Scripture terms blessed. For *"blessed,"* it is said, *"is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. Blessed is he whom You chasten, and teachest him out of Your law. Blessed are the undefiled in the way. Blessed are all they who trust in Him. Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord. Blessed is he whom his soul condemns not. Blessed is the man that fears the Lord."* And again, Christ speaks thus: *"Blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the humble; blessed are the meek; blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake."* [Matthew 5:3-10] Do you see how the divine laws everywhere pronounce blessed none of the rich, or of the well-born, or of the possessors of glory, but the man who has gotten hold of virtue. For what is required of us is, that in every thing we do or suffer, the fear of God should be the foundation; and if you implant this as the root, not merely will ease, and honour, and glory, and attention, produce fruits that shall be pleasurable to you; but hostilities also, and calumnies, and contempt, and disgrace, and torments, and all things without exception. And just as the roots of trees are bitter in themselves, and yet produce our sweetest fruits, so, verily, godly sorrow will bring us an abundant pleasure. They know, who have often prayed with anguish, and shed tears, what gladness they have reaped; how they purged the conscience; how they rose up with favourable hopes! For as I am always saying, it is not the nature of the things, but our disposition, which is wont to make us sad or joyful. If then we can render the latter such as it ought to be, we shall have a pledge for all gladness. And just as, with the body, it is

not so much the nature of the air, or the things it meets from without, as its own internal condition, that either injures or assists it, so also it is in the case of the soul; and much more so; for in the one case, there is the necessity of nature; in the other, the whole is seated in the power of choice. Therefore Paul, when he had endured innumerable evils— shipwrecks, wars, persecutions, plots, the assaults of robbers, and things too numerous to be recounted, dying also daily deaths— was so far from grieving or being discontented, that he gloried, and rejoiced, and said, *"I now rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh."* [Colossians 1:24] And again: *"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations."* [Romans 5:3] Now, glorying signifies an extension of pleasure.

11. If then you desire joy, seek not after riches, nor bodily health, nor glory, nor power, nor luxury, nor sumptuous tables, nor vestures of silk, nor costly lands, nor houses splendid and conspicuous, nor any thing else of that kind; but pursue that spiritual wisdom which is according to God, and take hold of virtue; and then nought of the things which are present, or which are expected, will be able to sadden you. Why do I say to sadden? Verily, the things that make others sad, will prove to you an accession of pleasure. For scourges, and death, and losses, and slanders, and the being evil entreated, and all such things, when they are brought upon us for God's sake, and spring from this root, will bring into our souls much pleasure. For no one will be able to make us miserable, if we do not make ourselves such; nor, on the other hand, blessed, if we do not make ourselves such, following up the grace of God.

12. And that you may learn that he only is blessed, who fears the Lord, I will now demonstrate this to you, not by what has happened in past times, but by what has befallen ourselves. Our city was in danger of being utterly

effaced; and no man among the rich, or eminent, or illustrious, dared to appear in public, but all fled, and hurried out of the way. But they who feared God, the men who passed their time in monasteries, hastened down with much boldness, and set all free from this terror; and the terrible events that had taken place, and the threats which had been expected to be put into execution, were so far from causing them to fear, or from throwing them into anxiety, that although they were placed far off from the calamity, and had no share in it, they cast themselves willingly into the midst of the fire, and rescued all; and as for death, which seems universally terrible and awful, they awaited it with the utmost readiness, and ran to meet it with more pleasure than others do towards principalities and honours. And why, but because they knew, that this is the greatest principality and honour? And they showed in very deed that he only is blessed who lays hold of the wisdom which is from above, that he undergoes no change and sustains no adversity, but enjoys a continued tranquillity, and laughs to scorn all things which seem to be sorrowful. At the present time at least, those who were once in power are oppressed by much sadness, inhabiting the prison, and loaded with chains, and daily expecting to be put to death. But these men on the contrary enjoy the purest pleasure; and if it be their lot to suffer anything terrible, this, and the very things which seem formidable to others, are welcome to them, for they know well towards what point they are running, and what lot will await them when they depart hence. But while they live with so much exactness, and smile at death, they nevertheless grieve for others, and reap therefrom, in turn, the greatest advantage. Let us then be in earnest to take care of our souls, and nothing which may come unlooked for can make us sad. And on behalf of those who are in prison, let us beseech God that He will deliver them from their present calamity. For it was in God's power at once to release us from this dire evil, and not to

suffer even the smallest part of it to remain; but in order that we may not again go back to our former negligence, He has provided that the torrent of these evils should subside gently and little by little, holding us fast to the same pious resolutions.

13. And that this is true, and that many would have gone back to their former supineness, if we had been released from the whole difficulty at once, is manifest from this circumstance; that while yet the remnants of the calamity are left, while the sentence of the Emperor is yet doubtful, and those who conducted the affairs of the city are all in prison, many of our fellow inhabitants, through their inordinate desire of bathing, run to the river, there making endless merriment, behaving wantonly, leaping, dancing, and dragging women after them. What pardon can such be worthy of? What kind of excuse can they offer? Or rather, what kind of punishment and vengeance do they not deserve? The head of the city is in the public prison; our members are in exile; the sentence concerning them is doubtful; and do you, I ask, dance, sport, and laugh? "*Why, we could not endure,*" says some one, "*to remain without the bath?*" O shameless disposition, sordid and perverted! How many months, I ask, how many years, have past? You have not been as yet shut out from the bath for twenty days; and you are as much distressed and discontented, as if you had continued without washing for a whole year! Tell me, was this your state, when thou were expecting an attack from the military, when thou were daily anticipating bring put to death, when you fled to the deserts, and wast hurrying to the mountain tops? If any one had then proposed to you to remain "*a year*" without the bath, so that you might be rescued from the impending distress, would you not readily have accepted the proposal, and submitted to it? When, therefore, it were becoming that you should give thanks to God, Who has freed you from all these things without any loss, do

you again grow wanton and contemptuous; and when the fear has passed away, turn back afresh to a worse state of negligence? Have these dire events really touched you, and yet are you so desirous of the baths? Why, if the bath had been permitted, would not the calamity of those who are yet in confinement have been sufficient to persuade those who are not in the same grievous condition to be forgetful of every luxury? Life itself is at stake, and do you remember the baths, and desire to be luxurious? Do you despise the danger because you have now escaped it? Take heed lest you entangle yourself in the necessity of a greater punishment, and call back in larger measure the wrath which is removed, and experience the very thing which Christ declared concerning the devils. For He says, that *"when the unclean spirit is gone out, and afterwards finds the house void and swept, he takes seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and enters into the soul, and the last state of that man is worse than the first."* Therefore let us also fear, lest now we are liberated from our former evils, we afterwards by our listlessness draw upon us those which are greater! I know that you yourselves are free from this folly; but you should restrain, punish, and sober those who walk disorderly, that you may always rejoice even as Paul commanded, that both for our own good works, and for our forethought for others, we may enjoy both here and in the life to come an abundant recompense; through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom, and with Whom, to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, honour, and adoration, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 19 on the Statues

On the Sunday called "Episozomenes," to those who had come to Antioch from the country— also on the subject of avoiding oaths.

1. You have revelled during the last few days in the Holy Martyrs! You have taken your fill of the spiritual feast! You have all exulted with honest exultation! You have beheld their ribs laid bare, and their loins lacerated; the blood flowing forth all around; ten thousand forms of torture! You have seen human nature exhibiting that which is above nature, and crowns woven with blood! You have danced a goodly dance throughout the whole city; this, your noble captain leading you on; but sickness compelled me to remain at home, although against my will. But if I did not take a part in the festival, I partook of the pleasure of it. If I could not have the enjoyment of your public assembly, yet did I share in your gladness. For such is the power of love, that it makes those who are not actually in the enjoyment to rejoice equally with those who are; persuading them to think the good things of their neighbour common to themselves. Therefore even while I sat at home, I was rejoicing with you; and now while I am not yet entirely freed from my sickness, I have risen up, and run to meet you, that I may see your much desired faces, and take a part in the present festival.

2. For I think the present day to be a very great festival indeed on account of our brethren, who by their presence beautify our city, and adorn the Church; a people foreign to us in language, but in harmony with us concerning the faith, a people passing their time in tranquillity, and leading an honest and sober life. For among these men there are no spectacles of iniquity— no horse racings, nor harlots, nor any of that riot which pertains to a city, but every kind of licentiousness is banished, and great sobriety

flourishes every where. And the reason is, that their life is a laborious one; and they have, in the culture of the soil, a school of virtue and sobriety, and follow that art which God introduced before all others into our life. For before the sin of Adam, when he enjoyed much freedom, a certain tillage of the ground was enjoined upon him; not indeed a laborious or a troublesome one, but one which afforded him much good discipline, for he was appointed, it is said, *"to till the garden, and to keep it."* Each of these men you may see at one time employed in yoking the labouring oxen, and guiding the plough, and cutting the deep furrow; and at another ascending the sacred pulpit, and cultivating the souls of those under their authority; at one time cutting away the thorns from the soil with a bill-hook, at another purging out the sins of the soul by the Word. For they are not ashamed of work like the inhabitants of our city, but they are ashamed of idleness, knowing that this has taught every kind of wickedness; and that to those who love it, it has proved a teacher of iniquity from the beginning.

3. These are our philosophers, and theirs the best philosophy, exhibiting their virtue not by their outward appearance, but by their mind. The pagan philosophers are in character no wise better than those who are engaged on the stage, and in the sports of actors; and they have nothing to show beyond the threadbare cloak, the beard, and the long robe! But these, quite on the contrary, bidding farewell to staff and beard, and the other accoutrements, have their souls adorned with the doctrines of the true philosophy, and not only with the doctrines, but also with the real practice. And were you to question any one of these, who live a rustic life at the spade and plough, as to the dogmas respecting which the pagan philosophers have discoursed an infinite deal, and have expended a multitude of words, without being able to say any thing sound; one of these would give you an accurate reply from his store of wisdom. And not only is

this to be wondered at, but that they confirm the credibility of these doctrines by their actions. For of the fact that we have an immortal soul, and that we shall hereafter render an account of what we have done here, and stand before a fearful Tribunal, their minds are at once thoroughly persuaded, and they have also regulated their whole course of life by such hopes as these; and have become superior to all worldly show, instructed as they have been by the sacred Scriptures, that "*all is vanity, yea, vanity of vanities,*" [Ecclesiastes 1:2] and they do not greedily long for any of those things which seem to be so splendid.

4. These too know how to philosophize concerning God, even as God has determined; and if, taking one of them, you were now to bring forward some pagan philosopher—or rather, now you could not find one! — But if you were to take one of these, and then open the books of their ancient philosophers, and go through them, and institute an enquiry by way of parallel as to what these now answer, and the others in their day philosophically advanced; you would see how much wisdom belonged to the former, and how much folly to the latter. For while some of those would aver, that the things existing were destitute of a providence, and that the creation had not its origin from God; that virtue was not sufficient for itself, but stood in need of wealth, and nobility, and external splendour, and other things still more ridiculous; and while these, on the other hand, would discourse wisely respecting Providence, respecting the future Tribunals of judgment, respecting the creative power of God, bringing forth all things out of nothing, as well as respecting all other points, although at the same time they were entirely destitute of worldly schooling; who could but learn from hence the power of Christ, which has proved these unlearned and simple persons to be as much wiser than those, who make so much boast of their wisdom, as men of discretion are seen to be in comparison of little

children? For what harm can result to them from their simplicity in regard to learning, when their thoughts are full of much wisdom? And what advantage have those philosophers from this learning, when the understanding is devoid of right thoughts? It were just as if one should have a sword that had its hilt of silver, while the blade was weaker than the vilest lead. For truly these philosophers have their tongue decked out with words and names, but their understanding is full of mere weakness and good for nothing. Not so with these philosophers, but quite the reverse. Their understanding is full of spiritual wisdom and their mode of life is a transcript of their doctrines. Amongst these there are no luxurious women; there are no ornaments of dress, nor colours, nor paints; but all such corruption of manners is discountenanced. Hence the population under their charge are the more readily trained to sobriety, and the law which Paul gave, when he directed that food and covering should be had, and nothing more be sought after, they most rigidly observe. [1 Timothy 6:8] Amongst them, there are no perfumed ointments to fascinate the senses; but the earth bringing forth herbs, prepares for them a varied fragrance of flowers, above all the skill of perfumers. For this reason, their bodies as well as souls enjoy a sound state of health, inasmuch as they have banished all luxury of diet, and driven off all the evil floods of drunkenness; and they eat just as much as suffices for subsistence. Let us then not despise them because of their outward appearance, but let us admire their mind. For of what advantage is the external habit, when the soul is more wretchedly clad than any beggar! The man ought to be praised and admired, not for dress, nay more, not for his bodily form, but for his soul. Lay bare the soul of these men, and you will see its beauty and the wealth it possesses, in their words, in their doctrines, and in the whole system of their manners!

5. Let the Gentiles then be ashamed, let them hide their heads, and slink away on account of their philosophers, and their wisdom, wretched as it is beyond all folly! For the philosophers that have been among them in their lifetime have hardly been able to teach their doctrines to a very few, who can easily be numbered; and when any trifling peril overtook them, they lost even these. But the disciples of Christ, the fishermen, the publicans, and the tent-makers, in a few years brought over the whole world to the truth; and when from that time, ten thousand perils have been constantly arising, the preaching of the Gospel was so far from being put down, that it still flourishes and increases; and they taught simple people, tillers of the ground, and occupied with cattle, to be lovers of wisdom. Such are the persons, who beside all the rest having deeply rooted in them that love which is the source of all good things, [Ephesians 3:17] have hastened to us, undertaking so long a journey, that they might come and embrace their fellow-members.

6. Come then, and in return for these favours, (I speak of their love and kind feeling), let us give them a provision, and so send them home; and let us again raise the question concerning oaths; that from the minds of all we may pluck up by the roots this evil custom. But first, I desire to put you a little in mind today of the things we spoke of lately.

When the Jews, having been released from Persia, and set free from that tyranny, were returned back to their own country, *"I saw,"* says one, *"a flying sickle, twenty cubits in length, and ten cubits broad."* [Zechariah 5:1-2] They heard also the Prophet giving them this instruction, *"This is the curse, that goes forth over the face of the whole land, and enters into the house of him that swears falsely; and it shall rest in the midst thereof, and throw down the timber and all the stones."* When we had read this passage, we also enquired then why it was, that it should destroy not the swearer

only, but also his house, and we stated this to be the reason; that God will have the punishments of the most grievous sins to remain continually visible; that all may afterwards learn prudence. Inasmuch then as it was necessary that the perjurer when dead should be buried, and committed to the bosom of the earth; in order that his wickedness might not be buried along with him, his house was made a heap, so that all who passed by, beholding it, and learning the reason of the overthrow, might avoid imitating the sin.

7. This also happened at Sodom. For when they burned in their lust one towards another, then too the very earth itself was burned up, being kindled by the fire from above. For He designed, that the vengeance of this sin should permanently remain.

And observe the mercy of God! Those who had sinned, He caused not to continue burning to the present day, but when they had been for once in flames, He buried them; and burning up the face of the ground, He placed it visibly before all who after should desire to look at these things; and now the sight of the land, through all the generations since, has given an admonition beyond all powers of speech, crying out as it were, and saying, *"Dare not to do the deeds of Sodom, lest ye suffer the lot of Sodom!"* For precept commonly makes not so deep an impression upon the mind as a fearful spectacle does, which bears upon it the vestiges of calamity though all time. And persons that have visited these places bear witness, who often, when they hear the Scripture discoursing of these things, are not much terrified; but when they have gone and stood upon the site, and see the whole surface of it disfigured, and have witnessed the effects of the fire, with soil no where visible, but every thing dust and ashes, they come away astonished with the sight, and taking with them a strong lesson of chastity. For truly, the very nature of the punishment was a pattern of the nature of

the sin! Even as they devised a barren intercourse, not having for its end the procreation of children, so did God bring on them such a punishment, as made the womb of the land ever barren, and destitute of all fruits! For this reason also He threatened to destroy the dwellings of the swearers, in order that by their punishments, they may make others to be more self-controlled.

8. But I am ready to show today, not the destruction of one, two, or three houses in consequence of oaths, but that of a whole city and of a people beloved of God; of a nation that had always enjoyed much of the divine care; and of a race that had escaped many dangers. For Jerusalem herself, the city of God, which had the holy ark, and all that divine service—where there were once prophets, and the grace of the Spirit, and the ark; and the tables of the covenant, and the golden pot—where angels were frequent visitors—this city, I say, when a multitude of wars took place, and many foreign nations made attacks upon it, as if girt by a wall of adamant, ever laughed them all to scorn, and while the land was utterly destroyed, sustained no injury! And not only is this to be wondered at, but that frequently in driving out its enemies, it inflicted upon them a heavy blow, and enjoyed so much of the providential care of God, that God Himself said, *"I found Israel as a bunch of grapes in the desert; and I beheld your fathers as the earliest fruit on the fig tree."* [Hosea 9:10] And again, of the city itself: *"As olive berries on the extremity of the highest bough, and they shall say, Do them no harm."* Nevertheless, the city beloved of God; that had escaped so many perils; that had been favoured with pardon, amidst the multitude of its sins; that alone had been able to avoid captivity, while all the rest were carried away, not once or twice, but very often; was ruined solely by an oath. But how, I proceed to state.

9. One of their kings was Zedekiah. This Zedekiah took an oath to Nebuchadnezzar, king of the barbarians, that he would remain in alliance

with him. Afterwards he revolted, and went over to the king of Egypt, disdaining the obligation of his oath, and suffered the things of which you shall hear presently. But first, it is necessary to mention the parable of the prophet, in which he enigmatically represented all these matters: *"The word of the Lord,"* says he, *"came to me, saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable, and say, Thus says the Lord God: A great eagle, with great wings, and long extended, full of claws."* [Ezekiel 17:2-3] Here he calls the king of the Babylonians an eagle, and speaks of him as being *"great, and long-winged;"* and he calls him long-extended and *"full of claws,"* on account of the multitude of his army, and the greatness of his power, and the swiftness of his invasion. For just as the wings and claws of the eagle are his armour, so are horses and soldiers to kings. This eagle, he goes on to say, *"has the leading to enter into Lebanon."* What is meant by the *"leading?"* Counsel— design. And Judæa is called Lebanon, because of its situation near that mountain. Afterwards, intending to speak of the oaths and treaties, *"He took,"* says he, *"of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field, that it might take root by great waters. He placed it to be looked upon; and it grew, and became a weak vine, and of small stature, and it stretched out its branches towards him, and its roots were under him."* [Ezekiel 17:5-6] Here he calls the city of Jerusalem a vine; but in saying that it stretched out its branches towards the eagle, and that its roots were under him, he refers to the treaties and alliances made with him; and that it cast itself upon him. Next, purposing to declare the iniquity of this, he says, *"And there was another great eagle,"* (speaking of the Egyptian king), *"with great wings, and having many claws; and the vine did bend itself toward him, and its tendrils toward him, and shot out its branches, that it might be watered. Therefore, I said, Thus says the Lord God: Shall it prosper?"* [Ezekiel 17:7-8] That is to say, *"after having broken the oath, and*

the treaties, shall it be able to remain, or to be safe, or to avoid falling?"

Presently, for the purpose of showing that this is not to happen, but that it is certainly to be destroyed on account of the oath, he discourses concerning its punishment, and alleges the cause. *"For its tender roots and its fruits shall become corrupt, and all which springs therefrom shall be withered."*

[Ezekiel 17:9] And for the purpose of showing that it will not be destroyed by human strength, but because it has made God its enemy by means of these oaths, he subjoins, *"Not by a mighty arm, nor by much people, to pluck it up by its roots."* Such indeed is the parable, but the prophet again

explains it, when he says, *"Behold, the king of Babylon comes against Jerusalem."* [Ezekiel 17:12] And then, after saying some other things

between, he mentions the oaths and the treaties. *"For"* says he, *"he shall make a covenant with him;"* [Ezekiel 17:14] and presently, speaking of the departure from it, he goes on to say, *"And he will depart from him, by sending messengers into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people."*

And then he proceeds to show that it is on account of the oath that all this destruction is to take place. *"Surely in the place where the king dwells that made him king, he who has despised My curse, and has transgressed My covenant, in the midst of Babylon he shall die; and not by great power nor by multitude, because he despised the oath in transgressing this My covenant; I will surely recompense upon his own head this My oath which he has dishonoured, and My covenant which he has broken; and I will spread My net upon him."* [Ezekiel 17:16-20] Do you see, that not

once, or twice, but repeatedly, it is said that because of the oath he was to suffer all these things. For God is inexorable when oaths are treated contemptuously. Nor merely from the punishment which was brought upon the city by the oath, but also from the delay, and the postponement, may it be seen how much God is concerned for the inviolability of oaths. *"For it*

came to pass," we are told, *"in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built a wall against it round about, and the city was besieged until the eleventh year of king Zedekiah, and the ninth day of the month, and there was no bread for the people to eat, and the city was broken up."* [2 Kings 25:1-4] He might indeed, at once from the first day, have delivered them up, and have given them into the hands of their enemies; but He permitted that they should first be wasted for the space of three years, and experience a most distressing siege; to the end that during this interval, being humbled by the terror of the forces without, or the famine that oppressed the city within, they might compel the king, however unwillingly, to submit to the barbarian; and some alleviation might be obtained for the sin committed. And to prove that this is true, and no conjecture of my own, hear what He says to him by the prophet: *"If you shall go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then your soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and you shall live, and your house. But if you will not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape out of their hand. And the king said, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hands and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver you. Obey, I beseech you, the word of the Lord, which I speak unto you; so shall it be better for you, and your soul shall live. But if you refuse to go forth, this is the word that the Lord has showed me. All the women that are left in the king of Judah's house, shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes; and those shall say, The men who are at peace with you have deceived you, and have prevailed over you; they shall prevail when your feet slip; they are turned away from you, and they shall*

bring out all your wives, and your children to the Chaldeans, and you shall not escape out of their hand, for you shall be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city shall be burned with fire." [Jeremiah 38:17-23]

10. But when He did not prevail with him by this address, but he remained in his sin and transgression, after three years, God delivered up the city, displaying at once His own clemency and the ingratitude of that king. And entering in with the utmost ease, they *"burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and the houses of Jerusalem, and every great house, the captain of the guard burnt, and overthrew the wall of Jerusalem;"* and everywhere there was the fire of the barbarian, the oath being the conductor of the conflagration, and carrying about the flame in all directions. *"And the captain of the guard carried away the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon. [Jeremiah 39:9] And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord the Chaldeans broke up, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces. And the pots, and the flesh-hooks, and the bowls, and the censers, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the firepans, and all the golden and silver bowls they took away. Moreover, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took away the two pillars, and the bases, and the sea which Solomon had made in the house of the Lord. And they took away Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door; and out of the city one eunuch that was set over the men of war; and five men that were in the king's presence; and Shaphan the chief captain, and the principal scribe, and threescore men. And he took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon, and the king smote them, and slew them."* [2 Kings 25:13-20]

11. Be mindful therefore, I pray, now of the *"flying sickle"* that *"rests in the swearer's house;"* and *"destroys the walls and the timber and the stones."* Be mindful, I pray, how this oath entered into the city, and overturned houses, and temple, and walls, and splendid buildings, and made the city an heap; and that neither the Holy of Holies, nor the sacred vessels, nor any thing else could ward off that punishment and vengeance, for that the oath had been transgressed! The city, indeed, was thus miserably destroyed. But the king endured what was still more wretched and deplorable. [2 Kings 25:4-7] And as the flying sickle overthrew the buildings, so did it also cut him down in his flight. For *"the king,"* it says, *"went forth by night, by way of the gate, and the Chaldeans encompassed the city, and the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king and overtook him, and they took the king, and brought him to the king of Babylon, and the king of Babylon gave judgment upon Zedekiah, and slew his sons before his face, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon."* What is meant by the expression, *"he spoke judgment with him?"* He demanded of him an account of his conduct, he pleaded against him; and first he slew his two sons, that he might be a spectator of the calamity of his house, and might behold that deplorable tragedy; and then he put out his own eyes. For what reason, I ask again, did this occur? In order that he might go as a teacher to the barbarians, and too the Jews who dwelt among them; and that they who had eyes might discern by him who was bereft of sight, how great an evil is an oath! Nor only these; but all who dwelt by the way, beholding the man fettered and blinded, might learn by his calamity the greatness of his sin. Therefore one of the prophets declares, *"He shall not see Babylon."* [Ezekiel 12:13] And another, *"He shall be carried away to Babylon."* [Jeremiah 32:5] And the prophecy seems, indeed, to be contradictory. But it is not so; for both of

these are true. For he saw not Babylon, though he was carried away to Babylon. How then did he not see Babylon? Because it was in Judæa he had his eyes put out; for where the oath had been set at nought, there also was it vindicated, and he himself subjected to punishment. And how was he carried away to Babylon? In a state of captivity. For since the punishment was twofold, deprivation of sight and captivity, the prophets took them severally. The one says, "*He shall not see Babylon,*" speaking of the loss of his eyes; the other says, "*He shall be carried away to Babylon,*" signifying his captivity.

12. Knowing these things, then, brethren, and gathering up what has been now advanced, as well as what has been said before; let us at last desist from this evil custom, yea, I pray and beseech you all! For if in the old dispensation, when the Jews had not the strictest moral wisdom required of them, but much condescension was extended to them, such wrath was the effect of one oath; such capture and captivity; what punishment is it likely that those who swear should now be subjected to, after an express law forbidding the practice, and so large an addition of precepts. Is it, indeed, all that is required, that we come to the assembly, and hear what is spoken? Why truly it is a reason for greater condemnation, and for more inevitable punishment, that we are continually hearing, and yet do not what is bidden! What excuse shall we have, or what pardon, if assembling here from earliest youth to latest old age, and enjoying the advantage of so much instruction, we remain just like them, and do not take pains to correct a single defect. Let no one henceforth allege custom. For this is the very thing at which I am indignant and provoked, that we are not able to get the better of custom. And, pray, if we do not get the better of custom, how can we get the better of concupiscence, which has its root even in the principles of our nature; for it is natural to feel desire; but to desire wickedly, comes after of

choice. But this practice of swearing takes not even its first principle from nature, but from mere negligence.

13. And that you may learn that not from the difficulty of the thing, but through our inattention, this sin has advanced to such a pitch, let us call to mind how many things far more difficult than these, men accomplish; and that too without expecting any recompense therefrom. Let us think what services the Devil imposes; how laborious, how troublesome they are; and yet, the difficulty has not become an obstacle to these services. For what can be more difficult, I ask, than when any young person delivering himself up to those, who undertake to make his limbs supple and pliant, uses his most strenuous exertion to bend his whole body into the exact shape of a wheel, and to turn over upon the pavement; his powers being tasked at the same time through the eyes, and through the movement of the hands, as well as other convolutions for the purpose of being transformed into the likeness of woman-kind. Yet neither the difficulty of these feats, nor the degradation arising from them, are thought of. And again, those who are dragged upon the dancing-stage, and use the members of the body as though they were wings, who that beholds them can help being struck with wonder? So too they who toss knives aloft in the air one after another, and catch them all by the handle, whom might they not put to shame of those who refuse to undergo any labour for the sake of virtue? And what can any one say of those men, who balancing a pole on the forehead, keep it just as steady as a tree rooted in the ground? And this is not the only marvellous part of the affair but that they set little children to wrestle with one another on the top of the tree; and neither the hands, nor any other part of the body assisting, the forehead alone sustains the pole unshaken, and with more steadiness than any kind of fastening. Again: another walks on the slenderest rope, with the same fearlessness as men do when they run over

level plains. Nevertheless these things, which even in thought seem impracticable, have become possible by art. What like this have we, I ask, to allege concerning oaths? What kind of difficulty? What toil? What art? What danger? There is only needed on our part a little earnestness, and the whole of our task will be quickly performed.

14. And do not tell me, *"I have accomplished the greater part of it;"* but if you have not accomplished the whole, consider that you have not as yet done any thing; for this little, if neglected, is destruction to all the rest. Often indeed when men have built a house, and put on the roof, they have destroyed the whole fabric, by not making any concern of a single tile that has been shaken off from it. And one may see the same thing occur with respect to garments; for there too if a small hole is made, and not repaired, a large rent is the consequence. And this also is frequently the case in regard to floods; for these, if they find but a small entrance, let in the whole torrent. Thou also, then, even if you have fortified yourself all around, and but a small part be left still unfortified, yet block up this also against the devil, that you may be made strong on all sides! You have seen the sickle! You have seen the head of John! You have heard the history pertaining to Saul! You have heard the manner of the Jewish captivity! And beside all these, you have heard the sentence of Christ declaring, that not only to commit perjury, but to swear in any way, is a diabolical thing, and the whole a device of the evil one. You have heard that every where perjuries follow oaths. Putting all these things then together, write them upon your understanding. Do you not see how women and little children suspend Gospels from their necks as a powerful amulet, and carry them about in all places wherever they go. Thus do thou write the commands of the Gospel and its laws upon your mind. Here there is no need of gold or property, or of buying a book; but of the will only, and the affections of the soul

awakened, and the Gospel will be your surer guardian, carrying it as you will then do, not outside, but treasured up within; yea, in the soul's secret chambers. When you rise up then from your bed, and when you go out of your house, repeat this law: *"I say unto you, Swear not at all."*

[Matthew 5:34] And the saying will be to you a discipline; for there is no need of much labour, but only of a moderate degree of attention. And that this is true, may thus be proved. Call your son, and frighten him, and threaten to lay a few stripes upon him, if he does not duly observe this law; and you will see, how he will immediately abstain from this custom. Is it not therefore truly absurd, that little children, out of the fear we inspire, should perform this commandment, and that we should not fear God as our sons fear us?

15. What then I said before this, I now again repeat. Let us lay down a law for ourselves in this matter; not to meddle either with public or private affairs until we have fulfilled this law; and then surely under the pressure of this obligation we shall easily conquer, and we shall at once adorn ourselves, and decorate our city. For consider what a thing it would be to have it said every where throughout the world, *"A practice becoming Christians is established at Antioch, and you will hear no one giving utterance to an oath, even though the greatest necessity is laid upon him!"* This is what the neighbouring cities will certainly hear; nay, not the neighbouring cities only, but even to the ends of the earth will the report be conveyed. For it is indeed probable that both the merchants who mix with you, and others who arrive from this place, will report all these matters. When, therefore, many persons in the way of encomium mention the harbours of other cities, or the markets, or the abundance of wares, enable those who come from hence to say, that there is that at Antioch, which is to be seen in no other city; for that the men who dwell there would sooner

have their tongues cut out, than suffer an oath to proceed from their mouths! This will be your ornament and defence, and not only so, but it will bring an abundant reward. For others also will certainly emulate, and imitate you. But if, when a person has gained but one or two, [James 5:20] he shall receive so great a reward from God; what recompense shall you not receive when you are the instructors of the whole world. It is your duty then to bestir yourselves, to be watchful, and to be sober; knowing that not only from our own personal good works, but from those we have also wrought in others, shall we receive the best recompense, and enjoy much favour with God, which may He grant us all continually to enjoy, and hereafter to obtain the kingdom of heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord; to Whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory and power both now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 20 on the Statues

That the fast of Lent is not sufficient to make us competent to partake of the Communion, but that holiness is the first thing required. How it is possible not to entertain resentment, and that God takes much account of this law; and that the entertaining of resentment punishes those who are guilty of it even before they reach the place of torment.— Also concerning abstinence from oaths, and those who have not succeeded in abstaining from swearing.

1. At length the season is verging towards the end of the Fast, and therefore we ought the more earnestly to devote ourselves to holiness. For as in the case of those who run a race, all their circuits will be of no avail if they miss the prize; so neither will any advantage result from these manifold labours and toils with regard to the fast, if we are not able to enjoy the sacred Table with a good conscience. For this end are fasting and Lent appointed, and so many days of solemn assemblies, auditories, prayers, and teachings, in order that by this earnestness being cleansed in every possible way from the sins which we had contracted during the whole year, we may with spiritual boldness religiously partake of that unbloody Sacrifice; so that should this not be the result, we shall have sustained so much labour entirely in vain, and without any profit. Let every one, therefore, consider with himself what defect he has corrected, what good work he has attained to; what sin he has cast off, what stain he has purged away; in what respect he has become better. And should he discover that in this good traffic he has made any gain by the fast, and be conscious in himself of much care taken of his wounds, let him draw near! But if he has remained negligent, having nothing to show but mere fasting, and has done nothing which is right

besides, let him remain outside; and then let him enter, when he has purged out all these offenses. Let no one rest on the fast merely; while continuing unreformed in evil practices. For it is probable, that he who omits fasting may obtain pardon, having infirmity of body to plead; but it is impossible that he can have an excuse who has not amended his faults. You have not fasted, it may be, on account of bodily weakness. Tell me for what reason you are not reconciled to your enemies? Have you, indeed, here to allege bodily infirmity? Again; if you retain envy and hatred, what apology have you then I ask? For no one in offenses of this kind is able to take refuge in the plea of bodily infirmity. And this was a work of Christ's love toward man, viz. that the chief of the precepts, and those which maintain our life, should not be impaired in any degree through the weakness of the body.

2. But since we need to practise all the divine laws alike, and more especially that which bids us consider no man as an enemy, nor retain resentment long, but immediately to be reconciled; suffer us today to discourse to you concerning this commandment. For as it is not to be imagined that the fornicator and the blasphemer can partake of the sacred Table, so it is impossible that he who has an enemy, and bears malice, can enjoy the holy Communion. And this with good reason. For a man when he has committed fornication, or adultery, at the same time that he has accomplished his lust, has also completed the sin; and should he be willing by watchful living to recover from that fall, he may afterwards, by manifesting great penitence, obtain some relief. But he who is resentful works the same iniquity every day, and never brings it to an end. In the former case the deed is over, and the sin completed; but here the sin is perpetrated every day. What excuse can we then have, I ask, for delivering ourselves willingly to such an evil monster? How can you ask your Lord to

be mild and merciful to you, when you have been so hard and unforgiving to your fellow-servant?

3. But your fellow-servant has treated you with contempt perhaps? Yes! And you have treated God with contempt oftentimes. And what comparison is there between a fellow-servant and the Lord? As to the former, when he was perchance in some way injured, he insulted you, and thou were exasperated. But you insult the Lord, when you are neither treated with injustice nor ill-will by Him, but receiving blessing of Him day by day. Consider, then, that if God chose to search out rigourously what is done against Him, we should not live a single day. For the prophet says, *"If You will be extreme to mark iniquity, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand?"* And, to pass by all those other things, of which the conscience of every sinner is aware, and of which he has no human witness, but God only; were we to be called to account for those which are open and admitted, what allowance could we expect for such sins? What if He were to scrutinize our listlessness and negligence in our prayers; and how, while standing before God and supplicating Him, we do not exhibit even so much fear and reverence for Him as servants do toward their masters, as soldiers do toward their officers, as friends do toward friends? When you discourse with a friend, you give heed to what you are doing, but when waiting on God on account of your sins, and asking pardon for so many offenses, and thinking that you shall obtain forgiveness, you are often listless; and while your knees are lying on the ground, you suffer your mind to wander every where, in the market, or in the house, babbling the while with your mouth vainly and to no purpose! And this we experience, not once or twice, but frequently! Did God then choose to scrutinize this alone, do you think that we could obtain pardon, or be able to find any excuse? Truly, I think not!

4. But what if the evil-speakings which we unkindly utter every day one against another, were brought forward against us; as well as the rash judgments with which we condemn our neighbour; and that for no reason, but because we are fond of blaming, and given to find fault; what, I say, should we be able to allege in defence? Again, should He scrutinize those roving glances of ours, and those evil desires which we carry in the mind, so frequently admitting disgraceful and impure thoughts from the unlicensed wandering of the eyes, what punishment must we not sustain? And should He demand a reason for our revilings, (for He says, "*Whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire,*") how could we, forsooth, open our mouths, or move our lips at all, or say any thing great or small in reply? Moreover, as to the vainglorious feelings we allow in our prayers, our fastings, our almsgiving, were we to scrutinize, them—I do not say, were God, but were we ourselves, who are the sinners, to do this—should we be able to lift up our eyes toward heaven? Then, as to the deceits which we devise one against another—praising a brother now, while he is present, and discoursing as with a friend; and when he is absent, reviling him; can we endure the punishments of all these? Then what of the oaths? Or what of the lying? What of the perjuries? What of the unjust anger, and of the envy with which we too often regard men when honoured, not enemies only, but also friends? Furthermore, what of the fact, that we are pleased when others suffer evil, and account the misfortunes of others a consolation for our own distress?

5. But suppose the penalty were exacted for our listlessness in our solemn assemblies what would our condition be? For this ye cannot but know, that often while God Himself is addressing us all by His prophet, we are holding frequent and long conversations with those near us, about matters which in no way concern us. Passing by, then, all the rest, should

He choose to exact of us the penalty due for this sin only, what hope of salvation will there be? For do not suppose that this offense is a small one, but if you would be aware of its magnitude, examine how this very thing is regarded among men, and then you will perceive the enormity of the sin. Just venture, when some magistrate is talking to you, or rather some friend who is of somewhat superior dignity, to turn from him, and enter into conversation with your servant; and you will then perceive, what you venture on in dealing thus with God! For if he be any one of the more distinguished classes, he will even demand reparation of you for such an insult. Yet God, while He is treated with as great, and still greater contempt than this, every day; and that not by one, or two, or three persons, but by almost all of us; is still forbearing and longsuffering, not in regard to this alone, but to other things which are far more grievous. For these things are what must be admitted, and what are obvious to all, and by almost all men they are daringly practised. But there are yet others, which the conscience of those who commit them is privy to. Surely, if we were to think of all this; if we were to reason with ourselves, supposing even that we were the cruelest and harshest of men, yet upon taking a survey of the multitude of our sins, we should for very fear and agony be unable to remember the injury done by others towards ourselves. Bear in mind the river of fire; the envenomed worm; the fearful Judgment, where all things shall be naked and open! Reflect, that what are now hidden things, are then to be brought to light! But should you pardon your neighbour all these sins which till then await their disclosure are done away with here; and when you shall depart this life, you will not drag after you any of that chain of transgressions; so that you receive greater things than you give. For many such transgressions, indeed, we have often committed, which no other person knows; and when we think, that on That Day these our sins shall lie exposed to the eyes of all,

upon the public theatre of the universe, we are in pain beyond any punishment, being choked and strangled by our conscience. Yet this shame, great as it is; these sins, these punishments, great as they are; there is a possibility of purging away through forgiveness exercised toward our neighbour.

6. For indeed there is nothing equal to this virtue. Would you learn the power of this virtue? *"Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me,"* says God, *"my soul would not regard them."* [Jeremiah 15:1] Nevertheless, those whom Moses and Samuel were not able to snatch away from God's wrath, this precept when observed was able to snatch away. Hence it is, that He continually exhorts those to whom He had spoken these things, saying, *"Let none of you revengefully imagine [Jeremiah 15:1] evil against his brother in your heart,"* and *"let none of you think of his neighbour's malice."* It is not said merely, forego wrath; but retain it not in your mind; think not of it; part with all your resentment; do away the sore. For you suppose that you are paying him back the injury; but you are first tormenting yourself, and setting up your rage as an executioner within you in every part, and tearing up your own bowels. For what can be more wretched than a man perpetually angry? And just as maniacs, who never enjoy tranquility, so also he who is resentful, and retains an enemy, will never have the enjoyment of any peace; incessantly raging, as he does, and daily increasing the tempest of his thoughts calling to mind his words and acts, and detesting the very name of him who has aggrieved him. Do you but mention his enemy, he becomes furious at once, and sustains much inward anguish; and should he chance to get only a bare sight of him, he fears and trembles, as if encountering the worst evils. Yea, if he perceives any of his relations, if but his garment, or his dwelling, or street, he is tormented by the sight of them. For as in the case of those who are beloved, their faces, their garments, their

sandals, their houses, or streets, excite us, the instant we behold them; so also should we observe a servant, or friend, or house, or street, or any thing else belonging to those we hate and hold our enemies, we are stung by all these things; and the strokes we endure from the sight of each one of them are frequent and continual.

7. What is the need then of sustaining such a siege, such torment and such punishment? For if hell did not threaten the resentful; yet for the very torment resulting from the thing itself we ought to forgive the offenses of those who have aggrieved us. But when deathless punishments remain behind, what can be more senseless than the man, who both here and there brings punishment upon himself, while he thinks to be revenged upon his enemy! For suppose that we see him still prosperous, then we are ready to die of chagrin; but if in an adverse condition, we are in fear, lest some propitious turn of events should take place. But for both of these there is stored up for us an inevitable punishment. For, *"Rejoice not,"* he says, *"when your enemy stumbles."* [Proverbs 24:17] And tell me not of the greatness of the injuries received; for it is not this which makes your wrath to be retained; but this, that you are unmindful of your own offenses; that you have not before your eyes either hell or the fear of God! To convince you that this is true, I will endeavour to make it manifest from the events which have happened in this city. For when the persons impeached of those flagrant crimes were dragged to the tribunal of justice—when the fire was kindled within, and the executioners stood around, and were lacerating their ribs, if any one standing beside them had proclaimed, *"If you have any enemies, dismiss your resentment, and we shall be able to set you free from this punishment;"*—would they not have kissed their very feet? And why do I say their feet? If one had bidden them take them for their masters, they would not then have refused. But if punishment that is human, and has its

bounds, would have triumphed over all anger, much more would the punishment to come, if it had continual possession of our thoughts, expel from the soul not only resentment, but every evil imagination? For what is easier, I ask, than to get rid of resentment against the injurer? Is there any long journey to be undertaken? Is there any expenditure of money? Is the aid of others to be invoked? It suffices only to resolve, and the good deed at once reaches the goal. What punishment, then, must we not deserve, if on account of worldly affairs we stoop to slavish occupations; and show a servility unworthy of ourselves; and expend money; and enter into conversation with porters, that we may flatter impious men; and do and say all manner of things, so that we may perfectly attain the end we have in view; and yet cannot endure, for the sake of God's laws, to entreat a brother who has injured us, but consider it a disgrace to be the first to make advances. Are you ashamed, tell me, when you are going to be the first to make gain? Rather, on the contrary, you ought to be ashamed of persisting in this passion; and waiting until the person who has committed the injury comes to you to be reconciled; for this is a disgrace, and a reproach, and the greatest loss.

8. For he who comes the first it is, who reaps all the fruit; and when at the entreaty of another you lay aside your anger, the good work is to be accounted his; for you have discharged the law as doing a favour to him, not as obeying God. But if, when no one entreats, when not even the man who has done the injury approaches, or solicits you, you yourself dismissing from your thoughts all shame, and all delay, runnest forward freely to the injurer, and dost quell anger entirely, the good deed becomes wholly your own, and you shall receive all the reward. If I say, "*Practise fasting,*" your plea, perchance, is bodily weakness. If I say, "*Give to the poor,*" it is poverty, and bringing up children. If I say, "*Make time for the*

assemblies of the Church," it is worldly cares. If I say, *"Give heed to what is spoken, and consider the power of what is taught,"* it is want of learning. If I say, *"Correct another,"* you say, *"When counsel is given him, he takes no heed, for I have often spoken, and been scorned."* Frigid, as such pretences are, yet you have some pretences to allege. But suppose I say, *"Dismiss your anger,"* which of these will you then allege? For neither infirmity of body, nor poverty, nor lack of culture, nor want of leisure, nor any other thing of that kind have you to advance; but this sin is above all other the most inexcusable. How will you be able to stretch your hands toward heaven, or how to move your tongue, or to ask pardon? For although God be desirous to pardon your sins, you yourself dost not suffer Him, while you retain that of your fellow-servant! But suppose that he is cruel, fierce, and savage, and greedy of revenge and retaliation? Why for this reason you ought especially to grant forgiveness. Have you been wronged much, and robbed, and slandered, and injured in matters of the first importance; and do you wish to see your enemy punished? Yet even for this, it will be of use to you to pardon him. For suppose that you yourself takest vengeance, and prosecutest it, either by words, by deeds, or imprecation against the adversary; then God will not afterwards prosecute it too, inasmuch as you have taken your revenge; and not only will He not prosecute the matter for you, but will also demand a penalty of you as a despiser of Himself. For if this same thing takes place among mankind, viz. that if we beat the servant of another, the master is indignant, and calls the act an insult (for although we be treated injuriously, whether by slaves, or by freemen, it is fitting that we should await the legal decisions of magistrates or masters); if then even among men, to avenge ourselves would not be safe, how much more so when God is the avenger!

9. Hath your neighbour wronged and grieved you, and involved you in a thousand ills? Be it so, yet do not prosecute vengeance on your own part, lest you do desire to your Lord! Yield the matter to God, and He will dispose of it much better than you can desire. To you He has given charge simply to pray for the injurer; but how to deal with him, He has ordered you to leave to Himself. Never can you so avenge yourself, as He is prepared to avenge you, if you give place to Him alone, and dost not utter imprecations on him who has aggrieved you; but sufferest God to be sole arbiter of the sentence. For although we may pardon those who have aggrieved us; although we may be reconciled; although we may pray for them; yet God does not pardon, unless they themselves are converted, and become better. And He withholds pardon, with a view to their own advantage. For He praises you, and approves you for your spiritual wisdom; but visits him, in order that he may not grow worse by your wisdom. So that the common saying on this subject is not to the point. For many there are, who when I reproach them because after being exhorted to be reconciled to their enemies, they will not be persuaded to it, think fit to proffer this apology, which is nothing less than a cloak for their iniquity. *"I am unwilling,"* says one, *"to be reconciled, lest I should make the man worse, more ill-tempered, and more disposed to treat me contemptuously hereafter."* Besides this, they also make this plea: *"Many people,"* say they, *"think it is weakness in me to come first to a reconciliation, and to entreat my enemy."* All these things are foolish; for the Eye that slumbers not has seen your good intention; wherefore, it behooves you to make no account of the opinion of your fellow-servants, when you have gained the opinion of the Judge, Who is about to try your cause.

10. But if your concern be, lest your enemy should become worse by your clemency learn this—that it is not thus he is made worse; but far rather

if you are unreconciled. For although he were the vilest of men; although he might neither confess nor publish it openly; yet he will silently approve your Christian wisdom, and in his own conscience will respect your gentleness. Should he, however, persist in the same iniquity, while you are endeavouring to soften and conciliate, he will have to abide the heaviest punishment from God. And that you may know, that although we should pray for our enemies, and for those who have injured us, God does not pardon, if they are likely to become worse by our forbearance, I will mention to you an ancient piece of history. Miriam once spoke against Moses. What then did God do? He sent a leprosy upon her, and made her unclean; notwithstanding that in other respects she had been meek and modest. Afterwards, when Moses himself, the party injured, besought that the wrath might be removed, God consented not: but what did He say? *"If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed? Let her remain,"* says He, *"without the camp seven days."* [Numbers 12:14] But what He means is to this effect. *"If,"* says He, *"she had a father, and he had put her away from his presence, would she not have undergone the rebuke? I approve you indeed for your fraternal piety, and your meekness and clemency; but I know when is the due time to remit her punishment."* Do thou then show all humanity towards your brother; and do not pardon his offenses in the desire of a greater punishment for him, but of your tenderness and good will; yet understand this very plainly, that the more he shall slight you, while you are labouring to conciliate, so much the greater punishment will he draw down upon himself.

11. What do you say? Tell me, Is he the worse for your attentions? This is blame to him, but your praise. Your praise, that, while seeing him thus behave himself, thou did not desist from doing God's will in conciliating him. But to him it is blame, because he has not been made

better by your clemency. But *"it is far more desirable that others should be blamed because of us, than we because of them."* Make me not this frigid reply, of saying, *"I am afraid of its being thought that I made an overture to him out of fear; and that he will therefore despise me the more."* Such a reply indicates a childish and foolish mind, agitated about human approbation. Let him suppose, that it was out of fear you made the first advance to him; your reward will be so much the greater; since, being aware of this beforehand, you still consented to endure all for the fear of God. For he who is in chase of human approbation, and seeks reconciliation for that end, curtails the recompense of reward; but he who is quite sure of the fact, that many will vilify and ridicule him, and even then does not desist, from the attempt at reconciliation, will have a twofold, yea, a threefold crown. And this is indeed the man who does it for the sake of God. Nor tell me, that the man has wronged you in this, or in that particular; for if he has displayed, in his conduct towards you, every kind of iniquity that is in man, yet even so God has enjoined you to forgive him all!

12. Lo! I forewarn, and testify, and proclaim this with a voice that all may hear! *"Let no one who has an enemy draw near the sacred Table, or receive the Lord's Body! Let no one who draws near have an enemy! Have you an enemy? Draw not near! Will you draw near? Be reconciled, and then draw near, and touch the Holy Thing!"* Nor, indeed, is this my declaration. Rather it is that of the Lord Himself, Who was crucified for us. That He might reconcile you to the Father, He refused not to be sacrificed, and to shed His blood! And are you unwilling to utter a word, or to make the first advance, that you may be reconciled to your fellow-servant? Hear what the Lord says, concerning those who are in this disposition; *"If you bring your gift to the altar, and there rememberest that your brother has anything against you"*— He does not say, *"wait for him to come to you,"* nor

"speak with another as mediator," nor "entreat some other," but "do you yourself make the advance towards him." For the exhortation is, *"Go your way, first be reconciled to your brother."* [Matthew 5:23-24] O transcendent wonder! Does He Himself account it no dishonour, that the gift should be left unoffered, and do you think it a mark of disgrace to go first and be reconciled? And how can such a case, I ask, be deemed worthy of pardon? Were you to see a member of yours cut off, would you not use every exertion so that it might be reunited to the body? This do with regard to your brethren; when you see them cut off from your friendship, make all haste to recover them! Do not wait for them to make the first advance, but press onward, that you may be foremost to receive the prize.

13. We are commanded to have only one enemy, the devil. With him be thou never reconciled! But with a brother, never be at enmity in your heart. And if there should be any narrowness of soul, let it be only an ephemeral thing, and never last beyond a day's space. For, *"let not the sun,"* he says, *"go down upon your wrath."* [Ephesians 4:26] For if, before evening, you are reconciled, you will obtain some pardon from God. But if you remain longer at enmity, that enmity is no longer the result of your being suddenly carried away by anger and resentment, but of wickedness, and of a foul spirit, and one which makes a practice of malice! And this is not the only terrible thing, that you deprive yourself of pardon, but that the right course becomes still more difficult. For when one day is past, the shame becomes greater; and when the second has arrived, it is still further increased; and if it reach a third, and a fourth day, it will add a fifth. Thus the five become ten; the ten, twenty; the twenty an hundred; and thenceforth the wound will become incurable; for as time goes on, the breach becomes wider. But do thou, O man, give way to none of these irrational passions; nor be ashamed, nor blush, nor say within yourself, *"A short time ago we*

called each other such names, and said a vast number of things fit or not fit to be spoken; and shall I now hurry at once to a reconciliation? Who then will not blame my excessive easiness?" I answer, no one who has sense will blame your easiness; but when you remain implacable, then, all persons will deride you. Then you will give to the devil the advantage of this wide breach. For the enmity becomes then more difficult to be got rid of, not by mere lapse of time, but from the circumstances too that take place in the meanwhile. For as *"charity covers a multitude of sins,"* [1 Peter 4:8] so enmity gives a being to sins that do not exist, and all persons henceforth, are deemed worthy of credit who turn accusers; who rejoice in the ills of others, and blaze abroad what is disgraceful in their conduct.

14. Knowing all these things then, make the first advance to a brother; lay hold of him before he has entirely shrunk away from you; and should it be necessary, to run through all the city on the same day; should it be necessary to go beyond the walls, or to take a long journey; still leaving all other things that may be in hand, attend only to this one work of reconciling your brother. For if the work be laborious, reflect that it is for God's sake you undergo all this, and you shall receive sufficient consolation. Stir up your soul also when it is shrinking, and backward, and bashful, and ashamed, by perpetually harping on this theme and saying, Why are you delaying? Why are you shrinking and holding back? Our concern is not for money, nor for any other of these fleeting things, but for our salvation. God bids us do all these things, and all things should be secondary to His commands. This matter is a sort of spiritual merchandise. Let us not neglect it, let us not be slothful. Let our enemy too understand that we have taken much pains, in order to do what is well-pleasing unto God. And though he may again insult, or strike us, or do any other such thing of a still more grievous kind, let us sustain all things courageously, since we are not so

much benefitting him thereby, as ourselves. Of all good works, this shall most especially befriend us on That Day. We have sinned and offended in many and great matters, and have provoked our Lord. Through His lovingkindness He has given us this way of reconciliation. Let us, then, not betray this good treasure. For had He not power to charge us simply to make reconciliation, and not have any reward assigned to it? For whom has He to gainsay or rectify His appointment? Nevertheless, through His great lovingkindness, He has promised us a large and unspeakable reward, and one which we must be especially desirous to obtain, the pardon of our sins; thus also making this our obedience more easy of performance.

15. What allowance then can be made for us, if even when we might receive so great a reward we still do not obey the Lawgiver, but persist in our contempt; for that this is a contempt is plain from hence. If the Emperor had laid down a law, that all those who were enemies should be reconciled to one another, or have their heads cut off, should we not every one make haste to a reconciliation with his neighbour? Yes! truly, I think so! What excuse then have we, in not ascribing the same honour to the Lord, that we should do to those who are our fellow-servants? For this reason we are commanded to say, *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."* [Matthew 6:12] What can be more mild, what more merciful, than this precept! He has made you a judge of the pardon of your own offenses! If you forgive few things, He forgives you few! If you forgive many things, He forgives you many! If you pardon from the heart, and sincerely, God in like manner also pardons you! If besides pardoning him you account him a friend, God will also thus deal with you; so that the more he has sinned, so much the more is it necessary that we should hasten to a reconciliation; since it becomes a cause of greater offenses being forgiven us. Are you willing to learn that there is no pardon for us, if we are mindful of injuries,

and that there is no one who can deliver us? I will make what I assert plain by an example. Suppose that a neighbour has done you a certain injury, that he has seized your goods; has confiscated or embezzled them; and not to confine myself to such a case, let me add to it more things and worse beside, and whatever you will; he has longed to destroy you; he has exposed you to a thousand perils; he has manifested every sort of malice towards you; and left nothing undone that human wickedness can do? For not to go over every thing separately, suppose that he has injured you to such an extent as no one ever injured any before—why, even in this case, if you are resentful, you will not be worthy of pardon. And I will explain how it is so.

16. If one of your servants owed you an hundred pieces of gold; and some one again was indebted to him in a few pieces of silver; and if the servants' debtor were to come, and entreat and supplicate you that he might obtain indulgence, and you were to call in your own servant, and charge him, saying, *"Forgive this man the debt, and from the sum you owe me I will deduct this debt;"* should that servant afterwards be wicked and shameless enough to seize on his debtor, could any one then rescue him out of your hands? Would you not most assuredly inflict a thousand stripes upon him, as having been insulted to the last extremity? And very justly too. This also God will do: for He will say to you on That Day, O wicked and villainous servant, yea, was it of your own you forgave him? Out of what thou were indebted to Me, thou were ordered to account to him. For *"Remit,"* He says, *"and I will remit unto you! Although, to speak truly, if I had not added this condition, it would have been even then your duty to have remitted at the instance of your Lord. But in this case, I did not command you as a master; but I asked it as a favour from a friend; and I asked it out of My own property; and I promised to give greater things in*

return; and yet with all this, thou were not made a better man." Moreover men, when they act in this manner, put down as much to their own servants' accounts, as the measure of the debt is. Thus, for example, suppose the servant owes his master a hundred pieces of gold; and the debtor of the servant owes ten pieces, should the latter remit his debt, the master does not remit him his hundred pieces, but these ten only; and all the rest he still demands. But it is not so with God; if you remit a few things to your fellow-servant, He remits all your debt.

17. Whence does this appear? From the very Prayer itself. *"For if,"* says He, *"ye forgive men their debts, your heavenly Father will forgive your debts."* [Matthew 6:14] And as much as the difference is between *"a hundred pence"* and *"ten thousand talents,"* so great is it between the debts on the one side, and those on the other!

What punishment then must he not deserve, who when he would receive ten thousand talents, in the room of a hundred pence, yet will not even so remit this small sum, but offers up the Prayer against himself. For when you say, *"Forgive us, as we forgive,"* and afterwards dost not forgive, you are supplicating of God nothing else than that He would entirely deprive you of all excuse or indulgence. *"But I do not presume to say,"* replies some one, *"Forgive me as I forgive"* but only, *"Forgive me."* But what matters this? For if you say it not yourself, yet God so does; as you forgive, He forgives. And this He has made quite evident from what follows; for there it is said, *"If you forgive not men, neither does your heavenly Father forgive you."* Think not, therefore, that it is a pious caution, not to repeat the whole sentence; nor offer up the Prayer by halves, but as He bade you so pray thou, in order that the very obligation of that expression, putting you daily in fear, may compel you to the exercise of forgiveness towards your neighbours.

18. Do not tell me, *"I have besought him many times, I have intreated, I have supplicated, but I have not effected a reconciliation."* Never desist till you have reconciled him. For He said not, *"Leave your gift, and go your way."* Entreat your brother. But, *"Go your way. Be reconciled."*

[Matthew 5:24] So that, although you may have made many entreaties, yet you must not desist until you have persuaded. God entreats us every day, and we do not hear; and yet He does not cease entreating. And do you then disdain to entreat your fellow-servant. How is it then possible for you ever to be saved? Suppose that you have often pleaded and been repulsed; for this, however, you will obtain a larger reward. For in proportion as he is contentious, and you persevere in entreating, so much the more is your recompense increased. In proportion as the good work is accomplished with greater difficulty, and the reconciliation is one of much labour, so much the greater will be the judgment on him, and so much the brighter will be the crowns of victory for your forbearance. Let us not merely applaud all this, but exemplify it too in our deeds; and never recede from the work, until we are restored to our former state of friendship. For it is not enough merely to avoid grieving an enemy, or doing him an injury, or being in our minds unkindly disposed towards him; but it is necessary that we should prepare him to be kindly affected towards ourselves. For I hear many saying, *"I have no hostility; I am not annoyed; neither have I any thing to do with him."* But this is not what God commands, that you should have nothing to do with him; but that you should have much to do with him. For this reason he is your *"brother."* For this reason He said not, Forgive your brother what you have against him. But what then? *"Go your way. First be reconciled to him;"* and should he have *"any thing against you,"* yet desist not, before you have reunited the member in friendly concord. But you, who in order that you may obtain a useful servant, tellest out the gold, and discoursest with

many merchants, and often undertake long journeys, tell me, are you not up and doing to the utmost, in order that you may convert an enemy into a friend? And how then will you be able to call upon God, while you are thus neglecting His laws? Assuredly, the possession of a servant will be of no great profit to us; but the making an enemy a friend, will render God propitious and favourable toward us; and will easily set us free from our sins; and gain us praise with men, as well as great security in our life; for nothing can be more unsafe than he who has even only a single enemy. For our earthly reputation is injured, while such a man is saying a thousand evil things of us to every body. Our minds are also in a state of fermentation, and our conscience disturbed; and we are exposed to a continual tempest of anxious thoughts.

19. Now since we are conscious of the truth of all this, let us set ourselves free from chastisement and vengeance; and let us show our reverence for the present feast, by doing all that has been said; and those same favours which we think to obtain from the Emperor on account of the feast, let us ourselves enable others to enjoy. For I hear, indeed, many saying, that the Emperor, out of his reverence for the Holy Passover, will be reconciled to the city and will pardon all its offenses. How absurd then is it, that when we have to depend for our safety upon others, we bring forward the feast, and its claims; but that when we are commanded to be reconciled one with another, we treat this same feast with disdain, and think nothing of it. No one, truly, so pollutes this holy feast, as he does, who, while he is keeping it, cherishes malignity. Or rather, I might say, that such a person cannot possibly keep it, though he should remain without food ten days successively. For where there is enmity and strife, there can be neither fast nor festival. You would not dare to touch the holy Sacrifice with unwashed hands, however pressing the necessity might be. Approach not then with an

unwashed soul! For this is far worse than the other and brings a heavier punishment. For nothing so fills the mind with impurity, as anger remaining constantly within it. The spirit of meekness settles not where wrath or passion exists; and when a man is destitute of the Holy Spirit, what hope of salvation shall he have, and how shall he walk aright? Do not then, O beloved, while you are desirous to be revenged of your enemy, cast yourself down headlong; nor cause yourself to be left alone without the guardianship of God! For, in truth, if the duty were a difficult one, yet the greatness of the punishment, which results from this action of disobedience, were sufficient to arouse the most slothful and supine, and to persuade them to undergo every degree of labour. But now our argument has shown that the duty is most easy, if we are willing.

20. Let us not then be negligent of what is our life, but let us be in earnest; and do every thing, in order that we may be without an enemy, and so present ourselves at the sacred Table. For nothing—nothing, I repeat, of what God commands will be difficult, if we give heed: and this is evident from the case of those who are already reformed. How many used to be cheated by the habit of using oaths, and to fancy this practice extremely difficult of reformation. Nevertheless, through the grace of God, when you put forth but a little effort, you for the most part washed yourselves clean of this vice. For this reason I beseech you to lay aside also what remains, and to become teachers of others. And to those who have not yet achieved it, but allege to us the length of time during which they were before swearers, and say that it is impossible for them to pluck up in a short time that which has been rooted for many years; I would make this answer, that where any precept among those commanded by God requires to be put in due practice, there is no need of length of time, nor of a multitude of days, nor an interval of years; but of fear only, and reverence of soul; and then we shall be sure

to accomplish it, and that in a short time. But lest you should suppose that I speak these things at random, take a man whom you think much addicted to swearing; one that swears more times than he speaks; hand this man over to me for only ten days, and if I do not rid him of all his habit in these few days, pass the severest sentence on me.

21. And that these words are not a vain boast, shall be made manifest to you from things that have already happened. What could be more stupid than the Ninevites? What more devoid of understanding? Yet, nevertheless, these barbarian, foolish people, who had never yet heard any one teaching them wisdom, who had never received such precepts from others, when they heard the prophet saying, *"Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown,"* [Jonah 2:4] laid aside, within three days, the whole of their evil customs. The fornicator became chaste; the bold man meek; the grasping and extortionate moderate and kind; the slothful industrious. They did not, indeed, reform one, or two, or three, or four vices by way of remedy, but the whole of their iniquity. But whence does this appear, says some one? From the words of the prophet; for the same who had been their accuser, and who had said, that *"the cry of their wickedness has ascended up even to heaven:"* [Jonah 1:5] himself again bears testimony of an opposite kind, by saying, *"God saw that every one departed from their own evil ways."* He does not say, from fornication, or adultery, or theft, but from their *"own evil ways."* And how did they depart? As God knew, not as man judged of the matter. After this are we not ashamed, must we not blush, if it turns out that in three days only the barbarians laid aside all their wickedness, but that we, who have been urged and taught during so many days, have not got the better of one bad habit? These men had, moreover, gone to the extreme of wickedness before; for when you hear it said, *"The cry of their wickedness has come up before me;"* you can understand

nothing else than the excess of their wickedness. Nevertheless, within three days they were capable of being transformed to a state of complete virtue. For where the fear of God is, there is no need of days, or of an interval of time; as likewise, on the contrary, days are of no service where there is a want of this fear. For just as in the case of rusted implements, he that rubs them only with water, though he spend a long time on them, will not rid them of all that foulness; but he that puts them in a furnace, will make them presently brighter than even those newly fabricated: so too a soul, stained with the rust of sin, if it cleanse itself slightly, and in a negligent way, and be every day repenting, will gain no further advantage. But if it cast itself into the furnace, as it were, of the fear of God, it will in a very short time purge all away.

22. Let us not then be procrastinating till tomorrow. For we *"know not what the next day may bring forth;"* [Proverbs 27:1] nor let us say, *"we shall conquer this habit little by little;"* since this little and little will never come to an end. Wherefore, dismissing that excuse, we should say, *"If we do not reform the practice of swearing today, we will not leave off till we do, though ten thousand things were to press us; though it were necessary to die, or to be punished, or to lose all we have; we will not give the devil the advantage of slackness, nor the pretext of delay."* Should God perceive your soul inflamed, and your diligence quickened, then He also Himself will lend His assistance to your reformation! Yea, I pray and beseech you, let us be in earnest, lest we also hear it said of us, *"The men of Nineveh shall rise up, and shall condemn this generation;"* [Luke 11:32] for these, when they had once heard, reformed themselves; but we are not converted after frequent hearing. These were proficient in every part of virtue, but we in no part. They when they heard that their city would be overthrown were affrighted; but we, though we have heard of Hell, are not affrighted: these, men who

did not partake of the instructions of the prophets; we, enjoying the advantage of perpetual teaching, and of much grace.

23. These things I now speak to you, not as if reproving you for your own sins, but for the sake of others; for I know full well that by you (as I have already observed), this law concerning swearing has been accomplished. But this does not suffice for our safety, unless by teaching we amend others, since he who produced the one talent, restoring as he did the whole portion committed to him, was punished, because he had not enriched that with which he was entrusted. Wherefore, let us not regard this point, that we ourselves have been set free from this sin; but until we have delivered others from it, let us not desist; and let every one offer to God ten friends whom he has corrected; whether you have servants, or apprentices: or if you have neither servants, nor apprentices, you have friends; these do thou reform. Further, do not make me this reply; *"We have banished oaths for the most part, and we are rarely caught in that snare;"* but let even this rarity of offending be got rid of. If you had lost one piece of gold, would you not go about to all persons, searching and making enquiry, in order to find it? This do also with regard to oaths. If you perceive that you have been cheated out of one oath, weep, lament, as though your whole substance were lost. Again I say what I did before. Shut up yourself at home; make it a subject of practice and exercise along with your wife, your children, and domestics. Say to yourself in the first instance, *"I must not put a finger to private or public matters until I have rectified this soul of mine."* If you will thus school your own sons, they too will instruct their children in turn, and thus this discipline, reaching even to the consummation and appearing of Christ, will bring all that great reward to those who go to the root of the matter. If your son has learned to say, *"Believe me;"* he will not be able to go up to the theatre, or to enter a tavern, or to spend his time at

dice; for that word, lying upon his mouth instead of a bridle, will make him however unwilling feel shame and blush. But if at any time he should appear in these places, it will quickly compel him to retreat. Suppose some persons laugh. Do thou on the other hand weep for their transgression! Many also once laughed at Noah while he was preparing the ark; but when the flood came, he laughed at them; or rather, the just man never laughed at them at all, but wept and bewailed! When therefore you see persons laughing, reflect that those teeth, that grin now, will one day have to sustain that most dreadful wailing and gnashing, and that they will remember this same laugh on That Day while they are grinding and gnashing! Then thou too shall remember this laugh! How did the rich man laugh at Lazarus! But afterwards, when he beheld him in Abraham's bosom, he had nothing left to do but to bewail himself!

24. Being mindful then of all these things, be urgent with all, for the speedy fulfilment of this precept. And tell me not, that you will do this little by little; nor put it off till the morrow, for this tomorrow never finds an end. Forty days have already passed away. Should the Holy Easter pass away, I will thenceforward pardon no one, nor employ further admonition, but a commanding authority, and severity not to be despised. For this apology drawn from custom is of no force. Why may not the thief as well plead custom, and get free from punishment? Why may not the murderer and adulterer? Therefore I protest, and give warning to all, that if, when I have met you in private, and put the matter to the proof (and I will certainly put it to the proof), I detect any who have not corrected this vice, I will inflict punishment upon them, by ordering them to be excluded from the Holy Mysteries; not that they may remain always shut out, but that having reformed themselves, they may thus enter in, and with a pure conscience enjoy the Holy Table; for this is to be a partaker of the Communion! God

grant that through the prayers of those who preside over us, as well as of all the saints, having corrected these and all other deficiencies, we may obtain the kingdom of heaven through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, honour, and adoration, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 21 on the Statues

On the return of Flavian the Bishop, and the reconciliation of the Emperor with the city, and with those who had offended in overthrowing the Statues.

1. Today, I shall begin with that very same saying with which I have ever been used to open my address to you during the season of danger, and shall say together with you, "*Blessed be God,*" Who has granted us this day to celebrate this holy Feast with much joy and gladness; and has restored the head to the body, the shepherd to the sheep, the master to the disciples, the general to the soldiers, the High Priest to the Priests! Blessed be God, "*Who does exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think!*"

[Ephesians 3:20] For to us it would have seemed sufficient, had we been but delivered from the hitherto impending evil; and for this we made all our supplication. But the God who loves man, and ever in His giving surpasses our prayers by an excess of bounty, has brought back our Father too, sooner than we could at all have expected. Who would, indeed, have thought that in so few days, he would have gone, and have had audience with the Emperor, and set us free from the calamity, and again come back to us so quickly, as to be able to anticipate the Holy Passover, and to celebrate it with ourselves? Behold, however, this event, which was so contrary to expectation, has been realized! We have received back our Father; and we enjoy so much the greater pleasure, inasmuch as we have received him back now beyond our hopes. For all these things, let us give thanks to the merciful God, and be amazed at the power, the lovingkindness, the wisdom, and the tender care which has been manifested on behalf of the city. For the devil had attempted its entire subversion through the daring crimes

committed; but God, by means of this same calamity, has adorned the city, the Priest, and the Emperor; and has made them all more illustrious.

2. The city has won renown, because when such a danger had overtaken her, passing by at once all those who were in power, those who were surrounded with much wealth, those who possessed great influence with the Emperor, it fled for refuge to the Church, and to the Priest of God, and with much faith, rested itself entirely upon the hope which is from above! Many indeed, after the departure of the common Father, were ready to terrify those who lay in prison, by saying, *"The Emperor does not lay aside his wrath, but is still more provoked, and is thinking of the utter ruin of the city."* But while they were whispering all this, and much more, they who were then in bonds were not the least intimidated, but upon our saying, *"These things are false, and they are a device of the devil, who desires to fill you with consternation;"* they replied to us, *"We need no consolation to be addressed to us; for we know where we have taken refuge from the first; and upon what hope we have rested ourselves. We have fixed our safety upon the sacred anchor! We have not entrusted this to man, but to the Almighty God; therefore we are most assuredly confident, that the result will be favourable; for it is impossible, truly impossible, that this hope can ever be confounded!"* To how many crowns, how many encomiums, is this equivalent for our city? How much of God's favour will it draw down upon us too in our other affairs! For it is not, indeed it is not a thing belonging to a soul of mean order to be watchful against the attack of temptations, and to look to God; and scorning all that is human, to yearn after that Divine aid.

3. The city then has thus won renown; and the Priest again not less than the city, for he exposed his life for all; and while there were many things to hinder him, as the winter, his age, the feast, and not less than these, his sister, then at her last breath, he raised himself above all these

obstacles, and did not say to himself, *"What a thing is this? Our only remaining sister, she who has drawn the yoke of Christ along with me, and who has been my domestic companion so long, is now at her last breath; and shall we desert her, and go hence, and not behold her expiring, and uttering her pining words? But she indeed was praying daily, that we might close her eyes, and shut and compose her mouth, and attend to all other things pertaining to the burial; but now in this case, as one deserted, and deprived of a protector, she will obtain none of these offices from her brother; of him whom she especially desired to obtain them; but when she gives up the ghost, she will not see him whom she loved more to have with her than all others? And will not this be heavier to her than dying many times over? Yes, although I were far away, would it not be right to come with speed, and do, and suffer any thing, for the purpose of showing her this kindness? And now when I am near, shall I leave her, and taking my departure abandon her? And how then will she sustain the remainder of her days?"*

4. Yet, so far was he from saying any of these things, that he did not even think of them; but esteeming the fear of God above all the ties of kindred, he recognized the fact, that as tempests display the pilot, and dangers the general, so also a time of trial makes the Priest to become manifest. *"All men,"* says he, *"are eagerly looking on us; the Jews as well as the Greeks; let us not confound the expectations which these have of us; let us not overlook so great a shipwreck; but having committed to God all things that pertain to ourselves, let us venture our life itself too!"* Consider, moreover, the magnanimity of the Priest, and the lovingkindness of God! All those things which he disregarded, all those he enjoyed; in order that he might both receive the reward of his readiness, and that he might obtain a greater pleasure by enjoying them contrary to expectation! He preferred to

celebrate the festival in a foreign place, and far from his own people, for the sake of the city's safety. But God restored him to us before the Paschal feast, so as to take a common part with us in the conduct of the festival; in order that he might have the reward of his choice, and enjoy the greater gladness! He feared not the season of the year; and there was summer during the whole period he was travelling. He took not his age into account; and he dispatched this long journey with just as much ease as if he had been young and sprightly! He thought not of his sister's decease nor was enervated by it, and when he returned he found her still alive, and all things which were disregarded by him, were all obtained!

5. Thus, the priest has indeed won renown both with God and man! This transaction has also adorned the Emperor with a splendour beyond the diadem! First, in that it was then made apparent that he would grant that to the priests which he would not to any other; secondly, that he granted the favour without delay, and quelled his resentment. But that you may more clearly understand the magnanimity of the Emperor, and the wisdom of the priest, and more than both these, the lovingkindness of God; allow me to relate to you a few particulars of the conference which took place. But what I am now about to relate I learned from one of those who were within the palace; for the Father has told us neither much nor little on the affair; but ever imitating the magnanimity of Paul, he hides his own good deeds; and to those who on all sides were asking him questions as to what he said to the Emperor; and how he prevailed upon him; and how he turned away his wrath entirely, he replied, *"We contributed nothing to the matter, but the Emperor himself (God having softened his heart), even before we had spoken, dismissed his anger, and quelled his resentment; and discoursing of the events that had taken place as if some other person had been insulted,*

he thus went over all the events that had happened without anger." But those things which he concealed from humility, God has brought to light.

6. And what were these? I will proceed to relate them to you by going a little farther back in the story. When he went forth from the city, leaving all in such great despondency, he endured what was far more grievous than we ourselves suffered, who were in the midst of these calamities. For, in the first place, meeting in the midst of his journey with those who had been sent by the Emperor to make inquisition upon the events which had happened; and learning from them, on what terms they were sent; and reflecting upon the dreadful events that were in store for the city, the tumults, the confusion, the flight, the terror, the agony, the perils, he wept a flood of tears, and his bowels were rent with compassion; for with fathers, it is usual to grieve much more, when they are not able to be present with their suffering children; which was just what this most tender-hearted man now endured; not only lamenting the calamities which were in reserve for us, but that he was far away from us, whilst we were enduring them. But this was, however, for our safety. For as soon as he had learned these things from them; more warmly did the fountain of his tears then gush forth, and he betook himself to God with more fervent supplication; and spent his nights without sleep, beseeching Him that He would succour the city, while enduring these things, and make the mind of the Emperor more placable. And as soon as he came to that great city, and had entered the royal palace, he stood before the Emperor at a distance—speechless—weeping—with downcast eyes—covering his face as if he himself had been the doer of all the mischief; and this he did, wishing first to incline him to mercy by his posture, and aspect, and tears; and then to begin an apology on our behalf; since there is but one hope of pardon for those who have offended, which is to be silent, and to utter nothing in defence of what has been done. For he was desirous that

one feeling should be got rid of, and that another should take its place; that anger should be expelled, and sadness introduced, in order that he might thus prepare the way for the words of his apology; which indeed actually took place. And just as Moses going up to the mount, when the people had offended, stood speechless himself, until God called him, saying, "*Let me alone, and I will blot out this people;*" [Exodus 32:10] so also did he now act: The Emperor therefore, when he saw him shedding tears, and bending toward the ground, himself drew near; and what he really felt on seeing the tears of the priest, he made evident by the words he addressed to him; for they were not those of a person provoked or inflamed, but of one in sorrow; not of one enraged, but rather dejected, and under constraint of extreme pain.

7. And that this is true, you will understand when you hear what were his words. For he did not say, "*What does this mean? Have you come heading an embassy on behalf of impious and abominable men, such as ought not even to live; on behalf of rebels, of revolutionists, who deserve the utmost punishment?*" But dismissing all words of that sort, he composed a defence of himself full of respectfulness and dignity; and he enumerated the benefits, which during the whole time of his reign he had conferred upon the city; and at each of these he said, "*Was it thus I should have been treated in return for these things? What injuries had I done, that they should take such revenge? What complaint had they, great or small, that they must not insult me only, but the deceased also? Was it not sufficient to wreak their resentment against the living? Yet they thought they were doing nothing grand, unless they insulted those now in their graves. Granting that I had injured them, as they suppose; surely it would have been becoming to spare the dead, who had done them no wrong; for they could not have the same complaint against them. Did I not ever esteem this city above every thing,*

and account it as dearer than my native place? And was it not a matter of my continual prayers to visit this city; and did I not make this my oath to all men?"

8. Upon this, the priest sobbing bitterly, and shedding warmer tears, no longer kept silence: for he saw that the defence of the Emperor was raising our crime to a still higher amount; but heaving from the bottom of his heart a deep and bitter sigh, he said, We must confess, O Emperor, this love which you have shown towards our country! We cannot deny it! On this account, especially, we mourn, that a city thus beloved has been bewitched by demons; and that we should have appeared ungrateful towards her benefactor, and have provoked her ardent lover. And although you were to overthrow; although you were to burn; although you were to put to death; or whatever else you might do, you would never yet have taken on us the revenge we deserve. We ourselves have, by anticipation, inflicted on ourselves what is worse than a thousand deaths! For what can be more bitter, than when we are found to have unjustly provoked our benefactor, and one who loved us so much, and the whole world knows it, and condemns us for the most monstrous ingratitude! If Barbarians had made an incursion on our city, and razed its walls, and burnt its houses, and had taken and carried us away captive, the evil had been less. And why so? But because, while you live, and continue such a generous kindness towards us, there might be a hope that we might again be brought back to our former condition, and regain a more illustrious liberty. But now, having been deprived of your favour, and having quenched your love, which was a greater security to us than any wall, whom have we left to fly to? Where else shall we have to look, when we have provoked so benign a lord, so indulgent a father? So that while they seem to have committed offenses of the most intolerable kind, they have on the other hand suffered the most

terrible evils; not daring to look any man in the face; nor being able to look upon the sun with free eyes; shame everywhere weighing down their eyelids, and compelling them to hide their heads! Deprived of their confidence, they are now in a more miserable condition than any captives, and undergo the utmost dishonour; and while thinking of the magnitude of their evils, and the height of insolence to which they have rushed, they can scarce draw breath; inasmuch as they have drawn on their own heads severer reproaches from all the inhabitants of the world, than even from him who is seen to have been insulted.

9. But yet, O Emperor, if you are willing, there is a remedy for the wound, and a medicine for these evils, mighty as they are! Often, indeed, has it occurred among private individuals, that great and insufferable offenses have become a foundation for great affection. Thus also did it happen in the case of our human race. For when God made man, and placed him in Paradise, and held him in much honour; the devil could not bear this his great prosperity, and envied him, and cast him out from that dignity which had been granted. But God was so far from forsaking him, that He even opened Heaven to us instead of Paradise; and in so doing, both showed His own lovingkindness, and punished the devil the more severely. So do thou too now! The demons have lately used all their efforts, that they may effectually rend from your favour that city which was dearest of all to you. Knowing this then, demand what penalty you will, but let us not become outcasts from your former love! Nay, though it is a strange thing, I must say, display towards us now still greater kindness than ever; and again write this city's name among the foremost in your love—if you are indeed desirous of being revenged upon the demons who were the instigators of these crimes! For if you pull down, and overturn, and raze the city, you will be doing those very things which they have long been desiring. But if you

dismiss your anger, and again avow that you love it even as you did before, you have given them a deadly blow. You have taken the most perfect revenge upon them by showing, not only that nothing whatever has come for them of their evil designs; but that all has proved the very opposite of what they wished. And you would be just in acting thus, and in showing mercy to a city, which the demons envied on account of your affection; for if you had not so exceedingly loved her, they would not have envied her to such a degree! So that even if what I have asserted is extraordinary, it is nevertheless, true, that what the city has suffered, has been owing to you, and your love! What burning, what devastation, so bitter as those words, which you uttered in your own defence?

10. You say now, that you have been insulted, and sustained wrongs such as no Emperor ever yet did. But if you will, O most gracious, most wise, and most religious Sovereign, this contempt will procure you a crown, more honourable and splendid than the diadem you wear! For this diadem is a display of your princely virtue, but it is also a token of the munificence of him who gave it; but the crown woven from this your humanity will be entirely your own good work, and that of your own love of wisdom; and all men will admire you less for the sake of these precious stones, than they will applaud you for your superiority over this wrath. Were your Statues thrown down? You have it in your power again to set up others yet more splendid. For if you remit the offenses of those who have done you injury, and take no revenge upon them, they will erect a statue to you, not one in the forum of brass, nor of gold, nor inlaid with gems; but one arrayed in that robe which is more precious than any material, that of humanity and tender mercy! Every man will thus set you up in his own soul; and you will have as many statues, as there are men who now inhabit, or shall hereafter inhabit, the whole world! For not only we, but all those who come after us,

and their successors, will hear of these things, and will admire and love you, just as if they themselves had experienced this kindness!

11. And to show that I do not speak this in a way of flattery, but that it will certainly be so, I will relate to you an ancient piece of history, that you may understand that no armies, nor warlike weapons, nor money, nor multitude of subjects, nor any other such things are wont to make sovereigns so illustrious, as wisdom of soul and gentleness. It is related of the blessed Constantine, that on one occasion, when a statue of himself had been pelted with stones, and many were instigating him to proceed against the perpetrators of the outrage; saying, that they had disfigured his whole face by battering it with stones, he stroked his face with his hand, and smiling gently, said, *"I am quite unable to perceive any wound inflicted upon my face. The head appears sound, and the face also quite sound."* Thus these persons, overwhelmed with shame, desisted from their unrighteous counsel.

This saying, even to the present day, all repeat; and length of time has neither weakened nor extinguished the memory of such exalted wisdom. How much more illustrious is such an action, than any number of warlike trophies! Many and great titles did he build, and many barbarous tribes did he conquer; not one of which we now remember; but this saying is repeated over and over again, to the present day; and those who follow us, as well as those who come after them, will all hear of it. Nor indeed is this the only admirable thing; that they will hear of it; but that when men speak of it, they do so with approbation and applause; and those who hear of it, receive it with the like; and there is no one who, when he has heard it, is able to remain silent, but each at once cries out, and applauds the man who uttered it, and prays that innumerable blessings may be his lot even now deceased.

But if among men, this saying has gained him so much honour, how many crowns will he obtain with the merciful God!

12. And why need I speak of Constantine, and other men's examples, when it were fitting that I should exhort you by considerations nearer home, and drawn from your own praiseworthy actions. You remember how but lately, when this feast was near at hand, you sent an epistle to every part of the world giving orders that the inmates of the prisons should be set free, and their crimes be pardoned. And as if this were not sufficient to give proof of your generosity, you said in your letters, *"O that it were possible for me to recal and to restore those who are dead, and to bring them back to their former state of life!"* Remember now these words. Behold the season of recalling and restoring the deceased, and bringing them back to former life! For these are indeed already dead, even before the sentence has been pronounced; and the city has now taken up its tabernacle at the very gates of Hades! Therefore raise it up again, which you can do without money, without expense, without loss of time or labour! It is sufficient merely for you to open your lips, and you will restore to life the city which at present lies in darkness. Grant now, that henceforth it may bear an appellation derived from your philanthropy; for it will not be so much indebted to the kindness of him who first founded it, as it will be to your sentence. And this is exceedingly reasonable; for he but gave it its beginning, and departed; but you, when it had grown up and become great; and when it was fallen, after all that great prosperity; will have been its restorer. There would have been nothing so wonderful in your having delivered it from danger, when enemies had captured, and barbarians overrun it, as in your now sparing it. That, many of the Emperors have frequently done; but should you alone accomplish this, you will be first in doing it, and that beyond all expectation. And the former of these good deeds, the protection of your

subjects, is not at all wonderful or extraordinary; but is one of those events which are of continual occurrence; but the latter, the dismissal of wrath after the endurance of such provocations, is something which surpasses human nature.

13. Reflect, that the matter now for your consideration is not respecting this city only, but is one that concerns your own glory; or rather, one that affects the cause of Christianity in general. Even now the Gentiles, and Jews, and the whole empire as well as the barbarians, (for these last have also heard of these events,) are eagerly looking to you, and waiting to see what sentence you will pronounce with regard to these transactions. And should you decree a humane and merciful one; all will applaud the decision, and glorify God, and say one to another, *"Heavens! How great is the power of Christianity, that it restrains and bridles a man who has no equal upon earth; a sovereign, powerful enough to destroy and devastate all things; and teaches him to practice such philosophy as one in a private station had not been likely to display! Great indeed must be the God of the Christians, who makes angels out of men, and renders them superior to all the constraining force of our nature!"*

14. Nor ought you, assuredly, to entertain that idle fear; nor to bear with those who say that other cities will become worse, and grow more contemptuous of authority, if this city goes unpunished. For if you were unable to take vengeance; and they, after doing these things, had forcibly defied you; and the power on each side was equally matched; then reasonably enough might such suspicions be entertained. But if, terrified and half dead with fear, they run to cast themselves at your feet, through me; and expect daily nothing else but the pit of slaughter, and are engaged in common supplications; looking up to heaven and calling upon God to come to their aid, and to favour this our embassy; and have each given

charge about his private affairs, as if they were at their last gasp; how can such a fear be otherwise than superfluous? If they had been ordered to be put to death, they would not have suffered as much as they do now, living as they have done so many days in fear and trembling; and when the evening approaches, not expecting to behold the morning; nor when the day arrives, hoping to reach the evening! Many too have fallen in with wild beasts, while pursuing their way through desert places, and removing to untrodden spots; and not men only, but also little children and women; free born, and of good condition; hiding themselves many days and nights in caves, and ravines, and holes of the desert! A new mode of captivity has indeed befallen the city. Whilst the buildings and walls are standing, they suffer heavier calamities than when cities have been set on fire! Whilst no barbarian foe is present, while no enemy appears, they are more wretchedly situated than if actually taken; and the rustling only of a leaf scares them all every day! And these are matters which are universally known; so that if all men had seen the city razed to the ground, they would not have been taught such a lesson of sobriety, as by hearing of the calamities which have now befallen it. Suppose not, therefore, that other cities will be made worse in future! Not even if you had overturned other cities, would you have so effectually corrected them, as now, by this suspense concerning their fate, having chastised them more severely than by any punishment!

15. Do not, then, carry this calamity any farther; but allow them henceforth to take breath again. For to punish the guilty, and to exact the penalty for these deeds, were easy and open to any one; but to spare those who have insulted you, and to pardon those who have committed offenses undeserving of pardon, is an act of which only some one or two are capable; and especially so, where the person treated with indignity is the Emperor. It is an easy matter to place the city under the subjection of fear; but to

dispose all to be loving subjects; and to persuade them to hold themselves well affected towards your government; and to offer not only their common, but individual prayers for your empire; is a work of difficulty. A monarch might expend his treasures, or put innumerable troops in motion, or do what else he pleased, but still he would not be able to draw the affections of so many men towards himself as may now very easily be done. For they who have been kindly dealt with, and those who hear of it too, will be well affected towards you, even as the recipients of the benefit. How much money, how many labours would you not have expended to win over to yourself the whole world in a short space of time; and to be able to persuade all those men who are now in existence, as well as all future generations, to invoke upon your head the same blessings which they pray for on behalf of their own children! And if you will receive such a reward from men, how much greater will you have from God! And this, not merely from the events which are now taking place, but from those good deeds which shall be performed by others in time to come. For if ever it should be that an event similar to what has now occurred should take place, (which God forbid!) and any of those who have been treated with indignity, should then be consulting about prosecuting measures against the rioters; your gentleness and moral wisdom will serve them instead of all other teaching and admonition; and they will blush and be ashamed, having such an example of wisdom, to appear inferior. So that in this way you will be an instructor to all posterity; and you will obtain the palm among them, even although they should attain to the highest point of moral wisdom! For it is not the same thing for a person to set the first example of such meekness himself and by looking at others, to imitate the good actions they have performed. On this account, whatever philanthropy, or meekness, those who come after you may display, you will enjoy the reward along with them; for he who

provides the root, must be considered the source of the fruits. For this reason, no one can possibly now share with you the reward that will follow your generosity, since the good deed has been entirely your own. But you will share the reward of all those who shall come after, if any such persons should make their appearance; and it will be in your power to have an equal share in the merit of the good work along with them, and to carry off a portion as great as teachers have with scholars. And supposing that no such person should come into being, the tribute of commendation and applause will be accumulating to you throughout every age.

16. For consider, what it is for all posterity to hear it reported, that when so great a city had become obnoxious to punishment and vengeance, that when all were terrified, when its generals, its magistrates and judges, were all in horror and alarm, and did not dare to utter a word on behalf of the wretched people; a single old man, invested with the priesthood of God, came and moved the heart of the Monarch by his mere aspect and intercourse; and that the favour which he bestowed upon no other of his subjects, he granted to this one old man, being actuated by a reverence for God's laws! For in this very thing, O Emperor, that I have been sent hither on this embassy, the city has done you no small honour; for they have thus pronounced the best and the most honourable judgment on you, which is, that you respect the priests of God, however insignificant they may be, more than any office placed under your authority!

17. But at the present time I have come not from these only, but rather from One who is the common Lord of angels and men, to address these words to your most merciful and most gentle soul, *"if you forgive men their debts, your heavenly Father will forgive you your trespasses."*

[Matthew 6:12] Remember then that Day when we shall all give an account of our actions! Consider that if you have sinned in any respect, you will be

able to wipe away all offenses by this sentence and by this determination, and that without difficulty and without toil. Some when they go on an embassy, bring gold, and silver, and other gifts of that kind. But I have come into your royal presence with the sacred laws; and instead of all other gifts, I present these; and I exhort you to imitate your Lord, who while He is daily insulted by us, unceasingly ministers His blessings to all! And do not confound our hopes, nor defeat our promises. For I wish you withal to understand, that if it be your resolution to be reconciled, and to restore your former kindness to the city, and to remit this just displeasure, I shall go back with great confidence. But if you determine to cast off the city, I shall not only never return to it, nor see its soil again, but I shall in future utterly disown it, and enrol myself a member of some other city; for God forbid that I should ever belong to that country, which you, the most mild and merciful of all men, refuse to admit to peace and reconciliation!

18. Having said this, and much more to the same effect, he so overcame the Emperor, that the same thing occurred which once happened to Joseph. For just as he, when he beheld his brethren, longed to shed tears, but restrained his feeling, in order that he might not spoil the part which he was playing; even so did the Emperor mentally weep, but did not let it be seen, for the sake of those who were present. He was not, however, able to conceal the feeling at the close of the conference; but betrayed himself, though against his will. For after this speech was finished, no further words were necessary, but he gave utterance to one only sentiment, which did him much more honour than the diadem. And what was that? How, said he, can it be any thing wonderful or great, that we should remit our anger against those who have treated us with indignity; we, who ourselves are but men; when the Lord of the universe, having come as He did on earth, and having been made a servant for us, and crucified by those who had experienced His

kindness, besought the Father on behalf of His crucifiers, saying, *"Forgive them, for they know not what they do?"* [Luke 23:34] What marvel, then, if we also should forgive our fellow-servants! And that these words were not a pretence was proved by all that followed. And not the least, that particular circumstance which I am now about to mention; for this our priest, when he would have remained there, and celebrated the feast together with himself, he urged, though contrary to what he would have wished—to use all speed, and diligence, to present himself to his fellow citizens. *"I know,"* said he, *"that their souls are still agitated; and that there are many relics of the calamity left. Go, give them consolation! If they see the helmsman, they will no longer remember the storm that has passed away; but all recollection of these sorrowful events will be effaced!"* And when the Priest was urgent, entreating him to send his own son, he, wishing to give the most satisfactory proof of his having entirely blotted out from his soul every wrathful feeling, answered; *"Pray that these hindrances may be taken out of the way; that these wars may be put an end to; and then I will certainly come myself."*

19. What could be gentler than such a soul? Let the Gentiles henceforward be ashamed; or rather, instead of being ashamed, let them be instructed; and leaving their native error, let them come back to the strength of Christianity, having learned what our philosophy is, from the example of the Emperor and of the Priest! For our most pious Emperor stayed not at this point; but when the Bishop had left the city, and come over the sea, he dispatched there also certain persons, being most solicitous and painstaking to prevent any waste of time lest the city should be thus deprived of half its pleasure, while the bishop was celebrating the feast beyond its walls. Where is the gracious father that would have so busied himself on behalf of those who had insulted him? But I must mention another circumstance that

redounds to the praise of the just man. For when he had accomplished this, he did not make it his endeavour, as any one else might have done, who was fond of glory, to deliver those letters himself, which were to set us free from the state of dejection in which we were; but since he was journeying at too slow a rate for this, he thought proper to send forward another person in his stead; one among those who were skilled in horsemanship, to be the bearer of the good news to the city; lest its sadness should be prolonged by the tardiness of his arrival. For the only thing he earnestly coveted was this; not that he might come himself, bringing these favourable tidings, so full of all that is delightful, but that our country might as soon as possible breathe freely again.

20. What therefore ye then did, in decking the forum with garlands; lighting lamps, spreading couches of green leaves before the shops, and keeping high festival, as if the city had just come into being, this do ye, although in another manner, throughout all time;— being crowned, not with flowers, but with virtue—kindling in your souls the light which comes from good works; rejoicing with a spiritual gladness. And let us never fail to give God thanks continually for all these things, not only that he has freed us from these calamities, but that he also permitted them to happen; and let us acknowledge his abundant goodness! For by both these has He adorned our city. Now all these things according to the prophetic saying, *"Declare ye to your children; and let your children tell their children; and their children again another generation."* [Joel 1:3] So that all who shall be hereafter, even to the consummation, learning this act of God's lovingkindness towards the city, may call us blessed, in having enjoyed such a favour— may marvel at our Sovereign, who raised up the city when it was so grievously falling—and may themselves be profited, being stimulated to piety by means of all which has happened! For the history of what has

lately happened to us, will have power to profit not only ourselves, if we constantly remember it, but also those who shall come after us. All these things then being considered, let us always give thanks to God who loves man; not merely for our deliverance from these fearful evils, but for their being permitted to overtake us—learning this from the divine Scriptures, as well as from the late events that have befallen us; that He ever disposes all things for our advantage, with that lovingkindness which is His attribute, which God grant, that we may continually enjoy, and so may obtain the kingdom of heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

No One Can Harm the Man Who Does Not Harm Himself

1. I know well that to coarse-minded persons, who are greedy in the pursuit of present things, and are nailed to earth, and enslaved to physical pleasure, and have no strong hold upon spiritual ideas, this treatise will be of a strange and paradoxical kind: and they will laugh immoderately, and condemn me for uttering incredible things from the very outset of my theme. Nevertheless, I shall not on this account desist from my promise, but for this very reason shall proceed with great earnestness to the proof of what I have undertaken. For if those who take that view of my subject will please not to make a clamour and disturbance, but wait to the end of my discourse, I am sure that they will take my side, and condemn themselves, finding that they have been deceived hitherto, and will make a recantation, and apology, and crave pardon for the mistaken opinion which they held concerning these matters, and will express great gratitude to me, as patients do to physicians, when they have been relieved from the disorders which lay seige to their body. For do not tell me of the judgment which is prevailing in your mind at the present time, but wait to hear the contention of my arguments and then you will be able to record an impartial verdict without being hindered by ignorance from forming a true judgment. For even judges in secular causes, if they see the first orator pouring forth a mighty torrent of words and overwhelming everything with his speech do not venture to record their decision without having patiently listened to the other speaker who is opposed to him; and even if the remarks of the first speaker seem to be just to an unlimited extent, they reserve an unprejudiced

hearing for the second. In fact the special merit of judges consists in ascertaining with all possible accuracy what each side has to allege and then bringing forward their own judgment.

Now in the place of an orator we have the common assumption of mankind which in the course of ages has taken deep root in the minds of the multitude, and declaims to the following effect throughout the world. "*All things*" it says have been turned upside down, the human race is full of much confusion and many are they who every day are being wronged, insulted, subjected to violence and injury, the weak by the strong, the poor by the rich: and as it is impossible to number the waves of the sea, so is it impossible to reckon the multitude of those who are the victims of intrigue, insult, and suffering; and neither the correction of law, nor the fear of being brought to trial, nor anything else can arrest this pestilence and disorder, but the evil is increasing every day, and the groans, and lamentations, and weeping of the sufferers are universal; and the judges who are appointed to reform such evils, themselves intensify the tempest, and inflame the disorder, and hence many of the more senseless and despicable kind, seized with a new kind of frenzy, accuse the providence of God, when they see the forbearing man often violently seized, racked, and oppressed, and the audacious, impetuous, low and low-born man waxing rich, and invested with authority, and becoming formidable to many, and inflicting countless troubles upon the more moderate, and this perpetrated both in town and country, and desert, on sea and land. This discourse of ours of necessity comes in by way of direct opposition to what has been alleged, maintaining a contention which is new, as I said at the beginning, and contrary to opinion, yet useful and true, and profitable to those who will give heed to it and be persuaded by it; for what I undertake is to prove (only make no

commotion) that no one of those who are wronged is wronged by another, but experiences this injury at his own hands.

2. But in order to make my argument plainer, let us first of all enquire what injustice is, and of what kind of things the material of it is wont to be composed; also what human virtue is, and what it is which ruins it; and further what it is which seems to ruin it but really does not. For instance (for I must complete my argument by means of examples) each thing is subject to one evil which ruins it; iron to rust, wool to moth, flocks of sheep to wolves. The virtue of wine is injured when it ferments and turns sour: of honey when it loses its natural sweetness, and is reduced to a bitter juice. Ears of grain are ruined by mildew and drought, and the fruit, and leaves, and branches of vines by the mischievous host of locusts, other trees by the caterpillar, and irrational creatures by diseases of various kinds: and not to lengthen the list by going through all possible examples, our own flesh is subject to fevers, and palsies, and a crowd of other maladies. As then each one of these things is liable to that which ruins its virtue, let us now consider what it is which injures the human race, and what it is which ruins the virtue of a human being. Most men think that there are various things which have this effect; for I must mention the erroneous opinions on the subject, and, after confuting them, proceed to exhibit that which really does ruin our virtue: and to demonstrate clearly that no one could inflict this injury or bring this ruin upon us unless we betrayed ourselves. The multitude then having erroneous opinions imagine that there are many different things which ruin our virtue: some say it is poverty, others bodily disease, others loss of property, others calumny, others death and they are perpetually bewailing and lamenting these things: and while they are commiserating the sufferers and shedding tears they excitedly exclaim to one another *"What a calamity has befallen such and such a man! He has*

been deprived of all his fortune at a blow." Of another again one will say: *"such and such a man has been attacked by severe sickness and is despaired of by the physicians in attendance."* Some bewail and lament the inmates of the prison, some those who have been expelled from their country and transported to the land of exile, others those who have been deprived of their freedom, others those who have been seized and made captives by enemies, others those who have been drowned, or burnt, or buried by the fall of a house, but no one mourns those who are living in wickedness: on the contrary, which is worse than all, they often congratulate them, a practice which is the cause of all manner of evils. Come then (only, as I exhorted you at the outset, do not make a commotion), let me prove that none of the things which have been mentioned injure the man who lives soberly, nor can ruin his virtue. For tell me if a man has lost his all either at the hands of calumniators or of robbers, or has been stripped of his goods by knavish servants, what harm has the loss done to the virtue of the man?

But if it seems well let me rather indicate in the first place what is the virtue of a man, beginning by dealing with the subject in the case of existences of another kind so as to make it more intelligible and plain to the majority of readers.

3. What then is the virtue of a horse? Is it to have a bridle studded with gold and girths to match, and a band of silken threads to fasten the housing, and clothes wrought in various colours and gold tissue, and head gear studded with jewels, and locks of hair plaited with gold cord? Or is it to be swift and strong in its legs, and even in its paces, and to have hoofs suitable to a well bred horse, and courage fitted for long journies and warfare, and to be able to behave with calmness in the battle field, and if a rout takes place to save its rider? Is it not manifest that these are the things which constitute the virtue of the horse, not the others? Again, what should you say was the

virtue of asses and mules? Is it not the power of carrying burdens with contentment, and accomplishing journies with ease, and having hoofs like rock? Shall we say that their outside trappings contribute anything to their own proper virtue? By no means. And what kind of vine shall we admire? One which abounds in leaves and branches, or one which is laden with fruit? Or what kind of virtue do we predicate of an olive? Is it to have large boughs, and great luxuriance of leaves, or to exhibit an abundance of its proper fruit dispersed over all parts of the tree? Well, let us act in the same way in the case of human beings also: let us determine what is the virtue of man, and let us regard that alone as an injury, which is destructive to it. What then is the virtue of man? Not riches that you should fear poverty: nor health of body that you should dread sickness, nor the opinion of the public, that you should view an evil reputation with alarm, nor life simply for its own sake, that death should be terrible to you: nor liberty that you should avoid servitude: but carefulness in holding true doctrine, and rectitude in life. Of these things not even the devil himself will be able to rob a man, if he who possesses them guards them with the needful carefulness: and that most malicious and ferocious demon is aware of this. For this cause also he robbed Job of his substance, not to make him poor, but that he might force him into uttering some blasphemous speech; and he tortured his body, not to subject him to infirmity, but to upset the virtue of his soul. But nevertheless when he had set all his devices in motion, and turned him from a rich man into a poor one (that calamity which seems to us the most terrible of all), and had made him childless who was once surrounded by many children, and had scarified his whole body more cruelly than the executioners do in the public tribunals (for their nails do not lacerate the sides of those who fall into their hands so severely as the gnawing of the worms lacerated his body), and when he had fastened a bad reputation upon him (for Job's

friends who were present with him said "*you have not received the chastisement which your sins deserve,*" and directed many words of accusation against him), and after he had not merely expelled him from city and home and transferred him to another city, but had actually made the dunghill serve as his home and city; after all this, he not only did him no damage but rendered him more glorious by the designs which he formed against him. And he not only failed to rob him of any of his possessions although he had robbed him of so many things, but he even increased the wealth of his virtue. For after these things he enjoyed greater confidence inasmuch as he had contended in a more severe contest. Now if he who underwent such sufferings, and this not at the hand of man, but at the hand of the devil who is more wicked than all men, sustained no injury, which of those persons who say such and such a man injured and damaged me will have any defence to make in future? For if the devil who is full of such great malice, after having set all his instruments in motion, and discharged all his weapons, and poured out all the evils incident to man, in a superlative degree upon the family and the person of that righteous man nevertheless did him no injury, but as I was saying rather profited him: how shall certain be able to accuse such and such a man alleging that they have suffered injury at their hands, not at their own?

4. What then? Some one will say, did he not inflict injury on Adam, and upset him, and cast him out of paradise? No: he did it not, but the cause was the listlessness of him who was injured, and his want of temperance and vigilance. For he who applied such powerful and manifold devices and yet was not able to subdue Job, how could he by inferior means have mastered Adam, had not Adam betrayed himself through his own listlessness? What then? Has not he been injured who has been exposed to slander, and suffered confiscation of his property, having been deprived of

all his goods, and is thrown out of his patrimony, and struggles with extreme poverty? No! He has not been injured, but has even profited, if he be sober. For, tell me, what harm did this do the apostles? Were they not continually struggling with hunger, and thirst and nakedness? And this was the very reason why they were so illustrious, and distinguished, and won for themselves much help from God. Again what harm was done to Lazarus by his disease, and sores, and poverty and dearth of protectors? Were they not the reasons why garlands of victory were more abundantly woven for him? Or what harm was done to Joseph by his getting evil reported of, both in his own land, and in the land of strangers for he was supposed to be both an adulterer and fornicator: or what harm did servitude do him or expatriation? Is it not specially on account of these things that we regard him with admiration and astonishment? And why do I speak of removal into a foreign land, and poverty, and evil report, and bondage? For what harm did death itself inflict on Abel, although it was a violent and untimely death, and perpetrated by a brother's hand? Is not this the reason why his praise is sounded throughout the whole world? Do you see how the discourse has demonstrated even more than it promised? For not only has it disclosed the fact that no one is injured by anybody, but also that they who take heed to themselves derive the greater gain (from such assaults). What is the purpose then it will be said of penalties and punishments? What is the purpose of hell? What is the purpose of such great threatenings, if no one is either injured or injures? What is it you say? Why do you confuse the argument? For I did not say that no one injures, but that no one is injured. And how is it possible, you will say, for no one to be injured when many are committing injury? In the way which I indicated just now. For Joseph's brethren did indeed injure him, yet he himself was not injured: and Cain laid snares for Abel, yet he himself was not ensnared. This is the reason

why there are penalties and punishments. For God does not abolish penalties on account of the virtue of those who suffer; but he ordains punishments on account of the malice of those who do wickedly. For although they who are evil entreated become more illustrious in consequence of the designs formed against them, this is not due to the intention of those who plan the designs, but to the courage of those who are the victims of them. Wherefore for the latter the rewards of philosophy are made ready and prepared, for the former the penalties of wickedness. Have you been deprived of your money? Read the word "*Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there.*" [Job 1:21] And add to this the apostolic saying "*for we brought nothing into this world; it is certain we can carry nothing out.*" [1 Timothy 6:7] Are you evil reported of, and have some men loaded you with countless abuse? Remember that passage where it is said "*Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you*" [Luke 6:26] and "*rejoice ye and leap for joy when they shall cast upon you an evil name.*" Have you been transported into the land of exile? Consider that you have not here a fatherland, but that if you will be wise you are bidden to regard the whole world as a strange country. Or have you been given over to a sore disease? Quote the apostolic saying "*the more our outward man decays, so much the more is the inward man renewed day by day.*" [2 Corinthians 4:16] Has any one suffered a violent death? Consider the case of John, his head cut off in prison, carried in a charger, and made the reward of a harlot's dancing. Consider the recompense which is derived from these things: for all these sufferings when they are unjustly inflicted by any one on another, expiate sins, and work righteousness. So great is the advantage of them in the case of those who bear them bravely.

5. When then neither loss of money, nor slander, nor railing, nor banishment, nor diseases, nor tortures, nor that which seems more

formidable than all, namely death, harms those who suffer them, but rather adds to their profit, whence can you prove to me that any one is injured when he is not injured at all from any of these things? For I will endeavour to prove the reverse, showing that they who are most injured and insulted, and suffer the most incurable evils are the persons who do these things. For what could be more miserable than the condition of Cain, who dealt with his brother in this fashion? What more pitiable than that of Phillip's wife who beheaded John? Or the brethren of Joseph who sold him away, and transported him into the land of exile? Or the devil who tortured Job with such great calamities? For not only on account of his other iniquities, but at the same time also for this assault he will pay no trifling penalty. Do you see how here the argument has proved even more than was proposed, showing that those who are insulted not only sustain no harm from these assaults, but that the whole mischief recoils on the head of those who contrive them? For since neither wealth nor freedom, nor life in our native land nor the other things which I have mentioned, but only right actions of the soul, constitute the virtue of man, naturally when the harm is directed against these things, human virtue itself is no wise harmed. What then? Supposing some one does harm the moral condition of the soul? Even then if a man suffers damage, the damage does not come from another but proceeds from within, and from the man himself. *"How so,"* do you say? When any one having been beaten by another, or deprived of his goods, or having endured some other grievous insult, utters a blasphemous speech, he certainly sustains a damage thereby, and a very great one, nevertheless it does not proceed from him who has inflicted the insult, but from his own littleness of soul. For what I said before I will now repeat, no man if he be infinitely wicked could attack any one more wickedly or more bitterly than that revengeful demon who is implacably hostile to us, the devil: but yet

this cruel demon had not power to upset or overthrow him who lived before the law, and before the time of grace, although he discharged so many and such bitter weapons against him from all quarters. Such is the force of nobility of soul. And what shall I say of Paul? Did he not suffer so many distresses that even to make a list of them is no easy matter? He was put in prison, loaded with chains, dragged hither and thither, scourged by the Jews, stoned, lacerated on the back not only by thongs, but also by rods, he was immersed in the sea, oftentimes beset by robbers, involved in strife with his own countrymen, continually assailed both by foes and by acquaintance, subjected to countless intrigues, struggling with hunger and nakedness, undergoing other frequent and lasting mischances and afflictions: and why need I mention the greater part of them? He was dying every day: but yet, although subjected to so many and such grievous sufferings, he not only uttered no blasphemous word, but rejoiced over these things and gloried in them: and one time he says *"I rejoice in my sufferings,"* [Colossians 1:24] and then again *"not only this but we also glory in afflictions."* [Romans 5:3] If then he rejoiced and gloried when suffering such great troubles what excuse will you have, and what defence will you make if you blaspheme when you do not undergo the smallest fraction of them.

6. But I am injured in other ways, one will say, and even if I do not blaspheme, yet when I am robbed of my money I am disabled from giving alms. This is a mere pretext and pretence. For if you grieve on this account know certainly that poverty is no bar to almsgiving. For even if you are infinitely poor you are not poorer than the woman who possessed only a handful of meal, [1 Kings 17:12] and the one who had only two mites, [Luke 21:2] each of whom having spent all her substance upon those who were in need was an object of surpassing admiration: and such great poverty was no hindrance to such great lovingkindness, but the alms

bestowed from the two mites was so abundant and generous as to eclipse all who had riches, and in wealth of intention and superabundance of zeal to surpass those who cast in much coin. Wherefore even in this matter you are not injured but rather benefitted, receiving by means of a small contribution rewards more glorious than they who put down large sums. But since, if I were to say these things for ever, sensuous characters which delight to grovel in worldly things, and revel in present things would not readily endure parting from the fading flowers (for such are the pleasant things of this life) or letting go its shadows: but the better sort of men indeed cling to both the one and the other, while the more pitiable and abject cling more strongly to the former than to the latter, come let us strip off the pleasant and showy masks which hide the base and ugly countenance of these things, and let us expose the foul deformity of the harlot. For such is the character of a life of this kind which is devoted to luxury, and wealth and power: it is foul and ugly and full of much abomination, disagreeable and burdensome, and charged with bitterness. For this indeed is the special feature in this life which deprives those who are captivated by it of every excuse, that although it is the aim of their longings and endeavours, yet is it filled with much annoyance and bitterness, and teems with innumerable evils, dangers, bloodshed, precipices, crags, murders, fears and tremblings, envy and ill-will, and intrigue, perpetual anxiety and care, and derives no profit, and produces no fruit from these great evils save punishment and revenge, and incessant torment. But although this is its character it seems to be to most men an object of ambition, and eager contention, which is a sign of the folly of those who are captivated by it, not of the blessedness of the thing itself. Little children indeed are eager and excited about toys and cannot take notice of the things which become full grown men. There is an excuse for them on account of their immaturity: but these others are debarred from the

right of defence, because, although of full age they are childish in disposition, and more foolish than children in their manner of life.

Now tell me why is wealth an object of ambition? For it is necessary to start from this point, because to the majority of those who are afflicted with this grievous malady it seems to be more precious than health and life, and public reputation, and good opinion, and country, and household, and friends, and kindred and everything else. Moreover the flame has ascended to the very clouds: and this fierce heat has taken possession of land and sea. Nor is there any one to quench this fire: but all people are engaged in stirring it up, both those who have been already caught by it, and those who have not yet been caught, in order that they may be captured. And you may see every one, husband and wife, household slave, and freeman, rich and poor, each according to his ability carrying loads which supply much fuel to this fire by day and night: loads not of wood or faggots (for the fire is not of that kind), but loads of souls and bodies, of unrighteousness and iniquity. For such is the material of which a fire of this kind is wont to be kindled. For those who have riches place no limit anywhere to this monstrous passion, even if they compass the whole world: and the poor press on to get in advance of them, and a kind of incurable craze, and unrestrainable frenzy and irremediable disease possesses the souls of all. And this affection has conquered every other kind and thrust it away expelling it from the soul: neither friends nor kindred are taken into account: and why do I speak of friends and kindred? Not even wife and children are regarded, and what can be dearer to man than these? But all things are dashed to the ground and trampled underfoot, when this savage and inhuman mistress has laid hold of the souls of all who are taken captive by her. For as an inhuman mistress, and harsh tyrant, and savage barbarian, and public and expensive prostitute she debases and exhausts and punishes with innumerable dangers and

torments those who have chosen to be in bondage to her; and yet although she is terrible and harsh, and fierce and cruel, and has the face of a barbarian, or rather of a wild beast, fiercer than a wolf or a lion, she seems to those who have been taken captive by her gentle and loveable, and sweeter than honey. And although she forges swords and weapons against them every day, and digs pitfalls and leads them to precipices and crags and weaves endless snares of punishment for them, yet is she supposed to make these things objects of ambition to those who have been made captive, and those who are desiring to be captured. And just as a sow delights and revels in wallowing in the ditch and mire, and beetles delight in perpetually crawling over dung; even so they who are captivated by the love of money are more miserable than these creatures. For the abomination is greater in this case, and the mire more offensive: for they who are addicted to this passion imagine that much pleasure is derived from it: which does not arise from the nature of the thing, but of the understanding which is afflicted with such an irrational taste. And this taste is worse in their case than in that of brutes: for as with the mire and the dung the cause of pleasure is not in them, but in the irrational nature of the creatures who plunge into it; even so count it to be in the case of human beings.

7. And how might we cure those who are thus disposed? It would be possible if they would open their ears to us, and unfold their heart, and receive our words. For it is impossible to turn and divert the irrational animals from their unclean habit; for they are destitute of reason: but this the gentlest of all tribes, honoured by reason and speech, I mean human nature, might, if it chose, readily and easily be released from the mire and the stench, and the dung hill and its abomination. For wherefore, O man, do riches seem to you worthy such diligent pursuit? Is it on account of the pleasure which no doubt is derived from the table? Or on account of the

honour and the escort of those who pay court to you, because of your wealth? Is it because you are able to defend yourself against those who annoy you, and to be an object of fear to all? For you cannot name any other reasons, save pleasure and flattery, and fear, and the power of taking revenge; for wealth is not generally wont to make any one wiser, or more self-controlled, or more gentle, or more intelligent, or kind, or benevolent, or superior to anger, or gluttony or pleasure: it does not train any one to be moderate, or teach him how to be humble, nor introduce and implant any other piece of virtue in the soul. Neither could you say for which of these things it deserves to be so diligently sought and desired. For not only is it ignorant how to plant and cultivate any good thing, but even if it finds a store of them it mars and stunts and blights them; and some of them it even uproots, and introduces their opposites, unmeasured licentiousness, unseasonable wrath, unrighteous anger, pride, arrogance, foolishness. But let me not speak of these; for they who have been seized by this malady will not endure to hear about virtue and vice, being entirely abandoned to pleasure and therefore enslaved to it. Come then let us forego for the time being the consideration of these points, and let us bring forward the others which remain, and see whether wealth has any pleasure, or any honour: for in my eyes the case is quite the reverse. And first of all, if you please, let us investigate the meals of rich and poor, and ask the guests which they are who enjoy the purest and most genuine pleasure; is it they who recline for a full day on couches, and join breakfast and dinner together, and distend their stomach, and blunt their senses, and sink the vessel by an overladen cargo of food, and waterlog the ship, and drench it as in some shipwreck of the body, and devise fetters, and manacles, and gags, and bind their whole body with the band of drunkenness and surfeit more grievous than an iron chain, and enjoy no sound pure sleep undisturbed by frightful dreams, and

are more miserable than madmen and introduce a kind of self-imposed demon into the soul and display themselves as a laughing stock to the gaze of their servants, or rather to the kinder sort among them as a tragical spectacle eliciting tears, and cannot recognize any of those who are present, and are incapable of speaking or hearing but have to be carried away from their couches to their bed—or is it they who are sober and vigilant, and limit their eating by their need, and sail with a favourable breeze, and find hunger and thirst the best relish in their food and drink? For nothing is so conducive to enjoyment and health as to be hungry and thirsty when one attacks the viands, and to identify satiety with the simple necessity of food, never overstepping the limits of this, nor imposing a load upon the body too great for its strength.

8. But if you disbelieve my statement study the physical condition, and the soul of each class. Are not the bodies vigorous of those who live thus moderately (for do not tell me of that which rarely happens, although some may be weak from some other circumstance, but form your judgment from those instances which are of constant occurrence), I say are they not vigorous, and their senses clear, fulfilling their proper function with much ease? Whereas the bodies of the others are flaccid and softer than wax, and beset with a crowd of maladies? For gout soon fastens upon them, and untimely palsy, and premature old age, and headache, and flatulence, and feebleness of digestion, and loss of appetite, and they require constant attendance of physicians, and perpetual doseing, and daily care. Are these things pleasurable? Tell me. Who of those that know what pleasure really is would say so? For pleasure is produced when desire leads the way, and fruition follows: now if there is fruition, but desire is nowhere to be found, the conditions of pleasure fail and vanish. On this account also invalids, although the most charming food is set before them, partake of it with a

feeling of disgust and sense of oppression: because there is no desire which gives a keen relish to the enjoyment of it. For it is not the nature of the food, or of the drink, but the appetite of the eaters which is wont to produce the desire, and is capable of causing pleasure. Therefore also a certain wise man who had an accurate knowledge of all that concerned pleasure, and understood how to moralize about these things said *"the full soul mocks at honeycombs:"* showing that the conditions of pleasure consist not in the nature of the meal, but in the disposition of the eaters. Therefore also the prophet recounting the wonders in Egypt and in the desert mentioned this in connection with the others *"He satisfied them with honey out of the rock."* And yet nowhere does it appear that honey actually sprang forth for them out of the rock: what then is the meaning of the expression? Because the people being exhausted by much toil and long travelling, and distressed by great thirst rushed to the cool spring, their craving for drink serving as a relish, the writer wishing to describe the pleasures which they received from those fountains called the water honey, not meaning that the element was converted into honey, but that the pleasure received from the water rivalled the sweetness of honey, inasmuch as those who partook of it rushed to it in their eagerness to drink.

Since then these things are so and no one can deny it, however stupid he may be: is it not perfectly plain that pure, undiluted, and lively pleasure is to be found at the tables of the poor? Whereas at the tables of the rich there is discomfort, and disgust and defilement? As that wise man has said *"even sweet things seem to be a vexation."*

9. But riches some one will say procure honour for those who possess them, and enable them to take vengeance on their enemies with ease. And is this a reason, pray, why riches seem to you desirable and worth contending for—that they nourish the most dangerous passion in our nature, leading on

anger into action, swelling the empty bubbles of ambition, and stimulating and urging men to arrogance? Why these are just the very reasons why we ought resolutely to turn our backs upon riches, because they introduce certain fierce and dangerous wild beasts into our heart depriving us of the real honour which we might receive from all, and introducing to deluded men another which is the opposite of this, only painted over with its colours, and persuading them to fancy that it is the same, when by nature it is not so, but only seems to be so to the eye. For as the beauty of courtesans, made up as it is of dyes and pigments, is destitute of real beauty, yet makes a foul and ugly face appear fair and beautiful to those who are deluded by it when it is not so in reality: even so also riches force flattery to look like honour. For I beg you not to consider the praises which are openly bestowed through fear and fawning: for these are only tints and pigments; but unfold the conscience of each of those who flatter you in this fashion, and inside it you will see countless accusers declaring against you, and loathing and detesting you more than your bitterest adversaries and foes. And if ever a change of circumstances should occur which would remove and expose this mask which fear has manufactured, just as the sun when it emits a hotter ray than usual discloses the real countenances of those women whom I mentioned, then you will see clearly that all through the former time you were held in the greatest contempt by those who paid court to you, and you fancied you were enjoying honour from those who thoroughly hated you, and in their heart poured infinite abuse upon you, and longed to see you involved in extreme calamities. For there is nothing like virtue to produce honour—honour neither forced nor feigned, nor hidden under a mask of deceit, but real and genuine, and able to stand the test of hard times.

10. But do you wish to take vengeance on those who have annoyed you? This, as I was saying just now, is the very reason why wealth ought specially to be avoided. For it prepares you to thrust the sword against yourself, and renders you liable to a heavier account in the future day of reckoning, and makes your punishment intolerable. For revenge is so great an evil that it actually revokes the mercy of God, and cancels the forgiveness of countless sins which has been already bestowed. For he who received remission of the debt of ten thousand talents, and after having obtained so great a boon by merely asking for it then made a demand of one hundred pence from his fellow servant, a demand, that is, for satisfaction for his transgression against himself, in his severity towards his fellow servant recorded his own condemnation; and for this reason and no other he was delivered to the tormentors, and racked, and required to pay back the ten thousand talents; and he was not allowed the benefit of any excuse or defence, but suffered the most extreme penalty, having been commanded to deposit the whole debt which the lovingkindness of God had formerly remitted. [Matthew 18:23-35] Is this then the reason, pray, why wealth is so earnestly pursued by you, because it so easily conducts you into sin of this kind? Nay verily, this is why you ought to abhor it as a foe and an adversary teeming with countless murders. But poverty, some one will say, disposes men to be discontented and often also to utter profane words, and condescend to mean actions. It is not poverty which does this, but littleness of soul: for Lazarus also was poor, aye! very poor: and besides poverty he suffered from infirmity, a bitterer trial than any form of poverty, and one which makes poverty more severely felt; and in addition to infirmity there was a total absence of protectors, and difficulty in finding any to supply his wants, which increased the bitterness of poverty and infirmity. For each of these things is painful in itself, but when there are none to minister to the

sufferer's wants, the suffering becomes greater, the flame more painful, the distress more bitter, the tempest fiercer, the billows stronger, the furnace hotter. And if one examines the case thoroughly there was yet a fourth trial besides these— the unconcern and luxury of the rich man who dwelt hard by. And if you would find a fifth thing, serving as fuel to the flame, you will see quite clearly that he was beset by it. For not only was that rich man living luxuriously, but twice, and thrice, or rather indeed several times in the day he saw the poor man: for he had been laid at his gate, being a grievous spectacle of pitiable distress, and the bare sight of him was sufficient to soften even a heart of stone: and yet even this did not induce that unmerciful man to assist this case of poverty: but he had his luxurious table spread, and goblets wreathed with flowers, and pure wine plentifully poured forth, and grand armies of cooks, and parasites, and flatterers from early dawn, and troops of singers, cupbearers, and jesters; and he spent all his time in devising every species of dissipation, and drunkenness, and surfeiting, and in revelling in dress and feasting and many other things. But although he saw that poor man every day distressed by grievous hunger and the bitterest infirmity, and the oppression of his many sores, and by destitution, and the ills which result from these things, he never even gave him a thought: yet the parasites and the flatterers were pampered even beyond their need; but the poor man, and he so very poor, and encompassed with so many miseries, was not even vouchsafed the crumbs which fell from that table, although he greatly desired them: and yet none of these things injured him, he did not give vent to a bitter word, he did not utter a profane speech; but like a piece of gold which shines all the more brilliantly when it is purified by excessive heat, even so he, although oppressed by these sufferings, was superior to all of them, and to the agitation which in many cases is produced by them. For if generally speaking poor men, when

they see rich men, are consumed with envy and racked by malicious ill-will, and deem life not worth living, and this even when they are well supplied with necessary food, and have persons to minister to their wants; what would the condition of this poor man have been had he not been very wise and noble hearted, seeing that he was poor beyond all other poor men, and not only poor, but also infirm, and without any one to protect or cheer him, and lay in the midst of the city as if in a remote desert, and wasted away with bitter hunger, and saw all good things being poured upon the rich man as out of a fountain, and had not the benefit of any human consolation, but lay exposed as a perpetual meal for the tongues of the dogs, for he was so enfeebled and broken down in body that he could not scare them away? Do you perceive that he who does not injure himself suffers no evil? For I will again take up the same argument.

11. For what harm was done to this hero by his bodily infirmity? Or by the absence of protectors? Or by the coming of the dogs? Or the evil proximity of the rich man? Or by the great luxury, haughtiness and arrogance of the latter? Did it enervate him for the contest on behalf of virtue? Did it ruin his fortitude? Nowhere was he harmed at all, but that multitude of sufferings, and the cruelty of the rich man, rather increased his strength, and became the pledge for him of infinite crowns of victory, a means of adding to his rewards, an augmentation of his recompense, and a promise of an increased requital. For he was crowned not merely on account of his poverty, or of his hunger or of his sores, or of the dogs licking them: but because, having such a neighbour as the rich man, and being seen by him every day, and perpetually overlooked he endured this trial bravely and with much fortitude, a trial which added no small flame but in fact a very strong one to the fire of poverty, and infirmity and loneliness.

And, tell me, what was the case of the blessed Paul? For there is nothing to prevent my making mention of him again. Did he not experience innumerable storms of trial? And in what respect was he injured by them? Was he not crowned with victory all the more in consequence—because he suffered hunger, because he was consumed with cold and nakedness, because he was often tortured with the scourge, because he was stoned, because he was cast into the sea? But then some one says he was Paul, and called by Christ. Yet Judas also was one of the twelve, and he too was called of Christ; but neither his being of the twelve nor his call profited him, because he had not a mind disposed to virtue. But Paul although struggling with hunger, and at a loss to procure necessary food, and daily undergoing such great sufferings, pursued with great zeal the road which leads to heaven: whereas Judas although he had been called before him, and enjoyed the same advantages as he did, and was initiated in the highest form of Christian life, and partook of the holy table and that most awful of sacred feasts, and received such grace as to be able to raise the dead, and cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils, and often heard discourses concerning poverty, and spent so long a time in the company of Christ Himself, and was entrusted with the money of the poor, so that his passion might be soothed thereby (for he was a thief) even then did not become any better, although he had been favoured with such great condescension. For since Christ knew that he was covetous, and destined to perish on account of his love of money he not only did not demand punishment of him for this at that time, but with a view to softening down his passion he was entrusted with the money of the poor, that having some means of appeasing his greed he might be saved from falling into that appalling gulf of sin, checking the greater evil beforehand by a lesser one.

12. Thus in no case will any one be able to injure a man who does not choose to injure himself: but if a man is not willing to be temperate, and to aid himself from his own resources no one will ever be able to profit him. Therefore also that wonderful history of the Holy Scriptures, as in some lofty, large, and broad picture, has portrayed the lives of the men of old time, extending the narrative from Adam to the coming of Christ: and it exhibits to you both those who are upset, and those who are crowned with victory in the contest, in order that it may instruct you by means of all examples that no one will be able to injure one who is not injured by himself, even if all the world were to kindle a fierce war against him. For it is not stress of circumstances, nor variation of seasons, nor insults of men in power, nor intrigues besetting you like snow storms, nor a crowd of calamities, nor a promiscuous collection of all the ills to which mankind is subject, which can disturb even slightly the man who is brave, and temperate, and watchful; just as on the contrary the indolent and supine man who is his own betrayer cannot be made better, even with the aid of innumerable ministrations. This at least was made manifest to us by the parable of the two men, of whom the one built his house upon the rock, the other upon the sand: not that we are to think of sand and rock, or of a building of stone, and a roof, or of rivers, and rain, and wild winds, beating against the buildings, but we are to extract virtue and vice as the meaning of these things, and to perceive from them that no one injures a man who does not injure himself. Therefore neither the rain although driven furiously along, nor the streams dashing against it with much vehemence, nor the wild winds beating against it with a mighty rush, shook the one house in any degree: but it remained undisturbed, unmoved: that you might understand that no trial can agitate the man who does not betray himself. But the house of the other man was easily swept away, not on account of

the force of the trials (for in that case the other would have experienced the same fate), but on account of his own folly; for it did not fall because the wind blew upon it, but because it was built upon the sand, that is to say upon indolence and iniquity. For before that tempest beat upon it, it was weak and ready to fall. For buildings of that kind, even if no one puts any pressure on them, fall to pieces of themselves, the foundation sinking and giving way in every direction. And just as cobwebs part asunder, although no strain is put upon them, but adamant remains unshaken even when it is struck: even so also they who do not injure themselves become stronger, even if they receive innumerable blows; but they who betray themselves, even if there is no one to harass them, fall of themselves, and collapse and perish. For even thus did Judas perish, not only having been unassailed by any trial of this kind, but having actually enjoyed the benefit of much assistance.

13. Would you like me to illustrate this argument in the case of whole nations? What great forethought was bestowed upon the Jewish nation! Was not the whole visible creation arranged with a view to their service? Was not a new and strange method of life introduced among them? For they had not to send down to a market, and so they had the benefit of things which are sold for money without paying any price for them: neither did they cleave furrows nor drag a plough, nor harrow the ground, nor cast in seed, nor had they need of rain and wind, and annual seasons, nor sunshine, nor phases of the moon, nor climate, nor anything of that kind; they prepared no threshing floor, they threshed no grain, they used no winnowing fan for separating the grain from the chaff, they turned no mill-stone, they built no oven, they brought neither wood nor fire into the house, they needed no baker's art, they handled no spade, they sharpened no sickle, they required no other art, I mean of weaving or building or supplying shoes: but the

word of God was everything to them. And they had a table prepared off hand, free of all toil and labour. For such was the nature of the manna; it was new and fresh, nowhere costing them any trouble, nor straining them by labour. And their clothes, and shoes, and even their physical frame forgot their natural infirmity: for the former did not wear out in the course of so long a time nor did their feet swell although they made such long marches. Of physicians, and medicine, and all other concern about that kind of art, there was no mention at all among them; so completely banished was infirmity of every kind: for it is said "*He brought them out with silver and gold; and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.*" But like men who had quitted this world, and were transplanted to another and a better one, even so did they eat and drink, neither did the sun's ray when it waxed hot smite their heads; for the cloud parted them from the fiery beam, hovering all round them, and serving like a portable shelter for the whole body of the people. Neither at night did they need a torch to disperse the darkness, but they had the pillar of fire, a source of unspeakable light, supplying two wants, one by its shining, the other by directing the course of their journey; for it was not only luminous, but also conducted that countless host along the wilderness with more certainty than any human guide. And they journeyed not only upon land but also upon sea as if it had been dry land; and they made an audacious experiment upon the laws of nature by treading upon that angry sea, marching through it as if it had been the hard and resisting surface of a rock; and indeed when they placed their feet upon it the element became like solid earth, and gently sloping plains and fields; but when it received their enemies it wrought after the nature of sea; and to the Israelites indeed it served as a chariot, but to their enemies it became a grave; conveying the former across with ease, but drowning the latter with great violence. And the disorderly flood of water displayed the

good order and subordination which marks reasonable and highly intelligent men, fulfilling the part at one time of a guardian, at another of an executioner, and exhibiting these opposites together on one day. What shall one say of the rocks which gave forth streams of water? What of the clouds of birds which covered the whole face of the earth by the number of their carcasses? What of the wonders in Egypt? What of the marvels in the wilderness? What of the triumphs and bloodless victories? For they subdued those who opposed them like men keeping holiday rather than making war. And they vanquished their own masters without the use of arms; and overcame those who fought with them after they left Egypt by means of singing and music; and what they did was a festival rather than a campaign, a religious ceremony rather than a battle. For all these wonders took place not merely for the purpose of supplying their need, but also that the people might preserve more accurately the doctrine which Moses inculcated of the knowledge of God; and voices proclaiming the presence of their Master were uttered on all sides of them. For the sea loudly declared this, by becoming a road for them to march upon, and then turning into sea again: and the waters of the Nile uttered this voice when they were converted into the nature of blood; and the frogs, and the great army of locusts, and the caterpillar and blight declared the same thing to all the people; and the wonders in the desert, the manna, the pillar of fire, the cloud, the quails, and all the other incidents served them as a book, and writing which could never be effaced, echoing daily in their memory and resounding in their mind. Nevertheless after such great and remarkable providence, after all those unspeakable benefits, after such mighty miracles, after care indescribable, after continual teaching, after instruction by means of speech, and admonition by means of deeds, after glorious victories, after extraordinary triumphs, after abundant supply of food, after the plentiful

production of water, after the ineffable glory with which they were invested in the eyes of the human race, being ungrateful and senseless they worshipped a calf, and paid reverence to the head of a bull, even when the memorials of God's benefits in Egypt were fresh in their minds, and they were still in actual enjoyment of many more.

14. But the Ninevites, although a barbarous and foreign people who had never participated in any of these benefits, small or great, neither words, nor wonders, nor works, when they saw a man who had been saved from shipwreck, who had never associated with them before, but appeared then for the first time, enter their city and say "*yet three days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,*" [Jonah 3:4] were so converted and reformed by the mere sound of these words, and putting away their former wickedness, advanced in the direction of virtue by the path of repentance, that they caused the sentence of God to be revoked, and arrested the threatened disturbance of their city, and averted the heaven-sent wrath, and were delivered from every kind of evil. "*For,*" we read, "*God saw that every man turned from his evil way, and was converted to the Lord.*" [Jonah 3:10] How turned? I ask. Although their wickedness was great, their iniquity unspeakable, their moral sores difficult to heal, which was plainly shown by the prophet when he said "*their wickedness ascended even unto the heaven:*" [Jonah 1:2] indicating by the distance of the place the magnitude of their wickedness; nevertheless such great iniquity which was piled up to such a height as to reach even to the heaven, all this in the course of three days in a brief moment of time through the effect of a few words which they heard from the mouth of one man and he an unknown shipwrecked stranger they so thoroughly abolished, removed out of sight, and put away, as to have the happiness of hearing the declaration "*God saw that every one turned from his evil way, and He repented of the evil which God said He*

would do them." Do you see that he who is temperate and watchful not only suffers no injury at the hands of man, but even turns back Heaven-sent wrath? Whereas he who betrays himself and harms himself by his own doing, even if he receives countess benefits, reaps no great advantage. So, at least, the Jews were not profited by those great miracles, nor on the other hand were the Ninevites harmed by having no share in them; but inasmuch as they were inwardly well-disposed, having laid hold of a slight opportunity they became better, barbarians and foreigners though they were, ignorant of all divine revelation, and dwelling at a distance from Palestine.

15. Again, I ask, was the virtue of the *"three children"* corrupted by the troubles which beset them? Whilst they were still young, mere youths, of immature age, did they not undergo that grievous affliction of captivity? Had they not to make a long journey from home, and when they had arrived in the foreign country were they not cut off from fatherland and home and temple, and altar and sacrifices, and offerings, and drink offerings, and even the singing of psalms? For not only were they debarred from their home, but as a consequence from many forms of worship also. Were they not given up into the hands of barbarians, wolves rather than men? And, most painful calamity of all, when they had been banished into so distant and barbarous a country, and were suffering such a grievous captivity were they not without teacher, without prophets, without ruler? *"for,"* it is written, *"there is no ruler, nor prophet, nor governor, nor place for offering before You and finding mercy."* Yea moreover they were cast into the royal palace, as upon some cliff and crag, and a sea full of rocks and reefs, being compelled to sail over that angry sea without a pilot or signal man, or crew, or sails; and they were cooped up in the royal court as in a prison. For inasmuch as they knew spiritual wisdom, and were superior to worldly things, and despised all human pride and made the wings of their soul soar

upwards, they counted their sojourn there as an aggravation of their trouble. For had they been outside the court, and dwelling in a private house they would have enjoyed more independence: but having been cast into that prison (for they deemed the splendour of the palace no better than a prison, no safer than a place of rocks and crags) they were straightway subjected to cruel embarrassment. For the king commanded them to be partakers of his own table, a luxurious, unclean and profane table, a thing which was forbidden them, and seemed more terrible than death; and they were lonely men hemmed in like lambs among so many wolves. And they were constrained to choose between being consumed by famine or rather led off to execution, and tasting of forbidden meats. What then did these youths do, forlorn as they were, captives, strangers, slaves of those who commanded these things. They did not consider that this strait or the absolute power of him who possessed the state sufficed to justify their compliance; but they employed every device and expedient to enable them to avoid the sin, although they were abandoned on every side. For they could not influence men by money: how should they, being captives? Nor by friendship and social intercourse? How should they being strangers? Nor could they get the better of them by any exertion of power: how was it possible being slaves? Nor master them by force of numbers: how could they being only three? Therefore they approached the eunuch who possessed the necessary authority, and persuaded him by their arguments. For when they saw him fearful and trembling, and in an agony of alarm concerning his own safety, and the dread of death which agitated his soul was intolerable: *"for I fear"* said he *"my lord the king, lest he should see your countenances sadder than the children which are of your sort and so shall you endanger my head to the king,"* [Daniel 1:10] having released him from this fear they persuaded him to grant them the favour. And inasmuch as they brought to the work all

the strength which they had, God also henceforth contributed his strength to it. For it was not God's doing only that they achieved those things for the sake of which they were to receive a reward, but the beginning and starting point was from their own purpose, and having manifested that to be noble and brave, they won for themselves the help of God, and so accomplished their aim.

16. Do you then perceive that if a man does not injure himself, no one else will be able to harm him? Behold at least youthfulness, and captivity and destitution, and removal into a foreign land, and loneliness, and dearth of protectors, and a stern command, and great fear of death assailing the mind of the eunuch, and poverty, and feebleness of numbers, and dwelling in the midst of barbarians, and having enemies for masters, and surrender into the hands of the king himself, and separation from all their kindred, and removal from priests and prophets, and from all others who cared for them, and the cessation of drink offerings and sacrifices, and loss of the temple and psalmody, and yet none of these things harmed them; but they had more renown then than when they enjoyed these things in their native land. And after they had accomplished this task first and had wreathed their brows with the glorious garland of victory, and had kept the law even in a foreign land, and trampled under foot the tyrant's command, and overcome fear of the avenger, and yet received no harm from any quarter, as if they had been quietly living at home and enjoying the benefit of all those things which I mentioned, after they had thus fearlessly accomplished their work they were again summoned to other contests. And again they were the same men; and they were subjected to a more severe trial than the former one, and a furnace was kindled, and they were confronted by the barbarian army in company with the king: and the whole Persian force was set in motion and everything was devised which tended to put deceit or constraint upon them:

various kinds of music, and various forms of punishment, and threats, and what they saw on every side of them was alarming, and the words which they heard were more alarming than what they saw; nevertheless inasmuch as they did not betray themselves, but made the most of their own strength, they never sustained any kind of damage: but even won for themselves more glorious crowns of victory than before. For Nabuchadonosor bound them and cast them into the furnace, yet he burnt them not, but rather benefited them, and rendered them more illustrious. And although they were deprived of temple (for I will repeat my former remarks) and altar, and fatherland, and priests and prophets, although they were in a foreign and barbarous country, in the very midst of the furnace, surrounded by all that mighty host, the king himself who wrought this looking on, they set up a glorious trophy, and won a notable victory, having sung that admirable and extraordinary hymn which from that day to this has been sung throughout the world and will continue to be sung to future generations.

Thus then when a man does not injure himself, he cannot possibly be hurt by another: for I will not cease harping constantly upon this saying. For if captivity, and bondage, and loneliness and loss of country and all kindred and death, and burning, and a great army and a savage tyrant could not do any damage to the innate virtue of the three children captives, bondmen, strangers though they were in a foreign land, but the enemy's assault became to them rather the occasion of greater confidence: what shall be able to harm the temperate man? There is nothing, even should he have the whole world in arms against him. But, some one may say, in their case God stood beside them, and plucked them out of the flame. Certainly He did; and if you will play your part to the best of your power, the help which God supplies will assuredly follow.

17. Nevertheless the reason why I admire those youths, and pronounce them blessed, and enviable, is not because they tramped on the flame, and vanquished the force of the fire: but because they were bound, and cast into the furnace, and delivered to the fire for the sake of true doctrine. For this it was which constituted the completeness of their triumph, and the wreath of victory was placed on their brows as soon as they were cast into the furnace and before the issue of events it began to be weaved for them from the moment that they uttered those words which they spoke with much boldness and freedom of speech to the king when they were brought into his presence. *"We have no need to answer you concerning this thing: for our God in Heaven whom we serve is able to rescue us out of the burning fiery furnace: and He will deliver us out of your hands, O King. But if not, be it known unto you, O King, that we will not serve your Gods nor worship the golden image which you have set up."* [Daniel 3:16-18] After the utterance of these words I proclaimed them conquerors; after these words having grasped the prize of victory, they hastened on to the glorious crown of martyrdom, following up the confession which they made through their words with the confession made through their deeds. But if when they had been cast into it, the fire had respect for their bodies, and undid their bonds, and suffered them to go down into it without fear, and forgot its natural force, so that the furnace of fire became as a fountain of cool water, this marvel was the effect of God's grace and of the divine wonder-working power. Yet the heroes themselves even before these things took place, as soon as they set foot in the flames had erected their trophy, and won their victory, and put on their crown, and had been proclaimed conquerors both in Heaven and on earth, and so far as they were concerned nothing was wanting for their renown. What then would you have to say to these things? Have you been driven into exile, and expelled from your country? Behold

so also were they. Have you suffered captivity, and become the servant of barbarian masters. Well! This also you will find befell these men. But you have no one present there to regulate your state nor to advise or instruct you? Well! Of attention of this kind these men were destitute. Or you have been bound, burned, put to death? For you can not tell me of anything more painful than these things. Yet lo! These men having gone through them all, were made more glorious by each one of them, yea more exceedingly illustrious, and increased the store of their treasures in Heaven. And the Jews indeed who had both temple, and altar, and ark and cherubim, and mercy-seat, and veil, and an infinite multitude of priests, and daily services, and morning and evening sacrifices, and continually heard the voices of the prophets, both living and departed, sounding in their ears, and carried about with them the recollection of the wonders which were done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and all the rest, and turned the story of these things over in their hands, and had them inscribed upon their door posts and enjoyed the benefit at that time of much supernatural power and every other kind of help were yet no wise profited, but rather damaged, having set up idols in the temple itself, and having sacrificed their sons and daughters under trees, and in almost every part of the country in Palestine having offered those unlawful and accursed sacrifices, and perpetrated countless other deeds yet more monstrous. But these men although in the midst of a barbarous and hostile land, having their occupation in a tyrant's house, deprived of all that care of which I have been speaking, led away to execution, and subjected to burning, not only suffered no harm there from small or great, but became the more illustrious. Knowing then these things, and collecting instances of the like kind from the inspired divine Scriptures (for it is possible to find many such examples in the case of various other persons) we deem that neither a difficulty arising from seasons or events, nor compulsion and

force, nor the arbitrary authority of potentates furnish a sufficient excuse for us when we transgress. I will now conclude my discourse by repeating what I said at the beginning, that if any one be harmed and injured he certainly suffers this at his own hands, not at the hands of others even if there be countless multitudes injuring and insulting him: so that if he does not suffer this at his own hands, not all the creatures who inhabit the whole earth and sea if they combined to attack him would be able to hurt one who is vigilant and sober in the Lord. Let us then, I beseech you, be sober and vigilant at all times, and let us endure all painful things bravely that we may obtain those everlasting and pure blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and power, now and ever throughout all ages. Amen.

Two Exhortations to Theodore After His Fall

Letter 1

"Oh! That my head were water, and my eyes a fountain of tears!"

[Jeremiah 9:1] it is seasonable for me to utter these words now, yea much more than for the prophet in his time. For although I am not about to mourn over many cities, or whole nations, yet shall I mourn over a soul which is of equal value with many such nations, yea even more precious. For if one man who does the will of God is better than ten thousand transgressors, then you were formerly better than ten thousand Jews. Wherefore no one would now blame me if I were to compose more lamentations than those which are contained in the prophet, and to utter complaints yet more vehement. For it is not the overthrow of a city which I mourn, nor the captivity of wicked men, but the desolation of a sacred soul, the destruction and effacement of a Christ-bearing temple. For would not any one who knew in the days of its glory that well-ordered mind of yours which the devil has now set on fire, groan, imitating the lamentation of the prophet; when he hears that barbarian hands have defiled the holy of holies, and have set fire to all things and burned them up, the cherubim, the ark, the mercy seat, the tables of stone, the golden pot? For this calamity is bitterer, yea bitterer than that, in proportion as the pledges deposited in your soul were far more precious than those. This temple is holier than that; for it glistened not with gold and silver, but with the grace of the Spirit, and in place of the ark and the cherubim, it had Christ, and His Father, and the

Paraclete seated within. But now all is changed, and the temple is desolate, and bare of its former beauty and comeliness, unadorned with its divine and unspeakable adornments, destitute of all security and protection; it has neither door nor bolt, and is laid open to all manner of soul-destroying and shameful thoughts; and if the thought of arrogance or fornication, or avarice, or any more accursed than these, wish to enter in there is no one to hinder them; whereas formerly, even as the Heaven is inaccessible to all these, so also was the purity of your soul. Now perhaps I shall seem to say what is incredible to some who now witness your desolation and overthrow; for on this account I wail and mourn, and shall not cease doing so, until I see you again established in your former lustre. For although this seems to be impossible to men, yet to God all things are possible. For it is He *"who raises the poor from the earth, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him with the princes, even with the princes of his people."* It is He *"who makes the barren woman to dwell at home, a mother rejoicing over her children."* Do not then despair of the most perfect change. For if the devil had such great power as to cast you down from that pinnacle and height of virtue into the extremity of evil doing, much more will God be able to draw you up again to your former confidence; and not only indeed to make you what you were before, but even much happier. Only be not downcast, nor fling away good hopes, nor fall into the condition of the ungodly. For it is not the multitude of sins which is wont to plunge men into despair, but impiety of soul. Therefore Solomon did not make the unqualified statement *"every one who has entered into the den of the wicked, despises;"* but only *"he who is ungodly."* For it is such persons only who are affected in this way when they have entered the den of the wicked. And this it is which does not suffer them to look up, and re-ascend to the position from which they fell. For this accursed thought pressing down like some yoke upon the

neck of the soul, and so forcing it to stoop, hinders it from looking up to the Master. Now it is the part of a brave and excellent man to break this yoke in pieces, to shake off the tormentor fastened upon him; and to utter the words of the prophet, *"As the eyes of a maiden look unto the hands of her mistress, even so our eyes look unto the Lord our God until He have mercy upon us. Have pity upon us, O Lord, have pity upon us, for we have been utterly filled with contempt."* Truly divine are these precepts, and decrees of the highest form of spiritual wisdom. We have been filled, it is said, with contempt, and have undergone countless distresses; nevertheless we shall not desist from looking up to God, neither shall we cease praying to him until He has received our petition. For this is the mark of a noble soul, not to be cast down, nor be dismayed at the multitude of the calamities which oppress it, nor to withdraw, after praying many times without success, but to persevere, until He have mercy upon us, even as the blessed David says.

2. For the reason why the devil plunges us into thoughts of despair is that he may cut off the hope which is towards God, the safe anchor, the foundation of our life, the guide of the way which leads to heaven, the salvation of perishing souls. *"For by hope"* it is said, *"we are saved."* [Romans 8:24] For this assuredly it is which, like some strong cord suspended from the heavens, supports our souls, gradually drawing towards that world on high those who cling firmly to it, and lifting them above the tempest of the evils of this life. If any one then becomes enervated, and lets go this sacred anchor, straightway he falls down, and is suffocated, having entered into the abyss of wickedness. And the Evil One knowing this, when he perceives that we are ourselves oppressed by the consciousness of evil deeds, steps in himself and lays upon us the additional burden, heavier than lead, of anxiety arising from despair; and if we accept it, it follows of necessity that we are immediately dragged down by the weight, and having

been parted from that cord, descend into the depth of misery where you yourself art now, having forsaken the commandments of the meek and lowly Master and executing all the injunctions of the cruel tyrant, and implacable enemy of our salvation; having broken in pieces the easy yoke, and cast away the light burden, and having put on the iron collar instead of these things, yea, having hung the ponderous millstone from your neck. Where then can you find a footing henceforth when you are submerging your unhappy soul, imposing on yourself this necessity of continually sinking downwards? Now the woman who had found the one coin called her neighbors to share her joy; saying, "*Rejoice with me;*" but I shall now invoke all friends, both mine and yours, for the contrary purpose, saying not "*Rejoice with me*" but "*Mourn with me,*" and take up the same strain of mourning, and utter the same cry of distress with me. For the worst possible loss has befallen me, not that some given number of talents of gold, or some large quantity of precious stones have dropped out of my hand, but that he who was more precious than all these things, who was sailing over this same sea, this great and broad sea with me, has, I know not how, slipped overboard, and fallen into the very pit of destruction.

3. Now if any should attempt to divert me from mourning, I shall reply to them in the words of the prophet, saying "*Let me alone, I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me.*" [Isaiah 22:4] For the mourning with which I mourn now is not of a kind to subject me to condemnation for excess in lamentation, but the cause is one for which even Paul, or Peter, had they been here, would not have been ashamed to weep and mourn, and reject all kinds of consolation. For those who bewail that death which is common to all one might reasonably accuse of much feebleness of spirit; but when in place of a corpse a dead soul lies before us, pierced with innumerable wounds, and yet even in its death manifesting its former

natural comeliness, and health, and beauty now extinguished, who can be so harsh and unsympathetic as to utter words of encouragement in place of wailing and lamentation? For as in the other world the absence of mourning is a mark of divine wisdom, so in this world the act of mourning is a mark of the same. He who had already mounted to the sky, who was laughing to scorn the vanity of this life, who regarded bodily beauty no more than if it had been in forms of stone, who despised gold as it had been mud, and every kind of luxury as mire, even he, having been suddenly overwhelmed with the feverish longing of a preposterous passion, has ruined his health, and manly strength, and the bloom of his youth, and become a slave of pleasure. Shall we not weep then, I pray you, for such a man and bewail him, until we have got him back again? And where do these things concern the human soul? It is not possible indeed to discover in this world the means of release from the death of the body, and yet even this does not stay the mourners from lamenting; but only in this world is it possible to bring to naught the death of the soul. *"For in Hades"* we read, *"who will confess you?"* Is it not then the height of stupidity that they who mourn the death of the body should do this so earnestly, although they know that they will not raise the dead man to life by their lamentation; but that we should not manifest anything of the kind, and this when we know that often there is hope of conducting the lost soul back to its former life? For many both now and in the days of our forefathers, having been perverted from the right position, and fallen headlong out of the straight path, have been so completely restored as to eclipse their former deeds by the latter, and to receive the prize, and be wreathed with the garland of victory, and be proclaimed among the conquerors, and be numbered in the company of the saints. For as long as any one stands in the furnace of pleasures, even if he has countless examples of this kind before him, the thing seems to him to be

impossible; but if he once gets a short start upon the way out from thence, by continually advancing he leaves the fiercer part of the fire behind him and will see the parts which are in front of him, and before his footsteps full of dew and much refreshment; only let us not despair or grow weary of the return; for he who is so affected, even if he has acquired boundless power and zeal, has acquired it to no purpose. For when he has once shut the door of repentance against himself, and has blocked the entrance into the race-course, how will he be able while he abides outside to accomplish any good thing, either small or great? On this account the Evil One uses all kinds of devices in order to plant in us this thought (of despair); for (if he succeeds) he will no longer have to sweat and toil in contending with us; how should he, when we are prostrate and fallen, and unwilling to resist him? For he who has been able to slip out of this chain, will recover his own strength and will not cease struggling against the devil to his last gasp, and even if he had countless other falls, he will get up again, and will smite his enemy; but he who is in bondage to the cogitations of despair, and has unstrung his own strength, how will he be able to prevail, and to resist, having on the contrary taken to flight?

4. And speak not to me of those who have committed small sins, but suppose the case of one who is filled full of all wickedness, and let him practice everything which excludes him from the kingdom, and let us suppose that this man is not one of those who were unbelievers from the beginning, but formerly belonged to the believers, and such as were well pleasing to God, but afterwards has become a fornicator, adulterer, effeminate, a thief, a drunkard, a sodomite, a reviler, and everything else of this kind; I will not approve even of this man despairing of himself, although he may have gone on to extreme old age in the practice of this great and unspeakable wickedness. For if the wrath of God were a passion,

one might well despair as being unable to quench the flame which he had kindled by so many evil doings; but since the Divine nature is passionless, even if He punishes, even if He takes vengeance, he does this not with wrath, but with tender care, and much loving-kindness; wherefore it behooves us to be of much good courage, and to trust in the power of repentance. For even those who have sinned against Him He is not wont to visit with punishment for His own sake; for no harm can traverse that divine nature; but He acts with a view to our advantage, and to prevent our perverseness becoming worse by our making a practice of despising and neglecting Him. For even as one who places himself outside the light inflicts no loss on the light, but the greatest upon himself being shut up in darkness; even so he who has become accustomed to despise that almighty power, does no injury to the power, but inflicts the greatest possible injury upon himself. And for this reason God threatens us with punishments, and often inflicts them, not as avenging Himself, but by way of attracting us to Himself. For a physician also is not distressed or vexed at the insults of those who are out of their minds, but yet does and contrives everything for the purpose of stopping those who do such unseemly acts, not looking to his own interests but to their profit; and if they manifest some small degree of self-control and sobriety he rejoices and is glad, and applies his remedies much more earnestly, not as revenging himself upon them for their former conduct, but as wishing to increase their advantage, and to bring them back to a purely sound state of health. Even so God when we fall into the very extremity of madness, says and does everything, not by way of avenging Himself on account of our former deeds; but because He wishes to release us from our disorder; and by means of right reason it is quite possible to be convinced of this.

5. Now if any one should dispute with us concerning these things we will confirm them out of the divine oracles. For who, I ask, became more depraved than the king of the Babylonians, who after having received such great experience of God's power as to make obeisance to His prophet, and command offerings and incense to be sacrificed to Him was again carried away to his former pride, and cast bound into the furnace those who did not honour himself before God. Nevertheless this man who was so cruel and impious, and rather a beast than a human being, God invited to repentance, and granted him several opportunities of conversion, first of all the miracle which took place in the furnace, and after that the vision which the king saw but which Daniel interpreted, a vision sufficient to bend even a heart of stone; and in addition to these things after the exhortation derived from events the prophet also himself advised him, saying *"Therefore, O king, let my counsel please you, and redeem your sins by alms, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; it may be that long suffering will be shown to your offense."* [Daniel 4:27] What do you say O wise and blessed man? After so great a fall is there again a way of return? And after so great a disease is health possible? And after so great a madness is there again a hope of soundness of mind? The king has deprived himself beforehand of all hope, first of all by having ignored Him who created him; and conducted him to this honour, although he had many evidences of His power and forethought to recount which occurred both in his own case and in the case of his forefathers; but after this again when he had received distinct tokens of God's wisdom and foreknowledge, and had seen magic, and astronomy and the theatre of the whole satanic system of jugglery overthrown, he exhibited deeds yet worse than the former. For things which the wise magi, the Gazarenes, could not explain, but confessed that they were beyond human nature, these a captive youth having caused to be solved for him, so

moved him by that miracle that he not only himself believed, but also became to the whole world a clear herald and teacher of this doctrine. [Daniel ii] Wherefore if even before having received such a token it was unpardonable in him to ignore God, much more so was it after that miracle, and his confession, and the teaching which was extended to others. For if he had not honestly believed that He was the only true God he would not have shown such honour to His servant, or have laid down such laws for others. But yet after making this kind of confession, he again lapsed into idolatry, and he who once fell on his face and made obeisance to the servant of God, broke out into such a pitch of madness, as to cast into the furnace the servants of God who did not make obeisance to himself. What then? Did God visit the apostate, as he deserved to be visited? No! He supplied him with greater tokens of His own power, drawing him back again after so great a display of arrogance to his former condition; and, what is yet more wonderful, that owing to the abundance of the miracles he might not again disbelieve what was done, the subject upon which He wrought the sign was none other than the furnace which the king himself kindled for the children whom he bound and cast therein. Even to extinguish the flame would have been a wonderful and strange thing; but the benign Deity in order to inspire him with greater fear, and increase his dismay, and undo all his hardness of heart, did what was greater and stranger than this. For, permitting the furnace to be kindled to as high a pitch as he desired, He then exhibited his own peculiar power, not by putting down the devices of his enemies, but by frustrating them when they were set on foot. And, to prevent any one who saw them survive the flame from supposing that it was a vision, He suffered those who cast them in to be burned, thus proving that the thing seen was really fire; for otherwise it would not have devoured naphtha and tow, and fagots and such a large number of bodies; but nothing is stronger than His

command; but the nature of all existing things obeys Him who brought them into being out of nothing; which was just what He manifested at that time; for the flame having received perishable bodies, held aloof from them as if they had been imperishable, and restored in safety, with the addition of much lustre, the deposit entrusted to it. For like kings from some royal court, even so did those children come forth from the furnace, no one having the patience to look any longer at the king, but all transferring their eyes from him to the strange spectacle, and neither the diadem nor the purple robe, nor any other feature of royal pomp, attracted the multitudes of unbelievers so much as the sight of those faithful ones, who tarried long in the fire, and then came out of it as men might have done who had undergone this in a dream. For the most fragile of all our features, I mean the hair, prevailed more mightily than adamant against the all-devouring flame. And the fact that when they were cast into the midst of the fire they suffered no harm was not the only wonder, but the further fact that they were speaking the whole time. Now all who have witnessed persons burning are aware, that if they keep their lips fast closed, they can hold out for a short time at least against the conflagration; but if any one chances to open his mouth, the soul instantly takes its flight from the body. Nevertheless after such great miracles had taken place, and all who were present and beheld were amazed, and those who were absent had been informed of the fact by means of letters, the king who instructed others remained himself without amendment, and went back again to his former wickedness. And yet even then God did not punish him, but was still long-suffering, counselling him both by means of visions and by His prophet. But when he was not made anywise better by any of these things, then at last God inflicted punishment upon him, not by way of avenging himself on account of his former deeds, but as cutting off the occasion of future evils,

and checking the advance of wickedness, and He did not inflict even this permanently, but after having chastised him for a few years, He restored him again to his former honour, without having suffered any loss from his punishment, but on the contrary having gained the greatest possible good; a firm hold upon faith in God, and repentance on account of his former misdeeds. [Daniel iv]

6. For such is the loving-kindness of God; He never turns his face away from a sincere repentance, but if any one has pushed on to the very extremity of wickedness, and chooses to return thence towards the path of virtue, God accepts and welcomes, and does everything so as to restore him to his former position. And He does what is yet more merciful; for even should any one not manifest complete repentance, he does not pass by one which is small and insignificant, but assigns a great reward even to this; which is evident from what Esaias the prophet says concerning the people of the Jews, speaking on this wise: *"On account of his sin I put him to pain for a little while, and smote him, and turned my face away from him, and he was pained, and walked sorrowfully, and then I healed him, and comforted him."* And we might cite as another witness that most ungodly king, who was given over to sin by the influence of his wife: yet when he only sorrowed, and put on sackcloth, and condemned his offenses, he so won for himself the mercy of God, as to be released from all the evils which were impending over him. For God said to Elias *"Do you see how Ahab is pricked in the heart before my face? I will not bring the evil upon him in his own days, because he has wept before me."* And after this again, Manasses, having exceeded all in fury and tyranny, and having subverted the legal form of worship, and shut up the temple, and caused the deceit of idolatry to flourish, and having become more ungodly than all who were before him, when he afterwards repented, was ranked among the friends of God. Now

if, looking to the magnitude of his own iniquities, he had despaired of restoration and repentance, he would have missed all which he afterwards obtained: but as it was, looking to the boundlessness of God's tender mercy instead of the enormity of his transgressions, and having broken in sunder the bonds of the devil, he rose up and contended with him, and finished the good course. [2 Chronicles 33:10-19] And not only by what was done to these men, but also by the words of the prophet does God destroy the counsels of despair, speaking on this wise: *"Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."* Now that expression *"today,"* may be uttered at every time of life, even on the verge of old age, if you desire it: for repentance is judged not by quantity of time, but by disposition of the soul. For the Ninevites did not need many days to blot out their sin, but the short space of one day availed to efface all their iniquity: and the robber also did not take a long time to effect his entrance into Paradise, but in such a brief moment as one might occupy in uttering a single word, did he wash off all the sins which he had committed in his whole life, and received the prize bestowed by the divine approval even before the Apostles. And we also see the martyrs obtain glorious crowns for themselves in the course, not of many years, but of a few days, and often in a single day only.

7. Wherefore we have need of zeal in every direction, and much preparation of mind: and if we so order our conscience as to hate our former wickedness, and choose the contrary path with as much energy as God desires and commands, we shall not have anything less on account of the short space of time: many at least who were last have far outstripped those who were first. For to have fallen is not a grievous thing, but to remain prostrate after falling, and not to get up again; and, playing the coward and the sluggard, to conceal feebleness of moral purpose under the reasoning of

despair. To whom also the prophet spoke in perplexity saying "*Does he who falls not rise up, or he who turns away not turn back?*" [Jeremiah 8:4] But if you inquire of me for instances of persons who have fallen away after having believed, all these things have been said with reference to such persons, for he who has fallen belonged formerly to those who were standing, not to those who were prostrate; for how should one in that condition fall? But other things also shall be said, partly by means of parables, partly by plainer deeds and words. Now that sheep which had got separated from the ninety and nine, [Luke 15:4-5] and then was brought back again, represents to us nothing else than the fall and return of the faithful; for it was a sheep not of some alien flock, but belonging to the same number as the rest, and was formerly pastured by the same shepherd, and it strayed on no common straying, but wandered away to the mountains and in valleys, that is to say some long journey, far distant from the right path. Did he then suffer it to stray? By no means, but brought it back neither driving it, nor beating it, but taking it upon his shoulders. For as the best physicians bring back those who are far gone in sickness with careful treatment to a state of health, not only treating them according to the laws of the medical art, but sometimes also giving them gratification: even so God conducts to virtue those who are much depraved, not with great severity, but gently and gradually, and supporting them on every side, so that the separation may not become greater, nor the error more prolonged. And the same truth is implied in the parable of the prodigal son as well as in this. For he also was no stranger, but a son, and a brother of the child who had been well pleasing to the father, and he plunged into no ordinary vice, but went to the very extremity, so to say, of evil, he the rich and free and well-bred son being reduced to a more miserable condition than that of household slaves, strangers, and hirelings. Nevertheless he returned again to

his original condition, and had his former honour restored to him. But if he had despaired of his life, and, dejected by what had befallen him, had remained in the foreign land, he would not have obtained what he did obtain, but would have been consumed with hunger, and so have undergone the most pitiable death: but since he repented, and did not despair, he was restored, even after such great corruption, to the same splendour as before, and was arrayed in the most beautiful robe, and enjoyed greater honours than his brother who had not fallen. For *"these many years,"* says he *"do I serve you, neither transgressed I your commandment at any time, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but when this your son has come who has devoured your living with harlots, you have killed for him the fatted calf."* [Luke 15:29-30] So great is the power of repentance.

8. Having then such great examples, let us not continue in evil, nor despair of reconciliation, but let us say also ourselves *"I will go to my Father,"* and let us draw near to God. For He Himself never turns away from us, but it is we who put ourselves far off: for *"I am a God"* we read *"at hand and not a God afar off."* And again, when He was rebuking them by the mouth of this prophet He said *"Do not your sins separate between you and me?"* Inasmuch then as this is the cause which puts us far from God, let us remove this obnoxious barrier, which prevents any near approach being made.

But now hear how this has actually occurred in real instances. Amongst the Corinthians some man of mark committed a sin such as was not named even among the Gentiles. This man was a believer and belonged to the household of Christ; and some say that he was actually a member of the priesthood. What then? Did Paul cut him off from the communion of those who were in the way of salvation. By no means: for he himself it is

who rebukes the Corinthians countless times, backwards and forwards, because they did not bring the man to a state of repentance: but, desiring to prove to us that there is no sin which cannot be healed, he said again concerning the man who had transgressed more grievously than the Gentiles: *"Deliver such an one to Satan for destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ."* [1 Corinthians 5:5] Now this was prior to repentance: but after he had repented *"Sufficient,"* said he, *"for such an one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many"* [2 Corinthians 2:6] " and he charged them by a letter to console the man again, and to welcome his repentance, so that he should not be got the better of by Satan. Moreover when the whole Galatian people fell after having believed, and wrought miracles, and endured many trials for the sake of their faith in Christ he sets them up again. For that they had done miracles he testified when he said: *"He therefore that supplies to you the Spirit and works miracles among you:"* [Galatians 3:5] and that they endured many contests for the sake of the faith, he also testified when he says: *"Have ye suffered so many things in vain if it be indeed in vain."* [Galatians 3:4] Nevertheless after making so great an advance they committed sin sufficient to estrange them from Christ concerning which he declares saying: *"Behold, I Paul tell you, that if you be circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing:"* and again *"ye who would be justified by the law are fallen away from grace:"* and yet even after so great a lapse he welcomes them saying *"my little children of whom I am in travail again until Christ be formed in you"* [Galatians 4:19] " showing that after extreme perversion it is possible for Christ to be formed again in us: for He does not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be conformed and live.

9. Let us then turn to Him, my beloved friend, and execute the will of God. For He created us and brought us into being, that He might make us

partakers of eternal blessings, that He might offer us the kingdom of Heaven, not that He might cast us into Hell and deliver us to the fire; for this was made not for us, but for the devil: but for us the kingdom has been destined and made ready of old time. And by way of indicating both these truths He says to those on the right hand, *"Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:"* but to those on the left *"Depart from me, you cursed, into fire everlasting prepared"* (he no longer says *"for you"* but) *"for the devil and his angels."* [Matthew 25:34] Thus hell has not been made for us but for him and his angels: but the kingdom has been prepared for us before the foundation of the world. Let us not then make ourselves unworthy of entrance into the bride-chamber: for as long as we are in this world, even if we commit countless sins it is possible to wash them all away by manifesting repentance for our offenses: but when once we have departed to the other world, even if we display the most earnest repentance it will be of no avail, not even if we gnash our teeth, beat our breasts, and utter innumerable calls for succour, no one with the tip of his finger will apply a drop to our burning bodies, but we shall only hear those words which the rich man heard in the parable *"Between us and you a great gulf has been fixed."* [Luke 16:26] Let us then, I beseech you, recover our senses here and let us recognize our Master as He ought to be recognized. For only when we are in Hades should we abandon the hope derived from repentance: for there only is this remedy weak and unprofitable: but while we are here even if it is applied in old age itself it exhibits much strength. Wherefore also the devil sets everything in motion in order to root in us the reasoning which comes of despair: for he knows that if we repent even a little we shall not do this without some reward. But just as he who gives a cup of cold water has his recompense reserved for him, so also the man who has repented of

the evils which he has done, even if he cannot exhibit the repentance which his offenses deserve, will have a commensurate reward. For not a single item of good, however small it may be, will be overlooked by the righteous judge. For if He makes such an exact scrutiny of our sins, as to require punishment for both our words and thoughts, much more will our good deeds, whether they be great or small, be reckoned to our credit at that day. Wherefore, even if you are not able to return again to the most exact state of discipline, yet if you withdraw yourself in a slight degree at least from your present disorder and excess, even this will not be impossible: only set yourself to the task at once, and open the entrance into the place of contest; but as long as you tarry outside this naturally seems difficult and impracticable to you. For before making the trial even if things are easy and manageable they are wont to present an appearance of much difficulty to us: but when we are actually engaged in the trial, and making the venture the greater part of our distress is removed, and confidence taking the place of tremor and despair lessens the fear and increases the facility of operation, and makes our good hopes stronger. For this reason also the wicked one dragged Judas out of this world lest he should make a fair beginning, and so return by means of repentance to the point from which he fell. For although it may seem a strange thing to say, I will not admit even that sin to be too great for the succour which is brought to us from repentance. Wherefore I pray and beseech you to banish all this Satanic mode of thinking from your soul, and to return to this state of salvation. For if indeed I were commanding you to ascend to your former altitude all at once, you would naturally complain of there being much difficulty in doing this: but if all which I now ask you to do is to get up and return thence in the opposite direction, why do you hesitate, and shrink, and make a retrograde movement? Have you not seen those who have died in the midst of luxury

and drunkenness, and sport and all the other folly of this life? Where are they now who used to strut through the market place with much pomp, and a crowd of attendants? Who were clothed in silk and redolent with perfumes, and kept a table for their parasites, and were in constant attendance at the theatre? What has now become of all that parade of theirs? It is all gone—the costly splendour of their banquets, the throng of musicians, the attentions of flatterers, the loud laughter, the relaxation of spirit, the enervation of mind, the voluptuous, abandoned, extravagant manner of life— it has all come to an end. Where now have all these things taken their flight? What has become of the body which enjoyed so much attention, and cleanliness. Go your way to the coffin, behold the dust, the ashes, the worms, behold the loathsomeness of the place, and groan bitterly. And would that the penalty were limited to the ashes! But now transfer your thought from the coffin and these worms to that undying worm, to the fire unquenchable, to the gnashing of teeth, to the outer darkness, to affliction and straitness, to the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, who although the owner of so much wealth, and clothed in purple could not become the owner of even a drop of water; and this when he was placed in a condition of such great necessity. The things of this world are in their nature no-wise better than dreams. For just as those who work in the mines or suffer some other kind of punishment more severe than this, when they have fallen asleep owing to their many weary toils and the extreme bitterness of their life, and in their dreams see themselves living in luxury and prosperity, are in no wise grateful to their dreams after they have awaked, even so that rich man having become rich in this present life, as it were in a dream, after his departure hence was punished with that bitter punishment. Consider these things, and having contrasted that fire with the conflagration of desires which now possesses you, release yourself from the furnace. For he who

has thoroughly quenched this furnace here, will have no experience of that in the other world: but if a man does not get the better of this furnace here, the other will lay hold of him more vehemently when he has departed hence. How long a time do you wish the enjoyment of the present life to be extended? For I do not suppose indeed that more than fifty years remain to you so as to reach extreme old age, nor indeed is even this at all assured to us: for how should they who cannot be confident about living even to the evening rely upon so many years as these? And not only is this uncertain, but there is the uncertainty also of a change in our affairs, for often when life has been extended for a long period, the conditions of luxury have not been extended with it, but have come, and at the same time hastily departed. However, if you like, let it be granted for argument's sake, that you will live so many years, and will not sustain any reverse of fortune what is this compared with the endless ages, and those bitter deed and intolerable punishments? For here indeed both good and evil things have an end, and that very speedily: but there, both are coextensive with immortal ages, and in their quality differ unspeakably from the things which now are.

10. For when you hear of fire, do not suppose the fire in that world to be like this: for fire in this world burns up and makes away with anything which it takes hold of; but that fire is continually burning those who have once been seized by it, and never ceases: therefore also is it called unquenchable. For those also who have sinned must put on immortality, not for honour, but to have a constant supply of material for that punishment to work upon; and how terrible this is, speech could never depict, but from the experience of little things it is possible to form some slight notion of these great ones. For if you should ever be in a bath which has been heated more than it ought to be, think then, I pray you, on the fire of hell: or again if you are ever inflamed by some severe fever transfer your thoughts to that flame,

and then you will be able clearly to discern the difference. For if a bath and a fever so afflict and distress us, what will our condition be when we have fallen into that river of fire which winds in front of the terrible judgment-seat. Then we shall gnash our teeth under the suffering of our labours and intolerable pains: but there will be no one to succour us: yea we shall groan mightily, as the flame is applied more severely to us, but we shall see no one save those who are being punished with us, and great desolation. And how should any one describe the terrors arising to our souls from the darkness? For just as that fire has no consuming power so neither has it any power of giving light: for otherwise there would not be darkness. The dismay produced in us then by this, and the trembling and the great astonishment can be sufficiently realized in that day only. For in that world many and various kinds of torment and torrents of punishment are poured in upon the soul from every side. And if any one should ask, "*and how can the soul bear up against such a multitude of punishments and continue being chastised through interminable ages,*" let him consider what happens in this world, how many have often borne up against a long and severe disease. And if they have died, this has happened not because the soul was consumed but because the body was exhausted, so that had the latter not broken down, the soul would not have ceased being tormented. When then we have received an incorruptible and inconsumable body there is nothing to prevent the punishment being indefinitely extended. For here indeed it is impossible that the two things should coexist. I mean severity of punishment and permanence of being, but the one contends with the other, because the nature of the body is perishable and cannot bear the concurrence of both: but when the imperishable state has supervened, there would be an end of this strife, and both these terrible things will keep their hold upon us for infinite time with much force. Let us not then so dispose

ourselves now as if the excessive power of the tortures were destructive of the soul: for even the body will not be able to experience this at that time, but will abide together with the soul, in a state of eternal punishment, and there will not be any end to look to beyond this. How much luxury then, and how much time will you weigh in the balance against this punishment and vengeance? Do you propose a period of a hundred years or twice as long? And what is this compared with the endless ages? For what the dream of a single day is in the midst of a whole lifetime, that the enjoyment of things here is as contrasted with the state of things to come. Is there then any one who, for the sake of seeing a good dream, would elect to be perpetually punished? Who is so senseless as to have recourse to this kind of retribution? For I am not yet accusing luxury nor revealing now the bitterness which lurks in it: for the present is not the proper time for these remarks, but when you have been able to escape it. For now, entangled as you are by this passion, you will suspect me of talking nonsense, if I were to call pleasure bitter: but when by the grace of God you have been released from the malady then you will know its topics for another season, what I will say now is just this: Be it so, that luxury is luxury, and pleasure, pleasure, and that they have nothing in them painful or disgraceful, what shall we say to the punishment which is in store for us? And what shall we do then if we have taken our pleasure now, as it were in a shadow and a figure, but undergo everlasting torment there in reality, when we might in a short space of time escape these tortures already mentioned, and enjoy the good things which are stored up for us? For this also is the work of the loving-kindness of God, that our struggles are not protracted to a great length, but that after struggling for a brief, and tiny twinkling of an eye (for such is present life compared with the other) we receive crowns of victory for endless ages. And it will be no small affliction to the souls of those who

are being punished at that time, to reflect, that when they had it in their power in the few days of this life to make all good, they neglected their opportunity and surrendered themselves to everlasting evil. And lest we should suffer this let us rouse ourselves while it is the accepted time, while it is the day of salvation, [2 Corinthians 6:2] while the power of repentance is great. For not only the evils already mentioned, but others also far worse than these await us if we are indolent. These indeed, and some bitterer than these have their place in hell: but the loss of the good things involves so much pain, so much affliction and straitness, that even if no other kind of punishment were appointed for those who sin here, it would of itself be sufficient to vex us more bitterly than the torments in hell, and to confound our souls.

11. For consider I pray the condition of the other life, so far as it is possible to consider it; for no words will suffice for an adequate description: but from the things which are told us, as if by means of certain riddles, let us try and get some indistinct vision of it. "*Pain and sorrow and sighing,*" we read "*have fled away.*" [Isaiah 35:10] What then could be more blessed than this life? It is not possible there to fear poverty and disease: it is not possible to see any one injuring, or being injured, provoking, or being provoked, or angry, or envious, or burning with any outrageous lust, or anxious concerning the supply of the necessities of life, or bemoaning himself over the loss of some dignity and power: for all the tempest of passion in us is quelled and brought to nought, and all will be in a condition of peace, and gladness and joy, all things serene and tranquil, all will be daylight and brightness, and light, not this present light, but one excelling this in splendour as much as this excels the brightness of a lamp. For things are not concealed in that world by night, or by a gathering of clouds: bodies there are not set on fire and burned: for there is neither night nor evening

there, nor cold nor heat, nor any other variation of seasons: but the condition is of a different kind, such as they only will know who have been deemed worthy of it; there is no old age there, nor any of the evils of old age, but all things relating to decay are utterly removed, and incorruptible glory reigns in every part. But greater than all these things is the perpetual enjoyment of intercourse with Christ in the company of angels, and archangels, and the higher powers. Behold now the sky, and pass through it in thought to the region beyond the sky, and consider the transfiguration to take place in the whole creation; for it will not continue to be such as it is now, but will be far more brilliant and beautiful, and just as gold glistens more brightly than lead, so will the future constitution of the universe be better than the present: even as the blessed Paul says *"Because the creation also itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption."*

[Romans 8:21] For now indeed, seeing that it partakes of corruption, it is subject to many things such as bodies of this kind naturally experience: but then, having divested itself of all these things, we shall see it display its beauty in an incorruptible form: for inasmuch as it is to receive incorruptible bodies, it will in future be itself also transfigured into the nobler condition. Nowhere in that world will there be sedition and strife: for great is the concord of the band of saints, all being ever in harmony with one another. It is not possible there to fear the devil, and the plots of demons, or the threatenings of hell, or death, either that death which now is, or the other death which is far worse than this, but every terror of this kind will have been done away. And just as some royal child, who has been brought up in mean guise, and subject to fear and threats, lest he should deteriorate by indulgence and become unworthy of his paternal inheritance, as soon as he has attained the royal dignity, immediately exchanges all his former raiment for the purple robe, and the diadem and the crown of body-

guards, and assumes his state with much confidence, having cast out of his soul thoughts of humility and subjection, and having taken others in their place; even so will it happen then to all the saints.

And to prove that these words are no empty vaunt let us journey in thought to the mountain where Christ was transfigured: let us behold him shining as He shone there; and yet even then He did not display to us all the splendour of the world to come. For that the vision was accommodated to human eyes, and not an exact manifestation of the reality is plain from the very words of the Evangelist. For what says he? "*He did shine as the Sun.*" [Matthew 17:2] But the glory of incorruptible bodies does not emit the same kind of light as this body which is corruptible, nor is it of a kind to be tolerable to mortal eyes, but needs incorruptible and immortal eyes to contemplate it. But at that time on the mountain He disclosed to them as much as it was possible for them to see without injuring the sight of the beholders; and even so they could not endure it but fell upon their faces. Tell me, if any one led you into some bright place, where all were sitting arrayed in vestures of gold, and in the midst of the multitude pointed out one other to you who alone had garments wrought with precious stones, and a crown upon his head, and then promised to place you in the ranks of this people, would you not do everything to obtain this promise? Open then even now in imagination your eyes, and look on that assembly, composed not of men such as we are, but of those who are of more value than gold and precious stones, and the beams of the sun, and all visible radiance, and not consisting of men only but of beings of much more dignity than men,—angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers. For as concerning the king it is not even possible to say what he is like: so completely do his beauty, his grace, his splendour, his glory, his grandeur and magnificence elude speech and thought. Shall we then, I ask, deprive

ourselves of such great blessings, in order to avoid suffering for a brief period? For if we had to endure countless deaths every day, or even hell itself, for the sake of seeing Christ coming in His glory, and being enrolled in the company of the saints, ought we not to undergo all those things? Hear what the blessed Peter says; *"it is good for us to be here."* [Matthew 17:4] But if he, when he beheld some dim image of the things to come, immediately cast away all other things out of his soul on account of the pleasure produced in it by that vision; what would any one say when the actual reality of the things is presented, when the palace is thrown open and it is permitted to gaze upon the King Himself, no longer darkly, or by means of a mirror, [1 Corinthians 13:12] but face to face; no longer by means of faith, but by sight?

12. The majority it is true of those who are not very sensibly minded propose to be content with escaping hell; but I say that a far more severe punishment than hell is exclusion from the glory of the other world, and I think that one who has failed to reach it ought not to sorrow so much over the miseries of hell, as over his rejection from heaven, for this alone is more dreadful than all other things in respect of punishment. But frequently now when we see a king, attended by a large bodyguard, enter the palace, we count those happy who are near him, and have a share in his speech and mind, and partake of all the rest of his glory; and even if we have countless blessings, we have no perception of any of them, and deem ourselves miserable when we look at the glory of those who are round about him, although we know that such splendour is slippery and insecure, both on account of wars, and plots, and envy, and because apart from these things it is not in itself worthy of any consideration. But where the king of all is concerned, he who holds not a portion of the earth but the whole circuit of it, or rather who comprehends it all in the hollow of his hand, and measures

the Heavens with a span, who upholds all things by the word of His power, by whom all the nations are counted as nought, and as a drop of spittle—in the case of such a king I say shall we not reckon it the most extreme punishment to miss being enrolled in that company which is round about him, but be content if we merely escape hell? And what could be more pitiable than this condition of soul? For this king does not come to judge the earth, drawn by a pair of white mules, nor riding in a golden chariot, nor arrayed in a purple robe and diadem. How then does He come? Hear the prophets crying aloud and saying as much as it is possible to tell to men: for one says *"God shall come openly, even our God and shall not keep silence: a fire shall be kindled before Him, and a mighty tempest shall be round about Him: He shall call the Heaven from above and the earth that He may judge His people."* But Esaias depicts the actual punishment impending over us speaking thus: *"Behold the day of the Lord comes, inexorable, with wrath and anger; to lay the whole world desolate, and to destroy sinners out of it. For the stars of Heaven, and Orion, and the whole system of the heaven shall not give their light, and the sun shall be darkened in its going down, and the moon shall not give her light; and I will ordain evils against the whole world, and visit their sins upon the ungodly, and I will destroy the insolence of the lawless, and humble the insolence of the proud, and they who are left shall be more precious than unsmelted gold, and a man shall be more precious than the sapphire stone. For the heaven shall be disturbed and the earth shall be shaken from its foundations by reason of the fury of the wrath of the Lord of Sabaoth, in the day when His wrath shall come upon us."* [Isaiah 13:9, 13] And again "windows" he says *"shall be opened from the Heaven, and the foundations of the earth shall be shaken: the earth shall be mightily confounded, the earth shall be bent low, it shall be perplexed with great perplexity, the earth shall stagger grievously like the*

drunkard and the reveller; the earth shall shake as a hut, it shall fall and not be able to rise up again: for iniquity has waxed mighty therein. And God shall set His hand upon the host of the Heaven in the height in that day, and upon the kingdoms of the earth, and He shall gather together the congregation thereof into a prison, and shall shut them up in a stronghold." And Malachi speaking concordantly with these said *"Behold the Lord almighty comes, and who shall abide the day of His coming or who shall stand when He appears? For He comes like a refiner's fire, and like fullers soap: and He shall sit refining and purifying as it were silver, and as it were gold."* [Malachi 3:2-3] And again, *"Behold,"* he says, *"the day of the Lord comes, burning like an oven, and it shall consume them, and all the aliens, and all who work iniquity shall be stubble, and the day which is coming shall set fire to them says the Lord almighty; and there shall be left neither root nor branch."* [Malachi 4:1] And the man greatly beloved says *"I beheld until thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days was seated, and his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head was pure as wool: His throne was a flame of fire, and the wheels thereof burning fire: a stream of fire wound its way in front of Him. Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The judgment was set and the books were opened."* Then after a little space *"I beheld,"* he says, *"in a vision of the night and behold with the clouds of Heaven, one came like the Son of Man, and reached unto the Ancient of Days, and was brought near before Him, and to Him was given rule, and honor, and the kingdom, and all the people, tribes and tongues serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed. As for me Daniel, my spirit shuddered within me, and the visions of my head troubled me."* Then all the gates of the heavenly vaults are opened, or rather the heaven itself is taken away out of the midst *"for*

the heaven," we read *"shall be rolled up like a scroll,"* [Isaiah 34:4] wrapped up in the middle like the skin and covering of some tent so as to be transformed into some better shape. Then all things are full of amazement and horror and trembling: then even the angels themselves are holden by much fear, and not angels only but also archangels and thrones, and dominions, and principalities and authorities. *"For the powers"* we read *"of the heavens shall be shaken,"* because their fellow-servants are required to give an account of their life in this world. [Matthew 24:29] For if when a single city is being judged before rulers in this world, all men shudder, even those who are outside the danger, when the whole world is arraigned before such a judge as this who needs no witnesses, or proofs, but independently of all these things brings forward deeds and words and thoughts, and exhibits them all as in some picture both to those who have committed the sins and to those who are ignorant of them, how is it not natural that every power should be confounded and shake? For if there were no river of fire winding by, nor any terrible angels standing by the side of the throne, but men were merely summoned some to be praised and admired, others to be dismissed with ignominy that they might not see the glory of God, (*"For let the ungodly"* we read *"be taken away that he may not see the glory of the Lord"*) and if this were the only punishment would not the loss of such blessings sting the souls of those who were deprived of them more bitterly than all hell itself? For how great an evil this is cannot possibly be represented now in words; but then we shall know it clearly in the actual reality. But now I pray add the punishment also to the scene, and imagine men not only covered with shame, and veiling their heads, and bending them low, but also being dragged along the road to the fire, and haled away to the instruments of torture and delivered over to the cruel powers, and suffering these things just at the time when all they who have practised what is good,

and wrought deeds worthy of eternal life, are being crowned, and proclaimed conquerors, and presented before the royal throne.

13. Now these are things which will happen in that day: but the things which will follow, after these, what language can describe to us— the pleasure, the profit, the joy of being in the company of Christ? For when the soul has returned to the proper condition of nobility, and is able henceforth with much boldness to behold its Master it is impossible to say what great pleasure it derives therefrom, what great gain, rejoicing not only in the good things actually in hand, but in the persuasion that these things will never come to an end. All that gladness then cannot be described in words, nor grasped by the understanding: but in a dim kind of way, as one indicates great things by means of small ones, I will endeavour to make it manifest. For let us scrutinize those who enjoy the good things of the world in this present life, I mean wealth and power, and glory, how, exulting with delight, they reckon themselves as no longer being upon the earth, and this although the things which they are enjoying are acknowledged not to be really good, and do not abide with them, but take to flight more quickly than a dream: and even if they should even last for a little time, their favour is displayed within the limits of this present life, and cannot accompany us further. Now if these things uplift those who possess them to such a pitch of joy, what do you suppose is the condition of those souls which are invited to enjoy the countless blessings in Heaven which are always securely fixed and stable? And not only this, but also in their quantity and quality they excel present things to such an extent as never entered even the heart of man. For at the present time like an infant in the womb, even so do we dwell in this world confined in a narrow space, and unable to behold the splendour and the freedom of the world to come: but when the time of travail arrives and the present life is delivered at the day of judgment of all men whom it has

contained, those who have been miscarried go from darkness into darkness, and from affliction into more grievous affliction: but those which are perfectly formed and have preserved the marks of the royal image will be presented to the king, and will take upon themselves that service which angels and archangels minister to the God of all. I pray you then, O friend, do not finally efface these marks, but speedily restore them, and stamp them more perfectly on your soul. For corporeal beauty indeed God has confined within the limits of nature, but grace of soul is released from the constraint and bondage arising from that cause inasmuch as it is far superior to any bodily symmetry: and it depends entirely upon ourselves and the grace of God. For our Master, being merciful has in this special way honoured our race, that He has entrusted to the necessity of nature the inferior things which contribute nothing much to our advantage, and in their issue are matters of indifference, but of the things which are really noble He has caused us to be ourselves the artificers. For if He had placed corporeal beauty also under our control we should have been subjected to excessive anxiety, and should have wasted all our time upon things which are of no profit, and should have grievously neglected our soul.

For if, even as it is, when we have not this power in ourselves, we make violent efforts, and give ourselves up to shadow painting, and because we cannot in reality produce bodily beauty, cunningly devise imitations by means of paints, and dyes, and dressing of hair, and arrangement of garments, and pencilling of eyebrows, and many other contrivances: what leisure should we have set apart for the soul and serious matters, if we had it in our power to transfigure the body into a really symmetrical shape? For probably, if this were our business, we should not have any other, but should spend all our time upon it: decking the bondmaid with countess decorations, but letting her who is the mistress of this bond-maid lie

perpetually in a state of deformity and neglect. For this reason God, having delivered us from this vain occupation, implanted in us the power of working upon the nobler element, and he who cannot turn an ugly body into a comely one, can raise the soul, even when it has been reduced to the extremity of ugliness, to the very acme of grace, and make it so amiable and desirable that not only are good men brought to long after it but even He who is the sovereign and God of all, even as the Psalmist also when discoursing concerning this beauty, said "*And the king shall have desire of your beauty.*" Do you see not also that in the houses of prostitutes the women who are ugly and shameless would hardly be accepted by prize-fighters, and runaway slaves, and gladiators: but should any comely, well-born and modest woman, owing to some mischance, have been reduced to this necessity, no man, even among those who are very illustrious and great, would be ashamed of marriage with her? Now if there is so much pity among men, and so much disdain of glory as to release from that bondage the women who have often been disgraced in the brothel, and to place them in the position of wives, much more is this the case with God, and those souls which, owing to the usurpation of the devil, have fallen from their original noble condition into the harlotry of this present life. And you will find the prophets filled with examples of this kind, when they address Jerusalem; for she fell into fornication, and a novel form of it, even as Ezekiel says: "*To all harlots wages are given, but you have given wages to your lovers, and there has been perversion in you beyond all other women,*" and again another says "*You sat waiting for them like a deserted bird.*" [Jeremiah 3:2] This one then who has committed fornication in this fashion God calls back again. For the captivity which took place was not so much by way of vengeance as for the purpose of conversion and amendment since if God had wished to punish them outright, He would not again have

brought them back to their home. He would not have established their city and their temple in greater splendour than before: *"For the final glory of this house"* He said *"shall exceed the former."* [Haggai 2:10] Now if God did not exclude from repentance her who had many times committed fornication, much more will He embrace your soul, which has now fallen for the first time. For certainly there is no lover of corporeal beauty, even if he be very frantic, who is so inflamed with the love of his mistress as God longs after the salvation of our souls; and this we may perceive both from the things which happen every day and from the divine Scriptures. See at least, both in the introduction of Jeremiah, and many other places of the prophets, when He is despised and contemned, how He again hastens forward and pursues the friendship of those who turn away from him; which also He Himself made clear in the Gospels saying, *"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! You that kill the prophets and stone them that are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not?"*

[Matthew 23:37] And Paul writing to the Corinthians said *"that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning their trespasses unto them, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ be ye reconciled to God."*

[2 Corinthians 5:19-20] Consider that this has now been said to us. For it is not merely want of faith, but also an unclean life which is sufficient to work this abominate enmity. *"For the carnal mind"* we read *"is enmity against God."* [Romans 8:7] Let us then break down the barrier, and hew it in pieces, and destroy it, that we may enjoy the blessed reconciliation, that we may become again the fondly beloved of God.

14. I know that you are now admiring the grace of Hermione, and you judge that there is nothing in the world to be compared to her comeliness; but if you choose, O friend, you shall yourself exceed her in comeliness and gracefulness, as much as golden statues surpass those which are made of clay. For if beauty, when it occurs in the body, so fascinates and excites the minds of most men, when the soul is refulgent with it what can match beauty and grace of this kind? For the groundwork of this corporeal beauty is nothing else but phlegm, and blood, and humor, and bile, and the fluid of masticated food. For by these things both eyes and cheeks, and all the other features, are supplied with moisture; and if they do not receive that moisture, daily skin becoming unduly withered, and the eyes sunken, the whole grace of the countenance immediately vanishes; so that if you consider what is stored up inside those beautiful eyes, and that straight nose, and the mouth and the cheeks, you will affirm the well-shaped body to be nothing else than a whited sepulchre; the parts within are full of so much uncleanness. Moreover when you see a rag with any of these things on it, such as phlegm, or spittle you cannot bear to touch it with even the tips of your fingers, nay you cannot even endure looking at it; and yet are you in a flutter of excitement about the storehouses and depositories of these things? But your beauty was not of this kind, but excelled it as heaven is superior to earth; or rather it was much better and more brilliant than this. For no one has anywhere seen a soul by itself, stripped of the body; but yet even so I will endeavour to present to you the beauty of this soul from another source. I mean from the case of the greater powers. Hear at least how the beauty of these struck the man greatly beloved; for wishing to set forth their beauty and being unable to find a body of the same character, he had recourse to metallic substances, and he was not satisfied even with these, but took the brilliancy of lightning for his illustration. [Daniel 10:6]

Now if those powers, even when they did not disclose their essential nature pure and bare, but only in a very dim and shadowy way, nevertheless shone so brightly, what must naturally be their appearance, when set free from every veil? Now we ought to form some such image of the beauty of the soul. *"For they shall be,"* we read *"equal unto the angels."* [Luke 20:36] Now in the case of bodies the lighter and finer kinds, and those which have retreated to the path which tend towards the incorporeal, are very much better and more wonderful than the others. The sky at least is more beautiful than the earth, and fire than water, and the stars than precious stones; and we admire the rainbow far more than violets and roses, and all other flowers which are upon the earth. And in short if it were possible with the bodily eyes to behold the beauty of the soul you would laugh to scorn these corporeal illustrations, so feebly have they presented to us the gracefulness of the soul. Let us not then neglect such a possession, nor such great happiness, and especially when the approach to that kind of beauty becomes easy to us by our hopes of the things to come. *"For our light affliction,"* we read, *"which is but for the moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*

[2 Corinthians 4:17] Now if the blessed Paul called such afflictions as you know of light and easy, because he did not look at the things which are seen, much more tolerable is it merely to cease from wantonness. For we are not calling you to those dangers which he underwent, nor to those deaths which he incurred daily, the constant beatings and scourgings, the bonds, the enmity of the whole world, the hatred of his own people, the frequent vigils, the long journies, the shipwrecks, the attacks of robbers, the plots of his own kinsfolk, the distresses on account of his friends, the

hunger, the cold, the nakedness, the burning, the despondency on account both of those who belonged to him, and those who did not belong to him. None of these things do we now demand of you; all that we ask for is that you would release yourself from your accursed bondage, and return to your former freedom, having considered both the punishment arising from your wantonness, and the honor belonging to your former manner of life. For that unbelievers should be but languidly affected by the thought of the resurrection and never be in fear of this kind, is nothing wonderful; but that we who are more firmly persuaded concerning the things of the other world than those of the present, should spend our life in this miserable and deplorable way and be nowise affected by the memory of those things, but sink into a state of extreme insensibility— this is irrational in the highest degree. For when we who believe do the deeds of unbelievers, or rather are in a more miserable plight than they (for there are some among them who have been eminent for the virtue of their life), what consolation, what excuse will be left for us? And many merchants indeed who have incurred shipwreck have not given way, but have pursued the same journey, and this when the loss which has befallen them was not owing to their own carelessness, but to the force of the winds; and shall we who have reason to be confident concerning the end, and know certainly that if we do not wish it, neither shipwreck nor accident of any kind will bring us damage, not lay hold of the work again, and carry on our business as we did aforetime, but lie in idleness and keep our hands to ourselves? And would that we kept them merely *to* ourselves and did not use them *against* ourselves which is a token of stark madness. For if any pugilist, leaving his antagonist were to turn his hands against his own head, and deal blows to his own face, should we not, I ask, rank him among madmen? For the devil has upset us and cast us down; therefore we ought to get up, and not to be dragged down again

and precipitate ourselves, and add blows dealt by ourselves to the blows dealt by him. For the blessed David also had a fall like that which has now happened to you; and not this only but another also which followed it. I mean that of murder. What then? Did he remain prostrate? Did he not immediately rise up again with energy and place himself in position to fight the enemy? In fact he wrestled with him so bravely, that even after his death he was the protector of his offspring. For when Solomon had perpetrated great iniquity, and had deserved countless deaths, God said that He would leave him the kingdom intact, thus speaking *"I will surely rend the kingdom out of your hand and will give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do this in your days."* Wherefore? *"For David your father's sake, I will take it out of the hand of your son."* [1 Kings 11:11] And again when Hezekiah was about to run the greatest possible risk, although he was a righteous man, God said that He would succour him for the sake of this saint. *"For I will cast my shield"* He says, *"over this city to save it for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake."* [2 Kings 19:34] So great is the force of repentance. But if he had determined with himself, as you do now, that henceforth it was impossible to propitiate God, and if he had said within himself: *"God has honoured me with great honour, and has given me a place among the prophets, and has entrusted me with the government of my countrymen, and rescued me out of countless perils, how then, when I have offended against Him after such great benefits, and have perpetrated the worst crimes, shall I be able to recover his favour?"* If he had thought thus, not only would he not have done the things which he afterwards did, but he would have aggravated his former evils.

15. For not only the bodily wounds work death, if they are neglected, but also those of the soul; and yet we have arrived at such a pitch of folly as to take the greatest care of the former, and to overlook the latter; and

although in the case of the body it naturally often happens that many wounds are incurable, yet we do not abandon hope, but even when we hear the physicians constantly declaring, that it is not possible to get rid of this suffering by medicines, we still persist in exhorting them to devise at least some slight alleviation; but in the case of souls, where there is no incurable malady; for it is not subject to the necessity of nature; here, as if the infirmities were strange we are negligent and despairing; and where the nature of the disorder might naturally plunge us into despair, we take as much pains as if there were great hope of restoration to health; but where there is no occasion to renounce hope, we desist from efforts, and become as heedless as if matters were desperate; so much more account do we take of the body than of the soul. And this is the reason why we are not able to save even the body. For he who neglects the leading element, and manifests all his zeal about inferior matters destroys and loses both; whereas he who observes the right order, and preserves and cherishes the more commanding element, even if he neglects the secondary element yet preserves it by means of saving the primary one. Which also Christ signified to us when He said, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell."* [Matthew 10:28]

Well, do I convince you, that one ought never to despair of the disorders of the soul as incurable? Or must I again set other arguments in motion? For even if you should despair of yourself ten thousand times, I will never despair of you, and I will never myself be guilty of that for which I reproach others; and yet it is not the same thing for a man to renounce hope of himself, as for another to renounce hope of him. For he who has this suspicion concerning another may readily obtain pardon; but he who has it of himself will not. Why so pray? Because the one has no controlling

power over the zeal and repentance of the other, but over his own zeal and repentance a man has sole authority. Nevertheless even so I will not despair of you; though you should any number of times be affected in this way; for it may be, that there will be some return to virtue, and to restoration to your former manner of life. And now hear what follows: The Ninevites when they heard the prophet vehemently declaring, and plainly threatening; *"yet three days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,"* even then did not lose heart, but, although they had no confidence that they should be able to move the mind of God, or rather had reason to suspect the contrary from the divine message (for the utterance was not accompanied by any qualification, but was a simple declaration), even then they manifested repentance saying: *"Who knows whether God will repent and be entreated, and turn from the fierceness of His wrath, and that we perish not? And God saw their works that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil which He said He would do unto them and He did it not."* [Jonah 3:9-10] Now if barbarian, and unreasoning men could perceive so much, much more ought we to do this who have been trained in the divine doctrines and have seen such a crowd of examples of this kind both in history and actual experience. *"For my counsels"* we read *"are not as your counsels nor my ways as your ways; but far as is the Heaven from the earth, so far are my thoughts from your mind, and my counsels from your counsels."* Now if we admit to our favour household slaves when they have often offended against us, on their promising to become better, and place them again in their former portion, and sometimes even grant them greater freedom of speech than before; much more does God act thus. For if God had made us in order to punish us, you might well have despaired, and questioned the possibility of your own salvation; but if He created us for no reason than His own good will, and with a view to our enjoying everlasting blessings, and if He does and

contrives everything for this end, from the first day until the present time, what is there which can ever cause you to doubt? Have we provoked Him severely, so as no other man ever did? This is just the reason why we ought specially to abstain from our present deeds and to repent for the past, and exhibit a great change. For the evils we have once perpetrated cannot provoke Him so much as our being unwilling to make any change in the future. For to sin may be a merely human failing, but to continue in the same sin ceases to be human, and becomes altogether devilish. For observe how God by the mouth of His prophet blames this more than the other.

"For," we read, "I said unto her after she had done all these deeds of fornication, return unto me, and yet she returned not." [Jeremiah 3:7] And again: from another quarter, when wishing to show the great longing which He has for our salvation, having heard how the people promised, after many transgressions, to tread the right way He said: "Who will grant unto them to have such an heart as to fear me, and to keep my commandments all their days, that it may be well with them and with their children forever?"

[Deuteronomy 5:29] And Moses when reasoning with them said, "And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to love Him?"

[Deuteronomy 10:12] He then who is so anxious to be loved by us, and does everything for this end, and did not spare even His only begotten Son on account of His love towards us, and who counts it a desirable thing if at any time we become reconciled to Himself, how shall He not welcome and love us when we repent? Hear at least what He says by the mouth of the prophet: "Declare first your iniquities that you may be justified."

[Isaiah 43:26] Now this He demands from us in order to intensify our love towards Him. For when one who loves, after enduring many insults at the hands of those who are beloved, even then does not extinguish his fondness

for them, the only reason why he takes pains to make those insults public, is that by displaying the strength of his affection he may induce them to feel a larger and warmer love. Now if the confession of sins brings so much consolation, much more does the endeavour to wash them away by means of our deeds. For if this was not the case, but those who had once swerved from the straight path were forbidden to return to it again, perhaps no one, except a few persons whose numbers would be easily reckoned, would ever enter the kingdom of Heaven; but as it is we shall find the most distinguished among those who have fallen. For those who have exhibited much vehemence in evil things, will also in turn exhibit the same in good things, being conscious what great debts they have incurred; which Christ also declared when He spoke to Simon concerning the woman: *"For do you see,"* says He, *"this woman? I entered into your house, you gave me no water for my feet; but she has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You gave me no kiss, but she since the time I came in has not ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou did not anoint; but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto you: her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. And He said unto her, your sins are forgiven."* [Luke 7:44-48]

16. For this reason also the devil, knowing that they who have committed great evils, when they have begun to repent, do this with much zeal, inasmuch as they are conscious of their offenses, fears and trembles lest they should make a beginning of the work; for after they have made it they are no longer capable of being checked, and, kindling like fire under the influence of repentance, they render their souls purer than pure gold, being impelled by their conscience, and the memory of their former sins, as by some strong gale, towards the haven of virtue. And this is the point in

which they have an advantage over those who have never fallen, that they exercise more vehement energy; if only, as I said, they can lay hold of the beginning. For the task which is hard and difficult of accomplishment is to be able to set foot on the entrance, and to reach the vestibule of repentance, and to repulse and overthrow the enemy there when he is fiercely raging and assaulting us. But after this, he will not display so much fury when he has once been worsted, and has fallen where he was strong, and we shall receive greater energy, and shall run this good race with much ease. Let us then in future set about our return, let us hasten up to the city which is in Heaven, in which we have been enrolled, in which also we have been appointed to find our home as citizens. For to despair of ourselves not only has this evil that it shuts the gates of that city against us, and that it drives us into greater indolence and contempt, but also that it plunges us into Satanic recklessness. For the only cause why the devil became such as he is was that he first of all despaired, and afterwards from despair sank into recklessness. For the soul, when once it has abandoned its own salvation, will no longer perceive that it is plunging downwards, choosing to do and say everything which is adverse to its own salvation. And just as madmen, when once they have fallen out of a sound condition, are neither afraid nor ashamed of anything, but fearlessly dare all manner of things, even if they have to fall into fire, or deep water, or down a precipice; so they who have been seized by the frenzy of despair are hence forward unmanageable, rushing into vice in every direction, and if death does not come to put a stop to this madness, and vehemence, they do themselves infinite mischief. Therefore I entreat you, before you are deeply steeped in this drunkenness, recover your senses and rouse yourself up, and shake off this Satanic fit, doing it gently and gradually if it be not possible to effect it all at once. For to me indeed the easier course seems to be to wrench yourself once for all

out of all the cords which hold you down, and transfer yourself to the school of repentance. But if this seems to you a difficult thing, that you should be willing to enter on the path which leads to better things, simply enter upon it, and lay hold on eternal life. Yea, I beseech and implore you by your former reputation, by that confidence which once was yours, let us see you once again standing on the pinnacle of virtue, and in the same condition of perseverance as before. Spare those who are made to stumble on your account, those who are falling, who are becoming more indolent, who are despairing of the way of virtue. For dejection now holds possession of the band of brethren, while pleasure and cheerfulness prevail in the councils of the unbelieving, and of those young men who are disposed to indolence. But if you return again to your former strictness of life the result will be reversed, and all our shame will be transferred to them, while we shall enjoy much confidence, seeing you again crowned and proclaimed victor with more splendour than before. For such victories bring greater renown and pleasure. For you will not only receive the reward of your own achievements, but also of the exhortation and consolation of others, being exhibited as a striking model, if ever any one should fall into the same condition, to encourage him to get up and recover himself. Do not neglect such an opportunity of gain, nor drag our souls down into Hades with sorrow, but let us breathe freely again, and shake off the cloud of despondency which oppresses us on your account. For now, passing by the consideration of our own troubles, we mourn over your calamities, but if you are willing to come to your senses, and see clearly, and to join the angelic host, you will release us from this sorrow, and will take away the greater part of sins. For that it is possible for those who have come back again after repentance to shine with much lustre, and oftentimes more than those who have never fallen at all, I have demonstrated from the divine

writings. Thus at least both the publicans and the harlots inherit the kingdom of Heaven, thus many of the last are placed before the first.

17. But I will tell you also of events which have happened in our own time, and of which you may yourself have been witness. You know probably that young Phœnician, the son of Urbanus, who was untimely left an orphan, but possessed of much money, and many slaves and lands. This man, having in the first place bidden complete farewell to his studies in the schools, and having laid aside the gay clothing which he formerly wore, and all his worldly grandeur, suddenly arraying himself in a shabby cloak, and retreating to the solitude of the mountains, exhibited a high degree of Christian philosophy not merely in proportion to his age, but such as any great and wonderful man might have displayed. And after this, having been deemed worthy of initiation into the sacred mysteries, he made still greater advances in virtue. And all were rejoicing, and glorifying God, that one nurtured in wealth, and having illustrious ancestors, and being still a mere youth, should have suddenly trodden all the pomps of this life under foot, and have ascended to the true height. Now which he was in this condition, and an object of admiration, certain corrupt men, who according to the law of kindred had the oversight of him dragged him back again into the former sea of worldliness. And so, having flung aside all his habits, he again descended from the mountains into the midst of the forum, and used to go all round the city, riding on horseback, and accompanied by a large retinue; and he was no longer willing to live even soberly; for being inflamed by much luxury, he was constrained to fall into foolish love intrigues, and there was no one of those conversant with him, who did not despair of his salvation; he was encompassed by such a swarm of flatterers, besides the snares of orphanhood, youth, and great wealth. And persons who readily find fault with everything, accused those who originally conducted him to

this way of life, saying that he had both missed his spiritual aims, and would no longer be of any use in the management of his own affairs, having prematurely abandoned the labours of study, and having been consequently unable to derive any benefit therefrom. Now while these things were being said, and great shame was felt, certain holy men who had often succeeded in this kind of chase, and had thoroughly learned by experience that those who are armed with hope in God ought not to despair at all of such characters, kept a continual watch upon him, and if ever they saw him appear in the market place they approached and saluted him. And at first he spoke to them from horseback, askance, as they followed by his side; so great was the shamelessness which had at first got possession of him. But they, being merciful and loving men, were not ashamed at all of this treatment, but continually looked to one thing only, how they might rescue the lamb from the wolves; which in fact they actually accomplished by means of their perseverance. For afterwards, as if he had been converted by some sudden stroke, and were put to shame by their great assiduity, if ever he saw them in the distance approaching, he would instantly dismount, and bending low would listen silently in that attitude to all which fell from their lips, and in time he displayed even greater reverence and respect towards them. And then, by the grace of God having gradually rescued him out of all those entanglements, they handed him over again to his former state of seclusion and devout contemplation. And now he became so illustrious, that his former life seemed to be nothing in comparison with that which he lived after his fall. For being well aware by experience of the snare, and having expended all his wealth upon the needy, and released himself from all care of that kind, he cut off every pretext for an attack from those who wished to make designs upon him; and now treading the path which leads to heaven, he has already arrived at the very goal of virtue.

This man indeed fell and rose again while he was still young; but another man, after enduring great toils during his sojourn in the deserts, with only a single companion, and leading an angelic life, and being now on the way to old age, afforded I know not how a little loophole to the evil one, through some Satanic condition of mind, and carelessness; and although he had never seen a woman since he transferred himself to the monastic life, he fell into a passionate desire for intercourse with women. And first of all he besought his companion to supply him with meat and wine, and threatened, if he did not receive it, that he would go down into the marketplace. And this he said, not so much out of a longing for meat, as because he wished to get some handle and pretext for returning into the city. The other being perplexed at these things, and fearing, that if he hindered this he might drive him into some great evil, suffered him to have his fill of this craving. But when his companion perceived that this was a stale device, he openly threw off shame, and unmasked his pretence, and said that he must positively himself go down to the city, and as the other had not power to prevent him, he desisted at last from his efforts, and following him at a distance, watched to see what the meaning of this return could possibly be. And having seen him enter a brothel, and knowing that he had intercourse with a harlot there, he waited until he had satiated that foul desire, and then, when he came out, he received him with uplifted hands, and having embraced and fervently kissed him, without uttering any rebuke on account of what had happened he only besought him, seeing that he had satiated his desire, to return again to his dwelling in the wilderness. And the other, put to shame by his great clemency, was immediately smitten at the heart of compunction for the deed which he had perpetrated, followed him to the mountain; and there he begged the man to shut him up in another hut, and, having closed the doors of the dwelling, to supply him with bread and water

on certain days, and to inform those who enquired for him that he was laid to rest. And when he had said this, and persuaded him, he shut himself up, and was there continually, with fastings and prayers and tears, wiping off from his soul the defilement of his sin. And not long after when a drought had settled on the neighbouring region, and all in that country were lamenting over it, a certain man was commanded by a vision to depart, and exhort this recluse to pray, and put an end to the drought. And when he had departed, taking companions with him, they found the man, who formerly dwelt with him, there alone; and on enquiring concerning the other they were informed that he was dead. But they, believing that they were deceived, betook themselves again to prayer, and again by means of the same vision heard the same things which they had heard before. And then, standing round the man who really had deceived them, they besought him to show the other to them; for they declared that he was not dead but living. When he heard this, and perceived that their compact was exposed, he brought them to that holy man; and they having broken through the wall (for he had even blocked up the entrance) and having all of them entered, prostrating themselves at his feet, and informing him of what had happened, besought him to succour them against the famine. But he at first resisted, saying that he was far from such confidence as that; for he ever had his sin before his eyes, as if it had only just taken place; but when they related all which had happened to them they then induced him to pray; and having prayed he put an end to the drought. And what happened to that young man who was at first a disciple of John the son of Zebedee, but afterwards for a long time became a robber chief, and then again, having been captured by the holy hands of the blessed Apostle returned from the robber dens and lairs to his former virtue, you are not ignorant, but know it all as accurately as I do: and I have often heard you admiring the great condescension of the

saint, and how he first of all kissed the blood-stained hand of the young man, embracing him, and so brought him back to his former condition.

18. Moreover also the blessed Paul not only welcomes Onesimus the unprofitable runaway thief, because he was converted, but also asks his master to treat him who had repented, on equal terms of honour with his teacher, thus saying: *"I beseech you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds, who was aforetime unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me, whom I have sent back to you; thou therefore receive him, that is my very heart, whom I would fain have kept with me, that in your behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the Gospel; but without your mind I would do nothing that your goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will. For perhaps he was therefore parted from you for a season that you should have him back for ever; no longer as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially unto me; but how much rather to you both in the flesh and in the Lord? If then you hold me as a partner, receive him as myself."* And the same apostle, in writing to the Corinthians, said, *"Lest when I come I should mourn over many of those who have sinned beforehand and have not repented;"* and again, *"as I have said beforehand, so do I again declare beforehand, that if I come again I will not spare."* Do you see who they are whom he mourns, and whom he does not spare? Not those who have sinned, but those who have not repented, and not simply those who have not repented, but those who have been called once and again to this work, and would not be persuaded. For the expression *"I have said beforehand and do now say beforehand, as if I were present the second time, and being absent I write,"* implies exactly that which we are afraid may take place now in our case. For although Paul is not present who then threatened the Corinthians, yet Christ is present, who was then speaking through his mouth; and if we continue obdurate, He will

not spare us, but will smite us with a mighty blow, both in this world and the next. *"Let us then anticipate His countenance by our confession,"* let us pour out our hearts before Him. For *"you have sinned,"* we read, *"do not add thereto any more, and pray on behalf of your former deeds;"* [Sirach 21:1] and again *"a righteous man is his own accuser in the first instance."* Let us not then tarry for the accuser, but let us seize his place beforehand, and so let us make our judge more merciful by means of our candour. Now I know indeed that you confess your sins, and call yourself miserable above measure; but this is not the only thing I wish, but I long for you to be persuaded that it can justify you. For as long as you make this confession unprofitable, even if you accuse yourself, you will not be able to desist from the sins which follow it. For no one will be able to do anything with zeal and the proper method, unless he has first of all persuaded himself that he does it to advantage. For even the sower, after he has scattered his seed, unless he expects the harvest, will never reap. For who would choose to fatigue himself in vain, if he was not to gain any good from his labor? So then he also who sows words, and tears, and confession, unless he does this with a good hope, will not be able to desist from sinning, being still held down by the evil of despair; but just as that husbandman who despairs of any crop of fruit will not in future hinder any of those things which damage the seeds, so also he who sows his confession with tears, but does not expect any advantage for this, will not be able to overthrow those things which spoil repentance. And what does spoil repentance is being again entangled in the same evils. *"For there is one"* we read, *"who builds, and one who pulls down, what have they gained more than toil? He who is dipped in water because of contact with a dead body, and then touches it again, what has he gained by his washing?"* Even so if a man fasts because of his sins, and goes his way again, and does the same things, who will

hearken to his prayer? And again we read *"if a man goes back from righteousness to sin the Lord will prepare him for the sword,"* [Sirach 26:28] and, *"as a dog when he has returned to his vomit, and become odious, so is a fool who by his wickedness has returned to his sin."* [Proverbs 26:11]

19. Do not then merely set forth your sins being your own accuser, but as one who ought to be justified by the method of repentance; for thus you will be able to put your soul, which makes its confession, to shame, so that it falls no more into the same sins. For to accuse ourselves vehemently and call ourselves sinners is common, so to say, to unbelievers also. Many at least of those who belong to the stage, both men and women, who habitually practise the greatest shamelessness, call themselves miserable, but not with the proper aim. Wherefore I would not even call this confession; for the publication of their sins is not accompanied with compunction of soul, nor with bitter tears, nor with conversion of life, but in fact some of them make it in quest of a reputation for the hearers for candor of speech. For offenses do not seem so grievous when some other person announces them as when the perpetrator himself reports them. And they who under the influence of strong despair have lapsed into a state of insensibility, and treat the opinion of their fellowmen with contempt proclaim their own evil deeds with much effrontery, as if they were the doings of others. But I do not wish you to be any of these, nor to be brought out of despair to confession, but with a good expectation, after cutting away the whole root of despair, to manifest zeal in the contrary direction. And what is the root and mother of this despair? It is indolence; or rather one would not call it the root only, but also the nurse and mother. For as in the case of wool decay breeds moths, and is in turn increased by them; so here also indolence breeds despair, and is itself nourished in turn by despair; and

thus supplying each other with this accursed exchange, they acquire no small additional power. If any one then cuts one of these off, and hews it in pieces, he will easily be able to get the better of the remaining one. For on the one hand he who is not indolent will never fall into despair, and on the other he who is supported by good hopes, and does not despair of himself, will not be able to fall into indolence. Pray then, wrench this pair asunder, and break the yoke in pieces, by which I mean a variable and yet depressing habit of thought; for that which holds these two things together is not uniform, but manifold in shame and character. And what is this? It happens that one who has repented has done many great and good deeds, but meanwhile he has committed some sin equivalent to those good deeds, and this especially is sufficient to plunge him into despair, as if the buildings which had been set up were all pulled down, and all the labor which he had bestowed upon them had been vain and come to naught. But this must be taken into account, and such reasoning must be repelled, because, if we do not store up in good time a measure of good deeds equivalent to the sins which are committed after them, nothing can hinder us from sinking grievously and completely. But as it is, (right action) like some stout breastplate does not suffer the sharp and bitter dart to accomplish its work, but even if it is itself cut through, it averts much danger from the body. For he who departs to the other world with many deeds both good and bad, will have some alleviation in respect of the punishment and the torment there; but if a man is destitute of these good works, and takes only the evil with him, it is impossible to say what great sufferings he will undergo, when he is conducted to everlasting punishment. For a balance will be struck there between the evil deeds and those which are not such; and should the latter weigh down the scale they will to no small extent have saved the doer of them, and the injury arising from the doing of evil deeds is not so strong as

to drag the man down from the foremost place; but if the evil deeds exceed, they carry him off into hell fire, because the number of his good actions is not so great as to be able to make a stand against this violent impulse. And these things are not merely suggested by our own reasoning, but declared also by the divine oracles; for He Himself says, "*He shall reward every man according to his works.*" [Romans 2:6] And not only in hell, but also in the kingdom one will find many differences; for He says "*in my Fathers house are many mansions;*" [John 14:2] and, "*there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon.*" [1 Corinthians 15:41] And what wonder, if in dealing with such great matters he has spoken with such precision, seeing that He declares there is a difference in that world even between one star and another? Knowing then all these things let us never desist from doing good deeds, nor grow weary, nor, if we should be unable to reach the rank of the sun or of the moon, let us despise that of the stars. For if only we display thus much virtue at least, we shall be able to have a place in Heaven. And though we may not have become gold, or precious stone, yet if we only occupy the rank of silver we shall abide in the foundation; only let us not fall back again into that material which the fire readily devours, nor, when we are unable to accomplish great things, desist also from small ones, for this is the part of extreme folly, which I trust we may not experience. For just as material wealth increases if the lovers of it do not despise even the smallest gains, so is it also with the spiritual. For it is a strange thing that the judge should not overlook the reward of even a cup of cold water, but that we, if our achievements are not altogether great, should neglect the performance of little things. For he who does not despise the lesser things, will exercise much zeal concerning the greatest; but he who overlooks the former will also abstain from the latter; and to prevent this taking place Christ has defined great rewards even for these small things.

For what is easier than to visit the sick? Yet even this He requites with a great recompense. Lay hold then on eternal life, delight in the Lord, and supplicate Him; take up again the easy yoke, bow yourself beneath the light burden, put a finish to your life worthy of the beginning; do not suffer so great a stream of wealth to slip past you. For if you should continue provoking God by your deeds, you will destroy yourself; but if before much damage has been done, and all your husbandry has been overwhelmed with a flood, you will dam up the channels of wickedness, you will be able to recover again what has been spoiled and to add to it not a little further produce. Having considered all these things, shake off the dust, get up from the ground, and you will be formidable to the adversary; for he himself indeed has overthrown you, as if you would never rise again; but if he sees you again lifting up your hands against him, he will receive such an unexpected blow that he will be less forward in trying to upset you again, and you yourself will be more secure against receiving any wound of that kind in future. For if the calamities of others are sufficient to instruct us, much more those which we have ourselves undergone. And this is what I expect speedily to see in the case of your own dear self, and that by the grace of God you are again become more radiant than before, and displaying such great virtue, as even to be a protector of others in the world above. Only do not despair, do not fall back; for I will not cease repeating this in every form of speech, and wherever I see you, as well as by the lips of others; and if you listen to this you will no longer need other remedies.

Letter 2

1. If it were possible to express tears and groans by means of writing I would have filled the letter, which I now send to you, with them. Now I weep not because you are anxious concerning your patrimony, but because you have blotted out your name from the list of the brethren, because you have trampled upon the covenant which you had made with Christ. This is the reason why I shudder, this is the cause of my distress. On this account do I fear and tremble, knowing that the rejection of this covenant will bring great condemnation upon those who have enlisted for this noble warfare, and owing to indolence have deserted their proper rank. And that the punishment for such is heavier than for others is manifest for this reason. For no one would indite a private individual for shunning military service; but when once a man has become a soldier, if he be caught deserting the ranks, he runs a risk of suffering the most extreme penalty. There is nothing strange, beloved Theodore, in a wrestler falling, but in his remaining in a fallen condition; neither is it a grievous thing for the warrior to be wounded, but to despair after the blow has been struck, and to neglect the wound. No merchant, having once suffered shipwreck, and lost his freight, desists from sailing, but again crosses the sea and the billows, and the broad ocean, and recovers his former wealth. We see athletes also who after many falls have gained the wreath of victory; and often, before now, a soldier who has once ran away has turned out a champion, and prevailed over the enemy. Many also of those who have denied Christ owing to the pressure of torture, have fought again, and departed at last with the crown of martyrdom upon their brows. But if each of these had despaired after the first blow, he would not have reaped the subsequent benefits. Even so now, beloved Theodore,

because the enemy has shaken you a little from your position, do not thou give yourself an additional thrust into the pit, but stand up bravely, and return speedily to the place from which you have departed, and deem not this blow, lasting but for a little while, any reproach. For if you saw a soldier returning wounded from war you would not reproach him; for it is a reproach to cast away one's arms, and to hold aloof from the enemy; but as long as a man stands fighting, even if he be wounded and retreat for a short time, no one is so unfeeling or inexperienced in matters of war, as to find any fault with him. Exemption from wounds is the lot of non-combatants; but those who advance with much spirit against the enemy may sometimes be wounded and fail; which is exactly what has now occurred in your case; for suddenly, while you attempted to destroy the serpent you were bitten. But take courage, you need a little vigilance, and then not a trace of this wound will be left; or rather by the grace of God you will crush the head of the Evil One himself; nor let it trouble you that you are soon impeded, even at the outset. For the eye, the keen eye of the Evil One perceived the excellence of your soul, and guessed from many tokens that a brave adversary would wax strong against him; for he expected that one who had promptly attacked him with such great vehemence would easily overcome him, if he persevered. Therefore he was diligent, and watchful, and mightily stirred up against you, or rather against his own head, if you will bravely stand your ground. For who did not marvel at your quick, sincere, and fervent change to good? For delicacy of food was disregarded, and costliness of raiment was despised, all manner of parade was put down, and all the zeal for the wisdom of this world was suddenly transferred to the divine oracles; whole days were spent in reading, and whole nights in prayer; no mention was made of your family dignity, nor any thought taken of your wealth; but to clasp the knees and hasten to the feet of the brethren

you recognized as something nobler than high birth. These things irritated the Evil One, these things stirred him up to more vehement strife; but yet he did not give a deadly blow. For if after a long time, and continual fastings, and sleeping on the bare ground and the rest of the discipline he overthrew you, even then there was no need to despair; nevertheless one would have said that the damage was great if defeat had taken place after many toils, and labour, and victories; but inasmuch as he upset you as soon as you had stripped for the contest with him, all that he accomplished was to render you more eager to do battle with him. For that fell pirate attacked you just as you were sailing out of the harbor, not when you had returned from your trading voyage, bringing a full cargo. And as when one has attempted to stay a fierce lion, and has only grazed his skin, he has done him no injury but only stirred him up the more against himself, and rendered him more confident and difficult to capture afterwards: even so the common enemy of all has attempted to strike a deep blow, but has missed it, and consequently made his antagonist more vigilant and wary for the future.

2. For human nature is a slippery thing, quick to be cheated, but quick also to recover from deceit and as it speedily falls, so also does it readily rise. For even that blessed man, I mean David the chosen king and prophet, after he had accomplished many good deeds, betrayed himself to be a man, for once he fell in love with a strange woman, nor did he stop there but he committed adultery on account of his passion, and he committed murder on account of his adultery; but he did not try to inflict a third blow upon himself because he had already received two such heavy ones, but immediately hastened to the physician, and applied the remedies, fasting, tears, lamentation, constant prayer, frequent confession of the sin; and so by these means he propitiated God, insomuch that he was restored to his former position, insomuch that after adultery and murder the memory of the

father was able to shield the idolatry of the son. For the son of this David, Solomon by name, was caught by the same snare as his father, and out of complaisance to women fell away from the God of his fathers.

[1 Kings 11:3-4] You see how great an evil it is not to master pleasure, not to upset the ruling principle in nature, and for a man to be the slave of women. This same Solomon then, who was formerly righteous and wise but who ran a risk of being deprived of all the kingdom on account of his sin, God permitted to keep the sixth part of the government on account of the renown of his father. [1 Kings 11:12-13]

Now if your zeal had been concerned with worldly eloquence, and then you had given it up in despair, I should have reminded you of the law courts and the judgment seat and the victories achieved there and the former boldness of your speech, and should have exhorted you to return to your labours in that behalf: but inasmuch as our race is for heavenly things, and we take no account of the things which are on earth, I put you in remembrance of another court of justice, and of that fearful and tremendous seat of judgment; *"for we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ."* [2 Corinthians 5:10] And He will then sit as judge who is now disregarded by you. What shall we say then, let me ask at that time? Or what defence shall we make, if we continue to disregard Him? What shall we say then? Shall we plead the anxieties of business? Nay He has anticipated this by saying, *"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"* [Matthew 16:26] Or that we have been deceived by others? But it did not help Adam in his defence to screen himself behind his wife, and say *"the woman whom you gave me, she deceived me;"* [Genesis 3:12] even as the serpent was no excuse for the woman. Terrible, O beloved Theodore, is that tribunal, one which needs no accusers and waits for no witnesses; for *"all things are naked and laid open*

to Him" [Hebrews 4:13] who judges us, and we must submit to give an account not of deeds only but also of thoughts; for that judge is quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. [Hebrews 4:12] But perhaps you will allege weakness of nature as the excuse, and inability to bear the yoke. And what kind of defence is this, that you have not strength to bear the easy yoke, that you are unable to carry the light burden? Is recovery from fatigue a grievous and oppressive thing? For it is to this that Christ calls us, saying, *"Come unto me all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* [Matthew 11:28] For what can be lighter I ask, than to be released from anxieties, and business, and fears, and labors, and to stand outside the rough billows of life, and dwell in a tranquil haven?

3. Which of all things in the world seems to you most desirable and enviable? No doubt you will say government, and wealth, and public reputation. And yet what is more wretched than these things when they are compared with the liberty of Christians. For the ruler is subjected to the wrath of the populace and to the irrational impulses of the multitude, and to the fear of higher rulers, and to anxieties on behalf of those who are ruled, and the ruler of yesterday becomes a private citizen today; for this present life in no wise differs from a stage, but just as there, one man fills the position of a king, a second of a general, and a third of a soldier, but when evening has come on the king is no king, the ruler no ruler, and the general no general, even so also in that day each man will receive his due reward not according to the outward part which he has played but according to his works. Well! Is glory a precious thing which perishes like the power of grass? Or wealth, the possessors of which are pronounced unhappy? *"For woe"* we read, *"to the rich;"* [Luke 6:24] and again, *"Woe unto them who*

trust in their strength and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches!"

But the Christian never becomes a private person after being a ruler, or a poor man after being rich, or without honour after being held in honour; but he abides rich even when he is poor, and is exalted when he strives to humble himself; and from the rule which he exercises no human being can depose him, but only one of those rulers who are under the power of this world's potentate of darkness.

"Marriage is right," you say; I also assent to this. For *"marriage,"* we read, *"is honourable and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge;"* [Hebrews 13:4] but it is no longer possible for you to observe the right conditions of marriage. For if he who has been attached to a heavenly bridegroom deserts him, and joins himself to a wife the act is adultery, even if you call it marriage ten thousand times over; or rather it is worse than adultery in proportion as God is greater than man. Let no one deceive you saying: *"God has not forbidden to marry;"* I know this as well as you; He has not forbidden to marry, but He has forbidden to commit adultery, may you be preserved from ever engaging yourself in marriage! And why do you marvel if marriage is judged as if it were adultery, when God is disregarded? Slaughter has brought about righteousness, and mercy has been a cause of condemnation more than slaughter; because the latter has been according to the mind of God but the former has been forbidden. It was reckoned to Phinees for righteousness that he pierced to death the woman who committed fornication, together with the fornicator; [Numbers 25:7-11] but Samuel, that saint of God although he wept and mourned and entreated for whole nights, could not rescue Saul from the condemnation which God issued against him, because he saved, contrary to the design of God, the king of the alien tribes whom he ought to have slain. [1 Samuel xv] If then mercy has been a cause of condemnation more than

slaughter because God was disobeyed, what wonder is it if marriage condemns more than adultery when it involves the rejection of Christ? For, as I said at the beginning, if you were a private person no one would indict you for shunning to serve as a soldier; but now you are no longer your own master, being engaged in the service of so great a king. For if the wife has not power over her own body, but the husband, [1 Corinthians 7:4] much more they who live in Christ must be unable to have authority over their body. He who is now despised, the same will then be our judge; think ever on Him and the river of fire: "*For a river of fire*" we read, "*winds before His face;*" [Daniel 7:10] for it is impossible for one who has been delivered over by Him to the fire to expect any end of his punishment. But the unseemly pleasures of this life no-wise differ from shadows and dreams; for before the deed of sin is completed, the conditions of pleasure are extinguished; and the punishments for these have no limit. And the sweetness lasts for a little while but the pain is everlasting.

Tell me, what is there stable in this world? Wealth which often does not last even to the evening? Or glory? Hear what a certain righteous man says: "*My life is swifter than a runner.*" [Job 9:25] For as they dash away before they stand still, even so does this glory take to flight before it has fairly reached us. Nothing is more precious than the soul; and even they who have gone to the extremity of folly have not been ignorant of this; for "*there is no equivalent of the soul*" is the saying of a heathen poet. I know that you have become much weaker for the struggle with the Evil One; I know that you are standing in the very midst of the flame of pleasures; but if you will say to the enemy "*We do not serve your pleasures, and we do not bow down to the root of all your evils;*" if you will bend your eye upward, the Saviour will even now shake out the fire, and will burn up those who have flung you into it, and will send to you in the midst of the furnace a

cloud, and dew, and a rustling breeze, so that the fire may not lay hold of your thought or your conscience. Only do not consume yourself with fire. For the arms and engines of besiegers have often been unable to destroy the fortification of cities, but the treachery of one or two of the citizens dwelling inside has betrayed them to the enemy without any trouble on his part. And now if none of your thoughts within betray you, should the Evil One bring countless engines against you from without he will bring them in vain.

4. You have by the grace of God many and great men who sympathize with your trouble, who encourage you to the fight, who tremble for your soul—Valerius the holy man of God, Florentius who is in every respect his brother, Porphyrius who is wise with the wisdom of Christ, and many others. These are daily mourning, and praying for you without ceasing; and they would have obtained what they asked for, long ago, if only you had been willing to withdraw yourself a little space out of the hands of the enemy. Now then is it not strange that, while others do not even now despair of your salvation, but are continually praying that they may have their member restored to them, you yourself, having once fallen, art unwilling to get up again, and remainest prostrate, all but crying aloud to the enemy: *"Slay me, smite me, spare not?" "Does he who falls not rise up again?"* [Jeremiah 8:4] speaks the divine oracle. But you are striving against this and contradicting it; for if one who has fallen despairs it is as much as to say that he who falls does not rise up again. I entreat you do not so great a wrong to yourself; do not pour upon us such a flood of sorrow. I do not say at the present time, when you have not yet completed your twentieth year, but even if, after achieving many things, and spending your whole life in Christ you had, in extreme old age, experienced this attack, even then it would not have been right to despair, but to call to mind the

robber who was justified on the cross, the labourers who wrought about the eleventh hour, and received the wages of the whole day. But as it is not well that those who have fallen near the very extremity of life should abandon hope, if they be sober minded, so on the other hand it is not safe to feed upon this hope, and say, Here for a while, I will enjoy the sweets of life, but afterwards, when I have worked for a short time, I shall receive the wages of the whole working time. For I recollect hearing you often say, when many were exhorting you to frequent the schools; *"But what if I bring my life to a bad end in a short space of time, how shall I depart to Him who has said 'Delay not to turn to the Lord, nor put off day after day?'"* [Sirach 5:8] Recover this thought, and stand in fear of the thief; for by this name Christ calls our departure hence, because it comes upon us unawares. Consider the anxieties of life which befall us, both those which are personal to ourselves, and which are common to us with others, the fear of rulers, the envy of citizens, the danger which often hangs over us imperilling even life itself, the labours, the distresses, the servile flatteries, such as are unbecoming even to slaves if they be earnest minded men, the fruit of our labours coming to an end in this world, a fact which is the most distressing of all. It has been the lot indeed of many to miss the enjoyment of the things for which they have laboured, and after having consumed the prime of their manhood in labours and perils, just when they hoped that they should receive their reward they have departed taking nothing with them. For if, after undergoing many dangers, and completing many campaigns, one will scarcely look upon an earthly king with confidence, how will any one be able to behold the heavenly king, if he has lived and fought for another all his time.

5. Would you have me speak of the domestic cares of wife, and children and slaves? It is an evil thing to wed a very poor wife, or a very

rich one; for the former is injurious to the husband's means, the latter to his authority and independence. It is a grievous thing to have children, still more grievous not to have any; for in the latter case marriage has been to no purpose, in the former a bitter bondage has to be undergone. If a child is sick, it is the occasion of no small fear; if he dies an untimely death, there is inconsolable grief; and at every stage of growth there are various anxieties on their account, and many fears and toils. And what is one to say to the rascalities of domestic slaves? Is this then life, Theodore, when one's soul is distracted in so many directions, when a man has to serve so many, to live for so many, and never for himself? Now among us, O friend, none of these things happen, I appeal to yourself as a witness. For during that short time when you were willing to lift your head above the waves of this world, you know what great cheerfulness and gladness you enjoyed. For there is no man free, save only he who lives for Christ. He stands superior to all troubles, and if he does not choose to injure himself no one else will be able to do this, but he is impregnable; he is not stung by the loss of wealth; for he has learned that we *"brought nothing into this world, neither can we carry anything out;"* [1 Timothy 6:7] he is not caught by the longings of ambition or glory; for he has learned that our citizenship is in heaven; [Philippians 3:20] no one annoys him by abuse, or provokes him by blows; there is only one calamity for a Christian which is, disobedience to God; but all the other things, such as loss of property, exile, peril of life, he does not even reckon to be a grievance at all. And that which all dread, departure hence to the other world—this is to him sweeter than life itself. For as when one has climbed to the top of a cliff and gazes on the sea and those who are sailing upon it, he sees some being washed by the waves, others running upon hidden rocks, some hurrying in one direction, others being driven in another, like prisoners, by the force of the gale, many actually in the water,

some of them using their hands only in the place of a boat and a rudder, and many drifting along upon a single plank, or some fragment of the vessel, others floating dead, a scene of manifold and various disaster; even so he who is engaged in the service of Christ drawing himself out of the turmoil and stormy billows of life takes his seat upon secure and lofty ground. For what position can be loftier or more secure than that in which a man has only one anxiety, *"How he ought to please God?"* [1 Thessalonians 4:1] Have you seen the shipwrecks, Theodore, of those who sail upon this sea? Wherefore, I beseech you, avoid the deep water, avoid the stormy billows, and seize some lofty spot where it is not possible to be captured. There is a resurrection, there is a judgment, there is a terrible tribunal which awaits us when we have gone out of this world; *"we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."* [Romans 14:10] It is not in vain that we are threatened with hell fire, it is not without purpose that such great blessings have been prepared for us. The things of this life are a shadow, and more naught even than a shadow, being full of many fears, and many dangers, and extreme bondage. Do not then deprive yourself both of that world, and of this, when you may gain both, if you please. Now that they who live in Christ will gain the things of this world Paul teaches us when he says: *"But I spare you;"* [1 Corinthians 7:28] and again *"But this I say for your profit."* [1 Corinthians 7:35] Do you see that even here he who cares for the things of the Lord is superior to the man who has married? It is not possible for one who has departed to the other world to repent; no athlete, when he has quitted the lists, and the spectators have dispersed, can contend again.

Be always thinking of these things, and break in pieces the sharp sword of the Evil One, by means of which he destroys many. And this is despair, which cuts off from hope those who have been overthrown. This is the strong weapon of the enemy, and the only way in which he holds down

those who have been made captives is by binding them with this chain, which, if we choose, we shall speedily be able to break by the grace of God. I know that I have exceeded the due measure of a letter, but forgive me; for I am not willingly in this condition, but have been constrained by my love and sorrow, owing to which I forced myself to write this letter also, although many would have prevented me. "*Cease labouring in vain and sowing upon rock*" many have been saying to me. But I hearkened to none of them. For there is hope I said to myself that, God willing, my letter will accomplish something; but if that which we deprecate should take place, we shall at least have the advantage of escaping self reproach for keeping silence, and we shall not be worse than sailors on the sea, who, when they behold men of their own craft drifting on a plank, because their ship has been broken to pieces by the winds and waves, take down their sails, and cast anchor, and get into a boat and try to rescue the men, although strangers, known to them only in consequence of their calamity. But if the others were unwilling to be rescued no one would accuse those of their destruction who attempted to save them. This is what we offer; but we trust that by the grace of God you also will do your part, and we shall again see you occupying an eminent place in the flock of Christ. In answer to the prayers of the saints may we speedily receive you back, dear friend, sound in the true health. If you have any regard for us, and hast not utterly cast us out of your memory, please vouchsafe a reply to our letter; for in so doing you will give us much pleasure.

Letter to a Young Widow

The date of the following letter can be determined within very narrow limits. It contains a reference (c. 5) to the defeat and death of the Emperor Valens in the battle with the Goths at Hadrianople, in A.D. 378, as a recent event. The Emperor who is described as having incessantly engaged in war ever since his accession (c. 4) must be Theodosius, who succeeded Valens, and as the Goths are said to be still overrunning large regions with impunity, and insolently mocking the timidity of the imperial troops (ib.) the letter must have been written prior to the crushing defeat which Theodosius inflicted on them in 382. The whole epistle is deeply tinged with that profound sense of the unhappiness and instability of human life which the moral corruption of society and recent calamities of the empire impressed with peculiar force on the minds of men; producing too often among Pagans either a cynical gloom or reckless indifference, but leading Christians to cling more closely and earnestly to the hopes and consolations of the Gospel.

1. That you have sustained a severe blow, and that the weapon directed from above has been planted in a vital part all will readily admit, and none even of the most rigid moralists will deny it; but since they who are stricken with sorrow ought not to spend their whole time in mourning and tears, but to make good provision also for the healing of their wounds, lest, if they be neglected their tears should aggravate the wound, and the fire of their sorrow become inflamed, it is a good thing to listen to words of consolation, and restraining for a brief season at least the fountain of your tears to surrender yourself to those who endeavour to console you. On this account I abstained from troubling you when your sorrow was at its height, and the

thunderbolt had only just fallen upon you; but having waited an interval and permitted you to take your fill of mourning, now that you are able to look out a little through the mist, and to open your ears to those who attempt to comfort you, I also would second the words of your handmaids by some contributions of my own. For while the tempest is still severe, and a full gale of sorrow is blowing, he who exhorts another to desist from grief would only provoke him to increased lamentations and having incurred his hatred would add fuel to the flame by such speeches besides being regarded himself as an unkind and foolish person. But when the troubled water has begun to subside, and God has allayed the fury of the waves, then we may freely spread the sails of our discourse. For in a moderate storm skill may perhaps play its part; but when the onslaught of the wind is irresistible experience is of no avail. For these reasons I have hitherto held my peace, and even now have only just ventured to break silence because I have heard from your uncle that one may begin to take courage, as some of your more esteemed handmaids are now venturing to discourse at length upon these matters, women also outside your own household, who are your kinsfolk, or are otherwise qualified for this office. Now if you allow them to talk to you I have the greatest hope and confidence that you will not disdain my words but do your best to give them a calm and quiet hearing. Under any circumstances indeed the female sex is the more apt to be sensitive to suffering; but when in addition there is youth, and untimely widowhood, and inexperience in business, and a great crowd of cares, while the whole life previously has been nurtured in the midst of luxury, and cheerfulness and wealth, the evil is increased many fold, and if she who is subjected to it does not obtain help from on high even an accidental thought will be able to unhinge her. Now I hold this to be the foremost and greatest evidence of God's care concerning you; for that you have not been overwhelmed by

grief, nor driven out of your natural condition of mind when such great troubles suddenly concurred to afflict you was not due to any human assistance but to the almighty hand the understanding of which there is no measure, the wisdom which is past finding out, the *"Father of mercies and the God of all comfort."* [2 Corinthians 1:3] *"For He Himself"* it is said *"has smitten us, and He will heal us; He will strike, and He will dress the wound and make us whole."* [Hosea 6:2]

For as long as that blessed husband of yours was with you, you enjoyed honour, and care and zealous attention; in fact you enjoyed such as you might expect to enjoy from a husband; but since God took him to Himself He has supplied his place to you. And this is not my saying but that of the blessed prophet David for he says *"He will take up the fatherless and the widow,"* and elsewhere he calls Him *"father of the fatherless and judge of the widow;"* thus in many passages you will see that He earnestly considers the cause of this class of mankind.

2. But lest the continual repetition of this name of widow should upset your soul, and disconcert your reason, having been inflicted on you in the very flower of your age, I wish first of all to discourse on this point, and to prove to you that this name of widow is not a title of calamity but of honour, aye the greatest honour. For do not quote the erroneous opinion of the world as a testimony, but the admonition of the blessed Paul, or rather of Christ. For in his utterances Christ was speaking through him as he himself said *"If you seek a proof of Christ who is speaking in me?"* [2 Corinthians 13:3] What then does he say? *"Let not a widow be enrolled under threescore years of age"* and again *"but the younger widows refuse"* [1 Timothy 5:9, 11] intending by both these sayings to indicate to us the importance of the matter. And when he is making regulations about bishops he nowhere prescribes a standard of age, but in this case he is very

particular on the point, and, pray, why so? Not because widowhood is greater than priesthood, but because widows have greater labour to undergo than priests, being encompassed on many sides by a variety of business public and private. For as an unfortified city lies exposed to all who wish to plunder it, so a young woman living in widowhood has many who form designs upon her on every side not only those who aim at getting her money but also those who are bent upon corrupting her modesty. And besides these we shall find that she is subjected to other conditions also likely to occasion her fall. For the contempt of servants their negligence of business, the loss of that respect which was formerly paid, the sight of contemporaries in prosperity, and often the hankering after luxury, induce women to engage in a second marriage. Some there are who do not choose to unite themselves to men by the law of marriage, but do so secretly and clandestinely. And they act thus in order to enjoy the praise of widowhood; thus it is a state which seems to be not reproached, but admired and deemed worthy of honour among men, not only among us who believe, but even among unbelievers also. For once when I was still a young man I know that the sophist who taught me (and he exceeded all men in his reverence for the gods) expressed admiration for my mother before a large company. For enquiring, as was his wont, of those who sat beside him who I was, and some one having said that I was the son of a woman who was a widow, he asked of me the age of my mother and the duration of her widowhood, and when I told him that she was forty years of age of which twenty had elapsed since she lost my father he was astonished and uttered a loud exclamation, and turning to those present "*Heavens!*" cried he "*what women there are among the Christians.*" So great is the admiration and praise enjoyed by widowhood not only among ourselves, but also among those who are outside the Church. And being aware of all this the blessed Paul said "*Let*

not a widow be enrolled under threescore years of age." And even after this great qualification of age he does not permit her to be ranked in this sacred society but mentions some additional requisites *"well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children if she have lodged strangers if she have washed the saints feet if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."* [1 Timothy 5:10] Heavens! What testing and scrutiny! How much virtue does he demand from the widow, and how precisely does he define it! Which he would not have done, had he not intended to entrust to her a position of honour and dignity. And *"the younger widows"* he says *"refuse;"* and then he adds the reason: *"for when they have waxed wanton against Christ they will marry."* [1 Timothy 5:11] By this expression he gives us to understand that they who have lost their husbands are wedded to Christ in their stead. Observe how he asserts this by way of indicating the mild and easy nature of this union; I refer to the passage *"when they have waxed wanton against Christ they will marry,"* as if He were some gentle husband who did not exercise authority over them, but suffered them to live in freedom. Neither did Paul confine his discourse on the subject to these remarks, but also in another place again he has manifested great anxiety about it where he says *"Now she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives; but she who is a widow indeed and desolate has set her hope in God, and continues in prayers and supplications day and night."* [1 Timothy 5:6, 5] And writing to the Corinthians he says *"But she is more blessed if she abide thus."* [1 Corinthians 7:40] You see what great praise is bestowed upon widowhood, and this in the New Testament, when the beauty of virginity also was clearly brought to light. Nevertheless even the lustre of this state could not obscure the glories of widowhood, which shines on brightly all the same, keeping its own value. When then we make mention of

widowhood from time to time, do not be cast down, nor consider the matter a reproach; for if this be a matter of reproach, far more so is virginity. But this is not the case; no! God forbid. For inasmuch as we all admire and welcome women who live continently while their husbands are yet alive must we not be delighted with those who manifest the same good feeling concerning their husbands when they have departed this, life, and praise them accordingly? As I was saying then, as long as you lived with the blessed Therasius you enjoyed honour and consideration such as is natural for a wife to receive from a husband; but now in his place you have God who is the Lord of all, who has of old been your protector and will be so now still more and with yet greater earnestness; and as I have already said He has displayed no slight token of his providential care by having preserved you whole and unharmed in the midst of such a furnace of anxiety and sorrow, and not suffering you to undergo anything undesirable. Now if He has not permitted any shipwreck to take place in the midst of so much rough water, much more will He preserve your soul in calm weather and lighten the burden of your widowhood, and the consequences of it which seem to be so terrible.

3. Now if it is not the name of widow which distresses you, but the loss of such a husband I grant you that all the world over among men engaged in secular affairs there have been few like him, so affectionate, so gentle, so humble, so sincere, so understanding, so devout. And certainly if he had altogether perished, and utterly ceased to be, it would be right to be distressed, and sorrowful; but if he has only sailed into the tranquil haven, and taken his journey to Him who is really his king, one ought not to mourn but to rejoice on these accounts. For this death is not death, but only a kind of emigration and translation from the worse to the better, from earth to heaven, from men to angels, and archangels, and Him who is the Lord of

angels and archangels. For here on earth while he was serving the emperor there were dangers to be expected and many plots arising from men who bore ill-will, for in proportion as his reputation increased did the designs also of enemies abound; but now that he has departed to the other world none of these things can be suspected. Wherefore in proportion as you grieve that God has taken away one who was so good and worthy you ought to rejoice that he has departed in much safety and honour, and being released from the trouble which besets this present season of danger, is in great peace and tranquillity. For is it not out of place to acknowledge that heaven is far better than earth, and yet to mourn those who are translated from this world to the other? For if that blessed husband of yours had been one of those who lived a shameful life contrary to what God approved it would have been right to bewail and lament for him not only when he had departed, but while he was still living; but inasmuch as he was one of those who are the friends of God we should take pleasure in him not only while living, but also when he has been laid to rest. And that we ought to act thus you have surely heard the words of the blessed Paul *"to depart and to be with Christ which is far better."* [Philippians 1:33] But perhaps you long to hear your husband's words, and enjoy the affection which you bestowed upon him, and you yearn for his society, and the glory which you had on his account, and the splendour, and honour, and security, and all these things being gone distress and darken your life. Well! The affection which you bestowed on him you can keep now just as you formerly did.

For such is the power of love, it embraces, and unites, and fastens together not only those who are present, and near, and visible but also those who are far distant; and neither length of time, nor separation in space, nor anything else of that kind can break up and sunder in pieces the affection of the soul. But if you wish to behold him face to face (for this I know is what

you specially long for) keep your bed in his honour sacred from the touch of any other man, and do your best to manifest a life like his, and then assuredly you shall depart one day to join the same company with him, not to dwell with him for five years as you did here, nor for 20, or 100, nor for a thousand or twice that number but for infinite and endless ages. For it is not any physical relation, but a correspondence in the way of living which qualifies for the inheritance of those regions of rest. For if it was identity of moral constitution which brought Lazarus although a stranger to Abraham into the same heavenly bosom with him, and qualifies many from east and west to sit down with him, the place of rest will receive you also with the good Therasius, if you will exhibit the same manner of life as his, and then you shall receive him back again no longer in that corporeal beauty which he had when he departed, but in lustre of another kind, and splendour outshining the rays of the sun. For this body, even if it reaches a very high standard of beauty is nevertheless perishable; but the bodies of those who have been well pleasing to God, will be invested with such glory as these eyes cannot even look upon. And God has furnished us with certain tokens, and obscure indications of these things both in the Old and in the New Dispensation. For in the former the face of Moses shone with such glory as to be intolerable to the eyes of the Israelites, and in the New the face of Christ shone far more brilliantly than his. For tell me if any one had promised to make your husband king of all the earth, and then had commanded you to withdraw for twenty years on his account, and had promised after that to restore him to you with the diadem and the purple, and to place you again in the same rank with him, would you not have meekly endured the separation with due self-control? Would you not have been well pleased with the gift, and deemed it a thing worth praying for? Well then submit to this now, not for the sake of a kingdom on earth, but of

a kingdom in Heaven; not to receive him back clad in a vesture of gold but robed in immortality and glory such as is fitting for them to have who dwell in Heaven. And if you find the trial very unbearable owing to its long duration, it may be that he will visit you by means of visions and converse with you as he was wont to do, and show you the face for which you yearn: let this be your consolation taking the place of letters, though indeed it is far more definite than letters. For in the latter case there are but lines traced with the pen to look upon, but in the former you see the form of his visage, and his gentle smile, his figure and his movements, you hear his speech and recognize the voice which you loved so well.

4. But since you mourn also over the loss of security which you formerly enjoyed on his account, and perhaps also for the sake of those great hopes of distinction which were dawning (for I used to hear that he would speedily arrive at the dignity of præfect, and this, I fancy, it is which more especially upsets and distresses your soul) consider I pray the case of those who have been in a higher official position than his, and yet have brought their life to a very pitiable end. Let me recall them to your memory: you probably know Theodore of Sicily by reputation: for he was one of the most distinguished men; he surpassed all in bodily stature and beauty as well as in the confidence which he enjoyed with the Emperor, and he had more power than any member of the royal household, but he did not bear this prosperity meekly, and having entered into a plot against the Emperor he was taken prisoner and miserably beheaded; and his wife who was not a whit inferior to your noble self in education and birth and all other respects was suddenly stripped of all her possessions, deprived even of her freedom also, and enrolled among the household slaves, and compelled to lead a life more pitiable than any bondmaid, having this advantage only over the rest that owing to the extreme severity of her calamity she moved to tears all

who beheld her. And it is said also that Artemisia who was the wife of a man of high reputation, since he also aimed at usurping the throne, was reduced to this same condition of poverty, and also to blindness; for the depth of her despondency, and the abundance of her tears destroyed her sight; and now she has need of persons to lead her by the hand, and to conduct her to the doors of others that she may obtain the necessary supply of food. And I might mention many other families which have been brought down in this way did I not know you to be too pious and prudent in disposition to wish to find consolation for your own calamity out of the misfortunes of others. And the only reason why I mentioned those instances to which I referred just now was that you might learn that human things are nothingness but that truly as the prophet says "*all the glory of man is as the flower of grass.*" [Isaiah 40:5] For in proportion to men's elevation and splendour is the ruin wrought for them, not only in the case of those who are under rule, but also of the rulers themselves. For it would be impossible to find any private family which has been immersed in such great calamities as the ills in which the imperial house has been steeped. For untimely loss of parents, and of husbands, and violent forms of death, more outrageous and painful than those which occur in tragedies, especially beset this kind of government.

Now passing over ancient times, of those who have reigned in our own generation, nine in all, only two have ended their life by a natural death; and of the others one was slain by a usurper, one in battle, one by a conspiracy of his household guards, one by the very man who elected him, and invested him with the purple, and of their wives some, as it is reported, perished by poison, others died of mere sorrow; while of those who still survive one, who has an orphan son, is trembling with alarm lest any of those who are in power dreading what may happen in the future should

destroy him; another has reluctantly yielded to much entreaty to return from the exile into which she had been driven by him who held the chief power. And of the wives of the present rulers the one who has recovered a little from her former calamities has much sorrow mingled with her joy because the possessor of power is still young and inexperienced and has many designing men on all sides of him; and the other is ready to die of fear, and spends her time more miserably than criminals condemned to death because her husband ever since he assumed the crown up to the present day has been constantly engaged in warfare and fighting, and is more exhausted by the shame and the reproaches which assail him on all sides than by actual calamities. For that which has never taken place has now come to pass, the barbarians leaving their own country have overrun an infinite space of our territory, and that many times over, and having set fire to the land, and captured the towns they are not minded to return home again, but after the manner of men who are keeping holiday rather than making war, they laugh us all to scorn; and it is said that one of their kings declared that he was amazed at the impudence of our soldiers, who although slaughtered more easily than sheep still expect to conquer, and are not willing to quit their own country; for he said that he himself was satiated with the work of cutting them to pieces. Imagine what the feelings of the Emperor and his wife must be on hearing these words!

5. And since I have made mention of this war, a great crowd of widows has occurred to me, who in past times derived very great lustre from the honour enjoyed by their husbands, but now are all arrayed in a dark mourning robe and spend their whole time in lamentation. For they had not the advantage which was enjoyed by your dear self. For thou, my excellent friend, saw that goodly husband of yours lying on his bed, and heard his last words, and receive his instructions as to what should be done

about the affairs of the family, and learn how by the provisions of his will they were guarded against every kind of encroachment on the part of rapacious and designing men. And not only this, but also when he was yet lying dead you often flung yourself upon the body, and kissed his eyes, and embraced him, and wailed over him, and you saw him conducted to burial with much honour, and did everything necessary for his obsequies, as was fitting, and from frequent visits to his grave you have no slight consolation of your sorrow. But these women have been deprived of all these things, having all sent out their husbands to war in the hope of receiving them back again, instead of which it has been their lot to receive the bitter tidings of their death. Neither has any one come back to them with the bodies of their slain, or bringing anything save a message describing the manner of their death. And some there are who have not even been vouchsafed this record, or been enabled to learn how their husbands fell, as they were buried beneath a heap of slain in the thick of battle.

And what wonder if most of the generals perished thus, when even the Emperor himself having been blockaded in a certain village with a few soldiers did not dare to go out and oppose the assailants, but remained inside and when the enemy had set fire to the building was burnt to death together with all that were therein, not men only, but horses, beams and walls, so that the whole was turned into a heap of ashes? And this was the tale which they who departed to war with the Emperor brought back to his wife in place of the Emperor himself. For the splendours of the world differ in no-wise whatever from the things which happen on the stage, and the beauty of spring flowers. For in the first place they flee away before they have been manifested; and then, even if they have strength to last a little while, they speedily become ready to decay. For what is more worthless than the honour and glory which is paid by the multitude? What fruit has it?

What kind of profit? What serviceable end does it meet? And would that this only was the evil! But in fact besides failing to get anything good from the possession, he who owns this most cruel mistress is continually forced to bear much which is painful and injurious; for mistress she is of those who own her, and in proportion as she is flattered by her slaves does she exalt herself against them, and ties them down by increasingly harsh commands; but she would never be able to revenge herself on those who despise and neglect her; so much fiercer is she than any tyrant and wild beast. For tyrants and wild animals are often mollified by humouring, but her fury is greatest when we are most complaisant to her, and if she finds any one who will listen to her, and yield to her in everything there is no kind of command from which in future she can be induced to abstain. Moreover she has also another ally whom one would not do wrong to call her daughter. For after she herself has grown to maturity and fairly taken root among us, she then produces arrogance, a thing which is no less able than herself to drive the soul of those who possess it into headlong ruin.

6. Tell me then do you lament this that God has reserved you from such a cruel bondage, and that He has barred every avenue against these pestilential diseases? For while your husband was living they ceased not continually assaulting the thoughts of your heart, but since his death they have no starting point whence they can lay hold of your understanding. This then is a discipline which ought to be practised in future— to abstain from lamenting the withdrawal of these evils, and from hankering after the bitter tyranny which they exercise. For where they blow a heavy blast they upset all things from the foundation and shatter them to pieces; and just as many prostitutes, although by nature ill favoured and ugly, do yet by means of enamels and pigments excite the feelings of the youthful while they are still tender, and when they have got them under their control treat them more

insolently than any slave; so also do these passions, vainglory and arrogance, defile the souls of men more than any other kind of pollution.

On this account also wealth has seemed to the majority of men to be a good thing; at least when it is stripped of this passion of vainglory it will no longer seem desirable. At any rate those who have been permitted to obtain in the midst of their poverty popular glory have no longer preferred wealth, but rather have despised much gold when it was bestowed upon them. And you have no need to learn from me who these men were, for you know them better than I do, Epaminondas, Socrates, Aristeides, Diogenes, Krates who turned his own land into a sheep walk. The others indeed, inasmuch as it was not possible for them to get rich, saw glory brought to them in the midst of their poverty, and straightway devoted themselves to it, but this man threw away even what he possessed; so infatuated were they in the pursuit of this cruel monster. Let us not then weep because God has rescued us from this shameful thralldom which is an object of derision and of much reproach; for there is nothing splendid in it save the name it bears, and in reality it places those who possess it in a position which belies its appellation, and there is no one who does not laugh to scorn the man who does anything with a view to glory. For it is only he who has not an eye to this who will be enabled to win respect and glory; but he who sets a great value on popular glory, and does and endures everything for the sake of obtaining it is the very man who will fail to attain it, and be subjected to all the exact opposites of glory, ridicule, and accusation, scoffing, enmity and hatred. And this is wont to happen not only among men, but also among you women, and indeed more especially in your case. For the woman who is unaffected in mien, and gait, and dress, and seeks no honour from any one is admired by all women, and they are ecstatic in their praise and call her blessed, and invoke all manner of good things upon her; but a vain-

glorious woman they behold with aversion and detestation, and avoid her like some wild beast and load her with infinite execrations and abuse. And not only do we escape these evils by refusing to accept popular glory, but we shall gain the highest advantages in addition to those which have been already mentioned, being trained gradually to loosen our hold of earth and move in the direction of heaven, and despise all worldly things. For he who feels no need of the honour which comes from men, will perform with security whatever good things he does, and neither in the troubles, nor in the prosperities of this life will he be very seriously affected; for neither can the former depress him, and cast him down, nor can the latter elate and puff him up, but in precarious and troubled circumstances he himself remains exempt from change of any kind. And this I expect will speedily be the case with your own soul, and having once for all torn yourself away from all worldly interests you will display among us a heavenly manner of life, and in a little while will laugh to scorn the glory which you now lament, and despise its hollow and vain mask. But if you long for the security which you formerly enjoyed owing to your husband, and the protection of your property, and immunity from the designs of any of those persons who trample upon the misfortunes of others *"Cast your care upon the Lord and He will nourish you."* *"For look,"* it is said, *"to past generations and see, who ever placed his hope on the Lord and was put to shame, or who ever called upon Him, and was neglected, or who ever remained constant to His commandments and was forsaken?"* [Sirach 2:10] For He who has alleviated this intolerable calamity, and placed you even now in a state of tranquillity will also avert impending evils; for that you will never receive another blow more severe than this you would yourself admit. Having then so bravely borne present troubles, and this when you were inexperienced, you will far more easily endure future events should any of the things

contrary to our wishes, which God forbid, occur. Therefore seek Heaven, and all things which conduce to life in the other world, and none of the things here will be able to harm you, not even the world-ruler of darkness himself, if only we do not injure ourselves. For if any one deprives us of our substance, or hews our body in pieces, none of these things concern us, if our soul abides in its integrity.

7. Now, once for all, if you wish your property to abide with you in security and yet further to increase I will show you the plan, and the place where none of those who have designs upon it will be allowed to enter. What then is the place? It is Heaven. Send away your possessions to that good husband of yours and neither thief, nor schemer, nor any other destructive thing will be able to pounce upon them. If you deposit these goods in the other world, you will find much profit arising from them. For all things which we plant in Heaven yield a large and abundant crop, such as might naturally be expected from things which have their roots in Heaven. And if you do this, see what blessings you will enjoy, in the first place eternal life and the things promised to those who love God, *"which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man,"* and in the second place perpetual intercourse with your good husband; and you will relieve yourself from the cares and fears, and dangers, and designs, and enmity and hatred which beset you here. For as long as you are surrounded with this property there will probably be some to make attempts upon it; but if you transfer it to Heaven, you will lead a life of security and safety, and much tranquillity, enjoying independence combined with godliness. For it is very irrational, when one wishes to buy land, and is seeking for productive ground, if, Heaven being proposed to him instead of earth, and the possibility presented of obtaining an estate

there he abides still on earth, and puts up with the toils that are connected with it; for it often disappoints our hopes.

But since your soul is grievously upset and vexed on account of the expectation often entertained that your husband would attain the rank of prefect, and the thought that he was untimely snatched away from that dignity consider first of all this fact, that even if this hope was a very well grounded one nevertheless it was only a human hope, which often falls to the ground; and we see many things of this kind happening in life, those which were confidently expected having remained unfulfilled, whereas those which never even entered the mind have frequently come to pass, and this we constantly see occurring everywhere in cases of governments and kingdoms, and inheritances, and marriages. Wherefore even if the opportunity were very near at hand, yet as the proverb says *"between the cup and the lip there is many a slip"* and the Scripture says *"from the morning until the evening the time is changed."* [Sirach 18:26]

So also a king who is here today is dead tomorrow; and again this same wise man illustrating the reversal of men's hopes says *"many tyrants have sat down upon the ground, and one that was never thought of has worn the crown."* [Sirach 11:5] And it was not absolutely certain that if he lived he would arrive at this dignity; for that which belongs to the future is uncertain, and causes us to have various suspicions. For on what grounds was it evident that had he lived he would have attained that dignity and that things would not have turned out the other way, and that he would have lost the office he actually held either from falling a victim to disease, or from being exposed to the envy and ill will of those who wished to excel him in prosperity, or from suffering some other grievous misfortune. But let us suppose, if you please, that it was perfectly evident that in any case had he survived he would have obtained this high distinction; then in proportion to

the magnitude of the dignity would have been the increased dangers, and anxieties, and intrigues which he must have encountered. Or put these even on one side, and let us suppose him to traverse that sea of difficulties safely, and in much tranquillity; then tell me what is the goal? Not that which he has now reached; no, not that, but something different, probably unpleasant and undesirable. In the first place his sight of heaven, and heavenly things would have been delayed, which is no small loss to those who have put their trust in things to come; and in the next place, even had he lived a very pure life yet the length of his life and the exigencies of his high office would have prevented his departing in such a pure condition as has now been the case. In fact it is uncertain whether he might not have undergone many changes and given way to indolence before he breathed his last. For now we are confident that by the grace of God he has taken his flight to the region of rest, because he had not committed himself to any of those deeds which exclude from the kingdom of Heaven; but in that case after long contact with public business, he might probably have contracted great defilement. For it is an exceedingly rare thing for one who is moving in the midst of such great evils to hold a straight course, but to go astray, both wittingly and against his will, is a natural thing, and one which constantly occurs. But, as it is, we have been relieved from this apprehension, and we are firmly persuaded that in the great day he will appear in much radiance, shining forth near the King, and going with the angels in advance of Christ and clad with the robe of unutterable glory, and standing by the side of the King as he gives judgment, and acting as one of His chief ministers.

Wherefore desisting from mourning and lamentation do thou hold on to the same way of life as his, yea even let it be more exact, that having speedily attained an equal standard of virtue with him, you may inhabit the same abode and be united to him again through the everlasting ages, not in this

union of marriage but another far better. For this is only a bodily kind of intercourse, but then there will be a union of soul with soul more perfect, and of a far more delightful and far nobler kind.

Homily on St. Ignatius

Eulogy. On the holy martyr Saint Ignatius, the god-bearer, archbishop of Antioch the great, who was carried off to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom, and thence was conveyed back again to Antioch.

1. [Sumptuous] and splendid entertainers give frequent and constant entertainments, alike to display their own wealth, and to show good-will to their acquaintance. So also the grace of the Spirit, affording us a proof of his own power, and displaying much good-will towards the friends of God, sets before us successively and constantly the tables of the martyrs. Lately, for instance, a maiden quite young, and unmarried, the blessed martyr Pelagia, entertained us, with much joy. Today again, this blessed and noble martyr Ignatius has succeeded to her feast. The persons are different: The table is one. The wrestlings are varied: The crown is one. The contests are manifold: The prize is the same. For in the case of the heathen contests, since the tasks are bodily, men alone are, with reason, admitted. But here, since the contest is wholly concerning the soul, the lists are open to each sex, for each kind the theatre is arranged. Neither do men alone disrobe, in order that the women may not take refuge in the weakness of their nature, and seem to have a plausible excuse, nor have women only quitted themselves like men, lest the race of men be put to shame; but on this side and on that many are proclaimed conquerors, and are crowned, in order that you may learn by means of the exploits themselves that in Christ Jesus neither male nor female, [Galatians 3:28] neither sex, nor weakness of body, nor age, nor any such thing could be a hindrance to those who run in the course of religion; if there be a noble readiness, and an eager mind, and a fear of God, fervent and kindling, be established in our souls. On this

account both maidens and women, and men, both young and old, and slaves, and freemen, and every rank, and every age, and each sex, disrobe for those contests, and in no respect suffer harm, since they have brought a noble purpose to these wrestlings. The season then already calls us to discourse of the mighty works of this saint. But our reckoning is disturbed and confused, not knowing what to say first, what second, what third, so great a multitude of things calling for eulogy surrounds us, on every side; and we experience the same thing as if any one went into a meadow, and seeing many a rosebush and many a violet, and an abundance of lilies, and other spring flowers manifold and varied, should be in doubt what he should look at first, what second, since each of those he saw invites him to bestow his glances on itself. For we too, coming to this spiritual meadow of the mighty works of Ignatius, and beholding not the flowers of spring, but the manifold and varied fruit of the spirit in the soul of this man, are confused and in perplexity, not knowing to which we are first to give our consideration, as each of the things we see draws us away from its neighbours, and entices the eye of the soul to the sight of its own beauty. For see, he presided over the Church among us nobly, and with such carefulness as Christ desires. For that which Christ declared to be the highest standard and rule of the Episcopal office, did this man display by his deeds. For having heard Christ saying, the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, [John 10:11] with all courage he did lay it down for the sheep.

He held true converse with the apostles and drank of spiritual fountains. What kind of person then is it likely that he was who had been reared, and who had everywhere held converse with them, and had shared with them truths both lawful and unlawful to utter, and who seemed to them worthy of so great a dignity? The time again came on, which demanded

courage; and a soul which despised all things present, glowed with Divine love, and valued things unseen before the things which are seen; and he lay aside the flesh with as much ease as one would put off a garment. What then shall we speak of first? The teaching of the apostles which he gave proof of throughout, or his indifference to this present life, or the strictness of his virtue, with which he administered his rule over the Church; which shall we first call to mind? The martyr or the bishop or the apostle. For the grace of the spirit having woven a threefold crown, thus bound it on his holy head, yea rather a manifold crown. For if any one will consider them carefully, he will find each of the crowns, blossoming with other crowns for us.

2. And if you will, let us come first to the praise of his episcopate. Does this seem to be one crown alone? Come, then, let us unfold it in speech, and you will see both two, and three, and more produced from it. For I do not wonder at the man alone that he seemed to be worthy of so great an office, but that he obtained this office from those saints, and that the hands of the blessed apostles touched his sacred head. For not even is this a slight thing to be said in his praise, nor because he won greater grace from above, nor only because they caused more abundant energy of the Spirit to come upon him, but because they bore witness that every virtue possessed by man was in him. Now how this is, I tell you. Paul writing to Titus once on a time— and when I say Paul, I do not speak of him alone, but also of Peter and James and John, and the whole band of them; for as in one lyre, the strings are different strings, but the harmony is one, so also in the band of the apostles the persons are different, but the teaching is one, since the artificer is one, I mean the Holy Spirit, who moves their souls, and Paul showing this said, *"Whether therefore they, or I, so we preach."*

[1 Corinthians 15:11] This man, then, writing to Titus, and showing what

kind of man the bishop ought to be, says, *"For the bishop must be blameless as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, temperate, holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers;"* [Titus 1:7-9] and to Timothy again, when writing upon this subject, he says somewhat like this: If a man seeks the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. The bishop, therefore, must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach, no brawler, no striker, but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money. Do you see what strictness of virtue he demands from the bishop? For as some most excellent painter from life, having mixed many colors, if he be about to furnish an original likeness of the royal form, works with all accuracy, so that all who are copying it, and painting from it, may have a likeness accurately drawn, so accordingly the blessed Paul, as though painting some royal likeness, and furnishing an original sketch of it, having mixed the different colors of virtue, has painted in the features of the office of bishop complete, in order that each of those who mount to that dignity, looking thereupon, may administer their own affairs with just such strictness.

Boldly, therefore, would I say that Ignatius took an accurate impression of the whole of this, in his own soul; and was blameless and without reproach, and neither self-willed, nor soon angry, nor given to wine, nor a striker, but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money, just, holy, temperate, holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, sober, sober-minded, orderly, and all the rest which Paul demanded. *"And what is the proof of this?"* says one. They who said these things ordained him, and they who suggest to others with so great strictness to make proof

of those who are about to mount to the throne of this office, would not themselves have done this negligently. But had they not seen all this virtue planted in the soul of this martyr would not have entrusted him with this office. For they knew accurately how great danger besets those who bring about such ordinations, carelessly and hap-hazard. And Paul again, when showing this very thing to the same Timothy wrote and says, *"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins."*

[1 Timothy 5:22] What do you say? Has another sinned, and do I share his blame and his punishment? Yes, says he, the man who authorizes evil; and just as in the case of any one entrusting into the hands of a raging and insane person a sharply pointed sword, with which the madman commits murder, that man who gave the sword incurs the blame; so any one who gives the authority which arises from this office to a man living in evil, draws down on his own head all the fire of that man's sins and audacity. For he who provides the root, this man is the cause of all that springs from it on every side. Do you see how in the meanwhile a double crown of the episcopate has appeared, and how the dignity of those who ordained him has made the office more illustrious, bearing witness to every exhibition of virtue in him?

3. Do you wish that I should also reveal to you another crown springing from this very matter? Let us consider the time at which he obtained this dignity. For it is not the same thing to administer the Church now as then, just as it is not the same thing to travel along a road well trodden, and prepared, after many wayfarers; and along one about to be cut for the first time, and containing ruts, and stones, and full of wild beasts, and which has never yet, received any traveller. For now, by the grace of God, there is no danger for bishops, but deep peace on all sides, and we all enjoy a calm, since the Word of piety has been extended to the ends of the

world, and our rulers keep the faith with strictness. But then there was nothing of this, but wherever any one might look, precipices and pitfalls, and wars, and fightings, and dangers; both rulers, and kings, and people and cities and nations, and men at home and abroad, laid snares for the faithful. And this was not the only serious thing, but also the fact that many of the believers themselves, inasmuch as they tasted for the first time strange doctrines, stood in need of great indulgence, and were still in a somewhat feeble condition and were often upset. And this was a thing which used to grieve the teachers, no less than the fightings without, nay rather much more. For the fightings without, and the plottings, afforded much pleasure to them on account of the hope of the rewards awaiting them. On this account the apostles returned from the presence of the Sanhedrin rejoicing because they had been beaten; [Acts 5:41] and Paul cries out, saying: "*I rejoice in my sufferings,*" [Colossians 1:24] and he glories in his afflictions everywhere. But the wounds of those at home, and the falls of the brethren, do not suffer them to breathe again, but always, like some most heavy yoke, continually oppress and afflict the neck of their soul. Hear at least how Paul, thus rejoicing in sufferings, is bitterly pained about these. "*For who, says he, is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?*" [2 Corinthians 11:29] and again, "*I fear lest when I come I shall find you not such as I would, and I be found of you such as you would not,*" [2 Corinthians 12:20] and a little afterwards, "*Lest when I come again to you, God humble me, and I shall mourn many of those who have sinned before, and have not repented of their uncleanness, and wantonness, and fornication which they have committed.*" [2 Corinthians 12:21] And throughout you see that he is in tears and lamentations on account of members of the household, and evermore fearing and trembling for the believers. Just as then we admire the pilot, not when he is able to bring

those who are on board safe to shore when the sea is calm, and the ship is borne along by favourable winds, but when the deep is raging and the waves contending, and the passengers themselves within in revolt, and a great storm within and without besets those who are on board, and he is able to steer the ship with all security; so we ought to wonder at, and admire those who then had the Church committed to their hands, much more than those who now have the management of it; when there was a great war without and within, when the plant of the faith was more tender, and needed much care, when, as a newly-born babe, the multitude in the church required much forethought, and the greatest wisdom in any soul destined to nurse it; and in order that you may more clearly learn, how great crowns they were worthy of, who then had the Church entrusted to them, and how great work and danger there was in undertaking the matter on the threshold and at the beginning, and in being the first to enter upon it, I bring forward for you the testimony of Christ, who pronounces a verdict on these things, and confirms the opinion which has been expressed by me. For when he saw many coming to him, and was wishing to show the apostles that the prophets toiled more than they, he says: "*Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.*" [John 4:38] And yet the apostles toiled much more than the prophets. But since they first sowed the word of piety, and won over the untaught souls of men to the truth, the greater part of the work is credited to them. For it is by no means the same thing for one to come and teach after many teachers, and himself to be the first to sow seeds. For that which has been already practised, and has become customary with many, would be easily accepted; but that which is now for the first time heard, agitates the mind of the hearers, and gives the teacher a great deal to do. This at least it was which disturbed the audience at Athens, and on this account they turned away from Paul, reproaching him with,

"You bring certain strange things to our ears." [Acts 17:20] For if the oversight of the Church now furnishes much weariness and work to those who govern it, consider how double and treble and manifold was the work then, when there were dangers and fighting and snares, and fear continually. It is not possible to set forth in words the difficulty which those saints then encountered, but he alone will know it who comes to it by experience.

4. And I will speak of a fourth crown, arising for us out of this episcopate. What then is this? The fact that he was entrusted with our own native city. For it is a laborious thing indeed to have the oversight of a hundred men, and of fifty alone. But to have on one's hands so great a city, and a population extending to two hundred thousand, of how great virtue and wisdom do you think there is a proof? For as in the care of armies, the wiser of the generals have on their hands the more leading and more numerous regiments, so, accordingly, in the care of cities. The more able of the rulers are entrusted with the larger and more populous. And at any rate this city was of much account to God, as indeed He manifested by the very deeds which He did. At all events the master of the whole world, Peter, to whose hands He committed the keys of heaven, whom He commanded to do and to bear all, He bade tarry here for a long period. Thus in His sight our city was equivalent to the whole world. But since I have mentioned Peter, I have perceived a fifth crown woven from him, and this is that this man succeeded to the office after him. For just as any one taking a great stone from a foundation hastens by all means to introduce an equivalent to it, lest he should shake the whole building, and make it more unsound, so, accordingly, when Peter was about to depart from here, the grace of the Spirit introduced another teacher equivalent to Peter, so that the building already completed should not be made more unsound by the insignificance of the successor. We have reckoned up then five crowns, from the

importance of the office, from the dignity of those who ordained to it, from the difficulty of the time, from the size of the city, from the virtue of him who transmitted the episcopate to him. Having woven all these, it was lawful to speak of a sixth, and seventh, and more than these; but in order that we may not, by spending the whole time on the consideration of the episcopate, miss the details about the martyr, come from this point, let us pass to that conflict. At one time a grievous warfare was rekindled against the Church, and as though a most grievous tyranny overspread the earth, all were carried off from the midst of the market-place. Not indeed charged with anything monstrous, but because being freed from error, they hastened to piety; because they abstained from the service of demons, because they recognized the true God, and worshipped his only begotten Son, and for things for which they ought to have been crowned, and admired and honoured, for these they were punished and encountered countless tortures, all who embraced the faith, and much more they who had the oversight of the churches. For the devil, being crafty, and apt to contrive plots of this kind, expected that if he took away the shepherds, he would easily be able to scatter the flocks. But He who takes the wise in their craftiness, wishing to show him that men do not govern His church, but that it is He himself who everywhere tends those who believe in Him, agreed that this should be, that he might see, when they were taken away, that the cause of piety was not defeated, nor the word of preaching quenched, but rather increased; that by these very works he might learn both himself, and all those who minister to him, that our affairs are not of men, but that the subject of our teaching has its root on high, from the heavens; and that it is God who everywhere leads the Church, and that it is not possible for him who fights against God, ever to win the day. But the Devil did not only work this evil, but another also not less than this. For not only in the cities over which they presided,

did he suffer the Bishops to be slaughtered; but he took them into foreign territory and slew them; and he did this, in anxiety at once to take them when destitute of friends, and hoping to render them weaker with the toil of their journey, which accordingly he did with this saint. For he called him away from our city to Rome, making the course twice as long, expecting to depress his mind both by the length of the way and the number of the days, and not knowing that having Jesus with him, as a fellow traveller, and fellow exile on so long a journey, he rather became the stronger, and afforded more proof of the power that was with him, and to a greater degree knit the Churches together. For the cities which were on the road running together from all sides, encouraged the athlete, and sped him on his way with many supplies, sharing in his conflict by their prayers, and intercessions. And they derived no little comfort when they saw the martyr hastening to death with so much readiness, as is consistent in one called to the realms which are in the heaven, and by means of the works themselves, by the readiness and by the joyousness of that noble man, that it was not death to which he was hastening, but a kind of long journey and migration from this world, and ascension to heaven; and he departed teaching these things in every city, both by his words, and by his deeds, and as happened in the case of the Jews, when they bound Paul, and sent him to Rome, and thought that they were sending him to death, they were sending a teacher to the Jews who dwelt there. This indeed accordingly happened in the case of Ignatius in larger measure. For not to those alone who dwell in Rome, but to all the cities lying in the intervening space, he went forth as a wonderful teacher, persuading them to despise the present life, and to think naught of the things which are seen, and to love those which are to come, to look towards heaven, and to pay no regard to any of the terrors of this present life. For on this and on more than this, by means of his works, he went on

his way instructing them, as a sun rising from the east, and hastening to the west. But rather more brilliant than this, for this is wont to run on high, bringing material light, but Ignatius shone below, imparting to men's souls the intellectual light of doctrine. And that light on departing into the regions of the west, is hidden and straightway causes the night to come on. But this on departing to the regions of the west, shone there more brilliantly, conferring the greatest benefits to all along the road. And when he arrived at the city, even *that* he instructed in Christian wisdom. For on this account God permitted him there to end his life, so that this man's death might be instructive to all who dwell in Rome. For *we* by the grace of God need henceforward no evidence, being rooted in the faith. But they who dwelt in Rome, inasmuch as there was great impiety there, required more help. On this account both Peter and Paul, and this man after them, were all slain there, partly, indeed, in order that they might purify with their own blood, the city which had been defiled with blood of idols, and partly in order that they might by their works afford a proof of the resurrection of the crucified Christ, persuading those who dwell in Rome, that they would not with so much pleasure disdain this present life, did they not firmly persuade themselves that they were about to ascend to the crucified Jesus, and to see him in the heavens. For in reality it is the greatest proof of the resurrection that the slain Christ should show forth so great power after death, as to persuade living men to despise both country and home and friends, and acquaintance and life itself, for the sake of confessing him, and to choose in place of present pleasures, both stripes and dangers and death. For these are not the achievements of any dead man, nor of one remaining in the tomb but of one risen and living. Since how couldest thou account, when he was alive, for all the Apostles who companied with him becoming weaker through fear to betray their teachers and to flee and depart; but when he

died, for not only Peter and Paul, but even Ignatius, who had not even seen him, nor enjoyed his companionship, showing such earnestness as to lay down life itself for his sake?

5. In order then that all who dwell in Rome might learn that these things are a reality, God allowed that there the saint should be perfected, and that this was the reason I will guarantee from the very manner of his death. For not outside the walls, in a dungeon, nor even in a court of justice, nor in some corner, did he receive the sentence which condemned him, but in the midst of the theatre, while the whole city was seated above him, he underwent this form of martyrdom, wild beasts being let loose upon him, in order that he might plant his trophy against the Devil, beneath the eyes of all, and make all spectators emulous of his own conflicts. Not dying thus nobly only, but dying even with pleasure. For not as though about to be severed from life, but as called to a better and more spiritual life, so he beheld the wild beasts gladly. Whence is this manifest? From the words which he uttered when about to die, for when he heard that this manner of punishment awaited him, *"may I have joy,"* said he, *"of these wild beasts."* For such are the loving. For they receive with pleasure whatever they may suffer for the sake of those who are beloved, and they seem to have their desire satisfied when what happens to them is more than usually grievous. Which happened, therefore, in this man's case. For not by his death alone, but also by his readiness he studied to emulate the apostles, and hearing that they, after they had been scourged retired with joy, himself too wished to imitate his teachers, not only by his death, but by his joy. On this account he said, *"may I have joy of your wild beasts,"* and much milder than the tongue of the tyrant did he consider the mouths of these; and very reasonably. For while that invited him to Gehenna, their mouths escorted him to a kingdom. When, therefore, he made an end of life there, yea rather, when he ascended

to heaven, he departed henceforward crowned. For this also happened through the dispensation of God, that he restored him again to us, and distributed the martyr to the cities. For that city received his blood as it dropped, but you were honoured with his remains, you enjoyed his episcopate, they enjoyed his martyrdom. They saw him in conflict, and victorious, and crowned, but you have him continually. For a little time God removed him from you, and with greater glory granted him again to you. And as those who borrow money, return with interest what they receive, so also God, using this valued treasure of yours, for a little while, and having shown it to that city, with greater brilliancy gave it back to you. You sent forth a Bishop, and received a martyr; ye sent him forth with prayers, and you received him with crowns; and not only ye, but all the cities which intervene. For how do ye think that they behaved when they saw his remains being brought back? What pleasure was produced! How they rejoiced! With what applause on all sides they beset the crowned one! For as with a noble athlete, who has wrestled down all his antagonists, and who comes forth with radiant glory from the arena, the spectators receive him, and do not suffer him to tread the earth, bringing him home on their shoulders, and besetting him with countless praises: so also the cities in order receiving this saint then from Rome, and bearing him upon their shoulders as far as this city, escorted the crowned one with praises, celebrating the champion, in song; laughing the Devil to scorn, because his artifice was turned against him, and what he thought to do against the martyr, this turned out for his behoof. Then, indeed, he profited, and encouraged all the cities; and from that time to this day he enriches this city, and as some perpetual treasure, drawn upon every day, yet not failing, makes all who partake of it more prosperous, so also this blessed Ignatius

fills those who come to him with blessings, with boldness, nobleness of spirit, and much courage, and so sends them home.

Not only today, therefore, but every day let us go forth to him, plucking spiritual fruits from him. For it is, it is possible for him who comes hither with faith to gather the fruit of many good things. For not the bodies only, but the very sepulchres of the saints have been filled with spiritual grace. For if in the case of Elisha this happened, and a corpse when it touched the sepulchre, burst the bands of death and returned to life again, [2 Kings 13:21] much rather now, when grace is more abundant, when the energy of the spirit is greater, is it possible that one touching a sepulchre, with faith, should win great power; thence on this account God allowed us the remains of the saints, wishing to lead by them us to the same emulation, and to afford us a kind of haven, and a secure consolation for the evils which are ever overtaking us. Wherefore I beseech you all, if any is in despondency, if in disease, if under insult, if in any other circumstance of this life, if in the depth of sins, let him come hither with faith, and he will lay aside all those things, and will return with much joy, having procured a lighter conscience from the sight alone. But more, it is not only necessary that those who are in affliction should come hither, but if any one be in cheerfulness, in glory, in power, in much assurance towards God, let not this man despise the benefit. For coming hither and beholding this saint, he will keep these noble possessions unmoved, persuading his own soul to be moderate by the recollection of this man's mighty deeds, and not suffering his conscience by the mighty deeds to be lifted up to any self conceit. And it is no slight thing for those in prosperity not to be puffed up at their good fortune, but to know how to bear their prosperity with moderation, so that the treasure is serviceable to all, the resting place is suitable, for the fallen, in order that they may escape from their temptations, for the fortunate, that

their success may remain secure, for those in weakness indeed, that they may return to health, and for the healthy, that they may not fall into weakness. Considering all which things, let us prefer this way of spending our time, to all delight, all pleasure, in order that rejoicing at once, and profiting, we may be able to become partakers with these saints, both of their dwelling and of their home, through the prayers of the saints themselves, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory to the Father with the Holy Spirit, now and always forever and ever amen.

On St. Babylas

1. I was anxious today to pay the debt which I promised you when I was lately here. But what am I to do? In the meanwhile, the blessed Babylas has appeared, and has called me to himself, uttering no voice, but attracting our attention by the brightness of his countenance. Be not, therefore, displeased at the delay in my payment; at all events, the longer the time is, the more the interest will increase. For we will deposit this money with interest. [Luke 19:23] Since thus did the master command who entrusted it to us. Being confident, therefore, about what is lent, that both the principal and the profit await you, let us not pass by the gain which falls in our way today, but revel in the noble actions of the blessed Babylas.

How, indeed, he presided over the Church which is among us, and saved that sacred ship, in storm, and in wave, and billow; and what a bold front he showed to the emperor, and how he lay down his life for the sheep and underwent that blessed slaughter; these things and such as these, we will leave to the elder among our teachers, and to our common father, to speak of. For the more remote matters, the aged can relate to you but as many things as happened lately, and within our lifetime, these, I a young man will relate to you, I mean those after death, those after the burial of the martyr, those which happened while he remained in the suburbs of the city. And I know indeed that the Greeks will laugh at my promise, if I promise to speak of the noble deeds after death and burial of one who was buried, and had crumbled to dust. We shall not assuredly on this account keep silence, but on this very account shall especially speak, in order that by showing this marvel truly, we may turn their laughter upon their own head. For of an ordinary man there would be no noble deeds after death. But of a martyr,

many and great deeds, not in order that he might become more illustrious (for he has no need of glory from the multitude), but that thou, the unbeliever may learn that the death of the martyrs is not death, but the beginning of a better life, and the prelude of a more spiritual conversation, and a change from the worse to the better. Do not then look at the fact, that the mere body of the martyr lies destitute of energy of soul; but observe this, that a greater power takes its place by the side of it, different from the soul itself— I mean the grace of the Holy Spirit, which pleads to all on behalf of the resurrection, by means of the wonders which it works. For if God has granted greater power to bodies dead and crumbled to dust, than to all living, much more will he grant to them a better life than the former, and a longer, at the time of the bestowal of his crowns; what then are this saint's noble deeds? But be not disturbed, if we take our discourse a little further back. For they who wish to display their portraits to advantage, do not uncover them until they have placed the spectators a little way off from the picture, making the view clearer by the distance. Do you then also have patience with me while I direct my discourse into the past.

For when Julian who surpassed all in impiety, ascended the imperial throne, and grasped the despotic sceptre, straightway he lifted up his hands against the God who created him, and ignored his benefactor, and looking from the earth beneath to the heavens, howled after the manner of mad dogs, who alike bay at those who do not feed them and those who do feed them. But he rather was mad with a more savage madness than theirs. For they indeed turn from, and hate their friends and strangers alike. But this man used to fawn upon demons, strangers to his salvation, and used to worship them with every mode of worship. But his benefactor, and Saviour, and him who spared not the only Begotten, for his sake, he turned from and used to hate, and made havoc of the cross, the very thing which uplifted the

whole world when it was lying prostrate, and drove away the darkness on all sides, and brought in light more brilliant than the sunbeams; nor yet even then did he desist from his frenzy, but promised that he would tear the nation of the Galilæans, out of the midst of the world; for thus he was wont to call us; and yet if he thought the names of the Christians an abomination, and Christianity itself to be full of much shame, for what reason did he not desire to put us to shame by that means, but with a strange name? Yea because he knew clearly, that to be called by what belongs to Christ, is a great ornament not only to men, but to angels, and to the powers above. On this account he set everything in motion, so as to strip us of this ornament, and put a stop to the preaching of it. But this was impossible, O wretched and miserable man! As it was impossible to destroy the heaven and to quench the sun, and to shake and cast down the foundations of the earth, and those things Christ foretold, thus saying: *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."* [Matthew 24:35]

Well, thou dost not submit to Christ's words; accept therefore the utterance which thus his deeds give. For I indeed having been privileged to know what the declaration of God is, how strong, how invincible a thing, have believed that is more trustworthy than the order of nature, and than experience in all matters. But do thou still creeping on the ground, and agitated with the investigations of human reasoning, receive the witness of the deeds. I gainsay nothing. I strive not.

2. What then do the deeds say? Christ said that it was easier for heaven and earth to be destroyed, than for any of his words to fail. [Luke 16:17] The emperor contradicted these words, and threatened to destroy his decrees. Where then is the emperor who threatened these things? He is perished and is corrupted, and is now in Hades, awaiting the inevitable punishment. But where is Christ who uttered these decrees? In Heaven, on

the right hand of the Father, occupying the highest throne of glory; where are the blasphemous words of the Emperor, and his unchastened tongue? They have become ashes, and dust and the food of worms. Where is the sentence of Christ? It shines forth by the very truth of the deed, receiving its lustre from the issue of the events, as from a golden column. And yet the emperor left nothing undone, when about to raise war against us, but used to call prophets together, and summon sorcerers, and everything was full of demons and evil spirits.

What then was the return for this worship? The overturning of cities, the bitterest famine of all famines. For you know doubtless, and remember, how empty indeed the market place was of wares, and the workshops full of confusion, when everyone strove to snatch up what came first and to depart. And why do I speak of famine, when the very fountains of waters were failing, fountains which by the abundance of their stream, used to eclipse the rivers. But since I have mentioned the fountains, come, immediately, let us go up to Daphne, and conduct our discourse to the noble deeds of the martyr. Although you desire me still to parade the indecencies of the Greeks, although I too desire this, let us abstain; for wherever the commemoration of a martyr is, there certainly also is the shame of the Greeks. This emperor then, going up to Daphne used to weary Apollo, praying, supplicating, entreating, so that the events of the future might be foretold to him. What then did the prophet, the great God of the Greeks? *"The dead prevent me from uttering,"* says he, *"but break open the graves, dig up the bones, move the dead."* What could be more impious than these commands? The Demon of grave-robbing, introduces strange laws and devises new methods of expelling strangers. Who ever heard of the dead being driven forth? Who ever saw lifeless bodies ordered to be moved as he commanded, overturning from their foundations the common laws of

nature. For the laws of nature are common to all men, that he who departs this life should be hidden in the earth, and delivered over for burial, and be covered up in the bosom of the earth the mother of all; and these laws, neither Greek, barbarian, Scythian, nor if there be any more savage than they, ever changed, but all reverence them, and keep them, and thus they are sacred and venerated by all. But the Demon raises his mask, and with bare head, resists the common laws of nature. For the dead, he says, are a pollution. The dead are not a pollution, a most wicked demon, but a wicked intention is an abomination. But if one must say something startling, the bodies of the living full of evil, are more polluting than those of the dead. For the one minister to the behests of the mind, but the other lie unmoved. Now that which is unmoved, and destitute of all perception would be free from all accusation. Not that I even would say that the bodies of the living are by nature polluting; but that everywhere a wicked and perverted intention is open to accusations from all.

The dead body then is not a pollution O Apollo, but to persecute a maiden who wishes to be modest, and to outrage the dignity of a virgin, and to lament at the failure of the shameless deed, this is worthy of accusation, and punishment. There were at all events, many wonderful and great prophets among ourselves, who spoke also many things concerning the future, and they in no case used to bid those who asked them to dig up the bones of the departed. Yea Ezekiel standing near the bones themselves was not only not hindered by them, but added flesh, and nerves and skin to them, and brought them back to life again. [Ezekiel xxxvii] But the great Moses did not stand near the bones of the dead, but bearing off the whole dead body of Joseph, thus foretold things to come. [Exodus 13:19] And very reasonably, for their words were the grace of the Holy Spirit. But the words of these, a deceit, and a lie which is no wise able to be concealed. For

that these things were an excuse, and pretence and that he feared the blessed Babylas, is manifest from what the emperor did. For leaving all the other dead, he only moved that martyr. And yet if he did these things, in disgust at him, and not in fear, it were necessary that he should order the coffin to be broken, thrown into the sea, carried to the desert, be made to disappear by some other method of destruction; for this is the part of one who is disgusted. Thus God did when he spoke to the Hebrews about the abominations of the Gentiles. He bade their statues to be broken, not to bring their abominations from the suburbs to the city.

3. The martyr then was moved, but the demon not even then enjoyed freedom from fear, but straightway learned that it is possible to move the bones of a martyr, but not to escape his hands. For as soon as the coffin was drawn into the city, a thunderbolt came from above upon the head of his image, and burnt it all up. And yet, if not before, then at least there was likelihood that the impious emperor would be angry, and that he would send forth his anger against the testimony of the martyr. But not even then did he dare, so great fear possessed him. But although he saw that the burning was intolerable, and knew the cause accurately; he kept quiet. And this is not only wonderful that he did not destroy the testimony, but that he not even dared to put the roof on to the temple again. For he knew, he knew, that the stroke was divinely sent, and he feared lest by forming any further plan, he should call down that fire upon his own head. On this account he endured to see the shrine of Apollo brought to so great desolation; For there was no other cause, on account of which he did not rectify that which had happened, but fear alone. For which reason he unwillingly kept quiet, and knowing this left as much reproach to the demon, as distinction to the martyr. For the walls are now standing, instead of trophies, uttering a voice clearer than a trumpet. To those in Daphne, to those in the city, to those who

arrive from far off, to those who are with us, to those men which shall be hereafter, they declare everything by their appearance, the wrestling, the struggle, the victory of the martyr. For it is likely that he who dwells far off from the suburb, when he sees the chapel of the saint deprived of a shrine, and the temple of Apollo deprived of its roof would ask the reason of each of these things; and then after learning the whole history would depart hence. Such are the noble deeds of the martyr after death, wherefore I count your city blessed, that you have shown much zeal about this holy man. For then, when he returned from Daphne, all our city poured forth into the road, and the market places were empty of men, and the houses were empty of women, and the bedchambers were destitute of maidens. Thus also every age and each sex passed forth from the city, as if to receive a father long absent who was returning from sojourn far away. And you indeed gave him back to the band of fellow enthusiasts. But the grace of God did not suffer him to remain there for good, but again removed him beyond the river, so that many parts of the country were filled with the sweet savor of the martyr. Neither even when he came hither was he destined to be alone, but he quickly received, a neighbor, and a fellow-lodger, and one of similar life. For he shared with him the same dignity, and for the sake of religion showed forth equal boldness. Wherefore he obtained the same abode as he, this wonderful man being no vain imitator, as it seems, of the martyr. For for so long a time he laboured there, sending letters continually to the emperor, wearying the authorities, and bringing the ministry of the body to bear upon the martyr. For you know, doubtless, and remember that when the midday summer sun possessed the heaven, he together with his acquaintances, used to walk there everyday, not as spectator only, but also, as intending to be a sharer in what was going on. For he often handled stone, and dragged a rope, and listened, in advance of the workmen

themselves, to one who wanted to erect any building. For he knew, he knew what rewards lie in store for him for these things. And on this account he continued doing service to the martyrs, not only by splendid buildings nor even by continual feasts, but by a better method than these. And what is this? He imitates their life, emulates their courage, throughout according to his ability he keeps the image of the martyrs alive, in himself. For see, they gave their bodies to the slaughter, he has mortified the members of his flesh which are upon the earth. They stopped the flame of fire, he quenched the flame of lust. They fought against the teeth of beasts, but this man bore off the most dangerous of our passions, anger. For all these things let us give thanks to God, because he has thus granted us noble martyrs, and pastors worthy of martyrs, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ [Ephesians 4:12] with whom be glory, honor, and might to the Father, with the Holy and lifegiving Spirit, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning Lowliness of Mind

There is an allusion at the beginning of this Homily to some remarks recently made on the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. These occur in Chrysostom's fifth Homily against the Anomæans, one of a set of Homilies which, from internal evidence, may be assigned to the close of the year 386, or beginning of 387. The following homily therefore was delivered at Antioch, probably just before Christmas 386. There were some persons who explained the words of St. Paul cited in the title as signifying that provided Christ was preached it mattered not whether the actual doctrines taught were true or heretical. The main object of the homily is to vindicate the language of the Apostle from this erroneous and mischievous interpretation.

1. When lately we made mention of the Pharisee and the publican, and hypothetically yoked two chariots out of virtue and vice; we pointed out each truth, how great is the gain of humbleness of mind, and how great the damage of pride. For this, even when conjoined with righteousness and fastings and tithes, fell behind; while that, even when yoked with sin, outstripped the Pharisee's pair, even although the charioteer it had was a poor one. For what was worse than the publican? But all the same since he made his soul contrite, and called himself a sinner; which indeed he was; he surpassed the Pharisee, who had both fastings to tell of and tithes; and was removed from any vice. On account of what, and through what? Because even if he was removed from greed of gain and robbery, he had rooted over his soul the mother of all evils— vain-glory and pride. On this account Paul also exhorts and says *"Let each one prove his own work; and then he will have his ground of boasting for himself, and not for the other."* Whereas he

publicly came forward as an accuser of the whole world; and said that he himself was better than all living men. And yet even if he had set himself before ten only, or if five, or if two, or if one, not even was this endurable; but as it was, he not only set himself before the whole world, but also accused all men. On this account he fell behind in the running. And just as a ship, after having run through innumerable surges, and having escaped many storms, then in the very mouth of the harbour having been dashed against some rock, loses the whole treasure which is stowed away in her—so truly did this Pharisee, after having undergone the labours of the fasting, and of all the rest of his virtue, since he did not master his tongue, in the very harbour underwent shipwreck of his cargo. For the going home from prayer, whence he ought to have derived gain, having rather been so greatly damaged, is nothing else than undergoing shipwreck in harbour.

2. Knowing therefore these things, beloved even if we should have mounted to the very pinnacle of virtue, let us consider ourselves last of all; having learned that pride is able to cast down even from the heavens themselves him who takes not heed, and humbleness of mind to bear up on high from the very abyss of sins him who knows how to be sober. For this it was that placed the publican before the Pharisee; whereas that, pride I mean and an overweening spirit, surpassed even an incorporeal power, that of the devil; while humbleness of mind and the acknowledgment of his own sins committed brought the robber into Paradise before the Apostles. Now if the confidence which they who confess their own sins effect for themselves is so great, they who are conscious to themselves of many good qualities, yet humble their own souls, how great crowns will they not win. For when sinfulness be put together with humbleness of mind it runs with such ease as to pass and out-strip righteousness combined with pride. If therefore thou have put it to with righteousness, whither will it not reach? Through how

many heavens will it not pass? By the throne of God itself surely it will stay its course; in the midst of the angels, with much confidence. On the other hand if pride, having been yoked with righteousness, by the excess and weight of its own wickedness had strength enough to drag down *its* confidence; if it be put together with sinfulness, into how deep a hell will it not be able to precipitate him who has it? These things I say, not in order that we should be careless of righteousness, but that we should avoid pride; not that we should sin, but that we should be sober-minded. For humbleness of mind is the foundation of the love of wisdom which pertains to us. Even if you should have built a superstructure of things innumerable; even if almsgiving, even if prayers, even if fastings, even if all virtue; unless this have first been laid as a foundation, all will be built upon it to no purpose and in vain; and it will fall down easily, like that building which had been placed on the sand. For there is no one, no one of our good deeds, which does not need this; there is no one which separate from this will be able to stand. But even if you should mention temperance, even if virginity, even if despising of money, even if anything whatever, all are unclean and accursed and loathsome, humbleness of mind being absent. Everywhere therefore let us take her with us, in words, in deeds, in thoughts, and with this let us build these (graces).

3. But the things belonging to humbleness of mind have been sufficiently spoken of; not for the value of the virtue; for no one will be able to celebrate it in accordance with its value; but for the intelligence of your love. For well do I know that even from the few things that have been said you will embrace it with much zeal. But since it is also necessary to make clear and manifest the apostolic saying which has been today read; seeming as it does to many to afford a pretext for indolence; so that some may not, providing for themselves hence a certain frigid defence, neglect their own

salvation— to this let us direct our discourse. What then is this saying?

"Whether in pretence," it says, "or in sincerity, Christ is preached."

[Philippians 1:18] This many wrest absolutely and just as happens, without reading what precedes and what comes after it; but having cut it off from the sequence of the remaining members, to the destruction of their own soul they put it forward to the more indolent. For attempting to seduce them from the sound faith; then seeing them afraid and trembling; on the ground of its not being without danger to do this, and desiring to relieve their fears, they bring forward this apostolic declaration, saying, Paul conceded this, by saying, *"Whether in pretence or in sincerity, let Christ be proclaimed."* But these things are not (true), they are not. For in the first place he did not say *"let him be proclaimed,"* but *"he is proclaimed,"* and the difference between this and that is wide. For the saying *"let him be proclaimed"* belongs to a lawgiver; but the saying *"he is proclaimed"* to one announcing the event. For that Paul does not ordain a law that there should be heresies, but draws away all who attended to him, hear what he says, *"If any one preaches to you a gospel besides what you have received, let him be anathema, were it even I, were it even an angel from the heavens."* [Galatians 1:8-9] Now he would not have anathematized both himself and an angel, if he had known the act to be without danger. And again— *"I am jealous of you with a jealousy of God,"* he says; *"for I have betrothed you to one husband a chaste virgin: and fear lest at some time, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his wiliness, so your thoughts should be corrupted from the singleness that is towards Christ."* See, he both set down singleness, and granted no allowance. For if there were allowance, there was no danger: and if there was no danger Paul would not have feared: and Christ would not also have commanded that the tares should be burned up, if it were a thing indifferent to attend to this one or that or another: or to all indiscriminately.

4. What ever then is what is meant? I wish to narrate to you the whole history from a point a little earlier; for it is needful to know in what circumstances Paul was when he was writing these things by letter. In what circumstances therefore was he? In prison and chains and intolerable perils. Whence is this manifest? From the epistle itself. For earlier than this he says, *"Now I wish you to know, brethren, that the circumstances in which I am have come rather to the furtherance of the Gospel; so that my bonds have become manifest in Christ in the whole Court, and to all the others; and a good many of the brethren, trusting to my bonds, the more exceedingly dare fearlessly to speak the word."* [Philippians 1:12-14] Now Nero had then cast him into prison. For just as some robber having set foot in the house, while all are sleeping, when stealing every thing, if he see any one having lit a lamp, both extinguishes the light and slays him who holds the lamp, in order that he may be allowed in security to steal and rob the property of others; so truly also the Cæsar Nero then, just as any robber and burglar while all were sleeping a deep and unconscious slumber; robbing the property of all, breaking into marriage chambers, subverting houses, displaying every form of wickedness; when he saw Paul having lighted a lamp throughout the world; (the word of his teaching;) and reproving his wickedness, exerted himself both to extinguish what was preached, and to put the teachers out of the way; in order that he might be allowed with authority to do anything he pleased; and after binding that holy man, cast him into prison. It was at that time then that the blessed Paul wrote these things. Who would not have been astounded? Who would not have marvelled? Or rather who could adequately have been astounded at and admired that noble and heaven-reaching soul; in that, while bound in Rome and imprisoned, at so great a distance as that, he wrote a letter to the Philippians? For you know how great is the distance between Macedonia

and Rome. But neither did the length of the way, nor the amount of time (required), nor the press of business, nor the peril and the dangers coming one upon another, nor anything else, drive out his love for and remembrance of the disciples; but he retained them all in his mind; and not so strongly were his hands bound with the chains as his soul was bound together and rivetted by his longing for the disciples: which very thing itself indeed also declaring, in the preface of the Epistle he said, *"On account of my having you in my heart, both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel."* [Philippians 1:7] And just as a King, having ascended upon his throne at morning-tide and taken his seat in the royal courts, immediately receives from all quarters innumerable letters; so truly he also, just as in royal courts, seated in the dungeon, both received and sent his letters in far greater number; the nations from all quarters referring to his wisdom everything about what had taken place among themselves; and he administered more business than the reigning monarch in proportion to his having had a larger dominion entrusted to him. For in truth God had brought and put into his hands not those who inhabited the country of the Romans only, but also all the barbarians, both land and sea. And by way of showing this he said to the Romans, *"Now I would not that you should be ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I have purposed to come to you, and have been hindered until the present; in order that I might have some fruit also among you, as among the rest of the Gentiles too. Both to Greeks and barbarians, both to wise and those without understanding I am a debtor."* [Romans 1:13-14] Every day therefore he was in anxious thought at one moment for Corinthians, at another for Macedonians; how Philippians, how Cappadocians, how Galatians, how Athenians, how they who inhabited Pontus, how all together were. But all the same, having had the whole world put into his hands, he continually cared not for entire nations only,

but also for each single man; and now indeed he dispatched a letter on behalf of Onesimus, and now on behalf of him who among the Corinthians had committed fornication. For neither used he to regard this— that it was the individual who had sinned and needed advocacy; but that it was a human being; a human being, the living thing most precious to God; and for whose sake the Father had not spared even the Only-begotten.

5. For do not tell me that this or that man is a runaway slave, or a robber or thief, or laden with countless faults, or that he is a mendicant and abject, or of low value and worthy of no account; but consider that for his sake the Christ died; and this suffices you for a ground for all solicitude. Consider what sort of person *he* must be, whom Christ valued at so high a price as not to have spared even his own blood. For neither, if a king had chosen to sacrifice himself on any one's behalf, should we have sought out another demonstration of his being some one great and of deep interest to the King— I fancy not— for his death would suffice to show the love of him who had died towards him. But as it is not man, not angel, not archangel; but the Lord of the heavens himself, the only-begotten Son of God himself having clothed himself with flesh, freely gave himself on our behalf. Shall we not do everything, and take every trouble, so that the men who have been thus valued may enjoy every solicitude at our hands? And what kind of defence shall we have? What allowance? This at least is the very thing by way of declaring which Paul also said, "*Do not by your meat destroy him for whose sake Christ died.*" [Romans 14:15] For desiring to shame, and to bring to solicitude, and to persuade to care for their neighbours, those who despise their brethren, and look down upon them as being weak, instead of all else he set down the Master's death.

Sitting then in the prison he wrote the letter to the Philippians from that so great distance. For such as this is the love that is according to God: it

is interrupted by no one of human things, since it has its roots from above in the heavens and its recompense. And what says he? *"Now I desire that you should know, brethren."* [Philippians 1:12] Do you see solicitude for his scholars? Do you see a teacher's carefulness? Hear too of loving affection of scholars towards their teacher, that you may know that this was what made them strong and unconquerable—the being bound together with one another. For if *"Brother helped by brother is as a strong city;"* far more so many bound together by the bonds of love would have entirely repulsed the plotting of the wicked demon. That indeed then Paul was bound up with the disciples, requires not even any demonstration further nor argument for us, since in truth even when in bonds he anxiously cared for them, and each day, he was also dying for them, burning with his longing.

6. And that the disciples too were bound up with Paul with all perfectness; and that not men only, but women also, hear what he says about Phœbe. *"Now I commend to you Phœbe the sister, being a deaconess of the Church which is in Cenchreæ; that you may receive her in the Lord worthily of the saints, and stand by her, in whatever matter she may require you, since she has proved a helper of many; and of me myself."*

[Romans 16:1-2] But in this instance he bore witness to her of her zeal so far as help went (only:) but Priscilla and Aquilla went as far even as death for Paul's sake; and about them he thus writes, saying, *"Aquila and Priscilla salute you, who for my life's sake laid down their own neck;"*

[Romans 16:3-4] for death clearly. And about another again writing to these very persons he says, *"Because he went as far as death; having counselled ill for his life, in order that he might supply your deficiency in your service towards me."* [Philippians 2:30] Do you see how they loved their teacher? How they regarded his rest before their own life? On this account no one surpassed them then. Now this I say, not that we may hear only, but that we

may also imitate; and not to the ruled only, but also to those who rule is what we say addressed; in order that both scholars may display much solicitude about their teachers, and the teachers may have the same loving affection as Paul about those placed under them; not those present only, but also those who are far off. For also Paul, dwelling in the whole world just as in one house, thus continually took thought for the salvation of all; and having dismissed every thing of his own; bonds and troubles and stripes and straits, watched over and inquired into each day, in what state the affairs of the disciples were; and often for this very purpose alone sent, now Timothy, and now Tychicus; and about him he says, *"That he may know your circumstances, and encourage your hearts:"* [Ephesians 6:22] and about Timothy; *"I have sent him, being no longer able to contain myself; lest in some way the tempter have tempted you."* [1 Thessalonians 3:5] And Titus again elsewhere, and another to another place. For since he himself, by the compulsion of his bonds being often detained in one place, was unable to meet those who were his vitals, he met them through the disciples.

7. And then therefore being in bonds he writes to the Philippians, saying, *"Now I desire that you should know, brethren,"* [Philippians 1:12] calling the disciples brethren. For such a thing as this is love; it casts out all inequality, and knows not superiority and dignity; but even if one be higher than all, he descends to the lowlier position of all; just what Paul also used to do. But let us hear what it is that he desires they should know. *"That the things which happened unto me,"* he says, *"have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the gospel."* [Philippians 1:12] Tell me, how and in what way? Have you then been released from your bonds? Have you then put off your chain? And do you with free permission preach in the city? Have you then, having gone into an assembly, drawn out many long discourses about the faith, and departed after gaining many disciples? Have you then raised

the dead and been made an object of wonder? Have you then cleansed lepers, and all were astounded? Have you driven away demons, and been exalted? No one of these things, he says. How then did the furtherance of the gospel take place? Tell me. *"So that my bonds,"* he says, *"have become openly known in the whole Court, and to all the rest."* [Philippians 1:13]

What do you say? This then, this was the furtherance, this the advance, this the increase of the proclamation—that all knew that you were bound. Yes, he says: Hear at least what comes next, that you may learn that the bonds not only proved no hindrance, but also a ground of greater freedom of speech. *"So that several of the brethren in the Lord, in reliance on my bonds, more abundantly dare fearlessly to speak the word."*

[Philippians 1:14] What do you say, O Paul? Have your bonds inspired not anxiety but confidence? Not fear but earnest longing? The things mentioned have no consistency. I too know it. For neither did these things take place according to the consistency of human affairs, he means, but what came about was above nature, and the successes were of divine grace. On this account what used to cause anxiety to all others, that to him afforded confidence. For also if any one having taken the leader of an army and confined him, have made this publicly known, he throws the whole camp into flight; and if any one have carried a shepherd away from the flock, the security with which he drives off the sheep is great. But not in Paul's case was it thus, but the contrary entirely. For the leader of the army was bound, and the soldiers became more forward in the spirit; and the confidence with which they sprung upon their adversaries was greater: the shepherd was in confinement, and the sheep were not consumed, nor even scattered.

8. Who ever saw, who ever heard of, the scholars taking greater encouragement in the dangers of their teachers? How was it that they feared not? How was it that they were not terrified? How was it that they did not

say to Paul, "*Physician, heal yourself,*" [Luke 4:23] deliver yourself from your manifold perils, and then thou wilt be able to procure for us those countless good things? How was it they did not say these things? How! It was because they had been schooled, from the grace of the Spirit, that these things took place not out of weakness, but out of the permission of the Christ; in order that the truth might shine abroad more largely; through bonds and imprisonments and tribulations and straits increasing and rising, to a greater volume. Thus is the power of Christ in weakness perfected. For indeed if his bonds had crippled Paul and made him cowardly; either himself or those belonging to him; one could not but feel difficulty; but if rather they prepared him into greater renown, one must be astounded and marvel, how through a thing involving dishonour glory was procured for the disciple— through a thing inspiring cowardice confidence and encouragement resulted to them all. For who was not astounded at him then, seeing him encircled with a chain? Then demons took to flight all the more, when they saw him spending his time in a prison. For not so splendid does the diadem make a royal head, as the chain his hands; not owing to their proper nature, but owing to the grace that darted brightness on them. On this account it was that great encouragement resulted to the disciples. For also they saw his body indeed bound, but his tongue not bound, his hands indeed tightly manacled, but his voice unshackled, and transversing the whole world more swiftly than the solar ray. And this became to them an encouragement; learning as they did from the facts that no one of present things is to be dreaded. For when the soul has been genuinely imbued by divine longing and love, it pays regard to no one of things present; but just as those who are mad venture themselves against fire and sword and wild beasts and sea and all else, so these too, maddened with a most noble and most spiritual frenzy, a frenzy arising from sanity, used to laugh at all things

that are seen. On this account, seeing their teachers bound, they the more exulted, the more prided themselves; by facts giving to their adversaries a demonstration that on all sides they were impregnable and indomitable.

9. Then therefore, when matters were in this state, some of the enemies of Paul, desiring to fan up the war to greater vehemence, and to make the hatred of the tyrant, which was felt towards him greater, pretended that they themselves also preached; (and they did preach the right and sound faith,) for the sake of the doctrine advancing more rapidly: and this they did, not with the desire to disseminate the faith; but in order that Nero, having learned that the preaching was increasing and the doctrine advancing, might the sooner have Paul led away to execution. There were therefore two schools; that of Paul's scholars and that of Paul's enemies; the one preaching out of sincerity, and the others out of love of contention and the hatred they felt towards Paul. And by way of declaring this he said, *"Some indeed through envy and strife are preaching Christ,"* (pointing out those his enemies) *"but some also through good pleasure;"* saying this about his own scholars. [Philippians 1:15] Then next about those; *"Some indeed out of contentiousness,"* (his enemies,) not purely, not soundly, but, *"thinking that they are thereby bringing pressure upon my bonds; [for the defence of the gospel."* For what? Nevertheless, in any way; whether in pretence or in sincerity, Christ is being announced. Philippians 1:16-18] So that vainly and to no purpose is this saying taken in reference to heresies. For those who then were preaching were not preaching corrupt doctrine; but sound and right belief. For if they were preaching corrupt doctrine, and were teaching other things contrary to Paul, what they desired was certain not to succeed to them. Now what did they desire? That the faith having grown, and the disciples of Paul having become numerous, it should rouse Nero to greater hostility. And if they were preaching different doctrines, they would not

have made the disciples of Paul numerous; and by not doing so, they would not have exasperated the tyrant. He does not therefore say this— that they were bringing in corrupt doctrines— but that the motive from which they were preaching, *this* was corrupt. For it is one thing to state the pretext of their preaching itself was not sound. For the preaching does not become sound when the doctrine is laden with deception; and the pretext does not become sound when the preaching indeed is sound, but they who preach do not preach for the sake of God, but either with a view of enmity, or with a view to the favour of others.

10. He therefore does not say this— that they were bringing in heresies; but that it was not from a right motive, nor through piety that they were preaching what they did preach. For it was not they might increase the gospel that they were doing this; but that they might wage war against him, and throw him into greater danger— on this account he accuses them. And see how with exactitude he laid it. "*Thinking*," he says, "*that they were putting pressure upon my bonds.*" [Philippians 1:17] He did not say, putting, but "*thinking they were putting upon*," that is supposing, by way of pointing out that even if they so supposed, still he himself was not in such a position; but that he even rejoiced on account of the advance of the preaching. He added therefore saying, "*But in this I both rejoice and will rejoice:*" [doctrines deception, and they were bringing in heresies, Paul could not possibly rejoice. But since the doctrine was sound and of genuine parentage, on this account he says, "*I rejoice and will rejoice.*" For what if they are destroying themselves by doing this out of contentiousness? Still, even unwillingly, they are strengthening my cause. Do you see how great is Paul's power? How he is caught by no one of the devil's machinations? And not only is he not caught; but also by these themselves he subdues him. For great indeed is both the devil's craftiness, and the wickedness of those who

minister to him; for under pretence of being of the same mind, they desired to extinguish the proclamation. But *"he who seizes the cunning in their craftiness"* did not permit that this should take place then. By way of declaring this very thing at least Paul said, *"But the continuing in the flesh is the more necessary for your sake; and this I confidently know, that I shall continue and remain in company with you all."* Philippians 1:24-25] For those men indeed set their mind on casting me out of the present life, and are ready to endure anything for this object: but God does not permit it on your account.

11. These things therefore, all of them, remember with exactness in order that you may be able with all wisdom to correct those who use the Scriptures without reference to circumstances and at hap-hazard, and for the destruction of their neighbours. And we shall be able both to remember what has been said, and to correct others, if we always betake ourselves to prayers as a refuge, and beseech the God who gives the word of wisdom to grant both intelligence in hearing, and a careful and unconquerable guardianship of this spiritual deposit in our hands. For things which often we have not strength to perform successfully from our own exertions, these we shall have power to accomplish easily through prayers which are persevering. For always and without intermission it is a duty to pray, both for him who is in affliction, and him who is in dangers, and him who is in prosperity— for him who is in relief and much prosperity, that these may remain unmoved and without vicissitude, and may never change; and for him who is in affliction and his many dangers, that he may see some favourable change brought about to him, and be transported into a calm of consolation. Are you in a calm? Then beseech God that this calm may continue settled to you. Have you seen a storm risen up against you? Beseech God earnestly to cause the billow to pass, and to make a calm out

of the storm. Have you been heard? Be heartily thankful for this; because you have been heard. Have you not been heard? Persevere, in order that you may be heard. For even if God at any time delay the giving, it is not in hatred and aversion; but from the desire by the deferring of the giving perpetually to retain you with himself; just in the way also that affectionate fathers do; for they also adroitly manage the perpetual and assiduous attendance of children who are rather indolent by the delay of the giving. There is to you no need of mediators in audience with God; nor of that much canvassing; nor of the fawning upon others; but even if you be destitute, even if bereft of advocacy, alone, by yourself, having called on God for help, you will in any case succeed. He is not so wont to assent when entreated by others on our behalf, as by ourselves who are in need; even if we be laden with ten thousand evil deeds. For if in the case of men, even if we have come into countless collisions with them, when both at dawn and at mid-day and in the evening we show ourselves to those who are aggrieved against us, by the unbroken continuance and the persistent meeting and interview we easily demolish their enmity— far more in the case of God would this be effected.

12. But you are unworthy. Become worthy by your assiduity. For that it both is possible that the unworthy should become worthy from his assiduity; and that God assents more when called on by ourselves than by others; and that he often delays the giving, not from the wish that we should be utterly perplexed, nor to send us out with empty hands; but in order that he may become the author of greater good things to us— these three points I will endeavour to make evident by the parable which has today been read to you. The woman of Chanaan had come to Christ praying on behalf of a daughter possessed by a demon, and crying out with much earnestness (it says, *"Have pity on me, Lord, my daughter is badly possessed by a*

demon.") See, the woman of a strange nation, and a barbarian, and outside of the Jewish commonwealth. For indeed what else (was she) than a dog, and unworthy of the receiving her request? For "*it is not,*" he says, "*good to take the children's bread, and to give it to the dogs.*" But, all the same, from her assiduity, she became worthy. For not only did he admit her into the nobility of children, dog as she was; but also he sent her off with that high encomium saying, "*O woman great is your faith; be it done to you as you will.*" Now when the Christ says, "*great is your faith,*" seek thou no other demonstration of the greatness of soul which was in the woman. Do you see how, from her assiduity the woman, being unworthy, became worthy?

Desirest thou also to learn that we accomplish (our wish) by calling on him by ourselves more than by others? She cried out, and the disciples having come to him say, "*Let her go away, for she is crying after us:*"

[Matthew 5:23] and to them he says, "*I am not sent, unless to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" [Matthew 5:24] But when she had come to him by herself and continued crying, and saying, "*Yes, Lord, for even the dogs eat from the table of their masters,*" then he granted the favour and says, "*Be it done unto you as you will.*" Do you see how, when they were entreating him, he repelled; but when she who needed the gift herself cried out, he assented? For to them he says, "*I am not sent, unless to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;*" but to her he said, "*Great is your faith; be it done unto you as you will.*" Again, at the beginning and in the prelude of her request he answered nothing; but when both once and twice and thrice she had come to him, then he granted the boon; by the issue making us believe that he had delayed the giving, not that he might repel her but that he might display to us all the woman's endurance. For if he had delayed in order that he might repel her, he would have not granted it even at the end; but since he was waiting to display to all her spiritual wisdom, on this account he was silent.

For if he had granted it immediately and at the beginning, we should not have known the woman's virtue. "*Let her go*" it says, "*because she is clamouring behind us.*" But what (says) the Christ? You hear a voice, but I see the mind: I know what she is going to say. I choose not to permit the treasure hidden in her mind to escape notice; but I am waiting and keeping silence; in order that having discovered it I may lay it down in publicity, and make it manifest to all.

13. Having therefore learned all these things, even if we be in sins, and unworthy of receiving, let us not despair; knowing, that by assiduity of soul we shall be able to become worthy of the request. Even if we be unaided by advocate and destitute, let us not faint; knowing that it is a strong advocacy — the coming to God one's self by one's self with much eagerness. Even if he delay and defer with respect to the giving, let us not be dispirited; having learned that the putting it off and delay is a sure proof of caring and love for mankind. If we have thus persuaded ourselves; and with a soul deeply pained and fervent, and thoroughly roused purpose; and such as that with which the woman of Chanaan approached, we too come to him, even if we be dogs; even if we have done anything whatever dreadful; we shall both rebut our own crimes, and obtain so great liberty of speech as also to be advocates for others; in the way in which also this woman of Chanaan not only herself enjoyed liberty of speech and ten thousand encomiums but had power to snatch her dear daughter out of her intolerable sufferings. For nothing— nothing is more powerful than prayer when fervent and genuine. This both disperses present dangers, and rescues from the penalties which take place at that hour. That therefore we may both complete our passage through the present life with ease, and depart there with confidence, with much zeal and eagerness let us perform this perpetually. For thus shall we be able both to attain the good things which are laid up, and to enjoy those

excellent hopes; which God grant that we may all attain; by the grace and loving kindness and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ— with whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, honour, dominion, to the ages of the ages. Amen.

Instructions to Catechumens

First Instruction

To those about to be illuminated; and for what reason the laver is said to be of regeneration and not of remission of sins; and that it is a dangerous thing not only to forswear oneself, but also to take an oath, even though we swear truly.

1. How delightful and lovable is our band of young brethren! For brethren I call you, even now before you have been brought forth, and before your birth I welcome this relationship with you: For I know, I know clearly, to how great an honour you are about to be led, and to how great a dignity; and those who are about to receive dignity, all are wont to honor, even before the dignity is conferred, laying up for themselves beforehand by their attention good will for the future. And this also I myself now do. For you are not about to be led to an empty dignity, but to an actual kingdom: and not simply to a kingdom, but to the kingdom of the Heavens itself. Wherefore I beseech and entreat you that you remember me when you come into that kingdom, and as Joseph said to the chief butler *"Remember me when it shall be well with you,"* [Genesis 40:14] this also I say now to you, do ye remember me when it is well with you. I do not ask this in return for interpreting your dreams, as he; for I have not come to interpret dreams for you, but to discourse of matters celestial, and to convey to you glad tidings of such good things as *"eye has not seen, and ear has not heard and which have entered not into the heart of man, such are the things which God has prepared for them that love him."* [1 Corinthians 2:9-10] Now Joseph indeed said to that chief butler, *"yet three days and*

Pharaoh will restore you to your chief butlership." But I do not say, yet three days and you shall be set to pour out the wine of a tyrant, but yet thirty days, and not Pharaoh but the king of Heaven shall restore you to the country which is on high, Jerusalem, which is free— to the city which is in the heavens; and *he* said indeed, "*You shall give the cup into the hands of Pharaoh.*" But I say not that you shall give the cup into the hands of the king, but that the king shall give the cup into your hand— that dread cup, full of much power, and more precious than any created thing. The initiated know the virtue of this cup, and you yourselves shall know it a little while hence. Remember me, therefore, when you come into that kingdom, when you receive the royal robe, when you are girt with the purple dipped in the master's blood, when you will be crowned with the diadem, which has lustre leaping forth from it on all sides, more brilliant than the rays of the sun. Such are the gifts of the Bridegroom, greater indeed than your worth, but worthy of his lovingkindness.

Wherefore, I count you blessed already before those sacred nuptials, and I do not only count you blessed, but I praise your prudence in that you have not come to your illumination as the most slothful among men, at your last breath, but already, like prudent servants, prepared with much goodwill to obey your master, have brought the neck of your soul with much meekness and readiness beneath the bands of Christ, and have received His easy yoke, and have taken His light burden. For if the grace bestowed be the same both for you and for those who are initiated at their last hour, yet the matter of the intention is not the same, nor yet the matter of the preparation for the rite. For they indeed receive it on their bed, but you in the bosom of the Church, which is the common mother of us all; they indeed with lamentation and weeping, but you rejoicing, and exceeding glad: they sighing, you giving thanks; they indeed lethargic with much

fever, you filled with much spiritual pleasure; wherefore in your case all things are in harmony with the gift, but in theirs all are adverse to it. For there is wailing and much lamentation on the part of the initiated, and children stand around crying, wife tearing her cheeks, and dejected friends and tearful servants; the whole aspect of the house resembles some wintry and gloomy day. And if you shall open the heart of him who is lying there, you will find it more downcast than are these. For as winds meeting one another with many a contrary blast, break up the sea into many parts, so too the thought of the terrors preying upon him assail the soul of the sick man, and distract his mind with many anxieties. Whenever he sees his children, he thinks of their fatherless condition; whenever he looks from them to his wife, he considers her widowhood; when he sees the servants, he beholds the desolation of the whole house; when he comes back to himself, he calls to mind his own present life, and being about to be torn from it, experiences a great cloud of despondency. Of such a kind is the soul of him who is about to be initiated. Then in the midst of its tumult and confusion, the Priest enters, more formidable than the fever itself, and more distressing than death to the relatives of the sick man. For the entrance of the Presbyter is thought to be a greater reason for despair than the voice of the physician despairing of his life, and that which suggests eternal life seems to be a symbol of death. But I have not yet put the finishing stroke to these ills. For in the midst of relatives raising a tumult and making preparations, the soul has often taken its flight, leaving the body desolate; and in many cases, while it was present it was useless, for when it neither recognizes those who are present, nor hears their voice, nor is able to answer those words by which it will make that blessed covenant with the common master of us all, but is as a useless log, or a stone, and he who is about to be illuminated lies

there differing nothing from a corpse, what is the profit of initiation in a case of such insensibility?

2. For he who is about to approach these holy and dread mysteries must be awake and alert, must be clean from all cares of this life, full of much self-restraint, much readiness; he must banish from his mind every thought foreign to the mysteries, and on all sides cleanse and prepare his home, as if about to receive the king himself. Such is the preparation of your mind: such are your thoughts; such the purpose of your soul. Await therefore a return worthy of this most excellent decision from God, who overpowers with His recompense those who show forth obedience to Him. But since it is necessary for his fellow servants to contribute of their own, then we will contribute of our own; yea rather not even are these things our own, but these too are our Master's. *"For what have you,"* says He, *"that thou did not receive? But if you received it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?"* [1 Corinthians 4:7] I wished to say this first of all, why in the world our fathers, passing by the whole year, settled that the children of the Church should be initiated at this season; and for what reason, after the instruction from us, removing your shoes and raiment, unclad and unshod, with but one garment on, they conduct you to hear the words of the exorcisers. For it is not thoughtlessly and rashly that they have planned this dress and this season for us. But both these things have a certain mystic and secret reason. And I wish to say this to you. But I see that our discourse now constrains us to something more necessary to say what baptism is, and for what reason it enters into our life, and what good things it conveys to us.

But, if you will, let us discourse about the name which this mystic cleansing bears: for its name is not one, but very many and various. For this purification is called the laver of regeneration. *"He saved us,"* he says, *"through the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."*

[Titus 3:5] It is called also illumination, and this St. Paul again has called it, *"For call to remembrance the former days in which after you were illuminated ye endured a great conflict of sufferings;"* [Hebrews 10:32] and again, *"For it is impossible for those who were once illuminated, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and then fell away, to renew them again unto repentance."* [Hebrews 6:4-6] It is called also, baptism: *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."* [Galatians 3:27] It is called also burial: *"For we were buried"* says he, *"with him, through baptism, into death."* [Romans 6:4] It is called circumcision: *"In whom you were also circumcised, with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh."* [Galatians 2:11] It is called a cross: *"Our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away."* [Romans 6:6] It is also possible to speak of other names besides these, but in order that we should not spend our whole time over the names of this free gift, come, return to the first name, and let us finish our discourse by declaring its meaning; but in the meantime, let us extend our teaching a little further. There is that laver by means of the baths, common to all men, which is wont to wipe off bodily uncleanness; and there is the Jewish laver, more honorable than the other, but far inferior to that of grace; and it too wipes off bodily uncleanness but not simply uncleanness of body, since it even reaches to the weak conscience. For there are many matters, which by nature indeed are not unclean, but which become unclean from the weakness of the conscience. And as in the case of little children, masks, and other bugbears are not in themselves alarming, but seem to little children to be alarming, by reason of the weakness of their nature, so it is in the case of those things of which I was speaking; just as to touch dead bodies is not naturally unclean, but when this comes into contact with a weak conscience, it makes him who touches them unclean. For that the

thing in question is not unclean naturally, Moses himself who ordained this law showed, when he bore off the entire corpse of Joseph, and yet remained clean. On this account Paul also, discoursing to us about this uncleanness which does not come naturally but by reason of the weakness of the conscience, speaks somewhat in this way, *"Nothing is common of itself save to him who accounts anything to be common."* [Romans 14:14] Do you not see that uncleanness does not arise from the nature of the thing, but from the weakness of the reasoning about it? And again: *"All things indeed are clean, howbeit it is evil to that man who eats with offense."* [Romans 14:20] Do you see that it is not to eat, but to eat with offense, that is the cause of uncleanness?

3. Such is the defilement from which the laver of the Jews cleansed. But the laver of grace, not such, but the real uncleanness which has introduced defilement into the soul as well as into the body. For it does not make those who have touched dead bodies clean, but those who have set their hand to dead works: and if any man be effeminate, or a fornicator, or an idolator, or a doer of whatever ill you please, or if he be full of all the wickedness there is among men: should he fall into this pool of waters, he comes up again from the divine fountain purer than the sun's rays. And in order that you may not think that what is said is mere vain boasting, hear Paul speaking of the power of the laver, *"Be not deceived: neither idolators, nor fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor covetous, not drunkards, not revilers, not extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God."* [1 Corinthians 6:9-10] And what has this to do with what has been spoken? Says one, *"for prove the question whether the power of the laver thoroughly cleanses all these things."* Hear therefore what follows: *"And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,*

and in the spirit of our God." We promise to show you that they who approach the laver become clean from all fornication: but the word has shown more, that they have become not only clean, but both holy and just, for it does not say only "*you were washed,*" but also "*you were sanctified and were justified.*" What could be more strange than this, when without toil, and exertion, and good works, righteousness is produced? For such is the lovingkindness of the Divine gift that it makes men just without this exertion. For if a letter of the Emperor, a few words being added, sets free those who are liable to countless accusations, and brings others to the highest honors; much rather will the Holy Spirit of God, who is able to do all things, free us from all evil and grant us much righteousness, and fill us with much assurance, and as a spark falling into the wide sea would straightway be quenched, or would become invisible, being overwhelmed by the multitude of the waters, so also all human wickedness, when it falls into the pool of the divine fountain, is more swiftly and easily overwhelmed, and made invisible, than that spark. And for what reason, says one, if the laver take away all our sins, is it called, not a laver of remission of sins, nor a laver of cleansing, but a laver of regeneration? Because it does not simply take away our sins, nor simply cleanse us from our faults, but so as if we were born again. For it creates and fashions us anew not forming us again out of earth, but creating us out of another element, namely, of the nature of water. For it does not simply wipe the vessel clean, but entirely remoulds it again. For that which is wiped clean, even if it be cleaned with care, has traces of its former condition, and bears the remains of its defilement, but that which falls into the new mould, and is renewed by means of the flames, laying aside all uncleanness, comes forth from the furnace, and sends forth the same brilliancy with things newly formed. As therefore any one who takes and recasts a golden statue which

has been tarnished by time, smoke, dust, rust, restores it to us thoroughly cleansed and glistening: so too this nature of ours, rusted with the rust of sin, and having gathered much smoke from our faults, and having lost its beauty, which He had from the beginning bestowed upon it from himself, God has taken and cast anew, and throwing it into the waters as into a mould, and instead of fire sending forth the grace of the Spirit, then brings us forth with much brightness, renewed, and made afresh, to rival the beams of the sun, having crushed the old man, and having fashioned a new man, more brilliant than the former.

4. And speaking darkly of this crushing, and this mystic cleansing, the prophet of old said, *"You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."* For that the word is in reference to the faithful, what goes before sufficiently shows us, *"For you are my Son,"* he says, *"today have I begotten you, ask of me and I will give the heathen for three inheritance, the utmost parts of the earth for your possession."* Do you see how he has made mention of the church of the Gentiles, and has spoken of the kingdom of Christ extended on all sides? Then he says again, *"You shall rule them with a rod of iron;"* not grievous, but strong: *"you shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."* Behold then, the laver is more mystically brought forward. For he does not say earthen vessels: but vessels of the potter. But, give heed: For earthen vessels when crushed would not admit of refashioning, on account of the hardness which was gained by them from the fire. But the fact is that the vessels of the potter are not earthen, but of clay; wherefore, also, when they have been distorted, they can easily, by the skill of the artificer, be brought again to a second shape. When, therefore, God speaks of an irremediable calamity, he does not say vessels of the potter, but an earthen vessel; when, for instance, he wished to teach the prophet and the Jews that he delivered up the city to an irremediable

calamity, he bade him take an earthen wine-vessel, and crush it before all the people, and say, *"Thus shall this city be destroyed, be broken in pieces."* [Jeremiah 19:11] But when he wishes to hold out good hopes to them, he brings the prophet to a pottery, and does not show him an earthen vessel, but shows him a vessel of clay, which was in the hands of the potter, falling to the ground: and brings him to it saying, *"If this potter has taken up and remodelled his vessel which has fallen, shall I not much rather be able to restore you when you have fallen?"* [Jeremiah 18:6] It is possible therefore for God not only to restore those who are made of clay, through the laver of regeneration, but to bring back again to their original state, on their careful repentance, those who have received the power of the Spirit, and have lapsed. But this is not the time for you to hear words about repentance, rather may the time never come for you to fall into the need of these remedies, but may you always remain in preservation of the beauty and the brightness which you are now about to receive, unsullied. In order, then, that you may ever remain thus, come and let us discourse to you a little about your manner of life. For in the wrestling schools falls of the athletes are devoid of danger. For the wrestling is with friends, and they practice all their exercises on the persons of their teachers. But when the time of the contest has come, when the lists are open, when the spectators are seated above, when the president has arrived, it necessarily follows that the combatants, if they become careless, fall and retire in great disgrace, or if they are in earnest, win the crowns and the prizes. So then, in your case these thirty days are like some wrestling school, both for exercise and practice: let us learn from thence already to get the better of that evil demon. For it is to contend with him that we have to strip ourselves, with him after baptism are we to box and fight. Let us learn from thence already his grip, on what side he is aggressive, on what side he can easily threaten

us, in order that, when the contest comes on, we may not feel strange, nor become confused, as seeing new forms of wrestling; but having already practiced them among ourselves, and having learned all his methods, may engage in these forms of wrestling against him with courage. In all ways, therefore, is he accustomed to threaten us, but especially by means of the tongue, and the mouth. For there is no organ so convenient for him for our deception and our destruction as an unchastened tongue and an unchecked utterance. Hence come many slips on our part: hence many serious accusations against us. And the ease of these falls through the tongue a certain one showed, when he said, *"Many fell by the sword, but not so many as by the tongue."* [Sirach 28:22] Now the gravity of the fall the same person shows us again when he says: *"To slip upon a pavement is better than to slip with the tongue."* [Sirach 20:18] And what he speaks of is of this kind. Better it is, says he, that the body should fall and be crushed, than that such a word should go forth as destroys the soul; and he does not speak of falls merely; he also admonishes us that much forethought should be exercised, so that we should not be tripped up, thus saying *"Make a door and bars for your mouth,"* [Sirach 20:25] not that we should prepare doors and bars, but that with much security, we should shut the tongue off from outrageous words; and again in another place, after showing that we need influence from above, both as accompanying and preceding our own effort so as to keep this wild beast within: stretching forth his hands to God, the prophet said, *"Let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice, set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips;"* and he who before admonished, himself too says again *"Who shall set a watch before my mouth, and a seal of wisdom upon my lips?"* [Sirach 22:27] Do you not see, each one fearing these falls and bewailing them, both giving advice, and praying that the tongue may have the benefit of much watchfulness?

And for what reason, says one, if this organ brings us such ruin, did God originally place it within us? Because indeed, it is of great use, and if we are careful, it is of use only, and brings no ruin. Hear, for example, what he says who spoke the former words, *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."* [Proverbs 18:21] And Christ points to the same thing when he says, *"By your words you shall be condemned, and by your words you shall be justified."* [Mark 12:27] For the tongue stands in the midst ready for use on either hand. You are its master. Thus indeed a sword lies in the midst, and if you use it against your enemies, this organ becomes a means of safety for you. But if you thrust its stroke against yourself, not the nature of the iron, but your own transgression becomes the cause of your slaughter. Let us then take this view of the tongue. It is a sword lying in the midst; sharpen it for the purpose of accusing your own sins. Thrust not the stroke against your brother. For this reason God surrounded it with a double fortification; with the fence of the teeth and the barrier of the lips, that it may not rashly and without circumspection utter words which are not convenient. Well, do you say it will not endure this? Bridle it therefore within. Restrain it by means of the teeth, as though giving over its body to these executioners and making them bite it. For it is better that when it sins now it should be bitten by the teeth, than one day when it seeks a drop of water and is parched with heat, to be unable to obtain this consolation. In many other ways indeed it is wont to sin, by raillery and blasphemy, by uttering foul words, by slander, swearing, and perjury.

5. But in order that we may not by saying everything at once today, confuse your minds, we put before you one custom, namely, about the avoidance of oaths, saying this much by way of preface, and speaking plainly—that if you do not avoid oaths, I say not perjury merely, but those too which happen in the cause of justice, we shall not further discourse

upon any other subject. For it is monstrous that teachers of letters should not give a second lesson to their children until they see the former one fixed well in their memory, but that we, without being able to express our first lessons clearly, should inculcate others before the first are completed. For this is nothing else than to pour into a perforated jar. Give great care, then, that you silence not our mouth. For this error is grave, and it is exceedingly grave because it does not seem to be grave, and on this account I fear it, because no one fears it. On this account the disease is incurable, because it does not seem to be a disease; but just as simple speech is not a crime, so neither does this seem to be a crime, but with much boldness this transgression is committed: and if any one call it in question, straightway laughter follows, and much ridicule, not of those who are called in question for their oaths, but of those who wish to rectify the disease. On this account I largely extend my discourse about these matters. For I wish to pull up a deep root, and to wipe out a long-standing evil: I speak not of perjury alone, but even of oaths in good faith. But so and so, says one, a forbearing man, consecrated to the priesthood, living in much self-control and piety, takes an oath. Do not speak to me of this forbearing person, this self-controlled, pious man who is consecrated to the priesthood; but if you will, add that this man is Peter, or Paul, or even an angel descended out of heaven. For not even in such a case do I regard the dignity of their persons. For the law which I read upon oaths, is not that of the servant, but of the King: and when the edicts of a king are read, let every claim of the servants be silent. But if you are able to say that Christ bade us use oaths, or that Christ did not punish the doing of this, show me, and I am persuaded. But if he forbids it with so much care, and takes so much thought about the matter as to class him who takes an oath with the evil one (for whatsoever is more than these, namely, than yea and nay, says he, is of the devil), [Matthew 5:35] why do

you bring this person and that person forward? For not because of the carelessness of your fellow servants, but from the injunctions of his own laws, will God record his vote against you. I have commanded, he says, you ought to obey, not to shelter yourself behind such and such a person and concern yourself with other persons' evil. Since the great David sinned a grievous sin, is it then safe for us to sin? Tell me: on this account then we ought to make sure of this point, and only to emulate the good works of the saints; and if there is carelessness, and transgression of the law anywhere, we ought to flee from it with great care. For our reckoning is not with our fellow-servants, but with our Master, and to him we shall give account for all done in our life. Let us prepare ourselves therefore for this tribunal. For even if he who transgresses this law be beyond everything revered and great, he shall certainly pay the penalty attaching to the transgression. For God is no respecter of persons. How then and in what way is it possible to flee from this sin? For one ought to show not only that the crime is grievous, but to give counsel how we may escape from it. Have you a wife, have you a servant, children, friends, acquaintance, neighbors? To all these enjoin caution on these matters. Custom is a grievous thing, terrible to supplant, and hard to guard against, and it often attacks us unwilling and unknowing; therefore in so far as you know the power of custom, to such an extent study to be freed from any evil custom, and transfer yourself to any other most useful one. For as that custom is often able to trip you up, though you are careful, and guardest yourself, and takest thought, and consideration, so if you transfer yourself to the good custom of abstaining from oaths, you will not be able, either involuntarily or carelessly, to fall into the fault of oaths. For custom is really great and has the power of nature. In order then that we do not continually distress ourselves let us transfer ourselves to another custom, and ask thou each one of your kindred

and acquaintance this favor, that he advise you and exhort you to flee from oaths, and reprove you, when detected in them. For the watch over you which takes place on their part, is to them too counsel and a suggestion to what is right. For he who reproves another for oaths, will not himself easily fall into this pit. For much swearing is no ordinary pit, not only when it is about little matters but about the greatest. And we, whether buying vegetables, or quarrelling over two farthings, or in a rage with our servants and threatening them, always call upon God as our witness. But a freeman, possessed of some barren dignity, you would not dare to call upon as witness in the market to such things; but even if you attempted it, you will pay the penalty of your insolence. But the King of Heaven, the Lord of Angels, when disputing both about purchases and money, and what not, you drag in for a testimony. And how can these things be borne? Whence then should we escape from this evil custom? After setting those guards of which I spoke round us, let us fix on a specified time to ourselves for amendment, and adding thereto condemnation if, when the time has passed, we have not amended this. How long time will suffice for the purpose? I do not think that they who are very wary, and on the alert, and watchful about their own salvation, should need more than ten days, so as to be altogether free from the evil custom of oaths. But if after ten days we be detected swearing, let us add a penalty due to ourselves, and let us fix upon the greatest punishment and condemnation of the transgression; what then is this condemnation? This I do not fix upon, but will suffer you yourselves to determine the sentence. So we arrange matters in our own case, not only in respect of oaths but in respect of other defects, and fixing a time for ourselves, with most grievous punishments, if at any time we have fallen into them, shall come clean to our Master, and shall escape the fire of hell, and shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ with boldness, to which

may we all attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory to the Father together with the Holy Spirit for ever and ever: Amen.

Second Instruction

To those about to be illuminated; and concerning women who adorn themselves with plaiting of hair, and gold, and concerning those who have used omens, and amulets, and incantations, all which are foreign to Christianity.

1. I have come to ask first of all for some fruit in return for the words lately said out of brotherly love to you. For we do not speak in order that you should hear simply, but in order that you should remember what has been said, and may afford us evidence of this, by your works. Yea, rather, not us, but, God, who knows the secrets of the heart. On this account indeed instruction is so called, in order that even when we are absent, our discourse may instruct your hearts. And be not surprised if, after an interval of ten days only, we have come asking for fruit from the seed sown. For in one day it is possible at once to let the seed fall, and to accomplish the harvest. For strengthened not by our own power alone, but by the influence which comes from God, we are summoned to the conflict. Let as many therefore as have received what has been spoken, and have fulfilled it by their works, remain reaching forth to the things which are before. But let as many as have not yet arrived at this good achievement, arrive at it straightway, that they may dispel the condemnation which arises out of their sloth by their diligence for the future. For it is possible, it is indeed possible for him who has been very slothful, by using diligence for the future to recover the whole loss of the time that is past. Wherefore, He says, *"Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the day of provocation."* And this, He says, exhorting and counselling us; that we should never despair, but so long as we are here, should have good hopes, and should lay hold on

what is before us, and hasten towards the prize of our high calling of God. This then let us do, and let us inquire into the names of this great gift. For as ignorance of the greatness of this dignity makes those who are honored with it more slothful, so when it is known it renders them thankful, and makes them more earnest; and anyhow it would be disgraceful and ridiculous that they who enjoy such glory and honors from God, should not even know what the names of it are intended to show forth. And why do I speak about this gift, for if you will consider the common name of our race, you will receive the greatest instruction and incentive to virtue. For this name "*Man*," we do not define according as they who are without define it, but as the Divine Scripture has bidden us. For a man is not merely whosoever has hands and feet of a man, nor whosoever is rational only, but whosoever practices piety and virtue with boldness. Hear, at least, what he says concerning Job. For in saying that "*there was a man in the land of Ausis*," he does not describe him in those terms in which they who are without describe him, nor does he say this because he had two feet and broad nails, but he added the evidences of his piety and said, "*just, true, fearing God, eschewing every evil deed*," [Job 1:1] showing that this is a man; even as therefore another says, "*Fear God, and keep his commandments, because this is the whole man*." [Ecclesiastes 12:13] But if the name man affords such a great incentive to virtue, much rather the term faithful. For you are called faithful on this account, because you have faith in God, and yourself art entrusted from Him with righteousness, sanctification, cleansing of soul, adoption, the kingdom of heaven. He entrusted you with these, and handed them over to you. Thou in turn hast entrusted, and handed over other things to him, almsgiving, prayers, self-control and every other virtue. And why do I say almsgiving? If you give him even a cup of cold water, you shall not indeed lose this, but even this he keeps with care against that day, and will

restore it with overflowing abundance. For this truly is wonderful, that he does not keep only that which has been entrusted to him, but in recompensing it increases it.

This too he has bidden you do according to your power, with what has been entrusted to you, to extend the holiness which you have received, and to make the righteousness which comes from the laver brighter, and the gift of grace more radiant; even as therefore Paul did, increasing all the good things which he received by his subsequent labors, and his zeal, and his diligence. And look at the carefulness of God; neither did he give the whole to you then, nor withhold the whole, but gave part, and promised part. And for what reason did he not give the whole then? In order that you might show your faith about Him, believing, on his promise alone, in what was not yet given. And for what reason again did he not there dispense the whole, but did give the grace of the Spirit, and righteousness and sanctification? In order that he might lighten your labors for you, and by what has been already given may also put you in good hope for that which is to come. On this account, too, you are about to be called newly-enlightened, because your light is ever new, if you will, and is never quenched. For this light of day, whether we will or no, the night succeeds, but darkness knows not that light's ray. *"For the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not."* Not so bright at least is the world, when the sunbeams come forth, as the soul shines and becomes brighter when it has received grace from the Spirit and learns more exactly the nature of the case. For when night prevails, and there is darkness, often a man has seen a coil of rope and has thought it was a serpent, and has fled from an approaching friend as from an enemy, and being aware of some noise, has become very much alarmed; but when the day has come, nothing of this sort could happen, but all appears just as it really is; which thing also

occurs in the case of our soul. For when grace has come, and driven away the darkness of the understanding, we learn the exact nature of things, and what was before dreadful to us becomes contemptible. For we no longer fear death, after learning exactly, from this sacred initiation, that death is not death, but a sleep and a seasonable slumber; nor poverty nor disease, nor any other such thing, knowing that we are on our way to a better life, undefiled and incorruptible, and free from all such vicissitudes.

2. Let us not therefore remain craving after the things of this life, neither after the luxury of the table, or costliness of raiment. For you have the most excellent of raiment, you have a spiritual table you have the glory from on high, and Christ has become to you all things, your table, your raiment, your home, your head, your stem. *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ."* [Galatians 3:27] See how he has become raiment for you. Do you wish to learn how he becomes a table for you? *"He who eats me,"* says He, *"as I live because of the Father, he also shall live because of me;"* and that he becomes a home for you, *"he that eats my flesh abides in me, and I in him;"* [John 6:56] and that He is stem He says again, *"I am the vine, you the branches,"* [John 15:5] and that he is brother, and friend, and bride-groom, *"I no longer call you servants: for you are my friends;"* [John 15:15] and Paul again, *"I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ;"* [2 Corinthians 11:2] and again, *"That he might be the first-born among many brethren;"* [Romans 8:29] and we become not his brethren only, but also his children, *"For behold,"* he says, *"I and the children which God has given me"* [Isaiah 8:18] and not this only, but His members, and His body. For as if what has been said were not enough to show forth the love and the good will which He has shown forth towards us, He has added another thing greater and nearer still, calling himself besides, our head. Knowing all

these matters, beloved, requite your benefactor by the best conversation, and considering the greatness of the sacrifice, adorn the members of your body; consider what you receive in your hand, and never suffer it to strike any one, nor shame what has been honored with so great a gift by the sin of a blow. Consider what you receive in your hand, and keep it clean from all covetousness and extortion; think that thou dost not receive this in your hand, but also puttest it to your mouth, and guard your tongue in purity from base and insolent words, blasphemy, perjury, and all other such things. For it is disastrous that what is ministered to by such most dread mysteries, and has been dyed red with such blood, and has become a golden sword, should be perverted to purposes of raillery, and insult, and buffoonery. Reverence the honor with which God has honoured it, and bring it not down to the vileness of sin, but having reflected again that after the hand and the tongue, the heart receives this dread mystery, do not ever weave a plot against your neighbor, but keep your thoughts pure from all evil. Thus you shall be able to keep your eyes too, and your hearing safe. For is it not monstrous, after this mystic voice is borne from heaven— I mean the voice of the Cherubim— to defile your hearing with lewd songs, and dissolute melodies? And does it not deserve the utmost punishment if, with the same eyes with which you look upon the unspeakable and dread mysteries, you look upon harlots, and dost commit adultery in your heart. You are called to a marriage, beloved: enter not in clad in sordid raiment, but take a robe suitable to the marriage. For if when men are called to a material marriage, though they be poorer than all others, they often possess themselves of or buy clean raiment, and so go to meet those who called them. Do thou too who hast been called to a spiritual marriage, and to a royal banquet, consider what kind of raiment it would be right for you to buy, but rather there is not even need to purchase, yea he himself who calls you gives it

you gratis, in order that you may not be able to plead poverty in excuse. Keep, therefore, the raiment which you received. For if you lose it, you will not be able to use it henceforth, or to buy it. For this kind of raiment is nowhere sold. Have you heard how those who were initiated, in old time, groaned, and beat their breasts, their conscience thereupon exciting them? Beware then, beloved, that you do not at any time suffer like this. But how will you not suffer, if you dost not cast off the wicked habit of evil men? For this reason I said before, and speak now and will not cease speaking, if any has not rectified the defects in his morals, nor furnished himself with easily acquired virtue, let him not be baptized. For the laver is able to remit former sins, but there is no little fear, and no ordinary danger lest we return to them, and our remedy become a wound. For by how much greater the grace is, by so much is the punishment more for those who sin after these things.

3. In order, therefore, that we return not to our former vomit, let us henceforward discipline ourselves. For that we must repent beforehand, and desist from our former evil, and so come forward for grace, hear what John says, and what the leader of the apostles says to those who are about to be baptized. For the one says, *"Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father;"* [Luke 3:8] and the other says again to those who question him, *"Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."* [Acts 2:38] Now he who repents, no longer touches the same matters of which he repented. On this account, also, we are bidden to say, *"I renounce you, Satan,"* in order that we may never more return to him. As therefore happens in the case of painters from life, so let it happen in your case. For they, arranging their boards, and tracing white lines upon them, and sketching the royal likeness in outline, before they apply the actual colors,

rub out some lines, and change some for others, rectifying mistakes, and altering what is amiss with all freedom. But when they put on the coloring for good, it is no longer in their power to rub out again, and to change one thing for another, since they injure the beauty of the portrait, and the result becomes an eyesore. Consider that your soul is the portrait; before therefore the true coloring of the spirit comes, wipe out habits which have wrongly been implanted in you, whether swearing, or falsehood, or insolence, or base talking, or jesting, or whatever else you have a habit of doing of things unlawful. Away with the habit, in order that you may not return to it, after baptism. The laver causes the sins to disappear. Correct your habits, so that when the colors are applied, and the royal likeness is brought out, you may no more wipe them out in the future; and add damage and scars to the beauty which has been given you by God. Restrain therefore anger, extinguish passion. Be not thou vexed, be sympathizing, be not exasperated, nor say, *"I have been injured in regard to my soul."* No one is injured in regard to the soul if we do not injure ourselves in regard to the soul; and how this is, I now say. Has any one taken away your substance? He has not injured you in regard to your soul, but your money. But if you cherish ill-will against him, you have injured yourself in regard to your soul. For the money taken away has wrought you no damage, nay has even been profitable, but thou by not dismissing your anger will give account in the other world for this cherishing of ill-will. Has any one reviled you and insulted you. He has in no way injured your soul, and not even your body. Have you reviled in return and insulted? You have injured yourself in regard to your soul, for for the words which you have said you are about to render account there; and this I wish you to know chiefly of all, that the Christian, and faithful man, no one is able to injure in regard to the soul, not even the devil himself; and not only is this wonderful, that God has made us

inaccessible to all his designs, but that he has constituted us fit for the practice of virtue, and there is no hinderance, if we will, even though we be poor, weak in body, outcast, nameless, bondservants. For neither poverty, nor infirmity, nor deformity of body, nor servitude, nor any other of such things could ever become a hinderance to virtue; and why do I say, poor, and a bondservant, and nameless? Even if you are a prisoner, not even this would be ever any hinderance to you as regards virtue. And how this is I proceed to say. Has any of your household grieved you and provoked you? dismiss your wrath against him. Have bonds, and poverty, and obscurity been any hinderance to you in this respect? And why do I say hinderance? They have both helped and contributed to restrain pride. Have you seen another prospering? Do not envy him. For not even in this case is poverty a bar. Again, whenever you need to pray, do so with a sober and watchful mind, and nothing shall be a bar even in that case. Show all meekness, forbearance, self-restraint, gravity. For these things need no external helps. And this especially is the chief point about virtue, that it has no necessity for wealth, power, glory, nor anything of that kind, but of a sanctified soul alone, and it seeks for nothing more. And behold, also, the same thing happening in respect of grace. For if any one be lame, if he has had his eyes put out, if he be maimed in body, if he has fallen into the last extremity of weakness, grace is not hindered from coming by any of these things. For it only seeks a soul receiving it with readiness, and all these external things it passes over. For in the case of worldly soldiers, those who are about to enlist them for the army seek for stature of body and healthy condition, and it is not only necessary that he who is about to become a soldier should have these alone, but he must also be free. For if anybody be a slave, he is rejected. But the King of Heaven seeks for nothing of this kind, but receives slaves into his army, and aged people, and the languid in limb, and is not

ashamed. What is more merciful than this? What could be more kind? For he seeks for what is in our own power, but they seek for what is not in our power. For to be a slave or free is not our doing. To be tall, again, or short is not in our own power, or to be aged, or well grown, and such like. But to be forbearing and kind, and so forth, are matters of our own choice; and God demands of us only those things of which we have control. And quite reasonably. For He does not call us to grace because of his own need, but because of doing us kindness; but kings, because of services required by them; and they carry men off to an outward and material warfare, but He to a spiritual combat; and it is not only in the case of heathen wars, but in the case of the games also that one may see the same analogy. For they who are about to be brought into the theatre, do not descend to the contest until the herald himself takes them beneath the gaze of all, and leads them round, shouting out and saying, *"Has any one a charge against this person?"* although in that case the struggle is not concerned with the soul, but with the body. Wherefore then do you demand proofs of nobleness? But in this case there is nothing of the kind, but all is different, our contest not consisting of hand locked in hand, but in philosophy of soul, and excellence of mind. The president of our conflicts does the opposite. For he does not take us, and lead us round and say, *"Has any one a charge against this man?"* but cries out, Though all men, though demons, stand up with the devil and accuse him of extreme and unspeakable crimes, I reject him not, nor abhor him, but removing him from his accusers, and freeing him from his wickedness, thus I bring him to the contest. And this is very reasonable. For there indeed the president contributes nothing towards the victory, in the case of the combatants, but stands still in the midst. But here, the President of the contests for holiness becomes a fellow-combatant, and helper, sharing with them the conflict against the devil.

4. And not only is this the wonderful thing that he remits our sins, but that he not even reveals them nor makes them manifest and patent, nor compels us to come forward into the midst, and to tell out our errors, but bids us make our defense to him alone, and to confess ourselves to him. And yet among secular judges, if any tell any of the robbers or grave-riflers, when they are arrested, to tell their errors and be quit of their punishment, they would accede to this with all readiness, despising the shame through desire of safety. But in this case there is nothing of this kind, but he both remits the sins, nor compels us to marshal them in array before any spectators. But one thing alone he seeks, that he who enjoys this remission should learn the greatness of the gift. How is it not, therefore, absurd that in case where he does us service, he should be content with our testimony only, but in those where we serve him we seek for others as witnesses, and do a thing for ostentation's sake? While we wonder then at his kindliness, let us show forth our doings, and before all others let us curb the vehemence of our tongue, and not always be giving utterance. *"For in the multitude of words there wants not transgression."* [Proverbs 10:19] If indeed then you have anything useful to say, open your lips. But if there be nothing necessary for you to say, be silent, for it is better. Are you a handicraftsman? As you sit at work, sing psalms. Do you not wish to sing with your mouth? Do this in your heart; a psalm is a great companion. In this case you shall undergo nothing serious, but shall be able to sit in your workshop as in a monastery. For not suitableness of place, but strictness of morals will afford us quiet. Paul, at least, pursuing his trade in a workshop suffered no injury to his own virtue. [Acts 18:3] Do not thou therefore say, How can I, being a handicraftsman and a poor man, be a philosopher? This is indeed the very reason why you may be a philosopher. For poverty is far more conducive to piety for us than wealth, and work than idleness; since

wealth is even a hinderance to those who do not take heed. For when it is needful to dismiss anger, to extinguish envy, to curb passion, to offer prayer, to exhibit forbearance and meekness, kindliness and charity, when would poverty be a bar? For it is not possible by spending money to accomplish these things, but by exhibiting a right disposition; almsgiving especially needs money, but even it shines forth in greater degree through poverty. For she who spent the two mites was poorer than all men, and yet surpassed all. [Luke 21:2-4] Let us not then consider wealth to be anything great, nor gold to be better than clay. For the value of material things is not owing to their nature, but to our estimate of them. For if any one would inquire carefully, iron is much more necessary than gold. For the one contributes to no need of our life, but the other has furnished us with the greater part of our needs, ministering to countless arts; and why do I speak of a comparison between gold and iron? For these stones are more necessary than precious stones. For of those nothing serviceable could be made, but out of these, houses and walls and cities are erected. But do thou show me what gain could be derived from these pearls, rather what harm would not happen? For in order that you may wear one pearl drop, countless poor people are pinched with hunger. What excuse will you hit upon? What pardon?

Do you wish to adorn your face? Do so not with pearls, but with modesty, and dignity. So your countenance will be more full of grace in the eyes of your husband. For the other kind of adorning is wont to plunge him into a suspicion of jealousy, and into enmity, quarrelsomeness and strife, for nothing is more annoying than a face which is suspected. But the ornament of compassion and modesty casts out all evil suspicion, and will draw your partner to you more strongly than any bond. For natural beauty does not impart such comeliness to the face as does the disposition of him who

beholds it, and nothing is so wont to produce that disposition as modesty and dignity; so that if any woman be comely, and her husband be ill affected towards her, she appears to him the most worthless of all women; and if she do not happen to be fair of face, but her husband be well affected towards her, she appears more comely than all. For sentence is given not according to the nature of what is beheld, but according to the disposition of the beholders. Adorn your face then with modesty, dignity, pity, lovingkindness, charity, affection for your husband, forbearance, meekness, endurance of ill. These are the tints of virtue. By means of these you will attract angels not human beings to be your lovers. By means of these you have God to commend you, and when God receives you, he will certainly win over your husband for you. For if the wisdom of a man illuminates his countenance, [Ecclesiastes 8:1] much more does the virtue of a woman illuminate her face; and if you consider this to be a great ornament, tell me what will be the advantage of the pearls in that day? But why is it necessary to speak of that day, since it is possible to show all this from what happens now. When, then, they who thought fit to revile the emperor were dragged to the judgment hall, and were in danger of extreme measures being taken, then the mothers, and the wives, laying aside their necklaces, and their golden ornaments, and pearls, and all adornment, and golden raiment, wearing a simple and mean dress, and besprinkled with ashes, prostrated themselves before the doors of the judgment hall and thus won over the judges; and if in the case of these earthly courts of justice, the golden ornaments, and the pearls, and the variegated dress would have been a snare and a betrayal, but forbearance, and meekness, and ashes, and tears, and mean garments persuaded the judge, much more would this take place in the case of that impartial and dread tribunal. For what reason will you be able to state, what defense, when the Master lays these pearls to your

charge, and brings the poor who have perished with hunger into the midst? On this account Paul said, "*not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly raiment.*" [1 Timothy 2:9] For therein would be a snare. And if we were to enjoy them continually, yet we shall lay them aside with death. But arising out of virtue there is all security, and no vicissitude and changeableness, but here it makes us more secure, and also accompanies us there. Do you wish to possess pearls, and never to lay aside this wealth? Take off all ornament and place it in the hands of Christ through the poor. He will keep all your wealth for you, when He shall raise up your body with much radiancy. Then He shall invest you with better wealth and greater ornament, since this present is mean and absurd. Consider then whom you wish to please, and for whose sake you put on this ornament, not in order that the ropemaker and the coppersmith and the huckster may admire. Then are you not ashamed, nor do you blush when you show yourself to them? Doing all on their account whom you do not consider worthy of accosting.

How then will you laugh this fancy to scorn? If you will remember that word, which you sent forth when thou were initiated, I renounce you, Satan, and your pomp, and your service. For the frenzy about pearls is a pomp of Satan. For you received gold not in order that you might bind it on to your body, but in order that you might release and nourish the poor. Say therefore constantly, I renounce you, Satan. Nothing is more safe than this word if we shall prove it by our deeds.

5. This I think it right that you who are about to be initiated should learn. For this word is a covenant with the Master. And just as we, when we buy slaves, first ask those who are being sold if they are willing to be our servants: So also does Christ. When He is about to receive you into service, He first asks if you wish to leave that cruel and relentless tyrant, and He receives covenants from you. For his service is not forced upon you. And

see the lovingkindness of God. For we, before we put down the price, ask those who are being sold, and when we have learned that they are willing, then we put down the price. But Christ not so, but He even put down the price for us all; his precious blood. For, He says, you were bought with a price. [1 Corinthians 7:25] Notwithstanding, not even then does He compel those who are unwilling, to serve him; but except you have grace, He says, and of your own accord and will determinest to enroll yourself under my rule, I do not compel, nor force you. And *we* should not have chosen to buy wicked slaves. But if we should at any time have so chosen, we buy them with a perverted choice, and put down a corresponding price for them. But Christ, buying ungrateful and lawless slaves, put down the price of a servant of first quality, nay rather much more, and so much greater that neither speech nor thought can set forth its greatness. For neither giving heaven, nor earth, nor sea, but giving up that which is more valuable than all these, his own blood, thus He bought us. And after all these things, he does not require of us witnesses, or registration, but is content with the single word, if you say it from your heart. *"I renounce you, Satan, and your pomp,"* has included all. Let us then say this, *"I renounce you, Satan,"* as men who are about in that world at that day to have that word demanded of them, and let us keep it in order that we may then return this deposit safe. But Satan's poms are theatres, and the circus, and all sin, and observance of days, and incantations and omens.

"And what are omens?" says one. Often when going forth from his own house he has seen a one-eyed or lame man, and has shunned him as an omen. This is a pomp of Satan. For meeting the man does not make the day turn out ill, but to live in sin. When you go forth, then, beware of one thing — that sin does not meet you. For this it is which trips us up. And without this the devil will be able to do us no harm. What do you say? You see a

man, and shuntest him as an omen, and dost not see the snare of the devil, how he sets you at war with him who has done you no wrong, how he makes you the enemy of your brother on no just pretext; but God has bidden us love our enemies; but you are turned away from him who did you no wrong, having nothing to charge him with, and do you not consider how great is the absurdity, how great the shame, rather how great is the danger? Can I speak of anything more absurd? I am ashamed, indeed, and I blush: But for your salvation's sake, I am, I am compelled to speak of it. If a virgin meet him he says the day becomes unsuccessful; but if a harlot meet him, it is propitious, and profitable, and full of much business; are you ashamed? And do you smite your foreheads, and bend to the ground? But do not this on account of the words which I have spoken, but of the deeds which have been done. See then, in this case, how the devil hid his snare, in order that we might turn away from the modest, but salute and be friendly to the unchaste. For since he has heard Christ saying that *"He who looks on a woman to desire her, has already committed adultery with her,"* [Matthew 5:28] and has seen many get the better of unchastity, wishing by another wrong to cast them again into sin, by this superstitious observance he gladly persuades them to pay attention to whorish women.

And what is one to say about them who use charms and amulets, and encircle their heads and feet with golden coins of Alexander of Macedon. Are these our hopes, tell me, that after the cross and death of our Master, we should place our hopes of salvation on an image of a Greek king? Do you not know what great result the cross has achieved? It has abolished death, has extinguished sin, has made Hades useless, has undone the power of the devil, and is it not worth trusting for the health of the body? It has raised up the whole world, and do you not take courage in it? And what would you be worthy to suffer, tell me? Thou dost not only have amulets always with you,

but incantations bringing drunken and half-witted old women into your house, and are you not ashamed, and do you not blush, after so great philosophy, to be terrified at such things? And there is a graver thing than this error. For when we deliver these exhortations, and lead them away, thinking that they defend themselves, they say, that the woman is a Christian who makes these incantations, and utters nothing else than the name of God. On this account I especially hate and turn away from her, because she makes use of the name of God, with a view to ribaldry. For even the demons uttered the name of God, but still they were demons, and thus they used to say to Christ, "*We know you who you are, the Holy One of God,*" [Mark 1:24] and notwithstanding, he rebuked them, and drove them away. On this account, then, I beseech you to cleanse yourselves from this error, and to keep hold of this word as a staff; and just as without sandals, and cloak, no one of you would choose to go down to the market-place, so without this word never enter the market-place, but when you are about to pass over the threshold of the gateway, say this word first: I leave your ranks, Satan, and your pomp, and your service, and I join the ranks of Christ. And never go forth without this word. This shall be a staff to you, this your armor, this an impregnable fortress, and accompany this word with the sign of the cross on your forehead. For thus not only a man who meets you, but even the devil himself, will be unable to hurt you at all, when he sees you everywhere appearing with these weapons; and discipline yourself by these means henceforth, in order that when you receive the seal you may be a well-equipped soldier, and planting your trophy against the devil, may receive the crown of righteousness, which may it be the lot of us all to obtain, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory to the Father and to the Holy Spirit for ever and ever—Amen.

Three Homilies on the Devil

Homily 1. Against Those Who Say that Demons Govern Human Affairs.

Against those who say that demons govern human affairs, and who are displeased at the chastisement of God, and are offended at the prosperity of the wicked and the hardships of the just.

I indeed was hoping, that from the continuance of my discourse, you would have had a surfeit of my words: but I see that the contrary is happening: that no surfeit is taking place from this continuance, but that your desire is increased, that an addition is made not to your satiety but to your pleasure, that the same thing is happening which the winebibbers at heathen drinking-bouts experience; for they, the more they pour down unmixed wine, so much the rather they kindle their thirst, and in your case the more teaching we inculcate, so much the rather do we kindle your desire, we make your longing greater, your love for it the stronger. On this account, although I am conscious of extreme poverty, I do not cease to imitate the ostentatious among entertainers, both setting before you my table continuously, and placing on it the cup of my teaching, filled full: for I see that after having drunk it all, you retire again thirsting. And this indeed has become evident during the whole time, but especially since the last Lord's Day: For that ye partake of the divine oracles insatiably, that day particularly showed: whereon I discoursed about the unlawfulness of speaking ill one of another, when I furnished you with a sure subject for self accusation, suggesting that you should speak ill of your own sins, but

should not busy yourselves about those of other people: when I brought forward the Saints as accusing themselves indeed, but sparing others: Paul saying I am the chief of sinners, and that God had compassion on him who was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, and calling himself one born out of due time, and not even thinking himself worthy of the title of Apostle: Peter saying *"Depart from me because I am a sinful man."* Matthew styling himself a publican even in the days of his Apostleship: David crying out and saying *"My iniquities have gone over my head, and as a heavy burden have been burdensome to me:"* and Isaiah lamenting and bewailing *"I am unclean, and have unclean lips:"* The three children in the furnace of fire, confessing and saying that they have sinned and transgressed, and have not kept the commandments of God. Daniel again makes the same lamentation. When after the enumeration of these Saints, I called their accusers flies, and introduced the right reason for the comparison, saying, that just as they fasten themselves upon the wounds of others, so also the accusers bite at other people's sins, collecting disease therefrom for their acquaintance, and those who do the opposite, I designated bees, not gathering together diseases, but building honeycombs with the greatest devotion, and so flying to the meadow of the virtue of the Saint: Then accordingly—then ye showed your insatiable longing. For when my discourse was extended to some length, yea to an interminable length, such as never was, many indeed expected that your eagerness would be quenched by the abundance of what was said. But the contrary happened. For your heart was the rather warmed, your desire was the rather kindled: and whence was this evident? The acclamations at least which took place at the end were greater, and the shouts more clear, and the same thing took place as at the forge. For as there at the beginning indeed the light of the fire is not very clear, but when the flame has caught the whole of the

wood that is laid upon it, it is raised to a great height; so also accordingly this happened on the occasion of that day. At the beginning indeed, this assembly was not vehemently stirred by me. But when the discourse was extended to some length, and gradually took hold of all the subjects and the teaching spread more widely, then accordingly, then the desire of listening was kindled in you, and the applause broke forth, more vehemently. On this account, although I had been prepared to say less than was spoken, I then exceeded the measure, nay rather *I* never exceeded the measure. For I am wont to measure the amount of the teaching not by the multitude of the words spoken, but by the disposition of the audience. For he who meets with a disgusted audience, even if he abridge his teaching, seems to be vexatious, but he who meets with eager, and wide-awake, and attentive hearers, though he extend his discourse to some length, not even thus fulfils their desire.

But since it happens that there are in so great a congregation, certain weak ones, unable to follow the length of the discourse, I wish to suggest this to them, that they should hear and receive, as much as they can, and having received enough should retire: There is no one who forbids, or compels them to remain beyond their natural strength. Let them not however necessitate the abridgement of the discourse before the time and the proper hours. You are replete, but your brother still hungers. You are drunk with the multitude of the things spoken, but your brother is still thirsty. Let him then not distress your weakness, compelling you to receive more than your own power allows: nor do thou vex his zeal by preventing him from receiving all that he can take in.

2. This also happens at secular feasts. Some indeed are more quickly satisfied, some more tardily, and neither do these blame those, nor do they condemn these. But there indeed to withdraw more quickly is praiseworthy,

but here to withdraw more quickly is not praiseworthy, but excusable. There to leave off more slowly, is culpable and faulty, here to withdraw more tardily, brings the greatest commendation, and good report. Pray why is this? Because there indeed the tardiness arises from greediness, but here the endurance, and patience are made up of spiritual desire and divine longing.

But enough of preamble. And we will proceed hereupon to that business which remained over to us from that day. What then was that which was then spoken? That all men had one speech, just as also they had one nature, and no one was different in speech, or in tongue. Whence then comes so great a distinction in speech? From the carelessness of those who received the gift—of both of which matters we then spoke, showing both the lovingkindness of the Master through this unity of speech, and the senselessness of the servants through their distinction of speech. For he indeed foreseeing that we should waste the gift nevertheless gave it: and they to whom it was entrusted, waxed evil over their charge. This is then one way of explanation, not that God wrested the gift from us but that we wasted what had been given. Then next after that, that we received afterwards gifts greater than those lost. In place of temporal toil he honoured us with eternal life. In place of thorns and thistles he prepared the fruit of the Spirit to grow in our souls. Nothing was more insignificant than man, and nothing became more honoured than man. He was the last item of the reasonable creation. But the feet became the head, and by means of the first-fruits, were raised to the royal throne. For just as some generous and opulent man who has seen some one escape from shipwreck and only able to save his bare body from the waves, cradles him in his hands, and casts about him a bright garment, and conducts him to the highest honours; so also God has done in the case of our nature. Man cast aside all that he had, his right to speak freely, his communion with God, his sojourn in Paradise,

his unclouded life, and as from a shipwreck, went forth bare. But God received him and straightway clothed him, and taking him by the hand gradually conducted him to heaven. And yet the shipwreck was quite unpardonable. For this tempest was due entirely not to the force of the winds, but to the carelessness of the sailor.

And yet God did not look at this, but had compassion for the magnitude of the calamity, and him who had suffered shipwreck in harbour, he received as lovingly as if he had undergone this in the midst of the open sea. For to fall in Paradise is to undergo shipwreck in harbour. Why so? Because when no sadness, or care, or labours, or toil, or countless waves of desire assaulted our nature, it was upset and it fell. And as the miscreants who sail the sea, often bore through the ship with a small iron tool, and let in the whole sea to the ship from below; so accordingly then, when the Devil saw the ship of Adam, that is his soul, full of many good things, he came and bored it through with his mere voice, as with some small iron tool, and emptied him of all his wealth and sank the ship itself. But God made the gain greater than the loss, and brought our nature to the royal throne. Wherefore Paul cries out and says, *"He raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him, on his right hand in the heavenly places, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness towards us."* What dost thou say? the thing has already happened and has an end, and dost thou say *"in order that he might show to the ages to come?"* Has he not shown? He has already shown, but not to all men, but to me who am faithful, but the unbelieving has not yet seen the wonder. But then, in that day the whole nature of man will come forward, and will wonder at that which has been done, but especially will it be more manifest to us. For we believe even now; but hearing and sight do not put a wonder before us in the same way, but just as in the case of kings when we hear of the purple

robe, and the diadem, and the golden raiment, and the royal throne, we wonder indeed, but experience this in greater degree when the curtains are drawn aside and we see him seated on the lofty judgment seat. So also in the case of the Only-Begotten, when we see the curtains of heaven drawn aside, and the King of angels descending thence, and with his body-guard of the heavenly hosts, then we perceive the wonder to be greater from our sight of it. For consider with me what it is to see our nature borne upon the Cherubim, and the whole angelic force surrounding it.

3. But look, with me, too, at the wisdom of Paul, how many expressions he seeks for, so as to present to us the lovingkindness of God. For he did not speak merely the word grace, nor riches, but what did he say? *"The exceeding riches of his grace in kindness."* But notwithstanding even so, he is below the mark; and even as the slippery bodies when grasped by countless hands, escape our hold, and slip through easily; so also are we unable to get hold of the lovingkindness of God in whatever expressions we may try to grasp it, but the exceeding magnitude of it baffles the feebleness of our utterances. And Paul therefore experiencing this, and seeing the force of words defeated by its magnitude, desists after saying one word: and what is this? *"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."* For neither speech, nor any mind is able to set forth the tender care of God. On this account he then says that it is past finding out, and elsewhere *"The peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts."*

But, as I was saying, these two ways of explanation are found in the meantime: one indeed that God has not wrested the gift that we have lost; and next, that the good things which have been given to us are even greater than those which we have lost. And I wish also to mention a third too. What then is the third? That even if he had not given the things after these, which were greater than those we had lost, but had only taken away what had been

given to us, as we furnished the reason why, (for let this be added); even this is enough of itself to show his tender care towards us. For not only to give, but also to take away what was given, is a mark of the greatest lovingkindness, and, if you will, let us lay bare the matter, in the case of Paradise. He gave Paradise. This of his own tender care. We were seen to be unworthy of the gift. This of our own senselessness. He took away the gift from those who became unworthy of it. This came of his own goodness. And what kind of goodness is it, says one, to take away the gift? Wait, and you shall fully hear. For think, what Cain would have been, dwelling in Paradise after his bloodguiltiness. For if, when he was expelled from that abode, if when condemned to toil and labour, and beholding the threat of death hanging over his head, if seeing the calamity of his father before his eyes, and holding the traces of the wrath of God still in his hands, and encompassed with so great horrors, he lashed out into such great wickedness, as to ignore nature, and to forget one born from the same birth pangs, and to slay him who had done him no wrong, to lay hold on his brother's person, and to dye his right hand with blood, and when God wanted him to be still, to refuse submission and to affront his maker, to dishonour his parents; if this man had continued to dwell in Paradise—look, into how great evil he would have rushed. For if when so many restraints were laid upon him, he leapt with fatal leaps; and if these walls were set at nought, whither would he not have precipitated himself?

Wouldest thou learn too from the mother of this man, what a good result the expulsion from the life of Paradise had, compare what Eve was before this, and what she became afterwards. Before this indeed, she considered that deceiving Devil, that wicked Demon to be more worth believing than the commandments of God, and at the mere sight of the tree, she trampled under foot the law which had been laid down by Him. But

when the expulsion from Paradise came, consider how much better and wiser she grew. For when she bare a son, she says *"I have gotten a man through the Lord."* She straightway flew to the master, who before this had despised the master, and she neither ascribes the matter to nature, nor puts the birth down to the laws of marriage, but she recognizes the Lord of Nature, and acknowledges thanks to Him for the birth of the little child. And she who before this deceived her husband, afterwards even trained the little child, and gave him a name which of itself was able to bring the gift of God to her remembrance: and again when she bare another, she says *"God has raised up seed to me in place of Abel whom Cain slew."* The woman remembers her calamity, and does not become impatient but she gives thanks to God, and calls the little child after his gift, furnishing it with constant material for instruction. Thus even in his very deprivation God conferred greater benefit. The woman suffered expulsion from Paradise, but by means of her ejection she was led to a knowledge of God, so that she found a greater thing than she lost. And if it were profitable, says one, to suffer expulsion from Paradise, for what cause did God give Paradise at the beginning? This turned out profitably to man, on account of our carelessness, since, if at least, they had taken heed to themselves, and had acknowledged their master, and had known how to be self-restrained, and to keep within bounds, they would have remained in honour. But when they treated the gifts which had been given them with insolence, then it became profitable, that they should be ejected. For what cause then did God give at first? In order that he might show forth his own lovingkindness, and because He himself was prepared to bring us even to greater honour. But we were the cause of chastisement and punishment on all sides, ejecting ourselves through our indifference to goods which were given to us. Just as therefore an affectionate father, at first indeed, suffers his own son to dwell

in his home, and to enjoy all his father's goods, but when he sees that he has become worthless of the honour, he leads him away from his table, and puts him far from his own sight, and often casts him forth from his paternal home, in order that he, suffering expulsion, and becoming better by this slight and this dishonour, may again show himself worthy of restoration, and may succeed to his father's inheritance: So has God done. He gave Paradise to man. He cast him out when he appeared unworthy, in order that by his dwelling outside, and through his dishonour, he might become better, and more self-restrained, and might appear worthy again of restoration. Since after those things he did become better, he brings him back again and says *"Today shall you be with me in Paradise."* Do you see that not the gift of Paradise but even the ejection from Paradise was a token of the greatest tender care? For had he not suffered expulsion from Paradise, he would not again have appeared worthy of Paradise.

4. This argument therefore let us maintain throughout, and let us apply it to the case of the subject lying before us. God gave a speech common to all. This is part of his loving kindness to men. They did not use the gift rightly, but they lapsed to utter folly. He took away again that which had been given. For if when they had one speech, they fell into so great folly, as to wish to build a tower to heaven: had they not immediately been chastised would they not have desired to lay hold on the height of heaven itself? For why? If indeed that were impossible for them, yet notwithstanding their impious thoughts are made out from their plan. All which things God foresaw, and since they did not use their oneness of speech rightly, he rightly divided them by difference of speech. And see with me, his lovingkindness. *"Behold,"* says he *"they all have one speech, and this they have begun to do."*

For what reason did he not at once proceed to the division of tongues, but first of all defend himself, as if about to be judged in a lawcourt? And yet at least no one can say to him, why have you done this? Yea he is at liberty to do all things as he wills. But still as one about to give account, he thus sets up a defence, teaching us to be gentle and loving. For if the master defends himself to his servants, even when they have done him this wrong; much more ought we to defend ourselves to one another, even if we are wronged to the highest degree. See at least how he defends himself.

"Behold they have all one mouth and one speech" says he, *"and this they have begun to do,"* as if he said let no one accuse me of this when he sees the division of tongues. Let no one consider that this difference of speech was made over to men from the beginning. *"Behold they all have one mouth, and one speech."* But they did not use the gift aright. And in order that you may understand that he does not chastise for what has taken place so much as he provides for improvement in the future, hear the sequel *"and now none of all the things will fail them, which they set on foot to do."* Now what he says, is of such a kind as this. If they do not pay the penalty now, and be restrained from the very root of their sins, they will never cease from wickedness. For this is what *"none of the things will fail them which they set on foot to do"* means, as if he said, and they will add other deeds yet more monstrous. For such a thing is wickedness; if when it has taken a start it be not hindered, as fire catching wood, so it rises to an unspeakable height. Do you see that the deprivation of oneness of speech was a work of much lovingkindness? He inflicted difference of speech upon them, in order that they might not fall into greater wickedness. Hold fast this argument then with me, and let it ever be fixed and immoveable in your minds, that not only when he confers benefits but even when he chastises God is good and loving. For even his chastisements and his punishments are the greatest

part of his beneficence, the greatest form of his providence. Whenever therefore you see that famines have taken place, and pestilences, and drought and immoderate rains, and irregularities in the atmosphere, or any other of the things which chasten human nature, be not distressed, nor be despondent, but worship Him who caused them, marvel at Him for His tender care. For He who does these things is such that He even chastens the body that the soul may become sound. Then does God these things saith one? God does these things, and even if the whole city, nay even if the whole universe were here I will not shrink from saying this. Would that my voice were clearer than a trumpet, and that it were possible to stand in a lofty place, and to cry aloud to all men, and to testify that God does these things. I do not say these things in arrogance but I have the prophet standing at my side, crying and saying, "*There is no evil in the city which the Lord has not done*"—now evil is an ambiguous term; and I wish that you shall learn the exact meaning of each expression, in order that on account of ambiguity you may not confound the nature of the things, and fall into blasphemy.

5. There is then evil, which is really evil; fornication, adultery, covetousness, and the countless dreadful things, which are worthy of the utmost reproach and punishment. Again there is evil, which rather is not evil, but is called so, famine, pestilence, death, disease, and others of a like kind. For these would not be evils. On this account I said they are called so only. Why then? Because, were they evils, they would not have become the sources of good to us, chastening our pride, goading our sloth, and leading us on to zeal, making us more attentive. "*For when,*" saith one, "*he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and came early to God.*" He *calls* this evil therefore which chastens them, which makes them purer, which renders them more zealous, which leads them on to love of wisdom;

not that which comes under suspicion and is worthy of reproach; for that is not a work of God, but an invention of our own will, but this is for the destruction of the other. He calls then by the name of evil the affliction, which arises from our punishment; thus naming it not in regard to its own nature, but according to that view which men take of it. For since we are accustomed to call by the name of evil, not only thefts and adulteries, but also calamities; so he has called the matter, according to the estimate of mankind. This then is that which the prophet saith "*There is no evil in the city which the Lord has not done.*" This too by means of Isaiah God has made clear saying "*I am God who makes peace and creates evil,*" again naming calamities evils. This evil also Christ hints at, thus saying to the disciples, "*sufficient for the day is the evil thereof,*" that is to say the affliction, the misery. It is manifest then on all sides, that he here calls punishment evil; and himself brings these upon us, affording us the greatest view of his providence. For the physician is not only to be commended when he leads forth the patient into gardens and meadows, nor even into baths and pools of water, nor yet when he sets before him a well furnished table, but when he orders him to remain without food, when he oppresses him with hunger and lays him low with thirst, confines him to his bed, both making his house a prison, and depriving him of the very light, and shadowing his room on all sides with curtains, and when he cuts, and when he cauterizes, and when he brings his bitter medicines, he is equally a physician. How is it not then preposterous to call him a physician who does so many evil things, but to blaspheme God, if at any time He does one of these things, if He bring on either famine or death, and to reject his providence over all? And yet He is the only true physician both of souls and bodies. On this account He often seizes this nature of ours wantoning in prosperity, and travailing with a fever of sins, and by want, and hunger, and

death and other calamities and the rest of the medicines of which He knows, frees us from diseases. But the poor alone feel hunger, says one. But He does not chasten with hunger alone, but with countless other things. Him who is in poverty He has often corrected with hunger, but the rich and him who enjoys prosperity, with dangers, diseases, untimely deaths. For He is full of resources, and the medicines which He has for our salvation are manifold.

Thus too the judges do. They do not honour, or crown those only who dwell in cities, nor do they provide gifts alone, but they also often correct. On this account both the sword is sharpened by them, and tortures are prepared; both the wheel and the stocks, and the executioners, and countless other forms of chastisement. That which the executioner is to the judges, famine is to God—as an executioner correcting us and leading us away from vice. This too, it is possible to see in the case of the husbandmen: They do not then, only protect the root of the vine, nor hedge it round but prune it, and lop off many of the branches; on this account not only have they a hoe, but a sickle too, suitable for cutting: yet notwithstanding we do not find fault with them, but then above all we admire them, when we see them cutting off much that is unserviceable, so as through the rejection of what is superfluous to afford great security to that which remains. How is it not then preposterous, that we should thus approve of a father indeed and a physician and a judge, and a husbandman, and should neither blame nor censure him who casts his son out of his house nor the physician who puts his patient to torture nor the judge who corrects, nor the husbandman who prunes: but that we should blame and smite with countless accusations God, if he would at any time raise us up, when we are as it were, besotted through the great drunkenness which comes of wickedness? How great

madness would it not be, not even to allow God a share of the same self-justification, of which we allow our fellow servants a share?

6. Fearing these things for them who reproach God, I speak now, in order that they may not kick against the pricks, and cover their own feet with blood, that they may not throw stones to heaven, and receive wounds on their own head. But I have somewhat else far beyond this to say. For omitting to ask (I say this by way of concession) if God took from us to our profit, I only say this; that if He took what had been given, not even thus, could anyone be able to reproach Him. For He was Lord of his own. Among men indeed, when they entrust us with money, and lend us silver, we give them our thanks for the time during which they lent it, we are not indignant at the time at which they take back their own. And shall we reproach God who wishes to take back his own? Indeed now is this not the extreme of folly? Yea the great and noble Job did not act thus. For not only when he received, but even when he was deprived, he gives the greatest thanks to God saying, *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be blessed for ever."* But if it is right to give thanks for both these even separately, and deprivation is not the less serviceable than bestowal; what excusableness should we have, tell me, in recompensing in a contrary spirit, and being impatient with Him when we ought to worship, who is so gentle, and loving and careful, who is wiser than every Physician, and more full of affection than any father, juster than any judge, and more anxious than any husbandman, in healing these souls of ours? What then could be more insane and senseless than they who in the midst of so great good order, say that we are deprived of the providence of God? For just as if some one were to contend that the soul was murky and cold, he would produce an example of extreme insanity, by his opinion; so if any one

doubts about the providence of God, much rather is he liable to charges of madness.

Not so manifest is the Sun, as the providence of God is clear. But nevertheless some dare to say that Demons administer our affairs. What can I do? You have a loving Master. He chooses rather to be blasphemed by you through these words, than to commit your affairs to the Demons and persuade you by the reality how Demons administer. For then you would know their wickedness well by the experience of it. But rather indeed now it is possible to set it before you as it were by a certain small example. Certain men possessed of Demons coming forth out of the tombs met Christ, and the Demons kept beseeching him to suffer them to enter the herd of swine. And he suffered them, and they went away, and straightway precipitated them all headlong. Thus do Demons govern; and yet to them the swine were of no particular account, but with you there is ever a warfare without a truce, and an implacable fight, and undying hatred. And if in the case of those with whom they had nothing in common they did not even endure that they should be allowed a brief breathing space of time: if they had gotten unto their power us their enemies who are perpetually stinging them what would they not have done? And what incurable mischief would they not have accomplished? For for this reason God let them fall upon the herd of swine, in order that in the case of the bodies of irrational animals you may learn their wickedness, and that they would have done to the possessed the things which they did to the swine, had not the demoniacs in their very madness experienced the providence of God, is evident to all: and now therefore when you see a man excited by a Demon, worship the Master. Learn the wickedness of the Demons. For it is possible to see both things in the case of these Demons, the lovingkindness of God, and the evil of the Demons. The evil of the Demons when they harass and disturb the

soul of the demented: and the lovingkindness of God whenever he restrains and hinders so savage a Demon, who has taken up his abode within, and desires to hurl the man headlong, and does not allow him to use his own power to the full, but suffers him to exhibit just so much strength, as both to bring the man to his senses, and make his own wickedness apparent. Do you wish to form another example to see once more how a Demon arranges matters when God allows him to use his own power? Consider the herds, the flocks of Job, how in one instant of time he annihilated all, consider the pitiable death of the children, the blow that was dealt to his body: and you shall see the savage and inhuman and unsparing character of the wickedness of the Demons, and from these things you shall know clearly that if God had entrusted the whole of this world to their authority, they would have confused and disturbed everything, and would have assigned to us their treatment of the swine, and of those herds, since not even for a little breathing space of time could they have endured to spare us our salvation. If Demons were to arrange affairs, we should be in no better condition than possessed men, yea rather we should be worse than they. For God did not give them over entirely to the tyranny of the Demons, otherwise they would suffer far worse things than these which they now suffer. And I would ask this of those who say these things, what kind of disorder they behold in the present, that they set down all our affairs to the arrangement of Demons? And yet we behold the sun for so many years proceeding day by day in regular order, a manifold band of stars keeping their own order, the courses of the moon unimpeded, an invariable succession of night and day, all things, both above and below, as it were in a certain fitting harmony, yea rather even far more, and more accurately each keeping his own place, and not departing from the order which God who made them ordained from the beginning.

7. And what is the use of all this, says one, when the heaven indeed, and sun, and moon, and the band of stars, and all the rest keep much good order, but our affairs are full of confusion and disorder. What kind of confusion, O man, and disorder? A certain one, says he, is rich, and overbearing, He is rapacious and covetous, he drains the substance of the poor day by day, and suffers no terrible affliction. Another lives in forbearance, self-restraint, and uprightness, and is adorned with all other good qualities, and is chastened with poverty and disease, and extremely terrible afflictions. Are these then the matters which offend you? Yes, these, says he. If then you see both of the rapacious, many chastened, and of those living virtuously, yea some even enjoying countless goods, why do you not abandon your opinion, and be content with the Almighty? Because it is this very thing which offends me more. For why when there are two evil men, is one chastened, and another gets off, and escapes; and when there are two good men, one is honoured, and the other continues under punishment? And this very thing is a very great work of God's providence. For if he were to chasten all the evil men, here; and were to honour here all the good men, a day of judgment were superfluous. Again if he were to chasten no wicked man, nor were to honour any of the good, then the base would become baser and worse, as being more careless than the excellent, and they who were minded to blaspheme would accuse God all the more, and say that our affairs were altogether deprived of his providence. For if when certain evil men are chastened, and certain good men punished, they likewise say that human affairs are subject to no providence; if even this did not happen what would they not say? And what words would they not send forth? On this account some of the wicked he chastens, and some he does not chasten and some of the good he honours and some he does not honour. He does not chasten all, in order that he may persuade you, that there is a Resurrection.

But he chastens some in order that he may make the more careless, through fear by means of the punishment of the others, more in earnest. Again he honours certain of the good, in order that he may lead on others by his honours to emulate their virtue. But he does not honour all, in order that you may learn that there is another season for rendering to all their recompense. For if indeed all were to receive their deserts here, they would disbelieve the account of the Resurrection. But if no one were to receive his desert here, the majority would become more careless. On this account some he chastens, and others he does not chasten, profiting both those who are chastened, and those who are not chastened. For he separates their wickedness from those, and he makes the others by their punishment, more self-restrained. And this is manifest from what Christ himself said. For when they announced to him that a tower had been brought to the ground, and had buried certain men, he saith to them *"What do you think? That these men were sinners only? I say to you nay, but if ye do not repent ye also shall suffer the same thing."*

Do you see how those perished on account of their sin, and the rest did not escape on account of their righteousness, but in order that they might become better by the punishment of the others? Were not then the chastened unjustly dealt with says one? For they could without being chastened themselves become better by the punishment of others. But if He had known that they would become better from penitence God would not have chastened them. For if when he foresaw that many would profit nothing from his longsuffering, he nevertheless bears with them, with much tolerance, fulfilling his own part, and affording them an opportunity of coming out of their own senselessness to their sober senses one day; how could he deprive those who were about to become better from the punishment of others, of the benefit of repentance? So that they are in no

way unjustly treated, both their evil being cut off by their punishment, and their chastening is to be lighter there, because they suffered here beforehand. Again, they who were not chastened are in no way unjustly treated; for it was possible for them, had they wished, to have used the longsuffering of God, to accomplish a most excellent change, and wondering at his tolerance, to have become ashamed at his exceeding forbearance, and one day to have gone over to virtue, and to have gained their own salvation by the punishment of others. But if they remain in wickedness, God is not to blame, who on this account was longsuffering, that he might recover them, but they are unworthy of pardon, who did not rightly use the longsuffering of God: and it is not only possible to use this argument as a reason why all the wicked are not chastened here, but another also not less than this. Of what kind then is this? That if God brought upon all, the chastenings which their sins deserved, our race would have been carried off, and would have failed to come down to posterity. And in order that you may learn that this is true, hear the prophet saying *"If Thou observedst iniquity O Lord, who shall stand?"* And if it seems good to you to investigate this saying, leaving the accurate enquiry into the life of each, alone: (For it is not possible even to know all that has been accomplished by each man) let us bring forward those sins which all, without contradiction, commit: and from these it will be plain and manifest to us, that if we were chastened for each of our sins, we should long ago have perished. He who has called his brother fool, *"is liable to the hell of fire"* saith He. Is there then any one of us who has never sinned this sin? What then? Ought he to be straightway carried off? Therefore we should have been all carried off and would have disappeared, long ago, indeed very long ago. Again he who swears, says he, even if he fulfil his oath, does the works of the wicked one. Who is there then, who has not sworn? Yea rather who is

there who has never sworn falsely? He who looks on a woman, says he, with unchaste eyes, is wholly an adulterer, and of this sin any one would find many guilty. When then these acknowledged sins are such and so insufferable, and each of these of itself brings upon us inevitable chastisement, if we were to reckon up the secret sins committed by us, then we shall see especially that the providence of God does not bring upon us punishment for each sin. So that when you see anyone rapacious, covetous, and not chastened, then do you unfold your own conscience; reckon up your own life, go over the sins which have been committed and you shall learn rightly that in your own case first, it is not expedient to be chastened for each of your sins: for on this account the majority make reckless utterances, since they do not look on their own case before that of others, but we all leaving our own alone, examine that of the rest. But let us no longer do this, but the reverse, and if you see any righteous man chastened, remember Job: for if any one be righteous, he will not be more righteous than that man, nor within a small distance of approaching him. And if he suffer countless ills, he has not yet suffered so much, as that man.

8. Taking this then into your mind, cease charging the master; learning that it is not by way of deserting him does God let such an one suffer ill, but through desire to crown him, and make him more distinguished. And if you see a sinner punished, remember the paralytic who passed thirty eight years on his bed. For that that man was delivered over then to that disease through sin, hear Christ saying *"Behold you are made whole; sin no more lest a worse thing happen to you."* For either when we are chastened, we pay the penalty of our sins, or else we receive the occasion of crowning if, when we live in rectitude, we suffer ill. So that whether we live in righteousness, or in sins, chastening is a useful thing for us, sometimes making us more distinguished, sometimes rendering us more self-controlled, and lightening

our punishment to come for us. For that it is possible that one chastened here, and bearing it thankfully should experience milder punishment there hear St. Paul saying *"For this reason many are weak and sickly, and some sleep. For if we judged ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged we are corrected by the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."* Knowing all these things therefore, Let us both moralize in this way on the providence of God, and stop the mouths of the gainsayers. And if any of the events which happen pass our understanding, let us not from this consider that our affairs are not governed by providence, but perceiving His providence in part, in things incomprehensible let us yield to the unsearchableness of His wisdom. For if it is not possible for one not conversant with it to understand a man's art, much rather is it impossible for the human understanding to comprehend the infinity of the providence of God. *"For his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out."* But nevertheless from small portions we gain a clear and manifest faith about the whole, we give thanks to him for all that happens. For there is even another consideration that cannot be contradicted, for those who wish to moralize about the providence of God. For we would ask the gainsayers, is there then a God? And if they should say there is not, let us not answer them. For just as it is worthless to answer madmen, so too those who say there is no God. For if a ship having few sailors, and passengers, would not be conducted safely for one mile even, without the hand which guides it, much more, such a world as this, having so many persons in it, composed of different elements, would not have continued so long a time, were there not a certain providence presiding over it, both governing, and continually maintaining this whole fabric, and if in shame, through the common opinion of all men, and the experience of affairs, they confess that there is a God, let us say this to them. If there is a God, as indeed there is, it follows that He is

just, for if He is not just neither is He God, and if He is just He recompenses to each according to their desert. But we do not see all here receiving according to their desert. Therefore it is necessary to hope for some other requital awaiting us, in order that by each one receiving according to his desert, the justice of God may be made manifest. For this consideration does not only contribute to our wisdom about providence alone, but about the Resurrection; and let us teach others, and let us do all diligence to shut the mouths of them who rave against the master, and let us ourselves glorify him in all things. For thus shall we win more of his care, and enjoy much of his influence, and thus shall we be able to escape from real evil, and obtain future good, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, By whom and with whom be glory to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 2. On the Power of Man to Resist the Devil.

Against those who object because the devil has not been put out of the world: and to prove that his wickedness does no harm to us—if we take heed: and concerning repentance.

1. When Isaac, in old time, was desirous to eat a meal at the hands of his son, he sent his son forth from the house to the chace. But when this Isaac was desirous to accept a meal at my hands he did not send me forth from the house, but himself ran to our table. What could be more tenderly affectionate than he? What more humble? Who thought fit to show his warm love thus, and deigned to descend so far. On this account surely, we also having spent the tones of our voice, and the strength of our feet over the morning discourse, when we saw his fatherly face, forgot our weakness, lay aside our fatigue, were uplifted with pleasure; we saw his illustrious hoary head, and our soul was filled with light. On this account too, we set out our table with readiness, in order that he should eat and bless us. There is no fraud and guile, here, as there was then, there. One indeed was commanded to bring the meal—but another brought it. But *I* was commanded to bring it, and brought it too. Bless me then, O my father, with spiritual blessing, which we all also pray ever to receive, and which is profitable not only to you, but also to me, and to all these. Entreat the common master of us all, to prolong your life to the old age of Isaac. For this is both for me, and for these, more valuable, and more needful than the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth.

But it is time to proceed to set out our table; what then is this? The remains of what was lately said with a view to our love of you. For still—

still—we renew our discourse concerning the Devil, which we started two days ago, which we also addressed to the initiated, this morning when we discoursed to them about renunciation, and covenant. And we do this, not because our discourse about the Devil is sweet to us, but because the doctrine about him is full of security for you. For he is an enemy and a foe, and it is a great security to know clearly, the tactics of your enemies. We have said lately, that he does not overcome by force, nor by tyranny, nor through compulsion, nor through violence. Since were this so, he would have destroyed all men. And in testimony of this we brought forward the swine, against which the Demons were unable to venture anything, before the permission of the Master. The herds and flocks of Job. For not even did the Devil venture to destroy these, until he received power from above. We learned therefore this one thing first, that he does not overcome us by force, or by compulsion; next after that, we added that even when he overcomes by deceitfulness, not thus does he get the better of all men, Then again we brought that athlete Job, himself into the midst, against whom he set countless schemes going, and not even thus got the better of him, but withdrew defeated. One question still remains. What then is this matter? That if he does not overcome says one, by force, yet by deceitfulness. And on this account it were better that he should be destroyed. For if Job got the better of him, yet Adam was deceived and overthrown. Now if once for all he had been removed from the world, Adam would never have been overthrown. But now he remains, and is defeated indeed by one, but gets the better of many. Ten overcame him, but he himself overcomes and wrestles down ten thousand and if God took him away from the world, these ten thousand would not have perished. What then shall we say to this? That first of all they who overcame are more valuable far than they who are defeated, even if the latter be more, and the former less. *"For better is one,"*

says he *"that does the will of God than ten thousand transgressors."* And next, that if the antagonist were taken away he who overcomes is thereby injured. For if you lettest the adversary remain, the more slothful are injured, not on account of the more diligent, but by their own slothfulness; whereas if you takest away the antagonist, the more diligent are betrayed on account of the slothful, and neither exhibit their own power, nor win crowns.

2. Perhaps ye have not yet understood what has been said. Therefore it is necessary that I should say it again more clearly. Let there be one antagonist. But let there be also two athletes about to wrestle against him, and of these two athletes let one be consumed with gluttony, unprepared, void of strength, nerveless; but the other diligent, of good habit, passing his time in the wrestling school, in many gymnastic exercises, and exhibiting all the practice which bears upon the contest. If then you take away the antagonist, which of these two have you injured? The slothful, pray, and unprepared, or the earnest one who has toiled so much? It is quite clear that it is the earnest one: For the one indeed is wronged by the slothful, after the antagonist has been taken away. But the slothful, while he remains, is no longer injured on account of the earnest. For he has fallen, owing to his own slothfulness.

I will state another solution of this question, in order that you may learn, that the Devil does not injure, but their own slothfulness everywhere overthrows those who do not take heed. Let the Devil be allowed to be exceeding wicked, not by nature, but by choice and conviction. For that the Devil is not by nature wicked, learn from his very names. For the Devil, the slanderer that is, is called so from slandering; for he slandered man to God saying *"Does Job reverence you for nought? But put out your hand, and touch what he has, see if he will not blaspheme you to your face."* He

slandered God again to man saying *"Fire fell from heaven and burnt up the sheep."* For he was anxious to persuade him, that this warfare was stirred up from above, out of the heavens, and he set the servant at variance with the master, and the master with his servant; rather he did not set them at variance, but attempted to indeed, but was not able, in order that whenever you may set another servant at variance with his master, Adam with God, and believing the Devil's slander, you may learn that he gained strength, not owing to his own power but from that man's slothfulness and carelessness. He is called the Devil therefore on that account. But to slander, and to refrain from slander is not natural, but an action which takes place and which ceases to take place, occurring and ceasing to occur. Now such things do not reach the rank of the nature or of the essence of a thing. I know that this consideration about essence and accident is hard to be grasped by many. But there are they who are able to lend a finer ear, wherefore also we have spoken these things. Do you wish that I should come to another name? You shall see that that also is not a name which belongs to his essence or nature. He is called wicked. But his wickedness is not from his nature, but from his choice. For even this at one time is present, at another time is absent. Do not thou then say this to me that it always remains with him. For it was not indeed with him at the beginning, but afterwards came upon him; wherefore he is called apostate. Although many men are wicked, he alone is called wicked by pre-eminence. Why then is he thus called? Because though in no way wronged by us, having no grudge whether small or great, when he saw mankind had in honour, he straightway envied him his good. What therefore could be worse than this wickedness, except when hatred and war exist, without having any reasonable cause. Let the Devil then be let alone, and let us bring forward the creation, in order that you may learn that the Devil is not the cause of ills to us, if we would only take heed: in

order that you may learn that the weak in choice, and the unprepared, and slothful, even were there no Devil, falls, and casts himself into many a depth of evil. The Devil is evil. I know it myself and it is acknowledged by all, yet give heed strictly to the things which are now about to be said. For they are not ordinary matters, but those about which many words, many times, and in many places arise, about which there is many a fight and battle not only on the part of the faithful against unbelievers but also on the part of the faithful against the faithful. For this is that which is full of pain.

3. The Devil then is acknowledged, as I said, to be evil by all. What shall we say about this beautiful and wondrous creation? Pray is the creation too, wicked? And who is so corrupt, who so dull, and demented as to accuse the creation? What then shall we say about this? For it is not wicked, but is both beautiful and a token of the wisdom and power and lovingkindness of God. Hear at least how the prophet marvels at it, saying, *"How are your works magnified O Lord! In wisdom You have made them all."* He did go through them one by one, but withdrew before the incomprehensible wisdom of God. And that he has made it thus beautiful and vast hear a certain one saying, *"From the vastness and beauty of the creatures, the originator of them is proportionably seen."* Hear too Paul saying, *"For the invisible things of Him, since the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made."* For each of these by which he spoke declared that the creation leads us to the knowledge of God, because it causes us to know the Master fully. What then? If we see this beautiful and wondrous creation itself becoming a cause of impiety to many, shall we blame it? In no wise, but them who were unable to use the medicine rightly. Whence then is this which leads us to the knowledge of God, a cause of impiety? *"The wise"* says he *"were darkened in their understandings, and worshipped and served the creature more than*

the creator." The Devil is nowhere here, a Demon is nowhere here, but the creation alone is set before us, as the teacher of the knowledge of God. How then has it become the cause of impiety? Not owing to its own nature, but owing to the carelessness of those who do not take heed. What then? Shall we take away even the creation? Tell me.

And why do I speak about the creation? Let us come to our own members. For even these we shall find to be a cause of destruction if we do not take heed, not because of their own nature, but because of our sloth. And look; an eye was given, in order that you may behold the creation and glorify the Master. But if you dost not use the eye well, it becomes to you the minister of adultery. A tongue has been given, in order that you may speak well, in order that you may praise the Creator. But if you givest not excellent heed, it becomes a cause of blasphemy to you. And hands were given you that you may stretch them forth unto prayer. But if you are not wary, you stretch them out unto covetousness. Feet were given in order that you may run unto good works, but if you art careless you will cause wicked works by means of them: Do you see that all things hurt the weak man? Do you see that even the medicines of salvation inflict death upon the weak, not because of their own nature but because of his weakness? God made the heaven in order that you may wonder at the work, and worship the master. But others leaving the creator alone, have worshipped the heaven; and this from their own carelessness and senselessness. But why do I speak of the creation? Assuredly what could be more conducive to salvation than the Cross? But this Cross has become an offense to the weak. *"For the word of the Cross is to them that are perishing, foolishness: but to those which are being saved, it is the power of God."* And again, *"we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Gentiles foolishness."* What could be more fit for teaching than Paul, and the apostles? But the

Apostles became a savour of death to many. He says at least *"to one a savour from death unto death: to the other a savour from life unto life."* Do you see that the weak is hurt even by Paul, but the strong is injured not even by the Devil?

4. Do you wish that we should exercise the argument in the case of Jesus Christ? What is equal to that salvation? What more profitable than that presence? But this very saving presence, so profitable, became an additional means of chastening to many. *"For for judgment"* says he *"came I into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may become blind."* What do you say? The light became a cause of blindness? The light did not become a cause of blindness, but the weakness of the eyes of the soul was not able to entertain the light. You have seen that a weak man is hurt on all sides, but the strong is benefited on all sides. For in every case, the purpose is the cause, in every case the disposition is master. Since the Devil, if you wouldst understand it, is even profitable to us, if we use him aright, and benefits us greatly, and we gain no ordinary advantages; and this, we showed in a small degree from the case of Job. And it is possible also to learn this from Paul: for writing about the fornicator he thus speaks *"Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved."* Behold even the Devil has become a cause of salvation, but not because of his own disposition, but because of the skill of the Apostle. For as the physicians taking serpents and cutting off their destructive members, prepare medicines for antidotes; so also did Paul. He took whatever was profitable of the chastening that proceeds from the Devil, and left the rest alone; in order that you may learn that the Devil is not the cause of salvation, but that he hasted to destroy and devour mankind. But that the Apostle through his own wisdom cut his throat: hear in the second epistle to the Corinthians,

what he saith about this very fornicator, "*confirm your love towards him,*" "*lest by any means such an one should be swallowed up by over much sorrow.*" And, "*we be taken advantage of by Satan.*" We have snatched beforehand the man from the gullet of the wild beast, he saith. For the Apostle often used the Devil as an executioner. For the executioners punish those who have done wrong, not as they choose, but as the judges allow. For this is the rule for the executioner, to take vengeance, giving heed to the command of the judge. Do you see to what a dignity the Apostle mounted? He who was invested with a body, used the bodiless as an executioner; and that which their common master saith to the Devil, concerning Job: charging him thus, "*Touch his flesh, but you shall not touch his life;*" giving him a limit, and measure of vengeance, in order that the wild beast might not be impetuous and leap upon him too shamelessly; this too the Apostle does. For delivering the fornicator over to him he says "*For the destruction of the flesh,*" that is "*you shall not touch his life.*" Do you see the authority of the servant? Fear not therefore the Devil, even if he be bodiless: for he has come in contact with him. And nothing is weaker than he who has come into such contact even though he be not invested with a body, as then nothing is stronger than he who has boldness even though he bear about a mortal body.

5. All these things have been now said by me, not in order that I may discharge the Devil from blame, but that I may free you from slothfulness. For he wishes extremely to attribute the cause of our sins to himself, in order that we being nourished by these hopes, and entering on all kinds of evil, may increase the chastening in our own case, and may meet with no pardon from having transferred the cause to him. Just as Eve met with none. But let us not do this. But let us know ourselves. Let us know our wounds. For thus shall we be able to apply the medicines. For he who does not know

his disease, will give no care to his weakness. We have sinned much: I know this well. For we are all liable for penalties. But we are not deprived of pardon; nor shall we fall away from repentance for we still stand in the arena, and are in the struggles of repentance. Are You old, and have you come to the last outlet of life? Do not consider even thus that you have fallen from repentance, nor despair of your own salvation, but consider the robber who was freed on the cross. For what was briefer than that hour in which he was crowned? Yet notwithstanding even this was enough for him, for salvation. Art thou young? Do not be confident in your youth, nor think that you have a very fixed term of life, *"For the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."* On this account he has made our end invisible, in order that we might make our diligence and our forethought plain. Do you not see men taken away prematurely day after day? On this account a certain one admonishes *"make no tarrying to turn to the Lord and put not off from day to day,"* lest at any time, as you delay, you are destroyed. Let the old man keep this admonition, let the young man take this advice. Yea, are you in security, and are you rich, and do you abound in wealth, and does no affliction happen to you? Still hear what Paul says *"when they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them."* Affairs are full of much change. We are not masters of our end. Let us be masters of virtue. Our Master Christ is loving.

6. Do you wish that I shall speak of the ways of repentance? They are many, and various, and different, and all lead to heaven. The first way of repentance is condemnation of sins. *"Declare first your sins that you may be justified."* Wherefore also the prophet said *"I said, I will speak out, my transgression to the Lord, and you remitted the iniquity of my heart."* Condemn yourself therefore for your sins. This is enough for the Master by way of self-defence. For he who condemns his sins, is slower to fall into

them again. Awake your conscience, that inward accuser, in order that you may have no accuser at the judgment seat of the Lord. This is one way of repentance, the best; and there is another not less than this, not to bear a grudge against your enemies to overcome anger, to forgive the sins of our fellow-servants. For so will those which have been done against the master be forgiven us. See the second expiation of sins: *"For if ye forgive"* says he, *"your debtors, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you."* Do you wish to learn a third way of repentance? Fervent and diligent prayer, and to do this from the bottom of the heart. Have you not seen that widow, how she persuaded the shameless judge? But you have a gentle Master, both tender, and kind. She asked, against her adversaries, but you do not ask against your adversaries, but on behalf of your own salvation. And if you wouldst learn a fourth way, I will say almsgiving. For this has a great power and unspeakable. For Daniel saith to Nebuchadnezzar when he had come to all kinds of evil, and had entered upon all impiety, *"O King let my counsel be acceptable unto you, redeem your sins by almsgiving and your iniquities by compassion on the poor."* What could be compared with this lovingkindness? After countless sins, after so many transgressions, he is promised that he will be reconciled with him he has come into conflict with if he will show kindness to his own fellow-servants. And modesty, and humility, not less than all words spoken, exhaust the nature of sins. And the publican is proof, being unable to declare his good deeds, in sight of all, bringing forward his humility, and laying aside the heavy burden of his sins. See we have shown five ways of repentance: first the condemnation of sins, next the forgiveness of our neighbours' sins, thirdly that which comes of prayer, fourth that which comes of almsgiving, fifth that which comes of humility. Do not thou then be lazy; but walk in all these day by day. For the ways are easy, nor can you plead poverty. And even if you live poorer than

all, you are able to leave your anger, and be humble, and to pray fervently, and to condemn sins, and your poverty is in no way a hindrance. And why do I speak thus, when not even in that way of repentance in which it is possible to spend money (I speak of almsgiving), not even there is poverty any hindrance to us from obeying the command? The widow who spent the two mites is a proof. Having learned then the healing of our wounds, let us constantly apply these medicines, in order that we may return to health and enjoy the sacred table with assurance; and with much glory, reach Christ the king of glory, and attain to everlasting good by the grace, and compassion, and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom be glory, power, honour, to the Father, together with the all holy, and good and quickening Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily 3. On the Power of Man to Resist the Devil.

That evil comes of sloth, and virtue from diligence, and that neither wicked men, nor the devil himself, are able to do the wary man any harm. The proof of this from many passages, and amongst others from those which relate to Adam and to Job.

1. The day before yesterday we set on foot our sermon concerning the Devil, out of our love for you. But others, the day before yesterday while these matters were being set on foot here, took their places in the theatre, and were looking on at the Devil's show. They were taking part in lascivious songs; you were having a share in spiritual music. They were eating of the Devil's garbage: you were feeding on spiritual unguents. Who pray decoyed them? Who pray separated them from the sacred flock? Did the Devil pray deceive them? How did he not deceive you? You and they are men alike; I mean as regards your nature. You and they have the same soul, you have the same desires, so far as nature is concerned. How is it then that you and they were not in the same place? Because you and they have not the same purpose. On this account they indeed are under deception, but you beyond deception. I do not say these things again as discharging the Devil from accusation, but as desiring earnestly to free you from sins. The Devil is wicked; I grant this indeed, but he is wicked for himself not towards us if we are wary. For the nature of wickedness is of this kind. It is destructive to those alone who hold to it. Virtue is the contrary. It is not only able to profit those who hold to it, but those nearest at hand too. And in order that you may learn that evil is evil in itself, but good is also good to others, I provide you with proverbial evidence: "*My*

son," says he, "if you have become evil, you shall bear your evils alone, but if wise, for yourself and your neighbour."

They were deceived in the theatre, but you were not deceived. This is the greatest proof of things, a clear testimony, and unquestionable reasoning, that in every case, the purpose is master. Do thou accordingly use this method of proof, and if you see a man living in wickedness, and exhibiting all kinds of evil; then blaming the providence of God, and saying that by the necessity of fortune and fate and through tyranny of Demons He gave us our nature, and on all sides shifting the cause from himself indeed, and transferring it to the creator who provides for all; silence his speech not by word, but by deed, showing him another fellow servant living in virtue and forbearance. There is no need of long speeches, no need of a complex plan, nor even of syllogisms. By means of deeds the proof is brought about. He said to him: you are a servant, and he is a servant; you are a man and he is a man. Thou livest in the same world: you are nourished with the same nourishment under the same heaven: How is it that you are living in wickedness, he in virtue? On this account God allowed the wicked to be mingled with the good; and did not give one law to the wicked indeed, and appointed another world as a colony for the good, but mixed these and those; conferring great benefit. For the good appear more thoroughly approved when they are in the midst of those who try to hinder them from living rightly, and who entice them to evil, and yet keep hold of virtue. *"For there must" he saith "be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."*

Therefore also on this account he has left the wicked to be in the world, in order that the good may shine the brighter. Do you see how great is the gain? But the gain is not owing to the wicked, but owing to the courage of the good. On this account also we admire Noe, not because he

was righteous nor yet because he was perfect alone, but because in that perverse and wicked generation he preserved his virtue, when he had no pattern of virtue, when all men invited him to wickedness; and he went his whole way contrary to them, like some traveller, pursuing his way while the great multitude is being borne along vehemently. On this account he did not simply say "*Noe was just, perfect,*" but added "*in his generation*" in that perverse, that desperate generation, when there was no acquisition of virtue. To the good indeed then this was the gain from the wicked. Thus at all events, also trees tossed about by contrary winds, become stronger. And there is a gain to the wicked from their mixing with the good. They feel confusion, they are ashamed, they blush in their presence; and even if they do not abstain from evil, yet nevertheless they dare what they dare with secrecy. And this is no small thing not to have transgression publicly committed. For the life of the others becomes the accuser of the wickedness of these. Hear at least what they say about the righteous man. "*He is grievous to us, even when beheld,*" and it is no small beginning of amendment to be tormented at his presence. For if the sight of the righteous man did not torment them, this word would not have been uttered. But to be stung, and pinched in conscience at his presence, would be no little hindrance to indulging in wickedness with pleasure, Do you see how great is the gain both to the good from the wicked, and to the wicked from the good? On this account God has not set them apart, but allowed them to be mingled together.

2. Let our argument also about the Devil be the same. For on this account He has left him also to be here, in order that he might render you the stronger, in order that he may make the athlete more illustrious, in order that the contests may be greater. When therefore any one says, why has God left the Devil here? Say these words to him, because he not only does no

harm to the wary and the heedful, but even profits them, not owing to his own purpose (for that is wicked), but owing to their courage who have used that wickedness aright. Since he even fixed upon Job not on this account that he might make him more illustrious, but in order that he might upset him. On this account he is wicked both because of such an opinion and such a purpose. But notwithstanding he did no harm to the righteous man, but he rather rejoiced in the conflict as we accordingly showed. Both the Demon showed his wickedness and the righteous man his courage. But he does upset many says one: owing to their weakness, not owing to his own strength: for this too has been already proved by many examples. Direct your own intention aright then, and you shall never receive harm from any, but shall get the greatest gain, not only from the good but even from the wicked. For on this account, as I have before said, God has suffered men to be with one another, and especially the wicked with the good, in order that they may bring them over to their own virtue. Hear at least what Christ saith to his disciples, *"The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a woman who took leaven and hid it in three measures of meal."* So that the righteous have the power of leaven, in order that they may transfer the wicked to their own manner of conduct. But the righteous are few, for the leaven is small. But the smallness in no way injures the lump, but that little quantity converts the whole of the meal to itself by means of the power inherent in it. So accordingly the power also of the righteous has its force not in the magnitude of their number, but in the grace of the Spirit. There were twelve Apostles. Do you see how little is the leaven? The whole world was in unbelief. Do you see how great is the lump? But those twelve turned the whole world to themselves. The leaven and the lump had the same nature but not the same manner of conduct. On this account he left the wicked in

the midst of the good, that since they are of the same nature as the righteous they may also become of the same purpose.

Remember these things. With these stop the mouths of the indolent, the dissolute, the slothful, the indisposed towards the labours of virtue, those who accuse their common Master. *"You have sinned"* he saith *"be still."* *"Do not add a second more grievous sin."* It is not so grievous to sin, as after the sin to accuse the Master. Take knowledge of the cause of the sin, and you will find that it is none other than yourself who hast sinned.

Everywhere there is a need of a good intention. I have shown you this not from simple reasoning only, but from the case of fellow-servants living in the world itself. Do thou also use this proof. Thus too our common master will judge us. Learn this method of proof, and no one will be able to reason with you. Is any a fornicator? Show him another who is self-restrained. Is any covetous and rapacious? Show him one who gives alms. Does he live in jealousy and envy? Show him one clean from passion. Is he overcome by anger? Bring into the midst one who is living in wisdom, for we must not only have recourse to ancient example, but take our models from present times. For even today by the grace of God, good deeds are done not less than of old. Is a man incredulous? And does he think that the scriptures are false? Does he not believe that Job was such as he was? Show him another man, emulating the life of that righteous person. Thus will the Master also judge us: He places fellow servants with fellow-servants, nor does he give sentence according to his own judgment, in order that no one may begin to say again, as that servant said, who was entrusted with the talent, and who instead of a talent brought the accusation. *"You are an austere man."* For he ought to mourn, because he did not double the talent, but rendered his sin the more grievous, by adding to his own idleness, his accusation against the Master. For what says he? *"I knew you that you are an austere man."* O

miserable, and wretched, ungrateful and lazy man! You ought to have accused your own idleness, and to have taken away somewhat from your former sin. But thou in bringing an account against the master hast doubled your sin instead of doubling your talent.

3. On this account God places together servants and servants in order that the one set may judge the other, and that some being judged by the others may not be able for the future to accuse the master. On this account, he saith *"The Son of Man comes in the glory of his Father."* See the equality of the glory: he does not say in glory like to the glory of the Father, but in the glory of the Father, and will gather together all the nations. Terrible is the tribunal: terrible to the sinful, and the accountable. Since to those who are conscious to themselves of good works, it is desirable and mild. *"And he will place the sheep on his right hand, and the kids on his left."* Both these and those are men. For what reason then are those indeed sheep but these kids? Not that you may learn a difference in their nature, but the difference in their purpose. But for what reason are they who did not show compassion kids? Because that animal is unfruitful and is not able to contribute services, either by its milk, or by progeny, or by its hair, to those who possess it, being on all sides destitute of such a contribution as this, on account of the immaturity of its age. On this account he has called those who bear no fruit, by comparison, kids, but those on the right hand sheep. For from these the offering is great, both of their natural wool, their progeny, and their milk. What then does he say to them? *"You saw me hungering and ye fed me, naked and ye clothed me, a stranger and ye took me in."* Again to those he says the contrary. And yet both these and those were alike men, both these and those received the same promises, the same rewards were assigned to both on doing right. The same person came both to these and to those, with

the same nakedness: and to these and to those with the same hunger, and in the same way and a stranger. All things were alike to those and to these.

How then was the end not the same? Because the purpose did not permit it. For this alone made the difference. On this account the one set went to Gehenna, but the other to the Kingdom. But if the Devil were the cause to them of their sins, these would not be destined to be chastened, when another sinned and drove them on. Do you see here both those who sin, and those who do good works? Do you see how on seeing their fellow-servants they were silenced? Come and let us bring our discourse to another example for your benefit. There were ten virgins he says. Here again there are purposes which are upright, and purposes which are sinful, in order you may see side by side, both the sins of the one and the good works of the others. For the comparison makes these things the plainer. And these and those were virgins; and these were five, and also those. All awaited the bridegroom. How then did some enter in, and others did not enter in? Because some indeed were churlish, and others were gentle and loving. Do you see again that the purpose determined the nature of the end, not the Devil? Do you see that the judgments were parallel, and that the verdict given proceeds from those who are like each other? Fellow-servants will judge fellow-servants. Do you wish that I should show you a comparison arising from contrasts? For there is one also from contrasts so that the condemnation may become the greater. *"The men of Nineveh"* he saith *"shall rise up, and shall condemn this generation."* The judged are no longer alike, for the one are barbarians, the others are Jews. The one enjoyed prophetic teaching, the others were never partakers of a divine instruction. And this is not the only difference, but the fact that in that case a servant went to them, in this the master; and that man came and proclaimed an overthrow; but this man declared the glad tidings of a

kingdom of heaven. Which of these was it the more likely, would believe? The barbarians, and ignorant, and they who had never partaken of divine teaching, or they who had from their earliest age been trained in prophetic books? To every one, it is plain, that the Jews would be more likely to believe. But the contrary took place. And these disbelieved the Master when he preached a kingdom of heaven, but those believed their fellow-servant when he threatened an overthrow: in order that their goodness, and these men's folly might be manifested to a greater degree. Is there a Demon? A Devil? Chance? Or Fate? Has not each become the cause to himself both of evil, and of virtue? For if they themselves were not to be liable to account, he would not have said that they shall judge this generation. Nor would he have said that the Queen of the South would condemn the Jews. For then indeed not only will one people condemn another people, but one man will often judge a whole people, when they who, it is allowed, might readily have been deceived, are found to remain undeceived, and they who ought in every way to have the advantage, turn out to be worsted. On this account, we made mention of Adam and of Job, for there is necessity to revert to that subject, so as to put the finish to our discourse. He attacked Adam indeed by means of mere words, but Job by means of deeds. For the one he denuded of all his wealth, and deprived of his children. But from this man he took not away anything, great or little of his possessions. But let us rather examine the very words and the method of the plot. "*The serpent came*" says he "*and said to the woman, What is it that God has said, ye shall not eat of every tree which is in the garden?*" Here it is a serpent; there a woman, in the case of Job: mean while great is the difference between the counsellors. The one is a servant, the other a partner of the man's life. She is a helpmate, but the other is under subjection. Do you see how unpardonable this is? Eve indeed, the servant in subjection deceived: but him not even his

partner, and helpmate could overthrow. But let us see what he saith. *"What is this that God has said, you shall not eat of every tree?"* Assuredly indeed God did not say this but the opposite. See the villany of the Devil. He said that which was not spoken, in order that he might learn what was spoken. What then did the woman? She ought to have silenced him, she ought not to have exchanged a word with him. In foolishness she declared the judgment of the Master. Thereby she afforded the Devil a powerful handle.

4. See what an evil it is to commit ourselves rashly to our enemies, and to conspirators against us. On this account Christ used to say, *"Give not holy things to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before the swine, lest they turn and rend you."* And this happened in the case of Eve. She gave the holy things to the dog, to the swine. He trod under foot the words: and turned and rent the woman. And see how he works evil. *"You shall not die the death"* says he.

Give me your attention on this point, that the woman was able to understand the deceit. For he immediately announced his enmity, and his warfare against God, he immediately contradicted Him. Let it be so. Before this you declared the judgment to one who wished to learn it. After this why did you follow one who said the opposite? God said *"you shall die the death."* The Devil made answer to this and said *"you shall not die the death."* What could be clearer than this warfare? From what other quarter ought one to learn the enemy and the foe, than from his answer returned to God? She ought then immediately to have fled from the bait, she ought to have started back from the snare. *"You shall not die the death,"* says he *"for God knows, that on the day on which you eat, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods."* In hope of a greater promise she cast away the goods in her hand. He promised that he would make them Gods, and cast them down into the tyranny of death. Whence then O woman did you

believe the Devil? What good did you discern? Was not the trustworthiness of the lawgiver sufficient to prove that the one was God, both creator and framer of the world, and the other the Devil and an enemy? And I do not say the Devil. You thought that he was a mere serpent. Ought a serpent to claim such equality that you should tell him the Master's judgment? You see that it was possible to perceive the deceit, but she would not, and yet God gave many proofs of his own beneficence and showed forth his care of his works. For he formed man, who had not existed before; and breathed a soul into him, and made him according to his image, making him ruler of all things upon the earth, and granted him a helpmate, planted Paradise, and having committed to him the use of the rest of the trees, refused him the taste of one only: and this very prohibition he made for man's advantage. But the Devil manifested no good things by his deed, whether little, or great: but exciting the woman with mere words and puffing her up with vain hopes, thus he deceived her. But nevertheless she considered the Devil to be more worthy of credit than God, although God showed forth his good will by his works. The woman believed in one who professed mere words, and nothing else. Do you see how, from folly alone and sloth, and not from force, the deceit happened? And in order that you may learn it more clearly hear how the scripture accuses the woman: For it does not say, being deceived, but "*seeing the tree that it was fair, she ate.*" So that the blame belongs to her uncontrolled vision, not to the deceit alone which comes from the Devil. For she was defeated by yielding to her own desire, not by the wickedness of the Demon. On this account she did not have the benefit of pardon, but though she said, "*the serpent deceived me,*" she paid the uttermost penalty. For it was in her power not to have fallen. And in order that you may understand this more clearly, come, let us conduct our discourse to the case of Job; from the defeated to the vanquisher, from the

conquered to the conqueror. For this man will give us greater zeal, so that we may raise our hands against the Devil. There he who deceived and conquered was a serpent; here the tempter was a woman, and she did not prevail: and yet at least she was far more persuasive than he. For to Job after the destruction of his wealth, after the loss of his children, after being stripped bare of all his goods, her wiles were added. But in the other case there was nothing of this kind. Adam did not suffer the destruction of his children, nor did he lose his wealth: he did not sit upon a dunghill, but inhabited a Paradise of luxury and enjoyed all manner of fruits, and fountains and rivers, and every other kind of security. Nowhere was there labour or pain, or despair and cares, or reproaches, and insults, or the countless ills which assailed Job: but nevertheless, when nothing of this kind existed, he fell and was overthrown. Is it not evident that it was on account of sloth? Even so therefore as the other, when all these things beset him, and weighed upon him, stood nobly and did not fall, is it not evident that his steadfastness was owing to his vigilance of soul?

5. On both sides, beloved, reap the utmost gain, and avoid the imitation of Adam knowing how many ills are begotten of indolence: and imitate the piety of Job, learning how many glorious things spring from earnestness. Consider him, the conqueror throughout, and you shall have much consolation in all pain and peril. For as it were in the common theatre of the world that blessed and noble man stands forth, and by means of the sufferings which happened to him discourses to all to bear all things which befall them nobly, and never give in to the troubles which come upon them. For verily, there is no human suffering which cannot receive consolation from thence. For the sufferings which are scattered over the whole world, these came together, and bore down upon one body, even his. What pardon then shall there be for him who is unable to bear with thankfulness his share

of the troubles which are brought upon him? Since he appears not bearing a part only, but the entire ills of all men, and in order that you may not condemn the extravagance of my words, come, and let us take in hand severally the ills that came upon him, and bring forward this fulfilment of them. And if you wishest, let us first bring forward that which seems to be the most unendurable of all, I mean poverty, and the pain which arises from it. For everywhere all men bewail this. What was poorer then than Job, who was poorer than the outcasts at the baths, and those who sleep in the ashes of the furnace, poorer in fact than all men? For these indeed have one ragged garment, but he sat naked, and had only the garment which nature supplies, the clothing of the flesh, and this the Devil destroyed on all sides, with a distressing kind of decay. Again these poor folk are at least under the roof of the porches at the baths, and are covered with a shelter. But he continued always to pass his nights in the open air, not having even the consolation of a bare roof. And, what is still greater, the fact that these are conscious of many terrible evils within themselves, but he was conscious of nothing against himself. For this is to be noticed in each of the things which happened to him, a thing which caused him greater pain, and produced more perplexity; the ignorance of the reason of what took place. These persons then, as I said, would have many things with which to reproach themselves. And this contributes no little to consolation in calamity; to be conscious in oneself of being punished justly. But he was deprived of this consolation, and while exhibiting a conversation full of virtue, endured the fate of those who had dared to do extreme wickedness. And these folk who are with us, are poor from the outset, and from the beginning are versed in calamity. But he endured calamity in which he was unversed, experiencing the immense change from wealth. As then the knowledge of the cause of what takes place, is the greatest consolation; so it is not less than this, to

have been versed in poverty from the beginning, and so to continue in it. Of both these consolations that man was deprived, and not even then, did he fall away. Do you see him indeed come to extreme poverty, even in comparison with which it is impossible to find a fellow? For what could be poorer than the naked who has not even a roof over him? Yea rather not even was it in his power to enjoy the bare ground, but he sat upon the dunghill. Therefore whenever you see yourself come to poverty, consider the suffering of the just one, and straightway you shall rise up, and shake off every thought of despondency. This one calamity therefore seems to men to be the groundwork of all sufferings together. And the second after it, yea rather before it, is the affliction of the body. Who then was even so disabled? Who endured such disease? Who received or saw any one else receive so great an affliction? No one. Little by little his body was wasted, and a stream of worms on every side issued from his limbs, the running was constant, and the evil smell which surrounded him was strong, and the body being destroyed little by little, and decaying with such putrefaction, used to make food distasteful and hunger was to him strange and unusual. For not even was he able to enjoy the nourishment which was given to him. For says he *"I see my food to be loathsome."* Whenever then you fall into weakness, O man, remember that body and that saintly flesh. For it was saintly and pure, even when it had so many wounds. And if any one belong to the army, and then unjustly and without any reasonable pretext, be hanged upon the pillory, and has his sides rasped to pieces, let him not think the matter to be a reproach, nor let him give way to the pain when he thinks upon this saint. But this man, says one, has much comfort and consolation in knowing that God was bringing these sufferings upon him. This indeed especially troubled and disturbed him, to think that the just God who had in every way been served by him, was at war with him. And he was not able to

find any reasonable pretext for what took place, since, when at least he afterwards learned the cause, see what piety he showed, for when God said to him *"Do you think that I have had dealings with you in order that you might appear righteous?"* conscious-stricken he says *"I will lay my hand upon my mouth, once have I spoken but to a second word I will not proceed,"* and again *"as far as the hearing of the ear I have heard you before, but now mine eye has seen you, wherefore I have held myself to be vile, and am wasted away, and I consider myself to be earth and ashes."*

6. But if you thinkest that this is sufficient for consolation, you will yourself also be able to experience this comfort. And even if you dost not suffer any of these misfortunes at the hands of God but owing to the insolence of men; and yet givest thanks and dost not blaspheme him who is able to prevent them indeed, but who permits them for the sake of testing you: just as they who suffer at the hands of God are crowned, so also you shall obtain the same reward, because you have borne nobly the calamities which were brought upon you from men, and gave thanks to him who was able indeed to hinder them, but not willing.

Behold then! You have seen poverty and disease, and both in the extremest degree brought upon this just man. Do you wish that I should show you the warfare at nature's hands, in such excessive degree waged then against this noble man? He lost ten children, the ten at one fell swoop, the ten in the very bloom of youth, ten who displayed much virtue, and that not by the common law of nature, but by a violent and pitiable death. Who could be able to recount so great a calamity? No one. Whenever therefore you lose son and daughter together, have recourse to this just man, and you shall find altogether much comfort for yourself. Were these then the only misfortunes which happened to him? The desertion and treachery of his friends, and the gibes, and raillery, and the mockery and derision, and the

tearing in pieces by all, was something intolerable. For the character of calamities is not of such a kind, that they who reproach us about our calamities are wont to vex our soul. Not only was there no one to soothe him but many even on many sides beset him with taunts. And you see him lamenting this bitterly, and saying *"but even you too fell upon me."* And he calls them pitiless, and says *"My neighbours have rejected me, and my servants spoke against me, and I called the sons of my concubines, and they turned away from me."* *"And others"* says he *"sport upon me, and I became the common talk of all. And my very raiment"* says he *"abhorred me."* These things at least are unbearable to hear, still more to endure in their reality, extreme poverty, and intolerable disease new and strange, the loss of children so many and so good, and in such a manner, reproaches and gibes, and insults from men. Some indeed mocked and some reproached and others despised; not only enemies, but even friends; not only friends, but even servants, and they not only mock and reproach, but even abhorred him, and this not for two or three, or ten days, but for many months; and (a circumstance which happened in that man's case alone) not even had he comfort by night, but the delusions of terrors by night were a greater aggravation of his misfortunes by day. For that he endured more grievous things in his sleep, hear what he says *"why dost thou frighten me in sleep, and terrify me in visions?"* What man of iron, what heart of steel could have endured so many misfortunes? For if each of these was unbearable in itself, consider what a tumult their simultaneous approach excited. But nevertheless he bore all these, and in all that happened to him he sinned not, nor was there guile in his lips.

7. Let the sufferings of that man then be the medicines for our ills, and his grievous surging sea the harbour of our sufferings, and in each of the accidents which befall us, let us consider this saint, and seeing one person

exhausting the misfortunes of the universe, we shall conduct ourselves bravely in those which fall to our share, and as to some affectionate mother, stretching forth her hands on all sides, and receiving and reviving her terrified children, so let us always flee to this book, and even if the pitiable troubles of all men assail us, let us take sufficient comfort for all and so depart. And if you sayest, he was Job, and for this reason bore all this, but I am not like him; you supply me with a greater accusation against yourself and fresh praise of him. For it is more likely that you should be able to bear all this than he. Why pray? Because he indeed was before the day of grace and of the law, when there was not much strictness of life, when the grace of the Spirit was not so great, when sin was hard to fight against, when the curse prevailed and when death was terrible. But now our wrestlings have become easier, all these things being removed after the coming of Christ; so that we have no excuse, when we are unable to reach the same standard as he, after so long a time, and such advantage, and so many gifts given to us by God. Considering therefore all these things, that misfortunes were greater for him, and that when the conflict was more grievous, then he stripped for the contest; let us bear all that comes upon us nobly, and with much thankfulness, in order that we may be able to obtain the same crown as he, by the grace and lovingkindness of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom be glory to the Father together with the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily on "Father, if it be possible..."

Against Marcionists and Manichæans

On the passage *"Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will but as you will:"* and against Marcionists and Manichæans: also, that we ought not to rush into danger, but to prefer the will of God before every other will.

1. I lately inflicted a severe stroke upon those who are grasping and wish to overreach others; I did this not in order to wound them but in order to correct them; not because I hate the men, but because I detest their wickedness. For so the physician also lances the abscess, not as making an attack upon the suffering body, but as a means of contending with the disorder and the wound. Well today let us grant them a little respite, that they may recover from their distress, and not recoil from the remedy by being perpetually afflicted. Physicians also act thus; after the use of the knife they apply plasters and drugs, and let a few days pass while they devise things to allay the pain. Following their example let me today, devising means for them to derive benefit from my discourse, start a question concerning doctrine, directing my speech to the words which have been read. For I imagine that many feel perplexed as to the reason why these words were uttered by Christ: and it is probable also that any heretics who are present may pounce upon the words, and thereby upset many of the more simple-minded brethren.

In order then to build a wall against their attack and to relieve those who are in perplexity from bewilderment and confusion, let us take in hand

the words which have been cited, and dwell upon the passage, and dive into the depths of its meanings. For reading does not suffice unless knowledge also be added to it. Even as the eunuch of Candace read, but until one came who instructed him in the meaning of what he was reading he derived no great benefit from it. In order therefore that you may not be in the same condition attend to what is said, exert your understanding, let me have your mind disengaged from other thoughts, let your eye be quick-sighted, your intention earnest: let your soul be set free from worldly cares, that we may not sow our words upon the thorns, or upon the rock, or by the way side, but that we may till a deep and rich field, and so reap an abundant harvest. For if you thus attend to what is said you will render my labour lighter and facilitate the discovery of that which you are seeking.

What then is the meaning of the passage which has been read "*Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me?*" What does the saying mean? For we ought to unlock the passage by first giving a clear interpretation of the words. What then does the saying mean? "*Father if it be possible take away the cross.*" How do you say? Is he ignorant whether this be possible or impossible? Who would venture to say this? Yet the words are those of one who is ignorant: for the addition of the word "*if,*" is indicative of doubt: but as I said we must not attend to the words merely, but turn our attention to the sense, and learn the aim of the speaker, and the cause and the occasion, and by putting all these things together turn out the hidden meaning. The unspeakable Wisdom then, who knows the Father even as the Father knows the Son, how should he have been ignorant of this? For this knowledge concerning His passion was not greater than the knowledge concerning His essential nature, which He alone accurately knew. "*For as the Father knows me*" He says "*even so know I the Father.*" [John 10:15] And why do I speak of the only begotten Son of God? For even the prophets appear not to have

been ignorant of this fact, but to have known it clearly, and to have declared beforehand with much assurance that so it must come to pass, and would certainly be.

Hear at least how variously all announce the cross. First of all the patriarch Jacob: for directing his discourse to Him he says *"Out of a tender shoot did you spring up:"* by the word shoot signifying the Virgin and the undefiled nature of Mary. Then indicating the cross he said *"You lied down and slumber as a lion, and as a lion's cub; who shall raise him up?"* [*Ibid*] Here he called death a slumbering and a sleep, and with death he combined the resurrection when he said *"who shall raise him up?"* No one indeed save he himself— wherefore also Christ said *"I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again,"* [John 10:18] and again *"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."* [John 2:19] And what is meant by the words *"you lied down and slumber as a lion?"* For as the lion is terrible not only when he is awake but even when he is sleeping, so Christ also not only before the cross but also on the cross itself and in the very moment of death was terrible, and wrought at that time great miracles, turning back the light of the sun, cleaving the rocks, shaking the earth, rending the veil, alarming the wife of Pilate, convicting Judas of sin, for then he said *"I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood;"* [Matthew 27:4] and the wife of Pilate declared *"Have nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things in a dream because of Him."* [Matthew 27:19] The darkness took possession of the earth, and night appeared at midday, then death was brought to nought, and his tyranny was destroyed: many bodies at least of the saints which slept arose. These things the patriarch declaring beforehand, and demonstrating that, even when crucified, Christ would be terrible, said *"you lied down and slumber as a lion."* He did not say you shall slumber but you slumbered, because it

would certainly come to pass. For it is the custom of the prophets in many places to predict things to come as if they were already past. For just as it is impossible that things which have happened should not have happened, so is it impossible that this should not happen, although it be future. On this account they predict things to come under the semblance of past time, indicating by this means the impossibility of their failure, the certainty of their coming to pass. So also spoke David, signifying the cross; *"They pierced my hands and my feet."* He did not say they *"shall pierce"* but *"they pierced"* *"they counted all my bones."* And not only does he say this, but he also describes the things which were done by the soldiers. *"They parted my garments among themselves, and upon my vesture did they cast lots."* And not only this but he also relates they gave Him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink. For he says *"they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."* And again another one says that they smote him with a spear, for *"they shall look on Him whom they pierced."*

[Zechariah 12:10] Esaias again in another fashion predicting the cross said *"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so opens he not his mouth."* *"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away."* [Isaiah 53:7-8]

2. Now observe I pray how each one of these writers speaks as if concerning things already past, signifying by the use of this tense the absolute inevitable certainty of the event. So also David, describing this tribunal, said, *"Why did the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things? The Kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ."* And not only does he mention the trial, and the cross, and the incidents on the cross, but also him who betrayed him, declaring that he was his familiar companion and guest. *"For,"* he says, *"he that eats bread with me did magnify his heel against*

me." Thus also does he foretell the voice which Christ was to utter on the cross saying *"My God, My God why have you forsaken me?"* and the burial also does he describe: *"They laid me in the lowest pit, in dark places, and in the shadow of death."* And the resurrection: *"you shall not leave my soul in hell, neither shall you suffer your Holy One to see corruption;"* and the ascension: *"God has gone up with a merry noise, the Lord with the sound of the trump."* And the session on the right hand: *"The Lord said to my Lord sit thou on my right hand until I make your foes your footstool."* But Esaias also declares the cause; saying, *"for the transgressions of my people is He brought to death,"* [Isaiah 53:8] and because all have strayed like sheep, therefore is he sacrificed. [Isaiah 53:6-7] Then also he adds mention of the result, saying *"by his stripes we have all been healed:"* [Isaiah 53:5] and *"he has borne the sins of many."* [Isaiah 53:12] The prophets then knew the cross, and the cause of the cross and that which was effected by it, and the burial and the resurrection, and the ascension, and the betrayal, and the trial, and described them all with accuracy: and is He who sent them and commanded them to speak these things ignorant of them Himself? What reasonable man would say that? Do you see that we must not attend merely to the words? For this is not the only perplexing passage, but what follows is more perplexing. For what does He say? *"Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me."* Here he will be found to speak not only as if ignorant, but as if deprecating the cross: For this is what He says. *"If it be permissible let me not be subjected to crucifixion and death."* And yet when Peter, the leader of the apostles, said this to Him, *"Be it far from you Lord, this shall not happen unto You,"* He rebuked him so severely as to say; *"get you behind me Satan, you are an offense unto me, for you savour not the things which be of God, but those which be of men:"* [Matthew 16:22-23] although a short time before he had pronounced him blessed. But to escape

crucifixion seemed to Him so monstrous a thing, that him who had received the revelation from the Father, him whom He had pronounced blessed, him who had received the keys of Heaven, He called Satan, and an offense, and accused him of not savouring the things which be of God because he said to Him, *"Be it far from you Lord, this shall never be unto You"*— namely crucifixion. He then who thus vituperated the disciple, and poured such an invective upon him as actually to call him Satan (after having bestowed such great praise on him), because he said *"avoid crucifixion,"* how could He desire not to be crucified? And how after these things when drawing the picture of the good shepherd could He declare this to be the special proof of his virtue, that he should be sacrificed for the sake of the sheep, thus saying, *"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep?"* [John 10:11] Nor did He even stop there, but also added, *"but he that is an hireling and not the shepherd sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep, and flees."* [John 10:12] If then it is the sign of the good shepherd to sacrifice himself, and of the hireling to be unwilling to undergo this, how can He who calls Himself the good shepherd beseech that he may not be sacrificed? And how could He say *"I lay down my life of myself"*? For if you lay down your life of yourself, how can you beseech another that you may not lay it down? And how is it that Paul marvels at Him on account of this declaration, saying *"Who being in the form of God counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."* [Philippians 2:6-8] And He Himself again speaks in this wise, *"For this cause does my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again."* [John 10:17] For if He does not desire to lay it down, but deprecates the act, and beseeches the Father, how is it that He is loved

on this account? For love is of those who are like minded. And how does Paul say again *"Love one another even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us?"* [Ephesians 5:2] And Christ Himself when He was about to be crucified said *"Father, the hour has come: glorify your Son,"* [John 17:1] speaking of the cross as glory: and how then does He deprecate it here when He urges it there? For that the cross is glory listen to what the evangelist says *"the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."* [John 7:39] Now the hearing of this expression is *"grace was not yet given because the enmity towards men was not yet destroyed by reason that the cross had not yet done its work."* For the cross destroyed the enmity of God towards man, brought about the reconciliation, made the earth Heaven, associated men with angels, pulled down the citadel of death, unstrung the force of the devil, extinguished the power of sin, delivered the world from error, brought back the truth, expelled the Demons, destroyed temples, overturned altars, suppressed the sacrificial offering, implanted virtue, founded the Churches. The cross is the will of the Father, the glory of the Son, the rejoicing of the Spirit, the boast of Paul, *"for,"* he says, *"God forbid that I should boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* [Galatians 6:14] The cross is that which is brighter than the sun, more brilliant than the sunbeam: for when the sun is darkened then the cross shines brightly: and the sun is darkened not because it is extinguished, but because it is overpowered by the brilliancy of the cross. The cross has broken our bond, it has made the prison of death ineffectual, it is the demonstration of the love of God. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that every one who believes in Him should not perish."* [John 3:16] And again Paul says *"If being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son."* [Romans 5:10] The cross is the impregnable wall, the invulnerable shield, the safeguard of the rich, the

resource of the poor, the defence of those who are exposed to snares, the armour of those who are attacked, the means of suppressing passion, and of acquiring virtue, the wonderful and marvellous sign. *"For this generation seeks after a sign: and no sign shall be given it save the sign of Jonas;"* [Matthew 12:39] and again Paul says, *"for the Jews ask for a sign and the Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified."* [1 Corinthians 1:22] The cross opened Paradise, it brought in the robber, it conducted into the kingdom of Heaven the race of man which was about to perish, and was not worthy even of earth. So great are the benefits which have sprung and do spring from the cross, and yet does He not desire to be crucified I ask? Who would venture to say this? And if He did not desire it who compelled Him, who forced Him to it? And why did He send prophets beforehand announcing that He would be crucified, if He was not to be, and did not wish to undergo it? And for what reason does He call the cross a cup, if He did not desire to be crucified? For that is the word of one who signifies the desire which he has concerning the act. For as the cup is sweet to those who are thirsty so also was crucifixion to Him: wherefore also He said *"With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you,"* [Luke 22:15] and this He meant not absolutely, but relatively, because after that evening the cross was awaiting Him.

3. He then who calls the thing glory, and rebukes the disciple because he was trying to hinder Him, and proves that what constitutes the good shepherd is his sacrificing himself on behalf of the sheep, and declares that he earnestly longs for this thing, and willingly goes to meet it, how is it that He beseeches it may not come to pass? And if He did not wish it what difficulty was there in hindering those who came for that purpose? But in fact you behold Him hastening towards the deed. At least when they came upon Him He said *"Whom do you seek?"* and they replied *"Jesus."* Then He

says to them *"Lo! I am He: and they went backward and fell to the ground."* [John 18:6] Thus having first crippled them and proved that He was able to escape their hands, He then surrendered Himself, that you might learn that not by compulsion or force, or the tyrannical power of those who attacked Him, did He unwillingly submit to this, but willingly with purpose and desire, preparing for it a long time before. Therefore also were prophets sent beforehand, and patriarchs foretold the events, and by means of words and deeds the cross was prefigured. For the sacrifice of Isaac also signified the cross to us: wherefore also Christ said *"Abraham your father rejoiced to see my glory and he saw it and was glad."* [John 8:56] The patriarch then was glad beholding the image of the cross, and does He Himself deprecate it? Thus Moses also prevailed over Amalek when he displayed the figure of the cross: and one may observe countless things happening in the Old Testament descriptive by anticipation of the cross. For what reason then was this the case if He who was to be crucified did not wish it to come to pass? And the sentence which follows this is yet more perplexing. For having said Let this cup pass from me He added *"nevertheless not as I will but as You will."* [Matthew 26:39] For herein as far as the actual expression is concerned we find two wills opposed to one another: if at least the Father desires Him to be crucified, but He Himself does not desire it. And yet we everywhere behold Him desiring and purposing the same things as the Father. For when He says *"grant to them, as I and Thou are one that they also may be one in us,"* [John 17:11] it is equivalent to saying that the purpose of the Father and of the Son is one. And when He says *"The words which I speak I speak not myself, but the Father which dwells in me, He does these works,"* [John 14:10] He indicates the same thing. And when He says *"I have not come of myself"* [John 7:28] and *"I can of my own self do nothing"* [John 5:30] he does not say this as signifying that He has been

deprived of authority, either to speak or to act (away with the thought!), but as desiring to prove the concord of his purpose, both in words and deeds, and in every kind of transaction, to be one and the same with the Father, as I have already frequently demonstrated. For the expression *"I speak not of myself"* is not an abrogation of authority but a demonstration of agreement. How then does He say here *"Nevertheless not as I will but as You will"*? Perhaps I have excited a great conflict in your mind, but be on the alert: for although many words have been uttered I know well that your zeal is still fresh: for the discourse is now hastening on to the solution. Why then has this form of speech been employed? Attend carefully, The doctrine of the incarnation was very hard to receive. For the exceeding measure of His lovingkindness and the magnitude of His condescension were full of awe, and needed much preparation to be accepted. For consider what a great thing it was to hear and to learn that God the ineffable, the incorruptible, the unintelligible, the invisible, the incomprehensible, in whose hand are the ends of the earth, who looks upon the earth, and causes it to tremble, who touches the mountains, and makes them smoke, the weight of whose condescension not even the Cherubim were able to bear but veiled their faces by the shelter of their wings, that this God who surpasses all understanding, and baffles all calculation, having passed by angels, archangels, and all the spiritual powers above, deigned to become man, and to take flesh formed of earth and clay, and enter the womb of a virgin, and be borne there the space of nine months, and be nourished with milk, and suffer all things to which man is liable. Inasmuch then as that which was to happen was so strange as to be disbelieved by many even when it had taken place, He first of all sends prophets beforehand, announcing this very fact. For instance the patriarch predicted it saying *"You sprang from a tender shoot my son: you lied down and slumber as a lion;"* [Genesis 49:9] and

Esaias saying *"Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call His name Emmanuel;"* [Isaiah 7:14] and elsewhere again *"We beheld Him as a young child, as a root in a dry ground;"* [Isaiah 53:2] and by the dry ground he means the virgin's womb. And again *"unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,"* [Isaiah 9:6] and again *"there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall spring out of his root."* [Isaiah 11:1] And Baruch in the book of Jeremiah says *"this is our God: no other shall be reckoned by the side of Him: He found out every path of knowledge and gave it to Jacob His servant, and Israel his beloved. After these things also He appeared upon the earth, and held converse with men."* And David signifying His incarnate presence said *"He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool, and like the drop which distills upon the earth"* because He noiselessly and gently entered into the Virgin's womb.

4. But these proofs alone did not suffice, but even when He had come, lest what had taken place should be deemed an illusion, He warranted the fact not only by the sight but by duration of time and by passing through all the phases incident to man. For He did not enter once for all into a man matured and completely developed, but into a virgin's womb, so as to undergo the process of gestation and birth and suckling and growth, and by the length of the time and the variety of the stages of growth to give assurance of what had come to pass. And not even here were the proofs concluded, but even when bearing about the body of flesh He suffered it to experience the infirmities of human nature and to be hungry, and thirsty, and to sleep and feel fatigue; finally also when He came to the cross He suffered it to undergo the pains of the flesh. For this reason also streams of sweat flowed down from it and an angel was discovered strengthening it, and He was sad and down-cast: for before He uttered these words He said

"my soul is troubled, and exceeding sorrowful ever unto death."

[Matthew 26:38] If then after all these things have taken place the wicked mouth of the devil speaking through Marcion of Pontus, and Valentinus, and Manichæus of Persia and many more heretics, has attempted to overthrow the doctrine of the Incarnation and has vented a diabolical utterance declaring that He did not become flesh, nor was clothed with it, but that this was mere fancy, and illusion, a piece of acting and pretence, although the sufferings, the death, the burial, the thirst, cry aloud against this teaching; supposing that none of these things had happened would not the devil have sown these wicked doctrines of impiety much more widely? For this reason, just as He hungered, as He slept, as He felt fatigue, as He ate and drank, so also did He deprecate death, thereby manifesting his humanity, and that infirmity of human nature which does not submit without pain to be torn from this present life. For had He not uttered any of these things, it might have been said that if He were a man He ought to have experienced human feelings. And what are these? In the case of one about to be crucified, fear and agony, and pain in being torn from present life: for a sense of the charm which surrounds present things is implanted in human nature: on this account wishing to prove the reality of the fleshly clothing, and to give assurance of the incarnation He manifests the actual feelings of man with full demonstration.

This is one consideration, but there is another no less important. And what is this? Christ having come to earth wished to instruct men in all virtue: now the instructor teaches not only by word, but also by deed: for this is the teacher's best method of teaching. A pilot for instance when he makes the apprentice sit by his side shows him how he handles the rudder, but he also joins speech to action, and does not depend upon words alone or example alone: in like manner also an architect when he has placed by his

side the man who is intended to learn from him how a wall is constructed, shows him the way by means of action as well as by means of oral teaching; so also with the weaver, and embroiderer, and gold refiner, and coppersmith—and every kind of art has teachers who instruct both orally and practically. Inasmuch then as Christ Himself came to instruct us in all virtue, He both tells us what ought to be done, and does it. *"For,"* he says, *"he who does and teaches the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."* [Matthew 5:19] Now observe; He commanded men to be lowly-minded, and meek, and He taught this by His words: but see how He also teaches it by His deeds. For having said *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek,"* [Matthew 5:3-4] He shows how these virtues ought to be practised. How then did He teach them? He took a towel and girded Himself and washed the disciples' feet. [John 13:4-5] What can match this lowliness of mind? For He teaches this virtue no longer by His words only but also by His deeds. Again He teaches meekness and forbearance by His acts. How so? He was struck on the face by the servant of the high priest, and said *"If I have spoken evil bear witness of the evil: but if well why do you smite me?"* [John 18:23] He commanded men to pray for their enemies: this also again He teaches by means of His acts: for when He had ascended the cross He said *"Father forgive them for they know not what they do."* [Luke 23:34] As therefore He commanded men to pray so does He Himself pray, instructing you to do so by his own unflagging utterances of prayer. Again He commanded us to do good to those who hate us, and to deal fairly with those who treat us despitefully: [Matthew 5:44] and this He did by his own acts: for he cast devils out of the Jews, who said that He Himself was possessed by a devil, He bestowed benefits on His persecutors, He fed those who were forming designs against Him, He conducted into His kingdom those who were desiring to crucify Him. Again He said to His disciples

"Get you no gold nor silver neither brass in your purses," [Matthew 10:9] thus training them for poverty: and this also He taught by His example, thus saying, *"Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has not where to lay His head."* [Matthew 8:20] And He had neither table nor dwelling nor anything else of that kind: not because He was at a loss to obtain them, but because He was instructing men to go in that path. After the same manner then he taught them also to pray. They said to Him *"Teach us to pray."* [Luke 11:1] Therefore also He prays, in order that they may learn to pray. But it was necessary for them not merely to learn to pray but also how they ought to pray: for this reason He delivered to them a prayer in this form: *"Our Father which art in Heaven hallowed be your name, Your kingdom come: Your will be done, as in Heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors: and lead us not into temptation:"* [Luke 11:2-4] that is into danger, into snares. Since then He commanded them to pray *"lead us not into temptation,"* He instructs them in this very precept by putting it in practice Himself, saying *"Father if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me,"* thus teaching all the saints not to plunge into dangers, not to fling themselves into them but to wait for their approach, and to exhibit all possible courage, only not to rush forwards themselves, or to be the first to advance against terrors. Why so, pray? Both to teach us lowliness of mind, and also to deliver us from the charge of vainglory. On this account it is said also in this passage that when He had spoken these words *"He went away and prayed:"* and after He had prayed He speaks thus to His disciples *"Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation."* [Matthew 26:39-41] Do you see He not only prays but also admonishes? *"For the Spirit indeed is willing,"* He said, *"but the flesh is weak."* [Matthew 26:41] Now this He said by way of emptying their soul

of vanity, and delivering them from pride, teaching them self-restraint, training them to practice moderation. Therefore the prayer which He wished to teach them, He Himself also offered, speaking after the manner of men, not according to His Godhead (for the divine nature is impassable) but according to His manhood. And He prayed as instructing us to pray, and even to seek deliverance from distress; but, if this be not permitted, then to acquiesce in what seems good to God. Therefore He said *"Nevertheless not as I will but as You will:"* not because He had one will and the Father another; but in order that He might instruct men even if they were in distress and trembling, even if danger came upon them, and they were unwilling to be torn from present life, nevertheless to postpone their own will to the will of God: even as Paul also when he had been instructed practically exhibited both these principles; for he besought that temptations might be removed from him, thus saying *"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice:"* [2 Corinthians 12:8] and yet since it did not please God to remove it, he says *"Wherefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in insults, in persecutions."* [2 Corinthians 12:10] But perhaps what I have said is not quite clear: therefore I will make it clearer. Paul incurred many dangers and prayed that he might not be exposed to them. Then he heard Christ saying *"my grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] As soon then as he saw what the will of God was, he in future submitted his will to God's will. By means of this prayer then Christ taught both these truths, that we should not plunge into dangers, but rather pray that we may not fall into them; but if they come upon us we should bear them bravely, and postpone our own will to the will of God. Knowing these things then let us pray that we may never enter into temptation: but if we do enter it let us beseech God to give us patience and courage, and let us honour His will in preference to every will of our own.

For then we shall pass through this present life with safety, and shall obtain the blessings to come: which may we all receive by the favour and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom be to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honour, now and for ever world without end. Amen.

Homily on the Paralytic Let Down Through the Roof

1. Having lately come across the incident of the paralytic who lay upon his bed beside the pool, we discovered a rich and large treasure, not by delving in the ground, but by diving into his heart: we found a treasure not containing silver and gold and precious stones, but endurance, and philosophy, and patience and much hope towards God, which is more valuable than any kind of jewel or source of wealth. For material riches are liable to the designs of robbers, and the tales of false accusers, and the violence of housebreakers, and the villany of servants, and when they have escaped all these things, they often bring the greatest ruin upon those who possess them by exciting the eyes of the envious, and consequently breeding countless storms of trouble. But the spiritual riches escape all these occasions of mischief and are superior to all abuse of this kind, laughing to scorn both robbers, and housebreakers, and slanderers, and false accusers and death itself. For they are not parted from the possessor by death, but on the contrary the possession becomes then more especially secured to the owners, and they accompany them on their journey to the other world, and are transplanted with them to the future life, and become marvellous advocates of those with whom they depart hence, and render the judge propitious to them.

This wealth we found in great abundance stored in the soul of the paralytic. And you are witnesses who with great zeal drew up draughts of this treasure yet without exhausting it. For such is the nature of spiritual wealth; it resembles fountains of water, or rather exceeds their

plenteousness, being most abundant when it has many to draw upon it. For when it enters into any man's soul it is not divided, not diminished, but coming in its entirety to each remains continually unconsumed, being incapable of ever failing: which was just what took place at that time. For although so many have applied to the treasure, and all are drawing upon it as much as they can— but why do I speak of you, seeing that it has made countless persons rich from that time to the present day, and yet abides in its original perfection? Let us not then grow weary in having recourse to this source of spiritual wealth: but as far as possible let us now also draw forth draughts from it, and let us gaze upon our merciful Lord, gaze upon His patient servant. He had been thirty and eight years struggling with an incurable infirmity and was perpetually plagued by it, yet he did not repine, he did not utter a blasphemous word, he did not accuse his Maker, but endured his calamity bravely and with much meekness. And whence is this manifest? You say: for Scripture has not told us anything clearly concerning his former life, but only that he had been thirty-eight years in his infirmity; it has not added a word to prove that he did not show discontent, or anger or petulance. And yet it has made this plain also, if any one will pay careful attention to it, not looking at it curiously and carelessly. For when you hear that on the approach of Christ who was a stranger to him, and regarded merely as a man, he spoke to him with such great meekness, you may be able to perceive his former wisdom. For when Jesus said to him "*Will you be made whole?*" he did not make the natural reply you see me who have been this long time lying sick of the palsy, and do you ask me if I wish to be made whole? Have you come to insult my distress, to reproach me and laugh me to scorn and make a mock of my calamity? He did not say or conceive anything of this kind but meekly replied "*Yea Lord.*" Now if after thirty-eight; years he was thus meek and gentle, when all the vigour and

strength of his reasoning faculties was broken down, consider what he is likely to have been at the outset of his trouble. For be assured that invalids are not so hard to please at the beginning of their disorder, as they are after a long lapse of time: they become most intractable, most intolerable to all, when the malady is prolonged. But as he, after so many years, was so wise, and replied with so much forbearance, it is quite clear that during the previous time also he had been bearing that calamity with much thankfulness.

Considering these things then let us imitate the patience of our fellow-servant: for his paralysis is sufficient to brace up our souls: for no one can be so supine and indolent after having observed the magnitude of that calamity as not to endure bravely all evils which may befall him, even if they are more intolerable than all that were ever known. For not only his soundness but also his sickness has become a cause of the greatest benefit to us: for his cure has stimulated the souls of the hearers to speak the praise of the Lord, and his sickness and infirmity has encouraged you to patience, and urged you to match his zeal; or rather it has exhibited to you the lovingkindness of God. For the actual deliverance of the man to such a malady, and the protracted duration of his infirmity is a sign of the greatest care for his welfare. For as a gold refiner having cast a piece of gold into the furnace suffers it to be proved by the fire until such time as he sees it has become purer: even so God permits the souls of men to be tested by troubles until they become pure and transparent and have reaped much profit from this process of sifting: wherefore this is the greatest species of benefit.

2. Let us not then be disturbed, neither dismayed, when trials befall us. For if the gold refiner sees how long he ought to leave the piece of gold in the furnace, and when he ought to draw it out, and does not allow it to

remain in the fire until it is destroyed and burnt up: much more does God understand this, and when He sees that we have become more pure, He releases us from our trials so that we may not be overthrown and cast down by the multiplication of our evils. Let us then not be repining, or faint-hearted, when some unexpected thing befalls us; but let us suffer Him who knows these things accurately, to prove our hearts by fire as long as He pleases: for He does this for a useful purpose and with a view to the profit of those who are tried.

On this account a certain wise man admonishes us saying *"My Son, if you come to serve the Lord prepare your soul for temptation, set your heart aright and constantly endure and make not haste in time of trouble;"* [Sirach 1:1-2] *"yield to Him"* he says, *"in all things,"* for He knows exactly when it is right to pluck us out of the furnace of evil. We ought therefore everywhere to yield to Him and always to give thanks, and to bear all things contentedly, whether He bestows benefits or chastisement upon us, for this also is a species of benefit. For the physician, not only when he bathes and nourishes the patient and conducts him into pleasant gardens, but also when he uses cautery and the knife, is a physician all the same: and a father not only when he caresses his son, but also when he expels him from his house, and when he chides and scourges him, is a father all the same, no less than when he praises him. Knowing therefore that God is more tenderly loving than all physicians, do not enquire too curiously concerning His treatment nor demand an account of it from Him, but whether He is pleased to let us go free or whether He punishes, let us offer ourselves for either alike; for He seeks by means of each to lead us back to health, and to communion with Himself, and He knows our several needs, and what is expedient for each one, and how and in what manner we ought to be saved, and along that path He leads us. Let us then follow wherever He bids us, and let us not too

carefully consider whether He commands us to go by a smooth and easy path, or by a difficult and rugged one: as in the case of this paralytic. It was one species of benefit indeed that his soul should be purged by the long duration of his suffering, being delivered to the fiery trial of affliction as to a kind of furnace; but it was another benefit no less than this that God was present with him in the midst of the trials, and afforded him great consolation. He it was who strengthened him, and upheld him, and stretched forth a hand to him, and suffered him not to fall. But when you hear that it was God Himself do not deprive the paralytic of his meed of praise, neither him nor any other man who is tried and yet steadfastly endures. For even if we be infinitely wise, even if we are mightier and stronger than all men, yet in the absence of His grace we shall not be able to withstand even the most ordinary temptation. And why do I speak of such insignificant and abject beings as we are? For even if one were a Paul, or a Peter, or a James, or a John, yet if he should be deprived of the divine help he would easily be put to shame, overthrown, and laid prostrate. And on behalf of these I will read you the words of Christ Himself: for He says to Peter *"Behold Satan has asked to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not."* [Luke 22:31-32] What is the meaning of *"sift"*? To turn and twist, and shake and stir and shatter, and worry, which is what takes place in the case of things which are winnowed: but I he says have restrained him, knowing that you are not able to endure the trial, for the expression *"that your faith fail not"* is the utterance of one who signifies that if he had permitted it his faith would have failed. Now if Peter who was such a fervent lover of Christ and exposed his life for Him countless times and sprang into the foremost rank in the Apostolic band, and was pronounced blessed by his Master, and called Peter on this account because he kept a firm and inflexible hold of the faith, would have been

carried away and fallen from profession if Christ had permitted the devil to try him as much as he desired, what other man will be able to stand, apart from His help? Therefore also Paul says *"But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape that you may be able to bear it."*

[1 Corinthians 10:13] For not only does He say that He does not suffer a trial to be inflicted beyond our strength, but even in that which is proportioned to our strength He is present carrying us through it, and bracing us up, if only we ourselves first of all contribute the means which are at our disposal, such as zeal, hope in Him, thanksgiving, endurance, patience. For not only in the dangers which are beyond our strength, but in those which are proportioned to it, we need the divine assistance, if we are to make a brave stand; for elsewhere also it is said *"even as the sufferings of Christ abound to us, even so our comfort also abounds through Christ, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."* So then he who comforted this man is the same who permitted the trial to be inflicted upon him. And now observe after the cure what tenderness He displays. For He did not leave him and depart, but having found him in the temple he says *"behold! You are made whole; sin no more lest some worse thing happen unto you."*

[John 5:14] For had He permitted the punishment because He hated him He would not have released him, He would not have provided for his future safety: but the expression *"lest some worse thing happen unto you"* is the utterance of one who would check coming evils beforehand. He put an end to the disease, but did not put an end to the struggle: He expelled the infirmity but did not expel the dread of it, so that the benefit which had been wrought might remain unmoved. This is the part of a tender-hearted physician, not only to put an end to present pains, but to provide for future

security, which also Christ did, bracing up his soul by the recollection of past events. For seeing that when the things which distress us have departed, the recollection of them oftentimes departs with them, He wishing it to abide continually, says *"sin no more lest some worse thing happen unto you."*

3. Moreover it is possible to discern His forethought and consideration not only from this, but also from that which seems to be a rebuke. For He did not make a public exposure of his sins, but yet He told him that he suffered what he did suffer on account of his sins, but what those sins were He did not disclose; nor did He say *"you have sinned"* or *"you have transgressed,"* but He indicated the fact by one simple utterance *"sin no more;"* and having said so much as just to remind him of it He put him more on the alert against future events, and at the same time He made manifest to us all his patience and courage and wisdom, having reduced him to the necessity of publicly lamenting his calamity, and having displayed his own earnestness on the man's behalf, *"for while I am coming,"* he says, *"another steps down before me:"* [John 5:7] yet he did not publicly expose his sins. For just as we ourselves desire to draw a veil over our sins even so does God much more than we: on this account He wrought the cure in the presence of all, but He gives the exhortation or the advice privately. For He never makes a public display of our sins, except at any time He sees men insensible to them. For when He says *"ye saw me hungry, and fed me not: and thirsty and gave me no drink,"* [Matthew 25:12] He speaks thus at the present time in order that we may not hear these words in time to come. He threatens, He exposes us in this world, that He may not have to expose us in the other: even as He threatened to overthrow the city of the Ninevites [Jonah 1:2] for the very reason that He might not overthrow it. For if He wished to publish our sins He would not announce beforehand that He

would publish them: but as it is He does make this announcement in order that being sobered by the fear of exposure, if not also by the fear of punishment we may purge ourselves from them all. This also is what takes place in the case of baptism: for He conducts the man to the pool of water without disclosing his sins to any one; yet He publicly presents the boon and makes it manifest to all, while the sins of the man are known to no one save God Himself and him who receives the forgiveness of them. This also was what took place in the case of this paralytic, He makes the reproof without the presence of witnesses, or rather the utterance is not merely a reproof but also a justification; He justifies Himself as it were for evil-entreating him so long, telling him and proving to him that it was not without cause and purpose that He had suffered him to be so long afflicted, for He reminded him of his sins, and declared the cause of his infirmity. *"For having found him," we read, "in the temple, He said unto him, sin no more lest some worse thing happen unto you."*

And now since we have derived so much profit from the account of the former paralytic let us turn to the other who is presented to us in St. Matthew's Gospel. For in the case of mines where any one happens to find a piece of gold he makes a further excavation again in the same place: and I know that many of those who read without care imagine that one and the same paralytic is presented by the four evangelists: but it is not so. Therefore you must be on the alert, and pay careful attention to the matter. For the question is not concerned with ordinary matters, and this discourse when it has received its proper solution will be serviceable against both Greeks and Jews and many of the heretics. For thus all find fault with the evangelists as being at strife and variance: yet this is not the fact, Heaven forbid! But although the outward appearance is different, the grace of the Spirit which works upon the soul of each is one, and where the grace of the

Spirit is, there is love, joy, and peace; and there war and disputation, strife and contention are not. How then shall we make it clear that this paralytic is not the same as the other, but a different man? By many tokens, both of place and time, and season, and day, and from the manner of the cure, and the coming of the physician and the loneliness of the man who was healed. And what of this? Some one will say: for have not many of the evangelists given diverse accounts of other signs? Yes, but it is one thing to make statements which are diverse, and another, statements which are contradictory; for the former causes no discord or strife: but that which is now presented to us is a strong case of contradiction unless it be proved that the paralytic at the pool was a different man from him who is described by the other three evangelists. Now that you may understand what is the difference between statements which are diverse and contradictory, one of the evangelists has stated that Christ carried the cross, [John 19:17] another that Simon the Cyrenian carried it: but this causes no contradiction or strife. *"And how,"* you say, *"is there no contradiction between the statements that he carried and did not carry?"* Because both took place. When they went out of the Prætorium Christ was carrying it: but as they proceeded Simon took it from Him and bore it. Again in the case of the robbers, one says that the two blasphemed: another that one of them checked him who was reviling the Lord. [Luke 23:40] Yet in this again there is no contradiction: because here also both things took place, and at the beginning both the men behaved ill: but afterwards when signs occurred, when the earth shook and the rocks were rent, and the sun was darkened, one of them was converted, and became more chastened, and recognized the crucified one and acknowledged his kingdom. For to prevent your supposing that this took place by some constraining force of one impelling him from within, and to remove your perplexity, he exhibits the man to you on the cross while he is

still retaining his former wickedness in order that you may perceive that his conversion was effected from within and out of his own heart assisted by the grace of God and so he became a better man.

4. And it is possible to collect many other instances of this kind from the Gospels, which seem to have a suspicion of contradiction, where there is no real contradiction, the truth being that some incidents have been related by this writer, others by that; or if not occurring at the same hour one author has related the earlier event, another the later; but in the present case there is nothing of this kind, but the multitude of the evidences which I have mentioned proves to those who pay any attention whatever to the matter, that the paralytic was not the same man in both instances. And this would be no slight proof to demonstrate that the evangelists were in harmony with each other and not at variance. For if it were the same man the discord is great between the two accounts: but if it be a different one all material for dispute has been destroyed.

Well then let me now state the actual reasons why I affirm that this man is not the same as that. What are they? The one is cured in Jerusalem, the other in Capernaum; the one by the pool of water, the other in some house; there is the evidence from place: the former during the festival: there is the evidence from the special season: the former had been thirty and eight years suffering from infirmity: concerning the other the evangelist relates nothing of that kind: there is the evidence from time: the former was cured on the Sabbath: there is the evidence from the day: for had this man also been cured on the Sabbath Matthew would not have passed by the fact in silence nor would the Jews who were present have held their peace: for they who found fault for some other reason even when a man was not cured on the Sabbath would have been yet more violent in their accusation against Christ if they had got an additional handle from the argument of the special

day. Moreover this man was brought to Christ: to the other Christ Himself came, and there was no man to assist him. *"Lord,"* said he, *"I have no man:"* whereas this man had many who came to his aid, who also let him down through the roof. And He healed the body of the other man before his soul: for after he had cured the paralysis He then said *"Behold you are made whole, sin no more:"* but not so in this case, but after He had healed his soul, for He said to him *"Son be of good cheer your sins be forgiven you,"* He then cured his paralysis. That this man then is not the same as the other has been clearly demonstrated by these proofs, but it now remains for us to turn to the beginning of the narrative and see how Christ cured the one and the other, and why differently in each case: why the one on the Sabbath and the other not on the Sabbath, why He came Himself to the one but waited for the other to be brought to Him, why He healed the body of the one and the soul of the other first. For He does not these things without consideration and purpose seeing that He is wise and prudent. Let us then give our attention and observe Him as He performs the cure. For if in the case of physicians when they use the knife or cautery or operate in any other way upon a maimed and crippled patient, and cut off a limb, many persons crowd round the invalid and the physician who is doing these things, much more ought we to act thus in this case, in proportion as the physician is greater and the malady more severe, being one which cannot be corrected by human art, but only by divine grace. And in the former case we have to see the skin being cut, and matter discharging, and gore set in motion, and to endure much discomfort produced by the spectacle, and great pain and sorrow not merely from the sight of the wounds, but also from the suffering undergone by those who are subjected to this burning or cutting: for no one is so stony-hearted as to stand by those who are suffering these things, and hear them shrieking, without being himself overcome and

agitated, and experiencing much depression of spirit; but yet we undergo all this owing to our desire to witness the operation. But in this case nothing of that kind has to be seen, no application of fire, no plunging in of an instrument, no flowing of blood, no pain or shrieking of the patient; and the reason of this is, the wisdom of the healer, which needs none of these external aids, but is absolutely self-sufficient. For it is enough that He merely utters a command and all distress ceases. And the wonder is not only that He effects the cure with so much ease, but also without pain, causing no trouble to those who are being healed.

Seeing then that the marvel is greater and the cure more important, and the pleasure afforded to the spectators unalloyed by any kind of sorrow, let us now carefully contemplate Christ in the act of healing. And He entered into a boat and crossed over and came into His own city: and behold they brought to him a man sick of the palsy lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy *"Son! Be of good cheer: your sins are forgiven."* [Matthew 9:1-2] Now they were inferior to the centurion in respect of their faith, but superior to the impotent man by the pool. For the former neither invited the physician nor brought the sick man to the physician; but approached Him as God and said *"Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed."* [Luke 7:7] Now these men did not invite the physician to the house, and so far they are on an equality with the centurion: but they brought the sick man to the physician and so far they are inferior, because they did not say *"speak the word only."* Yet they are far better than the man lying by the pool. For he said *"Lord I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool:"* but these men knew that Christ had no need either of water, or pool, or anything else of that kind: nevertheless Christ not only released the servant of the centurion but the other two men also from their maladies, and did not say: *"because you have proffered a*

smaller degree of faith the cure which you receive shall be in proportion;" but He dismissed the man who displayed the greater faith with eulogy and honour, saying *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."*

[Luke 7:9] On the man who exhibited less faith than this one he bestowed no praise yet He did not deprive him of a cure, no! not even him who displayed no faith at all. But just as physicians when curing the same disorder receive from some person a hundred gold pieces, from others half, from others less and from some nothing at all: even so Christ received from the centurion a large and unspeakable degree of faith, but from this man less and from the other not even an ordinary amount, and yet He healed them all. For what reason then did He deem the man who made no deposit of faith worthy of the benefit? Because his failure to exhibit faith was not owing to indolence, or to insensibility of soul, but to ignorance of Christ and having never heard any miracle in which He was concerned either small or great. On this account therefore the man obtained indulgence: which in fact the evangelist obscurely intimates when he says, *"for he knew not who it was,"* [John 5:13] but he only recognized Him by sight when he lighted upon Him the second time.

5. There are indeed some who say that this man was healed merely because they who brought him believed; but this is not the fact. For *"when He saw their faith"* refers not merely to those who brought the man but also to the man who was brought. Why so? *"Is not one man healed,"* you say, *"because another has believed?"* For my part I do not think so unless owing to immaturity of age or excessive infirmity he is in some way incapable of believing. How then was it you say that in the case of the woman of Canaan the mother believed but the daughter was cured? And how was it that the servant of the centurion who believed rose from the bed of sickness and was preserved. Because the sick persons themselves were not able to believe.

Hear then what the woman of Canaan says: *"My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil [Matthew 15:22] and sometimes she falls into the water and sometimes into the fire:"* now how could she believe whose mind was darkened and possessed by a devil, and was never able to control herself, not in her sound senses? As then in the case of the woman of Canaan so also in the case of the centurion; his servant lay ill in the house, not knowing Christ, himself, nor who He was. How then was he to believe in one who was unknown to him, and of whom he had never yet obtained any experience? But in the case before us we cannot say this: for the paralytic believed. Whence is this manifest? From the very manner of his approach to Christ. For do not attend simply to the statement that they let the man down through the roof: but consider how great a matter it is for a sick man to have the fortitude to undergo this. For you are surely aware that invalids are so faint-hearted and difficult to please as often to decline the treatment administered to them on their sick bed, and to prefer bearing the pain which arises from their maladies to undergoing the annoyance caused by the remedies. But this man had the fortitude to go outside the house, and to be carried into the midst of the market place, and to exhibit himself in the presence of a crowd. And it is the habit of sick folk to die under their disorder rather than disclose their personal calamities. This sick man however did not act thus, but when he saw that the place of assembly was filled, the approaches blocked, the haven of refuge obstructed, he submitted to be let down through the roof. So ready in contrivance is desire, so rich in resource is love. *"For he also that seeks finds, and to him that knocks it shall be opened."* [Luke 11:10] The man did not say to his friends *"What is the meaning of this? Why make this ado? Why push on? Let us wait until the house is cleared and the assembly is dissolved: the crowds will withdraw, we shall then be able to approach him privately and confer about*

these matters. Why should you expose my misfortunes in the midst of all the spectators, and let me down from the roof-top, and behave in an unseemly manner?" That man said none of these things either to himself or to his bearers, but regarded it as an honour to have so many persons made witnesses of his cure. And not from this circumstance only was it possible to discern his faith but also from the actual words of Christ. For after he had been let down and presented Christ said to him, *"Son! Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you."* And when he heard these words he was not indignant, he did not complain, he did not say to the physician *"What mean you by this? I came to be healed of one thing and you heal another. This is an excuse and a pretence and a screen of incompetence. Do you forgive sins which are invisible?"* He neither spoke nor thought any of these things, but waited, allowing the physician to adopt the method of healing which He desired. For this reason also Christ did not go to him, but waited for him to come, that He might exhibit his faith to all. For could He not have made the entrance easy? But He did none of these things; in order that He might exhibit the man's zeal and fervent faith to all. For as He went to the man who had been suffering thirty and eight years because he had no one to aid him, so did He wait for this man to come to him because he had many friends that He might make his faith manifest by the man being brought to Him, and inform us of the other man's loneliness by going to him, and disclose the earnestness of the one and the patience of the other to all and especially to those who were present. For some envious and misanthropical Jews were accustomed to grudge the benefits done to their neighbours and to find fault with His miracles, sometimes on account of the special season, saying that He healed on the sabbath day; sometimes on account of the life of those to whom the benefit was done, saying *"if this man were a prophet He would have known who the woman was who touched Him:"* [Luke 7:39]

not knowing that it is the special mark of a physician to associate with the infirm and to be constantly seen by the side of the sick, not to avoid them, or hurry from their presence— which in fact was what He expressly said to those murmurers; *"They that are whole have no need of a physician but they that are sick."* [Matthew 9:12] Therefore in order to prevent their making the same accusations again He proves first of all that they who come to Him are deserving of a cure on account of the faith which they exhibit. For this reason He exhibited the loneliness of one man, and the fervent faith and zeal of the other: for this reason He healed the one on the Sabbath, the other not on the Sabbath: in order that when you see them accusing and rebuking Christ on another day you may understand that they accused him on the former occasion also not because of their respect for the law, but because they could not contain their own malice. But why did He not first address Himself to the cure of the paralytic, but said, *"Son! Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you?"* He did this very wisely. For it is a habit with physicians to destroy the originating cause of the malady before they remove the malady itself. Often for example when the eyes are distressed by some evil humour and corrupt discharge, the physician, abandoning any treatment of the disordered vision, turns his attention to the head, where the root and origin of the infirmity is: even so did Christ act: He represses first of all the source of the evil. For the source and root and mother of all evil is the nature of sin. This it is which enervates our bodies: this it is which brings on disease: therefore also on this occasion He said, *"Son! Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you."* And on the other He said, *"Behold! You are made whole, sin no more lest some worse thing happen unto you,"* intimating to both that these maladies were the offspring of sin. And in the beginning and outset of the word disease as the consequence of sin attacked the body of Cain. For after the murder of his brother, after that act of

wickedness, his body was subject to palsy. For trembling is the same thing as palsy. For when the strength which regulates a living creature becomes weakened, being no longer able to support all the limbs, it deprives them of their natural power of direction, and then having become unstrung they tremble and turn giddy.

6. Paul also demonstrated this: for when he was reproaching the Corinthians with a certain sin he said, *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you."* Therefore also Christ first removes the cause of the evil, and having said *"Son! Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you,"* He uplifts the spirit and rouses the downcast soul: for the speech became an efficient cause and having entered into the conscience it laid hold of the soul itself and cast out of it all distress. For nothing creates pleasure and affords confidence so much as freedom from self-reproach. For where remission of sins is there is sonship. Even so at least we are not able to call God Father until we have washed away our sins in the pool of the sacred water. It is when we have come up from thence, having put off that evil load, that we say *"Our Father which art in Heaven."* But in the case of the man who was infirm thirty and eight years why did He not act thus, but cured his body first of all? Because by that long period of time his sins had been exhausted: for the magnitude of a trial can lighten the load of sins; as indeed we read was the case with Lazarus, that he received his evil things in full, and thereupon was comforted: and again in another place we read, *"Comfort ye my people, say ye to the heart of Jerusalem, that she has received of the Lord's hand double for her sins."* [Isaiah 40:1-2] And again the prophet says *"O Lord give us peace, for you have requited all things to us,"* [Isaiah 26:12] indicating that penalties and punishments work forgiveness of sins; and this we might prove from many passages. It seems to me then that the reason why He said nothing to that man about remission

of sins, but only secured him against the future, was because the penalty for his sins had been already worked out by the long duration of his sickness: or if this was not the reason, it was because he had not yet attained any high degree of belief concerning Christ that the Lord first addressed Himself to the lesser need, and one which was manifest and obvious, the health of the body; but in the case of the other man He did not act thus, but inasmuch as this man had more faith, and a loftier soul, He spoke to him first of all concerning the more dangerous disease: with the additional object of exhibiting his equality of rank with the Father. For just as in the former case He healed on the Sabbath day because He wished to lead men away from the Jewish mode of observing it, and to take occasion from their reproaches to prove Himself equal with the Father: even so in this instance also, knowing beforehand what they were going to say, He uttered these words that He might use them as a starting-point and a pretext for proving His equality of rank with the Father. For it is one thing when no one brings an accusation or charge to enter spontaneously upon a discourse about these things, and quite another when other persons give occasion for it, to set about the same work in the order and shape of a defence. For the nature of the former demonstration was a stumbling block to the hearers: but the other was less offensive, and more acceptable, and everywhere we see Him doing this, and manifesting His equality not so much by words as by deeds. This at any rate is what the Evangelist implied when he said that the Jews persecuted Jesus not only because He broke the Sabbath but also because He said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God, [John 5:16] which is a far greater thing, for He effected this by the demonstration of His deeds. How then do the envious and wicked act, and those who seek to find a handle in every direction? *"Why does this man blaspheme?"* they say for *"no man can forgive sins save God alone."*

[Mark 2:7] As they persecuted Him there because He broke the Sabbath, and took occasion from their reproaches to declare His equality with the Father in the form of a defence, saying *"my Father works hitherto and I work,"* [John 5:17] so here also starting from the accusations which they make He proves from these His exact likeness to the Father. For what was it they said? *"No man can forgive sins save God alone."* Inasmuch then as they themselves laid down this definition, they themselves introduced the rule, they themselves declared the law, He proceeds to entangle them by means of their own words. *"You have confessed,"* He says, *"that forgiveness of sins is an attribute of God alone: my equality therefore is unquestionable."* And it is not these men only who declare this but also the prophet thus saying: *"who is God as thou?"* and then, indicating His special attribute he adds *"taking away iniquity and passing over unrighteousness."* [Micah 7:18] If then any one else appears thus doing the same thing He also is God, God even as that one is God. But let us observe how Christ argues with them, how meekly and gently, and with all tenderness. *"And behold some of the scribes said within themselves: this man blasphemes."* They did not utter the word, they did not proclaim it through the tongue, but reasoned in the secret recesses of their heart. How then did Christ act? He made public their secret thoughts before the demonstration which was concerned with the cure of the paralytic's body, wishing to prove to them the power of His Godhead. For that it is an attribute of God alone, a sign of His deity to show the secrets of His mind, the Scripture says *"Thou alone know men's hearts."* [1 Kings 8:39] Do you see that this word *"alone,"* is not used with a view of contrasting the Son with the Father. For if the Father alone knows the heart, how does the Son know the secrets of the mind? *"For He Himself"* it is said, *"knew what was in man;"* [John 2:25] and Paul when proving that the knowledge of secret things is a special attribute of God

says, *"and He that search the heart,"* [Romans 8:27] showing that this expression is equivalent to the appellation *"God."* For just as when I say *"He who causes rain said,"* I signify none other than God by mentioning the deed, since it is one which belongs to Him alone: and when I say *"He who makes the sun to rise,"* without adding the word God, I yet signify Him by mentioning the deed: even so when Paul said *"He who searches the hearts,"* he proved that to search the heart is an attribute of God alone. For if this expression had not been of equal force with the name *"God"* for pointing out Him who was signified, he would not have used it absolutely and by itself. For if the power were shared by Him in common with some created being, we should not have known who was signified, the community of power causing confusion in the mind of the hearers. Inasmuch then as this appears to be a special attribute of the Father, and yet is manifested of the Son whose equality becomes thence unquestionable, therefore we read *"why think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier: to say: Your sins are forgiven you or to say arise and walk?"*

7. See moreover He makes a second proof of His power of forgiving sins. For to forgive sins is a very much greater act than to heal the body, greater in proportion as the soul is greater than the body. For as paralysis is a disease of the body, even so sin is a disease of the soul: but although this is the greater it is not palpable: whereas the other although it be less is manifest. Since then He is about to use the less for a demonstration of the greater proving that He acted thus on account of their weakness, and by way of condescension to their feeble condition He says *"whether is easier? To say your sins are forgiven you or to say arise and walk?"* For what reason then should He address Himself to the lesser act on their account? Because that which is manifest presents the proof in a more distinct form. Therefore He did not enable the man to rise until He had said to them *"But*

that you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, (then says He to the sick of the palsy) arise and walk:" as if He had said: forgiveness of sins is indeed a greater sign: but for your sakes I add the less also since this seems to you to be a proof of the other. For as in another case when He praised the centurion for saying *"speak the word only and my servant shall be healed: for I also say to this man go and he goes and to the other come and he comes,"* He confirmed his opinion by the eulogy which He pronounced: and again when He reproved the Jews for finding fault with Him on the Sabbath day saying that He transgressed the law, He proved that He had authority to alter laws: even so in this instance also when some said *"He makes Himself equal with God by promising that which belongs only to the Father,"* He having upbraided and accused them and proved by His deeds that He did not blaspheme supplied us with indisputable evidence that He could do the same things as the Father who begot Him. Observe at least the manner in which He pleases to establish the fact that what belongs to the Father only, belongs also to Himself: for He did not simply enable the paralytic to get up, but also said *"but that you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins:"* thus it was his endeavour and earnest desire to prove above all things that He had the same authority as the Father.

8. Let us then carefully hold fast all these things, both those which were spoken yesterday and the day before that, and let us beseech God that they may abide immoveably in our heart, and let us contribute zeal on our side, and constantly meet in this place. For in this way we shall preserve the truths which have been formerly spoken, and we shall add others to our store; and if any of them slip from our memory through the lapse of time we shall easily be able to recover them by the aid of continual teaching. And not only will the doctrines abide sound and uncorrupt but our course of life

will have the benefit of much diligent care and we shall be able to pass through this present state of existence with pleasure and cheerfulness. For whatever kind of suffering is oppressing our soul when we come here will easily be got rid of: seeing that now also Christ is present, and he who approaches Him with faith will readily receive healing from Him. Suppose some one is struggling with perpetual poverty, and at a loss for necessary food, and often goes to bed hungry, if he has come in here, and heard Paul saying that he passed his time in hunger and thirst and nakedness, and that he experienced this not on one or two or three days, but constantly (this at least is what he indicates when he says "*up to the present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked*"), [1 Corinthians 4:11] he will receive ample consolation, learning by means of these words that God has not permitted him to be in poverty because He hated him or abandoned him: for if this were the effect of hatred, He would not have permitted it in the case of Paul who was of all men especially dear to Him: but He permitted it out of His tender love and providential care, and by way of conducting him to a higher degree of spiritual wisdom. Has some other man a body which is beset with disease and countless sufferings? The condition of these paralytics may be an ample source of consolation and besides these the blessed and brave disciple of Paul who was continually suffering from disorders, and never had any respite from prolonged infirmity, even as Paul also said "*Use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities,*" [1 Timothy 5:23] where he does not speak merely of infirmities as such. Or another having been subjected to false accusation has acquired a bad reputation with the public, and this is continually vexing and gnawing his soul: he enters this place and hears "*Blessed are you when men shall reproach you and say all manner of evil against you falsely: rejoice ye and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in Heaven:*" [Matthew 5:11-12]

then he will lay aside all despondency and receive every kind of pleasure: for it is written *"leap for joy, and be exceeding glad when men cast out your name as evil."* [Luke 6:22-23] In this manner then God comforts those that are evil spoken of, and them that speak evil He puts in fear after another manner saying *"every evil word which men shall speak they shall give an account thereof whether it be good or evil."* [Matthew 12:36]

Another perhaps has lost a little daughter or a son, or one of his kinsfolk, and he also having come here listens to Paul groaning over this present life and longing to see that which is to come, and oppressed by his sojourn in this world, and he will go away with a sufficient remedy for his grief when he has heard him say *"Now concerning them that are asleep I would not have you ignorant brethren that you sorrow not even as others who have no hope."* [1 Thessalonians 4:13] He did not say concerning the dying, but *"concerning them that are asleep"* proving that death is a sleep. As then if we see any one sleeping we are not disturbed or distressed, expecting that he will certainly get up: even so when we see any one dead, let us not be disturbed or dejected for this also is a sleep, a longer one indeed, but still a sleep. By giving it the name of slumber He comforted the mourners and overthrew the accusation of the unbelievers. If you mourn immoderately over him who has departed you will be like that unbeliever who has no hope of a resurrection. He indeed does well to mourn, inasmuch as he cannot exercise any spiritual wisdom concerning things to come: but thou who hast received such strong proofs concerning the future life, why do you sink into the same weakness with him? Therefore it is written *"now concerning them that are asleep we would not have you ignorant that you sorrow not even as others who have no hope."*

And not only from the New Testament but from the Old also it is possible to receive abundant consolation. For when you hear of Job after the

loss of his property, after the destruction of his herds, after the loss not of one, or two, or three, but of a whole troop of sons in the very flower of their age, after the great excellence of soul which he displayed, even if you are the weakest of men, you will easily be able to repent and regain your courage. For thou, O man, hast constantly attended your sick son, and hast seen him laid upon the bed, and hast heard him uttering his last words, and stood beside him while he was drawing his last breath and hast closed his eyes, and shut his mouth: but he was not present at the death struggle of his sons, he did not see them breathing their last gasp, but the house became the common grave of them all, and on the same table brains and blood were poured forth, and pieces of wood and tiles, and dust, and fragments of flesh, and all these things were mingled together in like manner. Nevertheless after such great calamities of this kind he was not petulant, but what does he say— *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; as it seemed good unto the Lord even so has it come to pass, blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* Let this speech be our utterance also over each event which befalls us; whether it be loss of property, or infirmity of body, or insult, or false accusation or any other form of evil incident to mankind, let us say these words *"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; as it seemed good to the Lord so has it come to pass; blessed be the name of the Lord for ever."* If we practise this spiritual wisdom, we shall never experience any evil, even if we undergo countless sufferings, but the gain will be greater than the loss, the good will exceed the evil: by these words you will cause God to be merciful unto you, and wilt defend yourself against the tyranny of Satan. For as soon as your tongue has uttered these words immediately the Devil hastens from you: and when he has hastened away, the cloud of dejection also is dispelled and the thoughts which afflict us take to flight, hurrying off in company with him, and in addition to all this you will win all manner of

blessings both here and in Heaven. And you have a convincing example in the case of Job, and of the Apostle, who having for God's sake despised the troubles of this world, obtained the everlasting blessings. Let us then be trustful and in all things which befall us let us rejoice and give thanks to the merciful God, that we may pass through this present life with serenity, and obtain the blessings to come, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory, honour and might always, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

"If Your Enemy Hunger, Feed Him"

To those who had not attended the assembly.

To those who had not attended the assembly; on the apostolic saying, *"If your enemy hunger feed him,"* and concerning resentment of injuries.

1. I did no good as it seems by the prolonged discourse which I lately addressed to you with a view to kindling your zeal for the assemblies here: for again our Church is destitute of her children. Wherefore also I am again compelled to seem vexatious and burdensome, reproving those who are present, and finding fault with those who have been left behind: with them because they have not put away their sloth, and with you because you have not given a helping hand to the salvation of your brethren. I am compelled to seem burdensome and vexatious, not on behalf of myself, or my own possessions, but on your behalf and for your salvation, which is more precious to me than anything else. Let him who pleases take it in bad part, and call me insolent and impudent, yet will I not cease continually annoying him for the same purpose; for nothing is better for me than this kind of impudence. For it may be, it may be, that this at least if nothing else, will put you to shame, and that to avoid being perpetually importuned concerning the same things, you will take part in the tender care of your brethren. For what profit is there to me in praise when I do not see you making advances in virtue? And what harm is there from the silence of the hearers when I behold your piety increasing? For the praise of the speaker does not consist in applause, but in the zeal of the hearers for godliness: not in noise made just at the time of hearing, but in lasting earnestness. As soon

as applause has issued from the lips it is dispersed in air and perishes; but the moral improvement of the hearers brings an imperishable and immortal reward both to him who speaks and to them who obey. The praise of your cheers makes the speaker illustrious here, but the piety of your soul affords the teacher much confidence before the judgment-seat of Christ. Wherefore if any one loves the speaker, let him not desire the applause but the profit of the hearers. To neglect our brethren is no ordinary wrong, but one which brings extreme punishment, and an inexorable penalty. And the case of the man who buried the talent proves this: he was not reproached at least on account of his own life: for as regarded the deposit itself he did not turn out a bad man, since he restored it intact: nevertheless he did turn out a bad man as regarded his management of the deposit. For he did not double that which was entrusted to him; and so was punished. Whence it is manifest that even if we are earnest and well trained, and have much zeal about hearing the holy scriptures this does not suffice for our salvation. For the deposit must be doubled, and it becomes doubled when together with our own salvation we undertake to make some provision for the good of others. For the man in the parable said "*Lo! There you have that is yours:*" but this did not serve him for a defence: for it was said to him "*you ought to have put the money to the exchangers.*" [Matthew 25:27]

And observe I pray how easy the commands of the Master are: for men indeed make those who lend out capital sums at interest answerable for recalling them; "*you have made the deposit,*" one says, "*you must call it in: I have no concern with the man who has received it.*" But God does not act thus; He only commands us to make the deposit, and does not render us liable for the recall. For the speaker has the power of advising, not of persuading. Therefore he says: "*I make you answerable for depositing only, and not for the recall.*" What can be easier than this? And yet the servant

called the master hard, who was thus gentle and merciful. For such is the wont of the ungrateful and indolent; they always try to shift the blame of their offenses from themselves to their master. And therefore the man was thrust out with torture and bonds into the outer darkness. And lest we should suffer this penalty let us deposit our teaching with the brethren, whether they be persuaded by it, or not. For if they be persuaded they will profit both themselves and us: and if they are not, they involve themselves indeed in inevitable punishment, but will not be able to do us the slightest injury. For we have done our part, by giving them advice: but if they do not listen to it no harm will result to us from that. For blame would attach to us not for failing to persuade, but for failing to advise: and after prolonged and continual exhortation and counsel they and not we, have to reckon henceforth with God.

I have been anxious at any rate to know clearly, whether you continue to exhort your brethren, and if they remain all the time in the same condition of indolence: otherwise I would never have given you any trouble: as it is, I have fears that they may remain uncorrected in consequence of your neglect and indifference. For it is impossible that a man who continually has the benefit of exhortation and instruction should not become better and more diligent. The proverb which I am about to cite is certainly a common one, nevertheless it confirms this very truth. For "*a perpetual dropping of water*" it says, "*wears a rock*," yet what is softer than water? And what is harder than a rock? Nevertheless perpetual action conquers nature: and if it conquers nature much more will it be able to prevail over the human will. Christianity is no child's play, my beloved: no matter of secondary importance. I am continually saying these things, and yet I effect nothing.

2. How am I distressed, think you, when I call to mind that on the festival days the multitudes assembled resemble the broad expanse of the sea, but now not even the smallest part of that multitude is gathered together here? Where are they now who oppress us with their presence on the feast days? I look for them, and am grieved on their account when I mark what a multitude are perishing of those who are in the way of salvation, how large a loss of brethren I sustain, how few are reached by the things which concern salvation, and how the greater part of the body of the Church is like a dead and motionless carcass. *"And what concern is that to us?"* you say. The greatest possible concern if you pay no attention to your brethren, if you do not exhort and advise, if you put no constraint on them, and do not forcibly drag them hither, and lead them away out of their deep indolence. For that one ought not to be useful to himself alone, but also to many others, Christ declared plainly, when He called us salt, [Matthew 5:13] and leaven, and light: [Matthew 5:14] for these things are useful and profitable to others. For a lamp does not shine for itself, but for those who are sitting in darkness: and you are a lamp not that you may enjoy the light by yourself, but that you may bring back yonder man who has gone astray. For what profit is a lamp if it does not give light to him who sits in darkness? And what profit is a Christian when he benefits no one, neither leads any one back to virtue? Again salt is not an astringent to itself but braces up those parts of the body which have decayed, and prevents them from falling to pieces and perishing. Even so do thou, since God has appointed you to be spiritual salt, bind and brace up the decayed members, that is the indolent and sordid brethren, and having rescued them from their indolence as from some form of corruption, unite them to the rest of the body of the Church. And this is the reason why He called you leaven: for leaven also does not leaven itself, but, little though it is, it affects the

whole lump however big it may be. So also do ye: although you are few in number, yet be ye many and powerful in faith, and in zeal towards God. As then the heaven is not weak on account of its littleness, but prevails owing to its inherent heat, and the force of its natural quality, so ye also will be able to bring back a far larger number than yourselves, if you will, to the same degree of zeal as your own. Now if they make the summer season their excuse: for I hear of their saying things of this kind, *"the present stifling heat is excessive, the scorching sun is intolerable, we cannot bear being trampled and crushed in the crowd, and to be steaming all over with perspiration and oppressed by the heat and confined space:"* I am ashamed of them, believe me: for such excuses are womanish: indeed even in their case who have softer bodies, and a weaker nature, such pretexts do not suffice for justification. Nevertheless, even if it seems a disgrace to make a reply to a defence of this kind, yet is it necessary. For if they put forward such excuses as these and do not blush, much more does it behoove us not to be ashamed of replying to these things. What then am I to say to those who advance these pretexts? I would remind them of the three children in the furnace and the flame, who when they saw the fire encircling them on all sides, enveloping their mouth and their eyes and even their breath, did not cease singing that sacred and mystical hymn to God, in company with the universe, but standing in the midst of the pyre sent up their song of praise to the common Lord of all with greater cheerfulness than they who abide in some flowery field: and together with these three children I should think it proper to remind them also of the lions which were in Babylon, and of Daniel and the den: [Daniel 6:24] and not of this one only but also of another den, and the prophet Jeremiah, and the mire in which he was smothered up to the neck. [Jeremiah 38:5] And emerging from these dens, I would conduct these persons who put forward heat as an excuse into the

prison and exhibit Paul to them there, and Silas bound fast in the stocks, covered with bruises and wounds lacerated all over their body with a mass of stripes, yet singing praises to God at midnight and celebrating their holy vigil. For is it not a monstrous thing that those holy men, both in the furnace and the fire, and the den, and among wild beasts, and mire, and in a prison and the stocks, and amidst stripes and jailers, and intolerable sufferings, never complained of any of these things, but were continually uttering prayers and sacred songs with much energy and fervent zeal, while we who have not undergone any of their innumerable sufferings small or great, neglect our own salvation on account of a scorching sun and a little short lived heat and toil, and forsaking the assembly wander away, depraving ourselves by going to meetings which are thoroughly unwholesome? When the dew of the divine oracles is so abundant do you make heat your excuse? *"The water which I will give him,"* says Christ *"shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;"* [John 4:14] and again; *"He that believes in me as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."* [John 7:38] Tell me; when you have spiritual wells and rivers, are you afraid of material heat? Now in the market place where there is so much turmoil and crowding, and scorching wind, how is it that you do not make suffocation and heat an excuse for absenting yourself? For it is impossible for you to say that there you can enjoy a cooler temperature, and that all the heat is concentrated here with us:— the truth is exactly the reverse; here indeed owing to the pavement floor, and to the construction of the building in other respects (for it is carried up to a vast height), the air is lighter and cooler: whereas there the sun is strong in every direction, and there is much crowding, and vapour and dust, and other things which add to discomfort far more than these. Whence it is plain that these senseless

excuses are the offspring of indolence and of a supine disposition, destitute of the fire of the Holy Spirit.

3. Now these remarks of mine are not so much directed to them, as to you who do not bring them forward, do not rouse them from their indolence, and draw them to this table of salvation. Household slaves indeed when they have to discharge some service in common, summon their fellow slaves, but you when you are going to meet for this spiritual ministry suffer your fellow servants to be deprived of the advantage by your neglect. *"But what if they do not desire it?"* you say. Make them desire it by your continual importunity: for if they see you insisting upon it they certainly will desire it. Nay these things are a mere excuse and pretence. How many fathers at any rate are there here who have not their sons standing with them? Was it so difficult for you to bring hither some of your children? Whence it is clear that the absence of all the others who remain outside is due not only to their own indolence, but also to your neglect. But now at least, if never before, rouse yourselves up, and let each person enter the Church accompanied by a member of his family: let them incite and urge one another to the assembly here, the father his son, the son his father, the husbands their wives, and the wives their husbands, the master his slave, brother his brother, friend his friend: or rather let us not summon friends only but also enemies to this common treasury of good things. If your enemy sees your care for his welfare, he will undoubtedly relinquish his hatred.

Say to him: *"are you not ashamed and do you not blush before the Jews who keep their sabbath with such great strictness, and from the evening of it abstain from all work? And if they see the sun verging towards setting on the day of the Preparation they break off business, and cut short their traffic: and if any one who has been making a purchase from them,*

before the evening, comes in the evening bringing the price, they do not suffer themselves to take it, or to accept the money." And why do I speak of the price of market wares and transaction of business? Even if it were possible to receive a treasure they would rather lose the gain than trample on their law. Are the Jews then so strict, and this when they keep the law out of due season, and cling to an observance of it which does not profit them, but rather does them harm: and will you, who art superior to the shadow, to whom it has been vouchsafed to see the Sun of Righteousness, who art ranked as a citizen of the Heavenly commonwealth, will you not display the same zeal as those who unseasonably cleave to what is wrong, thou who hast been entrusted with the truth, but although you are summoned here for only a short part of the day, can you not endure to spend even this upon the hearing of the divine oracles? And what kind of indulgence, pray, could you obtain? And what answer will you have to make which is reasonable and just? It is utterly impossible that one who is so indifferent and indolent should ever obtain indulgence, even if he should allege the necessities of worldly affairs ten thousand times over as an excuse. Do you not know that if you come and worship God and take part in the work which goes on here, the business you have on hand is made much easier for you? Have you worldly anxieties? Come here on that account that by the time you spend here you may win for yourself the favour of God, and so depart with a sense of security; that you may have Him for your ally, that you may become invincible to the dæmons because you are assisted by the heavenly hand. If you have the benefit of prayers uttered by the fathers, if you take part in common prayer, if you listen to the divine oracles, if you win for yourself the aid of God, if, armed with these weapons, you then go forth, not even the devil himself will be able henceforth to look you in the face, much less wicked men who are eager to

insult and malign you. But if you go from your house to the market place, and are found destitute of these weapons, you will be easily mastered by all who insult you. This is the reason why both in public and private affairs, many things occur contrary to our expectation, because we have not been diligent about spiritual things in the first place, and secondarily about the secular, but have inverted the order. For this reason also the proper sequence and right arrangement of things has been upset, and all our affairs are full of much confusion. Can you imagine what distress and grief I suffer when I observe, that if a public holy day and festival is at hand there is a concourse of all the inhabitants of the city, although there is no one to summon them; but when the holy day and festival are past, even if we should crack our voice by continuing to call you all day long there is no one who pays any heed? For often when turning these things over in my mind I have groaned heavily, and said to myself: What is the use of exhortation or advice, when you do everything merely by the force of habit, and do not become a whit more zealous in consequence of my teaching? For whereas in the festivals you need no exhortation from me, but, when they are past you profit nothing by my teaching, do you not show that my discourse, so far as you are concerned, is superfluous?

4. Perhaps many of those who hear these things are grieved. But such is not the sentiment of the indolent: else they would put away their carelessness, like ourselves, who are daily anxious about your affairs. And what gain do you make by your secular transactions in proportion to the damage you sustain? It is impossible to depart from any other assembly, or gathering, in the possession of so much gain as you receive from the time spent here, whether it be the law court, or council-chamber, or even the palace itself. For we do not commit the administration of nations or cities nor the command of armies to those who enter here, but another kind of

government more dignified than that of the empire itself; or rather we do not ourselves commit it, but the grace of the spirit.

What then is the government, more dignified than that of the empire, which they who enter here receive? They are trained to master untoward passions, to rule wicked lusts, to command anger, to regulate ill-will, to subdue vainglory. The emperor, seated on the imperial throne, and wearing his diadem, is not so dignified as the man who has elevated his own inward right reason to the throne of government over base passions, and by his dominion over them has bound as it were a glorious diadem upon his brow. For what profit is there, pray, in purple, and raiment wrought with gold, and a jewelled crown, when the soul is in captivity to the passions? What gain is there in outward freedom when the ruling element within us is reduced to a state of disgraceful and pitiable servitude. For just as when a fever penetrates deep, and inflames all the inward parts, there is no benefit to be got from the outward surface of the body, although it is not affected in the same way: even so when our soul is violently carried away by the passion within, no outward government, not even the imperial throne, is of any profit, since reason is deposed from the throne of empire by the violent usurpation of the passions, and bows and trembles beneath their insurrectionary movements. Now to prevent this taking place prophets and apostles concur on all sides in helping us, repressing our passions, and expelling all the ferocity of the irrational element within us, and committing a mode of government to us far more dignified than the empire. This is why I said that they who deprive themselves of this care receive a blow in the vital parts, sustaining greater damage than can be inflicted from any other quarter inasmuch as they who come here get greater gain than they could derive from any other source: even as Scripture has declared. The law said "*You shall not appear before the Lord empty;*" [Exodus 23:15] that is, enter

not into the temple without sacrifices. Now if it is not right to go into the house of God without sacrifices, much more ought we to enter the assembly accompanied by our brethren: for this sacrifice and offering is better than that, when you bring a soul with you into the Church. Do you not see doves which have been trained, how they hunt for others when they are let out? Let us also do this. For what kind of excuse shall we have, if irrational creatures are able to hunt for an animal of their own species, while we who have been honoured with reason and so much wisdom neglect this kind of pursuit? I exhorted you in my former discourse with these words: *"Go, each of you to the houses of your neighbours, wait for them to come out, lay hold of them, and conduct them to their common mother: and imitate those who are mad upon theatre going, who diligently arrange to meet each other and so wait at early dawn to see that iniquitous spectacle."* Yet I have not effected anything by this exhortation. Therefore I speak again and shall not cease speaking, until I have persuaded you. Hearing profits nothing unless it is accompanied by practice. It makes our punishment heavier, if we continually hear the same things and do none of the things which are spoken. That the chastisement will be heavier, hear the statement of Christ. *"If I had not come and spoken to them they had not sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."* [John 15:22] And the Apostle says *"for not the hearers of the law shall be justified."* [Romans 2:13] These things He says to the hearers; but when He wishes to instruct the speaker also, that even he will not gain anything from his teaching unless his behaviour is in close correspondence with his doctrine, and his manner of life is in harmony with his speech, hear how the Apostle and the prophet address themselves to him: for the latter says *"but to the sinner said God, why do you preach my laws and takest my covenant in your mouth, whereas you have hated instruction?"* And the Apostle, addressing himself to these same again who

thought great things of their teaching, speaks on this wise: *"You are confident that you yourself art a leader of the blind, a light of those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes: thou therefore that teachest another do you not teach yourself?"* [Romans 2:19-21]

Inasmuch then as it could neither profit me the speaker to speak, nor you the hearers to hear, unless we comply with the things which are spoken, but rather would increase our condemnation, let us not limit the display of our zeal to hearing only, but let us observe what is said, in our deeds. For it is indeed a good thing to spend time continually in hearing the divine oracles: but this good thing becomes useless when the benefit to be derived from hearing is not linked with it.

Therefore that you may not assemble here in vain I shall not cease beseeching you with all earnestness, as I have often besought you before, *"conduct your brethren to us, exhort the wanderers, counsel them not by word only but also by deed."* This is the more powerful teaching— that which comes through our manners and behaviour— Even if you do not utter a word, but yet, after you have gone out of this assembly, by your mien, and your look, and your voice and all the rest of your demeanour you exhibit to the men who have been left behind the gain which you have brought away with you, this is sufficient for exhortation and advice. For we ought to go out from this place as it were from some sacred shrine, as men who have descended from heaven itself, who have become sedate, and philosophical, who do and say everything in proper measure: and when a wife sees her husband returning from the assembly, and a father his son, and a friend his friend, and an enemy his enemy, let them all receive an impression of the benefit which you have derived from coming here: and they will receive it, if they perceive that you have become milder, more philosophical, more devout. Consider what privileges you enjoy who hast

been initiated into the mysteries, with what company you offer up that mystic hymn, with what company you cry aloud the "*Ter sanctus*." Teach "*them that are without*" that you have joined the chorus of the Seraphim, that you are ranked as a citizen of the commonwealth above, that you have been enrolled in the choir of Angels, that you have conversed with the Lord, that you have been in the company of Christ. If we regulate ourselves in this way we shall not need to say anything, when we go out to those who are left behind: but from our advantage they will perceive their own loss and will hasten hither, so as to enjoy the same benefits themselves. For when, merely by the use of their senses, they see the beauty of your soul shining forth, even if they are the most stupid of men, they will become enamoured of your goodly appearance. For if corporeal beauty excites those who behold it, much more will symmetry of soul be able to move the spectator, and stimulate him to equal zeal. Let us then adorn our inward man, and let us be mindful of the things which are said here, when we go out: for there especially is it a proper time to remember them; and just as an athlete displays in the lists the things which he has learned in the training school: even so ought we to display in our transactions in the world without the things which we have heard here.

5. Bear in mind then the things which are said here, that when you have gone out and the devil lays hold of you either by means of anger or vainglory, or any other passion, you may call to remembrance the teaching which you have received here and may be able easily to shake off the grasp of the evil one. Do you not see the wrestling-masters in the practising grounds, who, after countless contests having obtained exemption from wrestling on account of their age, sit outside the lines by the side of the dust and shout to those who are wrestling inside, telling one to grasp a hand, or drag a leg, or seize upon the back, and by many other directions of that

kind, saying, *"if you do so and so you will easily throw your antagonist,"* they are of the greatest service to their pupils? Even so do thou look to your training master, the blessed Paul, who after countless victories is now sitting outside the boundary, I mean this present life, and cries aloud to us who are wrestling, shouting out by means of his Epistles, when he sees us overcome by wrath and resentment of injuries, and choked by passion; *"if your enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink;"* [Romans 12:20] — a beautiful precept full of spiritual wisdom, and serviceable both to the doer and the receiver. But the remainder of the passage causes much perplexity, and does not seem to correspond to the sentiment of him who uttered the former words. And what is the nature of this? The saying that *"by so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head."* For by these words he does a wrong both to the doer and the receiver: to the latter by setting his head on fire, and placing coals upon it; for what good will he get from receiving food and drink in proportion to the evil he will suffer from the heaping of coals on his head? Thus then the recipient of the benefit is wronged, having a greater vengeance inflicted on him, but the benefactor also is injured in another way. For what can he gain from doing good to his enemies when he acts in the hope of revenge? For he who gives meat and drink to his enemy for the purpose of heaping coals of fire on his head would not become merciful and kind, but cruel and harsh, having inflicted an enormous punishment by means of a small benefit. For what could be more unkind than to feed a person for the purpose of heaping coals of fire on his head? This then is the contradiction: and now it remains that the solution should be added, in order that by those very things which seem to do violence to the letter of the law you may clearly see all the wisdom of the lawgiver. What then is the solution?

That great and noble-minded man was well aware of the fact that to be reconciled quickly with an enemy is a grievous and difficult thing; grievous and difficult, not on account of its own nature, but of our moral indolence. But he commanded us not only to be reconciled with our enemy, but also to feed him; which was far more grievous than the former. For if some are infuriated by the mere sight of those who have annoyed them, how would they be willing to feed them when they were hungry? And why do I speak of the sight infuriating them? If any one makes mention of the persons, and merely introduces their name in society, it revives the wound in our imagination, and increases the heat of passion. Paul then being aware of all these things and wishing to make what was hard and difficult of correction smooth and easy, and to persuade one who could not endure to see his enemy, to be ready to confer that benefit already mentioned upon him, added the words about coals of fire, in order that a man prompted by the hope of vengeance might hasten to do this service to one who had annoyed him. And just as the fisherman surrounding the hook on all sides with the bait presents it to the fishes in order that one of them hastening to its accustomed food may be captured by means of it and easily held fast: even so Paul also wishing to lead on the man who has been wronged to bestow a benefit on the man who has wronged him does not present to him the bare hook of spiritual wisdom, but having covered it as it were with a kind of bait, I mean the *"coals of fire,"* invites the man who has been insulted, in the hope of inflicting punishment, to confer this benefit on the man who has annoyed him; but when he has come he holds him fast in future, and does not let him make off, the very nature of the deed attaching him to his enemy; and he all but says to him: *"if you are not willing to feed the man who has wronged you for piety's sake: feed him at least from the hope of punishing him."* For he knows that if the man once sets his hand to the work

of conferring this benefit, a starting-point is made and a way of reconciliation is opened for him. For certainly no one would have the heart to regard a man continually as his enemy to whom he has given meat and drink, even if he originally does this in the hope of vengeance. For time as it goes on relaxes the tension of his anger. As then the fisherman, if he presented the bare hook would never allure the fish, but when he has covered it gets it unawares into the mouth of the creature who comes up to it: so also Paul if he had not advanced the expectation of inflicting punishment would never have persuaded those who were wronged to undertake to benefit those who had annoyed them. Wishing then to persuade those who recoiled in disgust, and were paralysed by the very sight of their enemies, to confer the greatest benefits upon them, he made mention of the coals of fire, not with a view of thrusting the persons in question into inexorable punishment, but in order that when he had persuaded those who were wronged to benefit their enemies in the expectation of punishing them, he might afterwards in time persuade them to abandon their anger altogether.

6. Thus then did he encourage the man who has been wronged; but observe also how he unites again the man who has done the wrong to him who has been provoked. First of all by the very manner of the benefit: (for there is no one so degraded and unfeeling as to be unwilling, when he receives meat and drink, to become the servant and friend of him who does this for him): and in the second place through the dread of vengeance. For the passage, *"by so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head"* seems indeed to be addressed to the person who gives the food; but it more especially touches him who has caused the annoyance, in order that through fear of this punishment he may be deterred from remaining continually in a state of enmity, and being aware that the reception of food and drink might

do him the greatest mischief if he constantly retains his animosity, may suppress his anger. For thus he will be able to quench the coals of fire. Wherefore the proposed punishment and vengeance both induces the one who has been wronged to benefit him who has annoyed him, and it deters and checks him who has given the provocation, and impels him to reconciliation with the man who gives him meat and drink. Paul therefore linked the two persons by a twofold bond, the one depending on a benefit, the other on an act of vengeance. For the difficulty is to make a beginning and to find an opening for the reconciliation: but when that has once been cleared in whatever way it may be, all which follows will be smooth and easy. For even if at first the man who has been annoyed feeds his enemy in the hope of punishing him, yet becoming his friend by the act of giving him food he will be able to expel the desire of vengeance. For when he has become a friend he will no longer feed the man who has been reconciled to him, with an expectation of this kind. Again he who has given the provocation, when he sees the man who has been wronged electing to give him meat and drink, casts out all his animosity, both on account of this deed, and also of his fear of the punishment which is in store for him, even if he be excessively hard and harsh and stony hearted, being put to shame by the benevolence of him who gives him food, and dreading the punishment reserved for him, if he continues to be an enemy after accepting the food.

For this reason Paul did not stop even here in his exhortation, but when he has emptied each side of wrath he proceeds to correct their disposition, saying, *"be not overcome of evil."* *"For if,"* he says, *"you continue to bear resentment and to seek revenge you seem indeed to conquer your enemy, but in reality you are being conquered by evil, that is, by wrath: so that if you wish to conquer, be reconciled, and do not make an attack upon your*

adversary;" for a brilliant victory is that in which by means of good, that is to say by forbearance, you overcome evil, expelling wrath and resentment. But the injured man, when inflamed with passion would not have borne these words. Therefore when he had satisfied his wrath he proceeded to conduct him to the best reason for reconciliation, and did not permit him to remain permanently animated by the wicked hope of vengeance. Do you perceive the wisdom of the lawgiver? And that you may learn that he introduced this law only on account of the weakness of those who would not otherwise be content to make terms among themselves, hear how Christ, when He ordained a law on this same subject did not propose the same reward, as the Apostle; but, having said *"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you,"* which means give them food and drink, He did not add *"for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on their heads:"* but what did He say? *"that you may become like your Father who is in Heaven."*

[Matthew 5:44] Naturally so, for He was discoursing to Peter, James, and John and the rest of the apostolic band: therefore He proposed that reward. But if you say that even on this understanding the precept is onerous you improve once more the defence which I am making for Paul, but you deprive yourself of every plea of indulgence. For I can prove to you that this which seems to you onerous was accomplished under the Old Dispensation when the manifestation of spiritual wisdom was not so great as it is now. For this reason also Paul did not introduce the law in his own words, but used the very expressions which were employed by him who originally brought it in, that he might leave no room for excuse to those who do not observe it: for the precept *"if your enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink"* is not the utterance of Paul in the first instance, but of Solomon. [Proverbs 25:21-22] For this reason he quoted the words that he might persuade the hearer that for one who has been advanced to such a

high standard of wisdom to regard an old law as onerous and grievous which was often fulfilled by the men of old time, is one of the basest things possible. Which of the ancients, you ask, fulfilled it? There were many, but among others David especially did so more abundantly. He did not indeed merely give food or drink to his enemy, but also rescued him several times from death, when he was in jeopardy; and when he had it in his power to slay him he spared him once, twice, yea many times. As for Saul he hated and abhorred him so much after the countless good services which he had done, after his brilliant triumphs, and the salvation which he had wrought in the matter of Goliath, that he could not bear to mention him by his own name, but called him after his father. For once when a festival was at hand, and Saul, having devised some treachery against him, and contrived a cruel plot, did not see him arrive— *"where,"* said he, *"is the son of Jesse?"*

[1 Samuel 20:23] He called him by his father's name, both because on account of his hatred he could not endure the recollection of his proper name, and also because he thought to damage the distinguished position of that righteous man by a reference to his low birth—a miserable and despicable thought: for certainly, even if he had some accusation to bring against the father this could in no wise injure David. For each man is answerable for his own deeds, and by these he can be praised and accused. But as it was, not having any evil deed to mention, he brought forward his low birth, expecting by this means to throw his glory into the shade, which in fact was the height of folly. For what kind of offense is it to be the child of insignificant and humble men, *"the son of Jesse,"* but when David found him sleeping inside the cave, he did not call him the *"son of Kish,"* but by his title of honour: *"for I will not lift up my hand,"* he said, *"against the Lord's anointed."* [1 Samuel 26:11] So purely free was he from wrath and resentment of injuries: he calls him the Lord's anointed who had done him

such great wrongs, who was thirsting for his blood, who after his countless good services had many times attempted to destroy him. For he did not consider how Saul deserved to be treated, but he considered what was becoming for himself both to do and to say, which is the greatest stretch of moral wisdom. How so? When you have got your enemy in a prison, made fast by a twofold, or rather by a triple chain, confinement of space, dearth of assistance, and necessity of sleep, do you not demand a penalty and punishment of him? *"No,"* he says; *"for I am not now regarding what he deserves to suffer, but what it behooves me to do."* He did not look to the facility for slaying, but to the accurate observance of the moral wisdom which was becoming to him. And yet which of the existing circumstances was not sufficient to prompt him to the act of slaughter? Was not the fact that his enemy was delivered bound into his hands a sufficient inducement? For you are aware I suppose that we hasten more eagerly to deeds for which facilities abound, and the hope of success increases our desire to act, which was just what happened then in his case.

Well! Did the captain who then counselled and urged him to the deed, did the memory of past events induce him to slay? No one of these things moved him: in fact the very facility for slaughter averted him from it: for he bethought him that God had put Saul in his hands for the purpose of furnishing ample ground and opportunity for the exercise of moral wisdom. You then perhaps admire him, because he did not cherish the memory of any of his past evils: but I am much more astonished at him for another reason. And what is this? That the fear of future events did not impel him to lay violent hands on his enemy. For he knew clearly that if Saul escaped his hands, he would again be his adversary; yet he preferred exposing himself to danger by letting go the man who had wronged him, to providing for his own security by laying violent hands upon his foe. What could equal then

the great and generous spirit of this man, who, when the law commanded eye to be plucked out for eye, and tooth for tooth, and retaliation on equal terms, [Deuteronomy 19:21] not only abstained from doing this, but exhibited a far greater measure of moral wisdom? At least if he had slain Saul at that time he would have retained credit for moral wisdom unimpaired, not merely because he had acted on the defensive, not being himself the originator of violence, but also because by his great moderation he was superior to the precept "*an eye for an eye.*" For he would not have inflicted one slaughter in return for one; but, in return for many deaths, which Saul endeavoured to bring on him, having attempted to slay him not once or twice but many times, he would have brought only one death on Saul; and not only this, but if he had proceeded to avenge himself out of fear of the future, even this, combined with the things already mentioned, would procure him the reward of forbearance without any deduction. For he who is angry on account of the things which have been done to him, and demands satisfaction would not be able to obtain the praise of forbearance: but when a man dismisses the consideration of all past evils, although they are many and painful, but is compelled to take steps for self-defence from fear of the future, and by way of providing for his own security, no one would deprive him of the rewards of moderation.

7. Nevertheless David did not act even thus, but found a novel and strange form of moral wisdom: and neither the remembrance of things past, nor the fear of things to come, nor the instigation of the captain, nor the solitude of the place, nor the facility for slaying, nor anything else incited him to kill; but he spared the man who was his enemy, and had given him pain just as if he was some benefactor, and had done him much good. What kind of indulgence then shall we have, if we are mindful of past transgressions, and avenge ourselves on those who have given us pain,

whereas that innocent man who had undergone such great sufferings and expected more and worse evils to befall him in consequence of saving his enemy, is seen to spare him, so as to prefer incurring danger himself and to live in fear and trembling, rather than put to a just death the man who would cause him endless troubles?

His moral wisdom then we may perceive, not only from the fact that he did not slay Saul, when there was so strong a compulsion, but also that he did not utter an irreverent word against him, although he who was insulted would not have heard him. Yet we often speak evil of friends when they are absent, he on the contrary not even of the enemy who had done him such great wrong. His moral wisdom then we may perceive from these things: but his lovingkindness and tender care from what he did after these things. For when he had cut off the fringe of Saul's garment, and had taken away the bottle of water he withdrew afar off and stood and shouted, and exhibited these things to him whose life he had preserved, doing so not with a view to display and ostentation, but desiring to convince him by his deeds that he suspected him without a cause as his enemy, and aiming therefore at winning him into friendship. Nevertheless when he had even thus failed to persuade him, and could have laid hands on him, he again chose rather to be an exile from his country and to sojourn in a strange land, and suffer distress every day, in procuring necessary food than to remain at home and vex his adversary. What spirit could be kinder than his? He was indeed justified in saying *"Lord remember David and all his meekness."* Let us also imitate him, and let us neither say nor do evil to our enemies, but benefit them according to our power: for we shall do more good to ourselves than to them. *"For if you forgive your enemies,"* we are told *"you shall be forgiven."* [Matthew 6:14] Forgive base offenses that you may receive a royal pardon for your offenses; but if any one has done you great wrongs,

the greater the wrongs you forgive, the greater will be the pardon which you will receive. Therefore we have been instructed to say "*Forgive us, as we forgive,*" that we may learn that the measure of our forgiveness takes its beginning in the first place from ourselves. Wherefore in proportion to the severity of the evil which the enemy does to us is the greatness of the benefit which he bestows. Let us then be earnest and eager to be reconciled with those who have vexed us, whether their wrath be just or unjust. For if you are reconciled here, you are delivered from judgment in the other world; but if in the interval while the hatred is still going on, death interrupting steps in and carries the enmity away with it, it follows of necessity that the trial of the case should be brought forward in the other world. As then many men when they have a dispute with one another, if they come to a friendly understanding together outside the law court save themselves loss, and alarm, and many risks, the issue of the case turning out in accordance with the sentiment of each party; but if they severally entrust the affair to the judge the only result to them will be loss of money, and in many cases a penalty, and the permanent endurance of their hatred; even so here if we come to terms during our present life we shall relieve ourselves from all punishment; but if while remaining enemies we depart to that terrible tribunal in the other world we shall certainly pay the utmost penalty at the sentence of the judge there, and shall both of us undergo inexorable punishment: he who is unjustly angry because he is thus unjustly disposed, and he who is justly angry, because he has, however justly, cherished resentment. For even if we have been unjustly ill-treated, we ought to grant pardon to those who have wronged us. And observe how he urges and incites those who have unjustly given pain to reconciliation with those whom they have wronged. "*If you offer your gift before the altar, and there rememberest that your brother has ought against you, go your way; first be*

reconciled to your brother." [Matthew 5:23-24] He did not say, *"assemble, and offer your sacrifice"* but *"be reconciled and then offer it."* Let it lie there, he says, in order that the necessity of making the offering may constrain him who is justly angry to come to terms even against his will. See how he again prompts us to go to the man who has provoked us when he says *"Forgive your debtors in order that your Father may also forgive your trespasses."* For He did not propose a small reward, but one which far exceeds the magnitude of the achievement. Considering all these things then, and counting the recompense which is given in this case and remembering that to wipe away sins does not entail much labour and zeal, let us pardon those who have wronged us. For that which others scarcely accomplish, I mean the blotting out of their own sins by means of fasting and lamentations, and prayers, and sackcloth, and ashes, this it is possible for us easily to effect without sackcloth and ashes and fasting if only we blot out anger from our heart, and with sincerity forgive those who have wronged us. May the God of peace and love, having banished from our soul all wrath and bitterness, and anger, deign to grant that we being closely knit one to another according to the proper adjustment of the parts, [Ephesians 4:16] may with one accord, one mouth and one soul continually offer up our hymns of thanksgiving due to Him: for to Him be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Homily Against Publishing the Errors of the Brethren

1. [I account] you happy for the zeal, beloved, with which you flock into the Father's house. For from this zeal I have ground for feeling confidence about your health also with respect to the soul; for indeed the school of the Church is an admirable surgery— a surgery, not for bodies, but for souls. For it is spiritual, and sets right, not fleshly wounds, but errors of the mind, and of these errors and wounds the medicine is the word. This medicine is compounded, not from the herbs growing on the earth, but from the words proceeding from heaven— this no hands of physicians, but tongues of preachers have dispensed. On this account it lasts right through; and neither is its virtue impaired by length of time, nor defeated by any strength of diseases. For certainly the medicines of physicians have both these defects; for while they are fresh they display their proper strength, but when much time has passed; just as those bodies which have grown old; they become weaker; and often too the difficult character of maladies is wont to baffle them; since they are but human. Whereas the divine medicine is not such as this; but after much time has intervened, it still retains all its inherent virtue. Ever since at least Moses was born (for from thence dates the beginning of the Scripture) it has healed so many human beings; and not only has it not lost its proper power, but neither has any disease ever yet overcome it. This medicine it is not possible to get by payment of silver; but he who has displayed sincerity of purpose and disposition goes his way having it all. On account of this both rich and poor alike obtain the benefit of this healing process. For where there is a necessity to pay down money

the man of large means indeed shares the benefit; but the poor man often has to go away deprived of the gain, since his income does not suffice him for the making up of the medicine. But in this case, since it is not possible to pay down silver coin, but it is needful to display faith and a good purpose, he who has paid down these with forwardness of mind, this is he who most reaps the advantage; since indeed these are the price paid for the medicinal treatment. And the rich and the poor man share the benefit alike; or rather it is not alike that they share the benefit, but often the poor man goes away in the enjoyment of more. What ever can be the reason? It is because the rich man, possessed beforehand by many thoughts, having the pride and puffed-up temper belonging to wealthiness; living with carelessness and lazy ease as companions, receives the medicine of the hearing of the Scriptures not with much attention, nor with much earnestness; but the poor man, far removed from delicate living and gluttony and indolence; spending all his time in handicraft and honest labours; and gathering hence much love of wisdom for the soul; becomes thereby more attentive and free from slackness, and is wont to give his mind with more accurate care to all that is said: whence also, inasmuch as the price he has paid is higher, the benefit which he departs having reaped is greater.

2. It is not as absolutely bringing an accusation against those who are wealthy that I say all this; nor as praising the poor without reference to circumstances: for neither is wealth an evil, but the having made a bad use of wealth; nor is poverty a virtue, but the having made a virtuous use of poverty. That rich man who was in the time of Lazarus was punished, not because he was rich, but because he was cruel and inhuman. And that poor man who rested in the bosom of Abraham was praised, not because he was poor, but because he had borne his poverty with thankfulness.

For of things— (now attend carefully to this saying; for it will avail to put into you sufficient religious knowledge, and to cast out all unsound reasoning, and to bring about your having your judgment right concerning the truth of things)— well, of things some are by nature morally good, and others the contrary; and others neither good nor evil, but they occupy the intermediate position. A good thing piety is by nature, impiety an evil thing; a good thing virtue, an evil thing wickedness; but wealth and poverty in themselves are neither the one nor the other; but from the will of those who use them they become either the one or the other. For if you have used your wealth for purposes of philanthropy, the thing becomes to you a foundation of good; but if for rapine and grasping and insolence, you have turned the use of it to the direct opposite; but for this wealth is not chargeable, but he who has used his wealth for insolence. So also we may say of poverty: if you have borne it nobly by giving thanks to the Master, what has been done becomes to you a cause and ground for receiving crowns; but if on account of this thou blaspheme your Creator, and accuse Him for His providence, you have again used the thing to an evil purpose. But just as in that case it is not wealth that is responsible for the avarice, but the person who has made a bad use of wealth, so also here we are not to lay the blame of the blasphemy on poverty, but on him who did not choose to bear the thing in a sober spirit. For in every case both the praise and the blame belong to our own will and choice. Good is wealth, yet not absolutely, but to him only to whom it is not sin; and again poverty is wicked, but not absolutely, but only in the mouth of the impious, because he is discontented, because he blasphemes, because he is indignant, because he accuses Him who has made him.

3. Let us not therefore accuse riches, nor revile poverty absolutely, but those who do not will to use these virtuously; for the things themselves lie

in the middle. But as I was saying (for it is good to return to the former subject), both rich and poor enjoy the benefit of the medicines administered here with the same boldness and freedom; and often the poor with more earnestness. For the special excellence of the medicines is not this only, that they heal souls, that their virtue is not destroyed by length of time, that they are not worsted by any disease, that the benefit is publicly offered gratuitously, that the healing treatment is on a footing of equality both for rich and poor— but they have another quality also not inferior to these good points. Pray of what character is this? It is that we do not publicly expose those who come to this surgery. For they who go off to the surgeries of the outside world, have many who examine their wounds, and unless the physician have first uncovered the sore, he does not apply the dressing; but here not so, but seeing as we do innumerable patients, we go through the medical treatment of them in a latent manner. For not by dragging into publicity those who have sinned do we thus noise abroad the sins committed by them; but after putting forth our teaching, as common to all, we leave it entirely to the conscience of the hearers; so that each may draw to himself from what is said the suitable medicine for his own wound. For there proceeds the word of doctrine from the tongue of the speaker, containing accusation of wickedness, praise of virtue, blame of lewdness, commendation of chasteness, censure of pride, praise of gentleness, just as a medicine of varied and manifold ingredients, compounded from every kind; and to take what is applicable to himself and salutary is the part of each of the hearers. The word then issues openly, and settling into the conscience of each, secretly both affords the healing treatment which comes from it, and before the malady has been divulged, has often restored health.

4. You at all events heard yesterday how I extolled the power of prayer, how I reproached those who pray with listlessness; without having

publicly exposed one of them. Those then who were conscious to themselves of earnestness, accepted that commendation of prayer, and became still more earnest by the praises, while those who were conscious to themselves of listlessness, accepted on the other hand the rebuking, and put off their carelessness. But neither these nor those do we know; and this ignorance is serviceable to both— how, I now tell you. He who has heard the commendations of prayer and is conscious to himself of earnestness, were he to have many witnesses of the commendations, would have lapsed towards pride; but, as it is, by having secretly accepted the praise, he is removed from all arrogance. On the other hand he who is conscious to himself of listlessness, having heard the accusation, has become better from the accusation, as having no one of men a witness of the rebuking; and this was of no ordinary profit to him. For on account of the being flurried at the opinion of the vulgar, so long as we may think that we escape notice in our wickedness, we exert ourselves to become better; but when we have become notorious to all, and have lost the consolation derived from the escaping notice, we grow more shameless and remiss rather. And just as sores become more painful by being unbandaged and frequently exposed to cold air, so also the soul after having sinned, if in the presence of many it be rebuked for what it has done amiss, grows thereby more shameless. In order therefore that this might not take place, the word administered its medicine to you covertly. And that you may understand that the gain which this covert treatment has is great, hear what the Christ says. *"If your brother have committed a fault against you convince him of it,"* and he did not say *"between him and the whole town,"* nor, *"between you and the whole people,"* but *"only between you and him."* Let the accusation, he says, be unwitnessed to, in order that the change to amendment may be made easy of digestion. A great good surely, the making the advice unpublished.

Sufficient is the conscience, sufficient that incorruptible judge. It is not so much thou who rebukest him who has done wrong as his own conscience (that accuser is the sharper), nor do you do it with the more exact knowledge of the faults committed. Add not therefore wound to wound by exposing him who has done wrong; but administer for yourself the counsel unwitnessed. This therefore we are doing now—the very thing that Paul also did, framing the indictment against him who among the Corinthians had sinned without citing of witnesses. And hear how. *"On this account,"* he says, *"brethren, I have applied these figures of speech to myself and Apollos."* And yet not he himself nor Apollos were they who had rent the people in schism and divided the Church; but all the same he concealed the accusation, and just as by some masks, by hiding the countenances of the defendants by his own and Apollos' names, he afforded them power to amend of that wickedness. And again, *"Lest in some way after I have come God humble me, and I may have to mourn many of those who have before sinned, and have not repented over the uncleanness and lasciviousness which they had committed."* See how here also he indefinitely mentions those who had sinned, in order that he might not, by openly bringing the accusation, render the soul of those who had sinned more shameless. Therefore, just as we administer our reproofs with so much sparing of your feelings, so do ye also with all seriousness receive the correction; and attend with carefulness to what is said.

5. We discoursed to you yesterday about the power which is in prayer. I pointed out how the devil then lies in wait, deceiver that he is. For since he sees very great gain accruing to us from prayer, then most he assails us, in order that he may disable us from our defence; that he may send us off home empty-handed. And just as before magistrates, when the officers of the court who are about the person of the magistrate have a hostile feeling

toward those who come before him, they by their staves drive them away to a distance, preventing their coming near and resorting to lamentation and so obtaining compassion; so also the devil, when he has seen us coming to the judge, drives us away to a distance, not by any staff, but through our own slackness. For he knows, he knows clearly, that if they have come to him in a sober spirit, and have told the sins committed, and have mourned with their soul fervent, they will depart having received full forgiveness; for God loves mankind; and on this account he is beforehand with them, and debars them from access, in order that they may obtain no one of the things which they need. But the soldiers of magistrates with violence scare away those who are coming to them; but he with no compulsion, but by deceiving us, and throwing us into security. On this account we are not deserving even of allowance, since we voluntarily deprive ourselves of the good things.

Prayer with earnestness is a light of the understanding and soul— a light unquenchable and perpetual. On this account he throws into our minds countless rubbish-heaps of imaginations; and things which we never had imagined, these collecting together at the very moment of prayer he pours down upon our souls. And just as winds often rushing from an opposite quarter by a violent gust extinguish a lamp's flame as it is being lighted, so also the devil, when he has seen the flame of our prayer being kindled, blowing it on every side with the blasts of countless thoughts, does not desist before and until he has quenched the light. But the very thing which they who are kindling those lamps do, this let us also do. And what do they do? When they see a violent wind coming, by laying their finger upon the opening of the lamp they bar the entrance against the wind. For so long as he assails from without we shall be able to stand against him; but when we have opened to him the doors of the mind, and have received the enemy inside; after that we are no longer able to withstand even a little; but, having

on all sides completely extinguished the memory, just as a smoking lamp, he allows our mouth to utter empty words. But just as they put their finger upon the opening of the lamp, so let us lay consideration upon our mind: let us close off from the wicked spirit the entrance, in order that he may not quench our light of prayer. Remember both those illustrations, both that of the soldiers and the magistrate, and that respecting the lamp. For with this purpose we adduce to you these illustrations; with which we are conversant, in which we live, in order that, after we have departed hence and have returned home, we may from things of familiar occurrence receive a reminder of what has been said.

6. Prayer is a strong piece of armour and a great security. You heard yesterday how the three children, fettered as they were, destroyed the power of the fire; how they trampled down the blaze; how they overcame the furnace, and conquered the operation of the element. Hear today again how the noble and great Isaac overcame the nature itself of bodies through prayer. They destroyed the power of fire, this man today loosed the bonds of incapacitated nature. And learn how he effected this. "*Isaac*," it says, "*prayed concerning his wife, because she was barren.*" This has today been read to you; yesterday the sermon was about prayer; and today again there is a demonstration of the power of prayer. See how the grace of the Spirit has ordered that what has been read today harmonises with what was said yesterday. "*Isaac*," it says, "*prayed concerning Rebecca his wife, because she was barren.*" This first is worth inquiring into, for what cause she was barren. She was of a life admirable and replete with much chastity— both herself and her husband. We cannot lay hold of the life of those just ones, and say that the barrenness was the work of sin. And not only was she herself barren, but also his mother Sarah, who had borne him; not only was his mother barren and his wife, but also his daughter-in-law, the wife of

Jacob, Rachel. What is the meaning of this band of barren ones? All were righteous, all living in virtue, all were witnessed to by God. For it was of them that He said, *"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."* Of the same persons Paul also thus speaks. *"For which cause God is not ashamed to call himself their God."* [Hebrews 11:16]

Many are the commendations of them in the New, many the praises of them in the Old Testament. On all sides they were bright and illustrious, and yet they all had barren wives, and continued in childlessness until an advanced period. When therefore you see man and wife living with virtue; when you see them beloved of God, caring for piety, and yet suffering the malady of childlessness; do not suppose that the childlessness is at all a retribution for sins. For many are God's reasons for the dispensation, and to us inexplicable; and for all we must be heartily thankful, and think those only wretched who live in wickedness; not those who do not possess children. Often God does it expediently, though we know not the cause of events. On this account in every case it is our duty to admire His wisdom, and to glorify His unspeakable love of man.

7. Well, this consideration indeed is able to school us in moral character, but it is necessary also to state the cause for which those women were barren. What then was the cause? It was in order that when you have seen the Virgin bringing forth our common Master, you might not disbelieve. Wherefore exercise your mind in the womb of the barren; in order that when you have seen the womb, disabled and bound as it is, being opened to the bearing of children from the grace of God, you might not marvel at hearing that a virgin has brought forth. Or rather even marvel and be astounded; but do not disbelieve the marvel. When the Jew says to you, *"how did the virgin bear?"* say to him *"how did she bear who was barren and enfeebled by old age?"* There were then two hindrances, both the

unseasonableness of her age and the unserviceableness of nature; but in the case of the Virgin there was one hindrance only, the not having shared in marriage. The barren one therefore prepares the way for the virgin. And that you may learn that it was on this account that the barren ones had anticipated it, in order that the Virgin's childbirth might be believed, hear the words of Gabriel which were addressed to her— For when he had come and said to her, *"you shall conceive in the womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus;"* the Virgin was astonished and marvelled, and said, *"how will this be to me, since I know not a man."* What then said the Angel? *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon you."* Seek not the sequence of nature, he says, when that which takes place is above nature; look not round for marriage and throes of child-birth, when the manner of the birth is too grand for marriage. *"And how will this be,"* she says, *"since I know not a husband."* And verily on this account shall this be, since you know no husband. For did you know a husband, you would not have been deemed worthy to serve this ministry. So that, for the reason why you disbelieve, for this believe. And you would not have been deemed worthy to serve this ministry, not because marriage is an evil; but because virginity is superior; and right it was that the entry of the Master should be more august than ours; for it was royal, and the king enters through one more august. It was necessary that He should both share as to birth, and be diverse from ours. Wherefore both these things are managed.

For the being born from the womb is common in respect to us, but the being born without marriage is a thing greater than on a level with us. And the gestation and conception in the belly belongs to human nature; but that the pregnancy should take place without sexual intercourse is too august for human nature. And for this purpose both these things took place, in order

that you may learn both the pre-eminence and the fellowship with you of Him who was born.

8. And pray consider the wisdom of all that was done. Neither did the pre-eminence injure the likeness and kinship to us, nor did the kinship to us dim the pre-eminence; but both were displayed by all the circumstances; and the one had our condition in its entirety, and the other what was diverse compared with us. But just as I was saying, on this account the barren ones went before, in order that the Virgin's child-birth might be believed, that she might be led by the hand to faith in that promise and undertaking which she heard from the angel, saying, "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the miraculous power of the Most High shall overshadow you*"— thus, he says, you are able to bear. Look not to the earth; it is from the heavens that the operation will come. That which takes place is a grace of the Spirit; pray inquire not about nature and laws of marriage. But since those words were too high for her, he wills to afford also another demonstration. But do thou, pray, observe how the barren one leads her on the way to the belief in this. For since that demonstration was too high for the Virgin's intelligence, hear how he brought down what he said to lower things also, leading her by the hand by sensible facts. For "*behold,*" he says, "*Elizabeth your kinswoman— she also has conceived a son in her old age; and this month is the sixth to her who was called barren.*" Do you see that the barren one was for the sake of the Virgin? Since with what object did he adduce to her the child-bearing of her kinswoman? With what object did he say, "*in her old age?*" with what object did he add, "*who was called barren?*" It was by way of inducing her by all these things, manifestly, to the believing the glad annunciation. For this cause he spoke of both the age and the disabling effect of nature; for this cause he awaited the time also which had elapsed from the conception; for he did not tell to her the glad tidings immediately

from the beginning, but awaited for a six-months period to have passed to the barren one, in order that the puerperal swelling might, for the rest, be a pledge of the pregnancy, and an indisputable demonstration might arise of the conception. And pray again look at the intelligence of Gabriel. For he neither reminded her of Sarah, nor of Rebecca, nor of Rachel; and yet they also were barren, and they had grown old, and that which took place was a marvel; but the stories were ancient. Now things new and recent and occurring in our generation are wont to induce us into the belief of marvels more than those which are old. On this account having let those women alone, that she should understand from her kinswoman Elizabeth herself what was coming upon her, he brought it forward; so as from her to lead her to her own— that most awful and august childbirth. For the child-birth of the barren one lay between ours and that of the Master less indeed than that of the Virgin, but greater than ours. On this account it was by Elizabeth lying between, just as by some bridge, that he lifted up the mind of the Virgin from the travail which is according to nature, to that which is above nature.

9. I did desire to say more, and to teach you other reasons for which Rebecca, and Rachel, were barren; but the time does not permit; urging on the discourse to the power of prayer. For on this account indeed I have mooted all these points, that you might understand how the prayer of Isaac unbound the barrenness of his wife; and that prayer for so long a time. *"Isaac,"* it says, *"continually prayed about Rebecca his wife, and God listened to him."* For do not suppose that he invoked God and had immediately been listened to; for he had spent much time in praying to God. And if you desire to learn how much, I will tell you this too with exactness. He had spent the number of twenty years in praying to God. Whence is this manifest? From the sequence itself. For the Scripture,

desiring to point out the faith and the endurance and the love of wisdom of that righteous man, did not break off and leave untold even the time, but made it also clear to us, covertly indeed, so as to rouse up our indolence; but nevertheless did not allow it to be uncertain. Hear then how it covertly indicated to us the time. *"Now Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca, a daughter of Bethuel the Syrian."* You hear how many years old he was when he brought home his wife: *"Forty years old,"* it says, *"he was when he took Rebecca."* But since we have learned how many years old he was when he married his wife, let us learn also when he after all became a father, and how many years old he was then, when he begot Jacob; and we shall be able to see how long a time his wife had remained barren; and that during all that time he continued to pray to God. How many years old then was he when he begot Jacob? *"Jacob,"* it says, *"came forth laying hold with his right hand of his brother's heel: on this account he called him Jacob, and him Esau. Now Isaac was sixty years old when he begot them."* If therefore when he brought Rebecca home he was forty years old, and when he begot the sons sixty, it is very plain that his wife had remained barren for twenty years between, and during all this time Isaac continued to pray to God.

10. After this do we not feel shame, and hide our faces, at seeing that righteous man for twenty years persevering and not desisting; we ourselves after a first or second petition often fainting and indignant? And yet he indeed had in large measure liberty of speech towards God, and all the same he felt no discontent at the delay of the giving, but remained patient, whereas we, laden with countless sins, living with an evil conscience, displaying no good will towards the Master; if we are not heard before having spoken, are bewildered, impatiently recoil, desist from asking— on this account we always retire with empty hands. Who has for twenty years

besought God for one thing, as this righteous man did? Or rather who for twenty months only? Yesterday I was saying that they are many who pray with slackness, and yawning, and stretching themselves, and continually shifting their attitude, and indulging in every carelessness in their prayers—but today I have found also another damage attaching itself to their prayers more destructive than that one. For many, throwing themselves prostrate, and striking the ground with their forehead, and pouring forth hot tears, and groaning bitterly from the heart and stretching out their hands, and displaying much earnestness, employ this warmth and forwardness against their own salvation. For it is not on behalf of their own sins that they beseech God; nor are they asking forgiveness of the offenses committed by them; but they are exerting this earnestness against their enemies entirely, doing just the same thing as if one, after whetting his sword, were not to use the weapon against his enemies, but to thrust it through his own throat. So these also use their prayers not for the remission of their own sins, but about revenge on their enemies; which is to thrust the sword against themselves. This too the wicked one has devised, in order that on all sides we may destroy ourselves, both through slackness and through earnestness. For the one class by their carelessness in their prayers exasperate God, by displaying contempt through their slackness; and the others, when they display earnestness, display the earnestness on the other hand against their own salvation. *"A certain person,"* he (the devil) says, *"is slack: that is sufficient for me with a view to his obtaining nothing; this man is earnest and thoroughly aroused; what then must be done to accomplish the same result? I cannot slacken his earnestness, nor throw him into carelessness; I will contrive his destruction in the other way. How so? I will manage that he use his earnestness for transgressing the law:"* (for the praying against one's personal enemies is a transgression of law). *"He shall depart therefore*

not only having gained nothing by his earnestness, but also having endured the hurt which is greater than that caused through slackness." Such as these are the injuries of the devil: the one sort he destroys through their remissness; and the other through their earnestness itself, when it is shown not according to God's laws.

11. But it is also worth hearing the very words of their prayer, and how the words are of a puerile mind; of how infantile a soul. I am ashamed in truth when about to repeat them; but it is absolutely necessary to repeat them, and to imitate that coarse tongue. What then are the words? *"Avenge me of my enemies, show them that I too have God (on my side)."* They do not then learn, man, that we have God, when we are indignant and angry and impatient; but when we are gentle and meek and subdued, and practise all love of wisdom. So also God said, *"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in the heavens."* [Matthew 5:16] Perceivest thou not that it is an insult to God, the making a request to God against your enemies? And how is it an insult? One will say. Because He Himself said, *"pray for your enemies;"* and brought in this divine law. When therefore you claim that the legislator should relax his own laws; and callest upon him to legislate in opposition to himself; and supplicatest him who had forbidden you to pray against your enemies to hear you praying against your enemies; you are not praying in doing this, nor calling upon him; but you are insulting the lawgiver, and acting with drunken violence towards him, who is sure to give to you the good things which result from prayer. And how is it possible to be heard when praying, tell me, when you exasperate him who is sure to hear? For by doing these things you are pushing your own salvation into a pit, and art rushing down a precipice, by striking your enemy before the king's eyes. For even if you do not this with the hands, with your words you strike him,

the thing which you dare not do even in the case of your fellow-slaves. At least dare to do this in a ruler's presence, and though you have done countless public services, you will straightway surely be led away to execution. Then (I ask) in the presence of a ruler do you not dare to insult your equal, but when doing this in God's presence, tell me, do you not shudder, nor fear when in the time of entreaty and prayer being so savage and turning yourself into a wild beast; and displaying greater want of feeling than he who demanded payment of the hundred pence?

[Matthew 18:28] For that you are more insolent than he, listen to the story itself. A certain man owed ten thousand talents to his master; then, not having (wherewith) to pay, he entreated him to be long-suffering, in order that, his wife having been sold and his house and his children, he might settle his master's claim. And the master seeing him lamenting had compassion on him, and remitted the ten thousand talents. He having gone out and found another servant owing him a hundred pence, seizing his throat demanded them with great cruelty and inhumanity. The Master having heard this threw him into the prison, and laid on him again the debt of the ten thousand talents which he had before remitted; and he paid the penalty of the cruelty shown towards his fellow-servant.

12. Now do thou consider in how much more unfeeling and insensible in a way you have acted even than he, praying against your enemies. He did not beg his master to demand, but he himself demanded, the hundred pence; whereas thou even callest on the Master for this shameless and forbidden demand. And he seized his fellow-servant's throat not before his lord's eyes, but outside; while thou in the very moment of prayer, standing in the King's presence, doest this. And if he, for doing this without either having urged his master to the demand, and after going forth, met with no forgiveness; thou, both stirring up the Master to (exacting) this forbidden payment, and

doing this before his eyes, what sort of penalty will thou have to pay? Tell me. But your mind is inflamed by the memory of the enmity, and swells, and your heart rises, and when recurring in memory to him who has caused pain, you are unable to reduce the swelling of your thought. But set against this inflammation the memory resulting from your own sins committed the fear resulting from the punishment to come. Recall to memory for how many things you are accountable to your master, and that for all those things you owe Him satisfaction; and this fear will surely overcome that anger; since indeed this is far more powerful than that passion. Recall the memory of hell and punishment and vengeance during the time of your prayer; and you will not be able even to receive your enemy into your mind. Make your mind contrite, humble your soul by the memory of the offenses committed by you, and wrath will not be able even to trouble you. But the cause of all these evils is this, that we scrutinise the sins of all others with great exactitude; while we let our own pass with great remissness. Whereas we ought to do the contrary— to keep our own faults unforgotten; but never even to admit a thought of those of others. If we do this we shall both have God propitious, and shall cease cherishing immortal anger against our neighbours, and we shall never have any one as an enemy; and even if we should have at any time we shall both quickly put an end to his enmity, and should obtain speedy pardon for our own sins. For just as he who treasures up the memory of wrong against his neighbour does not permit the punishment upon his own sins to be done away; so he who is clear of anger will speedily be clear of sins also. For if we, wicked as we are and enslaved to passion, on account of the commandment of God overlook all the faults committed against us, much more will He who is a lover of mankind, and good, and free from any passion, overlook our delinquencies, rendering to us the recompense of our kindly spirit towards our neighbour in the

forgiveness of our own sins: which God grant that we may attain, by the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the dominion, to the ages of the ages. Amen.

Homily 1 on Eutropius

On Eutropius, the eunuch, Patrician and Consul.

1. *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"*— it is always seasonable to utter this but more especially at the present time. Where are now the brilliant surroundings of your consulship? Where are the gleaming torches? Where is the dancing, and the noise of dancers' feet, and the banquets and the festivals? Where are the garlands and the curtains of the theatre? Where is the applause which greeted you in the city, where the acclamation in the hippodrome and the flatteries of spectators? They are gone— all gone: a wind has blown upon the tree shattering down all its leaves, and showing it to us quite bare, and shaken from its very root; for so great has been the violence of the blast, that it has given a shock to all these fibres of the tree and threatens to tear it up from the roots. Where now are your feigned friends? Where are your drinking parties, and your suppers? Where is the swarm of parasites, and the wine which used to be poured forth all day long, and the manifold dainties invented by your cooks? Where are they who courted your power and did and said everything to win your favour? They were all mere visions of the night, and dreams which have vanished with the dawn of day: they were spring flowers, and when the spring was over they all withered: they were a shadow which has passed away— they were a smoke which has dispersed, bubbles which have burst, cobwebs which have been rent in pieces. Therefore we chant continually this spiritual song— *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* For this saying ought to be continually written on our walls, and garments, in the market place, and in the house, on the streets, and on the doors and entrances, and above all on the conscience of each one, and to be a perpetual theme for meditation.

And inasmuch as deceitful things, and maskings and pretence seem to many to be realities it behooves each one every day both at supper and at breakfast, and in social assemblies to say to his neighbour and to hear his neighbour say in return *"vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* Was I not continually telling you that wealth was a runaway? But you would not heed me. Did I not tell you that it was an unthankful servant? But you would not be persuaded. Behold actual experience has now proved that it is not only a runaway, and ungrateful servant, but also a murderous one, for it is this which has caused you now to fear and tremble. Did I not say to you when you continually rebuked me for speaking the truth, *"I love you better than they do who flatter you?"* *"I who reprove you care more for you than they who pay you court?"* Did I not add to these words by saying that the wounds of friends were more to be relied upon than the voluntary kisses of enemies. [Proverbs 27:6] If you had submitted to my wounds their kisses would not have wrought you this destruction: for my wounds work health, but their kisses have produced an incurable disease. Where are now your cup-bearers, where are they who cleared the way for you in the market place, and sounded your praises endlessly in the ears of all? They have fled, they have disowned your friendship, they are providing for their own safety by means of your distress. But I do not act thus, nay in your misfortune I do not abandon you, and now when you are fallen I protect and tend you. And the Church which you treated as an enemy has opened her bosom and received you into it; whereas the theatres which you courted, and about which you were oftentimes indignant with me have betrayed and ruined you. And yet I never ceased saying to you *"why doest thou these things?"* *"you are exasperating the Church, and casting yourself down headlong,"* yet you hurried away from all my warnings. And now the hippodromes, having exhausted your wealth, have whetted the sword against you, but the

Church which experienced your untimely wrath is hurrying in every direction, in her desire to pluck you out of the net.

2. And I say these things now not as trampling upon one who is prostrate, but from a desire to make those who are still standing more secure; not by way of irritating the sores of one who has been wounded, but rather to preserve those who have not yet been wounded in sound health; not by way of sinking one who is tossed by the waves, but as instructing those who are sailing with a favourable breeze, so that they may not become overwhelmed. And how may this be effected? By observing the vicissitudes of human affairs. For even this man had he stood in fear of vicissitude would not have experienced it; but whereas neither his own conscience, nor the counsels of others wrought any improvement in him, do ye at least who plume yourselves on your riches profit by his calamity: for nothing is weaker than human affairs. Whatever term therefore one may employ to express their insignificance it will fall short of the reality; whether he calls them smoke, or grass, or a dream or spring flowers, or by any other name; so perishable are they, and more naught than nonentities; but that together with their nothingness they have also a very perilous element we have a proof before us. For who was more exalted than this man? Did he not surpass the whole world in wealth? Had he not climbed to the very pinnacle of distinction? Did not all tremble and fear before him? Yet lo! He has become more wretched than the prisoner, more pitiable than the menial slave, more indigent than the beggar wasting away with hunger, having every day a vision of sharpened swords and of the criminal's grave, and the public executioner leading him out to his death; and he does not even know if he once enjoyed past pleasure, nor is he sensible even of the sun's ray, but at mid day his sight is dimmed as if he were encompassed by the densest gloom. But even let me try my best I shall not be able to present

to you in language the suffering which he must naturally undergo, in the hourly expectation of death. But indeed what need is there of any words from me, when he himself has clearly depicted this for us as in a visible image? For yesterday when they came to him from the royal court intending to drag him away by force, and he ran for refuge to the holy furniture, his face was then, as it is now, no better than the countenance of one dead: and the chattering of his teeth, and the quaking and quivering of his whole body, and his faltering voice, and stammering tongue, and in fact his whole general appearance were suggestive of one whose soul was petrified.

3. Now I say these things not by way of reproaching him, or insulting his misfortune, but from a desire to soften your minds towards him, and to induce you to compassion, and to persuade you to be contented with the punishment which has already been inflicted. For since there are many inhuman persons among us who are inclined, perhaps, to find fault with me for having admitted him to the sanctuary, I parade his sufferings from a desire to soften their hardheartedness by my narrative.

For tell me, beloved brother, wherefore are you indignant with me? You say it is because he who continually made war upon the Church has taken refuge within it. Yet surely we ought in the highest degree to glorify God, for permitting him to be placed in such a great strait as to experience both the power and the lovingkindness of the Church:— her power in that he has suffered this great vicissitude in consequence of the attacks which he made upon her: her lovingkindness in that she whom he attacked now casts her shield in front of him and has received him under her wings, and placed him in all security not resenting any of her former injuries, but most lovingly opening her bosom to him. For this is more glorious than any kind of trophy, this is a brilliant victory, this puts both Gentiles and Jews to shame, this displays the bright aspect of the Church: in that having received

her enemy as a captive, she spares him, and when all have despised him in his desolation, she alone like an affectionate mother has concealed him under her cloak, opposing both the wrath of the king, and the rage of the people, and their overwhelming hatred. This is an ornament for the altar. A strange kind of ornament, you say, when the accused sinner, the extortioner, the robber is permitted to lay hold of the altar. Nay! say not so: for even the harlot took hold of the feet of Jesus, she who was stained with the most accursed and unclean sin: yet her deed was no reproach to Jesus, but rather redounded to His admiration and praise: for the impure woman did no injury to Him who was pure, but rather was the vile harlot rendered pure by the touch of Him who was the pure and spotless one. Grudge not then, O man. We are the servants of the crucified one who said *"Forgive them for they know not what they do."* [Luke 23:34] But, you say, he cut off the right of refuge here by his ordinances and various kinds of laws. Yes! Yet now he has learned by experience what it was he did, and he himself by his own deeds has been the first to break the law, and has become a spectacle to the whole world, and silent though he is, he utters from thence a warning voice to all, saying *"do not such things as I have done, that you suffer not such things as I suffer."* He appears as a teacher by means of his calamity, and the altar emits great lustre, inspiring now the greatest awe from the fact that it holds the lion in bondage; for any figure of royalty might be very much set off if the king were not only to be seen seated on his throne arrayed in purple and wearing his crown, but if also prostrate at the feet of the king barbarians with their hands bound behind their backs were bending low their heads. And that no persuasive arguments have been used, you yourselves are witnesses of the enthusiasm, and the concourse of the people. For brilliant indeed is the scene before us to day, and magnificent the assembly, and I see as large a gathering here today as at the Holy

Paschal Feast. Thus the man has summoned you here without speaking and yet uttering a voice through his actions clearer than the sound of a trumpet: and you have all thronged hither today, maidens deserting their boudoirs, and matrons the women's chambers, and men the market place that you may see human nature convicted, and the instability of worldly affairs exposed, and the harlot-face which a few days ago was radiant (such is the prosperity derived from extortion) looking uglier than any wrinkled old woman, this face I say you may see denuded of its enamel and pigments by the action of adversity as by a sponge.

4. Such is the force of this calamity: it has made one who was illustrious and conspicuous appear the most insignificant of men. And if a rich man should enter the assembly he derives much profit from the sight: for when he beholds the man who was shaking the whole world, now dragged down from so high a pinnacle of power, cowering with fright, more terrified than a hare or a frog, nailed fast to yonder pillar, without bonds, his fear serving instead of a chain, panic-stricken and trembling, he abates his haughtiness, he puts down his pride, and having acquired the kind of wisdom concerning human affairs which it concerns him to have he departs instructed by example in the lesson which Holy Scripture teaches by precept:— *"All flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withers and the flower fails"* [Isaiah 40:6-7] or *"They shall wither away quickly as the grass, and as the green herb shall they quickly fail"* or *"like smoke are his days,"* and all passages of that kind. Again the poor man when he has entered and gazed at this spectacle does not think meanly of himself, nor bewail himself on account of his poverty, but feels grateful to his poverty, because it is a place of refuge to him, and a calm haven, and secure bulwark; and when he sees these things he would many times rather remain where he is, than enjoy the possession of all men for a

little time and afterwards be in jeopardy of his own life. Do you see how the rich and poor, high and low, bond and free have derived no small profit from this man's taking refuge here? Do you see how each man will depart hence with a remedy, being cured merely by this sight? Well! Have I softened your passion, and expelled your wrath? Have I extinguished your cruelty? Have I induced you to be pitiful? Indeed I think I have; and your countenances and the streams of tears you shed are proofs of it. Since then your hard rock has turned into deep and fertile soil let us hasten to produce some fruit of mercy, and to display a luxuriant crop of pity by falling down before the Emperor or rather by imploring the merciful God so to soften the rage of the Emperor, and make his heart tender that he may grant the whole of the favour which we ask. For indeed already since that day when this man fled here for refuge no slight change has taken place; for as soon as the Emperor knew that he had hurried to this asylum, although the army was present, and incensed on account of his misdeeds, and demanded him to be given up for execution, the Emperor made a long speech endeavouring to allay the rage of the soldiers, maintaining that not only his offenses, but any good deed which he might have done ought to be taken into account, declaring that he felt gratitude for the latter, and was prepared to forgive him as a fellow creature for deeds which were otherwise. And when they again urged him to avenge the insult done to the imperial majesty, shouting, leaping, and brandishing their spears, he shed streams of tears from his gentle eyes, and having reminded them of the Holy Table to which the man had fled for refuge he succeeded at last in appeasing their wrath.

5. Moreover let me add some arguments which concern ourselves. For what pardon could you deserve, if the Emperor bears no resentment when he has been insulted, but you who have experienced nothing of this kind display so much wrath? And how after this assembly has been dissolved

will you handle the holy mysteries, and repeat that prayer by which we are commanded to say "*forgive us as we also forgive our debtors*"

[Matthew 6:12] when you are demanding vengeance upon your debtor? Has he inflicted great wrongs and insults on you? I will not deny it. Yet this is the season not for judgment but for mercy; not for requiring an account, but for showing loving kindness: not for investigating claims but for conceding them; not for verdicts and vengeance, but for mercy and favour. Let no one then be irritated or vexed, but let us rather beseech the merciful God to grant him a respite from death, and to rescue him from this impending destruction, so that he may put off his transgression, and let us unite to approach the merciful Emperor beseeching him for the sake of the Church, for the sake of the altar, to concede the life of one man as an offering to the Holy Table. If we do this the Emperor himself will accept us, and even before his praise we shall have the approval of God, who will bestow a large recompense upon us for our mercy. For as he rejects and hates the cruel and inhuman, so does He welcome and love the merciful and humane man; and if such a man be righteous, all the more glorious is the crown which is wreathed for him: and if he be a sinner, He passes over his sins granting this as the reward of compassion shown to his fellow-servant.

"For" He says *"I will have mercy and not sacrifice,"* and throughout the Scriptures you find Him always enquiring after this, and declaring it to be the means of release from sin. Thus then we shall dispose Him to be propitious to us, thus we shall release ourselves from our sins, thus we shall adorn the Church, thus also our merciful Emperor, as I have already said, will commend us, and all the people will applaud us, and the ends of the earth will admire the humanity and gentleness of our city, and all who hear of these deeds throughout the world will extol us. That we then may enjoy these good things, let us fall down in prayer and supplication, let us rescue

the captive, the fugitive, the suppliant from danger that we ourselves may obtain the future blessings by the favour and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power, now and for ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 2 on Eutropius

After Eutropius having been found outside the Church had been taken captive.

1. Delectable indeed are the meadow, and the garden, but far more delectable the study of the divine writings. For there indeed are flowers which fade, but here are thoughts which abide in full bloom; there is the breeze of the zephyr, but here the breath of the Spirit: there is the hedge of thorns, but here is the guarding providence of God; there is the song of cicadae, but here the melody of the prophets: there is the pleasure which comes from sight, but here the profit which comes from study. The garden is confined to one place, but the Scriptures are in all parts of the world; the garden is subject to the necessities of the seasons, but the Scriptures are rich in foliage, and laden with fruit alike in winter and in summer. Let us then give diligent heed to the study of the Scriptures: for if you do this the Scripture will expel your despondency, and engender pleasure, extirpate vice, and make virtue take root, and in the tumult of life it will save you from suffering like those who are tossed by troubled waves. The sea rages but you sail on with calm weather; for you have the study of the Scriptures for your pilot; for this is the cable which the trials of life do not break asunder. Now that I lie not events themselves bear witness. A few days ago the Church was besieged: an army came, and fire issued from their eyes, yet it did not scorch the olive tree; swords were unsheathed, yet no one received a wound; the imperial gates were in distress, but the Church was in security. And yet the tide of war flowed hither; for here the refugee was sought, and we withstood them, not fearing their rage. And wherefore prithe? Because we held as a sure pledge the saying *"You are Peter, and*

upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." [Matthew 16:18] And when I say the Church I mean not only a place but also a plan of life: I mean not the walls of the Church but the laws of the Church. When you take refuge in a Church, do not seek shelter merely in the place but in the spirit of the place. For the Church is not wall and roof but faith and life.

Do not tell me that the man having been surrendered was surrendered by the Church; if he had not abandoned the Church he would not have been surrendered. Do not say that he fled here for refuge and then was given up: the Church did not abandon him but he abandoned the Church. He was not surrendered from within the Church but outside its walls. Wherefore did he forsake the Church? Did you desire to save yourself? Thou should have held fast to the altar. There were no walls here, but there was the guarding providence of God. Were you a sinner? God does not reject you: for *"He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."* [Matthew 9:13] The harlot was saved when she clung to His feet. Have ye heard the passage read today? Now I say these things that you may not hesitate to take refuge in the Church. Abide with the Church, and the Church does not hand you over to the enemy: but if you fly from the Church, the Church is not the cause of your capture. For if you are inside the fold the wolf does not enter: but if you go outside, you are liable to be the wild beast's prey: yet this is not the fault of the fold, but of your own pusillanimity. The Church has no feet. Talk not to me of walls and arms: for walls wax old with time, but the Church has no old age. Walls are shattered by barbarians, but over the Church even demons do not prevail. And that my words are no mere vaunt there is the evidence of facts. How many have assailed the Church, and yet the assailants have perished while the Church herself has soared beyond the sky? Such might has the Church: when she is assailed she conquers: when

snare are laid for her she prevails: when she is insulted her prosperity increases: she is wounded yet sinks not under her wounds; tossed by waves yet not submerged; vexed by storms yet suffers no shipwreck; she wrestles and is not worsted, fights but is not vanquished. Wherefore then did she suffer this war to be? That she might make more manifest the splendour of her triumph. You were present on that day, and you saw what weapons were set in motion against her, and how the rage of the soldiers burned more fiercely than fire, and I was hurried away to the imperial palace. But what of that? By the grace of God none of those things dismayed me.

2. Now I say these things in order that you too may follow my example. But wherefore was I not dismayed? Because I do not fear any present terrors. For what is terrible? Death? Nay this is not terrible: for we speedily reach the unruffled haven. Or spoliation of goods? *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I depart;"* [Job 1:21] or exile? *"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;"* or false accusation? *"Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for great is your reward in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:12] I saw the swords and I meditated on Heaven; I expected death, and I bethought me of the resurrection; I beheld the sufferings of this lower world, and I took account of the heavenly prizes; I observed the devices of the enemy, and I meditated on the heavenly crown: for the occasion of the contest was sufficient for encouragement and consolation. True! I was being forcibly dragged away, but I suffered no insult from the act; for there is only one real insult, namely sin: and should the whole world insult you, yet if you dost not insult yourself you are not insulted. The only real betrayal is the betrayal of the conscience: betray not your own conscience, and no one can betray you. I was being dragged away and I saw the events— or rather I saw my words turned into events, I saw my discourse which I had uttered in

words being preached in the market-place through the medium of actual events. What kind of discourse? The same which I was always repeating. The wind has blown and the leaves have fallen. *"The grass has withered and the flower has faded."* [Isaiah 40:8] The night has departed and the day has dawned; the shadow has been proved vain and the truth has appeared. They mounted up to the sky, and they came down to the level of earth: for the waves which were swelling high have been laid low by means of merely human events. How? The things which were taking place were a lesson. And I said to myself will posterity learn self-control? Or before two days have passed by will these events have been abandoned to oblivion? The warnings were sounding in their ears. Again let me utter, yet again I will speak. What profit will there be? Certainly there will be profit. For if all do not hearken, the half will hearken; and if not the half, the third part: and if not the third the fourth: and if not the fourth, perhaps ten: and if not ten, perhaps five: and if not five perhaps one: and if not one, I myself have the reward prepared for me. *"The grass withers and the flower fades; but the word of God abides for ever."* [Isaiah 40:8]

3. Have ye seen the insignificance of human affairs? Have ye seen the frailty of power? Have ye seen the wealth which I always called a runaway and not a runaway only, but also a murderer. For it not only deserts those who possess it, but also slaughters them; for when any one pays court to it then most of all does it betray him. Why do you pay court to wealth which today is for you, and tomorrow for another? Why do you court wealth which can never be held fast? Do you desire to court it? Do you desire to hold it fast? Do not bury it but give it into the hands of the poor. For wealth is a wild beast: if it be tightly held it runs away: if it be let loose it remains where it is; *"For,"* it is said, *"he has dispersed abroad and given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever."* Disperse it then that it may

remain with you; bury it not lest it run away. Where is wealth? I would gladly enquire of those who have departed. Now I say these things not by way of reproach, God forbid, nor by way of irritating old sores, but as endeavouring to secure a haven for you out of the shipwreck of others. When soldiers and swords were threatening, when the city was in a blaze of fury, when the imperial majesty was powerless, and the purple was insulted, when all places were full of frenzy, where was wealth then? Where was your silver plate? Where were your silver couches? Where your household slaves? They had all betaken themselves to flight; where were the eunuchs? They all ran away; where were your friends? They changed their masks. Where were your houses? They were shut up. Where was your money? The owner of it fled: and the money itself, where was that? It was buried. Where was it all hidden? Am I oppressive and irksome to you in constantly declaring that wealth betrays those who use it badly? The occasion has now come which proves the truth of my words. Why do you hold it so tightly, when in the time of trial it profits you nothing? If it has power when you fall into a strait, let it come to your aid, but if it then runs away what need have you of it? Events themselves bear witness. What profit was there in it? The sword was whetted, death was impending, an army raging: there was apprehension of imminent peril; and yet wealth was nowhere to be seen. Where did the runaway flee? It was itself the cause which brought about all these evils, and yet in the hours of necessity it runs away. Nevertheless many reproach me saying continually thou fastens upon the rich: while they on the other hand fasten upon the poor. Well I do fasten upon the rich: or rather not the rich, but those who make a bad use of their riches. For I am continually saying that I do not attack the character of the rich man, but of the rapacious. A rich man is one thing, a rapacious man is another: an affluent man is one thing, a covetous man is another. Make clear

distinctions, and do not confuse things which are diverse. Are you a rich man? I forbid you not. Are you a rapacious man? I denounce you. Have you property of your own? Enjoy it. Do you take the property of others? I will not hold my peace. Would you stone me for this? I am ready to shed my blood: only I forbid your sin. I heed not hatred, I heed not war: one thing only do I heed, the advancement of my hearers. The rich are my children, and the poor also are my children: the same womb has travailed with both, both are the offspring of the same travail-pangs. If then you fasten reproaches on the poor man, I denounce you: for the poor man does not suffer so much loss as the rich. For no great wrong is inflicted on the poor man, seeing that in his case the injury is confined to money; but in your case the injury touches the soul. Let him who wills cast me off, let him who wills stone me, let him who wills hate me: for the plots of enemies are the pledges to me of crowns of victory, and the number of my rewards will be as the number of my wounds.

4. So then I fear not an enemy's plots: one thing only do I fear, which is sin. If no one convicts me of sin, then let the whole world make war upon me. For this kind of war only renders me more prosperous. Thus also do I wish to teach you a lesson. Fear not the devices of a potentate, but fear the power of sin. No man will do you harm, if you dost not deal a blow to yourself. If you have not sin, ten thousand swords may threaten you, but God will snatch you away out of their reach: but if you have sin, even should you be in paradise you will be cast out. Adam was in paradise yet he fell; Job was on a dung hill, yet he was crowned victorious. What profit was paradise to the one? Or what injury was the dung hill to the other? No man laid snares for the one, yet was he overthrown: the devil laid snares for the other, and yet he was crowned. Did not the devil take his property? Yes, but he did not rob him of his godliness. Did he not lay violent hands upon his

sons? yes: but he did not shake his faith. Did he not tear his body to pieces? yes but he did not find his treasure. Did he not arm his wife against him? yes but he did not overthrow the soldier. Did he not hurl arrows and darts at him? yes but he received no wounds. He advanced his engines but could not shake the tower; he conducted his billows against him, but did not sink the ship. Observe this law I beseech you, yea I clasp your knees, if not with the bodily hand, yet in spirit, and pour forth tears of supplication. Observe this law I pray you, and no one can do you harm. Never call the rich man happy; never call any man miserable save him who is living in sin: and call him happy who lives in righteousness. For it is not the nature of their circumstances, but the disposition of the men which makes both the one and the other. Never be afraid of the sword if your conscience does not accuse you: never be afraid in war if your conscience is clear. Where are they who have departed? Tell me. Did not all men once bow down to them? Did not those who were in authority tremble greatly before them? Did they not pay court to them? But sin has come, and all things are manifested in their true lights; they who were attendants have become judges, the flatterers are turned into executioners; they who once kissed his hands, dragged him themselves from the church, and he who yesterday kissed his hand is today his enemy. Wherefore? Because neither did he yesterday love him with sincerity. For the opportunity came and the actors were unmasked. Did you not yesterday kiss his hands, and call him saviour, and guardian, and benefactor? Did you not compose panegyrics without end? Wherefore today do you accuse him? Why yesterday a praiser, and today an accuser? Why yesterday utter panegyrics, and today reproaches? What means this change? What means this revolution?

5. But I am not like this: I was the subject of his plots, yet I became his protector. I suffered countless troubles at his hands, yet I did not retaliate.

For I copy the example of my Master, who said on the cross, "*Forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" Now I say these things that you may not be perverted by the suspicion of wicked men. Now many changes have taken place, since I had the oversight of the city, and yet no one learns self-control? But when I say no one, I do not condemn all, God forbid. For it is impossible that this rich soil when it has received seed, should not produce one ear of grain: but I am insatiable, I do not wish many to be saved but all. And if but one be left in a perishing condition, I perish also, and deem that the Shepherd should be imitated who had ninety-nine sheep, and yet hastened after the one which had gone astray. [Luke 15:4] How long will money last? How long this silver and gold? How long these draughts of wine? How long the flatteries of slaves? How long these goblets wreathed with garlands? How long these satanic drinking feasts, full of diabolical activity?

Do you not know that the present life is a sojourn in a far country? For are you a citizen? Nay you are a wayfarer. Do you understand what I say? You are not a citizen, but you are a wayfarer, and a traveller. Say not: I have this city and that. No one has a city. The city is above. Present life is but a journey. We are journeying on every day, while nature is running its course. Some there are who store up goods on the way: some who bury jewellery on the road. Now when you enter an inn do you beautify the inn? Not so, but you eat and drink and hasten to depart. The present life is an inn: we have entered it, and we bring present life to a close: let us be eager to depart with a good hope, let us leave nothing here, that we may not lose it there. When you enter the inn, what do you say to the servant? Take care where you put away our things, that you do not leave anything behind here, that nothing may be lost, not even what is small and trifling, in order that we may carry everything back to our home. You are a wayfarer and traveller,

and indeed more insignificant than the wayfarer. How so? I will tell you. The wayfarer knows when he is going into the inn, and when he is going out; for the egress as well as the regress is in his own power: but when I enter the inn, that is to say this present life, I know not when I shall go out: and it may be that I am providing myself with sustenance for a long time when the Master suddenly summons me saying *"You fool, for whom shall those things be which you have prepared? For on this very night your soul is being taken from you."* The time of your departure is uncertain, the tenure of your possessions insecure, there are innumerable precipices, and billows on every side of you. Why do you rave about shadows? Why desert the reality and run after shadows?

6. I say these things, and shall not cease saying them, causing continual pain, and dressing the wounds; and this not for the sake of the fallen, but of those who are still standing. For they have departed, and their career is ended, but those who are yet standing have gained a more secure position through their calamities. *"What then,"* you say, *"shall we do?"* Do one thing only, hate riches, and love your life— cast away your goods; I do not say all of them, but cut off the superfluities. Be not covetous of other men's goods, strip not the widow, plunder not the orphan, seize not his house: I do not address myself to persons but to facts. But if any one's conscience attacks him, he himself is responsible for it, not my words. Why are you grasping where you bring ill-will upon yourself? Grasp where there is a crown to be gained. Strive to lay hold not of earth but of heaven. *"The kingdom of Heaven belongs to violent men and men of violence take it by force."* Why do you lay hold of the poor man who reproaches you? Lay hold of Christ who praises you for it. Do you see your senselessness and madness? Do you lay hold of the poor man who has little? Christ says *"lay hold of me; I thank you for it, lay hold of my kingdom and take it by*

violence." If you are minded to lay hold of an earthly kingdom, or rather if you are minded to have designs upon it you are punished; but in the case of the heavenly kingdom you are punished if you do not lay hold of it.

Where worldly things are concerned there is ill-will, but where spiritual there is love. Meditate daily on these things, and if two days hence you see another riding in a chariot, arrayed in raiment of silk, and elated with pride, be not again dismayed and troubled. Praise not a rich man, but only him who lives in righteousness. Revile not a poor man, but learn to have an upright and accurate judgment in all things.

Do not hold aloof from the Church; for nothing is stronger than the Church. The Church is your hope, your salvation, your refuge. It is higher than the heaven, it is wider than the earth. It never waxes old, but is always in full vigour. Wherefore as significant of its solidity and stability Holy Scripture calls it a mountain: or of its purity a virgin, or of its magnificence a queen; or of its relationship to God a daughter; and to express its productiveness it calls her barren who has borne seven: in fact it employs countless names to represent its nobleness. For as the master of the Church has many names: being called the Father, and the way, [John 14:6] and the life, [Ibid] and the light, and the arm, and the propitiation, [1 John 2:2] and the foundation, [1 Corinthians 3:11] and the door, [John 10:7] and the sinless one, and the treasure, and Lord, and God, and Son, and the only begotten, and the form of God, [Philippians 2:6] and the image [Colossians 1:15] of God so is it with the Church itself: does one name suffice to present the whole truth? By no means. But for this reason there are countless names, that we may learn something concerning God, though it be but a small part. Even so the Church also is called by many names. She is called a virgin, albeit formerly she was an harlot: for this is the miracle wrought by the Bridegroom, that He took her who was an harlot and has

made her a virgin. Oh! What a new and strange event! With us marriage destroys virginity, but with God marriage has restored it. With us she who is a virgin, when married, is a virgin no longer: with Christ she who is an harlot, when married, becomes a virgin.

7. Let the heretic who inquires curiously into the nature of heavenly generation saying *"how did the Father beget the Son?"* interpret this single fact, ask him how did the Church, being an harlot, become a virgin? And how did she having brought forth children remain a virgin? *"For I am jealous over you,"* says Paul, *"with a godly jealousy, for I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ."* [2 Corinthians 11:2] What wisdom and understanding! *"I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy."* What means this? *"I am jealous,"* he says: are you jealous seeing you are a spiritual man? I am jealous he says as God is. And has God jealousy? Yea the jealousy not of passion, but of love, and earnest zeal. I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God. Shall I tell you how He manifests His jealousy? He saw the world corrupted by devils, and He delivered His own Son to save it. For words spoken in reference to God have not the same force as when spoken in reference to ourselves: for instance we say God is jealous, God is angry, God repents, God hates. These words are human, but they have a meaning which becomes the nature of God. How is God jealous? *"I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God."* [2 Corinthians 11:2] Is God angry? *"O Lord reproach me not in your indignation."* Does God slumber? *"Awake, wherefore do you sleep, O Lord?"* Does God repent? *"I repent that I have made man."* [Genesis 6:7] Does God hate? *"My soul hates your feasts and your new moons."* [Isaiah 1:14] Well do not consider the poverty of the expressions: but grasp their divine meaning. God is jealous, for He loves, God is angry, not as yielding to passion, but for the purpose of chastising, and punishing. God

sleeps, not as really slumbering, but as being long-suffering. Choose out the expression. Thus when you hear that God begets the Son, think not of division but of the unity of substance. For God has taken many of these words from us as we also have borrowed others from Him, that we may receive honour thereby.

8. Do you understand what I have said? Attend carefully my beloved. There are divine names, and there are human names. God has received from me, and He Himself has given to me. Give me yours, and take mine He says. You have need of mine: I have no need of yours, but you have of mine inasmuch as my nature is unmixed, but you are a human being encompassed with a body, seeking also corporeal terms in order that, by borrowing expressions which are familiar to you, thou who art thus encompassed with a body, may be able to think on thoughts which transcend your understanding. What kind of names has He received from me, and what kind has He given to me? He Himself is God, and He has called me God; with Him is the essential nature as an actual fact, with me only the honour of the name: *"I have said you are gods, and you are all children of the most highest."* Here are words, but in the other case there is the actual reality. He has called me god, for by that name I have received honour. He Himself was called man, he was called Son of man, he was called the Way, the Door, the Rock. These words He borrowed from me; the others He gave from Himself to me. Wherefore was He called the Way? That you might understand that by Him we have access to the Father. Wherefore was He called the Rock? That you might understand the secure and unshaken character of the faith. Wherefore was He called the Foundation? That you might understand that He upholds all things. Wherefore was He called the Root? That you might understand that in Him we have our power of growth. Wherefore was He called the Shepherd?

Because He feeds us. Wherefore was He called a sheep? Because He was sacrificed for us and became a propitiatory offering. Wherefore was He called the Life? Because He raised us up when we were dead. Wherefore was He called the Light? Because He delivered us from darkness. Why was He called an Arm? Because He is of one substance with the Father. Why was He called the Word? Because He was begotten of the Father. For as my word is the offspring of my spirit, even so was the Son begotten of the Father. Wherefore is He called our raiment? Because I was clothed with Him when I was baptized. Why is He called a table? Because I feed upon Him when I partake of the mysteries. Why is He called a house? Because I dwell in Him. Why is He called an inmate of the house? Because we become His Temple. Wherefore is He called the Head? Because I have been made a member of His. Why is He called a Bridegroom? Because He has taken me as His bride. Wherefore is He called undefiled? Because He took me as a virgin. Wherefore is He called Master? Because I am His bondmaid.

9. For observe the Church, how, as I was saying, she is sometimes a bride, sometimes a daughter, sometimes a virgin, sometimes a bondmaid, sometimes a queen, sometimes a barren woman, sometimes a mountain, sometimes a garden, sometimes fruitful in children, sometimes a lily, sometimes a fountain: She is all things. Therefore having heard these things, think not I pray you that they are corporeal; but stretch your thought further: for such things cannot be corporeal. For example: the mountain is not the maid: the maid is not the bride: the queen is not the bond-maid: yet the Church is all these things. Wherefore? Because the element in which they exist is not corporeal but spiritual. For in a corporeal sphere these things are confined within narrow limits: but in a spiritual sphere they have a wide field of operation. *"The queen stood on your right hand."* The

queen? How did she who was down-trodden and poor become a queen? And where did she ascend? The queen herself stood on high by the side of the king. How? Because the king became a servant; He was not that by nature, but He became so. Understand therefore the things which belong to the Godhead, and discern those which belong to the Dispensation. Understand what He *was*, and what He *became* for your sake, and do not confuse things which are distinct, nor make the argument of his lovingkindness an occasion for blasphemy. He was lofty, and she was lowly: lofty not by position but by nature. His essence was pure, and imperishable: His nature was incorruptible, unintelligible, invisible, incomprehensible, eternal, unchangeable, transcending the nature of angels, higher than the powers above, overpowering reason, surpassing thought, apprehended not by sight but by faith alone. Angels beheld Him and trembled, the Cherubim veiled themselves with their wings, in awe. He looked upon the earth, and caused it to tremble: He threatened the sea and dried it up: [Isaiah 51:10] he brought rivers out of the desert: He weighed the mountains in scales, and the valleys in a balance. How shall I express myself? How shall I present the truth? His greatness has no bounds, His wisdom is beyond reckoning, His judgments are untraceable, His ways unsearchable. Such is His greatness and His power, if indeed it is safe even to use such expressions. But what am I to do? I am a human being and I speak in human language: my tongue is of earth and I crave forgiveness from my Lord. For I do not use these expressions in a spirit of presumption, but on account of the poverty of my resources arising from my feebleness and the nature of our human tongue. Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I utter these words not in presumption but because I have no others: nevertheless I do not rest content with the meanness of my speech, but soar upwards on the wings of my understanding. Such is His greatness and power. I say this,

that without dwelling on the words, or on the poverty of the expressions, you may also yourself learn to act in the same way. Why do you marvel if I do this, inasmuch as He also does the same, when He wishes to present something to our minds which transcends human powers? Since He addresses human beings He uses also human illustration, which are indeed insufficient to represent the thing spoken of, and cannot exhibit the full proportions of the matter, yet suffice for the infirmity of the hearers.

10. Make an effort, and do not grow weary of my prolonged discourse. For as when He manifests Himself, He is not manifested as He really is, nor is His bare essence manifested (for no man has seen God in His real nature; for when He is but partially revealed the Cherubim tremble— the mountains smoke, the sea is dried up, the heaven is shaken, and if the revelation were not partial who could endure it?) as then, I say, He does not manifest Himself as He really is, but only as the beholder is able to see Him, therefore does He appear sometimes in the form of old age, sometimes of youth, sometimes in fire, sometimes in air, sometimes in water, sometimes in armour, not altering his essential nature, but fashioning His appearance to suit the various condition of those who are affected by it. In like manner also when any one wishes to say anything concerning Him he employs human illustrations. For instance I say: *"He went up into the mountain and He was transfigured before them, and His countenance shone as the sun, and His raiment became white as snow."* He disclosed, it is said, a little of the Godhead, He manifested to them the God dwelling among them *"and He was transfigured before them."* Attend carefully to the statement. The writer says and He was transfigured before them, and His raiment shone as the light, and His countenance was as the sun. When I said *"such is His greatness and power"* and added *"be merciful to me O Lord,"* (for I do not rest satisfied with the expression but am perplexed, having no

other framed for the purpose) I wish you to understand, that I learned this lesson from Holy Scripture. The evangelist then wished to describe His splendour and he says "*He shone.*" How did He shine? Tell me.

Exceedingly. And how do you express this? He shone "*as the sun.*" As the sun do you say? Yea. Wherefore? Because I know not any other luminary more brilliant. And He was white do you say as snow? Wherefore as snow? Because I know not any other substance which is whiter. For that He did not really shine thus is proved by what follows: the disciples fell to the ground. If he had shone as the sun the disciples would not have fallen; for they saw the sun every day, and did not fall: but inasmuch as he shone more brilliantly than the sun or snow, they, being unable to bear the splendour, fell to the earth.

11. Tell me then, O evangelist, did He shine more brightly than the sun, and yet do you say, "*as the sun?*" Yea: wishing to make that light known to you, I know not any other greater luminary, I have no other comparison which holds a royal place among luminaries. I have said these things that you may not rest contentedly in the poverty of the language used: I have pointed out to you the fall of the disciples: they fell to the earth, and were stupified and overwhelmed with slumber. "*Arise*" He said, and lifted them up, and yet they were oppressed. For they could not endure the excessive brightness of that shining, but heavy sleep took possession of their eyes: so far did the light which was manifested exceed the light of the sun. Yet the evangelist said "*as the sun,*" because that luminary is familiar to us and surpasses all the rest.

But as I was saying, He who was thus great and powerful desired an harlot. I speak of our human nature under that name. If a man indeed desire an harlot he is condemned, and does God desire one? Yea verily. Again a man desires an harlot that he may become a fornicator: but God that He

may convert the harlot into a virgin: so that the desire of the man is the destruction of her who is desired: but the desire of God is salvation to her who is desired. And why did He who is so great and powerful desire an harlot? That He might become the husband thereof. How does He act? He does not send to her any of His servants, He sends not angel, archangel, Cherubim, or Seraphim; but He himself draws near Who loves her. Again when you hear of love, deem it not sensuous. Cull out the thoughts which are contained in the words, even as an excellent bee settles on the flowers, and takes the honey comb, but leaves the herbs God desired an harlot, and how does He act? He does not conduct her on high; for He would not bring an harlot into Heaven, but He Himself comes down. Since she could not ascend on high, He descends to earth. He comes to the harlot, and is not ashamed: He comes to her secret dwelling place. He beholds her in her drunkenness. And how does He come? Not in the bare essence of His original nature, but He becomes that which the harlot was, not in intention but in reality does He become this, in order that she may not be scared when she sees Him, that she may not rush away, and escape. He comes to the harlot, and becomes man. And how does He become this? He is conceived in the womb, he increases little by little and follows like me the course of human growth. Who is it who does this? The Deity as manifested, not the Godhead; the form of the servant not that of the Master; the flesh which belongs to me, not the essential nature which belongs to Him: He increases little by little, and has intercourse with mankind. Although He finds the harlot, human nature, full of sores, brutalised, and oppressed by devils, how does He act? He draws near to her. She sees Him and flees away. He calls the wise men saying Why are you afraid? I am not a judge, but a physician. *"I came not to judge the world but to save the world."* [John 12:47] Straightway He calls the wise men. Oh! new and strange

event. The immediate first-fruits of His coming are wise men. He who upholds the world lies in a manger, and He who cares for all things is a nursling in swaddling bands. The temple is founded and the God dwells therein. And wise men come and straightway worship Him: the publican comes and is turned into an evangelist: the harlot comes and is turned into a maiden: the Canaanitish woman comes and partakes of his lovingkindness. This is the mark of one who loves, to forbear demanding an account of sins, and to forgive transgressions and offenses. And how does He act? He takes the sinner and espouses her to himself. And what does He give her? A signet ring. Of what nature? The Holy Spirit. Paul says *"now He who establishes us with you is God who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit."* [2 Corinthians 1:21-22] The Spirit then He gives her. Next He says *"Did not I plant you in a garden?"* She says *"yea."* And how did you fall from thence? *"The devil came and cast me out of the garden."* You were planted in the garden and he cast you out: behold I plant you in myself, I uphold you. How? The devil dares not approach me. Neither do I take you up into Heaven; but something greater than Heaven is here: I carry you in myself who am the Lord of Heaven. The shepherd carries you and the wolf no longer comes: or rather I permit him to approach. And so the Lord carries our nature: and the devil approaches and is worsted. *"I have planted you in myself:"* therefore He says *"I am the root, you are the branches:"* so He planted her in Himself. *"But,"* she says, *"I am a sinner and unclean."* *"Let not this trouble you, I am a physician. I know my vessel, I know how it was perverted. It was formerly a vessel of clay, and it was perverted. I remodel it by means of the laver of regeneration and I submit it to the action of fire."* For observe: He took dust from the earth and made the man; He formed him. The devil came, and perverted him. Then the Lord came, took him again, and remoulded, and recast him in baptism, and He

suffered not his body to be of clay, but made it of a harder ware. He subjected the soft clay to the fire of the Holy Spirit. *"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"* [Matthew 3:11] He was baptized with water that he might be remodelled, with fire that he might be hardened. Therefore the Prophet speaking beforehand under divine guidance declared *"You shall dash them in pieces like vessels of the potter."* He did not say like vessels of earthenware which every one possesses: for by a potter's vessels are meant those which the potter is fashioning on the wheel: now the potter's vessels are of clay, but ours are of harder ware. Speaking beforehand therefore of the remoulding which is wrought by means of baptism he says, *"you shall dash them in pieces like vessels of a potter"*—He means that He remodels and recasts them. I descend into the water of baptism, and the fashion of my nature is remoulded, and the fire of the Spirit recasts it, and it is turned into a harder ware. And that my words are no empty vaunt hear what Job says, *"He has made us as clay,"* [Job 10:9] and Paul, *"but we have this treasure in earthen vessels."* [2 Corinthians 4:7] But consider the strength of the earthen vessel: for it has been hardened not by fire, but by the Spirit. How was it proved to be an earthen vessel? *"Five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned,"* and yet the earthen vessel was not shattered. *"A day and a night have I been in the deep."* He has been in the deep, and the earthen vessel was not dissolved: he suffered shipwreck and the treasure was not lost; the ship was submerged and yet the freight floated. *"But we have this treasure"* he says. What kind of treasure? A supply of the Spirit, righteousness, sanctification, redemption. Of what nature, tell me? *"in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk."* [Acts 3:6] *"Æneas, Jesus Christ makes you whole,"* [Acts 9:34] I say unto you thou evil spirit, go out of him. [Acts 16:18]

12. Have you seen a treasure more brilliant than royal treasures? For what can the pearl of a king do like that which the words of an Apostle effected? Set crowns innumerable upon dead men, and they will not be raised: but one word went forth from an Apostle, and it brought back revoked nature, and restored it to its ancient condition. *"But we have this treasure."* O treasure which not only is preserved, but also preserves the house where it is stored up. Do you understand what I have said? The kings of the earth, and rulers when they have treasures, prepare large houses, having strong walls, bars, doors, guards, and bolts in order that the treasure may be preserved: but Christ did the contrary: He placed the treasure not in a stone vessel but in an earthen one. If the treasure is great wherefore is the vessel weak? But the reason why the vessel is weak is not because the treasure is great; for this is not preserved by the vessel, but itself preserves the vessel. I deposit the treasure: who is able henceforth to steal it? The devil has come, the world has come, multitudes have come, and yet they have not stolen the treasure: the vessel has been scourged, yet the treasure was not betrayed; it has been drowned in the sea, yet the treasure was not shipwrecked: it has died yet the treasure survives. He gave therefore the earnest of the Spirit. Where are they who blaspheme the Spirit's majesty? Give ye heed. *"He that establishes us with you in Christ is God who also has given the earnest of the Spirit."* [2 Corinthians 1:21-22] You all know that the earnest is a small part of the whole; let me tell you how. Some one goes to buy a house at a great price; and he says give me an earnest that I may have confidence: or one goes to take a wife for himself, he arranges about dowry and property, and he says *"give me an earnest."* Observe: in the purchase of a slave and in all covenants there is an earnest. Since then Christ made a covenant with us (for He was about to take me as a bride) he also assigned a dowry to me not of money, but of blood. But this dowry

which He assigns is the bestowal of good things *"such as eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man."*

[1 Corinthians 2:9] He assigned them for the dowry:—immortality, praise with the angels, release from death, freedom from sin, the inheritance of a kingdom (so great are his riches), righteousness, sanctification, deliverance from present evils, discovery of future blessings. Great was my dowry. Now attend carefully: mark what He does. He came to take the harlot, for so I call her, unclean as she was, that you might understand the love of the bridegroom. He came; He took me: He assigns me a dowry: He says *"I give you my wealth."* How? *"Have you lost,"* He says, *"paradise?"* take it back. Have you lost your beauty? Take it back; take all these things. But yet the dowry was not given to me here.

13. Observe, this is the reason why He speaks beforehand with reference to this dowry; He warranted to me in the dowry the resurrection of the body—immortality. For immortality does not always follow resurrection, but the two are distinct. For many have risen, and been again laid low, like Lazarus and the bodies of the saints. But in this case it is not so, but the promise is of resurrection, immortality, a place in the joyful company of angels, the meeting of the Son of Man in the clouds, and the fulfilment of the saying *"so shall we ever be with the Lord,"*

[1 Thessalonians 4:17] the release from death, the freedom from sin, the complete overthrow of destruction. Of what kind is that? *"Eye has not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."* Do you give me good things which I know not? He says *"yea; only be espoused to me here, love me in this world."* *"Wherefore do you not give me the dowry here?"* It will be given when you have come to my Father, when you have entered the royal palace. Did you come to me! nay I came to you. I came not that you should

abide here but that I might take you and return. Seek not the dowry here: all depends on hope, and faith. *"And do you give me nothing in this world?"* He answers. *"Receive an earnest that you may trust me concerning that which is to come: receive pledges and betrothal gifts."* Therefore Paul says *"I have espoused you."* [2 Corinthians 11:2] As gifts of betrothal God has given us present blessings: they are an earnest of the future; but the full dowry abides in the other world. How so? I will tell you. Here I grow old, there I grow not old; here I die, there I die not, here I sorrow, there I sorrow not; here is poverty, and disease, and intrigue, there nothing of that kind exists: here is darkness and light, there is light alone: here is intrigue, there is liberty; here is disease, there is health; here is life which has an end, there is life which has no end; here is sin, there is righteousness, and sin is banished; here is envy, there nothing of the kind exists. *"Give me these things"* one says; *"Nay! Wait in order that your fellow-servants also may be saved; wait I say. He who establishes us and has given us the earnest"*— what kind of earnest? The Holy Spirit, the supply of the Spirit. Let me speak concerning the Spirit. He gave the signet ring to the Apostles, saying *"take this and give it to all."* Is the ring then portioned out, and yet not divided? It is so. Let me teach you the meaning of the supply of the Spirit: Peter received, and Paul also received the Holy Spirit. He went about the world, he released sinners from their sins, he restored the lame, he clothed the naked, he raised the dead, he cleansed the lepers, he bridled the devil, he strangled the demons, he held converse with God, he planted a Church, levelled temples to the earth, overturned altars, destroyed vice, established virtue, made angels of men.

14. All these things we were. But *"the earnest"* filled the whole world. And when I say the whole I mean all which the sun shines upon, sea, islands, mountains, valleys, and hills. Paul went hither and there, like some

winged creature, with one mouth only contending against the enemy, he the tentmaker, who handled the workman's knife and sewed skins together: and yet this his craft was no hindrance to his virtue, but the tentmaker was stronger than demons, the uneloquent man was wiser than the wise. Whence was this? He received the earnest, he bore the signet ring and carried it about. All men saw that the King had espoused our nature: the demon saw it and retreated, he saw the earnest, and trembled and withdrew: he saw but the Apostle's garments [Acts 19:11] and fled. O the power of the Holy Spirit. He bestowed authority not on the soul, nor on the body, but even on raiment; nor on raiment only but even on a shadow. Peter went about and his shadow put diseases to flight, [Acts 5:15] and expelled demons, and raised the dead to life. Paul went about the world, cutting away the thorns of ungodliness, sowing broadcast the seeds of godliness, like an excellent ploughman handling the ploughshare of doctrine. And to whom did he go? To Thracians, to Scythians, to Indians, to Maurians, to Sardinians, to Goths, to wild savages, and he changed them all. By what means? By means of *"the earnest."* How was he sufficient for these things? By the grace of the Spirit. Unskilled, ill-clothed, ill-shod he was upheld by Him *"who also has given the earnest of the Spirit."* Therefore he says *"and who is sufficient for these things? [2 Corinthians 2:16] But our sufficiency is of God, who has made us sufficient as ministers of the new Testament, not of the letter but of the Spirit."* [2 Corinthians 3:5-6] Behold what the Spirit has wrought: He found the earth filled with demons and He has made it heaven. For meditate not on present things but review the past in your thought. Formerly there was lamentation, there were altars everywhere, everywhere the smoke and fumes of sacrifice, everywhere unclean rites and mysteries, and sacrifices, everywhere demons holding their orgies, everywhere a citadel of the devil, everywhere fornication decked with wreaths of honour; and Paul stood

alone. How did he escape being overwhelmed, or torn in pieces? How could he open his mouth? He entered the Thebaid, and made captives of men, He entered the royal palace, and made a disciple of the king. He entered the hall of judgment, and the judge says to him *"almost you persuade me to become a Christian,"* and the judge became a disciple. He entered the prison, and took the jailor captive. He visited an island of barbarians, and made a viper the instrument of his teaching. He visited the Romans, and attracted the senate to his doctrine. He visited rivers, and desert places in all parts of the world. There is no land or sea which has not shared in the benefits of his labours; for God has given human nature the earnest of His signet, and when He gives it He says: some things I give you now, and others I promise. Therefore the prophet says concerning her *"The queen stood upon your right hand in a vesture woven with gold."* He does not mean a real vesture, but virtue. Therefore the Scripture elsewhere says *"How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?"* so that here he does not mean a garment, but fornication, and foul and unclean living. As then foul raiment signifies sin, so does golden raiment signify virtue. But this raiment belonged to the king. He Himself bestowed the raiment upon her: for she was naked, naked and disfigured. *"The queen stood on your right hand in a vesture woven with gold."* He is speaking not of raiment but of virtue. Observe: the expression itself has great nobility of meaning. He does not say *"in a vesture of gold"* but *"in a vesture woven with gold."* Listen intelligently. A vesture of gold is one which is gold throughout: but a vesture woven with gold is one which is partly of gold, partly of silk. Why then did he say that the bride wore not a vesture of gold, but one woven with gold? Attend carefully. He means the constitution of the Church in its varied manifestations. For since we do not all belong to one condition of

life, but one is a virgin, another a widow, a third lives a life of devotion—so the robe of the Church signifies the constitution of the Church.

15. Inasmuch then as our Master knew that if He carved out only one road for us, many must shrink from it, He carved out various roads. You can not enter the kingdom it may be by the way of virginity. Enter it then by the way of single marriage. Can you not enter it by one marriage? Perchance you may by means of a second marriage. You can not enter by the way of continence: enter then by the way of almsgiving: or you can not enter by the way of almsgiving? Then try the way of fasting. If you can not use this way, take that— or if not that, then take this. Therefore the prophet spoke not of a garment of gold, but of one woven with gold. It is of silk, or purple, or gold. You can not be a golden part? Then be a silken one. I accept you, if only you are clothed in my raiment. Therefore also Paul says *"If any man builds upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones."*

[1 Corinthians 3:12] You can not be the precious stone? Then be the gold. You can not be the gold? Then be the silver, if only you are resting upon the foundation. And again elsewhere, *"there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars."*

[1 Corinthians 15:41] You can not be a sun? Then be a moon. You can not be a moon? Then be a star. You can not be a large star? Be content to be a little one if only you are in the Heaven. You can not be a virgin? Then live continently in the married state, only abiding in the Church. You can not be without possessions? Then give alms, only abiding in the Church, only wearing the proper raiment, only submitting to the queen. The raiment is woven with gold, it is manifold in texture. I do not bar the way against you: for the abundance of virtues has rendered the dispensation of the king easy in operation. *"Clothed in a vesture woven with gold, manifold in texture."* Her vesture is manifold: unfold, if you please, the deep meaning of the

expression here used, and fix your eyes upon this garment woven with gold. For here indeed some live celibate, others live in an honourable estate of matrimony being not much inferior to them: some have married once, others are widows in the flower of their age. For what purpose is a paradise? And wherefore its variety? Having various flowers, and trees, and many pearls. There are many stars, but only one sun: there are many ways of living, but only one paradise; there are many temples, but only one mother of them all. There is the body, the eye, the finger, but all these make up but one man. There is the same distinction between the small, the great, and the less. The virgin has need of the married woman; for the virgin also is the product of marriage, that marriage may not be despised by her. The virgin is the root of marriage: thus all things have been linked together, the small with the great, and the great with the small. *"The queen stood on your right hand clothed in a vesture wrought with gold, manifold in texture."* Then follows *"Hearken! O daughter."* The conductor of the bride says that you are about to go forth from your home to the home of the bridegroom who in his essential nature far surpasses you. I am the conductor of the bride. *"Hearken O daughter."* Did she immediately become the wife? Yea: for here there is nothing corporeal. For He espoused her as a wife, He loves her as a daughter, He provides for her as a handmaid, He guards her as a virgin, He fences her round like a garden, and cherishes her like a member: as a head He provides for her, as a root he causes her to grow, as a shepherd He feeds her, as a bridegroom He weds her, as a propitiation He pardons her, as a sheep He is sacrificed, as a bridegroom He preserves her in beauty, as a husband He provides for her support. Many are the meanings in order that we may enjoy a part if it be but a small part of the divine economy of grace. *"Hearken O daughter"* and behold, and look upon things which are bridal and yet spiritual. Hearken O daughter. She was at first a daughter of

demons, a daughter of the earth, unworthy of the earth and now she has become a daughter of the king. And this He wished who loved her. For he who loves does not investigate character: love does not regard uncomeliness: on this account indeed is it called love because it oftentimes has affection for an uncomely person. Thus also did Christ. He saw one who was uncomely (for comely I could not call her) and He loved her, and He makes her young, not having spot or wrinkle. Oh what a bridegroom! adorning with grace the ungracefulness of his bride! Hearken O daughter! Hearken and behold! Two things He says "*Hearken*" and "*Behold*," two which depend on yourself, one on your eyes, the other on your hearing. Now since her dowry depended on hearing (and although some of you have been acute enough to perceive this already, let them tarry for those who are feebler: I commend those who have anticipated the truth, and make allowances for those who only follow in their track) since the dowry then depended on hearing— (and what is meant by hearing? faith: for "*faith comes by hearing*" faith as opposed to fruition, and actual experience) I said before that He divided the dowry into two, and gave some portion to the bride for an earnest, while He promised others in the future. What did He give her? He gave her forgiveness of sins, remission of punishment, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, the body of the Lord, the divine, spiritual Table, the resurrection of the dead. For all these things the Apostles had. Therefore He gave some parts and promised others. Of some there was experience and fruition, others depended upon hope and faith. Now listen. What did He bestow? Baptism and the Sacrifice. Of these there is experience. What did He promise? Resurrection, immortality of the body, union with angels, a place in the joyful company of archangels, and as a citizen in His kingdom, immaculate life, the good things "*which eye has not*

seen, nor ear heard nor have entered into the heart of man, things which God has prepared for them that love Him."

16. Understand what is said, lest ye lose it: I am labouring to enable you to perceive it. The dowry of the bride then was divided into two portions consisting of things present and things to come; things seen and things heard, things given and things taken on trust, things experienced, and things to be enjoyed hereafter; things belonging to present life, and things to come after the resurrection. The former things you see, the latter you hear. Observe then what He says to her that you may not suppose that she received the former things only, though they be great and ineffable, and surpassing all understanding. *"Hearken O daughter and behold;"* hear the latter things and behold the former that you may not say *"am I again to depend on hope, again on faith, again on the future?"* See now: I give some things, and I promise others: the latter indeed depend on hope, but do thou receive the others as pledges, as an earnest, as a proof of the remainder. I promise you a kingdom: and let present things be the ground of your trust, your trust in me. Do you promise me a kingdom? Yea. I have given you the greater part, even the Lord of the kingdom, for *"he who spared not his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"* [Romans 8:32] Do you give me the resurrection of the body? Yea; I have given you the greater part. What is the nature of it? Release from sins. How is that the greater part? Because sin brought forth death. I have destroyed the parent, and shall I not destroy the offspring? I have dried up the root, and shall I not destroy the produce. *"Hearken O daughter and behold."* What am I to behold? Dead men raised to life, lepers cleansed, the sea restrained, the paralytic braced up into vigour, paradise opened, loaves poured forth in abundance, sins remitted, the lame man leaping, the robber made a citizen of paradise, the publican turned into an evangelist, the harlot

become more modest than the maid. Hear and behold. Hear of the former things and behold these. Accept from present things a proof of the others; concerning those I have given you pledges, things which are better than they are. *"What is the meaning of this your saying?"* These things are mine. *"Hearken O daughter and behold."* These things are my dower to you. And what does the bride contribute? Let us see. What I pray you do you bring that you may not be portionless? What can I, she answers, bring to you from heathen altars, and the steam of sacrifices and from devils? What have I to contribute? What? Do you say? Your will and your faith. *"Hearken O daughter and behold."* And what will you have me do? *"Forget your own people."* What kind of people? The devils, the idols, the sacrificial smoke, and steam, and blood. *"Forget your own people, and your father's house."* Leave your father and come after me. I left my Father, and came to you, and will you not leave your father? But when the word leave is used in reference to the Son do not understand by it an actual leaving. What He means is *"I condescended, I accommodated myself to you, I assumed human flesh."* This is the duty of the bridegroom, and of the bride, that you should abandon your parents, and that we should be wedded to one another. *"Hearken O daughter and behold, and forget your own people, and your father's house."* And what do you give me if I do forget them? *"and the king shall desire your beauty."* You have the Lord for your lover. If you have Him for your lover, you have also the things which are his. I trust ye may be able to understand what is said: for the thought is a subtle one, and I wish to stop the mouth of the Jews.

Now exert your minds I pray: for whether one hears, or forbears to hear I shall dig and till the soil. *"Hearken O daughter, and behold, forget also your own people, and your father's house, and the king shall desire*

your beauty." By beauty in this passage the Jew understands sensible beauty; not spiritual but corporeal.

17. Attend, and let us learn what corporeal, and what spiritual beauty are. There is soul and body: they are two substances: there is a beauty of body, and there is a beauty of soul. What is beauty of body? An extended eyebrow, a merry glance, a blushing cheek, ruddy lips, a straight neck, long wavy hair, tapering fingers, upright stature, a fair blooming complexion. Does this bodily beauty come from nature, or from choice? Confessedly it comes from nature. Attend that you may learn the conception of philosophers. This beauty whether of the countenance, of the eye, of the hair, of the brow, does it come from nature, or from choice? It is obvious that it comes from nature. For the ungraceful woman, even if she cultivate beauty in countless ways, cannot become graceful in body: for natural conditions are fixed, and confined by limits which they cannot pass over. Therefore the beautiful woman is always beautiful, even if she has no taste for beauty: and the ungraceful cannot make herself graceful, nor the graceful ungraceful. Wherefore? Because these things come from nature. Well! You have seen corporeal beauty. Now let us turn inwards to the soul: let the handmaid approach the mistress! let us turn I say to the soul. Look upon that beauty, or rather listen to it: for you can not see it since it is invisible— Listen to that beauty. What then is beauty of soul? Temperance, mildness, almsgiving, love, brotherly kindness, tender affection, obedience to God, the fulfilment of the law, righteousness, contrition of heart. These things are the beauty of the soul. These things then are not the results of nature, but of moral disposition. And he who does not possess these things is able to receive them, and he who has them, if he becomes careless, loses them. For as in the case of the body I was saying that she who is ungraceful cannot become graceful; so in the case of the soul I say the contrary that the

graceless soul can become full of grace. For what was more graceless than the soul of Paul when he was a blasphemer and insulter: what more full of grace when he said *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."* [2 Timothy 4:7] What was more graceless than the soul of the robber? What more full of grace when he heard the words *"Verily I say unto you today shall you be with me in paradise?"*

[Luke 23:43] What was more graceless than the publican when he practised extortion? But what more full of grace when he declared his resolution.

[Luke 19:8] Do you see that you can not alter grace of body, for it is the result not of moral disposition, but of nature. But grace of soul is supplied out of our own moral choice. You have now received the definition. Of what kind are they? That the beauty of the soul proceeds from obedience to God. For if the graceless soul obeys God it puts off its ungracefulness, and becomes full of grace. *"Saul! Saul!"* it was said, *"why do you persecute me?"* and he replied *"and who are You Lord?" "I am Jesus."* [Acts 9:4-5] And he obeyed, and his obedience made the graceless soul full of grace. Again, He says to the publican *"come follow me"* [Matthew 9:9] and the publican rose up and became an apostle: and the graceless soul became full of grace. Whence? By obedience. Again He says to the fishermen *"Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men:"* [Matthew 4:19] and by their obedience their minds became full of grace. Let us see then what kind of beauty He is speaking of here. *"Hearken O daughter and behold, and forget your own people and your father's house, and the king shall desire your beauty."* What kind of beauty will he desire? The spiritual kind. How so? Because she is to *"forget"* He says *"hearken and forget."* These are acts of moral choice. *"Hearken!"* he said: an ungraceful one hears and her ungracefulness being that of the body is not removed. To the sinful woman He has said *"Hearken,"* and if she will obey she sees what manner

of beauty is bestowed upon her. Since then the ungracefulness of the bride was not physical, but moral (for she did not obey God but transgressed) therefore he leads her to another remedy. You became ungraceful then, not by nature, but by moral choice: and you became full of grace by obedience. *"Hearken O daughter and behold and forget your own people, and your father's house, and the king shall desire your beauty."* Then that you may learn that he does not mean anything visible to sense, when you hear the word beauty, think not of eye, or nose, or mouth, or neck, but of piety, faith, love, things which are within— *"for all the glory of the king's daughter is from within."* Now for all these things let us offer thanks to God, the giver, for to Him alone belongs glory, honour, might, for ever and ever. Amen.

Letters to Olympias

[The deaconess Olympias to whom seventeen of Chrysostom's extant letters are addressed was the most eminent of his female friends. She belonged to a Pagan family of high rank, and was born about 368. Her father Seleucus who was a count of the Empire died when she was a young girl and she was brought up under the guardianship of an uncle Procopius, who was a devout Christian and a friend of Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory took great interest in her, speaking of her in his letters as "his own Olympias" and delighting to be addressed by her as "father." Her governess Theodosia, sister of St. Amphilochius of Iconium, was a woman whom Gregory exhorted her to imitate as the very pattern of Christian goodness. The orphan girl had great personal beauty, and was the heiress of a large fortune. Naturally therefore she had many suitors, and in 384 at the age of sixteen she was wedded to Nebridius, a young man of high rank and irreproachable character. The marriage however does not seem to have been a happy one, and perhaps in this fact as well as in the death of her husband about two years after their union, Olympias saw a divine intimation that she should not entangle herself again in the worldly cares and anxieties incident to married life. The Emperor Theodosius wished to unite her to a young Spaniard, Elpidius, a kinsman of his own, and irritated by her refusal, ordered her property to be confiscated until she should have attained her thirtieth year, unless she consented to the proposed union. Olympias however remained inflexible and in a letter of dignified sarcasm thanked the Emperor for relieving her from a heavy burden. "He could not have conferred a greater blessing upon her unless he had ordered her wealth to be bestowed upon the Churches and the poor." Theodosius perceiving the

uselessness, if not regretting the injustice, of his harsh decree, cancelled it, and left her in the undisturbed enjoyment of her property. Henceforward her time and wealth were devoted to the service of religion. She ministered to the necessities of the sick and poor, and supported the work of the Church in Greece, Asia Minor and Syria with such lavish donations, not only of her money but of her land, that even Chrysostom, who might be called the great preacher of almsgiving, warned her against indiscriminate liberality, reminding her that as her wealth was a trust committed to her by God she ought to be discreet in the management of it. This salutary advice gained him the ill-will of many avaricious bishops and clergy who had profited, or hoped to profit, by her gifts. She in her turn requited the Archbishop for his spiritual care by many little feminine attentions to his bodily wants, especially by seeing that he was supplied with wholesome food, and did not overstrain his feeble constitution by a too rigid abstinence. She herself however practised the most austere asceticism, renouncing the luxury of the bath, wearing none but old coarse clothing, and subjecting herself to severe restrictions in respect of food and sleep. After the expulsion of Chrysostom from Constantinople 404, through the intrigues of his enemies, Olympias suffered much from the persecution to which all his followers were subjected. She was accused of having been concerned in causing the fire which broke out immediately after his departure, and destroyed the Cathedral Church and the Senate House. Her intrepid demeanour before the præfect who tried in vain to frighten her into a confession of guilt, or induce her to edge Arsacius who had been intruded into the See by an arbitrary exercise of imperial power, excited general admiration; and the tidings of her fortitude were a great consolation to the exiled archbishop in the midst of much bodily suffering, and mental distress. It is not quite certain whether

she was driven from Constantinople or voluntarily retired from it; nor have we any definite information concerning the remainder of her life.]

To My Lady

The most reverend and divinely favored deaconess Olympias, I John, Bishop, send greeting in the Lord.

1. Come now let me relieve the wound of your despondency, and disperse the thoughts which gather this cloud of care around you. For what is it which upsets your mind, and why are you sorrowful and dejected? Is it because of the fierce black storm which has overtaken the Church, enveloping all things in darkness as of a night without a moon, and is growing to a head every day, travailing to bring forth disastrous shipwrecks, and increasing the ruin of the world? I know all this as well as you; none shall gainsay it, and if you like I will form an image of the things now taking place so as to present the tragedy yet more distinctly to you. We behold a sea upheaved from the very lowest depths, some sailors floating dead upon the waves, others engulfed by them, the planks of the ships breaking up, the sails torn to tatters, the masts sprung, the oars dashed out of the sailors' hands, the pilots seated on the deck, clasping their knees with their hands instead of grasping the rudder, bewailing the hopelessness of their situation with sharp cries and bitter lamentations, neither sky nor sea clearly visible, but all one deep and impenetrable darkness, so that no one can see his neighbour, while mighty is the roaring of the billows, and monsters of the sea attack the crews on every side.

But how much further shall I pursue the unattainable? For whatever image of our present evils I may seek speech shrinks baffled from the attempt. Nevertheless even when I look at these calamities I do not abandon the hope of better things, considering as I do who the pilot is in all this—not one who gets the better of the storm by his art, but calms the raging

waters by his rod. But if He does not effect this at the outset and speedily, such is His custom— He does not at the beginning put down these terrible evils, but when they have increased, and come to extremities, and most persons are reduced to despair, then He works wondrously, and beyond all expectation, thus manifesting his own power, and training the patience of those who undergo these calamities. Do not therefore be cast down. For there is only one thing, Olympias, which is really terrible, only one real trial, and that is sin; and I have never ceased continually harping upon this theme; but as for all other things, plots, enmities, frauds, calumnies, insults, accusations, confiscation, exile, the keen sword of the enemy, the peril of the deep, warfare of the whole world, or anything else you like to name, they are but idle tales. For whatever the nature of these things may be they are transitory and perishable, and operate in a mortal body without doing any injury to the vigilant soul. Therefore the blessed Paul, desiring to prove the insignificance both of the pleasures and sorrows relating to this life, declared the whole truth in one sentence when he said— "*For the things which are seen are temporal.*" [2 Corinthians 4:18] Why then do you fear temporal things which pass away like the stream of a river. For such is the nature of present things whether they be pleasant or painful. And another prophet compared all human prosperity not to grass, but to another material even more flimsy, describing the whole of it "*as the flower of grass.*" For he did not single out any one part of it, as wealth alone, or luxury alone, or power, or honour; but having comprised all the things which are esteemed splendid among men under the one designation of glory he said "*all the glory of man is as the flower of grass.*" [Isaiah 40:6]

2. Nevertheless, you will say, adversity is a terrible thing and grievous to be borne. Yet look at it again compared with another image and then also learn to despise it. For the railings, and insults, and reproaches, and gibes

inflicted by enemies, and their plots are compared to a worn-out garment, and moth-eaten wool when God says *"Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for they shall wax old as does a garment, and like moth-eaten wool so shall they be consumed."*

[Isaiah 50:7-8] Therefore let none of these things which are happening trouble you, but ceasing to invoke the aid of this or that person, and to run after shadows (for such are human alliances), do thou persistently call upon Jesus, whom you serve, merely to bow his head; and in a moment of time all these evils will be dissolved. But if you have already called upon Him, and yet they have not been dissolved, such is the manner of God's dealing (for I will resume my former argument); He does not put down evils at the outset, but when they have grown to a head, when scarcely any form of the enemy's malice remains ungratified, then He suddenly converts all things to a state of tranquillity and conducts them to an unexpected settlement. For He is not only able to turn as many things as we expect and hope, to good, but many more, yea infinitely more. Wherefore also Paul says *"now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."*

[Ephesians 3:20] Could He not, for example, have prevented the three children at the outset from falling into trial? But He did not choose to do this, thereby conferring great pain upon them. Therefore He suffered them to be delivered into the hands of barbarians, and the furnace to be heated to an immeasurable height and the wrath of the king to blaze even more fiercely than the furnace, and hands and feet to be bound with great severity and they themselves to be cast into the fire; and then, when all they who beheld despaired of their rescue, suddenly, and beyond all hope, the wonder-working power of God, the supreme artificer, was displayed, and shone forth with exceeding splendour. For the fire was bound, and the bondmen were released; and the furnace became a temple of prayer, a place

of fountains and dew, of higher dignity than a royal court, and the very hairs of their head prevailed over that all devouring element which gets the better even of iron and stone, and masters every kind of substance. And a solemn song of universal praise was instituted there by these holy men inviting every kind of created thing to join in the wondrous melody; and they uttered hymns of thanksgiving to God for that they had been bound, and also burnt, as far at least as the malice of their enemies had power; that they had been exiles from their country, captives deprived of their liberty, wandering outcasts from city and home, sojourners in a strange and barbarous land; for all this was the outpouring of a grateful heart. And when the malicious devices of their enemies were perfected (for what further could they attempt after their death?) and the labours of the heroes were completed, and the garland of victory was woven, and their rewards were prepared and nothing more was wanting for their renown; then at last their calamities were brought to an end, and he who caused the furnace to be kindled, and delivered them over to that great punishment, became himself the panegyrist of those holy heroes, and the herald of God's marvellous deed, and everywhere throughout the world issued letters full of reverent praise, recording what had taken place, and becoming the faithful herald of the miracles wrought by the wonder-working God. For inasmuch as he had been an enemy and adversary what he wrote was above suspicion even in the opinion of enemies.

3. Do you see the abundance of resource belonging to God? His wisdom, His extraordinary power, His loving-kindness and care? Be not therefore dismayed or troubled but continue to give thanks to God for all things, praising, and invoking Him; beseeching and supplicating; even if countless tumults and troubles come upon you, even if tempests are stirred up before your eyes let none of these things disturb you. For our Master is

not baffled by the difficulty, even if all things are reduced to the extremity of ruin. For it is possible for Him to raise those who have fallen, to convert those who are in error, to set straight those who have been ensnared, to release those who have been laden with countless sins, and make them righteous, to quicken those who are dead, to restore lustre to decayed things, and freshness to those which have waxen old. For if He makes things which are not, come into being, and bestows existence on things which are nowhere by any means manifest, how much more will He rectify things which already exist. But you will say there are many who perish, many who are caught by snares. Many such things have indeed often taken place, yet afterwards have all received their appropriate correction, save some few who have remained in an incurable condition, even after the change in their circumstances. Why are you troubled and distracted because such a person is cast out and such another is put into his place? Christ was crucified and the release of Barabbas the robber was demanded, and the depraved populace clamoured for the preservation of the murderer rather than of the Saviour and benefactor. How many think you then stumbled at these things? How many were destroyed? But I must carry my argument yet further back. Did not He who was crucified become immediately after his birth a wanderer and a fugitive? Was He not from the very cradle removed with the whole household into a strange land, taking that long journey into a barbarous region? And this removal gave occasion to torrents of blood, and cruel murder and slaughter, and all the children of tender age were cut to pieces just as if they had been soldiers arrayed in battle, and infants torn from the breast were handed over to death, and even when the milk was in their throats, the sword was driven through their necks. What could be more distressing than this tragedy? And these things were done by him who sought to destroy Jesus, yet the long-suffering God endured this tragical

cruelty, which caused so much bloodshed, and forbore to prevent it although He had the power, displaying his long-suffering for some inscrutably wise purpose. And when Jesus had returned from the foreign land and was grown up, war was rekindled against him on every side. First of all the disciples of John were envious of Him and tried to slander Him, although John himself behaved reverently to Him, and they said *"He who was with you beyond Jordan, behold the same baptizes and all men come to Him."* [John 3:26] For these were the words of men who were already irritated, and agitated by ill-will, and consumed by that passion. For the same reason also one of the disciples who said these things disputed with a certain Jew and raised a contentious argument about purifying, comparing one kind of baptism with another, the baptism of John with that of the disciples of Christ. *"For there arose"* it is said, *"a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a certain Jew about purifying."* And when He began to work miracles how many calumniators He had! Some called Him a Samaritan and demoniac saying *"You are a Samaritan and hast a Devil"* [John 8:48] others *"a deceiver,"* saying *"This man is not of God but deceives the multitude"* [John 7:12] others *"a sorcerer"* saying *"He casts out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the Devils"* [Matthew 9:34] and they continually said these things against Him and called Him an adversary of God, and a gluttonous, and greedy man, and a drunkard, and a friend of the wicked and depraved. *"For"* He said, *"the Son of man came eating and drinking and they say behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."* [Luke 7:34] And when he was conversing with the harlot they called Him a false prophet; *"For had He been a prophet,"* one said, *"He would have known who this woman is which speaks unto Him;"* [Luke 7:39] in fact every day they sharpened their teeth against Him. And not only did the Jews thus oppose Him, but even those who were

reputed to be his brethren were not sincerely attached to Him, but even out of his own family opposition was kindled against Him. See at least how they also themselves were perverted, from the evangelist adding the remark *"for neither did His brethren believe in Him."* [John 7:5]

4. But since you call to mind many who were offended and went astray, how many of the disciples do you suppose were offended at the time of the crucifixion? One betrayed Him, the others took to flight, one denied Him, and when all had abandoned Him He was led away bound without companions. How many then think you who had lately seen Him working His miracles, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, casting out devils, multiplying loaves, and doing all other kinds of wonderful deeds, were offended at that season, when they beheld Him led away and bound, surrounded by common soldiers, and followed by Jewish priests making a tumult and uproar; alone in the midst hemmed in by all his enemies, and the traitor standing by and exulting in his deed? And what was the effect think you when He was being scourged? And probably a vast multitude was present. For it was an illustrious festival which brought all together, and this drama of iniquity was enacted in the capital city, and in the very middle of the day. How many think you who were present then were offended when they saw Him bound, scourged, streaming with blood, examined before the governor's tribunal, and not one of His disciples standing by? What was the effect again when He was subjected to those manifold kinds of mockery, successively repeated, when they crowned Him with thorns, then arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, then put a reed in His hand, then fell down and worshipped Him, setting in motion every species of ribaldry and derision? How many think you were offended, how many bewildered, how many perplexed when they smote Him on the cheek and said *"prophesy unto us you Christ, who is He that smote you?"* [Matthew 26:28] and when they led

Him hither and there, and spent the whole day in scoffs and abuse, and ribaldry and derision in the midst of the Jewish assembly? And when the servant of the High-Priest dealt Him a blow; and when the soldiers parted His garments among them and when He was led up to the cross, having the marks of the scourge upon His back, and was fastened to the wood, how many think you were offended? For not even then were those savage beasts softened, but became more furious than before, and the tragedy became more intense, and the ribaldry increased. For some said *"Ah! Thou that destroyest the temple, and in three days buildest it up;"* [Matthew 27:40] and some, *"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."* [Matthew 27:42]

And others said *"If you are the Son of God come down from the cross and we will believe you."* [Matthew 27:40]

Again when they insulted Him by offering Him gall and vinegar on the sponge how many think you were offended? Or when the robbers reviled Him? Or when as I have already said, they made that dreadful and monstrous assertion that the robber and housebreaker, the man laden with the crime of murder deserved to be released rather than Jesus, and having received permission from the judge to make their choice preferred Barabbas, desiring not only to crucify Christ, but also to involve Him in infamy? For they thought that by these means they should be able to manufacture the belief that He was worse than the robber, and such a great transgressor that neither on the plea of mercy, nor of the privilege of the Festival was it possible to save Him. For they did everything with a view to slander His fame; which also was the reason why they crucified the two robbers with Him. Nevertheless the truth was not obscured, but shone forth all the more clearly. And they accused Him of usurping kingly power saying *"Every one who makes himself a king is not a friend of Cæsar"* bringing this charge of usurpation against one who had not where to lay his

head. Moreover they brought a calumnious accusation of blasphemy against Him. For the High Priest rent his clothes saying "*He has spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?*" [Matthew 26:65] And what was the nature of his death? Was it not a violent one? Was it not the death of capital offenders? Of execrable criminals? Was it not of the vilest kind? Was it not the death of those who have perpetrated the worst offenses, and are not worthy to draw even their last breath upon the earth? And then as to the manner of his burial, was it not accomplished as a matter of favour? For a certain one came and begged for his body. Thus not even he who buried Him belonged to his own friends, to those whom He had benefited, to his disciples, to those who had enjoyed such free and salutary intercourse with Him, for all had taken to flight, all had hurried away from Him. And that base suspicion which his enemies contrived in consequence of the resurrection when they said "*His disciples came and stole Him*" [Matthew 28:13] how many think you were offended, how many for a time upset by that? For the story prevailed at that time, although it was a fabrication, and was bought for money; nevertheless it held its ground among some people, after the seals (of the sepulchre were broken) after the manifest appearance of the truth. For the multitude did not know the prediction of the resurrection (and no wonder), inasmuch as even his disciples did not understand it; for we read "*they did not know that He must rise again from the dead.*" [John 20:9] How many therefore think you were offended in those days? And yet the long-suffering God patiently endured, ordering all things according to His own inscrutable wisdom.

5. Then again after those days the disciples continued to live in hiding and secrecy, being fugitives full of fear and trembling, continually shifting from place to place, and even when they began to appear after fifty days, and to work miracles, they did not enjoy perfect security; but even after

those events there were innumerable stumbling-blocks to offend the weaker brethren, when they were scourged, when the Church was distressed, when they themselves were driven away, and their enemies had the upper hand in many places, and raised tumults. For when they had acquired much confidence by means of the miracles which they wrought, then the death of Stephen again caused a severe persecution, and dispersed them all, and involved the Church in confusion; and the disciples were again alarmed, fugitive, and distressed. And yet the Church continually grew, when it flourished by means of the signs which were wrought and became illustrious from the manner of its introduction. One disciple for example was let down through a window, and so escaped the hands of the ruler; others were brought out of prison by an angel and so released from their fetters; others were received into the houses of common people and artisans when they were driven out by those in authority; they were courteously treated in every way, by female sellers of purple, by tentmakers, and tanners dwelling in the outskirts of the cities, and by the sea shore. Frequently moreover they did not dare to appear in the middle of the towns; and if they did venture there themselves their entertainers did not. And thus amidst alternate trials, and respites from trial, the fabric of the Church was wrought, and they who once stumbled were afterwards set upright, and they who wandered away were brought back, and the ruined places were built up more firmly than before. For this cause when Paul prayed that the preaching of the word might proceed by a smooth course only, God rich in wisdom and resource did not yield to His disciple; nay even when many times invoked he would not consent but said *"my grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* [2 Corinthians 12:9] If then even now you will reckon up the good things with the painful, you will see that many events have occurred which if not positive signs and wonders do yet

resemble signs, and are unspeakable proofs of the great providence and succour of God. But that you may not hear everything from me without any trouble, I leave this as your task, that you may reckon up everything accurately and compare them with the misfortunes, and by occupying yourself with this good employment may divert your mind from despondency; for you will derive much consolation from this work.

Pray say many kind words from me to all your blessed household. May you continue in good health and good spirits, most reverend and divinely favoured lady.

If you wish me to write long letters inform me of this, and pray do not deceive me by saying that you have thrown off all despondency, and are enjoying a season of rest. For letters are a remedy of the proper kind to produce great cheerfulness in you, and you will continually see letters from me. And when you write to me again do not say "*I have much comfort from your letters,*" for this I know of myself, but tell me that you have as much as I wish you to have, that you are not confounded with sorrow, that you do not pass your time in weeping, but in serenity and cheerfulness.

To Olympias

Do not be anxious on my behalf, nor rack yourself with solicitude, on account of the severity of the winter, and the weakness of my digestion, and the incursions of the Isaurians. For the winter is only what it is wont to be in Armenia; nothing more need be said about it; and it does not very seriously injure me. For in anticipation of these things I have devised many plans for averting the mischief which might arise from them; keeping up a constant fire, setting screens about the chamber in which I live, using a large number of rugs, and staying always indoors. This indeed is irksome to me, if it were not for the benefit to be derived; for as long as I remain indoors I am not severely distressed by the cold; but if I am compelled to go out a little, and come in contact with the outer air, I suffer no small damage. Wherefore I beseech you dear lady, and entreat you as a very great favour to pay great attention to the restoration of your bodily health. For dejection causes sickness; and when the body is exhausted and enfeebled, and remains in a neglected condition, deprived of the assistance of physicians, and of a wholesome climate, and an abundant supply of the necessities of life, consider how great an aggravation of distress is occasioned thereby. Wherefore I beseech you, dear lady, to employ various and skilled physicians, and to take medicines which avail to correct these conditions. For a few days ago when I suffered from a tendency to vomiting, owing to the state of the atmosphere, I had recourse among other remedies to the drug which was sent me by my most discreet mistress Syncletion, and I found that no more than three days' application of it cured my infirmity. I beseech you therefore to make use of this remedy also yourself and to arrange that some more of it may be sent to me. For having again felt

somewhat upset, I again had recourse to it, and completely cured my disorder; for it allays the deep internal inflammation, draws out moisture on the skin, causes a moderate degree of warmth, infuses no little vigor, and excites an appetite for food; and all these effects I experienced in the course of a few days. Let then my most honoured lord the Count Theophilus be exhorted to take means to send some of this to me again. And do not be distressed at my wintering here, for I am in a much more comfortable and sounder state of health than I was last year; so that if you also would take the requisite care of yourself, you would be in a far more satisfactory condition. Now if you say that your ailments have been produced by despondency how is it that you again ask for letters from me, seeing that you have not derived any benefit from them in the direction of cheerfulness, but have sunk so deeply under the tyranny of despondency as even to desire to depart out of this world. Are you ignorant how great a reward even of sickness awaits one who has a thankful spirit? Have I not often, both in person, and through letters, discoursed to you concerning this theme? But since the pressure of business perhaps, or the peculiar nature of your sickness, and the quick succession of changes in your condition do not permit you to retain what I have said constantly and clearly in your mind, listen once more while I try to heal the wounds of your despondency by repeating the same incantations: *"for to write the same things,"* it is said, *"to me indeed is not grievous, and for you it is safe."* [Philippians 3:1]

2. What is it then which I say and write? Nothing, Olympias, redounds so much to the credit of any one as patient endurance in suffering. For this is indeed the queen of virtues, and the perfection of crowns; and as it excels all other forms of righteousness, so this particular species of it is more glorious than the rest. Perhaps what I have said seems obscure; I will therefore try to make it clearer. What then is it that I affirm? Not the

spoliation of goods, even if one were to be stripped bare of all one's possessions, not the loss of honours, nor expulsion from one's country, and transportation to a distant land, nor the strain of labour and toil, nor imprisonment, and bondage, nor reproaches, and abuse, and scoffings (not indeed that you are to think the courageous endurance of such things a slight kind of fortitude, as Jeremiah that great and eminent prophet proves who was not a little distressed by this kind of trial); [Jeremiah xv] yet not even this, nor the loss of children, even should they be torn from us in one fell swoop, nor the perpetual assaults of enemies, nor anything else of that nature, no, nor even the head and crown of things accounted painful, namely death, terrible and loathsome though it be, is so oppressive as infirmity of body. And this is proved by the greatest hero of endurance, who, when he was encompassed by bodily sickness, thought death would be a release from the calamities which were depressing him; and when he underwent all the other sufferings, was not sensible of them, although he received blow after blow, and at last a deadly one. For it was no slight matter, but rather an evidence of the most malignant cruelty on the part of his enemy in dealing with one who was no novice in suffering, nor entering the lists for the first time, but already exhausted with the frequent repetition of assaults, to inflict upon him that deadly blow, the destruction of his children, so cruelly inflicted moreover that all of either sex were destroyed at the same moment in early youth and by a violent end, and so instantaneous was their death that it involved their burial also. For their father neither saw them laid upon a bed, nor kissed their hands, nor heard their last words, nor touched their hands and knees, nor did he shut their mouths, or close their eyes when they were about to die, acts which tend not a little to console parents who are being parted from their children; neither did he follow some of them to burial, and find others on his return home to

console him for those who had departed; but he heard that as they were reclining on their couches at a banquet, a banquet full of love, not of excess, a table of brotherly kindness, they were all overwhelmed; and blood, and wine, the cups and the ceiling, the table, and the dust, and the limbs of his children, were all mingled together. Nevertheless when he heard these things, and others before these which were also distressing; for they too had perished in a distressing way; flocks and whole herds had been destroyed, the latter having been consumed by fire sent down from heaven, (so said the evil messenger of this tragedy,) and the former having been all seized together by various enemies, and cut to pieces as well as the shepherds themselves; nevertheless I say when he saw this great storm stirred up in a brief moment of time affecting his lands, his house, his cattle, and his children, when he saw billow following billow, and long lines of rocks, and the darkness was profound, and the surging waves unbearable, even then he was not tortured by despondency, and scarcely seemed to feel the things which had happened, save so far as he was a man and a father. But when he was delivered over to sickness and sores, then did he also long for death, then did he also bewail himself and lament, so that you may understand how this kind of suffering is more severe than all others, and this form of patience the highest of all. Nor is the Devil himself unaware of this fact; for when after having set in motion all these trials he perceived that the hero remained untroubled and undismayed he rushed to this as the greatest contest of all, saying that all the other calamities were bearable, as loss of child, or property, or anything else (for this is what is meant by the expression "*skin for skin*" [Job 2:4]) but the deadly blow was when pain was inflicted on a man's body. And therefore when he had been worsted after this contest, he had no longer a word to utter, although on former occasions he had made the most strenuous and shameless resistance. In this

instance however he found that he could not invent any further shameless device, but hid his face and retreated.

3. Think not however that it is an excuse to justify you in desiring death, that Job desired it, not being able to bear his sufferings. For consider the time when he desired it, and the disposition of his circumstances— the law was not given, the prophets had not appeared, grace had not been shed forth as it was afterwards, nor had he the advantage of any other kind of philosophy. For as a proof that more is demanded from us than from those who lived then, and that harder tasks are assigned to us, listen to Christ, when He says *"Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."* [Matthew 5:20] Do not think therefore that to pray for death now is exempt from blame, but hearken to the voice of St. Paul when he says *"To depart and to be with Christ is far better, but to abide in the flesh is more necessary for your sake."* [Philippians 1:23-24] For in proportion as the strain of the affliction is increased are the garlands of victory multiplied; in proportion as the gold is heated does it become purified, the longer the merchant makes his voyage on the sea, the larger is the freight which he collects. Do not then think that the labour now allotted to you is a slight one, but rather that it is higher than all which you have undergone, I mean that which consists in infirmity of body. For in the case of Lazarus [Luke xvi] (and although I may have often said this to you, it nowise hinders me from saying it now) this bodily infirmity availed for his salvation; and he departed to the bosom of the man who possessed a dwelling which he shared with all who passed by, and was continually shifting his home on account of God's command, and sacrificed his own son, his only begotten, who had been given him in extreme old age; although Lazarus had done none of these things yet he obtained this

blessing inasmuch as he cheerfully endured poverty, and infirmity, and friendlessness. For this is so great a good to those who bear anything bravely that it releases any one who may have committed the greatest sins from the heaviest burden of them; or if any one is an upright and just man it becomes an additional ground of the greatest confidence. For it is a bright wreath of victory for the just, shining far above the brightness of the sun, and it is the greatest means of purification for those who have sinned. On this account Paul delivers the man who had made the incestuous marriage to "*destruction of the flesh*," purifying him by this means. For as a proof that what was done did purify even from so great a stain hear his words "*that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*" [1 Corinthians 5:5] And when he was accusing others of another very awful sin, that of partaking unworthily of the holy table and those secret mysteries, and had said that such a person will be "*guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*," [1 Corinthians 11:27] observe how he says that they also are purified from that grievous stain— "*therefore are many weak and sickly among you.*" [1 Corinthians 11:30] And then by way of proving that they will not be confined to this condition of punishment, but that some profit will be derived from it, namely release from the penalties to which the sin is liable, he added: "*for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But now when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*" [1 Corinthians 11:31-32] Moreover that they who have lived very righteously derive much benefit from such chastisement is plain from the case of Job, who was more illustrious after it than before, and from the case of Timothy, who although he was such a good man, and entrusted with such an important ministry, and made the circuit of the world with Paul passed not two or three days, nor ten or twenty, or a hundred, but many in succession in ill health, his body being

very seriously enfeebled. Paul shows this where he said *"Use a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your frequent infirmities."* [1 Timothy 5:23] And he who raised the dead did not cure this man's infirmity, but left him in the furnace of his sickness so that he might therefrom contract a very great abundance of confidence. For the lessons which Paul himself had enjoyed from his Master, and the training which he had received from Him, he imparted to his disciple. For although he was not subjected to bodily infirmity, yet he was buffeted by trials not less severe, which inflicted much physical pain. *"For there was given unto me"* he says *"a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me"* meaning by this the blows, the bonds, the chains, the imprisonments, the being dragged about, and maltreated, and tortured by the scourges of public executioners. Wherefore also being unable to bear the pain occasioned to the body by these things *"for this I besought the Lord thrice (thrice here meaning many times) that I might be delivered from this thorn."* And then when he did not obtain his petition, having learned the benefit of the trial, he held his peace, and rejoiced at the things which happened unto him.

Therefore even if you remain at home, and are set fast in bed, do not consider your life an idle one; for you undergo more severe pains than those who are dragged, and maltreated, and tortured by executioners, inasmuch as in this excessive infirmity of yours you have a perpetual executioner residing with you.

4. Do not then now desire death, nor neglect the means of cure; for indeed this would not be safe. On this account Paul also exhorts Timothy to take the greatest care of himself. As regards infirmity then enough has now been said. But if it is separation from me which causes your despondency expect release from this. And I have not said this now merely to encourage you, but I am sure that it really will be the case. For if it were not destined

to happen, I should long ago, so at least I think, have departed from this world, considering the trials which have been inflicted on me. For to pass over all that occurred in Constantinople, after my departure thence, you may understand what sufferings I endured on that long and cruel journey, most of which were sufficient to produce death; what I endured after my arrival here, after my removal from Cucusus, and after my sojourn in Arabissus. Yet I have survived all these things, and now I am in sound health, and great security, so that all Armenians are astonished that with such a feeble and flimsy frame as mine I can support such an intolerable amount of cold, or that I can breathe at all, when those who are habituated to the winter are suffering from it in no common degree. Nevertheless I have remained uninjured up to the present day, having escaped the hands of robbers who have repeatedly attacked us, and yet in daily want of the necessaries of life, and deprived of the use of a bath; and although since my sojourn here I have been constantly without this luxury I am now so established in the habit that I do not even long for the comfort to be derived from it, but am in sounder health than before. And neither the inclemency of the climate, nor the desolation of the region, nor the scarcity of provisions, nor the lack of attendants, nor the unskillfulness of physicians, nor the deprivation of the bath, nor perpetual confinement in one chamber as in a prison, and the impossibility of moving about which I always used continually to need, nor perpetual contact with fire and smoke, nor fear of robbers, nor a constant state of siege, nor anything else of this kind has got the better of me; on the contrary I am in a sounder condition of health than I was elsewhere, although I then received great care and attention. Taking all these things then into consideration pray shake off the despondency which now oppresses you, and do not exact inordinate and cruel penances from yourself. I sent you the treatise which I have lately written, that "*no one can*

harm the man who does not injure himself," and the letter which I now send your honour contends for the same position. I beg you therefore to go over it constantly, and if your health permits you, recite it aloud. For if you will, it may prove an effectual remedy for you. But if you are contentious with me, and do not try to cure yourself, and will not rouse yourself from these dismal swamps of despondency in spite of the unlimited amount of advice and exhortation which you enjoy I shall not on my part readily consent to send you frequent and long letters, if you are not to derive any benefit in the way of cheerfulness from them. How then shall I know this? Not by your merely saying so, but by a practical proof, inasmuch as you lately affirmed that it was nothing but despondency which caused this sickness of yours. Since then you have yourself made this confession I shall not believe that you have got rid of your despondency unless you have got rid of your bodily infirmity. For if it is the former which causes your disorder, as you say in your letter, it is obvious that when that has been dispersed the other will be removed at the same time, and when the root has been plucked up, the branches perish with it—and if the branches continue flowering and flourishing, and producing an unnatural amount of fruit I cannot believe that you have been set free from the root of your distress. Therefore do not show me words but facts, and, if you get well, you will see letters sent to you again exceeding the limits of former communications. Deem it then no small consolation that I am alive, and in good health, and that in the midst of such circumstances I have been set free from sickness and infirmity, which, as I know, is a great annoyance and vexation to my enemies. It follows therefore that you should deem this the greatest encouragement, and the crown of your consolation. Do not call your household desolate, which has now a higher place assigned to it in Heaven by reason of the sufferings which it endures. I was grievously distressed on account of Pelagius the

monk. Consider therefore what great rewards they deserve who bravely hold their ground, when men who pass their time in such a habit of discipline and endurance are found susceptible of degradation.

To Olympias

Having risen from the very gates of death I address this letter to the discreet lady; and I am very glad that your servants have met me just as I am anchoring at last in harbour. For had they met me when I was still tossing on the open sea, and experiencing the cruel waves of bodily sickness, it would not have been easy for me to deceive your cautious spirit, by sending good tidings instead of sorrowful. For the winter, which has become more than commonly severe, brought on a storm of internal disorder even more distressing, and during the last two months I have been no better than one dead, nay worse. For I had just enough life to be sensible of the horrors which encircled me, and day and dawn and noon were all one night to me as I spent all my time closely confined to my bed, and in spite of endless contrivances I could not shake off the pernicious effects of the cold; but although I kept a fire burning, and endured a most unpleasant amount of smoke, and remained cooped up in one chamber, covered with any quantity of wraps, and not daring to set a foot outside the threshold I underwent extreme sufferings, perpetual vomiting supervening on headache, loss of appetite, and constant sleeplessness. Thus restlessly did I pass through my long dark sea of troubles. But not to distress your mind by dwelling upon my miseries, from all of them I am now relieved. For as soon as spring approached, and a little change in the temperature took place, all my troubles spontaneously vanished. Nevertheless I still require great care as regards diet; therefore I put only a light load on my stomach, so that it may be able to digest it easily. But it has occasioned me no little concern to learn that my discreet mistress was brought to the verge of death. Nevertheless in consideration of my great affection, and anxiety, and

solicitude for your welfare I was relieved from this care, even before the arrival of your letters, many persons having come from thence who brought me tidings of your restoration to health.

And now I am exceedingly glad and delighted to hear, not only that you have been released from your infirmity, but above all that you bear the things which befall you so bravely, calling them all but an idle tale; and, which is indeed a greater matter, that you have applied this name even to your bodily infirmity, which is an evidence of a robust spirit, rich in the fruit of courage. For not only to bear misfortunes bravely but to be actually insensible to them, to overlook them, and with such little exertion to wreath your brows with the garland prize of patience, neither labouring, nor toiling, neither feeling distress nor causing it to others, but as it were leaping and dancing for joy all the while, this is indeed a proof of the most finished philosophy. Therefore I rejoice, and leap for joy; I am in a flutter of delight, I am insensible to my present loneliness, and the other troubles which surround me, being cheered, and brightened, and not a little proud on account of your greatness of soul, and the repeated victories which you have won, and this, not only for your own sake, but also for the sake of that large and populous city, where you are like a tower, a haven, and a wall of defence, speaking in the eloquent voice of example, and through your sufferings instructing either sex to strip readily for these contests, and descend into the lists with all courage, and cheerfully bear the toils which such contests involve. And the wonder is that without thrusting yourself into the forum, or occupying the public centres of the city, but sitting all the while in a small house and confined chamber you serve and anoint the combatants for the contest, and while the sea is thus raging round you, and the billows are rising to a crest, and crags and reefs, and rocky ledges and fierce monsters appear on every side, and everything is shrouded in the

most profound darkness you, setting the sails of patience, float on with great serenity, as if it was noonday, and calm weather, and a favourable breeze wafting you on, and so far from being overwhelmed by this grievous tempest are not even sprinkled by the spray; and very naturally so; such is the force of virtue as a rudder. Now merchants and pilots, and sailors and voyagers when they see clouds gathering up, or fierce winds rushing down upon them, or the breakers seething with an abundance of foam keep their vessels moored inside harbour; and if they chance to be tempest-tossed in the open sea they do their best, and devise every means to bring their ship to some anchorage, or island or shore. But you, although such innumerable winds, and fierce waves burst upon you together, and the sea is heaved up from its very depths owing to the severity of the storm, and some are submerged, others floating dead upon the water, others drifting naked upon planks, you plunging into the mid ocean of calamities call all these things an idle tale, sailing on with a favourable breeze in the midst of the tempest; and naturally so; for pilots, even if they are infinitely wise in that science, nevertheless have not skill sufficient to withstand every kind of storm; consequently they often shrink from doing battle with the waves. But the science which you have is superior to every kind of storm— the power of a philosophic soul— which is stronger than ten thousand armies, more powerful than arms, and more secure than towers and bulwarks. For the arms, and bulwarks, and towers which soldiers have, are serviceable for the security of the body only, and this not always, nor in every way; but there are times when all these resources are baffled, and leave those who fly to them for refuge destitute of protection. But your powers do not repel the weapons of barbarians, nor the devices of hostile men, nor any assaults and stratagems of that kind, but they have trampled under foot the constraining forces of nature, put down their tyranny and levelled their citadel. And

while ceaselessly contending with demons, you have won countless victories, yet have not received a single blow, but stand unwounded in the midst of a storm of darts and turn the spears which are hurled at you back upon those who discharge them. Such is the wisdom of your art; by the sufferings which you undergo you take vengeance on those who inflict them; by the plots of which you are the subject you put your enemies to pain, possessing in their malice the best foundation for the materials of fame. And you, knowing these things well yourself, and having gained perception by experience, naturally call them all an idle tale. For how, pray, should you not call them by that name, possessing as you do a mortal body, and yet despising death as if you were hastening to quit a foreign country, and return to your own land; a chronic sufferer from the most severe infirmity, and yet more cheerfully disposed than the thriving and robust, not depressed by insults, nor elated by honours and glory, the latter being a cause of infinite mischief to many who after an illustrious career in the priesthood, and after reaching extreme old age, and the most venerable hoar hairs, have fallen into disgrace on this account, and become a common spectacle of derision for those who wish to make merry. But you on the contrary, woman as you are, clothed with a fragile body, and subject to these severe attacks, have not only avoided falling into such a condition yourself, but have prevented many others from so doing. They indeed before they had advanced far in the contest, even at the very outset and starting point, have been overthrown; whereas you, after having gone countless times round the farther turning post, have won a prize in every course, after playing your part in manifold kinds of wrestling and combats. And very naturally so; for the wrestlings of virtue do not depend upon age, or bodily strength, but only on the spirit and the disposition. Thus women have been crowned victors, while men have been upset; so also boys have

been proclaimed conquerors, while aged men have been put to shame. It is indeed always fitting to admire those who pursue virtue, but especially when some are found to cling to it at a time when many are deserting it. Therefore, my sweet lady, you deserve superlative admiration, inasmuch as after so many men, women, and aged persons who seemed to enjoy the greatest reputation have been turned to flight, all lying prostrate before the eyes of the world, and this not after a severe onslaught, nor any alarming muster of the enemy's force, but overthrown before the encounter and worsted before the struggle, you on the contrary after so many battles and such large muster of the enemy are so far from being unstrung, or dismayed by the number of your adversities, that you are all the more vigorous, and the increase of the contest gives you an increase of strength. For the recollection of what has been already achieved becomes the ground of cheerfulness, and joy, and greater zeal. Therefore I rejoice, and leap for joy; for I will not cease repeating this, and taking about with me everywhere the material of my joy; so that although my separation from you distresses you, yet you have this very great consolation arising from your successful exploits; for I also who am banished to so great a distance gain no small cheerfulness from this cause—I mean your courage.

To Olympias

Why do you lament? Why do you belabour yourself, and demand of yourself a punishment which your enemies were not able to demand from you, having thus abandoned your soul to the tyranny of dejection? For the letters which you sent to me by the hands of Patricius have discovered to me the wounds which have been inflicted on your mind. Wherefore also I am very sorrowful and much distressed that when you ought to be using every exertion and making it your business to expel dejection from your soul, you go about collecting distressing thoughts, even inventing things (so you say) which do not exist, and tearing yourself to pieces for no purpose, and to your very great injury. For why are you grieved because you could not remove me from Cucusus? Yet indeed, as far as you were concerned, you did remove me, having made every exertion and endeavour for this purpose. And even if it has not been actually accomplished you ought not to be vexed on that account. For perhaps it seemed good to God that I should be set to run the longer double course, in order that the garland of victory might be rendered more glorious. Why then are you vexed on account of these things, in consequence of which my fame is spread abroad, when you ought to leap and dance for joy and bind wreaths upon your brow, because I have been deemed worthy of so great an honour which far exceeds my merits? Is it the desolation of this place which grieves you? Yet what can be pleasanter than my sojourn here? I have quietness, and tranquillity, plenty of leisure and good bodily health. For although the town has neither market-place nor market that is nothing to me. For all things are poured abundantly upon me as out of a flowing spring. I find my lord the Bishop here and my lord Dioscorus are constantly employed in providing for my refreshment.

And the good Patricius will tell you that as far as my sojourn here is concerned I pass my time cheerfully and gladly, surrounded by attention. But if you lament the events which occurred in Cæsarea, here again your conduct is unworthy of yourself. For there also bright garlands of victory were woven for me, inasmuch as all were proclaiming and publishing my praises, and expressing wonder and astonishment at the ill-treatment to which I had been subjected followed by expulsion. Meanwhile however do not let any one know these things, although they are the theme of much gossip. For my lord Pœanius has disclosed to me that the presbyters of Pharetrius himself have arrived on the spot, who declare that they were in communion with me and had no communication or intercourse or partnership with my adversaries. Therefore to avoid upsetting them do not let any one know these things. For certainly the things which befell me were very grievous: and if I had not suffered any other distress the events which happened there would have sufficed to procure innumerable rewards for me: so extreme was the danger which I encountered. Now I beseech you to keep these matters secret, and so I will give you a short account of them, not in order to grieve you but rather to make you glad. For herein consists the material of my gain, herein consists my wealth, herein the means of getting rid of my sins—that my journey is continually encompassed by trials of this kind, and that they are inflicted upon me by persons from whom they were quite unexpected. For when I was about to enter the region of Cappadocia, having escaped from that man of Galatia, who nearly threatened me with death, many persons met me on the way saying "*the lord Pharetrius is awaiting you, and going about in all directions for fear of missing the pleasure of meeting you, and making every possible endeavour to see you, and embrace you, and show you all manner of affectionate regard; and he has set the monasteries of men and women in motion for this*

purpose." Now when I heard these things I did not expect that any of them would really take place, but formed an impression in my own mind precisely the reverse: but of this I said nothing to any of those who brought me this message.

2. Now when I arrived late one evening at Cæsarea, in an exhausted and worn-out condition, being in the very height of a burning fever, faint and suffering to the last degree, I lighted upon an inn situated just at the outskirts of the city, and took great pains to find some physicians and allay this fiery fever; for it was now the height of my tertian malady. And in addition to this there was the fatigue of the journey, the toil, the strain, the total absence of attendants, the difficulty of getting supplies, the want of a physician, the wasting effects of toil, and heat and sleeplessness; thus I was well near a dead man when I entered the city. Then indeed I was visited by the whole body of the clergy, and the people, monks, nuns, physicians, and I had the benefit of great attention, as all paid me every kind of ministration and assistance. Yet even thus, being oppressed by the lethargy arising from the feverish heat I was in an extremely distressed condition. At length by degrees the malady was coming to an end and abating. Pharetrius however nowhere appeared; but waited for my departure, I know not with what purpose in view. When then I saw that my disorder had slightly abated I began to form plans for my journey so as to reach Cucusus, and enjoy a little repose after the calamities of the way. And while I was thus situated it was suddenly announced that the Isaurians in countless multitudes were overrunning the district of Cæsarea, and had burnt a large village, and were most violently disposed. The tribune, having heard this, took the soldiers which he had and went out. For they were afraid lest the enemy should make an assault also upon the city, and all were in terror, and in an agony of alarm the very soil of their country being in jeopardy, so that even the old

men undertook the defence of the walls. While affairs were in this condition suddenly towards dawn a rabble of monks (for so I must call them, indicating their frenzy by the expression) rushed up to the house where we were, threatening to set fire to it, and to treat us with the utmost violence unless we turned out of it. And neither the fear of the Isaurians, nor my own infirmity which was so grievously afflicting me, nor anything else made them more reasonable, but they pressed on, animated by such fierce rage that even the proconsular soldiers were terrified. For they kept threatening them with blows and boasted that they had shamefully beaten many of the proconsular soldiers. The soldiers having heard these things, sought refuge with me, and entreated and beseeched me, saying *"even if we are to fall into the hands of the Isaurians deliver us from these wild beasts."* When the governor heard this he hastened down to the house intending to succour me. But the monks would not pay any heed to his exhortations, and in fact he was powerless. Perceiving the great strait in which affairs were placed and not daring to advise me either to go out to certain death, or on the other hand to stay indoors, owing to the excessive fury of these men, he sent to Pharetrius beseeching him to grant a few days respite on account of my infirmity and the impending danger. But even then nothing was effected, and on the morrow the monks arrived even fiercer than before, and none of the presbyters dared to stand by me and help me, but covered with shame and blushes (for they said that these things were done by the instructions of Pharetrius) they concealed themselves and lay hid, not responding even when I called them. What need to make a long story? Although such great terrors were imminent, and death well near a certainty, and the fever was oppressing me (for I had not yet got relief from the troubles arising from that cause) I flung myself at high noon into the litter, and was carried out thence, all the people shrieking and howling, and imprecating curses on the

perpetrator of these deeds, while every one wailed and lamented. But when I got outside the city, some of the clergy also gradually came out and escorted me, mourning as they went. And having heard some persons say *"Where are you leading him away to manifest death?"* one of those who was warmly attached to me said to me *"Depart I entreat you; fall into the hands of the Isaurians, provided you get clear away from us. For wherever you may fall, you will fall into a place of security, if only you escape our hands."* Having heard and seen these things the good Seleucia, the generous wife of my lord Ruffinus (a most attentive friend she was to me), exhorted and entreated me to lodge at her suburban house which was about five miles from the city and she sent some men to escort me, and so I departed there.

3. But not even there was this plot against me to come to an end. For as soon as Pharetrius knew what she had done, he published, as she said, many threats against her. But when she received me into her suburban villa I knew nothing of these things; for when she came out to meet me she concealed these things from me, but disclosed them to her steward who was there, and ordered him to afford me every possible means of repose, and if any of the monks should make an assault, wishing to insult or maltreat me, he was to collect the labourers from her other farms, and thus marshal a force against them. Moreover she besought me to take refuge in her house, which had a fortress and was impregnable, that I might escape the hands of the bishop and monks. This however I could not be induced to do, but remained in the villa, knowing nothing of the plans which were devised after these things. For even then they were not content to desist from their fury against me but Pharetrius beset the lady as she says, strictly threatening her, constraining and forcing her to expel me even from the suburbs, so that at midnight, I knowing nothing of these things, the lady being unable to endure his annoyance, announced, without my knowledge, that the

barbarians were at hand, for she was ashamed to mention the compulsion which she had undergone. So in the middle of the night Evethius the presbyter came to me, and having roused me from sleep, exclaimed with a loud voice *"Get up, I pray you, the barbarians are upon us, they are close at hand."* Imagine my condition on hearing this! Then, when I said to him what must we do? We cannot take refuge in the city lest we suffer worse things than what the Isaurians are going to do to us, he compelled me to go out. It was midnight, a dark, murky night without a moon— a circumstance which filled up the measure of our perplexity— we had no companion, no assistant, for all had deserted us. Nevertheless under the pressure of fear and in the expectation of immediate death, I got up, suffering as I was, having ordered torches to be lit. These however the presbyter ordered to be put out, for fear as he said lest the barbarians should be attracted by the light and attack us; so the torches were extinguished. Then the mule which carried my litter fell on its knees, the road being rugged, and steep and stony, and I who was inside was thrown down and narrowly escaped destruction, after which I dismounted, and was dragged along on foot, being held fast by Evethius the presbyter (for he also had alighted from his mule), and so I plodded on, led, or rather hauled by the hand, for to walk was impossible through such a difficult country, and among steep mountains in the middle of the night. Imagine what my sufferings must have been, encompassed as I was by such calamities, and oppressed by the fever, ignorant of the plans which had been made, but in terror of the barbarians and trembling. with the expectation of falling into their hands. Do you not think that these sufferings alone, even if nothing else besides had befallen me, would avail to blot out many of my sins, and afford ample material for obtaining praise with God? Now the reason of all this, at least as I suppose, was, that as soon as I arrived in Cæsarea, those who were in official

positions, the learned men who were ex-vicars, and ex-governors, the ex-tribunes and indeed the whole people visited me every day, paid me great attention, and treated me as the apple of their eye; I suppose these things irritated Pharetrius and that the envy which drove me from Constantinople did not refrain from pursuing me even here. This at least is what I suppose, for I do not positively declare it but only suspect it to be the fact.

And what is one to say about the other events which happened on the way, the fears and the perils? As I recall them day by day, and continually bear them in mind, I am elated with pleasure, I leap for joy as one who has a great treasure laid up in store for him; for such is my position and feeling about them. Wherefore also I beseech your Honour to rejoice at these things, to be glad, and leap for joy, and to glorify God who has counted me worthy to suffer such things. And I beseech you to keep these matters to yourself, and not to divulge them to any one, although for the most part the proconsular soldiers can fill all the city (with the story) as they themselves have undergone extreme danger.

4. Nevertheless do not let any one know this from your prudence, but rather put down those who talk about it. But if you are distressed lest the consequences of my ill-treatment should remain, know for certain that I have shaken myself entirely free from them, and that I am in better bodily health than when I was sojourning in Cæsarea. And why do you dread the cold? For a suitable dwelling has been prepared for me, and my lord Dioscorus does and arranges everything so as to prevent my having the least sensation of cold. And if I may form a conjecture from the outset of my experience, the climate now seems to me oriental in character, no less than that of Antioch. So great is the warmth, so pleasant is the temperature. But you have grieved me much by saying, "*perhaps you are annoyed with me as having neglected you,*" yet I dispatched a letter many days ago to

your honour begging you not to move me from this place. Now I have had occasion to consider that you need a strong defence and much toil and labour to be able to make a satisfactory apology for this expression. But perhaps you have made a partial apology, by saying "*I am generally occupied in thinking how to increase my affliction.*" But I in my turn reckon it as the greatest accusation that you should say "*I take a pride in increasing my sorrow by thinking over it:*" for when you ought to make every possible effort to dispel your affliction you do the devil's will, by increasing your despondency and sorrow. Are you not aware how great an evil despondency is?

As to the Isaurians, dismiss your fears in future concerning them: for they have returned into their own country: and the governor has done everything necessary in this respect; and I am in far greater security here than when I was in Cæsarea. For in future I have no one to fear so much as the bishops, with a few exceptions. On account of the Isaurians then fear nothing: for they have retreated, and when winter has set in they are confined to their own homes, although they may possibly come out after Whitsuntide. And what do you mean by saying that you have not the benefit of letters from me? I have already sent you three long letters, one by the proconsular soldiers, one by Antonius, and the third by Anatolius my servant; two of them were a salutary medicine capable of reviving any one who was desponding or stumbling, and conducting him into a healthy state of serenity. When you have received these letters then go over them constantly and thoroughly, and you will perceive their force and enjoy experience of their healing power, and benefit, and will inform me that you have derived much advantage therefrom. I have also a third letter ready, similar to these, which I do not choose to send at the present time having been exceedingly vexed at your saying "*I accumulate sorrowful thoughts,*

even inventing things which do not exist," an utterance unworthy of yourself, which makes me hide my head for shame. But read those letters which I have sent, and you will no longer say these things, even if you are infinitely bent on being despondent. I at least have not ceased, and will not cease saying that sin is the only thing which is really distressing; and that all other things are but dust and smoke. For what is there grievous in inhabiting a prison and wearing a chain? Or in being ill-treated when it is the occasion of so much gain? Or why should exile be grievous or confiscation of goods? These are mere words, destitute of any terrible reality, words void of sorrow. For if you speak of death you only mention that which is the debt of nature: a thing which must in any case be undergone even if no one hastens it: and if you speak of exile you mention that which only involves a change of country and the sight of many cities: or if you speak of confiscation of goods you mention what is only freedom and emancipation from care.

5. Do not cease to pay attention to Maruthas the Bishop, as far as it concerns you, so as to lift him up out of the pit. For I have special need of him on account of the affairs in Persia. And ascertain from him, if you can, what has been accomplished there through his agency, and for what purpose he has come home, and let me know whether you have delivered the two epistles which I sent to him: and if he is willing to write to me, I will write again to him: but if he should not be willing let him at least signify to your prudence whether any thing more has taken place there, and whether he is likely to accomplish anything by going there again. For on this account I was anxious to have an interview with him. Nevertheless let all things which depend on you be done, and take care to fulfill your own part, even if all men are rushing headlong to ruin. For your reward will thus be perfected. By all means therefore make friends with him as far as it is

possible. I beseech you not to neglect what I am about to say, but to pay diligent heed to it. The Marsian and Gothic monks where the Bishop Serapion has constantly been concealed have informed me that Moduarius the deacon has come bringing word that Unilas, that excellent bishop whom I lately ordained and sent into Gothia, has been laid to rest, after achieving many great exploits: and the deacon was the bearer of a letter from the king of the Goths begging that a bishop might be sent to them. Since then I see no other means of meeting the threatened catastrophe with a view to its correction save delay and postponement (as it is impossible for them to sail into the Bosphorus or into those parts at the present time), take measures to put them off for a time on account of the winter season: and do not by any means neglect this: for it is a matter of the greatest importance. For there are two things which would specially distress me if they were to happen, which God forbid: one is that a bishop should be appointed by these men who have wrought such great wickedness, and who have no right to appoint, and the other is that any one should be made without consideration. For you know yourself that they are not anxious to create some worthy man bishop, and if this should take place, which heaven forbid, you are aware what will follow. Use all diligence therefore to prevent either of these things happening: but if it were possible for Moduarius quietly and secretly to hasten out to me it would be of the greatest advantage. But if this is not possible let what is practicable under the circumstances be done. For that which takes place in the case of money, and actually occurred in the case of the widow in the gospel, also holds good in the case of practical affairs. For as that poor woman when she had cast two mites into the treasury surpassed all those who had cast in more, because she used up her whole substance: even so they who devote themselves to the work in hand with all their

might discharge it completely, so far as they are concerned, even if nothing results from it, and they have their reward perfected.

I am very grateful to Hilarius the bishop: for he wrote to me asking to be allowed to depart to his own country, and to set things in order there, and then to come back again. As his presence therefore is of great service (for he is a devout, inflexible, and zealous man) I have urged him to depart and to return speedily. Take care then that the letter is quickly and safely delivered to him and not cast on one side: for he eagerly and earnestly begged for letters from me, and his presence is a great benefit. By all means therefore have a care of the letters; and if Helladius the presbyter be not on the spot see that they are delivered to my friends by the hands of some discreet man who has a head on his shoulders.

To Olympias

Nothing strange or unnatural has befallen your Piety, but only what is quite natural and consonant to reason, that by a constant succession of trials the sinews of your soul should become more braced, and your zeal and energy for the struggle increased, and that you should therefrom derive much joy. For such is the nature of affliction—when it lays hold of a brave and noble soul, this is what it is wont to effect. And as the fire makes the piece of gold, when it is applied to it, of better proof: so also affliction when it visits golden characters renders them purer and more proven. Wherefore also Paul said "*affliction works patience, and patience probation.*"

[Romans 5:3-4] For these reasons I also rejoice and leap for joy, and derive the greatest consolation of this my solitude from a consideration of your fortitude. On this account, even though innumerable wolves encompass you, and many crowds of wicked doers, I fear nothing; but I pray both that existing temptations may be suppressed, and that others may not occur, thus fulfilling the Lord's precept who bids us pray that we may not enter into temptation; but if it should be permitted to happen again I have good confidence concerning your golden soul, which acquires therefrom the greatest riches for itself. For by what means will they be able to terrify you, who dare everything to their own destruction? Will it be by loss of goods? But I know well that these are counted by you as dust and cheaper than dirt. Or shall it be by expulsion from country and home. But you know how to dwell in great and populous cities as if they were uninhabited, spending the whole of your time in quietness and rest, and treading worldly ambitions under foot. Or do they threaten death? This also you have constantly practiced by anticipation, and if they should drag you to slaughter, they will

be dragging a body which is already dead. What need to speak more at length? No one will be able to do anything to you of this kind which he will not find you have already abundantly made yourself undergo. For by always walking in the narrow and strait path, you have trained yourself in all these things. Wherefore having practised this most beautiful art in the course of your training, you now shine forth the more gloriously in the contest itself, not only being in no wise disturbed by the things which are happening, but rather elated, and leaping and dancing for joy. For the contests which you have anticipated in your training you now undertake with much ease, although it be in a woman's body, feebler than a cobweb, treading under foot with derisive scorn the fury of lusty men gnashing their teeth upon you; being ready to suffer even worse things than they prepare for you. Happy and thrice happy are you by reason of the crowns of victory to be won, but even more by reason of the contest itself. For such is the nature of these struggles, even before the prizes are given even in the midst of strife they have their recompense and reward—the pleasure which you are now enjoying, the cheerfulness, the courage, the endurance, the patience, the power which is proof against capture and conquest and rises superior to all things; the perfect training which renders you insensible to any terror at the hands of any one, the power of standing on a rock in the midst of mighty billows of tribulation, and sailing in a calm with a favourable breeze when the sea is raging around you. These are the prizes of affliction even in this world before the kingdom of heaven is won. For I know very well that, even at this present time, being elated with joy, thou dost not consider yourself clothed with a body, but if an opportunity should summon you to do it, you would divest yourself of it more readily than others do of the raiment which they wear. Rejoice therefore and be glad both for yourself, and for those who have died a blessed death, not in a bed, nor in a house,

but in prison, and chains, and torment; and bewail those only who do these things, and grieve for them. But since you also wish to be informed concerning my bodily health, let me tell you that I have been relieved for the present from the infirmity which was lately oppressing me, and am now in a more comfortable condition: the only fear is lest the winter on its return should again make havoc of my feeble digestion; and as far as the Isaurians are concerned we now enjoy great security.

Letter to Some Priests of Antioch

The following letter is added as a specimen, out of a very large number, of the natural, almost playful style, and tone of warm affection, in which Chrysostom wrote to his intimate friends. All his extant letters were written during his exile, and therefore there is much repetition in their contents, and great general similarity of character.

To Castus, Valerius, Diophantus, Cyriacus — Presbyters of Antioch

I am not surprised that you call my long letter a short one. For this is just the way with lovers; they do not recognize such a thing as satiety, they will not admit such a thing as satisfaction, but the more they receive from the objects of their love the more they seek. Therefore, even if the letter which you have received had been ten times as large as the former one, it would not have escaped the epithet of "*brief*;" in fact it would have been called a small letter, and not only would it have been so called, but it would have actually seemed such in your eyes. Hence I also in my turn am never satisfied with the measure of affection for me which you have attained, but am always seeking to make additions to your love-draught, and daily demanding the discharge of your love debt which is always being paid, and yet is always owing (for it is written, "*owe no man anything but to love one another*" [Romans 13:8]). I am indeed continually receiving what I ask in great abundance, yet never think that I have received the whole. Do not cease then to pay down this goodly debt, which has a twofold pleasure. For those who pay, and those who receive, derive equal enjoyment, inasmuch as they are both alike enriched by the payment; which in the case of money is an impossibility, for there the one who pays becomes poorer, and only the man who has received is richer. But this is not what commonly happens in

the covenant of love. For he who pays it is not less bereft of it, as in the case of money when it is transferred to the receiver; but payment of love makes him who pays richer than before. Knowing these things then, O Sirs, most honoured and devout, cease not continually displaying this excellent disposition towards me. For although you need no exhortation for this purpose from me yet as I greatly long for your love I remind you, even when you need it not, both in order that you may constantly write to me, and also inform me of the state of your health. For even if you do not need any one to remind you on this account, I shall not desist from continually seeking this at your hands; as it is a matter which I have very much at heart. That it is a difficult task owing both to the season of the year, and the difficulty of the journey, and the scarcity of travellers who will do this service for you I am well aware: nevertheless as far as is possible and practicable in the midst of so much difficulty, we exhort you to write constantly, and crave this favour from your love.

Correspondence with Pope Innocent I

From John to Innocent

**To my lord, the most reverend and divinely
beloved bishop Innocent, John sends greeting in
the Lord**

1. [I suppose] that even before receiving our letter your Piety has heard of the iniquity which has been perpetrated here. For the magnitude of our distress has left scarcely a single portion of the world uninformed of this grievous tragedy: for report carrying the tidings of what has happened to the very extremities of the earth, has everywhere caused great mourning and lamentation. But inasmuch as we ought not to mourn, but to restore order, and to see by what means this most grievous storm of the Church may be stayed, we have deemed it necessary to persuade my lords, the most honoured and pious bishops Demetrius, Pansophius, Pappus and Eugenius to leave their own churches, and venture on this great sea voyage, and set out on a long journey from home, and hasten to your Charity, and, after informing you clearly of everything, to take measures for redressing the evils as speedily as possible. And with them we have sent the most honoured and beloved of our Deacons, Paulus and Cyriacus, but we also ourselves, in the form of a letter, will briefly instruct your Charity concerning the things which have come to pass. For Theophilus, who has been entrusted with the presidency of the Church in Alexandria, having

been commanded to repair alone to Constantinople, certain men having brought an accusation against him to the most devout Emperor, arrived bringing with him no small multitude of Egyptian Bishops, as if wishing to show from the outset, that he came for war and antagonism; moreover when he set foot in the great and divinely beloved Constantinople he did not enter the Church according to the custom and the law which has prevailed from ancient time, he held no intercourse with us, and admitted us to no share in his conversation, his prayers, or his society: but as soon as he disembarked, having hurried past the vestibule of the Church, he departed and lodged somewhere outside the city, and although we earnestly entreated him, and those who had come with him, to be our guests (for everything had been made ready, and lodgings provided, and whatever was suitable) neither they, nor he consented. We seeing this, were in great perplexity, not being able to discover the cause of this unjust hostility; nevertheless we discharged our part, doing what became us, and continually beseeching him to meet us and to say for what cause he hazarded so great a contest at the outset, and threw the city into such confusion. But as he did not choose to state the reason, and those who accused him were urgent, our most devout Emperor summoned us and commanded us to go outside the walls to the place where Theophilus was sojourning, and hear the argument against him. For they accused him of assault, and slaughter and countless other crimes; but knowing as we did the laws of the fathers, and paying respect and deference to the man, and having also his own letters which prove that lawsuits ought not to be taken beyond the border, but that affairs of the several provinces should be treated within the limits of the province, we would not accept the office of judge, but deprecated it with great earnestness. But he, as if striving to aggravate the former insults, having summoned my archdeacon, by a stretch of arbitrary power, as if the Church

were already widowed, and had no bishop, by means of this man seduced all the clergy to his own side; and the Churches became destitute, as the clergy in each were gradually withdrawn, and instructed to hand in petitions against us, and trained to prepare accusations. And having done this he sent and summoned us to trial, although he had not yet cleared himself of the charges brought against him, a proceeding directly contrary to the canons and to all the laws.

2. But we being aware that we were not cited to a trial (for otherwise we would have presented ourselves any number of times) but to the presence of an enemy and an adversary, as was clearly proved by all which occurred both before and after, dispatched certain bishops to him, Demetrius of Pesinus, Eulysius of Apamea, Lupicinus of Appiaria, and the presbyters Germanus and Severus, who replied with the moderation which became us, and said, that we did not decline to be judged, but to appear before an open enemy, and manifest adversary. For how could one who had not yet received any bills of indictment against me, and had acted from the outset in the manner described, and severed himself from the Church, from communion, and from prayer, and was training accusers, and seducing the clergy, and desolating the Church, how, I say, could he with justice mount the throne of the judge which was not in any sense befitting him? For it is not suitable that one who belongs to Egypt should act as judge of those who are in Thrace, and this a man who is himself under an accusation, and an enemy and adversary. Nevertheless he, in no way abashed, but hurrying on to the completion of his design, although we had declared our readiness to clear ourselves of the charges in the presence of a hundred yea or a thousand bishops, and to prove ourselves innocent as indeed we are, would not consent: but in our absence, when we were appealing to a synod, and demanding a trial, and not shrinking from a hearing of our cause, but only

from open enmity, he both received our accusers and absolved those who had been excommunicated by me, and from them, who had not yet cleared themselves of the offenses laid to their charge, he received complaints against me, and had minutes made of the proceedings, all which things are contrary to law, and the order of the canons. But what need is there of a long story? He did not cease doing and contriving everything until, with all possible display of arbitrary power and authority, he ejected us from the city and the church, when the evening was far advanced and all the people were streaming after us. Being drawn by the public informer through the midst of the city, and dragged along by force I was taken down to the sea, and thrust on board ship, and made a night voyage, because I appealed to a synod for a just hearing of my cause. Who could hear these things without tears, even if he had a heart of stone?

But seeing, as I said before, that we ought not merely to lament the evils which have been done, but also to amend them, I beseech your Charity to rouse yourself and have compassion, and do everything so as to put a stop to the mischief at this point. For even after what I have mentioned he did not desist from his deeds of iniquity, but sought to renew the former attack. For when the most devout Emperor had turned out those who shamelessly rushed into the Church, and many of the Bishops present seeing their iniquity had retreated into their own dioceses, flying from the incursion of these men as from a fire devouring all things, we were again invited to the city, and to the Church, from which we had been unjustly expelled, more than thirty bishops introducing us, and our most pious Emperor sending a notary for this purpose, while Theophilus immediately took to flight. For what purpose, and from what cause? When we entered the city we besought our most pious Emperor to convene a synod for prosecuting the offenders in the late transactions. Being conscious therefore

of what he had done, and dreading conviction, the imperial letters having been sent in every direction, convoking all men from all quarters, Theophilus secretly at midnight flung himself into a boat, and so made his escape, taking all his company with him.

3. But even then we did not desist, supported as we were by a clear conscience, from making the same supplication again to the most devout Emperor: and he, acting as became his piety, sent to Theophilus again, summoning him from Egypt, and his associates, in order to give an account of the late proceedings, and informing him that he was not to suppose that the one-sided deeds which he had so unjustly perpetrated in our absence, and in violation of so many canons, would suffice for his defence. He did not however submit to the royal mandate, but remained at home, alleging an insurrection of the people in excuse, and the unseasonable zeal of certain persons who were attached to him, as he pretended: and yet before the arrival of the imperial letters this same people had deluged him with abuse. But we do not make much of these matters now, but have said what we have said as wishing to prove the fact that he was arrested in his mischievous course. Yet even after these things we did not rest, but were urgent in our demand that a tribunal should be formed for the purpose of enquiry and defence: for we said that we were ready to prove that we ourselves were guiltless, but that they had flagrantly transgressed. For there were some Syrians among those present with him at that time, who were left behind here; and we accosted them expressing our readiness to plead our cause, and frequently importuned them on this behalf, demanding that the minutes (of the late transactions) should be given up to us, or that the formal bills of indictment, or the nature of the charges, or the accusers themselves, should be made known; and yet we did not obtain any of these things, but were again expelled from the Church. How am I to relate the

events which followed, transcending as they do every kind of tragedy? What language will set forth these events? What kind of ear will receive them without shuddering? For when we were urging these things, as I said before, a dense troop of soldiers, on the great Sabbath itself, as the day was hastening towards eventide, having broken into the Churches violently drove out all the clergy who were with us, and surrounded the sanctuary with arms. And women from the oratories who had stripped themselves for baptism just at that time, fled unclothed, from terror at this grievous assault, not being permitted to put on the modest apparel which befits women; indeed many received wounds before they were expelled, and the baptismal pools were filled with blood, and the sacred water reddened by it. Nor did the distress cease even at this point; but the soldiers, some of whom as we understand were unbaptized, having entered the place where the sacred vessels were stored, saw all the things which were inside it, and the most holy blood of Christ, as might happen in the midst of such confusion, was spilt upon the garments of the soldiers aforesaid: and every kind of outrage was committed as in a barbarian siege. And the common people were driven to the wilderness, and all the people tarried outside the city, and the Churches became empty in the midst of this great Festival, and more than forty bishops who associated with us were vainly and causelessly expelled together with the people and clergy. And there were shrieks and lamentations, and torrents of tears were shed everywhere, in the market places, in the houses, in the desert places, and every part of the city was filled with these calamities; for owing to the immoderate extent of the outrage not only the sufferers, but also they who did not undergo anything of the kind sympathized with us, not only those who held the same opinions as ours, but also heretics, and Jews, and Greeks, and all places were in a state of tumult and confusion, and lamentation, as if the city had been

captured by force. And these things were perpetrated contrary to the intention of our most pious Emperor, under cover of night, the Bishops contriving them, and in many places conducting the attack, nor were they ashamed to have sergeants instead of deacons marching in front of them. And when day dawned all the city was migrating outside the walls under trees and groves, celebrating the festival, like scattered sheep.

4. All which happened afterwards I leave you to imagine; for as I said before it is not possible to describe each separate incident. The worst of it is that these evils, great and serious as they are, have not even now been suppressed nor is there any hope of their suppression; on the contrary the mischief is extending itself every day, and we have become a laughing stock to the multitude, or rather I should say, no one laughs even if he is infinitely lawless, but all men mourn, as I was saying, this new kind of lawlessness, the finishing stroke of all our ills.

What is one to say to the disorders in the other Churches? For the evil did not stop even here, but made its way to the east. For as when some evil humor is discharged from the head, all the other parts are corrupted, so now also these evils, having originated in this great city as from a fountain, confusion has spread in every direction, and clergy have everywhere made insurrection against bishops, there has been schism between bishop and bishop, people and people, and will be yet more; every place is suffering from the throes of calamity, and the subversion of the whole civilized world. Having been informed then of all these things, my lords, most honourable and devout, exhibit the courage and zeal which becomes you, so as to put a stop to this great assault of lawlessness which has been made upon the Churches. For if this custom were to prevail, and it became lawful for any persons who desired it to enter strange dioceses, so widely separated, and expel those whom one wished to remove, and do whatever

they pleased according to their own arbitrary power, be assured that all things will go to ruin, and an implacable kind of war will overrun the whole world, all men attacking others, and being in turn attacked. Therefore to prevent such confusion overtaking the whole earth yield to our entreaties that you will signify by writing that these lawless transactions executed in our absence, and after hearing one side only, although we did not decline a trial, are invalid, as indeed they are by the very nature of the case, and that those who are convicted of having committed such iniquities must be subjected to the penalty of the ecclesiastical laws; and for ourselves, who have not been detected or convicted, or proved liable to punishment may we continue to have the benefit of your correspondence, and your love, and all other things which we have enjoyed aforetime. But if even now those who have committed such lawless acts are willing to disclose the charges on the strength of which they have unjustly expelled us, neither memoranda, nor formal bills of indictment being given, nor the accusers having appeared: yet if an impartial tribunal is formed, we will submit to be tried, and will make our defence, and prove ourselves guiltless of the things laid to our charge, as indeed we are: for the things which they have done are outside the bounds of every kind of order, and every kind of ecclesiastical law and canon. And why do I say ecclesiastical canon? Not even in the heathen courts would such audacious deeds ever have been committed, or rather not even in a barbarian court, neither Scythians, nor Sarmatians would ever have judged a cause in this fashion, deciding it after hearing one side only, in the absence of the accused, who only deprecated enmity, not a trial of his case, who was ready to call any number of judges, asserting himself to be innocent and able to clear himself of the charges in the face of the world, and prove himself guiltless in every respect.

Having considered therefore all these things, and having been clearly informed of all particulars by my lords, our most devout brethren the bishops, may you be induced to exert your zeal on our behalf; for in so doing you will confer a favour not upon ourselves alone but also upon the Church at large, and you will receive your reward from God who does all things for the peace of the Churches. Fare you well always, and pray for me, most honoured and holy master.

To Innocent, Bishop of Rome, greeting in the Lord

Our body it is true is settled in one place, but the pinion of love wings its way round every part of the world. Even so we also although we be separated by a journey of such great extent are near to your Piety, and in daily communion with you, beholding with the eyes of love the courage of your soul, the sterling nature of your disposition, your firmness and inflexibility, the great consolation, constant and abiding, which you bestow upon us. For in proportion as the billows mount higher, and concealed reefs increase, and the hurricanes are many does your vigilance wax stronger: and neither the great length of the journey between us, nor the large amount of time consumed, nor the difficulty in dealing with events has disposed you to become supine: but you continue to imitate the best class of pilots who are on the alert at those times most especially when they see the waves crested, the sea swelling, the water dashing vehemently, and the deepest darkness in day-time. Therefore also we feel great gratitude towards you, and we long to send you showers of letters, thus affording ourselves the greatest gratification. But since we are deprived of this, owing to the desolation of the place; (for not only of those who arrive from your regions, but even of those who dwell in our part of the world no one could easily

have intercourse with us, both on account of the distance, the spot in which we are confined being situated at the very extremity of the country, and also the terror of robbers acting as a bar to the whole journey:) we beseech you rather to pity us because of our long silence, than to condemn us for indolence on that account. For as a proof that our silence has not been due to negligence, we have now at last after a long time secured our most honoured and beloved John the presbyter, and Paul the deacon, and we send a letter through them, and continue to express our gratitude to you, that you have surpassed even affectionate parents in your good will and zeal concerning us. And indeed so far as your Piety is concerned all things would have been duly amended, and the accumulation of evils and offenses have been swept away, and the Churches would have enjoyed peace and a glassy calm, and all things would have floated along with a smooth stream, and the despised laws and violated decrees of the fathers would have been vindicated. But since in reality none of these things has taken place, they who perpetrated the former deeds striving to aggravate their former iniquities, I omit any detailed narrative of their subsequent proceedings: for the narrative would exceed the limits not merely of a letter but even of a history; only this I beseech your vigilant soul, even if they who have filled everything with confusion be impenitently and incurably corrupt, let not those who have undertaken to cure them become faint-hearted or despondent, when they consider the magnitude of the thing to be accomplished. For the contest now before you has to be fought on behalf of nearly the whole world, on behalf of Churches humbled to the ground, of people dispersed, of clergy assaulted, of bishops sent into exile, of ancestral laws violated. Wherefore we beseech your Diligence, once, twice, yea many times, in proportion as the storm increases, to manifest still greater zeal. For we expect that something more will be done for the purpose of

amending these wrongs. But even if this should not take place, you at least have your crown made ready for you by the merciful God, and the resistance offered by your love will be no small consolation to those who are wronged: for now that we are passing the third year of our sojourn in exile exposed to famine, pestilence, wars, continual sieges, indescribable solitude, daily death, and Isaurian swords, we are not a little encouraged and comforted by the constant and abiding nature of your disposition and confidence, and by revelling in your abundant and genuine love. This is our wall of defence, this is our security, this our calm haven, this our treasure of infinite blessings, this our gladness, and ground of much joy. And even if we should be carried off again to some spot more desolate than this, we shall carry this love away with us as no small consolation of our sufferings.

From Innocent to John

To the beloved brother John, Innocent

Although the innocent man ought to expect all good things, and to crave mercy from God, nevertheless we also, counselling resignation, have sent an appropriate letter by the hands of Cyriacus the deacon; so that insolence may not have more power in oppressing, than a good conscience has in retaining hope. For thou who art the teacher and pastor of so many people needest not to be taught that the best men are ever frequently put to the test whether they will persevere in the perfection of patience, and not succumb to any toil of distress: and certainly conscience is a strong defence against all things which unjustly befall us: and unless any one conquer these by patient endurance he supplies an argument for evil surmising. For he ought to endure all things who trusts first of all in God, and then in his own conscience; seeing that the noble and good man can be specially trained to endurance, inasmuch as the holy Scriptures guard his mind; and the sacred lessons which we deliver to the people abound in examples, testifying as they do that nearly all the saints have been continually oppressed in various ways, and are tested as by a kind of scrutiny, and so attain to the crown of patience. Let conscience itself console your love, most honoured brother, which in affliction supplies the consolation of virtue. For under the eye of the Master Christ, the conscience, having been purged, will find rest in the haven of peace.

**Innocent, bishop, to presbyters and deacons, and
to all the clergy and people of the Church of**

Constantinople, the brethren beloved who are subject to the bishop John, greeting

From the letters of your love which you have sent by the hands of Germanus the presbyter, and Casianus the deacon, I have studied with anxious care the scene of calamity which you have placed before my eyes, and by repeated perusal of your description I thoroughly perceived under what great distress and toil your faith is labouring: and this is a matter which can be cured only by the consolation of patience: for our God will speedily grant an end to such great afflictions, and He will aid you in your endurance of these things. Moreover while praising the statement of your case which contains many testimonies encouraging to patience I notice this necessary consolation placed at the beginning of the epistle of your love: for the consolation which we ought to have written to you, you have anticipated by your letter. For this is the kind of patience which our Master is wont to supply to those who are in distress, in order that the servants of Christ when they are in affliction may console themselves by reflecting that the things which they themselves are suffering have happened to the saints also in former times. And we also from your letter shall be able to derive consolation: for we are not estranged from sympathy with you, inasmuch as we also are chastised in your persons. For who will be able to endure the offenses committed by those men who ought to be specially zealous promoters of the tranquillity of the Church and of concord itself. At the present time, by a perversion of custom, guiltless priests are expelled from the presidency of their own Churches. And this is what your chief brother, and fellow minister, John, your bishop has unjustly suffered, not having obtained any hearing: no crime is charged against him, none is heard. And what is the object of this iniquitous device? That no pretext for a trial may

occur, or be sought, other men are introduced into the places of living priests, as if those who start from an offense of this description could be judged by any one to have anything good or to have done anything right. For we understand that such deeds have never been perpetrated by our fathers; or rather that they were prevented by the fact that no one had authority given him to ordain another to take the place of one who was still living. For a spurious ordination cannot deprive the priest of his rank: seeing that neither can he be a bishop who is wrongfully substituted for another. And as regards the observance of the canons we lay it down that we ought to follow those, which were defined at Nicæa, to which alone the Catholic Church is bound to pay obedience and recognition. And if others are brought forward by certain men, which are at variance with the canons framed at Nicæa, and are proved to have been composed by heretics, let them be rejected by the Catholic bishops. For the inventions of heretics ought not to be appended to the Catholic canons; for by their adverse and unlawful decrees they are always intending to weaken the design of the canons of Nicæa. Not only therefore do we say that these ought not to be followed, but rather that they should be condemned among heretical and schismatic decrees, as was formerly done in the Council of Sardica by the bishops who were before us. For it were more fitting, most honoured brethren, that good deeds should be condemned than that things done in direct opposition to the canons should have any validity. But what are we to do against such things at the present time? A synodical decision of them is necessary, and we have long declared that a synod ought to be convened, as it is the only means of allaying the agitation of such tempests as these: and if we obtain this it is expedient that the healing of these evils should be committed to the will of the great God, and His Christ our Lord. All the disturbances then which have been caused by the envy of the devil for the

probation of the faithful will be mitigated; through the firmness of our faith we ought not to despair of anything from the Lord. For we ourselves also are considering much by what means the œcumenical synod may be brought together in order that by the will of God these disturbing movements may be brought to an end. Let us therefore endure for a while, and fortified by the wall of patience let us hope that all things may be restored to us by the assistance of our God. Moreover all things which you say you have undergone we have learned by accurate enquiry from our fellow bishops who have already taken refuge in Rome, although for the most part at different times, that is to say, Demetrius, Cyriacus, Eulysius and Palladius, who are here with us.

On the Priesthood (Book I)

1. I had many genuine and true friends, men who understood the laws of friendship, and faithfully observed them; but out of this large number there was one who excelled all the rest in his attachment to me, striving to outstrip them as much as they themselves outstripped ordinary acquaintance. He was one of those who were constantly at my side; for we were engaged in the same studies, and employed the same teachers. We had the same eagerness and zeal about the studies at which we worked, and a passionate desire produced by the same circumstances was equally strong in both of us. For not only when we were attending school, but after we had left it, when it became necessary to consider what course of life it would be best for us to adopt, we found ourselves to be of the same mind.

2. And in addition to these, there were other things also which preserved and maintained this concord unbroken and secure. For as regarded the greatness of our fatherland neither had one cause to vaunt himself over the other, nor was I burdened with riches, and he pinched by poverty, but our means corresponded as closely as our tastes. Our families also were of equal rank, and thus everything concurred with our disposition.

3. But when it became our duty to pursue the blessed life of monks, and the true philosophy, our balance was no longer even, but his scale mounted high, while I, still entangled in the lusts of this world, dragged mine down and kept it low, weighting it with those fancies in which youths are apt to indulge. For the future our friendship indeed remained as firm as it was before, but our intercourse was interrupted; for it was impossible for persons who were not interested about the same things to spend much time together. But as soon as I also began to emerge a little from the flood of

worldliness, he received me with open arms; yet not even thus could we maintain our former equality: for having got the start of me in time, and having displayed great earnestness, he rose again above my level, and soared to a great height.

4. Being a good man, however, and placing a high value on my friendship, he separated himself from all the rest (of the brethren), and spent the whole of his time with me, which he had desired to do before, but had been prevented as I was saying by my frivolity. For it was impossible for a man who attended the law-courts, and was in a flutter of excitement about the pleasures of the stage, to be often in the company of one who was nailed to his books, and never set foot in the market place. Consequently when the hindrances were removed, and he had brought me into the same condition of life as himself, he gave free vent to the desire with which he had long been laboring. He could not bear leaving me even for a moment, and he persistently urged that we should each of us abandon our own home and share a common dwelling:— in fact he persuaded me, and the affair was taken in hand.

5. But the continual lamentations of my mother hindered me from granting him the favor, or rather from receiving this boon at his hands. For when she perceived that I was meditating this step, she took me into her own private chamber, and, sitting near me on the bed where she had given birth to me, she shed torrents of tears, to which she added words yet more pitiable than her weeping, in the following lamentable strain: My child, it was not the will of Heaven that I should long enjoy the benefit of your father's virtue. For his death soon followed the pangs which I endured at your birth, leaving you an orphan and me a widow before my time to face all the horrors of widowhood, which only those who have experienced them can fairly understand. For no words are adequate to describe the tempest-

tossed condition of a young woman who, having but lately left her paternal home, and being inexperienced in business, is suddenly racked by an overwhelming sorrow, and compelled to support a load of care too great for her age and sex. For she has to correct the laziness of servants, and to be on the watch for their rogueries, to repel the designs of relations, to bear bravely the threats of those who collect the public taxes, and harshness in the imposition of rates. And if the departed one should have left a child, even if it be a girl, great anxiety will be caused to the mother, although free from much expense and fear: but a boy fills her with ten thousand alarms and many anxieties every day, to say nothing of the great expense which one is compelled to incur if she wishes to bring him up in a liberal way. None of these things, however, induced me to enter into a second marriage, or introduce a second husband into your father's house: but I held on as I was, in the midst of the storm and uproar, and did not shun the iron furnace of widowhood. My foremost help indeed was the grace from above; but it was no small consolation to me under those terrible trials to look continually on your face and to preserve in you a living image of him who had gone, an image indeed which was a fairly exact likeness.

On this account, even when you were an infant, and had not yet learned to speak, a time when children are the greatest delight to their parents, you afforded me much comfort. Nor indeed can you complain that, although I bore my widowhood bravely, I diminished your patrimony, which I know has been the fate of many who have had the misfortune to be orphans. For, besides keeping the whole of it intact, I spared no expense which was needful to give you an honorable position, spending for this purpose some of my own fortune, and of my marriage dowry. Yet do not think that I say these things by way of reproaching you; only in return for all these benefits I beg one favor: do not plunge me into a second

widowhood; nor revive the grief which is now laid to rest: wait for my death: it may be in a little while I shall depart. The young indeed look forward to a distant old age; but we who have grown old have nothing but death to wait for. When, then, you shall have committed my body to the ground, and mingled my bones with your father's, embark for a long voyage, and set sail on any sea you will: then there will be no one to hinder you: but as long as my life lasts, be content to live with me. Do not, I pray you, oppose God in vain, involving me without cause, who have done you no wrong, in these great calamities. For if you have any reason to complain that I drag you into worldly cares, and force you to attend to business, do not be restrained by any reverence for the laws of nature, for training or custom, but fly from me as an enemy; but if, on the contrary, I do everything to provide leisure for your journey through this life, let this bond at least if nothing else keep you by me. For could thou say that ten thousand loved you, yet no one will afford you the enjoyment of so much liberty, seeing there is no one who is equally anxious for your welfare.

6. These words, and more, my mother spoke to me, and I related them to that noble youth. But he, so far from being disheartened by these speeches, was the more urgent in making the same request as before. Now while we were thus situated, he continually entreating, and I refusing my assent, we were both of us disturbed by a report suddenly reaching us that we were about to be advanced to the dignity of the episcopate. As soon as I heard this rumor I was seized with alarm and perplexity: with alarm lest I should be made captive against my will, and perplexity, inquiring as I often did whence any such idea concerning us could have entered the minds of these men; for looking to myself I found nothing worthy of such an honor. But that noble youth having come to me privately, and having conferred with me about these things as if with one who was ignorant of the rumor,

begged that we might in this instance also as formerly shape our action and our counsels the same way: for he would readily follow me whichever course I might pursue, whether I attempted flight or submitted to be captured. Perceiving then his eagerness, and considering that I should inflict a loss upon the whole body of the Church if, owing to my own weakness, I were to deprive the flock of Christ of a young man who was so good and so well qualified for the supervision of large numbers, I abstained from disclosing to him the purpose which I had formed, although I had never before allowed any of my plans to be concealed from him. I now told him that it would be best to postpone our decision concerning this matter to another season, as it was not immediately pressing, and by so doing persuaded him to dismiss it from his thoughts, and at the same time encouraged him to hope that, if such a thing should ever happen to us, I should be of the same mind with him. But after a short time, when one who was to ordain us arrived, I kept myself concealed, but Basil, ignorant of this, was taken away on another pretext, and made to take the yoke, hoping from the promises which I had made to him that I should certainly follow, or rather supposing that he was following me. For some of those who were present, seeing that he resented being seized, deceived him by exclaiming how strange it was that one who was generally reputed to be the more hot tempered (meaning me), had yielded very mildly to the judgment of the Fathers, whereas he, who was reckoned a much wiser and milder kind of man, had shown himself hotheaded and conceited, being unruly, restive, and contradictory. Having yielded to these remonstrances, and afterwards having learned that I had escaped capture, he came to me in deep dejection, sat down near me and tried to speak, but was hindered by distress of mind and inability to express in words the violence to which he had been subjected. No sooner had he opened his mouth than he was prevented from

utterance by grief cutting short his words before they could pass his lips. Seeing, then, his tearful and agitated condition, and knowing as I did the cause, I laughed for joy, and, seizing his right hand, I forced a kiss on him, and praised God that my plan had ended so successfully, as I had always prayed it might. But when he saw that I was delighted and beaming with joy, and understood that he had been deceived by me, he was yet more vexed and distressed.

7. And when he had a little recovered from this agitation of mind, he began: If you have rejected the part allotted to you, and have no further regard for me (I know not indeed for what cause), you ought at least to consider your own reputation; but as it is you have opened the mouths of all, and the world is saying that you have declined this ministry through love of vainglory, and there is no one who will deliver you from this accusation. As for me, I cannot bear to go into the market place; there are so many who come up to me and reproach me every day. For, when they see me anywhere in the city, all my intimate friends take me aside, and cast the greater part of the blame upon me. Knowing his intention, they say, for none of his affairs could be kept secret from you, you should not have concealed it, but ought to have communicated it to us, and we should have been at no loss to devise some plan for capturing him. But I am too much ashamed and abashed to tell them that I did not know you had long been plotting this trick, lest they should say that our friendship was a mere pretence. For even if it is so, as indeed it is— nor would you yourself deny it after what you have done to me— yet it is well to hide our misfortune from the outside world, and persons who entertain but a moderate opinion of us. I shrink from telling them the truth, and how things really stand with us, and I am compelled in future to keep silence, and look down on the ground, and turn away to avoid those whom I meet. For if I escape the

condemnation on the former charge, I am forced to undergo judgment for speaking falsehood. For they will never believe me when I say that you ranged Basil among those who are not permitted to know your secret affairs. Of this, however, I will not take much account, since it has seemed agreeable to you, but how shall we endure the future disgrace? For some accuse you of arrogance, others of vainglory: while those who are our more merciful accusers, lay both these offenses to our charge, and add that we have insulted those who did us honor, although had they experienced even greater indignity it would only have served them right for passing over so many and such distinguished men and advancing mere youths, who were but yesterday immersed in the interests of this world, to such a dignity as they never have dreamed of obtaining, in order that they may for a brief season knit the eyebrows, wear dusky garments, and put on a grave face. Those who from the dawn of manhood to extreme old age have diligently practised self-discipline, are now to be placed under the government of youths who have not even heard the laws which should regulate their administration of this office. I am perpetually assailed by persons who say such things and worse, and am at a loss how to reply to them; but I pray you tell me: for I do not suppose that you took to flight and incurred such hatred from such distinguished men without cause or consideration, but that your decision was made with reasoning and circumspection: whence also I conjecture that you have some argument ready for your defence. Tell me, then, whether there is any fair excuse which I can make to those who accuse us.

For I do not demand any account for the wrongs which I have sustained at your hands, nor for the deceit or treachery you have practised, nor for the advantage which you have derived from me in the past. For I placed my very life, so to say, in your hands, yet you have treated me with

as much guile as if it had been your business to guard yourself against an enemy. Yet if you knew this decision of ours to be profitable, you ought not to have avoided the gain: if on the contrary injurious, you should have saved me also from the loss, as you always said that you esteemed me before every one else. But you have done everything to make me fall into the snare: and you had no need of guile and hypocrisy in dealing with one who was wont to display the utmost sincerity and candor in speech and action towards you. Nevertheless, as I said, I do not now accuse you of any of these things, or reproach you for the lonely position in which you have placed me by breaking off those conferences from which we often derived no small pleasure and profit; but all these things I pass by, and bear in silence and meekness, not that you have acted meekly in transgressing against me, but because from the day that I cherished your friendship I laid it down as a rule for myself, that whatever sorrow you might cause me I would never force you to the necessity of an apology. For you know yourself that you have inflicted no small loss on me if at least you remember what we were always saying ourselves, and the outside world also said concerning us, that it was a great gain for us to be of one mind and be guarded by each other's friendship. Every one said, indeed, that our concord would bring no small advantage to many besides ourselves; I never perceived, however, so far as I am concerned, how it could be of advantage to others: but I did say that we should at least derive this benefit from it: that those who wished to contend with us would find us difficult to master. And I never ceased reminding you of these things: saying the age is a cruel one, and designing men are many, genuine love is no more, and the deadly pest of envy has crept into its place: we walk in the midst of snares, and on the edge of battlements; those who are ready to rejoice in our misfortunes, if any should befall us, are many and beset us from many quarters: whereas

there is no one to condole with us, or at least the number of such may be easily counted. Beware that we do not by separation incur much ridicule, and damage worse than ridicule. Brother aided by brother is like a strong city, and well fortified kingdom. Do not dissolve this genuine intimacy, nor break down the fortress. Such things and more I was continually saying, not indeed that I ever suspected anything of this kind, but supposing you to be entirely sound in your relation towards me, I did it as a superfluous precaution, wishing to preserve in health one who was already sound; but unwittingly, as it seems, I was administering medicines to a sick man: and even so I have not been fortunate enough to do any good, and have gained nothing by my excess of forethought. For having totally cast away all these considerations, without giving them a thought, you have turned me adrift like an unballasted vessel on an untried ocean, taking no heed of those fierce billows which I must encounter. For if it should ever be my lot to undergo calumny, or mockery, or any other kind of insult or menace (and such things must frequently occur), to whom shall I fly for refuge: to whom shall I impart my distress, who will be willing to succour me and drive back my assailants and put a stop to their assaults? Who will solace me and prepare me to bear the coarse ribaldry which may yet be in store for me. There is no one since you stand aloof from this terrible strife, and cannot even hear my cry. Do you see then what mischief you have wrought? Now that you have dealt the blow, do you perceive what a deadly wound you have inflicted? But let all this pass: for it is impossible to undo the past, or to find a path through pathless difficulties. What shall I say to the outside world? What defence shall I make to their accusations.

8. Chrysostom: Be of good cheer, I replied, for I am not only ready to answer for myself in these matters, but I will also endeavor as well as I am able to render an account of those for which you have not held me

answerable. Indeed, if you wish it, I will make them the starting-point of my defence. For it would be a strange piece of stupidity on my part if, thinking only of praise from the outside public, and doing my best to silence their accusations, I were unable to convince my dearest of all friends that I am not wronging him, and were to treat him with indifference greater than the zeal which he has displayed on my behalf, treating me with such forbearance as even to refrain from accusing me of the wrongs which he says he has suffered from me, and putting his own interests out of the question in consideration for mine.

What is the wrong that I have done you, since I have determined to embark from this point upon the sea of apology? Is it that I misled you and concealed my purpose? Yet I did it for the benefit of yourself who wast deceived, and of those to whom I surrendered you by means of this deceit. For if the evil of deception is absolute, and it is never right to make use of it, I am prepared to pay any penalty you please: or rather, as you will never endure to inflict punishment upon me, I shall subject myself to the same condemnation which is pronounced by judges on evil-doers when their accusers have convicted them. But if the thing is not always harmful, but becomes good or bad according to the intention of those who practise it, you must desist from complaining of deceit, and prove that it has been devised against you for a bad purpose; and as long as this proof is wanting it would only be fair for those who wish to conduct themselves prudently, not only to abstain from reproaches and accusation, but even to give a friendly reception to the deceiver. For a well-timed deception, undertaken with an upright intention, has such advantages, that many persons have often had to undergo punishment for abstaining from fraud. And if you investigate the history of generals who have enjoyed the highest reputation from the earliest ages, you will find that most of their triumphs were

achieved by stratagem, and that such are more highly commended than those who conquer in open fight. For the latter conduct their campaigns with greater expenditure of money and men, so that they gain nothing by the victory, but suffer just as much distress as those who have been defeated, both in the sacrifice of troops and the exhaustion of funds. But, besides this, they are not even permitted to enjoy all the glory which pertains to the victory; for no small part of it is reaped by those who have fallen, because in spirit they were victorious, their defeat was only a bodily one: so that had it been possible for them not to fall when they were wounded, and death had not come and put the finishing stroke to their labors, there would have been no end of their prowess. But one who has been able to gain the victory by stratagem involves the enemy in ridicule as well as disaster. Again, in the other case both sides equally carry off the honors bestowed upon valor, whereas in this case they do not equally obtain those which are bestowed on wisdom, but the prize falls entirely to the victors, and, another point no less important is that they preserve the joy of the victory for the state unalloyed; for abundance of resources and multitudes of men are not like mental powers: the former indeed if continually used in war necessarily become exhausted, and fail those who possess them, whereas it is the nature of wisdom to increase the more it is exercised. And not in war only, but also in peace the need of deceit may be found, not merely in reference to the affairs of the state, but also in private life, in the dealings of husband with wife and wife with husband, son with father, friend with friend, and also children with a parent. For the daughter of Saul would not have been able to rescue her husband out of Saul's hands except by deceiving her father. And her brother, wishing to save him whom she had rescued when he was again in danger, made use of the same weapon as the wife. [1 Samuel 20:11]

Basil: But none of these cases apply to me: for I am not an enemy, nor one of those who are striving to injure you, but quite the contrary. For I entrusted all my interests to your judgment, and always followed it whenever you bid me.

Chrysostom: But, my admirable and excellent Sir, this is the very reason why I took the precaution of saying that it was a good thing to employ this kind of deceit, not only in war, and in dealing with enemies, but also in peace, and in dealing with our dearest friends. For as a proof that it is beneficial not only to the deceivers, but also to those who are deceived; if you go to any of the physicians and ask them how they relieve their patients from disease, they will tell you that they do not depend upon their professional skill alone, but sometimes conduct the sick to health by availing themselves of deceit, and blending the assistance which they derive from it with their art. For when the waywardness of the patient and the obstinacy of the complaint baffle the counsels of the physicians, it is then necessary to put on the mask of deceit in order that, as on the stage, they may be able to hide what really takes place. But, if you please, I will relate to you one instance of stratagem out of many which I have heard of being contrived by the sons of the healing art. A man was once suddenly attacked by a fever of great severity; the burning heat increased, and the patient rejected the remedies which could have reduced it and craved for a draught of pure wine, passionately entreating all who approached to give it him and enable him to satiate this deadly craving— I say deadly, for if any one had gratified this request he would not only have exasperated the fever, but also have driven the unhappy man frantic. Thereupon, professional skill being baffled, and at the end of its resources and utterly thrown away, stratagem stepped in and displayed its power in the way which I will now relate. For the physician took an earthen cup brought straight out of the furnace, and

having steeped it in wine, then drew it out empty, filled it with water, and, having ordered the chamber where the sick man lay to be darkened with curtains that the light might not reveal the trick, he gave it him to drink, pretending that it was filled with undiluted wine. And the man, before he had taken it in his hands, being deceived by the smell, did not wait to examine what was given him, but convinced by the odor, and deceived by the darkness, eagerly gulped down the draught, and being satiated with it immediately shook off the feeling of suffocation and escaped the imminent peril. Do you see the advantage of deceit? And if any one were to reckon up all the tricks of physicians the list would run on to an indefinite length. And not only those who heal the body but those also who attend to the diseases of the soul may be found continually making use of this remedy. Thus the blessed Paul attracted those multitudes of Jews: [Acts 21:26] with this purpose he circumcised Timothy, although he warned the Galatians in his letter [Galatians 5:2] that Christ would not profit those who were circumcised. For this cause he submitted to the law, although he reckoned the righteousness which came from the law but loss after receiving the faith in Christ. [Philippians 3:7] For great is the value of deceit, provided it be not introduced with a mischievous intention. In fact action of this kind ought not to be called deceit, but rather a kind of good management, cleverness and skill, capable of finding out ways where resources fail, and making up for the defects of the mind. For I would not call Phinees a murderer, although he slew two human beings with one stroke: [Numbers 25:7] nor yet Elias after the slaughter of the 100 soldiers, and the captain, [2 Kings 1:9-12] and the torrents of blood which he caused to be shed by the destruction of those who sacrificed to devils. [1 Kings 18:34] For if we were to concede this, and to examine the bare deeds in themselves apart from the intention of the doers, one might if he pleased judge

Abraham guilty of child-murder [Genesis 22:3] and accuse his grandson and descendant [Exodus 11:2] of wickedness and guile. For the one got possession of the birthright, and the other transferred the wealth of the Egyptians to the host of the Israelites. But this is not the case: away with the audacious thought! For we not only acquit them of blame, but also admire them because of these things, since even God commended them for the same. For that man would fairly deserve to be called a deceiver who made an unrighteous use of the practice, not one who did so with a salutary purpose. And often it is necessary to deceive, and to do the greatest benefits by means of this device, whereas he who has gone by a straight course has done great mischief to the person whom he has not deceived.

On the Priesthood (Book II)

1. That it is possible then to make use of deceit for a good purpose, or rather that in such a case it ought not to be called deceit, but a kind of good management worthy of all admiration, might be proved at greater length; but since what has already been said suffices for demonstration, it would be irksome and tedious to lengthen out my discourse upon the subject. And now it will remain for you to prove whether I have not employed this art to your advantage.

Basil: And what kind of advantage have I derived from this piece of good management, or wise policy, or whatever you may please to call it, so as to persuade me that I have not been deceived by you?

Chrysostom: What advantage, pray, could be greater than to be seen doing those things which Christ with his own lips declared to be proofs of love to Himself? [John 21:15-17] For addressing the leader of the apostles He said, "*Peter, do you love me?*" and when he confessed that he did, the Lord added, "*if you love me tend my sheep.*" The Master asked the disciple if He was loved by him, not in order to get information (how should He who penetrates the hearts of all men?), but in order to teach us how great an interest He takes in the superintendence of these sheep. This being plain, it will likewise be manifest that a great and unspeakable reward will be reserved for him whose labors are concerned with these sheep, upon which Christ places such a high value. For when we see any one bestowing care upon members of our household, or upon our flocks, we count his zeal for them as a sign of love towards ourselves: yet all these things are to be bought for money:— with how great a gift then will He requite those who tend the flock which He purchased, not with money, nor anything of that

kind, but by His own death, giving his own blood as the price of the herd. Wherefore when the disciple said, *"You know Lord that I love You,"* and invoked the beloved one Himself as a witness of his love, the Saviour did not stop there, but added that which was the token of love. For He did not at that time wish to show how much Peter loved Him, but how much He Himself loved His own Church, and he desired to teach Peter and all of us that we also should bestow much zeal upon the same. For why did God not spare His only-begotten Son, but delivered Him up, although the only one He had? It was that He might reconcile to Himself those who were disposed towards Him as enemies, and make them His peculiar people. For what purpose did He shed His blood? It was that He might win these sheep which He entrusted to Peter and his successors. Naturally then did Christ say, *"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord shall make ruler over His household."* Again, the words are those of one who is in doubt, yet the speaker did not utter them in doubt, but just as He asked Peter whether he loved Him, not from any need to learn the affection of the disciple, but from a desire to show the exceeding depth of his own love: so now also when He says, *"Who then is the faithful and wise servant?"* he speaks not as being ignorant who is faithful and wise, but as desiring to set forth the rarity of such a character, and the greatness of this office. Observe at any rate how great the reward is— *"He will appoint him,"* he says, *"ruler over all his goods."* [Matthew 24:47]

2. Will you, then, still contend that you were not rightly deceived, when you are about to superintend the things which belong to God, and are doing that which when Peter did the Lord said he should be able to surpass the rest of the apostles, for His words were, *"Peter, do you love me more than these?"* Yet He might have said to him, *"If you love me practise fasting, sleeping on the ground, and prolonged vigils, defend the wronged,*

be as a father to orphans, and supply the place of a husband to their mother." But as a matter of fact, setting aside all these things, what does He say? *"Tend my sheep."* For those things which I have already mentioned might easily be performed by many even of those who are under authority, women as well as men; but when one is required to preside over the Church, and to be entrusted with the care of so many souls, the whole female sex must retire before the magnitude of the task, and the majority of men also; and we must bring forward those who to a large extent surpass all others, and soar as much above them in excellence of spirit as Saul overtopped the whole Hebrew nation in bodily stature: or rather far more. [1 Samuel 10:23] For in this case let me not take the height of shoulders as the standard of inquiry; but let the distinction between the pastor and his charge be as great as that between rational man and irrational creatures, not to say even greater, inasmuch as the risk is concerned with things of far greater importance. He indeed who has lost sheep, either through the ravages of wolves, or the attacks of robbers, or through murrain, or any other disaster befalling them, might perhaps obtain some indulgence from the owner of the flock; and even if the latter should demand satisfaction the penalty would be only a matter of money: but he who has human beings entrusted to him, the rational flock of Christ, incurs a penalty in the first place for the loss of the sheep, which goes beyond material things and touches his own life: and in the second place he has to carry on a far greater and more difficult contest. For he has not to contend with wolves, nor to dread robbers, nor to consider how he may avert pestilence from the flock. With whom then has he to fight? With whom has he to wrestle? Listen to the words of St. Paul. *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* [Ephesians 6:12] Do

you see the terrible multitude of enemies, and their fierce squadrons, not steel clad, but endued with a nature which is of itself an equivalent for a complete suit of armor. Would you see yet another host, stern and cruel, beleaguering this flock? This also you shall behold from the same post of observation. For he who has discoursed to us concerning the others, points out these enemies also to us, speaking in a certain place on this wise: *"The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, fornication, adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults,"* [2 Corinthians 12:20] and many more besides; for he did not make a complete list, but left us to understand the rest from these. Moreover, in the case of the shepherd of irrational creatures, those who wish to destroy the flock, when they see the guardian take to flight, cease making war upon him, and are contented with the seizure of the cattle: but in this case, even should they capture the whole flock, they do not leave the shepherd unmolested, but attack him all the more, and wax bolder, ceasing not until they have either overthrown him, or have themselves been vanquished. Again, the afflictions of sheep are manifest, whether it be famine, or pestilence, or wounds, or whatsoever else it may be which distresses them, and this might help not a little towards the relief of those who are oppressed in these ways. And there is yet another fact greater than this which facilitates release from this kind of infirmity. And what is that? The shepherds with great authority compel the sheep to receive the remedy when they do not willingly submit to it. For it is easy to bind them when cautery or cutting is required, and to keep them inside the fold for a long time, whenever it is expedient, and to bring them one kind of food instead of another, and to cut them off from their supplies of water, and all other

things which the shepherds may decide to be conducive to their health they perform with great ease.

3. But in the case of human infirmities, it is not easy in the first place for a man to discern them, for no man *"knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him."* [1 Corinthians 2:11] How then can any one apply the remedy for the disease of which he does not know the character, often indeed being unable to understand it even should he happen to sicken with it himself? And even when it becomes manifest, it causes him yet more trouble: for it is not possible to doctor all men with the same authority with which the shepherd treats his sheep. For in this case also it is necessary to bind and to restrain from food, and to use cautery or the knife: but the reception of the treatment depends on the will of the patient, not of him who applies the remedy. For this also was perceived by that wonderful man (St. Paul) when he said to the Corinthians— *"Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."* [2 Corinthians 1:24] For Christians above all men are not permitted forcibly to correct the failings of those who sin. Secular judges indeed, when they have captured malefactors under the law, show their authority to be great, and prevent them even against their will from following their own devices: but in our case the wrong-doer must be made better, not by force, but by persuasion. For neither has authority of this kind for the restraint of sinners been given us by law, nor, if it had been given, should we have any field for the exercise of our power, inasmuch as God rewards those who abstain from evil by their own choice, not of necessity. Consequently much skill is required that our patients may be induced to submit willingly to the treatment prescribed by the physicians, and not only this, but that they may be grateful also for the cure. For if any one when he is bound becomes restive (which it is in his power to be), he makes the mischief worse; and if he should pay no heed to

the words which cut like steel, he inflicts another wound by means of this contempt, and the intention to heal only becomes the occasion of a worse disorder. For it is not possible for any one to cure a man by compulsion against his will.

4. What then is one to do? For if you deal too gently with him who needs a severe application of the knife, and do not strike deep into one who requires such treatment, you remove one part of the sore but leave the other: and if on the other hand you make the requisite incision unsparingly, the patient, driven to desperation by his sufferings, will often fling everything away at once, both the remedy and the bandage, and throw himself down headlong, "*breaking the yoke and bursting the band.*" I could tell of many who have run into extreme evils because the due penalty of their sins was exacted. For we ought not, in applying punishment, merely to proportion it to the scale of the offense, but rather to keep in view the disposition of the sinner, lest while wishing to mend what is torn, you make the rent worse, and in your zealous endeavors to restore what is fallen, you make the ruin greater. For weak and careless characters, addicted for the most part to the pleasures of the world, and having occasion to be proud on account of birth and position, may yet, if gently and gradually brought to repent of their errors, be delivered, partially at least, if not perfectly, from the evils by which they are possessed: but if any one were to inflict the discipline all at once, he would deprive them of this slight chance of amendment. For when once the soul has been forced to put off shame it lapses into a callous condition, and neither yields to kindly words nor bends to threats, nor is susceptible of gratitude, but becomes far worse than that city which the prophet reproached, saying, "*you had the face of a harlot, refusing to be ashamed before all men.*" [Jeremiah 3:3] Therefore the pastor has need of much discretion, and of a myriad eyes to observe on every side the habit of

the soul. For as many are uplifted to pride, and then sink into despair of their salvation, from inability to endure severe remedies, so are there some, who from paying no penalty equivalent to their sins, fall into negligence, and become far worse, and are impelled to greater sins. It behooves the priest therefore to leave none of these things unexamined, but, after a thorough inquiry into all of them, to apply such remedies as he has appositely to each case, lest his zeal prove to be in vain. And not in this matter only, but also in the work of knitting together the severed members of the Church, one can see that he has much to do. For the pastor of sheep has his flock following him, wherever he may lead them: and if any should stray out of the straight path, and, deserting the good pasture, feed in unproductive or rugged places, a loud shout suffices to collect them and bring back to the fold those who have been parted from it: but if a human being wanders away from the right faith, great exertion, perseverance and patience are required; for he cannot be dragged back by force, nor constrained by fear, but must be led back by persuasion to the truth from which he originally swerved. The pastor therefore ought to be of a noble spirit, so as not to despond, or to despair of the salvation of wanderers from the fold, but continually to reason with himself and say, *"Peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."* [2 Timothy 2:25] Therefore the Lord, when addressing His disciples, said, *"Who then is the faithful and wise servant?"* [Matthew 24:45] For he indeed who disciplines himself compasses only his own advantage, but the benefit of the pastoral function extends to the whole people. And one who dispenses money to the needy, or otherwise succors the oppressed, benefits his neighbors to some extent, but so much less than the priest in proportion as the body is inferior

to the soul. Rightly therefore did the Lord say that zeal for the flock was a token of love for Himself.

Basil: But you yourself— do you not love Christ?

Chrysostom: Yea, I love Him, and shall never cease loving Him; but I fear lest I should provoke Him whom I love.

Basil: But what riddle can there be more obscure than this— Christ has commanded him who loves Him to tend His sheep, and yet you say that you decline to tend them because you love Him who gave this command?

Chrysostom: My saying is no riddle, but very intelligible and simple, for if I were well qualified to administer this office, as Christ desired it, and then shunned it, my remark might be open to doubt, but since the infirmity of my spirit renders me useless for this ministry, why does my saying deserve to be called in question? For I fear lest if I took the flock in hand when it was in good condition and well nourished, and then wasted it through my unskilfulness, I should provoke against myself the God who so loved the flock as to give Himself up for their salvation and ransom.

Basil: You speak in jest: for if you were in earnest I know not how you would have proved me to be justly grieved otherwise than by means of these very words whereby you have endeavored to dispel my dejection. I knew indeed before that you had deceived and betrayed me, but much more now, when you have undertaken to clear yourself of my accusations, do I plainly perceive and understand the extent of the evils into which you have led me. For if you withdrew yourself from this ministry because you were conscious that your spirit was not equal to the burden of the task, I ought to have been rescued from it before you, even if I had chanced to have a great desire for it, to say nothing of having confided to you the entire decision of these matters: but as it is, you have looked solely to your own interest and neglected mine. Would indeed you had entirely neglected them; then I

should have been well content: but you plotted to facilitate my capture by those who wished to seize me. For you cannot take shelter in the argument that public opinion deceived you and induced you to imagine great and wonderful things concerning me. For I was none of your wonderful and distinguished men, nor, had this been the case, ought you to have preferred public opinion to truth. For if I had never permitted you to enjoy my society, you might have seemed to have a reasonable pretext for being guided in your vote by public report; but if there is no one who has such thorough knowledge of my affairs, if you are acquainted with my character better than my parents and those who brought me up, what argument can you employ which will be convincing enough to persuade your hearers that you did not purposely thrust me into this danger: say, what answer shall I make to your accusers?

Chrysostom: Nay! I will not proceed to those questions until I have resolved such as concern yourself alone, if you were to ask me ten thousand times to dispose of these charges. You said indeed that ignorance would bring me forgiveness, and that I should have been free from all accusation if I had brought you into your present position not knowing anything about you, but that as I did not betray you in ignorance, but was intimately acquainted with your affairs, I was deprived of all reasonable pretext and excuse. But I say precisely the reverse: for in such matters there is need of careful scrutiny, and he who is going to present any one as qualified for the priesthood ought not to be content with public report only, but should also himself, above all and before all, investigate the man's character. For when the blessed Paul says, "*He must also have a good report of them which are without,*" [1 Timothy 3:7] he does not dispense with an exact and rigorous inquiry, nor does he assign to such testimony precedence over the scrutiny required in such cases. For after much previous discourse, he mentioned

this additional testimony, proving that one must not be contented with it alone for elections of this kind, but take it into consideration along with the rest. For public report often speaks false; but when careful investigation precedes, no further danger need be apprehended from it. On this account, after the other kinds of evidence he places that which comes from those who are without. For he did not simply say, "*he must have a good report,*" but added the words, "*from them which are without,*" wishing to show that before the report of those without he must be carefully examined.

Inasmuch, then, as I myself knew your affairs better than your parents, as you also yourself acknowledged, I might deserve to be released from all blame.

Basil: Nay this is the very reason why you could not escape, if any one chose to indite you. Do you not remember hearing from me, and often learning from my actual conduct, the feebleness of my character? Were you not perpetually taunting me for my pusillanimity, because I was so easily dejected by ordinary cares?

5. Chrysostom: I do indeed remember often hearing such things said by you; I would not deny it. But if I ever taunted you, I did it in sport and not in serious truth. However, I do not now dispute about these matters, and I claim the same degree of forbearance from you while I wish to make mention of some of the good qualities which you possess. For if you attempt to convict me of saying what is untrue, I shall not spare you, but shall prove that you say these things rather by way of self-depreciation than with a view to truth, and I will employ no evidence but your own words and deeds to demonstrate the truth of my assertion. And now the first question I wish to ask of you is this: do you know how great the power of love is? For omitting all the miracles which were to be wrought by the apostles, Christ said, "*Hereby shall men know that you are my disciples if you love one*

another," [John 13:35] and Paul said that it was the fulfilling of the law, [Romans 13:10] and that in default of it no spiritual gift had any profit. Well, this choice good, the distinguishing mark of Christ's disciples, the gift which is higher than all other gifts, I perceived to be deeply implanted in your soul, and teeming with much fruit.

Basil: I acknowledge indeed that the matter is one of deep concern to me, and that I endeavor most earnestly to keep this commandment, but that I have not even half succeeded in so doing, even you yourself would bear me witness if you would leave off talking out of partiality, and simply respect the truth.

6. Chrysostom: Well, then, I shall betake myself to my evidences, and shall now do what I threatened, proving that you wish to disparage yourself rather than to speak the truth. But I will mention a fact which has only just occurred, that no one may suspect me of attempting to obscure the truth by the great lapse of time in relating events long past, as oblivion would then prevent any objection being made to the things which I might say with a view to gratification. For when one of our intimate friends, having been falsely accused of insult and folly, was in extreme peril, you then flung yourself into the midst of the danger, although you were not summoned by any one, or appealed to by the person who was about to be involved in danger. Such was the fact: but that I may convict you out of your own mouth, I will remind you of the words you uttered: for when some did not approve of this zeal, while others commended and admired it, *"How can I help myself?"* you said to those who accused you, *"for I do not know how otherwise to love than by giving up my life when it is necessary to save any of my friends who is in danger:"* thus repeating, in different words, indeed, but with the same meaning, what Christ said to his disciples when he laid down the definition of perfect love. *"Greater love,"* He said, *"has no man*

than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." If then it is impossible to find greater love than this, you have attained its limit, and both by your deeds and words have crowned the summit. This is why I betrayed you, this is why I contrived that plot. Do I now convince you that it was not from any malicious intent, nor from any desire to thrust you into danger, but from a persuasion of your future usefulness that I dragged you into this course?

Basil: Do you then suppose that love is sufficient for the correction of one's fellowmen?

Chrysostom: Certainly it would contribute in a great measure to this end. But if you wish me to produce evidence of your practical wisdom also, I will proceed to do so, and will prove that your understanding exceeds your lovingkindness.

At these remarks he blushed scarlet and said, Let my character be now dismissed: for it was not about this that I originally demanded an explanation; but if you have any just answer to make to those who are without, I would gladly hear what you have to say. Wherefore, abandoning this vain contest, tell me what defence I shall make, both to those who have honored you and to those who are distressed on their account, considering them to be insulted.

7. Chrysostom: This is just the point to which I am finally hastening, for as my explanation to you has been completed I shall easily turn to this part of my defence. What then is the accusation made by these persons, and what are their charges? They say that they have been insulted and grievously wronged by me because I have not accepted the honor which they wished to confer upon me. Now in the first place I say that no account should be taken of the insult shown to men, seeing that by paying honor to them I should be compelled to offend God. And I should say to those who

are displeased that it is not safe to take offense at these things, but does them much harm. For I think that those who stay themselves on God and look to Him alone, ought to be so religiously disposed as not to account such a thing an insult, even if they happened to be a thousand times dishonored. But that I have not gone so far as even to think of daring anything of this kind is manifest from what I am about to say. For if indeed I had been induced by arrogance and vainglory, as you have often said some slanderously affirm, to assent to my accusers, I should have been one of the most iniquitous of mankind, having treated great and excellent men, my benefactors moreover, with contempt. For if men ought to be punished for wronging those who have never wronged them, how ought we to honor those who have spontaneously preferred to honor us? For no one could possibly say that they were requiting me for any benefits small or great which they had received at my hands. How great a punishment then would one deserve if one requited them in the contrary manner. But if such a thing never entered my mind, and I declined the heavy burden with quite a different intention, why do they refuse to pardon me (even if they do not consent to approve), but accuse me of having selfishly spared my own soul? For so far from having insulted the men in question I should say that I had even honored them by my refusal.

And do not be surprised at the paradoxical nature of my remark, for I shall supply a speedy solution of it.

8. For had I accepted the office, I do not say all men, but those who take pleasure in speaking evil, might have suspected and said many things concerning myself who had been elected and concerning them, the electors: for instance, that they regarded wealth, and admired splendor of rank, or had been induced by flattery to promote me to this honor: indeed I cannot say whether some one might not have suspected that they were bribed by

money. Moreover, they would have said, *"Christ called fishermen, tentmakers, and publicans to this dignity, whereas these men reject those who support themselves by daily labor: but if there be any one who devotes himself to secular learning, and is brought up in idleness, him they receive and admire. For why, pray, have they passed by men who have undergone innumerable toils in the service of the Church, and suddenly dragged into this dignity one who has never experienced any labors of this kind, but has spent all his youth in the vain study of secular learning."* These things and more they might have said had I accepted the office: but not so now. For every pretext for maligning is now cut away from them, and they can neither accuse me of flattery, nor the others of receiving bribes, unless some choose to act like mere madmen. For how could one who used flattery and expended money in order to obtain the dignity, have abandoned it to others when he might have obtained it? For this would be just as if a man who had bestowed much labor upon the ground in order that the grain field might be laden with abundant produce, and the presses overflow with wine, after innumerable toils and great expenditure of money were to surrender the fruits to others just when it was time to reap his grain and gather in his vintage. Do you see that although what was said might be far from the truth, nevertheless those who wished to calumniate the electors would then have had a pretext for alleging that the choice was made without fair judgment and consideration. But as it is I have prevented them from being open mouthed, or even uttering a single word on the subject. Such then and more would have been their remarks at the outset. But after undertaking the ministry I should not have been able day by day to defend myself against accusers, even if I had done everything faultlessly, to say nothing of the many mistakes which I must have made owing to my youth and inexperience. But now I have saved the electors from this kind of

accusation also, whereas in the other case I should have involved them in innumerable reproaches. For what would not the world have said? *"They have committed affairs of such vast interest and importance to thoughtless youths, they have defiled the flock of God, and Christian affairs have become a jest and a laughing-stock."* But now *"all iniquity shall stop her mouth."* For although they may say these things on your account, you will speedily teach them by your acts that understanding is not to be estimated by age, and the grey head is not to be the test of an elder— that the young man ought not to be absolutely excluded from the ministry, but only the novice: and the difference between the two is great.

On the Priesthood (Book III)

1. Chrysostom: As regards the insult to those who have done me honor, what I have already said might be sufficient to prove that in avoiding this office I had no desire to put them to shame; but I will now endeavor to make it evident, to the best of my ability, that I was not puffed up by arrogance of any kind. For if the choice of a generalship or a kingdom had been submitted to me, and I had then formed this resolution, any one might naturally have suspected me of this fault, or rather I should have been found guilty by all men, not of arrogance, but of senseless folly. But when the priesthood is offered to me, which exceeds a kingdom as much as the spirit differs from the flesh, will any one dare to accuse me of disdain? And is it not preposterous to charge with folly those who reject small things, but when any do this in matters of pre-eminent importance, to exempt such persons from accusations of mental derangement, and yet subject them to the charge of pride? It is just as if one were to accuse, not of pride, but of insanity, a man who looked with contempt on a herd of oxen and refused to be a herdsman, and yet were to say that a man who declined the empire of the world, and the command of all the armies of the earth, was not mad, but inflated with pride. But this assuredly is not the case; and they who say such things do not injure me more than they injure themselves. For merely to imagine it possible for human nature to despise this dignity is an evidence against those who bring this charge of the estimate which they have formed of the office. For if they did not consider it to be an ordinary thing of no great account, such a suspicion as this would never have entered their heads. For why is it that no one has ever dared to entertain such a suspicion with reference to the dignity of the angels, and to say that arrogance is the

reason why human nature would not aspire to the rank of the angelic nature? It is because we imagine great things concerning those powers, and this does not suffer us to believe that a man can conceive anything greater than that honor. Wherefore one might with more justice indite those persons of arrogance who accuse me of it. For they would never have suspected this of others if they had not previously depreciated the matter as being of no account. But if they say that I have done this with a view to glory, they will be convicted of fighting openly against themselves and falling into their own snare; for I do not know what kind of arguments they could have sought in preference to these if they had wished to release me from the charge of vainglory.

2. For if this desire had ever entered my mind, I ought to have accepted the office rather than avoided it. Why? Because it would have brought me much glory. For the fact that one of my age, who had so recently abandoned secular pursuits, should suddenly be deemed by all worthy of such admiration as to be advanced to honor before those who have spent all their life in labors of this kind, and to obtain more votes than all of them, might have persuaded all men to anticipate great and marvellous things of me. But, as it is, the greater part of the Church does not know me even by name: so that even my refusal of the office will not be manifest to all, but only to a few, and I am not sure that all even of these know it for certain; but probably many of them either imagine that I was not elected at all, or that I was rejected after the election, being considered unsuitable, not that I avoided the office of my own accord.

3. Basil: But those who do know the truth will be surprised.

Chrysostom: And lo! These are they who, according to you, falsely accuse me of vainglory and pride. Whence then am I to hope for praise? From the many? They do not know the actual fact. From the few? Here

again the matter is perverted to my disadvantage. For the only reason why you have come here now is to learn what answer ought to be given to them. And what shall I now certainly say on account of these things? For wait a little, and you will clearly perceive that even if all know the truth they ought not to condemn me for pride and love of glory. And in addition to this there is another consideration: that not only those who make this venture, if there be any such (which for my part I do not believe), but also those who suspect it of others, will be involved in no small danger.

4. For the priestly office is indeed discharged on earth, but it ranks among heavenly ordinances; and very naturally so: for neither man, nor angel, nor archangel, nor any other created power, but the Paraclete Himself, instituted this vocation, and persuaded men while still abiding in the flesh to represent the ministry of angels. Wherefore the consecrated priest ought to be as pure as if he were standing in the heavens themselves in the midst of those powers. Fearful, indeed, and of most awful import, were the things which were used before the dispensation of grace, as the bells, the pomegranates, the stones on the breastplate and on the ephod, the girdle, the mitre, the long robe, the plate of gold, the holy of holies, the deep silence within. But if any one should examine the things which belong to the dispensation of grace, he will find that, small as they are, yet are they fearful and full of awe, and that what was spoken concerning the law is true in this case also, that *"what has been made glorious has no glory in this respect by reason of the glory which excels."* [2 Corinthians 3:10] For when you see the Lord sacrificed, and laid upon the altar, and the priest standing and praying over the victim, and all the worshippers empurpled with that precious blood, can you then think that you are still among men, and standing upon the earth? Are you not, on the contrary, straightway translated to Heaven, and casting out every carnal thought from the soul, do

you not with disembodied spirit and pure reason contemplate the things which are in Heaven? Oh! What a marvel! What love of God to man! He who sits on high with the Father is at that hour held in the hands of all, and gives Himself to those who are willing to embrace and grasp Him. And this all do through the eyes of faith! Do these things seem to you fit to be despised, or such as to make it possible for any one to be uplifted against them?

Would you also learn from another miracle the exceeding sanctity of this office? Picture Elijah and the vast multitude standing around him, and the sacrifice laid upon the altar of stones, and all the rest of the people hushed into a deep silence while the prophet alone offers up prayer: then the sudden rush of fire from Heaven upon the sacrifice:— these are marvellous things, charged with terror. Now then pass from this scene to the rites which are celebrated in the present day; they are not only marvellous to behold, but transcendent in terror. There stands the priest, not bringing down fire from Heaven, but the Holy Spirit: and he makes prolonged supplication, not that some flame sent down from on high may consume the offerings, but that grace descending on the sacrifice may thereby enlighten the souls of all, and render them more refulgent than silver purified by fire. Who can despise this most awful mystery, unless he is stark mad and senseless? Or do you not know that no human soul could have endured that fire in the sacrifice, but all would have been utterly consumed, had not the assistance of God's grace been great.

5. For if any one will consider how great a thing it is for one, being a man, and compassed with flesh and blood, to be enabled to draw near to that blessed and pure nature, he will then clearly see what great honor the grace of the Spirit has vouchsafed to priests; since by their agency these rites are celebrated, and others nowise inferior to these both in respect of

our dignity and our salvation. For they who inhabit the earth and make their abode there are entrusted with the administration of things which are in Heaven, and have received an authority which God has not given to angels or archangels. For it has not been said to them, *"Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."* [Matthew 18:18] They who rule on earth have indeed authority to bind, but only the body: whereas this binding lays hold of the soul and penetrates the heavens; and what priests do here below God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of his servants. For indeed what is it but all manner of heavenly authority which He has given them when He says, *"Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained?"* [John 20:23] What authority could be greater than this? *"The Father has committed all judgment to the Son?"* [John 5:22] But I see it all put into the hands of these men by the Son. For they have been conducted to this dignity as if they were already translated to Heaven, and had transcended human nature, and were released from the passions to which we are liable. Moreover, if a king should bestow this honor upon any of his subjects, authorizing him to cast into prison whom he pleased and to release them again, he becomes an object of envy and respect to all men; but he who has received from God an authority as much greater as heaven is more precious than earth, and souls more precious than bodies, seems to some to have received so small an honor that they are actually able to imagine that one of those who have been entrusted with these things will despise the gift. Away with such madness! For transparent madness it is to despise so great a dignity, without which it is not possible to obtain either our own salvation, or the good things which have been promised to us. For if no one can enter into the kingdom of Heaven except he be regenerate through water and the Spirit, and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord

and drink His blood is excluded from eternal life, and if all these things are accomplished only by means of those holy hands, I mean the hands of the priest, how will any one, without these, be able to escape the fire of hell, or to win those crowns which are reserved for the victorious?

6. These verily are they who are entrusted with the pangs of spiritual travail and the birth which comes through baptism: by their means we put on Christ, and are buried with the Son of God, and become members of that blessed Head. Wherefore they might not only be more justly feared by us than rulers and kings, but also be more honored than parents; since these begot us of blood and the will of the flesh, but the others are the authors of our birth from God, even that blessed regeneration which is the true freedom and the sonship according to grace. The Jewish priests had authority to release the body from leprosy, or, rather, not to release it but only to examine those who were already released, and you know how much the office of priest was contended for at that time. But our priests have received authority to deal, not with bodily leprosy, but spiritual uncleanness — not to pronounce it removed after examination, but actually and absolutely to take it away. Wherefore they who despise these priests would be far more accursed than Dathan and his company, and deserve more severe punishment. For the latter, although they laid claim to the dignity which did not belong to them, nevertheless had an excellent opinion concerning it, and this they evinced by the great eagerness with which they pursued it; but these men, when the office has been better regulated, and has received so great a development, have displayed an audacity which exceeds that of the others, although manifested in a contrary way. For there is not an equal amount of contempt involved in aiming at an honor which does not pertain to one, and in despising such great advantages, but the latter exceeds the former as much as scorn differs from admiration. What soul then is so

sordid as to despise such great advantages? None whatever, I should say, unless it were one subject to some demoniacal impulse. For I return once more to the point from which I started: not in the way of chastising only, but also in the way of benefiting, God has bestowed a power on priests greater than that of our natural parents. The two indeed differ as much as the present and the future life. For our natural parents generate us unto this life only, but the others unto that which is to come. And the former would not be able to avert death from their offspring, or to repel the assaults of disease; but these others have often saved a sick soul, or one which was on the point of perishing, procuring for some a milder chastisement, and preventing others from falling altogether, not only by instruction and admonition, but also by the assistance wrought through prayers. For not only at the time of regeneration, but afterwards also, they have authority to forgive sins. *"Is any sick among you?" it is said, "let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up: and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him."* [James 5:14-15] Again: our natural parents, should their children come into conflict with any men of high rank and great power in the world, are unable to profit them: but priests have reconciled, not rulers and kings, but God Himself when His wrath has often been provoked against them.

Well! After this will any one venture to condemn me for arrogance? For my part, after what has been said, I imagine such religious fear will possess the souls of the hearers that they will no longer condemn those who avoid the office for arrogance and temerity, but rather those who voluntarily come forward and are eager to obtain this dignity for themselves. For if they who have been entrusted with the command of cities, should they chance to be wanting in discretion and vigilance, have sometimes destroyed

the cities and ruined themselves in addition, how much power think you both in himself and from above must he need, to avoid sinning, whose business it is to beautify the Bride of Christ?

7. No man loved Christ more than Paul: no man exhibited greater zeal, no man was counted worthy of more grace: nevertheless, after all these great advantages, he still has fears and tremblings concerning this government and those who were governed by him. *"I fear,"* he says, *"lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ."*

[2 Corinthians 11:3] And again, *"I was with you in fear and in much trembling;"* [1 Corinthians 2:3] and this was a man who had been caught up to the third Heaven, and made partaker of the unspeakable mysteries of God, [2 Corinthians 12:4] and had endured as many deaths as he had lived days after he became a believer—a man, moreover, who would not use the authority given him from Christ lest any of his converts should be offended. If, then, he who went beyond the ordinances of God, and nowhere sought his own advantage, but that of those whom he governed, was always so full of fear when he considered the greatness of his government, what shall our condition be who in many ways seek our own, who not only fail to go beyond the commandments of Christ, but for the most part transgress them? *"Who is weak,"* he says, *"and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?"* [2 Corinthians 11:29] Such an one ought the priest to be, or, rather, not such only: for these are small things, and as nothing compared with what I am about to say. And what is this? *"I could wish,"* he says, *"that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."* [Romans 9:3] If any one can utter such a speech, if any one has the soul which attains to such a prayer, he might justly be blamed if he took to flight: but if any one should lack such excellence as much as I do, he

would deserve to be hated, not if he avoided the office, but if he accepted it. For if an election to a military dignity was the business in hand, and they who had the right of conferring the honor were to drag forward a brazier, or a shoemaker, or some such artisan, and entrust the army to his hands, I should not praise the wretched man if he did not take to flight, and do all in his power to avoid plunging into such manifest trouble. If, indeed, it be sufficient to bear the name of pastor, and to take the work in hand haphazard, and there be no danger in this, then let whoso pleases accuse me of vainglory; but if it behooves one who undertakes this care to have much understanding, and, before understanding, great grace from God, and uprightness of conduct, and purity of life and superhuman virtue, do not deprive me of forgiveness if I am unwilling to perish in vain without a cause.

Moreover, if any one in charge of a full-sized merchant ship, full of rowers, and laden with a costly freight, were to station me at the helm and bid me cross the Ægean or the Tyrrhene sea, I should recoil from the proposal at once: and if any one asked me why? I should say, "*Lest I should sink the ship.*" Well, where the loss concerns material wealth, and the danger extends only to bodily death, no one will blame those who exercise great prudence; but where the shipwrecked are destined to fall, not into the ocean, but into the abyss of fire, and the death which awaits them is not that which severs the soul from the body, but one which together with this dismisses it to eternal punishment, shall I incur your wrath and hate because I did not plunge headlong into so great an evil?

8. Do not thus, I pray and beseech you. I know my own soul, how feeble and puny it is: I know the magnitude of this ministry, and the great difficulty of the work; for more stormy billows vex the soul of the priest than the gales which disturb the sea.

9. And first of all is that most terrible rock of vainglory, more dangerous than that of the Sirens, of which the fable-mongers tell such marvellous tales: for many were able to sail past that and escape unscathed; but this is to me so dangerous that even now, when no necessity of any kind impels me into that abyss, I am unable to keep clear of the snare: but if any one were to commit this charge to me, it would be all the same as if he tied my hands behind my back, and delivered me to the wild beasts dwelling on that rock to rend me in pieces day by day. Do you ask what those wild beasts are? They are wrath, despondency, envy, strife, slanders, accusations, falsehood, hypocrisy, intrigues, anger against those who have done no harm, pleasure at the indecorous acts of fellow ministers, sorrow at their prosperity, love of praise, desire of honor (which indeed most of all drives the human soul headlong to perdition), doctrines devised to please, servile flatteries, ignoble fawning, contempt of the poor, paying court to the rich, senseless and mischievous honors, favors attended with danger both to those who offer and those who accept them, sordid fear suited only to the basest of slaves, the abolition of plain speaking, a great affectation of humility, but banishment of truth, the suppression of convictions and reproofs, or rather the excessive use of them against the poor, while against those who are invested with power no one dare open his lips.

For all these wild beasts, and more than these, are bred upon that rock of which I have spoken, and those whom they have once captured are inevitably dragged down into such a depth of servitude that even to please women they often do many things which it is well not to mention. The divine law indeed has excluded women from the ministry, but they endeavor to thrust themselves into it; and since they can effect nothing of themselves, they do all through the agency of others; and they have become invested with so much power that they can appoint or eject priests at their

will: things in fact are turned upside down, and the proverbial saying may be seen realized— *"The ruled lead the rulers:"* and would that it were men who do this instead of women, who have not received a commission to teach. Why do I say teach? For the blessed Paul did not suffer them even to speak in the Church. But I have heard some one say that they have obtained such a large privilege of free speech, as even to rebuke the prelates of the Churches, and censure them more severely than masters do their own domestics.

10. And let not any one suppose that I subject all to the aforesaid charges: for there are some, yea many, who are superior to these entanglements, and exceed in number those who have been caught by them. Nor would I indeed make the priesthood responsible for these evils: far be such madness from me. For men of understanding do not say that the sword is to blame for murder, nor wine for drunkenness, nor strength for outrage, nor courage for foolhardiness, but they lay the blame on those who make an improper use of the gifts which have been bestowed upon them by God, and punish them accordingly. Certainly, at least, the priesthood may justly accuse us if we do not rightly handle it. For it is not itself a cause of the evils already mentioned, but we, who as far as lies in our power have defiled it with so many pollutions, by entrusting it to commonplace men who readily accept what is offered them, without having first acquired a knowledge of their own souls, or considered the gravity of the office, and when they have entered on the work, being blinded by inexperience, overwhelm with innumerable evils the people who have been committed to their care. This is the very thing which was very nearly happening in my case, had not God speedily delivered me from those dangers, mercifully sparing his Church and my own soul. For, tell me, whence do you think such great troubles are generated in the Churches? I, for my part, believe

the only source of them to be the inconsiderate and random way in which prelates are chosen and appointed. For the head ought to be the strongest part, that it may be able to regulate and control the evil exhalations which arise from the rest of the body below; but when it happens to be weak in itself, and unable to repel those pestiferous attacks, it becomes feebler itself than it really is, and ruins the rest of the body as well. And to prevent this now coming to pass, God kept me in the position of the feet, which was the rank originally assigned to me. For there are very many other qualities, Basil, besides those already mentioned, which the priest ought to have, but which I do not possess; and, above all, this one:— his soul ought to be thoroughly purged from any lust after the office: for if he happens to have a natural inclination for this dignity, as soon as he attains it a stronger flame is kindled, and the man being taken completely captive will endure innumerable evils in order to keep a secure hold upon it, even to the extent of using flattery, or submitting to something base and ignoble, or expending large sums of money. For I will not now speak of the murders with which some have filled the Churches, or the desolation which they have brought upon cities in contending for the dignity, lest some persons should think what I say incredible. But I am of opinion one ought to exercise so much caution in the matter, as to shun the burden of the office, and when one has entered upon it, not to wait for the judgment of others should any fault be committed which warrants deposition, but to anticipate it by ejecting oneself from the dignity; for thus one might probably win mercy for himself from God: but to cling to it in defiance of propriety is to deprive oneself of all forgiveness, or rather to kindle the wrath of God, by adding a second error more offensive than the first.

11. But no one will always endure the strain; for fearful, truly fearful is the eager desire after this honor. And in saying this I am not in opposition to

the blessed Paul, but in complete harmony with his words. For what says he? *"If any man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work."*

[1 Timothy 3:1] Now I have not said that it is a terrible thing to desire the *work*, but only the authority and power. And this desire I think one ought to expel from the soul with all possible earnestness, not permitting it at the outset to be possessed by such a feeling, so that one may be able to do everything with freedom. For he who does not desire to be exhibited in possession of this authority, does not fear to be deposed from it, and not fearing this will be able to do everything with the freedom which becomes Christian men: whereas they who fear and tremble lest they should be deposed undergo a bitter servitude, filled with all kinds of evils, and are often compelled to offend against both God and man. Now the soul ought not to be affected in this way; but as in warfare we see those soldiers who are noble-spirited fight willingly and fall bravely, so they who have attained to this stewardship should be contented to be consecrated to the dignity or removed from it, as becomes Christian men, knowing that deposition of this kind brings its reward no less than the discharge of the office. For when any one suffers anything of this kind, in order to avoid submitting to something which is unbecoming or unworthy of this dignity, he procures punishment for those who wrongfully depose him, and a greater reward for himself.

"Blessed," says our Lord, *"are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven."* [Matthew 5:1]

And this, indeed, is the case when any one is expelled by those of his own rank either on account of envy, with a view to the favor of others, or through hatred, or from any other wrong motive: but when it is the lot of any one to experience this treatment at the hand of opponents, I do not think

a word is needed to prove what great gain they confer upon him by their wickedness.

It behooves us, then, to be on the watch on all sides, and to make a careful search lest any spark of this desire should be secretly smouldering somewhere. For it is much to be wished that those who are originally free from this passion, should also be able to avoid it when they have lighted upon this office. But if any one, before he obtains the honor, cherishes in himself this terrible and savage monster, it is impossible to say into what a furnace he will fling himself after he has attained it. Now I possessed this desire in a high degree (and do not suppose that I would ever tell you what was untrue in self-disparagement): and this, combined with other reasons, alarmed me not a little, and induced me to take flight. For just as lovers of the human person, as long as they are permitted to be near the objects of their affection, suffer more severe torment from their passion, but when they remove as far as possible from these objects of desire, they drive away the frenzy: even so when those who desire this dignity are near it, the evil becomes intolerable: but when they cease to hope for it, the desire is extinguished together with the expectation.

12. This single motive then is no slight one: and even taken by itself it would have sufficed to deter me from this dignity: but, as it is, another must be added not less than the former. And what is this? A priest ought to be sober minded, and penetrating in discernment, and possessed of innumerable eyes in every direction, as one who lives not for himself alone but for so great a multitude. But that I am sluggish and slack, and scarcely able to bring about my own salvation, even you yourself would admit, who out of love to me art especially eager to conceal my faults. Talk not to me in this connection of fasting, and watching, or sleeping on the ground, and other hard discipline of the body: for you know how defective I am in these

matters: and even if they had been carefully practised by me they could not with my present sluggishness have been of any service to me with a view to this post of authority. Such things might be of great service to a man who was shut up in a cell, and caring only for his own concerns: but when a man is divided among so great a multitude, and enters separately into the private cares of those who are under his direction, what appreciable help can be given to their improvement unless he possesses a robust and exceedingly vigorous character?

13. And do not be surprised if, in connection with such endurance, I seek another test of fortitude in the soul. For to be indifferent to food and drink and a soft bed, we see is to many no hard task, especially at least to such as are of a rough habit of life and have been brought up in this way from early youth, and to many others also; bodily discipline and custom softening the severity of these laborious practices: but insult, and abuse, and coarse language, and gibes from inferiors, whether wantonly or justly uttered, and rebukes vainly and idly spoken both by rulers and the ruled—this is what few can bear, in fact only one or two here and there; and one may see men, who are strong in the former exercises, so completely upset by these things, as to become more furious than the most savage beasts. Now such men especially we should exclude from the precincts of the priesthood. For if a prelate did not loathe food, or go barefoot, no harm would be done to the common interests of the Church; but a furious temper causes great disasters both to him who possesses it, and to his neighbours. And there is no divine threat against those who fail to do the things referred to, but hell and hell-fire are threatened against those who are angry without a cause. [Matthew 5:22] As then the lover of vainglory, when he takes upon him the government of numbers, supplies additional fuel to the fire, so he who by himself, or in the company of a few, is unable to control his anger,

but readily carried away by it, should he be entrusted with the direction of a whole multitude, like some wild beast goaded on all sides by countless tormentors, would never be able to live in tranquillity himself, and would cause incalculable mischief to those who have been committed to his charge.

14. For nothing clouds the purity of the reason, and the perspicuity of the mental vision so much as undisciplined wrath, rushing along with violent impetuosity. "*For wrath,*" says one, "*destroys even the prudent.*" For the eye of the soul being darkened as in some nocturnal battle is not able to distinguish friends from foes, nor the honorable from the unworthy, but handles them all in turn in the same way; even if some harm must be suffered, readily enduring everything, in order to satisfy the pleasure of the soul. For the fire of wrath is a kind of pleasure, and tyrannizes over the soul more harshly than pleasure, completely upsetting its healthy organization. For it easily impels men to arrogance, and unseasonable enmities, and unreasonable hatred, and it continually makes them ready to commit wanton and vain offenses; and forces them to say and do many other things of that kind, the soul being swept along by the rush of passion, and having nothing on which to fasten its strength and resist so great an impulse.

Basil: I will not endure this irony of yours any longer: for who knows not how far removed you are from this infirmity?

Chrysostom: Why then, my good friend, do you wish to bring me near the pyre, and to provoke the wild beast when he is tranquil? Are you not aware that I have achieved this condition, not by any innate virtue, but by my love of retirement? And that when one who is so constituted remains contented by himself, or only associates with one or two friends, he is able to escape the fire which arises from this passion, but not if he has plunged into the abyss of all these cares? For then he drags not only himself but

many others with him to the brink of destruction, and renders them more indifferent to all consideration for mildness. For the mass of people under government are generally inclined to regard the manners of those who govern as a kind of model type, and to assimilate themselves to them. How then could any one put a stop to their fury when he is swelling himself with rage? And who among the multitude would straightway desire to become moderate when he sees the ruler irritable? For it is quite impossible for the defects of priests to be concealed, but even trifling ones speedily become manifest. So an athlete, as long as he remains at home, and contends with no one, can dissemble his weakness even if it be very great, but when he strips for the contest he is easily detected. And thus for some who live this private and inactive life, their isolation serves as a veil to hide their defects; but when they have been brought into public they are compelled to divest themselves of this mantle of seclusion, and to lay bare their souls to all through their visible movements. As therefore their right deeds profit many, by provoking them to equal zeal, so their shortcomings make men more indifferent to the practice of virtue, and encourage them to indolence in their endeavours after what is excellent. Wherefore his soul ought to gleam with beauty on every side, that it may be able to gladden and to enlighten the souls of those who behold it. For the faults of ordinary men, being committed as it were in the dark, ruin only those who practise them: but the errors of a man in a conspicuous position, and known to many, inflicts a common injury upon all, rendering those who have fallen more supine in their efforts for good, and driving to desperation those who wish to take heed to themselves. And apart from these things, the faults of insignificant men, even if they are exposed, inflict no injury worth speaking of upon any one: but they who occupy the highest seat of honor are in the first place plainly visible to all, and if they err in the smallest matters these trifles seem

great to others: for all men measure the sin, not by the magnitude of the offense, but by the rank of the offender. Thus the priest ought to be protected on all sides by a kind of adamantine armour, by intense earnestness, and perpetual watchfulness concerning his manner of life, lest some one discovering an exposed and neglected spot should inflict a deadly wound: for all who surround him are ready to smite and overthrow him: not enemies only and adversaries, but many even of those who profess friendship.

The souls therefore of men elected to the priesthood ought to be endued with such power as the grace of God bestowed on the bodies of those saints who were cast into the Babylonian furnace. [Daniel 3] Faggot and pitch and tow are not the fuel of this fire, but things far more dreadful: for it is no material fire to which they are subjected, but the all-devouring flame of envy encompasses them, rising up on every side, and assailing them, and putting their life to a more searching test than the fire then was to the bodies of those young men. When then it finds a little trace of stubble, it speedily fastens upon it; and this unsound part it entirely consumes, but all the rest of the fabric, even if it be brighter than the sunbeams, is scorched and blackened by the smoke. For as long as the life of the priest is well regulated in every direction, it is invulnerable to plots; but if he happens to overlook some trifle, as is natural in a human being, traversing the treacherous ocean of this life, none of his other good deeds are of any avail in enabling him to escape the mouths of his accusers; but that little blunder overshadows all the rest. And all men are ready to pass judgment on the priest as if he was not a being clothed with flesh, or one who inherited a human nature, but like an angel, and emancipated from every species of infirmity. And just as all men fear and flatter a tyrant as long as he is strong, because they cannot put him down, but when they see his affairs going

adversely, those who were his friends a short time before abandon their hypocritical respect, and suddenly become his enemies and antagonists, and having discovered all his weak points, make an attack upon him, and depose him from the government; so is it also in the case of priests. Those who honored him and paid court to him a short time before, while he was strong, as soon as they have found some little handle eagerly prepare to depose him, not as a tyrant only, but something far more dreadful than that. And as the tyrant fears his body guards, so also does the priest dread most of all his neighbours and fellow-ministers. For no others covet his dignity so much, or know his affairs so well as these; and if anything occurs, being near at hand, they perceive it before others, and even if they slander him, can easily command belief, and, by magnifying trifles, take their victim captive. For the apostolic saying is reversed, *"whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it;"* [1 Corinthians 12:26] unless indeed a man should be able by his great discretion to stand his ground against everything.

Are you then for sending me forth into so great a warfare? And did you think that my soul would be equal to a contest so various in character and shape? Whence did you learn this, and from whom? If God certified this to you, show me the oracle, and I obey; but if you cannot, and form your judgment from human opinion only, please to set yourself free from this delusion. For in what concerns my own affairs it is fairer to trust me than others; inasmuch as *"no man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him."* [1 Corinthians 2:11] That I should have made myself and my electors ridiculous, had I accepted this office, and should with great loss have returned to this condition of life in which I now am, I trust I have now convinced you by these remarks, if not before. For not malice only, but something much stronger— the lust after this dignity— is

wont to arm many against one who possesses it. And just as avaricious children are oppressed by the old age of their parents, so some of these, when they see the priestly office held by any one for a protracted time— since it would be wickedness to destroy him— hasten to depose him from it, being all desirous to take his place, and each expecting that the dignity will be transferred to himself.

15. Would you like me to show you yet another phase of this strife, charged with innumerable dangers? Come, then, and take a peep at the public festivals when it is generally the custom for elections to be made to ecclesiastical dignities, and you will then see the priest assailed with accusations as numerous as the people whom he rules. For all who have the privilege of conferring the honor are then split into many parties; and one can never find the council of elders of one mind with each other, or about the man who has won the prelacy; but each stands apart from the others, one preferring this man, another that. Now the reason is that they do not all look to one thing, which ought to be the only object kept in view, the excellence of the character; but other qualifications are alleged as recommending to this honor; for instance, of one it is said, *"let him be elected because he belongs to an illustrious family,"* of another *"because he is possessed of great wealth, and would not need to be supported out of the revenues of the Church,"* of a third *"because he has come over from the camp of the adversary;"* one is eager to give the preference to a man who is on terms of intimacy with himself, another to the man who is related to him by birth, a third to the flatterer, but no one will look to the man who is really qualified, or make some test of his character. Now I am so far from thinking these things trustworthy criteria of a man's fitness for the priesthood, that even if any one manifested great piety, which is no small help in the discharge of that office, I should not venture to approve him on

that account alone, unless he happened to combine good abilities with his piety. For I know many men who have exercised perpetual restraint upon themselves, and consumed themselves with fastings, who, as long as they were suffered to be alone, and attend to their own concerns, have been acceptable to God, and day by day have made no small addition to this kind of learning; but as soon as they entered public life, and were compelled to correct the ignorance of the multitude, have, some of them, proved from the outset incompetent for so great a task, and others when forced to persevere in it, have abandoned their former strict way of living, and thus inflicted great injury on themselves without profiting others at all. And if any one spent his whole time in the lowest rank of the ministry, and reached extreme old age, I would not, merely out of reverence for his years, promote him to the higher dignity; for what if, after arriving at that time of life, he should still remain unfit for the office? And I say this now, not as wishing to dishonor the grey head, nor as laying down a law absolutely to exclude from this authority those who come from the monastic circle (for there are instances of many who issued from that body, having shone conspicuously in this dignity); but the point which I am anxious to prove is, that if neither piety of itself, nor advanced age, would suffice to show that a man who had obtained the priesthood really deserved it, the reasons formerly alleged would scarcely effect this. There are also men who bring forward other pretexts yet more absurd; for some are enrolled in the ranks of the clergy, that they may not range themselves among opponents, and others on account of their evil disposition, lest they should do great mischief if they are overlooked. Could anything be more contrary to right rule than this? That bad men, laden with iniquity, should be courted on account of those things for which they ought to be punished, and ascend to the priestly dignity on account of things for which they ought to be debarred from the

very threshold of the Church. Tell me, then, shall we seek any further the cause of God's wrath, when we expose things so holy and awful to be defiled by men who are either wicked or worthless? For when some men are entrusted with the administration of things which are not at all suitable to them, and others of things which exceed their natural power, they make the condition of the Church like that of Euripus.

Now formerly I used to deride secular rulers, because in the distribution of their honors they are not guided by considerations of moral excellence, but of wealth, and seniority, and human distinction; but when I heard that this kind of folly had forced its way into our affairs also, I no longer regarded their conduct as so atrocious. For what wonder is it that worldly men, who love the praise of the multitude, and do everything for the sake of gain, should commit these sins, when those who affect at least to be free from all these influences are in no wise better disposed than they, but although engaged in a contest for heavenly things, act as if the question submitted for decision was one which concerned acres of land, or something else of that kind? For they take commonplace men off-hand, and set them to preside over those things, for the sake of which the only begotten Son of God did not refuse to empty Himself of His glory and become man, and take the form of a servant, and be spat upon, and buffeted, and die a death of reproach in the flesh. Nor do they stop even here, but add to these offenses others still more monstrous; for not only do they elect unworthy men, but actually expel those who are well qualified. As if it were necessary to ruin the safety of the Church on both sides, or as if the former provocation were not sufficient to kindle the wrath of God, they have contrived yet another not less pernicious. For I consider it as atrocious to expel the useful men as to force in the useless. And this in fact takes place, so that the flock of Christ is unable to find consolation in any direction, or

draw its breath freely. Now do not such deeds deserve to be punished by ten thousand thunder-bolts, and a hell-fire hotter than that with which we are threatened [in Holy Scripture]? Yet these monstrous evils are borne with by Him who wills not the death of a sinner, that he may be converted and live. And how can one sufficiently marvel at His lovingkindness, and be amazed at His mercy? They who belong to Christ destroy the property of Christ more than enemies and adversaries, yet the good Lord still deals gently with them, and calls them to repentance. Glory be to You, O Lord! Glory to You! How vast is the depth of Your lovingkindness! How great the riches of Your forbearance! Men who on account of Your name have risen from insignificance and obscurity to positions of honor and distinction, use the honor they enjoy against Him who has bestowed it, do deeds of outrageous audacity, and insult holy things, rejecting and expelling men of zeal in order that the wicked may ruin everything at their pleasure in much security, and with the utmost fearlessness. And if you would know the causes of this dreadful evil, you will find that they are similar to those which were mentioned before; for they have one root and mother, so to say— namely, envy; but this is manifested in several different forms. For one we are told is to be struck out of the list of candidates, because he is young; another because he does not know how to flatter; a third because he has offended such and such a person; a fourth lest such and such a man should be pained at seeing one whom he has presented rejected, and this man elected; a fifth because he is kind and gentle; a sixth because he is formidable to the sinful; a seventh for some other like reason; for they are at no loss to find as many pretexts as they want, and can even make the abundance of a man's wealth an objection when they have no other. Indeed they would be capable of discovering other reasons, as many as they wish, why a man ought not to be brought suddenly to this honor, but gently and gradually. And here I should

like to ask the question, *"What, then, is the prelate to do, who has to contend with such blasts? How shall he hold his ground against such billows? How shall he repel all these assaults?"*

For if he manages the business upon upright principles, all those who are enemies and adversaries both to him and to the candidates do everything with a view to contention, provoking daily strife, and heaping infinite scorn upon the candidates, until they have got them struck off the list, or have introduced their own favorites. In fact it is just as if some pilot had pirates sailing with him in his ship, perpetually plotting every hour against him, and the sailors, and marines. And if he should prefer favor with such men to his own salvation, accepting unworthy candidates, he will have God for his enemy in their stead; and what could be more dreadful than that? And yet his relations with them will be more embarrassing than formerly, as they will all combine with each other, and thereby become more powerful than before. For as when fierce winds coming from opposite directions clash with one another, the ocean, hitherto calm, becomes suddenly furious and raises its crested waves, destroying those who are sailing over it, so also when the Church has admitted corrupt men, its once tranquil surface is covered with rough surf and strewn with shipwrecks.

16. Consider, then, what kind of man he ought to be who is to hold out against such a tempest, and to manage skillfully such great hindrances to the common welfare; for he ought to be dignified yet free from arrogance, formidable yet kind, apt to command yet sociable, impartial yet courteous, humble yet not servile, strong yet gentle, in order that he may contend successfully against all these difficulties. And he ought to bring forward with great authority the man who is properly qualified for the office, even if all should oppose him, and with the same authority to reject the man who is not so qualified, even if all should conspire in his favor, and to keep one

aim only in view, the building up of the Church, in nothing actuated either by enmity or favor. Well, do you now think that I acted reasonably in declining the ministry of this office? But I have not even yet gone through all my reasons with you; for I have some others still to mention. And do not grow impatient of listening to a friendly and sincere man, who wishes to clear himself from your accusations; for these statements are not only serviceable for the defence which you have to make on my behalf, but they will also prove of no small help for the due administration of the office. For it is necessary for one who is going to enter upon this path of life to investigate all matters thoroughly well, before he sets his hand to the ministry. Do you ask why? Because one who knows all things clearly will have this advantage, if no other, that he will not feel strange when these things befall him. Would you like me then to approach the question of superintending widows, first of all, or of the care of virgins, or the difficulty of the judicial function. For in each of these cases there is a different kind of anxiety, and the fear is greater than the anxiety.

Now in the first place, to start from that subject which seems to be simpler than the others, the charge of widows appears to cause anxiety to those who take care of them only so far as the expenditure of money is concerned; but the case is otherwise, and here also a careful scrutiny is needed, when they have to be enrolled, for infinite mischief has been caused by putting them on the list without due discrimination. For they have ruined households, and severed marriages, and have often been detected in thieving and pilfering and unseemly deeds of that kind. Now that such women should be supported out of the Church's revenues provokes punishment from God, and extreme condemnation among men, and abates the zeal of those who wish to do good. For who would ever choose to expend the wealth which he was commanded to give to Christ upon those

who defame the name of Christ? For these reasons a strict and accurate scrutiny ought to be made so as to prevent the supply of the indigent being wasted, not only by the women already mentioned, but also by those who are able to provide for themselves. And this scrutiny is succeeded by no small anxiety of another kind, to ensure an abundant and unfailing stream of supply as from a fountain; for compulsory poverty is an insatiable kind of evil, querulous and ungrateful. And great discretion and great zeal is required so as to stop the mouths of complainers, depriving them of every excuse. Now most men, when they see any one superior to the love of money, immediately represent him as well qualified for this stewardship. But I do not think that this greatness of soul is ever sufficient of itself, although it ought to be possessed prior to all other qualities; for without this a man would be a destroyer rather than a protector, a wolf instead of a shepherd; nevertheless, combined with this, the possession of another quality also should be demanded. And this quality is forbearance, the cause of all good things in men, impelling as it were and conducting the soul into a serene haven. For widows are a class who, both on account of their poverty, their age and natural disposition, indulge in unlimited freedom of speech (so I had best call it); and they make an unseasonable clamor and idle complaints and lamentations about matters for which they ought to be grateful, and bring accusations concerning things which they ought contentedly to accept. Now the superintendent should endure all these things in a generous spirit, and not be provoked either by their unreasonable annoyance or their unreasonable complaints. For this class of persons deserve to be pitied for their misfortunes, not to be insulted; and to trample upon their calamities, and add the pain of insult to that which poverty brings, would be an act of extreme brutality. On this account one of the wisest of men, having regard to the avarice and pride of human nature, and

considering the nature of poverty and its terrible power to depress even the noblest character, and induce it often to act in these same respects without shame, in order that a man should not be irritated when accused, nor be provoked by continual importunity to become an enemy where he ought to bring aid, he instructs him to be affable and accessible to the suppliant, saying, *"Incline your ear to a poor man and give him a friendly answer with meekness."* [Sirach 4:8] And passing by the case of one who succeeds in exasperating (for what can one say to him who is overcome?), he addresses the man who is able to bear the other's infirmity, exhorting him before he bestows his gift to correct the suppliant by the gentleness of his countenance and the mildness of his words. But if any one, although he does not take the property (of these widows), nevertheless loads them with innumerable reproaches, and insults them, and is exasperated against them, he not only fails through his gift to alleviate the despondency produced by poverty, but aggravates the distress by his abuse. For although they may be compelled to act very shamelessly through the necessity of hunger, they are nevertheless distressed at this compulsion. When, then, owing to the dread of famine, they are constrained to beg, and owing to their begging are constrained to put off shame, and then again on account of their shamelessness are insulted, the power of despondency becoming of a complex kind, and accompanied by much gloom, settles down upon the soul. And one who has the charge of these persons ought to be so long-suffering, as not only not to increase their despondency by his fits of anger, but also to remove the greater part of it by his exhortation. For as the man who has been insulted, although he is in the enjoyment of great abundance, does not feel the advantage of his wealth, on account of the blow which he has received from the insult; so on the other hand, the man who has been addressed with kindly words, and for whom the gift has been accompanied

with encouragement, exults and rejoices all the more, and the thing given becomes doubled in value through the manner in which it is offered. And this I say not of myself, but borrow from him whose precept I quoted just now: *"My son, blemish not your good deeds, neither use uncomfortable words when you give anything. Shall not the dew assuage the heat? So is a word better than a gift. Lo! Is not a word better than a gift? But both are with a gracious man."* [Sirach 18:15-17]

But the superintendent of these persons ought not only to be gentle and forbearing, but also skillful in the management of property; for if this qualification is wanting, the affairs of the poor are again involved in the same distress. One who was entrusted not long ago with this ministry, and got together a large hoard of money, neither consumed it himself, nor expended it with a few exceptions upon those who needed it, but kept the greater part of it buried in the earth until a season of distress occurred, when it was all surrendered into the hands of the enemy. Much forethought, therefore, is needed, that the resources of the Church should be neither over abundant, nor deficient, but that all the supplies which are provided should be quickly distributed among those who require them, and the treasures of the Church stored up in the hearts of those who are under her rule.

Moreover, in the reception of strangers, and the care of the sick, consider how great an expenditure of money is needed, and how much exactness and discernment on the part of those who preside over these matters. For it is often necessary that this expenditure should be even larger than that of which I spoke just now, and that he who presides over it should combine prudence and wisdom with skill in the art of supply, so as to dispose the affluent to be emulous and ungrudging in their gifts, lest while providing for the relief of the sick, he should vex the souls of those who supply their wants. But earnestness and zeal need to be displayed here in a

far higher degree; for the sick are difficult creatures to please, and prone to languor; and unless great accuracy and care are used, even a slight oversight is enough to do the patient great mischief.

17. But in the care of virgins, the fear is greater in proportion as the possession is more precious, and this flock is of a nobler character than the others. Already, indeed, even into the band of these holy ones, an infinite number of women have rushed full of innumerable bad qualities; and in this case our grief is greater than in the other; for there is just the same difference between a virgin and a widow going astray, as between a free-born damsel and her handmaid. With widows, indeed, it has become a common practice to trifle, and to rail at one another, to flatter or to be impudent, to appear everywhere in public, and to perambulate the market-place. But the virgin has striven for nobler aims, and eagerly sought the highest kind of philosophy, and professes to exhibit upon earth the life which angels lead, and while yet in the flesh proposes to do deeds which belong to the incorporeal powers. Moreover, she ought not to make numerous or unnecessary journeys, neither is it permissible for her to utter idle and random words; and as for abuse and flattery, she should not even know them by name. On this account she needs the most careful guardianship, and the greater assistance. For the enemy of holiness is always surprising and lying in wait for these persons, ready to devour any one of them if she should slip and fall; many men also there are who lay snares for them; and besides all these things there is the passionateness of their own human nature, so that, speaking generally, the virgin has to equip herself for a twofold war, one which attacks her from without, and the other which presses upon her from within. For these reasons he who has the superintendence of virgins suffers great alarm, and the danger and distress is yet greater, should any of the things which are contrary to his wishes

occur, which God forbid. For if a daughter kept in seclusion is a cause of sleeplessness to her father, his anxiety about her depriving him of sleep, where the fear is so great lest she should be childless, or pass the flower of her age (unmarried), or be hated (by her husband), [Sirach 42:9] what will he suffer whose anxiety is not concerned with any of these things, but others far greater? For in this case it is not a man who is rejected, but Christ Himself, nor is this barrenness the subject merely of reproach, but the evil ends in the destruction of the soul; *"for every tree,"* it is said, *"which brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire."* [Matthew 3:10] And for one who has been repudiated by the divine Bridegroom, it is not sufficient to receive a certificate of divorce and so to depart, but she has to pay the penalty of everlasting punishment. Moreover, a father according to the flesh has many things which make the custody of his daughter easy; for the mother, and nurse, and a multitude of handmaids share in helping the parent to keep the maiden safe. For neither is she permitted to be perpetually hurrying into the market-place, nor when she does go there is she compelled to show herself to any of the passers-by, the evening darkness concealing one who does not wish to be seen no less than the walls of the house. And apart from these things, she is relieved from every cause which might otherwise compel her to meet the gaze of men; for no anxiety about the necessities of life, no menaces of oppressors, nor anything of that kind reduces her to this unfortunate necessity, her father acting in her stead in all these matters; while she herself has only one anxiety, which is to avoid doing or saying anything unworthy the modest conduct which becomes her. But in the other case there are many things which make the custody of the virgin difficult, or rather impossible for the father; for he could not have her in his house with himself, as dwelling together in that way would be neither seemly nor safe. For even if they

themselves should suffer no loss, but continue to preserve their innocence unsullied, they would have to give an account for the souls which they have offended, just as much as if they happened to sin with one another. And it being impossible for them to live together, it is not easy to understand the movements of the character, and to suppress the impulses which are ill regulated, or train and improve those which are better ordered and tuned. Nor is it an easy thing to interfere in her habits of walking out; for her poverty and want of a guardian does not permit him to become an exact investigator of the propriety of her conduct. For as she is compelled to manage all her affairs she has many pretexts for going out, if at least she is not inclined to be self-controlled. Now he who commands her to stay always at home ought to cut off these pretexts, providing for her independence in the necessities of life, and giving her some woman who will see to the management of these things. He must also keep her away from funeral obsequies, and nocturnal festivals; for that artful serpent knows only too well how to scatter his poison through the medium even of good deeds. And the maiden must be fenced on every side, and rarely go out of the house during the whole year, except when she is constrained by inexorable necessity. Now if any one should say that none of these things is the proper work of a bishop to take in hand, let him be assured that the anxieties and the reasons concerning what takes place in every case have to be referred to him. And it is far more expedient that he should manage everything, and so be delivered from the complaints which he must otherwise undergo on account of the faults of others, than that he should abstain from the management, and then have to dread being called to account for things which other men have done. Moreover, he who does these things by himself, gets through them all with great ease; but he who is compelled to do it by converting every one's opinion does not get relief by

being saved from working single-handed, equivalent to the trouble and turmoil which he experiences through those who oppose him and combat his decisions. However, I could not enumerate all the anxieties concerned with the care of virgins; for when they have to be entered on the list, they occasion no small trouble to him who is entrusted with this business.

Again, the judicial department of the bishop's office involves innumerable vexations, great consumption of time, and difficulties exceeding those experienced by men who sit to judge secular affairs; for it is a labor to discover exact justice, and when it is found, it is difficult to avoid destroying it. And not only loss of time and difficulty are incurred, but also no small danger. For ere now, some of the weaker brethren having plunged into business, because they have not obtained patronage have made shipwreck concerning the faith. For many of those who have suffered wrong, no less than those who have inflicted wrong, hate those who do not assist them, and they will not take into account either the intricacy of the matters in question, or the difficulty of the times, or the limits of sacerdotal authority, or anything of that kind; but they are merciless judges, recognizing only one kind of defence—release from the evils which oppress them. And he who is unable to furnish this, although he may allege innumerable excuses, will never escape their condemnation.

And talking of patronage, let me disclose another pretext for fault-finding. For if the bishop does not pay a round of visits every day, more even than the idle men about town, unspeakable offense ensues. For not only the sick, but also the whole, desire to be looked after, not that piety prompts them to this, but rather that in most cases they pretend claims to honor and distinction. And if he should ever happen to visit more constantly one of the richer and more powerful men, under the pressure of some necessity, with a view to the common benefit of the Church, he is

immediately stigmatized with a character for fawning and flattery. But why do I speak of patronage and visiting? For merely from their mode of accosting persons, bishops have to endure such a load of reproaches as to be often oppressed and overwhelmed by despondency; in fact, they have also to undergo a scrutiny of the way in which they use their eyes. For the public rigorously criticize their simplest actions, taking note of the tone of their voice, the cast of their countenance, and the degree of their laughter. He laughed heartily to such a man, one will say, and accosted him with a beaming face, and a clear voice, whereas to me he addressed only a slight and passing remark. And in a large assembly, if he does not turn his eyes in every direction when he is conversing, the majority declare that his conduct is insulting.

Who, then, unless he is exceedingly strong, could cope with so many accusers, so as either to avoid being indited altogether, or, if he is indited, to escape? For he must either be without any accusers, or, if this is impossible, purge himself of the accusations which are brought against him; and if this again is not an easy matter, as some men delight in making vain and wanton charges, he must make a brave stand against the dejection produced by these complaints. He, indeed, who is justly accused, may easily tolerate the accuser, for there is no bitterer accuser than conscience; wherefore, if we are caught first by this most terrible adversary, we can readily endure the milder ones who are external to us. But he who has no evil thing upon his conscience, when he is subjected to an empty charge, is speedily excited to wrath, and easily sinks into dejection, unless he happens to have practised beforehand how to put up with the follies of the multitude. For it is utterly impossible for one who is falsely accused without cause, and condemned, to avoid feeling some vexation and annoyance at such great injustice.

And how can one speak of the distress which bishops undergo, whenever it is necessary to cut some one off from the full communion of the Church? Would indeed that the evil went no further than distress! But in fact the mischief is not trifling. For there is a fear lest the man, if he has been punished beyond what he deserves, should experience that which was spoken of by the blessed Paul and *"be swallowed up by overmuch sorrow."* [2 Corinthians 2:7] The nicest accuracy, therefore, is required in this matter also, lest what is intended to be profitable should become to him an occasion of greater damage. For whatever sins he may commit after such a method of treatment, the wrath caused by each of them must be shared by the physician who so unskillfully applied his knife to the wound. What severe punishment, then, must be expected by one who has not only to render an account of the offenses which he himself has separately committed, but also incurs extreme danger on account of the sins committed by others? For if we shudder at undergoing judgment for our own misdeeds, believing that we shall not be able to escape the fire of the other world, what must one expect to suffer who has to answer for so many others? To prove the truth of this, listen to the blessed Paul, or rather not to him, but to Christ speaking in him, when he says: *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit, for they watch for your souls as they that shall give account."* [Hebrews 13:17] Can the dread of this threat be slight? It is impossible to say: but these considerations are sufficient to convince even the most incredulous and obdurate that I did not make this escape under the influence of pride or vainglory, but merely out of fear for my own safety, and consideration of the gravity of the office.

On the Priesthood (Book IV)

Basil heard this, and after a little pause thus replied:

If you were yourself ambitious of obtaining this office, your fear would have been reasonable; for in being ambitious of undertaking it, a man confesses himself to be qualified for its administration, and if he fail therein, after it has been entrusted to him, he cannot take refuge in the plea of inexperience, for he has deprived himself of this excuse beforehand, by having hurriedly seized upon the ministry, and whoever willingly and deliberately enters upon it, can no longer say, *"I have sinned in this matter against my will—and against my will I have ruined such and such a soul;"* for He who will one day judge him, will say to him, *"Since then thou were conscious of such inexperience, and had not ability for undertaking this matter without incurring reproach, why were thou so eager and presumptuous as to take in hand what was so far beyond your power? Who compelled you to do so? Did you shrink or fly, and did any one drag you on by force?"* But you will hear nothing like this, for you can have nothing of this kind to condemn yourself for; and it is evident to all that thou were in no degree ambitious of this dignity, for the accomplishment of the matter was due to the action of others. Hence, circumstances which leave those who are ambitious of this office no chance of pardon when they err therein, afford you ample ground for excuse.

Chrysostom: At this I shook my head and smiled a little, admiring the simple-mindedness of the man, and thus addressed him: I could wish indeed that matters were as you say, most excellent of men, but not in order that I might be able to accept that office from which I lately fled. For if, indeed, no chastisement were to await me for undertaking the care of the flock of

Christ without consideration and experience, yet to me it would be worse than all punishment, after being entrusted with so great a charge, to have seemed so base towards Him who entrusted me with it. For what reason, then, did I wish that thou were not mistaken in this opinion of yours? truly for the sake of those wretched and unhappy beings (for so must I call them, who have not found out how to discharge the duties of this office well, though thou were to say ten thousand times over that they had been driven to undertake it, and that, therefore, their errors therein are sins of ignorance) — for the sake, I say, of such that they might succeed in escaping that unquenchable fire, and the outer darkness [Matthew 25:30] and the worm that dies not [Mark 9:44] and the punishment of being cut asunder, and perishing together with the hypocrites.

But what am I to do for you? It is not as you say, no, by no means. And if you will, I will give you a proof of what I maintain, from the case of a kingdom, which is not of such account with God as the priesthood. Saul, that son of Kish, was not himself at all ambitious of becoming a king, but was going in quest of his asses, and came to ask the prophet about them. The prophet, however, proceeded to speak to him of the kingdom, but not even then did he run greedily after it, though he heard about it from a prophet, but drew back and deprecated it, saying, *"Who am I, and what is my father's house."* [1 Samuel 9:21] What then? When he made a bad use of the honor which had been given him by God, were those words of his able to rescue him from the wrath of Him who had made him king? And was he able to say to Samuel, when rebuked by him: *"Did I greedily run and rush after the kingdom and sovereign power? I wished to lead the undisturbed and peaceful life of ordinary men, but thou dragged me to this post of honor. Had I remained in my low estate I should easily have escaped all these stumbling blocks, for were I one of the obscure multitude, I should*

never have been sent forth on this expedition, nor would God have committed to my hands the war against the Amalekites, and if I had not had it committed to me, I should not have sinned this sin." But all such arguments are weak as excuses, and not only weak, but perilous, inasmuch as they rather kindle the wrath of God. For he who has been promoted to great honor by God, must not advance the greatness of his honor as an excuse for his errors, but should make God's special favor towards him the motive for further improvement; whereas he who thinks himself at liberty to sin because he has obtained some uncommon dignity, what does he but study to show that the lovingkindness of God is the cause of his personal transgression, which is always the argument of those who lead godless and careless lives. But *we* ought to be on no account thus minded, nor to fall away into the insane folly of such people, but be ambitious at all times to make the most of such powers as we have, and to be reverent both in speech and thought.

For (to leave the kingdom and to come to the priesthood, which is the more immediate subject of our discourse) neither was Eli ambitious of obtaining his high office, yet what advantage was this to him when he sinned therein? But why do I say obtain it? Not even had he wished could he have avoided it, because he was under a legal necessity to accept it. For he was of the tribe of Levi, and was bound to undertake that high office which descended to him from his forefathers, notwithstanding which even he paid no small penalty for the lawlessness of his sons. And the very first High Priest of the Jews, concerning whom God spoke so many words to Moses, when he was unable to withstand alone the frenzy of so great a multitude, was he not very nearly being destroyed, but for the intercession of his brother, which averted the wrath of God? [Exodus 32:10-11] And since we have mentioned Moses, it will be well to show the truth of what

we are saying from what happened to him. For this same saintly Moses was so far from grasping at the leadership of the Jews as to deprecate the offer, [Exodus 4:13] and to decline it when God commanded him to take it, and so to provoke the wrath of Him who appointed him; and not only then, but afterwards when he entered upon his rule, he would gladly have died to have been set free from it: *"Kill me,"* says he, *"if you are going to deal thus with me."* But what then? When he sinned at the waters of strife, [Numbers 20:12] could these repeated refusals be pleaded in excuse for him? Could they prevail with God to grant him pardon? And wherefore was he deprived of the promised land? For no other reason, as we all know, than for this sin of his, for which that wondrous man was debarred from enjoying the same blessings which those over whom he ruled obtained; but after many labors and sufferings, after that unspeakable wandering, after so many battles fought and victories won, he died outside the land to reach which he had undergone so much toil and trial; and though he had weathered the storms of the deep, he failed to enjoy the blessings of the haven after all. From hence then you see that not only they who grasp at this office are left without excuse for the sins they commit in the discharge thereof, but they too who come to it through the ambitious desire of others; for truly if those persons who have been chosen for this high office by God himself, though they have never so often refused it, have paid such heavy penalties, and if nothing has availed to deliver any of them from this danger, neither Aaron nor Eli, nor that holy man the Saint, the prophet, the wonder worker, the meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth, [Numbers 12:3] who spoke with God, as a man speaks unto his friend, [Exodus 33:11] hardly shall we who fall so infinitely short of the excellence of that great man, be able to plead as a sufficient excuse the consciousness that we have never been ambitious of the dignity, more especially when

many of the ordinations now-a-days do not proceed from the grace of God, but are due to human ambition. God chose Judas, and counted him one of the sacred band, and committed to him, as to the rest, the dignity of the apostolic office; yea he gave him somewhat beyond the others, the stewardship of the money. [John 12:6] But what of that? When he afterwards abused both these trusts, betraying Him whom he was commissioned to preach, and misapplying the money which he should have laid out well; did he escape punishment? nay for this very reason he even brought upon himself greater punishment, and very reasonably too. For we must not use the high honors given to us by God so as to offend Him, but so as to please Him better. But he who claims exemption from punishment where it is due, because he has been exalted to higher honor than others, acts very much like one of those unbelieving Jews, who after hearing Christ say, *"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin," "If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin,"* [John 15:22-24] should reproach the Saviour and benefactor of mankind by replying, *"Why, then, did you come and speak? Why did you work miracles? Was it that you might punish us the more?"* But these are the words of madness and of utter senselessness. For the Great Physician came not to give you over, but to heal you— not to pass you by when thou were sick, but to rid you entirely of disease. But you have of your own accord withdrawn yourself from his hands; receive therefore the sorer punishment. For as you would have been freed from your former maladies if you had yielded to his treatment, so if, when you saw him coming to your aid you fled from him, you will no longer be able to cleanse yourself of these infirmities, and as you are unable, you will both suffer punishment for them, and also because for your part you made God's solicitude for your good of none effect. Therefore we who act like this are not subjected to the

same torment after as before we received honor at God's hands, but far severer torment after than before. For he who has not become good even by being well treated, deserves all the bitterer punishment. Since, then, this excuse of yours has been shown to be weak, and not only fails to save those who take refuge in it, but exposes them so much the more, we must provide ourselves with some other means of safety.

Basil: Tell me of what nature is that? Since, as for me, I am at present scarce master of myself, you have reduced me to such a state of fear and trembling by what you have said.

Chrysostom: Do not, I beseech and implore you, do not be so downcast. For while there is safety for us who are weak, namely, in not undertaking this office at all, there is safety for you too who are strong, and this consists in making your hopes of salvation depend, next to the grace of God, on avoiding every act unworthy of this gift, and of God who gave it. For they certainly would be deserving of the greatest punishment who, after obtaining this dignity through their own ambition, should then either on account of sloth, or wickedness, or even inexperience, abuse the office. Not that we are to gather from this that there is pardon in store for those who have not been thus ambitious. Yea, even they too are deprived of all excuse. For in my judgment, if ten thousand were to entreat and urge, a man should pay them no attention, but should first of all search his own heart, and examine the whole matter carefully before yielding to their importunities. Now no one would venture to undertake the building of a house were he not an architect, nor will any one attempt the cure of sick bodies who is not a skilled physician; but even though many urge him, will beg off, and will not be ashamed to own his ignorance; and shall he who is going to have the care of so many souls entrusted to him, not examine himself beforehand? will he accept this ministry even though he be the most inexperienced of

men, because this one commands him, or that man constrains him, or for fear of offending a third? And if so, how will he escape casting himself together with them into manifest misery. Had he continued as he was, it were possible for him to be saved, but now he involves others in his own destruction. For whence can he hope for salvation? Whence to obtain pardon? Who will then successfully intercede for us? They who are now perhaps urging us and forcibly dragging us on? But who will save these same at such a moment? For even they too will stand in need in their turn of intercession, that they may escape the fire. Now, that I say not these things to frighten you, but as representing the matter as in truth it is, hear what the holy Apostle Paul says to Timothy his disciple, his own and beloved son, "*Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins.*" [1 Timothy 5:22] Do you not see from what great blame, yea and vengeance, we, so far as in us lies, have delivered those who were ready to put us forward for this office.

2. For as it is not enough for those who are chosen to say in excuse for themselves, "*I did not summon myself to this office, nor could I avoid what I did not see beforehand;*" so neither will it be a sufficient plea for those who ordain them to say that they did not know him who was ordained. The charge against them becomes greater on account of their ignorance of him whom they brought forward, and what seems to excuse them only serves to accuse them the more. For how absurd a thing, is it not? That they who want to buy a slave, show him to the physician, and require sureties for the sale, and information about him from their neighbours, and after all this do not yet venture on his purchase without asking for some time for a trial of him; while they who are going to admit any one to so great an office as this, give their testimonial and their sanction loosely and carelessly, without further investigation, just because some one wishes it, or to court the favor,

or to avoid the displeasure of some one else. Who shall then successfully intercede for us in that day, when they who ought to defend us stand themselves in need of defenders? He who is going to ordain, therefore, ought to make diligent inquiry, and much more he who is to be ordained. For though they who ordain him share his punishment, for any sins which he may commit in his office, yet so far from escaping vengeance he will even pay a greater penalty than they— save only if they who chose him acted from some worldly motive contrary to what seemed justifiable to themselves. For if they should be detected so doing, and knowing a man to be unworthy have brought him forward on some pretext or other, the amount of their punishment shall be equivalent to his, nay perhaps the punishment shall be even greater for them who appointed the unfit man. For he who gives authority to any one who is minded to destroy the Church, would be certainly to blame for the outrages which that person commits. But if he is guilty of no such thing, and says that he has been misled by the opinions of others, even then he shall not altogether remain unpunished, but his punishment shall be a little lighter than his who has been ordained. What then? It is possible that they who elect may come to the election deceived by a false report. But he who is elected could not say, "*I am ignorant of myself*," as others were of him. As one who will receive therefore a sorer punishment than they who put him forward, so should he make his scrutiny of himself more careful than that which they make of him; and if they in ignorance drag him on, he ought to come forward and instruct them carefully about any matters whereby he may stop their being misled; and so having shown himself unworthy of trial may escape the burden of so high an office.

For what is the reason why, in the arts of war, and merchandize, and husbandry, and other departments of this life, when some plan is proposed,

the husbandman will not undertake to navigate the ship, nor the soldier to till the ground, nor the pilot to lead an army, under pain of ten thousand deaths? Is it not plainly this? That each foresees the danger which would attend his incompetence? Well, where the loss is concerned with trifles shall we use so much forethought, and refuse to yield to the pressure of compulsion, but where the punishment is eternal, as it is for those who know not how to handle the Priesthood, shall we want only and inconsiderately run into so great danger, and then advance, as our excuse, the pressing entreaties of others? But He who one day will judge us will entertain no such plea as this. For we ought to show far more caution in spiritual matters than in carnal. But now we are not found exhibiting as much caution. For tell me: if supposing a man to be an artificer, when he is not so, we invited him to do a piece of work, and he were to respond to the call, and then having set his hand to the material prepared for the building, were to spoil the wood and spoil the stone, and so to build the house that it straightway fell to pieces, would it be sufficient excuse for him to allege that he had been urged by others and did not come of his own accord? In no wise; and very reasonably and justly so. For he ought to have refused even at the call of others. So for the man who only spoils wood and stone, there will be no escape from paying the penalty, and is he who destroys souls, and builds the temple of God carelessly, to think that the compulsion of others is his warrant for escaping punishment? Is not this very absurd? For I omit the fact as yet that no one is able to compel the man who is unwilling. But be it that he was subjected to excessive pressure and various artful devices, and then fell into a snare; will this therefore rescue him from punishment? I beseech you, let us not deceive ourselves, and pretend that we know not what is obvious to a mere child. For surely this pretence of ignorance will not be able to profit in the day of reckoning. You were not

ambitious, you say, of receiving this high office, conscious of your own weakness. Well and good. Then you ought, with the same mind, to have declined the solicitation of others; or, when no one called you, were you weak and incapable, but when those were found ready to offer you this dignity, did you suddenly become competent? What ludicrous nonsense! Worthy of the extremest punishment. For this reason also the Lord counsels the man who wishes to build a tower, not to lay the foundation before he has taken his own ability to build into account, lest he should give the passers by innumerable opportunities of mocking at him. But in his case the penalty only consists in becoming a laughing-stock; while in that before us the punishment is that of fire unquenchable, and of an undying worm, [Isaiah 66:24] gnashing of teeth, outer darkness, and being cut asunder, and having a portion with the hypocrites.

But my accusers are unwilling to consider any of these things. For otherwise they would cease to blame a person who is unwilling to perish without cause. It is not the management of grain and barley, oxen or sheep, that is now under our consideration, nor any such like matters, but the very Body of Jesus. For the Church of Christ, according to St. Paul, is Christ's Body, and he who is entrusted with its care ought to train it up to a state of healthiness, and beauty unspeakable, and to look everywhere, lest any spot or wrinkle, [Ephesians 5:27] or other like blemish should mar its vigor and comeliness. For what is this but to make it appear worthy, so far as human power can, of the incorruptible and ever-blessed Head which is set over it? If they who are ambitious of reaching an athletic condition of body need the help of physicians and trainers, and exact diet, and constant exercise, and a thousand other rules (for the omission of the merest trifle upsets and spoils the whole), how shall they to whose lot falls the care of the body, which has its conflict not against flesh and blood, but against powers unseen, be able

to keep it sound and healthy, unless they far surpass ordinary human virtue, and are versed in all healing proper for the soul?

3. Pray, are you not aware that that body is subject to more diseases and assaults than this flesh of ours, is more quickly corrupted, and more slow to recover? And by those who have the healing of these bodies, various medicines have been discovered, and an apparatus of different instruments, and diet suitable for the sick; and often the condition of the atmosphere is of itself enough for the recovery of a sick man; and there are instances of seasonable sleep having saved the physician all further labor. But in the case before us, it is impossible to take any of these things into consideration; nay there is but one method and way of healing appointed, after we have gone wrong, and that is, the powerful application of the Word. This is the one instrument, the only diet, the finest atmosphere. This takes the place of physic, cautery and cutting, and if it be needful to sear and amputate, this is the means which we must use, and if this be of no avail, all else is wasted; with this we both rouse the soul when it sleeps, and reduce it when it is inflamed; with this we cut off excesses, and fill up defects, and perform all manner of other operations which are requisite for the soul's health. Now as regards the ordering of our daily life for the best, it is true that the life of another may provoke us to emulation. But in the matter of spurious doctrine, when any soul is diseased thereby, then there is great need of the Word, not only in view of the safety of our own people, but in view of the enemy without. If, indeed, one had the sword of the spirit, and the shield of faith, [Ephesians 6:16-17] so as to be able to work miracles, and by means of these marvels to stop the mouths of impudent gainsayers, one would have little need of the assistance of the Word; still in the days of miracles the Word was by no means useless, but essentially necessary. For St. Paul made use of it himself, although he was everywhere so great an

object of wonder for his miracles; and another of those who belonged to the *"glorious company of the Apostles"* exhorts us to apply ourselves to acquiring this power, when he says: *"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you,"* and they all, with one accord, committed the care of the poor widows to Stephen, for no other reason than that they themselves might have leisure *"for the ministry of the Word."* [Acts 6:4] To this we ought equally to apply ourselves, unless indeed we are endued with a power of working miracles. But if there is not the least sign of such a power being left us, while on every side many enemies are constantly attacking us, why then it necessarily follows that we should arm ourselves with this weapon, both in order that we may not be wounded ourselves with the darts of the enemy, and in order that we may wound him.

4. Wherefore it should be our ambition that the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. [Colossians 3:16] For it is not for one kind of battle only that we have to be prepared. This warfare is manifold, and is engaged with a great variety of enemies; neither do all these use the same weapons, nor do they practice the same method of attack; and he who has to join battle with all, must needs know the artifices of all, and be at once both archer and slinger, captain and general, in the ranks and in command, on foot and on horseback, in sea-fight and in siege. In common warfare, indeed, each man repels the enemy by discharging the particular duty which he has undertaken. But here it is otherwise; and if any one wishes to come off conqueror in this warfare, he must understand all forms of the art, as the devil knows well how to introduce his own assailants through any one spot which may happen to be unguarded, and to carry off the sheep. But not so where he perceives the shepherd coming equipped with accurate knowledge at all points, and well acquainted with his plottings. Wherefore we ought to

be well-guarded in all parts: for a city, so long as it happens to be surrounded with a wall, laughs to scorn the besiegers, abiding in great security; but if any one makes a breach in the wall, though but of the size of a gate, the rest of the circuit is of no use, although the whole of it stand quite securely; so it is with the city of God: so long as the presence of mind and wisdom of the shepherd, which answers to the wall, protect it on all sides, all the enemy's devices end in his confusion and ridicule, and they who dwell within the wall abide unmolested, but wherever any one has been able to demolish a single part, though the rest stand never so fast, through that breach ruin will enter upon the whole. For to what purpose does a man contend earnestly with the Greeks, if at the same time he becomes a prey to the Jews? Or get the better of both these and then fall into the clutches of the Manichæans? or after he has proved himself superior to them even, if they who introduce fatalism enter in, and make havoc of the flock? But not to enumerate all the heresies of the devil, it will be enough to say that unless the shepherd is well skilled in refuting them all, the wolf, by means of any one of them, can enter, and devour the greater part of the flock. In ordinary warfare we must always look for victory being won or defeat sustained by the soldiers who are on the field of battle. But in the spiritual warfare the case is quite different. For there it often happens that the combat with one set of enemies secures a victory for others who never engaged in battle at all, nor took any trouble, but were sitting still all the while; and he who has not much experience in such occurrences will get pierced, so to say, with his own sword, and become the laughing-stock of friends and foes alike. I will try by an example to make clear what I am saying. They who receive the wild doctrines of Valentinus and Marcion, and of all whose minds are similarly diseased, exclude the Law given by God to Moses from the catalogue of the Divine Scriptures. But Jews so revere the

Law, that although the time has come which annuls it, they still contend for the observance of all its contents, contrary to the purpose of God. But the Church of God, avoiding either extreme, has trodden a middle path, and is neither induced on the one hand to place herself under its yoke, nor on the other does she tolerate its being slandered, but commends it, though its day is over, because of its profitableness while its season lasted. Now it is necessary for him who is going to fight with both these enemies, to be fully conversant with this middle course. For if in wishing to teach the Jews that they are out of date in clinging to the old law, he begins to find fault with it unsparingly, he gives no little handle to those heretics who wish to pull it to pieces; and if in his ambition to stop their mouths he extols it immoderately, and speaks of it with admiration, as necessary for this present time, he unseals the lips of the Jews. Again they who labor under the frenzy of Sabellius and the craze of Arius, have both fallen from a sound faith for want of observing a middle course. The name of Christian is applied to both these heretics; but if any one examines their doctrines, he will find the one sect not much better than the Jews, and differing from them only in name, and the other very nearly holding the heresy of Paul of Samosata, and that both are very wide of the truth. Great, therefore, is the danger in such cases, and the way of orthodoxy is narrow and hemmed in by threatening crags on either side, and there is no little fear lest when intending to strike at one enemy we should be wounded by the other. For if any one assert the unity of the Godhead, Sabellius straightway turns that expression to the advantage of his own mental vagary, and if he distinguish the Persons, and say that the Father is one, and the Son another, and the Holy Spirit a third, up gets Arius, ready to wrest that distinction of Persons into a difference of substance; so we must turn and flee both from the impious confounding of the Persons by the one, and the senseless division of the substance by the

other, confessing, indeed, that the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, while we add thereunto a Trinity of Persons. For then we shall be able to fortify ourselves against the attacks of both heretics. I might tell you besides these, of several other adversaries against which, except we contend bravely and carefully, we shall leave the field covered with wounds.

5. Why should any one describe the silly chatter of our own people? For these are not less than the attacks upon us from without, while they give the teacher even more trouble. Some out of an idle curiosity are rashly bent upon busying themselves about matters which are neither possible for them to know, nor of any advantage to them if they could know them. Others again demand from God an account of his judgments, and force themselves to sound the depth of that abyss which is unfathomable. "*For your judgments,*" says the Scriptures, "*are a great deep,*" and about their faith and practice you would find few of them anxious, but the majority curiously inquiring into matters which it is not possible to discover, and the mere inquiry into which provokes God. For when we make a determined effort to learn what *He* does not wish us to know, we fail to succeed (for how should we succeed against the will of God?); and there only remains for us the danger arising from our inquiry. Now, though this be the case, whenever any one authoritatively stops the search, into such fathomless depths, he gets himself the reputation of being proud and ignorant; so that at such times much tact is needed on the Bishop's part, so as to lead his people away from these unprofitable questions, and himself escape the above-named censures. In short, to meet all these difficulties, there is no help given but that of speech, and if any be destitute of this power, the souls of those who are put under his charge (I mean of the weaker and more

meddlesome kind) are no better off than ships continually storm-tossed. So that the Priest should do all that in him lies, to gain this means of strength.

6. Basil: *"Why, then, was not St. Paul ambitious of becoming perfect in this art? He makes no secret of his poverty of speech, but distinctly confesses himself to be unskilled, even telling the Corinthians so, who were admired for their eloquence, and prided themselves upon it."*

Chrysostom: This is the very thing which has ruined many and made them remiss in the study of true doctrine. For while they failed to fathom the depths of the apostle's mind, and to understand the meaning of his words, they passed all their time slumbering and yawning, and paying respect not to that ignorance which St. Paul acknowledges, but to a kind from which he was as free as any man ever was in the world.

But leaving this subject to await our consideration, I say this much in the meantime. Granting that St. Paul was in this respect as unskilled as they would have him to be, what has that to do with the men of today? For he had a greater power by far than power of speech, power which brought about greater results too; which was that his bare presence, even though he was silent, was terrible to the demons. But the men of the present day, if they were all collected in one place, would not be able, with infinite prayers and tears, to do the wonders that once were done by the handkerchief of St. Paul. He too by his prayers raised the dead, [Acts 20:10] and wrought such other miracles, that he was held to be a god by heathen; [Acts 14:11] and before he was removed from this life, he was thought worthy to be caught up as far as the third heaven, and to share in such converse as it is not lawful for mortal ears to hear. [2 Corinthians 12:2-4] But the men of today — not that I would say anything harsh or severe, for indeed I do not speak by way of insult to them, but only in wonder — how is it that they do not shudder when they measure themselves with so great a man as this? For if

we leave the miracles and turn to the life of this blessed saint, and look into his angelic conversation, it is in this rather than in his miracles that you will find this Christian athlete a conqueror. For how can one describe his zeal and forbearance, his constant perils, his continual cares, and incessant anxiety for the Churches; his sympathy with the weak, his many afflictions, his unwonted persecutions, his deaths daily? Where is the spot in the world, where is the continent or sea, that is a stranger to the labours of this righteous man? Even the desert has known his presence, for it often sheltered him in time of danger. For he underwent every species of attack, and achieved every kind of victory, and there was never any end to his contests and his triumphs.

Yet, all unawares, I have been led to do this man an injury. For his exploits are beyond all powers of description, and beyond mine in particular, just as the masters of eloquence surpass me. Nevertheless, since that holy apostle will judge us, not by the issue, but by the motive, I shall not forbear till I have stated one more circumstance which surpasses anything yet mentioned, as much as he himself surpasses all his fellow men. And what is this? After so many exploits, after such a multitude of victories, he prayed that he might go into hell, and be handed over to eternal punishment, if so be that those Jews, who had often stoned him, and done what they could to make away with him, might be saved, and come over to Christ. [Romans 9:3] Now who so longed for Christ? If, indeed, his feelings towards him ought not to be described as something nobler than longing; shall we then any more compare ourselves with this saint, after so great grace was imparted to him from above, after so great virtue was manifested in himself? What could be more presumptuous?

Now, that he was not so unskilled, as some count him to be, I shall try to show in what follows. The unskilled person in men's estimation is not

only one who is unpracticed in the tricks of profane oratory, but the man who is incapable of contending for the defence of the right faith, and they are right. But St. Paul did not say that he was unskilled in both these respects, but in one only; and in support of this he makes a careful distinction, saying that he was *"rude in speech, but not in knowledge."*

[2 Corinthians 11:6] Now were I to insist upon the polish of Isocrates, the weight of Demosthenes, the dignity of Thucydides, and the sublimity of Plato, in any one bishop, St. Paul would be a strong evidence against me. But I pass by all such matters and the elaborate ornaments of profane oratory; and I take no account of style or of delivery; yea let a man's diction be poor and his composition simple and unadorned, but let him not be unskilled in the knowledge and accurate statement of doctrine; nor in order to screen his own sloth, deprive that holy apostle of the greatest of his gifts, and the sum of his praises.

7. For how was it, tell me, that he confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, [Acts 9:22] though he had not yet begun to work miracles? How was it that he wrestled with the Grecians and threw them? and why was he sent to Tarsus? Was it not because he was so mighty and victorious in the word, and brought his adversaries to such a pass that they, unable to brook their defeat, were provoked to seek his life? At that time, as I said, he had not begun to work miracles, nor could any one say that the masses looked upon him with astonishment on account of any glory belonging to his mighty works, or that they who contended with him were overpowered by the force of public opinion concerning him. For at this time he conquered by dint of argument only. How was it, moreover, that he contended and disputed successfully with those who tried to Judaize in Antioch? And how was it that that Areopagite, [Acts 17:34] an inhabitant of Athens, that most devoted of all cities to the gods, followed the apostle, he and his wife? Was

it not owing to the discourse which they heard? And when Eutychus [Acts 20:9] fell from the lattice, was it not owing to his long attendance even until midnight to St. Paul's preaching? How do we find him employed at Thessalonica and Corinth, in Ephesus and in Rome itself? Did he not spend whole nights and days in interpreting the Scriptures in their order? And why should any one recount his disputes with the Epicureans and Stoics. [Acts 17:18] For were we resolved to enter into every particular, our story would grow to an unreasonable length.

When, therefore, both before working miracles, and after, St. Paul appears to have made much use of argument, how can any one dare to pronounce him unskillful whose sermons and disputations were so exceedingly admired by all who heard them? Why did the Lycaonians [Acts 14:11] imagine that he was Hermes? The opinion that he and Barnabas were gods indeed, arose out of the sight of their miracles; but the notion that he was Hermes did not arise from this, but was a consequence of his speech. In what else did this blessed saint excel the rest of the apostles? And how comes it that up and down the world he is so much on every one's tongue? How comes it that not merely among ourselves, but also among Jews and Greeks, he is the wonder of wonders? Is it not from the power of his epistles? Whereby not only to the faithful of today, but from his time to this, yea and up to the end, even the appearing of Christ, he has been and will be profitable, and will continue to be so as long as the human race shall last. For as a wall built of adamant, so his writings fortify all the Churches of the known world, and he as a most noble champion stands in the midst, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, casting down imaginations, and every high thing which exalts itself against the knowledge of God, [2 Corinthians 10:5] and all this he does by those epistles which he has left to us full of wonders and of Divine wisdom. For

his writings are not only useful to us, for the overthrow of false doctrine and the confirmation of the true, but they help not a little towards living a good life. For by the use of these, the bishops of the present day fit and fashion the chaste virgin, which St. Paul himself espoused to Christ, [2 Corinthians 11:2] and conduct her to the state of spiritual beauty; with these, too, they drive away from her the noisome pestilences which beset her, and preserve the good health thus obtained. Such are the medicines and such their efficacy left us by this so-called unskillful man, and they know them and their power best who constantly use them. From all this it is evident that St. Paul had given himself to the study of which we have been speaking with great diligence and zeal.

8. Hear also what he says in his charge to his disciple: [1 Timothy 4:13] *"Give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching,"* and he goes on to show the usefulness of this by adding, *"For in doing this you shall save both yourself and them that hear you."* [1 Timothy 4:16] And again he says, *"The Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing;"* [2 Timothy 2:24] and he proceeds to say, *"But abide thou in the things which you have learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them, and that from a babe you have known the sacred writings which are able to make you wise unto salvation,"* [2 Timothy 3:14-15] and again, *"Every Scripture is inspired of God, and also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete."* Hear what he adds further in his directions to Titus about the appointment of bishops. *"The bishop,"* he says, *"must be holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able to convict the gainsayers."* But how shall any one who is unskillful as these men pretend, be able to convict the gainsayers and stop their mouths? Or what need is there to give

attention to reading and to the Holy Scriptures, if such a state of unskillfulness is to be welcome among us? Such arguments are mere makeshifts and pretexts, the marks of idleness and sloth. But some one will say, *"it is to the priests that these charges are given:"*— certainly, for they are the subjects of our discourse. But that the apostle gives the same charge to the laity, hear what he says in another epistle to other than the priesthood: *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom,"* [Colossians 3:16] and again, *"Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, that you may know how ye ought to answer each one,"* [Colossians 4:6] and there is a general charge to all that they *"be ready to"* [1 Peter 3:15] render an account of their faith, and to the Thessalonians, he gives the following command: *"Build each other up, even as also ye do."*

[1 Thessalonians 5:11] But when he speaks of priests he says, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word, and in teaching."* [1 Timothy 5:17] For this is the perfection of teaching when the teachers both by what they do, and by what they say as well, bring their disciples to that blessed state of life which Christ appointed for them. For example alone is not enough to instruct others. Nor do I say this of myself; it is our Saviour's own word. For whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great. [Matthew 5:19] Now if doing were the same as teaching, the second word here would be superfluous; and it had been enough to have said *"whosoever shall do"* simply. But now by distinguishing the two, he shows that practice is one thing, and doctrine another, and that each needs the help of the others in order to complete edification. You hear too what the chosen vessel of Christ says to the Ephesian elders: *"Wherefore watch ye, remembering that for the space of three years, I ceased not to admonish every one, night and day, with tears."* [Acts 20:31] But what need was there for his tears or for

admonition by word of mouth, while his life as an apostle was so illustrious? His holy life might be a great inducement to men to keep the commandments, yet I dare not say that it alone could accomplish everything.

9. But when a dispute arises concerning matters of doctrine, and all take their weapons from the same Scriptures, of what weight will any one's life be able to prove? What then will be the good of his many austerities, when after such painful exercises, any one from the Priest's great unskillfulness in argument fall into heresy, and be cut off from the body of the Church, a misfortune which I have myself seen many suffering. Of what profit then will his patience be to him? None; no more than there will be in a sound faith if the life is corrupt. Wherefore, for this reason more than for all others, it concerns him whose office it is to teach others, to be experienced in disputations of this kind. For though he himself stands safely, and is unhurt by the gainsayers, yet the simple multitude under his direction, when they see their leader defeated, and without any answer for the gainsayers, will be apt to lay the blame of his discomfiture not on his own weakness, but on the doctrines themselves, as though they were faulty; and so by reason of the inexperience of one, great numbers are brought to extreme ruin; for though they do not entirely go over to the adversary, yet they are forced to doubt about matters in which formerly they firmly believed, and those whom they used to approach with unswerving confidence, they are unable to hold to any longer steadfastly, but in consequence of their leader's defeat, so great a storm settles down upon their souls, that the mischief ends in their shipwreck altogether. But how dire is the destruction, and how terrible the fire which such a leader brings upon his own wretched head for every soul which is thus lost, you will not need to learn from me, as you know all this perfectly. Is this then pride, is

this vainglory in me, to be unwilling to be the cause of the destruction of so many souls? And of procuring for myself greater punishment in the world to come, than that which now awaits me there? Who would say so? Surely no one, unless he should wish to find fault where there is none, and to moralize over other men's calamities.

On the Priesthood (Book V)

1. How great is the skill required for the teacher in contending earnestly for the truth, has been sufficiently set forth by us. But I have to mention one more matter beside this, which is a cause of numberless dangers, though for my own part I should rather say that the thing itself is not the cause, but they who know not how to use it rightly, since it is of itself a help to salvation and to much good besides, whenever you find that earnest and good men have the management of it. What then, do I mean by this? The expenditure of great labor upon the preparation of discourses to be delivered in public. For to begin with, the majority of those who are under the preachers' charge are not minded to behave towards them as towards teachers, but disdaining the part of learners, they assume instead the attitude of those who sit and look on at the public games; and just as the multitude there is separated into parties, and some attach themselves to one, and some to another, so here also men are divided, and become the partisans now of this teacher, now of that, listening to them with a view to favor or spite. And not only is there this hardship, but another quite as great. For if it has occurred to any preacher to weave into his sermons any part of other men's works, he is exposed to greater disgrace than those who steal money. Nay, often where he has not even borrowed anything from any one, but is only suspected, he has suffered the fate of a thief. And why do I speak of the works of others when it is not permitted to him to use his own resources without variety? For the public are accustomed to listen not for profit, but for pleasure, sitting like critics of tragedies, and of musical entertainments, and that facility of speech against which we declaimed just now, in this case becomes desirable, even more than in the case of barristers, where they are

obliged to contend one against the other. A preacher then should have loftiness of mind, far exceeding my own littleness of spirit, that he may correct this disorderly and unprofitable pleasure on the part of the multitude, and be able to lead them over to a more useful way of hearing, that his people may follow and yield to him, and that he may not be led away by their own humors, and this it is not possible to arrive at, except by two means: indifference to their praise, and the power of preaching well.

2. For if either of these be lacking, the remaining one becomes useless, owing to its divorce from the other, for if a preacher be indifferent to praise, and yet cannot produce the doctrine "*which is with grace seasoned with salt,*" [Colossians 4:6] he becomes despised by the multitude, while he gains nothing from his own nobleness of mind; and if on the other hand he is successful as a preacher, and is overcome by the thought of applause, harm is equally done in turn, both to himself and the multitude, because in his desire for praise he is careful to speak rather with a view to please than to profit. And as he who neither lets good opinion influence him, nor is skillful in speaking, does not yield to the pleasure of the multitude, and is unable to do them any good worth mentioning, because he has nothing to say, so he who is carried away with desire for praise, though he is able to render the multitude better service, rather provides in place of this such food as will suit their taste, because he purchases thereby the tumult of acclamation.

3. The best kind of Bishop must, therefore, be strong in both these points, so that neither may supplant the other. For if when he stands up in the congregation and speaks words calculated to make the careless wince, he then stumbles, and stops short, and is forced to blush at his failure, the good of what he has spoken is immediately wasted. For they who are rebuked, being galled by what has been told them, and unable to avenge

themselves on him otherwise, taunt him, with jeers at this ignorance of his, thinking to screen their own reproach thereby. Wherefore he ought, like some very good charioteer, to come to an accurate judgment about both these good things, in order that he may be able to deal with both as he may have need; for when he is irreproachable in the eyes of all, then he will be able, with just so much authority as he wishes, both to correct and to remit from correction all those who are under his rule. But without this it will not be easy for him to do so. But this nobleness of soul should be shown not only up to the limit of indifference to praise, but should go further in order that the gain thus gotten may not in its turn be fruitless.

4. To what else ought he then to be indifferent? Slander and envy. Unseasonable evil speaking, however (for of course the Bishop undergoes some groundless censure), it is well that he should neither fear nor tremble at excessively, nor entirely pass over; but we ought, though it happen to be false, or to be brought against us by the common herd, to try and extinguish it immediately. For nothing so magnifies both an evil and a good report as the undisciplined mob. For accustomed to hear and to speak without stopping to make inquiry, they repeat at random everything which comes in their way, without any regard to the truth of it. Therefore the Bishop ought not to be unconcerned about the multitude, but straightway to nip their evil surmisings in the bud; persuading his accusers, even if they be the most unreasonable of all men, and to omit nothing which is able to dispel an ill-favored report. But if, when we do all this, they who blame us will not be persuaded, thenceforward we should give them no concern. Since if any one be too quick to be dejected by these accidents, he will not be able at any time to produce anything noble and admirable. For despondency and constant cares are mighty for destroying the powers of the mind, and for reducing it to extreme weakness. Thus then must the Priest behave towards

those in his charge, as a father would behave to his very young children; and as such are not disturbed either by their insults or their blows, or their lamentations, nor even if they laugh and rejoice with us, do we take much account of it; so should we neither be puffed up by the promises of these persons nor cast down at their censure, when it comes from them unseasonably. But this is hard, my good friend; and perhaps, methinks, even impossible. For I know not whether any man ever succeeded in the effort not to be pleased when he is praised, and the man who is pleased at this is likely also to desire to enjoy it, and the man who desires to enjoy it will, of necessity, be altogether vexed and beside himself whenever he misses it. For as they who revel in being rich, when they fall into poverty are grieved, and they who have been used to live luxuriously cannot bear to live shabbily; so, too, they who long for applause, not only when they are blamed without a cause, but when they are not constantly being praised, become, as by some famine, wasted in soul, particularly when they happen themselves to have been used to praise, or if they hear others being praised. He who enters upon the trial of preaching with desires of this kind, how many annoyances and how many pangs do you think that he has? It is no more possible for the sea to be without waves than that man to be without cares and grief.

5. For though the preacher may have great ability (and this one would only find in a few), not even in this case is he released from perpetual toil. For since preaching does not come by nature, but by study, suppose a man to reach a high standard of it, this will then forsake him if he does not cultivate his power by constant application and exercise. So that there is greater labor for the wiser than for the unlearned. For there is not the same degree of loss attending negligence on the part of the one and the other, but the loss is in exact proportion to the difference between the two

possessions. For the latter no one would blame, as they furnish nothing worth regarding. But the former, unless they are constantly producing matter beyond the reputation in which all hold them, great censure attends on all hands; and besides these things, the latter would meet with considerable praise, even for small performances, while the efforts of the former, unless they be specially wonderful and startling, not only fail to win applause, but meet with many fault-finders. For the audience set themselves to be critics, not so much in judgment of what is said as of the reputation of the speaker, so that whenever any one excels all others in oratorical powers, then especially of all others does he need laborious study. For this man is not allowed to avail himself of the usual plea which human nature urges, that one cannot succeed in everything; but if his sermons do not throughout correspond to the greatness of the expectations formed, he will go away without having gained anything but countless jeers and censures; and no one takes this into consideration about him, that dejection and pain, and anxiety, and often anger, may step in, and dim the clearness of his thoughts and prevent his productions from coming from him unalloyed, and that on the whole, being but a man, he cannot be constantly the same, nor at all times acquit himself successfully, but naturally must sometimes fall short of the mark, and appear on a lower level of ability than usual. None of these things, as I said, are they willing to take into consideration, but charge him with faults as if they were sitting in judgment on an angel; though in other cases, too, a man is apt to overlook the good performances of his neighbor, though they be many and great, and if anywhere a defect appears, even if it be accidental, even if it only occur at long intervals, it is quickly perceived, and always remembered, and thus small and trifling matters have often lessened the glory of many and great doings.

6. You see, my excellent friend, that the man who is powerful in preaching has peculiar need of greater study than others; and besides study, of forbearance also greater than what is needed by all those whom I have already mentioned. For thus are many constantly springing up against him, in a vain and senseless spirit, and having no fault to find with him, but that he is generally approved of, hate him; and he must bear their bitter malice nobly, for as they are not able to hide this cursed hatred, which they so unreasonably entertain, they both revile, and censure, and slander in private, and defame in public, and the mind which has begun to be pained and exasperated, on every one of these occasions, will not escape being corrupted by grief. For they will not only revenge themselves upon him by their own acts, but will try to do so by means of others, and often having chosen some one of those who are unable to speak a word, will extol him with their praises and admire him beyond his worth. Some do this through ignorance alone, some through ignorance and envy, in order that they may ruin the reputation of the other, not that they may prove the man to be wonderful who is not so, and the noble-minded man has not only to struggle against these, but often against the ignorance of the whole multitude; for since it is not possible that all those who come together should consist of learned men, but the chances are that the larger part of the congregation is composed of unlearned people, and that even the rest, who are clearer headed than they, fall as far short of being able to criticize sermons as the remainder again fall short of them; so that only one or two are seated there who possess this power; it follows, of necessity, that he who preaches better than others carries away less applause, and possibly goes home without being praised at all, and he must be prepared to meet such anomalies nobly, and to pardon those who commit them in ignorance, and to weep for those who acquiesce in them on account of envy as wretched and pitiable

creatures, and not to consider that his powers have become less on either of these accounts. For if a man, being a pre-eminently good painter, and superior to all in his art, sees the portrait which he has drawn with great accuracy held up to ridicule, he ought not to be dejected, and to consider the picture poor, because of the judgment of the ignorant; as he would not consider the drawing that is really poor to be something wonderful and lovely, because of the astonishment of the inartistic.

7. For let the best artificer be himself the critic of his own designs, and let his performances be determined to be good or poor, according as the mind which designed them gives sentence upon them. But let him not even consider the opinion, so erroneous and inartistic, of the outside world. Let, therefore, the man who undertakes the strain of teaching never give heed to the good opinion of the outside world, nor be dejected in soul on account of such persons; but laboring at his sermons so that he may please God, (For let this alone be his rule and determination, in discharging this best kind of workmanship, not acclamation, nor good opinions,) if, indeed, he be praised by men, let him not repudiate their applause, and when his hearers do not offer this, let him not seek it, let him not be grieved. For a sufficient consolation in his labors, and one greater than all, is when he is able to be conscious of arranging and ordering his teaching with a view to pleasing God.

8. For if he be first carried away with the desire for indiscriminate praise, he will reap no advantage from his labors, or from his power in preaching, for the mind being unable to bear the senseless censures of the multitude is dispirited, and casts aside all earnestness about preaching. Therefore it is especially necessary to be trained to be indifferent to all kinds of praise. For to know how to preach is not enough for the preservation of that power, if this be not added: and if any one would

examine accurately the man who is destitute of this art, he will find that he needs to be indifferent to praise no less than the other, for he will be forced to do many wrong things in placing himself under the control of popular opinion. For not having the energy to equal those who are in repute for the quality of their preaching, he will not refrain from forming ill designs against them, from envying them, and from blaming them without reason, and from many such discreditable practices, but will venture everything, even if it be needful to ruin his own soul, for the sake of bringing down their fame to the level of his own insignificance. And in addition to this, he will leave off his exertions about his work; a kind of numbness, as it were, spreading itself over his mind. For much toil, rewarded by scanty praise, is sufficient to cast down a man who cannot despise praise, and put him into a deep lethargy, since the husbandman even when he spends time over some sorry piece of land, and is forced to till a rock, quickly desists from his work, unless he is possessed of much earnestness about the matter, or has a fear of famine impending over him. For if they who are able to speak with considerable power, need such constant exercise for the preservation of their talent, he who collects no materials at all, but is forced in the midst of his efforts to meditate; what difficulty, what confusion, what trouble will he experience, in order that he may be able at great labor to collect a few ideas! And if any of those clergy who are under his authority, and who are placed in the inferior order, be able in that position to appear to better advantage than he; what a divine mind must he have, so as not to be seized with envy or cast down by despondency. For, for one to be placed in a station of higher dignity, and to be surpassed by his inferior in rank, and to bear this nobly, would not be the part of any ordinary mind, nor of such as my own, but of one as hard as adamant; and if, indeed, the man who is in greater repute be very forbearing and modest, the suffering becomes so

much the more easily borne. But if he is bold and boastful and vainglorious, a daily death would be desirable for the other; he will so embitter his life, insulting him to his face, and laughing at him behind his back, wresting much of his authority from him, and wishing to be everything himself. But he is possessed of the greatest security, in all these circumstances, who has fluency in preaching, and the earnest attention of the multitude about him, and the affection of all those who are under his charge. Do you not know what a passion for sermons has burst in upon the minds of Christians now-a-days? And that they who practice themselves in preaching are in special honor, not only among the heathen, but among them of the household of the faith? How then could any one bear such disgrace as to find that all are mute when he is preaching, and think that they are oppressed, and wait for the end of the sermon, as for some release from work; while they listen to another with eagerness though he preach long, and are sorry when he is about to conclude; and almost angry when it is his purpose to be silent. If these matters seem to you to be small, and easily to be despised, it is because of your inexperience. They are truly enough to quench zeal, and to paralyze the powers of the mind, unless a man withdraw himself from all human passions, and study to frame his conduct after the pattern of those incorporeal powers, who are neither pursued by envy, nor by longing for fame, nor by any other morbid feeling. If then there be any man so constituted as to be able to subdue this wild beast, so difficult to capture, so unconquerable, so fierce; that is to say, public fame, and to cut off its many heads, or rather to forbid their growth altogether; he will easily be able to repel these many violent assaults, and to enjoy a kind of quiet haven of rest. But he who has not freed himself from this monster, involves his soul in struggles of various kinds, and perpetual agitation, and the burden both of despondency and of other passions. But why need I detail the rest of these

difficulties, which no one will be able to describe, or to learn unless he has had actual experience of them.

On the Priesthood (Book VI)

1. Our condition here, indeed, is such as you have heard. But our condition hereafter how shall we endure, when we are compelled to give our account for each of those who have been entrusted to us? For our penalty is not limited to shame, but everlasting chastisement awaits us as well. As for the passage, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them, for they watch in behalf of your souls as they that shall give account;"* [Hebrews 13:17] though I have mentioned it once already, yet I will break silence about it now, for the fear of its warning is continually agitating my soul. For if for him who causes one only, and that the least, to stumble, it is profitable that *"a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea;"* [Matthew 18:6] and if they who wound the consciences of the brethren, sin against Christ Himself, [1 Corinthians 8:12] what then will they one day suffer, what kind of penalty will they pay, who destroy not one only, or two, or three, but so many multitudes? For it is not possible for inexperience to be urged as an excuse, nor to take refuge in ignorance, nor for the plea of necessity or force to be put forward. Yea, if it were possible, one of those under their charge could more easily make use of this refuge for his own sins than bishops in the case of the sins of others. Do you ask why? Because he who has been appointed to rectify the ignorance of others, and to warn them beforehand of the conflict with the devil which is coming upon them, will not be able to put forward ignorance as his excuse, or to say, *"I have never heard the trumpet sound, I did not foresee the conflict."* For he is set for that very purpose, says Ezekiel, that he may sound the trumpet for others, and warn them of the dangers at hand. And therefore his chastisement is

inevitable, though he that perishes happen to be but one. *"For if when the sword comes, the watchman does not sound the trumpet to the people, nor give them a sign, and the sword come and take any man away, he indeed is taken away on account of his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hands."* [Ezekiel 33:6]

2. Cease then to urge us on to a penalty so inevitable; for our discourse is not about an army, or a kingdom; but about an office which needs the virtues of an angel. For the soul of the Priest ought to be purer than the very sunbeams, in order that the Holy Spirit may not leave him desolate, in order that he may be able to say, *"Now I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me."* [Galatians 2:20] For if they who dwell in the desert, and are removed far from the city and the market-place, and the tumult therein, and who enjoy all their time a haven of rest, and of peacefulness, are not willing to rely on the security of that manner of life, but add to it numberless other safeguards, hedging themselves round on every side, and studying both to speak and to act with great circumspection, so that to the utmost extent of human power they may draw near to God with assurance, and with unstained purity, what power and strength, do you think, does the ordained Priest need so as to be able to tear his soul away from every defilement, and to keep its spiritual beauty unsullied? For he has need of far greater purity than they; and whoever has need of greater purity, he too is subject to more pressing temptations than they, which are able to defile him, unless by using constant self-denial and much labor, he renders his soul inaccessible to them. For beauty of face, elegance of movement, an affected gait and lisping voice, pencilled eyebrows and enamelled cheeks, elaborate braiding and dyeing of hair, costliness of dress, variety of golden ornaments, and the glory of precious stones, the scent of perfumes, and all those other matters to which womankind devote themselves, are enough to disorder the mind,

unless it happen to be hardened against them, through much austerity of self restraint. Now to be disturbed indeed by such things is nothing wonderful. But on the other hand, that the devil should be able to hit and shoot down the souls of men by the opposite of these— this is a matter which fills us with astonishment and perplexity.

3. For ere now some men who have escaped these snares, have been caught by others widely differing from these. For even a neglected appearance, unkempt hair, squalid dress, and an unpainted face, simple behavior, and homely language, unstudied gait, and unaffected voice, a life of poverty, a despised, unpatronized and lonely condition, have first drawn on the beholder to pity, and next to utter ruin; and many who have escaped the former nets, in the way of gold ornaments and perfumes, and apparel, and all the rest, of which I have spoken as connected with them, have easily fallen into these so widely differing from them, and have perished. When then both by poverty and by riches, both by the adornment and the neglect of the personal appearance, both by studied and unaffected manners, in short by all those means which I have enumerated, war is kindled in the soul of the beholder, and its artifices surround him on every side, how will he be able to breathe freely while so many snares encompass him? And what hiding-place will he be able to find— I do not say so as to avoid being forcibly seized by them (for this is not altogether difficult)— but so as to keep his own soul undisturbed by polluting thoughts?

And I pass by honors, which are the cause of countless evils. For those which come from the hands of women are ruinous to the vigor of self-restraint, and often overthrow it when a man does not know how to watch constantly against such designs; while those which come from the hands of men, unless a man receive them with much nobleness of mind, he is seized with two contrary emotions, servile flattery and senseless pride. To those

who patronize him, he is obliged to cringe; and towards his inferiors he is puffed up, on account of the honors which the others confer, and is driven into the gulf of arrogance. We have mentioned these matters indeed, but how harmful they actually are, no one could well learn without experience. For not only these snares, but greater and more delusive than these, he must needs encounter, who has his conversation in the world. But he who is content with solitude, has freedom from all this, and if at any time a strange thought creates a representation of this kind, the image is weak, and capable of being speedily subdued, because there is no fuel added to the flame from without, arising from actual sight. For the recluse has but himself to fear for; or should he be forced to have the care of others they are easily counted: and if they be many, yet they are less than those in our Churches, and they give him who is set over them much lighter anxiety about them, not only on account of their fewness, but because they are all free from worldly concerns, and have neither wife nor children, nor any such thing to care about; and this makes them very deferential to their rulers, and allows them to share the same abode with them, so that they are able to take in their failings accurately at a glance and correct them, seeing that the constant supervision of a teacher is no little help towards advance in virtue.

4. But of those who are subject to the Priest, the greater number are hampered with the cares of this life, and this makes them the slower in the performance of spiritual duties. Whence it is necessary for the teacher to sow every day (so to speak), in order that by its frequency at least, the word of doctrine may be able to be grasped by those who hear. For excessive wealth, and an abundance of power, and sloth the offspring of luxury, and many other things beside these, choke the seeds which have been let fall. Often too the thick growth of thorns does not suffer the seed to drop even upon the surface of the soil. Again, excess of trouble, stress of poverty,

constant insults, and other such things, the reverse of the foregoing, take the mind away from anxiety about things divine; and of their people's sins, not even the smallest part can become apparent; for how should it, in the case of those the majority of whom they do not know even by sight?

The Priest's relations with his people involve thus much difficulty. But if any inquire about his relations with God, he will find the others to be as nothing, since these require a greater and more thorough earnestness. For he who acts as an ambassador on behalf of the whole city— but why do I say the city? On behalf of the whole world indeed— prays that God would be merciful to the sins of all, not only of the living, but also of the departed. What manner of man ought he to be? For my part I think that the boldness of speech of Moses and Elias, is insufficient for such supplication. For as though he were entrusted with the whole world and were himself the father of all men, he draws near to God, beseeching that wars may be extinguished everywhere, that tumults may be quelled; asking for peace and plenty, and a swift deliverance from all the ills that beset each one, publicly and privately; and he ought as much to excel in every respect all those on whose behalf he prays, as rulers should excel their subjects.

And whenever he invokes the Holy Spirit, and offers the most dread sacrifice, and constantly handles the common Lord of all, tell me what rank shall we give him? What great purity and what real piety must we demand of him? For consider what manner of hands they ought to be which minister in these things, and of what kind his tongue which utters such words, and ought not the soul which receives so great a spirit to be purer and holier than anything in the world? At such a time angels stand by the Priest; and the whole sanctuary, and the space round about the altar, is filled with the powers of heaven, in honor of Him who lies thereon. For this, indeed, is capable of being proved from the very rites which are being then celebrated.

I myself, moreover, have heard some one once relate, that a certain aged, venerable man, accustomed to see revelations, used to tell him, that he being thought worthy of a vision of this kind, at such a time, saw, on a sudden, so far as was possible for him, a multitude of angels, clothed in shining robes, and encircling the altar, and bending down, as one might see soldiers in the presence of their King, and for my part I believe it. Moreover another told me, without learning it from some one else, but as being himself thought worthy to be both an ear and eye witness of it, that, in the case of those who are about to depart hence, if they happen to be partakers of the mysteries, with a pure conscience, when they are about to breathe their last, angels keep guard over them for the sake of what they have received, and bear them hence. And do you not yet tremble to introduce a soul into so sacred a mystery of this kind, and to advance to the dignity of the Priesthood, one robed in filthy raiment, whom Christ has shut out from the rest of the band of guests? [Matthew 22:13] The soul of the Priest should shine like a light beaming over the whole world. But mine has so great darkness overhanging it, because of my evil conscience, as to be always cast down and never able to look up with confidence to its Lord. Priests are the salt of the earth. [Matthew 5:13] But who would easily put up with my lack of understanding, and my inexperience in all things, but thou, who hast been wont to love me beyond measure. For the Priest ought not only to be thus pure as one who has been dignified with so high a ministry, but very discreet, and skilled in many matters, and to be as well versed in the affairs of this life as they who are engaged in the world, and yet to be free from them all more than the recluses who occupy the mountains. For since he must mix with men who have wives, and who bring up children, who possess servants, and are surrounded with wealth, and fill public positions, and are persons of influence, he too should be a many-

sided man— I say many-sided, not unreal, nor yet fawning and hypocritical, but full of much freedom and assurance, and knowing how to adapt himself profitably, where the circumstances of the case require it, and to be both kind and severe, for it is not possible to treat all those under one's charge on one plan, since neither is it well for physicians to apply one course of treatment to all their sick, nor for a pilot to know but one way of contending with the winds. For, indeed, continual storms beset this ship of ours, and these storms do not assail from without only, but take their rise from within, and there is need of much condescension, and circumspection, and all these different matters have one end in view, the glory of God, and the edifying of the Church.

5. Great is the conflict which recluses undergo, and much their toil. But if any one compare their exertions with those which the right exercise of the Priesthood involves, he will find the difference as great as the distance between a king and a commoner. For there, if the labor is great indeed, yet the conflict is common to body and soul, or rather the greater part of it is accomplished by the condition of the body, and if this be not strong, the inclination remains undeveloped, and is unable to come out into action. For the habit of intense fasting, and sleeping on the ground, and keeping vigil, and refraining from the bath, and great toil, and all other means which they use for the affliction of the body are given up, when the body to be thus disciplined is not strong. But in this case purity of soul is the business in hand, and no bodily vigor is required to show its excellence. For what does strength of body contribute towards our being not self-willed, or proud, or headstrong, but sober and prudent, and orderly, and all else, wherein St. Paul filled up the picture of the perfect Priest? But no one could say this of the virtues of the recluse.

6. But as in the case of wonder-workers, a large apparatus is required, both wheels and ropes and daggers; while the philosopher has the whole of his art stored up in his mind, not requiring any external appliances: So accordingly in the case before us. The recluse requires both a good condition of body, and a place suitable for his course of life, in order that such may not be settled too far from intercourse with their fellow men, and may have the tranquillity which belongs to desert places, and yet further, may not fail to enjoy the most favorable climate. For nothing is so unbearable to a body worn with fastings as a climate which is not equable. And what trouble they are compelled to take in the preparation of their clothing and daily food, as they are themselves ambitious of doing all with their own hands, I need not speak of now. But the Priest will require none of these things to supply his wants, but is unconcerned about them, and participates in all things which are harmless, while he has all his skill stored up in the treasure-house of his mind. But if any one admire a solitary life, and retirement from the society of the multitude, I should say myself that such a life was a token of patience, but not a sufficient proof of entire fortitude of soul. For the man who sits at the helm in harbor, does not yet give any certain proof of his art. But if one is able to guide his ship safely in the midst of the sea, no one would deny him to be an excellent steersman.

7. It would be, therefore, in no wise excessively surprising to us, that the recluse, living as he does by himself, is undisturbed and does not commit many and great sins. For he does not meet with things which irritate and excite his mind. But if any one who has devoted himself to whole multitudes, and has been compelled to bear the sins of many, has remained steadfast and firm, guiding his soul in the midst of the storm as if he were in a calm, he is the man to be justly applauded and admired of all, for he has shown sufficient proof of personal manliness. Do not thou, therefore, for

your part wonder if I, who avoid the market-place and the haunts of the multitude, have not many to accuse me. For I ought not to wonder, if I sinned not when asleep, nor fell when I did not wrestle, nor was hit if I did not fight. For who, tell me, who will be able to speak against me, and reveal my depravity? Can this roof or cell? Nay, they would not be able to give tongue? Would my mother, who best of all knows my affairs? Well, certainly with her I am neither in communication, nor have we ever come to a quarrel, and if this had happened, no mother is so heartless and wanting in affection for her child as to revile and accuse before all him whom she travailed with, and brought forth, and reared, if there were no reason to constrain her, nor any person to urge her to such an act. Nevertheless, if any one desires to make a careful inspection of my mind, he will discover much which is corrupt there. Nor are you unaware of this who art specially wont to extol me with praises before all. Now that I do not say these things out of mere modesty, recollect how often I said to you, when this subject was being discussed between us, If any one were to give me my choice whether I would rather gain distinction in the oversight of the Church, or in the life of the recluse, I would vote a thousand times over for accepting the former. For I have never failed to congratulate those who have been able to discharge this office well, and no one will gainsay that what I counted blessed I would not have shunned were I able to take part in it fitly. But what am I to do? There is nothing so prejudicial to the oversight of the Church as this inactivity and negligence of mine, which others think to be a sort of self-discipline, but which I hold to be a veil as it were of my personal infirmity, covering the greater number of my defects and not suffering them to appear. For he who is accustomed to enjoy such great freedom from business, and to pass his time in much repose, even if he be of a noble nature, is confused by his inexperience, and is disturbed, and his

inactivity deprives him of no small part of his natural ability. But when, besides, he is of slow intellect, and ignorant also of these severe trials, which I take it is my case, he will carry on this ministry which he has received no better than a statue. Wherefore of those who have come to such great trial, out of that school, few shine; and the greater part betray themselves, and fall, and undergo much hardship and sufferings; and no wonder. For the trials and the discipline are not concerned with the same things. The man who is contending in no wise differs from those who are untrained. He who thus enters this list should despise glory, be superior to anger, full of great discretion. But for the exercise of these qualities there is no scope in his case who affects a secluded life. For he does not have many to provoke him in order that he may practise chastising, the force of his anger: nor admirers and applauders in order that he may be trained to despise the praises of the multitudes. And of the discretion which is required in the Church, there is no taking account in their case. Whenever, therefore, they come to the trials of which they have never had practical experience, they get bewildered, their heads are turned, they fall into a state of helplessness, and besides adding nothing to their excellence, may have often lost that which they brought with them.

8. Basil: What then? Shall we set over the administration of the Church those who move in society, and who are careful about the concerns of this world, who are adepts at wrangling and vituperation, are full of countless artifices, and versed in luxurious ways?

Chrysostom: Hush, dear friend that you are! You should never entertain in your thoughts such men as these, when the Priesthood is under discussion, but only such as are able after mixing and associating with all, to keep their purity undefiled, and their unworldliness, their holiness, constancy and sobriety unshaken, and to possess all other virtues which

belong to recluses, in a greater degree than they. He who has many defects, but is able to hide them, by means of his seclusion, and to make them ineffectual, because he does not associate with any one, when *he* comes into society will gain nothing, but the position of a laughing-stock, and will run greater risks still, which I was very nearly experiencing myself, had not the providence of God quickly warded off such fire from my head. For it is not possible for one in such a position to escape notice when he is so conspicuously placed, but everything then is detected, and as the fire tests the material of metals, so too the trial of the clerical office searches the souls of mortal men; and if any one be passionate or mean, or ambitious of fame, if he be boastful, or anything else of the kind, it unveils all; and speedily lays bare his defects, and not only lays them bare, but increases their painfulness and strength. For the wounds of the body, if they are galled, become harder to heal, and the emotions of the mind when chafed and irritated, are naturally more exasperated, and those who possess them are driven to commit greater sins. For they excite him who does not restrain them, to love of glory, and to boastfulness, and to desire for this world's goods, and draw him downwards, both to luxury and laxity of life, and to laziness, and, little by little, to evils worse than these which result from them. For many are the circumstances in society which have the power to upset the balance of the mind, and to hinder its straightforward course; and first of all is his social intercourse with women. For it is not possible for the Bishop, and one who is concerned with the whole flock, to have a care for the male portion of it, but to pass over the female, which needs more particular forethought, because of its propensity to sins. But the man who is appointed to the administration of a Bishopric must have a care for the moral health of these, if not in a greater, at least in no less a degree than the others. For it is necessary to visit them when they are sick, to comfort them

when they are sorrowful, and to reprove them when they are idle, and to help them when they are distressed; and in such cases the evil one would find many opportunities of approach, if a man did not fortify himself with a very strict guard. For the eye, not only of the unchaste, but of the modest woman pierces and disturbs the mind. Flatteries enervate it, and favors enslave it, and fervent love—the spring one may say of all good—becomes the cause of countless evils to those who do not make a right use of it. Constant cares too have ere now blunted the edge of the understanding, and have made that which was buoyant heavier than lead, while anger has burst in like smoke, and taken possession of all the inner man.

9. Why should any one speak of the injuries that result from grief, the insults, the abuse, the censure from superiors, from inferiors, from the wise, and from fools; for the class who are wanting in right judgment are particularly fond of censuring, and will never readily allow any excuse. But the truly excellent Bishop ought neither to think lightly of these, but to clear himself with all men of the charges which they bring against him, with great forbearance and meekness, pardoning their unreasonable fault-finding, rather than being indignant and angry about it. For if St. Paul feared lest he should incur a suspicion of theft, among his disciples, and therefore procured others for the management of the money, that *"no one"* he says, *"should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us,"* [2 Corinthians 8:20] how ought we not to do all so as to remove evil suspicions, even if they happen to be false, and most unreasonable, and very foreign to our thought? For we are not so utterly removed from any sin as St. Paul from theft; notwithstanding, though so far from this evil practice, he did not, therefore, slight the suspicion of the world, although it was very absurd, and even insane. For it was madness to have any such suspicion

about that blessed and admirable character. But none the less does he remove far off the causes of this suspicion, unreasonable though it was, and such as no one who was in his senses would entertain, and he neither disdained the folly of the multitudes, nor did he say, *"To whose mind did it ever occur to suspect such things of us, after the signs which I have wrought, and the forbearance which has marked my life, and when you all revered and admired us?"* Quite the contrary: he foresaw and expected this base suspicion, and pulled it up by the roots, or rather did not suffer it to grow at all. Why? *"Because,"* says he, *"we provide things honest not only before the Lord, but before all men."* So great, yea and far greater zeal must we use, to uproot and prevent floating reports which are not good, but to see beforehand from afar whence they come, and to remove beforehand the causes from which they are produced, not to wait till they are established and are the common topics in every one's mouth. For then it is not easy in the future to destroy them, but very difficult, perhaps impossible, and not without mischief, because this is done after many have been injured. But how far shall I continue pursuing the unattainable? For to enumerate all the difficulties in this direction, is nothing more nor less than measuring the ocean. Even when any one should clear himself from every passion (which is a thing impossible) in order to correct the failings of others, he is forced to undergo countless trials, and when his own infirmities are added, behold, an abyss of toil and care, and all that he must suffer, who wishes to subdue the evils in himself and in those around him.

10. Basil: And now, art *thou* free from toils? Have you no cares while you live by yourself?

Chrysostom: I have indeed even now. For how is it possible for one who is a man, and who is living this toilsome life of ours, to be free from cares and conflict? But it is not quite the same thing for man to plunge into

a boundless ocean and to cross a river, so great is the difference between these cares and those. For now, indeed, if I were able to become serviceable to others, I should wish it myself, and this would be a matter of prayer with me. But if it is not possible to help another, yet if it be practicable to save and rescue myself from the waves, I shall be contented.

Basil: Do you then think this to be a great thing? And do you fancy that you will be saved when you are not profitable to any other?

Chrysostom: You have spoken well and nobly, for I am not myself able to believe that it is possible for one who has not labored for the salvation of his fellow to be saved, nor did it at all profit the wretched man in the Gospel that he had not diminished his talent; but he perished through not increasing it and bringing it doubled to his master. [Matthew 25:24] Nevertheless, I think that my punishment will be milder when I am called to account, because I have not saved others, than it would be if I should destroy myself and others too by becoming far worse after so great an honor. For now I trust that my chastisement will be proportioned to the amount of my sins, but after receiving this office, I fear it would be not double, or threefold, but manifold, because I should have caused very many to stumble, and after additional honor should have offended the God who honored me.

11. For this very cause God accuses the Israelites more vehemently, and shows that they were worthy of greater chastisement, because they sinned after so many honors had come to them from Him, saying in one place: *"But you only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you for your iniquities,"* [Amos 3:2] and again, *"and I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites;"* [Amos 2:11] and before the times of the prophets, wishing to show that sins receive sorer punishment by far when they occur in the case of the Priest than in the case of the laity, He enjoins as great a sacrifice to be offered for

the Priest as for the whole people, and this amounts to a proof on his part, that the wounds of the Priesthood need more assistance— that is, as great as those of all the people together, and they would not have needed a greater, except they were worse; and they are not worse in their nature, but are aggravated through the dignity of the Priest, who dares to commit them. And why do I speak of the *men* who follow this ministration. For the daughters of the Priests, [Leviticus 21:9] who have no part in the Priestly office, yet on account of their father's dignity undergo a far bitterer punishment for the same sins as others, and the offense is the same in their case and in the daughters of the laity; namely, fornication in both; yet the penalty is far severer for the former. Do you see with what abundant proof God shows you that he demands much greater punishment for the ruler than for the ruled? For no doubt he who punishes to a greater degree than others the daughter of a certain man for that man's sake, will not exact the same penalty from the man who is the cause of her additional chastisement as from others, but a much heavier one; and very reasonably; for the mischief does not merely involve himself, but it destroys the souls of the weaker brethren and of them who look up to him, and Ezekiel, writing to show this, distinguishes from one another the judgment of the rams and of the sheep. [Ezekiel 34:17]

12. Do we then seem to you to entertain a reasonable fear? For in addition to what has been said, although much toil is needful on my part, so that I should not be completely overwhelmed by the passions of my soul, yet I endure the toil, and I do not shun the conflict. For even now I am taken captive by vainglory, but I often recover myself, and I see at a glance that I have been taken, and there are times when I rebuke my soul, which has been enslaved; outrageous desires even now come over me, but they kindle only a languid flame, since my bodily eyes cannot fasten upon any fuel to

feed the fire. From speaking ill of any, or from hearing any one evil spoken of, I am utterly removed, since I have no one to talk with; for surely these walls would never give tongue; yet it is not altogether in like manner possible to avoid anger, although there be none to provoke it. For often when the recollection of outrageous men has come over me, and of the deeds done by them, it makes my heart swell. But not permanently, for I quickly subdue its kindling, and persuade it to be quiet, saying that it is very inexpedient and extremely despicable to leave one's own fault alone, and to busy one's self about the faults of one's neighbors. But were I to come among the multitude, and to be involved in countless excitements, I should not be able to have the benefit of this warning, nor to experience reflections which take me thus to task. But just as they who are driven over precipices by a torrent, or in some other way, are able to foresee the destruction to which they are finally going, and are unable to think of any means of help, so I, when I have fallen into the great tumult of my passions, shall be able to see at a glance my chastisement daily increasing. But to be master of myself as I am now, and to rebuke diseases of this sort raging on every side, would not be equally easy for me as it was before. For my soul is weak and puny, and easily mastered, not only by these passions, but by envy, which is bitterer than all of them. Neither does it know how to bear insults or honors temperately. But these do exceedingly elate it, while those depress it. As, then, savage wild beasts, when they are in good condition, and in full vigor, overcome those that fight with them, particularly, too, if they be feeble and unskillful; but if any one were to weaken them by starvation, he will put their rage to sleep, and will extinguish most of their strength; so that one, not over valiant, might take up the conflict and battle with them: so also with the passions of the soul. He who makes them weak, places them in subjection to right reason; but he who nourishes them carefully, makes his

battle with them harder, and renders them so formidable that he passes all his time in bondage and fear.

What then is the food of these wild beasts? Of vainglory, indeed, it is honors and applause; of pride, abundance of authority and power; of envy, the reputation of one's neighbors; of avarice, the munificence of the generous; of incontinence, luxury and the constant society of women; and other passions have their proper nutriment? And all these things will sorely attack me if I come forth into the world, and will tear my soul to pieces, will be the more formidable and will make my battle with them the harder. Whereas, while I am established here they will be subdued; and then, indeed, only with great exertion; yet at the same time, by the Grace of God, they *will* be subdued, and there will not be anything worse than their bark. For these reasons I keep to this cell, and am inaccessible, self-contained, and unsociable, and I put up with hearing countless complaints of this kind, although I would gladly efface them, and have been vexed and grieved because I cannot; for it is not easy for me to become sociable, and at the same time to remain in my present security. Therefore I beseech you, too, to pity rather than to censure one beset with such great difficulty.

But we cannot yet persuade you. Accordingly the time is now come that I should utter to you the only thing which I have left unspoken. Perhaps it may seem to many to be incredible, but even so I shall not be ashamed to bring it before the world, for though what is said is proof of an evil conscience and of many sins, yet, since God, who is about to judge us, knows all accurately, what gain will result to us from the ignorance of men? What then is this, which is yet unspoken? From that day on which you imparted to me the suspicion of the bishopric, my whole system has often been in danger of being completely unhinged, such was the fear, such the despondency which seized my soul; for on considering the glory of the

Bride of Christ, the holiness, the spiritual beauty and wisdom, and comeliness, and then reckoning up my own faults, I used not to cease bewailing both her and myself, and amidst continual distress and perplexity, I kept saying— who then made such a suggestion as this? Why has the Church of God made so great a mistake? Why has she so provoked her Master, as to be delivered over to me, the unworthiest of all men, and to undergo such great disgrace? Considering these things often by myself, and being unable to bear the thought of so monstrous a thing, I used to be like thunderstruck people, speechless, and unable either to see or hear. And when this condition of great helplessness left me, for there were times when it passed off, tears and despondency succeeded to it, and after the flood of tears, then fear again, entered in their stead, disturbing, confusing and agitating my mind. In such a tempest I used to pass the time that is gone; but you were ignorant of it, and thought that I was spending my time in a perfect tranquillity, but I will now try and unveil to you the storm of my soul, for it may be you will henceforth pardon me, abandoning your accusations. How then shall I unveil this to you? For if you would see this clearly, it is not otherwise possible than by laying bare my own heart; but as this is impossible, I will try and show you as well as I can, by a certain faint illustration, the gloom of my despondency, and from this image please to infer my condition.

Let us suppose that the daughter of the King of all the earth under the sun is the betrothed of a certain man, and that this damsel has matchless beauty, transcending that of human nature, and that in this respect she outstrips by a long distance the whole race of women; also that she has virtues of the soul, so great as to distance by a long way the whole generation of men that have been, or that shall be; and that the grace of her manners transcends all standards of art, and that the loveliness of her person

is eclipsed by the beauty of her countenance; and that her betrothed, not only for the sake of these things, is enamored of the maiden, but apart from these things has an affection for her, and by his ardor throws into the shade the most passionate of lovers that ever were. Then let us suppose, while he is burning with love, he hears from some quarter that some mean, abject man, low born, and crippled in body, in fact a thoroughly bad fellow, was about to wed this wondrous, well-beloved maiden. Have we then presented to you some small portion of our grief? And is it enough to stay my illustration at this point? So far as my despondency is concerned, I think it is enough; for this was the only purpose for which I introduced the comparison, but that I may show you the measure of my fear, and my terror, let me proceed to another description.

Let there be an armament composed of infantry, cavalry, and marines, and let a number of triremes cover the sea, and phalanxes of foot and horse cover most of the plains, and the ridges of the mountains, and let the metal of their armor reflect the sunshine, and the glitter of the helmets and shields be reflected by the beams which are emitted from them; let the clashing of spears and the neighing of horses be borne up to the very heavens, and let neither sea nor land appear, but only brass and iron in every direction. Let the enemy be drawn up in battle array opposite to these, fierce and savage men, and let the time of the engagement be now at hand. Then let some one suddenly seize some young lad, one of those brought up in the country, knowing nothing but the use of the shepherd's pipe and crook; let him be clad in brazen armor, and let him be led round the whole camp and be shown the squadrons and their officers, the archers, slingers, captains, generals, the foot and horse, the spearmen, the triremes and their commanders, the dense mass of soldiers in the ships, and the multitude of engines of war lying ready on board. Let him be shown, moreover, the

whole array of the enemy, their repulsive aspect, and the varied stores and unusual quantity of their arms; the ravines also and precipices of the mountains, deep and difficult. Let him be shown further on the enemies' side, horses flying by some enchantment and infantry borne through the air, and sorcery of every power and form; and let him consider the calamities of war, the cloud of spears, the hailstorm of arrows, that great mist and obscurity that gloomiest night which the multitude of weapons occasions, eclipsing the sunbeams with their cloud, the dust no less than the darkness baffling the eyesight. The torrents of blood, the groanings of the falling, the shouts of the surviving, the heaps of slain, wheels bathed in blood, horses with their riders thrown headlong down, owing to the number of corpses, the ground a scene of general confusion, blood, and bows, and arrows, hoofs of horses and heads of men lying together, a human arm and a chariot wheel and a helmet, a breast pierced through, brains sticking to swords, the point of a dart broken off with an eye transfixed upon it. Then let him reckon up the sufferings of the naval force, the triremes burning in the midst of the waves, and sinking with their armed crews, the roaring of the sea, the tumult of the sailors, the shout of the soldiers, the foam of the waves mixed with blood, and dashing over into all the ships; the corpses on the decks, some sinking, some floating, some cast upon the beach, overwhelmed by the waves, and obstructing the passage of the ships. And when he has been carefully instructed in all the tragedy of warfare, let the horrors of captivity and of slavery be added to it, worse than any kind of death; and having told him all this, bid him mount his horse straightway, and take command of all that armament.

Do you really think that this lad would be equal to more than the mere description, and would not, at the very first glance, lose heart?

13. Do not think that I have exaggerated the matter by my account, nor suppose that because we are shut up in this body, as in some prison house, and are unable to see anything of the invisible world, that what has been said is overstated. For you would see a far greater and more formidable conflict than this, couldst thou ever behold, with these eyes of yours, the devil's most gloomy battle array, and his frantic onset. For there is no brass or iron there. No horses, or chariots or wheels, no fire and darts. These are visible things. But there are other much more fearful engines than these. One does not need against these enemies breastplate or shield, sword and spear, yet the sight only of this accursed array is enough to paralyze the soul, unless it happen to be very noble, and to enjoy in a high degree as a protection to its own courage the providential care of God. And if it were possible by putting off this body, or still keeping it, to see clearly and fearlessly with the naked eye the whole of his battle array, and his warfare against us, you would see no torrents of blood, nor dead bodies, but so many fallen souls, and such disastrous wounds that the whole of that description of warfare which I just now detailed to you you would think to be mere child's sport and pastime rather than war: so many are there smitten every day, and the wounds in the two cases do not bring about the same death, but as great as is the difference between the soul from the body, so great is the difference between that death and this. For when the soul receives a wound, and falls, it does not lie as a lifeless body, but it is thenceforth tormented, being gnawed by an evil conscience; and after its removal hence, at the time of judgment, it is delivered over to eternal punishment; and if any one be without grief in regard to the wounds given by the devil, his danger becomes the greater for his insensibility. For whoever is not pained by the first wound, will readily receive a second, and after that a third. For the unclean spirit will not cease assaulting to the last

breath, whenever he finds a soul supine and indifferent to his first wounds; and if you would inquire into the method of attack, you would find this much more severe and varied. For no one ever knew so many forms of craft and deceit as that unclean spirit. By this indeed, he has acquired the greater part of his power, nor can any one have so implacable a hatred against his worst enemies as the evil one against the human race. And if any one inquire into the vehemence with which he fights, here again it would be ludicrous to bring men into comparison with him. But if any one choose out the fiercest and most savage of beasts, and is minded to set their fury against his, he will find that they were meek and quiet in comparison, such rage does he breathe forth when he attacks our souls; and the period of the warfare indeed in the former case is brief, and in this brief space there are respites; for the approach of the night and the fatigue of slaughter, meal-times also, and many other things, afford a respite to the soldier, so that he can doff his armor and breathe a little, and refresh himself with food and drink, and in many other ways recover his former strength. But in the case of the evil one it is not possible ever to lay aside one's armor, it is not possible even to take sleep, for one who would remain always unscathed. For one of two things must be: either to fall and perish unarmed, or to stand equipped and ever watchful. For he ever stands with his own battle array, watching for our indolence, and laboring more zealously for our destruction, than we for our salvation.

And that he is not seen by us, and suddenly assails us, which things are a source of countless evils to those who are not always on the watch, proves this kind of war to be harder than the other. Couldst thou wish us, then, in such a case to command the soldiers of Christ? Yea, this were to command them for the devil's service, for whenever he who ought to marshal and order others is the most inexperienced and feeble of all men, by betraying

through this inexperience those who have been entrusted to his charge, he commands them in the devil's interests rather than in Christ's.

But why do you sigh? Why weep? For my ease does not now call for wailing, but for joy and gladness.

Basil: But not my case, yea this calls for countless lamentations. For I am hardly able yet to understand to what degree of evil you have brought me. For I came to you wanting to learn what excuse I should make on your behalf to those who find fault with you; but you send me back after putting another case in the place of that I had. For I am no longer concerned about the excuses I shall give them on your behalf, but what excuse I shall make to God for myself and my own faults. But I beseech you, and implore you, if my welfare is at all regarded by you, if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any bowels, and mercies, [Philippians 2:1] for you know that yourself above all hast brought me into this danger, stretch forth your hand, both saying and doing what is able to restore me, do not have the heart to leave me for the briefest moment, but now rather than before let me pass my life with you.

Chrysostom: But I smiled, and said, how shall I be able to help, how to profit you under so great a burden of office? But since this is pleasant to you, take courage, dear soul, for at any time at which it is possible for you to have leisure amid your own cares, I will come and will comfort you, and nothing shall be wanting of what is in my power.

On this, he weeping yet more, rose up. But I, having embraced him and kissed his head, led him forth, exhorting him to bear his lot bravely. For I believe, said I, that through Christ who has called you, and set you over his own sheep, you will obtain such assurance from this ministry as to receive me also, if I am in danger at the last day, into your everlasting tabernacle.